

OPERATIONAL REPORT

2D BATTALION 35TH INFANTRY

This Report Provided by

(Then) Maj. Ben G. Crosby, The Battalion S3

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Headquarters, 2d Battalion 35th Infantry

APO 96355

AVDC-C-OP

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

TO: Commanding Officer

3d Bde TF, 25th Inf Div

APO 96355

Section 1: Organization Activities

1. Name of operation: Baker

2. Dates of operation: 010001 May 1967 — 312400 July 1967

3. Location: Duc Pho District, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam; Mo Duc District, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam.

4. Command and control headquarters: 2d Battalion 35th Infantry

5. Reporting Officers:

a. Commanders

	UNIT COMMANDER	PERIOD
2d Bn 35 th Inf	LTC CLINTON E. GRANGER, JR	1 May-14 Jun 67
2d Bn 35 th Inf	LTC NORMAN L. TILLER, SR	14 Jun-31 Jul 67
HHC 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT JESSE L. HORN, JR	1 May-29 Jun 67
HHC 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT S. L.C. BARCENA	29 Jun-31 Jul 67
Co. A 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT S. L C. BARCENA	1 May-29 Jun 67
Co. A 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT LARRY W. HICKS 2	9 Jun-31 Jul 67
Co. B 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT RALPH B. WALKER	1 May-28 May 67
Co. B 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT JAMES L. LINDSEY	29 May-31 Jul. 67
Co. C 2d Bn 35 th Inf	CPT JAMES W. LANNING	1 May-31 Jul 67
Reconnaissance Platoon 2d Bn 35th Inf	LT HOMER KROUT II	1 May-31 Jul 67

b. Staff

XO	MAJ ROBERT F. CARR	1 May - 24 Jun. 67
XO	MAJ IRA W. BLACK	24 Jun - 31 Jul 67
S1	1 LT JAMES T. HENNESSEY JR	1 May - 31 Jul 67
S2	1 LT CURTIS CHASE	1 May - 5 May 67
S2	1LT RICHARD J. WHITE JR	5 May - 1 Jul 67
S2	CPT MICHAEL FLICK	1 Jul - 31 Jul 67
S3	MAJ BEN G. CROSBY	1 May - 31 Jul 67
S4	CPT JAMES A. HARRIS	1 May - 31 Jul 67
Arty	LNO CPT RONALD NORRIS	1 May - 4 May 67
Arty	LNO CPT VINCENTE DEJESUS	4 May - 24 Jun 67
Arty	LNO 1LT CHRISTOPHER Q. HERRICK	24 Jun - 31 Jul 67

6. Task Organization *

1 May-7 May 1967

2/35th Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

Sqd/D/65th

4 June-26 June 1967

2/35th Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

Engr A/1-14 Inf

Sqd/D/65th Engr

C/2-34 Arm (-)

18 May-26 May 1967

2/35th Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

C/2—31~ Arm ()

Sqd/D/65th Engr

26 June-29 June. 1967

2/35 Inf

A/1-14 Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

Sqd/D/65th Engr

28 May-30 May 1967

2/35th Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

C/2-34 Arm (-)

C/1-35 Inf

Sqd/D/65th Engr

30 June-31 July 1967

2/35 Inf

A/1-14 Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

C/2-34 Arm (-)

Sqd/D/65th Engr

30 May-3 June 1967

2/35th Inf

C/3-4 CAV (-)

C/2-34 Arm (-)

Sqd/D/65th Engr

* B/1-9 CAV (Airmobile) was placed OPCON 2-35 frequently for periods of hours only.

7. Supporting Forces (Artillery)

The 2/35th Inf received artillery support from 2d Bn 9th Arty and 2d Bn 11th Arty in the following manner:

- Fired preparations for airmobile assaults.
- Fired H&I fires as requested by CO, 2d Bn 35th Inf.
- Attempted to canalize enemy into ambush sites by fire.

- d. Assisted unit commanders in land navigation.
- e. Fired counter mortar and blocking fires.
- f. Fired will-adjust missions for units in contact.
- g. Fired nightly defensive concentrations around unit locations.
- h. Fired time on target and quick fire targets on suspected or known enemy locations.

8. Artillery Coordination in support of the battalion.

- a. All artillery fired in the battalion was coordinated by the artillery liaison section attached to the 2-35th Inf from 2-9 Arty.
- b. Coordination for clearance of fires from units outside the battalion AO was coordinated by the artillery liaison section.
- c. Artillery preparations of landing zones for combat assaults were prepared, adjusted, and coordinated by the artillery liaison officer.

9. Enemy Capabilities

- a. During the period of 1 May 67 to 31 July 67 the 2nd VC Regiment was capable of employing all of its elements in the 2-35 AO
- b. The 2nd VC Regiments heavy weapons company possesses 82mm and 60mm mortars and is capable of launching a mortar attack on friendly troop locations.
- c. The support elements of the 2nd VC Regiment are capable of utilizing captured U.S. bombs and artillery rounds as booby traps and employing them along Highway #1, frequently used foot paths and track trails. These sapper elements are also capable of destroying bridges along Highway #1.
- d. The enemy is capable of employing up to a battalion size force to conduct active anti-sweep operations against U.S. forces. They can employ mines and booby traps in likely areas of search and are capable of using B-40 rocket launchers and 57 recoilless rifle fire against U.S. troops and armor.

10. Enemy Vulnerabilities

- a. The 2nd VC regiment remain vulnerable to a artillery and air strikes and is not likely, to mass troops in a small area.
- b. The 2nd VC regiment lacks sufficient supplies and men to conduct a major offensive action.
- c. The 2nd VC regiment has to rely on the rice and food stuffs grown in the Mo Duc and Duc Pho area for their main food source.

11 Observations:

- a. During the latter part of May 1967, the Enemy initiated his reported summer offensive. On 27 May 67, elements of the 60th VC Battalion, 1st VC Regiment came in contact with 2-35 Inf. As a result of this contact the Enemy suffered heavy losses in men and equipment and withdrew to the NUI LON mountain area. This major defeat curtailed the Enemy's summer offensive.
- b. During the latter part of June and July, the Enemy infiltrated into the DUC PHO peninsula area. The main force consisted of elements of the 97th Bn, 2d VC regiment and supporting units. Their mission was to conduct anti-sweep operations against US forces. During the latter part of July, the Enemy lost numerous personnel and weapons. The Enemy is still present in force on the DUC PHO peninsula. However, interrogation of prisoners reveals that the morale

of Enemy units is low due to lack of food, ammunition, and medical supplies. This condition has been exploited by PSYOPS. The Enemy has suffered losses due to artillery and air strikes.

c. The recent infiltration of 97th Bn units into the DUC PHO Peninsula indicates that the Enemy may be attempting resupply by sea; also it appears that he will make every effort to maintain control of this rice producing area.

12. Major contacts

DATE	EN KIA (BC)	PW	WPNS	CIA	OTHERS
11 May 67	32	1	13	1 PRC	10 CIA
12 May 67	2-35	FSB Mortar Attack (35-40 rds 82mm mortar)			
20 May 67	79	3	20		
24 May 67	21	0	8		
29 May 67	29	3	13		
1 Jun 67	24		7		
21 Jun 67	57	0	7		
1 Jul 67	33		1		
19 Jul 67	18		11		
26 Jul 67	37	20	12		

13 Conclusions:

a. The Enemy will not maintain contact but will split up into small groups upon initial contact. These small groups will hide in bunkers, caves, tunnels or spider holes along trenches and hedgerows or attempt to flee the contact area.

b. The Enemy will normally plant mines on or near roads and trails.

c. The Enemy will employ booby traps or mines in likely rest areas and paths through hedgerows.

d. When destroying mines, booby traps, or dud rounds, the minimum amount of personnel should be used so as to avoid the possibility of several casualties resulting from curious on-lookers.

e. Spider holes, tunnels, and caves are extremely well camouflaged. Search techniques must emphasize slow, methodical and painstaking investigation of all likely areas.

f. When US forces enter a hamlet, the Enemy will normally wait until they are approximately 20-25 meters away and then engage.

g. VC local and main force units will hide during the day in bunkers, caves, tunnels and spider holes. These units will move at night.

h. In the 2-35 Inf AO, the Enemy will infiltrate from the NUI LON mountains to the lowlands through hamlets along his route.

i. The Enemy was being re-supplied by sea prior to the arrival of the 3-25 Inf. Through surveillance of the coastal portion of the A0 as well as search and destroy operations in the villages, we have denied the Enemy access to resupply by sea.

j. A thorough search of a hamlet must be conducted to insure all possible hidden rice caches are discovered because the Enemy and his supporters will bury, camouflage and hide food caches.

k. Extensive inter-connecting trench systems are located along the DUC PHO Peninsula and are used as lines of communication for the enemy.

l. Immediate interrogation of POW and VCS frequently provided information of immediate tactical value.

m. In the past few weeks numerous NVA Cadre have been captured.

n. Villagers supporting the VC are normally relatives of the VC.

o. Units of the battalion still do not have sufficient interpreter capability. There should be one interpreter per platoon.

14 Statistics during reporting period

EN KIA	WPNS CIA	POW's	VCS	US KIA	US WIA
883	276	281	2246	55	257

WEAPONS BREAKDOWN (CIA)

SKS: 45	M-1 Carbine:	50
AK-47: 20	Soviet/Chicom MG:	9
SMG: 30	Thompson SMG:	8
M-1 Rifle 34	M-14 Rifle:	2
US MG: 4	M-79:	7
BAR: 17	.9 mm Pistol:	1
P38 Pistol: 2	60mm Mortar:	1
M-16 Rifle: 3	57RR:	3
.45 Cal Pistol: 6	B-40:	4
Mauser Rifle: 2	Chicom Carbine:	15
M-2 Carbine: 6	MAS 36:	7

15: Operations Section

1 May-7 May 1967

During the reporting period there was no significant contact as the 2-35th Inf continued to conduct S&D operations in the battalion AO. On 4 May 1967, the 2-35th Inf displaced the Battalion CP from LZ Montezuma to LZ LIZ, vic BS754431, closing at 1130H.

8 May-12 2349H May 1967

The Battalion continued to conduct S&D operations in AO Baker with no significant contact. The units suffered some casualties due to enemy booby traps and mines.

12 2350H-13 May 1967

See inclosed after action report.

14 May 18 May 1967

On 15 May 1967, Team Penn (C/3~4 Cav & Recon/2-3 5) located a small textile plant vic BS796445. During the two day search, 38 weaving machines and 1000 meters of white and black cloth were discovered. Efforts to evacuate this material and equipment were hampered by long range enemy small arms fire. On 17 May 1967, the last of the equipment and refugees from the area were evacuated to Duc Pho district headquarters.

19 May 1967

At 1450H, C/2-35, while searching a cave and bunker complex vicinity B8766539, made contact with a Viet Cong local force platoon. C/2-34 Armor with one platoon of A/1-14 was instructed by the Battalion Commander to attack the enemy from the southeast while C/2-35 attacked from the northwest. The enemy was pursued into an open rice paddy where he was destroyed. Thirteen enemy were killed.

19 May-20 May 1967

a. While in the process of securing an LZ, vic 775457, at 19 1545H May 1967, in preparation for a combat assault in support of C/2-35, in contact to the north, A/2-35 began receiving enemy automatic and small arms fire from three or four enemy positions to their south. The CO, A/2-35, decided, with the concurrence of the Battalion Commander, to attack these enemy positions and to develop the situation. The initial enemy fire wounded one soldier seriously. Moving to the south A/2-35 overran the enemy positions, killing two enemy. By 1610H, the enemy had disengaged and had retreated to the southwest. A sweep of the contact area produced an F.M. Radio, medical supplies and several NVA uniforms. They continued the search and then, upon receipt of information of enemy movement to the southwest, began a sweep in that direction.

b. At 1735H, A/2-35 again received some small arms fire from the south. Realizing that his company might be led into an enemy ambush, CPT Barcena, CO, A/2-35, requested and received an air observation team from B/1-9 Cav (airmobile) to screen his flanks and front. Continuing to move to the south, A/2-35 was fired on at 1830H, from the south. The observation team located the enemy and directed the company along a concealed route to the enemy position. This position was destroyed and two enemy were killed. One Thompson sub-machine gun was captured. At 1910H Company A closed for the night, vic BS774455. At 1915H, one VC sniper fired at and wounded one of the company's rifleman. The VC was killed and his weapon captured. The company dug in and listening posts were put out. The wounded soldier was evacuated.

c. At 20 0025H, the CO, A/2-35, reported that his LP's to the northwest and southwest had engaged a total of eight enemy. The LP's threw grenades, detonated their claymores and fired their weapons.

Two enemy with grenades were killed; the other six fled. The LP's shifted their locations and waited. A sweep was conducted by one of the platoons but they only discovered three blood trails and the two enemy killed. Blood trails indicated three of the enemy were seriously wounded.

d. At 0147H, CPT Barcena reported his perimeter under attack by an estimated enemy company. Using existing trench lines that encompassed the entire area, the enemy was able to move undetected to within a few meters of where the LP's had been. The enemy, thinking the LP's were there, threw hand grenades and attacked the empty position. This brief warning enabled the LP's to "ambush" the attackers and move back to their lines. By this time artillery defensive concentrations were being fired. Despite the heavy volume of outgoing fire, the enemy pressed forward in a vigorous ground attack. Using "hugging" tactics to avoid the heavy artillery concentrations, the enemy threw a large number of hand grenades in the perimeter. It was these hand grenades that inflicted most of the casualties. Flare ships and gunships were requested. The Battalion Commander requested an armed AC-47 and AC-47 flare ship. By 0222H the enemy had ceased the coordinated ground attack and was engaging A/2-35 on only the northern flank. DUSTOFF, aeromedical evacuation, was alerted to stand by to evacuate the wounded once the area was secured.

e. At 0247H, CPT Barcena requested a resupply of ammunition. LTC Granger, realizing that a resupply helicopter would, in all probability, be shot down in the attempt, decided to commit C/3-4 Cav (-); not only to carry the much needed ammunition, but also to block the southern escape route. Under the light from the 107mm illuminating rounds, C/3-4 Cav (-) departed LZ LIZ. At 0355H, the armed AC-47 "Dragonship" arrived on station and rained accurate fire on the enemy. The aircraft commander of the AC-47 also guided the APC's along the best route of advance toward the besieged company. At 0418H, Co A reported ten WIA and requested medevac for them. By 0427H, Dustoff was overhead and going into the LZ. Receiving enemy AW fire, the helicopter had to pull off, unable to extract any of the WIA's. He flew to LZ LIZ to check his helicopter for damage and to await the time when he could again attempt the extraction.

f. C/3-4 Cav closed A/2-35's perimeter without incident at 0451H. Just prior to the closing, the enemy fired rifle grenades and small arms sporadically throughout the perimeter. Contact was broken on the arrival of the C/3-4 Cav. Additional resupply was requested and the resultant resupply helicopter and DUSTOFF extracted the twelve WIA's and two KIA's. See sketch # 1.

g. Between 0630 and 1210H, there was no enemy contact. A/2-35 and C/3-4 Cav conducted an extensive search and sweep of the night area of contact, locating ten enemy killed and three weapons. In addition, one hamlet guerilla was captured. Upon interrogation, it was discovered that he was wounded during the initial probe at 0025H. He observed two others in his group killed. At 0900H, A/2-35 located a VC bunker complex 100 meters west of their night location. An engineer squad from D Company, 65th Eng. Battalion, was airlifted with explosives to the LZ and was carried by an APC to that location. Elements from both C/3-4 Cav and A/2-35 provided security while the engineers worked on the destruction of the VC. camp and its bunker complex. See sketch # 2

h. At 1221H, this work party came under attack by the enemy. Firing RPG-2's, the enemy hit one of the APC's, killing the track commander and driver. The APC was destroyed. In reinforcing the engineer work party A/2-35 (-) and C/3-4 Cav (-) met heavy enemy resistance, but aggressively fought through it driving them to the southwest. At 1341, C/2-35 was alerted to move to a pick-up site where they would be extracted for a combat assault southwest of the

contact area. The battalion reconnaissance platoon was alerted to move from LZ LIZ to vic BS768463. At 1410 an airstrike helped to break up enemy concentration. By 1448, Recon 2-35 Inf was in position and by 1500,

C/2-35 (-) had conducted their CA into an LZ vic BS768443. While the elements were being moved into position, a FAC spotted twenty armed enemy moving toward the destroyed APC. While the Battalion Commander adjusted the direct fire of the 106RR fire from LZ LIZ, CPT Barcena sent a ground element toward the enemy position and APC. When the troops arrived at the deserted APC they killed two more enemy, one of them inside the track,

i. C/2-35 (-) moved from the landing zone to the east linking with A/2-35. By 140H, C Company was in contact with a well entrenched enemy southwest of A Company. During a stiff village fight that lasted more than an hour C Company killed twenty-six armed enemy. Meanwhile, A Company and C troop 3-4 Cav had turned to the east and were pushing through the southern edge of Vinh Hien (3) toward Highway #1. After C Company had evacuated their wounded and dead, they moved into the northern part of Vinh Hien (3), paralleling A Company's route of movement. Just inside the hamlet, C Company encountered another entrenched enemy element. Helicopter rockets and small unit tactics eventually overcame the remaining VC force, and C Company reached the eastern edge of the hamlet at 1950 hours. A Company and C Company established a combined perimeter in the paddy area east of the hamlet. See sketch # 2.

j. C/3-4 Cav had begun a sweep back toward the blocking position of the recon platoon. At 2015H, Recon/2-35 and C/3-4 (-) closed LZ LIZ to provide FSB security. There were no further incidents that night. An armed AC-47 "Dragon Ship" reported on station at 2015 and his fires were directed by CPT Lanning. Artillery was fired into the hamlet throughout the night to deny the enemy access to the remnants of the battle area.

k. At 210620H, the two companies began a systematic search of the hamlet and other areas of contact. In addition, before the village was destroyed each and every bunker, spider hole, and hut, was methodically searched for signs of the enemy. By the time the hamlet had been razed, all enemy material had been evacuated or destroyed. One ton of explosives was used to destroy the complex.

1. Results:

1. Friendly Losses

- a. KIA 5
- b. WIA 24

2. Enemy Losses-Personnel

- a. KIA 89
- b. CIA 3
- c. Detained (suspects) 12

3. Enemy Losses

- a. weapons 47
- b. Mixed ammunition 10,000 rds.
- c. Rice 1,000 lbs.

21 May -23 May 1967

2-35 Inf continued to operate in AO Baker with C/3-4 Cav and C/2-34 Armor OPCON 2-35 Inf. There was no significant contact with the enemy.

24 May 1967

C/2-35 Inf, continuing to conduct search operations vic BS765533, was in almost constant contact throughout the day. It appeared that the enemy was trying to prevent the company from making any more than a cursory search of the small hill mass in the area. Fifteen enemy were killed and eight weapons were captured during the day.

25 May-26 May 1967

In an attempt to exploit the enemy's interest in the hill mass vic BS765533, C/2-35 moved their base camp to the top of the hill to be in a position to conduct an aggressive search. During the next six days, C/2-35 destroyed over thirty small tunnels, thirty five bunkers, and about five hundred meters of trench work. They killed twenty eight enemy, captured three Viet Cong, evacuated fifty pounds of documents, and captured seventeen weapons.

27 May-30 May 1967

a. At 27 1200H, the battalion CP was notified by the S2, 3d Brigade Task Force, of a suspected enemy CP located in Tan Phong Hamlet, Due Pho District, Quang Ngai Province (BS735435). Since the organic forces of the battalion were committed some distance from the area of interest, the battalion commander, LTC Granger, requested and received permission to insert the Blue Team, Troop B, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry, (Airmobile). The Blue Team (an infantry platoon) was inserted by combat assault east of the target into an LZ vic BS739435 at 1225H. Team Penn (C/3-4 Cav (-) and the Reconnaissance Platoon 2-35 Inf) located about ten kilometers north of LZ LIZ was given the mission of reserve reaction force (RRF) for the Blue Team to their south.

b. At 1300H, vic BS738439, the Blues reported observing thirty well armed and equipped enemy with camouflaged uniforms. The Blues engaged the enemy platoon, killed three and called for additional troop support to block what appeared to be a withdrawing enemy. Team Penn, reacting to the call, immediately moved south to block. Gunships from the weapons platoon B/1-9 Cav (Red Team) were dispatched to provide additional fire support. Artillery blocking fires were adjusted to the west of the contact to prevent enemy withdrawal in that direction. See sketch #3.

c. At 1340H, B/2-35 was released from OPCON B/1-9 Cav and returned to the 2-35 Inf. They were alerted to move by air to support the growing fight, At 1400H, the Blues had secured an LZ vic BS747472 and the lift ships carrying 1B/2-35 were enroute. At 1402, the first helicopter carrying 1B landed amidst very heavy enemy fire. The other five helicopters were forced to circle out of the area of contact. One ship was hit and the pilot wounded. Despite his wounds, the pilot was successful in landing his aircraft out of the battle area, 800 meters west of LZ LIZ, Recon (-) and two APC's from C/3-4 Cav were dispatched from LIZ to provide security for the ship.

d. By 1415H, the Blues, heavily engaged and suffering not only battle casualties but also heat injuries, had requested an emergency resupply of ammunition and water. At 1430H, a 174th Aviation Company UH-1D was loaded and over the area of contact at an LZ secured by the Blue Team. As the helicopter was making its short final it was hit by a heavy burst of enemy

automatic weapons fire and subsequently crashed 200 meters south of the LZ. A squad from the Blues successfully extracted the wounded crew from the burning craft before it exploded.

e. At 1554H, Company B (-) was airlifted to the vicinity of the downed bird where it linked up with the remaining elements of Recon and C/3-4 Cav. This force then deployed northwest to the hamlet where the Blues were heavily engaged and surrounded.

f. By 1607H, Team Penn had arrived from the north and was receiving fire from the enemy. Dismounting the battalion reconnaissance platoon, the C/3-4 Cav moved about one thousand meters west and attacked from the northwest. Recon assaulted the enemy from the northeast. See sketch #3. The enemy, now engaged on three sides, found itself surrounded. They still persisted in their violent attack on the Blue Team and despite accurate gunship fire were able to inflict a few more casualties. As the pressure grew more intense, the enemy slackened their rate of fire and began to evade. The Recon platoon broke through the enemy lines and linked with the Blues. See sketch #4. Almost simultaneously, the APC's, inflicting heavy enemy losses, broke through to the northwest. Captain Penn, CO, C/3-4 Cav, decided to withdraw the WIA's from the contact area to a secure LZ where the wounded could be evacuated. As his element with the WIA's in the APC's moved through the perimeter, Captain Penn's tracks became surrounded. The enemy undoubtedly thought they could stop the armor with their small arms but they paid a huge price in lives before the error was discovered. The armored cavalry succeeded in securing an LZ and at 1620H, the first DUSTOFF was completed.

g. At 1631H, B/2-35 (-) linked with the friendly elements in the contact area (Tan Phong). After reorganization of the force, B Company deployed to the north for a careful, detailed search for the enemy. Finding the enemy was not difficult as they continued to resist with heavy volumes of small arms and automatic weapons fire. However, the enemy began using the many spider holes and caves that infested Tan Phong in an effort to escape the closing force. As the units approached the northern end of the hamlet, an airstrike was called in by LTC Granger on an enemy hamlet 500 meters north of Tan Phong. C/3-4 Cav was directed to move to the northwest in an attempt to move around the enemy and block his withdrawal. In the meantime, Recon began receiving moderate fire to the south, indicating the enemy had left a force behind. The Reconnaissance Platoon turned back through Tan Phong while B/2-35 (-) continued to the hamlet's northern fringe. By this time the large enemy force (estimated company (+)) had scattered and the units were receiving only light resistance, See sketch #5.

h. By 1900H, all elements closed together in a perimeter vic BS730437 to be re-supplied and to extract the Blue Team. 2B was to be lifted in to reinforce the team. At 1918H, 2B attempted a touchdown but again only one bird was able to land in the face of enemy AW fire. It was decided that it was too risky to try the exchange, Gunships, flareships, and an armed AC-47 reported on station. See sketch #6.

i. At 2100H, A/2-35 was airlifted from the beach to LZ Liz where they assumed responsibility for FSB security. All elements dug in for the night.

j. At 28 0315H, the force in Tan Phong came under a light enemy mortar attack. Captain Penn, CO, C/3-4 Cav, the only casualty, was mortally wounded, Counter mortar fires from LZ Liz and artillery fires by 2d Bn 9th Arty were placed effectively throughout the area. There was no further contact that night. In view of the enemy strength it was decided to commit further troops into the area in the morning,

k. At 28 0938H May 1967, C/1-35 (-) was placed OPCON 2-35 Inf and conducted a heliborne assault vic BS727477. Their assigned mission was to sweep south along the base of the hill

mass on the western border of the coastal plain, a likely avenue of enemy withdrawal. Recon/2-35 conducted a heliborne, assault at 1055H west of C/1-35 (-) vic BS715465 and was assigned to sweep the ridge lines and draws in the hill masses to the northwest of Tan Phong. A/2-35 departed LZ Liz on a sweep to the west not only to aid B/2-35 in the search of the battlefield, but also to establish contact. C/3-4 Cav was assigned blocking positions southeast of Recon. The Blue Team was extracted and replaced by 2B at 0916H. See sketch #7.

l. The simultaneous sweeps of the Tan Phong area on the 28th produced several small contacts. However, fire support by the gunships of the 174th Aviation Company and B/1-9 Cav (airmobile) accounted for the vast majority of the enemy dead. A prisoner and a Hoi Chanh identified the enemy unit as the 60th Bn 1st VC Regiment. Undoubtedly, the majority of the battalion was in the area. As the 2-35 Inf elements pursued the enemy, they forced him to break into the clearings and rice paddies. The rockets and "Mini" gun fire of the armed "Hueys" killed or wounded all observed enemy. The units on the ground forced the enemy into hiding to avoid the increasing onslaught. Efforts to capture prisoners failed as the enemy repeatedly fought to their death. By the end of the day, 87 enemy lay dead on the battlefield, killed for the most part by the gunships. A/2-35 and C/3-4 Cav swept back to LZ Liz where they provided FSB security. B/2-35, C/1-35 (-), and Recon/2~35 were re-supplied and assigned the mission of saturation ambush patrols for the night. Recon/2-35 was placed OPCON B/2-35.

m. By 2215H, all elements were in position. B/2-35 with OPCON of Recon occupied four ambush sites at the mouth of the Song Tra Cau Valley: Recon located vic BS713424; 2B located vic BS712425; B (-) located vic BS713433; and 3B located vic BS715438. C/1-35 had three ambushes north of Highway 515 positioned along the road. See sketch #7.

n. At 29 0240H May 1967, the ambush of Company B (-), located vicinity BS713433, came under an intense enemy ground and mortar attack. See sketch #8. Using camouflage and stealth, at least one enemy company surrounded the ambush position undetected. The enemy initiated the attack with accurate mortar fire. Efforts to counter the mortar fire with their own 60mm mortar and the 4.2 mortar platoon from LZ Liz proved useless. The enemy was using at least two mortars which could not be located. As the mortars were raining their deadly fire, the enemy began a concentrated ground attack. Captain Ralph Walker, CO, Company B, although mortally wounded by the initial mortar attack, rallied his men into a perimeter and requested artillery fire support. His courage and determination provided the catalyst for the initial defense of the position and undoubtedly prevented the unit from being overrun. Captain Walker died forty minutes later. When the unit moved from its linear ambush into a perimeter, it inadvertently closed around an enemy position. The two enemy were swiftly killed. At 0300H, Medivac was requested to come to LZ Liz where it would remain on alert until the contact area was secure. At the same time the aircraft commander of the armed AC-47 "Dragon Ship" reported that he would be in the area of contact at 0320H. Armed HU-1C's were on station with a helicopter flare ship and began firing under the guidance of the 2d platoon leader, who had assumed command. The enemy continued to fire his mortars although the volume was not as heavy. Efforts to locate these mortars proved fruitless. It was later discovered that the enemy had used a mud hut as a firing pit. A hole two feet in diameter was cut in the roof through which he fired his rounds. This tactic prevented observation of the muzzle flash and because of the muffled noise, made it virtually impossible to determine with accuracy how far away the mortars were. Meanwhile, the gunships concentrated their fire on ten enemy in a rice paddy. As the enemy attack intensified, the men from B Company threw white phosphorus grenades to mark the proximity of an enemy automatic weapons position. This enabled the armed helicopters from both the 174th Aviation Company and B/1-9 Cav (airmobile) to engage the enemy accurately. At 0325H it was decided to move the rest of B Company and the Reconnaissance Platoon to reinforce the besieged platoon. At 0346H, LTC Granger, over the

contact area in his command and control helicopter, decided to commit C/2-35 (-) in a reinforcing action from the east. All elements, as they moved toward the point of contact, made light contact which resulted in several more enemy dead. At 0405H a medevac helicopter carrying the company executive officer successfully made it into the perimeter and evacuated three wounded. On its arrival 1LT Russel Chapman assumed command. The departure of the medevac signaled a renewed enemy attack. At 0410H 1LT Chapman was wounded in the head, but courageously continued to command, At 0411H, Recon and IB attempting to break through the attack from the southwest came under intense automatic weapons fire. Maneuvering against the position, the reconnaissance platoon overran it and Captured the M1919A6 machine gun. This was the last strong effort made by the enemy to block the relief force. At 0434H, the enemy tried for the last time to break through the unit's staunch perimeter. He assaulted in mass from the east under a murderous barrage of enemy mortar fire. Some of the enemy broke through the lines and into the perimeter but that was where they died. Orders were issued that no one would leave their foxholes so that if anyone was seen moving in the perimeter he would be enemy. The tactic worked, At 0446H, the contact had lightened considerably. Medevac was again requested and the helicopter landed in the LZ amidst suppressive fire from the perimeter. By 0550 all contact had been broken by the enemy, the casualties had been evacuated and a resupply of ammunition had been effected. At 0617H, C/3-4 Cav, with one platoon of A/2-35, and A/2-35 (-) departed LZ Liz on two separate axes to the west to sweep the flanks of the contact area to reestablish contact with the enemy. At 0627H, C/1-35 closed with B/2-35. See sketch #9.

o. At 0854H, B/1-9 Cav was placed OPCON 2-35 Inf. The Blue Team conducted a combat assault vic BS694423 and moved east along, the Song Tra Cau Valley into prepared blocking positions of C/1-35 and C/3-4 Cav at the mouth of the valley floor. A/2-35 swept south and southwest of the point of contact detaining large numbers of military age males who were hiding in a Buddhist temple. They also discovered five tons of stored rice in the same temple. The remaining elements made light contact while flushing the Viet Cong from bunkers, caves and tunnels.

p. At 1030H, Company B was extracted by helicopter and taken to LZ Montezuma where they met their new CO, Captain Lindsey. At 1800H, A/2-35, C/3-4 Cav, and Recon/2-35 closed to LZ Liz, C/1-35 closed to a night location about 800 meters west-southwest of LZ Liz.

q. At 30 0930H May 1967, C/1-35 crossed the Song Tra Cau River, the southern AO line, and was returned to the control of the 1-35 Inf.

r. Results of the three day contact were as follows:

(1) Friendly casualties:

3 KIA
27 WIA
1 DOW

(2) Enemy losses, personnel:

116 KIA
8 CIA
119 Detained

(3) Enemy losses, weapons:

Crew served: 7

57 recoilless rifle 1

60mm mortar w/sight 1

B-40 rocket launcher 1

RPD LMG 3

cal. 30 LMG 1

Individual: 34

Carbine, M-1, .30 cal 3

Carbine, M-.2, .30 cal 2

7.62 SKS 10

AK-47 6

BAR 3

M-79, 40mm GL 3

SMG, Type unknown 3

Pistol, 9mm 1

7.62, Soviet Carbine,

Mosin Nagant 1

7.62 SMG, PPSH-41 1

7.62, M-14 1

31 May 1967

At 30 1215H May, a 3d Brigade Task Force Long Range Reconnaissance Team was placed OPCON 2-35th Inf and inserted by the Battalion S2 into an area, vic BS71 8443, secured by the Battalion's reconnaissance platoon, The Long Range Reconnaissance Team clandestinely slipped into the hedgerows as the battalion reconnaissance platoon wove a path in the area. After regrouping, the team members moved to the hill mass bordering the Due Pho coastal plains and at 1448H reported they were located vic BS718453, and that they would remain in the area until dark before moving. At 2030H, the team radioed the tactical operations center that they would be moving shortly to the north. That was the last communication received. At 31 0715H, a helicopter with the S2 aboard attempted to regain communication with the Long Range Reconnaissance Team, This proved fruitless. A/2-35 made a combat assault at 0911H vic BS718473 to locate the missing team and started a sweep down the ridges and draws leading to the Long Range Reconnaissance Team's last reported position. Team Krout, consisting of C/3-4 Cav and Recon/2-35, conducted a land move from LZ Liz to a location vic BS716468. Recon platoon then moved north up the slopes toward the last reported location of the Long Range Reconnaissance Team, At 1048H, Recon/2-35, vic BS718453, located a grave containing two bodies from the Long Range Reconnaissance Team. All their equipment and their two weapons were missing. A thorough search of the area did not produce either the other missing men, or their equipment. However, three enemy were killed and one captured. The prisoner could not provide any information concerning the missing men. Results: two friendly killed in action, three friendly missing in action, one PRC-25 radio and 5 weapons captured by the enemy. Enemy losses totaled 3 KIA and one CIA. On 1 June 1967, the search was discontinued.

1 June 1967

At 1600H, an observation helicopter from B/1-9 Cav observed fifteen armed enemy in a rice paddy vic BS761564. Team Strunck which consisted of C/2-34 Armor, 2C/3-4 Cav and 1A/2-35 Inf was dispatched and following the directions of the observation helicopter pilot moved into

the enemy location. Armed HU-1C's were requested and employed with the Armor and Infantry, the enemy, although reinforced, was still no match for the swift team. Twenty four enemy were killed and seven weapons were captured without the loss of a single U.S. casualty.

2 June 1967

A/1-14th Inf was placed OPCON to the 2/3-5th Inf at 04 1035H, having moved from their parent base at Chu Lai to their new base on LZ Dragon, vic BS725535. Battery B, 2d Battalion, 11th Artillery, GS, Task Force Oregon, Was positioned at LZ Dragon to provide artillery support for what had been a gap, in the northern portion of the battalion area of operations.

5 June 1967

At 1505H, while securing an engineer work party, the third platoon of A/2-35, suffered three friendly KIA's when the security team detonated a 250 lb. bomb rigged as a bobby trap on a bridge, vic BS778444. A Navy diving team was requested and sent to dive for the missing equipment; however, one M-60 machine gun was not found. A/2-35th continued to provide security for the engineer work parties assigned to repair national route # 1.

6 June-8 June 1967

There was no significant contact during the period. Recon 2/35 Inf conducted a county fair operation in the village of Vinh Xuan, BS748437. The village was adopted by the 2-35th and 100 civilians were treated by the Battalion medical team,

9 June-14 June 1967

There was no significant contact during this period. On 14 1100H, a change of command ceremony was held at LZ LIZ with LTC Norman L, Tiller accepting the Battalion colors from LTC Clinton E. Granger.

15 June 1967

The 2-35 Inf was assigned to provide convoy security for a round trip resupply convoy from Chu Lai to Due Pho. Units were placed at critical points along route # 1 and A/1-14 was placed on RRF with lift helicopters on strip alert. The convoy left Chu Lai at 0730H and arrived at Due Pho at 1400H Departing Duc Pho at 1500H, the convoy moved back north, stopping at Quang Ngai at 1900H. 2-35 Inf was released from the assigned mission at this time. At 1854H, C/3-4 Cav, returning with Recon 2-35 Inf from the days operation, had one APC detonate a pressure released two hundred and fifty pound bomb buried three hundred meters from LZ LIZ. Eleven soldiers were killed and one APC totally destroyed.

16 June-20 June 1967

During the reporting period, the Battalion continued to conduct search and destroy operations in the assigned AO. Sporadic contact with Viet Cong local forces during the five day period yielded fifteen enemy killed.

21 June-22 June 1967

Acting on intelligence information received from the US Advisory Team, Mo Due district headquarters, the 2-35 Inf conducted three combat assaults in an effort to encircle a suspected Viet Cong main force company. At 21 0845H, Recon 2-35 Inf conducted a combat assault into an LZ vic BS752608. At 0915H, A/1-14 combat assaulted an LZ vic BS735605. A/2-35 conducted a combat assault at 0915H vic BS736616. When the Recon lift landed, the VC panicked and started fleeing the area. The majority met their death when they ran into the open rice paddies where the armed

HU-1C's were circling. The gunships accounted for at least thirty enemy dead. When A/1-14 and A/2-35 landed, they swiftly moved in on the enemy to close the pincer. The units, by then, did not find the enemy so readily bent on running into the open. They hid in the tunnels and bunkers. The gunships, providing visual reconnaissance, spotted eight to ten enemy with weapons at vic BS745585. They took them under fire. The enemy took refuge in bunkers and tunnels in the immediate area. With the gunships providing suppressive fire, A/1-14 swept to the area of contact. Once in the area, A/1-14 started a detailed search of all bunkers and tunnels. A grenade thrown into a tunnel entrance produced one enemy KIA. This particular tunnel entrance turned out to be the beginning of an extensive network of rooms and passageways. Two days were spent in the search of the tunnel. The results were six enemy KIA and five weapons captured. At the end of the second day, engineers were brought in and the complex was destroyed. Tear Gas and hand grenades were used extensively along with PSYOPS teams. Recon 2-35 and A/2-35 were extracted the first day while A/1-14 remained in ambush. During the two day operation fifty-seven enemy were killed.

23 June-26 June 1967

There was no significant enemy contact during the reporting period. At 26 1600H, C/2-34 Armor was released OPCON 2/35 Inf and returned by sea to control of the 3d Brigade Task Force.

27-30 June 1967

There was no significant contact during this period.

1 July-3 July 1967

At 0300 under cover of darkness C/2-35 moved by foot from LZ LIZ commencing a three day ambush vic 7942. Moving within a two thousand meter area and with no helicopter resupply the element killed 32 with no American casualties. A/2-35 conducted combat assault 3 0945H vic BS799477 and searched to the east with negative results.

4 July- 9 July 1967

A/1-14 and B/2-35 conducted three day ambushes in same pattern as C/2-35 at locations vic 750555 and vic 805473 respectively with similar results.

At 04 0715H Recon 2-35 working with the Mo Duc Special Intelligence Team set up a day ambush at BS705542.. They immediately observed and engaged eight enemy killing four and wounding two.

Pursuing the remaining enemy, Recon was engaged from a village to their front and enemy to their rear. Immediately gunships were directed against the enemy forcing them to break contact. Three weapons were CIA.

During this period A/1-14 and B/2-35 conducted twenty-four hour stand downs at Montezuma and each unit had one platoon receive three days of training.

10 July-11 July 1 967

At 10 1424H vic BS804427 A/2-3 5 captured one NVA with a BAR . After intensive interrogation, he led them to a bamboo grove and pointed out a cleverly concealed hole with a wooden trap door. Digging with entrenching tools disclosed a tunnel and two VC who fought as well as they could in the cramped quarters with little success. Using the same method of digging, A/2-35 uncovered three more holes and two more VC, arms, and equipment with no friendly loss of life.

12 July-31 July 1967

Alerted to the structure and nature of concealment of enemy bunkers and tunnels, the 2-35 began literally to dig up the entire AO. Reaching a small search area and working in search and security teams each squad would dig up all likely areas. Trap doors were found and removed, often exposing an enemy who either had to surrender or fire a few futile rounds from his cramped fighting position. Interpreters present at the search site provided units with an ability to exploit POW's whose information led them to further caves. The enemy, unable to effectively retaliate, was subjected to a decimation of his ranks with few friendly casualties as the following totals during this period illustrate:

Enemy	US
KIA 260	KIA 9
POW 47	WIA 42

WPNS 108

AS the reporting period ended this method of operations held promise of continuing profitable results.

On 19 July C/2-3 5 and A/2-3 5 conducted medcap of An Tho-1. Moving to the village on separate routes they sealed off the village and conducted a thorough search and gave medical assistance.

On 23 July C/2-35 set up night ambushes with 1C/2-3 5 and 2C/2-35 vic BS814453 with successful results: two enemy were killed and two captured.

On 25 July A/1-14 located at BS731610 had two enemy attempt to infiltrate the perimeter. Keeping everyone in their holes the unit engaged anything that moved killing one NVA and seizing his AK-47. The following day A/1-14, conducting search and destroy in the vicinity of BS730605, located an entire enemy platoon concealed in an aqueduct. A Company engaged them by fire, surrounded the area, and with a PSYOPS team called for the unit to surrender, Nine members surrendered, three were killed and six weapons were captured, With this action the 3rd platoon of the 31st Company of the 40th Sapper Battalion ceased to exist.

16 Personnel

A. General:

1. The Battalion administrative headquarters was relocated to LZ Montezuma in late April. During the reporting period all administrative functions were performed at the forward Brigade Base, LZ Montezuma.
2. The requirement to maintain a rear detachment at the 4th Div base camp in Pleiku was responsible for the initial difficulty in strength accountability, personnel in and out processing, and submission of personnel actions.
3. The location of personnel records in Pleiku made them almost inaccessible to the battalion personnel services NCO and Company orderly rooms.
4. No significant personnel problems were encountered during the reporting period.

B. Unit Strengths:

1. As of 15 May 1967, the strength of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf was as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	OFF	WO	EM	OFF	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	17	2	272	15	2	249
Company A	6	0	173	50	1	52
Company B	6	0	173	5	0	163
Company C	6	0	173	5	0	156
35	2	791	30	2	720	

2. As of 15 June 1967, the strength of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf were as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	OFF	WO	EM	Off	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	17	2	272	15	1	245
Company A	6	0	173	4	0	163
Company B	6	0	173	4	0	163
Company C	6	0	173	4	0	184
35	2	791	28	1	761	

3. As of 10 July 1967, the strengths of the units of the 2d Bn 35th Inf were as follows:

UNIT	AUTH			ASSIGNED & ATCHD		
	Off	WO	EM	Off	WO	EM
HHC, 2d Bn 35th Inf	17	2	272	16	0	261
Company A	6	0	173	7	0	157
Company B	6	0	173	5	0	179
Company C	6	0	173	5	0	184

4. The 2d Bn 35th Inf strength fluctuated daily during the reporting period. The following are periodic strength figures:

MAY

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			PRESENT FOR DUTY		
	Off	WO	EM	Off	WO	EM
6 May	31	2	717	29	1	682
11 May	30	2	727	30	1	701
16 May	31	2	714	30	1	687
21 May	30	2	763	29	1	714
26 May	30	1	736	27	1	700
31 May	27	1	730	26	1	698

JUNE

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			PRESENT FOR DUTY		
	Off	WO	EM	Off	WO	EM
6 June	27	1	757	27	1	731
11 June	28	1	768	26	1	738
16 June	29	2	760	27	2	710
21 June	33	2	766	32	2	738
26 June	33	2	749	31	2	712
29 June	33	1	746	31	1	704

JULY

	ASSIGNED & ATTACHED			PRESENT FOR DUTY			
	Off	WO	EM	Off	WO	EM	
6 July			33 0	766		32 0	732
11 July			34 0	784		33 0	740
16 July			33 0	782		31 0	734
21 July			29 1	733		28 1	732
26 July			29 1	733		28 1	738
30 July			28 1	760		26 1	721

C. Rest and recuperation:

1. During the reporting period, personnel of this unit were offered rest and recuperation at nine different locations.

2. The total number allocations for the reporting period was 173. Tokyo continues to be the most popular R & R site. The R & R allocations and utilization were as follows:

MAY JUNE JULY

PLACE	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED	ALLOCATED	UTILIZED
Hawaii	9	9	11	11	11	11
Tokyo	7	8*	10	16*	13	15*
Bangkok	8	8	10	10	13	13
Hong Kong	5	6*	8	11*	11	10+
Taipei	8	8*	11	11	12	12
Kuala Lumpur	2	2	2	2	4	4
Penang	1	1	2	2	2	2
Manila	2	2	2	2	2	2
Singapore	2	2	2	2	3	2+
	44	46	58	67	71	72

* Utilized allocations that were turned back by other units.

+ Traded allocations for this R & R center for ones to the most popular R & R center.

D. Promotions:

1. Promotion allocations for first in-country promotions continue to be many times more than utilized.

2. Promotion allocations for second and third in-country promotion continue to be less than the requested number.

3. The promotion allocation and utilization for the reporting period were as follows:

MAY	ALLOCATIONS		
First in-country	E4 (65)	E5(103)	E6 (9)
Second or third in-country	E4 (0)	E5(0)	E6 (0)
May	PROMOTED		
First	E4 (65)	E5(11)	E6(1)
Second	E4 (0)	E5(0)	E6(0)
June	ALLOCATIONS		
First	E4 (87)	E5 (127)	E6 (24)
Second	E4 (13)	E5 (4)	E6 (1)
June	PROMOTED		
First	E4 (87)	E5(6)	E6(0)
Second	E4 (13)	E5(4)	E6(1)
July	ALLOCATIONS		
First	E4 (18)	E5(118)	E6 (2)
Second	E4 (0)	E5(7)	E6 (1)
July	PROMOTED		
First	E4 (18)	E5(0)	E6(1)
Second	E4 (0)	E5 (7)	E6 (1)

4. Three personnel within the battalion have been promoted to E7 during the reporting period.

E. Casualties:

During the reporting period, the battalion suffered the following casualties:

	KIA	DOW	WIA	MIA
May	17	1	75	0
Jun.	12	0	67	0
Jul	10	0	38	0
	39	1	180	0

F. Replacements:

The following units received replacements during the reporting period:

Month	E3	E4	E5	E6	E7	E8
HHC May	22	2	1	1	0	1
Jun	23	3	0	0	0	0
Jul	11	7	4	0	0	0
A Co May	29	0	0	0	0	0
Jun	11	0	0	1	0	0
Jul	9	1	0	1	2	0
B Co May	28	5	1	0	0	0
Jun	34	0	0	2	0	0
Jul	36	4	1	2	0	0
C Co May	43	1	0	0	0	0
Jun	7	0	0	1	0	0
Jul	9	0	0	0	0	0

SECTION 2: COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Part I. Observations (Lessons Learned)

1. OPERATIONS.

a. Item: OPCON or attachment of maneuver units.

Discussion: Assigning a maneuver battalion operational control of another battalion's rifle company is an effective means of shifting combat power on the fluid battlefield; however, if the OPCON assignment is on a semi-permanent basis the company in question should become attached for several reasons. First, logistically, the receiving battalion will be required to support the company in all ways. Second, administratively, the receiving battalion will handle the necessary paperwork that follows any normal combat operation. Finally, the unit commander and his officers will be rated for efficiency reports, by the receiving battalion. In this specific case, A/1-14 is OPCON 2-35 INF and has been so on a semi-permanent basis requiring A/1-14 to keep his company rear in Chu Lai while operating in the Mo Duc area, a considerable distance away. All paperwork concerning awards, decorations, punishments, reports of survey, combat losses, requisitions for repair parts and serial numbered items of supply has to process through his Battalion Headquarters. Naturally, day to day supplies are issued by this battalion and whenever possible, this battalion provides direct exchange for accountable items. All such exchanges passing through Chu Lai are delayed by the distance and lack of an adequate communications system.

Observation: Whenever units are to be parceled out over extended periods of time or extended distances, the unit should be attached, not placed OPCON.

b. Item: Search Technique

Discussion: The slogan "Find 'Em-Fix 'Em-Fight 'Em and Finish 'Em" is true as the day it was first promulgated; however, many units fail to put the sequence in proper order. So often this is true of our ARVN' neighbors, they fix and fight to learn they have nothing to finish. The unmatched success of this battalion lies primarily with finding the enemy first through the use of the deliberate search technique before we attempt to fix or fight. All operations are based on the most current intelligence, admittedly causing frequent changes in plans, but more often than not, yielding tangible results. The one true indicator of success is the actual number of enemy killed or captured and the number of enemy weapons seized. Since 10 July, this battalion has killed 260 enemy, captured 47 POWs and seized 108 weapons while suffering only 9 soldiers KIA. Our high body count and high weapons-to-kill ratio has resulted mostly from locating the enemy in his hiding places. Once he is located in this hiding place the job is relatively simple because the enemy has fixed himself by choosing a small tunnel with no route of escape. The enemy in this area has depended primarily on his advanced techniques of camouflage for protection. Once these passive measures fail, the enemy has no choice but to be killed or captured. Defense of a small hole, normally 18" by 18", against an American rifle squad is a difficult if not impossible task. This battalion has capitalized on the natural curiosity of the American and our soldiers poke and probe every nook and cranny of the hedgerows around a village. We have learned that the most common hiding place for the enemy is beneath a bamboo thicket with a concealed trap door as shown in the enclosed sketch and photographs. As one can see, unless one actually places his hand on the bamboo stalks and pulls, the trap door will remain undetected for it is not normally discernible by eye. Some trap doors can be discovered merely by looking, but most are located by probing with hands and bayonets. To make most effective use of the manpower available, the searching unit, normally a rifle squad, must subdivide into a search team and a security team. Naturally, the curious should go to the searchers while the less curious provide the security, but these must be rotated throughout the day as the bamboo thorns are extremely difficult on the searcher's hands and arms. The amount of enthusiasm generated by the platoon leaders is almost directly proportional to: the number of holes located. Many a hole has been located by the bleeding of a lieutenant or captain when the enthusiasm for the search dwindled to a low ebb. Such leadership by example rekindles the searchers and the race is on again to see who can locate the next hole. Once the hole is located, security is placed around the area and a

systematic reduction of the area by begins with first clearing away enough bamboo to allow the comparatively large American soldier to operate within the confined space. Then the hole is opened normally by shooting through the door with a M-16 rifle. This is a strong deterrent to those enemy who would toss out a grenade on the unsuspecting soldier standing nearby. Once the trap door is opened, various American and Vietnamese expressions are shouted into the tunnel exhorting the enemy to come out or be killed.. Frequently the enemy will give up without a fight, saving us the effort not only of killing him, but of having to dig out the tunnel for weapons and documents. When all else fails and the hard core VC stays within the confines of his self created tomb, a few strategically placed hand grenades normally reduce both the VC and the tunnel to rubble, leaving only the messy task of digging out the remains. The key to success of this operation lies in the search technique of the individual soldier and his leader. This method has paid off handsomely. We first "Find 'Em" by a slow deliberate search on the small unit level before we take any of the other steps necessary in defeating the enemy.

Observation: Deliberate detailed search missions should be employed as a primary means of locating VC and NVA elements living in close proximity to or within inhabited areas. As a general rule the area of search assigned an infantry company should not exceed a maximum of two square kilometers. It should be realized that this search technique applies to guerrilla type operations during which enemy forces do not concentrate.

List of Enclosures:

1. Sketch of tunnel,
 2. Photograph of tunnel with trap door installed.
 3. Photograph of tunnel with trap door removed.
 4. Close up of tunnel with trap door removed.
 5. Close up or trap door.
 6. Photograph of typical tunnel area in bamboo thicket.
 7. Close up of typical tunnel area in bamboo thicket.
 8. Photograph showing typical tunnel with entrance in bamboo thicket.
 9. Photograph showing normal tunnel construction.
- c. Item: Tunnel destruction.

Discussion: Destruction of tunnels and spider holes can be expedited by the construction of prefabricated charges at the rear area. The charges are delivered by helicopter ready to use. Two blocks of C-4 (5 lbs) has proved adequate to completely destroy normal spider holes. A 30 second delay fuse is sufficient to allow personnel to escape the effects of the blast. When the hole is larger than most, two of the prefab charges are used. In addition to the prefab charges used for small tunnels and spider holes, two tunnel kits are maintained, at the battalion trains consisting of flashlights, rope, gas masks, CS gas, armored vests and a grappling hook. These are prepackaged and ready to be picked up by helicopter on a

moment's notice. These two items can be delivered by the C&C when no other helicopters are available.

Observation: A 5 pound prefabricated charge is a great time saver for the line unit in destroying spider holes. Having the equipment for reduction of a tunnel complex, such as a tunnel kit, will also save valuable time for the infantry unit. .

d. Item: Intelligence gathering.

Discussion: Due to the difficulties in translation and the nature of the Vietnamese people, all information obtained through other than U.S. sources must be scrutinized in utmost detail. Frequently, reports which come to this battalion have stated that so and so knows where a VC platoon or squad is and is willing to lead U.S. troops back there. On several of these occasions when U.S. troops were committed to the task of exploiting this new found intelligence, the informants would, upon arrival at the scene, state that he was not sure exactly where this platoon or squad was but rather he heard someone else say it was in this general area. All informants and agents must be questioned to determine if the information was as a result of his personal observation or someone else's observation.

Observation: Intelligence collecting agencies must be absolutely certain that the informant has personally observed what he is reporting before any evaluation of the information is made. Hearsay information is of little or no value.

e. Item: Immediate exploitation of information.

Discussion: Prisoners of war have tactical information that is of immediate value to the capturing unit. On several occasions, this battalion was able to capitalize on information obtained from POWs before the POW was evacuated from the capturing unit. Due to the nature of this conflict, a POW should be thoroughly interrogated at the capturing unit before he is evacuated if for no other reason than the POW becomes misorientated by the helicopter ride to the rear. At the time of capture, the POW can lead U.S. troops to other enemy locations. At a later time, the POW may not be able to lead U.S. troops to enemy units merely because he gets so confused by the rapid moves of a helicopter.

Observation: A MI team should be kept "on standby" at the brigade level to be lifted to the place of capture for immediate exploitation of any tactical information. Upon completion of this initial interrogation, the POW and the MI team should be returned to the rear for further questioning.

f. Item: 106RR,

Discussion: One of the finest weapons to be added to the infantry arsenal recently is the 106RR "beehive round." The round has a simple but effective fuse allowing the firer to select muzzle action or a bursting point as far distant as 3200 meters. A test was conducted at a range of approximately 300 meters using 25 ammunition boxes spaced over a linear distance of 50 feet and placed in depth 25 feet. Not a single box escaped the strike of at least one flaschette. Several boxes were hit as many as ten times. Certainly this round will be extremely effective against groups of personnel at various ranges. In addition to the anti-personnel round, the standard 106 HEP round has a casualty producing effect when employed in that role. Due to the accuracy of the weapons system and high rate of fire, we have successfully employed the 106RR in many roles around LZ Liz area; the flat coastal plain interrupted by

small hill masses offers numerous opportunities for effective employment of the 106mm RR both offensively and defensively.

Observation: The 106RR should be maintained at battalion level for use as an offensive and defensive weapon against personnel.

g. Item: Use of detonation cord in bunker destruction.

Discussion: Destruction of bunkers is often a slow and tedious job requiring large amounts of explosives. Frequently a great deal of time is wasted by destroying one bunker then proceeding with the next. A time saver is "det cord" as it can be layed between bunkers for hundreds of feet allowing the unit to destroy several bunkers simultaneously. Normal demolition procedures are used with the line of "det cord" forming the ring main or main line of the charge. The individual bunker charges are placed on the various branches. The charge is double primed and detonates almost instantaneously due to the high detonation velocity of "det cord."

Observation: The employment of large amounts of detonation cord in bunker destruction is justified by the time it saves in placement of individual charges.

h. Item: Target marking with the C&C ship.

Discussing: One of the most important uses of "Charlie Charlie" is as a target marker. Due to the location of the C&C over most contact areas, it is frequently the first one to spot enemy movement into or out of an area. At present, there are two courses of action open to the C&C staff. One, to verbally direct the ground element or gunships to the target or, second, mark the target with smoke. As verbal directions are difficult to give and often confused, it is by far best to mark with smoke. Dropping smoke from a C&C at altitudes of over 1000 feet is at best a hit and miss proposition; therefore, the best solution is to "go low level" and mark. Needless to say, the slower Delta model used for C&C ships is more vulnerable to ground fire than the gunships so the aviation personnel object to these low level target marking runs. An obvious solution would be to mark from high level. This can be accomplished if a set of white phosphorous marking rockets, such as used by forward air controllers, were installed on each C&C. The HU1D's have the capability of accepting installation of these rockets as well as the electrical circuitry necessary for the pilot to fire them.

Observation: A need exists for a method of target marking from the C&C and the white phosphorous rocket will fill that need. Installation of these rockets could probably be accomplished at LZ Montezuma.

i. Item: XM-148

Discussion: The combination of the M-16 and the XM-148 grenade launcher has proved completely unsatisfactory. The addition of the 40mm grenade launcher to the rifle resulted in a decrease in both rifle and grenade fire power and accuracy. The sight of the grenade launcher attachment is nearly impossible to use but even worse is the cocking lever and trigger. They rarely, if ever, function easily and smoothly. Loading of the weapon is most inconvenient, in addition to being clumsy. The overall fire power of the rifle squad has been reduced by issue of the XM-148. The weapon is most difficult to maneuver in the thick vines of the jungle and bamboo clumps. The many protrusions are constantly catching in the thorns and vines making it impossible for the soldier to use either the M-16 or the 40mm grenade launcher.

Observation: The XM-148 weapons system is a failure and grenadiers should be rearmed with the M-79.

j. Item: Aircraft availability:

Discussion: The reaction capability of our supporting helicopters has been outstanding. On several occasions, the 174th Aviation Company has scrambled 6-8 HU1Ds in a few minutes to support an exploitation of newly gained intelligence. However, when the helicopter requirement is greater than the 174th can muster, the response is necessarily less. On 25 July we gained a significant bit of intelligence that required the immediate commitment of two rifle companies. At 1430 hours we alerted the brigade S3 Air for the requirement of a simultaneous lift of these rifle companies. Total personnel in the lift would be 204 which would require 34 HU1D helicopters. At 1630 hours, CO, 174th notified the battalion that he had 17 ships available and recommended that we go on that basis, which we did. A/1-14 was lifted at 1642 and touched down at 1649. A/2-35 was lifted at 1700 and touched down at 1709. Only 17 lift ships were used. The time required to marshal 17 lift ships was two hours. In spite of the time required, the operation was a success.

Observation: The rapid marshalling of helicopters in the direct support company is easily accomplished but once the lift requirements exceed that of the DS company, the response times become too great for immediate tactical commitment.

k. Item: Timing of aerial resupply operations:

Discussion: Following normal behavior patterns, units will develop patterns of activity in resupply operations which will have an impact on tactical operations, The practice of accepting resupply at a night defensive perimeter location pinpoints the actual location to the enemy, denies the friendly unit the advantage of surprise in establishing the defense, and increases the vulnerability of helicopters by establishing fixed patterns of activity which are predictable to the enemy!

Observation: Resupply of tactical units, other than those fixed to a specific location by a tactical requirement, should be accomplished on an irregular basis, varying the patterns in a random manner. Units should displace, even if only a short distance, after accepting resupply.

l. Item. Use of 60mm mortars in rifle companies.

Discussion: When maneuvering on foot and especially over difficult terrain where resupply may be only by airdrop, the rifle companies frequently have a requirement for a light organic mortar, capable of being man-carried. The 60mm mortar has proved very successful as a man-carried weapon, supplementing the M79-XM-148 40mm capability. The mortar, bipod, base plate, and sight can be carried by a team of three men. Ammunition can be carried, one round per individual, by all personnel in a rifle platoon. This proved successful. using captured 60mm mortars, with the task of carrying the ammunition being rotated through the rifle platoons. The ready availability of an organic mortar in the rifle company proved to be very desirable when the company was operating separated from other elements of the Battalion by a considerable distance.

Observation: The rifle battalion headquarters company should contain two three-man 60mm mortar teams, to be used as attachments to rifle companies operating on terrain, or under tactical conditions which preclude the introduction of the 81mm mortar when desired by the commander.

m. Item: Ground air signal strobe light.

Observation: A battery powered high-intensity strobe light, which emits a brilliant flash of light at approximately one-second intervals is provided in aircraft crew emergency items for signaling. The light is visible even during daylight, and is clearly visible at night over distances up to 4-5 Kilometers. The light is provided with a shield, so that it may be employed as a highly directional signaling device. The entire device is about the size of a first aid packet. When used at night, the strobe light provides a lightweight, compact means of identifying landing zones or drop zones to aircraft.

Observation: Each tactical unit which may be required to operate separately, (squad, LRRP, special detachment) should be equipped with one ground to. air emergency strobe light for signaling. Re-supplies of batteries should be maintained in the supply system.

n. Item: Airlift of packs and unit equipment,

Discussion: To decrease the load carried by the individual soldier, it is frequently practical to collect all individual packs, specialized equipment (starlight scopes, trip flares, intrusion detection devices), unit equipment (mortars and ammunition; recoilless rifles and ammunition) at first light, returning them to the unit near the night defensive location prior to establishment of the defense. This enhances the ground mobility of the individual, lessens heat fatigue, and maintains a better overall combat posture. Adoption of the technique also permits the introduction of more and heavier weapons near a planned defensive position, as well as specialized items such as starlight scopes and intrusion detection devices that would otherwise be at the marginal weight limit for the soldier to carry. To expedite lifting of equipment, storage during the day, and return at night, a cargo net may be utilized for each platoon. The packs and equipment being placed in the net at the beginning of a tactical move, lifted to a secure area during the day, and returned intact at or near the defensive position at the close of the march.

Observation: Cargo nets should be authorized for use in extraction and return of a maneuver platoon's equipment when the tactical situation permits.

o. Item: Ammunition resupply packets.

Discussion: After a firefight, the requirements of small arms ammunition, grenades, and similar Class V items may be reasonably predicted based on time in contact and the size of the force employed. A "package" of all normal types of Class V items suitable for a platoon can be established, and several of these "packages" stocked at the battalion trains area. When a firefight develops,, an immediate ammunition resupply can be made available. The "package" can be rigged for sling load, and carried under a UH-1D aircraft for low-level drop or touch and go delivery, thus reducing the time the aircraft may be exposed to ground fire.

Observation: "Packages" of selected Class V resupply items should be prepared for sling load aircraft, and maintained, at battalion trains area to provide an immediate Class V resupply capability.

p. Item: Depth for commitment of blocking forces.

Discussion: Experience in actions conducted in the Duo Pho area indicate that the enemy can achieve a very high speed of withdrawal when he believes he is faced with a vastly superior force. Efforts to position a blocking force will hinge on the time that the force is

introduced in relationship to the time when the enemy recognizes the requirement for a withdrawal. As a general rule, when the axis of withdrawal can be accurately predicted, the blocking force should be introduced between 1500-2500 meters of the point of contact.. Introduction at a point closer to the point of contact may permit some enemy to escape, and may limit the use of supporting fires between the attacking and the blocking force.

Observation: Blocking forces should be introduced as far (up to 2500 meters) from the point of contact as it may be practical to predict the enemy withdrawal routes.

q. Item: Use of air and armored cavalry.

Discussion: The combination of the aerial surveillance and target acquisition capability of helicopters with the ground mobility, armor protection, and heavy fire power of armored cavalry has proved to be a combination which maximizes the advantages of both. In pursuit operations the two elements are particularly effective.

Observation: As a matter of SOP, air cavalry should be married with armored cavalry whenever enemy contact develops.

r. Item: Stitching on jungle fatigues.

Discussion: Some models of jungle fatigues have the seams sewn on the inside to give the exterior a more finished appearance. This leaves a projecting hump of material on the inside. When the individual soldier perspires, the uniform tends to cling to him, and the interior seams rub sore spots on the skin in contact.

Observation: Seams on tropical fatigues should be sewn on the outside, leaving a smooth interior.

s. Item: Interpreter requirements.

Discussion: In tactical operations in populated areas interpreters are essential to proper conduct of search and destroy, search and clear, and village search operations. Interpreters are required with each separate unit that may encounter indigenous personnel, or which may have ARVN, RF, or PF forces attached.

Observation: Interpreters should be assigned to each maneuver platoon.

t. Item: Disposable containers,

Discussion: Normal resupply of water is accomplished for companies having aerial resupply through the use of metal 5 gallon cans. Hot rations are fed using mermite cans. In both cases the empty containers must later be extracted by helicopter, in some cases the extraction may be delayed by weather or non-availability of aircraft, thus delaying the movement of that portion of the tactical unit required to secure the landing zone.

Observation: A disposable water container and a disposable food container should be supplied to preclude the necessity for lifting out empty food and water containers.

u. Item: Communications capabilities in command and control helicopters.

Discussion: During combat operations, a requirement exists for personnel in the airborne command group to monitor and transmit traffic on the battalion command net, the battalion air-ground net, the brigade command net, and the artillery fire direction net. Occasional requirements for a capability to monitor and transmit on other nets will exist. The battalion commander needs to be able to selectively monitor all or each separate net. Additionally, a requirement exists for the battalion commander to talk to the aircraft pilot, and to the artillery liaison officer. On many occasions it will, also be necessary to be able to talk to other members of the airborne command group. Current communications capabilities available permit one man to monitor one radio, and unless employing the aircraft intercom, the passengers can communicate only by shouting at each other.

Observation: Radio-intercom systems should be installed in the command and control helicopters.

v. Item: 4.2 inch mortar booster charge.

Discussion: About 1 July 1967 the new M329A1 4.2 inch mortar round was issued in various lot numbers. It was soon discovered that at ranges under 1400 meters the dud rate exceeded 30%. At ranges over 1400 meters, the dud rate was normal. With a little experimentation, the dud rate of the M329A1 round at ranges under 1400 meters was reduced to normal. This experimentation consisted of replacing the booster charge (shotgun shell) on the new round with the booster charge from some old ammunition. Naturally this points out that the new shotgun shell apparently burns at a slower rate resulting in insufficient setback to arm the round at short ranges.

Observation: The new M329A1 ammunition should only be fired at ranges which exceed 1400 meters saving the old M329 ammunition for the shorter ranges.

2. LOGISTICS.

a. Item: Breakfast.

Discussion: Feeding a breakfast meal to the front line troops contributes immensely to their health, morale and combat effectiveness. This can be accomplished with the TOE mess equipment on hand if all elements of each company are at one location which is, of course, dependent on the tactical situation. If the platoons are at separate locations, this operation is complicated because the battalion is authorized only thirty three mermite containers. Breakfast is transported by helicopter to the units at 0545 and then, the empty mermite containers are picked up prior to the unit's departure for their operations.

Observation: Supplying the forward elements with hot breakfast increases their combat effectiveness and morale and can be accomplished if each company is in one location in the morning. Additional mermite containers would allow this to be accomplished under any circumstance.

b. Item: Ice.

Discussion: Providing the individual soldier in the field with a quantity of ice on a daily basis is a tremendous morale factor. The battalion receives an average of eighteen hundred pounds of ice daily. The battalion then stores the ice as well as possible and makes every effort to send it forward only after the elements close at their night location. Unfortunately, the storage facilities of the battalion's trains area are inadequate to keep the ice until it leaves the

area. Also, no storage facilities are available for the ice in transit to the field. Therefore, each individual receives less than half of his authorized three pounds .per day.

Observation: Daily resupply of ice to the individual in the forward area is a tremendous morale factor. Every effort is made to get the ice to the field, but this effort is hampered by a lack of proper storage facilities.

c. item: Battalion ASP.

Discussion: During this reporting period the battalion has operated in the area of Due Pho. During this period all resupply of munitions and demolitions had to be brought eight kilometers over a road from the nearby beach. This road was mined and had to be manually swept each morning. These factors caused unacceptable delays processing both normal and emergency requests for ammunition and explosives. A simple solution to the problem is to build a bunker for ammunition and explosives. This would be stocked with enough ammunition and demolitions to supply the battalion's needs for twenty four hours and enough to fill resupply requests resulting from small contacts.

Observation: Delays in resupply of ammunition and explosive's can be eliminated through the construction and stocking of a battalion ammo bunker near the resupply pad at the trains area.

d. Item: Combat losses and deadlined items

Discussion: The 725th Maintenance Battalion has established a float to enable them to DX such items as radios which have been deadlined and turned in for repair. This system is excellent and has minimized the length of time the front line soldier is without the equipment. However, there is no such float system for combat loss items. The resulting situation is typified by this example from Charlie Company which turned in a PRC 25 radio as combat loss in late March 1967 and still has not received a replacement at the end of this reporting period. This has unacceptably lowered the communications ability of this unit.

Observation: That the plan employed by the 725th Maintenance Battalion to temporarily replace items of essential equipment that are on deadline, is highly successful. It could be profitably used to temporarily replace items of combat loss.

e. item: Construction of bunkers.

Discussion: During the reporting period the upgrading of bunkers has been of primary interest to this unit because of the approaching monsoon season. It is imperative that these bunkers be completed before the monsoon season because it will greatly affect the tactical operations of this unit and troop comfort and welfare.

Observation: The effort to improve the bunkers in the battalion's permanent firebase and trains area has been hampered due to lack of sufficient building materials.

Part II, Recommendations

1. OPERATIONS.

- a. That attachment be the normal method of allocation of resources whenever the assignment is to be over extended distances or periods of time.
- b. That training in search techniques be incorporated in the replacement training school at brigade level.
- c. That a five pound charge of explosive be prefabricated with a 30 second time fuse for use in spider hole destruction.
- d. That a more detailed study of each bit of information be made before it is forwarded to the infantry battalion as intelligence requiring action.
- e. That an IPW team be made available upon request from the infantry battalion to be deployed to conduct in the field interrogation of POWs.
- f. That the 1O6RR be retained at the infantry battalion.
- g. That large amounts of detonation cord be obtained for use in bunker destruction.
- h. That a study be conducted to determine the feasibility of installing marking rockets on command and control helicopters.
- i. That the issue of the XM-148 be discontinued and that the grenadiers be rearmed with the M-79.
- j. That contingency planning be based on realistic reaction times for helicopter support.
- k. That resupply of units be conducted at various times throughout the day.
- l. That two 60mm mortars be obtained for issue to each infantry battalion to be further attached to rifle companies as the tactical situation permits.
- m. That 50 air emergency strobe lights be obtained for each infantry battalion for use in signaling.
- n. That sufficient extra cargo nets be procured to allow each rifle platoon to keep one permanently for use in lifting its packs and equipment.
- o. That a study be conducted to determine what type and in what amounts ammunition packages can be prepared at the forward ASP for immediate delivery to a rifle company.
- p. That blocking forces be committed generally 2500 meters from the point of contact along the most likely route of enemy withdrawal.
- q. That an air cavalry troops be made available to the 3d Brigade Task Force to be employed in connection with operational requirements in the Due Pho-Mo Duc area.
- r. That seams of the jungle fatigues be stitched on the outside to prevent rubbing of the soldier's skin.

s. That additional interpreters be obtained to permit semi-permanent assignment of one to each maneuver platoon.

t. That a study be conducted to develop a disposable food and liquid container suitable for field use.

u. That a radio-intercom console be installed in each command and control helicopter.

v. That the M329A1 107mm mortar round be reevaluated to determine the cause of the high dud rate experienced at ranges less than 1400 meters.

2. LOGISTICS

a. That the battalion be issued twenty additional mermite containers to enable hot breakfast to be served to the front line troops even when platoons are operating separately.

b. That an additional storage facility be provided the battalion capable of storing one thousand pounds of ice and a container be developed to store small quantities of ice during transport to the forward area.

c. That a battalion ammunition dump be constructed near the trains resupply pad and stocked with enough munitions and explosives to meet small emergency requests and one day's normal supply.

d. That a study be conducted to determine the feasibility of replacing combat loss items from the established maintenance float.

1 Incl.
Combat Operations After
Action Report For Mortar
Attack on LZ Liz, 12 May 67

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LTC. Infantry
Commanding