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AGO ltr 29 Apr 1980 ; 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 (M) (22 Jul 68) FOR OT RD 68X035

5 August 1968

AD 838851

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Report - Op BYRD, Headquarters, 2d
Bn, 7th Cav, 1st Air Cav Div, Period 25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68

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1. Subject report is forwarded as inclosure for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15.
2. 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.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (8 Oct 68) FOR CT RD 68X035

11 October 1968

SUBJECT: Security Classification of Combat After Action Report -
Operation BYRD (U)

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1. Reference: Letter, Headquarters, Department of the Army, Subject: Operation BYRD, Headquarters 2d Battalion, 7th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division, Period 25 August 1966 - 20 January 1968, dated 5 August 1968.
2. The Combat After Action Report forwarded by reference letter was received unclassified at Headquarters, Department of the Army and published without noting that paragraphs 1 and 2 (pages 35 and 36) of the report contain CONFIDENTIAL information.
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HEADQUARTERS
1ST AIR CAVALRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco, Calif 96490

AVDAIK-SC

10 May 1968

SUBJECT: After Action Report - Operation BYRD

THRU: ~~Commanding General~~
~~1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)~~
~~APO San Francisco 96490~~

TO: Commanding General
I Field Forces Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96350

1. References:
 - a. MACV Dir 335-8, CBT OPNS, AAR
 - b. I Field Forces V, Tactical SOP
 - c. 1st Cav Reg 335-16, dtd 16 Oct 66, subj:
CBT OPNS, AAR
2. In accordance with above cited references, After Action Report for this unit is herewith submitted.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Kenneth A. Iwanusa
KENNETH A. IWANUSA
1/LT, Infantry
Adjutant

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I. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation BYRD was an independent Task Force Operation under the control of I Field Force Vietnam. It was initially a unilateral US Search and Destroy Operation which later expanded to include joint/com-
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bined operations in support of Revolutionary Development through out the AO. It was a classic example of a successful economy of force operation.

II. DATES OF OPERATION: 25 August 1966 - 20 January 1968

III. LOCATION: BINH THUAN, SE portion of BINH TUY, SE portion of LAM DONG, W portion of NINH THUAN and S portion of TUYEN DUC Provinces. (ANNEX A - BYRD AO)

IV. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: I FIELD FORCE VIETNAM

V. REPORTING OFFICER:

25 Aug 66 - 9 Dec 66: LTC Billy M. Vaughn.

10 Dec 66 - 29 Mar 67: LTC Fred E. Karhohs

30 Mar 67 - 1 Aug 67: LTC Leo D. Turner

2 Aug 67 - 20 Jan 68: LTC Joseph T. Griffin, Jr.

VI. TASK ORGANIZATION: Annex B

VII. SUPPORTING FORCES: Annex C

VIII. INTELLIGENCE: Characteristics of Area of Operation

A. TERRAIN

1. General; The BYRD AO covered not only an extensive area in terms of square miles, but also an area that varied greatly in climate and types of terrain. The AO encompassed all of Binh Thuan Province with the exception of the northeast corner (east of grid line 00), Lam Dong Province (south of grid line 65), Tuyen Duc Province (south of grid line 75), and Ninh Thuan Province (south of grid line 75 and west of grid line 60). In the northern portion of the AO the Throung Son Mountain Range consists mainly of rugged hills and mountains with isolated rolling plateaus. The area is thickly foliated with multi-canopied forest and heavy underbrush. Because of this rugged relief, exfiltration routes generally follow streams and ridge lines which form a north-south drainage pattern. The principle rivers are the Da R' Giao, Da R' Bao, Song La Nga, and Song Long. The plains region extends in a 10 km wide strip the length of the AO. This region is generally flat with some areas of low rolling hills.

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Heavily forested areas are few, with heavy brush and thick bamboo along the streams being prevalent. Defoliation has been extensive in many sections of the plains, especially in the Le Hong Phong Forest (BN 1030), Dong Gia (ZT 2525) and Niu Ba Dang (ZS 2792). Drainage is provided by the Song Phan, Song Cai, Suoi Da, and Song Luy Rivers. Along the coast of the South China Sea are broad beaches with extensive sand dunes reaching in some areas a height of sixty meters. Infiltration is not frequently carried out along the beaches because of continuous surveillance, however, some enemy resupply has been affected over the beach, vicinity AM7393 and BN2627.

2. Observation and Fields of Fire: Taken as a whole the AO affords poor observation in the northern regions due to the heavily forested hills and mountains and thick foliage and underbrush in the valleys. Aerial observation is good over much of the plains and excellent in the rice producing area around Phan Thiet. Ground observation in the area is rated as good to excellent. Flat trajectory weapons are restricted by the vegetation and irregular terrain except in the rice producing area. The high forest canopy limits the use of observed artillery fire and reduces the effectiveness of aircraft observation and air strikes.

3. Cover and Concealment: Good to excellent concealment from aerial observation is afforded by the forests. Virtually no concealment from aerial observation is afforded by the rice paddies. Fair cover from small arms is provided by the dense vegetation and fair to good cover from flat trajectory fire is provided by terrain irregularities in the more rugged areas of the province. Good concealment from ground observation is available on the plains. Low earthen dikes and shallow ditches in rice fields provide limited cover from flat trajectory fires.

4. Obstacles: One river, the Song Cai, is considered too deep for fording. Dense forests, rugged terrain, and extensive rice fields make most of the province unsuited for off-road vehicular movements and hinder fast, overland movement. An escarpment facing SE along the northern portion of the Lam Dong - Binh Thuan border is a formidable obstacle to movement.

5. Key Terrain: The city of Phan Thiet must be considered the key terrain feature of the AO. The key area to be controlled is the "Triangle" area bounded by the railroad tracks from Muong Man to Thien Giao and Phan Thiet and by Highway 8B from Phan Thiet to Thien Giao. This region is the main food producing area.

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6. Roads: There are two main roads in the AO, National Route 1 and Intra-province Route 8B. National Route 1 is the main line of communication for the major portion of South Vietnam. Route 8B is important in that it bisects the rice growing area and provides communication between Phan Thiet and Thien Giao.

7. Airfields:

NAME	COORD	AZ	L/W	ELEV	SUR	CLASS
Phan Thiet	AN802071	70/250	3800/80	203	Bitumen	C-130
Song Mao	BN265457	90/270	3500/105	85	Laterite	C-153
Luong Son	BN120385	90/270	2200/50	30	Sod	C-123
Tuy Phong	BN527414	40/220	1400/30	20	Sod	01
Thien Giao	AN868255	10/190	2100/50	100	Sod	01

B. WEATHER: During the period from May through early November in Phan Thiet area experiences its wet season. Rains are quite frequent, especially heavy afternoon showers, usually three to four times a week. Also during this period, it is not uncommon for rains to persist for several days to a week. During the wet season, morning fog is common and usually will lift by mid-morning. The fog is mostly concentrated in the valleys of the mountain regions and is very dense around the many streams and rivers.

During the period from early November through April, the Phan Thiet area goes through its dry season. Rains are infrequent, and it is common for no rain to fall for a period of a month at a time. At this time, smaller streams dry up completely and the water levels drop considerably in the larger streams and major rivers.

Normal temperatures range from the low 70's through the high 90's...throughout both seasons, with the higher temperatures being the norm for the dry season. Occasionally temperatures go above 90 and below 70 degrees. The mountain regions are generally cooler than the plains, especially at night.

Humidity ranges from 70-80 during the dry season and 80-90 during the rainy season.

Surface winds average 5 to 15 knots during the day-light hours. During the night winds are extremely light or non-existent. Along the coast there is a predominate wind coming from the ocean which gusts up to 30 knots. This occurs almost every afternoon throughout both seasons.

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C. ECONOMICS AND SOCIOLOGY:

1. Economics: Farming, fishing, and Nuoc Mam (Fish sauce) are the basis of the economy in Binh Thuan. There are over 5,000 fishing boats bringing in an annual catch of 37,000 metric tons. This makes the province the largest producer of Nuoc Mam in Vietnam. Exports also include mineral water, salt, cargo boats, and fishing boats. Rice is the major field crop. The province produces 14,500 metric tons annually and imports 14,500 tons to meet consumer needs. Early rice is harvested in September and October, normal rice in November and December, and the late rice in January through the middle of February. Secondary crops are corn, manioc, beans, peanuts, and tobacco.

2. Sociology: The total population is about 253,600 of which approximately 223,000 are Vietnamese, 12,000 are Chams, 11,000 Nungs, and 5,000 Montagnards (75% Rolai and 25% Rai). The principle religions are: Buddhists (43.9%), Catholics (8.3%), Brahmans (7.7%), Moslems (6.4%), Protestants (.87%), and Cao Dai (1.8%)

D. ENEMY SITUATION:

1. Organization, Disposition and Strength
(See Table A: Enemy Order of Battle.)

2. Buildup of Enemy Activity Prior to Operation BYRD: During June, July, and August of 1966, VC forces stepped up their aggressive tactics against ARVN/RF/PF forces throughout the AO. Their main objective continued to be isolation, then reduction of the "Triangle" area. The VC conducted frequent platoon to battalion sized attacks within and near that area. Other VC actions were platoon and company size operations involving ambushes, terrorist acts, assassinations and kidnappings. Propaganda lectures were continued to be commonplace occurrences even within outlying government controlled hamlets. The VC 482d LF Battalion and the separate LF companies gradually tightened a VC ring around Phan Thiet City denying to the GVN access to the rest of the AO. GVN forces suffered more than 150 KIA, 110 WIA and lost large numbers of weapons and radios in five attacks during this period. As the September 12 elections drew near, the VC objective became the sabotage of the election. VC initiated a campaign of propaganda and terror urging the populace to ignore the election.

3. Enemy Activity from 25 August 66 to 31 December 66: Initial VC reactions to employment of US forces in Binh Thuan Province, concurrent with their campaign against the election, were similar to tactics used during the brief operation of the 1st BDE, 101st Airborne Division in the latter part of April and early May of 1966. The enemy withdrew his major combat units from potential US operational areas, began

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surveillance of the US installations at Phan Thiet airfield left the task of countering the election to the local guerrilla and hamlet forces, while awaiting the withdrawal of our forces from the AO. Initially the enemy fired freely at reconnaissance aircraft with AW and SA weapons; employed snipers to confuse and draw away our searching forces from their installations; and used small groups to observe and harass forward LZ's. The enemy gradually learned that camouflage techniques used against fixed wing observation aircraft were not sufficient to protect against observation by helicopters and that indiscriminate firing at helicopters resulted in substantial casualties. Extensive alert systems were set up to warn of the approach of ground and air forces. Units began intensive training to improve camouflage and movement techniques and methods of engaging aircraft. In late September, two mortar attacks were made on Phan Thiet air field. The first attack, conducted on the night prior to the election, was probably a politically motivated action designed to impress the people with the VC capability to engage the US forces. The second, on 26 November, probably was intended to tie down additional US forces to the protection of TF 2/7 CAV base at the airfield. Because of the success of our operations and to counter falling morale within his ranks, the decision was reached late in September, to launch an attack on the district HQ's of Thien Giao. Preparation began in early October and the attack was launched in the early morning hours of 16 October, with the entire 482nd LF Battalion and the 430th LF Company against an RF Company. The attack was conducted from assembly areas in the vicinity of Nui To Ho (AN7224). Though initially successful in over-running the outer defenses and destroying three of the four bunkered strong points, the enemy was forced to withdraw prematurely and suffered heavy casualties from ARA and Tac Air. One VC company commander was killed. For the first time the 482nd Bn was not able to propagandize a success. The enemy forces did manage, however, to evade blocking forces consisting of two US and one ARVN company which air assaulted at first light to cover routes of withdrawal. The 482nd Bn withdrew north to assembly areas in the vicinity of Song Katch River and south of Nui Dagia (AN9142). There the enemy rested several days. The battalion then moved eastward towards its Le Hong Phong base area. On 25 October, elements of the 482nd Bn were sighted in the vicinity of BN0526. ARA and Tac Air engaged the area followed by an air assault by one US company. C 2/7 CAV engaged the 486th Company and inflicted heavy casualties. A PW captured stated that his company was preparing to attack Phu Long (AN886145). Following this engagement the Bn completed its withdrawal in its Le Hong Phong base area for an extended period of rest, reorganization and retraining. Strength of the Bn had dropped to 80-85 men per rifle company and about 70 in the battalion combat support company. The battalion received replacements from local guerrilla forces. On

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11 November 1966, Phan Thiet airfield was mortared for the third time by elements of the 480th Company. For the first time 82mm mortars were used. A PW stated that on all three occasions mortars were borrowed from the 487th Company. The Bn continued training its replacements and practice of counter-sweep operations in the Le Hong Phong until early in December. On 15 December 1966, the Battalion, minus one company, reinforced with the 450th Company made a limited attack on one RF company at Phu Long and two RF platoons at Phouc Thouc Thien Xuan (AN882126). Light casualties were suffered by the Bn and moderate casualties were inflicted on Regional and Popular forces.

4. Enemy Activity from 1 January 67 to 31 March 67:

At 17 0205H January, an attack was made on the GVN outpost of Fort Pitt (AN850164) followed by an attack by an estimated two rifle companies supported by 81mm mortars, 57mm RR, and B-40 rocket launchers against the ARVN 4-8 Cav (APC) Company. Heavy contact lasted until 0315H. Friendly losses of personnel and equipment were light. Enemy losses for this operation were estimated to have been moderate in personnel and light in equipment. Prior to the attack at 0025H, A Co 2/7 Cav ambush patrol made contact with an estimated 20-25 VC, killing several and capturing one PW who identified the unit as the entire 480th Co, strength approx 69. ARVN units began search ops in the vicinity of the "Triangle" prior to first light and made sporadic light contact. Local patrols around the periphery of ARVN operations and along likely withdrawal routes made light contact with local guerrillas. D Co 2/7 Cav, following a route identified by a Task Force Agent as the enemy withdrawal route, made contact with the 430th Co in the vicinity AN745242 and killed five VC and found a large base camp area. It is believed that this attack of 17 Jan was made with 430th Co and one company of the 482nd Bn supported by the heavy weapons company of the Bn. Diversionary attacks were made by the 480th Co at Phan Thiet Airfield, the 450th Co at hamlets along Hwy 1 south of Phu Long, and at LZ Virginia (AN815176). Two satchel charges were blown and one VC claymore was found and undetonated at LZ Virginia. It is possible that one additional company was employed in the ambush between 3/44th ARVN at Thien Giao and Ft. Pitt. If the above is an accurate description of the enemy's concept of the operation, the plan was well conceived, obviously at Province Level, but apparently too complex to be successfully coordinated. It is significant to note the lack of resolve to carry through with the mission shown by the elements assigned the sapper attack on LZ Virginia and elements of the 450th Co charged with the diversion along Hwy 1. It was felt that because of generally unfavorable light conditions during the remainder of the pre-TET period, the 17 Jan attack was meant to be the major opn in the "Triangle" area before TET. On 13 Feb 67, Lt Nguyen Van Thanh, Bn Maj of the 482nd LF Bn, wounded and captured on 21 Dec, was returned to TF for exploita-

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tion. Significant items of interest from his interrogation confirm present holdings on OB of the Bn. He has identified the normal base of area of the Bn as being in the Le Hong Phong Secret Area and by mentally tracing a route from a known point, has described the location as being within two kilometers of coord BN0931. He claims that the unit is in this area 6 to 8 months of the year. On 21 Feb 67 the enemy conducted a two company attack against the 444th RF Co at Tuy Tinh (BN453467), in which the VC suffered 8 killed and an estimated 30 wounded, while the RF Co had 2 KIA and 14 WIA. Also lost by the VC in this operation were 2 AK-47's, a quantity of small arms ammo and grenades, and 4 - 57mm RR shells. Documents found at this site identify the attacking units as part of D-120 Bn and Company 91 of D-120. One mass abduction of seventy-three (73) persons was reported by National Police Sources on 25 Feb 67. The source stated that these people were taken from Binh Lam (AN845192) and Ninh Thuan and My Thanh (AN835175) hamlets, on 13 Feb 67 to become carrying parties for the VC, and that they had been taken to the Song Linh River area. On 23 Feb D Co 2/7 Cav on a search and destroy operation in the northwestern portion of the TAOR discovered a series of platoon sized campsites and on the 25th of February came upon what may very well have been a base camp of MR-6. This camp consisted of 30 structures containing benches 5'x6'x1.5', a conference room 10'x12' with a blackboard, benches along the wall, a table 5'x8', and one ornate chair with back and arm rests. All of the structures were elaborately constructed of bamboo. The platoon sized camps were located along streams and trails leading into the apparent headquarters area. During March the enemy continued what appeared to be his policy of avoiding contact with US/GVN Military Units. However, he did attack two bridges, successfully destroying one and only inflicting minor damage upon the other. Small units were reported to have entered villages on seven occasions to threaten prospective candidates for political office with violence if they choose to run. Two separate reports were received from the National Police with slightly different indications. The first voiced the opinion that the VC plan was to assassinate or kidnap candidates before the election and to attempt, by force, to prevent voters getting to the polls. The second opinion was that the VC would attempt to place their own men as candidates or, after investigation, back an attempt to have elected those candidates who are considered by the VC as persons who can effectively be influenced to support VC aims through threats or coercion. While either maneuver seemed likely, it appeared that the VC would more readily accept the destruction of the electoral system as a primary course of action and the attempt to subvert serving elected officials as an alternative. In this manner, the failure of the government to carry out effectively its political program would be immediately apparent, while submission is more subtle and

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much less obvious to the average citizen. On 22 March, a 20 man combat patrol, moving toward the suspected base camp of MR-6, was observed by a VC security unit. The patrol engaged and dispersed the unit, capturing 01 North Vietnamese soldier, a GRC 9 and two PRC 10 radios. The NVAC stated that at the time of the attack by the patrol, his section consisted of 85 men. During the period 26-31 Mar 67, guerrilla harassment and coercive tactics increased with eleven separate reports of hamlets being entered by various sized units; two kidnappings, one of 27 people for laborers, the other was an individual probably suspected of being an informer for the government; the stopping of a bus with declared intentions of removing GVN soldiers, none of which were aboard; the attempted assassination of a policeman who was wounded in the attempt; two incidents of gathering woodcutters and conducting a propaganda meeting; and three reportings of tax collection or confiscation of goods (one report indicated a total of 6,500K of salt). The Task Force acting upon local intelligence, conducted 4 Air-mobile platoon sized assaults and a company sized search and destroy operation resulting in 15 NVA and 60 VC KIA: 4 NVA WIA.

5. Enemy Activity from 1 April 67 to 30 June 67:

On 5 April 67, the 2nd Co, 3rd Bn, 44th ARVN Regt engaged an estimated company sized unit (reported by PW to be 82d Co 840th MF Bn) in extremely well prepared positions. The mixed VC/NVA unit utilized excellent fire discipline, apparently wiping out the ARVN point squad in initial moments of contact. C Co, 2/7 Cav, responded, and met heavy resistance from well camouflaged bunkers and trenches. Gunships, ARA, Scutships, and airstrikes were called in, but each attempt to advance met with determined resistance on the part of the VC. Finally, at the company commander's request, 2nd Co, 3rd Bn, was extracted at 1800H, followed shortly thereafter by C Co 2/7 Cav. The following morning, after moving A Co to Song Mao, C Co was reinserted into the area in an attempt to regain contact, but the VC had withdrawn during the night. Friendly losses were 3 US and 10 ARVN KIA, 20 US and 10 ARVN WIA, 1 - M148 lost by US and 1 cal .30 IMG, 2 BAR and 2 - M-79 lost by ARVN. Confirmed losses to the enemy were 2 NVA KIA (BC), 1 - B-40 rocket launcher (Chicom type 56) and 1 Thompson SMG. This was the first time the Task Force encountered the VC in prepared defensive positions. The PW stated his unit's mission was to liberate the surrounding area and that they should be prepared to fight to the last man, if engaged. During interrogation he (PW of 82d Co 840th BF Bn) admitted expecting to be killed at any moment after capture and at the very latest, as soon as the interrogation was terminated. Humane treatment coupled with firm interrogation reduced his fear, but it points up the effectiveness of anti-US propaganda in use by North Vietnamese and Viet Cong Units. On 8 April 67, VC LF units demonstrated their inability to cope with the air-mobile concept. On two occasions that day, Scout helicopters observed and engaged several individuals with weapons. The

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standby Mini-Cav Platoons were quickly airlifted in and the day's total was 18 VC KIA, 10 small arms and a large quantity of documents captured with no friendly losses. One of the documents established quotas for subordinate units of the 430th LF CO; i.e., destroy 2 US helicopters, 1 US squad, 1 ARVN platoon and, in one instance, encourage shooting at US helicopters, a primary means used by us to identify enemy in the area. One document described his version of our heliborne attack against known VC positions as the "Old American tactic was used, and is still used since they arrived in Binh Thuan Province". This tactic, however "old" it may be to this province, remains the principle tool in the success of the 2/7 Cav. From 7 - 15 April, there were numerous reports of small VC units entering villages and hamlets after dark to conduct propaganda against the coming elections. These efforts have been at least partially effective, since only 11 candidates are available for 12 offices here in Phan Thiet. The elections in Binh Thuan Province were scheduled to take place at two different times, 16 April for Phan Ly Cham, Hai Long, Hoa Da, and Tuy Phong Districts and on 30 April for the other three districts, which includes Phan Thiet City. C Co was still at Song Mao, acting both as a stabilizing force along with 3rd Co 3/44th ARVN Regt during the election in that area, and to provide security for the weapons and equipment remaining at the Song Mao Training Center. One assassination was committed during the period, that of one of our agents, his wife, and his 4 year old child. A document found at the scene, believed to have been written by the murdered man, incriminated several village officials. This information was passed on to GVN officials, and as a result, the Village Chief was arrested on 14 April 67. The VC have been utilizing small scale harassing and sabotage tactics, in addition to frequent propaganda activities in the outlying districts, to attempt to partially establish control in areas recently gained by the government. Two bridges were damaged and an attempt on a third was thwarted by the PF squad guarding the bridge. Small guerrilla bands were reported entering the outlying hamlets, primarily along Highway #1, and also inside the "Triangle" area, to conduct propaganda meetings. It is felt that the main purpose of these hamlet entries is not the actual conducting of the propaganda meetings or the distribution of leaflets, but a demonstration of the VC ability to move at will during the hours of darkness. Continued utilization of the Night Starlight Missions is being made, but results are difficult to assess. An agent report received on 22 April indicates the 430th Co is newly divided into two company sized units, the 430N (150 men) and the 430T (200 men). In addition to capturing individuals who have infiltrated from NVN, there has been an increase in agent, police, and census grievance reports of persons speaking the NORTHERN Dialects and have had actual sightings by our troops of gray uniforms, normally associated with NORTH VIETNAMESE. These reports are indicative more of reinforcement than of replacement and that possibly a regimental size headquarters

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has been established to coordinate activities with in the Province. On 23 April, the enemy initiated two mortar attacks on D Co 2/7 Cav in one day. The first occurred in the in the early morning at 0150H when approximately 20 rounds of 60mm mortar and 8 rounds of 81mm mortar fire were received at the Company's Patrol Base, and the second occurred a short while before midnight (2320H) when 3 to 4 rounds of 81mm mortar fire were received after the company had moved 4000 meters to the NW. During the first incident, the enemy utilized a heavy base of automatic and small arms fire to mask the sounds of his mortars firing, but in the second case he only used a few sporadic rounds, quite like sniper fire, and many of the men heard the mortar rounds fired. There was also a high rate of duds in the 81mm rounds; 3 of 8 the first firing, and 2 of 4 (possible) in the second firing. In neither case can these actions be considered effective, since only 6 persons were wounded (5 ARVN and 1 US), none seriously. From 23 - 31 April, the LF had contact with portions of the 482nd LF Bn. A VC killed by our counter fire in the first incident previously mentioned had a letter showing LBN 52432 of the 488th Co. On April 25, while attempting to locate the sources of a Special Agent Report, we killed two VC, one of which carried a letter addressed to LBN 52433 or the 489th Co. During the search of a bunker-trench complex, described in detail later, documents found were identified as being from the 486th Co (LBN 52431HF). Two of these contacts were within 5 kilometers of each other, at ZT202322 on 23 April and ZT173275 on 29 April. The other occurred at AN822259 on 24 April, approximately 18 kilometers to the east. On 29 April, D Co, 2/7 Cav encountered a bunker-trench complex vic ZT173275 not unlike the one constructed by the 82nd Co, 840th MF Bn 432468, except the most recent position had not been completed. It consisted of approximately 15 trenches linking 6 bunkers together and another trench between two bunkers. The complex is somewhat oval in shape, approximately 220 meters in length by approximately 100 meters across. It was very evident that work had been done recently, perhaps within the 24 hour period preceding our entrance into the area at approximately 1300H 29 April. The similarity of the two complexes, i.e., well constructed and camouflaged bunkers and zig-zag commo trenches, is striking. This similarity and the distance between the two complexes, plus the fact that the units associated with the two complexes are from different battalions, indicates probable direction or instruction from higher echelon, possibly MR-6.

During the first half of May the enemy utilized sniper fire against TF patrols and attempted to harass our outposts without significant results, always evading after the initial fire. Patrols aggressively followed up these encounters, and in one instance found a bunker which was occupied by eight prisoners of the Viet Cong. These individuals, 7 men and 1 woman, were clearing land to use for gardens. The guards fled telling prisoners to move with them, but the eight hid in a

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bunker. The fate of the other four prisoners is unknown. Reports were received pertaining to the "TRUONG SON" unit and the 140A Regt. A meeting and departure ceremony was held for the 840th, 482nd and the 812th Bns on 2 May prior to their entrance into battle in the "flat lands of the Binh Thuan Province". A slogan used at the end of the meeting was "Thruong Son has come to reduce the enemy to nothing." We do not know at this time if the reference is to the Thruong Son Regt or to Col Truong Son, previously reported as having come to Binh Thuan to observe activity at the airfield, but since the slogan ended with "Long live Truong Son," we assume the man was inferred. This report is from a Task Force penetration agent who is considered fairly reliable. Task Force Agents have previously (13, 18, and 24 April) reported 2 Bns of the 140A Regt in the northern portion of the province, and a report received on 13 May from the National Police indicated that 2 recon platoons of that Regt are working with an unidentified battalion about 10 kilometers northeast of Tuy Phong District Capital. While we have no reason to doubt the validity of these reports, VC activity over the past several weeks does not indicate that a buildup has actually taken place. On 13 May an estimated two company force attacked the Cham Hamlet of Chau Hanh (BN 197418). The Task Force received word of the attack, and provided aerial support. Documents found on or near enemy KIA indicate that a portion of the 840th VC Main Force Bn was part of the attacking force. In an attempt to locate the enemy withdrawing from the scene, a team from A 1/9 Cav was dispatched to conduct aerial reconnaissance at first light. Several hours of fruitless searching were spent to the north, after which the search was shifted to the south. Along a trail leading toward the SSW from the hamlet and approximately 2.5 kilometers away, a conical straw hat and a cardboard tube which could have been used to hold a mortar round were observed, and the trail showed signs of recent use. The scout team followed the trail and obs an estimated 20 VC vic BN234355. Our Mini-Cav, consisting of B Co (-) was air assaulted into an LZ in the immediate vicinity and became quickly engaged. A quantity of documents found in this area give firm evidence that the unit in contact was the 440th LF CO, however, 14 detainees taken in the area claimed to be from a local VC village and had no knowledge of the 440th Co being in the area. An agent report received on 20 May indicated that the agent had seen a document taken from a VC KIA at Chau Hanh Hamlet and that this document was commendation letter from the 840th VC MF Bn. The agent report also indicated that the 490th LF Co was involved in the attack, along with a portion of the 840th Bn, and that the attacking forces suffered 53 KIA and a number carried off. While there is no firm evidence that either of these two local companies were involved in the attack. It most probably was the 440th Co, primarily because of the trail activity and the fact that

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the 440th LF Co. The ambush was triggered by one truck hitting a mine. The PF platoon counter attacked, killing one VC and capturing an M-16 rifle and a mine. No friendly casualties were reported. On 16 June at 0230H, a National Police platoon and a Counter Terror Action team were attacked by an estimated VC platoon, resulting in two friendly KIA's, six WIA's and five individual weapons captured. One VC was captured and two suspects were detained. Indications were that the unidentified platoon received support from a squad of guerrillas living in the village. The VC who was captured had signalled the beginning of the attack from within the village. The National Police reported on 16 June that the 812th MF Battalion was moving into Binh Thuan Province where it is to join the 482d and 840th MF Battalions in forming a regiment. Although there has been nothing to substantiate this report, there was another agent report which stated that an unidentified battalion had moved from AN7840 to AN8637 on 15 June. A Census Grievance Report on 16 June placed the 482d Battalion from AN8137 to AN8337 while a TF Agent reported that the 840th MF Battalion with a Chicom Advisor and one platoon of Montagnards was located at AN815339. Sector Agents reported on two occasions on 16 June that an anti-aircraft position was located in the vicinity of Thien Giao (AN8725), one location being AN886280 and the other reported as being northwest of Thien Giao. These were the first reports of anti-aircraft weapons being in the AO. Air reconnaissance in the vicinity of the reported locations has not revealed anti-aircraft weapons positions. On 18 June at 1230H, the TF reaction force air assaulted in the vicinity of AM740965 after A 1/9 Cav Scout ships had observed personnel in the area. This action resulted in 4 VC KIA and two civilians detained who were later classified as civil defendants. On 21 June at ZT231217 elements of A Co 2/7 engaged four VC, resulting in three VC KIA and three weapons captured. An hour later fifteen more VC entered the same area and were engaged, resulting in one VC KIA. There was a noticeable decrease in intelligence reports from Task Force agents and other agencies' sources during this period, substantiating previous reports that major enemy elements within the AO have withdrawn for a period of time to reorganize and retrain. Agent reports of several agencies are continuing to report sightings of various sized units, from platoon to battalion size, moving within the province. Aerial surveillance and reconnaissance by fire have had negative results in most instances. The only significant reports pertain to movement of the 482d LF Bn into the Le Hong Phong Secret Zone and reports of the 812th Bn, part of the Truong Son Regt, moving just to the west of the II/III Corps boundary. Although the only information received on the latter two units is from agents, the renewal of reports on these units again indicates a possible threat of a multi-battalion attack within the province. The recently acquired Personnel Detection device, commonly referred to as the

"People Sniffer" underwent test and evaluation procedures with elements of our scout helicopter teams. Results were favorable, but did not provide sufficient evidence to reach a conclusion concerning its effectiveness in various terrain and foliage. 16

6. Enemy Activity from 1 July 67 to 30 September 67

In three light skirmishes on 8 July, the 888th RF Co attempted to engage VC units that avoided contact and refused to become committed. This same pattern was followed on the 8th, when the 300th RF Co received several rounds of sniper fire prior to the enemy's fading into the brush. Task Force operations were characterized by a significant inability to establish contact with the enemy. Individuals or groups of 2 or 3 persons were observed fleetingly at distances beyond 500 or 600 meters, moving rapidly away from maneuver elements and, in several instances, patrols came upon recently vacated camp sites containing personal gear. On one occasion, a two platoon element of C Co was moving into an ambush position just at dark when an estimated 25 - 30 VC moved perpendicular to the left flank of the ambush's left outpost. Only 3 or 4 men were in position to fire, and they engaged the VC who immediately evaded. It is believed that several of the VC were hit, but no bodies could be found. Gunships, ARA, and Tube Artillery were used to attempt to regain contact, all without success. Two abductions and an assassination were reported. The man assassinated was an informer of one of the Task Force's agents. The mother of a sub-agent was taken by the VC. The other abduction involved two teenagers, a nineteen year old girl and a thirteen year old boy, taken from their native hamlet on 3 July. There were two significant indicators of lowering of VC morale in addition to his lack of willingness to become engaged. The first was a report from Binh Thuan Sector that documents captured by ARVN troops on 4 July reflected concern that there was less control by the VC in areas in which allied forces and RD Cadre were operating. The second was a National Police report received by the Task Force on 7 July which stated the VC Binh Thuan Province Committee had been required to send a battalion into the Le Hong Phong Secret Zone in order to bolster deteriorating morale on the part of soldiers and people in that area. The first reports were received concerning VC intentions and plans to counter the impending Presidential and Congressional elections. In general, these plans seem to follow the same pattern as those reported to oppose past elections in the Province, i.e. sabotage of polling places, threats to candidates, distortion of party platforms and propaganda directed at discrediting candidates. While reports received prior to past elections indicated the plans of the VC were thorough and painstakingly programmed, no serious threat was evidenced during the actual conduct of the elections, and a high percentage of eligible voters cast their ballots. The enemy

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within the BYRD AO and Binh Thuan Province appears unwilling to engage U.S. or ARVN forces. He seems to be preoccupied with attempts to shore up his weakening esprit, while elaborating upon great plans for the future. While no recent reports were received of the Truong Son Regt, the 912th Bn is still the subject of several agent reports. Neither contact with elements of the battalion nor documents relating to this unit were found to confirm its existence. A VC unit of unknown size, estimated to be one company, was engaged by the 3d Co, 3d Bn, 44th Regt at approximately 0120H 15 July. The Bn commander maneuvered another company into blocking position and ARA from the Task Force were airborne to support the two companies. When communications were lost with the 3d Co, the Bn Commander decided it more advisable to fire preplanned artillery concentrations known to the Co rather than have ARA engage the area. In an attempt to disengage, the VC apparently overran the Headquarters element of 3d Co, killing one, and wounding a total of 10 RVN soldiers and capturing 5 SA and a radio, accounting for the communications failure. Approximately 2 hours later and 5 kilometers to the south of the above action, an unknown number of VC placed a satchel charge in the newly constructed Xuan Phong Hamlet office, completely demolishing the building. No casualties were reported as a result of this activity. On 15 July, A Task Force agent reported the 600th Bn being on the edge of the Province. This information was secured by the agent through an informant who is acquainted with a man named Tan. Tan was the Commander of the 186th Co, providing security for MR-6 in 1966. The 600th Bn is also known as the 480th Bn and has 186th Co plus an unknown number of unidentified companies. Current OB listings were checked and show that a Sr Cpt Tan was replaced as Commander of the 182d MF Bn sometime in 1966. It is not known if there is any connection between the similarities of names and numbers in this or the fact that current OB also lists a 480th IF Co as the Phan Thiet Town Unit. The 600th Bn was reported earlier by this Task Force from sketchy information provided in late April and early May, however, the agents who reported that information have no known contact with the agent and informant currently reporting the 600th Bn. Current subordination of the Bn is unknown, but the link between the 186th Co and the fact that Tan supposedly attended a course of instruction under the auspices of MR-6 in late 1966 prior to being assigned as the Deputy Bn CO, suggests it may be controlled by MR-6. Enemy initiated activities were at the lowest level remembered since the arrival of the Task Force in the area. All agencies continued to report sighting VC elements moving throughout the Province, in strengths from 4 to 5 man groups up to Battalion sized forces of 350 men. All attempts to locate these forces were in vain, with the exception of the previously mentioned ground to air fire. Ground troops were inserted in reaction to this fire on several occasions met no resistance as they swept the area. The enemy's previously established

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desire to avoid contact was re-emphasized during the period. It may have been due to lack of initiative on his part or to commitment of troops to other tasks, such as agricultural duties. There was noticed an increase in the number of small plots of ground under cultivation and there have been some indications of food shortage, i.e. paying higher prices for rice and difficulty on our part to discover rice caches in known base areas. On the other hand it may also be due to preparation for activities to begin on the 20th of July, Geneva Convention Day.

Interrogations of Hoi Chanh reveal that units have been separated into platoon and squad size groups at the district level and are being used to reinforce village guerrilla units. The principle reasons given by Hoi Chanh for rallying are unwillingness to endure further hardships, lack of food, and the effectiveness of the psychological program to provide the VC with knowledge of the Chieu Hoi program. Several Hoi Chanh have stated that they discussed the Chieu Hoi program with other members of their units prior to rallying and that more wish to do the same but fear capture prior to reaching Government control or reprisal against members of their families. Extensive Search and Destroy operations during the period 6 - 11 August resulted in no contact, with the exception of isolated sniping at both ground troops and aircraft. On 12 Aug 67 a platoon from A cb 2/7, operating out of LZ Bartlett (AN785235), flushed a VC unit estimated to be either a squad or platoon (-). A brief fire fight ensued during which time the enemy used two automatic weapons as a base of fire for approximately 30 seconds, then immediately broke and ran from the area of contact to the south and southwest. A search of the area revealed well prepared bunkers with excellent fields of fire, several rice sacks made into packs, over 300 rounds of small arms ammunition and 10 BAR magazines. Documents taken during this action indicate the unit may have been the 1st squad of the 1st platoon (or the platoon itself) of the 488th LF Co, 482d LF Bn. The 430th LF Co has been reported by Task Force agents and agents of other agencies in contact at more than one location at approximately the same time. While this appears to be impossible on the surface, the 430th LF Co is believed to contain as many as seven platoons, with at least one platoon, B-9, operating separately. If this is true, portions of the company could then be engaged in separate operations. The 490th LF Co continues to be reported by agents who state that Nguyen Huu Ich commands the unit. Also reported operating in this same area is the 600th LF Co under the command of Sau Thao, who had been previously reported as the commander of the 490th Co. A recent Hoi Chanh from the 600th Co claims Sau Thao is the unit commander and a captive from the Executive Committee of Phan Ly District and claims Nguyen Huu Ich is both Secretary of the Executive Committee and Commander of the 490th LF Co. Based upon these two statements it may be assumed that two companies presently

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exist in the VC Phan Ly (or Bac Son) District, the 490th LF Co and the 600th LF Co. Agents continue to report an increase in unit sightings, which range in size from 3 man cells entering outlying hamlets to companies with strengths estimated at 100 infiltrating within 3 kilometers of the city of Phan Thiet to conduct propaganda and destroy a bridge before withdrawing. Reports have also been received of Battalion size units moving about the periphery of the "Triangle" area. One report mentioning the Truong Son Regt was received from an agent who had not previously reported this designation and another agent reported a Co sized unit of the 812th Bn, however, reports of Bn sized units operating to the north of Thien Giao have been received. The enemy's intentions during the period prior to the elections were to be in three phases: 8 - 15 Aug - encourage people not to vote; 16 - 23 Aug - assassinate or kidnap GVN officials, mine or destroy bridges and roads, and snipe at isolated ARVN patrols; 24 Aug - 3 Sep - attacks against ARVN Outposts. During the 1st Phase, there was an increase in reported incidents of small groups working their way into hamlets in the "Triangle" area, and attempts have been made to cut Highway 1 west of Phan Thiet by blowing culverts and mining bypasses. It may be assumed that assassination or kidnap attempts will increase as will small scale attacks against RVN Outposts and possibly against US installations. One report was received that some officials of the outlying districts, fearful for the safety of their families, have moved them to either Phan Rang or Phan Thiet. Prior to the recent Hamlet and Village elections, we had received a rash of reports concerning VC intentions and plans to disrupt these functions. While there were some attempts, no coordinated actions appeared to have been made and the elections were held without incident with a high percentage of eligible voters casting their ballots. On the 21st at 0750H, a water detail from an ARVN engineer unit was successfully ambushed approximately 25 kilometers NE of Phan Thiet on Highway 1. Two of the men were killed, the other two wounded and 4 weapons were lost to an unknown number of VC. On the night of 31 Aug, the VC set up a mortar tube, believed to be 82mm, on the periphery of Phan Thiet City and fired an estimated 17 rounds into the city. 14 civilians and one PF soldier were wounded and one civilian was killed as a result of this action. On the same night, a demolition team set off a charge in a nearby hamlet, partially destroying the elementary school. The shock of the blast caused a newborn infant's death in a nearby house. Psychological Operations exploited these incidents.

A report from a Police Special Branch Agent received at 2100H 2 September indicated that a hamlet on the southwestern periphery of Phan Thiet as well as the Airfield itself was the target of a combined mortar and ground attack with a plan to ambush reinforcements along the road from the Airfield. The attacks were to begin at 2300H, however active surveillance

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on the part of Task Force Night Hunter operation and flares fired by US Navy Swift Boats caused the VC to alter their plans, if the agent's information was in fact correct, since the attack did not materialize. Shortly before dusk on 5 September, a Sector aircraft, performing VR in the area NE of Thien Giao (AN8725) observed an estimated 17 VC. The Task Force responded to the sighting with a Night Hunter element and shortly after their arrival on the scene engaged an estimated 30 VC, who broke into small groups and attempted to evade. Night Hunter continued placing fire on these small elements until approximately 2230H, when contact was lost. At 060020H, Go Boi (AN723093) was the target of an M-79 and small arms attack, followed at 060030 by a multi-company attack against Ft Pitt (AN852164). A prisoner captured by the ARVN during this action reportedly stated 3 companies were involved in the attack of Ft Pitt, the 487th LF Co (Combat Support), 488th LF Co (Infantry), and the 430th LF Co (District Unit). An unknown number of 82mm and 60mm mortar rounds were fired from several locations, one 2500 meters SW, while the ground attack came mainly from the north and northeast. Indications of a recent arms shipment have been received. Both a PW, captured on 6 Sep by ARVN troops, and a Hoi Chanh, who returned on 2 Sep to GVN control, state their units received new weapons on 31 Aug and 1 Sep. Two new Ak-47's have been captured recently as well as new magazines for AK-47's and a new RPD LMG drum was taken in the field as a result of combat operations. The PW, claiming to be a platoon leader of the 486th LF Co, stated his platoon consisted of 15 members and received 10 new weapons on 31 Aug. The Hoi Chanh, claiming to be from the 440th LF Co with an estimated strength of 65, had received 6 new weapons on 1 Sep. If these figures can be taken as an average for the Provincial and District units it may be assumed that as many as 150 to 175 new weapons have arrived in the Province within the past 2 to 3 weeks (based on 3 rifle companies in the 482d Bn consisting of 3 platoons each = 9 platoons x 10 weapons and 6 District companies with 2 to 3 platoons each = 14 platoons x 6 weapons). This is a conservative estimate and the number of platoons attributed to the District companies does not include 3 known separate platoons and a newly reported separate platoon subordinate to the 440th LF Co, nor does it include the combat support company (487th) of the 482LF Bn. This was done principally because it is believed that initial resupply of weapons would go first to the Provincial Battalion infantry units, second to the District units, and later to the Bn Combat Support Co and then to the separate platoons of the Districts. On the afternoon of 19 Sep Scout helicopters received ground fire and both air and ground elements of the Task Force subsequently engaged and killed a total of 19 enemy. Documents captured during this engagement indicate that the unit the Task Force was in contact with was an element of the 1st Bn 275th VC Regt, 5th VC Div. Other documents taken are from the 487th Co of the 482d LF Bn, the Binh

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Thuan Provincial Bn, and a PW who was able to furnish only fragmentary information before he was med-evac'd and subsequently died, stated that he was with the 487th Co. There has been no known contact with any element of the 5th VC Div in Binh Thuan Province previous to this, however, a detainee from Phu Minh (ZT1901) in the latter part of August stated that VC from K8, Worksite 5, came regularly to his hamlet from a westerly direction to purchase rice. Worksite 5 is AKA for 5th VC Div. A Co 2/7 Cav, working jointly with 1st Co, 3d Bn, 44th ARVN in the mountains ENE of Song Mao, did not establish significant contact with elements of the 840th Bn suspected of being in the area. They did, however, on 25 Sep in a light engagement, kill one VC who carried documents identifying himself as a member of the 840th Bn. This is the first known contact this unit has had with an element of the 840th Bn. Information has also been received in a report from the 55th MI IPW that the Hoi Chanh, Maj NGUYEN CONG TAN, stated that the 600th Bn he reported in Binh Thuan (Bac Binh) is AKA for 840th MF Bn. Also during operations in this area, A Co discovered extensive bunker areas, containing several hundred well constructed bunkers. This find is similar to the bunkers and communication trenches encountered by C Co on 5 Apr in contact with the 81st Co, 840th Bn. A prisoner taken during that action was from NVN and stated that his unit had spent the previous 20 days preparing the site. Due to the similarity of defensive emplacements, captured documents and statements of Maj TAN, it may be assumed that the 840th MF Bn remains in Binh Thuan Province at this time.

7. Enemy Activity from 1 October 67 to 20 January 68

The enemy efforts seem to be directed toward attempts to collect as much rice as possible. Realizing that this year's harvest would not be quite as good as expected and that US/ARVN activities were being directed toward preventing his acquisition of the principal item of food, he was forced to operate in small groups throughout and around the edges of the Triangle area. Task Force activities were concentrated along the periphery and within the Triangle area, to interdict his efforts to obtain the much needed rice, and resulted in light contact. On 7 Oct, when Scout ships observed what appeared to be a base area, but saw no movement, an air strike and 4 sorties of ARA were placed on the area prior to the air assault of a platoon of the TF reaction force. 2 VC KIA, 3 huts, 17 well constructed bunkers and a 40' trench line were found confirming the Scout sighting of a base camp. Four weapons, including an AK-47, manufactured in Communist China in 1967, were found along with 900 rounds of small arms ammunition, 11 mortar rounds, 5 propellant charges for the B40 GL and a large quantity of clothing and equipment. Readout indicated the unit in the area may be three separate elements; an unidentified element of the 482nd Bn; the 486th Co, 482nd Bn; and the 481st Sapper platoon. One

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roster indicated 3 platoons had a total of 25 men armed with 14 weapons. This roster also listed the types and serial numbers of the weapons, and two of the captured weapons are listed. This list includes 7 SKS, 3 AK (possibly AK47 since SN checks), 1 K50, 1 M-79, 1 B40 (SN checks) and 1 u/i rifle. The capture of this roster further indicated that the strength of the companies of the 482nd Bn is being depleted and that the units are being supplied with more automatic and semi automatic weapons. Also captured among the equipment were two drums for RPD LMG, and two US ammo cans with 200 rounds each of 7.62 ammo linked for the German MG 34. The VC continued terrorist activities with the attempted assassination of Hiep Hoa hamlet chief on 1 Oct. The hamlet chief was wounded, but will survive. On 11 Oct, a team of Scout ships from a 1/9 Cav, operating approximately 15 kilometers north of Thien Giao District Capitol, observed 5 individuals huddled around a campfire. They were engaged as they attempted to evade, two were killed and the Task Force Mini-Cav was committed to exploit the engagement. The Mini-Cav confirmed the two KIA'S and engaged and killed one VC who was probably acting as an outpost. A search of the area produced 5 weapons 3 rubber gas masks with detachable metal cannisters and separate goggles, miscellaneous military clothing and equipment, and documents pertaining to members of the 2d Co, 1st Bn, 274th Regt, CT5 VC Div. This is the second time that documents relating to elements of the CT5 VC Div have been taken as a result of contact with units that have not yet been firmly identified. Although the documents offer evidence that members of the units had been with both 274th and 275th Regts of CT5 VC Div, no conclusive evidence exists to confirm the presence of units themselves in the BYRD AO. On 20 Oct, vic AM7394, one VC was killed by scout helicopters. The VC had documents relating to the 3d Co, 1st Bn, 274th Regt. This was the third report relating to the 5th VC Div bringing units within the BYRD AO. A Hoi Chanh who rallied at Tuy Phong Sub-Sector on 15 October stated he was a member of the 840th MF Bn. Initial statements included a claim that the Em consisted of 5 companies of 200 men each. This was later refuted and he admitted a unit (company) strength of less than 100, estimating the Bn strength at about 300 - 350. He also claims that the majority of the Bn recently returned from Cambodia where it obtained new weapons. They were gone for over 3 months. While this information is received with skepticism, it may be a partial explanation for the lack of contact with this unit since mid-May. One incident resulted in the possible death of several VC when a mine they were emplacing apparently detonated prematurely. It is estimated by local citizens that 3 VC were killed in the blast, presumably being the VC who were sent to destroy the ballot box detail coming from Muong Man (AN7314) to Ham Thuan District Headquarters (AN7709 on 23 Oct.

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A major attack was initiated against the ARVN outpost at Ft Mara at 080155H nov conducted by the 840th MF Bn supported by the 450th LF Co. The attack was the largest single action conducted by the enemy since the 6 Sep attack at Ft Pitt and the neighboring hamlet of Binh An (AN857162). It is also the first significant contact with the 840th MF Bn since it attacked Chau Hanh hamlet on 13 May 67. Confirmed enemy casualties as a result of this action were 42 VC KIA, 20 of which were killed by this TF either during the actual assault of the subsequent pursuit. Low ceilings during the hours of darkness hampered support that was rendered by TF aircraft, and prevented the use of close air support, although the TF FAC was at the scene of the battle and did direct two sorties of AC-47 (Spooky). Inclement weather which proceeded Typhoon Frieda also hampered and finally precluded further pursuit of the enemy. On 22 Nov the TF became heavily engaged with, as later documentation and exploitation of PW's and Hoi Chanh would indicate, the 482nd LF Bn. The enemy had prepared extremely well camouflaged bunkers and fighting positions around an LZ; they were heavily armed with IMG's and AW and used 60mm mortar, 82mm mortar and B40 rockers during the action. Tactical air support helped in the fighting throughout the day as did the artillery from LZ Bartlett. The enemy broke contact during the night and evaded into the mountains to the NW. The action resulted in 22 VC KIA and several small arms being captured. This was the first time that the enemy had employed this technique of ambushing LZ's with fortified positions. Later Task Force operations, keeping this lesson in mind, found that several LZ's in the AO had been prepared in the same manner. Enemy reaction to TF operations during the rest of November remained essentially the same: snipe and harassing lead elements engage, while the rest of the enemy element withdraws from the area. Following an ARC LIGHT strike late in December 67, in the vicinity BN0728, a large document cache of the Thuong Phong District Committee was discovered resulting in the capture of many important records and directives of the Committee. Extensive deceptive means of injecting units into operational areas has increased contact and PW's. This activity has served to further restrict enemy movements to and from the critical "Triangle" area.

Enemy activity during the first twenty days of January 68 was moderate to heavy, for there was enemy contact on six days only. During the first part of the month, the VC became quite aggressive. LZ Judy was mortared on 4 & 5 Jan 68 with both 60mm and 82mm mortar fire. On 7 Jan 68, an estimated VC platoon was ambushed resulting in 3 VC KIA. Night Movement increased as the VC had to move into the "Triangle" area with work parties to procure much needed rice and supplies. A total of 14 VC were killed during the first twenty days of January 68.

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IX. MISSION: The initial missions of the 2nd Bn, 7th Cav as delineated in IFFORCEV Frag o 14-66 (BYRD) dated 25 August 66 were: (a) Deploy one (1) battalion to Phan Thiet for approximately 60 days, (b) to destroy the 620th Local VC Battalion, (c) to stabilize the area for elections, and (d) to work together with all VN forces. At this time, revolutionary development actions were not specified but were considered to be implied.

During the "Development Phase" as the Task Force came into being, additional missions were given to the battalion in frag orders which have since been destroyed or discarded. Many orders and reports during the early months of Operation BYRD were not deemed to be of significant enough historical value to be worthy of permanent files, consequently the complete list of missions given to the Task Force by I Field Force Vietnam is lost for posterity.

The missions and the units committed to accomplish these missions continued to increase in number and scope until eventually on 1 November 66, the CG, I Field Force Vietnam appointed CO, TF 2/7 Cav, the Senior Military Advisor in the Province.

As the Task Force assembled and materialized, the missions of the Task Force were reoriented toward closer and more complete cooperation with the indigenous military and civilian authorities until eventually revolutionary development in Binh Thuan Province became a national PILOT project of Civil Operations & Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS).

Specific and implied military tasks such as the destruction of the enemy's will to fight, the protection of innocent civilians and the safeguarding of military and civilian installations were all related to the overall mission of realizing the ultimate objectives of revolutionary development.

X. CONCEPT OF THE OPERATION: Upon receipt of the original operations order, the battalion planned to continue to conduct operations in the manner to which the 1st Air Cavalry Division had become accustomed during its 12 months in Vietnam. Initially, the battalion established a fire base and battalion command post on the Phan Thiet airfield from which infantry rifle companies were air assaulted into landing zones within range of the direct support artillery battery.

In the embryonic stages of the operation, divisional assets were put in direct support of the 2nd Bn, 7th Cavalry, however, as the battalion mushroomed into a task force all supporting units came directly under the command of the Task Force commander. This was a gigantic step forward toward eliminating awkward parallel command and control channels and directly contributed to the immense degree of success enjoyed by the Task Force.

The first combat operations were limited in size and scope with the immediate objectives of providing a show of military force and relieving besieged villages within the province. As the awesome air superiority of the airmobile Task Force became

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apparent, the objectives of the combat operations became more diversified. Every attempt was made to allow the Vietnamese Army, RF and PF forces share in the military achievements throughout the Province.

Unilateral military combat operations met with such overwhelming success that expansion of the scope of tactics to include combined operations became obvious, desirable and mutually beneficial.

The combined operations greatly enhanced the prestige of the Vietnamese military forces, raised the standards of both forces and most important, gained for the Task Force the confidence of the people that a US force was in the province to stay.

This ultimate objective - winning the confidence of the people - was the significant success story of Operation BYRD.

XI. EXECUTION:

A. SUMMARY OF THE OPERATION: Operation BYRD was the longest sustained combat operation conducted by US forces in Vietnam, to this date.

Prior to initiation of Operation BYRD, the enemy situation was critical. One local main force battalion and 10 local force companies were being supported by an estimated 1600 auxiliaries. The bulk of the government forces had retired to the limits of the province capitol, Phan Thiet. The city of Thien Giao was virtually in a state of siege. The VC ranged freely through the countryside.

Operation BYRD commenced 25 August 66 as a S & D operation in support of the initial phase of Revolutionary Development in the Phan Thiet area of Binh Thuan Province. As planned, this operation initially envisioned an infantry battalion of the 1st Air Cav Div conducting S & D operations from a secure base in Phan Thiet.

D Day was to have been 5 September 66 and the operation was to continue for approximately 60 days. The increased activity in Binh Thuan Province by enemy forces, and the upcoming GVN election of 11 September 66, necessitated advancement of operation BYRD to 25 August 66.

During the 1st month of Operation BYRD (25 Aug - 25 Sept) the TF operated against on VC LF Bn and 5 LF Co's in Binh Thuan Province. The TF succeeded in keeping the VC off balance by using its airmobility, fire support and aggressiveness to reach even the smallest elements of the VC. The true effectiveness of Operation BYRD can be mirrored in the average kill ratio for the entire Operation of 39:1.

TF 2/7 initiated immediate combat operations to ease the crucial situation around Phan Thiet and Thien Giao. Tactical operations begun on 25 August 66 consisted of destroying msn

support sites of the 482 LF Bn, and pursuit and destruction of enemy forces in and around the "Triangle" area of Binh Thuan Province.

Platoon size patrols and Co size operations were committed to uncover msn support sites, tax collection operations and preparatory training sites and disrupt attempts of enemy build-ups for attacks on GVN outposts.

Detailed cordon and search operation of villages were conducted with National Police and Regional force troops to inhibit VC movement, apprehend VC infrastructure and sell the GVN to the people w/ overtures directed to the Medical Civil Action program (MEDCAP). The first MEDCAP conducted in Phan Thiet treated over 400 VN civilians. Later TF 2/7 Cav donated 17,500 dong to the Phan Thiet Orphanage and presented them with 10 cases of powdered milk.

The repositioning of Regional Forces back into the villages w/RD follow up, added to the isolation of the Local VC forces. A total of 16 RD teams operated in Binh Thuan Province.

The USSF CIDG camp at Luong Son (BN 125308) was used as a model for establishment of patrol bases for the Regional forces.

Road clearing operations were begun immediately, permitting travel on the highways in the "Triangle" area for the first time in years.

A US fire base (LZ Judy) was established in the vicinity of Muong Man, AN 725132, to provide support throughout the "Triangle" area. This also provided protection for the establishment and expansion of RD work in the area.

A Civil Affairs detachment of the 41st CA Co was provided to exploit the psychological impact of combined action programs. The CA Teams operated in close cooperation w/ the PW interrogation Teams to derive quick reaction themes and messages of immediate value to the ground tactical plan.

The intelligence section of the MI detachment was augmented with assistance from twelve intelligence gathering agencies providing fast evaluation and thorough coverage of intelligence information. A Counter-Intelligence Officer was assigned to TF 2/7 Cav to assist the Task Force 52. The Psy War team was used extensively to support tactical operations and exploit the situation.

After 1½ months of successful combined operation by TF 2/7 Cav with RF & PF forces, the 3rd and 4th Bn, 44th ARVN Regt was finally placed under operational control of the Province. The control of these two vitally important forces within Binh Thuan Province led to the first combined US/ARVN Operation on 26 December 66. From then on, continuous joint S & D and cordon and search operations were affected. With one Bn securing a portion of the southern "Triangle" area and the other securing a northern portion, protection was provided for US Engrs opening and improving more roads in the Immediate Phan Thiet area. Each Bn also had one Co available as a reaction force, free to operate jointly w/ TF 2/7 Cav.

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With the construction of a new GVN outpost in vicinity of AN 800160 (Ft Sahara) and the realization by the people that the GVN and TF 2/7 Cav intended to remain, 88 Hoi Chanh's were produced from the surrounding, predominately VC, villages in one day.

On 25 October 66, C Co 2/7 made the first large scale contact w/ an est reinforcement Co (vic BN 41279) bringing into play much of the TF's available aerial fire support.

The remainder of October 66 and the month of November 66 were marked with many small element engagements of platoon size or less w/ TF 2/7 aerial fire support capitalizing on enemy contacts. By the end of November, 248 enemy had been killed with US losses amounting to only 5 personnel.

On 15 November 66, TF 2/7 was given an additional msn of supporting daily combined operations in all areas to include RD projects. The msn was titled HOP LUC (working together), and envisioned the ARVN eventually being in a position to take over the area of the "Triangle" zone in Binh Thuan Province, thus permitting US forces to move farther and farther into VC held territory.

The initial enemy contact made during the early part of Operation BYRD began establishing enemy patterns of action. Due to TF 2/7 Cav's aggressive spirit, devastating aerial fire power, and quick reaction capabilities, the enemy began moving in small squad size of two or three man elements, grouping only prior to an attack or when the situation seemed to favor their victories.

Due to these tactics, TF 2/7 Cav incorporated the Night Hunter concept, scoutship recons, and Mini-Cav flights into their standard operating procedures. These tactics, not new to the TF 2/7, were immeasurably effective by keeping the enemy off balance and continually under surveillance, both day and night.

Until mid-December, the enemy avoided any major contacts, but continually harassed and terrorized local GVN outposts and Revolutionary Development cadre; TF 2/7 reacted immediately and called for assistance by GVN officials.

On 14 2345H December 66, an est 2 Co's of VC attacked the 886th RF Co at Ap Phu Cuong (AN 840143). TF 2/7 rushed to the aid of the Vietnamese with a flareship, ARA, and arty illumination. Although enemy casualties were unknown, the quick response of TF 2/7 with military assistance established the necessary US/VN operational harmony of mutual support vital to the success of TF 2/7 and Operation BYRD.

The period of January 67 through the end of March 67 was characterized by continuous, almost daily contacts w/ small squad and platoon size enemy elements. TF 2/7 continued to interdict VC LOC and prosper by night and day ambushing. Combined US/ARVN operations were continuous w/ both US and ARVN gaining mutual respect, experience and cementing firm working relationships. On 28 February 67, the BIG BROTHER program began.

Soon US volunteers were teaching English to the local Vietnamese.

C Co 1/9 Scout ships, D 229th Gunships and B Co 2/20 Arty ARA continued to play a vital role in TF 2/7 Cav's establishing a firm hold in Binh Tuan Province and discouraging a large scale enemy build up in and around the "Triangle" area.

On 30 March 67, B Co 2/7 AA, vicinity of BN 215585, became engaged w/ an unknown size enemy force until approximately 1700H. The ensuing running battle was significant in the fact that no US casualties occurred while the enemy sustained 38 KIA, 4 VC and 8 weapons lost. Once again the armed helicopter support of TF 2/7 Cav played a key role in the decisive US victory. The VC could no longer feel secure in any area of Binh Thuan Prov.

On 5 April 67, C Co 2/7 was AA in the vicinity of BN 430371 in support of one Co 3/44 Regt, who had made contact w/ est NVA Co while on a S & D operation. The NVA were extremely well entrenched and prepared to hold at all costs. ARA, gunships, Arty, and airstrikes were continuous throughout the day and night. Both the US and ARVN elements were pulled back during the night to enable utilization of continuous air support. On 6 April 67, C Co 2/7 conducted a sweep of the contact area finding the fortified positions interlaced with mutually supporting trenches and bunkers which would have made any attempts at an all out assault disastrous. The contact reaffirmed reports of a possible NVA unit operation in the NE section of Binh Thuan Province. The unit was later identified as the 840th MF (approx 2/3 NVA. The remainder VC).

The VC continued their harassment, probing, and timely attacks through April, May, June, July, and August of 1967 on GVN outposts and RD sites in the "Triangle" area, once again avoiding any major conflicts w/ US elements. TF 2/7 Cav increased Mini-Cav and Night Hunter operations in a effort to establish and exploit a sizable contact. Increased platoon size patrols day and night S & D, and ambush operations, and aerial recons were also directed and executed.

As the Sept National election drew near, the VC began an all out effort to propagandize VC victories, while increasing harassment, terrorism, and assassination of local GVN officials and RD cadre. On 2 September 67, one VC squad of the 340th LF co entered An Phu (H) (AN 900 200) and surrounding area and confiscated a total of 26 voting cards. The Thien Giao District Chief immediately issued new voting cards. Despite all attempt of the VC to thwart the 3 September election in Binh Thuan Province, the turnout of eligible voters was the largest ever in the province. The msn of TF 2/7 Cav at this time was to continue operations in the area immediately beyond the "Triangle" area.

The VN could then supply close-in security of the hamlet and village polling stations. The 1966 elections showed 85,000 eligible voters (68.5%) appearing at the polls. In the 1967 National elections, the number of eligible voters increased to over 106,000 (an impressive turnout est at 91%) casting their

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ballots. The success of the election turnout was a definite indication of acceptance of a central government by the people of the Binh Thuan Province, and the effectiveness of US/VN combined operations.

The VC having been soundly defeated in attempts to discourage voters for the National election and having failed to attain any pre-election military victories, attempted to assert himself with post election attacks on GVN atrong points.

On 6 September, AN 723 093, the 887th RF Co was attacked by an est VC Co firing M-79 and 3.5" rockets. Almost simultaneous with this attack, at AN 852 163 (Ft Pitt), the 3/44th Regt ARVN came under attack by an est VC Bn. AW, SA, and an est 17 rounds of 82mm mortar fire were recorded. TF 2/7 Cav assisted by committing Night Hunter, gunships, ARA and Spooky. Numerous VC were sighted and engaged by the armed helicopters while elements of 3/44 ARVN began sweeping the area of contact. Six VC KIA were credited to TF 2/7 as a result of the Night Hunter team w/ numerous casualties carried off by the VC. Such immediate response appeared to have again prevented a sizable victory for the VC.

On 8 November 67, TF 2/7 was notified that an element of 3/44 ARVN at Ft. Mara (BN 033 373) was under attack from an est VC Bn. A TF Night Hunter team was immediately alerted and sent to the area of contact with a USAF AC-47 joining them on station. The attack continued through the morning hours. TF 2/7 Cav conducted reinforcing elements at 1st light. The immediate response of TF 2/7 Cav was credited with preventing Ft. Mara from being overrun. The attacking force was later identified as the 840th MF Bn supported by 450th LF Co. During the attack and est 380 rounds of 57mm and B-40 rocket, 60 and 82mm mortar, and M-72 fire were received by the defenders of Ft. Mara. The actions of 6 September and 8 November were indications of the enemy's need for a large victory in order to reestablish the control he once commanded in Binh Thuan Province.

The enemy forces of Binh Thuan Province continued to show a marked desire to attain at least some type of moral victory.

From 18 November to 22 November, the ARVN & 887th RF Co located at Thien Giao (AN 870 260) received sporadic SA, AW, and mortar fire nightly. Intelligence reports indicated possible enemy intentions of an attack similar to the one at Ft. Mara on 8 November. TF 2/7 Cav readied itself for a possible enemy attempt at overrunning Thien Giao.

On 22 November at 1200 H, A Co 1/9 scoutships cond recon vic An 820 280, after several TF aircraft had received grenade fire. The scoutships began receiving heavy AW fire in this area and immediately requested TF Mini-Cav to be deployed. As the 2nd Plat, D Co, 2/7 touched down in the area of contact, they were immediately pinned down by heavy SA & AW fire from all sides. The ensuing battle saw the commitment of the remainder of D Co (-), B Co (-), & C Co (-). By night fall, 15 TF aircraft had been hit by grenade fire; 2 shot down (dest), 1 later recovered. Contact continued through the daylight hrs

of the 23rd until the enemy finally broke contact and evaded. Arty fires and USAF air strikes continued throughout the night. The enemy force was later identified as the 482nd LF Bn (supported by one company from MR-6 HQ). A captured PW disclosed that the 482nd Bn had set an ambush for the TF 2/7 Cav and that attacks on Thien Giao were merely diversions. 30

Throughout the remaining months of Operation BYRD, it became evident that the enemy was prepared to conduct more sustained contacts and surprise ambushes for numerous suitable LZ found by aerial recon and ground elements, were found to be fortified with fresh bunkers, fighting positions and foxholes. Nevertheless, the province continued to benefit and prosper from the presence of the Task Force and its revolutionary development projects. On 27 November, Highway 1 was opened from Phan Thiet to Tuy Phong and on 23 December from Tuy Phong to Phan Rang. It was an occasion for speeches, ribbon cuttings, and official recognition by all levels of local government. (The road had been closed since early 1960.) On 14 January 68, a convoy travelled without incident from Saigon to Hue for the first time in almost a decade.

Operation BYRD was temporarily terminated for the period 1 December 67 to 9 January 68 to permit TF 2/7 Cav to participate in Operation Klamath Falls with the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division.

On 9 January 68, TF 2/7 Cav resumed operation BYRD and assumed responsibility for security of the "Rome Plows" of the 14th Engineer Battalion, which were clearing vegetation along Highway 1. This road clearing operation was a significant step forward in keeping National Route 1 open for traffic and denying likely ambush locations to the enemy.

TF 2/7 Cav terminated Operation BYRD 1200H on 20 January 68.

XVII. RESULTS:

A. US LOSSES:

1. KIA - 34
2. WIA - 335
3. MIA - 0
4. Ind Wpns - 1
5. Crew Served Wpns - 1
6. Aircraft:
 - a. UH1A-H - 101 damaged
 - b. UH1A-H - 9 destroyed
 - c. A1E - 1 destroyed

B. ENEMY LOSSES

1. Personnel:

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1. Personnel:

a. KIA	VC/NVA	832/17
b. PW	VC/NVA	102/ 7
c. Civil Defendants		203
d. Innocent Civilians		835
e. Returnees	VC/NVA	16/00
f. Detainees		1163

2. Weapons:

a. Ind Small Arms	297
b. Crew Served	11

3. Ammunition:

a. Small Arms Included:

5.56 (US)
7.62 (US)
7.62 Type 50
7.62 Type 56
9mm
.45 cal
7.62 Long rim (Chicom)
.30 cal (US)
.30 cal carbine
7.92 link rimless
7.62 Type 56 link
.50 cal (US)
12.7mm
60mm Mortar
81mm Mortar
82mm Mortar
RPG (B-40)
RPG (B-41)
M-79
Chicom Hand Grenades
Claymores (Chicom)
Blasting Caps
Blasting Cords

4. Food Stuff:

Rice	370.43 tons
Salt	3.84 tons
Grain	7.90 tons
Flour	1.00 ton
Peanuts	.64 ton
Fish	.50 ton
Tea	.25 ton

5. Signal:

- 7 Radios
- 1 Telegraph Transmitter/Receiver
- 1 G43/G Generator
- Batteries
- Communication Wire
- Tester, Voltage Meter

6. Miscellaneous:

- Cloth
- Plastic
- Tin (Sheet Metal)
- Punji Stakes (Wood, Bamboo, Metal)
- Vitamins
- Opium
- Novacaine
- Penicillin
- Asprin
- Anti-Venoms
- Syringes
- Bandages
- Misc Medicine
- Uniforms, VC/NVA
- Sandals
- Hammocks
- Lanterns
- Web Gear
- Canteens (US/VC/NVA)
- Knives
- Picks
- Hoes
- Shovels
- Documents
- Propaganda Leaflets
- Flags (VC/NVA)
- Ponchos

XIII. ADMINISTRATION & LOGISTICS

A. ADMINISTRATION: Headquarters, 2nd Bn, 7th Cav, the Task Force control headquarters rendered routine daily, monthly, quarterly, and special reports to I FIELD FORCE V. All other administrative matters were conducted through normal parent organization channels by the appropriate section of the unit concerned.

B. LOGISTICS: The logistical support provided to the Task Force was one of the most outstanding facets of Operation BYRD. In terms of location and facilities, it was a logistician's dream. The terrain and climate were ideal for

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airmobile operations, the existing airfield easily accommodated large cargo aircraft, the beach and tidal conditions permitted logistical-over-the-shore operations, pipelines carried POL from barges to storage tanks, and the existing roads in the area facilitated short-haul land transportation. The 1st Air Cavalry Division provided the battalion Task Force with all of the logistical support elements normally allocated to a brigade, while non-divisional support was either provided in Phan Thiet by I Field Force V or was made available to the Task Force, as required.

XIV. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES:

A. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT:

1. Blinking strobe lights (from the Air Force survival equipment) were carried by each company commander and platoon leader. They proved to be of invaluable assistance on operations during period of limited visibility or darkness.

2. M-14 rifles with sniperscopes were employed periodically but met with only marginal success. Troops had mixed opinions regarding the validity of the employment of snipers. Generally speaking, the tactics of the enemy and the terrain of the AO were not conducive to achieving the desired results.

3. Nylon ropes and snap links were used during several rappelling operations. The considerations of tactical security and safety, however, caused a curtailment of rappelling activities. It is worth consideration to note that the training involved in attaining proficiency in rappelling is invariably beneficial to the morale, esprit, and physical conditioning of the troops participating.

B. SPECIAL TECHNIQUES:

1. Night Hunter, while not a new technique, was used most extensively during Operation BYRD. Due to the unique capabilities of an independent task force in providing close control, direct coordination, immediate response and constant availability of personnel and aircraft, Night Hunter teams became one of the most potent forms of combat power within the Task Force.

The Night Hunter teams flew every night that weather permitted, thereby severely inhibiting the enemy's capability of travelling freely during the hours of darkness.

Night Hunter teams consisted of 2-4 infantrymen (or other volunteers), each with starlight scope mounted on a M-16 rifle attached by a sling to the ceiling of a lift ship helicopter, flying at an altitude of 50-400 feet.

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The lift ship was accompanied by a flare ship, flying at approx 3000 feet, and an ARA ship trailed the lift ship at approx 1000 feet. When ARA was not available, a gun ship was used. The flare ships provided increased illumination to enhance the capability of the starlight scope. The starlight scopes spotted the target and marked it with tracers. The gunships or ARA then engaged the target.

2. The "Mini-Cav", like the Night Hunter teams did not constitute a new technique but was refined and used most extensively by TF 2/7 Cav. The singular success of the Mini-Cav was due to the fact that TF 2/7 Cav was an independent Task Force with an organic lift capability.

Combat operations conducted by TF 2/7 Cav in Operation BYRD proved conclusively that an ideal fighting force in a counter-insurgency environment is an infantry unit which has its organic helicopter support to provide a rapid and responsive application of small units over an extended area with the capability to mass at a given point to destroy enemy concentrations.

3. Combined operations conducted by TF 2/7 Cav were unique in that the US and GVN (ARVN, CIDG, RF, & PF) units cross attached rifle platoons. These operations were considered to be the single most contributing factor toward winning the confidence and support of the Vietnamese people.

4. Scout ships conducting LZ reconnaissance (in conjunction with daily first light reconnaissance) were sometimes called upon to adjust artillery fires onto pre-selected landing zones. This permitted the battalion commander (+ Arty LNO) to move immediately from one air assault LZ to another and insert several units into well prepared landing zones with the minimum of delays.

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XV. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS:

A. Commander's Observations:

If military operations are judged by the standard of accomplishment of the mission, then Operation BYRD was an unqualified success.

The ultimate mission of the Task Force in the BYRD AO was to win the confidence of the people and this the Task Force did overwhelmingly. The confidence of the people was demonstrated in the single most important way -- by deeds.

During elections, they voted, during harvests, they reaped recorded crops, during combat operations, they fought - courageously.

In the minds of the people, as long as the Task Force was available, help was nearby.

The real successes of TF 2/7 Cav should not be measured in terms of kill ratios or body counts (both of which were admirably high) but rather in the progress made in pacifying the area of operations and restoring relative peace in the war-torn country. That this could be affected in such a vast area of operations with such a relatively small fighting force is the key to appreciating the Air Cavalry concept.

The highly mobile offensive search operations of air cavalrymen tend to keep the enemy off balance, but it is in the devastating, rapid response to enemy contact (however initiated) that the air cavalry truly displays its unique capabilities.

The eyes of the scout ships, the arms of the ARA and gunships and the backup of air lifted reinforcements allow the Air Cavalry commander to exert massive combat power directly on the enemy in an overwhelming force.

Once the enemy and the people have learned this lesson, relative peace may be maintained by merely remaining active, available, and responsive.

Task Force 2/7 Cav taught this lesson in the BYRD AO many times and very well.

B. LESSONS LEARNED:

ITEM : The assets available to combat troops are severely limited when fighting in tree covered mountains or dense jungles.

DISCUSSION : Unless absolutely necessary, combat operations should not be conducted in tree covered mountains or dense jungle. Eventually, the enemy must leave the mountains and jungles, if only to encounter the people he intends to befriend or oppose. At this time, he can and should be thoroughly and completely engaged (fixed, fought, and finished). To concede combat power, to fight him on his own

ground, at his time, and in a place of his choosing is not only tactically unsound, it is foolish.

OBSERVATION: At all times, commanders should strive to deploy their forces where maximum utilization may be made of the complete combat power available to troops in contact.

ITEM: The battalion command and control ship and the battalion log ship

DISCUSSION: Not before, or ever since, Operation BYRD has the C & C ship (or log ship) been so immediately responsive to the desires and needs of the battalion commander. Each and every day of Operation BYRD confirmed the need for this responsiveness. It is a situation which does not exist when the C & C ship (or log ship) is allocated as available from a higher headquarters. When the battalion commander, especially of an airmobile infantry battalion, does not have complete control of his C & C ship (or log ship) he simply cannot properly, completely control (or resupply) his battalion as he so desires.

OBSERVATION: The battalion commander of an airmobile infantry battalion should control his C & C ship and logistic ship.

ITEM: Cross attachment of US and GVN combat units.

DISCUSSION: During combined operations, one platoon of US infantrymen was put under the operational control of an ARVN Company commander and vice versa. This provided much more than just a truly combined operation, it provided each an opportunity to observe the other, to learn customs, languages, and tactics and to develop a much deeper respect for one another fostered by mutual privations and hardships.

OBSERVATIONS: The cross attachment of US and GVN combat units is highly desirable, mutually beneficial and tactically advantageous.

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CONFIDENTIAL

AVFA-GC-OT (18 May 68) 1st Ind
SUBJECT: After Action Report - Operation BYRD

DA, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam

TO: Commander, United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam,
ATTN: MACJ 343, APO 96222

This headquarters has reviewed the Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation BYRD and makes the following corrections:

a. Reference paragraph 3 Appendix 1 (Artillery) to Annex C (Supporting Forces). The searchlight battery attached to I FFORCEV Artillery is Battery B, 29th Artillery (Searchlight). There is no battalion designation.

b. Reference paragraph 6 Appendix 1 (Artillery) to Annex C (Supporting Forces). The radar section provided by Headquarters Battery, 8th Battalion, 26th Artillery (TAB) is capable of detecting hostile artillery and mortar fire. It was neither designed for nor is it capable of detecting enemy movement. Headquarters Battery, 8th Battalion, 26th Artillery (TAB) has no organic radars suitable for detection of personnel.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

s/ Arthur B. Busbey Jr.
t/ ARTHUR B. BUSBEY JR.
Colonel, AGC
Adjutant General

Copies furnished:
CG, USARV, ATTN: DST
CINCUSARPAC
ACSFOR, DA
2d Bn, 7th Cav 1st Cav Div

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1. (C) VC/NVA Order of Battle:

a. NVA UNITS: The following NVA units were believed to be operating within the Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR).

b. VC Main Force Units: Composed of Military, General, and Political Staffs:

(1) Military Region VI (MR-6) Hqs. has direct control of the main force elements within the confines of MR-6. The Headquarters of MR-6 was last reported at ZT2545.

(2) The 840th Main Force VC Bn of MR-6 was last contacted when its elements in conjunction with the 450th Local Force Company launched an attack against the ARVN Outpost Ft. Mara on 8 Nov 67. The battalion is believed to be located at AN9957.

(3) The 186th Main Force Bn subordinate to MR-6 was last contacted by elements of the 4/45th ARVN. The battalion is believed to be located at AN9957.

(4) The 145th Main Force Artillery Bn of MR-6 was reported to have divided into two groups, the 145th B Bn and the 145th A Bn. It was reported that the 145th A was organized into an infantry Bn with two companies while the 145th B was organized into an artillery battalion. The 145th Main Force Artillery Battalion was last located at ZT 0086.

c. VC Local Force Units:

(1) The 482d Local Force Bn was believed to be operating in or within reinforcing distance of the TAOR. The Bn was believed to be in the vicinity of AN7731.

(2) The following local force units were believed to be operating in or within the vicinity of the TAOR or within reinforcing distance:

- (a) 430th Co AN 8013
- (b) 440th Co BN 0118
- (c) 450th Co AN 0421
- (d) 460th Co ZT 2204
- (e) 480th Co ZT 1906
- (f) 490th Co BN 4649

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2. (C) Organization, Disposition, and Strength:

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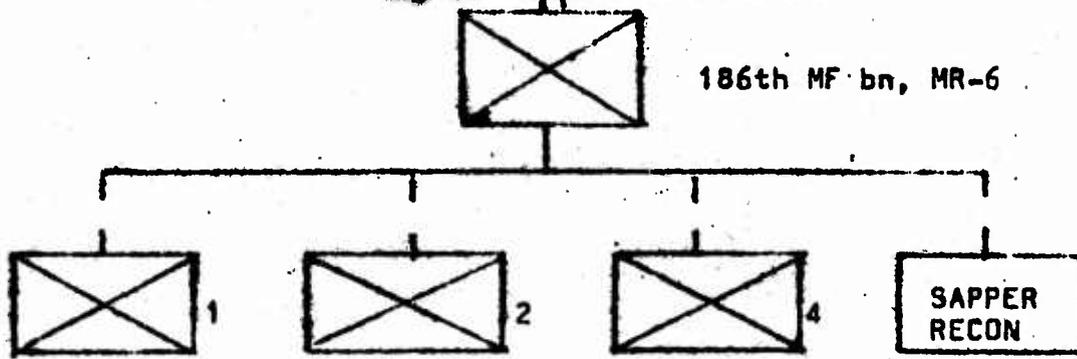
UNIT	AKA	STRENGTH	CO	LOCATIONS
MR-6 HQ'S		95		ZT 2545
145th MF Arty BN	Workshop 541 Cu Mao	300	CPT Tai	ZT 1276
186th MF Bn	Xuong 681 Ngan Son	350	Thong Ga Cung Hai	BN 0673
840th MF Bn	120th MF Bn 279th Bn	300	Bu Tho	AN 7843
482nd LF Bn	602nd Bn Hoanh Son Bn	300	Tam Troc (aka: Quang)	ZT 2424

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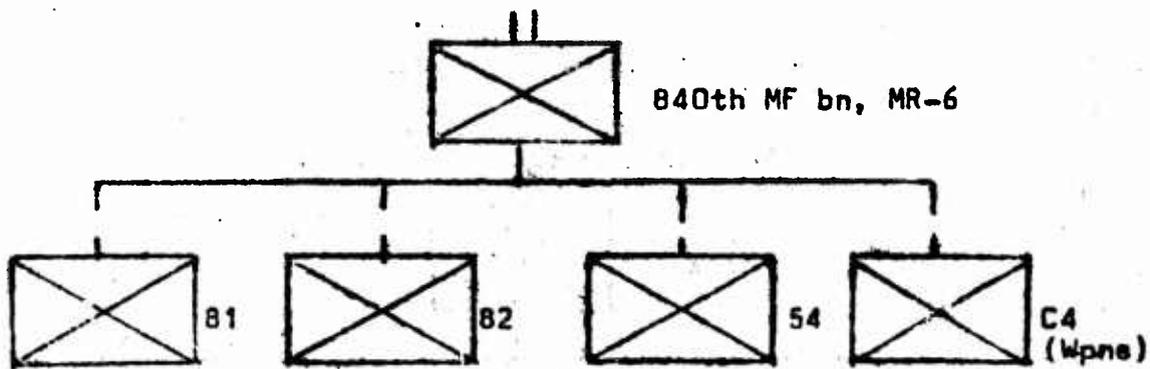
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3. Organization of 186th MF Bn, MR-6

40'



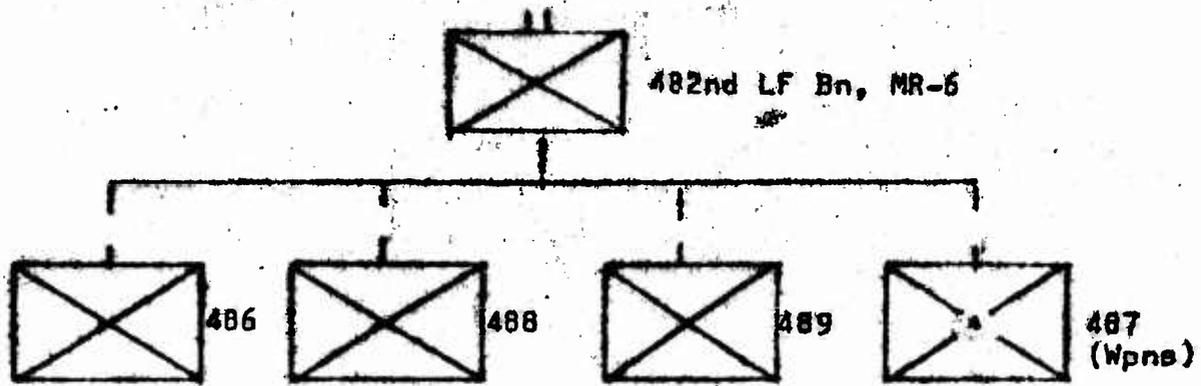
4. Organization of 840th MF Bn, MR-6



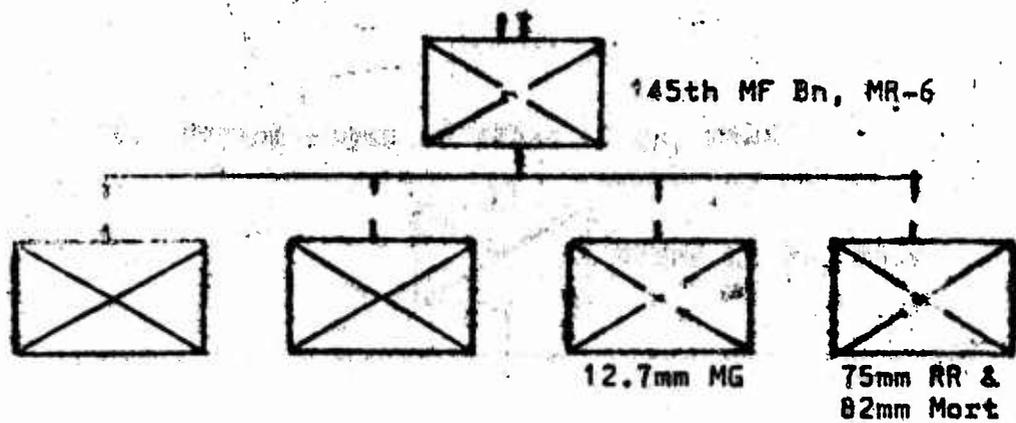
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5. Organization of 482nd LF Bn, MR-6

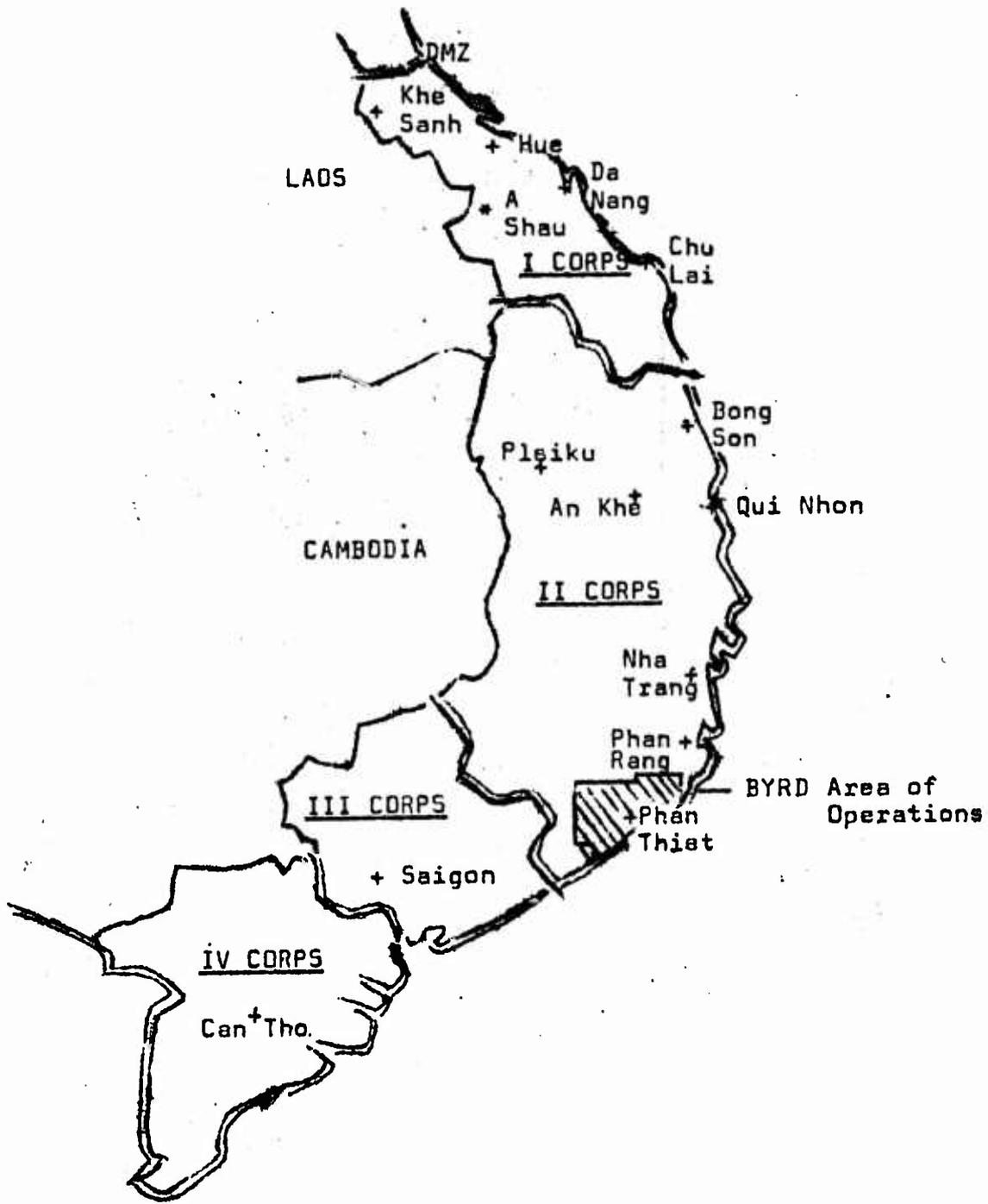


6. Organization of 145th MF Bn, MR-6



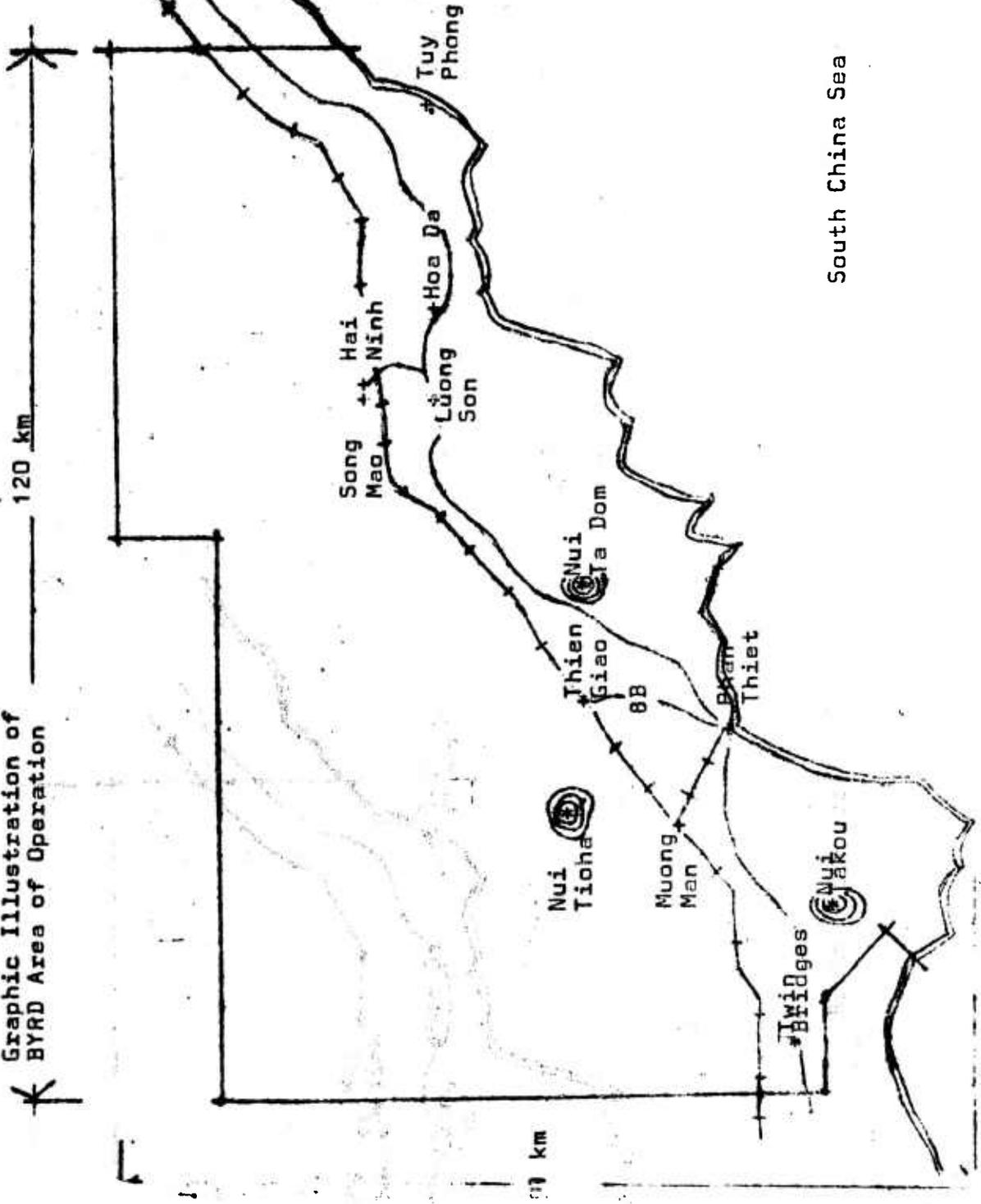
ANNEX A (Map of BYRD AO) to After Action Report -
Operation BYRD

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Graphic Illustration of
BYRD Area of Operation



ANNEX B (Task Organization) to After Action Report -
Operation BYRD

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1. MANUEVER UNITS

- a. 2nd Battalion, 7th Cavalry
Headquarters & Headquarters Company (25 Aug 66 -
20 Jan 68)
 - A Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
 - B Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
 - C Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
 - D Company (16 Dec 66 - 20 Jan 68)
 - Combat Support Co (25 Aug 66 - 16 Dec 66)
- b. 2nd Battalion, 12th Cavalry
C Company (15 Oct 66 - 8 Nov 66)
- c. 1st Battalion, 8th Cavalry
B Company (9 Nov 66 - 31 Nov 66)
- d. 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry
1st Plat, A Troop (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- e. US Special Forces "A" Detachment - LUDNG SON
(1 Nov 66 - 20 Jan 68)

2. COMBAT SUPPORT UNITS

- a. 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery (105mm How)
 - A Battery (25 Aug 66 - 14 Sep 66)
(16 Feb 67 - 20 Jan 68)
 - B Battery (15 Sep 66 - 15 Feb 67)
- b. 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery)
1 Section, C Battery (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- c. 1st Battalion, 29th Artillery (Searchlight)
1 Section, B Battery (1 May 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- d. 4th Battalion, 60th Artillery (M42 - Duster)
1 Platoon, A Battery (1 Nov 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- e. 1st Battalion, 41st Artillery (Quad .50)
1 Section, E Battery (1 Jan 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- f. 8th Battalion, 26th Artillery (Radar)
1 Section, A Battery (15 Oct 66 - 15 Dec 66)
- g. 6th Battalion, 32nd Artillery (8" & 175mm Gun)
C Battery (30 Aug 66 - 15 Jan 67)

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3. COMBAT SERVICE SUPPORT UNITS:

- a. 3rd Forward Support Element, 1st Air Cavalry Division
Support Command (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
FSE Headquarter Section (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
Movement Control Team (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
15th Medical Battalion
C Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
15th Supply and Services Battalion
Support Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
15th Transportation Battalion
C Company (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
27th Maintenance Battalion
Forward Support Maintenance (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
184th Chemical Platoon
Forward Chemical Section (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- b. Forward Support Area (FSA) Element, 1st Logistical
Command (10 Sep 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- c. 55th Military Intelligence (MI) Detachment, I Field
Force V, IPW Team, Counter Intelligence Team (1 Dec 66 -
20 Jan 68)
- d. 272nd Military Police (MP)
1 Platoon (15 Oct 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- e. 8th Psychological Operations (PSYOPS) Battalion
245th PSYOP Company
Field Team #7 (06 Aug 67 - 30 Nov 67)
Field Team #8 (29 Aug 66 - 30 Nov 67)
A Company (01 Dec 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- f. 41st Civil Affairs (CA) Co (01 Sep 66 - 1 Jun 67)
- g. 11th Aviation Group
Pathfinder Detachment (10 Sep 66 - 20 Jan 68)

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- 227th Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter)
 - A Company (27 Jan 67 - 20 Jan 68)
 - 1 Plat, D Co (27 Jan 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- 228th Aviation Battalion (Assault Support Helicopter)
 - 1 Section, C Co (25 Aug 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- h. 8th Engineer Battalion (Combat)
 - C Company, 3rd Platoon (15 Mar 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- i. 14th Engineer Battalion (35th Eng Grp, 18th Engr Bde)
 - C Company (18 Sep 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- j. 54th Signal Battalion
 - Detachment, B Company (20 Sep 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- k. 13th Signal Battalion
 - Detachment, A Company (25 Sep 66 - 20 Jan 68)
- l. Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols
 - Detachment, LRRP Platoon (01 Jan 67 - 20 Jan 68)
- m. 35th Infantry (Scout Dog)
 - Platoon (16 Aug 67 - 20 Jan 68)
 - (NOTE: Initially, the 25th Scout Dog Platoon)
- n. Air - Naval Gun Fire Liaison Company (ANGLICO),
United States Navy (1 Feb - 20 Jan 68)
- o. Forward Air Controller (FAC), United States Air Force
(20 Sep 66 - 20 Jan 68)

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ANNEX C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report -
Operation BYRD

1. In order to more easily distinguish individual units and to clarify their specific missions and scope of participation, each type of support element is covered in detail in a separate appendix to this Annex (C).
2. While each unit is identified by its distinct contribution, it must be remembered that the significant value and outstanding success of Operation BYRD was due to the extremely close support, immediate responsiveness, and effective manner in which each supporting unit contributed to the overall accomplishment of the Task Force mission.

- APPENDIX -
1. Artillery
 2. Aviation
 3. Engineer
 4. Signal
 5. Scout Dog
 6. Supply and Services
 7. Military Intelligence
 8. Psychological Operations
 9. Navy
 10. Air Force

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APPENDIX 1 (Artillery) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

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1. 1st Battalion, 21st Artillery

a. Mission: To provide one direct artillery support battery for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: In order to provide for maneuver elements in the field and protective fires for TF elements at the base camp (LZ Betty), one battery (A Bat 1/21 Arty) operated from two mutually supporting fire bases simultaneously, which, for the major portion of Operation BYRD, constituted having three Howitzers and a fire direction center at both LZ Bartlett and LZ Judy.

Maneuver elements which operated outside of the range of the light artillery were supported by taking the howitzers and FDC from one of the fire bases and re-establishing them on a temporary fire base. Additionally, A Battery was utilized extensively to fire LZ preparations for air assaults and to conduct H & I fires throughout the Task Force AO.

c. Results

(1) The results attained by A Battery, 1st Bn, 21st Arty were considerable in view of the large area and variety of terrain in which operations were conducted. Only by splitting the battery and operating from two fire bases could adequate artillery support be given to the maneuvering elements.

(2) In Operation BYRD, the artillery range from a single fire base is not extensive enough to exploit completely the Task Force capability, and it was not feasible to displace an artillery battery to support daily operations. By dividing the battery into two fire bases, a greater area was covered and less displacement was necessary. In certain instances, however, the infantry battalion conducted operations outside the range of arty from either LZ Bartlett or LZ Judy. When this occurred, artillery support was maintained by displacing the Tubes from one of the fire bases in the area of operations. These operations termed "Hip Shoot" (modified artillery Raid), proved highly effective and demonstrated that sufficient fire power could be obtained by utilizing only three howitzers with the added advantages of greater speed of displacement and reduced logistical requirements.

(3) The split battery concept and the use of "Modified Raids" or "Hip Shoots" employed by A Battery in Operation BYRD produced outstanding results, increasing the area of artillery coverage, thus giving greater flexibility to

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the Task Force commander. (NOTE: In order to effectively operate from two fire bases, the present personnel and equipment had to be augmented with the following:

PERSONNEL

EQUIPMENT

Asst Chief of Firing Battery
Radio Repairman

Complete set of FDC equipment
(TFT's, GFT's, RDP's, etc)

- (4) Rounds fired - 80,000 (Approximate)
- (5) Artillery incidents (Troops wounded by friendly artillery) - 00
- (6) Permanent fire bases constructed - 5

2. 2nd Battalion, 20th Artillery ARA

a. Mission: Provide 5 aircraft for aerial rocket artillery support for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: The preponderance of fires delivered by ARA were in support of Ground/Air Plans (GAP). GAP's were conducted every day of the operation when weather permitted. The number of Night Hunter missions ran a close second to the number of GAP's flown.

c. Results

- (1) Friendly
 - (a) KIA - 00
 - (b) WIA - 01
- (2) Missions Flown
 - (a) GAP
 - (b) Night Hunter
 - (c) Fire Mission
- (3) Expenditures
 - (a) 2.75 Rockets - 22,208
 - (b) 7.62 Rounds - 172,099
 - (c) CS Grenades - 720

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d. Commander's Comments: The platoon operated from LZ Betty except during operations in the Song Mao area. It was found that one platoon of four (4) aircraft can adequately support a battalion task force organization.

The platoon consistently provided at least one operational section of ARA. The responsiveness of the direct support maintenance unit of TF 2/7 Cav proved to be superior to that provided under normal task organizations. The effect of having direct support maintenance so much more responsive became obvious by comparing similar aircraft availability vs average hours flown per aircraft. The averages for the time period were:

	Avail'ty	hrs/acft
Battery (-) (conducting Opn Pershing)	71.0 %	59.2
Platoon (conducting Opn BYRD)	72.6 %	73.8

The above comparison shows that while flying 24.71 percent more hours, the aircraft availability in Phan Thiet was 1.6 percent higher!

3. B Battery, 1st BN, 29th Artillery (Searchlight)

a. Mission: To provide a searchlight section for TF 2/7

b. Execution: Generally four (4) searchlights were available for emplacement by the Task Force. They were normally employed on the perimeter of permanent fire bases and attached to the infantry commander charged with responsibility for defense of the perimeter.

c. Results: No tangible results can be determined by the commanders, however, the presence of searchlights could conceivably have been an instrumental deterrent in thwarting any efforts at probing the perimeters of any permanent US fire bases in the BYRD AO.

4. Platoon, A Battery, 4th Bn, 60th Arty (M42 - Duster)

a. Mission: To provide mobile 40mm artillery fire support for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: Generally six (6) weapons were available to the Task Force. Each weapon consists of twin mounted 40mm cannons on a tracked vehicle designed for anti-aircraft defense but employed in Vietnam in an anti-personnel role.

The weapons were normally employed on the perimeter of the permanent fire bases. In addition, they conducted convoy

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escort missions, provided security for Civil Affairs, MEDCAP, PSYOPS, and revolutionary development teams during daytime operations and frequently participated in combined arms "Tank sweeps". They participated nightly in the artillery H & I program.

c. Results: Although there are no recorded instances during Operation BYRD which indicate that the "dusters" were involved in heavy contact with the enemy, they were indispensable for road convoy security and for integrated fires of base defense.

5. Section, E Battery, 41st Artillery (Quad .50)

a. Mission: To provide a section of mobile heavy machine gun fire for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: Generally, four (4) weapons were available to the task force. The weapons were employed, both mounted and dismounted, on the perimeter of the permanent fire bases. On occasion, the mounted quad .50's were employed similarly to the "dusters" (para 4, above), however, the terrain in the BYRD AO was such that the carrier was confined largely to roads and improved trails.

c. Results: There were no recorded instances in which the quad .50's were involved in heavy contact with the enemy.

6. Section, A Battery, 8 TAB, 26th Artillery (Radar)

a. Mission: To provide short range radar capability for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: During the relatively brief period of time in which the radar sets were available to the Task Force, they were employed on the perimeter of LZ Betty, the Task Force base camp.

c. Results: There were no recorded instances of the radar picking up any enemy movement in the vicinity of the base camp at LZ Betty.

7. 6th Battalion, 32nd Artillery (8" & 175mm Gun)

a. Mission: To provide 8" and 175mm guns for direct artillery support for TF 2/7 Cavalry

b. Execution: C Battery, 6/32 Artillery provided 3 - 8" and 2 - 175mm guns to the Task Force. The heavy artillery was used to reinforce the fires of the Task Force's direct

support battery. Due to the relatively slow rate of fire of the larger guns, they were not considered to be adequate for ground/air plans (CAP). Their longer range and heavier fire, however, were put to good use during fire missions, H & I programs and counter battery fire plans.

c. Results: Records of total rounds fired, total missions conducted and total battle assessments are unavailable. Nevertheless, operational summary reports submitted during the period in which the battery supported the Task Force indicate that the heavy artillery was deemed to have been an extremely valuable asset whose departure significantly reduced the combat power of the Task Force.

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APPENDIX 2 (AVIATION) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. 11th Aviation Group

- a. Mission: Provide 6 Pathfinders for air traffic control for TF 2/7 Cavalry.
- b. Execution: Two Pathfinders were constantly available in the control tower at Phan Thiet airfield. Pathfinders rarely accompanied rifle companies on air assault operations.
- c. Results: The air traffic control provided by these highly competent personnel was vital to the efficient operation of one of the most frequently utilized airfields in the province. The Pathfinders, who were employed in the field materially assisted the rifle company commander by freeing him from the problems of air traffic control and permitting him to direct his complete attention to the tactical situation.

2. 227th Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter)

- a. Mission:
 - (1) Provide one company for TF 2/7 Cav to provide necessary lift capability, troop resupply, spray, command and control and some Med-Evac missions.
 - (2) Provide one platoon for gunship support to the lift helicopters, as escort for CH-47 helicopter on resupply or combat assault missions and cover for Med-Evac air ambulances.
- b. Execution:
 - (1) All missions were received from the Task Force S-3 office direct to the aviation elements. A/227th was assigned a total of 16 aircraft to support the Task Force of which 12 were required to be mission ready each day. Ten aircraft were assigned daily missions on a rotating basis. The following is a breakdown of daily operational assignments:

Yellow 1: Task Force airlift for RRF - 24 hour standby for Mini-Cav

2: RRF - Mini-Cav

3: RRF - Mini-Cav

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4 RRF - Mini-Cav
White 1 RRF - Mini-Cav
White 2 Recons, spray, command & control
White 3 Log Aircraft
4 Log Aircraft
Green 1 Night Hunter Aircraft
2 Night Hunter Flare Ship

(2) The number of aircraft assigned to support TF 2/7 gave the operation more flexibility than can normally be expected in a TF of this make-up. Maximum efficiency was effected through the close relationship of each of the supporting units, and an excellent working relationship with the supported units.

(3) Throughout the period, normal aviation support was furnished TF 2/7 Cav. The Night Hunter technique, though not new to the Cav type operation, was used more extensively in the BYRD AO than any other location. The Night Hunter operation was determined to be the main deterrent to enemy activity against ARVN Forts. The Night Hunter aircraft supported by ARA, gunships, flare ships, and artillery has proven to be a potent retaliatory force against VC night attacks directed at the ARVN Forts.

c. Results:

(1) The assets from the 227th Avn Bn (AH) during the 12 months they were in support of this operation had 26 aircraft receive hits of which three were totally destroyed. Twenty-one aviation personnel were wounded during the operation. Eight aviation personnel lost their life during this time period in two aircraft crashes. In both cases the cause of the crash was material failure. For complete statistical data on the aviation support furnished see TAB A.

(2) The aircraft maintenance field needs mentioning here. With a constant aircraft commitment each day, programmed maintenance was not a serious problem. Another reason for the fine availability record established was due to close working relationship with the supporting direct support unit. Still another reason was the close proximity of Vung Tau and their fine maintenance establishment. These records could not have been maintained if each individual had not built up a sense of urgency to keep the maximum number of ships mission ready.

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3. 228th Aviation Battalion (Assault Support Helicopter)

a. Mission: Provide CH-47 aircraft for TF 2/7 Cav to provide airlift capability for the movement of troops and bulk cargo.

b. Execution: Lettered companies of the 228th Aviation Battalion supported Operation BYRD by providing CH-47 aircraft commencing on 25 August 66. Initially there was a requirement for only one (1) CH-47 aircraft. This was later raised to three and four aircraft depending on the situation as the operation progressed.

c. Results:

(1) Data during the initial stages of the period August 66 through November 66 is unavailable. Statistical data is furnished as follows:

PERIOD	PAX	TONS	USEFUL SORTIES	TOTAL SORTIES	FLYING TIME
1 - 31 Dec 66	2036	269.9	173	344	62+30
1 - 31 Jan 67	1877	307.6	177	209	50+55
1 - 28 Feb 67	1602	270.7	174	209	55+45
1 - 31 Mar 67	1667	273.8	176	213	60+35
1 - 30 Apr 67	1775	296.6	180	220	20+10
1 - 31 May 67	1807	301.5	185	225	54+45
1 - 30 Jun 67	1569	258.5	167	218	52+35
1 - 31 Jul 67	1660	285.0	186	235	67+20
1 - 31 Aug 67	1773	257.5	176	240	93+30
1 - 30 Sep 67	5076	985.5	484	786	338+25
1 - 31 Oct 67	3405	875.0	456	691	223+40
1 - 30 Nov 67	4875	1321.5	520	873	376+20
1 - 31 Dec 67	6301	765.0	382	568	325+45
1 - 20 Jan 68	1563	255.0	154	225	83+20

(2) Evaluation of enemy KIA is unknown, however, during Operation BYRD the 228th Aviation Battalion lost three (3) aircraft that were shot down by hostile fire and totally destroyed. Four crew members sustained minor injuries and returned to duty.

d. Remarks: Maintenance and aircraft parts resupply became a major problem during Operation BYRD. Due to the lack of maintenance facilities at Phan Thiet aircraft requiring schedule inspections (Intermediates) had to be flown to Vung Tau. This created a loss of aircraft availability for longer periods than normally required. Although a supply of parts were kept on hand, it was limited. The only means of

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acquiring parts was a resupply from An Khe base camp which is approximately three to four hours flying time. It is recommended that whenever possible, detached CH-47's be situated in close proximity to maintenance facilities for more rapid maintenance support to include parts resupply. This initial problem was solved by rotating aircraft from An Khe to take the place of aircraft on Operation BYRD that were running short on flying time. However, this did not solve the loss of time involved in changing aircraft. During the latter stages of the operation, the 15th TC provided a maintenance element at Phan Thiet to provide support, but again the parts resupply had to be provided from An Khe which was a continuing hinderance to the operation. Even though confronted with these problems, the 228th Aviation Battalion was able to continue providing the necessary CH-47 aircraft to support the Operation.

4. 229th Aviation Battalion (Assault Helicopter)

The missions and execution of 229th Avn Bn liftships and gunships were identical to those of the 227th Aviation Battalion.

The Statistical data identifying the participation of the 229th Avn Bn helicopters is unavailable, however, the figures shown by the 227th Avn Bn are typical and readily reflect average monthly commitments of liftships and gunships.

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TAB A (Statistical Summary) to Appendix 2 (Aviation) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation BYRD

FACTS AND FIGURES FOR BYRD AO

227th Aviation Battalion

MONTHS	C/A		DCS		RECON			C/G			MED		EVAC		MAINT		TNG	
	TASKS	SORTIE	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S	T	S
Jan 67	220	488	189	256	9	29	11	21	3	5	45	162	49	174				
Feb	1382	3429	864	1932	24	57	21	53	6	9	69	253	74	213				
Mar	999	3165	593	1658	6	15	10	24	9	12	61	199	52	205				
Apr	1009	3220	641	1653	5	10	6	13	2	3	82	273	77	215				
May	1970	3850	1172	2143	16	33	44	65	4	5	57	226	70	188				
Jun	1606	3661	1223	2365	13	30	22	47	3	5	51	180	84	238				
Jul	1278	3339	831	1934	29	48	24	39	6	8	70	243	66	200				
Aug	1403	3474	890	1966	12	33	18	37	4	7	122	365	113	368				
Sep	758	1679	927	2043	3	11	5	18	9	11	97	341	108	329				
Oct	1308	3140	901	1998	6	21	53	103	5	7	82	146	91	221				
Nov	1291	2841	710	1896	3	10	31	79	10	14	108	209	76	155				
Dec	1477	3360	889	1744	5	18	28	63	2	3	34	96	34	128				
Jan 68	989	2681	736	2006	0	0	4	18	1	2	35	74	71	142				
TOTAL	15,690	38,327	10,566	23,594	131	315	277	580	66	91	913	2,768	965	2,816				

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TAB A (Statistical Summary) to Appendix 2 (Aviation) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation BYRD

FACTS AND FIGURES FOR BYRD AO

Based on airspeed of 80 knots-
227th Aviation Battalion
mileage flown equal 1,592,400 miles.

MONTHS	T	S	PAX	CARGO	TOTAL TIME	A/C ASSIGN	% AVAIL	AVG FLY	'D' Co	MONTHS	TIME	SORTIE	TASKS
Jan 67	20	35	345	9	365					Jan 67	180	102	102
Feb	66	163	7450	233	1241	19.6	82.3	116.1		Feb	222	588	588
Mar	51	152	6874	211	1069	20.0	70.8	14.2		Mar	201	621	621
Apr	59	170	7457	255	1100	20.0	73.3	14.7		Apr	211	678	678
May	94	209	8201	282	1404	19.7	81.9	16.0		May	275	718	718
Jun	87	188	7744	270	1484	18.8	89.7	16.7		Jun	286	723	723
Jul	88	192	7072	278	1175	17.7	79.5	14.0		Jul	209	574	574
Aug	76	177	7453	252	1264	15.0	81.8	12.3		Aug	228	603	603
Sep	78	181	6450	247	761	15.1	83.4	12.6		Sep	158	364	364
Oct	93	231	7316	261	1364	21.6	81.9	17.7		Oct	310	874	874
Nov	43	148	8111	232	1594	15.2	98.0	14.9		Nov	426	727	727
Dec	83	191	7814	197	1523	14.6	80.1	11.7		Dec	481	891	891
Jan 68	35	86	8787	314	661	14.0	55.7	7.8		Jan 68	206	323	323
TOTAL	675	2,133	90,074	3,041	14,905	17.6	79.9	14.2		TOTAL	3,393	7,786	7,786

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APPENDIX 3 (ENGINEER) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. 8th Engineer Battalion (Combat)

a. Mission: Provide one (1) engineer company for direct and general support to TF 2/7 Cavalry.

b. Execution:

(1) C Company, 8th Engineers conducted general support missions consisting primarily of the construction and maintenance of the defensive perimeter of LZ Betty.

(2) Combat support missions consisted of the construction of seven major permanent firebases to include bunkers, demolition support for Mini-Cav operations, removal of mine fields and destruction of enemy defensive fortifications.

c. Results:

(1) Wire Obstacles

(a) Relocate wire at north end of air-strip	200m
(b) Install wire around 228th Avn	1000m
(c) Install wire around firing range	1000m
(d) Extend wire at south end of perimeter	500m
(e) Extend wire at tower pad	1000m
(f) Install wire along western perimeter road	500m
(g) Erection of 4 strand cattle fence at end of runway	80m
(h) Installed perimeter wire for PRU Fort	300m
(i) Extended wire at south end of LZ	250m
TOTAL	4830m

(2) Perimeter Bunkers: The following bunkers were constructed and later repaired as needed:

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Perimeter, LZ Betty	6'x8'x5'	36
Perimeter, Water Point	4'x5'x4'	5
Perimeter, bunkers at Engr compound	6'x8'x5'	5
Bunkers for squad protection	10'x18'x5'	1
<hr/>		
TOTAL		47

(3) Perimeter Claymores, LZ Betty: Seventy-eight (78) claymore mines were set in concrete blocks (12"x6"x18"), two mines 20 meters in front of each perimeter bunker. The claymores were inspected and replaced periodically. In July 67, all of the claymores were replaced because of damage to firing wires caused by traffic on the perimeter road. Although there were 78 M18A1 mines set in concrete at LZ Betty, the tactical situation determined that 53 additional M18A1's would be installed. Every month an inspection team from the 8th Engrs periodically checked the mine installations and made necessary repairs.

(4) Revetments:

(a) A sandbag revetment 100m long, 30m wide, 1.5m high, and three sandbags thick was constructed around the FSE ammunitions sling out point to protect ammunition which was often stored on the pad.

(b) Revetments were constructed for 17 UH-1 helicopters for the 227th

(c) Revetments were constructed for three CH-47 for the 228th

(d) Revetments for four OH-13 helicopters were constructed for 1/9.

(5) Bunkers: An alternate TOC was constructed for HQ, 2/7 Cav (10'x12'x8').

(6) Other General Support Projects:

(a) Four 36" culverts totaling 120 ft were installed in the road net at LZ Betty.

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- (b) Six showers were constructed at LZ Virginia.
 - (c) One 15'x15' tropical building was constructed for 2/7 Cav
 - (d) One concrete pad 30'x30' placed for 2/7 Cav.
 - (e) Mine field on east side of LZ Betty was breached to allow PA&E to install culverts for drainage.
 - (f) PSP on the airfield at Song Mao was repaired and fastened down with pickets.
 - (g) A ramp for unloading POL blivets was constructed for S-4, 2/7 Cav.
 - (h) Six mess tables constructed for 2/7 messhall.
 - (i) Ammunition storage bunkers constructed for 227th Avn.
 - (j) Four aerial flare dispensers constructed for 227th Avn.
 - (k) Flare storage racks (30 flare capacity) constructed for 227th Avn.
 - (l) One tower for 1000 gal water tank constructed for 228th Avn.
 - (m) Perimeter marking system was developed, tested, and installed at seven ARVN positions.
 - (n) Materials, technical advise, & supervision furnished for perimeter wire at Ft Sahar (ARVN)
 - (o) Five 12'x16' billets constructed in 3rd Engr Platoon area
 - (p) Fifteen knife rests were constructed for access roads into LZ Betty.
 - (q) Constructed one 12' high life guard tower for Phan Thiet Beach.
 - (r) Installed flare pit lighting system at ARVN Ft Nora.
 - (s) Complete construction of 5 new squad billets 12'x16'.

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- (t) Constructed 80'x90' POW compound for 272th MP Detachment.
- (u) Supported the 14th Engrs in laying PSP at the Phan Thiet Airfield.
- (v) Constructed 6 desks for HHC, 2/7th Cav and 10 messhall tables, including 16 benches.
- (w) Cleared 10'x200' section of French mine field for PA&E for sewer drainage pipes.
- (x) Instructed 14th Engrs in use of Elex-X
- (y) Instructed companies A, B, C, & D 2/7 Cav in enemy mines and booby traps.
- (z) Constructed a 20'x18' building - MP (PMO)
- (aa) Constructed a 18'x16' building - Plat CP
- (bb) Constructed a 12'x16' building - CCo, 2/7
- (cc) Constructed a 12'x16' building - D Co, 2/7
- (dd) Reinspected all lighting systems in 7 ARVN Forts.
- (ee) Instructed Vietnamese National Police in expedient distruction of enemy mines and booby traps.

(7) Major Fire Bases: Seven major fire bases were developed by 3rd platoon in support of Task Force 2/7 Cav. Two of these bases (Bartlett & Judy) were used continuously during the period from 1 May 67 to the end of the reporting period, the remainder being utilized from periods of two weeks to one month, then destroyed and abandoned. Although terrain varied widely at each locations, all of the fire basses were of the same general size - containing one infantry company, three artillery pieces, and landing areas for a minimum of four UH-1D aircraft.

LANDING ZONE	ENGR EFFORT	SIZE
Bartlett* (AN762230)	3000 man hrs, 6000# C-4	500m x 150m
Judy* (AN706133)	240 man hrs, none	100m x 100m
Sandy	84 man hrs, none	150m x 100m

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Joe	168 man hrs,	60 lbs C-4	200m x 150m
Jack	24 man hrs,	80 lbs C-4	150m x 100m
Casson	192 man hrs,	150 lbs C-4	100m x 75m
Scooter	192 man hrs,	150 lbs C-4	100m x 100m
<hr/>			
TOTAL	3998 man hrs,	6640 lbs C-4	162,500 m ²

From 17 September 67 until 14 January 68, no permanent fire bases were constructed in the BYRD AO. The 3rd platoon cut 9 new fire bases. Each temporary fire base consisted of 3 - 105 Howitzers and an infantry co. . The area was constructed so that a minimum of four UH-1D aircraft or two CH-47 aircraft could land simultaneously.

(8) Mini-Cav Operations: One demolition team was on stand-by at the platoon CP daily for Mini-Cav Operations. Although the team was called out frequently, the majority of the time no engineer work was performed.

- (a) 20 Mar 67 - Removed 3 CBU-bomblets 14km north-east of Phan Thiet
- (b) 01 Apr 67 - Destroyed 3 Booby traps 4km north by northeast of Phan Thiet
- (c) 15 May 67 - Destroyed 1 tunnel 8km north by northeast of Phan Thiet
- (d) 10 Jul 67 - Sealed entrance to cave 6km east of Phan Thiet w/ 40 lbs C-4
- (e) 05 Aug 67 - Destroyed 1 booby trapped propaganda poster at LZ Sandy.
- (f) 18 Sep 67 - Destroyed 1.5 tons of rice, 1 bunker, and 6 houses.
- (g) 19 Sep 67 - Destroyed 18 bunkers. Cleared a one-ship LZ.
- (h) 29 Sep 67 - Destroyed 10 bunkers, 7'x4'x4' w/ 3' of overhead cover. Destroyed 100 lbs of rice, 75 lbs of grain. Cleared a one-ship LZ for extraction purposes.

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- (i) 03 Oct 67 - Constructed LZ for Med-evac ship. Constructed LZ for extraction and destroyed small tunnels 6' long.
 - (j) 06 Oct 67 - Placed two booby trapped ammo cans on garbage sump. Cans consisted of 1.5 lbs of C-4 packed around a M26A1 w/ M-5 firing device, at coordinates 322398. Resulted in two VC KIA.
 - (k) 07 Oct 67 - Destroyed 17 bunkers, 6'x2'x3' & 4'x2'x3' w/ 6" to 8" of logs used as overhead cover w/ 1.5" of earth above the logs. Destroyed 37 houses by fire. Destroyed 25 Chi Com hand grenades and 200 lbs of rice. Captured on enemy claymore mine.
 - (l) 08 Oct 67 - Destroyed 22 bunkers 7'x3'x2', 6'x2'x3', 4'x2'x3', covered with 4 - 8" logs as overhead cover. Two hoes, 2 picks and 1 ARA rocket (2.75) were found and destroyed.
 - (m) 12 Oct 67 - Destroyed five bunkers, 3'x8'x4' w/ overhead cover of 6" logs, w/ 2.5" of dirt over the logs. Destroyed one dud round. Constructed a three-ship LZ.
 - (n) 11 Nov 67 * Destroyed two bunkers, 8'x5'x5', with revetted sides, 4.5' overhead cover. Destroyed 750 lbs low drag bomb, 2 water collection points, and numerous pots & cooking utensils. Constructed a one-ship PZ for extraction.
 - (o) 13 Nov 67 - Destroyed one bunker 5'x5'x2.5' with 2.5' overhead cover. One VC KIA, one weapon captured, two offensive blast grenades captured, and one set of web gear. Constructed a one-ship PZ.
 - (p) 19 Nov 67 - Destroyed one bunker & two booby traps.
 - (q) 01 Dec 67 - Destroyed five bunkers & 155mm small.
 - (r) 08 Dec 67 - Destroyed six bunkers & three booby traps, hill 906. Cut one Med-evac LZ.
 - (s) 16 Dec 67 - Destroyed one booby trap
 - (t) 19 Dec 67 - Destroyed sixteen T-shaped bunkers.

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(u) 19 Dec 67 - Destroyed three L-shaped bunkers one C-shaped bunker, thirteen T-shaped bunkers, and two booby traps w/ pull type devices. Destroyed seven more T-shaped bunkers and captured documents.

(v) 02 Jan 68 - Destroyed 23 T-shaped bunkers encircling a landing zone (262212) and constructed a new extraction LZ.

(9) Mine Fields: A non-standard pattern protective mine field at LZ Virginia was removed prior to giving control of the LZ to ARVN Forces. The mine field records were not accurate and two casualties were sustained on the removal operation.

(10) Direct support of infantry companys: During the period 15 March to 17 September 1967, Task Force 2/7 Cav normally employed one company on a search and destroy mission in the BYRD AO with the remaining three companys securing LZ Betty and the forward fire bases. 3d platoon attached one engineer squad to the company with the search and destroy mission. The endurance of these operations was normally three to five days although one lasted for ten days (2 Jun - 12 Jun 67). Considering the engineer man hours expended on these operations little actual engineer work was performed. On an average five-day mission, the squad would expend 40 to 60 lbs of C-4 while destroying three booby traps (usually artillery rounds, but occasionally CBU's and hand grenades), four bunkers and cutting a one-ship LZ for resupply. On joint Search and Destroy operations, the engineer platoon supplied the ARVN company with usually four men, and their mission; to destroy enemy munitions, fortifications, and to cut LZ's as needed.

2. 14th Engineer Battalion (Combat)

a. Mission: Provide one platoon (later increased to a company) to TF 2/7 Cav to perform all general support missions which require earth moving equipment or vertical construction.

b. Execution: C Company, 14th Engr provided tractors, dozers, road graders, and "Romo Flows", as well as skilled construction personnel. The company was constantly occupied repairing bridges throughout the province, repairing Q1 1 (National Highway 1), and clearing vegetation near the highway to a distance of 300 meters from the road surface.

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The latter operation was tactically designed to inhibit the ability of VC to ambush vehicles along this vital line of communication.

c. Results: Unfortunately, the statistical data indicating the miles of the highway repaired and cleared, the number of culverts and bypasses repaired and constructed and the number of bridges repaired and constructed is unavailable. Suffice it to say that the efforts of this unit were admirable and contributed greatly to the overall accomplishment of the Task Force mission.

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APPENDIX 4 (SIGNAL) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. Signal Section, 2/7 Cavalry

a. Radio

(1) Equipment:

AN/PRC-25	74
VRC-46	6
PRC-74	5
PRC-47	5
MRC-95	2
RC-292	10

(2) Locations:

- (a) NCS was located with battalion headquarters at LZ Betty (Phan Thiet)
- (b) A manual relay was constantly maintained on LZ Bartlett consisting of two PRC-25 & two RC-292 antennas.
- (c) Radio relays were also employed at various other locations when the tactical situation warranted. They were as follows:

Song Mao
Twin Bridges
Nui Ta Dom Mountain

(At one time Song Mao, Twin Bridges, and LZ Bartlett were operating simultaneously.)

(3) Nets:

- (a) Battalion command and control
- (b) Bn air/ground (lift)
- (c) Arty support
- (d) AM Admin and Log to An Khe
- (e) RTT (D-7) to division (Operated by 13th Signal Bn)

(4) Comments:

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(a) Communications were maintained constantly throughout the AQ by the use of the various relays.

(b) Some shortage of radios was experienced when several of the attached units of the Task Force came to us for radios; ie, Psyops, Civil Affairs, FSA (for POL Barge), and MP's. These radios came from the bn commo section and caused a shortage within the headquarters commo section.

(c) Assigned frequencies in the Phan Thiet area were good. Very little interference or over-ride was experienced. Frequency changes, when necessary, were assigned by IFFV Signal in Na Trang.

b. Wire:

(1) Switchboard:

(a) Initially three 5B-22's were used but provided unsatisfactory service. As the number of subscribers and trunks increased, a 5B-86 with an auxiliary jack was acquired from the 43rd Signal Bn. This gave us a 60 line capacity. As many as ten trunks and 75 subscribers were in use at one time. Several subscribers shared party lines.

(b) Trunk lines were furnished by 43rd Sig Bn, who had a UHF and TROPO site at LZ Betty. They also supported MACV Headquarters in the city of Phan Thiet.

(c) Trunk Lines:

Nha Trang	Three
Cam Ranh Bay	(LD)
Saigon	(LD)
101st Abn Div	
Song Mao	
1st Bde; 101st Abn Div	
Phan Thiet Switch (MACV)	
227th Avn Bn	

(d) Hot Lines:

IFFV HQ to 2/7th Cav (T.O.C.)
DASC-A (Air Force to 2/7th Cav (ALO)

c. Courier Service:

(1) Phan Thiet to Nha Trang: three times each week in U1-A or UH-1D from 54th Sig Bn Avn Section. Courier personnel supplied by 54th Sig Bn.

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APPENDIX 5 (SCOUT DOG) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. 34th Infantry Platoon (Scout Dog)

a. Missions: Provide one squad of Scout Dogs to TF 2/7 Cavalry for:

- (1) Search and Destroy Patrols
- (2) Ambushes
- (3) Mini-Cav operations, to provide silent early warning of the presence of enemy personnel or equipment such as booby traps.

b. Execution:

One dog team was on constant standby for Mini-Cav operations. The other dog teams were attached to rifle companies or platoons, when feasible, for combat operations.

c. Results:

Generally, Scout Dog teams were effectively employed. The use of scout dogs on Mini-Cav operations often proved highly advantageous. Certain missions, however, requiring the dogs to follow blood trails or other ground trails would have been more suitable for tracker dog teams, which are trained to work on ground rather than airborne scent. (Tracker dogs were not available.)

(1) Totals:

- (a) Search and Destroy patrols - 31
- (b) Ambushes 27
- (c) Mini-Cav operations 99
- (d) L R R P 04

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- (2) Phan Thiet to An Khe: twice daily via Air Force C7-A. Courier personnel to An Khe supplied by 2/7 Cavalry.

d. Generators:

- (1) 28V DC power for radios was supplied by two 3 KW generators from the 2/7 TO&E equipment.
- (2) 115V AC power for lights was supplied by a central 100 KW generator operated by PA&E. (Phan Rang Sub Area Command, Post Engr.)

2. 13th Signal Battalion:

a. Missions:

- (1) Provide the Task Force voice and secure radio teletype communications in the 1st Air Cav Div Command Am Radio Net #1 (D-3) and Command AM Radio Net #2 (D-4), as required.
- (2) Provide the Task Force's FSE with voice and secure radio teletype communications in the 1st Air Cav Division Admin and Log Net #2 (D-7).
- (3) Provide the task Force's FSE with internal switchboard and telephone communications.

b. Execution: The 13th Sig Bn provided the following communications support to TF 2/7 Cav:

- (1) Two - AM SSB radio teletype teams (attached to Sig section, TF 2/7 Cav)
- (2) One - AM SSB radio teletype team (attached to TF 2/7 Cav's FSE)
- (3) One - Wire/Switchboard team (attached to TF 2/7 Cav's FSE)

c. Results: The support provided permitted adequate capabilities to the Task Force.

3. 54th Signal Battalion

a. Mission: Provide commo ctr & HF RATT fac. for TF 2/7 CAV

b. Execution: The team (avg 8 men) provided required support for TF 2/7 Cav.

c. Results: The support provided contributed adequate capabilities to the Task Force.

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APPENDIX 6 (Supply and Services) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. 1st Air Cavalry Division Support Command:

a. Mission: Provide the logistical personnel and equipment to support an independent Task Force organization comprised of over 1500 officers and men.

b. Execution: The division support command committed the 3rd Forward Service Support Element to command and control logistical resources for the Task Force. Resupply during Operation BYRD was accomplished primarily by logistical over-the-shore (LOTS) operations. This consisted of the movement of all classes of supply to the Task Force by LCC and LST. The supplies were then transported to the Forward Support Activity (FSA).

The 3rd FSE took control of supplies from the FSA and provided break-down and dissemination to supported units. Distribution was accomplished by unit pick-up and serial resupply.

2. 3rd Forward Support Element (3rd FSE)

a. Mission: The mission of the 3rd FSE was to provide combat service support to the Task Force 2/7 Cav, attached and supporting units:

- (1) Direct support maintenance and back-up organizational maintenance.
- (2) Retail service of all classes of supply
- (3) Medical treatment and evacuation
- (4) Recovery and evacuation of damaged and captured material and salvage.
- (5) Defoliation and application of chemical agents, and maintenance of CBR equipment
- (6) Control and coordination of aerial resupply, and operation of airstrip at Task Force base.
- (7) Supervise unit movements in and out of the Task Force's AO.

b. Execution: The 3rd FSE organized the six separate subordinate units of the division support command into a smooth operating, hard working, efficient team. (TAB A, Organization of the 3rd Forward Support Element.)

In addition to controlling and coordinating the movement of supplies, the 3rd FSE also provided an operational control capability to the Task Force for maintenance parts and equipment, as well as retrograde cargo movements.

Due to the extremely large size of the BYRD AD (over 5,000 square miles), it was necessary to maintain two supply bases: One at LZ Betty and one at Song Mao.

Due to the fact that a portion of the supplies of the Task Force arrived via air, it was necessary to maintain a section of the Movements Control Team at the Task Force base airstrip to control all passenger and cargo movements. Bulk supply by air was primarily by means of C-123 and C-130 aircraft. There were also C7A aircraft to provide passenger, general cargo, retrograde cargo, and salvage equipment transportation capabilities. Maintenance support to the Task Force was coordinated and monitored by the 3rd FSE, and provided by its organic Maintenance Contact Team. The 3rd FSE also coordinated and monitored the aircraft maintenance provided by its organic A/C maintenance support facility.

c. Results: (Tonnage Recapitulation)

(1) CH-47 Chinook:

Total cargo in : 360,000 lbs (4000 lbs daily avg)
Total cargo out: 12,357,360 lbs

Total cargo out by Classes:

Class I	3,700,000 lbs
Class II & IV	788,100 lbs
Class	2,838,780 lbs
Class V	5,030,480 lbs

Cargo out daily by Classes:

Class I	6,851 lbs
Class II & IV	1,274 lbs
Class III	5,257 lbs
Class V	9,300 lbs

(2) C7A Caribou:

Total cargo in :	561,600 lbs
Daily cargo in:	1,040 lbs (average)
Total cargo out:	603,000 lbs
Daily cargo out:	1,120 lbs (average)

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(3) C-123 Provider:

Daily Cargo in : 14,600 lbs (average)
Daily Cargo out: 9,000 lbs (average)

(4) C-130 Hercules:

Daily Cargo in : 34,700 lbs (average)
Daily Cargo out: 19,600 lbs (average)

(5) The 3rd FSE also provided passenger service to an average of 110 passengers daily. The majority of these were Task Force 2/7 Cav personnel traveling between An Khe and Phan Thiet or Cam Ranh Bay and Phan Thiet. This FSE was also responsible for the control of fuel and troop airlifts to Song Mao and LZ Betty. They coordinated all unit moves into and out of the AO. At the conclusion of Operation BYRD, the 3rd FSE moved the Task Force, consisting of 1,057 tons of cargo and 900 passengers, to four different destinations with a total of 51 sorties by C-130 aircraft. Included in cargo moved were 102 vehicles and trailers, 8 x 4 containers, six M-102 howitzers, ten conexas, 49 pallets and one MOCON.

3. 15th Supply and Service Battalion:

a. Missions: The 15th S & S Bn provided continuous support to Operation BYRD through the Forward Supply Platoon, which was under the operational control of the Support Command Forward Support Element, (FSE). Missions of Forward Supply Platoon:

- (1) Provide retail distribution of Class I, II, IV, III, and V supplies to all units under the operational control of Task Force 2/7 Cav.
- (2) To provide sling out equipment and rigger support for the Aerial Delivery of ammunition and petroleum products.
- (3) To provide a ready reaction force and perimeter security, as directed by the Task Force commander based on tactical requirements.

b. Execution:

(1) The Forward Support Supply Platoon consists of four major sections; Class I, II & IV, III, and V, each section under the control of a non-commissioned officer. Each section working in conjunction with the Forward Support Area Element (FSA) of the 1st Logistical Command, provides supply point distribution to all assigned units. Supplies are

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received direct from the supporting depot by the FSA, based on demand data established by the FSE. Upon receipt, the FSA delivers all supplies to the Forward Supply Platoon, who in turn makes unit distribution. Detailed supply point procedures are as indicated below:

(a) Class I: Receipt for all rations and sundry packs from the FSA and make unit distribution, based on headcounts received from each unit.

(b) Class II & IV: Requisition directly from the depot all types of Class II & IV supplies. Maintain accurate demand data and stock record cards on each line item stocked. Operate direct exchange, and salvage facility for supported Task Force. Accepts from units and makes appropriate disposition of all captured weapons.

(c) Class III: Operate all Mogas and DF-2 refueling points. Provide personnel to fill and sling out all 500 gallon fuel bags to forward elements. Provide technical assistance and support to all assigned aviation units as required.

(d) Class V: Draw from the ammunition supply point all ammunition required by assigned units; provide supply point distribution, and sling out equipment and personnel for Aerial Delivery of ammunition.

c. Results: (Classes of Supplies Issued) The following classes of supplies were issued by the Forward Supply Platoon through the 3rd FSE.

Class I

A - Rations	566,586 lbs
B - Rations	487,764 lbs
C - Rations	866,200 lbs

Class II & IV

Barrier Material	5,461,000 lbs
Other	612,872 lbs

Class III

JP4	4,671,000 gal
AVGAS	1,486,000 gal
MOGAS	467,000 gal
DF-2	594,000 gal

Class V

Ammunition	12,073,500 lbs
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4. 15th Medical Battalion

a. Mission:

- (1) To provide medical support to all units in Task Force 2/7 Cav in Operation BYRD.
- (2) To give emergency medical support to all allied forces in AO.
- (3) To evacuate sick and injured patients from the field to the clearing station of C Company 15th Medical Battalion.
- (4) To provide immediate backhaul of C Company, 15th Med Bn's patients after they had been stabilized.

b. Execution:

- (1) Two Medevac helicopters were attached to C Co, 15th Med Bn during the entire Operation BYRD. The Air Ambulance Platoon, HSC 15th Med supplied the ships and rotated them approximately twice monthly.
- (2) One Dustoff helicopter from 45th Air Ambulance Company, Long Binh, supported 15 Med Bn by providing backhaul capability. The Dustoff helicopter logered at C Company's location.
- (3) The concept of operation of C Co, 15th Med Bn during Operation BYRD was to provide medical support on an immediate treatment basis to the troops of Task Force 2/7 Cav. C Company operated a clearing station with a 40-bed capacity with the goal of either evacuating or releasing to duty all patients before they spent a full three days on the ward.
- (4) During the tour at LZ Betty, C Co had few mass casualties. Only in November and December 67 was there more than one mass casualty situation per month. Nevertheless, C Company was able to effectively perform its mission by stabilizing the injured patients and preparing them for evacuation. Due to the great distance to the nearest hospital and the nearest Dustoff ship, it often took two hours or more to move the patient from C Company's area. This was partially remedied in September 67 when a Dustoff ship came to lager permanently in C Company's area.
- (5) C Company, 15th Med Bn made full use of its dental laboratory and X-ray facilities during Operation BYRD.

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C. Results:

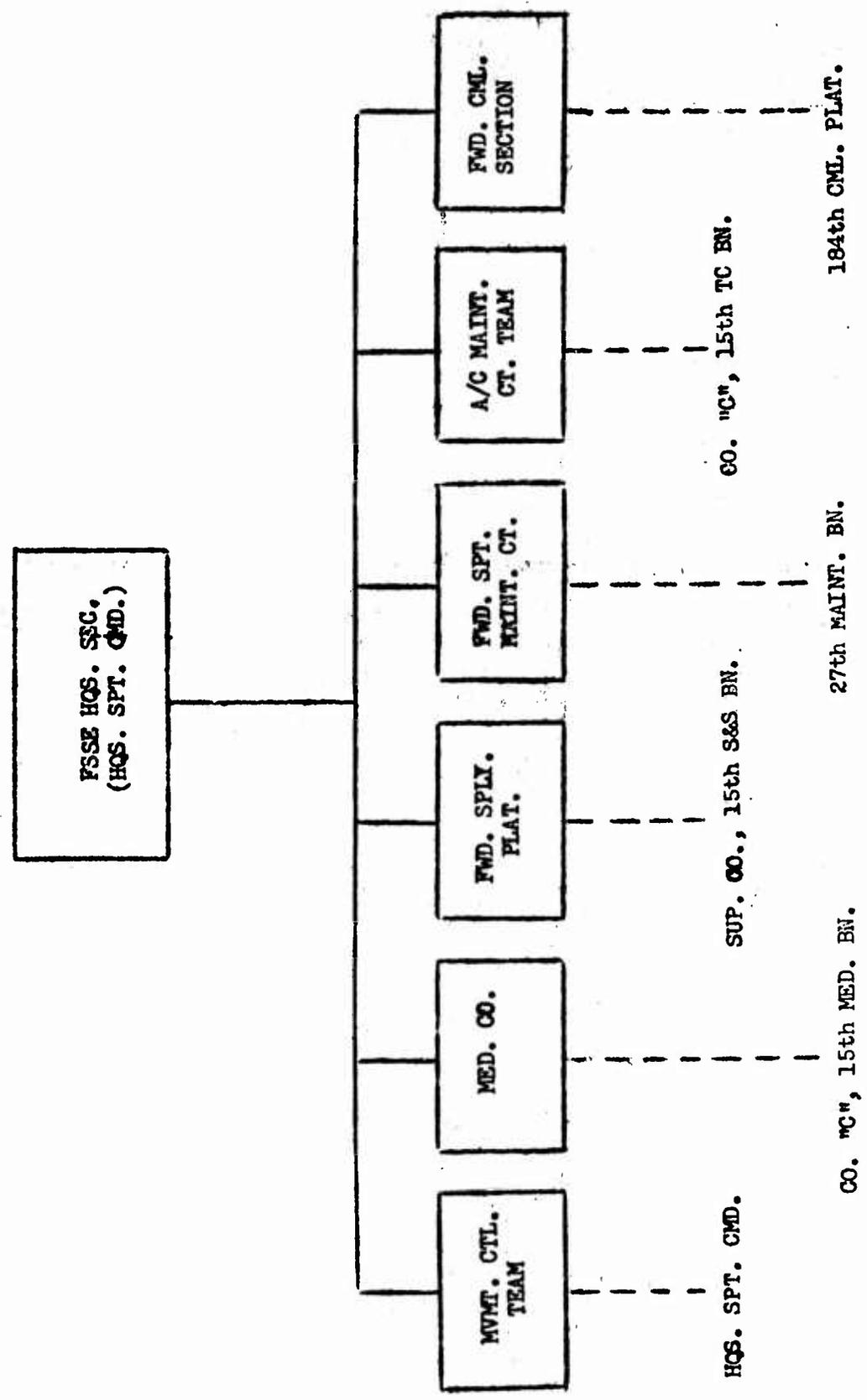
(1) The following number of patients were treated by C Company during Operation BYRD:

ADMISSIONS		DISPOSITIONS	
IRHA	4,400	Duty	8,400
NBI	1,756	Evacuated	2,090
Disease	<u>5,600</u>	KIA	<u>1,510</u>
TOTAL	11,756	TOTAL	12,000

(2) Medevac C Co, 15th Med Bn

No of A/C	-	2
Total missions	-	229
Total sorties	-	558
Total hours	-	180.4
Total patients	-	250
US	-	102
VN	-	130
VC	-	18
Total Cargo	-	23.87

TAB A (Organisation of 3rd Forward Support Element) to Appendix 6 (Supply and Services) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation Byrd.



APPENDIX 7 (Military Intelligence) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation BYRD

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1. 55th Military Intelligence Detachment (CORPS)

a. Mission: Provide a 3-man Counter Intelligence (CI) section and a 3-man Interrogation of prisoners of war (IPW) section plus two ARVN interpreters and one civilian interpreter for TF 2/7 Cavalry.

b. Execution

(1) The Counter-intelligence Section set up a covert intelligence net, utilizing local personnel in the collection of tactical combat intelligence. This provided a steady flow of combat intelligence which was collected and passed on to the S2, 2/7 Cav. In addition to the basic mission, the CI Section conducted staff studies as directed by the Task Force S2 on bridge and highway security from the Binh Tuy to the Ninh Thuan border following Highway #1. Another study was conducted on Viet Cong tax collection points along Highway #1. The CI Section also conducted liaison visits with the other intelligence agencies within Phan Thiet.

(2) The IPW Section conducted interrogations of prisoners of war and translated captured enemy documents. This materially assisted TF 2/7 Cav in obtaining information about the structure, personalities, weakness, and modus operandi of the VC units operating within the Binh Thuan Province. On numerous occasions members of the IPW Section were air lifted into the AD to assist commanders in obtaining immediate tactical information through the interrogation of detainees. Also members of the IPW Section have accompanied members of the 2/7 Cav in the exploitation of Hoi Chanhs, and PW's by accompanying them into the field to point out VC assembly areas, strong points, and caches.

c. Results: Records available to the Task Force S2 (many still classified) indicate that the members of the Phan Thiet element of the 55th MI Detachment produced results which directly influenced many tactical operations and contributed immensely to the overall success of the Task Forces' mission.

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APPENDIX B (Psychological Operations) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. 8th Psy Opns Bn

a. Mission: To provide tactical psychological operation support to Task Force 2/7 Cav.

b. Execution: Headquarters, 8th Psy Opns Bn supported TF 2/7 Cav with:

- (1) One HB loudspeaker team, equipped with two backpack loudspeakers and one bullhorn.
- (2) One HE audio visual team, equipped with an audio visual 3/4 ton van (Feb 67 - Oct 67) and an audio-visual jeepster (Sep 67 - Jan 68)
- (3) Five printing presses (Nha Trang)
- (4) Miscellaneous equipment, to include tenting, in support of field team(s).
- (5) Supporting field team operations were a US Air Force C-47, a U-10 and a O2B aircraft.
- (6) US Navy support was provided on request.

c. Results: The results of psychological operations can best be examined by comparisons:

(1) Attitude of the people

(a) 29 August 1966 (Beginning of Operation BYRD)

(1') The population of Binh Thuan Province was approximately 248,000 of which the major groups are: 12,000 Chams, 11,000 Nungs, and 5,000 Montagnards. The geography of Binh Thuan was such that most of the populace live along the Song Ca Ty, Song Cai, Song Can, and the Son Luy river basins. Phan Thiet and Song Mao, are the two population centers. Due to the terrain, the Viet Cong have easy access to these population centers.

(2') The province has had a long history of successful guerilla warfare dating back to the Viet Minh efforts against the French. In addition, the situation just prior to the start of Operation BYRD was such that government credibility was extremely low. There were successful Viet Cong attacks on Government Military units which

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resulted in major psychological gains for the Viet Cong.

(3') The VC morale at the beginning of Operation BYRD was considered high. The leadership of the Viet Cong was excellent, and there was no concrete evidence there were NVA or NVA cadre in the area. The NVA did not seem a factor in this operation.

(4') The population had a "wait and see" attitude. Many "show of force" operations, both US and ARVN had preceded Operation BYRD. When those forces had left the area, the Viet Cong returned and eliminated anyone they suspected of cooperating with the previous Allied offense, stressed physical destruction of the VC, the VC supplies, etc.

(b) 20 January 1968 (Termination of Operation)

(1') The population of the province had changed little by the end of BYRD.

(2') By the middle of 1967 and continuing until the end of the operation, virtually all interrogees of the PSYOP Phan Thiet detachment, both PW and Hoi Chanh or detainees had heard the loudspeaker broadcasts. Most had seen leaflets. They knew what the Chieu Hoi program stood for.

(3') Enemy morale, under the military pressure being applied, was bad. Food was generally scarce.

(4') The attitude of the population was generally favorable towards the TF 2/7 CAV, but the people still had some political reservations. What mattered was the stability of the government, not who stood for what. The dominant military force in the area had apparent allegiance of the populace, be it VC or GVN.

(5') Military contact had become sporadic.

(2) Propaganda:

(a) VC Propaganda:

(1') Consisted of leaflets and face to face communication, and was applied to civilians, VC, US, and ARVN troops.

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- (2') The VC asked people to back them in their fight against the Americans to save South Vietnam
- (3') Ralliers were shot after their propaganda usefulness had been exhausted.
- (4') Leaflets for Americans say this is a war in which the rich get richer and and the poor get killed. They urged that American soldiers lay down their arms.
- (5') They claimed that US leaflets are poisoned so that people touching them die.

(b) US Propaganda:

- (1') See Inclosure for themes utilized
- (2') The following campaigns, by no means complete, were conducted.
 - (a') Feb 67 through Jan 68. Broadcasting from junks along free-strike zones. No indicators of effectiveness. Broadcasting was accomplished primarily at night and was either emotional in appeal; "Daddy come home" or harrassment tapes (gunfire, voices, funeral music).
 - (b') Election campaigns. Intensive instructions were given by loudspeakers from the air, and by leaflets and posters indicating where and when to vote in the September and October 1967 elections. Turnout in both elections was above 80% of the possible voters in the AO.
 - (c') Fall 1967 Rice Harvest campaign to get rice in the outlying areas brought into government controlled areas. Saturation loudspeaker instructions were given by O2B aircraft and leaflet drops in fertile rice growing areas which were non-government controlled. Indications by farmers' associations was that most farmers had heard the message, and some were complying. Dishonesty of some ARVN-GVN officials in stealing the stored rice worked against the success of program.
 - (d') Information on sanitation, geography of the area, etc. was periodically given out through films, posters, and tape presentations given during Civil Affairs MEDCAPS. Interest in

such information ran high, but continued development of such a program was a problem for the team. When this type of information was provided by Civil Affairs or CORDS, it was utilized. All motion picture came through CORDS, whose selection was limited. 82

(e') An indicator of the increasing effectiveness of US propaganda were reports during the fall of 1967 that the VC units had re-organized themselves into three-man cells, each man in the cell keeping an eye on the others.

(f') Reports through PW's and Hoi Chanh during the latter half of 1967 indicated that most enemy soldiers desired to rally, but lacked instructions on how to go about it and were being watched too closely to get away or were afraid of reprisals if they attempted to flee and were captured.

d. Remarks:

(1) The length of Operation BYRD and the stability which TF 2/7 Cav being in the area for an extended period of time brought seemed to PSYOP field team leaders to present an opportunity to attempt to build a base on which stable government could grow while supporting revolutionary development.

(2) There was no precedent for this operation. Most, if not all, PSYOP being done in Vietnam at the time seemed to be essentially tactical. Nevertheless, through selection of films and in certain propaganda leaflets and tapes disseminated, the attempt was made to build a broader base for democratic government.

(3) The likelihood is the PSYOP successes can, for the present, only come in terms of short range goals of only because of the demonstrated ability of the VC to disrupt at will the civilian populace, getting the rice into government areas, getting out the voters. Even the creation of a climate for such understanding depends on factors far removed from psychological operations. Therefore, though the field teams were apparently aware of the desirability of doing something more than support tactical operations, PSYOPS can realistically hope in such situations to achieve only short range successes.

(4) Decorum of the American troops had an effect on PSYOP. There was a very good relationship between the people and TF 2/7 Cav in the AO. The awareness of TF 2/7 Cav of the importance of good conduct in the area materially aided revolutionary development and created a climate in which the people believed in the good faith of the Americans.

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in deciding what equipment to provide field teams, is good look is taken at the terrain in which the team must operate, and at the type of operation the supported unit conducts. The employment of the audio-visual jeepster in Operation BYRD was a good selection since roads in the area were good and since the military situation allow its use.

INCLOSURE (1, c, (2), US Proaganda) General Themes

General Campaign:

- VC cannot win.
- Don't Help the VC.
- VC Destroy while the GVN Attempts to Build.
- VC are Losing
- GVN is Getting Stronger All the Time.
- GVN Stands for Peace and Security in Vietnam, and for End of Terrorism.

Specific Operations:

Opening of ARVN outposts:

- GVN again extending its influence, and is bringing peace and security to the countryside.
- ARVN outpost is open (giving location): here is your chance to rally.
- Can the VC stop the GVN from establishing outposts and bringing security?

Opening of Highways:

- Highway is open.
- GVN is working for the people.
- Highways mean more commerce, prosperity, a better life.

VC destruction, terrorism:

- VC destroy while GVN attempts to build.
- (When applicable) GVN has repaired what VC has destroyed.
- Why do VC destroy? Because they are losing.
- Why destroy your country when you can be helping to Rally.

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Specific Operations (Continued):

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Rice Harvest:

Bring your rice into secure GVN areas.

If VC get rice, fighting continues longer.

Help the GVN defeat the VC by denying them rice.

Elections:

Strong Vietnam depends on interested, active civilian support.

GVN has support of the people: Look at election turnout.

Quick reactions:

Accomplished as required.

2. 245th PSY Ops Company

a. Mission: To provide tactical psychological operations support to TF 2/7 Cav.

b. Execution:

(1) The 245th Psy Ops Company supported the TF with one HB Team and one HE Team.

(2) The HB Team provided the targets for the Air Force Psywar aircraft (U-10, C-47, and O2B) and team members flew in assistance of such missions, in addition to providing loudspeaker support on the ground.

The HB Team also broadcasted from junks along the free strike zones in the AO. During the period 1 August to 1 December 1967, three such missions were conducted. All were night missions. The junks were manned by members of the South Vietnamese Navy, coordinated through US Naval advisors at Binh Thuan Province, MACV sector.

In addition, the HB team provided morale-boosting broadcasts for TF 2/7 Cav by providing Christmas music from Psywar planes, the two days before Christmas day, both 1966 and 1967.

Proceeding each election held during the operation, Psywar aircraft covered the towns of the area with loudspeaker messages on when and how to vote, dropping sample ballots as leaflets. In the October 1967 election for National Assembly, a small turnout was expected, but in Binh Thuan Province over 80% of

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the eligible voters participated. The PSYOP team was credited with significantly effecting the turnout of voters in the election.

(3) The HE team was directed towards reaching the civilian population and winning their support. To this end, the audio-visual team showed motion pictures explaining what the government was trying to do and what certain government programs stood for. The team also distributed leaflets during Civil Affairs MEDCAP's, played music and propaganda messages.

The ability of the HE team to operate in the BYRD area was aided materially by good generally secure roads. In December 1967, when the audio-visual team decided to begin reaching villages lying farther from the immediate Phan Thiet area, they rigged the audio-visual Jeepster so it could be carried slung from a Chinook helicopter. This enabled the team to move with security into remote villages where some people had never seen motion pictures.

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APPENDIX 9 (Navy) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to After
Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. Air/Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (ANGLICO)

a. Mission: To provide a liaison detachment to TF 2/7 Cav for the purpose of coordinating, requesting, and adjusting naval gunfire.

b. Execution: A Naval detachment, normally consisting of one Navy officer and 2-3 sailors/marines, was attached to the TF 2/7 Cav. US Navy destroyers and rocket ships were then assigned to provide direct support to the TF for periods ranging from 2-7 days. The Navy officer served in much the same capacity as an Army artillery liaison officer, providing assistance in naval gunfire during LZ preps and enemy contacts and programming H & I fires in conjunction with the artillery FSCC.

The remainder of the naval gunfire liaison detachment accompanied the infantry units on search and destroy operations providing the ground combat commander with an additional FO capability and the devastating firepower of naval guns and rockets.

c. Results:

The increased range and the ability of the ships at sea to move at will along the coastline to predesignated off-shore positions greatly enhanced the operating range and thus the flexibility of the Task Force.

Although figures are not available to identify the number of rounds and rockets fired in support of TF 2/7 Cav, the mere presence of the US Navy in the BYRD AO was in itself a tremendous psychological, as well as, military contribution to the potential combat power of the Task Force.

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APPENDIX 10 (Air Force) to Annex C (Supporting Forces) to
After Action Report - Operation BYRD

1. a. Mission: to provide forward air controllers to TF
2/7 Cav for the purpose of coordinating, requesting,
and controlling tactical air support.

b. Execution: Two forward air controllers were attached
to the Task Force. These Air Force pilots flew mis-
sions daily throughout the AO conducting aerial reconnaissance,
controlling preplanned air strikes, selecting night "sky spot"
targets and providing close tactical air support to ground
combat units.

Requests for immediate air strikes were transmitted to
DASC-A and usually produced fighters within 15 - 30 minutes.

There were usually 2 - 4 airstrikes preplanned daily
and 1 or 2 "sky spots" available each night.

c. Results: Exact figures are unavailable to identify
the amount of tactical air support provided to TF
2/7 Cav, however, records of a three month period, which
may be considered as average, produced the following approxi-
mate totals:

(1) Number of hours flown	1,600
(2) Number of missions	450
(3) VF	400
(4) Sky spots requested	250
(5) Sky spots cancelled	70
(6) Preplanned air strikes	325
(7) Immediate air strikes	120
(8) Diverted air strikes	200
(9) VR	270
(10) Photo missions	85

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