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**22 August 1968**

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- BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Nickham

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**Commanding Generals**  
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 2ND BRIGADE, 9TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96372

AVDE-47MH-A

17 April 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Operations - After Action Report

THRU: Commanding General  
9th Infantry Division  
APO US Forces 96370

TO: Commander  
United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
ATTN: MACJ343  
APO US Forces 96222

1. NAME OF OPERATION: OPERATION CONOMBO XI.
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 140600 February 68 to 041200 March 68.
3. LOCATION: Cai Bang District, Phong Dinh Province, RVN  
Map Reference: 1:50,000; sheets Nr: 6128 I, 6128 II, 6128 IV, 6129 II, 6129 III.
4. COMMAND AND CONTROL HEADQUARTERS:  
Headquarters Mobile Riverine Force  
2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division - US Army element.  
Task Force 117 - U.S. Navy element.
5. REPORTING OFFICERS:
  - a. Captain R. S. Salzer, Commodore CTF 117.
  - b. Colonel B. A. David, CO, 2nd Bde, 9th Inf Div.
  - c. LTC George E. Bland, CO, 3-47th Infantry.
  - d. LTC John G. Hill, CO, 3-60th Infantry.
  - e. LTC W. E. Rawlinson, CO, 3-34th Artillery.
6. TASK ORGANIZATION: See inclosure #1.
7. SUPPORTING FORCES:

a. U.S. Navy: Naval support throughout the operation was provided by the Combined Task Force 117. Support included mutual coordination and preparation of operational plans and orders. Administrative and logistical requirements were effectively provided. Operational support included riverine survey teams, escort and troop lifts from the MBB into the area of operations. Water sweeps were also conducted ahead of all troop carriers. Tactical operations included coordination, deployment and employment of Army and Naval forces. In addition, Naval fire was provided in support of maneuver battalions with direct and indirect fires in zone. The mobility provided by the ships and boats of TF 117 insured that infantry and full support for infantry was provided for operations virtually anywhere in the central Delta area within hours of receipt of movement orders.

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b. U.S. Air Forces: Air support throughout the operation was provided by the 7th U.S. Air Force employing pre-planned and immediate air strikes. Thirty-three pre-planned strikes were employed during this operation, mostly on preselected beaching sites and targets. Pre-planned requests were submitted through Army channels by telephone prior to each operation. Immediate requests were initiated via Air Force single side-band communication system after approval by local commander. Most of the air strikes employed against fortified bunker positions were effective in destroying the enemy's bunkers. Air strikes employed against fleeing ground troops, and preparation of beaching and landing zones were most effective. No significant problems were encountered during the employment of air strikes; targets were properly marked and identified. On several occasions aircraft with unexpended ordnance were diverted and effectively employed against targets of opportunity. On several other occasions, C-47 "SPOOKY" Flare Ships equipped with miniguns were employed to support and reinforce elements of the Brigade which were heavily engaged with the enemy during hours of darkness. Reaction times of response to requests for flare ships were excellent and their support was effective not only in reinforcing friendly elements, but also in destroying the enemy.

c. Army Aviation: Army aviation assets of III and IV Corps provided gunship support and light helicopter airlift support. Aviation requirements were submitted to the next immediate Headquarters which exercised operational control of the Brigade. Tactical plans and operations were often modified when Army airlift assets were not available, diverted or withdrawn from the Brigade and reallocated for a higher priority mission. When airmobile helicopter companies were available, their employment enhanced the mobility of the Brigade, such that fighting elements were inserted as required within the area of operations to reinforce friendly units or block, engage and destroy the enemy.

d. ARVN: 21st ARVN Division conducted tactical operations in coordination and cooperation with the Brigade. Elements of the ARVN Division operated independently of the Brigade, within the tactical area of operational interest. Areas of operation were coordinated and established so as to insure that operations of both Free World Armed Forces would complement each other, i.e. sharing of mutual AO boundaries to block the enemy's withdrawal through the adjacent AO.

e. Artillery: Artillery support throughout the operation was provided by the 3rd Battalion, 34th Artillery (-) from forward fire support bases established on floating barges. During one of the operations, Battery C, 2-35th Artillery was attached to the base established within the AO. Responses to all fire missions were prompt and assisted in suppressing enemy fires; counter mortar and high explosive fires were employed extensively. All artillery fires were effective; however, employment procedures must be improved upon at the adjustment level. On several occasions, friendly positions were not clearly identified and artillery fires were employed too close.

6. INTELLIGENCE: a. General. Within the CAI RANG District PHONG DINH Province, the enemy decreased the intensity of his attacks against urban areas, although the majority of his forces remained in close proximity to populated areas. During the renewed major Viet Cong offensive (TET Campaign 1968) in the IV Corps area, the enemy employed the majority of his main and local force units in vast attacks against urban areas. The intensity of these attacks

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and the enemy's willingness to accept unprecedented losses, indicated that he anticipated provoking a general uprising designed to influence the desired destination of the governmental structure. The enemy's previous activities demonstrated his ability to expend munitions extensively, which indicated that his resupply capabilities were adequate and possibly that his munitions and supplies were prepositioned prior to his attacks.

b. Enemy Forces: Numerous intelligence reports indicated that the enemy had improved his strength throughout the Phong Dinh Province, and increased his movement within the TAOI. Viet Cong, proselyting activities succeeded in increasing the number of VC throughout the province. In most cases young recruits were assigned to units and sent to battle with minimum training; this enabled the VC to display considerable force on the battlefield at minimum risk. For example, the TAY DO Battalion was believed to have recruited substantial numbers of personnel on the strength of their reputation supported by a considerable propaganda effort. Enemy forces within the PHONG DINH Province were identified as: 306th Main Force Battalion (MF), 303rd MF Battalion, the TAY DO I and II Battalions, the U MINH 10th Battalion PMF and a Military Region III Hqs accompanied by a security element of 200 men from the TM 3173 Battalion. The TAY DO Battalion II was also referred to as the 307th MF Battalion.

(1) The 306th MF Battalion was observed in the vicinity WS0203 and WS9306, with an estimated strength of two companies. Observation of this unit of 11 February indicated that the battalion was located at vicinity WS6510. The battalion was reported to have had a flamethrower (man pack) assets, and was allegedly considered to be proficient with that capability.

(2) The 309th MF Battalion was sighted in the vicinity WS7707, on 12 February, with an estimated of 500 troops. The battalion was composed of a Hqs Company, three Infantry Companies, a Reconnaissance Company, and a Sapper element.

(3) The 303rd MF Battalion was identified on 12 February as being located along a stream, from vicinity WS759995 to WS762965, and along a canal vicinity WS772013 to WS774976. The operational strength of this battalion was estimated to be approximately 450 troops. The battalion consisted of a Headquarters Company, three Infantry Companies, a Combat Support Company, an anti-aircraft element, a Reconnaissance Company and a Sapper element.

(4) The TAY DO Battalion was considered one of the most elite VC fighting units. Its total strength numbered 500 troops. The battalion consisted of a Headquarters Company, three Infantry Companies, a Heavy Weapons Company and a Sapper Company. The battalion was located in the vicinity of the 306th MF Battalion (WS6510).

(5) Reports received indicated that a second TAY DO Battalion was operating in the Phong Dinh Province (vicinity WS57707) with an estimated strength of approximately 240 men. The battalion was to have consisted of three rifle companies.

(6) The U MINH 10TH Battalion PMF was reported to be located vicinity WS709880 to WS770810 on 12 February. The battalion was composed of four Infantry Companies of 100 men each, and arrived at that location after its attack on Rach Gia.

(7) The III Military Region Headquarters controlled the provinces of Rach Gia, Can Tho, Vinh Long, Tra Vinh, Soc Trang and Ca Mau. The headquarters moved from vicinity WS7786 to the junction of the Kinh Sang, Kinh Sauteray canals, vicinity WS770870.

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9. Mission:

a. Conduct riverine, airmobile, search and sweep operations in Cai Rang District, Phong Dinh Province, to locate, fix, and destroy elements of VC 303, 306 and 309 MR Battalions and Tay Do Battalions I and II in zone.

b. In cooperation with elements of 21st ARVN Division, conduct riverine, airmobile, search and sweep operations in Phong Dinh District, Phong Dinh Province, and Thuan An District, An Xuyen Province, to locate & destroy VC NP III Headquarters and attached enemy elements in zone.

c. Conduct waterborne cordon and infantry search and clear operations on island of Cu Lao Xay, Nam On District of Vinh Xuan Province, to eliminate guerrilla elements thereon.

d. Conduct riverine, airmobile and search & sweep operation in Cai Rang District Phong Dinh Province, in cooperation with elements of 21st ARVN Division to locate, fix & destroy elements of 303rd, 306th, 309th MR Battalions (VC) and other enemy elements in zone.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION:

a. The operation as originally conceived was to be conducted in three phases involving deployment, employment and redeployment of the Mobile Riverine Forces. The first phase consisted of deployment of the MRF from Dong Tam to Can Tho; after which both Army and Navy elements were employed in tactical operations. The employment phase concluded generally with the course of friendly operations conducted constituting Operation CORONADO XI. The redeployment phase concluded the operation with the MRF returning to the Dong Tam area.

b. The initial deployment phase of Operation CORONADO XI commenced on 12 February 1968, with the movement of the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) from Dong Tam to an anchorage point in the vicinity of Can Tho. The MRF, minus the 3-60th Infantry troop carrier, APL-26, proceeded up the Mekong River to an anchorage at the eastern entrance to the Vam Nao, arriving at approximately 2000 hours. Early the morning of 13 February with a favorable high tide, the MRF units completed transit down the Vam Nao, into the Bassac and proceeded down stream, arriving off Can Tho shortly after 1300 hours, having completed a transit of 109 miles from Dong Tam. The APL-26 under tow, proceeded independently with escort to join the MRF at Can Tho arriving on the afternoon of the 14th February.

c. Four significant offensive operations were initiated during CORONADO XI. Each operation was derived from analysis of increased enemy activity within the Brigade's TAO and missions assigned by higher headquarters. OPORTS were prepared jointly by Army and Navy elements comprising the Mobile Riverine Force for each of the offensive operations. Operation CORONADO XI began with the implementation of OPORT 15-68 and employment of waterborne (Riverine) insertions of infantry units along the Rach Can Tho in Cai Rang District, Phong Dinh Province; this being the first time a major U.S. Army Force had conducted tactical operations in the southern extremity of the Republic of Vietnam. The MRF's mission read as follows: MRF conducts riverine, airmobile, search and sweep operations in Cai Rang District, Phong Dinh Province, to locate, fix and destroy elements of VC 303, 306 and 309 MR battalions and Tay Do Battalions I and II in zone.

(1) OPORT 15-68: The concept for this operation involved deploying the 3-47th Infantry by riverine movement to AO

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MILL, there the battalion would conduct beach assaults on three (3) landing sites. Each beach assault landing would be supported by artillery and Naval fire support. Upon completion of the beach assaults, TF 117's assault support patrol boats (ASPB) and troop carriers would establish water blocks. Upon beaching, the battalion would attack north in zone, and backload on armored troop carriers, on order, for subsequent employment elsewhere within the AO. A/3-60th Infantry would be employed as a Rapid Reaction Force (RRF) and was prepared to conduct airmobile operations in the AO and establish blocking positions (B) or reinforce friendly elements in contact. The 3-60th Infantry (-) upon closure in the Mobile Riverine Base would be prepared to conduct offensive operations within the AO.

(2) OPGORD 16-68: For this operation, the Brigade would deploy both maneuver battalions by riverine movement from base Austin to AO's Dickens and Tackeray. The 3-47th Infantry would conduct beach assaults on three landing sites in AO Tackeray. Elements landing on beach 1 and 2 would then sweep southwest in zone along either side of the Kinh Loi Mley. Elements landing on the third beach would then sweep northwest along the east side of Kinh Saintenoy. The 3-60th Infantry would be employed to conduct beach landing assaults in AO Dickens on 3 beach sites. Elements seizing beaches 1 and 2 would sweep southeast in zone along either side of Kinh Saintenoy; while the remaining elements of the battalion, seizing beach 3 would sweep southeast in zone parallel to Kinh Saintenoy. Sweeping operations by both battalions would fix elements of the VC MF III Headquarters thereby denying their withdrawal from the area. Artillery and Naval fire support would be provided from organic assets of the Brigade and TF 117 respectively. Artillery fires would be reinforced by C/2-35th Artillery which was OPCON to the Brigade. Preplanned and immediate airstrikes would be employed as required by the tactical situation. To permit passage of armored troop carriers thru the canal, the center span of the bridge at Phung Hiep was required to be either removed or raised. The 3/D/15 Engineers would accomplish this task prior to the arrival of the AIC's at that point. All force would be extracted from the AO, the evening of 23 February.

(3) OPGORD 17-68: To eliminate the guerrilla elements on the island of Cu Lac May, a waterborne cordon of the island would be established NLT 240630 February. Immediately following the cordon, loudspeaker instructions would be provided by the Brigade's Psychological Operations Detachment. These instructions would inform the inhabitants of the nature of the operations and directed them to move to one of two collection points where they would be screened. Medops would be conducted concurrently with the screening. A two hour period (0630 to 0830) would be allotted to the inhabitants to get to the collection points. After which, the two maneuver battalions would make beach landings at each of the island to conduct search and clear operations. The 3-47th Infantry would beach on the west end of the island and conduct a detail search southeast in zone to the battalion boundary. The 3-60th Infantry would beach on the east end of the island and conduct a detail search northwest in zone to its boundary. Fire support would be provided both by 3-34th Artillery (-) and Naval boats if required.

(4) OPGORD 18-68: This operation would involve deployment of the 3-47th Infantry by riverine movement to the AO to attack south in zone. The 3-60th Infantry would be deployed to a pickup zone (PZ) in the vicinity of the AO whence the battalion would conduct airmobile assaults into the AO to establish blocking positions oriented to the north. On the following day both battalions would be prepared to continue operations southwest in zone. Preplanned and immediate airstrikes would be employed to support the operation. The 3-34th Artillery (-) would deploy to FSB Ricardo to support the operation. TF 117 units would establish saturation patrols on the Song Can Tho to prevent enemy exfiltration to the South, East and West.

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11. EXECUTION:

a. 14 February 1968:

(1) Approximately 0700 hours, the MRF initiated combat operations in accordance with OPLAN 15-68, employing the 3-47th Infantry in a riverine assault to seize beach landing sites: Green 1, coordinates WS 783035; Green 2, coordinates WS 786038; and Green 3, coordinates WS 788404. Bravo, Charlie and Echo Companies were deployed by ATC's and seized landing sites Green 1, 2 and 3 respectively encountering no enemy contact or resistance. Assault boats of River Division 92 established waterborne patrols from coordinates WS 759036 to WS 826057 on the Rach Can Tho to provide support and blocking forces. The companies then began their sweep northwest in zone. Immediately after the assault landing, airstrikes were employed to destroy suspected enemy positions vicinity WS 773607. The 3-47th Infantry continued its sweeping mission after waiting briefly for the airstrikes to terminate. A/3-47th Infantry, which was introduced into the AO at 0720 hours landing on site Green 3, assumed the mission of battalion reserve and displaced northwest behind E Company.

(2) Approximately 1025 hours, A/3-47th Infantry engaged five (5) VC, moving across an open area vicinity WS 776054, with small arms and artillery fires; a search of the area of contact was made, during which the company found one (1) VC KIA and a large arms cache. The arms cache was located in the vicinity of WS 779050 and contained the following items: 165 charges for B-40 rockets, 460 B-40 rockets, 51, anti-personnel mines, 56 heavy 10-K mines, 200 lbs of explosives, 109 ohicomm grenades, 140 fragmentation grenades, three 82mm mortar rounds, 400 concussion grenades, (69) 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, (89) 120mm mortar rounds, two 82mm mortar bipods, 92 charges for RPG-7-P, several cans of loose AK-47 ammunition and assorted medical supplies. The company remained within the immediate area and secured the arms cache until an EOD team arrived to destroy it. Civilians in the area informed A/3-47th Infantry that 20 VC were seen in the area moving south with supplies prior to the Americans arrival.

(3) At 0826 hours B/3-47th Infantry, during its sweep northwest, located 19 "L" shaped bunkers vicinity WS 783050 and destroyed them with hand grenades and explosives. One hour later the company engaged four (4) VC vicinity WS 783054. Shortly thereafter, the company received fire from an estimated VC squad in the vicinity of WS 775063. Artillery fires were employed on the enemy position, silencing his fire. The area was searched resulting in negative findings. Contact was again established at 1435 hours, with what was thought to be an estimated VC squad size force vicinity WS 781074. The enemy elected to withdraw instead of fighting. Three VC were observed fleeing the area; one of which was armed with an AK-47 rifle. The two unarmed VC were captured. An immediate interrogation of the POW's revealed that they were members of the 309 VC Battalion. Bravo Company continued their movement east along a stream line to locate a small group of VC that ARVN units, to the east, had reportedly flushed into the area. The company was engaged again at 1513 hours receiving heavy volumes of automatic weapons fire. During this engagement the company sustained four men WHA, and reported that they were in contact with an estimated VC Company. Airstrikes and artillery were employed to reinforce B/3-47th Infantry. The assault boats extended their patrols to vicinity of WS 716068 to provide additional flanking support. Gunships were also employed to reinforce the company in suppressing the heavy volume of enemy fires. The gunships were employed in continuous passes and provided close in support within 25 meters of B/3-47th forward most position. During this engagement the gunships provided outstanding support while being engaged also by enemy fires. One gunship discharged a rocket during a pass over the company's position resulting in one US WHA and ten WHA. A dust off (medical evacuation) was requested but the intense engagement delayed its arrival until a later time in the day. As the engagement continued the volume of enemy's fire was coming east from the B Company location.

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The company then maneuvered to vicinity of WS788072, at which point they began to receive fire from their front and both banks. At 1635 hours the Battalion Commander requested that A/3-60th Infantry be committed on LZ Falcon vicinity WS785064 to block and fix the VC force. E/3-47th Infantry and A/3-60th Infantry were tasked to move into the area and reinforce Bravo Company.

(4) E/3-47th Infantry was originally sweeping northwest from vicinity of WS786038 to WS783054. It was at the latter location where they engaged four VC before moving further to the northwest to vicinity of WS773066. Approximately 1715 hours the company began its movement to the north to assist B/3-47th Infantry. Two hours later the company began its employment to position alongside of B Company. At this time the E/3-47th was heavily engaged and subsequently pinned down by enemy fires vicinity WS789072 from their north and east, and could not continue forward into position beside B Company at that time. Artillery was employed against enemy positions to assist E Company. During the artillery engagement one US KIA and five WHA resulted from a short round. The contact continued with both B and E/3-47th Infantry engaging the enemy. Echo 3-47th Infantry was receiving heavy automatic weapons fire from the north bank of the canal approximately 300 meters west of B/3-47th Infantry location vicinity of WS786071. At 2144 hours, the patrolling boats hailed an unlighted sampan. The occupants dove into the water, and the sampan was destroyed by fire.

(5) The 3-60th Infantry (-) was continuing its riverine movement to the MRB. A/3-60th, which had deployed with the MRF was OPCON to the 2nd Brigade. The company provided MRB security at PZ Troy for the 3-47th Infantry and remained as the Brigade RRF. The 3-60th Infantry closed into the MRF at 1200 hours, at which time Alpha Company was alerted as the Brigade RRF and committed into the area of operation OPCON to the 3-47th Infantry approximately 1700 hours. The company was tasked and executed an airmobile assault to assist B/3-47th in their contact vicinity WS790084. A/3-60th Infantry conducted an airmobile assault from the MRB to an LZ 1500 to 1800 meters south of B/3-47th position. The company then proceeded north moving along the canal running north to south towards Bravo Company location. Due to limited visibility (darkness) it was necessary for Alpha Company to advance in column formation employing the 2nd Plt as the lead platoon followed by the 1st 3rd and 4th platoons. Approximately 400 meters from the LZ the 3rd platoon observed two VC moving west across the axis of advance of the company; the two VC were engaged and killed. One of the two VC was armed with a chicom carbine. Later during the company's movement the 3rd and 4th platoon observed four VC in a sampan moving due south from the northwest in the canal. The sampan was engaged resulting in 4 VC KIA. Still continuing their movement toward B/3-47th Infantry location, A/3-60th could hear firing of their engagement. Two VC were moving down the same trail that Alpha Company was moving up. The point man of the 2nd platoon observed the two VC and engaged them killing one; the other evaded. Approximately 2230 hours Alpha Company had reached their position from which they would reinforce Bravo Company however, at this time the VC had started to break contact. Coordination was made with B/3-47th and A/3-60th Infantry set up a perimeter of defense for the night. During the night A/3-60th engaged all enemy activity on the trail. Approximately 17 to 20 VC were engaged with probable KIA's.

(6) C/3-47th Infantry during its sweep northeast displaced to vicinity WS781043 and collected five detainees. At 0942 hours the company reported hearing fire from vicinity WS776051. The company moved towards the direction of the firing and destroyed one chicom type grenade booby trap while enroute (WS774052). The company was then subjected to sporadic sniper fire. Artillery fires were employed on suspected sniper locations. The sniper(s) fires inflicted four casualties upon

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the company (1 KHA and 3 WHA's). A dust off was requested and completed at 1825 hours. The company then moved into the area where the snipers were located and found a VC base camp (WS791054) containing 500 lbs of medical supplies and some cooking utensils. The medical supplies were evacuated along with three soldiers who were injured accidentally by a grenade. C/3-47th Infantry then displaced to vicinity WS771055 and remained there until 1714 hours, at which time they encountered sporadic sniper fire. Approximately 2145 hours, the company was resupplied at that location; they also received supplies for Alpha Company. C/3-47th Infantry was alerted at 2230 hours to provide security for a helicopter downed by enemy fires vicinity WS755041. At 2335 hours an element of Charlie Company began its airlift into the area to secure one of two UH-1D helicopters downed by hostile fire. The helicopter was on a dust off (medical evacuation) mission at the time it was engaged. Its crew was determined to be safe and later evacuated. An additional element of Charlie Company was airlifted into the area to assist in securing the aircraft until it was feasible to extract it.

(7) The enemy continued to engage elements of the 3-47 Infantry throughout the evening and into the night. During the evening Charlie and Echo Companies 3-60th Infantry were committed into the AO by Riverine movement to establish blocking positions in the vicinity objective 57, coordinates WS811056. The companies beached in the vicinity of WS816045 at 2010 hours unopposed and proceeded to vicinity of objective 57. Both battalions established their defensive positions for the night and engaged enemy activity near their perimeters. No significant engagements were encountered. After landing the two companies, boats of River Division 111 established patrols from WS803405 to WS826057 and blocked throughout the night.

(8) In addition to the patrols on the Song Can Tho, at the request of IV Pz Riverine Advisory Personnel, TF 117 established patrols on the Song Hau Giang between WS902066 and WR968997 to interdict a VC crossing corridor.

b. 15 February 1968:

(1) Approximately 0700 hours the Brigade continued riverine airmobile, search and sweep operations in zone. These operations required elements of the Brigade to move into AO SIDNEY to fix and destroy enemy elements located within the TAOI. The 3-47th Infantry continued its sweep of the area of contact of the previous evening. Echo and Bravo Companies displaced from the vicinity of objective 141 to conduct a search and sweep operation towards objective 223, then south in zone. Alpha and Charlie Companies moved from vicinity objective 151 north and west to objective 138, then southwest in zone to seize objective 232. Throughout the morning elements of the 3-47th Infantry located two VC KIA from the previous day's engagement. Three POW's without weapons were captured, in addition to one AK 47, one M1 rifle, several grenades, some small arms ammunition and medical supplies. A and C Companies 3-47th Infantry engaged a sampan believed to be exfiltrating VC's; three VC were killed in this engagement. Bravo Company questioned local inhabitants within the AO and was informed by one Vietnamese, that he had seen ten VC who were KIA in yesterday's contact. Other Vietnamese said the VC had sustained heavy casualties as a result of the airstrikes. In one contact at 1355 hours, A/3-47th reported one VC KIA while conducting their search and sweep operations. The enemy harassed the battalion throughout the day employing sniper fires and booby traps, and avoiding significant contact with the friendly forces. This harassment activities (snipers, booby traps) resulted in two US soldiers KHA and 14 US WHA. Seven VC were reported KIA by the battalion.

(2) The 3-60th Infantry began its offensive operations by deploying Alpha and Echo Companies on ATC's of River Division 111

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unopposed. The companies continued their search and sweep operations east then south in zone. Approximately 1300 hours, Charlie Company was engaged with small arms fire. The fire was returned resulting in one VC KIA. The VC was believed to be an officer who had in his possession one chicom pistol, a map case containing four to five maps of the CAN THO area and one hand drawn map of CAN THO. A half an hour later the company received moderate small arms fire from the vicinity WS740080; the fire was returned being reinforced with gunship fires in the vicinity WS736074; another VC KIA was obtained as a result of this contact. Echo Company during their sweep and search detained three individuals and found two VC KIA and one AK 47 vicinity WS739077. Alpha Company in their search located three VC KIA from the previous day's activities and one US carbine. Throughout the day the battalion located a total of seven VC KIA, two weapons, one PRC-25 radio and detained four individuals. Waterborne blocks were maintained by River Division 111 between WS718085 and WS750745. At 2020 T-111-13 received small arms and automatic weapons fire from both banks vicinity WS716067. The ATC returned suppressing fire but was attacked again five minutes later. ATC-111-7 was dispatched to assist, but T-111-13 was again able to suppress the fire from an estimated squad of VC.

c. 16 February 1968:

(1) Throughout the night (15 February 68), the 3-47th and 3-60th Infantry Battalions did not have any significant enemy contact. However, the Viet Cong initiated a mortar attack against the CAN THO airfield approximately 0115 hours. The attack lasted until approximately 0155 hours resulting in the destruction of one watch tower, one 3/4 truck and one engineer crane. A UH-1D Cobra received major damage and another received minor damage. A mohawk was also damaged by .50 cal fire. Eight US personnel were wounded during the attack. Elements of the 2nd Brigade were not requested to reinforce the airfield; because the enemy's attack was not an attempt to seize the airfield. Enemy troops positioned outside of the airfield engaged the airfield with small arms and .50 cal fire.

(2) The 3-47th Infantry continued their operations southwest of CAN THO. At 0700 hours Charlie and Echo Companies, 3-47 Infantry began their sweep operations southwest; their night kits were left behind at Alpha Company's location to be extracted by air. Alpha Company remained at vicinity WS763063 until 1000 at which time they loaded on two helicopters acquired by the Battalion commander from CAN THO Airfield and were airlifted to FSB RICARDO (WS785042) where they were to remain until they could load on ATC's and join the battalion riverine convoy to vicinity WR793976. Alpha Company closed FSB RICARDO at 1055 completing their shuttle. At 1245 hours Charlie and Echo Companies completed their move, arriving at WS762037, where they loaded on ATC's. Alpha company remained at FSB RICARDO until 1252 hours, at which time they loaded at ATC's and joined the battalion convoy enroute to the beaching site, vicinity WR793976, arriving at 1440 hours. Following the beach assault, Charlie and Echo Companies began to sweep west. At 1538 hours, Alpha Company backloaded on ATC's vicinity WR792976 and conducted a riverine movement to vicinity WR792991 for the purpose of securing a PZ at that location and preparing positions for a battalion night perimeter. Charlie and Echo Companies swept west and then northwest to Alpha Company's position vicinity WR792991 with no contact. Several civilians wounded in an earlier airstrike were treated and evacuated by the battalion surgeon. A battalion perimeter was established vicinity WR792991 astride the river and resupply was completed at that location at 1830 hours. The 3-60th Infantry continued their operations southwest of CAN THO also. Later in the day, Alpha and Charlie 3-60th Infantry engaged four VC; one VC KIA was reported immediately after the engagement. Another search of the area the following day revealed the bodies of the other three VC. A total of seven VC were KIA during both battalion operations.

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(3) At 1325 hours a RARE (Riverine Armored Reconnaissance Element) consisting of two Monitors and four ASFB's proceeded on the Song Can Tho from FSB RICARDO to VC WB736045 to investigate a report of a VC crossing. The RARE returned to the fire support base at 1510 without incident or enemy contact. Units of River Division 111 commenced patrols between WB736045 and WB736045 about 1320. By 1720, the boats had destroyed 78 bunkers and reported negligible sampans traffic. Other TF 117 boats continued nightly patrols along the Song Can Tho and the Song Hau Giang. At 2350, boats of River Division 91 provided mortar fire in support of an ARVN outpost at WB733990 which was receiving small arms fire. The enemy attack was suppressed and no hostile fire was received by the boats. About 2355 hours a sampan was destroyed by two boats of River Division 91 vicinity WB740007. The two occupants apparently escaped.

d. 17 February 1968:

The Brigade continued offensive operations southwest of CAN THO, employing 3-47th Infantry and 3-60th Infantry in search and sweep operations. The 3-47th employed Alpha Company by riverine movement (ATC) vicinity WRY93883 to conduct their sweep north. The company engaged and killed one of two VC who threw a grenade at elements of Echo Company vicinity WR700013. The company continued its sweep northward and terminated its operation at 1645 hours, arriving vicinity WR800044, at which point they boarded ATC's and returned to the MRB. Charlie and Echo 3-47th Infantry were employed in search and sweep operations by means of riverine movement also, moving northward. In the forermost contact, Echo Company engaged one of two VC hiding in a sniper hole who threw two grenades at their advancing elements. One VC was KIA by the company, however, seven US WHA resulted from the enemy grenades. A dust off was requested and completed. In a search of the area, the company found two weapons (one US 45 pistol and one chiocom 9mm pistol) and two grenades. The 3-60th Infantry continued their offensive operations moving northward within the AO, no significant contact was encountered by the battalion. On one occasion Echo Company located and captured one VC who was hiding in a spider hole. The VC was taken captive along with his chiocom carbine. Elements of the battalion terminated their operation and conducted a riverine movement back to the MRF. Three additional VC who were KIA on 16 February were located during the day. The Three VC were a part of the group of four which were engaged by Alpha and Charlie Company 3-60th Infantry. A search of the immediate area only indicated one VC KIA; however, the additional three VC were found during the company search and sweep operations today. TF 117 units continued nightly patrols with River Division 91 reporting 48 bunkers destroyed or heavily damaged and 123 sampans searched.

e. 16 February 1968:

The Brigade initiated search and sweep operations in the vicinity of the CAN THO airfield to locate enemy mortar and rocket positions from which the VC use to launch a mortar attack on the airfield. The 3-47th Infantry assumed the task of RRF and assisted in the security of the MRB conducting multiple riverine and ground patrols. The 3-60th Infantry Battalion executed a riverine movement to beach landing sites 1 and 2 from which points two companies swept south then east; and two companies swept south then west toward objective three and then moved northwest to the backload point. River Division 111 established interdiction patrols in the vicinity of the landing beaches in direct support of the troops. Two monitors and two ASFB's of River Division 112 commenced patrols on the Song Can Tho from WB826058 to WB871091. Throughout the battalions search and sweep operations four locations were determined to be positions from whence the enemy had fired mortars. No weapons or ammunition were found in the area. Neither was the battalion able to locate any hiding places for mortar tubes i.e. spider holes.

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Bravo company 3-60th located one VC mortar position vicinity WS816091; Charlie 3-60th Infantry located three VC mortar positions and one .50 cal machine gun firing position (expended rounds scattered in area) vicinity WS816091. There was no contact throughout the day, and the battalion returned to the MRB in the evening and commenced preparation for the following days activities.

f. 19 February 1968:

(1) The Brigade initiated search and sweep operations in the vicinity of Binh Thuy airfield to located enemy rocket and mortar positions and to prevent the enemy from initiating an attack against the airfield. The Brigade employed 3-47th Infantry by riverine movement to conduct reconnaissance in force in the vicinity of the Binh Thuy airfield; the battalion's search and sweep operation did not reveal any firing positions for mortars or rockets. Negative contact was made during the above operation. Approximately 1240 hours ARVN Forces operating in the area reported that they were in contact with an estimated VC Battalion size force in the vicinity of WS808064. To relieve the magnitude of pressure on the ARVN force and concurrently prevent the enemy from escaping south and southwest from the area of contact, the Brigade Commander committed the 3-47th Infantry and elements of the 3-60th Infantry into the AO by airmobile and riverine movement. Approximately 1300 hours the 3-47th Infantry's Alpha, Charlie and Echo Companies loaded helicopters, vicinity WS752118 and were airlifted to a LZ in the vicinity of WS805072. In Alpha and Echo Companies approach to the LZ, the helicopters were engaged by enemy automatic weapons fire. Artillery fires were employed on suspected enemy positions to suppress their fires. At 1720 hours the battalion (-) was inserted into the area of operations. Alpha Company, followed by Echo Company, began to sweep south during which time the company encountered sniper fire. As the companies continued their movement, the lead company began to receive automatic weapons fire from the south vicinity WS806065 at 1825 hours. Within an hour Echo Company joined Alpha Company and continued to sweep south. Charlie Company conducted its airlift from PZ WS754117 to LZ vicinity WS805071 and began to sweep south also; encountering sniper fire as they moved from the LZ. Sniper fire thus far resulted in one US KIA and one US WHA. The company continued its movement south to vicinity WS807062 and at 1908 hours the company had destroyed bunkers vicinity WS807062 and killed one VC. At this time another US was WHA as a result of sniper fire. A dust off was initiated and the helicopter was hit by enemy fire, requiring it to make an emergency landing at CAN THO. Approximately 2030 hours the battalion (-) reported contact was broken/less with the enemy forces. A battalion perimeter was established with Alpha Company in the vicinity WS807063, Charlie Company vicinity WS806063 and Echo Company WS805063. Throughout the night the enemy probed sectors of the perimeter (A and C Companies) and harassed the battalion with sniper firing. A flareship and artillery fires were employed to prevent the enemy from penetrating the company's perimeter. The enemy employed a few mortar rounds in Charlie Company's perimeter; however, no casualties were inflicted on friendly forces. At the end of the day's operation there were: 5 US KIA, 1 detainee, and two weapons captured (1 AK 47 and M60).

(2) At the request of Senior Adviser, IV Corps, TF 117 units initiated joint waterborne patrols with units of the VNN River Assault Group along a 13 mile stretch of the Rach Can Tho/Song Can Tho to interdict all sampan traffic and to support the ARVN and US Infantry. The patrols extended from WS773036 to WS872090. At 2217 hours Monitor 91-1 was struck by two B-40 rocket rounds which penetrated her 40mm turret. Although seven personnel, including an embarked VNN interpreter were wounded, M-91-1 was able to suppress the automatic weapons and small arms fire which was coming from three positions on both banks in the vicinity WS725054. Four of the wounded were medevaced after a rendezvous with a medical aid boat. The patrols continued throughout the night in an effort to prevent exfiltration of VC units from the area of operations. At 0140 hours Monitor 92-2 received a recoilless rocket hit on the starboard side vicinity WS744048. The round did not penetrate and fire was suppressed immediately.

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## g. 20 February 1968:

The Brigade continued operations in CAI RANG District, southwest of CAN THO. Reconnaissance operations were initiated to regain enemy contact established the evening of 19 February. Both maneuver battalions attacked in zone to locate and destroy remaining VC elements within the AO. Contact was light throughout the day resulting in 17 VC KIA. The Brigade extracted the battalion back to the MRS in preparation for its forthcoming operation. TF 117 continued interdiction patrols without incident.

## h. 21 thru 23 February 1968:

(1) The Mobile Riverine Force, in conjunction with elements of the 21st ARVN Division, initiated operations on 22 February in accordance with OPORD 16-68, to locate and destroy the VC Main Force III Headquarters and other enemy elements in zone. The scheme of maneuver involved deploying the 3-60th Infantry (-) by riverine movement into the AO, landing on three beaches. Two companies of the battalion swept to the southeast in zone along the KINH SAINTENOY. Another company swept southeast in zone parallel to KINH SAINTENOY. The 3-47th Infantry (-) deployed three companies by riverine movement to three beach landing sites. Upon beaching the battalion employed two companies southwest in zone along either side of KINH LOI NIEU and the third company northwest along the east side of KINH SAINTENOY. Fire support was provided by C Battery 2-35 Artillery and 3-34th Artillery (-). Echo Company 3-60th Infantry was under OPCON of the Brigade for the purpose of securing fire support base (FSB) ELIOT vicinity WR907844 on 22 February. In preparation for their mission, E/3-60th Infantry conducted a riverine movement 212039 February from the MRS to the CAN THO Rag Pier, for subsequent deployment to FSB Eliot the following morning. Enroute to FSB Eliot, the company was tasked to provide convey/escort security for C/2-35th Artillery Battalion. The company was provided 2 1/2 ton vehicles and augmented with five APC's by the 21st ARVN Division to accomplish the mission. Charlie 4-47th Infantry was deployed from Dong Tam to secure one of the three forward Fire Support Bases.

(2) Approximately 220400 February the 3-60th Infantry (-) and 3-47th Infantry (-) loaded aboard armored troop carriers of TF 117.2.1 and TF 117.1.2 respectively and conducted a riverine movement toward the AO. The 3-60th Infantry (-) proceeded down the Kinh Saintenoy Canal followed by 3-47th Infantry (-). Approximately 0545 hours E/3-60th Infantry linked up with the ARVN elements and proceeded to provide escort security for C/2-35th Artillery (SP) to FSB Eliot. It was originally estimated that the firing battery would reach the FSB and be prepared to fire by 0830 hours. The battery's movement was delayed because, unknowingly to the US and ARVN forces, the enemy had employed explosives in several locations along Highway 4 the previous day. The convoy movement was hindered as a result of the surface conditions of the road, causing the battery to close at FSB Eliot at 1125 hours. Alpha Company 3-47th Infantry debarked at FSB Fielding and established defensive positions to secure the FSB.

(3) The 3-60th Infantry (-) and 3-47th Infantry (-) continued their riverine movement to AO Dickens and Thackeray. The Brigade and Battalion Commanders, while airborne over the riverine movement, observed several groups of Viet Cong moving throughout the area trying to evade. Some were running for bunkers located throughout the area. As the assault boats of Task Force 17.2.1 proceeded through the Kinh Lai Hier, they were engaged with sporadic sniper fire from the north bank vicinity WR869827 to WR810807. The assault boats returned fire when fired upon, suppressing the enemy sniper fires. Four US Navy personnel were slightly wounded during these sporadic sniper engagements. To obtain the overhead clearance required for the boats to proceed under and beyond the Phung Hiep Bridge, the center span of the bridge was lifted (raised). Engineers lifted the center span of the bridge three feet with jacks, after which they inserted heavy lumber beneath each end of the bridge. The MRF continued their riverine movement without delay through the canal to the designated landing sites in the AO.

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(4) The rapid and unique deployment of the MRF into the AO attained the desired element of surprise which resulted in confusing the enemy. The Brigade Commander decided to exploit the enemy's massive exodus and directed a scheme of maneuver employing the 3-47th Infantry (-) and gunships to fix and destroy the enemy moving throughout the area. Employment of gunship fire was coordinated and controlled by both the Brigade Commander and the two Battalion Commanders. The Battalion Commander, 3-60th Infantry observed approximately 15 VC evading through an open area approximately 200 meters northwest of objective 29. Gunships engaged the VC killing five. At this time the Battalion Commander observed VC moving throughout the area running for bunkers and spider holes which were also visible from the air. He requested more gunships to engage the fleeing VC; however, the gunships were not available at this time because of refueling/rearming requirements, and their employment throughout the AO. The Brigade Commander directed airstrikes be employed against the enemy and the bunkers instead of waiting for the gunships. Airstrikes were diverted from pre-planned targets and employed against enemy bunker positions. The Battalion Commander 3-47th Infantry observed groups of enemy moving towards bunkers in the vicinity of the canal. Gunships and the fire power of the assault boats of TF 117 were employed against the VC and bunkers. The 3-47th Infantry Battalion (-) was inserted in the vicinity of the fleeing Viet Cong to achieve the maximum tactical advantage by blocking the enemy movement. Approximately 0950 hours, Bravo and Echo Companies 3-47th Infantry conducted a beach assault vicinity WR844817 in search for enemy forces. Charlie Company 3-47th Infantry remained aboard their ATC's prepared for commitment as the battalion reserve. Shortly after their landing, Bravo and Echo Companies encountered heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from their north vicinity WR845829. Airstrikes were employed on suspected enemy positions. Following the airstrikes, Bravo and Echo Companies swept north, then east and west. Bravo Company 3-47th Infantry made contact immediately and continued to receive sporadic fire during their sweep. Air strikes were again employed on enemy positions vicinity WR845829. Bravo 3-47th then moved to vicinity WR853824 at which time they swept northeast receiving sporadic fire. The company during its search operation found some uniforms, several pictures of VC soldiers (WR852283) and several well camouflaged spider holes in the area; in addition to killing 3 VC. Echo 3-47th Infantry encountered sporadic fire while conducting their sweep moving towards vicinity WR845821. The company reported eight VC KIA while conducting their initial sweep. Two US were WIA by a grenade, and were medically evacuated by helicopter. The company continued its movement north reaching the vicinity of WR846825, at which point it continued its search and sweep operations west encountering sporadic sniper fire. During their sweep E/3-47th Infantry located one 60mm mortar, one 57mm recoilless rifle and two home made bombs (vicinity WR845824) and apprehended two male detainees. Enroute back to the armored troop carrier the company reported a total of 19 VC KIA. An additional 32 VC KIA were found by the 3-47th Infantry.

(5) The 3-60th Infantry continued their riverine movement towards AO Dicken during the period in which the 3-47th was exploiting the initial contact. The 3-60th Infantry Battalion conducted beach assaults on landing sites: Alpha Company vicinity WR807806, Bravo Company vicinity WR810827 and Charlie Company vicinity WR817808. The battalion then initiated search and destroy operations southeast in zone parallel to Kinh Saintency. Throughout their operations the battalion did not encounter any enemy contact, however, they located several booby traps and a bunker complex with spider holes.

(6) The 3-47th Infantry Battalion withdrew from the initial area of contact at 1438 hours and loaded on the ATC's to continue their movement to AO Thackeray. The battalion conducted beach assaults at 1505 hours at landing sites WR807806, WR812807 and WR817808, and then conducted reconnaissance operations southwest in zone. At 2230 hours Echo Company engaged a sampan with four VC vicinity WR808808 resulting in four VC KIA (BC). Two additional VC KIA were located the following day one by Echo Company and the other HHC on MRF defense.

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(7) As a result of this operation 66 VC KIA'S (BC) were obtained, one 57mm recoilless rifle and one 60mm mortar base plate were captured along with several ammo cans with ammunition. One bomb, 2 sampans, two home made bombs and 2 grenades were destroyed. Two POW's and 1 detainee were also obtained.

(8) On 23 February, the Mobile Riverine Force concluded the assault on the enemy's MF III Headquarters. US forces were extracted from the area of operations by surface, water and airmobile operations. Throughout the day there was no enemy contact or significant findings. TF 117 provided lifts for company size units and Riverine security during movement.

1. 24 February 1968:

(1) General.

(a) In accordance with OPORD 17-68, the MRF conducted a waterborne CORDON, search and clear operation on the island of CU LAU MAY, TRA on District of VINH BINH Province to elements located therein. The operation was conducted in the northern eight and a half kilometers of Lao May Island including the lesser island of LAO MAI QIAM. The area of operation (island) was four kilometers wide at its widest point and surrounded by the Baasac River except for the eastern edge where it (island) is divided by a man-made canal. The island's land mass is characterized by three/stream tree lines which run generally northwest/southeast and are located in the northern central and southern sections of the island. A swamp lies between the central and southern tree lines. MY HUNG, the principle village on the island, is composed of nine hamlets. Prepared fighting emplacements and numerous spider holes were located in some areas.

(b) The organized strength of the VC force throughout MY HUNG Village consisted of approximately 50 men. Twenty-five of which were members of a reconnaissance platoon which operated throughout the village and whose primary mission was to provide security for the infiltration and supply route which crosses the island. A smaller force consisting of five to ten VC comprised the AN THANH HAMLET Guerrilla Squad whose mission was to harass the outposts on the Kinh Sang Canal and patrol boats that ventured near the eastern end of the island. The remaining five to ten men comprising of 30 men VC force consisted of a machinegun squad which operated along the southwest shore of the island. Their mission was assumed to be the engagement of PBR's operating in the area. Any additional VC personnel were considered to be part-time guerrillas (15 to 20) who assisted the others as necessary.

(2) The operation commenced at 0415 hours with elements of the 3-60th Infantry Battalion loading aboard ATC's for movement to the AC. Alfa Company 3-60th conducted a riverine movement to the vicinity of XB006088 to secure a detainee collection point. The 3-60th Infantry and 3-47th Infantry began loading on ATC's at 0600 hours. Echo 3-47th deployed at an earlier time (0500 hours) to secure another detainee collection point. At 0630 hours the Riverine Advisor, Brigade 82 and 85, departed the MRF to effect coordination with the district headquarters which was used as the combined tactical screening center throughout the operation. The district headquarters had no advance knowledge of the operation. To insure maximum security they were not informed of the operation until it was implemented. By 0630 hours, 44 river assault craft and ten PBR's deployed and had encircled the island reinforcing the initial Naval blockade established at 0630 hours by PBR's and ASPB's. Prior to the debarkation of the infantry battalions, the brigades psyop team, augmented by the 85 section, initiated loudspeaker and leaflet drops operations notifying the populace of the impending operation and directing them to report to one of the two detainees collection centers. Pre-recorded tapes were played over a public

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address system (1000 watts) mounted in a UH1D helicopter from 0630 to 0800 hours and later from 0820 to 0930 hours. The first of two tapes used, directed the civilians to go to either one of two collection points. The second tape urged the enemy (VC) to surrender and advised him that allied forces were in the area, and of the consequences of attempted escape. The civilian populace was given two hours to go to the collection points. During this two hour period, there were two instances of sampans attempting to leave the island. Specific instructions were given for them to return, and the sampans responded immediately. Another loudspeaker system was mounted on an ASPB. The ASPB was employed through one segment of the Naval cordon, playing the identical two tapes. A total of 70,000 quick reaction leaflets were dropped over the island to augment the loudspeaker announcing the conditions of the cordon. At 0830 hours, the 3-47th and 3-60th Infantry Battalions beached. The 3-47th Infantry then began its sweep to the southwest. Bravo Company 3-47th Infantry captured one BAR, one chicom carbine, 35 rounds of chicom ammo and five pounds of documents in the vicinity W8955022. Two male detainees were apprehended by B/3-47th Infantry vicinity W3964018; one detainee succeeded in escaping later in the day. A search of the area was conducted but the detainee could not be found. The company collected a total of 125 male detainees. Upon completion of their beaching, the 3-60th Infantry began its sweep operations northwest in zone collecting and evacuating 293 detainees for interrogation; two of which were identified as Viet Cong. During the battalion's operation B/3-60th uncovered 49 bunkers and two (2) anti-personnel mines which were destroyed in addition to two VC flags. The operation concluded on the same day at 1730 hours. All elements backloaded on ATC's and returned to the MRB. Throughout the entire operation both battalions conducted MEDCAP and DENTCAP operations at the detainee collection points. No enemy contact was made during the day however, three US were WHA resulting from a booby trap.

J. 26 February 1968:

(1) General. On 26 February, the Brigade encountered heavy enemy contact while conducting search and sweep operations in Chu Heng District, Phong Dinh Province. During the initial stage of the operation, elements of the 303rd, 306th and 309th Viet Cong Main Force Battalion elected to fight instead of retreating from the engaged elements of the Brigade inflicting considerable losses on the Brigade. The Brigade's initial concept of the operation was modified as a result of the tactical situation and the enemy was forced to withdraw after sustaining heavy casualties.

(2) The MRF commenced the operation at 0300 hours in accordance to OPORD 18-68. The 3-47th Artillery (-) and Charlie Company 3-60th Infantry deployed from FSB Hotchkiss vicinity W8812144 to FSB Ricardo vicinity W85787306. Approximately 0700 hours the 3-47th Infantry conducted a riverine movement from the MRB to execute an assault landing on the beach sites Blue 1, 2, and 3 vicinity W8800119. The 3-60th (-) conducted a riverine movement at 0830 hours to F2 Bobcat vicinity W8841142, in preparation for the air-mobile assault into the area of operation, the boats then moved down the Song Can Tho to establish anti-exfiltration patrols from W8826057. By 0832 hours, Alfa Company 3-47th Infantry and Echo Company 3-47th Infantry had executed their beach assaults unopposed at Blue 3 vicinity W8801120. Blue 2 vicinity W8800119 and Blue 1 vicinity W8799116 respectively. Charlie Company beached after Echo Company as the battalion reserve. After beaching, the 3-47th swept south initiating search and sweep operations as originally planned. Boats of River Division 92 established patrols on the Rach Bien Thuy between W8801121 and W8830130.

(a) The 3-60th Infantry (-) began its airmobile operation into the area of operations, by deploying B Company as the first element to LZ Bravo vicinity W8831075. The first lift of

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B Company landed on the LZ at 0940 hours and received sporadic sniper fire from the vicinity of objectives 56, 98 and 101. The second lift, upon landing at 1000 hours, was immediately engaged by accurate small arms and automatic weapons fire. The LZ was prepared, prior to the first element landing, by artillery fires and airstrikes. However, the enemy was afforded protection against the preparation fires by the well constructed fighting positions (bunkers and holes). As a result of the enemy's fires, the second lift of B Company sustained ten US KIA and an excess number of US personnel wounded (approximately 20 WHA); seven of which were reported to be in serious condition. Of the twelve helicopters conducting the lift, one was destroyed and eleven were badly damaged to the extent that additional replacement helicopters were required to complete the airmobile operation. Elements of Bravo Company 3-60th Infantry on the LZ suddenly found themselves confronted with the task of suppressing the enemy fires; the majority of the automatic weapons fire was coming from the vicinity of WS813077. The artillery forward observer and his radio man were wounded while aboard one of the helicopters. At 1130 hours, additional helicopters were available for Echo Company 3-60th Infantry to load for movement into the AO in order to link up with and assist Bravo Company. Echo Company 3-60th was airborne at 1150 hours and at 1159 hours landed in the AO unopposed and southwest of Bravo Company 3-60th Infantry position vicinity WS813083. Alpha Company 3-60th Infantry was introduced into the AO vicinity WS814083 at 1405 hours in one lift. Additional airmobile assets were provided by 4th Corps to expedite the airlift. Alpha 3-60th Infantry followed Echo 3-60th towards B Company's location, and received small arms and automatic weapons fire vicinity WS813078. At 1430 hours, Echo 3-60th Infantry's movement was delayed during a stream crossing. While crossing, the company was engaged with small arms and automatic weapons fire for approximately 20 minutes vicinity WS811078; three US were WHA as a result of these fires. Meanwhile Bravo 3-60th Infantry was still engaging the enemy; and at 1545 hours both Bravo and Echo Companies were in heavy contact with the enemy and were not able to effect the link up. An enemy machinegun position, vicinity WS813077, prevented an expeditious link up of the companies. The machinegun position was eliminated by elements of Bravo Company, killing the machinegun crew of four VC. The link up was completed at 1715 hours, at which time B Company was placed under the operational control of E Company because Bravo 3-60th Infantry had sustained heavy casualties. The three companies (A, B and E) secured the area of contact and established their perimeter of defense for the night. Resupply and medical evacuations were conducted. The enemy continued to engage the companies with sporadic small arms and sniper fire throughout the evening. Echo Company 3-60th Infantry reported they were monitoring an enemy radio net; and the communications indicated that the VC would not withdraw from the area because of US armed helicopters. The enemy personnel losses were not known at this time; however, it was also difficult to determine the exact number of casualties that the 3-60th Infantry Battalion has sustained. Approximately ten US were KIA and 40 or more had been WHA.

(b) The 3-47th Infantry Battalion conducted their search and sweep operation initially as planned. However, at 1037 hours Echo 3-47th was tasked to move to assist Bravo 3-60th Infantry. At 1107 hours the 3-47th Infantry Battalion was tasked to sweep south toward objective 27 to assist and reinforce the 3-60th Infantry. The Battalion began its movement south, halting at 1250 hours when an airstrike was employed against objective 27. Following the strike the battalion continued its movement receiving sporadic sniper fire occasionally from the southwest of objective 27; two US personnel were wounded from these fires. The battalion requested and employed a light fire team on enemy positions vicinity WS798087. Elements of the

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battalion encountered enemy contact vicinity WS801085 while crossing a stream. Bravo Company 3-47th Infantry crossed the stream and moved south toward objective 20 (vicinity WS806086) while A and E Companies remained on the north side of the stream. After Bravo Company had secured the area vicinity of the crossing site, the remaining elements of the battalion crossed the stream at approximately 1637 hours. The companies continued their movement toward Bravo 3-60th Infantry location, receiving occasional small arms and sniper fires. Bravo 3-47th Infantry reported two US were KHA and one US WHA resulting from sniper fires. Alpha and Echo Companies continued their movement until 1945 hours at which time they established their night defensive positions as follows: Alpha Company WS806084, Bravo Company WS805084, Charlie Company WS801084 and Echo Company WS803083.

(c) By 2140 hours both battalions had established night defensive positions and completed resupply. Ground contact with the enemy had ceased. Task Force 117 had established interdictory anti-exfiltration patrols on the Rach Can Tho from the city of Can Tho along the southern boundary of operations to vicinity WS777036. About 2030 hours, ATC 111-6 received a hit in the port bow causing a loud explosion. ASPB 111-6 closed the ATC to provide assistance and was taken under fire by automatic weapons from vicinity WS725054. Fire was returned and suppressed. Ten minutes later, ATC 91-9 received recoilless rifle in the vicinity WS788037. The round passed over the ATC which immediately returned and suppressed the fire. There were no casualties to boat personnel in either attack. The units continued their patrols without incident until 0215 when a major action occurred as a result of a large force of VC attempting to exfiltrate the area of operations. ASPB 112-4, one of the units patrolling between WS772030 and WS818064 came under heavy fire from both banks vicinity WS777036. The boat sustained several B-40 rocket hits causing major flooding and wounding two crewmen. Other river assault craft moved into the area and suppressed the hostile fire about 0220, but ASPB 112-4 sank as it was being towed by Monitor 112-1 back to FSB RICARDO. All crew members were rescued, but Monitor 111-3 received several hits while moving into assist the disabled ASPB. Five Monitor crewmen were wounded. During the same period, ASPB 111-4, operating four kilometers east of the first attack, was engaged with a heavy volume of rocket and automatic weapons fire vicinity WS810345. The boat captain and radio were killed instantly and the three other crewmen were wounded. The three survivors were able to beach the boat, however, and it was later towed back to the fire support base. The enemy continued their attack for an hour and a half, with ATC 111-2, ATC 111-11, ATC 111-9 and ASPB 112-7 all involved in major contact. A light helicopter fire team reconnoitered the area by fire and aided in suppressing the enemy fires. Although it was impossible to make an actual body count, it is certain that the enemy sustained substantial casualties as the assault craft thoroughly strafed the sources of hostile fire with all weapons. More importantly, the VC were unable to escape south across the Song Can Tho as the blockade was successfully maintained throughout the action.

(d) Throughout the night the enemy harassed the infantry battalions with probing actions and sniper fire. Artillery and mortar fires were employed on suspected enemy positions silencing their fires. Echo Company 3-47th Infantry engaged an estimated VC squad size force in the vicinity of WS8050084. Approximately 0400 hours the enemy attempted to penetrate Bravo Company 3-47th Infantry's sector of the perimeter. The contact lasted approximately 10 minutes resulting in three VC KIA's and one captured AK 47 rifle. Contact remained sporadic for the balance of the night. At day light the 3-47th Infantry commenced sweeping to the south and the 3-60th Infantry conducted a search of the battle area. The sweep continued south to the Rach Can to vicinity WS823037, where the 3-60th loaded on armored

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troop carriers at 1500 hours and returned to the MRB. The 3-47th Infantry moved to Rach Can The vicinity WS8090045 and loaded armored troop carriers for movement back to the MRB. All elements of the battalions closed at the MRB at 1845 hours. As a result of the two day operation there were 22 US KIA's and 83 WHA's. Eighty five enemy were KIA (VC); 22 weapons, 75 B-40 rounds, (5) B-50 rounds, (6) 57mm recoilless rifle rounds, (2) 75mm recoilless rifle rounds, (3) 75mm pack howitzer rounds, 190 60mm mortar rounds; 10,600 AK 47 rounds, 3,000 7.62 rounds, (7) claymore mines, 200 flares, 30 lbs TAT, 123 assorted grenades, 11 gas grenades, (4) anti tank mines, (3) 25 lbs mines (6) anti-personnel mines, blasting caps, web gear, wire cutters and other items of equipment.

k. 1 thru 2 March 1968;

(1) General. After a two day stand down (28 and 29 February). The Brigade continued operation CORONADO XI south of the RACH CAN THO River, in accordance with frag order 2 to OPORD 18-68. The MRF's mission was to conduct riverine, search and sweep operations in CAI RANG District to locate, fix and destroy enemy elements in zone.

(2) At 0500 hours, the 3-47th Infantry and 3-60th Infantry embarked on ATC's in preparation for movement into the AO. Both battalions departed the MRB at 0545 hours. The 3-47th Infantry conducted beach landings at 0655 hours vicinity WS811042 to WS817047 with no enemy contact. The 3-60th Infantry (-) conducted their beach landings in the vicinity of WS824058 at 0700 hours; C/3-60th Infantry beached 15 minutes earlier in the same location. All beaching operations were made without any enemy contact; both battalions upon beaching commenced their search and sweep operations north in zone. Elements of each battalion encountered sporadic engagements with small arms fire during their sweep operations. Later in the afternoon, both battalions were engaged in moderate to heavy contact. Artillery, gunships and airstrikes were employed to support of units in contact.

(a) At 1515 hours, B/3-47th Infantry in the vicinity of WS792078 was engaged from several (8-10) positions with heavy volumes of small arms and automatic weapon fire. Both Alpha and Charlie 3-47th Infantry were employed to reinforce Bravo Company. Charlie Company established contact while moving towards Bravo Company 3-47th Infantry's west flank. Alpha Company made contact while maneuvering from vicinity of WS802070 toward WS806078. The enemy contact continued into the evening hours and terminated at 2100 hours. The battalion then assumed its night defensive position. During this engagement the 3-47th Infantry sustained two US KIA and 22 WHA. Seven VC were KIA by body counts found the following day. Seven VC were KIA (BC).

(b) The 3-60th Infantry encountered light to moderate contact during their sweep operations. The battalion found seven VC KIA and two AK 47 rifles during the initial search operations. Later during the day Alpha and Charlie Companies 3-60th Infantry moved toward vicinity WS794077 to support elements of the 3-47th Infantry. At 1655 hours Charlie Company 3-60th Infantry engaged and killed five VC in the vicinity of WS805080. Alpha 3-60th Infantry was engaged in the vicinity of WS801085 from three sides resulting in one US KIA (unit commander). Elements of the battalion continued their operations with moderate contact receiving automatic weapons and small arms fire until 2000 hours. The battalion then assumed its night defensive position. The battalion's operation resulted in three US KIA, nine WHA and one WHA; enemy losses were 12 VC KIA (BC).

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(3) Throughout the night, the enemy harassed both battalions, employing 60mm and 82mm mortar fires on their positions. The Brigade continued its offensive operations, early the morning of 2 March by sweeping the battle area. No significant contact developed throughout the day, however, the enemy sporadically engaged battalion elements with small arms fire. The 3-60th Infantry found 25 graves containing of VC KIA on the previous day. The 3-47th Infantry found two caches containing weapons and medical supplies. Twelve VC were KIA during the day; ten of which were killed by light fire teams (armed helicopters) supporting a River Assault Reconnaissance operation conducted by the Naval elements of MRF.

(4) Salvage operations continued on ASPB 112-4 on February 29 and March 1. At 0400 on March 1, security patrols came under enemy attack from the south bank vicinity WB770030. B-40 rockets and automatic weapons fire were directed at ASPB 112-8 and Monitor 112-1 which took several hits. A B-40 rocket round that struck ASPB 112-8 knocked the boat captain overboard, and an extensive search yielded negative results. Other boats moved into suppress the hostile fire, and minor flooding aboard ASPB 112-8 was controlled.

**12. RESULTS:**

a. Enemy personnel casualties:	KIA	POW
(1) Period 140600 thru 201627 Feb	89	10
(2) Period 220300 thru 231600 Feb	66	
(3) Period 240300 thru 241630 Feb		2
(4) Period 260400 thru 021630 Mar	142	2
(5) Total enemy casualties:	297	14
b. Friendly personnel casualties:	KHA	WHA
(1) Period 140600 thru 201627 Feb	13	77
(2) Period 220300 thru 231600 Feb		
(3) Period 240300 thru 241630 Feb		3
(4) Period 260400 thru 021900 Feb	29	120
(5) Total friendly casualties:	42	200

**13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:**

a. CORONADO XI revealed some unusual supply activity due to the geographical location of operations, the tempo of operations and the change in control headquarters from 9th Infantry Division (US) to IV Corps.

b. The geographical location placed the MRF away from the normal lines of communication thus straining normal resupply. Continuous operations caused a heavy expenditure of ammunition and a greater than normal usage of operational Class I and Class III supplies. The operational control exercised by IV Corps created a new set of logistics channels to support operations.

c. Basically, all the logistics problems were solved by personal liaison between the MRF Army logistics representatives and located at CAN THO. Items such as C rations, flour, mags and limited II and IV construction materials were provided by 1st LOG Command. In addition IV Corps provided ADMIN transportation and evacuation for graves registration requirements. Both Army and Navy logistics problems were aided by IV Corps eagerness and rapid response.

**14. SPECIAL TECHNIQUES:**

Implementation of OPORD 17-68 (240300 - 241630) Feb 68 introduced a new concept in MRF operations and demonstrated the unique characteristics of the MRF capabilities. The establishment of a Naval cordon (encirclement), followed by the introduction of Army infantry was accomplished in such a manner that enemy withdrawal from the island

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was negligible. The operation was further enhanced by employing preplanned civil affairs and psychological operations. Although the AO was an island, this technique may be applicable to other areas where its size and adjacent waterways would permit establishment of a Naval cordon.

15. COMMANDER ANALYSIS:

a. Within the CAN THO area, most Riverine movements throughout waterways and canals were accomplished without any significant enemy opposition. The enemy had no prepared defensive or fighting positions along or in close proximity to the canals, that would deny or hinder MRF deployment activities. However, the enemy had initiated excellent defensive measures to intercept airmobile operations conducted near open rice paddies. Bunkers were well constructed and facilitated good overhead protection against artillery and airstrikes. The bunkers were positioned such that adequate fields of fire were best utilized. In one instance, the introduction of MRF elements was such that the enemy could not engage them; their bunkers were oriented in the opposite direction. Realizing this, the enemy panicked and attempted to withdraw making himself vulnerable to the fires of the advancing US elements and supporting gunships.

b. The enemy demonstrated his ability to employ automatic weapons fire during his initial engagement of friendly forces. All contacts were characterized by an initial heavy volume of automatic weapons fire followed by sporadic sniper fires. Sniper activities showed evidence of the enemy's desire to engage unit leaders and radio operators. Snipers were well trained and extremely effective in the CAN THO area. Friendly casualties resulting from enemy sniper fires generally had head and upper torso wounds. The enemy also demonstrated his determination to remain in contact until the late hours of the night (2200 to 2400 hours). After which he would withdraw, but harass friendly positions with mortar and rocket fires. Arms and supply caches are evidently located throughout the area. Medical and ammunition caches are relatively large in size, and they could possibly be the largest caches established within the Delta Region.

c. The missions contained in paragraph nine of this report were determined to be essential for the accomplishment of the Brigade's overall mission within the KHONG DINH Province. All operations conducted made maximum utilization of Naval and air assets, and demonstrated that adequate planning and timely intelligence is essential. Airmobile assets are a must, and their availability and utilization can vastly influence the course of a tactical situation; whereby Rapid Reaction Forces can be employed to reinforce a unit in contact or exploit the enemy situation. With the addition of the Brigade's third infantry battalion afloat, the Brigade will then be capable of selecting more targets and intensifying its operations within an AO. During OPERATION CORONADO XI, the MRF's reactions, planning and execution of subsequent operations were successfully accomplished.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS: None.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

5 Inclosures

1. Task Organization
2. Overlay to OPORD 15-68
3. Overlay to OPORD 16-68
4. Overlay to OPORD 17-68
5. Overlay to OPORD 18-68

WINSTON H. SUN  
Major, Infantry  
Adjutant

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**TASK ORGANIZATION**

- 23 1. OPORD 15-68 (Period 140600 thru 201627)  
HEADQUARTERS, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division
- a. 3-47th Infantry Battalion
  - b. 3-60th Infantry Battalion
  - c. 3-34th Artillery Battalion (-)
  - d. Airmobile Company, DS - attached
  - e. 3/D/15th Engineer Battalion
2. OPORD 16-68 (Period 220300 thru 231600)  
HEADQUARTERS, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division
- a. 3-47th Infantry Battalion
  - b. 3-60th Infantry Battalion
  - c. 3-34th Artillery Battalion (-)
  - d. C/2-35th Artillery (Reinf) - attached
  - e. C/4-47th Infantry - attached
3. OPORD 17-68 (Period 240300 thru 241630)  
HEADQUARTERS, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division
- a. 3-47th Infantry Battalion
  - b. 3-60th Infantry Battalion
  - c. 3-34th Artillery Battalion (-)
  - d. 3/D/15th Engineer Battalion
  - e. Psyop Team
4. OPORD 18-68 (Period 260400 Feb thru 021900 Mar)  
HEADQUARTERS, 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division
- a. 3-47th Infantry Battalion
  - b. 3-60th Infantry Battalion
  - c. 3-34th Artillery Battalion (-)
  - d. Airmobile Company (DS)
  - e. 3/D/15th Engineer Battalion

Inclosure 1

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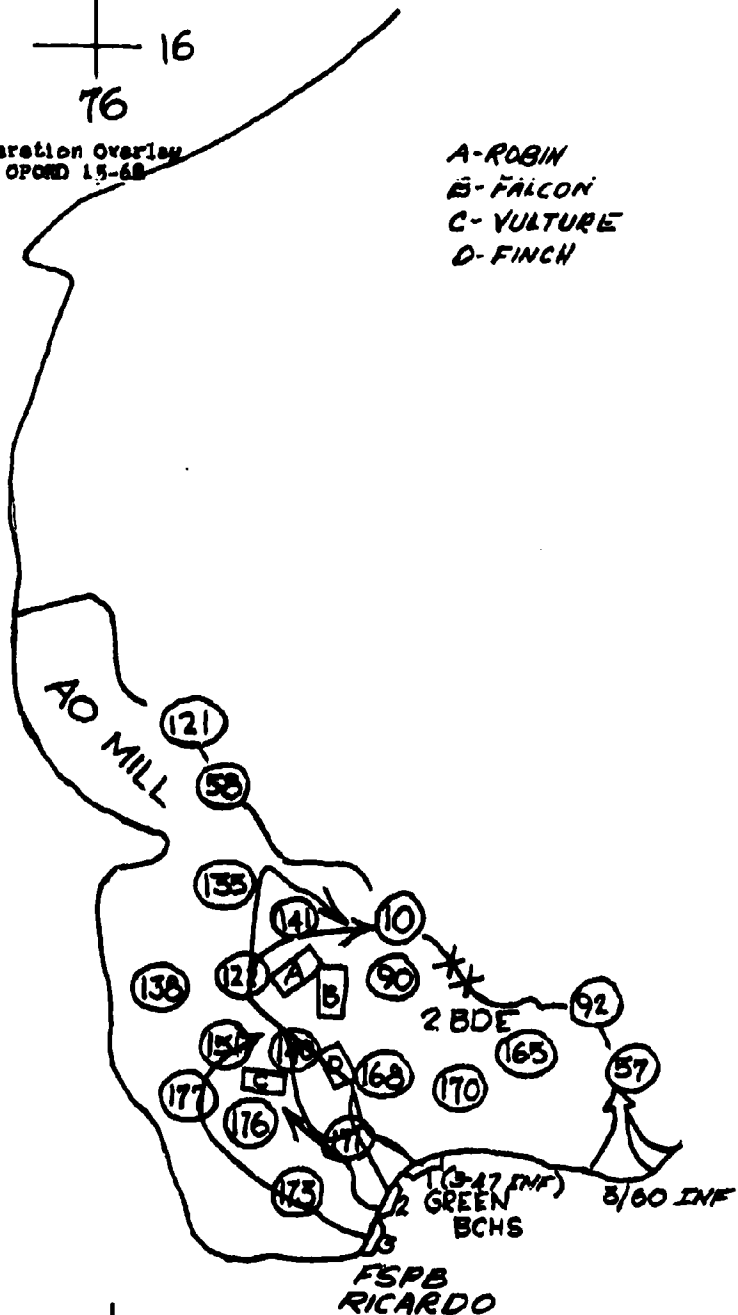
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to OPORD 15-68

A-ROBIN  
B-FALCON  
C-VULTURE  
D-FINCH



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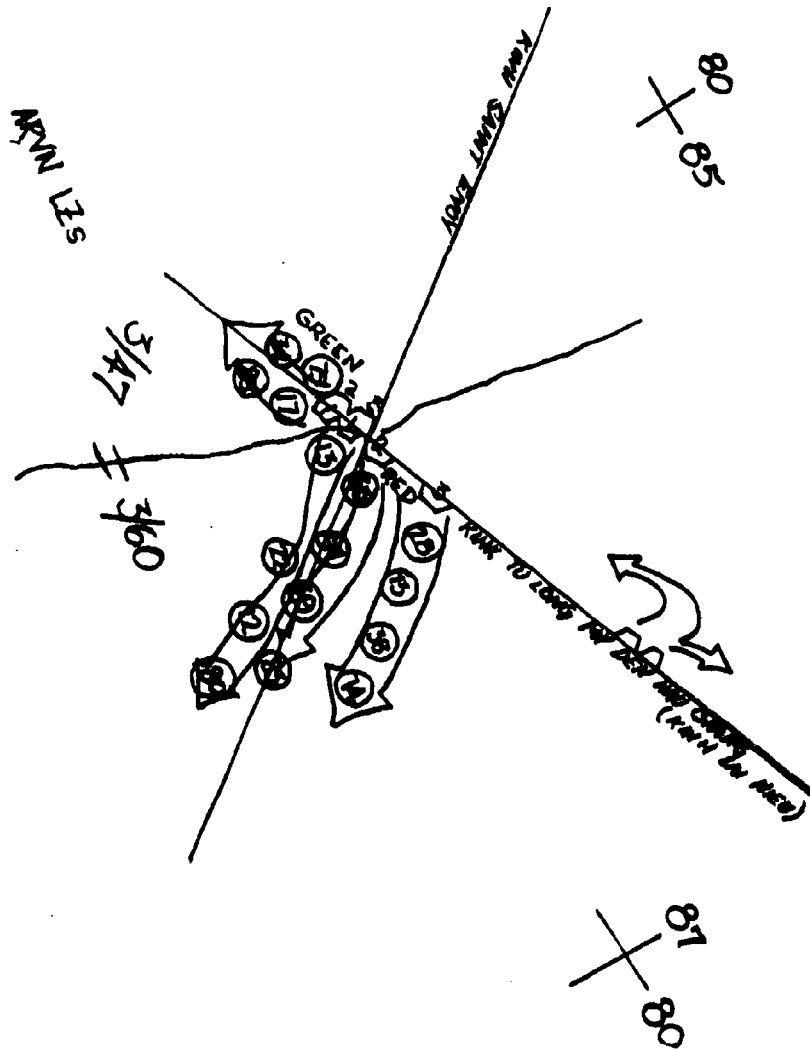
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27 Operation Overlay  
to OPORD 16-68



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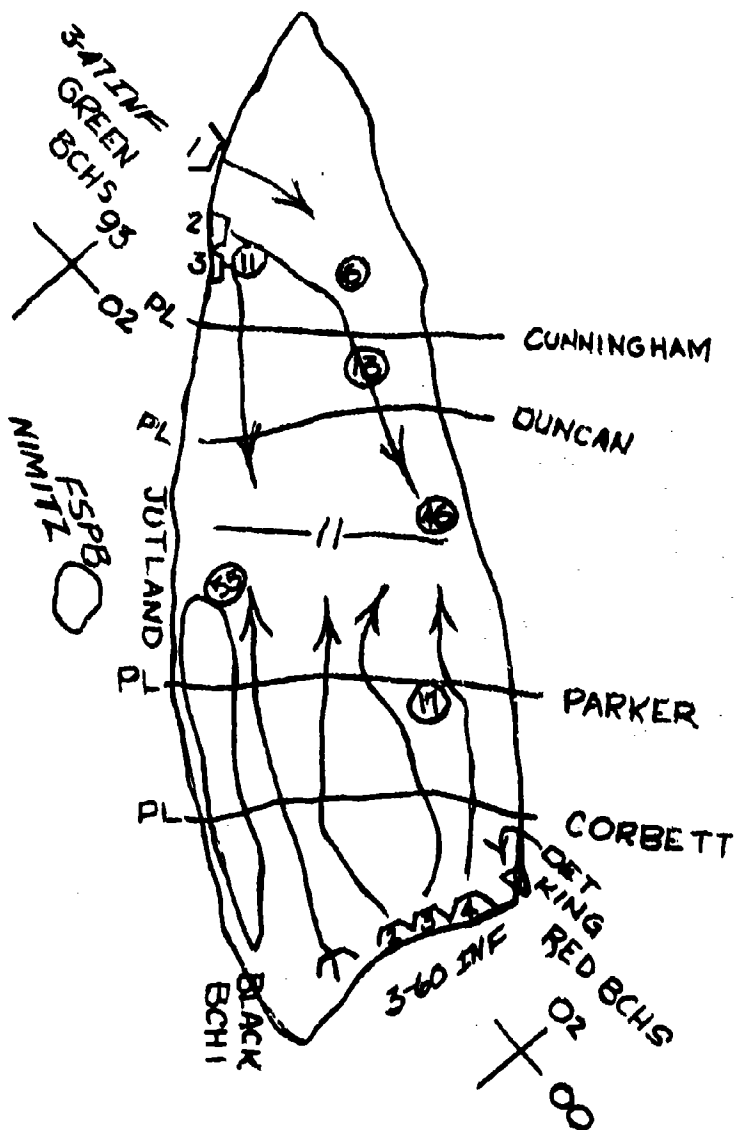
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Operation Overlay  
to OPORD 17-68



Inlosure 4

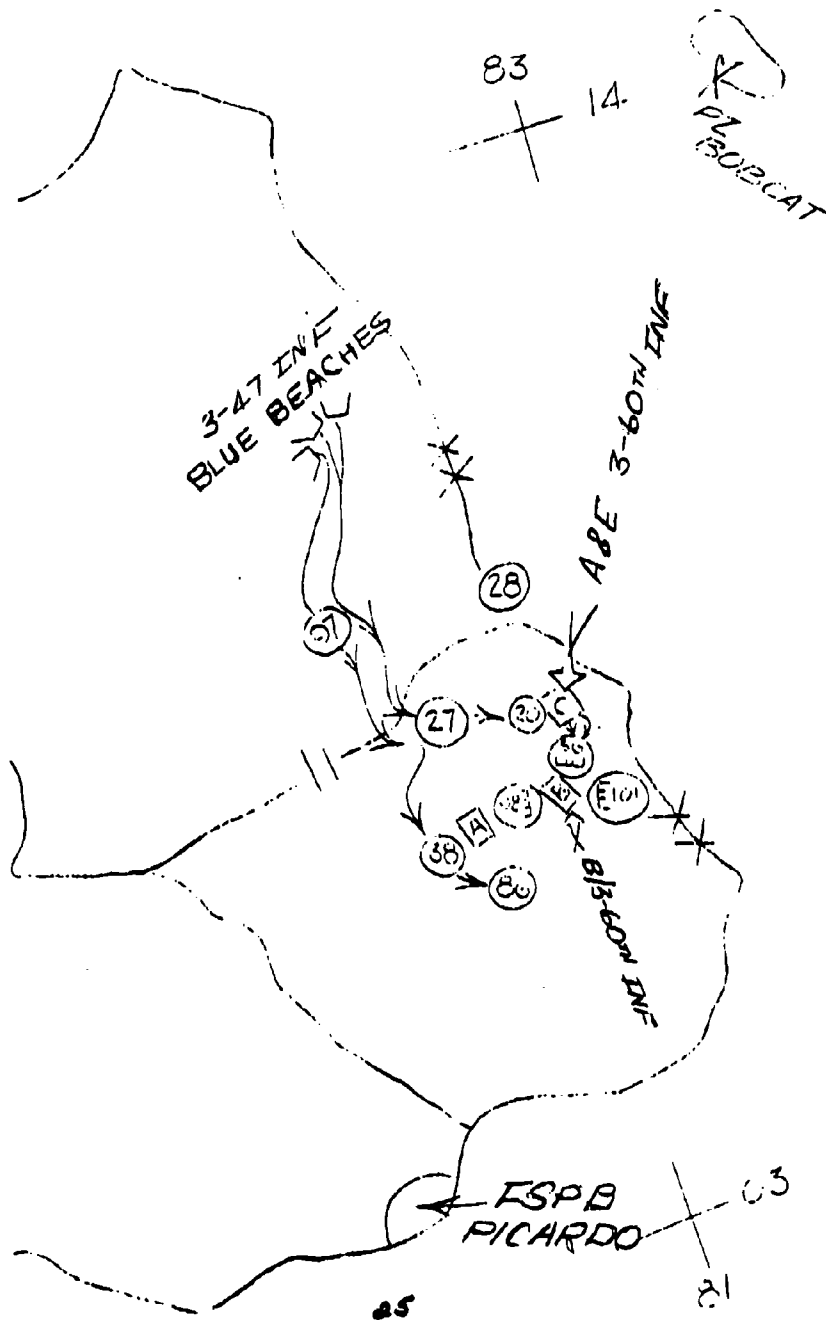
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 \*\* FOR OT RD # \_\_\_\_\_  
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