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c/ Lt
Miller

RECORDS-RE

20 November 1967

EVALUATION REPORT

SECURITY FOR PACIFICATION IN QUANG DA SPECIAL ZONE

1. (U) PURPOSE: To evaluate the security for pacification in Quang Da Special Zone; the performance of the 51st ARVN Regiment in support of revolutionary development; and, the success of the Hung Quang I (Peace Hamlet) Operation.

2. (C) BACKGROUND:

a. This is one of a series of evaluations designed to assess support provided by ARVN to the pacification program in each Division Tactical Area (DTA) and Special Zone (SZ) throughout the country. Quang Da Special Zone (CDSZ) includes Quang Nam Province and the autonomous city of Danang. The QDSZ Commander reports directly to the I Corps Commander and has a function similar to that of a DTA Commander. The major ARVN tactical unit in QDSZ is the 51st ARVN Regiment. Over one million inhabitants reside in the zone; 851,000 in Quang Nam Province and 244,000 in the city of Danang. Pacification in the zone is particularly important because of the strategic value of Danang City and the presence of Free World and ARVN logistical installations. This study concentrates on Quang Nam Province.

b. Quang Nam, the most populated province in I Corps, is abundant in natural resources. Sea foods, forest products, mines and handicrafts help make up for a deficit in rice. The An Hoa industrial area in Duc Duc District, because of its potential for the production of coal and electricity, is important to the entire I Corps area. The people of Quang Nam are more politically sophisticated than most Vietnamese. According to a study prepared on 23 July 1967 by Mr. Albert A. Francis, the senior province representative, the VNQDD is the strongest political party in Quang Nam. The people of Quang Nam have long been propagandized by the VC, and the GVN is experiencing difficulty in approaching the people and gaining their allegiance.

c. The 1967 RD program in Quang Nam includes 28 Ap Doi Moi (population 690,349) and 10 Ap Cung Co (population 12,856). Most of these hamlets are located within the national priority area which surrounds Danang. Some 29 RD Groups currently are developing these hamlets. Providing security for these teams in a direct support role are 19 PF platoons; seven RF companies, five of which are organic to the 59th RF Battalion; and the four ARVN battalions of the 51st Regiment. The RD program is

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GROUP 4
DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

104
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behind schedule in the province as only eleven hamlets have been completed thus far this year. The primary reasons for being behind schedule are lack of security, poor administration, political turbulence and poor leadership, and excessive absenteeism among RD Groups.

d. A major portion of the 1967 pacification program in Quang Nam is devoted to Operation Hung Quang I conducted by the 51st ARVN Regiment, adjacent to Route 1, south of Danang. The purposes of this operation are to provide security to the hamlets immediately adjacent to Route 1, to clear controlled fire areas on the periphery of the RD area in order to block a major VC access route to the sea, to protect Route 1, and to resettle the inhabitants of these controlled fire areas into six "Peace Hamlets". The operation began in late 1966 with the establishment of the 59th RF Battalion and one battalion of the 51st Regiment as the immediate security forces for eleven RD hamlets located astride Route 1 south of Danang. At the same time, on the periphery of this RD area, the remaining battalions of the 51st Regiment began search and destroy operations. Phase 2 of the operation began in mid-February with the building of the Peace Hamlets and the resettlement of refugees. Through July, the program concentrated on the area to the west of Route 1. Since July, at least one battalion of the regiment has been operating in the area to the east of Route 1.

3. (C) DISCUSSION:

a. Enemy Situation: (Inclosure 1)

(1) Thirty-two percent of Quang Nam's population is under VC control and 46% live in contested areas. Generally, the VC/NVA control the western foothills and mountainous areas of the province and seem to have relatively free access to the coastal plain. Enemy strength in Quang Nam is about 13,300. Of this number, approximately 3,300 are combat troops, 7,790 are irregulars, 1,000 are administrative troops and about 1,500 are political cadre. The following enemy units comprise the major threat to Quang Nam Province: The V25 Local Force Battalion which is partially sapper trained and is believed responsible for the disastrous attack on Hieu Nhon District on 11 September; the R20 Local Force Battalion which has been active in the Dien Ban/Dai Loc area; the T89 Main Force Sapper Battalion which operates in Central Quang Nam; and other units in the province among which are the 105th Local Force Battalion and the 3d Battalion of the 3d NVA Regiment. Recently, the 3d NVA Regiment has been operating on the Quang Nam/Quang Tin Border and has suffered heavily as a result of activity by the 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cav Division. The 3d Battalion is believed to be in Southern Quang Nam. Combat support troops include the 368B Rocket Regiment which consists of two 122mm rocket battalions and one 140mm rocket battalion. This unit is located in Thuong Duc District and is the unit which managed to infiltrate close enough to the Danang complex to conduct

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rocket attacks. As a result of these attacks, a rocket belt has been defined which circumscribes Danang out to the maximum range of the rockets and is heavily patrolled by US troops. In addition to the battalion size VC/RVA units, each district normally has its VC district company.

(2) Lack of security has been the principal problem in Quang Nam. Successful enemy attacks throughout the spring and again in August and September against the province capital of Hoi An and the districts of Hieu Nhon and Dien Ben in which much of the RD program is concentrated, have had a detrimental effect. These attacks have been conducted by three local force battalions (P20, V25 and 105th) which operate in a belt south of the Thu Bon River extending from the sea inland to the mountains. (See Inclosure 1) The VC virtually dominate this area, have freedom of movement, and as a result are able to stage large-scale attacks northward into Hieu Nhon and Dien Ban Districts and against Hoi An, the province capital.

b. Infrastructure: Because of a long history of VC influence in Quang Nam, a viable and effective infrastructure has been established. Occasionally, VC cadre have been captured or killed by ARVN, RF units or RDC groups, but not in significant numbers. Generally, when ARVN forces or RDC groups move into an area, infrastructure members tend to move out or operate on the periphery and are generally ready to reenter the hamlet once the GVN presence has diminished. Recently, however, a major inroad was made in the destruction of the infrastructure. Basically, it was achieved through the coordination of the intelligence units under the auspices of the ICEN program. In this case, two intelligence cadre of RD team 27 received information from an informer on the location of a VC tunnel complex. Together with an element of the 1st Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment, the tunnel complex was investigated. Six VC were killed and eight captured. Interrogation of the captives and dissemination and coordination of the information received so far has led to the arrest of 61 VC agents operating within the province and in Danang. Some of these people were operatives in province headquarters as well as in the 51st Regiment. It is hoped that this effort will snowball and result in the significant weakening of the infrastructure in Quang Nam.

c. Friendly Situation: (Inclosure 2) As a result of the importance of the Danang complex, a high density of US and ARVN troops are located in Quang Nam Province. Most of these are located within the national priority area which surrounds the city of Danang. In spite of the concentration of allied forces, the VC are still able to make incursions into the vital area around Danang, to attack hamlets, interdict Route 1, and in some cases make major attacks on key installations in Quang Nam, particularly in the southernmost part of the province.

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(1) FMARF: The 5th and 7th Marine Regiments of the 1st Marine Division operate within the Marine TAOR which surrounds Danang. Elements of the 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cav Division operate in southern Quang Nam and along the Quang Nam/Quang Tin border. These operations are predominately search and destroy in nature and have met with considerable success. The recent introduction of 1st Air Cav units into Quang Nam has relieved much of the pressure in the southern Quang Nam area. While US Marines in the Danang area conduct some search and destroy operations, their attention is devoted primarily to saturation patrolling in defense of the rocket belt around Danang. The Commander of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines, stated that his battalion was fully committed to the role of saturation patrolling of the rocket belt, protection of LCCs, and providing reaction forces for targets of opportunity which occur in the Marine TAOR. The pace of his activity has been such that he has had difficulty in excusing one rifle platoon from duty each day. It should be noted that there is an area which falls astride the TAORs of the 1st Marine Division and the 1st Air Cav unit in which enemy main force units are able to operate with relative freedom because of the scarcity of troops available for offensive operations. It appears that additional mobile forces are needed in this area to counter the VC main force units and to block this avenue of approach into Dien Ban, Hieu Nhon and to the sea.

(2) ARVN: The 51st ARVN Regiment, a separate regiment, falls under the operational control of the QDSZ Commander, and is in direct support of revolutionary development. The 2d, 3d and 4th Battalions of the 51st ARVN Regiment and the 59th RF Battalion (5 RF companies under the operational control of the 51st Regiment) operate in the regimental TAOR (Inclosure 3) and conduct the Hung Quang I Operation. The 1st Battalion, 51st Regiment, is under the operational control of province and operates in the Hoi An/Hieu Nhon area (Inclosure 2). The recent assignment of the battalion to this area has improved security and has enabled the provincial capital at least to defend itself against VC incursions from the south. It is significant that the TAOR of the 51st Regiment falls within and is superimposed upon the TAOR of the 1st Marine Division. Coordination with the Marines appears to be good. However, this results in lengthy reaction times in the delivery of artillery fires. The location of the TAOR of the 51st Regiment is also significant in the protection of Danang and the security of the rocket belt. Other forces in the province are 2/4 AFC Troop, located in the Hoi An area, which operates under the control of province, and the 1st Ranger Group which operates under the control of the I Corps Commander and is the I Corps reserve. Occasionally, a battalion or more of this group will operate in the southern Quang Nam area. A total of 37 RF companies and 144 PF platoons operate in the province. This includes RF/PF units in the city of Danang. Thirty-seven Combined Action Platoons (CAP) operate in the province; 14 more are planned.

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d. Performance of the 51st ARVN Regiment:

(1) General: The 51st Regiment is the main ARVN force in Quang Nam and has the primary mission of providing security for pacification. All battalions (4 ARVN, 1 RF) are considered in direct support of RD. As described above, the regiment is also concerned with the Hung Quang I RD and resettlement operation. The resettlement operation has been carried out as an ARVN civic action program. An assessment of the Hung Quang I Operation is discussed in paragraph 3d(7). Location and disposition of 51st units as well as controlled fire zones are as shown on Inclosure 3.

(2) 1st Battalion, 51st Regiment: A detailed evaluation of this battalion was not made due to its inaccessibility during the period in which the evaluators visited Quang Nam Province. The battalion is detached from the 51st Regiment and operates in Hieu Nhon District under the control of the province chief. The battalion was assigned to the Hieu Nhon area in mid-September after a series of VC attacks in August and early September had inflicted severe damage on Hieu Nhon District as well as on Province Headquarters. The positioning of the battalion in the area has brought about at least a local balance of combat power. The battalion has provided the protection necessary for the RD Groups at Hieu Nhon to proceed with the RD program. However, the stationing of this battalion in the Hieu Nhon area does not provide sufficient combat power with which to conduct the continuous offensive operations which are desperately needed for adequate security.

(3) The 59th RF Battalion: The heart of the Hung Quang I Operation is the protection of the nine RD Groups which are located astride Route 1 south of Da nang. Two battalions provide protection for these hamlets. They are the 59th RF Battalion and 4th Battalion, 51st Regiment. Seven RD Groups are within the TAO of the 59th RF Battalion. The battalion currently consists of five RF rifle companies and a Headquarters company. The entire battalion has completed RD training. The battalion command post is in a fixed central location, and companies are assigned TAOs and specific RD Groups to protect. Efforts are underway to keep the RF companies mobile within their TAOs and to move each company headquarters at least twice a week. The company commanders have control for security purposes over the RD Groups within their areas. Generally, about three search operations of at least two-company size are conducted each month. The battalion has an active ambush and patrol program. Approximately 11 squad and platoon-size patrols and 14 squad-size ambushes are conducted each night. Generally, these patrols operate 500 to 1000 meters from fixed positions. Patrol plans usually are prepared three days in advance so they can be coordinated with Marine operations in the area.

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(a) CPT Thanh, the battalion commander, is considered a relatively good administrator, but not a very effective leader. The reasonable success of the battalion in conducting its mission is credited to a good battalion staff and generally good company commanders. CPT Thanh has been the battalion commander for about two years. Morale is high and the desertion rate is low. Generally, there are only two or three desertions a month.

(b) A four man US team advises the battalion. CPT Penn has been the 59th Battalion advisor for about a year. He rates the battalion as GOOD to EXCELLENT in the accomplishment of its mission. He rates two of the seven RD Groups within his TAOR as EXCELLENT.

(c) Lo Giang Hamlet, RD Group 2 and Thong Nam Hamlet, RD Group 13, were visited. These hamlets appear to be in an advanced stage of development and security provided by the 59th Battalion appears to be adequate.

(d) The problems encountered by the 59th Battalion include mediocre leadership on the part of the battalion commander, some materiel shortages, maintenance problems with vehicles and the comparatively long time interval required to obtain fire support.

(4) 4th Battalion, 51st Regiment: 4th Battalion is located south of the 59th RF Battalion, astride Route 1, and has the principal mission of defending the southern portion of the RD area. One RD Group operates within the battalion TAOR. Normally search and destroy operations with up to two companies are conducted about once a week. These operations generally do not exceed one day in duration. In addition, 10 to 14 squad-size ambushes and one squad-size patrol are conducted daily. The battalion operates from fixed company bases which are noteworthy because of their extensive barbed wire barriers surrounding the positions. Since July, the battalion has had only five contacts resulting in two friendly KIA and one VC KIA. The excellent defensive positions together with the small number of contacts indicate that the battalion conducts essentially a static defense of the RD area.

(a) Notwithstanding the lack of aggressive operations, leadership within the battalion is excellent, CPT Thuan has been the battalion commander for about 18 months and has impressed the advisors as being industrious, honest and professionally competent. He has received the highest Vietnamese award for heroism. Of the three infantry company commanders, two are rated as GOOD and one has not been assigned long enough to be properly evaluated.

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(b) Cooperation between the battalion and the RDC Group appears good. A four to five-man team from the battalion works directly with the RDC Group security team and assists in the group defence. In addition, one corporal from the battalion is assigned to effect liaison between the battalion and the RDC Group and to insure coordination of the defensive effort. The battalion has furnished civic action assistance by helping to build a school and by providing one sergeant and one private as teachers.

(c) Coordination with the Marines is good. The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines is located directly south of the ARVN position. Supporting artillery has been registered in the area; however, because of the requirement for coordination prior to firing into the overlapping TAORs of the Marine and ARVN units, it has taken up to twenty minutes to fire requested missions.

(d) One recent VC attack took place against the RD Group in the hamlet of Giang Nam. This attack was launched by approximately one VC squad on 26 October 1967 and resulted in one RD Cadre KIA and six RD Cadre and 15 villagers wounded. The attackers escaped before the reaction force from the 4th Battalion arrived on the scene.

(e) In addition to a battalion reaction plan, there is also a regimental reaction plan which designates one regimental commando platoon and one company of 3d Battalion, 51st Regiment, as reaction forces.

(f) CPT Martinez has been the battalion advisor since July and rates his battalion as EXCELLENT.

(5) 2d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment: The battalion operates to the west of the principle RD area with the dual mission of providing peripheral security to the RD area and conducting the western portion of the Hung Cuong I resettlement operation. Since 3 March 1967 the battalion effort has been directed towards the resettlement of the people in the area into Peace or Resettlement Hamlets, (Yen Ne, Le Son) and providing the defense for these hamlets. The population is being resettled for the purpose of clearing a controlled fire zone west of Highway 1 in order to interdict the movement of VC from the foothills to the sea. Since 3 March, the battalion in conjunction with US Marines killed over 100 VC. Friendly casualties have exceeded over 100 killed and wounded during the same period with the majority being caused by mines and booby-traps. It is noteworthy that of nine daily ambushes, two are established jointly with the Marines. Although the battalion conducts no unilateral patrols, it does conduct two joint patrols daily with the Marines. Battalion and company size operations are conducted infrequently. The battalion provides essentially a static defense.

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(a) The battalion commander, CPT Rung, has impressed his advisors as being competent and honest. He has commanded the battalion since October 1965.

(b) Coordination with the Marines in the area appears good. Artillery has been registered; however, requirements for coordination of artillery fire have caused extensive delays in the delivery of fire with up to twenty minutes elapsing between request and delivery of support.

(c) The two Peace Hamlets in the battalion area of responsibility form a study in contrast. Yen Ne, in the north, ultimately will contain 216 houses; 156 families now live in the hamlet. People generally came willingly to the hamlet and there is a feeling of friendly cooperation as one walks through the streets. Participation in the recent elections approached 100%. VC activity in the area has been extremely limited and one RD Group recently began to work in the hamlet. By contrast, in the hamlet of Le Son a different atmosphere prevails. The hamlet was to have originally consisted of 150 houses, but construction has stopped at 140. Only reluctantly did the people come to the hamlet and as one walks through the streets, a feeling of neutrality if not outright antipathy is felt. A recent VC attack on 8 October destroyed 27 houses and damaged 15. Two ARVN soldiers were killed. There were no VC casualties. There are indications of VC influence in the hamlet in that the VC warned the inhabitants and permitted them to remove their belongings from their houses prior to the attack. This affiliation is not surprising since the residents of Le Son were considered the most pro-VC of those families moved from the controlled fire area. The feeling of the advisors is that Yen Ne hamlet can be ranked as a success while Le Son, although not a failure, has many hurdles yet to cross.

(d) 2d Battalion, 51st Regiment began RD refresher training on 6 November 1967. The battalion advisor, CPT LeMieux, rates the battalion as GOOD.

(6) 3d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment: This battalion, minus one company, occupies the eastern portion of the regimental TAOR. The battalion (-) has a dual mission of providing defense to the east of the principle RD area and resettling the people within its area of responsibility into the two peace hamlets of Binh Ky and Nui Kim Son. Resettlement of the people within this area provides for the establishment of a controlled fire zone which facilitates the defense of the logistical complex around Danang and blocks an avenue of approach through the regimental TAOR. The detached company of the battalion operates in the very western portion of the regimental TAOR, in Hieu Duc District, and is primarily responsible for the security of the Peace Hamlets of Ducng Lam and Duyen Son. This mission is performed in coordination with Hieu Duc District.

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(a) The battalion (-), operates in the eastern area from two fixed company bases, and conducts an average of seven ambushes daily. It also patrols jointly with the Marines. There are few company or larger size operations and the defense is generally static. The battalion has the additional mission of providing a reaction force for regiment. On occasion, portions of the battalion have had to move out of their TAOR south to Roi An to perform a reaction mission. When this occurs, security declines in the Peace Hamlet area. Since the beginning of operations about mid-July, 14 VC have been killed and 53 captured, while six ARVN have been killed. In the west, the detached company provides only a static defense for the two Peace Hamlets in the area.

(b) Leadership of the battalion appears adequate. CPT Xang has commanded the battalion some time and is considered competent by advisors. He has been selected for schooling in the United States.

(c) The Peace Hamlets in the battalion area range from good to bad. Binh Ky in the east appears most successful. Construction is about complete and the families that have moved in appear friendly. Classes are being taught by ARVN soldiers and officials have been elected. Nui Kim Son hamlet in the east, although secured by a platoon from the 3d Battalion, 51st Regiment, is under the administrative control of Hoa Vang District. In the west, Duong Lam hamlet is considered somewhat less successful than Binh Ky but, nevertheless, appears to be a working, viable hamlet. The least successful of the Peace Hamlets is Duyen Son. Only a limited number of houses have been built and construction has now been stopped. Few people have moved into the area. The principle reasons are the VC orientation of the people, the minimal security and the poorly selected site for the hamlet. Both Duong Lam and Duyen Son are in Hieu Duc District, and the construction and administration of these hamlets generally have been taken over by the Hieu Duc District Chief. The 2d Company, 3d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment continues to assist in providing security.

(d) CPT Lindsey, who has been the battalion advisor since June, rates the battalion as GOOD.

(7) Evaluation of the Hung Quang I Operation:

(a) Accomplishments by the 51st ARVN Regiment in the conduct of Hung Quang I are as follows: The security for the RD hamlets in Hoa Vang District bordering Route 1 generally has been adequate. Although some incursions have been made by the VC, no severe attacks have occurred; consequently, the hamlets in this area have progressed relatively well. On the periphery of the RD area, the resettlement operation has experienced only moderate success. Although this operation is continuing,

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its achievements to date consist of establishing two successful hamlets, Yen Ho in the west and Binh Ky in the east. The remaining peach hamlets have had moderate success in three cases, and, in one, progress has been extremely poor. Of significance is the fact that the hamlets have been built by an ARVN unit as a civic action project. The initial construction of the hamlets, the resettlement of the people, the administration of the hamlets, the conduct of the election, teaching in the schools, and the building of market places have all been done by the 51st ARVN Regiment. In the two hamlets where there have been meaningful accomplishments, it is particularly significant that this can be attributed to an ARVN unit. In the second part of the resettlement operation, the clearing of controlled fire zones, success has been only partial, as many inhabitants continue to live in the zones. Much of the area was to be destroyed and leveled; however, only a portion of this has been completed. A final accomplishment of the Hung Quang I Operation is the control of an area south of Danang which comprises part of the rocket belt. The presence of the 51st ARVN Regiment in this area increases the density of troops and provides additional protection to the Danang logistical bases.

(b) As a counter to the accomplishments stated above, one must consider that the assets of an entire ARVN regiment have been used for approximately one year. Although some of these accomplishments have been significant, particularly for an ARVN unit, it appears that more should have been achieved when successes are weighed against the assets employed.

(8) General Assessment of the 51st ARVN Regiment Performance:

(a) The regiment, under the command of LTC Thao, is well led, relatively well trained and competent. It would rank among the top three regiments in I Corps.

(b) On the positive side, the regiment is providing adequate security for the RD area, as indicated by the small number of attacks against RD groups and the relatively good security which has prevailed within the RD area.

(c) On the other hand, the regiment definitely is oriented towards a static rather than a dynamic defense. The regiment operates from bases which are too fixed and depends too much on small unit ambushes and patrols. Greater emphasis on mobile operations almost certainly would result in keeping the VC more off balance and would result in higher VC kills. In addition, as in any mobile defense concept, it would result in the requirement for fewer units to defend the same area. The regimental advisor, MAJ Bayers, currently is conducting a program to convince the regimental commander that his battalions should keep their companies mobile and should move their company CPs often, thus more thoroughly saturating the battalion TACRs. A training program has been

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designed to this affect, and MAJ Beyers is hopeful that at least one battalion will adopt the concept in the near future.

(d) One aspect of the defense which should be improved is the rapidity with which artillery fire can be delivered.

(e) While it is difficult to document, there is evidence that a lack of coordination exists between the RF companies, PF platoons, RD groups, CAPs and ARVN defensive elements, particularly in the principle RD area. This is not meant to reflect on the effectiveness of the individual elements. It does indicate, however, that better coordination among the elements could result in a more effective defense, or, alternatively, the same quality of defense with fewer units.

(f) With the density of security elements in the Hung Quang I area, i.e., RDC groups, RF companies, PF platoons, CAPs and Marines, and with a more aggressive defensive concept on the part of the ARVN Regiment, it appears that the Regiment could release one or perhaps two battalions from the Hung Quang I Operation in the near future. These battalions could be replaced by RF and PF units and the battalion(s) then used in a mobile role in southern Quang Nam. Specifically, it appears that the 59th RF Battalion could now assume the responsibility for the entire RD area in the Hung Quang I Operation, thus releasing 4th Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment. In the near future, consideration should be given to using RF companies along with CAPs for the protection of the western hamlets of Le Son and Yen Ne, thus releasing 2d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment. In fact, plans to this affect are already in being and consideration should be given to their implementation.

(g) In summary, the Hung Quang I Operation is felt to have been worth while and the 51st ARVN Regiment has performed relatively well. However, the regiment tends to be too defensively oriented. Through more aggressive leadership and emphasis on offensive action, the regiment could have achieved greater success in its support of RD.

(h) The 2d, 3d and 4th Battalions, 51st ARVN Regiment are rated GOOD in the support they have rendered to the RD program.

d. General Assessment of Security in Quang Da Special Zone:
The security of QDSZ may be considered in three geographical segments.

(1) In the central and northern part of the province, including the area which generally surrounds Danang, there appears to be sufficient Marine and ARVN units to provide adequate security, although their offensive capability is limited. The attention of the Marines is diffused between saturation patrolling and defense of the rocket belt on one hand and limited small scale offensive action on the other. The entire attention of the 51st ARVN Regiment minus one battalion is devoted to the defense of the Hung Quang I RD area. As a result, defense and security in this area are

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adequate - offensive capability is limited.

(2) In extreme southern Quang Nam there is an excellent offensive capability in the presence of 3d Brigade, 1st Air Cav Division and the proximity of other elements of the Americal Division. These units have achieved excellent results in their recent operations and there is every indication that they have seriously hurt the VC units, i.e., the 3d KVA Regiment, operating in this area. The regiment appears to be on the run and devoting full attention to avoiding direct confrontation with the US units.

(3) This leaves the areas of Hoi An, Hieu Nhon, Dien Ban and the belt just south of the Thu Bon River. In these areas there are only limited allied forces. There are occasional US Marine incursions into these areas, but generally for only short periods of time. At present, available forces only permit an essentially defensive posture. As a result, Hoi An and Hieu Nhon are receiving some measure of security from the 1st Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment; however, forces are not available for conducting offensive operations to destroy enemy units in the area. It is in this area that additional forces are required if VC Local Force units are to be defeated and the area made secure for pacification. These forces should consist of at least three battalions. They could be Marine, RVNAP or US Army. Ideally, a three battalion US Brigade could solve the problem. Alternatively, it could be solved by two battalions of the 51st ARVN Regiment along with one or more Ranger Battalions from the corps reserve. A third alternative might be the use of two or more ARVN battalions in part of the area together with increased US operations by elements of the Americal Division in other portions of the critical area.

4. (C) CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS: The following conclusions and recommendations are those of the field evaluators and are submitted for information and whatever action is considered appropriate by the command and/or agencies concerned:

a. Conclusions:

(1) Security is relatively adequate in the northern and central portions of the province. Units of the Americal Division are keeping the enemy off balance in the extreme southern portion of the province. Additional security is required for the belt centering on Hoi An - Dien Ban and extending to the west along the Thu Bon River.

(2) The 51st ARVN Regiment is well led and provides adequate security for the Hang Quang I Campaign area.

(3) The 51st ARVN Regiment could be more effective or, alternatively, could accomplish its present mission with fewer battalions if it adopted a more dynamic defensive philosophy to include additional search and destroy operations and more aggressive patrolling.

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(A) RF companies, RF platoons, available CAPs and RD group defensive elements should be given primary responsibility for the close-in defense of the RD area. This would release ARVN units from their static positions to conduct offensive operations.

(B) Revolutionary development in the Hung Quang I RD area is progressing satisfactorily.

(C) The concept of resettling people into Peace Hamlets, unique in this province, has proven to be only moderately successful.

b. Recommendations:

(1) That US/PMAF or ARVN units in no less than a three battalion task force conduct mobile offensive operations in the Thu Bon River Valley area generally between the 5 and 6 northing grid lines. (CG III MAF, SA I Corps; ACoIS, J3; PSA Quang Nam)

(2) That consideration be given to releasing at least one additional battalion of the 51st Regiment from the Hung Quang I Operation for operations in the Hieu Mhon - Dien Ban area. (CG III MAF, SA I Corps; PSA Quang Nam)

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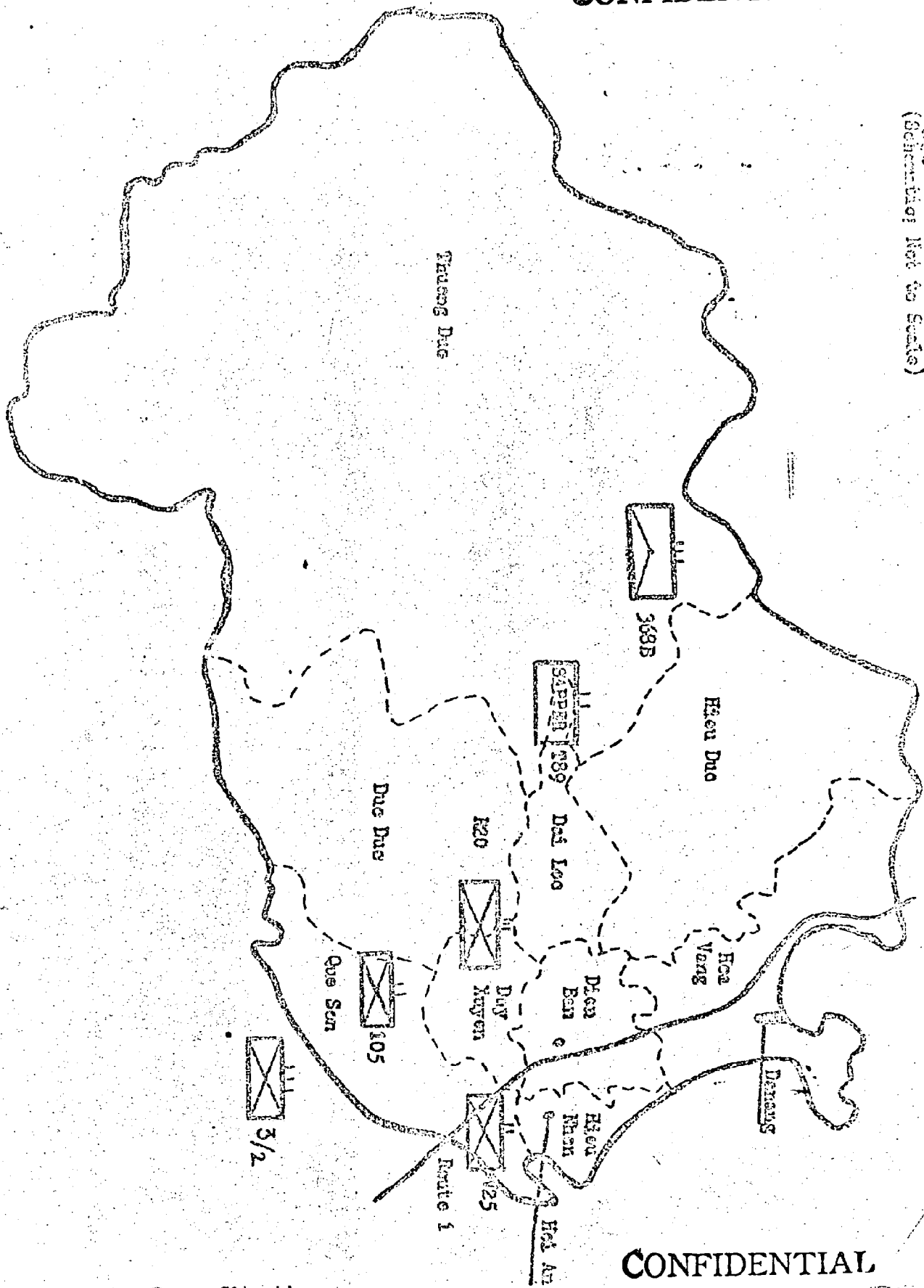
Henry J. Lewis
HENRY J. LEWIS
Major, GS
I CTZ Fld Evaluator

Clarence W. Hannon
CLARENCE W. HANNON
Major, GS
I CTZ Fld Evaluator

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QUANG NAM
(Schematic; Not to Scale)

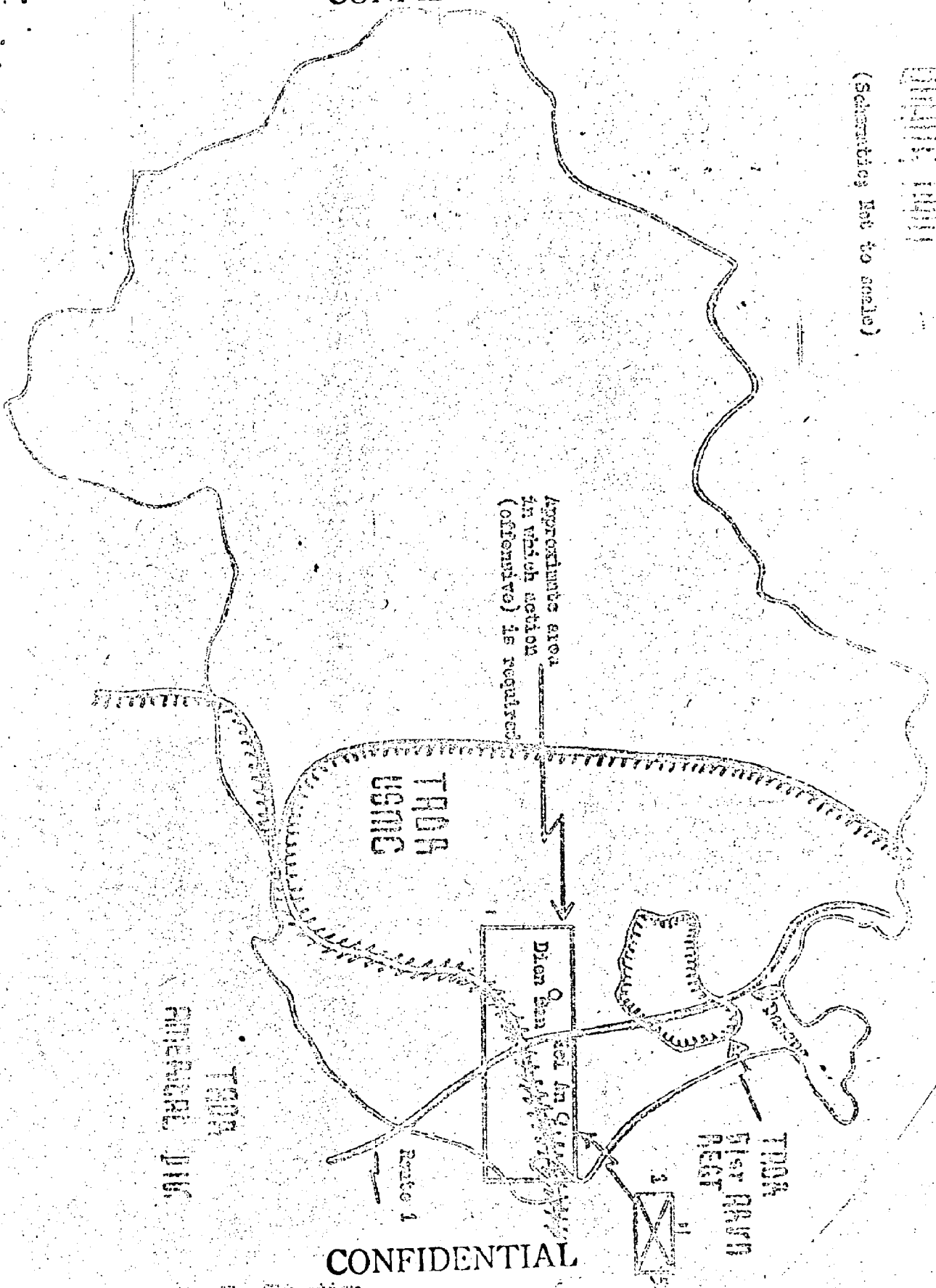


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ENCLOSURE 1: Enemy Situation

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(Schematic Not to Scale)

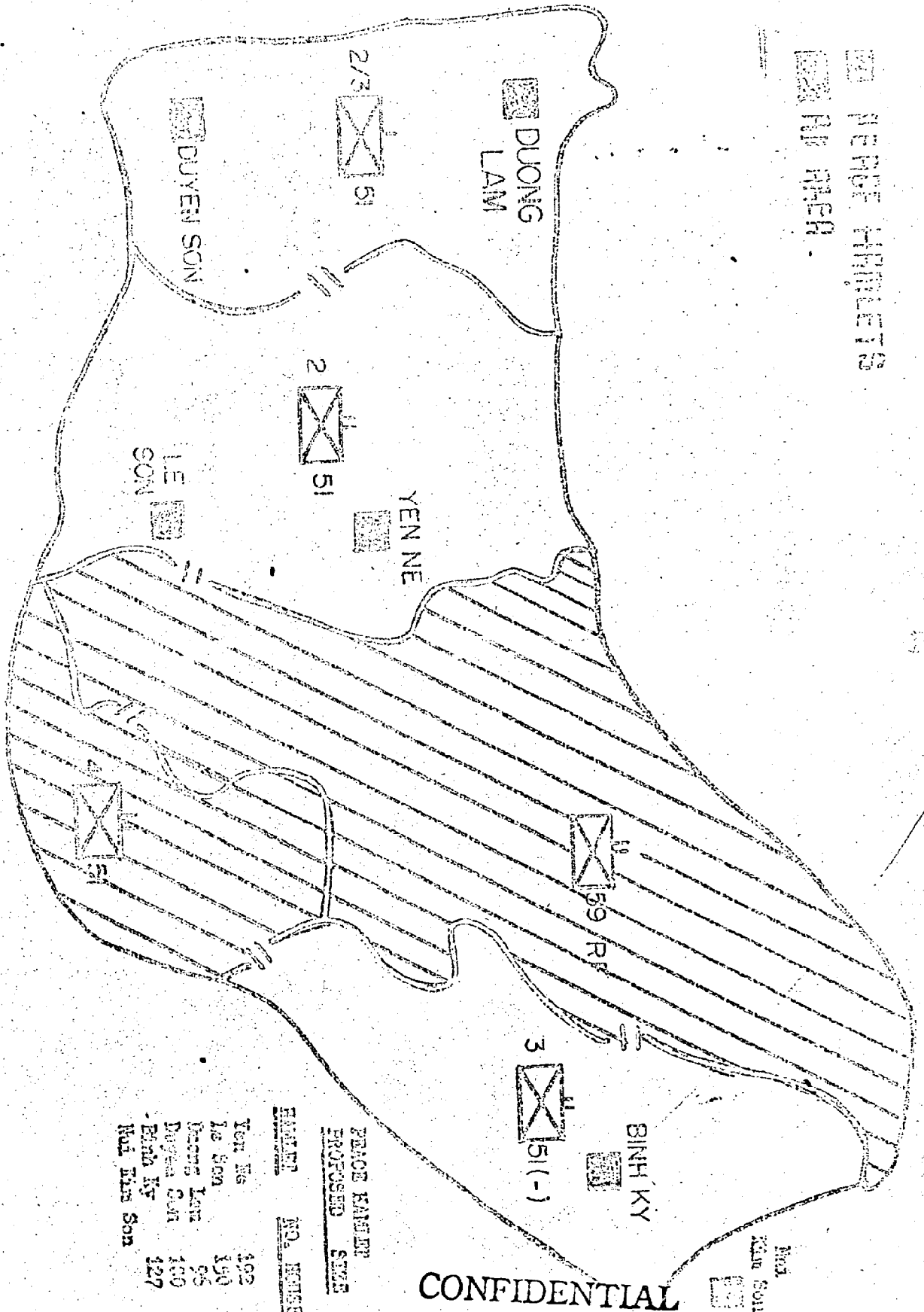


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ENCLOSURE 2: Schematic Situation

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MEMORANDUM
FOR THE
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