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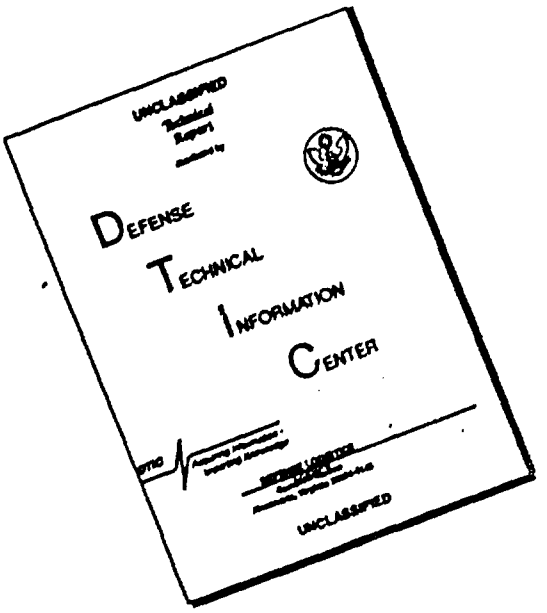

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
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IN REPLY REFER TO
AGAM-P (M) (9 Feb 68) FOR OT RD-670833 14 February 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, Period Ending 31 July 1967 (U)

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

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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.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

Kenneth G. Wickham

KENNETH G. WICKHAM
Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

DDC
MAR 11 1968

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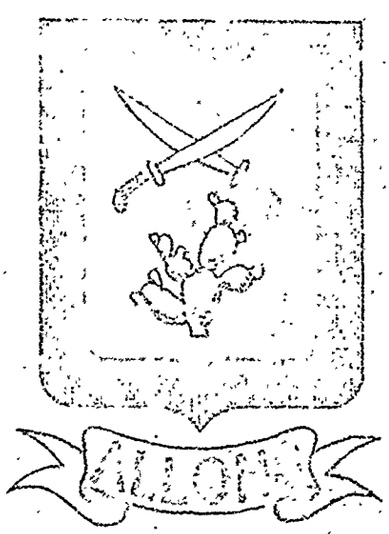

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11th ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

BLACKHORSE REGIMENT

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OPERATIONAL REPORT - LESSONS LEARNED

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

APO SAN FRANCISCO 96257

31 July 1967

FOR OTRD
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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96257

5

This Operational Report - Lessons Learned is the fourth submitted by the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment since its arrival in the Republic of Vietnam.

It has been prepared in accordance with AR 1-19 and covers the quarter 1 May 1967, thru 31 July 1967. Pertinent facts concerning the regiment's combat operations, civic action activities and base camp development during the quarter are included in this report.

ROY V. FARLEY
Colonel, Armor
Commanding

SECTION I

Significant Organization Activities

1. General
2. Personnel and Administration
3. Intelligence
4. Combat Operations
5. Training
6. Aviation
7. Logistics
8. Psychological Operations and Civic Action
9. Personnel Requirements for Base Camp Operation

SECTION II

Commanders Observations and Recommendations

1. Observations (Lessons Learned)
2. Recommendations

SECTION III

Inclosures

~~* 1. Map - 1/50,000, Blackhorse Base Camp, Regimental Tactical Area of Responsibility~~

~~* 2. Map - 1/250,000, I Corps Tactical Zone, 2nd Squadron~~

~~* 3. Map - 1/250,000, III Corps Tactical Zone, Regimental Tactical Area of Interest~~

~~* 4. 11th Armored Cavalry Organizational Structure~~

~~* 5. Roster of Commanders and Key Staff Officers~~

~~* 6. Biographies of Key Officer Personnel~~

~~* 7. Switchboard Diagrams~~

8. Operation Manhattan - Combat Operation After Action Report (Omitted)

~~** 9. Operation Dallas - Combat Operation After Action Report~~

~~** 10. Operation Akron - Combat Operation After Action Report~~

11. 21 May 1967 Ambush After Action Report

~~* 12. Roster of Personnel Receiving Awards and Decorations - 1 May 67 to 31 July 67~~

~~* 13. PSYOPS Leaflets~~

* Withdrawn, Hqs, DA
**Operation Dallas, Withdrawn, Hqs, DA; Combat After Action Report 67X179
**Operation Akron, Withdrawn, Hqs, DA; Combat After Action Report 67X178

7

OPERATIONAL REPORT FOR QUARTERLY PERIOD ENDING 31 JULY 1967.

SECTION I

1. (U) GENERAL. The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment continued operations against the Viet Cong in the Third Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ) with the 2nd Squadron of the Blackhorse Regiment continuing to provide cavalry support for Task Force OREGON in the First Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ).

The areas of operation during this reporting period were concentrated primarily in the regiment's Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR), and Tactical Area of Interest (TAOI). Initially, however, the regiment (-) participated in Operation MANHATTAN, a multi-divisional thrust into the LONG NGUYEN Secret Zone, long the suspected headquarters of the IV Military Region. This operation, with the regiment under operational control of the 1st Infantry Division, terminated on 23 May.

On the 26th of May, the 9th Infantry Division assumed operational control (OPCON) of the Blackhorse Regiment. The OPCON status was changed to attachment on 1 June. During the month of June, the regiment conducted counter-insurgency operations in the LONG DINH, BIEN HOA, and PHOUC TUY Provinces of the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). It participated in Operation AKRON under control of the 9th Infantry Division, and in operation QUICKSILVER, in support of the 18th ARVN Division, which continued into the month of July.

After a short period of rest and maintenance following the termination of QUICKSILVER on 2 July, the 1st Squadron of the Blackhorse Regiment participated in Operation PADDINGTON under the control of the 1st Australian Task Force. The regiment (-) augmented by the ARVN 52nd Ranger Battalion, commenced Operation EMPORIA on 21 July. At 210930H July the 3rd Squadron, while moving to the area of operations (AO), was ambushed by a reinforced battalion of the 275th VC Regiment.

The development of the Blackhorse Base Camp continued on schedule. The perimeter defenses were completed, as were the Post Exchange and Army Post Office facilities. Some progress was made in construction of permanent living quarters and administrative buildings by self-help programs. The ice plant became functional on a full time basis. The Tactical Command Bunker was 98% finished and became operational on 31 July. Improvement of perimeter positions continued, and revetments for regimental aircraft were under construction. The airfield was approved for use by USAF C7A, thus providing fixed-wing transportation and support for the base camp. Construction was initiated on a finance cater; the base camp amphitheatre was 80% completed.

Units of the 11th Armored Cavalry were continuously engaged in combat operations (92 days) against the Viet Cong. Operations varied from troop to regimental size during the quarter.

A regimental change of command ceremony was conducted at the forward command post on 8 May 1967. Colonel Roy W. Farley assumed command of the Blackhorse Regiment from Colonel William W. Cobb, while the 11th Armored Cavalry was participating in Operation MANHATTAN.

In July there were changes in command of both the 1st and 3rd Squadrons. Lieutenant Colonel Hillman Dickinson assumed command of the 3rd Squadron from Lieutenant Colonel Arthur F. Cochran on 2 July 1967. Lieutenant Colonel Martin D. Howell relinquished command of the 1st Squadron to Lieutenant Colonel James H. Holt on 15 July 1967. In addition Captain William J. Scharrett assumed command of the 919th Engineer Company on 20 July 1967.

2. (C) Personnel and Administration.

a. General. During the quarter, the overall strength of the regiment remained relatively constant. While overall an adequate number of replacements were received, a critical shortage of officers existed during June and the first half of July.

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b. Personnel.

(1) Strength.

(a) Strength figures by month are as follows:

	Auth	Asgd	PDY
May	4112	4379	4356
June	4112	4494	4445
July	4112	4267	4379

(b) Hospital Returnees. During the quarter, 153 personnel were returned to duty after being hospitalized. This figure does not include 2nd Squadron returnees, who were processed through Task Force Oregon.

(c) Casualties.

	WHA	KHA	MHA	NBI	NED
May	98	22	1	9	1
June	100	15	0	14	0
July	117	21	0	5	0

c. MOS Shortages. During the last part of June and all of July, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment underwent a massive DEROS hump and thus experienced particularly high density MOS shortages. Particularly significant was the shortage of NCOs in the grades of E-5 and E-6.

d. Replacements. Quality of replacement personnel remained high. Training level of all persons was acceptable.

e. Services.

(1) Religious. A total of ninety-four Protestant services were held with 4492 attendees. Thirty-eight of the services were weekday services. One hundred fourteen Catholic services were performed, 78 of them on weekdays, with a total attendance of 5388. These figures do not include 2nd Squadron.

(2) Red Cross. During May, June and July, a total of 841 cases were handled. Fifty-one loans were processed, resulting in $9745 in cash being loaned to members of the regiment. Thirty-six emergency leaves were granted.

(3) Special Services. During this period, first-run movies were scheduled on the Vietnam circuit and were shown in troop areas and clubs. A covered stage for USO and soldier talent shows was erected, and a loudspeaker system provided. A lending library service was provided with outstanding results.

(4) Postal. Postal operations during the period improved and service was provided to field locations. Money order clerks were transported to field locations on a rotating basis and provided service for all personnel.

(5) Red Cross Clubmobile. All units on Blackhorse Base Camp were offered the services of the Clubmobile, and daily runs were established. Clubmobile service was also provided to other units using the base camp as a staging area as well as units in Xuan Loc and Gia Ray. The efforts of the unit continued to make significant contributions to the morale of men of the Blackhorse.

f. Post Exchange. The PX facility had the following dollar volume by month: May - $149,079.59, June - $177,466.68, July - $230,575.24. Increases were due to expanded building facilities, an aggressive procurement program, and more purchasing power due to excellent turn-over in inventory. A permanent building was erected to increase greatly available display space.

g. Morale. Morale continued to be high. New PX facilities and increased Special Services activities contributed to this situation.

h. Information activities. Throughout the period, information coverage for the regiment increased, and a total of 1211 editorial, pictorial, and radio releases were made during the quarter. The number of media representatives visiting the regiment increased, totaling thirty-six arrivals during the three month period.

i. Awards and Decorations. The following awards and decorations were processed during the quarter (most of those approved had been initiated prior to 1 May 67):

	APPROVED	PENDING
DSC	0	1
LM	5	6
SS	7	13
DFC	5	6
SM	18	11
BS	156	172
AM	743	421
ACM	219	149
PH	245	0

j. Prisoners of War. During the period, a detachment of 1 officer and 18 enlisted men from the 720th Military Police Battalion, was located at the Blackhorse Base Camp which greatly enhanced the security and transport of PW. The detachment worked with the 541st MI and provided prisoner security in forward locations and in the base camp. A POW compound was constructed on the base camp to give further security.

k. Maintenance of discipline, law and order.

(1) Courts-Martial. During the quarter, the regiment processed the following Courts-Martial, by type:

General	Special	Summary
1	14	11

(2) Serious Incidents. There was one serious incident reported, involving a traffic accident between a US military vehicle and a Vietnemese.

(3) A general increase in Military Police Reports was noted, due to establishment of formal MP patrols on the base camp. Many of the discrepancies had previously been handled by tenant and lodger units and had not forwarded through this headquarters. No noticeable upward trend in incidents or violations was discovered.

3. (c) INTELLIGENCE:

a. VC Activity: The 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment continued throughout the quarter to operate at will within VC controlled areas and base camps. There were four major operations which took the Blackhorse Regiment into the heart of the VC dominated areas in War Zone "C", the HAT DICH Secret Zone, MAY TAO Secret Zone, and for the first time into War Zone "D". During these and other operations, the VC reacted with sporadic defense and harassment. In addition there were two major ambushes, one on National Highway 1 on 210850H May, vicinity YT572063 to

YT556062 and the other on National Highway 20 on 210940H July, vicinity YT433317 to YT430307. There were two mortar attacks and one ground attack conducted against the Blackhorse Regiment during the quarter. To counter the pressure exerted by the Blackhorse Regiment, the VC employed mines, RPG-2, and small arms fire in increasing intensity to thwart the allied advance. During the period there were twenty-two mining incidents, thirty-seven incidents of small arms fire, eight instances of automatic weapons fire, seven instances of recoilless rifle or RPG-2 rocket launcher fire, three instances of rifle grenade employment, nine claymore incidents, four mortar attacks, and twelve accounts of aircraft receiving small arms or automatic weapons fire. Despite the increased number of VC initiated incidents, the regiment suffered only light personnel casualties and vehicle damage.

(1) During Operation MANHATTAN, which terminated on 120230H May, enemy contact was light and sporadic, primarily characterized by mining and RPG-2 incidents. Mines were employed most frequently in areas which, because of vegetation or relief, canalized mechanized movement. The increasing frequency with which mines and AT weapons were encountered indicates an enhanced capability to counter armored units by delaying movement and inflicting casualties. During the operation, numerous lightly defended base camps and supply caches were found, of which two in particular netted the regiment a wealth of VC ammunition. On 6 May, the regimental command post and trains area received a mortar attack of sixty rounds. There were several instances of contact, all with small cell-sized elements primarily from the 81st Rear Service Group protecting the base camps and supply caches in the area. Enemy personnel losses for the operation were fifty-two VC KIA (BC), fifteen KIA (POSS) and eleven PWs. Enemy arms and equipment captured included twenty small arms, 226 grenades, five RPG-2 launchers, 133,683 rounds of small arms, 428 mortar rounds, eleven RPG-2 rounds, thirty antitank mines and 100 time bombs (explosive charges with clocks wired into the electrical detonating system). There were 980 fortifications and 187 small structures destroyed and there were three pounds of grain, 137.7 tons of rice, and seventy-five tons of salt located.

(2) Operation KITTY HAWK was resumed 121200H May, with only one major enemy contact. On 21 May, a platoon sized element (seven ACAVs, one tank, one 2½ ton truck, one ¼ ton truck) from the 3rd Squadron was ambushed by an estimated reinforced VC Battalion (believed to be but not confirmed from the 274th VC Regiment) vicinity YT572063 to YT556062. VC losses were twenty-eight KIA (BC), two KBA (BC), five KBA (POSS). On 20 May, Troop K, 3rd Squadron, at GIA RAY Rock Quarry received fifteen rounds of mortar fire (estimated 82mm). All of the rounds landed outside of the perimeter, and there were no casualties or damage.

(3) The 1st Squadron, attached to the 1st Infantry Division, participated in Operation DALLAS from 11 May to 27 May, marking the first time elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment entered War Zone "D". During the operation, one significant contact was made with elements of the 273rd VC Regiment resulting in eleven VC KIA (BC). Mechanized movement in the area of operation was good to excellent except in the eastern sector where dense forest and numerous streams canalized movement. Total enemy personnel losses were: nineteen VC KIA (BC), three KIA (POSS). Equipment captured included four small arms, two automatic weapons, thirty-one grenades, two RPG-2 launchers, 35.3 tons of rice and .75 tons of salt.

(4) Operation AKRON found the normally well occupied VC HAT DICH Secret Zone very lightly defended. On 19 June, the VC once again displayed their ability to attack allied forces by conducting a counter-sweep action consisting of a ground, mortar, and recoilless rifle attack by elements of the 1st Battalion, 274th VC Regiment reinforced with heavy weapons. The attack was made against the 3rd Squadron Command Post and fire support base and resulted in fifty-six VC KIA (BC). Generally, mechanized movement varied from fair to good, being restricted primarily by streams which canalized movement, and areas of dense jungle. Enemy personnel losses for the operation were sixty-five KIA (BC) and three VC PW's. Equipment captured was: thirty-three small arms, five RPG-2s, 100 grenades, 22,335 rounds of small arms, five recoilless rifle rounds, ten RPG-2 rounds, and thirteen antitank mines. There were 661 fortifications, and forty-four small structures destroyed. There were 14.3 tons of rice and .8 tons of salt located.

(5) Operation EMPORIA took the Blackhorse Regiment north along National Highway 20 to the Corps boundary on a road clearing mission. On 210940H July, L Troop, 3rd Squadron moving north on Highway 20 on a road clearing operation was ambushed by elements of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 275th VC Regiment and the D800 Provincial Main Force Battalion from vicinity YT433317 to YT430307. L Troop received

recoilless rifle and small arms and automatic weapons fire from both sides of the road. Contact was broken at 1230H, with ninety-six VC KIA (BC) and one FW (WIA).

b. VC Losses:

(1) Personnel: 262 KIA (BC), ten KBA (BC), thirty-seven KIA (POSS), seven KBA (POSS), eighty-two detainees; twelve POWs; four CHIEU HOIs, twenty-one civil defendents, forty-five innocent civilians.

(2) Weapons and Ammunition: BAR - three; Submachineguns - five; machineguns - two; RPG-2 launchers - 13; carbines - 11; rifles - 19; pistols - 2; 57mm Recoilless Rifle - 2; 81mm mortar tube - one; M-79 grenade launcher - three; 500 lb bomb - one; claymores - 13; hand grenades - 417; AT mines - 65; small arms ammunition - 147,300 rounds; RPG-2 rounds - 197; mortar rounds - 471; rifle grenades - 153; timebombs - 100; blasting caps - 3,250; TNT - 140 lbs; C3 - 75 lbs; artillery rounds - ten; M60 machinegun barrel - one; CBU bomblets - 39; 75mm Recoilless Rifle rounds - eight; 57mm Recoilless Rifle rounds - two.

(3) Foodstuffs: Forty-three tons rice, 8.5 tons salt, 400 lbs peanuts, 7,200 lbs beans, ton lbs meal, seven gallons cooking oil.

(4) Miscellaneous: Six oxen, six oxcarts, 144 lbs documents, 67 lbs clothing, twenty reams writing paper, fifteen rolls wire, one sand table, three trucks, one bulldozer, one sewing machine, nineteen lbs medical supplies, fourteen bicycles, bicycle parts, one barber set, 4400 lbs cement, one gas mask, two footbridges, one rice mill, thirty-two sheets roofing tin, one outboard motor, eight clocks, fifteen watches, ten large bolts of canvas cloth, seventy-seven shovel heads, four radios, thirty-two batteries, one typewriter, seven sampans, thirty-five punji pits, three medical kits, seventeen tunnels, 1025 bunkers, 152 foxholes, 125 structures, and six mortar positions.

c. Intelligence Sources:

(1) A targeting study was conducted of Viet Cong facilities found during Operation AKRON in the "HAT DICH" Secret Zone. There were forty installations provided in the intelligence bulletin and of these, twenty four were found to fall within 500 meters of the suspected location. These facilities included fortifications, base areas, training areas, food caches, and miscellaneous ordnance, signal and medical installations. A comparison of each of these locations with previously reported intelligence information shows that 60% of the suspected locations fell within a 180 to 200 meter average distance from the suspected given location. A similar study was conducted comparing suspected enemy locations with the actual locations found on Operation MANHATTAN. Of the 108 given locations, forty-two (38%) were found to fall within 500 meters of the actual location. The average distance of radial error (100 to 130 meters) was significantly less when compared with the 180 to 200 meter radial error found on Operation AKRON. The correlation is still high enough to warrant detailed consideration of the VC Installation List when targeting for or searching during an operation.

(2) RED HAZE: Red Haze still proves useful in detecting VC units, base and rest areas. There has been a noticeable lack of significant returns in the Blackhorse TAOR and areas of operation during the quarter, partly due to the number of missions aborted because of bad weather and the possibility that the VC may have altered their cooking hours to counter Red Haze detection. A change in mission times will be tried in the future to determine if better results can be obtained.

(3) SLAR: During the quarter numerous SLAR Missions were flown but once again bad weather caused some missions to be aborted. Readings received provided possible locations for H&I fires.

(4) PHOTOGRAPHS: Utilization of the hand held camera with telephoto lens, acquired last quarter, has proven to be a valuable asset to the regiment throughout the quarter, providing spot photography on a more timely basis than before. The 9th Infantry Division organic aerial photographic capability provided rapid response to operational and intelligence gathering processes for the regiment during Operation AKRON, KITTY HAWK, and ENDERLY.

(5) During the latter part of this quarter an additional intelligence gathering source was made available to the regiment. This was a "People Sniffer", a device which detects personnel concentrations by measuring the amount of ammonia in the air. This additional source has been used almost daily with outstanding results. Because of its high reliability, future plans call for its extensive use, particularly in covering convoys in remote areas, along known VC lines of communications, suspected base camp areas, and rallying points.

(6) PW and Documents: Rapid interrogation and dissemination of PW information aided in the identification and location of enemy units and facilities. Ralliers, when used within areas with which they are familiar, proved useful and profitable in locating VC installations and facilities.

(7) Agent reports: These reports constituted the bulk of intelligence reports received by the regiment. The majority of these reports were of doubtful value unless corroborated by other intelligence sources.

4. (C) Combat Operations

a. General

(1) Background: On 22 April, the 2nd Squadron moved to join Task Force OAKLEY, per Operation Plan OAKLEY 1-67, Headquarters, Task Force OAKLEY, dated 10 March 1967 (See Map Section III, inclosure 2). Base Camp security, provided principally by the tenant units and the regimental rear detachment, was assumed by the 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry, 9th Infantry Division. Operation MANHATTAN commenced on 23 April with the regiment (-) under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division from the previous operation (See organizational structure, Section III, inclosure 4), JUNCTION CITY II, which terminated 15 April. The regiment's general planning guidance was provided by II Field Force Vietnam, Letter of Instruction (LOI 7-(c) II FFORCEV campaign plan for 1967.

(2) May: At the beginning of the reporting period, the regiment (-) continued Operation MANHATTAN (See map, Section III, inclosure 3), a search and destroy operation, in the LONG NGUYEN Secret Zone. The 1st and 3rd Squadrons led the multi-divisional force, again proving the versatility of the Blackhorse Regiment by the penetration of jungle terrain heretofore accessible only to infantry troops. Because the enemy was continually pursued, he was not able to concentrate his forces for a major assault upon the armor columns. In fact, the armored cavalry forces were able, in many instances, to seize and destroy enemy base camps, food and ammunition caches with few casualties because of the haste of the Viet Cong (VC) departure. The employment of saturation ambushes as well as stay behind and sniper patrols proved to be very successful in surprising the enemy when he returned to a base area after the sweep was completed. (See combat after action report, Section III, inclosure 8)

Upon termination of MANHATTAN on 12 May, the regiment (-) roadmarched back to Blackhorse under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division. On reaching base camp on 12 May, the regiment, now minus both the 1st and 2nd Squadrons, resumed Operation KITTY HAWK, a continuing operation within the regiment's Tactical Area of Interest (TAOI) (See map, Section III, inclosures 1 and 3). Operation KITTY HAWK was initiated 15 February 1967 under guidance provided by II FFORCEV Campaign Plan for 1967.

Meanwhile, the 1st Squadron, now under operational control of the 1st Brigade, 1st Infantry Division, was preparing for Operation DALLAS which began on 17 May. This was a search and destroy operation and was the first Blackhorse venture into War Zone "D". The 1st Squadron participated in Operation DALLAS until 26 May and reverted to regimental control on 27 May. (See combat after action report, Section III, inclosure 9)

On 21 May, the 1st Platoon, Team K, was ambushed by a reinforced Viet Cong battalion approximately one kilometer west of SUOI CAT (YT5906). Team K was providing security for an element of the 595th Engineer Company at the GIA RAY Rock Quarry, (YT6309), as part of Operation KITTY HAWK. The 1st Platoon, at the time of the ambush, was conducting a resupply run along National Highway 1 and Interprovincial Route 2. (See Section III, Inclosure 11, Ambush After Action Report)

13

(3) June: During this month, the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (-) conducted counterinsurgency operations in the LONG KHÁNH, BIEN HÒA and PHUOC TUY Provinces of the Republic of Vietnam. Operation AKRON was initiated on 9 June by the 9th Infantry with the 11th Armored Cavalry attached to seek out and destroy Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Forces in the "NUI DINH" Secred Zone. Participating forces under operational control or direct support to the Blackhorse were 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry (-), 35th Ranger Battalion (ARVN), 52nd Ranger Battalion (ARVN), and elements of the 9th Division Artillery. Contact throughout the operation was sporadic with a major contact with elements of the 274th VC Regiment on 19 June. This engagement, called the BATTLE of SLOPE 30, began at 190115H June, when elements of the 1st Battalion, 274th VC Regiment, reinforced with heavy weapons, initiated a mortar, recoilless rifle and ground attack against the 3rd Squadron Command Post (CP) and Fire Support Patrol Base secured by Troop K (See Section III, Annex H to Inclosure 10, Battle of Slope 30). The regiment terminated participation in Operation AKRON on 27 June (See combat after action report, Section III, inclosure 10).

On the same day, the 1st Squadron was committed to reinforce elements of the 18th ARVN Division in Operation QUICKSILVER. The ARVN Division had launched an attack earlier in the day in order to disrupt the advance of two battalions of the 275 th VC Regiment which had crossed the DONG NAI River from War Zone "D" (YT330325). Forces under the operational control of the regiment (-) were 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry; 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry; 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery (-); B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery; and Troop A, 3rd Squadron, 5th Cavalry. During the operation; the 1st Squadron secured the air landing and extraction of elements of the 2nd Battalion, 39th Infantry and conducted aggressive search and destroy operations. The 1st Squadron also secured two Fire Support bases (FSB) during the operation. The entire operation was performed in conjunction with the 18th ARVN Division. The close coordination between the US and ARVN units resulted in extensive and profitable use of POW and CHIEU HOI as guides to enemy positions.

The Blackhorse Regiment (-) continued Operation KITTY HAWK periodically throughout the month of June. This consisted of road clearing (ROADRUNNER) operations along National Highways 1 and 20, Interprovincial Route 2, and search and destroy operations in the Blackhorse Tactical Area of Interest (TAOI). Major emphasis was placed on the Revolutionary Development Program, cordon and search operations in hamlets and villages, the Medical Civic Program (MEDCAP) and other civic action projects

(4) July: The regiment (-) continued direct support of the 18th ARVN Division in Operation QUICKSILVER until it was terminated on 2 July. The 1st Squadron closed Blackhorse Base Camp at 021901H July.

Following a short period for rest and maintenance, the 1st Squadron moved, under the operational control of the 1st Australian Task Force, on 8 July to participate in Operation PADDINGTON. This operation, of multi-brigade size, was conducted by the 9th Infantry Division in conjunction with the 1st Australian Task Force and GVN forces. Initially, the 1st Squadron conducted a tactical roadmarch from LONG GIAO (YS 4397) to NUI DAT (YS4367). On 10 July, they made the main attack up route 329 (vic YS7079) while two battalions of the 1st Bde, 9th Infantry Division, occupied blocking positions southeast of Route 329, and the units of the 1st Australian Task Force occupied blocking positions east of the attacking 1st Squadron. On 11 July after securing their objective, the 1st Squadron linked up with the RVN Marines. They continued to support the Marines and conduct clearing and securing missions along Route 329 until 15 July.

On 15 July, the 1st Squadron terminated participation in Operation PADDINGTON and reverted to regimental control.

Operation EMPORIA was initiated 210700H July with the 3rd Squadron conducting a road march along National Highway 20 to secure engineer route clearing operations. At 210935H July the Squadron was ambushed by elements of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions, 275th VC Regiment reinforced by elements of the DONG NAI (D800 Provincial Main Force) Battalion. Contact was broken at 211140H July resulting in 96 VC KIA (BC). US losses were fourteen killed by hostile action (KHA) and forty-seven wounded by hostile action (WHA). This operation continues at the end of the reporting period.

(5) Miscellaneous: Plans were initiated to improve the defensive posture of Vietnamese Regional and Popular Forces (RF/PF) facilities within the TAOI by providing barrier materials, communications and ready reaction forces. Operation

RIVER WAR continued periodically during the entire reporting period. Increased emphasis has been placed in the latter part of this quarter on Revolutionary Development through the use of MEDCAP and other civic action programs. Continued emphasis will be placed on the Revolutionary Development Program.

b. Engineer Activities.

(1) Combat Support. Combat Engineer support for the regiment was provided principally by the 919th Engineer Company (Armored) with the limited assistance provided by the 27th Engineer Battalion (C).

During the first week in May, elements of the 919th Engineer Company were still engaged in Operation MANHATTAN. The 1st and 3rd Platoons were supporting the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which was attached to the 1st Infantry Division. The 2nd Platoon was supporting the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry of the 1st Infantry Division. These search and destroy operations were centered around DAU TIENG and LAI KHE.

The platoons found one mine of undetermined origin and a 250 pound bomb and 155mm round which had been recovered by the enemy and used as mines.

The 1st Platoon destroyed 155 fortified positions, which consisted of two and four man foxholes. Upon termination of Operation MANHATTAN, on 11 May 1967, the company moved back to Blackhorse Base Camp.

In June the 919th Engineer Company with elements of the 595th Engineer Company, 27th Engineer Battalion, and the 15th Engineer Battalion was vigorously engaged in a land clearing operation near GIA RAY. The combined engineer force cleared approximately 150 acres of heavily forested land.

During Operation PADDINGTON (8-15 July), combat support consisted of bunker destruction, mine sweeping and building of fords in support of search and destroy missions. Following PADDINGTON the 919th Engineer Company assisted in the development of Blackhorse Base Camp until the 21st of July when the company (-) moved out on Operation ELPORIA. While employed along Highway 20 (YT1638) in support of the Blackhorse Regiment, the Headquarters of the 919th Engineer Company supplied material for the Regional and Popular Forces outposts along the highway.

The 1st Platoon, in support of the 1st Squadron, was employed in reinforcing the highway, vicinity YT354275. The 3rd Platoon, 919th Engineer Company, supporting the 3rd Squadron, supplied the RF/PF with material and assisted them in constructing positions along Highway 20. Material used consisted of 110 rolls of concertina, 65,000 sandbags, eighty long pickets and twenty short pickets. In addition, the 3rd Platoon stocked 168 rolls of concertina wire, 160 long pickets, sixty short pickets and 20,000 sandbags in the sub-sector advisors headquarters.

During each of these operations, a small detachment from the 919th Engineer Company remained at Blackhorse to assist in the development and betterment of the base camp. This rear detachment completed the Regimental Tactical Operations Center, three semi-permanent buildings for the Air Cavalry Troop, a Regimental Replacement School and the Headquarters and Headquarters Troop Supply Room.

(2) Base Development: Progress on the base camp continued to move on schedule in spite of the loss of engineer resources during the quarter for tactical missions. The 27th Engineer Battalion, along with elements of the 919th Engineer Company, continued to provide the engineer assets necessary for the development of the base camp.

The Regimental Headquarters, Tactical Operations Center and numerous other administrative buildings, to include the Army Post Office, Post Exchange and a Finance Office, were completed during this quarter. The camp drainage system, of major importance during this monsoon season, was completed. Work continued on the drainage ditches in the form of reshaping and repairing whenever necessary. BOQ facilities for the Regimental Headquarters were completed and are occupied. Messhalls have been erected, and a total of thirty-six billets were completed. One more hospital ward was finished. The logistical support element had three

large supply sheds, one vegetable shed, one condiment store and office, two direct exchange and self-service facilities and one repair parts building erected during the quarter. These add greatly to their ability to support the regiment.

An operational ice plant, started last quarter, was completed. Water continues to be provided by a spring fed lake. During this quarter 3,125,758 gallons of potable water were consumed; of this total there were 784,796 gallons consumed in May, 970,362 gallons in June and 1,370,600 gallons in July.

c. Chemical Activities.

(1) Defoliation and clearing. The area of National Route 2 along Hill 300 (YT4304) and the cemetery (YT4403) about 5 km from the Blackhorse Base Camp have been cleared using M132 Flamethrowers. Both of these areas offered good concealment, and were frequented by snipers and used for mine emplacement. For a more persistent effect these two areas are presently being defoliated. The growth around the Gia Ray Rock Quarry was such that the Viet Cong could easily move close to the perimeter undetected. This perimeter has been defoliated. The defoliation of the Blackhorse Base Camp perimeter in order to provide a more effective field of fire is a continuing operation.

(2) CS Drops. The Chemical Section and 33rd Chemical Detachment participated in no RCA drops during the reporting period.

(3) Explosive Ordnance Disposal. Although this is not a primary function of the 33rd Chemical Detachment, the detachment has rendered safe or exploded various munitions as a service to the units on the Blackhorse Base Camp. The list of munitions include M79 rounds, a 3/4 ton Truck load of various unusable ammunitions, and a damaged Claymore Mine rendered safe. The enemy munitions rendered safe included 12 grenades, 2 rifle grenades, 1 large Claymore mine, 2 parachute type grenades, and 2 RPG-2 Rocket Launcher rounds.

(4) Training Conducted by the 33rd Chemical Detachment. The detachment conducted training for new replacements on CBR operations and equipment that is being used in the Republic of Vietnam. This training includes conducting a gas chamber exercise for replacements as an opportunity to fit and test the operation of their protective masks.

(5) Training Received by the chemical detachment. Personnel of the chemical detachment were trained in the operation and maintenance of the Personnel Detector. The training was conducted by the personnel of the 9th Infantry Division Chemical Section. The regiment requested three Personnel Detectors which will be laterally transferred from the 173rd Airborne Brigade. They are expected to arrive in August or early September.

d. Signal Activities.

(1) During the months of May, June and July, signal activities within the regiment were varied in nature. On 12 May, the regiment terminated Operation MANHATTAN and returned to the base camp. The remainder of May and part of June and July were spent in installing a security bunker telephone system around the Blackhorse base camp perimeter. In addition, work continued on base camp development to include the rerouting and balancing of the Headquarters power distribution system, the acquisition of two 100 KW generators from PA&E, the wiring of new headquarters buildings and the preparation of the Regimental TOC for occupancy.

(2) During the period 22 July to 31 July, the regiment participated in Operation EMPORIA, in which the Regimental CP moved to a forward area. This operation was a good shakedown for the regiment, as many personnel were new. VHF, telephone circuit and Communications Center Support were provided by elements of the 9th Signal Battalion, 9th Infantry Division. These facilities afforded the regiment direct circuits to the Blackhorse Base Camp, 9th Infantry Division, 18th ARVN and 54th Artillery Group.

(3) On returning to the Blackhorse Base Camp the new Regimental TOC was occupied. Two sixty-five foot wood poles were obtained, on which six FM antennas for the regiment, one FM antenna and one VHF antenna for the Air Liaison Team (US Air Force) were mounted. Power for all communications equipment is provided through the use of a rectifier, heavy duty batteries and AC power from the Regimental Headquarters 100 KW generator. This eliminates the necessity of small size generators which have not been completely reliable for the power levels required.

(4) Permanent base camp communications, provided by the 1st Platoon, 588th Signal Company, continued to improve. The unit is in the process of changing over to permanent telephone cables, moving the wirehead, VHF terminals, switchboard and communications center into a permanent type building.

a. Support

(1) Air Force

(a) General: During this period the entire Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) became established at LONG GIAO. Parking facilities and revetments were completed by self-help. Living quarters were improved and now house all TACP personnel. Many of the operational problems that existed when the FAC's and O-1 aircraft were located at BIEN HOA have been eliminated by this move. Reaction time to the 11th Armored Cavalry Tactical Air requests has been improved considerably. The acquisition of a third O-1 in July increased FAC coverage available to the regiment.

(b) Resources:

1 Aircraft: The unit now has three O-1 aircraft assigned. All aircraft are located at LONG GIAO.

2 Personnel: During this period, the TACP has suffered almost a complete changeover of personnel.

a Officer: The unit maintained an average strength of six officer personnel during this period. However, there were new personnel who had to undergo a checkout prior to replacing the experienced FAC who were leaving.

b Enlisted: Enlisted personnel manning consists of one NCO and seven radio repairmen/operators and two O-1 aircraft crewchiefs. A temporary shortage existed while new personnel underwent a training program.

(c) Operations: During this period, the TACP supported several major operations. Even though the regiment remained under the operational control of the 1st Infantry Division, the FAC and O-1 aircraft, after coordination with ALO of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division, staged out of DAU TIENG. By deploying closer to the regiment, closer coordination and less reaction time were achieved.

(d) Problem Areas: FAC communications problems still existed throughout this period. The suspense date for the new service radios, scheduled to be installed in O-1 aircraft, has been moved to September.

STATISTICAL DATA ON AIR FORCE SUPPORT

May - July 1967

OBJECTIVE	SORTIES FLOWN
Visual Reconnaissance	174
Forward Air Control	106
Convoy Escort	307
Other	18
Combat Strikes	259

11

TYPE AIRCRAFT FLOWN

TYPE	F-4	F-5	F-100	B-57	A-1H	AC47	O-1
SORTIES	55	3	279	19	2	1	605

ORDNANCE EXPENDED

Mk 117	750# Bomb	367
Mk 82	500# Bomb	601
Mk 81	250# Bomb	50
Mlu-13/Mlu-27	750# Napalm Bomb	421
Lau-3 Rx Pods	19 2.75" Rx/Pod	34
CBU Canisters 2/A		16
20mm		82,600
.50 Cal		3,200
7.62mm		41,000
Flares		149

(2) Artillery

(a) General: Artillery fire support provided during the quarter assumed two principle roles; one, support of ground operations and secondly, the delivery of harrassing and interdicting (H&I) fires. The organic howitzer batteries continued direct support missions for their squadrons with reinforcing fires being provided by the 54th Artillery Group in the Blackhorse TAOR, TAOI, and areas of operations (AO).

Coordination of artillery fires from the base camp were done by the 54th Artillery Group Liaison section location at the regimental TOC.

(b) Employment and Combat Operations:

1 Organic artillery was employed dependent on the mission assigned each squadron. General support artillery was provided by elements of the 54th Artillery Group from respective base camp firing positions. Long range fires were provided daily for convoys operating between the base camp and LONG BINH, and on all targets of opportunity within the Blackhorse TAOI.

2 During Operation MANHATTAN, conducted April-May 1967 the batteries received clearance to fire from 8th Battalion, 6th Artillery, the general support battalion of the 1st Infantry Division. Due to the lack of a Fire Support Element organic to the regiment, clearance of fires with adjacent units was processed through the Regimental Tactical Operations Center (RTOC) which lacked necessary personnel to handle the additional requests. The howitzer batteries of the respective squadrons coordinated directly with one another for clearance of fires.

3 During Operation AKRON in June, the fires of Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron, were cleared through the 54th Artillery Group Liaison Section at the Regimental Tactical Operations Center. Due to the limited size of the liaison section, fires were not expeditiously processed on a twenty-four hour basis. In the latter part of June, 1st Squadron (-) augmented by 2nd and 4th Battalions, 39th Infantry, 9th Infantry Division, reacted to support the 18th Infantry Division (ARVN) elements in contact with elements of the 275th VC Regiment. 1st Battalion, 11th Artillery (-) displaced with two batteries and assumed control of artillery fires in the operational area, to include B Battery, 2nd Battalion, 35th Artillery, from the 54th Artillery Group. Liaison sections were also provided to ARVN maneuver elements to ensure maximum fire support available to participating units.

4. During Operation ENTORIA, a Fire Support Element comprised of members of the 9th Division Artillery provided coordination and clearance of fires, as well as establishing an auxiliary Artillery Warning Control Center (AWCC) to XUAN LOC Artillery. This arrangement proved to be a most advantageous means of ensuring effective and timely delivery of supporting fires and relieved the Regimental Tactical Operations Center of the additional responsibilities for clearance of fires.

(c) Ordnance Expended

May

Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron	7,515
Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron	6,788
TOTAL	14,303

June

Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron	4,335
Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron	6,276
TOTAL	10,611

July

Howitzer Battery, 1st Squadron	3,584
Howitzer Battery, 3rd Squadron	3,443
TOTAL	7,027

5. (U) Training.

a. Unit Training, maintenance, on the job training, weapons familiarization and proficiency firing were conducted throughout the quarter. During periods of extended tactical operations, maximum utilization of available time enabled small unit leaders to review tactics, techniques, and lessons learned.

b. Replacement Training was continued throughout the quarter on a six day a week basis. Individual attendance for the quarter were as follows: May - 181, June - 355, July - 715. The program of instruction was reviewed to improve replacement training based on lessons learned from combat operations. Basically the scope of instruction remained unchanged from USARV requirements. Additional emphasis was placed upon individual marksmanship, mines and booby traps, individual actions, patrolling, ambushes and counterambushes. With a high projected turnover of personnel during July and August, action was taken to construct a permanent classroom 20 feet x 60 feet to increase attendance capacity to 120 replacements. The new classroom was completed 21 June with the former classroom to be utilized as an annex during peak training months. Each squadron, in addition was levied a total of three non-commissioned officers to serve as instructors.

c. New Equipment Training was conducted on the AN/PSR-1 anti-intrusion device. In addition, training was conducted on the starlight scope for units of the Provisional Squadron authorized augmentation of equipment for perimeter defense.

d. Specialized Training:

(1) Recondo School. The Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol (LRRP) of the Air Cavalry Troop continued to provide individuals for attendance at the NHA TRANG MACV Recondo School. Due to a constant turnover rate of personnel in the LRRP, four to six students were sent for schooling. Map reading and jungle navigation continue to be a major weakness in the trainees. In order to overcome deficiencies, the LRRP conducted training approximately two weeks each month or whenever operational commitments would allow.

(2) Jungle Survival School. A three day course conducted at Clark AFB Philippines was made available to aviation personnel. One individual per month attended the course to become familiar with the techniques of jungle survival.

(3) Aircraft Maintenance: The Army Aviation Maintenance Technical Assistance Program (AAMTAP) School, 765th Transportation Group, VUNG TAU administered in-country training on aircraft maintenance. The courses offered by the AAMTAP School have proven to be invaluable in that there has been a critical shortage of adequately trained aircraft mechanics and maintenance personnel for weapons subsystems.

6. (U) Aviation.

a. General: The Army Aviation elements supported the regiment with 17 OH-23s, 19 UH-1Cs, and 12 UH-1Ds. The OH-23s continued to prove their value for command and control in moving armor units, convoys and supporting elements by not only increasing the armor versatility but also lengthening its range of communication. Aerial fire support and rapid reaction force was provided by the Air Cavalry Troop's UH-1C gunships. These helicopters not only suppressed enemy fires during ambushes and provided a blocking force against retreating enemy during armor assaults, but also silenced enemy mortar fire day or night within minutes after an attack. Insertion and extraction of Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols, evacuation of wounded and emergency resupply, was accomplished by the UH-1D. Major emphasis was placed on improving the airdrome. The air traffic at Evans Army Airfield averaged from 250 to 800 operations a day. The regiment realized the urgent need for a traffic advisory in order to assist in the safe flow of traffic. With limited resources of personnel and equipment the tower became operational with both FM and UHF frequencies. It provided aircraft with limited information such as traffic advisory, weather, artillery firing, change of flight plan, and relay of information from ground personnel. An aircraft Control Team "B" and an airfield control tower (AN TSQ 70A) were requested to resolve the existing limitations. Six electric helicopter landing lights were installed on the runway to reduce the hazards of night helicopter approaches. The taxiway was lengthened, marked, cleared, and made usable as a runway and is presently being used by C7A daily for transporting replacement and departing personnel. Revetments are being built for protecting helicopters against mortar attack and are fifty percent complete. Other achievements are listed below:

Sorties Flown

	Command & Control	Troop Lift	Cargo Lift	Casualty Evac
OH-23	3164			
UH-1D	722	732	999	60

	Aerial Fire Support & Reaction Forces	Administration	Reconnaissance
OH-23		1253	327
UH-1C	2386		382
UH-1D		1589	50

	No. Pass	Tons Cargo	Hours Flown	Fuel Consumed (gal.)
OH-23	3047		2444	41548
UH-1C			2712	244080
UH-1D	7804	282	2114	190260

These results were achieved by use of resources organic to the Regimental Aviation Platoon, the Squadron Aviation Sections and the Air Cavalry Troop.

b. Employment: The Observation Helicopters were utilized mainly for command and control, reconnaissance, and fire adjustment at the squadron level. In-country orientation and training of newly arrived aviators was accomplished with a vigorous emphasis on safety.

The UH-1C gunships were employed in aerial fire support as a rapid reaction force and in reconnaissance missions.

Results of fire	May	June	July	Total
VC killed confirmed	7	7	2	16
VC killed estimated	10	5	17	32

Results of Fire	May	June	July	Total
Structures destroyed	1	1	0	2
Structures damaged	2	0	23	25

Ammunition consumed:	7.62	2.75"	40MM
	934,100	6,804	12,366

UH-1D aircraft were principally utilized for LRRP insertion and extraction, medical evacuation of the wounded, Night Command and Control, group reconnaissance and emergency resupply.

c. Techniques: The observation and communication capabilities of the OH-23 continued to enhance the versatility of the Cavalry Squadron. Safe procedures were emphasized for flying under adverse conditions such as marginal weather, night and low level. The program of STANDARDIZATION rides for aviators every three months was continued to maintain a high state of proficiency. A program of infusion of aviators was instituted to spread the rotation of aviators as evenly as possible throughout the year.

Trubine powered UH-1 flying hours were closely monitored in order to fly only those tasks necessary for accomplishment of the mission. Conservation of flying time and care in the use of equipment was emphasized and practiced in order to conserve the life of the aircraft. The average number of hours flown is as follows:

	OH-23	UH-1C	UH-1D
May	68	58	64
June	54	64	55
July	67	69	62

The main area of technique development was in providing close fire support during darkness. It was learned that the elements essential for success in this type operation depend upon detailed reconnaissance during daylight hours of positions and outposts likely to be subject to enemy attacks and close coordination with the ground command and control element. Experience gained during the quarter in this type operation indicate that ground elements can expect rapid, effective gunship support during darkness with friendly troops stationary and when the above listed actions are accomplished.

A major area of concern was maintaining the highest possible number of aircraft flyable. Night maintenance and the shuttling of parts to the base camp from general support units assisted in maintaining a good availability rate. The base camp airfield tower provided a flight following service for aircraft and an instant relay to maintenance when recovery of a downed aircraft was required. It was learned that a back up of tower operators, generators and radios is required for consistency of operation even though they are not authorized by the TOE. The base camp airfield is handling an average of 500 aircraft a day, and when it is used for a staging area for operations, the air traffic count rises to over 800. It is anticipated that the 125th Air Traffic Control Company will provide some assistance toward the manning of the Air Traffic Advisory Facility.

d. Maintenance: The maintenance posture has been plagued with OH-23 generators sheering driveshafts, performance of the 1100 hour periodic inspection for the UH-1D and the malfunction of armament systems on the UH-1C. The availability of mission ready aircraft was significantly reduced because of the lack of direct support maintenance at Blackhorse Base Camp for aircraft armament and radios. Helicopters with armament and radio systems requiring direct support maintenance must be flown to Vung Tau for repair which is time-consuming and uses flight time not in support of combat effort. Considering these obstacles, the availability has been excellent compared to other units in Vietnam. The aircraft availability is as follows:

Aircraft availability - (expressed in percent of assigned aircraft)

	OH-23	UH-1C	UH-1D
May	73	76	89.5
June	71	79	81.8
July	72.6	76	82.8

7. (U) LOGISTICS.

a. General: The regiment was adequately supported in Class I thru V by the 29th Support Group. The primary means of resupply for Classes I, II, III and IV was supply point distribution from the 3rd Ordnance Battalion at Long Binh. In this quarter, during tactical operations conducted by the regiment, resupply was conducted by both ground convoys and air, Chinook CH7.

b. Supply and Maintenance:

(1) Class I: Adequate support was provided. The 28-day cyclic menu provides for too many "B" type rations. More fresh meats and vegetables would be appreciated, especially during periods the units are at base camp.

(2) Class II/IV:

(a) The regiment received the 9 authorized Armor Vehicle Launch Bridges (AVLB) during this period.

(b) The regiment experienced a shortage of headsets (H161/U) used by track vehicle crew members.

(c) Availability of signal repair parts continues to be a problem

(3) Maintenance: Direct maintenance support was provided by the 55lst Light Maintenance Company during the period. Due to the time lag in receiving needed repair parts, some vehicles experience long periods of down time. This unit further experienced a shortage of engines for M113A1 vehicles. Critical shortages stil exist in signal repair parts causing excessive down time on equipment turned in for repair.

c. Transportation: Organic transportation was used extensively for the transporting of repair parts and Class II items from supply depots in Saigon and Lon Binh. This was due to the non-availability of supporting transportation from 1st Logistical Command on a timely basis. Air re-supply by Chinook CH7 and UH-1D was used extensively for all classes of supply during tactical operations conducted during this period.

d. Services: Adequate support was provided, however it has been noted tha the contract laundry service at THU-DUC has deteriorated since this laundry was initially used. Many items are being exchanged at the laundry and the quality of workmanship has decreased.

e. Medical:

(1) General. Injuries as a result of hostile action are primarily due to fragments. The upper and lower extremities are most commonly affected. Chest an abdominal wounds account for less than 4% of reported injuries. The percentage of injured as a result of hostile action (IRHA) cases evacuated for hospitalization was smaller than in the preceeding quarter (189 evacuated, 33 treated at regimental facilities).

(2) Unusual diseases. Malaria occurred at an average of four cases pe month. Four cases of hepatitis were diagnosed. Three hundred and sixty-eight cases of diarrhea were reported. Unit medical personnel have been unable to associate foo and water sources in any of these cases.

(3) MEDCAP. The MEDCAP program during the report period was conducted in a more organized manner. Most of the MEDCAP missions were conducted by a team of

one physician and several medics, Skin diseases, upper respiratory tract infections, and suspected malnutrition type disorders and anemia were the most frequently encountered diseases. During the month of July special emphasis was placed on improving basic sanitation, and the handing out of soap to the patients seems to be a promising start in this direction. Attempts are being made to revisit certain villages or hamlets on a regularly scheduled basis. A total of 5297 medical and 226 dental patients were treated. Fifty-two missions were performed.

8. (U) Civic Action and Psychological Operations:

a. Civic Action during the quarter included an increased number of MEDCAP/DENTCAP, English language classes, and distribution of commodities and foodstuffs to the Vietnamese people. In addition, a new building was constructed at the Chieu Hoi center. Close coordination with local agencies involved in civic action was made to insure that these projects support GVN objectives.

(1) In May, considerable progress was made by the Hoi Chanh of the Long Khanh Chieu Hoi center toward the completion of a six meter by twelve meter building. Also, during the month of May, scrap lumber and foodstuffs were donated to the Chieu Hoi center to improve living standards at the center. A total of 2,500 lbs of rice, 1,500 lbs of milk, 1,350 lbs of cooking oil and 100 bars of soap were distributed to needy Vietnamese throughout the province. A total of 610 patients were treated during the month as part of the MEDCAP program, and 191 were treated during DENTCAP. Refugee relief assistance was provided during the final stages of Operation MANHATTAN, and 15 tons of captured rice were returned to the GVN.

(2) During the month of June, the extension of the dormitory at the Chieu Hoi Center, in Xuan Loc, was completed. In addition, the Hoi Chanh have commenced work on the renovation of existing buildings. This is a self help program with assistance and advice being provided by the S5 section of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and Civilian Operations for Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS). In addition to the six meter by twelve meter building at the Chieu Hoi Center, a class 55 expedient timber bridge was constructed (YS394868), and two 72" culverts, 30' in length were installed (YS509993). Civic Action also included MEDCAPs, during which 1,716 persons were treated. A total of 300 lbs of cement, 1200 lbs of rice, 952 lbs milk, 72 gallons cooking oil, 700 lbs of corn meal, 1200 lbs rolled wheat and 900 lbs of bulgar wheat, as well as 20 rolls of galvanized tin and 25 lbs of candy, was dispatched for distribution to the needy civilians of the province. Members of the regimental S5 section continued to assist in vocational training of Hoi Chanh in carpentry, mason work, and animal husbandry.

(3) In July, the 18th ARVN Psychological Operations (PSYOP) team was used in conjunction with regimental activities. The team was used a total of five times, during MEDCAP/DENTCAP and cordon and search operations. The ARVN has proven very cooperative and effective in the deployment of their PSYOP team. The Hoi Chanh of the Long Khanh Chieu Hoi center are making preparations for construction of another building to house new Hoi Chanh. The S5 section of the 11th Armored Cavalry and CORDS work closely on this project in order to coordinate disposition of material and technical assistance. July also illustrated the continuing involvement of the Blackhorse Regiment in support of Revolutionary Development and civic action. Thirteen truck loads of lumber were delivered to the Chieu Hoi Center and the 52nd Ranger Battalion for rebuilding and improving housing. Also 1350 lbs of milk, 2900 lbs of rice, 2000 lbs of oil, 1100 lbs of bulgar wheat and 150 lbs of candy were distributed to the needy families of the province. In order to stimulate educational and vocational training in the province, 3300 school kits, 420 sewing kits and 30 shovels were distributed during the month. The regiment's emphasis on MEDCAP showed positive results as the number of patients treated increased fourfold. A total of 2,971 patients were treated. In addition, 35 patients were treated during DENTCAP.

(4) During the quarter, care was taken to achieve a more favorable balance between short term immediate impact projects and long range projects, with the goal of assisting the indigenous population in achieving greater self-sufficiency. Closer liaison was achieved with the 18th ARVN Division, their PSYOP and cultural teams produced rewarding results for the regiment. Close liaison and coordination continues with both US and Vietnamese agencies in the area that are actively involved in civic action. Among these are the sector advisory team, advisory personnel of the 18th ARVN Division, subsector advisory personnel, the District Chief, the S5 of the 54th Artillery Group, the Civilian Operations for Revolutionary Development

Support, and the Joint United States Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO) representatives. The employment of all available agencies and resources in a fruitful civic action program is a necessary prerequisite to an effective civic action/Revolutionary Development program.

The psychological warfare effort of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment is supported by the 10th Mobile Field Propaganda Team from the 246th Psychological operations Company in Bien Hoa. From 1 May thru 31 July the team conducted a total of 78 psychological warfare missions in which there were 7,449,400 leaflets dropped and 35 hours of loudspeaker broadcast time.

(1) The psychological operations of the past quarter can generally be divided into two types, (1) direct support of squadron and regimental operations at the request of the unit and (2) operations which were originated by the field team based on its intelligence and targeting. During the reporting period, 18 special tapes were prepared by the field team. These consisted of personal messages from recent Hoi Chanh to members of their units, messages by district and other local officials, and tapes prepared for quick reaction to tactical situations.

(2) A new addition to the PSYOPS effort this quarter was the utilization of the Psychological Warfare (PSYWAR) Team from the 18th ARVN Division. This special team assisted on various occasions in conducting MEDCAP as well as cordon and search operations. This type of operation will be continued.

9. (C) PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS FOR BASE CAMP OPERATION. This regiment has a minimum requirement for 15 officers, 41 NCO, and 142 EM for strictly base camp operations. These requirements include Primary Replacement and Club personnel; Logistical Convoy Control and Unit Police personnel; Regimental Training School NCO; water point, ammunition, supply point and baggage procuring personnel, and supply personnel at the Long Binh convoy staging area. At the present time these personnel are assigned to Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. This requirement should not be counted against the combat strength of the maneuver squadrons and the Air Cavalry Troop. This is an absolute minimum requirement which is necessary for the safety and well-being of all of the units and personnel assigned to Blackhorse Base Camp. This problem is especially critical for the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment as it is the only seperate brigade or regiment in Vietnam that is not authorized a support battalion.

SECTION II COMMANDER'S OBSERVATIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. OBSERVATIONS (LESSONS LEARNED)

a. Operations:

(1) Item: Enemy employment of automatic weapons along aircraft firing routes during ambushes and attacks.

Discussion: During recent enemy ambushes and night attacks against outposts, hostile automatic weapons have been employed away from the attacking forces and along the normal paths taken by low flying aircraft to attack the long axis of the enemy target. Weapons are emplaced in individual shelters and mounted to fire effectively at low flying aircraft.

Observation: Aircraft crews must be extremely vigilant for anti-aircraft weapons around enemy ambush and night attack sites. When discovered these weapons must be given priority in being neutralized so that effective fire can be placed on enemy forces.

(2) Item: Coordination of Air Strikes and Artillery Fire.

Discussion: The lack of common communications frequencies between the ground commander and the Forward Air Controller (FAC) has caused difficulty in coordinating Air Strikes and Artillery Fire resulting in a loss of fire support for ground units during critical moments of engagement with the enemy.

Observation: The ground commanders must operate on a frequency compatible with the Forward Air Controller's radio, thus allowing the FAC to monitor the command net. The FAC could brief the fighters, then notify the ground commander that the fighters are ready. Upon hearing, over the command net, that the last round was on the way or that the artillery had been shifted, the FAC should mark the target and order the fighters in. If this procedure is followed, the fighters can be deployed in a minimum of time. Using this procedure, with the 1st Squadron on Operation JUNCTION CITY I, Phase II, the fighters were on target less than one minute following the last round of artillery. In addition, if the last round of artillery fire is white phosphorus, marking by FAC is not necessary, allowing for a more rapid reaction by the fighters.

(3) Item: Recovery of Damaged Vehicles.

Discussion: It has been found that recovery of M113 is facilitated by having a tractor and 12 ton trailer accompany the recovery section whenever possible. This allows vehicle recovery without dragging the personnel carrier over hard surfaced roads.

Observation: Recovery teams should be accompanied by a tractor-trailer whenever possible.

(4) Item: FAC and observers must keep abreast of the tactical situation.

Discussion: Valuable time is lost when information of the tactical situation must be relayed to FAC.

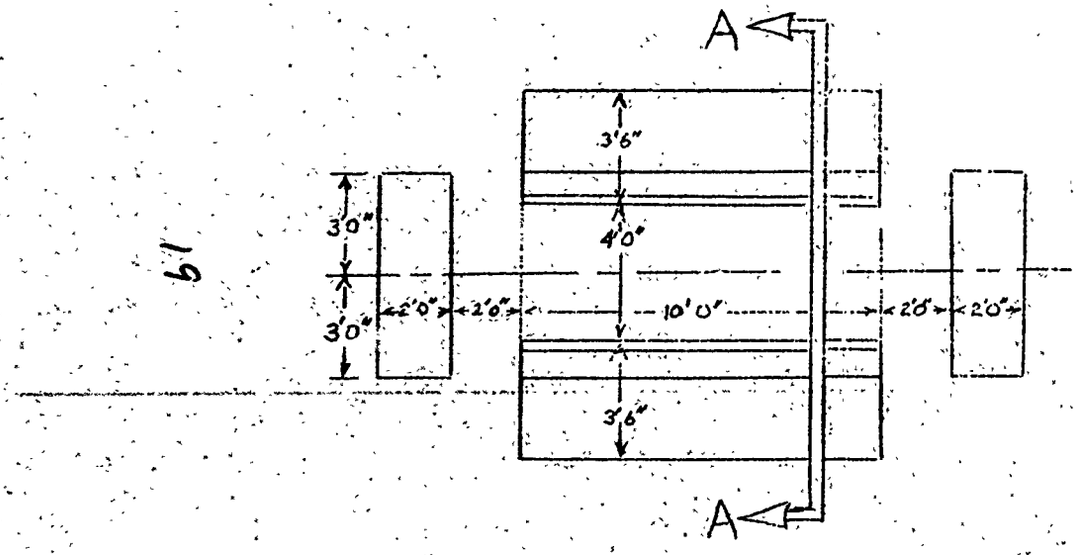
Observation: The practice of FAC reporting in on the command net to learn the tactical situation should be followed by all observers rather than having information relayed.

(5) Item: Passive Defensive Measures

Discussion: During the rainy season, digging underground bunkers for permanent protection usually results in water filled trenches.

Observation: Seventy-two inch culvert half-sections can be easily transported to the field for use with sandbags as support for bunkers and overhead cover and precludes digging-in, thereby avoiding water filled trenches. (See Diagram, next page).

C.M.P. BUNKER
(PERSONNEL)



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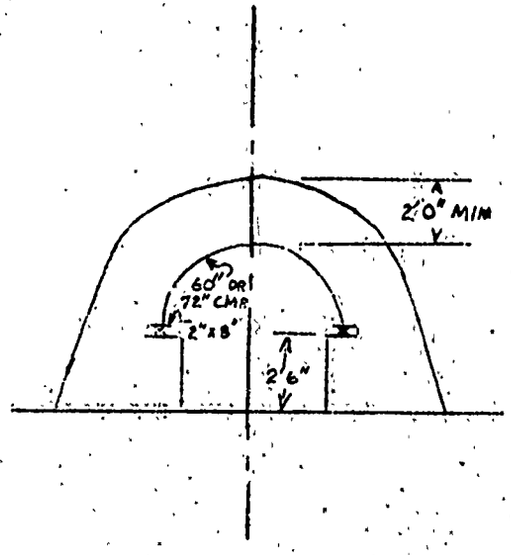


SECTION AA

(6) Item: Ambush Indicators

Discussion: An ambush depends primarily on surprise for its success. This surprise can be eliminated or minimized, and the enemy force destroyed or neutralized by observing telltale indicators. These indicators are:

(a) Absence of indigenous population in fields or rubber plantations adjacent to the road or in towns known to be populated.

(b) Absence of civilian traffic on the road.

(c) Unexplained halts in civilian traffic flow; vehicles stopped or parked on the side of the road.

(d) Road blocks of trees, brush, and dirt.

(e) Combination of one or more of the above in an area lacking room for maneuver or possessing limited trafficability for tracked vehicles.

Observation: Alert ground crews or personnel in command and control aircraft can use these indicators as early warning and initiate proper countermeasures to neutralize or destroy the ambush force.

(7) Item: Jungle Clearing.

Discussion: Units often clear heavily forested or overgrown areas to establish laager positions, LZ's and access roads, or to conduct search and destroy operations. Several steps can be taken to reduce injury to personnel and damage to equipment.

(a) Bulldozers will effectively clear the area when contact is not imminent. In this way, weapons, ordnance, and personnel of the combat vehicle will not be exposed to unnecessarily rough treatment.

(b) Should combat vehicles be used, drivers should be buttoned up; nearby combat vehicles should cover the "clearing" vehicle.

(c) Remove loose equipment from the top or sides of the vehicle. Secure items which cannot be stowed inside the vehicle. Sensitive items, such as radio antennas, should be tied down or removed.

(d) Instruct soldiers not to place their arms on rims of cupolas, or upon potential cutting edges (armor shields) in the event of falling objects such as tree limbs.

(e) Use tanks in lieu of ACAV whenever possible. Exercise care to prevent damage to weapons and main guns; weapons such as machine guns should be depressed and dept on line toward the direction of movement.

(f) Instruct vehicle commanders to guide their vehicles along paths of least resistance.

(g) Maintain interval between adjacent vehicles during multiple-axis jungle clearing operations.

Observation: Personnel should be trained to clear heavily jungled areas within the capability of their vehicles and without injury to personnel or sacrifice of equipment.

(8) Item: Suspension Systems.

Discussion: During the rainy season, suspension systems are subjected to continuous strain as a result of the mud and swampy terrain. Accumulation of dried mud on and around the idler arms and road wheel arms causes the track to be forced from the road wheels, resulting in thrown track and ruptured seals.

27

Observation: Crews must be particularly conscious of before, during and after operations checks on suspension systems. Track tension and road wheel oil levels must be checked continuously. Mud deposits should be chipped off with a shovel or tanker's bar.

(9) Item: Aerial Resupply.

Discussion: Overland resupply off main roads during the rainy season is impractical. Wheeled vehicles cannot negotiate the muddy or swampy terrain prevalent in this area. Although aerial resupply alleviates this resupply problem, the following additional factors peculiar to this method of resupply must be considered:

(a) Weather: The uncertainty of aerial resupply due to poor weather required full five days basic load at all times be maintained on vehicles during field operations.

(b) Priorities of resupply items must be established, and items prepackaged for efficient use of the aircraft.

(c) Logistics personnel must be thoroughly familiar with rigging techniques, LZ selection, and preparation, aerial resupply communications procedures, and aircraft load capacities.

Observation: Logistics personnel must not allow the speed of aerial resupply to be a substitute for careful planning. Weather and aircraft maintenance introduce variables which drastically affect the aerial resupply effort.

(10) Item: Revolutionary Development Materials/Civil Affairs.

Discussion: Grants to ARVN Forces, local villages, and RF/PB outposts in the form of construction or barrier materials must be made in quantities commensurate with the locally available manpower. Stockpiling of large quantities of such material may impose a security burden upon responsible persons. In addition such materials may be used improperly or for barter if allowed to accumulate.

Observation: Provide materials in quantities which can be used effectively over a one to two day period.

(11) Item: Civilian Labor and Planning.

Discussion: Civilian labor can be used for the mutual advantage of US Forces and Vietnamese Nationals for such tasks as clearing brush, erecting fortifications, and common hard labor. Civilian labor requirements must be planned and coordinated well in advance to allow National Police and village chiefs to screen available personnel. Wages, working conditions, and labor requirements can be analyzed and agreements made from District through village level. Use of civilian labor on Operation Emporia II disclosed that the people were uninformed of the labor contract, dissatisfied with their wages, and ignorant of the job to be performed. This problem was caused by insufficient time allowed for coordination of labor requirements.

Observation: Allow 2-3 weeks notification and coordination time to allow GVN officials to exploit their manpower resources and eliminate misunderstandings.

(12) Item: Employment of Vietnamese National Police.

Discussion: Vietnamese National Police are sent to the field unprepared and uninformed. In most cases, they explain that their section chiefs don't tell them where they are going, how long they will be gone, or what they are to do. Policemen report to the Squadron without sleeping gear, proper change of uniform, etc.

Observation: While this lack of information perhaps aids security, a procedure should be established to insure that policemen report to a unit with the equipment and clothing necessary for extended field operations.

(13) Item: Captured Enemy Material.

Discussion: Captured enemy items are often kept by soldiers as war trophies.

Observation: Captured material should be tagged ASAP as to where, when, and how and who captured the material. If the item is a valid "war trophy" it should be promptly returned to the trooper who found it. Soldiers should be informed of the valuable intelligence information gained from captured items and assured that legitimate war trophies will be returned to them.

(14) Item: Radio Transmission.

Discussion: Complaints are received concerning garbled radio transmissions, especially during the rainy season.

Observation: Antennas should be unscrewed from their bases and cleaned daily. Mud and dirt accumulate on the base connecting ball, causing weak and distorted transmission.

(15) Item: MEDCAP Teams and Intelligence.

Discussion: MEDCAP Teams are received favorably by the population. The people are more willing to talk about VC activities.

Observation: MI or S-2 personnel should accompany MEDCAP Teams to obtain intelligence information.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS.

a. Observation: Wheel trafficability is greatly reduced during the monsoon season; whereas tracked vehicles demonstrate versatility in operating over varied terrain. During Operation EMPORIA I wheeled vehicles encountered difficulty in maneuvering and keeping up with track vehicles. As a result many wheel vehicles needed in the combat trains remained at the base camp, which greatly increased the number of aerial resupply sorties needed.

Recommendation: That the new M548 cargo carrier be authorized in lieu of some of the wheeled vehicles in the squadron support platoon. The M548 can be adapted or modified to transport fuel or water pods, as well as to carry ammunition. Six of the M548 are to be issued to the Howitzer Batteries of each squadron. Three are to be issued for the flame thrower sections of each squadron. Additional M548 should be issued to the support platoon to improve its cross country mobility.

b. Observation: The regiment has experienced a low availability rate on OH-23 aircraft due to failures of: Cylinders; exhaust valves; fuel pumps; ignition leads; generators; tail rotors. Problems have been encountered with the flight control system; 82% of those checked have had control connections which have been grounded, and with aircraft bolts vibrating loose. Also several engine failures have occurred in aircraft which have habitually carried two passengers and where the engine had in excess of 700 operational hours.

Recommendation:

(1) That several additional checks be initiated during the Intermediate and Periodic Inspections:

(a) Compression checks.

(b) A more vigorous oil analysis program.

(c) A more thorough check of all systems during the intermediate inspections.

(2) That tail rotors, which have been found to last no more than 400 hours, be dye penetrated at each PE to preclude cracks from going un-

detected.

(3) That control systems be checked each 100 hours.

(4) That all bolts be retorqued after replacement and checked during all scheduled and unscheduled maintenance.

(5) That a more extinsive PLL be maintained to preclude loss of availability due to carburator, generator and fuel pump failure.

(6) That OH-23 aircraft be restricted to carrying one passenger to reduce load on engine and prevent early engine failures.

c. Observation: The rifle platoon organic to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment's Air Cavalry Troop has been used as a long range reconnaissance element. Under the staff supervision of the regimental S-2, long range reconnaissance patrols have provided timely and accurate information concerning areas of operations. However, because of insufficient training in patrolling techniques, land navigation, jungle survival and helicopter insertion and extraction procedures for thick jungle, the regiment has had to send members of the aero-rifle platoon to the MACV Recondo School. The necessity for this schooling and the training of the platoon members not sent to the Recondo school has meant a loss of utilization of the platoon as a reconnaissance element.

Recommendation: That Ranger School trained personnel be provided for utilization in the Air Cavalry Troop's aero-rifle platoon. This specialized training would enable the platoon to be employed as a long range reconnaissance element with a minimum of in-country training.

d. Observation: The TOE for the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment does not provide a means for clearing supporting fires. At the regimental level, there is no authorized artillery liaison section to handle artillery matters and the coordination and delivery of fires during operations. The regiment, during Operation EMPORIA, occupied four fire support bases and had four artillery batteries supporting three battalion size operations. The 54th Artillery Group, located in Xuan Loc (YT4508) approximately 12 kilometers north of base camp, had 8" and 175mm artillery in support of the regiment's operations. In addition to the problem of fire support coordination from the widely separated fire support bases, there was additional fire support coordination required to maintain support of the base camp.

Recommendation: That a fire support element, consisting of one officer, two non-commissioned officers and three radio-telephone operators, be authorized. This augmentation would give the regimental tactical operations center an operational fire support element and would allow for a more timely coordination and delivery of fires in support of Blackhorse Base Camp and regimental operations.

e. Observation: The regiment is presently short 34 A and 39 B gun shield kits for the M113A1. Indications are that these kits will not be available until December 1967 or January 1968.

Recommendations:

(1) That all M113A1 shipped into RVN that are to be used as ACAV be equipped with the A and B gun shield kits prior to shipment from CONUS.

(2) That USARV take action to expedite the delivery of these kits to replace existing shortages.

f. Observation: All resupply to units at the Blackhorse Base Camp is conducted by daily wheeled vehicle convoys from Long Binh, a distance of approximately 67 kilometers. These daily convoys consist of 50 to 60 vehicles and take three hours to traverse National Routes 1 and 2 to the base camp at Long Giao (YS4396). Personnel and vehicles require 48 hours for the round trip if they are stationed at the Blackhorse Base Camp. In addition critical combat power is required to escort all wheeled vehicle convoys, which reduces the regiment's oper-

ational capabilities and adds greatly to the mileage of tracked vehicles. A Vietnamese railroad, which is operational, does run between Long Binh and Xuan Loc (YT4509), which is 12 kilometers north of the 11th Armored Cavalry's Blackhorse Base Camp.

Recommendation: That a railroad spur be constructed from the main line of the Long Binh/Xuan Loc railroad to the Blackhorse Base Camp and that the railroad be used for movement of supplies to the base camp.

g. Observation: The operation of Blackhorse Base Camp requires a minimum of 15 officers, 41 NCO and 142 EM above the TOE strength of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. These personnel are necessary to carry out the responsibilities of installation coordination and for the safety and well-being of all units and personnel assigned to the Blackhorse Base Camp. In addition to the regiment these units include the 27th Engineer Battalion (C), the 7th Surgical Hospital, the 506th Supply and Service Company, the 551st Light Maintenance Company and several smaller units. This problem is especially critical for the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment as it is the only seperate brigade or regiment in Vietnam that is not authorized a support battalion.

Recommendation: That sufficient personnel be authorized the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment to meet Base Camp needs and to preclude the diversion of combat strength for this purpose.

h. Observation: The 398th Transportation Detachment (CHFM) is staffed to provide maintenance support for 26 UH-1 type helicopters. The 11th Armored Cavalry has 48 helicopters assigned. As the helicopters of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment become older the amount of direct support maintenance has increased, and, under present conditions, requires evacuation of more and more helicopters to Vung Tau for maintenance. This increases down time of helicopters and causes a lower availability rate. Additionally, no avionics or armaments support is available within the 398th Transportation Detachment.

Recommendation:

(1) That a second maintenance detachment be assigned to the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment thereby providing the proper level of direct support maintenance in the density of aircraft supported.

(2) That an Avionics team and an Armament team be attached to the 398th Transportation Detachment for direct support of regimental aircraft.

These two teams would enable the maintenance detachment to provide one stop maintenance service at Blackhorse Base Camp thereby precluding evacuation of aircraft to Vung Tau which normally causes a delay in availability of at least 48 hours.

i. Observation:

(1) The Airfield Traffic Advisory handles between 250 and 800 operations a day.

(2) Both FM and VHF radios are required for Air Traffic Control and flight following service.

(3) An adequate dependable power source is needed for continuous operation and prevention of surging and blowing of radios.

(4) Adequate trained personnel are required. Tower personnel must be well rested and alert to provide a safe flow of traffic.

(5) Fire crews should have proper wearing apparel to fight aircraft fires.

Recommendation:

(1) That the AN/TSQ-70, which has been programmed for September 67,

be utilized for air traffic control in the field and backup control at the base camp.

(2) That VHF and FM radios be authorized for the tower, regimental flight operations and maintenance. The tower radios are required for air traffic control and flight following. The flight operations radio is required for monitoring the tower, changing missions and diverting aircraft. An FM radio is needed in maintenance for alerting a special crew for aircraft recovery, advising maintenance of mechanical failures and enabling maintenance to provide advice to correct failures when they occurr and to be able to transmit essential information such as engine pressure and temprature reading.

(3) That a 100 kw generator and a rectifier to convert the power to DC and capable of carrying at least 100 amps be authorized.

(4) That four trained tower operators be authorized.

(5) That fire crews be given aircraft fire fighting clothing and an oxygen capability so they would be able to get to the aircraft in case of fire.

33

AVDE-MH 1st Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned (CS FOR - 65)(1 May 1967-31 July 1967)

HEADQUARTERS, 9TH INFANTRY DIVISION, APO San Francisco 96370 18 DEC 1967

TO: Commanding General, II Field Force, Vietnam, APO San Francisco 96226

1. This Headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 July 1967 from Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment.

2. This Headquarters concurs with Section II, Commanders Observations and Recommendations, with the following exceptions:

a. Reference Section II, paragraph 1a (2) and 1a (4): Nonconcur. This is the "CO- the whole show" concept. Staff and all radio nets (air, ground, artillery, etc.) should be employed to increase breadth of unit's capabilities and effectiveness. This "one man show" concept is inadequate to handle a real combined arms operation. Too many agencies on the command net cause congestion and confusion. Proper command and staff techniques should be followed.

b. Reference Section II, paragraph 2b (6): Nonconcur. OH23 aircraft are designed and are capable of carrying two passengers. Early engine failures are primarily caused by over boosting the OH23 engine. These over boosts are normally caused by pilot inattention to weight and balance computations in relation to high density altitude operations resulting in the OH23 helicopter being over maximum authorized weight.

3. This Headquarters would like to further emphasize the following paragraphs of Section II:

a. Reference Section II, paragraph 2d: Concur. If 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment is to conduct Regimental/Brigade (as opposed to separate squadron) operations, a capability for fire support planning and coordination is required.

b. Reference Section II, paragraph 2g: Concur. Headquarters of tactical units become over burdened with problems of base development and base defense while concentrating on operations in the overall tactical area of responsibility. However, it is an inherent responsibility of the headquarters concerned to justify organization of provisional headquarters.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

R. H. PHELPS
CPT. AGC
Asst. A. G.

26

34

AVFBC-RE-H 2d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, HQ, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 31 July 1967 (RCS: CSFOR-65) (U)

DA HQ II FFORCEV, APO San Francisco 96266 8 NOV 1967

THRU: Commanding General, USARV, ATTN: AVHGC-DH, APO 96375

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

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

1. (C) This headquarters has reviewed the attached report and concurs with the comments and recommendations with the following exceptions:

a. Reference Section I, paragraph 7 b (3): The Command Deadline Reports submitted weekly during the reporting period by this unit do not indicate an excessive deadline rate for M113A1 vehicles. There have been instances when engines for these vehicles were out of stock, but not for an excessively long-time. MACV Directive 335-20, 13 Sep 66, Subject: Logistics Summary (RCS: LOGSUM) establishes a 15% deadline rate as a critical point for this item. This unit has maintained a deadline rate below 15%.

b. Reference Section II, paragraph 2 e: The shortage of A and B gun shield kits for the M113A1 results from the equipping of vehicles not authorized this equipment. Additional kits are scheduled to arrive during the first quarter of 1968.

c. Reference Section II, paragraph 2 f: This headquarters does not support the recommendation to build a railroad spur from Xuan Loc to Blackhorse. MACV Directive 55-9, 23 June 1966, Subject: Joint MACV/USAID Railroad Coordinating Committee, states that where valid requirements exist for rail lines for exclusive US military use, these lines must be funded by US military activities. Considering the shortage of US assets in South Vietnam and high priority requirements, the construction of a railroad to service a small community such as Blackhorse is not justified. US improvements or additions to the transportation system in Vietnam should fit into overall Vietnamese plans. This headquarters is not aware of current or future Vietnamese plans to build a railroad south from Xuan Loc.

2. (C) The following comments amplify referenced portions of the report.

a. Reference Section I, paragraph 7 b (1): A new 28 day cyclic menu was recommended during the 1st Logistical Command Food Service Conference held in August 1967. It was indicated that upon consumption of

35

AVFBC-RE-H 2d Ind 8 NOV 1967
SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned, HQ, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, 31 July 1967 (RCS: CSFOR-65) (U)

excess "B" subsistance items all issues will be "A" rations except those "B" items issued to satisfy rotational requirements.

b. Reference Section I, paragraph 7 d: Saigon Support Command has requested that this unit notify them in writing of specific instances of poor laundry service. This is the correct method of initiating corrective action.

c. Reference Section II, paragraph 2 b: This headquarters concurs with the recommendations in the report and the comment in paragraph 2 b of the 1st Indorsement. The recommendations in paragraph 2 b (1) - (3) should be reported through maintenance channels by submitting Equipment Improvement Reports.

d. Reference Section II, paragraph 2 c: Although Ranger School at Fort Benning would be beneficial for long range patrol personnel, the MACV Recondo School at Nha Trang would continue to be an incountry training requirement.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

E. M. McGRATH
CPT, AGC

28

AVHGC-DST 3d Ind
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

HEADQUARTERS, UNITED STATES ARMY VIETNAM, APO San Francisco 96375 19 DEC 1967

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

1. (U) This headquarters has reviewed the Operational Report-Lessons Learned for the period ending 31 July 1967 from Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment (AY6A) as indorsed.

2. (C) Pertinent comments follow:

a. Reference item concerning cyclic menu, section I, page 15, paragraph 7b(1): Concur. Fresh meats and vegetables are being provided wherever and whenever physically possible. The menu has recently been revised and the majority of the B type components have been removed. Emergency feeding stock is, however, necessary and it must be rotated. This rotation is accomplished by only 11 meals of the 28 day cyclic menu.

b. Reference item concerning maintenance, section I, page 15, paragraph 7b(3), and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 1a: Concur with comment at 2d Indorsement, paragraph 1a. APC deadline for this unit is well below MACV standards. As better demand data is accumulated the PLL/ASL will be more valid and further reduce repair parts shortages.

c. Reference item concerning laundry service, section I, page 15, paragraph 7d: Concur. Action has been taken through the 1st Logistical Command laundry and bath officer who will coordinate with 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment and the US Army Procurement Agency to correct the situation.

d. Reference item concerning headsets, H161/U, section I, page 15, paragraph 7b(2)(b): Concur. Efforts are being made to expedite shipment of these headsets.

e. Reference item concerning signal repair parts, section I, page 15, paragraph 7b(2)(c): Concur. This headquarters is aware of the problem. DA has been advised.

f. Reference item concerning coordination of air strikes, section II, page 1, paragraph 2, and 1st Indorsement, paragraph 2a:

(1) Comments made in both references have merit. With proper radio discipline, one or two additional subscribers to the command net should

Downgraded at 8 year Intervals
Declassified after 12 years
DOD DIR 5200.10

57

AVHGC-DST
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

not cause undue confusion and congestion.

(2) It is agreed that proper command and staff techniques should be followed but the employment of Forward Air Controllers and their participation in the command net, or "one man show" concept, should rest with the commander.

g. Reference item concerning employment of Vietnamese National Police, section II, page 4, paragraph 12: Concur. Action concerning deployment of Vietnamese National Police is not within the purview of Headquarters, USARV. This headquarters has notified MACV J-2 of this problem.

h. Reference item concerning M548 cargo carrier, section II, page 5, paragraph 2a. Comment: ENSURE and MTOE action in February and May 1967 was taken to substitute four M548 carriers for four 5 ton cargo trucks in the transportation section of the Cavalry Squadron Headquarters. Each M548 will be fitted with a pump and fuel cell. This MTOE is now pending approval at DA.

i. Reference item concerning TOE, section II, page 6, paragraph 2d. If a fire support element is required at Regimental Headquarters a MTOE should be submitted with trade-off spaces provided.

j. Reference item concerning A and B gun shield kits, section II, page 6, paragraph 2e: Concur. These kits have been the subject of General Officer correspondence but it appears the issue date is final.

k. Reference item concerning railroad, section II, page 6, paragraph 2f, and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 1c: Concur with remarks at 2d Indorsement, paragraph 1c. Priority for construction of railroad spurs must go to depot complexes and ports. Construction into a tactical base camp which may not remain in the same location is of questionable value and must be given a very low priority.

l. Reference item concerning assignment of Ranger School trained personnel to the Aero-Rifle Platoon of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, section II, page 6, paragraph 2c, and 2d Indorsement, paragraph 2d, II Field Force Vietnam. Ranger personnel can be requested by proper annotation on normal requisitions if such personnel are authorized.

30

56

38

AVHGC-DST
SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 1967

3. (U) A copy of this indorsement will be furnished to the reporting unit through channels.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

C. S. NAKATSUKASA
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant General

cc: HQ, 11th Armd Cav Regt
HQ, II FFORCEV

31

39

GPOP-DT(undtd) 4th Ind(U)
SUBJECT: Operational Report for the Quarterly Period Ending 31 July 67 from Hq, 11th Armored Cav Regiment (UIC: WAY6AA) (RCS CSFOR-65)

HQ, US ARMY, PACIFIC, APO San Francisco 96558 25 JAN 1968

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

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

2. The MTOE referred to in paragraph 2h, 3d indorsement, has been approved by DA and will be implemented in February 1968 by USARPAC General Orders.

FOR THE COMMANDER IN CHIEF:

HEAVRIN SNYDER
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

32

41

AMBUSH AFTER ACTION REPORT: 21 May 1967

First Platoon, Troop K, 3rd Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry, commanded by Lt Michael Boyd, was conducting a normal resupply run along National Route 1 from the GIA RAY Rock Quarry to the junction on National Route 1 and Interprovincial Route 2 on the morning of Sunday 21 May 1967. Shortly before, the platoon had completed clearing Route 1 for mines and VC activity between GIA RAY Rock Quarry, where the bulk of Troop K was providing security for an element of the 595th Engineer Company, and SUOI CAT village to the west. This distance of approximately 6 kilometers had proved in the past to be the stretch of road most generally interdicted by VC activity. The clearing operation had proved uneventful, and the platoon had returned to GIA RAY, picked up the troop mess truck and an Engineer jeep, and proceeded down the cleared route through SUOI CAT village.

When passing through SUOI CAT none of the members of the platoon noticed anything out of the ordinary. The usual civilian traffic was on the road, farmers were tilling their fields, and children were waving to the troopers and begging for candy. The advance guard cleared the village, crossed the bridge over SONG RAI stream (See figure 1), and moved west without incident. The main body followed, deployed as shown in figure 2.

The first indication of danger came suddenly at about 0850 hrs when the advance guard, about 600 meters ahead of the main body, was cresting a slight ridge 2 kilometers west of the bridge. The lead ACAV was suddenly hit from the right flank with a 75mm recoilless rifle round that penetrated the vehicle and set the vehicle's basic load of ammunition ablaze. The two machine gunners and the grenedier immediately abandoned the ACAV with their individual weapons and hit the nearest ditch. SSG Pittman, the vehicle commander and acting platoon sergeant, barely had enough time to hurriedly give a radio call of "ambush, ambush, ambush" to the platoon before he and the driver, SPR Steidl, were forced by exploding ammunition to abandon the flaming ACAV. Prior to leaping from the vehicle, however, SSG Pittman had enough presence of mind to seize a number of hand grenades from the ACAV. Likewise, SP4 Steidl quickly dismounted one of the side mounted M-60 machineguns from the ACAV and began to lay down a heavy volume of suppressive fire. K-11, the ACAV following K-10, stopped long enough to take aboard SP4 Brush, SP4 Royball and PFC Puglisi, the crew members who had abandoned K-10 about 100 meters east of the point where it had finally come to a halt. K-11 then fought its way through the main part of the ambush, by-passing the gutted K-10. SSG Pittman, after dropping from his flaming vehicle, saw a group of five VC in mixed black pajama and fatigue uniforms approximately 25 meters to the northwest of his position and engaged them with grenades. He saw several bodies fly, but had no time to count VC casualties, as, in his words, "bullets were flying everywhere". Pittman ducked behind the left side of his vehicle and spotted three VC armed with rifles behind a slight rise about 20 meters to his south. He grenaded them and turned to see 2 more VC crossing the road to his rear. He also grenaded them and saw them fall. Pittman then threw several more grenades to all sides to neutralize any more who might be nearby.

As soon as the lead vehicle was hit by recoilless rifle fire, a huge volume of recoilless rifle, mortar, RPG-2, automatic weapons, and small arms fires erupted from both sides of the road against the entire length of the column. The rear of the column had just cleared the bridge over SONG RAI stream when it was hit. The main body of the column extended from SONG RAY stream to the west a distance of about 1 kilometer. Dust conditions were so bad that the vehicles had been forced almost 100 meters distance to conserve the visibility.

The platoon leader's ACAV, K-16, was the second vehicle in the main body. It was driven by Lt Hendrickson, a platoon leader with the 595th Engineer Company, which manned the GIA RAY Rock Quarry. Lt Hendrickson was returning to LONG GIAO Base Camp to attend to personal business and had expressed a desire to drive an ACAV. K-16 followed the M48A3 Tank, M-34, attached to the platoon from Company M, 3rd Sqdn, for added fire support,

Simultaneously, Lt Boyd the Platoon Leader, heard SSG Pittman's excited radio message of "ambush, ambush, ambush" and saw the tank ahead of him take a hit from a recoilless rifle on its right and become lost in a cloud of smoke. The crew of K-16 watched as the tank fired one round in reply from its 90mm cannon and moved on. The tank took several more hits and began to angle left on the road, coming to a halt 100 meters west of the point where the initial round had struck.

The Platoon Leader's initial reaction was to try to radio the four trail ACAV's which he did not think were yet in the killing zone. He instructed them to go south along SOUI RAY stream and set up a base of fire while he attempted to fight through the ambush. Boyd did not know whether his trail ACAV's recieved his message since he did not receive an answer from any of them. K-16 itself went forward, stopping momentarily at the tank. There was no sign of human activity at the tank. Boyd assumed that the crew was either dead or had abandoned the vehicle. As automatic weapon and small arms fire was starting to build up in this area from both sides of the road, K-16 moved on around the tank and continued west on the road. Boyd tried to contact his Troop Headquarters at GIA RAY by radio and give information on his increasingly desparate situation, but by some fluke, his radios had ceased functioning at this critical moment.

After passing the tank, K-16 moved west for about 60 meters before it too was hit by a recoilless rifle round from the left. The round penetrated the vehicle directly under the radio, wounding the entire crew, and spinning the ACAV to the left. Lt Hendricksen quickly regained control of the vehicle and, aided by heavy suppressive fire from the two side mounted M-60 machineguns manned by SP4 Mace and SP4 Shelton and the fires of PFC Henry and SP4 Poerman, rammed his way through the ambush to where SSG Pittman and SP4 Steidl were fighting beside the burning K-10. The ACAV sufferdd two more recoilless hits in the rear during this dash which further injured the crew members. Between the tank and K-10, the crew members of K-16 had counted no less than six recoilless rifles with crews and numerous RPG-2 teams. All the Viet Cong seemed to be dressed in black, and all appeared to be unconcerned about the fire directed against them. This fact, noticed by many survivors of the platoon gave them the impression that the VC were "doped up".

K-16 halted by K-10, picked up Pittman and Steidl and overtook K-11 which was still moving to the west. Boyd hailed the ACAV, and it stopped. Pittman mounted K-11, and both vehicles then turned back into the ambush, K-11 leading and K-16 stopping periodically while Boyd sprayed both sides of the road with his caliber 50 machinegun.

The rear portion of the column was also undergoing its special little hell. With the Platoon Leader's loss of communications and the Platoon Sergeant's loss of his vehicle, all concerted action as a Platoon ceased and the fight degenerated into a series of undirected actions on the part of single vehicles and individuals. The Troop K mess truck, K-4, followed the Platoon Leader's ACAV. In it were the driver, PFC Gregory, and the Troop Motor Sergeant SSG Jackson.

As soon as the ambush was sprung, Jackson and Gregory jumped from the truck with their M-16 rifles and hit the ditch to the south of the road. They saw about 20 VC in mixed uniforms kneeling behind some shallow mounds and firing. The VC seemed to be more interested in plugging holes in the truck than firing at Jackson and Gregory; some of the VC were exposing themselves unconcernedly and firing from a standing position. A heavy machinegun was also raking the truck from the woodline to the south of the road. Jackson and Gregory fired at the VC to their front until they had only half a clip of ammunition left apiece. Between them they had dropped several VC and the incoming fire had subsided somewhat because the heavy machinegun had been neutralized. They decided to return to the truck and attempt to make a run for it.

43

Upon leaving the truck, Gregory had forgotten to turn off the engine. Miraculously, when they returned to it the truck was still operational and the engine running. They moved down the road through a hail of small arms fire for about 50 meters before an RPG-2 round hit the truck in the middle of the drivers seat. Gregory only avoided being killed because he was hunched down in the seat in order to avoid small arms fire only his eyes peering over the dash board. His flack jacket protected him from the shrapnel effect of the blast, but he was stunned and lost control of the vehicle. It veered to the left, ran off the road, and came to a halt about 60 meters to the left rear of the tank. Jackson leaped from the vehicle and tried to get to the tank, but was cut down midway between the truck and the tank by Viet Cong small arms fire from the south. PFC Gregory jumped from the truck and as he hit the ground was struck by fire from a group of VC standing about 20 meters away. He fell to the ground, and his 45 caliber pistol dropped about 2 feet from his body. Still alive, Gregory decided that the best course of action was to play dead. His ordeal of terror had just begun.

For what seemed to him an eternity, PFC Gregory lay beside th truck as the VC fired at him and the truck thinking that so long as the VC were firing in his direction they would not come over to determine if he were still alive. Finally the firing ceased and a group of Viet Cong approached Gregory. One VC turned Gregory over on his back and calmly fired two shots into his left side. He was already so numb with pain that he did not react physically to this indignity. The Viet Cong then sat on Gregory's face and rifled his pockets while the other VC explored the truck. As luck would have it, the truck carried a 55 gallon drum of CS crystals in its bed. Sometime during the firing, bullets had penetrated the CS drum and the tear gas began to permeate the area in overwhelming waves. This drove the VC from the area. Gregory, because of his low position was not overly bothered by the tear gas fumes and lapsed into unconsciousness. He awakened slightly and half remembers the tank firing on the opposite side of the truck. He was rescued by the Troop K relief force about 20 minutes later.

The four rear ACAV's which bore the brunt of the ambush, had varying fortunes. K-14 stopped behind the halted 2½ ton truck after the ambush warning and took up a temporary firing position to the left facing south. K-14 could not close upon the tank to the direct front of the 2½ ton truck because of heavy recoilless and RPG-2 fire. The ACAV quickly sustained an RPG-2 hit on the right side about midway on the track. Sgt Dickinson, the vehicle commander, then jumped from the TC hatch over the drivers compartment, seizing the driver's M-16 and, disappeared to the left of the road. His body was later found riddled by small arms fire.

SP4 Ates, the driver, and PFC Walker, the right machine gunner, by natural inclination started to follow Sgt Dickinson, but were knocked back into the vehicle by a second RPG-2 hit. Walker then climbed into the TC hatch and the whole crew settled down to the business at hand. The initial round had come from the north of the road, but the main threat soon developed to the south as the crew could see large numbers of VC milling around and firing small arms and RPG-2's at the ACAV's. There were still many civilians lying prone in the field between the two engaged forces. One of the most startling sights was three small babies lying on a blanket under a tree between the firing lines. The group of VC that had initially engaged from the right had shifted to the rear of the column and had infiltrated the village of SUOI CAT from which they fired on the ACAV's with small arms and RPG-2's.

ACAV number K-13 following directly behind K-14, was hit by a recoilless rifle in the first burst of firing. The entire crew was wounded and everyone disabled except PFC Miller, a machine gunner. He was knocked inside the vehicle, and as he attempted to get up, another recoilless round hit the left side mounted machinegun and knocked it off. Miller found a box of hand grenades and started throwing them in an arc around the vehicle to prevent the VC from closing with the vehicle. He would pop his head out of the vehicle just long enough to throw a grenade and then duck back into the vehicle as protection against the intensive small arms fire. Miller saw three VC lying behind a mound about 20 meters to his south. Two of them were armed with rifles and one carried a radio. He tried to grenade them but could not reach them as his right arm had been severely injured by shrapnel. The ACAV was then hit again by a recoilless round and Miller was blown out of the vehicle, losing consciouness. The next thing he remembers is his Troop Commander arriving with the relief force. He was the only surviver of ACAV number K-13.

ACAV number K-17 and ACAV number K-18 were the last two vehicles in the column. Sgt Lee, the vehicle commander of K-17 received Pittman's message of "ambush, ambush, ambush", just as he spotted a large number of VC on his left and alerted his crew with the words "VC on the left", The crew immediately began firing right and left. Lee saw K-13 take its initial recoilless hit in front of him and, thinking the vehicle lost, ordered the driver PFC Timberlake to move on through the ambush. K-18 followed K-17. As the two ACAV's passed K-14 firing from its position to the south of the road, K-18 sustained a recoilless hit that disabled the vehicle. It ground to a halt directly west of K-14 and took several more recoilless hits. There were no survivors from K-18.

K-17 kept moving. SP4 Force, the platoon medic, was manning machinegun. He saw VC to the south of the road firing small arms and several VC behind a berm about 75 meters from the road firing crew served automatic weapons. He engaged all targets he could see and saw several VC fall. Civilians were lying all over the fields. The small arms fire was extremely heavy and accurate, causing Force to fire through his gun shield and allowing him only a very limited view of the battleground. In moving a distance of 400 meters, the ACAV was hit 4 times by RPG-2 rounds. K-17 had not suffered much damage, but the shrapnel from the last blast had caused Forces machinegun to malfunction and superficially wounded most of the crew members. The driver halted the ACAV temporarily. Force applied immediate action to his weapon as SP5 Centers, the platoon mechanic, provided covering fire with his M-16 rifle. Force finally gave up on the machinegun and grabbed his M-16 to engage the numerous VC to the south. Over the din of battle Force heard SP4 Williamson, the right machine gunner, cry "hand me ammo". Force handed him a box of 7.62mm machinegun ammunition but Williamson said "no, M-16". His machinegun was inoperable also.

The driver moved the ACAV out through the gauntlet again, dodging and weaving to avoid the hail of anti-tank rockets directed at the track. Sgt Lee was still firing his caliber 50 machinegun to the left and right of the road, and Force, Williamson, and Centers were blazing away with their rifles, while SP4 Wheeler, an ex-cook newly assigned to the platoon, handed them ammo from inside the vehicle. However, K-17 kept sustaining hits. Williamson was hit in the stomach with a burst of shrapnel from an RPG-2 that penetrated the right side of the track. Finally an RPG-2 round penetrated the driver's compartment, killing the driver, Timberlake and Sgt Lee. The ACAV stopped. Force leaped up to the top of the TC hatch to attempt first aid on Lee, but was knocked off the track by another RPG-2 round that hit the front of the TC cupola. He was slightly wounded by shrapnel, but still held grimly on to his rifle. He tried to regain the ACAV but could not because of the heavy volume of small arms fire directed against it. Force crawled into the ditch paralleling the road and started crawling south looking for other GI's. He heard the ACAV take at least three more RPG-2 hits. Force remained alone in the ditch desperately hoping he would not be discovered by the VC until the relief column arrived. He then returned to K-17 and found Wheeler still alive in the vehicle and gave him first aid. Centers' body was found 25 meters to the rear of the ACAV riddled by small arms fire.

It had initially appeared to LT Boyd that the M48A3 tank K-34 leading the main body of the column, had been critically damaged and abandoned by its crew. This was far from the case. The tank was a little late in getting into the battle, but when it did, it made its presence felt. The tank crew had just received Pittman's warning, and Sgt Wright, the tank commander, had notified SP4 Blancarte, the driver, of the situation, when a recoilless round hit the TC cupola a glancing blow and destroyed the caliber 50 machinegun. The tank was about 400 meters west of SUOI RAI stream at this time. PFC Loisel, a recent replacement, who had never been under fire and disdained any real VC threat, was tank loader. He was riding on the tank equipment rack and was severely wounded by the blast from the first recoilless round.

The tank replied with one round of 90mm cannister fire to its right side and continued to roll. It moved another 100 meters before a second recoilless round hit the underside of the tank's front slope and knocked Blancarte, the driver unconscious. The tank rolled to the left of the road and halted. Simultaneously, a third round pentrated the front turret lacerating the face of SP4 Nelson, the gunner, and disabling the coaxially mounted M-73 machinegun. As Loisel was severely wounded and lying on top of the tank exposed to heavy small arms fire, Wrightmanhandled Loisel through the TC's cupola into the tank. Nelson helped fit Loisel into the relative security of the gunner's seat and slid over to the loader's position just as another recoilless rifle round took the left rangefinder cover off the tank.

By this time, all the tank sights were inoperative because of recoilless hits. Wright came up from the Tank Commander's cupola and saw two VC at a distance of about 100 meters to the left rear of the tank. Thinking that the tank's entire fire control system was destroyed, Wright used the only weapon available, his caliber 45 service pistol. The results were predictable; he missed. Nelson then came up with his caliber 45 submachine gun and emptied two clips of ammunition at the VC with no greater success than Wright. At this time, the tank was hit by another recoilless rifle round that pierced the turret wounding Loisel again.

Loisel became hysterical and lapsed into incoherency. Wright dropped into the turret to check on him and noticed that the 90mm gun light switches were on. Hoping that the main gun might function, Wright yelled to Nelson, "Let's try it", and traversed the gun until it paralled the south side of the road pointing east. Wright hit the switch and the main gun fired. Nelson and Wright then began to fire south of the road from east to west traversing the gun slightly after each round until they had completed an arc covering the south of the road. While this transpired, the tank suffered four or five more recoilless rifle hits, one of which temporarily blinded Nelson who just kept on loading. Wright was firing from his TC override; however, Loisel at one time came out of shock long enough to fire two rounds from his gunner's switch.

After completing this maneuver, Wright came up and began to engage targets of opportunity. About 125 meters directly to his west, straight south of the road Wright spotted two VC with a 57mm Recoilless rifle firing at the tank. There was no way for him to aim the gun, so he just pointed and fired. The white phosphorous round landed about 50 meters short, so Wright made a visual adjustment as Nelson loaded a cannister round and fired again. The gun position was destroyed. The tank then received two more rounds of RPG-2 fire from the two VC to the left rear that Wright and Nelson had previously engaged with their pistol and submachinegun. Wright turned the main gun and fired two rounds of cannister at them. The tank received no more fire from this direction.

Wright could not see any GI's on the road when he looked out of the tank. All he could see were two burning ACAV's, one 200 meters to his west and another 300 meters to his east. He also spotted two VC at about 150 meters distance, crossing the road to his east, carrying a litter. He repeated his previous maneuver and fired a cannister round and had the satisfaction of seeing the VC's and the litter go flying. The tank fired two more times with unknown results in the general direction from which it had received recoilless rounds. Before the relief column arrived, Wright could remember firing his 45 pistol at a VC in the ditch 75 meters to his West. When the relief element arrived, Wright and Nelson saw for the first time SSG Jackson's body midway between them. The tank had sustained a total of 14 hits from recoilless weapons, not including numerous other glancing hits and near misses. But the tank would still run and all the crew members had survived the battle, although Loisel died of wounds shortly afterwards.

As the battle progressed in the vicinity of K-14, SP4 Walker, now manning the caliber 50, saw a VC caliber 50 firing at the truck and jeep in front of him from a position in the woodline to his south. He and PFC Fails on the left M60 machinegun took it under fire with about 100 rounds apiece and silenced it. The crew noticed a VC officer dressed in fatigue shirt and camouflage trousers carrying a 45 pistol followed by a woman radio operator emerge from the woodline to the south. As both Fails and Walker were loading their weapons, they could not fire, and the strange pair quickly faded into the woods again. At this time, the VC who had infiltrated the village, opened up again with RPG-2's and scored two glancing hits on the back ramp but obtained no penetration. In quick succession a mortar shell scored a direct hit on the left machinegun, destroying it and wounding SP4 Dickinson the grenedier and team leader, and heavy small arms fire was directed at the vehicle from both sides of the road.

All the crew members were pinned down by the fire and could not operate their weapons. Sensing their opportunity, four VC advanced from the left and 3 VC advanced from the right. One VC was dressed in an ARVN uniform complete with web gear and steel helmet. Another, the lead man on the right carried 8 M-26 hand grenades on his belt. In this desperate situation, SP4 Ates, the vehicle driver rose to the occasion. Employing his driver's periscope, he thrust and M-16 from his hatch and fired to the left and right felling several VC and driving the rest back. The crew returned to their positions and resumed the battle. Walker noticed the K-18 track that had stalled in front of his ACAV and saw a VC dressed in fatigue trousers and black shirt and armed with an M-16 climbing on the track. He quickly tore him to pieces with the 50 caliber. SP4 Hutchins was still alive and fighting on K-18 at this time.

A strange thing then happened. Lt Boyd, having had no communications since the fight began, suddenly came over the radio of K-14 loud and clear, saying, "move out, move out!". It was later determined that Boyd had been talking to his own driver, and by some chance, had accidently transmitted this message. K-14, however, quickly complied, but immediately took a recoilless hit that penetrated the left side, wounding both Fails and Walker, The ACAV, however, moved out and soon took another hit from the left through the drivers's compartment just as it passed the tank. Ates, the driver, was hit in the hand and foot and temporarily lost control of the vehicle. It swerved to the right, but Ates cuickly regained control and sped on down the road. Walker remembers seeing Nelson firing his submachinegun at the VC as K-14 passed the tank.

K-14 continued down the road spraying the VC lining the road and behind the mounds to the left and right of the road with machine gun and M-16 fire. The crew engaged one group of 8 VC carrying three RPD light machineguns with unknown results. Finally, K-14 was out of the ambush. It continued slowly west on the road for another few kilometers until its engine quit. As the crew looked behind them, Lt Boyd pulled his ACAV up directly behind them. He loaded the crew on his vehicle and took them to the ARVN LOC dispensary.

The Engineer jeep following the K Troop Mess Truck received the warning of "ambush, ambush," over its vehicle mounted radio. The driver PFC Heppen decided to make a run for it even though numerous VC along the road and behind the low mounds beside the road were firing small arms at the jeep. SP4 Cruz was riding "shotgun", and SP4 Friend was manning the M-60 machine gun mounted in the rear of the vehicle. Both men sprayed the sides of the road with fire. The dust and smoke on the road were so heavy that none of the jeep occupants could see. They made it a distance of about 500 meters before a recoilless round hit the right front of the jeep and smashed it into the ditch at the right of the road.

Heppen was killed by small arms fire at this time. Cruz and Friend were hurled from the jeep into the adjacent field. Cruz recovered and crawled west in the ditch until he was picked up by Lt Boyd's ACAV on its initial run through the ambush. Friend was dazed when he was thrown from the jeep and had some trouble regaining his senses. He went to the road and saw an ACAV about 100 meters to his west. Friend tried to run towards it and saw two VC behind a mound of dirt to his right with rifles aimed at him. He hid his head in his arm and ran on past them. Strangely, the VC did not fire, but only looked at Friend bewildered. Friend ran on a few feet more and found his path blocked by another VC carrying a rifle at sling arms. As he had lost his rifle when the jeep was destroyed,

Friend was unarmed except for a hunting knife. He quickly unsheathed it, without losing stride and drove it into the VC's belly with an underhand stroke. The VC crumpled on the road, and Friend hurried on until he found SP4 Steidl standing beside K-10, firing his M-60. Steidl and Friend were also picked up by K-16.

Just as K-16 and K-11 had turned back into the ambush, several of the crew members of K-16 faintly recall seeing K-14 move past them heading west. It appeared to them as though all the crew members were wounded. K-16, stopping to fire as it moved down the road to the east, soon lost sight of K-11. K-16 picked up several wounded and engaged a large number of VC on the road. Hendrickson remembers passing two burning ACAV's, the 2½ ton truck and the jeep as he drove into the ambush. Boyd was still attempting to reach his troop headquarters on his radio and was calling for air and artillery, but he had negative radio contact with anyone. The crew sighted large numbers of VC firing at them from both sides of the road. The VC, dressed in mixed black pajama and fatigue uniforms, seemed unconcerned and moved very slowly and deliberately.

K-16 moved to a position slightly east of the tank, which was obscured by smoke and dust. Neither Boyd nor Hendrickson could see any signs of life at this point, so the decision was made to turn around and fight their way out. As the ACAV turned around a recoilless round smashed into its side, wounding Boyd's hand. Directly to the front of the ACAV Boyd spotted a recoilless rifle with its two man crew attempting to close the breech on the weapon. It was located just off the road. Boyd had lost power in his hand and could not fire his caliber .50. Hendrickson, knowing he had to act immediately, gunned the ACAV and ran over the rifle, crushing it and its crew. He spun the ACAV back on the road and ran over a wounded VC dressed in fatigues who was dragging himself across the highway. K-16 then proceeded west through heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire until it was clear of the ambush. K-16 continued west until it pulled up behind K-14. The wounded crew was loaded into K-16, and it moved west again until it met an ARVN column near the junction of Routes 1 and 2.

As K-11 moved down the road to the east ahead of K-16, it sustained several close-in hits from RPG-2's, one of which entered the rear of the vehicle and killed SP4 Royball and PFC Saenz. When passing the tank, a VC stepped into the road and fired an RPG-2 round head on into the ACAV. The round penetrated the engine compartment, but the driver, SP4 Christianson kept gunning the engine, rolling over the VC. Midway between the gutted hulks of K-13 and K-18, another round struck the transmission of K-11 and it ground slowly to a halt just east of K-13. During his ride back into the ambush, Pittman had finally contacted GIA RAF radio relay and appraised them of his situation. This was not the first notification of ambush that had been received, however, and a relief force was already on the way.

As soon as the ACAV halted, the crew began to abandon the vehicle heading for cover behind a woodpile, just south of the road. Small arms fire was coming in on the small group from all directions, but Pittman realized that salvation lay in unloading enough weapons and ammunition from the vehicle to make a fight with. So, while Christianson seized one of the side mounted M-60's and lay down covering fire, Pittman, SP4 Edwards, SP4 Moline, PFC Puglisi, and SP4 Brush threw ammunition boxes from the ACAV to the woodpile.

Then the six men settled down for a last stand. One M-60 was positioned on the right, covering southwest; the other, on the left, covering northwest. The remaining four men lay between the machine guns with rifles. The enemy could not be seen very clearly but the small arms fire directed at the six GI's was heavy and accurate. Whenever a VC firing position could be seen, Pittman directed his men to fire on it with all they had. Luckily there were no VC to the east of them and they could direct the entire attention to the west. The small group fought a touch and go battle for about 20 minutes before VC fire began to slack. Soon afterwards, the first elements of the relief force arrived and their fight was over.

In retrospect, it cannot be said that the platoon would have been saved if certain things were done differently, but, after investigation two points are worthy of discussion. Number one, the elements of the platoon lost radio communications with each other and ceased functioning as a platoon. Also, the platoon lost communications with its troop headquarters. It was only by chance that Lt Boyd's voice came over the troop net at 0910 excitedly saying "hard right,

hard right, move out!". Lt Burr, the troop exec, speculated from the highly excited tone of his voice and the fact that he had no other communication with him, that Boyd was in an ambush. On this basis alone, Captain Hoffman, the K Troop Commander, committed his other two platoons as a relief force. Perhaps, if SSG Pittman, the acting platoon sergeant, had been riding in K-17 the platoon sergeant's vehicle with its dual radio capability, he could have notified his troop headquarters of the situation earlier. As it was the fight had been going on some 15 to 20 minutes before Captain Hoffman received notification and committed his relief force.

Number two, both Pittman and Boyd were at the head of the column. There was no strong directing hand among the four rear ACAV's who took the majority of the casualties. If Pittman had been with the main body rather than the advance guard (no place for a platoon sergeant in the first place), he might have been able to organize them and coordinate their maneuver. However, the Battalion (+) size ambush and the huge volume of anti-armor weapons employed by the VC in what was basically an ambush by fire would probably still have overcome any action the platoon might have taken.

The ambush in itself was thoroughly planned and devastatingly executed by the VC. Against a single cavalry platoon, unsupported by either air, artillery or friendly ground forces, the result was a foregone conclusion. That as many men survived as did is a tribute to the courage and initiative of the individual American soldier.

FIGURE 1

SUBJECT: Ambush Report 21 May 1967

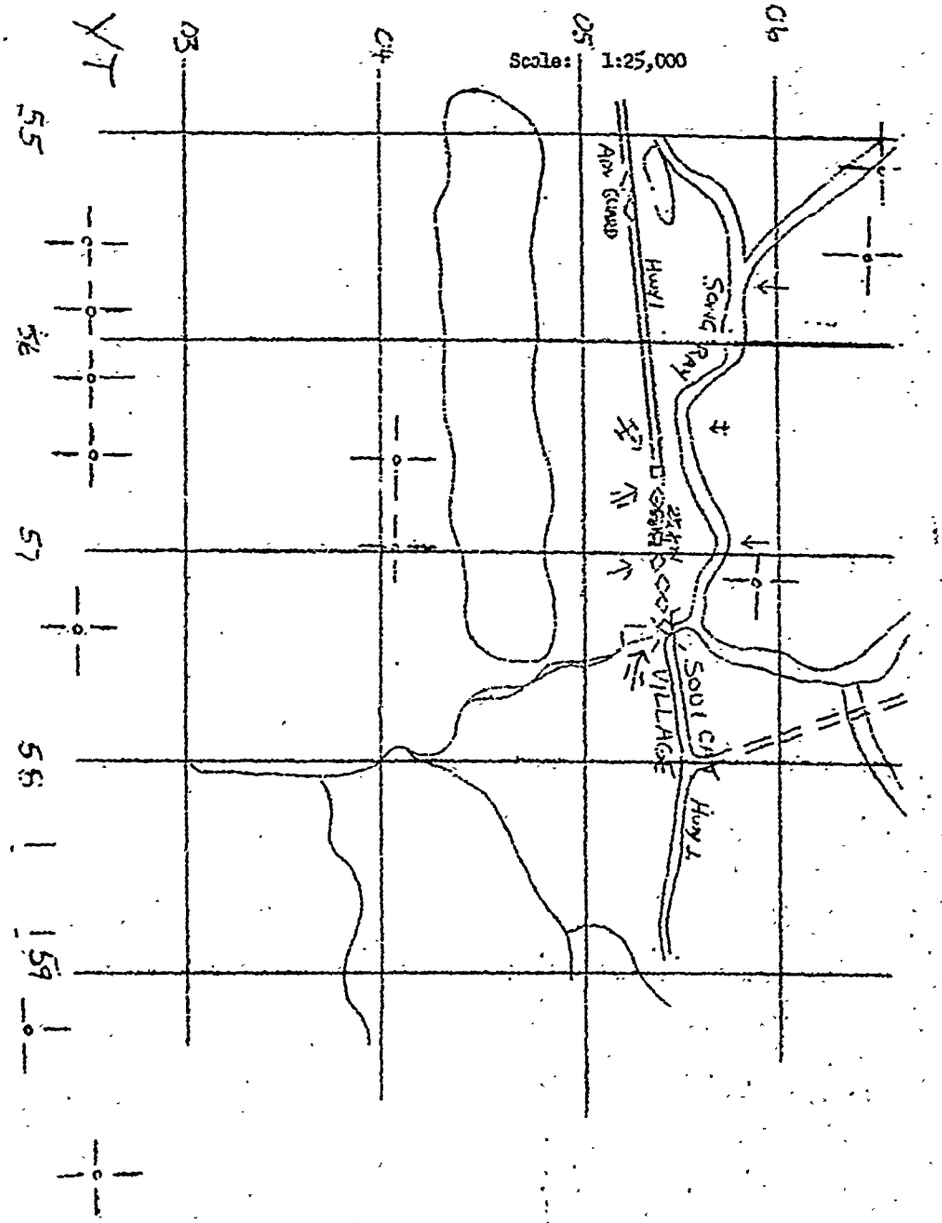
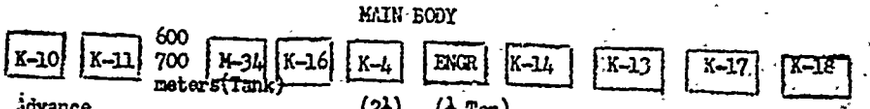


FIGURE 2

50

INITIAL DEPLOYMENT BY VEHICLE AND PERSONNEL



K-10
- SSG Pittman (Plt Sgt)
- SP4 Steidl
- SP4 Brush
- SP4 Royball
- PFC Puglisi

K-11
- PFC Saenz
- SP4 Edwards
- SP4 Moline
- SP4 Christianson

M-34
- SGT Wright
- SP4 Nelson
- SP4 Blancarte
- PFC Loisel

K-16
- LT Boyd (Plt Ldr)
- LT Hendrickson (Engr)
- SP4 Poorman
- SP4 Mace
- PFC Henry
- SP4 Shelton

K-4
- SSG Jackson
- PFC Miller

K-14
- SGT Dickinson
- SP4 Dickinson
- PFC Fails
- SP4 Ates
- SP4 Walker

K-13
- PFC Houser
- SP4 Steichner
- SP4 Ireland
- PFC Stanley
- PFC Miller

K-17
- SGT Lee
- SP4 Force
- PFC Timberlake
- SP4 Williamson
- SP5 Centers
- SP4 Wheeler

K-18
- SGT Simpson
- SP4 McInnis
- SP4 McWhorter
- SP4 Hutchins

UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification

DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & 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)
OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310

2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION
Confidential

2b. GROUP
4

3. REPORT TITLE
Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES (Type of report and inclusive dates)
Experiences of unit engaged in counterinsurgency operations, 1 May - 31 July 1967

5. AUTHOR(S) (First name, middle initial, last name)
CO, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment

6. REPORT DATE	7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES	7b. NO. OF REFS
undated	43	

8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.	9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)
b. PROJECT NO. N/A	670833
c.	9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) (Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)
d.	

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES	12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY
N/A	OACSFOR, DA, Washington, D.C. 20310

13. ABSTRACT

43

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 1473

UNCLASSIFIED
Security Classification