

#140
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MANHATTAN

1ST & 25 ED

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articles

Operation MANHATTAN was north of the Iron Triangle between Dau Tieng (XT4967) and Ben Sue (XT5833). Operation MANHATTAN was planned as a complementary operation to CEDAR FALLS (Jan 67 - Iron Triangle), since intelligence indicated extensive VC activity in the area after friendly forces departed the CEDAR FALLS operational area. Headquarters Military Region IV, the control HQ for VC activities in and around Saigon, and 2d Gp, 83d Rear Services were active in the area. The mission was to locate and destroy elements of the headquarters of Military Region IV, GP 83, COSVN Rear Services, local units and the VC infrastructure. Prior to the initiation of the operation, intelligence collection increased, resulting in probable location of the Headquarters of Military Region IV, in the vicinity bounded by coordinates XT6535, XT6536, XT6635, XT6634, and XT6634. One hundred seventy-nine suspected military installations consisting of base camps and supply caches were located or identified. As was demonstrated during Operation CEDAR FALLS and on all previous operations in the vicinity, the major enemy resistance was expected to be extensive use of mines, booby traps and snipers throughout the area; also, heavily fortified base camps and supply areas with complete tunnel and bunker systems defended intensely by small groups of VC. Deception operations were conducted by all major subordinate units involved to deny the VC forewarning of the operation. This was accomplished by strict control of reconnaissance, B-52 strikes and the pre-positioning of artillery and forward supply bases prior to the conduct of operations.

Vital information was gained during the operation in the form of captured documents and interrogations of PW and ralliers. In several instances, this information led to locations of supply caches and possible headquarters installations. An example of this was 2 large weapons caches containing 369 individual weapons, 3,500 mortar rounds, and 310,000 small arms rounds, located by the 1st Div through information given by a Hoi Chanh.

The most important effect of Operation MANHATTAN was the destruction of one of the largest concentrated VC supply complexes located in the III CTZ. The destruction which was initiated during Operation CEDAR FALLS was continued during Operation MANHATTAN. Together, the operations included both sides of the Saigon River from the southern portion of the Iron Triangle (XT7521) north to Dau Tieng. The assault on Military Region IV Headquarters produced valuable information from captured documents, PW and Hoi Chanh concerning VC future intentions, plans and operations in the Saigon area. The destruction of GP 83 installations, bases and supplies will require the VC to divert manpower resources from combat operations in order to reconstitute logistical bases. Documents captured indicate a new VC policy concerning dispersion of supplies as an attempt to eliminate large losses in the future. This

change in VC logistical storage will increase their manpower requirements. The realization that previously safe base areas are vulnerable to Allied forces will adversely affect VC morale. VC losses as a result of this operation will possibly result in a curtailment of support by the local populace. Enemy losses for Operation MANHATTAN

345 detainees.

191 VC KIA (BC), 25 PW, 28 ralliers, POW

SOURCE: ORLL, II Field Force, July 1967

(1)

March 18 - April
April 23 - June 7 1967
255D
All multi-bugader search and destroy operation
in the Ben Loi - Ben Qui area 10 miles south of
D.T. 3,545/1500 pay-over targets were dropped

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1st Infantry

Operation Manhattan

Operation Manhattan was a multidivision search and destroy operation initiated by II FFORCEV in Binh Duong and Tay Ninh Provinces on 23 April. The area of operations included the Boi Loi Woods and the area east of the Saigon River between Dau Tieng and Ben Suc. The operation started with a coordinated airmobile and ground assault by the 1st and 25th Infantry Divisions. The 1st Division attacked with its 3d Brigade and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, which was under operational control of the division. The 25th Infantry Division task organization consisted of its 1st and 2d Brigades and 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division attached. The US forces were supported by the 34th ARVN Ranger Battalion and the 30th River Assault Group (RAG) (VNN). The 25th Infantry Division attacked from the west into the Boi Loi Woods toward the western approaches to the Saigon River. Concurrently, the 1st Infantry Division attacked from the east toward the eastern approaches of the river. During the following days, both units conducted numerous search and destroy operations. Contacts with the Viet Cong were sporadic and usually involved only small groups of the enemy. As expected, the enemy made extensive use of mines and booby traps, causing several friendly casualties. Both divisions searched meticulously, uncovering increasingly large amounts of supplies. During one of these search operations the 2d Battalion, 18th Infantry discovered the largest weapons cache found

in III CTZ to date. Located inside a concrete lined warehouse, guarded by a double ring of claymore mines, the unit found 369 individual weapons, 3,500 rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition and over 300,000 rounds of small arms ammunition. Numerous bunkers and tunnels were located and destroyed; some of them exceptionally well constructed with 16 inch reinforced concrete walls and roofs supported by steel beams. The II FFORCEV units continued their drive toward the Saigon River locating and destroying small groups of the enemy. The 25th Infantry Division pushed steadily toward the northeast bank of the Saigon River while the 1st Infantry Division and the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment closed in from the opposite side in an effort to make the Viet Cong stand and fight. In the third week of MANHATTAN, elements of the 25th Infantry Division boarded the boats of the 30th RAG (VNN) and conducted sweeps up and down the Saigon River as the enemy was forced towards its banks by the pincer movements of the two divisions. The river was a prime enemy supply route through the Boi Loi and Ho Bo Woods into Saigon. The RAG force landed and conducted thorough searches of those areas that had signs of Viet Cong activity. Equipped with weapons that ranged from .30 caliber machineguns to 40mm cannon, the RAG boats proved to be effective for this type of operation. As the operation progressed, the number of participating units was reduced gradually until on 12 May control of MANHATTAN was passed to the 25th Infantry Division. Engineer elements continued extensive land clearing projects and the destruction of hundreds of bunkers, tunnels and Viet Cong installations that had been located. In essence, MANHATTAN became a security operation for the engineer projects being conducted. This operation terminated on 7 June.

#10
Operations

The 25th Infantry Division as a part of IIFORCEV began Operation MANHATTAN on 23 April with the objective of destroying VC forces and installations in the HO BO - BOI LOI - BEN CUI areas and along the SAIGON River in conjunction with other IIFORCEV units. After IIFORCEV concluded the operation on 11 May, the 25th Infantry Division continued Operation MANHATTAN as a division operation until 07 June 1967, employing the 1st and 2nd Brigades, 25th Infantry Division and 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division. Search and destroy operations commenced in April continued. On 9 May, 2nd Brigade, 25th Infantry Division completed its participation in Operation MANHATTAN and returned to CU CHI Base Camp in preparation for the forthcoming Operation KOLEKOLE. On 10 May, 3rd Brigade, 4th Infantry Division completed its participation in Operation MANHATTAN and returned to the DAU TIENG Base Camp in preparation for the forthcoming Operations AHINA and DIAMOND HEAD. First Brigade, 25th Infantry Division continued operations and provided necessary security for extensive clearing operations conducted by the 65th Engineer Battalion, which employed the ROME PLOW, a modified bulldozer with a sharpened blade used for clearing densely vegetated areas. In addition necessary roads were constructed in the Area of Operations (AO). The clearing of the vegetation in the AO deprived the VC of the sanctuary they had long established throughout the area, especially in the HO BO and BOI LOI Woods. Significant results of Operation MANHATTAN were: 74 VC KIA (BC), 99 VC KIA (poss), 3 HOI QUAN and 19 PW. Enemy weapons and munitions losses were: 201 small arms weapons, 18 crew served weapons, 42 artillery rounds of ammunition, 671 mortar rounds of ammunition, 214 anti-tank weapons rds of ammunition, 293 mines, 901 grenades and booby traps, 400,543 rds of small arms ammunition, 168 cluster bomb units, 3200 blasting caps, 2300 feet of detonating cord, 1800 lbs of TNT and 2278 lbs of black powder. Enemy equipment losses: 34 sampans, 400 pounds of clothing, 443 pounds of medical supplies, 250 tons of rice, 5.5 tons of other food-stuffs, 398 pounds of documents, 12,760 feet of communication wire, 7 radios, 30 pounds of purji stakes, 17 pounds of tools, one telephone, 7 protective masks, 2 plows, 108 bicycles, 1 oxcart, 6 generators, 25 gals of CS agent and 6 outboard motors. Enemy facility losses: 461 structures, 1594 meters of tunnels, 1163 bunkers, 421 foxholes, 5635 meters of trenches, 7 base camps, 1 radio repair ship, 1 bicycle repair shop and 2 hospitals.

SOURCE: Operational Report Lessons Learned, (CORR) 25th Infantry Division,
201 Reading 31 July 1967