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AGAM-P (M) (22 Apr 68) FOR OT RD 681098

29 April 1968

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SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, Headquarters, I Field Force Vietnam, Period Ending 31 January 1968 (U)

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1. Subject report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with paragraph 5b, AR 525-15. Evaluations and corrective actions should be reported to AGSPOR OT RD, Operational Reports Branch, within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.
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

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Major General, USA
The Adjutant General

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f. Enemy Capabilities and Vulnerabilities:

(1) enemy Capabilities:

(a) In the Western Highlands, the B3 Front is capable of undertaking multi-regimental size coordinated attacks as indicated.

1. In Kontum Province, attack in multi-regimental strength against Ban Hut Special Forces Camp, with secondary efforts in Dak To District and in multi-battalion strength in the Kontum City area.

2. In Pleiku Province, attack in multi-battalion strength supported by NF and LP units. Most likely targets are Duc Co, Plei Djereng and Pleiku City. Conduct ambushes in multi-company strength along QL 14 and QL 19.

3. Attack Ban Ma Thuot in Darlac Province in multi-battalion strength supported by local forces.

(b) In the coastal lowland provinces of Binh Dinh, Phu Yen and Khanh Hoa attack in multi-battalion strength in conjunction with diversionary attacks by sapper, main force and local force units. Conduct raids against district headquarters and LP/FF units.

(c) In Binh Thuan and Lam Dong provinces, attack in up to multi-battalion strength supported by district and guerrilla forces.

(d) Attack isolated outposts, installations and units with up to reinforced battalion strength in any province in conjunction with attempts to ambush relief forces.

(e) Continue harassment, sabotage, assassination and probing activities.

(f) Attack in multi-regimental strength employing any combination of the above capabilities, carried out separately or in coordination with each other.

(2) Enemy Vulnerabilities:

(a) Enemy LGU's are extended and insecure, with the exception of those traversing neutral countries or international waters, where some degree of security exists.

(b) The enemy is generally short of medicine and food.

(c) The enemy's limited capability to engage in conventional warfare for extended periods makes him vulnerable to superior allied firepower in any large-scale enemy offensive.

g. Long Range Patrol (LRP) Company:

(1) Training: Continuing the training program cited in the report for the previous period, the 4th and 2d Patrol Platoons finished the MACV Recon School in November and the 3d Patrol Platoon graduated on 15 December. Immediately after each platoon finished Recon School training, they conducted a live patrol VTX on the MACARTHUR AO, with the Mission Support Station (MSS) established at Plei Do Lam CIGG Camp.

(2) Operations: By 22 November, eight days ahead of the programmed date of operational readiness, the 1st Patrol Platoon was deployed with the 1st Brigade, 21st Airborne Division, for 39 days of operations in the KHAMMATH AO. By 1 January all four platoons had

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participated in operational missions. The operational statistics for the months of December and January are as follows:

- (a) Number LRP personnel KIA/WIA: 2/3
- (b) Number enemy personnel KIA: 6 (BC), 2 (Prob)
- (c) Number LRP insertions: 78
- (d) Number LRP sightings of VC/NVA: 31
- (e) Number emergency extractions: 14

h. Weather:

(1) Interior: The northeast monsoon prevailed over the area throughout this period and there was very little day to day change in the weather pattern over the interior. Skies were generally fair to partly cloudy with ground fog forming in the high mountain valleys near sunrise. Fog was especially heavy during this period in the Dak To area and hampered some airtask operations during the early morning hours. Very little rain fell over the interior during this period; the only significant amount occurred with a dissipating tropical storm that moved across the central plateau on the 10th and 11th of November.

(2) Coast: The northeast monsoon has been very dry this year and precipitation was about half of the normal expected during this period. Skies were partly cloudy to cloudy during November and December but by mid-January skies became mostly fair. During November and December ceilings along the coast from Nha Trang northward were generally 1500 to 2500 feet during the early morning hours but lifted to 3000 to 4000 feet by noon. The coastal ridges in PERSHING, Capital KOK Division and 9th BOK Division areas of operations were usually obscured with low clouds and light rain between the hours of 0200 hours to 1000 hours. Very little rain was reported along the coast south of Nha Trang. Typhoon Freda hit the coast between Tuy Hoa and Minh Hoa on the morning of 10 November. Winds as high as 65 knots were reported within a 20 mile radius of the storm center. The storm weakened rapidly as it moved inland; however, it deposited 2-3 inches of rain along the coast between Minh Hoa and Qui Nhon and heavier amounts in the mountains to the west of this area.

(3) Effects on Operations: The strong winds associated with Typhoon Freda damaged some buildings in the Minh Hoa and Tuy Hoa areas but did very little damage elsewhere. Monsoon rains washed out several bridges on the Highway north of Qui Nhon and at Nha Trang. Phases II and III of Operation HAILIFT were both delayed because of weather. Spooky could not support the attack on Lao Thien when it was under attack on 24 January due to heavy ground fog. There were a total of 294 TAC sorties and 87 trail dust missions cancelled due to weather. No other effects on operations are known.

(4) Detachment 31, 5th Weather Squadron has the mission of supporting I Field Force Vietnam and USAF tactical units in II CTZ, plus the Americal Division and the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) in I CTZ. This support is being provided in the following manner:

(a) I FPOCEV

- 1. Staff Weather Officer (SWO)
- 2. Forecast Support Center for II CTZ
- 3. Climatological Support

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E Co, 20th Inf (LRP)
54th Inf Det (Radar)
68th Inf Det (Radar)
434 AFU (APO 96390)
54th Sig Bn (Corps)
59th MI Det
64th Engr Det (Terrain)
209th Sig Det (IA)
272d MP Co (Corps)
297th Trans Co (GAR)

USARV GO 4916, 26 Sep 67
USARV GO 3137, 27 May 66
USARV GO 1913, 28 Mar 66
USARV GO 5953, 6 Oct 66
USARV GO 668, 20 Sep 65
USARV GO 1229, 27 Oct 65
USARV GO 159, 13 Jan 66
USARV GO 1590, 15 Nov 65
USARV GO 663, 20 Sep 65
USARV GO 5953, 6 Oct 66

Attached 4th Inf Div
Attached 1st Cav Div (AM)
Attached 52d CAB

USARV GO 5271, 14 Oct 67
IPFOLCHV GO 200, 9 Jun 66
IPFOLCHV GO 415, 25 Oct 66

Attached 54th Sig Bn

IPFOLCHV GO 25, 16 Nov 65

NOTE: * Unit is in support of units OPCON to III MAF.

ATTACHED UNITS

5th PI Det
11th PI Det
13th HLI Rpt Det
26th CHL Det (CHL CTR)
41st CA Co (-)
164th CHL Flt (DS)
191st MI Det
313th MR Bn

AUTHORITY

USARV GO 5587, 8 Sep 66
USARV GO 4878, 21 Jul 66
USARV GO 2181, 28 Dec 65
USARV GO 1056, 16 Oct 65
USARV GO 4079, 22 Jun 66
USARV GO 1056, 16 Oct 65
USARV GO 1056, 16 Oct 65
509th MR Op GO 9, 8 Jun 66

STATUS

Attached 1st Cav Div (AM)
attached 1st Cav Div (AM)
Attached 1st Cav Div (AM)

ATTACHMENT

IPFOLCHV GO 16, 25 Oct 65
IPFOLCHV GO 16, 25 Oct 65
IPFOLCHV GO 16, 25 Oct 65

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