

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile)  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CA-E

25 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report - Summary LIBRARY  
APACHE SNOW USA CGSC FT LEAVENWORTH...

MAR 30 1971

Commanding General  
Headquarters 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile)  
APO San Francisco 96383

ACCESSION NO \_\_\_\_\_  
PO REGISTR 1181

1. Name and Type of Operation: Operation APACHE SNOW; Reconnaissance in Force.
2. Dates of Operation: 10 May - 7 June 1969.
3. Location: This Operation was conducted in Nam Hoa District, Thua Thien Province. Map References: Sheets; 1:50,000 6441 I, II, III, IV; Series L7014 & L7015.
4. Control Headquarters: Hqs 3d Bde, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).
5. Reporting Officer: Joseph B. Comxy Jr., Colonel Infantry, Commanding.
6. Task Organization:

<u>1-506(-)</u>	<u>2-506(-)</u>	<u>3-187</u>	<u>3-5 Cav</u>
	A-2-506 OPCON 18-21 May		D-2-506 OPCON

Bde Control

Bde Scty Plat	B-326 Engr (DS)
Rcn 1-506	A-158 AHB (DS)
A-2-17 Cav	B-158 AHB (DS)
2-319 Arty (DS)	TACP 20 TASS
C-2-11 Arty (GSR)	58th Sct Dog Plat
C-2-94 Arty (GSR)	3d FSSE
C-1-83 Arty (GSR)	

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1st ARVN Regt

1-1 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 2-1 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 3-1 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 4-1 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 Battery 11 ARVN Arty (DS)  
 Battery 34 ARVN Arty (GSR)  
 1 LNO Party

3d ARVN Regt

1-3 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 2-3 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 3-3 ARVN Bn w/FO Party  
 Battery 12 ARVN Arty (DS)

## 7. Supporting Forces:

a. 2-17 Cav - supported 3d Bde by reconnaissance, the marking of LZ's prior to insertions, the screening of ground units and along the Laotian border, and by pinpointing enemy mortar and rocket locations. (See Incl 5 for further details).

b. Artillery - units shown in task organization provided support for LZ preps, units in contact, H & I fires, and direct fire in defense of bases underground and sapper attack. (See Incl 7 for further details).

c. 7th TAF - provided both preplanned and immediate air strikes with air priority to units in contact, LZ preps, LZ construction, and intelligence targets. (See Incl 8 for further details).

d. 160th Avn Group - provided airlift for combat assaults and extractions, establishment of fire support bases, resupply sorties during the operation, and pathfinder control on both LZ insertions and fire bases. (See Incl 4 for further details).

e. Logistical Support - provided by 3d FSSE, DISCOM, 101st Abn Div, elements of the 426 Supply and Service Battalion, Co C 326 Medical Bn, Co D 801st Maintenance Battalion, Det 1002 Supply and Service Company, 26th Group w/POL Platoon, Laundry and Bath Platoon and Graves Registration Section. (See Incl 4 for detailed breakdown on support units, mission requirements and services rendered).

## 8. Intelligence: See Inclosure 1 for complete details.

Operation APACHE SNOW confirmed that elements of the 6th, 9th, and 29th Regiments were using the Northern & Shau Valley as a primary LOC for movement of material and infiltration of troops to enemy units throughout I Corps. Using Radio Research Unit techniques and quickly reacting to information gained through POW interrogation, the 3d Brigade was able to exploit hard intelligence and render the 7th, 8th and 9th battalions of the 29th Regt plus its technical units combat ineffective. Also identified were sappers of the K12 battalion and the K6 (AKA 806th) Bn, 6th Regiment, and K35 Arty Bn (Rocket). These units, after unit

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identification and location had been confirmed, were constantly hounded by TAC Air, Artillery, and pursuit by 3d Brigade ground forces. This invariably resulted in the capture of a POW whose interrogation resulted in valuable information gained.

9. Mission:

3d Bde and 1st ARVN Regt conduct combined airmobile assaults into the Northern A Shau Valley in conjunction with the 9th Marines and the 3d ARVN Regt to destroy NVA/VC forces, block enemy routes of egress into Laos, interdict enemy LOC, and to locate and destroy enemy caches.

10. Concept of Operation:

a. Prior to D-Day, 10 May 69, the 1st and 3d ARVN Regts and the 3rd Brigade 101 established three mutually supporting fire bases at FB Bradley (YD278122), FB Airborne (YD355070) and FB Currahee (YC399949). On D-Day, following a fifty minute TAC Air prep, an eighteen minute Artillery prep, Air Cav LZ examination, and a one minute ARA LZ prep, five maneuver battalions (three US and two ARVN) were inserted into five separate LZ's along the Laotian border overlooking the Northern A Shau Valley. After searching and clearing the immediate LZ area, all US battalions began extensive RIF operations to the East and Northeast toward the Valley floor. After the insertion of the maneuver battalions had been completed at 1400 hours, the 2-1(-) ARVN Bn combat assaulted atop Tiger Mountain (YD253090) and secured FB Tiger for the insertion of Battery 12 ARVN Artillery (105mm). The 3-5 Cav secured Route 547 and Fire Bases Blaze (YD544203), Bastogne (YD620095), and Cannon (YD475028). Route 547 is the all weather route to be used for resupply of units working in the valley and along its ridge lines.

b. Operations Narrative: On D-Day, 10 May 1969, utilizing lift ships from the 158th and 101st AHB's, the 1-506 Inf at 0730H, 3-187 Inf at 0801H, and 2-501 Inf at 1001H, were combat assaulted into LZ's vicinity YC312949, YC320988, and YD288015 respectively. The 4-1 ARVN Inf battalion at 1020H and 2-1 ARVN Inf Bn(-) at 1300H combat assaulted into LZ's at YD250042 and YD253090. The LZ for the 4-1 ARVN was hot as the lift ships began to receive small arms fire upon exiting the LZ. Sporadic firing continued until approximately 1300H. At Tiger Mountain, one CH 47 was downed on the LZ by small arms fire. There were negative casualties. The 105mm Howitzer being carried was undamaged and the CH 47 was extracted without further incident. The enemy apparently had no advance knowledge of the primary LZ's and as a result, were unable to effect a determined or effective defense.

At 110220H May 69, FB Bastogne received a probe by an unknown size enemy force. Approximately 10 RPG rounds and a substantial amount of small arms fire were directed into the perimeter. At the initial RPG fire,

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ARA and all organic weapons to include 90mm tank guns were employed to counter the attack. One RPG round started a fire which caused an explosion in the ASP of C-1-83 Artillery (175mm). This explosion resulted in 33 US WIA, of which only 18 required medevac. The medevac was complete at 0445 hours 11 May.

On 111000H May 69, the 3-1 ARVN Inf Bn combat assaulted into LZ number 6 at YD197044. The LZ was cold with negative enemy contact. At 1625H, B Co 3-187 Infantry began to receive heavy small arms and machine gun fire from YC325982. This action marked the beginning of the ten day battle for Dong Ap Bia Mountain. Due to the continuous and heavy fighting prior to the capture of Hill 937, a separate Inclosure, Inclosure 9, has been prepared. For all further details on the battle for Dong Ap Bia Mountain refer to Inclosure 9.

12 May 69 resulted in only minor contact with the exception of the 1-506 and 3-187 Infantry Battalions who were enjoined in the battle for Dong Ap Bia. The 2-501 Infantry Battalion and allied units continued to RIF along the border.

At 150335H May 69, FB Airborne received a heavy enemy ground attack. Sappers of the K12 Battalion, in conjunction with the C3 Company, K6 Battalion, 6th NVA Regiment attacked the base in a three pronged attack; from the NW, E and S. The CO of A-2-501 employed every weapon at his disposal to include ARA, Spooky and direct fire artillery from B-2-319 (105mm) and C-2-11 (155mm) as the perimeter was assaulted. C-2-319 Artillery sustained both casualties to personnel and one 105 gun was destroyed and one damaged while C-2-11 Artillery sustained one 155mm gun heavily damaged. At 0530H, after the attack had been repulsed, 31 NVA KIA (BC) were found and 1 PW was captured. US losses were 21 KIA and 52 WIA. (See Inclosures 7 and 13 for further details). The 2-501 Inf(-) was extracted from various PZ's (YD284031) at 1030H and completed at FB Airborne at 1220H. The 2-501 Inf then began extensive RIF's in the vicinity of FB Airborne to pursue and destroy the K6 Battalion, 6th NVA Regiment known to be in the area.

During 18 May 69, the battle for Dong Ap Bia raged as heavy ground fighting continued. The 3-187th Infantry fought its way South to the military crest of Hill 937, while the 1-506th Infantry assaulted Northward up the slope. In time, enemy fire from heavily fortified bunkers slowed the momentum of the 1-506th Infantry assault. The 3-187 having pushed further toward the top, began to receive fire from both flanks as the enemy was reinforced. With little daylight remaining, the decision was made to combat assault two additional battalions into the battle to stem the flow of enemy reinforcements and add combat mass to what would be the final assault on Hill 937. At 1830H, A-2-506 Infantry was lifted from Phong Dien to FB Currahee by CH 47 then combat assaulted to vicinity YC320989 at which time they became OPCON to 3-187.

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On 19 May 69, the 2-501 Infantry(-) at 1515H and the 2-3 ARVN at 1327H were combat assaulted from PZ vicinity YD363081 and My Chanh respectively into LZ's at YC332922 and YC338974. Both LZ's were cold and the remainder of the day was spent in preparation for the assault on Dong Ap Bia scheduled for the next day. The 3-5 Cav which had been providing security for engineer worksites along route 547, became OPCON to the 2d Brigade. Having been relieved of providing security for FB's Bastogne, Blaze and Cannon, the elements of the 3rd Brigade were then able to more effectively marshall their resources for the assault on Hill 937.

On 20 May 69, the 3-187th Infantry with 4-2-506 OPCON, 2-501 Infantry, 1-506 Infantry and 2-3 ARVN successfully assaulted and drove the 7th and 8th Bns of the 29th NVA Regiment from their mountain stronghold atop Dong Ap Bia Mountain. (See Incl 9 for complete details).

Effective 21 May 69, the 3-187 Infantry became OPCON to the 2d Bde 101st Abn Div, who in turn returned the 2-506 Infantry to 3rd Bde control. The time period 21 May 69 - 7 June was characterized by decreasing enemy contact and ever increasing discoveries of enemy caches. The 2-506 Infantry began their portion of Operation APACHE SNOW by regaining 4-2-506 Infantry which had been OPCON to 3-187 Infantry for the final two days of the battle for Dong Ap Bia Mountain. The battalion CP, companies B, C and D(-) moved from Camp Evans, Phong Dien District Headquarters, and the An Lo Bridge to FB Blaze by CH 47. Upon completion of the CH 47 move to FB Blaze, the Battalion CP and E Co(-) combat assaulted to FB Airborne. 4-2-506, upon release by the 3-187 Infantry, combat assaulted from PZ (YC327982) to LZ FB Airborne.

On 22 May 69, C & D companies of 2-506 moved from FB Blaze and FB Currahee to FB Airborne. With all elements of 2-506 in and around FB Airborne, the battalion began exhaustive searching and RIF operations to locate NVA Warehouse 54, known to be in the area. (For further information see Inclosure 12).

The 2-501 Infantry began RIF operations from vicinity Dong Ap Bia, along the Dong So Ridge, heading for the Valley floor. The 1-506 Infantry began extensive search and clear RIF operations from Dong Ap Bia Mountain South toward FB Currahee. On 5 June 69, the 4-1 ARVN Battalion moved to PZ vicinity YD278066 and extracted to La Vang. The move was complete at 1315H.

At 072400 June 69, Operation APACHE SNOW was concluded. This combined allied operation saw some of the war's bloodiest and fiercest fought battles against a determined foe. APACHE SNOW has added another stirring chapter to the history of the 3d Bde, 101st Airborne Division. (For detailed information regarding the time period 21 May - 7 June 69 see Inclosure 10, 11 and 12).

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12. Results: a. The 3d Brigade with OPCON units successfully accomplished its mission in Operation APACHE SNOW. This multi-battalion combined Operation was a classic campaign which found the enemy, fixed his location, and methodically and devastatingly destroyed him in place. The effect of this was to destroy the combat effectiveness of not only the maneuver battalions of the 29th NVA Regiment, but also its central headquarters with organic and attached technical units, forcing the remaining broken elements to retreat across the border into Laos, while at the same time preventing them from again using the Northern A Shau Valley as either a staging area for attack or as a large scale storage base to outfit future operations.

b. Enemy Losses categorized as follows:

	US	ARVN
(1) KIA (BC) NVA/VC	691	229
(2) KBAA (BC)	16	
(3) KBA (BC)	102	
(4) Captured: PW -	5	
IWC	241	340
CSWC	40	100
Documents (wt in lbs)		37

c. Friendly Losses:

US	ARVN
78 KIA	31 KIA
536 WIA	137 WIA

d. Body to Weapons Ratio:

US	ARVN
691/281 = 2.44:1	229/400 = 1:1.40

e. Enemy to US killed ratio:

US	ARVN
691/78 = 8.06:1	229/31 = 7.01:1

f. Captured or destroyed Equipment: US

(1) 137,250 rds of SA Ammo	(4) 827 RPG/Rifle Grenades
(2) 2,426 rds CS Ammo	(5) 32 Mine/BET
(3) 2,386 rds Mortar Ammo	(6) 34,776 lbs Rice

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(7) 241 Structures	(10) 4 Radios
(8) 1205 Fortifications	(11) 125 lbs Explosives
(9) 3 122mm Rockets	(12) Vehicles (trucks) 4

Captured or destroyed Equipment: ARVN

(1) 340,000 rds SA Ammo	(7) 10 122mm Rockets
(2) 5,000 rds CSW	(8) 11,735 lbs rice
(3) 5,000 rds Mortar Ammo	(9) 257 Fortifications
(4) 540 RPG/Rifle Grenades	(10) 306 Structures
(5) 566 Hand Grenades	(11) 14,275 lbs explosives
(6) 227 Mine/BBT	(12) 40 Vehicles (trucks and dozers)

13. Administration: (See Inclosure 2).

14. Logistics: (See Inclosure 4)

15. Chemical: Non-Toxic chemical munitions for the M-79 and 105mm Howitzer were employed on several different occasions on 15, 16, and 17 May during the attack on Dong Ap Bia Mountain. CS grenades, both individually thrown by the foot soldier and bulk air dropped from UH-1H aircraft were also used prior to and during assaults (See Inclosures 8 & 9). Although the use of these chemical munitions met with some early success, the changing wind patterns along the ridge lines of Dong Ap Bia Mountain quickly dissipated the agent. The NVL, realizing the effect of CS in a confined area such as a static bunker defense, counteracted the use of CS by donning new Chicom protective masks. Because of these factors, the further use of chemical munitions was suspended after 20 May 69.

16. Civil Affairs (Omitted).

17. Psychological Operations (See Inclosure 5).

18. Communications (See Inclosure 6).

19. Engineer (Omitted).

20. Artillery (See Inclosure 7).

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## 21. Special Equipment and Techniques:

a. Rigger and Rappelling: Discussion - Several times during Operation APACHE SNOW, aircraft were down in hostile terrain where easy access was impossible. At times the only feasible way riggers could get to the aircraft in order to rig it for extraction was through the use of rappelling techniques from UH-1H helicopters.

Solution - Realizing that this method of entry is not a normal technique for riggers, or infantry security elements, experience shows that as a minimum, a basic course of instruction to include actual helicopter rappelling is needed in all infantry and rigger units.

b. Chest Plate Protectors: Discussion - Units of both the 1-506 and 2-506 Infantry Battalions employed aircraft crew member ceramic vest plates for their point men. This body armor, while heavy and cumbersome, saved the lives of three men who were struck by SA at close range.

Solution - The possibility of adapting this aircraft type body armor to use by field troops should be investigated by every infantry unit engaged in operations where contact is felt to be imminent.

## 22. Commander's Analysis:

a. Recon by Fire - Discussion - At least one Company of each maneuver battalion involved in Operation APACHE SNOW initiated premature enemy return fire placing the enemy in a poor defensive posture through the use of recon by fire. As an example, a unit reconning by fire along its route of advance and using 2-17 Cav Pink teams (1 LOH and 1 Gunship) to screen its advance reduces the possibility of being engaged by NVN trail watchers, or "set-piece" ambushes. "Walking fires" or the use of artillery to recon a route of march makes for rapid employment of both blocking fires and close in contact fires with less time lost through haphazard adjustments and confirmation of map location.

b. Flak vests: Discussion - The protective or "flak" vest, normally worn only by troops in either a static security role or convoy duty, significantly reduced both the number of KIA & WIA for the US battalions assaulting Dong Ap Bia Mountain. Many early casualties were due to Claymore and RPG shrapnel. As this type projectile does not have the velocity, nor the penetrating power of small arms fire except at very close range, the flak vest is an excellent defensive measure. The only drawbacks are its weight which causes heat casualties, and its bulkiness.

Solution - Issue "flak" vest as the situation dictates.



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c. Use of Rucksacks: Discussion - whenever possible, it is advantageous for the members of a unit to go "light" i.e. without rucksacks, carrying only water, smoke and a complete basic load for organic weapons.

Solution - This can be done if operating out of a static base, or if resupply is to be effected daily as the rucksack could be lifted by helicopter. The main advantages to going "light" are: ability to move quickly and quietly, rapid deployment in contact, and less fatigue both physical and mental for the lead elements thereby sharpening their prowess and detection skills. The major disadvantage to going "light" is the possibility of failure to resupply because of poor weather or enemy conditions.

d. ~~AR~~: Discussion - Throughout Operation APACHE SNOW incidents involving ~~AR~~ resulted in unnecessary US casualties. The normal manner of employment of ~~AR~~ is through artillery command channels to the FO accompanying the ground unit commander. It is now apparent that instances occur when the FO is either separated from his commander, or not fully briefed on the entire fluid situation.

Solution - To preclude accidental injury to troops, it is felt that ~~AR~~ should follow the same procedure as gunships, i.e. contact the ground commander on his internal command net, be briefed on the friendly and enemy situation, and then have his approach pattern checked by the ground commander to insure it is correct and that he has identified all friendlies before rolling in on his rocket run.

e. Use of the Air Cavalry: Discussion - Ground commanders, unless having prior experience, are not normally aware of the limitations and best use of the supporting air cavalry in its role of recon and immediate closing of contact with the enemy.

Solution - A short class to explain and demonstrate the proper use of Air Cav by the ground commander should be held periodically at Brigade level. This class should be attended by all commanders down to and including the company level.

f. Supporting Fires: Discussion - Battalion commanders must be airborne to properly coordinate fire support, i.e. ~~ARA~~, gunships, T&C ~~air~~ and heavy artillery. Company Commanders must periodically have demonstrated to them the correct and effective use of these fires in order to remain current and adept in their employment. Heavy (8" & 175mm) artillery with its mass destructive force can be used against entrenched enemy in positions close to friendly elements.

Solution - Airborne Battalion Commanders should remain airborne

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to command, contact, and coordinate their elements and all supporting fires. Company commanders should periodically attend fire support coordination classes. Heavy artillery should be registered and fired in by ground unit FO's so that should the need arise, it will be readily available.

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*J. B. Conmy Jr.*

- 15 Incl
1. Intelligence
  2. Flight Route, Assault Bns
  3. Personnel and Administration
  4. Logistics
  5. Psychological Operations
  6. Communications
  7. Artillery
  8. T&C Air
  9. Battle for Dong Ap Bia
  10. Combat Operations After Action Report, 3-187 Inf
  11. Combat Operations After Action Report, 1-506 Inf
  12. Combat Operations After Action Report, 2-506 Inf
  13. Combat Operations After Action Report, 2-501 Inf
  14. Combat Operations After Action Report, 158 AHB
  15. Combat Operations After Action Report, 2-17 Cav

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CA-D

25 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report (APACHE SNOW)

TO: CO  
3rd Bde 101st Abn Div  
ATTN: S-3

The following analysis of the enemy situation and supporting information is submitted for inclosure in the Combat After Actions Report (APACHE SNOW).

*For: Gregory V. Montgomery for*  
CHARLES B. ADDISON  
Captain MI  
S2

1 Incl

I Intelligence of Dong Ap Bia

*Incl 1*

SUBJECT: Combat After Actions Report (APACHE SNOW)

(INTELLIGENCE) to Combat After Action Report, (APACHE SNOW)

1. Terrain: The terrain aspects of the 3d Bde Area of Operations generally conformed to the original Intelligence estimate varying from open valley to steep mountains.

a. The Valley: The A SHAU Valley floor consists of flat open terrain which varies in width from 300 meters (YD363032) to three kilometers near TA BAT. Vegetation includes grass, 2 to 6 feet tall and scattered brush. Foot and vehicle trafficability is excellent, and any portion of the valley floor is conducive to helicopter landings.

b. The Transitional Area: Bordering the Northern A SHAU on the western hills at depth of one to two kilometers the terrain is covered with matted grass and brush vegetation which impedes foot traffic. The area is laced with numerous trail networks and trafficability is limited to their use. Tracked vehicles could deploy as far north as YD3112.

c. The Mountainous Area: Rising abruptly out of the narrow fingers and uneven contours of the transitional area, the canopy-covered, steep slopes (20% to 50%) of the mountainous region form an unbroken barrier to movement, observation, and heliborne operations. Foot traffic is confined to trails and streambeds. Observation and fields of fire were severely limited in some areas due to undergrowth and elephant grass. Though no particular area of the operational area was reported as impassable, areas under triple canopy near streams were more difficult due to the amount of tangle foot in the areas where no trails were established. All streams encountered were negotiable by foot troopers. Vehicles though not used in operation Apache Snow would be generally limited to Route 547, valley floor and its long more gradual sloping fingers.

Numerous suitable helicopter landing zones and trails were found in the area. (Overlay will be fwd under separate cover).

2. Weather: Throughout the operational period, the weather was considered excellent. Ground Fog was prevalent in early morning hours in most ravines, usually clearing off around 0800 - 0830 hours. Also immediately following thundershowers cumulus clouds developed and remained in the area for a short time. For the most part, thundershowers occurred between 1430 hours and 2100 hours daily with clear skies developing after rainfall. Temperatures were moderate to warm in afternoon preceding thundershowers. Weather in general was excellent for Airmobile Operations.

3. Enemy Situation: The original intelligence estimate carried order of Battle listings of the following units in the 3d Brigade Area of Operation:

- a. 6th NVA Regiment
  - (1) 806th Bn - Confirmed
  - (2) 800th Bn - Possible
  - (3) 802nd Bn - Possible
- b. 9th NVA Regiment
- c. 559th Trans Group
- d. 675th Arty Regiment
- e. U/I Forces (BA 611)

Though the original estimate of enemy disposition and composition was not confirmed altogether, it is believed that all elements were operating in area of the planned operation except the 9th NVA Regiment. Contacts throughout the period could have and in all probability were made with elements listed in a, c - e. Contact was established on 10 May 1969 by the 3/187 and 1/506 Infantry Battalions and was maintained throughout the duration of the operation. The second day of the operation, the 3d Bn, 187th made sporadic contact with snipers that were dug in as well as tree borne. This contact continued and the fighting increased as the 3/187 had encountered the two Enemy Battalions and sections of an NVA Regimental Headquarters size unit which was later identified through documents and Prisoners as the 29th NVA Regiment. The 7th and 8th Battalions and elements of the 29th Regt Hqs were located on Dong Ap Bia mountain (YC328981). As the intensity of the fighting increased, the 3/187 was joined by three (3) additional battalions in routing the 29th NVA Regiment. The 29th NVA Regiment was the only new unit identified in the area. (See Inclosure # 1 for information on Hill 937). Elements of the 806th Battalion, 6th NVA Regiment and the K10 Sapper Battalion remained active throughout the operation.

4. Enemy Tactics: The 806th Battalion located North of FSB Airborne generally remained in a defensive posture of enemy caches and base areas with limited reconnaissance missions. Elements of the 806th did participate in a sapper attack on 13 May 69. Remaining elements of the 6th NVA were not contacted during the operation. The 29th NVA Regiment was deployed in a defensive role. The 7th and 8th Battalions were deployed in depth utilizing concentric bunkers on Dong Ap Bia (Hill 937). Bunkers were heavily fortified, reinforced ("A" Frame) with thick over head cover and covered with mutual supporting fires. An intricate series of interconnecting trenches enabled the enemy to reinforce any portion of his perimeter. Snipers and 2-3 man listening post were deployed along all possible avenues of approach at sufficient distance from the enemys' perimeter to provide

early warning. With the exception of the battle for Dong Ap Bia from 11-21 May, the mobile defense tactic was employed by the enemy. In this role, US and ARVN units most frequently encountered trailwatchers, small recon parties and snipers during reconnaissance in force operations. The enemy elements employing this tactic would attempt to inflict maximum friendly casualties initially and break contact immediately. Sapper attacks increased during the period indicating the enemy's increased reliance upon this tactic to inflict maximum casualties and destruction of installations and equipment with a minimum of forces which are highly trained with suicidal motivation. Direct and indirect fire attacks on Fire Bases and night defensive positions also increased during the reported period. Fire attacks were usually by enemy snipers deploying harassing techniques with small arms and rocket propelled grenade. Indirect fire attacks were conducted with 60mm mortar, 82mm mortar, 122mm rockets, 122mm artillery (Tiger Mtn) and infrequently by rocket propelled grenades. Only one indirect fire attack was followed by a ground attack and that occurred on 13 May 69 with a combined sapper and ground attack. Mines and booby traps were employed in the area of operation generally along LOC's that the enemy suspected US and ARVN use. Cache sites were heavily booby trapped in a hasty manner appearing to be a last resort of preventing US and ARVN capture of these desperately needed supplies and munitions. Command and trip-device claymores were encountered along LOC's and particularly in defense of Dong Ap Bia. The claymore's were staggered and placed in depth to provide coverage both in front and to sides of bunkers. Grenades, 60 and 80mm mortar rounds with trip devices placed in ordnance containers and left in open areas were also employed.

5. Training: Enemy individual and unit training was considered to be excellent. Particular noteworthy is the excellent marksmanship and concealment employed by elements of the 29th NVA Regiment. Detection of individuals and bunkers were extremely difficult in the initial phases of the operation around Dong Ap Bia and improved as ordnance was placed in heavy jungle terrain. The excellent marksmanship of the 29th Regt showed a marked improvement over previous contacts with enemy units. The special training of the Sapper elements remains in a very high state.

6. Logistics: The overall supply posture of enemy forces was not considered good, however the only known shortages were food. Caches of munitions and other supplies indicate the enemy's ability to infiltrate and store large quantities of supplies in Base areas. Though numerous medical supplies were captured in the area it is believed that the enemy is experiencing a critical shortage of medical personnel in administering treatment.

7. Combat effectiveness and Morale: The overall combat effectiveness of enemy elements contacted was considered to be good and considerably better than the enemy elements previously contacted in lowlands and along the rocket belts. The 7th and 8th Battalions, 29th NVA Regt was considered to be highly effective until after the battle for Dong Ap Bia.

Morale of the enemy continues to be poor. The poor state of morale is

contributed to lack of sufficient food stuffs, continued hardships and repeated defeats by Allies.

8. Intelligence Operations:

a. Aerial Surveillance

1. Visual Reconnaissance

a. FAC VR - In early February 1969, 3d Brigade FACs began an intense systematic VR program of the northern A Shau Valley. Pilots were debriefed by S2 personnel after completed missions, and furnished valuable data on roads, trails, HLZs and enemy locations.

b. S2 VR - the assistant S2 and S2 Air conducted reconnaissance of the TAOR in fixed-wing aircraft from the 220th RAC and accompanied FACs on missions. Hand held photos were taken of HLZ's and enemy locations.

c. A-2-17 Cav VR - armed helicopter reconnaissance missions were flown by the 2-17 Cav in support of 3d Brigade Operations.

2. Airborne Personnel Detector - sniffer missions were frequently conducted to locate enemy concentrations and were a valuable source of intelligence.

b. Aerial Photography G2 Air-assets of the Division Imagery Interpretation section were utilized in planning operations. Although no specific photo missions were flown, prior photo coverage was used.

c. SLAR and Red Maze - missions were flown daily by XXIV Corps. Radar - FPS 4, 5 and the TBS 25 were employed on forward support bases for ground surveillance and early warning.

d. URS - special agent reports indicated known enemy locations and disposition.

e. PW Interrogation and Document Readout - a team from the 3d Brigade IFW section was maintained at the forward TACP for rapid exploitation of prisoners and captured enemy documents.

9. Totals for Operation Apache Snow: (10 May - 2000H to 7 June 69)

	<u>US</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
KIA	691	229	920
PW	5	0	5
WRETS: IWC	241	340	581
CSWC	40	100	140
SA AMMO	97250	340000	437250
CS AMMO: MORT	2462	5000	7462
RPG	827	540	1367
OTHERS	15202	10800	26002
GRAIN (RICE IN LBS)	34778	11735	46511
DEMO (LBS)	185	14275	14460
DOCUMENTS (LBS)	104	37	471
VEHICLES	4	40	44
BUNKERS	1205	257	1462
STRUCTURES	241	306	547

Inclosure 1, of Combat After Action Report, (INTELLIGENCE) to APACHE SNOW.

SUBJECT: Intelligence Exploitation of "DONG AP BIA"

INTRODUCTION: Intelligence played a major part in the success of the 3d Brigade in Operation "APACHE SNOW" and more specifically, intelligence was the major factor that caused a battle for the 937 hill. In the battle of Dong Ap Bia just about every available source of intelligence gathering was exploited.

The means of gathering this information were: Prisoners, spar reports, visual reconnaissance and Agent Reports.

BACKGROUND: In mid February, during Operation Ohio Rapids conducted in southern and eastern portion of Base Area 101, the 3d Battalion, 187th Infantry captured a prisoner from the 806th Battalion, 6th Regt. During the interrogation of the PW, he stated that his elements received supplies from a warehouse complex in vicinity of the northern A Shau Valley. The prisoner indicated that his elements would move for two (2) days to the west and three (3) days to the south where warehouse 54 was located. Based on this data, exploitation of this area began within the Brigade's capability.

EXPLOITATION: Immediately, Air Strikes were planned and flown in the area of Warehouse 54. These airstrikes received numerous secondary explosions and many secondary fires. Suspecting that the warehouse complex had been located, additional air strikes were placed in the area and the area north of warehouse 54. One airstrike further north was particularly revealing and that was the discovery of a large trail, well used with what appeared to be spider holes along it running in a North-South direction. About this time, an extensive Visual Reconnaissance program was initiated. These VR missions were coordinated and established with Air Force FAC's attached to the 3d Bde for direct air support. The program was set-up to have the FAC's make VR's of the entire area while Airstrikes were being flown in the area and when no fighters were available the FAC's would simply recon the area. After each flight into the area, the FAC would report to S2 and draw all trails, possible landing zones and just generally brief the S2 on his observations in the area. The area of warehouse 54 and the trails leading out of Laos into the Dong Ap Bia were particularly interesting because of the obvious heavy use. After a short period, the FAC's had established a number of trail networks and possible areas of enemy concentrations. Results of the visual Reconnaissance missions were three fold; First, they were able to provide the S2 with immediate information on specific areas of interest, 2) he added to or improved the data base of information on the area for future Operations and third, he became very familiar with the terrain so when friendly troops were deployed in the area, no difficulty was experienced in providing very close air support.

In late February and early March of 1969, indications from URS showed an unusual increase in Spar readings in the upper part of the Valley. Concurrently with the beginning of Operation Massachusetts Striker, a URS



indicated deployment of a Major North Vietnamese Command in the A Shau area and in Base Area 611 in Laos. Three of these commands were identified as Regimental size headquarters, each regiment having under its command three or more battalions. Discovery of parts of a Coaxial cable tended to buttress the idea of a major comms facility located somewhere in the valley. By early May, a URS report had identified a regimental headquarters as being 5-8 kilometers west of Dong Ap Bia and was moving easterly.

Photographs and captured documents played a major role in selecting the landing zones and general axis of advance of the Battalions participating in the Combat Assaulting of multiple battalions along the Laotian border. The Bde II and Ass't S2 officer under the guidance of the S2 and S3 selected specific areas for photographs. The study and analysis of these photographs were instrumental, both to the S2/3 and later to the Bn Commanders in their planning of assigned missions.

Although agent reports were plentiful in the early stages of formulating a data base and preparing plans for Apache Snow, the information was general and not in depth. The Bde S2 made a liaison visit to the 525th MI Det in Hue and directed specific questions concerning the area of interest to the Det OIC. He was able to respond immediately with some of the information and levied the remaining requirements on his agents.

As the data base grew or developed, plans were made by the 3d Bde to begin Operation Apache Snow to fully exploit the situation. The Operation kicked off on 10 May with a multiple battalion CA into selected LZ's along the Laotian Border. All assaulting elements reported cold LZ's and moved out on multiple axis of advance. On the 2d day of Apache Snow the 3d Battalion, 187th met heavy enemy resistance from a well trained, well concealed and dug in enemy force. The fight continued for the next eight (8) days with some of the hardest and costliest fighting ever experienced by an NVA force. As the Hill was finally taken by a four allied battalion force on 21 May 69, a PW captured revealed that the 29th Regt Hqs with two of its three organic battalions was located on Dong Ap Bia. Further interrogation revealed that elements of the 29th Regt on Dong Ap Bia suffered extreme heavy casualties. One PW estimated that over 80 percent of his Company was destroyed.

Enclosure 3 (Personnel and Administration) to Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache Snow.

Units Strengths:

a. Initial:

	Officers	Warrant Officers	EM
HHC 3d Bde	238	14	239
1st Bn, 506th Inf	37	2	797
2d Bn, 506th Inf	44	2	786
3d Bn, 187th Inf	43	1	755

b. Final:

	Officers	Warrant Officers	EM
HHC 3d Bde	36	14	234
1st Bn, 506th Inf	31	1	661
2d Bn, 506th Inf	40	2	778
3d Bn, 187th Inf	28	1	629

c. Casualties:

	Officers	Warrant Officers	EM
HHC 3d Bde	1	1	4
1st Bn, 506th Inf	13	0	157
2d Bn, 506th Inf	8	0	92
3d Bn, 187th Inf	22	0	318

d. Replacements:

	Officers	Warrant Officers	EM
HHC 3d Bde	2	0	5
1st Bn, 506th Inf	3	0	164
2d Bn, 506th Inf	1	0	81
3d Bn, 187th Inf	9	1	118

e. There was an average of fifty people on leave and R&R during Operation Apache Snow.

Other Aspects:

a. AG Functions: An additional administration load was incurred due to the numerous casualties and the correspondence required on each one. Other administration remained at a normal level.

b. PMO: The Provost Marshal reports had no increase in crime during this period.

c. Finance: There was no change in finance functions at the 3d Bde during this period.

d. Chaplain: The brigade chaplains, as a matter of course, visited all units on a regular schedule, no matter where they were located, in order to hold religious services. The chaplains also briefed replacements and visited personnel of the 3d Bde in hospitals in the area. During this time the chaplains also started a building project for a Catholic Orphanage in the local district.

11 > Incl 3

Extract, After Action Reports, Operation Apache Snow - Logistical, Hq, 3d Bde

1. Reference: a. ADMINO 1-69, Hq, 3d Bde, 101st Abn Div (AM), dtd 28 Feb 69.

b. OPCRD 3-69, Hq, 3d Bde, 101st Abn Div (AM), dtd 6 May 69.

2. Operation Apache Snow was initiated by a Brigade planning conference: ADMINO 1-69, dtd 28 Feb 69, initiated the logistical support for the operation.

3. Logistical Task Organization (as of 6 May 1969):

3d FSSE, DISCOM

Elements, 426th Supply and Service Battalion

Co C, 326th Medical Battalion

Co D, 801st Maintenance Battalion

Detachment, 1002d Supply and Service Company

POL Platoon

Laundry and Bath Platoon

Graves Registration

Detachment 2, 571st Ordnance Company (Ammo)

178th Maintenance Company

287th Explosive Ordnance Detachment

15th Aerial Port (USAF)

4. General: Logistical support for this operation consisted of support rendered to the 3d Brigade Task Force, to the 1st ARVN Regiment, and to the 3d ARVN Regiment.

5. Preparation: a. In anticipation of expenditures, a buildup of Class IV and barrier material was effected at Camp Evans. The stockage level of all other classes of supplies at Camp Evans on 6 May 1969 was sufficient for extended field operations by this Brigade.

b. Levels (Camp Evans)

(1). Ammunition: a seven day level is maintained in the Camp Evans ASP by the Da Nang Support Command.

(2). POL: 70,000 gallons of JP4

Amal 41

(3). Rations: a five day level of C-Rations and LRRPs.

c. Facilities: All logistical facilities required to support Brigade-sized operations were in place on 6 May 1969.

6. Tactical Conduct: a. Operation Apache Snow commenced on 7 May 1969, (D-3). The 1st ARVN Regiment, the 11th, 12th, and 34th ARVN Artillery Battalions, and the 3d Brigade (1/506, 3/187, 2/501, 3/5, 2/319) moved into positions and conducted CA's from D-3 to D+1.

The 3d Brigade forward command post was located at FB Bertchesgarden. The 1st ARVN Regiment forward command post was located at FB Bradley. The 1/506 FSB was located at FB Currahee, the 3/187 FSB was located at FB Bertchesgarden, and the 2/501 and 2/506 FSB was at FB Airborne. The forward command post of the 3/5 was at FB Blaze, and the forward command post of the 2/319 was at FB Eagles Nest.

c. The 3/187 was extracted from the operational area on 21 May 1969.

7. Logistical Support: a. The plan for logistical support entailed sling-loaded cargo movement by CH-47 helicopters from Camp Evans to fire bases. Upon arrival, cargo was stored or further broken down to company loads for resupply to units in the field by UH-1H helicopters.

b. Cargo consisting of mail, personnel, and loads which were deemed uneconomical to move by CH-47 were hauled by UH-1H directly from Camp Evans to FSBs or to the unit in the field.

c. USAF Support: No additional munitions or supplies were flown into Camp Evans Army Airfield in direct support of the operation.

d. Ground Line of Communications: 26th GS Group continued support at a normal rate via ground transportation.

e. Helicopter Support:

(1). UH-1H: Assets of the 158th AHB and the 3d Brigade Aviation Section flew in direct support of committed combat elements.

(2). CH-47: Assets of the 159th ABHB flew 1188 sorties in support of committed combat elements as follows:

<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>CL I</u>	<u>CL III</u>	<u>CL IV</u>	<u>CL V</u>	<u>WATER</u>	<u>MISC</u>
FB Airborne	16	16	29	168	52	6
FB Currahee	17	45	18	230	78	16
FB Bertchesgarden	8	14	14	172	81	6
FB Eagles Nest	4	6	19	7	24	2
FB Bradley				4		
FB Rakksan	2	5	2	67	41	13
Tiger Mt				6		
TOTAL	47	86	82	654	276	43

f. Medical Support: Seventyseven dust-off missions were flown in support of the operation.

g. Maintenance: Maintenance work orders in direct support of the operation were processed by Co D, 801st Maint Bn and the 78th Maint Co

h. Graves Registration: The remains of 63 US personnel and 8 ARVN personnel were processed.

i. Laundry and Bath: Unit standowns were provided to 19 company-sized units immediately prior to and following Operation Apache Snow. Service consisted of hot showers, DX of clothing and boots (as needed), ice cream issue, and super contact teams.

j. GLOC Maintenance: NMCB 10 was responsible for QL 1 maintenance. No significant problems were encountered during the conduct of the operation.

8. Problem Areas: a. Ammunition: Serious problems were encountered with ASR items, in particular 81 mm HE, M-79 HE, and M-26 Fragmentation Grenades. The requirement for H&I fires and close in support of maneuver elements in close proximity to the Fire Support Bases far exceeded the ASR for the period covered. The ASR based upon experience factors of operations on the coastal plains is not representative of the requirements for operations in the A Shau valley and surrounding mountains.

Recommendation: Consideration should be given to operational missions when ASRs are determined and increased usage should be forecasted when terrain and security requirements change.

b. Personnel Movements: The turbulence of replacement personnel and normal administrative personnel requiring transportation forward created a potential problem, if sorted by UH-1. Logistics resupply time was not sufficient to resupply units in the field and move personnel simultaneously. Maximum utilization of CH-47's helped solve this problem. Personnel were loaded internally in CH-47's along with the external loads to achieve maximum utilization.

Recommendation: One central location should be established where personnel from all organizations of the Brigade would be shuttled to forward areas on CH-47's. This would better utilize resources by centralizing the requirement, increasing CH-47 payloads, and decreasing blade time of UH-1's.

c. Chain Saws: Significant problems were encountered by the high deadline rate of chain saws when operated by untrained personnel. Parts for deadlined saws were in short supply. The maintenance requirement to keep chain saws operational is directly correlated to the usage factor. A temporary solution was found by establishing a maintenance float of saws and conducting field location training on proper techniques of operating the chain saw.

Recommendation: All combat units be given practical demonstrations and instruction in the operation and maintenance of chain saws.

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d. Shortage of Air Items: Backhaul of air items from fire bases was a serious problem. When opening a fire base, supplies flow so rapidly that units tend to drag their feet derigging sorties delivered. At times urgently needed supplies are unnecessarily delayed or not delivered due to air items not being available for rigging.

Recommendation: Commanders at all levels should stress the importance of returning air items from fire bases at the earliest possible moment.

e. Water: Forward elements constantly in contact and unable to clear LZ's were operating in areas where water was not available. In order to supply water to these elements, a container which could be kicked out of a helicopter without breaking and one which held an adequate amount of water had to be found. The immediate solution was to use the 175mm powder cannister. However, several draw backs were found which made this solution less than satisfactory. Water transported in these containers had a particularly unpleasant taste; many personnel developed dysentary which was thought to be caused by some chemical residue in the cannisters and the cannisters had to be left in the operational area where they can be salvaged by the enemy.

Recommendation: A light disposable water container, which can be kicked out of helicopters without breaking should be found. Commanders at all levels should submit recommendations for a possible solution.

*Gene H. Tosh*

GENE H. TOSH  
Major, Infantry  
S-4

## Psychological Operations

1. General: During Operation APACHE SNOW, Psychological Operations was confined to Aerial Broadcasts from UH-1H helicopters, and mass leaflet drops in support of the 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).
2. Programs: Aerial Broadcasts used the main NVA Chieu Hoi theme interjected with the aspect of unnecessary death in false cause. Mass leaflet drops consisted of an assortment of NVA Chieu Hoi themes: appealing to sense of survival; referring to stamina of American Troops in pursuit of their goals, and the fairness of GVN forces dealing with NVA Chieu Hoi's.
3. Results: The NVA troops were attacked with Aerial Broadcast and mass leaflet drops. Since vast areas had to be covered in short intervals of time the propaganda medias were considered best suited to effectiveness of such an operation. The material was spread over the areas of heaviest concentration and reached targets with adequate accuracy.

A total of 5,310,000 NVA Chieu Hoi leaflets were disseminated in the 28 days of the operation. A total of 47 hours of Aerial Broadcasts were also included in support of the operation..

### CONCLUSION:

Although no Chieu Hoi's and only a slight number of POW's were taken in the operation, the effectiveness of Psychological Operations should not be considered a total loss. All POW's stated that all broadcasts were heard and leaflets were received. However, discipline in the individual unit plus the fear of Political Officer's pressure in the unit and in home base disrupted the minimal chances of total success.

Incl 5

Inclousure 6 - to Combat After Action Report - Operation Apache Snow

SUBJECT: COMMUNICATIONS EMPLOYMENT DURING OPERATION "APACHE SNOW".

1. The following FM and Ratt radio nets were employed from Brigade to Division and Subordinate units in support of operation "Apache Snow" and were effective during the entire operation.

NETS	MODE	TYPE EQUIPMENT
Division Command Net	FM Secure	AN/VRC - 46/KY-8
Division Command Net	FM Nonsecure	AN/VRC - 46
Division Intell Net	FM Secure	AN/PRC - 77/KY-38
Division Spt Net 1	Ratt Secure	AN/VSC - 2/K W-7
Brigade Command Net	FM Nonsecure	AN/VRC - 46 (see notel)
Bde Command Ops/Intell	FM Secure	AN/VRC - 46/KY-8
Brigade Admin/Log	FM Nonsecure	AN/VRC - 46/AN/PRC-25

2. VHF communications were employed extensively throughout the entire operation, and was effective. VHF was employed from the following locations

FROM	TO	MODE	TYPE EQUIPMENT
Berchtesgaden	Camp Evans	VHF	AN/GRC - 163
"	FB Currahee	VHF	AN/GRC - 163
"	FB Eagle Nest	VHF	AN/GRC - 163
"	FB Blaze	VHF	AN/GRC - 163/AK/MRC-68
"	Camp Evans	VHF	AN/MRC - 69(See note 2)
"	Camp Eagle	VHF	AN/MRC - 69
Camp Evans	FB Rakkasan	VHF	AN/MRC - 68

3. All other means of communications were employed IAW with the Brigade SOP experiencing no major difficulty.

NOTES

1. Radio Set AN/VRC - 49 (Automatic Retrans) was located at FB Eagles Nest to communicate with units operating from the valley floor of the A Chau Valley.
2. Six (6) channels were strapped over at Camp Eagle to Camp Evans.

Sub 6



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 2D BATTALION, 319TH ARTILLERY  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96383

18 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache Snow

Commanding Officer  
3d Brigade, 101st Airmobile Division  
ATTN: S-3  
APO 96383

1. Mission: Direct support of the 3d Brigade and control of artillery fires in the 3d Brigade Area of Operations.

2. Concept of Operations:

a. Organization of the artillery was as follows:

- (1) 2/319th Arty DS 3d Bde
- (2) B2/11 Arty GSR 101st Abn Div
- (3) C2/11 Arty GSR 101st Abn Div
- (4) A1/83 Arty GSR 101st Abn Div
- (5) C1/83 Arty GSR 101st Abn Div
- (6) 4/77th ARA GSR 2/319th Arty

b. Concept of the operation was to provide artillery coverage with all batteries for all friendly elements as needed.

3. Execution:

a. This Battalion was in DS of the 3d Brigade in the area of operation, the A Shau Valley, during the entire operation, Apache Snow. "B" Battery was the first battery to support Apache Snow when they moved from Camp Evans to Bertchesgarden on 25 April 1969. On 9 May 1969 "A" Battery moved from FSB Blaze to FSB Currahee, and on 8 May 1969 "C" Battery moved from FSB Rakkassan to FSB Airborne, all moved in support of operation Apache Snow. Part of the Battalion TOC moved to FSB Blaze on 25 April 1969, and the complete TOC moved to Eagle's Nest on 10 May 1969. On 13 May 1969 "C" Battery 2/319th Artillery came under mortar and ground attack from the South and Southwest grid 357052 and from the hill to the East. Personnel losses were as follows: 49 WIA's and 13 KIA's and 1 died of wounds later, bring total of KIA's to 14. Equipment losses were as follows: 1 105mm Howitzer destroyed and 1 damaged. Both were replaced the same day. Other equipment losses include:

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(1)	Radio Set, Control AN/GRA-39	3 ea
(2)	Radio Set, AN/PRC-47	1 ea
(3)	Radio Set, AN/PRC-25	3 ea
(4)	Container, Insulated, Thermal	1 ea
(5)	Antenna, RC-292	6 ea
(6)	Launcher, Grenade	1 ea
(7)	Light Set, General Illumination	1 ea
(8)	Computer, M18	1 ea
(9)	Rifle, M16A1	1 ea
(10)	Trailer, $\frac{1}{4}$ Ton	1 ea
(11)	Generator Set 1-5 kw	1 ea
(12)	Headset, 144 C/V	7 ea

Operation Apache Snow ended 2400 hours 8 June 1969. At that time the below listed units in support of Apache Snow were disposed as follows:

- (1) Hq TOC at Eagle's Nest
- (2) A2/319 Arty at FSB Currahee
- (3) B2/319 Arty at FSB Bertchesgarden
- (4) C2/319 Arty at FSB Airborne
- (5) B2/11 Arty at FSB Currahee
- (6) C2/94 Arty at FSB Nancy
- (7) A6/33 Arty at FSB Thor
- (8) C1/83 Arty at FSB Blaze
- (9) A4/77 ARA at Camp Evans

b. Number, type of missions and ammunition expenditures for organic batteries follow:

<u>TYPE OF MISSION</u>	<u>NO OF MISSIONS</u>	CS	HE	WP	ILL	EH	FC	SMK
Confirmed	528	172	1506	250	0	0	0	0
Acquired	1829	0	15974	0	0	0	380	0
Counterbattery	62	0	1116	0	0	0	0	0
Preparation	112	0	1008	603	0	0	0	0
Interdiction	2116	0	10580	0	0	0	0	0
Special Purpose	643	0	3858	542	627	0	0	216
ARVN, CIDG	11	0	3408	0	42	0	0	0
Registration	79	0	948	0	0	0	0	0
Other	202	0	1818	0	0	30	0	0

4. Analysis: The operation was a success from the artillery point of view. The effect of H&I fires as a deterrent cannot be determined since results are normally unobtainable. Enemy rocket and ground attacks, such as the "G"

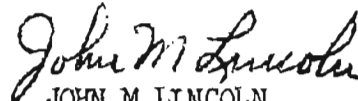
D/A Hq 2/319 FA 101st Abn Div

18 June 1969

SUB LTR: Combat Opns After Action Report, Apache Snow

Battery incident, have made it necessary for the artillery to respond quickly. This type of response has proven to be very effective against such attacks on Fire Support Bases in the Brigade AO.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



JOHN M LINCOLN

CPT, FA

Adjutant

## Tactical Air Support (Operation Apache Snow)

### 1. Mission:

The mission of the 3d Bde, 101 Abn ~~USAF Tactical Air Control~~ Party to Operation Apache Snow can be divided into 5 phases:

- a. Pre-operation reconnaissance, mapping, and intelligence gathering.
- b. Advising the Brigade concerning the best use of Tactical Airpower (TAC Air).
- c. Planning and coordinating the Tactical Airpower employment for D-Day.
- d. Controlling airstrikes in support of the ground elements.
- e. Visual reconnaissance during the operation.

2. Concept of Operation: TAC Air would be used prior to D-Day to VR known enemy routes, cut trails and roads in the A Shau Valley floor, and prepare LZ's for future use. After D-Day, constant FAC coverage would provide immediate coverage for units in contact with the ability to rapidly direct already airborne TAC Air for additional destructive power on heavily defended enemy emplacements.

a. The pre-operation reconnaissance program was initiated approximately one month prior to D-Day. It consisted primarily of working with the Brigade S-2 in mapping enemy trails and probable enemy locations. Another important part of this phase consisted of taking the Brigade and Battalion Commanders and key staff members on flights over the area of operation, thus allowing them to become familiar with their areas before D-Day.

b. The advice of the ALO and FAC's was sought concerning the most probable areas of enemy concentration, the best locations for LZ's and the best way of using TAC Air in preparing LZ's, covering the insertions, and supporting troops in contact.

### 3. Execution:

#### STATISTICAL SUMMARY

Date	FAC Sorties	<del>Sorties</del>	Bombs (lbs)	Napalm (lbs)
10 May	8	<del>27</del>	118,500	29,500
11	6	14	119,000	21,000
12	4	16	118,500	16,500
13	6	16	85,000	15,000
14	4	15	103,000	16,000
15	5	13	99,500	14,000

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Tactical Air Support (Operation Apache Snow)

Date	FAC Sorties	Airstrikes	Bombs (lbs)	Napalm (lbs)
16	3	12	106,000	12,000
17	5	14	115,000	17,500
18	5	12	48,000	28,000
19	4	17	123,000	17,000
20	4	16	81,000	24,000
21	4	11	92,000	5,000
22	3	8	43,000	11,000
23	3	15	61,000	17,500
24	4	7	96,000	5,000
25	4	13	75,000	6,000
26	4	9	59,000	4,500
27	0	0	0	0
28	4	0	0	0
29	4	0	0	0
30	3	2	11,000	2,000
31	3	4	36,000	0
1 June	2	3	13,000	6,000
2	4	3	22,000	0
3	4	10	58,000	15,000
4	3	5	40,000	0
5	2	8	72,000	0
6	4	10	76,000	3,000
7	3	7	66,500	0
29 Days	112 Sorties	287 Airstrikes	1,937,000	285,500

NOTE: These figures include only those airstrikes actually controlled by this TACP. They do not include those controlled by the ARVN TACP in support of the ARVN portion of Operation Apache Snow. Nor do they include Arclights or Combat skyspots.

NOTE: 27, 28, and 29 May were bad weather days, requiring all TAC Air to be controlled by Combat skyspot. 27 May through 2 June were also bad weather days, requiring most of the TAC Air to be controlled by combat skyspot.

BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT  
TOTALS FOR APACHE SNOW

Killed by Air	102
Secondary Explosions	81
Secondary Fires	52
Fortifications Destroyed	332
Military Structures Destroyed	47
Crew-Served weapons positions Destroyed	4
Road Cuts	7

## Tactical Air Support (Operation Apache Snow)

### 4. Analysis:

a. The Brigade AIO did considerable planning and coordinating with the Brigade and division staffs, the 101st Division AIO, the ARVN AIO, and the Direct Air Support Center. This involved planning the ordnance load, timing, controlling, entry and exit routes and altitudes, and holding locations and altitudes of 32 airstrikes on D-Day. This planning and coordination resulted in an extremely smooth, orderly, effective, and accident - free TAC Air operation on D-Day.

b. An important part of this TACP's contribution to the success of Operation Apache Snow was the day-to-day controlling of airstrikes in support of the ground commanders. Airstrikes played an especially important part in the Battle of Dong Ap Bia. Seldom in this or any other conflict has TAC Air been employed so massively as in the Battle of Dong Ap Bia.

c. When not busy controlling airstrikes the Forward Air Controllers conducted extensive visual reconnaissance of the area of operation and possible routes of enemy resupply or retreat. Although the area is not conducive to effective visual reconnaissance due to the thick jungle canopy, an enemy road used for resupply was detected and partially interdicted.

### 5. Lessons Learned

a. The absolute necessity of precise, detailed planning and coordination for large operations like the prepping of LZ's and the aircapping of the insertions of D-Day. The simultaneous prepping and aircapping of several LZ's in close proximity to each other, in different AO's, controlled by several FAC's from different TACP's and using different frequencies, along with the intense artillery fire and multitude of helicopters in the area all combined to present an excellent opportunity for mid-air collisions, short rounds, or some other disaster. Only by very detailed planning and coordination was this potential disaster turned into a smooth, efficient demonstration of air power.

b. The selection and construction of LZ's. All units had good LZ's because the sites selected were on relatively level terrain that was originally covered by scrub brush or elephant grass. These LZ sites were selected after several futile attempts were made at constructing LZ's on karst pinnacles or uncracked ridges covered with triple canopy jungle. The Daisy Cutter bombs (1000 lbs with fuse extensions) used for LZ construction easily clear out the scrub brush and elephant grass. However, it takes many airstrikes and a great deal of time to construct an LZ on a jungle-covered mountain top; first, because the mountain top is extremely difficult to hit, and second, because more hits are required to clear out the dense jungle. The

## Tactical Air Support (Operation Apache Snow)

experiences of this operation seem to indicate that in the future the process of LZ selection, where TAC Air construction is required, should be more of a compromise between the highest ground, which is naturally desirable, and the more level ground, which is more practical to construct.

c. Use of fire power to dislodge the enemy from deeply bunkered, heavily protected positions, such as were encountered on Dong Ap Bia Mountain. Although the usual ordnance for a troops-in-contact airstrike (500 pound bombs and napalm) does destroy some fortified positions and produce many casualties, it is not sufficient to dislodge a determined enemy from really heavily protected bunkers. It would seem that the best way to accomplish the task would be for the friendly troops to draw back to safe positions and thoroughly cover the enemy positions with large (at least 1000 pounders) bombs with delayed (at least .025 second) fuses. The larger the bomb and the more delay, up to 1 second, the better.

*Christopher Bowen*  
CHRISTOPHER BOWEN, Major, USAF  
Air Liaison Officer

BATTLE OF DONG AP BIA - HILL 937 10 - 21 May 1969

The battle to defeat the 29th NVA Regiment dug in on the slopes and summit of Dong Ap Bia Mountain was the most intense and brutal conflict entered into by the 3d Bde 101st Abn Div since its arrival in the Republic of Vietnam in December 1967. "Hamburger Hill" as Dong Ap Bia has come to be called, was captured in the traditional Infantry manner, by assault. That this victory was obtained with so few allied casualties can be attributed to the teamwork and near-perfect coordination between ARVN & US, as well as US Air Force, Artillery, Aviation and the Infantry. The battle of "Hamburger Hill" is characterized in the words of the motto of the Third Brigade, "Ready to Move, Ready to Fight," Airborne!

Incl 9



HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG

24 May 1969

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: Summary of Action and Results

1. The initial assault on Dong Ap Bia, as part of the 101st Airborne Division participation in Operation Apache Snow, was made by the 3-187th Infantry into an LZ 1 kilometer northwest of Dong Ap Bia.
2. The movement toward Dong Ap Bia immediately encountered well dug in enemy who fought hard to prevent penetration of his base area. The enemy appeared to be well dressed and was well supplied with weapons and ammunition. He made good use of his concentric rings of fortified positions and employed RPG and automatic weapons extensively.
3. Between 10 and 16 May 1969, the 3-187th Infantry employed heavy TAC Air and artillery fires to reduce the enemy positions and clear away the jungle undergrowth. They then maneuvered their forces to apply further pressure on the enemy and cause him to dispose his forces to additional air strikes and artillery fires. From all indications, the enemy was reinforcing his positions nightly from Laos. By 15 May, after a week of heavy close-in fighting, the enemy complex on Dong Ap Bia was well developed and an additional Battalion (1-506 Inf) maneuvered towards Hill 937 from the southwest. On 19 May 1969, the 2-501st Infantry and the 2-3rd ARVN were deployed into the area to apply pressure from all sides. On 20 May, after further artillery and tactical air strikes the battalion's objectives were secured astride Dong Ap Bia ridge.
4. During the operation two enemy battalions (7th and 8th) of the 29th NVA Regiment were identified from captured documents found in the area and it appears that regimental and other supporting units (Anti-aircraft, heavy weapons and engineer) were also involved. These units had not been identified in-country since the fall of 1968 and it appears that they had just recently returned, presumably to increase enemy military activity in Thua Thien Province. Confirmed total body count of 630 enemy killed accounts for about one-half of the total enemy force. In addition to these confirmed enemy killed, there were substantial enemy casualties which could not be counted directly, but which significantly reduce the effectiveness of the Regiment. A PW stated that only 20% of the two companies with which he was familiar survived the Allied attack. In addition to enemy casualties, a major base area was neutralized and significant quantities of enemy supplies were captured including 17 weapons.

Incl 9 Tab A

DECLASSIFIED

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Summary of Action and Results

5. The effectiveness with which fire power and maneuver were combined is shown by the 10 to 1 enemy to friendly kill ratio that was achieved despite the rugged terrain, dense vegetation and the enemy's use of prepared positions. B-52 strikes and tactical air strikes were placed on bases and infiltration routes to inflict further casualties on enemy forces attempting to reinforce or escape from the Dong Ap Bia area.

6. As a result of his losses, it is estimated that two enemy battalions involved in this operation are no longer combat effective and that the ability of the newly arrived 29th NVA Regiment to conduct offensive operations in the immediate future has been severely limited. Thus, a major threat to Thua Thien Province has been removed.

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: Description of Operation vic Dong Ap Bia

1. ( ) BACKGROUND

a. XXIV Corps Operation APACHE SNOW was directed at enemy forces, bases and lines of communications in and adjacent to the Northern A Chau Valley. As part of this operation, the 101st Airborne Division in coordination and cooperation with the 1st ARVN Division conducted a multi-battalion combat assault into LZ's adjacent to the Laotian border on 10-11 May 1969. Four fire bases were either constructed or expanded to support the operation.

b. By the evening of 9 May the Division was in a posture to launch an airmobile assault the next day. Ten artillery batteries(-) and necessary troops were positioned at FB's Bradley (YD273123), Airborne (YD355071), Currahee (YC398949), Bergtesgaden (YD424011), and Cannon (YD474028). Units participating in the combat assault had marshalled their forces in the vicinity of FB Blaze (YD536020). At 0730 hours, 10 May the 101st Airborne Division and the 1st ARVN Division commenced a four battalion combat assault into selected LZ's utilizing 65 UH1H helicopters. The combat assault onto each LZ was preceded by a seventy minute TAC air and artillery preparation with final suppressive fires provided by air cav gunships and ARA. Simultaneously two ARVN battalions which had been prepositioned on 9 May conducted reconnaissance in force operations north and south of the general area selected for the combat assault. At 1230 hours one ARVN company combat assaulted onto FB Turnage (YD252090) followed by a 105 artillery battery in order to be in position to support the combat assault of the 3/1st ARVN Battalion on the 11th. All LZ's were green and light resistance was encountered the first day. The combat assault was a success - the element of surprise had been achieved and not a single aircraft was destroyed by enemy ground fire during the assault phase.

c. As part of the overall operation, the area in the vicinity of Dong Ap Bia - Hill 937 (YC328982) was selected as one of the areas to be searched following the initial combat assault. Intelligence gathered throughout April and early May 1969 indicated enemy possible enemy presence in this area throughout April and early May 1969, and SLAR readings indicated a pattern of west to east movement in the area throughout April 1969. Additionally, VR's in late March and mid-April revealed signs of trail activity in the vicinity of Hill 937. Accordingly,

Tab B

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Description of Operation vic Dong Ap Bia

the 3-187th Infantry combat assaulted into an LZ approximately one kilometer northwest of Hill 937 with the intention of moving southeast from the border area towards the hill. The 1-506th Infantry landed approximately four kilometers southwest of Hill 937 and initially conducted RIF operations southwest of the hill.

d. The Dong Ap Bia complex is a prominent line of ridges running southwest-northeast overlooking an east-west valley approach to A Luoi and the northern A Shau Valley. Additionally this ridge sits astride a major trail network that supports the infiltration of enemy supplies and personnel into RVN. The most prominent feature of the Ap Bia ridge is the saddle between hill 916 on the southwest end and hill 937 on the northeast. The area is covered with multi-canopy jungle and thick undergrowth, and movement over the steep slopes was extremely difficult. Except for frequent afternoon thundershowers, the weather was clear and suitable for supporting air operations.

2. (C) NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION OF ACTION AROUND AP BIA - HILL 937 (10-24 May 69).

The 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division initiated Operation APACHE SNOW in coordination and cooperation with the 1st 3d Regiments of the 1st ARVN Division to block enemy escape into LAOS along Route 922 and to interdict Route 548; and to conduct RIF operations in zone to destroy enemy forces and caches. This narrative is concerned with a small segment of that operation but one that was to prove to be the most significant -- attack of the Dong Ap Bia Ridge. (Sketches depicting this action are appended at the end of the following narrative).

a. On 100844H May 1969, the 3-187th Infantry combat assaulted into an LZ in the vicinity of YC314988 just west of Dong Ap Bia. D/3-187 immediately made contact with an unknown size enemy force. Approximately two hours later while moving from the LZ, B/3-187 made contact, returned fire and killed two NVA. Initial impressions were that the NVA were probably trail watchers, but after sustaining three wounded the battalion concluded that the firing was too well controlled and that stiffer resistance might be encountered. (The following morning 2 more bodies were found in the underbrush.)

b. On 11 May, the 3-187th placed artillery and TAC air on a large bunker complex located astride their axis of advance. RIF operations followed the strikes as the 3-187th moved to the southeast toward Hill 937. While searching the hut and bunker complex, the 3-187th found 5 NVA bodies killed by the artillery/TAC air preparation. A significant discovery in the area was a group of documents identifying the unit as the 29th NVA Regiment. The documents showed that the 29th NVA Regiment had returned from North Vietnam in April and had been conducting reconnaissance operations between BA 611 in Laos and Route 548 in the A Shau Valley.

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Description of Operation vic Dong Ap Bia

c. On 12 May the 3-187th continued their push along the rough, canopied ridges. By 0905H they made heavy contact with a well disciplined force estimated at two companies dug in about 200 meters to their front. They maneuvered against the force and killed 3 NVA. The battalion called in ARA and artillery fire in order to dislodge the enemy from his fortified position. The enemy held fast, however, and throughout the day the 3-187th received heavy automatic weapons and RPG fire and limited mortar fire. Heavy TAC air and artillery fires were placed on the enemy positions.

d. The situation remained unchanged on 13 May as the enemy stayed in bunkers and employed small arms, RPG, automatic weapons and mortars against maneuvering elements of the 187th. The 3-187th returned fire and employed additional artillery and tactical air.

e. On the morning of the 14th B, C, and D companies of the 3-187th once again began the slow and deliberate maneuver under artillery, TAC air and gunship support. Under this heavy attack the enemy fell back. Contact terminated about 1700 and the 187th swept the bunker area to find 13 NVA killed in action by artillery, 47 NVA killed by small arms fire and 29 killed by air strikes.

f. The 187th continued its drive along the ridges to Hill 937 on the morning of 15 May. As the line companies maneuvered toward their objective they discovered 14 NVA bodies from the previous day's contact. By 1500H they were in heavy contact and realized the force was more than a normal NVA battalion size element. Rates of fire were extremely heavy and the enemy troops skillfully employed command detonated claymores in large quantities. Enemy reinforcements were being brought into the contact zone, the new troops had fresh haircuts, clean uniforms, and new weapons. The enemy was deployed in concentric rows of bunkers which afforded maximum utilization of the terrain available. The intense bunker to bunker fighting left 62 more NVA dead and the 1-506 Infantry was directed to move north to reinforce the 3-187th in order to take Hill 937.

g. At 160110H May C/3-187th Infantry began receiving grenades, satchel charges, and small arms fire on their position. Spooky (Air Force C47 flare ship with mini-guns) was employed from 0200-0600 resulting in three secondary explosions. A first light check revealed 14 NVA killed. The 1-506th was maneuvering north to effect its link-up with the 187th when it received heavy fire from Hill 916 (IC3196). The 1-506th continued their movement toward the 187th with the support of air strikes.

h. On 17 May, the 187th occupied an overwatch position and directed CS gas strikes. The 1-506th continued to maneuver to reinforce the 187th. Although the enemy had gas masks, the CS attacks were effective and caused him to leave some of his bunkers.

AVDG-CA-E

SUBJECT: Description of Operation vic Dong Ap Bia

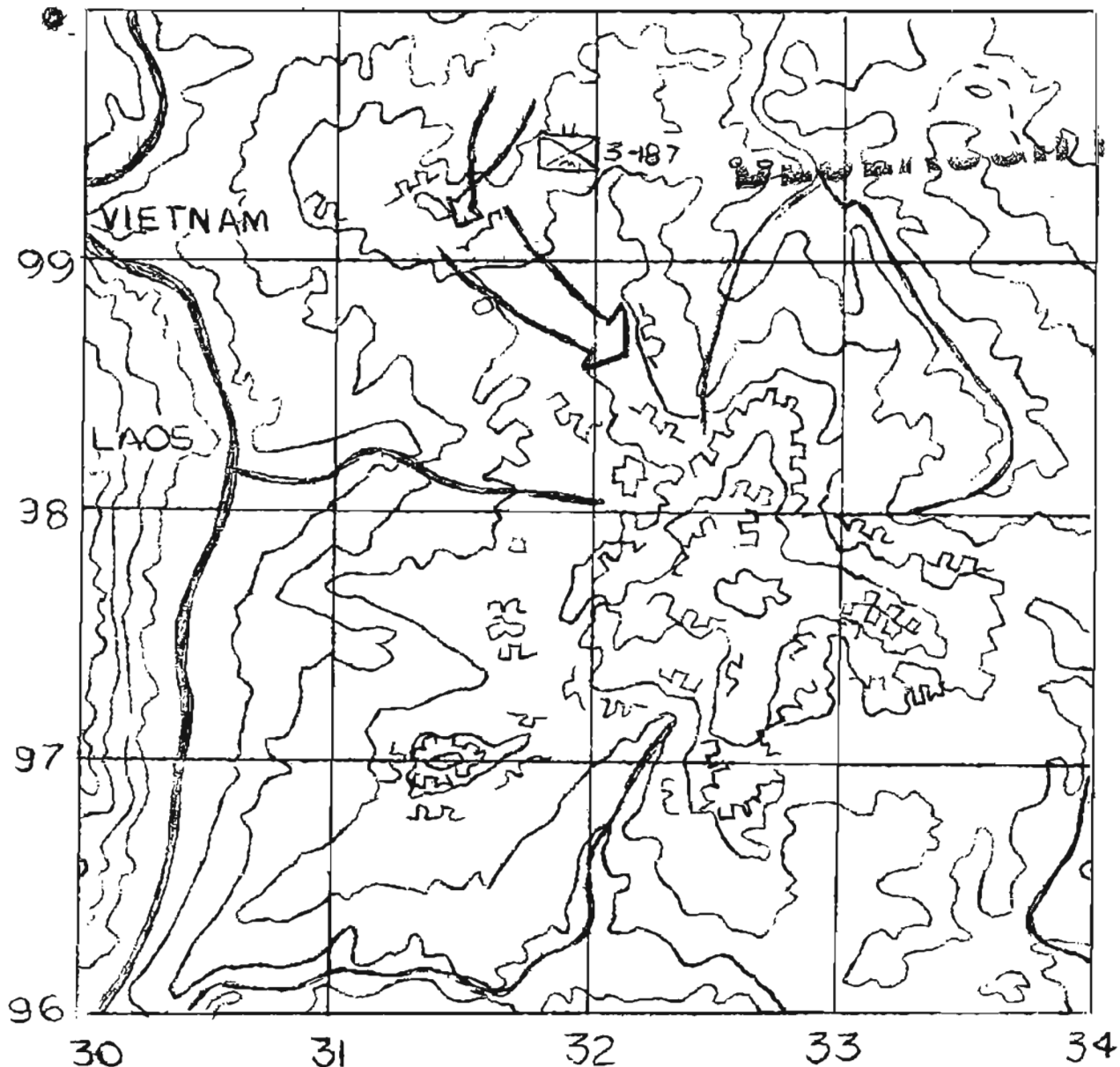
i. By 180715H May B/1-506th Inf began closing on the southern base of Hill 937. A and C/1-506th Inf closed in on either flank. At 1930H the 3-187th Inf having been under continuous fire, took up positions NW of Hill 937. Artillery, TAC air, ARA and gunships then proceeded to pound the hill. A/2-506th Inf was alerted and deployed to FB Blaze (IC5302) to be available if required.

j. On the morning of 19 May, with the 1-506th Inf on the south and the 3-187th Inf on the north, the enemy positions were subjected to continuous artillery and TAC air fires. The 2-501st Inf and the 2/3d ARVN were alerted to prepare to assist in the final sweep of the enemy's fortified positions surrounding the entire ridge line. By late afternoon an additional 175 enemy bodies had been accounted for.

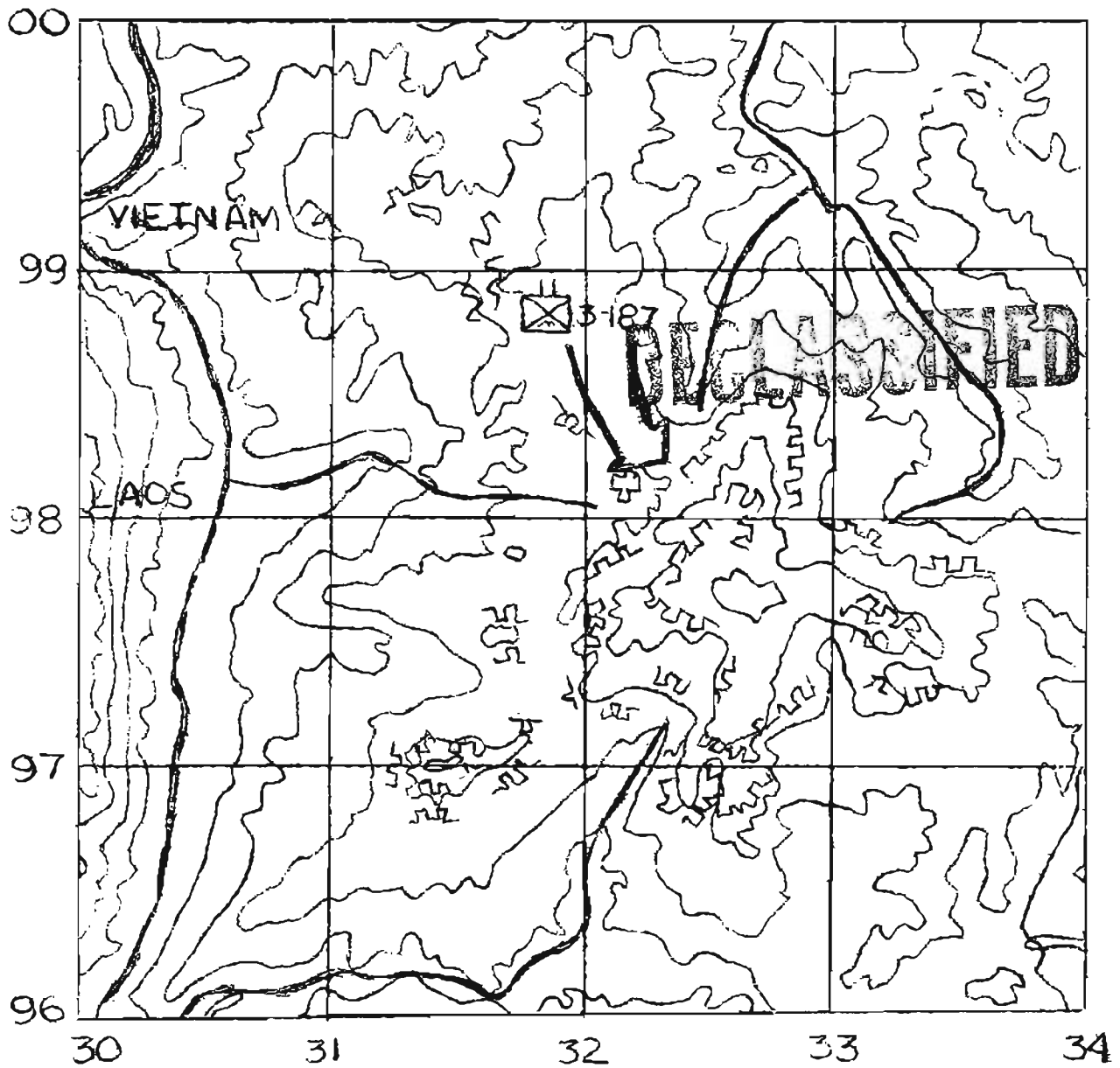
k. Late in the morning of 20 May, 4 battalions executed a coordinated assault on Hill 937. The 3-187th Inf, with A/2-506th Inf attached, assaulted the hill from the north; the 1-506th Inf from the south and southwest; the 2/3d ARVN from the southeast; and the 2-501st Inf from the northeast. The 3-187th swept up the hill from the north, while the 1-506th and the 2-501st blocked possible routes of escape. The 2/3d ARVN moved onto Hill 937 from the south. By 1200 hours battalion objectives on the Dong Ap Bia Ridge were taken. The determined enemy resistance disintegrated as friendly forces overran enemy positions resulting in a total body count for 20 May 109.

l. On 21 May 1969 allied forces swept over the hill to check the enemy base area in detail. After ten days of hard fighting the 3-187th Infantry had earned a well deserved rest and returned to the coastal plains. The 1-506th Inf secured the abandoned enemy positions while the 2-501st Inf conducted RIF operations to the west. The 2/3d ARVN conducted RIF operations to the east. Friendly reconnaissance of the area encountered only isolated and sporadic resistance. An additional 59 enemy killed were discovered and 89 weapons were captured.

m. The Dong Ap Bia operation cost the enemy a total of 630 NVA KIA. In addition to these confirmed casualties, a PW captured during the operation indicated that 80% of the units in his area were casualties. On 22 May the 2-501st Inf and the 2/3d ARVN continued search operations in the vicinity of Hill 937, accounting for 77 NVA killed and 3 crew served weapons captured. The search operation continued on the 23d of May with the 1-506th Inf finding 10 more NVA bodies and the 2-501st Inf finding 3 bodies. On 24 May the 1-506th Inf discovered 51 individual weapons and the 2-501st Inf found 1 NVA KIA.



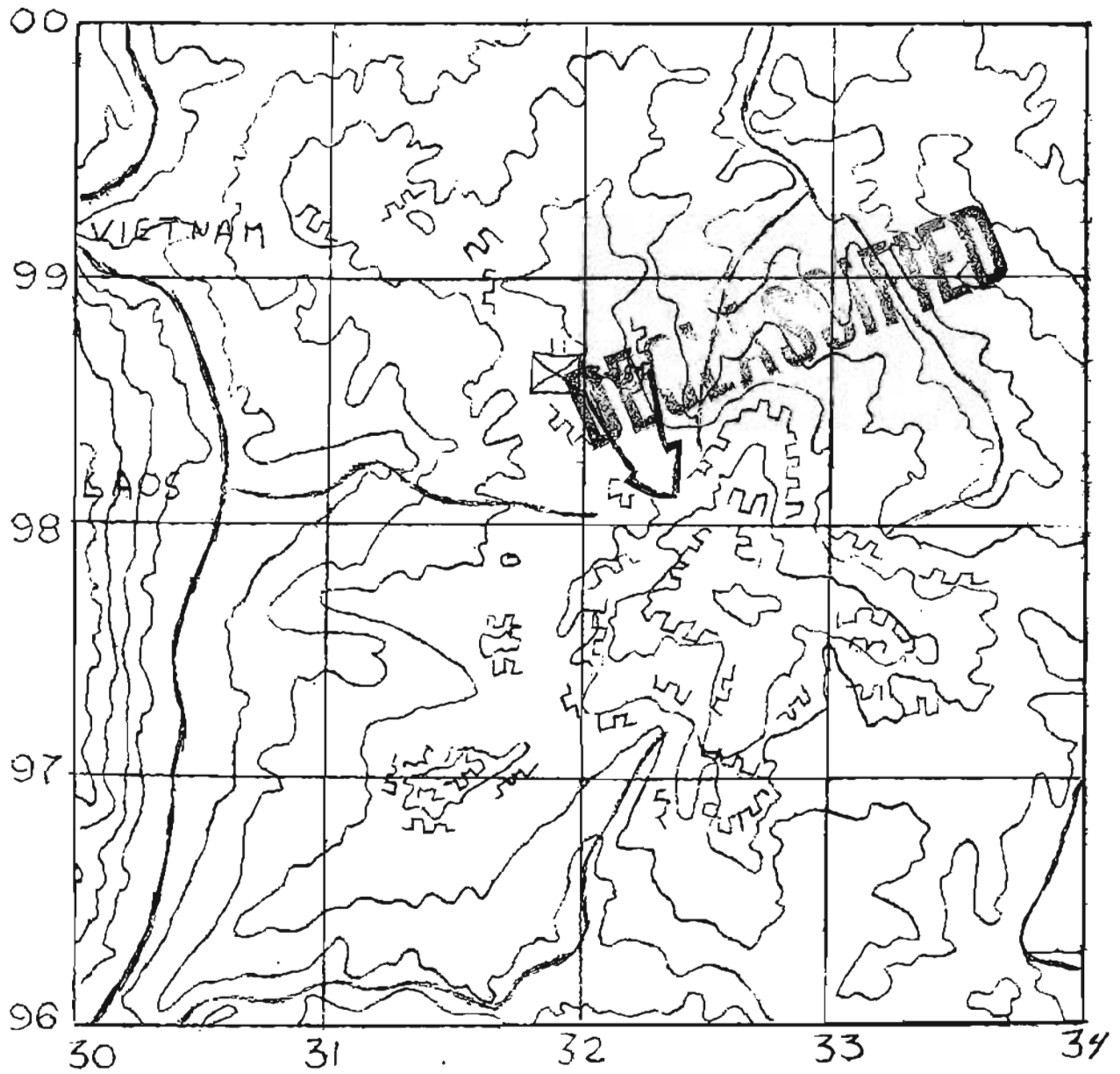
DONG AP BIA  
SITUATION 10 MAY 1969



DONG AP BIA

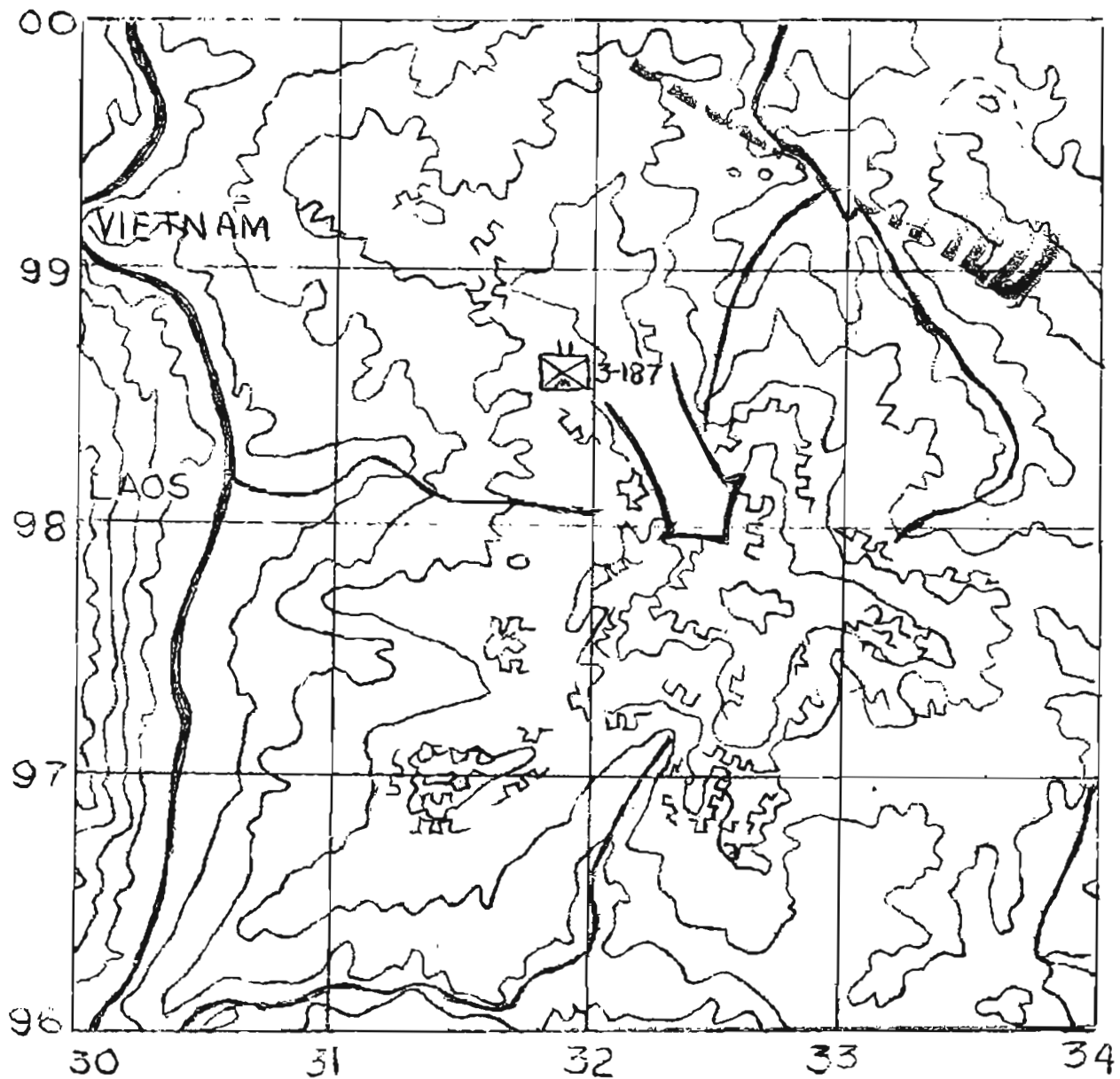
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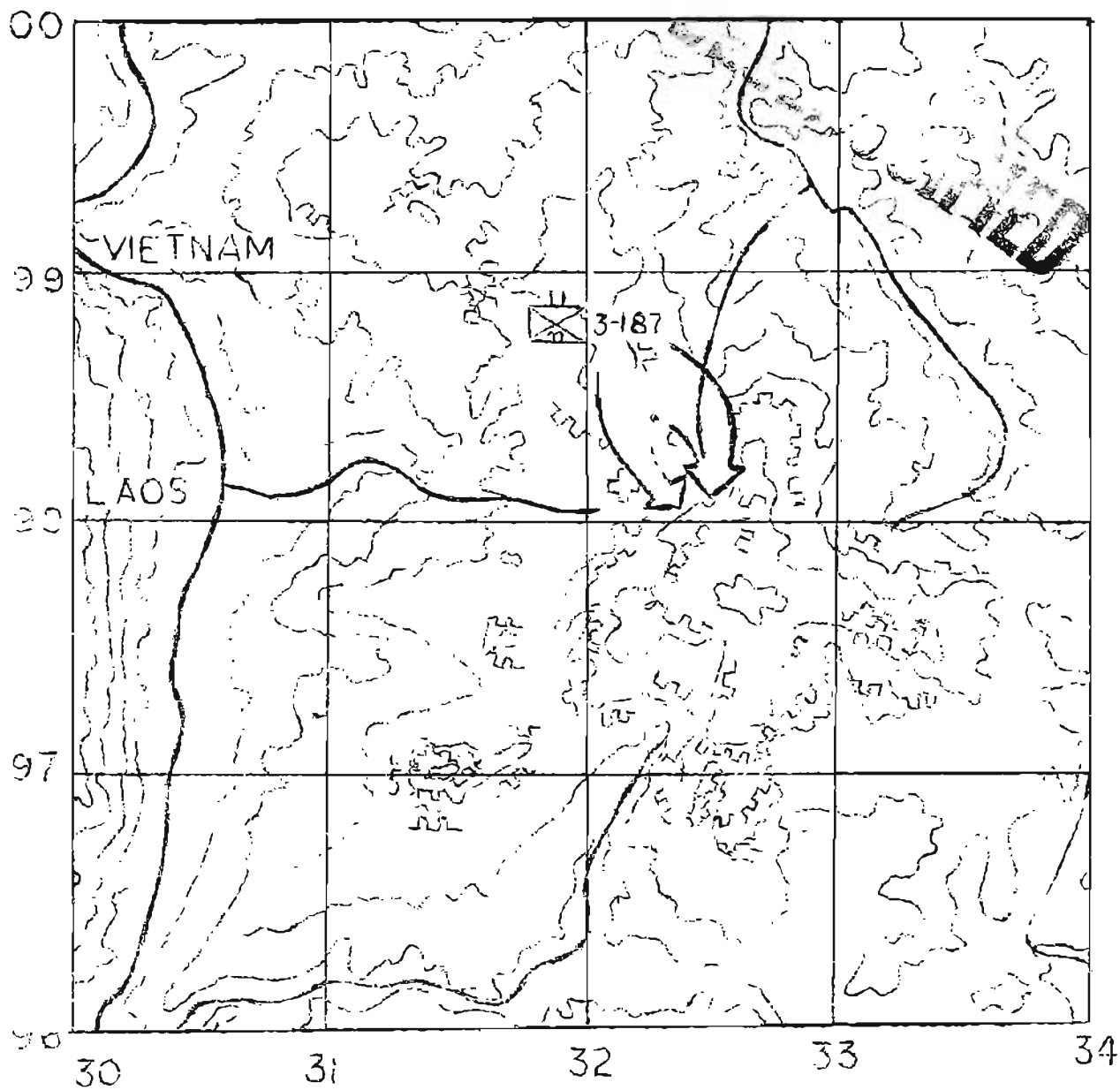


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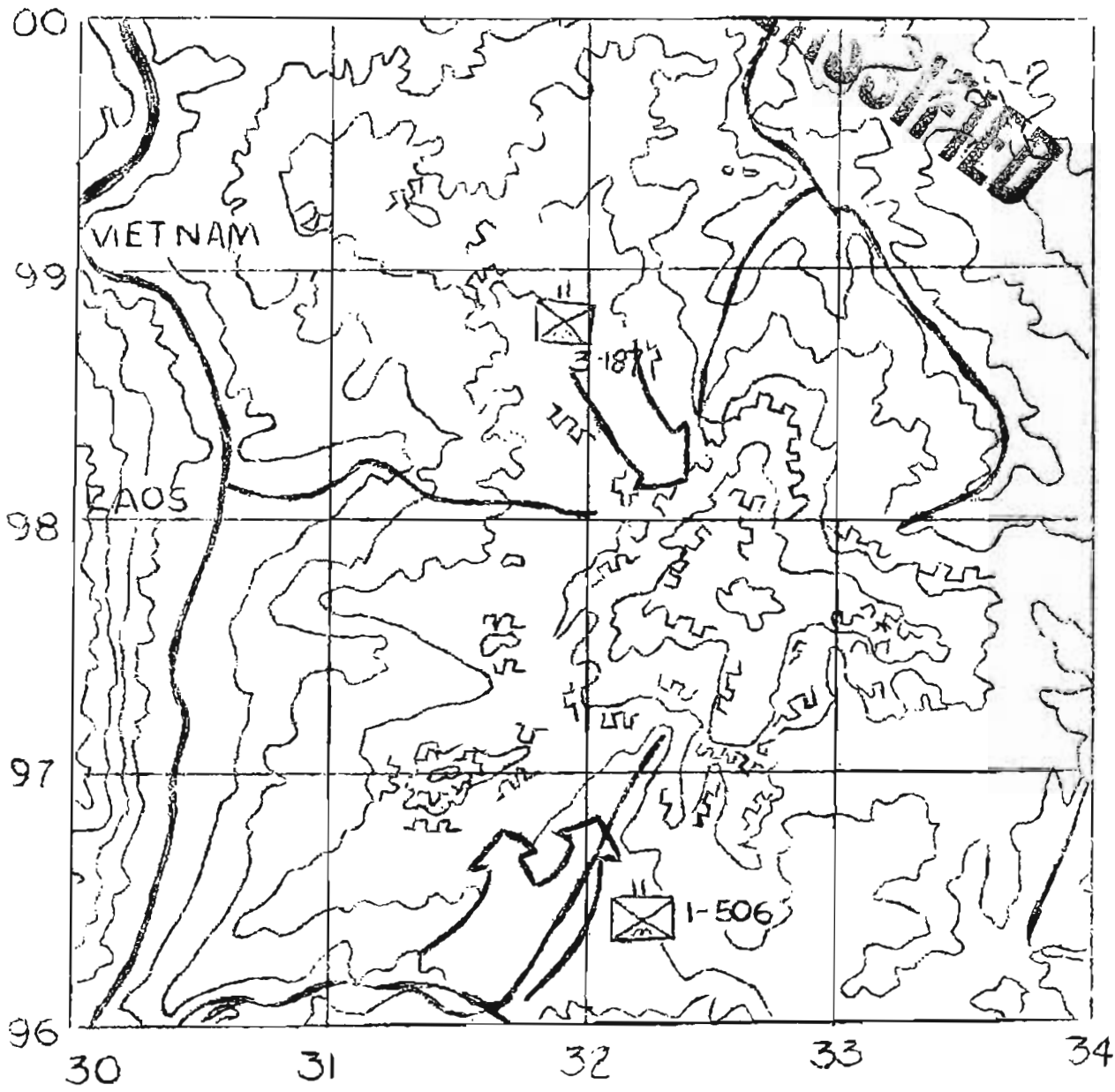


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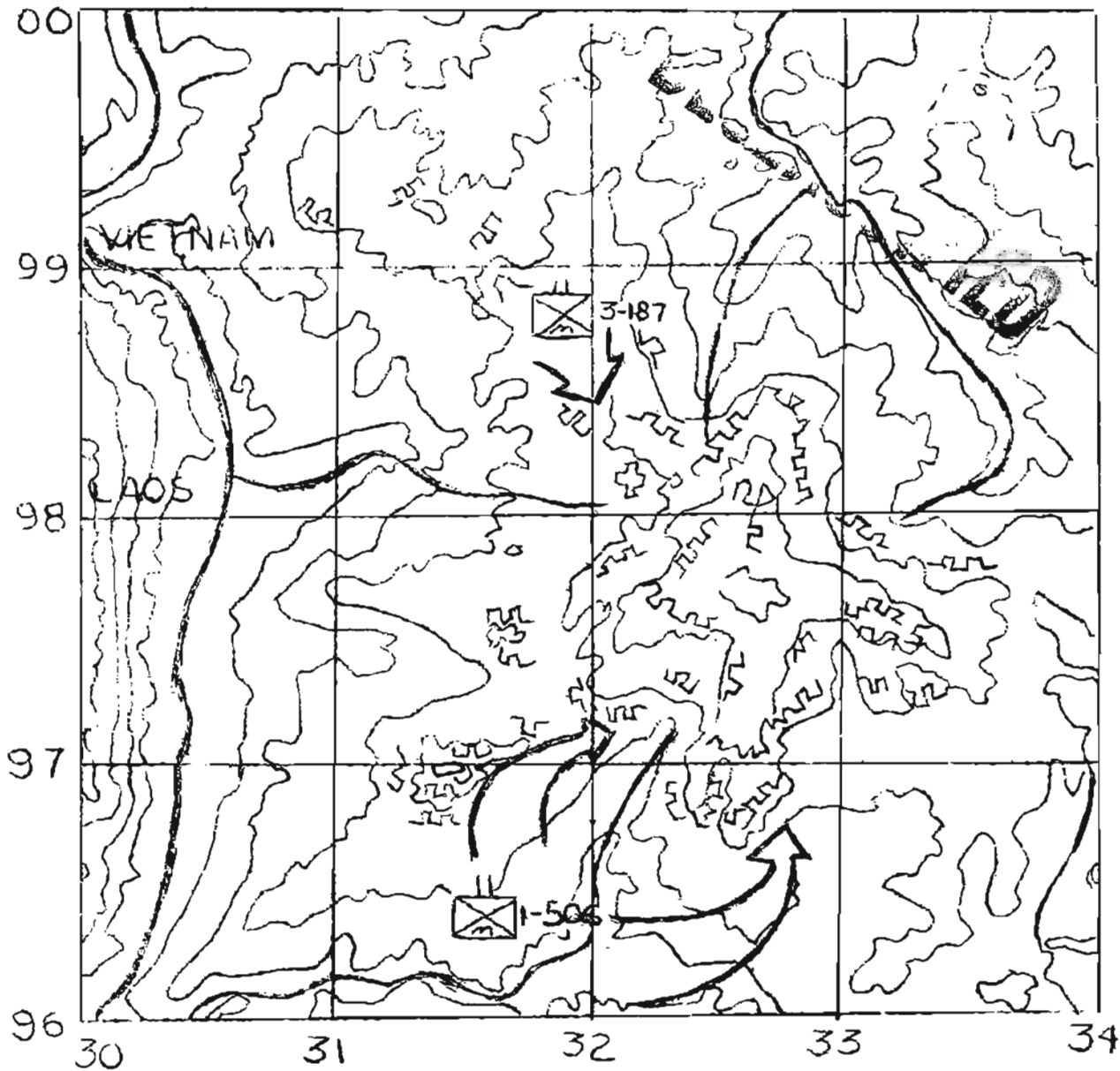
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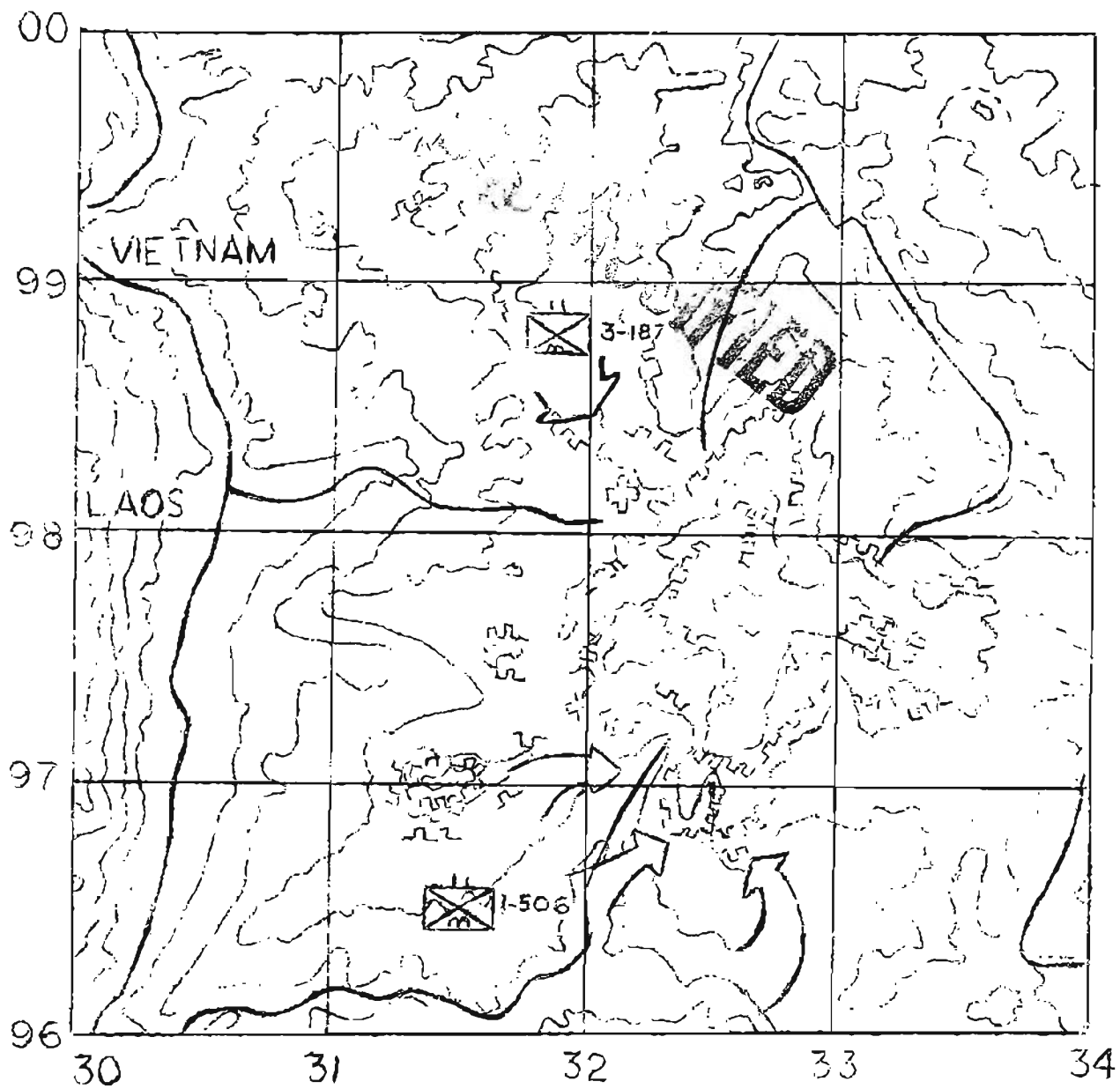


DONG AP BIA

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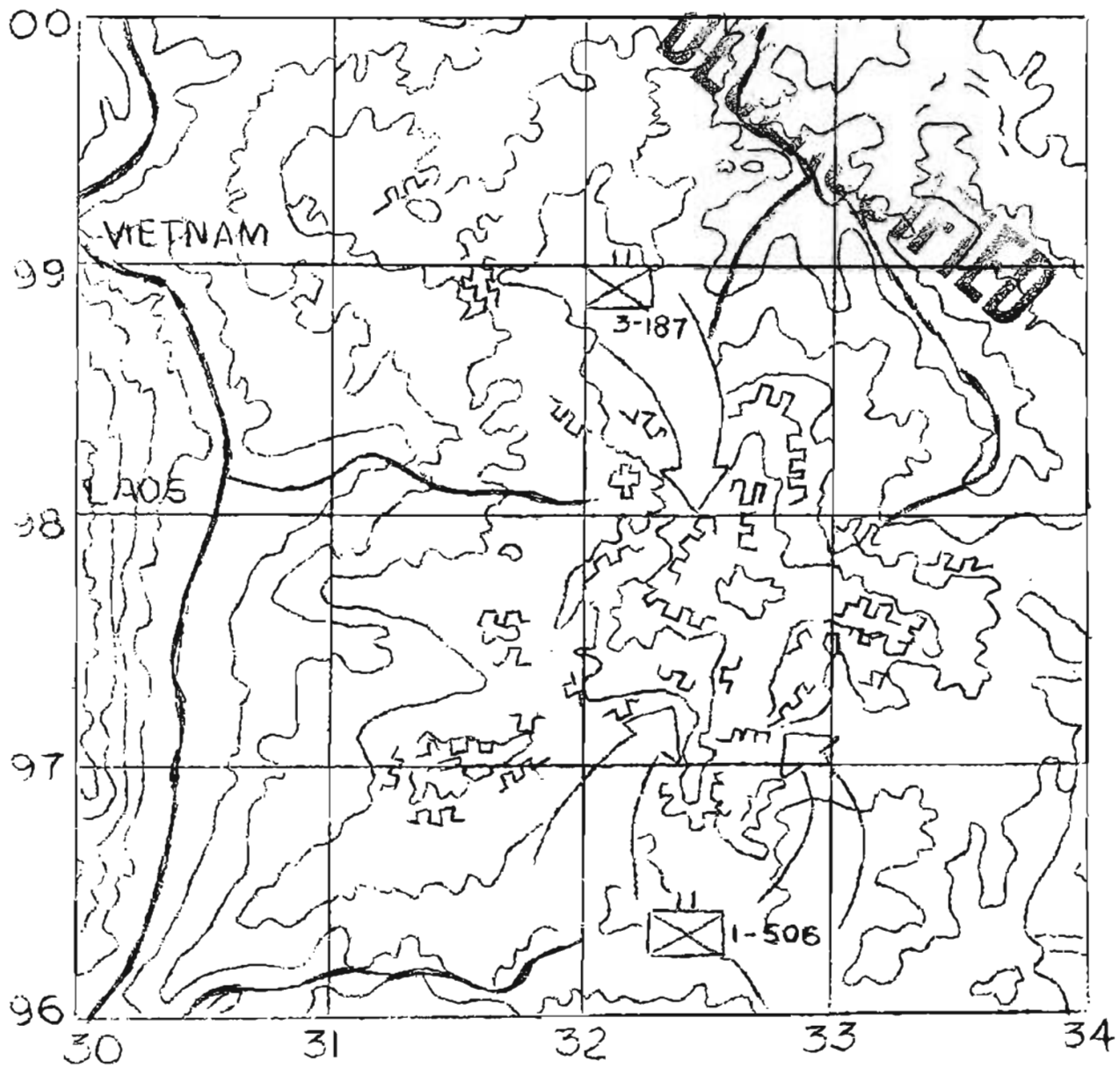


DONG AP BIA  
SITUATION 16 MAY 1969

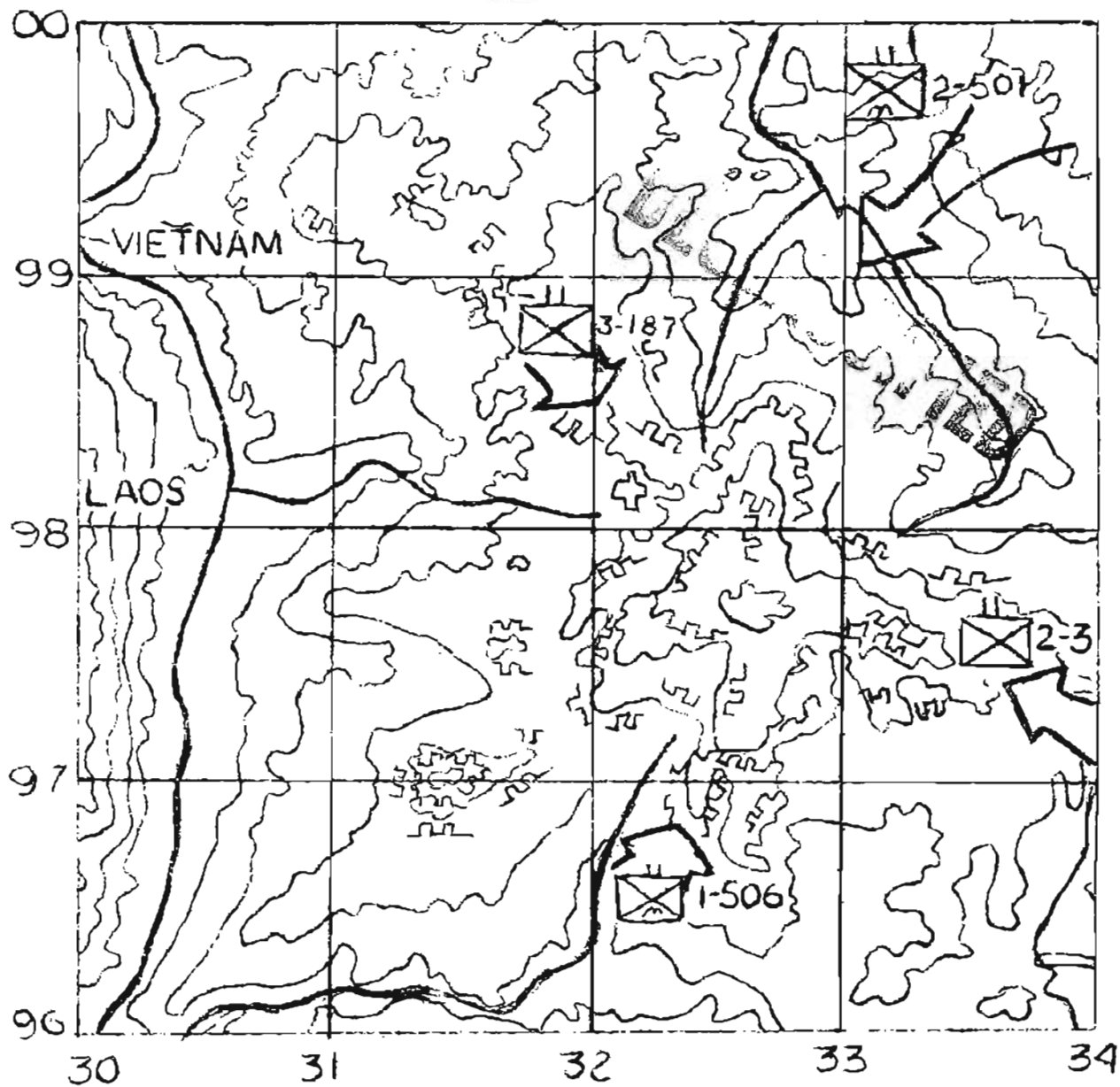


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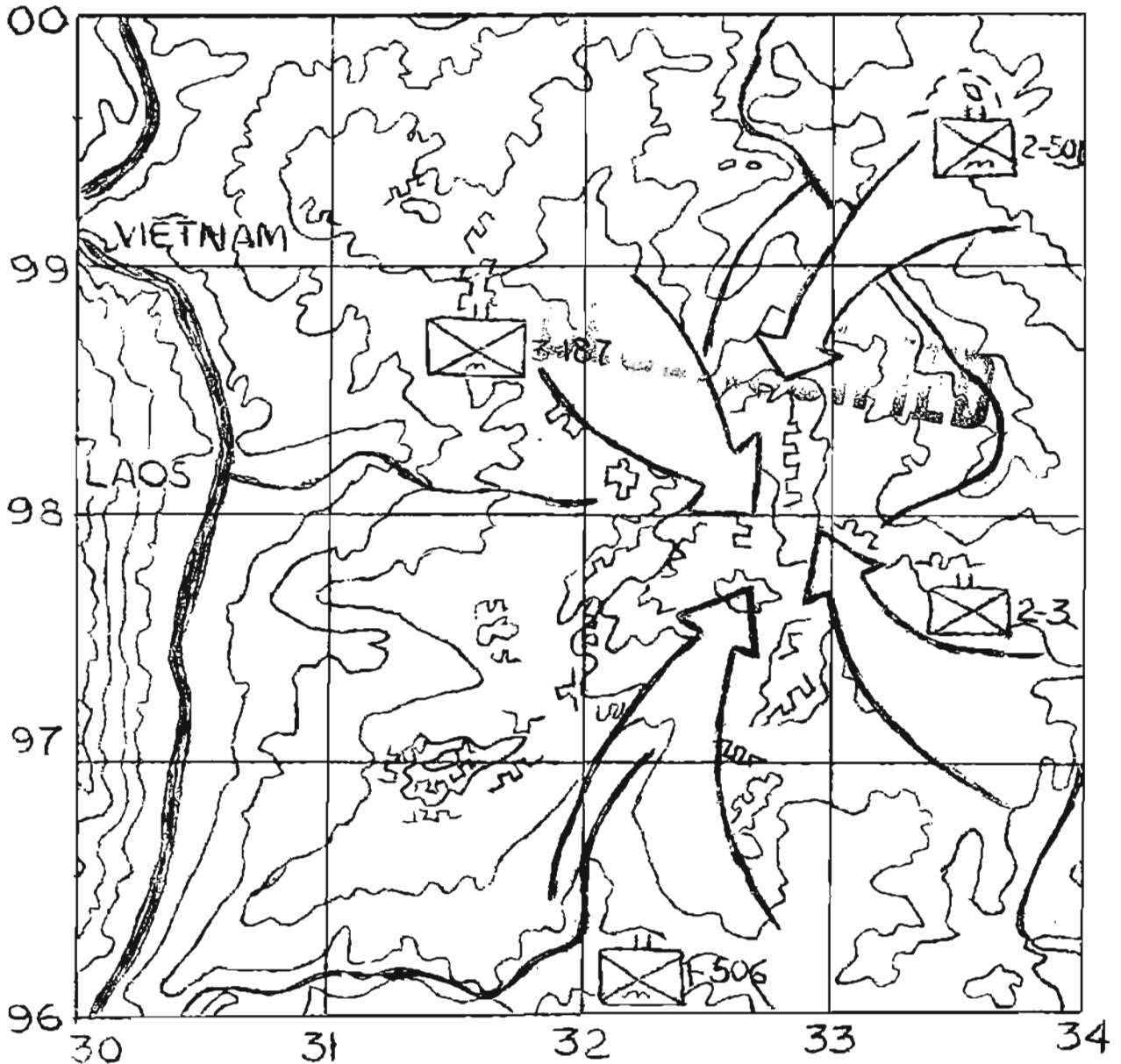
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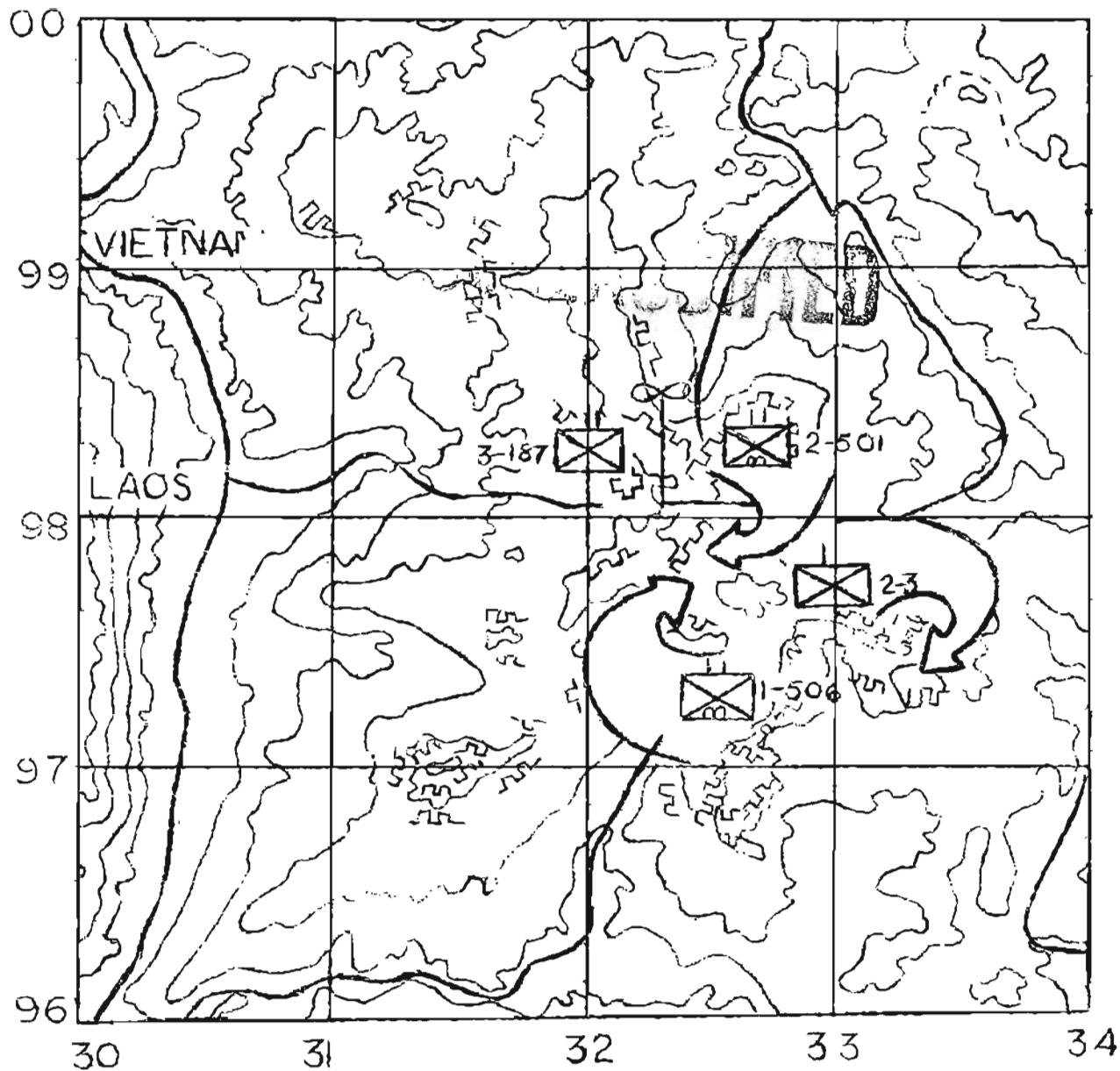
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DONG AP BIA

SITUATION 20 MAY 1969



DONG AP BIA

SITUATION 21 MAY 1969

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
 Office of the Commanding General  
 APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG

24 May 1969

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: Enemy Losses- Dong Ap Bia

DATE	3-187	1-506	2-501	2-3 ARVN	2-17 Cav	TAC AIR	TOTAL
10 May	2				1		3
11 May	5						5
12 May	3						3
13 May							0
14 May	74				2	29	105
15 May	62						62
16 May	14	1					15
17 May	2	1				2	5
18 May	114	11					125
19 May	1	28			2	1	32
20 May	78	13		6		12	109
21 May		46		29			75
22 May		54		16	4	3	77
23 May		10	3				13
24 May			1				1
TOTAL	355	164	4	51	9	47	630

US TOTALS - 579  
 ARVN TOTALS - 51  
 TOTAL - 630

PW - 2 NVA

Tab C-1

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG

24 May 1969

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: Weapons Captured - Dong Ap Bia

	3-187		1-506		2-501		2-3 ARVN		2-17 Cav		TOTAL	
	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>C</u>
10 May	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0
11 May	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	1
12 May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
13 May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
14 May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
15 May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
16 May	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
17 May	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0
18 May	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
19 May	0	0	5	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	4
20 May	0	0	0	0	1	0	3	0	0	0	4	0
21 May	7	1	61	15	3	0	2	1	0	0	73	17
22 May	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	3
23 May	0	0	12	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	12	0
24 May	0	0	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	51	0
TOTAL	12	2	131	20	4	0	5	1	0	2	152	25

I - Individual Weapons

C - Crew Served Weapons

US: 84 & 24, and ARVN: 5 & 1

Tab C-2

AVDG-00

SUBJECT: Ordnance Employed - Dong Ap Bia

ARTILLERY  
Number Rounds Fired

	<u>HE</u>	<u>WP</u>	<u>HC</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
105mm	10,634	517	69	254	11,474
155mm	3,919	94	17	0	4,030
8"	834	0	0	0	834
175mm	253	0	0	0	253
2.75 RKT	<u>2622</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2622</u>
Total	18,262	611	86	254	19,213

POUNDS OF ROUNDS FIRED

	<u>HE</u>	<u>WP</u>	<u>HC</u>	<u>CS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
105mm	356,262	17,475	2,282	8,382	384,901
155mm	372,470	8,854	1,605	0	382,929
8"	166,800	0	0	0	166,800
175mm	37,488	0	0	0	37,488
2.75RKT	<u>53,866</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>53,866</u>
Total	986,886	26,829	3,887	8,382	1,025,984 (513 Tons)

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Ordnance Delivered - Dong ap Bia

ARTILLERY UNITS SUPPORTING DONG AP BIA

A/2-319 Arty (105)

B/2-319 Arty (105)

C/2-319 Arty (105)

B/2-11 Arty (155)

C/2-11 Arty (155)

A/12 Arty (ARVN) (105)

A/1-83 Arty (8")

C/1-83 Arty (175)

4/77th Arty (ARA)

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVIX-CG

FACT SHEET

SUBJECT: Dong Ap Bia

The following is a breakdown of the casualties inflicted on the Infantry elements of the Division during Operation Apache Snow (10 May 69 - 24 May 69) in securing Dong Ap Bia. These figures do not include the casualties sustained at Firebase Airborne.

1. Daily Figures

<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>EVAC</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>RTD</u>	<u>MIA*</u>
10 May	3-187	0	4	0	0	0
11 May	3-187	5	25	17	0	0
12 May	3-187	0	1	1	0	0
13 May	3-187	3	64	8	0	0
14 May	3-187	8	16	6	1	1
15 May	3-187	6	41	16	0	0
16 May	3-187	1	0	0	0	0
	1-506	2	14	0	0	0
TOTAL		3	14	0	0	0
17 May	1-506	6	8	0	0	0
18 May	3-187	12	55	1	1	1
	1-506	5	24	1	2	2
TOTAL		17	79	2	3	3
19 May	1-506	3	18	1	0	0
20 May	3-187	0	49	1	0	0
	1-506	1	15	0	3	3
	2-506	1	11	0	0	0
TOTAL		2	75	1	3	3

Tab C-4

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: Dong Ap Bia

WIA

<u>DATE</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>EVAC</u>	<u>RTD</u>	<u>MIA*</u>	
21 May	3-187	1	0	0	0	
	1-506	$\frac{1}{2}$	5	$\frac{0}{0}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
	TOTAL	2	5	0	0	
22 May	2-501	0	1	0	0	
23 May	1-506	0	7	1	0	
	2-501	$\frac{1}{1}$	$\frac{2}{16}$	$\frac{0}{1}$	$\frac{0}{0}$	
	TOTAL	1	16	1	0	
TOTALS		56	367	420	53	7

2. Unit Figures

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>EVAC</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>RTD</u>	<u>MIA*</u>
a. 3-187	36	255		50	2
b. 1-506	18	91		3	5
c. 2-506	1	11		0	0
d. 2-501	$\frac{1}{56}$	$\frac{10}{367}$		$\frac{0}{53}$	$\frac{0}{7}$
TOTALS	56	367		53	7

\* Personnel still carried in a MIA status are:

\*\* 1-Spl Michael A. Huntley, US56730012, C/3-187 - reported MIA on 14 May.

\*\* 2-Spl Jerry Lovell, US53909978, D/3-187 - reported as MIA on 18 May.

3-Spl Charles Cutlike, US54980437, B/1-506 - reported as MIA on 18 May.

4-Lt Joe P. Conkle, 05352137, B/1-506 - reported as MIA on 18 May.

\*\* 5-Spl Charles Pearce, US54822261, B/1-506 - reported as MIA on 20 May.

\*\* 6-Pfc William W. Smith, US56433088, C/1-506 - reported as MIA on 20 May.

\*\* 7-Pfc Robert E. Goodner, US56433418, C/1-506 - reported as MIA on 20 May.

\*\* Indicates those personnel whose assumed remains have been recovered.

The remains were flown to DaNang 23 and 24 May 69 for positive identification. Final ID is still pending.



HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96333

24 May 1969

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: AP Account of Hill 937 Battle (Published in Washington Newspaper by Jay Scharbutt)

A battle for a mountain along the rugged Laotian frontier stretched into its ninth day Sunday with the United States command claiming 325 North Vietnamese killed.

U.S. losses were put at 37 killed and 209 wounded.

Heavy artillery barrages pounded the 3000 ft. high Dong Ap Bia mountain overlooking the A Shau Valley, after American paratroopers were beaten back with 12 men killed and 79 wounded Sunday in a tense attempt to seize the North Vietnamese fortress.

The US command reported that 125 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed in the 14 hour fight Sunday, but AP correspondent Jay Scharbutt reporting from the mountain said most of the communist losses were estimates by U.S. air observers after massive napalm, bomb and artillery strikes.

The mountain top has been blasted almost bare by artillery, bombs, napalm and rockets, but at last report an estimated 800 North Vietnamese soldiers were still holding out in deep bunkers.

The 3rd Bn, 187th Inf., of the 101st Abn Div. has made it to the top of the mountain three times, but has been driven off each time by a shattering stream of North Vietnamese rocket propelled grenades and machine gun fire.

SP4 Anthony Toll, 20, who has been in nine of the assaults, said, "After all these air and artillery strikes, those gooks (North Vietnamese) are still in there fighting. All of us are wondering why they (the Americans) just can't pull back and B-52 (bomb) the hill. I've lost a lot of buddies up there. Not many guys can take it much longer."

But one Intelligence Officer said, "Look, these Gooks aren't stupid. They know exactly how much damage a B-52 strike does, how deep the bombs blow. They build their bunkers to withstand that. That's what they've done out there."

LTC Weldon Honsycutt, 38, commander of the 3rd Bn, when asked why paratroopers wanted to take the hill replied, "Well, for one thing, it overlooks a good deal of the A Shau Valley. For another, you pull

Tab D-1

AVDG-CG

SUBJECT: AP Account of Hill 937 Battle (Published in Washington  
Newspaper by Jay Scharbutt)

back and Charlie (the North Vietnamese Army) ~~use~~ <sup>use</sup> as hell will follow you  
right down and hit you."

The mountain top fortress is believed to house a North Vietnamese  
regimental Headquarters and supply depot.

Col Joseph Conny, commander of the 3rd Bde of the 101st Abn Div  
said, "If they are not protecting something they're just trying to  
inflict maximum American casualties."

He said the mountain isn't worth much from a strategic stand point, but  
added, "We don't really go out for a piece of terrain. We go out to clobber  
him...that's what we've done."

Another version of essentially the same story but which was filed by  
Scharbutt from the scene, said in part:

"Paratroopers came down from the mountain, their shirts dark green  
with sweat, their weapons gone, their bandages stained brown and red  
from mud and blood. Many cursed their hard nosed Battalion commander,  
LTC Honeycutt, who sent three companies Sunday to take the 3,000 ft  
mountain just over a mile east of Laos and overlooking shell pocketed  
A Chau Valley. They failed and suffered. "That damn black jack won't  
stop until he kills every one of us" said one of the 40-50 Abn Div  
troopers wounded. Honeycutt, 38, of Columbus, Ga., had been given  
an order: take the mountain."

HEADQUARTERS 101ST AIRBORNE DIVISION  
Office of the Commanding General  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG

24 May 1969

SUBJECT: News Release, VIETNAM-ZAIS (Filed by Les Santorelli)

Camp Eagle, South Vietnam, May 22, Renter--The U.S. General whose controversial assault on "Hamburger Hill" was criticised by Senator Edward Kennedy said today it would be a "useless dialogue to pit his views" against the senator's.

The senator had described the repeated American onslaughts against the remote northern peak two miles from the Laotian border as "senseless and irresponsible." The North Vietnamese defense caved in two days ago after holding out for a week.

Gen. Melvin Zais said: "I fight the war here to the best of my ability as Division Commander, he performs as a senator to the best of his ability there in Washington. I don't know what he's thinking nor what information he was provided." -

"I know for sure he wasn't here and I think we'd jut be engaging in useless dialogue to pit my views against his," he told newsmen.

Gen. Zais spoke to a press conference at this sprawling base camp about 35 miles east of the rugged mountain whose capture cost the lives of 48 Americans and nearly 600 North Vietnamese.

The General, who commands the 101st Airborne Division which took the peak, was pressed as to the tactical significance of the hill, Dong Ap Bia, which overlooks mountainous passes linking Laos to populated centres in Thua Thien Province.

"The only significance of the hill was the fact that your North Vietnamese (were) on it ... the hill itself had no tactical significance," said the General.

"My mission was to conduct operations in the Northern A Shau Valley, to destroy the enemy forces and installations in the area of operations," said the General, from Fall River, Mass.

"We found the enemy on Hill 937 and that's where we fought him...that was my decision and the decision was to go up to the enemy on the hill."

"If we find him on any other hill in the A Shau Valley, in Vietnam, I can assure you I'll attack him," he added.

Asked whether more concentrated bombing could not have been used to

Tab D-#

AVDQ-CG

SUBJECT: News Release, VIETNAM-ZAIS (Filed by Les Santorelli)

seize the 3,000-foot peak, Gen. Zais said: "I don't know how many wars we have to go through to convince people that bombing alone can never do the trick."

He added the job could not have been done with big B-52 bombers. "They were dug in too deep, they were protected," he said.

On the controversy that the attack had triggered in Saigon and Washington, the General said: "These people are acting like this was a catastrophe for the U.S. troops. This was a tremendous, gallant victory."

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, 3d Bn 187th Abn Infantry  
APO San Francisco, 96383

AVDG-CD-CO

20 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report, Operation APACHE SNOW,  
Period 9 May thru 21 May 1969.

TO: Commanding General  
101st Airborne Division  
ATTN: ACofS, G3  
APO San Francisco, 96383

THRU: Commanding Officer  
3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division  
ATTN: S3  
APO San Francisco, 96383

1. NAME OF OPERATION: APACHE SNOW/Reconnaissance In Force.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 100730 - 211525 May 1969.
3. LOCATION: Vicinity YC320989, Nam Hoa District, Thua Thien Province  
I CTZ: Republic of Viet Nam, Map Series L7015; Map Sheet 6441 IV;  
Scale 1:50,000.
4. Headquarters 3d Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry, APO San Francisco,  
Calif. 96383.
5. REPORTING OFFICER: LTC Weldon F. Honeycutt
6. TASK ORGANIZATION: 3d Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry

HQ(-) 3/187	B/3/187 (Initially 3d BDE RES)
Arty LNO	
Engineer Squad(-)(B, 326th Eng)	C/3/187
81 Mortar Section	Engineer Section
	1 PIO Rep
A/3/187	
Engineer Section	
1 PIO Rep	

D/3/187  
Engineer Section  
A/2/506 OPCON (18-21 May)

**DECLASSIFIED**

7. SUPPORTING FORCES - ANNEX A
8. INTELLIGENCE - ANNEX B

*and 10*

9. MISSION: 3d Battalion 3/187, Airborne Infantry combat assaults at H-Hour D-Day (10 May) into LZ 2, coordinate YC314989, vicinity of the location border to destroy NVA/VC forces, interdict enemy LOC, and to locate and destroy his forces within the assigned AO.
10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: 3d Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry combat assaults into LZ 2 with D, A, and C Companies in that order. After securing the LZ, D Company RIF's to the SE to secure the high ground vicinity coordinate YC320989. A Company RIF's to the NW and secures the high ground vicinity coordinate YC308994. C Company RIF's to the SW vicinity coordinate YC315985. D Company, initially Brigade Reserve; on order, Combat Assault into LZ 2, RIF SE and link up with Battalion Headquarters. After securing and searching out the border area, 3/187 RIF's to vicinity, Dong Ap Bia, Hill 937, (YC328981) and searches that ridge complex to the SW, vicinity coordinate YC315970; the south vicinity coordinate YC326973; and SE, vicinity coordinate YC337976. From this key terrain, conduct RIF's throughout the assigned AO, generally NE to the A-Shau Valley vicinity of A Luoi (YC385003).
11. EXECUTION: ANNEX C (EXECUTION)
12. RESULTS:

a. ENEMY LOSSES

- (1) Personnel Losses by Day. (KIA by 3/187th small arms only).

10 May	2	16 May	14
11 May	7	17 May	2
12 May	3	18 May	114
13 May	5	19 May	2
14 May	60	20 May	78
15 May	76	21 May	0*

KIA 357  
 KIA 102  
 TOTAL 459

- (2) KIA - 102\*\*  
 (3) PW's - 2  
 (4) IWC - 12  
 (5) GSWC - 2  
 (6) Friendly to enemy killed ratio 1:12  
 (7) Body to wps captured ratio 1:32

\*Thirteen bodies found 21 May were credited to action on 15 May, five bodies to action on 13 May.

\*\*Killed by Air Strikes flown in support of 3/187 only.

(8) Number of preplanned airstrikes requested	30
(9) Number of airstrikes flown	65
(10) Number of preplanned skyspots requested	31
(11) Number of skyspots flown	14
(12) Number of Arlights requested	5
(13) Number of Arlights flown	0

b. US LOSSES

(1) Personnel Losses by day.

<u>DATE</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>KBFF*</u>	<u>WBFF*</u>	<u>EVAC</u>	<u>NONEVAC</u>
10 May	0	3	0	1	4	0
11 May	3	9	1	35	32	12
12 May	1	2	0	0	2	0
13 May	4	33	0	0	25	8
14 May	9	71	0	3	62	12
15 May	1	45	2	20	52	13
16 May	0	0	0	0	0	0
17 May	0	0	0	0	0	0
18 May	13	60	1	4	63	1
19 May	0	1	0	0	0	0
20 May	1	43	0	0	43	0
21 May	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
	32	266	4	63	283	46

\*Friendly Fire (ARA)

TOTAL

WIA	329*
WIA EVAC	283
WIA RETURNED to DUTY	85
KIA	36

283  
36  
319

(2) EQUIPMENT DAMAGED:

14 An/PRC 25 Radios  
1 90mm Recoilless Rifle  
5 Starlight Scopes

\* This figure includes all wounds received regardless of severity. Some personnel were wounded two or more times and are included each time in the total, consequently the total number of actual persons wounded is less than the stated figures.

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Supply: The logistical support was provided by a Battalion Forward Support Point located at FB Borchtesgaden, utilizing UH-1D aircraft to shuttle requested items to the field elements, and by the Battalion S-4 in conjunction with the PSSE located at Camp Evans, utilizing CH-47 aircraft. Bulk items of supply such as class I, III, IV, V, and water were flown from Camp Evans to FB Borchtesgaden by CH-47 to maintain a three day basic load. Although this three day basic load was essential to insure that the field elements

were provided with required quantities of the basic classes of supply, it was not always, in fact, present at the forward resupply point.

Due to numerous "Combat Emergency" sorties required by the artillery units in support of the operation, a backlog of sorties for this unit developed and this, combined with dwindling supplies on hand at Fire Base Berchtesgaden, required that this unit declare certain sorties as "Combat Emergency".

Property accountability throughout the operation was difficult due to the intensive fighting and the number of casualties. In the future to prevent different companies' equipment becoming mixed up, companies will utilize their supply clerks in the field, as coordinators between the companies and Battalion S4 who normally receives backhauled equipment. Each unit will utilize a company roster indicating each individual's type of weapon, its serial number, as well as a separate "line number" for the individual. In addition to greatly speeding up casualty reporting, this line number could be affixed to the individual's weapon and rucksack, which would greatly simplify identifying evacuated equipment.

b. Maintenance: Just prior to operation Apache Snow, all four rifle companies participated in a one day stand down during which FSSE contact tools were made available.

c. Treatment, Evacuation and Hospitalization of wounded:

(1) Treatment of casualties was accomplished quickly and skillfully by members of the medical platoon, including replacements who had no previous combat experience. Emphasis on control of hemorrhage, using mechanical means and large amounts of I.V. fluids, in particular serum albumin, kept shock casualties to a minimum.

(2) Evacuation of the wounded from the forward edge of the battle area to the Battalion Headquarters LZ was accomplished by light observation helicopter. An evacuation triad system was set up whereby patients were classified as: critical, moderately serious, and fair condition. The classification was based upon the following criteria: amount of blood loss, state of shock, degree of trauma, type of wound, and time elapsed between initial trauma and primary emergency treatment by medical personnel. From the field, patients were transported by logistical support aircraft, light observation helicopter, and MEDEVAC helicopter to the 18th Surgical Hospital, 22d Surgical Hospital, and C Company, 326 Medical Battalion (FB Blaze). Further evacuation was accomplished by these facilities, upon the individual judgement of the medical officer in regard to each specific case.

d. Transportation: The Battalion resupply helicopter was intended to ferry supplies from the forward supply point to our field elements. As this aircraft was the sole means of resupply for our elements engaged in heavy contact, it played an essential role in the overall combat effectiveness of this unit. In several instances, this utility aircraft had to be diverted from its primary function to perform tasks which should have been but were not, completed by other aircraft. For example:

(1) Evacuation of casualties to both FB Berchtesgaden and Camp Evans, and Phu Bai, due to only one of two MEDEVAC aircraft available.



(2) Deployment of badly needed replacements for tactical elements; as many as 34 in one day, due to lack of aircraft which had been requested but did not arrive.

(3) Resupply of small arms ammunition from Camp Evans directly to field elements, which had become critical due to back log of unflown CH-47 sorties. This necessary, although improper use of the Battalion LOG-bird, resulted in either field elements not receiving requested items or extension of aircraft flying time and in some cases both apply.

e. Communication: There was nothing out of the ordinary regarding communications during this operation.

f. Strengths and other Pertinent S1 problems:

(1) Timely submission of casualty reports was the biggest problem encountered. Because of the distance from the base camp to the area of operation, the only means of communication was with a relay station. When individuals were evacuated it could not be determined to which hospital they went.

(2) To establish a more effective reporting system, a representative was stationed with the CP to record and consolidate pertinent casualty information. Another representative was sent to Phu Bai to check the 85th and 22d and report on members of the command admitted.

#### 14. Special Equipment and Techniques:

##### a. Employment of Spooky (C 47 w/miniguns)

(1) Item: Spooky is primarily used to provide flare and suppressive fire support to friendly perimeters.

(2) Discussion: The ship uses parachute flares to illuminate the target area. Often, though, the flare is unsatisfactory due to wind, haze or restrictions imposed by the situation.

(3) Solution: When this occurred, 81mm mortar illumination rounds, timed for near surface ignition, proved to be a quicker and more reliable way to orient Spooky than his own flares.

##### b. Use of Flak Jackets.

(1) Item: Flak jackets are used most often to protect soldiers on static posts.

(2) Discussion: During the battle for Hill 937, many of the US casualties were caused by RPG shrapnel. Many of the wounds, though not serious, were enough to require evacuation. This depleted the fighting strength.


(3) Solution: When it was determined that the enemy was defending in place on Hill 937, flak jackets were issued to the attacking troops. By wearing them casualties were reduced considerably. Flak jackets are particularly desirable when in a situation such as this, troops have only a short distance to move to contact and can leave their rucksacks grounded in a relatively secure area.

15. Commander's Analysis.

a. Problem: The only major problem that occurred during this operation was the control of ARA.

b. Observation: On three occasions the ARA mistakenly placed fire on 3/187 troops, resulting in total casualties of 4 killed and 63 wounded. The principal cause of this was an ARA lack of orientation about the ground situation and troops locations. The policy had been for the ARA to report directly on an artillery frequency to artillery personnel, bypassing the Battalion Commander. This procedure was used over the repeated objections of the Battalion Commander 3/187.

c. Recommendation: ARA should enter the battalion command frequency for a briefing on the ground tactical situation. Only the Battalion Commander, S3 or operations people are completely aware of the troop disposition and missions. After this they can be released to the artillery FO's control on the artillery radio net.

  
W. F. HONEYCUTT  
LTC, Infantry  
Commanding

3 ANNEXES

Annex A Supporting Forces  
Annex B Intelligence  
Annex C Execution

DISTRIBUTION:

A - Plus  
30 - S3 3D BDE  
1 - Historian

ANNEX A (Artillery) to Combat After Action Report, "APACHE SNOW, 3/137  
Operations.

1. SUPPORTING FORCES (Direct Support)

C/2/319 (105 Airborne)  
B/2/319 (105 Berchtesgaden)  
C/2/11 (155 Airborne/Berchtesgaden)

(Indirect Support)

A/2/319 (105 Ta Bat)  
B/2/11 (155 Ta Bat)  
.../1/83 (8" Son)

(Organic Support)

2 such 81mm Mortars (YC320989)

(LFA)

B/4/77 (Evans, Ta Bat)  
C/4/77 (Blaze)

2. Defensive targets were fired every night by all firing units. These targets were placed on an H&I list kept by the Liaison Officer. The final data for these targets were fired every 30 minutes during the night, beginning between 1830-1900 hours.

3. The main problem was the control of ARA. This problem was worked out early in the operation. (See paragraph 15, Commanders's Analysis of this report).

4. The forward observers made good use of recon by fires and used them regularly. Lack of rounds available to the firing batteries restricted these somewhat.

5. Excellent use was made of the 81mm mortars firing in close support of the Infantry. The mortars fired in defensive targets and Recon-by-fires which proved effective in the successful seizure of Hill 937 and defense of the blocking position.

ANEX "E" (Intelligence) to Combat After Action Report, "APACHE SNOW".

The intelligence estimate of the A-Shau Valley area prior to the operation was essentially correct. (See Appendix 1).

It was felt that due to large number of SLAR, People Sniffer, VR Sightings and aircraft receiving fire near Dong Ap Bia that a large enemy unit was probably occupying the area around Dong Ap Bia as a way station/supply point. The extensive trail network on and around Dong Ap Bia had indicated that the mountain was located on or near a major infiltration route from Laos into the A-Shau Valley. No unit identification had been made prior to the assault of 3/187 elements on 10 May 1969, although the identification of the enemy presence made Reconnaissance In Force of the area necessary.

## 1. GROUND

a. The Dong Ap Bia mountain complex (YC327977) rises approximately 970 meters from sea level at its highest point. The mountain does not form part of a larger ridge complex, but rather stands alone in the southwestern side of the A-Shau Valley. It is bordered on the west by the Trung Phan River which forms part of the Laotian Border; on the north by the Dong So Ridge line; to the south by the Xe Sap (Rao Lao) River; and overlooks the abandoned A Loui Fort and airstrip location approximately 6000 meters to the east northeast. The valley areas surrounding Dong Ap Bia consist of rolling terrain with the small hills and fingers forming many cross compartments. The vegetation is thick brushwood, and in many places, single canopy jungle. The Dong Ap Bia mountain itself consists of a peak with several ridges and fingers extending in all directions. Two of these ridges form mountains in themselves; Hill 916 (YC315970) on the southwest, and Hill 937 (YC327982) on the north. The combination of slope, the thick undergrowth and double to triple canopy jungle make Dong Ap Bia extremely difficult to traverse by friendly troops.

b. Observation by ground elements was poor. Aerial observation was hindered due to canopy thickness, but was able to assist ground units immensely, throughout the operation. Enemy observers used the tree tops as OP's and sniper positions.

c. Avenues of approach into the Dong Ap Bia area were numerous. The valley to the north and south of the mountain were primary lines of communications from the Laotian Border. The northern valley contained many high speed trails through the Pa Da area, which turned southeast and joined the vast trail networks found along the Rao Lao River. From the intersection of the trails east of Dong Ap Bia, this line of communication proceeds across the A-Shau Valley and is believed to terminate in the new BA 114 southwest of Hue City. Many of these trails have branch trail networks leading into the Dong Ap Bia complex, and travel up the many fingers toward the peak itself. These avenues of approach were covered by fire.

## 2. ENEMY ACTIVITY

a. The enemy was indeed surprised as the 3-187 elements combat assaulted between Dong Ap Bia mountain and the Laotian Border in a successful effort to prevent escape of enemy units into Laos. There was an almost complete lack of hostile ground fire as the escape routes were blocked by assaulting elements. As the 3-187 Airborne Infantry moved up the mountain, they found that

ANNEX "B" (Intelligence) to Combat After Action Report, "AFACHE SPOW".

the enemy employed defense in depth principle well indeed. The lower echelons were made up of the front line of defense. As friendly elements moved toward the enemy fell back to increasingly stronger, better prepared positions. The enemy was well entrenched and had bunkers as large as 8'x22' x 8' deep. Some were constructed in "A" frame configuration, and were capable of withstanding almost any type of supporting fires. All bunkers and fighting positions were mutually supporting and were covered by fire from other bunkers or fighting positions. During the attack on 14 February, it was found that the enemy was employing large chamber clay-pipe type mines in front of and behind their bunker systems. The chambers were controlled from a central spider hole or bunker. If friendly units overran the forward bunkers, the rearmost chambers were installed to fire into friendly troops as they searched and cleared the bunker complexes.

b. It was found that the enemy units were well trained and equipped, with good uniforms, weapons, and gas masks. They were especially well disciplined and obviously trained in techniques of fire and fire control, as they would consistently wait, camouflaged and undetected, until friendly troops were in close proximity before firing. When engaged, the enemy had planned sectors of fire and obtained good area coverage. Marksmanship was far above average for VC/NVA forces. Snipers in trees were employed effectively, but consistently enjoyed a short line span, as the trees offered little protection and friendly troops observed and engaged them usually after the first shots were fired.

c. It was found that although CS was used against the enemy forces, that the effect was limited due to the presence of new NVA protective masks. CS did have some effect however, as several NVA attempted to flee their bunkers under CS attack. G/3-187 reported on 20 May that the enemy was employing an inferior form of CS against their position. Several chicom CS grenades were found later, confirming the limited US capabilities of NVA forces.

d. Although enemy forces will not under normal circumstances, remain in a fixed location under heavy friendly attack, the NVA elected to establish a very determined defense. One reason for this was probably due to the importance which the enemy attached to the facilities on Dong Ap Bia, and the lines of communications adjacent to it. It appears also that the air assaults of friendly forces cut off his escape routes across the Laotian border leaving him alternative but to stand and fight.

e. The NVA forces in the A-Siau Valley have radio monitor capabilities as evidenced on the Battalion Command net at 0948 hours, on 17 May. At this time calls for "BlackJack" were received from an unknown station. The calls were in English with a heavy vietnamese accent.

### 3. UNIT IDENTIFICATION:

Captured documents have identified the 7th and 8th Battalions, 29th Regiment Headquarters and possibly the D-2 AA Battalion as comprising the majority of opposing forces at Dong Ap Bia. Documents also indicated that the 29th Regiment replaced the 9th NVA Regiment on or about 5 May 1969. It is possible that a part of the 9th Regiment also took part in the battle. The 4th Battalion, 29th Regiment has not been identified and is believed to be located in BA 611, in Laos.

ANNEX "B" (Intelligence) to Combat After Action Report, "APACHE SNOW".

UNIT INSIGNIA:

Uniforms on the enemy bodies were of three colors, olive drab, khaki, and blue gray. On several of the bodies, unit insignia was found, it was sewn by hand, and in several colors. The symbol T-2 and T-2/6 was in blue; the symbol T-2 in red; and symbol T-2/6 with T-2 in red and 1/6 in white. The symbol T-2/1, T-2/3 and T-1/4 were also found. These insignia are believed to represent the following:

- T-2/2 2 Bn 8th Co (AKA 8th Co 8th Bn, 29th Regt.)
- T-2/6 2 Bn 8th Co (AKA 8th Co 8th Bn, 29th Regt.)
- T-2/7 2 Bn 7th Co (AKA 7th Co 8th Bn, 29th Regt.)
- T-1/4 Pass 4th Co 7th Bn, 29th Regiment.

A P.W. stated that his insignia was T-2/6, and was a member of the 8th Co, 8th Bn 29th Regt., establishing the T-2 as the symbol of the 8th Bn. T-1 is possibly an AKA for 7th Bn, 29th Regt. The P.W. further stated that no special significant was attached to the various thread colors, that personnel of his unit utilized the colors readily available to him.

P.W. interrogation of NVA private Pham Van Hoi, of the 5th platoon, 8th Company 8th Bn 8th Regt (29th Regiment), stated that his regiment had replaced the 10th Regiment at Dong Ap Bia 15 days ago (5 May 1969). He further stated that the 7th and 8th Battalion and 29th Regimental Headquarters were there (substantiated by document readouts) and that his Battalion consisted of the 5th, 6th, and 7th Companies. He stated that the 8th company strength was 100 men upon arrival, and had suffered approximately 80 casualties by 20 May. The prisoners statements agree with 101st Airborne Division holdings of company numbers and subordination. Upon completion of Operation Apache Snow the 29th NVA Regiment is held with the following strengths:

UNIT	ESTIMATED STRENGTH
29th Regt Hq	200
7th Bn	150
8th Bn	140
9th Bn	450

See Appendix I to ANNEX A (Intelligence) for estimated strength of the 29th Regiment prior to Operation Apache Snow.

a. As a result of Operation APACHE SNOW, the presence of the 29th NVA Regiment in the A-Shau Valley was confirmed. Their location had been unknown to US/ARVN forces since the fall of 1968. Captured documents indicate that the Regiment had refitted, rested and retrained in North Vietnam prior to its return to the Republic of Vietnam in April 1969. Document readouts indicated that the 29th NVA Regiment was to stay in the A-Shau prior to conducting offensive operations in the more populated lowlands of Thua Thien Province. Elements of the Regiment in contact with friendly forces during this operation suffered a 70 to 80 per cent loss in strength. Only the 9th Bn, location unknown remains combat effective. Due to the defeat of the 29th NVA Regiment at the hands of the 3d Battalion, 187th Airborne Infantry, this former well trained, disciplined and equipped unit has been rendered combat ineffective and will not be capable of conducting any significant offensive in the near future. The 29th Regiment has been believed to have withdrawn to BA 611 to regroup, thus failing to accomplish its mission of combat operations in the lowlands near Hue City.

Appendix I to ARVN A (Intelligence) to Combat After Action Report (Apache Snow).

Extract from APPENDIX I (ENEMY SITUATION) TO ARVN A; OPORD 3-69 (Apache Snow)

1. ( ) General: The northern A Shau Valley is a primary enemy LOC used for movement of material and infiltration of troops to enemy units throughout I Corps. Also, the enemy has maintained logistics installations in the northern A Shau which distribute much needed supplies to units operating in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. The importance of the northern A Shau as a vital LOC has increased because friendly operations are presently interdicting other key enemy LOC's in northern I Corps. Operation Maine Crag is halting enemy movement on Rte 926, and Operation Massachusetts Striker is disrupting enemy activity on Rte 548 and high speed trails in the southern A Shau - Rao Nai area and on Route 614 and main trails east of BA 677. Recently acquired intelligence indicates a pattern of movement from the northern A Shau (YD 3012) to BA 114. Additionally, the sighting of several large hut and bunker complexes vic YD 3607 and airstripes in the same area resulting in numerous secondary explosions indicates that the enemy has established a large supply depot in this area. It is very likely that the flow of supplies from this depot and other logistics installations in the northern A Shau Valley to BA 114 will increase in the near future.

2. ( ) Disposition of Enemy Forces in the Northern A Shau Area (See Appendix 10)

a. 6th Regt. The 806th Bn, 6th Regt is presently operating near the Song O and My Chanh Rivers. The 800th and 802d Bns are presently unlocated. Following the Tet Offensive of 1968, the 6th Regt retreated to the northern A Shau - BA 611 area. It is very possible that the 800th Bn and/or 802d Bn, 6th Regt is presently located in this area.

b. 9th Regt. The 816th Bn, 9th Regt is presently operating in the southern A Shau - Bao Nai area vic YC 4997. The 815th and 818th Bns, 9th Regt are presently unlocated. The 9th Regt normally operates in the northern A Shau - BA 611 area, and in August 68, the 816th and 818th Bns were operating near Pa Du (2), YC 362974. It is very possible that elements of the 9th Regt are presently operating in that area.

c. 559th Trans Gp. Elements of this unit are currently operating in BA 611 and throughout the northern A Shau Valley.

d. Unidentified Enemy Forces in BA 611. The Hq of TTMR is believed to be located in BA 611 in Laos. It is very possible that a regiment is serving as a security element for this large Hq. In response to a friendly operation in the northern A Shau Valley, it is possible that this regiment would be committed to defend the supply depots.

e. 675th Arty Regt. The 675th Regt was contacted during Operation Dewey Canyon. It is considered very possible that elements of this unit are still operating in BA 611.

3. ( ) Enemy Tactics and Equipment

a. In Operation Dewey Canyon, the 9th Marine Regt discovered several

EXTRACT from Appendix C (FRIENDLY ESTABLISHMENT) to ANNEX A; (SECRET 3-69).

122mm guns and sizeable quantities of 122mm ammunition vic Rte 922. 1-502 Abn Inf recently discovered 50 rds of 122mm ammunition in the area east of BA 607. Thus, it is very possible that friendly forces in the northern A Shau Valley will encounter 122mm artillery fire from BA 611 in the future.

b. In Operation Somerset Plain, which was conducted from 4-20 Aug 68 in the northern A Shau Valley, the 16th and 83th Bns conducted delaying actions and avoided major contact. However, the 9th Marine Regt encountered company sized enemy attacks during Operation Dewey Canyon when they entered major cache areas. The 2-17 Cav met heavy resistance while initially operating vic ID 3507, and the 3-187 initially met stiff resistance when entering their present AO. Thus, since other major LOC's are being blocked, it is possible that the enemy will defend his supply installations throughout the northern A Shau Valley.

c. In Operation Dewey Canyon, the 9th Marine Regt found several large caches which were extensively booby trapped. Additionally, the large cache found by 2-502 Abn Inf east of BA 607 was booby trapped with 4 round shaped charges. The 3-187 has also found their caches were booby trapped. Thus, it is very possible that caches in the northern A Shau Valley are booby trapped.

1. ( ) Potentially Lucrative Target Areas in the northern A Shau Valley

a. Area vic YC3507. Recent VR, airstrikes, and contacts have indicated that this area is a major supply area.

b. Bao Lao River area. The trails along this river serve as a key infiltration route into Thua Thien Province. Infiltration Station # 4 is loc vic YC3594. An "X" on a captured map was loc near Pa Du #1 vic YC 334967. Additionally, SLAR and URS indicated enemy presence and movement in this area in March and early April.

c. Dong So Mtns or "Beak" area. During Operation Delaware, 19 Apr - 26 May 69, 1st ACD discovered large caches in this area. A photo mission flown on 7 Apr 69 revealed 5 camouflaged trucks vic YD 361011 and numerous POL drums vic YD 364009. It is very possible that a truck park is located in this area.

d. Ap Bia Mtns area, vic YC 3198. Recent URS and SLAR indicate enemy presence and a pattern of west-east movement in this area. It is very possible that the enemy is moving supplies eastward from BA 611 to caches in this area.



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1. ( ) The A Shau Valley floor consists of flat open terrain which varies in width from approximately 300 meters near grid coordinate YD363032 to two to three kilometers near Ja Bat (YC420950). Vegetation includes grass, 2 to 6 feet tall, and scattered brush. Numerous bomb craters and streams existing throughout the valley's floor restrict wheeled vehicles but tracked vehicles can move throughout the valley floor with relative ease. Route 548 which traverses the entire valley, is usable by tracked vehicles but wheeled vehicular movement is interdicted by bombing. Movement off of 548 is possible in the valley, as evidenced by numerous enemy wheeled vehicles and wheeled vehicle tracks observed on aerial photography, including many examples of wheeled tracks in stream beds. Foot movement is good on the valley floor. Helicopter landing zones are available in any portion of the valley floor. However, since these zones can be observed for long distances and since cover from direct fire weapons is lacking, combat assaults would be extremely hazardous and difficult to protect without a greater than normal number of gunships.

2. ( ) The northeastern side and the southwestern side of the A Shau Valley differ greatly in vegetation, trafficability, and overall shape of the terrain.

a. The northeastern side including a narrow transitional area between the valley floor and the mountain ranges.

(1) The Transitional Area: Bordering the northern A Shau on the west side at a depth of one to two kilometers, this area, although it appears from the air to be covered with low, even vegetation, is actually covered with a matted grass and brush vegetation which would greatly restrict foot movement and which would support only tracked vehicular traffic. Landing zones in this area are infrequent and are limited to stream beds and scattered slash and burn areas. Few trails have been recorded through this area between Rte 547A and the northern end of the valley, however, one road exists from Rte 548 at coordinate YD304093 into the extreme western end of the Co Pung ridge. Part of this road was cut by a bulldozer and beyond the point where it enters the tree line, small segments appear through breaks in the canopy as far north as grids YD3011, and YD3112. In November of 1968 the area entered by this road was reported as a probable storage area or transshipment area from which trails lead into BA 114. From photography it appears that armor could deploy into as far north as the YD 3112 grid.

(2) The Mountainous Area: Rising abruptly out of the narrow fingers and uneven contours of the transitional area the canopy covered steep slopes (20% to 50%) of the mountainous region form an unbroken barrier to movement, observation, and heliborne operations. Elevation increases by over 3,000 feet from the valley floor to the ridge lines which reach their peak some five to six kilometers from the valley. Although these ridge lines are greater in elevation than those bordering the

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EXTRACT from Appendix 5 (TELETYPE ANALYSIS) to ANNEX A, (INTELLIGENCE) to OPOD 2-69

A Shau they have supported Fire Base construction in the past and should afford the same basic problems in the future as were encountered during the recent construction of FSB's WHIP and FURY. The drainage problems encountered at FSB WHIP will confront construction units again in the northern A Shau. There is no known granite outcropping which would seriously hinder bulldozers from preparing the Fire Base platform. Not so much the vegetation but the severe slopes will impede foot movement from the mountains toward the valley floor. Landing Zones of course will be restricted to old FSB locations and to those points previously cut by friendly units.

b. The southwestern side of the valley differs from the northern side in several ways: firstly the mountains are isolated and do not form a solid barrier to movement; secondly, of the few mountains, one, the Co A Nong, located strategically at the extreme northern tip of the valley, has supported a friendly FSB and another, the Dong So ridge, has been negated by at least one enemy vehicle (wheeled) which was destroyed and/or abandoned prior to September of 1968; thirdly the southern side of the valley is characterized by numerous LOC's - Route 922 and the 922 by-pass around the northwestern slope of Co A Nong mountain, the Xe Sap River and the Rao Lao River, and many well-worn trails from Laos into the valley; and lastly, broad rolling areas between the two rivers which are void of heavy canopy would afford relatively easy foot movement. (see area 2 on diagram).

The traversability of the entire area west of the valley and north of the Rao Lao can be considered good for foot movement but unsuitable for tactical deployment of vehicles. Although the rivers and streams are, for the most part, negotiable, the avenues for vehicular movement are restricted by slope and vegetation. (Also not enough information about soil content is available to determine suitability, but one can assume that wet weather would restrict movement since the area is the drain filed for the waters of the A Sap Valley).

The Rao Lao River, from 10m to 40m wide, is not an insurmountable barrier to foot movement, especially during dry months. Due to its rocky bottom and the fact that it is not fed by any major cascading mountain streams, the Rao Lao flows slowly through its low banks. The depth varies from numerous shallow rapids to wide deep pools where it washes through layers of sand and silt. The appearance of numerous trails which weave back and forth across the river also indicate an easy traversability. The Xe Sap River differs from the Rao Lao with an increased number of sandbars and rapids making it less easily traversed.

Landing Zones are available south of the A Shau along rivers and streams, especially the Xe Sap River. Large assault landing would be possible in the northern end of the valley on and around Rt. 922 between Laos and Co A Nong mountain.

EXTRACT from Appendix 5 (TERRAIN ANALYSIS) to ANNEX A; (INTELLIGENCE) 31  
OPRYL 3-69

The key point in understanding the terrain of the western side of the A Shau Valley is that the few existing mountains are isolated. The enemy has used these vantage points not only to store their material but also as concealed locations from which to harass friendly observation planes and thus protect their own movement over high speed routes from BA 611 and through extensive trail networks from BA 611 and further down the Laotian border. Two of the mountains seem to be especially suitable for friendly use. First the Co A Nong mountain has supported a FSB in the past and affords good observation toward BA 611 and toward the A Shau Valley. Due to extensive bombing the southwestern slope has been cleared of vegetation and Route 922 running along the chalky slope is completely interdicted by landslides. Observation to the north is hindered by trees. Streams in the Co A Nong area will not hinder ground operations in any way. Second the Long S ridge, centrally located on the western side of the northern A Shau can be easily entered on foot from its northern and southern tips. Friendly units, were they located on these two ridge lines could probably check enemy movement while supporting US ground operations. Also occupation of these ridges would greatly lessen the amount of enemy fire upon heliborne operations.

EXERCISE from Appendix 10 (OB LISTING) to ANNEX A (INTELLIGENCE) to OPGRO 4.69

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>LOCATION/DATE</u> <u>LAST CONTACT</u>	<u>AKA</u>
Hq MRTH	855	Unlocated	
4th Regt	1,790		
Regt Hqs	250		
C-12 Sapper Co			
C-15 A Co (12.7mm)			
C-16 Mortar Co (82mm)			
C-17 RR Co (75mm)			
C-18 Trans Co			
C-19 Engr Co			
1st Security Co			
U/1 Signal Co			
U/1 Recon Co			
J/1 Medical Co			
800th Bn	420	Unlocated	K-1
C-1 Co			
C-2 Co			
C-3 Co			
C-4 Co			
102d Bn	420	Unlocated	K-2, 820
C-1 Co			
C-2 Co			
C-3 Co			
C-4 Co			
806th Bn	400	YD3820/ Feb 69	K-6, K-5
C-1 Co			
C-2 Co			
C-3 Co			
C-4 Co			
9th Regt	1780		
Regt Hqs	300	Unlocated	E-9, Doan 9
C-16 RR Co			
C-17 Engr Co			
C-18 Mortar Co			
C-19 A Co (12.7mm)			
C-20 Signal Co			
C-21 Foton Co			
C-22 Sapper Co			
C-23 Trans Co			
C-24 Medical Co			
315th Bn	500	Unlocated	K-15, K-1 1st Bn
C-1 Co			
C-2 Co			
C-3 Co			

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EXTRACT from Appendix 10 (OB LISTING) to ANNEX A (INTELLIGENCE) to OROEL 3-69

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>LOCATION/DATE LAST CONTACT</u>	<u>AKA</u>
C-4			
316th Bn	400	YD5402/ March 69	K-16, K-3, 3d Bn
C-11 Co			
C-12 Co			
C-13 Co			
C-14 Co			
312th Bn	500	Unlocated	K-18, K-12, 2d Bn
C-5 Co			
C-7 Co			
C-8 Co			
C-9 Co (C-10 Co)			
29th Regt	1800	Unlocated	Song Lo, E-8, 3d Regt
Regt Hqs	650	Unlocated	
C-14 AA Co (Type Unk)			
C-15 Engr Co			
C-16 Signal Co			
C-17 Mortar Co (82mm)			
C-18 RR Co (75mm)			
7th Bn	400	Unlocated	K-7, D-1
C-1 Co			
C-2 Co			
C-3 Co			
C-4 Co			
8th Bn	380	Unlocated	K-8, D-2
C-5 Co			
C-6 Co			
C-7 Co			
C-8 Co			
9th Bn	380	Unlocated	K-9, D-3
C-9 Co			
C-10 Co			
C-11 Co			
C-12 Co			
65th Arty Regt	UNK	Unlocated	Doan 65
K-40 Bn (85mm gun)			
K-41 Bn (122mm gun)			
K-42 Bn (AA)			
K-43 Bn (AA)			

EXTRACT from Appendix 10 (CB LISTING) to ANNEX A (INTELLIGENCE) to OPR 2 69

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>STRENGTH</u>	<u>LOCATION/DATE</u> <u>LAST CONTACT</u>	<u>AFA</u>
675th Arty Regt 213th Bn 215th Bn 25th Bn 23d Bn	UNK	Unlocated	
K-25 Bkt - Arty Bn A Cos (Unk designation)	UNK	Unlocated	835
First Tram 42 1st Inf Bn 1st Co 2nd Co 3d Co 4 4th Co 641st Indep Inf Co 642d Indep Inf Co 643rd Indep Inf Co	UNK	Unlocated	
3d M. Bn G-10 Co G-11 Co G-12 Co			
2 U/I Inf Bns (3-4 Cos Probable) 4th Commo Bn			
55th Trans Bn H-5 Co H-6 Co H-7 Co H-8 Co			
52d Trans Bn (Poss) 9th Inf Security Bn (Poss) 1st Inf Security Bn (Poss) U/S Signal Co			

ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, Apache Snow (3/187 Operations)

1. The initial phase of the operation was executed as planned i.e. the 3/187 secured LZ 2 and the terrain immediately adjacent to it.
2. The intention after that was to secure Dong Ap Bia and the major ridges running off it to the southwest, south, and southeast.
3. The enemy, however, was discovered in force on Dong Ap Bia and the 3/187 fought him there throughout the period of participation in Apache Snow.
4. The appendices to this annex describe, in chronological order, the detailed day to day operations of the 3/187, from staging on 9 May through extraction from the AO on 21 May.

APPENDICES:

1. 9-10 May
2. 11 May
3. 12 May
4. 13 May
5. 14 May
6. 15 May
7. 16 May
8. 17 May
9. 18 May
10. 19 May
11. 20 May
12. 21 May

Appendix 1 (9-10) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, APACHE SNOW  
(3/187 Operations)

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Operation APACHE SNOW began for the 3/187 with staging in the vicinity of  
Fire Base Blaze on 9 May (D-1) 1969.

Pathfinders were supposed to arrive before dark on the 9th to coordinate  
the D-Day lift but they did not. The Battalion S3 met with the company  
commanders and a search was made of the PZ in an attempt to locate aircraft  
guide markers according to what had been described to the S3 by the aviation  
representative the night before. Finding only a partially marked PZ, the  
plan was formulated to position troops from east to west in two rows each  
with 15 groups of 5 men each. The lift was scheduled to use 30 aircraft.

At 0700 hours, on 10 May, the 3-187 troops were formed according to plan  
for an expected 0720 hours, pick up. Pathfinders arrived sometime around  
0700 hours. Their information about the pattern on the PZ and number of  
ships to be used was confused and contradictory and they never did coordinate  
or control the lift to any effective degree. Consequently the composition  
of the ground units' lifts was not exactly as planned.

The C&C ship reported on the battalion frequency at 0700 hours and by 0705  
hours, the Battalion Commander was airborne and ready to start the lift.  
The PZ time for D Company, the first unit lifted, was at 0750 hours. Their  
LZ time was 0801 hours, and the D Company Commander reported that LZ 2 was  
cold. Elements of A and C Companies were lifted at 0801 hours, and were  
closed into LZ 2 at 0820 hours. The Battalion Headquarters (minus the  
CO and Arty LNO who were airborne in the C&C ship), the mortars and additional  
elements of C and A Companies departed the PZ at 0845 hours, and were on  
LZ 2 at 0856 hours.

The insertion had caught the enemy by surprise. D Company, after securing  
the LZ according to plan moved its 1st Platoon up the ridge to the  
southeast. This immediate push up the ridge was to prove an important  
achievement. It was from this position, the key terrain to the immediate  
northwest of Dong Ap Bia (Hill 937), that the Battalion Headquarters  
controlled and supported operations throughout the period 10 to 21 May.  
Occupation of this terrain also resulted in an effective blocking position,  
as it stood on the major ridgeline and trail complex between Dong Ap Bia  
and the Laotian border.

The lack of proper Pathfinder PZ coordination caused a broken sequence of  
troops arriving in LZ 2. Consequently, there was some confusion and  
disorganization in effecting the Battalion Commander's plan for securing  
and expanding the perimeter of the LZ and commencing initial RIF's. When  
the Battalion Headquarters arrived, the S3 gathered the available leaders  
and directed actions essentially as the Commander had intended i.e., A Company  
organize on the northwest part of the perimeter and commence a RIF to the  
high ground to the northwest; C Company secure the southern portion and commence  
a RIF to the southwest. C Company was assigned the mission of LZ security  
until all elements were in. D Company as mentioned already had the eastern  
side and had moved out to the southeast.

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At 0930 hours A Company reported reaching the high ground approximately five hundred meters to the northwest (YC313994) and finding and searching out trails in that area. During this period the headquarters and mortars, following D Company, began their move toward the southeast. C Company, waiting the arrival of the remainder of its forces, secured LZ 2 and commenced a platoon RIF toward the southwest.

At 1044 hours the Battalion Commander with the Artillery LNO, landed at LZ 2.

At 1045 hours a LOH on VR reported a complex of bunkers and huts, several hundred meters to the east of the LZ.

By noon D Company had secured the ridgeline blocking position to the southeast (YC320988) and the Battalion Headquarters and Mortars were within the D Company perimeter. Preparation of an LZ and mortar positions had begun.

Throughout the middle of the day Pink Teams, LOH VR's, ARA and FAC's reported numerous trails, huts, bunkers, tunnels and small groups of enemy east and west of the 3/187 location.

By 1600 hours B Company, which had been the Brigade reserve, closed into LZ 2, completing the 3/187 into the AO. B Company moved southeast to the Headquarters location and received instructions to continue moving southeast toward Dong Ap Bia, set up an NDP, and to move at first light on the 11th to RIF toward Hill 937.

At 1646 hours and 1658 hours B Company reported receiving sniper fire and then small arms and RPG fire. They responded with small arms fire, 90mm RR and were supported by mortars, artillery, gunships and airstrikes. The US suffered three WIA, while killing four of the enemy. MEDEVAC (2 ambulatory and 1 litter) was completed by 1835 hours. Gunship and airstrike support continued until dark. The night defensive positions for 10 May were:

A Co(-) at YC308994  
A Co 2d plat at YC306995  
C Co(-) at YC315985  
C Co 1st plat at YC314983

B Co(-) at YC321987  
B Co 4th plat at YC321986  
D Co Mortars and Bn Hqs  
at YC320989

APPENDIX 2 (11 May) to ANNEX C (transmission) to After Action Report, APACHE SNOW (3, 117 Operations)

The night of 10/11 May was quiet and the morning's activity started at 0600 hours with a fire ball (perimeter fire into potential enemy locations),

At 0634 hours C Company's reconnaissance by fire prompted enemy return fire from vicinity coordinate YC317984. C Company returned fire with organic weapons.

Assault 25, Light fire team (LFT), was on station at 0653 hours and reported two enemy soldiers running on a trail about four hundred meters east of B Company's location. He reported an observation post in a tree, also, and bunkers fortified with rocks, in the same general area. The area was taken under fire by Assault 25 and he fired on and missed by automatic weapons.

Banshee 23, (LFT), reported that a LOH reconning for him took enemy fire from the vicinity of coordinate YC355974. At 0745 hours he engaged the area by fire.

B Company departed their NDP at 0745 hours.

A and C Companies sent reports that their units had commenced moving.

Plans for the day were:

A Company RIF vicinity of NDP; then double back to vicinity of LZ 2 (YC314939).  
B Company RIF from NDP to vicinity of YC329984 the northern tip of Hill 937.  
C Company RIF south and east from their NDP.  
D Company remain in blocking position with Battalion Headquarters and Mortars; conduct limited RIF's to the north and east.

The FAC reported in at 0844 hours, with the first of six airstrikes of the day.

At 0851 hours, B Company reported finding two RPG rounds, one light machine gun, and numerous blood trails to the east of the previous day's contact. Between 0900-1000 hours, B Company found 4 enemy KIA's in the vicinity of coordinate YC324984. The KIA's were wearing green uniforms with khakis underneath. One of the dead had a picture in his wallet that appeared to be of him in an officer's uniform. Also found on his person was an additional picture, North Vietnamese money, eight razor blades, and a US type accessory pack with tobacco.

By 0910 hours B Company had found two additional enemy KIA's, one SKS rifle, one IMG, a Chicom grenade, one AK47 rifle, one RPG launcher with six rounds, some medical equipment, a letter, bandages, items of clothing, and numerous blood trails.

C Company gave his position, at 0913 hours, as YC315985.

At 0946 hours, A Company had moved to YC304974. He reported that he was keeping the company(-) at that location and sending out platoon RIF's.

Bilk 37, FAC, reported finding a large hut with bunkers around it at coordinate YC348983.

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APPENDIX 2 Con't

At 1045 hours B Company reported more blood trails and bandages along his direction of advance.

At 1100 hours, A Company reported the following locations: 3d Platoon at YC320990; 1st Platoon at YC300993.

At 1106 hours, B Company reported that he had found one large sack of rice containing approximately 15 pounds of rice balls; a carrying case containing three AK-47's and magazines; a bag containing three satchel charges already primed; another small bag containing something similar to C4; a bag of first aid supplies and equipment; two more Chicom grenades and blood trails leading to the east up the hill.

Unit locations at 1158 hours were: A Company and 3d Platoon at YC304994; 1st Platoon at YC300993; 2d Platoon at YC302990. B Company at YC323984; C Company(-) at YC323983; C Company 3d Platoon at YC313981.

At 1159 hours, A Company reported that they had discovered a well-used trail four meters wide running NW-SE.

At 1215 hours, the 1st Platoon of D Company returned to the company location. The platoon had reconnoitered to the NE for several hundred meters but had made no contact with the enemy.

At 1310 hours, B Company reported finding several communication wires running down from the hill into the stream bed along his route of advance. He also reported a small knoll to his east covered with sniper holes.

A LOH on VR at 1315 hours, reported that he had sighted at least two telephone poles with wires and insulators on them at coordinate YC351939. He added that there were trails running parallel to the communications system. These wires and trails evidently ran from the east, up over Hill 937, to the west. The LOH also reported that he had received fires from bunkers at YC324981.

Throughout the day A, C and B Companies continued to find trails, fresh tracks, communication wires and cables, spider holes, miscellaneous pieces of clothing and equipment, blood trails, and huts and bunkers. The pilots too, continued reporting numerous indications of enemy presence around and on Hill 937.

By 1550 hours, B Company moving east, had started up the ridge leading to Hill 937. While following fresh tracks, they were fired on by a lone sniper. The sniper's intention, evidently, was to draw the unit up the ridge where the enemy waited in bunkers.

At 1624 hours, B Company was in contact at YC327983, and at 1630 hours, the Company Commander reported that he had suffered three US KIA's. He also had two US WIA's and possibly two more from attempting to retrieve the first two. His troops had confirmed six enemy KIA's. The Battalion Commander instructed him to increase his volume of fire and push past the wounded, rather than attempt to immediately retrieve them under direct enemy fire. Mortars, artillery, gunships, and airstrikes were used in support of B Company. A MEDEVAC was requested at 1643 hours, and at 1842, all wounded were out.

APPENDIX 2 Con't

At 1700 hours, during an AFA strike, one of the ships turned and fired in the wrong direction. The rockets impacted in the center of the Battalion Headquarters location. One US was killed and thirty-five wounded. Fifteen of the WIA required MEDEVAC. Included in the wounded were the Battalion Commander and S3 (both lightly); the Artillery LNO and S4 officer (both seriously); and the Operations Sergeant and the Mortar Sergeant (both seriously). Various ships were used to evacuate and by 1907 hours, the casualties were cleared from the 3-187 location.

Through this disruption, the headquarters continued to function. Mortars continued their mission in support of B Company and the Battalion Commander continued to direct airstrikes, and give instructions to the companies.

At 1942 hours, D Company's 3d Platoon, which had been on a RIF to the north, returned to the blocking position, reporting negative sightings.

Spook, requested earlier, reported on station at 1937 hours and operated until 2119 hours.

NLP's for the 3/187 on the night of 11/12 May were: A Co(-) at YC312993 with 2 ambushes at YC313992 and YC310994; B Company at YC325981; C Co(-) at YC315981 with 1st Platoon ambush at YC316981; D Company, Battalion Headquarters and Mortars at YC320989.

APPENDIX 3 (12 May) to ANNEX E ~~Discussion~~ ~~to~~ ~~After~~ ~~Action~~ ~~Report~~, APACHE SNOW (3/187 Operations).

The night was quiet. At 0640 hours, Bilk 37, reported on ~~station~~ ~~at~~ ~~1734~~ ~~hours~~ in two airstrikes for B Company. There were eight airstrikes against ~~the~~ ~~area~~ throughout, the day, the last one going in at 1734 hours. These strikes were a mix of high drag bombs, napalm, and 500 and 1000 pound bombs with fuse delay. The accuracy of the strikes was outstanding.

At 0659 hours, Company A began moving toward the Battalion Headquarters location. They arrived at 0805 hours.

B Company reported at 0820 hours that his rear element spotted some movement.

The Battalion Commander called Brigade at 0852 hours, and requested a team of engineers to assist in blowing an LZ for B Company. This request for an LZ at that location (vic. coord. YG323983) proved to be a wise one. The lower LZ, as it came to be called, was the key intermediate staging, evacuation, and resupply point throughout the operation.

At 0913 hours, B Company received enemy small arms and RPG fire from the vicinity of coordinate YG325981. Results were 1 US WIA; the return fire killed one enemy soldier.

The Division Artillery Commander arrived on the upper LZ at 0940 hours. He had come to discuss the ARA mishap and a policy for control of ARA. It was agreed by him that the ARA ships would come up on the battalion command frequency to receive a briefing on the ground tactical situation before going to work for a company artillery FO. Prior to the accident on the 11th, they had been reporting directly to the Artillery FO. This procedure was used against the repeated objection of the Battalion Commander 3/187.

At 0950 hours, Banshee 27, a LOG ship carrying the engineers, reported in on the battalion frequency and was turned over to B Company's control. At 1024 hours, while inserting the engineers, the ship crashed after its tail struck a tree. There were six casualties resulting from the crash; three engineers and three crew members. One of each required immediate MEDEVAC. B Company and the remaining engineers, however, continued with the preparation of the LZ. Throughout the day gunships, ARA, airstrikes, artillery, and mortars pounded the area east of the B Company location.

At 1141 hours, D Company replaced by A Company in the blocking position, departed the Battalion Headquarters location and commenced a RIF down the finger leading northeast from the upper LZ.

At 1219 hours, the MEDEVAC requested by B Company for the crash victims reported on station, but the LZ was not considered ready and the Battalion Commander told the ship to return and wait for his call.

At 1226 hours, the Battalion S3 reported to the Brigade S3 that the crashed ship was burning and therefore there would be ~~no~~ ~~need~~ ~~for~~ ~~a~~ ~~rigged~~ ~~team~~

B Company reported at 1224 hours, that he was receiving incoming mortar rounds from the vicinity of coordinate YG325976. No casualties resulted. The suspected enemy location was fired on by gunships, artillery, and counter-mortar fire.

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APPENDIX 3 Con't

At 1448 hours, B Company had an acceptable LZ and had extended the security of it sufficiently to bring in a MEDEVAC. He had a total of nine casualties to be evacuated; three were litter and one ambulatory. The MEDEVAC went in twice, without incident, and the evacuation was completed by 1500 hours.

At 1554 hours, Thunder 44 (LOH) went into the lower LZ and took out three US KIA's sustained in a previous action.

B Company reported that he had at least three confirmed enemy KIA's.

During the afternoon, B and C Companies called in reports of sporadic enemy movement, RPG, small arms and mortar fire. There were no US casualties resulting from these fires, however an additional NVA soldier was reported KIA. In response to any report of enemy movement or fires, friendly fires of several types were put into the suspected locations.

At 1627 hours, one of the gunships sighted three huts and many bunkers and fighting positions at coordinate YC325977. He was instructed to engage these.

At 1645 hours, C Company, moving east, reported their location as YC325977. This was just two hundred meters south of B Company. The 2d Platoon of A Company which had been sent to B Company's location with a resupply, arrived there at 1648 hours.

D Company had no enemy contact on the 12th and at 1724 hours, he reported his position as coordinate YC325989.

At 1829 hours, C Company, having engaged several enemy sightings SW of the upper LZ that afternoon, stated that he was pulling back from the contact area and digging in for the night. A moment later he reported that an estimated eleven RPG and mortar rounds fell into his old position to the west and that he was calling artillery on the suspected enemy location.

During the remaining hours of light, artillery and mortar defensive fires were adjusted in around the perimeter.

At 2000 hours, on 12 May the 3-187 was disposed as follows: A Company, Battalion Headquarters occupied the blocking position at coordinate YC325980; C Company at YC325978 with the 1st Platoon ambush at YC323979; D Company at YC323988 with a platoon ambush at YC323987.

The night was quiet with no enemy contact.

APPENDIX 4 (13 May) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, APACHE  
SNOW (3/187 Operations)

The first person to report on the Battalion Frequency on the morning of 13 May was Assault 11 (LFT). He stayed on station from 0645 hours until 0735 hours during which time they scouted to the west and south of the blocking position and engaged several hut and bunker complexes.

The FAC was next, at 0656 hours, with the first of ten airstrikes to be placed in support of the Battalion until 1900 hours that night.

At 0721 hours, C Company, moving east for half an hour already and recognizing by fire as they moved, reported that their lead element was receiving small arms fire. They requested permission to hold and strike the suspected enemy location with mortars and artillery. The request was granted.

B Company was next, at 0725, with a report that he was receiving AK-47 fire from his west. Fighters were overhead at the time and an immediate strike was placed on the enemy location.

At 0752, B Company reported that he had three of his troops slightly wounded.

Minutes later, C Company reported that he had five US WIA's.

At 0850 B Company requested a MEDEVAC for two of his wounded and also informed the Battalion Commander that he had US KIA.

The preponderance of enemy fires, which consisted of RPG, mortar and small arms, was coming from the vicinity of YC327978. For the next several hours, the Battalion Commander directed airstrikes, ARA, artillery and mortars into the area.

At 0920 C Company, pushing slowly eastward, reported enemy fires and movement from several directions in close to his position. He reported that the enemy were expertly camouflaged and that C Company was using maximum reconnaissance by fire as they moved.

D Company, who had moved out at first light, reported movement, but no enemy contacts, as he was reconnoitering in the vicinity of YC325990.

At 0956, B Company's elements, following fresh tracks to the east, ran into a nest of snipers and reported two more US WIA and one KIA.

The US response to these contacts was immediate and violent. Hardly a report of enemy contact occurred during this operation that there was not some type of air support overhead. An average of eight to ten airstrikes per day put Air Force Fighters overhead nearly fifty percent of the time. Continually on the outskirts of the immediate contact area, gunship scout teams prowled the area, engaged enemy movement and bunker complexes and were immediately available for close in support of the infantry.

For example, during this morning of contact for B and C Companies, there were at least four assault gunship teams, each at different times, in the area supporting them. Each team averaged about an hour on station. Also, by noon

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five airstrikes had been delivered in their support. During the rare moments that air support was not overhead, artillery and organic mortars fires were falling into these enemy locations. Final casualty figures would show the enemy paid tenfold for each casualty he inflicted on the 3/187.

At 1042, C Company reported that due to continuing enemy contact, he now suffered a total of two KIA's and eight WIA. A MEDEVAC was requested and the more seriously wounded were taken out. THUNDER 44 (LOH) who has been shuttling supplies to B and C Companies, evacuated eight of the less seriously wounded and the three KIA to the upper LZ. B Company, at this time, had sustained a total of five wounded and one KIA for the day.

C and B Companies sent in locations at 1058 hours; B was at YC325981 and C at YC325979. The enemy was fighting a determined delaying action, but the two companies continued their deliberate move toward the hill.

During the morning D Company had reconnoitered to the northeast and then turned to proceed southeast toward Hill 937. At 1227 hours, the 3d and 2d platoons had just moved through a stream bed at YC327989 and begun the move up the ridge toward Hill 937. The 1st platoon had been covering the stream crossing and, as they moved out, mortar and RPG's wounded seven, two seriously. The D Company Commander ordered the 1st platoon to move the wounded down into the stream bed, prepare a PZ and secure the area. He took the Company(-) southeast up the ridge to search for the suspected enemy position. By 1330, MEDEVAC 927 reported in, but the PZ was not ready and he departed to refuel. Meanwhile the Company(-) pushed further on up the ridge and the 1st platoon continued improving the PZ. ARA supported D Company as it moved up the hill.

At 1348 MEDEVAC 927 returned and, since the D Company PZ was still not ready, he was turned over to B Company who has been in continuing contact all day long and had now sustained more than ten WIA.

By 1450 hours, D Company(-) had reconnoitered approximately three hundred meters southeast up the ridge and were in the vicinity of YC325987.

At 1510, unknown to Battalion Headquarters, MEDEVAC 927, returned once more and D Company Commander directed him to the PZ. A few minutes later the Company Commander reported to the Battalion Commander that the MEDEVAC had been hit by RPG and has crashed. The 1st Platoon Sergeant, later describing what had happened, said that the ship had been hovering for a minute or two and had dropped the basket when it took a direct hit from the RPG. He insisted that the fire, only one RPG round, came from a ridge to the north. The ship came straight down on the 1st Platoon Command Group. Five men were killed (three crewmen and two from D Company) and three were injured (one crew member very seriously and two men from D Company) as a direct result of this crash.

The Battalion Commander ordered D Company to start moving the wounded back to the upper LZ. He also ordered A Company to send a platoon down to assist them.

D Company(-) moved back down the ridge and joined the 1st Platoon at 1600



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hours. The Company Commander confirmed the situation and the casualty figures personally and rendered his report to the Battalion Commander. He added that the helicopter had burned and was a total loss. He then reported that D Company was ready to start carrying the wounded out. The intention was to get the WIA's out first and return the following day for the dead.

By 1716 hours, the 3d Platoon, A Company, had linked up with D Company. At 1915 hours, however, D Company Commander called to say that one crew man was quite badly injured and that this slowed their movement. He recommended stopping for the night and moving to the upper LZ early the next morning. The Battalion Commander approved this; instructed them to make the wounded as comfortable as possible; and ordered the A Company Platoon to return to the blocking position.

Through the afternoon of the 13th, B and C Companies had continued maneuvering toward Hill 937 attempting to gain a favorable position for a major attack on the 14th. It was not an easy task. Both units maintained contact throughout the afternoon. B Company's contact with the enemy ceased at 1730 hours. C Company received mortars and small arms as late as 1935 hours and, though the enemy broke contact at 1941 hours, C Company continued observe movement and engaged it until 2000 hours.

As a result of the day's actions the Battalion had suffered thirt-three men WIA and 4 KIA. It was not until the next day, when the battalion penetrated the enemy bunker complex, that they were to confirm the damage inflicted on the enemy. Undoubtedly it was even greater than reported, since the enemy had all night to retrieve his dead and wounded.

At 2009 hours, A Company's 3d platoon returned to the blocking position.

At 2040 hours, D Company sighted moving lights several hundred meters to his north. Artillery was called in on the area and the lights dissappeared.

Spooky came on atation at this time and worked until 2314 hours.

The 3/187 NDP's for the night of 13/14 May were: A Company, Battalion Headquarters and Mortars at YC320989; B Company at YC324983; C Company at YC325981; and D Company at YC323989.

The Battalion now fully realized that the NVA were present in considerable strength in the vicinity of Hill 937 and the blocking position occupied by the Battalion Headquarters.

The alert posture for the Headquarters, Mortars and A Company was 100% until 2400 hours; 50% until 0300 hours; and 100% again until 0600 hours. Instructions were passed for a strict STAND-TO at 0500 hours. At that hour every man and officer on the blocking position was to be in a fighting position; mortar crews on their weapons; and every radio on the checked into the net. These alert percentages and STAND-TO criteria were maintained throughout the operation. STAND-TO was held daily at 0500 hours and 1900 hours. Controlled rest periods during the day sustained the alertness of the troops.

There was no action during the night of 13/14 May.

APPENDIX 5 (14 May) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, APACHE SNOW (3/187 Operations).

At 0630 hours, on 14 May the 2d platoon of A Company returned to D Company's NDP to carry the wounded back to the upper LZ.

The AF PAC, now a familiar voice and part of the daily scene reported on station at 0646 hours, and began the first of thirteen airstrikes spaced throughout the day.

The 14th of May should be considered the first concentrated attempt by the 3d Battalion, 187th to seize Hill 937. The plan was for D Company to attack from the north, after they had evacuated their wounded and recovered the dead from the crashed helicopter. B Company would attack from the west and C Company also from the west but on a finger 150 meters south of B company. All companies would be supported by an artillery prep.

At 0756 hours, as C Company began his deliberate move toward Hill 937. He reported movement to his west and south. Reacting to all such reports, the Battalion Commander continually instructed his company commanders to move somebody toward the suspected enemy location, to watch the friendly flanks, to use maximum reconnaissance by fire, to employ the 90mm and to keep moving and stay spread out. The Battalion Commander kept airstrikes, gunships, artillery and mortars striking the enemy. All fires were brought in as closely as possible without causing friendly casualties. Units identified their positions with smoke and the Battalion Commander insisted that marking rounds be fired by artillery and mortars on first rounds and after each substantial change in data.

At 0810 hours, B Company, moving east to the north of C Company, reported receiving one RPG and light AK-47 fire and at 0832 hours, he reported receiving additional RPG and small arms as well as mortar fire.

At 0843 hours, C Company reported that he was moving into a bunker complex on the military crest of the ridge and that he was running into small arms, RPG's hand grenades, and claymores employed by enemy troops from the top of the ridge.

At 0902 hours, B Company reported that two of his platoons were in contact.

At 0903 hours, C Company reported that his 3d Platoon had almost reached the top of the hill but was meeting extremely heavy resistance.

At 0931 hours, B Company reported that he had his lead platoon on top of the ridge and that they were receiving extremely heavy fire. At this time C Company reported movement and enemy fires from around his position, and he reported that he would have to pull back. The Battalion Commander approved and, in order not to expose B Company's southern flank, he ordered them to pull back also. B Company meanwhile reported discovering another bunker complex guarded by strands of claymores, booby traps and command detonated mines. In addition he reported many enemy bodies in the area of contact.

At 1200 hours the Battalion Commander reported to the Brigade S3 that he estimated there were at least two companies to a battalion of enemy on Hill 937.

At 1210 hours, B Company Commander reported that the top of the ridge was covered with blood, pieces of bodies, and enemy dead, but that he would have to wait to give an accurate figure on enemy K&As.

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During the rest of the day, B and C Companies evacuated wounded, received resupply and prepared for the next day's operations with the enemy were reported in the vicinity of the lower LZ from which the companies worked.

Clearer pictures of casualties and reports of enemy KIA's were sent to the Battalion Commander during the afternoon. B Company reported his strength at 86 and C Company at 70. They had started their procession with 114 and 135 respectively. The CO ordered them to establish NDP's in the vicinity of the lower LZ and informed them that A Company would relieve C Company on the 15th. He also sent a platoon of B Company to C Company's location to assist with the wounded.

At 1845 hours, the 3d Brigade Commander, Iron Raven, visited the 3/187. He stayed for about thirty minutes, talked with some of the troops and then departed.

During this day of fierce fighting by B and C Companies, D Company had been reconnoitering the area surrounding the downed helicopter.

The 2d Platoon of A Company, arrived at 0714, secured the previous day's wounded, and carried them back to the upper LZ.

D Company's 1st Platoon was sent back to the crash site to obtain the five bodies left there overnight. The 2d Platoon reconnoitered the ridge just north of the crash site. The 3d Platoon covered the trails in the vicinity of the NDP.

The 1st Platoon had moved to the crash site, secured the bodies and was enroute to the upper LZ by 1400 hours. There had been no sign of the enemy; but, on their return, an RPG attack wounded four. None was serious, however, and the platoon continued with its evacuation mission.

At 1610 hours, D Company Commander informed the Battalion Commander that the 1st Platoon would not reach the upper LZ by dark and that he had given them instructions to press on until 1830 hours at which time they were to drop the bodies and return to the company NDP.

In addition to the 1st Platoon's wounded, the 3d Platoon had sustained six WIA from RPG's.

At 1912 hours the 1/506 sent in NDP's which placed them approximately 2 K's to the southwest of the 3/187. On the evening of the 14th of May the 3/187 was disposed as follows: A Company, Battalion Headquarters and Mortars at YC320989; B Company(-) at YC324982 with 2d Platoon ambush at YC322981 and the 2d and 3d Platoon ambush at YC323982; C Company at YC324982; D Company(-) at YC323990 with two ambushes at YC323989 and YC323988. The intention for 15 May was to attack Hill 937 again before the enemy could bring in reinforcements. A Company was to relieve C Company on B's southern flank, but was to attack more from the south than C Company had. Since B Company nearly reached the top of the hill on the 14th, they were to attack again essentially in the same way due to the limited avenues of approach to Hill 937. C Company, was to occupy the blocking position on which the Battalion Headquarters was located. D Company, operating to the northeast, was to continue attacking in that area. The 1/506 was to move toward Hill 937 from the southwest and block enemy routes of escape and enemy reinforcing attempts through that area.

APPENDIX 6 (15 May) to ANNEK 6 (Executive Report, AFACHE  
SNW 13/187 Operations).

The 15th of May was the second attempt at Hill 937.

Hill 937, the AF FAC, reported on station at 0635 hours, with the first ten airstrikes to be placed on the hill.

In the morning, C and A Companies completed their exchange of positions i.e. C Company assuming the blocking position on the hill with the Battalion Headquarters, mortars and A Company in the attack position south of B Company. At approximately 1200 hours, the companies began the move toward Hill 937. The first contact reported was from B Company at 1316 hours. Enemy claymores and command detonated mines caused several US casualties. At this same time A Company, though not in contact, reported that the enemy was moving elements between him and B Company. The Battalion Commander coordinated the fires of the two companies and gunships into the draw between the hill and instructed them to keep abreast of one another as they moved forward. The enemy was employing claymores, RPG's, MG's and mortars, in addition to small arms and snipers. B Company reported that the enemy was well dug in and camouflaged and that the US troops received the greatest volume of fire when they were up and attempting to move, indicating the excellent training of the enemy. Both elements, however, continued to make steady progress up the hill, using maximum reconnaissance by fire, employing the 90mm cannister round, and creeping mortars and artillery to their front and flanks.

At 1400 hours, both companies were about 150 meters from the top of the hill and each had sustained no more than a dozen wounded. At 1400 hours, however, the ARA once again shot up a friendly unit. This time it was B Company's command group and resulted in 2 US KIA's and 14 WIA's. Included in the fourteen wounded were the Company Commander, the FO, RTO's and 1st Sergeant.

At 1359 hours, the Battalion Headquarters area received the first of four RPG rounds spaced about twenty minutes between each. Eight persons from the headquarters and five from C Company were wounded. Included were the Battalion Commander and the S3; neither was evacuated at the time.

By 1416 hours, the B Company wounded were being carried back to the lower LZ and another captain (planned to replace the S2) had taken command of B Company.

At 1500 hours A Company reported he was about 75 meters from the hill top of 937. B Company was out of radio contact due to the unfortunate strike on its command group. At 1512 hours, A Company reported movement around him.

At 1517 hours, the Battalion Commander briefed Brigade on the situation. He explained to Brigade that he doubted B Company could reach the top with its command group knocked out. The new B Company Commander had just taken over and had requested that he be allowed to pull back and sort out what he was. The Battalion Commander felt that A Company might make it without B, but he did not want to put a single, below strength company on the hill alone. He recommended that the two companies pull back to the NDEPs of the previous night and let the Air Force continue to bomb the hill. This was approved by Brigade.

APPENDIX 7 (16 May ) to ANNEX 4 (Reaction) to After Action Report, APOHE  
SWO (1/87 Operations).

At 0700 hours, Gender 6, (Ltr), reported ~~and~~ ~~scouted~~ and scouted the area west of the Headquarters location to the ~~west~~. He reported two fires that appeared to be the result of secondary explosions ~~reported by Spook's during~~ the night.

On the morning of the 16th, B and D Companies exchanged positions ~~and~~ ~~assisted~~. B Company returned to the upper LZ blocking position and secured ~~the~~ ~~eastern~~ half of the perimeter. D Company, after a complete resupply, moved down to the lower LZ.

At 1116 hours, the Battalion was informed of the locations for the 1/506. That unit reported two companies in light contact. Very little forward progress had been made from his NDP's and, consequently, the coordinated attack was postponed until the 17th.

While the two companies selected to make the next attack, D and A Companies, were making preparations, the Battalion Commander continued to direct air strikes and artillery on the objective.

Engineer support continued to assist the Battalion in enlarging the upper LZ, blowing a 360 degree clearance for the mortars and generally improving the defenses of the blocking position.

At 1415 hours, the 24th Corps Commander visited the Rakkasans and stayed for about an hour.

There were no significant contacts on the 16th. At dark the unit locations were: A Company at YC21985 with 4 LP's; B Company at YC320989 with 2 ambushes; C Company at YC320989 with 1 platoon ambush; D Company at YC321986 with 1 platoon ambush.

Twelve skyspots were cleared in the vicinity of the Battalion mainly to the west along the border.

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At 1522 hours, as A Company was unloading for the airstrike, they reported that the enemy was counter attacking down the ridge to their south in an attempt to flank them. The Battalion Commander sent A Company to put into the area and to protect his rear. Artillery fire was directed at the enemy and brought in close to the company. At 1531 hours, A Company reported that his rear element was in contact and at 1537 hours informed that he had one US KIA and 6 or 7 WIA's. At 1603 hours, A and B Company linked up at the lower LZ.

At 1700 hours, A Company reported total casualties for the day at 1 KIA and 15 WIA's; B Company had 2 KIA's and 19 WIA's all but five of B Company's WIA's were caused by the ARA ship. The magnitude of this mishap could not be fully appreciated at the time. On this day, sustaining moderate casualties, the 3-187th had nearly attained the top of the hill only to have the momentum of the coordinated attack interrupted by the ARA strike on B Company's command section. Three days later the 3-187th was to suffer its 2d worst day of casualties in its third attempt to take the objective. Even though the hill was pounded day and night on the 16th and 17th by air, artillery and mortars, one can only assume from the ferocity of the fighting on the 18th, as compared to that on the 15th, that the enemy must have reinforced considerably.

At 1820 hours Spooky was requested for 2000 hours, and throughout the night to be employed on Hill 937 and west of the headquarters location toward the Taction border.

By 1914 hours all the casualties had been evacuated. At 2126 hours, F Company reported his strength as 65. A Company still had approximately 700 men.

The evening defensive positions for 15 May were: A and B Companies together at the lower LZ at YC320986. C Company, Battalion Headquarters, and mortars occupied the blocking position at YC320989 with 1st platoon A Company ambushing at YC318988. D Company at YC321988 was just northeast of the blocking position with a platoon size ambush 700 meters to the north of the NDF.

Several fireballs were planned at odd times through the night.

At 2230 hours, Brigade called to confirm plans for a coordinated two pronged attack using gas (CS) to be conducted on the 16th. The concept was that two companies of 3/187 would move toward Dong Ap Bia to a position from which they could exert pressure on the enemy and support by fire from the west while the 1/506 made its assault from the southwest. The scheme never had a chance for the 16th, because the 1-506 was too far from the hill.

At 2300 hours, C Company detected movement on the perimeter and employed grenades against the suspected enemy location. At 2330 hours, C Company again reported movement. The Battalion Commander cautioned the company to refrain from using small arms or MG's until absolutely necessary. He instructed the unit to be sure that they did have movement and to continue to use hand grenades in order to deny the enemy knowledge of the exact grace of the perimeter.

The movement at this time was ~~a large draw off~~ the western edge of the perimeter. At 2340 hours, three to four enemy grenades, or comparable explosive devices, were hurled at the perimeter. The US troops responded with more hand grenades. At 2400 hours troops were ordered to continue the 100% alert. Thirty minutes later more movement was reported and at 0038 hours several more small satchel charges or grenades were thrown toward the perimeter. All landed just short and there were no US casualties. The S3 called Brigade and requested to keep Spooky on station throughout the night. At 0130 hours the perimeter received sporadic small arms fire. The Battalion Commanded instructed the line to put some M-79 fire in the suspected locations which now were south and west of the perimeter. He then asked Brigade to increase the volume of his H&I fires and to fire his defensive targets. He also emphasized the need for Spooky or ARA,

At 0200 hours, Shadow (C119) with a searchlight fire guide capability and ordinance similar to Spooky reported on station. The artillery and mortars were canceled and Shadow went to work. At 0240 hours, Hawk 19, a light fire team of Cobras, checked in and went to work in conjunction with Shadow. Shadow, who by now was oriented and placing accurate and close fires to the south and west, merely kept his light on and Hawk 19 went in under him to shoot in the target area.

While the two were working C Company reported more enemy satchels, MG fire was placed into the draw to the west, after a soldier reported seeing two of the enemy.

About 0400 hours, Shadow left station (Hawk 19 had already departed) and the artillery and mortars resumed until 0425 hours, when Spooky reported in and went to work.

As late as 0510 hours, C Company continued to report movement. Evidently, if the enemy had planned an attempt at the perimeter, he decided against it when confronted by the alert response of the troops to his movement and the continuous mix of air and indirect fire support. 1st light check revealed 14 enemy KIA.

APPENDIX 8 (17 May) to ANNEX C - (Exception) to After Action Report, APACHE SNOW (3/187 Operations).

The night passed quietly with no enemy contact. Lights were observed on Hill 937 and artillery and mortars were adjusted on them.

At 0855 hours, the Battalion Headquarters received locations for the 1/506, A Company and Battalion Headquarters at YC328969; B Company at YC319972, and C Company at YC327965.

The 1/506 had gained about 300 meters from the previous day's position, but they were still too far away to be considered in any immediate plan for a coordinated attack with the 3/187th.

At 0910 hours, Bilk 35, the AF FAC, reported on station with fighters carrying 1000 pound fuze delay bombs. With him in the aircraft was a 3/187th soldier who had been up the hill. It was hoped that he could point out to the FAC the precise locations on the hill that the enemy was concentrating his defenses.

At 1038 hours, the Battalion Commander's callsign (BlackJack) was transmitted and repeated on the battalion net. The voice was obviously that of a Vietnamese. It was assumed to be the enemy and Brigade was notified.

At 1024 hours, Brigade conducted an artillery CS test fire on Hill 937.

At 1055 hours, as the third airstrike of the day began, A Company Commander reported that he saw an enemy body tossed into the air. From the Battalion headquarters location, one could observe also what appeared to be bodies suspended from trees.

At 1220 hours, locations for the 1/506 showed that their two lead companies had only progressed a hundred meters since their 0850 hours report.

Throughout the day newsmen arrived on the scene.

At 1300 hours, the Battalion S3 asked for a report on the progress of the 1/506. Brigade informed him that they were in essentially the same locations and that their A Company was running into stiff resistance from enemy in bunkers. Once again the coordinated attack was postponed, pending forward progress by the 1/506.

Meanwhile the 3/187 stored extra ammunition, to include concussion and CS grenades, at the lower LZ. Additional flak jackets were distributed to the companies destined to make the attack on the 18th. Defenses at the blocking position were improved and RIF's were sent out to the west, northwest and north east.

During the afternoon, A and D Company Commanders, with a platoon each, reconnoitered forward to the hill in order to determine a position from which they could best support the impending attack by the 1/506. It was agreed by both commanders that they would simply have to move up the hill until contact was made before they could exert any appreciable pressure on the enemy's defenses.

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Both platoons returned before dark and at 1730 hours D Company Commander reported hearing a burst of AK47 fire that was apparently shot up in the air. He presumed that it was an enemy OP alert signal.

At 1955 hours, the Battalion Headquarters received three or four enemy rockets. They landed about three hundred meters southwest of the position, however, and there were no casualties.

At 2020 hours, the Brigade S2 informed the Battalion S2 that the enemy occupying Hill 937 were from the 29th NVM Regiment.

The NDP's for the 3/187 were essentially the same as they had been on the 14th, Ambush and LP locations, of course, were varied some.

At 2155 hours, NDP's were received for the 1/506 which showed them to be where they were at 1300 hours.

With this knowledge, the Battalion S3, after conferring with the Battalion Commander, called Brigade and made a strong recommendation that on the following day the 3/187 not attempt to go in alone again should the 1/506 not show more progress. It was agreed that the mission for the two 3/187 companies was to support, by fire, as the 1/506 attacked from the southwest. The Battalion S3 explained that when the order was given to move, A and D Companies would move forward to make contact and continue to move forward until they were exerting pressure on the enemy's defenses. They would attempt to not become decisively engaged until the 1/506 was in position and ready to go for the hill.

At 2130 hours, Spooky 12 arrived and he was directed against Hill 937 and the ridge running west from the blocking position to the border.

APPENDIX 9 (18 May) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, APACHE  
SNOW (3/187 Operations)

Another Spooky came on station at 0453 hours, and worked until 0538 hours.  
The night was uneventful, however.

At 0630 hours, Bill 14 an AF FAC, reported on station.

At 0751 hours, Assault 27, a helicopter scout team, reported fresh tracks  
and what appeared to be a recently dug grave two kilometers to the northwest  
of the blocking position in the area that Spooky had been firing the past few  
nights.

A Company reported at 0815 hours, that they had departed their NDP and were  
moving to their attack position.

\* Brigade informed the Battalion Commander of the sequence of events for the  
attack:

- 1st - prior to 0830 hours, airstrikes in support of each battalion.
- 2d - 0830 to 0900 hours, artillery register on the hill.
- 3d - 0900 to 0905 hours, artillery CS prep.
- 4th - 0905 to 0925 hours, regular artillery prep.
- 5th - 0925 hours, troops move out.

The schedule was a flexible one and was immediately slipped. - The airstrikes  
were put in for the 3/187th, finishing at 0914 hours. The artillery regis-  
tration began at 0915 hours, and lasted about 20 minutes. The first rounds  
of CS were on the ground at 0940 hours. The CS round accuracy was poor,  
however, and most of them landed in the vicinity of A Company located in an  
attack position three to four hundred meters southwest of the registration  
area. This was not the catastrophe one might think. The gas prep was sparse  
and would probably have had little effect on the enemy even if it had been  
on target. The day was bright and clear and there was a gentle breeze of 4  
to 6 knots from the southwest, so the gas didn't linger.

At 0955 hours, Brigade informed that the CS prep would be continued dispensing  
the gas from aircraft.

At 0957 hours, A Company reported receiving RPG's and small arms fire from  
the southwest.

Shortly after 1000 hours, the ADC, Hawkeye, made the decision to curtail the  
use of gas and start the artillery prep; it began at 1010 hours. The  
artillery prep lasted for fifteen minutes with the last rounds on the ground  
at 1025 hours. By this time D and A Companies had moved to within 200 meters

\* of the hilltop. E Company had reported light contact and A Company had  
been receiving fire on his right flank from the northern side of the ridge to  
his southwest. This was the ridge that B Company 1/506 was supposed to be  
attacking over but all units of the 1/506 were too far away to be of any  
assistance. The Battalion Commander, airborne in a LOH, instructed A Company  
to move to the northern edge of the ridge that he was on, in order to get  
cover from the fires to his southwest. The enemy was also down in the area  
to A Company's north and A Company was instructed to use maximum recon by fire  
to his left flank as he moved up.

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At 1058 hours, D Company reported that he was 150 to 200 meters from the top, and was maintaining a heavy volume of fire on the enemy in support of the 1/506 but the volume of enemy fire was increasing.

At 1059 hours, the following locations for 1/506 were received: A and B with the Headquarters, were at YC328968, one hundred meters back from their last forward most plat; B Company 1/506 was at YC320973, a gain of 200 meters but still a kilometer from A Company 3/187th. Included with this report of their locations was the message that they were receiving small arms and RPG's but were making good progress.

At 1103 hours, D Company reported seeing NVA "all around him" and that he was "shooting them up". A Company reported at 1104 hours, that his lead element had yet to make hard contact. At 1105 hours, D Company Commander personally confirmed two NVA dead. At 1128 hours, however, D Company reported receiving a heavy volume of small arms and automatic weapons fire, RPG's and claymores and that he was taking heavy casualties. Most of the fire was coming from the trees on the northern edge of the bombed out area on the hilltop and from bunkers to his front.

At 1137 hours, A Company reported being about 75 meters from the top and firing in support of 1/506.

The following report came from the 1/506 at 1141 hours: B-1/506 had moved only 100 meters and is receiving fire from all sides - mortars, small arms and RPG; A Company 1/506 is also in contact.

At 1142 hours, D Company Commander reported that he was hit bad and was turning over command to his 2d Platoon Leader. Eventually, all of D Company's officers were wounded.

At 1150 hours, both companies were receiving a heavy barrage of 60 and 82mm mortar fires. The Battalion Commander called for artillery on the suspected sites, which were on the eastern side of Hill 937, and also requested an airstrike on that area.

By 1151 hours, A Company reported incoming small arms and RPG and reported that his 1st platoon leader had been hit.

At 1158 hours, Bilk 35 the AF FAC, who had put so many strikes on to Dong Ap Bia, reported in and announced that he would have some fighters overhead in about 15 minutes.

At 1130 hours, C Company departed the Lower LZ to carry ammunition up to D Company and also to carry back casualties to the lower LZ. C Company also had a be prepared mission to pass through D Company and take up the attack on order.

At 1201 hours, A Company reported having 5 to 6 seriously wounded.

At 1202 hours, C Company was receiving automatic weapons fire and reported that he had a platoon leader hit. At 1206 hours, C Company reported that

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he was pinned down and receiving RPG and mortar fire. The Battalion Commander, above in a LOH, ordered him to spread his men out, get moving and get the ammunition up to D Company.

The majority of the fire on Company C was coming from the southern edge of a ridge running northwest off the hill. The Battalion Commander shifted the mortars into the area and called for more artillery into the same place.

At 1213 hours, Assault 26 a (LFT) put a strike into the area from which A Company was receiving most of its fire; about three hundred meters from his position on an azimuth of 300 degrees.

At 1214 hours Bilk 34, FAC, was overhead with fighters.

D Company reported again at 1218 hours, that he was receiving a heavy volume of fire. The Battalion Commander told him to hold fast; not try to move forward; and that C Company was on the way up to reinforce him, to resupply ammo, and assist with his casualties. By this time, B Company, too, had a platoon carrying ammunition to the lower LZ. It was also to assist with the security of that area and help with the evacuation of the wounded.

At 1229 hours, while the platoon was enroute, the ARA unknown to be in the area again shot up the friendlies. One man was killed and four men wounded from B Company platoon. At this point, the Battalion Commander ordered the ARA out of his area.

Meanwhile, C Company enroute to D Company's location, reported a continuous volume of mortars, RPG's and small arms coming at his left flank from the north. He was still pushing toward to D Company, but the forward progress was difficult.

At 1231 hours, A Company reported that he had eight WIA's and was holding in place. He had already dispatched an ammo resupply party to the lower LZ.

At 1239 hours, the Battalion Commander, who had landed to allow his LOH to refuel, was airborne again. He immediately started adjusting the mortars in closer to his companies had the artillery moved to make it more effective, and demanded that C Company spread out, put out a greater volume of fire and move faster up to D Company's location.

At 1251 hours, bilk 35 put an airstrike into the front of A Company's position. The approach was a difficult one for the jets because of the disposition of friendlies, but the pilots did a magnificent job. This time, with the FAC and Battalion Commander in the air working together, they managed to put the strike precisely where it was needed.

For the next half hour the companies held in position and the enemy was hit with a concentrated mix of napalm strikes, gunships, mortars and artillery, as well as a maximum volume of US small arms, MG, M-79 LAW, and 90mm. At 1321 hours C Co reported that he had one of his reinforcing units linked up with D Company and that another was right behind with ammunition. The Battalion Commander ordered him to move up personally and take what remained of D Company under his command. He "rogered" and stated that his First Sergeant had just been hit.

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At 1336 hours, the Battalion Commander returned to the Headquarters location. Incidentally, at the blocking position there was a clearing on the southeast side of the hill from which the entire 3/187 effort could be observed. Though not the same as being in a LOH, it was a good ground-observation and control position.

At 1350 hours A Company, who by now had effected his ammunition resupply, reported that he was still receiving RPG's, mortars and small arms. At 1357 hours, the Brigade S3 informed the Battalion Commander that A/2/506 would arrive later in the afternoon to reinforce the 3/187.

The Battalion S3 kept a continual check on the progress of the 1/506, hoping for some progress in that direction to take the pressure off the units of the 3/187. Throughout the day, however, the 1/506 forward progress was slow. Evidently F/1/506 had made a heavy contact and had moved off the ridge to the south west of A/3, 187 and had gone east to join the main body of the 1/506. This action was unknown to the 3/187.

With casualties beginning to mount, assistance from the 1/506 not forthcoming, and, adding to the difficulty, a torrent of rain falling, the Battalion Commander recommended to Brigade that he once more pull back the 3/187 to avoid taking unacceptable casualties. His recommendation was approved by the Brigade Commander and at 1432 hours on the 18th the three companies reported that they were pulling back. A Company was to hold initially and support by fire to the front of D and C Companies while they withdrew. All Companies, however, continued to have contact with the enemy as they were pulling back. The enemy were in trees along the ridge to the north and northeast of A and C Companies and in the draw between those two and A Company. Airstrikes, artillery and mortars, in addition to the fires of the ground troops, got the companies back down the hill.

At 1437 hours, the Battalion Commander briefed the ADC, Hawkeye on the situation. It was agreed that the enemy must be reinforcing considerably from across the border. As the enemy KIA's were wearing clean new uniforms and steel helmets and gas masks.

At 1456 hours, the Battalion reported from Brigade all possible air support for the night i.e. Spooky, gunships, ARA.

It was felt that the enemy, having previously attacked the 3/187th's blocking position, might try attacking there again in order to divert attention from Dong Ap Bia. Even during daylight the troops manning this position, who were not taking rest breaks, were kept alert, OP's were manned and squad RIF's were sent out three to four hundred meters in all directions. Sporadic contacts by the headquarters and blocking unit was experienced. Included in the request at 1456 hours, for air support, was a request for increased MEDEVAC's. A heavy rain was falling, visibility was less than 20 meters, and the northern A Shau was soaked in. US WIA's were lying on the LZ and a reported 15 to 20 more were on the way. Sixty three were eventually evacuated.

At 1526 hours, the Battalion Commander, 2/506, arrived at 3/187 Headquarters in order to discuss the arrival of his A Company in about one hour.

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At 1507 hours, the first MEDEVAC departed the area. Through breaks in the weather, use of ICG chaps, the ICH and an offer to use the Division Commander's helicopter, all the wounded were evacuated before dark.

At 1555 hours, Thunder 44 ICH reported that he had evacuated all the serious WIA's from A, C, and D Companies and was starting to evacuate the KIA's.

Word at this point about the ICH shuttle, between the upper and lower LZ's is appropriate. The ICH and its pilots were of invaluable assistance to the 3/187th during the operation. Thunder 44 (and others) became a call sign to signify the whole effort. In the dark, in the rain, through indirect fire, onto LZ's and FZ's receiving fire, they performed in a most courageous manner. The lower LZ was located about 400 meters to the southeast of the upper LZ. It was the key intermediate area between the main LZ and the objective. They could bring supplies, key personnel, and ammo only as far as the upper LZ. The MEDEVAC's could land only on the upper LZ. Consequently, it fell to the ICH to shuttle wounded and immediately needed items between the two LZ's. On many occasions, when time and the situation demanded, the ICH hovered right down into the area where the companies were attacking, in order to deliver critically needed items.

The first ships with the troops of A/2/506 arrived on the upper LZ at 1630 hours, and were completed by 1725 hours. Between lifts of the A/2/506, the Division Commander, Lucky Eagle, stooped in to visit with the Raikasans and stayed for about 30 minutes. It was a timely visit and gave the officers and men of the 3/187 a great boost.

At 1645 hours, the Battalion Commander was informed that some US KIA's and possibly MIA's had been left on Hill 937 when D and C Companies pulled back. The Battalion Commander ordered C Company Commander to go back up and get them, after both units had rendered an accurate accounting.

At 1745 hours, A Company reported that his men had reported killing at least 15 of the enemy, but that he had not canvassed all of his troops yet.

Speedy 11, FAC, had fighters with 1000 pound bombs, at 1751 hours, and continued pounding Hill 937.

At 1800 hours, the following casualty figures were reported to the Battalion Commander: C Company WIA 27; KIA 11; D Company WIA 23; KIA 10; MIA 12; A Company WIA 10, KIA 0.

The corrected battalion totals were: WIA (hostile) 60, (friendly) 4, total WIA 64; KIA (hostile) 13, (friendly) 1, total KIA 14.

At 1850 hours, the Battalion S2 sent the enemy casualty figures, inflicted by 3/187th troops, to the Brigade S2. A Company 27 KIA; F Company None; C Company 22 KIA; D Company 63+ KIA.

At 1931 hours, the Battalion Headquarters position received approximately ten enemy rounds (suspected 82mm) from the northwest at a distance of 600 meters. Mortars were already laid on the area and the response was immediate. The artillery, which was firing in DT's to the north-northwest, already had data for the suspected area from previous nights. Mortar and artillery

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Shots rained on the target for approximately ten minutes, receiving no further fire, the enemy mortar was presumed to be neutralized. All enemy rounds had fallen short, and there were no US casualties.

Spooky came on station at 2003 hours, but was delayed minutes later to go to work for the 1/506 as they were reported to be in contact with the enemy.

Positions for the 3/187th on 18 May were: A Company at YC322983, with ambush at YC322983; C Company and D Company at YC323984; B Company and A/2/506 were at the perimeter at the blocking position, YC320989.

D Company occupied the northern half of the perimeter with a platoon size ambush to the north (YC320991), and A/2/506 occupied the southern portion with a platoon size ambush to the west (YC318988).

At 2111 hours, the Battalion Commander reminded Brigade that Spooky was no longer working for the 3/187th and requested that the 1/506 keep him on their side of the fire coordination line (FCL) so that the 3/187th could continue with its fire support program. FCL's using the 97.8 and the 32.8 grid lines had been established.

At 2225, the Brigade discussed the multi-battalion operations for the 19th and 20th with the Battalion Commander. Essentially these plans were to commit two additional battalions into the Dong Ap Bia campaign. Around noon on the 19th, the 2/501 would be combat assaulted into an LZ approximately 1500 meters east of Hill 937 and the 2/3 ARVN would be combat assaulted into an LZ approximately 2000 meters southeast of the hill. All four battalions would be in position by dark on the 19th and early on the 20th they would attack the hill.

At 2332 hours, the Battalion Commander informed the companies of this plan and requested they confirm their strength figures. The following were reported: A Company 83; B Company 78; C Company 76; D Company 57; and A Company 2/506 98,

APPENDIX 10 (19 May) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report, AFACME  
SNOW (3/187 Operations).

Shadow came on station at 0700 hours and worked the Hill and border region. While working just east of the border, about 1500 meters to the west of the 3/187th, he reported several fairly big secondary explosions. This was the same area in which Spooky reported secondaries on a previous night.

Spooky's went in on suspected infiltration routes throughout the night.

The troops on the LZ perimeter continued with the 100/50/100% alert schedule and fired their fireballs. The night was quiet.

At 0618 hours, Speedy II, FAC, reported that he had a set of fighters inbound with "Snake and Nape". ETA 0630 hours.

At 0657 hours, A Company Commander cautioned that someone had been popping purple smoke continuously since the FAC was on station. A check was made through Brigade with all units in the area. No body was presently marking anything with purple smoke. All friendlies in the immediate area had marked with smoth, but none was using purple.

At 0713 hours, Speedy II announced another set of fighters on station.

Assault 24, LFT, who had been working since 0704 hours, reported sighting more purple smoke on the ridge line 300 meters southwest of A Company.

Speedy finished his airstrike at 0738 hours, and left the 3/187th area to put in a strike for 1-506.

On 19 May, there was a total of seven airstrikes put on the eastern slopes and on top of Hill 937, in support of the 3/187th. Also, Assault (LFT) roamed the area all day drawing the enemy's fire and engaging him.

Early in the morning, C and A (3/187th) Company Commanders were brought up to the Battalion Headquarters where they met the Company Commander, A/2/506. All were briefed on the plans for the remainder of the day and the attack on the 20th. Each was given an aerial VR of the objective.

D Company was brought to the upper LZ and A/2/506 replaced it at the lower LZ.

The Battalion Commander intended that, during the day, the three companies prepare completely for the attack and be in their attack positions and dug in by nightfall. On the 20th, A/2/506 was to attack up the northern face of the hill into the trees from which D and C Companies had received the majority of their fires on the 18th. C Company, in the middle, was to attack on generally the same line of advance that they had used in reinforcing D Company on the 18th. A Company which had sustained only light casualties on the 18th, was to take the southern flank but attempt to keep its forces protected from the anticipated enemy fire from the southwest.

\*Orders were to move deliberately; bypass nothing; and take out all resistance to the flanks.

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The rest of the morning was used to stockpile ammunition at the lower LZ; check every man going into the attack for a flak jacket; and generally equip and prepare for the impending assault on Hill 937. **DECLASSIFIED**

At 0925 hours, the Brigade S3 informed the Battalion Commander that the had a helicopter crash (not as a result of enemy action) on it's PZ and to hold off moving 3/187th elements. Actually, the 3/187th units had more than enough time to meet whatever plan that evolved. The distances to the three units' attack positions were not more than an hour for C and A Company and only slightly longer for A/2-506.

It was already apparen that even with the whole day at their disposal some of the other battalions might not be at their assigned LD's by dark.

For the troops of the 3/187th and attached A/2-506, the 19th was a time to get set just as they wanted for the attack.

The Rakksan mortarmen, however, guided by the Battalion Commander, who was sometimes at their ground position and sometimes in a LOH, spent the whole day firing into suspected enemy locations and obtaining data for specific points on the hill that would be fired as the companies moved forward the following day. From their two tubes they fired more than three hundred rounds of 81mm on the 18th and again on the 20th; plus another 70-80 WP each day.

At 1050 hours, D Company reported seeing one NVA body fly through the air due to an air strike on hill 937. Another body could be seen hanging from a tree. By this time the formerly triple-canopied top of Dong Ap Bia was bald and with each airstrike and each arty prep the canopy peeled back more exposing the shells of bunkers destroyed by the pounding.

At 1155 hours the Brigade S3 informed the Battalion Commander that the artillery prep for the 2/3 ARVN LZ would begin at 1230 hours and continue for 15 minutes. He confirmed the LZ location as YC341976. The 2/3 ARVN would assault with 550 troops. Upon the completion of their assault, the 2/501, with 500 troops, would be inserted at YC333991.

At 1238 hours, A Company 2/506, while maneuvering into their attack position, reported engaging a sniper in a tree in the vicinity of YC322985.

At 1306 hours, the Battalion Commander instructed B Company to RIF about 1000 meters to the west and at 1345 hours, two patrols departed.

From 1416 hours until 1521 hours, the Battalion Commander was airborne in a LOH, flying low over Hill 937 to get a good look at enemy positions and to assess the effects of the US fires on them.

At 1421 hours, the Brigade reported that the 2/3 ARVN would complete their CA into the LZ at YC341976 in approximately ten minutes. Their LZ was cold. As a visual recognition symbol, the ARVN troops would be wearing red and yellow arm bands.

The Battalion Commander, 3/187 while directing airillery and mortars from the LOH, called at 1432 hours to instruct the Battalion S3 to tell Brigade that Artillery fires in support of the 1/506 were being on the 3/187th. **DECLASSIFIED**

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Though these two battalions, and on the 20th ~~two more~~ battalions, converged on the same general area, there was no major ~~problem or incident~~ with fires as limited by this FCL.

At 1447 hours, the Brigade S3 announced that the 2/3 ARVN LZ completion ~~time~~ was 1430 hours, and that the 2/501 would begin their CA shortly.

The 2/501 made their assault later in the afternoon onto a cold LZ and commenced their RIF to the south toward Dong Ap Bia.

The 1/506 had reported to Brigade, at 1600 hours, that its B Company was at YC327973 and that its A Company in that vicinity also had made no contact with the enemy that day.

At 1611 hours, A/2-506 confirmed that they had killed the sniper fired on earlier.

Skyspots were cleared at 1715 hours; with the 3/187th requesting priority for three on the border to the west. ARC lights and skyspots were planned for numerous locations on this night as they had been for other nights during the operation.

At 1750 hours, A Company reported hearing an enemy mortar several hundred meters from their location (YC324984) on an azimuth of 210 degrees. The area was immediately pounded by counter mortar fire and even ~~suallly~~ by artillery. The enemy rounds did not fall on any of the 3/187th locations. At 1915 hours, B Company reported spotting several NVA carrying a mortar at YC314993 or about 300 meters to the NW of the upper LZ. The enemy force was taken under fire by MG's, mortars, and artillery and was not seen or heard from again.

At 2046 hours, the 3/187th received NDP's for the 1/506: A Company at YC327974; B Company at YC324976; C Company at YC327968 also Battalion Headquarters. Their forward progress had been about 100 meters from the previous NDP's.

Earlier, Brigade had sent coordinates to dictate forward progress for lines of departure (LD) that the four battalions would ~~make~~ by dark on the 19th. These were: 3/187th from the NW YC326989. This was well behind the forward progress of the attached A2/506's forward progress. The other attacking companies, of course, were already poised at the bottom of the hill.

2/501 from the NE YC331989 they had inserted about a kilometer ~~NE~~ of this in the mid to late afternoon and did not quite make their LD by dark. Their NDP was in the vicinity of YC339975.

The 2/3 ARVN were to reach YC339975 and did ~~not~~ easily.

The 1/506 were to reach YC328979 and they were there at night ~~fall~~ on the 19th.

On the night of 19 May, elements of the 3/187th were disposed as follows: A Company (-) at YC324984 with the 1st Platoon ambush at YC323984 and 2d Platoon ambush at YC323983, they employed 2 LP's.

APPENDIX 10 Cont.

C Company located in a combined position with A Company, had its ~~30 positions~~ ~~ambushing~~ at YC325983. C Company put out one ~~in addition~~.

D Company still at the lower LZ, employed one LP. D Company's mission for the 20th was to provide security for the lower LZ and provide ammunition and casualty carrying parties in support of the attacking companies.

B Company manned the blocking position.

A/2/506 was at YC326987 with 3 LP's.

Generally this is the way the four battalions were displaced on the night of 19-20 May:

The 2/501, to the NE still had a mile of rough uphill terrain to climb before they reached the hill top; they were not to make it on the 20th, until several hours after the Rakkasans.

The ARVN troops, a kilometer or better to the SE, had an easier approach and with light resistance would reach the eastern side of the hilltop about 2 hours and a half after H-Hour.

The 1/506, to the SW, in the general vicinity of the past few days, were to continue at about the same rate on the 20th. Their casualties on the 20th; however would be their heaviest of the operation.

The 3/187th units, in a position up tight to the enemy's main defenses, had Dong Ap Bia's western face coming at them in the night. Tomorrow they would sit on top of Hill 937 approximately two hours after H-Hour.

APPENDIX 11 (20 May) to ANNEX C (Execution) to After Action Report,  
APACHE SNOW (3/187 Operations)

At 0001 hours, on the 20th of May, ~~the same entry that had been entered~~ for the past nine days was made ~~once more~~: Journal ~~opened~~ 3/187 continues operations in assigned AO vicinity of the A Shau Valley.

The first daylight activity was Stand-To, it began at 0530 hours, and relaxed at 0600 hours. Defensive fires were included in this Stand-To.

Speedy 11, PAC, reported on station at 0633 hours, with his usual wares: snake and naps.

Enemy fire from small arms cracked over the Battalion CP area at 0634 hours, as if to tell the 3/187 that the enemy was still there. The perimeter returned fire to the suspected locations west of the upper LZ. Brigade was asked to send a pink team out to take a look. A pink team already on the way, arrived at 0640 hours, and was asked to scout west of the upper LZ.

Instructions were passed to the perimeter to periodically shoot up trees and other possible sniper locations for the next ten to fifteen minutes. Meanwhile, the Bn CO had put in the airstrike. An explosion, followed immediately by the cry for "medic", interrupted morning shaving at 0705. One of B Company's LP's was hit by the shrapnel of an RPG fired from a draw to the northwest of the upper LZ. The area was shot up and a squad RIF sent out to investigate, reported negative contact. A MEDEVAC was brought in and the evacuation was completed by 0735 hours.

Another airstrike had since begun against Hill 937, and Assault 28, LFT, was working to the west.

At 0745 hours, A Company 2/506, reported that his troops had killed one enemy soldier. The enemy KIA had walked directly up to their perimeter carrying a grenade with the pin pulled and they fired him up with small arms. He didn't appear to be on dope. He had no insignia. In his possession were a tobacco pouch, song books, and a paper with what appeared to be coordinates on it.

Two ships inbound at 0810 hours, with newsmen. At 0813 hours, Speedy 11 reported on station with the 3d of 7 airstrikes for the 3/187 on D-Day. At 0904 hours the Brigade S3 informed the Battalion Headquarters that the artillery prep would begin in two minutes.

At 0917 hours, the Brigade S3 informed the Bn S3 to instruct the 3/187 units to hold in place once contact with the enemy was made and to wait for the coordinated move of the 1/506 and the 2/501 before continuing the assault on Hill 937. The Brigade Commander would give the order to move out.

At 0942 hours, the Brigade S3 informed the Bn CO that there was mortar fire falling too close to the 2/3 ARVN. The CO informed Brigade that they were not the 3/187 mortars as they were not firing.

At 0950 hours, the 2/3 ARVN, reported mortar fire falling to their front and rear. At 0958 hours, with two minutes of artillery prep remaining, the Bn CO passed last minute reminders to the troops. He was particularly anxious for A/2/506 to get fires into the wooded area to C Company's front. The artillery seemed to increase in intensity as H-hour approached. The fires which included 105, 125, and 8-inch were accurate and intense. This prep was the best artillery effort witnessed by the 3/187 during the entire operation. The troops by now were standing in the door.

APPENDIX 11 (20 May) Cont

All wore flak jackets and had more than two basic loads of ammunition. Concussion and CS grenades were also carried. They did not realize at the time, but only one man, a soldier from A/2/506 would ~~be~~ return that day. Not a man balked and at 1000 hours, when the word came from Brigade that the artillery prep was over, they assaulted the hill.

At 1003 hours, the Battalion Commander requested that Brigade have the 2/3 ARVN mark their lead element with purple smoke and the lead element, 2/501, mark with yellow. He requested that they use those colors exclusively and that they keep out continuous smoke.

The 3/187 units had met only light resistance by 1015 hours, and continued pressing up the hill behind their mortar fires. Still, the Bn CO, overhead in a LOH, cautioned them to get spread out, stay alert, recon by fire, and by-pass nothing on their immediate flanks.

By 1020 hours, the 3/187 was 125 meters from the military crest of the hill. The 2/3 ARVN to their southeast, were also making fast gains toward the top.

At 1027 hours, the Bn CO reported that all 3/187 units were abreast, approximately 100 meters from the military crest of the hill, and still climbing.

By 1031 hours, A/2/506 reached the first bunkers on the northwestern face of the hill. They reported no resistance. Still they were instructed to approach the structures carefully and destroy them before moving beyond them.

The initial lull was deceptive and at 1035 hours, the battle of wills began once more. C Company reporting receiving RPG's. The Bn CO urged him to counter with his 90mm and to press quickly for the military crest which was less than 50 meters from him. The enemy was still on the hill in force, however, and at 1037 hours, D Company reported receiving heavy automatic weapons fire. The 1Ba CO instructed him to put suppressive fires into the automatic weapons position and hold in place until A/2/506 moved farther up to hit the enemy flank.

A/3/187 was into the action with a report, at 1042 hours, of incoming enemy fires. Again the fires were from the ridge to his rear (SW) and from the draw on his left flank. At 1045 hours, C Company reported that one of his platoon leaders was hit. A minute later C Company added that they were receiving hand grenades. This position just below the military crest was quite precipitous and the enemy, without exposing himself, simply rolled hand grenades down on the attacking troops.

At 1053 hours, C Company reported a MG firing at his right flank. This fire was coming from one of several bunkers that were still intact even after the concentrated 30 day pounding by air and artillery. Many of course had been demolished. At the start, however, there had been multiple, concentric rows of mutually supporting bunkers cleverly positioned and dug deep into the side of the hill. Only a direct hit could destroy one. This particular MG sat at the U between the two ridges up which A and A Company were advancing.

At 1100 hours the Brigade CO informed the Bn CO that the 2/3 ARVN was still maneuvering and suggested that the Bn CO coordinate the movement of the ARVN Battalion with the 3/187 to avoid the possibility of one friendly unit inflicting casualties on another. At 1101 hours, A/2/506 reported

four of his soldiers were WLA. C Company informed at 1102 hours that he was still receiving RPG's. The Bn CO cautioned the Company Commander to continue to keep fires going out, but to keep them low because of the ARVN locations just on the other side of the hill. At 1107 the Bn CO informed A/2/506 that his direction of advance was off. He was instructed to turn 45 degrees to his left and move forward. His direction had been too southerly and his fires had been bothering C Company. At 1109, the Bn CO put a smoke marker down to guide A/2/506 to the precise terrain that he wanted taken. He did the same for C Company a moment later.

Since A/3/187 first had contact thirty minutes earlier, the action had become heavier. At 1116, he reported enemy on his right flank and stiff resistance on his left, but that he was making headway toward the large huts and bunker complex on the western military crest of the hill. A moment later the Bn CO, adjusting mortars from the LOH, was bringing 2 rounds of 81mm tube per minute directly onto this target area. He told A/2/187 to watch his flanks, because the "gooks" are up and running around up here and streaming off the western side of the hill into the draws". At this time, he enjoined the Bn CO 1/506 to move quickly to catch the enemy spilling into the draw several hundred meters to the front of the 1/506. At 1126 A Company CO reported that he had just been hit in the head and was passing on command to his 2d Platoon Leader. All the 3/187 units were on the military crest of the hill by 1127 hours. Ammunition began to run low at this point and A and C Companies started carrying parties back to obtain more. D Company which was securing the lower LZ, already had dispatched ammo parties forward. For immediate insurance, the Bn CO ordered a mix of M-60 M-16, and M-79 shuttled up to A Company's location ASAP. At 1134 C Company shouted to Black Jack that the enemy had masks on and was employing gas! The Bn CO ordered "Put on your masks and don't stop moving forward". Actually, there never was any appreciable amount

of gas used by the enemy. What he did use was probably C/S grenades dropped by US WLA's on the 18th. At 1142 hours, Thunder 007 the LOH went right into A Company's location and kicked out the ammo resupply.

The first company to actually reach the top of Hill 937 was C/3/187. He accomplished this at 1144, one hour and forty-four minutes after starting. He complained of a lot of sniper fire, though, and the Bn CO told both A Companies to get moving and relieve C Company's flanks. The Bn CO returned to the CP to refuel at 1145 hours.

At 1152 hours A/2/506 was receiving heavy fire from below C Company's location. C Company, who by now had progressed further onto the top of the hill, diverted one of his rear elements to move north and down into the draw between him and A/2/506 to neutralize resistance there. The Bn CO was airborne again at 1200 hours. C Company reported numerous snipers on the hill top and the Bn CO told him to be sure that he shot every thing up and be certain to blow every bunker he passed, even if it appeared unoccupied. The LOH had already started the casualty evacuation shuttle to the upper LZ. The Bn CO now was spotting groups of NVA on the hill and advised units of the enemy locations in relation to them. Mortars, keeping up a maximum sustained rate of fire, were adjusted on these locations. The Bn CO advised the 2/3 ARVN and A/2/506 to link up on the northeast. The 2/507 was still a considerable distance from the base of Dong Ap Bia in that direction. At 1207 C Company reported that he had ten US WLA's. At 1208 the Bn CO reported to Brigade that a good number of the enemy to the front of A Company were just standing there and locked down. He requested pink team to work the area. At 1213 the Bn CO

observed white puffs of smoke, possibly an indirect fire weapon, behind the 2/501 location. Assault 28, a LFT, was told to check the area. By 1217 link up between A/2/506 C Company and elements of the 2/3 ARVN had been made. Assault 28 reported that he had spotted mortars to the east of the hill. The Bn CO told him to clear the location with the 2/3 ARVN US LNO. At 1230 D Company was still receiving fire from the ridge to the south of A Company. At 1232 Brigade informed the 3/187 that the CG 24th Corps would like to visit the Rakhasan headquarters. The Bn CO now or the upper LZ told him to come on in. Both the Division Commander and the Corps Commander paid separate visits to the 3/187 on the afternoon of the 20th. At 1243 A Company had linked up with C Company on the hill top. ARA was working to their front and the Bn CO continued to chase the enemy with the mortars. At 1252 hours the Bn CO reiterated to Brigade that he could see the enemy retreating toward the 1/506. The location of the retreating elements was marked and struck innumerable times by ARA, Assault teams, airstrikes and mortars. By 1255, with the noose tightening over the hilltop, the Bn CO reported enemy running in every direction over the hill in their confused attempt to escape. The majority however were spilling into the draw on the west in a desperate rush for the border less than two kilometers away. Still many stayed to the end and at 1256 A Company and D Company reported continuing incoming RPG. At 1306 the Bn S-3 was informed that the perimeter observed at least five NVA moving west, through an open area, approximately 600 meters out, on an azimuth of 210 degrees. The target was immediately engaged with MG's and mortars.

The southern end of the blocking position, overlooked the draws leading east from Dong Ap Bia to the Laotian Border. Mortar fires, airstrikes, artillery and automatic weapons fire were clearly observable and conveniently adjusted on the enemy. At 1316 an advisor with the 2/3 ARVN reported that several advisors had been wounded and that some of the ARVN were retreating from the hill. At 1326 A/2/506 requested a MEDVAC and was instructed to have his seriously wounded carried down to the lower LZ. About this time, also, C Company reported RPG from his rear. Many of these reports of RPG from the rear were actually small caliber (60mm) enemy mortar fires. Enemy mortar fires of varying caliber were definitely fired from the east, northwest and south of the upper LZ at different times during the day. At 1334 A/2/506 reported receiving 60mm mortar fires from the north of his location on Hill 937. It appeared that the enemy knowing the US would drive them from the hill, had positioned mortars in several directions from it. Pink teams and ARA were usually dispatched to deal with these suspected locations. At 1350 hours the Battalion Commander requested that Brigade contact the 1/506 and 2/501 to man their positions and come upon the 3/187 frequency to discuss final push of their units on the hill. At 1405 hours, the Brigade Commander informed the Battalion Commander that the mission now was to search the objective thoroughly, and destroy remaining enemy and positions. At 1410 hours A/2/506 reported that his casualties were 1 KIA and 8 WIA. A LFT, Assault 26, checked in at 1420 hours, and was instructed by the Battalion Commander to work over the path of the retreating enemy in the draw to the west and southwest of Hill 937. At 1447 hours, the Battalion Commander recommended to Brigade that the mop up operations call for 2/3 ARVN to press over the crest of the hill into the hut and bunker complex to their west; that the 1/506 RIF, search, and destroy to their east, and that, when the 2/506

APPENDIX 11 Cont'd

achieved the hill, they exploit their success by pushing down into the draw to the west. This would keep the area to the east and southwest free for the present and enable US airstrikes and artillery to pound into the rear of the retreating troops. Airstrikes into this area must truly have taken their toll because for days after this numerous mass grave sites were found in the vicinity of the large western draw. Speedy 11 FAC was on station with fighters at 1451 hours and was told to dump his ordnance on the enemy retreating west. At 1459 hours, the 2/3 ARVN advisor reported receiving mortars on an azimuth of 250 degrees from his location. The Battalion S3 requested current locations of the 1/506 who advancing through the suspected vicinity of the mortars. At 1516 hours, the ARVN Advisor reported to the 3/187 that he was still pushing toward the objective and that the NDP for his CP would be to the east of Hill 937. Bulk 34 FAC requested clearance to put an airstrike into vicinity coordinates YC320973. The Battalion S3 gave coordinated clearance for the 3/187 but suggested that he check with 1/506 for any of their troops possibly in that area. At 1552 hours, while the Division Commander was visiting, enemy mortars were fired from the west at the upper LZ. The suspected area was filled up with mortars, MG's and artillery. There were no friendly casualties. During the remaining hours of day light the unit on the hilltop continued mopping up operations. The progress was slow because of the continuing sniper fire. At 1651 hours, C Company had found two of the enemy WIA hiding in a bunker. One died shortly there after C Company Commander called to explain that the captive wouldn't come out of the hole. The Battalion S3 instructed him to throw tear gas or smoke grenades into the hole. The Battalion Commander came on the radio at that point to warn the Company Commander that he didn't want a single US soldier even scratched in an encounter such as this one. He ordered that if they couldn't get the NVA out of the hole to tell him we would throw a frag grenade in with him. Minutes later at 1655 hours, the enemy soldier was out of his hole stripped and on his way to the lower LZ. This captive evacuated later in the afternoon told the grizzly tale of how more than 30% of his company of a hundred and twenty men had been wiped out since the fighting began on 10 May. He was from the 5th platoon, K8 Bn, 29th NVA Regiment. The Brigade S3 landed at 1707 hours to confer with the Battalion Commander and to pass on the new missions and general movement planned for the 3/187 for 21 May to the Battalion S3.

On the 21 of May, the 3/187 was to be withdrawn from the area and sent in for a Stand-Down and subsequent missions in the coastal plains.

As late as 1816 hours, C Company reported having a man wounded by sniper fire.

At 1930 hours, D Company arrived at the upper LZ and took positions on the southern half of the perimeter.

NDP's sent in at 1950 hours were: A Company at YC328982 with 3 LP's; A Company 2/506 at YC227984 with 1 LP; B Company 3/187 at YC320989 with 3 LP's and an ambush at YC320990; C Company 3/187 at YC328982; D Company 3/187 at YC320988 with 3 LP's and an ambush at YC319988.



APPENDIX ;8 Con't

Skyspot, ARC light, and artillery clearances were granted and the three were placed on enemy routes of withdrawal throughout the night.

At 2020 hours, Spocky was again over the 3/187 and, between arclight and skyspot strikes, worked an area 600 meters in all directions from coordinate YC310293 and further to the west and south.

At 2039 hours, B Company's 3d Platoon LP detected movement and threw two grenades. There were no other actions on the perimeter except for six friendly fireballs, and the night passed quietly.

On the 21st at 0032 hours, Brigade informed the Battalion S3 that the desired order of extraction of 3/187 units was: B, C, Battalion Headquarters, D and A. The quiet was broken at 0615 hours, when enemy 60mm mortars were fired at the headquarters location. Approximately 15 rounds were fired from south of the perimeter but caused no casualties. Counter mortar fire answered swiftly and MG's raked the suspected location. An additional fireball was executed at 0630 hours. At 0656 hours, the C&C ship, to be used in controlling the extraction, reported in on the battalion command frequency. B Company was prepared for pickup but, because of adverse weather at 0730 hours, the Battalion Commander elected to postpone the extraction for an hour.

At 0910 hours, the Division Commander arrived at the upper LZ. Five minutes after his arrival, enemy mortar rounds, impacted just outside the western section of the perimeter. The target was engaged by mortars and MG's and there were no friendly casualties.

At 0924 hours, Brigade was informed that the extraction would begin at 0930 hours.

The PZ times for B Company was 0936 hours. It was clear for B Company at 1014 hours.

A FAC requested clearance to put an airstrike into the vicinity of coordinate YC314981. This area was the main draw off Hill 937; it extended to the border and was the shortest escape route for the enemy. Clearance was granted.

PZ time for C Company was 1017 hours. The PZ for C Company and A Company was located on the top of Hill 937. A Company, 2/506, which was extracted after the completion of the 3/187, provided security for the pickup.

By 1030 hours, B Company had completed its move to the intermediate LZ at FB Blaze and was on its way to a new mission at Phong Dien.

The PZ complete time for C Company clearing Hill 937 was 1031 hours, and by 1105 hours, they too had been cleared through FB Blaze and were on their way to a new mission at Colco Beach. Next the headquarters came out and it was back at Camp Evans by 1136 hours. Everything was going smoothly with the D Company extraction when at 1300 hours, with 21 men remaining on the upper LZ, they received four incoming RPG rounds. Fortunately only two men were wounded and not seriously. The Battalion S3 who was controlling the extraction, gave instruction to the platoon leader on the ground and called for air support from Brigade. While the D Company Platoon sought to neutralize the enemy presence and guarantee the security of the LZ, the lift ships were diverted to A Company. A Company was extracted from Hill 937 without incident and by 1505 hours, was on the way to Eagle Beach for a stand-down.

Approximately 1400 hours, the Battalion Commander 3/187 arrived at the LZ over D Company's troops, that were left on the blocking position, PZ. He directed armed helicopter fires and ~~airstrikes~~ ~~on possible enemy~~ ~~locations~~ close to the PZ. After an hour of these fires, he deemed the PZ secure and the troops were ~~successfully~~ extracted by 1515 hours.

Thus ended the action of the 3/187 at Dong Ap Bia Hill 937.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters 1st Battalion, 506th Airborne Infantry  
APO San Francisco, 96383

AVDC-CB

18 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation APACHE SNOW.

Commanding Officer  
3d Bde, 101st Abn Div  
ATTN: 53  
APO SF 96383

1. Name or Identity and/or type of Operation: Operation APACHE SNOW was a combined airmobile assault into the northern A SHAU Valley. This operation was performed in conjunction with the 9th Marines and the 3rd ARVN Regiment, to destroy NVA/VC forces; block enemy routes of infiltration from nearby Laos, destroy enemy base camps in the area; and to locate and destroy enemy caches.
2. Dates of Operation: 100730 May 1969 - 092400 June 1969.
3. Location: The area of operations was in the QUAN NAM HOA District and TRUNG PHAN Province, RVN. References for this operation were: Map, VIETNAM, sheet no. 6441 I, II, III, IV series L7014 and L7015. Area of operations; LZ's and routes of advance are shown in inclosure 1.
4. Control Headquarters: 1st Bn, 506th Abn Inf.
5. Reporting Officer: LTC J. M. BOWERS, Commanding Officer 1st Bn, 506th Abn Inf.
6. Task Organization:  
A/1-506 Inf B/1-506 Inf C/1-506 Inf D/1-506 Inf E/1-506 Inf Demo Tms  
B/326 Engrs.
7. Supporting Forces:
  - a. 3 Mar Div conducted operations in N/NW AO.
  - b. 1-1 ARVN w/attachments conducted operations in NW AO.
  - c. 2-501 Abn Inf conducted operations in NW AO.
  - d. 3-187 Abn Inf conducted operations in NW and adjacent AO.
  - e. 2-506 Abn Inf conducted operations in adjacent AO.
  - f. 3/1 ARVN Regiment w/attachments conducted operations SE TA RAT airfield in assigned AO.

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- g. 2/17 AIR CAV general support, air and ground recon.
- h. 7th AF provided CAS in AO, to include interdiction of the A SHAU Valley.
- i. 160th Aviation group provided airlift capability and resupply sorties.
- j. 45th Engr Gp continued to construct all weather road west to the A SHAU Valley.
- k. A/2-319 Arty DS, 1-506th Abn Inf.
- l. A/1-83rd Arty (8").
- m. A/2-138 Arty (155).
- n. B/2-11 Arty (155).

8. Intelligence: Operation APACHE SNOW was conducted in the northern portion of the A SHAU Valley which was a primary enemy LOC used for movement of material and infiltration of troops and enemy units throughout I Corps area. The enemy had maintained logistics installations and base camps in the northern A SHAU Valley which distributed supplies and replacements to units operating in QUANG TRI and THUA THIEN Province. The importance of the northern A SHAU as a vital location had increased when the friendly operations began to interdict other key enemy locations in Northern I Corps area. The senior enemy headquarters in this area was the TRI - THIEN - HUE Military Region (TTHMR). This HQ's, equivalent to Corps level, was responsible for military and political activities in QUANG TRI and THUA THIEN Provinces and the border area of eastern Laos. Principal combat units were 6th, 9th and 29th NVA Regiments, each with a reported strength of approximately 1800 men. Additionally, the 675th Arty Regt was reported to have been operating in the A LUOI - A SHAU area and Base Area 611, in eastern Laos.

9. Mission: At H-Hour on D-Day (100730 May 1969) the 1st Bn, 506th Airborne Infantry conducted a combat assault along the Laotian border into LZ RED (See incl 1), to destroy NVA/VC forces in assigned area of operations, interdict Route 923 from Laos, and locate and destroy enemy caches within assigned AO.

10. Concept of the Operation: Two concepts of operations were planned for the execution of this operation and are listed below. It will be noted that the alternate concept of operation was not necessary in the actual execution of this operation.

a. The 1st Battalion, 506th Airborne Infantry conducts a combat assault with three companies into LZ 1 (LZ RED) from PZ loc in staging area at FSB BLAZE with BRAVO Company inserted first to secure the LZ and sieze Objective 1. CHARLIE Company and ALPHA Company following in that order, occupy

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Objective 1 and seize Objective 2 respectively. The first insertion will be supported by a TAC air prep from H-50 to H-15 with a 15 minute artillery prep commencing at H-15. Priority of fires to units in contact.

b. Alternate Concept of Operation: In the event LZ 1 (LZ RED) becomes unusable, Bn conducts combat assault with three companies into LZ 2 with BRAVO Company being inserted first to secure the LZ and seizes Obj 1A. CHARLIE and ALPHA Companies following in that order, seize Obj 2A and 3A respectively. LZ prep and priority of fires remain the same.

11. EXECUTION:

a. Operations order 12-69 (APACHE SNOW) (U), this headquarters was published in preparation of this operation. Method of operation to execute OPORD 12-69 was as follows:

(1) A/1-506 Abn Inf. Conducted combat assault on LZ RED following CA by B/1-506 and C/1-506; moved to and secured Obj 3; and conducted reconnaissance in force and search and destroy operations in assigned AO.

(2) B/1-506 Abn Inf. Conducted combat assault on LZ RED; secured LZ RED for companies A, C and Command Group; seized Objective 1 and 2 on order; conducted reconnaissance in force and search and destroy operations in assigned AO.

(3) C/1-506 Abn Inf. Provided security for the Command Group; combat assaulted on LZ RED; occupied Objective 1; and initially assumed OPCON of the 81mm Mortar Section in direct support of operation until extraction of the 81mm Mortar Section on 12 May 1969.

(4) D/1-506 Abn Inf. Conducted heliborne movement commencing 080845 to vic TA BAT (YC 399949) and established security for construction of FSB CURRAHEE; prepared to become 3d Brigade RRF effective 100730 May with one platoon on 15 min alert and remainder of unit on 30 min alert; assumed OPCON of 81mm Mortar Sections in DS of FSB CURRAHEE.

(5) E/1-506 Abn Inf. RCN Plat released OPCON to 3d Bde eff 081200 May 1969. Ground Surveillance Section displaced to FSB CURRAHEE.

(6) Radio Relay Elm/HHC/1-506 Abn Inf. Moved to FSB EAGLES NEST from FSB BLAZE and acted as relay between forward units and Command & Control Headquarters and Rear Tactical Operations Center.

b. Operations Narrative:

(1) D Day (10 May 1969):

Operation APACHE SNOW commenced at 100730 hours, May 1969 as the

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first lift of Co B took off from the PZ vic FSB BLAZE for insertion into LZ RED. Insertion of B Company, was followed by Co C with the Command Group and 81mm attachments, and Co A was inserted last into LZ RED, completing the insertion at 1110 hours, 10 May 1969. Co A conducted reconnaissance in force operations in preparation to seize Objective 3, Co B (vic YC 312937) killed 1 NVA officer with small arms. Officer was wearing a 9mm pistol and carrying an AK-47. The NVA officer was dressed in khakis and a thorough search of the body revealed identification photos, and documents which were later confirmed to be plans of attacks on US positions. At 1300 hours, (vic YC 321929), Co B found a bunker and hooch complex consisting of 14 bunkers containing 60-60mm mortar rounds, 96 RPG rounds, 1 RPG-2 launcher, 40-82mm mortar rounds, 6 RPD MG's, 5 AK's, 14 rucksacks and 1 Chicom MG. All munitions were destroyed in place and all equipment was evacuated. C Co with attachments provided security for the Command and Control Group, and conducted RIF operations in assigned AO. Co D provided security for construction of FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) provided DS to FSB CURRAHEE, Recon Platoon OPCON to 3rd Bde, at FSB BERCHTESGADEN. All units moved into and occupied NDP's at 102030 hours, at following locations. Co A - YC 314943, Co B - YC 311957, Co C - YC 312949, Co D FSB CURRAHEE - YC 399949, Co E (-) FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(2) D Day + 1 (11 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Commenced RIF operations in assigned AO. At 1122 hours, Co A reported finding one recently constructed bunker, believed to have been built by trail watchers. One US rocket pod and a cable crossing a river was located vic YC 305938. Also in same vicinity, two hooches, 1 SKS rifle, one automatic weapon, and a garden plot containing bananas, corn, pineapples, and watermelons were found. All equipment was evacuated and defoliation mission was requested to destroy the garden complex.

(b) Co B: Commenced early RIF operations in assigned AO and at 0645 hours, one enlisted man was wounded by enemy small arms fire during the process of retrieving Claymores. The enemy was fired upon with small arms. Medevac was called and completed at 0815 hours. At 1115 hours, Co B found (vic YC 307939) 1200 lbs of polished rice and 40 lbs of TNT. Both were destroyed in place.

(c) Co C: Commenced early RIF operations in assigned AO and reported at 1121 hours the finding of 1 hooch, 10'X6'X5', containing garden tools and 5 gallons of kerosene. The hooch was surrounded by a garden. All were destroyed. At 1715 hours, Co C reported receiving incoming mortar rounds vic YC 312929. Mortars were coming from the west, suspected location vic YC 2893. Counter-mortar and artillery fire was employed. Gunships and flareships were called in and remained over night. Mortar attack continued for 1 hour and 15 minutes. Medevac's were called for 22 personnel. Medevac's were treated at FSB CURRAHEE and further evacuated for additional medical treatment. Medevac's were completed at 1910 hours.

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(d) Co D: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE. At 2100 hours, D Co LP vic YC 405293 reported hearing branches being broken and something entering the water. Small arms were fired, grenades were thrown, and a first-light search of the area was conducted with negative results.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at 2020 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. Co A - YC 308919, Co B - YC 314939, Co C - YC 312928, D Co - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(3) D Day + 2 (12 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO in preparation for seizing Objective 3.

(b) Co B: At 1100 hours, Co B 3rd platoon spotted 3 enemy and immediately employed small arms fire, resulting in 1 enemy KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. Artillery was called in on the enemy location.

(c) Co C: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO, and provided security for the Bn Command and Control Group.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE. Multiple AP's and LP's were established vic FSB CURRAHEE.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at 2015 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. Co A - YC 314940, Co B - YC 318946, Co C - YC 317942, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(4) D Day + 3 (13 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO. At 1100 hours, Co A reported spotting 1 NVA trail watcher. Small arms were fired and artillery called in. Subsequent search of the area revealed a blood trail with negative further findings. At 1305 hours, Co A reported finding 8 hooches, 10'X15', 3 rifle grenades, 1 drum of RPA, 7mm ammo and 1 steel helmet, (vic YC 317922). All were destroyed in place.

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(b) Co B: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO. At 1000 hours, Co B reported finding vic YC 318948 a corn field enclosed with a fence 250 meters long and a recently used trail heading west. At 1220 hours, (vic YC 314947), Co B found 3 hocches, 20'X40', 2 hocches 10'X15' with 14 rounds of SA ammo. All were destroyed in place.

(c) Co C: Continued RIF operations and providing security for the Bn Command and Control Group. At 1120 hours, Co C reported finding (vic YC 319941) 2 hocches 15'X20', 2 French bolt action rifles and 2 crosscut saws. All findings were in poor condition and were destroyed in place.

(d) Co D: Continued providing security for FSB CURRAHEE. At 0633 hours, Co D was given the mission of providing one platoon RRF for possible employment and movement to FSB AIRBORNE in support of 2/501 Inf. At 1457 hours, medevac was called for 2 personnel and completed at 1515 hours. One man had infected sunburn and one had been diagnosed as having flu.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS FSB CURRAHEE and reported locating enemy observer vic YC 385953. Mortars and artillery from FSB CURRAHEE were fired.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. Co A - YC 317944, Co B - YC 322955, Co C - YC 321952, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

NOTE: At 1220 hours Commanding Officer 1st Bn, 506th Abn Inf was alerted to plan for the immediate movement of 1-506 units N and NW to reinforce the 3-187 Abn Inf vic YC 327982 which was in contact at that time. Plans were made and orders issued to all units to immediately move N/NW to support 3-187 Abn Inf.

(5) D Day + 4 (14 May 1969):

The 1-506 Abn Inf moved in a N/NW direction to reinforce 3-187 Abn Inf. Commanding Officer, 1-506 issued orders to Co B to immediately begin moving NW to vic YC 315975.

(a) Co A: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO, and moved N/NW to support 3-187 Abn Inf. At 1530 hours, vic YC 317961, Co A reported their point man had been killed by 3 NVA trail watchers. Enemy fled NE with Co A in pursuit. Subsequently, ARA was called in on enemy's last known location. Extraction of 1 KHA completed at 1742 hours.

(b) Co B: Continued RIF operations N/NW in assigned AO, to support 3-187 Abn Inf. At 1450 hours, Co B employed gunships for recon by fire, vic



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YC 319962. At 1540 hours, Co B requested medevac for 1 person with broken collar bone. Medevac completed at 1610 hours.

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(c) Co C: Continued RIF operations in assigned AO and providing security for the Bn Command and Control Group. Co C continued movement N/NW to support 3-187 Abn Inf.

(d) Co D: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2020 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. Co A - YC 319961, Co B - YC 316966, Co C - YC 321956, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(6) D Day + 5 (15 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued RIF operations N/NW in support of 3-187 Abn Inf. At 0905 hours, Co A reported their Objective 1, YC 327973 had been siezed and secured. Immediate RIF operations vic Obj 1 was initiated. Unit received small arms fire and returned with small arms and artillery fire on suspected enemy locations. Area was searched at first light, 16 May 1969 with negative results.

(b) Co B: Continued RIF operations N/NW in support of 3-187 Abn Inf. At 0905 hours, Co B reported their Objective 2 had been seized and secured. Enemy trail watchers were engaged by B Co 1st plat after receiving AK-47 fire, (vic NDP). Enemy was observed wearing khaki uniforms. At 1230 hours, Co B, 3rd plat spotted 1 NVA and engaged with small arms. Subsequent search of the area resulted Co B, 3rd platoon engaging an estimated enemy squad. Small arms fire was returned, and artillery and ARA called in on enemy location. At 1425 hours, Co B was again fired upon with small arms from an unknown size enemy force. Small arms fire was returned and artillery and ARA called in on enemy location. B Co suffered two US WHA. Medevac was completed at 1505 hours.

(c) Co C: Continued RIF operations N/NW to support 3-187 Abn Inf and providing security for the Bn Command and Control Group. At 1630 hours, medevac was called for 1 US with possible broken back. Medevac completed at 1722 hours.

(d) Co D: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE. At 1330 hours while conducting RIF operations vic YC 390948, Co D reported finding 1 hooch 10'X15' w/bunker underneath, 7'X10' with 22' overhead cover. Also found old baskets, teapots, bow and arrow, 1 Chicom bayonet and 1 GI mermite can. All equipment was destroyed in place.

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(e) Co E (-): Continued DS security of FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2030 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. NDP's established at following locations: Co A - YC 327967, Co B - YC 315970, Co C - YC 324956, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(7) D Day + 6 (16 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued operations vicinity of Obj 1 in support of 3-187 Abn Inf. At 0735 hours, vic YC 327967, Co A moved to search area where enemy was located on 15 May 69. An unknown size enemy force fired small arms at A Co, killing 1 US and wounding 7 personnel. Artillery, ARA and gunships were called in on enemy loc. Air strikes were employed at 0925, 1020, and 1040 hours. Medevacs were completed at 0810 hours. Immediately following completion of artillery, ARA, and air strikes, Co A continued to search for the enemy vic YC 328969, and found 1 bunker, picks, shovels, 2 Russian bandages, 2 Chicom Claymores, and numerous piles of bloody bandages and blood trails. At 1345 hours, vic YC 328969, Co A reported seeing 8-10 enemy armed with AK-47's and carrying bandoleers of ammo. ARA engaged the enemy, along with small arms from Co A. Subsequent search of the area resulted in Co A engaging and killing 1 NVA and capturing 1 AK-47. NVA were well fed, had clean haircuts and were in good physical condition. Co A also found numerous blood trails. At 1505 hours, Co A requested medevac for 2 US injured by lightning. Medevac completed at 1600 hours.

(b) Co B: Continued operations in support of 3-187 Abn Inf and at 1045 hours became engaged in enemy contact from unknown size force. Small arms and RPG fire was received from rear and front of Co elements. Flanking maneuvers employed by elements of Co B relieved the pressure on the elements engaged and resulted in contact being broken at 1250 hours. Medevac was called but was unable to evacuate the injured because of heavy sniper fire. By 1330 hours, all injured personnel had been evacuated by LOH to FSB CURRAHEE and by Dustoff to FSB BLAZE. 1 KHA and 8 WHA were evacuated.

(c) Co C: Continued operations in support of 3-187 Abn Inf and providing security for the Bn Command and Control Group.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE, employing multiple LP's and AP's vic FSB CURRAHEE.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2015 hours.

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Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. NDP's were occupied at the following locations: Co A - YC 328969, Co B - YC 319972, Co C - YC 327965, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(8) D Day + 7 (17 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Operations continued. Contact w/enemy began with incoming mortar rounds at 0640 hours. Location of mortars were unknown and no casualties were suffered. At 0950 hours, Co A departed vic YC 328969 moving N/NW to higher terrain and at 1010 hours received small arms fire resulting in 1 KHA and 1 WHA. Co A reported that the enemy was well dug in and that elements of A Co were continuing up the ridge destroying bunkers on each side of the trail. Medevac was called at 1010 hours and completed for 1 KHA and 1 WHA at 1100 hours. At 1200 hours, Co A again received small arms fire from an unknown size enemy force, coming from well dug in bunkers and fighting positions. Artillery and ARA were employed, CS ship was called in and completed four runs. Using protective masks, Co A continued the attack and engaged an unknown size enemy force again at 1545 hours. Contact was broken by the enemy and during later maneuvers to the west of the ridge Co A was again fired on by well dug in NVA forces. Co A pulled back and coordinated artillery, ARA, and additional CS drops. An air strike was called in at 1840 hours, and resulted in one secondary explosion vicinity of A Company's contact. At 1900 hours, Co A once again received small arms fire resulting in 1 KHA and 1 WHA. Medevac was called and completed at 1940 hours.

(b) Co B: Continued operations in support of the 3-187 Abn Inf and began early movement to the NW, vic of Hill 900. At 1150 hours, Co B found 2 NVA helmets, 1 AK-47, 4 RPG rounds, canteens, pistol belts and 5 well-constructed fox holes and a machine gun position (vic YC 320972). All equipment was evacuated. At 1450 hours, movement was detected to the rear of Co B. Gunships were called in and artillery was employed. At 1630 hours, Co B was fired upon by an unknown enemy size force with small arms and RPG's. Gunships that were on station also receiving automatic weapons fire. One NVA attempted withdrawal and was killed in the process by elements of B Co. Co B had 1 US KHA and 2 US WHA. Artillery, ARA and air strikes were employed on the enemy's location. All WHA were medevaced and completed evacuation at 1855 hours.

(c) Co C: Continued operations vicinity Hill 900, and providing security for the Bn Command Group.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE and employed multiple LP's and AP's.

(e) Co E (-): DS security of FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

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All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 1955 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 328968, Co B - YC 320973, Co C - YC 326964, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(9) D Day + 8 (18 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued operations along the ridge line (vic YC 328968) and at 0700 hours received RPG fire from well-fortified bunkers to their north. There were no casualties. Artillery was placed on the enemy location. Air strikes were called in and completed at 0845 hours. At 0940 hours, artillery CS was employed (vic YC 328968). Immediately following the CS attack, Co A began receiving RPG and mortar fire. Gunships were employed. At 1531 hours, Co A observed 3 NVA. Enemy was fired upon resulting in 3 NVA killed. At 1545 hours, Co A reported receiving mortar rounds and that the unit was delayed in place by an unknown size enemy force in bunkers. Bunkers were attacked and destroyed and Co A proceeded to continue the attack, destroying the mortar position and killing 4 NVA. 4 US WHA's were medevaced. Co A continued the attack towards Hill 937 and reported their 4th platoon was in contact just south of Hill 937. Heavy RPG and automatic weapons fire was being received. Small arms fire was exchanged, and contact was broken by the enemy at 1935 hours. Co A reported finding and destroying 14 well-constructed bunkers, each containing 4-5 rounds of RPG ammo, vic YC 327973. At 1940 hours, Co A began to dig in for the night and at 1945 hours was again in contact. 1 NVA was killed and a base plate for mortar tube was destroyed.

(b) Co B: Continued their attack in the early hours and at 0900 hours, spotted 2 NVA attempting to sneak up on the rear element. When the NVA were close enough for small arms fire, Co B commenced firing and reported both NVA had been killed. At 1032 hours, (vic YC 320973) Co B received RPG fire, resulting in 1 US WHA. Medevac was called and completed at 1215 hours. ARA was called in on the enemy location. At 1115 hours, Co B was again under attack from all directions. Mortar fire, heavy RPG's and small arms fire was received. ARA was called in and mortar attack stopped at 1133 hours. At 1232 hours, Co B was again under mortar attack. Artillery and ARA were employed. Contact was made with 1 NVA (vic YC 321974), resulting in 1 NVA killed. Medevac was called at 1420 hours; however, wounded personnel had to be evacuated by the Battalion LCH. Due to enemy small arms fire, an LZ large enough to accommodate a LCH was available so the aircraft could land and be out of small arms fire. Again at 1620 hours, Co B engaged an unknown size enemy force. Medevac for 3 WHA was called and completed at 1640 hours. Contact was again made at 1910 hours. Contact continued until approximately 2040 hours. At this time, a LCH pilot was wounded in legs as he landed at Co B's LZ. Small arms fire was continually being placed on the enemy location and one platoon of Co B moved to and secured the wounded LCH and wounded pilot.

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NDP was established. At 2044 hours, Co B was attacked from the NE, Contact was broken by the enemy at 2055 hours resulting in 3 US persons MIA.

(c) Co C: Continued the attack up the ridge south of Hill 937. Security was provided for the Bn Command and Control Group. At 1700 hours, two elements from Co C were in contact, resulting in 2 NVA killed. At 1858 hours, contact was again made by Co C resulting in 2 more NVA killed. At 1940 hours, Co C linked up with Co A (vic YC 329972).

(d) Co D: Continued construction and security of FSB CURRAHEE. The 4th platoon Co D, departed FSB CURRAHEE at 0900 hours conducting RIF operations. At 1510 hours, 2 NVA were spotted at YC 392953. Artillery and ARA were employed with negative results.

(e) Co E (-): DS security, FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Flat: OPCOM 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at 2040 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 327974, Co B - YC 322974, Co C - YC 329972, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Flat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(10) D Day + 9 (19 May 1969):

(a) Co A: At 0800 hours, Co A reported their forward element had received RFG fire and was in heavy contact. 3 US were WHA with shrapnel. Medevac was called and completed at 1020 hours. At 1035 hours, Co A engaged and killed 3 NVA in bunkers. Search of the bunker area revealed AK's, RFG's, and one .51 Cal MG. Since it was necessary to continue the attack immediately, Co A was unable to accurately count all the weapons but reported to the Bn Command Group, that Co C was following them and would pick up all weapons. Numerous bunkers were destroyed during the next few hours, and sporadic enemy contact continued until 1405 hours when Co A spotted 1 NVA and fired on him. Additionally 10-12 NVA were pinned down in bunkers to their immediate front. CO, Co A reported at 1450 hours that they had counted at least 20 bunkers with 2 NVA manning each bunker. The bunkers were well-fortified and were defended with AK's, RFG's, and LMG's. CO, Co A also reported that there were many more bunkers, and that he would continue the attack and destruction of the bunkers as rapidly as possible. At 1540 hours, Co A reported 4 NVA KIA, and at 1715 hours, had reached the top of Hill 900 just south of Hill 937. At 1837 hours, Co A engaged an unknown size enemy force and reported killing 6 NVA, all of which had neat hair cuts and appeared to have been in good physical condition. At 1910 hours, Co A found 1 dead NVA killed by small arms, and 3 killed by shrapnel. At 2003 hours, CO, Co A reported body count for the day was 18 confirmed. Also that NVA KIA's were wearing green khakis, NVA helmets, and some with leather shoes. At 2045 hours, CO, Co A reported 2 US KHA and 19 WHA's were evacuated. 4 WHA's were

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not serious enough for immediate evacuation. Elements of 3-187 Abn Inf were observed on Hill 937.

(b) Co B: CO, Co B reported that the air strike in vic of his location was complete at 0835 hours. At 1030 hours, Co B reported that the pilot and LOH had been flown out of the area where it had been shot down on 18 May 69.

(c) Co C: Continued the attack at first light and continued to secure the Bn Command and Control Group. At 0742 hours, (vic 329972) Co C found 1 .51 Cal MG. At 0915 hours, Co C found 1 NVA body killed from previous day's contact. At 1340 hours, CO, 1-506 Abn Inf directed that Co C move up and relieve the pressure on Co A which had been in constant contact during most of the day. Co C maneuvered rapidly and by 1430 hours had linked up with Co A (vic YC 327974). At 2003 hours Co C reported having killed 10 NVA during the day. Equipment captured from the NVA KIA's consisted of the following: 1 AK-50, 4 AK-47's; 2 .51 Cal MG's; 2 unknown type MG's; 1 RPG-2 (B-40); 2 RPG-2 rounds, medical supplies; 60 rounds .51 Cal MG ammo; 4 AK magazines, 1 Chicom telephone; 1 mount for .51 Cal MG; 2 rucksacks, 2 Russian ammo boxes. All equipment was evacuated.

(d) Co D: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE and conduct RIF operations vic FSB CURRAHEE. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

Units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 327974, Co B - YC 324976, Co C - YC 327968, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(11) D Day + 10 (20 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Operation APACHE SNOW continued and at 0745 hours CO, Co A reported that air strikes in their vicinity had been completed and that his company had begun to move forward. The NVA were still on the hill, and at 0930 hours, Co A encountered and killed one NVA who threw a dud hand grenade. Continued search and destroy operations resulted in Co A receiving small arms and RPG fire at 1055 hours from vic YC 320973. Co A spotted 4 NVA at this location and called in artillery. At 1115 hours, Co A linked up (vic YC 320973) with Co A to establish blocking positions (vic YC 324975). At 1345 hours, Co A had moved to top of Hill 900 (vic YC 328976). At 1458 hours, CO, Co A reported receiving incoming mortar fire from the west. Artillery and ARA were called in on the suspected enemy location and air

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strikes were requested. Co A continued the attack with sporadic contact throughout the remainder of the day. At 1945 hours, Co A linked up with 3-187 Abn Inf and the 1-1 ARVN Bn vic YC 327977.

(b) Co B: Continued operations and made contact with an unknown enemy size force at 0935 hours, (vic YC 324976). Co B continued to maneuver and at 1115 hours, linked up with Co A to establish blocking positions vic YC 325976. At 1125 hours, HQ's 3rd Bde notified the Bn Command Group that indications were that the enemy was withdrawing towards Co B's location. At 1145 hours, CO, Co B reported that the enemy was to their front and firing RPG's and small arms, Co B maneuvered and flanked the enemy and engaged them with small arms and called in artillery. At 1150 hours, CO, Co B was directed to move across the draw to the west (vic YC 320971) and that Co C would take up the blocking positions. At 1155 hours, Co B engaged 3-5 NVA. The enemy used RPG's, hand grenades, and small arms, attacking from the NE. At 1540 hours, CO B reported entering the area where enemy mortars were being fired from (vic YC 328976). Contact with the enemy was made at 1620 hours, with NVA in fortified bunkers, with 2 enemy personnel per bunker. Co B suffered 2 KHA's and 4 WHA's with small arms wounds. Medevac was completed at 1815 hours. At 2020 hours, Co B reported that 5 NVA had been KIA during the contact and Co B had suffered 1 KHA and 7 US WHA's.

(c) Co C: At 0745 hours, CO, Co C reported that his unit was occupying a blocking position vic YC 327968, as the Battalion reserve. Sporadic contact continued throughout the day and at 1200 hours, CO, 1-506 directed that Co C move to vic YC 324971 and relieve the pressure on Co B and that B Co move to new blocking position's (vic YC 320971). Co C relieved Co B at 1420 hours. At 1620 hours, 1 platoon of Co C was reported in contact with NVA located in well-constructed and fortified bunkers. Co C continued to press the attack and suffered 2 US KHA's and 2 US WHA's. Medevac was completed at 1910 hours. Enemy casualties were unknown.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE and continued RIF operations vic FSB CURRAHEE.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

Units established NDP's at 2040 hours, and employed multiple IP's and AP's. NDP's occupied at: Co A - YC 327977, Co B - YC 327967, Co C - YC 327968, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat & FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(12) D Day + 11 (21 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Search and destroy operations were continued by Co A

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in vicinity of Hill 900. At 1055 hours, Co A found a diary and 82mm mortar firing data chart. Both were evacuated to HQ's 3rd Brigade. At 1300 hours, Co A began to search and destroy the bunker complex that they had fought through earlier. As a result of this search, they found 18 NVA KIA in the bunkers, killed by small arms and grenades. At 1500 hours, 6 more NVA KIA's were found and at 1540 hours, Co B found 6 more NVA KIA which were accredited to Co A's operation on 20-21 May 69. At 1535 hours, Co A found a bunker complex vicinity Hill 900, (YC 327977), containing 14 Chicom grenades, 4 RPG tubes, 40 B-40 rockets, 20-60mm mortar rounds, 4 AK-47's, 8 Chicom claymores, 5,000 rounds AK ammo, and several documents. All was destroyed except the documents and weapons which were later evacuated to HQ's, 3rd Brigade. Light contact continued, and at 1925 hours Co A once again found and entered a 28 bunker complex. In the complex, Co A found 25-82mm mortar rounds, 25-60mm mortar rounds, 5 RPG rounds, 1 RPG launcher, 1 RPD MG, and 13 Chicom grenades, 10 NVA rucksacks with new clothing, 1 diary and 7 NVA bodies. The weapons and equipment were evacuated and all bunkers were destroyed.

(b) Co B: Continued their search and destroy operation south of Hill 900, making contact throughout the morning hours. Sporadic contact continued and at 1540 hours, Co B found 6 NVA KIA that had been killed by Co A on 20 May 69. One .51 Cal MG was also found and evacuated. At 1645 hours, Co B captured one POW and evacuated him to HQ's, 3rd Brigade. At 1610 hours, contact was made with an unknown enemy size force and resulted in 2 US MIA. A medevac was called and completed at 1640 hours. Co B's 3 KIA's from 20 May 69 were found and evacuated from vicinity YC 327968 at 1825 hours.

(c) Co C: Continued search and destroy operations and providing security for the Bn Command and Control Group. Sporadic contact continued throughout the day, resulting in Co C finding 9 NVA KIA at 1300 hours, and finding 15 bunkers, 25-82mm mortar rounds, 25-60mm mortar rounds, and 1 RPG launcher. All were destroyed, except the RPG launcher, between 1345 and 1600 hours.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE by employing daylight RIF operations and multiple LP's and AP's at night.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDE's at approximately 2020 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDE's allocated as: Co A - YC 327977, Co B - YC 327968, Co C - YC 327968, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(13) D Day + 12 (22 May 1969):



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(a) Co A: Scheduled air strikes delayed the movement of Co A until 0945 hours. Three air strikes were employed vic YC 320970, with last air strike being completed at 0925 hours. FAC reported to Bn Command Group that one of his jets received heavy machine gun fire from Hill 916, (vic YC 315970). Artillery fire was placed on this area. Co A began movement at 0945 hours and made sporadic contact with the enemy throughout the morning hours. At 1215 hours, (vic YC 327977), Co A found 4 satchel charges, and 1,000 AK rounds. All were destroyed. Visual contact was established with elements of 1-502 Abn Inf at 1240 hours, after which Co A withdrew to the west, continuing their search and destroy mission.

(b) Co B: Movement was delayed because of air strikes, and at 0945 hours began to maneuver (vic YC 327968). At 1025 hours, Co B found and destroyed 4 well-constructed bunkers. The bunkers contained 3 Chicom grenades, 2 RPG cleaning kits (evacuated), 1 .51 Cal MG mount, 1 loaded RPG launcher, 1 AK-47, and 7 NVA KIA. The RPG launcher and the AK-47 was evacuated. At 1120 hours, Co B found 3 NVA gas masks that were booby trapped. All 3 were destroyed. At 1240 hours, Co B found 1 NVA KIA and 26 fresh graves, probably killed by Co C on 21 May 69. At 1400 hours, (vic YC 333968) Co B found a bunker complex with well-constructed fighting positions near each bunker. Also a resupply and suspected hospital complex was found. All bunkers and supplies were destroyed. At 1715 hours, Co B found 26 NVA KIA that had been recently killed by air strikes or artillery.

(c) Co C: Began movement at 0945 hours. At 1110 hours, (vic YC 327-968) Co C found 7 NVA KIA's who were killed by small arms fire. Sporadic fire was received throughout the day, and at 1630 hours, (vic YC 324969) Co C found 11 well-constructed bunkers that had been destroyed by artillery or air strikes. Search of the bunkers resulted in 18 NVA KIA and numerous trails caused by bodies having been dragged away. The search of the area continued and at 1920 hours, vic YC 327968 Co C found 19 more fighting bunkers of which 15 had been destroyed by artillery and air strikes. All were destroyed.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE by employing RIF operations and multiple LP's and AP's.

(e) Co E (-): DS security, FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2045 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 327977, Co B - YC 327968, Co C - YC 327968, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(14) D Day + 13 (23 May 1969):

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(a) Co A: Air strikes on Hill 916 again delayed the early movement of all companies. Air strikes were employed and completed at 0810 hours. Co A began movement (vic YC 324977) and found 3 NVA shirts with T/2-6 embroidered on them. Also North Vietnamese writing on the trees in the area: "To stay and fight - not run. This area is good to fight in." Co A received the order to commence movement to vic YC 315970. At 0945 hours movement began and immediately contact was made with an unknown size enemy force. Fighting continued throughout the morning, and at 1450 hours, Co A found over 100 RPG rounds and 1200 lbs of rice vic (YC 322973) that had been partially destroyed by air strikes. At 1545 hours, Co A found (vic YC 322973), 4 M2 Carbines, 18 RPG rounds, assorted medical supplies, 180 Chicom grenades, 300 lbs polished rice, 1-82mm mortar sight, and 7 NVA KIA. All the equipment except the weapons was destroyed in place. At 1615 hours, Co A found a number of NVA shirts with embroidered patches on each left pocket: T2/8, T2/6, and T.2. The T.2 had a red circle around it. The shirts were evacuated to HQ's 3rd Brigade. At 1910 hours, (vic YC 322973) Co A found 11 well-constructed A-frame bunkers 8'X4'X4' with 3' of overhead cover. All were destroyed.

(b) Co B: At 0915 hours, Co B began to advance (vic Hill 916). At 1050 hours, Co B was ordered to move his unit to YC 325973. Co B immediately began maneuvering and at 1050 hours, (vic YC 325973) found 3 bunkers containing RPG's and SKS's, 3 fresh graves, communication wire, and a water line system. At 1120 hours in the same area, Co B found another bunker containing mortar equipment, SKS's, AK-44's, RPG's, and 1 mortar tube. The weapons were evacuated, and the bunkers were destroyed. At 1135 hours, Co B found a cache of AK-47's, RPG's and numerous containers of small arms ammunition. All were evacuated. At 1150 hours (vic YC 321973) contact was made with an unknown size enemy force. Artillery and ARA were called in with unknown results. Co B continued their search and again at 1530 hours began receiving mortar and RPG fire. Artillery was called in on the suspected enemy locations. At 1600 hours (vic YC 315970) Co B found one MIA. The body was extracted at 1805 hours.

(c) Co C: At 1010 hours Co C and Bn Command Group began to advance. Sporadic contact continued throughout the morning hours, and at 1340 hours, Co C linked up with Co A at YC 322973. At 1415 hours Co C found the bodies of 5 NVA KIA that had been killed by small arms fire from elements of Co C on 22 May 69. The search continued and at 1540 hours the company received fire from a well-constructed bunker. The fire was returned with M-79's and a subsequent search revealed one NVA KIA in the bunker. A large bunker complex was found at YC 318971. Artillery was called in and Co C suffered 5 WHA's by shrapnel from friendly ARA. The 5 WHA's were medevaced at 1620 hours. The search operations continued throughout the remainder of the day.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE. At 1345 hours, FSB CURRAHEE received 6 incoming 122mm rockets. Co D's artillery was fired and the rocket attack terminated at 1520 hours. All rockets hit outside the

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perimeter. Co D suffered 1 US WHA with shrapnel wounds.

(e) Co E (-): Continued DS security, FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 323976, Co B - YC 323974, Co C - YC 324973, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(15) D Day + 14 (24 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Co A continued to search the area and spent the day destroying bunkers and small caches. By 1100 hours, the company had destroyed 16 bunkers, 8 fighting positions and at 1753 hours, found and destroyed 5 - 8'X8'X8' bunkers. At 2010 hours, CO, 1-506 Abn Inf reported to CO, Co A that radar had picked up 10-15 NVA approximately 700-800 meters from their location, moving in their direction. Artillery was called in by Co A on the suspected enemy location. Search and destroy operations continued until Co A occupied their NDP at 2045 hours.

(b) Co B: Co B began the day's operation by receiving incoming mortar fire at 0750 hours. Artillery was employed on the suspected enemy location. At 0820 hours, (YC 323974) this company found 1 bunker containing 1 RPD MG, 42 SKS rifles, 1 M-16 rifle, 3-60mm mortar rounds, 2 US Garbines, 7-82mm mortar rounds, 1 AK-47, 50-60mm mortar fuses, 128 powder charges for 60mm mortars, 4 propelling charges for 82mm mortars, 24 Chicom grenades, 15 RPG-2 rounds, 3 RPG charges, and 1 belt of 7.62 Russian manufactured ammo. All equipment was evacuated. At 1014 hours Co B began to advance and linked up with A Co at 1145 hours. Co B continued their search and destroy operations throughout the remainder of the day. At 2122 hours movement was detected by the company at YC 327469. Artillery was called on the suspected enemy location. Results were unknown. NDP occupied at 2030 hours.

(c) Co C: Co C and the Bn Command Group began to advance at 0745 hours and at 1003 hours, at YC 324973, found 4 bunkers containing 4 Chicom grenades, 22-82mm mortar rounds, 12-60mm mortar rounds, 40 lbs of polished rice, and 2 SKS rifles. All items were evacuated except the following items which were destroyed: 33 Chicom grenades, 17 RPG rounds, 1 battery, 8 electric blasting caps, 7 non-electric blasting caps, 2- $\frac{1}{4}$  lb blocks of TNT, 2-82mm mortar fuses and 4 ignition fuses for 82mm mortars. At 1100 hours, CO 1-506 Abn Inf reported that Co C had destroyed 19 bunkers 6'X6' of which 11 had sleeping positions. That afternoon the company found 20 more well-constructed bunkers, 20 RPG rounds, 50 Chicom grenades, 3,000 rounds AK ammo, and 100 lbs of NVA demolition. Destruction of bunkers and cache kept the company busy for the remainder of the day until they occupied their NDP at 2040 hours.

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(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE, employing multiple daylight RIF's, night LP's and AP's.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2045 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. NDP locations: Co A - YC 327974, Co B - YC 327969, Co C - YC 327969, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(16) D Day + 15 (25 May 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued their search and destroy operations throughout the day with no enemy contact. At 1220 hours Co A found items of US equipment that had been booby trapped with 1-82mm mortar round. BBT was destroyed in place. At 1220 hours, a recently used area was discovered containing 1 NVA canteen, numerous first aid bandages both new and used, and 1 bottle of unknown type pills. At 1607 hours, 3 electrical wires, running N & S were discovered. They were made of 20 gauge copper wire with white insulators. The wire was cut in numerous places.

(b) Co B: Conducted reconnaissance in force operations in assigned AO and had no enemy contact during the day.

(c) Co C: Continued to provide security for the Bn Command Group and conducted reconnaissance in force operations in assigned AO and had negative contact with the enemy.

(d) Co D: Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE by employing multiple RIF operations, LP's and AP's.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 333967, Co B - YC 327965, Co C - YC 327965, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(17) D Day + 16 (26 May 1969):

Operation "APACHE SNOW" continued with units conducting search and destroy operations within their assigned AO's. At 0950 hours, the CG 101st Airborne Division visited FSB CURRAHEE and presented the Silver Star to LTC JAMES M. BOWERS, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 506th Airborne Infantry

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for his action's on 20 May 69, vicinity Hill 937.

(a) Co A: Continued search and destroy operations in assigned AO. No enemy contact was made during the day.

(b) Co B: Continued their search of bunker complexes and at 1835 hours reported finding 49-60mm mortar rounds, 2-60mm mortar charges, 35 RPG-2 rounds, 12 rifle grenades, 33-82mm mortar charges, 25 propellant shells, and 7 AK-47 magazines at YC 336961. All were destroyed in place except the mortar ammo which was extracted to HQ's, 3rd Brigade.

(c) Co C: Continued their search and destroy operations and at 1430 hours, linked up with Co B at YC 333966. At 1514 hours, the Bn Command Group and Co C found high tension wires with 2 different type insulators at YC 333966. Bicycle tracks were found throughout the same area on numerous recently used trails found in the same vicinity. At 1527 hours, the company discovered numerous bunkers with fighting positions, located at YC 337963. Also 23 hooches were found, each with bunkers underneath and fighting positions nearby. The bunkers were 6'X8' and 6'X10' with 2-3' overhead cover. In the same area 12-60mm mortar rounds, 3 RPG-2 rounds, 1 large 2-man cross-cut saw, and miscellaneous tools were found. All were destroyed except the mortar ammo which was extracted to HQ's, 3rd Brigade.

(d) Co D: Continued the security of FSB CURRAHEE, employing multiple daylight RIF's, night LP's and AP's.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

Units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 347969, Co B - YC 331996, Co C - YC 337963, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(18) D Day + 17 (27 May 1969):

Operation "APACHE SNOW" continued as units of the 1st of the CURRAHEES conducted search and destroy operations in vicinity of Hill 937. At 0820 hours, Co B reported finding one fresh grave containing 1 NVA KIA, killed by small arms and wearing US type web gear. At 1545 hours, Co C found a corn field 25 meters long. The field was destroyed. All units continued reconnaissance in force operations but there was no contact with the enemy during the day. All units moved into NDP's at 2030 hours and established multiple LP's and AP's. NDP's located at: Co A - YC 348972, Co B - YC 337962, Co C - YC 348961, Co D - FSB CURRAHEE, Co E (-) - FSB

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CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(19) D Day + 18 (28 May 1969):

All units continued operation "APACHE SNOW". The major event of the day was the exchange of missions and AO's between D and C Co's. Co A was airlifted to FSB CURRAHEE and assumed the mission of securing FSB CURRAHEE; D Co replaced Co A in the AO. A round-robin-type airlift commenced at 1310 hours, with last PZ/LZ being completed at 1402 hours. Report was received from 3rd Brigade that FSB BRADLEY had been attacked at 0440 hours. CO, 1-506 informed the rear TOC to increase security of FSB CURRAHEE and to increase their H & I fires. All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2045 hours and established multiple LP's and AP's. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 350962, Co C - YC 355964, Co D - YC 351974. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(20) D Day + 19 (29 May 1969):

3rd Brigade notified CO, 1-506 that the RCN Plat would be relieved of FSB security of FSB BERCHTESGADEN on 31 May 69, and would return to Battalion control. Also that operations in 101st AO would be halted from 300600 May to 310600 May in observance of Buddha's birthday.

(a) Co A: Continued the security of FSB CURRAHEE by conducting daylight RIF operations and employing multiple night LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: Began RIF at 0800 hours and reported 1 US with high fever. Medevac was completed at 0900 hours. The company continued search and destroy operations throughout the day without enemy contact.

(c) Co C: Continued security of the Bn Command Group and at 0936 hours, reported finding 4 bunkers 4'X3'X3' (vic YC 356966). Two had 2-3' overhead cover of dirt and logs and all were destroyed.

(d) Co D: Began RIF at first light and moved (vic YC 360973) and found 1 hooch with a well-constructed underground bunker containing 1 box of M-60 ammo, 2 blocks of TNT, 40 AK-47 rounds, 2 empty M-16 magazines, 1 steel folding chair, and miscellaneous pottery and silverware. Bunker and all findings were destroyed.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: OPCON 3rd Bde, FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

At 1121 hours, FSB CURRAHEE received six incoming 122mm rockets which landed just outside the perimeter with negative casualties.

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All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2045 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located vic: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 365966, Co C - YC 369966, Co D - YC 369966. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(21) D Day + 20 (30 May 1969):

Operations in support of "APACHE SNOW" were halted in observance of the Buddha's birthday. All units utilized this time to prepare their equipment for future operations. NDP's were occupied at approximately 2045 hours and multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 365954, Co C - YC 369966, Co D - YC 369966. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB BERCHTESGADEN.

(22) D Day + 21 (31 May 1969):

Operation "APACHE SNOW" resumed at 0600 hours, with all units beginning to RIF at 0705 hours. RCN Platoon was relieved of security for FSB BERCHTESGADEN and was air lifted to FSB CURRAHEE, completing the move at 0933 hours.

(a) Co A: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE, assumed OPCON RCN Plat and employed it in RIF operations in vic FSB CURRAHEE.

(b) Co B: Conducted search and destroy operations in assigned AO, with negative enemy contact.

(c) Co C: Conducted search and destroy operations in assigned AO, with negative enemy contact.

(d) Co D: Commenced RIF at first light and at 1217 hours made contact with an unknown size enemy force (vic YC 375967). Small arms fire and grenades were received from approximately 30 meters away. Contact was broken by the enemy at 1310 hours. Co D suffered 4 US WHA with shrapnel wounds. Medevac was completed at 1320 hours. Continuing the RIF at 1610 hours, Co D made contact again by an estimated squad size enemy force resulting in one US WHA. Enemy casualties were unknown. Medevac was completed at 1749 hours.

(e) Co E (-): DS FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: DS FSB CURRAHEE.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2020 hours, and established multiple LP's and AP's. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 376942, Co C - YC 379962, Co D - YC 377967, Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB CURRAHEE.

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(23) D Day + 22 (1 June 1969):

CO, 1-506 Abn Inf was given the mission of providing 2 companies for a combat assault operation vic YC 349990 to search for and destroy NVA/VC forces and caches. Plans were formulated and orders were issued for Companies B and D to begin movement immediately east to FSB CURRAHEE to prepare for combat assault operations on 3 June 69. (See inclsure 2 for area of operations).

(a) Co A: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE by conducting RIF operations and employing multiple LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: Search and destroy operations continued and at 1100 hours, Co B had one man medevaced for a broken leg. Medevac was completed at 1237 hours. The company continued to search the area of operation east towards FSB CURRAHEE without enemy contact.

(c) Co C: Continued to provide security for the Bn Command Group and conducted search and destroy operations throughout the day without enemy contact.

(d) Co D: At 0915 hours, vic YC 375968 the company found 1 fighting position with 1-60mm mortar complete, 28-60mm mortar rounds with primers, 4 rucksacks, 100 lbs polished rice, 1 US protective mask, 2 boxes 60mm mortar fuses, 2 Chicom grenades, 1 Chicom claymore, and 1 NVA pistol belt. The pistol belt had "H06", "GIAN YOIEN", "HT 16552IT" and "HUYIR GUON LOC TRAN" written on it. All fighting positions were destroyed, and all equipment was evacuated. The company continued their search and at 1100 hours found a bunker complex (YC 376967) with 4 bunkers, 2 with overhead cover and 2 under construction. In the same area, three cooking hooches were found. All bunkers and hooches were destroyed. Search of the area was continued and at 1347 hours, 1 metal badge with silver writing on it was found. In the same area 2 bunkers 1-2'X4'X2' and 1-12'X20X8' with 3' overhead cover were found which had been recently constructed. All equipment was extracted and all bunkers were destroyed. The search continued eastward towards FSB CURRAHEE without enemy contact.

(e) Co E (-): Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2010 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 395947, Co C - YC 393955, Co D - YC 390966, Co E - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB CURRAHEE.

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(24) D Day + 23 (2 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE by employing multiple daylight RIF's and night LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: Began moving at first light and at 0710 hours closed at FSB CURRAHEE. The company conducted maintenance of equipment and was given a stand down. Showers, clean clothing, ice cream, and repair teams for ordnance and signal items were provided. Remainder of the day was devoted to preparation for the next day's operation.

(c) Co C: Continued their early movement with the Bn Command Group and closed FSB CURRAHEE at 0830 hours. The company conducted maintenance of equipment and was given a stand down. Showers, clean clothes, ice cream and repair teams for ordnance and signal items were provided. The remainder of the day was devoted to maintenance and relaxation and preparation for future operations.

(d) Co D: At 0820 hours, YC 311966 found 1 hooch 15'X25'X10' with thatched roof and a bamboo floor. An animal pen was close by and showed signs of recent use. Hooch and pen were destroyed. The company continued RIFing eastward and closed FSB CURRAHEE at 1045 hours. The company conducted maintenance of equipment and was given a stand down. Showers, clean clothes, ice cream, and repair teams for ordnance and signal items were provided. Remainder of the day was devoted to maintenance and relaxation and preparation for future operations.

(e) Co E (-): Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Flat: Returned to Camp Evans for repelling training.

All units moved into NDP's at approximately 2045 hours vicinity FSB CURRAHEE.

(25) D Day + 24 (3 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE employing multiple RIF operations and LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: Conducted airmobile combat assault vic YC 347990. 1st lift departed FSB CURRAHEE at 0808 hrs and completed insertion at 0833 hours. LZ was cold. One man was injured with a possible fractured leg. Medevac called and completed at 0905 hours. Operations continued and at 0935 hours vic YC 346988 found 2 bunkers, 1-10'X15'X10' and 1-4'X5'X4' with 2' overhead cover. Both bunkers were destroyed. At 1050 hours, vic YC 345985 the company found and destroyed 1 Chicom claymore mine that was hanging in a tree. Movement continued and at 1136 hours, the point element of Co B spotted 2-3

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NVA and engaged them with small arms fire. Subsequent search of the area revealed 1 NVA KIA, 1 AK-50 captured and indications that another body had been drug away from the contact area. At 1145 hours, vic YC 345985 an arm and another AK-50 was found. Both weapons were evacuated. At 1255 hours, 1 NVA with RRG was spotted moving west. ARA and gunships were employed with negative results. Continuing the search, movement was again spotted at YC 345985. Gunships were employed. At 1427 hours the company came under attack with an unknown size enemy force firing small arms and RRG's. Small arms fire was returned and artillery called in with negative results. Operations continued throughout the day with negative enemy contact.

(c) Co C: Remained at FSB CURRAHEE providing security and construction of FSB CURRAHEE.

(d) Co D: Conducted airmobile combat assault into an LZ vic YC 347990. LZ was cold. First lift departed FSB CURRAHEE 0828 hours, and insertion was completed at 0900 hours. At 1445 hours, vic YC 355974 Co D found 3 spider holes recently used with 2' of overhead cover. All were destroyed. Operations continued and at 1555 hours, the company found some printed material and a published letter from Ho Chi Minh telling NVA what a good job they were doing. Publications were evacuated. The operation continued with negative enemy contact during the day.

(e) Co E (-): Continued to provide security for FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Flat: Continued repelling training at Camp Evans.

Units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2045 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units, NDP's located at:  
Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - 342982, Co C - FSB CURRAHEE, Co D - YC 357995.  
Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Flat - Camp Evans.

(26) D Day + 25 (4 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued security and construction of FSB CURRAHEE and employed multiple RIF operations, LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: At 0710 hours, Co B's 1st and 4th platoons departed the NDP leaving 2nd platoon as a stay-behind force at the NDP. At 0739 hours, 1 NVA entered the NDP. Small arms fire was employed resulting in 1 NVA KIA and 1 AK-47 captured. At 0835 hours, 1 NVA was seen moving into the ambush position. Small arms fire was employed and Co B's 2nd platoon began receiving RRG rounds from an unknown size enemy force. Artillery was called in on the suspected enemy location with unknown results. Co B suffered 6 WHA's from shrapnel. Medevac completed at 1000 hours. Operations continued and at 1407 hours, 1 anti-aircraft position and 4 mortar positions, well camouflaged were found. All positions were destroyed. The company continued to search

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throughout the day and found numerous recently used trails. Negative further enemy contact made during the remainder of the day.

(c) Co C: Continued to provide security and construction of FSB CURRAHEE.

(d) Co D: Began moving at 0710 hours and at 1110 hours found an NDP position vic YC 362996 with 20 fox holes. All positions were destroyed. No enemy contact was made throughout the day.

(e) Co E (-): Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Flat: Continued repelling training at Camp Evans.

Units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2015 hours. Multiple LP's and AP's were employed by all units. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 344984, Co C - FSB CURRAHEE, Co D - YC 365995. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Flat - Camp Evans.

(27) D Day + 26 (5 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Continued security and construction of FSB CURRAHEE and employed multiple RIF operations, LP's and AP's.

(b) Co B: Began early movement and at 0810 hours, vic YC 353986 found 2 overnight sleeping positions that were used during the night. Search operations continued and no enemy contact was made during the day's operation.

(c) Co C: Began early preparations for movement by helicopters to Eagle Beach. Movement began at 0915 hours and was completed at 1020 hours.

(d) Co D: Departed the night NDP at 0745 hours and moved east continuing the search and destroy mission. At 1100 hours, vic YC 368994, the company found 4 hooches 10'X10'X10' with 5 well-constructed bunkers 4'X5' with 2' overhead cover. One container of .51 Cal MG ammo with 30 rounds was found in the bunker. All bunkers were destroyed and the ammunition was evacuated. Movement continued and at 1445 hours, vic YC 371986 a fighting trench, 3'-5' deep with overhead cover was found. Sleeping positions were abundant. Trench was approximately 120' long, and was destroyed. No enemy contact was made during the day's operation.

(e) Co E (-): Continued security and construction of FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Flat: Continued repelling training at Camp Evans.

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Units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2000 hours and established multiple LP's and AP's. NDP's located at: Co A - FSB CURRAHEE, Co B - YC 367982, Co C - Eagle Beach Rest Center, Co D - YC 371987. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - Camp Evans.

(28) D Day +27 (6 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Began early preparations for movement to Eagle Beach. Helicopter movement began at 1120 hours and was completed at 1235 hours.

(b) Co B: Continued search operations and had negative enemy contact during the day's operation.

(c) Co C: Returned to FSB CURRAHEE from Eagle Beach closing at 1311 hours and assumed security for FSB CURRAHEE.

(d) Co D: Continued operations in assigned AO and had negative enemy contact during the day's operation.

(e) Co E (-): Continued security FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: Completed repelling training at Camp Evans.

All units moved into and occupied NDP's at approximately 2015 hours and employed multiple LP's and AP's. NDP's located at: Co A - Eagle Beach, Co B - YC 389977, Co C - FSB CURRAHEE, Co D - YC 385983. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - Camp Evans.

(29) D Day + 28 (7 June 1969):

(a) Co A: Returned to FSB CURRAHEE from Eagle Beach and were immediately inserted into an LZ vic FSB GEORGIA, YD 410033. Insertion was completed at 1117 hours.

(b) Co B: Began early movement for extraction and movement to Eagle Beach. At 0845 hours, YC 392977 the company found 4 bunkers, 8'X8'X4' with 3' overhead cover. All bunkers were destroyed. The company arrived at the PZ at 0915 hours vic YC 401976 and began extraction to Eagle Beach. Movement was completed at 1040 hours.

(c) Co E (-): Continued security of FSB CURRAHEE.

(f) RCN Plat: Conducted move from Camp Evans to FSB CURRAHEE and was inserted into FSB GEORGIA at 1720 hours. LZ was cold.

Locations of units were: Co A - NDP YD 410033, Co B - Eagle Beach, Co C - FSB CURRAHEE, Co D - Eagle Beach. Co E (-) - FSB CURRAHEE, RCN Plat - FSB GEORGIA.

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(30) D Day + 29 (8 June 1969):

Operation "APACHE SNOW" officially terminated for the 1st of the CURRAHEES at 082400 hours. The day's activities consisted of Co A continuing operations northeast of FSB EAGLES NEST; Co B assuming responsibility for FSB BERCHTESGADEN and FSB EAGLES NEST; Co C and D being inserted into FSB GEORGIA for operations northeast of FSB EAGLES NEST; and Co E (-) remained as security for FSB CURRAHEE pending relocation of 1-506 Abn Inf Tactical Operations Center to EAGLES NEST on 9 June 1969.

12. Results:

a. The mission given the 1st of the 506th was successfully accomplished by destroying NVA/VC forces, base camps, and caches and denying him the use of the area of operations as a resupply location and staging area for replacement personnel.

b. Enemy losses:

(1) KIA: 159

(2) KBAA: UNK

(3) KBA: UNK

(4) CAPTURED: 1

c. Friendly losses:

(1) KBA: 22

(2) WHA: 136

(3) MHA: 1

d. Body to weapons ratio: 2:1

e. Enemy to friendly killed ratio: 7:1

13. Administration: Current ADMINO used.

14. Logistics: Current ADMINO used.

15. Chemical: N/A.

16. Civil Affairs: N/A.

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17. Psychological Operations: N/A.

18. Communications: N/A.

19. Engineer: Two engineer personnel were attached to each company during Operation APACHE SNOW. Engineers were primarily used in demolition roles in destroying caches, bunkers, etc.

20. Artillery: N/A.

21. Special Equipment and Techniques: N/A.

22-23. Commander's analysis and recommendations:

A. (1) Observation. Units capturing enemy personnel are not permitted sufficient time to interrogate these personnel in order to obtain immediate tactical information.

(2) Discussion. On 21 May 1969 an NVA soldier was captured by B Company 1-506 who indicated a willingness to assist US forces. At the time of capture he had a shrapnel wound in the right leg and was treated by medics from B Company which helped to increase his willingness to cooperate. The Battalion was informed to immediately evacuate the individual to higher headquarters. Approximately six hours later the Battalion was informed that the POW revealed that an enemy recon platoon was located only 300 meters west of Co C 1-506 who had encountered enemy in that location the previous evening.

(3) Recommendation. That units be permitted to retain POW's for a sufficient period of time to obtain information of an immediate tactical value.

B. (1) Observation. Slow reaction time and inaccuracy of CS employment by UH-1 aircraft.

(2) Discussion. It took excessive time to get a CS ship on station and then CS was dropped so high that it was inaccurate and was greatly effected by wind.

(3) Recommendation. That more frequent use be made of CS drops and that CS pilots continually stay abreast of friendly locations and situations.

C. (1) Observation. When attacking enemy bunker complexes many chest wounds are constantly inflicted by small arms and fragments, from RPG's, claymores and grenades.

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(2) Discussion. Company C of the ~~Battalion~~ ~~made use of~~ flak jackets while attacking a bunker complex and also for protection of secondary 8" Artillery fragments that were firing a destruction mission on the complex. The objective was completely destroyed by the 8" fire and no enemy fire was encountered. No casualties were suffered from secondary fragments.

(3) Recommendation. That troops encountering bunker complexes utilize flak jackets and that 8" Artillery be used for destruction missions on bunker complexes prior to the assault. These type fires can be called in within 300 meters of friendly troops when troops take cover and utilize flak jackets.

D. (1) Observation. Vary few adequate LZ's were available within the area of operation.

(2) Discussion. A rifle company must remain within a one hour distance from an LZ for immediate extraction for contingency plans, medevac's, resupply, reinforcements, etc.

(3) Recommendation. That all rifle companies cut a minimum of one LZ daily. This can be accomplished by the platoon providing security for the company CP while the remaining platoons are conducting search and destroy or reconnaissance in force operations.

E. (1) Observation. Employing stay-behind forces upon departure from night defensive positions.

(2) Discussion. On 4 June 1969, Co B 1st Bn, 506th Abn Inf departed the NDP leaving the 2nd platoon as a stay-behind force. (See par 11 b. (26)). This action resulted in Co B springing a successful ambush when two NVA entered the NDP area within 30 minutes after B Company's departure.

(3) Recommendation. That all units employ maximum stay-behind forces. This type operation will normally yield more enemy contact and further, will confuse the enemy so that his plans must be changed.

F. (1) Observation. Units requiring resupply of water were witnessing a loss of water through use of plastic 5 gallon containers that were cracked when dropped from resupply ships.

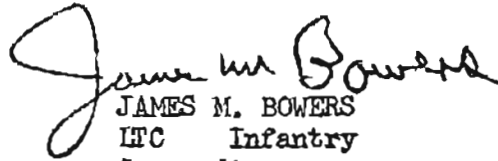
(2) Discussion. Units of the 1st Bn, 506th Abn Inf required resupply at a higher rate than normal. Throughout, water containers were in short supply. 155 powder bag containers were used to resupply all units w/water and proved very effective for kick-out missions. They are water tight and sturdy enough to penetrate the jungle canopy when dropped from heights of 100 - 150 feet.

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(3) Recommendations. That supply personnel utilize the 155 powder bag containers for resupply of water.



JAMES M. BOWERS  
LTC Infantry  
Commanding

2 Inclosures:

1. Area of Operations, 10 May - 9 Jun 69.
2. Area of Operations, 3 Jun - 9 Jun 69.



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 2D BATTALION, 506TH AIRBORNE INFANTRY  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-CG-C

20 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report OPCRD 3-69 (~~APACHE SNOW~~) (U)

Commanding Officer  
3d Bde, 101st Abn Div  
ATTN: S3  
APO 96383

1. (U) NAME OF OPERATION: APACHE SNOW.
2. ( ) DATES OF OPERATION: 211200 May 69 to 080001 June 69 (inclusive dates of 2-506 participation).
3. ( ) LOCATION: Northern A Shau Valley, Nam Hoa District, Thua Thien Province, RVN. Maps: Vietnam Map Series L7014, Sheets 6441 I and 6441 IV, Scale 1:50,000 and Pictomap Supplement Series L8020, Sheet 6441 IVS, Scale 1:25,000.
4. ( ) COMMAND/CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: Hqs, 3d Bde, 101st Airborne Division.
5. ( ) REPORTING OFFICER: LTC Gene T Sherron (ALLIGATOR).
6. ( ) TASK ORGANIZATION: A/2-506, B/2-506, C/2-506, D/2-506, E/2-506 (-).
7. ( ) SUPPORTING FORCES:
  - a. Artillery:
    - (1) C/2-319th Artillery (105). Direct Support.
    - (2) 2-11th Artillery (-) (155). General Support Reinforcing.
    - (3) 1-83rd Artillery (-) (175/8"). General Support Reinforcing.
    - (4) 4-77th Artillery (-) (ARA). General Support Reinforcing.
  - b. Tactical Air Support: 7th TAF.
  - c. Airlift and Resupply:
    - (1) 158th Assault Helicopter Battalion.
    - (2) 159th Assault Helicopter Battalion.

*Incl 1a*

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d. Engineer: 1 Plat B/326th Engr.

e. Pathfinder: 160th Aviation Group.

8. ( ) INTELLIGENCE: See Intelligence Inclosure.

9. ( ) MISSION: 2-506th Inf, combat assault, 21 May 1969, into FSB Airborne (YD355070), conduct RIF operations to locate and destroy enemy forces, base areas and caches in assigned area of operation.

10. ( ) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Three (3) companies conduct RIF/Search and Clear Operations on separate axes with the BN CP, one (1) rifle company and the combat support company (-) located at FSB Airborne for security, construction and improvement of the facility.

11. EXECUTION:

a. Method of Operation:

(1) A/2-506: Provide security, conduct local RIF and improve defensive positions at FSB Airborne.

(2) B/2-506: RIF/Search and Clear from FSB Airborne to the SW.

(3) C/2-506: RIF/Search and Clear from FSB Airborne to the S-SE.

(4) D/2-506: RIF/Search and Clear from FSB Airborne to the NW.

(5) E/2-506 (-): Provide 81mm mortar support from FSB Airborne.

(a) Provide ground surveillance through employment of crew-served starlight scopes, radar, and anti-intrusion devices.

(b) Recon Plat provide security for FSB Airborne, improve defensive positions and conduct local RIF operations. (See Inclosure 2, Operations Schematic.)

b. Operations Narrative:

(1) 21 May 69: The 2-506th Inf began participation in Operation APACHE SNOW with the movement, by CH-47, of the Bn CP, Companies B, C and E (-) from Camp Evans, Phong Dien District Headquarters and An Lo Bridge to FSB Blaze (YD529020). This move consisted of 312 PAX utilizing 10 CH-47 sorties. Upon completion of the Hook move to FSB Blaze, the Bn CP and Company E (-) conducted a CA from PZ FSB Blaze to FSB Airborne. This move consisted of 107 PAX, utilizing 22 sorties. Company A was released from OPCON to the 3-187th Inf and conducted a CA from PZ YC327982 to LZ FSB Airborne with 85 PAX utilizing 17 sorties. Company A and Recon Plat assumed a defensive position on FSB Airborne. Because of darkness, Companies B, C and D remained at FSB Blaze and FSB Currahee overnight.

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(2) 22 May 69: The CA of Companies B, C and D from FSB's Blaze and Currahee was completed and consisted of 282 ~~PAR~~ and 57 ~~sorties~~. Upon completion of this CA, all elements of the 2-506th Inf were on or near FSB Airborne. Companies B, C and D began their RIF/Search and Clear Operations away from FSB Airborne on separate axes. Company A and the Recon Plat conducted local RIF missions in the immediate vicinity of FSB Airborne. All units began finding evidence of enemy activity as they continued their operations, i.e., numerous items of enemy equipment, bunkers and hooches. Some of the bunkers appeared to have been used as recently as three (3) weeks. There was no enemy contact on 22 May.

(3) 23 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued operations in assigned AO with the Bn CP, Companies A and E (-) located at FSB Airborne. At 0056 hours, FSB Airborne received four (4) rounds of 60mm mortar fire. There were no casualties as a result of this action. Companies B, C and D continued to find evidence of enemy activity in the area. Co B, vic YD360072, received small arms fire from an unknown enemy force resulting in 1 US/KIA and 2 US/WIA. At 1010 hours at YD361064, Co B was again in contact with three (3) enemy. The point man was hit, but as a result of an armor chest plate which he was wearing, he sustained only a minor injury. At 1050 hours, at the same location, Co B was again in contact for the third time today with the same three (3) enemy. The Recon Plat was sent from FSB Airborne to Co B's location to assist in the removal of Co B's KIAs and WIAs. 2-506 used blocking fire with 81mm mortars and employed an air strike on a hilltop near Co B's location. At 1213 hours, at YD343076, Co D received small arms and RPG fire. In this action, Co D had one (1) man wounded who, at 1250 hours died as a result of injuries sustained. At 1705 hours, at YD344078, Co D had one (1) incoming round, a suspected 82mm mortar round. This resulted in one (1) man wounded. But, at 1722 hours, this man died as a result of his wounds. For the day, then, there were 4 US/KIA, 5 US/WIA and 1 US/NBI (Non-Battle-Injury).

(4) 24 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued to conduct RIF/Search and Clear Operations in its assigned AO, with Co B moving to the SW, Co C to the S and Co D to the NW. Signs of enemy activity were still being found as units progressed. At 0545 hours, FSB Airborne received an estimated 38 rounds of 60mm mortar fire from an unknown location. There were negative casualties in this action. Co D had three (3) contacts during the day at 0920 hours, 1210 hours and 1800 hours. In the first action, at 0920 hours, at YD342076, Co D observed one (1) NVA moving about 200 meters from their NDP to the east. They engaged him with small arms fire, however, a RIF of the area had negative results. Then at 1210 hours, at YD341076, Co D received ten (10) rounds of small arms sniper fire. The sniper was believed to be located in a tree. A RIF once again led to negative results. Finally, at 1800 hours, Co D at YD341074 received four (4) rounds of small arms fire with the suspected enemy location being 150 meters to their south. They engaged but did not receive return fire. In all three contacts, Co D did not have any casualties. In other action today, Co C at 1156 hours, at YD349077, discovered and destroyed two (2) 250 pound bombs. Then at 1803 hours, at YD351076, Co C received three (3) bursts of small arms fire but sustained negative injuries. They checked out the area of the suspected enemy location but had negative findings. An LP from Co C spotted one (1) NVA armed with an AR47 who fired at FSB Airborne during the firing of a "mad minute." On the day then, there were no friendly or confirmed enemy

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casualties as a result of these actions. There were several bunkers and hooches found in the AO. Additionally, units found various items of enemy clothing and equipment.

(5) 25 May 69: All units continued to maneuver against suspected enemy positions and caches and continued to find bunkers, fighting positions and enemy clothing and equipment. At 0915 hours, an air strike was employed for LZ construction. The only contact for the day was made by Co B at 1835 hours at YD361066, at which time they received three (3) RPG rounds and some small arms fire. They returned fire and after checking out the area, they found a pool of blood but negative further. In the action, Co B sustained five (5) WIA.

(6) 26 May 69: At 1205 hours, three (3) air strikes were employed for LZ construction. There were two (2) enemy contacts during the day, one (1) at 1040 hours when Co D received approximately ten (10) rounds of small arms fire and the other was at 1350 hours when a "stay-behind" patrol from Co B fired on one (1) enemy entering their former NDP at YD361065. Results of these actions were one (1) NVA/KIA and one (1) US/WIA. In other action today, Co C and the Recon Plat each found a bunker complex and Co C also found five (5) graves containing decomposed bodies.

(7) 27 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued its RIF/Search and Clear Operations in the northern A Shau Valley. At 0425 hours, there was an 82mm mortar attack on FSB Airborne. Seven (7) or eight (8) rounds landed inside the perimeter with direct hits on two (2) bunkers and an LP located 25 meters outside the perimeter. There were four (4) US/KIA and six (6) US/WIA as a result of the attack. Simultaneously, with the mortar attack on FSB Airborne, Co B came under a grenade attack but sustained no casualties. During the day, units continued to find enemy bunkers, hooches, equipment and munitions which was highlighted by three (3) separate caches, found in vicinity YD348063 and discovered by Co C which consisted of a total of 800 rounds of 82mm mortar, 600 rounds of 60mm mortar, 100 RPG-9 and 100 RPG-7 rounds. All of the ammunition in these caches was in good condition and was evacuated.

(8) 28 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued operations in the northern A Shau Valley with the Bn CP, Companies A and E (-) located at FSB Airborne and Companies B, C and D maneuvering against suspected enemy locations and caches. Co B at YD358056 and Co D at YD329075, found small bunker and hooch complexes and a small amount of clothing and and miscellaneous equipment. Co C, at YD351058, found three (3) new AK47 Rifles wrapped in plastic and some AK47 magazines. At 1748 hours, Co D, while moving into its NDP located at YD330075, tripped a booby trap consisting of two or three claymores. This resulted in fourteen (14) US/WIA.

(9) 29 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued to operate in its assigned AO. There were no enemy contacts during the day, however, Co D, while in its NDP located at YD327068, received one (1) incoming ~~105mm~~ Phosphorous round believed to be a 105mm from C/2-319th Artillery located at FSB Airborne. As a result of this, Co D sustained five (5) US/WIA who had to be Medivaced.

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(10) 30 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued to operate in the northern A Shau Valley. At 1500 hours, vic YD327068, Co D found an anti-aircraft position with 12.7mm ammunition in it and five (5) bunkers and four (4) hooches. Co C found an assortment of old and rusty ammunition and Recon Plat, while on a local RIF of FSB Airborne, found three (3) sets of NVA fatigues and miscellaneous medical supplies and documents in a cave.

(11) 31 May 69: The 2-506th Inf continued RIF/Search and Clear Operations in its assigned AO in the northern A Shau Valley. Companies B, C and D, while operating on separate axes, all found evidence of enemy activity in their respective areas. At YD328066, Co D found a bunker/hooch complex with a latrine, a shower point and an observation platform. At YD349063, Co C located an ammunition cache consisting of 215-82mm mortar rounds, 100-60mm mortar rounds, 31 RPG-7 and 12 RPG-9 rounds and 14 B40 Rockets. Also at YD350067, Co C found another cache of small arms and mortar ammunition. In this cache, there were AK47, 9mm, 12.7mm, 14.5mm and RPG-7 rounds, as well as 82mm and 60mm mortar rounds. Co B at YD351047, found 880 rounds of 12.7mm ammunition. All the above caches were evacuated.

(12) 1 June 69: Companies B, C and D continued their RIF/Search and Clear Operations within the Bn AO. Highlighting the day's activities, was a 6,500 pound, booby trapped, rice cache found by Co C at YD348061. The rice was polished, in 100 pound bags and in excellent condition. Also, at YD349061, Co C found the wreckage of a UH-1D Helicopter. At the crash site was the partial remains of a body, a flight helmet with the name "CPT Begley" on it, 2 M60 Machineguns, serial numbers 6477 and 7005, 1 CAR-15, 1 M79 Grenade Launcher, 2 M16 Rifles and a Jungle Penetrator. Other activities of the day included a cache of fishing equipment found by Co C at YD349061, which consisted of six (6) 100 pound bundles of transparent fishing line, 400 fishing poles and 1000 snap links with swivels.

(13) 2 June 69: As the companies continued to maneuver within the AO, they continually found signs of enemy activity. The 12 element of Co C was air lifted to FSB Airborne to provide security and conduct local day time RIF operations while the Recon Plat was extracted from FSB Airborne to Camp Evans to attend Rappel School. While conducting a platoon-size RIF to the SE of FSB Airborne, Co A, at 0915 hours and at YD361065, spotted approximately ten (10) NVA setting up US-type claymores. There was an immediate exchange of fire between the NVA and Co A. The NVA detonated their claymores during the exchange of fire. The results of this contact were two (2) NVA/KIA, one (1) US/KIA and four (4) US/WIA. Throughout the day, Companies B, C and D continued to find bunkers, hooches, caves and small amounts of miscellaneous clothing, equipment and ammunition. At 1340 hours, in vic YD353064 and YD354065, Co C found two (2) separate rice caches which totaled 12,900 pounds of polished rice in 150 pound bags and stacked on an 85 degree slope against logs and covered with plastic. The rice was in excellent condition and appeared to have been in this location for approximately two weeks.

(14) 3 June 69: The 2-506th Inf still participating in Operation APACHE SNOW, continued to find signs of enemy activity during its RIF operations throughout the Bn AO. Units continued to conduct individual operations and found small bunker and hooch complexes and small quantities of enemy clothing

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and equipment. At 1330 hours, the 11 element of A/2-506, while on a local RIF from FSB Airborne, at YD362064, found two (2) graves containing two (2) NVA bodies killed less than 24-hours. They were killed by small arms fire possibly as a result of contact made by another Co A RIF on 2 June 69. At YD343056, Co C found two (2) SKS Rifles wrapped in plastic and buried under leaves. The rifles were in poor condition but would fire. They were evacuated. There was no enemy contact during the day.

(15) 4 June 69: Companies B, C and D continued to conduct RIF/ Search and Clear Operations in the Bn AO. The only contact occurred at 1000 hours when Co D received approximately ten (10) rounds of small arms fire. There were no casualties as a result of this action. At YD340053, Co C found 22 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition. And at YD355064, while on a local RIF, Co A found five (5) rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition. All companies continued to find bunkers, hooches and miscellaneous items of clothing and equipment.

(16) 5 June 69: The 2-506th Inf continued participation in the Bde operation in the A Shau Valley by conducting RIF/Search and Clear Operations in its assigned AO with the Bn CP located at FSB Airborne. Companies B, C and D continued to maneuver on separate axes with Co B oriented to the west, Co C to the south and Co D to the northwest. Co A remained as security force for FSB Airborne and conducted local RIF operations during the daylight hours. At 0735 hours, at YD314105, Co D made contact with an estimated two (2) NVA. This action resulted in one (1) NVA/KIA and one US/WIA. The NVA/KIA had in his possession an RPG Launcher which was evacuated to this location. Additionally, Co D found at YD314098, three (3) graves estimated to be one (1) year old and four (4) bunkers with overhead cover. At 1518 hours, at YD314104, the 13 element of Co D again made contact with an estimated NVA squad. Co D sustained three (3) US/WIA in this action all of which were medivaced shortly after the end of the contact. At 1815 hours, Co C received one (1) RPG round which exploded in the trees and thereby causing three (3) US/WIA.

(17) 6 June 69: All elements of the 2-506th Inf continued to operate in the assigned AO. At 0630 hours, at YD315046, Co B had incoming RPG and 60mm mortar rounds. Co B sustained one (1) US/KIA and 12 US/WIA from this attack. At 1500 hours, Co B made contact with 2-3 NVA equipped with small arms at YD305043. In this action, there was one (1) US/WIA.

(18) 7 June 69: Today was the last day for the 2-506th Inf participation in Operation APACHE SNOW. At 1210 hours, a LOH on a VR mission for this battalion received ground fire from vic YD337077. The Bn S3 received a minor leg wound as a result of this action. At YD355068, Co C found five (5) bunkers and ammunition. The ordnance consisted of 40 Rifle grenades, 3 RPG-9 rounds and 2-60mm mortar rounds. Also Co C, at YD355062 made contact with three (3) NVA. In this action there were no US casualties but there was one (1) NVA/KIA. After this action, they later found four (4) hooches in the area. And upon searching, found two (2) SKS Rifles, 1 sniper rifle, 8 Model 44 Carbines, 2 M3 M36 rifles, 1 PPS43 sub-machinegun, 8 cases of M16 Rockets, 1 case of RPG rounds, 8 cases of AK47 ammo, 50-50 pound bags of salt and 20 packs of powdered salmon.

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At YD337074, Co D found one (1) AK47 rifle, one (1) SKS rifle, 1 Model 44 rifle with grenade launcher, ten (10) anti-tank grenades and some miscellaneous small arms ammunition, clothing and equipment. During the hours of darkness, radar and crew served starlight scopes located at FSB Airborne, discovered movement of small groups of individuals and various lights. All sightings were engaged by 81mm mortars after which the movement ceased. At 1616 hours, Co B was air moved from their field location at YD309039 to FSB Airborne to take over the security of the fire base. The CA was complete at 1640 hours.

12. ( ) RESULTS:

a. The mission was successfully accomplished and vast quantities of enemy supplies and materials were captured.

b. Enemy losses:

(1) KIA: 30 (includes 21 KIA by A/2-506 while OPCON to 3-187th Inf)

(2) KBAA: None

(3) KBA: None

(4) Captured: None

(5) Enemy equipment captured or destroyed:

(a) Food supplies: 2,600 lbs

(b) Small arms weapons: 27

(c) Small arms ammo: 84,227 rds

(d) 60mm mortar ammo: 712 rds

(e) 60mm mortar Base Plate: 1

(f) 82mm mortar ammo: 1,361 rds

(g) 82mm mortar fuses: 100

(h) B40 Rkts: 38

(i) RPG 7 and 9: 200

(j) 12.7mm and 14.5mm Ammo: 13,708 rds

(k) Miscellaneous ammo: 129 rds

(l) TNT: 9 lbs

(m) Crossbows: 2

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- (n) NVA Machetes: 2
- (o) Mines and BBT: 7
- (p) Fuel: 20 gal
- (q) Structures: 119
- (r) Tunnels: 2
- (s) Bunkers: 302
- (t) Documents: 3 $\frac{3}{4}$  lbs
- (u) Medical supplies: 11 $\frac{1}{2}$  lbs
- (v) Secondary Explosions: 2
- (w) Rice: 21,360 lbs
- (x) Uniforms: 12
- (y) NVA canteens: 2
- (z) Mittens: 50 prs
- (aa) Fishing line: 600 lbs
- (bb) Fishing poles: 400 ea
- (cc) Commo wire: 5000 meters

13. ( ) ADMINISTRATION:

a. Personnel strength:

21 May 1969

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>PDY</u>	<u>FIELD</u>
HHC	191	172	36
A	119	105	94
B	131	112	98
C	131	120	106
D	129	113	95
E	85	89	79
	<u>786</u>	<u>711</u>	<u>508</u>

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<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>PDY</u>	<u>FIELD</u>
HHC	205	189	46
A	112	101	79
B	109	94	75
C	124	112	95
D	113	104	87
E	91	100	72
	<u>754</u>	<u>600</u>	<u>454</u>

Average for period 21 May 1969 -8 June 1969

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>ASSIGNED</u>	<u>PDY</u>	<u>FIELD</u>
HHC	198	180	50
A	115	101	83
B	112	100	81
C	128	116	100
D	116	103	86
E	87	96	79
	<u>766</u>	<u>696</u>	<u>388</u>

b. Number of personnel departed R&R during 21 May-8 June 1969: 32

14. ( ) LOGISTICS:

a. Concept of logistical support: Logistical support was provided through normal supply channels. Aviation support for supply was provided by A/158th Aviation and other elements of the 160th Aviation Group. Resupply to maneuver elements was programmed at three day intervals. Hot chow was integrated with each resupply. CH-47 sorties arrived from Cheyenne and Wyoming Pads located at Camp Evans and from forward supply areas at FSB's Blaze and Birmingham.

b. Logistic summary:

(1) UH-1 Sorties - 170.

(2) CH-47 Sorties - 49.

(3) Tonnage by class of supply to each firebase and unit.

(a) Fire Base Airborne

1 Class I 30,975 lbs

2 Class II 3,000 lbs

3 Class III 10,000 lbs

4 Class IV 56,000 lbs

5 Class V 80,000 lbs

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(b) Company B

1 Class I 14,000 lbs

2 Class II 300 lbs

3 Class III 20 lbs

4 Class V 800 lbs

(c) Company C

1 Class I 16,000 lbs

2 Class II 300 lbs

3 Class III 20 lbs

4 Class V 1,000 lbs

(d) Company D

1 Class I 12,000 lbs

2 Class II 250 lbs

3 Class III 20 lbs

4 Class V 700 lbs

c. Problem Areas - Lessons Learned:

(1) Initially, FSB Airborne had insufficient helicopter landing area for the amount of air traffic which some days exceeded 90 sorties. To alleviate this problem, the CH47 Pad, in the Artillery area, was enlarged as well as improved. The existing UH-1 Pad was also enlarged to accommodate two (2) helicopters and a new CH47 Pad was constructed on the southern edge of the perimeter.

(2) A large resupply of demolitions was required to be on hand at all times to allow for bunker destruction, clearing fields of fire on the perimeter and construction of landing zones. An initial stockage of 5000 lbs is recommended.

(3) Much of the Fire Support Base was already constructed when the 2-506 Inf initially moved in. Otherwise a greater amount of Class IV material would have been required.

(4) To facilitate resupply and maintain airmobility, landing zone construction was a continual requirement. Time being a factor, it was soon learned that by lowering the following items, maneuver elements could rapidly

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establish landing zones.

- (a) Two (2) long handled axes.
- (b) Two (2) chain saws.
- (c) Premixed fuel.
- (d) Oil.
- (e) 30-50 electric and non-electric blasting caps.
- (f) 100-700 lbs of C4 demolition.

(5) Chain saws were consolidated at FSB Airborne for immediate dispatch to companies and maintenance to include sharpening, adjustment of chain tension and cleaning. The quantity of demolition required for any one landing zone varied and depended upon the condition of the landing zone site. Daisy Cutters and Artillery preparation reduced the amount of demolition required. Due to the wind turbulence in this area, landing zones had to be large enough to allow an additional eight (8) feet beyond the normal area allotted a UH-1 aircraft. Through its maneuverability and small size, the IOH was often used to deliver necessary equipment to finish partially completed landing zones.

15. (U) CHEMICAL: N/A

16. (U) CIVIL AFFAIRS: N/A

17. (U) PSYOPS: N/A

18. ( ) COMMUNICATIONS:

a. Communications with maneuver companies and the Battalion rear was consistently good throughout the operation. Due to sporadic failure of vital radio relays and automatic retransmission stations at Eagles Nest, vic YD407035, communications was at times difficult.

b. A forward radio maintenance shop was established at FSB Airborne to facilitate rapid repair and provide back-up radios during the interim repair periods.

c. Transmission security was above average during the operation. One complete SOI change was experienced and the transition was made smoothly.

19. ( ) ENGINEER: Upon initial occupation of FSB Airborne, one (1) engineer platoon was utilized to improve fighting bunkers, clear fields of fire, create new helicopter pads and generally expand the fire base.

20. ( ) ARTILLERY:

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a. Mission: Provide 2-506th Inf artillery support for Operation APACHE SNOW.

b. Concept: The 2-506th Inf was inserted on FSB Airborne relieving the 2-501st Inf in place. C/2-319th and C/2-11th ( ) remained on FSB Airborne to provide Direct Support and General Support Reinforcing fires for the 2-506th Inf.

c. Execution:

(1) The infantry mission required a careful and thorough search of the immediate terrain surrounding FSB Airborne; consequently, C/2-319th was very limited in providing fire support due to the proximity of the maneuver elements to FSB Airborne.

(2) B/2-319th Arty, located on FSB Berchestgarden, provided fire support for the majority of the missions fired for the 2-506th Inf.

(3) 4-77th Arty (ARA) (-) provided general support reinforcing fires for the 2-506th Inf. The highly mobile and responsive ARA sections are a definite asset to the ground commander.

d. Analysis: The key to successful indirect fire support is rapid response of the Direct Support Artillery Battery. Airmobile concepts give the ground commander various means of supporting fires. ARA is usually alerted at the time contact is initiated, on station time varied between 10 and 15 minutes; thus tube artillery must have been employed and adjusted prior to the arrival of the ARA section. If this has been accomplished, the ground commander or observer can adjust tube artillery and ARA simultaneously. However, if the artillery unit providing direct support cannot react prior to the arrival of the ARA section, coordination cannot be made between the tube artillery and the Aerial Rocket Artillery, therefore, it is imperative that the reaction time of the tube artillery from the time the mission is received to the time the round is fired be less than 5 minutes. It is a must that an air observer be on station to provide assistance to the ground observer that is in contact. Mountainous terrain is very deceiving to the ground observer; visual contact to the impact is impossible, thus a round impacting 200 meters on the opposite slope of the ground observer's position may sound as though it is at a far greater distance. High Angle fire was primarily utilized resulting in an additional hazard. In order for the ground observer to provide himself with close-in supporting fires, he must have an additional set of eyes in the sky.

21. (U) SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES: N/A

22. ( ) COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

a. Reconnaissance by fire.

(1) Item: Maneuver elements encountered small NVA teams usually employing delaying and harassing tactics creating casualties and time loss.

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through deployment of the unit.

(2) Solution: Extensive use of recon by indirect fire on planned routes of advance and the use of Pink Teams to screen areas to the immediate front of maneuver elements reduces the possibility of this type of encounter and causes the enemy to move, thereby exposing him and keeping him off balance. Frequent reconnaissance by fire, additionally, benefits the ground commander in that he is able to engage the enemy with indirect fire quickly by shifting from fired in targets.

b. Stay behind force.

(1) Item: In efforts to maintain continual surveillance of friendly elements, small NVA units, usually 2 to 3 individuals, attempt to follow maneuver companies.

(2) Solution: Whenever possible, a small force should remain in the previous night defensive position in an ambush posture as this is one instance where friendly forces are able to choose the location of contact. This tactic was effectively employed yielding one (1) enemy/ KIA during Operation APACHE SNOW.

c. Use of stealth while entering night defensive positions.

(1) Item: Avoiding enemy indirect fire attack while in NDP.

(2) Solution: Normal digging and preparation of NDPs causes noise and reveals friendly locations. To avoid indirect fire attack, the maneuver element sends a small reconnaissance force to secure the proposed NDP. After the hours of darkness, the company moves slowly and quietly to the location and further into a perimeter without digging fighting positions. The area for the NDP should contain enough brush and undergrowth to hide the element from visual detection. The key to successful execution is holding movement to a minimum.

d. Additional protection for the point man.

(1) Item: The point element is more susceptible to booby traps and fleeting engagements, therefore, all possible measures should be employed to further protect these personnel.

(2) Solution: Shortly after implementing an SOP where all point and slack men will wear breast protectors (of the same variety worn by rotary wing aviators and door gunners). One (1) possibly two (2) soldier's lives were saved in a contact during this operation. While the weight must be considered a disadvantage to wearing the chest protector, this can be overcome by rotating the point and slack men at frequent intervals and also by a redistribution of their equipment so as to make the additional weight as bearable as possible.

e. Use of Artillery, ARA and Daisy Cutters.

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(1) Item: To avoid aircraft booby traps. Aircraft booby traps are located in all possible landing zones throughout the AC.

(2) Solution: Though this battalion did not experience any aircraft destruction due to booby traps, it is felt that the possibility was reduced by the use of artillery and ARA on all possible landing zones prior to aircraft entry. Booby traps generally consist of CHICOM claymore mines facing the sky with pull-type firing mechanisms activated by the rotor wash. Preparation by Artillery and ARA directly on the landing zone effectively detonates or severs the lines connected to the firing device. Increased use of Daisy Cutter bombs to establish future landing zones and greater airmobile flexibility reduce the likelihood of aircraft damage through enemy mining activity merely by the logistical problem encountered when mining a large number of landing zones.

(f) Destruction of captured enemy equipment and material.

(1) Item: Evacuation of enemy equipment and material proved a time-consuming task in two instances during the operation. One maneuver company required 3 days to move 2000 rounds of mortar and RPG ammunition to a suitable landing zone. In another instance, one day was required to move five tons of rice to an adequate location for extraction.

(2) Solution: In certain situations, destruction of enemy caches is the only reasonable solution. It is understandable that captured enemy goods have an intelligence and training value, however, consideration must be given to the location, ease of extraction, and time required of a maneuver element in relation to their mission.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

*George T. Okamoto*  
GEORGE T. OKAMOTO  
CPT, Infantry  
Adjutant

2 Incl  
1 - Intelligence Inclosure  
2 - Operations Overlay

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4 - 2-506 File

Inclosure 1 (INTELLIGENCE INCLOSURE) to After Action Report APACHE SNOW (U)

1. ( ) TERRAIN: Operation APACHE SNOW was conducted in the A Shau-A Luoi Valley, a traditional NVA/VC established base area and infiltration route. The 2-506th Inf area of operation was located northeast of the A Luoi Valley bounded by grids YD3012, YD4109, YD2603 and YD3001. The valley varies in width from 150 meters to two (2) kilometers. Average elevation is from 575 meters in the valley flanks to 1740 meters in the northeast. Slopes on the rolling terrain vary from 2-15 per cent and as steep as 80 per cent on higher elevations.

2. ( ) VEGETATION: Multi-canopied dense underground forest dominate the hills and mountains throughout the area. The lower slopes are covered with brushwood and elephant grass.

3. ( ) WEATHER: Weather is the major factor which has always limited military operations in the A Shau-A Luoi Valley area. During the reporting period, weather conditions were exceptionally good, with temperatures being consistently in the 80-90 degree range. Early morning and late afternoon low ceiling did not interfere with combat operations or resupply.

4. ( ) ENEMY ACTIVITIES:

a. Prior to operation: Prior to the operation, the enemy had free use of routes, warehouses and base areas. Enemy forces in the area of operations consisted of transportation type units. Combat units could be massed and had the capability of conducting offensive operations.

b. During the operation: The enemy moved the 800th and 802nd Battalions of the 6th NVA Regiment into the area of operations. However, in the latter part of May, both battalions were withdrawn from the AO. Contact with enemy forces during the operation consisted of engagements with trail watchers and squad-size elements. Contact was broken by the enemy on each occasion.

c. Results and effects of the operation: Continued pressure by US Forces in the AO forced the enemy to abandon his cache sites and continually relocate his forces. This action resulted in cache sites being abandoned, which were found and destroyed or evacuated by US Forces. During the operation, the enemy was required to curtail his resupply operations to elements in the mountains, to the northeast. He was compelled to withdraw main force units back across the Laotian border and resort to a role of observation and harassment of Allied operations.

5. ( ) ENEMY CONTACTS:

a. Thirty-three (33) contacts were made with the enemy during the reporting period. The following employment against US Forces was encountered.

(1) RPG Fire: Extensive use of the RPG 2 and 7 were used during eight (8) contacts, resulting in four (4) US/KIA and seventeen (17) US/WIA. This weapon is sometimes employed with mortar fire to confuse US Forces as to the direction and type fire they are receiving.

Inclosure 1 (INTELLIGENCE INCLOSURE) to After Action Report APACHE SNOW (U)

(2) Mortar fire: It has been observed that 60mm mortar fire does not appear to be as accurate as 82mm mortar fire. Mortar fire was encountered (5) times, resulting in four (4) US/KIA and six (6) US/WIA. All casualties were caused by 82mm fire.

(3) Small arms fire: This battalion was engaged seventeen (17) times by small arms fire, resulting in two (2) US/KIA and fourteen (14) US/WIA. These figures include friendly aircraft engaged by small arms fire in the 2-506th AO.

(4) BBT's: The most common type BBT (booby trap) encountered was the CHICCM claymore. On nine separate occasions, units encountered claymore type booby traps or ambushes. These actions resulted in one (1) US/KIA and 23 US/WIA. It may be noted that the NVA preparation claymores as a defensive measure. On some encounters, claymores were found unfused, however, they were camouflaged and in useable condition.

6. ( ) INTELLIGENCE OPERATIONS: During the operation the following activities were employed:

a. VR Mission: 15

b. Personnel Detector: 5

c. Anti-intrusion devices: AF/PSR 1 employed on F95 Airborne-5

d. Scout dogs: two (2) teams for three (3) days each from the 58th Scout Dog Plat.

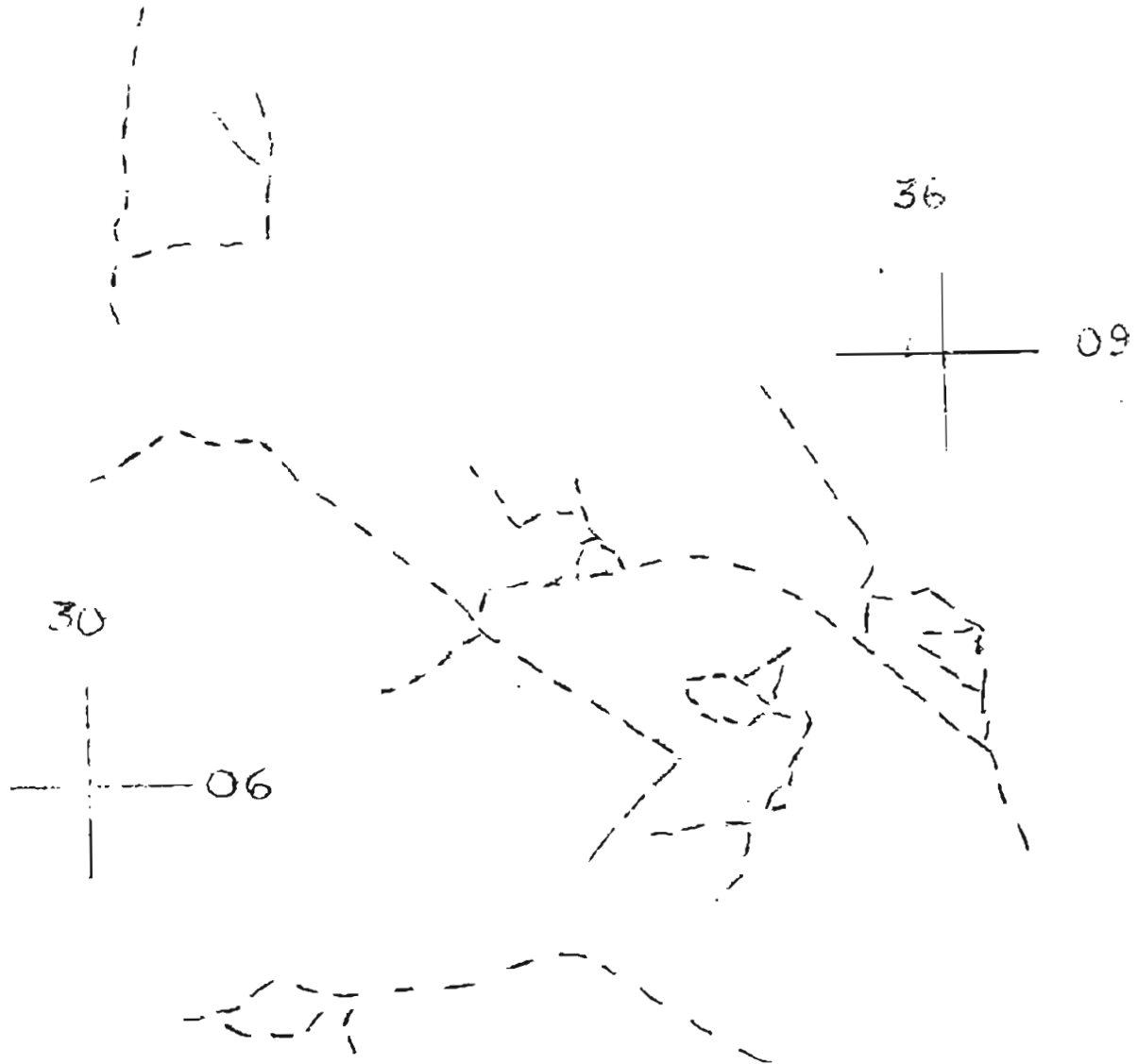
7. (C) The following LZ's were prepared and utilized during the operation:

- a. YD348062: 1 Ship
- b. YD339072: 1 Ship
- c. YD349068: 1 Ship
- d. YD348065: 1 Ship
- e. YD358097: 1 Ship
- f. YD315044: 1 Ship
- g. YD341077: 1 Ship
- h. YD355065: 1 Ship
- i. YD382082: 1 Ship
- j. YD362063: 1 Ship
- k. YD355072: 1 Ship
- l. YD373055: 1 Ship



Tab A (Trails Overlay) to Inclosure 1 (INTELLIGENCE INCLOSURE) to Operation APACHE SNOW (U)

Ref: Map, 1:50,000, RVN, sheet 6441 IV

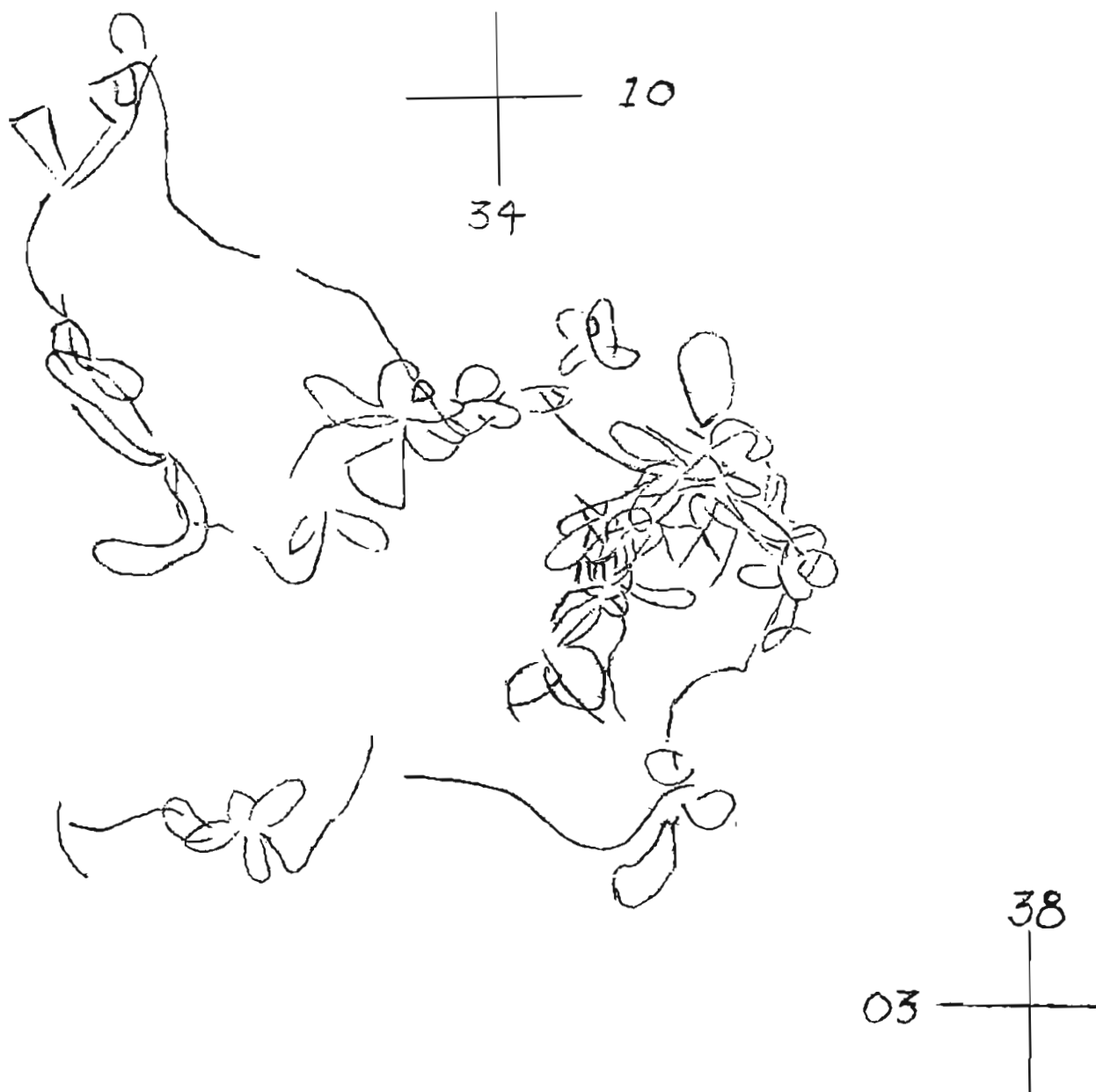


Inclosure 2 (OPERATIONS OVERLAY) to After Action Report APACHE SNOW (U)

Ref: Map, 1:50,000, RVN, sheet 6441 IV

22 May-7 June 69

APACHE SNOW Overlay Summary



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters 2d Battalion (AM) 501st Abn Infantry  
2d Brigade 101st Airborne Division  
APO San Francisco 96383  
"DRIVE ON"

AVDG-BO-A

22 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache  
Snow

Commanding Officer  
3d Bde, 101st Airborne Division  
ATTN: 8-3  
APO San Francisco 96383

1. Name or Identity and type of Operation: Apache Snow/ Search and Destroy.
2. Dates of Operation: 101000 May 1969 - 090920 June 1969.
3. Location: Ap Laibang. Map, Vietnam, Series L7014 & L7015, 1:50,000, Sheets 6441 I, II, III, IV.
4. Control or Command Headquarters: 3d Brigade.
5. Reporting Officer: Battalion Commander: LTC Robert L. German.
6. Task Organization: 2d Battalion, 501st Inf OPCON to 3d Bde, 101st Airborne Div. Organization for Combat of 2-501st Inf, as follows:

A Co

Mortar Squad

TM Geronimo

HQ Co (-)  
E Co (-)

B Co

C Co

Mortar Squad

Bn Con

Mortar Platoon (-)  
Radar Section

D Co

Mortar Squad

Incl 13

-22 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache Snow

## 7. Supporting Forces:

a. Combat and Combat Service Support. See 3d Bde task organization - TOE missions.

8. Intelligence: Annex A (Intelligence) to Frag Order 4-69 (Apache Snow) to OPORD 3-69 (Kentucky Jumper) 3d Bde, 101st Abn Div.

9. Mission: 2-501 Inf on order conducts airmobile assault on D-Day to locate and destroy enemy forces, caches and locations in assigned AO; provides security for FSB Airborne and FSB Eagles Nest.

10. Concept of the Operation: 2-501 Inf conducts heliborne assault into LZ Green YD296017 on D-Day to locate enemy forces, caches, and locations. Elements of 2-501 provide security for FSB Airborne and FSB Eagles Nest. 2-501 will be prepared to continue operations to the east or to the northeast within assigned AO on order. The operation will be conducted in three phases, as follows:

a. Phase I - Establishment of FSB Airborne and marshalling of units at FSB Blaze prior to airmobile assault.

b. Phase II - Combat assault of 2-501 (-) into LZ Green at coordinates YD296017. Then locates and destroy enemy forces, caches, and LOC's. Elements of 2-501 Inf provide security for FSB Airborne and FSB Eagles Nest.

c. Phase III (on order) - Prepare to conduct RIF operations to the north & east in the Ale Ninh (YD323013) and the Ale Nigh (1) area YD344003.

## 11. Execution:

a. Method of Operation: Standard doctrine of 101st Abn Div.

b. Operations Narrative: Operation Apache Snow commenced on 8 May 1969. The 2d Bn, 501 Inf moved from an AO surrounding fire support base Whip to a new AO adjacent to and overlooking the northern A Chau Valley. The Battalion Command Post was located on FSB Airborne. After the initial combat assault of the Bn (-) into LZ Green at YD296017 on 10 May 1969, each of the three assaulting companies moved out to assigned objectives.

c. Subsequent RIF operations saw the three maneuvering companies close to objectives in the vicinity of YD284031 and then conducting a battalion size RIF operation toward the northwest. When all elements were clear of their objectives, each company continued to conduct RIF and search and destroy operations within the assigned AO.

d. As the AO assigned to the 2-501 expanded, each company was assigned an area to search. The preponderance of contacts during the entire operation

SUBJECT: Combat Operations after Action Report, Operation "Pac-Man"

was with small local security forces of 4-5 personnel or with trail watchers. Only two contacts involved larger than squad size elements. The first contact occurred the morning of the 13th of May at FSB Airborne in the vicinity of YD355070. At 0330 hours FSB Airborne came under very heavy mortar fire of 82mm, 60mm, and RPG fire. Approximately two reinforced infantry and sapper companies assaulted the perimeter from the northeast and northwest. Alpha Company repelled the attack which lasted two hours. Conventional artillery direct fire was employed along with "Spooky" and 81mm mortar fire resulting in 32 NVA KIA (BC) US casualties were 13 US KIA and 16 US WIA.

e. On the morning of 23 May in the vicinity of YC320988, Delta Company was conducting a RIF operation in its assigned AO. As the lead element began to move to high ground in the vicinity of the coordinates above, they encountered a heavy volume of small arms, RPG, satchel charges, and grenade fire. Gunships from a cavalry team and artillery were immediately employed and Delta Company moved in to search the area. This search of the immediate area indicated a dug-in platoon size position with 3 NVA KIA (BC). Friendly casualties were 1 US KIA and 8 US WIA. Terrain was typical of the entire AO, the low ground had heavy underbrush with patches of trees and small streams running throughout the area. The high ground was covered with double and triple jungle canopy.

f. In both contacts mentioned above, the reaction time for artillery was about 5 minutes, "Spooky" was on station within 60 minutes of the time requested and the Cav team and ARAs arrived on station about 15 minutes after their request.

12. Results:

a. All units accomplished their assigned missions.

b. Enemy losses, categorized as follows:

(1) KIA (BC)	64
(2) KBA (BC)	0
(3) KBA	0
(4) Captured	2

c. Friendly losses.

(1) US KIA	18
(2) US WIA	55

d. Body to weapons ratio (enemy) - 3:2

22 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache Snow

a. Enemy to friendly ratio - 3.5:1

### 13. Administration:

a. Unit Strength:

	<u>Start of Operation</u>			<u>End of Operation</u>		
HHC	OFF	WO 1	EM	OFF	WO 2	EM
A	6		114	3		108
B	3		114	4		119
C	5		119	4		113
D	4		118	4		119
E	3		95	2		89
TOTAL:	33	1	756	30	2	726

b. This battalion received the following replacements during the operation:

HHC	5/36
A	2/37
B	2/28
C	0/16
D	1/20
E	0/E
Total:	10/145

c. The breakdown of R&R's is as follows:

HHC	7/11
A	0/5
B	0/11
C	0/8
D	0/11
E	0/9
Total:	7/53

d. Breakdown of casualties:

	<u>OFF</u>	<u>EM</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
WIA	6	117	123
KIA	1	18	19

e. There were no problems experienced in the area of Finance, Chaplain activities, or any related activities.

### 14. Logistics:

a. Concept of Support

(1) External support came from the 3d Bde FSSE which was located at Camp Evans.

AVDG-BG-A

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Actions Report, Operation Apache Snow

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22 June 1968

(2) Battalion supply points were set up at Camp Evans, LZ Sally, FSB Airborne and Curahes on removal from Airborne. From Camp Evans, supplies were shipped in bulk by CH-47 helicopters to FSB Airborne and later to FSB Curahes. Miscellaneous supplies were shipped by UH-1D helicopters to the forward supply points from LZ Sally.

b. Material and Services

(1) All Class I supplies were shipped from Camp Evans. Class II supplies were shipped by UH-1D helicopters from LZ Sally to the forward supply point. Class III was shipped in 55 gallon drums from LZ Sally to the forward firebase. All class IV & V materials were shipped by CH-47 helicopters from Camp Evans. A basic load of Class V was maintained at the forward supply point.

(2) Water was shipped via CH-47 helicopters in 500 gallon collapsible containers to the forward fire base.

c. Maintenance: Vehicles and generators in need of repair were back-hauled to LZ Sally.

d. Transportation: Vehicular transportation from Camp Evans to LZ Sally was accomplished by organic 2 $\frac{1}{2}$  ton trucks. Air transportation was by UH-1D and CH-47 helicopters. UH-1D support was required for an average of 5 hours per day. Averages of 2 CH-47 sorties per day were required for Class I, IV, and V.

e. Medical Services:

(1) Medical support during operation Apache Snow: The forward aid station was operating at FSB Airborne, where minor casualties and illnesses were treated. Battalion medical supply operated from LZ Sally with no problems. Battalion medical supply was further supported by a forward medical clearing station at FSB Blaze operated by C Company 326th Med. Each medical element involved was essential and proved to be very effective.

(2) Casualties: Following statistical data on casualties during the operation 8 May thru 10 Jun 69 are as follows:

a. Casualties	OFF	EM
KIA	1	18
WIA	6	117

(3) Most of the injuries were minor. Only personnel requiring further or follow-up medical treatment were evacuated to LZ Sally.

15. Chemical: N/A

16. Civil Affairs: N/A

22 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation Apache Snow

17. Psychological Operations: N/A

18. Communications:

a. General: AN/PRC radios were employed throughout the operation. At the Bn OP, RC-292 antennas were utilized for communications with the rear (when operational).

Problems: No major problems were encountered.

19. Engineer: N/A

20. Artillery:

a. Mission

B/2/319 Arty: DS 2/501 Inf  
 C/2/319 Arty: DS 2/501 Inf  
 A/2/319 Arty: DS 2/501 Inf  
 B/2/11th Arty: GS-R 319 Arty  
 C/2/11th Arty: GS-R 319 Arty  
 A/1/83 Arty: GS, 3d Bde, 101 Abn Div  
 B/1/83 Arty: GS, 3d Bde, 101 Abn Div

b. Concept of Operation:

Establish Fire Support Bases to provide continuous, maximum artillery support.

c. Execution:

All operations were conducted within range of light and medium artillery.

d. Analysis: Artillery support was quick, variable and accurate.

21. No special equipment or other techniques were employed.

22. Commander's analysis

a. LOH Communications (limitation)

(1) The intercom system between the front and rear seats of the LOH is unsatisfactory. When the Bn CO and S-3 were airborne in the LOH, the CO could usually transmit to the S-3, but the S-3 was unable to transmit to the CO.

(2) The solution to the problem was to modify the forward aircraft headset so that one ear phone was plugged into LOH intercom while the second

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AVDG-BC-A

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operations 22 June 1969

one was attached to an AN/PRC-25 carried by the S-3. In this way the S-3 had communications with the Bn CO and could also monitor the command net when the CO switched to another FM net, or switch to another net when the CO directed.

b. LZ preparation and selection:

(1) Resupply and extraction of elements operating under the dense jungle canopy proved difficult and more rapid LZ clearing techniques need to be developed.

(2) It was found that selection of pre-planned air strikes along the planned route of advance of the companies aided in LZ preparation. In addition each company carried additional demolitions.

23. Recommendations:

a. The Battalion Commander frequently controls his battalion in a LOH. There is only one FM set, three jacks for intercom and no rear selection box. Currently, LOH's do not report with headsets for the present inadequate system. Recommend LOH be modified to include a radio system which will provide two FM sets with forward and aft selection capabilities and a complete system for all occupants for the aircraft.


b. A means to mark targets from a LOH, similar to the system employed by FAC aircraft, is needed. Current procedures to mark targets are not accurate and take too much to penetrate the thick jungle canopy. WP grenades are not authorized due to safety factors. Recommend a WP grenade launcher be mounted on LOH similar to the FAC aircraft.

3 Incl:

- 1 - Frag O 3 to OPOKD 3-69
- 2 - Annex A (OP Overlay) to OPOKD 3-69
- 3 - Annex B (OP Overlay) to OPOKD 3-69

ROBERT L. GERMAN  
LTC, Infantry  
Commanding

OFFICIAL:

  
B. HANSEN  
S-3

## Extract of 158 AHB After Action Report

### Airmobile problems encountered and method of solution employed during Operation APACHE SNOW

a. Reconnaissance. For every combat assault, provisions must be made to permit the AMC and his key personnel to make visual reconnaissances of prepared LZ's and routes. Similarly the AMC and AMTF CO, with designated assistants, must make a joint reconnaissance of LZ's to ensure mutual understanding and agreement as to their exact location and use.

b. Coordination. Final coordination between AMC and AMTF CO is also required, preferably at the AMC's final briefing. This is the only way to eliminate anticipated difficulties pertaining to PZ control, number of lifts, ACL, etc.

c. Pick-up Zone Control. (1) Pick-up Zone activities caused the only difficulties for the 158th AHB Operation APACHE SNOW. Poor performance started before the first aircraft arrived at PZ Cannon. On the night of 9 May, at the 3rd Brigade briefing, the Pathfinder representative presented the plan for use of PZ Cannon, including internal arrangements for parking and loading. Although presented in the context of having been accomplished, it was in fact a plan only, on which execution would not begin until daylight on the 10th. As a result, FF personnel, apparently confused by the near simultaneous arrival at the PZ of C/158 and a unit of the 101st AHB, mis-directed C/158, causing the unit aircraft to depart the PZ and return, and thus use more fuel than planned. This also resulted in 5 aircraft of C/158 being separated from the main body by the river that runs through the PZ. An eventual 30 minute delay resulted, with troops having to wade across the river to load on their aircraft. On return from the first lift of 3/187 Inf, each unit landed at the PZ, loaded, and prepared to make the final lift of that battalion. Prior to departure, it was discovered that the infantry battalion S3, who, it was understood was controlling the PZ, had departed with an earlier flight. The PZ troops were now without control, and despite PF efforts, some 7 aircraft total in B/158 and C/158 were not loaded. Pathfinders could find no troops to load. With indications that the PZ was "clean", each flight departed on schedule with the troops on board. Empty aircraft remained in the PZ to rejoin their original flights on the latter's return. As A/158 (which had been fully loaded) passed the PZ on return, enroute to FB Birmingham to refuel, CO, 160th Avn Gp notified CO, 158th AHB that there were about 50 3/187 Inf troops remaining on the PZ who had to be lifted to LZ #2. CO, 158th AHB directed A/158 to refuel and, without regard for previous plans and schedules, proceed immediately to PZ, load the 3/187 Inf troops and deliver them to LZ #2. This caused A/158, scheduled to lead each succeeding assault, to return late for subsequent missions and perform its lifts separately from the remainder of the battalion.

(2) It is mandatory that the AMTF CO organize a PZ control party to

*Doc 14*

Extract of 158 AFB After Action Report

ensure troops are divided into ACL groups for each aircraft, for each lift, and that all troops to be loaded on aircraft are in fact present and ready to load. It is the responsibility of the AMTF PZ Control Officer to tell the AMTF CO and the AMC, or his representative, when the PZ is clear of all troops to be loaded.

d. Downed Aircraft Procedures. Although no aircraft were forced down during the operation, review and evaluation of the published downed aircraft procedure leads to the conclusion it probably would not have contributed to the safety of personnel and efficiency of extraction. Considering the terrain over which flights are habitually made, it does not seem likely that the location of a downed aircraft can be accurately identified and marked unless another aircraft in the area goes immediately to the scene and guides security forces in. Otherwise, it appears extremely doubtful that even a "Blue Team" on immediate stand-by could get to the scene in time to determine just where the aircraft and crew are located in the jungle. Accordingly, the following procedures to mark, secure, and extract downed aircraft are recommended: (1) The wing aircraft or the one immediately behind the aircraft in distress follows it down (no touch-down) unless exigencies dictate) and pin-points the location, determines status of aircraft and condition of crew. (2) Aircraft commander of chase aircraft notifies AMC, who should call air cavalry "Blue Team", medevac aircraft, and put chase ship in direct contact with both. (3) The AMC then calls for unit maintenance aircraft and, through aviation channels, requests extraction ship to be placed on stand-by 150th Aviation Group. (4) On arrival of "Blue Team" at the downed aircraft location, chase aircraft turns control of operation over to air cavalry leader, reports to AMC, and rejoins flight as directed by AMC.

e. Authority for armed helicopters to fire. In the escort roll, armed helicopters have no difficulty protecting lift ships in the LZ or the immediate area. Enroute protection has proved to be more difficult. At any time the flight is over an AO not belonging to the AMTF CO, it has proven practically impossible to secure permission for the armed aircraft to return fire against ground targets. This is true primarily because the gunships are not provided, in advance, call signs and frequencies of AO commanders through whose areas they fly. Going through brigade TOC's has proved so inaccurate and time consuming as to be worthless. Recommend brigades provide, in advance of each operation, permission to fire in specific areas along the flight route, as well as the call signs and frequencies of all who control all areas along the route to permit immediate updating of information and permission.

f. Improvement of LZ's. The continuous difficulty airlift aircraft experience getting into hastily prepared LZ's could be immeasurably lessened if ground units were constantly to improve the condition of the LZ while the lift is in progress. Cutting down high grass and weeds, pulling stumps out, and efforts made to level and make specific landing sites better would go far towards eliminating hazards to personnel and aircraft and preclude accidents. Recommend LZ's be continuously

Extract from 158 AHB After Action Report

improved at all sites until each helicopter can land to a cleared area, 100 feet in diameter.

4. Commander's Summary. The operation was the first major undertaking of the 158th Aviation Battalion (AH) since arrival in RVN. In the 3-day period concerned, the battalion lifted 1774 troops into combat in 295 sorties without difficulty and almost without incident. Highlights of the operation included professional display of flight and communications discipline; the execution of emergency procedures by the crews of 2 damaged aircraft; the flexibility shown when "A" Co was unexpectedly committed to a third lift of the 3/187, requiring a complete change in the lift sequence for the remaining assaults scheduled; and, perhaps above all, the outstanding results of the teamwork of the aerial combined arms team involved: air cavalry, aerial rocket artillery, and the assault helicopter elements. The mutual support and great cooperation displayed by all three were of significant import, ably demonstrating the results which can be habitually achieved in such operations. The procedures developed and used in this operation are recommended for standardization.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
Headquarters, 2d Squadron, (Ambl), 17 Cavalry  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-3

17 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations after Action Report OPERATION APACHE SNOW

Commanding General  
101st Airborne Division  
ATTN: AVDG-CG-DOT  
APO San Francisco 96383

1. Name of Operation. APACHE SNOW.
2. Dates. 9 May-7 June 1969.
3. Location. A Shau Valley, Thua Thien Province, RVN.
4. Command Headquarters. HQ 2nd Squadron 17 Cavalry.
5. Reporting Officer. LTC William W. DeLoach  
Other Cndrs/Advisors Involved: Cndr 1/506  
Cndr 3/187  
Cndr 2/502 OPCON
6. Task Organization.
  - A. A Trp, 2/17th Cav.
  - B. B Trp, 2/17 Cav(-)
  - C. C Trp, 2/17th Cav
  - D. D Trp, 2/17th Cav
7. Support Forces. Organic.
8. Intelligence. Intsum 10 May - 7 June 1969.
9. Mission. Reconnaissance, marking and screening LZ's during and after insertions. Conducted border patrol and area reconnaissance.
10. Concept of Operation. 2/17th Cavalry supported 3rd Bde by reconnaissance, the marking of LZ's before insertions and the screening of troops on the ground. This was accomplished on LZ's #1 through #6 inclusive. 2/17th Cavalry was then to provide area reconnaissance and border patrol.

Encl 15

17 June 1969

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report OPERATION APACHE SNOW

11. Execution. At 100800 May 69 C Trp, 2/17th Cavalry marked LZ's for the first insertion. The remainder of the LZ's were screened and marked by the 2/17th Cavalry. 2/17th provided reconnaissance, border patrol, and downed aircraft security for the remainder of the operation as required. A Trp, and C Trp provided pink teams for the battle of Dong Ap Bia as required.

12. A. Results: Totals as of 7 June 1969.

- B. (1) KIA - 9.  
 (2) KIA - 16.  
 (3) KBA - N/A.  
 (4) Captured - N/A.

C. Friendly Losses: 2 US KIA 3 US WIA

D. Body to weapons ratio: 5:1

E. Enemy to friendly killed ratio: 12:5 to 1

13. Administrative Matters. N/A

14. Special Equipment and Techniques. N/A

15. Commander's analysis. APACHE SNOW was well planned, supervised, and executed. Observations for consideration in future airmobile operations are listed below.

16. Recommendations.

A. Item. Infantry packs.

(1) Discussion. The scope of airmobile operations requires that the infantry soldier travel light in order to effectively move through the canopy against the enemy.

(2) Recommendation. The pack of the infantryman should be reduced to water, ammo, food all carried on his LBE. Rucksacks when used could be extracted from the unit in the morning and returned to the unit in the evening. During periods of extended inclement weather, however, rucksacks would be necessary.

B. Item. Fire Bases.

(1) Discussion. Fire base planning must be expanded to include landing areas for safe use by helicopter. There must be two separate landing areas one for all logistics and another for passenger/command personnel.

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SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report OPERATION APACHE SNOW

(2) Recommendation. Fire base construction should be done based upon a drawn plan. Fire bases on hilltops should have landing pads on the opposite side of the hill; one for log and one for passengers.

Fire bases on flat terrain should leave two 150 foot-wide lanes between strands of defensive wire. Again these areas should be on the opposite sides of the fire base. This area will be used for the parking of aircraft and could be expanded to include ground level refuel/rearm points if required.

C. Item. Aviation Orientation.

(1) Discussion. The Division Airmobile School is an available tool in teaching airmobile concepts to non-aviators and aviators. An additional capability that should be considered for expansion is the rotation of aviators to ground assignments in key staff positions throughout the Division i.e., Support Command.

(2) Recommendations. A program should be instituted within the Division to reassign aviation company commanders, operations officers, and S-4's to the brigade/battalion staffs and the Division's Support Command.

/s/ ROBERT W. FROST

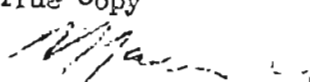
2 Incl

/t/ ROBERT W. FROST  
Maj ARMOR

1. A Trp After Action Report.
2. B Trp After Action Report.

S-3

True Copy

  
MARVIN A. JEFFCOAT  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst S3

Incl. 1

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
A Troop, 2d Sqdn (Air), 17th Cavalry  
APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-4

12 June 69

SUBJECT: After Action Report

Commanding Officer  
2/17th Cavalry  
101st Abn Div (Aml)  
A.O 96383

1. Name of Operation: Apache Snow
2. Dates: 10 May - 7 Jun 69
3. Location: A Shau Valley, Thua Thua Thien Province, RVN.
4. Control Hqs: HQ, 2d Squadron 17th Cavalry.
5. Reporting Officer: M.L.J Thomas R. Curtin, Commanding, Troop A 2d Squadron 17th Cavalry.
6. Task Organization: N/A
7. Support Forces: Provided on a daily basis commensurate with aircraft availability, the following assets:

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>TYPE ACFT</u>	<u>USE</u>
1	UH-1H	C&C
4	UH-1H	Lift
4	OH-6A	Single Scout, White team, part of pink team and/or Cav team.
4	AH-1G	Red, part of pink team or Cav team, also provide armed escort for Lift.

8. Intelligence: See Intsum, provided by Hq, 2/17th Cavalry.
9. Mission: Provide Air Cavalry assets in general support of 3d Bde.



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10. Concept of Operation: Provide the aforementioned Air Cavalry assets as required by supported Hqs.

11. Execution: Provided 6 Cav teams, 67 pink teams, 4 white teams, 10 red teams, and 6 sniffer acft.

a. The Lift Section flew 11 troop lift missions.

b. There were 30 C&G acft provided.

c. Flying hours by model acft as follows:

<u>ACFT</u>	<u>HRS FLOWN</u>	<u>Ch./SORTIES</u>	<u>DCS/SORTIES</u>	<u>OCS/SORTIES</u>
UH-1H	445:50	558	19	18
LH-1G	529:00	731	5	41
OH-6A	532:35	638	70	66

d. Ammo Expended:

2.75" FFAR	2400
40mm	7639
7.62	154,300
5.56	3300

12. Results:

KBills	11
Structures	
Destroyed	49
Damaged	32

13. Administration Matters:

Morning Report Strength

	<u>OFF</u>	<u>WO</u>	<u>EM</u>
10 May	14	27	143
7 June	14	25	162

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: Aero Rifle Plt rappel qualified.

15. Commander's Analysis:

a. (1) Item: Standard load carried by Rifle Platoon when inserted.

(2) Discussion: It was noted that on each insertion of the Rifle Platoon, the load carried by the individual varied, often times

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necessitating an unscheduled resupply. Additionally, the resupply requirement for a Night Defensive Position (NDP) varied.

(3) Solution: The development of a standard load to be carried by each member of the rifle platoon, plus a standard pre-positioned resupply package for use at the NDP.

b. (1) Item: Difficulty of getting qualified aircraft riggers to the site of a downed aircraft.

(2) Discussion: On occasion this unit experienced great difficulty in getting qualified riggers to the site of a downed aircraft. Mainly due to the dense foliage surrounding the aircraft the rigging personnel would be required to rappel into these areas.

(3) Solution: Rappel qualified aircraft maintenance riggers in addition to qualifying members of the rifle platoon, who are rappel qualified, as aircraft riggers.

c. (1) Item: Aerial Artillery Adjustment being accomplished by all aviators.

(2) Discussion: Little or no training is being given to aviators in the art of aerial adjustment while in attending flight school which is immediately apparent when the individual arrives in a combat zone assigned to an Air Cavalry Troop. To effectively adjust artillery from the air is an absolute requirement to further the Air Cavalry capability.

(3) Solution: Aerial Artillery Adjustment classes conducted, on a recurring frequency, by the Artillery Observer assigned to each troop followed by repeated practical exercise.

16. Recommendations: The employment of Air Cavalry is unknown to many commanders and I recognize the recurring requirement to constantly explain the proper employment of this very valuable asset but this operation brought to light the great need for a re-evaluation of the Air Cavalry indoctrination program currently in effect. The proper employment of Air Cavalry not only requires an intimate knowledge of the assets available, their use and employment, but also an imagination. The ground tactical commander must realize that he cannot effectively employ Air Cavalry directly over his point element. He must further realize that Air Cavalry with its speed, flexibility and great determination can quickly find, fix and begin to fight the enemy. The ability of the ground commander to quickly and effectively react to the findings by the Air Cavalry is the key to his success, and he must be ever prepared to act boldly and with decisiveness. I have found that the primary problem is indoctrination with the newly arrived commanders,

AVDG-SQ-A

12 June 69

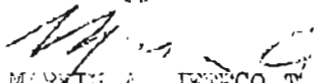
SUBJECT: After Action Report

at all levels, and the continued orientation on Air Cavalry employment.

/s/ THOMAS R. CURTIN

True Copy

/t/ THOMAS R. CURTIN

  
MARTIN A. JEFFCOAT  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst S3

Major, Armor  
Commanding

Incl. 2

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
C TROOP, 2D SQUADRON (Airmobile), 17th Cavalry  
APO San Francisco 96383

SUBJECT: Combat Operations, after Action Report

Commanding Officer  
2/17th Cav, 101st Abn Div (Aml)  
ATTN: AVDG-SQ-3

1. Name of Operation: Apache Snow.
2. Dates: 10 May - 7 June, 1969.
3. Location: A Shau Valley - Adjacent to Laotian Border (3rd Bde AO).
4. Control HQS: 3rd Bde.
5. Reporting Officer: CPT Vincent R. Anderson, other Cmdrs/Advisors involved:  

Cmdr 1/506  
Cmdr 3/187  
Cmdr 2/501 OPCON
6. Task Organization: Cav Teams, Pink Teams, and ARP.
7. Support Forces: Organic.
8. Intelligence: N/A
9. Missions: Recon, mark and screen LZ's before, during and after insertion. Conduct border recon and recon of selected areas. LZ# 314988.
10. Concept of Operation: C Troop supported 3rd Bde in reconning and marking LZ's before insertion and screening troops during and after insertion. This was accomplished on LZ's #2, #4, #5, and #6. For the week following the initial insertion, C Troop provided trail watch along the Laotian border and aerial reconnaissance of selected AO's.
11. Execution: Cav teams and Pink teams were used to perform area recon's and screening operations. ARP was used to secure downed aircraft.
12. Results: All Spot Reports:

Incl. 2

<u>DTG</u>	<u>COORDINATES</u>	<u>SIGHTING</u>
120905H	YC308084	Found 2x bulldozers and 1x truck which were taken under fire and destroyed yesterday.
131020H	YC330878	Trail 2 - 3 ft wide running N-S, used within last couple of hours.
142115H	YC308986	Many huts and bunkers, movement observed through trees. Trail 5' wide running from river to area, well used.
142115H	YC303998	Found truck tire marks and fresh mud on eastern side of ford in river.
142115H	YC302038	Movement on trail in the open on ridge top, observed two men in uniform running into tree line, called for verification of friendlys in area. Negative reply.
142115H	YC299949	5' trail running E-W with hard rock ford approximately 2' deep in river.
142115H	YC380092 to YC300991	5' trail running along river on eastern side with numerous huts and bunkers.
142115H	YC299949	Series of very large huts and bunkers along river running East.
142115H	YC299949	Area under top canopy of jungle cleared of all underbrush.
160820H	YC365998	Received small arms fire, did not return fire. Speed: 80K, Alt: 20 ft.
160832H	YC285005	Received automatic weapon fire, red birds engaged target, negative assessment; speed: 70K, Alt: 20 ft.
171015H	YC298943	Trail 3' wide used in last couple hours, 3x or 4x strands of commo wire along trail to hill west of Currahee, trail follows Blue Line.
171025H	YC350956	Bamboo raft, 8' x 8', did not engage.
171033H	YC383940	Raft 9' x 10' with barrels underneath.

13. Administrative Matters: None.

02 INCL 1 (AREA OF OPERATIONS) TO AFTER ACTION REPORT  
01 (APACHE SNOW) 10 MAY - 8 JUN 69  
00  
99



AD EFF 13 MAY 1969

3-187  
1-506

3-187 = 1-506

3-5  
1-506

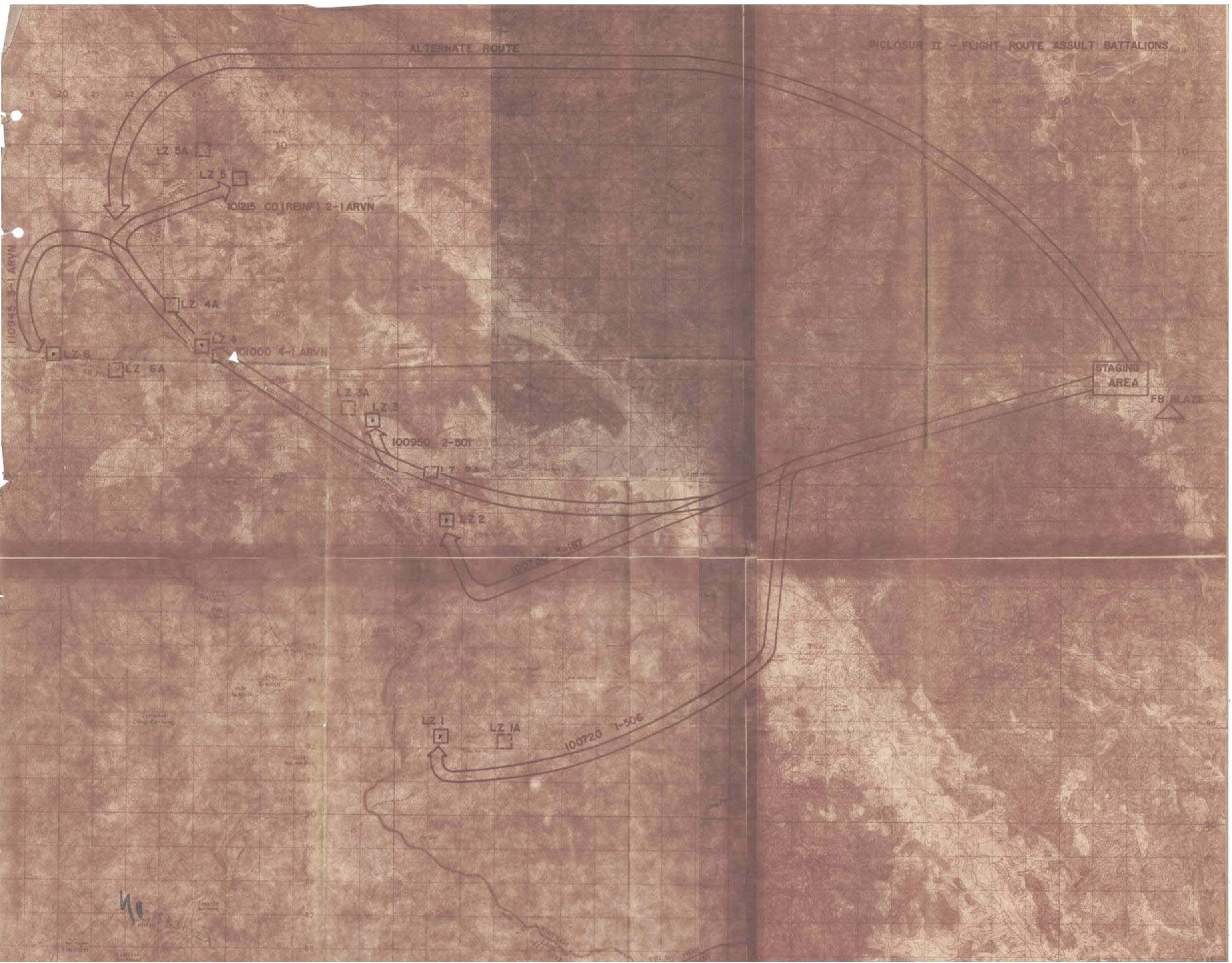
FSB CURRAHEE

LZ RED  
OCA

3-101  
3 ARVN

ALTERNATE ROUTE

INCLOSURE II - FLIGHT ROUTE ASSULT BATTALIONS



INCL 2 (AREA OF OPERATIONS) TO AFTER ACTION REPORT  
(APACHE SNOW) 10 MAY-8 JUN 69





Incl. 2

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: Artillery used to recover Cav teams off station. WP was used to burn all huts destroyed. The following ammo was expended:

<u>7.62</u>	<u>5.56</u>	<u>2.75</u>	<u>40mm</u>
48,015 rds	680 rds	787 rds	2,556 rds

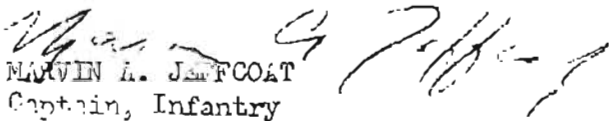
15. Commander's Analysis: UH-1B fuel capacity is insufficient for required tasks.

16. Recommendations: Ropes and ladders should be organic to the troops and 125' ropes should be used for rappeling in all cases.

/s/ VINCENT R. ANDERSON

True Copy

/t/ VINCENT R. ANDERSON

  
MARVIN L. JEFFCOAT  
Captain, Infantry  
Asst S3

CPT  
Operations Officer

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