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ago, d/a ltr, 29 apr 1980

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

IN REPLY REFER TO

AGAM-P (M) (30 Jul 69) FOR UT UT 692176

1 August 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 116th Engineer Battalion, Period Ending 30 April 1969

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

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tinneth G. Mickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM Major General, USA The Adjutant General



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DFPARTMENT OF THE ARMY HEADQUARTERS, 116TH ENGINEER BATTALION (COMBAT) APO San Francisco 96493

EGACBG-SC

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30 April 1969

SUBJICT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Fnding 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65(RI)

THRU: Commanding Officer 35th Engineer Group (Construction) APO 96312

> Commanding General 18th Engineer Brigade ATTN: AVBC-C APO 96377

REVISED COPY

Commanding General United States Army, Vietnam ATTN: AVHGC (DST) APO 96307

Commender in Chief United States Army, Pacific ATTN: GPOP-DT APO 96588

TD: Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development Department of the Army (ACSFOR DA) Washington, D. C. 20310

1. Section 1, Operations: Significant Activities.

a. Command and Staff Changes:

(1) On 10 March 1969 CPT Loren E Call assumed command of Company B from CPT George W Eldridge, who was assigned to Headquarters, 35th Engineer Group. On 15 March CPT Richard K. Snyder assumed command of Headquarters Company from CPT Charles B Stoddard, who assumed command of Company C from CPT Rex F Smith, who was assigned as Battalion Assistant S-3.

(2) On 8 March 1969 LLT Eugene T. McHugh was assigned as Battalion Adjutant in place of CPT Daniel M Wilson who was assigned to Headquarters, 18th Engineer Brigade. On 25 March 1969 LLT George Pinkston was assigned as Battalion S-2 officer.

b. The ll6th Engineer Battalion (Combat), with the 572d Engineer Company (Light Equipment) and the 687th Engineer Company (Land Clearing) attached, were engaged in numerous construction, maintenance, and operational support activities within the southeastern portion of the II Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam. The battalion area of responsibility for the reporting period included southwestern Binh Thuan and southwestern Lam Dong Provinces.

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1

30 April 1969

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Poriod Ending 30 April 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

(1) The following projects were campleted during the reporting period:

(a) Company B poured a concrete slab for a mess hall for B troop 7/17 Air Cavalry, LZ Betty, Phan Thiet; project was completed 7 February 1969.

(b) Company D completed construction of minimum essential requirements (MER) and rowchments for 3rd Bn, 503 Inf; project was completed 1 March 1969.

(c) Company E completed drilling an exploratory well at Phan Thict, ARVN Hospital; project was completed 10 March 1969.

(d) Company B constructed mess hall for B Btry 5/27th Artillery, LZ Sherry; project was completed 10 March 1969.

(c) Company D completed erection of four guard towers at Gia Nghia; project completed 17 March 1969.

(f) The 687th Engineer Company (LC) completed land clearing operations on QL-20 from II/III CTZ Boundary northeast to DiLinh. The project consisted of clearing jungle 200 meters each side of centerline of QL-20. Over 2400 acres of jungle were cleared from 7 February thru 24 March 1969. Project was completed 24 March 1969.

(g) Company D completed construction of 34 SEA Huts for 3rd Bn 503 Infantry, Bao Loc. Project was completed 1 April 1969.

(h) Company B constructed MER 192d Assault Helicoptor Company, Phan Thiet. Project was completed 5 April 1969.

(1) Company B completed Engineer Support, consisting of construction of soven guard towers, two 175mm gun pads, two helipads, two shallow wells, and improvement of berms, for LZ Sandy and LZ Sherry. Phan Thiet. Project was completed 20 April 1969.

(j) Company B constructed mess hall for C Btry 5/22 Artillery, LZ Sandy, Phan Thiet. Project was completed 24 April 1969.

(k) Company A and Company C completed construction of Buse Camp located at B'Sar. The project consisted of building $36(20' \times 50')$ living-fighting bunkers, two field showers, two burn-out latrines, two moss halls and two timber groase racks. Six SEA Huts were constructed for orderly rooms, supply rooms and day rooms. Base Camp perimeter included defensive wire, perimeter lighting and earth borm. Within the base camp drainage culverts were installed; road nets and vehicle parking areas were graded and ditched. River-run gravel was then placed on all roads and

2

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30 April 1969

SUFJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR (RI)

parking areas. Project completed 30 April 1969.

(2) The following work was completed on operational support and LOC projects which are of a continuing nature.

(a) Company B performed read clearing and maintenance work on QL-1 mortheast from Phan Thiet to Song Mae on eleven different occasions and west from Phan Thiet to the JI/III CTZ Boundary four times during the reporting period. Road clearing to intermediate locations on QL-1 in the AOR was performed on other dates also. Obstacles removed included trenches across the read, berms, mines and rubble used as a read block. All mines or suspected mines were blown in place. Eight culverts were replaced on the highway during the reporting period. Now treadway was replaced on one Bailey bridge. Work parties involved in the read clearing and maintenance work were involved in two ambushes on QL-1 from 2 to 3 km southwest of Ap Ge Boi. There was one U.S. slightly wounded and one truck received bullet holes in side and one tire.

(b) Company B also performed read clearing and maintenance activities on highway LTL-8B from Phan Thiet north to LZ Sandy and LZ Sherry. In addition to mine clearing operations, culvert headwalls were repaired, culverts were improved, one bypass was constructed and one damaged Bailey bridge was repaired during the quarter. On 31 March Company B sustained three mining incidents with two separate work parties. Casualties sustained were one KIA and four WIA with equipment damage to water truck and two 10 ton truck tractors.

(3) The main effort of the battalion during the reporting period was maintenance and restoration work on National Highway QL-20 from the II/III CTZ Boundary to DiLinh; work was performed by HHC, Co A, Co C, Co D and the 572d Engr Co (LE). The mission of the units involved on this section of QL-20 was continuous maintenance and repair of the road surface, drainage structures, and bridges; reconaissance to ensure serviceability and mine sweeping and clearing operations within the area of responsibility. In conjuction with the maintenance and restoration mission, the 687th Engineer Company (LC) was attached to the 116th Engineer Battalion. The 687th Engineer Company (LC) had the mission to clear the jungle from both sides of QL-20 to a distance of 200 meters from II/III CTZ Boundary to DiLinh.

(a) Company A performed work on the highway from B'Sar northeast to three km northeast of Santa Maria from 5 February thru 30 April 1969. Most of the work involved ditching, replacing or lengthening culverts, standards, and pothole patching with 1¹/₂ minus crushed rock and asphalt. On 24 February 1969 a work party received small arms fire. No casualties or significant equipment damage were sustained. No other incidents occurred during the remainder of the reporting period.

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30 April 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 "pril 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

(b) Company C porformed maintenance and restoration of QL-20 from II/III OTZ Boundary east to B'Sar. Work during the entire quarter included shoulder widening and stabilization, ditching and culvert catch basin improvement, extending existing culverts and installation of new culverts, bridge repaires, pothole patching, and clearing for 15 meters along the highway. A total of 60 feet of 72" CMP was installed with treated timber headwalls for a by-pass located at Madagui. Company C cleared about 200,000 square meters of jungle on GL-20. Approximately 2500 cubic yards of river-rua gravel were placed for sub-base material on QL-20. On 20 February a dozer ran over a cannister type mine. No casualities or equipment damage resulted. On 31 March C Sompany discovered a 48" culvert destroyed. The culvert was replaced. On 3 April one member of a mine clearing team stepped on a mine resulting in one U.S. KIA and three U.S. WIA. No equipment damage was sustained. No other serious incidents occurred during the remainder of the reporting period.

(c) Company D has performed continuous maintenance and restoration work on QL-20 during the entire quarter including shouldor widening and stabilization, ditching and culvert inlet basin improvement, extending culverts, installation of new culverts, and bridge repairs. The unit's work was primarily performed on the highway from Bao Loc southwest to 3 km northeast of Santa Maric. The unit is presently installing a double 60th culvert 260 feet long. This culvert when completed will {reatly facilitate thy drainage along QL-20. On 24 April a work party received three B-40 rocket rounds. Casualties were light with one U.S. WIA and one vehicle slightley damaged. No other incidents occurred during the reporting period.

(d) The 572d Engineer Company (Light Equipment) has been performing clearing, road widening, alignment improvement, and quarry/crusher operations as its part in the maintenance and restoration of QL-20. Part of the unit's operations has been in support of the line companies in their projects including company B at Phan Thiat and support of companies A, C, and D in the maintenance and restoration work accomplished on QL-20. The unit in operating its 75 TPH primary and secondary crushers produced 13,364 cubic yards of 3" minus, 3,962 cubic yards of $1\frac{1}{2}$ " minus and 535 cubic yards of 3/4" to $\frac{1}{2}$ " crushed rock for the reporting period. During the quarter the crusher was deadlined 100 hours for preventive maintenance, 17 hours for generator malfunction, 111 hours for primary malfunction. The Chi Cong Quarry produced a total of 16,207 cubic yards of blast rock. Production of blast rock was reduced because the unit's Furakawa track drill was deadlined for a total of 22 days during the reporting period because of nonavailability of parts. The 572d Engr Co (LE) also distributed 100,814 gallons of asphalt cut-back along the road for dust control and surface treatment.

4

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(e) Altogether, the units accomplishing the maintenance and rectoration of GL-20 from east of DiLinh to the II/III boundary installed 29 culverts, 16 separate culvert extensions with headwalls and end-walls, performed over 250,000 cubic yards of exception work and applied over 800,000 gallons of water for compaction of road sub-base.

(4) Company A started construction of MACV Facilities at Dilinh. The project consists of billets with latrine, messhall and community facilities, water storage with tower, septic tank and shower. Along with the water storage, a well is to be drilled as drilling equipment becomes available. By the end of the quarter all construction was complete with the exception of water storage system and drilling of the well.

(5) Company D started construction of two MACV facilities located at Thien Giao and Ham Thuan, Binh Thuan Province. The projects consist of billets, water storage facilities, and septic tanks. In addition, a well is to be drilled at Ham Thuan. During the quarter the billets and septic tanks were completed. On 22 March while two squads of Company D were TDY at Thien Giao the compound received mortar rounds followed by a ground attack. Personnel of C mpany D sustained 16 slightly wounded. Enemy casualties 33 confirmed KIAs.

(6) Beginning 12 February Company B began construction of a 228 foot x 30 foot LST ramp at LZ Betty, Phan Thiet. Accomplishments to 30 April included completion of driving piles, attachment of walers and sheathing and the back-filling of material inside the ramp. The plank decking is the only work remaining to be completed.

(7) Company B was assigned the mission of the construction of a timber treatle pile bent city by-pass bridge at Phan Thiot. The bridge is to be 308 feet by 16 feet and a class 50. As of 30 April the two abutments were completed.

(8) Company C started construction of a MACV facility at B'Sar Lam Dong Province, on 10 March. Scope of the project consists of billets with latrino, water storage system, and water well. As of 30 April all construction was complete with the exception of water storage tank and drilling of the well.

(9) Company C was assigned the mission of construction of latrine and shower, water storage system and water well at MACV facility, Kien Duc District, Guang Duc Province. As of 30 April actual construction had not been started.

(10) Company D started construction on SEA Huts, FSA, Bao Lec on 24 March. Project includes 17 SEA huts, reafer shed, ice shed, generator shed and secondary electrical distribution system. As of 30 April construction completed included 15 SEA huts, ice shed and electrical distribution system. Only minor work remains on the remaining structures.

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the lifth Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

(11) Company D was assigned the mission of construction of MACV facilities at New Loc Province HOS and district headquarters. Construction at Province HOS includes billets with latrino, mess hall, PX branch, administration and supply room, septic tank and water storage with tower. District headquarters construction consists of billets with latrine, water storage with tower, and septic tank, Work started 1 April on the district facility with septic tank and water storage with tower completed at the end of the reporting period. Work on MACV Province was not started by the end of the reporting period.

(12) All units were involved in base camp construction and maintenance during the reporting period at Camp Sm. 1 in Sao Loc, Camp Little Idahc (2) at B'Sar and Camp Idaho Beach at Phan Thiet. Improvement of roads and drainage, installation of additional perimeter defensive wire, corrugated metal roofing on some of the SEA huts and maintenance of sandbag revolments were accomplished at Camp Smith. The construction of guard towers, additional perimeter defensive wire and maintenance of sandbag revolments were accomplished at Camp Smith. The construction of guard towers, additional perimeter defensive wire and maintenance of sandbag revoluents was accomplished at Camp Idaho Beach. The construction of Camp Little Idaho was completed on 30 April 1969. Work consisted of living-fighting type bunkers, messhalls, latrines, showers, SEA huts, timber grease rocks, perimeter defensive wire and lighting and road nets.

(13) On different occasions during the reporting period the base camp at Phan Thiet and B'Sar received small arms and mortar fire. On 22 February Company B located at LZ Betty, Phan Thiet received four mortar rounds in their company supply yard. Negative casualties and one crane slightly damaged by small arms fire and mortar shraphol. On 2 March Company B received small arms fire on their perimeter. Received negative casualities and equipment damage. One enemy by body count was discovered. On 4 March Company B again received small arms fire on their perimeter. There were negative casualties or equipment damage. On 7 March Company A received three mortar rounds within their company area of the base camp at B'Sar. There was one KIA, and % we WIA; one truck received shraphel damage to tires and radiator.

(14) The Battalion participated in Civic Actions projects at various times and locations throughout the reporting period. All the units participated in projects consisting of earth moving, grading, road alignment, clearing and drainage operations for schools, churches and villages. Over 40,000 gallons of potable water were processed for use by the Viotnamose forces and their dependants at B'Sar. The motical section of HHC/116 gave medical assistance to over 200 villagers and local Mationals during the quarter. The Battalion Chaplain donated candy, soap and food stuffs to schools and villages. Scrap lumber and materials not useable on assigned projects were donated to churches and schools. Other Civic Action projects included land clearing and earth berm construction for ARVN outpost to better their defensive positions.

6

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30 April 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

b. (1) During the reporting period thirteen transportation convoys with construction materials and other logistic supplies were received by the battalion from the CRB Army Depot. Over 203,000 broad feet of lumber and 1,700,000 lbs of other types of construction materials were received.

Class I, II, & III supplies were requested by the individual companies on as needed basis from the ISA at Bao Loc & Phan Thiet.

(2) The Battalion Laintenance section completed 391 second echelon job orders and expended 3793 man hours on maintenance support.

The maintenance contact truck and shop truck van expended over 1500 lbs of welding rod on prefabrication projects.

(3) The water purifying equipment organic to the battalion produced over 2,000,000 gallons of potable water during the reporting period.

(4) The average assigned strength of the battalion for the reporting period; was 99.9% for February, 100.4% for March and 96.9% for April. The significant factor causing the decrease in strength was the reassignment of 28 11B MOS personnel to other units outside of the battalion.

(5) During the quarter 85 replacements were received by the battalion. All received the required in-country orientation and replacement training.

(6) During the reporting period approvals were received for the following awards; 28 Purple Hearts, 13 Army Commendation Medals for Service, 9 Bronze Stars for Service, in addition to 12 Purple Hearts awarded by hospital commanders.

(7) Mail service has greatly improved since the last reporting period, mainly due to more definite schedule of mail planes into the Bao Loc /.irfield.

2. Section 2, Lessons Learned: Commander's Observations, Fvaluations and Recommendations.

a. Personnel

NONE

b. Operations.

There are some observations and recommendations for improvement of operations. Some of these concern maintenance, others concern engineer construction and operational support missions.

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30 April 1969

SUBJICT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

(1) Substituting universal joint spider from 5 ton dump for H90M Front Loader.

(a) Observation: Universal joint (FSN 2520-798-4686) for H9OM Front Loaders, are difficult to obtain.

(b) Evaluation: To maintain H90M scoop loaders in an operational condition a substitute for the universal joint spider had to be found.

(c) Recommendation: It was found with re-drilling and rethreading that a spider from a 5 ton dump M51A2 propeller shaft makes a good and satisfactory substitute.

(2) Shortage of oil filers for WABCO 440 Grader.

(a) Observation: HHC was experiencing shortage of oil filters (FSN 2940-141-9026) for the WABCO 440 Grader.

(b) Evaluation: There is a need for a substitute to keep the equipment operational.

(c) Recommendation: It was found that the oil filter from a 5 ton dump truck M-51 will interchange with the oil filters of the W/ BCO 440 Grader with satisfactory results.

(3) Acquiring sand and rock for concrete aggregate.

(a) Observation: When using river-run gravel for concrete aggregate, much time is consumed in sorting the larger aggregate out of the gravel to make a suitable mix.

(b) Evaluation: There is a need for some type of screening device for grading aggregate.

(c) Recommendation: A field expedient grizzly can be made from 1 inch reinforcing steel and chainlink fence which fits on the bed of a 5 ton dump truck M51A2. The larger rocks roll off the screen leaving 2 inch minus material for concrete aggregate.

(4) Draining of excess water during culvert installation.

(a) Observation: When preparing culvert base for installation of culverts the base is often below the existing water table.

(b) Fvaluation: There is a need to keep excessive ground water out of culvert base to obtain the needed CBR.

(c) Recommendation: It was found by digging a sump hole adjacent to the culvert site, the water will seep from the culvert base into the sump hole. This water can then be pumped out of the area, thus lowering the water table enabling the culvert to be installed properly.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Luding 30 April 1969. RCS CSFOR (RI)

(5) Jacking device for strutting corrugated metal culvert 60 inches or larger in diameter.

(a) Observation: When strutting culvert of 60 inches or larger in diameter, much time is consumed before being able to start back-filling the culvert.

(b) Evaluation: During the installation of long sections of CMP a device for strutting was needed.

(c) Recommendation: By using 4 inch I beam or similar channel iron, construct a single bar approximately 36 inches long or longer depending upon the size of the CMP which is to be strutted. A flat plate is welded on the bottom and a 8 ton jack is then bolted to the plate. A base plate and cap are then made out of angle iror that will fit onto a 2 x 4 inch block. The jack is then used to stretch the CMP to the desired height.

c. Training

NONE

d. Intelligence

(1) VC Banners

(a) Observation: Booby trapped VC Banners have often been displayed along main highways and near work sites for propaganda purposes.

(b) Evaluation: The possibility of booby traps, makes removal of VC banners a hazardous task.

(c) Recommendation: When removing VC Banners or other propagends devices a thorough and careful search must be made for booby traps.

(2) The placement of non-metallic mines by the VC.

(a) Observation: During unit operations on LTL-8B, Company B encountered non-metallic mines placed in the roadbed with an electrical type detonation device. The mine was wired to a battery source some distance off of the road.

(b) Fvaluation: With this type of mine the MNL-M P153 mine detector is unable to give positive readings of the presence and location of the mine.

(c) Recommendation: A close and thorough search of the area which is being swept for possible mines is a must. Utilization of the same personnel from day to day on the mine sweep team proves to be

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30 April 1969

SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer Battalion (Combat) for Period Ending 30 April 1969. RCS SCFOR (RI)

very beneficial.

e. Logistics

(1) Activity Address Code

(a) Observation: The Activity Address Code is better, known as a unit's "AT CODE", This code permits combat and construction units to submit MILSTRIP requisitions into the requisitioner code field. This action permitted by the "AT CODI" insures a far more expedient method of obtaining required construction materials and supplies.

(b) Evaluation: Experience of this battalion indicated that a three month delay was encountered from the time of submission to the time of receipt of the "AT CODE".

(c) Recommendation: Units deployed overseas should not only be knowledgeable of purpose and procedures of the Activity Address Code; they should insist that this code be assigned prior to their deployment.

f. Organization

NONE

g. Escape and Ivasion

NONF.

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DONALD R. CHORMLEY LTC, CE Commanding

ECA-CO (30 April 69) 1st Ind SUBJECT: Operational Report of 116th Engineer Battalion (Cbt) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

DA, Headquarters, 35th Engineer Group (Const.), APO 96312, 26 May 1969

TO: Commanding General, 18th Engineer Brigade, APO 96377

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the 116th Engineer Battalion (Cbt) for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1969. The report is an excellent summary of the battalion's activities for the reporting period.

2. This headquarters concurs with the remarks of the Battalion Commander.

A HILIAN Colonel, Cr. Commanding

AVEC-BC (30 April 1969) 2nd Ind SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 116th Engineer battalion (Combat) for the leriod anding 30 April 1969, LD COPUR-65 (A1)

D., Headquarters, 18th Engineer Brigade, AFC 96377 6 JUN 1969

TO: Commanding General, U.S. Army Vietnam, ATTM: AVEGO-DUT, AFC 96575

1. This headquarters has reviewed the operational heport - ressons Learned for the 116th Engineer Latalion (Combat) as indersed by the 35th Engineer Group (Construction). The report is considered to be an excellent account of the Battalion's activities for the reporting period.

2. This headquarters concurs with the observations and recommendations of the Battalion and Group Commanders.

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OF: CC, 35th Engr Gr CC, 116th Engr Bn AVHGC-DST (30 April 1969) 3d Ind SUBJECT: Operational Report of the 11oth Engineer Battalion (COMBAT) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CoFOR-65 (R1)

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY, VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 26 JUN 1969

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

1. This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the quarterly period ending 30 April 1969 from Headquarters, 116th Engineer mattalion (COMMAT).

2. Comments i'ollow:

a. Reference item concerning Substituting universal joint spider from five (5) ton dump for H9OM Front Loader, section II, page 8, paragraph 2b(1)(a); nonconcur. Nomenclature and FSN listed do not agree. FSN 2520-798-4686 is a <u>Spider and bearing Assembly</u>, not a Universal Joint. In-country status of this part has been relatively constant for over six months, with current status showing 461 split between Cam Ranh, Gui Nhon, and Saigon. Fossible cause of non-filled requisitions is improper nomenclature. FSN 2520-040-2356, Parts Kit, Universal Joint is made up of numerous moving and fitted parts and is not designed to bear the stress placed on the front loader spider and bearing assembly. Unit will be advised of above comment.

b. Reference item concerning Shortage of oil filters for WABCO 440 Grader, section II, page 8, paragraph 2b(2); concur. Comparison of TM 5-3805-237-35P (WABCO 440 Grader) and TM 9-2320-211-20P (M151 five (5) Ton Dump Truck) reveals that the oil filter element in <u>both</u> cases is FSN 2940-141-9026. Proper stockage identification at unit level would have filled requests without "substitution". Unit will be advised.

c. Reference item concerning Activity Address Code, section II, page 10, paragraph e(1); concur. Adequate guidance is contained in AR 220-10 (paragraph 2-4) and AR 725-50. No further action required by higher headquarters. Unit will be advised.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

Cy furn: 116th Engr Bn 18th Engr Bde

W. C. ARNTZ

CPT, AGC Assistant Adjutant General

13

CPOP-DT (30 Apr 69) 4th Ind SUBJECT: Operational Report of HQ, 116th Engr Bn (Cbt) for Period Ending 30 April 1969, RCS CSFOR-65 (R1)

HQ, US Army, Pacific, APO San Francisco 96558 14 JUI 19

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

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

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

CPT, AGC Asst AG

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