

SARATOGA

(c) Operation SARATOGA was initiated by the 1/27 Infantry, 2d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division on 8 December 1967 as a reconnaissance in force operation in Hau Nghia Province in support of pacification. Initially this operation maintained a sizable military force in the southern portion of the division TAOI while the majority of the division's resources were committed to Operation Y. LLOSTONK; however, as enemy activity increased in the Saigon - Hoc Mon area, Operation Y. LLOSTONK was reduced in scope and available forces were committed to Operation SARATOGA. On 31 January Cu Chi Base Camp received an estimated 244 rounds of mortar and rocket fire causing 32 US wounded. At 0346 hours a B/1/27 Infantry patrol engaged an unknown number of enemy approximately four kilometers southwest of Duc Ha with small arms and automatic weapons. This contact resulted in four US killed and three US wounded; while 15 of the enemy were killed. At 0835 hours, D/1/27 Infantry contacted an enemy force of unknown size in the same area resulting in 12 US wounded and 22 enemy killed. In response to attacks on Tan Son Nhut, 3/4 Cavalry (less Troop A) came under operational control to Task Force WARE and conducted a cross-country road move to reinforce contacts in the Tan Son Nhut area. The squadron, with Troop C in the lead, contacted an estimated three enemy battalions at the southwest corner of Tan Son Nhut (XS970950). Friendly forces engaged the enemy with organic weapons to include direct fire mortar ammunition. Troop B reinforced the contact and the squadron fought its way through the enemy forces, completely disrupting the enemy's attack. Artillery and light fire teams supported the squadron during the period of contact, thereby contributing to the success of the attack. This eight-hour battle resulted in 15 US killed and 23 US wounded; enemy losses were 162 killed and 24 captured. All contacts 31 January on Operation SARATOGA resulted in 206 enemy killed and 24 captured as compared to 24 US killed and 77 US wounded. On 27 February 1/27 and 2/27 Infantry Battalions came under operational control to Task Force WARE. On the same day, Cu Chi Base Camp received a mortar, rocket and RPG attack that resulted in only light casualties,

but hit the ammunition storage area causing heavy damage and loss of ammunition and buildings in the base camp. On 5 February, 3/4 Cavalry, (less one Troop), 1/27 Infantry and 2/27 Infantry were released from operational control of Task Force WARE. Three contacts in the Hoc Mon area resulted in 86 enemy killed on 5 February. On 6 February, A and B 2/12 Infantry engaged an unknown size enemy force nine kilometers southeast of Cu Chi; results were one US killed, 11 wounded and 20 enemy killed. At 0935 hours on the same day, C/3/4 Cavalry and A/1/27 Infantry contacted an estimated enemy battalion. B/3/4 Cavalry reinforced the contact. Friendly forces were supported by light fire teams, airstrikes and artillery. This contact resulted in nine US killed and 18 US wounded; 48 enemy were killed. Contacts on 7 and 8 February, as a result of offensive reconnaissance in force operations by US forces, resulted in 145 enemy killed as compared to 10 US killed and 101 wounded. On 9 February, C and D/2/27 Infantry contacted an estimated enemy battalion three kilometers southwest of Hoc Mon; friendly forces were supported by artillery, light fire teams, AC-47 (Spooky) and airstrikes. Three US were killed and four US were wounded; enemy losses were 102 killed. On the same day, Task Force SABER (B/3/4 Cavalry, C and D/1/27 Infantry and A/2/27 Infantry), contacted an enemy force of unknown size one kilometer south of Hoc Mon; this force employed small arms, automatic weapons and rifle grenade fire along the Task force axis of advance. Friendly forces placed a heavy volume of fire on enemy emplacements with organic weapons and were supported by light fire teams, artillery, AC-47 (Spooky) and airstrikes. A follow-up sweep of the battlefield disclosed 176 enemy killed, 21 small arms and 18 crew served weapons captured or destroyed. Friendly losses were three killed and 25 wounded. Operation SARATOGA contacts on 9 February resulted in 385 enemy killed. On 10 February, Task Force SABER contacted enemy forces three kilometers northeast of Hoc Mon. A total of 105 enemy were killed while US losses were one killed and 29 wounded. Reconnaissance in force operations conducted by elements of the 25th Infantry Division on 12 February resulted in 16 US killed and 63 US wounded; enemy losses were 98 killed. The most significant contact on 12 February occurred four kilometers northeast of Hoc Mon when 1/27 Infantry contacted an unknown size enemy force. Forty-seven of the enemy were killed in this contact. On 14 February task force 4/23 Infantry (Mechanized) conducted a reconnaissance in force operation along Highway QL 1 to an objective seven kilometers northeast of Hoc Mon (XT715099). At 0630 hours, one kilometer west of the objective, the task force contacted an enemy force of unknown size, light fire teams and artillery supported the friendly forces. Eleven US were killed and 48 wounded; enemy losses were 91 killed. Forty-three enemy dead were located six kilometers northeast of Cu Chi and 40 were killed by light fire teams six kilometers north of Hoc Mon. All contacts on 14 February resulted in 18 US killed and 69 wounded; 219 enemy were killed. Sporadic contact with enemy forces was made by US elements

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on 15 February and a number of enemy dead were found from previous contacts, accounting for 160 enemy killed. On 17 February, the 25th Infantry Division increased Operation SARATOGA in scope when two additional combat battalions were added from Operation YAN DOA STONE. On 21 February Task Force 3/4 Cavalry, with B/2 Infantry (each armed) under its operational control, conducted reconnaissance in force operations some nine kilometers west and southwest of Tan Son Nhut. At 0956 hours, Troop C received small arms, automatic weapons and 40 fire from an enemy force of unknown size 10 kilometers southwest of Tan Son Nhut (XBT03922). Troop A and B reinforced the contact; light fire teams, artillery, AC-47 (Spooky) and airstrikes supported the friendly forces. Three US were killed and 22 wounded; 135 enemy were killed. All Operation SARATOGA contacts on 21 February resulted in six US killed and 45 wounded, 232 enemy killed. On 24 February, Operation YAN DOA STONE was terminated and all of the 25th Infantry Division combat forces joined Operation SARATOGA. On 2 March C/4 Infantry, while moving south along Route 248 five kilometers north of Xam Loi (XBT43054), received heavy fire from an estimated enemy company in camouflaged, dug-in positions. Friendly forces returned fire with organic weapons and were supported by light fire teams, artillery and airstrikes. Companies A and B reinforced the contact and swept southeast from Route 248 to the Saigon River. Forty-eight US troops were killed and 29 wounded. Twenty-one enemy killed were located in follow-up sweeps. On 3 March A/1/27 Infantry and C/3/4 Cavalry contacted an enemy force of unknown size seven kilometers southwest of Xam Loi. Friendly forces were supported by airstrikes, artillery and light fire teams. Fifty-three enemy were killed; friendly losses were seven killed and 40 wounded. Operation SARATOGA terminated on 10 March 1968. Significant cumulative results include 582 US killed, 1,075 wounded, and four missing; enemy losses were 5,853 killed, 347 detainees, 418 small arms and 130 crew served weapons captured.

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