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AVDCFB-C

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation YELLOWSTONE)

Artillery Regt, 1st Guard Bn, 680th Training Regt, 7th NVA Div, 82d Rear Services Group, and possible elements of the 9th NVA Div. The total strength of these units was estimated between 10,000 and 14,000; however, in late November 1967, the 9th VC Div moved into Northwestern Binh Long Province and other units were dispersed down to battalion-size units throughout War Zone "C". Initially their pattern of activity was to defend supply areas and to fight delay actions, allowing COSVN Ho to move north across the Cambodian Border. Once this was accomplished, enemy forces conducted counter sweep operations and attacks on friendly base camps.

b. War Zone "C" is characterized by extremely heavy jungle vegetation and occasional open areas. The hydrography of the area is restricted to two small streams which had little effect on friendly or enemy movement. The terrain was heavily dotted with trenches and fortifications. The largest concentrations appeared to be in headquarters and cache areas just south of the Cambodian Border.

c. In the first week of the Operation, friendly units met with little enemy resistance. Most of the contact was limited to indirect fire harassment and probing actions. Intelligence indicated that COSVN HQ and its security guard units were located due north of KATUM, probably moving across the border. Other unit dispositions and locations were unknown; however, it was suspected that elements of the NVA 7th Div were dispersed to the south and east of KATUM. There were no signs of a mass exodus of War Zone "C", upon the arrival of US troops.

d. Significant contacts during the operation were generally with company or smaller sized units defending base camps. There were a few instances of enemy units attacking ARVN or FWF during sweeps, but the majority of activity involved contact with VC/NVA units in heavily fortified base camps or forward defensive positions. Enemy tactics were to make the operation as costly as possible while committing a minimum number of troops. He made extensive use of indirect fire, employing 60mm, 82mm, and 120mm mortars, and 122mm rockets. These attacks were generally used for harassing purposes, attempting to inflict casualties and destroy supplies rather than to support ground attacks. However the enemy did on two occasions demonstrate a capability to conduct a multi-battalion attack on friendly FSBs.

e. The enemy employed AT mines on Route 4, but AP mines and booby traps were conspicuous by their absence.

f. Significant enemy losses:

(1) 03 and 09 Dec 67: 4-9 Inf Bn vic XT 289 938 located three caches containing 350 tons of unpolished rice. The rice was later evacuated.

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