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6 Sept 72

Signature/Date

FMF PAC: Operations of the III MAF,
Vietnam

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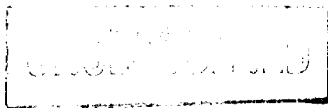
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OPERATIONS OF THE III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE

VIETNAM

DECEMBER 1965

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This is a summary of activities of the III Marine Amphibious Force, Vietnam, for the month of December, 1965. Its purpose is to update similar reports which covered periods I through VII, from March to November 1965. The period covered by this report is designated as Period VIII.

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SUMMARY

During December, III MAF maintained its balanced approach to prosecuting the war. Defenses of the three critical installations were strengthened, progress in the expanding civic action program became more visible, and, in the largest operation to date involving Marines, Viet Cong forces of significant size were driven from a previously secure base area.

The continuing monsoon weather seriously impeded operations. The logistic effort was most affected. Supply storage areas were flooded, bridges and roads washed out, and material damaged. Rough seas hampered cargo unloading at both Danang and Chu Lai and rendered inoperative for a considerable period of time the amphibious assault bulk fuel system at Chu Lai. Construction work was slowed, as the bad weather delayed the arrival of materials and necessitated the shifting of work crews to the maintenance of roads or other facilities affected by the rains. Similarly, tactical operations, both in the air and on the ground, were made more difficult. Jet attack aircraft were forced to run attacks when ceilings were 800 feet or less, movement on the ground by foot or vehicle was gravely impeded, and communications suffered.

Despite the weather, there was an increase in the number of offensive ground operations--7444, as compared with 6242 in November and 5512 during October. Some 7200 of these offensive efforts were small unit patrols and ambushes, conducted primarily to deliver the people from VC harassment and oppression. Southwest of Danang, a coordinated USMC/ARVN operation (Harvest Moon) attacked the VC in one of his major base camps, killing 407 VC, and

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capturing large stores of supplies and equipment. These III MAF ground operations were supported by 2285 offensive air sorties and 23,179 helicopter transport sorties.

There was, by the end of the month, tangible evidence of progress in the pacification of areas where Marine forces are operating. A reduction of VC activity in these areas was evident, along with an increase in the effectiveness of local officials, a growth in the civilian population, modest increase in Popular Forces, an increase in the number of operating schools, and continued cultivation of intelligence sources among villagers. There were, in addition, two other indicia of significance: the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council became a truly unified group and began to wield its combined power in the interest of the people; and the US-GVN-sponsored Ngu Hanh Son pacification campaign south of Danang gave evidence of real progress.

Although the logistic picture improved, movement of cargo through the port of Danang continued to be a major problem because of the lack of adequate unloading facilities. At the close of the November reporting period seventeen ships were in the harbor unloading or waiting to be unloaded. By the end of December the total had decreased to twelve. Seven had been in port longer than two weeks and four had been there in excess of one month. On the favorable side, however, expansion of the supply pipeline and implementation of special assistance measures improved the availability of repair parts and, with improved maintenance practices, decreased the number of items on deadline. By the end of the month, there were no significant shortages of supplies.

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SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

Small Unit Operations. In the central effort to liberate the people from Viet Cong oppression, there were 4218 patrols and 2984 ambushes conducted during the month, and 222 sniper posts employed. Apart from the substantial contribution to the growing pacification effort (see below), these operations resulted in 217 VC killed, 21 wounded and 28 captured. Casualties suffered by III MAF personnel in these operations were 16 KIA and 250 WIA. Results of patrols or ambushes by each battalion are indicated in figures 1, 2 and 3. As in the previous month, the majority of the contacts with the enemy occurred during daylight -- 287 out of a total 447 contacts.

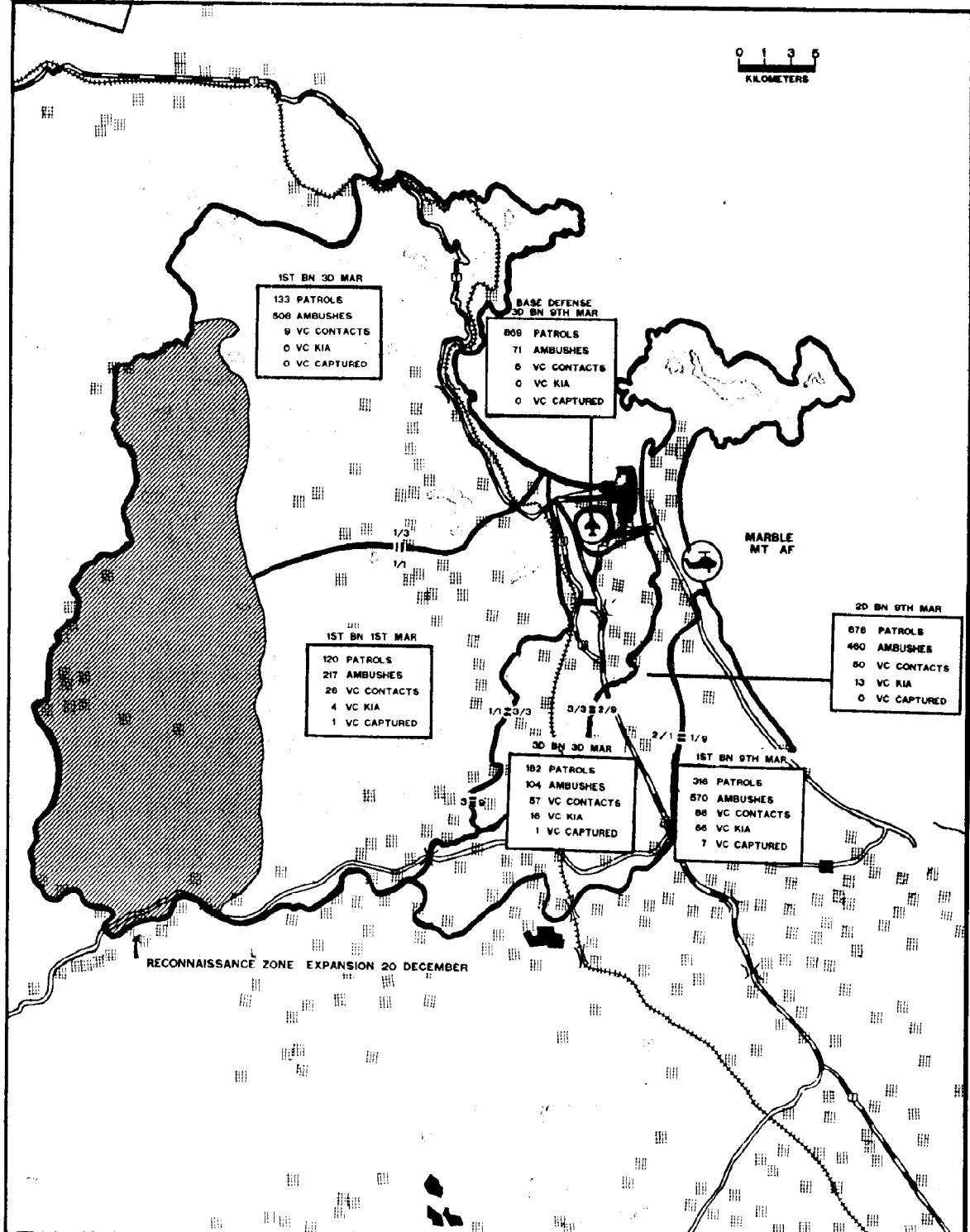
Two of these daylight patrols made contact with sizeable VC forces. Seven miles south of Danang, a squad from 1st Bn, 9th Marines engaged an estimated seventy Viet Cong on the afternoon of 27 December. The patrol requested reinforcements from its company's patrol base, tried to advance, then observed 20 VC attempting to envelop its right flank. The enveloping force was pinned down, but in the action the patrol's radio was destroyed by the enemy fire. Two runners were dispatched to guide the reinforcing elements, which consisted of two squads, two Ontos, and two tanks. With the originally committed squad as a base of fire, the reinforcing elements partially surrounded the VC force, and aided by artillery and UH-1E helicopters, virtually annihilated the VC. 41 VC were KIA and six Marines were wounded, one of whom later died.

At 0640H on 5 December, a platoon of C Company, 1st Bn, 7th Marines made contact with approximately 70 VC on the bank of the Song Moi River about 7 miles southeast of Chu Lai. Executing well coordinated surprise fire, the platoon overwhelmed the VC unit. There were 30 KIA, con-

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OFFENSIVE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE DANANG TAOR



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Figure -1-

OFFENSIVE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE CHU LAI TAOR

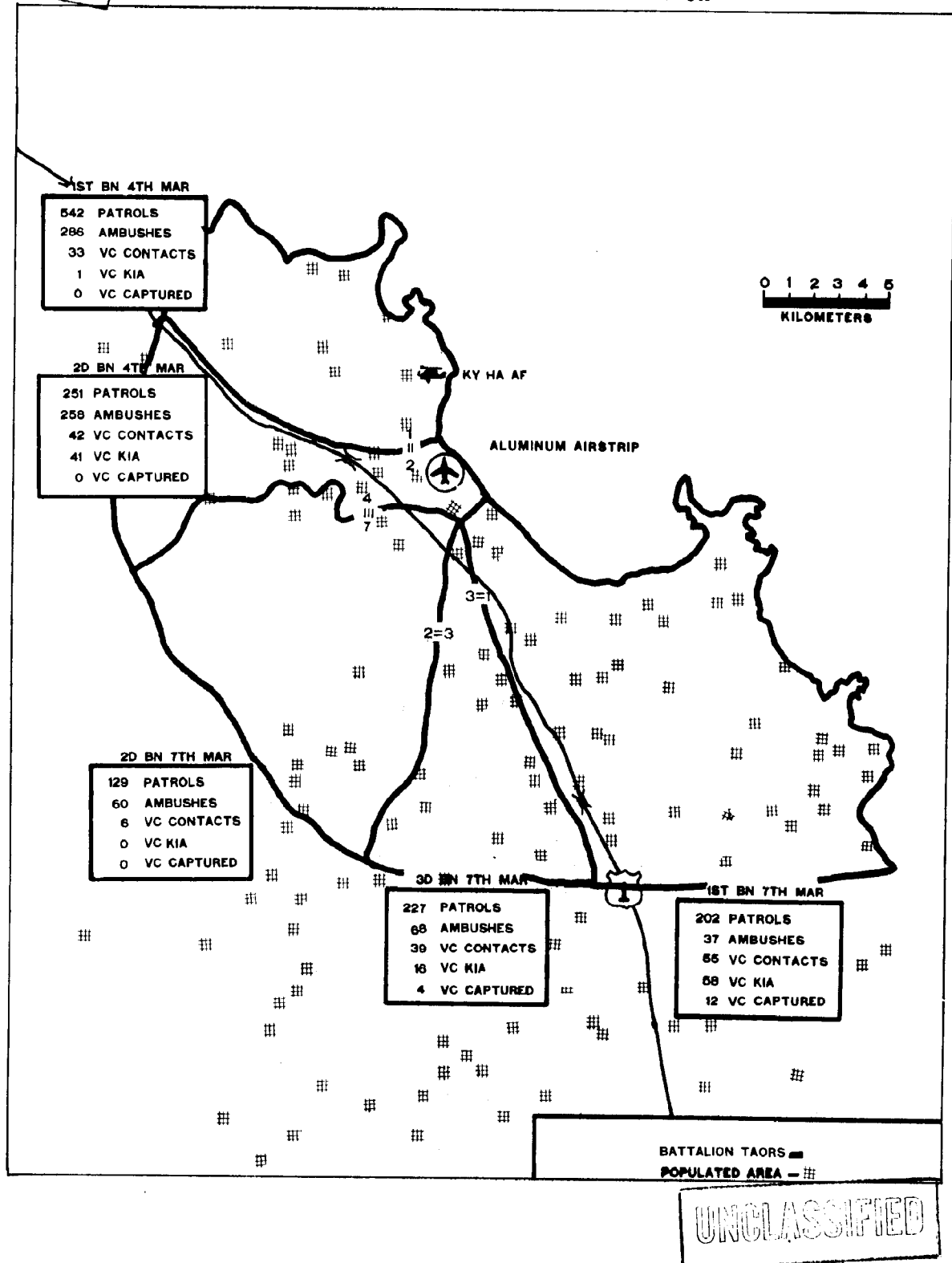


Figure -2-

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OFFENSIVE ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PHU BAI TAOR

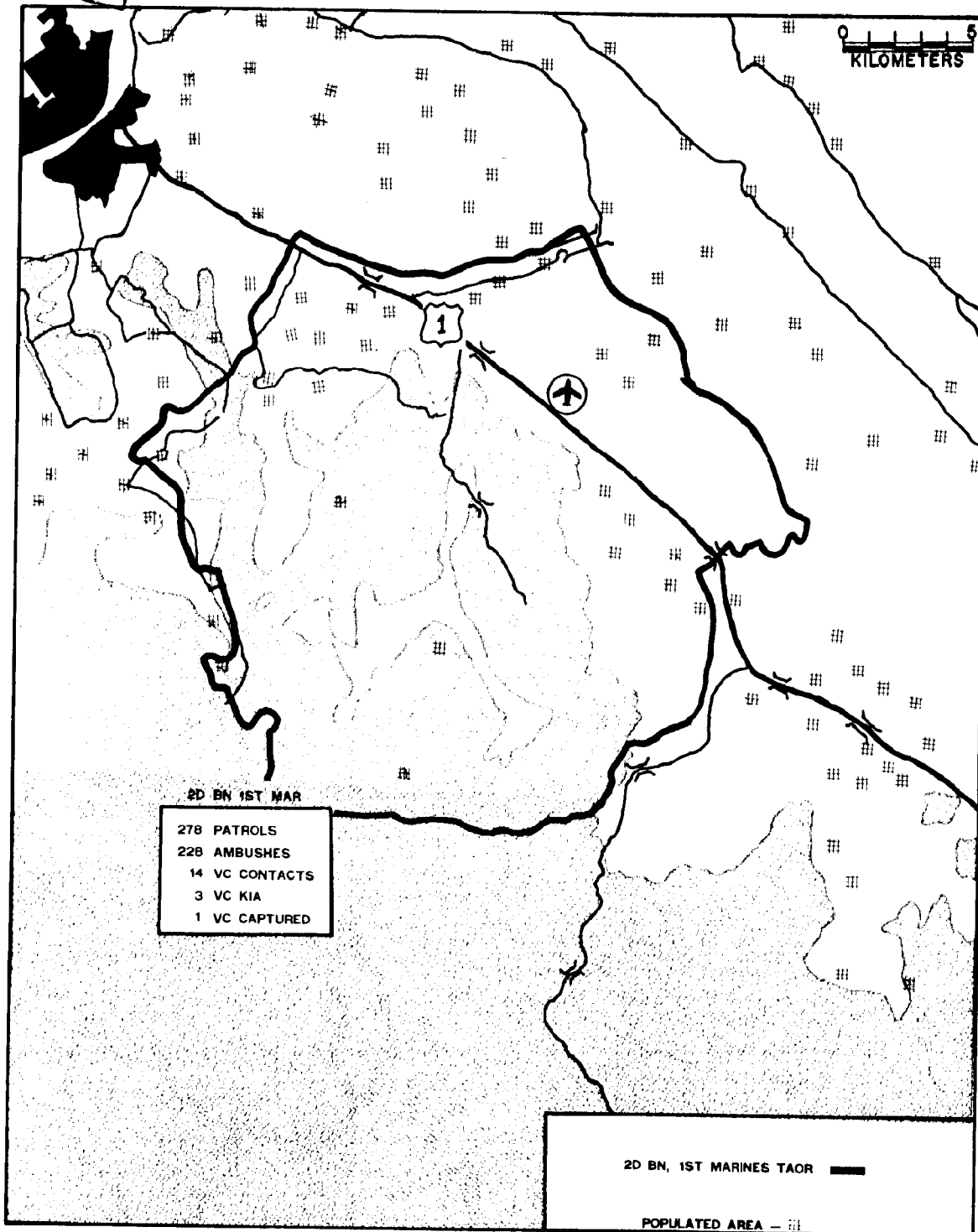

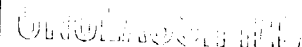



Figure -3-


firmed by body count, 14 probable WIA, 9 VC captured and 1 VC suspect detained. There were no Marine casualties.

Harvest Moon (8-20 December) was a coordinated USMC/ARVN search and destroy operation in an area approximately midway between Danang and Chu Lai, inland some fifteen miles (see figure 4). In terms of friendly forces involved, it was the largest operation for Marines since their arrival in Vietnam. Major participating ground units were 2d Bn, 7th Marines; 3d Bn, 3d Marines; 2d Bn, 1st Marines (the ground element of the Special Landing Force); 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt; 11th ARVN Ranger Bn; and the 1st Bn, 6th ARVN Regt. Major participating aviation units were MAGS 11, 12, 16 and 36 and HMM 261 (SLF). The operation was controlled by a command group under the Assistant Division Commander, 3d Marine Division (Chu Lai). Briefly, the plan for Harvest Moon called for ARVN forces to penetrate the VC area, reportedly a major base camp, on 9 December, after moving overland from the northeast. At the same time, two Marine battalions would be helilifted to the rear and flanks of the VC, completing their entrapment (figure 5).

On the morning of 8 December, the 11th ARVN Ranger Bn and the 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt advanced to the southwest in route column, on opposite sides of the road running from Thang Binh to Hiep Duc. By early afternoon, they had moved about six kilometers, without opposition. At 1330 and without warning, the Ranger Bn on the north side of the road came under attack at close range by a large VC force. In the brief fight which followed, the Ranger Bn was rendered ineffective. The 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt, on the opposite side of the road, was not affected, but its attempt to reinforce the Rangers with one company was halted by

OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS OUTSIDE III MAF TAORS

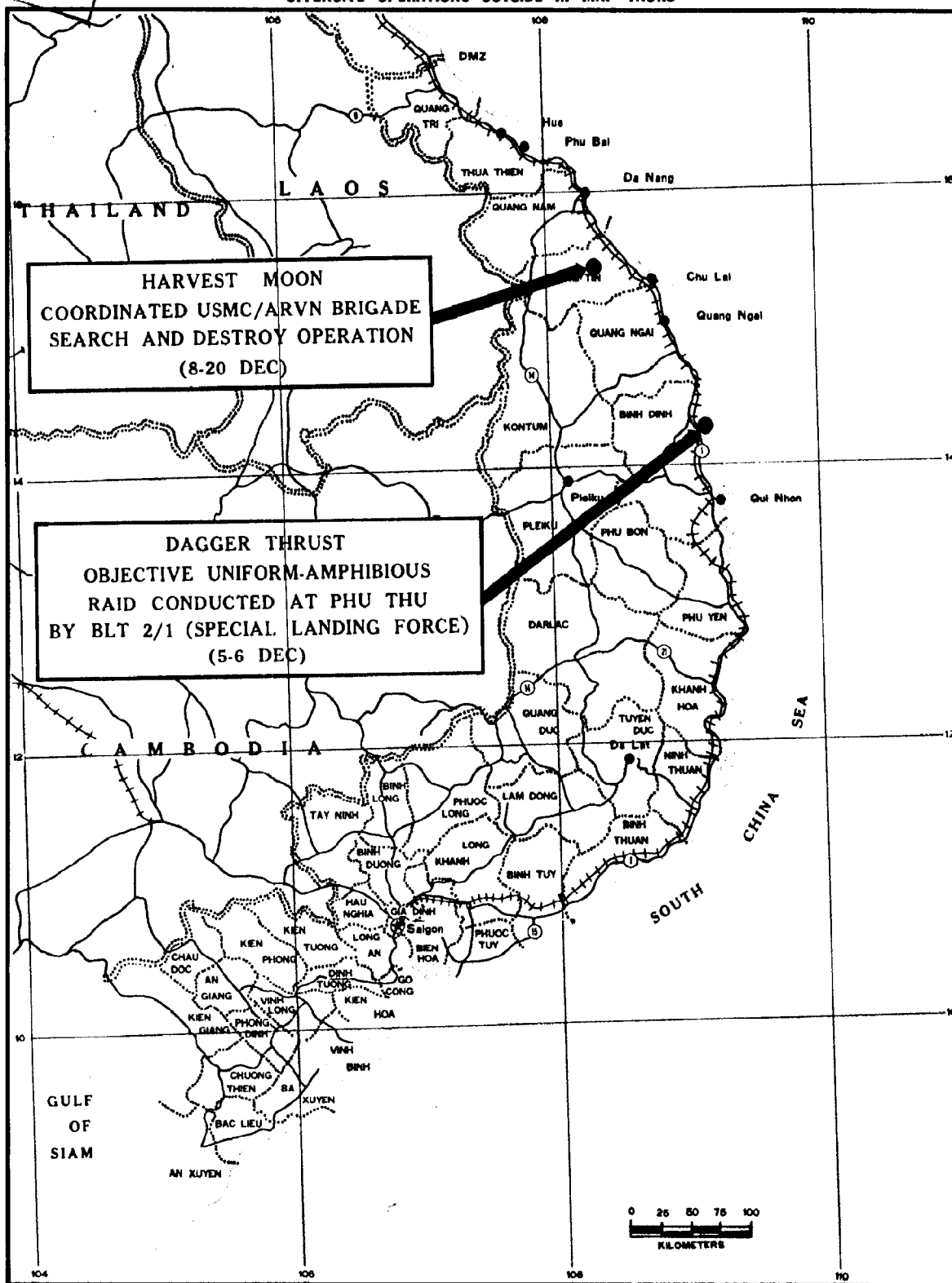


Figure -4-

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

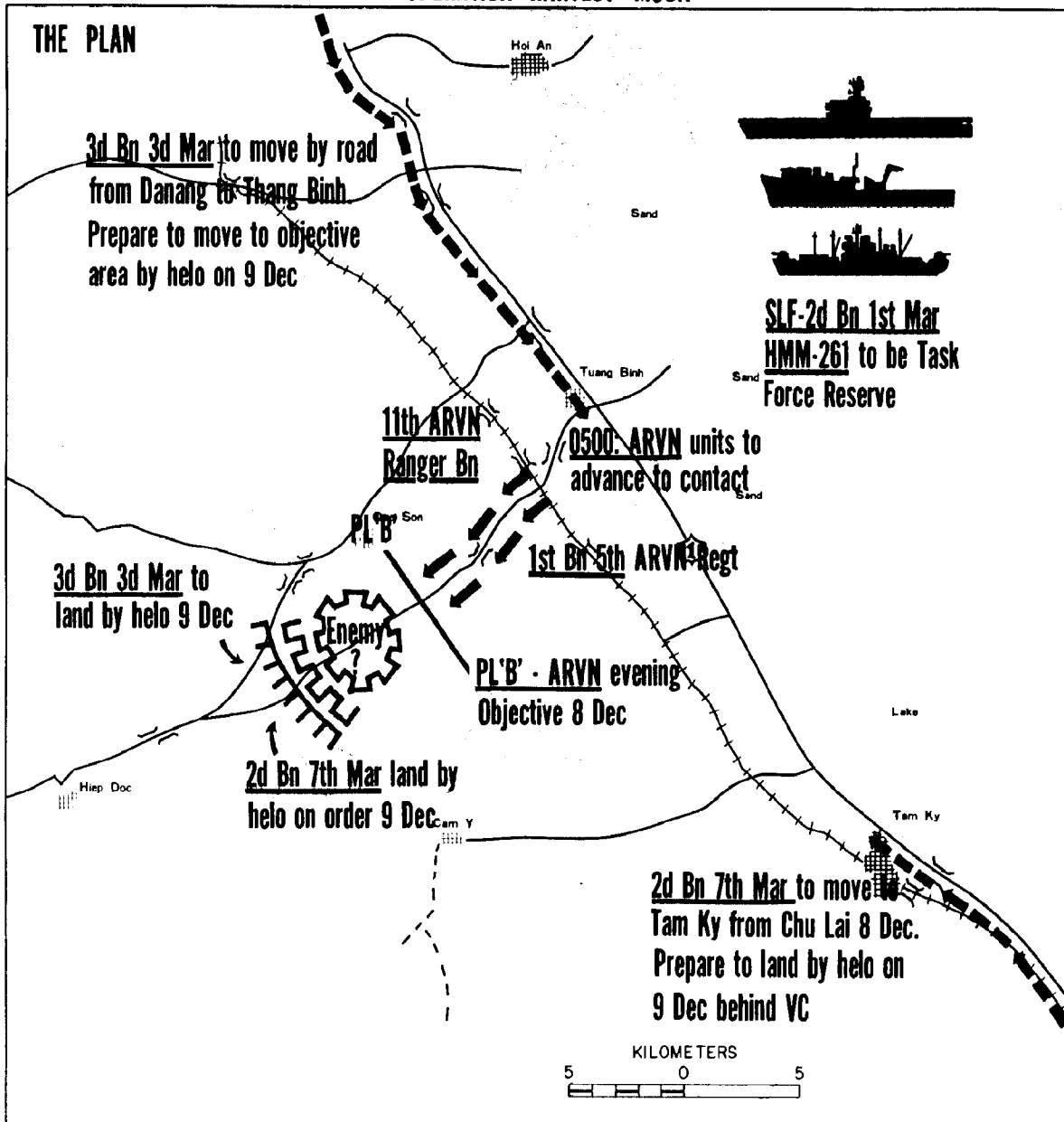


Figure -5-

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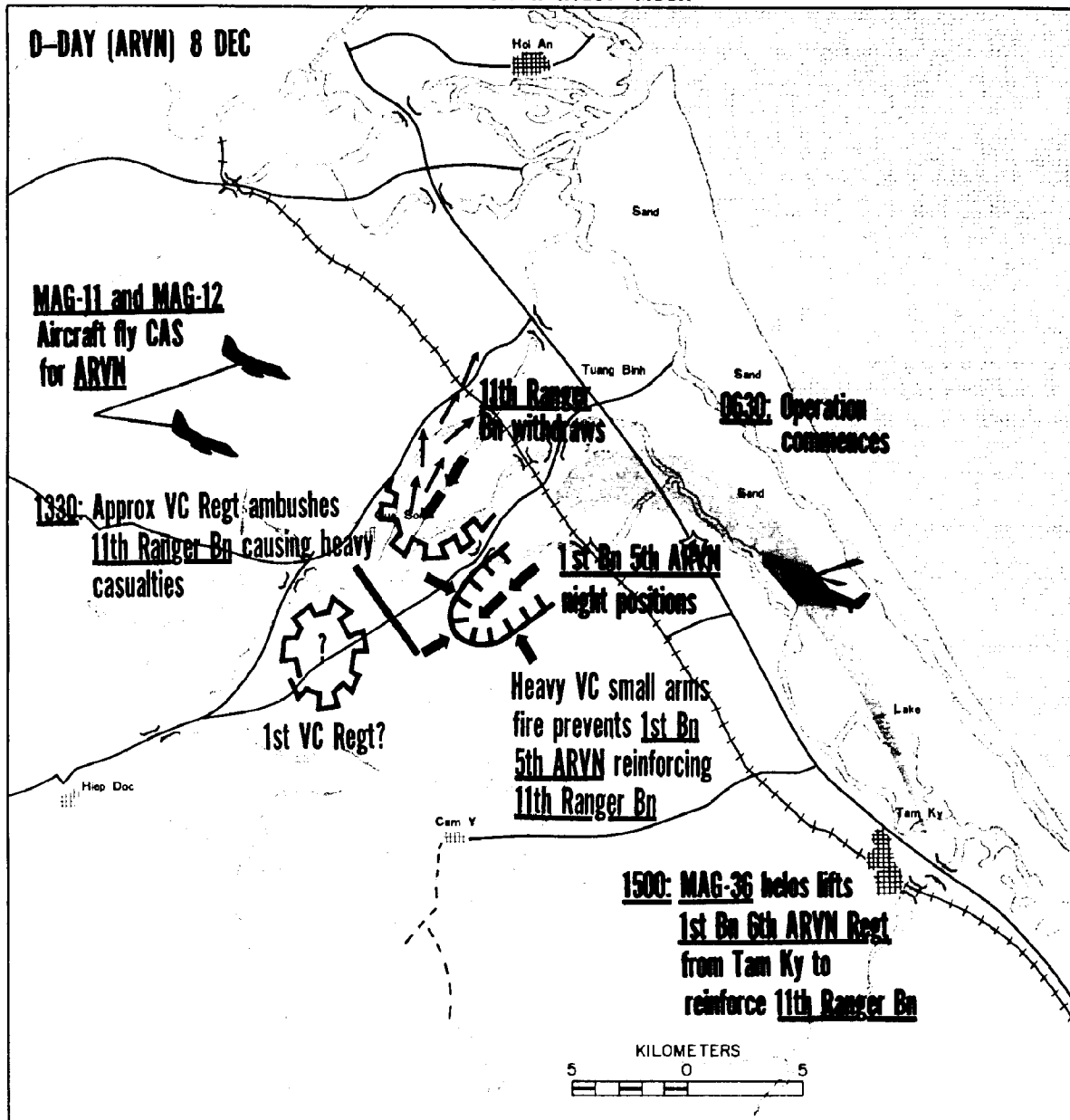
heavy small arms fire. At 1434 Marine helicopters lifted the 1st Bn, 6th ARVN Regt from Tam Ky to the Rangers' position, and the VC broke contact. During the afternoon and despite rain and mist which lowered ceilings to 1500 feet, Marine aircraft were busy in support of the ARVN. In one action, 27 Marine A4 aircraft attacked an estimated 1000 VC who were in the open, inflicting heavy casualties. During the night of 8 December, the ARVN units consolidated their positions. In the only contacts, the 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt received a few light probes, initially, but these increased in intensity and culminated, about 0600 the following morning, in a heavy assault by an estimated VC regiment. This attack decimated the ARVN battalion, driving portions of it south and east, away from the battlefield (figures 6 and 7).

On the morning of 9 December, the Marine battalions entered the operation, as planned. At 1000, 2d Bn, 7th Marines landed by helicopter about nine kilometers west of the 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt position, and attacked to the east, against moderate resistance, to put pressure on the rear of the VC facing the fragmented ARVN elements. At 1445 that afternoon, 3d Bn, 3d Marines landed by helicopter south and slightly east of the ARVN positions and drove northwestward, to juncture with remnants of the 1st Bn, 5th ARVN Regt (figure 8).

The attack was resumed early on the morning of 10 December, as the two Marine battalions attempted to compress the VC from two directions. Resistance was heavy, and, in addition, Marines found it very difficult to negotiate the hedgerows, jungle covered hills, and rice paddies over which they were moving. Consequently, it was decided to land the Seventh Fleet Special Landing Force (2d Bn 1st Marines) from ships previously positioned off-shore. The

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON



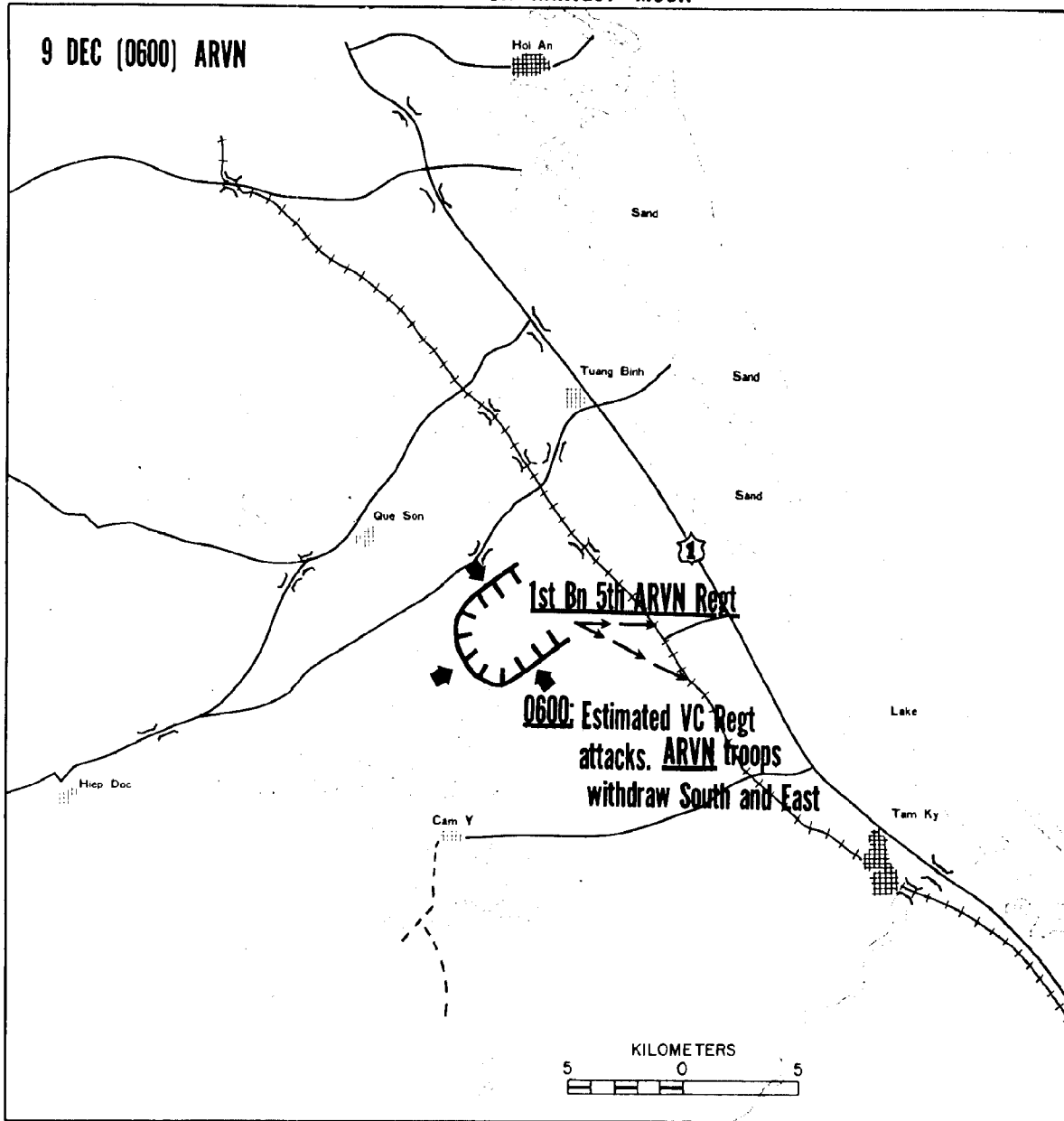
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Figure -6-

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

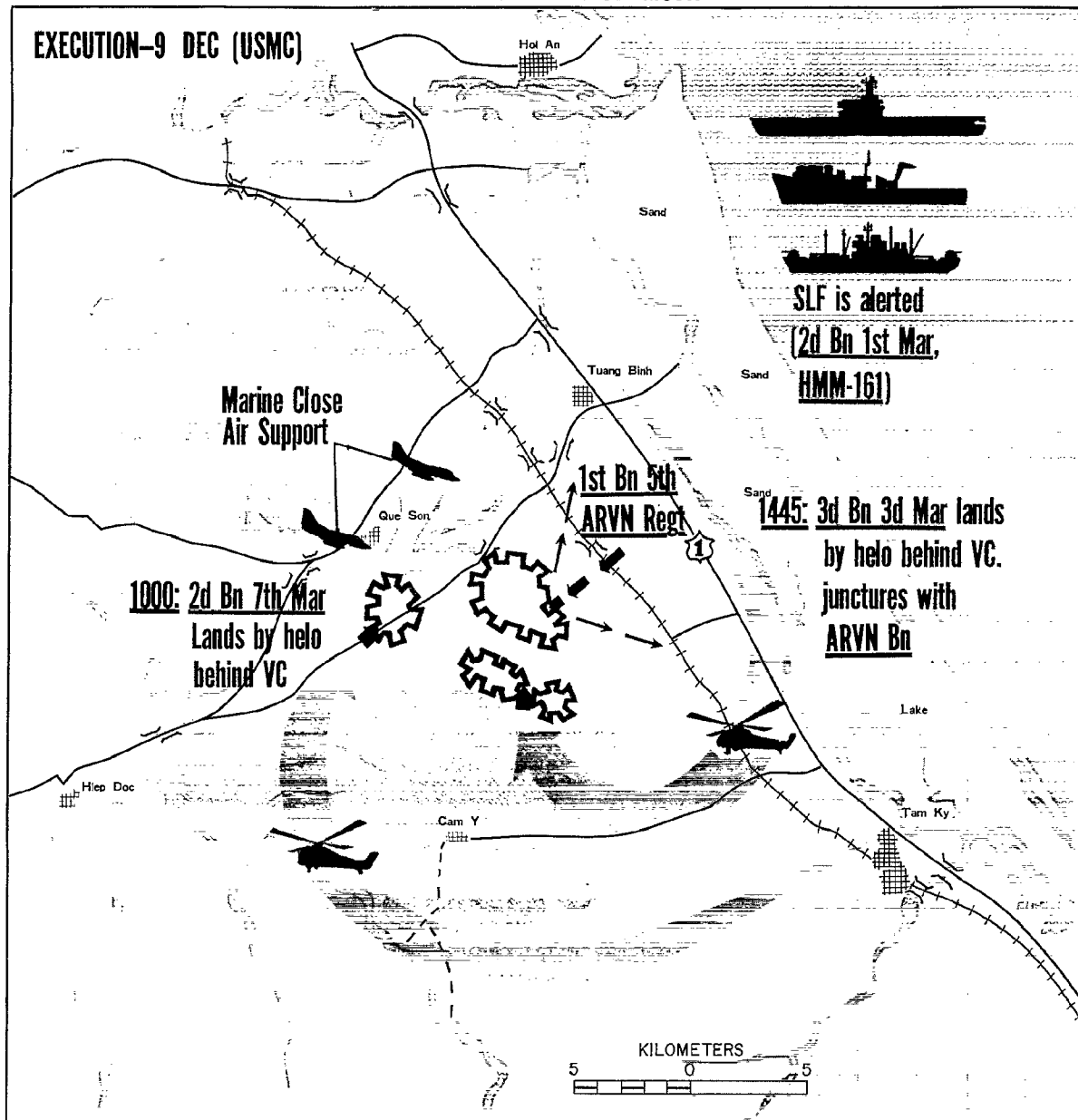


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Figure -7-

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON



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Figure -8-

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two companies which landed initially (heli-lift) met heavy resistance as they joined in what had now become a triangular compression of the enemy force (figure 9).

Marine aircraft, flying in good weather on the 10th, maintained a constant close air support effort over the battlefield, attacking troops in the open and destroying six active mortar positions. Reports of enemy casualties from air attacks were received throughout the day, including one air observer's report of seeing over 100 civilians dragging and carrying casualties out of the battle area to the west.

ARVN forces, meanwhile, were reorganizing and collecting their dead and wounded from the battlefield where their action had occurred. ARVN units did not reappear in Harvest Moon, as forces of consequence.

On 11-12 December, the three Marine battalions continued to close on the enemy position but the hoped-for entrapment of sizeable VC forces was not fully realized. For the most part, the VC resorted to harassment as they attempted to exfiltrate the area. At noon on 11 December, the remaining two rifle companies of 2d Bn, 1st Marines were heli-lifted into the objective area and joined the rest of the battalion.

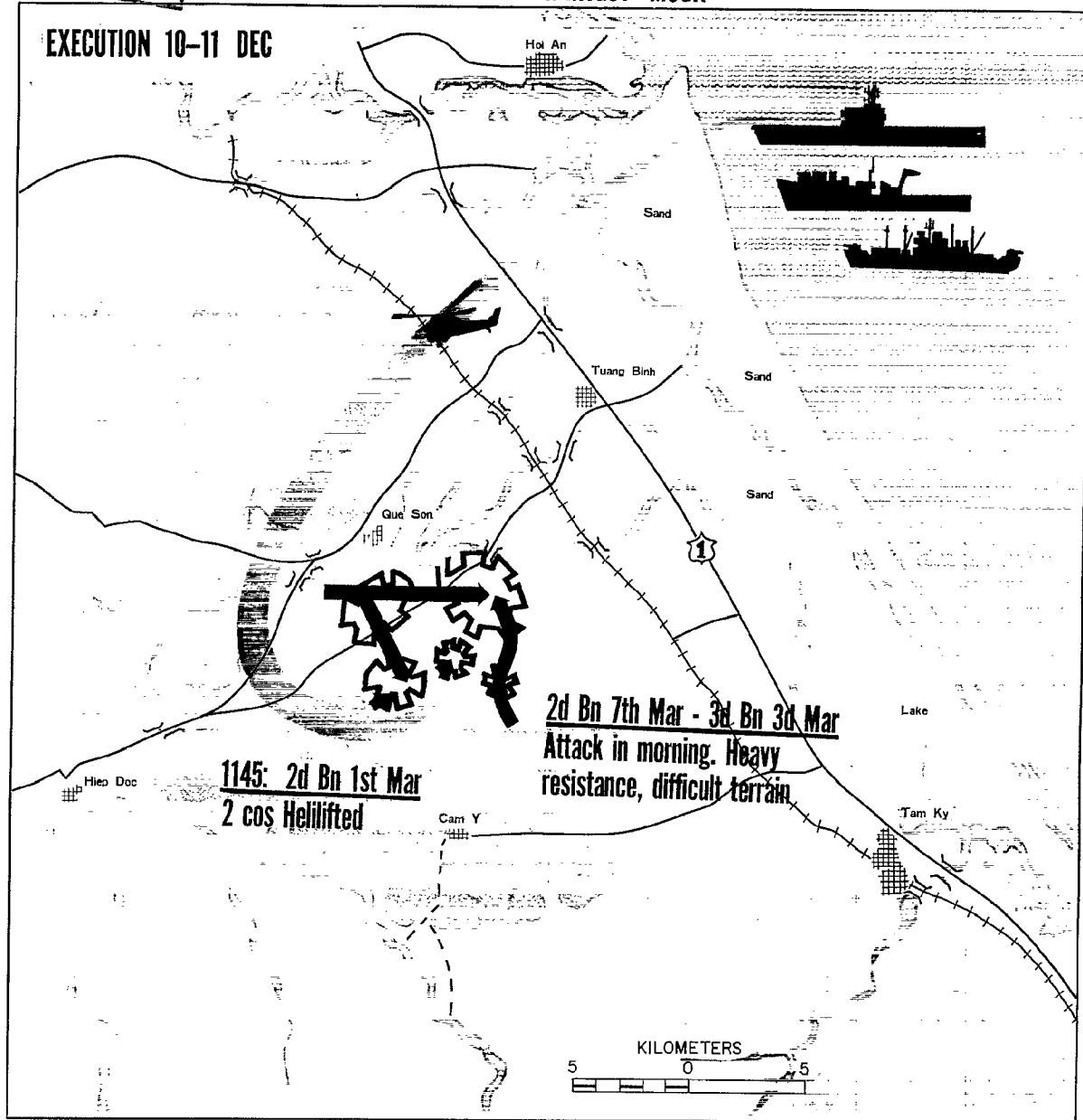
On 12-14 December, four B-52 strikes were delivered on targets in the Harvest Moon area (figure 10). Two of them were exploited by Marine forces rapidly deploying assault and blocking forces by helicopter. The 3d Bn, 3d Marines was heli-lifted on 13 December to the northeast corner of the 12 December strike to commence the exploitation. Resistance initially encountered was overcome by

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON

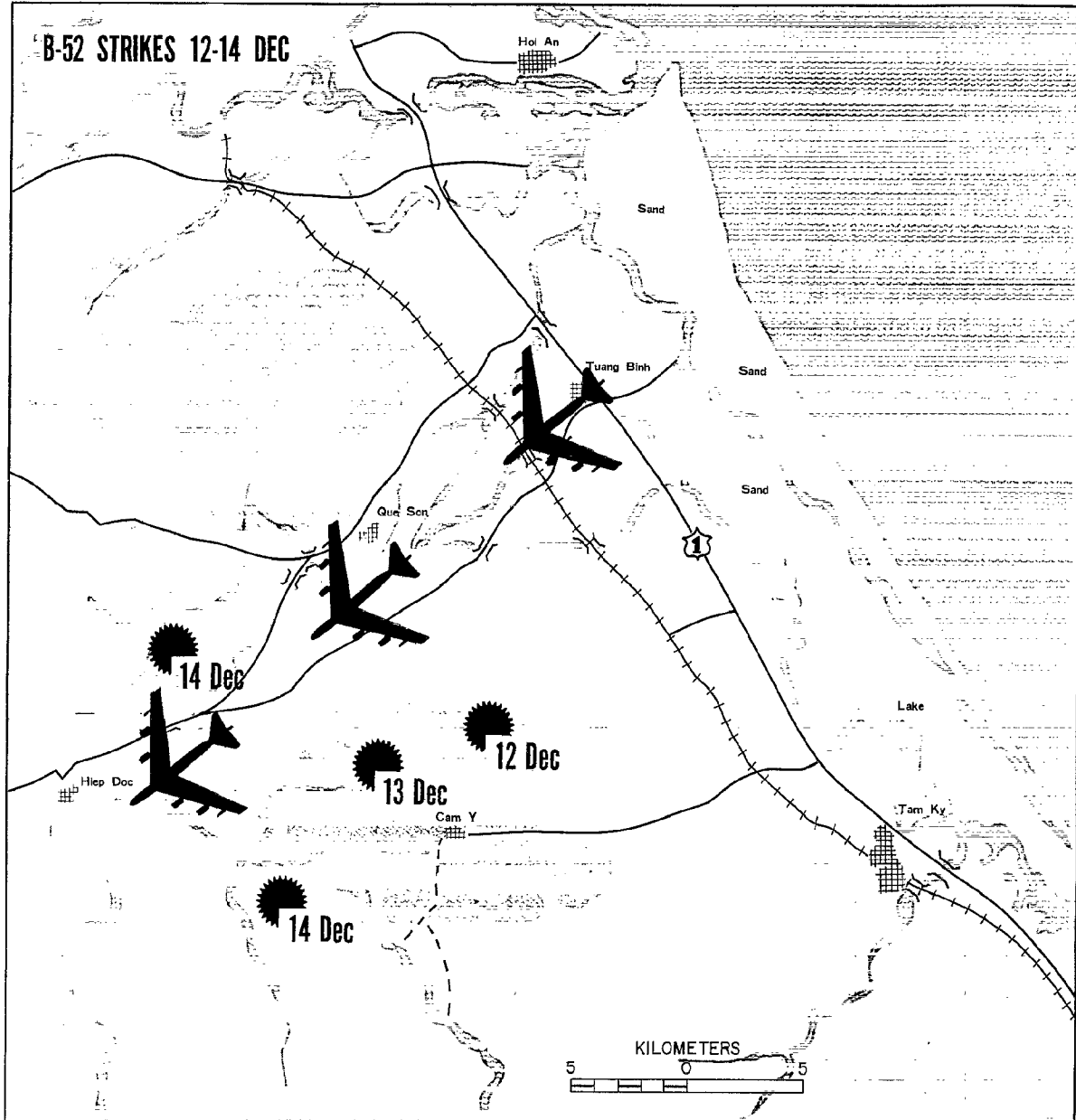


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Figure -9-

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OPERATION HARVEST MOON



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Figure -10-

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early evening, and control of the target area was established by occupying high ground surrounding the valley. During the next three days, the battalion made repeated sweeps through the valley against light and sporadic resistance. These sweeps uncovered many VC tunnels and caves containing large quantities of VC stores, equipment, and manufacturing installations (figures 11 and 12).

On 12 December, 2d Bn, 1st Marines swept southeast to block the southern exit from the valley struck by B-52's that morning and then, early on the 13th, the battalion was retracted to positions north of the 13 December B-52 strike. Following the raid, the battalion moved south over very difficult terrain and into the target area, which it searched through the 15th. Search results were negligible (figure 12).

While 3d Bn, 3d Marines and 2d Bn, 1st Marines were exploiting the B-52 strikes, 2d Bn, 7th Marines swept west and then south on a search and destroy operation, with little contact. On 14 December, the battalion was heli-lifted farther south, to positions on the north side of the Song Khang. Light resistance by scattered VC elements was eliminated quickly, in one instance by Marine air strikes on a number of the VC who tried to flee southward across the river (figure 12).

By 16 December, significant VC resistance had been overcome. 3d Bn, 3d Marines moved northeast and closed out of the operation on 18 December, without further action of any consequence.

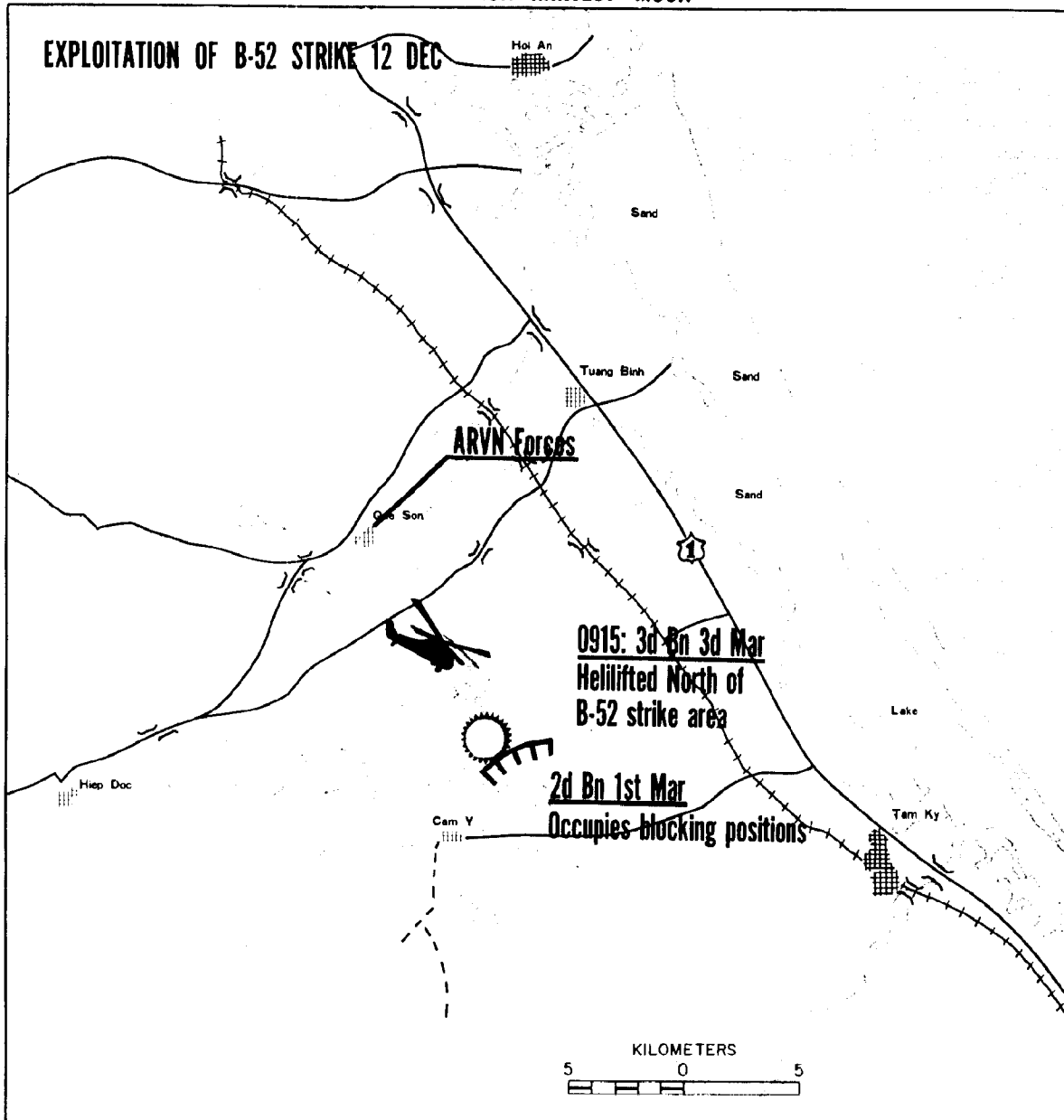
2d Bn, 1st Marines, also moving northeast on the morning

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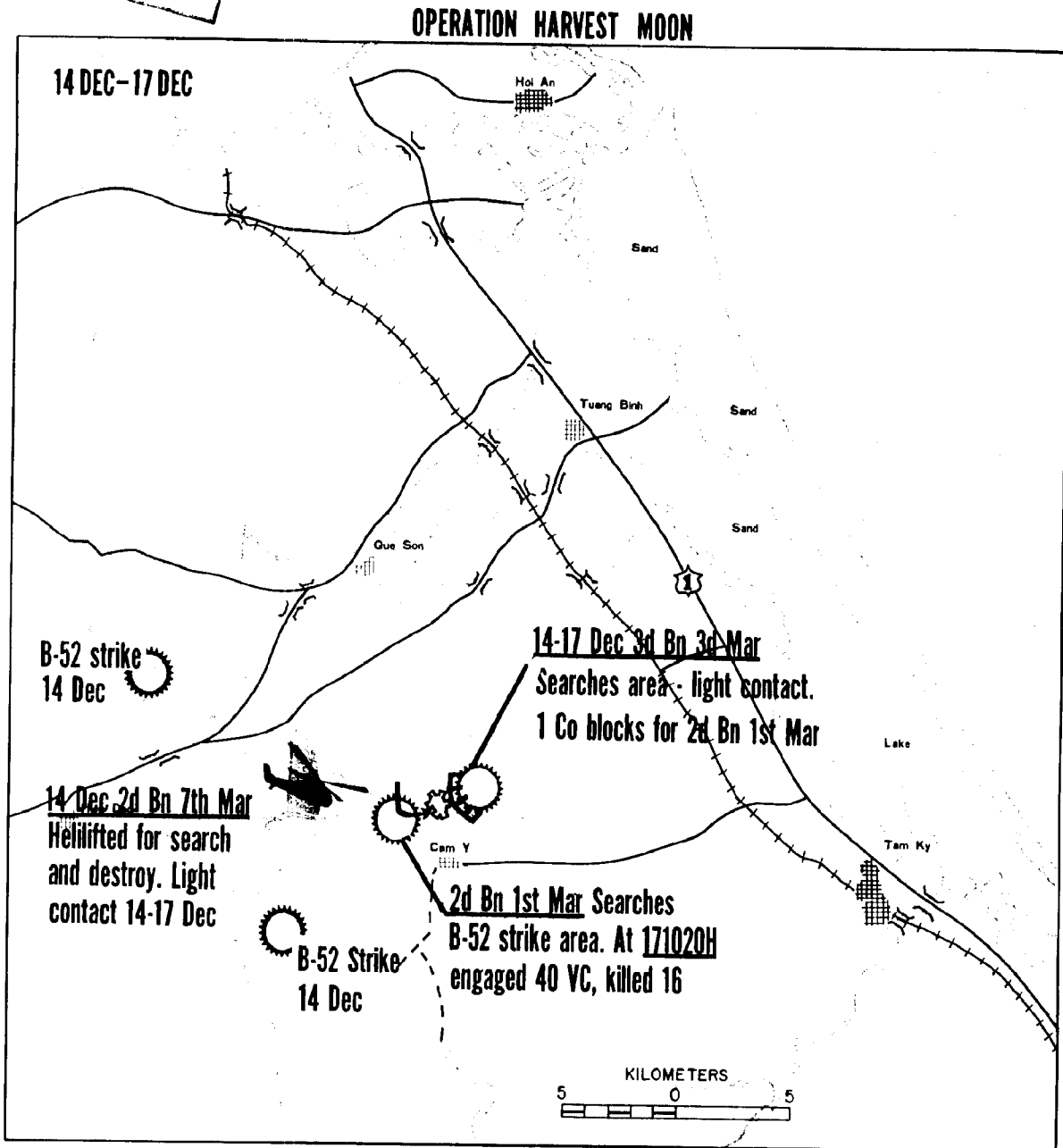
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OPERATION HARVEST MOON



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Figure -11-



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Figure -12 -

of 16 December but behind 3d Bn, 3d Marines, trapped approximately 40-50 VC between the lead elements of 2/1 and 3d Bn, 3d Marines (figure 12). 16 VC were killed before contact was broken. On 17-18 December, the battalion followed 3d Bn, 3d Marines in trace, closing out of Harvest Moon on 19 December (figure 14).

After its search and destroy operation along the north bank of the Song Khang, 2d Bn, 7th Marines turned eastward towards Tam Ky, sweeping the southern edge of the objective area. At 181330H, while the battalion was moving in route column, the lead element, Company G, came under heavy mortar and small arms fire from a VC force estimated at two companies. Company F, following behind, moved up to reinforce Company G, leaving a gap in the column.

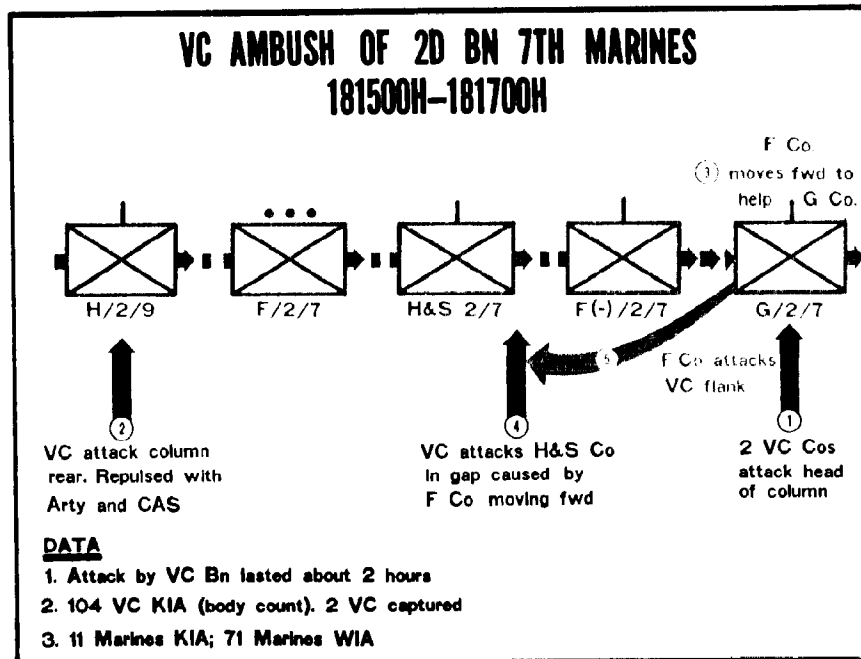


Figure -13-

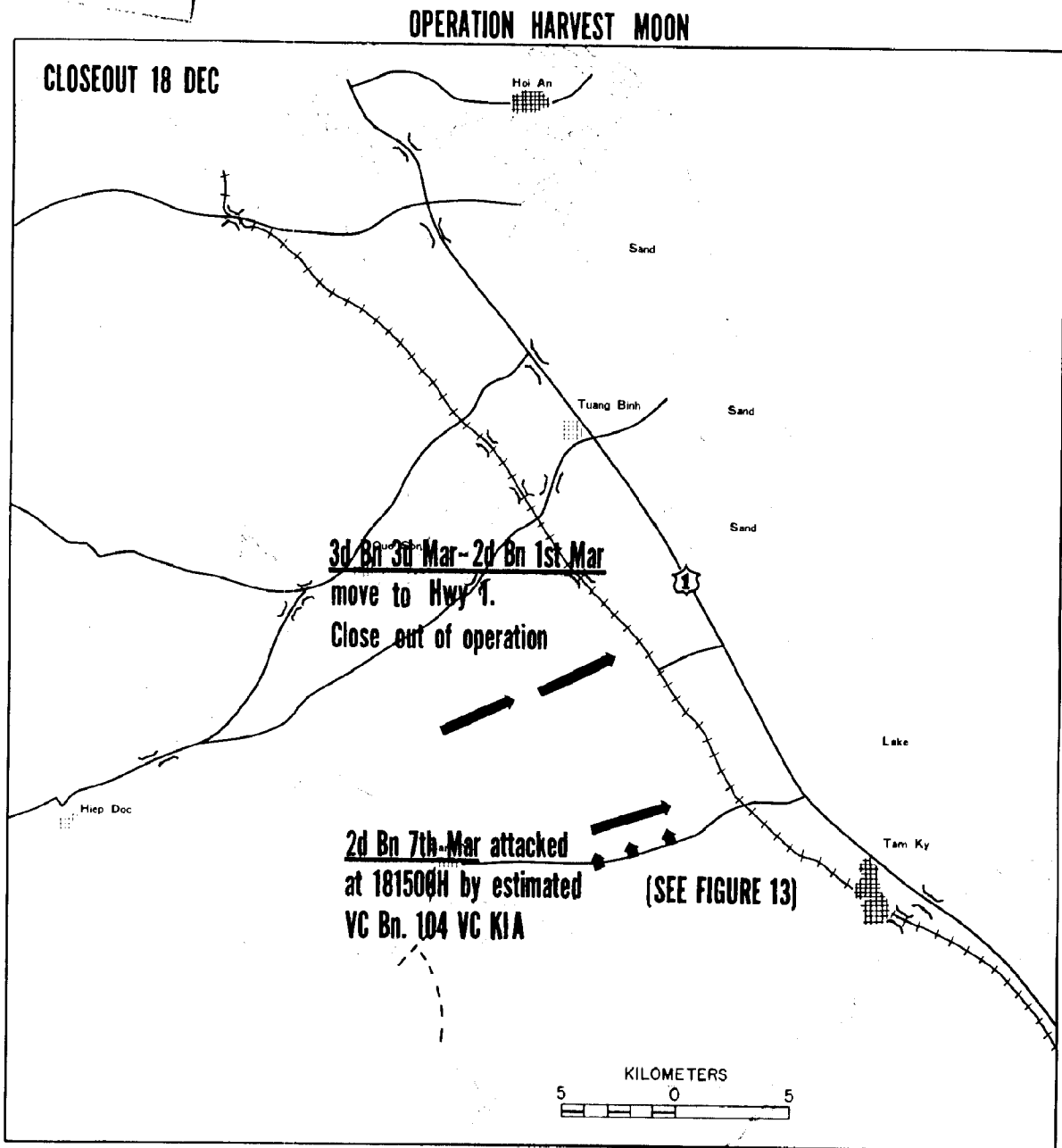


Figure -14-

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A second VC force assaulted the rear of the column, across open ground, while a third force attacked into the gap caused by Company F moving forward. Company F wheeled about and hit the VC flank, driving them back and inflicting heavy casualties. At the rear of the column, heavy organic fire, artillery, and armed helicopters stopped the VC as they got to within 50 meters of the Marine column. The VC unit engaged was of estimated battalion size. It suffered 104 confirmed killed. 2d Bn, 7th Marines resumed movement to the east on 19 December, closing out of the operation that night (figure 14).

Casualties (Entire Harvest Moon Operation)

VC: 314 KIA
93 Killed by air
33 VC captured (including 4 PAVN)
231 VC suspects apprehended
3 Ralliers (including 2 PAVN)

USMC: 45 KIA
26 Died of wounds
218 WIA (162 evacuated)

VC Supplies and Equipment Captured:

45 Tons of Rice
11 Tons of Tea
3 Tons of Salt
Large Quantities of Medical Supplies and Uniform Material
13 Crew served Weapons
95 Individual Weapons
10,000 Rds of Ammunition

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Significant points in the operation:

- Extensive use was made of helicopters for both tactical and logistic support. Within the objective area, the three reinforced battalions were sustained, over the entire 10 day period, entirely by helicopters.
- Artillery and logistic support units were able to move about freely, using motor transport, outside of the Danang and Chu Lai TAOR's.
- The validity of coordinated USMC/ARVN operations was again emphasized.



Dagger Thrust (5-6 Dec) was a BLT amphibious search and destroy operation conducted by the Special Landing Force (Battalion Landing Team 2/1 and Helicopter Squadron HMM-261) of the Seventh Fleet. The objective was Phu Thu, a coastal village, approximately forty miles north of Qui Nhon (figure 4). The assault was conducted by two rifle companies in LVT's, LCVP's, LCM's and LCU's. Simultaneously, a third company was landed by helicopter and immediately set up blocking positions to deny enemy access and egress to the objective area. The fourth rifle company was maintained in reserve and subsequently landed by helicopters on D-day (figure 15).

The landing achieved tactical surprise and, although only a small number of uniformed enemy troops were in the area, they were caught in the open.

Upon securing objective #1, and with the helilifted company

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in a blocking position, two companies conducted sweeps of the objective area. Only moderate resistance was offered by the remaining VC; however, many well-prepared trenches and defensive positions were encountered and destroyed by the Marines. Although the villagers in Phu Thu were friendly, numerous VC propaganda billboards were observed in other villages in the objective area.

VC losses were sixteen KIA, twelve WIA, and thirty eight VC suspects detained. USMC losses were three KIA and twelve WIA.


Danang Reconnaissance Area of Responsibility (RAOR). On 20 December, the Danang RAOR was extended generally 13000 meters to the west of the present TAOR boundary (figure 1). This latest expansion, concurred in by CG I Corps, added approximately 128 square miles to the area of III MAF activity.

Relief of Units. BLT 3/4, which had been in Viet Nam, at Phu Bai, since April 1965 was relieved by BLT 2/1 on 23 December. BLT 3/4 departed for Okinawa and is tentatively scheduled for redeployment to Viet Nam in March 1966.

Additional Units. VMF(AW) 312 arrived in Danang on 19 December. This squadron had been home based at Iwakuni, Japan since February, 1965.

Air Base Defense. Noteworthy efforts have been made during the month of December to continue the improvement

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of the air base defense. Dual purpose, 50 Cal AA machine guns have been installed in each enclave, and training of 1,742 personnel, to include familiarization firing, has been completed. Phu Bai has 13 Cal 50 AA weapons deployed within two kilometers of the airfield; Danang has 40 of these weapons deployed in immediate support of the air base; and Chu Lai has 46 Cal 50 AA weapons as local air base defense.

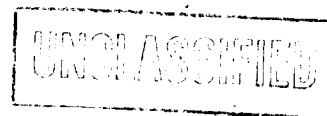
The Base Defense Command in Danang has completed construction of five new bunkers on the perimeter defenses of the air base. A successful effort is being made to train Popular Force squads to assist in perimeter defense and local patrols.

Throughout all areas there has been increased employment of seismic intrusion devices, fire team and squad patrols, and ambushes.

Aircraft revetments have been increased and more are planned in the near future.

Marine sentry dogs are now being employed to assist in perimeter defenses. A sentry dog platoon of one officer, 39 enlisted, and 28 dogs will complete training at Lackland AFB, Texas on 18 Feb 66 and will be deployed immediately to Vietnam.

Concentrated efforts are being made to procure and construct permanent wire fencing with adequate lighting around the air base facilities at Danang. This permanent fencing



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will be in addition to the tactical wire and anti-personnel mine fields installed around each air base and facility in the III MAF TAOR's.

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CIVIC ACTION AND PACIFICATION ACTIVITIES

The heavy patrol and ambush activity (see above) which is in progress opened further the way, during the month, for pursuit of the pacification program. It is beginning to show results. These results - modest to be sure - may be measured by six significant indicia: the level of Viet Cong activity, functioning of local officials, growth of population, development of Popular Forces, establishment of schools, and development of intelligence sources among villagers. These will be treated briefly in the following paragraphs.

There is substantially no Viet Cong activity in the Phu Bai TAOR and in the northwestern and western portion of the Danang TAOR, and there is practically none around Chu Lai. Viet Cong activity continues to the south and southwest of Danang in a concerted effort to disrupt the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign being pursued there and reveals an increasing awareness of the Viet Cong to the great threat posed by the campaign.

Local governments have been restored at Phu Bai and in the northwestern and western sectors at Danang, and are in the process of being established at Chu Lai. Restoration of village and hamlet governments in the remainder of the Danang TAOR has been accomplished in three villages and is in the process of being completed in four more. Efforts to establish effective governments in the remaining four villages will be included in Phase II of the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign.

Civilian population levels in the Phu Bai and Chu Lai TAORS have remained relatively constant while increasing approximately 50 percent in the northwestern and western sectors at Danang. In the former hard core area

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south of Danang, 328 refugee families have returned to their hamlets and indications are that this trend will continue.

Sixteen new schools have been established in the Danang and Chu Lai TAORS and additional schools are forthcoming.

Popular Forces in the Phu Bai TAOR are operating effectively. The number of Popular Forces in the Danang and Chu Lai enclaves has gradually increased since October 1965; however, Popular Forces, both in numbers and training, are still grossly inadequate for the tasks at hand. In recognition of the importance of local forces, III MAF, in December, assumed more responsibility for the training and operations of Popular Force units. An example of what can be done is the Combined Action Company at Phu Bai. This unit has been integrated with a small hard core of Marines and has been given the rudiments of training in local security and the military elements of counterinsurgency. The Marines have confidence in the PF and the PF show sincere affection for their Marine counterparts.

In the new program initiated by III MAF, the 3d MarDiv will assume operational control of additional PF platoons. Their mission will be to provide defense of their village areas and other local installations within the district.

One Marine T/O rifle squad, reinforced with one radio operator (AN/PRC-10), one hospitalman and one interpreter will be assigned to each designated PF platoon. The Marine squad will be integrated within the PF platoon. The squad leader will be advisor to the PF platoon commander. Training for the PF platoon will be conducted by the integrated Marine squad, with these subjects being

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taught: small arms, marksmanship, ambush technique, scouting and patrolling, squad formations, first aid, field sanitation, personal hygiene, squad tactics (offensive and defensive), hand and rifle grenades, assault fire, helo familiarization, compass and map reading, hand and arm signals, and rifle platoon tactics.

The number of instances of villagers reporting intelligence on Viet Cong activities is an indication of the acceptance of the program on the part of villagers and their willing cooperation with it. The number of instances of villagers passing information to the Marines and to local Government of Vietnam officials has increased. This fact is encouraging for it represents growing confidence of the people in their own government - one of the principal goals of the pacification program.

In assessing pacification progress, consideration must also be given to two significant developments in I Corps Tactical Zone: institution of the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign in Hoa Vang District of Quang Nam Province, and developments in the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council.

Coordinated Pacification Operation in Quang Nam Province: Progress in the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign - an intensive, two phased joint pacification program centering on nine villages south of the Cau Do River in Hoa Vang District - was evident in most of the five villages comprising Phase I of the program as visible changes in the attitude of villagers were reported. The most evident signs of progress were observed in Hoa Thai Village, where III MAF Forces are providing local security. The least progress was reported in the Hoa Thai Village hamlets of Cam Ne and Yen Ne. The lack of progress in these two hamlets has been attributed to

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the close family ties that exist between villagers and Viet Cong and because the Marines moved on before pacification was completed. For example, on 21 December, elements of the 59th Regional Force Battalion, which had relieved III MAF Forces in the initial phase of the campaign, were attacked by a force of fifty to sixty Viet Cong. It appears that the attacking force had been sheltered in Cam Ne and Yen Ne for approximately two days prior to the attack. Subsequently, all Pacification Forces were withdrawn and a reinforced rifle company from III MAF commenced a methodical sweep of the area. It is anticipated that selected Pacification Forces will be reassigned to the area early in January (figure 16).

Analysis of the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign for the month of December reveals that three new schools were opened, farm tools and fertilizer were distributed, and a Pacification News Bulletin was published. However, personnel shortages, changes in leadership and the monsoon rains limited the advances made during the month. Pacification Forces committed to the campaign include the 59th Regional Force Battalion, three Peoples Action Teams, four Popular Force Platoons, the Vietnamese Civilian Pacification Cadre, one company from the 39th Ranger Battalion (ARVN) and two companies from the 51st ARVN Regiment (the latter two were added subsequent to 26 December). However, the Regional Force Companies operated at approximately fifty percent of authorized strength, a ten percent reduction since the campaign began. In addition, the Pacification Cadre experienced a fifteen percent turn-over in personnel combined with a ten percent reduction in force. The Peoples Action Teams have been reduced from five to three in the past two months. This instability was further compounded by two command changes during December. Early in the month, the Hoa Vang District Chief succeeded the former Pacification Chief on an additional duty basis. While

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NGU HANH SON PACIFICATION CAMPAIGN IN HOA YANG DISTRICT

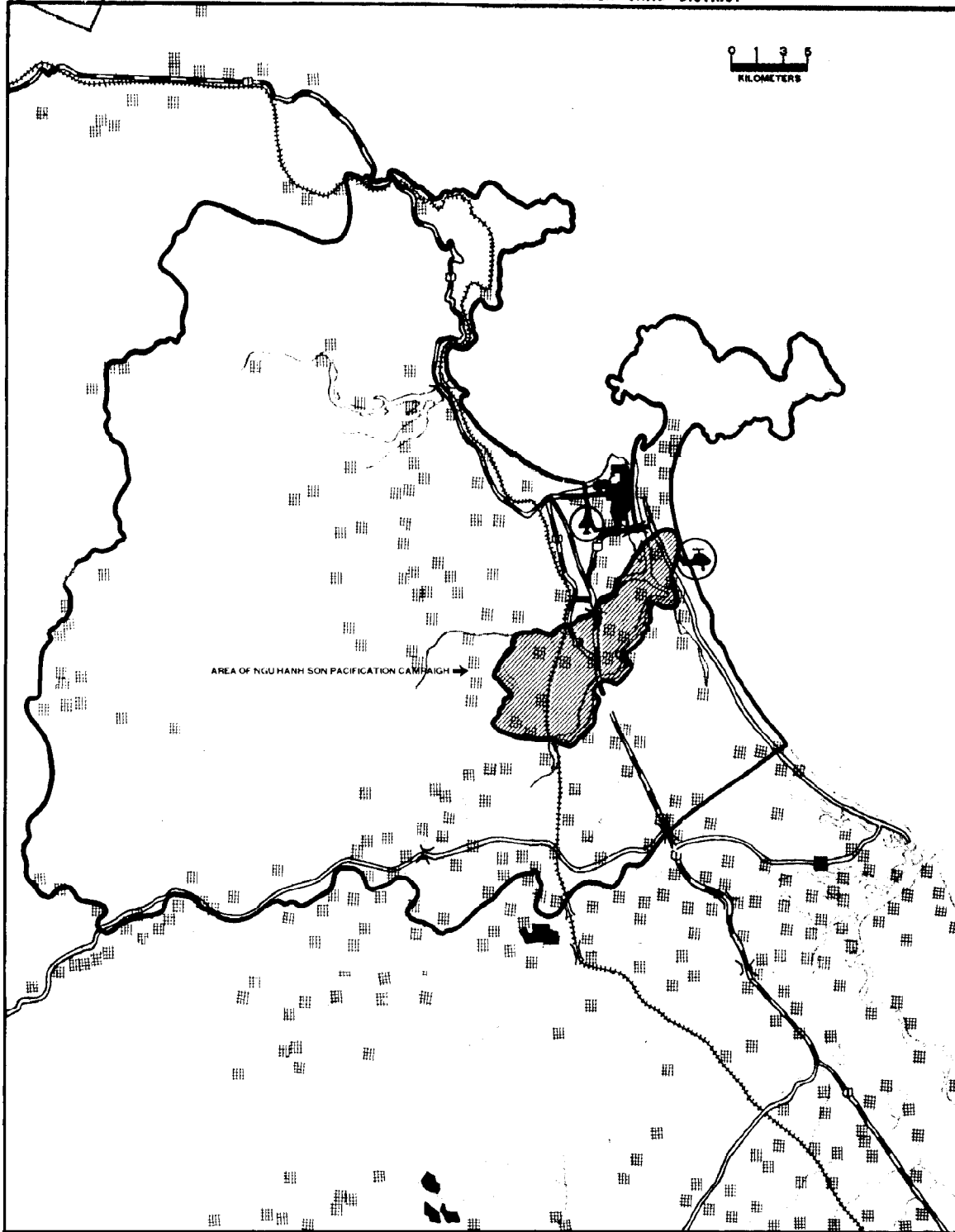


Figure -16-

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extremely competent, his regular duties left little time to actively supervise the campaign. On 26 December, the Commanding Officer of the 51st ARVN Regiment was assigned as the Pacification Chief, again on an additional duty basis. However, a member of the I Corps (ARVN) Staff was also assigned as the Deputy Pacification Chief and will devote his full efforts to the campaign.

Overall progress since the commencement of the campaign can be measured against the COMUSMACV Six Point Criteria for classifying an area as secure. The Viet Cong infrastructure has been destroyed, the census has been completed, villagers have been organized for functional tasks, and hamlet and village governmental committees have been organized. Only the recruiting and training of adequate Popular Forces, and the development of defensive plans and perimeter defenses remain to be accomplished. Pacification leaders predict that Phase I will be completed by 1 March, at which time the effort will shift to the remaining four villages.

I Corps Joint Coordinating Council For Civic Action:

The month of December found the Joint Coordinating Council expanding its interests and membership, and producing concrete evidence of its effectiveness.

On the first of December, the attention of the Council was directed to the difficulties that were being experienced by the Pacification Forces in producing a news bulletin for distribution in the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Campaign in Hoa Vang District. The value of such a publication was recognized and the Psychological Warfare Committee was assigned the project. As a result, the combined efforts of the Joint U. S. Public Affairs Office, III Marine Amphibious Force and the Vietnamese Information Service were directed to providing a suitable news

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bulletin. On 11 December, 400 copies of the first edition of the bulletin were distributed. Circulation of subsequent semi-weekly editions has increased to approximately 2000.

Continuing a program of organizational changes that was initiated in November and is designed to ensure the responsiveness of the Joint Coordinating Council to the needs of all facets of the Rural Construction Program, three additional committees, with joint U. S., Government of Vietnam and I Corps (ARVN) membership, were added to the Council. A Port of Danang Committee was organized to exercise cognizance over the development of the Port, in particular, the efficient joint use of port facilities by all using parties. The Danang Community Relations Committee was formed to provide a means of coordinating public safety efforts adjacent to military installations and to resolve minor civil/military problems arising in the city. A special committee was activated to review procedures for distributing civic action type commodities received from non-governmental sources. The committee will ensure equitable distribution of supplies to all religious/ethnic groups throughout I Corps Tactical Zone.

Additional programs receiving the attention of the Joint Coordinating Council include the 1966 Vietnamese Pacification Budget, availability of Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) supplies, and the Military Provincial Hospital Assistance Program. The 1966 Vietnamese Pacification Budget for I Corps Tactical Zone was reviewed by the Council during December. The Budget and accompanying Pacification Plan were accepted and will receive the active support of council members. It is anticipated that this will be one of the most significant council functions in 1966. One of the more pressing problems in the public health field in I Corps Tactical

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Zone involves the delivery of MEDCAP supplies from Saigon to Danang. The Public Health Committee will devote maximum attention to this problem in coming weeks. In addition, the Public Health Committee is monitoring the progress of the Military Provincial Hospital Assistance Program (MILPHAP). MILPHAP is a program developed by the U. S. Operations Mission and COMUSMACV to provide expanded health and medical services for the civilian populace. At the present time, two MILPHAP Teams are located in I Corps Tactical Zone - one in each Provincial Hospital in Quang Tri and Quang Ngai Provinces. Primarily, the Council is concerned with the flow of medical supplies and equipment required to improve the physical plant in provincial hospitals. The Joint Coordinating Council will provide maximum support to ensure the success of MILPHAP.

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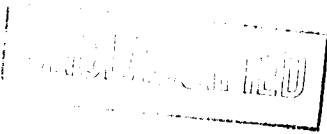
PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE OPERATIONS

CG I Corps early recognized the need for a central agency to pull together all Government of Vietnam and U. S. psy-war programs and to coordinate them with the extensive Government of Vietnam rural construction program. With the aid of the 1st Psy-Ops Field Detachment of the U. S. Army, CG, I Corps established a Civil Affairs/ Psy-Warfare Center for I Corps Tactical Zone and requested U. S. civilian and military agencies to work through and support the center. All agencies complied and the results were most gratifying. The center published a catalogue of standardized leaflets which were made readily available to ARVN and USMC units. Standard tape recordings, magazines and film strips were prepared and provided to ARVN and USMC units. The center sponsored the I Corps Mixed Psy-Ops Committee which was chaired by the I Corps Deputy Chief of Staff for Psy-War and Socialization. Officers responsible for civic action and psy-war from all U. S. and Vietnamese organizations, both civilian and military, are represented on the committee.

There has been a noticeable increase in psychological warfare efforts within I Corps tactical zone during the past two months. The distribution of psy-war leaflets alone has increased from approximately 400,000 during November to over 1,200,000 during the month of December. Approximately 505,000 of the December leaflets were distributed during Operation Harvest Moon, - 12-21 December.

Distribution of leaflets alone does not tell the story. Patrols operating from all three enclaves have engaged in face-to-face persuasion. Psy-War Audio/Visual Teams have accompanied patrols, to reach the semi-literate peasants by lectures, tape recordings, and movies. Six times each week an Audio/Visual Team visits the villages

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near Danang. Hospital corpsmen also have accompanied psy-war teams to provide medical aid as concrete evidence of our good intentions.

Psy-war personnel have been alerted to take advantage of any opportunity to further the objectives of the psy-war program. As an example, a small Vietnamese boy reported into sick bay with a gunshot wound in his leg, allegedly inflicted by VC. After treating the boy, he was returned to his village with a psy-war team, accompanied by a corpsman. The boy related to the villagers how the VC had shot him and how well the GVN and U.S. forces had treated him.

III MAF conducted a psy-war seminar, 17-18 November, for all III MAF psy-war officers. ARVN and U.S.A. psy-war representatives from I Corps assisted. Mutual coordination has begun to tie together the psy-war efforts throughout ICTZ.

As psy-war activities expanded in ICTZ, additional assistance in the way of special equipment was provided from Saigon. A total of four U-10 single engine aircraft have been assigned to I Corps for psy-war and are now on station at Danang. The U-10 has an 800 watt amplifier-speaker system with an integral, battery powered tape recorder.

One weakness in the psy-war facilities in I Corps has been the lack of an adequate number of radio stations with enough power to reach the most remote villages. A 5 KW station will be opened in Danang, but more are needed. Currently there are only 3 radio stations in I Corps area: Hue, Hoi An, and Quang Ngai. None of these stations can reach into the areas now under pacification. An expansion of these facilities would be useful in appealing to the close cultural ties between the people in the pacification areas and the government.

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In early December, the I Corps Psy-War Mixed Committee convened to study current VC propaganda activities. The objective of the meeting was to arrive at appropriate psy-war themes and it was determined that the major effort should be directed toward VC supply problems and their manpower support base.

MACV mission council and GVN have approved a large scale, nationwide psychological campaign to be conducted during January. The campaign will:

- Concentrate on VC psychological disadvantages i. e., his hard life, lack of food, and shortage of medical supplies.
- Employ more leaflet drops, one a national safe conduct pass and the other telling the VC to return to their homes and to North Vietnam.

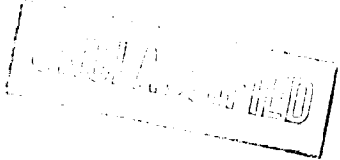
Intensified psy-war operations are being planned to complement the tactical situation and scheduled operations in ICTZ.

Timely interrogations of captured VC, in addition to reports from front line units, indicated that psychological warfare could be profitable if applied during Operation Harvest Moon. A concentrated program was initiated. Extensive leaflet drops and broadcasts were planned throughout the area. A VC rallier made a most effective tape that was used extensively.

Daily Activities (Harvest Moon)

12 December - 180,000 leaflets were dropped over three selected areas. Leaflets were two letters from captured VC appealing to their fellow VC to surrender.

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13 December - Aerial broadcasts were made of tapes recorded by captured VC appealing to comrades to surrender. A speech by the District Chief of Thang Binh was also used over three areas.

14 December - 75,000 surrender appeals and safe conduct passes were dropped over two areas.

15 December - A VC captive's letter to comrades and a speech by a rallier were broadcast over four areas.

16 December - Aerial broadcasts were made of speeches by a VC prisoner, rallier, and the VN National Anthem was played over four areas.

17-18-19 December - Marginal weather prevented execution of extensive plans made for these days.

20 December - 100,000 leaflets were dropped. Loudspeaker broadcasts of a speech by a VC captive told of the good treatment received at hands of U. S. and ARVN personnel. An appeal was made to the VC to stop fighting their Vietnamese brothers.

21 December - Extensive leaflet drops were conducted plus wide dissemination of taped surrender appeal.

I Corps Joint Psy-war center personnel have completed drafting a statement of over-all objectives of the psy-ops program in ICTZ:

Objective 1: Create, build and maintain confidence in GVN.

Objective 2: Establish climate of national unity behind war effort.

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Objective 3: Expose true nature of VietCong objective.

Objective 4: Induce disaffection among VC and their supporters.

Objective 5: Insure that population is aware that allied forces are in RVN at request of GVN and that they will depart when war is won.

Present requisitions for psy-war leaflets to be delivered to III MAF units for distribution during the period 15Jan - 15Mar66, total 1,195,000 leaflets.

III MAF Psy-War Officer is presently establishing a reporting system for psy-ops so that the type of operation, date, area and results can be recorded for future reference.

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Improvements in the logistic support of III MAF forces were realized during December; however, port and transportation deficiencies and inadequate storage facilities continued to be critical factors. Adverse weather conditions hampered construction work and a large portion of the work force was diverted to maintenance of existing facilities, the conduct of emergency repairs, or expedient construction measures in order to preserve existing stocks. The supply support improved both through the normal "pull" system and the "push" of selected items. The supply pipeline continued to expand in response to the increased demands and the accelerated tempo of operations, and steps were taken to increase stock levels to provide assets for units which have been approved for deployment during the first quarter of calendar year 1966.

Port Facilities: The most critical factor in the logistic support of III MAF at the end of 1965 was the lack of adequate port facilities at Danang. The average daily throughput at Danang during December was 2505 M/T. This amount is not in keeping with the present requirements and the situation promises to become more critical as additional deployments during January-March, 1966 are executed. Several projects to alleviate the unloading bottleneck at Danang are in progress, including LST/LCU unloading ramps and facilities near the west end of the Tourane River bridge, with an LST pier and a quay wall at the same location. A deep draft pier is scheduled for completion in late summer 1966. The LST/LCU ramps are currently 22 percent complete, with the first of two LST ramps ready for use by LCU's at such time as dredging now in progress clears the approaches to the facility. The entire LST/LCU ramp project is scheduled

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for completion in April 1966; however, portions of the facility will be in use prior to that time. Based on projected capabilities versus requirements, adequate facilities to handle the required cargo at Danang will not be available until August, 1966.

Supply: Stock levels of all classes of supply remained essentially as previously reported.

Class II - The first CRITIPAC shipments (boxes of fast moving routinely required supplies) received by the using units in III MAF direct from the MCSC, Barstow, resulted in 51 combat essential items being removed from deadline. A second CRITIPAC shipment was received during the period 18 - 20 December. Based upon the material contained in the first two CRITIPACS, CG, III MAF has submitted recommended modifications to the listing of items to be included in subsequent packs. These new listings have been forwarded to Marine Corps Supply Center, Barstow and the third CRITIPAC shipments, in January, will be modified accordingly. To provide increased stock availability in WESTPAC for supporting the additional forces to be deployed during January-March 1966, requisitions have been submitted by Headquarters, FMFPAC for shipment of supplies to Chu Lai and the 3rd FSR on Okinawa. This action will result in increased stock levels in RVN - commensurate with the increase of forces - and an increased pipeline to the logistic base on Okinawa to provide for the increased support requirements.

Class III and IIIA - Bulk POL deliveries continued by ship-to-shore line at both Chu Lai and Danang; however, the bottom-laid line at Chu Lai deteriorated and required replacement of the bottom-laid system. The new bottom-laid system was installed and used for the transfer of POL

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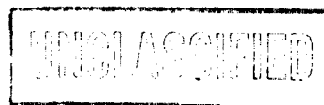
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prior to the end of the period.

Class IV - Demands for field fortification materials continued to be high, primarily for materials to construct defensive obstacles at key installations. All wire, stakes and other fortifications material were issued as they were received. Continued high usage of these items has precluded the stockpiling of any assets.

Class V and VA - Continued shortages of some critical high usage items of aviation ordnance resulted in use of substitute items. Additional high drag bombs are being banded at the Naval Magazine, Subic Bay to be used as substitutes for the low drag bombs which are a preferred ammunition item in III MAF. To provide support for increased ground forces in RVN, action has been initiated to increase the stock levels in RVN and at the Naval Ordnance Facility, Sasebo, Japan. A total of 45 days of ammunition is maintained on hand in RVN at all times, and an additional 30 days is held in Navy/Marine Corps storage facilities in WESTPAC for replenishment.

Maintenance: The total percentage of deadlined equipment decreased from 15 percent to 12 percent during December. This decrease is attributable to improved maintenance procedures and, to some extent, improved availability of repair parts. A total of 875 items of equipment were evacuated from RVN to the 3rd FSR on Okinawa for repair or other disposition. Also, a program was initiated to replace unserviceable motor transport vehicles, and on 6 December, seventy-five M-422, Mighty Mites, and thirty six M-36 trucks were shipped from Barstow to

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III MAF. Additional vehicle replacements have been approved and further shipments will be made. Contact instruction teams for communication-electronics and engineer equipment completed a cycle of instruction in III MAF. Contact instruction teams in all technical areas are to be continued in January within the III MAF.

Engineer Operations: The heavy northeast monsoon rains continued to hamper construction projects during December. A major engineering effort was devoted to maintenance of the roads which had deteriorated considerably as a result of the rain and heavy traffic. Sand-cement stabilization of the southern half of the Chu Lai Expeditionary Airfield was completed, and replacement of the M9M1 and M9M2 aluminum matting on the taxiways with the newer and more suitable AM-2 matting continued during the month. Further construction at Chu Lai included 32,000 square feet of maintenance facilities and continued work on the erection of three 10,000 barrel steel POL tanks. Overall, the cantonment construction in III MAF increased by 9 percent -- to a total of 47 percent of the total required construction. Cantonment construction continues under the self-help program whereby the engineer units prefabricate the material and the using units complete the actual construction. The 400 bed hospital at Marble Mountain reached 31 percent completion, and one 120 bed increment, together with an operating room, laboratory, receiving ward, and galley were completed for use.

Movement and Resupply: During December, one BLT rotation was completed. BLT 2/1, which landed from the SLF to participate in Operation HARVEST MOON, remained in RVN and replaced BLT 3/4 at Phu Bai. BLT

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3/4 then embarked on the SLF shipping for movement to Okinawa, debarking on 30 December. BLT 2/3 was then embarked at Okinawa with the SLF. BLT 2/3 had rotated from RVN to Okinawa during late November 1965, and had received priority attention for repair and replacement of equipment during the period spent on Okinawa.

MSTS controlled shipping remains the primary means of resupply for III MAF; however, utilization of space on amphibious shipping between Okinawa and RVN has become an increasingly important factor in effecting timely resupply. During December, eight amphibious ships were utilized, in whole or in part, to transport III MAF cargo. Since these ships have organic load/unload capability, their use has significantly enhanced efforts to increase the throughput capability of the III MAF ports. During December the average daily unload of cargo at Danang was 2505 M/T. On 30 November there were seventeen ships at Danang; an additional thirteen arrived during the month. Eighteen ships completed their unloading and twelve were in port on 31 December. The average backlog during December was 34,844 M/T of cargo. The backlogged cargo on 31 December totalled 26,650 M/T. Also, it is significant that 15 ships are being held in ports outside RVN with cargo for Danang. KC-130 aircraft of the Okinawa based VMGR-152 lifted 3387 passengers and 1,257,728 pounds of cargo into or out of RVN during the month.

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STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

PERIOD VIII - 1 December - 31 December

1. PHU BAI - On 23 December, 2d Bn, 1st Marines relieved 3d Bn, 4th Marines in the Phu Bai TAOR. 3d Bn, 4th Marines departed for Okinawa.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>
Within 25 Miles			Within 25 Miles		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	2	1	Battalions	1	1
Companies	3	3	Companies	2	5
Total			Total		
strength	1,065	765	strength	470	442
Within 25 to 50 Miles			Within 25 to 50 Miles		
Sub Region Hq	1	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Regt Hq	0	0	Battalions	7	7
Battalions	3	4	Companies	4	5
Companies	12	7	Total		
Total			strength	2,285	3,335
strength	2,375	2,210			
Grand Total			Grand Total		
to 50 Miles	3,440	2,975	to 50 Miles	2,755	3,777

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2. DANANG - On 19 December, VMF (AW) - 312 arrived at Danang Air Base from Iwakuni and was placed under OPCON of MAG-11. On 20 December, the Danang reconnaissance zone was extended westward approximately 13,000 meters. The extension increased the zone by about 128 square miles and included areas which previously were under VC influence.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>
Within 25 Miles			Within 25 Miles		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	3	2	Battalions	4	5
Companies	8	9	Companies	3	6
Total			Total		
strength	1,800	1,770	strength	1,365	2,655
Within 25 to 50 Miles			Within 25 to 50 Miles		
Regt Hq	1	1	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	5	6	Battalions	2	2
Companies	10	10	Companies	2	3
Total			Total		
strength	2,890	3,110	strength	970	642
Grand Total			Grand Total		
to 50 Miles	4,690	4,880	to 50 Miles	2,335	3,297

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3. CHU LAI - There was no change in major USMC/USN forces or the tactical area of responsibility.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Nov</u>
Within 25 Miles			Within 25 Miles		
MR V Hq	0	1	Regt Hq	1	1
Regt Hq	0	0	Battalions	2	3
Battalions	4	5	Companies	0	1
Companies	10	9	Total		
Total			strength	700	1,320
strength	2,100	3,300			
Within 25 to			Within 25 to		
50 Miles			50 Miles		
MR V Hq	1	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Regt Hq	3	1	Battalions	3	4
Battalions	14	4	Companies	0	1
Companies	13	16	Total		
Total			strength	1,300	1,550
strength	8,550	6,440			
Grand Total			Grand Total		
to 50 Miles	10,650	9,740	to 50 Miles	2,000	2,870

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4. <u>TOTAL III MAF AREA</u>	<u>December</u>	<u>November</u>
Square Miles	804	676
Inhabitants	436,397	413,117
Villages	93	87
Hamlets	400	359

5. ENEMY CASUALTIES

<u>This Period</u>		<u>Total to 31 Dec</u>
678	KIA	2,514
58	Captured	502
509	VC Suspects	2,989
21	WIA	324
149	Weapons Captured	539

6. CIVIC ACTION

<u>December</u>	<u>November</u>		<u>Total to 31 Dec</u>
60,814	42,304	Persons Given Medical Treatment	194,933
13	17	Persons Given Medical Training	76
26	16	Construction Projects	143
13,759	14,063	Pounds of Food Distributed	145,675
5,677	3,899	Pounds of Soap Distributed	46,623
13,299	4,330	Pounds of Clothing Distributed	134,066

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6. CIVIC ACTION (Cont)

<u>December</u>	<u>November</u>		<u>Total to 31 Dec</u>
91	309	Critically Ill	4,222
		Civilians Evacu- acted	
42	17	English Language	82
		Classes in Progress	
\$ 1,444	\$ 570	Cash Donations	\$3,494

7. III MAF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

<u>December</u>	<u>November</u>		<u>Total to 31 Dec</u>
4,218	3,488	Patrols	13,671
2,988	2,576	Ambushes	7,678
222	175	Sniper Posts	397
1	3	Regimental Opns	11
3	1	Battalion Opns	39
12 *	75	Company Opns	392
2,285 (470	2,551	Offensive Air	16,294
out of country)		Sorties	
23,179	23,629	Helo Trans- port sorties	144,467

*Lower December figure results from refinement in reporting system which now permits separation of company, platoon and squad sized operations. Figure above consists only of company-sized operations. November figure reflects operations by units of all sizes.

8. III MAF STRENGTH BY ENCLAVE - 31 DECEMBER

Danang	27,782
Chu Lai	14,486
Hue Phu Bai	1,928
Total	44,196

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9. LOGISTICS

a. Supply Levels at End of Period:

	DANANG	CHU LAI	PHU BAI
Class I: (1000 of rations/days of supply)			
MCI (Rations)	894/35	226/14	89/45
B Rations	391/15	221/14	70/35
A Rations	57/2	27/2	3/2
Class II & IIIA (BULK): (1000 gallons/days of supply)			
JP-4	254/4	472/9	8/40
AVGAS	77/13	102/14	54/24
MOGAS	149/11	152/11	32/23
DIESEL	73/11	84/8	17/25
Class V and VA:			
Ground Ammo (days of supply)	45	45	45
250 lb bombs (number of bombs)	3651	5065	-

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500 lb bombs (number of bombs)	681	4227	-
Launcher w/19 2.75 in. Rockets	697	1013	-
Launcher w/4 5.0 in. Rockets	202	198	-

b. Resupply Status:

(1) Surface Shipping Status (Danang):

Cargo unloaded

(December)	-	77,661 M/T
Avg. daily cargo dis- charge rate	-	2,505 M/T
Ships in port on 30 Nov	-	17
Ships arriving during Decem- ber	-	13
Ships unloaded (December)	-	18
Ships in Port (31 Dec)	-	12
Cargo backlog(30 Nov)	-	55,165 M/T
Cargo backlog (31 Dec)	-	26,650 M/T
Avg. Cargo backlog (Decem- ber)	-	34,844 M/T

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(2) Air Shipping Status:

Cargo lifted to RVN (Dec) - 1,257,728 lbs.

Cargo offered and awaiting
lift Okinawa - 124 S/T

c. RED BALL SUMMARY (Dec):

Items at beginning of period - 377

Items added - 95

Items removed - 242

Items remaining at end of
period - 230

d. Maintenance (December)

Items evacuated from RVN - 875

Items repaired at 3rd FSR - 1,003

Items returned to CONUS from
3rd FSR - 101

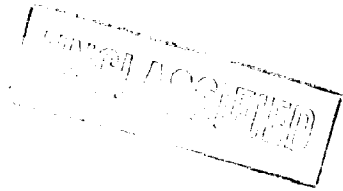
Items disposed of on Okinawa - 1,268

e. Construction Projects:

Roads rehabilitated or constructed - Mainte-
nance only.

Bridges constructed - 1

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Wells drilled - 3 in progress

Covered storage constructed - 60,000 sq. ft. in progress

Maintenance facilities constructed - 32,000 sq. ft.

Ammo storage facilities constructed - No change

POL storage facilities - 3 Tanks, 10,000 bbls each in progress

Status of:

400 bed hospital (Marble- 31% complete Mt)

Cantonments - 47% complete

Water supply distribution systems - 50% complete

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CONCLUSIONS

The operations of III MAF during December added further substance to the conclusions--evident in months past--that the real war is among the people; that progress in eliminating the VC from the fabric of the people is direct progress toward winning the war; that victories over VC outside the populated areas, while meaningful, are peripheral to final victory; that victories which are accompanied by establishment of firm GVN/U. S. influence are far more significant than those which are followed by departure of our forces and reversion of the region to VC domination.

III MAF made slow progress in December, but progress that is both discernible and enduring. Its operations portray a sound design for victory; albeit one that will embody the expenditure of much time and patience.

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