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AGO D/A ltr, 29 Apr 1980; AGO D/A 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 (M)(21 June 68) FOR OT RD 682251

26 June 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 3d Brigade,
101st Airborne Division, Period Ending 30 April 1968. (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance
with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should
be reported to ACSFOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days
of receipt of covering letter.

2. Information contained in this report is provided to insure appro-
priate benefits in the future from lessons learned during current
operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

C. A. STANFIEL
Colonel, AGC
Acting The Adjutant General

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

AVDG-CA-E

16 May 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 3D Brigade 101st Airborne Division
for period ending 30 April 1968, RGS CPOR-65 (RL)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities.

a. During the reporting period, the 3D Brigade conducted counter-insurgency operations in Bien Hoa and Binh Duong Provinces. Two organic and one attached battalion were responsible for security of the rocket belt north and east of Long Binh/Bien Hoa complex and interdiction of movement along primary avenues of approach into the area. The remaining organic battalion provided local security for Phuoc Vinh Base Camp and conducted Bushmaster-Type operations in Binh Duong Province.

b. The significant activities portion of this report will include only that period the 3D Brigade was OPCON to II FFORCE V, 5 March thru 30 April. The two major operations occurring during this period were:

(1) Operation BOX SPRINGS

(2) Operation TOAN THANG (AO LOS BANOS, initially Operation HARRISBURG)

(a) Operations

On 16 March the 3d Battalion (Airborne), 187th Infantry conducted Operation BOX SPRINGS in southern section of Binh Duong Province from 16 March to 22 March 1968. The area of operation included long time enemy sanctuaries in the western section of War Zone D. Numerous small unit actions to include airmobile assaults, reconnaissance in force, and Bushmaster-type operations were conducted throughout the area of operation. Participating units experienced light but steady contact with major action beginning in the afternoon and early evening hours and continuing into the night, the employment of night operations in conjunction with the use of scout dogs kept the enemy off balance; often catching him by surprise and forcing him to fight a brief but tenacious battle in an effort to break contact. The persistence of friendly forces forced the enemy to move his position constantly which apparently resulted in the permanent relocation of some enemy units. Base camps, which had been considered sanctuaries by the enemy, were cleared and destroyed. At 1650 hrs 22 March the last Company was moved by air to Phuoc Vinh Base and Operation BOX SPRINGS terminated. 16 US personnel were killed, 62 wounded of which 52 were evacuated from the battle field. Enemy losses were 147 killed.

On 21 March 1968 the 2d Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry was released from operation control of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade in AO UP SHUR and moved to a Fire Support Base in AO HARRISBURG, later changed to AO LOS BANOS. The 1st Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry moved by air to Fire Support Base Paris in AO HARRISBURG on the same day. The mission of the two battalions in the area of operation was to secure the Rocket Belts to the north, east and south of Bien Hoa in Bien Hoa Province and to protect the Bien Hoa/Long Binh military complex against ground and rocket attacks. The battalions conducted reconnaissance in force, airmobile assaults and ambush patrols in the operational area.

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The name of the area of operations was changed from AO HARRISBURG to AO LOS BANOS on 24 March 1968. On 8 April Operation AO LOS BANOS was incorporated into the III Corps Operation RAM THANG, as were operations conducted in AO CLARKSVILLE in Binh Duong Province. On 9 April the 1st Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry returned to Phuoc Vinh Base and the 2d Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry assumed responsibility for the entire AO LOS BANOS. The 3d Battalion (Airborne) 187th Infantry went under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division on 16 April and conducted operations in the southern portion of Binh Duong Province and northern portion of Bien Hoa Province. On 23 April the 3d Battalion (Airborne) 187th Infantry was released from operational control of the 1st Infantry Division and moved to the southern end of AO LOS BANOS. With the increasing threat of rocket/ground attack on Long Binh/Bien Hoa area, the 5th Battalion 12th Infantry (199 LID), A Troop 3d Squadron 17th Air Cavalry and F Company 51st Long Range Patrol were placed under the operational control of the 3d Brigade on 24 April. The 5th Battalion 12th Infantry was given tactical responsibility for Fire Support Base PARIS and AO LOS BANOS southeast of Long Binh. The 3d Battalion (Airborne) 187th Infantry moved all units into AO LOS BANOS CENTER, east of Bien Hoa and the 2d Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry assumed responsibility of AO LOS BANOS NORTH, north of the Dong Nai River. F Company 51st Long Range Patrol conducted operations north of AO LOS BANOS in AO URGHUR II. A Troop 3-17 Air Cav conducted air reconnaissance, provided Army Air support, and maintained the Brigade Ready Reaction Force. Contact during the period was sporadic to moderate with increasing activity and rocket/mortar attacks toward the end of the reporting period. The operation is continuing at present. 13 US personnel were killed, 81 wounded of which 67 were evacuated from the battlefield. Enemy losses were 57 killed. Cumulative results of the reporting period's operations are recorded in Inclosure 1.

c. The organizational structure to include attached units and units under the operational control of the 3d Brigade is attached as Inclosure 2.

d. Units of the Brigade, not participating in tactical operations, conducted training on a daily basis. Each battalion is required to maintain a master training chart as prescribed in 101st Airborne Regulation 350-1, dated 25 March 1968. Training included Code of Conduct, Safety, Mines and Boobytraps Warfare, Small Arms Familiarization Firing Program, Lesson Learned to include Vietnam Primer, Division and Brigade Combat Notes, and First Aid to include personal hygiene. Fifty-six days of tactical operations and training have been conducted since 5 March.

e. There were no major troop movements during the reporting period.

f. One major innovation was the consolidation of all 81mm mortars into one platoon attached to the combat support company. The 81mm mortar squads are returned to their parent unit and attached to other units, according to the tactical requirements. When there are no requirements by units operating outside the base camp, the 81mm mortars are incorporated into the base camp's fire support platoon and provide ready close-in support as well as immediate illumination.

g. An additional asset that became available to the 3d Brigade in March was the Scout Dog Platoon of the 58th Infantry. Immediately scout dogs were incorporated into as many operations as possible. Primary emphasis was placed on using the scout dogs as a member of the point element. It was necessary to train troops and leaders at all levels in the employment of the scout dogs. Once the units had grown accustomed to the use of the scout dog and their idiosyncracies, increased use was emphasized. Dogs were made available for ambushes, patrols, road clearing operations, cordon and search operations, and any other use the ground commander might desire which met with the scout platoon leaders approval.

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The scout dogs proved valuable in all cases. A rotational system to exchange dogs and handlers once their effectiveness and efficiency had decreased was implemented. This system assured the ground commander of a relatively fresh scout dog team at all times. Whenever possible each platoon was assigned its own dog to utilize on cloverleaf operations and platoon sweeps. Every effort was made to assign dogs to the same unit each time. This resulted in a greater familiarity between the soldiers and dogs which proved conducive to greater effectiveness.

2. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commanders Observations, Evaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel. NONE

b. Operations

Limited Resupply

(1) OBSERVATION. The ability of a unit to keep the enemy from pinpointing its location or having knowledge of its presence has tactical significance toward the success of the operation.

(2) EVALUATION. On 17 April, A Company 1st Battalion (Airborne) 506th Infantry began a 5 day reconnaissance in force operation. The company carried only rations, water, medical supplies, ammunition, and minimum field equipment. No resupply, except for emergency was planned. On the evening of 20 April the company engaged a large enemy force, whose location indicated complete surprise at the presence of an Allied Force. 1 US personnel was killed, 6 wounded (evacuated) and 24 enemy killed by body count.

(3) RECOMMENDATION. That Allied Forces conduct more small unit night operations with limited resupply or other activities that tend to pinpoint the location or reveal the presence of the unit in a specific area.

c. Training.

Replacement Personnel

(1) OBSERVATION. The 3d Battalion (Airborne) 187th Infantry conducted a series of classes for replacements newly assigned to the battalion. By means of analyzing student response and personal interview of students, it was apparent that the majority of replacements arriving in Vietnam for their first tour are under the misconception the Viet Cong is a ragged, poorly trained and ill-equipped guerrilla.

(2) EVALUATION. To under estimate the ability of the enemy is a mistake that has cost numerous battles throughout the history of war. Having to wait until engagement with the Viet Cong to discover he is a well trained, highly motivated soldier can be costly to the individual.

(3) RECOMMENDATION. That Advance Individual Training for trainees and Vietnam Orientation Courses for other replacements stress the capabilities and motivation of the enemy.

d. Intelligence.

Chieu Hoi

(1) OBSERVATION. Chieu Hoi are of tremendous value when employed on a regular scout basis with company and platoon size elements.

(2) EVALUATION. The employment of ralliers as guides and scouts against their former comrades is hardly a new technique. However, building a Kit Carson Scout Program is a slow process. Chieu Hoi must be screened and selected from those who have completed the prescribed indoctrination course prior to their full time employment as scouts.

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b

This Brigade has attempted to obtain ralliers who are familiar with the brigade area of operations. However, more important is obtaining ralliers who are familiar with enemy techniques in the field, have served in the field and are willing to accompany US forces on sustained operations. Close liaison must be maintained with province Chieu Hoi centers to obtain personnel of this caliber. Once obtained the individual must be screened and a rapport established with the unit to which the rallier is assigned.

(3) RECOMMENDATION. That the value of using Chieu Hoi as guides for combat operations be stressed to all units newly arrived or preparing for deployment to the Republic of Vietnam.

- c. Logistics. NONE
- f. Organization. NONE
- g. Other. NONE

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as

Lawrence L Mowery
LAWRENCE L MOWERY
Colonel Infantry
Commanding

Distribution:

II FORCEV
USARPAC GPOC-DT
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101ST AIN DIV

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AVFBC-RE-H (16 May 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 3D Brigade 101st Airborne Division
for period ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 29 MAY 1968

THRU: Commanding General, US Army Vietnam, ATTN: AVHGC(DST), APO 96375

Commander, US Army Pacific, ATTN: GPOP-OT, APO 96558

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

1. Subject report is forwarded.
2. This command has reviewed the attached Operational Report - Lessons Learned of the 3D Brigade, 101st Airborne Division and concurs with it.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

OB Fony
O. B. FONNY
1ST AGC
ASST AG

AVHGC-DST (16 May 68) 2d Ind CFT Arnold/rbw/LBN 41.85
SUBJECT: Operational Report of 3D Brigade 101st Airborne Division for period
Ending 30 April 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM APO San Francisco 96375 6 JUN 1968

TO: Commander in Chief, United States Army Pacific, ATTN: GPCP-DT,
APO 96558

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1968 from Headquarters, 3d Brigade 101st Airborne Division as indorsed.

2. Reference item concerning replacement personnel, page 3, paragraph 2c. Concur. DA Pam 360-518, Know Your Enemy: The Viet Cong, should be used as a basis for orientation training.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. S. Nakatsukasa
C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

Copy furnished:
Hq, II FFORCEV
Hq, 3d Bde 101st Abn Div

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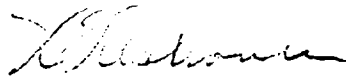
GPOP-DT (16 May 68) 3d Ind (U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 3d Bde, 101st Abn
Div, for Period Ending 30 April 1968,
RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 **14 JUN 1968**

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

This headquarters has evaluated subject report and forwarding indorsements and concurs in the report as indorsed.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:



K. F. OSBOURN
MAJ, AGC
Asst AG

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OPERATION	DATES	FM/AF		VC	PW	R/EE	SA	C/S		SA	OTHER
		US	VHA					WFS	AT/O		
	16 MAR										7,800 LBS Rice
	22 MAR	16	52	117	0	0	14	8			357 Bunkers 58 Claymore mines
AO LOS BANOS	23 MAR										
TYEN THANG	8 APR										2130 LBS Rice, 2 AT mines, 2 AP mines, 6 Boobytraps, 67 Bunkers, 26 Structures, 26 rds HE, 60 LBS explosives, 6 RFD Drums, 2 Brgs, 7 Sampans, 6 Trucks, 7 Claymores, 53 Grenades
	CONTINUING	13	61	57	7	0	20	0	139		

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Enclosure 1

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<u>ORGANIC UNITS</u>		<u>ATTACHED UNITS</u>		<u>OPCON UNITS</u>	<u>DATE OPCON</u>
HHC 3D Bde	186	2-319th Arty	437	5-12 Inf	24 April
1-506th Inf	875	326th Engr	126	A 3-17 A/C	24 April
2-506th Inf	849	501st Sig	45	F Co 51st LRP	24 April
3-187th Inf	909	326th Med	70		
		101st MP	29		
		801st Maint	31		
		265th RRU	24		
		101st MI	6		
		101st Adm	4		

Inlosure 2

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