

ORLL 3RD BDE, 4TH DIV

PERIOD ENDING 1-31-68

(Edited)

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS 3D BRIGADE TF, 4TH INFANTRY DIVISION

APO San Francisco 96355

AVDDC-OP

2 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 January 1968

TO: See Distribution

SECTION 1 (C) SIGNIFICANT ORGANIZATION ACTIVITIES

1. (c) GENERAL: During the reporting period 1 November 1967 to 31 January 1968 the 3d Brigade TF, 4th Infantry Division participated in Operation Baker for 62 days, Operation Muscatine for 23 days and Operation Wheeler/ Wallowa for 7 days for a total of 92 days in combat. The 3d Brigade TF, 4th Infantry Division has participated in 632 consecutive days in combat as of 31 January 1968.

a. Mission: The 3d Brigade's mission in Operation Baker was to assume responsibility within the Duc Pho AO for:

- (1) Offensive and defensive operations designed to locate and destroy NVA elements, Viet Cong main force, local force, and guerrilla units as well as the Viet Cong infrastructure,**
- (2) Provide convoy security in zone, and from Quang Ngai south on Hwy #1 to the Brigade AO.**
- (3) Be prepared to provide one rifle company on two hours notice, and an additional rifle company in an additional two hours, for employment anywhere in the Americal Division TAOR on order.**
- (4) Be prepared to provide a company size reaction force to support the defense of Quang Ngai Airfield, on order.**
- (5) Support Revolutionary Development in the 3d Brigade AO.**
- (6) Conduct psychological operations in support of tactical operations and revolutionary development,**
- (7) Be prepared on 12 hours notice to provide one reinforced infantry battalion for employment anywhere in South Vietnam.**
- (8) Be prepared on an additional 12 hours notice to deploy the remainder of the 3d Brigade TF, 4th Infantry Division anywhere in South Vietnam.**

b. The 3d Brigade's mission in Operation Muscatine was to assume responsibility for the southern 2/3 of the Muscatine AO for:

(1) Offensive and defensive operations designed to locate and destroy NVA elements, Viet Cong main force, local force, and guerrilla units as well as the Viet Cong infrastructure.

(2) Assume responsibility for security and road clearing of Hwy #1 from BS623865 to BS633810.

c. The 3d Brigade's mission in operation Wheeler/Wallowa was to assume responsibility of the northern half of the Wheeler/Wallowa AO for:

(1) Offensive and defensive operations designed to locate and destroy NVA elements, Viet Cong main force, local force, and guerrilla units as well as the Viet Cong infrastructure.

(2) Assume responsibility for providing security as required for the 39th Engr Bn repair mission on Hwy #535.

(3) Assume responsibility for security and road clearing of Hwy #1 from BT114497 to BT175418.

d, Operational Areas. (See Inclosure #1 for Duc Pho AO, Inclosure #2 for Muscatine and Wheeler/Wallowa AO's).

(1) The area designated as the 3d Brigade AO in the Duc Pho AO encompassed the majority of Duc Pho & Mo Duc Districts, Quang Ngai Province.

(2) The area designated as the 3d Brigade AO in Operation Muscatine encompassed Binh Son & Son Tinh Districts, Quang Ngai Province.

(3) The area designated as the 3d Brigade AO in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa encompasses Duy Xuyen, Que Son, and Duc Duc Districts in Quang Nam Province.

e. Task Organization: Principal units of the 3d Brigade TF, 4th Infantry Division, with commanders names and dates of command, and the major supporting and operational controlled units are as follows:

Headquarters, 3d Brigade TF, 4th Infantry Division

Commander: Colonel George E. Wear (1 Nov 67-31 Jan 68)

1st Battalion, 35th Infantry

LTC Robert G. Kimmel (1 Nov 67-14 Nov 67, KHA)

LTC William W. Taylor, Jr. (15 Nov 67-31 Jan 68)

2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry

LTC Norman C. Tiller, Sr. (1 Nov 67-10 Dec 67)

LTC William J. Livsey, Jr. (11 Dec 67-31 Jan 68)

2nd Battalion 9th Artillery

LTC Gerald B. Bobzien (1 Nov 67-31 Jan 68)

2. INTELLIGENCE:

a. General: During this reporting period, 1 November 1967 through 31 January 1968, enemy activity is categorized in three phases, based on the three separate areas of operation.

b. Phase One: 1 November 1967-2 January 1968, Duc Pho - Mo Duc areas of operation. This phase began in the middle of the enemy's Winter Campaign that was designed to produce a propaganda left through a series of quick victories in order to bolster the morale of his followers. On the night of 30th October 1967, a Battalion size force attempted to destroy the bridge over the Song Ve River (BS695635) and was driven off by elements of the 2nd ARVN Division. As a result of a night ambush on 31 October 1967, a prisoner was captured that confirmed the fact that the 97th MF Bn, 2nd MF Regt attacked the Song Ve Bridge and was based in the Nui Lon Mountains (BS6747) and Song Ve Valley (BS6049). Airborne Personnel Detector missions (People Sniffer), agent reports and usual sightings confirmed the fact that the enemy had moved back into the mountains on the western border of the Brigade's reconnaissance zone. On 3 November 1967, the 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry conducted a ten day operation in the Song Ve valley where it contacted small elements of the C-18 LF Company and Scattered NVA food gathering parties. The ten day operation resulted in 25 enemy KIA, and the capture of 15 weapons.

On the 4th of November, the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry launched a thirty day operation in the heavily forested, mountain area in the Southwest portion of the Brigade's AO (BS7428) against elements of the 22d NVA Regt, 3d NVA Division. Captured documents and the PW's revealed that the 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry had engaged support elements of the 22d NVA Regt to include the Signal, Reconnaissance, and Mortar companies, plus scattered elements of the 8th and 9th NVA Battalions of the 22d NVA Regiment. The operation terminated with 109 enemy KIA, 57 weapons captured, to include two 82mm mortars and 28 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition. On or about 6 December 1967, the 22d NVA Regiment with two of its Battalions, withdrew from the mountains and moved into the lowlands of Binh Dinh Province (vic BS9108) where they were quickly engaged by the 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division and elements of the 22d ARVN Division. Within a fifteen day period, the 22d NVA Regiment had lost over 600 men. The 7th and 8th NVA Battalions along with regimental support companies sustained the bulk of the losses. The 9th NVA Battalion avoided contact. In December 1967, the 97th MF Battalion moved South and lost over 150 men to elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division. The remainder of this phase was devoted to platoon and company size operations directed against village and hamlet infrastructure. The local force units in close coordination with the village and hamlet guerrillas, continued to harass the Brigade by planting mines and booby traps on the trails and roads throughout the A0 with particular emphases along Highway #1. The enemy in the area took advantage of the Christmas and New Year cease fire to rest and resupply prior to the Spring Offensive.

c. Phase Two: 2 January 1968-25 January 1968. This phase found the Brigade Operating in the Son Tinh and Binh Son Districts north of the Song Tra Khuc River against several local force units. The enemy's most potent threat in this new AO was his ability to avoid contact behind an uncountable number of mines and booby traps which accounted for 9 KHA's and 30 WHA's. The single significant contact that took place during this phase was on 17 January 1967. Company B and Recon, 1st Battalion, 14th Infantry, combat assaulted into an area where four local force VC Companies (T18, 21 Sapper, 31, 95) had just recently assembled in preparation for a forthcoming attack. Brigade Aviation and gunships flying in support of the combat assault were the first to observe and engage the enemy soldiers who were moving about in a communications trench. The contact ended late in the afternoon on the 17th with 80 enemy KIA and 36 weapons captured. The remainder of this phase was spent conducting

platoon and company size search and destroy operations against small bands of local guerrillas that continued to move ahead of the advancing troops and place booby traps in their paths.

d. Phase Three: 26 January 1968-31 January 1968. A large buildup of enemy units in the Northern part of the Americal AO caused the Brigade to move North into the Quang Nam Province and assume the AO occupied by the 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division. A relief in place was effected and the 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division moved farther to the North. The first part of this phase was spent in platoon and company size operations in an attempt to gain intelligence as to the enemy's probable actions during the "TET" period. Intelligence reports revealed that the 2d NVA Division Headquarters, the 1st VC MF Regiment and the 3d NVA Regiment moved from their base areas, Vic AT8733 - AT9641, into the northern part of Duy Xuyen District Vic AT9751 - AT0351. As part of the enemy's overall plan to attack during the normal "TET" cease fire period, two fire bases Within the Brigade AO received light to moderate mortar (82mm and 120mm) and 75mm Recoilless Rifle attacks on 30 and 31 January 1968. Agent reports revealed that a VC Company of the 105th LT Battalion with an NVA mortar platoon attached were responsible for shelling the Brigade's fire support bases. Thang Binh and Que Son District Headquarters were shelled and attacked by VC Local Force units that were working in close coordination with local guerrilla forces.

3. OPERATIONS AND TRAINING

a. Plans:

(1) During the period covered by this report, the 3d Brigade was responsible for planning the relief of elements of the 196th Infantry Brigade (LT) within a portion of the Muscatine AO effective 021200 January 1968.

(2) During the latter part of the reporting period, the 3d Brigade planned and conducted the relief of the 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Div in a portion of the Wheeler/Wallowa AO effective 261200 January 1968.

(3) During the reporting period the 3d Bde sponsored the 11th Inf Bde (LT) and the 198th Inf Bde (LT) (See Inclosure #4)

b. Operations:

(1) General: The 3d Brigade continued with the mission assigned for operation Baker until 021200) January 1968. During this reporting period, elements of' the 3d Brigade conducted search, and destroy operations in their respective areas of responsibility with attachments from C Troop, 1st Squadron, 10th Cavalry and the 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery. Contacts during the period were light and in some cases initiated by the enemy; however, in all cases the enemy force was defeated and enemy casualties were moderate to heavy. Friendly casualties were light. The 3d Brigade enemy/friendly killed in action ratio is a very respectable 22.5 to 1 for the entire reporting period. During Operation Muscatine, 021201 January 1968 to 261200 January 1968, searching for, locating, and destroying the enemy in tunnels and caves became a necessity for the accomplishment of the assigned mission. The most significant contact during Operation Muscatine occurred on 17 January and was a result of a combination of timely intelligence, thorough planning, and a combat assault which forced the enemy into an untenable position where he was destroyed by ground elements and armed helicopters. In addition to the normal objectives of an Infantry Brigade, the additional objectives of interdicting the enemy's supply routes and inhibiting his freedom of movement were

established. These objectives were accomplished by continual H&I artillery fires, strategic location of firebases, and Continual movement of troop elements in the field. By denying the enemy the ease of movement and the liberal amount of supplies he had become accustomed to, he was forced to disperse and operate in small elements. Consequently, the enemy was caused to spend more time foraging and this decreased his ability to attack in force. In both the Baker and Muscatine AO s the concept of' operations included an advance over suspected avenues of enemy movement and a methodical search for enemy personnel, caches, and fortifications. The objective was to deny the enemy use of the inhabited lowlands and thereby cut him off from his source of food, intelligence, labor and recruits. The general plan was to have infantry battalions establish firebases with the battalion command post and supporting indirect fire elements. One rifle company was employed to guard the firebase and conduct local operations while the remainder of the infantry elements conducted operations throughout the TAOR. After the enemy was found and fixed, all available firepower was brought to bear as the infantry advanced, methodically searching every enemy position. These procedures were continued during the initial phases of Operation Wheeler/Wallowa, 261201 January 1968 to 312400 January 1968.

(3) 1st Battalion, 35th Infantry: During the reporting period the Battalion conducted search and destroy operations in two TAOR's. During Operation Wheeler the Battalion, OPCON to the 101st Airborne Division, operated near Tam Ky, Republic of Vietnam with the Battalion CP located at "LZ MARY LOU" (BT132203). During Operation Wallowa, the Battalion CP was located at "LZ BALDY" (BT132453). The Battalion reverted to 3d Brigade control on 26 January when the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division assumed responsibility for the northern portion of the Wheeler/Wallowa AO. During the period 26 January - 31 January, no significant contacts occurred.

(4) 2nd Battalion, 35th Infantry: During the reporting period the Battalion conducted search and destroy operations in the Baker AO, the Muscatine AO and the Wheeler/Wallowa AO. From 1 November to 18 December 1967 the Battalion CP was located at "LZ LIZ" (BS751436). On 19 December 1967 the Battalion became OPCON too the 198th Infantry Brigade (LT) and established a Battalion CP at "LZ SUE" (BS567877). From 9 January to 31 January the Battalion participated in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa, OPCON to the 196th Infantry Brigade (LT) with Battalion CP s at "Fire Support Base West" (AT990250) and at "LZ ROSS" (BT029341). Throughout the period the Battalion had many minor engagements with one moderate contact.

(8) 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery:

(a) General: During the period 1 November 1967 to 2 January 1968, the mission of the 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery was direct support of the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division on Operation Baker. Battery A was OPCON to the 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and 3d Brigade, 1st Cavalry (Airmobile) Division in Operation Wheeler/Wallowa in direct support of the 1-35th Infantry. Battery B was in direct support of the 1-14th Infantry, and Battery C was in direct support of the 2-35 Infantry.

(b) During the period 2 January through 25 January traditional. missions continued in the following AO s.

1. Battery A - Operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

2. Battery B — Operation Muscatine.

a During the 11 January through 25 January Battery G, 6th Battalion, 11th Artillery was OPCON to the 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery with the mission of Reinforcing.

3. Battery C - Operation Muscatine 2 January - 11 January.

a. During the period 11 January .through 25 January Battery C became OPCON to the 196th Infantry Brigade (LT) in operation Wheeler/Wallowa.

(c) During the period 25 January through 31 January the 2d Battalion, 9th Artillery continued the mission of direct support to the 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division in support of Operation

Wheeler/Wallowa. Battery A was in direct support of the 1-14th Infantry, Battery B was in direct support of the 1-35th Infantry and Battery C was in direct support of the 2-35th Infantry.

**GEORGE E. WEAR
Colonel, Infantry
Commanding**