

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER

AD390643

CLASSIFICATION CHANGES

TO: unclassified

FROM: confidential

LIMITATION CHANGES

TO:  
Approved for public release, distribution  
unlimited

FROM:  
Controlling DoD Organization: Adjutant  
General's Office [Army], Washington, DC.

AUTHORITY

31 Jan 1980 per DoDD 5200.10; Adjutant  
General's Office ltr dtd 29 Apr 1980

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

AD390643

**CONFIDENTIAL**

ORIGINAL CONTAINS COLOR PLATES: ALL DDC  
REPRODUCTIONS WILL BE IN BLACK AND WHITE.  
ORIGINAL MAY BE SEEN IN DDC HEADQUARTERS

**Battle  
For**

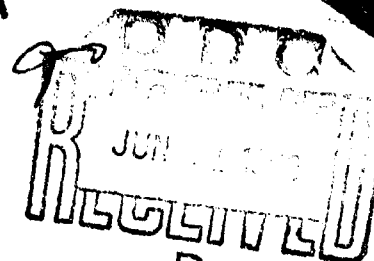
**DAK TO**

FILE COPY

**4TH**

**Infantry Division**

25 OCT-1 DEC 87



**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

•This document contains information affecting the National  
Defense of the United States within the meaning of the  
Espionage Laws, Title 18, U. S. C., Sections 793 and 794,  
its transmission or the revelation of its contents in any  
manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 10 YEARS  
DOD DIR 1200.10

**CONFIDENTIAL**

18 OACSFOR

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION [u] 8

Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96262

19 OT-RD-68X007

11 3 Jan 1968

AVDDH-CO 9

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

6 Battle for DAK TO

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

12 420p.

The "Battle for DAK TO" was not a designated operation in itself, but occurred within the boundaries of the 4th Infantry Division's Operation MAC ARTHUR, (in AO SPAATZ) which continues. Nevertheless, the size of the two opposing forces, the length and violence of the engagement and the overall significance of the battle have made the events that occurred in the vicinity of DAK TO from 2 October to 1 December the most important that have occurred in the Central Highlands since the 1954 Geneva Convention. This special after action report is submitted to record those events as an entity.

During August, September and early October a definite change in NVA tactics became evident in PLEIKU Province where our two brigades were deployed. Our units were having very scattered and light contact with reconnaissance and trail watcher parties, but the enemy's infantry units had not been contacted since late July, an abnormally long time by past experience. But by late October intelligence sources began detecting unusual and large movements in the tri-border area - the junction of LAOTIAN - CAMBODIAN - SOUTH VIETNAMESE Borders - west of the DAK TO Special Forces Camp in KONTUM Province. As the area was watched by the various means of aerial and ground intelligence gathering agencies it became apparent that the NVA was moving large forces into southwest KONTUM Province. These enemy forces were moving northeast from the area adjacent to the CAMBODIAN Border west of PLEIKU, the long existing base area for the B-3 Front and the 1st NVA Division. This then was a logical answer for the absence of NVA units in western PLEIKU Province.

The 1st Brigade, which had been surveilling the border area in western PLEIKU Province, began deploying to New DAK TO airfield on 28 October. On 2 November a NVA reconnaissance sergeant became a CHIEU HOI and divulged what later proved to be the accurate positions and battle plans of the four NVA infantry regiments and one artillery regiment that were preparing to launch the largest enemy attack to date in the Central Highlands against the DAK TO - TAN CANH area. The NVA sergeant revealed that the enemy plan was to launch the primary attack with two regiments from the south and southwest of DAK TO supported by mortar and rocket fire. A second attack into the area, also supported by rockets and mortars, was to be launched from the northeast by one regiment. The fourth regiment was to be held in reserve.

FOR OT RD  
68X007

CONFIDENTIAL

Regraded Unclassified  
When Separated From  
Classified Inclosures

003 650

elk

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-CG

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - - "Battle for DAK TO"

This information proved to be correct and was valuable in the initial deployment of our forces. The 1st Brigade sent one battalion on to the ridgeline that runs east to west south of DAK TO airfield, one battalion southwest of DAK TO and an OPCON battalion from the 173d Airborne Brigade moved west and established a fire support base for medium artillery at BEN HET.

The initial contacts were made on the ridgeline south of DAK TO by the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry; followed in succession by very heavy contacts to the southwest by the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry, and by the 4th Battalion, 503d Airborne Infantry moving south from BEN HET. This initial phase took place from 1 - 6 November and can be viewed as the brigade's forces attacking into the face of enemy units as they were moving toward pre-selected and in some areas previously prepared positions. After these initial contacts the 173d Airborne Brigade with two battalions arrived at DAK TO and moved west to BEN HET. During this phase from 7 to 12 November contact was continuous as battalions were combat assaulted behind the lead elements and into the base areas of the 32d and 66th NVA Regiments.

Meanwhile the ARVN Forces placed their units in vicinity of TAN CANH to the east of DAK TO. A battalion of the 42d ARVN Regiment later joined by the 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions oriented to the north and northeast to initially block and then attack the 24th NVA Regiments moving on the DAK TO - TAN CANH area from the northeast down the TUMERONG Valley. The 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry moved into an AO southeast of TAN CANH to react against a possible attack from the southeast against the now large base complex along Route 512 from TAN CANH to DAK TO. The 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division with the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry arrived at KONTUM from the coast and was immediately deployed into the DAK HODRAI Valley south of the main battle area to intercept the withdrawing NVA.

The NVA forces were stopped and forced to withdraw. To the west of the BEN HET the NVA committed their reserves, the 174th NVA Regiment, to cover the withdrawal to the southwest of their two hard hit regiments. This resulted in the violent, four day, struggle for Hill 875 which ultimately involved two battalions of the 173d Airborne Brigade and the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry, which was airlifted into the battle area from DARLAC Province. The hill was taken after receiving the heaviest concentration of TAC air and all calibers of artillery bombardment of any single terrain feature in the II Corps area. Meanwhile northeast of TAN CANH an ARVN infantry battalion fixed a large NVA force on a hill mass while two ARVN airborne battalions swept up the flanks in a fierce two day battle, which inflicted heavy NVA casualties. Later, the same 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions sprang an attempted enemy ambush with one battalion while getting behind the positioned NVA forces with the other battalion and hitting the headquarters group, completely routing the battalion-size force.

The outstanding success at DAK TO is in itself a tribute to the infantrymen and their leaders who drove the enemy from his entrenched positions and tenaciously pursued him as he frantically withdrew to his

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-CG

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - - "Battle for DAK TO"

sanctuary areas.

The fire support forces deserve a good share of the credit for their around-the-clock support of the infantry units. The large number of enemy in the area presenting targets and the fact that many of the contacts were against elaborately constructed enemy fortifications required that TAC air and artillery be used at the maximum rates possible. The 77 tubes of artillery fired over 151,000 rounds while 2096 sorties of TAC air were flown in support. The responsiveness of both air and artillery and the cooperation between them contributed greatly to the victory and was a real tribute to integrated direct support under difficult circumstances.

The army aviation support was also outstanding. Many tributes have been paid to helicopters and the contribution they make to our efforts in this conflict; however, the enemy could not have been met so swiftly and checked at each threat had it not been for the tremendous support provided by those helicopter units supporting our forces. The terrain was some of the most rugged in VIETNAM and there was only one second class road into the region which stopped at the medium fire support base. All tactical moves of infantry and artillery and all resupply to forward fire bases was by chopper. Without the excellent helicopter support that was common during the battle the NVA would have succeeded in getting into position. Instead, our rapid deployment to block him, and our combat assaults behind his advanced units, preempted his deployment into his planned attack positions.

We would be remiss on not acknowledging the outstanding medical support received in this fierce battle. Unhappily, the casualties were heavy on several occasions as they will be from such violent and continuous contact; however the professionalism and competence of the combat medics, the dustoff crews and the doctors and nurses at the 71st Evacuation Hospital resulted in not one casualty losing his life once he was lifted out of the area of contact. This is surely a record to be proud of and which greatly increases the morale of the troops that had to seek out and engage the enemy.

The logistic personnel, that worked so tirelessly to keep flowing the tremendous amount of supplies needed by our forces, are not to be forgotten. In spite of the destruction of the ASP as the result of the mortaring of DAK TO on 15 November our units did not want for munitions. Our supply lines reacted quickly and replacement supplies were on the way to DAK TO almost before the last round had fallen. In less than two days after the attacks the EOD teams had cleared the area, the engineers had repaired the airfield runway and resupply aircraft were landing supplies to augment the overland convoys.

The combined US and ARVN enemy body count of 1,644 is by itself proof that the enemy suffered an enormous defeat. However, his real defeat lies in the fact that he was caught while preparing for an attack that he calculated would demonstrate his ability to take and hold an area and give

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-CG

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report -- "Battle for DAK TO"

him the victory he so desperately needs in this war. Instead, he was suddenly on the defensive and after more than three weeks of savage fighting was sent limping back to his sanctuaries. From there the enemy is undoubtedly frantically planning for the victory he is so desperately seeking. Nevertheless, until he finally realizes the futility of such efforts the FVMAF and ARVN forces stand ready to engage any such future attempts in the Central Highlands.

*W.R. Peers*

W.R. PEERS  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

# CONFIDENTIAL

# UNCLASSIFIED

## COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT -- "Battle for DAK TO"

### TABLE OF CONTENTS

<u>TITLE</u>	<u>PARA</u>	<u>PAGE</u>
NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION	1	1
DATE OF OPERATION	2	1
LOCATION	3	1
CONTROL HEADQUARTERS	4	1
REPORTING OFFICER	5	1
TASK ORGANIZATION	6	1
INTELLIGENCE	7	1
MISSION	8	5
CONCEPT OF OPERATION	9	6
EXECUTION	10	7
SUPPORTING FORCES	11	17
RESULTS	12	32
ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS	13	37
LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS	14	62
COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS	15	66

<u>INCLOSURES</u>	<u>TITLE</u>
1	Reporting Officer
2	Task Organization
3	Attacks by Indirect Fire Tab A - Overlay
4	Chronological Summary of Significant Activities
5	B-52 Strike Areas
6	After Action Report, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division
7	After Action Report, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
8	After Action Report, 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division
9	After Action Report, 24th Special Tactical Zone

UNCLASSIFIED



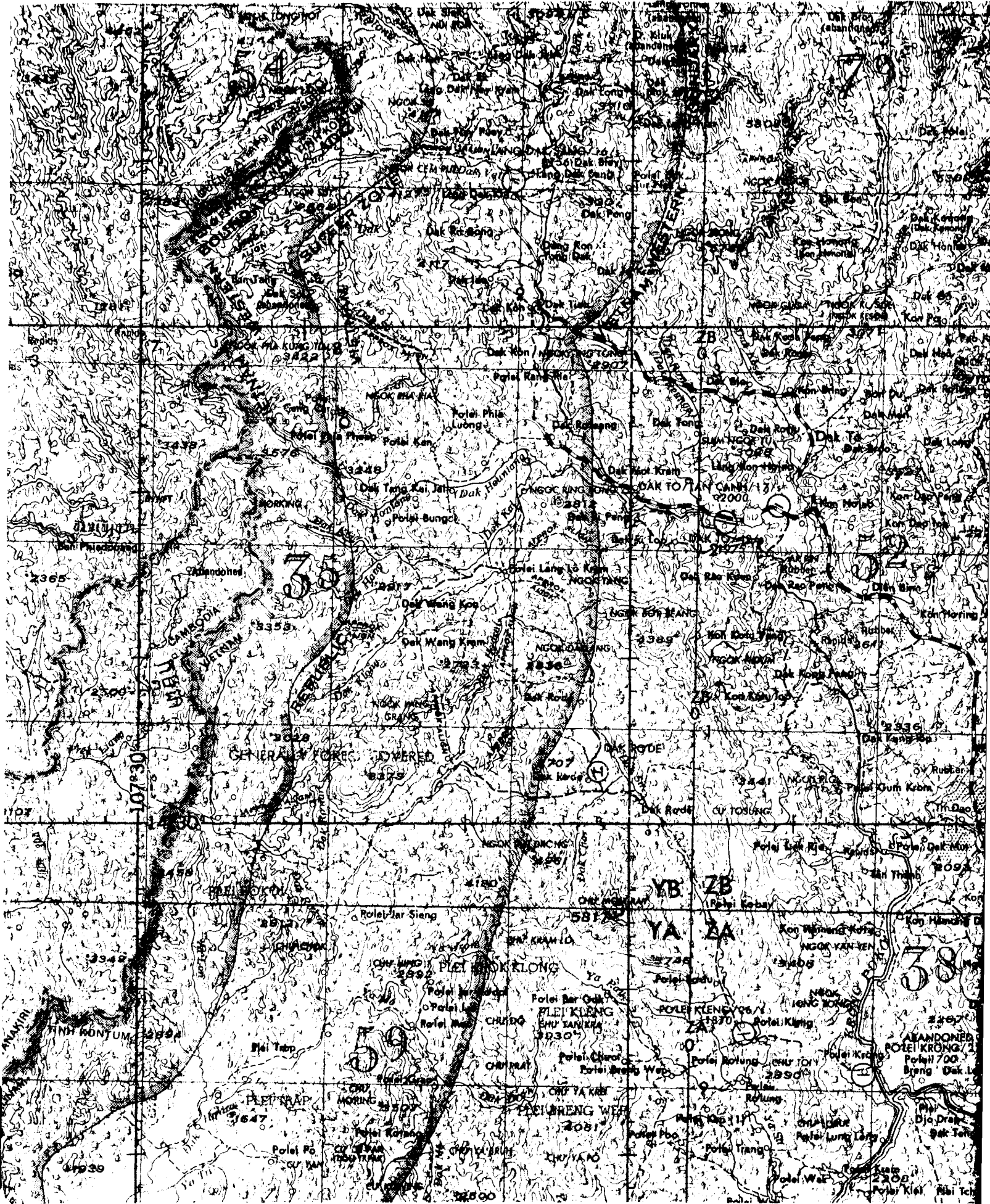
# UNCLASSIFIED

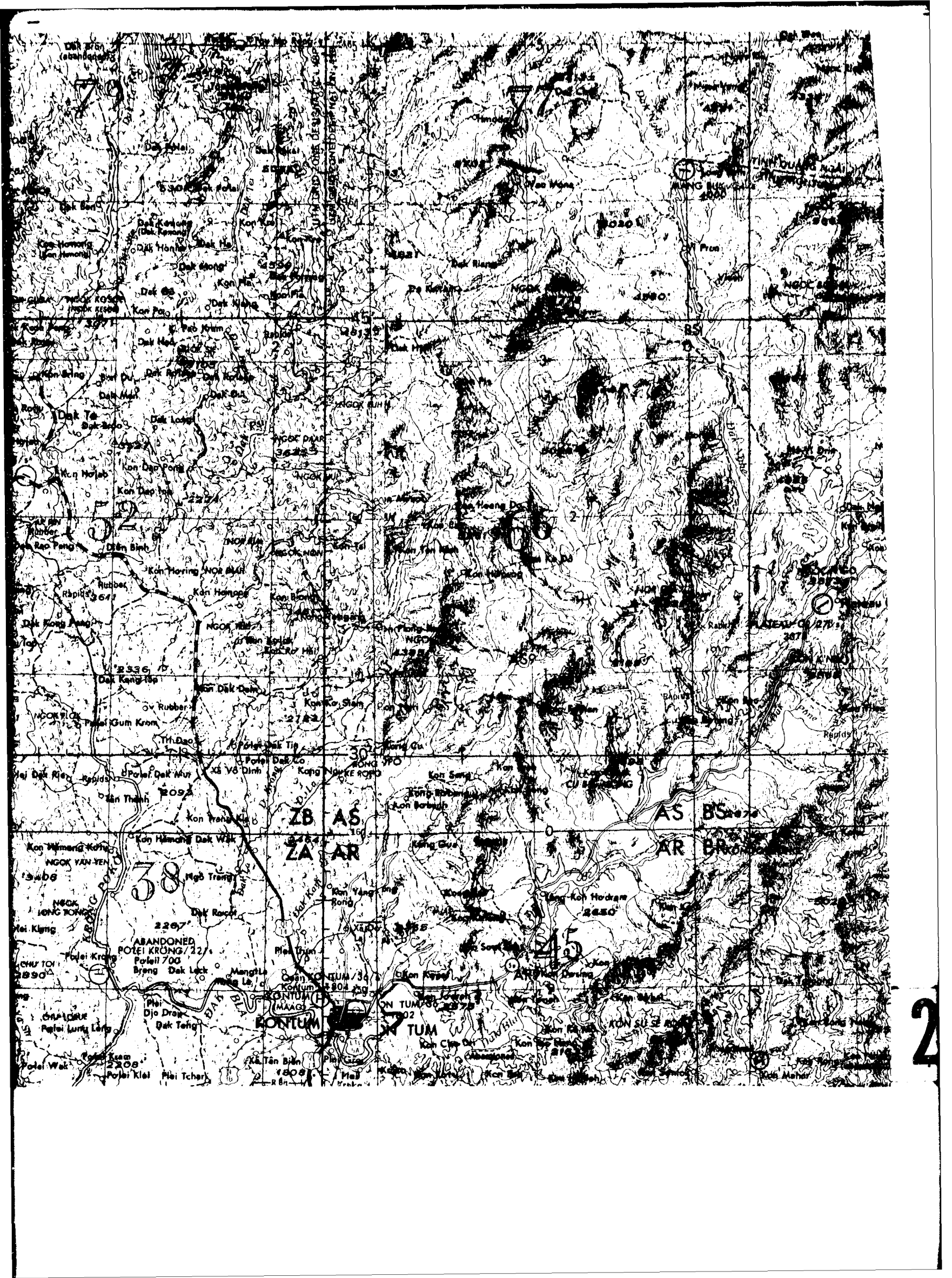
## INCLOSURES

## TITLE

- |    |   |
|----|---|
| 10 | After Action Report, 4th Infantry<br>Division Artillery |
| 11 | After Action Report, 4th Aviation<br>Battalion          |
| 12 | After Action Report, 52d Combat<br>Aviation Battalion   |
| 13 | After Action Report, 299th<br>Engineer Battalion (C)    |
| 14 | After Action Report, 124th<br>Signal Battalion          |
| 15 | Abbreviations Used in Text                              |
| 16 | Map 1:50,000, Series L7014,<br>Sheets 6538 II, III      |

UNCLASSIFIED





Dak Son (abandoned)

MANG BIEN  
4000

KON ROSA  
3500

KON HONG  
3500

KON HONG  
3500

Dak Kang  
2536

KON HANG  
3500

ABANDONED  
POLEI KRONG/22  
POLEI 700  
BRONG DAK LECH  
2267

KON SU SE  
3500

ZB AS  
ZA AR

AS BS  
AR BR

KONTUM  
MAAGI

KONTUM

2

**CONFIDENTIAL**

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

THRU: Commanding General  
I Field Force, Vietnam  
ATTN: AVFA-GC  
APO 96350

TO: Commander  
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
ATTN: J343  
APO 96243

1. (U) NAME AND TITLE OF OPERATION: Operation MAC ARTHUR, "Battle for DAK TO" - Search and destroy.
2. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: 25 October to 1 December 1967.
3. (U) LOCATION: Reference map VIETNAM, Scale 1:250,000; Series JCG (G) 1501: Sheets ND 48-8, 49-5; and map VIETNAM, Scale 1:50,000; Series L7014: Sheets 6537 I, II, III, IV, 6538 I, II, III, IV; 6637 III, IV; 6638 III, IV.
4. (U) CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 4th Infantry Division.
5. (U) REPORTING OFFICER: Principal commanders and senior staff officers participating in the operation are listed at inclosure 1.
6. (U) TASK ORGANIZATION: Inclosure 2.
7. (C) INTELLIGENCE:
  - a. Enemy Composition, Disposition and Strength Prior to the "Battle for DAK TO".

(1) At the beginning of the battle the NVA B-3 Front was preparing the battlefield southwest of the DAK TO Special Forces Camp in KONTUM Province. The enemy mission was to infiltrate men and materials into the area via the PLEI TRAP Valley and Tri-Border area and to attack and overrun the DAK TO Special Forces Camp. This attack was to take place in conjunction with the country-wide escalation of enemy activity aimed at a significant NVA/VC victory. The presence of such a large enemy force represented one of the largest buildups ever to take place in the Western Highlands.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Downgraded at 3 Year Interval.  
Declassified After 12 YEAR.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

# CONFIDENTIAL

A. DDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(2) Summary of enemy composition, disposition and strength at the beginning of the "Battle for DAK TO".

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
1st NVA Div	2,500	South of DAK TO
32nd NVA Regt	2,500	Southwest of DAK TO
66th NVA Regt	2,500	Northwest of DAK TO
174th NVA Regt	1,400	Southwest of DAK TO
40th Arty Regt	1,796	Northeast of DAK TO
24th NVA Regt	500	Southeast of DAK TO
304th MF VC Bn		

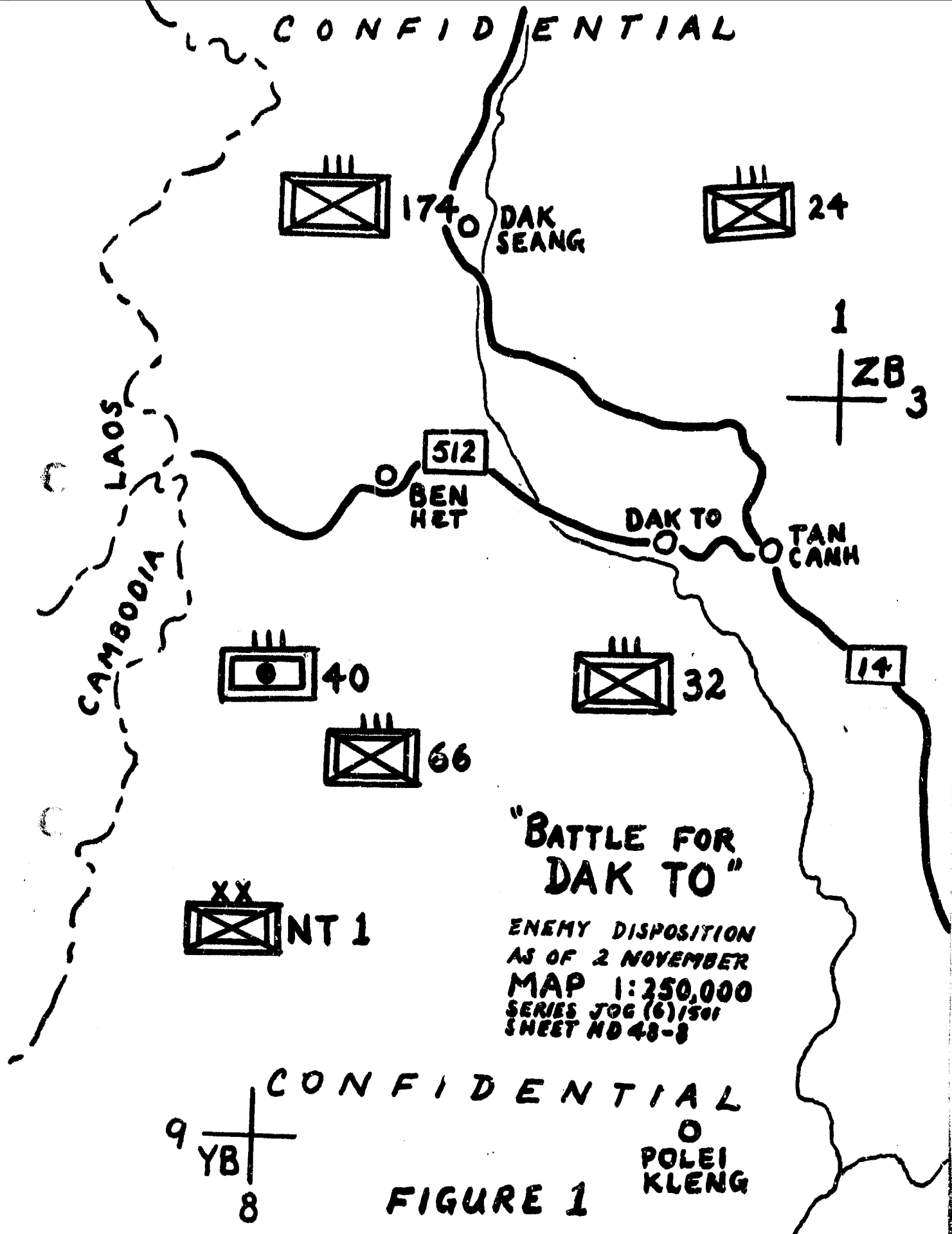
b. Enemy Activity During the "Battle for DAK TO".

(1) During late October and early November, there was evidence that the 1st NVA Division with its subordinate regiments, the 32nd and 66th, had moved into southeastern KONTUM from its previous location in CAMBODIA. The enemy's plans were revealed by NVA Sergeant Vu Hong, who rallied to ARVN forces on 2 November. He indicated that the 66th Regiment would attack US Forces at DAK TO, approaching from the southwest. The 32nd Regiment would screen to prevent US counterattacks against the 66th. The 174th Regiment, under control of the 1st Division, would be in reserve. Fire support would be provided by the 40th Artillery Regiment, which consisted of a 120mm mortar battalion and two 122mm rocket battalions. The artillery was reportedly divided, with part collocated with the 32nd Regiment and the remainder northeast of DAK TO with the 24th NVA Regiment. It is probable that elements were assigned in direct support of the 66th, as well. The mission of the 24th Regiment was to block reinforcements and to join in on a three prong attack on DAK TO if the need developed. The attack was to have begun on 28 October, but was postponed by problems of coordination. The rapid deployment of US units to DAK TO in the interim spoiled the enemy's plans for attacking the camp.

(2) From subsequent action, it can be concluded that the enemy reacted by redeploying to prepared defensive positions to the south and southwest of DAK TO. The apparent plan at this point was to provoke US units into attacks against heavily fortified positions. The first engagement of the DAK TO battle began on 3 November, when elements of the NVA 32nd Regiment were contacted south of DAK TO by the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry. The following day the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry engaged two battalions of the same enemy unit at YB913143. Meanwhile, the 4th Battalion, 503d Airborne was fighting the 66th Regiment further to the west at YB853187. Both the enemy regiments were well dug in and fought to hold the ground they occupied. During these actions, the 32nd suffered sufficient casualties to impair its effectiveness significantly. The 66th also sustained heavy losses, but was able to continue operations.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



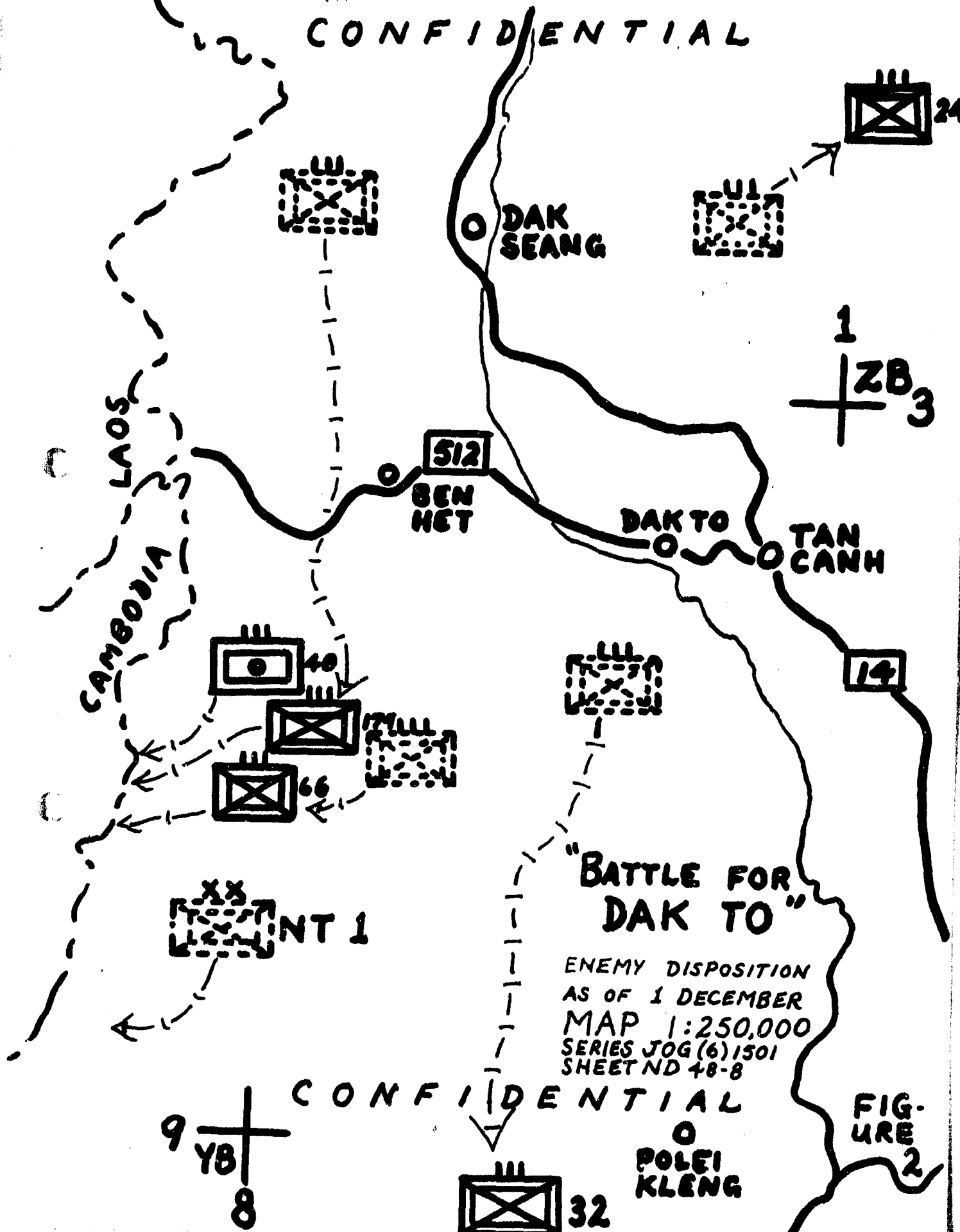
"BATTLE FOR  
DAK TO"  
ENEMY DISPOSITION  
AS OF 2 NOVEMBER  
MAP 1:250,000  
SERIES JOG (6) 1501  
SHEET NO 48-8

CONFIDENTIAL

FIGURE 1

POLEI  
KLENG

CONFIDENTIAL



ENEMY DISPOSITION  
 AS OF 1 DECEMBER  
 MAP 1:250,000  
 SERIES JOG (6) 1501  
 SHEET ND 48-8

CONFIDENTIAL

FIGURE 2

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(3) By 12 November, the 174th and 24th NVA Regiments were committed to action, while the 32nd and 66th withdrew to the southwest. On 12 November, the US 173d Airborne Brigade began a series of battles with the 174th Regiment southwest of POLEI KAN. The enemy took moderate casualties, but stood their ground. The largest battles in this series were fought for control of Hill 875 (YB798137), which finally came under US control on 23 November.

(4) On 18 November, the 24th NVA Regiment, to the northeast, was first identified in a contact with ARVN forces as it began a continuing effort to relieve pressure on the embattled units to the southwest. Other engagements with ARVN forces occurred on 20, 21, 25 and 29 November in the vicinity of ZB1330. As a result, the 24th Regiment lost 405 KIA (BC). In these contacts, the 4th and 5th Battalions were firmly identified. The 6th Battalion, which frequently operated independently, was not positively located. However, a document captured on 15 November at YB649149 suggested that this battalion was located south of DAK TO.

(5) The ambush of a convoy on Highway 14 at ZB152084 on 11 November and mortar attacks on KONTUM City on 15 and 17 November were further efforts to divert US forces away from the main elements of the 1st NVA Division. These attacks were probably made by the 304th VC MF Battalion, which frequently operated in coordination with the 24th Regiment. By the end of the month, attacks by fire from well-fortified positions were mounted against friendly forces. The usual weapon was the 82mm mortar. The enemy was poised for withdrawal: however, evidence still remained that he might attempt some offensive measures with attacks by fire, using 122mm rockets, being the most logical.

(6) As of 30 November estimated enemy strengths and locations were as follows:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>DISPOSITION</u>
24th NVA Regt	1,268	ZB1240
32nd NVA Regt	1,900	Southwest of DAK TO
66th NVA Regt	2,056	Southwest of DAK TO
174th NVA Regt	1,965	YB7814
304th MF VC Bn	470	Southeast of DAK TO
40th Arty Regt	1,400	Elements vic YB7626

c. During the "Battle for DAK TO" the following enemy techniques were used against friendly forces.

(1) Attacks by fire. The presence of the 40th Artillery Regiment gave the enemy a 120mm mortar as well as 122mm rocket capability. Only employed twice on, 21 and 22 November, they were to have been employed in the original plan for overrunning DAK TO. The presence of

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

the 75mm pack howitzer was also noted in the area, but it was not known to have been effectively employed. Attacks by fire against both friendly forces and fixed installations, using 60mm and 82mm mortars as an economy of force measure, were again successfully employed by the enemy.

(2) Enemy change of tactics: The enemy's initial lack of coordination and the quick deployment of 4th Infantry Division and OPCON units into the DAK TO area forced the enemy to re-evaluate and change course from his initial plans. Instead of an offensive attack on DAK TO, he chose to have US units come to him and fight on an already prepared battlefield.

#### d. Terrain.

(1) DAK TO is situated in a mountainous region in southwestern KONTUM Province. The area is bordered on the east by the KRONG POKO River and on the west by the CAMBODIAN Border. The area is dense jungle, heavily covered with triple canopy vegetation, with numerous streams and small rivers throughout. Rolling plains and less vegetated areas appear along the KRONG POKO River and in the various valleys where streams and small rivers are found. Highway 512, which begins at TAN CANH and extends to the LAOTIAN Border, is the only land route into the immediate area. This route is an unimproved fair weather road with bypasses available for heavy equipment. Highway 14, a hard surface road, runs the length of the battle area from north-south in the eastern portion. Foot trails abound throughout the area.

#### (2) Military aspects of the terrain.

(a) Observation and fields of fire: Observation is limited because of the dense forest and hills and mountains. Ground observation is often limited to a few yards. From the air, observation is difficult, but not impossible. Flat trajectory fires are limited in the hills and mountains and can be easily deflected by the dense undergrowth. Vegetation and terrain irregularities limit target acquisition and adjustment of fire for high angle fire weapons.

(b) Cover and Concealment: Cover and concealment from flat trajectory fire is excellent in most parts of the battle area. The mountainous terrain and dense foliage provides natural concealment as well as cover. In the more open portions of the area this is somewhat reduced; however, it is still deemed adequate to permit undetected movement. There are numerous mountain caves which provide excellent cover.

(c) Obstacles: The major obstacle is the KRONG POKO River which forms a barrier for east-west travel. The river is fordable during the dry season.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(d) Key terrain features: The NGOK TANG Mountain (vic YB9517) and its connecting mountain groups is a key terrain feature in the northern portion of the area. The southern portion includes many mountainous areas where terrain is very irregular in pattern and difficult to traverse.

e. Weather. The weather was mild during the period, with only light amounts of precipitation from occasional afternoon rain showers. Most clouds were at two levels: 10,000 and 25,000 feet. Morning fog formed occasionally in the deep valleys and along the streams. Soil conditions were usually dry, facilitating easy movement for vehicles. The good weather allowed for maximum usage of air power during the operation.

f. One mining incident occurred during the "Battle for DAK TO". A 3/4 ton truck from the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor hit a plastic mine on 11 November at YB893271 with negative casualties and light damage to the vehicle.

g. There were seven mines located in the DAK TO area during this period. All were discovered on 19 November and were destroyed in place. The mines were emplaced approximately 200 meters apart.

<u>Location</u>	<u>Type Mine</u>
YB896272	CHICOM AT
YB892270	US MLAL
YB889271	US MLAL
YB903273	2-CHICOM AT
YB901273	US MLAL
YB902273	CHICOM AT

h. A total of 60 rocket/mortar attacks were experienced during the "Battle for DAK TO". A list of the attacks is at inclosure 3.

## 8. (C) MISSION:

a. The mission of the 4th Infantry Division in the MAC ARTHUR area of operations in which the "Battle for DAK TO" took place is stated below.

The 4th Infantry Division conducts operations in the MAC ARTHUR area of operations to:

(1) Detect North VIETNAMESE Army infiltration into the Republic of VIETNAM.

(2) Conduct spoiling attacks to prevent enemy buildup in the West Central Highlands.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GO

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(3) Provide security for engineer construction, land clearing, road upgrading, logistical installations and Highways 14 and 19.

(4) Support the Government of VIETNAM's Revolutionary Development and Refugee Resettlement Programs.

(5) Conduct a continuing Civic Action Program consisting of short range, high impact projects in the forward areas and long range, nation building projects in the Tactical Area of Responsibility.

b. The mission of the 4th Infantry Division and OPCON units at DAK TO was simpler.

The US forces in cooperation and coordination with ARVN and CIDG units were to engage, destroy and drive from central KONTUM Province the North VIETNAMESE Army forces which had infiltrated and were threatening the population centers and FWMAF installations of DAK TO and KONTUM City.

## 9. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

In the latter part of October as the indications of strong enemy interest in the DAK TO area increased the decision was made to replace the mechanized infantry battalion which at the time had the mission of securing the DAK TO airfield, the adjacent FSA and engineer work parties that were upgrading route 512 from TAN CANH to the proposed site of the BEN HET CIDG camp with the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry. As enemy activity increased the 1st Brigade with two battalions moved from western PLEIKU into DAK TO while the mechanized battalion and an armored cavalry squadron, because of their mobility, assumed the 1st Brigade's mission of screening the border area in western PLEIKU Province.

The division's 2d Brigade with three battalions continued operations in northern DARLAC Province to seek out and destroy an NVA regiment that was reported to be infiltrating into the area.

The first phase of the "Battle for DAK TO" began following the arrival of the 1st Brigade. Several days later a battalion from the 173d Airborne Brigade was added to the 1st Brigade's forces. All intelligence assets were employed to find the enemy. They indicated that the enemy planned to attack the DAK TO complex and a knowledgeable NVA HOI CHANH who turned himself in right before the battle began confirmed this. The three battalions were projected south and southwest of DAK TO to seek, find and fix the enemy. This resulted in a spoiling of the enemy's plan and did fix his main locations.

As the magnitude of the encounters increased and the enemy was found in strength, the battle moved into the second phase. In order to destroy the enemy main force, additional forces were furnished resulting in two more

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

battalions of the 173d Airborne Brigade and the brigade command-and-control group arriving in the battle area. The division then added one more of its battalions to the 1st Brigade. The two brigades, now totalling six battalions, pushed south and southwest to destroy the enemy.

The battle developed and entered into the third phase when the brigades, following heavy fighting, were able to exploit their advantage and pursue the enemy to the southwest. To block the enemy withdrawal from the area, a two battalion brigade from the 1st Air Cavalry Division arrived on the scene and deployed south of the battle area across the main infiltration routes that led to the PLEI TRAP Valley. A threat to the DAK TO complex from the north and northeast was countered by bringing in a total of three ARVN airborne and two ARVN ranger battalions to assist the ARVN infantry battalion which was stationed in this area.

After the enemy had been routed and driven from the area, the brigades then conducted search and destroy operations to find and eliminate isolated enemy elements, and to locate and destroy enemy supply caches, base areas and fortifications.

## 10. (C) EXECUTION:

a. Prior to the battle on 25 October the disposition of the division's forces were as follows:

(1) The 2d Brigade with three infantry battalions was in northern DARLAC Province. The battalions were positioned so that they could effectively block the suspected infiltration into that area from CAMBODIA by the 33d NVA Regiment.

(2) The 1st Brigade with two infantry battalions and one cavalry squadron was screening the CAMBODIAN Border area in western PLEIKU Province from New PLEI DJERENG to the IA DRANG River.

(3) A mechanized battalion task force was located at DAK TO (ZB004217) to assist ARVN and CIDG forces securing the DAK TO complex and to provide security for engineer road and bridge construction parties.

(4) The other cavalry squadron and the tank battalion were securing Highways 19E, 14N and 14S.

b. Intelligence points to DAK TO.

(1) In the latter part of October the 1st NVA Division was detected just opposite the tri-border (VIETNAM - CAMBODIA - LAOS) area. The 173d Airborne Brigade during Operation GREELEY had worked the area south of DAK TO from June through September. They had contacts in June and July, but none subsequent to that time, and so most of the brigade was redeployed

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

to PHU YEN Province. A battalion task force, 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, remained. This battalion was subsequently replaced by the division's mechanized infantry battalion, the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry (Mech) on 12 October. When elements of the 1st NVA Division were identified in the area the mechanized battalion was replaced by the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry. The infantry battalion assumed responsibility for DAK TO on 28 October and began reconnoitering the area. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols began to pick up enemy movement toward DAK TO from the southwest. Also, agent reports supported the LRRP reports and confirmed the movement of the NVA toward DAK TO. The 1st Brigade Headquarters was immediately moved to DAK TO closing on 29 October and followed on 30 October by the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry. All intelligence means available were employed in the area. An airborne personnel detector - "Snoopy" - detected strong concentrations along the valleys leading toward DAK TO and BEN HET (YB873259) from the southwest. It was evident that the NVA were moving in, and in large numbers. The LRRP's continued to pick up movement. Several ammunition storage areas and base camps were discovered in the area - another indication of an enemy buildup. Also used were visual reconnaissance aircraft (head-hunters) and airborne infrared sensors.

(2) The division knew the enemy was moving in. Then on 2 November, one of the members of a NVA 50 man reconnaissance party, a sergeant from the 66th NVA Regiment, turned himself in as a HOI CHANH at the village of DAK RI (YB969217). The sergeant had quite a fantastic tale to tell. A lot of people disbelieved him because he knew too much. He said that the 66th Regiment was moving from the southwest generally towards BEN HET; the 32d Regiment was moving from the southwest generally towards DAK TO; the 32d was to cover the attack made by the 66th. The 174th Regiment, which had been north in the DAK SEANG area had moved down along the border to act as reinforcements in the event the other units got in trouble - a contingency force. He also said that the 24th Regiment, which had been well to the north and northeast of DAK TO, was going to move down and hit the DAK TO area from the northeast. He stated that the 40th Artillery Regiment was split to support both the regiments coming in from the southwest and the 24th Regiment coming from the north. All forces were under the control of the 1st NVA Division located just inside the border. All the intelligence the division had gathered indicated that what the HOI CHANH had said was correct. The division followed through on the information and it was exactly the way it worked out in the entire operation, with one minor exception.

## c. Phase I - The threat (1-6 November)

(1) The first phase of the "Battle for DAK TO" began on 1 November when, to counter the immediate threat, the 1st Brigade deployed the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry to the ridge line immediately south of DAK TO and the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry was placed to the southwest of DAK TO, also on the high ground. I FFORCEV made available a battalion of the 173d Airborne Brigade, the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry, which closed DAK TO on

# CONFIDENTIAL



N

DAK TO II  
3 DEC 67

# BATTLE FOR DAK TO PHAS

CONFIDENTIAL

CANAL



40



1

BEN HET

512



4-503

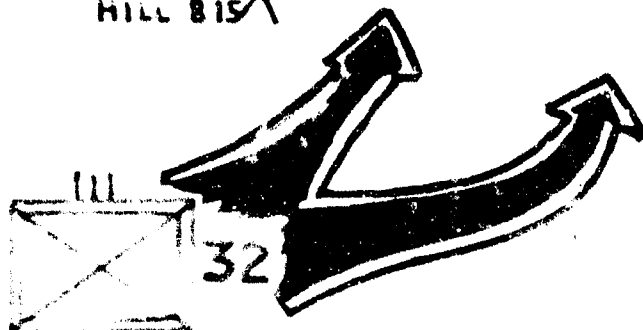


3-8

CANAL

HILL 815

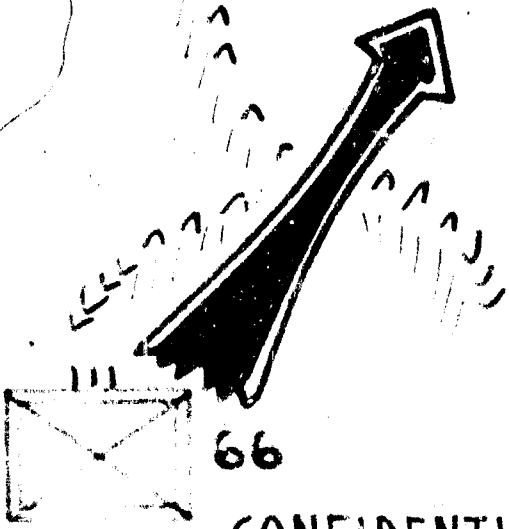
HILL 1



32



HO LAM



66

MAP  
APP

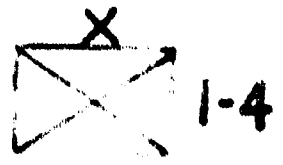
1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



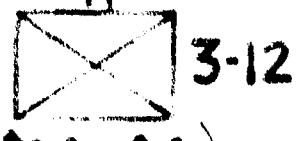
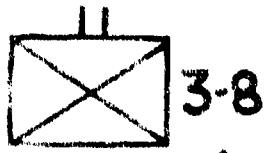
512



-503

TAN CANH

DAK TO



DAK PSI

HILL 1338

14

LAK YON

MAP NOT TO SCALE  
APPROX. 1:100,000

56

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

1 November and was attached to the 1st Brigade. On 3 November the battalion was moved to BEN HET, the new location of the DAK TO CIDG camp. At the time there was a heavy concentration of engineers and road clearing equipment there. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry was directed to move south from BEN HET.

(2) On 3 and 4 November the first contact in the "Battle for DAK TO" took place at YB000161 on the high ridge due south of DAK TO. It was only 900 meters south of the location of one of the largest engagements which the 173d Airborne Brigade had in the DAK TO area in the month of June during Operation GREELEY. Two companies from the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry pushing up the ridge encountered a very strong NVA position. They tested it and found it could not be taken without excessive casualties, and so the companies backed off and started pounding it with artillery and tac air. They tried it again and were still met by strong opposition. All available artillery was brought to bear on the enemy position, as were 40 air strikes, which included 24 sorties of 1000 pound bombs with delayed action fuzes. With this support the companies were able to move in. They had four KIA and counted 13 NVA KIA. Many more NVA were undoubtedly killed than those counted. Many NVA were covered by the bomb damage. Also, it was evident that the NVA had dragged away quite a few bodies. The 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry, during this time, established a fire base at YB934188 and air assaulted two companies onto the ridge line to the south at YB9114 to work west along the ridge. They had one contact as they moved in this general area in which they killed 11 NVA and lost four.

(3) Three companies from the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry moved south from BEN HET and on the morning of 6 November all three companies had simultaneous contact in the vicinity of YB831204. Concurrently the remaining company was air assaulted on top of Hill 825 at YB853187. The hill had been well prepped by artillery and air which, as was later found out, had driven the enemy off the hilltop. The company landed without opposition, but not more than 30 minutes later they had NVA all around them. The NVA had all around defenses and a large base camp on the hill. The battle continued on into the night and part of the following morning. By the time the battle was over the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry had lost 16 people and had killed a total of 104 NVA. This brought to the end the first phase in which only the 1st Brigade was employed.

#### d. Phase II - The counteroffensive (7-12 November).

(1) On 5 November the I Field Force Commander made the remainder of the 173d Airborne Brigade (less the recently arrived 3d Battalion, 503d Infantry) available to the division. The 173d TAC CP and the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry closed DAK TO on 6 November and moved to BEN HET. On 7 November the Brigade Main CP and the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry closed into the area and set up at the Old DAK TO airstrip (ZB046210) near TAN CANH. With the arrival of the 173d Airborne Brigade the battle area south of Route 512 was divided with the 1st Brigade on the east and the 173d on the west.

9

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

At the same time from the division's 2d Brigade that was operating in DARLAC Province, the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry was alerted to move into the area and join the 1st Brigade.

(2) To provide command and control over this two brigade force the division deployed a tactical command post to DAK TO on 6 November.

(3) During this period the 9th ARVN Airborne Battalion was flown in from SAIGON and the Joint General Reserve and it was agreed that the ARVN would orient themselves to the northeast to work against the 24th NVA Regiment.

(4) Route 512 that junctioned with Highway 14 at TAN CANH and ran through the DAK TO complex to BEN HET presented a security problem. The ARVN assisted the division in solving this problem by providing the 1st Battalion, 42d Regiment for local defense of the DAK TO complex, the defense of the city of TAN CANH and the regimental headquarters and also to secure the bridge west of DAK TO. In addition to securing the DAK TO area, the division had to secure Highway 14 from TAN CANH thru KONTUM to PLEIKU. A troop from the 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry and a company from the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor were used for this mission.

(5) South of DAK TO the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry continued to work down the ridge line at YB9715. They found that the enemy had defenses about every 1500 to 2000 meters. Each time they came up against one of these positions they had to stop and pound the enemy with air and artillery before moving in. This tactic was repeated on several occasions. Each time we would lose a couple of men and kill 10 to 15 NVA.

(6) The 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry continued to maneuver in the vicinity of the ridge line at YB9318 on 7 and 8 November. On 8 November two companies of the battalion had what could be considered one of the largest contacts of the war at YB904149. The enemy force was estimated to be in excess of a battalion, possibly two battalions. The companies were in their night position when they were hit by a furious weapons and ground attack. Intensive B-40 rocket and mortar fire had a devastating effect on the companies. The NVN penetrated the perimeter of one of the companies, but was driven back. Late in the evening the attack ceased, but only after intense pounding of the enemy by artillery and napalm. In a sweep of the battle area the next two days they counted 232 NVA bodies. The companies lost a total of 21. Shrapnel from the B-40 rockets and mortars produced many wounds, however many of these were minor and these men would return to their units somewhere between two weeks and a month.

(7) The 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry replaced one of the companies the following day and continued to advance up the ridge line toward Hill 724. The enemy engaged the advancing companies with small arms and mortar fire. Occasional squad - sized groups of individuals were observed. In

# CONFIDENTIAL

# BATTLE FOR DAK TO

CONFIDENTIAL

LAOS

CAMBODIA



173



4-503

BEN HET

512



1-503



2-503



3-8

77.1  
77.2



1-

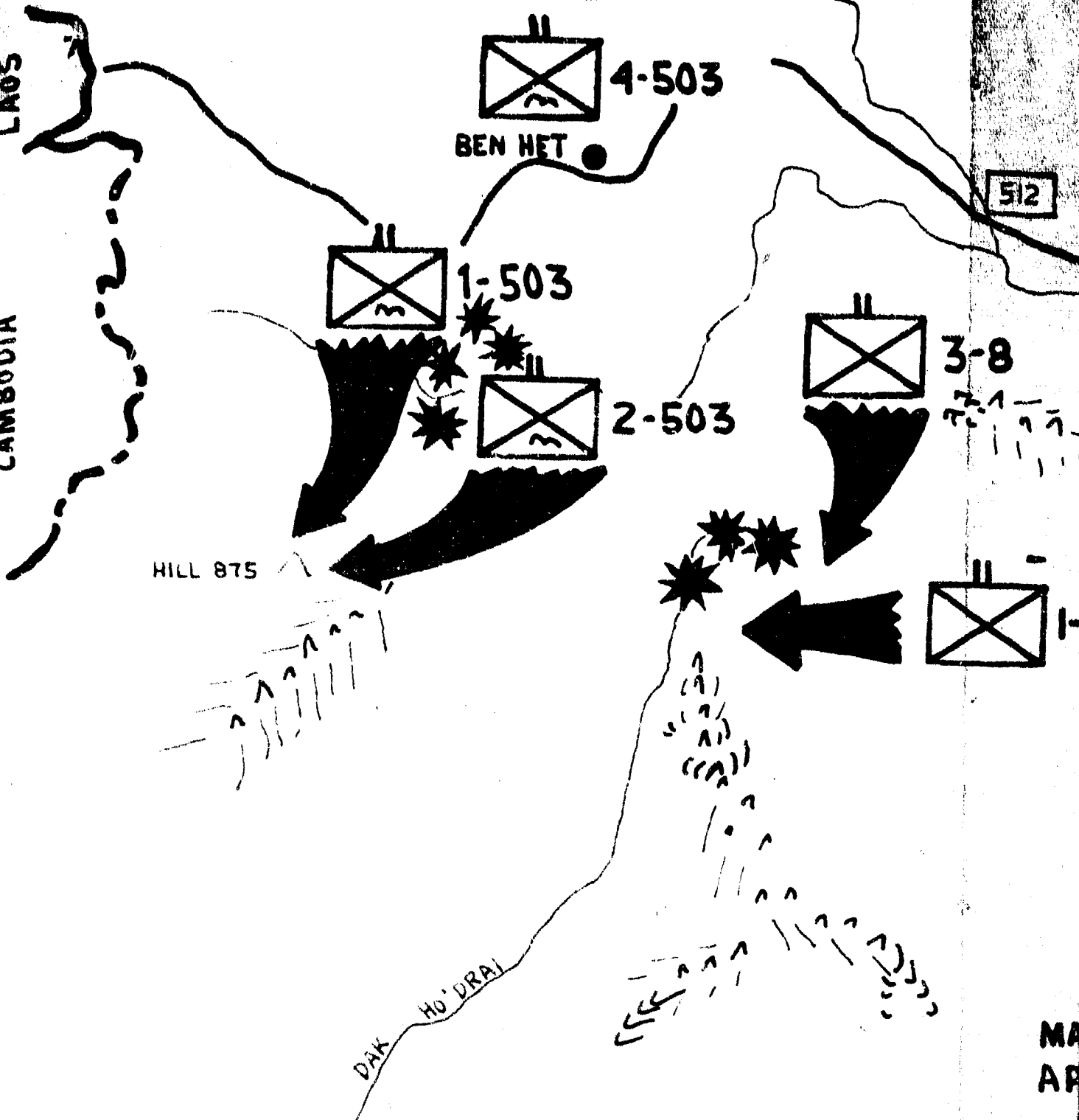
HILL 875

DAK HO DRAI

MA  
AR

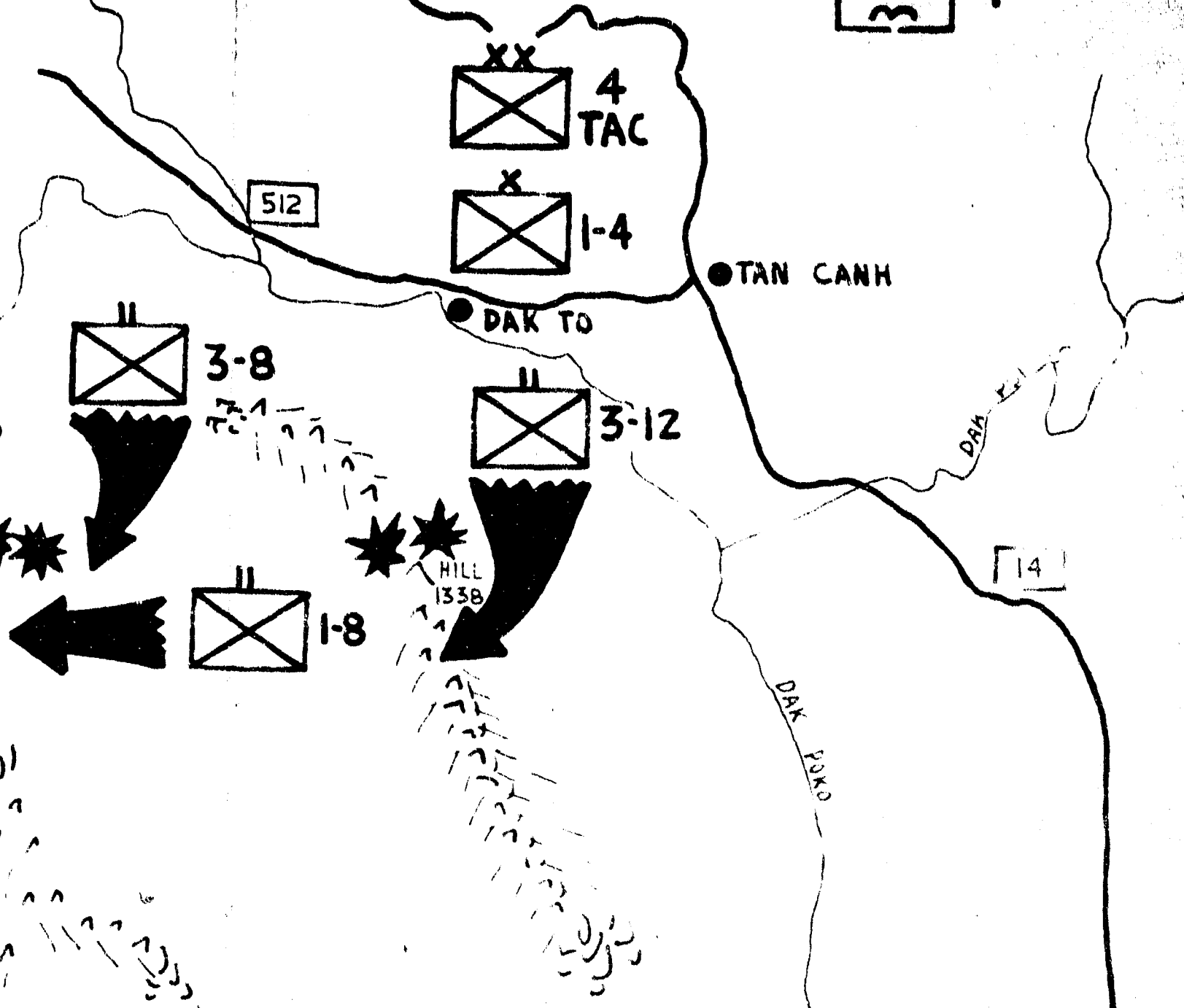
CONFIDENTIAL

1



CONFIDENTIAL

ARVN 9



MAP NOT TO SCALE  
APPROX 1:100,000

CONFIDENTIAL

2

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

the afternoon of 10 November a third company was lifted into the area. As they joined the other two companies at YB900148, the combined perimeter was hit by the enemy. The attack lasted the rest of the day and into the night before it was broken off. The enemy again made extensive use of small arms, B-40 rockets and mortars. The battalion employed massive artillery and air strikes against the enemy. The body count the next morning showed that 94 of the enemy had been killed. The companies lost 18, but again there were many wounded. One company was down to 44 men. Another company was down to 59 and the largest had only 78. Difficulties were encountered in evacuating the dead and wounded when a resupply helicopter bringing in ammunition and supplies was hit by a B-40 rocket. It burned all day blocking the LZ so that the companies were unable to evacuate their casualties. It was not until the next morning that the LZ was cleared and the dead and wounded evacuated.

(8) On 11 November the three companies reached Hill 724. Throughout the day and into the night, the enemy continued harassing the units with small arms, mortar and B-40 rocket fire.

(9) In the area south of BEN HET the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry had suffered a number of wounded, so it was replaced by the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry on 9, 10 November. The 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry pushed out to the west on 11 November and not very far from its fire base ran into the enemy at YB825184. It was a very heavy engagement lasting most of the day and part of the night. In this contact they killed 161 of the enemy and lost 21.

(10) Evidence showed that the enemy was moving back to the west, away from the contacts with the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry. To block this movement the 21 Battalion, 503d Infantry was air assaulted into an old fire base area at YE821159 on 12 November. The battalion established a new FSB and began moving to the west and ran into sporadic engagements where they lost 19 and killed 23 of the enemy.

(11) About this time I FFORCEV made other forces available to the division. On 11 November the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry from the 1st Air Cavalry Division closed DAK TO and was initially employed in the area around DAK TO. Later two of the companies were deployed to assist the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry and still later the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry. Then on 18 November the command post of the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry and one additional battalion, the 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry closed into KONTUM.

(12) The first mortar attack on the DAK TO airfield complex occurred on the night of 12 November. Forty-four rounds were received that night, but caused practically no damage. Two personnel were wounded and three vehicles received minor damage.

e. Phase III - The pursuit (13-25 November).

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TP"

(1) The ARVN Joint General Staff continued to reinforce the area with ARVN airborne troops. The 3d ARVN Airborne Battalion arrived from SAIGON on 13 November replacing the 9th ARVN Airborne Battalion. The 3d was followed two days later by the 2d ARVN Airborne Battalion. The ARVN 3d Battalion, 42d Infantry, which had been southeast of DAK TO along Highway 14N, and the 3d ARVN Airborne Battalion were employed to the north-east of TAN CANH against the 24th NVA Regiment.

(2) In the 1st Brigade portion of the battle area, the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry continued on down the ridge line south of DAK TO and cleaned it out. Then the battalion started along the high hill line that ran southeast to northwest through YB9915. The battalion had a very heavy encounter on Hill 1338. The same tactic was used as had been used before: Feel the enemy out, pin them down and then hit them with air and artillery. The battalion took the hill killing 49 NVA and losing eight of their own personnel.

(3) The 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry which had come in from DARLAC Province on 10 November and had been securing the area east of TAN CANH, was air assaulted into YB909121 on 12 November, primarily to establish a 155mm artillery base. Moving from the fire base on 14 November two companies air assaulted to YB957115 to exploit secondary explosions and other intelligence indicating that a rocket attack on DAK TO would be initiated from the hill. The companies moved through the area, but did not establish contact. However they did find recently constructed enemy protective and fighting positions. Subsequently, they deployed two companies to YB870100 and the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry established a mortar base at YB875072. The 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry had a medium sized contact near the mortar base in which they lost four and killed 10 enemy.

(4) On 18 November the 1st Battalion 503d Infantry as it continued to the south from BEN HET had a contact at YB803161 in which they killed 51 NVA and lost six.

(5) At the same time the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry was pushing southwest with three companies. The companies laagered that evening about one kilometer north of Hill 875 (YB796135). The following morning, 19 November, two of the companies moved out toward the hill and ran into strong resistance at YB798138. They pulled back toward their night location and called in air and artillery. The third company began to move to join the other companies when they came under violent attack. They had to fight their way out of the engagement to marry up with the other companies. The three companies between them had 30 to 40 dead, about 100 wounded and several people missing. The dead and wounded had been assembled for evacuation when a bomb from one of the aircraft bombing the hill landed among them. It was estimated that an additional 20 were killed and 20 to 30 wounded as a result. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry was air assaulted into the 2d Battalion,

# CONFIDENTIAL

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

CONFIDENTIAL

LAOS

CAMBODIA

173

4-503

BEN HET

512

DAK

1-503

2-503

3-8

HILL 875

HILL 1338

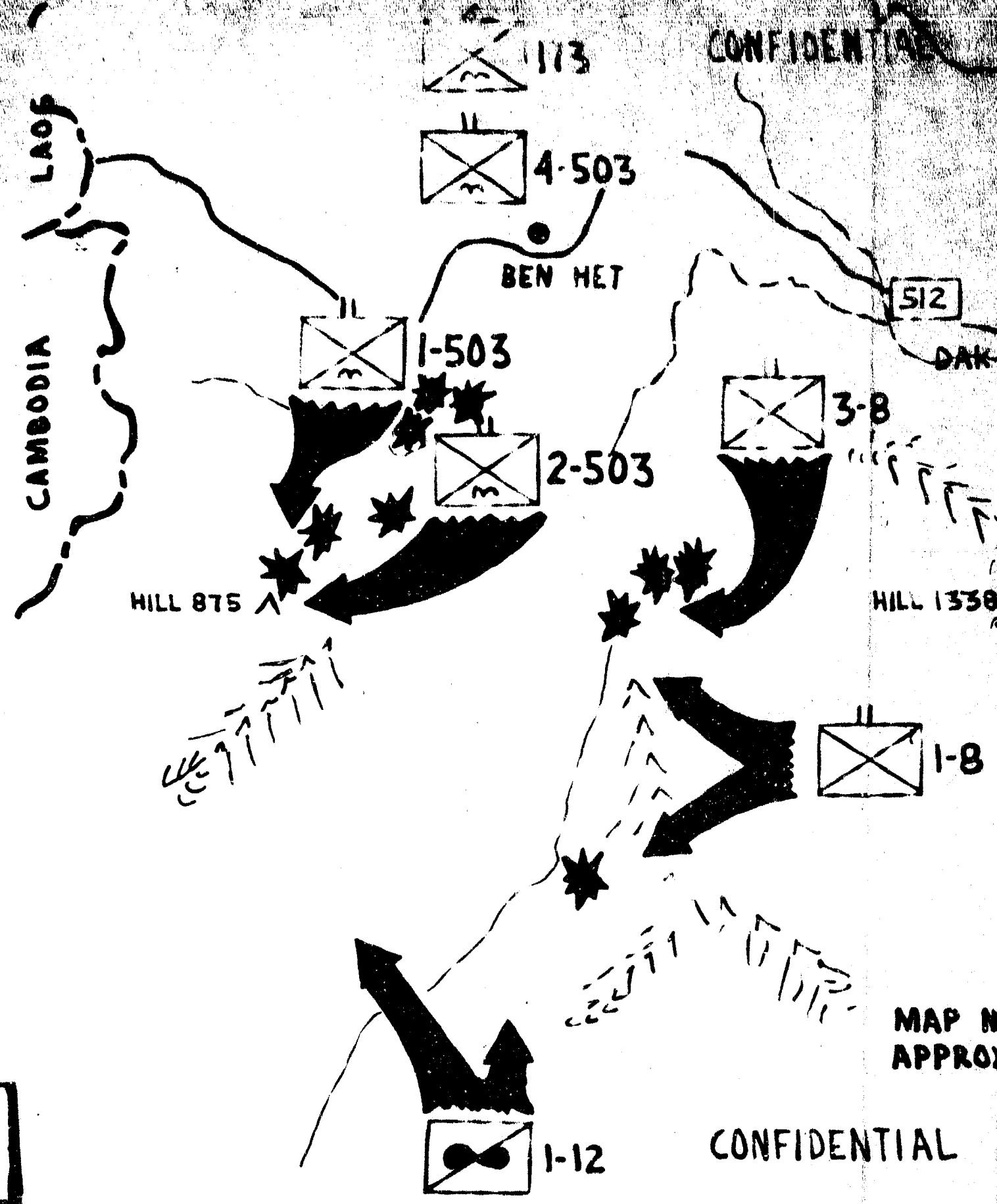
1-8

MAP N  
APPROX

1-12

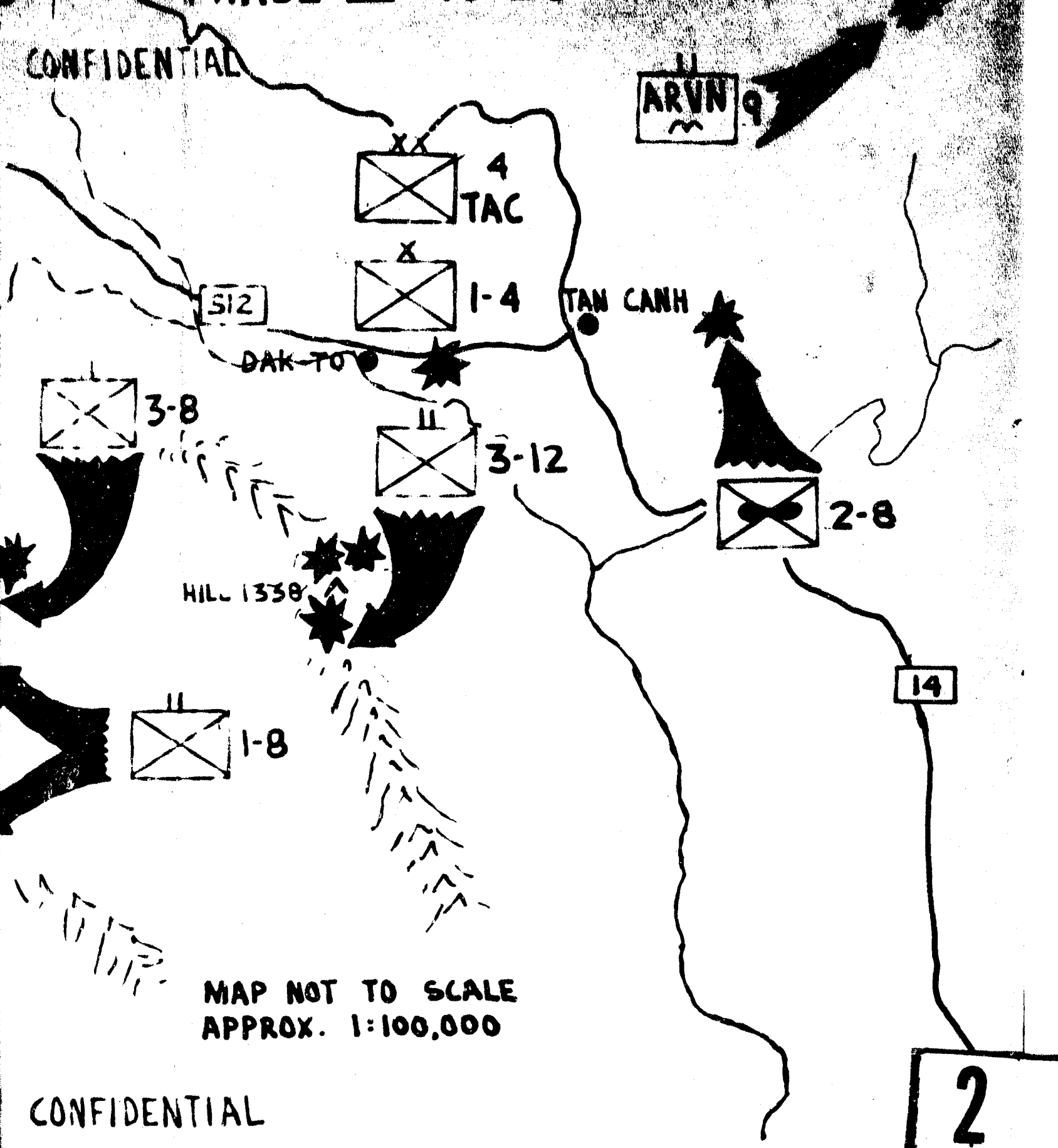
CONFIDENTIAL

1



CONFIDENTIAL

ARVN 9



MAP NOT TO SCALE  
APPROX. 1:100,000

CONFIDENTIAL

2



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

503d Infantry's fire base on 20 November and then moved overland to link up with the three companies of the 2d Battalion at Hill 875. It was necessary to move against Hill 875 in order to neutralize the enemy fire on the LZ so that the wounded and dead could be evacuated. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry started to assault the hill and found it was strongly held. They pulled back and all available air and artillery was thrown against the hill the following day. Light, medium and heavy artillery were fired at maximum rates and during one five hour period air strikes came in at the rate of one every 15 minutes to 30 minutes. On 20 November the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry was moved up from DARLAC Province. This was made possible since I FFORCEV had secured the 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, from II FFORCEV to replace it. Two companies from the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry were placed under the operational control of the 173d Airborne Brigade and on 22 November were combat assaulted into an LZ (YB800127) adjacent to the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry and the two companies from the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry tested the hill and found it was still strongly held. The units could have driven in but would have taken additional casualties. Instead they pulled back and again pounded the hill with massive artillery and air. The following day 23 November the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry on the north and the two companies from the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry on the south, drove in against light opposition and occupied Hill 875. The 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry in their engagements with the enemy at Hill 875 had 95 people killed: they killed 279 NVA. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry lost 18 and they killed 43 NVA.

(6) The 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry upon their arrival at KONTUM was deployed north into the area east of DAK TO to replace its sister battalion, the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry. The 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry was then air assaulted into the DAK HODRAI Valley south of the battle area to establish a base camp (YB342088) to cut off the enemy's escape routes and to search out the area. However, no enemy was found in the area.

(7) Meanwhile the 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry moved into the hills east of TAN CANH and encountered strong enemy defenses. The battalion operated in the area about six days, again blasting the enemy out. In the six days they lost two and killed 22. One important find that the battalion made was 25 rounds of 57 and 75 millimeter recoilless ammunition which could have been used against DAK TO and TAN CANH. They destroyed this captured ammunition.

(8) The ARVN meanwhile had moved northeast of TAN CANH. The 3d Battalion, 42d Regiment established contact on top of a high peak, Hill 1416 at ZB138308, so the 3d ARVN Airborne Battalion was employed on their left flank and they too met heavy resistance. The peak was worked over by air and artillery while the ARVN units were reinforced with another battalion, the 2d ARVN Airborne which had arrived from SAIGON. The ARVN 3d Battalion, 42d Regiment was put in a blocking position and the 2d and 3d Airborne Battalions assaulted the hill. One attacked from the south and the other slipped around the west side and came in from the north, all the while employing air and artillery very skillfully. A 4th Division Artillery 155mm howitzer battery reinforced the fires of two ARVN 105mm batteries.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

At the end of two days when the contact broke, the ARVN had 49 of their personnel killed and had counted 247 dead NVA on the hill.

(9) On the morning of 15 November the DAK TO complex was again mortared this time receiving eight rounds. They landed among three C-130 aircraft on the parking ramp that were lifting part of the 9th ARVN Airborne Battalion from the area. One of the rounds hit next to one of the C-130's and wounded the 9th ARVN Airborne Battalion Commander and two other of his people and set the C-130 afire. One other C-130 was hit also, causing it to explode and burn. The third aircraft was hit, but did not burn. The pilot and crew chief managed to get into the aircraft, start two of the engines and with reversed props backed the C-130 away from the two that were burning, saving the aircraft from destruction. The other two were destroyed.

(10) That evening starting about 1700 hours, DAK TO received a heavier attack. About 78 rounds fell generally in the same area as the morning attack but some of the rounds impacted in the ammunition supply point and fire spread from one bunker to another and eventually destroyed 1100 tons of ammunition. However, out of all this action, only three ARVN and three US were wounded.

(11) On 22 November reacting to intelligence that the NVA 4th Battalion, 95B Regiment was moving into the PLEI MRONG - KONTUM area, an ideal place from which to hit KONTUM, the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry was air assaulted into the area. The battalion landed right on top of where intelligence indicated the enemy to be. Within an hour after landing the battalion received a mortar attack. The area was low jungle, but extremely thick and the battalion was not able to establish contact with the NVA battalion.

(12) On 25 November because of a need elsewhere, the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division Headquarters and the 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry were withdrawn from the DAK TO forces and airlifted out of the area.

## f. Phase IV - The exploitation (26 November - 1 December).

(1) The 4th Infantry Division forces began to sweep the battle area searching out and destroying the extensive enemy bunker complexes and supply areas, and engaging the small groups of NVA still in the area.

(2) The ARVN made the last contacts in the DAK TO area. The 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions started to move north and northwest of DAK TO and were joined by the 7th Airborne Battalion. A battalion of Rangers was also deployed from PLEIKU to work to the northwest. The 22d Ranger Battalion made contact on 25 November at ZBO314. They lost four personnel and killed 31.

# CONFIDENTIAL

LAOS

CAMBODIA

ARVN



2-503



1-503

BEN HET

512



1-503



1-12



3-8



1-8



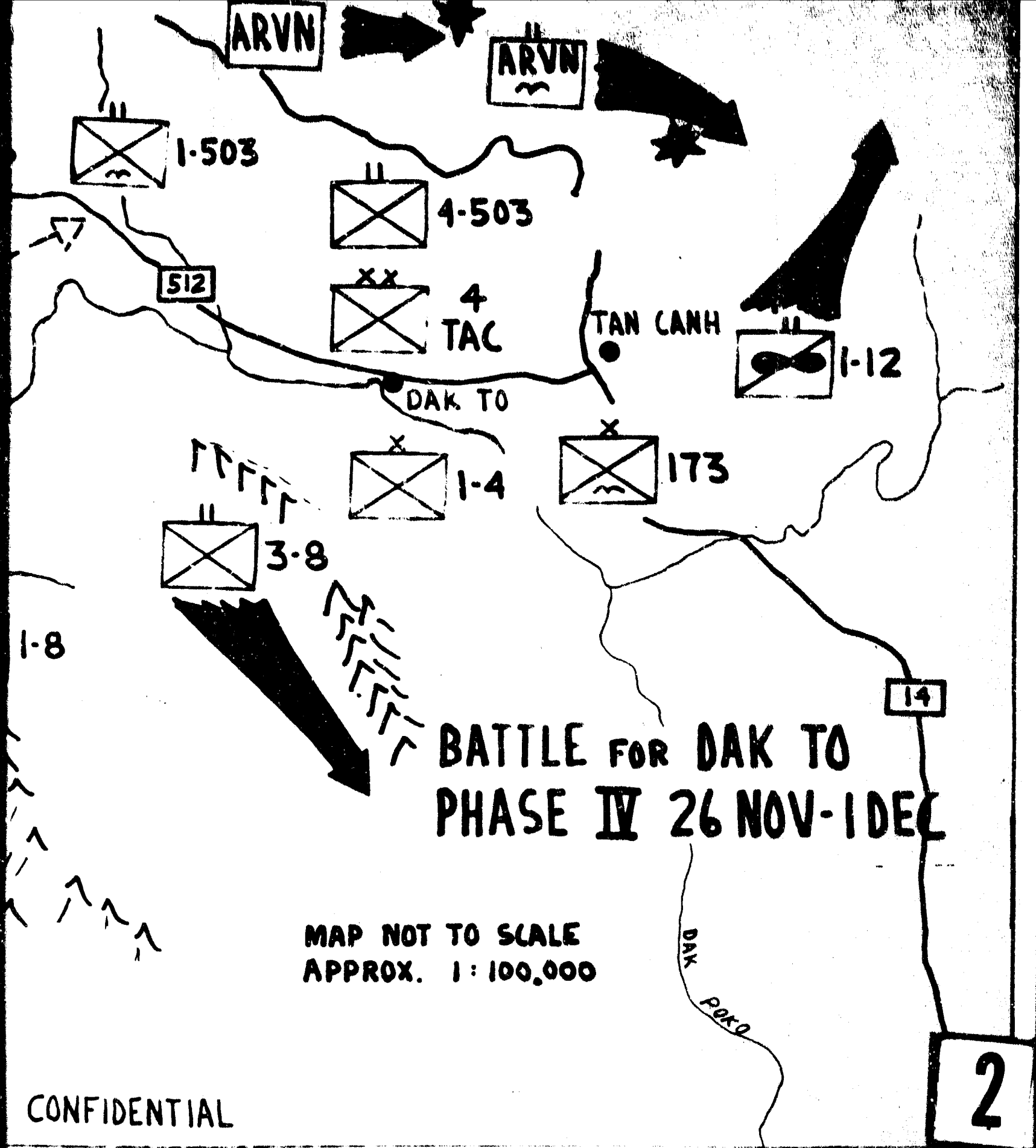
3-12

DAK HO'DRAI

MA  
AR

1

CONFIDENTIAL



MAP NOT TO SCALE  
 APPROX. 1:100,000

CONFIDENTIAL

2

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(3) There was good information that the 24th NVA Regiment was in the mountains northeast of TAN CANH (ZBL425). The 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions were north of the area and moved against the suspected location of the enemy regiment. The 3d Airborne Battalion came down Highway 14N, the 2d Airborne Battalion began sweeping southeast. The battalions had almost simultaneous contact. The 2d Airborne Battalion established contact with what they considered to be the headquarters of the group which had ambushed a convoy of the 3d Airborne Battalion. It was a strong contact and the 2d Airborne Battalion killed 72 of the enemy and lost five. The 3d Airborne Battalion killed 37 of the ambushing force and they lost five personnel.

(4) During this phase readjustments of the DAK TO forces were made. The 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry was in the area of Hill 875 working with the 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry. The 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry moved back to BEN HET to reorganize and refit. The 4th Battalion, 503d Infantry was then moved back to the vicinity of DAK TO. The 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry moved its fire base west of the DAK POKO River that runs between BEN HET and DAK TO and began working to the northwest of the fire base.

(5) The 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry moved their fire base to YB823082 to search out an area where an NVA rocket site had been detected on 17 November. The rockets had been directed at the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry fire base which was in the area at the time. The firing of the rockets had been observed from the fire base of the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry who reacted immediately with aerial rocket artillery. The fire base that the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry established was in extremely rugged jungle. There were ironwood trees five to six feet in diameter and bamboo five to eight inches thick.

(6) The 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry air assaulted to Hill 830 (YB858138) to establish a fire base and began working south. The 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry after a short search mission east of Highway 14 moved onto the ridge south of DAK TO to continue to search it out. The battalion uncovered a huge bunker and tunnel complex deep in a canyon below Hill 1338. The tunnels were large caverns with hospital areas along with eating and sleeping facilities. It was large enough to accommodate more than a battalion. The complex was destroyed.

(7) On 1 December BEN HET, where the 173d Airborne Brigade Tactical CP, the 2d Battalion, 503d Infantry, along with engineers and artillery were located, was hit by 122mm rockets from the area west of BEN HET. Mortars were fired at BEN HET from the south. Twenty-two rockets landed inside the fire base killing one and wounding nine.

g. Outside the battle area.

(1) The "Battle for DAK TO" was not limited to the DAK TO area alone. Enemy activities increased in other areas of the Highlands

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-00

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

to detract from DAK TO and cause the division to employ forces elsewhere, one of the things the enemy tried to do was sever the supply lifeline between PLEIKU and DAK TO. An engineer work party was ambushed just north of KONTUM at ZA200965 on 11 November. An armored cavalry platoon was nearby and quickly reacted. There were six US killed and 13 enemy dead were counted. Later in searching the area another 16 enemy bodies were found. The ambush had cost the enemy 29 lives. On 24 November a convoy moving from QUI NHON to PLEIKU on Highway 19E was ambushed approximately eighteen kilometers east of PLEIKU at AR958493. The 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry reacted very quickly and arrived while the ambush was still going on. The convoy reacted well, driving many of the trucks off the road into the adjacent rice paddies saving several vehicles. The cavalry flanked the enemy, a headhunter (a spotter aircraft) was on the scene quickly and helicopter gunships arrived shortly thereafter. An airstrike was employed and the Division Exploitation Platoon was on the ground within 30 minutes. The enemy killed four US personnel and destroyed six 5-ton trucks. The ambush cost the enemy 44 killed and five captured. While this was going on elements of a NVA battalion, later identified from a captured document as the KI01 Battalion, moved into the area west of Highway 14B and at Y 896353 tried to ambush a mechanized infantry platoon from the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry. The platoon reacted very quickly and slid around in back of the enemy. The platoon had two men killed and two wounded. They killed 10 NVA and captured more than 10 weapons and 26 packs. In the early morning hours of 27 November a strong point of three tanks and an armored personnel carrier from the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor, guarding the bridge at ZA219915, received small arms and B-40 rocket fire. One tank was destroyed and six personnel were wounded. Two NVA bodies were found.

(2) In DARLAC Province, where the 2d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division was operating with two battalions, there was one major contact on 3 November in which the NVA had tried to attack a fire base. The 1st Battalion, 22d Infantry killed 25 of the enemy and had two men wounded. Elements of the brigade had many small contacts during the period that the "Battle for DAK TO" was raging killing 78 enemy and capturing 11.

(3) 4th Infantry Division forces operating in PLEIKU Province killed 68 enemy and captured six during the DAK TO period.

b. The cost.

(1) The total enemy killed by FVMAF during the "Battle for DAK TO" was 1644 by body count - not by estimate. Nineteen POW's were captured by US forces and three by the ARVN. In addition 314 small arms and 109 crew-served weapons were captured. The friendly casualties were 290 US KIA. Of those killed, the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division lost 82, the 173d Airborne Brigade 194 and supporting units 14. The ARVN had 73 killed. The total friendly KIA was 363.

(2) The total casualties resulting from 4th Infantry Division operations in the Central Highlands during the period 25 October to 1 December (does not include ARVN) was 1374 enemy killed and 340 US lost.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## 11. (C) Supporting Forces.

### a. Non-organic and non-attached supporting forces.

- (1) 7th Air Force.
- (2) 52d Artillery Group.
- (3) 937th Engineer Group.
- (4) 52d Combat Aviation Battalion.
- (5) 145th Combat Aviation Battalion.
- (6) PLEIKU Sub-area Command.
- (7) 9th Air Commando Squadron.
- (8) Det. 245th Psyops Company, PLEIKU.
- (9) USAID, KONTUM Province.
- (10) JUSPAO, KONTUM Province.

### b. Artillery.

(1) The 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division began deploying to DAK TO on 28 October being directly supported by the 6th Battalion (-), 29th Artillery (105mm)(T). Battery A, 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery (105mm)(T) had previously been in the DAK TO area supporting the 2d Battalion, 8th Infantry (Mech), and remained behind, when the battalion departed the area, to reinforce the fires of the two batteries accompanying the 1st Brigade. Battery C, 6th Battalion, 14th Artillery (8"/175) was in general support during this initial deployment phase. As the NVA threat became more clearly defined and the tempo of the battle increased, additional maneuver forces and artillery were committed to AO Spaatz. Battery A, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery (155mm SP) arrived on 30 October, followed by Battery B, 1st Battalion, 92d Artillery (155mm T) and the 175mm gun platoon of Battery A, 3d Battalion, 18th Artillery on 5 November. Batteries B (155mm SP) and D (-) (8" SP), 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery moved in on 9 November. The 8" howitzer platoon of Battery A, 3d Battalion, 18th Artillery closed in DAK TO on 10 November, which completed the build-up of general support and reinforcing artillery. In the meantime, each arriving infantry battalion brought its direct support artillery unit, beginning with Battery B, 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery (105mm T) on 2 November and the remainder of the battalion in support of the 173d Airborne Brigade on 6 November. The arrival of the 1st Air Cavalry Division elements on 11 November brought Battery B, 2d Battalion, 19th Artillery (105mm T) and the Headquarters and Battery C on 16 November. At this time the maximum deployment of artillery was attained; 15 batteries of all calibers, with a total of 77 artillery pieces available to support the battle.

17

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(2) Artillery units made 48 displacements to support the changing demands of the battle. Initially, the emphasis was in the area south and southwest of DAK TO. With the commitment of the 173d Airborne Brigade on the west flank of the 1st Brigade, the center of mass of artillery was displaced to the west and again to the south as both brigades moved south against the enemy defenses. Two artillery displacements are of special significance. On 13 November Battery B, 1st Battalion, 92d Artillery (155mm T) was displaced by air to a forward fire support base at YB908121. It remained there throughout the period and was a keystone of artillery support for all three brigades operating within its capabilities. On 17 November, Battery A, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery was displaced to the vicinity of Old DAK TO (ZB060265) and placed in general support to reinforce the fires of the ARVN artillery. The battalion established liaison and communication with the headquarters of the ARVN Airborne Task Force. This displacement was made in time to support the major ARVN contact on 19 November in which many enemy casualties were credited to artillery.

(3) To facilitate the coordination of the massed artillery in the battle area and to insure maximum effectiveness in the allocation of general support artillery fires, a division artillery Tactical Command Post began operating at DAK TO on 9 November. As many as six batteries were used in TOT fires on intelligence targets and from six to eight batteries fired in support of major contacts.

(4) ARVN Artillery. Artillery fire support for ARVN forces during the battle was provided by Battery A, 221st ARVN Artillery Battalion (105mm T) and Battery B, ARVN Airborne Artillery Battalion (105mm T) firing direct support for the maneuver elements. One platoon from ARVN 37th Artillery Battalion (155mm T) provided general support and reinforcing fires to ARVN maneuver elements. The responsiveness and coordination of US and ARVN combined artillery fires was accomplished in an expeditious manner by US artillery liaison personnel from the US batteries firing in support of ARVN troops working with the ARVN artillerymen in their fire direction center.

(5) Aerial Rocket Artillery. Three sections of Battery A, 2d Battalion, 29th Artillery (ARA) deployed with the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division to KONTUM. They were employed as general support/reinforcing artillery when the brigade moved west of POLEI KLENG to block escape routes south and southwest of the main area of contact. While in this locale, on the evening of 17 November the NVA initiated a rocket attack directed at the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry fire support base where a 155mm howitzer battery was collocated. The enemy rocket site could be seen from the 1st Air Cavalry's CP and ARA was employing counter battery fire within minutes. This may have been the only instance of rockets being employed against rockets in any war.

(6) Maximum use was made of the limited aerial observation capability available to the artillery units. The thick, double canopy

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

"Battle for DAK TO"

jungle that prevails in the area south and southwest of DAK TO inhibited aerial observation; however, in several instances AO's over a contact were able to fix enemy mortar or rocket positions and direct artillery onto them.

(7) Countermortar radar support was provided by the organic radars of the 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery, and 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery, and by the radar section of the 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery which was placed OPCON to Division Artillery. The radars were deployed so as to provide maximum coverage. As the threat changed, the radars were deployed accordingly. The radar section of the 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery was successfully moved by air to a forward fire base in response to an enemy mortar threat to the forward areas.

(8) Ammunition expenditure by battery in support of the "Battle for DAK TO" from 25 October to 1 December.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CALIBER</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
B/2-19	105	8,189
C/2-19	105	10,487
A/6-29	105	11,749
B/6-29	105	16,980
C/6-29	105	15,165
A/4-42	105	9,899
A/3-319	105	14,654
B/3-319	105	13,807
C/3-319	105	15,844
		<u>TOTAL 116,774</u>
A/5-16	155	7,850
B/5-16	155	7,221
B/1-92	155	8,374
		<u>TOTAL 23,445</u>
C/6-14	8"	2,390
D/5-16	8"	3,622
A/3-18	8"	1,708
		<u>TOTAL 7,720</u>
C/6-14	175	2,240
A/3-18	175	3,912
		<u>TOTAL 3,912</u>

GRAND TOTAL 151,851

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(9) Daily Ammunition Expenditures for all calibers of US artillery fired in support of forces at DAK TO from 25 October to 1 December.

October 25 - 163	November 7 - 4526	November 20 - 7370
26 - 133	8 - 5021	21 - 5902
27 - 157	9 - 5539	22 - 8615
28 - 153	10 - 1899	23 - 9959
29 - 137	11 - 8010	24 - 7993
30 - 315	12 - 7642	25 - 5629
31 - 231	13 - 6043	26 - 5267
November 1 - 459	14 - 7040	27 - 4582
2 - 406	15 - 4883	28 - 3873
3 - 1554	16 - 3282	29 - 2442
4 - 3308	17 - 8402	30 - 2407
5 - 2652	18 - 5803	
6 - 2111	19 - 8686	

(10) Ammunition expenditure by battery fired by ARVN artillery batteries in support of the "Battle for DAK TO".

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>HE</u>	<u>WP</u>	<u>ILLUM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Btry A (-), 221st Arty (105)	10,522	125	189	10,866
Btry B, Abn Arty (105)	7,891	159	195	8,245
Btry A (-), 37th Arty (155)	801	26	6	833
TOTAL	19,214	310	310	19,944

### c. Air Support

(1) Experience gained from all previous operations in the Central Highlands was displayed during the fighting for DAK TO. Tactical air was used to the maximum in support of ground forces in contact with a disciplined, well-equipped and well-trained enemy who chose to stand and fight from heavily fortified positions. Repeatedly, the US units were in such close contact with the enemy that only napalm could be employed. To provide the desired ordnance to troops in contact Air Force aircraft would divert from a preplanned target and expend its napalm and when the other ordnance could not be used would ask for another target. On several occasions, aircraft would check in with the FACs requesting to use their 20mm armament, since they had already expended their bombs on targets in other areas.

(2) The spirit and dedication of the US Air Force to give close and continuous tactical air support to the ground forces can best be described by the fact some pilots flew three and four sorties in one day. Considering the flight time, time over target, and rearming of the aircraft, this is a tremendous feat. Forward Air Controllers spent eight to ten hours a day over target areas, landing only to tactically rearm with rockets and fuel.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
 "Battle for DAK TO"

Night time was virtually non-existent as flares from Spooky aircraft were used to permit the FACs to see their targets. Tactical air support was close and continuous regardless of the time or place.

(3) Inter-service coordination was splendid. On several occasions ordnance necessary to penetrate a triple canopy and destroy heavily fortified bunkers was not immediately available in the area. This was handled with simplicity and efficiency as Navy aircraft from carriers at sea were diverted into the target area, ie. the 1000 lb. bombs used against NVA bunkers on Hill 875 were delivered by Navy aircraft from the aircraft carrier CONSTELLATION.

(4) Summary of close tactical air support flown in support of US and ARVN forces during the "Battle for DAK TO":

Type Mission	MISSIONS		SORTIES				TYPE AIRCRAFT					
	Req	Flown	Flown	A1E	B57	FAC	F100	A37	A4	A6	AC47	C130
FAC PP	529	481	957	36	10	81	812	18				
FAC Immed	498	496	1011	162	14	149	669	8	6	3		
CSS PP	60	48	49		6	12	31					
CSS Immed	20	13	17			2	15					
SPOOKY	65	62	62								61	1
TOTAL	1172	1100	2096	198	30	244	1527	26	6	3	61	1

(5) B-52 Strikes: B-52 strikes proved again to be a source of tremendous fire power. The B-52s struck known base areas, infiltration routes and strong points. Numerous secondary explosions and destroyed fortifications were found in the target area. One of the major effects is not presently known and that is the fear caused by the B-52 with its sudden and complete destruction of the target area. There were 257 sorties flown in 39 missions in support of 4th Infantry Division units and 48 sorties in 6 missions in support of ARVN forces.

(6) Weather: Weather conditions were excellent for air operations during the "Battle for DAK TO".

d. Army Aviation.

(1) The Army aviation support provided to the US and ARVN forces was a very significant contributing factor to the successes in the

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

"Battle for DAK TO". As the tempo of the battle picked up there was a corresponding increase in the amount of aviation support required. The extended period of heavy contact emphasized the necessity for doing everything possible to conserve aviation resources and utilize them with maximum efficiency.

(2) The number of aviation units committed to the "Battle for DAK TO" necessitated centralized control of the allocated aircraft in order to insure the most efficient aircraft utilization. Accordingly, an Aviation Combat Operations Center (AVCOC) was established and operated by the S3 Section, 4th Aviation Battalion. Aviation liaison officers from the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion and 173d Airborne Brigade were used extensively. The AVCOC had the following responsibilities:

(a) To advise the Division's Forward Tactical Operations Center (TAC) of the aircraft requirements requested by the supported units, and of the capability to satisfy those requirements.

(b) To relay those requests approved by the division TAC to the division aviation battalion.

(c) To coordinate with the supported units and advise both the division forward TAC and division aviation battalion of any unusual aircraft requirements.

(d) To provide assistance to the supported units in planning airmobile operations in AO Spaatz.

(3) One characteristic of the AVCOC was the extensive communications required. "Hot lines" were established to all major supporting and supported units, and to division aviation. Additionally, there were four radio frequencies allocated for aircraft control, which were all in constant use. With that communications system in operation, the AVCOC was able to monitor closely the location and utilization of all aircraft working in the area of operations. When the tactical situation dictated, aircraft were diverted to a priority mission and subsequently reallocated either to their original missions or as indicated by new requirements. The net result was more efficient use of aircraft, a better flow of information, and a decrease in reaction times.

(4) 4th Aviation Battalion. The battalion S3 section allocated the helicopter assets from the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion to general support missions supporting all US and ARVN units participating in AO Spaatz. The 52d's average daily operational commitment to the division was 22 UH-1H, 10 UH-1C and seven CH-47 aircraft. The following is the summary of operational data and support furnished to units in the DAK TO area by the 4th Aviation Battalion and the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion:

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

	<u>4th Avn Bn</u>		<u>52d CAB</u>
	<u>Co A</u>	<u>Co B</u>	
(a) Hours flown:	347	97	7,550
(b) Sorties completed:	855	419	17,563
(c) Passengers carried:	1,359	180	32,516
(d) Tons of cargo transported:	27.5	NA	4,509

(5) The Aviation section, 1st Brigade, 4th Division, 4th Division Artillery and Troop D, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry flew direct support missions in support of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division including aerial observation, convoy security, gunship support and liaison. The following is the summary of operational data and support furnished these units:

	<u>D. 1-10 Cav</u>	<u>Div Arty</u>	<u>1st Bde</u>
(a) Hours flown:	165	186	103
(b) Sorties completed:	225	451	377
(c) Passengers carried:	70	448	292
(d) Tons of cargo transported:	NA	NA	1

(6) The 228th Aviation Battalion and the 229th Aviation Battalion provided CH-47 and UH-1 helicopter support respectively to the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division during their operations in DAK TO, KONTUM, and POLEI KLENG. The following is the summary of operational data and support flown by the two battalions:

	<u>228th Avn Bn</u>	<u>229th Avn Bn</u>
(a) Hours flown:	314	691
(b) Sorties completed:	835	1,242
(c) Passengers carried:	2,900	1,721
(d) Tons of cargo transported:	1,092	169.9

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(7) The 173d Airborne Brigade Aviation Platoon and the 335th Assault Helicopter Company furnished direct support to the 173d Airborne Brigade at DAK TO. The brigade made maximum use of army aircraft since they were positioned in the extreme western portion of the AO in which all but two of their fire bases were inaccessible by road. All the brigade artillery displacements were by CH-47 and CH-54 helicopters. The following is the summary of operational data and support furnished to the brigade: (Note: These totals include all aviation support furnished to the 173d Airborne Brigade and does not break down the general support furnished by the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion from the direct support aviation elements.)

(a) Hours flown:	3,653
(b) Sorties completed:	6,622
(c) Passengers carried:	22,500
(d) Tons of cargo transported:	3,700

(8) Aircraft Recovery. The 179th Assault Helicopter Company (Chinook) recovered 40 downed aircraft. These unflyable ships included helicopters from the 335th Assault Helicopter Company and Company B, 299th Aviation Battalion, 1st Air Cavalry Division in addition to those from units of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion. All of the evacuated helicopters had been damaged by enemy fire or as a result of operating in extremely confined areas. The majority of these aircraft were repairable and it aided the acute aircraft availability problem considerably that the CH-47's were able to recover almost all of damaged aircraft.

(9) Maintenance. The tremendously heavy requirement for helicopters during the period 25 October through 1 December and the relatively large number of aircraft damaged placed a heavy burden on the maintenance and recovery units supporting the aviation units committed to DAK TO. The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion alone flew in excess of 10,000 hours during this period, most of this time in support of DAK TO. Maintenance support of these aircraft required approximately 25,000 maintenance manhours to perform 330 PMI's and 121 PMP inspections. An estimated additional 25,000 maintenance manhours were required to perform unscheduled maintenance of which many of these hours were spent repairing the 40 damaged helicopters evacuated from AO Spaatz. Due to the shortage of critical skilled maintenance personnel, the personnel available often had to work around the clock to supply aircraft to meet operational requirements.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, (RCS: MACV J3-32)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## e. Engineer Support.

(1) 299th Engineer Battalion provided general engineer support to the DAK TO area during the "Battle for DAK TO". For various times the companies of the battalion assumed direct support missions for the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, 173d Airborne Brigade, and elements of the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division. Major tasks assigned to the battalion included: construction of an air strip and clearing the site for a proposed Special Forces Camp at BEN HET; maintaining and up grading the roads and bridges on Route 512 and Route 14; and maintaining the airfields and FSA's at New DAK TO and KONTUM.

(a) Headquarters and Headquarters Company directed the battalion's engineer effort during the "Battle for DAK TO" from the battalion forward CP located at Old DAK TO airfield (ZB045225), where the S-2, S-3, S-4, battalion maintenance and the equipment platoon had the preponderance of their elements located.

1. The battalion S-4 procured all class II and IV engineer supplies for battalion projects. This required a heavy use of organic tractors and lowboys. Water was provided to the units operating in the DAK TO area with two 1500 gpm erdlators. The water point was implemented by a 600 gpm unit from the 4th Engineer Battalion. The 173d Airborne Brigade established a 600 gpm unit at BEN HET which proved to be extremely beneficial as it reduced the requirement for hook sorties. The 1500 gpm unit at DAK TO was set up outside the perimeter which increased the possibility of damage by enemy activity; however, all attempts to get a pump with at least a 70 foot head were unsuccessful.

2. Two D6B dozers were modified by the battalion maintenance section to be broken down into two sections, one with the tracks, chassis and blade, the other with the engine and body. These were airlifted by CH-54 Skycrane to three locations to support the infantry units in clearing fire bases. On 13 November a D6B was airlifted from Old DAK TO airfield to the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry fire support base (YB910120). At this location the dozer and crew leveled areas for a 155mm artillery battery-which proved to be a most valuable medium artillery emplacement-a fire direction center, excavated slots for a tactical operations center, ammo storage and two helicopter landing zones were leveled. After the complex was developed, the dozer continued to improve perimeter and fields of fire by clearing an area approximately 200 meters by 500 meters. On 28 November a D6E was moved to support the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry on Hill 1030 (YB822081). This fire support base had large trees (approximately 150' high and 18" - 24" diameter) which were felled by demolitions and moved by the dozer. Again slots for bunkers and ammo storage were excavated and 150 meters by 600 meters was cleared for fields of fire.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(b) Company A. The CP was located vicinity of (ZB045223). The company provided direct engineer support to the 173d Airborne Brigade and elements of the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division. In addition they had responsibility for road repair of Route 14 from bridge 14-22 (ZB156053) to DAK TO and for Route 512 from the junction of Route 14 to ZB023216. Company A had the mission of upgrading Route 14 and Route 512. The company excavated and removed over 14,500 cubic yards of select fill in the rebuilding of the road. The company also constructed 1700 meters of access road to a quarry site at ZB081171. The company rehabilitated the fire base area around DAK TO airfield that had been used by the 173d Airborne Brigade during Operation GREELEY.

1. On 6 November Company A began providing direct support to the 173d Airborne Brigade, excavating holes for three tactical operation centers, five POL bladder revetments and a total of 162,500 square meters of fields of fire were cleared. On 25 November Company A airlifted one squad to provide direct engineer support along with the D6B dozer at a 173d Airborne Brigade fire support base located at YA815151.

2. On 15 November the ASP at New DAK TO airfield was hit with enemy mortar rounds resulting in the loss of all stockage. Company A was tasked to build a five cell ASP adjacent to the 173d Airborne Brigade area. Beneficial occupancy was made on 21 November and the project completed on 28 November. A total of 130,000 cubic yards of earth were excavated for the forming of the hill side pads, four bunkers were built, 490 feet of culvert were placed, 9,000 sandbags filled and placed, and 1800 meters of triple concertina were placed. On 17 November bridge 14-26 (ZB088175) was blown by enemy elements. Company A cleared the debris and emplaced an AVLB over the gap. The 22 foot timber span was rebuilt on 19 November with materials transported from PLEIKU.

(c) Company B directed its engineer effort from the company CP located in KONTUM (AR769898). Company B conducted a daily reconnaissance of Route 14 north to bridge 14-22 (ZB156055) in order to insure the road was open for logistic convoys. A sandpit was operated on the DAK BLA River and loaded out a total of 13,115 cubic yards. A total of 5540 cubic yards of fill were placed in upgrading Route 511 and another 970 cubic yards were placed on Route 14. Over 60km of road were graded and 460 feet of culvert was installed on drainage structures along these routes.

1. Bridge 14-14 (ZA210943), bridge 14-15 (ZA196974), bridge 14-19 (ZA184996) and bridge 14-21 (ZB165028) were repaired with new curbing and bridge 14-18 (ZA186992), a single double Bailey, was redecked. Tactical wire was installed around the piers of bridge 14-10 (AR768876) and around bridge 14020 (ZB168017). On 31 October construction of bridge 511-1 (ZA202901) was started. This three span, timber pile bridge, 72 feet

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

in length with a classification of 75/55 was completed on 7 November. A triple barrel 72" culvert bypass at bridge 14-11 (ZA229906) was constructed to prevent enemy interdiction of Route 14 by destruction of the bridge. On 7 November bridge 14-24 (ZB153085) and its bypass were blown sometime during the night. Company B moved one platoon from KONTUM and installed 30 feet of 48" culvert and opened a bypass to traffic by 1330 hours. The decking on the bridge was replaced and the bridge opened to traffic on 10 November. On 12 November bridge 14-14 (ZA210943) was blown by enemy action. An AVLB was emplaced by Company B by 0849 hours. The bridge was replaced by a double barrel 36" culvert and was open to traffic at 1300 hours on 13 November.

2. On 6 November Company B began to provide direct support to elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division and the 173d Airborne Brigade that had moved into KONTUM. During the following two weeks the company constructed 34 helicopter revetments and four Chinook revetments. A total of 208,950 square yards of area around revetments and landing zones were covered with peneprime. The ammo storage point was improved with over 1,000 cubic yards of fill placed and 700 meters of triple concertina installed. Eight revetments were excavated for PCL bladders.

3. On 12 November the company was given operational control of two sections of the 35th Land Clearing Platoon with the purpose of clearing 100 meters on either side of Route 14 north of KONTUM to DAK TO. From this time until 29 November the Rome plows, secured by one platoon from Company B, cleared 605 acres which completed the clearing of Route 14 to DAK TO.

4. On 11 November a platoon from Company B was ambushed by an enemy force at ZA200968. The enemy attacked with grenades, rockets, automatic weapons and mortars. The platoon was reinforced by the 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry, 20 to 30 minutes after contact was initiated. There were 6 US KIA and 4 US WIA; 13 NVA KIA.

5. Company B was given the requirement to construct a turnaround for C-130's on the northeast side of KONTUM airfield. This was required to reduce the congestion on the parking apron and thus reduce the C-130's vulnerability to attack. A 34,000 square foot area was cleared, filled with 875 cubic yards of fill, graded and shot with peneprime. M8A1 matting was placed on the "U" shaped turnaround. Work began on 22 November and the turnaround was ready for use on 27 November.

(d) Company C had moved to BEN HET on 22 October (YB873257) with the mission of constructing a C-7A airfield with the provision that it could be expanded rapidly to handle C-130's. The company was also tasked to clear the site for the proposed BEN HET CIDG camp. The company also provided direct support to the elements of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and to elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade located at BEN HET.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

In addition, the Company C had maintenance responsibility of Route 512 from Bridge 512-3 (YB953238) to BEN HET. One section of Rome plows was furnished Company C for the clearing of the airfield, CIDG camp and 100 meters on both sides of Route 512. The Rome plows worked during the period 25 October to 22 November under the control of Company C and cleared a total of 690 acres. As the road was cleared by the Rome plows, it was upgraded with grading and ditching totaling 14,000 meters and 120 feet of culvert were installed. On 6 November Company C began providing direct support to elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade collocated with them at BEN HET. Dozer support was provided on the average of one per day to excavate defensive positions, living bunkers, a tactical operations center and 8" and 155mm gun positions.

(e) Company D directed its engineer effort from the company CP located at DAK TO (ZB012219). The company provided direct engineer support to units of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, 173d Airborne Brigade, and 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division located at DAK TO. The company had responsibility for maintaining and rebuilding Route 512 from ZB023216 to bridge 512-3 (YB953238) including a daily minesweep from bridge 512-2 (ZB002222) to bridge 512-3. Company D maintained the runway at DAK TO airfield to insure trafficability to C-130 aircraft which required extensive patching of the runway where the thin single surface treatment had worn through due to the heavy volume of C-130 traffic. This task was accomplished with the use of cold mix consisting of RC-3 and 3/4 inch minus aggregate. A total of 445 square yards were patched during the period. Work was done at night because of the C-130 traffic in the daytime; however, on several nights the tactical situation would not permit the use of lights resulting in work on this project being sporadic.

1. On 15 November the airfield parking apron with three C-130's was mortared in the morning resulting in the total destruction of two of the aircraft. In the late afternoon the ASP was hit with mortars resulting in the loss of all stock in the ASP. Company D constructed an expedient taxiway to the parking apron providing a bypass to the area where the debris of the C-130's was located. This work was started on 17 November and completed on 19 November with 700 cubic yards of select fill hauled and compacted. The ramp was then coated with peneprime and RC-3. A concurrent task was the construction of five emergency ammunition storage cells on the north side of the airfield. Two FAC revetments were constructed by Company D utilizing empty 55 gallon drums. The area was prepared on 20 November and the job was completed on 28 November.

2. On 19 November Company D repaired Bridge 512-3 (YB953238) on which one column had begun to fail due to erosion at the base. On 23 November the ramp on the M4T6 float at Bridge 512-3 cracked and was closed to traffic. One platoon was dispatched to make the repairs with materials flown in by CH-47 helicopter.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

3. Company D had the responsibility of rebuilding and upgrading Route 512 from the east end of DAK TO airfield to Bridge 512-3. A total of 30,067 cubic yards of fill were hauled and compacted on the road. On 23 November the Rome plow section and the responsibility for clearing Route 512 was transferred to Company D from Company C. From this date until 1 December a total of 335 acres were cleared.

(f) The 15th Engineer Company (LE) was attached to and provided engineer equipment support to the 299th Engineer Battalion. This equipment included 290M tractor scrapers, D-7E dozers, Cat 12 road graders, air compressors, asphalt distributors and 5 ton dump trucks. All Class II and IV materials used by the battalion were transported to DAK TO from PLEIKU with most of the transportation provided by the 15th Engineer Company.

(g) Company C, 70th Engineer Battalion was OPCON to the 299th Engineer Battalion on 17 November with the mission of installing a Bailey bridge at (YB953238) to replace the M4T6 float bridge 512-3. This bridge, when completed, will be three, 80 foot, double single spans on pile piers. By 1 December the piles had been driven for one pier. The company provided additional support to the 299th Engineer Battalion with the utilization of 5 ton dump trucks and bucket loaders and repaired two O1 aircraft revetments that collapsed.

(2) Company A, 4th Engineer Battalion provided direct support to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division from 25 October to 1 December. The Headquarters Platoon provided equipment support for penprime distribution and water purification for the 1st Brigade DAK TO base area. One platoon each provided direct support to the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry; 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry; and 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry. One platoon from Company B, 4th Engineer Battalion supported 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry and was OPCON to Company A. The platoon headquarters were located in the battalion's fire support bases with the engineer squads accompanying company size operations. Engineer support from Company A consisted primarily of clearing LZ's and fire support bases and assisting in the construction of fortifications and the placement of tactical wire. The support provided by the engineer squads to company-size operations consisted of demolition work and destruction of enemy fortifications and base complexes. Mine detectors were employed to search for buried enemy weapons and ammunitions. These attempts were not extremely effective for most items were buried at depths greater than 9 to 12 inches. Clearing operations of six battalion fire support bases were enhanced by the availability of an airliftable D6B dozer. Additional bulldozers were provided by 299th Engineer Battalion for fire bases improvement. Extensive use of demolitions for timber clearing was required in this rugged area. C-4 explosive, not always available in the quantities required, was far superior to TNT. The XM37 Demolition Kit was found to be ideal for fast cutting of large trees. The use of bangalore torpedoes to clear bamboo and brush accelerated clearing of fire support bases. Linear shaped charges would have greatly reduced the amount of explosives consumed in clearing operations.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(3) Company A (-), 8th Engineer Battalion. Company A (-), 8th Engineer Battalion provided direct engineer support to the 2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry and the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry. Company B, 70th Engineer Battalion assisted the 8th Engineers in improving the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division TAC CP at POLEI KLENG Special Forces Camp.

(4) 173d Engineer Company provided direct engineer support to the three airborne infantry battalions of the 173d Airborne Brigade and the brigade headquarters. The platoons of the company operated two water purification points, cleared Route 512 of mines from FSB 12 (YB674257) to bridge 512-2 (ZBOO2222) on a regular basis cleared FSB 15 (YB53186) and FSB 16 (YB815147) utilizing bangalore torpedoes and C-4 explosive, cleared an emergency LZ on Hill 875 (YB797134) and constructed an underground TAC at FSB Eagle.

## f. Psyops.

(1) During the period 2 to 30 November a very intense psychological operations campaign was conducted against NVA forces in support of the "Battle for DAK TO". On 2d of November an NVA Sgt/Sqd Leader, VU HONG, rallied to a local hamlet official. This individual possessed information that proved to be invaluable to both the Psyops situation as well as the tactical situation. Maximum use of this HOI CHANH was made as he possessed accurate location of NVA forces, extraordinary knowledge of plans and schemes of maneuvers in the DAK TO area. He made several tapes encouraging his former comrades to rally to the GVN, and also flew live missions expressing this same theme. In a further effort to capitalize on his rallying, HOI CHANH VU HONG wrote a personal letter to his comrades which was reproduced as a leaflet in his handwriting with no attempt to correct grammar or spelling.

(2) The enemy forces encountered at DAK TO posed a challenge to psychological warfare personnel as he was thoroughly indoctrinated by his political officers and believed he could defeat the FWMAF. The usual themes did not apply in this situation because the enemy was well-equipped and present in strength. The immediate use of material with psyops value was primarily by aircraft dissemination. Massive small target area drops were addressed to specific enemy units such as the 24th, 32d, and the 66th NVA Regiments. A two color sketch map of VIETNAM showing the principal cities in NVN, HANOI and HAI PHONG, and locations in RVN of recent NVA/VC defeats. The captions relating to these battle locations gave the body count of NVA/VC casualties resulting from the major battles during September and October 1967 in which several units now located at DAK TO had participated.

(3) Psyops air support was provided by the 9th Air Commando Squadron, PLEIKU AFB. The O2B aircraft landed at DAK TO airfield to receive mission briefings, updating on the tactical situation and to pick-up

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RGS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

quick reaction tapes. This system was employed until the runway at DAK TO was determined by the Air Force to be unsafe because of the unstable nose wheel on the O2B aircraft. Another characteristic of the O2B aircraft that limited quick-reaction programs was that live broadcasts could not be made because the aircraft lacked the capacity to carry more than one passenger.

(4) The use of organic 1000 watt loudspeakers was limited in the airborne role during early November because of a low priority for helicopter support for psyops. There was virtually no employment of the speakers in a tactical ground role in the early engagement of DAK TO since tactical commanders did not desire to employ them during the height of battle. During the final stages, loudspeakers were placed in battalion fire bases on a permanent status. Each of the six fire bases employed a 500 watt loudspeaker.

(5) The psyops campaign was effective within the DAK TO area. Five NVA soldiers rallied to the GVN under the CHIEU HOI Program from 2-30 November. Two turned themselves in to the US Forces, two to ARVN, and one to civilian authorities. A total of 16,440,000 leaflets were dispensed; of these approximately 13 million were standard leaflets and the remaining three million leaflets were immediate reaction, locally produced leaflets. 73 hours of taped messages were broadcast by aircraft. In addition 48 hours of ground loudspeaker time was broadcast.

## g. Civic Action Support.

(1) The US Forces carried out civic action in the DAK TO District of KONTUM Province along Route 512, west from the intersection of Route 14 and Route 512 to ZB915620 and along Route 14 north from its intersection with Route 512 to ZB048289; this area included 15 hamlets. Civic Actions were also conducted in KONTUM City.

(2) With the build-up of US forces from one battalion on 28 October to the strength of three brigades by mid-November, the civic action effort increased proportionately. Civic Action was under the direction of the S5, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, who was designated Civic Action Coordinator for KONTUM Province. Civic actions supported the KONTUM Revolutionary Development Program goals of improving the social and economic situation of the people, and strengthening security and government control. The immediate objectives of the division civic action effort in the area of DAK TO and KONTUM City were to acquaint the local civilians with the reason for the US build-up of forces and the importance of the impending battles. During the battle, the information program described the magnitude of the NVA defeats following significant engagements. Themes and projects were directed toward winning the friendship and confidence of the MONTAGNARD civilians. In the initial phase the MONTAGNARDS were curious and interested in the American buildup. They were favorably disposed, probably because of a past history of US civic actions in the area and the efforts of Western missionaries that have been in the KONTUM area over the last several decades. The second phase consisted

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

of short-term, high-impact civic actions to consolidate the people's goodwill: it included MEDCAPS, Youth Health Program, visits which saw 1,160 children, and distribution of relief materials and foodstuffs to institutions in the area. Civic action teams gave over 4,000 pounds of food to two schools, two orphanages, one leprosarium and one hospital. The 4th Infantry Division contributed funds to build a kitchen for the KONTUM Orphanage. One remote village requested and received concertina wire. A 1st Brigade surgeon provided diagnostic assistance to dispensaries at the missionary schools at DINH BINH and DAK TO. Civic Action teams conducted intensive face-to-face Psyops programs during their visits to hamlets. Their efforts developed a good rapport with the villagers during the battles. GVN authorities, with US assistance, planned a meeting with hamlet chiefs to explain and celebrate the US-ARVN victory. US engineers began land clearing operations to deny the VC and NVA access routes to populated areas.

(3) District and Province officials provided cement and school kits to support Military Civic Action. As US Civic Action teams began to work in the DAK TO area, the DAK TO District officials provided them with relevant information on population attitudes. At the request of 4th Infantry Division, V.I.S. Teams assuaged the fears of villagers during the intensified battles near DAK TO. The majority of the civilians, their apprehensions relieved by the Civic Action/Psyops efforts, occupied themselves with harvesting their rice while the Highland's battle raged.

## 12. (C) RESULTS:

### a. Summary of Enemy Personnel and Equipment Losses.

#### (1) Personnel.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>PW</u>
1st Bde, 4th Inf Div	7	
1-8 Inf	12	
3-8 Inf	335	2
1-12 Inf	5	1
3-12 Inf	115	1
173d Abn Bde	14	
1-503 Abn Inf	242	4
2-503 Abn Inf	306	4
4-503	153	1
1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div		
2-8 Cav	21	
1-12 Cav	2	

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
 "Battle for DAK TO"

2-1 Cav	15	3
4th Inf Div Totals	1227	16
ARVN	396	3
CIDG/MF	21	—
TOTAL ALL FORCES	1644	19

(2) Weapons.

<u>Capturing Unit</u>	<u>Small Arms</u>	<u>Crew Served</u>
1st Bde, 4th Inf Div		
1-8 Inf	2	
3-8 Inf	39	25
1-12 Inf	20	13
173d Abn Bde	3	
1-503 Abn Inf	36	12
2-503 Abn Inf	24	2
4-503 Abn Inf	76	18
1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div		
2-8 Cav	5	4
1-12 Cav	2	
2-1 Cav	7	1
4th Inf Div Totals	214	75
ARVN	92	20
CIDG/MF	8	1
TOTAL ALL FORCES	314	96

(3) Ammunition and explosives destroyed:

<u>Capturing Unit</u>	<u>Small Arms</u>	<u>Crew Served</u>	<u>Hand Grenades</u>	<u>Mines</u>
1st Bde, 4th Inf Div				
1-8 Inf		1	3	
3-8 Inf	765	2	4	
1-12 Inf	100	70	6	
3-12 Inf	1600	24	35	
173d Abn Bde				
1-503 Abn Inf		81	6	
2-503 Abn Inf		22	44	
4-503 Abn Inf		28	210	
2-1 Cav			79	1
ARVN		33		2
CIDG/MF		1	4	

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(4) Body count and estimates of enemy losses during the "Battle for DAK TO" were affected by several pertinent factors.

(a) The difficult terrain and dense vegetation in the area greatly assisted the enemy in his evacuation of casualties from the immediate area of major contact.

(b) The enemy emphasizes recovery of dead and wounded from the battlefield. During the battle he was successful in removing many bodies from the battlefield.

(c) The enemy has been persistent at his attempts to remove as many casualties from the battle area as possible. His preparations for such recovery and his demonstrated efforts and willingness to risk fresh casualties to police his dead and wounded have generally proven successful for him.

(d) As a result of the factors described above it is concluded that the actual body count of enemy KIA during the "Battle for DAK TO" is not a complete count of enemy KIA and is far less than the actual enemy KIA during the operation.

(e) The following is an estimate of enemy losses using the MACV formula. The total estimated enemy KIA is determined by multiplying the actual body count (BC) by .28.

<u>ENEMY UNITS</u>	<u>ACTUAL BC</u>	<u>MACV COMPUTED KIA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
24th Regt	405	123	528
32nd Regt	469	131	600
66th Regt	377 <sup>1</sup>	97	444
174th Regt	423	118	541
	<u>1644</u>	<u>469</u>	<u>2113</u>

## b. Summary of Friendly Losses.

### (1) Personnel.

<u>Unit</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
4th Inf Div			
HHC, 1st Bde	1	4	
1-8 Inf	4	13	
3-8 Inf	46	223	

<sup>1</sup>Almost impossible to distinguish KIA between 66th and 174th Regiments.

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
 "Battle for DAK TO"

1-12 Inf	5	58	
3-12 Inf	24	155	
HQB, Div Arty		1	
6-29 Arty	1	13	
4-42 Arty	1	17	1
2-1 Cav	1	17	
1-10 Cav	2		
1-69 Armor		8	
4th Engr Bn		5	
4th Admin Co		1	
33d Inf Plat (Sct Dog)	<u>1</u>	---	---
	86	515	1
173d Abn Bde	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
HHC, 173d Abn Bde		1	
1-503 Abn Inf	24	159	3
2-503 Abn Inf	113	228	3
3-503 Abn Inf		3	
4-503 Abn Inf	45	239	6
3-319 Arty	4	4	1
Spt Bn, 173d Bde	1		
173d Engr Co	4	6	2
Co E, 17th Cav		<u>5</u>	
TOTAL	<u>191</u>	<u>645</u>	<u>15</u>
1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div			
2-8 Cav	6	24	
1-12 Cav		<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL	<u>6</u>	<u>28</u>	<u>2</u>
TOTAL US FORCES	283	1188	18
ARVN	56	232	3
CIDG/MF	<u>5</u>	<u>21</u>	<u>11</u>
TOTAL	344	1441	32

(2) Equipment lost, damaged or destroyed.

<u>Item</u>	<u>4th Inf Div</u>	<u>173d Bde</u>	<u>299th Engr</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	<u>CIDG/ MF</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Tank, M48A3	1					1
APC, M113	1					1
Howitzer, 155mm SP	1					1
Howitzer, 105mm T		1				1
Truck, 5 ton	2					2
Truck, 2½ ton				10		10
Truck, ¾ ton			2			2
Truck, ¼ ton			1			1

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS. MACV J3-32) (U)  
 "Battle for DAK TO"

Item	4th Inf Div	173d Bde	299th Engr	ARVN	CIDG/		TOTAL
					MF		
Dozer, D7E			1				1
Wrecker, 5 ton			1				1
Helicopter, all types	27 <sup>2</sup>	12 <sup>3</sup>					39
Recoilless Rifle 90mm		1					1
Mortar, 81mm		1					1
Machine Gun, M60	5	9					14
Rifle, M16	41	225			2		268
SMG, Car 15		7					7
Shotgun	3	5					8
Grenade Launcher, M79	65	35			1		101
Pistol, Cal. 45	15	48					63
Flame Thrower		3					3
Radio Set, AN/VRC-46	5	1					6
Radio Set, AN/VCC-24		1					1
Radio Set, AN/PRC-25	28	61					89
Radio, AN/PRT-4		22					22
Radio, AN/PRP-9		19					19
Telephone, TA-1/PT		12					12
Telephone, TA-312	11	9					20
Antenna, RC-292		6					6
Starlight Scope		2					2
Chain Saw		9					9
Binocular, 6X30		10					10

c. Fire Support Results.

(1) It is not possible to determine with any accuracy the number of enemy killed or wounded as the result of artillery fires and air strikes. The battle area was true highlands jungle - mountainous terrain covered with thick double and triple canopied jungle - that severely limited visual observation of the target areas.

(2) To attempt to differentiate between artillery and air strike results would be an exercise in futility because the combined power of both was brought to bear in vast quantities on the target areas developed during the battle. There are a few observations and estimates that can be made regarding the results obtained by the artillery and air; these follow in subsequent paragraphs.

<sup>2</sup>Aircraft were in direct support of the division from the 52d Aviation Battalion.

<sup>3</sup>The figure includes aircraft from both the 173d Airborne Brigade Aviation Platoon and the 335th Assault Helicopter Company in direct support of the Brigade.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## (3) Artillery.

(a) Effective results were obtained by counter-mortar radar against enemy mortar, and to a lesser extent, rocket positions. Numerous secondary explosions were observed during the firing of counter-mortar/rocket programs.

(b) On 1 December the artillery was fired against an active rocket position. 809 rounds were fired in zone and sweep centered less than 100 meters from the actual position, which was uncovered by infantry based on the firing grid. The position showed evidence of extensive damage by artillery fire.

(c) As many as six batteries were used in TOT fires on intelligence targets and as many as six to eight batteries fired in support of major contacts.

## (4) Air.

### (a) Damage assessment.

<u>TYPE MISSION</u>	<u>EST</u> <u>KBA</u>	<u>BUNKERS</u> <u>DEST</u>	<u>SEC</u> <u>EXP</u>	<u>SEC</u> <u>FIRES</u>	<u>AW</u> <u>DEST</u>	<u>ROCK-</u> <u>ETS</u>	<u>MORT-</u> <u>ARS</u>	<u>HUTS</u> <u>DEST</u>
FAC Preplanned	103	79	34	21	1	1	0	15
FAC Immediate	408	98	69	14	8	3	18	1
CSS Preplanned								
CSS Immediate								
SPOOKY								
TOTAL	<u>544</u>	<u>177</u>	<u>103</u>	<u>35</u>	<u>9</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>16</u>

(b) The damage assessment as shown on the chart above is not complete because it does not show the true destruction wrought by tactical air. Several enemy positions were so completely obliterated by air that the ground forces that moved into the area could not determine what had been destroyed. On occasions the forces on the ground reported seeing ordnance from aircraft landing on the enemy positions, but by the time they reached the area the NVA had policed the battlefield. In addition there were B-52 strike areas that were never entered by ground units because of heavy tactical commitments in other areas. Those areas received only aerial VR.

## 13. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

### a. General

#### (1) Concept of logistical support.

(a) The concept of logistical support during the "Battle for DAK TO" was initially a continuation of that which had been

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
 'Battle for DAK TO'

in existence at the start of Operation MAC ARTHUR, ie, to furnish required support as far forward as possible. In support of this concept a Forward Support Area (FSA) of the 1st Logistical Command was in existence at DAK TO. In addition to providing Class I, III, IIIA, limited IV (barrier materials) and V supplies, the FSA provided laundry, bath, and Graves Registration (GRREG) services. Class II and IV supplies were provided from the division base camp at Camp Enari, and maintenance and medical services were provided from DISCOM and infantry battalions resources respectively. Potable and non-potable water was provided by the 299th Engineer Battalion of the 937th Engineer Group.

(b) As the scope and complexity of the operation expanded the concept for logistic support was correspondingly modified. An emergency refueling point and a limited Class V ASP were established at KONTUM on 7 November as a back up for the DAK TO FSA. By 13 November, this logistical base had been expanded to an FSA providing the same supplies as the DAK TO FSA plus GRREG services. This base supported tactical units operating out of KONTUM and continued to provide back-up for the DAK TO FSA.

(c) Resupply of forward logistical bases was accomplished primarily by LLOC throughout the battle, however, ALOC was of necessity used extensively.

(2) Organization of logistical facilities at DAK TO:

(a) The sketches at figures 1 and 2 portray the logistic facilities that existed on 25 October and the additional facilities that were constructed or established later as a result of enemy action and the huge influx of troops and equipment in the area. Rationale and results of these alterations are discussed in subsequent paragraphs.

(3) Phases of logistical support.

(a) The logistical operations during the "Battle for DAK TO" can best be understood by viewing development in five distinct yet inter-related phases.

(b) The initial phase, 25-30 October. Logistical support during this phase was minimal. Only one battalion task force supplemented by a few artillery batteries from 52d Artillery Group was operating out of DAK TO on 25 October. Additionally, elements of the 299th Engineer Battalion were there primarily in support of I FORCEV projects. The FSA consisted of three officers and fifty-one enlisted men. All facilities and services were located at DAK TO II. Except for the Class III and IIIA refueling points and the water point, all logistical installations were on the south side of the airstrip. When the 1st Brigade tactical CP arrived with an additional battalion task force on 29 and 30 October there was a slight increase in logistical services and stockage levels; however, this had no significant logistic impact.

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(c) The first build-up, 1-14 November.

1. In reaction to intelligence and stimulated by a major contact between 3 and 5 November, a massive build-up of troops and equipment was initiated. From 6 to 13 November six infantry battalions accompanied by combat support and combat service support units were moved into the DAK TO area. This influx coupled with the marked increase in consumption of supplies put a severe strain on the logistic support available.

2. The first impact occurred with the arrival of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) on 6 and 7 November. Moving into the area on short notice, they did not arrive with their full basic load of Class V. As a result, there was a marked drawdown on ammunition with some items being drawn to a zero balance. Barrier materials, particularly sandbags, became a critical item. It was necessary to vastly increase the size of resupply convoys and to run two convoys a day. This was supplemented by a daily requirement for emergency resupply missions using C-130 aircraft. CH-47 helicopters were also used to bring hook loads of fuel and critically needed ammunition from Camps Holloway and Enari up with them in lieu of deadheading to DAK TO for their daily missions. Controls had to be established by the division G4 forward to insure that each brigade received a fair share of those items that were not in sufficient quantity to meet brigade needs. It also became necessary to integrate the 173d Airborne Brigade's engineer requirements with the overall engineer effort to insure that their immediate needs were satisfied as expeditiously as possible.

3. Lack of space at DAK TO II dictated that the 173d Airborne Brigade's base camp be located across from the DAK TO I airstrip. However, the Brigade Support Operations Center (BSOC) was located on the north side of the DAK TO II airfield. This enabled the division to integrate the resupply missions of their battalions with division missions and minimize the number of Chinooks required. It also placed them in close proximity to the FSA facilitating the rapid acquisition and distribution of supplies. By locating their maintenance and medical units close to the 1st Brigade medics, mutual assistance was readily established.

4. The addition of the airborne brigade severely taxed the water supply point at DAK TO II since no additional water producing capability arrived until after the brigade had closed. While sufficient potable water was produced to meet minimal needs, non-potable water was insufficient to meet dust suppressant and individual bath requirements. This problem was resolved within two days by moving in a 1500 gph pump into the area and by the arrival of the airborne brigade's water pump which was installed at the DAK TO I complex.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

5. The bath and laundry point was already established. However because the water supply point pump broke down, its pump was used for the production of water. As a result a back-up of laundry was created. Although the pump was returned by the time the airborne brigade closed, the increased requirements of an additional unit exceeded the FSA's capability. Additional washers and dryers were added and each brigade provided a two man detail in an effort to eliminate the problem. It took almost three weeks to return to normal service because the laundry point was outside the perimeter and insufficient troops were available in the base camp to secure night operations. To ease the shower problem Australian shower buckets and improvised showers were used.

6. Continued heavy contacts by participating units resulted in continued heavy drawdowns especially in mortar and artillery munitions. To eliminate the daily requirement of calling for emergency resupplies, coordination was effected with I FFORCEV to provide twenty C-130 sorties on a daily basis. This meant approximately 300 tons of additional supplies were brought into the area, and this, coupled with the 600 tons that were delivered overland, enabled the FSA to progress from simply meeting the daily requirements to building up the newly established stockage objectives to a three day level. This level was reached by 13 November. During this massive buildup, much of the fuel, ammunition, and penprime was thru-put from QUI NHON direct to DAK TO and in some cases further thru-put to gunships and forward fire support bases

7. Air traffic was a problem area that required close surveillance. In C-130 traffic alone there were 308 sorties flown. When this is added to the hundreds of daily helicopter landings and take offs it is not presumptuous to state that DAK TO II airfield was one of the busiest airfields in VIETNAM during this period. While airfield operations have been discussed in other portions of this report, the logistical aspects are worthy of note. First it was essential to establish a priority so that the C-130's could land as soon after arriving in the area as possible. Not only was this the economical thing to do, but since the airfield could not be used for resupply during the hours of darkness, it was essential that a minimum of time be lost in landings and take-offs. During this phase of the operation there were as many as four C-130 aircraft on the parking ramp at a time. Sufficient MHE was available to off-load two resupply aircraft simultaneously within seven to 10 minutes. In an effort to reduce helicopter traffic at the airfield, a JP4 refueling point was established outside the 173d Airborne Brigade's base camp on 14 November. This diverted all rotary wing aircraft, less CH-47, supporting the airborne brigade from the DAK TO II airfield and considerably reduced traffic. The compactness of their base camp and limited security forces available dictated that the refueling point be located outside their perimeter. However, it was located so that it could be covered by direct fire.

40

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS· MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

8. On the 10 November, the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry was moved to DAK TO by Land and CH-47. This brought the 1st Brigade to a three battalion force. Logistically, few changes were required. Stockage levels were slightly adjusted. It was during this time frame that a direct exchange clothing facility was established by the 4th S&T Battalion. While forward units normally DX clothing at Camp Enari, it was more economical and more convenient for the units for DISCOM to haul clothing to DAK TO in bulk than to have each battalion to do it individually.

9. The 1st Squadron, 12th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division arrived on 11 November by C-130 aircraft. No significant adjustments were required. Experience with the Air Cavalry Division at KONTUM in July had shown that a high consumption of 2.75 rockets and JP4 fuel could be expected. Therefore, sufficient stockages were secured by the time the unit arrived.

10. The ability to move supplies by LLOC from PLEIKU to DAK TO was essential to any successful operation and it was expected that the enemy would continue to mine the MSR, damage or destroy bridges and ambush convoys along the route whenever possible. There was only one bridge across the DAK PLA River approaching KONTUM from the south and with no backup bridging capability to span the River immediately available, it was essential to provide some logistic back-up north of the river. Therefore, a class III and IIIA refueling point and a one day resupply of major caliber ammunition was placed in vicinity of the KONTUM airfield. This move later proved of benefit to the 1st Air Cavalry Division units, when they closed into KONTUM on 13 November and facilitated the rapid establishment of an FSA at KONTUM the following day.

11. By the 14 November the ASP at DAK TO was heavily stocked for its size. In an effort to reduce the density and at the same time to provide some dispersion temporary berms were constructed in the vicinity of the 173d Airborne Brigade's base area and the existing ASP was expanded.

12. Throughout this phase 1st Logistical Command made corresponding increases in men and equipment at the FSA as the requirements increased.

(d) Disruption and recovery period, 15-17 November.

1. On the morning of 15 November aerial resupply had begun for the day and a scheduled lift of an ARVN battalion was underway. At 0930 hours there were four C-130 aircraft on the parking ramp, three for the ARVN move and one for resupply. At that moment the NVA commenced a recoilless rifle attack. The second and third rounds in hit the lead C-130 located at the east end of the ramp. The next few rounds hit the second C-130. Both aircraft were destroyed. The third aircraft received some shrapnel, but was later able to take off. The fourth aircraft had not cut off its engines and was able to turn around, move to

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GF

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

the west end of the landing strip and take off. The remaining rounds during this attack landed in the Class I and V yard causing secondary explosions in three of the ammo storage berms. Additionally, the reefer vans in the Class I yard were rendered unserviceable, some MHE was destroyed or damaged and the FSA headquarters complex received extensive damage. The Class IIIA bladders on the ramp area were perforated by shrapnel, and although no fires were started, the fuel was contaminated. After the attack terminated attempts were made to bring the fires in the berms under control. The water and foam from all available fire fighting equipment expended, but the fire could not be brought under control. Additional incoming rounds later in the day also impacted in the Class V area and completed the destruction of the ASP.

2. The mortar attack and destruction of the ASP created an immediate storage problem. Temporary locations for the storage of supplies not damaged and those on the morning convoy had to be found. An urgent requirement existed for EOD personnel to clear the airfield, the FSA complex, the CIDG-Special Forces Camp and the engineer company area located on the east side of the ASP, since all areas contained sensitive and unexploded rounds. Billets had to be found for the FSA personnel. The landing strip had to be repaired. Construction of ammunition berms had to be expedited. Bladders for the Class IIIA point and reefer vans had to be replaced.

3. On the morning of 16 November EOD personnel preceded a police detail down the airstrip and the west half of the parking ramp. Engineers then began patching the strip. By the next day the airfield was usable. The EOD men continued on into the FSA headquarters area. Initially trucks were used to collect the shrapnel or piles of duds, but several vehicles received flat tires from the shrapnel and debris in the area. Thereafter track cargo vehicles from the self-propelled artillery units were used.

4. To the maximum extent possible resupply vehicles were moved directly to the gun sites or hook out areas. The remaining supplies were off-loaded in the temporary storage areas. Class I and Class V were placed in the aircraft revetments on the northeast side of the runway. Barrier materials were off loaded between the east end of the runway and Route 512.

5. An airdrop of supplies was planned and coordinated in the event supplies became critical, but was not required to be executed.

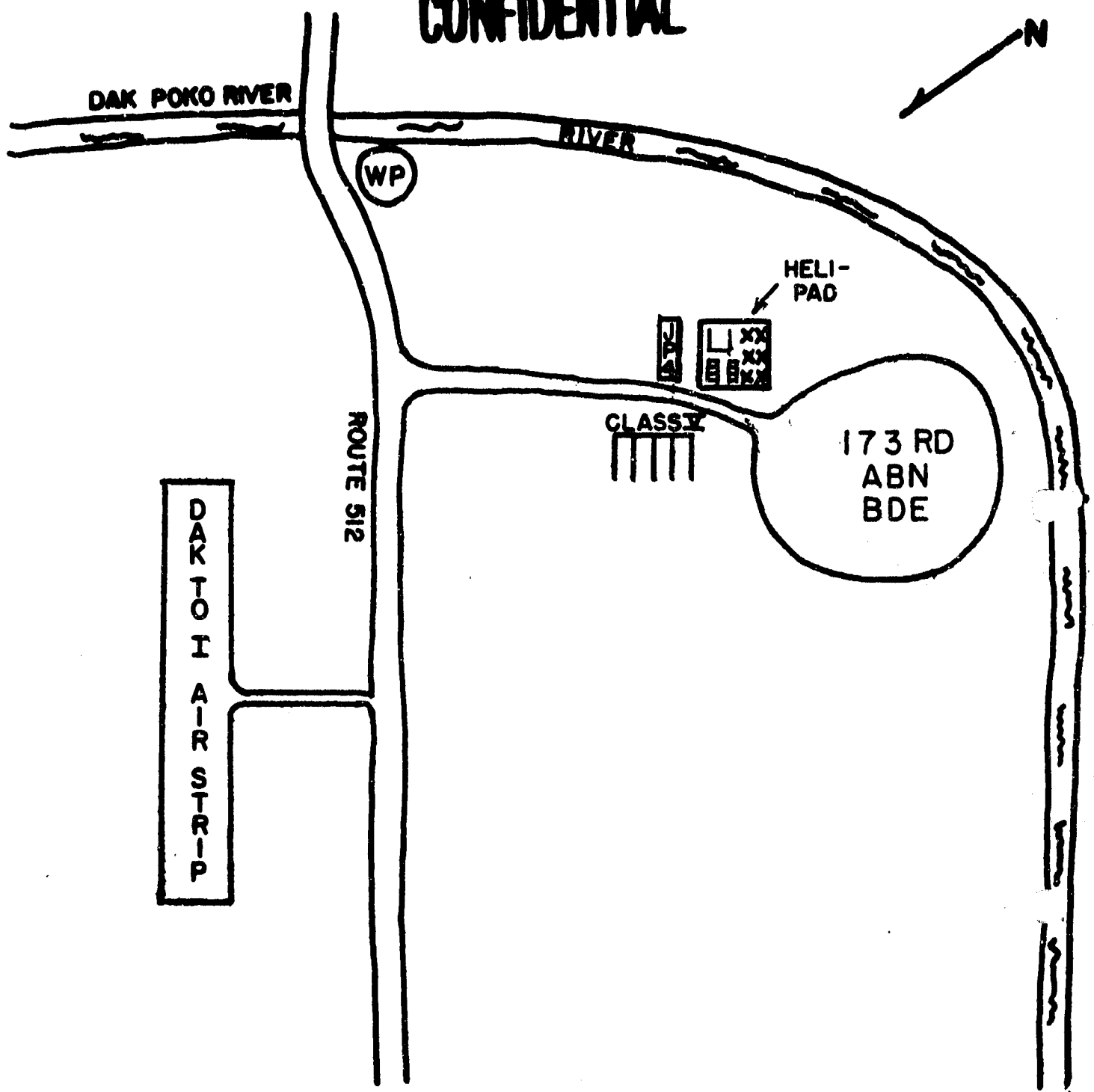
6. The tactical situation permitted a reduction of artillery firing on 16 November which was of significant help in getting the logistical support into full operation again.

42

CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

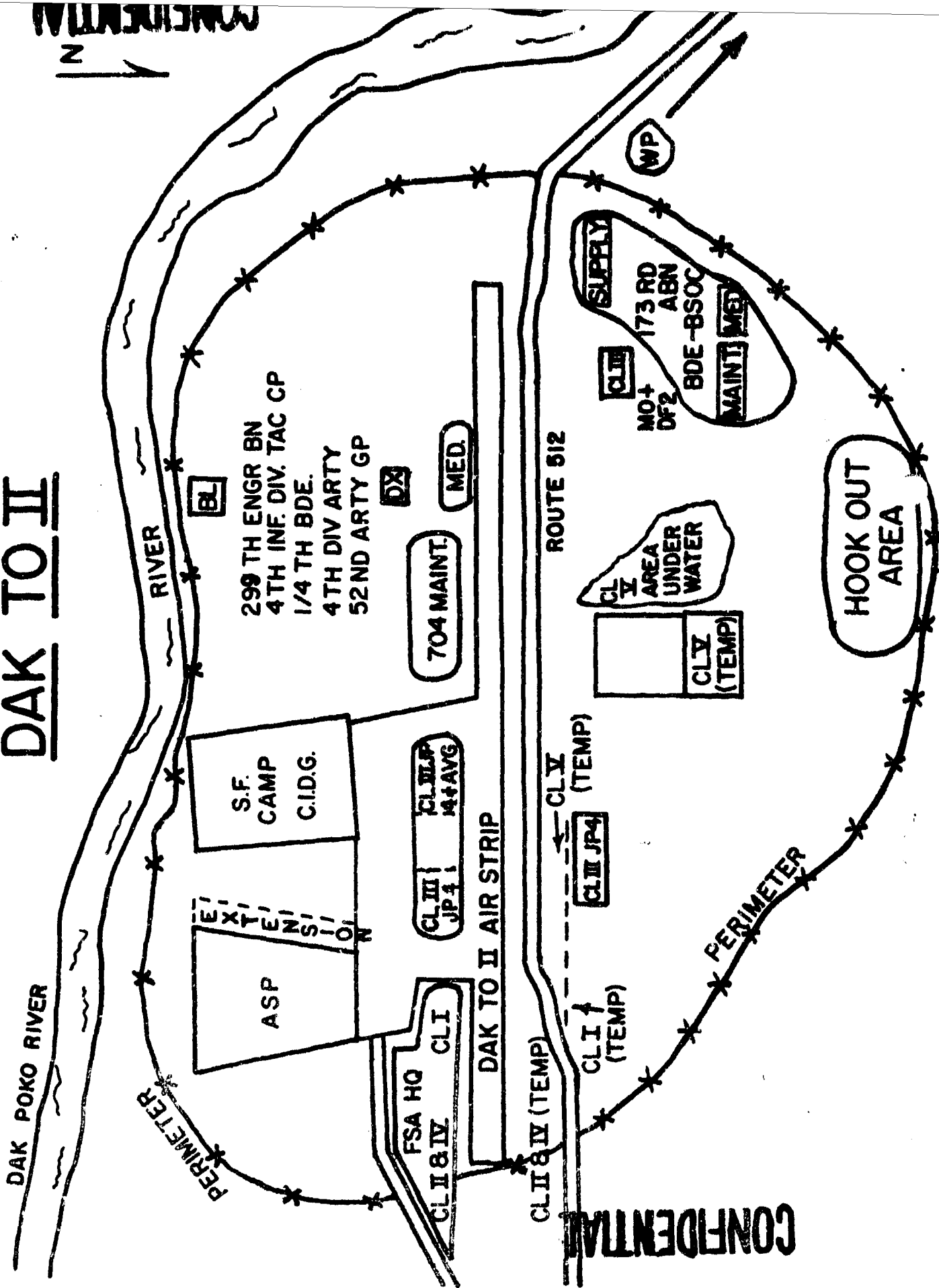


DAK TO I

FIGURE 1

CONFIDENTIAL

# DAK TO II



DAK POKO RIVER

PERIMETER

ASP

S.F. CAMP  
C.I.D.G.

299 TH ENGR BN  
4TH INF. DIV. TAC CP  
1/4 TH BDE.  
4TH DIV ARTY  
52ND ARTY GP

FSA HQ  
CLI  
CLI I & IV

DAK TO II AIR STRIP

CLI II & IV (TEMP)

CLI I (TEMP)

CLI III JP4

CLI V (TEMP)

CL V (TEMP)

CL V AREA UNDER WATER

ROUTE 512

HOOK OUT AREA

MO+  
DF2  
173 RD  
ABN  
BDE-BSOC  
SUPPLY  
MAINT  
MED

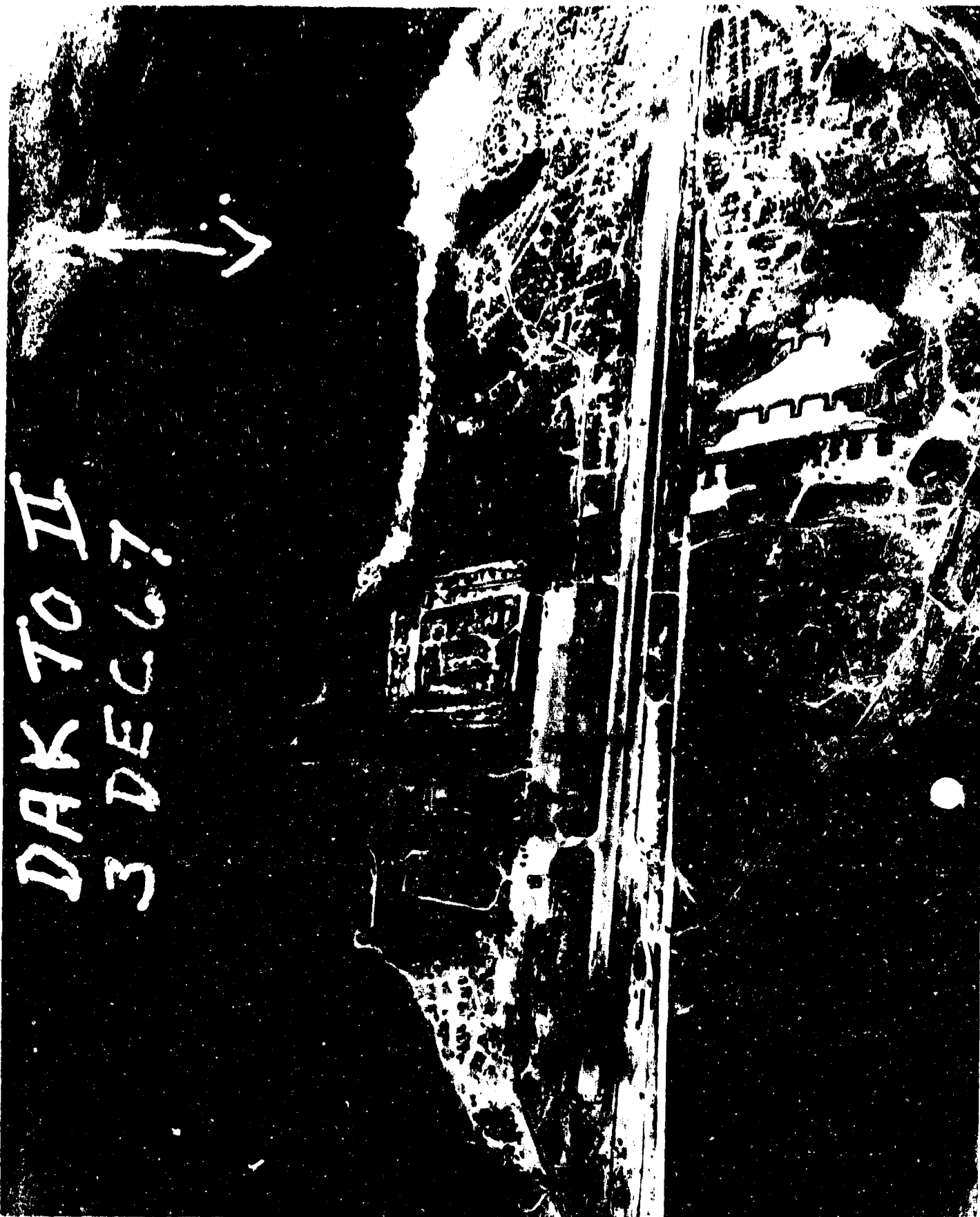
WP

N

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DAK TO II  
3 DEC 67



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

7. By 17 November the airfield had reopened with the restriction that no more than one C-130 aircraft be on the ground at any one time. The EOD personnel had cleared all areas except the ASP which required two more weeks to complete. Three of the new temporary berms were near completion. New fuel bladders had arrived and were being installed. AVGAS was being provided from a 5,000 gallon tanker located by the AVGAS bladder. Construction of a new entrance-exit to the parking ramp located between the JP-4 and AVGAS refueling points was underway.

(e) Second build up, 18-23 November.

1. With all units in contact it was essential that the maximum effort be made to bring sufficient supplies to meet the daily requirements and continue to buildup to the stockage objectives. In addition to using all available vehicles in the PLEIKU area and the 1st Logistical Command vehicles transporting supplies from QUI NHON, the division and the 937th Engineer Group provided all the vehicles that they could spare for the movement of supplies. On the 18 November 204 vehicles carrying 1,052 tons of supplies closed into DAK TO. To the maximum extent possible vehicles were thru-put to gun sites and forward fire support bases to insure needed resupply was provided in a minimum of time and to minimize the requirement of off-loading supplies into the temporary storage areas and then reload them onto unit resupply vehicles. There were additional vehicles in the convoy when they left PLEIKU destined for KONTUM. To differentiate the destinations different colored cards were placed on the vehicles. This facilitated traffic control and insured the vehicle arrived at the correct locale.

2. To help reduce the draw-down of supplies from DAK TO, the trains element of the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry moved to KONTUM and began resupplying from that logistic base. This decision was made because the battalion was operating sufficiently south of DAK TO to make the difference in turn-around time of resupply helicopters negligible. After four days the trains element returned to DAK TO.

3. The airfield at DAK TO was ready on 17 November, but on 18 November a previously planned airlift of supplies was brought into KONTUM. It was envisioned that by bringing supplies to KONTUM a shorter vehicle turn-around time to DAK TO could be realized. However, by the end of the day the KONTUM airfield was saturated with supplies. Insufficient MHE was available to handle the input and a safety hazard was created. The following day the airlift to DAK TO was resumed. The supplies were off-loaded at the west end of the runway because repairs to the ramp were still being made. Sufficient MHE was available to insure that off-load was accomplished between five and 10 minutes. A 5,000 gallon fuel tanker was on standby to receive JP-4 fuel from C-130 fuel tankers. Once the loads had been derigged they were placed on S&P trucks and transported to the temporary storage area or sent to gun sites or forward fire support bases.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

4. Replacement 10,000 gallon bladders were received and installed at the south refueling point and in the 173d Airborne Brigade area. Soon thereafter, the Class IIIA fuel stockage objectives were reached and the air traffic density at DAK TO II airfield was reduced by approximately 50 percent.

5. On 20 November the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry was flown into DAK TO from BAN ME THUOT. This necessitated a corresponding increase in division support personnel and FSA stockage objectives.

6. Line haul of supplies continued at the rate of 125-150 vehicles per day. By 21 November, aerial resupply was back to full scale operation and by following day all stockage objectives were reached.

7. The Class V berms in vicinity of the 173d Airborne Brigade were completed during this phase and were storing munitions for the airborne brigade. Two of the berms on the north side of the DAK TO II airfield were completed and were storing major caliber munitions.

8. It was also during this phase that casualties were high and C-130 aircraft were used to evacuate them to PLEIKU.

(f) Return to normalcy, 24 to 1 December.

1. This phase of the operation was characterized by a reduction in enemy activity with a corresponding reduction in troop strength and stockage objectives. Aerial resupply was reduced to a few sorties per day.

2. The 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division with one battalion departed the area on 25 and 26 November. During the air movement of these units, saturations of the airstrip reached a critical point. This was precipitated by the arrival of a group of SOG helicopters at the DAK TO II Class IIIA point. At the same time, C-130's were loading in the vicinity and helicopters conducting a combat assault were refueling. The congestion and confusion was relieved by the diversion of the helicopters to the Class IIIA point at the 173d. After this experience rapid steps were taken to penprime one third of the DAK TO I airstrip and place a 5,000 gallon JP-4 tanker there each day. The SOG helicopters used this location as a parking area and refueling point, thus alleviating the problem.

3. The remaining ammo storage berms were completed on the north side of the DAK TO II airfield and the old Class I, II and IV yards were reestablished freeing the revetments for helicopter use.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS. MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

4. The stocks at KONTUM were moved to DAK TO except for a contingency level that was maintained.

5. EOD personnel and engineers removed the remains of the two C-130 aircraft that had been destroyed. Both were buried outside the base camp perimeter.

## b. Material and Services.

### (1) Supply

(a) The majority of supplies consumed during this period was issued through the Forward Support Areas operated by 1st Logistics Command at DAK TO and KONTUM. It is estimated that 3000 additional tons of supplies were issued directly to units from rear base areas. Supplies issued from rear areas included fuel used by aircraft and vehicles in direct support of combat operations, Class II, IV, and V supplies issued to divisional units from Camp Enari and Class II and IV supplies issued to the 173d Airborne Brigade from AN KHE. Not included in the estimate is fuel consumed by C-130 and C7A Aircraft in support of aerial resupply or troop airlifts.

(b) Statistical data contained in subsequent paragraphs is accurate for the most part. However, some data, particularly in Class IV and V supplies, should be considered as minimal issued. This is due in part to the records that were lost when the ASP at DAK TO was destroyed and in part to the period when supplies were so urgently needed that convoy vehicles from as far away as QUI NHON were through-put directly to forward fire support bases. There were some instances on these occasions when the receipt was not collected or was lost prior to collection. Based on the total volume involved, it is reasonable to state that records shown below are accurate to within two percent.

### DAK TO FSA

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>AV DAILY ISSUES</u>	<u>TOTAL ISSUES</u>	<u>WT(S/T)</u>
Class I			
"A" Rations	5,827 (Rations)	215,485 (Rations)	645.0
"C" Rations	2,958       "	109,571       "	330.0
Class III (Gallons)			
JP-4	23,330	863,190	2,761.6
AVGAS	880	32,550	92.4
MOGAS	3,943	146,000	438.0
DIESEL	6,581	243,500	1,204.0
Class V (S/T)	797.41	7,314.17	7,314.17
		TOTAL (S/T)	12,824.9

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## KONTUM FSA

<u>COMMODITY</u>	<u>AV DAILY ISSUES</u>	<u>TOTAL ISSUES</u>	<u>WT(S/T)</u>
<b>Class I</b>			
"A" Rations	1,339 (Rations)	22,766 (Rations)	69.0
"C" Rations	1,423 "	24,197 "	72.0
Sundry Packs	20.4	349	16.4
<b>Class III (Gallons)</b>			
JP-4	29,500	502,500	1,609.6
AVGAS	911.8	15,500	42.3
MOGAS	3,011	51,200	153.0
DIESEL	5,611	95,500	336.0
	38.5	644	644.0
<b>Class V (S/T)</b>			
			<b>TOTAL (S/T) 2.942.3</b>

(c) In addition to tonnage of Class III and V used by division units, the US Air Force expended the following Class III and V in support of the "Battle for DAK TO".

### Class III

<u>AIRCRAFT</u>	<u>QTY (FUEL IN S/T)</u>
Fighters	10,485
B-52's	30,000
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40,485</b>

### Class V

Delivered by Fighters

<u>ORDNANCE</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>WEIGHT (S/T)</u>
Bombs	5,073	1,587.5
CBU	405	81.1
Napalm	2,487	832.5
Rockets	184	36.8

Delivered by Fighters and AC-47 (Spooky)

<u>ORDNANCE</u>	<u>QTY</u>	<u>WEIGHT (S/T)</u>
20mm	62,400	15.6
7.62mm	240,000	6.0

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Reports (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

Delivered by B-52's

Bombs	UNK	<u>4.100</u>
TOTAL		47,144.5

Recapitulation of all supplies issued:

US Army	DAK TO	12,824.9
	KONTUM	2,942.3
	Rear Areas	<u>3,000.0</u>
	Sub Total	18,767.2 (S/T)
US Air Force		47,144.5 (S/T)

(2) Services.

(a) FSA Services

1. Laundry Processed

DAK TO - 83,040 lbs  
KONTUM - 68,000 lbs

2. Baths

DAK TO - 10,355 individuals  
KONTUM - 1,870 individuals

3. Graves registration

DAK TO - 176 remains  
KONTUM - 2 remains

c. Transportation

(1) Land

(a) The security requirements on Route 14 North prevented free flow traffic: therefore, it was necessary to control movement through convoys. Initially, two round trip convoys from PLEIKU were established. However, because of limited security and increased enemy activities, a separate convoy to KONTUM was deleted. From within the DTO staff, a forward DTO was established at DAK TO utilizing one officer and one enlisted man. The forward DTO levied units for vehicles in the forward areas, marshalled convoys to forward fire bases and returning convoys to PLEIKU, and assisted in clearing operations for the DAK TO airfield. Traffic Control Points were operated at CP 40, CP 45, and CP 102 by both division and 50<sup>th</sup> Military

47  
CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Reports (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

Police Battalion military police. To assist in liaison with the 504th MP's the DTO was augmented with one division MP who operated at CP 40. Additionally, one officer from the 4th Supply and Transportation Battalion was utilized for a three day period to assist the DTO at Camp Enari.

(b) The highway was opened each day after the route had been secured by the units assigned with this mission. A traffic headquarters was established within the DTO. Radio communication from Camp Enari to the various TCP insured accurate information as to number of number of vehicles in the convoys, exact location of the convoys, locations of down vehicles and road conditions. During the period, 11,669 vehicles traveled between PLEIKU, KONTUM and DAK TO. Each convoy consisted of between one to two hundred vehicles and normally composed of unit movement vehicles, resupply vehicles and miscellaneous vehicles from units in the forward area.

## (2) Air

The following show the total sorties and short ton airlifted into KONTUM and DAK TO

	<u>Sorties</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>(S/T)</u>
Supplies airlifted to KONTUM/DAK TO	<u>327</u>		<u>5,174.7</u>
Troops and equipment airlifted	<u>346</u>	<u>6,852</u>	<u>4,144.7</u>
Troops and equipment airlifted			
TOTAL	673	6,852	9,319.4

## d. Maintenance Support.

### (1) General

(a) One company of the 704th Maintenance Battalion deployed major elements to DAK TO with the 1st Brigade. The mission of the company (-) was to provide maintenance support for all division equipment in the area of operations. This support was somewhat limited, because elements of the company remained at the Oasis to provide maintenance support to Task Force 22.

(b) Another company of the battalion provided maintenance support to the 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry which was securing the LOC from PLEIKU to DAK TO and to elements of the 1st Battalion, 69th Armor and 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery operating in the KONTUM - PLEI MRONG area.

(c) The main support company of the maintenance battalion provided backup support to the two forward support companies when required, and provided repair parts resupply support to all division forces in the operation.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## (2) Maintenance activities at DAK TO.

(a) There was a marked increase in work flow during the "Battle for DAK TO". The Production Control Report for that period was as follows:

	<u>REC'D</u>	<u>COMP</u>	<u>O/H/E/Month</u>	<u>A/W PARTS</u>	<u>EVAC</u>
Wheel Section	62	60	2	2	0
Track Section	10	10	0	0	0
Armament	262	262	0	0	0
Signal	203	190	10	7	6
Engineer	11	9	2	2	0
Other	<u>25</u>	<u>25</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
TOTAL	573	556	14	11	6

(b) The above figures do not portray the several hundred maintenance jobs completed by the unit for "customer units" in the DAK TO area that were performed in a combat expedient manner to facilitate ease of operation for those units. Of these latter jobs, the track and armament sections contributed the bulk of this figure since this type of work was conducted outside the DAK TO base area perimeter. The Signal and Service Sections completed many mission essential type jobs in the maintenance shop at DAK TO that were flown in from the forward fire bases for priority consideration.

(c) The maintenance battalion elements also provided maintenance assistance to the non-divisional units at DAK TO. The non-divisional units supported were:

173d Airborne Brigade  
1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division  
3d Battalion, 18th Artillery  
6th Battalion, 14th Artillery  
43d Signal Battalion  
278th Signal Company  
EOD Detachment, PKSAC

(d) The Armament Section was kept very busy with the important task of maintaining the DAK TO artillery in operational condition. In addition the armament section replaced 15 selfpropelled and towed howitzer gun tubes, as follows:

<u>GUN DESCRIPTION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF TUBES REPLACED</u>
105mm Towed Howitzer	7
155mm Self Propelled Howitzer (M109)	2
8" Self Propelled Howitzer (M110)	1
175mm Self Propelled Gun	5

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(e) The armament section also worked on 39 mortars, 25 machine guns, and 84 rifles and pistols. Personnel of this section made approximately 65 visits to fire bases to perform support maintenance. Five of these were made just prior to infantry combat assault missions.

(f) The supervisor of the armament section conducted several on-the-job training classes for supported units on M16 Rifle care and cleaning procedures and 105mm Howitzer Organizational Maintenance procedures.

(g) The Service and Evacuation Section, normally busy in a combat zone, conducted quite an extensive operation, especially the recovery crew. This two man crew alone accounted for over a dozen recovery type missions ranging from towing disabled convoy vehicles to replacing 175mm gun tubes during darkness, a difficult task during the day light.

(h) The supply activity of the maintenance company was extensive. Normal policies and SOP's were modified so that effective supply support could be provided at DAK TO. A large shop stock was located at DAK TO to expedite parts handling exchange. The company supplied both their internal direct support requirements and the organizational parts needed by customers. Approximately 550 maintenance, armament, signal, and other parts were supplied to users as shown below:

320 Armament parts used in repair of job ordered equipment  
100 Signal parts used in repair of job ordered equipment  
20 Signal parts issued to customers  
70 Maintenance parts issued to customers (to include Prescribed Load List type parts and other organizational parts)  
40 Maintenance parts used in repair of job ordered equipment.

(i) The supply section at DAK TO also handled limited direct exchange items in order to provide faster service to units in the field. Various parts were issued to non-divisional units to assist them in emergency cases where time and distance precluded their obtaining these parts elsewhere.

(j) Special projects centered around maintenance improvement and production. The maintenance section found that replacement of complete powerpacks on large track vehicles was faster than the separation and installation method. The armament section continued to exchange 105mm towed Howitzers on a round-robin type periodic maintenance and rebuild program.

(k) One of the jobs performed by the maintenance company that was out of the ordinary occurred on 15 November, when division maintenance personnel repaired the windshield of a C-130 damaged during the mortar attack on the airfield. These repairs enabled the crew to fly aircraft out of the area prior to the second attack.

50

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## e. Medical Support.

### (1) DAK TO

(a) Medical support at DAK TO was provided by Company B, 4th Medical Battalion. The initial mission of the company was to provide division level medical service to all units assigned or attached to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and was subsequently expanded to include all units in support of the division in AO Spaatz.

(b) On 29 October, Company B, 4th Medical Battalion, deployed one clearing section composed of two MC's, one DC, one MSC, and 31 enlisted personnel. The section deployed with equipment and personnel capable of performing ground ambulance evacuation, emergency dental service, laboratory and X-ray services, psychiatric service, routine outpatient treatment, and life saving surgical capability. The clearing section had a 20 bed holding capability expandable to 30 beds when required, and was self supporting less messing. On 5 November, the remainder of the clearing section moved to DAK TO. Two additional MC officers and 3 enlisted medical technicians were in this group.

(c) Initially, the 283d Medical Detachment (Air Ambulance), 44th Medical Brigade, provided aeromedical evacuation support. Later the 485th Medical Company, 44th Medical Brigade also provided aeromedical evacuation capability to support the operation. Prior coordination between 4th Medical Battalion and the 52d Aviation Battalion established procedures for obtaining non-medical aviation support when evacuation requirements exceeded the supporting air ambulance units' capability.

(d) The routine communications procedures were established. Company B using its organic radio communications means, entered the 1st Brigade Administrative/Logistical Net, where medical requirements were received from combat elements. It also monitored the Dustoff Radio Net. Communications with the 4th Medical Battalion Headquarters at Camp Enari and to supporting Army level medical units located in PLEIKU were through a radio relay system established on Dragon Mountain. Administrative traffic to include medical reports, and routine medical supply requirements was passed over the 4th Medical Battalion Command Net. Additionally, telephonic communications were available as a secondary means.

(e) Medical supplies were deployed at approximately a nine day level, and were later increased to a fifteen day level. Resupply of medical items was routinely accomplished by utilizing medical aircraft returning to the clearing section from patient evacuation missions. Routine medical resupply, less blood, was accomplished daily by organic vehicles in the scheduled convoys.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(f) The clearing section, located adjacent to the DAK TO Airstrip, consisted of the following.

1. Two GP large tents. One was a 20 bed ward tent, and the other was for admissions and dispositions, pharmacy and a six table treatment area.

2. Six GP Medium tents. One tent was as an X-ray and medical tent, and the other five were billets

3. Two GP Small tents. One tent was for dental treatment, the other for surgery.

(g) The A&D tent housed the coordinating center for all requirements. In the forward section of the tent was located the communications center with the radios, and three telephone-lines. The unit had a "hot line" to the 1st Brigade S4, a "hot line" to the 173d Airborne Brigade organic medical company, and a common user line to the forward switch. Additionally, A&D housed laboratory facilities and pharmacy, contained six litters on litter stands, and routine/emergency medical supplies & equipment.

(h) Routine patients who could be returned to duty within 72 hours were admitted to the clearing station ward. Priority and urgent category patients were airevuated as soon as their condition was stabilized and evacuation resources were available.

(i) Company B (-), medically supported the entire DAK TO area (approximately 6,000 troops) until 10 November, when the organic medical company of the 173d Airborne Brigade became operational in the same area. It was established that the Commanding Officer, Company B, 4th Medical Battalion would be responsible for coordinating medical evacuation from both medical units to the rear, and basically, each organic medical company (4th Infantry Division and 173d Airborne Brigade) would execute their normal medical support missions to their respective units. This arrangement proved highly successful in that:

1. Backup support was immediately available when either clearing received mass casualties.

2. Maximum use was made of aero-medical aviation evacuation helicopters for field pickup missions.

3. Maximum use was made of medical and non-medical aviation evacuation resources.

4. Emergency medical supplies were exchanged without delays in obtaining these items from normal medical supply sources.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

5. Immediate information concerning the total medical situation was available at one source.

(j) Initially patient evacuation from DAK TO to the 71st Evacuation Hospital in PLEIKU was accomplished by medical aircraft (Dustoff). The 283d Medical Detachment, and the 71st Evacuation Hospital were notified by radio from the clearing station, concerning patient evacuation status. This system provided the hospital time to adequately prepare for the inbound casualty (ies), and alerted the Dustoff Control to dispatch another aircraft to DAK TO. After 5 November, there were two and at times four dustoff helicopters located at the forward clearing stations for immediate field pickup. The Dustoff aircraft were primarily used for evacuation from the field to the clearing station and to transport emergency category patients to higher medical facilities. Non-medical aircraft from the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion transported other than emergency patients to the hospital in PLEIKU on their return at the end of the mission day. Requirements for non-medical aircraft evacuation assistance were relayed to the 4th Medical Battalion, where contact was made with the 52d Aviation Battalion Liaison Officer. At the same time, the requirement was furnished to the 1st Brigade Aviation Officer by Company B. This arrangement facilitated the disposition of the request, and immediate assistance was provided by the 52d Aviation Battalion throughout the DAK TO operation. For example, on 12 November, they evacuated, by Chinook aircraft, one hundred and fourteen patients to the 71st Evacuation Hospital.

(k) Medical supplies for division units were routinely provided from the Division Medical Supply Office at Camp Enari. Emergency requirements were filled from DMSO for all units operating in the DAK TO area. During this period, 125 units of blood were used, which was more than the total blood usage in the division for the entire year.

(l) On 15 November, an Air Force Medical Evacuation Team was established at DAK TO. Requirements for routine evacuation to Army level hospitals were consolidated by the Company B Clearing Section, and subsequently provided to the Air Force Team. The requirement was then scheduled, and the evacuation was accomplished by Air Force aircraft. Urgent category patients were in all cases evacuated to the 71st Evacuation Hospital by Dustoff aircraft.

(m) Patients handled by Company B during the period:

1. Total number of patients seen - 2,364

Injuries Result of Hostile Action - 479

Injuries Not a Result of Hostile Action - 68

Others (Disease, FUO, Non-Battle Injury) - 1,819

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## 2. Evacuation Statistics:

Air - 755  
Ground ambulance - 6  
Total - 761

## 3. Dispositions:

Evacuated - 761  
Returned to duty - 1,603

(n) The following medical supplies were expended in support of the operation:

<u>QUANTITY</u>	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>TOTAL WEIGHT (lbs)</u>
29 Boxes	Dextrose 5%	1,421
18 Boxes	Dextrose	648
18 Boxes	Dextrose Sodium Chloride	782
114 Boxes	Ringers Inj Lactated	6,042
176 Boxes	Water F/Inf	645
199 Cans	Albumin Human Serum	1,000
2,723 Packages	Gauze Sponge and (4x4-2x2-4x8)	3,000
172 ea	Blankets	850
122 ea	Litter Folding	3,460
125 Units	Human Blood	300
	<b>TOTAL WEIGHT</b>	<b>18,168 lbs</b>

f. Explosive Ordnance Disposal. EOD provided immeasurable support during the "Battle for DAK TO". Initially two personnel were on call to meet periodic requirements. However, with the attack on the logistical complex on 15 November a mammoth load in EOD work was instantly created. EOD personnel from both the Army and the Air Force were flown into DAK TO from as far away as SAIGON. Their first task was to clear the airfield and parking ramps of all duds and dangerous debris so that fixed wing aircraft could use the field. This was completed by the 17 November. They continued the clearing program in the FSA complex, the CIDG Camp and an engineer company area adjacent to the ASP. By the end of November the clearing of the ASP began. Once or twice each day the gathered munitions escorted by tanks or dusters were taken outside the perimeter to be destroyed. Blast sites were varied daily as a security measure. Initially only the airfield tower was notified on the time of blast so that aircraft in the area could be alerted. However, troop sensitivity to explosions in the area dictated that units in the area be notified of blast time. In addition to

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

the clearing of the logistical complex, they continued to perform daily EOD mission in response to US and ARVN requirements.

g. Logistical cooperation between US and ARVN forces was demonstrated throughout the "Battle for DAK TO". On three separate occasions 4th Infantry Division coordinated the use 1st Logistical Command, 937th Engineer Group, and their own organic vehicles for ARVN troop movements between KONTUM and DAK TO. On one occasion 1,000 rounds of 105mm HE ammunition were given to ARVN forces in the area when their need was critical and US supply at the ASP was sufficient. Ten thousand sand bags were also given to ARVN forces. At another time ARVN forces provided the 4th Infantry Division with 5,000 pounds of C4 explosive when it was critically needed to clear LZ's and none could be obtained through US logistic channels in time to meet requirements.

#### h. Problem Areas:

(1) DTO personnel. The DTO is not staffed sufficiently to operate a forward DTO. Instead of increasing the base camp DTO's staff for the DAK TO operation, the base camp DTO was cut by 50% in order to support a forward DTO. Additionally, transportation type traffic regulating personnel should have been available at CP 45 and CP 112. A minimum augmentation of two NCO's as requested on modified TO&E, should be permanently assigned to the DTO.

(2) Evacuation of disabled vehicles. There was not sufficient support available to retrieve disabled vehicles on route 14N. The convoys transporting FSA material had vehicles which could accomplish evacuation, but the recovery capabilities were limited. Downed vehicles could not always be recovered immediately, forcing the security element to secure lone vehicles: thereby decreasing the security accompanying the convoy. Maintenance support, to include additional recovery vehicles, should be assigned and located at heavily traveled TCP's.

(3) Vehicle Availability. The 4th Division was required to supply vehicles to PKSAC to support their command in meeting DAK TO vehicle resupply requirements. The DTO levied all units on base camp to meet these vehicle requirements. Vehicles were so critical that division engineer bridge trucks were utilized to haul everything from troops to ammunition to meet required commitments. An additional medium truck company should be either assigned to or in direct support of the 4th Infantry Division.

(4) Engineer Projects. Much confusion arose concerning priority of projects and valid equipment requests as the size of DAK TO Base Camp increased. Much equipment time was lost when completed projects were ruled inadequate or incorrect. For large and complex fire bases such as that located at DAK TO a base area commander should be appointed and a fire base board with representation from each major unit (or tenant)

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

and staff engineer should be created. This board would meet frequently to discuss area improvements, security requirements, unit moves and locations, support facilities and, most important of all, schedule the engineer work effort to support these requirements.

(5) Communications Equipment. The division had serious shortages in communications equipment, particularly in PRC-25 radios and their auxiliary equipment. Battle losses incurred at DAK TO aggravated the basic problem. (Because of the critical nature of the problem most of the needs were adequately satisfied.) However, no long antennas were received. This seriously hampered the ability to communicate over desired distances. The terrain over which the division operated was characterized by high mountains, double and triple canopies extending up to 200 feet, and dense vegetation. Absorption and attenuation of signals was high. The long antennas would have been of considerable help on innumerable occasions. Units operating in the type terrain described above should be given a priority of issue of long antennas over those operating in more favorable terrain.

(6) Chain Saws. Currently available chain saws continue to fail when used to cut the extremely tough hardwood trees in the Central Highlands.

(7) C4 Explosive. Experience in the Central Highlands has shown C4 is the best explosive and the best item available for use in clearing LZ's. In the dense and heavily vegetated terrain great effort must be expended to accomplish the clearing. The pliability of C4 plus its greater explosive power makes it highly conducive for use in this area. There were innumerable combat assaults made during the "Battle for DAK TO". Each battalion size CA required 500 pounds of C4 (250, M37 kits). On some days 10,000 - 15,000 pounds were required. The item was in short supply throughout the battle. In an effort to meet the demand all C4 in the division was sent to DAK TO. Additionally C4 was obtained from ARVN forces. By these means the problem was partially alleviated. C4 should be stockpiled in greater quantities at rear logistic bases at the sacrifice of dynamite if necessary.

## i. Communications.

(1) VHF Systems installed to support units in the DAK TO - KONTUM area from 25 October - 1 December.

(a) Two 12-channel systems were established from Division Main to 1st Brigade Forward CP at DAK TO on 28 October.

(b) One 12-channel system was opened with one relay from Division Main to DAK TO MACV tower on 5 November in anticipation of 173d Airborne CP moving into DAK TO. On 6 November the system was terminated at the 173d Airborne Brigade CP at Old DAK TO airfield.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(c) One 12-channel system was activated from the 4th Division TAC CP at New DAK TO to 173d Airborne Brigade at Old DAK TO airfield on 6 November and was still active on 1 December.

(d) One 12-channel system was activated from Camp Enari to KONTUM on 6 November by the 54th Signal Battalion. This system was still active on 1 December.

(e) Two 12-channel systems were activated from KONTUM to DAK TO on 6 November by the 54th Signal Battalion, requiring one relay. These two systems were still active on 1 December.

(f) One 12-channel system was activated from Division Main to 173d Airborne Brigade TAC CP at BEN HET on 6 November. This system was still active on 1 December.

(g) One 12-channel system from 173d Airborne Brigade CP at Old DAK TO to the 173d Airborne Brigade TAC CP at BEN HET was installed on 8 November. This system was still active on 1 December.

(h) One 12-channel system from Division Main to New DAK TO requiring one relay was operated from 10 to 20 November.

(i) One 4-channel system from the 4th Division TAC CP at New DAK TO to the 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry was operated from 11 November until 19 November.

(j) One 12-channel system was operated from the 4th Division Main to 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division CP at KONTUM requiring one relay from 13 November until 19 November.

(k) One 12-channel system from the 4th Division TAC CP at New DAK TO to MACV tower at DAK TO Special Forces Camp was activated on 13 November by the 124th Signal Battalion. On 15 November the 54th Signal Battalion assumed operation of the system. The system was still active on 1 December.

(l) A 4-channel system from the 4th Division TAC CP to the 173d Airborne Brigade TAC at BEN HET was operated 14 - 18 November.

(m) One 12-channel system from the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry CP at Old DAK TO airfield to their TAC CP at POLEI KLENG was operated 15 - 19 November.

(n) One 12-channel system from Division Main to 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division, when they relocated from KONTUM to Old DAK TO airfield, was operated 19 - 25 November.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(o) One 12-channel system from 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry to DAK TO MACV tower was operated from 26 November until 30 November when the battalion left the area of operations.

(2) New DAK TO airfield is virtually inaccessible to VHF. Masked by high hills on all four sides the airfield is almost impervious to VHF systems running to the south. Therefore, most systems were relayed through the MACV tower at the DAK TO Special Forces Camp, east of the airfield. Although this compound is only four kilometers from the airfield, it had a higher elevation and enjoys an opening in the mountains to the south through which VHF communications was possible.

(3) Upon arrival of the Division TAC CP at DAK TO on 6 November, the 124th Signal Battalion was operating one AN/MTC-7 switchboard for the 1st Brigade. With the increase of activity it became necessary to install another AN/MTC-7 switchboard for the Division TAC CP element. It soon became apparent that units such as the 1st Logistical Command Forward Support Area, airfield control personnel, engineer units, and other support units had a requirement for area communications service. A request was made to I FFORCEV to provide this service to relieve the I FFORCEV load of the division's two tactical switchboards and the tactical teletypewriter circuits. As a result the 43d Signal Battalion established a 12 channel system (AN/GRC-50) from DAK TO to PLEIKU and installed a switchboard (AN/MTC-7) and a telegraph terminal (AN/MSC-29) at DAK TO.

(4) Additional systems programed at this time was for a multi-channel system between 1st Brigade Forward/Division CP, which was collocated, and the 173d Airborne Brigade. Also a system to connect 173d Airborne Brigade TAC with the 1st Brigade Forward/Division TAC CP was programed. To provide circuits for the 173d Airborne Brigade Forward CP back to their aviation support, which remained at KONTUM, and their base camp location at AN KHE, the 54th Signal Battalion provided a multi-channel system between DAK TO airfield and KONTUM with a radio relay at MACV Compound. At KONTUM this system tied into an established 43d Signal Battalion system to pickup the AN KHE circuits. Two other 54th Signal Battalion systems already in operation, one from Camp Enari to PLEIKU and one from PLEIKU to DAK TO airfield were utilized for additional circuitry as required.

(5) On 13 November the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division came under 4th Infantry Division OPCON and moved into the KONTUM area with a TAC CP located in the vicinity of POLEI KLENG. To support this new unit, the 124th Signal Battalion installed two multichannel systems, one between 4th Infantry Division base camp and KONTUM via Dragon Mountain, and one between KONTUM and POLEI KLENG. The 54th Signal Battalion's system previously installed between DAK TO airfield and KONTUM again proved useful since it was now possible to route traffic from the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division direct to the Division TAC CP.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(6) During this period the 1st Signal Brigade made arrangements to install a 24 channel tropo system between Dragon Mountain and MACV Compound of which the 124th Signal Battalion was to utilize 12 channels. In order to extend these 12 channels to the 4th Infantry Division base camp a AN/TTC-7, 12 channel, land-line carrier system was installed using Spiral-4 cable. The tropo equipment arrived by C-130 aircraft on 13 November and was operational on 14 November.

(7) FM radio operations. The multichannel communications systems were the primary trunking means supporting the forces at DAK TO. Particularly note worthy was the high quality and reliability of FM communications that existed between the division base camp and DAK TO through the retransmission station on Dragon Mountain. Due to periods of heavy traffic on the division FM Command Net, it was necessary to operate one radio on the division primary and one radio on the division alternate command frequency, passing secure transmissions simultaneously.

(8) Wire operations. To provide additional flexibility, a 12 line WD-1 system was installed between the patch panel located at the MACV Compound and the 173d Airborne Brigade. However, from the onset this project was plagued with problems. Initially the lines were laid over the open terrain. With the engineer construction in progress in the area, the lines were soon damaged beyond repair. Arrangements were made to bury the lines; however, they had to exit the ground at the edge of the 173d Airborne Brigade CP and run along the barbed wire entanglements which was initially located in elephant grass. Fires occurred quite frequently which burned the lines, again resulting in inoperative wire lines. The lines were then placed overhead in the vicinity of the CP, however, engineer construction again reduced the lines to an inoperative status. On 17 November information was received on the CP displacement of the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division from KONTUM to the DAK TO area in the vicinity of the 173d Airborne Brigade. In addition an eight (8) line WD-1 system was laid from MACV relay to the CP of the 1st Brigade which was not plagued with the problems of the first wire system.

(9) Teletype operations. Also of importance to the operation was the teletype traffic load handled by the communications center during this period. Of special note was the increase of flash precedence messages processed during the "Battle for DAK TO". During the 37 days prior to 25 October (17 September - 24 October), the communications center sent 46 and received 43 flash precedence messages. During the 37 days of the DAK TO action, this same facility sent 253 and received 198 flash precedence messages.

(10) Photo lab. The 124th Signal Battalion facilities processed some 2100 black and white photographs. Approximately 300 color photographs were forwarded to LONG BINH for processing. Photographers were detailed down to company level to obtain first hand photographs for the historical files of the 4th Infantry Division.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

j. Personnel.

(1) Replacements received by grade.

<u>4th Inf Div</u>		<u>173d Abn Bde</u>		<u>1st Bde, 1st ACD</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
		<u>Abn</u>	<u>Non-Abn</u>		
E1-3	356	408	241	103	1,108
E4	19	50	15	12	96
E5	5	41	3	5	54
E6	8	11	2	2	23
E7	0	3	0	1	4
	<u>388</u>	<u>513</u>	<u>261</u>	<u>123</u>	<u>1,285</u>
		774			

(2) Critical MOS requirements.

(a) 4th Infantry Division: MOS 11B

(b) 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division: MOS 05B20, 91A10, 91B20, 67N20.

(c) 173d Airborne Brigade. Critical MOS needs at the beginning of the period and those received to counter-balance needs.

<u>MOS</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SHORT</u>	<u>ASGND</u>	<u>MOS</u>	<u>GRADE</u>	<u>SHORT</u>	<u>ASGND</u>
11D2P	E4	60	8	63H2P	E4	4	0
11F2P	E4	17	3	63H2P	E5	3	0
11F2P	E5	11	0	63H4P	E7	2	0
11F4P	E5	4	2	71E2P	E5	1	0
17B1P	E3	1	0	71F3P	E3	1	0
31K2P	E5	1	1	71F3P	E4	1	0
44B4P	E6	1	0	91C2P	E6	4	0
54E4P	E6	3	0	96C3P	E6	1	0
54E4P	E7	1	0	96D4P	E6	1	0
63B4P	E6	3	0	97B4P	E5	1	0
63B4P	E7	1	0				

(3) Priority for assignment of replacements.

(a) 4th Infantry Division. Replacements were assigned to units based on the number of casualties sustained. Initially, priority of assignment was to the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry, then to the 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry, and was finally returned to 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry as the contact and its intensity shifted from one unit to another.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-CC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

(b) 173d Airborne Brigade. The enlisted requisition for the period covered by this report was submitted six months prior and was based on normal projected shortages caused by DEROS losses and separations. At that time requisitions were submitted IAW Headquarters, USARV policy to maintain the brigade enlisted strength at 105% of the authorized strength. At the outset of this reporting period, normal policies of personnel management were used in making assignments. As casualties mounted, additional skills and numbers of replacements required increased. These requirements were continuously reviewed, adjusted and submitted telephonically to the AG Replacement Division at Headquarters, USARV. Assignment by skills was based upon individual qualifications and each unit's particular needs: MOS 11B personnel were assigned based upon relative shortages within infantry line battalions.

(c) 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division: There were no variations from normal procedures in receiving replacements. No priorities of units were established for replacements during this period.

## (4) Variation in method of assigning replacements.

### (a) 4th Infantry Division.

1. It became apparent soon after units at DAK TO began to receive significant casualties that the usual methods of assigning replacements could not be applied.

2. The normal practice of assigning personnel to specific companies on orders was terminated. Replacements were assigned to the 1st Brigade for further assignment by the brigade. This increased flexibility in the face of a rapidly changing situation.

3. The AG maintained constant coordination with the S1 of the 1st Brigade. The number of replacements needed was determined by deducting the number of WIA that would quickly return to duty from the total WIA figure. A percentage of fill factor was developed based on the percentage of WIA who would be lost to the unit for an extended period. Medical personnel provided estimates to the brigade S1 in this regard. He, in turn, relayed this information to AG. The percentage of fill during the DAK TO battle ranged from 80 to 100 percent of WIA, reflecting the seriousness of wounds received. A 100 percent fill was used for KIA.

4. After two of the heavier contacts, representatives from AG met with the brigade S1 and battalion adjutants to discuss all facets of the replacement picture. This detailed coordination materially assisted in determining specific personnel requirements.

### (b) 173d Airborne Brigade.

1. Telephonic requests for replacement personnel were frequently submitted to USARV to keep them abreast of needs. Replacement

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

stream apparently was not capable of responding to brigade needs for airborne qualified personnel. As a result, troopers were levied from a subordinate infantry battalion not committed in the area of operations with extensive NVA contact. Personnel levied were reassigned in an attempt to equalize shortages in those battalions incurring substantial casualties. Due to the prolonged contact with the NVA, it was determined that internal realignment would not resolve the problem of personnel shortages. The decision was made to accept non-airborne replacements from USARV immediate resources.

2. The acceptance of non-airborne personnel did not immediately alleviate the shortages of personnel. The period for administrative processing (one day) and transition training (five days) delayed their dispatch to the combat area. Generally, there was a minimum of one week from the date a casualty was sustained until a replacement was present for duty in the foxhole.

#### 14. (C) LESSONS LEARNED AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Lessons Learned. The lessons learned that follow are in addition to those included in the participating unit's Combat Operations After Action Reports which are attached.

##### (1) Operations.

##### Air-Ground Coordination

Item: Air-ground coordination in a battle area with a high density of troop units.

Discussion: The relatively high density of maneuver units and supporting artillery and the large number of tactical air and gunship sorties employed during the "Battle for DAK TO" generated increased problems in air-ground coordination. The result was excessive "checkfires" of artillery at critical times when artillery support was required.

Observation: The problem of air safety from ground fires must be restudied with the objective of agreement on simplified measures which will allow maximum tactical benefit to be realized from both weapons systems. A study is in progress within this division, but as yet no concrete solutions have been developed.

##### Airlift of Medium Artillery

Item: Airlift of 155mm howitzers into otherwise inaccessible fire bases.

Discussion: One of the most valuable artillery positions in the battle was that of a 155mm howitzer battery airlifted into position by CH-54 "Flying Crane" helicopters. The battery was lifted into a fire base by the cranes

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

that would normally be inaccessible to medium artillery. The positioning of the artillery battery in the fire base provided the units in contact with medium artillery support that they would otherwise have been denied because of the rugged terrain and nearly non-existent road net in the area. From the advantageous location that they were airlifted into, the battery was in constant support of all three committed brigades.

Observation: In the jungles and mountains of the Central Highlands where roads and trafficable trails are not available units often must be committed out of the range of the medium artillery and therefore are supported only by light artillery. A unit that makes contact with the NVA is nearly always greatly outnumbered by the enemy and requires all the fire support available. The airlifting of 155mm howitzers into fire bases cut out of the jungle provides the infantrymen with additional support that is so valuable to him during a contact. Sufficient "Flying Cranes" should be made readily available to permit this flexible employment of medium artillery.

## (2) Logistics.

### Helicopter Hoists

Item: Hoists on Medevac helicopters for operations in the Central Highlands.

Discussion: Operations in the Central Highlands require the extensive use of hoists to evacuate wounded and dead from the battlefield. Extensive use results in rapid deterioration of the hoist and demands that frequent inspection be made to insure serviceability. When mass evacuation from the battlefield is required, Medevac helicopters operating in more favorable terrain are subject to being diverted to the critical area.

Observation: Units directed to provide Medevac helicopters to support operations in the Central Highlands must insure that each aircraft arrives with a serviceable hoist.

### Supply Requirements

Item: Forecasting supply requirements.

Discussion: During the initial phases of the "Battle for DAK TO" subordinate commands were late in submitting their requirements to the supporting FSA. Therefore, the FSA was late with its order to the sub-area command. Also some of the requests were unrealistically high. The result was that either some items were not able to be loaded prior to the convoy's departure or the high quantity of an item requested, usually artillery ammunition, prevented an equally needed item from being loaded due to the lack of sufficient transportation to meet all

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

the needs. This problem was resolved somewhat by requiring subordinate headquarters to submit requirements by 1600 hours to the G4 Forward who analyzed them and then submitted them to the FSA.

Observation: S4's must closely monitor the action taking place on the battlefield and require subordinate units to keep him abreast of ammunition levels, particularly the large caliber items. The S4 should develop experience factors in consumption as an aid in insuring that requests submitted are realistic.

## Vehicle Availability

Item: Decreasing turn-around time of vehicles moving supplies from rear areas to forward areas.

Discussion: When units are in heavy contact it follows that the size of convoys will increase. It becomes important that a maximum number of these vehicles be returned to the supply depot as soon as possible because the total number of vehicles available to support an operation generally remains fixed and they will be needed to move supplies the following day.

Observation: Turn-around time for resupply convoys can be effectively reduced by thru-putting truck loads of ammunition to individual gun sites. Advantage can be taken of MHE in the gun site area or, since the load at any individual site is normally small, it can be quickly off-loaded by hand. Ammunition personnel responsible for control of ammunition must insure that they record the load in the receipt and issue column of their records and collect the checker's form and the DA Form 581 from the driver delivering the ammunition and the unit receiving the ammunition. This method also eliminates the need to off-load ammunition at the forward ASP and subsequently on-load it on a unit vehicle. This system can be applied to other classes of supply also.

## Air Delivered Supplies

Item: Quick removal of air delivered supplies from airfields.

Discussion: When large quantities of supplies are being delivered by airlift invariably the receiving unit is unable to remove the supplies from the ramp as fast as the aerial port team is able to off-load the aircraft. The end result is that the aerial port team runs out of space to put the load and a safety hazard is created.

Observation: Removal of air delivered supplies from an airfield can be expedited by having S&D trailers lined up at the side of the ramp. As a trailer is loaded, a tractor can move it to the ASP for the off loading and return to the airfield with an empty trailer. This system requires only half the number of tractors as trailers.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## Sweaters

Item: The need for sweaters in the Central Highlands during the dry season.

Discussion: Sweaters are a necessity for troops operating in forward areas in the Central Highlands during the dry season. High altitudes and strong winds create an abnormally high wind-chill factor. While field jackets are satisfactory for rear base camp areas, they are too bulky for use in the forward areas and impede troop agility.

Observation: Sweaters should be requisitioned in sufficient quantity and in sufficient time to allow issues to be made to all maneuver task force personnel. Units subjected to being committed in the Central Highlands should maintain a sufficient stock of sweaters on hand to meet maneuver force requirements.

## Evacuation of Remains

Item: Evacuation of remains to mortuaries.

Discussion: It is difficult at times to evacuate remains to rear areas within a reasonable length of time after being processed by Graves Registration. Unless the base camp is close to a rear area, evacuation by air is the only recourse. Helicopters operate out forward during the day and normally return to rear area at night. Remains can be placed on them on their return flight. The drawback to this is that the wounded rightfully have priority over remains and are inevitably in far greater abundance. This priority also holds for evacuations from the battlefield. Therefore, it is possible for remains to be in forward areas up to 48 hours or more. Graves Registration seldom has the capacity to store the number of remains that will accrue in a two or three day period especially in periods of moderate to heavy contact.

Observation: It is incumbent upon the appropriate logistic supervisor to closely monitor actions on the battlefield so that an analysis can be made of evacuation requirements and available transport. Since helicopters are the only passenger carrying aircraft in forward areas early coordination is required to divert other type aircraft for evacuation of remains. The C7A aircraft normally used for courier service has been used for small requirements and has the advantage of being able to be used on short runways. C-123 and C-130 are excellent for mass evacuation, however are not as available as the division's own courier and therefore require advance coordination.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

b. Recommendations.

(1) It is recommended that:

(a) Familiarization with the controlling headquarters personnel status reporting procedures by the OPCON unit be accomplished as early as possible after knowledge of an impending mission becomes known.

(b) A more dependable communication system between the parent unit and subordinate unit, when subordinate unit is OPCON to another organization, be developed. Possibly an administrative code system would expedite the interchange of information.

(c) The theater replacement system earmark airborne personnel to provide a pool of personnel with varied qualifications to meet emergency situations.

(d) A system be established to provide feeder casualty reports to parent units from servicing medical facilities.

(e) CH-47, "Flying Crane", helicopters be made more readily available to lift medium artillery into otherwise inaccessible fire support bases.

(f) Future multi-channel VHF equipment designed for use at division level be capable of operating on frequencies down to 100 Mhz.

(g) The French Army mathematical method (Colonel Deygout's method) to determine path loss using the Graphoflex slide rule be included in the POI for systems engineering and planning at Army Signal Schools.

(h) The "lessons learned" contained in this report be made available to those individuals and agencies responsible for the training of personnel to be assigned to the Republic of VIETNAM.

(2) Appropriate recommendations may also be found in the lessons learned and in the subparagraph entitled "Problem Areas" in paragraph 13.

15. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

The "Battle for DAK TO" might well become the turning point of the war in the Central Highlands. It was in the same rugged, mountainous terrain south and southwest of DAK TO that had been used years before, by the VIET MINH to launch their attacks against KONTUM and vicinity that ultimately drove the French Army from the area, that the North VIETNAMESE Army B-3 Front commander assembled his forces.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MAOV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

He had secretly moved the 32d and 66th Regiments up from their CAMBODIAN base areas to join the 24th and 174th NVA Regiments already in the area. The 1st NVA Division Headquarters was the control headquarters. These were the forces the enemy intended to use in his scheme to overrun the DAK TO complex with its airfield, Special Forces CIDG Camp, supply dump, 42d ARVN Regimental Headquarters and concentration of civilian population that had grown around these installations.

The terrain in the area as it has been indicated previously is extremely rugged in this part of the Highlands. The Mountains are steep and covered with double and triple canopy jungle. The few open areas and valleys that show on the maps are choked with 20 to 30 feet high bamboo. The trees are thick hardwood trees that resist efforts to cut or blow them down, and so it becomes a monumental task to clear a one ship landing zone.

The weather throughout the entire battle favored our operations making it possible for our units to receive continuous air support from tactical air, gunships and Spooky.

Into this environment, based on considerable intelligence received from airborne sensors, long range reconnaissance patrols (LRRP's), agents and a single, but extremely important CHIEU HOI, we deployed our 1st Brigade and the 173d Airborne Brigade and, soon after, the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division. Six ARVN Battalions and several Mike Force and CIDG Companies worked in cooperation and coordination with our forces.

The enemy had prepared the battlefield well. Nearly every key terrain feature was heavily fortified with elaborate bunker and trench complexes. He had moved quantities of supplies and ammunition into the area. He was prepared to stay. The enemy's plan of battle was good. The 32d NVA Regiment was to occupy the ridge line south of DAK TO that commanded the DAK TO complex and the approaches leading to it. The 66th Regiment would assault the complex from the southwest and the 24th Regiment from the northeast. The attack was to be supported by the 122mm rockets and the mortars of the 40th Artillery Regiment. The 174th Regiment was to be in reserve.

Through our intelligence sources and the knowledgeable CHIEU HOI we were able to pretty well construct the enemy's plans. With this knowledge our overall strategy was developed. It was based on a large counter-offensive against the enemy forces to the southwest as follows:

- a. Clear the east-west ridge line immediately south of DAK TO and Highway 512.
- b. Locate and engage the enemy's lead combat elements.

67

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GC

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

- c. Project additional forces into the enemy's rear by combat assault to interrupt his lines of communications and supply bases.
- d. Use all available air and artillery on enemy trails and avenues of approach.
- e. Utilize ARVN combat elements to secure the area north and northeast of DAK TO, and to locate and fix the NVA 24th Regiment beyond the range of the artillery.
- f. Screen the area west with Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRP's) and CIDG units.
- g. Maintain one battalion in reaction posture either in division central reserve or in a position where it could immediately be extracted and deployed to areas of immediate danger.

Our units moved out on the offensive, before the enemy plan could gain momentum. We pre-empted his offensive and caught him while he was still moving up and arrested his drive. As the battle developed we began to force him back, but the well trained and well equipped NVA was stubborn and gave way slowly. They made counter-attacks, that were local, but with "Banzai" type ferocity, especially against those units that threatened his lines of communication and supply.

Constant pressure was maintained on the enemy by our ground units supported by continuous air and artillery fires, that not only hit at the enemy fortified positions but at supply areas and avenues of withdrawal and reinforcement as well. We continued the pressure until the NVA was defeated and forced to withdraw from the area.

While our units were driving the enemy from the area southwest of DAK TO, the ARVN forces met the 24th NVA Regiment moving down from the northeast and soundly defeated them.

As it always is in ground warfare, the infantryman bore the lion's share of the burden of combat. He fought the NVA every foot of the way over that rugged terrain and he did superbly. Tough, smart and with incomparable endurance under the strain of continuous combat he slugged it out with the enemy and came out the winner.

The infantrymen had the maximum support in his efforts. Aircraft from the 7th US Air Force, Navy, Marines and VNAF provided close and continuous air support. Helicopter gunships added their rocket and machine gun fire to the support effort. The artillery - light, medium and heavy - kept up a steady pounding of the enemy throughout the battle. The logisticians

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDH-GO

3 January 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

transported and issued the enormous quantity of supplies consumed by the units.

Those mentioned are only a part of the team at DAK TO. It was the professionalism and "can do" spirit displayed by all who participated that signaled the success of the FVMAF in the "Battle for DAK TO".



W. R. PEERS  
Major General, USA  
Commanding

CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32) (U)  
"Battle for DAK TO"

## DISTRIBUTION:

1 - ACSFOR - DA	1 - CO, 3d Bn, 8th Inf
1 - OCMH - DA	1 - CO, 1st Bn, 12th Inf
4 - USACDC	1 - CO, 3d Bn, 12th Inf
2 - USCONARC	1 - CO, 1st Bn, 14th Inf
1 - CINCUSARPAC	1 - CO, 1st Bn, 22d Inf
1 - COMUSMACV	1 - CO, 1st Bn, 35th Inf
1 - DCG, USARV	1 - CO, 2d Bn, 35th Inf
2 - COST ANAL STUDY GP, USARV	1 - CO, 4th Avn Bn
6 - CG, I FFORCE V	1 - CO, 4th Engr Bn
1 - CG, ROK V	1 - CO, 124th Sig Bn
1 - Comdt, Armed Forces Staff College	1 - CO, 4th Med Bn
1 - Comdt, Army War College	1 - CO, 4th S&T Bn
1 - Comdt, C & GS	1 - CO, 704th Maint Bn
1 - Comdt, Armor Sch	1 - ACofS, G1
1 - Comdt, Arty Sch	1 - ACofS, G2
1 - Comdt, Avn Sch	1 - ACofS, G3
1 - Comdt, Chemical Center & School	1 - ACofS, G4
1 - Comdt, Engr Sch	1 - ACofS, G5
2 - Comdt, Inf Sch	1 - Comdt, 4th Div Repl Tng Det
1 - Comdt, Sig Sch	1 - Chemical Officer
1 - Comdt, USMA	1 - TACP (ALO), 4th Inf Div
1 - EG, Ft Polk, La	30 - CO, 29th Mil Hist Det
1 - CG, 1st Air Cav Div	1 - AG File
1 - CG, Americal Div	
1 - CG, ROK Capital Div	
1 - CG, 9th ROK Inf Div	
1 - CG, 173d Abn Bde (Sep)	
1 - CG, 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div	
1 - CG, 196th Lt Inf Bde	
1 - DSA, II Corps	
1 - SA, 24th STZ	
1 - CO, CDC, CBR Agency	
1 - CO, 52d Arty Gp	
1 - CO, 937th Engr Gp	
1 - CO, 52d Avn Bn	
1 - CO, 20th Engr Bn	
1 - CO, 5th USSF Gp	
1 - CO, Co B, 5th USSF	
2 - CO, 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div	
2 - CO, 2d Bde, 4th Inf Div	
2 - CO, 3d Bde, 4th Inf Div	
2 - CO, Div Arty	
2 - CO, DISCOM	
1 - CO, 1st Sqdn, 10th Cav	
1 - CO, 2d Sqdn, 1st Cav	
1 - CO, 7th Sqdn, 17th Air Cav	
1 - CO, 1st Bn, 69th Armor	
1 - CO, 1st Bn, 8th Inf	
1 - CO, 2d Bn, 8th Inf	

UNCLASSIFIED

# CONFIDENTIAL

## Combat Operations After Action Report

### BATTLE FOR DAK TO

#### Inclosures

<u>Number</u>	<u>Title</u>
1	Reporting Officer
2	Task Organisation
3	Attacks by Indirect Fire Tab A - Overlay
4	Chronological Summary of Significant Activities
5	B-52 Strike Areas
6	After Action Report, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division
7	After Action Report, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
8	After Action Report, 1st Brigade 1st Air Cavalry Division
9	After Action Report, 24th Special Tactical Zone
10	After Action Report, 4th Infantry Division Artillery
11	After Action Report, 4th Aviation Battalion
12	After Action Report, 52d Combat Aviation Battalion
13	After Action Report, 299th Engineer Battalion
14	After Action Report, 124th Signal Battalion
15	Abbreviations Used in Text
16	Map 1:50,000, Series L7014 Sheets 6538 II, III

CONFIDENTIAL



# UNCLASSIFIED

## REPORTING OFFICER

Principal commanders and senior staff officers participating in the operation were: (All personnel listed were present during the entire period unless otherwise indicated)

### 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION HEADQUARTERS

CG	MG	Peers, William R
ADC-A	BG	Connors, Robert E
ADC-B	COL	Hickman, Don R
CofS	COL	Jackson, Charles A

### General Staff, 4th Infantry Division

ACofS, G1	LTC	Kunze, Melton H	
ACofS, G2	LTC	Smith, John A Jr	28 Nov - 1 Dec
	LTC	Storey, Robert	25 Oct - 27 Nov
ACofS, G3	LTC	Livsey, William J	
ACofS, G4	LTC	Tombaugh, William W	
ACofS, G5	LTC	Bentz, Harold F Jr	

### 1ST BRIGADE, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION

CO	COL	Johnson, Richard H
S3	MAJ	Edmonds, Maurice O

### 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry

CO	LTC	Hendrix, James R	4 Nov - 1 Dec
	LTC	Vollmer, John P	25 Oct - 3 Nov

### 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry

CO	LTC	Belnap, Glen D
----	-----	----------------

### 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry

CO	LTC	Madison, John H
----	-----	-----------------

### 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry

CO	LTC	Birch, Harold B
----	-----	-----------------

Inclosure 1

# UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

6th Battalion, 20th Artillery

CO LTC Kenny, Donald E

173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)

CG BG Schweiter, Leo H

S3 MAJ Fisher, George E  
MAJ Daniel, Bartow D

12 Nov - 1 Dec  
25 Oct - 11 Nov

1st Battalion, 503d Infantry

CO LTC Schumacher, David J

2d Battalion, 503d Infantry

CO MAJ Steverson, James R

4th Battalion, 503d Infantry

CO LTC Johnson, James H

3d Battalion, 319th Artillery

CO LTC Drake, Charles F

Troop E, 17th Cavalry

CO MAJ Mitchell, Corless

173d Engineer Company

CO CPT Weber, Thomas E

173d Support Battalion

CO LTC Weisinger, Sherman

1ST BRIGADE, 1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION

CO COL Rattan, Donald V

2d Battalion, 8th Cavalry

CO LTC Stannard, John E

1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry

CO LTC French, Daniel W

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

2d Battalion, 19th Artillery

CO MAJ Gillespie, Vernon W Jr  
Company A, 8th Engineer Battalion

CO CPT Childress, John  
Battery A, 2d Battalion, 29th Artillery

CO MAJ Woliver, Clarence  
Company B, 229th Aviation Battalion

CO MAJ Varner, Veloy J

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION ARTILLERY

CO COL McAlister, Robert C

S3 LTC Weall, Robert H

5th Battalion, 16th Artillery

CO LTC Evans, Henry C

4TH INFANTRY DIVISION SUPPORT COMMAND

CO COL Blewett, Rex R

S3 MAJ Risse, William

SPECIAL TROOPS

2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry

CO LTC Gay, Joseph M Jr

1st Battalion, 69th Armor

CO LTC Grant, William D

4th Aviation Battalion

CO LTC Mierswa, Myles 5 Nov - 1 Dec  
LTC Holloman, Robert A 25 Oct - 4 Nov

4th Engineer Battalion

CO LTC Lee, Emmett C

UNCLASSIFIED

124th Signal Battalion

CO

LTC

Spitz, William M

OTHER UNITS

52d Combat Aviation Battalion

CO

LTC

Lukert Edward P

299th Engineer Battalion (C)

CO

LTC

Aguilar, D. I.

UNCLASSIFIED

# CONFIDENTIAL

## TASK ORGANIZATION

1. (U) Detached units. The 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division was attached to the Americal Division and located at DUC PHO in QUANG NGAI Province throughout the period of this report.

2. (U) Attached units.

- a. 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry
- b. 374th Radio Research Company
- c. Team 8, 41st Civil Affairs Company
- d. Team 9, 41st Civil Affairs Company
- e. HE Team 6, 245th Psyops Company
- f. HE Team 9, 245th Psyops Company
- g. Company E, 20th Infantry (less operational control)
- h. Observing Team Nr 3, OL-4, Detachment 31, 5th Weather Squadron

(USAF)

3. (C) Organization for Combat.

a. Control headquarters was Headquarters, 4th Infantry Division.

b. Task organization at the beginning of the "Battle for DAK TO" as set forth in OPOD 37-67, 100800H October 1967 and FRAGO 2-37-67, 210600H October 1967.

### 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div

1-8 Inf  
3-8 Inf  
3-12 Inf  
1-10 Cav (-) (OPCON)  
C/3-6 Arty (DS)  
Co A, 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
Plat, 4th MP Co (DS)  
TACP

1-69 Armor (-)  
A/3-6 Arty (DS)  
TACP

### 2-1 Cav (-)

Div Arty  
5-16 Arty

### Div Troops

4th Avn Bn  
4th Engr Bn (-)  
124th Sig (-)  
43d Cml Det  
33d Inf Plat (Sct Dog)  
50th Inf Plat (Sct Dog)  
4th MI Det  
4th Div TACP

### 2d Bde, 4th Inf Div

1-12 Inf  
1-22 Inf  
4-42 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co B (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
Plat, 4th MP CO (DS)  
TACP

Inclosure 2

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

TF 2-8  
2-8 Inf (Mech)  
Plat, 1-69 Armor (OPCON)  
Plat, 2-1 Cav (OPCON)

DISCOM

c. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 4-37-67 effective 291200 October 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
3-8 Inf  
3-12 Inf  
Plat, 1-69 Armor (OPCON)  
Plat, 2-1 Cav (OPCON)  
6-29 Arty (-) (DS)  
CO A (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

TF 1-22  
1-22 Inf (-)  
2-8 Inf (MECH)  
1-10 Cav (-) (OPCON)  
3-6 Arty (-) (DS)  
2 Plat, 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

2d Bde, 4th Inf Div  
1-8 Inf  
1-12 Inf  
2 Co, 1-22 Inf  
4-42 Arty (-) (DS)  
TACP

2-1 Cav (-)

Div Arty  
5-16 Arty

Div Troops

DISCOM

1-69 Armor (-)  
A/3-6 Arty (DS)

d. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 5-37-67, DTG 011450Z November 1967, effective 1 November 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
add: 4-503 Inf (OPCON)

e. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 6-37-67, DTG 061200H November 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
3-8 Inf  
3-12 Inf  
1-42 ARVN (OPCON) (eff 7 Nov)  
Co B (-), 1-69 Armor (OPCON)  
Plat, 2-1 Cav (OPCON)  
6-29 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co A (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

2d Bde, 4th Inf Div  
1-8 Inf  
1-12 Inf  
2 Co, 1-22 Inf  
4-42 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co B (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

173d Abn Bde (-)

1-503 Inf  
2-503 Inf  
4-503 Inf  
Trp E, 17th Cav  
23 MF Co (OPCON)  
26 MF Co (OPCON)  
3-319 Arty (-)  
173d Engr Co (-)

TF 22  
1-22 Inf (-)  
2-8 Inf (Mech)  
1-10 Cav (-) (OPCON)  
3-6 Arty (-) (DS)  
2 Plat, 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

2-1 Cav (-)

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

1-69 Armor (-)  
A/3-6 Arty (DS)

Div Arty  
5-16 Arty

Div Troops

DISCOM

f. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 7-37-67, DTG 090525Z November 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
add: 1-8 Inf (eff 10 Nov)

2d Bde, 4th Inf Div  
delete: 1-8 Inf (eff 10 Nov)  
add: 1-22 Inf (eff 9 Nov)

173d Abn Bde  
add: 1 Plat B/1-69 Armor

g. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 8-37-67, DTG 111145Z November 1967.

Div Troops  
add: 1-12 Cav (OPCON)

h. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 9-37-67, DTG 131400H November 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
1-8 Inf  
3-8 Inf  
3-12 Inf  
D/1-12 Cav  
B/1-69 Armor (-) (OPCON)  
Plat, 2-1 Cav (OPCON)  
6-29 Arty (DS)  
Co A (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

2d Bde, 4th Inf Div  
1-12 Inf  
1-22 Inf  
4-42 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co B (-), 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

173d Abn Bde (-)  
1-503 Inf  
2-503 Inf  
4-503 Inf  
Plat, B/1-69 Armor (OPCON)  
Trp E, 17th Cav  
23 MF Co (OPCON)  
26 MF Co (OPCON)  
3-319 Arty (-)  
173d Engr Co (-)  
TACP

TF 22  
2-8 Inf (Mech)  
1-10 Cav (-) (OPCON)  
3-6 Arty (-) (DS)  
2 Plat, 4th Engr Bn (DS)  
TACP

1-69 Armor (-)  
A/3-6 Arty (DS)

2-1 Cav (-)

Div Arty  
5-16 Arty

1st Bde, 1st ACD  
2-8 Cav  
1-12 Cav (eff 16 Nov)  
2-19 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co A (-), 8th Engr Bn  
TACP

Div Troops

DISCOM

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

i. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 10-37-67, DTG 220810Z  
November 1967 effective 20 November 1967.

1st Bde, 4th Inf Div  
add: 1-12 Inf (-) (eff 20 Nov)

173d Abn Bde  
add: 2 Cos, 1-12 Inf (OPCON) (eff. 20 Nov)

2d Bde, 4th Inf Div  
delete: 4-39 Inf (OPCON) (eff 21 Nov)

delete: 1st Bde, 1st ACD (OPCON to 1st ACD eff 25 Nov)  
2-8 Cav  
2-19 Arty (-) (DS)  
Co A (-), 8th Engr Bn  
TACP

Div Troops  
add: 1-12 Cav (eff 25 Nov)  
Btry, 2-19 Arty (DS)

j. Task organization as changed by FRAGO 11-37-67, DTG 300315Z  
November 1967.

Div Troops  
add: 7-17 Cav (-) (GS)

# CONFIDENTIAL



**CONFIDENTIAL**  
**ATTACKS BY INDIRECT FIRE IN THE DAK TO AREA**

<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ROUNDS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
November 3	B/3-12	YB999161	unk	unk
4	A&B/3-12	ZB000161	unk	60mm
5	A/3-12	YB999157	3	60mm
6	B/4-503	YB853187	unk	unk
7	A&B/3-8	YB900148	unk	unk
7	B/4-503	YB853187	unk	unk
7	B&C/4-503	YB849199	unk	unk
8	A&D/3-8	YB900148	12	unk
8	3-8 FSB	YB933188	10	60mm
8	C/4-503	YB852188	20	unk
9	D/3-8	YB982169	unk	unk
9	1-503 FSB	YB885185	18	unk
9	DAK TO	ZB004217	5-7	unk
9	A/1-503	YB854185	18	unk
10	B/3-8	YB934187	unk	unk
11	C7D/3-8	YB900149	unk	unk
11	A&D/3-8	YB825184	unk	unk
12	B,C,D/3-8	YB897150	6-8	unk
12	DAK TO	ZB018219	29	unk
12	A/2-503	YB822159	unk	unk
13	C&D/3-8	YB897150	57	82&60mm
13	B,C,D/3-8	YB896149	unk	unk
13	DAK TO	ZB018219	1	unk
13	1-8	YB957149	1	unk
13	C/3-8	YB896149	2	unk
13	A&B/2-503	YB810149	12	82mm
13	D/2-503	YB821159	10	82mm
14	A/3-8	YB934187	3	unk
15	1-503 FSB	YB855189	72	82mm
15	DAK TO	ZB045225	82	81&82mm
16	173 ABN	ZB046210	unk	unk
17	1-8 FSB	YB910122	30	unk
17	2-503 FSB	YB821159	10-12	82mm

Inclosure 3

**CONFIDENTIAL**

# CONFIDENTIAL

<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>ROUNDS</u>	<u>TYPE</u>
November				
18	1-8 FSB	YB910122	4-6	82mm
18	C&D/1-503	YB848262	unk	60mm
19	B/3-12	YB946148	20	unk
19	A,C,D/2-503	YB798138	3	unk
20	D/1-8	YB910122	2	82mm
20	C/2-503	YB797136	6-7	60mm
21	DAK TO	ZB004217	9	unk
21	1-8 FSB	YB910122	3	unk
21	A,B,C/4-503	YB799139	25-31	82&122mm
21	A,C/2-503	YB799135	unk	unk
22	1-8 FSB	YB910122	8	82mm
23	1-8 FSB	YB910122	10	unk
23	B/4-503	YB798135	unk	unk
23	B/4-503	YB798136	unk	82&60mm
23	A,B/4-503	YB796135	unk	unk
24	1-8 FSB	YB910122	12	82mm
24	1-12 FSB	YB796135	25-30	60mm
25	3-12 FSB	YB875075	25	60&82mm
26	1-8 FSB	YB910122	40	82mm
26	1-12 FSB	YB821159	unk	unk
26	A,D/1-12	YB795134	unk	unk
26	C/1-12	YB795130	unk	unk
26	3-12 FSB	YB875074	50-60	82mm
27	3-12 FSB	YB875074	4	82mm
27	D/1-503	YB808182	4	unk
28	3-12 FSB	YB875074	1	unk
29				
29	A/1-12	YB795134	3	unk
December				
1	2-503 FSB	YB873258	20-30	82mm&122mm

# CONFIDENTIAL

19  
21  
22  
23  
24  
25  
26

15

17  
20

18

84  
YB  
13

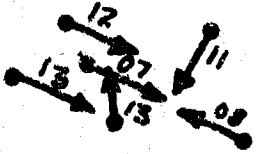
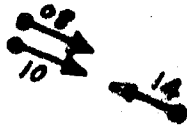
14

1

MORTAR ATK  
842262  
NOV

MORTAR ROCKET ATK  
YB 873258  
1 DEC

BATTLE FOR  
ATTACKS BY  
MAP 1:50,000  
SHEETS 6538

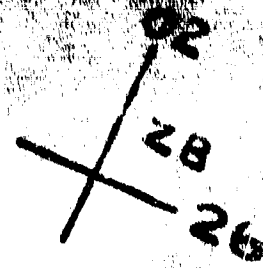


TAB A TO INCLOSURE 3

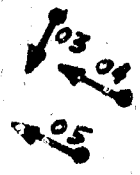
CONFIDENTIAL

2

FOR DAK TO  
KS BY INDIRECT FIRE  
50,000 SERIES L7014  
S 6538 II, III, 6637 IV



DAK TO  
09 → B



MORTAR ATTACKS ON  
KONTUM 15 & 27 NOV



3

# CONFIDENTIAL

## CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACTIVITIES

### BATTLE FOR DAK TO

25 October. Task Force 2d Battalion 8th Infantry (Mech) conducted operations in AO Spaatz (DAK TO and vicinity).

26 October. 3d Battalion 12th Infantry departed area west of Jackson Hole and moved overland to Camp Enari for further redistribution.

27 October. One company 3d Battalion 12th Infantry moved overland to DAK TO. 3d Battalion 8th Infantry began moving units back to Camp Enari for redistribution. One company from Task Force 2d Battalion 8th Infantry departed DAK TO and moved overland to Camp Enari.

28 October. 3d Battalion 12th Infantry completed move to DAK TO and assumed responsibility for AO Spaatz. 3d Battalion 8th Infantry completed move to Camp Enari. Task Force 2d Battalion 8th Infantry relieved of AO Spaatz moved to Camp Enari.

29 October. 1st Brigade CP moved to AO Spaatz and assumed responsibility for the AO. Two companies of the 3d Battalion 8th Infantry moved overland to DAK TO.

30 October. 3d Battalion 8th Infantry completed movement to DAK TO.

31 October.

1 November.

2 November. At YB887133 Reconno Patrol 1E made contact with a force of unknown size resulting in one US KIA. A helicopter attempting to extract the patrol received ground fire resulting in two US WIA.

3 November. At YB999161 a platoon from Company B, 3d Battalion 12th Infantry, made contact with a force of unknown size in bunkers. Four NVA were killed and six US wounded.

4 November. Company A, 3d Battalion 8th Infantry made contact with five NVA at 0950 hours and at 1120 hours at YB913143 with another NVA force of unknown size: the contacts resulted in two US KIA and four US WIA. Enemy losses were eight killed. At 1154 hours at ZB000161 Companies A and B, 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry, made contact with a well dug-in, estimated NVA battalion and received heavy AW mortar and B-40 rocket fire. Twenty-five US soldiers were wounded, with enemy losses unknown.

5 November. Companies A and B, 3d Battalion 12th Infantry, killed nine NVA at YB995162. Reconno Patrol 2D found six graves with six NVA bodies at AQ792491. They were believed killed by artillery on 3 November.

Inclosure 4

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

6 November. At 1444 hours Company B, 4th Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry conducted a combat assault at YB853187 and at 1530 hours began receiving heavy AW, SA and mortar fire which continued until 2215 hours. At 1457 hours Company D also made contact and after Company A linked up with Company D at 1900 hours both companies received sporadic SA fire until 2030 hours. At 1905 hours Company C also came into contact and received SA fire. During these actions 15 US were killed and 37 wounded. Enemy losses were 18 NVA KIA and 20 AK-47's, one CHICOM heavy machine gun, and one loaded B-40 rocket launcher were captured. At 2355 hours at YB911143 Companies A and D, 3d Battalion 8th Infantry received SA and rocket and mortar fire from the west resulting in one US KIA and two US WIA.

7 November. At 0502 hours at YB853187 Company B, 4th Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry received mortar rocket and SA fire resulting in three US KIA. Two NVA were killed in the exchange. At 0745 hours Company B killed two NVA snipers. In a sweep of the previous day's contact area 82 additional NVA bodies were found. Companies A and D, 3d Battalion 8th Infantry received SA, AW, mortar and B-40 rocket fire at YB900148 resulting in 10 US KIA, 35 US WIA. The fire was returned killing 12 NVA.

8 November. At 0817 hours at YB900148 Companies A and D, 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry received 12 rounds of mortar fire resulting in eight US WIA. At 1700 hours at the same location they again received mortar fire and at 1840 hours a heavy ground attack started and continued until 2145 hours. During the action 11 US were killed, 38 wounded and 232 NVA were killed. At 1145 hours at YB840178 Company C, 4th Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found 3 NVA bodies. At YB849188 Company C, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry killed 1 NVA. At AQ907420 Companies A and C, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found 1 grave with 6 NVA bodies 4-5 days old. Five US were wounded when 20 rounds of mortar fire fell on the position of Company C, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry at YB852188.

9 November. At 0710 hours at YB982167 Companies C and D, 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry made contact with an estimated NVA company resulting in one US KIA, 11 US WIA, and 12 NVA KIA.

10 November. At YB896149 a 52d CAB gunship received ground fire and crash landed, resulting in two WIA, one MIA and the destruction of the aircraft. At 1315 hours at YB982169 Company C, 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry fired at two individuals carrying an 82mm mortar tube and base plate. One NVA was killed and the base plate was captured. At YB850186 Company A, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found a bunker complex with six NVA bodies estimated to have been killed within the previous 24 hours by mortar fire. At 1554 hours at YB982169 Companies C and D, 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry made contact with a force of unknown size resulting in six US KIA, 24 US WIA and 11 NVA KIA.

11 November. At ZA200965 Troop C, 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry and a work party from Company B, 299th Engineer Battalion made contact with a force of unknown size, resulting in two US KIA, eight US WIA, 13 VC KIA, two VCC. At 0830 hours at YB877257 a 3/4 ton vehicle hit a mine, seriously wounding one US. At 0830 hours Companies A, C and D, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry made contact with an NVA force of unknown size at two separate

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

locations. The contact continued until 1715 hours resulting in 21 US KIA 128 US WIA and two NVAC. At 1307 hours Companies B, C and D, 3d Battalion, 3th Infantry received mortar fire followed by a heavy ground attack from the north. The contact continued until 1903 hours and resulted in 18 US KIA, 118 US WIA, 92 NVA KIA and one NVAC. Companies C and D, 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry found two NVA bodies from the 10 November contact.

12 November. At 1020 hours at YB822159 Companies A and B, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry made contact which continued until 1430 hours, resulting in one US KIA, 36 US WIA and four NVA KIA. At 1105 hours at YB 847187 Companies A, C and D, 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry made contact which continued until 1330 hours, resulting in three US WIA, six NVA KIA, and one NVAC. At 1705 hours the 1st Brigade CP area received 44 rounds of mortar fire. During the attack four US were wounded and five vehicles damaged. At YB803334 a recondo patrol killed two NVA.

13 November. At 1430 hours at YB998153 a reconnaissance patrol from the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry killed two NVA while one US was wounded. At 1645 hours Companies A and B, 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry received mortar, rocket and SA fire. At the same time the battalion FSB was subjected to a ground attack accompanied by mortar rocket and SA fire. The contact continued until 1850 hours, resulting in 23 US KIA, 21 US WIA and 13 NVA KIA. At 1815 hours the FSB of the 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry at YB855189 received mortar fire which wounded six US.

14 November. At 1500 hours at ZB138292 the 3d Battalion 42d ARVN Regiment made contact with an estimated two NVA companies. The contact resulted in 10 ARVN KIA, 19 ARVN WIA, two ARVN MIA and eight NVA KIA.

15 November. At 0845 hours the airstrip at DAK TO received approximately 12 rounds of mortar fire, two C-130 aircraft were destroyed and one damaged. From 1549 hours to 1750 hours DAK TO received 78 rounds of mortar fire, most of them landing in the vicinity of the ammunition supply point and large portions of the ammunition caught fire. The 173d Airborne Brigade found an additional 17 NVA KIA from the 11 and 13 November contacts. At 1315 hours at YB825117, the 26th MIKE Force Company killed one NVA. 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found eight NVA bodies from the 13 November contact.

16 November. At 2025 hours at YB877104 Recondo Patrol 1A called artillery on a group of NVA moving on a trail and found seven NVA KIA. The 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found five NVA bodies from the contact of 13 November.

17 November. At 0830 hours at ZB130311 the 3d ARVN Airborne Battalion made a contact resulting in 10 ARVN KIA and 50 ARVN WIA. At 1011 hours at YB989153 Companies A and C, 3d Battalion 12th Infantry received SA fire from Hill 1338. Air and artillery support were called in and at 1718 hours the companies took the hill. One US was killed and 22 wounded. Enemy losses were 49 NVA KIA and one NVAC. At YB849263 the 26th Mike Force Company made contact with an estimated NVA platoon resulting in one US and four CIDG WIA and one NVA KIA.

3

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

18 November. At 0715 hours at ZB153135 an APC from Troop C. 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry received one round of B-40 rocket fire resulting in one US KIA and three US WIA. At 1110 hours at YB848262 the 23d Mike Force Company received sniper fire resulting in one CIDG KIA. At 1200 hours at YB796135 the 26th Mike Force Company received AW fire which wounded six CIDG. At 1320 hours Company C 2d Battalion 8th Cavalry made contact when they discovered a NVA bunker complex. During the contact three US were wounded and one NVA KIA. At 1320 hours at YB848262 Company D, 4th Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry and the 23d Mike Force Company received two rounds of mortar fire resulting in six US KIA 15 US WIA three CIDG KIA and 13 CIDG WIA. At 1440 hours Company A 1st Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry made contact at YB803161. The contact which continued until 1920 hours resulted in six US KIA 29 US WIA 51 NVA KIA and one NVAC. In the vicinity of the 1st Battalion's FSB a patrol killed one NVA and found four NVA bodies. At 1527 hours in the vicinity of Hill 1338 a B-40 rocket round impacted in the trees spraying shrapnel on the positions of the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry and injuring 15. In the same location friendly artillery wounded two US. The 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions and the 3d Battalion 42d ARVN Regiment, in heavy contact northeast of DAK TO for several days reported total friendly casualties of 32 KIA 131 WIA and three MIA.

19 November. At 1800 hours at ZB153085 an engineer reconnaissance party in two vehicles received SA fire resulting in one US WIA and three enemy KIA. At 0815 hours at YB878105 Reconno Patrol 1A made contact with 20-25 NVA. Two US were wounded in the action. At 1040 hours at YB798138 three companies of the 2d Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry received sniper fire as they moved up Hill 875. They pulled back and called in air and artillery support. Companies C and D came under attack by 200-300 NVA and Company A made heavy contact clearing the LZ. The contact which was not broken until 1910 hours resulted in 72 US KIA 85 US WIA and three US MIA. An undetermined number of the casualties resulted when an aircraft in support dropped a bomb near the US position. From 1300 to 1600 hours four UH-1H aircraft of the 335th Assault Helicopter Company were shot down in the battalion FSB. Two US were wounded in these actions. The aircraft were successfully extracted. At 1045 hours at YB863078 a platoon from Company D 1st Battalion 8th Infantry made contact with a force of unknown size resulting in four US KIA five US WIA and four NVA KIA. At 1225 hours Company B 2d Battalion 8th Cavalry conducted a combat assault at ZB110225 and met resistance resulting in three US KIA eight US WIA and four NVA KIA. At YB984152 the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry made contact with the enemy. Contact was broken and followed up at 1600 hours by 20 rounds of mortar fire from the north. The results of the contact and the subsequent mortar attack were four US KIA seven US WIA and 18 NVA KIA. At approximately 2300 hours at ZB103219 an Air Force F-4C crashed apparently as a result of target fixation. One pilot was killed. The other pilot succeeded in bailing out and was rescued. At 2340 hours at YB847307 an ambush patrol of Company D 1st Battalion 12th Infantry killed two NVA with a claymore mine. The 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Battalions made contact in the vicinity of ZB1331. The 2d Battalion reported 19 ARVN KIA 75 ARVN WIA and four NVA KIA. The 3d Battalion reported 15 ARVN KIA 86 ARVN WIA 47 NVA KIA and one NVAC. A sweep of the battlefield later brought the total enemy losses to 248 NVA KIA.

4  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

20 November. At 0930 hours in the vicinity of ZB9666 an aircraft from Troop C 7th Squadron 17th Cavalry was shot down and destroyed with negative casualties. Elements of the 4th Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry swept the area of the 19 November contact and found graves with 39 NVA bodies. At the 2d Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry FSB two UH-1H aircraft were shot down with negative casualties

21 November. From 0645 to 0915 hours at YB799139 three companies of the 4th Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry received 30-31 rounds of 120mm mortar fire resulting in five US KIA and 47 US WIA. At YB798161 Company C 1st Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry found three NVA bodies. At 1046 hours at ZB109217 the Reconnaissance Platoon 2d Battalion 8th Cavalry made contact with an estimated 20 NVA and received AW and B-40 rocket fire resulting in one US KIA and two US WIA. At 1550 hours Companies A and B 4th Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry made heavy contact on Hill 875. The contact which continued until 1900 hours resulted in seven US KIA 38 US WIA and four US MIA. At 1610 hours in the vicinity of ZA1232 a VNAF A1E aircraft went down of an undetermined cause. The forward air controller spotted the wreckage and reported no survivors. At ZB109217 Company B 2d Battalion 8th Cavalry found five NVA bodies

22 November. While moving to Hill 1294 at YB994144 Company A 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found two NVA bodies one 60mm mortar tube and 12 B-40 rocket rounds. Company D 1st Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry killed one NVA and captured one at YB796156. At 1340 hours in the same area Company C, 1st Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry made contact with a force of unknown size, resulting in one US KIA one US WIA and one NVA KIA. At the same time at YB797159 Company C made contact with an estimated NVA squad and killed one NVA. Three companies of the 2d Battalion (Abn) and three companies of the 3d Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry policed the battlefield of the 21 November contact and found 73 NVA bodies. At 1440 hours in the vicinity of YB7913 a 2 75mm rocket fired from a gunship supporting a company of the 1st Battalion 12th Infantry impacted near US personnel, wounding nine. At 2015 hours at ZB174014 a truck from the 1st Battalion 69th Armor was hit with a B-40 rocket round wounding two US.

23 November. At 0900 hours at YB985129 Company B 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found two NVA bodies. At YB798138 Company A 4th Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry made contact with a force of unknown size resulting in 10 NVA KIA. At 1025 hours near the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry FSB a 52d Combat Aviation Battalion UH-1H received ground fire and crashed at the firebase, resulting in one US WIA. At 1515 hours in the vicinity of Hill 875 a UH-1H aircraft from the 335th Assault Helicopter Company was hit by ground fire and crashed, resulting in no casualties but the aircraft was destroyed. At 1658 hours at ZB106228 Company C 2d Battalion 8th Cavalry found one NVA body. In the vicinity of Hill 875 elements of the 4th Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry found 17 NVA bodies

24 November. At 1020 hours on highway 19E at AR958493 a truck convoy was ambushed by an estimated two NVA companies. Two troops of the 2d Squadron, 1st Cavalry reacted quickly killing 42 NVA and capturing six. During the action four US were killed, 11 wounded, six 5 ton trucks were destroyed, and four damaged. At 1320 hours at YB805152 Company D 1st

5  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry found one NVA body. At 1602 hours at YB 300158 Company B, 1st Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry made contact with a force of unknown size, resulting in one NVA KIA. At 1945 hours at YB876-074 Company D, 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found four NVA bodies.

25 November. At 0720 hours 1st Battalion 12th Infantry FSB received sniper fire, resulting in one US KIA. At YB797138 the battalion found two NVA bodies. At 0845 hours at ZB101296 a 20th Engineer vehicle was hit by a rifle grenade, resulting in two US WIA three ARVN WIA one Korean KIA, and one Vietnamese civilian KIA. At 0900 hours at ZB092302 another 20th Engineer vehicle was hit by an unknown type round, resulting in one US WIA one VN WIA, and one VN KIA. At 1255 hours at YB797168 Company B, 1st Battalion (Abn) 503d Infantry killed one NVA. Company D killed one NVA at 1230 hours at YB797158 and Company A found one NVA body at YB800158. From 1237 hours to 1530 hours the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry FSB received sporadic mortar fire, resulting in one US KIA and two US WIA. The 173d Airborne Brigade in conjunction with two Mike Force companies made a sweep in the vicinity of Hill 875 and found an additional 166 NVA bodies from the contacts of 19 November through 24 November. At 1730 hours at ZB915347 the 22d ARVN Ranger Battalion made contact with an estimated NVA company, resulting in four ARVN KIA 16 ARVN WIA 23 NVA KIA and one NVAC.

26 November. At 1732 hours on Hill 1030 Company C 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found one NVA body and Company B found one NVA body at YB878084. From 1742 hours to 1930 hours the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry FSB received 50-60 rounds of 82mm mortar fire, resulting in one US KIA and 10 US WIA. From 1800 hours to 1930 hours the 1st Battalion 12th Infantry FSB and three companies in the vicinity of Hill 875 received an unknown number of mortar rounds, resulting in four US KIA and five US WIA. At YB845145 a reconnaissance patrol from the 1st Battalion 12th Infantry found two NVA bodies, believed to have been killed by artillery.

27 November. At 0320 hours at ZA219915 a bridge security team manned by elements of the 1st Battalion 69th Armor received SA and rocket fire, resulting in six US WIA. The unit returned fire and killed two VMC. At 0830 hours the 3d Battalion 12th Infantry FSB received approximately 14 rounds of 82mm mortar fire, resulting in three US WIA. At 1100 hours at YB818067 Company B, 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found one NVA body.

28 November. At 1245 hours at YB 832143 a 52d Combat Aviation Battalion UH-1D helicopter crashed during a combat assault. There were no casualties, but the aircraft was destroyed. At 1300 hours at YB801137 Company A, 1st Battalion 12th Infantry found one NVA body. At 1430 hours at YB854137 Company A 1st Battalion 8th Infantry found one NVA body in a grave. At 1930 hours at YB820078 Companies C and D 3d Battalion 12th Infantry found two NVA bodies.

29 November. At 1340 hours the 2d ARVN Airborne Battalion made heavy contact with an estimated NVA company at ZB089310. The contact, which continued until 1945 hours, resulted in one ARVN KIA 14 ARVN WIA and 109 NVA KIA. At 1700 hours the 3d ARVN Airborne Battalion received unknown number of mortar rounds and SA fire at ZB069318, resulting in three ARVN KIA and 10 ARVN WIA.

# CONFIDENTIAL

30 November. At 0930 hours Company C, 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry made contact with four NVA at YB875295 resulting in two US KIA and two US WIA. At 1310 hours Company B, 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry killed one NVA at YB872296. At 1335 hours the command-and-control helicopter of the 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry was hit with 50 caliber fire in the vicinity of YB8012. The rounds hit the aircraft's radio equipment and fragments from the radio slightly wounded the battalion commander. At 1450 hours the 2d ARVN Airborne Battalion made contact with a force of unknown size at ZB097316 resulting in two ARVN WIA. At 1945 hours the 7th Squadron, 17th Cavalry made contact with an NVA platoon at YB963617 and killed one NVA.

1 December. At YB866326 Reconco Patrol 3E made contact with an unknown size force resulting in three NVA KIA and three Ak-47's captured. Company A, 3d Battalion, 8th Infantry detonated a grenade rigged to jungle vines as a booby trap at YB995134 wounding two US. In the vicinity of YB 819087 a company from 3d Battalion, 12th Infantry found two NVA that had been killed by mortar or artillery fire. At 1835 hours the 2d Battalion (Abn), 503d Infantry fire support base near HEN HET at YB873258 began receiving a heavy 82mm mortar and 122mm rocket attack. The attack continued until 1945 hours. Twenty to twenty-five rounds landed in the perimeter, eight of which were duds. The attack resulted in one US KIA, nine US WIA and one 155mm howitzer and one 3/4 ton truck destroyed.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CAMBODIA

HAII-36 121541-9  
HAII-24 21 0130-9

HAII-14 140340-9

HAII-22 0430  
HA 11-3 080830  
HAII-40

HAII-33 270605-9

HAII-21 200440-9

HAII-32 230330-6  
HAII-22 201615-6

HAII-16 151035-9

HAII-34 240441-6

HA 11-15 152028-6

HAII-10 120350

HAII-27 200330-6  
HAII-25 191100

1

INCLOSURE 5

HA 11-5  
10020-6

90  
|  
YB

HA 11-42  
241850-9

HA 11-7  
110028-9

HA 11-30  
200715-6

HA 11-4  
080400-5

HA 11-2  
050501-9

HA 11  
11022

HA 11-10  
0350-3

HA 11-26  
191915-6

HA 11-41  
260507-9

HA 11-1  
041210-6

HA 11-12  
142327-9

HA 11-13  
150040-9

CONFIDENTIAL

2

B  
-14

5

A11-9  
0220-6

KONTUM 324  
010125 DEC-9

85  
+ AS 10

KONTUM 322  
261342-6

KEY:

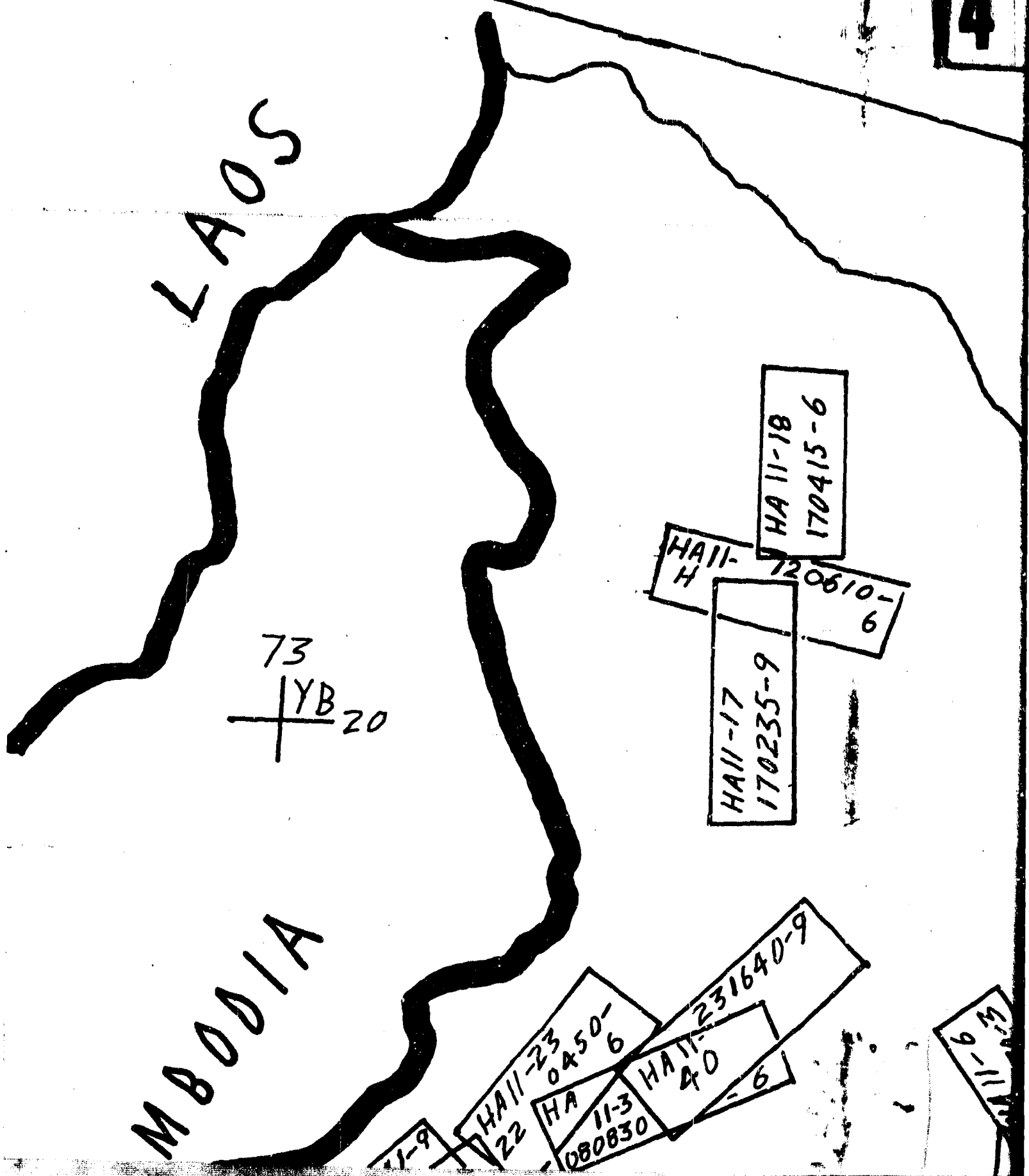
MISSION NUMBER  
DTG-NR.ACFT

ALL MISSIONS FLOWN  
IN NOVEMBER UNLESS  
OTHERWISE INDICATED

3

LAOS

MBODIA



73  
| YB  
+ 20

HAII-  
H 120610-  
6

HA 11-18  
170415-6

HAII-17  
170235-9

11-9  
HAII-23  
22 0450-  
6  
HA 11-3  
080830

HAII-231640-9  
40  
6

11-6  
6



5

QUEBEC  
50  
220310-6

ROUTE 512

1100  
E-28-6  
MAR 11-6

24  
-9

KONTUM 323  
250426-9

13  
| ZB 34  
—

CONFIDENTIAL

QUEBEC  
89  
220825-6

KONTUM  
3-16  
190520-6

BATTLE FOR  
B-52 STRIK  
MAP 1:50,000  
SHEETS 6538

DEC  
10-6

8

34

FOR DAK TO  
LIKES  
000 SERIES L7014  
38 I, II, III, IV, 6638 III

AS 30  
80

9

CONFIDENTIAL

1st Brigade  
4th Infantry Division

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 6

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96265

AVDDA-BRC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: After Action Report

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDDA-GC  
APO 96292

1. (U) Operation Mac Arthur: The Battle of Dak To: 29 October to 1 December 1967, Operation Mac Arthur, Area of Operation Spaatz.
2. (U) Location: Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam.
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 1ST BRIGADE, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
4. (C) Major Unit Commanders engaged in Operation:  
Colonel RICHARD H. JOHNSON, 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division  
Lieutenant Colonel John H. Madison, 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry  
Lieutenant Colonel Glenn D. Belnap, 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry  
Lieutenant Colonel Harold B. Birch, 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry  
Lieutenant Colonel John P. Vollmer, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry  
Lieutenant Colonel James R. Hendrix, 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry
5. (C) Operational Control, supporting and attached units during period:
  - a. Operational Control
    - (1) 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry (10 November - 1 December)
    - (2) 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry (31 October - 1 December)
    - (3) 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry (29 October - 1 December)
    - (4) 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry (25 November - 1 December)
    - (5) 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry (AMBL) (16 November - 19 November)

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

CONFIDENTIAL

W

# CONFIDENTIAL

- (6) 4th Battalion, 503 Infantry (AAN) (1 November-6 November)
- (7) 1st Battalion, 42nd Infantry (AAN) (1 November-29 November)
- (8) B Troop, 2-1 Cavalry (-) 22 November-1 December)
- (9) C Troop, 2-1 Cavalry (-) 29 October-1 December)
- (10) B Company, 1st Battalion, 69th Armor (3 November-1 December)

b. Direct Support Units

- (1) 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery
- (2) A Company, 4th Engineer Battalion
- (3) B Company, 4th Medical Battalion
- (4) 1st Platoon, 4th Military Police Company
- (5) 1st Platoon, B Company, 124th Signal Battalion
- (6) D Company, 704th Maintenance Battalion

c. Attached Units

- (1) Tactical Air Control Party (USAF)
- (2) Civil Affairs Team, 41st Civil Affairs Battalion

6. (C) Supporting Forces

a. Artillery

(1) Units:

- (a) A 4-42 Artillery (105)
- (b) C 6-14 Artillery (175/8)
- (c) B 1-92 Artillery (155)
- (d) A 5-16 Artillery (155)
- (e) B 5-16 Artillery (155)
- (f) D 5-16 Artillery (8)
- (g) A 3-18 Artillery (175/8)
- (h) C 3-319 Artillery (105)
- (i) Platoon, 4-60 Artillery (105)

(2) Operation

(a) Direct Support:

Normal direct support artillery was provided to each infantry battalion by 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery augmented with battery A, 4th Battalion, 42nd Artillery. The concept of establishing a battalion fire support base which positioned the direct support battery with the battalion TOC was again proven to be the best procedure for insuring immediate and close fire support to infantry units. It was normal procedure to position fire support bases so that each base was covered by artillery fire from an adjacent base.

(b) General Support:

General support artillery was sufficient

(2)

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

augment the fires of the direct support battalion. These batteries were positioned both in and forward of Dak To Base Camp in order to provide overlapping artillery coverage for infantry units within the A.O. The GS units were controlled initially by the 1st Brigade Fire Support Coordinator; however, upon arrival of the 4th Infantry Division Tactical CP, control reverted to Division Artillery.

## (c) General:

1. Artillery fires were planned and requested both to exploit intelligence and to provide security for infantry units and installations. Interdicting fires were placed on known enemy routes of access and withdrawal and on suspected staging areas. Additionally, counter-mortar and counter-rocket programs were planned and periodically fired on likely enemy firing positions to preempt NVA weapons attacks on friendly units.

2. Both GS and DS artillery were used to support heliborne assaults, ground attacks, and to defend friendly units from NVA attacks. Intelligence targets frequently were derived from APD readings, long range patrol sightings, and aerial observers.

b. United States Air Force: During the Battle of Dak To, support provided to ground forces by Forward Air Controllers, tactical fighter-bombers, and long range bombers was a major contributing factor in the success of the battle.

(1) During this period, tactical air strikes were requested and delivered daily for use on targets identified by APD, patrol, LRRP, and VR sightings. Preplanned air strikes were frequently diverted to targets of opportunity which had a higher priority.

(2) Requests for immediate air strikes to support troops in contact or to engage a target of opportunity were forwarded through infantry and/or air force TAC channels. Response to these requests was immediate and strikes were normally on station within less than 30 minutes. Close air support in each engagement was precise and timely. In addition to radar guided Combat Sky Spots, close air support was provided at night utilizing "Spooky" or "Moonshine" to illuminate the target for the FAC and the fighters. This support was equally effective.

(3) Enemy positions encountered were well constructed with thick overhead cover and were connected by extensive trench systems. Experience proved such positions could be destroyed only by tactical air using heavy ordnance with delayed fuze.

(4) Tactical air strikes were used to assist in constructing landing zones for combat assaults, thus allowing ground forces to select areas for landing that were least expected by NVA forces.

(5) Arc Lights were employed to destroy enemy staging and storage areas and to interdict major enemy troop movements.

(6) A breakout of air missions and sorties for the period is as follows:

(3)

CONFIDENTIAL

Fighter Missions:	369
Fighter Sorties:	1193
FAC Missions:	369
FAC Sorties:	199
Spooky/Moonshine Missions:	43
ARC Lights requested:	13
ARC Lights Flown:	11

## c. Engineer

(1) The 299th Engineer Battalion (-) and the 15th Engineer Light Equipment Company provided general engineer support to the 1st Brigade within A.O. Spaatz, in addition to their principle mission of C7A airfield construction and CIDG Camp complex clearing at Ben Hot. General support consisted of road construction and upgrading of Rte 512 and 14 North, maintenance of C130 strip, construction of new ASP, and construction of 2 FAC aircraft revetments at Dak To.

## (2) A Company, 4th Engineer Battalion:

(a) A Company, 4th Engineer Battalion provided direct support to 1st Brigade in the Spaatz A.O. from 29 October to 1 December 1967, with one platoon each DS to 1/8th Inf, 3/8th Inf, and 3/12th Inf. One platoon from B Company, 4th Engineer, supported 1/12th Inf and was OPCON, A Company, 4th Engineer.

Dates of employment in the A.O. are coincident with battalion dates of employment. A Company, 4th Engineer, directed Brigade engineer efforts from the Brigade Base Camp. Platoon Headquarters were in all cases located in the Battalion Fire Base with engineer squads often accompanying company size operations.

(b) Engineer support by A Company, 4th Engineer consisted primarily of clearing LZ and Fire Support Bases and assisting in placement of fortifications and protective wire. The support provided by the engineer squads to company-size operations consisted of demolition work and destruction of enemy fortifications and base complexes. Mine detectors were employed to search for buried enemy weapons and ammunitions. These attempts were not extremely effective for most items were buried at depths greater than 9 to 12 inches.

(c) Clearing operations of six (6) battalion FSB's were enhanced by the availability of a D6B dozer. The dozers were airlifted by a CH-54 Flying Crane. Additional bulldozers were provided by 299th Engineer Battalion for fire base improvement

(d) Extensive use of demolitions for timber clearing was required in the A.O. C4 explosive, not always available in the

(4)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

quantities required, was far superior to TNT since it is more effective by weight and easier to use because of its plastic characteristics. The XM37 Demolition Kit was found to be ideal for fast cutting of large trees. The use of demolitions in clearing fire bases accelerated the clearing of heavy timber, bamboo, and brush. The latter two were rapidly cleared by the use of bangalore torpedoes. It is felt that linear shaped charges would greatly reduce the amount of explosives consumed in clearing operations. Although linear shaped-charges were requested they were not available during the operation.

(e) The Headquarters Platoon, A/4th engineer provided equipment support with penneprime distribution and water purification equipment at the Dak To Base, and pre-cut perimeter bunkers were provided to support the existing perimeter defense structures.

d. Special Forces Operations: During the operation, the 1st Brigade was supported by the Dak To CIDG Camp with operations which had missions of search, reconnaissance, and bridge security. These missions were performed with from platoon to two company size forces.

(1) 31 October - 6 November: Conducted three (3) platoon-size operations: Two platoons conducted search operations north of Dak To Base with negative enemy contact; one platoon conducted rice crop security missions to southeast of Dak To. Both missions continued through 6 November. On 4 November, two platoons were assigned critical bridge security missions on Rt 512 for three days.

(2) 7 November - 16 November: Initiated company-size search operations to southeast of Dak To which continued through 16 November with negative enemy contact. One company air assaulted from Dak To to ZB 0612 to conduct a S and D operation to east. The company was extracted on 16 November with negative results.

(3) 17 November - 30 November: Initiated company-size operation to northwest of Dak To to search for suspected enemy mortar locations. The company ended the operation on 25 November with negative results.

## 7 (C) Intelligence

### a. Enemy Situation:

UNIT	STRENGTH	LOCATION (1 Nov)
24th NVA Regiment	1285	ZB 1348
32nd NVA Regiment	1600	YB 8205
66th NVA Regiment	1560	YB 7002
174th NVA Regiment	1760	YB 6523
304th LF Bn (VC)	520	AR 7900
40th Arty Regiment	Unk	YB 8205

(5)

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## b. Terrain:

### (1) General

The brigade area of operations consists of a few highland valleys and extensive mountainous areas. The mountainous regions are rugged and rise to heights of over 2,400 feet. They are normally covered with thick double-canopied jungle. The plateau area is intermittently covered with forests of 100-150 foot trees, grass and thick bamboo rising some 50-60 feet in the air. Except for the valley area 90% of the higher elevations are covered with dense close-canopy rain forests. Terrain along Highway 14 from Kontum City to the north is relatively flat with some secondary growth. Observation is good to fair up to four kilometers on either side of the road.

### (2) Military Aspects of Terrain

(a) The cover afforded by the terrain is excellent along ridge lines and mountain complexes particularly from the effects of small arms and direct fire weapons. In the thick jungle canopy the lethal effects of mortar and light artillery fire is considerably decreased due to the fact that the rounds frequently explode in the top of a 100-150 foot tree. The effects at ground level are obviously decreased. Concealment is particularly outstanding in the mountainous rain forests where visibility on the ground is normally limited to 15-20 feet. Visual reconnaissance missions from the air were limited except when observers could fly low enough to "see under" the canopy. VR in the valley floors was much more effective since numerous "breaks" in the bamboo canopy permitted observations of trails.

(b) The Dak Poko River was the only obstacle in the Brigade tactical area of operations which would impede friendly operations. The significance of this obstacle was reduced considerably because the majority of operations were oriented southwest of this river.

(c) Critical features consisted primarily of commanding terrain. The Dak To Base lies between two ridgelines. The Suim Ngok Tu (ZB 0126) to the north and the ridge complex Ngok Ring Rua, Ngok Tang, Ngok Bor Beang, and Ngok Kon Kring to the south and southwest. To reduce the enemys' observation of Dak To and deny him indirect fire positions, it was imperative that these features be under friendly control. Fifteen kilometers to the southwest of Dak To is a junction point of a high speed east-west trail and a southwest to northeast trail. Hill 823 at YB 8518 dominates this junction and should be controlled. A major southwest to northeast infiltration route from the Dak Hodrai River (YB 8305) to the Dak Sir River (YB 9412) can be dominated by elements positioned on Hill 1030 (YB 8107).

(6)

CONFIDENTIAL

(d) Key positions for observation and major avenues of approach are at the overlay.

(e) Weather- During the operation, the Dak To area was under the influence of the northeast monsoon. During this period, the surface wind was northeasterly to east at 7-12 knots, with gusts to 20 knots. General sky conditions consisted of high scattered to broken clouds at about 2000-3000 feet during the late morning and early afternoon hours. Visibility was normally 7-10 miles, reduced to one mile during early morning from about 0700 to 0800 hours. The period was characterized by rainfall on only one day.

(f) Summary of Terrain and Weather - The thick double canopy jungle and bamboo favored the movement of enemy forces by concealing these elements from visual and photo reconnaissance. The rugged mountains provided an advantage to the enemy in that he was able to prepare defensive bunkers, trenches, tunnels, caves, and base camps. Results of operations confirm that U.S. losses were greatest when attacking prepared positions. The weather unquestionably favored U.S. operations because the U.S. advantage in aerial reconnaissance, ordnance delivery and movement of men and materials was not impeded by poor weather.

#### e. Intelligence Build-Up Prior to Battle of Dak To

During the middle of October 1967, intelligence agencies received information that reflected preparation for an attack by elements of the PAVN B-3 Front in the western Kontum Province area. By the 20th of October, it was apparent that the PAVN 1st Division, previously located in Cambodia west of Duc Co and Plei Djerang Special Forces Camps had displaced north, northeast to the Cambodia-Vietnam-Laos, Tri-Border area. The displacement of the 1st Division was particularly significant because the 24th NVA Regiment and 174 NVA Regiment were already located in Kontum Province. With four, possibly five Regimental forces poised in Kontum, a major enemy operation of a magnitude here to fore unknown in the Highlands was about to unfold. Enemy reconnaissance elements concentrated in Kontum gave a focal point to the immediate threat--DAK TO.

A major intelligence break through occurred on 2 November when Sergeant Hong, 66th NVA Regiment, "Chieu Hoied" at Dak Ki Peng Village (YB 976220). Hong was assigned to a 1st NVA Division reconnaissance force with the mission to conduct a detail reconnaissance of the U.S. Base at Dak To. The results of the mission would be instrumental in finalizing draft plans for the attack on the U.S. Base at Dak To. Hong revealed that the 32nd Inf Regiment, 66th Infantry Regiment and 40th Artillery Regiment were located in a base camp/assembly area bounded

(7)

CONFIDENTIAL

by coordinates YB 8307, 8314, 9307, and 9314. The proposed plan called for the 32nd Regiment and 66th Regiment to conduct a combined ground attack with the 32nd in an "anvil" position east of Dak To and the 66th as the "hammer" striking from west to east through Dak To. The ground attack would be supported by mortars from the high ground south of Dak To and rocket fire from positions approximately 10 kilometers east of Dak To. The 174th NVA Regiment positioned in a Tri-Border Base Camp would be Division reserve. Though the battle was not executed in this precise manner, Hong's information provided U.S. forces with a firm basis upon which to employ intelligence collection agencies and subsequently maneuver battalions.

d. Defensive Phase - 28 October- 2 November 1967

During this period, 1st Brigade elements and combat service support units were deployed in a defensive posture, primarily committed to expansion of a command and control facility and logistic support base at Dak To. In order to develop the enemy situation, a premium was placed upon intelligence collection. The 32d Regiment was believed to be deployed in the vicinity of YB 820050, therefore Infra-red, Aerial Personnel Detector, and Visual Reconnaissance was concentrated in a ten-kilometer radius of this point. Infra-red Sensors detected a possible battalion base camp on 30 October at YB 865084. Significant APD sensings were recorded in the Ngok Lang Grang (YB 8312) and Ngok Toba (YB 8210) Mountain Range on 30 and 31 October.

Three Long Range Reconnaissance Teams were employed to the southwest of Dak To. On 1 November, at YB 864180, a team briefly engaged an estimated 15 enemy believed to be headed to the northeast. Later in the afternoon of 1 November, a team discovered a heavily used east to west trail at YB 935159, while at YB 886126 one team located a significant base camp complex, a portion of which was still under construction.

In view of the intelligence collected during 30, 31 October and 1 November, the suspected location of the 32d NVA Regiment appeared to be fixed to an area southwest of Dak To.

e. Offensive Phase - 3-11 November - 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry

During the period 3 November Co's A and D of the 3/8th Infantry combat assaulted into the vicinity of the Ngok Borlang ridge complex, (YB 9214). With the friendly elements deployed on this north-west/southeast ridge line, the 1st Brigade was now positioned to intercept the northeasterly movement of an enemy regiment. On 4 November at 0940, Co A engaged an unknown size force northeast of Hill 882. The contact was initiated with small arms and automatic weapons fire from the north and west. Firing intensified but finally ceased at 1202 hours. An estimated 20-30 NVA were killed, however only eight were identified by body count. Miscellaneous enemy equipment was captured plus a light machine-gun.

On 4 and 5 November, the enemy avoided contact with friendly units, however reconnaissance elements were actively probing perimeters of Co A and D. Significant enemy movement was observed at Hill 843, and an

CONFIDENTIAL (8)

# CONFIDENTIAL

immediate air strike on the suspected enemy location produced numerous small secondary explosions lasting for approximately 20 minutes. It is believed a small arms cache was hit by this airstrike. From early morning until late afternoon on 7 November, Co A and D received small arms fire intermingled with B-40 rockets and mortar fire primarily from the west as the friendly units continued to advance toward Hill 843. On 8 November Co's A and D were still situated on a small knoll (YB 904149) southeast of Hill 724. The enemy held the commanding terrain to the northwest and continued to impede the advance of these companies toward Hill 724. At approximately 1700 hours, a furious weapons and ground attack was launched against Co's A and D. Intensive B-40 rocket and mortar fire had devastating effect on the U.S. companies. The NVA penetrated the perimeter of Co A but were driven back. Two flame throwers were deployed against the company but the operators were killed prior to expending their load. At 2037 hours, the attack ceased, but only after intense pounding of the enemy by artillery and napalm. Two hundred thirty-two NVA died in this attack against Co A and D. Thirty-seven individual and thirty-eight crew-served weapons were captured. A PW captured on 9 November by Co D, 3/8th Inf. at YB 905149 identified his unit as 1st Squad, 1st Platoon, 3rd Company, 7th Battalion, 66th Regiment. His unit was in the process of retreating to the northwest at the time of his capture. Where the 32nd Regiment was initially thought to be in contact with the 3rd Battalion, 8th Infantry, it appeared that an unknown size force (probably two battalions) from the 66th Regiment also was deployed on the Ngok Dorlang ridge complex.

On 9 November, following the relief of Co A by Co B, 3/8th Inf, U.S. elements continued to advance to Hill 724. The enemy engaged the advancing companies with small arms and mortar fire. Occasional squad size groups or individuals were observed. At 1350 hours, 10 November, B, C, and D companies reported receiving a ground attack at YB900148. The attack was broken after 35 minutes, but heavy small arms and mortar and rocket fire continued until approximately 1900 hours. The enemy was repeatedly pounded by artillery fire and air strikes during this attack. Enemy losses were 92 KIA by body count, 15 individual and 20 crew-served weapons.

On 11 November, B, C, and D Companies reached Hill 724. Throughout the day and into the night, the enemy continued harassing the U.S. elements with small arms, mortar, and rocket fire.

During the assault across the Ngok Dorlang ridge line, the Battalion FSB received sporadic mortar fire generally during the time when forward line companies were in contact. Such tactics were employed to disrupt command and control and direct support artillery from the FSB.

Enemy fighting positions were characterized by extensive preparations against the effects of artillery and air. The enemy preferred the tactic of assaulting U.S. positions supported by extensive mortar and rocket fire.

(9)

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

By 13 November, it was evident the enemy had suffered a severe blow to his fighting capability and had chosen to retire from the battlefield.

### f. Offensive Phase - 3-11 November - 3rd Battalion, 12th Infantry

On 03 November 1967, the battalion moved by combat assault to vicinity of YB 996162 to establish a FSB with Co's C and D. Just east of the FSB Co's A and B air assaulted then turned west to close on the FSB. During this move several small groups of two to three NVA were observed, however they fled immediately after detection. Enemy sniper and harassing mortar fire was directed at the companies during the advance to the hill at YB 996162. Four enemy were killed during this action. On 4 November A and B Company continued to advance to the west with light mortar and small arms fire from the northwest. By 1200 the enemy fire became heavy. Enemy personnel in spider holes were lobbing grenades at the lead elements. It was estimated that perhaps a battalion was dug in with OHC at YB 999157. In face of terrific weapons fire, the companies withdrew to night locations by 1430 hours. The enemy positions were then pounded with air and artillery until the next morning. On 5 November, friendly elements advanced to the enemy tunnels and bunkers where eight NVA KIA were discovered by body count, however numerous drag marks, blood stains and flesh embedded on tree bark indicated a higher toll of enemy had been taken.

On 9 November Co C and D engaged an estimated NVA company while advancing north west to YB 981165. The enemy engaged the U.S. companies from prepared positions with small arms and automatic-weapons fire. The enemy was finally neutralized with a body count loss of 12, and seven individual and crew served weapons.

Co C and D continued advancing toward Hill 1089 on 10 November and discovered mortar positions at YB 975171. One position was obviously prepared for a 120mm type mortar. In the late afternoon, a patrol from Co D briefly engaged an unknown size force on Hill 1089. Small arms and automatic weapons fire was exchanged briefly prior to withdrawal of the friendly patrol. At 1645 hours elements of Co C and D engaged an enemy force in bunkers and trenches at YB 969167. Contact was broken at 1740 hours with 11 NVA KIA (BC).

From 10-12 November, battalion elements continued to search northwest along the Ngok Tang ridgeline, meeting only isolated groups of two to three NVA who gave no intention of making contact with the Americans.

### g. Offensive Phase - 3-7 November - 4th Battalion, 503rd Airborne Infantry

Following a move by convoy from Dak To to the vicinity of Polei Kan, the 4th Battalion moved southwest from the FSB toward the hill and trail

(10)

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

complex Ngok Kom Leat (YB 8420) with three companies generally abreast. No significant enemy observations were made until 0930 hours 6 November when Co A had a light contact with five NVA. Contact was broken almost immediately, however miscellaneous items of equipment to include two individual weapons were left by the enemy fleeing south. At 1050 hours (12) individuals were observed moving south in the wake of Co A's advance. Co D, to the right flank of Co A, located a fresh southwest trail at YB 848203 over which several enemy were moving rapidly toward the southwest. Co B combat assaulted to Hill 823 (YB 8518) and discovered 50-100 foxholes and several rucksacks indicating the enemy had departed just a short time prior to friendly elements closing on the position. In mid-afternoon, Co B started receiving heavy automatic weapons fire and sporadic mortar and rocket fire from the south. Throughout the night and early morning of 5-6 November respectively, Co A and B were hit with intensive automatic and indirect fire. Co B was most heavily engaged by this fire. The two companies reported 21 NVA killed by body count.

On 7 November at 1000 hours, the 1st Brigade passed operational control of the 4th Battalion to the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

## h. Pursuit Phase - 12-30 November - 1st Battalion 8th Infantry

On 10 November, the 1/8th Infantry deployed from Darlac Province to a FSB just southwest of Dak To along Route 14. From 10-11 November, no enemy activity was reported as the Battalion prepared for a combat assault to YB 909121, subsequently launched on 12 November. Surprisingly, no enemy force was encountered, in the vicinity of the assault. On 14 November, B and C companies combat assaulted to Hill 762 (YB 9511) to exploit secondary explosions and other intelligence indicating that a rocket attack on Dak To would be initiated from this hill. The operation at Hill 762 confirmed recent enemy preparation of protective and fighting positions and secondary explosions of unknown enemy ordnance. It is believed the combat assault to this hill prevented a possible rocket attack prior to complete preparation of the firing area.

The anticipated large enemy force in the vicinity of the Battalion FSB had for all purposes vanished into small groups bent on avoiding ground contact with the U.S. Battalion. Three times resupply or Command and Control helicopters received small arms and mortar or rocket fire when attempting to land at friendly locations.

On or about 14 November intelligence reports confirmed previous indications that fragmented elements of the 32nd and 66th NVA Regiments were retreating from the battle along a route from east to west across the Ngok Dorlang Ridge (YB 9214) then south through the Dak Hodrai River Valley (YB 8914). In an attempt to intercept these elements, Co A and D combat assaulted to Hill 530 (YB 8707) on 17 November. From the FSB, elements began pushing to the west to interdict the enemies north/south avenues of escape.

(11)

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

On 15 November Co A found 30-50 foxholes at YB 892128, used within 48 hours prior to discovery. Numerous north/south trails continued to confirm enemy movement to the south. The APD recorded significant heavy readings on 16 November that indicated enemy elements oriented in north/south columns probably moving south.

On 17 November battalion FSB personnel observed muzzle flashes from a range of approximately 4.5 kilometers southwest of the base. Impact point of rounds was unknown. On 18 November observers saw what appeared to be rocket trails on azimuth of 4400mils from the FSB at a distance of approximately 5500 meters. The initial trails were observed at 1830 hours with two additional trails at 1840 hours originating from the same location. In both instances, the rockets were launched simultaneously with trails parallel and relatively close to each other. Direction of fire was toward the 1/8th Inf FSB. Impact of the rounds was not observed and subsequent ground search in vicinity of FSB revealed no craters. On 26 November verification was made that the trails were caused by 122mm rockets when firing positions and equipment were found in the vicinity of YB 821082. From 20-26 November the FSB received 82mm rounds, normally in the late afternoon in quantities from 2 to 35 with an average of 10 rounds per attack. Significantly, none of the rounds fell within the friendly perimeter, a fact that tends to bear out the training deficiencies resulting from heavy losses in NVA units.

On 16 November, a LRRP detected an enemy column moving under cover of darkness on a north/south route at YB 877104. Artillery engaged the target with seven NVA KIA by body count.

On the afternoon of 19 November a patrol from Co D made contact with an unknown size force at YB 865083. Communications was lost with the patrol until late afternoon when a relief force picked up the survivors. No enemy bodies were recovered, however one individual weapon and miscellaneous equipment and supplies were captured.

An unusual incident occurred on 21 November, when Co A observed lights and heard sounds of a motor running in the vicinity of YB 855116. Artillery fire into the suspected area produced two secondary explosions. The valley location of these explosions further establish the existence of a sizeable storage area.

Search operations by battalion elements continued to produce enemy foxholes, bunkers, sleeping areas and miscellaneous equipment. On 29 November, Co A located a battalion base camp at YB 862157 consisting of 100, 4-5 man bunkers. An unknown size enemy force had evacuated the complex not longer than 48 hours prior to Co A entering the area.

Enemy activity during pursuit operations by 1/8th Inf was characterized by frequent but ineffective mortar attacks against the FSB. The enemy forces had no intention of engaging the superior U.S. forces, as evidenced by his skillful evasion of searching ground elements.

(12)

## CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## 1. Pursuit Operations - 12-30 November - 3rd Battalion 8th Infantry

After Hill 724 was seized and the battalion reorganized, company size elements pushed further west across the Dak Hodrai River Valley. From 16-20 November several fighting complexes were located with the most noteworthy being a battalion size base camp on 16 November at YB 880153.

On 18 November, intelligence reports from three fairly reliable sources identified the presence of two, possibly three company size VC elements in the vicinity of ZB 110160. Due to the recent VC attempts to interdict route 14 and the fact that two key bridges along the route were within easy striking distance of the reported enemy companies, the battalion (minus) assaulted, on 20 November, along route 14. Co A and B pushed east in a pincer move to envelop the reported enemy. After exploiting the area it became apparent by 24 November that the reliability of the intelligence upon which friendly forces were committed was questionable. The operation had netted only a few rice caches with no evidence of the enemy.

On 23 and 24 November, the Battalion TAC returned by air to the FS.B (YB 935187). Co A and B combat assaulted to Hill 1338 (YB 989152) to continue exploiting this dominant terrain overlooking the Dak To Base. Co C combat assaulted to the Ngok King Kong ridge (YB 9322), to eliminate the NVA reconnaissance elements which had been operating with heretofore unimpeded freedom. These elements plus possible rocket and mortar units posed a significant threat to the Dak To area.

The Co C operation revealed no significant enemy activity. The reconnaissance elements had apparently moved northwest as the U.S. company swept the ridge complex. Only a few signs of recent activity supported the information of NVA in the area of search.

The sweep operations conducted on the Ngok Boi Beang and Ngok Kon Kring ridges south of Dak To gave rise to a particularly important bunker and cave complex. On 28 November, Co D discovered this gigantic complex extending from YB 988147 to YB 984140 which yielded 154 bunkers and nine caves covering an area approximately 600 meters by 300 meters. The bunkers normally averaged three man capacity. The disposition of this complex was so arranged that direct hits on bunkers would be extremely difficult. The caves were dug in the sides of almost sheer mountain sides, with a 10-15' front walk-in entrance area at the end of which was a room with stand-up height, approximately 6x8'. The caves were shored with 6-8" logs on all surfaces to include the floor. Based on the numerous items of equipment captured, the area was obviously used as a base camp, aid station, and logistic base for a regimental size force. Large quantities

(13)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

of uniforms, medical supplies, and ammunition were found in this complex.

## j. Pursuit Operations - 12-30 November - 3rd Battalion 12th Infantry

Following Search and Destroy operations northwest along the Ngok Tang Mountain complex, Co's A and C turned southwest from the Battalion FSP at YB 997162 and commenced pursuit operations toward the ominous Hill 1338 (YB 9815). On 17 November Co C became heavily engaged with an unknown size force at YB 992158. Following an all day struggle the companies controlled Hill 1338 only after fighting past six trench lines studded with bunkers and open fighting positions. These fighting positions represented the most elaborate complex engaged by any 1st Brigade force during the Dak To campaign. The 1338 operation resulted in 49 NVA KIA by body count, four individual weapons, three crew-served weapons with numerous items of equipment and ammunition. A PW identified enemy forces on Hill 1338 as the 4th Battalion, 32nd NVA Regiment.

On 19 November Co B engaged an unknown size enemy force fighting from trenches on Hill 1262 (YB 975149). The U.S. Company received small arms, grenade, and rocket fire from 1500 hours until 1620 hours when contact was finally broken. Enemy losses were seven KIA (body count), three individual weapons, three crew-served weapons, and miscellaneous equipment and ammunition.

During early afternoon 24 November, elements from Co A received automatic weapons fire from northeast and northwest of Hill 1294 (YB 9914). Fire ceased after artillery pounded the area. The 6th Battalion, 32nd NVA Regiment was identified on Hill 1338 when a Chieu Hoi rallied to Co B at YB 978148.

On 23 November Co D located a cave used for an aid station at YB 988139. Stretchers and numerous bloody bandages were strewn throughout the cave which also contained four NVA bodies.

Following mop-up operations in the vicinity of Hills 1338 and 1294, a task force consisting of Co's A, E, and C combat assaulted on 24 November to Hill 530 (YB 8707), to prepare a mortar base from which to support subsequent operations to Hill 1000 further west. Early afternoon on the 25th saw approximately (25) rounds of 82mm mortar fire hit the new mortar base with light U.S. casualties resulting.

On 26 November, Co E and C combat assaulted from Hill 530 to Hill 1000 (YB 8208). At 1400 hours, Co B discovered a 122mm rocket position oriented to FSP (YB 9012) and various items of rocket equipment and containers. This discovery verified the report by 1/8th

(14)

# CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

Inf of rockets being fired from this location on 18 November. On 26 and 27 November, several NVA bodies were found as preparations continued on the new Battalion FSL.

In view of information received from a PW captured by 1/12th Inf, the 2nd Battalion, 174th NVA Regiment was believed to be disposed in the vicinity of Hill 963 (YT 7910). From 28 November through 1 December, Co A and D moved overland to the northwest to search the suspect area. This search revealed insignificant enemy activity.

On 30 November, the battalion C&C ship received one round of 12.7 machine gun ammo, which provided the first confirming date of this type weapon being employed in the area of operations.

### k. Pursuit Operations - 25-30 November - 1st Battalion 12th Infantry

On 25 November the battalion combat assaulted two companies to Hill 875 (YT 7913) to assist in mop-up and security operations following a fierce battle on this hill by elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade.

On 26 November, a PW captured by Co A on Hill 875 identified the 2nd Battalion, 174th Regiment. Interrogation revealed a strong possibility that the 2nd Battalion had not withdrawn to the Cambodian sanctuary but had moved to prepared positions along a ridgeline between YT 8014 to YT 8415. On the evening of 26 November, a coordinated mortar attack by NVA units was directed against five different U.S. positions southwest of Dak To to include the Battalion FSL at YT 814145, and Co A and D (YT 796135). An estimated 10-15 rounds of 82mm mortars fell on the FSL while up to 150 rounds of 82mm hit the two companies.

Sweep operations in the vicinity of Hill 875 revealed additional enemy dead and captured or destroyed equipment from the 173d Brigade contact. A search operation by Co D on the Chu Hien Gram (YT 8314) for evidence of the 2nd Battalion, 174th NVA Regiment met with negative results.

### l. Pursuit Operations - 15-19 November 1967 - 2nd Battalion 8th Cavalry

From 16-19 November Co D searched the foothills south of the U.S. Dak To Base in an attempt to locate enemy mortar and recoilless rifle positions and personnel who had fired upon the base complex on 15 November. The only results produced were several fresh foxholes.

Meanwhile from 15-18 November Co D conducted similar operations along a ridge line to the north of the Dak To Base to locate enemy elements which had been placing mortar fire on the airstrip. On the

(15)

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

morning of 17 November a Cordon and Search operation by Co F at YB 997283 revealed NVA had been in the village within five days of this operation. Later in the day, Co C, operating to the east of Route 14 observed five NVA fleeing north from ZF 110212. The enemy were taken under fire but results were unknown. On the morning of 18 November elements of Co C received small arms fire from hill at ZF 113215. At 1415 hours, ten NVA were observed moving west from the same general location. At 1740 hours an estimated NVA company was engaged with artillery and air at ZF 109223. Sweep of area produced four NVA KIA (body count), three individual weapons, and six crew-served weapons.

What effect the actions by this U.S. battalion had on enemy mortar and recoilless rifle attacks from the north and south of Dak To is unknown. The more significant contact with unidentified NVA units east of Route 14 by Co C could have cancelled any plans to launch a rocket attack on Dak To from that area. It should be noted that Chieu Hoi, Sergeant Vu Hong, who rallied 2 November, indicated a reconnaissance was made to the east of Dak To for possible rocket sites. These potential sites would fall within the contact area of Co C since this area is 10,000 meters from Dak To.

### m. Interdiction of Communications Routes

Highway 14 from Pleiku through Kentum and north into Dak To served as the main supply route for 1st Brigade operations. Several ambush operations by enemy forces were attempted however the enemy was generally routed by relief forces with moderate damage and loss of life experienced by friendly elements.

On 5 November at ZF 152104, a civilian vehicle headed north on Highway 14 was hit by a claymore mine. One woman was killed by the blast. Troop C of 2/1st Cavalry swept the ambush area but found no signs of the enemy. Quite possibly the operation was carried out by one individual.

On 7 November at 0930 hours an unidentified VC force blew the main Highway bridge at ZF 152085. The same explosion weakened the abutment on the bypass bridge to the extent that it was impassable to traffic for several days.

At 0823 hours, 11 November, an engineer work party moving north on Highway 14 was ambushed by the 309th VC company. The relief force, C Troop, 2/1st Cavalry, drove the enemy from the ambush scene leaving 13 VC KIA, one CIA, and eight individual and crew-served weapons.

During early morning hours 27 November elements of Co F, 2nd

(16)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

Battalion, 1st Cavalry were attacked while securing a bridge on Highway 14 at ZA 219915. The contact was broken after 50 minutes at 0220 hours with one U.S. tank destroyed in the middle of the bridge, one tank and APC damaged, one U.S. KIA, and five U.S. WIA. Two enemy believed to be members of the 4th Battalion, 95th NVA Regiment, were killed plus several weapons and equipment items captured.

Attempts by the NVA/VC to effectively interdict the main communication route were at best harassing with no lasting effects. The engineer float bridges, the most critical targets along the entire route, were not attacked. Had the enemy realized the difficulty in replacing such structures and directed his interdiction accordingly, the effects on 1st Brigade Operations would have been severe.

## n. Weapons Attacks on Fixed Installations

Enemy weapons attacks were primarily directed against fixed installations, such as a Fire Support Base and the Dak To logistics complex. The FSB at YD 909121 used by the 1st Battalion, 8th Infantry was most frequently the target of attack (See Attack Phase, 1/8th Infantry for details). The Dak To Base was taken under mortar and or recoilless rifle fire on 9, 15, 16, and 21 November. The attacks on 9, 16, and 21 November were characterized by 6-10 rounds of inaccurate fire landing well outside the perimeter. However the 15 November attack was initiated at 0845 hours and continued with sporadic fire until 1745 hours. Both 82mm mortars and 75mm recoilless rifles were employed. Fifty-five rounds were accounted for by crater count, however it is believed more rounds were fired. Counter mortar radar and Forward Air Controllers located firing positions generally south of the Base at ZI 029209, 004203, 014191, 019194, 016195, and 004203. Counter mortar fire was believed to be effective since the intensity of enemy fire was reduced within (20) minutes after the first round impacted, however, the remainder of the day witnessed many skillful yet frustrated attempts to neutralize one recoilless rifle position.

From the outset, the target was apparent--three C-130 aircraft which had landed that morning and already in the process of unloading. Efforts to clear these C-130's were too late since one aircraft was hit and burning within five minutes after the first round and a second aircraft was hit 25 minutes later as it sat helplessly hemmed in by the other burning plane. The ammunition supply point was finally hit at 1745 hours. Explosions from munitions extended into the night until more than 800 tons had been destroyed.

The success of the enemy attack on the aircraft can be attributed to accurate intelligence collection. The enemy noted that for several days prior to the attack two to three C-130 aircraft were habitually discharging cargo simultaneously at the ramp area. A well placed round

(17)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

on the lead aircraft would block the ramp exit and insure sufficient time to systematically destroy the aircraft parked behind the lead plane.

The enemy gunners shifted their fire from the aircraft to the munitions area without effort and systematically pounded this area until one vital round struck home to initiate the sympathetic pattern of explosions that followed.

## o. Introduction of New Indirect Fire Tactic

On 211900, the Dak To complex reported incoming mortar rounds believed to be coming from vicinity of ZD 007259. This point was verified by several competent eye witnesses who observed what appeared to be muzzle flashes. Sounds of mortar rounds striking the ground were heard following each flash with what would appear to be a normal "splash" time. Subsequent investigation revealed that craters caused by this incoming fire are located at ZD 007225, ZD 008224, ZD 009225, ZD 011221, ZD 012220, and ZD 013219. All six craters contained a fuse identified as that type used on a 75mm recoilless round. Each round struck the ground on a slope between 21-30 degrees. The first three craters were not "clean" enough to permit an accurate back azimuth plot. Eyewitness on the north perimeter, who identified the craters, indicated that the rounds sounded as though they had been fired from the vicinity of ZD 007259 (location of flashes). Based on the above information, it appears that the enemy used a flash producing source (probably a mortar) from vicinity of ZD 007259 to cause friendly counter battery fire and detection devices to be oriented on a pre-planned target while at the same time the enemy could direct more effective and unopposed fire on friendly positions from another location.

8. (C) Missions: Initial missions assigned to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division were:

- a. Conduct S and D operations in AO Spaatz.
- b. Provide security for LLOC and convoys north of Kontum.
- c. Provide security for 937th Engineer Group elements operating in AO.
- d. Provide security for Ben Het CIDG Base complex.
- e. Establish liaison with and be prepared to reinforce/relieve Dak Pek, Dak Seang, Dak To, Polci Klong, Mang Buk, and Plateau Gi.

## 9. (C) Concept of Operations:

a. The brigade concept of accomplishing the assigned missions was to conduct the operations in 3 phases. Phase I (Defensive) included assumption of security missions, a rapid build-up of combat and combat support units in the AO, and positioning maneuver units with artillery to block the most dangerous avenues into Dak To from the southwest. Phase II (offensive) began on 3 November with an attack by two battalions to the south and southwest of Dak To to search and secure key terrain. The offensive phase continued through the attack by 3 battalions to secure Hills 1338,

(18)

# CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

724, and 823. Phase III (Pursuit) began on 12 Nov 67 with operations to pursue, regain contact, destroy NVA units in the southwestern portion of the AO, and destroy NVA bases and storage areas uncovered in search operations.

b. Battalions employed company-size forces to conduct initial search followed by employment of required reinforcements from the battalion once an enemy force was engaged. Attacks of fortified positions were executed with a minimum force of two (2) companies supported by artillery and air concentration of supporting fires into primary battle areas was made possible by selective positioning of both DS and GS artillery units. Criteria for selecting battalion fire bases was defensibility, observation, and indirect fire coverage.

10. (C) Execution

a. Defense Phase:

(1) The 3rd Bn, 12th Inf assumed missions at Dak To on 28 Oct 67, relieving 2nd Bn, 8th Inf (Mech). This msn concerned Dak To Base security, Route convoy and critical bridge scety on Rte 512, and engr work party scety for operations at Ben Het CIDG Base and along Rte 512. The battalion was OPCON to Div, and had B 1/69 Armor (-) and C 2/1 Cav (-) OPCON for security missions on Rtes 512 and 14N.

(2) HQs, 1st Bde moved to establish a forward CP at Dak TO on 28 Nov and assumed OPCON of operations in AO Spaatz and 3/12 Inf on 29 Nov. 3/8 Inf (-) moved by convoy to Ben Het on 30 Oct and established a FSB and began preparation to displace to forward positions in the AO.

(3) On 30 Oct, B and C 3/8 CA SW of Dak To to begin construction of FSB. On 31 Oct the Bn HQ AL to FSB to prepare for offensive operations.

(4) 1-2 Nov: 4/503 Inf (Abn) AL from Tuy Hoa to Dak To Base, then convoyed to Ben Het to assume scety msns, and establish FSB. 3/12 Inf cont scety msn and control of defensive operations from Dak To Base. 3/8 Inf continued sub-unit patrols and construction at FSB, no enemy contact.

b. Offensive Phase (3-11 Nov): This period encompassed the most intensive action of the offensive phase of operations.

(1) 3/12 Inf: (overlay 3) A and B 3/12 CA to S of Dak To Base to establish Bn FSB. During movement W to selected FSB position, B 3/12 contacted estimated enemy platoon in bunker and trench positions (031552H); the company broke contact, utilizing Arty and Air to suppress fire and destroy the position; B 3/12 again moved to West contacting enemy at the same coordinates; the company withdrew, and requested air and arty on the position; contact ceased at 1915H. Results: 6 US WIA, 4 EN KIA. On 04 Nov, A and B 3/12 again began move to West, with sub-element in lead; from 0834 to 1430, company perimeter and lead elements were subjected to mortar, AM and SA fire. 2 platoons from B 3/12 were cut off from perimeter by heavy AW and SA fire, closing the perimeter at 1220H; Results: 24 US WIA, 2 US MIA. On 05 Nov, the companies again moved West to selected FSB site, encountering sporadic SA and AW fire resulting in negative casualties; during search of area,

CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

found 15 EN KIA and confirmed 2 US MIA as KIA. On 6 and 7 Nov the companies constructed BN FSB and continued local patrolling for the secty of the FSB. On 8 Nov, C and D 3/12 contacted small enemy force, and withdrew to company perimeter calling air and arty fire on the en location. Results: 1 US WIA, 2EN KIA. On 9 Nov, C and D moved west to enemy loc, contacting unknown enemy force in bunker and trench system; the lead elements again withdrew to the patrol base calling for air and artillery suppressive fires. The element sustained 1 US KIA, 11 US WIA. On 10 Nov, C and D again moved West to enemy location, and engaged unknown enemy force from 1350H to 1807H; casualties totaled 9 US KIA, 24 US WIA and 2 US MIA; 11 enemy were killed. On 11 Nov C and D 3/12 secured enemy location and confirmed 2 US MIA as KIA, with negative enemy contact; C company continued search and destroy operations from this location through 14 Nov killing 2 NVA by ambush patrol. In order to complete surveillance of ridgeline, A and D 3/12 moved east southeast from 3/8 Infantry FSB toward C 3/12 location 12 - 14 Nov, with negative enemy contact.

(2) 3/8 Inf : (overlay 2) On 3 Nov, prior to CA of 3/12 Infantry elements, A and D 3/8 CA from Ben Het to Hill 882 to initiate S and D operations to West, and gain a position from which to interdict trail-infiltration route from South. On 4 Nov, A 3/8 contacted 5 enemy at 0930H; enemy broke contact at 1030H; upon resuming S and D West, unit was brought under heavy SA, AW and sniper fire, contact broken at 1235H; resulting in 2 US KIA, 3 US WIA, and 8 enemy KIA. On 5 and 6 Nov, A and D moved West to secure Hill 843; units were subjected to sporadic sniper and SA fire during movement, with negative casualties. On 8 Nov A and D 3/8 moved West to secure Hill 724. A company received AW, B-40 rocket, mortar and SA fire; while maneuvering North to support A co, D co was pinned down by SA, AW and mortar fire; units joined at 1600H and established perimeter; results: 10 KIA, 35 WIA. Through night of 7 and morning of 8 Nov, perimeter was subjected to sporadic mortar fire; as units began move West on 8 Nov, received heavy mortar fire, SA and AW fire, and returned perimeter; from 1655-1800 perimeter was attacked by unknown enemy force using B-40 rockets, mortars, grenades, SA and AW weapons; Contact was broken at 1800H; however, mortar and B-40 rocket fire continue until 2000H. Results: 14 US KIA, 64 US WIA. A co 3/8 was AL to Dak To and replaced by C 3/8 on 9 Nov; units conducted search operations from patrol base finding 95 enemy KIA. During period 10-14 Nov, 3/8 Infantry AL out and replaced units in order to maintain unit strengths; on 11 Nov, B, C and D moved to secure Hill 724; units engaged unknown enemy force in bunker and trench complex, and withdrew calling air and artillery to destroy enemy units on Hill 724; On 12 Nov, D 3/8 was AL to Dak To Base, and received at Hill 724 by D 1/12 Cav (AMEL). Units continued to receive sporadic mortar fire in perimeter through 14 Nov; casualties for this period were 6 KIA and 31 WIA.

(3) 4/503 Inf (Abn); (overlay 4) A, C and D companies conducted search and destroy operations to South of Ben Het during period 3-7 Nov to locate suspected unknown size enemy force; on 7 Nov unit was released OPCON 1-4 Infantry Pde and placed OPCON 173rd Bde (Abn) with negative enemy contact during period.

(4) 1/8 Infantry: (overlay 1) Unit arrived in AO 10 Nov and located initially on Route 14N, East of Dak To Base; sub-elements continued search and destroy operations to North and West of Route 14N, relieving 2/503 Infantry (Abn) of AO responsibilities. During period 12-15 Nov, 1/8 AL to FSB location to interdict trail infiltration routes from South into 1st Bde AO; FSB received sporadic mortar fire at FSB during this period, with negative casualties and negative enemy contact.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

period, with negative casualties and negative enemy contact.

c. Pursuit Phase: (12-30 Nov) During this phase, combat assault and AL operations, coupled with air and artillery in a blocking role, were used to the best advantage.

(1) 1/8 Inf: (overlay 5) 1/8 initiated pursuit operations 12 Nov by continuing CA from Route 14N location to establish heavy artillery FSB in the center of suspected NS enemy exfiltration route. Sub-elements continued search and destroy operations to W and SW of FSB base to screen routes with negative enemy contact. Beginning 19 Nov, FSB was subjected to sporadic mortar attacks and a patrol from D co contacted unknown enemy force resulting in 1 US KIA, 5 US WIA, and 6 US MIA; a search on the following day (20 Nov) confirmed 3 US KIA, 3 US returned to duty, and found 4 EN KIA. On 25 Nov, A and D co continued CA from search location to Hill 830 to prepare FSB for support of operations to the W and S; the HQ and DS artillery followed on 27 Nov, leaving one company to secure B 1/92 artillery (155) fire support base. During the remainder of the pursuit phase, 1/8 Infantry subordinate units continued area sweeps and search patrols with negative enemy contact.

(2) 3/8 Inf: During the period 16-20 Nov A and C, and A and B companies search to west and SW of Hill 724 to interdict trail system and determine disposition of EN forces withdrawn from Hill 724. There was no enemy contact during this period. On 20 Nov, in reaction to a reported threat of EN interdiction along Route 14N, A and B companies were CA to commanding terrain features to E of the route (overlay 6). The battalion established a second FSB with T/C CP and A 4/42 artillery (aGSR unit) for support of the operation; A and B companies conducted search and destroy operations to N and E of route 14N through 24 Nov with negative enemy contact. On 25 Nov, A and B companies AL from search area E of route 14 N to Hill 1338 to continue search and destroy operations to S along ridgeline, and exploit NVA base complex discovered by 3/12 Inf. This operation continued through 30 Nov with negative enemy contact. (overlay 7).

(3) 3/12 Inf: (overlay 9) On 15 Nov, 3/12 Inf initiated pursuit operations to SW of Dak To Base by continuing CA of B and D companies to Hill 530 to construct FSB. A and C companies continue search operations along ridge S from Hill 1338; on 16 Nov, a patrol from C company contacted unknown enemy force in trench and bunker complex on approach to Hill 1338; patrol withdrew to Company location, calling artillery and air into enemy location. A (-) and C companies attacked to secure Hill 1338 on 17 Nov, contacting enemy through-out the day; Hill was secured at 1718H with 9 US KIA and 32 WIA. On 18 Nov, search operations vic Hill 1338 found 46 NVA KIA; during search, a E-40 rocket fired into perimeter caused 15 US WIA. B 3/12 was AL from Hill 530 to support S and D operations at Hill 1338; B 3/12 attacked to secure Hill 1294 on 19 Nov, and contacted unknown enemy force entrenched in defense perimeter; unit withdrew to Company perimeter, calling air and artillery on enemy position; company perimeter received mortar from enemy position causing 3 US KIA and 8 US WIA; A search of perimeter area revealed 7 NVA KIA; On 20 Nov, A co moved from FSB to secure B Company patrol base while B co attacked to secure Hill 1294; mission was accomplished with negative enemy contact. A and B companies continued search operations from Hills 1338 and 1294 through 23 Nov with negative enemy contacts. On 24 Nov, 3/12 Inf was relieved in place by A and B 3/8 Inf, and continued AL to establish FSB at hill 530; A and D moved from

# CONFIDENTIAL

Hill 530 to establish Company patrol base for search operations to W on same day. A and D company continued S and D operations to W through 27 Nov; B and C company CA West from FSP (Hill 530) to Hill 1000 on 28 Nov. Action during the period 28-30 Nov were limited to sporadic mortar attacks on FSP at Hill 530; a total of 5 US KIA and 18 US WIA resulted from these attacks.

(4) 2/8 Cav (Aml): (overlay 10) On 15 Nov D and C companies CA from Kontum to AO Spatz; both companies continued S and D operations to N and NW of Dak To Base; HQ, 2/8 Cav and F company AL from Kontum to AO, becoming OPCON to 1st Bde for S and D operations, on 16 Nov. C 2/8 contacted unknown enemy force in trench and bunker positions resulting in 2 US WIA; D company 2/8 CA to commanding terrain to S of Dak To Base to continue search for suspected mortar positions. On 18 Nov, C 2/8 again contacted enemy force NW of Dak To with negative casualties and on 19 Nov were reinforced by CA of B 2/8 from position N of Dak To. B and C company continue to assault NE again contacting unknown enemy force, resulting in 3 US KIA and 7 US WIA; companies withdrew and called artillery and airstrike on known enemy location; 2/8 Cav became OPCON 1/LACD on 20 Nov and continued search and destroy operations on commanding terrain NW of Dak To Base.

(5) 1/12 Inf: (overlay 8) The battalion AL from Pan Me Thout to Dak To Base on 20 Nov, and moved W to become OPCON to 173rd Lde (Abn). 1st Bde retained OPCON of B 1/12 for perimeter defense and local patrol at Dak To Base. 1/12 returned OPCON 1st Bde on 25 Nov with A, C and D companies continuing S and D operations vic Hill 875, west of Dak To Base. On 28 Nov, B and C companies continued CA to Hill 915 to establish patrol base for search operations to NW and NE. 1/12 (-) w/DS Artillery AL from FSP 16 to FSP 15. C company and Recon platoon continued search operations to N of FSP 16, and B and D continued S and D operations NW and NE along ridgeline through 1 Dec, with negative enemy contact.

d. Dak To Base Security: The most serious threat to the Dak To complex was from weapons attack. Each battalion stationed at Dak To assumed defense responsibility for the complex during its stay; in addition CIDG, ARVN (1/42 Inf) and lodger units provided perimeter security. The complex received mortar rounds on 9, 12, 14, 15, 16, and 21 Nov; 2 C-130 aircraft and ASP were completely destroyed by fire caused by one attack. Active patrolling by perimeter defense units were unable to locate mortar positions to N or S of Base; however, no further attacks were made through 30 Nov.

e. Security of Convoys and Main Supply Routes: The following units were open to 1st Bde for this mission; C 2/1 Cav (-) (31 Oct - 21 Nov), B 2/1 Cav (-) (22 Nov - 11 Dec), and B 1/69 Arm (3 Nov - 1 Dec).

(1) C 2/1 Cav with two platoons and one platoon from B 1/69 Arm continued convoy/route and critical bridge security on Route 14N from Kontum to Dak To Base; enemy activity during this period was limited to sporadic ambush. Armed vehicles were ambushed on 11, 18, and 19 Nov, resulting in 5 US KIA, 9 US WIA and 12 EN KIA. No supply convoys were

# CONFIDENTIAL

attacked.

(2) B 2/1 Cav assumed convoy, route and critical bridge security mission on 22 Nov. On 27 Nov a critical bridge site (12) was attacked by unknown enemy force; one tank was destroyed, 1 US KIA, 5 US WIA, and 2 EN KIA.

(3) B 1/69 Arm continued convoy security on Route 512 from Dak To Base W to Don Het; convoys were mainly artillery resupply. In addition, the company provided Rome Flow security for clearing operations on route 512; enemy activity consisted of mining roadway, with no significant incidents during period.

(4) Enemy activity on Routes 14N and 512 was severely limited by daily engineer minesweeps and bridge reconnaissance by 299th Engineer Battalion; in addition one company from 1/42 Inf (ARVN) provided a strong point and critical bridge security force at Bridge 3 on Route 512 West.

11. (C) SUPPORT OPERATIONS:

a. Training: As combat operations were conducted during the period of the report, training was limited to zeroing of individual weapons and crew served weapons practice, attendance at formal training schools on scheduled allocations was continued for LRRP personnel.

b. Administration: Due to the administrative work load and difficult communications between the battalion forward locations and their administrative elements at Camp Enari, the Brigade S-1 Section was divided into two elements, one at Camp Enari, and one collocated with the Brigade TOC. This provided a centralized location for transmitting messages and alerting Division on future requirements.

Coordination of replacement personnel was the main mission accomplished by the section during the period. A total of 739 replacements were handled during this period; 453 were new replacements with the remainder (286) being original unit members returned to duty from sick or injury.

c. Logistics:

(1) General

(a) Beginning on 27 October 1967 and ending 31 October 1967 the 1st Brigade Trains moved from the Oasis to Dak To.

(b) The Brigade Trains move was accomplished in three (3) phases as follows:

- (1) 3/12 Battalion Trains
- (2) Brigade S-4 and support elements
- (3) 3/8 Battalion Trains

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(c) During the move from the Onsis to Dak To the statistics for the move was as follows:

<u>TRUCK</u>	<u>TOTAL SORTIES</u>
5 Ton	15
2 1/2 Ton	192
3/4 Ton	38
1/4 Ton	36
2 1/2 Ton FOL	2
S&P Dump	4

(d) During the displacement from the Onsis, the battalion's were allowed to stand down at Division Base Camp ( Camp Enari ) for at least one (1) day. This stand down was utilized to conduct physical inventories, reconcile shortages, promptly fill where practical. A maintenance contact team was set up in the unit area to repair all weapons, to include scopes and night observation devices.

(e) During the initial occupation and deployment in the Dak To area, the 1st Brigade was responsible for all resupply to FSP's and convoy movement for all units in the A/O.

(f) The logistical base, when completed, at Dak To consisted of the following:

- (1) Battalion and separate Co/Btry Trains
- (2) Forward Support Area (Class I, II, III, & V)
- (3) Laundry and Bath Unit
- (4) DX Point
- (5) Engineer Company
- (6) Medical Company (-)
- (7) Maintenance Company (-)

(g) The FSA (Forward Support Area) was operated by the Pleiku Sub-Area Command of 1st Log. It consisted of Class I, III and V supply points, other items continued to be supplied from Division Base Camp.

## (2) CLASS I:

(a) Class I statistics for the period:

	<u>TYPE</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>	<u>ISSUED</u>	<u>O/H</u>
1/8	A Ration	24,975	24,975	0
	C Ration	42,587	42,587	0
	Sundry	200	200	0
3/8	A Ration	19,000	19,000	0
	C Ration	43,000	36,336	6,864
	Sundry	215	215	0

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

3/12	A Ration	30,826	30,826	0
	C Ration	45,100	45,100	9,600
	Sundry	246	240	6
1/12	A Ration	3,384	3,384	0
	C Ration	14,724	14,724	2,000
	Sundry	72	72	0

Average Daily Head Count:  $\frac{1}{12}$  690     $\frac{1}{8}$  890     $\frac{3}{8}$  963     $\frac{3}{12}$  800  
 Average Units Issued to Daily: 4

(b) During the mortar attack of 15 November 1967, and the subsequent blowing up of the ASP, the Class I supply point received heavy damage, curtailing the issue of A Rations for 2 days, normal issue of A Rations begin in 24 to 48 hours.

(3) Class II & IV:

(a) Statistics for the period:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>	<u>ISSUED</u>	<u>O/H</u>
Sandbags	746,000	706,000	40,000
Concertina Dales	26	26	0
Parwire, Rolls	21	15	6
Pickets (All Size)	6,850	5,050	1,800
PSP, Sheets	882	882	0
Instant Punks	16	16	0
6X6	250	250	0
8X8	80	80	0
Engineer Stakes	5,000	4,580	420

(b) A bulk shipment of some high turnover items of class II & IV would have eliminated some resupply problems for all units in the AO. A one time request of these items consolidated by FSA for breakout upon arrival to bring stock levels up to requirements would have alleviated some problems. It is recommended that the following items in amounts indicated be used for future guidance:

	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
(1)	Battery, BA-386	180 cs
(2)	Battery, BA-30	12 cs
(3)	Battery, BA-505	300 ea
(4)	Battery, BA-399	300 ea
(5)	Handset, H-144/U	15 ea
(6)	Antenna, PRC-25 Short	36 ea
(7)	Antenna, PRC-25 Long	36 ea

**CONFIDENTIAL**

# CONFIDENTIAL

(c) Emergency needs of Barrier Material for establishment of FSB's created some problem. It is recommended that an emergency stock level be established at FSA, to supply units in critical need. The following material in amounts indicated is normally required for the establishment of one FSB in jungle terrain of the nature found in this area:

	<u>ITEM</u>	<u>AMOUNT</u>
(1)	PSP	10 Bundles
(2)	Instant Junkers	20 (For Major Move)
(3)	Sandbags	150,000
(4)	Barbwire	10 Rolls
(5)	Concertina	10 Rolls
(6)	6x6 x 16	30
(7)	8x8 x 16	20

## (4) Class V:

### (a) Class V Statistics (Expenditures):

(1)	4.2 (All Types)	32,780
(2)	81mm (All Types)	36,130
(3)	105mm (All Types)	41,549
(4)	90mm (Heat & Cannister)	95
(5)	50cal	26,700
(6)	7.62	667,000
(7)	Demc, LIS	43,580
(8)	Det Cord	25,000
(9)	Pangalores	880
(10)	5.56	614,200
(11)	Grenade, Smoke	3,181
(12)	Blasting Caps	2,600
(13)	Grenade, Frag	1,860
(14)	Trip Flares	1,506
(15)	Claymores	1,452
(16)	Linear Mines	25
(17)	40mm (M79)	3,646
(18)	Flare, Hand Held	1,016
(19)	Flare, Surface	862
(20)	M72	135

(b) The type of warfare encountered during this operation clearly depicted the need for large stockage objectives at FSB's, FSA, & in Battalion emergency stocks. This need is attributed to large expenditures during contact

(c) An ASP at Brigade level could take some of the load from the 1st Log Command ASP with respect to emergency needs. This ASP being used during shortage at 1st Log Command ASP and emergency unit needs. Normal resupply would continue to be conducted at FSA-ASP.

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

(d) Demo material was in short supply. This was due to expenditure of unusually large amounts in the clearing of FSD's. The terrain in this area consist of dense jungle with canopys rising to 200 feet requiring large amounts of Demo to clear LZ's. TNT and military dynamite can be used in lieu of the C4 and M37 kits, however it has been found that the C4 and M37 kits were much more efficient and effective in clearing a rapid LZ.

(1) Approximately 70% less C4 required to blow trees as opposed to TNT.

(2) Less bulk to transport since less tonnage is used.

(3) Can be molded around trees for more efficient use, getting more blast area around the object blown.

(4) Faster and easier to set up then TNT.

## (5) Laundry & Baths:

(a) Laundry service initially was a problem, due to inadequate facilities and a sense of urgency lacking in development of this installation.

(b) Until late in the period, when shower facilities could be installed, units utilized various sundry rigs for shower facilities.

## (6) Medical Company Support, Statistics for period:

(a) Dustoffs	Patients 771
	Missions 242
(b) Number of patients evacuated	845
(c) Total injured Non-hostile action	83
(e) Total injured hostile action	491

## (7) Maintenance:

(a) Maintenance support was marginal during the intial phase of the operation. This was the result of units not having adequate organic maintenance capability and direct support not having adequate maintenance personnel, equipment, and MLL stockage at this location. Also the units were required to DX fast moving items initially at HC & A Co of support maintenance back at Camp Enari. Support Maintenance repair parts and DX items continue to be slow. Many generators are deadlined for lack of engines.

(b) The shortages of wreckers continue to be a problem in the 1st Brigade AO. During our first few days of operation, the Brigade was without a tank recovery vehicle and very limited vehicle recovery capability.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(B) 1/12

(a) Unit trains moved to Dak To from Ban Elech via Camp Enari beginning 20 November 1967 and closed at Dak To 21 November 1967. Utilizing following:

2½ Ton	7
3/4 Ton	1
1/4 Ton	2
2½ Ton	2 (Added at Camp Enari)
S&P	1 (Added at Camp Enari)

(b) The logistical input to the FSF caused by shifting Fire Base four (4) times in ten days, increased the requirements for all types of supplies except rations. For example, the number of hook sorties while at Dak To has doubled from the four (4) sorties required at Ban Elech to in excess of seven (7) per day. The requirements for transportation to haul ammunition increased from two (2) 2½ Ton trucks to six (6). The additional logistical support required the use of a wrecker to move large quantities of Class V rapidly.

#### d. Signal:

(1) Brigade communications were continuous during this period and experienced only minor difficulties.

(2) Communications transition from Jackson Hole to Dak TO was accomplished quickly and efficiently. Continuous Brigade communications were maintained by displacing the C. P. in echelons. A Brigade TAC C. P. equipped with necessary FM Radio and wire equipment precoded the main body to Dak To. Division communications posed no problems since two VHF Radio Relay systems had already been installed to support other units operating in the Dak To area. An adequate number of circuits were provided to the 1st Brigade by these two systems.

(3) Due to the mountainous terrain, some minor communications difficulties arose. VHF Radio Relay circuits were somewhat degraded due to the necessity of employing two radio repeaters. Additionally, FM Radio communications to Division Base Camp could only be effected by use of a retransmission station on Dragon Mountain. The obstacle gain phenomena was frequently employed in establishing FM Radio communications between Brigade Fire Bases. Antenna siting and height were critical to these circuits.

(4) The rapid buildup during the early days of November from a two Battalion, one Brigade operation to a Division (Plus) operation posed several problems. The most noticeable was FM Radio congestion. It had been reported that every frequency allocated to the 4th Infantry Division by IFFV was being used in the Dak To area, some more than one time. This resulted in frequent cases of mutual interference with completely clear FM Radio frequencies being the exception rather than the rule.

# CONFIDENTIAL

(28)

# CONFIDENTIAL

Also, the sudden buildup of troop units in the area initially overloaded the 1st Brigade forward switchboard. This problem was immediately recognized and overcome through the installation of 4th Division TAG and Dak To area switchboards.

(5) The significant increase in high precedence message traffic during the first half of November presented on communications difficulties. The number of flash messages handled during this period exceeded the average number handled during the preceding four months, by 100 Per Cent.

## c. Psychological Operations:

(1) Psychological Operations (Psy Ops): Missions were flown in AO Spatz in support of the 1st Brigade with primary emphasis aimed at the NVA. The leaflet drops and loudspeaker missions were planned and executed to cover known and suspected locations and infiltration/exfiltration routes utilized by the enemy forces.

(2) A total of 84 missions were flown resulting in 19,123,000 leaflets being dropped and 73 hours of aerial loudspeaker time. A total of 32 ground hours of live and taped broadcasts were made. These Psy Ops endeavors emphasized the themes of FWMAP strength, lack of food and medical supplies, nostalgic themes, the benefits of and how to "Chieu Hoi", NVA hardships, and the inevitability of defeat.

(3) The enemy faced during this operation posed a real challenge to the Psy Ops section as he was thoroughly indoctrinated by his political officers and felt he really could defeat the FWMAP's in this area. The NVA had spent considerable time massing troops and equipment in the area and he was well prepared for long term operations in the area. The usual type themes did not apply in this case due to the well-equipped enemy forces; therefore, a different approach had to be initiated.

(4) On 2 November 1967, a Chieu Hoi named Vu Hong rallied to the ARVN at Dak To District Headquarters. This individual possessed information that proved to be invaluable to both the Psy Ops situation as well as the tactical situation. He named units, personalities, locations and plans of action. He was exploited to the maximum extent by the Psy Ops agencies and as a result, many varied leaflets and tapes were made. An intensive saturation campaign was initiated throughout the AO utilizing the material obtained from Vu Hong. Captured NVA personnel verified the fact that the name and story of Vu Hong was known by the enemy throughout the area of operations. On 21 November 1967, the Brigade received its first NVA "Chieu Hoi", named Do Van Ba. This man was also exploited to the maximum degree. Within 24 hours after he rallied, leaflets had been printed and disseminated throughout the area indicated as his unit location. Within 36 hours, taped appeals made by Do Van Ba, were also being broadcast in the area. Prompt and effective utilization of these two Hoi Chens took its toll on the enemies' morale as has been evidenced by statements made by PW.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(5) An effort was made to have a Psy Ops aircraft at this location for more expeditions and timely utilization. The Psy Ops section of the 1st Brigade felt that this was necessary due to the fluid tactical situation. This experiment was cancelled after 3 days due to the determination by higher authority that the runway was not suitable for the landing gear of the aircraft.

(6) A ground Psy Ops team, consisting of two individuals was assigned to the Psy Ops section. This team was equipped with a 250 watt speaker system and a 1000 watt speaker system as well as a tape recorder and numerous tapes. Due to the fact that one individual of the two man team was fluent in Vietnamese, an interpreter was not necessary. The team was sent to the various units of this command for ground Psy Ops activities. As a result of the success of this team, 4 additional teams were assigned to the Psy Ops section on 28 November 1967, and one team sent to each of the maneuver battalions. These teams broadcast a minimum of 4 hours daily and were well versed in the tactical situation with in their respective battalion AO. The effectiveness of these teams, in conjunction with the aerial missions, remains to be seen but the statements of PW's support the assumption that this two-pronged Psychological strike against the enemy is having the desired effect.

(7) Enemy Propaganda: There was no real effort on the part of the enemy to employ Psy Ops against FWMF. Although he possessed leaflets aimed mainly at the Americans, he failed to use them. Whether his failure to utilize this media of warfare was by design or due to FWMF tactical gains is not known. The enemy entered villages within the AO, but made no real attempts at using political or psychological themes in his lectures to the village. The villagers immediately reported the entry to the friendly forces, indicating ineffectiveness to intimidate the civilian population. There were no reports of enemy terrorist activities with in the AO.

(8) Propaganda and political indoctrination techniques within the enemy forces structure continued to follow patterns of the past. Each enemy unit, from company up, had a political officer assigned who equals the rank of the commander of the unit. This individual appears to be well trained and highly esteemed by members of the unit. The political officer continued to approach the theme that the NVN are liberating the South Vietnamese from the yoke of American oppression. The Chieu Hoi program continued to be the principle concern of these Political Officers and they extended their greatest effort to degrade it.

(9) Psychological operations evaluation of the indigenous population indicated the acceptance of FWMF and that the population is wholeheartedly behind the cause of democracy.

## f. Civil Affairs:

(1) A survey of the hamlets in the Dak To vicinity was made on 30 October 1967. To avoid duplication of the Civic Action effort, an

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

agreement was made with Special Forces to take over the Civic Action support of 3 hamlets west of Dak To Air Strip. In addition, joint visitations, with CIDG personnel providing security, were undertaken in a number of other hamlets.

(2) As intelligence continued to indicate an NVA Division build up in the area, ground speaker Psy Ops missions were launched starting the 1st of November 1967. On the afternoon of the following day a "Hoi Chanh" belonging to the 66th NVA Regiment turned himself in and provided detailed intelligence on the enemy battle plan and units. Intense ground and air Psy Ops loudspeaker missions continued through the next 10 days with CIDG personnel providing general security.

(3) On 10 November 1967 the S-5, 1st Brigade, was appointed Civic Action Coordinator of Kontum Province by the Commanding General. A survey was made of the cities of Kontum Province and other areas of the province free of NVA control. A Civic Action plan of support to major institutions in the province was prepared.

#### (4) Village Operations:

(a) By the middle of the month 1st Brigade Civic Action teams of the Battalions in the forward AO were assigned the following hamlets on a permanent basis:

Dak Robie	ZF 002228
Dak Tomboe	ZF 006231
Tri Le	ZF 995224
Dak Ri Ping	YB 976221
Dak Mot Lop	YB 964228
Yang Lo Nho	YB 944239
Dak Roleang	YB 936248

(b) In addition eight other areas received Civic action visits from the Brigade S-5 section:

Ke Joy	ZF 025216
Dak Wong	ZF 026217
Tan Canh	ZF 063223
Long Kon Hojie	ZF 049241
Dak To	ZF 059267
Dien Binh	ZF 090175
Canh Chao	ZF 058251
Kontum	AS 730385

(5) On 17 November 1967, Brigade S-5 investigated the NVA attack on Tan Canh the previous evening. Enemy mortar sites were located and the people of the town calmed. Request was received to clear land behind the Buddhist temple and the Catholic Orphanage (route of approach used by the NVA) this request was honored. A Vietnamese Information team was requested from Province for use in the area to calm the peoples fears. They were provided and used in Dak To and Kon Horang.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(6) Individual and institution assistances:

(a) A program of diagnostic examinations by Brigade doctors was provided for the people of Dien Binh through the St Paul Mission School Dispensary. Approximately 200 people received this care.

(b) The Dak To campaign resulted in 58 Civic Action visits. 705 MEDCAPS were conducted and 1160 children participated in the Youth Health Program

(c) The following institutions of Kontum Province were assisted by the Brigade S-5 sections:

Buddhist School (Tan Canh) - 430 gals of milk was distributed.

St Taun Orphanage (Tan Canh) - 1,000 lbs of food, 1,500 lbs cement, 2½ ton truck load of ammo boxes were distributed.

Cao Dai Temple (Tan Canh) - received 1,300 lbs of cement to repair its temple school.

St Paul Mission School (Dien Binh) - received 100 school kits, 426 gals of milk, 3 boxes medical supplies and 2½ ton truck load of ammo boxes.

Dr Smith Hospital (Kontum) - received two GP medium tents were erected and presented to the hospital to house Montagnard families caring for their relatives. 1,800 lbs of food was distributed.

St Vincent De Paul Orphanage (Kontum) - received 800 lbs of food and 400 gals of milk. Arrangements were made to provide funds for the building of a kitchen.

Leperosorium (Kontum) - 426 gals of milk and 450 pounds of food were distributed.

13. (C) Results:

a. Friendly:

- (1) KIA: 76
- (2) WIA 368
- (3) Equipment:

Tank, M48A3	1
AFC M113	1
LMG	5
ML6	23
Pistol cal 45	15
Shotgun	3

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

Gren lau	65
Radio, PRC 25	21
Radio, VRC 46	5
Tel Set TA312	11
T. 50-901 items	3849

## b. Enemy

- (1) KIA: 529 (incl units opcon)
- (2) CIA: 3
- (3) Weapons captured

AK-47	50
SKS	12
US Carb	1
LMG	18
HMG	4
D-40 RL	24
PFT	2
Radio	2
Tel	1
60mm mtr	3

- (4) Munitions:
  - 99rds 81mm
  - 81rds 60mm
  - 80 Ap mines
  - 90 Gren ades (hand & Rifle)
  - 4210 rds SA Ammo

- (5) Equipment:
  - 13 indiv prot masks
  - 24 rucksacks
  - various miscellaneous items (ponchos, ammo pouches, etc)

- (6) Food Stuff:
  - Est 5 tons. rice (redistributed through 24STZ)

## 14. (C) Combat Lessons Learned

### a. Administration

Item: Establishment of duplicate S-1 sections, to be located at Base Camp and at the forward Brigade element in necessity during periods of extensive enemy contact.

Discussion: With the wide dispersion of maneuver units, communications between the forward elements and support elements at base camp is difficult and many times impossible. This lack of communication

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

causes a slow reaction time in evaluating the impact of casualties, and thereby slowing the replacement process. The forward S-1 element of Brigade was able to monitor losses and actions of the maneuver units through the operations section, and was then able to consolidate estimated requirements and alert the Division replacement elements immediately through well established communications channels.

**Observation:** The continuance of the split S-1 section concept, with one portion always collocated with the brigade forward CP enables early action for replacement processing.

## b. Operations

(1) Item: Use of auxiliary radio receivers to monitor battalion command nets during enemy contact.

**Discussion:** During multiple enemy contacts affecting more than one maneuver battalion, auxiliary receivers located in the Brigade TOC were used to monitor battalion command nets. These receivers were monitored constantly during the period of the contact, and allowed the Brigade staff to anticipate battalion requirements, and initiate action prior to the formal request from the units in contact. This became extremely important during multiple contacts. When the brigade command net became overloaded, or tied up by one unit reporting and/or requesting assistance. By utilizing this method, it was possible, on many occasions, to advise the unit that assistance was "on the way" immediately upon receiving the request formally.

**Observation:** The Brigade TOC should maintain a minimum of two auxiliary receivers available for monitoring purposes during tactical operations.

(2) Item: No completely satisfactory method for clearing new landing zones exists at present. This is particularly true of attempts made in Kontum Province, where triple canopy vegetation is the rule rather than the exception.

**Discussion:** The requirement to establish forward FSB for support of maneuver operations placed a heavy burden upon air support. All manner and combination of munitions were used. It normally required a minimum of nine aircraft (three flights) with heavy ordnance, e.g., M-117, M82, with fuze extenders to establish an acceptable one-ship landing zone. It was then necessary to insert engineer personnel as soon as possible to clear and enlarge the landing zone to a size capable of handling the minimum number of helicopters necessary to insure the security of the unit on the ground.

**Observation:** Hard-casing, heavy (1000, 750) pound bombs with fuze extenders are the only satisfactory munitions for initial clearing of a landing zone, and these have proven only marginally satisfactory in triple-canopy, hardwood vegetation.

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

## a. Support Operations

(1) Item: Engineer support in FST clearing and construction.

Discussion: Heavy engineer support in constructing battalion size FST consisted of employment of the D6E dozer, chain-saw squads, and extensive demolition operations.

(a) Airlift of the D6E dozer by CH-54 (Flying Crane) to the FST under construction is invaluable; however, the airlift conversion kit provided to aid this operation is unsatisfactory, requiring in excess of 3 hours for reassembly at the site, and two CH-54 sorties. By separating the D6E into three loads; one for engine, chassis, and frame (CH-54), one for the blade (CH-47), and one for the tracks (CH-47), reassembly time at the FST is 15-30 minutes by a well-trained crew.

(b) The Remington 18" chain saw is totally unsatisfactory for clearing operations conducted in the Central Highlands. The size and type of trees (mostly mahogany) encountered cannot be cleared with this saw as it lacks the durability of engine and chain-blade necessary.

(c) C-4 explosive continues to be far superior to TNT for land clearing operations. The XM-37 demolition kit is exceptional in this respect as it is easily carried and can be suited to the tree with less work, thereby allowing faster clearing operations.

### Observations:

(a) The airlift conversion kit for the D6E should be eliminated from use.

(b) The Remington 18" chain saw should be replaced by commercial-duty, hardened-steel blade chain saws.

(c) Plans for any operations involving FST construction in the Central Highlands must provide for obtaining and stockpiling excessive quantities of C4 explosive.

(2) Item: Combat assaults into previously used fire bases.

Discussion: Previously used fire bases offer excellent landing zones in the area of Dak To. Natural LZ's are very scarce and usually require improvement. Old FST's are easily mined, booby trapped, and ambushed. The enemy in this area is well aware of the scarcity of LZs and plans for U.S. forces to use old fire bases for combat assault landings.

(35)

CONFIDENTIAL

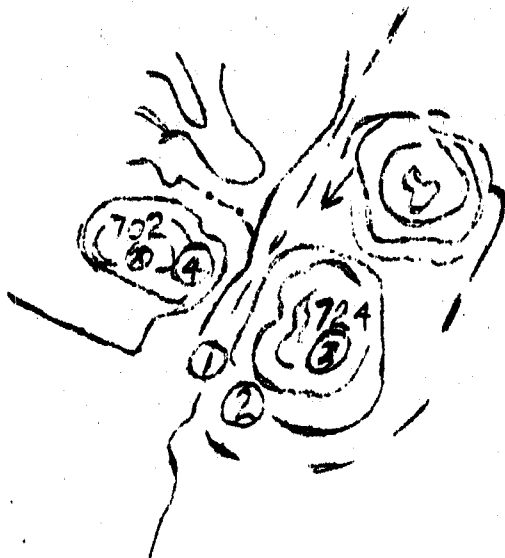
# CONFIDENTIAL

Observation: Old FSP's should not be used as LZ if any other suitable LZ is available. If any other suitable LZ is available. If they are used, a heavy bomb preparation must be used to clear the LZ of mines and booby traps. An extensive preparation by both air and artillery must be used on all likely anti-heliborne terrain on or near the LZ. Artillery and air should be shifted away from the LZ but must be continuous throughout the assault landing until the commander determines that the landing is unopposed. Particular attention should be given to fires on likely enemy heavy machine gun positions near the approach and departure routes of both helicopter and ground forces.

## (3) Item: Anti-heliborne ambushes

Discussion: The enemy has conducted at least one successful ambush of U.S. gunships. The situation was a medical evacuation and resupply of an infantry unit early in the morning after a night of contact with the enemy. Four UH-1H's and two UH-1C gunships were sent to accomplish the mission. The gunships were flying just to the right and forward of the lead UH-1H. The second gunship sighted a group (5-7) of NVA in the open standing in a bomb crater. The NVA made no attempt to hide or evade when the gunships flew over. The lead gunship turned around a small hill, back onto the original flight path and started a normal gun run at the smoke that the second gunship had dropped. Just after turning in on final and before firing, the gunship was taken under fire from the ridge to his left with deadly accurate rocket, machine gun, and small arms fire. The gunship was literally shot out of the air and crash landed just beyond the original enemy located in the bomb crater.

N  
↑



1. Enemy in bomb crater.
2. Crash site.
3. Friendly Co
4. Enemy heavy fire.
5. ---- flt path of gunships.

(36)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

Observations: When enemy contact is probable and heliborne operations are to be conducted, an intensive H & I and defensive fire program should be fired on overlooking or prominent terrain adjacent to the LZ prior to the arrival of the helicopters. Gunships should vary their approaches and gun runs on obvious targets when the terrain presents likely ambush sites.

(4) Item: Instant foxholes for forward units.

Discussion: Overhead cover shortly after the combat assault of a unit is often demanded by the enemy's capability to mortar or rocket the unit. The arriving unit will not be sufficiently set up and protected to withstand a mortar or rocket attack within 2-4 hours after the combat assault. One battalion sustained such an attack the night of the day the unit combat assaulted two companies and moved the rest of the FSE by CH-47. No KIA or WIA were sustained by this unit using instant foxholes.

Observation: Prior to the movement of the unit, PSP and timbers should be stockpiled, cut, and packaged into CH-47 loads so that when they arrive in the new FSE they can immediately be emplaced for overhead cover. The foxholes are initially dug using shape charges. As usual, the infantry shapes the foxhole and fills sandbags to finish the foxhole with overhead cover.

An additional fourteen (14) CH-47 sorties are required to carry the PSP, shape charges, and timbers to construct the instant foxholes. The tactical situation and the enemy's mortar and rocket capability will dictate the use of this technique.

## d. Evaluation of Aerial Reconnaissance

Discussion: During the reported period, aerial reconnaissance in the 1st Brigade Tactical Area of Operations provided immeasurable assistance in locating enemy base camps, fortifications and movements. The Aerial Personnel Detector (APD-Snoopy) flew 26 missions of which 18 provided significant indications of enemy troop concentrations. 21 of 21 visual reconnaissance missions produced significant data confirming enemy trail activity and emplacements. On five of these missions sightings confirmed previously recorded APD sensings. Only five photo missions were flown due to the dense canopy in the area of operations which tended to reduce the effectiveness of this collection source. However, on all photo missions numerous bunker and foxhole positions were recorded in sparsely vegetated areas. Of 47 Infra Red missions, 21 revealed possible locations of enemy base camp or bivouac sites. It should be noted that Infra Red is an effective collection device particularly in support of operations in a jungle environment; however, the effectiveness of this sensor was reduced by excessive no fire zone requirements. As a general rule, No Fire Zones extending on a 20 kilometer radius from a center point coordinate lasting up to 60 minutes were required. Under such restrictions essential H&I fires must be terminated for an unacceptable time covering almost the entire area of operations. The

(37)  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

ground commander could not permit such an extensive cessation of fire under battle conditions encountered in the Ede A.O. The only alternative was to abort the reconnaissance mission. In summary, density of vegetation in the Ede A.O. determined the effectiveness of aerial surveillance devices. Based on this criteria the APD produced the most significant results followed in order by Visual Reconnaissance, Infra Red, and Photography.

## e. Logistics:

### (1) Item: Sundry Pack

Discussion: Items in Sundry Packs are excellent except for a lack of writing material. Only 3 tablets and 30 envelopes are issued per 100 men.

Observation: Writing material should be increased to 5 tablets and 100 envelopes.

### (2) Item: Combat losses of Serial Numbered Weapons.

Discussion: The accounting for weapons by serial number on combat loss reports requires a physical inventory be taken. This is extremely difficult with units spread out on FSB's, Trains areas, rear areas and personnel moving between these areas.

Observation: Combat losses of serial numbered weapons be reported by totals to effect immediate replacement, with serial numbers to follow or adjustment of serial numbers made when unit is out of contact and returned to trains area.

### (3) Item: Class V

Discussion: Abnormally large amounts of class V were required during this operation by units in contact.

Observation: That continued high basic loads of ammunition be stocked and large quantities be established in unit trains as emergency resupply and that close supervision be maintained also.

### (4) Item: Class V

Discussion: Units establishing FSB's in A.O. encountered dense growths of large trees. In order to clear a FSE large quantities of Demo were required. ASP has had a constant problem meeting this demand.

Observation: ASP increas stockage objectives to support operations in this type of area.

(38)

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## (5) Wrecker and/or Mechanical Handling Equipment (MHE).

Discussion: The large volume of Class V required to be moved from the ASP to hook pads or to ammo preparation areas and then to hook pads plus maintenance requirements and movement of barrier material put a severe strain on the efficient handling of these items. Due to lack of handling equipment, on most occasions, palletized loads had to be broken in order to be handled by hand which caused delay.

Observation: That authorization be obtained for Brigade to have at its disposal one (1) 5 Ton wrecker and one (1) 2,000 lb capacity fork lift for employment in movement of supplies in bulk.

## (6) Item: Clothing in the field

Discussion: Due to DX of individual clothing after contact, loss of clothing through laundry services and medical evacuation, many personnel did not have fatigues with name, rank etc. sewn on.

Observation: The requirements to sew on these items be eliminated from clothing in the field. Enlisted rank be of the collar pin on type.

## (7) Item: Repair parts at Spt Maint

Discussion: Much difficulty has been experienced with the supply of repair parts and DX items at Support Maintenance. Some items which remain critical are, batteries for 1/4 and 3/4 Ton Veh, Brake Shoes for 2 1/2 and 5 Ton, Generator engines, Magnetos and Carburetors, Vehicle starters and generators.

Observation: Stock levels at SPT Maint be increased.

## (8) Item: Hook Operations

Discussion: Some difficulty was experienced both at Dak To Hook Pad and FSE's in that hook loads were not being dropped where required. This was caused in some degree, at the Hook Pads, by Pathfinders not knowing where loads being backhauled belong, and at the FSE's by incoming hooks not getting instructions as to where to drop or failure to establish communications with the FSD.

Observation: Units establish close coordination with Pathfinders by keeping unit representative on Hook Pad at all times hooks are operating to assist Pathfinders in placing backhauls

(39)

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

and that every effort be made at FSI's to establish commo with Hooks.

(9) Items: Float items at Support Maintenance

Discussion: The lead time necessary for the replacement or repair of some items, denies the units the use of these critical items for some time. Float items at support maintenance were non-existent.

Observation: That support maintenance carry the following items as floats to replace, temporarily, like items destroyed or in maintenance for repair.

81mm Mortar	1
4.2mm Mortar	1
Sights, Mortar	3
PRC-25	5

(10) Item: DX Point

Discussion: The DX point was established five (5) days too late to support units that came into the area for stand down & DX.

Observation: That DX point be established as early as possible to support all units in the A.G.

FOR THE COMMANDER

*Ivan M Pierce*  
IVAN M PIERCE  
1st Lt, Inf  
Asst Adj

- 8 Inclosures
- 1- overlays 1 and 3
- 2- overlay 2
- 3- overlay 4
- 4- overlays 5 and 7
- 5- overlay 6
- 6- overlays 8 and 10
- 7- overlay 9
- 8- overlay 11

(40)

CONFIDENTIAL

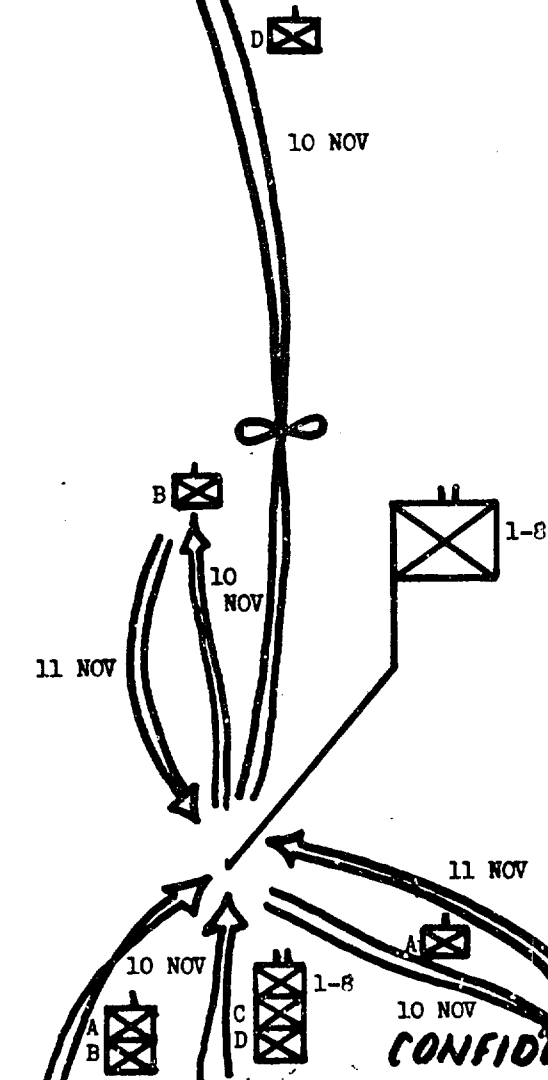
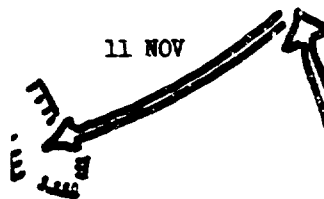
**CONFIDENTIAL**

1-8 INF

10-11 Nov

MAP 1:50,000  
SERIES L7014  
SHEET 6538 II

~~28~~ 27  
08



~~08~~ 14  
08

OVERLAY 1

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

94  
23

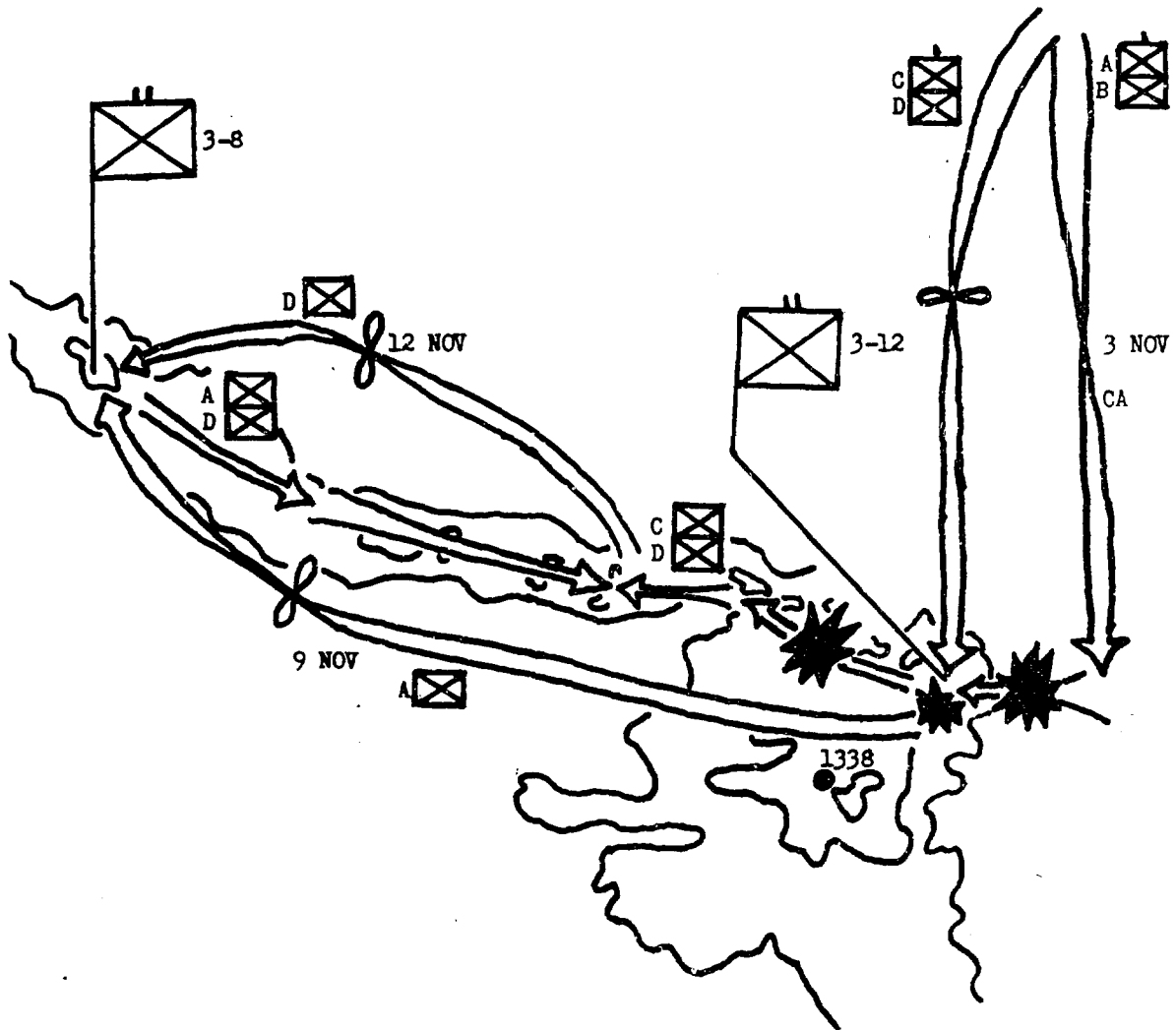
3-12 INF

3-12 NOV

MAP 1:50,000

SERIES L7014

SHEETS 6538 II, III



OVERLAY 3

CONFIDENTIAL

00  
YB/ZB 12





30-31 OCT

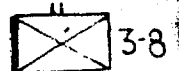
3-8 INF  
30 OCT-20 NOV

CONFIDENTIAL

85  
+  
20

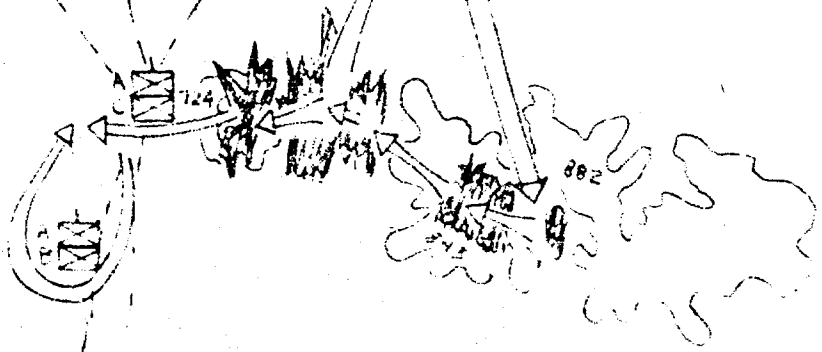


3 NOV



9 NOV

TRAIL SYSTEM



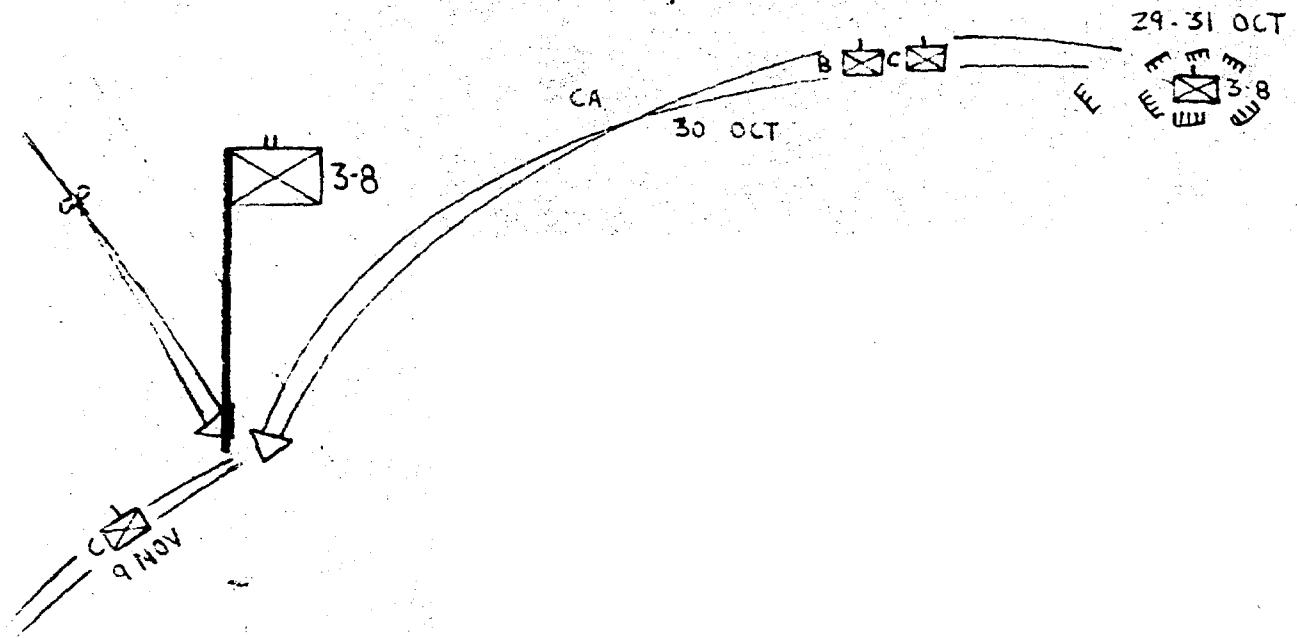
CONFIDENTIAL

1

3-8 INF  
30 OCT-20 NOV

OVERLAY 2

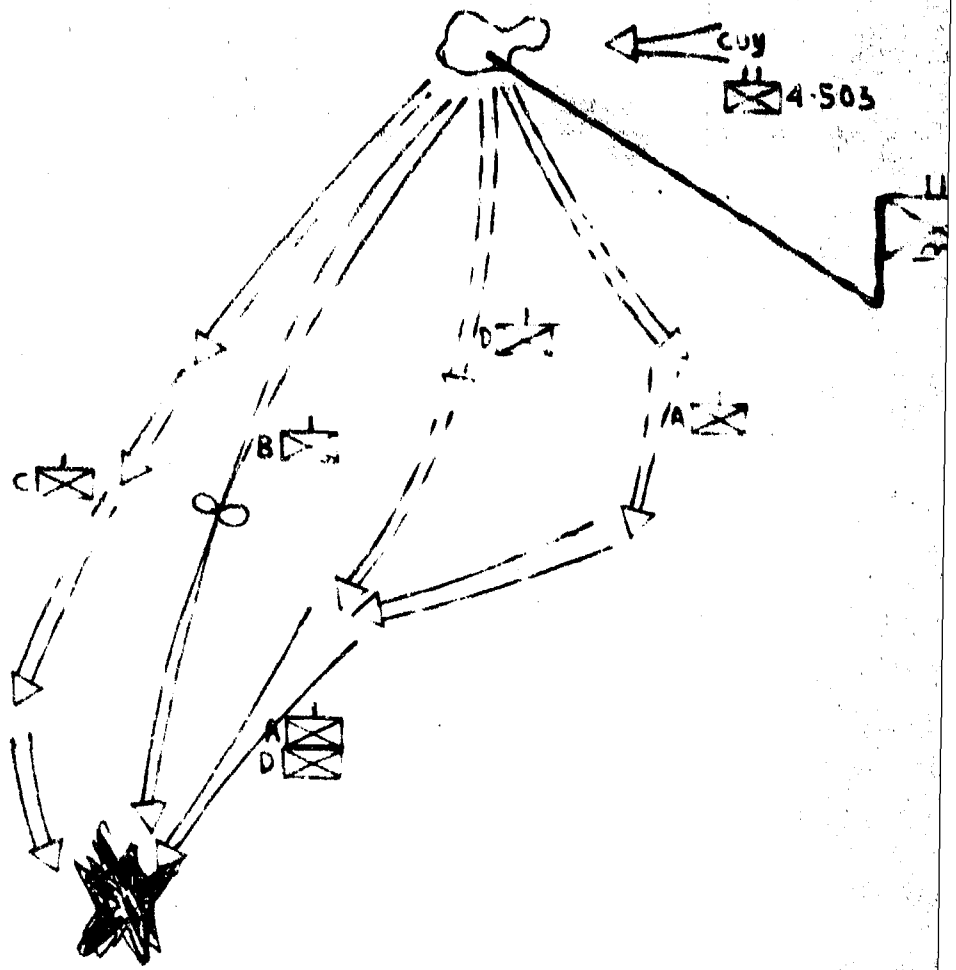
CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

2

4-5  
1NO



80  
—|— 20  
—|—

1

CON

CONFIDENTIAL

03 (ABN)  
V-7 NOV

4-503

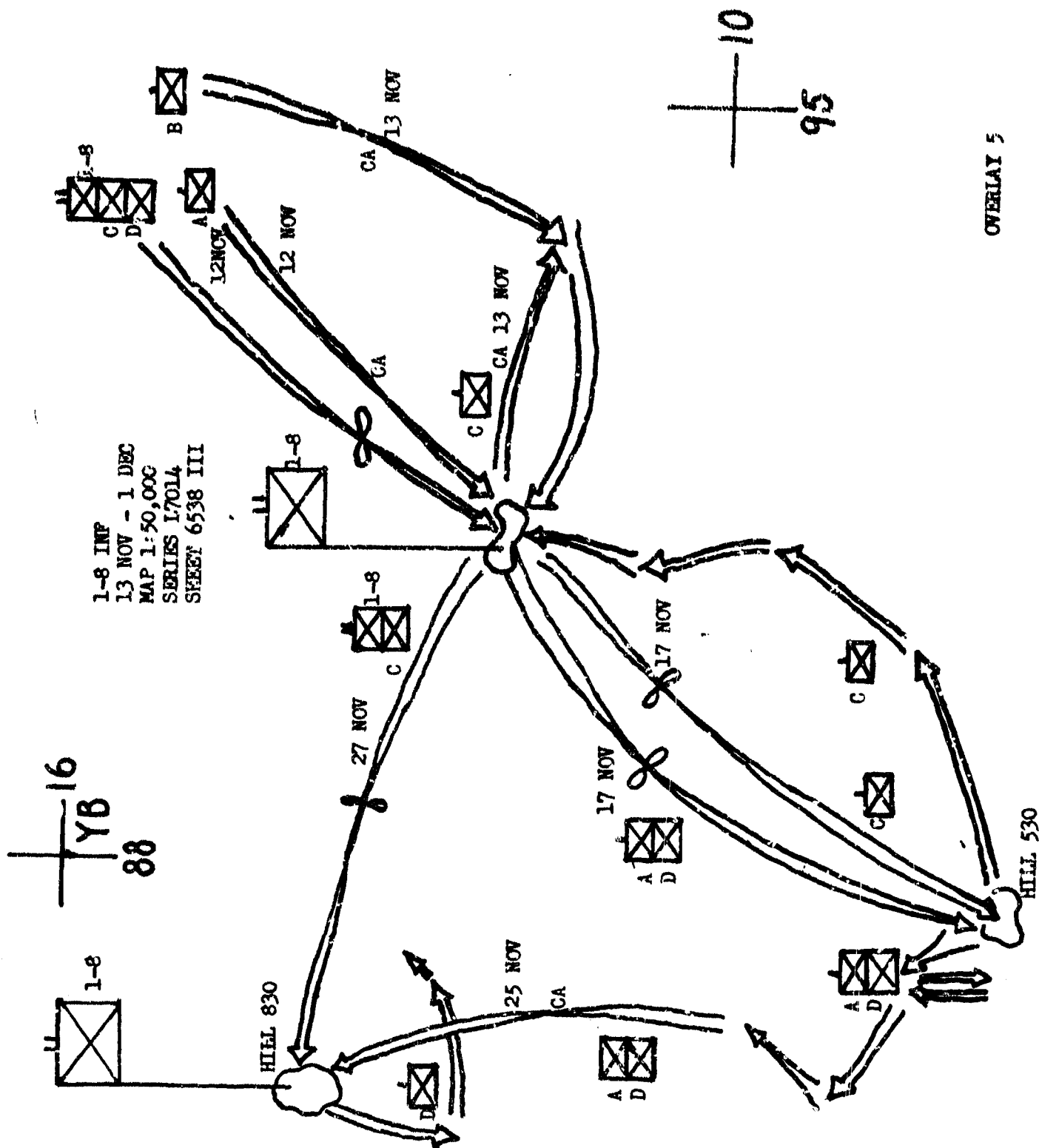
00 4-503  
1 NOV  
NOV 1 1950

CONFIDENTIAL

OVERLAY #4

2

CONFIDENTIAL

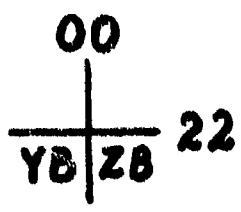
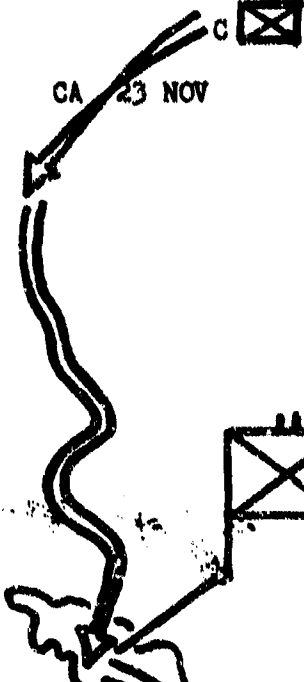


1-8 INF  
 13 NOV - 1 DEC  
 MAP 1:50,000  
 SERIES I7014  
 SHEET 6538 III

OVERLAY 5

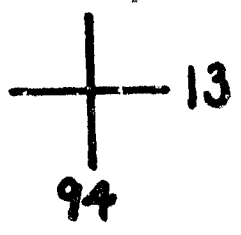
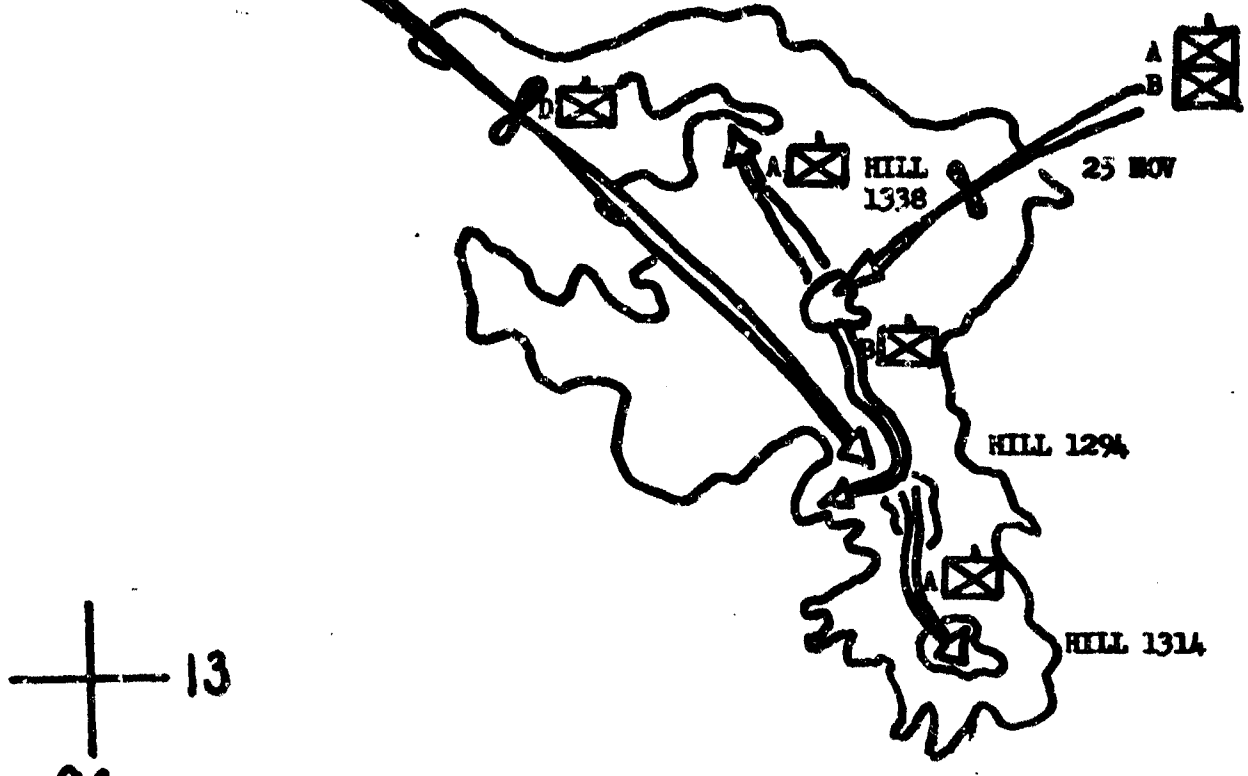
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



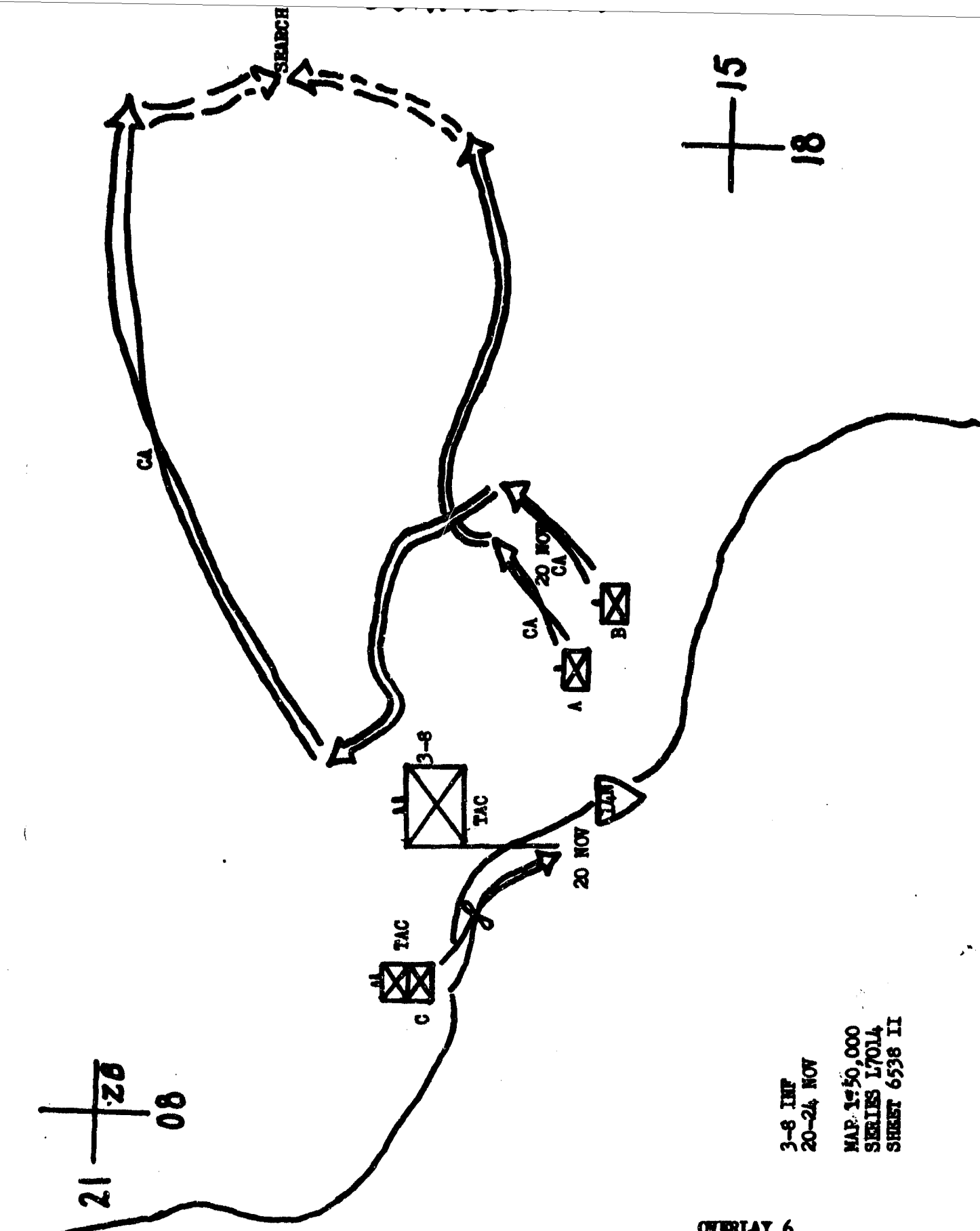
3-8 INF  
24 NOV - 1 DEC

MAP 1:50,000  
SERIES L701A  
SHEETS 6538 II, III



OVERLAY 7

CONFIDENTIAL



**CONFIDENTIAL**

**OVERLAY 6**

3-8 INF  
 20-24 NOV  
 MAP 1:50,000  
 SERIES L7014  
 SHEET 6538 II

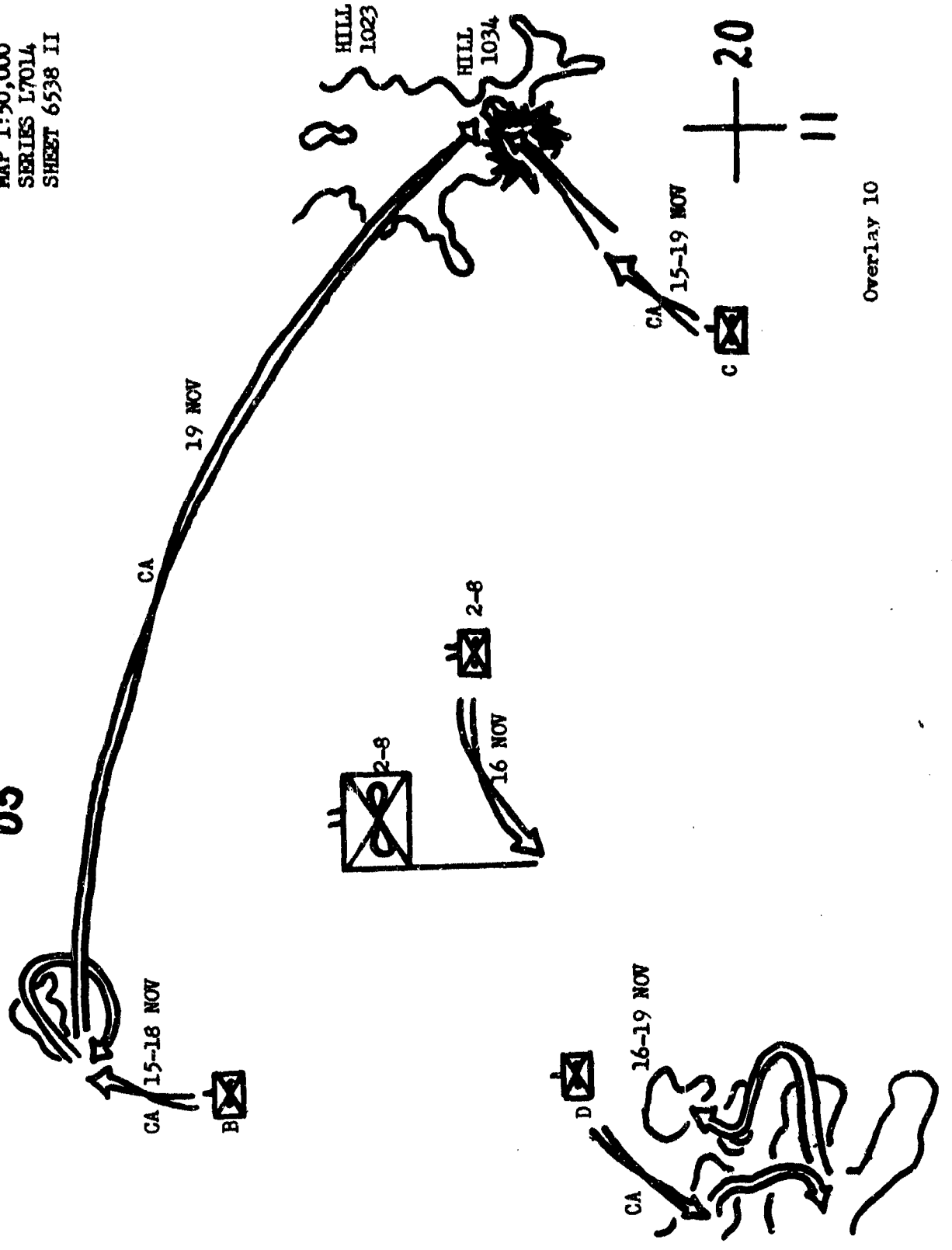




CONFIDENTIAL

2-8 CAV  
15-19 NOV  
MAP 1:50,000  
SERIES L7014  
SHEET 6538 II

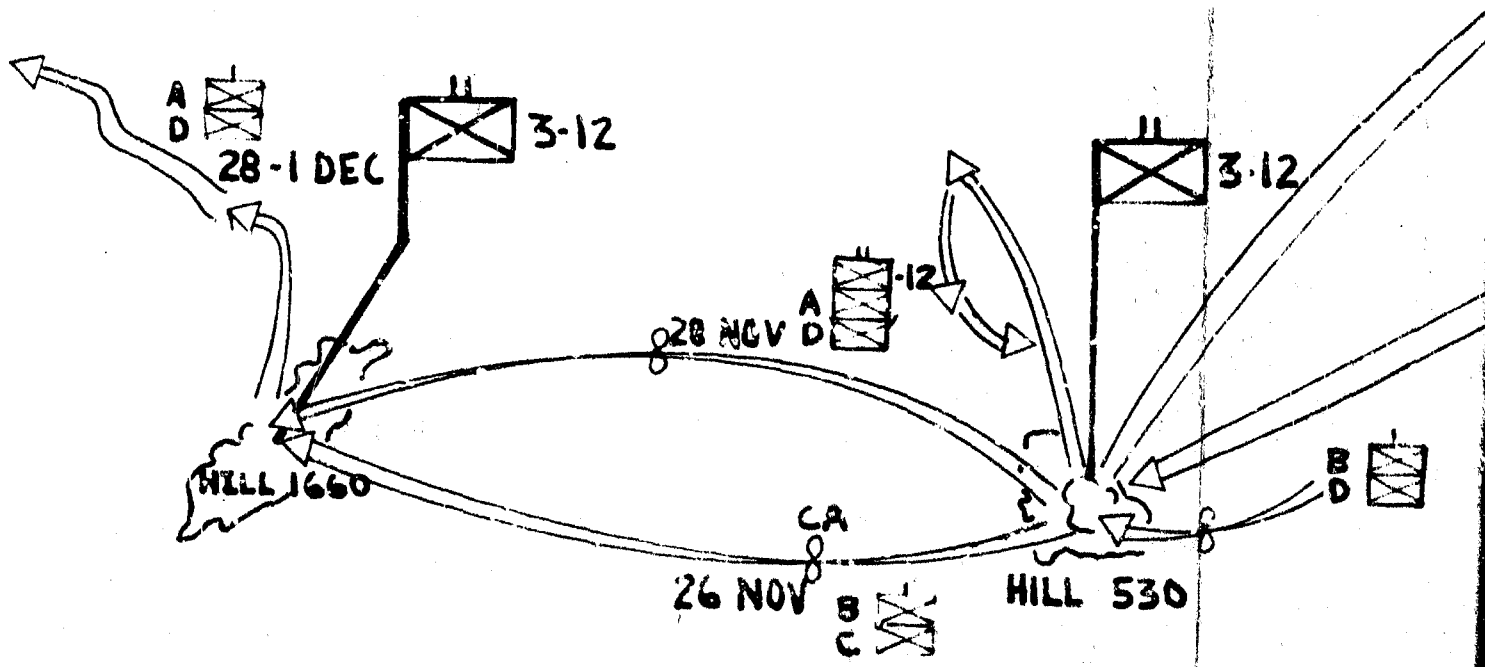
27 — 28  
05



Overlay 10

CONFIDENTIAL

3  
131



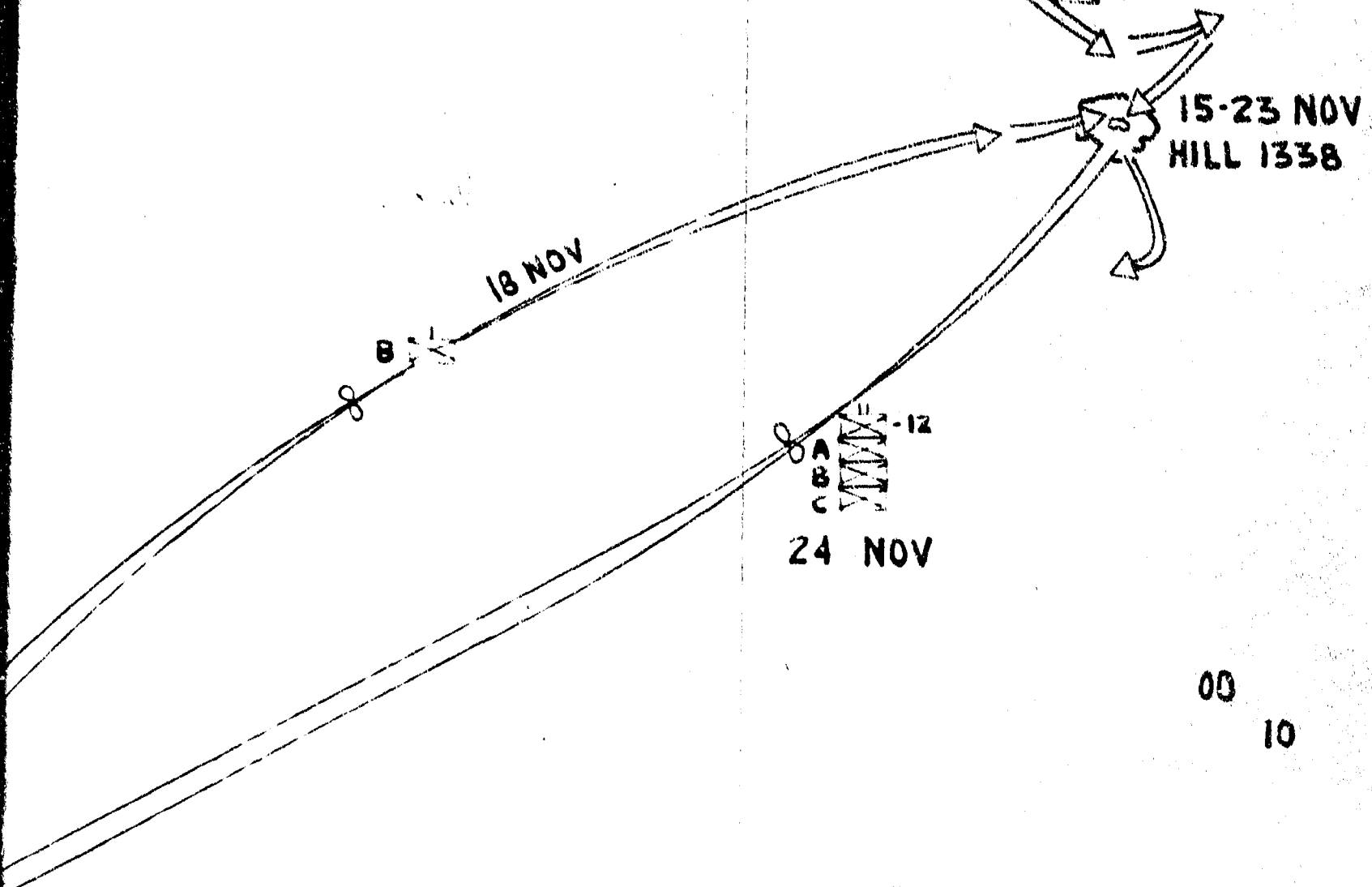
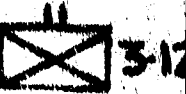
1

CO

CONFIDENTIAL

3-12 INF

3 NOV - 1 DEC



A  
 B  
 C  
 24 NOV

15-23 NOV  
 HILL 1338

00  
10

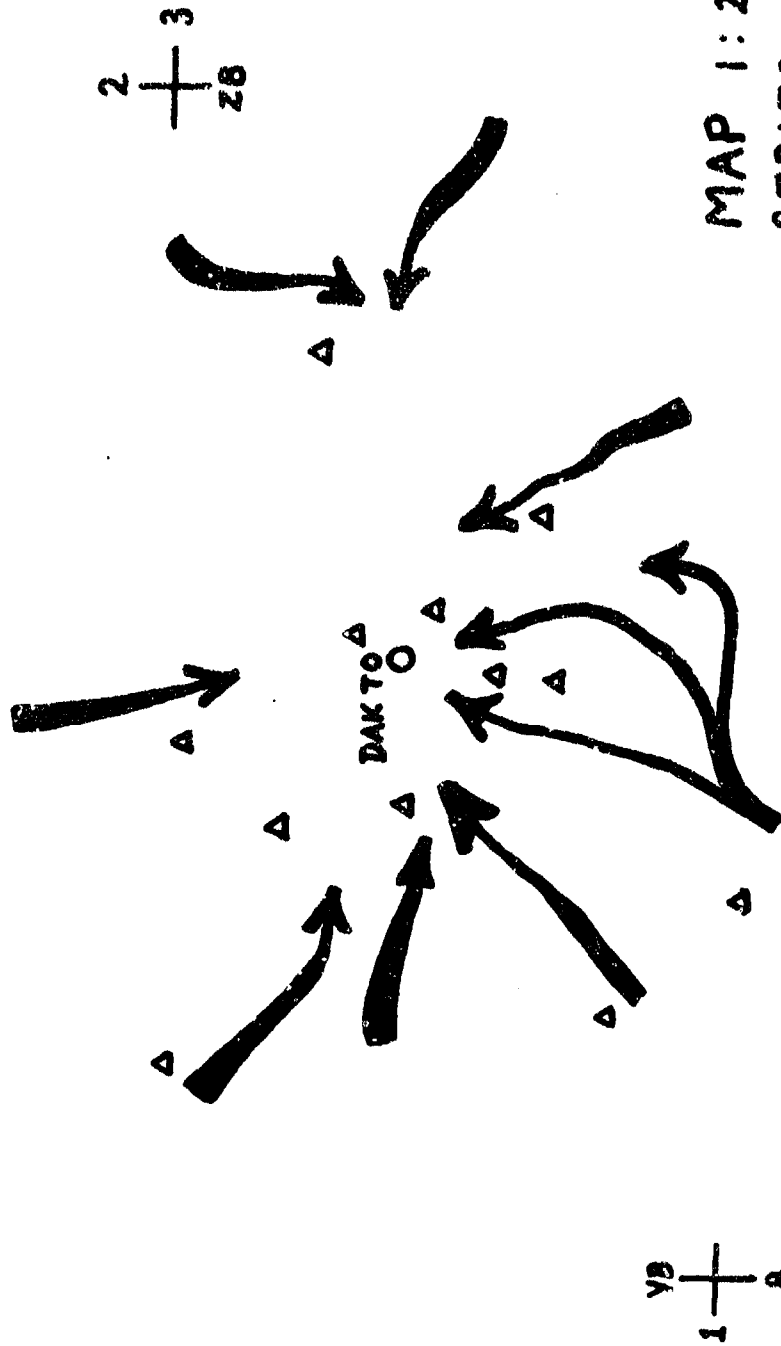
CONFIDENTIAL

OVERLAY # 9

2
---

CONFIDENTIAL

MILITARY ASPECTS OF TERRAIN OVERLAY II



MAP 1: 250,000  
SERIES 1501  
SHEETS ND 48-8, 49-5



CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 7

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN: 29th Military Historical Detachment  
APO San Francisco 96262

The following Combat Operations After Action Report is submitted in accordance with unclassified message AVDDH-CG-MG-12-022 dated 1 December 1967.

1. General: During October 1967 increased enemy activity in the vicinity of DAK TO in KONTUM PROVINCE was noted. Intelligence sources revealed that large NVA forces were poised in the vicinity of DAK TO with the intention to conduct attacks on Special Forces and CIDG Forces in the DAK TO/DAK SEANG area. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) minus the 3d Battalion (Airborne) 503d Infantry and Company D 16th Armor Battalion was ordered to deploy by air to participate in Operation MACARTHUR in the DAK TO area of the CENTRAL HIGHLANDS. On 1 November 1967 the 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry deployed to DAK TO. Increased enemy activity necessitated the deployment of the 1-503d Infantry 2-503d Infantry, the remainder of the 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery, and E Troop, 17th Cavalry Squadron to DAK TO. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) in conjunction with elements of the 4th Infantry Division, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and ARVN forces, conducted search and destroy operations in the DAK TO region through 1 December 1967.

2. Name of Operation: The Battle of DAK TO.

3. References: Map Vietnam 1:50 000 Series L7014 Sheets 6538 I, II, III, and IV and 6539 II and III.

4. Type of Operation: Search and destroy

5. Date of Operation: 1 November - 1 December 1967.

6. Location: Northern KONTUM PROVINCE in the vicinity of DAK TO.

7. Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate).

8. Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H Schweiter

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

## 9. Task Force Organization:

### Operation MACARTHUR

1-503d Infantry  
B Btry, 3-319th Arty  
Engineer Demolition Team  
3 Scout Dog Teams

2-503d Infantry  
A Btry 3-319th Arty  
Engineer Demolition Team  
4 Scout Dog Teams

4-503d Infantry  
C Btry 3-319th Arty  
Engineer Demolition Team  
4 Scout Dog Teams

Brigade Control  
HHC (-)  
3-319th Artillery (-)  
173d Engineer Company (-)  
E-17th Cavalry  
173d Support Battalion (-)  
173d Signal Company (Prov) (-)  
335th AHC (DS)  
172d MI Detachment  
404th RRU Detachment  
51st Chemical Detachment (-)  
46th FI Detachment (-)  
TACP (USAF)  
24th MHD

OPCON to Brigade  
23d Mobile Strike Force Company  
26th Mobile Strike Force Company  
1st Battalion 12th Infantry  
1st Battalion 12th Cavalry  
1 Platoon D/69th Armor  
B Btry, 2-19th Arty

## 10. Supporting Forces:

### a. United States Air Force

(1) During the reporting period the following close air support missions were flown:

Preplanned Sorties . . . . .	265
Immediate Sorties . . . . .	383
Flaeship Sorties . . . . .	29
FAC (O-1) Sorties . . . . .	127
Total Ordnance Delivered . . . . .	981 Tons

(2) During the reporting period the following B-52 missions were flown:

Number of Strikes . . . . .	20
Number of Sorties . . . . .	135

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

Total Target Area Covered . . . . . 49 Square Kilometers

Total Ordnance Delivered . . . . . 3 348 Tons

(3) Results and Effectiveness: Tactical Air Support was extremely effective during this operation. Bomb damage assessments reflected numerous secondary explosions as a result of strikes and mortar and rocket positions were silenced on several occasions. Heavily reinforced bunkers and trench systems were difficult to detect and destroy even with the jungle canopy removed.

(4) Timeliness: Sorties arrived within a useable time frame and were effectively employed. Immediate strikes were provided on a continuing basis. Close coordination with support channels prevented aircraft having to hold over the target for continuous periods. At no time when troops were in contact were aircraft not available.

b. Army Aviation:

(1) Size of Force:

The Brigade was supported by the following Army Aviation units during the Battle of DAK TO.

- (a) 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) Aviation Platoon
- (b) 335th Assault Helicopter Company (DS)
- (c) 52d Aviation Battalion (GS)
- (d) 4th Aviation Battalion (GS)
- (e) 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)

(2) How and When Employed:

<u>Missions</u>	<u>Sorties</u>
Combat Assault	943
Armed Helicopter	402
Resupply	3934
Command and Liaison	1119
Aerial Reconnaissance	98
Psychological Operations	0
Aerial Observer	126
TOTAL	6622

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK T3

(3) Highlights of Army Aviation Activity: With the exception of two Fire Support Bases, all Brigade fire support bases, command posts, and laager sites were dependent upon Army Aviation for resupply, troop movement, and medical evacuation. All Brigade artillery units were displaced by OH-47 and OH-54 aircraft.

(4) 3 653 hours were flown in support of The Battle of DAK T3.

(5) 22 500 passengers were transported by rotary wing aircraft during this operation.

(6) 3 700 tons of cargo were flown during the operation for a daily average of 148 tons.

(7) Results and Effectiveness: With maximum utilization of aircraft, Brigade forces conducted large scale troop movements, resupply missions, medical evacuation, and close fire support missions. Many critical reinforcements of embattled units were accomplished despite heavy enemy fire and confined landing zones.

(8) Timeliness: Although a total of 12 helicopters were damaged (11 repaired) by enemy ground fire, aviation support was adequate in all phases of the operation. This was due in large measure to the outstanding courage and flying skill of the members of the 173d Airborne Brigade Aviation Platoon and the 335th Assault Helicopter Company in direct support of the Brigade. Particularly this was the case in the battle for Hill 875, where heavy automatic weapons fire was received on every approach to the landing zone. Timely resupply, reinforcement and medical evacuation was dependent on the courage, skill, and devotion to duty of the Brigade's Aviators.

## c. Artillery

### (1) Size of Force:

(a) 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery (18 - 105mm How T) DS

(b) B Battery, 2d Battalion, 19th Artillery  
(6 - 105mm How T) OPCON

(c) Additional General Support Artillery from Division Artillery, 4th Infantry Division and 54th Artillery Group was utilized throughout the operation.

### (2) How and When Employed:

(a) Initial Employment: On 2 November, B Btry, 3-319th Arty moved by convoy to FSB 12 (YB 874256) closing at 1530 hours. C Btry

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

3-319th Arty moved by convoy to FSB 13 (YB 916259) on 6 November closing at 1450 hours. A Btry 3-319th Arty moved on 6 November to a bridge site (YB 957242), closing at 1750 hours.

(b) Displacement: On 7 November A Btry again moved by helilift to FSB 12, closing at 1200 hours. C Btry was helilifted on 9 November to FSB 15 (YB 855185) closing at 1403 hours. A Btry was helilifted on 12 November to FSB 16 (YB 815151) closing at 1945 hours. At 0900 hours, 29 November C Btry was helilifted to FSB 13 closing at 1550 hours. A Btry was helilifted from FSB 16 to FSB 12

(c) On 11 November the battalion fired 3982 rounds in support of the 1-503d Inf west of Hill 823. On 18 and 19 November 7886 rounds were fired in support of the assault of Hill 875.

### (3) Results and Effectiveness:

(a) Intelligence targets were engaged with one to four firing units, dependent upon availability of firing units and priority of the targets.

(b) Advancing and clearing fires were used extensively. Heavy artillery was utilized to hit overhead cover and clear bamboo.

(c) Blocking fires were utilized when feasible to deny the enemy withdrawal reinforcement and resupply capabilities. Fires were planned daily on intelligence and interdiction targets by the forward observers, Battalion Liaison Officers and the Battalion S3. POWs reported that fires were effective. An NVA element moving to an attack position, near a fire support base, aborted the mission as a result of KIAs and WIAs from artillery placed along the approach route.

(d) Effective results were obtained by the counter-mortar radar (MPQ-4). Mortar, rocket and recoilless rifle fires were detected during numerous attacks. Early identification of type attack (mortar or rocket) was given by type trajectory detected. Grids located were passed to all firing elements.

(e) Direct fire was used extensively by A Btry on FSB 16. Both HE (500 - 700 rounds) and Bee Hive (5 rounds) were fired. B-40 rocket positions were silenced on several occasions. Four secondary explosions were observed from FSB 16 on one enemy position.

### (4) Timeliness:

(a) In some instances lapses in fire support occurred when artillery check fires necessary to employ close air support were employed too early. Close and timely coordination between forward air

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

controllers, artillery fire support coordinators and ground commanders reduced this to a minimum.

(b) Quick reaction time to grids located by counter-mortar radar resulted in many enemy firing positions being silenced.

(5) Missions Fired

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>MISSIONS</u>	<u>ROUNDS EXPENDED</u>
A-3-319	488	12 907
B-3-319	590	14 598
C-3-319	368	18 112
B-2-19	28	812

d. "E" Troop 17th Cavalry:

(1) Size of Force:

- (a) Troop Headquarters
- (b) Three (3) Reconnaissance Platoons
- (c) LRRP Platoon
- (d) Vehicles - 30  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton vehicles 11  $\frac{3}{4}$  ton vehicles and 1 1500 gallon tanker  
4-2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ton vehicles

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Initially the troops were airlifted to DAK TO. They moved by road from DAK TO to FSB Eagle (Brigade Fwd CP).

(b) Unit was assigned Brigade Reaction Force command post security, convoy escort Eagle flight and search and destroy missions within the capability of the unit.

(3) Result and Effectiveness:

- (a) Security of FSB Eagle was excellent.
- (b) Although the tactical situation did not necessitate use of the troop as Brigade Reaction Force, the troop remained on a 30 minute "ready status."
- (c) Eagle flights were not utilized as such. The troop conducted a platoon size combat assault in an effort to destroy a clandestine radio site with negative results.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(4) Timeliness: Operations were conducted at proper times and locations.

e. 173d Engineer Company

(1) Size of Force: The 173d Engineer Company consisted of three line platoons, one bridge platoon, one water point section, one maintenance section and company headquarters.

(2) How and When Employed: A two man engineer demolition team was assigned to each line company of the three infantry battalions. One NCO was attached to each infantry battalion headquarters to control these teams and advise the battalion staffs. The company, less demolition teams completed engineer tasks in the base camp area. Each line platoon retained a readiness posture so as to provide immediate assistance to their supported infantry battalions. During The Battle of DAK TO the following activities were conducted:

(a) Operated two water purification points to supply Brigade with potable water

(b) Cleared portions of Route 512 of mines from FSB 12 (YB 874257) to bridge #2 (ZB 002222)

(c) Cleared FSB 15 (YB 853186) and FSB 16 (YB 815147) utilizing bangalore torpedoes and C-4 explosive

(d) Cleared an emergency LZ on Hill 875 (YB 797134)

(e) Constructed TOC, ASP and FDC bunkers and performed other engineering tasks at various fire support bases

(f) Constructed an underground TOC at FSB Eagle.

(g) Supervised the construction of double apron and triple concertina fences around FSB Eagle.

(h) Improved the roads at FSB Eagle

(i) Peneprimed brigade roads, helicopter pads and the Battalion Medical and Brigade supply areas.

f. 173d Military Police Platoon

(1) Military Police Platoon consisted of six nine man squads operated in three locations simultaneously (AN KHE, PHU HIEP, and DAK TO).

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(a) Personnel:

- 1 Six nine man squads
- 2 One officer
- 3 Two investigators

(b) Equipment:

- 1 One 3/4 ton truck
- 2 Seven 1/2 ton trucks
- 3 Eight M-60 machine guns
- 4 One .50 Caliber machine gun

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) The Military Police Platoon deployed four squads to DAK TO in support of the Brigades and conducted the following tasks:

- 1 Provided escort to and from fire support bases as required.
- 2 Conducted Raids on establishments in the DAK TO area to reduce the Vice and Narcotics operations.
- 3 Conducted town patrols in the village of TAN CANH and a roving patrol from TAN CANH to DAK WON to control traffic and to assist in the movement of convoys.
- 4 Established maintained and controlled the PW Collecting Point.
- 5 Investigated and prepared incident and offense reports.
- 6 Provided perimeter security and controlled all traffic entering and leaving the Brigade forward area
- 7 Provided internal security for the Brigade TOC and Commanding General's personal guard.
- 8 Provided security for the COMUSMACV, other Generals, Field Grade Officers and dignitaries on 1 December 1967.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(3) Results and Effectiveness: Military Police participated in The Battle of DAK TO with positive results, attitude and effectiveness in all military police functions

## g. 51st Chemical Detachment

(1) Size of Force: The Brigade Chemical Section supported by the 51st Chemical Detachment (DBRE) conducted offensive chemical missions in support of the 173d Airborne Brigade during The Battle of DAK TO (1 Nov 67 - 1 Dec 67).

### (2) How and When Employed

(a) Herbicide Operations: Defensive defoliation missions were conducted by the Chemical Section using a UH-1D helicopter and a 55 gallon capacity homemade spray apparatus. Three missions were flown, all in support of the 2-503d Inf. The target areas were heavily vegetated and close to the battalion's fire support base which provided excellent concealment for enemy ground or mortar attacks.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>FSB</u>	<u>COORDINATES OF TARGET</u>
17 November 1967	16	Hill vic BQ 813154
27 November 1967	12	Stream vic BQ 870260
30 November 1967	12	Stream vic BQ 870260

(b) Flame Throwers: The Chemical Section assisted the Chemical Staff Specialist of the 4-503d Inf in preparing flame throwers and thickened fuel for the offensive employment of flame on HILL 875.

### (3) Results and Effectiveness

(a) The tactical effectiveness of the defoliation mission near FSB 16 was not realized because 2-503d Inf moved to FSB 12 soon after the mission was flown. At FSB 12 and FSB 16 the foliage is beginning to show effects of the herbicide. The defoliation at FSB 12 will result in assisting the overall defense of the CIDG Special Forces Camp now under construction at that location.

(b) Plans and coordination for future use of flame throwers should include the mixing of thickened fuel and servicing of flame throwers at the FSB and not at the forward location. Difficulty was experienced in mixing the thickened fuel at the forward location due to debris in the air caused by helicopters in the area.

(4) Timeliness: All missions were accomplished on time and in an efficient manner.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

## h. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol Platoon (LRRP):

### (1) Size of Force

- (a) Two (2) officers.
- (b) Fifty-five (55) enlisted men.

(2) How and When Employed: The LRRP Platoon moved to the forward operational area at DAK TO on 4 November 1967 by C-130 aircraft. Operations began on 12 November with the insertion of two teams between 0710 and 0725 hours. Throughout the Battle of DAK TO the LRRP's conducted a total of 8 missions (6 area reconnaissance missions and 2 area reconnaissance and prisoner snatch). The LRRP's continued Operation MAC-ARTHUR in the DAK TO area after the Battle of DAK TO

(3) Results and Effectiveness: The LRRP's were successful in either observing or making contact with the enemy on five missions. The remainder of the missions were successful to the extent that they provided information as to whether or not the enemy had been or presently was operating in the area. The physical results of the LRRP missions were as follows:

(a) Contact made and small arms fire exchanged - 3 missions:

- 1. Enemy losses - 5 NVA KIA (BC)
- 2. Weapons captured - 3
- 3. Friendly losses - 0

(b) Enemy sightings made with no exchange of fire -

(4) Timeliness: The normal LRRP reaction time including AO reconnaissance, briefing of helicopter pilots, gunship pilots and the issue of operations orders during the operation was approximately 12 hours.

### i. 39th Scout Dog Platoon:

(1) General: The scout dog team is most effectively employed by utilizing them as part of the point element. In open terrain the team should be directly in front of the formation. In thick or mountainous terrain the team should work behind the point man. This allows the point man to break trail; thus the dog has more freedom of movement. The dog does not exert as much energy when a trail is prepared for him.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVRE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(2) The scout dog teams employed during The Battle of DAK TO from 2 Nov 67 to 1 Dec 67 were employed as outlined above. The terrain in DAK TO is very mountainous and the dogs needed assistance. This proved effective as the dogs' endurance was not significantly hampered. Further the dogs maintained an interest while scouting.

(a) The scout dog teams were employed to provide early silent warning as to the enemy's presence. In several instances the dogs also alerted on medical and food caches, tunnel networks and extensive bunker complexes.

(b) The scout dogs worked as part of the point element on all movements. During the fight for Hill 875, once contact was made, the dogs were moved to the rear for their own protection.

(3) The manner in which the scout dog teams were used during the operation was highly successful. The overall condition of the animals plus the manner in which the dogs were used added to their effectiveness. Their alerts were checked and gave our forces ample time to set up and maneuver.

(a) One handler and his dog was killed on 13 Nov with B-2-503d Inf. Should a handler be killed and or separated from his dog a muzzle should be placed on the dog and the animal should be evacuated as soon as possible to the rear area.

(b) The use of the scout dog once heavy contact was made was excellent. If a sustained fight is imminent, great harm could come to the dogs. Mortar, artillery and air strikes have a very adverse effect on the dogs' hearing. The handlers moved their dogs to the rear to protect the dogs from the sounds of these large caliber weapons.

(c) One team was attached to the 173d Engineer Company to assist in mine clearing operations. The team received additional training on detection of trip wires which proved very effective. Once the team was employed, no mines, boobytraps or any type contact was made.

## 11. Intelligence:

a. Enemy Situation Prior to the Operation: Prior to the commencement of the operation the following enemy units were believed to be in the area of interest: 1st NVA Div, 32d NVA Regt, 66th NVA Regt, 174th NVA Regt, 24th NVA Regt, 40th NVA Arty Regt, and the 304th VC Inf Bn. The enemy had the capability to:

(1) Attack the DAK TO complex with three NVA Regiments supported by the indirect fires of the 40th NVA Artillery Regiment.

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(2) Defend in battalion strength when contacted by US troops. It was doubtful if he was capable of massing a regimental defense due to US Air and Artillery.

(3) Withdraw from the area at the time and place of his choosing.

(4) Reinforce the battlefield with the 174th NVA Regt which was located west of DAK TO in the vicinity of the Cambodian border.

## b. Order of Battle Findings and Summary of the area of operation:

(1) A Hoi Chanh, who rallied on 2 November at DAK RI village YB977220, identified himself as a sergeant from a special reconnaissance element of the 66th NVA Regt. The rallier stated he was an artillery specialist and that the mission of the reconnaissance element was to reconnoiter and to prepare rocket positions. The Hoi Chanh stated that a major for whom he worked indicated the following attack plan: Elements of the 40th Arty located NE and SW of DAK TO to SF Camp were to attack the camp and possibly the DAK TO district headquarters. The 66th and 32d NVA Regts, located south and southwest of the SF Camp were to attempt to overrun the camp. The 174th NVA Regiment, located approximately 10 KM west of DAK SEANG SF Camp was to be in reserve. The 24th NVA Regt was located 15 KM north of DAK TO and had the mission of blocking reinforcements to the camp and preventing friendly forces from evacuating.

(2) The mention of the 40th Arty Regt by the Hoi Chanh was the first mention of this unit. The 40th Arty Regt includes the 200th Arty Bn which is equipped with 120mm mortars and 122mm rockets. On 20 November 2-503d Inf received 120mm mortar fire to lend credence to the report that the 40th Arty Regt was in the area. There were no prisoners or returnees who made mention of this unit. No documents were captured to confirm the presence of this unit in the area of operations.

(3) Documents captured 6 November at YB843203 identified C19 the Recon Company of the 66th Regt and also identified elements of the 7th and 8th Bns of the 66th Regt. The 66th Regt was in contact with elements of the 1-503d Inf and 4-503d Inf vicinity YB853187. The 66th Regt suffered 104 KIA (BC). On 11 November YB845185 1-503d Inf again engaged elements of the 66th Regt killing 142 NVA (BC). The 66th Regt moved to the west into Cambodia after these engagements.

(4) PW's and documents captured 16 November at YB801151 confirmed the presence of elements of the 174th NVA Regt. The 174th Regt fought on Hill 875 with the 2-503d Inf. This action assisted the 32d NVA Regt, 66th NVA Regt, and command elements to withdraw from the area of operations and enter Cambodia.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(5) Nong Truong 1 --- 1st NVA Division is believed to have been directing the operations in the DAK TO area. The confirmation of 174th Regt in the area confirms the fact that the 174th Regt has probably replaced the 88th Regt in the 1st Division. The 174th has previously been carried as subordinate to the B3 Front. The 88th Regt has been reported to be operating in DARLAC Province.

## c. Terrain and Weather Analysis

(1) Terrain: The area of operations fell within KONTUM Province. The western boundary was the Cambodian and Laotian borders. The southern most boundary was designated by the YB09 E-W grid line. The northern most boundary was designated by the YB40 E-W grid line. The eastern most boundary was the DAK PSI River. The DAK POKO and DAK PSI Rivers are the major drainage systems in the area. The relief of the area is characterized by high mountain ranges interlaced by river valleys and streams. The vegetation is characterized by dense stands of bamboo in the low areas and on the mountain sides with a continuous canopy 40-70 feet high. There are some grasslands and savannah in the area. Major routes into the area are National Highway 14 and Communal Route 512.

(2) Weather: The weather during the Battle of DAK TO was characterized by little rainfall or thunderstorm activity. Cloudiness was at a minimum with ceilings from 2000 feet to 5000 feet. Low clouds, bases 3000 to 5000 feet, cover more than half the area less than 10% of the time. Temperatures ranged from 55-91 degrees.

12. Mission: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) conducts search and destroy operations in cooperation and coordination with ARVN forces within AO SPAATZ. Conduct reconnaissance with Mobile Strike Force Companies in AO, provide security for BEN HET Base complex. Establish liaison and be prepared to reinforce/relieve DAK SEANG and DAK PEK. Secure FSB at YB918258.

13. Concept of Operation: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) deploy by airlift from AO BOLLING to KONTUM/DAK TO. On or about 1 November Task Force 4-503d Inf moves by air from TUY HOA to DAK TO (OPCON 4th Infantry Division) and then to BEN HET and conduct search and destroy operations. On or about 5 November Task Force 1-503d moves by air from TUY HOA to KONTUM (OPCON 4th Infantry Division) and then to BEN HET and conduct search and destroy operations. On or about 6 November Task Force 2-503d moves by air from TUY HOA to DAK TO and will become the division reaction force upon closing DAK TO. Headquarters and support elements will move by air from TUY HOA to DAK TO. Upon closure of the Brigade in the DAK TO area units will revert to OPCON 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate).

## 14. Execution:

a. D + 6 (31 October 1967)

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVR-3C

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: FRAG ORDER 14 to OPORD 2--67 published ordering a one battalion task force to DAK TO OPCON to the 4th Inf Div on 1 Nov 67

b. D + 7 (1 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: Task Force 4-503 Inf became OPCON to the 4th Infantry Division upon arrival at DAK TO.

Operational Summary: Commencing 1100 hours 4-503d Inf and B-3-319th Arty were airlifted from TUY HOA to DAK TO Upon arrival they became OPCON to the 4th Inf Div

c. D + 8 (2 November 1967)Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: Elements of the 4-503d Inf finished the airlift to DAK TO at 1715 hours

d. D + 9 (3 November 1967)Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: Task Force 4-503d Inf at BEN HET OPCON to the 4th Inf Div

e. D + 10 (4 November 1967)Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: The Brigade prepared to move one company on one hour notice and Task Force 1-503d Infantry (-) on ~~six~~ hours notice to DAK TO commencing at 0400 hours FRAG ORDER 15 to OPORD 24-67 was published ordering this Companies A, C and D/4-503d Inf initiated movement abreast by 0845 hours and continued search and destroy operations to the southwest. They had negative contact or sightings during the day and laagered at 1400 hours. Intelligence and LRRP contact reports indicate that enemy was occupying the area to the south west in strength The unit was believed to be the 66th NVA Regiment.

f. D + 11 (5 November 1967)Changes in Task Force Organization: None

CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

Operational Summary: The 1-503d Infantry with E-17th Cavalry OPCON and C-3-319th Artillery began a helilift to clear AO GANDER and to prepare for redeployment to DAK TO. E-17th Cavalry returned to Brigade control at PHU HIEP upon extraction from AO GANDER.

The 4-503d Infantry helilifted from AO's PEAK and ARROW to PHU HIEP and prepared for the airlift to DAK TO.

The 4-503d Infantry initiated search and destroy operations to the southwest of their night laager site at YB 855191. At 1130 hours Company "C" discovered an enemy base camp at YB 839223. Company "A" was ordered to follow Company "D" as a reserve force as contact seemed imminent. At 1220 hours, "C" Company located another NVA/VC base camp at YB 840219 containing a large number of foxholes. All elements closed into laager sites by 1630 hours and received the mission of establishing Fire Support Base 15 at YB 853187 the following day. There was negative contact reported during the day.

g. D + 12 (6 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 2-503d Infantry OPCON to the 4th Infantry Division. The 26th Mobile Strike Force Company OPCON to the 4-503d Infantry at 1240 hours. 1-503d Inf OPCON to the 4th Inf Div.

Operational Summary: Upon arrival at DAK TO the 1-503d Infantry was deployed to FSB 12 (YB 872257). Upon arrival, "A" Company became the security force for FSB 12. "B" Company moved out on a road clearing operation to FSB 13 and "C" and "D" Companies initiated search and destroy operations in their assigned zones.

The 2-503d Infantry was lifted to DAK TO. Upon arrival they moved to YB 046210 where they were given responsibility of securing the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) Headquarters and were placed OPCON to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division as the Division Reaction Force.

Companies A C&D/4-503d Inf initiated movement to Hill 823 at YB 853187 at 0845 hours. That morning 3 airstrikes were called in on Hill 823 beginning at 0815 hours. At 1300 hours, Company "D" received automatic weapons fire at YB 849201. At 1430 hours, Company "B" made a cold LZ assault on Hill 823. Shortly afterwards they were attacked by NVA forces and airstrikes, artillery and helicopter gunships were called in around the hill. At the same time, "D" Company was in heavy enemy contact. At 1510 hours, "A" Company was ordered to link up with "D" Company. It was estimated that the two companies were in contact with a reinforced enemy platoon on the hilltop at YB 849201. All contact was broken at 1900 hours with "C" Company laagering alone and "A" and "D" Companies laagering together at YB 849201. Contact continued on Hill 823 throughout the night. Total casualties for the battalion were 17 KIA and 37 WIA with enemy casualties unknown.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

## h. D + 13 (7 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 1-503d Infantry and 4-503d Infantry returned to OPCON of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-). C-1-503d Infantry OPCON to Task Force 4-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) commenced Operation MACARTHUR. At 1000 hours the 1st Battalion 503d Infantry initiated search and destroy operations in AO FALCON. "D" Company returned OPCON to the 1-503d Infantry. At 1300 hours C-1-503d Infantry was helilifted from FSB 12 to an LZ vicinity of YB 849941, closing at 1345 hours and becoming OPCON to the 4-503d Infantry.

The 2-503d Infantry initiated search and destroy operations in a small AO in the vicinity of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) base. "C" Company received a burst of automatic weapons fire from the west while laagering at a position near FSB 5. They returned fire with negative results or casualties.

The 4-503d Infantry's "B" Company remained in contact on Hill 823 with sporadic rocket and mortar fire continuing throughout the night and into the day. At 0712 hours "B" Company captured one (1) NVA who was evacuated for interrogation. At 1330 hours C-1-503d Infantry was helilifted into Hill 823 to support Company "B" and became OPCON to the 4-503d Infantry. During the day a police of the battlefield showed over 50 NVA KIA (BC) and a large amount of enemy weapons and equipment captured. During the day Companies "C" and "D" linked up with Company "A" and completed a thorough search of the battle area from the previous day.

A-3-319th Artillery moved by helilift from YB 953238 to FSB 12, closing at 1245 hours.

E-17th Cavalry closed FSB EAGLE at 1500 hours and assumed the mission of the Brigade Reaction Force.

## i. D + 14 (8 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: C-1-503d Infantry returned to OPCON of 1-503d Infantry. 23d Mobile Strike Force element OPCON to 4-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. The 1st Bn 503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO FALCON. At 1445 hours C-1-503d Infantry engaged 8 NVA vic YB 849141 resulting in 1 US WIA 1 US KIA and 1 NVA KIA. At 1840 hours, C-1-503d Infantry received 10-20 mortar rounds vicinity of YB 853187 resulting in 1 US WIA. Counter mortar fire was initiated with unknown results. At 0945 hours D-1-503d Infantry while on a road clearing

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

mission via YB 907263, received one B-40 rocket launcher round resulting in one Bulldozer destroyed. At 1730 hours "D" Company was helilifted from FSB 12 to an LZ vicinity YB 853187 closing at 1806 hours.

The 2-503d Infantry continued its base security, search and destroy operations and mission as the Division Reaction Force for the 4th Infantry Division. At 0955 hours 2-503d Infantry received word that it was on 6 hour alert as the 4th Infantry Division Reaction Force. The 2-503d Infantry was further given a warning order concerning an air mobile assault on 10 November.

The 4-503d Infantry continued its operations preparing Companies "A", "C" and "D" for extraction to FSB 12. Company "D" initiated search and destroy operations around Hill 823 this morning discovering an NVA base camp and a large amount of NVA equipment and several NVA bodies. Extraction of "D" Company from Hill 823 was begun at 1440 hours but was delayed due to incoming mortar and small arms fire. Movement to FSB 13 was completed by 1830 hours.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force at FSB EAGLE.

j. D + 15 (9 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 23d Mobile Strike Force Company released from OPCON to the 4-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. The 1st Battalion, 503d Inf at 1200 hours was helilifted from FSB 12 to FSB 15, closing at 1624 hours. Upon closure, the 1-503d Infantry assumed responsibility for AO CONDOR. At 0750 hours, C-1-503d Infantry found an NVA body at YB 853187. Body was assumed to be KIA by artillery fired the night before. At 1220 hours, C-3-319th Artillery was helilifted from FSB 13 to FSB 15 closing at 1440 hours.

The 2-503d Infantry continued its assigned mission. "A" and "B" Companies conducted a road clearing mission. At 1725 hours, the DAK TO airstrip received 6 mortar rounds. At 1840 hours "C" Company was inserted into an LZ in an attempt to knock out the mortar position. They had negative results. B-52 strikes were scheduled in support of the air assault which still remained in the planning stages having been postponed until the 11th.

The 4-503d Infantry continued operations with all elements of "A", "C" and "D" Companies being extracted from a PZ at YB 844192 by 1223 hours. Small arms fire was received in the area on several occasions with negative results. Company "D" assumed a road clearing mission from FSB 13 to FSB 12. The 23d Mobile Strike Force Company was released from OPCON of 4-503d Infantry to the 4th Infantry Division at 1000 hours.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force at FSB EAGLE.

Mobile Strike Force elements from FLETKU continued patrolling activities in AO's CONDOR and FALCON without contact.

k. D + 16 (10 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: The 2-503d Infantry returned to the OPCON of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-).

Operational Summary: The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1330 hours, "A" Company found 6 NVA bodies in a base camp vic YB 850186. The NVA had been dead 24 hours from 81mm mortar fire.

The 2-503d Infantry was replaced in their AO by elements of the 1-8th Infantry, 4th Infantry Division. The 2-503d Infantry consolidated, received their operations order and prepared for an air assault and subsequent search and destroy operations on 11 November 1967. Early in the morning "C" Company had accidentally shot and killed one of their men who had wandered outside the perimeter and failed to respond to a challenge.

The 4-503d Infantry continued operations with Company "D" on a road clearing operation. They were fired on during the day by an unknown number of NVA or VC at YB 899274. Fire was returned with small arms and tanks with unknown results. On investigation a blood pool was found. Company "C" discovered footprints at YB 857254 but could not follow them.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force at FSB EAGLE.

Mobile Strike Force elements continued patrolling activities in AO CONDOR and AO FALCON without contact.

l. D + 17 (11 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: C-4-503d Infantry OPCON to Task Force 1-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR utilizing Task Force BLUE (A-1-503d Infantry and one platoon of D-1-503d Infantry). At 0828 hours Task Force BLUE came into contact with 50 NVA in bunkers at YB 844182 and came under ground and mortar attack. TF BLUE withdrew and called in artillery and mortar fire. During this time two 4.2" mortar rounds fell short causing one US KIA and 2 US WIA. TF BLUE moved back into the contact area at 1135 hours and found

CONFIDENTIAL

AYEB-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

many squad size bunkers and trench systems. At 1540 hours TF BLUE made contact with an enemy OP and again called in artillery

At 0950 hours, "C" Company engaged an estimated battalion size enemy force vic YB 825184 and at 1002 hours began receiving incoming mortar fire. At 1012 hours, "D" Company as a part of Task Force BLACK moved to link up with "C" Company and formed a perimeter receiving grenade fire. By 1020 hours, "C" Company was receiving fire from 3 sides and "D" Company had linked up with them. At 1112 hours, "C" Company reported that their perimeter had been breached. At 1116 hours a decision was made to insert C-4-503d Infantry into an LZ at YB 824188. All firing stopped at 1120 hours. At 1224 hours, TF BLACK was under attack again until 1253 hours. At 1324 hours the Task Force was again receiving small arms and mortar fire. Still under fire at 1437 hours, C-4-503d Infantry and TF BLACK linked up. By 1558 hours all incoming fire had stopped. A sling load of ammo was dropped too far outside the perimeter to be recovered at approximately 1130 hours. Resupply was finally made at approximately 1545 hours. During the contact all air-strikes were diverted in support of the two Task Forces in contact. Results: Friendly: 20 KIA. 154 WIA. 2 MIA. Enemy: 116 NVA KIA (BC). 2 NVA POW's.

Elements of the 2-503d Infantry assaulted a hilltop 3 miles from the Cambodian border with negative enemy contact.

4-503d Infantry elements continued operations in their assigned AO's. "D" Company conducted road security operations after a 3/4-ton truck hit a mine at YB 893271. At 1115 hours "C" Company was alerted to prepare to conduct an air assault in support of 1-503d Infantry contact. Company "C" was airlifted into an LZ vicinity YB 830189 at 1150 hours. Upon landing they became OPCON to the 1-503d Infantry. At 1920 hours, FSB 12 received 6-10 rounds of rocket fire from the west. During the night other fire was received and movement noted. Fire was initiated with unknown results.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements from PLEIKU and CIDG elements from DAK TO continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 0825 hours, the MIKE Force OPCON to the 2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size NVA force vic YB 833143 resulting in 1 MSF WIA.

m. D + 18 (12 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: Mobile Strike Force element OPCON to 1-503d Infantry made OPCON to 2-503d Infantry. MIKE Force Company from DAK TO OPCON to 4-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: Task Force 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR and policed the battlefield. At 1105 hours, TF BLUE engaged an unknown size NVA force in bunkers vic YB 835184 resulting in 3 US KIA and 6 NVA KIA.



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

The 2-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK. At 0755 hours, A-2-503d Infantry C-2-503d Infantry and the 2-503d Infantry 4.2" Mortar Platoon were helilifted from FSB 5 to FSB 16, closing at 1115 hours. At 1020 hours, A-2-503d Infantry engaged 6-8 NVA vic YB 835184 resulting in 1 NVA KIA. At 1130 hours, A-2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size NVA force vic YB 810149 resulting in 19 US WIA. Contact was broken at 1430 hours. At 1300 hours, B-2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size enemy force at YB 815150 while attempting to reinforce A-2-503d Infantry resulting in 1 US KIA and 11 US WIA. At 1300 hours C-2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size NVA force vic YB 815150 resulting in 6 US WIA. At 1640 hours, C-2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size NVA force vic YB 813149 resulting in 3 NVA KIA, 5 small arms, 1 rocket launcher and 10 grenades captured. At 1640 hours, A-2-503d Infantry captured one NVA vic YB 810151.

At 1800 hours, one platoon of A-3-319th Artillery was helilifted from FSB 12 to FSB 16 closing at 1910 hours.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

At 1700 hours, LRRP Team "D" engaged 21 NVA vic YB 800245 resulting in 2 NVA KIA.

MIKE Special Forces elements from PLEIKU continued patrolling activities in AO's FALCON and CONDOR without contact.

Company "B", 4-503d Infantry continued road clearing operations while Company "D" conducted local security operations. The battalion received road clearing responsibility east to a bridge at YB 952248.

n. D + 19 (13 November 1967)

Task Force Organization Changes: C-4-503d Infantry released from OPCON to 1-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. Task Force 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1010 hours, TF 1-503d Infantry released C-4-503d Infantry from OPCON to its parent unit. 1-503d Infantry reported 4 more US MIA's as a result of the contact on 11 November. FSB 15 received 72 82mm mortar rounds from 1900 to 1932 hours. By 1730 hours, C-1-503d Infantry had found 51 NVA bodies, 1 B-40 rocket launcher, 1 rifle, 11 AK-47's, 4 RPG machine guns and 5 SKS rifles vic YB 825185, resulting from the 11 November contact.

The 2-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK. At 1658 hours, elements of A-2-503d Infantry and B-2-503d Infantry engaged an unknown size enemy force vic YB 812151 resulting in 10 US KIA, 20 US WIA and 6 US MIA. At 0758 hours C-2-503d Infantry found 5 NVA bodies

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of D&K TO

vic FSB 16 (see enclosed Combat After Action Report for details).

Companies "A" and "D" 4-503d Infantry assaulted an LZ at YB 903186 at 1530 hours. They then initiated search and destroy operations to the north. Company "D" continued security mission of FSB 15. Company "C" assumed security mission of FSB 12 after returning to the operational control of 4th Battalion at 1640 hours.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

MIKE Special Forces elements engaged an unknown size enemy force vic YB 834125 resulting in 1 NVA KIA.

o. D + 20 (14 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: A-1-12th Cavalry OPCON to 2-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. 1st Battalion 503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1428 hours A-1-503d Infantry found 9 NVA KIA, 1 B-40 rocket launcher and 2 SKS rifles at YB 826184 resulting from the 11 November contact. At 1005 hours, B-1-503d Infantry found 4 NVA KIA vic YB 851188 killed by 81mm mortar fire.

2-503d Infantry withdrew eastward carrying their WIA's with them. At the vicinity of YB 813154 they set up a new perimeter around a bomb crater and DUSTOFF took out their casualties. The total casualties for the contact of the 13th and 14th was: "B" Company - 21 KIA 17 WIA. "A" Company - 3 WIA. Throughout the morning airstrikes, artillery and mortar fire was adjusted in on the NVA positions. At 1300 hours "D" Company from FSB 16 joined with "A" and "D" Companies and the three companies swept up the ridge right through the battle area and several hundred meters beyond with negative enemy contact. The three companies laagered for the night at YB 808151. The results of the sweep were 84 NVA KIA (BC) 20 small arms weapons, two 82mm mortars minus one tube and numerous blood trails found. All MIA's were found dead and the 90mm recoilless rifle and other US equipment was recovered.

Companies "A" and "D" 4-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations with negative contact. Company "D" moved to FSB 13 and Company "C" to FSB 12 to assume security responsibility.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

p. D + 21 (15 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: A-1-12th Cavalry released from OPCON to 2-503d Infantry.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. 1st Battalion 503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1700 hours A-1-503d Infantry found 4 NVA KIA vic YB 822180 resulting from airstrikes placed in the area.

"A" and "D" Companies 2-503d Infantry continued a search of the hill vic YB 803149 and the approaching ridge lines where the contact of the 12th and 13th occurred. "D" Company secured the LZ and equipment. "A" Company engaged two groups of three NVA at different times and locations killing one, wounding two and capturing one. "B" Company also captured one NVA. "A" Company found an estimated 13 NVA KIA from air and artillery and 1 NVA KIA from small arms fire as a result of the 12 November contact. The three companies laagered together on the hill.

D-4-503d Infantry moved to FSB 13 at 0815 hours. Companies "A" and "D" began search and destroy operations to the west and laagered at 1600 hours with negative contact or incident.

At 1155 hours, MIKE Special Forces Company OPCON to 2-503d Infantry engaged 5 NVA vic YB 825117 resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 captured.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

MIKE Special Forces elements from KONTUM continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON.

q. D + 22 (16 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. 1st Battalion 503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1145 hours, A Co engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 821181 resulting in 1 NVA KIA. At 1525 hours, A Co found one 12.7mm weapon with 50 rounds of ammo and 12 CHICOM grenades in the vicinity of YB 822180.

B-2-503d Inf returned to FSB 16 replacing C Co who moved out to A and D Co's on search and destroy operations. An A Co clearing patrol found 5 NVA bodies and 3 AK-47's in the vicinity of YB 804149. They were credited to their 12 November contact (total of 19 NVA KIA (BC)). C Co captured one seriously wounded NVA and an AK-47 enroute to A and B Co's. The captive was evacuated. The 3 companies laagered at YB 800145.

Companies A and B-4-503d Inf initiated continued search and destroy operations at 0820 hours. Several old trails were found and the companies laagered with negative contact on Hill 990 (YB 817246). Co C's mine sweep found one CHICOM mine at YB 894171.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

E-17th Cav continued as Brigade reaction force.

MSF elements and CSF elements continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON.

r. D + 23 (17 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. 1st Battalion 503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1500 hours the battalion called for an air strike in the vicinity of YB 865200 resulting in 4 NVA KIA.

The 2-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK.

The 4-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO FALCON.

E-17th Cavalry continued as Brigade Reaction Force. At 1620 hours, E-17th Cav engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of ZB 057223, resulting in 1 NVA KIA. E-17th Cav received incoming B-40 RL fire resulting in 2 US WIA.

MSF elements and CSF elements continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 1540 hours an MSF element under the OPCON of the 4-503d Inf engaged a platoon size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 849263, resulting in 1 US SF WIA and captured 1 AK-47, 40 rounds of small arms ammo 4 MSF WIA and 2 CHICOM type grenades.

s. D + 24 (18 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: CSF company from DAK TO was released from the OPCON of the 4-503d Inf.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR today in AO SPAATZ in conjunction with elements of the 4th Inf Div. The 1-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1440 hours A Co engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 803160. At 1715 hours A Co received B-40 RL fire from enemy positions in the vicinity of YB 803160. Artillery was called into the area with unknown results. At 1805 hours A Co received incoming 60mm rounds with negative friendly casualties. At 1530 hours B Co found 4 NVA KIA in the vicinity of YB 856199. The graves were about 3 days old and cause of death could not be determined. At 1905 hours A Co received an emergency resupply. At 1931 hours A Co engaged 1 NVA in the vicinity of YB 798157 resulting in 1 NVA KIA. Contact was broken at 1935 hours.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report -- The Battle of DAK TO

The 2-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK. At 1440 hours, a CHIEU HOI walked into FSB 16. He carried AK-47 ammo, clothes and a home made protective mask.

Companies A and B-4-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations with negative results. D Co was dispatched to link-up with the 23d MSF Co at 1035 hours. At 1310 hours, an artillery round fell into D Co's CP and the 23d MSF perimeter killing 6 US and 3 CIDG and wounding 14 US and 13 CIDG personnel.

E-17th Cav continued as Brigade Reaction Force.

MSF elements and CSF elements continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 1045 hours, the 23d MSF Co under the OPCON of 2-503d Inf, engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 797133. The MSF Co received heavy AW fire resulting in 1 VN SF WIA and 8 CIDG WIA. At 1105 hours, the CSF Co under the OPCON of 4-503d Inf was released to its parent unit.

t. D + 25 (19 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. The 1-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 0632 hours, A Co captured 1 NVA in the vicinity of YB 797157 who was wounded in the eye. At 0830 hours, A, C and D Co's conducting clearing patrols in the vicinity of YB 797158, found 51 NVA KIA, 9 AK-47's, 3 B-40 RL's, 1 AK-50, 3 BA rifles and 2 SKS rifles from the results of the contact on 18 November.

The 2-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK. At 1040 hours, D Co engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 798138. At 1131 hours, D Co received incoming B-40 rocket fire in the vicinity of YB 798135. At 1412 hours, A Co engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 798138. At 1435 hours, A, C and D Co's reported they were in heavy contact with an unknown size NVA force and surrounded. At 1910 hours, enemy contact was broken with all units of 2-503d Inf. The casualty figures for the contact were 40 US KIA, 42 US WIA and 32 US MIA. There were unknown NVA casualties. At 1858 hours, a Marine Bomber accidentally dropped a bomb on the CP area.

At 0930 hours, C-4-503d Inf was helilifted from FSB 12 to a LZ in the vicinity of YB 855279. One US Paratrooper was wounded by sniper fire on the initial landing. At 1000 hours, A and B Co's were airlifted to FSB 12 to close in at 1125 hours. A Co followed Co C into the LZ at 1315 hours at YB 855279.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

At 1530 hours the 335th AHC aircraft 498 received AW fire in the vicinity of FSB 16 with no friendly casualties. The aircraft returned to DAK TO. At 1630 hours aircraft 621 was shot down in the vicinity of FSB 16 with no friendly casualties. At 1740 hours aircraft 717 was shot down in the vicinity of FSB 16 resulting in 2 US WIA. At 1745 hours aircraft 638 was shot down in the vicinity of FSB 16 with no friendly casualties. All the aircraft were flying in support of resupply operations for the 2-503d Inf.

MSF elements continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 1257 hours the MSF Co under the OPCON of 2-503d Inf engaged 3 NVA in the vicinity of YB 797126, resulting in 3 NVA KIA and 2 AK-47's and 1 SKS rifle being captured.

u. D + 26 (20 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 4-503d Inf assumed OPCON of 2-503d Inf. A and D-1-12 Inf assumed the mission as Brigade Reaction Force.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. The 1-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1050 hours A Co found 11 60mm mortar rounds, 75 meters outside their perimeter in the vicinity of YB 799159. At 1055 hours, D Co found 4 82mm mortar rounds and 2 CHICOM grenades in the vicinity of YB 796157.

The 2-503d Inf continued patrolling, consolidation and policing of the battle area in the vicinity of YB 796135. At 1645 hours D Co engaged an unknown size NVA force in the vicinity of YB 797136 with unknown results.

Company B-4-503d Inf initiated movement from FSB 16 to expected relief of the 2-503d Inf. Companies A and C were airlifted to FSB 16 commencing at 0825 hours and closing at 1025 hours. Companies A and C followed Co B to effect relief of 2-503d Inf. All companies found US and NVA weapons and equipment and 41 NVA during movement to relief. Co's A and D-1-12th Inf arrived at FSB 12 to assume security mission at 1820 hours. Co's A, B and C linked up with 2-503d Inf at 1655 hours, 2110 hours and 2225 hours respectively. At 1800 hours, Co B was subjected to a mortar barrage. The mine sweep between FSB 12 and 13 discovered three anti-tank mines at 1100 hours.

E-17th Cav continued as Brigade Reaction Force.

The MSF elements continued patrolling activities in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 1846 hours A Co and D Co 1-12th Inf closed on FSB 12. Upon closure, elements of 1-12 Inf assumed mission as Brigade Reaction Force.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

At 0820 hours, the 335th AHC aircraft 633 was shot down in the vicinity of FSB 16 with no friendly casualties. At 0820 hours the aircraft 637 was shot down in the same vicinity with no friendly casualties. These aircraft were flying in support of operations of the 2-503d Inf.

v. D + 27 (21 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. The 1-503d Inf continued patrolling activities in AO CONDOR. At 1655 hours B Co engaged 1 NVA in the vicinity of YB 855187, resulting in 2 US WIA. At 1335 hours, C Co found 2 dead NVA in the vicinity of YB 798161. They had been killed by SA and had been dead 3 days. At 1102 hours, C Co found 1 dead NVA in the vicinity of YB 799161. He had been dead 2 days.

The 2-503d Inf continued to extract WIA and KIA from the battle area in the vicinity of YB 796155. The CP group was extracted from FSB 16 and moved to FSB 12.

From 0605 hours and through the morning all companies of the 4-503d Inf received heavy mortar rockets and small arms fire. Medical evacuation and resupply aircraft were unable to land to pick up the wounded and dead or to resupply elements. Air strikes and artillery were called in on Hill 875 and the surrounding hills from 0700 hours until 1050 hours. At 1050 hours, the 4th Battalion prepared to begin the assault on Hill 875 with Co A on the left, Co B in the center and Co C on the right. The assault was delayed until 1400 hours to call in more air strikes. Co C began preparing a new LZ out of direct fire from Hill 875. The LZ was completed at 1415 hours.

Elements of the 1-12th Infantry and E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements continued patrolling actions in AO HAWK and AO FALCON.

w. D + 28 (22 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued search and destroy operations on Operation MACARTHUR. 1-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1347 hours, "C" Company engaged an estimated NVA squad vicinity YB 797157 resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 US WIA. Contact was broken at 1350 hours. At 0930 hours, "D" Company engaged and killed 1 NVA vicinity YB 796156 and captured one

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

small arms weapon. At 1000 hours, "D" Company found 1 NVA KIA vic YB 796156. At 1340 hours, "D" Company engaged an unknown size NVA force vic YB 796155 resulting in 1 US KIA, 1 US WIA and unknown enemy casualties. Contact was broken at 1410 hours. One NVA body was later found in the area.

The 2-503d Infantry continued to extract elements from their battle area to FSB 12. Total casualties for the 19-22 November contact were: 86 KIA, 130 WIA and 3 MIA. Casualties for company were: "A" 28 KIA 45 WIA; "C" 32 KIA, 43 WIA and 3 MIA; "D" 19 KIA, 33 WIA; HHC 7 KIA, 9 WIA.

The 4-503d Infantry continued to be in contact on Hill 875. During the morning and through mid-day and afternoon, continuous airstrikes were brought in on Hill 875. Many secondary explosions were noted. The assault that was planned for 1000 hours was postponed. At 1035 hours A-1-12th Infantry and D-1-12th Infantry were helilifted into an LZ at YB 803127. The lift was completed at 1330 hours. They then began movement up the north slope of Hill 875 to vicinity of YB 797128 to await the assault planned for 23 November. They incurred 9 WIA from US gunships in route. Company D-4-503d Infantry sent out combat patrols from FSB 16 to vic YB 799-147 but made no contact. They heard mortar tubes popping in the vicinity of YB 810123. Artillery was fired into the area where the tubes were seen flashing and secondary explosions were noted.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements from KONTUM continued operations in AO HAWK to the 4-503d Infantry.

x. D + 29 (23 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 2-503d Infantry released from OPCON to the 4-503d Infantry.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR today. At 0800 hours "A" "C" and "D" Companies of the 1-503d Infantry moved on foot to FSB 16 (YB 815148) closing at 1450 hours. At 0700 hours "A" Company found 14 rifle grenades 9 hand grenades, 6 B-40 rockets 10 82mm mortar rounds and 19 60mm mortar rounds at YB 798157. All ammunition was destroyed.

Elements of the 2-503d Infantry secured an LZ vic YB 799137 and provided flank security for the 4-503d Infantry attack. At 1600 hours, A-2-503d Infantry and D-2-503d Infantry were helilifted from PZ vicinity of YB 797137 to FSB 12 closing at 1725 hours.

Continuous airstrikes and artillery were brought in on Hill 875 from first light until 1100 hours in support of the 4-503d Infantry assault on that hill. The assault began at 1100 hours with "C" Company on the right,

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

"B" Company on the left and "A" Company in reserve. At 1105 hours, they began to receive light resistance. At the same time Task Force 1 (A-1-12th Infantry and D-1-12th Infantry) began their assault from the south slope of the hill. By 1125 hours, the top of the hill had been reached. By 1130 hours, automatic weapons fire and mortar fire was being directed on the hill from the west. By 1150 hours, all friendly elements had consolidated on the hilltop and had begun construction of an LZ. Airstrikes and artillery fires were continued to the southwest west and northwest until dark. At 1540 hours the LZ was completed and elements of the 2-503d Infantry were evacuated to FSB 16 and then to FSB 12. The last elements departed Hill 875 at 1725 hours. All elements harbored in place on top of Hill 875. "D" Company reported movement on their perimeter during the night but there was no contact.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements from KONTUM continued operations in AO HAWK and AO FALCON.

y. D + 30 (24 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: The 26th Mobile Strike Force Company was released from the OPCON of the 4-503d Infantry. The 4-503d Infantry was placed OPCON to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

The 1-503d Infantry conducted search and destroy operations into an Arc Light Area vic YB 783160. At 0730 hours "B" Company was helilifted from FSB 15 to FSB 16 and "C" Company was helilifted from FSB 16 to FSB 15. At 1530 hours, "B" Company found a rucksack vic YB 805151 containing two B-40 rocket boosters, 2 Chicom grenades and 3 AK-47 rounds. At 1320 hours "D" Company found one dead NVA vic YB 805152. He had been dead for 4-5 days and had been killed by small arms fire. At 1602 hours, "D" Company engaged 4 NVA vic YB 800158 resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 captured.

The 2-503d Infantry continued to organize at FSB 12.

At 1000 hours, A-1-12th Infantry assumed responsibility for the HAWK AO and initiated search and destroy operations in that AO. At 1400 hours B-1-12th Infantry was helilifted from DAK TO to FSB 16 closing at 1505 hours. At 1735 hours, A-1-12th Infantry and D-1-12th Infantry received 25-30 82mm mortar rounds vic YB 798135 resulting in 1 US WIA and 1 NVA KIA. Contact was broken at 1830 hours.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements continued operations in AO HAWK and AO FALCON. At 1655 hours, MIKE Force Company 26, OPCON to the 4-503d

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report-The Battle of DAK TO

Infantry, was helifted to DAK TO from PZ via YB 800128. released from OPCON and returned to its parent unit.

a. D + 31 (25 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: 4-503d Infantry released from OPCON to the 4th Infantry Division. 1-12th Infantry was released from OPCON to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-).

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR today. The 1-503d Infantry continued operations in AO CONDOR. At 1200 hours "A" Company found 1 M-16 rifle in the vicinity of YB 792169. At 1145 hours "B" Company engaged 2 NVA in vicinity of YB 797-158, resulting in 1 NVA and 2 AK-47 rifles captured. At 1330 hours "B" Company found 1 SKS rifle with grenade launcher. At 1430 hours "B" Company found 4 B-40 rockets vic YB 793158.

The 2-503d Infantry continued to reorganize at FSB 12.

The 4-503d Infantry continued to reorganize at DAK TO. The 4-503d Infantry extracted one 60mm mortar and one Chicom grenade from Hill 875 as a result of the 19-23 November contact. At 0900 hours, the 4-503d Infantry was released from the OPCON of the 4th Infantry Division and returned to control of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-).

The 1-12th Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO HAWK. At 0900 hours, 1-12th Infantry released from the OPCON of the Brigade and returned to its parent unit.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

At 0720 hours, 3-319th Artillery received sniper fire vic YB 815148 at FSB 16. Results were 1 US KIA.

Mobile Strike Force elements from KONTUM continued operations in AO HAWK and AO FALCON.

aa. D + 32 (26 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued search and destroy operations on Operation MACARTHUR. The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR. At 1400 hours B-1-503d Infantry found 37 AK-47 rounds, 2 rifle grenades and 1 Chicom hand grenade vic YB 791170. At 1420 hours B-1-503d Infantry found 1 82mm mortar round vic YB 788172.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO.

The 2-503d Infantry continued to reorganize and conduct patrolling activities vic FSB 12.

The 4-503d Infantry continued their security mission of the DAK TO airstrip. A unit training cycle was initiated. Company "C" conducted a local security patrol to the north but had no contact.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

Mobile Strike Force elements continued patrolling activities in the vicinity of FSB 12.

bb. D + 33 (27 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued search and destroy operations in AO SPAATZ in conjunction with elements of the 4th Infantry Division. The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR with negative contact.

The 2-503d Infantry continued to reorganize and conduct search and destroy operations in AO FALCON.

The 4-503d Infantry continued its security mission of the DAK TO airstrip. Companies "C" and "D" conducted a search and destroy operation to a laager site on Hill 810 vic YB 973248. Negative contact was reported and their training cycle continued without incident.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force.

At 262000 hours November A-3-319th Artillery received 25-30 mortar rounds vic FSB 16 resulting in 1 US WIA.

Mobile Strike Force elements from KONTUM continued search and destroy operations in AO's HAWK and FALCON.

cc. D + 34 (28 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR in KONTUM PROVINCE. The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO CONDOR.

The 2-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operation in AO FALCON with negative contact.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

At 0900 hours, C-3-319th Artillery was helilifted from FSB 15 to DAK TO closing at 1000 hours.

ee. D + 36 (30 November 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR. 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry continued operations in their AO. At 0845 hours, "A", "B" and "D" Companies were helilifted from a PZ vic YB 832228 to FSB 13, closing at 1030 hours.

The 2-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO FALCON. At 0930 hours, C-2-503d Infantry engaged 4-5 NVA vic YB 874-296 resulting in 2 US KIA, 2 US WIA. At 1305 hours B-2-503d Infantry engaged 1 NVA and 1 AK-47 rifle captured.

The 4-503d Infantry continued security of the DAK TO airfield and a bridge vic YB 952238. At 0850 hours, Company "C" initiated security operations and laagered vic YB ZB 028240. At 1315 hours, Company "A" security patrols discovered an AK-47 rifle and five (5) empty 57mm recoilless rifle canisters at ZB 018259. It was impossible to tell their age. Company "A" patrols closed into laager sites at 1400 hours with negative contact reported. At 1540 hours, a Company "D" security patrol discovered a hut with foodstuffs that were 3-4 days old at YB 956234.

The 1-12th Cavalry initiated search and destroy operations in their assigned AO. At 0802 hours, the CP group of 1-12th Cavalry was helilifted from a PZ at ZB 145755 to FSB BOOM BOOM, closing at 0859 hours. At 0859 hours, B-2-19th Artillery was helilifted from a PZ vic ZB 145755 to FSB BOOM BOOM, closing at 1125 hours. At 1122 hours, A-1-12th Cavalry conducted a combat assault from FSB BOOM BOOM to an LZ vic ZB 140299, closing at 1205 hours. At 1205 hours C-1-12th Cavalry conducted a combat assault from a PZ vic ZB 145755 to an LZ vic ZB 140299 closing at 1320 hours. At 1340 hours, B-1-12th Cavalry was helilifted from a PZ at ZB 145755 to FSB BOOM BOOM, closing at 1500 hours.

E-17th Cavalry continued at the Brigade Reaction Force.

At 1305 hours A-3-319th Artillery was helilifted from FSB 16 to FSB 13, closing at 1330 hours.

ff. D + 37 (11 December 1967)

Changes in Task Force Organization: None.

Operational Summary: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) continued Operation MACARTHUR however the Battle of DAK TO was declared over

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

1 Dec 67. The 1-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in their AO with negative contact.

The 2-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO FALCON with negative contact.

At 1825 hours, FSB 12 came under mortar and rocket fire and received small arms fire resulting in 1 US WIA. FSB 12 received a total of 25 rounds with contact broken at 2000 hours.

The 4-503d Infantry continued search and destroy operations in AO VULTURE with no contact.

The 1-12th Cavalry continued search and destroy operations in their assigned AO. At 1445 hours, 1-12th Cavalry found 1 SKS rifle, 2 B-40 rocket launcher rounds, 2 blocks of dynamite, 160 60mm mortar rounds and 300 AK-47 rounds at ZB 133298.

E-17th Cavalry continued as the Brigade Reaction Force. At 0930 hours, LRRP Team "E" engaged an unknown size enemy force resulting in 3 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 rifle captured and 2 AK-50 rifles captured.

## 15. Logistic/Administrative Activities:

Upon the Brigade's arrival at DAK TO the Brigade Support Operations Center (BSOC) was established at the north-western side of the airstrip. A Forward Support Activity (FSA) established during the previous operations in the DAK TO area by the PLEIKU Subarea Command supported the main battle of DAK TO with Class I, III, IIIA and V Supply Support barrier materials, shower point, Quartermaster Laundry and graves registration service. The FSA was resupplied by daily convoys from PLEIKU throughout the entire operation. During the period of heavy contact the convoys were augmented by C-130 flights. Infantry battalions were resupplied in their fire support bases by rotary wing aircraft. Those fire support bases that could be reached by road received additional resupply by convoy.

### a. Supply and Transportation:

Company "C" (Supply and Transportation) 173d Support Battalion arrived at DAK TO on 6 November with 2 officers and 30 enlisted men, 4 - M35A2 trucks, 1 - M52, 1 - 12 ton trailer and 2 forklifts. The land element brought in 5 tractors with 12 ton trailers.

(1) The following short tons of supply were issued during the operation:

<u>CLASS</u>	<u>INITIAL MOVE</u>	<u>THROUGH AN KHE</u>	<u>THROUGH FSA</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
I	1.5 Tons	0	125 Tons	126.5 Tons

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

II	50 Tons	15 Tons	1 Ton	66 Tons
III	0	0	471.5 Tons	471.5 Tons
IIIA	0	0	1,015 Tons	1,015 Tons
IV	1.2 Tons	0	447 Tons	448.2 Tons
V	2.5 Tons	0	3 000.25 Tons	3 002.75 Tons

(2) In addition to the above, a JP-4 refueling point was established issuing up to 3,500 gallons of JP-4 fuel a day. A helicopter armament point was also established near the Brigade CP.

(3) The transportation section supported the Brigade with six (6) tractors with trailers and four (4) 2½ ton trucks. The mission was to resupply Fire Support Bases (FSB's) and carry Class V from the ASP to the Chinook pad. Two convoys were dispatched to PLEIKU to turn in salvage vehicles and equipment to the 62d C&C Battalion.

(4) Rigger support was provided by the Air Equipment Support Platoon in rigging loads for helicopter resupply missions controlling the manifesting, loading and unloading of personnel and equipment on the daily courier and control of all Brigade resupply UH-1H's on the helicopter pad.

(5) The following resupply sorties were flown from DAK TO to forward units:

(a) UH-1D . . . . . 924

(b) CH-47 . . . . . 484

(6) The following Air Force sorties (carrying supplies, replacements and mail) were flown between the Base Camp and DAK TO:

(a) C-130 . . . . . 21

(b) C-123 . . . . . 4

(c) C-7A . . . . . 2

## b. Maintenance

(1) In the initial move to DAK TO, Company "D" (Maintenance) deployed with 2 officers and 18 enlisted men. On 10 November, 2 officers and 16 enlisted men arrived with the land element.

(2) During the operation, the following work was completed by Company "D" (Maintenance):

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

<u>SECTION</u>	<u>RECEIVED</u>	<u>COMPLETED</u>	<u>EVACUATED</u>	<u>CONTACT TEAM VISITS</u>
Automotive	50	50	0	0
Armament	213	213	0	50
Electronics	351	347	4	2
Engineer	31	31	0	0
Service and Evacuation	77	77	0	8
Office Machines	2	2	0	0

(3) The most significant maintenance problem realized during the Battle of DAK TO was the non-availability of spare parts, caused by the disruption of the Company "F" Technical Supply Section and the inability of the 62d Maintenance Battalion (DS) to provide repair parts to satisfy requirements.

### c. Medical:

(1) Clearing Station: The Brigade Clearing Station was established at DAK TO on 8 November 1967. It was staffed with 4 medical officers, 1 dental officer, 3 administrative officers and approximately 60 enlisted men. The holding capacity of 25 beds with an immediate expansion capability to 50 beds was adequate for the heaviest casualty loads because of prompt evacuation to the rear and, on 21 November 1967 the establishment of a US Air Force Casualty Staging Facility in the vicinity of the Clearing Station. Relatively heavy casualty loads were handled the first two weeks almost continuously with the maximum for any one day being 21 November, when 159 WIA personnel were received, treated, sorted and evacuated to rear area hospitals between the hours of 1500 and 1930.

(2) Evacuation: Evacuation from the battlefield to the clearing station was provided by the 498th Medical Company (Helicopter Ambulance). One (1) UH-1H model MEDEVAC helicopter (DUSTOFF) with hoist, was stationed at the Clearing Station at all times. A clearing station for the 4th Infantry Division was also established at DAK TO with a DUSTOFF helicopter on standby. The two DUSTOFF's were mutually supporting. Additional DUSTOFF ships were available on call from PLEIKU and casualty pickups from the battlefield were also accomplished by non-medical helicopters. Evacuation to the rear prior to 21 November was by DUSTOFF and CH-47 Chinook helicopter. After establishment of the Casualty Staging Facility on 21 November, most rear evacuations were by US Air Force fixed wing aircraft.

(3) Hospitalization: Hospitalization and regulating was provided by the 55th Medical Group.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

(4) Malaria: Four (4) malaria cases were diagnosed as having originated during the reporting period for a rate of 15/1,000 annum.

(5) Summary of diseases and injuries handled by the clearing station:

<u>PATIENT TYPE</u>	<u>NO. PATIENTS</u>
KIA . . . . .	191
WIA . . . . .	481
NBI . . . . .	21
FUO . . . . .	65
Malaria . . . . .	12
Dermatological . . . . .	71
Eye . . . . .	12
Gastro-Intestinal . . . . .	90
Genito-Urinary (including VD) . . . . .	12
Neuro-Psychiatric . . . . .	5
Other Medical . . . . .	123
Other Surgical . . . . .	26
Dental . . . . .	180
Vietnamese . . . . .	27*

\* - Included in WIA's

(6) Communications: During the period 5 - 30 November 1967, signal activities of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) centered around FSB EAGLE and FSB 12. The 173d Signal Company deployed with sufficient personnel to establish a Brigade CP in the vicinity of DAK TO while still providing signal support to the CP at PHU HIEP. On 6 November, the 173d Signal Company personnel and equipment arrived and installation of communications equipment for the Brigade CP began. The communications installed were SOP and included FM, RATT Commcenter VHF, switchboard and wire. In addition, a RATT station and a FM secure voice station were installed to enter 4th Infantry Division nets. On 8 November, a TAC CP was deployed

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

to FSB 12, necessitating that the Brigade organic VHF (AN/MRC-6B's) and additional FM and AM radio equipment be brought forward from AO BOLLING.

## 16. Results of the Battle of DAK TO

### a. Friendly Losses:

#### (1) Personnel:

KIA	191
WIA	642
MIA	15
Non-Battle Injuries	33

#### (3) Equipment:

Radio Set, AN/PRC-25	61
Howitzer, 105mm M102	1
Mortar, 81mm	1
Rifle, 5.56mm M-16A1	225
Grenade, Launcher, M-79	35
Machine Gun 7.62, M-60	9
Submachine Gun CAR-15 Commando	7
Radio Set, AN/PPT-4	22
Radio Set, AN/PRP-9	19
Radio Set, AN/VRC-46	1
Radio Set, AN/VRC-24A	1
Shotgun, 12 gauge	5
Pistol, Caliber .45	48
Scout Dog	1
Antenna, GP, RC292	6

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVER-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

Recoilless Rifle, 90mm M-67	2
Compass, Lensatic	55
Bayonet, w/scabbard	83
Flame Thrower	3
Compass, MZ	6
Starlight Scope, AML Hand Held	2
Binoculars, 6 x 30	10
Shotgun Adapters	27
Spare Barrels, M-60	3
Sig Assy, TA-207/P	1
Telephone, TA-1/PT	12
Telephone, TA312/PT	9
Chain Saw	9
Protective Mask CER M-17	42
Surgical Instrument Set, Indiv	2
Light Set PT-61	1
Antenna, AT-271	1
Sight Unit M-34	1
Wrist Watch, Non-Maint	3
Tent, Hexagonal	2
Tent, CP, Small	1

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

NVA/VC KIA (BC)	715
NVA/VC KIA (POSS)	33

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHC-SC  
SUBJECT:

Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

10 December 1967

NVA/VC POW	9
Civil Defendants	0
Ralliers	1
Returnees	0

(2) Equipment:

Weapons

AK-47 Rifle	55
AK-50 Rifle	5
SKS Rifle	20
M-16 Rifle	2
Misc Small Arms	25
RPD-G Machine Gun	6
Light Machine Gun	4
Heavy Machine Gun	1
B-40 Rocket Launcher	8
RPG-2 Rocket Launcher	10
60mm Mortar	3
82mm Mortar	1

Ammunition

Misc Small Arms Rounds	3116
60mm Mortar Rounds	235
82mm Mortar Rounds	27
60mm Mortar Fuzes	32
B-40 Rockets	15
RPG-2 Rockets	16

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-90

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

12.7mm Rounds 20

57mm Recoilless Rifle Rounds 1

### Grenades, Mines and Explosives

Hand Grenades 279

Rifle Grenades 47

AT Mines 11

CBU 2

Explosive (pounds) 16

### Installations

Huts 1

Firing Positions 36

### Food

Rice (pounds) 643

Corn (bushels) 2

### Miscellaneous

Chemical Detection Kit 1

Binoculars (pair) 2

Field Telephones 2

Rucksacks 13

Gas Masks 3

Shovels 9

Uniforms 1

Steel Helmets 3

Helmet Liners 2

Compass 1

40

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

Radio, Type 71-B (Russian)	1
Tripod, 82mm Mortar	1
Aiming Stake, 82mm Mortar	1
Wallet	1
Bolt Cutter	1
Field Kitchen	1
Poncho	1
Canteen	1
Machetes	2
Medical Supplies (pounds)	2
Misc Clothing (pounds)	22

## 17. Commander's Analysis and Lessons Learned:

During the Battle of DAK TO, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) (-) was opposed by large determined NVA units which were exceptionally well equipped and supplied. The enemy continued to elect to choose the time and place in which decisive engagements would be fought. Only when and where the tactical situation, terrain, battlefield preparation and relative strengths of opposing forces favored enemy action were significant contacts initiated. This, coupled with the personnel strengths at which the rifle companies deployed to the DAK TO area (average company strength: 4 officers and 122 enlisted men), necessitated maneuvering Brigade infantry elements in at least multi-company size forces. The tactical situations encountered during the Battle of DAK TO placed even greater emphasis on the effective and timely use of tactical air and artillery support both during contact and as harrassing and interditory fires. Although the operation revealed no new lessons learned, it reiterated the following items:

### ITEM: Air and Artillery Support

OBSERVATION: The NVA presses the attack in contacts apparently attempting to hug the US forces to avoid the US artillery and air support. Air and artillery are of great value as blocking fires, but can be used as close-in support only at a high risk to friendly forces.

DISCUSSION: The effectiveness of air and artillery support is limited when units engage in close contact. When it is determined that you are

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-50

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

engaged with a substantial enemy force that cannot be overrun, pull back with your wounded to a safe distance where you can adjust air and artillery support. Units must insure that they carry an adequate number of smoke grenades to mark friendly positions.

ITEM: Control of Artillery and Air Support

OBSERVATION: When the tactical situation permits, there should be a coordination meeting between ground commanders, artillery liaison personnel and Forward Air Controllers to incorporate tactical air into artillery fire support plans. Artillery must frequently be called off to permit airstrikes. In addition, there is a tendency in heavy contact to initially disregard all indirect fire as friendly fire. This frequently results in elements requesting a check fire of mortars and artillery depriving friendly units of their supporting fires during critical periods of battle.

DISCUSSION: Closer coordination and planning of TAC Air and artillery fire support should allow for the use of air and artillery simultaneously while also reducing the number of check fires.

ITEM: Enemy Fortifications and Tactics

OBSERVATION: The NVA utilized reinforcing trenches and tunnels to their bunkers which provided protection from direct fires. Their bunkers had extensive overhead covers (5-8 feet) allowing them to display determined resistance to air and artillery preparation fires, and enabling them to survive and put up a strong defense after bombardment. The NVA will also attack from these fortified positions.

DISCUSSION: Bunkers which are considered neutralized should not be by-passed until they have been thoroughly checked for reinforcing tunnels. Because of the extensive overhead covers utilized, more emphasis is placed on munitions with delayed fuse assemblies.

ITEM: Snipers and Tree Positions

OBSERVATION: The NVA used tree positions to their advantage even when pressing the attack. The use of this technique gives them the capability of preventing resupply or evacuation missions from being flown by placing automatic weapons fire on the LZ from trees.

DISCUSSION: Greater emphasis must be placed on defensive measures effectively designed to locate, engage and destroy enemy snipers. CBU bomb clusters are effective against snipers in trees but cannot be used unless friendly forces have overhead cover.

ITEM: NVA Tactics

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - The Battle of DAK TO

OBSERVATION: The NVA demonstrated a tactic designed to encircle a portion of a unit with the objective of defeating it in detail. When a friendly unit encountered a fortified position it could expect a sharp assault from the flanks or rear. The NVA continually probed friendly flanks or rear elements in an attempt to exploit this tactic. Upon discovery, enemy flanking forces would break contact if it appeared that their attack would be unsuccessful. In addition, this tactic allowed the NVA to "hug" friendly forces, thus practically nullifying the effect of heavier fire power provided by artillery and TAC Air.

DISCUSSION: Units must be constantly aware of this tactic, which if successfully implemented by a strong enemy force, could result in heavy friendly casualties. In addition to constant awareness, commanders must be prepared to defeat this enemy tactic. Constant physical security must be maintained to the flanks and rear not only when moving to contact, but after contact has been made and a friendly attack is begun. Additionally, the commander should attempt to disengage to avoid decisive combat and to allow tactical air and artillery fires to destroy the enemy force or to prepare for future friendly assaults. The tactic of immediately pulling back forces each time the situation arises must be weighed against the possibility of backing into a well-planned enemy ambush.

ITEM: Specialized Training.

OBSERVATION: Use of Flame Throwers, LAW and satchel charges was restricted because of inadequate training in these areas.

DISCUSSION: Frequent specialized training is needed in the attacking of bunkers and fortified positions to include the use of flame throwers, CS, satchel charges and LAW.

ITEM: Use of Marking Smoke for Helicopters.

OBSERVATION: On several occasions, the NVA mortared friendly positions when smoke was used to mark positions or to assist in the identification of helicopter landing zones. When smoke was not employed, mortar attacks were not received even though helicopters were landing and taking off.

DISCUSSION: The use of smoke to mark positions and assist in the identification of helicopter landing zones should be restricted to an absolute minimum when the enemy has a strong mortar or rocket capability.

7 Incl

- 1 - D-4-503d Inf, CAAR, 6 Nov 67
- 2 - B-4-503d Inf, CAAR, 6-8 Nov 67
- 3 - A-2-503d Inf, CAAR, 11-15 Nov 67
- 4 - A-1-503d Inf, CAAR, 17-19 Nov 67
- 5 - A-2-503d Inf, CAAR, 19-23 Nov 67
- 6 - B-4-503d Inf, CAAR, 12-24 Nov 67
- 7 - Civilian Press Coverage

/s/W. L. Kvasnicka  
W. L. KVASNICKA  
1LT, AGC  
Asst AG

43

A TRUE COPY

*Francis E Cutler*

FRANCIS E CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVBE-SC/MHD

7 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of Dak To

1. (U) Date of Operations: 6 November 1967.
2. (U) Location: YB 849201, Map Series L7015, Sheet 6538 III.
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter
5. (C) Task Organization: 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry
6. Supporting Forces: 105mm Howitzer, 155mm Howitzer, 8" Howitzer, 4.2" mortar and TAC AIR on call.
7. Background Information: "D" Company had been participating in a continuous search and destroy operations in the vicinity of TUY HOA and had been in the field for approximately 35 days. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) had returned to the DAK TO area after intelligence reports indicated that several North Vietnamese Army regiments had reinfilitrated the region after termination of Operation GREEBLEY.
8. Intelligence: The Company Commander was briefed that there were possibly two North Vietnamese Army units in the area.
9. Mission: Search and Destroy
10. Concept of the Operation and Execution: "D" Company deployed from Fire Support Base 12 on the morning of 6 November 1967 on an azimuth of 180 degrees. They moved by foot, shifting towards the southwest and west, approaching their objective, Hill 823 (YB854186). They were using map and compass navigation. At approximately 1130 hours, while heading on an azimuth of 270 degrees, the point man (SP4 Jurgesen) spotted VC Commo wire leading up a trail. Elements of "D" Company followed the wire for approximately 200 meters and returned to the company. Upon investigation, a white pith helmet was found. At this time, CPT Baird, the Company Commander, requested permission to divert the company from its assigned mission in order to investigate the wire. The company was located at YB 858208 at this time. The company immediately formed a perimeter and sent two squads (10 men per squad) out to cloverleaf on each side of the trail. The squads spent about an hour reconnoitering the area and finally regrouped at 1230 hours. They then proceeded up the trail with a four man point (SP4 Jurgesen, SP4 Barnes, SP4 Hobbs and PFC Laird) with the 2d platoon, CIDG force and 1st platoon following in that order. At approximately 1300 hours, the point

Incl 1

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC/MHD

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of Dak To

reported that the trail had begun to widen as it approached the top of the hill (75-100 meters away) and that they had come across fresh, bare foot-prints. The company formed a perimeter again and CPT Baird ordered the two lead squads to cloverleaf clockwise.

SGT Worley's squad started to move out of the platoon perimeter up the trail, when they received a burst of automatic fire from no more than 50 meters to their front.

LT Micheal Burton pulled them back and sent them around to the left flank as the 2d squad on the right supported with M-60 and M-79 fire.

The squad proceeded up to the edge of a small clearing when SP4 Moss spotted an NVA soldier in a green uniform with an AK-47 rifle. The NVA began to turn back and SP4 Moss killed him with a burst of automatic fire from his M-16.

At this point CPT Baird ordered LT Burton to pull his platoon back to form a company perimeter. LT Burton had SGT Worley's squad fall back as the 2d squad and 3d squad covered.

At this time, intense fire from the hilltop began coming in on the right flank into 2d squad's position. This fire wounded 3 men including 2 assistant M-60 gunners.

The scout squad from "A" Company, which also moving to Hill 823, had come up from "D" Company's rear by that time and joined the perimeter. The 30 man CIDG force had originally been on the perimeter facing the direction of fire up the hill. But as the fire drew close all but MSG Ky and a medic broke and moved to the rear of the perimeter. The squad from "A" Company and the CIDG force formed the rear and the remainder of the company formed the flanks. There was an estimated NVA company with three Chicom light machine guns firing on "D" Company at this time. The company was located at YB849201.

CPT Baird diverted one of the TAC airstrikes preparing Hill 823 to their own area. The first strike came in on the high ground at the top of the hill at 1330 hours.

The 3d squad and 2d squad pulled back at this time with the platoon leader, squad leader and SP4 Hobb's machine gun covering. The perimeter was set up with the 2d squad on the right covering the trail, the 3d squad in the center and the left front, and the 1st squad on the left flank.

The First Platoon and CIDG covered the rear. The NVA firing on full automatic, rushed the right flank at the 2d squad almost immediately. At this time, SGT Shaffer, the squad leader, was killed and 2 other men hit. SGT Smith took over the squad and held the perimeter together. A few minutes

1-2

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC/MHD

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of Dak To

later, the assault struck on the left front, hitting the 3d squad. It was a coordinated assault by an estimated NVA company heavily armed with automatic weapons.

The 3d squad with the help of fire from the 1st squad on their flank stopped the NVA and forced them back.

The 2d platoon had beaten back the first assault.

An F-100 came in low and dropped an apparently short canister of napalm that hit to the left rear of "D" Company's perimeter routing the attacking NVA. CPT Baird immediately contacted TAC Air and made the necessary adjustments. It was found later, during a thorough search of the battle area, that 15 NVA had been moving in on the company's rear in order to attack. The canister of napalm left only 15 charred bodies as evidence.

During the first airstrike, three men (SGT Plank, SGT Smith and SP4 Rockwell) located themselves approximately 25 meters to the right front of SGT Smith's squad firing M-79 and M-16 fire across the trail and up the hill at an angle. Since the second attack, there had been only heavy sniper fire from the trees and heavy bamboo. The Forward Observer from the artillery was wounded almost immediately after the beginning of the battle and his RTO, SP4 Ernie Fulcher, directed all artillery fire for the remainder of the day. At 1400 hours the second airstrike came in close to the front of the perimeter. SGT Smith and the other two men at the forward position crouched behind a log and reported they would have been killed by shrapnel had they been on the other side of the log. The company medic, SP4 Cortinas was wounded by shrapnel while covering SP4 Stone's body during the airstrike. Upon the termination of the airstrike they all three moved back to the perimeter. Smith remained at his position and found his ammunition running low. He was being fired at by snipers in the trees when SP4 Madison came running up with M-79 and M-16 ammo. After reloading from Madison's ammo, Smith fired into the trees to his right and killed a sniper tied onto the limb of a tree. At approximately 1500 hours, SGT Smith looked up to see approximately 16 NVA firing AK-47s on full automatic charging his position. PFC Rothwell had rejoined Smith and Madison and the three of them killed at least four of the charging NVA. They also reported movement to their right and occasional fire from that vicinity.

At 1510 hours, the CIDG force on the right rear of the perimeter spotted approximately a squad (15 men) of NVA moving through the bamboo towards the perimeter. MSG Ky, an LLDB advisor with several of the CIDG's and the squad from "A" Company drove them off apparently inflicting several casualties. Artillery support continued on top of the hill. The Company RTO and the Commanding Officer were wounded at the time of the third attack. CPT Baird remained in control of "D" Company after being wounded.

At approximately 1530 hours, helicopter gunships made one pass. The

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC/MHD

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of Dak To

smoke marking "D" Company's perimeter was unable to get through the high tree canopy and there was one US WIA from the gunships.

Fighting died down after this and at 1730 hours, "A" Company moved up and reinforced "D" Company. The perimeter was marked by yellow smoke from "A" Company and the third and final airstrike was brought in. The strike was very close in to the perimeter and quieted all movement in the vicinity. Up until that time, the casualties had been 4 US KIA and 16 WIA. The squad from "A" Company got up from their positions and walked standing up to join their parent unit as they reinforced a segment of the perimeter. Troopers from "D" Company yelled for them to get down but several AK-47's and a machine gun opened up at that moment resulting in 1 KIA and 2 WIA for "A" Company and 1 KIA and 1 WIA for "D" Company.

At 1800 hours, the artillery RTO, SP4 Fulcher called in defensive concentrations around the position and "A" and "D" Companies under command of the "A" Company Commanding Officer, CPT Muldoon, dug in for the night.

An estimated NVA company was moving up on "D" Company's rear when they were taken under fire by the 1st platoon. At this time the NVA hearing the fire in the rear, rushed the 2d platoon again. The 2d platoon beat back the assault which hit the 2d and 3d squads on the right and left front.

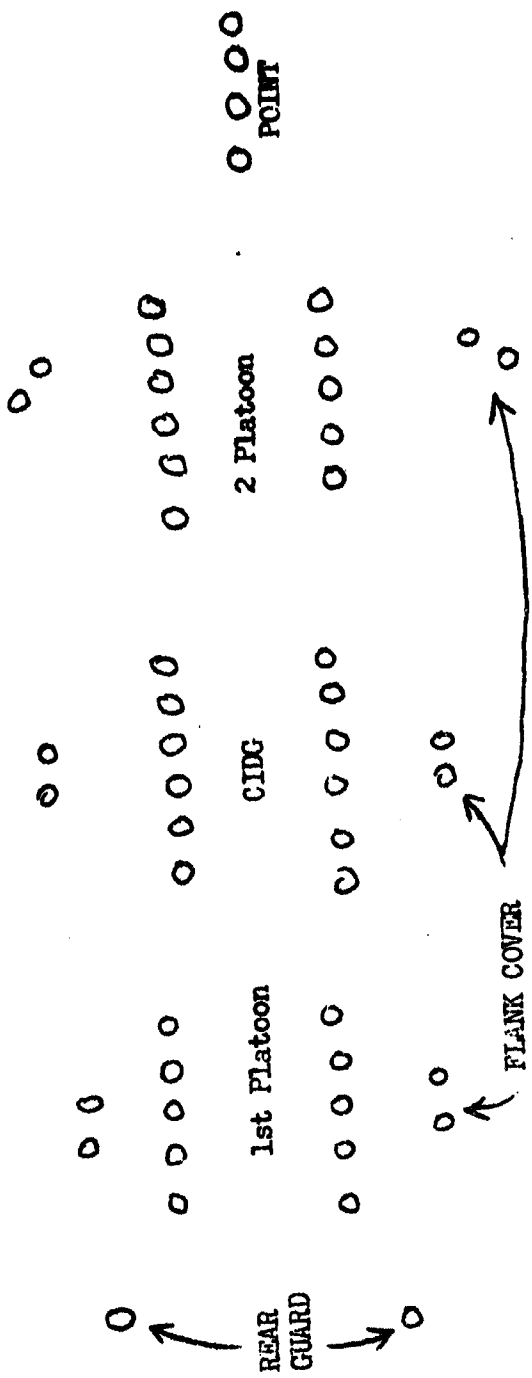
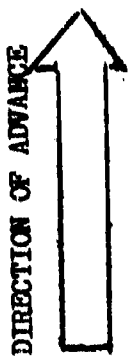
The 2d platoon with SGT English and several men from 1st platoon helped by "A" Company's medics pulled back all the wounded to the LZ which was being cut. 1st platoon and "A" Company set up a perimeter as 2d platoon brought their wounded and dead back. The most critically wounded were lifted out that night and the remainder at first light on the 7th. There was no further major contact reported during the night.

11. Results: Total losses for "D" Company on 6 November were as follows: 5 KIA, 18 WIA, and no MIA. Equipment: 2 rucksacks. Enemy losses were 28 KIA, (BC), total 60 KIA (POSS), and no POW. Equipment: 22 weapons, 6 machine guns, 2 rocket launchers, and a large amount of personal equipment. "D" Company deployed with 85 enlisted men and 4 officers (including the Forward Observer from B/3/319th Artillery) with 30 CIDG personnel attached. Each man carried two days combined LRRP and C-rations. Every man carried a full rucksack weighing up to 50 pounds. Each man with an M-16 rifle carried a basic load of 500 rounds. A single tracer round was carried at the end of each magazine to let the individual know that he would soon have to reload. Each individual also carried 200 rounds of machine gun ammunition totaling at least a basic load of 1,400 rounds. "D" Company was broken down into two platoons with six machine guns supporting. M-79 grenadiers carried 50 high explosive rounds and 50 shotgun rounds with adapters. Each man carried four fragmentation grenades and two smoke grenades. There were five claymore mines per squad with a machine gun in each of the six squads. "D" Company carried no mortars or recoilless rifles on this operation.

1-4

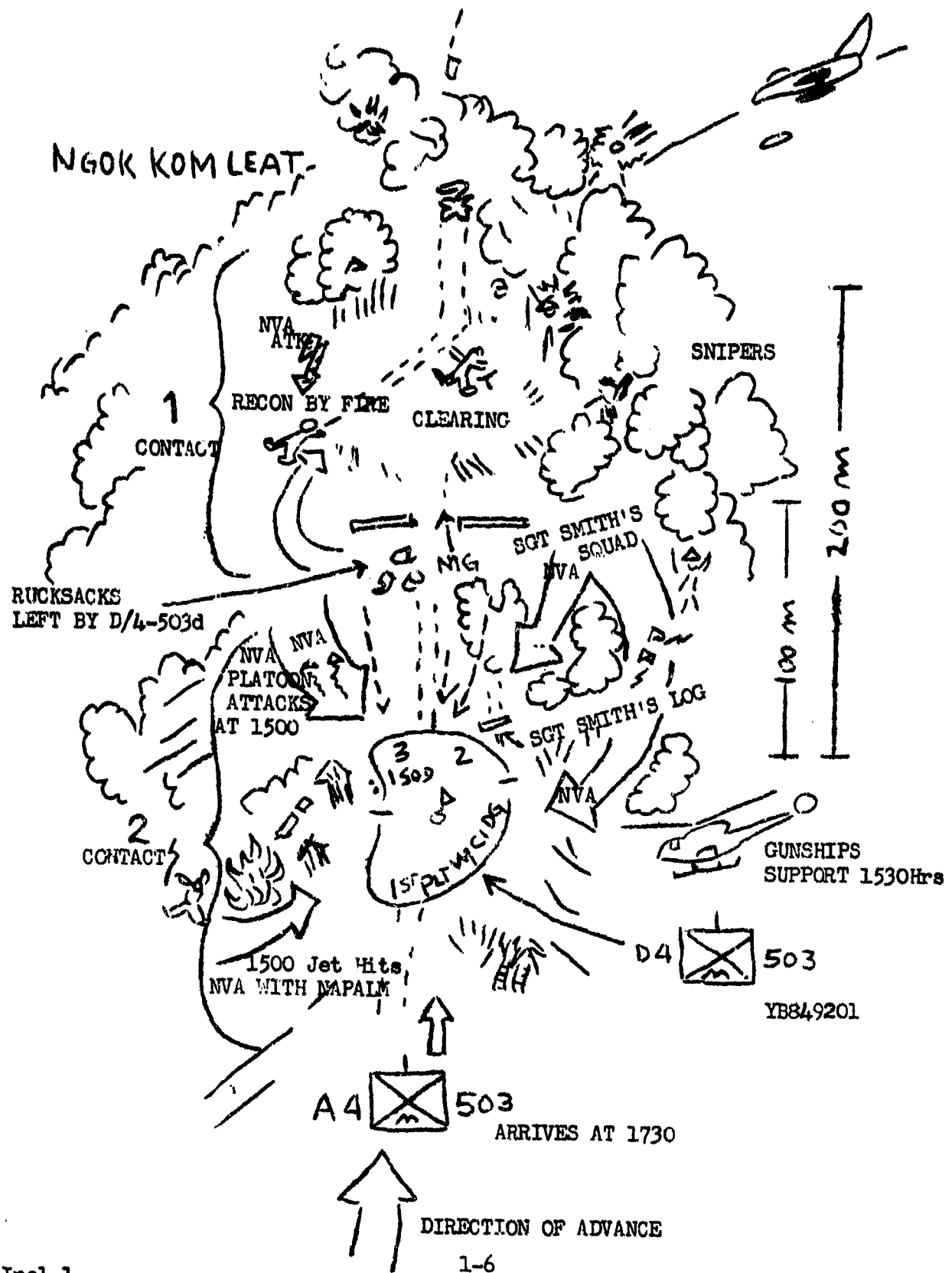
CONFIDENTIAL

H



MARCH FORMATION D/4-503

1-5



Incl 1

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVHE-SC/MHD

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

1. (U) Date of Operations: 6-8 November 1967
2. (U) Location: YB 854186 Map Series L7014 Sheet 6538 III.
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter
5. (C) Task Organization: Company B 4th Battalion (Airborne) 503d Infantry
6. Supporting Forces: 105mm Howitzer 175mm Howitzer 8" Howitzer. 4.2" mortar and TAC AIR on call.
7. Background Information: The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) had returned to the DAK TO region due to the fact that intelligence findings had indicated that several North Vietnamese Army regiments had reinfilitrated the area and were threatening the NEW DAK TO airstrip and the local Special Forces camp. The Brigade had operated in this region on Operation GREELEY which terminated on 14 October 1967. "B" Company had been in the field in excess of forty days but morale was extremely good
8. Intelligence: The Company Commander of "B" Company was briefed and informed that there were two NVA regiments in the area and that there was a possibility of the Company landing on a "hot" LZ
9. Mission: Heliborne assault and search and destroy
10. Concept of the Operation and Execution: At 2100 hours 5 November 1967, Captain George T. Baldrige Company Commander B/4-503d Infantry conducted a briefing of all Platoon Leaders concerning the combat assault on 6 November. Maps of the area were studied and all personnel were advised of the possibility of the LZ being "hot". Two NVA regiments the 32d and 66th, had been reported in the vicinity. The company mission was to clear Hill 823 for a fire support base and the unit was to be prepared to stay for several days. The assault was completed without incident at 1430 hours with a perimeter being formed at the top of the hill. All platoons put out listening posts approximately 75 meters in front of their positions. The 3d Platoon was on the western edge of the perimeter with PFC Louis Miller and PFC Bickel on the listening post. Shortly afterwards the 3d Platoon's outpost came under attack with Miller being killed and Bickel severely wounded

Incl 2

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC/MHD

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

1LT Darling, 3d Platoon, Platoon Leader, took his RTO (SP4 Ellis), SP4 Corbett, PFC Dowdy and PFC Clarence Miller down the hill to the aid of Miller and Bickel and they were all killed by approximately 30 NVA attacking up the slope. PFC Bickel managed to crawl part way back up the slope but his cries were heard by an NVA soldier who shot and killed him. SGT Alfred McQuarter, 1st Squad Leader 3d Platoon took two men and directed their fire until they killed the NVA

About 15 NVA reached the top of the hill at the edge of the 3d Platoon's perimeter. They were killed by heavy fire from the 2d Platoon. Approximately 30 to 50 NVA could be seen down the hill in the broken heavy bamboo. One man's M-79 failed to fire and he was killed by an NVA soldier charging up the hill. The attack lasted for about 20 minutes and then quieted down

The 1st and 2d Platoon Leaders moved men over into the 3d Platoon's perimeter to fill the gaps left from the NVA charge. SFC Ponting Platoon SGT from the 1st Platoon left his position and took command of the 3d Platoon. At approximately 1515 hours the western portion of the perimeter came under attack again. The second attack was brief and resulted in unknown casualties.

At the junction between the 2d and 3d Platoon there was a large B-52 bomb crater. At the beginning of the second attack there was a machine gun position and a 90mm recoilless rifle position set up on the outside of the rim. During the assault they moved both positions to the inside of the crater. The NVA immediately moved up to the outside of the crater and began harassing the positions with grenades. This harassment continued through the night.

Casualties up to this point were very light. After the first hour of contact "B" Company had sustained 7 KIA and 13 WIA. All the wounded were evacuated within the first hour.

SGT Riley, the company mortar NCO began firing within the first hour and continued his effective fire throughout the three days. He had two 81mm tubes, one always firing while the other was swabbed and cooled. The mortars were located 12 and 14 feet down in a bomb crater in the middle of the perimeter and most of the rounds were fired to the west. The mortar crews used only one aiming stake and had no M-16 Plotting Boards. The fire was adjusted from 100 meters out to within 5-10 meters from the perimeter. A total of 639 rounds were fired during the three days.

At approximately 1400 hours a chopper brought in Major Scott CPT Leonard, 1SG Okendo, SGT Kennedy and SP4 Thomas. They dug in behind the 3d Platoon and MAJ Scott proceeded to direct all TAC Air Strikes. At 1430 hours, CPT Leonard took command of "B" Company from CPT Baldrige who had been wounded. All wounded were evacuated by 1430 hours.

There was little action in the late afternoon other than sniper fire

2-2

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC/MHD

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

and harassment from hand grenades thrown over the bomb crater. Artillery and mortar fire was brought in close all round the perimeter but the NVA was apparently able to retreat to fortified positions as the grenade attacks continued throughout the night

Just prior to darkness (1830 hours) "B" Company was resupplied with mortar rounds and grenades. Starting at 1950 hours, several positions reported movement to their fronts. The men at the bomb crater could hear people moving through the bamboo up the finger to their front. One man looked up over the edge of the crater to see an NVA within 5 meters of the other side. He blew the man's head off with an M-79 canister round. An all night hand grenade duel was fought at the bomb crater. The NVA were located on the opposite side of the crater from the machine gun and recoilless rifle position within 5 meters from "B" Company's position there. When men from "B" Company threw grenades they would hear the sound of footsteps running away but the NVA would always return to throw more grenades. There were no friendly casualties at this position. There was no fire other than M-79 and hand grenades for fear of giving away the position.

There was also heavy movement in front of the 3d Platoon's portion of the perimeter, and they received heavy grenade harassment from there also. At 2000 hours, SPOOKY began flare support which continued throughout the night. A flare was dropped every 15 minutes. The troops stated later that they would have preferred continuous low illumination on top of the hill rather than to the sides. Overall support by SPOOKY was excellent and the mini-gun suppressive fire was very effective. Every position had claymore mines out to their front. The NVA apparently sent several teams up to cut the wires but all mines were accounted for the next morning.

The NVA pressed their hand grenade attacks very heavily after throwing clumps of dirt to try and get B Co troops to expose their exact location by returning fire. The NVA also had good fire discipline. At 0400 hours, SFC Ponting was made aware of approximately two squads (12-15 men) of NVA to the right front of the 3d Platoon. There was also extremely heavy movement to their front. Suspecting that the enemy was massing for a heavy attack, SFC Ponting contacted SGT McClain, Forward Observer from B/3-319th Artillery who directed artillery fire into the area and broke up the movement. The NVA were aggressive and determined: one NVA soldier had his leg blown off by a hand grenade but crawled into the bamboo, bandaged it, and returned to throw grenades at the Americans' positions until killed. The paratroopers were ever more determined and repulsed and smashed the attacking NVA troops.

At 0500 hours, SGT Cabrera, Platoon Sergeant, 1st Platoon was checking the perimeter when he was killed by a rocket fired by two NVA. They were killed with M-79 and hand grenade fire.

At 0615 hours, 7 November, "B" Company marked its perimeter with smoke grenades and helicopter gunships made several strikes. TAC airstrikes followed.

2-3

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC/MHD

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

immediately and came within 200 meters of the perimeter. Napalm was dropped further down the ridge and the right side of the finger in front of the bomb crater where the two NVA squads had been the night before

Also around first light LSG Okendo was at the bomb crater when 6 NVA with a rocket launcher jumped into the crater and tried to make it up the other side to fire into the perimeter. The NVA with the launcher was killed and the rest fled. LSG Okendo and PFC Wilbanks pursued the NVA as far as the outer lip of the crater and threw grenades toward the sound of their movement in the bamboo.

After the airstrikes, LT Proffitt took out the 2d Platoon and moved down the finger toward the west and northwest. They were to secure enemy weapons and bodies. Within 50 meters they had located 15-20 NVA bodies dead mostly from grenade fragments. As they first moved out the platoon received a burst of small arms fire. SGT Riley fired 10 rounds of mortar fire and then 5 more. Then the platoon moved out moving from cover to cover until they cleared the outside perimeter. They pushed 75-100 meters into the bamboo and began their sweep up the side of the finger. They located many foxholes and bunkers with overhead cover. They also found rucksacks and entrenching tools and one tall tree that had a rope ladder running up the side. From the top FSB Savage was easily visible.

At 0800 hours they located a bunker with a man who appeared dead laying at the opening. He was holding a pistol in his hand. SSG Wiggons the 2d platoon Sergeant looked in and the man raised his hand and fired at him. SSG Wiggons jumped back and the NVA officer ducked back in the bunker. A hand grenade was thrown in and when the smoke cleared another one was thrown. SGT Okendo looked in and another shot was fired at him. Then a WP grenade was thrown in and the NVA officer came out shooting. He was killed immediately by several members of the platoon.

The platoon continued the sweep picking up enemy weapons. Total NVA equipment picked up during the sweep: 1 NVA POW, 22 AK-47 rifles, 1 RPD Light MG, 3 RPG Rocket Launchers, 4 SKS Carbines, 200 hand grenades, 9 rockets, 1 7.62mm pistol, a large number of crimped cartridges for rifle grenades, some papers and a map, several new protective masks and a decontamination kit. One man saw a CS gas grenade and another said he examined a bottle with a pull string that was identified as CS gas.

At 1140 hours, B & C/4-503d Inf and C/1-503d found an NVA Base Camp at YB 853187. There were US claymores set up around the perimeter. The 2d Platoon returned to the perimeter by 1506 hours and began digging in and preparing overhead cover for their shelter. They used bamboo for support and used sandbags as fast as they could be brought in by helicopters resupplying the position. Helicopters were able to resupply freely with only occasional fire directed at the choppers. At 1850 hours, just prior to dark, the position received 25-30 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. SGT Riley

2-4

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC/MHD

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

estimated they were firing from 400-450 meters out and began directing counter mortar fire. He directed fire from 300 meters to 1 200 meters out. A total of 100 rounds were fired with unknown results. Friendly casualties were 2 WIA.

During the night of 7 November there was little contact other than several incidents of hand grenade harassment. At 0024 hours, B Co received 82mm mortar fire resulting in 1 WIA. Artillery supported with unknown results. SPOOKY supported from 2000 hours until daylight. An emergency ammo resupply mission was brought in at 0245 hours. At 1710 hours, 8 November, while "C" Company and C/1-503d Inf remained in position "B" Company extracted from Hill 823 into FSB 13. Earlier at 1300 hours "B" Company located 3 NVA bodies outside the perimeter bringing the total enemy body count to 89 NVA KIA (BC).

2-5

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 11-15  
November 1967

1. (U) Date of Operations: 11 Nov 67 - 15 Nov 67
2. (U) Location: Dak To District Kontum Province
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter
5. (C) Task Organization:
  - a. 11 Nov - 15 Nov  
A/2/503d Inf      B/2/503d Inf      C/2/503d Inf      D/2/503d Inf  
Attached 173d Engineer Platoon
6. Supporting Forces:
  - a. 3/319th Artillery (+): Employed in a direct support role
  - b. 335th AHC (Cowboys) provided assault lift resupply and armed helicopter direct support
  - c. Tac Air on call.
7. Intelligence: Battalion size enemy forces were suspected in the immediate area.
8. Mission: The 2d Battalion 503d Infantry conducted Search and Destroy operations against enemy installations of force located near the Dak To Special Forces Camp.
9. Concept of Operation: The elements of the TAC CP B and D company, an 81mm mortar section and an attached 173d Engineer platoon air assaulted onto a hilltop 3 miles from the Cambodian border (YB818152) and establish a fire base from which to conduct search and destroy operations.
10. Execution: On 11 November elements of 2/503d: TAC CP B and D Co's, an 81mm mortar section and an attached 173d Engineer platoon air assaulted onto a hilltop 3 miles from the Cambodian border (YB818152). They had negative enemy contact. On 12 November the remainder of the 2/503d Inf combat elements: A, C Co's and the 4 2" mortar platoon airlifted in

Incl 3

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

B and C Co's with the engineer platoon moved to a western knoll at YB815151 and prepared to receive A Battery of the 3/319th Arty. D Co and the TAC CP remained at YB818152. A Co moved out on S&D operations to clear the ridge west of B and C Co's.

At approximately 0930 hours as A Co's recon squad commenced to ascend the ridge at YB812149, the scout dog alerted SGT Lance D. Peoples, the squad leader ordered the dog to be released as this was being done they received heavy AW and SA fire from approximately 20 meters to their left flank. The recon squad dispersed and took cover SGT Peoples called LT Mathew Harrison in the lead platoon for assistance LT Harrison brought up his platoon deploying them on the left flank of the ridge where the enemy fire was coming from linking up with the recon squad who was deployed in the center of the ridge LT Harrison then had the recon squad move forward cautiously in an attempt to get the high ground. They proceeded forward for only a short distance and came under heavy fire from the right flank with SGT Peoples being wounded. Simultaneous to this action CPT Michael J. Kiley, A Co CO, brought the 2d Platoon up on the right hand side to link up with the recon squad, and the 3d Platoon up in the rear to complete the company perimeter. The Weapons Platoon and the Co CP formed an inner perimeter. The recon squad pulled back five to ten meters as the 1st and 2d platoons laid down a heavy base of fire. Enemy fire slackened and became sporadic after A Co's counter fire. CPT Kiley then had 3d Platoon move forward through the company and attempt to push forward on the left-hand side of the ridge. They had only progressed a few meters beyond the perimeter when they were subjected to RR fire, grenades, AW and SA fire. At the same time A Co's entire forward perimeter came under the same fire as the NVA apparently had bunkers in depth stretched across the ridge line (see diagram #1). Two men from 3d Platoon were killed by RR fire. The 3d Platoon pulled back on order with LT Joseph Sheridan going forward to carry back several of the wounded. During this time, B Co had sent its 2d Platoon forward from its location at the western knoll (YB815151) to help secure and extract A Co's wounded. PSG Jackie Siggers with a security force went back down the ridge to guide them in. LSGT Troy L. Dickens then directed them to secure the wounded and fill in the perimeter where 3d platoon had left. As A Co consolidated, they detected movement on both flanks down off the ridge as the NVA were apparently attempting to encircle them. Using fire and maneuver CPT Kiley moved his Co and the attached platoon back down the ridge approximately 150 meters YB141149 out of close range of the bunkers and at a site more suitable for an LZ. At this time 1112 hours indirect fires and air strikes were directed on suspected enemy locations.

As A Co was with-drawing and consolidating at their new location the 1st platoon of B Co back on the hill at YB815151 opened fire on some NVA who had crawled through the thick bamboo to within 20 meters of their perimeter. CPT James Rogan, B Co Commander initially had his men check fire to insure that he wasn't firing onto his own people since some of the NVA had gotten in between the A and B Co (-) elements.

The NVA pushed to within 15 meters of B Co's perimeter using AW SA and B-40 rockets. C Co reinforced the 1st and 3d platoons of B Co as the fire-fight continued for about 45 minutes with an estimated platoon of NVA pressing the attack. B and C Cos fired their 81mm mortars and 90mm RR in repulsing the enemy. One B Co M-60 MG was destroyed by enemy rocket fire.

3-2

# CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

The NVA 60mm mortars were fired into the perimeter during the fight. Light sniper fire continued to be directed at A, B and C Cos throughout the early afternoon as artillery mortar and supporting airstrikes were adjusted in on suspected enemy locations. At approximately 1430 hours all contact was broken and B Co per instructions from battalion moved out to link up with A Co. The two Cos attempted to cut an LZ but the vegetation proved too difficult. They had one chain saw, a few axes and some machetes. At 1730 hours the 2d platoon of B Co returned with the wounded to C Co's location at the western knoll (YB815151) where the wounded were dusted off. The total casualties for the day were A Co - 3 KIA 21 WIA (evacuated) 3 WIA (not needing Dustoff). B Co - 1 KIA 11 WIA C Co - 8 WIA and D Co - 1 WIA. In the late afternoon C Co swept the battlefield where they and B Co had come under attack, vicinity YB814151. They found 4 NVA by body count 3 AK-47s, 1 RPD LMG, 1 SKS, 1 Chicom RR, 10 hand grenades, one gas mask and assorted SA rounds. At 1555 hours B Co captured an NVA who had been separated from his unit and was going for water (location of capture at YB813149). He was brought back to C Co's location along with the wounded to be extracted. CPT Kaufman, C Co's CO learned from the NVA captive that he was a member of one of two NVA Co's involved in the day's contact. He belonged to the 4th Bn, 174th NVA Regt. A and B Cos had water and ammunition dropped into them at 1930 hours. There was no other contact that night.

At 130430 hours Nov A and B Cos who were laagered together vic YB 814149 (approximately 200 meters west of where C and D were constructing FSB 16) received 12 incoming mortar rounds however they all landed outside of the perimeter and produced no casualties. C Co also reported incoming rounds at this time however they fell short of the perimeter. A and C Cos sent out clearing patrols from their locations in the early morning. C Co CP found 4 additional NVA bodies at YB813149 from B and C Co's contact on the 12th (total of 8 NVA KIA (BC) from this contact). A Co CP had negative findings. At 0830 hours A and B Cos returned to FSB 16 (YB815151) to resupply for a 3 day operation. At 130819 hours Nov and airstrike with 500 lb bombs and napalms was conducted at YB803150 another strike was conducted at 131100 hours vic YB808151 and YB815155 and a third strike at 131-130 hours at vic YB833140. Also throughout the morning a heavy artillery and mortar preparation was fired vic YB808151 and on the approaching ridgelines. The high ground to the west had been well covered with artillery and bomb strikes.

The concept of the operation for 13 November was to move two companies north out of FSB 16 down the valley and up the next ridge. The Cos were then to turn westward and follow the ridgeline which led to the hill YB802149 which A Co had been approaching on 12 November thus hitting the NVA from a different direction (see diagram #2)

Riflemen moved out with full rucksacks and 400 rds (+) of ammunition. Grenadiers carried 30 HE rounds and 40 shotgun rounds (no 45's were carried by grenadiers, machine-gunners or 90mm RR men--Bde SOP). Twelve hundred rounds (+) were carried for each M-60 MG. All men carried at least 2 frag grenades and each carried 1 smoke grenade any color except red (red is used to mark enemy positions). Each man carried 1 trip flare and there were 12

## CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

claymores per platoon B Co's weapons platoon remained at FSB 16 but the 2d platoon carried a 90mm RR with 20 rounds of canister and 2 rounds of HE. From FSB 16, two 50 Cal MGs and several M-60s were available to support by direct fire. In addition FSB 16 had five 81mm Mortars and a 4 2" mortar platoon (4 guns) the range was too close for A/3/319th to support however. they did attempt to support by direct fire later in the day. TAC Air, 175mm guns, 8" howitzers, 155 SP artillery and 105mm artillery were on call.

B Co moved out at 1300 hours with 3 platoons in column the platoons moving in two files. The order of march was 2d platoon, CP group, 3d platoon and 1st platoon. As the terrain permitted, flank security was put out including a MG team on each side of the column. A Co moved out behind B Co providing rear security.

B Co moved north across the valley (see diagram #2) until they hit the next ridgeline, then they turned westward and moved 300 meters along the top of the ridgeline until the lead platoon ran into a small area where 5 gallon cans of CS powder had been dumped and 5 CBU's which had not gone off vic YB812153. The CS was of US manufacture. The Bn CO instructed B Co to mask and to pour out the powder to prevent the NVA from using it the time was approximately 1500 hours. The company continued to move up the ridge. About 150 meters past the CS cans CPT Rogan B Co CO halted the Co to confirm his location to select a laager site and to allow A Co to close. The area was found not suitable for a two Co laager site because of the narrowness of the ridge and the high ground to the west.

CPT Rogan instructed LT Phillip Bodine, 2d platoon leader, to move his platoon with the scout dog 200 meters westward up the ridge to locate a better laager site. LT Bodine complied and found a good laager site. As he was checking out the site his point man spotted 2 bunkers slightly down the northern slope of the ridge. LT Bodine notified CPT Rogan of his find and that he was checking the area. At this time A Co closed on the rear of B Co. As the point man moved down towards the bunker, 2 sniper rds were fired. LT Bodine radioed back that he had received a couple rds of sniper fire from the NW and that he was going to attempt to get him. The time was 1557H. Hearing this report CPT Rogan began to move the rest of his Co forward, instructing A Co to keep closed on their rear.

LT Bodine then called and requested permission to fire the 90mm RR at the bunkers. CPT Rogan granted permission and told him to secure the right flank that he was sending the 3d platoon to secure the left. The 1st platoon would cover the rear and A Co would move close to the 1st platoon so as not to present an opening for the NVA to cut off and separate the two units.

When PFC Charles A. Marshall fired the 90mm canister rd at the NVA bunker heavy hostile fire broke loose. SP4 Jimmy Tice the assistant gunner reloaded the 90mm and yelled at SP4 Robert L. Ross to check the back blast area before giving Marshall an "Up". SP4 Ross fell off the rucksack that he was sitting on, shot through the head. The heavy fire wounded LT Bodine twice and killed his RTO. There was no further radio transmission from 2d platoon both radios were damaged. Before Marshall could fire the 90 again incoming Chicom grenades exploded around them. The 90 crew turned their gun in the direction of incoming fire and discharged their last canister rd. (The assistant gunner only carried two rounds and the rest of the 90mm ammunition was scattered throughout the platoon)

# CONFIDENTIAL

His ammunition expended PFC Marshall crawled back and secured SP4 Ross's M-16 and ammunition since he had no side-arm (45 Cal pistol). SP4 Marshall laid behind Ross's body and began firing when AK-47 rds began hitting near him from the rear so he turned around and continued firing. The situation had become very confusing to PFC Marshall and the men around him did not know what was happening.

SP4 Wayne Murray and his assistant machine gunner began to lay a heavy base of fire from the left towards the NVA position. LT Bodine yelled for everyone to get into a tight perimeter. Marshall, Tice and the others around them crawled back into some logs. SP4 Tice saw they had left the 90mm RR, so Marshall crawled back out and dragged it back into their position. The 90mm had been damaged by SA fire.

The firing continued to grow even heavier as the NVA worked up to within 10 to 15 meters of the log pile which was now in a crossfire. PFC Willie J. Simmons spotted one NVA fired and missed, he then threw a grenade and when he raised to fire again he was shot between the eyes. Murray was hit in the chest and died while Marshall tried to administer first aid.

Meanwhile a B-40 rocket exploded nearby. The NVA began to move up closer, evidently thinking that the rocket had wiped the paratroopers out. When the NVA exposed themselves, LT Bodine, SP4 Tice and PFC Marshall opened fire, killing several and pushing the others back. By this time CPT Rogan had moved his CP group just 20 meters to the right rear of their position and the arrival of the 3d platoon on the left took some of the pressure off. LT Bodine yelled for the wounded to move back.

The terrain that the 2d platoon was fighting in was thick bamboo and shrub brush with occasional open spots where most of the casualties were taken. There were tall trees encircling the hilltop (see diagram #3). Visibility was restricted to about 5 meters and firing was at point-blank range. Since B Co CO was unable to contact his 2d platoon on the radio he yelled forward for them to get on the horn. The platoon responded by sending back a runner. The firing now was extremely heavy, and it was very difficult to assess the situation since there had not been continuous communications. The 2d platoon was taking heavy losses and the NVA were beginning to roll up the right flank of B Co's position. LT Bodine moved back to the CO's position to receive further instructions even though he had been wounded twice earlier. CPT Rogan asked him if he could pull back bringing his dead and wounded. LT Bodine answered yes and the 3d platoon leader LT McDevitt on the left concurred the same for his platoon.

CPT Rogan then ordered both platoons to withdraw at his command and alerted the 1st platoon that they would be passing through them and for 1st platoon to cover the withdrawal. A Co CO was notified to prepare a perimeter for B Co to withdraw into.

By this time the NVA had rolled up to B Co's right flank. They killed the CO's two RTO's, senior medic and wounded LT Bodine again. Having instructed his lead platoons to withdraw, CPT Rogan ordered the CP group to

# CONFIDENTIAL

withdraw taking their wounded. The artillery FO had become separated from the CO at this time.

CPT Rogan grabbed one of the radios in order to control the withdrawal and moved back 10 meters. It then became evident that neither the 2d or the 3d platoons could withdraw because of the close contact with the NVA. The fighting was at point-blank range. The 2d platoon could not recover its wounded. SSG Williams had taken command of the 2d platoon but for all intents and purposes it was out of action. The CO confirmed that the 3d platoon could not extract itself and that most of the 2d platoon were either dead or wounded. Seeing that he was unable to withdraw CPT Rogan ordered the 1st platoon to counterattack to the right to restore the flank and secure the 2d platoon's wounded and dead. The CO then switched his one radio to Bn frequency and instructed A Co to close up on the rear, to send one platoon forward to reinforce the 1st platoon of B Co and to secure the eastern end of the perimeter with its remaining two platoons. In addition A Co was to send their artillery FO LT Busenlehner to B Co CO's location.

A Co complied, linking up at approximately 1655H. B Co 1st platoon's counterattack helped restore the perimeter and recover many of the wounded and dead. A Co gave a big assist as their 2d platoon under LT Thomas Remington moved through to help bolster the 1st and 3d platoon of B Co. In the course of the counterattack LT Paul Gillenwater B Co 1st platoon leader, and his RTO, PFC Jones, found themselves out in front of the perimeter but were able to get back without injury. While still on the Bn frequency, CPT Rogan requested the Bn TOC to place blocking fires 500 meters west and north of his position to prevent enemy reinforcement.

The company commander's main concern at this time was to establish a firm perimeter and establish effective artillery fires. A Co's artillery FO had joined CPT Rogan and had begun walking 4 2" mortar fires in towards the perimeter. The wounded and dead were drawn in. No air or gunships were in support at this time. The fighting was too close and artillery and air could only help indirectly. The fighting had become man-to-man with bursts of AW fire at point-blank range. The bamboo was so thick that some of the paratroopers thought that their M-16 rds weren't penetrating. To illustrate the closeness of the fighting the next day on the outer edge of the perimeter 6 American bodies were found on the eastern side of a log and 4 NVA bodies on the western side. Two other NVA bodies lay to the left of the log, one an NVA officer still holding an M-16 he had snatched from the other side of the log.

As darkness approached the NVA continued to keep up a heavy volume of fire attempting to cut off or penetrate a section of the perimeter. At 1730H CPT Rogan requested an emergency ammunition resupply. Two LOC ships arrived at 1845H. A bomb crater near the center of the two Cos perimeter was selected as the DZ. It was dark by this time but the sky was clear and the moon full. The B Co CO guided the first ship in with a flashlight and even though the ship received several hits while it hovered it dropped the ammunition on target. The second ship left its load at FSB 16 and escorted the damaged helicopter back to Dak To. B Co then requested medical evacu-

3-6

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

ation by basket and hoist for 8 of their more serious WIA's. A Medevac ship arrived at 2000H but was driven off by AW fire as soon as he hovered with two of the crew being wounded. CPT Rogan then cancelled the Dustoff request since the area was not secure

No flare ships were requested since this would give away and silhouette the American positions. SNOOPY came on station for an hour and a half working the ridge lines running north and west. The Cos marked their position with HC white smoke which was clearly visible at night. SPOOKY, a FAC and fighters were on call throughout the night.

While the NVA continued probing during the night B and A Companies attempted to recover their wounded. Grenades and SA fire was swapped between the NVA and Americans with contact not being broken until 140630 hours. At 0500 hours SSG Funderburk, SP4 Stokes and several others dragged the last WIA inside the perimeter under enemy fire. The entire effort to recover the WIAs was carried on under the most dangerous conditions. At one time an NVA soldier was shot while rifling the body of one of the wounded.

Earlier in the evening of the 13th, at 1608 hours, 2015 hours and at 2115 hours, C Company at FSB 16 had several small skirmishes with NVA forces up to a squad with negative casualties or results.

At 140800 hours November, A and B Companies withdrew eastward 400 meters taking their WIAs and dead with them. At the vicinity of YB813154 they set up a new perimeter around a large bomb crater and Dusted Off their casualties. The total casualties for the contact of the 13th and 14th were B Company - 21 KIA, 17 WIA, A Company - 3 WIA.

Throughout the morning airstrikes, artillery and mortar fire were adjusted in on the NVA positions. At 1300 hours, D Company from FSB 16 joined up with A and B and the 3 Companies swept up the ridge with B Company in the center, A Company on the left and C Company on the right, through the battle area and several hundred meters beyond with negative enemy contact. The 3 companies laagered for the night at YB808151 the location where A and B Companies had spent the night before. Results of the sweep were 34 NVA KIA (BC) 20 SA weapons, two 82mm mortars minus one tube and numerous blood trails. All of the MIA's were found dead, the 90mm RR and other US equipment were recovered.

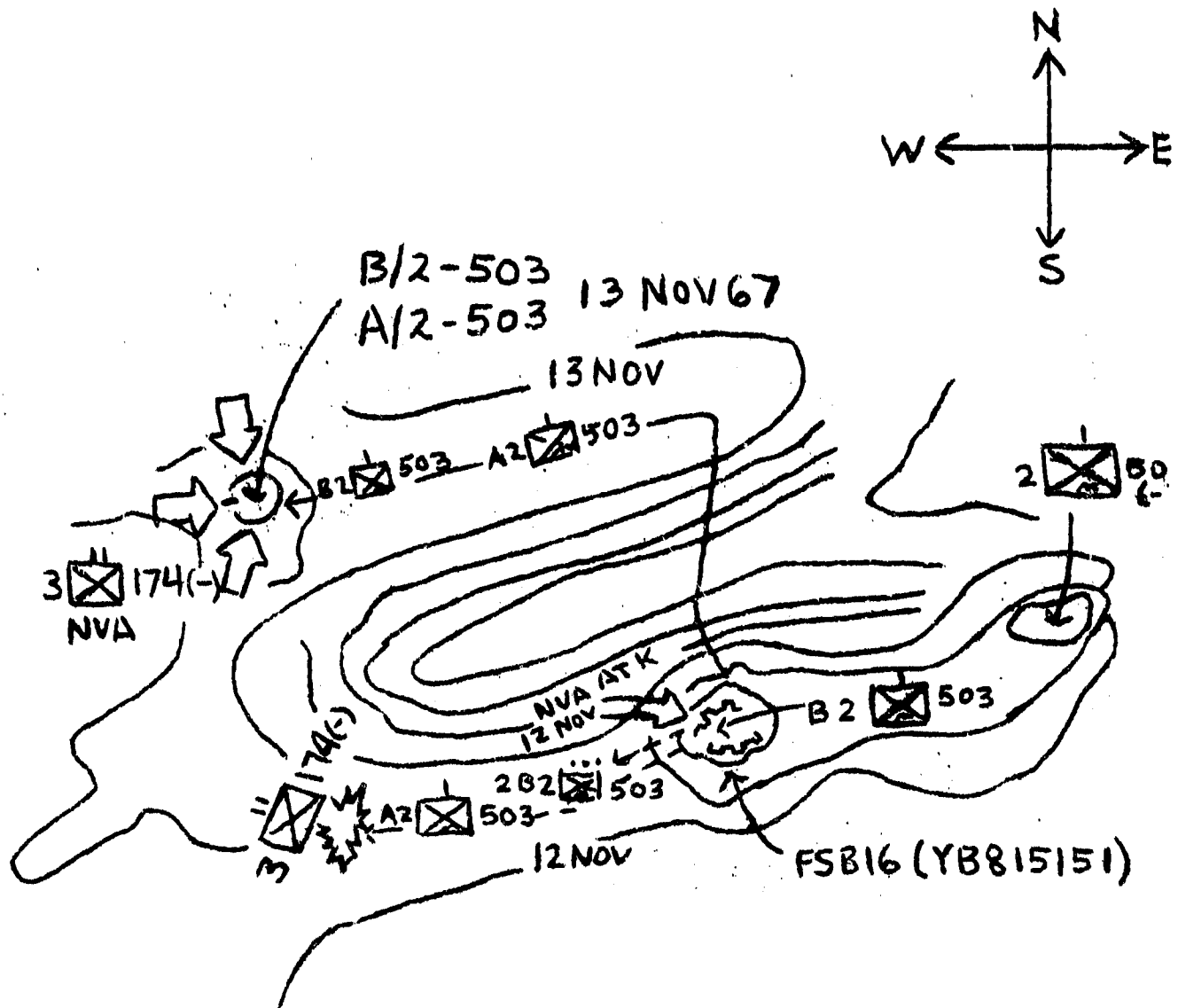
On the morning of 15 November, A and B Companies continued a search of the hill vicinity YB803149 and the approaching ridge lines where the contacts of the 12th and 13th occurred; while D Company secured the LZ and the Company's equipment. A Company engaged two groups of 3 NVA at different times and locations killing one, wounding two and capturing one. D Company also captured one NVA (Note: A total of 3 POWs since 11 November for 2/503d). A Company found an estimated 13 NVA KIA (BC) from air and artillery and 1 NVA KIA (BC) from SA fire as a result of their 12 November contact. The 3 companies laagered together on the hill.

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

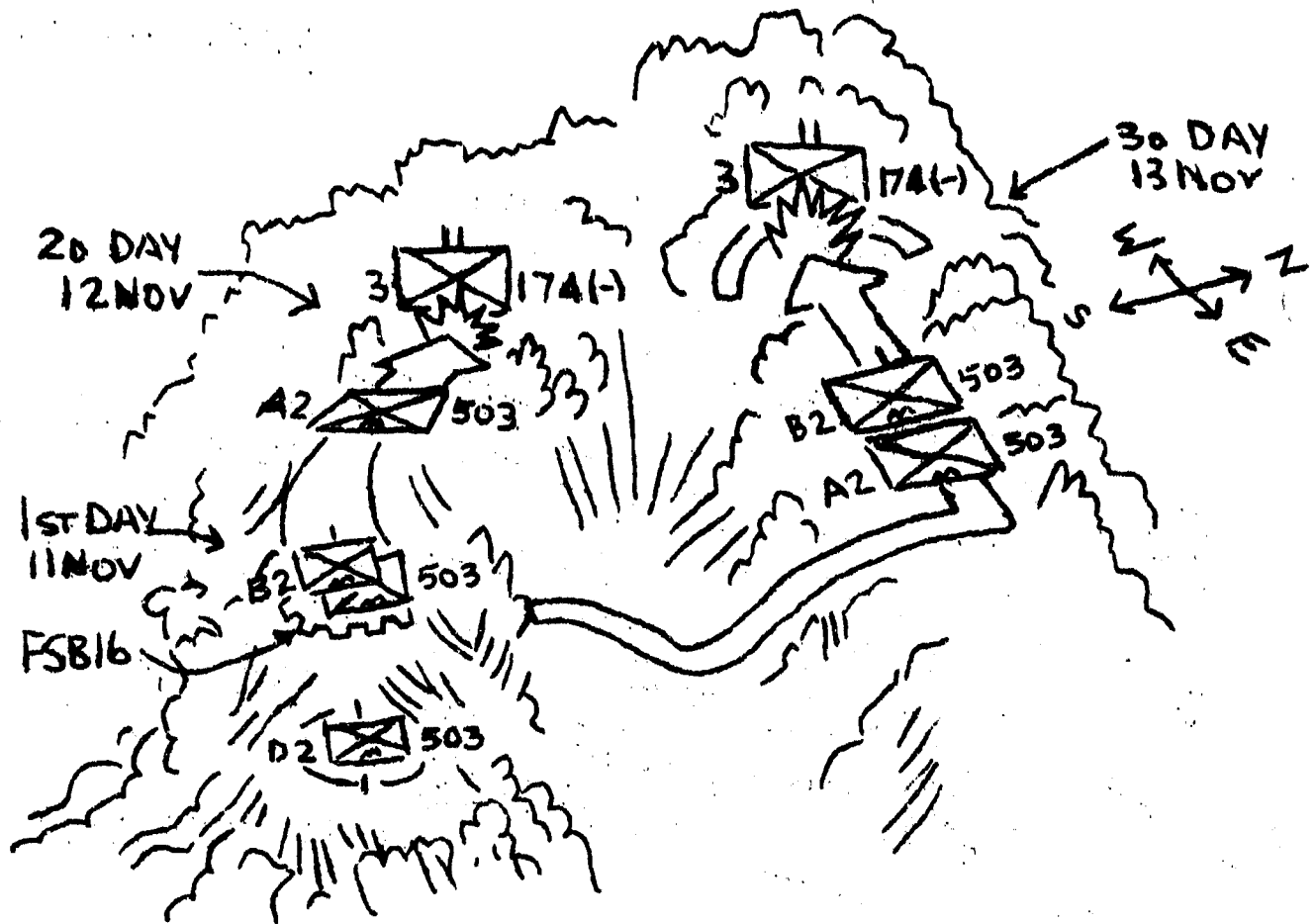
CONTOUR DIAGRAM

12-13 NOV CONTACT



CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL



SIDE VIEW OF 12-13 NOV 67  
CONTACT

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

1. (U) Date of Operation: 17-19 November 1967
2. (U) Location: Vicinity YB797158, Map Series L7014, Sheet 6538 III
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter
5. (C) Task Organization: Company A, 1st Battalion, 503d Airborne Infantry
6. Supporting Forces: 81mm mortar, 105mm howitzer and TAC AIR on call.
7. Background Information: A-1-503d Inf had been conducting search and destroy operations in the DAK TO area since 6 November and had been in almost continuous contact with the NVA for the past 10 days. The 1-503d Inf was working in a multi company task force because of known large size NVA forces in the area.
8. Intelligence: The task force knew they were on the trail of a fair sized enemy force up to battalion size.
9. Mission: Search and Destroy.
10. Concept of the Operation and Execution: A-1-503d Inf had laagered the night of the 17th in a former NVA bunker and trench system in the vicinity of YB814174 and had been resupplied by helicopter. The next morning at 0730 hours, A Co moved out towards YB796153. Captain David A. Jesner was company commander. 2LT Robinson was the 1st platoon leader, 2LT Ed Robertson was the 2d platoon leader, 1LT Larry Kennaner had the 3d platoon and 1LT David Holland led the weapon platoon. Sammual Duckett was the 1st SGT.

The 1st platoon lead with its point screening forward about 150 meters then clover leafing. Once the area looked clear the point posted security and motioned the main body forward. This type of movement was slow but the company had been saved from walking into ambush by it. The point men had always either spotted the NVA first or they had spotted each other at the same time.

The leading 1st platoon found an NVA trench system (Vic YB810165) filled with Chinese field dressings that was still damp with blood. The dressings were estimated to be only two hours old and the men became eager to press on, displaying exceptionally high morale for having been on such a continuous operation. The company continued moving southwest towards Hill 882 with the 1st platoon still in the lead.

Inclosure 4

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

When the company arrived in the vicinity of YB805161, a little after noon, CPT Jesner held the company up and sent the 1st platoon forward to recon Hill 882. The company (-) formed a perimeter to provide a strong position for the 1st platoon to fall back to in case they ran into heavy enemy fire. The company had received reports that there were suspected enemy on the hill.

The 1st platoon began advancing up the eastern finger of Hill 882 about 1315 hours and closed the top at 1400 hours. The progress up the hill had been difficult since the men had to work their way through a lot of deadfall and thick bamboo. Once on top, LT Robinson set up a platoon perimeter in a circle for quick security.

Almost immediately PFC's Brown, Suth and Hale spotted one (1) NVA to their south along the trail. PFC Brown fired a long burst from his M-16 but the NVA stepped behind a large clump of trees. PFC Suth jumped into the trail with a M-60 machine gun and fired. The NVA fell down into a small ravine and disappeared.

As soon as the platoon fired on the single NVA, the company commander started moving his men forward. PFC's Powers, Hugh and Brown went on a scouting patrol to find the body across the south side of the hill. To the south they found a partly completed bunker with commo wire leading back west to another bunker. The patrol immediately returned and then went on a scouting patrol to the west where they spotted a squad of NVA.

The company was setting up its perimeter when the patrol came running back. The company immediately got into position. Some of them were able to occupy holes remaining from Operation GREELEY which the Brigade had terminated on 14 October 1967 in the DAK TO area. C and D-1-503d Inf had also come up on the hill and were forming another but larger circle perimeter. Around the perimeter was about a five meter view. The area was trees, thick bamboo and underbrush.

The 1st platoon was on the west side of the perimeter while the 3d platoon covered the south side. The 2d platoon covered the southeast and C and D companies filled the remainder. A slight gap existed between the right flank of A Co across an open space (an old single ship LZ) and the connecting sister company.

LT Robinson located his two machine guns in the center of his western facing platoon so that they would be mutually supporting and cover both approaching trails. The platoon was fully armed with its basic load of ammunition.

The NVA opened up with heavy sniper fire, automatic weapons fire, machine guns, mortars, rifle grenades and rockets. The 1st platoon counted 12 automatic weapons firing on them besides intense sniper fire from the trees. A fifty caliber machine gun was also heard firing. The NVA were grouping into twenty or thirty men and rushing the perimeter in bounds trying to locate the paratroopers' positions. When they opened up and maneuvered, the Sky Soldiers returned

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report -- The Battle of DAK TO

their fire. The NVA soldiers were camouflaged very effectively over their entire body and were often very difficult to see unless moving, especially in the heavy undergrowth.

The A company commander immediately requested air and artillery strikes. The air strikes came in with good effect on the NVA, however, the bombs blew debris all over which cut down on the distance the troopers could see. One man was wounded by the air strikes. Artillery did a good job and was right on target. 1st SGT Duckett set up an 81mm mortar and put it into action placing fire on the advancing NVA.

SSG Hookahi coordinated covering the right flank and as the battle progressed, manned the extreme right flank of the 1st platoons perimeter. The NVA pressed their main assault from the west against the 1st platoon.

The NVA pressed the attack up to within ten meters of the perimeter. LT Robinson moved back and forth covering the perimeter. The heavy rifle grenades, rocket fire and mortars began to cause numerous wounded among the 1st platoon. The other platoons sent men up with fresh ammunition and grenades and helped withdraw the wounded.

PFC Hughs was wounded early in the fire fight and medical corpsman Withers gave Hughs mouth to mouth respiration for two hours to keep him alive. SP/4 Suth was manning one of the 2 M-60's with a line of fire directly upon the advancing NVA. His heavy bullets tore through the bamboo and were inflicting heavy casualties on the attacking NVA. When Suth's M-60 jammed, PFC Bruce moved from his south westerly firing position into Suth's position with his M-60. The NVA were keeping up a heavy grazing fire just a foot or two off the ground wounding or killing anyone who stood up. PFC Bruce fired for about three hours being moved from position to position by LT Robinson to confuse the enemy and not give away the gun's position.

At about 1630 hours, SGT Baum, a 1st platoon squad leader, was hit. A medic, SP/4 Dyer, came to his aid and was hit in the leg himself. He drug SGT Baum to a near by tree where Dyer was shot in the head by a sniper and killed instantly.

Rocket fire came in and wounded PFC Bruce. PFC Hale then took over the position. The company commander then decided to withdraw the 1st platoon line about 20 meters and tighten his perimeter to fill the gaps caused by the wounded. Men from the 2d platoon and HQ's element crawled forward and reinforced the 1st platoon.

While leaving his position, PFC Hale's M-60 was blown out of his hands and destroyed by a rifle grenade. PFC Hale was wounded. All but three men from the first platoon had been wounded and all but the seriously wounded remained on the perimeter to fight.

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

10 December 1967

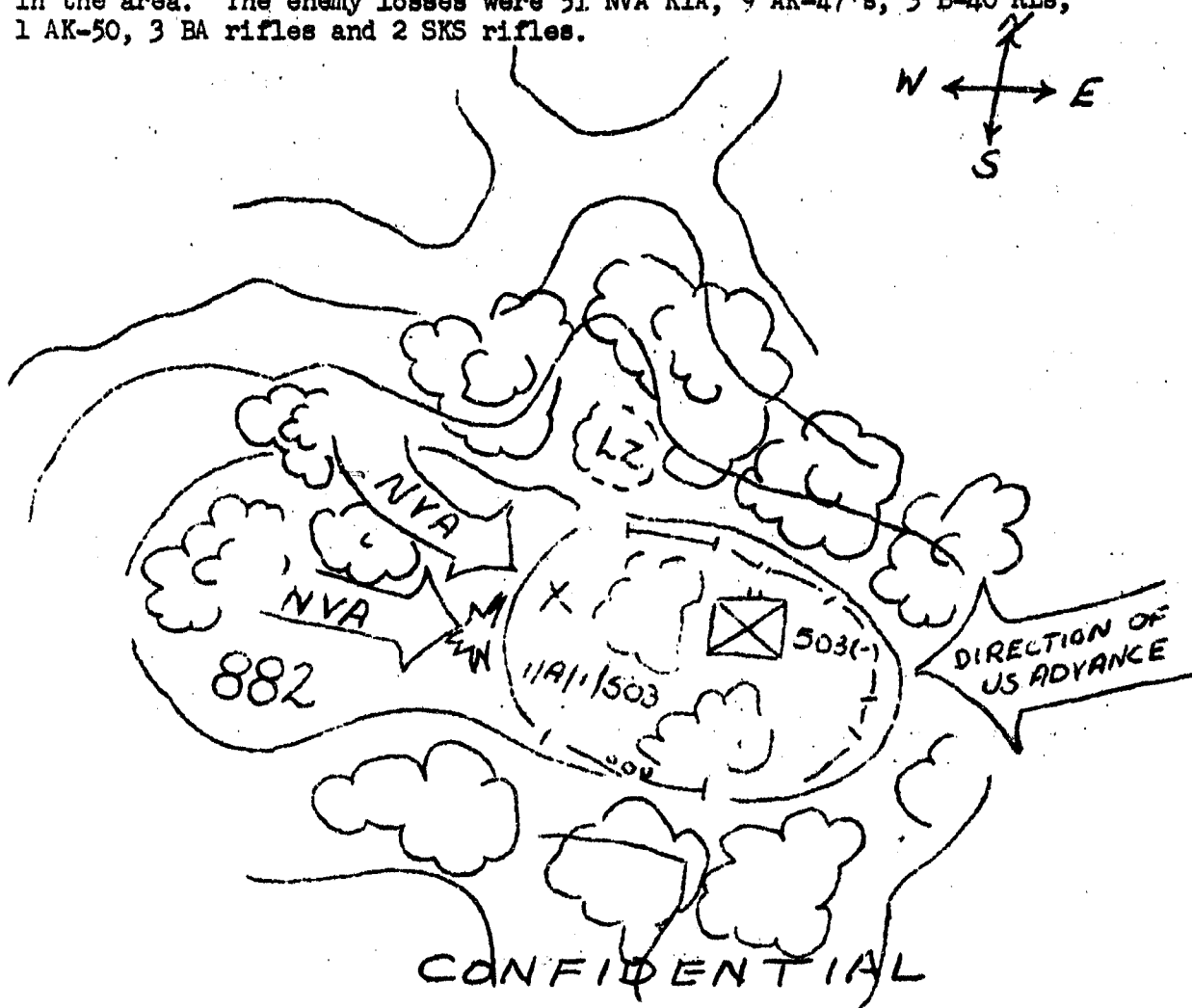
SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report -- The Battle of DAK TO

A new machine gun was passed up and reinforcements joined the 1st platoons perimeter. From the second perimeter LT Robinson tried three different times to go back out and save SGT Baum. He was wounded each of the three times. On his third attempt LT Robinson called to SGT Baum and Baum opened his eyes and warned LT Robinson, "For God sakes Lieutenant, don't come out here, there is a machine gun behind the tree", and he gestured behind the tree. SGT Baum died trying to crawl back to the perimeter. He had been shot seven times.

Between 1800 and 1830 hours, the wounded, who weren't in any condition to fight, plus the dead were assembled in the center of the perimeter. During this process a rocket was fired by the NVA and landed in the center of the perimeter wounding several more personnel.

As it turned dark the NVA laid down a heavy volume of 60mm mortar fire and broke contact. Throughout the night there were occasional NVA probes on the 2d platoon. The perimeter was closed tighter and the companies received arial resupply and helicopters evacuated the wounded. At 1735 hours, A Co killed one NVA who jumped into a hole in their perimeter. Friendly casualties for the battle were 6 KIA and 29 WIA.

The next day the 1-503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in the area. The enemy losses were 51 NVA KIA, 9 AK-47's, 3 B-40 RLs, 1 AK-50, 3 BA rifles and 2 SKS rifles.



# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

1. (U) Date of Operation: 19 November - 23 November 1967.
2. (U) Location: DAK TO District KONTUM Province
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate).
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter.
5. (C) Task Organization:
  - a. A/2/503d Infantry:
    - 1 Scout Dog Team
    - Medical Team
    - Artillery Forward Observer Team
    - 4.2" Mortar Forward Observer
    - Engineer Team
  - b. C/2/503d Infantry:
    - 1 Scout Dog Team
    - Medical Team
    - Artillery Forward Observer Team
    - 4.2" Mortar Forward Observer
    - Engineer Team
  - c. D/2/503d Infantry:
    - 1 Scout Dog Team
    - Medical Team
    - Artillery Forward Observer Team
    - 4.2" Mortar Forward Observer
    - Engineer Team
  - d. OPCON Elements:
    - Engineer Platoon, 173d Engineer Company (19 November - 201300 November).
    - MIKE Special Forces Company #26 (19 November - 201300 November).
    - Companies A, D/1/12th Infantry (211500 November - 221000 November 1967).
    - MIKE Special Forces Company #23 (211500 November - 232400 November).
  - e. Supporting Forces:
    - (1) Artillery:
      - 3/319th Arty (DS) 173d Abn Bde (6 105mm How - Towed)
      - C/6/14th Arty (GS) 8"/175mm How
      - A/5/16th Arty (GS) 155mm How (SP)
      - B/5/16th Arty (GS) 155mm How (SP)

Inclosure 5

# CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19  
November -- 23 November

D/5/16th Arty (-) (GS) 155mm/175mm How

A/3/18th Arty (GS) 8"/175mm How

B/2/19th Arty (GS) 105mm How - Towed

C/2/19th Arty (GS) 105mm How - Towed

A/4/42d Arty (GS) 105mm How - Towed

B/1/92d Arty (GS) 155mm How - Towed

(2) Air

(a) Transportation: The Brigade Aviation Officer handled all of the 2/503d Infantry's requirements for troop and cargo transportation with the exception of DUSTOFF's. The 2d Battalion received excellent support within the Brigade's capabilities. The resupply pilots and crews were particularly valorous in their support during the battle on Hill 875.

(b) Dustoff: All DUSTOFF's were handled through the Admin/Intelligence (S2) Net and performance was outstanding.

(c) Airstrikes/FAC's: Supporting airstrikes including Sky Spots and ARC Lights were coordinated through Brigade S3 Air

(d) Special Purpose Flights (Intelligence): The 2/503d Infantry received prompt and adequate support for SNOOPY RED HAZE, VR and SLAR missions through the Brigade S2 Air.

(3) Armor: B/1/69th Armor gave excellent cooperation and support throughout the contact.

(4) Chemical: The 2/503d Infantry had three defoliation missions flown during November on which they received excellent cooperation and prompt action by the Brigade Chemical Officer.

(5) Engineer: The 173d Engineer Company provided excellent support especially in clearing operations. They were indispensable in clearing thick bamboo clumps and in removing large trees.

6. Intelligence: The Intelligence Annex to OPORD 25-67 Operation MACARTHUR. Headquarters, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) dated 050900 November 1967 gave the most current enemy locations available for use by friendly forces prior to conduct of Operation MACARTHUR. These enemy locations were general in nature and there were no confirmed enemy locations within the Battalion area of operation at the beginning of the operation

5-2

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19 - 23 November 1967

7. Mission: The 2/503d Infantry had been alerted to assault Hill 875 after the 26th MIKE Special Forces Company (OPCON to the 2/503d Infantry) had made contact with a large NVA force on its slopes the previous day (18 November 1967).

8. Concept of Operation: The attack was to be made with 2 companies abreast "D" Company on the left and "C" Company on the right with the trail running up the mountain acting as the boundary between the attacking companies. The companies were to attack with two platoons forward and one platoon in reserve. A third company ("A" Company) was to be held in reserve and was to insure security of the rear flank of the other two companies and secure the area at the bottom of the hill.

9. Execution: At 0730 hours 19 November, the ambush elements from "A" "C" and "D" Companies closed their unit's night laager site vicinity YB 798138. Captain Harold J. Kaufman senior company Commanding Officer issued the battle order while artillery and air preparation was being fired on Hill 875. The 26th MIKE Special Forces Company reached its blocking position at YB 797127 at 0822 hours. At 0943 hours the airstrikes were complete and the three companies began moving.

The attack was to be made with two companies abreast. "D" Company on the left and "C" Company on the right, with the trail running up the mountain acting as a boundary between the attacking companies. The companies were to attack with two platoons forward and one platoon held in reserve. "D" Company had its 3d Platoon on the left, 2d Platoon on the right, CP behind the 2d Platoon and the 1st and Weapons Platoon following in reserve. "C" Company had its 3d Platoon on the left, 2d Platoon on the right, CP behind the 3d Platoon and the 1st Platoon following in reserve. "A" Company was to be in reserve and to secure the rear.

The weather was clear and warm and the ridge slope gradual, approximately 100 meters wide, dropping off sharply to the east and more gradually to the west. The vegetation was fairly thick with bamboo, scrub brush and tall trees growing up the hill.

"C" and "D" Companies started out in two columns each. As they reached the base of the hill they deployed into two platoons abreast with two squad files in each platoon. They advanced slowly through the tangled and gnarled vegetation which had been mashed down by the bomb strikes. In the center-most file of the two companies was the 2d Squad, 2d Platoon of "D" Company SP4 Kenneth Jacobson was the point man. SP4 Charlie Hinton about 5 meters behind him and SGT Frederick Shipman, the squad leader, behind Hinton. As they approached the military crest of the hill Jacobson received 3 small arms rounds and was killed instantly. The time was 1030 hours. SP4 Hinton and SGT Shipman moved up closer to Jacobson and called for a medic. As the medic came up, he was hit by small arms fire and died a few minutes later (SP4 Farley). SP4 Hinton and SGT Shipman still did not know where the fire

5-3

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

was coming from. It wasn't until the NVA started throwing grenades that SGT Shipman and his men could identify where the initial fire had come from. After the initial bursts of fire rucksacks were dropped and the platoons began closing up and deploying on line. As they approached SGT Shipman's squad, which had been slightly forward, fire increased rapidly with recoilless rifle, automatic weapons fire and rifle grenades coming from the NVA positions. Over on the right flank as "C" Company's 2d Platoon closed up and moved forward one of their point men - SP4 Quinn - was hit by small arms fire. As the medic SP4 Haggerty moved up to assist he was killed by small arms fire. The enemy fire lulled; they moved forward 5-6 meters on line, then the enemy fire exploded again. After returning fire and pausing for indirect fires to be brought in, the 2d Platoon moved forward approximately 20-30 meters using fire and movement. During the next two hours they took most their casualties from frag wounds from the exploding recoilless rifle rounds and hand grenades. Meanwhile the 3d Platoon "C" Company, which was near the trail, dropped their rucksacks and moved forward alongside of "D" Company receiving mostly sniper fire along the way. As they reached "D" Company's location they too came under heavy recoilless rifle and B-40 rocket fire. At this time "C" and "D" Companies marked their positions with smoke as FAC's adjusted in artillery and airstrikes. The paratroopers returned fire on enemy positions. After approximately 30 minutes, the companies began moving again utilizing fire and movement.

Just five meters in front of SGT Shipman's position was a bunker from which the contact had originated. 1SG Deebs, SSG Page and others from "D" Company took the first bunker, throwing 4 or 5 hand grenades through the port. SSG Johnson's 1st Squad 2d Platoon "D" Company came across a dead NVA in a V-trench to the left of the bunker. The 2d Platoon advanced past the bunker and the trench, only to have an NVA throw several grenades at them from the bunker they had just blown. The bunker apparently had a tunnel leading to it from higher on the hill, as the 2d Platoon reported killing several NVA in the position and still they continued to receive resistance from the bunker. The platoons advanced slowly for 15-20 meters not knowing exactly where to fire since the enemy had its positions well concealed in the thick, broken bamboo and brush. Heavy recoilless rifle fire, grenades and small arms fire brought the assault to a stand-still in some places. Over on the left side "D" Company reported advancing to within 15-20 meters of what appeared to be the main bunker system. Over on the right-hand side they were only able to close to within 15-20 meters. During this assault LT Smith 3d Platoon Leader "C" Company was cut down by automatic weapons fire and later died. Also a couple of artillery short rounds fell on "D" Company on the left injuring PSG James Beam (SSG E6), SP4 Frank Carmody and one or two others. It was about this time that "A" Company got hit from the rear.

Captain Kaufman, seeing that the assault was bogging down and realizing that the rear was being attacked, ordered his men back and formed a perimeter.

5-4

# CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

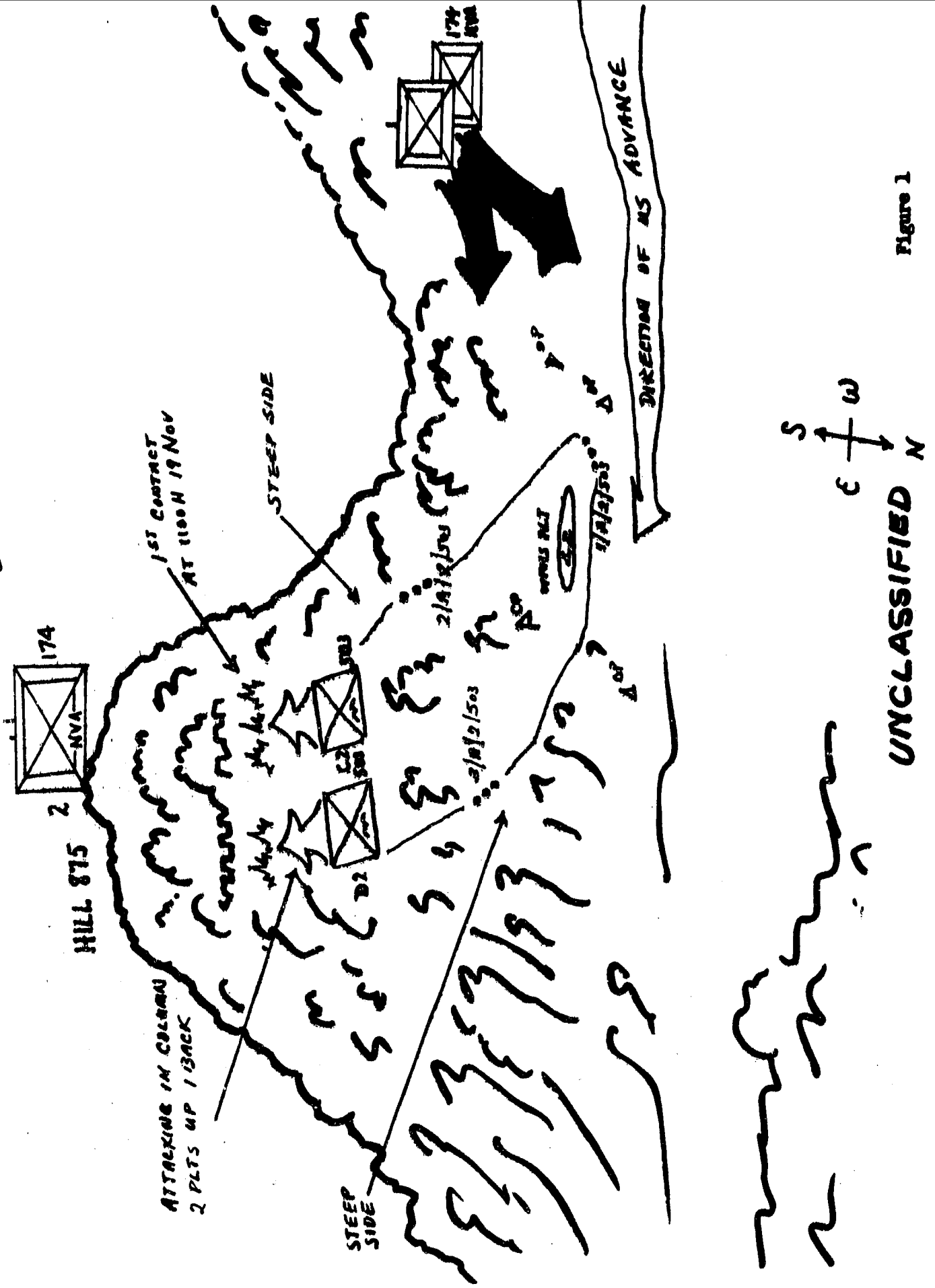


Figure 1

UNCLASSIFIED

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

They did so over about 30 meters of the ground they had just covered, drawing their wounded with them. SP4 Witold Leszuzynski was WIA as he covered LT Peter Lantz who brought LT Smith back into the perimeter before he died. Over on the left hand side, 3d Platoon "D" Company also got the word to withdraw and did so. The 2d Platoon however didn't get the word and continued fighting. Before long they realized that there was no one on their flanks. "D" Company's 3d Platoon had pulled back approximately 30 meters when they received word that the 2d Platoon was pinned down. They moved back up the hill to help. With the 1st Platoon covering "D" Company began a rapid and broken withdrawal but many of the men were not quite aware of the situation. Captain Kaufman, "C" Company Commander drew and fired his pistol in the air several times to regain control. Captain Kaufman only had his men pull back into the perimeter rather than withdraw as he didn't want to lose the high ground that they had gained. The front edge of the perimeter was only 20 meters from the NVA bunker and trench where the battle started. The men began to dig in with knives, steel pots or anything else they could work with.

"A" Company had left the laager site that morning right on the heels of "C" and "D" Companies in the march order of 2d, 3d CP, Weapons and 1st Platoon. They moved approximately 500 meters in 45 minutes. As they moved up the hill, the 2d Platoon broke off to the right keeping in sight of "C" Company and the 3d Platoon went off to the left keeping "D" Company in sight. The CP, Weapons and the 1st Platoon remained in the middle. When contact occurred, "A" Company halted. As the action developed, Captain Kiley ordered the Weapons Platoon to start constructing an LZ. They did so at a point approximately 100 meters from where "C" and "D" Companies were engaged. The 1st Platoon secured the LZ from the rear by putting CP's out 30-50 meters to the flanks and rear and by positioning the remainder of the men on line 15 meters back. The 2d and 3d Platoon's secured the flanks. As "C" and "D" Companies slowly advanced, the two "A" Company platoons moved with them as best they could. The LZ construction was going slowly. An LZ kit was requested at 1300 hours and dropped in at 1400 hours. Shortly afterwards, the LZ received several mortar rounds.

The rear CP was located 30-40 meters back along the trail that the companies had moved down earlier. It was manned by SP4 James Kelley, the Team Leader who was armed with an M-16, SP4 John Steer, a rifleman, PFC Carlos Lazada, a machine-gunner and PFC Anthony Romano, the assistant machine-gunner. A little after 1400 hours SP4 Kelley was sitting on the right side of the trail behind a tree with PFC Romano, SP4 Steer and PFC Lazada, smoking and waiting. Romano mentioned not to fire at the first enemy that approached but to let them get close. SP4 Kelley began to hear twigs breaking in front of him so he leaned around the tree and aimed uphill.

Suddenly as firing broke out on the left (possibly mortar fire), PFC Lazada yelled, "Here they come, Kelley", and began to fire in long sweeping

5-5

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

bursts down the hill into a group of about 15 advancing NVA. Lazada's initial bursts into the advancing NVA caught the NVA by complete surprise and at such a close range that the M-60 machine gun tore the column to pieces.

The NVA evidently were caught by complete surprise and were unaware of the presence of the rear OP

As soon as the firing broke out members of the first platoon: SGT Jeffery Hilleshiem, PFC James Howard (RTO), PFC James Spellers and SP4 Eugene Bookman, dashed forward to aid the OP's who were rapidly being pinned down by the advancing NVA. SGT Hilleshiem was hit while running forward and PFC Romano, assistant machine-gunner, ran back to help him bringing him back to the LZ. PFC Lazada knelt behind a log and continued firing long sweeping bursts into the advancing NVA while SP4 Kelley and SP4 Steer fired their M-16's from the right side of the trail

The sudden heavy fire from the rear had momentarily slowed the NVA attack and alerted the rest of the company. SP4 Kelley called for Lazada to fall back. Lazada responded by running across the trail firing and getting behind a log on the right side of the trail and continuing to fire into the onrushing NVA with steady streams of fire. Kelley continued to yell as he fell back and just after he shot a well camouflaged NVA at 10 meters, his weapon jammed. (Note: The NVA's face was blackened and his weapon was wrapped in burlap) While Kelley worked on his weapon Lazada jumped into the trail and began firing from the hip at the charging NVA as he walked slowly backwards up the trail.

SP4 Steer started dropping back. Kelley fixed his weapon and started firing again. Lazada's machine-gun jammed (or he ran out of ammunition). As he ran to catch up, the NVA fire hit him in the head knocking him onto Steer. Steer became upset so Kelley ran back down the hill and got Steer on the trail moving back up hill. In the meantime of the others who came to help the OP's, Bookman and Howard were wounded and Speller killed by the heavy NVA fire. McGill and Coleski assisted the wounded men and they all moved rapidly up the hill using fire and movement with other men in the platoon. Kelley dropped M-26 fragmentation grenades behind him as he moved up the trail.

Back on the LZ after the first mortar rounds hit - the Weapons Platoon ran for their gear and formed a perimeter. As the action and mortar fire increased, SP4 Jack Shoop and PFC Martin Bergman ran back onto the LZ and attempted to initiate counter mortar fire. While in the process, Shoop was hit and killed by small arms fire.

Captain Kiley instructed his 2d and 3d Platoons who had been carrying wounded down to the LZ to move down and reinforce the 1st Platoon. This was his last transmission. There were approximately 8-10 WIA's on the LZ when the rear attack broke out. LT Thomas Remington immediately started

5-6

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVEE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

moving his 2d Platoon back down from the right hand side of the ridge. They never made it.

The NVA were approaching on a large well traveled trail that was very well constructed, including steps cut into the side of the hill. They smashed into the west flank of the 2d Platoon near the front cutting them off from the rest of their company around the LZ. SGT Aron Hervas was leading the 2d Platoon when the NVA opened up with a heavy volume of fire. He spun firing, hitting several NVA before he was felled with a bullet through the head. SP4 Frank Stokes and PVT Ernesto Villereal were killed in action. SP4 Benzene and PFC Sexton were pinned down. SP4 Orendorf and some others moved down and got Sexton out however SP4 Benzene after killing 5-10 NVA from behind a tree, was himself killed. LT Remington was hit in both arms and both legs. PSG Smith (SSG E6) and several others were wounded in the fire fight. The 2d Platoon consolidated as best they could and pulled back up the hill to "C" and "D" Companies perimeter. The 3d Platoon was on the eastern edge of the ridge, met lesser resistance and was able to link up with the LZ. They did receive effective fire from the west and sustained several casualties, as the NVA had smashed through to the main trail.

The NVA were evidently well prepared for the battle. The rear attack, attack from the left flank and mortar attack all came within minutes of each other. Both of the attacking forces were estimated to be company size. Several of the NVA were well camouflaged. It was noticed that several of the NVA had strange grins on their faces. One trooper reported seeing an NVA charge into a tree, bounce off and continue his charge. When the hill was finally taken, it was noticed that many of the enemy casualties and equipment had been policed from the battlefield indicating that the enemy had avenues of withdrawal that could have been utilized at any time.

"A" Company's CP group was hit by one of the initial mortar rounds, wounding Captain Kiley, LT Busenlehner, SGT Lyons, SGT Stacey and others. The CP group was then caught in the midst of an NVA attack from the west. A "C" Company medic who had been one of the wounded at the LZ said that the NVA came "swarming" up the side of the ridge. The CP group killed several of the NVA force before succumbing. There were six (6) in the CP group and they all went down fighting. Captain Kiley, SP5 Taylor (the Senior Medic who had been treating Captain Kiley and the others), SP4 Young (RTO) and three others all died fighting. One of the group was shot in the legs and the "C" Company medic could not carry him and had to abandon him to scramble back up to the perimeter. LT Busenlehner, SGT Stacey and SGT Lyons had moved down to the Weapons Platoon near the LZ and instructed them to withdraw since the CP had been knocked out. The Weapons Platoon took their one good radio and as many of the wounded as they could carry and moved back up towards the "C" and "D" Company perimeter.

In 10-15 minutes, the NVA pushed "A" Company up the hill towards "C" and "D" Companies perimeter. PSG Siggers posted men on the trail to hold

5-7

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

it open for the withdrawing paratroopers. As fast as the "Sky Soldiers" fired, the faster the NVA kept coming. Survivors of "A" Company described themselves as being literally swamped by a hoard of charging NVA soldiers. At 1500 hours, "C" Company reported to Battalion Headquarters that an estimated 200-300 NVA were all around them. The entire perimeter had come under mortar attack and now recoilless rifle, small arms and B-40 rocket fire pounded the perimeter as the NVA followed "A" Company right up to the perimeter.

Where the perimeter was established the slope was rather gradual, pitching off to either side. "C" Company had from 12 o'clock to 5 o'clock on the perimeter, "D" Company from 7 to 10 o'clock and "A" Company mingled from 4 to 10 o'clock. The Company CP's were located together where the wounded were consolidated. The paratroopers beat off the NVA attack but continued to receive sporadic but effective sniper and mortar fire. At 1550 hours "C" Company reported receiving B-40 rocket fire. At 1643 hours an LOC ship dropped in an ammunition resupply but it landed approximately 15 meters outside the perimeter on the forward slope between the NVA and the US positions. LT Lantz and LT McDonough organized recovery teams and moved out to recover it. The operation was going fairly smoothly when a sniper hit LT Lantz, killing him instantly. The recovery party withdrew immediately. The 335th Assault Helicopter Company continued to attempt to resupply the companies, however, heavy hostile fire drove them away. A total of six (6) ships were grounded from automatic weapons and small arms fire. At 1750 hours two pallets were successfully dropped in. Throughout this period a heavy barrage of TAC Air and artillery was adjusted in on the enemy Sky Raiders, F-100s and helicopter gunships delivered their payloads making their passes on a SW to NW tangent on the perimeter. At 1858 hours just after dark a jet fighter approached Hill 875 from a NE to SW direction passing directly over the heads of the "Sky Soldiers". One or two of its bombs fell short landing directly in the middle of the "C" Company CP where the leaders and wounded had been congregated. There were at least 42 killed and 45 wounded (either initially or after having been wounded initially) by the bomb. LT Bart O'Leary "D" Company Commanding Officer, though suffering from serious wounds, stayed on the Battalion net throughout the night, maintaining communications. At first there was mass confusion and some panic. Most of the leaders had been either hit or killed including the chaplain Father Waters and the entire "C" Company CP group including leaders from each of the platoons. The paratroopers quickly recovered, however, with leaders emerging from the ranks. The wounded were gotten off their feet and quieted down. PSG Peter Krawtzow took charge of "C" Company and reorganized their sector of the perimeter. LT McDonough from "D" Company and LT Sheridan from "A" Company had only minor wounds and were instrumental in re-establishing control. "A" Company's artillery RTO was the only one with initial contact with the Battalion Fire Direction Net. He adjusted the first artillery defensive concentration walking it in towards the perimeter. As he was adjusting his second defensive concentration in front of a different sector of the perimeter, he gave an adjustment that would have brought the round too close to the perimeter. During this period, PSG

5-8

# CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

TAC A1

- 20 Nov - Six air strikes of nine F100's & four A1E's USAF dropped 12 tons of HE, six tons of napalm & four CHU clusters.
- 21 Nov - Six air strikes of ten F100's, two F4C's & two A1E's, USAF dropped 17 tons of HE and 7½ tons of napalm.
- 22 Nov - Twelve air strikes, 21 F100's, two F4C's & four A1E's, USAF dropped 22 tons of HE, 15 tons of napalm and 15 CHU clusters.



21 Nov - Construction of new LZ 1000 hrs: LAW's, flame throwers, 81mm mortars and ammo dropped in 1500 - 4/503 assaulted Hill 875, 1730 4/503 withdrew; wounded extracted

22 Nov - Air & artillery pound Hill

Attack at 1500

20 Nov - 4/503 (-) joined two En's perimeter  
 B/4/503 closed at 1700  
 A/4/503 closed at 2100  
 C/4/503 closed at 2200  
 Dust off sets five critical WIA out at 1800

UNCLASSIFIED

Figure 3

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19-23  
November 1967

Krawtsov had gotten ahold of a radio and began turning the frequencies to get any friendly station. He happened to land on the Battalion Fire Direction Net and monitored the errant adjustment. At this point he intervened and he and SSG Moultrie called in and adjusted the defensive concentrations for the rest of the night. Shortly after the bomb hit at 1930 hours one round of artillery hit in "D" Company's sector of the perimeter, killing one and injuring 3-4 others. Two PRC-25 radios were also knocked out. Someone came up on the net and told them to add 100 meters. The NVA continued to probe during the night. SGT Williams from "C" Company and others in his foxhole heard movement to their front so they threw a couple of frag grenades. They heard hollering and then the NVA started yelling "Chieu Hoi". The "Sky Soldiers" responded by throwing a couple more grenades. They didn't fire their weapons for fear of revealing their positions. The next morning they found numerous NVA bodies to the front of their position. (Note: They estimated 25-50 although some felt that this was the result of the second bomb which landed just outside of the perimeter). One of the bodies was within 10 meters of their position with a sack of grenades beside him. The three companies' laager site for the night was at YB 797136 - three - quarters of the way up Hill 875.

On the early morning of the 20th at 0540 hours "C" Company heard movement then shortly afterwards received several rifle grenades. Fifteen minutes later "D" Company heard heavy movement higher up on the hill and called in artillery fire. The first priority for the companies was to establish and secure an LZ to evacuate the wounded. At 0818 hours, an LOC ship was hit trying to kick off an LZ kit and one man was injured. Bomb strikes were conducted on the hill while the men of the companies attempted to hack out an LZ. The Battalion TAC CP organized a command group consisting of the Battalion XO, Major William Kelley, and the XO's of "A" and "C" Companies whose mission was to go in and reorganize their elements expedite the evacuation of the wounded and if possible exploit the tactical situation. Their attempts to get in were frustrated by hostile ground fire, in spite of heavy TAC Air artillery gunship and infantry ground fire. At approximately 1400 hours, "D" Company sent out a clearing patrol up Hill 875 in an attempt to locate some of the tree snipers who were driving the helicopters away. The first 4 men in the patrol had barely left the perimeter when a captured M-60 machine gun cut them down, killing one and wounding three. The fire came from the vicinity of the bunker which had caused so much trouble before. At 1800 hours a DUSTOFF helicopter finally made it in and out extracting five (5) of the critically wounded. It was the only ship able to make it in before dark. Leaving FSB #16 at 0937 hours B/4/503d Infantry marched overland closing on the companies at 1700 hours. A/4/503d Infantry closed at 2100 hours and C/4/503d Infantry at 2220 hours. Major Kelley and the Command Group made it in on the successful DUSTOFF ship. B/4/503d Infantry reported two incoming B-40 rockets and at 2045 hours, 7-8 60mm mortar rounds landed within the perimeter injuring at least one. During the day of the 20th, 2/503d Infantry started its extraction from AO HAWK,

5-9

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

6 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - 2/503d Infantry Contact of 19--23  
November 1967

their area of operation, by extracting their Battalion Headquarters minus the TAC CP group and by extracting the 4 2" mortar platoon.

On 21 November, together with the 4/503d Infantry, the paratroopers constructed a new LZ and extracted the wounded. The critical water and food resupply was completed. LAW's and flamethrowers were brought in to assist on the assault of the hill. The two battalions were hit by three mortar attacks. One at 0655 hours at 0845 hours and at 1420 hours. Both battalions took several casualties. "B" Company and the TAC CP were extracted from FSB #16 leaving only the three companies "A", "C" and "D" Companies in the contested hills near Cambodia.

On 22 November "A", "C" and "D" Companies besides securing the perimeter, undertook the task of identifying and extracting the KIA's. They also consolidated and extracted their extra weapons and equipment. The 2/503d Infantry's total approximate casualties minus attachments for the period 19-23 November 1967 were 86 KIA, 130 WIA and 3 MIA. Casualties per company were: "A" - 28 KIA 45 WIA "C" - 32 KIA 43 WIA and 3 MIA. "D" - 19 KIA 33 WIA. HHC - 7 KIA 9 WIA. They received only one mortar attack but it resulted in the wounding and subsequent extraction of the Battalion Surgeon.

On 23 November a Task Force consisting of the 4-503d Infantry and 1/12th Infantry assaulted and took Hill 875 completing the assault in one hour after meeting a minimum of resistance. Just after the start of the assault, all elements on Hill 875 including the 2/503d Infantry received a mortar attack. The 2/503d Infantry's casualties were: "A" Company - 4 WIA. "D" Company - 1 KIA and 1 WIA. Between 1630 and 1730 hours, the three 2d Battalion companies were helilifted to FSB #12 completing a costly but victorious five days of fighting. Later estimates and sweeps of the battlefield credited the 2/503d Infantry with 255 NVA KIA (BC).

5-10

# CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

Captured: 3 60MM mortars, assorted equipment,  
6 B-40 Rocket rounds, 10 82MM rounds  
19 60MM rounds and assorted small arms  
KIA 298 NVA (BC)

23 Nov Airstrikes- 5 F100's  
Dropped 4 tons HE, 3 tons  
Napalm, and fired 2400  
rounds of 20 MM

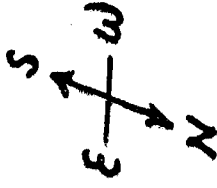
On the top at 1122

HILL  
875

Date 3/7/67 found  
on bunker

1/12 made coordinated  
assault from south

Launched attack 1100



UNCLASSIFIED

Figure 4

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVBE-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

1. (U) Date of Operation: 12-24 November 1967
2. (U) Location: YB796134, Map Series L7014, Sheet 6538 III.
3. (U) Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)
4. (U) Reporting Officer: Brigadier General Leo H. Schweiter
5. (C) Task Organization: Company "B", 4th Battalion (Airborne), 503d Infantry.
6. Supporting Forces: 60mm Mortar, 81mm Mortar, 105mm Howitzer, 155mm Howitzer, 8" Howitzer, 175mm Gun, and TAC AIR on call.
7. Background Information: 2-503d Airborne Infantry had been diverted from its search and destroy operations to attack Hill 875 after a MIKE FORCE OPCON 2-503d Infantry had made contact with a dug in NVA force on the South slope of Hill 875, 18 November. Contact was made by C-2-503d Inf and D-2-503d Inf at 1040H, against NVA in bunkers. They found themselves opposing determined enemy resistance. At 1430H, the NVA launched a two company attack against the rear and flank of A-2-503d Inf which was securing the rear and cutting an LZ at the base of the hill. The NVA rolled up the rear of the 2-503d Inf and the BN reported itself in heavy contact and surrounded. By 1700H, the 2-503d Inf had reported 42 US KIA, 42 US WIA, and 32 US MIA.
8. Intelligence: The Company Commander was briefed that Hill 875 was held by strong NVA forces and he could expect an ambush along his route to Hill 875.
9. Mission: To relieve the surrounded 2-503d Inf and capture Hill 875.
10. Concept of the Operation and Execution: At 1045H, 19 Nov B-4-503d Inf was helifited from an LZ vic YB853284 to FSB 12, closing at 1123H. B-4-503d Inf was alerted at FSB 12 that the 2-503d Inf was in hard fighting and that they were going in to reinforce them. B-4-503d Inf was then helifited from FSB 12 to FSB 16 closing at 1731H.

The paratroopers of B/4-503d Airborne Infantry were eager to move out and relieve their comrades in the surrounded 2-503d Inf, but it was too close to dark, so the company laagered for the night on the eastern end of FSB 16 and cleaned their weapons preparing for the next day's battle. Since the Sky Soldiers knew they were going into a heavy fire fight they all drew and packed extra ammunition. Riflemen carried 600 rds or more, machine gunners

Inclosure 6

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

carried upwards of 2000 rds, grenadiers 50 rds HE and usually about the same amount of shotgun rounds. Ever one carried from 5 - 10 M-26 frag grenades and two smoke grenades. Since the paratroopers wanted to travel light and fast they only carried one meal of C-rations, one canteen of water (they would cross several streams), and a poncho for carrying their dead and wounded to the LZ. Each platoon carried 20 rds of 60mm mortar ammo except the weapons platoon which carried 70rds and two 60mm mortars. Flamethrowers, 90mm RR, LAW's and 81mm mortars would be brought in later by helicopter.

The morning of the 20th, B/4-503d Inf mustered at 4 officers and 96 enlisted men. SP4 Edward D. Garcia, 173d Engineer Company was attached to the Company. The Company had been briefed that there were several hundred NVA on the hill and that they could expect an ambush on the way into 2-503d Infantry's perimeter. Therefore, CPT Leonard decided to swing wide and come into Hill 875 from the Northwest. At 0730H, B/4-503d Inf moved out in diamond type formation with the 3d Platoon commanded by 1LT Al Lindseth in the lead, 1st Platoon on the right flank led by 1LT Larry Moore, the 2d Platoon on left flank led by 1LT Hugh Proffitt and the weapons platoon under SSG Riley in the rear. CPT Leonard located himself behind the 3d Platoon and sent his point out about 100 meters in advance of the main body. The Company started out on an azimuth of 280 degrees, traveling along trails, thru thick bamboo, scrub, and tall tree cover for about six hundred meters before turning on a new azimuth of 240 degrees. While moving approximately 1500 meters along this bearing the paratroopers passed through several NVA base camps and found 4 dead NVA killed from air and Artillery fire. There were also pieces of bodies lying around. Fifteen mortar rds were found in the base camps and destroyed in place by the fast moving paratroopers.

As they approached Hill 875, the company turned on to an azimuth of 180 degrees and began to move down the finger which ran south into Hill 875. The company arrived on the finger at 1600H and proceeded to move down towards Hill 875. Coming down the hill the paratroopers passed numerous empty C-ration cans which the NVA had opened and eaten, occasional NVA rucksacks, bloody Chinese first aid dressings, and empty Chinese ammo cans. Hard by the trail in the location of A/2-503d Inf former OP on the trail they found a young paratrooper lying dead on his side in a pile of empty shell casings still clutching his jammed machine gun. In the creek at the bottom of the hill they found 15 or 20 M-16 magazines of ammo which the Americans had dropped and the NVA had collected and thrown in the stream. The paratroopers wiped them off and stuck them in their pocket for future use. The company filled their canteens in the stream for men of 2-503d Inf and began to move up Hill 875, passing numerous dead paratroopers of the 2d Battalion as they moved. One young paratrooper said he began to wonder if there was anybody alive as he saw all of the dead on the approach to the 2d Battalion's perimeter.

Bravo Company swept up the bullet smashed hill and linked up with C/2-503d Inf at 1700 hours. The men of the 2-503d Inf were beat and there were tears in their eyes as they greeted their buddies from the 4-503d Inf. Bravo Company passed out their water and rations to the 2d Battalion men and immediately

2

# CONFIDENTIAL

5

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

moved to reinforce the entire perimeter; none of the 2-503d Inf's wounded had been evacuated yet but they were making a great effort to hold up. All of Bravo's medics immediately were dispatched to aid the wounded. One medic SP4 Earl Webb, worked constantly throughout the night and into the next day before he was killed by enemy fire trying to save a wounded man on the LZ during a mortar attack.

The 2-503d Inf was still supplied with ammo but had run out of food and water. While the company reinforced the perimeter and CPT Leonard checked positions, SSG Riley set up his two 60mm mortars on the right side of the perimeter in the only area where he had overhead clearance to fire on the hill. The mortars did not fire since they had no positions yet and did not want to attract NVA counter mortar fire.

The night passed quietly marked only by two NVA mortar rounds shortly after B Company arrived. A/4-503d Inf closed into the perimeter a little after 2000H and C/4-503d Inf came in about 30 to 40 minutes later. These companies completed reinforcing the perimeter.

Just after seven o'clock the next morning the NVA conducted their own version of "standto", firing 5 to 6, 5 rd volleys of 60mm and 82mm mortar fire on the two battalion perimeter which was only about 100 meters wide to 100 to 125 meters deep. The NVA mortars were so close the men could hear the rds being fired and had time to dive into their holes. But the mortar rounds falling into the crowded perimeter caused numerous casualties, where direct hits in holes crowded with six and seven often killed or wounded several men at one time. The holes had no overhead cover and although some men had tunneled into the sides of their holes and some rounds exploded in the treetops, the mortar fire caused many casualties. Throughout the day whenever men started to chop overhead cover, the NVA would fire their mortars in a searching pattern, walking them through the perimeter in a line (usually 60mm, but sometimes 82mm).

At 0900H, Bravo Company was briefed that they would conduct a three platoon assault on Hill 875 at 1100H after the Air Force had finished pounding it. The 1st Platoon would be on the right with its 26 men, the 2d Platoon on the left with 20 men, the 3d Platoon in the center with 18 men, and weapons platoon with 17 men providing fire support. C Company 4-503d Inf was to attack on the right and A/4-503d Inf would assault on the left.

Around 1000H helicopters dropped in the LAW's, Flamethrowers, and 2x81mm mortars with 400 rounds of ammunition plus 60mm ammunition to raise the 60mm ammo to 350 rounds. One 81mm was moved up forward about 15 meters to provide walking fire: the other back about 20 meters to fire on the hill top. The three 60mm mortars would cover the perimeter.

The men were instructed to carry 600 rounds of ammunition and all the grenades they could carry. Inexperienced men, one to two per platoon were equipped with flamethrowers after a brief explanation of its use and handling.

# CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

AVBF-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

A few NCO's were issued the LAW since most men weren't trained on them and the officers were afraid the back blast would injure their own men. No satchel charges, CS grenades, or WP grenades were issued on the first assault.

The assault was postponed until 1430H to enable the Air Force to continue to strike the hill until 1400H and allow artillery to pound the hill until 1430H. Five air strikes continued until 1435H consisting of 10 F100's and 2 F4C's dropping 15 tons of HE and 7½ tons of napalm on the top of Hill 875.

The assault led by CPT Leonard moved out of the perimeter into the thick tangle of blown down trees at 1505H. Initial enemy mortar fire killed two men in the 2d Platoon. The men couldn't crawl under the trees but had to go over them silhouetting themselves. The 2d Platoon was not in a difficult terrain and could use fire and maneuver to advance towards the trench system dodging behind trees. The men in the 1st Platoon were crawling over the logs. Snipers were firing from high trees on the flanks and the men were taking heavy automatic weapons, machine gun fire, rocket and mortar fire. The mortars fell mostly to the rear as they advanced.

In the 1st Platoon area where some of the heaviest fighting was, the men couldn't actually see the NVA troops who were firing from bunkers. LT Moore could count only 12 men with him out of 36 when his 1st Platoon became pinned down by heavy automatic weapons fire. The NVA were firing from six inch slots in their bunkers. LT Moore finally spotted a bunker opening covered with leaves and branches as camouflage and directed his remaining men to concentrate on it. Meanwhile sniper fire in the trees continued to grow until PFC Mason of the 1st Platoon stood up and sprayed a long burst of M-60 machine gun fire into the trees off to the right. His fire killed two snipers and momentarily quieted the other snipers. The men crouched behind what ever cover they could find, small trees, logs, or mounds of dirt. It became almost impossible to move. The NVA were firing rockets which slid along the ground and exploded a second or two later. LT Moore tried to call CPT Leonard but his RTO was killed passing him the mike and his radio smashed. Both the 1st Platoon's PRC-25's were destroyed. A rocket slid down the hill towards LT Moore and one of his men and exploded as they desperately tried to twist aside, wounding both. The attack of the 1st Platoon was stopped.

On the left the 2d Platoon was making better progress through easier terrain but they soon ran up against two bunkers and trench systems. The 2d Platoon couldn't see the NVA either but located their positions by the smoke from their weapons. Rockets were coming in sliding along the ground and exploding, most of the mortar fire was falling behind the second platoon. The 2d Platoon concentrated on two bunkers to the left. Most of the casualties were caused by rocket and mortar fire; many of the men were saved by dud CHICOM grenades. The men were scared of the flame throwers and were ineffective in their employment.

A Company made contact on the left flank and reported to SSG Riley that his mortar rds had gotten about 20 NVA. The LAWs proved ineffective against the NVA bunkers with small slits since it's extremely difficult to get a direct

4

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVBE-SC

December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

hit on a bunker opening. SP4 Garcia and PFC Paul Rice (who received his briefing on the flame thrower during the fight) assaulted the bunkers with flame throwers but the flames proved ineffective. The American mortars proved mostly ineffective except for keeping the NVA down. Shells exploded harmlessly on top of bunkers that had as much as six feet of overhead cover. Other mortars failed to explode when they landed in the soft dirt which had been powdered by air strikes. Artillery was firing on the flanks and counter mortar missions.

As darkness approached word came to hold in place and then to fall back. "A" Company withdrew through the left flank of B Company. As the men fell back they screamed curses at the NVA and sang "Gory Gory What a Hell-of-a Way to Die". The men had wanted desperately to take the hill and felt cheated by darkness. Whether or not the remains of Bravo Company could have taken the hill that afternoon is a moot question but many men felt they could have stormed the hill if darkness had not fallen.

It was dark when Bravo pulled back into the perimeter. The first platoon had lost 7 KIA and 15 WIA reducing it to 14 men, the 3d platoon had 9 men left, and the 2d platoon was also mauled. Weapons platoon remained at 17 men.

When they assembled on the perimeter they were able to get a little water. Rations had come in but the 2d Battalion personnel had first priority since they had been without for the longest.

The battalions prepared to pull back 100 meters to allow air to continue pounding the hill for the next day. The 4-503d Inf had requested permission to pull back 1000 meters and hit the hill with B-52 strikes, however Brigade turned this down since minimum safe distance was 3000 meters. The fourth battalion evacuated its dead and wounded with the help of men from the 2d Battalion such as SGT John Jiggs who led his squad to help. Bravo then moved all its mortars and ammo back down the hill and prepared their positions for the night.

The 2-503d saw the fourth battalion prepare their equipment for a fresh assault on Hill 875. The Bn recorded mortar fire that morning and sporadically through out the day with occasional rockets. Dust off was accomplished for the dead and wounded due to mortar/rockets fire. By 2105H that evening the 4th Bn had lost 15 KIA, 108 WIA, and 4 MIA. A patrol closing the perimeter that evening reported 4 NVA bodies and 6 rifle grenades. CPT Leonard and SSG Maclain directed air strikes and artillery throughout the day.

Thanksgiving morning Bravo received their first rations and planned their second assault on Hill 875. Weapons were checked, ammo distributed, satchel charges were passed out, C/S M-79 grenades, M-17 protective masks, LAWs, and 90mm RR were prepared. Bravo was to assault the left and Charlie Company the right, "A" Company would bring up the rear taking care of snipers and flushing bunkers and protecting B and C from being shot in the back.

The 1/12th Inf which had been moved into position on the S/W slope of the hill was to assault at the same time as B and C Companies.

5

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVHE-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

Two air strikes were conducted on Hill 875 that morning between 0939H and 1015H. The five F100's dropped four tons of Hb and 3 tons of napalm and fired 2400 rds of 20mm. Both strikes were rated 100% on target.

At 0700H Thanksgiving morning Bravo received 20 to 25 rds of mortar fire with negative casualties.

At approximately 0900H A-4-503d Inf killed 10 NVA vic YB798138.

1100H upon the preparing signal of the rounds of a volley of 30-81mm mortar rounds, CPT Leonard again led his company up Hill 875. In addition to leading his own company CPT Leonard was in control of all artillery and air strike for the day. The mortars were employed the same as for the first assault. Just prior to jumping off 3-82mm rounds hit on the right with no casualties.

As Bravo led the advance the weapons platoon walked 81mm fire 25 meters in front of them all the way out to 150 meters. The advance faced some mortar and sniper fire. A flame thrower carrier was blown up (flame throwers were now carried by volunteers and some engineers). An incoming mortar round made a direct hit on SGT Cates who was carrying satchel charges blowing him to bits and killing several men around him. Most of the officers and NCO's felt flame throwers and satchel charges should be held back and brought up on call. Nearly the entire 3d platoon could have been killed by its own satchel charges. CPT Leonard was hit in the leg by a sniper but continued with his men.

As the men came to the top of Hill 875 they captured 3 60mm mortars with triggers and base plates manufactured to the tube. These were passed back to A company. The trench system they over-ran was deep enough for a man to walk in and be hidden, bunkers were dug into the back of the trench so that dead or wounded could be pushed out of the way. Some bunkers had six feet of overhead cover. One man found the date 3/7/67 carved in a bunker wall. The hilltop was blown bald by the constant air and artillery. The paratroopers found prone shelters and also a new type fortification described as a doughnut. Many bombs had exploded in the trees above the ground but only one dud was found. There were only a few NVA bodies around but the troopers could smell more.

The paratroopers over-ran the hilltop at 1122H amidst cheers of "Airborne and Geronimo." Some men pulled out cans of C-rations turkey loaf and proceeded to whip up a quick Thanksgiving meal. Others were crying with happiness and pride. Some men were disappointed there were not more NVA bodies, others were glad they had what was left. These were the men 1/12th Cav met on top of Hill 875 a half hour later.

Later that day the tired hungry paratroopers sat in the dust and debris of Hill 875 and ate their traditional Thanksgiving meal which was brought in hot by helicopter. As one Sky Soldier SGT said, "It was the best meal I ever ate."

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

AVBF-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Battle of DAK TO

The next day 1LT Moore 1/B-4-503d Inf with his heart in his mouth as he described it led a clearing patrol out from Hill 875 and found a rucksack containing starched blue and tan uniforms, a bolt action rifle and a rocket launcher leaning against a tree. Negative enemy resistance was encountered.

NOTE (The Brigade S2 believes the 2 Bn/174th NVA Regt held Hill 875 and the 3d Bn/174 NVA Regt on the hill to the west of Hill 875 placed most of the direct and indirect fire on the paratroopers during the attack on 23 November.)

7

**CONFIDENTIAL**

# UNCLASSIFIED

## CIVILIAN PRESS COVERAGE - THE BATTLE OF DAK TO

A. During the period 5 November 1967 to 25 November 1967 the following civilian correspondents were present in the Brigade area for varying lengths of time. A number of them were with line elements in contact

1. Lorieux, Claude reporter Agence France Presse
2. Wildau, Robert, reporter Agence France Presse
3. Masure, Francois, reporter Agence France Presse
4. Arnett Peter, reporter Associated Press
5. Chang Albert, photographer Associated Press
6. Lengel, John reporter Associated Press
7. Merron, Richard reporter Associated Press
8. Simons, Lewis reporter Associated Press
9. White Edwin reporter Associated Press
10. Kaylor Robert reporter Associated Press
11. Pigott Bruce reporter Reuters
12. Webb Alvin reporter United Press International
13. Oliver Richard reporter United Press International
14. Cheatham Thomas reporter United Press International
15. Hall William photographer United Press International
16. Stone, Dana photographer United Press International
17. Brannigna, William, commentator with two-man crew, ABC
18. Needham, Richard commentator with two-man crew ABC
19. Fough, Edward commentator with two-man crew CBS
20. Fromson, Murray commentator with two-man crew CBS
21. Schakne, Robert commentator with two-man crew CBS
22. Laurence, Jack commentator, with two-man crew CBS
23. Rodboon Vallop silent cameraman CBS

Inclosure 7

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

24. Turing O cameraman German TV
25. Obermann, H soundman German TV
26. Brelis Dean commentator with two-man crew NBC
27. Hall, Wilson, commentator with two-man crew NBC
28. Davis, Neil reporter Visnews
29. Milligan, Ronald Interviewer Westinghouse Broadcasting Company
30. Coffey, Raymond reporter Chicago Daily News
31. Tuohy William reporter Los Angeles Times
32. Randolph John reporter Los Angeles Times
33. Buckley, Thomas, reporter New York Times
34. Carter, Stanley, reporter New York Daily News
35. Ishikawa, Fumihiro reporter Ryukyu Shimpo
36. Forken, Gerard, reporter Stars and Stripes
37. Olson, John reporter Stars and Stripes
38. Van Geen Isabelle reporter Vietnam Nouveau
39. Kann, Peter, reporter Wall Street Journal
40. Lescaze, Lee reporter Washington Post
41. Tate, Don reporter Scripps-Howard News Service
42. Coggin Dan reporter Time
43. Greenway, Hugh reporter Time
44. Lee, Chang-Min reporter Asia Magazine
45. Leister, Colin reporter Life
46. Rentmeester Co reporter Life
47. Perry, Merton reporter Newsweek
48. Donnelly John reporter Newsweek
49. LeCampion, Henri photographer free-lance

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

50. Johner Claude photographer free-lance
51. Kazickas Jurate reporter free-lance
52. Bellorget Ghislain photographer free-lance

B. In addition, the following military information personnel were present:

1. A five-man still and motion-picture team from the US Army Pictorial Center.
2. A five-man still and motion-picture team from the Department of the Army Special Projects Office (DASPO)
3. A photographer and an interviewer from USARV Information Office.
4. An interviewer from IFFORCEV Information Office.
5. CPT R.R. Brewer, CPT R.E. Hill, SGT V.D. Phillips, SP5 Hester, SP4 H.G. Rice, SP4 P.V. Butler, SP4 M.J. Pappas and J.T. Baldwin of the Brigade Information Office.

C. Total personnel covering Brigade activities: 88.

CONFIDENTIAL

1st Brigade  
1st Air Cavalry Division

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT  
BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 8

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS  
1ST BRIGADE  
1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO 96490

AVDAER-SC

1 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - 1st Bde Participation  
in Operation MACARTHUR

TO: See Distribution

1. (U) OPERATION. Operation MACARTHUR.
2. (U) PERIOD COVERED. 122030H November 1967 - 261630H November 1967.
3. (U) LOCATION. SPAATZ Area of Operations, part of the MACARTHUR Area of Operations, located in KONTUM Province, RVN.
4. (U) COMMAND HEADQUARTERS. 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division.
5. (U) REPORTING OFFICER. Colonel Donald V. Rattan, CO, 1st Bde, 1st ACD.
6. (C) TASK ORGANIZATION. The Brigade Task Force consisted of:
  - a. 1st Bde
  - b. Bde HHC
  - c. 2-8 Cav
  - d. 1-12 Cav (Eff 140600H Nov 67 released 241724H Nov 67)
  - e. 2-19 Arty (A Btry)
  - f. A/2-20 Arty (ARA) (-) (3 sections total)
  - g. A/8th Engr (- Plat)
  - h. LN Sec, 11th Avn Gp
  - i. B/229th AH Co
  - j. C/228th ASH Co (-) (6 CH 47 total)
  - k. Pathfinder Tms, 11th Avn Gp
  - l. 2 Squads, 25th Scout Dog Plat
  - m. TACP
  - n. 1st Plat (-), 545th MP Co
  - o. Tm, 13th Sig
  - p. Tm, IPW/CI, 191st MI Det
  - q. Tm, 15th S & T Bn
  - r. Tm, 15th S & S Bn
  - s. Clearing Co, 15th Med Bn
  - t. Det, 27th Maint Bn
  - u. Det (Control Hq) 2d FSE

CONFIDENTIAL

Group 4  
Downgraded at 3 year intervals  
Declassified after 12 years

\*

# CONFIDENTIAL

## 7. (C) SUPPORTING UNITS.

- a. 50th Scout Dog Plt (OPCON) from 4th Inf Div.
- b. GS Arty in DAK TO area on request to include 175/8" and 155MM.
- c. TAC air.
- d. Heavy bomber (B-52).
- e. 4th Inf Div CH 47: 70 mission hours, total of 50 sorties.
- f. 4th Inf Div UH1H: 26 mission hours, total of 40 sorties.
- g. C Btry 5-16 Arty (155, SP) GSR to 2-19th Arty positioned at PLEI MRONG SF Camp.
- h. B Co, 70th Engr for improvement of proposed 1st Bde TAC CP at POLEI KLENG SF Camp.
- i. Engineer assistance from 4th Div Engrs, 173d Engrs and 299th Engrs at LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) and KONTUM.

## 8. (C) INTELLIGENCE.

a. Area of Operations - Background information on Northern KONTUM Province was obtained by visits to the G2 and S2 advisors of 24th Special Tactical Zone and KONTUM Province. These units were able to provide accurate and useful data concerning past trends of enemy activity, existing enemy fortifications, enemy order of battle, and a detailed terrain analysis. The 24th STZ G2 advisor had an up-to-date, detailed list of landing zones within the AO which would have proven invaluable had the 1st Brigade continued operations in the SPAATZ AO. Reports from agents employed by other US Agencies were received, but the Brigade departed the AO before their reliability could be verified. A detachment from the 219th Aviation Company located at KONTUM Airfield maintains a situation map with up-to-date postings of the area's extensive trail network. Weather reports were obtained from the Air Force weather unit at Dragon Mountain. This unit has no FM radio capability and communications were difficult.

b. Intelligence support from 4th Infantry Division.

(1) Locations of enemy units. Initially the employment of 1st Bde elements was dictated by requirements developed from high-level intelligence sources. The Brigade S2 section had no opportunity to produce operational intelligence to influence the original disposition. The 1st Bn, 12th Cav, which occupied LZ BECKY and screened the area around it, made no significant contact with the NVA 32d and 66th Regiments which were reported to have been withdrawing through that area. The battalion did, however, observe an enemy rocket artillery unit, believed to be the NVA 40th Arty Regt, firing to the east of the LZ, and was able to direct air and artillery on the firing site. The 1-12 Cav then deployed to an area southwest of KONTUM in response to high level reports that a battalion of the 95B Regiment was preparing for offensive operations at that location. No significant contact was made at that location prior to the time the 1st Bde departed SPAATZ AO.

# CONFIDENTIAL

The 2d Bn, 8th Cav made heavy contact with what is believed to have been elements of the NVA 24th Regt. The contact took place on the ridges to the east of DAK TO. The enemy force had taken up the positions in an attempt to cut the highway 14 route into DAK TO, isolate the ARVN 42d Regt at TAN CANH and eventually attack DAK TO itself. The enemy left quantities of 60MM Mortar, 82MM Mortar and 75MM Recoilless Rifle ammunition on position before withdrawing, indicating that the area had been occupied by at least a battalion, very probably reinforced by parts of the Regimental Heavy Weapons Company. Although enemy personnel losses for this contact were only 15 confirmed KIA, it is believed that many more NVA were killed but were either buried in fortifications, destroyed by airstrikes or evacuated before the area was occupied. Prior to departing from the SPAATZ AO, the 2-8 Cav began operations to the east of their original contact in order to engage the withdrawing enemy force. No significant contact was made.

(2) Order of Battle Information: Initially the 1st Brigade was not provided information on enemy units. By 20 Nov relatively complete order of battle on the 32d, 66th, 24th and 174th NVA Regiments was made available.

## 9. (C) MISSIONS.

a. 12-14 Nov. 1st Bde TF conducts movement by air and landtail beginning 130600H Nov 67 to close KONTUM with combat elements by 141200H Nov 67 and landtail follow-up by 16 Nov 67, OPCON to 4th Inf Div.

b. 14-19 Nov 1st Bde TF conducts operations in assigned AO beginning H hour 15 Nov 67 to find and destroy the enemy, blocking any enemy attempt to infiltrate or exfiltrate the SPAATZ AO. Bde TF be prepared to establish Fwd CP at POLEI KLENG (LZ POLLY - ZA 027937) and to release or accept OPCON of an Air Cav and/or other maneuver battalions on order.

c. 19-22 Nov: 1st Bde TF conducts operations in assigned AO's (WHITEHORSE vic ZB 110220 and CHARGER vic YB 845060) to find and destroy the enemy.

d. 22-24 Nov: 1st Bde TF continues operations in the WHITEHORSE AO (vic ZB 110220) and opens operations vic PLEI MRONG SF Camp (ZA 115675) to find and destroy the enemy.

e. 24-25 Nov: 1st Bde TF minus TF 1-12 Cav deploys by air and landtail beginning 240730H Nov 67 from the MACARTHUR AO to the PERSHING AO, closing combat elements by 251800H Nov 67, prepared to reassume Operation PERSHING in assigned AO.

## 10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

a. 12-14 Nov: Upon receipt of the frag order at 122025H

# CONFIDENTIAL

Nov 67 directing movement on 13 Nov, all staff sections were required to make estimates on internal movement posture and movement requirements of attached Task Force units and elements. The concept of the move included movement in three echelons.

(1) Movement in organic division and C7A aircraft from unit locations to PHU CAT, the Departure Airfield (DAF), with six sorties of CH 47 aircraft moving directly from LZ ENGLISH to KONTUM with the Bde CP and TF advance party.

(2) Movement of combat essential troops and equipment to KONTUM from the DAF Phu Cat by C-130 aircraft closing by 141200H Nov 67.

(3) Movement of other TF elements by landtail beginning 14 Nov and closing KONTUM on 15 Nov.

b. 14-19 Nov: 1st Bde TF was tasked to block enemy infiltration and/or exfiltration in its assigned AO and to find and destroy the enemy. The 1-12 Cav was tasked to combat assault into the northern portion of the assigned Bde AO, establish a firebase (LZ BECKY AT YB 845060) and conduct operations to find and destroy the enemy. The 2-8 Cav was tasked to provide one rifle company to secure the proposed Bde Fwd CP (LZ POLLY) and to provide two rifle companies OPCON to the 4th Inf Div to operate in the vicinity of DAK TO to assist in security of that installation. On 16 Nov the 2-8 Cav was released OPCON to the 1st Bde, 4th Div to assist in the defense of DAK TO.

c. 19-22 Nov: 1st Bde TF retained all missions and in addition was tasked to operate with one Bn (2-8) east of DAK TO vic ZB 110220 to find and destroy the enemy.

d. 22-24 Nov: 1st Bde TF continued to operate with one Bn (2-8) east of DAK TO but was tasked to move the 1-12 Cav from vic LZ BECKY to a new AO vic of PLEI MRONG SF Camp to search for 1st Bn, 95B (Main force VC Regt) and destroy it.

e. 24-25 Nov: 1st Bde TF was directed to return to the PERSHING AO releasing TF 1-12 Cav on 24 Nov. Movement was to be by C-130 aircraft for combat elements from DAK TO DAF and necessary combat support and combat service support elements from KONTUM DAF. All non-essential troops and equipment would be returned by landtail.

## 11. (C) EXECUTION:

### a. Maneuver:

(1) 12-14 Nov: Movement to KONTUM was executed as planned but considerably ahead of schedule. Command and control elements, the maneuver battalion and artillery battalion and its firing battery were closed at KONTUM by 132000H Nov 67. The Bde at that time was

4  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

prepared for combat operations. This was considerably ahead of the 141200H Nov 67 time established in the Division frag order. The full TF lift resources were not available until the late afternoon of 14 Nov. However, with the resources available, if necessary, the Bde TF had the capability of combat assault and other combat operations at 132000H Nov 67 with some support from the 4th Inf Div. Sufficient supplies were on hand to sustain at least a two day operation without resupply. The last C-130 sortie (Nr 37) closed KONTUM at 141730H Nov 67. The landtail departed LZ ENGLISH (BONG SON) at 140800H Nov 67, arrived at CAMP RADCLIFFE (AN KHE) at 1530, remaining overnight, and arrived at KONTUM at 151450H Nov 67, thus closing the 1st Bde TF.

(2) 14-19 Nov 67:

(a) The 1-12 Cav combat assaulted at 150756H Nov 67 vic YB 845060 (LZ BECKY) to secure a firebase and operate in the area to block enemy infiltration and/or exfiltration.

(b) The 1-12 Cav with B Btry 2-19 Arty closed LZ BECKY at 151450H Nov 67 and conducted operations in their assigned AO. Three CIDG platoons were attached and were quite valuable because of their knowledge of the area. The Bn operated with two companies in the vicinity of LZ BECKY and two companies, operating together, searching to the south and west of the LZ.

(c) On the evening of 17 Nov the source of a rocket attack, suspected to be from the NVA 40th Arty Regt, was observed by the 1-12 Cav. ARA, Spooky, five airstrikes and artillery fires were directed on the location. Four heavy bomber strikes were requested and delivered saturating the enemy positions. Exploitation by 1-12 Cav in the area of the heavy fires uncovered nothing significant.

(d) The 2-8 Cav initially released two companies to the 1st Bde, 4th Div for the defense of DAK TO on 15 Nov 67. The Bn (-) moved on 16 Nov 67 to the DAK TO area, resumed control of their rifle companies and operated under the 1st Bde, 4th Div to assist in the defense of DAK TO. D Co worked generally to the south, B Co to the north and C Co to the east of DAK TO. C Co made contact with an estimated NVA company at ZB 110210 and conducted a two day battle finally securing the hill top. A Co remained OPCON to the 1st Bde, 1st ACD and secured the proposed forward CP location at LZ POLLY. It was determined on 16 Nov that the Bde forward CP would not move to LZ POLLY but would instead move to LZ WINCHESTER vic of ZB 046208 and would co-locate with the 2-8 Cav CP and the 173d Abn Bde Rear CP.

(3) 19-22 Nov 67

(a) The 1-12 Cav continued to operate in the LZ BECKY area and southwest of that location with no contact. A mixed CIDG/US reconnaissance patrol explored the suspected rocket site location, detected on 17 Nov, with negative significant findings.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(b) The 2-8 Cav (-) returned OPCON to the 1st Bde and was assigned an AO in the vicinity of its C Co contact (WHITEHORSE AO). B Co combat assaulted on 19 Nov vic ZB 106218. Contact was made with an estimated NVA company in that general area continually throughout the day. B Co was extracted late in the afternoon, and inserted in the vicinity of C Co at ZB 110210. During the afternoon, night and the morning of 20 Nov, the entire ridge complex from ZB 110210 to ZB 103237 was pounded by artillery and air strikes. Estimates of the enemy strength on the ridgeline, based on contacts by B and C Co, 2-8 Cav and visual sightings by aerial observers, indicated a well dug-in enemy battalion.

(c) During the night of 19-20 Nov an F4F aircraft conducting an air strike received ground to air fire and crashed in the vicinity of ZB 090223. ARA covered the extraction of one pilot immediately after the crash. D Co, 2-8 Cav returned to 2-8 Cav control and conducted a CA to secure the wreckage of the downed aircraft and to extract sensitive items of equipment and the body of one pilot who failed to eject.

(d) The 2-8 Cav (-) continued to advance northwest along the ridgeline proceeded by a devastating air and artillery barrage. The entire ridgeline was cleared and secured by 21 Nov. The Bn then conducted battlefield police with one company and used two companies to pursue the enemy.

(e) The Bde Fwd CP was established at LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046206) on 19 Nov. This CP consisted of the Bde CO, Bde HHC (-), S-2/3, liaison sections and HHB, 2-19th Arty. Security was provided by the Bde security platoon and one rifle company (A Co, 2-8) minus one platoon. The Bde Rear CP remained at KONTUM. It consisted of the DBC, Bde S4, Bde Avn Plt, all Bde Avn resources including ARA, maneuver battalions rear combat service support base, and all TF attached combat service support units. One rifle platoon remained at the rear CP for security.

(4) 22-24 Nov.

(a) Acting in response to enemy sighting southwest of KONTUM, the 1-12 Cav was extracted from the LZ BECKY area and opened LZ GALORE (ZA 145755) just north of the PLEI MRONG SF Camp on 22 Nov 67. The Bn firebase, LZ GALORE, received twelve rounds of 82MM Mortar in the early evening of 22 Nov. The Bn completely closed out LZ BECKY at 221926H Nov and was operating in their new assigned AO with the entire Bn on 23 Nov. On 24 Nov the 1-12 Cav assisted the PLEI KIENG SF Camp by controlling lift to insert a ready reaction force from the camp to aid a CIDG unit in heavy contact vic ZA 020850. The Bn was released by the 1st Bde, 1st ACD at 241715H Nov 67 to the 4th Inf Div. TF 1-12 Cav elements including 7 UH1H lift aircraft, a command and control UH1H, a platoon from Bde TF resources.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(b) The 2-8 Cav (-) continued to operate in their assigned AO. The AO was expanded to the north and east on 23 Nov to allow for pursuit to the northeast. A firebase (LZ FALCON ZB 133212) was opened on 23 Nov. On 24 Nov A and C Co's combat assaulted to the northeast with no significant findings. Both companies were subsequently extracted to LZ WINCHESTER on 24 Nov in preparation for the return of the 1st Bde, 1st ACD, to the PERSHING AO on 25 Nov.

(c) The 1st Bde maintained its forward CP at LZ WINCHESTER and its Rear CP at KONTUM. One company (B Co) from the 2-8 continued to secure both locations with the Co (-) securing the forward CP and one platoon securing the rear CP.

(5) 24-25 Nov 67:

(a) TF elements in the Forward CP area phased out of the MACARTHUR AO utilizing DAK TO as the DAF. The Rear CP utilized KONTUM as a DAF. Movement began from DAK TO at 0730H by C-130. Movement by C-130 at KONTUM began much later (1400H). Only combat essential troops and equipment were moved by air. The Bde CP departed by CH 47 from LZ WINCHESTER at 1210. A landtail departed LZ WINCHESTER at 0815H and was joined by the Rear CP landtail at KONTUM. Landtail elements remained overnight at PLEIKU on the night of 25-26 Nov.

(b) Combat elements of the 1st Bde TF closed LZ ENGLISH, the Arrival Airfield (AAF), by 251800 Nov 67. The Bde assumed control of the 1-8 Cav and its assigned AO. C Co, 2-8 Cav assumed the security mission at LZ MUSTANG - TAPE at 251530H Nov 67. B Co 2-8 Cav (-) assumed the security mission at LZ LARAMIE at 251600H Nov 67 and provided two platoons to assist in securing LZ ENGLISH by 1600H. The last C-130 sortie (Nr 20) arrived at the AAF (LZ ENGLISH) from DAK TO at 252240H Nov 67. The last sortie (Nr 20) arrived at the AAF from KONTUM at 260515H Nov 67 closing the airstream. The landtail closed LZ ENGLISH from KONTUM at 261630H Nov 67 without a major incident. All vehicles suffering break downs and other delays had closed LZ ENGLISH by 290955H Nov 67.

b. Support.

(1) Aviation: The attached, organic and supporting aviation elements provided the following outstanding support to the 1st Bde TF.

(a) 229th Avn Bn.

1. Total hours flown	691
2. Total log sorties	1242
3. Total tons of cargo logged	169.9
4. Total combat sorties	1083
5. Total combat troop carried	1721
6. Total hours flown by gunships alone	103.5
7. Total escort sorties flown by gunships	378

7

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

8. An average day for a log aircraft consisted of 28.25 sorties, carrying 3.86 tons of cargo and 39 PAX, logging 6 hrs and 20 minutes.
9. An average day for an RRP aircraft consisted of 16.4 sorties, carrying 27 PAX, and logging 6 hrs and 15 minutes.
10. Lift aircraft utilized as OC's flew a total of 24 hours.

## (b) 228th Avn Bn.

1. Total hours flown 314
2. Total sorties 835
3. Total PAX transported 2900
4. Total tons cargo carried 1092
5. An average day for a CH-47 consisted of 19 sorties, carrying 19.8 tons of cargo, 66 PAX, logging 7 hours and 10 minutes.

## (c) 4th Infantry Division Aviation Support (Estimate).

### 1. Lift Ships:

- a. Total hours flown 26
- b. Total log sorties 40
- c. Total combat sorties 10
- d. Total combat troops carried 70

### 2. CH -- 47:

- a. Total hours flown 70
- b. Total sorties 50
- c. Total PAX transported 150
- d. Total tons cargo carried 100
- e. CH - 47's were used primarily for FSE missions.

## (d) 1st Bde Avn Plt.

### 1. OH-13

- a. Total hours flown 148.8
- b. Average hours flown per A/C 49.5
- c. Average hours flown per day per A/C 3.8
- d. Total number of missions 81
- e. Total number of sorties 235
- f. Average number of missions flown per A/C per day 8

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

g.	Average number of sorties flown per A/C per day	18
2.	UH - 1H (CC)	
a.	Total hours flown	266.6
b.	Average hours flown per A/C	76.2
c.	Average hours flown per day per A/C	5.9
d.	Total number of missions	147
e.	Total number of sorties	725
f.	Average number of missions flown per A/C per day	11
g.	Average number of sorties flown per A/C per day	56

(2) Artillery 2-19th Artillery and ARA provided close and continuous fire support during the entire period. Expenditures for the period were:

(a) Missions: Observed    Known or suspected targets  
                                   113                                   542

<u>Unobserved</u>	<u>Total</u>
82	737

(b) Ammo:            HE            WP            ILL            SMK            OTHER  
 By type    12,365    384    55    217    0

TOTAL  
13,020

(c) Ammo:            Observed            Known or suspected targets  
 By Mission:        6,718                    1,898

<u>Unobserved</u>	<u>Total</u>
4,404	13,020

(3) Air Fires. Air fires were responsive and accurate. The volume, flexibility and adaptability of the air effort in the MACARTHUR AO was outstanding. Support for the 1st Bde TF was:

(a) Requests fulfilled:

1.	FAC Sorties	24
2.	Fighter sorties/missions	96/38
2.	Immediate fighter	
	sorties/missions	24/12
4.	B-52 sorties/missions	
a.	1st Bde Request	9/3
b.	4th Inf Div request	4/1

# CONFIDENTIAL

## (b) Ordnance delivered

### 1. Fighter

- a. 253,000 lbs
- b. 25,800 rounds 20MM
- c. 20,000 rounds 30 cal

### 2. B-52 - 1,051,000 lbs

## (4) Communications.

(a) Radio. FM radio was effectively used for distances up to 70 KM's with properly selected retransmission station sites. FM radio was effectively used, in one instance at a distance of 50 KM's without retransmission. FM radio was marginal, however, between the Brigade TAC & Rear CP's at DAK TO & KONTUM respectively. Apparently the Rear CP was in a 'Dead Spot' as it had difficulty even reaching a retransmission station on a 1000 meter hill in clear line of sight. Single side band voice was used between the Bde TAC & Rear CP's with an AN/VSC-2 and an AN/MRC-95. The Bde Hqs is authorized only one of these sets permanently. The AN/MRC-95 will ultimately be turned in and its availability can not be counted on for future operations.

(b) Telephone & teletype. Other than local telephone, all telephone & teletype circuits were provided by the 4th Division in conjunction with IFFV & USARV. The service provided was generally unsatisfactory. Circuits were usable less than 50% of the time. Telephone service between the Bde TAC and Rear CP's was in particular both crucial and unreliable. The three day 'COOR IN' time apparently required for satisfactory telephone trunks is unacceptable in a fast moving situation.

(c) Maintenance. Difficulties were encountered in maintaining command & control helicopter communications equipment and in properly transferring such equipment from one helicopter to another. This problem arose as a result of the Bde Avn Plt and the Bde communications platoon, which at that time was charged with all aircraft communications equipment maintenance, operating a great distance from each other. Maintenance could be accomplished simultaneously on aircraft and aircraft communications equipment only if the Aviation Platoon performed both. To maximize aircraft availability, simultaneous maintenance is desirable. Communications equipment maintenance & transfer were not always satisfactory due to the inexperience of the Aviation Platoon in this area.

(d) Engineer: Equipment Support included 60 hours of D7 work at Bde Rear (KONTUM), 16 hours of D6B work at LZ BECKY, 20 hours of D6/D7 work at LZ WINCHESTER, 12 hours of 3414 work at LZ BECKY and 16 hours of 3414 work at LZ WINCHESTER. At LZ BECKY the D6B and 3414 were used to clear the LZ, level the log pads, dig-in Bn CP, and clear and expand fields of fire.

# CONFIDENTIAL

At KONTUM a D7 from B Co, 299th Engr Bn used to clear areas for Bds Rear elements. At LZ WINCHESTER dozer work included clearing 400,000 sq ft for the Bde CP (14 Hours), digging trenches for TOC and FOC (3.5 hours) and leveling CP area after Bde departure (2.5 hours). The 3414 was used to dig individual positions around the Bde CP. 100 logs were cut to provide overhead cover for positions. Demo teams were provided on both mission basis and DS basis to maneuver battalions. Water supply was provided by 4th Engr Bn (KONTUM) and 299th Engr Bn at LZ WINCHESTER.

## 12. (C) ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

### a. General

(1) These comments reflect the logistical experience of the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division during the period 13 November 1967 thru 26 November 1967 in the MACARTHUR area of operation.

(2) The displacement of the Brigade CP complex from KONTUM to DAK TO changed the method of support whereby supplies were hooked to DAK TO and then shipped by log bird to unit locations while others were shipped directly from KONTUM to forward unit locations.

(3) Radio communication difficulties between the forward and rear elements caused a delay and in some cases double requests being submitted for required items of supply, ie, C-4 blasting compound. The forward elements were out of range of the PRC-25 Radios and even the vehicle mounted VRC-46 Radios. In some instances requests were made to the Brigade S-4 for items which were available, had the forward battalion S-4 people been in more direct contact with their rear S-4 personnel.

(4) Replenishment of TOE and TA 50-901 equipment presented a problem due to the distance involved from the Base Camp at AN KHE to the units in the forward areas. Individual items of clothing presented no problem as they were available through the FSE. TOE and TA 50-901 type items are non-expendable and are required to be picked-up and accounted for on the Battalion Property Books; therefore they are not issued thru the FSE. The establishment of a courier service between the Base Camp and the forward elements for exchange of TOE and TA 50-901 items would be considered necessary for any prolonged operations.

### b. Material and Services

#### (1) Supply

(a) Class I. Two days of combat rations were taken by all units and resupply was made in sufficient time by the FSE. As soon as possible after the brigade's arrival in KONTUM, Class 'A' rations were issued. Water was in short supply in the KONTUM area for

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

the first four days, until the FSE could get their own water point in operation. In the forward area water was slung out by hooks in 250 gal bladders from KONTUM for the first several days, this was eliminated after a 400 gal water trailer was slung out since it could be refilled much faster and with less effort there at DAK TO.

(b) Class II & IV. Barrier materials with the exception of wood timbers, were readily made available and slung out to forward unit locations. On this operation, due to the hard dry ground, wooden timber shortages did not present a great problem since the metal matting could be placed directly on top of the ground to support the sandbags used for bunkers and overhead cover.

(c) Class III. When the brigade first arrived at KONTUM the JP-4 refueling facilities were insufficient due to the lack of operational pumps to operate more than four (4) refueling points simultaneously. This was corrected by the third day when more pumps became available and construction was started on a separate CH-47 refueling area which was completed and in operation by the sixth day after arrival in KONTUM.

(d) Class V. No problems were encountered with the Class V points once our daily requirements were made known to the supporting FSE/FSA. At first the 105MM Ammunition for the Artillery Batteries were slung out by CH-47 aircraft but when the Brigade CP moved to DAK TO arrangements were made with the FSA Class V Officer to divert the required ammunition for the Artillery from the Class V point to the Battery without being offloaded from the convoy trucks and trailers. This saved time and eliminated double handling of the heavy 105MM Ammunition.

## (2) Transportation

(a) Air transportation for movement - The movement by air on the initial move from PHU CAT Air Base to KONTUM went very smooth and was efficiently carried out. The move back from KONTUM did not work out as well due to the limited number of aircraft allowed to be on the ground at one time. Only two (2) aircraft could be on the ground loading at any one time; this was due mainly to the small area that could be utilized and also considering the situation.

(b) Ground Transportation - Cargo vehicles were not readily available at the forward CP for shuttling ammunition and supplies in large quantities until two (2) 2-1/2 ton cargo vehicles were sent from the rear FSE to fulfill this requirement. Sufficient cargo vehicles were not made available to move the entire landtail from KONTUM to ENGLISH because of the short notice and lack of reaction time of supporting headquarters to obtain all needed vehicle requirements. Because of this, a part of the FSE was forced to remain at KONTUM until more vehicles could be acquired.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## (3) Services:

(a) FSE. The continued support by all elements of the 2d FSE was outstanding since there was no FSE nor FSA established in KONTUM prior to the arrival of the 1st Brigade Task Force. Laundry and bath facilities were in operation on the fifth day after arrival.

(b) Engineer. Assistance from "B" Company, 299th Engineer Battalion was immeasurable. The unit was not obligated to support the brigade in any way, however they completed every major project requested of them. The Engineer support by "A" Co, 8th Engineer Battalion, a part of the element, was outstanding considering the numerous requests made on them on this operation.

(c) Medical. The major problem encountered in this field was the distance involved from the medical facilities to the forward elements, plus radio communication. The reaction time was of the utmost importance since the forward areas were at least 20 minutes away from the main medical facility. This meant at least a 40 minute turn-around time after the Medevac was called until the patient would be at the hospital. The brigade was spread out in too many locations for the amount of Medevac helicopters, had there been an emergency. The brigade units were north, west and south from the Kontum area main medical facility.

## 13. RESULTS.

### a. Friendly Losses:

- (1) KIA - 5
- (2) WIA - 17
- (3) MIA - 0

### b. Enemy Losses:

- (1) KIA (BC) - 17 NVA
- (2) POW - 0
- (3) Weapons Losses:
  - (a) 2 60MM Mortars
  - (b) 1 RPD Machinegun
  - (c) 1 B40 R.L.
  - (d) 4 AK 47 Assault rifles, 2 SKS Carbines

### (4) Equipment Losses:

- (a) 31 rds 82MM Mortar Ammo
- (b) 17 rds 75MM Recoilless Rifle Ammo
- (c) 27 rds 60MM Mortar Ammo
- (d) 2500 rds SA Ammo
- (e) 19 Grenades

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

14. (C) COMMANDERS ANALYSIS. This operation provided a stringent test and acted as an invaluable training vehicle for all elements of the Task Force. Staff sections and units were pushed to the limit to react on short notice to execute the extraction from the PERSHING AO and the movement to the MACARTHUR AO; prepared on arrival for combat operations. Much of the fat, collected since February, was forcibly trimmed from the Brigade during the operation. The responsiveness, sense of urgency, cooperation and full accomplishment of all missions by all elements of the Brigade was outstanding and most gratifying. The support, understanding and full cooperation of the CG, 4th Inf Div, the 4th Inf Div Rear and Forward staffs and all elements organic to and in support of the 4th Inf Div was truly outstanding.

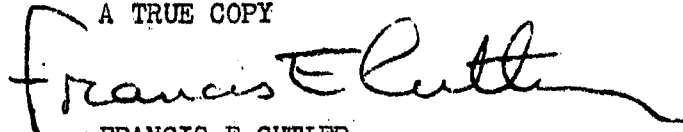
/s/ D. V. Rattan  
DONALD V. RATTAN  
Colonel, Infantry  
Commanding

Inclosures 1 - Lessons Learned  
2 - Sketch Map - SPAAT2 AO  
3 - OPORD 3-67 (Movement to MACARTHUR AO)  
4 - Frag Ord 83-67 (Operations 14 - 19 Nov)  
5 - LOI, Movement of Bde Forward CP  
6 - Frag Ord 84-67 (Operations 19-22 Nov)  
7 - Frag Ord 85-67 (Operations 22-24 Nov)  
8 - Frag Ord 86-67 (Movement to PERSHING AO)  
9 - Frag Ord 87-67 (Resumption of PERSHING)

#### DISTRIBUTION

12 1st ACD  
5 4th Inf Div  
1 1-8 Cav  
1 2-8 Cav  
1 1-12 Cav  
1 2-19 Arty  
1 2-20 Arty  
2 8th Engr  
1 11th Avn Gp  
1 228th ASH Bn  
1 229th AH Bn  
1 ALO (USAF)  
1 13th Sig  
1 Spt Cmd  
10 Bde HHC  
1 2d Bde  
1 3d Bde  
8 S3

A TRUE COPY



FRANCIS E CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

14  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

After several hours of wasted effort trying to allocate division organic aircraft on a mission by mission basis, the final solution of establishing movement control headquarters and sub-allocating aviation assets to subordinate units for blocked out periods of time was adopted. The movement, using this approach, was then executed in an efficient, time saving manner.

b. Observation: Time permitting, allocation of aviation resources on a mission basis is most efficient. In a complicated move to be executed on short notice, aviation resources should be sub-allocated to units on a priority basis. A movement control headquarters made up of an aviation liaison section, supported units liaison officers and controlled by a movements control officer from brigade must be established. Communications must be available to supporting aviation and the supported units. The Bde established the priorities, the supported units feed in the requirements and the aviation allocation is coordinated between the aviation LNO and the movements control officer. As one unit is completed, resources are reallocated to lower priority units.

4. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Prior joint planning for air movement between USAF movements personnel and the tactical headquarters to be moved will enhance execution of the airmove.

a. Discussion: Seldom is there an attempt made to establish direct liaison between the tactical headquarters involved in movement and the USAF movements personnel located within the division. In the latest move made by the 1st Bde TF invaluable advice and assistance could have been exchanged prior to the execution of the move. Movement requirements alone provide only necessary information for bulk allocation of aircraft. Tactical priorities, load planning, airfield facilities, communications available, palletizing facilities and transportation can only be coordinated through joint planning.

b. Observation: Immediately upon notification for pending movement by Air Force aircraft, USAF movements control personnel should be provided to the tactical headquarters conducting the move, for joint planning and an exchange of information.

5. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Prior planning and arrangements to handle refueling of aviation assets of an airmobile unit.

a. Discussion: Refueling of helicopters in the KONTUM area was a problem that affected the operational capability of the Bde TF for four days after arrival. Sufficient refueling points were not available, requiring as much as two and one half hours to refuel lift aircraft and gunships. No AV Gas was initially available to service H-13 aircraft. After four days suitable facilities were available in the KONTUM area.

b. Observation: Refueling points for the aviation assets of

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**LESSONS LEARNED**

1. (C) LESSON LEARNED: A tendency exists to overstock firebases.

a. Discussion: In a fluid situation, units must guard against overstocking of firebases with all classes of supply. In the clearing of LZ BECKY, on short notice, it required in excess of 50 CH 47 sorties. The artillery battery alone, including the back haul of brass, and ammunition stockages required 26 sorties.

b. Observation: Commanders must establish definite limits to the stockage of all classes of supply on firebases in a fluid situation. Particular attention must be given to artillery ammunition. In a fluid situation such as the one experienced in the MACARTHUR AO, and with the aviation resources available, firebases should have been closed out in a maximum of twenty-five CH 47 sorties. This figure does not include requirements for troop lift.

2. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Units must maintain up-to-date, accurate movement data at all times.

a. Discussion: On receipt of the movement directive, this headquarters immediately requested movement requirements from all attached units. These movement requirements were returned, in many cases, only after undue harassment. The data reported in many cases was inaccurate and incomplete. Movement planning at departure airfields and for convoy movement became quite difficult until the actual arrival of the unit at the departure point.

b. Observation: Movement requirements for the movement of troops, vehicles by type and bulk cargo must be continually up-dated by all units. These requirements must be maintained in such a state of readiness as to forward immediately to a control headquarters the required information when movement and a task organization is directed. Data must be accurate to permit accurate planning and positive control.

3. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Short notice movement of a brigade task force in division organic aircraft is difficult on a mission by mission basis.

a. Discussion: On notification for movement of the Bde Task Force and the establishment of the task organization, several problems were presented. The 2-8 Cav and C/2-19th Arty were deployed in the AN LAO Valley. Other 2-8 Cav units were on fixed firebases and had to be relieved by 1-8 Cav units before departure. The C-130 strip at LZ ENGLISH was closed and PHU CAT was designated as the departure airfield. Division allocated eleven CH 47's and 9 UH1H's for the movement of the 1-8 Cav to relieve 2-8 Cav and the subsequent movement of the Bde TF airlanded echelon to the DAF. Several C7A aircraft were available for movement of TF elements from LZ ENGLISH to the DAF (PHU CAT)

Inclosure 1

1-1

**CONFIDENTIAL**



a Bde TF must have high priority in planning and installation at a new location. Coordination should be the responsibility of the attached FSE with staff supervision by the Bde S4. A unit with the task organization of the 1st Bde TF requires six refueling points for UH1H's and gunships, 2 points for CH-47 and 2 points for AV gas for H-13's. Also provisions must be made for a rearming area for gunships and ARA helicopters close to refueling points.

6. (C) LESSON LEARNED. Rugged terrain with primary or secondary jungle growth yields poor LZ's unless partially cleared in advance by air strikes (Daisy Cutters).

a. Discussion: Detailed planning and adequate time (24-48 hrs) is necessary in rugged jungled terrain to clear intended LZ's by air and arty fires. This is particularly important for LZ's destined to be firebases. LZ's not adequately cleared before insertion of troops and equipment make the initial assault, landing of follow-up troops and supplies and subsequent defense very difficult.

b. In rugged jungle or heavily wooded terrain, a landing zone plan should be established as soon as possible. Landing zones should be cleared as much as possible by air and artillery fires in priority of importance and as far in advance of combat assaults as possible. LZ's should be selected so that they can be supported by the plan for fire support. Several LZ's should be prepared simultaneously to provide some deception and reduce the enemy's chances for correctly analyzing a pending combat assault.

7. (C) LESSON LEARNED: All communications personnel and equipment are critical to combat operations and are combat essential.

a. Discussion: In an attempt to move as "Lean and Mean" by air as possible, some communications personnel and equipment moved by landtail. This proved to be a mistake since all communications equipment and personnel were immediately necessary in the new AO. Particularly the Bde retransmission equipment, moving by landtail, was sorely missed.

b. Observation: All communications personnel and equipment should be considered as combat essential and close a new area early in the airlanded echelon.

8. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Airmobile VHF equipment will not net with conventional equipment found in a conventional infantry division.

a. Discussion: This was a known problem prior to departure. However, the 4th Inf Div, IFFV and USARV supporting elements were hard pushed to provide necessary telephone circuits to the Bde TF especially when the Bde CP split into a forward and a rear. Telephone circuits were never satisfactory and operated at about 50% efficiency.

CONFIDENTIAL

b. Observation: Gaining units must realize this communications difficulty and plan accordingly to provide adequate telephone circuits to attached airmobile units.

9. (C) LESSON LEARNED: Resupply equipment can be a limiting factor in adequate resupply and unit movement especially in a fluid situation.

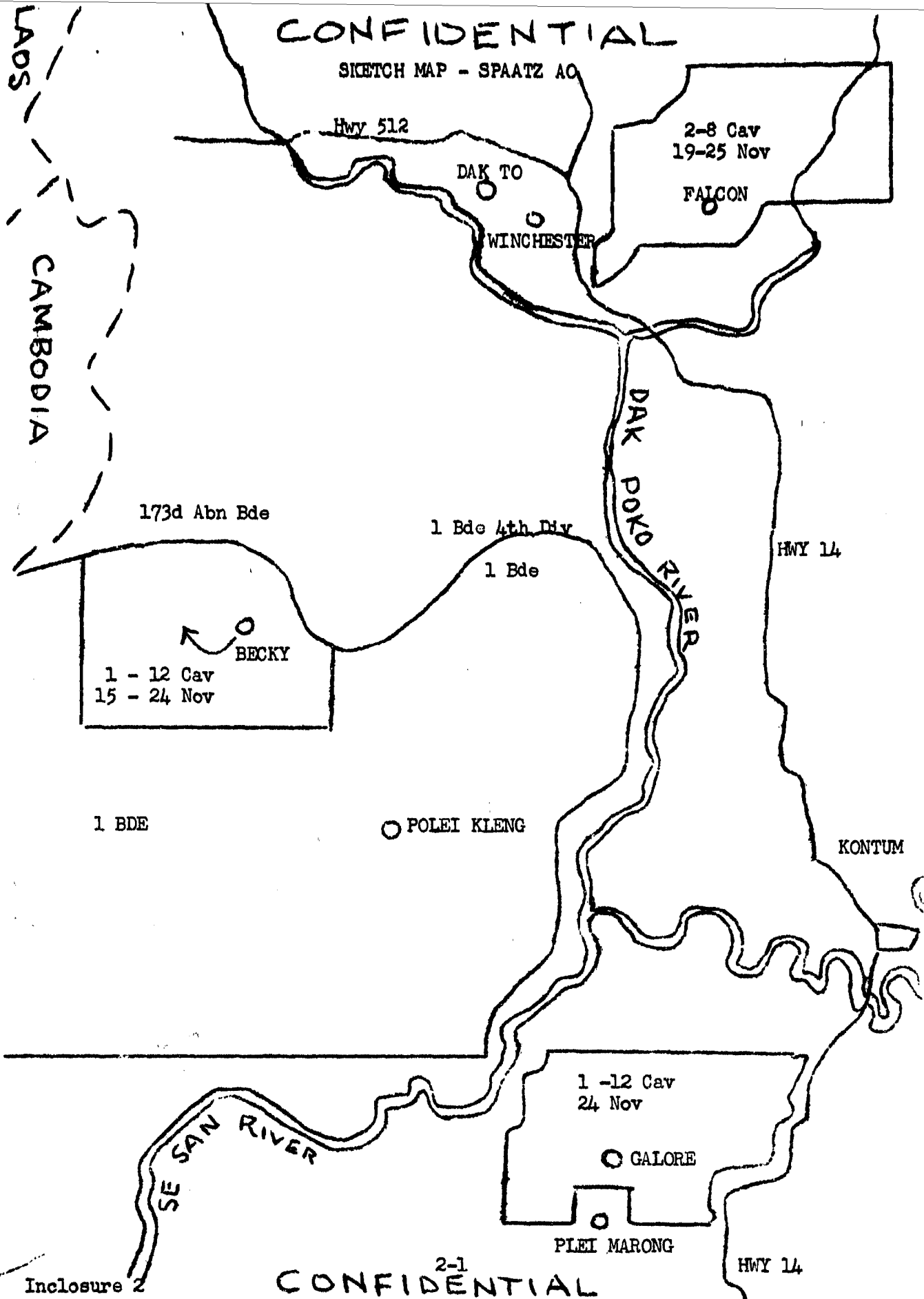
a. Discussion: Adequate resupply equipment (cargo straps, doughnuts, clevis, etc.) for helicopter external loading must have a high priority in movement to a new AO. In a situation where fire-bases are being established or closed on a daily basis, this equipment becomes critical. In addition units must emphasize speed in rigging and derigging of equipment and return of the rigging hardware to ensure an even, uninterrupted flow of externally loaded supplies and equipment.

b. Observation: Unit SOP's, training and requirements for rigging equipment should be reviewed to ensure adequacy of procedures and equipment in a fast moving situation.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

SKETCH MAP - SPAATZ AO



LAOS  
CAMBODIA

Hwy 512

DAK TO

2-8 Cav  
19-25 Nov

FALCON

WINCHESTER

173d Abn Bde

1 Bde 4th Div

1 Bde

HWY 14

BECKY

1 - 12 Cav  
15 - 24 Nov

1 BDE

POLEI KLENG

KONTUM

1 - 12 Cav  
24 Nov

GALORE

PLEI MARONG

HWY 14

Inclosure 2

CONFIDENTIAL

2-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

Copy of 50 copies  
HQ, 1st Bde, 1st Cav Div  
LZ ENGLISH (BS 885008) RVN  
130200H Nov 67  
TVA

OPORD 3-67

Reference Maps, 1:50,000, RVN, Sheets 6837IV, 6737I, 6738II, 6838III,  
6538II, II, III, IV, 6537 I, IV

## TASK ORGANIZATION:

1-8 Cav  
2 AV Plt, C/1-50 Mech  
A Btry, 2-19 Arty  
2-8 Cav  
PF Team

1st Bde TF  
2-19 Arty (-)  
A Co, 8th Engr (-)  
Plt, 545th MP (-)  
A Btry, 2-20 Arty (-)  
B/229th AHB  
6 CH47  
Tm, 13 Sig  
Tm, IPW/CI, 191 MI Det  
2 sqd, 25th Scout Dog Plt  
TACP  
FSE

### 1. (C) SITUATION:

a. Enemy Forces: To follow in subsequent OPORD.

b. Friendly Forces:

(1) Task organization effective immediately for planning and coordination and at 130600H Nov 67 for execution.

(2) Div aviation resources support move of 1st Bde combat essential echelon.

2. (C) MISSION: 1st Bde TF conducts movement by air and landtail beginning 130600H Nov 67 to close KONTUM with combat elements by 141200 Nov 67 and landtail follow up by 16 Nov 67 OPCON to 4th Inf Div.

### 3. (C) EXECUTION:

a. Concept of Operations: 1st Bde TF begins movement to KONTUM with the advance party departing at 130630H Nov 67 by CH47. 2-8 Cav is relieved at LZs MUSTANG-TAPE and LARAMIE-ENGLISH by 1-8 Cav by 130300H Nov 67 and moves combat essential troops and equipment by CH47 and road to PHU CAT, the departure airfield (DAF) to close initial two companies by 0830H and Bn (-) by 1030H. 1-8 Cav relieves 2-8 Cav, moves CP to LZ ENGLISH, maintains presently assigned security missions, assumes 1st Bde AO, and reverts to 1st Cav Div control at 130800H Nov 67. 1st Bde TF moves all combat essential troops, vehicles and equipment to KONTUM

Inclosure 3

3-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Arrival Airfield (AAF) by C-130 from PHU CAT (DAF) beginning 131000H Nov 67 and closing combat essential echelon by 141200H. Bde TF land tail composed of all non-combat essential troops, vehicles, and equipment departs on 14 Nov, remains overnight at Camp Radcliff and closes KONTUM by 151700H Nov 67.

b. 1-8 Cav:

(1) Relieve 2-8 Cav of security of LZs MUSTANG-TAPE and LARAMIE-ENGLISH by 130800H Nov 67.

(2) Move CP to LZ ENGLISH on 13 Nov 67.

(3) Assume responsibility for 1st Bde AO at 130600H Nov 67.

(4) Released from OPCON 1st Bde to Division control at 130800H Nov 67.

c. 2-8 Cav:

(1) Coordinate relief of fixed security forces with 1-8 Cav.

(2) Move two rifle companies to close DAF (PHU CAT) by 130830H Nov 67.

(3) Bn (-) combat essential troops, vehicles and equipment, close DAF by 131030H Nov 67.

(4) Move to KONTUM by C-130 for combat essential echelon beginning 131000H Nov 67 and closing by 131800H Nov 67 as directed and controlled by Departure Airfield Control Officer (DACO).

(5) Move non-combat essential echelon as part of TF convoy on 14 Nov 67.

d. 2-19 Arty (-):

(1) C Btry close PHU CAT (DAF) by 130930H Nov 67.

(2) Bn (-) close PHU CAT NLT 131100H Nov 67.

(3) Move combat essential echelon to KONTUM from PHU CAT as directed by Departure Airfield Control Officer (DACO).

(4) Move non-combat essential echelon to KONTUM by Bde TF convoy on 14 Nov 67.

e. A/2-20 Arty (-)

f. A Co, 8th Engr (-) Close DAF by 131300H Nov 67. Prepare for air movement by C-130.

g. Plt 545th MP (-):

# CONFIDENTIAL

- h. B/229th AHB: Six CH 47s attached.
- i. Scout Dog Plt (-)
- j. FSE: Conduct overland movement to close KONTUM by 151700H Nov 67.
- k. Coordinating Instructions.

(1) Only combat essential troops, vehicles and equipment will move by air. This movement will begin at 131000H Nov 67 with PHU CAT as the DAF and KONTUM as the AAF.

(2) Non-combat essential troops, vehicles and equipment will travel by landtail under 1st Bde TF control departing on 14 Nov and arriving KONTUM on 15 Nov.

(3) Emphasis on a professional air and land move.

(4) All movement data and requests to 1st Bde TF movement control by 122300H Nov 67.

(5) DACO for C7A moves from LZ ENGLISH is Lt Hostikka.

(6) DACO for DAF PHU CAT is Cpt McKinley.

(7) AAFCO for AAF KONTUM is Cpt Radcliffe.

(8) Each individual will personally carry 20 sandbags as part of his combat load for movement.

(9) Units provide Departure Airfield Control Groups at PHU CAT (DAF). Report prior to arrival of first elements to DACO, Cpt McKinley.

#### 4. (C) ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS:

- a. Units carry 2 days C Rations for combat essential echelon.
- b. Class V basic load to accompany all units.
- c. FSE operational on 16 Nov.

#### 5. (C) COMMAND AND SIGNAL:

- a. Signal:
  - (1) Current SOI in effect.
  - (2) Callsigns: (Freq 55.05)
    - (a) DACO ENGLISH - Comet 3 Mike Alpha.

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

(b) DACO PHU CAT - Comet 83.

(c) AAFCO KONTUM - Comet 3 Mike Bravo.

(d) Movement Control/Bde TOC LZ ENGLISH - Comet 65 and  
3 Mike.

(3) Units maintain FM communications at all time with all subordinate elements and establish contact on arrival with Bde TF representative (DACO, AAFCO, etc).

b. Command:

(1) Movement CP remains LZ ENGLISH until departure of landtail on 14 Nov to receive reports and relay to 1st ACD.

(2) Airfield Control Groups established by 1st Bde TF at:

(a) LZ ENGLISH.

(b) PHU CAT - 0645H.

(c) KONTUM - 1700H.

(3) Bde CP moves by CH47 to KONTUM at 131200H Nov 67.

(4) Bde AO reverts to 1-8 Cav control at 130600H Nov 67 and 1-8 Cav OPCON to 1st ACD at 130800H Nov 67.

(5) Bde command group arrives KONTUM by 130800H Nov 67 and CP opens on arrival NLT 131400H Nov 67.

Acknowledge

ANNEX A - Movement Data

DISTRIBUTION: Special

RATTAN  
COL

OFFICIAL

/s/ Olson  
OLSON  
S3

3-4

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 50 copies  
HQ, 1st Bde, 1st ACD  
LZ ENGLISH (BS885008) RVN  
130500H Nov 67  
UWB

Annex A (Movement Data) to OPORD 3-67

Reference: Same as OPORD 3-67.

1. (C) The 1st Bde will move by air and surface commencing 130630H Nov 67 from LZ ENGLISH to KONTUM.

2. (C) Appendix 1: Movement 13 Nov 67.

3. (C) Appendix 2: Movement 14 Nov 67.

Acknowledge.

RATTAN  
COL

APPENDIXES:

- 1 - Movement 13 Nov 67
- 2 - Movement 14 Nov 67

DISTRIBUTION: Same as Basic Order

OFFICIAL:

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

3-5

**CONFIDENTIAL**



Appendix 1 (Movement 13 Nov 67) to Annex A (Movement Data) to OPORD 3-67

1. (C) Units will move in accordance with the following schedule.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>A/C SORTIES</u>	<u>TIME AVAILABLE</u>	<u>DESTINATION</u>
2-8 Cav	5 Hooks	0630-1015	PHU CAT
	5 Hooks 6 + 2	0700	PHU CAT
	5 Hooks 6 + 2	0830	PHU CAT
	7 Hooks	1015-1400	PHU CAT
1-8 Cav	6+2	0730-0815	MUSTANG
	6+2	0900	LARAMIE
C/2-19 Arty	3 Hooks	0630-1015	PHU CAT
Advanced Party	3 Hooks	0630-1200	KONTUM
TAC OP	4 Hooks	1200-1800	KONTUM

C7A and Hooks as available to PHU CAT. Available at DAF LZ ENGLISH 0700H (TWO BITS 2-20 Arty) according to following priorities:

- 1 2-19 Arty (-)
- 2 Bde HHC
- 3 Tm, 13th Sig
- 4 Tm, IPW/CI
- 5 Plt, 545th MP (-)
- 6 A/2-20 Arty
- 7 TACP
- 8 25th Scout Dog Plt (-)

2. (C) Air Movement from PHU CAT to KONTUM:

- a. 37 C-130 sorties required.
- b. SP time 1000H 13 Nov 67.
- c. Movement will be conducted according to the following priority:

- (1) 1 Co 2-8 Cav (-)
- (2) CP, 2-8 Cav.
- (3) C/2-19 Arty.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

- (4) 2-8 Cav (-).
- (5) Bde HHC.
- (6) Tm, 13th Sig.
- (7) Tm, IPW/CI.
- (8) Plt, 545th MP (-).
- (9) A/2-20 Arty.
- (10) TACP.
- (11) 25th Scout Dog Plt (-).

d. Movement will depend upon number of C-130 aircraft available and the arrival of all units at PHU CAT.

3. (C) Surface movement to PHU CAT 13 Nov 67.

a. Convoy Commander - Cpt Parsons.

(1) March Unit #1:

- (a) 2-19th Arty - 8 vehicles.
- (b) 545th MP - 2 vehicles.
- (c) AFALO - 1 vehicle.
- (d) Commo Plt - 4 vehicles.
- (e) Arty LNO - 1 vehicle.
- (f) Avn LNO - 1 vehicle.
- (g) 2-8 Cav - 4 vehicles.
- (h) March Unit Commander to be designated by 2-8 Cav.

(2) March Unit #2:

- (a) Co A, 8th Engr-8 vehicles.
- (b) Hq, 1st Bde S-4 - 1 vehicle.
- (c) March unit commander, CO, A Co, 8th Engr.

# CONFIDENTIAL

Acknowledge

DISTRIBUTION: Same as OPORD 3-67

RATTAN  
COL

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

CONFIDENTIAL

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 50 Copies  
HQ, 1st Bde, 1st ACD  
LZ ENGLISH (BS885038) RVN  
130500H Nov 67  
UWB

Appendix 2 (Movement 14 Nov 67) to Annex A (Movement Data) to OPORD 3-67

1. (C) Units will move in accordance with the following schedule.
2. (C) Movement to KONTUM 14 Nov 67.
  - a. Convoy Commander - Maj Raunig.
    - (1) March Unit #1:
      - (a) 2-8 Cav - 17 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ T trucks w/trailers.
      - (b) March Unit Commander to be designated by 2-8 Cav.
    - (2) March Unit #2:
      - (a) HHC, 1st Bde
      - (b) Avn Plt
      - (c) Scty Plt
      - (d) Commo Plt
      - (e) Pathfinders
      - (f) IPW/CI
      - (g) Total vehicles - 18 (6  $\frac{1}{4}$ T w/trailers) (6  $\frac{3}{4}$ T w/trailers) (6 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ T w/trailers).
      - (h) March Unit Commander to be designated.

Acknowledge.

RATTAN  
COL

DISTRIBUTION: Same as OPORD 3-67

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Olson  
OLSON  
S3

3-9

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(No Changes From Verbal Orders)

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
Hq, 1st Bde, 1st Cav Div  
KONTUM (ZA 209899) RVN  
142359H Nov 67  
KMS

FRAG ORDER 83-67

Task Organization: 1-12 Cav (-) OPCON 1st Bde effective 150600H Nov 67

1. (C) Enemy Situation: Annex B, Intelligence.
2. (C) 4th Inf Div continues Operations MACARTHUR in the SPAATZ AO w/173d Abn Bde, 1st Bde, 4th Inf Div and 1st Bde, 1st ACD.
3. (C) 1st Bde conducts operations in assigned AO beginning H hr 15 Nov 67 to find and destroy the enemy blocking any enemy attempt to infiltrate or exfiltrate the SPAATZ AO. Bde is prepared to release or accept OPCON of air cav and/or other maneuver bns on order.
4. (C) 2-8 Cav releases two companies to 4th Div control, one company to 1st Bde, 1st ACD control to secure LZ POLLY, prepares to reinforce 1-12 Cav on order and prepares for future operations adjacent to 1-12 Cav AO beginning on or about 16 Nov 67.
5. (C) 1-12 Cav conducts CA 150730H Nov 67 to secure LZ BECKY as a fire base and base of operations, receives A Co from 173d Abn Bde at 150900H Nov 67 and conducts operations in assigned AO to find and destroy the enemy.
6. (C) 2-19th Arty (-) inserts one battery (B Btry) into LZ BECKY to provide DS 1-12 Cav on order. Be prepared to support 2-8 Cav with one DS battery on order.
7. (C) Priority of all air and arty fires to 1-12 Cav on 15 Nov 67.
8. (C) Priority of all lift and CH47 support to 1-12 Cav on 15 Nov 67.
9. (C) Units are cautioned on extensive use of smoke to mark helicopter landing sites. Maximum planning and execution to ensure helicopters do not remain on the ground for an extended period of time because of extensive enemy mortar and rocket capability.
10. (C) Retransmission unit for communications on 1st Bde Op/Intel frequency will be operational at 150630H Nov 67. Low band to be used west of 96 vertical grid line is 40.04. High band for use east of 96 vertical grid line is 55.10.

Inclosure 4

4-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

11. (C) Bde TAG CP operational 140900H Nov 67 at LZ POLLY. Command group occupies on 15 Nov 67.

Acknowledge

ANNEXES

A-Opn Overlay (TEP)

B-Intel (issued separately)

RATTAN

COL

DISTRIBUTION: Special

OFFICIAL:

/s/ Olson

OLSON

S3

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of \_\_\_\_\_ copies.  
HQ, 1st Brigade  
1st Air Cavalry Division  
APO 96490  
141500 Nov 67

ANNEX B  
Intelligence Summary

References: Map, Vietnam, 1:250,000, Series L1501, Sheets ND 48-8 and ND 49-5.

1. (C) ENEMY SITUATION.

a. Recent Activity.

(1) During late October and early November there was evidence that the NVA 1st Div with its subordinate 32d and 66th Regt had moved into Southwest KONTUM Province from positions in CAMBODIA west of PLEIKU City.

(2) The enemy plans in the area were revealed by an NVA Sergeant who rallied vic DAK TO on 2 Nov. These plans were as follows: the 66th Regt would attack US units at DAK TO (ZB 010215) from the SW. The 32d Regt would ambush US units employed in the rear of the 66th Regt by covering LZ's and routes into the area.

(3) The 174th Regt, under 1st Div control, would be in reserve and employed only if necessary. The 40th Arty Regt (1 each AA Bn, 122MM Mortar Bn, and 122MM Rocket Bn) would attack by fire from positions both north and south of DAK TO. These attacks were prevented by US actions.

(4) During the period 4-12 Nov a series of engagements vic coord YB 900147 and ZB 9917 by 3/8th and 3/12th Bn's respectively with what is believed to be at least 2 Bn's of the 32d have been rendered combat ineffective as a result of these actions.

(5) A series of contacts during the period 4-12 Nov vic YB 8519 by 1st, 2d, and 4th Bn's/503d have resulted in 237 KIA from what is believed to be at least 2 Bn's of the 66th Regt have been seriously impaired as a result of these actions. The 24th and 174th Regts have not yet been engaged.

(6) It's believed that the 174th Regt will be employed eventually to attack US units in the area, to cover the withdrawal of the remainder of the 1st Div. It's possible that the 24th Regt will be employed against US/ARVN units in the DAK TO/TAN CANH area. At present, there are no indications that the enemy will withdraw from the area, except under pressure.

b. Forces:

UNIT  
32d NVA Regt

STR  
1515

LOC  
Vic YB 8615

4-3

CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>SIR</u>	<u>LOC</u>
66th NVA Regt	1580	vic YB 8316
40th Arty Regt	Unk	vic YB 9516
24th NVA Regt	1620	vic ZB 1734
124th NVA Regt	1815	Unloc W SW of DAK TO vic CAMBODIAN Border.

2. (C) Capabilities, Vulnerabilities and Probable Courses of Action.

a. Capabilities:

- (1) To conduct attacks within the area with a multi-regimental size force supported by an artillery regiment and local VC units.
- (2) To launch attacks by fire using mortars and 122MM rockets.
- (3) Infiltrate new units and individual replacements into the AO.
- (4) Reinforce with units from LAOS and COMBODIA.

**CONFIDENTIAL**



CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS  
1ST BRIGADE  
1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO 96490

AVDAER-SC

18 November 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) Movement of Bde TOC to forward location

TO: See Distribution

1 (C) General: 1st Bde 1st ACD will establish a forward command post (CP) at ZB 047207 beginning 190730H Nov 67. The Bde rear CP will remain in KONTUM and will be consolidated in one general area in the vicinity of the presently established FSE/FSA area. The Bde facilities currently located at Landing Zone (LZ) POLLY will be dried up and extracted by air and landtail by 190900H Nov 67.

2 (C) Purpose: This LOI outlines the concept, responsibilities and movement directive for the Bde Task Force establishment of a forward CP.

3 (C) Concept of Operation: 1st Bde TF dries up LZ POLLY by 181800H Nov 67 and begins movement by air and organic and attached motor vehicles on 19 Nov 67 to the Forward CP locations at ZB 047207. The 2-19 Arty (-) moves an FDC element and advanced party in one CH47 at 190630H Nov 67 from LZ POLLY. The Bde CP moves a small tactical CP composed of Bde HHC S-2/3 and communications personnel from KONTUM at 190630H Nov 67 in one CH47 aircraft. The 2-19 Arty landtail forms at LZ POLLY and departs at 0730H. The 1st Bde landtail forms in the current Bde CP area at 0730H and departs at 0800H. Upon departure of the landtails A/2-8 moves to the Bde forward CP remaining OPCON to the 1st Bde. One platoon of A/2-8 Cav remains in KONTUM OPCON to the 1st Bde TF rear CP (LTC Petty rear(CP Commander)). Bde staff and supporting elements not accompanying the forward CP elements will consolidate vic the FSE/FSA area under the direction of the rear CP commander after the departure of the forward CP landtail. Once operational, the Forward CP will be co-located with the 173d Abn Bde rear CP and the 2-8 Cav CP. The Bde forward will provide command and control to the 1-12 Cav and other attachments, serve as a forward laager area for scout teams and serve as a forward logistical area for Class I (C-Rations).

4 (C) Tasks to Subordinates:

a Bde HHC:

(1) Break down attached truck transportation to appropriate elements.

5-1

Inclosure 5

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDAER-SC

18 November 1967

SUBJECT: Letter of Instruction (LOI) Movement of Bde TOC to forward location

(2) Hq Commandant is Convoy Commander.

(3) Move by landtail.

b Security Platoon Provide security to Forward CP on a continuing basis.

c. Avn Plt

(1) Establish plt in vic 229th area on 19 Nov Coordination directed.

(2) Provide sufficient area at SPAR PAD for CH 47 at 190630H Nov 67 for Tac CP pick up.

(3) Laager Bde CC ship and two scout teams at Bde Forward daily returning to KONTUM at night

d Commo Plt

(1) Maintain continuous FM communications on all nets during move.

(2) Maintain retransmission station.

(3) Ensure FM and phone patch communications with Bde rear CP.

(4) Maintain rear switchboard from Bde rear CP

(5) Ensure smooth transfer of all communications circuits from present location to the forward area.

e 2-8 Cav:

(1) A Co remains OPCON to 1st Bde.

(2) Maintain Bn rear in present location.

(3) Continue present missions.

f 1-12 Cav:

(1) Maintain Bn rear in present location.

(2) Provide a small forward logistics group (four personnel maximum) to Bde S4 in Forward CP for break down of supplies.

g A Co 2-8 Cav.

- (1) Secure LZ POLLY until extracted 190800H Nov 67.
- (2) Provide one platoon to Bde rear for security OPCON to Bde Rear Cp CO.
- (3) Provide additional security with Co (-) to the Bde Forward CP on arrival at 190815H Nov 67 and assist in establishing CP facilities.

h 2-19th Arty (-):

- (1) Continue to coordinate use of ARA.
- (2) Move advanced FDC and quartering party to forward CP location by one CH 47 sortie at 190630H Nov 67 from LZ POLLY.
- (3) Move and control remainder of Bn (-) by separate convoy from LZ POLLY to forward CP location beginning NLT 190730H Nov 67
- (4) Coordinate security of road by CIDG personnel from POLEI KLENG to Ferry site on 19 Nov.
- (5) Coordinate use of ferry on 19 Nov with B/70 Engr
- (6) Seven 2 1/2 T truck attached for land movement on 18 Nov.
- (7) Coordinate occupations of forward CP with S3 1st Bde on arrival of advanced party

i A/2-20 Arty (ARA): Continue GS from KONTUM.

j A/8th Engr (-):

- (1) Continue present missions
- (2) Provide technical direction to construction of forward CP facilities
- (3) Command and control headquarters established at forward CP.

k 30th Scout Dog Plt: Continue GS at KONTUM co-located with Bde S4

l 25th Scout Dog Plt (-): Continue GS at KONTUM co-located with Bde S4

m 2/229th Avn (-): Continue present support from KONTUM

n 11th Avn Gp LN Sec: Establish coordination and liaison facilities at forward CP and ensure solid communications with Avn resources.

o FAC: Establish LN facilities at forward CP while maintaining TACP resources at KONTUM

p. Tm 13th Sig: Continue support at forward CP.

q. Tm IPW/CI 191 MI Det: Continue support at Forward CP.

r. Tm 94 RRU: Continue support at forward CP.

s. Det, 15th Med: Continue GS at KONTUM.

t. FSE: Continue GS at KONTUM.

5. Coordinating Instructions:

a. Preparation for move must not detract materially from present missions until TAC CP is established at forward location at approximately 190715H Nov 67

b. Briefing for drivers and assistant drivers to be conducted in Bde TOC by convoy commander at 190745H Nov 67

c. Cpt Parsons is designated as convoy commander of the Bde landtail. Callsign, Hostage Spar 34

d. Lt Glatte is designated as the commander of March Unit #1. Callsign, Mighty Danger

e. Lt Hostikka is designated as the commander of March Unit #2. Callsign Hostage Spar 51.

f. Convoy will form around Spar Pad with the head at the SE corner at 190730H Nov 67

g. Convoy control frequency for movement is 57.25

h. Elements located in Bde TOC area remaining in rear CP will not begin displacement to new area at KONTUM until forward CP convoy has departed, in order to reduce confusion.

i. Composition and Movement Summary - Bde forward CP  
Inclosure 1

j. March tables, Inclosure 2 TBP

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR THE COMMANDER:

2 Incl  
as

DISTRIBUTION:  
1 CO, STAFF  
1 each unit  
15 33

/s/ Howard P Petty  
HOWARD P PETTY  
LTC Infantry  
Deputy Brigade Commander

5-5

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## COMPOSITION AND MOVEMENT SUMMARY - BDE FORWARD OP

<u>BDE ELEMENTS</u>	<u>AIR</u>	<u>LANDTAIL</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Bde CO	1		1
Sgt Maj	1		1
S2 Sec	2	4	6
IPW/LN/RRU	2	13	15
S3	3	9	12
Arty LN	2	2	4
TACP (ALO)	1	2	3
11th Cp LN	2	5	7
Pathfinder	0	1	1
A/8th Engr	2	4	6
Bde HHC	0	6	6
Mess	0	6	6
Scty Plt	12	15	27
Commo Plt	2	33	35
4th Div Comm	0	20	20
MP Plt (-)	0	11	11
S4 & Bn reps	0	5	5
<u>ARTY ELEMENTS:</u>	<u>20</u>	<u>40</u>	<u>60</u>
	50	176	226
2-19 Arty (-)			
TOTAL			

### NOTES:

#### Landtail

1. Bde convoy to consist of 25 organic vehicles with 9 attached 2½T trucks. Arty Convoy to consist of 3 organic vehicles and 7 attached 2½T trucks.
2. Advance party for Arty and Bde is one CH 47 sortie each.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(No Change From Verbal Orders)

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
HQ 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div  
LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) RVN  
192300H Nov 67  
FT-2

FRAG ORDER 84-67

## TASK ORGANIZATION:

2-8 Cav (-)  
1 Sqd A/8th Engr  
PF Tm  
1-12 Cav  
Plt A/8th Engr (-)  
PF Tm

1st Bde  
HHC 1st Bde  
A Co 2-8 Cav  
2-19th Arty (-)  
A/2-20 Arty (ARA) (GSR 2-19 Arty)  
A/8th Engr (-)  
B 229th AHB (-)  
2 Sqds 25th Sct Dog Plt  
50th Sct Dog Plt

### 1. (C) Enemy Forces:

a. 1st NVA Div has not allowed staggering losses to change plans to mount a multi-regimental attack on DAK TO. DAK TO remains vulnerable to attacks by the 66th Regt from the southwest and the 32d Regt from the south. Attack is to be supported by rocket, mortar, recoilless rifle and possibly 75MM pack howitzer fire from the 40th Artillery Regt. The 1st NVA Div has assumed OPCON of the 174th NVA Regt which will be committed in a reserve role. The 24th Inf Regt operating independently is attempting to relieve pressure on the 1st NVA Div and if the DAK TO attack materializes will attempt to cut off friendly relief forces deployed from the east. The 304th MF BN continues to mount pressure on KONTUM City and surrounding areas.

### b. Current Dispositions:

- (1) 1st NVA Div - YB 8010
- (2) 66th NVA Regt - YB 8516
- (3) 32d NVA Regt - YB 7811
- (4) 174th NVA Regt - YB8114
- (5) 40th NVA Arty Regt - YB 8008
- (6) Unidentified NVA unit (probably elements of 24th NVA Regt) - ZB 2110.
- (7) 304th MF Bn - ZA 1993

Inclosure 6

6-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

2. (C) 4th Inf Div with 173d Abn Bde, 4th Inf Div, 1st Bde, 1st ACD 2d and 3d ARVN Airborne Bns and 42d ARVN Ranger Bn continues operation MACARTHUR in the SPAATZ AO to find and destroy the enemy

3. (C) 1st Bde 1st ACD conducts operations in the CHARGER AO and WHITEHORSE AO to find and destroy the enemy

4. (C) 2-8 Cav (-) returns OPCON to 1st Bde 1st ACD. at 200800H Nov 67. One company remains OPCON to 1st Bde 4th Inf Div (D Co) and one company remains OPCON to 1st Bde 1st ACD (A Co). Bn (-) continues operations in assigned AO (WHITEHORSE) to find and destroy the enemy and is prepared to withdraw elements on order to safe distances from air strikes.

5. (C) 1-12 Cav continues to conduct operations in assigned AO (CHARGER) to find and destroy the enemy and secure LZ HECKY

6. (C) A Co 2-8 Cav secures Bde rear CP at LZ WINCHESTER with Co (-) and provides one pl to secure Bde rear CP at KONTUM.

7. (C) 2-19 Arty (-) provides one battery DS to 1-12 Cav and 2-8 Cav. A/2-20 Arty (ARA) GSR

8. (C) A/8th Engr (-) provides platoon (-) to 1-12 Cav and one squad to 2-8 Cav, GS with Co (-). priority of work to LZ WINCHESTER.

9. (C) B/229th AHB (+) GS

10. (C) 25th Set Dog Plt GS with priority to 1-12 Cav

11. (C) 50th Set Dog Plt GS with priority to 2-8 Cav

## Acknowledge

### ANNEXES

A-Opn Overlay  
B-Arty Support

RATTAN  
COL

DISTRIBUTION: Special

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

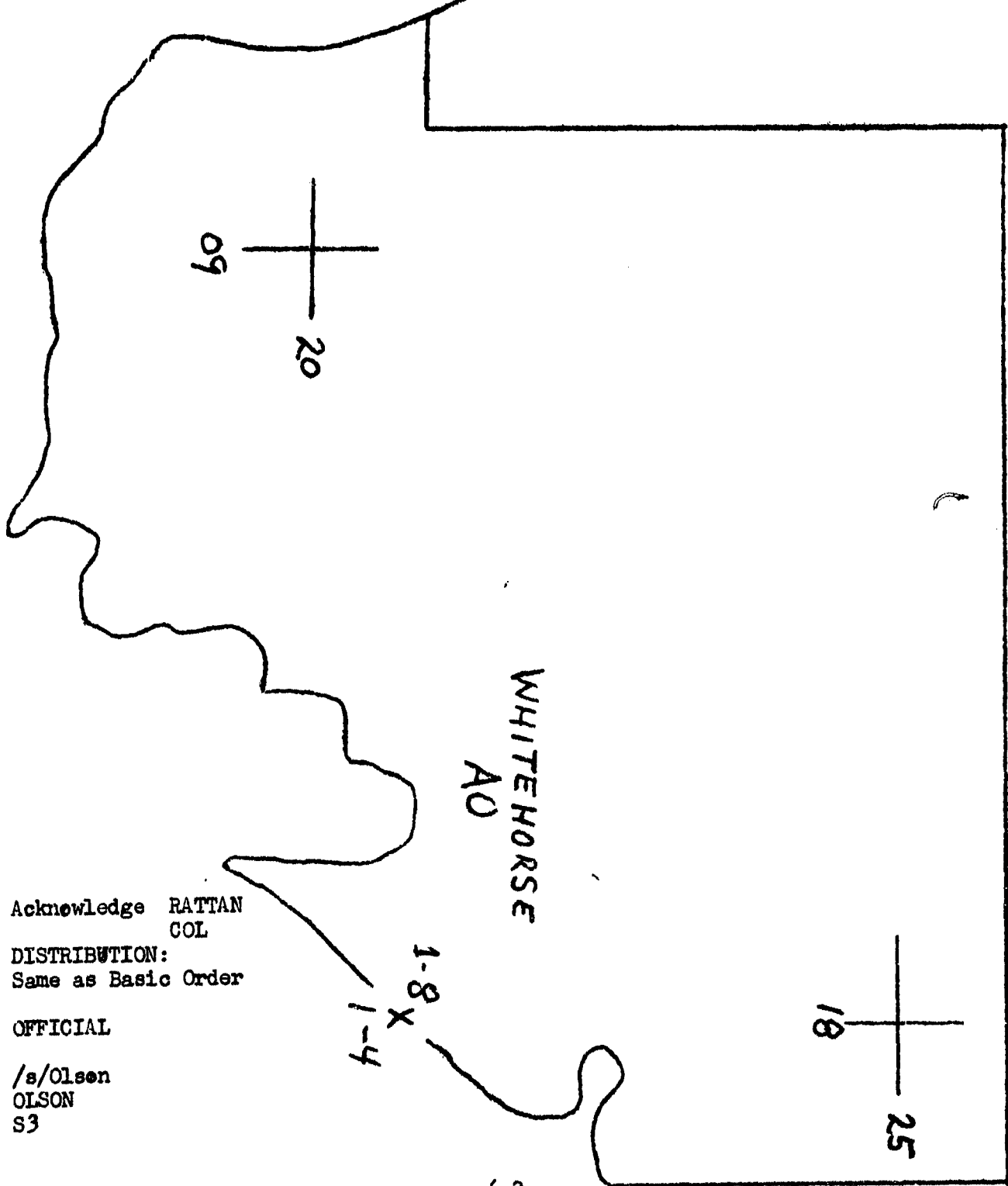
# CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
Hq, 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div  
LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) RVN  
192300H Nov 67  
FT-2

ANNEX A (Operation Overlay) to Frag Order 84-67



Acknowledge RATTAN  
COL

DISTRIBUTION:  
Same as Basic Order

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

6-3  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
HQ 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div  
LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) RVN  
192300H Nov 67  
FT-2

ANNEX B (Artillery Support) to Frag Order 84-67

1. (C) Situation:

a. Enemy: Basic Order

b. Friendly:

(1) B Btry 1st Bn (155MM towed), 92d Arty GS loc  
YB 909121.

(2) A Btry 5th Bn (155MM SP), 16th Arty GS loc  
ZB 058267.

(3) C Btry 6th Bn (175MM/8 in SP) 14th Arty GS loc  
ZB 003220.

(4) A Btry 3d Bn (175MM/8 in SP) 18th Arty GS loc  
ZB 033220

(5) A Btry 2d Bn (ARA) 20th Arty GSR loc LZ WINCHESTER.

2. (C) Mission: 1st Bde 1st ACD continues operations in CHARGER AO and begins operations in WHITEHORSE AO to find and destroy the enemy.

3. (C) Execution:

a. Concept:

(1) General: This Annex contains information designed to familiarize all concerned with current artillery support available.

(2) Maneuver: The artillery provides direct support general support reinforcing and general support

(3) Artillery support:

(a) B Btry 2d Bn, 19th Arty provides direct support to 1st Bn 12th Cav.

(b) C Btry 2d Bn 19th Arty provides direct support to 2d Bn 8th Cav

(c) A Btry 2d Bn 20th Arty provides general support reinforcing to 2d Bn 19th Arty (-). Priority of fire support to units in contact.

6-4

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

4. (C) Administration and Logistics: On hand levels of 105MM  
HE ammunition must be maintained above 600 rounds.

5. (C) Command and Signal: 2d Bn. 19th Arty (-) CP LZ WINCHESTER  
(ZB 046208).

Acknowledge

DISTRIBUTION: Same as basic order RATTAN  
COL

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

6-5

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

(No Change From Verbal Orders)

Copy \_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
HQ 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div  
LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) RVN  
221200H Nov 67  
FT-2

FRAG ORDER 85-67

TASK ORGANIZATION: No change

1. (C) Enemy unit 95B is operating in the area north of PLEI MRONG ZA 145750 Vietnamese Special Forces Camp. Unit is suspected to have 122MM rocket capability. 95B is suspected to have the mission of harassing KONTUM City and Route 14 from PLEIKU to KONTUM.
2. (C) 2-8 Cav continues current operations in assigned AO, is prepared to establish firebase at ZB 145223 and is prepared to move on order to reinforce the 1-12 Cav north of PLEI MRONG SF Camp.
3. (C) 1-12 Cav coordinates with PLEI MRONG Vietnamese SF personnel, selects and establishes firebase in assigned AO and moves entire Battalion and Arty Btry to new AO to find and destroy 95B. LZ BECKY and CHARGER AO is closed out by 221800H Nov 67 and new firebase and operations in new AO open as soon as possible on 22 Nov 67. LZ POLLY is to be used as a staging and storage area as necessary. Bn provides one platoon reinforced with one squad OPCON to 1st Bde to secure rear CP on 23 Nov on order.
4. (C) Priority of all airlift to 1-12 Cav on 22 and 23 Nov. 2-8 Cav allocated two log ships (UHLH) on 22 Nov.
5. (C) C/5-16, 155 (SP) located at ZA 111666 GSR to 2-19 Arty. Freq 45.05, callsign Echo 63.
6. (C) Bde CP remains at LZ WINCHESTER. Radio Retransmission station moves on order 22 Nov to LZ POLLY to maintain contact w/1-12 Cav. Low Band for Bde operations and intelligence is 55.10. High band for retransmission on 55.10 in 1-12 Cav new AO is 68.65. Current SOI remains in effect with following additions.
  - a. Senior Sector Advisor - YUMA EXPRESS - 44.40
  - b. Sector Advisor - IDLE ZIRCON - 45.00
  - c. POLEI KLENG SF Camp - VIVID CAMELS - 46.00
7. (C) Bde Rear CP remains at KONTUM to support combat operations.

Acknowledge

DISTRIBUTION: Special

RATTAN  
COL

OFFICIAL  
/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3  
Inclosure 7

CONFIDENTIAL  
7-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

(No Change From Verbal Orders)

Copy\_\_\_\_\_ of 35 Copies  
HQ 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div  
LZ WINCHESTER (ZB 046208) RVN  
241730H Nov 67  
HAL

FRAG ORDER 86-67

TASK ORGANIZATION: (Effective on Order)

TF 1-12 Cav:

1-12 Cav

B/2-19 Arty  
Plat A 2-20 Arty (4 Acft)  
Plat A/8th Engr W/Back Hoe  
2 Plats B/229 Avn (7 Acft)  
PF TM 11th Avn Gp  
Sig Det 13th Sig (MR 95)  
Cbt Tracker TM (4 Men)  
C-C Ship, Avn Plat, 1st Bde

1st Bde TF (-)

Bde HHC  
2-8th Cav  
2-19th Arty (-)  
A/2-20 Arty (-)  
A/8th Engr (-)  
B/229th (-)  
C/228th (-)  
Plat 545th MP  
Det 191st MP  
25th Sct Dg Plat (-)  
TM 13th Sig  
2d FSE (-)

1. (C) 1st Bde TF deploys by air for combat essential troops, vehicles and equipment and Landtail for other element from the MACARTHUR AO to PERSHING AO beginning 250800H Nov 67 and closing ASAP.

2. (C) Concept of Operations: 1st Bde TF suspends tactical operations in the MACARTHUR AO, releases TF 1-12 Cav to continue operations OPCON to 4th Inf Div, assembles troops and vehicles for Landtail at KONTUM (Bde Rear CP) and assembles troops, vehicles and equipment for air move at LZ WINCHESTER and KONTUM (TF Rear). Air move begins at 250800H Nov 67 and Landtail departs at 250800H Nov 67 (LZ WINCHESTER) and 241100H Nov 67 (TF Rear). Both air and Landtail close PERSHING AO (LZ's ENGLISH and TWO BITS) by 261800H Nov 67 OPCON 1st ACD to continue Operation PERSHING.

3. (C) Coordinating Instructions

- a. Departure airfields (DAF) for air echelon is DAK TO for forward elements, KONTUM for rear elements
- b. Arrival airfield is LZ ENGLISH
- c. SP for Landtail is SP Nr 1 LZ WINCHESTER. SP Nr 2 Hwy 14 at KONTUM.
- d. Convoy commander is Major Crasto.
- e. DAK TO DAF control officer is Capt McKinley (HOSTAGE SPAR 44 on 38.00)

Inclosure 8

8-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

f. KONTUM DAF control officer is Capt Dent (HOSTAGE SPAR 2 MIKE on 38.60).

g. Advance Party will depart in first C-130 aircraft forming at DAF at DAK TO. It will consist of:

- (1) Arrival Airfield Control off and NCO (Capt Radcliffe, 55.05, Sgt Lankford) and  $\frac{1}{2}$  truck (H-3).
- (2) 2-8 Cav - 10 PAX and  $\frac{1}{2}$  truck and  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton trailer.
- (3) 2-19th Arty (-) 6 PAX and  $\frac{1}{2}$  truck and trailer.
- (4) A/8th Engr - 2 PAX.
- (5) Bde HHC - 10 PAX.

h. Priority for air movement:

- (1) Advanced Party.
- (2) 1st Rifle Co.
- (3) 2d Rifle Co.
- (4) Arty Btry.
- (5) Bde HHC elements, IN sec's. Bde Commo.
- (6) Cav Bn CP.
- (7) Arty Bn CP.
- (8) 3d Rifle Co.
- (9) 4th Rifle Co.
- (10) A/8th Engr (-).
- (11) 25th Sct Dg (-).
- (12) FSE Elements.

i. TF Avn resources will remain in MACARTHUR AO until released. This release will take place after TF resources are repositioned at DAK TO and KONTUM for air and land movement.

j. Bde TF CP returns to LZ ENGLISH by CH47 (Three sorties) on order after reposition of air and Landtail into holding areas for movement.

k. Arrival Airfield Control Officer is Capt Radcliffe (Comet 3 Mike Bravo on 55.05 at LZ ENGLISH).

Acknowledge

DISTRIBUTION: Special

RATTAN  
COL

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

8-2

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

KONTUM	Pax Air 1/4 tr 1/2 3/4	3/4 tr 2 1/2	1 1/2 tr 1	mocon	wat	pax	Land 1/4 tr 1/2 3/4	tr 2 1/2	1 1/2 tr 2	atch 3	Ton
Bde Dep & Drv	2	1	1								
Bde HHC											
Scty Plt	1					6	1	1			
Commo	1					8					
AIO						4	1	1			
S4											
545 MP						4	1	1			
2-8						5	1	1			
2-19	35	3	14	1	1	45	3	3	1	1	15
A8th Engr	1	1	1			25	7	2	4	1	6
A/2-20 Arty	43	1	2	1	1	4					
25 Sct Dog	8										
B/229	6	1	1	1							
27 Maint	19	1	1	6		12	1	1	4	4	1
15 Med	50	3	2	5	1	12	1	1	2	2	
15 S&S	30	1	1	1	1	50	3	2	1	5	
FSE	6	1	1			30			1	6	
Total	202	13	12	28	5	2	8	209	19	13	21

AFM NOV

LANDMAIL

83

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS  
1ST BRIGADE  
1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION  
APO 96490

SUBJECT: MOVEMENT DATA -

DAK TO	Pax Air	1/4 Tr	3/4-3/4 Tr	2 1/2 Tr	1 1/2 Tr	wat trl	How	Pax Land	1/4 Tr	3/4 Tr	3/4 Tr	2 1/2 Tr	atch
Cmd Gp	2	1	1					18					
Bde HHC	2	1	1					15	2	2	1		
Scty Plt	10							9					
Mess & Supply	1							25	3	3	1		
Commo	15	1	1										
Arty LHO	4	1	1										
AIO	2	1	1										
S4													
11th Av Gp	1												
371 RRH								2	1	1			
191 MI								4	2	2			
545 MP								4	2	2			
C/2-19 Arty	500	2	2	2		1		5	2	2			
2-19 Arty	55	1	2	1				12	1	1			
A/8th Engr	60	2	2	3		6							
Total	41	1	1	7				25	7	2	4	1	6
	693	10	11	7				119	20	15	8	4	6

7-8

AIR MOVEMENT

10 000# Bulk Cargo

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

(No Change From Verbal Orders)

Copy... of 35 Copies  
Hq 1st Bde 1st Cav Div  
LZ ENGLISH (BS 885008) RVN  
251800H Nov 67  
BHA

FROM: CO, 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div LZ ENGLISH RVN

TO: CO, 1-8 Cav  
CO, 2-8 Cav  
XO, C/1-50 Mech  
Plt Ldr. 2d Plt C/1-50 Mech

INFO: CG, 1st ACD  
CO, 2d Bde  
CO, 2-19 Arty  
CO, 2-20 Arty  
CO, 11th Avn Gp  
CO, A/8th Engr  
NFFF Advisor

CONFIDENTIAL AVDAER-SC \_\_\_\_\_

FRAG ORDER 87-67

TASK ORGANIZATION:

1-8 Cav (eff 251800H Nov 67)  
AV Plt and Cmd GpC/1-50 Mech  
Plt 4/60 (AW) Arty  
(M42 "DUSTERS") (OPCON)  
2-8 Cav

1st Bde  
Plt (AV) C/1-50 Mech  
2-19 Arty (-) (DS)  
A/8th Engr (-) (DS)  
1st Plt 545 MP Co  
1st Co 222d NFFF Bn  
2 sqds 25th Sct Dg Plt  
TM 13th Sig  
TM 245th Psy Ops Co  
TM IFW/CI 191st MI Det

1. (C) SITUATION.

a. Enemy Forces: Current INTSUM

b. Friendly Forces:

- (1) A 1-9 Cav supports reconnaissance effort in 1st Bde AO
- (2) 2-19 Arty (-) DS (A Btry LZ GERONIMO; C Btry LZ MUSTANG by 261200H Nov 67)
- (3) 7-13 Arty (-) (105 Towed) GSR (A Btry LZ TOM by 261200H Nov 67; C Btry LZ ENGLISH)

Inclosure 9

9-1

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

- (4) A/7-15 Arty (8" SP) GSR at LZ ENGLISH)
- (5) C/1-30 Arty (155 Towed) GSR at LZ LARAMIE).
- (6) 2-20 Arty (ARA) GS
- (7) 228th ASHB. provides CH 47 lift
- (8) 229th AHB. provides airlift

2. (C) MISSION. 1st Bde OPCON 1st ACD resumes Operation PERSHING by 251800H Nov 67 conducts operations to find engage and destroy organized enemy forces: controls population and resources and destroys VC infrastructure in conjunction with the National Police Field Forces (NPPF) and District Police Forces: conducts planning and coordination with 40th ARVN Regt and provides on request, reaction forces to ARVN/RVN installations under attack: conducts combined operations with ARVN forces and provides combat support and combat service support as needed by 40th ARVN Regt: secures LZ LARAMIE, LZ ENGLISH, Highway 1 Bridges in the AO. Highway 1 bridges in the 40th ARVN AO through coordination and providing required reaction forces coordinates with HOI NHON District Advisor for operations in areas under GVN control, and provides security to 45th Engr Gp (19th and 35th Engr Bns) elements through reconnaissance fire support and operations in close proximity to engineer activities

### 3. (C) EXECUTION.

a. Concept of Operations: (Annex A. OPN overlay) 1st Bde closes combat elements by 251800H Nov 67 and all elements by air and Landtail by 261800H Nov 67 at LZ ENGLISH. 1-8 Cav received OPCON at 251800H Nov 67 is relieved of security requirements in AN IAO Valley and LZ ENGLISH by 2-8 Cav and conducts operations in assigned AO. 2-8 Cav assumes security responsibilities of LZ MUSTANG - TAPE and LZ LARAMIE and conducts operations in assigned AO. AV Plt C 1-50 Mech is Bde reaction force at LZ ENGLISH, conducts operations with maneuver Bn's as directed. Priority of fires to unit (s) in contact

#### b. 1-8 Cav

(1) Secure LZ GERONIMO with one company less augmentation necessary for Highway 1 security force

(2) Secure Highway 1 bridges from 88-94 with the Armored Vehicle (AV) unit reinforced by the M-42 duster unit and sufficient organic personnel. Bridges 91, 92 and 94 will be occupied by at least a reinforced squad while other bridges will be secured by random patrolling and ambushing and by fires and observation. Internal reaction force planning will be emphasized

(3) Conduct combat operations in assigned AO to find, engage and destroy the enemy

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(4) Conduct operations against the VC infrastructure in conjunction with the NFFF through sweeps, Cordon and search type operations and "SNATCH" type operations. At least one Cordon and search type and one "SNATCH" type operation will be conducted daily with the support of the NFFF

(5) Maintain a close working relationship with 40th ARVN Regiment and prepare plans and conduct combined operations as directed in coordinating area north of the BONG SON River.

(6) Provide security to the 45th Engr GP elements in assigned AO and coordinating area through coordination (19th Engr Bn) with reaction forces on order reconnaissance fire support and operations in close proximity to engineer activities

(7) Provide a QRF of one platoon at LZ ENGLISH from 1730-0600 nightly OPCON to 1st Bde to serve as a reaction force to relieve units in contact as necessary. QRF platoon is to be prepared for further OPCON to a maneuver battalion as necessary.

(8) Coordinate with 40th ARVN and be prepared to control reaction forces to relieve ARVN/RVN installations or bridges under attack within coordination area.

(9) Provide one mortar squad OPCON to 1st Bde for LZ ENGLISH base defense. Squad will operate under 2-8 Cav base defense unit control.

c. 2-8 Cav:

(1) Secure LZ MUSTANG -TAPE with one rifle company.

(2) Secure LZ LARAMIE with one rifle company minus two rifle platoons. Unit must consist of at least 53 officers and men

(3) Provide a control headquarters two rifle platoons and a mortar section of one squad and a section headquarters OPCON to 1st Bde for LZ ENGLISH base defense. Unit to consist of at least 50 officers and men

(4) Assume security missions and AO responsibility at 251800H

Nov 67

(5) Conduct operations in assigned AO to find, engage and destroy the enemy

(6) Maintain a close working relationship with 40th ARVN Regt and prepare plans and conduct combined operations as directed in coordination area south of BONG SON River

(7) Coordinate with 40th ARVN Regt and HOI NHON District

# CONFIDENTIAL

**CONFIDENTIAL**

and be prepared to control reaction forces on order to relieve ARVN/RVN installations or bridges under attack in assigned AO or coordination area.

(8) AV Plt C/1-50 Mech attached for rations, quartering and logistics.

d. AV Plt C/1-50 Mech:

(1) Attached for rations quartering and logistics to 2-8 Cav.

(2) OPCON to 1st Bde prepared to act as a reaction force OPCON to a maneuver battalion to relieve ARVN/RVN installation or bridge site under attack on order

(3) Operate OPCON to a maneuver battalion as directed on a daily basis returning to LZ ENGLISH by 1730 hrs each day.

e. Coordinating Instructions:

(1) Each maneuver battalion be prepared to assemble a platoon in 30 minutes followed by a rifle company (-) in one hour as the 1st Bde reaction force.

(2) Maximum emphasis on rice harvest surveillance and control.

(3) Units make maximum use of night ambush and killer team operations.

4. (C) COMMAND AND SIGNAL.

a. Signal:

(1) Current 1st ACD SOI in effect on closure PERSHING AO.

(2) Bde retransmission equipment available on loan basis on 28 Nov 67.

b. Command: Bde CP opens LZ ENGLISH by 251800H Nov 67.

Acknowledge

Annex A - Operations Overlay

RATTAN  
COL

DISTRIBUTION: A

OFFICIAL

/s/Olson  
OLSON  
S3

9-4

**CONFIDENTIAL**

CONFIDENTIAL

24th Special Tactical Zone

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 9

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

HEADQUARTERS  
SPECIAL TACTICAL ZONE 24, ADVISORY DETACHMENT  
APO US Forces 96499

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

THRU: Deputy Senior Advisor  
II Corps Advisory Group  
APO US Forces 96318

THRU: Commander  
I Field Forces Vietnam  
APO US Forces 96240

TO: Commander  
USMACV  
APO US Forces 96222

1. (U) Identity of Operation: ARVN operations in conjunction with the 4th US Infantry Division in AO SPAATZ.

2. (U) Date of Operation: 7 November - 8 December 1967.

3. (U) Location: North of Dakto and East of Dakto and Tan Canh. See overlays for each operation.

4. (U) Control Headquarters: 24th Special Tactical Zone.

5. (U) US Advisors:

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
24th STZ Fwd CP	LTC Edward L. King	DSA
" " " "	LTC Charles T. Walker	DSA
" " " "	CPT John E. Counts	Asst G3 Advisor
" " " "	CPT Henry C. Hudson	Asst G2 Advisor
" " " "	CPT William Wagner	24 STZ G4 Advisor
" " " "	CPT Robert Moore	24 STZ Arty Advisor
" " " "	SFC John Yermal	G3 LN NCO
" " " "	SFC Dean D. Gilbertson	Arty NCO

Downgraded at 3 Year Intervals  
Declassified After 12 years  
DOD DIR 5200.10

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

<u>ELEMENT</u>	<u>NAME</u>	<u>DUTY</u>
42d Regiment	MAJ James E. Bardwell	Senior Advisor
1/42 Regiment	CPT William E. Sullivan	Bn Advisor
3/42 Regiment	CPT James L. Davis	Bn Advisor
3d ARVN Abn Task Force	MAJ R. W. Pfeiffer	TF Senior Advisor
	CPT J. W. Kinzer	TF Liaison Officer
2d Abn Bn	*CPT John Koenig	Bn Advisor
	CPT T. R. Cobb	Bn Advisor
3d Abn Bn	CPT R. W. Andrews	Bn Advisor
6th Abn Bn	CPT W. A. Beirlich	Bn Advisor
7th Abn Bn	CPT C. L. Jackson	Bn Advisor
9th Abn Bn	CPT R. J. Freund	Bn Advisor
Arty Btry	CPT J. E. Echols	Arty Advisor
Air Force	LTC P. W. Almquist	Abn ALO
Air Force	MAJ J. K. Giles	Abn FAC
Air Force	CPT W. D. Jenkins	Abn FAC
2d Ranger Task Force	MAJ Lyle E. Jerret	TF Senior Advisor
22d Ranger Bn	CPT H. A. Jenkins	Bn Advisor
23d Ranger Bn	CPT Larry Crane	Bn Advisor

\* With the exception of CPT John Koenig who was wounded early in Operation Kham Jai 182, all US Advisors participated extensively in both planning and execution phases of the ARVN operations in AO SPAATZ.

## 6. (C) Task Organization:

24 Special Tactical Zone Forward CP

42d Regiment:

1/42 Infantry

3/42 Infantry

9th ARVN Abn Bn (7-17 Nov)

3d ARVN Abn Task Force:

2d Abn Bn

3d Abn Bn

6th Abn Bn

7th Abn Bn

2d Ranger Task Force:

22d Ranger Bn

23d Ranger Bn

Arty:

A Btry (-) 221st Arty (105-4 tubes) Supported from Dakto

B Btry ARVN Abn Arty (105) Supported from Dakto Subsector

Subsector FSB

FSB and FSB 17

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

A Btry (-) 37th Arty (155) Located at Tan Canh  
A Btry 5/16 Arty (US 155) Supported from Dakto Subsector

FSB

## 7. (C) Supporting Forces:

a. Artillery fire support for the operations was provided by Btry A (-), 221st Arty Bn, Btry B (Abn), one Plat 155MM Arty from 37th Arty Bn, and Btry A, 5/16th Arty Bn, a US 155MM SP unit. Overall artillery fire support and coordination was performed in an outstanding manner. The responsiveness and coordination of the US artillery fires was greatly enhanced by the Artillery Liaison personnel from the US Btry working side by side with the Vietnamese in the ARVN fire direction center. During the operations, fire support bases were established at Tan Canh, Dakto Subsector, and FSB #17 (ZB088347). The helilift of the Airborne Artillery to FSB #17 on 23 Nov 67, was not executed as smoothly and timely as could have been. This was due primarily to the limited number of slings and ammunition nets which were available for the move. A breakdown of the total number of rounds expended during the operations follows:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>HE</u>	<u>WP</u>	<u>ILLUM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Btry A (-) 221st Arty (105)	10,522	125	189	10,866
Btry B Abn Arty (105)	7,891	159	195	8,245
Btry A (-) 37th Arty (155)	801	26	6	833
Btry A 5/16 Arty (US 155)	<u>1,614</u>	<u>30</u>	<u>60</u>	<u>1,704</u>
	20,828	340	450	21,648

b. USAF/VNAF: The air support throughout the period of operations was outstanding, and in at least one instance, and possibly more, close air support was the decisive factor in the overall success of ground operations. During the period ARVN received 112 fighter bomber sorties, 46 Sky Spots, 3 B-52 Airstrikes, and 11 C-47 (SPOOKY) sorties. Strikes were used to prestrike objectives, hit known and suspected enemy positions, and strike targets of opportunity. FAC coverage was provided at all times by ARVN Abn and 24 STZ FAC's alternating flights over the area of operations.

c. Army Aviation Support: The Army Aviation support was coordinated through the G-3 Forward CP of the 4th Infantry Division. The cooperation and support ARVN received was superb and all missions requested were accomplished. The ARVN received 160 sorties of CH-47 (Chinook), 84 sorties of HUIB including 12 sorties of gunships, and 18 sorties of H-34 (VNAF). The type of missions included combat assault, command and control, troop lift, resupply, medevac, and aerial rocket artillery.

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

8. (C) Intelligence reports during early November indicated the HQ of the 24th NVA Regiment had moved from the north to an area approximately 8KM northeast of Dakto District HQ with an estimated two battalions. ARVN Operations Kham Jai 180, 182 and 183 were mounted to sweep the series of peaks believed held by the enemy northeast of Dakto. ARVN forces encountered heavy resistance especially on Hill 1416. ARVN seizure of the peaks resulted in 255 NVA KIA, 2 CIA, and 70 enemy individual and crew served weapons captured.

Interrogation of the captured prisoners revealed that the 24th Regiment's 4th and 5th battalions had occupied the objective areas and that these battalions had been given the mission of liberating Dakto District HQ and Tan Canh. They also reported that the 4th Bn which had an approximate strength of 400 men had suffered many casualties as a result of friendly artillery and air support during the contact.

On 28 Nov 67 intelligence reports indicated that elements of the 24th Regiment had moved southwest of the earlier contacts to areas near the road running north of Dakto. An ARVN operation mounted to take advantage of this enemy movement made contact on 29 Nov 67. ARVN troops reinforcing the contact were ambushed while in convoy on the highway north of Dakto. The elements of the 24th NVA Regiment conducting the ambush were successful in damaging 10 ARVN trucks, inflicting light casualties and looting the convoy for foodstuffs.

Since 29 November 67 there has been no significant contact with NVA elements north of Dakto. Intelligence reports as late as 9 Dec 67 indicate that elements of the 24th Regiment have withdrawn to the northeast of Dakto.

9. (C) Mission: Locate and destroy VC/NVA forces located North and East of Dakto.

10. (C) Concept of Operations: 24th STZ in close coordination and cooperation with the 4th Infantry Division and CIDG initiated operations during the first week of November in order to find, fix and destroy NVA/VC forces operating North and East of Tan Canh. When it became apparent that a large NVA force was operating in the Dakto area, the zone commander requested and received assistance in the form of the 2d Ranger and 3d ARVN Abn Task Forces. The 3/42 discovered a large NVA Force northwest of Dakto which was too large and well fortified to overrun with one battalion. Once the 3/42 had located the NVA force the concept was to exploit our superior mobility by gathering as much combat strength as rapidly as possible and defeat the enemy before he could withdraw back into the jungle. This was the concept utilized throughout the operations.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

## 11. (C) Execution:

a. During late October and early November the US buildup began at Dakto and at 071500 Nov the 1/42 Infantry began Operation Le Loi 44 in coordination with the 4th Infantry Division (US). 1/42(-) assisted the 1st Bde, 4th Division in securing the Dakto Airstrip while one company of the 1/42 secured the bridge across the Dak Poko River vic coordinates YB953328. On the morning of 7 Nov the 9th ARVN Abn Bn arrived by C-130 at Dakto and was placed under operational control of the 42d Regiment. At 071600 Nov the 9th Abn Bn began Le Loi 45, a search and destroy operation, northwest of Tan Canh in AO SBO523, 1123, 0531 and ZB1131. Le Loi 45 terminated at 101400 Nov with negative results. At 101100 the 3/42 Infantry was relieved of its RD mission at Konko and moved by trucks to Dakto. At 101400 the 3/42, and 9th ARVN Abn Bn began operation Le Loi 46, search and destroy in AO YB9935, ZB1735, 0623 along Highway 14 to ZB9929, YB9935. At 131500 Nov the 3d Abn Task Force HQ closed into Tan Canh and at 131830 the 3d ARVN Abn Bn closed into a bivouac vic coordinates ZEO74218 near Tan Canh. The 3d Abn Bn replaced the 9th Abn Bn in operation Le Loi 46 at 141400 and the 9th Bn returned to Dakto to prepare for a move back to Saigon on the morning of 15 Nov. The 2d Abn Bn was scheduled to arrive at Dakto on 15 Nov but at 150845, while the 9th Abn Bn was located at the Dakto Airstrip loading C-130's, the airfield was mortared, destroying 2 C-130s on the loading ramp and damaging a 3d. 4 soldiers from the 9th Bn were wounded including the Battalion CO and one 3/4 Ton and one 1/2 Ton Trucks were destroyed. The 2d Abn Battalion's flight scheduled to land at Dakto was diverted to Kontum, where the 2d Bn stayed the night of the 15th, and the 9th Abn Bn returned to Tan Canh. On Operation Le Loi 46 at 141530 the 3/42 Infantry made contact with an estimated 2 NVA Companies dug in on the hill vic coordinate ZB138292 (Obj B, See Overlay #1). The 3/42 backed off and called in air and artillery strikes. The morning of 15 Nov the 3/42 moved back up the hill and received heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from NVA still located in foxholes and bunkers on the hill. At 151440 the 3/42 tried to move up the hill a 3d time but had to withdraw because of heavy automatic weapons and rifle grenade fire. Artillery and Immediate Air Strikes were called in on the hill. Results of contact: Fdly: 10 KIA, 2 MIA, 19 WIA. Enemy: 8 NVA KIA (BC). At 151640 the 3d ARVN Abn Bn was combat assaulted from Dakto to LZ vic coordinate ZB110276 with negative contact.

b. At 161430 the ARVN terminated Operation Le Loi 46 and simultaneously initiated Operation Kham Jei 180 (See Overlay #1). The area of operations was generally the same as for Le Loi 46 however now that a large NVA force was located a new operation was immediately started to bring maximum forces into the area. The 3/42 Bn established a blocking position south of Objective B and the 3d Abn Bn moved to, and secured an LZ vic coordinate ZB110308. The 2d Abn Bn was lifted into the LZ by CH-47,

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

closing at 161615 hours. The two Abn Battalions were placed under the control of the 3d Abn TF HQ for the operation. At 170815 while moving towards Objective D (Hill 1416) the 3d Bn made contact with an estimated NVA Company via coordinate ZB130311. Contact continued throughout the day until 1640. Results were 5 Friendly KIA and 50 WIA. The 2d Abn Bn advanced toward Objective D on a second axis north of the 3d Bn and at 171240 a CBU from a friendly airstrike accidentally landed on elements of the 2d Bn killing 4 and wounding 27 soldiers. The 2d Bn made contact with an unknown size enemy force at 171515 via coordinate ZB128317 with negative results. The 2d Abn Bn received an unknown number of mortar rounds in their night location on 17-18 Nov via coordinate ZB130311 resulting in 19 WIA. During the night of 17 Nov US helicopter pilots, flying into a very hazardous LZ, extracted all 77 of the ARVN soldiers wounded during the days fighting. On the morning of 18 Nov after the soldiers wounded by the mortar attack were evacuated, the Abn TF resumed its move up hill 1416 and at 1020 they found a body believed to be that of a Battalion XO. Documents indicate he belonged to the K4 Bn, 24 NVA Regiment. At 181120 both 2d & 3d Abn Bns made contact via coordinates ZB131305 and ZB130311. 20 sorties of airstrikes were called in along with 105 and 155 artillery support. The Battalions maintained contact throughout the day and at 181830 both Abn Battalions received mortar fire in their night locations. At 190740 both battalions resumed their attack on hill 1416 and immediately made contact. The 2d Bn broke contact and moved north around the hill so the Task Force could attack the hill from two directions. The 3d Bn continued to attack to the east up the hill and remained in contact all day. 18 more sorties of airstrikes were placed on the hill along with 105 and 155 artillery and at 191600 the 3d Bn reached the top of the hill and began consolidating the position. The Abn TF remained on top of hill 1416 (Obj D) on 20 Nov and at 201230 4 tubes of 105MM artillery from the ARVN Abn closed into the Fire Support Base at Dakto. The 2d and 3d Battalions searched the hill all day and discovered 247 NVA KIA and 70 weapons. On 20 Nov the 3/42 which remained in a blocking position throughout the operation was replaced by the 22d Ranger Bn which was helilifted to an LZ via coordinate ZB135292, and the 3/42 was moved back to Tan Canh to prepare for a move to the Lam Son training center. The 7th Abn Bn arrived at Dakto at 201300 and was moved to ZB060265 (Dakto Subsector) to act as Task Force Reserve. On 21 November elements of the 22d Ranger Bn moved to Objective B without resistance and elements of the 3d Abn Bn moved upon Objective C without resistance. 3 Rangers were wounded by Punji Stakes on Objective B. At 221330 Operation Kham Jei 180 terminated with the cumulative results: Fdly: 47 KIA, 182 WIA, 2 MIA. Enemy: 255 NVA KIA, 2 CIA, 70 weapons CIA. After the operation the 22d Ranger Bn was lifted to Dakto Subsector (ZB060265) and the Abn TF was moved to Tan Canh. The 7th Abn Bn remained at Dakto Subsector.

c. Phase II of Operation Kham Jei 180 was conducted by the 2d Ranger Group HQ and the 22d Ranger Battalion starting at 230715 Nov (See Overlay #2). The Rangers moved into the AO on foot with the 22d Ranger Bn (-) moving on one axis through Objective A1 through A4, one company moving on an axis to Objectives B1 through B4, and one company staying to

6

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (k-D) )

secure the FSB at Dakto Subsector along with the 2d Ranger Group HQ. At 241415 one Ranger Company made contact with an enemy outpost vic hill 1315 (ZB035329) resulting in 1 Fdly KIA, 2 WIA, 1 NVA KIA, 1 AK 47 and 1 SMG CIA. At 251730 the 22d Ranger Bn(-) made contact with an estimated NVA Company vic coordinate ZB015347. The enemy broke contact withdrawing to the north-west at 1830. Results, Fdly: 4 KIA, 16 WIA, Enemy: 31 NVA KIA, 1 CIA, and several weapons CIA (See Paragraph 12). The POW stated he was from the 2d Company of the K4 Bn, 24th Regiment. At 2709 1 Company 22d Ranger Battalion was lifted to join the remainder of the Bn and one Company of the 1/42 resumed the FSB security mission. On 28 November Phase II of Kham Jei 180 was terminated and the 22d Ranger Bn moved back to Dakto Subsectors on foot.

d. Operation Kham Jei 182 with the ARVN Abn Task Force began at 231200 in an AO northeast of Dakto (See Overlay #3). The Task Force included the Abn TF HQ, and the 2d, 3d and 7th Abn Bns. The 7th Abn Bns closed into FSB 17 (ZB090347) at 231615 on foot and after they had secured the FSB the Abn Arty Btry(-) was moved by CH-47 into the FSB closing at 231850. The 2d & 3d Abn Bns closed into FSB at 241500 and the 2d & 7th Bns began S&D operations in their respective areas of operation while the 3d Bn secured the FSB and conducted local S&D missions. At 281200 all Battalions closed back into FSB #17 and the operation was terminated temporarily. The operation was reinitiated at 290700 as a result of information from the 4th Division that elements of the 24th NVA Regiment CP were reported vic coordinate ZB105308 at 281700 Nov moving to the west. At 290715 the 22d Ranger Bn moved on foot north from Dakto and occupied blocking positions from Kon Bring (ZB050289) to Dak Rosa (ZB060312). The 2d & 7th Abn Bns moved south from FSB 17 on two axes and the 3d Bn remained as security and Task Force reserve in the FSB. The Abn Arty was moved from FSB 17 to Dakto Subsector by CH-47 and closed at 291615. At 291240 the 2d Abn Bn made contact with an estimated NVA platoon vic coordinate ZB089318. Air strikes, arty and gunships were called in and contact was broken at 1430. The 2d Bn made contact again at 291615 with an estimated NVA Company and once again called on Air strikes and artillery support. Contact was broken at 1700. At 291600 the 3d Abn Bn began to move from FSB 17 to Tan Canh by truck and at 291616 the convoy was attacked by an estimated 3 NVA Companies vic coordinate ZB075323. The 3d Bn dismounted and returned fire; contact was broken at 1725 hours and the 3d Bn took up a blocking position along the road from Dak Rosa (ZB060312) to ZB079335. At 291640 the 7th Bn received one round of mortar fire which resulted in 9 WIA. Results for the contacts were Fdly: 10 KIA, 46 WIA, 10 TRUCKS Damaged. Enemy: 109 NVA KIA (BC), 1 CIA and 14 weapons CIA (See para 12). All elements closed into Dakto on 30 November and on 1 Dec the 6th ARVN Abn Bn arrived at Dakto airfield and the 3d ARVN Abn Bn departed for Saigon.

e. The 1/42 terminated Le Loi 44 (scty) on 22 Nov, moving 1 Company to Tan Canh, 1 Company to secure the FSB at Dakto Subsector and one Company remained to secure the bridge across the Dak Poko vic coordinate YB953238. The 1/42 terminated bridge security at 291000 and the company returned to Tan Canh. On 26 November the 3/42 departed Dakto Airfield by

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS MACJ) - 32 (A-D)

C-130 for the Lam Son Training Center. At 251000, the 1/42 (-1 Co) began a RD Security operation along the road between Dakto Subsector and FS 3 17. Le Loi 48 was terminated on 27 Nov after the contact on the road by the 3d Abn Bn.

f. Kham Jei 183 was conducted by the 2d Ranger Task Force including the 22d & 23d Ranger Battalions, and the 6th & 7th ARVN Abn Battalions. The operation began at 010800 Dec and terminated at 081615 Dec in an AO east of Dakto bounded by coordinates ZB059305, resulting in 1 Friendly KIA. Enemy casualties were unknown. At 061125 the 7th Abn Bn relieved the 22d and 23d Ranger Battalions in the AO and the Ranger Battalions began to move to Pleiku. The 6th Bn made contact with a small enemy force vic coordinate ZB133315 at 061655. Results were 1 Friendly KIA. The operation was terminated on 8 Dec and the 2d Abn Bn departed Dakto Airfield for Saigon. The 6th Abn Bn and 3d Abn TF HQ were located at Tan Canh, and the 7th Abn Bn and Arty Btry were located at Dakto as of 9 Dec awaiting further orders.

## 12. (C) Results:

### a. Le Loi 46 - Kham Jei 180

UNIT	FRIENDLY			ENEMY	
	KIA	MIA	MIA	KIA	CIA
3/42	10	10	2	8	
Abn TF (2d & 3d Bn) 22d Rgr Bn	37	162		247	2
	47	184	2	255	2

The following enemy equipment was CIA:

- 1 60MM mortar
- 1 12.75MM HMG
- 8 LMG
- 7 B40 Rocket Launchers
- 24 AK47/50
- 19 Chicom Carbines
- 11 Chimcom Rifles
- 1-82MM Bipod with 3 rounds 82MM
- 2 Claymore mines, 1 US and one homemade
- Many packs, ponchos, canteens, medical supplies and other miscellaneous individual equipment.

### b. Kham Jei 180 Phase II

UNIT	FRIENDLY			ENEMY	
	KIA	MIA	MIA	KIA	CIA
22d Rgr Bn	5	18	0	31	1

Equipment CIA 2 AK47, 2 SMG, 1 SKS, 1 B40 Rocket Launcher & 7 B40 rounds, 11 rounds 60MM mortar.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS. MACJ3 -32 (K-D) )

c. Kham Jei 182

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>F R I E N D L Y</u>			<u>E N E M Y</u>	
	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>CIA</u>
2d Abn Bn	5	16		72	
3d Abn Bn	5	8		37	1
7th Abn Bn		9			
Abn TF HQ		1			
Abn Arty		3			
1/42		7			
	<u>10</u>	<u>44</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>109</u>	<u>1</u>

Fdly Equipment Losses - 10 Trucks damaged  
 Enemy Equipment Losses - 1 B40 Rocket Launcher  
                                   1 LMG  
                                   4 SKS  
                                   8 AK 47/50  
                                   12 rds 82mm mortar  
 Documents indicating elements  
 of the K4 & K5 Bns 24 NVA regt

d. Kham Jei 183-1 KIA, 1 WIA from 6th Abn Bn. Enemy: 0.

e. Cumulative Results:

<u>KIA</u>	<u>F R I E N D L Y</u>		<u>KIA</u>	<u>E N E M Y</u>	
	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>		<u>KIA</u>	<u>CIA</u>
63	247	2	395	4	

Approximately 100 Enemy weapons CIA.

f. Other casualties during the period:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>KILLED</u>	<u>WOUNDED</u>	<u>REMARKS</u>
3d Abn Bn	2	7	Accidentally mortared on 14 Nov. Mortar attack at Dakto Airfield on 15 Nov.
9th Abn Bn	<u>2</u>	<u>4</u> 11	

13. (C) Administrative Matters:

a. The resupply of tactical units was very timely and efficient throughout the operations, primarily because of the availability of US Army Aviation Support. The only difficulty that impeded resupply was the shortage of adequate tools for constructing LZs. As a result of this shortage the resupply of several units had to be delayed while they prepared LZs. The major supply problem encountered during the operation occurred on 17 Nov when ARVN was in heavy contact vic hill 1416. The ARVN sent 900 rds of 105mm ammo from Kontum to Dakto FSB without fuzes. The result was the FSB had only 200 rds with fuzes until additional fuzes could be shuttled to the FSB by HULD the night of 17 Nov and morning of

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

18 Nov. The combat loads carried by troops was adequate, and resupply of small arms ammunition was never a problem.

b. The maintenance of equipment was performed in a professional manner by all units, which points out the success of their training programs, and strong supervision of their leaders.

c. Treatment of casualties was handled as expeditiously as circumstances would permit. The US Helicopter pilots performed magnificently in accomplishing the evacuation of ARVN wounded. The best example was during the night of 17 Nov when pilots evacuated 77 ARVN paratroopers from an LZ cut into the side of hill 1416 vic coordinate ZB130310. The LZ was within enemy small arms range and was so steep that helicopters could only touch down on one skid and hover while the wounded were lifted into the ship. The only delays in Medevac during the operations was caused by the amount of time it took to cut LZs out of the heavy jungle, however all Medevacs requested were accomplished.

d. Transportation: Because of the mobility afforded ARVN by the use of US helicopter support transportation was excellent throughout the operations. The only problem encountered was a shortage of slings with which to move the ARVN 105MM artillery and ammunition. The slings that the ARVN had on hand were unserviceable, and as a result the G4 Advisor and Artillery Advisor had to borrow slings from the 173d Abn Bde which was also short of slings.

e. Communications: The new series of radios, particularly the PRC 25 provided solid radio communications throughout the operations. The land line communications between Kontum and Tan Canh, Kontum and Dakto Airfield and Tan Canh and Dakto Airfield were operational approximately 80% of the time.

14. (U) Special Equipment and techniques: None.

15. (C) Advisory Analysis:

a. The cooperation and coordination throughout the planning and execution of operations around Dakto was outstanding and as a result the combined US/ARVN forces achieved one of the greatest victories of the war.

b. The mobility and fire support afforded the ARVN by US forces was the key factor in the success of operations. The ARVN using US helicopters were able to mass decisive combat strength in their portion of the area of operations rapidly and using USAF/VNAF air support and 105, 155 and 8" Artillery support to their best advantages were able to inflict devastating defeats on elements of the 24th NVA Regiment.

c. Units must remain flexible and ready to change plans on a moment's notice based on intelligence reports. The ARVN reaction to

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

MACTR-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT Combat After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3 - 32 (K-D) )

4th Division Intelligence on 29 Nov during Operation Kham Jai 182 resulted in a decisive victory west of Dakto against elements of the 24th NVA Regiment that had moved into the area on 28 November. This was an excellent example of combat flexibility.

d. Although the 1/42(-1 Co) was performing road security between Dakto and FSB #17 (Le Loi 48) the convoy carrying the 3d Abn Bn from FSB 17 to Tan Canh was ambushed by 3 NVA Companies vic coordinate ZB075323 at 291616 Nov. The aggressiveness and quick reaction of the personnel in the convoy turned the ambush into a victory resulting in 37 NVA KIA, however 5 friendly soldiers were killed and 12 wounded during the battle and 10 trucks were damaged (all were later recovered by the 1/42). The ambush might have been avoided if the 1/42(-) had sent elements out from the road to patrol the high ground, however they did not and as a result the NVA were able to move to within 100-150 meters of the road undetected.

## 16. (C) Lessons Learned:

a. Units must remain flexible and ready to react to a rapidly changing situation on a moment's notice exploiting the superior mobility afforded by US Army Aviation.

b. When operating in dense mountainous terrain adequate tools, both hand and power must be available for rapid preparation of LZs. Unnecessary delay in preparation of LZs can be costly when wounded are awaiting evacuation.

c. When resupplying artillery ammunition the ARVN must insure that fuzes are sent with rounds.

d. In airstrikes on prepared positions heavy 500 and 750 pound bombs with delay fuzes must be used to destroy bunkers. CBUs are not effective against well fortified positions with overhead cover, and if napalm is used it should be dropped after heavy bombs have cleared out the area so that the napalm can reach the ground.

e. In operations requiring a number of helilifts of artillery and ammunition the ARVN must have adequate slings on hand to move a minimum of one 105 Btry and 1,000 rounds of ammunition. The slings must be properly maintained to insure continuous serviceability, and if a shortage exists slings must be requested well in advance of anticipated operations.

f. Units with a mission of road security must send patrols out far enough from the road to recon all possible enemy ambush locations, particularly on high ground and other key terrain features.

# CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

MACTN-KT3

12 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (RCS MACJ3 -32 (K-D) )

FOR THE COMMANDER:

3 Inclosures

as

/s/ Wendell W. Barney

WENDELL W. BARNEY

Major, Arty

Admin Officer

TRUE COPY

*Francis E Cutler*

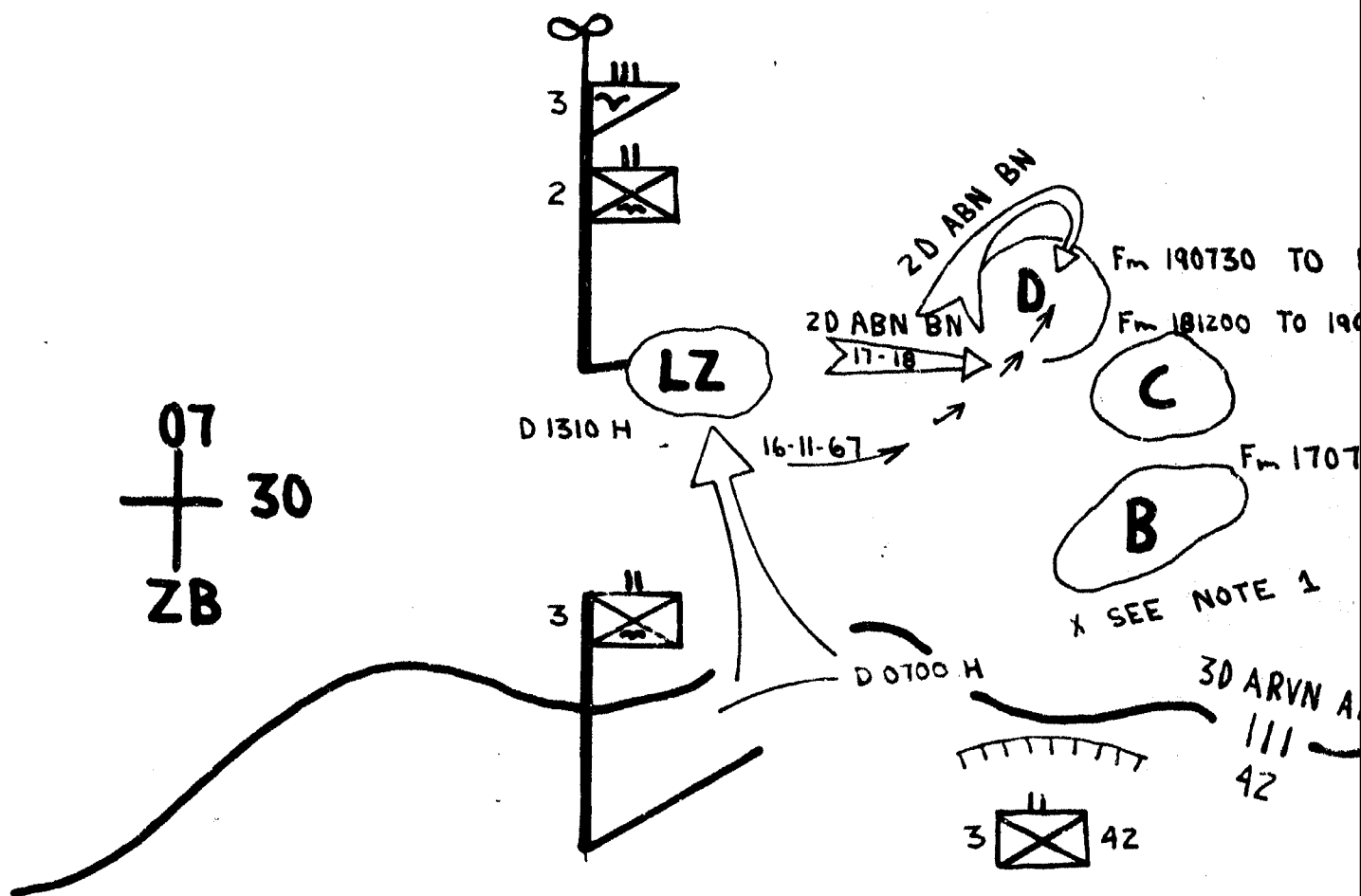
FRANCIS E. CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

CONFIDENTIAL

OVERLAY #1

KHAM-JEI OPERATION #180

REF VN MAP SCALE 1/50,000 SHE



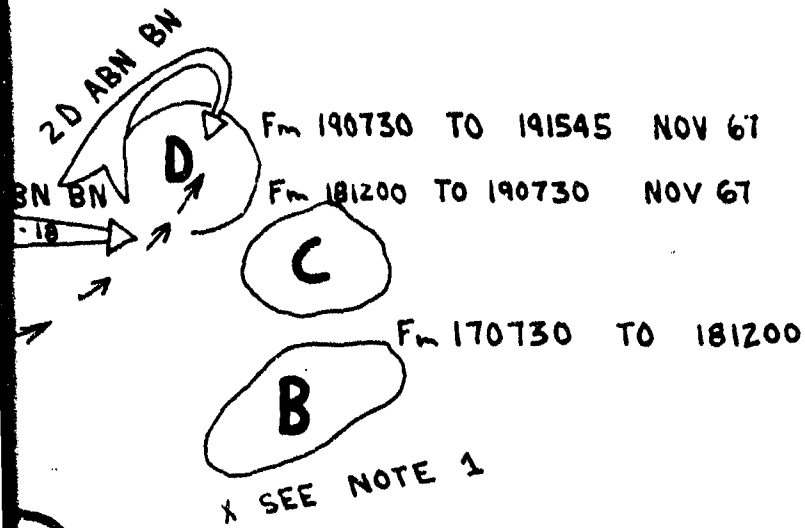
1

CONFIDENTIAL

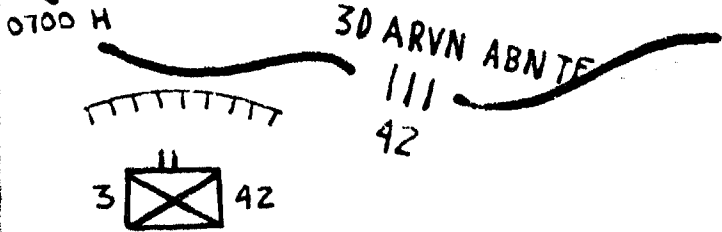
CONFIDENTIAL

# OPERATION #180 3<sup>D</sup> ARVN ABN TF/36

SCALE 1/50,000 SHEET NO 6538/142



THE PROGRESSIVE ENGAGEMENT  
OF 3D ARVN ABN TF INCLUDING  
2D & 3D ABN BNS TO SEIZE THE  
STRATEGIC HILLTOP 1416  
IN OBJECTIVE DELTA



NOTE 1: LOC OF 3/42 CONTACT  
ON OPERATION LE LOI 46

15  
+  
24

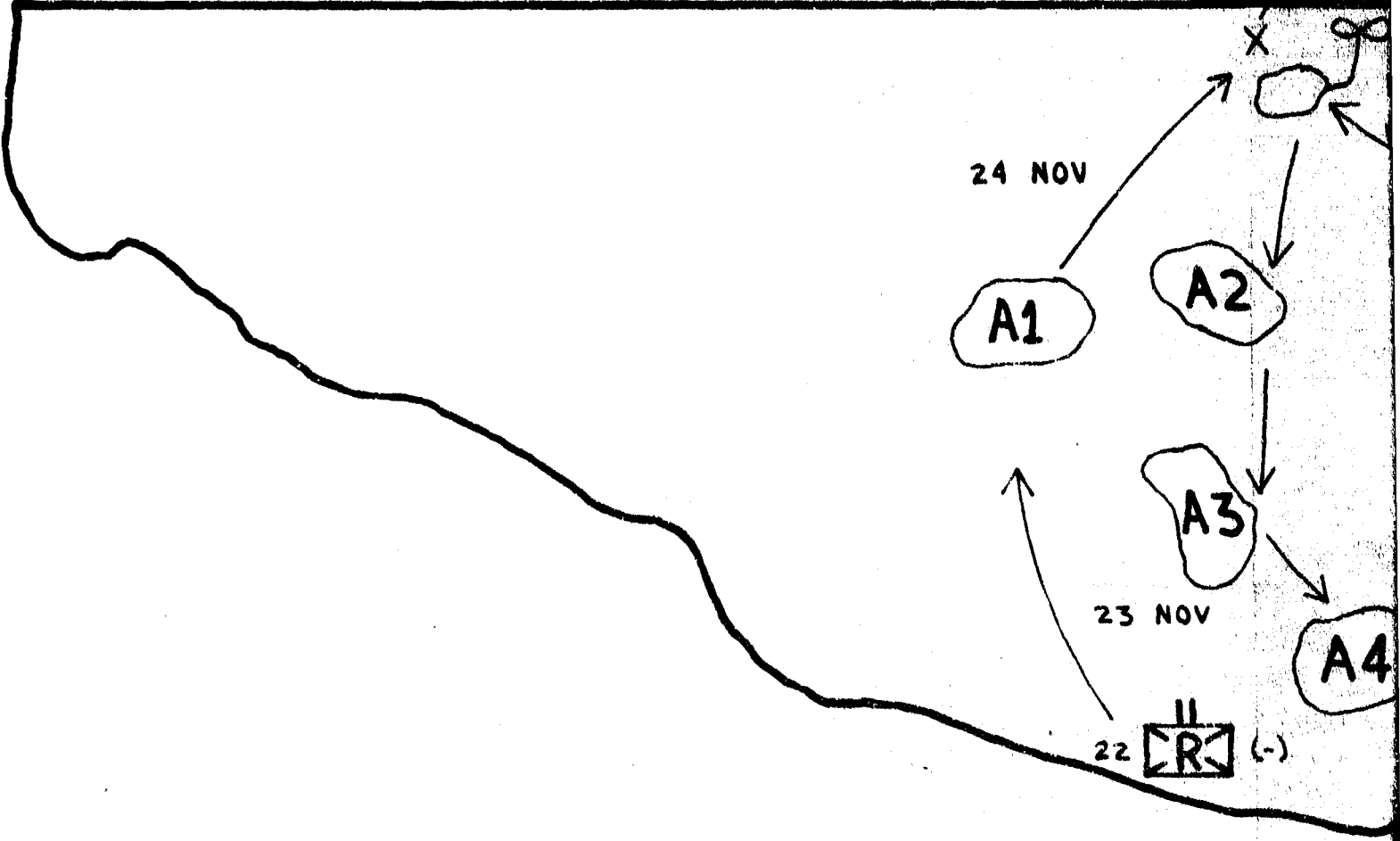
2

CONFIDENTIAL

KHAM JEI 180

23-28 NOVEMBER 1964

CONFIDENTIAL



95  
|  
27 +  
|  
YB

1

CONFIDENTIAL

# JEI 180 (PHASE II)

28 NOVEMBER 1967

ZB  
+ 36  
08

CONTACT W/EST NVA  
COMPANY 251730 NOV

1 CO LIFTED FROM  
DAK TO 270930 NOV

CONTACT W/NVA OUTPOST  
241415 NOV

24 NOV

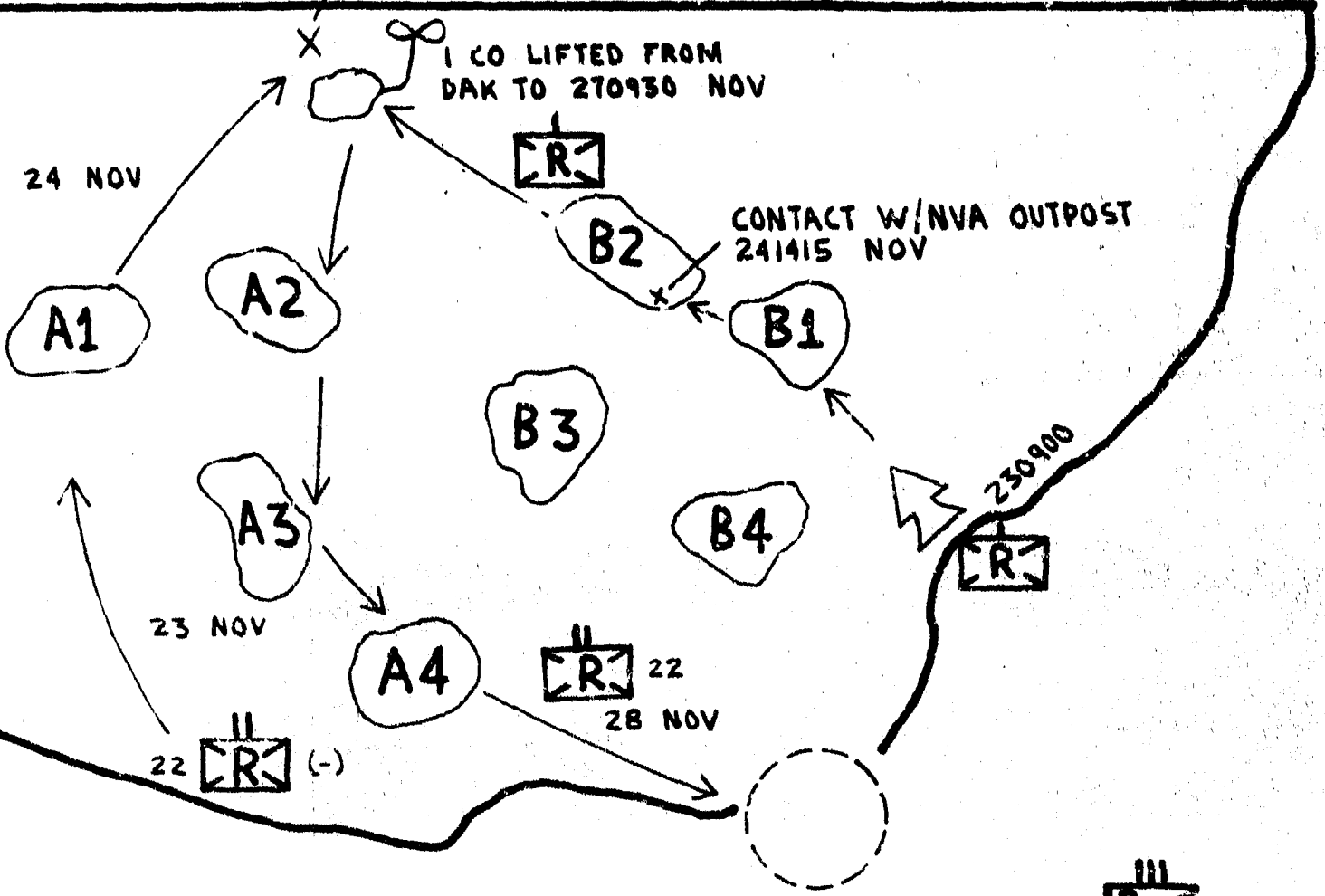
23 NOV

22  
28 NOV

22 (-)

230900

(LIFTED TO AO  
28 NOV  
(-)



CONFIDENTIAL

2





CONFIDENTIAL

4th Infantry Division Artillery

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 10

CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION ARTILLERY  
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDD-AC

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDDH-CG  
APO US Forces 96262

1. (U) NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION: THE BATTLE OF DAK TO.
2. (C) DATES OF OPERATION: 25 October to 1 December 1967.
3. (U) LOCATION: Dak To, Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam.
4. (U) CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters 4th Infantry Division Artillery.
5. (U) REPORTING OFFICER: Division Artillery Commander Colonel Robert C. McAlister.
6. (U) TASK ORGANIZATION: Inclosure 1.
7. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES: Task Organization, Inclosure 1.
8. (U) INTELLIGENCE: Omitted.
9. (C) MISSION: Artillery with the 4th Infantry Division Supports the Battle of Dak To with available artillery, radar, automatic weapons, searchlights and meteorological resources.
10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: The concept of artillery employment was to provide direct support artillery to each maneuver element and to employ the relatively large amount of medium and heavy artillery in reinforcing and general support roles to weight maneuver efforts and to provide artillery support for ARVN operations.
11. (C) EXECUTION:
  - a. Initially, the 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery (-) was in direct support of the 1st Brigade. Battery A, 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery (105mm T) reinforced its fires, and Battery C, 6th Battalion, 14th Artillery

Downgraded At 3 Year Intervals  
Declassified After 12 Years.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDD-AC

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

was in general support. As the enemy threat became more clearly defined and the tempo of the battle increased, additional maneuver forces and artillery were committed to AO Spaatz. Battery A, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery (155mm S.P.) arrived on 30 October, followed by Battery B, 1st Battalion, 92d Artillery (155mm T) and the 175mm gun platoon of Battery A, 3d Battalion, 18th Artillery on 5 November, and Batteries B (155mm S.P.) and D (-) (8 S.P.) 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery on 9 November. The 8 howitzer platoon of Battery A, 3d Battalion, 18th Artillery closed in Dak To on 10 December, and this completed the build up of general support and reinforcing artillery. In the meantime, each arriving maneuver unit brought with it its associated direct support artillery unit beginning with Battery B, 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery (105mm T) on 2 November and the remainder of the battalion in support of the 173d Airborne Brigade on 6 November. The arrival of 1st Cavalry Division (AM) elements on 11 November brought Battery B, 2d Battalion, 19th Artillery (105mm T) and the Headquarters and Battery C on 16 November. At this time the maximum deployment of artillery was attained 15 batteries of all calibers, with a total of 77 artillery pieces, were firing in support of the battle.

b. Artillery units made 48 displacements in order to support the changing demands of the battle. Initially, the emphasis was in the area south and southwest of Dak To. With the commitment of the 173d Airborne Brigade on the west flank of the 1st Brigade, the center of mass of artillery was displaced to the west, and again to the south as both brigades moved south against the enemy defenses.

c. In order to coordinate artillery activities in the battle area and to insure maximum effectiveness in the allocation of general support artillery fires, a Division Artillery Tactical Command Post was opened at Dak To on 9 November.

d. Two artillery displacements are of special significance

(1) On 13 November, Battery B, 1st Battalion, 92d Artillery (155mm T) was displaced by air (flying crane) to a forward fire support base at YB908121. It remained there throughout the period as a keystone of artillery support for all three brigades operating within its capabilities.

(2) On 17 November, Battery A, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery was displaced to the vicinity of Old Dak To (ZB060265) and placed in general support, reinforcing the fires of the ARVN artillery. The battalion established liaison and communication with the headquarters of the ARVN Airborne Task Force. This displacement was made in time to support the major ARVN contact on 19 November in which many enemy casualties were credited to its firing by the ARVN.

e. Artillery with the Division fired a total of 151,851 rounds during the battle. A summary by unit and caliber, and the totals for each day are shown at Inclosure 2.

2

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDD-AC

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

f. Countermortar radar support was provided by the organic radars of the 6th Battalion, 29th Artillery, and 3d Battalion, 319th Artillery, and by the radar section of the 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery which was placed OPCON to Division Artillery. The radars were deployed so as to provide maximum coverage. As the threat changed, the radars were deployed accordingly. The radar section of the 4th Battalion, 42d Artillery was successfully moved by air to a forward fire support base in response to an enemy mortar threat to the forward areas.

g. Meteorological support was furnished continuously throughout the battle.

h. Maximum use was made of the limited aerial observation capability available.

i. Two enemy actions were of special significance to artillery

(1) On 15 November, enemy firing mortars, recoilless rifles, and probably a 75mm pack howitzer destroyed 2 C-130 aircraft and set fire to the ASP at Dak To.

(2) On 1 December, the enemy conducted a rocket attack on Battery B, 5th Battalion, 16th Artillery from at least two positions.

## 12(C) RESULTS:

a. Enemy:

(1) Because of the virtual impossibility of obtaining immediate visual surveillance in the densely vegetated terrain which characterized the battle area and the variety and quantity of weapons systems employed, it is not possible to make a significantly accurate statement of the results specifically achieved by artillery fire.

(2) POW's reported that artillery fires were effective and greatly feared.

(3) Effective results were obtained by countermortar radar against mortar, and to a lesser extent rocket, positions. Numerous secondary explosions were observed.

(4) On 1 December artillery fired against an active rocket position. 809 rounds were fired in zone and sweep centered less than 100 meters of the actual position, which was uncovered by the infantry based on the firing grid. The position showed evidence of extensive damage by artillery fire.

(5) As many as six batteries were used in TOT fires on intelligence targets, and as many as 6-8 batteries fired in support of major contacts.

3

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDD-AC

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

b. Friendly:

(1) Personnel:

KIA - 8

WIA - 38

MIA - 1

(2) Material:

1 - 155mm how SP, M109

2 - Trucks - 5 ton

7 - PRC 25 radio

18 - Rifle, M16

13. (U) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: Logistic support was particularly outstanding during the entire operation. At no time was artillery firing seriously curtailed by ammunition shortage. Maximum use was made throughout of resupply directly from depot to those firing positions which could be resupplied by road.

14. (U) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: None.

15. (C) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Observation: The relatively high density of maneuver units and supporting artillery and the large number of tactical air and gunship sorties employed generated increased problems in air-ground coordination. The result was excessive "checkfires" of artillery at critical times when artillery support was required.

Recommendation: That the problem of air safety from ground fires be restudied with the objective of agreement on simplified measures which will allow maximum tactical benefit to accrue from both weapons systems. This study is in progress.

b. Observation: One of the most valuable artillery positions in the battle was that of a 155mm battery airlifted into position by use of the "flying crane". Because of its additional range and greater weight of metal, this battery was in constant support of all three committed brigades.

Recommendation: That sufficient "flying cranes" be maintained available to permit this flexible employment of medium artillery.

4  
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVDDD-AC

11 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (U)

c. Observation. Use of air observers was particularly effective in suppression of enemy mortar and rocket fire. The small number of observation helicopters available and the complete lack of artillery fixed wing aircraft degraded this effort.

Recommendation: That fixed wing observation aircraft (O1) be restored to artillery unit control.

d. Observation: Engineer support was required in preparation of position areas for medium and heavy artillery.

Recommendation: That Engineer support planning include provisions for preparation of position areas for medium and heavy artillery.

2 Incl:

- 1 - Task Organization  
for the Battle of  
Dak To
- 2 - Daily Ammunition  
Expenditures (All  
Calibers)

/s/Robert C McAlister  
ROBERT C McALISTER  
Colonel, Artillery  
Commanding

A TRUE COPY

*Francis E Cutler*

FRANCIS E CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

# CONFIDENTIAL

## TASK ORGANIZATION FOR THE BATTLE OF DAK TO

25 - 29 October 1967

1st Bde

6/29 (-) DS  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty  
A/4/42 DS 2/R

52d Gp

C/6/14 GSR

30 October - 1 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29 (-) DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

Div Arty

A/5/16 GSR

52d Gp  
G/6/14 GSR

2 - 3 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29 (-) DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
B/3/319 DS 4/502  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

Div Arty

A/5/16 GSR

52d Gp  
C/6/14 GSR

4 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29 DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
B/3/319 DS 4/503  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

Div Arty

A/5/16th GSR

52d Gp  
C/6/14 GSR

5 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29 DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
B/3/319 DS 4/503  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

Div Arty

A/5/16 GSR

52d Gp  
C/6/14 GSR  
B/1/92 GS  
A/3/18 (-) GSR

Incl 1

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

TASK ORGANIZATION FOR THE BATTLE OF DAK TO (CONT)

6-8 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29 DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

173d Abn Bde

3/319th DS

Div Arty

A/5/16th GSR

52d Gp

B/1/92d GS

9 - 10 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29th DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

173d Abn Bde

3/319th DS

Div Arty

A/5/16th GSR  
D/5/16th (-) GS  
B/5/16 (-) GS  
TAC CP

52d Gp

B/1/92 GS

C/6/14 GS

A/3/18 GS

11 - 30 November 1967

1st Bde

6/29th DS  
A/4/42d Reinf  
Plt (-) D/4/60  
3 SLT 29th Arty

173d Abn Bde

3/319 DS

1st Bde 1 ACD

2/19th (-) DS

Div Arty

TAC CP  
A/5/16th GS  
B/5/16th GS  
D/5/16th (-) GS  
5/16th TAC CP

52d Gp

B/1/92 GS

C/6/14 GS

A/3/18 GS

# CONFIDENTIAL

## DAILY AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES (ALL CALIBERS)

### DAK TO AREA

Oct 25	163	Nov 12	7642
26	133	13	6043
27	157	14	7040
28	153	15	4883
29	137	16	3282
30	315	17	8402
31	231	18	5803
Nov 1	459	19	8686
2	406	20	7370
3	1554	21	5902
4	3308	22	8615
5	2652	23	9959
6	2111	24	7993
7	4526	25	5629
8	5021	26	5267
9	5539	27	4582
10	1899	28	3873
11	8010	29	2442
		30	2407

Incl 2

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

## AMMUNITION EXPENDITURES FOR THE BATTLE OF DAK TO

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CALIBER</u>	<u>EXPENDITURE</u>
A/4/42	105	9,899
A/6/29	105	11,749
B/6/29	105	16,980
C/6/29	105	15,165
A/3/319	105	14,654
B/3/319	105	13,807
C/3/319	105	15,844
B/2/19	105	8,189
C/2/19	105	10,487
	TOTAL	116,774
A/5/16	155	7,850
B/5/16	155	7,221
B/1/92	155	8,374
	TOTAL	23,445
D/5/16	8"	2,390
C/6/14	8"	3,622
A/3/18	8"	1,708
	TOTAL	7,720
C/6/14	175	2,240
A/3/18	175	1,672
	TOTAL	3,912
	GRAND TOTAL	151,851

CONFIDENTIAL

4th Aviation Battalion  
4th Infantry Division

6  
COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclousure 11

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 4TH AVIATION BATTALION  
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96262

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDDH-GC  
APO San Francisco 96262

1. (U) NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION: Battle For Dak To.
2. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: 250001 October to 302400 November 1967.
3. (U) LOCATION: Dak To, Kontum Province, RVN.
4. (U) CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 4th Aviation Battalion, 4th Infantry Division.
5. (U) REPORTING OFFICER: LTC Myles H. Mierswa, Commanding Officer, 4th Aviation Battalion.
6. (U) TASK ORGANIZATION:
  - a. HHD, 4th Avn Bn
  - b. Co A (Airmobile), 4th Avn Bn
  - c. Co B, 4th Avn Bn
7. (U) SUPPORTING FORCES:
  - a. 52d Combat Aviation Battalion
    - (1) 57th Assault Helicopter Company
    - (2) 119th Assault Helicopter Company
    - (3) 155th Assault Helicopter Company (-)
    - (4) 170th Assault Helicopter Company
    - (5) 189th Assault Helicopter Company (-)

CONFIDENTIAL

Downgraded At 3 Year Intervals;  
Declassified After 12 Years.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

(6) 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company

b. 192d Assault Helicopter Company (-)

c. 213th Assault Support Helicopter Company (-)

d. 243d Assault Support Helicopter Company (-)

8. (C) INTELLIGENCE: There was no evidence of any enemy air activity. There was evidence of AA fire with .50 caliber weapons. Heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire was experienced throughout the AO especially during periods of significant contact. All forward LZ's were considered hot, and were subject to small arms, automatic weapons, mortar, and B-40 rocket fire during unit occupancy.

9. (U) MISSION: To provide aviation support to those units assigned, attached, or OPCON to the 4th Infantry Division and operating in AO Spaatz.

10. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS: Significant Highlights.

25 Oct: UH-1H fr 119th AHC shot at vic YB9236. Neg cas.

30 Oct: CA 2 Co 3-8 vic YB927186.

2 Nov: UH-1H fr 170th AHC received 7 rounds vic YB8812. 1 WIA.

3 Nov: CA 2 Co 3-12 vic YB005163.  
CA 2 Co 3-8 vic YB919141.

4 Nov: OH-23 fr Div Arty shot at vic YB9421. Neg cas.

6 Nov: UH-1H fr 170th AHC received 3 rounds vic YB890273.  
Pilot WIA.

8 Nov: CA 2 Co 3-12 vic YB996162.

9 Nov: 1 Co 3-12 ADMIN vic FSB 3-8 YB996162.  
UH-1C (gunship) received 2 rounds vic YB902151. Neg cas.  
CH-47 fr 179th ASHC received 2 rounds vic YB850175.  
Neg cas.

10 Nov: 2 Co 1-8 ADMIN vic Dak To.  
1 Co 3-8 CA vic YB905149.  
UH-1C fr 119th AHC crashed vic YB893146. 1 KIA, 3 WIA.  
UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 1 round vic YB893146. Neg Cas.  
Hvy Scouts, D, 1-10 Cav received ground fire vic YB9012.  
Neg cas.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

- 11 Nov 3/12 CP & DS arty moved vic YB996162.  
Lt Scouts D, 1-10 Cav received automatic weapons fire  
while on VR vic YB8913. Neg cas.
- 12 Nov: CA 1-8 w/3 Cos & DS arty vic YB910120.  
B 3-8 ADMIN to Dak To.  
D 1-12 lifted into loc w/C&D 3-8 vic FSB.  
Co & 2 sec DS arty 2/503 lifted to YB821159.  
UH-1H fr 170th AHC shot at vic YB913125. Neg cas.  
UH-1H fr 170th AHC shot at vic YB900149. Neg cas.  
UH-1H fr 170th AHC received 2 rounds vic YB900153.  
Neg cas.
- 13 Nov: CA B & C 1-8 vic YB957115.  
UH-1H fr 170th AHC hit by B-40 rocket round vic YB896149.  
3 WIA.
- 14 Nov: D Co 3-8 lifted to Dak To. A Co lifted to location  
C Co vic YB895149.
- 15 Nov: CA B & C 3-12 vic YB875073.
- 17 Nov: D 1-8 lifted to Co base w/D 3-12.  
B 3-12 lifted to FSB.
- 18 Nov: B 3-8 from FSB to A 3-8 location.  
C 3-8 lifted to Dak To and D Co lifted from Dak To to FSB.  
OH-23, fr Div Arty, received ground fire vic YB9916.  
Neg cas. A/C not flyable.
- 19 Nov: UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 1 round vic YB876078. Neg  
cas.  
UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 1 round vic YB876028. Neg  
cas.
- 20 Nov: CA 3-8 w/3 Cos vic ZB1116.
- 22 Nov: UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 1 round vic YB810130. 3 WIA.
- 23 Nov: CA C Co 3-8 vic YB924228.  
UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 5 rounds vic YB811120.  
Neg cas.  
UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 12 rounds vic ZB0119. 1 WIA.  
UH-1H fr 119th AHC received 3 rounds vic YB797136. Neg cas  
A/C not flyable.  
C Co 1-12 lifted vic YB800126.
- 24 Nov: B Co 1-12 lifted vic YB821159.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

- 25 Nov: CA 2 Co 1-8 vlc YB8513.  
AL 2 Co 3-8 vlc YB9815.
- 26 Nov: CA Co B 3-12 vlc YB8107.  
AL Co C vlc YB8107.
- 27 Nov: AL FSB 1-8 vlc YB934187.
- 28 Nov: AL 1 Co 1-8 vlc YB934187.  
CA 2 Co 1-12 vlc YB835145.  
AL 1 Co 1-12 vlc YB821159.  
52d UH-1H crashed and was destroyed during CA vlc  
YB832143. Neg cas.  
AL FSB 3-12 vlc YB822080.
- 29 Nov: AL Bn CP & 1 Co 1-12 YB855189.
- 30 Nov: UH-1H fr 189th AHC received 1 round .50 caliber fire  
vlc YB802108. 1 WIA. A/C not flyable.

12. (C) RESULTS:

a. Unit Data:	<u>4th Avn Bn</u>		<u>52d CAB</u>
	<u>Co A</u>	<u>Co B</u>	
(1) Hours flown:	347	97	7,550
(2) Sorties completed:	855	419	17,563
(3) Passengers carried:	1,359	180	32,516
(4) Tons of cargo transported:	27.5	NA	4,509
(5) WIA:	0	0	15
(6) MIA:	0	0	0
(7) KIA:	0	0	3
	<u>D. 1-10 Cav</u>	<u>Div Arty</u>	<u>1st Bde</u>
(1) Hours flown:	165	186	103
(2) Sorties completed:	225	451	377
(3) Passengers carried:	70	448	292

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

(4) Tons of cargo transported:	NA	NA	1
(5) WIA:	0	0	0
(6) MIA:	0	0	0
(7) KIA:	0	0	0

b. Totals for Operational Data:

(1) Hours flown:	8,448
(2) Sorties completed:	19,890
(3) Passengers carried:	34,865
(4) Tons of cargo transported:	4,537
(5) WIA:	15
(6) MIA:	0
(7) KIA:	3

13. (U) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: The airfield at Dak To was a key factor in providing logistical support of tactical operations in AO Spaatz. The airfield was used as an FSA, a PZ for resupply to units operating throughout the AO, and as a staging area for unit movements and combat assault operations. The continuous, effective operation of the airfield was essential and required both organization and coordination of effort. The senior ground commander stationed at the airfield is responsible for the operation of the airfield. His major responsibilities include, but are not limited to, the following areas:

- a. Air Traffic Control Procedures.
- b. Allocation of facilities and space on the airfield (includes designating areas for parking and for use in airmobile, resupply, and other type operations).
- c. Servicing of aircraft (e.g. refueling, rearming, etc.)
- d. Facility improvement and maintenance (e.g. runway repairs, etc)
- e. Dissemination of NOTAMS containing information pertaining to the operation, safety, and servicing of aircraft.
- f. Security of the airfield.

The Dak To airfield was used simultaneously by fixed wing

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

aircraft ranging in size from the O-1 to the C-130, and by all sizes of rotary wing aircraft from the OH-13 to the CH-54. The major problem areas were in air traffic control, servicing of aircraft, and allocation of space for aircraft parking and operations. Those problems were ultimately resolved by extensive planning and coordination and by the cooperation of all users of the airfield's facilities. There was no loss of support to any of the maneuver elements due to the various problems encountered.

14. (U) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

None

15. (C) COMMANDER ANALYSIS:

The aviation support provided to the US and ARVN forces was a significant contributing factor to their success in the Battle of Dak To. As the tempo of the contact picked up, there was a corresponding increase in the amount of aviation support required. The extension of the period of significant contact only served to emphasize the necessity for doing everything possible to conserve aviation resources and utilize them with maximum efficiency.

The number of units committed to the Battle of Dak To necessitated more centralized control of the allocated aircraft in order to insure the most efficient aircraft utilization. Accordingly, an Aviation Combat Operations Center (AVCOC) was established with representatives from the 4th Aviation Battalion, and aviation liaison officers from the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion and 173d Airborne Brigade. The AVCOC had the following responsibilities: (1) to advise the Division Forward Tactical Operations Center (FTOC) of the aircraft requirements requested by the supported units, and of the capability to satisfy those requirements; (2) to relay those requests approved by the division FTOC to Division Aviation; (3) to coordinate with the supported units and advise both the division FTOC and division aviation of any unusual aircraft requirements; (4) to provide assistance to the supported units in planning airmobile operations in AO Spatz.

One characteristic of the AVCOC was the extensive communications required. "Hot lines" were established to all major supporting and supported units, and to division aviation. Additionally, there were four radio frequencies allocated for aircraft control, which were in constant use. With that communications system in operation, the AVCOC was able to monitor closely the location and utilization of all aircraft working in the AO. When the tactical situation dictated, aircraft could be diverted to a priority mission and then subsequently reallocated either to their original missions or as indicated by new requirements. The net result was more efficient use of aircraft, a better flow of information, and a decrease in reaction times.

Aircraft availability determines the number of aircraft which

# CONFIDENTIAL



# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

can be placed in support of an operation. In turn, there are three major factors which determine aircraft availability. Those factors are pilot proficiency, maintenance support, and mission environment. The first two listed factors obviously are the responsibility of the aviation commanders. The third factor, mission environment, is a product of tactical situation and the ground commander's requirements.

The term "mission environment" includes factors such as the specific tasks for which the aircraft is used and the areas in which the aircraft is required to operate. The number and scope of tasks assigned by the ground commander determine the amount of "blade time" placed on the helicopter and the time at which the aircraft can be released for required daily maintenance. The amount of maintenance required is directly proportional to the amount of "blade time" used. Also, the longer the aircraft is kept on station, the less time there is to accomplish the required maintenance, and the less likely it will be available for the next day's missions. Therefore, it is incumbent upon each commander to insure that the aircraft allocated to them are utilized as judiciously as possible and released at the earliest practicable time.

The ground commanders at all echelons have a significant influence on aircraft availability through their control of the areas in which the aircraft operate. The same maxim applies to an aircraft landing area as to a unit position, e.g. make it right the first time and make improvements continuously. Aircraft landing area deficiencies have resulted in both personnel injury and aircraft damage. Specific items which the ground commander can accomplish, and which will materially contribute to safe operations and continued aircraft availability are as follows:

- a. Make the LZ as large as possible. For a hasty LZ, a rule of thumb would be to make the LZ triple the size of the largest helicopter which will be using it.
- b. Remove obstacles from the approach and departure paths to the LZ.
- c. Mark a touchdown area in the LZ and remove all stumps, logs, rocks, and other protruding objects from the area.
- d. Remove trash, debris, loose equipment, and supplies from the vicinity of the designated touchdown area.
- e. Provide a ground guide to visually inspect the touchdown area before the aircraft arrival and to guide the aircraft to touchdown.
- f. Insure that a radio is available and monitored so that the aircraft can establish contact prior to arrival in the LZ. Also, have smoke available to mark the LZ if the tactical situation permits and the pilot requests it.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

10 December 1967

g. Insure that dust and dirt will be disturbed as little as possible by rotor downwash. Measures which can be taken include use of penepime, the use of water to wet down the area prior to arrival of the aircraft, or the placement of the touchdown point in a grassy area.

The facilities available to control, park, and service aircraft also affect the amount and type of aviation support which can be provided. The lead time associated with the receipt of additional airfield operating personnel and with the completion of airfield improvement projects requires that a decision to expand be made as early as possible in the planning stage. The projects should then be initiated as soon as the necessary security exists and compromise of the tactical effort is not a consideration.

## 16. (C) RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. That a division aviation element, with liaison officers from supporting aviation headquarters, be employed as a part of the division forward tactical operations center in future operations.

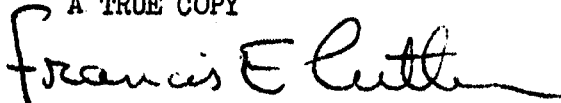
b. That all commanders monitor the use of aircraft and the condition of aircraft landing areas, and insure improvements are effected where indicated.

c. That airfield improvement projects be preplanned for support of selected levels of troop densities at airfields throughout the AO.

d. That implementation of airfield improvement projects, with the highest possible priority, be initiated as soon as operational requirements permit.

/s/Myles H. Mierswa  
MYLES H. MIERSWA  
LTC, Artillery  
Commanding

A TRUE COPY



FRANCIS E. CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

52d Combat Aviation Battalion  
17th Combat Aviation Group

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT  
BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 12

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION  
APO San Francisco 96318  
FLYING DRAGONS

AVGD-CC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November 1967

TO: See Distribution

1. (C) GENERAL: This report covers Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ) in the vicinity of DAK TO, Kontum Province, Republic of Vietnam, for the period 25 October - 30 November 1967.

a. Command Headquarters. The command headquarters, from the standpoint of aviation operations, was the 17th Combat Aviation Group.

b. Mission. The mission of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion (FLYING DRAGONS) was to provide aviation support to the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and its attached and supporting elements within the confines of AO SPAATZ (see inclosure 1).

c. Participating Units.

(1) Units organic to the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion, commanded by LTC Edward P Lukert Jr, which participated in Operation MAC ARTHUR, are as follows:

Headquarters, 52d Combat Aviation Battalion  
57th Assault Helicopter Company  
119th Assault Helicopter Company  
155th Assault Helicopter Company (-)  
170th Assault Helicopter Company  
189th Assault Helicopter Company (-)  
179th Assault Support Helicopter Company

(2) Supporting detachments organic to units in paragraph 1c(1), which supported the operation, were:

545th Transportation Detachment  
70th Signal Detachment  
94th Medical Detachment  
405th Transportation Detachment  
448th Signal Detachment  
755th Medical Detachment  
402d Transportation Detachment  
604th Transportation Detachment

CONFIDENTIAL

Downgraded At 3 Year Intervals;  
Declassified After 12 Years.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November 1967

6th Signal Detachment  
615th Transportation Detachment  
822d Signal Detachment

(3) Additional aviation support elements, OPCON to the 52d CAB during Operation MAC ARTHUR, were:

Gun Platoon, 192d Assault Helicopter Company  
180th Assault Support Helicopter Company  
196th Assault Support Helicopter Company  
213th Assault Support Helicopter Company  
243d Assault Support Helicopter Company

## 2. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. INTSUMS pertaining to Operation MAC ARTHUR were published as early as 15 October 1967, containing reports showing the build-up of enemy forces in preparation for the Battle of DAK TO. However, taken as they occurred, the reports were not significant until on or about 29 October when they began to indicate a pattern.

(1) During the period 15-21 October, there were several reports of small arms fire directed at aircraft in an area 20 kilometers (km) northeast of DAK TO. TAN CANH City (4 km northeast of DAK TO) received 5 rounds of mortar fire.

(2) 22-29 October, contact was made with an unidentified company size unit 8 km southeast of DAK TO. Heavy trail building activity was reported 30 km northwest of DAK TO. An agent reported that a 4000 man force would use the trails indicated to move into KONTUM Province.

(3) From 30-31 October, an agent reported the 24th NVA Regiment in an area 25 km northwest of DAK TO. A Special Forces vehicle hit a mine 12 km northwest of DAK TO.

(4) During the period 1-7 November, several mines were detonated along Highway 14, between DAK TO and KONTUM City. Ground contacts took place daily in an area West and South of DAK TO. The National Police reported extensive propaganda and anti-government lectures throughout KONTUM and PLEIKU Provinces. They also reported plans to cut Highway 14 and hit KONTUM with rockets and mortars. NVA Sgt Vu Hung, 66th NVA Regiment, rallied at DAK KRI Village, near DAK TO. He gave locations and battle plans for the 66th, 32d, 24th and 174th Regiments. He also mentioned the 40th Heavy Artillery Regiment. These units were reported by Sgt Vu Hung to be deployed in the vicinity of DAK TO, and planned to rocket DAK TO and KONTUM and overrun DAK TO.

(5) From 8-14 November, savage fighting occurred in the DAK TO area, with almost continuous heavy contact. 8-10 November, contact centered 7-15 km westsouthwest of DAK TO. After the 10th, the heaviest

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November 1967

concentration of activity was approximately 15-20km westsouthwest of DAK TO.

(6) On 15 November, the second phase of the DAK TO battle began. From 15-21 November, heavy contact continued. Enemy troops seemed to be well entrenched. Their objective seemed to be an attempt to inflict as many US casualties as possible, rather than attempting to overrun DAK TO itself. Units mentioned in paragraph 2a(4) had by now been confirmed in contact.

(7) During the period 22-28 November, enemy activity decreased significantly. In what appeared to be an attempt to divert US Forces from DAK TO, the enemy began to increase ambush and harassing activities in the KONTUM City, PLEIKU area. KONTUM City was mortared on the 27th. The 32d, 66th and 174th Regiments were badly mauled and attempted to pull back and regroup and resupply, with the 24th remaining in contact northeast of DAK TO.

### 3. (C) OPERATIONS:

a. The 52d CAV was the principal supporting aviation element during Operation MAC ARTHUR. The battalion's normal daily operational commitment to the 4th Infantry Division was 22 UH-1Hs, 10 UH-1Cs and 7 CH-47s, the majority of which was allocated to the 1st Brigade at DAK TO.

b. Significant Events. A day-by-day account of significant events is listed below. Due to the heat of battle and the maximum effort required of the operation, only the most important events are recorded. Single ship operations and miscellaneous missions will only be reflected in the overall statistics.

(1) 25 October 67 - 170th Assault Helicopter Company (AHC) participated in a combat assault (CA), lifting the 1/8th Inf and 1/22d Inf, for a total of 550 passengers (PAX) and 150 sorties. 119th AHC moved a portion of the 1/12th Inf, totaling 54 PAX in 20 sorties.

(2) 26 October 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA, lifting the 1/8th Inf, totaling 225 PAX and 143 sorties. 119th AHC conducted a final extraction for the 3/12th Inf, totaling 100 PAX.

(3) 27 October 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA for the 3/12th Inf, lifting 132 PAX in 40 sorties. 119th AHC conducted a CA, lifting 108 PAX; then conducted a final extraction for 3/8th Inf, totaling 261 PAX.

(4) 28 October 67 - 170th AHC participated in a CA for the 1/8th Inf.

(5) 30 October 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA for 3/12th Inf, totaling 254 PAX in 158 sorties.

3

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 15 October - 30 November 1967.

(6) 31 October 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA for 1st Bde lifting 72 PAX in 45 sorties.

(7) 3 November 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA for the 3/8th Inf, lifting 264 PAX in 111 sorties; followed by 4 assaults for the 3/12th, totaling 249 PAX in 105 sorties. The 119th then assaulted with the 1/12th, airlifting 211 PAX.

(8) 6 November 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA for the 2/504th Abn, lifting 120 PAX in 65 sorties. Heavy enemy fire was encountered in the landing zone (LZ). 1 UH-1H received 5 hits and 1 crewman was wounded.

(9) 7 November 67 - 170th AHC participated in a CA for the 1st Bde.

(10) 9 November 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA with the 3/8th Inf, lifting 121 PAX in 54 sorties. Aircraft received light small arms fire approaching the LZ. As aircraft were departing the LZ, heavy mortar fire was received. 1 UH-1H was hit and destroyed, wounding 1 crewman. The 170th then assaulted with elements of the 3/8th Inf, lifting 162 PAX in 67 sorties. That same day, the 119th lifted B/24th CIDG, totaling 130 PAX.

(11) 10 November 67 - 119th AHC lifted a 4th Div element, totaling 60 PAX. 1 UH-1C was shot down while providing covering fire.

(12) 11 November 67 - 119th AHC conducted a CA for the 3/12 Inf, totaling 120 PAX.

(13) 12 November 67 - 119th AHC conducted a CA for the 1/8th Inf, lifting 180 PAX. Sniper fire was received in and around the LZ with negative results. The 170th, on the same lift, had 1 UH-1H hit by 2 rounds of small arms fire, sustaining minor damage.

(14) 13 November 67 - 119th AHC assaulted with B and C Companies, 1/8th Inf, lifting 210 PAX and 4 additional sling loads. Sniper fire was received from 6 locations in and around the LZ, with negative results. On the same assault, the 170th had 1 UH-1H hit by rocket fire (B-40). The aircraft was destroyed and 4 crewmen wounded.

(15) 14 November 67 - 119th AHC conducted 2 CAs for the 3/8th Inf, totaling 450 PAX. Sniper fire was again received from all quadrants.

(16) 15 November 67 - 170th AHC conducted 2 CAs with the ARVN in support of the 1st Bde. A total of 690 PAX were lifted in 164 sorties. 1 UH-1H was hit by small arms fire and 1 crew member was wounded.

# CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November 1967.

(17) 18 November 67 - 170th AHC participated in a 4th Inf Div CA.

(18) 19 November 67 - 170th AHC participated in 4th Inf Div CA. 1 UH-1C was hit by small arms fire, sustaining only minor damage.

(19) 22 November 67 - 170th AHC participated in a CA for the 4th Inf Div. The 119th assaulted with the 173d Abn, lifting 120 PAX. 2 aircraft were hit by small arms fire without major damage.

(20) 23 November 67 - 170th AHC participated in a CA for the 4th Inf Div. The 119th conducted an assault and final extraction for the 3/8th Inf, totaling 120 PAX. Another final extraction for the 3/12th Inf resulted in the movement of 240 PAX.

(21) 24 November 67 - 170th and 119th AHCs conducted assaults with the 1/12th Inf, vicinity HILL 875. 120 PAX were moved. Automatic weapons fire was received from all quadrants of the LZ. 2 aircraft were hit; 1 by 8 rounds, the other by 10 rounds. 1 crew member was wounded. The 119th then made a final extraction for 2/503d Abn from HILL 875. 150 PAX were extracted.

(22) 25 November 67 - 119th AHC conducted an assault and final extraction for the 1/8th Inf, totaling 240 PAX and 10 sling loads. A final extraction was also executed for the 8/8th and 3/12th Inf with 370 PAX. Immediately following, the 170th assaulted with the 3/12th with 300 PAX in 100 sorties.

(23) 26 November 67 - 189th AHC executed 3 night medical evacuations under emergency conditions.

(24) 27 November 67 - 189th AHC moved 73 PAX and 1600 pounds of cargo for 4th Inf Div.

(25) 28 November 67 - 170th AHC conducted a CA with the 1/8th Inf, moving 121 PAX in 58 sorties. The 1/12th Inf was then lifted, totaling 353 PAX in 183 sorties. The 189th also participated in this lift, moving 372 PAX. 1 UH-1H crashed in the LZ with negative injury to the crew.

(26) 29 November 67 - 189th AHC conducted a final extraction and an assault, moving 252 PAX.

(27) 30 November 67 - 189th AHC conducted another move, lifting 585 PAX. 1 aircraft received automatic weapons fire, suffering 1 hit with negative injury to the crew. However, the battalion commander of the 3/12th Inf received minor facial wounds from flying metal particles.

5  
CONFIDENTIAL



CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November

c. Operational Statistics. The following is a resume of statistics amassed by the 52d CAB during Operation MAC ARTHUR. These totals do not include performances of those units attached or OPCON to the battalion during that operation.

<u>CBT</u>	<u>UH-1</u>	<u>CH-47</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>HOURS</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
17,563	6325	1225	7550
<u>CBT</u>	<u>BTRY</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>CARGO</u>
<u>ASLTS</u>	<u>MOVES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>TONS</u>
64	20	32,516	9075
<u>MED</u>	<u>DEAD</u>	<u>ENEMY</u>	<u>A/C</u>
<u>EVACS</u>	<u>EVACS</u>	<u>KBA</u>	<u>HITS</u>
*720	*320	UNKNOWN	16
<u>A/C</u>	<u>A/C</u>	<u>DOWN A/C</u>	<u>CREW MEM</u>
<u>DAMAGED</u>	<u>DEST</u>	<u>RECOV'D</u>	<u>INJ/KILL</u>
24	3	**40	15 / 3

AMMUNITION EXPENDED

<u>7.62mm</u>	<u>2.75mm</u>	<u>.40mm</u>
577,900	3488	6329

\* Figures include ARVN evacuations.

\*\* Figures include aircraft evacuated for the 335th Aslt Hel Co (attached to 173d Abn Bde and B/229th Avn Bn (attached to elements of 1st Cav Div)).

4. (C) MAINTENANCE:

During the period 25 October - 30 November 1967, elements of the 52d CAB flew in excess of 10,000 hours, the majority of which were flown in support of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, on Operation MAC ARTHUR. The elements involved performed 330 PMIs and 121 PMP inspections during that same period.

b. In and around DAK TO, 40 aircraft were evacuated by the 179th Aslt Spt Hel Co. All of these aircraft had been damaged by enemy fire or due to operating in extreme confined areas. Most of these aircraft were repairable, but may have been otherwise lost except for the professional competence of the 179th.

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT. After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October - 30 November 1967

c. It required approximately 25,000 maintenance manhours to perform the inspections mentioned in paragraph 4a. Additionally, it took an estimated 25,000 maintenance manhours to perform unscheduled maintenance. Because of the shortage of maintenance personnel in critical skills, crews often worked around the clock to supply aircraft to meet operational requirements. Because of their efforts, the battalion was able to maintain throughout the operation an availability rate of 78.4% on UH-1Cs and 84.6% on UH-1Hs.

5. (U) AWARDS AND DECORATIONS. The following recommendations for awards and decorations have been forwarded or are being prepared as a result of the Battle of DAK TO.

Silver Star	25
Distinguished Flying Cross	41
Bronze Star	13
Air Medal with "V" Device	74
Army Commendation Medal	16
Purple Heart	18

6. (U) COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS, DISCUSSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Landing Zones.

(1) Observation and Discussion. During this operation, an increased rate of combat and operational damage was experienced in infantry battalion and company size landing zones. On several combat assaults bomb craters were used for landing zones. This situation, although extremely hazardous, was unavoidable due to the terrain and location of the enemy. However, these same hazardous landing areas were used again and again with little or no improvement. In addition to the extremely small landing areas, trash in these landing zones doubled the risks to incoming aircraft. Loose ponchos, C-ration boxes and cans, as well as empty sandbags, were to be found in quantity in and around all landing zones. During this operation alone, this battalion replaced 38 main rotor blades and 35 tail rotor blades, the majority of which were caused by flying debris. The incidents cited cost the government approximately \$123,500.

(2) Recommendation. I recommend that commanders place increased emphasis on proper landing zone selection and preparation. The police of the area should be the responsibility of the individual within the infantry unit who is responsible for unit resupply by aircraft, and the clean-up program should be closely monitored.

b. Aircraft Utilization.

(1) Observations and Discussion. During the Battle of DAK TO, a misutilization of aircraft was experienced on a number of occasions. This was due primarily to inadequate planning or a lack of sufficient planning time. On several occasions, aircraft were assembled from all

7  
CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ) 25 October - 30 November.

over II Corps for a priority lift when existing assets could have served the purpose, properly utilized. Commanders failed to seek aviation advice during mission planning. Consequently, aviation supporting elements suffered. Aircraft would arrive on station, on time, only to find loads not ready for pickup or the intended delivery point had not been decided upon. Due to excessive idle time, critical blade time was expended, thereby reducing the aviation effectiveness during peak operational periods. Aviation requirements were constantly changed without warning, and using units had difficulty determining what might be needed two hours hence. The more aircraft allocated a unit, the more sorties added on to the existing requirements. Frequently, aircraft were extended to conduct emergency resupply at night, though these same aircraft may have remained idle for prolonged periods throughout the day. Whenever possible, missions should be given to the aircraft commander, not just a commitment for a certain number of aircraft. This way full utilization of the aircraft can best be managed with maximum flexibility.

(2) Recommendation. Commanders of supported units should place increased emphasis on the need to make known their requirements as far in advance as possible, utilizing warning orders which should be issued to aviation units as well as to ground elements. In a combat assault is to be conducted at first light, the mission requirement should be made known early enough the day before to provide time for a daylight reconnaissance of landing zones, flight routes and pickup zones. Execution of immediate combat assaults should be kept to a minimum and ordered only in the case of a combat emergency. With adequate planning time, a greater aviation effort can be made with fewer aircraft.

## c. Airfield Operations.

(1) Observations and Discussion. A common practice of ground commanders is to establish their base of operations adjacent to the air facility serving the area. Of course, this is for convenience of the headquarters, as well as facilitating air support to forward elements. However, after a time, aircraft are forced to divert to alternate poorly equipped areas to continue operations. The haphazard mixing of Air Force cargo aircraft, helicopters, light fixed wing aircraft and LOHs, plus the lack of ramp space and inadequate refueling and rearming facilities, cause confusion and resulted in a distinct safety hazard during the Battle of DAK TO.

(2) Recommendations. Extreme care should be exercised in the development of a small airfield into an adequate facility for supporting the various aviation elements required for a major operation. Priority engineer support must be allocated to build adequate parking ramps, dispersed POL points and rearming points. Consideration must be given to separating fixed wing traffic and parking from helicopter traffic and parking. Right and left hand traffic patterns should be initiated. Also, hover lanes should be provided gunships, so that they may move to the runway for a running takeoff after refueling and rearming; A high priority should be given to dust control. Artillery positions should be placed so they do not fire through traffic patterns or otherwise restrict the full utilization of the airfield. Airfield

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

SUBJECT: After Action Report, Operation MAC ARTHUR (AO SPAATZ), 25 October -  
30 November 1967

perimeters must be moved out far enough to meet the above requirement and to provide for adequate dispersion of aircraft to preclude excessive losses to rocket or mortar attack. Vehicle traffic must be routed away from the pads, medevac pads and other critical installations should be dispersed parallel to and along the active runway.

d. Safety.

(1) Observations and Discussion. During the Battle of DAK TO, several extremely unfortunate accidents occurred; accidents which could have easily been avoided. Passengers loading and off-loading helicopters continued to walk into turning rotor blades. Turning blades are a hazard at any time; however, when operating on other than level ground, the hazard increases ten-fold. A rotor strike will almost always result in decapitation and death to the individual involved.

(2) Recommendation. Personnel operating in the vicinity of helicopters should be constantly reminded of the dangers involved. Classes or demonstration should be given as to the proper method of boarding or departing a helicopter. On the just concluded operation, 3 lives were unnecessarily lost due to carelessness in this manner.

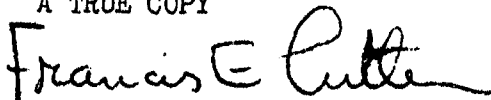
FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
Map (AO SPAATZ) (omitted from  
the True Copies)

/s/Curtis D Green  
CURTIS D GREEN  
MAJ INF  
Adjutant

Distribution  
2-1st Avn Bde  
4-17th Cbt Avn Cp  
2-4th Inf Div  
1-1st Bde, 4th Inf Div

A TRUE COPY



FRANCIS E CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

# CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

299th Engineer Battalion  
937th Engineer Group

COMBAT OPERATIONS AFTER ACTION REPORT

BATTLE FOR DAK TO

Inclosure 13

CONFIDENTIAL

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 299TH ENGINEER BATTALION (C)  
APO 96318

EGCC-CO

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS· MACV J3-32)

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN. AVDDH-GC  
APO 96262

1. NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION: Battle of Dak To/  
Operation MacArthur.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 250001 October to 012400 December 1967.
3. LOCATION: Dak To Province, RVN.
4. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 4th Infantry Division.
5. REPORTING OFFICER: LTC D. I. Aguilar, CO, 299th Engr Bn (C).
6. TASK ORGANIZATION:
  - a. Organic Units: 299th Engr Bn General Support of 4th Infantry Division.
  - b. Attachments: 15th Engr Co (LE). Direct support of 299th Engr Bn (C).
  - c. Detachments: Company B was made OPCON 70th Engineer Battalion from 19 Nov to 10 Dec 1967.
7. SUPPORTING FORCES: HQ, 937th Engineer Group provided one float bridge maintenance team from 554th Engr Co (FB).
8. INTELLIGENCE:
  - a. Reconnaissance: Ground reconnaissance of Routes 14, 511, and 512 were made daily by the battalion recon teams. Also aerial reconnaissance was made periodically when aircraft was available from 937th Engineer Group.
  - b. Road Nets: There were no problems with the roads sustaining traffic in the area of operation. However the roads are nearly all fair weather roads and in particular all of Route 512 is strictly a fair weather road.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-CC

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

This condition must be corrected before the next monsoon season if it is expected that this road will carry operational traffic during the rainy season. It will take a major engineer effort to upgrade the road to all weather capability.

c. Enemy Engineer Efforts: The NVA and VC units operating in the AO utilized engineer skills on a limited yet successful basis. This included mining of the road and the use of demolitions on bridges.

(1) Mining incidents: The battalion was directly involved in two mining incidents. The first was on 11 Nov on Route 512. At 0845 a 3/4 ton from the land clearing platoon hit a mine at YB893271. C Company cleared the area and found a second mine, a Chicom type 12" in diameter and 4" thick. The second occurred on 20 November on Route 14 at ZB172016 when an M48 hit a mine at 0750 hours. While B Company was conducting a sweep the logistic convoy passed through the area and a 5 ton tractor hit a second mine at 0950 hrs.

(2) Demolition: Two bridges were blown during the period in the battalion AO. On 7 November bridge 14-24 (ZB153088) was blown sometime during the night. Also the bypass was blown at the same location. The demolition work was poor as the bridge was repaired with the replacement of a stringer and some decking. November bridge 14-26 (ZB088175) was blown during the night. This timber span was completely destroyed and had to be replaced.

(3) Ambushes: On 8 November at YB893271 on Route 512 a C Company dozer was attached with small arms and rocket fire. The dozer was extensively damaged. On 11 November a platoon from B Company was ambushed at ZA200968 by an estimated 50 to 80 man VC force. The attack was made with rockets, grenades, mortars, and small arms.

9. MISSION: The mission assigned to the 299th Engineer Battalion (C) by the 937th Engineer Group (C) is to provide general engineer support to elements of the 4th Infantry Division operating in the battalion's AO. The 299th assumed, on its own, direct support missions for the 4th Infantry Division, the 173d Airborne Brigade and elements of the 1st Cavalry Division Air Mobile on a task basis.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

a. The 299th Engineer Battalion directed the battalion's engineer effort during Operation MacArthur from the battalion forward CP located at Dak To, RVN.

b. Headquarters and Headquarters Company provided support to the companies operating in Dak To. The S-2, S-3, S-4, Battalion Maintenance and the Equipment Platoon had the preponderance of their section located in Dak To. Two 1500 gallon-per-hour water purification units were used to provide

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

water for all units in the area. Normal administrative functions were conducted from the main CP at Pleiku. Also all Class II and IV supplies were procured and shipped with organic transportation by the battalion S-4 section located in Pleiku.

c. Company A directed its engineer efforts from the Company's CP located at the vicinity of Tan Canh (ZB045223). The Company provided direct engineer support to the 173d Airborne Brigade and elements of the 1st Brigade 1st Airmobile Division. In addition they have responsibility for road repair of Route 14 from Bridge 14-22 (ZB156053) to Dak To and for Route 512 from the junction of Rt 14 to ZB023216.

d. Company B directed its engineer effort from the Company CP located in Kontum (AR769898). The company provided direct engineer support to elements of the 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division located in Kontum. B Company also had maintenance and upgrading responsibility of Rt 511 from Kontum to the Krong Poko River and Rt 14 from Kontum to Bridge 14-22 (ZB156053) inclusive.

e. Company C operated from the Company CP located at Ben Het (YB873257). The primary mission of the Company is to construct a C-7A airfield, a Fire Support Base and clear for a CIDG camp. Also C Company provided direct support to elements of 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division and to elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade located at Ben Het. In addition the Company has maintenance responsibility of Route 511 from Bridge 512-3 (YB953238) to Ben Het.

f. D Company directed its engineer effort from the Company CP located at Dak To (ZB012219). The Company provided direct engineer support to units of the 1st Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, 173d Airborne Brigade, and 1st Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division located at Dak To. The Company had responsibility for rebuilding Route 512 from ZB023216 to Br. 512-3. Also they maintained and repaired the Dak To airfield to keep it trafficable for C-130 traffic during the operation.

g. 15th Engr Co (LE) operated from the Company CP located at Dak To (ZB018213) and provided direct engineer equipment support to the 299th Engineer Battalion.

## 11. EXECUTION:

a. Headquarters and Headquarters Company: HHC was split in two elements for the support of the battalion during the operation. A Battalion forward CP was located in Dak To and made up of elements of the S-2, S-3, S-4, commo and maintenance sections plus most of the equipment platoon. In Pleiku, the battalion's base camp, the remainder of the headquarters maintained all staff section representation. Two D6B dozers were modified by the Battalion maintenance section to be broken down into two sections, one with the tracks, chassis and blade, the other with the engine and body.

3

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

These were airlifted by CH-54 Skycopters to three locations to support the infantry units in clearing fire bases.

(1) On 131200 Nov 67 a D6B was airlifted from Old Dak To airfield to the 1/8 Infantry Fire Support Base (YB910120). At this location the dozer and crew leveled areas for 155mm artillery battery, excavated slots for a Tactical Operations Center, a Fire Direction Center, ammo storage and personnel sleeping bunkers. Also two helicopter Landing Zones were leveled, one for resupply and the other for command ships. After the complex was developed, the dozer continued to improve perimeter and fields of fire by clearing an area approximately 200 meters by 500 meters. The dozer was lifted to Old Dak To on 18 Nov 67.

(2) On 281100 November the D6B was moved directly to support the 3/12 Infantry on hill 1030 (YB822081). This Fire Support Base had large trees (approximately 150' high and 18" - 24" diameter) which were felled by demolitions and moved by the dozer. Again slots for bunkers and ammo storage were excavated and 150 meters by 600 meters was cleared for fields of fire. After the end of the reporting period the dozer is to clear and level an area for an artillery battery.

b. (1) Company A has the mission of upgrading Route 14 and Route 512. During this reporting period the Company excavated and removed over 14,500 cy of organic soil from Route 512 and placed over 19,000 cy of select fill in the rebuilding of the road. Also the company constructed 1700 meters of access road to a quarry site (ZB081171) in preparation for its development. The company rehabilitated the area which was a fire base around Old Dak To airfield used by the 173d during Operation Greeley.

(2) On 6 November the company began providing direct support to the 173d Airborne Brigade. They excavated holes for 3 Tactical Operation Centers, one 36' x 40' one 25' x 45' and one 20' x 40'. 5 POL bladder holes were excavated and a total of 162,500 square meters of fields of fire was cleared.

(3) On 15 Nov the ASP was hit with mortar rounds and all the stockage was lost. A Company was tasked to build a 5 cell ASP adjacent to the 173d area. Beneficial occupancy was made on 21 Nov and the project completed on 28 Nov. A total of 130,000 cubic yards of earth was excavated for the forming of the side hill pads, 4 bunkers were built, 490 ft of culvert was placed, 9000 sandbags filled and placed and 1800 meters of triple concertina was installed. Also 130,000 square meters of fields of fire were cleared.

(4) On 17 November bridge 14-26 was blown by the enemy and A Company cleared the debris and emplaced an AVLB over the gap. The 22' timber span was rebuilt on 19 Nov after the materials were hauled from Pleiku.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCO-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

(5) On 19 November A Company began providing direct engineer support for elements of the 1st Cav AM Division. Over 120,000 square meters of fields of fire were cleared and three 50 meter x 10 meter x 5 meter holes were excavated.

(6) On 25 Nov A Company airlifted one squad to provide general engineer support along with the D6B dozer at a 173d fire support base located at YB815151.

c. (1) During the period 25 October to 1 Dec B Company located in Kontum provided general engineer support in an area which included Route 511 from Kontum to the Krong Poko River, Route 14 from Kontum to Bridge 14-22 and to units staying in the vicinity of Kontum airfield. During this period the Company operated a sandpit on the Dak Bla River and loaded out a total of 13,115 cubic yards of sand. A total of 5540 cubic yards of fill was placed upgrading Route 511 and another 970 cubic yards was placed on Route 14. Over 60 km of road was graded and 460 feet of culvert was installed on drainage structures along these routes. Bridges 14-14, 15, 19, and 21 were repaired with new curbing and bridge 14-18, a single double Bailey, was redecked.

(2) On 28 October the Bailey bridge 14-12 which had been in place since June was raised and releveled because it was resting on the abutments due to settlement.

(3) On 31 October construction of bridge 511-5 was started. This three span timber pile bridge, 72 feet in length with a classification of 75/55 was completed on 7 November 1967.

(4) A bypass at bridge 14-11 was constructed in order that the interdiction of Route 14 by destruction of the bridge could be considerably more difficult. A triple barrel 72" culvert was installed and the work completed on 13 November.

(5) On 7 November bridge 14-24 (ZB153085) and the bypass were blown sometime during the night. B Company moved one platoon from Kontum and installed 30 feet of 48 Inch culvert and had the bypass open to traffic by 1330 hours. The decking on the bridge was replaced and the bridge opened to traffic on 10 November. On 11 November a platoon from B Company was returning to bridge 14-24 to replace the hand rails and curbs, when they were ambushed by an enemy force of from 50 to 80 VC at ZA200968. The enemy attacked with grenades, rockets, automatic weapons and mortars. The platoon was split in two halves. A perimeter was organized after extracting three of their six vehicles. The platoon received Cav reinforcement 20 to 30 minutes after contact started and the contact lasted approximately 90 minutes. One 5 ton dump truck, one 3/4 ton truck and one 1/2 ton truck were extensively damaged. There were 6 US engineer KIA and 4 WIA and 13 enemy KIA confirmed by body count.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (ROS: MACV J3-32)

(6) On 12 November bridge 14-14 was blown by enemy action. An AVLB was emplaced by B Company by 0849 hours. The bridge was replaced by a double barrel 36" culvert and was open to traffic at 1300 hours on 13 November.

(7) On 6 November B Company began to provide direct support to elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division and the 173d Airborne Brigade that moved into Kontum. During the following two weeks the company constructed 34 helicopter revetments and 4 Chinook revetments. A total of 208,950 square yards of area around revetment and landing zones was covered with peneprime. More than 71,000 square yards was cleared for landing zones, troop areas and storage area for FSE. The ammo storage point was reworked with over 1000 cubic yards of fill placed and 700 meters of triple concertina installed. Eight holes 16' x 46' x 5' were excavated for POL bladders.

(8) On 12 November the company was given operational control of two sections of the 35th Land Clearing Platoon with the purpose of clearing 100 meters on either side of Route 14 north of Kontum to Dak To. From this time until 29 Nov the Rome plows secured by one platoon from B Company cleared 605 acres ending at bridge 14-25. On this date the responsibility of the clearing was transferred to A Company and the remainder of the clearing of Route 14 to Dak To was completed.

(9) B Company was given the requirement to construct a turnaround for C-130s on the northeast side of Kontum airfield. This was required to reduce the congestion on the parking apron and thus reduce the C-130s vulnerability to attack. A 34,000 square foot area was cleared, filled with 875 cy of fill, graded and shot with peneprime. M8A1 matting was placed on the "U" shaped turnaround. Work started on 22 November and the turnaround was ready for use on 27 November.

(10) B Company conducted a daily reconnaissance of Route 14 north to bridge 14-22 in order to insure the road was open for logistics convoys supporting the battle of Dak To. Tactical wire was installed around the piers of bridge 14-10 and around bridge 14-20. Also 350 meters of tactical wire was placed around an orphanage in Kontum.

d. (1) C Company had moved to Ben Het on 22 October (YB873257) with the mission of constructing a C-7A capable airfield with the provision that it be expanded rapidly to carry C-130 traffic. They also have the task of providing a cleared area for a CIDG camp and to provide an entrencher and sand and gravel for concrete work.

(2) One section of Rome plows was provided C Company for the clearing of the airfield, CIDG camp and clearing 100 meters on both sides of Route 512. They worked during the period 25 Oct to 22 Nov under the control of C Company and cleared a total of 690 acres which includes the airfield, CIDG camp and east along Route 512 to the Krong Poko River. At this point the control of the Rome plows was transferred to D Company.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

(3) Daily mine sweeps were conducted on Route 512 both to the water point and also to FSB 13 (YB918260) by Company C. As the road was cleared by the Rome plows, it was upgraded with grading and ditching totaling 14,000 meters and 120 ft of culvert installed.

(4) On 6 November C Company began providing direct support to elements of the 173d Airborne Brigade co-located with them at Ben Het. A total of 2335 meters of triple concertina was installed around the perimeter. 1200 meters of this fencing was later relocated. For the following three weeks the company provided an average of 2 dump trucks and one bucket loader per day for ammunition movement and troop transportation to areas of operation. Dozer support was provided on the average of one per day to excavate defensive positions, living bunkers, a TOC, and 8' and 155 mm gun positions. One of the eight 11' x 24' living/fighting bunkers built for the troops in C Company was turned over to the 173d for their use.

(5) During the period 13 November to 30 November the stripping of the overburden was completed with a total of 52,000 cubic yards of loose fill removed. This was accomplished with the use of 3 each 290M tractor scrapers.

e. (1) D Company had been located in Dak To since late August. With the build up of US troops in the Dak To area D Company was tasked with providing general engineer support to the Dak To AO. An average of two dozers per day were utilized to clear fields of fire, excavate bunkers and sumps. They installed over 1800 meters of triple concertina on the perimeter. The company manned a portion of the perimeter during the entire reporting period with an average of 3.5 squad days devoted to this mission. The company conducted a daily minesweep of Route 512 from bridge 512-2 to bridge 512-3 for the entire period and for approximately two weeks the sweep went to FSB 13 (YB918260).

(2) The company had the mission of patching the runway where the thin single surface treatment had worn through because of the heavy C-130 traffic. This task was accomplished with the use of cold mix made with RC-3 and 3/4 inch minus aggregate. A total of 445 square yards was patched during the period. Work was done at night because of the C-130 traffic in the daytime. On several nights the tactical situation would not permit the use of lights therefore the work on this project was sporadic.

(3) From 1 to 8 November D Company placed 16,000 gallons of peneprime and RC-3 outback as a dust palliative. At this time the equipment and responsibility was turned over to A Company, 4th Engineer Battalion.

(4) On 15 November the airfield parking apron with three C-130s was mortared in the morning resulting in the total destruction of two of the aircraft. In the late afternoon the ASP was hit with mortars resulting in the loss of all stock in the ASP. Two tasks were given to D Company as

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCO-CO

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

a result of this damage in addition to policing shrapnel from the runway. An expedient taxiway was constructed to the parking apron to provide a bypass to the area where the damaged C-130s were located. This work was started on 17 November and completed on 19 November with 700 cubic yards of select fill hauled and compacted. The ramp was then coated with peneprime and RC-3. The second task was the construction of 5 emergency ammunition storage cells. These five cells were constructed on the north side of the airfield and were completed by 20 November.

(5) Two FAC revetments were constructed by D Company utilizing empty 55 gallon drums. The area was prepared on 20 November and the job was completed on 28 November. The 55 gallon drums were stacked 2 high with the first row 2 wide. These were filled with earth and a layer of sandbags placed on the top row to bring the total height to eight feet.

(6) On 23 November the Rome plow section and the responsibility for clearing Route 512 was transferred to D Company from C Company. From this date until 1 December a total of 335 acres was cleared. D Company provided one platoon for security of the plows.

(7) D Company has the mission of constructing a four module, twenty cell ASP on the location of the old ASP. Work started on this on 12 November before the ASP fire. The berms for four cells were completed at the time of the fire. Because of the hazard of duds in the area, work did not resume until 28 November. The cells will have a 50' x 50' MSA1 pad on a surface which will be compacted and peneprimed. By 1 December a total of 4 cells were complete and ready for occupancy.

(8) On 19 November D Company repaired bridge 512-3 which had one column on the first pier begin to slide out under the bridge due to erosion at the base. On 23 November the ramp on the M4T6 float bridge 512-3 cracked and was closed to traffic. One platoon was dispatched to make the repairs with materials flown in by Chinook. This was completed by 2200 hours the 23d.

(9) D Company has the mission of rebuilding and upgrading Route 512 from the east end of Dak To airfield to bridge 512-3. During this period a total of 30,067 cubic yards of fill was hauled and compacted on the road.

f. The 15th Engineer Company (1E) provided engineer equipment support to the battalion throughout the period. This equipment includes 290M tractor scrapers, D-7E dozers, Cat 12 graders, air compressors, asphalt distributors and dump trucks. All class II and IV materials used by the battalion were hauled to Dak To from Pleiku with most of the transportation provided by the 15th Engineers. Also the company manned approximately 600 meters of perimeter with 76 personnel on the perimeter each night. The company's average present for duty strength was 86.

g. (1) C Company of the 70th Engineer Battalion was OPCON to the

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-CO

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

299th from 17 November with the mission of installing a Bailey bridge at 512-3 to replace the M4T6 float bridge. This bridge is to be three 80 foot double single spans on pile piers. By 1 December the company had driven the piles for one pier.

(2) The company provided additional support to the 299th with the utilization of dump trucks and loaders. The company repaired two FAC revetments that had collapsed in September.

## 12. RESULTS:

a. Friendly personnel losses: B Company - 6 KIA, 4 WIA. C Company - 2 WIA. HQ Company - 2 WIA.

b. Friendly equipment losses: 1-D7E dozer, 1- $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck, 2-3/4 ton trucks, 1-5 ton wrecker.

c. Enemy personnel losses. 16 VC KIA by body count.

## 13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Normal routine administrative matters were performed at the Battalion rear in Pleiku. Feeder information for reports was transmitted to the Battalion rear by radio on the admin net or by convoy on the mail truck. The battalion used a 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck as a mail/courier vehicle to make daily runs from Pleiku to Dak To.

b. Medical and administrative evacuations were excellent.

c. Logistics:

(1) During the operation the Battalion S-4 procured all class II and IV Engineer supplies for battalion projects. This required a heavy use of organic tractors and lowboys. This was further hampered by a shortage of seven lowboys in the battalion. A limited supply of lumber, sandbags and wire was provided to supported units when these items were available and not required for other projects.

(2) The 299th provided water to the units operating in the Dak To area with two 1500 gpm erdlators. The water point was implemented by a 600 gpm unit from the 4th Engineer battlion. The 173d established a 600 gpm unit at Ben Het which proved to be extremely beneficial, as it reduced the requirement for hook sorties. The 1500 gpm unit at Dak To was set up outside the perimeter which increased the possibility of damage by enemy activity. An attempt was made to establish a water point inside the perimeter adjacent to the bath and shower point. The FSA would not allow their pumps to be used for raw water supply to the erdlator. All attempts by the battalion to get a pump with at least a 70 foot head were unsuccessful. At

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

# FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGCC-00

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (ROS: MACV J3-32)

the end of the reporting period this water point inside the perimeter was still not operating because of a lack of a pump.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: Airlifting D6B dozers: The battalion has modified two D6B dozers to accommodate an Airmobile kit which allows the dozer to be broken into two sections. One section consists of the tracks, frame and blade. The other is the engine and body and is fitted with a nose wheel and two small sets of pads which fit over the drive sprockets. These dozers were airlifted in two sections by CH-54 Flying Cranes to Fire Bases in the AO. The reassembly of the dozers in the fire base was dependent on three factors. The first was the orientation of the two parts with respect to each other when delivered by the aircraft. Assembly is expedited if the two parts are parallel one behind the other rather than placed perpendicular to each other as was sometimes the case. To achieve this proper alignment requires close cooperation between the pilot and personnel on the ground. The second factor affecting assembly time was the soil condition at the fire base. Normally the area had received numerous artillery rounds which loosened the soil. The tractor if necessary to move any appreciable distance would bury itself because of the small bearing area of the sprocket pads. The third factor is the slope of the terrain on which assembly is to be made. If the grade is much over 10% the tractor is nearly uncontrollable because the nose wheel has no steering and the gravity forces cause the front end to travel down hill. In this situation movement of the engine and body assembly was achieved with the use of deadman and tackle with manpower as the moving force. The time of assemble varied from 1½ hours to 7 hours dependent upon the above conditions.

## 15. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

### Aircraft Support:

Discussion: The widespread activity of the 299th Engineer Battalion over insecure area required aircraft for the purposes of coordination, supervision, reconnaissance, and liaison. Critical items of equipment, spare parts, and supplies were delivered by aircraft. In the majority of instances an aircraft was provided by 937th Engineer Group. Those cases where this was not available, transportation was provided by the 4th Division and the 173d Airborne Brigade.

Observation: Problems of air transportation would be greatly facilitated if the supported unit could provide aircraft to the supporting engineer units on a priority basis.

## 16. RECOMMENDATIONS:

Reference paragraph 15: That the supporting engineer units be given priority for aircraft similar to that of comparable size organic units.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

EGOC-CO

10 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACV J3-32)

FOR THE COMMANDER:

/s/Thomas F. Wilder  
THOMAS F. WILDER  
CPT., CE  
Adjutant

A TRUE COPY

*Francis E. Cutler*

FRANCIS E. CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY



UNCLASSIFIED

HEADQUARTERS  
124TH SIGNAL BATTALION  
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDH-SI-SC

9 December 1967

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report Battle for Dak To

TO: Commanding General  
4th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDDH-GC  
APO San Francisco 96262

1. NAME OR IDENTITY AND/OR TYPE OF OPERATION. Battle for Dak To
2. DATES OF OPERATION. 25 Oct 67 to 1 Dec 67
3. LOCATION. 4th Infantry Division Area of Operations RVN
4. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS. 124th Signal Battalion
5. REPORTING OFFICERS.
  - a. Spitz, William M LTC Battalion Commander
  - b. Caudill, Emery LLT HHD Commander
  - c. Plichta, Frank L CPT Co A Commander
  - d. Rawlerson, Franklin S LLT Co B Commander
  - e. Martel, Richard L. LLT Co C Commander
  - f. Wagner Robert C CPT 278th Sig Co Commander
6. TASK ORGANIZATION. 124th Signal Battalion
  - a. 278th Signal Company 43d Signal Battalion, supporting the 4th Infantry Division with base camp communications
  - b. 3d FASC, Co B 124th Signal Battalion attached to 3d Brigade 4th Infantry Division operating under OPCON Americal Division
7. SUPPORTING FORCES. NA
8. INTELLIGENCE. NA

UNCLASSIFIED

9. MISSION.

a. The mission of the 124th Signal Battalion during the operation was as described in TO&E 11-35E

(1) To provide signal communications to include communications to subordinate units for:

(a) Division Headquarters exclusive of internal radio nets.

(b) Support Command exclusive of internal radio nets.

(2) To establish and operate the division area communications system.

(3) To provide each organic brigade headquarters, except those detached, with multichannel communications

(4) To provide an area signal center service to units in the brigade fire base

(5) To establish and operate facilities to connect division artillery headquarters into the division area communications system

b. To perform photography (except aerial photography) for the division and still picture laboratory service for all divisional units.

c. To perform third echelon maintenance of all cryptographic equipment in the division and organizational maintenance of signal equipment organic to the battalion

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION. The concept of operations employed by the 124th Signal Battalion involved establishing an area communications system which provided the following major units with access entry into the Division Communications system and to the in-country communication system:

- a. 4th Inf Div Main
- b. 4th Inf Div TAC
- c. 4th Inf Div Arty (Main and TAC)
- d. 4th Inf Div Support Cmd (Main)
- e. 1st Bde 4th Inf Div
- f. 2d Bde 4th Inf Div
- g. TF 22 4th Inf Div
- h. 1/69th Armor 4th Inf Div

# UNCLASSIFIED

- i. 2/1st Cav 4th Inf Div
- j. 173d Abn Bde (OPCON 4th Inf Div)
- k. 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div (AM) (OPCON 4th Inf Div)

As explained in more detail below in the execution paragraph, this involved providing normal base camp communications for Div Main, Div Arty Main, and DISCOM Main. Modified forward area signal centers were provided to b, e, f, and g above and multichannel VHF communications systems for the remaining. 4th Infantry Division Tactical Operation Center remained at Base Camp and was continuously operated and maintained.

11. EXECUTION. At the beginning of this operation the 124th Signal Battalion was providing normal communications for Division Main, Div Arty Main, and DISCOM at Camp Enari, supporting the 1st and 2d Bde's with area signal center platoons and supporting a composite task force with the equivalent of an ASC platoon. In addition, one platoon from Co B remained in support of the 3d Bde at Duc Pho. The 124th also provided multichannel communications for one Cav squadron (2/1), the division tank battalion (1/69), and one infantry battalion (2/8). At onset of the operations, the multichannel communications systems in operation are shown in incl 1. It needs to be pointed out that at this time the 2d Bde Fwd was in the process of collocating with their trains.

From this time frame forward, the tactical situation required the continual repositioning of major combat units which altered the division area communications with each move.

On 26 Oct 67, the 1/69th Arm moved to a new location (vic Phu Nhon). The multichannel communications supporting this unit displaced with them. On 27 Oct 67, the 1st Bde consolidated their Fwd and Trains location at Oasis. The 50-85-71 (4th Div BC to 1/4 Bde Fwd) and 61-71 (1st Bde Trains to 1st Bde Fwd) systems depicted on incl 1 were deactivated. Circuit channelization was altered to the 61 location to provide service for the new consolidated 71 location. On this same day, an additional VHF system (50B-85-92) was activated to handle the increased activity at 2d Bde TAC. The following day, additional equipment was dispatched to Dak To, and a second multichannel VHF system (50B-85-85A-77) was activated due to the move of 1st Bde to the Dak To area.

On 28 Oct 67, it was necessary to alter the designation of the signal centers operating the division area communications system to reflect the current tactical units being supported. The 77 location (2/8 Inf) became 71 (1st Bde Fwd). The 61 location (1st Bde Trains) was changed to 76 (TF 22 located at Oasis) and the 92 location (2d Bde TAC) became 72 (2d Bde Fwd).

On 29 Oct 67, the division area communications system was as reflected in incl 2.

It should be pointed out at this point that Dak To Airfield is virtually inaccessible to VHF. Masked by high hills on all four sides, the airfield is

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

almost impervious to VHF systems running to the south. Therefore most systems must be relayed through MACV Compound (85A) east of the airfield. Although this compound is only four kilometers from the airfield, it has a higher elevation and enjoys an opening in the mountains to the south through which VHF communications is possible. The planning distance for AN/TRC-24 radio is 45km. Line of site incl 3 reflects the profile and distance between Dragon Mt (85) and MACV Compound (85A) as 88km.

The facilities being provided for 1st Bde 2d Bde and TF 22 at this time consisted of the following:

- a. Common User switchboard services
- b. Hot line telephone circuits
- c. Message center
- d. Messenger
- e. Radioteletype.

Information was received that the 173d Abn Bde had come under OPCON of the 4th Inf Div and would displace to the Dak To area. In anticipation for this move a system was installed between 4th Div Base Camp with radio relays at Dragon Mt and MACV Compound (Dak To). Upon the displacement of the 173d Abn Bde to the Dak To area this VHF system was established at their CP location.

Additional systems programed at this time was for a multichannel system between 1st Bde Fwd/Div TAC CP which was to be collocated and the 173d Abn Bde. Also a system to connect 173d Abn Bde TAC with the 1st Bde Fwd/Div TAC CP. In order to provide circuits for the 173d Abn Bde Fwd back to their aviation support, which was to remain at Kontum, and their base camp location at An Khe, the 54th Signal Battalion provided a multichannel system between Dak To Airfield and Kontum with a radio relay at MACV Compound. At Kontum this system would tie into a 43d Sig Bn system to pickup the An Khe circuits. Two other 54th Sig Bn systems already in operation, one from Camp Enari to Pleiku and one from Pleiku to Dak To Airfield were utilized for additional circuitry as required. On 7 Nov 67 the division area communications system at this point is as reflected in incl 4.

Upon arrival of the Div TAC CP at Dak To the 124th Signal Battalion was operating one AN/MTC-7 switchboard for the 1st Bde. With the increase of activity it necessitated installing another AN/MTC-7 switchboard for the Div TAC element. It soon became apparent that units such as the 1st Logistical Commands Forward Supply elements, airfield control personnel, engineer units, and other support units had a requirement for area communications service. A request was made to IFFV to provide this service to relieve the load of the two division tactical switchboards and the tactical teletype-writer circuits. This resulted in the 43d Sig Bn establishing a 12 channel system (AN/GRC-50) from Dak To to Pleiku and installing a switchboard (AN/MTC-7) and a telegraph terminal (AN/MS-29) at Dak To.

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

The requirement for increased circuitry between the 173d Abn Bde Fwd and their TAC necessitated deactivating the 71-93 system and activating a 73-93 system. In order to provide a back up teletype circuit for this Bde the 124th Signal Bn provided a AN/VSC-2 radio. With the deactivation of the 71-93 system there still existed a requirement for circuitry between Div TAC and 173d Abn Bde TAC. To provide this requirement a AN/MRC-112 system 4 channel VHF system, was established

As the buildup continued on 13 Nov 67 the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav (AM) came under 4th Inf Div OPCON and moved into the Kontum area with a TAC CP located in the vicinity of Polei Kleng. To support this new unit the 124th installed two multichannel systems one between 4th Inf Div base camp and Kontum via Dragon Mt and one between Kontum and Polei Kleng. The 54th Sig Bn's system previously installed between Dak To Airfield and Kontum again proved useful since it was now possible to route traffic from the 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div direct to the Div TAC CP. The multichannel system from base camp encountered difficulties on the transmit from Kontum to Dragon Mt. After considerable effort the system was established by reverting from horizontal to vertical polarization on the antennas. A profile of this system is reflected in incl 5

During this period, at the request of the 4th Inf Div, the 1st Sig Bde made arrangements to install a 24 channel tropo system between Dragon Mt and MACV Compound of which the 124th Signal Battalion was to utilize 12 channels. In order to extend these 12 channels to the 4th Inf Div base camp a AN/TTC-7 12 channel land-line carrier system was installed using Spiral-4 cable. The tropo equipment arrived by C-130 aircraft on 13 Nov 67 and was operational on 14 Nov 67. Concurrent with plans of installing the tropo system and the deactivation of one system from 4th Div base camp to TF 22 the 124th dispatched a SB-611/MRC patch panel to MACV Compound Dak To in order to provide needed flexibility in routing the circuits required to the appropriate location

To provide still additional flexibility, a 12 line WD-1 system was installed between the patch panel located at MACV Compound and the 173d Abn Bde. However from the onset this project was plagued with problems. Initially the lines were laid over the open terrain. With the engineer construction in progress in that area the lines were soon damaged beyond repair. Arrangements were made to bury the lines, however they had to exit the ground at the edge of the 173d Abn Bde CP and run along the barbed wire entanglements which was initially located in elephant grass. Fires occurred quite frequently which burned the lines again resulting in inoperative wire lines. The lines were then placed overhead in the vicinity of the CP, however again additional engineer construction reduced the lines to an inoperative status

On 17 Nov 67 information was received on the CP displacement of the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div from KONTUM to the Dak To area in the vicinity of the 173d Abn Bde. To support this move multichannel communications systems were established between 4th Inf Div base camp and 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div and between 4th Inf Div TAC and the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div. In addition

# UNCLASSIFIED

## UNCLASSIFIED

an eight (8) line WD-1 system was laid from MACV relay to the CP of the 1st Bde which was not plagued with the problems of the first wire system.

On 20 Nov 67 the area communication system is as reflected in Incl 6. The systems were now stabilized and remained so until around 25 Nov 67 at which time the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div was released from Div OPCON leaving one battalion the 1/12th Air Cav under Div OPCON. Initial attempts to establish a VHF system from 4th Inf Div base camp to the 1/12th Cav proved fruitless due to the terrain and it was established at MACV Compound (DAK TO).

The bulk of the commentary above has been centered around multichannel communications systems as this is the primary trunking means within the Division. Particularly note-worthy was the high quality and reliability of FM communications that existed between the 4th Inf Div base camp and DAK TO through the retransmission station on Dragon Mountain. Due to periods of heavy traffic on the Division FM Command net, it was necessary to operate one radio on the division primary and one radio on the division alternate Command frequency, passing secure transmissions simultaneously.

Also of importance to the operation was the teletype traffic load handled by the Famous Communications Center during the reporting period. Of special note was the extreme increase of flash precedence messages processed during the Battle for DAK TO. For example during the 37 days prior to 25 Oct (17 Sep - 24 Oct) the communications center sent 46 and received 43 flash precedence messages. During the 37 days of the DAK TO action this same facility sent 253 and received 198 flash precedence messages. Had the Famous Communications Center been operating out of the authorized TOE equipment, AN/MS-29 instead of their present configuration (permanent building) it is doubtful that this type of service to the degree required, could have been provided.

One final aspect of communications involved in this operation was the internal wiring of the 1st Bde/Div TAC collocated CP. Initially upon arrival of the 1st Bde at DAK TO 26 pair cables were extended from the signal complex to selected points within the area and connected to J-1077 junction boxes. All local and hot lines were connected to J-1077's. With the arrival of the Div TAC the system was found inadequate to handle the increased circuitry. This necessitated installing additional cable and wire which overtaxed the resources of the 124th Sig Bn. The 54th Sig Bn provided wiremen to augment the 124th wire teams. If in the future a similar situation arises, installation of two separate wire systems each completely independent of the other is planned.

During the Battle for DAK TO the 124th Sig Bn photo facilities processed some 2100 black and white photographs. Approximately 300 color photographs were forwarded to Long Binh for processing. Photographers were detailed down to company level to obtain first hand photographs for the historical files of the 4th Inf Div. Two additional photographers were provided by the 54th Signal Bn.

## UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

## 12. RESULTS.

- a. KIA - Negative
- b. WIA - Negative
- c. MIA - Negative
- d. Equipment - Negative

## 13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.

Transportation: Due to inaccessibility of some areas by road movement and also the requirement for immediate communications it was necessary to airlift the AN/MRC-34 $\frac{1}{2}$  on four (4) different occasions. The first was when the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div located a TAC CP at POLEI KLENG. From there it was airlifted to the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div CP when they displaced to the DAK TO area. When they were released from Div OPCON and the 1/12th Air Cav Sqdn relocated in the vicinity of PLEI MRONG it was again airlifted by chopper and the last time was back to DAK TO Air Field when the 173d Abn Bde assumed OPCON of the 1/12th Cav. This extreme flexibility of movement for 12 channel VHF communications equipment proved once again to be an invaluable assist to this Division.

## 14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

- a. The AN/MRC-34 $\frac{1}{2}$  discussed above
- b. The special technique of obstacle gain was again required in order to provide multichannel communications systems to the KONTUM and DAK TO areas.

## 15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS.

The battalion provided communications support over a huge AO extending some 240 km N/S and 60 km E/W. Support was provided to four (4) U.S. Brigades, one Brigade size TF and up to three separate battalions (for a total of 15 maneuver battalions) under Division OPCON. Only one multichannel system from Division Main to the forward elements was line of sight. In addition the battalion provided normal communications support elements to the 3d Brigade, 4th Inf Div which was detached.

Because of the size of the AO all systems were command oriented. The three primary means of communications were VHF (TRC-24) multichannel systems (carrying common user voice, sole user voice and comm center TTY circuits), frequency modulation radio (FM) using AN/VRC-12 series equipment and high frequency radio teletype.

Upon attachment of the 1st Bde, 1st Air Cav Div the battalion was fully committed and remained so until their departure on 25 Nov 67. Back-up VHF systems provided by IFFV were required to provide necessary redundancy throughout the operation.

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

At no time during the entire period were operations hampered due to a lack of division command control, fire, aviation, or logistical communications support. Commanders and staffs were as a whole fully satisfied with the communications support provided. Of all the signal operations I have participated in at Division level (four different divisions) I feel, considering all factors, that the support provided during the Battle for DAK TO by this battalion was the best I have ever seen.

Of particular note were the numerous non line-of-sight VHF systems over distances beyond the communications planning range. These AN/TRC-24 multi-channel systems were engineered using a method developed by Colonel Deygout of the French Army. His method has been reduced mathematically to simple slide rule computations. This slide rule (which is manufactured by Graphoflex) enables accurate path loss prediction for a particular profile in addition to compensating for  $4/3$ ds earth curvatures on regular graph paper. The initial step in systems engineering is to calculate the allowable path loss for a particular radio. The allowable path loss is computed by determining the input sensitivity of the receiver in terms of dbm, combining this with the transmitter output in terms of dbm, antenna gain in db, and using a safety factor. For AN/TRC-24 this is approximately 140 db for a one hop system subtracting 2 db for each relay. In this manner it can be predicted whether a system will work and at what frequency. Due to the mountainous terrain in the highlands there are few line of sight shots. With the use of COL Deygout's slide rule, obstacle gain paths over this terrain can be predicted with great accuracy. When this type of path occurs the frequency at which the system will work falls invariably in the low to upper middle B band range (100 Mhz to 200 Mhz). The more line of sight a path becomes the higher the frequency the system may be installed at.

## 16. RECOMMENDATIONS.

a. It is recommended that future multi-channel equipment designed for use at Division level be capable of operating on frequencies down to 100 Mhz.

b. It is recommended that Colonel Deygout's mathematical method to determine path loss (using the Graphoflex slide rule) be included in the POI for systems engineering and planning at Army Signal Schools.

## 6 Inclosures

1. Communications Systems  
(as of 27 Oct 67)
2. Communications Systems  
(29 Oct 67)
3. Profile DRAGON MT -MACV  
Compound (DAK TO)
4. Communications Systems  
(7 Nov 67)
5. Profile, KONTUM - DRAGON MT
6. Communications Systems  
(20 Nov 67)
7. Multi-channel VHF Radio Systems

/s/William M Spitz  
WILLIAM M. SPITZ  
LTC, SigC  
Commanding

A TRUE COPY

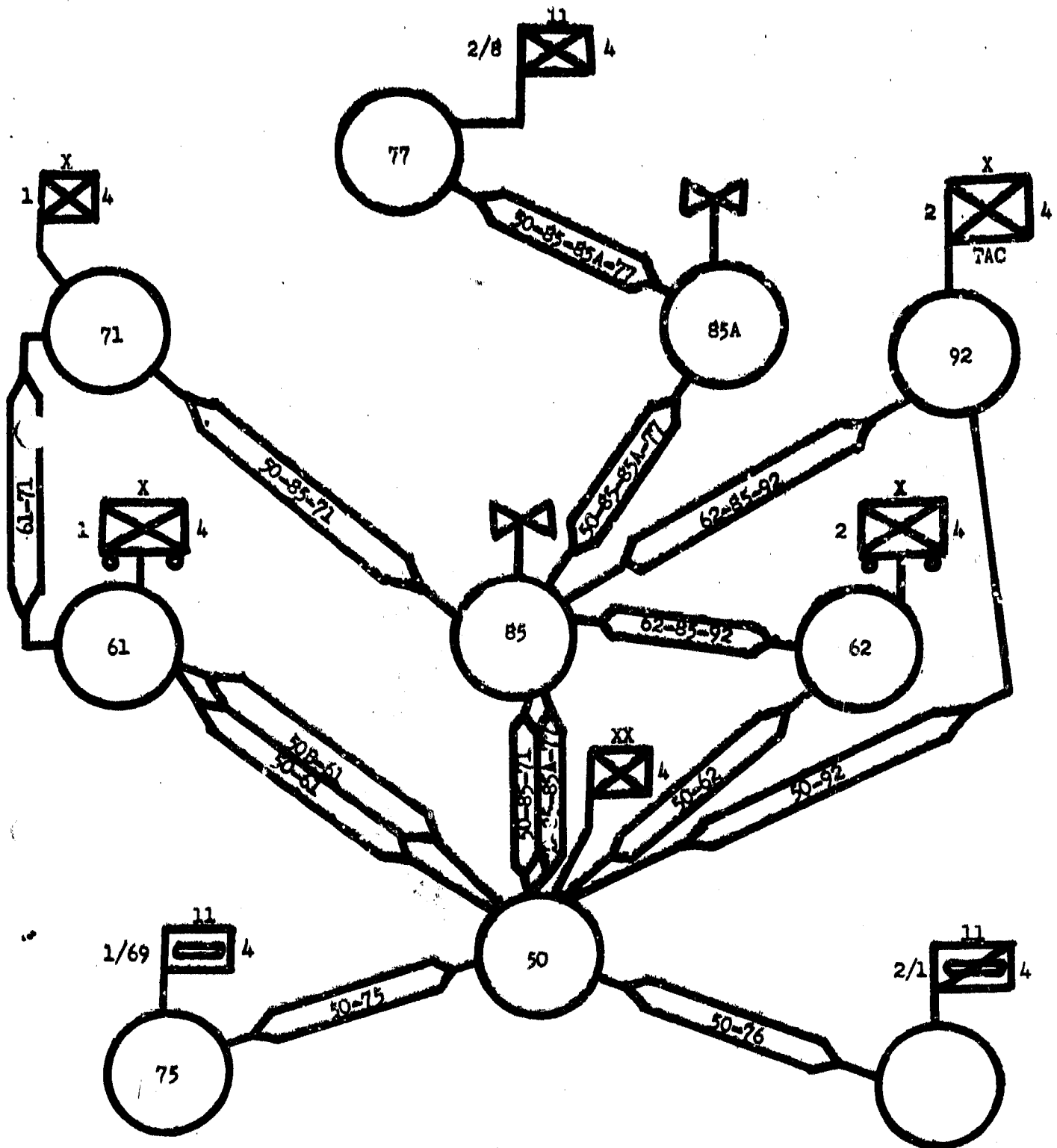
*Francis E Cutler*

FRANCIS E CUTLER  
MAJ, Armor

UNCLASSIFIED

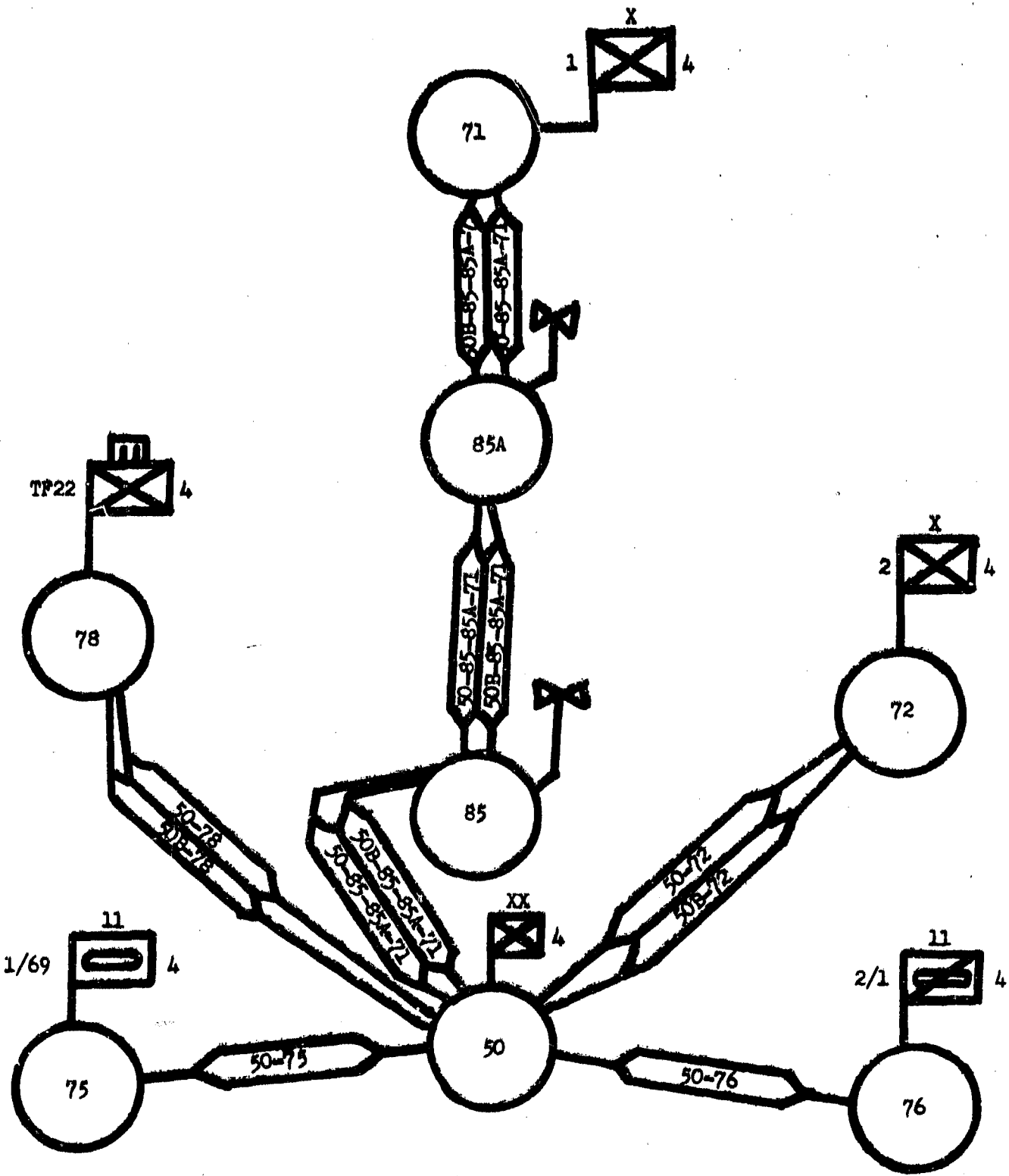


Communications Systems (as of 27 Oct 67)



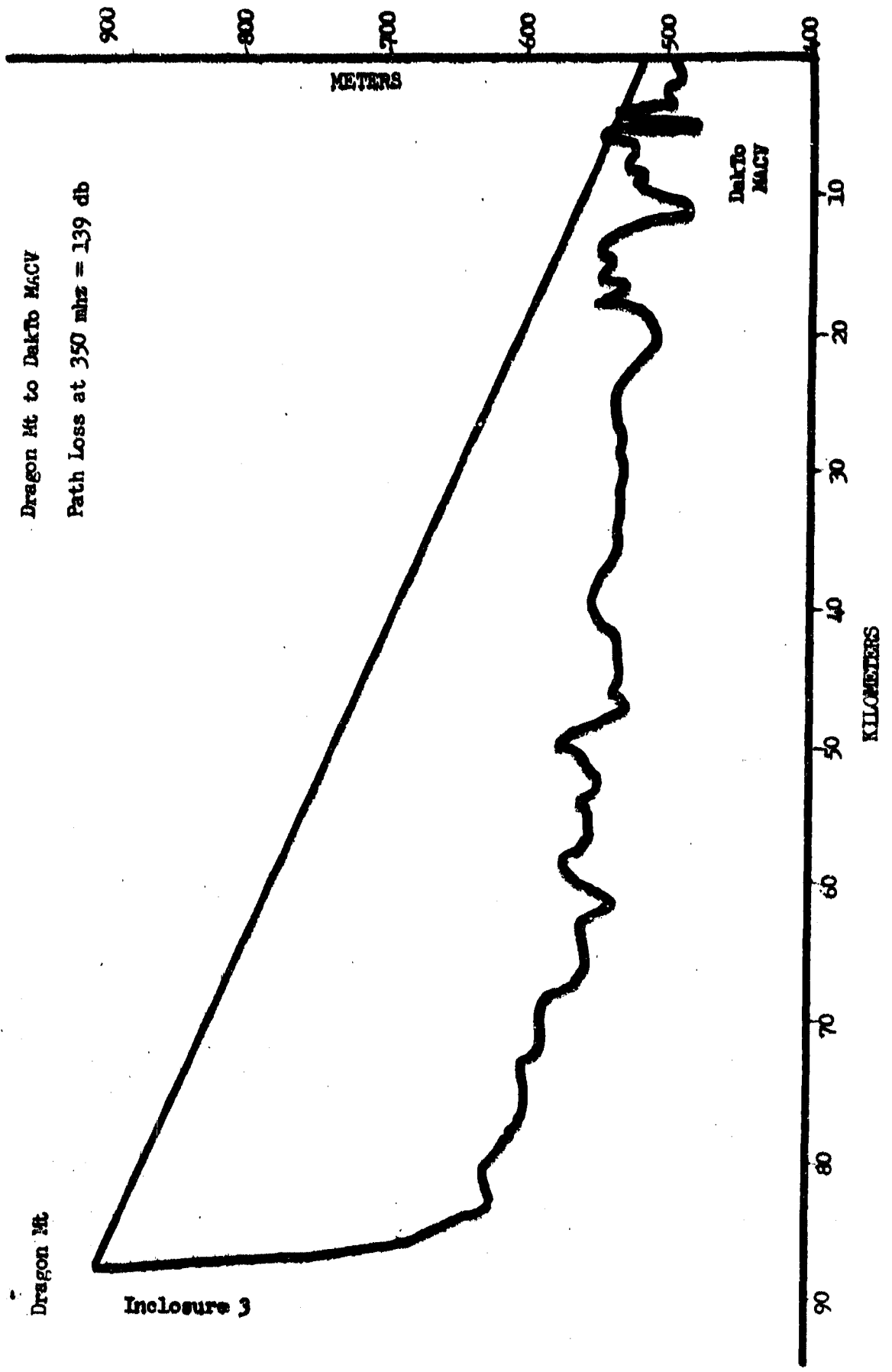
NOTE: Positioning of symbols above has no correlation with geographical location.

Inclosure 1

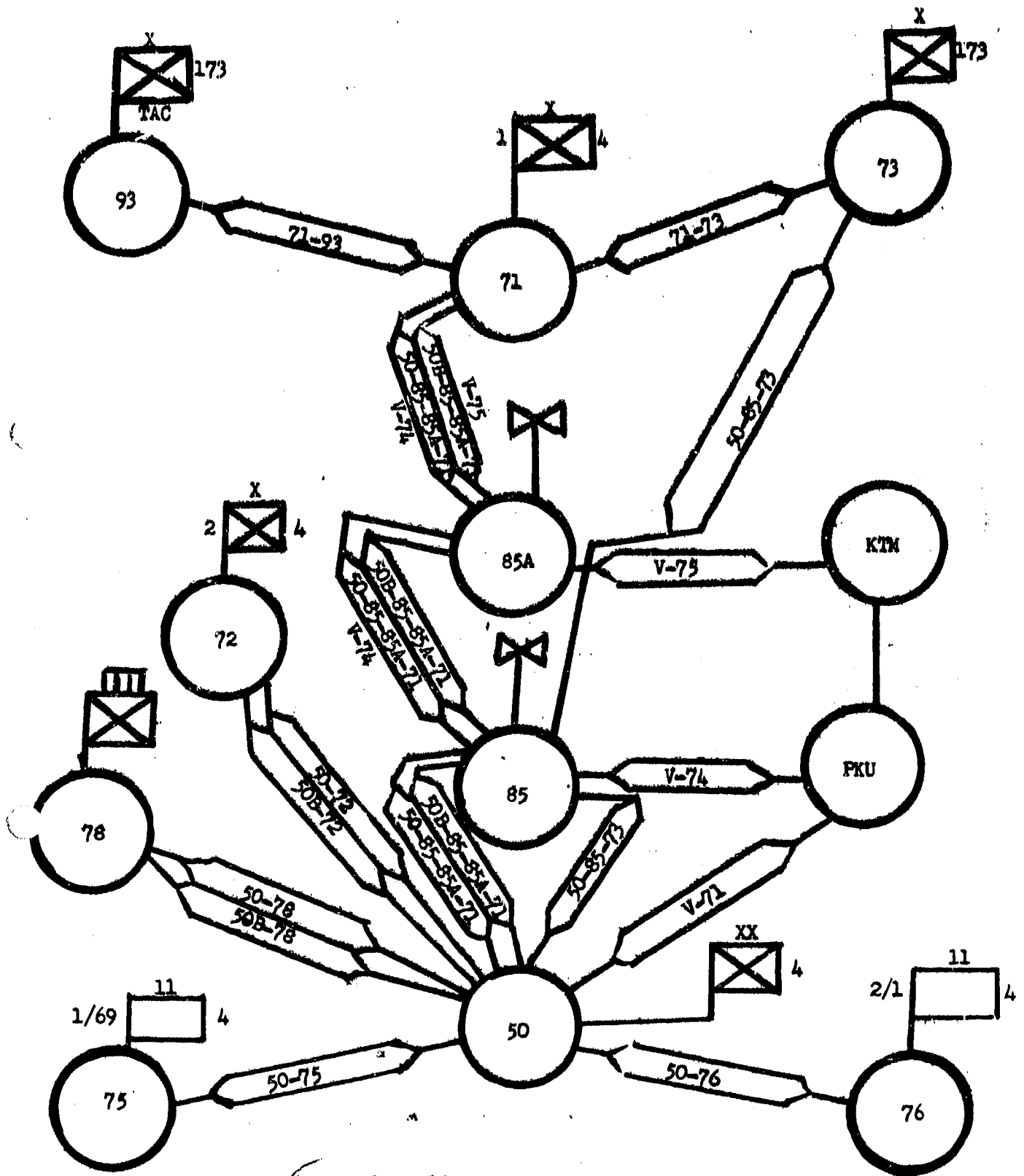


NOTE: Note on diagram 1 applies

Inclosure 2



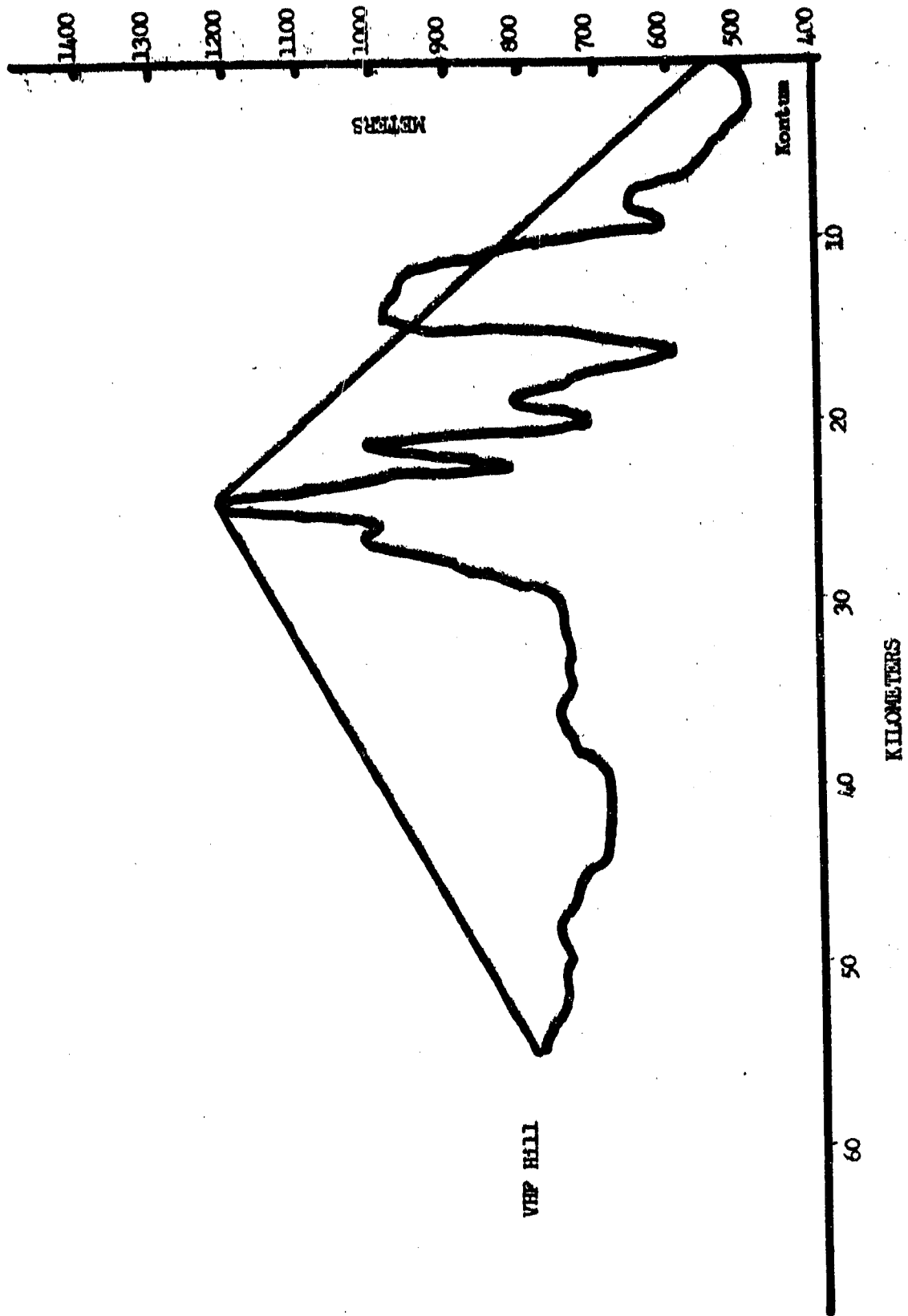
Communications Systems (7 Nov 67)



NOTE: Note on Diagram 1 applies  
 124th 54th 43rd  
 Inclosure 4

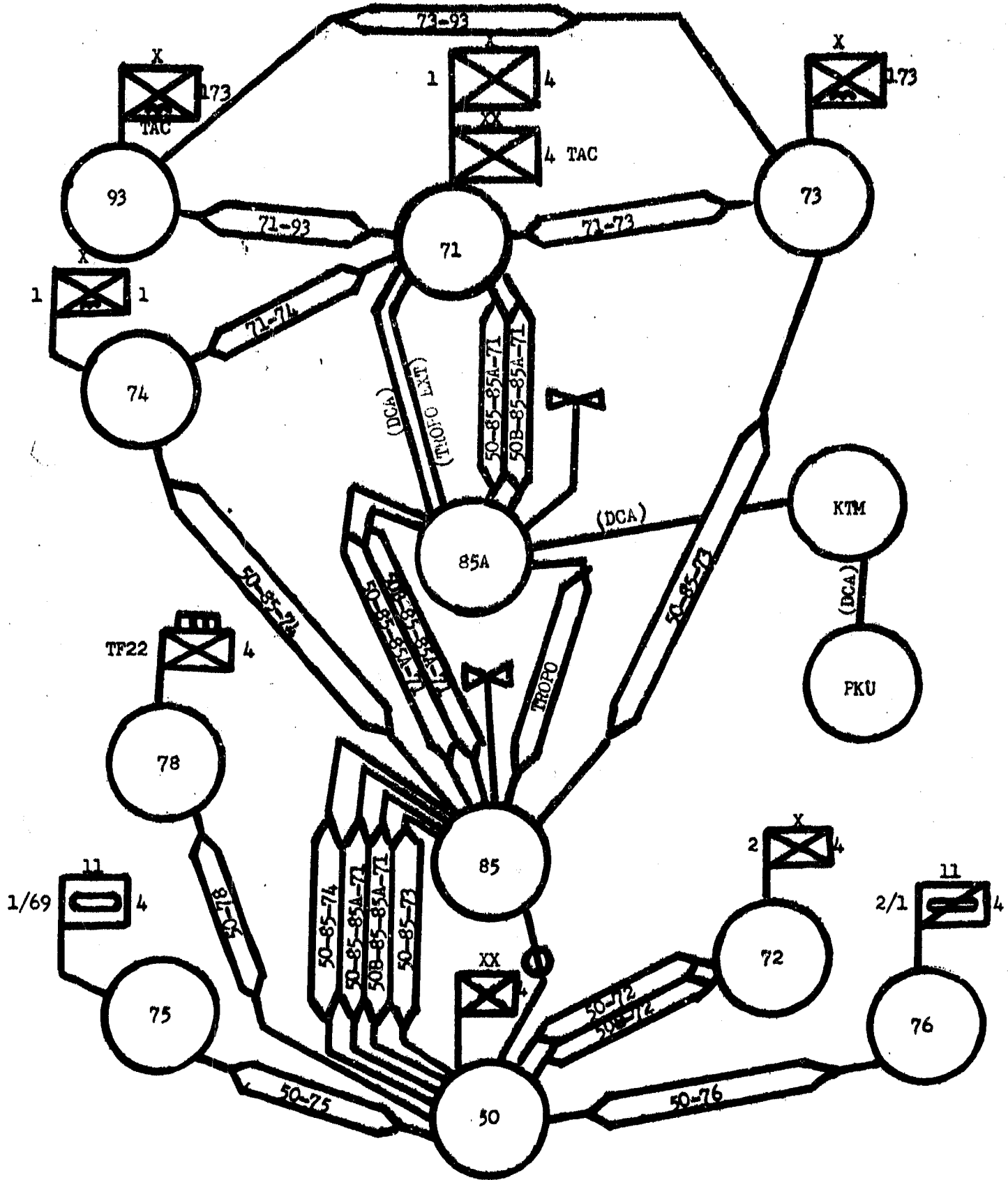
VHF Hill to Kontum

Path Loss at 100 mhz = 144 db



Inclosure 5

Communications Systems (20 Nov 67)



NOTES: Note on diagram 1 applies  
 124th 43rd 54th  
 Incl 6

# UNCLASSIFIED

## MULTICHANNEL VHF RADIO SYSTEMS

### 1. Systems in operation as of 25 October

<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RELAYS REQD</u>	<u>DATE TERMINATED</u>	<u>NOTE</u>
Div Main	2/1 Cav			
Div Main	1/69 Armor			
Div Main	1st Bde Tns		29 Oct 67	(3)
Div Main	1st Bde Tns		29 Oct 67	(3)
Div Main	1st Bde Fwd	1	27 Oct 67	
Div Main	2d Bde Tns		29 Oct 67	
Div Main	2d Bde Tac		29 Oct 67	(5)
Div Main	2/8 Inf Bn	2	28 Oct 67	(1)
1st Bde Tns	1st Bde Fwd		27 Oct 67	
2nd Bde Tns	2nd Bde Tac	1	28 Oct 67	

### 2. Systems established between 25 October - 1 December

<u>FROM</u>	<u>TO</u>	<u>RELAY REQD</u>	<u>ACTIVATED DATE</u>	<u>NOTE</u>	<u>DEACTIVATED DATE</u>
Div Main	2nd Bde Tac		27 Oct 67		29 Oct 67(5)
Div Main	1st Bde Fwd	2	28 Oct 67		
Div Main	1st Bde Fwd	2	28 Oct 67	(2)	
Div Main	TF 1-22		29 Oct 67	(4)	
Div Main	TF 1-22		29 Oct 67	(4)	13 Nov 67
Div Main	2nd Bde Fwd		29 Oct 67	(6)	
Div Main	2nd Bde Fwd		29 Oct 67	(6)	
Div Main	MACV-DAKTO	1	5 Nov 67	(7)	6 Nov 67 (10)
Div Tac	173d Abn Bde		6 Nov 67		
Camp Enari	Kontum		6 Nov 67	(8 9)	
Kontum	DakTo AF (New)	1	6 Nov 67	(8 9)	
Kontum	DakTO AF (New)	1	6 Nov 67	(8 9)	
Div Main	173d Abn Bde Tac		6 Nov 67	(10)	
Div Tac	173d Abn Bde Tac		7 Nov 67		8 Nov 67
173d Abn Bde	173d Abn Bde Tac		8 Nov 67		
Div Main	MACV-DakTo	1	10 Nov 67	(8)	20 Nov 67
Div Tac	1-12 Cav Sqdn		11 Nov 67	(11)	19 Nov 67
	1st Air Cav Div				
Div Tac	173d Abn Bde		11 Nov 67		13 Nov 67
Div Main	1st Bde 1st	1	13 Nov 67		19 Nov 67
	Air Cav Div				
Div Tac	MACV-DakTo		13 Nov 67		15 Nov 67 (12)
Div Tac	173d Abn Bde Tac		14 Nov 67	(11)	18 Nov 67
Div Tac	MACV-DakTo		15 Nov 67	(12)	
1st Bde 1st Air	1st Bde 1st				
Cav Div	Air Cav Div Tac		15 Nov 67		19 Nov 67
Div Main	MACV-DakTo		15 Nov 67	(13)	
Div Main	1st Bde 1st	1	19 Nov 67	(14)	25 Nov 67
	Air Cav Div				
Div Tac	1st Bde 1st		19 Nov 67	(14)	25 Nov 67
	Air Cav Div				
1-12 Cav Sqdn	MACV-DakTo		26 Nov 67		30 Nov 67
1st Air Cav Div					
Div Main	7-17 Air Cav Sqdn		27 Nov 67		29 Nov 67

Incl 7

# UNCLASSIFIED

7

## NOTES

1. System was not actually deactivated Channelization was altered to support the 1st Bde Fwd which moved into the DakTo area
2. See Note 1.
3. System was not actually deactivated Channelization was altered to support TF 122 which moved into the Oasis area.
4. See note 3.
5. System was not actually deactivated Channelization was altered to support 2d Bde Fwd which moved into the Ban Blech area.
6. See Note 5.
7. System activated in anticipation of 173d Abn Bde relocating to the DakTo area.
8. 54th Signal Battalion system.
9. System reverted to support of the 4th Inf Div on date noted.
10. System was reterminated from MACV-DakTo to the 173d Abn Bde location.
11. 4-channel AN/MRC-112 system.
12. System was not actually deactivated 54th Sig Bn assumed operational control of the system
13. The 43d Sig Bn established a 24 channel TROPO system between MACV-DakTo and DGM. The 124th Sig Bn established a 12 channel LL SP-4 system between Base Camp and DGM.
14. 1st Bde 1st Air Cav Div relocated from Kontum to DakTo area.



# UNCLASSIFIED

## ABBREVIATIONS

List of abbreviations used in text (Local, common usage, standard Army).

AA	Anti-Aircraft
ALOC	Air Line of Communication
AM	Air Mobile
AO	Area of Operations
APD	Airborne Personnel Detector
ARA	Aerial Rocket Artillery
ARVN	Army Republic of VIETNAM
ASP	Ammunition Supply Point
ASR	Available Supply Rate
A/V	Audio Visual
AVCOC	Aviation Combat Operations Center
AVLB	Armored Vehicle Launched Bridge
AW	Automatic Weapon
BSOC	Brigade Support Operations Center
CA	Civic Action
CA	Combat Assault
CAS	Close Air Support
C&C	Command and Control
CHICOM	Chinese Communist
CI	Counterintelligence
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group
CP	Command Post
CS	Tear Gas
CSS	Combat Sky Spot
DISCOM	Division Support Command

Inclosure 15

# UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

DMSO	Division Medical Supply Office
DS	Direct Support
DTO	Division Transportation Office
DTOC	Division Tactical Operations Center
DX	Direct Exchange
FAC	Forward Air Controller
FDC	Fire Direction Center
FC	Forward Observer
FRAGO	Frag Order
FSA	Forward Support Area
FSB	Fire Support Base
FSE	Forward Supply Element
FWMAF	Free World Military Assistance Forces
GRAEG	Graves Registration
GS	General Support
GSR	General Support Reinforcing
Gun, Gunship	Armed UH-1 Helicopters
GVN	Government of VIETNAM
Hawkeye Team	Four Man Hunter - Killer Team
H&I	Harassment and Interdiction
Headhunter	O-1E Aircraft Used for Visual Reconnaissance
Hook	CH-47 "Chinook" Helicopter
I FFORCEV	I Field Force, VIETNAM
INRHA	Injuries Not the Result of Hostile Action
IPW	Interrogation Prisoner of War Team
IRHA	Injuries the Result of Hostile Action

UNCLASSIFIED

# UNCLASSIFIED

JUSPAO	Joint US Public Affairs Office
KBA	Killed by Air
KIA	Killed in Action
LF	Local Force
LRRP	Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol, Reconno Patrol
LLOC	Land Line of Communications
LZ	Landing Zone
MACV	Military Assistance Command, VIETNAM
MEDCAP	Medical Civic Action Program
MF	Main Force
MI	Military Intelligence
MIA	Missing in Action
MSR	Main Supply Route
MTOE	Modified Table of Organization and Equipment
NVA	North VIETNAMESE Army
NVAC	North VIETNAMESE Army Captive
Oasis	Brigade CP Area at ZAL10275
OPCON	Operational Control
OPORD	Operation Order
PF	Popular Forces
PMI	Preventive Maintenance Inspection
PMP	Preventive Maintenance Periodic
POLWAR	Political Warfare (ARVN)
POW, PW	Prisoner of War
PP	Preplanned
PZ	Pick-up Zone
RCA	Riot Control Agent

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

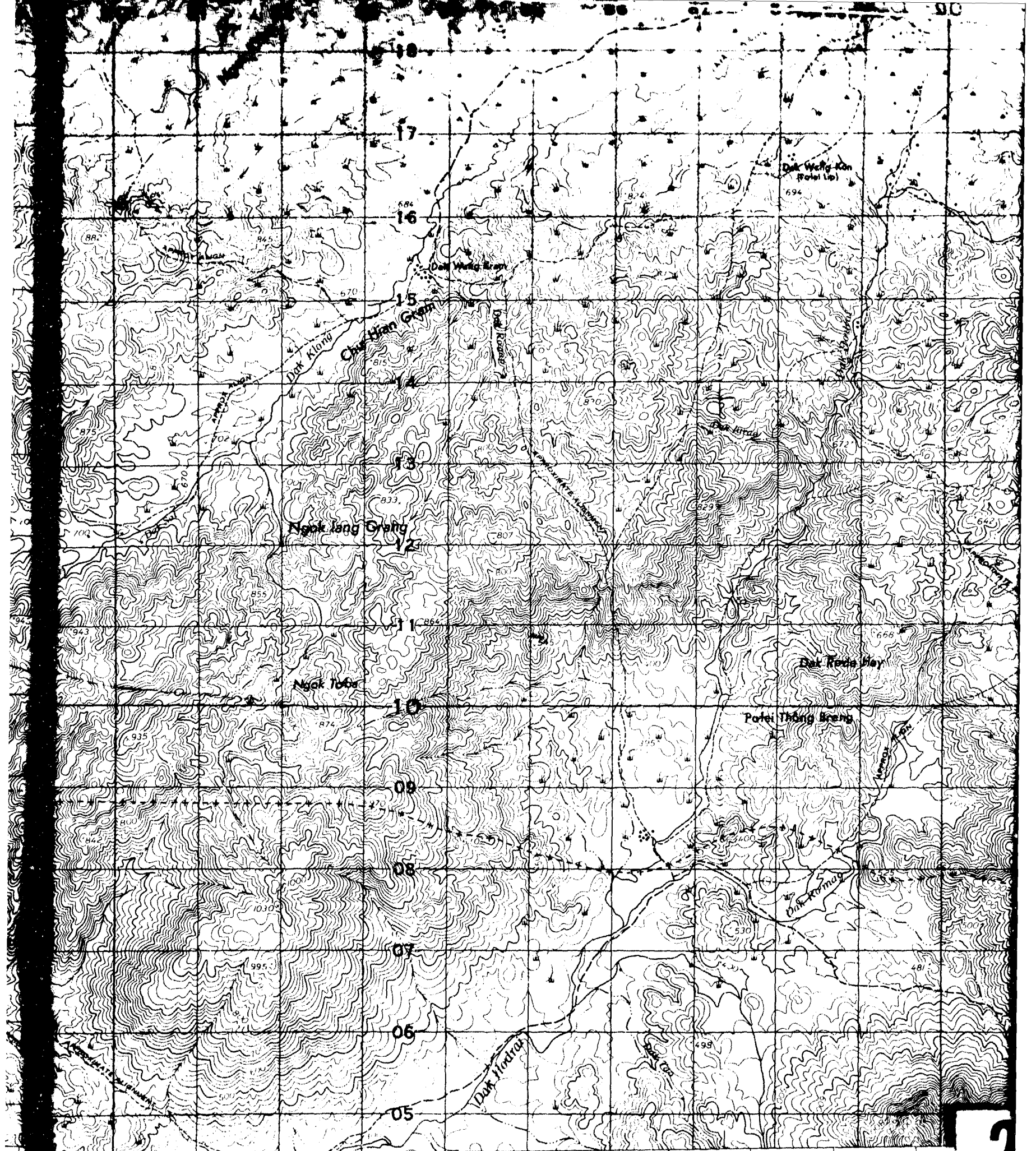
CONFIDENTIAL

RD	Revolutionary Development
RF	Regional Forces
RL	Rocket Launcher
RVN	Republic of VIETNAM
S&D	Search and Destroy
Slick	UH-1 Helicopter Used Primarily for Air Lift
SOG	Special Operations Group
SP	Self Propelled
S&P Trucks	Stake and Platform Trucks
Spooky	Air Force Minigun Armed AC-47 Flaeship
TAC	Tactical
TAOR	Tactical Area of Responsibility
TOE	Table of Organization and Equipment
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
USARV	United States Army, VIETNAM
USSF	United States Special Forces
VC	Viet Cong
VCC	Viet Cong Captive
VETCAP	Veterinary Civic Action Program
VMC	Viet MONTAGNARD Cong
VMCC	Viet MONTAGNARD Cong Captive
VR	Visual Reconnaissance
VT	Variable Time
VTR	Vehicle, Tank Recovery
WIA	Wounded in Action

UNCLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL





780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790

POLEI JAR SIENG 8.4 KM  
Scale 1:50,000  
Tỷ lệ 1:50,000

2

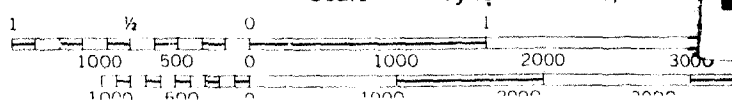




155 802 803 804 805 50' 806 160 807 808 809 810 811 165 812

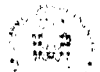
POLEI DAK RIO (1) 2 3 KM.

Scale Tỷ lệ 1:50,000

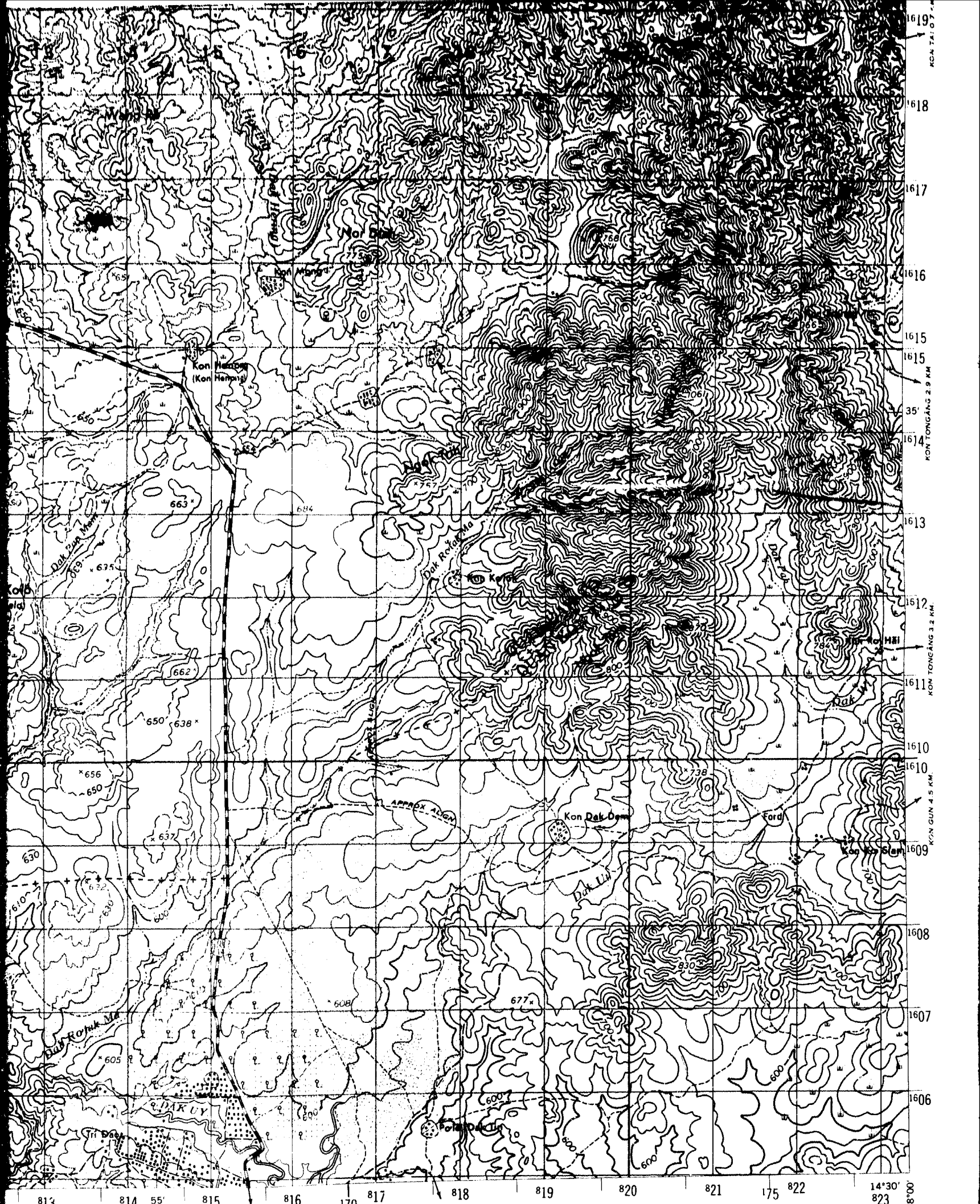


4

1965







1619  
1618  
1617  
1616  
1615  
1615  
1614  
1613  
1612  
1611  
1610  
1610  
1609  
1608  
1607  
1606

KON TONGANG 2.9 KM  
KON TONGANG 3.2 KM  
KON GUN 4.5 KM

813 814 55' 815 816 170 817 818 819 820 821 175 822 14°30' 823 108°00'

XÃ VŨ DINH 0.8 KM POLEI DAK CŨ 0.6 KM

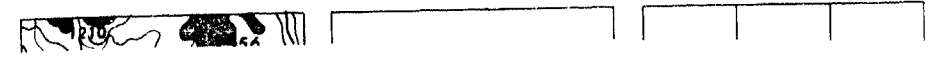
5  
Meters

3 Statute Miles

ELEVATION GUIDE  
CHỈ-DẪN CAO-ĐỘ

BOUNDARIES  
NHỮNG ĐỊA-GIỚI

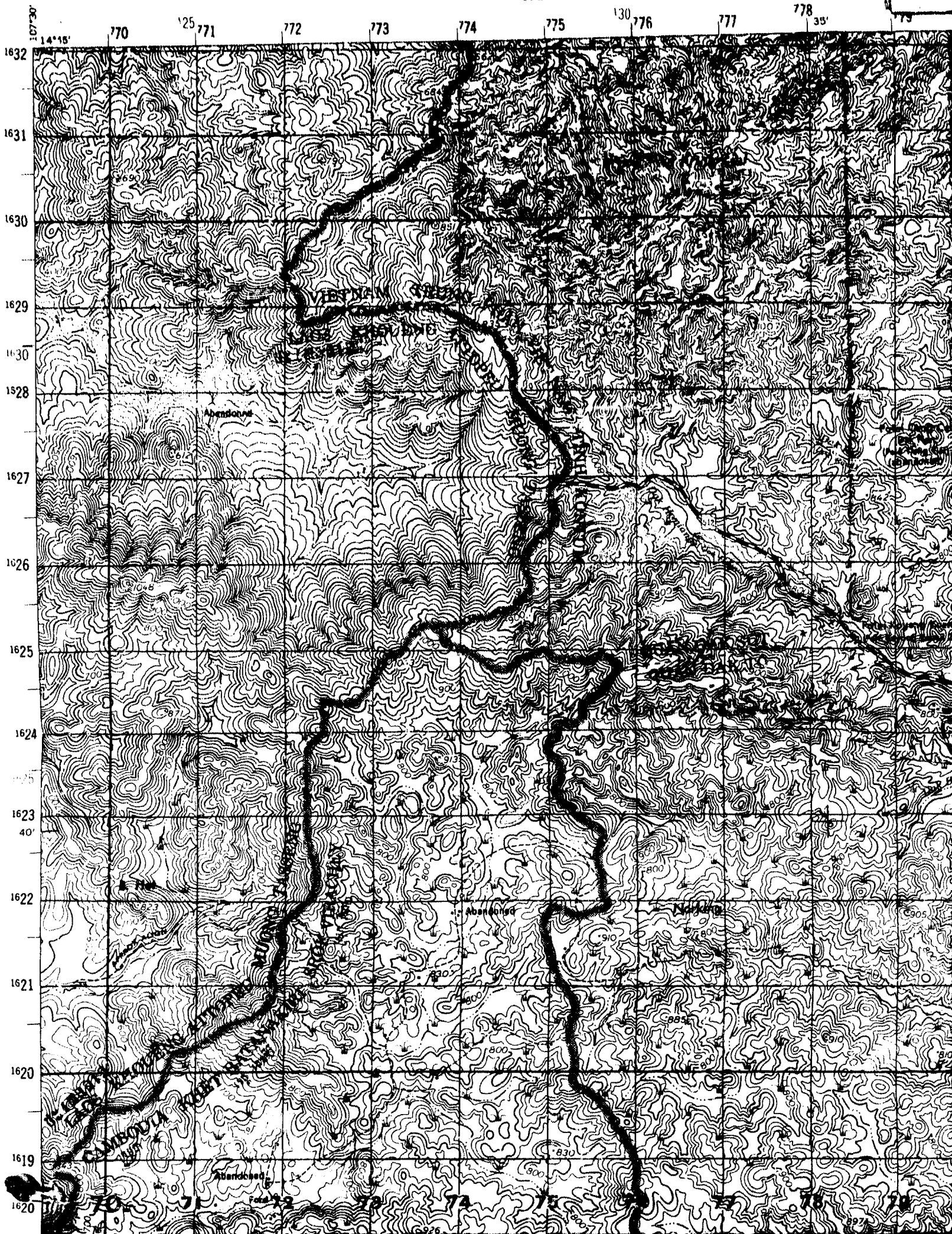
ADJOINING SHEETS  
BẢNG RÁP ĐỊA-ĐỒ



VIETNAM 1:50,000

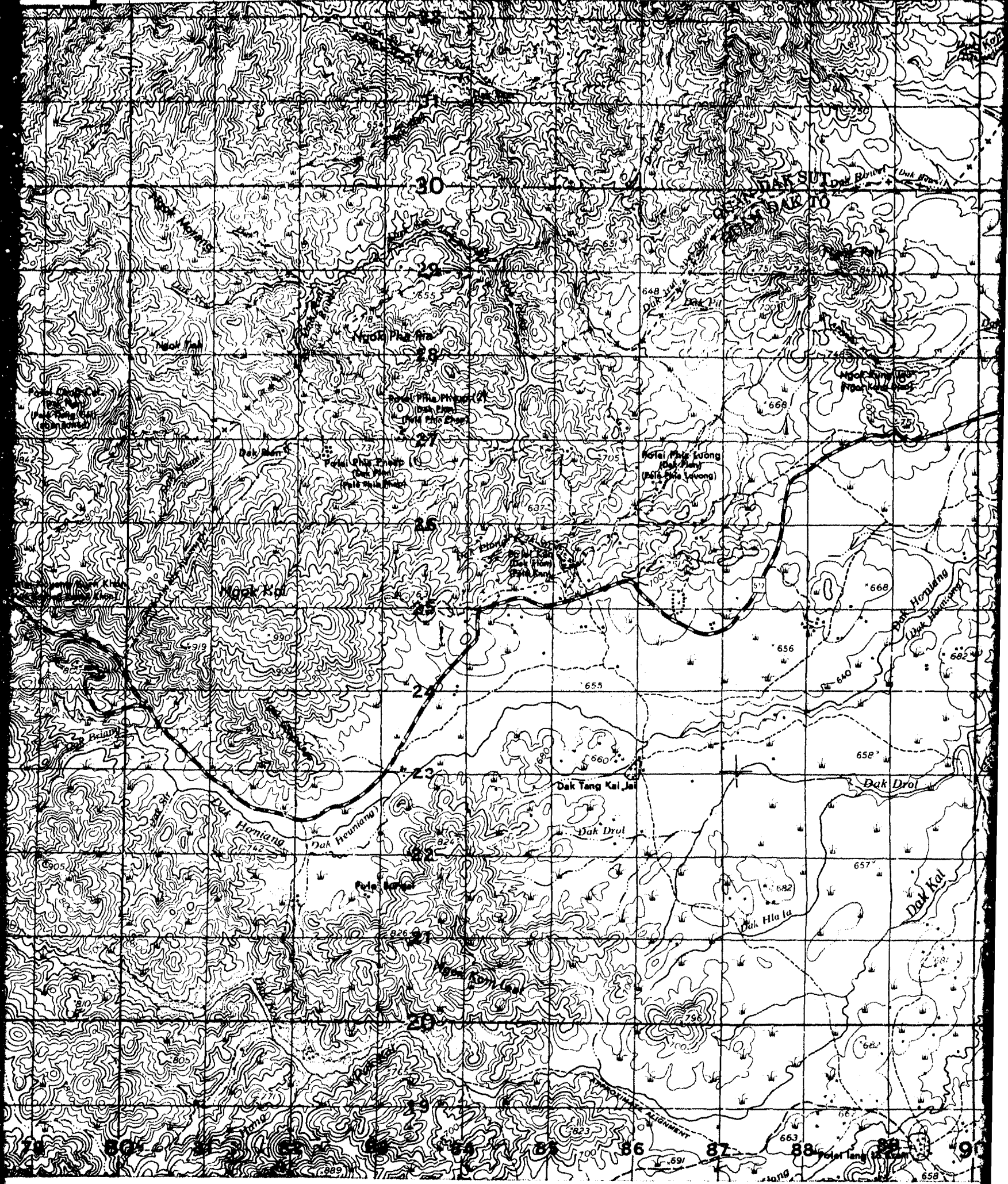
EDITION 1-AMS  
XUẤT-BẢN LẦN THỨ 1-AMS

6



DAK MỘT LOP

780 781 782 783 784 785 786 787 788 789 790



79 80 81 82 83 84 85 86 87 88 89 90





812 813 814 55' 815 170 816 817 818 819 820 175 821 822 14' 45'

1632  
1631  
1630  
1630  
1629  
1628  
1627  
1626  
1625  
1625  
1624  
40'  
1623  
1622  
162  
162  
162  
161

