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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20310



IN REPLY REFER TO  
AGAM-P (N) (10 Apr 57) FOR OT

18 April 1967

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Combat After  
Action Report, Operation Sioux City (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

Forwarded as inclosure is a Combat After Action Report for Operation Sioux City. Operation Sioux City was conducted by the 173d Airborne Brigade during the period of 26 September to 9 October 1966. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appropriate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current operations, and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

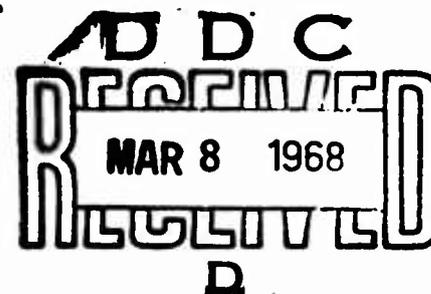
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KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE (SEPARATE)  
APO San Francisco 96250

AVBE-SC

15 December 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report

THRU: Commanding General  
II FFORCEV  
ATTN: G-3 D&T  
APO 96227

TO: Assistant Chief of Staff  
For Force Development  
Department of the Army  
Washington D.C. 20310

The following report is submitted in accordance with MACV Directive number 335-8.

1. General: On 26 September, the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) launched a two battalion search and destroy operation, to locate and destroy VC/NVA forces and installations, northwest of Xom Cat (XT 153286). This operation, code name "Sioux City", was part of II FFORCEV's mission of conducting operations within the III CTZ (III Corp Tactical Zone).

2. Name of Operation: Operation "SIOUX CITY"

3. References: Maps of Vietnam: 1:50,000 sheets; 6343 I, 6344 II, 6444 III, 6444 IV.

4. Type of Operation: Search and Destroy

5. Date of Operation: 260530H September - 091604H October 1966 / OFORD 19-66. Frag Orders 1 - 4.

6. Location: Northwest of Xom Cat (XT 153286) in the III Corp Tactical Zone.

7. Command Headquarters: 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate)

8. Reporting Officer: Major General Paul F. Smith

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9. Task Organization: Control of the operation was exercised by Headquarters 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate). A command group comprised of HHC, 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) operated from a tactical command post.

a. TF Saber - MAJ SUTTON, Commanding

E/17th Cav  
D/16th Armor

b. TF 3/319th Arty - LTC NORDIN, Commanding

3/319th Arty (-2 Btry)  
Btry 2/25th Arty (155mm)

c. TF 1/503d Inf - LTC GOAD, Commanding

1/503d Inf (-)  
173d Engr (Squad)  
3 Scout Dog Teams

d. TF 2/503d Inf - LTC SIGHOLTZ, Commanding

2/503d Inf  
173d Engr (Squad)  
173d Engr (Boat Section)  
3 Scout Dog Teams

10. Supporting Forces:

a. 3/319th Arty (-); C Btry 2/35th Arty:

(1) Size of Force: Two (2) 6 gun 105mm howitzer batteries and one (1) 6 gun 155mm howitzer battery.

(2) How and When Employed:

(a) Convoy cover for motor marches and roadrunner operations throughout the operation (26 September to 9 October 1966).

(b) On call missions for 1/503d Inf, 2/503d Inf, E/17th Cav, D/16th Armor and C/2/34th Armor throughout the operation.

(c) Preparation of LZ's throughout the operation.

(d) H&I throughout the operation.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: The artillery fired a total of 1,280 missions and expended 8,611 rounds during Operation "Sioux City". The effectiveness of artillery fire could not be readily determined as most fire was unobserved.

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However, in all cases when artillery was used during VC contact, the VC fire ceased.

(4) **Timeliness:** Effective coordination between the TF's, the artillery, TAC air, and Army aviation and the fact that the AO was in War Zone D, produced timely and effective fire support.

b. Army Aviation:

(1) **Size of Force:** Operation "Sioux City" was supported by the following Army Aviation units:

(a) 335th AMCL, including 173d Aviation Platoon (UH-1D & OH-13 aircraft)

(b) 145th Aviation Battalion (Combat) (UH-1D & Ol-F aircraft)

(c) 11th Aviation Battalion (CH-47 aircraft)

(d) 245th Medical Detachment (Dustoff) (UH-1D)

(2) **How and When Employed:**

<u>TYPE SORTIES</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SORTIES</u>
Combat Assault . . . . .	1,490
Armed Helicopter . . . . .	719
Combat Resupply . . . . .	1,381
Command and Control . . . . .	139
Reconnaissance . . . . .	79
Medical Evacuation . . . . .	50
Artillery Adjustment . . . . .	51
LRRP . . . . .	121
RCA Missions . . . . .	6
Convoy Coverage . . . . .	44
Miscellaneous . . . . .	<u>551</u>
TOTAL SORTIES . . . . .	4,731

(3) **Results and Effectiveness:** UH-1D type aircraft transported a total of 5,186 personnel or an average of 346 people per day and 195.7 tons of

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cargo or about 13.5 tons daily. They flew about 8.6 hours daily. OH-13 aircraft were effectively used for ground observation, one exposing a VC ambush which was awaiting elements of E/17th Cav.

(4) Timeliness: During Operation "Sioux City" weather conditions, such as thunderstorms, fog, and ground haze, at times reduced the timeliness of aviation support by delay of flights of the helicopters. Otherwise, aviation support was effective.

c. United States Air Force; Vietnam Air Force (7th USAF):

(1) Size of Force: USAF/VNAF flew a total of 121 TAC sorties, expending 116.4 tons of ordnance. 90 FAC sorties, 22 VR sorties, and 4 escort sorties were also flown. No airlift missions were flown. 168 preplanned sorties were flown.

(2) How and When Employed:

- (a) Convoy and roadrunner cover throughout the operation
- (b) Preplanned missions throughout the operation
- (c) LZ preparation throughout the operation
- (d) Airborne FAC on call during the daylight hours
- (e) Only one immediate request was submitted and it was a Sky Spot mission.

(3) Results and Effectiveness: During Operation "Sioux City" all preplanned targets were struck by air. Ground units found many items of VC equipment which had been effectively hit by napalm. VC KIA was not available due to VC practice of carrying bodies away.

(4) Timeliness: The ground and airborne FAC's were effective, resulting in timely and accurate fires throughout the operation.

(5) Air Request Net Utilized: Requests for air support came from unit commanders through the Brigade Tactical Air Control Group and relayed through III Corps Direct Air Support Center (DASC). Targets were also received from Brigade S2 covering likely VC troop locations and installations.

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(6) Air-Ground Marking System: Ground elements marked friendly positions with smoke to prevent accidental hits while targets were marked by airborne FAC's with WP rockets.

d. C/2/34th Armor and Scout Platoon:

(1) Size of Force: 17 M48 A3 Tanks and 5 M113 APC's with modifications to mount 2 additional M-60 machinegun on each.

(2) How and When Employed: The armored vehicles were teamed with infantry elements of various sizes and combinations and used for increased fire power, protection and speed to the infantry. This was done after 30 September

66. Examples of the teams used are:

- (a) 1 tank, 1 APC, 1 platoon of infantry
- (b) 1 tank section, 1 platoon of infantry
- (c) 1 APC platoon, 1 platoon of infantry
- (d) Tanks and APC's used on battalion perimeter
- (e) APC clearing patrols
- (f) Extraction of VC supplies

(3) Results and Effectiveness:

- (a) Infantry was able to cover larger areas
- (b) Increased firepower reduced chances of VC attack
- (c) Tank searchlights were available for illumination
- (d) Tanks were restricted to roads and bogged down even when roads, in low laying areas, were muddy.
- (e) Tanks and APC's were vulnerable to mines and antitank weapons, fired from hidden positions. Vehicles were not destroyed, of course, but their movement was restricted.
- (f) APC's proved more effective than the tanks in supporting the infantry, going through woods and bogs easily.
- (g) Radio capabilities of APC's improved communications of using infantry units although the nets became crowded.

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(4) Timeliness: N/A

e. Brigade Chemical Section:

(1) Size of Force:

- (a) 51st Chemical Detachment
- (b) 1 UH-1B helicopter (furnished by A/82d Aviation)

(2) How and When Used:

(a) Riot Control Agent (RCA) CS-1 (micropulverized) was employed on three occasions during Operation "Sioux City".

(b) The purpose for use of RCA in all cases was to contaminate, with persistent irritant agent, limited areas known to have been used by the VC in order to temporarily restrict use by the VC.

(c) Method of Employment:

1. Packaging: Bags of CS-1 were removed from the shipping drum. A  $\frac{1}{2}$  pound block of TNT fused with a 30 second length of time fuse and fuse lighter was secured to the package. The rigged bag was wrapped in a polyethylene plastic sack to reduce vapor leakage and taped shut with only the fuse lighter exposed.

2. Delivery: In all cases the RCA was delivered by utility helicopter either at low level or 1500' altitude. The explosive packages were hand dropped over the target and detonated on the ground. Repeated passes were made as necessary to build up the desired coverage. A UH-1B model helicopter can carry CS-1 from 8 drums on each lift.

(d) Chronological Record of Employment:

1. On 30 September 66, a known VC river crossing site on the Song Be river (YT 077427 - YT 082430) was contaminated with 700 pounds of CS-1. Repeated low level passes were made over the area between 1445 - 1500 hours with armed helicopters accompanying firing suppressive fire. No ground fire was encountered. Helicopters operating in the area during the morning hours had received ground fire from the near vicinity of the target. The river crossing site was

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believed to service the major quantity of VC supplies moving through the area. Contamination of the area was calculated to require a temporary rerouting of the traffic.

2. On 2 October 1966, the suspected location of the Military Region Headquarters was contaminated with 800 pounds of CS-1. The RCA was delivered by helicopter at 1500' altitude flying a circular pattern within a 250 meter radius of target center. The objective was to contaminate the area sufficiently to cause the headquarters to displace. A TAC air bombing strike immediately followed the contamination mission to accomplish limited physical destruction of emplacements to further encourage movement of the headquarters. At altitudes below 1500' the F-5 aircraft pilots experienced some effects from CS vapor, additionally the Forward Air Controller was unable to make a Bomb Damage Assessment from the altitude desired. The CS mission and the TAC air strike were accomplished between 1340 - 1400 hours on a warm, clear day with light variable winds. The strong lapse condition prevailing at the time is believed responsible for the altitude of the resulting vapor column. Future missions of a similar nature will continue the same technique to allow possible increased casualty effects among target personnel affected by the CS vapor. The Air Liaison Section plans to coordinate use of oxygen masks by TAC pilots on coordinated missions including use of RCA.

3. On 9 October 66, approaches to two road junctions on a major VC supply route (YT 017328 and YT 018346) were contaminated with 800 pounds of CS-1. The purpose was to temporarily restrict the use of the route. Rerouting through adjacent areas would result in activity visible to Aerial Observation.

(e) Future planning includes continuing use of RCA when suitable tactical reasons exist.

(3) Effectiveness: Since no ground troops were introduced into the contaminated areas, no assessment of the effects of RCA used could be made.

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(4) Timeliness: At all times, CS missions were flown at the time requested by the ground commanders.

## 11. Intelligence:

a. Enemy Situation Before Operation: The operational area was believed to contain a high level of Viet Cong activity. The 800 Dong Nai VC Battalion (security force for VC Military Region 7 Headquarters and War Zone D), the 303d LF Battalion (normally operates between Vinh Loi forest XT 8827; Phuoc Loc, XT 9832; and Di An, XT 1022), and several transient VC units were believed to be operating in the area. A major infiltration route from War Zone D passes through the AO from northwest to southwest.

b. Enemy Situation During Operation: Seventy-nine contacts were made with VC forces. Forty-one of these were VC initiated. The largest VC force contacted was platoon size. Exploitation of information received from a rallier (ARVN II Corps Headquarters) resulted in the discovery of a platoon size camp vicinity YT 0333 and a river crossing site at YT 084378. Three hundred-eighteen (318) documents were captured during the operation. Many of the documents made reference to sub-elements of VC Military Region 7 Headquarters and subordinate elements. US aircraft in support of the Brigade size operation received ground fire on seventeen (17) occasions, with nine aircraft sustaining hits.

## c. Area of Operations:

(1) Weather Conditions: The climate within the AO was typical of tropic zones affected by monsoons. Winds were gentle to moderate, with some strong gusts during rainstorms. Rainfall was heavy for the time of year, occurring mainly during the late afternoon and evening hours. Visibility was generally good, except for heavy morning fog, which usually dissipated by 0800 hours. Ceilings were approximately 8,000 feet, lowering to 300 feet during rainstorms.

(2) Terrain: The area is characterized by relatively slight variation in relief with a difference of form from 25 to 50 meters elevation. Dense

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forest predominates throughout the general region, with areas of open forest and dense brush interspersed. There are relatively few cleared areas. The Song Be River, which flows from northwest to southeast, joins the Dong Nai, providing the major drainage pattern of the region. A major trail leading up to the Song Be at YT 081430 indicates the VC are using the river to transport supplies. The Song Be forms a continuous obstacle along the eastern portion of the AO, and the Dong Nai river provides an obstacle to the south. Numerous heavily used roads, trails, and foot paths were found throughout the AO.

## 12. Concept of Operation:

a. At 221900H September 1966, change 1 to the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) OPORD 19-66 was published outlining plans for Operation "Sioux City", to best locate and destroy the VC/NVA forces and installations in the Xom Cat area. The Brigade operated in the following phases (see operational overlay for location of positions, LZ's, AO's and routes named):

Phase I: TF Saber moved by vehicle along Route Blue commencing at 260530H September 1966, secured Position Fox, prepared to secure Route Blue from Position Fox to Position Mohawk on order.

Phase II: TF 3/319th Arty moved by vehicle along Route Blue to Position Fox, commencing 260645H September 1966, moved to Position Mohawk on order.

Phase III: TF 1/503d Inf (-) conducted an air assault on Position Mohawk commencing 260840H September 1966, moved to Position Mohawk for the Fire Support Base (FSB), conducted local patrols and ambushes, prepared to conduct Eagle Flights, patrols and ambushes in area of operations (AO) 3, 4, 5 and 6.

Phase IV: TF 2/503d Inf conducted an air assault on LZ Cherokee, commencing 270915H September 1966, and LZ Apache with one company on order, conducted search and destroy operations in AO 1 and 2, in that order, including crossing to the north bank of the Song Be river with A Company.

b. During the operation, Army air support was provided by 4 major Army Aviation units and tactical air support was provided by the 7th Air Force (ARVN).

c. The 4/503d Inf continued Operation "Uniontown" in the Brigade TAOR.

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## 13. Execution:

D - Day (26 September 1966)

a. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) initiated Operation "Sioux City" at 0530 hours. The 1/503d Inf conducted an air assault on Position Mohawk (YT 0437) at 0942 hours and completed at 1030 hours with no contact. The battalion secured Position Mohawk and participated in the defense of the Brigade CP/FSB. The battalion CP was at YT 033373. The 2/503d Inf's air assault was postponed one day due to the delays in the movement of TF Saber at Position Fox.

The 3/319th Arty (-) departed Bien Hoa at 0645 hours and moved by road to Position Mohawk, closing at 1623 hours. TF Saber (E/17th Cav) departed Bien Hoa at 0530 hours and closed on Position Fox by 0810 hours. C/3/319th Arty fired preparation on Position Mohawk prior to the landing of 1/503d Inf. At 0847 hours, a  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck from E/17th Cav and a  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck from 3/319th Arty hit pressure type mines at Position Fox, resulting in the destruction of both vehicles and the wounding of 3 US Paratroopers. TF Saber closed on Position Mohawk at 1900 hours. The Brigade Command Post (CP) assumed operational control at Position Mohawk (YT 038366) at 1900 hours.

Psychological Operations consisted of leaflet drops in AO's 1, 2, and 3 on each bank of the Song Be river.

D + 1 (27 September 1966)

b. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City". The 1/503d Inf continued in its security of the Brigade FSB at Position Mohawk and conducted patrols to the southeast and west of Position Mohawk.

The 2/503d Inf (-) conducted an air assault on LZ Cherokee (YT 080427) at 0915 hours and initiated search and destroy operations in AO 1. Co A conducted a river crossing of the Song Be in AO 1 and moved to YT 075435. Co B was located at Yt 078427. Co C assaulted LZ Apache at 1056 hours and initiated patrolling into AO 1 at YT 037412. The 3/319th Arty supported from Position Mohawk, while E/17th Cav conducted platoon sized recon from Position Mohawk in AO 6.

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At 1355 hours, the 1st platoon of E/17th Cav made contact with 10 - 12 VC (poss) at YT 031386. An APC from D/16th Armor, under the operational control of E/17th Cav, received one 57mm recoilless AT round, damaging one road wheel. The APC was able to continue its mission. The VC broke contact and one VC KIA (poss) was seen being dragged away and blood was found at the scene.

At 1456 hours, E/17th Cav found 6 or 7 bunkers, two (2) 55 gallon drums of 30 weight oil and two (2) 55 gallon drums of solvent at YT 031306. The bunkers and drums were destroyed.

Psychological support consisted of a loudspeaker mission being flown from 1500 - 1630 hours, urging "Surrender, the 173d Airborne Brigade is Operating in the Area".

D + 2 (28 September 1966)

c. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City". The 1/503d Inf provided CP security at Position Mohawk. B/1/503d Inf conducted an air assault on LZ's Zenith (ST 945404) and Motorola (ST 948387), then moved south on a search and destroy mission. Co B was extracted at LZ Stoney (XT 946374) at 1630 hours. During this mission, B/1/503d Inf received 3 rounds of small arms fire from XT 952402 at 1030 hours, and fire was returned with negative results. At 1530 hours, B/1/503d Inf found a small base camp at XT 945380. The camp contained fifteen (15) huts, one (1) classroom, one (1) claymore mine, hot food and water, miscellaneous documents and equipment. At 1545 hours, B/1/503d Inf engaged 10 - 12 VC. One VC was armed with a LMG. Contact was broken at 1555 hours with negative casualties. C/1/503d Inf patrolled east and north of Position Mohawk, with negative contact.

The 2/503d Inf continued search and destroy operations in AO 1 with A/2/503d Inf north of the Song Be river. B/2/503d Inf spotted 4 VC at 1400 hours at YT 074424 but they escaped before identification of the uniform and dress could be made. C/2/503d Inf continued on its search and destroy mission with negative contact.

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TF Saber conducted a mounted patrol south to Position Fox, repaired a bridge in that area and moved further south to LZ Chippewa, then to Position Mohawk. At 0811 hours, a lowboy carrying a bulldozer struck an AT mine at YT 019347. At 0920 hours, an ammo truck struck an AT mine at YT 019347. At 0955 and 1035 hours, two more vehicles struck mines at YT 019348. At 1455 hours, TF Saber received one incoming rifle grenade, resulting in one US WIA. At XT 995292 at 1459 hours, a vehicle hit an AT mine. At 1625 hours, TF Saber received two small arms rounds from XT 992312. Fire was returned with negative results. At 1400 hours, the PMO received one sniper round while on vehicle recovery operations at YT 018345. Fire was returned with negative results.

D + 3 (29 September 1966)

d. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City". The 1/503d Inf continued to provide security for the FSB and Brigade CP. At 1100 hours, the recon platoon from 1/503d Inf conducted an air assault on Position Fox (XT 988328) and provided security for an engineer mine clearing detail. At 1205 hours, the recon platoon located and destroyed, in place, an M1-A1 AT mine dated 1944 at XT 990325. The recon platoon extracted at 1555 hours and closed on Position Mohawk at 1608 hours. B/1/503d Inf made contact with 3 VC while on patrol at 1405 hours at YT 057370. 3 VC were killed, three (3) Mossin-Nagant carbines, miscellaneous documents and medical supplies were taken. At 1637 hours, A/1/503d Inf conducted an air assault on LZ Chippewa with negative contact.

The 2/503d Inf conducted operations in AO 1 with companies A and B closing on LZ Cherokee. A/1/503d Inf crossed the Song Be river and closed to LZ Cherokee at 1650 hours. C/1/503d Inf continued moving towards LZ Cherokee throughout the night without contact.

The 173d Engineer Company, operating with 2/503d Inf, located and extracted a cache of 100 pick heads, 40 entrenching tools, 10 hoes and parts of two bicycles at 1315 hours at YT 078430.

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The 335th AMCL supported the recon platoon and A/1/503d Inf lifts. At 1035 hours, a light fire team (LFT) from 335th AMCL received a/w fire at YT 025400. Fire was returned and artillery and TAC air was called in. At 1820 hours, aircraft from 335th AMCL spotted 5 VC at YT 019348. The area was brought under suppressive fire with unknown results. The 3/319th Arty continued to support Operation "Sioux City" from Position Mohawk.

D + 4 (30 September 1966)

e. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City". The 1/503d Inf secured the Brigade CP and FSB at Position Mohawk with negative contact.

The 2/503d Inf extracted from LZ Cherokee (YT 079427) at 1000 hours by CH-47 aircraft and UH-1D aircraft after C/2/503d Inf closed in after an all night foot march. The air assault of Position Fox (XT 990327) commenced at 1007 hours and was completed at 1115 hours. Patrolling to the north and south was immediately initiated to secure the area. At 1435 hours, the 3d platoon of B/2/503d Inf activated a boobytrapped hand grenade while searching a rice cache site at YT 993316, resulting in 1 KIA and 1 WIA.

TF Knife (E/17th Cav, D/16th Armor, elements of the 173d Engineer Company) departed Position Mohawk at 0805 hours and cleared the road to XT 922288. Outposts were established along the route to cover the passage of Brigade HHC and C/2/34th Armor. At 0924 hours, at YT 024348, an APC of D/16th Armor, in TF Knife, received a 57mm recoilless near miss. At the same time small arms fire was received and a 3/4 ton truck from E/17th Cav hit a pressure type mine, resulting in 1 US KIA and 5 WIA.

C/2/34th Armor (+) came under OPCON of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) at 0800 hours and moved from Long Binh, arriving at Position Fox at 1600 hours. At 2220 hours, Position Fox received four (4) 60mm mortar rounds, wounding 4 and slightly damaging one vehicle.

Seven-hundred (700) pounds of riot control agent (RCA) CS-1 (micropulverized) was employed by UH-1D aircraft of the 335th AMCL from 1445 to 1500 hours

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from YT 077427 to YT 082430, to restrict VC use of a river crossing point on a supply route.

D + 5 (1 October 1966)

f. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City". The 1/503d Inf continued to provide CP security for Position Mohawk with negative contact. A/1/503d Inf cleared the road from Position Mohawk to CA Yellow (YT 019-347) and commenced on an eagle flight to LZ Jamaica (XT 977298).

The 2/503d Inf formed tank/infantry teams and conducted search and destroy operations to the north and south of Position Fox (XT 988328). At 0440 hours, a patrol from A/2/503d Inf made contact with 6 VC at XT 983343, killing 1 VC and capturing 1 claymore mine.

TF Knife preformed road repairs and security operations on Route Blue. One platoon from C/2/34th Armor went under the operational control (OPCON) of 1/503d Inf, at Position Mohawk at 2115 hours. C/3/319th Arty received 2 incoming hand grenades at YT 040365. Fire was returned with M-79's with unknown results. There were no US casualties.

D + 6 (2 October 1966)

g. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City" northeast of Tan Uyen. The 1/503d Inf continued to provide security to the Brigade CP and FSB. At 0638 hours, a patrol from C/1/503d Inf at YT 028375 had a claymore blasting cap detonated at it. The claymore failed to explode and it was picked up and evacuated to the rear. At 0912 hours, an APC, moving with recon 1/503d Inf, struck a mine at YT 033377, causing the vehicle to be destroyed with no casualties. At 1135 hours, a recovery APC moving toward the destroyed APC, struck a mine and was disabled. At 1202 hours, C/1/503d Inf uncovered a vehicle maintenance cache at YT 075353. The recon platoon from 1/503d Inf found another maintenance cache at YT 031387 at 1440 hours.

The 2/503d Inf continued operations in the vicinity of Position Fox with negative contact. TF Knife (E/17th Cav, 1 platoon D/16th Armor, 1 platoon 1/503d

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Inf and 2 Engineer mine detector teams) moved south from Position Mohawk at 0800 hours. At 0900 hours, at YT 018336, an APC from D/16th Armor was hit by an 82mm B-40 anti-tank round, resulting in 9 US WIA. Fire was returned, TAC air supported.

At 0940 hours, an M-48 A-3 tank from C/2/34th Armor, moving north along Route Blue, hit an AT mine at YT 018332, blowing off its left track. The damage was repaired on the spot.

TF Knife moved south to regain contact. At 1330 hours, at YT 022332, E/17th Cav made contact with an unknown number of VC, resulting in 1 VC KIA (BC) and 2 VC KIA (poss) and one (1) AK-47 rifle captured. At 1340 hours, at YT 197403, RCA CS-1 (micropulverized) was delivered by UH-1D aircraft of the 335th AMCL to contaminate a suspected VC headquarters with a persistent chemical irritant and cause the headquarters to displace.

D + 7 (3 October 1966)

i. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City" northeast of Tan Uyen. The 1/503d Inf conducted an operation south of Position Mohawk with TF Knife under its operational control. A TF Knife  $\frac{1}{2}$  ton truck was hit by an AT rocket, resulting in 4 US WIA at 0730 hours. At 0800 hours, at YT 015347, TF Knife made contact with 15 to 20 VC with two (2) .30 caliber machine-guns, losing 2 US WIA's. At 0825 hours, an APC of TF Knife struck an AT mine at YT 019347, causing no casualties and light damage. C/1/503d Inf made contact with 6 - 8 VC, vicinity YT 026350, resulting in 1 US WIA and 1 VC KIA (poss).

The 2/503d Inf continued operations in AO's 5 and 6. At 1700 hours, the recon platoon from 2/503d Inf uncovered a cache of 350 100-pound bags of rice and 250 200-pound bags of peanuts at XT 972359. At 1215 hours, the recon platoon from 2/503d Inf killed 2 VC (BC), capturing a chicon AM and a US M-2 carbine at XT 995348. A/2/503d Inf suffered 3 WIA's when a VC boobytrap detonated, at 1256 hours at XT 972359. The recon platoon from 2/503d Inf picked up 2 chicon carbines in a contact with 4 VC at 1340 hours. A VC claymore mine detonated against A/2/503d Inf at 1430 hours, killing 1 and wounding 2 US soldiers.

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At 1000 hours, E/17th Cav found a landing site and a sampan at YT 084378. E/17th Cav also found 4 trucks at various locations which had been destroyed by napalm and machinegun fire.

D + 9 (5 October 1966)

j. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City" northeast of Tan Uyen. The 1/503d Inf continued operations around Position Mohawk with A/1/503d Inf receiving fire from 1 VC. They returned fire with negative results, at 1155 hours at YT 022360.

The 2/503d Inf worked the area near Position Fox. At 1415 hours, A/2/503d Inf, while extracting rice previously found, received a claymore blast at XT 975358, resulting in 1 US WIA. At 1100 hours, C/2/503d Inf made contact with an estimated VC platoon in prepared positions at XT 935349. The VC broke contact at 1217 hours with 2 US KIA's and 7 US WIA's, 3 VC KIA (BC) and 3 weapons captured. The recon platoon from 2/503d Inf uncovered 10.5 tons of rice at 1805 hours.

D + 10 (6 October 1966)

k. In continuing Operation "Sioux City", the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) displaced its CP and FSB to Position Fox. The 1/503d Inf moved to Position Fox by helicopter.

C/1/503d Inf was placed under OPCON of 2/503d Inf and helilifted to LZ Zenith (XT 937399) without contact. Companies A and C 2/503d Inf moved north from Position Fox. At 0240 hours, the recon platoon from 2/503d Inf received 3 WIA's at XT 973363 from incoming mortar fire. At 0845 hours, A/2/503d Inf took, 1 WIA from a claymore at XT 973363. C/2/503d Inf contacted 3 VC at XT 952354 who fled to the east with negative results.

The 3/319th Arty moved from Position Mohawk to Position Fox and was layed and ready to fire at 1258 hours. At 0742 hours, a tank from C/2/34th Armor, hit a pressure type mine at YT 022347, damaging the tracks and front road wheel.

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E/17th Cav captured a VC claymore mine at YT 019346. C/2/503d Inf used 6 M7A3 CS grenades at XT 955352 to flush VC from suspected hiding places.

D + 11 (7 October 1966)

l. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City" northeast of Tan Uyen. The 1/503d Inf secured the Brigade CP and FSB at Position Fox (XT 9933). At 0930 hours, the 1/503d Inf reported four (4) incoming 60mm mortar rounds with no casualties. At 1250 hours, A/1/503d Inf contacted 3 VC in a base camp at XT 989305 with no casualties on either side.

The 2/503d Inf attacked north and west from Position Fox to LZ Zenith, using the hammer and anvil system, with companies A, B and C/2/503d Inf on line and the recon platoon and company C from 1/503d Inf as the blocking force at LZ Zenith. At 1445 hours, Company A, 2/503d Inf contacted 4 VC at XT 945308, armed with a machinegun in a dug in position. Company A had 1 KIA and 2 WIA before the contact was broken while the VC may have lost 1 KIA. All elements of 2/503d Inf closed on LZ Sony (XT 947375) at 1910 hours.

TF E/17th Cav secured an Engineer work party on Route Blue. At 1015 hours, a 5 ton dumptruck in that party struck an AT mine at XT 949311 resulting in 2 US WIA and severe damage to the truck. At 1445 hours, E/17th Cav detonated a homemade VC mine at XT 945308, resulting in 3 US KIA's and 2 WIA's.

D + 12 (8 October 1966)

m. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) continued Operation "Sioux City" in War Zone "D" northeast of Tan Uyen. The 1/503d Inf secured the Brigade CP and FSB at Position Fox (XT 9832). At 2345 hours, A/1/503d Inf received 3 incoming hand grenades at XT 988328 with negative casualties.

The 2/503d Inf extracted from LZ Seney at 0856 hours to Bien Hoa, where they stood down. Companies A and B of 2/503d Inf were assembled and helilifted to the AO, of Operation "Sioux City" at 1556 hours, and secured Route Blue from Position Fox to XT 942268.

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E/17th Cav cleared and secured Route Blue from Position Fox to CP Echo, being relieved by 2/503d Inf (-). At 1255 hours, E/17th Cav received 15 rounds of small arms fire from the vicinity of XT 975315 with no casualties. At 1455 hours, E/17th Cav fired on 7 VC in black pajamas at XT 928279, who got away. At 1520 hours, E/17th Cav apprehended a VCS who had been wounded at XT 922287.

D + 13 (9 October 1966)

n. The 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) terminated Operation "Sioux City" at 1604 hours. The 1/503d Inf was helilifted from Position Fox, closing to Bien Hoa at 1250 hours.

Companies A and B of 2/503d Inf were helilifted from their positions on Route Blue and closed to Bien Hoa at 1045 hours. TF 3/319th Arty and TF E/17th Cav moved by road convoy, closing to Bien Hoa at 1604 hours and 1428 hours respectively.

At 1600 hours, 700 pounds of RCA CS-1 (micropulverized) was delivered on trail junctions at YT 018328, YT 018345 and YT 034373 by UH-1D aircraft of the 335th AMCL to contaminate VC supply routes.

#### 14. Administrative Matters:

a. Supply and Transportation: Resupply was accomplished from Bien Hoa base camp by helicopter from the BSO helipad. The 173d Support Battalion furnished all classes of supply. A total of 428.6 tons were handled during the operation. Only those units which used roads encountered transportation problems, mainly from mines and AT fire. This was a tactical consideration.

b. Communications: The primary means of communication during Operation "Sioux City" was FM voice radio, which presented no major problems.

c. Medical: Company B Medical, 173d Support Battalion, provided the primary evacuation facility at the Bien Hoa base camp. Seriously injured casualties, requiring major surgery, were evacuated directly to the 3d Surgical Hospital, bypassing B Med. Evacuations were accomplished by dustoff heliambulance from 254th Medical Detachment. The dustoff ship remained forward during

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daylight hours and returned to the clearing station at night. A total of 22 patients were treated and 6 bodies were processed.

15. Results of Operation "Sioux City":

a. US Forces (Losses):

Personnel:

KIA . . . . .	13
WIA . . . . .	70
MIA . . . . .	0

Equipment Losses (Damaged Beyond Repair):

1/2 Ton Truck . . . . .	2
3/4 Ton Truck . . . . .	1
5 Ton Truck . . . . .	1
M-106 Mortar APC . . . . .	1
M-113 APC . . . . .	1
AN/VRC 49 . . . . .	1

b. VC Forces (Losses):

Personnel:

KIA (BC) . . . . .	10
KIA (poss) . . . . .	7
VCC . . . . .	0
VCS . . . . .	1
Returnees . . . . .	1

Weapons:

US Carbines . . . . .	2
Chicon Carbines . . . . .	2
SKS Rifles . . . . .	4
Mossin-Nagant Rifle . . . . .	1
1917 Eddystone Springfield Rifle . . . . .	1
US M-1 . . . . .	1
AK-47 . . . . .	2

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Ammunition:

Small Arms Rounds . . . . .	343
Chicom Hand Grenades . . . . .	3
81mm Mortar Rounds . . . . .	46
Claymore Mines DH-10 . . . . .	9
M1-A1 AT Mines . . . . .	11
Bangalore Torpedo . . . . .	1
AP Mines . . . . .	43
VC Hand Grenades . . . . .	4

Communications:

Voltmeter . . . . .	1
Flashlight . . . . .	1

Food Stuffs:

Polished Rice (tons) . . . . .	66.21
Wheat (pounds) . . . . .	800
Salt (ton) . . . . .	1/2
Peanuts (tons) . . . . .	25
Cooking Oil (gallon) . . . . .	1
Dried Fish (pound) . . . . .	1

Miscellaneous:

Documents . . . . .	372
Engine Oil (55 gal drum) . . . . .	12
Engine Oil (5 gal can) . . . . .	5
Engine Oil (#10 cans) . . . . .	4
Engine Oil (quarts) . . . . .	2
Cleaning Solvent (55 gal drum) . . . . .	2
Gasoline (55 gal drum) . . . . .	1
Diesel Fuel (55 gal drums) . . . . .	11
7.62 Bullet Mold (each) . . . . .	2

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Brake Fluid (can)	1
VC Ponchos	5
Vehicle Batteries	3
Galvanized Tin (sheets)	50
Black Uniforms (pounds)	20
Tiger Pants	1
Khaki Shirt	1
Web Gear (pounds)	6½
Gause (rolls)	21
Hot Water Bottles	2
VC Gas Masks	5
Ingredient Packets for Gas Masks	15
Meter Stick	1
Vitamin Ampoules (pounds)	6
Entrenching Tools	40
Hoes	10
M-1 Clips	8
VC Pistol Belts	2
VC Ammo Pouches	3
Hammock	1
VC Canteens w/Cups	2
Steel Reinforcement Rods	300
Solid US CS (gallon)	55
Drive Shaft Yokes	3
Heavy Clutch & Pressure Plate	1
US Truck Tires	18
Part Rear Dual Wheel for Heavy Vehicle	2
Truck Unmarked	1
Cloth (meters)	74

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Wire (roll) . . . . . 1

Tool Box w/Assted Vehicle Tools . . . . . 1

Bicycle Parts for 2 Bicycles

3/4 Ton Truck Parts

16. Commander's Analysis and Lessons Learned:

a. Commander's Analysis:

(1) Operation "Sioux City" was characterized by light contact, however large quantities of supplies, automotive parts and gasoline were captured and/or destroyed indicating a major resupply effort had been conducted in the area. More than 60 tons of polished rice, 800 pounds of wheat and  $\frac{1}{2}$  a ton of salt were also captured from the VC. Introduction of the 173d Airborne Brigade (Separate) into the AO probably interrupted the plans for resupply of VC units within the area. Extensive use of air strikes and artillery forced the VC to abandon many squad, platoon and company sized base camps and storage areas, leaving behind large quantities of food, equipment and many weapons. The destruction of base camps and the caving of trenches and bunkers should temporarily disrupt VC operations and resupply within the Area of Operations.

(2) Contact with the VC continued to be at close ranges in squad or platoon sized elements or less. The enemy continued to try to lure US units into claymore ambushes. The enemy made effective use of claymores, mines and boobytraps, thus accounting for the major portion of friendly casualties.

(3) The planning and execution of eight (8) platoon and company sized air assaults (Eagle Flights) was further developed and individual and Unit proficiency increased. This tactic has proved effective in extending a unit's effective control without sacrificing flexibility or fatiguing the troops.

(4) The river crossing exercise of A/2/503d Inf proved the feasibility of such a maneuver although the lack of contact makes the final evaluation inconclusive. This type operation demands thorough rehearsal and detailed planning in order to be effective.

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(5) The 1st and 2d Battalions conducted a series of tests on the employment of tanks in the Area of Operation (AO). These tests disclosed that although the increase in speed and fire power were great, certain problems in mobility were encountered. The terrain of the Area of Operation restricted the movement of tanks causing them to remain on the roads and this, in turn, threatens both tank and crew due to the presence of mined areas along the route.

(6) At one time during the operation, the 1/503d Inf issued a request for an immediate TAC air strike. The strike was subsequently executed in 15 minutes. This was an illustration of excellent coordination between a ground unit and TAC. The air strike was well controlled, however, a bomb damage assessment could not be determined due to terrain restriction.

(7) The area of operation for "Sioux City" was found to be a sophisticated VC supply storage and transfer area with a good road and water network. Numerous automotive supplies and parts indicated the use of trucks. Brigade forces successfully depleted VC supplies and disrupted his operations. However, it is believed that the VC will continue to use this area until it is saturated with permanent friendly military elements.

b. Lessons Learned:

Item: Scout Dog Teams

Discussion: The use of dogs at company level aided in the discovery of boobytraps and in location of caches. However, dogs became fatigued and were limited to approximately 10 hours of work. This meant that the dogs were not available for both all day operations and night patrols, LP's, ambushes, and perimeter watch.

Observation: Dog teams should be assigned on the basis of three dogs per company so that the animals may be rotated, thereby insuring that the dogs do not become so fatigued as to effect the efficiency of the unit.

Item: Use of Tanks and APC's

Discussion: Tanks and APC's are an asset to the infantry in

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providing increased fire power, communications and mobility. However, their lack of off-the-road infiltration, at least in the area of operation of "Sioux City", became a disadvantage, exposing them to VC mines on the roads they were forced to use. One technique used to overcome this was to have the infantry ride to a point, leave the track to cover their movement and move into the woods and search. They would then return to the track and move to the next spot. APC's were used to recon by fire, introduce and extract ambush patrols, run clearing patrols, retrieve sick and wounded when helicopters could not be used, set up blocking positions, clear fields of fire and reinforce perimeters. The APC has much more flexibility than the M48-A3 tank in both its mobility and job versatility.

Observation: The use of tracked vehicles enhances the capabilities of the infantry but their navigation limits must be taken into account during their employment.

Item: River Crossing Observations

Discussion: The problems inherent in River Assault Operations became obvious during this operation. This type operation must be carefully planned and rehearsed each time it is employed if the operation is to be successful. The following observations illustrate some of the problems and their solutions.

Observation:

- (a) Assembly area must be able to accommodate a helicopter.
- (b) Time must be allotted for the infiltration and movement of boats to the bank.
- (c) Banks should be gently sloping. The bank in this operation was 15 feet high and only one boat could land at a time. A good recon for the crest site is necessary.
- (d) Boat handlers must be well trained.
- (e) Outboard motors are noisy and require constant care.

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Item: Use of 60mm Mortars at Company Level

Discussion: 60mm mortars have proven to be a flexible alternate to the 81mm mortar carried by the company. Three times the normal basic load can be carried without burdening the line platoons. The trigger mechanism provides it with direct fire capability, although the bursting radius is somewhat smaller than the 81mm mortar. During the hours of darkness, the 60mm mortars should be supplemented by bringing in the 81mm mortar (prepalletized) and lifting it out prior to movement in the morning

Observation: 60mm mortars should be made available for use in operations which involve prolonged movement through heavy jungle where there is a need for light, fast movement where large enemy forces are not expected to be encountered.

Item: Use of Mine Detectors

Discussion: Mine detectors were able to locate metallic mines and boobytraps when properly employed. However, proper use requires a slow process which is fatiguing to operators.

Observation: While on roads, mine detectors should be employed in pairs to cover each side of the road at the same time. It must be insured that relief operators are available. If the process is not unnecessarily hastened, results can be expected.

Item: Use of Starlight Scope, Hand Held

Discussion: The case for the Starlight Scope was unsuited for jungle use due to its weak zipper, lack of space inside the case for accessories, and its non-water-repellent quality.

Observation: Use of the M-60 machinegun spare barrel case overcame the deficiencies of the issued Starlight Scope case.

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FOR THE COMMANDER:

15 December 1966



E. B. ROBERSON  
CPT, AGC  
Asst AG

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**"SIOUX CITY"**

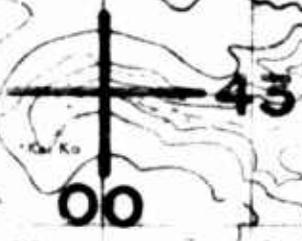
**ANNEX C - Operations Overlay - 20 September 1966**

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TO OP ORD 74-66 (OPN SIOUX CITY)



**AO-1**

**CHEYENNE**

**PSN MOHAWK**

**6**

**AO-2**

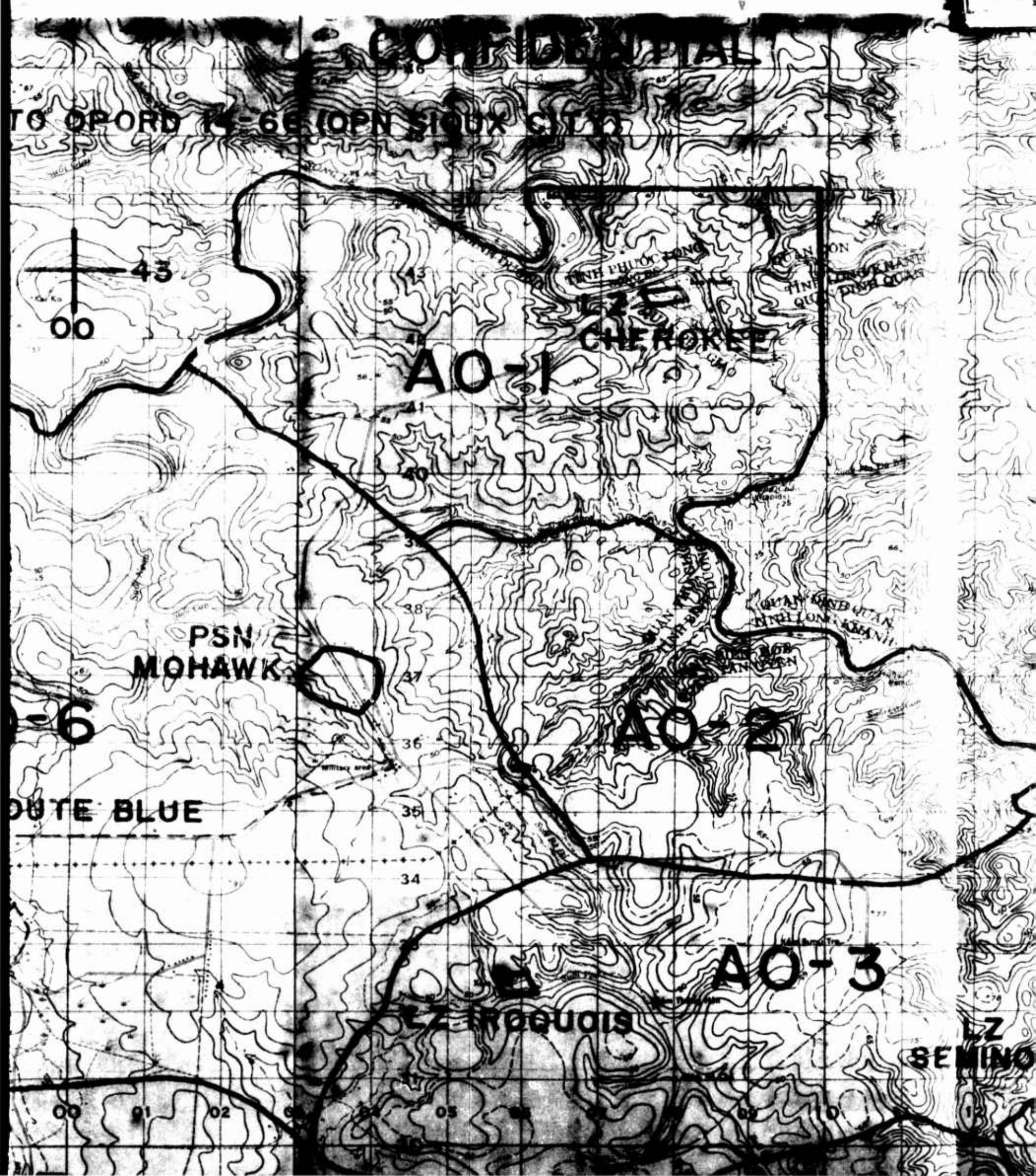
**ROUTE BLUE**

**AO-3**

**ROQUOIS**

**SEMINO**

00 01 02 03 04 05 06 07 08 09



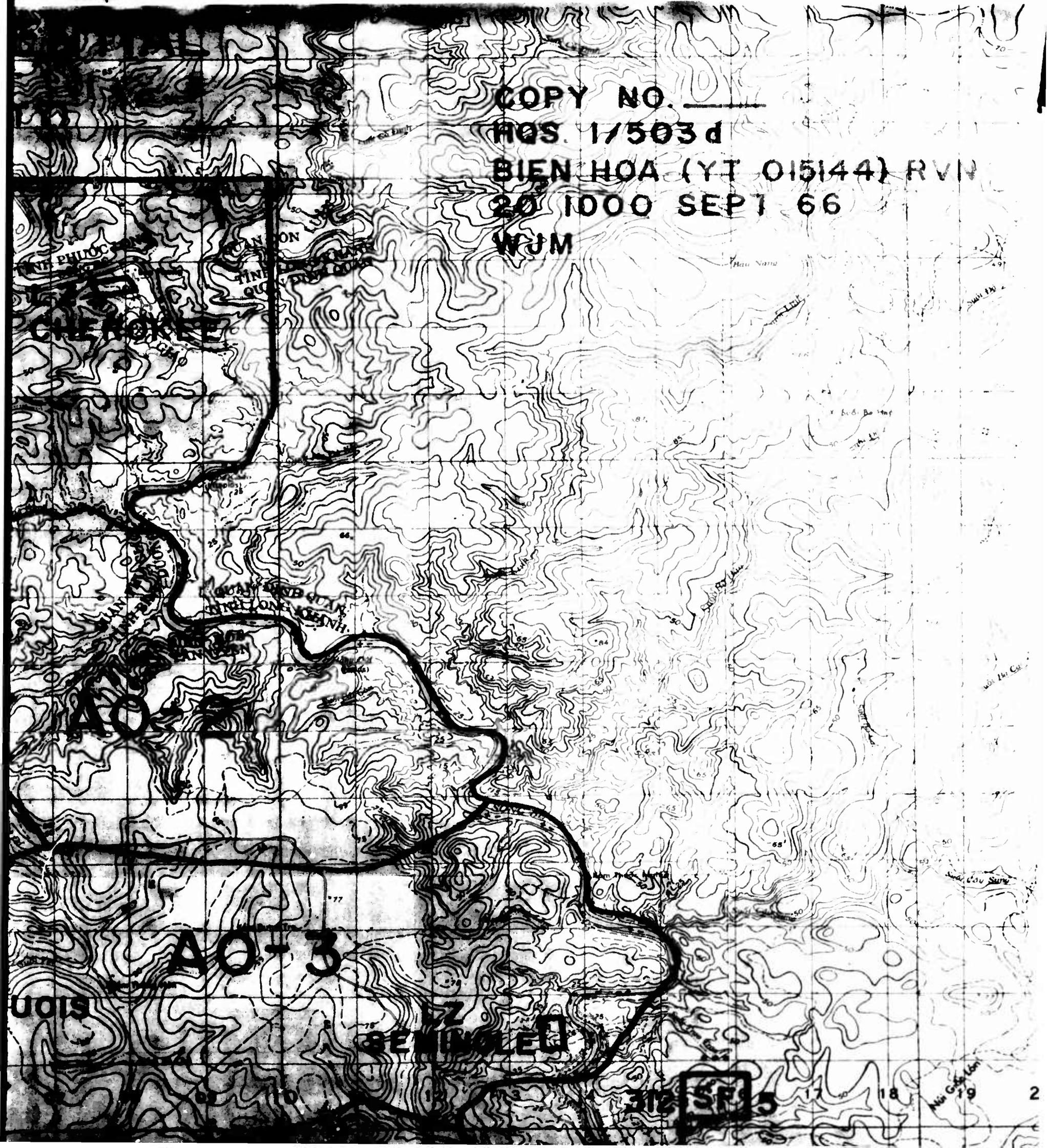
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BIEN HOA (YT 015144) RVN

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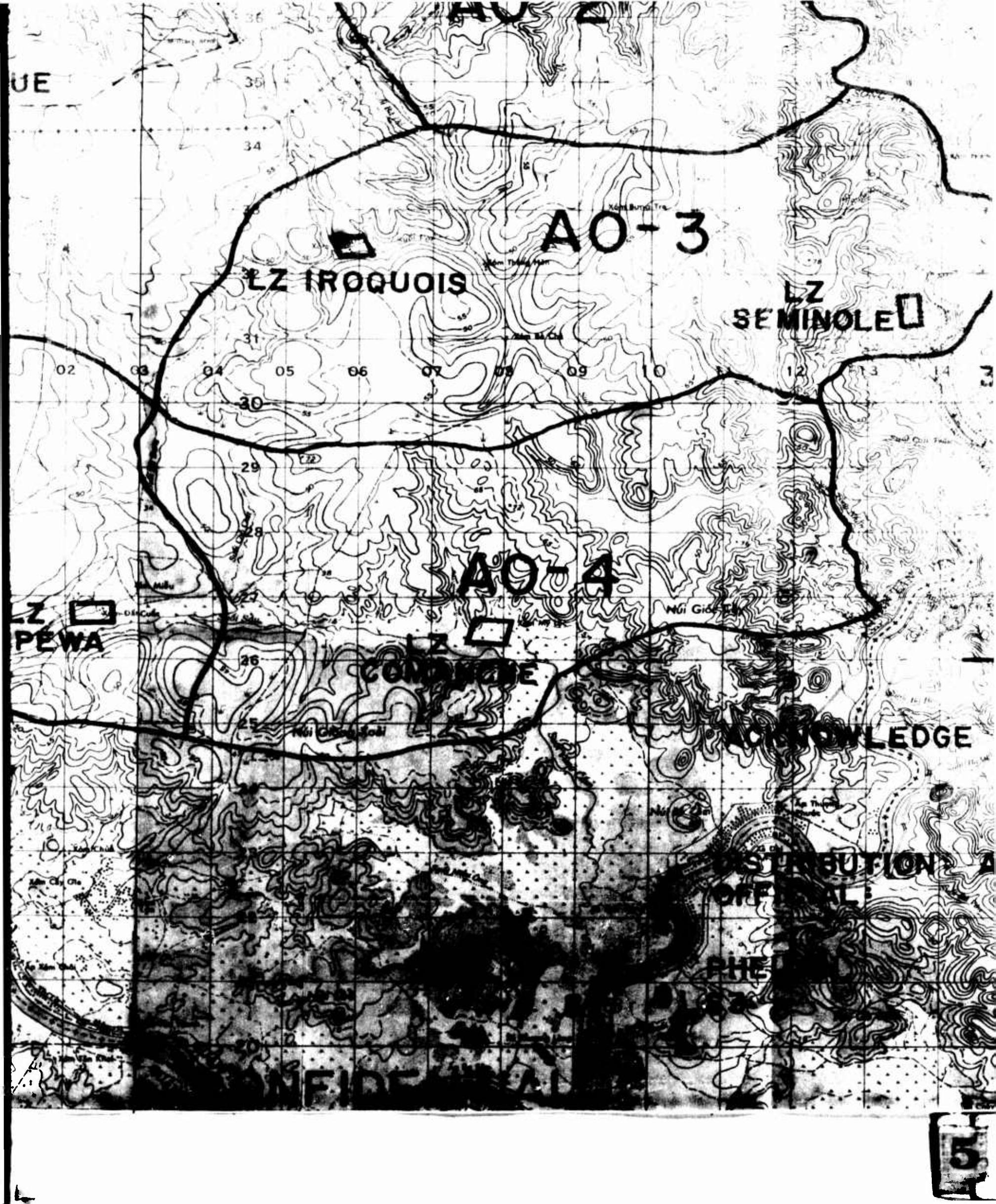


AO-3

REINFORCED

SP-5





UE

LZ IROQUOIS

A0-3

LZ SEMINOLE

LZ PEWA

A0-4

LZ KNOWLEDGE

LZ KNOWLEDGE

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