

UNCLASSIFIED

AD NUMBER	
AD512272	
CLASSIFICATION CHANGES	
TO:	unclassified
FROM:	confidential
LIMITATION CHANGES	
TO:	Approved for public release, distribution unlimited
FROM:	Distribution authorized to U.S. Gov't. agencies and their contractors; Administrative/Operational Use; 04 AUG 1970. Other requests shall be referred to Office of the Adjutant General, Washington, DC 20310.
AUTHORITY	
OAG D/A ltr, 11 Jun 1980; OAG D/A ltr, 11 Jun 1980	

THIS PAGE IS UNCLASSIFIED

THIS REPORT HAS BEEN DELIMITED  
AND CLEARED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE  
UNDER DOD DIRECTIVE 5200.20 AND  
NO RESTRICTIONS ARE IMPOSED UPON  
ITS USE AND DISCLOSURE.

DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT A

APPROVED FOR PUBLIC RELEASE;  
DISTRIBUTION UNLIMITED.

# **SECURITY**

---

# **MARKING**

**The classified or limited status of this report applies to each page, unless otherwise marked.**

**Separate page printouts MUST be marked accordingly.**

---

THIS DOCUMENT CONTAINS INFORMATION AFFECTING THE NATIONAL DEFENSE OF THE UNITED STATES WITHIN THE MEANING OF THE ESPIONAGE LAWS, TITLE 18, U.S.C., SECTIONS 793 AND 794. THE TRANSMISSION OR THE REVELATION OF ITS CONTENTS IN ANY MANNER TO AN UNAUTHORIZED PERSON IS PROHIBITED BY LAW.

NOTICE: When government or other drawings, specifications or other data are used for any purpose other than in connection with a definitely related government procurement operation, the U.S. Government thereby incurs no responsibility, nor any obligation whatsoever; and the fact that the Government may have formulated, furnished, or in any way supplied the said drawings, specifications, or other data is not to be regarded by implication or otherwise as in any manner licensing the holder or any other person or corporation, or conveying any rights or permission to manufacture, use or sell any patented invention that may in any way be related thereto.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

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



IN REPLY REFER TO

AGDA (M) (30 Oct 70)

FOR OT UT 70B037

10 November 1970

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: BG H. S. Cunningham, CG,  
173d Airborne Brigade, Period 9 August 1969 to 10 August  
1970 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Reference: AR 1-26, subject, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U) dated 4 November 1966.
2. Transmitted herewith is the report of BG H. S. Cunningham, subject as above.
3. This report is provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the author. The report should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 1-26; however, it should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.
4. Information of actions initiated under provisions of AR 1-26, as a result of subject report should be provided ACSFOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*Kenneth G. Wickham*

KENNETH G. WICKHAM  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

1 Incl  
as

DISTRIBUTION:

Commanding Generals

US Continental Army Command

US Army Combat Developments Command

Commandants

US Army War College

US Army Command and General Staff College

US Army Armor School

US Army Aviation School

US Army Combat Surveillance School

US Army Engineer School

Regraded unclassified when separated  
from classified inclosure.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

AD512272

**Best  
Available  
Copy**

## CONFIDENTIAL

### DISTRIBUTION (Cont'd)

- US Army Field Artillery School
- US Army Infantry School
- US Army Institute for Military Assistance

### Copies furnished:

- Office, Chief of Staff, US Army
- Deputy Chiefs of Staff
- Chief of Research and Development
- Assistant Chiefs of Staff
- Chief of Engineers
- Chief of Military History
- Office, Joint Chiefs of Staff
- Commanders in Chief
  - Pacific
  - US Army Pacific
  - US Strike Command
- Commanding Generals
  - Deseret Test Center
  - III Corps
- Chief of Staff, USAF
- Deputy Chief of Staff, Air Force, Plans & Operations
- Chief of Naval Operations
- Commandant of the Marine Corps
- Commandants
  - Armed Forces Staff College
  - Defense Intelligence School
  - Industrial College of the Armed Forces
  - The National War College
- Senior Army Representative, Marine Corps Development & Education Command
- USAF Air Ground Operations School
- The Air University Library
- Defense Documentation Center
- USAF Project RAND
- Commanding Officers
  - US Army Limited War Laboratory
  - US Army Logistics, Doctrine Systems & Readiness Agency
  - US Army Mobility Equipment Research & Development Center

CONFIDENTIAL



**CONFIDENTIAL**

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96375

12 00 170

AVHGC-DST

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report -  
Brigadier General H.S. Cunningham

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

1. Reference para 6, AR 1-26.
2. Attached are three copies of the Senior Officer Debriefing Report prepared by Brigadier General H.S. Cunningham. The report covers the period 9 August 1969 - 10 August 1970, during which time BG Cunningham served as Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade.
3. BG Cunningham is recommended as a candidate guest speaker at appropriate service schools and joint colleges.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl  
as (trip)  
2 cy wd HQ DA

W. C. Stevens Jr.

Major General, USA

FOR OT UT  
7. 5037

Incl sure

Regraded unclassified when separated  
from classified inclosure.

i

**CONFIDENTIAL**

**CONFIDENTIAL**



DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 173D AIRBORNE BRIGADE  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96250

AVBE-CG

9 August 1970

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

THRU: ~~Commanding General~~  
~~I Field Force, Vietnam~~ *Reg. A/c/s. 11 Aug 1970*  
~~APO San Francisco 96250~~

TO: Commanding General  
United States Army, Vietnam  
ATTN: AVHGC-DST  
APO San Francisco 96375

1. Attached is the debriefing report of my tenure as Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade during the period 9 August 1969 to 10 August 1970.

2. This report documents the progress of Operation WASHINGTON GREEN, the Brigade's pacification operation in the four northern districts of Binh Dinh Province. It is replete with facts and figures which are intended to measure the success of the Brigade's three-front program; Pacification, Combat Operations, and the Improvement of ARVN and Territorial Forces. By any of the usual statistical indicators the enemy in Northern Binh Dinh is steadily losing ground and his former stranglehold on this key area has been effectively broken.

3. The truly significant gains, however, cannot be adequately described by charts and graphs. A full appreciation of the results of our efforts can only be obtained by considering a host of intangibles and by personal observation over a period of time. When these factors are added to the statistics, the true measure of our achievements is revealed.

*For OT UT*  
*70B037*

Regraded unclassified when separated  
from classified inclosure.

**CONFIDENTIAL**

Incl



AVBE-CG

9 August 1970

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

4. Rather than cite impressive figures on kill ratios and body count, I prefer to gauge our success in terms of the 300,000 Vietnamese people which are now more than 90% under the control and protection of their government. Less than 50% were in this category when WASHINGTON GREEN began. I'm proud of the huge sections of land reclaimed and resettled, the hamlets restored, the new roads built, and the bustling market places which make Northern Binh Dinh a thriving economic area. A little over a year ago, this same area was a desolated land with masses of refugees huddled fearfully along QL 1, the sole area under GVN control.

5. The really meaningful success indicators are the smiles I see on the people's faces as I walk through hamlets that recently were dangerous to fly over, and the confidence exhibited by Regional and Popular Forces planning and executing night operations. Other heart-warming indicators are children attending school for the first time in years, if not their lives; roads long in disuse being repaired or new roads extending to hamlets that have always been isolated; instances where wives have gone into VC-dominated hills to have their husbands surrender and rally to the government; and the increasingly frequent occasions where villagers point out booby traps to US or GVN troops, and identify VC sympathizers, guerrillas, and members of the infrastructure.

6. During the past year, I have witnessed tremendous change in Northern Binh Dinh. New red-tiled roofs dot the district, new rice paddies reach further and further into what was once abandoned land, and former VC strongholds have been transformed into pro-GVN economic centers.

7. This certainly was not due solely to the exploits of the 173d Airborne Brigade, although we are, justifiably I think, proud of the major role we have played. Progress was achieved by a coordinated team effort in which GVN forces and their MACV advisors combined with our troops to carry out joint plans for

AVBE-CG

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

9 August 1970

military operations, training, and civic action. The success of WASHINGTON GREEN does, I believe, prove the validity of the methods described in this report and their value as a model to be employed in other areas of Vietnam.

AIRBORNE ALL THE WAY!



H. S. CUNNINGHAM  
Brigadier General, USA  
Commanding

1 Incl  
as

CONFIDENTIAL

SENIOR OFFICER DEBRIEFING PROGRAM

(BG H.S. Cunningham, 173d Airborne Brigade)

COUNTRY: Republic of Vietnam

DEBRIEF REPORT BY: Brigadier General H.S. Cunningham

DUTY ASSIGNED: Commanding General, 173d Airborne Brigade

INCLUSIVE DATES: 9 Aug 1969 - 10 Aug 1970

DATE OF REPORT: 4 Aug 1970

Regraded unclassified when separated  
from classified inclosure.

Incl 1 to Incl 1

4

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

1. Introduction	8
a. Pursuit of Pacification	
b. Upgrading the Territorial Forces	
c. Combat Operations	
d. Requirement for Total Involvement	
2. Tactical Situation	9
a. Enemy Situation	
(1) Prior to Washington Green	
(2) During Washington Green	
(3) Today	
b. Friendly Situation	
(1) US Forces	
(2) Territorial and ARVN Forces	
3. Concept of Operation	10
a. Tactical Operations	
(1) Collocation	
(2) Employment of Infantry Battalions	
(3) Hawk Teams	
(4) Employment of the Cavalry Troop	
(5) Employment of Artillery	
(6) Employment of Ranger Teams	
(7) Employment of Aircraft	
(8) Employment of Chemical Support	
b. Civic Action/Psychological Operations	

Regraded unclassified when separated  
from classified inclosure.

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS CONTINUED

(1) Civic Affairs	
(2) Psychological Operations	
(3) Engineer Support	
4. Operations	13
a. Tactical Operations	
(1) Operation Washington Green I	
(2) Operation Darby Trail III	
(3) Operation Washington Green II	
(4) Hill 474	
(5) Operation Washington Green III	
(6) Operation Darby Talon (T.F. Talon)	
(7) Soui Ca Valley Operation	
(8) Operation Washington Green IV	
b. Training Operations	
(1) Leadership School	
(2) QJT Through Collocation	
(3) QJT for ARVN Officers	
c. Civil Affairs/Civic Action Operations	
(1) Civil Affairs	
(2) Psychological Operations	
(3) PSDF	
(4) Kit Carson Scout Program	
5. Support	18
a. Organic Aviation	
b. Non-organic Aviation	

# CONFIDENTIAL

## TABLE OF CONTENTS CONTINUED

c. Aviation Maintenance	
d. Logistics	
e. Problems of Dispersion	
6. Base Activities	19
a. Sky Soldier Beach	
b. PX Facilities	
c. Club Facilities	
d. Sky Soldier Library	
e. Photo Lab	
f. Swimming Pool	
g. Projects Under Development	
7. Achievements	20
a. Government	
b. ARVN	
c. Territorial Forces	

# CONFIDENTIAL

## OPERATION WASHINGTON GREEN

1. Introduction. On 15 April 1969 the 173d Airborne Brigade relinquished its role as a major United States reaction force in Vietnam to assume a new and challenging task in the four northern districts of Binh Dinh Province in AO Lea. The operation was named Washington Green and assigned the Brigade the mission of conducting operations in support of GVN Pacification. Involved were a wide variety of requirements, the principal of which form the so called "Three Front Concept;" these were to be performed simultaneously and included the pursuit of province and district pacification plans, the upgrading of the training, leadership, and combat effectiveness of all GVN forces operating in the AO, and finally the conduct of effective combat operations that would complement, exploit, and further stabilize GVN agencies operating in support of pacification.

a. Pursuit of Pacification. US and GVN officials jointly arrived at a set of objectives. Security and improvement of existing lines of communication and the establishment of new ones were high on the list. Next the refugees were to be moved from the overcrowded population centers along QL1 and QL19 and resettled. They were to be accompanied by security forces which would protect the villages and deny the enemy access to the vital crop producing areas. This development of the rural areas was not only to relieve the population congestion, but to provide a needed increase in agricultural production and to provide the stable communities needed for a successful local and national government.

b. Upgrading the Territorial Forces. This was to be accomplished through several means. First, leadership schools were to be established by the Brigade to provide a steady flow of trained junior leaders to the territorial forces. Further, US rifle companies were to deploy to collocate with Regional Force (RF) companies and conduct joint operations. In this way the territorial forces were to "learn by doing". As training improved, US platoons were to join Popular Force (PF) platoons while the Company Command Group was to remain with its RF counterpart. Aggressive patrolling was to be the mainstay of these small units. Initial patrols were to be half US and half Vietnamese, but as the latter gained confidence and expertise, US involvement was to decrease until only one or two paratroopers would accompany each patrol. Thus, each Sky Soldier was to become an advisor and instructor. Further, Security Training Advisory Groups (STAG Teams) were to be established to augment MACV Teams in the training of PSDF hamlet security forces. They were to teach basic tactics, marksmanship, and the care and cleaning of equipment. Upon completion of training the PSDF were to be given the weapon with which they trained and returned to their village.

c. Combat Operations. It was envisioned that as territorial forces became self-sustaining, more ARVN forces would be available to counteract the enemy throughout the AO. When intelligence sources indicated a concerted enemy threat to pacification, a combined US/GVN task force was to be organized and sent to destroy the threat before the enemy offensive was launched. In the case of terrorist activity, a similar combined US/GVN force was to react to insure the populace of the ability and intention of the government to provide them the required protection.

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.  
DOD DIR 5200.10

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

d. It was recognized that success of the concept demanded thorough involvement of both GVN and US forces in pacification and that emphasis on only one phase of the "Three Front Concept" would result in the ultimate failure of the entire program.

## 2. Tactical Situation

### a. Enemy Situation

(1) Enemy activities in Binh Dinh Province date to the Indo-China War. It was the last province to be ostensibly evacuated by the Viet Minh after the Geneva Agreements of 1954, but there remained a strong infrastructure which has formed the nucleus of subsequent insurgency activities. The area proved to be a lucrative center for Viet Cong activity due to the close proximity of heavily vegetated mountains to the densely populated coastal plain with its always ready source of supplies and recruits. Continuously, the trained Viet Cong district and guerrilla forces defied government attempts to gain control of the area and win the support of the people. It was into this atmosphere of communist dominance that the 173d Airborne Brigade entered in the spring of 1969. In March of that year, intelligence sources estimated the insurgent strength to be 5,000 Viet Cong.

(2) As a result of the heavy losses in the early months of Operation Washington Green, the enemy found that for the first time in the history of the war he could not sustain operations and maintain control of the population without NVA help. As a result of a request for assistance from MR 5, the 2nd Regiment, 3rd NVA Division moved into the An Lao Valley in the fall of 1969. After sustained contact with US Forces, this unit moved further south into Base Area 226 where it has since remained. This activity was followed by the introduction into northern Binh Dinh of the 22nd Regiment, 3d NVA Division, a unit which was soon decimated to the point that it was deactivated and its personnel transferred to local VC units.

(3) Today despite operational losses, there are 3,000 enemy still operating in AO Lee as district forces, village and hamlet guerrillas, and VCI. Viet Cong in Tam Quan and Hoai-Nhon Districts control three company size elements and several platoons and squads. Similarly, Hoai An District controls one district force company and Phu My District controls four. Throughout the AO, and in Phu My in particular, elements of the 3d NVA Division are currently working side by side with the Viet Cong. All enemy personnel have had their armament upgraded to include the most modern weapons in their inventory. Current enemy tactics, combined with the integration of NVA with guerrilla forces, are strong indicators that the enemy is returning to hit-and-run guerrilla warfare.

### b. Friendly Situation

(1) US presence in Binh Dinh Province has for 1½ years been comprised almost entirely of the 173d Airborne Brigade. At present the Brigade CP is located at LZ English and each of its four battalions is assigned to a separate district with general support being provided by the organic artillery

# CONFIDENTIAL



## CONFIDENTIAL

battalion. These battalions are each further decentralized into twenty to forty small teams, a system which provides thorough coverage of the territory and emphasizes the importance of action at the hamlet level. The organic support battalion operates fifty miles to the south at Phu Tai and Cha Rang where it has easy access to the key support facilities in the Qui Nhon area.

(2) Prior to the initiation of Operation Washington Green, the GVN territorial forces were almost exclusively employed along QL1 and QL19, and at district headquarters. This forced the ARVN 40th and 41st Regiments, 22nd ARVN Division, to be tied down to the security role normally assigned to the territorial forces. It has been one of the achievements of the operation that today the territorial forces provide the security in most areas. As a result, the 40th ARVN Regiment at LZ English and the 41st ARVN Regiment at LZ Crystal in Phu My District are now free to conduct combat operations and were able to participate in recent operations in Cambodia.

### 3. Concept of Operation

a. Tactical Operations. The Brigade concept of tactical operations is as follows:

(1) Collocation. The most effective and important concept of Operation Washington Green has been the collocation of US Forces with the appropriate district and territorial forces. During the operation each maneuver battalion located its main or forward tactical operations center with that of the MACV advisory element and the GVN officials at district headquarters. This placed the battalion S2 and S3 in close coordination with the District Intelligence Coordination Center (DIOCC). Artillery liaison teams were similarly collocated with the District Fire Direction Centers. This process of collocation was maintained through all lower levels of command, such that US rifle companies collocated with Regional Force companies and rifle platoons with Popular Force platoons. The concept served two purposes: it provided added security to the populated areas and served to train and upgrade the territorial forces. Thus, it provided the nucleus around which Operation Washington Green has developed and operated since the spring of 1969.

### (2) Employment of Infantry Battalions.

(a) At the time I assumed command, three of the Brigade's four organic rifle battalions were committed to pacification in Hoi Nhon, Tam Quan and Phu My Districts. The 1st Bn, 50th Mech Inf, shared the responsibility for Phu My District with the 1st Battalion. Two battalions were required because of the high level of enemy activity in that area. The 2nd Battalion was operating in Hoi Nhon and the 4th in Tam Quan. On 5 September 1969 the 3rd Battalion, which had been with Task Force South, in a one for one switch with the 1/50th Mech, returned to Brigade control and began operations in Phu My District. The territorial forces of Hoi An were sufficiently stable to be able to assume full responsibility for their district.

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

(b) The battalions throughout the operation have maintained their administrative rears at three major fire support bases: LZ English, LZ North English, and LZ Uplift. Tactical CP's, however, have been located either at District Headquarters or in forward areas.

(c) By February 1970, pacification had progressed to such a degree that two battalions were able to conduct combat operations in high ground along the periphery of the populated areas.

(3) Hawk Teams. A Hawk team is a small mobile Hunter-Killer team designed to saturate an area and significantly increase pressure on smaller Viet Cong local force units, logistical carrying parties, and couriers. Their mission is to pursue these smaller enemy groups, carryout interdicting ambushes and provide a constant source of harassment to the enemy. A Hawk team varies in size, based on the mission and situation, from a fire team of 5 men to a full platoon. Whenever possible, Hawk teams include Regional and Popular Forces with as many as 140 Hawks dispersed at night throughout the AO. This concept provides maximum coverage of all suspected avenues of approach. The resulting screen has been most effective in providing the shield behind which the Revolutionary Development Cadres move into the hamlets to initiate basic pacification programs.

(4) Employment of the Cavalry Troop. The organic cavalry troop, comprised of APC's and Sheridan assault vehicles, was limited by terrain and maneuver damage considerations to operations along LOC's and around the populated areas. In the pacification role, track vehicles must avoid destruction of crops and property in order to gain and retain the goodwill of the people. In general the Cav was used to support the battalions with individual platoons placed under the battalion's operational control. This allowed the battalion commander to employ them as the tactical situation dictated. The Cav proved particularly effective when used as a blocking force.

(5) Employment of Artillery. Artillery was positioned throughout the AO to provide maximum coverage and support to maneuver battalions with minimum need for relocating the batteries. One unique feature of battery employment in AO Lee has been the action of batteries to provide their own security for Fire Support Bases. This has allowed the infantry to employ a maximum number of personnel in combat operations.

(6) Employment of Ranger Teams. Ranger teams were employed in areas of suspected enemy concentration and on avenues of approach into populated areas. They were used primarily as an intelligence gathering source and to further develop intelligence based on sensor readouts, Airborne Personnel Detector (Snoopy) readouts, and agent reports. N Co, 75th Infantry is authorized a total of 61 personnel. However, due to operational commitments throughout a large AO, I increased the strength of the unit to 115.

(7) Employment of Aircraft.

(a) The 173d organic aviation platoon operated and maintained 8 UH1H and 6 OH58 aircraft. These were used primarily for command and control and reconnaissance missions.

## CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

(b) A platoon of the 61st AHC provided direct gunship support to the Brigade for airmobile operations. Additional aviation support in the form of slicks and CH-47 hooks was utilized for a wide variety of missions from normal airmobile assaults to fougasse drum-drops. The wide dispersion of units and the rapidly changing situation made such support mandatory.

(8) Employment of Chemical Support. The 51st Chemical Detachment, under the operational control of the Brigade Chemical Officer, supported the Brigade in a wide variety of missions to include employment of herbicides, Airborne Personnel Detectors (APD), Riot Control Agents (RCA), and air delivered thickened fuel (fougasse) drops. These latter two deserve some special discussion.

(a) Riot Control Agents (RCA). The Brigade made frequent use of CS munitions in direct support of combat operations. Bulk CS-2 and micropulverized CS were used in the contamination of boulder and cave complexes to deny their further use to the enemy. E-158 CS cannister clusters were employed from helicopters in conjunction with tactical airstrikes, ground operations, and in crop destruction missions where ground fire was expected.

(b) Air Delivered Thickened Fuel (Fougasse). The 173d Airborne Brigade employed an army aviation flame munition known as fougasse in support of tactical operations. The basic component of the fougasse drum-drops is a fifty-five gallon drum filled with thickened fuel. These drums are rigged for air movement by CH-47 helicopters in slings or cargo nets. The munitions are dropped in the target area and the fuel ignited from a remote source, i.e., hand dropped pyrotechnics, 2.75" rockets, or machine gun tracer ammunition. These munitions had the advantage of being completely under Army control and could be rapidly deployed. They proved extremely effective in missions against tunnel/boulder complexes, bunkers, caves, cache sites and booby trap areas. During eight months of employment, the drops resulted in 42 VC/NVA KIA and 3 VC/NVA CIA. Additionally, there were 92 secondary explosions and many enemy base camps destroyed.

b. Civic Action/Psychological Operations. Complementing tactical operations were civic actions. In the multi-faceted war of Binh Dinh, they played a role of utmost importance and deserved equal priority with tactical operations. The 173d Airborne Brigade's role included assistance to the GVN in getting the people to work among themselves and with the government, and direct self-help assistance to the Vietnamese.

(1) Civil Affairs. To fulfill these two basic objectives the 173d Civil Affairs Program strove to establish the environment, and to provide the techniques and materials, which could assist the government and people to realize their own unique aspirations. Moreover, the 173d program supplemented the GVN Civic Action Program where the GVN and the people were clearly unable to realize their needs and aspirations. Assisting the Vietnamese development meant work through Vietnamese leaders and officials and their US counterparts. These leaders provided first-hand knowledge of local requirements, problems, and existing programs. Once a civic action project or civil assistance had

## CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

been approved and initiated, the Brigade attempted to insure close cooperation with the GVN and to place appropriate emphasis on the GVN involvement in the project, thus showing the people that the GVN is capable and willing to support them.

(2) Psychological Operations. The 173d spent the majority of its direct support PSYOPS time in support of tactical and security operations. Combined tactical and pacification operations stressed the inevitability of GVN victory, the GVN as the fulfillment of the aspirations of the people, and the communist forces as destroyers of everything meant for the welfare and benefit of the Vietnamese people. Pacification PSYOPS concentrated upon the specific constructive projects that were being done by GVN and upon the specific destructive acts and planned terrorism of the Viet Cong. Purely tactical PSYOPS stressed the overwhelming power of the allied forces and the uselessness of dying for the communist cause.

(3) Engineer Support. As plans for pacification were formulated, we recognized that roads were required into the population centers. The majority of target areas were also accessible only by air or foot and the roads that did exist were in disrepair or had been interdicted by the enemy. Roads and bridges were required to increase the mobility of US and territorial forces and to provide commercial access to the populated areas. To satisfy these requirements, an extensive secondary LOC program was formulated jointly at each District by US and GVN officials. This secondary road construction program initiated the movement of refugees back to abandoned hamlets and villages in remote areas and has continuously been instrumental in the advancement of the pacification program.

#### 4. Operations

##### a. Tactical Operations

(1) Operation Washington Green I was well underway by 9 August 1969. By then the maneuver battalions had moved into collocated positions with District and territorial forces and were performing security operations in support of pacification. Cordon and search operations were conducted extensively with RF/PF forces to rid the populated areas of VC guerrilla forces. Simultaneously, the units began conducting active night patrolling in an attempt to eliminate infiltration and movement by the VCI. Hoai An District developed so rapidly that the 1st Battalion, 503d Infantry was moved to Phu My District, thus leaving Hoai An District forces to operate on their own. This initial phase of Washington Green cost the enemy 438 KIA, 54 POW, and 152 small arms captured.

(2) During the period 30 September through 5 October 1969 the Brigade conducted Operation Darby Trail III in the area of the I Military Region and II Military Region boundary. The Brigade mission was to conduct recon-in-force operations in the An Lao Valley and to interdict the movement of the 2d Regiment, 3d NVA Division across the boundary. This was a combined operation involving elements of the Americal Division and 4th Regt, 2d ARVN

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

Division from I MR and two Bns of the 173d Abn Bdo and two regimental task forces of the 22nd ARVN Division from the II MR for a total of 9 battalions. Results of this operation included 55 enemy KIA and 21 small arms CIA with no casualties being inflicted on friendly personnel.

(3) Operation Washington Green II (11 Oct 69) was a continuation of the original mission. Its purpose was to continue support of the pacification effort in Binh Dinh Province and to extend the security screen for the populated areas. By employing fire teams and squads in coordination with territorial forces, the area of operation was saturated with friendly patrols and ambushes. Initial success enabled the 3rd Bn, 503d Infantry to be released from collocation responsibilities of pacification and to initiate combat operations in the clearing zones of AO Lee. In addition, the 3rd Bn, 506th Infantry was placed OPCON to the Brigade on 23 December 1969 to assist the 3rd Bn, 503d Infantry in conducting recon-in-force missions. This force was deployed to the Crows Foot Area (northern base area 226). Enemy losses as a result of operations during this period were 214 KIA, 11 POW, and 91 captured weapons.

(4) On 3 February 1970, in anticipation of the enemy threat for TET 70, elements of the 3rd Bn, 506th Infantry commenced recon-in-force operations in the high ground adjacent to My Binh Hamlet, Tam Quan District. The unit encountered an extensive cave complex while battling the 8th Battalion and other supporting elements of the 22d NVA Regiment which were discovered in attack positions on Hill 474 in Tam Quan District. During the course of the battle, which lasted six weeks, artillery, TAC air, and CS proved ineffective in driving the enemy from his caves. A new tactic, however, proved highly effective. Drops of 55 gallon drums of fougasse, previously described in paragraph 3, provided the pinpoint accuracy required to root out the enemy. Results of the operation were 70 VC/NVA KIA, 15 VC/NVA KBA, and 4 crew served weapons captured.

(5) With the generally uneventful passing of the TET 70 high point, Operation Washington Green III was initiated on 18 February 70. It was designed to provide more flexibility in meeting the changing enemy situation. While the 1st and 4th Battalions continued to provide direct support to Phu My and Tam Quan District Pacification Programs, the 2nd and 3rd Battalions provided overall security by conducting reconnaissance in force against enemy build-ups. The major significance of this phase of Washington Green was to increase the number of combined operations conducted in the AO. Cumulative results of the operation were 938 enemy KIA, 41 POW, 30 Hoi Chanhs, and 383 captured weapons.

(6) As the threat after TET subsided in northern Binh Dinh, TF Talon was deployed on 12 March 1970 in reaction to an enemy build-up in Phu Yen Province. The task force was made up of elements of the 3rd Bn, 503d Infantry. It consisted of a command group, a reinforced rifle company of six platoons, a 4.2 mortar section, and three tubes of 105 artillery. The knowledge and techniques acquired in Binh Dinh were used to support and upgrade the territorial forces of Tuy Hoa District. The task force returned to the Brigade on 22 April 1970. Results of the mission were 9 VC/NVA KIA, 115 detainees, and 4 VCI neutralized.

## CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(7) On 10 April 1970 the 2nd Bn, 503d Infantry, in conjunction with two task forces and an APC Company from the 22nd ARVN Division, conducted operations in the Soui Ca Valley against forward elements of the 3rd NVA Division. The ARVN artillery provided all direct supporting fire for the operation, and ARVN emerged as an aggressive fighting force. Results of this operation were 29 enemy KIA and 2 POW.

(8) During the new phase of Washington Green which was initiated on 10 May 1970, ARVN forces from AO Lee were dispatched into Cambodia. This phase IV of the operation has included expansion of US battalion AO's, accelerated training of territorial forces and more active ambushing and patrolling by all forces in and around the population. The 173d continues Washington Green IV as this report is submitted.

## b. Training Operations

(1) Leadership School. The task of upgrading the territorial forces is based upon improving the quality of the non-commissioned officers and the junior officers of these organizations. To this and the Brigade has operated a leadership school which conducts a thirteen day course for RF/PF personnel. Instruction includes basic military subjects such as marksmanship, patrolling techniques, adjustment of artillery and air support, and basic leadership. A five day course is also conducted for RD/PSDF cadre personnel.

(2) OJT through Collocation. US Forces collocated with RF/PF habitually conducted joint operations and provided on-the-job training through learning by doing. In May 1970 an accelerated program for upgrading the skills of the territorial forces was begun with greater emphasis being placed on weapons training, patrolling and hamlet defense. The US Infantry squads provided the expertise and pushed the training through formal and practical work. This, combined with the Brigade School, has helped expand the territorial forces so that they can provide security to more of the territory of northern Binh Dinh Province.

(3) OJT for ARVN Officers. On 5 June 1970 twenty ARVN officers from training centers throughout Vietnam came to the 173d for a one month on-the-job training program. These officers were assigned to the maneuver battalions and operated in the field rotating from squad thru battalion level. Tactical concepts and ideas were exchanged and the program proved very successful and was profitable to both ARVN officers and US personnel.

## c. Civil Affairs/Civic Action Operations

### (1) Civil Affairs

(a) During Operation Washington Green 81 Km of secondary lines of communications have been completed with 35 Km more scheduled for completion

CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

prior to the 1970 monsoon season. This combined with the growth of territorial forces, provided the environment and manpower which could allow the pacification program to progress and military action to commence. As security improved, people began to resettle areas which they had formerly abandoned because of VC terrorism, harassment, and taxation. In 1969 and early 1970, 28,000 people in AO Lee returned to their native areas. Between August and September 1969 eight hamlets were resettled and security established to keep them loyal to the GVN. The establishment of security is reflected in the continued resettlement of hamlets throughout the AO. In early 1969 some 70,000 refugees formed a major segment of the population of 300,000 in northern Binh Dinh. By early 1970, 60,000 of these people were no longer refugees. Throughout the period the Brigade provided relief assistance to refugees at the Diem Phieu, Trung Luong and Hoai An District refugee camps.

(b) ARVN dependents were another target group whose morale and development were critical to progress in the entire AO. The 73d assisted the 22nd ARVN Division in building dependent housing units at LZ Dog, Hoai Nhon District, LZ Crystal, Phu My District, and near the 22nd ARVN Division Headquarters at Ba Gi in An Nhon.

(c) The development of an educational system and the growth of the school population was of special concern to the 73d due to the great number of youngsters in northern Binh Dinh and the potential they represented to the VC if left uneducated. As a result of constant attention from the GVN, ARVN, and the 73d Airborne Brigade, school attendance in northern Binh Dinh nearly tripled from August 1969 to July 1970. Furthermore, in fifty target hamlets of the 73d Airborne Brigade for Operation Washington Green, there are now 7,531 children attending school. In 1969, there were only 110 children (40 of these in VC controlled schools) attending school.

(d) Medical support was provided the populace through the MEDCAP program. Further, to provide for the future, a program of instruction under the direction of the Brigade Medical Company was presented to representatives of hamlets throughout the AO. The program was designed to place trained medical personnel in each hamlet to provide emergency medical treatment to the villagers. The two week course included instruction in basic medical treatment and treatment of wounds and minor injuries.

(e) Of special interest to the Brigade were actions to aid the development of the government among the people. Direct coordination between the Brigade, MACV, and District officials provided the environment for all areas development. Security operations and day-to-day GVN pacification and civil affairs played important roles. Psychological operations, integrated with populace and resources control activities, were responsible for gaining the loyalty of the people, calming fears about government policies, and training GVN personnel in controlling the people without alienating them.

The Brigade further aided in providing a shield of security for election activities. As a result, government has spread and the number of elected hamlet and district chiefs has steadily increased.

## CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

(f) In addition to assisting the GVN in this difficult phase of development, the Brigade bettered the image of the US by providing special gifts to orphans, refugee centers, and churches at selected times of the year, especially at Christmas, Tet, and Buddha's birthday.

## (2) Psychological Operations

(a) The Brigade employed a wide variety of PSYOPS equipment. Although airborne helicopter-mounted loudspeakers suffered somewhat from maintenance difficulties and noise problems, they proved ideal for rapid reaction and in tactical situations where heavy US superiority was enjoyed. However, ground equipment continued to be the most effective means of reaching both the enemy and the people. The new AN/PIQ-5 bullhorn was especially useful in reaching the enemy in the many cave complexes of the 173d AO.

(b) In all pacification operations, the primary means of disseminating thoughts and ideas was through face-to-face communications. To complement this concept, the Brigade emphasized knowledge of the customs of the Vietnamese people to all Sky Soldiers. The personal handout of leaflets by RVNAF and GVN personnel proved much more productive than aerial drops. Many Hoi Chanhs stated that they had read the leaflets and been strongly influenced by them. Such operations contributed to the increase of Hoi Chanhs from 1969 to 1970 in addition to developing confidence in and support for the GVN.

(3) PSDF. In the 1970 pacification and development plan, community cooperation and political mobilization were themes highly stressed. The growth of the PSDF was a major factor in the political mobilization of the people. Progress in building the PSDF is shown in the comparison of these two months of the number of PSDF organized in each district of AO Lee:

	August 1969	May 1970
Tam Quan	2,772	2,396
Hoai Nhon	9,827	15,978
Hoi An	350	6,035
Phu My	UNK	18,497

(4) Kit Carson Scout Program. The 173d Airborne Brigade is an enthusiastic participant in the Kit Carson Scout Program. The scouts of the 173d were recruited from the National Chieu Hoi Center in Saigon and from the Binh Dinh Chieu Hoi Center. The Brigade also recruited scouts from the 1st Infantry Division and the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division when these units redeployed. In Sky Soldier operations these former VC/NVA have proved to be invaluable with their abilities to detect mines, booby traps, and enemy positions. In the past year, the Brigade recognized the heroism displayed by the Kit Carson Scouts by awarding one Silver Star and two Bronze Star Medals with "V" device.

# CONFIDENTIAL



## CONFIDENTIAL

5. Support. Although no major problem areas have developed in Brigade operations, we certainly experienced difficulties due to limited organic aircraft support and wide dispersion of units.

a. Aviation assets have continuously been a problem in day-to-day operations. The MTOE of the Brigade Aviation Platoon authorizes six OH58 helicopters which falls far short of the operational needs of the Brigade. As a result of an augmentation to the MTOE, the Brigade was additionally authorized eight UH1H helicopters; however, maintenance personnel were not provided. At present these personnel are assigned in excess of MTOE authorization. A change to the MTOE has been submitted in an attempt to provide authorization for additional personnel. It is presently being staffed at USARPAC and DA.

b. All non-organic aviation support is located seventy miles south of the Brigade Headquarters. This distance hampered operation on many days when weather in our area was clear but was not flyable at the aircraft's home base. The distance, plus the weather, contributed to many late arrivals and delays in operations which would not have occurred if the 173d Airborne Brigade had an attached assault helicopter company plus its organic aviation platoon. The weather and distance were also problems with CH-47 support until one CH-47 was required to remain at LZ English each night during the rainy season. This action insured that the aircraft was immediately available to accomplish necessary resupply when weather permitted.

c. In the aircraft maintenance area, the most difficult problem was the criteria for turn-in of damaged aircraft. This policy was the same for the Brigade's aviation platoon as it was for larger units. Since the Brigade had only a limited number of aircraft, the loss of one for thirty days to a supporting maintenance unit drastically reduced the capability of the platoon. An active float aircraft program would have eliminated this problem. However, the aircraft supply point system has improved greatly in the past two months and is satisfactory.

d. The wide dispersion of units in a pacification role strained the resources of the Brigade. There often was just not enough equipment to go around. Typical examples were radios and food containers. Each site had to have a radio as an operational necessity. The lack of this equipment placed some limitations on the number of sites and ambushes which could be established at any time. The food containers were needed because it was desirable to supply one hot meal a day to each site and separate containers were required at these sites. Much difficulty could have been avoided by the augmentation of certain equipment for units operating in the pacification role.

e. One interesting aspect in the field of logistics has been the high availability of M551 vehicles. Many factors contributed to this situation. When the decision was made not to issue the M551 vehicles to the 4th Division, the vehicles and push package of repair parts were diverted to the 173d. Various key personnel of the 173d Spt Bn had prior experience with the M551 and consequently were able to program for the required repair parts. An

CONFIDENTIAL

# CONFIDENTIAL

augmentation to the authorized strength of the Cav Troop provided for a Warrant Officer to supervise the maintenance of these vehicles. A 3-day maintenance stand-down for each 30 operation days was found to be an absolute necessity. The availability of technical representatives to the using unit and its direct support activity is an invaluable asset provided they are allowed to remain in the area for a sufficient period of time. All these factors have had the combined result of insuring a higher than average availability rate for the M551 vehicle.

6. Base Camp Activities. Since August of 1969 a concerted effort has been made to improve the welfare and morale of the Sky Soldiers of the 173d Airborne Brigade. This effort resulted in the completion of several projects and work continues toward the completion of several more.

a. Sky Soldier Beach, located near the fishing village of Lo Dieu, provides a beach area where the men can enjoy a variety of recreational activities. Among the facilities available at the beach is a MARS station which provides an opportunity to place calls to the United States. A contact team from Brigade Rear goes to Lo Dieu on a regular basis to clear up administrative and personnel problems. Additionally, maintenance contact teams check and repair the unit weapons, radios, and other equipment as necessary.

b. PX facilities were opened at LZ English offering personnel the opportunity to purchase merchandise not readily available to forward area troops. Business was more active than anticipated and a branch PX was opened at LZ Uplift.

c. A club system was established at LZ English. The Officers Club offers hot meals in the evening as well as movies. The NCO's and EM share a larger club which houses a bar and steakhouse combination. Both clubs have the capability of presenting live entertainment. Additionally the club system has been expanded to provide similar services at North English and Uplift.

d. In May 1970 Special Services opened the Sky Soldiers Library for the information and education of the men of the Brigade and attached units. There are over 3000 volumes, both hardback and paperback, presently in the library.

e. June 1970 saw the opening of a photo lab at LZ English. This facility enables the Sky Soldier to learn a skill while relaxing. A qualified photo lab instructor is available to assist the men in the processing of film of all sizes, black and white, and color.

f. A swimming pool was constructed on the LZ and opened on 17 July 1970. The facility is equipped with swimming suits, shower, locker room and snack bar.

g. Other projects presently under construction are a tennis court and a shopping center for licensed concessionaires.

# CONFIDENTIAL

## CONFIDENTIAL

7. Achievements. Although many achievements have been discussed throughout this report, certain of them deserve elaboration since they reflect the stability which has been brought to northern Binh Dinh Province.

a. Government. The government structure in northern Binh Dinh Province has experienced immense growth during the period covered by this report. During the early phases of Operation Washington Green, functional hamlet organizations were virtually non-existent. An initial step in reestablishing GVN control was to insure security for these hamlets and to the officials who fill the positions of responsibility. Within this security screen, active participation in government activities and representation down to hamlet level became a fact. In addition to security, other problems facing the civil government included resettlement and the reconstruction of entire hamlets. This in turn led to the requirements of fixing boundaries, determining ownership, and other legal technicalities. In overcoming these problems, the GVN has demonstrated resiliency and willingness to assist and support the populace in its efforts to live in peace. Since August 1969, the civil organizations have been reestablished and every hamlet in the AO is again represented. Of particular importance has been the development of points of contact, both civil and military, to assist in a free democratic form of government.

b. ARVN. After some initial hesitation in working with 173d Airborne Brigade units, the 40th and 41st Regiments of the 22nd ARVN Division began operating harmoniously with US units and have significantly contributed to pacification. They provided local security forces in early stages of Operation Washington Green when RF/PF forces were not available in sufficient numbers to carry out that mission. Since the improvement of the RF/PF, both regiments have conducted successful combat operations in the AO and were committed to the effort in Cambodia.

c. Territorial Forces. Regional Force and Popular Force soldiers have provided the manpower that the District Chiefs needed to secure the population and support the pacification program. During Operation Washington Green, these units have grown from a few units along major lines of communications and at major population centers into a formidable force securing the country side and freeing ARVN forces to perform combat operations against the enemy. Through their growth and achievements, they have become a key to the success of pacification in northern Binh Dinh Province.

## CONFIDENTIAL

UNCLASSIFIED

Security Classification

CONFIDENTIAL

## DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R &amp; D

(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified)

1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY (Corporate author)		2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION	
HQ DA, OACSFOR, Washington, D.C. 20310		CONFIDENTIAL	
3. REPORT TITLE		2b. GROUP	
Senior Officer Debriefing Report: BG H. S. Cunningham		4	
4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)			
Senior Officer Debriefing Report, 9 Aug 69 to 10 Aug 70.			
5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)			
BG H. S. Cunningham			
6. REPORT DATE		7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
4 August 1970		24	
8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.		9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)	
N/A		70B037	
8b. PROJECT NO.		9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)	
10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT			
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES		12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY	
N/A		OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310	
13. ABSTRACT			