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HEADQUARTERS 1ST BATTALION 12TH INFANTRY
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

AVDDB-121

1 Feb 69

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons learned for the period ending 31
January 1969

TO: Commanding Officer
3rd Brigade, 4th Inf Div
APO San Francisco 96262

I. Significant Organization or Unit activities:

1. General: During the reporting period, the "Red Warriors" were engaged primarily in defense, support, and clearing operations in the Kontum, VC Valley, and western Pleiku Province.

In addition to the aforementioned, several cordon and search operations were conducted in conjunction with Vietnamese National Police and Military Intelligence Teams, resulting in several V C leaders KIA, or detained, which greatly assisted in the disruption of the V C infra-structure. Simultaneously, MEDCAP operations were conducted by Unit Medical Personnel.

a. Task Organization: The task organization during the reporting period was as follows:

- (1) From 1 Nov to 12 Nov, the organization was composed of:

1st Bn, 12th Inf

Co A

Co B

Co C

Co D

Recon

4.2

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B/4/42 (DS)

1/B/4 Engr (DS)

- (2) During 12 Nov to 14 Nov
23rd ARVN Ranger Bn OPCON 1/12 Inf
- (3) During 20 Nov to 2 Dec
A/1/22 Inf OPCON 1/12 Inf
B/1/22 Inf OPCON 1/12 Inf
- (4) During 8 Dec to 6 Jan
1/C/4 Engr DS 1/12 Inf
- (5) During 15 Dec to 18 Dec
Co B & C OPCON 2/8 Inf (MECH)

b. Commanders and Principal Staff:

Commanding Officer: 1 Nov to 11 Jan LTC JOSEPH T PALASTRA

11 Jan to 31 Jan LTC ROBERT H CARTER

Executive Officer: 1 Nov to 18 Nov MAJ RALPH T CORRELL

18 Nov to 21 Jan MAJ BENJAMIN P OWEN

21 Jan to 31 Jan MAJ CHARLES H LYON

S-1 1 Nov to 2 Jan, CPT LYLE D GESSFORD

2 Jan to 25 Jan, CPT BRUCE A HARRIS

25 Jan to 31 Jan, CPT JOHN R LOVETT

S-2 1 Nov to 31 Jan, CPT WILLIAM A McDONOUGH

S-3 1 Nov to 21 Jan, MAJ DOUGLAS E EMERY

21 Jan to 31 Jan, MAJ BENJAMIN P OWEN

S-4 1 Nov to 21 Jan, CPT FLOYD A BROWNFIELD

21 Jan to 31 Jan, CPT WILLIAM TUCKER

S-5 1 Nov to 25 Nov, 1LT RICHARD E CARPENTER

25 Nov to 10 Jan, 1LT JOSEPH C KUHN

10 Jan to 31 Jan, 1LT JAMES A WALSH

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CO HHC	1 Nov to 28 Nov, CPT ERNEST S OLIVER
	28 Nov to 31 Jan, 1LT MICHAEL C LABERTEAUX
CO A Co	1 Nov to 7 Jan, CPT RICHARD B WALKER
	7 Jan to 31 Jan, CPT RAYMOND E SCHUMACKER
CO B Co	1 Nov to 7 Dec, CPT EMMETTE Y BURTON
	7 Dec to 31 Jan, CPT PHILIP PATRICK
CO C Co	1 Nov to 18 Nov, 1LT WILLIAM BESEL
	18 Nov to 21 Jan, CPT HAROLD D BAUGHMAN
	21 Jan to 31 Jan, CPT FLOYD A BROWNFIELD
CO D Co	1 Nov to 4 Jan, CPT BRUCE A HARRIS
	4 Jan to 31 Jan, 1LT ROBERT C STOVER
CO E Co	1 Nov to 7 Jan, 1LT CHARLES E HAWKINS
	7 Jan to 31 Jan, 1LT JAMES D RAWSON

c. Mission: The two primary missions for the "Red Warriors" during the reporting period were: (1) search and clear operations in the Kontum, VC Valley, Pleiku areas, and (2) the disruption of the VC infrastructure.

2. INTELLIGENCE:

Enemy activity in the Red Warriors areas of operation during the reporting period has been light. The only significant incidents have occurred during the final weeks of the period and continue at the time of this report.

During the past quarter 1/12 has operated in four provinces, Quang Duc, Darlac, Kontum and Pleiku. Following short operations at Duc Lap and the Mewal plantation area, the Red Warriors moved north into Kontum Province to participate in the operation there designed to deny the enemy use of the Plei Trap Valley road network. Heavy vehicle traffic had been reported

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and observed in that area as NVA began moving men and supplies south following the end of the rainy season.

Intelligence sources indicated a planned meeting of VC leaders during early Dec S-E of Kontum City. Elements of 1/12 along with 1/22 operated in that area for nearly a week, but were unable to locate either the participants or the meeting site.

During mid Dec the Red Warriors operated from LZ Anne vic Polei Kleng SF Camp. Sweeping through the valleys to the west efforts were made to detect possible NVA movement into the area surrounding LZ's Brillo Pad, Bunker Hill & Alamo. It was thought that the enemy might be maneuvering to begin attacks by fire on Polei Kleng & Kontum City.

Prior to the Christmas cease-fire the battalion moved into LZ's NW of VC Valley to support a clearing operation in that area, a traditional VC strong point. Activity continued light with no contacts or significant indications of enemy forces.

Following the termination of the VC Valley operation the Red Warriors moved to LZ Stacy, north of the Oasis and came under the operational control of the 3rd Bde. Here the battalion operated in general support of the ARVN 42d Regt, in reaction to a buildup of the NVA 24th Inf. Regt & 40th Arty. Regt Vec Chu Pa Mountains. In addition to preventing the enemy from moving south, cordon & search operations proved successful in denying the enemy access to the ready supplies of rice stored in the villages.

One such C & S operation conducted on 7 Jan at Flei Broch (1) yielded 1 ea KIA, 1 WIA, 1 CIA as well as a significant quantity of documents. Careful searches throughout the area yielded sizeable quantities of munitions to include cases of B40 rockets & mortar ammunition.

On Jan 11 as the Red Warriors moved into LZ Punch Bowl, their present location, they unknowingly forced the evacuation of several companies of enemy

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troops who had been set up in that area. Since that time several sharp yet brief contacts have yielded 2 ea KIA & 1 WIA in addition to hundreds of pounds of rice & some 23 rds of 75 mm recoilless rifle ammo.

Current Intell sources, to include POW interrogation, indicate the possibility of an enemy plan to attack the Punch Bowl area in the near future.

3. Operations:

During early November, the 1/12 Infantry was in the Duc Lap area, returning to Ban Me Thuot (LZ George) on 10 November.

On 16 Nov, the entire Bn, along with B Btry 4/42 Arty moved by road from Ban Me Thuot to Camp Enari.

On 17 and 18 Nov, the elements underwent stand down and refitting.

On 19 Nov, a road move was made to Pleiku Air Base. From there the Battalion and B Btry were lifted by C130 to Polei Kleng.

On 20 Nov, a FSB was established at LZ Swinger (YA 837 935). The primary mission of 1/12 Infantry was to provide fire support and reaction forces (if required) for 5 CIDG Companies who were destroying the road network in the Plei Trap Valley. A and D companies remained at Polei Kleng to secure B 5-16 Arty while Recon and 4.2 Mortar Platoon established a patrol base northeast of Polei Kleng. This afforded rapid fire support for those forces at Polei Kleng. On 26 November, companies B and C moved by air into the Plei Trap Valley to continue clearing and destruction operations begun by the ARVN Forces.

On 2 and 3 Dec, the battalion and B Btry were lifted back to Polei Kleng, in preparation for a multi-battalion raid to be conducted southeast of Kontum. On the afternoon of 3 Dec, the battalion moved by vehicle to LZ Mary Lou where they stayed for the night of the 3d of Dec.

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On 4 Dec the entire battalion minus Co A, was moved on a CAA to LZ Red (ZA 032 931) and Co A was CA'd into LZ White (vic VA 920 740). Co's C and D conducted a sweep of the entire area of operations with no significant findings.

On 6 Dec, the battalion returned to Polei Kleng, with plans to completely sweep the valley in the Polei Kleng area. The Bn CP, secured by Co D moved to LZ Anne (ZA 064 904). Co C remained at Polei Kleng, while Co A established a patrol base to the north and Co B did likewise to the southeast. An extensive short range patrol program was conducted with no significant findings.

On 11 Dec, Co C returned to LZ Red and conducted a sweep of the AO, leaving LZ White on 12 Dec.

During the period 15-18 Dec, Co's B and C were placed OPCON to 2/8 Inf (Mech) to participate in a series of cordon and search operations.

During the period 20-23 Dec, Co's A and C conducted joint sweep operations with two CIDG companies from Polei Kleng. The entire valley west and southwest of Polei Kleng was searched, but there was no contact with the enemy.

On 23 Dec, the "Red Warriors" moved by vehicle to Highlander Heights, and on 24 December moved by vehicle to LZ Black Hawk. Christmas Eve found Co A, Co C, Co D, the jump CP and part of B 4-42 deployed north of LZ Black Hawk, in preparation to support ARVN Ranger sweeps north of VC Valley. On 26 Dec, the remainder of the Bn was closed into the appropriate locations. Extensive short range patrol screens were employed, in anticipation of enemy elements moving out of the AO.

During the period 1-5 Jan, Co's B and D conducted sweep operations through the AO north of LZ Black Hawk with no significant findings.

On 6 Jan, the entire battalion, with B 4-42 moved from Black Hawk by vehicle to LZ Stacey (ZA 087 457). Beginning at midnight on 6 Jan, Co B began a move north of LZ Stacey to cordon and search Plei Brech (1) arriving at

070 430 Jan. The cordon and search proved very fruitful in that a courier team

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from the B 3 front was apprehended as they approached the village. The courier and one of his security members were WIA and numerous important documents were captured. In addition, one VC was captured within the village.

Co's A and C moved northeast of LZ Stacey, beginning 070 500 and performed cordon and search operations on three villages, with no significant findings. On 8 Jan, a LOH which was approaching an LZ established by Co's A and C received extensive ground fire. Co A pursued the enemy and made contact vic ZA 090 534, with an estimated enemy squad. Negative results.

From 8 to ¹⁰ Jan Co's A, B, & C continued to sweep the AO disclosing evidence of heavy VC and NVA traffic through the area. There were extensive high-speed trails, numerous rice and ammunition caches, and reports from villagers that the area was extensively used for movement of food, arms, and ammunition.

On 10 Jan, the battalion began an air movement to the Punch Bowl (ZA 939 586). By the evening of 10 Jan, Co's B and D, along with the jump CP and B 4-42 were at the Punch Bowl. On the evening of 10 Jan, the Fire Support Base received approximately 18 rounds of 75 mm recoilless rifle fire and extensive machine gun fire, resulting in only two U.S. slightly wounded.

On 11 and 12 Jan, the remainder of the Bn closed the AO with A and C Co's at LZ Victor, located northeast of the Punch Bow. Extensive short range patrol and platoon sweeps were conducted, resulting in the discovery of an extensive bunker-hospital complex. This complex was systematically destroyed by air strikes and the use of C-4 and persistent CS.

On 15 Jan Co B moved from the Punch Bowl on a reconnaissance in force operation to the west, then began a RIF to the north to the southwest of Chu Pa Mountain, with negative significant findings as of this writing.

On 18 Jan Co C moved on foot from LZ Victor north to an AO southeast of

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Chu Pa Mountain to recon in force. As of this writing, no significant findings.

On 20 Jan, Co D moved on foot from the Punch Bowl to recon in force to the north. On 23 Jan, they sighted two individuals, took them under fire, wounding one. He was a cook with 31st Bn, 40th Arty Regt (NVA), and was evacuated to 71st Evac Hospital on 25 Jan.

4. Training: During the period of this report, all training was conducted in the field by unit Officers and NCO's, Weapon zeroing was accomplished bi-weekly at the fire support base and company patrol bases.

Enlisted men from each line company attended every session of the 4th Infantry Division NCO Academy with excellent overall standings. A total of 18 individuals attended, with 100% graduates.

Following are noteworthy standings:

No 1 graduate - 4 each

No 2 graduate - 1 each

5. Logistics: Forward resupply and logistical support was performed primarily by air, with Bn trains areas located at 2d & 3d Brigade CP's (Highlander Heights and the Oasis). Helicopter support, normally, was excellent and all mission essential resupply was carried out in fine fashion.

6. Organization: NONE

7. OTHER: The AN/PRC 77's with secure means have proven immeasurable value, saving much time in shackling of messages and locations.

8. Lessons Learned:

1. Personnel: NONE

2. Intelligence:

a. Observation- Intelligence information gained in the tactical situations that Battalions find themselves is often sketchy, incomplete,

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and of little value. Oftentimes the ground commander (be it patrol or company) passes unneeded information over tactical nets because he is uncertain what is needed.

b. Evaluation: Ground commanders need to be aware of those items that are of significant intelligence value to higher headquarters, so that the limited amount of time that is available for such traffic on a tactical radio net is well spent.

c. Recommendation: That in addition to the regularly scheduled briefings in which S-2's present general specific enemy situation to commanders, the Intelligence officer should keep commanders advised of the current essential elements of information (EEI). This additional briefing need not be formal, but should include enough information so that the unit commander upon contact, or upon making a discovery can make a more accurate estimate of the situation & report the items of immediate intelligence value.

3. Operations:

A. Observation: During the cordon and search of villages, it has been found that on numerous occasions that individuals are leaving and entering the target village at BMNT.

B. Evaluation: When a village is cordoned during the early hours of morning, members of the cordon party may find individuals moving into the village, as well as out of it. Those moving in will likely be enemy soldiers.

C. Recommendation: In addition to placing a cordon with emphasis on watching the target village, a second cordon (which can be comprised of LP's) should be placed with individuals about 150 meters outside regular cordon, watching for individuals entering the village. On two occasions, this practice netted enemy soldiers and a great amount of intelligence material.

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Enemy Munitions captured by 1/12 Inf

1 Nov 68 - 31 Jan 69

1 Pistol (7.62)

1 M-1 carbine

1 M-2 carbine

2 AK 47

25 Rds B-40 Rockets

22 Rds 75 mm

8 Rds 82 mm

2 Rds 81 mm

26 Rds 60 mm

6 Chicom Hand Grenades

23 " Rifle Grenades

8 Lbs TNT

2 Blasting Caps

5 Propellant charge B-40 Rocket

5 Magazines AK 47

1 30 Cal

28 Rds 30 Cal Ammo

1040 AK 47 "

Confirmed Enemy Personnel Losses

KIA 3

WIA 2

CIA 1

Total 6

* Also CIA