

OPERATION BINH TAY I

6-13 May 1970

Our thanks to Richard Cazeault for providing this report.

"CAZ" served with Delta Co. 2/35th in 1970

IN MEMORY...

5/8/70 B Co. Pfc Richard Mathieis Age 20 Adams, Minnesota Multi-frag

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, 2ND BATTALION 35TH INFANTRY

APO San Francisco 96262

23 May 1970

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report

Commanding Officer

2nd Brigade, 4th Inf Div

ATTN: S-3

San Francisco 96262

1.(C) Name of Operation: BINH TAY 1

2.(C) Dates of Operation: 6 May - 13 May.

3.(C) Location: The general location of the operation was 65 Kilometers west of PLEIKU, RVN, in the SE SAN RIVER VALLEY of CAMBODIA.

4. Control Headquarters

a. 2nd brigade, 4th Infantry Division located at NEW PLEI DJERENG

b. 2-35 Inf forward Command Post located at LZ Conquer.

5. Key Personnel

POSITION

NAME

BN CO

LTC WILLIAMS L. HARRISON, JR.

BN XO

MAJ WILLIAM J. HARDENBURGH

BN S-1	1LT ROBERT P. BOSKING
BN S-2	1 LT BRUNO JACHMANN
BN S-3	MAJ EVERETT R. THOMAS
BN S-3 AIR	1LT PHILLIP R. RUSS
BN S-4	1LT JOHN M. HAYDEN
BN S-5	CPT HARRY M. WEISMANN
BN SPT PLT LDR	1LT MICHAEL D. MACMANN
A CO	CPT JERRY S. CLARK
B CO	1LT BERT L. JACOBS
C CO	CPT BURL D. MAGEE
D CO	CPT DAVID B. O'BRIAN
E CO	CPT EMILIO GUTERRIZ
RECON PLT LDR	1LT THOMAS M. WAJER
4.2 MORTAR PLT LDR	2LT WILLIS M. MUSKA
A/4-42 ARTY CO	CPT PAUL STEWART
A/4-42 ARTY LO	CPT GORDON CAMERON-STUART

6. Task Organization:

A/2-35 Inf	BN CON
B/2-35 Inf	RCN PLT/2-35 Inf
C/2-35 Inf	4.2 MORT PLT/2-35 Inf
D/2-35 Inf	A/4-42 Arty (DS)
	PLT/C/4th Engr (DS)

7. Supporting Forces:

a. Supporting artillery to include TIC, Night Fire, Quick Fire, and Defensive Targets, were provided by A/4-42 Arty at FSB CONQUER.

b. Gunship support was provided on a mission request basis by 2nd BDE located at NEW PLEI DJERENG.

c. Tactical Air Support was available on a pre-planned and/or immediate request basis through 2nd BDE, 4th Inf Div. Numerous pre-planned requests were submitted through this Battalion.

d. SNOOPY/SCORPION missions were available on a pre-planned basis through S-2, 2nd BDE, 4th Inf Div.

8. Intelligence:

a. Terrain: The terrain consisted of gently rolling hills with many open areas. With the small streams almost dried no water was not readily available. The weather was unusually hot with no significant precipitation.

b. Enemy Situation: It was estimated that a refitting station would be located in the area with accompanying supply and training facilities. The K-47 Sapper Bn is known to have frequented this area, but was not expected to be there at that time. It was expected that the enemy would evade if possible.

c. Large enemy housing and storage complexes were found. However, all of these were food storage; no equipment, weapons, or munitions caches were found. A total of 359 huts, 41,950 lbs of rice, and 200 lbs of salt were found and destroyed. 113 bunkers were found but due to the small amount of time allotted to the mission, most of these are not destroyed. A training area complex, complete with mock concertina, and several huts believed to be classrooms were also destroyed. The enemy deserted the area at the approach of friendly forces. Only two, one of whom was KIA and one of whom (an elderly woman) was captured, came in contact with friendly units. Other contacts consisted mainly of sniper fire. The commanders on the ground judged, from the signs they found, that the enemy had evaded to the north and west. Numerous additional complexes could be seen from the air. These could not be exploited however, due to the limited time available. It is estimated that a substantial number of facilities and supplies were not destroyed. The enemy will probably resupply, rebuild, and continue to develop the same area. Although his resources were damaged significantly, it is estimated that sufficient supplies remain to sustain the cadre and production workers in the near future.

9. 2/35 Inf repositioned its forces and initiated search and destroy operations on 7 May 70, in AO CONQUER to locate, capture, and/or destroy enemy forces, installations, and facilities.

10. Concept of Operations: The initiation of the operation was conducted in two phases.

a. Phase I: At 060700H May 70, BN moved by convoy from CAMP RADCLIFF to LZ MERIDETH. Bn trains continued the move to NEW PLEI DJERENG.

b. Phase II: At 070800H May 70, A, B, C, & D Companies, Bn TOC, and RCN platoon conduct CA into AO CONQUER and began search and destroy operations. 4.2 Mortar platoon conducted an airlift to LZ CONQUEST to begin support mission for the Bn. (Annex A)

11. Execution: On 7 May 70 2/35 Inf began operations by establishing the battalion CP at FSB CONQUER (YA 600400)

a. A Co: On 7 May 70, A Company assumed the mission of security of FSB CONQUER. Upon CA'ing into the LZ, A Co found a hootch containing 2000 lbs of rice. A Co sent sweeps around the perimeter of the fire base. On 10 May, 2/A found 3 hootches containing 2 tons of rice. On the same day 1/A found a hootch containing 3 tons of rice in 250 lb bags. On 111742H May 70, A Co conducted a CA from FSB CONQUER to 12 vic YA 514399, and began search and destroy operations in their AO. On 120928H May 70, vic YA 514404, 3/A sweep was checking an old hootch when the security men observed 2 individuals 50 meters to the north. The

security man engaged the enemy with small arms and the enemy fled to the west, A sweep of the area revealed Ho Chi Minh sandal prints. On 13 May, A Co conducted a FE and AL to NEW PLEI DJERENG and convoyed to CAMP RADCLIFF to begin Stand-down in preparation for upcoming operations.

b. B Co: On 07 1732H May 70, B Company completed a CA from LZ Merideth into LZ CHEETAH and departed to the north to begin search and destroy operations in their AO. On 081354H May 70, vic YA 595402, B Co OP observed 2 enemy 30 meters to the south moving to the south. The OP engaged the enemy with small arms fire. The enemy returned fire and fled to the south. A sweep of the area revealed negative findings. Results of the contact were 1 friendly KIA. On 10 1515H May 70, vic YA 580404, 3/B found a village consisting of 25 hootches and 4 fighting positions. The village was capable of housing 100 individuals. On 11 May 70, B Company conducted a FE and AL to FSB CONQUER to assume the miss of security and construction, and, on 13 May, B Co conducted a FE to NEW PLEI DJERENG and convoyed to CAMP RADCLIFF to begin stand-down in preparation fo upcoming operations.

c. C Co: On 7 May 70, C Company conducted a CA into LZ LION and departed to the west to begin search and destroy operations in their AO. At 1525H, vic YA 598400, C Co found a village consisting of 25 hootches and livestock. On 080854H, vic YA 591406, 1/C observed one enemy 50 meters to the north moving to the east. The enemy was engaged with small arms and light organics resulting in 1 enemy KIA. On 081146H May 70, vic YA 586407, 2/C detained an 60 year old woman who was extremely sick. The woman was evacuated to 2nd BDE at NEW PLEI DJERENG. On 120853H May 70, vic YA 589421, C Company point man was approaching a hootch. When the point man was approximately 20 meters away two enemy fled to the northeast. The point man engaged the enemy with small arms, however, a sweep revealed negative findings. On 13 May 70, C Company conducted a FE to NEW PLEI DJERENG and convoyed to CAMP RADCLIFF to begin a stand-down in preparation for upcoming operations.

d. D Co: On 7 May 70, D Company completed a CA into LZ PANTHER and departed to the northeast into their AO to begin search and destroy operations. On 080827H May 70, vic YA 600409, D Co pound a village consisting of 45 hootches, 1 church., and 20 bunkers. Inside the village was found 1500 lbs of rice. At 1256H, vic YA 602409, 3/D found a hootch containing 2000 lbs of unpolished rice. At 1545H vic YA 627413, 1/D received 15 rounds of small arms sniper fire from vic YA 627415. Heavy organic fire was returned and a sweep of the area revealed negative findings. On 111750H May 70, vic YA I536393, D Co sweep to the south observed 10-12 individuals to the east approximately 300 meters. Enemy opened up on the sweep with an estimated 500 rounds of AK-47 and automatic weapons fire and fled to the east. Small arms and artillery were employed, however, a sweep of the area revealed negative findings. There wore no friendly casualties. On 13 May 70, D Company conducted a FE and AL to NEW PLEI DJERENG and convoyed to CAMP RADCLIFF to begin a stand-down in preparation for upcoming operations.

e. Recon Platoon: On 7 May 70, Rcn platoon conducted a CA from LZ MERIDETH to LZ CONQUER and moved overland to the southwest into their AO to begin RIF operations. On 081025H May 70, vic YA 600395, Rcn platoon found a. hootch containing 2000 lbs of uncut rice. At 1216H, vic YA 605388, Rcn found a village consisting of 35 hootches and 20 bunkers. On 111012H May 70, vic YA 589390, Rcn platoon found a village consisting of 23 hootches and 12 bunkers. On 120852H May 70, vic YA 579386, Rcn platoon found 3 storage hootches containing 1 ton of unpolished rice. At 1311H, vic YA 565395, Rcn plt found a training area consisting of 23 hootches w/bunkers inside, 2 classrooms with blackboards, wood mock-ups of B-40 rockets and an obstacle course. On 13 May 70, Rcn platoon conducted a FE and AL to

NEW PLEI DJERENG and conveyed to CAMP RADCLIFF to begin a stand-down in preparation for upcoming operations.

12. Results: The operation yielded the following results:

1 x enemy KIA	720 x rds. AK-47 ammunition
1 x detainee	25 x rds. SKS ammunition
21 x tons of rice	2 x 2.75 rockets
200 x lbs salt	3 x .51 cal rds.
359 x hootches	5 x crossbows
113 x bunkers	1 x AK-47 cleaning kit
1 x flint-lock rifle	1 x AK-47 bayonet
10 x villages	Numerous documents
1 x hospital complex	Medical supplies
1 x training area	Numerous misc supplies
1 x mess area	

13. Administrative Matters:

a. Supply: Battalion trains was located at NEW PLEI DJERENG, and forward supply point for emergency Class I and V was maintained at FSB CONUER. To enable UH-1 helicopters more time to resupply the elements in the field, at least one internal CH-47 sortie was resupplied to the fire base each day.

b. Maintenance: Limited organizational maintenance was performed at the trains area, and items requiring repair beyond Battalion capability were transferred to C Co 704th Maint.

c. Treatment of Casualties: Battalion aid stations were located at both the trains and forward base. Due to the open area of operations the jungle penetrator was required only once during this operation.

d. Transportation: The availability of aircraft for resupply and operations was not a problem. Vehicles for the convoy to LZ MERIDETH were supplied by 54th Trans Det and 4th S&T Bn.

e. Communications: No communications problems occurred during this operation.

14. Special Equipment and Technique: The GRC/163 Multiplex radio was experimented with great success on FSB CONQUER. The radio provided 4-channel communications with BDE and the rear area in CAMP RADCLIFF.

a. Enemy Situation: As predicted in the intelligence estimate, the enemy had been using the SE SAN RIVER VALLEY as a base area/food production area. Numerous Montagnard villages dotted the countryside, and one NVA/VC training area was discovered. Trail signs and warm

campfires indicated that the enemy had moved out to the north and west just prior to our arrival.

b. Tactics Employed: Company sized search and destroy formations characterized the entire operation. Because of the time required to burn hootches and destroy large quantities of rice and because of the short duration of the operation, a majority of the villages in the AO were not exploited. A more realistic approach to the Battalion's AO would have been ambushing the multiple well used trails.

WILLIAMS L. HARRISON, JR.

LTC, Infantry

Commanding

ANNEXES:

A – Operation Overlay (not included in the report)