

TOP SECRET

figures compare with enemy manpower input into SVN of 123,000, out of a total manpower recruitment in RVN and SVN of over 175,000, and out of 275,000 men coming of military age in RVN and in rural SVN. That is, we estimate we killed and captured nearly half of their new military manpower and over one-fourth of their men coming of military age. Given Asian attitudes toward human life, and proven enemy determination, they can if necessary continue to sustain losses at these high or even higher rates. (Britain lost half its men in a five-year age group in World War I.) The supplies we say we capture, even at the rate of early this year, add about one-third of the total VC/NVA supply requirement. That won't break their backs either.

### 3. Exaggeration of Claims

Moreover, if we look closer at enemy losses, the picture gets worse. Official claims overstate the enemy troops killed and supplies captured.

To estimate the extent of this overstatement we gathered information on the mix of tactical situations leading to our forces' fire-fights and skirmishes and the true average results of the fights by type. This information is worthwhile in and of itself, and provides a better measure of the cumulative over-estimation of enemy KIA than we can get merely from the five or ten specific instances where we know how much padding of the figures there was. For the mix of tactical situations in the table below on larger battles, our main sources were the regular After-Action reports submitted to MACV and the ad hoc debriefing interviews by BGeneral S.L.A. Marshall. Marshall covered about 75 major battles of 1966 in great detail; we picked up additional information on these and enough information for the table for some 26 more battles from the After-Action reports. For platoon-sized and larger fights (both sides), these

#### FULLY-REPORTED SIGNIFICANT BATTLES IN 1966 (At least a Platoon Each Side)

	<u>Nr. of Engagements</u>	<u>Percent of Total</u>
1. Hot Landing Zone	9	8.9
2. Enemy attacks our perimeter	23	27.7
3. VC/NVA ambush our troops	21	20.7
4. Moving U.S. unit meets dug-in enemy:		
(a) who surprises us	13	12.9
(b) who does not surprise us	5	4.9
(c) degree of surprise not reported	9	8.9
5. U.S. ambushes VC/NVA	11	10.9
6. Chance meeting engagement	<u>5</u>	<u>4.9</u>
TOTAL	101	99.8

Source: For description, see "The Strategy of Attrition," SEA Anal. Rept.; atchd here as Annex C. The proportions stated here and in the text are broadly supported by data in the JECOV study, by After-Action Reports, and by off-the-record interviews with battalion commanders.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Sources agree so well that we are satisfied there is no reporting bias now the fights started. Useful collateral information came from the ARCOV study, from regular Marine and Army reports other than the After-Action ones, (especially on small engagements, and on mines and booby traps) from occasional press coverage, and from our own interviews of a few former battalion commanders and General DePuy.

The discussion of tactical initiative on page 5, below, explains the tactical and strategic implications of this table.

For the true outcomes by type of engagement, our information is much shakier because of the delicate nature of the question. Three of the battalion commanders we interviewed were particularly candid with us on this question; S.L.A. Marshall's interviews, although he generally avoided body-counting, provided collateral information enough to convince him that the enemy's counter-measures to our air and artillery (hugging tactics and bunkering) are almost entirely successful. This conclusion is devastating in its implications, because commanders in the field lean so heavily on "all that artillery and air" in making their claims for enemy KIA. Some press coverage is pertinent, and reliable enough, for example that given to recent Marine fights in and near the DMZ. Finally, we can get hints on enemy KIA from the ARCOV data, and other like data, on the typical enemy force size in the different types of fights. Except in the very large battles, the data show that the enemy's (especially the VC's) preferred tactic is to use a small force, say a squad, to surprise a larger U.S. unit, say a platoon or company; shooting from concealed trenches, they inflict as many casualties as they can quickly on our exposed force, and then they clear out. Even if we could hit the enemy unit with our air and artillery, which we can't, we couldn't get a very favorable kill ratio because he hasn't put many men at risk compared to the number of ours he catches in the surprise attack.

When we piece these bits of information together, we arrive at roughly the following picture of the types of engagements and of the true enemy KIA resulting from them.

CALCULATION OF ENEMY KIA BY US, 1966

	<u>US KIA</u>	<u>ENEMY KIA</u>
Mines, etc. (F&I)	1250	750
Small eng.	1250	1250
Large eng., ambush, surprised US., etc.	1250	1250
Large eng., perim. attacks & other favorable	<u>1250</u>	<u>6250</u>
TOTAL	5000	9500

*Total VC?*

*Kill ratio?*

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

Mines and booby traps account for about one-fourth of U.S. deaths by hostile action; we base this estimate on comprehensive data from the 1st Infantry Division and from the Marines, and on occasional bits of information from other units. Fights in which one or both sides have less than a platoon engaged (sniper action, hit and run guerrilla attacks, and chance meeting,) also account for about one-fourth of U.S. deaths. This estimate is our weakest, derived mainly from comprehensive data on only one battalion. Large engagements in which the enemy surprises us and fights at a tactical advantage account for another quarter of our losses; and large ones in which the enemy attacks our dug-in troops or we fight at a tactical advantage for any other reason account for the last quarter.

Against U.S. losses to mines and booby traps we set a crude guess of the enemy's losses to our harassment of him, primarily through H&I fire. For present purposes we offer the generous figure of 750, which agrees more with the text than with the tables of our paper on unobserved fire. Against the small and large engagements in which we fight at a tactical disadvantage we set enemy losses equal to our own, for the reasons given. Against the large engagements we fight at a tactical advantage, such as foolish enemy attempts to overrun a dug-in company or artillery position, the rare ambushes we spring on him and the cases where a cautious or lucky U.S. unit commander detects in time and zaps the enemy who is trying to zap him, we estimate enemy losses at five times our own on the average. In the perimeter attacks the loss ratio generally runs three or four to one, but in the other cases we generally do much better.

The overall totals come out at a ratio of about two to one, and U.S. ground forces killed about 10,000 enemy last year. RVNAF, which lost 10,000, were regularly ambushed and overrun. If we discount their claims in the same proportion as we do the official U.S. claim, as is surely appropriate, they

#### REVISED RESULTS, 1966

	<u>Friendly KIA</u>	<u>VC/NVA KIA</u>
All RVNAF Engagements	10,000	10,000
All US/FW Engagements (previous table)	<u>5,000</u>	<u>9,500</u>
TOTALS	15,000	19,500

(MACV claim: 55,500)

Note: See Sec. II, which estimates enemy KIA at 22,800.

killed about the same number of VC/NVA, namely about 10,000. Overall, instead of 55,500 KIA and 97,000 losses altogether, the enemy had under 20,000 KIA and 42,000 losses altogether, or less than half the official figure. Even if all other figures on enemy losses and recruiting are true, as by and large they probably are, he isn't hurting very much, and can keep it up indefinitely.

(Supplies captured from the enemy are exaggerated like the "body count," although it is neither possible nor necessary to document this assertion in

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

1. The supplies the enemy needs and the amount we capture are so little, modern standards, that neither is worth arguing about.)

Why do these KIA estimates disagree with the official ones? When the majority of our engagements come as unpleasant surprises, even though not always fully coordinated ambushes, our field commanders are inevitably embarrassed in describing the action and its results. It is very hard for a company or battalion commander to admit to anyone, even to himself, that he has let his force be ambushed; and many do not realize that not they but our operating practices are at fault, driving them into one ambush or tactical surprise after another. So to protect their self-respect, their careers, and their seniors, they have to pad the claims of enemy KIA. Reports of such padding are too consistent (on how they happen and how far they go) to be discounted. We know reliably, through the S.L.A. Marshall interviews, our own interviews, personal acquaintances who have been in the field, and press interviews of soldiers and junior officers, of case after case of inflated body counts. The picture we have is that the estimates from the engaged platoon or company already make sufficient allowance for bodies the enemy removes from the battlefield and for indirect kills due to artillery and air; the almost universal doubling of the claimed enemy KIA at battalion and again at brigade is self-delusion. The degree of probable delusion is so great as to be a matter of national concern; for even if the claims are accurate, the enemy merely may be in trouble, and in fact we are overstating that.

#### 4. Tactical Initiative

The figures in the table on page 2 also shed light on who holds the initiative. In 83% of the engagements, those in the first four categories, the enemy either fought in prepared positions, which he occupies and defends only at his own option, or he assaulted an entrenched U.S. unit. That is, by and large the enemy fights at times and places of his own choosing; he knows our tactical dispositions but we don't know his. He defends no territory, and our operations have little effect on population control because we move on and let him move in behind us. (The GVN has consistently failed to provide security and government services in areas "cleared" of the enemy by military operations.) That means that if attrition should ever become a severe problem with him, the enemy could scale down his operations to keep it within acceptable limits, without sacrificing any other objective than that of inflicting heavy losses on us. He has not chosen to do so; this year the pace of his ambushes of our large units and of his other attacks has increased, not diminished.

Moreover, the enemy has shifted away from his least profitable, most costly attacks. Having learned last year that he could never overrun a dug-in U.S. unit as large as a company or more, and that the attempt cost him dearly, the enemy has placed greater emphasis on set-piece ambushes of advancing company and battalion-sized units, especially around the DMZ. Our own weekly losses have nearly doubled, while very likely the true kill ratio in recent weeks is down to one-to-one; if so, correctly estimated enemy weekly losses are running about the same as last year.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

REVISED RESULTS, First Eight Months 1967

	<u>Friendly KIA</u>	<u>Enemy KIA</u>
RVNAP	7,000	7,000
U.S./FW	<u>6,850</u>	<u>7,000 - 14,000</u>
TOTALS	13,850	14,000 - 21,000
	(MACV claim:	60,800)

Does this mean that our small units have poor tactical leadership? Even if it did mean that, and we are not sure that it does, the main correctives are needed at higher levels. The higher command favors ponderous, conspicuous sweeps, and sets movement objectives that leave small unit commanders no choice but to charge ahead and disregard elementary security precautions. Moreover, our military traditions favor spirited aggressiveness, and place little emphasis on reflective appraisal of the enemy's tactics and intentions. Although our military leaders know that a field commander should seek combat only on favorable terms, they have failed to see the need for subtlety in applying this rule. MACV requires that all regular ground force units stay within reach of artillery, apparently supposing that its power assures success in every engagement; under its cover, the practice of seeking combat at every opportunity reflects both this confidence and the extreme emphasis on enemy KIA as the primary objective.

The calculating, outmanned, and outgunned enemy, who must make every action count, has learned when to refuse combat. He knows the power of our weapons, and how to avoid their most disastrous effects: by deep bunkering, by hugging tactics, and by careful choice of escape routes. That he presses the pace of combat, knowing its costs to him, is indirect evidence that these counter-measures work and that we grossly inflate the "body count." Thus we have the paradox of aggressive sweeps and apparent forceful initiative by U.S. forces, combined with almost total control of the action by the enemy.

### 5. Conclusion

All this adds up to a picture of a continuing series of tactical defeats on the battlefield. They are, individually, small defeats in terms of engaged forces, casualties, and elapsed time.

This consistent pattern of tactical defeats presents a paradox amid the prevailing aura of irresistible military pre-eminence. U.S. forces retain the ability to go anywhere they want almost anytime they wish; so the public and the military services believe that U.S. arms prevail and that the tactical defeats, even when they are recognized and admitted, are unimportant in contrast. The high command can almost completely conceal them from the U.S. public, saying that the absence of a single major defeat betokens success. Now, this line of reasoning tells us, "the crux of our military problem is how to choke off NVA infiltration."\*

\*Ambassador Bunker in July 1967 briefings for Secretary McNamara.

TOP SECRET

TOP SECRET

As one would expect, such a series of tactical defeats of U.S. forces, in their accumulation, does hurt the morale of the troops directly engaged; but the damage is limited by the 12 month tour limit in country - a limit that implies extremely short command tours in infantry units and ensures a continuous in flow of new, zealous officers.

Completely ignored are the effects these tactical defeats of U.S. forces have upon the enemy. Not only do they fail to damage him physically beyond endurance, but they must also sustain his morale, his effectiveness, and his dogged determination. Therefore, we still have an unsolved military problem.

What then can we do to do better militarily? Broadly, the mission of US/FW forces should no longer be to seek out and destroy the enemy main force units. That objective is impractical, and has the wrong emphasis. Instead the mission should be to make it so costly and dangerous for enemy battalion-sized and larger units to operate in the important areas that they will feel forced to break up into smaller units, and will no longer pose the threat of large attacks that they do now. Even this objective is impractical unless we use our forces with more skill and stealth; a working-level objective should be to operate in such a way that we surprise enemy units as least as often as they surprise us. And we should plan our surprises so that they are devastating in effect.

Specifically, most our military operations and procedures have the following defects:

1. We conduct large, multi-battalion sweeps. Helicopters and artillery announce their presence. We almost never surprise a large enemy force, and seldom surprise a small one. They surprise us often, with unfortunate effect.
2. Intelligence procedures are a disaster. ARVN doesn't talk to the local police, our intelligence people don't talk to either one, and don't talk to each other. Maps of trails, camp layouts, and so on disappear into division files after each operation, and generally soon disappear completely. A unit that has worked an area fails to provide intelligence to another unit moving into the same area. And so on.
3. Our battalions transfer continually from one area to another, never learning any area well and never keeping after any particular enemy unit to wear it down.

As a result of all this, enemy forces feel entirely in command of the situation. They attack or avoid combat at will. They position themselves carefully to avoid the worst effects of our air and artillery. They retain control of almost all areas they previously held except those into which our forces have moved and stayed indefinitely; and they retain strong influence even in such areas. Nothing in the picture gives them reason to fear impending doom.

We could change all that dramatically. Of course, ARVN will have to do better, and coordinate better with their own people. But we too can plan and coordinate better. We can gather intelligence by large numbers of covert patrols, and by other operational techniques. We can assign individual U.S. battalions to track particular enemy battalions for long periods, with clear

DECLASSIFIED

positions to zap them at the earliest favorable opportunity. We can create opportunities by feint and subterfuge. When a few enemy battalions have disappeared this way, and the others know they are constantly hunted, the morale picture will change so much as to make it a new game entirely.

DECLASSIFIED

CONFIDENTIAL CONFIDENTIAL

This interview is being conducted by Cpt JWA Whitehorse, 14th MHD on 17 June 1968 with MG John J Tolson, CG, 1st Air Cavalry Division. The subject is Operation Pegasus (1-15 April 1968).

Q. General Tolson, when was an operation to relieve Khe Sanh Combat Base first conceived?

A. To the best of my memory, the first mention of our undertaking an operation to relieve the Khe Sanh Combat Base was sometime during the week of 21 January. General Cushman, CG, III MAF, on a visit to the division CP, which we were in process of moving from LZ El Paso, south of Hue to Camp Evans, gave me an order to start working on a contingency plan to include the relief or reinforcement of the Khe Sanh Combat Base and three other 3d Mar Div bases (Ca Lu, Rock Pile, Camp Carroll). Later this verbal order was confirmed by message on 251428Z Jan 1968. Obviously, shortly after this, the TET Offensive took place, and then the TET counter-offensive that kept us heavily engaged during the month of February. There was very little mention of any 1 ACD offensive into Khe Sanh. However, during the latter part of February, I'll have to check the date: the 29th, we were told to prepare a plan for going into and relieving Khe Sanh. In addition, we were told we would have additional forces, possible an ARVN Airborne Task Force and a Marine Regiment, and that the entire force (including the 26th Marine Regiment at Khe Sanh) would be under my operational control as CG, 1st Cavalry Division.

During the first week in March, I had to go to Da Nang and present to CG, III MAF our plan for the relief of Khe Sanh Combat Base. In attendance at this briefing was General Abrams, deputy COMUSMACV, who was still in this area with his advance headquarters at Hue-Phu Bai. The plan was strictly ours from the outset as to where we would base our operation and how we would deploy our troops. We were given no specific guidance in our directives as to how we would or should accomplish the mission assigned to us. Actually, the mission was three-fold; one, we would relieve the Khe Sanh Combat Base; two, we would open Highway Nine from Ca Lu to Khe Sanh; and three, we would destroy the enemy forces within the AO—G3 can check through his files to tabulate the specific written directives we received on the subject which were very few. During the course of the development of the plan, Provisional Corps, Vietnam was activated under General Rosson, and at that time, General Abrams left I Corps area with his advance headquarters from MACV. But all of our initial planning for the operation to include the concept, and which we carried out to the letter, was actually presented to CG, III MAF prior to the activation of PCV. The main thing here is that the bulk of the development of our operation was done based on verbal orders only. We went on from there and developed our plans in detail.

Q. Would you describe the planning phases and preliminary activities undergone prior to Pegasus?

A. In the early part of March, we really settled down to detailed planning. We centralized division planning activities under G-3 Plans, Major Schwartz, and brought in representatives from the other units that would be working with and OPCON to us. Specifically, the 3d Marine Division sent us several officers. We also made contact with the two Regiments of Marines that would be working with us, specifically the 1st Marine Regiment, from

and  
1

and 1. Page 1 of 7 Pages

CONFIDENTIAL

Task Force X-Ray (1st Marine Division) which was to be used in our force. Actually at one time, another Marine Regiment, the 4th, was designated but this regiment was changed to the 1st Marine Regiment from the 1st Marine Division. We established a planning tent here at Evans just in back of my "HOOCH". We consolidated in this tent all of the intelligence we could get on the area; maps; and we even constructed a sand table model of the Khe Sanh area. There were, of course, numerous coordination and planning meetings with PCV, 3d Marine Division, and the Air Force. Of course, my coordination with Col Lowndes and the 26th Marine Regiment at Khe Sanh was done by staff or command visits directly with him at that location. One of the key things that had to be done during the planning phase was to develop our operation so that everything that went on in the Khe Sanh area would be coordinated through one headquarters, ours, the 1st Cavalry Division's, once the operation started. Prior to commencing the operation, of course, the Khe Sanh Combat Base, basically the 26th Marine Regimental headquarters, pretty well controlled and coordinated all the activities to include air and ground in the immediate vicinity. In addition, there were other air operations in the general area that were controlled by other agencies. The big point here is that when we started operating with our 1/9 Cav prior to D Day, very close coordination had to be established for the control of fires; artillery, ground and air. Considerable pre-planning was done to insure that this coordination was understood, that it was as simple as possible to accomplish, and that its results were able to be carried out. During the planning phase, one important thing stood out above all others and that was that the actual intelligence on ground forces of the enemy in the area was very vague and not very positive. Everything was expressed in generalities. There was very little concrete information on exact locations of enemy forces prior to our going in and getting it. This meant that the activities of our 1/9 Air Cavalry Squadron would take on a very, very important role in the whole operation. I established a requirement that the 1/9 would start operating in the AO at least six days prior to D Day. It did start reconnaissance operations from LZ Stud, our main base in the vicinity of Ca Lu, on D minus six, gradually working out in increasing concentric circles up to the Khe Sanh area, working at all times with an air cab from the 7th Air Force or the 1st Marine Air Wing and with ample support from SAC with B-52 ARC Light Strikes. It was the 1/9 that I had to rely on almost solely to establish enemy locations, anti-aircraft positions and strong points that we would try to avoid in our initial assaults and obviously in the selection of our LZ's. This was a key bit that became more and more important as we began to get ready for our operation. Also in our work with the Engineers of the 3d Marine Division (the 11th Engineer Battalion) and with the Sea Bees, we had to do a lot of early planning for the establishment of our base near Ca Lu which we designated LZ Stud. In my plans for the operation, I established a requirement for an air strip at our base capable of handling C-123 aircraft. If my memory is correct, it was somewhere around 15 March that we completed our reconnaissance for the establishment of the actual airstrip and work began. The initial construction was under the supervision of the Division Engineer, LTC Townsley. But, the work was initially done by the engineer battalion of the 3d Marine Division. Later this was supplemented, in fact the strip construction was taken over by the Sea Bee Battalion, the 5th NCB. It constructed the airstrip and also the bunkers and TCC's and facilities within the base area. This, of course, had to be done prior to D-Day. Another pre-D-Day requirement was to open Highway Nine between the Rockpile and Ca Lu. In fact, it had to be opened prior to D minus six so that we could start bringing in ammunition and fuel to stockpile there. This was

accomplished by the 3d Marine Division. The road, of course, was open between Dong Ha and the Rockpile but it had been closed for quite awhile between the Rockpile and Ca Lu. Another phase in the planning, which I've already mentioned, and which was of great importance, was the establishment of control of close air support aircraft. An Air Force control party was established at PCV to assist in this. We received great assistance from it and from the 1st Marine Air Wing. The mechanism was set up to control all aircraft supporting the troops in the AO and all aircraft requirements were funneled through Division Headquarters.

Q. Would you describe the pre-operational alignment of forces?

A. In the pre-operational alignment of forces, so far as the Cav units were concerned (we were to use all three brigades in this operation) the only unit that we didn't plan to get into the immediate area of Khe Sanh was the 2/8 Cav which was to remain at the rear of the AO in the vicinity of LZ Sharon at Quang Tri City with the mission of closely defending our base there where we laager quite a few aircraft—about 100. The pre-operational alignments so far as the three brigades of the Cav were concerned were basically unchanged and they assembled right in their immediate JEB STUART AO's in which they were operating. We staged the 3d Brigade on D-1 into the vicinity of LZ Pedro, just northwest of Quang Tri City. It was transported by 1 ACD aircraft and then bivouaced in the hills in the vicinity of LZ Pedro. On D-Day it was the lead off Brigade. The initial assault troops went in in Hueys directly from LZ Pedro to LZ's Mike and Cates. The rest of the Brigade was lifted in "hooks" to LZ Stud where it transferred to Hueys as they returned from depositing their first assault troops. This started a continuous flow of troops from LZ Stud which then became the main loading point for all subsequent Huey lifts into the objective area. With the 2d and 1st Brigades, it was not necessary to stage them in the vicinity of LZ Pedro because of their proximity to the objective area. So other than assembling their troops right in their own AO, no shuttling to stage was involved and they were brought in directly from the AO. But the same shuttling of troops by "hook" from their previous AO to LZ Stud and then the short reshuttle by Huey to the objective area was done with both of these brigades and this greatly expedited getting the troops into the objective area. (The 1st Marine Regiment which was in Hue-Phu Bai, moved up to the Ca Lu area just before D-Day; in fact, one of the battalions that was in this regiment, the 2d Bn, 1st Regt, arrived in the vicinity of LZ Stud on D minus six.) It set up the defense of LZ Stud and throughout the operation performed this vital mission. Units, of course, from the Khe Sanh Combat Base were all located in the vicinity of Khe Sanh where they'd been since January. The ARVN Airborne Task Force with its three battalions was flown from Saigon to Quang Tri City where it marshalled and was brought into the objective area in the same manner that my brigades were. It was the fourth brigade sized unit to make an assault. While the Task Force was in Quang Tri City, it had considerable training under the auspices of the 1st Brigade on air assaults and on the type of operation that we do and that they were going to have to do. Prior to D-Day also, considerable artillery was brought into the Ca Lu area. Actually, there was an 8 inch battery, two 155 batteries, and a 105 battery in the area prior to the launching of the attack. So, as I stated before, by D-Day, we had the 11th Engineer Battalion of the 3d Marine Division in the Ca Lu-LZ Stud area and a great part of the 5th Sea Bee construction battalion. The last infantry combat unit, the ARVN Ranger Battalion, was already in the Khe Sanh Combat Base with the 26th Marine Regiment. Finally, and again, we had prestocked a consid-

erable quantity of supplies in the LZ Stud area prior to D-Day. Our convoys had started moving from Dong Ha to LZ Stud.

Q. Was there any special reason the 3d Brigade spearheaded the attack?

A. There was no special reason other than that 3d Brigade had the AO furthest to the south and was thus furthest away from the objective area. That meant it had to be staged through an intermediate location. But also most important, a part of our old AO, the 3d Brigade's and 2d Bde's, was being taken over by units of the 101st Airborne Division; specifically the 2d Brigade of the 101st Airborne Division, which was located to the south of us. This also meant that it was much more logical to start moving out from the south so that the units of the 101st could move in towards the north, taking over the responsibilities of the AO as we vacated it. So that's the reason the 3d Brigade was elected to spearhead the operation.

Q. Would you describe the deployment of forces in the AO and the reasons for such?

A. I think I can do this without a map. I want to stress here that I have G3 diagramming these movements day by day so they'll be available for this, showing just how we advanced with our assaults. (Appear in After Action Report) You want to remember what I said before and that was that hard intelligence was sadly lacking on enemy locations in the area. All you could get were generalities, so this conditioned my movement into the area considerably. My first move on D-Day was an air assault by the 3d Brigade within range of the artillery I had in the Ca Lu-LZ Stud area. The assault was up the valley astride Highway Nine to two LZ's--Mike and LZ Cates on the extreme highground to the North of the valley. On LZ Mike, we assaulted with the 1/7 and on Cates with the 5/7 Cav and then air landed the 2/7 Cav on LZ Mike. At the same time, over land, we started the First Marine Regiment from Ca Lu on each side of the highway; one battalion again on the south side of the river valley and another on the north of the valley. Its mission of course was to open the road as far as LZ's Mike and Cates and to protect the Engineers who were to immediately start their work of opening the road from Ca Lu to Khe Sanh Combat Base. Also on D-Day we got a 105 battery into LZ Mike and also one into LZ Cates. I'd like to point out that this was a remarkable achievement. Due to the weather, we could not commence air assaults on D-Day until around 1330; yet by late afternoon, we had completed assaulting and bringing in the entire 3 battalions of the brigade and 2 batteries of the direct support 105mm artillery with the necessary supplies to keep them going. This means, very simply, that the movement of troops by "hooks" from the marshalling area into LZ Stud and the movement of the troops by Hueys out of LZ Stud into the two LZ's was very professionally done and the timing was and had to be perfect. I'd like to point out here also that throughout the Khe Sanh operation, it soon became apparent that we were usually not going to be able to get going "full blast" in our airmobile operations until around 1300 or at the earliest, noon. For all of the assaults that we made in the initial phase, we were unable to get started prior to 1300. After D-Day, in my plan, there was no firmly fixed decision on the exact LZ's to be assaulted by the 2d Brigade, the 1st Brigade or the ARVN Airborne Task Force. As we progressed towards Khe Sanh, we, of course, shifted the activity of the 1/9 because of the indefinite situation concerning enemy locations. Although we had tentatively selected LZ's for the entire assault portion of the

operation, it was stressed that we could make, and would make if necessary, changes in actual LZ's. Now, as to timing; I had decided that we would not move too rapidly into subsequent assaults after the 3d Brigade was in. I even contemplated that it would be as late as D plus 3 before I made an assault with the 2d Brigade. This was in case any difficulties were encountered in determining the enemy situation in front of the 3d Brigade. What I'm trying to stress here is that we were not fixed on the exact location of LZ's nor on the timing of assaults. We were firm where we were going on D-Day, obviously, and we were pretty well settled on the subsequent moves. But if it appeared that we had made a bad selection during our early planning, we were flexible to change. And when on D-Day, we received no opposition to speak of, that night, I immediately started the work of accelerating and expediting our advance. We decided to assault the 2/7 Cav to LZ Thor, which was further West, up Highway Nine on the high-ground in advance of LZ Mike; also, to complete the lift of the 105 battery to LZ Mike plus a 155 battery; and further, that we would assault the 2d Brigade into the AO on D plus two. The operation on D plus one went without a hitch and we continued right on into D plus two when we assaulted the 2d Brigade. One battalion went in on LZ Wharton (2/12 Cav) and one went in on LZ Tom (2-5 Cav). We then airlifted the 1/5 Cav into LZ Wharton the same day. We also put a battery of 105's into LZ Tom and a battery of 105's into LZ Wharton. On D plus three, it was decided to complete the artillery move into LZs Wharton and Tom (The remaining 105 battery and a battery of 155's), to initiate the ground assault by the 1/5 Cav towards the Old French Fort to the northwest, and to launch an attack by a battalion minus (1-9 Mar) of Marines from the vicinity of Khe Sanh Base proper to seize Hill 471 which overlooked the Base from the South. Everything went along very well on D plus two, and on D plus three, so we assaulted with the 1st Brigade into LZ Snapper on D plus four. We assaulted one battalion (1-8 Cav) and airlifted another (1-12 Cav) and got in their 105 batteries that day. On D plus five, we brought the remainder of the artillery (155's) into LZ Snapper, launched the two battalions on attacks with the 1/12 Cav going toward Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. We decided the next day to go ahead with the assault of the ARVN Airborne Task Force. On D plus six, the ARVN Airborne Task Force assaulted into LZ Snake. We got all three battalions in that day and two of them moved off the LZ attacking in the direction of their objectives and their artillery was brought in. The LZ's, starting with Tom and Wharton in the 2d Brigade, then Snapper and Snake, as you'll see on a map, enveloped the Khe Sanh area. We established commanding positions all within mutual artillery support of each other on the high ground overlooking the whole area of Khe Sanh proper. So this meant that we were secure, but still we did not have positive locations of enemy forces, although we had already on D plus one started running into enemy positions astride the road West of LZ Thor. It became obvious that the NVA was well emplaced and deployed to defend against an attack up the road, Highway Nine, between THOR and Khe Sanh Combat Base. But the important thing is that we had encircled the enemy very rapidly and he was pretty well overwhelmed with our mass of troops and firepower, artillery and air. We used considerable numbers of arc light strikes (53 to be exact) starting on D minus six and continuing through the entire operation. As I said before, we had all the close air support we could use from the 7th Air Force and the 1st Marine Air Wing. It was really a terrific example of firepower and mobility on a scale that, personally, I've never heard of being used before. When you figure that we assaulted all three of our brigades here plus the artillery we had, it was quite a massive operation. There were quite a few enemy

ground forces opposing us; they hadn't withdrawn. But they did in many cases after our assaults took place, leaving their weapons on positions they were defending and which we occupied. I would say that it was an overwhelming operation by which we took over that area.

Relative to fire support; I think that I covered it pretty well. We had over 100 tubes of 105mm howitzers in this operation; two batteries of 8 inch howitzers, 5 batteries of 155 howitzers as I recall. We had a terrific amount of tube artillery plus 53 Arc Light Strikes during this operation and numerous close air support missions all of which commenced with our activities with the 1/9 Cav on D minus six.

There were no real big changes in plans other than the major one of the rapid termination of the operation and the turnabout to pull out and extract in order to get ready for Operation Delaware in the A Shau Valley. On 10 April, I was visited by the Corps Commander and told to start making plans to extract as fast as possible back to Quang Tri City and Camp Evans in order to assault into A Shau Valley. Actually, we started extracting on the next day, the 11th. This was, as I said, a definite surprise. I had not anticipated this order nor its coming quite that early. In some ways, it was a bit of a disappointment. But as I've said before, I've always wanted to go into the A Shau Valley. The weather at this time was a big consideration; everyone was convinced that April was the best month for airmobile operations in the A Shau Valley and April would soon be over. We had met with great success in Pegasus. It was obvious that the enemy opposition was quickly overcome--between the B-52 bombardment and the massiveness and lightning-like thrusts of our airmobile operation, the immediate resistance in the area adjacent to the Khe Sanh complex never had a chance to succeed. However, it was quite obvious that there were forces far to the south of our immediate area and also to the north and northwest. On the 10th, just before getting this notice about the A Shau, we had planned 13 air assaults for the next day with the 1st and 2d Brigades going south to where we had intelligence of the enemy being located, and with the 3d Brigade assaulting with its units to the north from its position around Khe Sanh. The 1st Marine Regiment, also that same day was planning to go in with 2 or 3 air assaults north of their AO into the valley west of the Rockpile. When I got this directive to turnabout, heading back to get ready for A Shau, I had to cancel all those assaults for that day. I feel that in some respects it was unfortunate that we didn't get to carry these out--really giving the surrounding area a good going over in a period of a week or ten days prior to having to depart. But there were certainly overwhelming considerations for us to get on back and on with our new mission of getting into the A Shau.

There were no great problems in our coordination of the operation. This was certainly a team effort with all the services, Army, Navy, Marines and Air Force in this together. It was quite a gratifying experience for me to have under my command the Marines and Navy Forces that we had for the operation. As I say, we had no problems. I feel that the whole operation went off very smoothly. I was given the utmost support by everyone--Air Force, Navy, Marines and Army. You had a lot of coordinating, naturally, but we encountered no great difficulties.

There were no limitations or restrictions placed on our actions except, of course, we couldn't cross the boundary between Laos and Vietnam. That made for difficulties because some of the most damaging artillery fire we received came from the CO ROC Mountains in Laos. We were not, of course, permitted to put ground units in there to eliminate these fires and this is

understandable. Otherwise, I had no restrictions that I am aware of. It was a wonderful operation and I was given complete charge of all the troops in the AO. I got their full support and there was no question of command or who was calling the signals and, of course, just as important, I had the full support of General Rosson at Provisional Corps Vietnam and of III MAF and the Theater. It was, all in all, a terrific operation and if you can get into the details, you can't help but realize it was a great achievement for all the forces that took part.

CONFIDENTIAL

6. (C) MISSION: 1st Air Cavalry Division (Reinf) attacks on D Day to open Hwy 9 from Ca Lu west to Khe Sanh Combat Base, link up with forces at KS and search for and destroy enemy forces in assigned AO.

7. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: During the period 11-31 March 1968, the 1 ACD initiated preparations and developed plans for the conduct of Operation PEGASUS/LAM SON 207A. The development phase was initiated with the construction of a C7A airstrip at LZ STUD; upgrading of Hwy 9 between the ROCKPILE and CA LU; prestocking of supplies at LZ STUD, extensive aerial recon by 1/9 Cav Sqdn to prepare the battlefield and selection and clearing of LZ's using TAC AIR, Artillery and B-52 Arc Light strikes. Security for the construction effort at LZ STUD was initially provided by the 4th Marine Regiment, one then two companies of 1 ACD and on D-1, by one battalion of 1st Marine Regiment which worked in an expanded AO around LZ STUD and SIGNAL HILL. On D-Day, the 1st Marine Regiment with one Bn securing the AO surrounding the 1 ACD CP, commenced operations in its assigned AO. The basic concept of operations was as follows; 1st Marine Regt with 2 Bn's would attack West of the 1st Marine Regt AO and attack West toward Khe Sanh. On D+1 and D+2 all elements would continue the attack West toward Khe Sanh. On D+3 the 2d Bde, 1 ACD would air assault 3 Bn's SE of Khe Sanh and attack NW. 26th Marine Regt with 1 Bn would attack South from Khe Sanh to secure hill 471. On D+4 the 1st Bde (-) 1 ACD would air assault with 2 Bn's South of Khe Sanh and attack to the North. D+5 the 3d ABN TF (ARVN) would air assault with 3 Bn's SW of Khe Sanh and attack SW toward Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. On order the 26th Marine Regt (-) would attack to the West out of Khe Sanh.

8. (C) EXECUTION:

a. General: Operation PEGASUS/LAM SON 207A was a classic example of the capability of the Airmobile Division to extract from one combat area and rapidly combat assault into another many miles away. Further, the closely integrated reconnaissance/fire support effort of the 1/9 Cav with TAC AIR, artillery, and B-52 Arc Light strikes during the period D-6 to D-Day was an almost flawless demonstration of properly preparing a battlefield when tactical intelligence is not available. The mission of the Division was accomplished by the effective and rapid deployment and immediate employment of a total of 14 battalions (8-1 ACD, 3-USMC, 3-ARVN). During the initial reconnaissance efforts, it became evident that the enemy had established positions designed to delay or stop any attempt to reinforce/relieve Khe Sanh. Primary positions were established on key terrain features both North and South of Hwy 9. As a result of the rapid introduction of combat troops into the AO, the enemy soon found allied troops in the front of, behind, and on the flank

of his positions and his units were forced to fight in an area and/or direction not of his choosing. Harassed by continuous aerial bombardment, reconnaissance efforts by the 1/9 Cav Sqdn and a versatile offense, the enemy was forced to abandon his positions and withdraw from the battle area. In his hasty retreat, discipline disappeared as evidenced by the large amounts of equipment, weapons, ammunition and supplies literally abandoned on battle positions. The enemy was confused, disorganized and demoralized resulting in his complete defeat.

(1) Maneuver:

(a) D-6 to D-Day (25 March-1 April): ON D-6, 1-9 Cav Sqdn initiated extensive reconnaissance operations in the PEGASUS/LAM SON 207A AO. The mission of the 1-9 Cav during this period was to find the enemy, destroy his antiaircraft capability, acquire hard intelligence for exploitation, and locate and prepare suitable LZ's. The squadron was supported during this period by one 8 inch howitzer battery that was moved from LZ SHARON to CA LU and one 105mm howitzer battery that was moved from LZ SHARON to LZ STUD as well as TAC AIR, ARA and B-52 Arc Light strikes. Known or suspected enemy antiaircraft positions and troop concentrations were sought out and destroyed. LZ's were selected and preparations of the LZ's for future use was accomplished by TAC AIR using special fuzed bombs (Daisy Cutters) and B-52 Arc Light strikes. During this phase of the operation, 1-9 Cav developed targets for 632 sorties of TAC AIR, 49 specially fuzed construction sorties (Daisy Cutters) and 12 B-52 Arc Light strikes. The thoroughness of battle-field preparation was demonstrated when no 1 ACD aircraft were lost due to AA or SA firing during the air assaults into the LZ's.

1 ACD Engineers supported by USN Mobile Construction Battalion (MCB) 5 and the 11th Engineer Battalion (USMC) initiated construction of a C-7A airfield and parking ramp, logistical facilities and bunker complex at LZ STUD on 14 March. By D-6 a type II C-7A airstrip (1500x600 feet), ammunition storage areas, aircraft and vehicle refuel facilities and extensive road nets in the vicinity of LZ STUD were complete or near completion. The C-7A airstrip was completed on 31 March and by 6 April the runway had been extended to 2300 ft to accommodate C-123 aircraft. C Company of 1-12 Cav was airlifted to CA LU on D-6 and placed OPCON to 2-1 Marines for security of the artillery batteries supporting 1-9 Cav Squadron and further providing security for Engr work parties at LZ Stud. This company was reinforced by C Company of 2-5 Cav on D-3. As D-Day approached, the intensity of reconnaissance and construction activity increased. The 1 ACD TAC CP airlifted to LZ STUD on D-1 and became operational at 1500H. On D-1, 2d Bde 101st Abn Division assumed responsibility for the portion of the JEB STUART AO vacated by 1 ACD and the security of Camp Evans. The 3d Bde, 1 ACD moved to marshalling areas vicinity of LZ Pedro in preparation for D-Day air assaults. Also, at 0800 hours, 1 ACD received OPCON of the 1st and 26th Marine Regiments.

(b) D Day (1 Apr): At 010700 April 1968 the attack phase of Operation PEGASUS/LAM SON 207A commenced as two battalions of the 1st Marine Regt attacked west from CA LU along Hwy 9. The 3d Bde, 1 ACD was air assaulted/airlifted from its marshalling area vicinity LZ Pedro (YD 002845) by combination of UH-1 and CH-47 aircraft to Forward LZ's/LZ Stud. Elements airlifted to LZ Stud were further air assaulted/airlifted into forward LZ's. 1-7 Cav air assaulted into LZ Mike (XD 937409). 2-7 Cav was airlifted into the same LZ. 5-7 Cav air assaulted into LZ Cates (XD 927437). Both LZ's were secured. No significant enemy resistance was encountered as the 1st Day of the operation ended with all objectives secured. One Bn (1-1 Marines) of the 1st Marine Regiment provided security for and conducted operations in an AO vicinity of the Division CP at LZ STUD, a mission it was to retain through-

*Confidential*

*Confidential*

out the operation. It is significant to note that ground fog, haze, and low hanging clouds delayed the air assault of the 3d Bde until 1300H. This phenomenon persisted throughout the operation. Even with this delay, the Brigade and its supporting artillery were in position prior to darkness. 1st and 2d Bde, 1 ACD continued operations in the eastern portion of the PEGASUS/LAM SON 207A AO vic LZ's Betty (YD 335504), Sharon (YD 336492) and Jane (YD 377432), while preparing for future commitments. (See TAB A, TAB B).

(c) D+1 (2 April): Offensive operations continued in the AO as 1st Marine Regt (-) continued the attack West along Hwy 9. Company's E and G (2-1 Marines) conducted an air assault and established LZ Robin (XD 975447). E/2-1 met light resistance on the LZ which resulted in 3 NVA killed. 3d Bde air assaulted the 2/7 Cav to LZ Thor (XD 897404) while 1-7 Cav and 5-7 Cav continued to improve positions on LZ's Mike and Cates and conducted company sized operations in the vicinity of the LZ's. No enemy resistance was encountered by the 3d Bde elements. The 2d Bde TAC CP airlifted to CA LU (YD 014449) while the 3 Bn's of the Bde moved into marshalling areas (vic LZ Jane) in preparation for air assaults on 3 April (See TAB A, TAB B).

(d) D+2 (3 April): Operations continued with enemy activity increasing. As the 1st Marine Regt (-) continued its attack West, Engr road clearing and upgrading operations continued on Hwy 9. 3d Bde continued operations in the vicinity of established LZ's with two Bn's. 2-7 Cav attacking West along Hwy 9 made contact with an estimated company size blocking position at XD 890404, resulting in 4 NVA killed. Accelerating the tempo of the entire operation due to its unparalleled success and the lack of significant enemy resistance, the 2d Bde, one day earlier than originally planned, air assaulted into the AO with 2-5 Cav air assaulting to LZ Tom (XD 900345) and 2-12 Cav first airlifting to LZ Stud by CH-47, transferring to UH-1H aircraft and air assaulting to LZ Wharton (XD 880360). 1-5 Cav was then airlifted to LZ Wharton. Both LZ's Tom and Wharton received incoming enemy artillery fire during the air moves. Also, LZ Wharton received approximately 20 rounds of 130mm artillery during the night. 1-9 Cav continued reconnaissance throughout the AO, observed and killed 5 NVA in 2 separate contacts (See TAB B).

(e) D+3 (4 April): Operations continued in the AO as 1st Marine Regt (-) continued its attack West against light enemy resistance. The 3d Bde continued operations in the vicinity of established LZ's. 2-7 Cav attacking West along Hwy 9 in the 3d Bde AO encountered an enemy defensive position at XD 883399. Contact was made and continued throughout the day resulting in 7 NVA killed. The 2d Bde concentrated efforts in improving LZ's with the 2-5 Cav conducting operations in the vicinity of LZ Tom and 2-12 Cav conducting operations in the vicinity of LZ Wharton. The 1-5 Cav initiated an attack toward an old French Fort at XD 895383. The Fort was occupied by an estimated NVA Bn and initial contact resulted in 4 NVA killed. 1st Bn, 9th Marines, OPCON to the 26th Marine Regt at Khe Sanh launched an attack South from Khe Sanh (the first offensive ground action of that element in weeks) to seize Hill 471 (XD 843393), a strategic piece of terrain affording a commanding view of Khe Sanh. After preparing the objective with artillery fire, the Marines successfully seized the hill resulting in 16 NVA killed. 1st Bde, 1 ACD, moved two Bn's (1-8 Cav, 1-12 Cav) into marshalling areas vic LZ Pedro in preparation for air assault into an AO west of the 2d Bde. (See TAB A, TAB B).

(f) D+4 (5 April): 1st Marine Regiment (-) continued to attack to the West with light contact. 1-1 Marines continued security mission and operations vicinity LZ Stud. The 3d Bde continued its attack West on Hwy 9 as 2-7 Cav again made contact with an enemy force at XD 883399. This contact continued throughout the day resulting in 9 NVA killed. The 2d Bde continued

*Confidential*

*Confidential*

the attack to seize the old French Fort meeting heavy enemy resistance. The companies of 2-5 Cav were airlifted to LZ Wharton, relieving the 2/12 Cav. Elements of the 26th Marine Regt continued operations in the vicinity of Khe Sanh, and Hill 471. An attack by an estimated enemy battalion against Hill 471 was repulsed resulting in 122 NVA killed. The 3d ABN TF (ARVN) was alerted to be prepared to airlift one rifle company from Quang Tri to effect link-up with the 37th ARVN Ranger Bn located at KS. The 1st Bde commenced operations in the western portion of the AO by airlifting 1-8 Cav and 1-12 Cav to LZ Stud. 1-8 Cav was further air assaulted to LZ Snapper (XD 842346). Upon landing at Snapper, D/1-8 Cav began operations to the West of the LZ and made contact with an enemy company resulting in 8 NVA killed and 1 POW. 1-12 Cav was airlifted to the same LZ and immediately began extensive combat operations to the West. 1st Bde CP airlifted into LZ Snapper closing at approximately 1500H. One Bn (2-8 Cav) remained in the vicinity of Quang Tri under 1 ACD control with the mission of securing LZ's Betty and Sharon and continuing combat operations vic of Quang Tri City (See TAB A, TAB B).

(g) D+5 (6 April): 1st Marine Regt (-) continued operations in the high ground north and south of Hwy 9. 2-1 Bn conducted a battalion-size air assault/airlift to LZ Kiwi (XD 969486). 2-3 Bn continued bridge and hwy security mission along Hwy 9 while at the same time conducting two company-size air assaults south of the Hwy. The heaviest fighting of the operation to date occurred in the 3d Bde AO as 2-7 Cav continued its drive west on Hwy 9 toward Khe Sanh. Enemy blocking along the Highway offered stubborn resistance. In a day long battle which ended when the enemy summarily abandoned his positions and fled to the west, the Bn accounted for 83 NVA killed, 1 POW, 121 individual and 10 crew served weapons captured. The 2-12 Cav was airlifted to Hill 471 relieving 1-9 Marines at that position. Two companies of 2-12 remained on the hill while two companies initiated an attack to the South toward Khe Sanh Hamlet (XD 846381). The 1-5 Cav, continuing its attack on the French Fort, received a heavy volume of enemy mortar fire causing its extraction and return to LZ's Wharton and Tom with the mission of seizing the French Fort given to the 2-5 Cav. At 060640 in the 1st Bde (-) AO the 1-12 Bn perimeter located West of LZ Snapper was attacked by an enemy force utilizing mortars, hand grenades and B-40 and B-41 rocket launchers. The attack ended in disaster for the enemy as 20 NVA were killed. At 1320H the 84th Co of the 8th Airborne Battalion, 3d Airborne Task Force was airlifted by 1 ACD aircraft into Khe Sanh and linked up with elements of the 37th Ranger Battalion. The lift was conducted without incident and marked the initial link-up of forces at Khe Sanh. 26th Marine Regt continued local operations vicinity of Khe Sanh with 1-9 Marines conducting an attack to the West of Hill 471 after being relieved on position by 2-12 Cav. 1-9 Sqdn continued to conduct low level reconnaissance throughout the AO accounting for 27 NVA killed in scattered contacts. (See TAB B).

(h) D+6 (7 April): 1st Marine Regt (-) reported no significant contact as operations continued in the assigned AO. 3d Bde continued its attack along Hwy 9 against enemy resistance consisting mostly of occasional sniper fire. Coordination between 3d Bde, 1 ACD and 26th Marine Regt was finalized for the relief of KS on 8 Apr. The 2d Bde continued its attack on the French Fort as the 2-5 Cav air assaulted to XD 843382 and then attacked West into the Fort, resulting in 6 NVA killed. The seizure of the Fort eliminated the last known enemy strong point between the FIRST TEAM and Khe Sanh. The 2-12 Cav continued operations vicinity of Khe Sanh Hamlet (XD 846381) finding 5 crew served and 25 individual weapons plus 470 rds lg caliber and 5000 rds small caliber ammunition. 1st Bde (-) continued operations West of LZ Snapper with no significant contact. The 3d Airborne Task

*Confidential*

*Confidential*

Force (ARVN) was committed to Operation Pegasus/Lam Son 207A at 070815H, having previously been delayed by unusually poor weather. The entire TF was airlifted from Quang Tri to the 1 ACD base at LZ Stud. One Bn was then air assaulted to LZ Snake (XD 808378) with the mission of clearing and securing the LZ. Two more Bn's and the TF CP were then airlifted into the LZ. Throughout the air assault phase of the operation, the LZ was subjected to enemy mortar and artillery fire. There was no ground contact as the ARVN ABN TF successfully secured the LZ and prepared to conduct ground attacks to the West and South. The 26th Marines continued local operations in the vicinity of Khe Sanh with no contact (See TAB B).

(i) D+7 (8 April): 1st Marine Regt continued operations in assigned AO conducting one company-sized air assault to seize objective at XD 951480. One contact at XD 854481 resulted in 7 NVA killed. The 3d Bde airlifted its CP into Khe Sanh and assumed the mission of securing Khe Sanh. This was accomplished after the 2-7 Cav successfully cleared Hwy 9 to the Base and effected link-up with the 26th Marine Regiment. At 0800 this date, the relief of Khe Sanh was effected and the FIRST TEAM became the new landlord. 3d Bde elements occupied the high ground to the East and Northeast of the base with no enemy contact. At this time it became increasingly evident, through the lack of enemy contact and the large amounts of new equipment being found indiscriminately abandoned on the battlefield, that the enemy had fled the area rather than face certain defeat in battle. He was totally confused by the swift, bold attack executed by THE FIRST TEAM. 2d Bde continued to press its search for enemy personnel and equipment in the vicinity of the French Fort and Khe Sanh Hamlet. 1st Bde (-) continued operations West of LZ Snapper with no significant contact. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) received a ground and mortar attack at LZ Snake at 0400H. Contact was broken at 0630H as the enemy suffered 72 killed. The 3d and 6th Bns initiated operations to the West and Northwest of LZ Snake while the 8th Bn continued operations in the vicinity of LZ Snake. Throughout the day, all elements of the TF were subjected to enemy mortar, rocket and artillery fire; however, the fire was largely ineffective. After relief of the security mission at Khe Sanh by the 3d Bde, 1 ACD, elements of the 26th Marine Regt initiated operations in the high ground to the West and Northwest of Khe Sanh (See TAB B).

(j) D+8 (9 April) 26 MAR Regt attacked W out of KS. Operations continued with two Bn's of the 1st Marine Regt continuing to press their search for the enemy. By this date, all 1st Marine Regt objectives had been secured and Hwy 9 was repaired and secured throughout the 1st Marine AO. 3d Bde reported only scattered incidents of enemy sniper fire as operations continued in the vicinity of Khe Sanh and along Hwy 9 in the 3d Bde AO. Incoming mortar, rocket and artillery fire at Khe Sanh became increasingly sporadic after several weeks of slightly more intense bombardment. The 2d Bde continued operations vicinity the French Fort, Khe Sanh Hamlet and Hill 471 with intermittent contact. In the 1st Bde (-) AO D/1-12 Cav found a large weapons and ammunition cache at YD 834384. A/1-8 made contact with an unknown size enemy force at XD 822314 resulting in 16 NVA killed. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) continued attacks to the West and Northwest of LZ Snake with no ground contact. Sporadic mortar and artillery fire continued to harass the ARVN units throughout the day. (See TAB B).

(k) D+9 (10 April): 1st Marine Regt continued to search for enemy personnel and equipment with no enemy contact. 3d Bde continued operations vicinity Khe Sanh finding numerous bunkers, one twenty foot deep T-shaped tunnel and many discarded articles of NVA equipment. 2d Bde continued operations in the French Fort, Khe Sanh Hamlet and Hill 471. Light enemy contact was reported as units continued to find abandoned NVA supplies and equipment. 1st Bde (-) operating to the West of LZ Snapper, was assigned

*8 Confidential*

*Confidential*

the mission to continue the attack Northwest with 1 Bn to seize the new Lang Vei Special Forces Camp at XD 780360. This was the site of an attack in Mid-February by NVA infantry supported by armor during which the camp was overrun. The 1-12 Cav commenced the attack and seized the Old Special Forces Camp (XD 795360) with limited resistance. Artillery and air strikes were called in on the new camp and numerous secondary explosions prevented the 1-12 Cav from occupying the area. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) and 26th Marine Regiment continued operations with scattered enemy contacts. Elements of A Troop, 1-9 Cav Sqdn, observed and called in air strikes and destroyed an enemy PT-76 Tank (XD 720375). This marked the first enemy tank destroyed and confirmed. (See TAB B).

(1) D+10 (11 April): 1st Marine Regt continued extensive combat operations in its assigned AO conducting 3 company sized air assaults in an attempt to find and destroy the enemy. Security operations continued on Hwy 9 as engineer work parties neared completion of bridge rebuilding and clearing of the hwy. 3d Bde continued local operations in the vicinity of Khe Sanh with emphasis on the areas East and NE of the base. 1-7 Cav continued to provide security for bridge sites and engineer work parties on Hwy 9. After several days of no incoming enemy indirect weapons fire, Khe Sanh received approximately 26 rounds of mixed artillery and 122mm rocket fire. 2d Bde released 2-12 Cav for air movement back to Camp Evans. The Bn was extracted from the 2d Bde AO by UH-1H aircraft and taken to LZ Stud. Bad weather hampered further movement and the Bn did not close Camp Evans until 12 April. On closure at Camp Evans, 2-12 Cav became OPCON 2d Bde, 101st Airborne Division. 1-12 Cav from 1st Bde was placed OPCON to 2d Bde, 1 ACD, and continued its attack on the new Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. Heavy enemy contact at XD 785357 resulted in 27 NVA killed. 1st Bde (-) was extracted from the western portion of the AO and returned to the Quang Tri area to resume operations in the vicinity of LZ's Betty and Sharon. 2-8 Cav Bn was released OPCON 1 ACD and returned OPCON 1st Bde upon its closure at LZ Betty. These moves back to the JEB STUART I AO were prompted by an order from CG, PCV to initiate operations in the A SHAU Valley as soon as possible. This new operation, DELAWARE/LAM SON 216, is covered in a separate after action report. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) continued to attack west and southwest of LZ Snake with two Bn's. At 1625H objective at XD 785367 was secured by the 6th Bn. At 1930H the Bn was attacked by an estimated NVA Bn. Contact continued until 2240H, at which time the enemy withdrew leaving behind 20 dead. 26th Mar Regiment reported no significant contact as operations continued West and Northwest of Khe Sanh. 37th ARVN Ranger Bn initiated airlift from Khe Sanh to Da Nang. Lift was completed on 12 April (See TAB B).

(m) D+11 (12 April): 1st Marine Regt (-) continued to conduct operations to the West in its extended AO. 2-1 Marines and 2-3 Marines conducted four company size air assaults. No enemy contact was reported by 1st Marine Regt (-). 3d Bde commenced its extraction from Khe Sanh as 1-7 Cav airlifted by UH-1H to LZ Stud in preparation for further airlift to Camp Evans, two Companies of 5-7 Cav airlifted by C-130 from Khe Sanh to Camp Evans. Two Companies continued security mission at Khe Sanh. 2-7 Cav, after being relieved of Hwy 9 security responsibilities by elements of 1st Marine Regt (-), moved to Khe Sanh in preparation for extraction to Camp Evans on 13 April. 2d Bde airlifted its CP to LZ Snapper. 1-12 Cav continued its attack on the new Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. The Bn again met moderate enemy resistance; however, the camp was taken at 1155H, as the Bn supported by A/1-9 Cav accounted for 21 NVA killed, 11 crew served weapons and 10 small arms weapons captured. Two companies from 1-5 Cav air assaulted into an enemy held LZ at XD 828321. After a brief fire fight, the LZ was secured.

*Confidential*

*Confidential*

Results of the contact were 12 NVA killed and 7 small arms weapons captured. The 6th Bn, 3d Abn TF (ARVN) was attacked at 0530H by an estimated two company size force. Contact was broken at 0640H with 5 NVA killed. 3d and 6th Bns continued local operations in the vicinity of the LZ. 26th Marine Regt continued operations west and NW of Khe Sanh with no contact. 1st Bde (-) continued operations vicinity of the Quang Tri complex with no contact. Engr upgrading was completed on Hwy 9 and the 12.8 mile stretch of highway from CA LU to Khe Sanh was opened to traffic for the first time in 8 months. (See TAB B).

(n) D+12 (13 April): 1st Marine Regt (-) continued operations in assigned AO with no significant contact. 3d Bde extraction from the AO continued as 1-7 Cav was airlifted by C-123 aircraft from LZ Stud to Camp Evans. Two companies of 2-7 Cav and remaining two companies 5-7 Cav were also airlifted from Khe Sanh to Camp Evans. Poor weather prevented the remainder of 2-7 Cav and 3d Bde CP from leaving Khe Sanh. Responsibility for security of Khe Sanh scheduled to be assumed by the 2d Bde's 2-5 Cav was also delayed due to poor weather. One company of 2-5 Cav was airlifted to Khe Sanh and placed OPCON 2-7 Cav. Remainder of the Bn continued operations vicinity of Hill 471. 1-12 Cav continued operations in and around the new Lang Vei Special Forces Camp resulting in 11 NVA killed, 40 crew served weapons, 9,050 large caliber rounds and 111,400 small caliber rounds captured. Two companies 1-5 Cav continued operations via XD 828381 resulting in two additional NVA killed. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) was alerted for extraction from the AO to Khe Sanh in preparation for further movement to Hue. 26th Marine Regt continued local operations West and NW of Khe Sanh with no significant contact. (See TAB B).

(o) D+13 (14 April): 1st Marine Regt (-) continued operations in assigned AO, with emphasis on operations in the high ground overlooking Hwy 9. 3d Bde completed the airlift of 2-7 Cav and Bde CP to Camp Evans. On closing Camp Evans, 3d Bde received OPCON 2-12 Cav from 2d Bde 101st Abn Div and also assumed responsibility for security of Camp Evans. The 2d Bde CP and remaining 3 companies of 2-5 Cav airlifted to Khe Sanh, relieving 3d Bde and assuming security mission of Khe Sanh. The 1-12 Cav was extracted and airlifted to Quang Tri then further moved by truck to LZ Sharon. At 1810H the Bn had closed LZ Sharon, was released OPCON 2d Bde and returned OPCON 1st Bde. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) was extracted from vicinity of LZ Snake and closed Khe Sanh at 1735H. In the 26th Marine Regt AO, 3-26 Marines initiated an attack north from Hill 881 S (XD 777438). The objective of the attack was to seize Hill 881 N (XD 775457). The attacking battalion met heavy resistance during the attack; however, seized the hill resulting in 106 NVA killed. The seizure of this piece of terrain was accomplished approximately 1 year from the date the hill was last successfully occupied by US Marines. 1st Bde continued operations in the vicinity of the Quang Tri Complex and South of LZ Sharon with no significant enemy contact. 1-9 Cav Squadron continued to support 2d Bde in the vicinity of Khe Sanh with A Troop while B, C, and D Troops initiated a phased withdrawal from the AO. (See TAB I)

(p) D+14 (15 April): Operation Pegasus/Lam Son 207A officially terminated at 150800H April 1968. The 2d Bde (-) 1 ACD was placed OPCON 3d Mar Div and further to TF Glick and initiated Operation Scotland III in the vicinity of Khe Sanh. The 3d Abn TF (ARVN) commenced air movement from Khe Sanh to Hue. The move of the TF was conducted moving some elements first to LZ Stud by CH-47 aircraft and then transferring to C-123 aircraft for moves to Hue/Phu Bai. Other elements moved directly from Khe Sanh by C-130 and C-123 aircraft to Hue/Phu Bai. The move was continuously hampered by adverse weather conditions and was not completed until 181715H when the last elements

*Confidential*

of the TF closed Hue. 1st Marine Regt and 26th Marine Regt were released OPCOM 1 ACD and returned OPCOM 3d Mar Div effective 150800H. (See TAB B).

#### 9. (U) COMMANDER'S ANALYSES

a. General: Operation Pegasus/Lam Son 207A from its inception to final extraction from the AO will long stand as a classic example of air cavalry operations. The operation geographically illustrates the speed and effectiveness with which a large force can be employed in combat using airmobile tactics and techniques developed by the FIRST TEAM. The enemy's repeated failure to fully comprehend the quick reaction time and capabilities of the 1 ACD led to his defeat, forced withdrawal, and eventual rout from the battlefield. The enemy was helpless and confused, suffered great losses in men and equipment, and failed in his mission to block or delay the relief of Khe Sanh.

b. Execution: The success of the Pegasus/Lam Son 207A operation can largely be attributed to the detailed planning and preparation that occurred prior to D-Day. Nevertheless, it was the derring-do of the individual SKY TROOPER and the successive levels of command that made the planning look good. The extensive reconnaissance/surveillance of the AO provided by 1-9 Cav served to locate hard targets for TAC Air, B-52 ARC LIGHTS; LZ's; and to provide information for the division on the overall impact of the terrain, weather and enemy. Construction of logistical facilities, ammunition storage areas, road nets, aircraft and vehicle refuel/rearm points and a Type II C-7A runway were basically complete prior to the initiation of the operation. Hwy 9 between the Rock Pile (XD 479558) and LZ Stud was re-opened ensuring a continuous flow of needed supplies and equipment to forward elements of the Division. After the initial success of the 3d Bde, the decision was made to accelerate the commitment of the remaining forces. By D+6 a total of 11 complete battalions had been air assaulted/airlifted into the AO and 20 battalions were actively committed in ground operations. The success of the initial battalion air assaults was rapidly exploited by aggressive company and even platoon-sized air assaults, all supported by artillery and air. The enemy, although well dug-in, well supplied and initially determined to deter relief of Khe Sanh, found himself surrounded and had no choice but to retreat in rout order back into Laos leaving behind both his dead and much valuable equipment strewn over the entire battlefield. The total success of the operation can be best measured by the mission accomplishment: In 15 days, the division had entered the AO, defeated the enemy, relieved Khe Sanh, opened Highway 9 and extracted from the assault to assault four days later into the heart of the NVA bastion in the A SHAU Valley. The flexibility, mobility and effectiveness of the FIRST TEAM were confirmed by unparalleled success.

OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT  
TAB B INCLOSURE 1

D-DAY 1 APRIL

1st MARINE REGIMENT

1-1 Mar Secure LZ STUD

1st MAR REGT (-) Attacks

WEST FROM CA LU ALONG HWY 9

3d BDE 1 ACD

1-7 BN AIR ASSAULTED

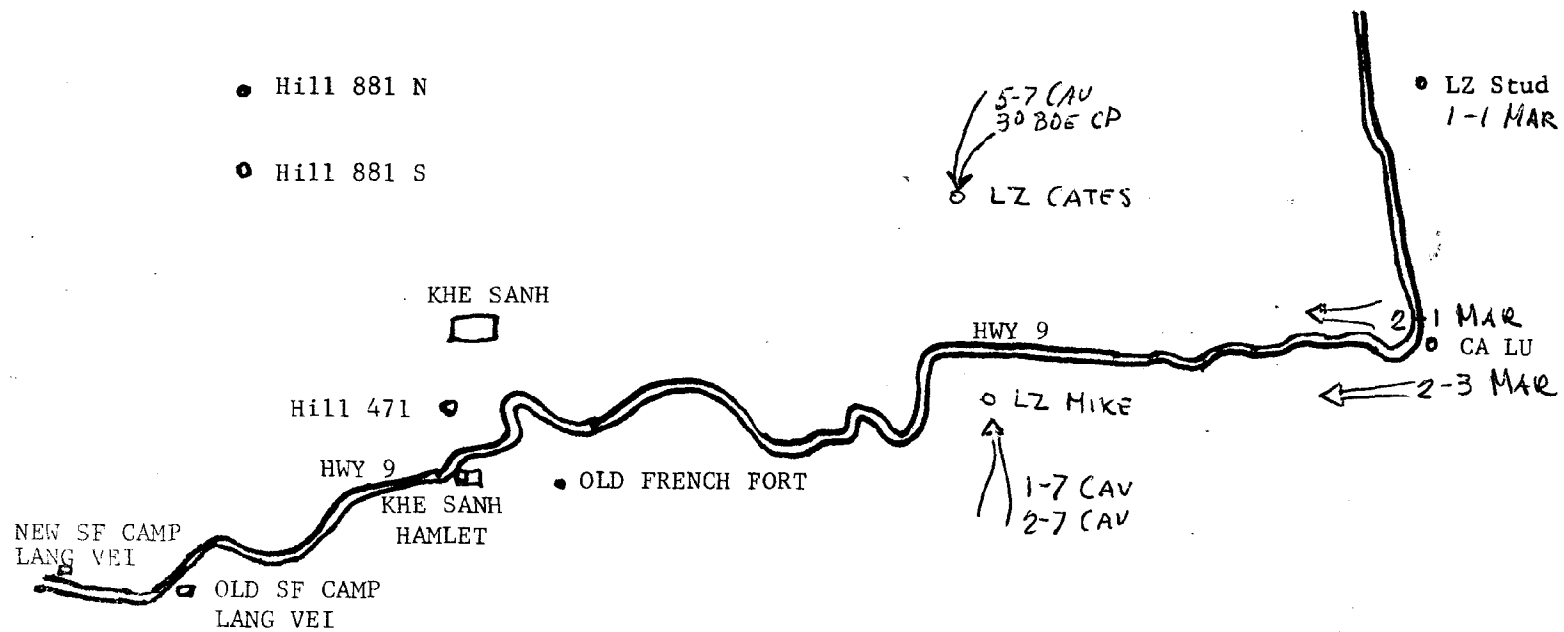
LZ MIKE

2-7 BN AIR LIFTED TO LZ MIKE

5-7 BN AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ CATES

BDE CP AIR LIFTED TO LZ CATES

D-DAY 1 APRIL



OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 2

D + 1 2 APRIL

1st MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

2-1 (-) CONT ATTACK WEST. TWO

CO'S AIR ASSAULT TO LZ ROBIN

2-3 MAR CONT ATTACK WEST

3D BDE 1 ACD

2-7 CAV AIR ASSAULT TO LZ THOR

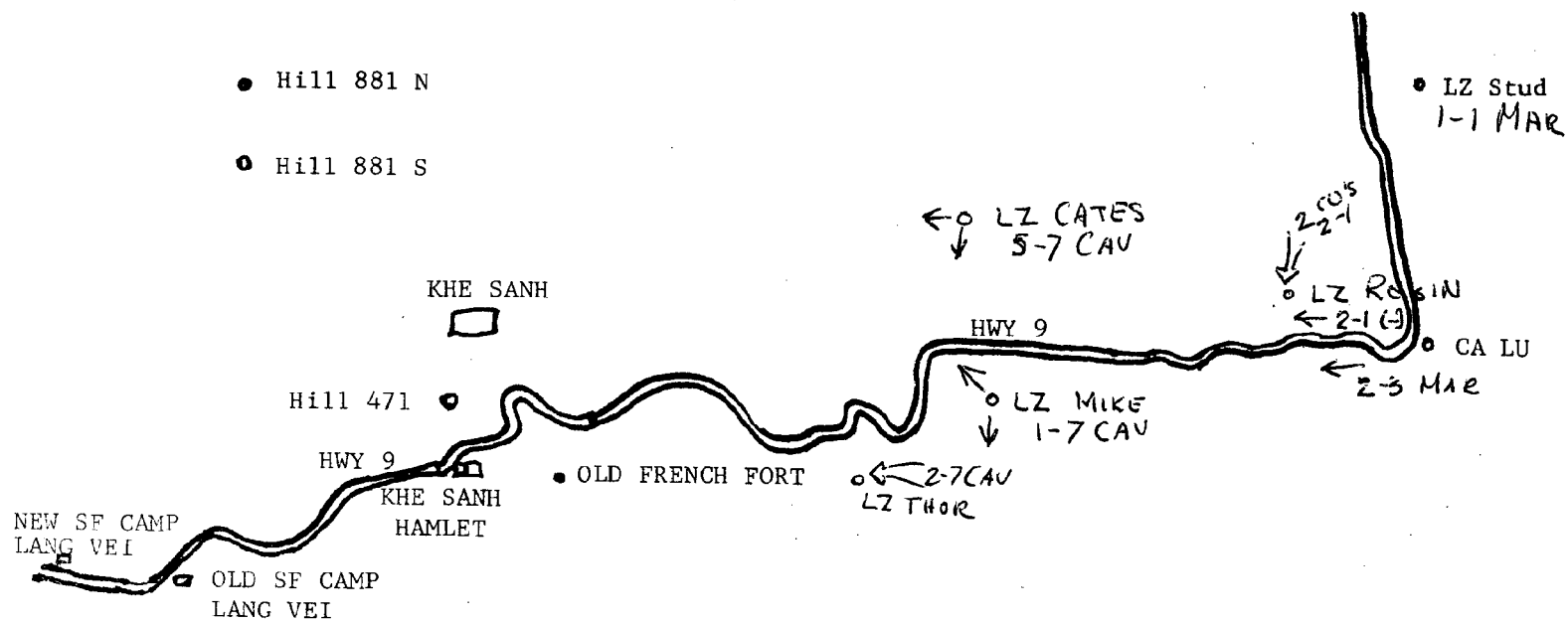
1-7 CAV CDT OPNS VIC LZ MIKE

5-7 CAV CDT OPNS VIC LZ CATES

2D BDE L ACD

BDE CP AIR LIFTED TO CA LU

O+1 2 APRIL



OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 3

D + 2 3 APRIL

1st MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1st MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK

WEST ALONG HWY 9

3D BDE L ACD

2-7 ATTACKS WEST FROM LZ THOR

1-7 CONT OPNS VIC LZ MIKE

5-7 CONT OPNS VIC LZ GATES

2D BDE L ACD

2-5 CAV AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ TOM

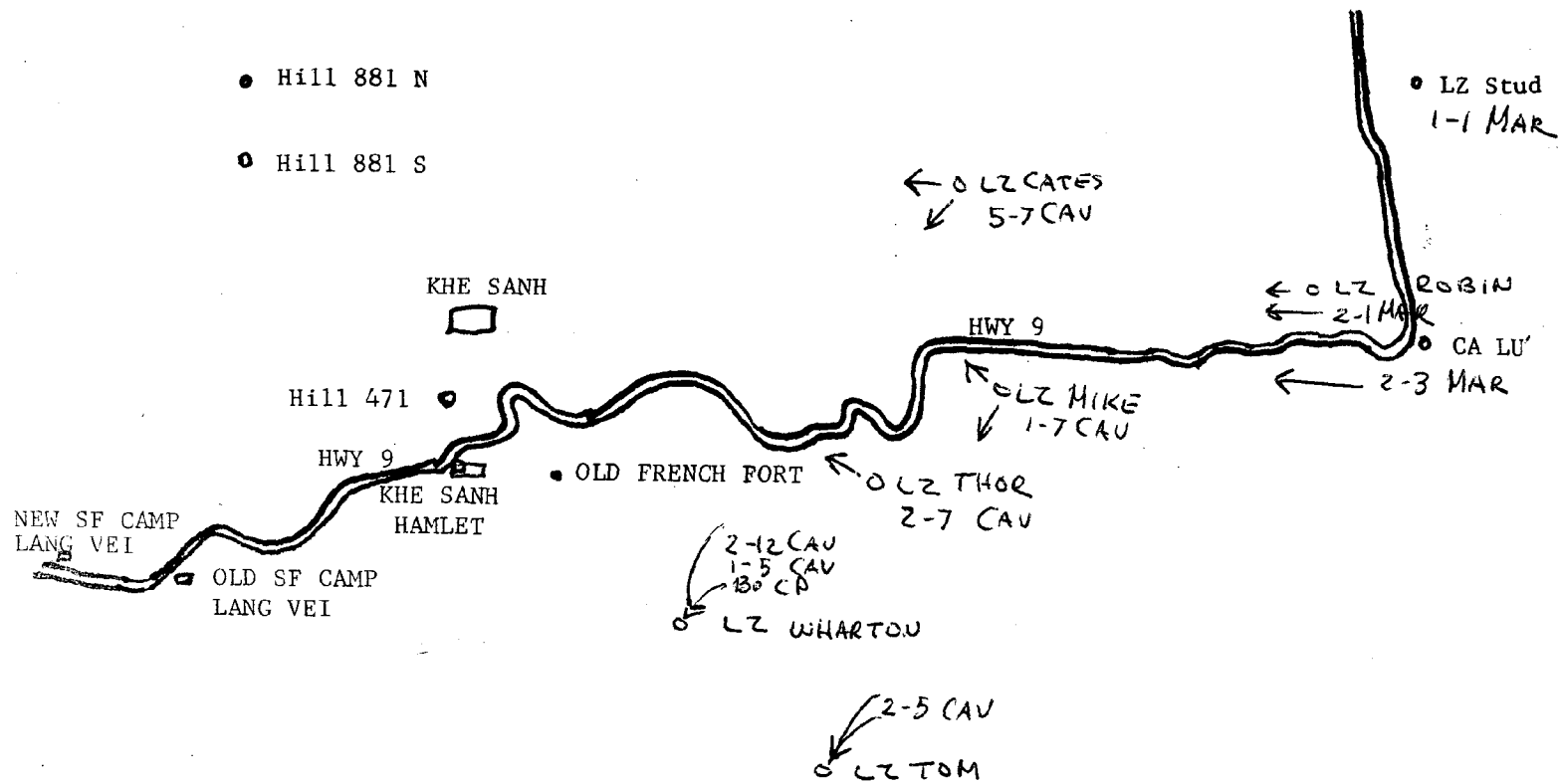
2-12 CAV AIRLIFTED TO LZ STUD

THEN AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ WHARTON

1-5 CAV AIR LIFTED TO LZ WHARTON

2D BDE CP AIRLIFTED TO LZ WHARTON

D+2 3 APRIL



OPERATION REGISNS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 4

D + 3 4 APRIL

1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK

WEST ALONG HWY 9

3d BDE 1 ACD

2-7 CAV CONT ATTACK WEST

FROM LZ THOR

1-7 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ MIKE

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ CAVES

2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV ATTACKS TO SEIZE OLD

FRENCH FORT

2-12 CAV CDT OPNS VIC LZ WHARTON

2-5 CAV CDT OPNS VIC LZ TOM

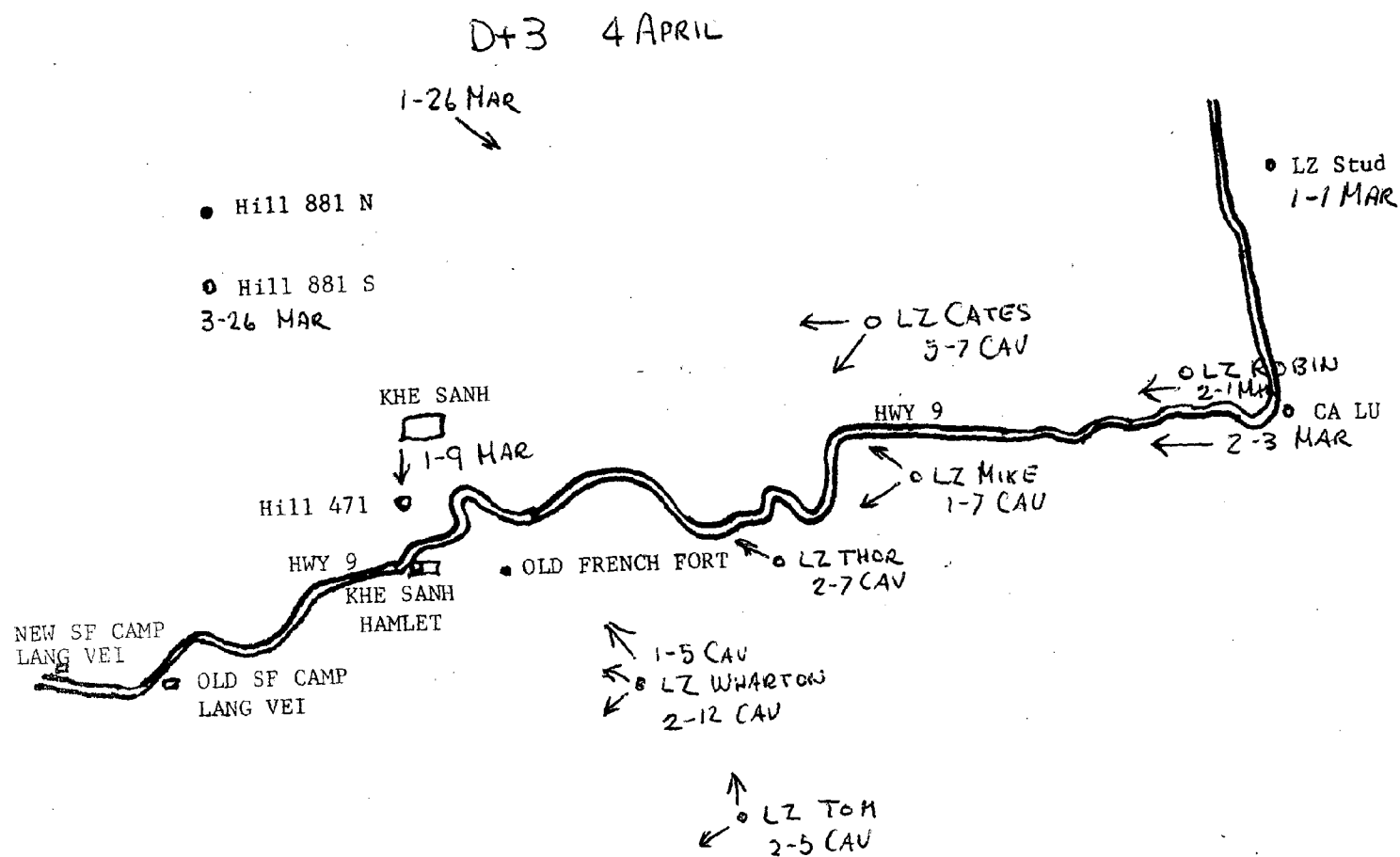
26TH MAR REGT

1-9 MAR ATTACKS SOUTH FROM KHE SANH

TO SEIZE HILL 471

26TH MAR REGT (-) CONT SCTY KI AND

OPNS VIC KS



OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B ENCLOSURE 5

D + 4 5 APRIL

1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK WEST

3D BDE 1 ACD

2-7 CAV CONT ATTACK WEST FROM

LZ THOR

1-7 CAV CONT OPNS FROM LZ MIKE

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS FROM LZ GATES

2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT ATTACK ON FRENCH FORT

2-12 CAV CONT OPNS FROM LZ WHARTON

2-5 CAV AIRLIFT TWO CO'S TO LZ WHARTON,

CONT OPNS FROM LZ TOM

1ST BDE (-) 1 ACD

BDE (-) AIRLIFTED TO LZ STUD

1-8 CAV AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ SNAPPER

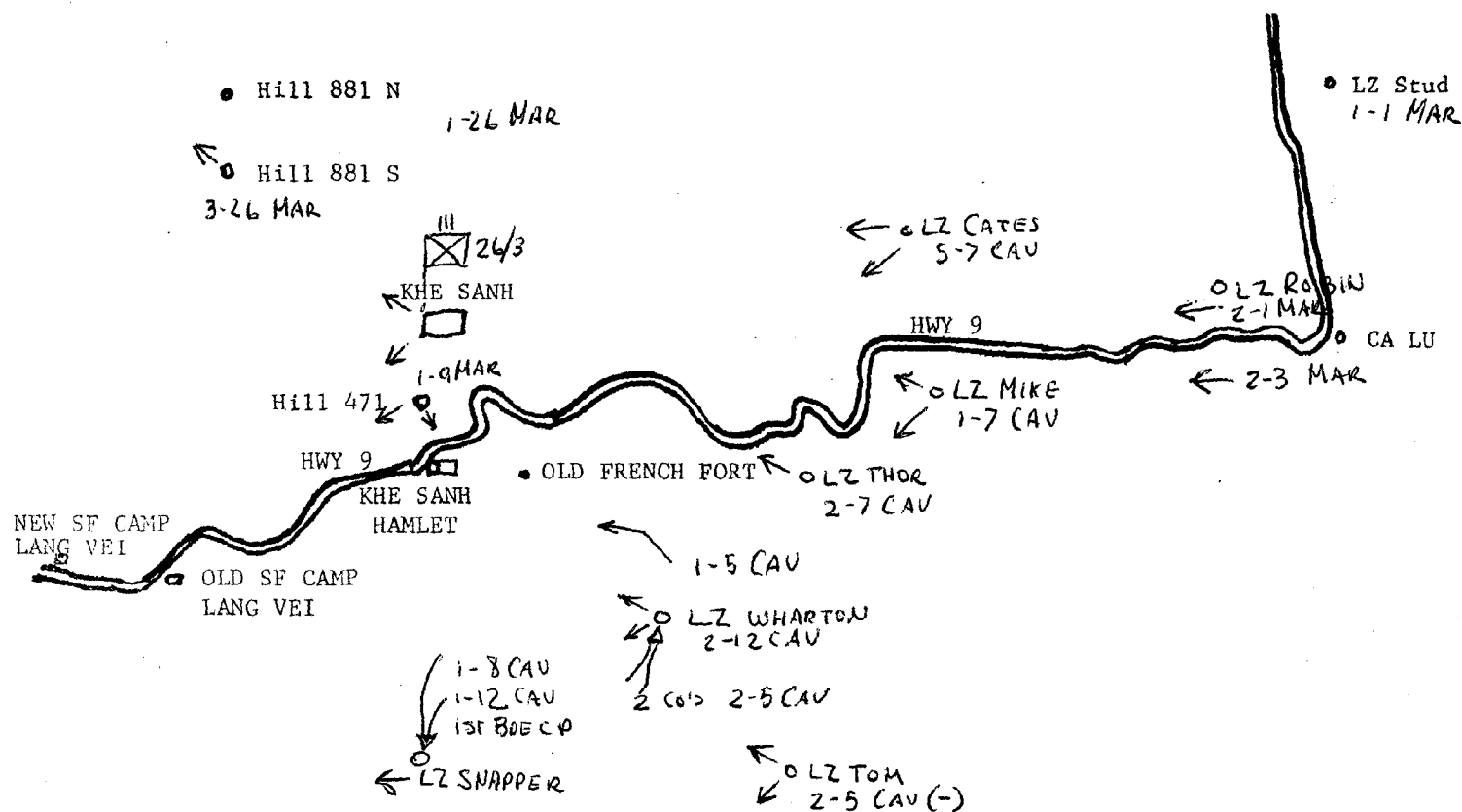
1-12 CAV AND BDE CP AIRLIFTED TO

LZ SNAPPER

26TH MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT OPNS VIC HILL 471

26TH MAR (-) CONT OPNS VIC KS



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 6

D + 5 6 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

- 1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD
- 2-1 MAR AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ KIWI
- 2-3 MAR CONT ATTACK TO WEST

## 3D BDE 1 ACD

- 2-7 CONT ATTACK WEST ALONG HWY 9
- 5-7 CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ GATES
- 1-7 CAV CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ MIKE

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

- 2-12 CAV AIRLIFTED TO HILL 471, COMMENCES ATTACK SOUTH
- 1-5 CAV CONT ATTACK ON FRENCH FORT, AIR-LIFTED TO LZ'S WHARTON AND TOM
- 2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ'S WHARTON AND TOM, GIVEN MISSION OF SEIZING FRENCH FORT

## 1ST BDE 1 ACD

- 1-12 CAV CONT ATTACK WEST OF LZ SNAPPER
- 1-8 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAPPER

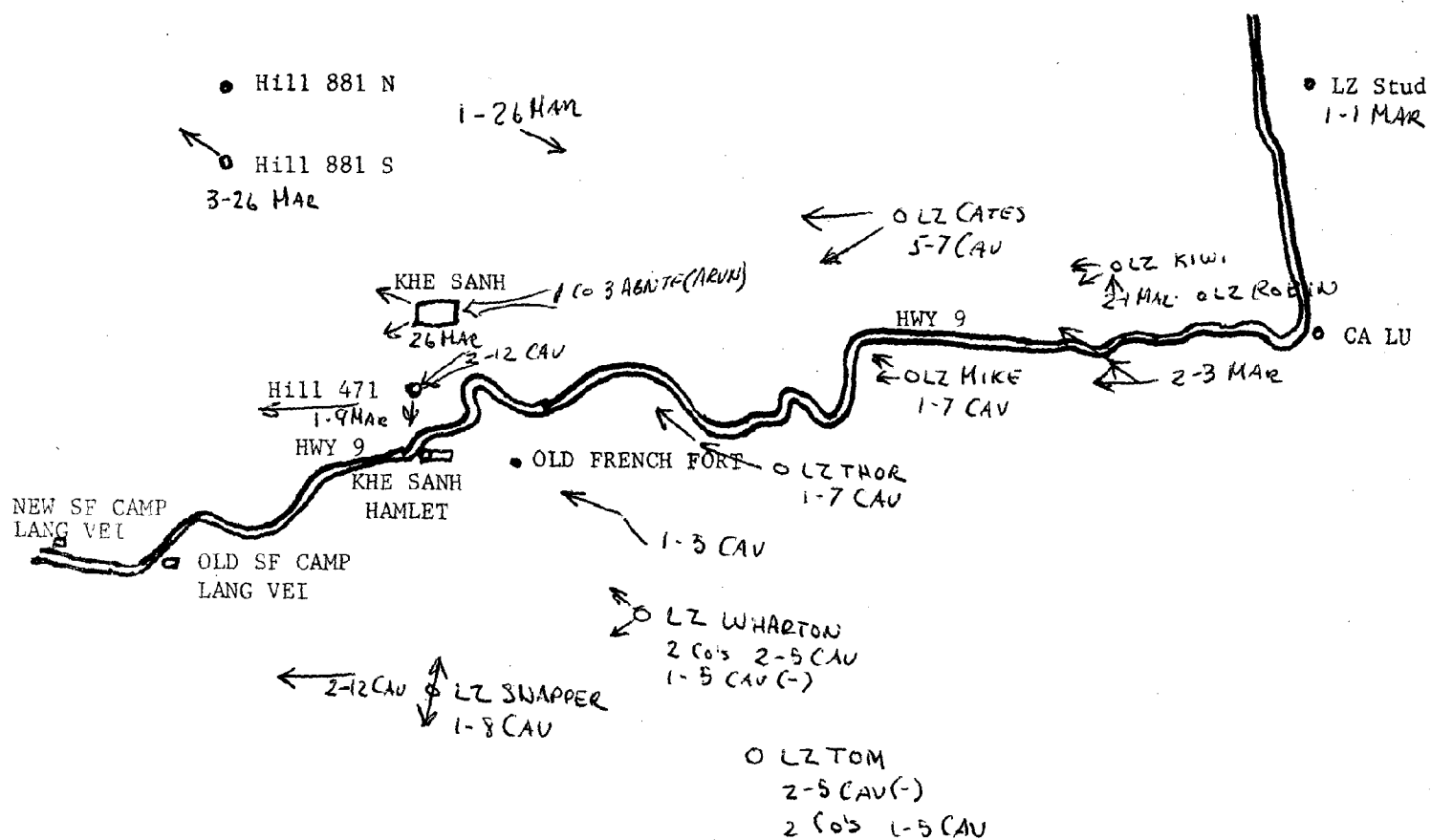
## 26TH MARINE REGT

- 1-9 MAR ATTACK WEST FROM HILL 471
- 26th MAR REGT (-) CONT LOCAL OPNS VIC WS

## 3D ABN TF ( ARVN)

- 84th CO 8th BN AIRLIFTED TO K TO LINK UP WITH 37th ARVN TANGER BN

D+5 6 APRIL



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 7

D + 6 7 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK TO WEST

## 3d BDE 1 ACD

2-7 CONT ATTACK WEST ON HWY 9

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ GATES

1-7 CAV CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ MIKE

## 2d BDE 1 ACD

2-5 CAV AIR ASSAULTED THEN ATTACKED WEST  
AND SEIZED FRENCH FORT2-12 CAV CONT OPNS IN KS HAMLET AND VIC  
HILL 471

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON AND TOM

## 1ST BDE (-) 1 ACD

1-12 CAV CONT ATTACK WEST OF LZ SNAPPER

1-8 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAPPER

## 26TH MARINE REGT

1-9 M/R CONT ATTACK WEST OF HILL 471

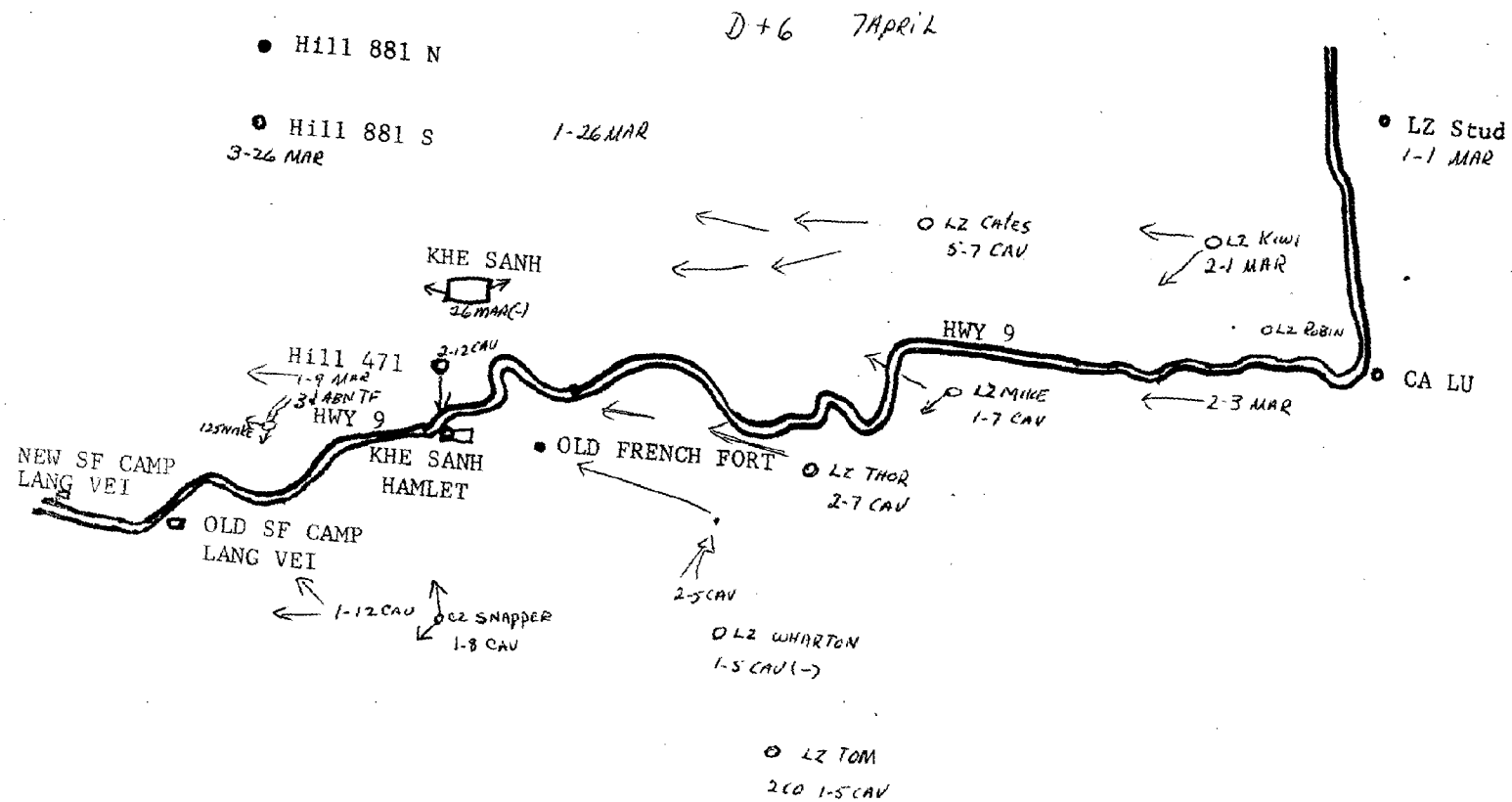
26th M/R (-) CONT OPNS VIC KS

## 3d ABN TF (ARVN)

TF AIRLIFTED FROM QUANG TRI TO LZ STUD

8TH BN AIR ASSAULTED TO LZ SNAKE

6TH BN, 3D BN AND TF CP AIRLIFTED TO  
LZ SNAKE



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 8

D + 7 8 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SOUT LZ STUD

1ST M R REGT (-) CONT ATTACK WEST

## 3D BDE 1 ACD

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ GATES,  
OCCUPIED HIGH GROUND ENE OF KS

1-7 CONT OPNS WEST FROM LZ MIKE

2-7 CAV CONT ATTACK WEST EFFECTED LINK UP  
WITH 26TH MARINES AT KS

BDE CP AIRLIFTED TO KS

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON AND TOM

2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC FRENCH FORT

2-12 CAV CONT OPNS VIC FRENCH FORT KS HAMLET  
AND HILL 471

## 1ST BDE 1 ACD

1-8 CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAPPER

1-12 CAV CONT ATTACK W LZ SNAPPER

## 26TH MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT ATTACK WEST HILL 471

26th MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS VIC KS AND WNW  
OF KS

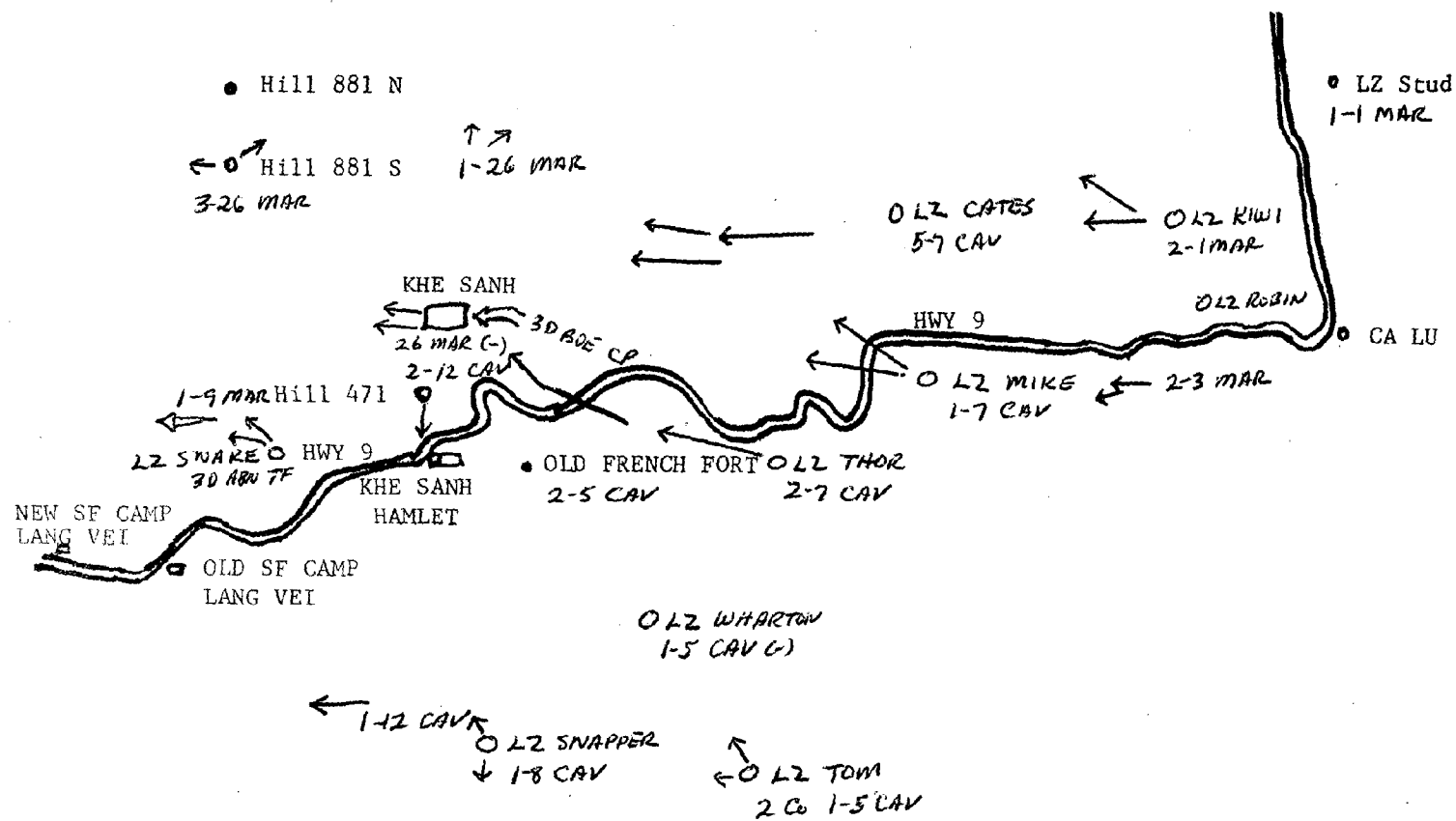
## 3D ABN TF (ARVN)

8th BN CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAKE

6th BN CDT ATTACK NW LZ SNAKE

3D BN CDT ATTACK W LZ SNAKE

D+7 8 APRIL



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 9

D + 8 9 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT 30TH LZ STUD

1st MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS WEST

## 3d BDE 1 ACD

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS ON HIGH GROUND ENE OF KS

2-7 CAV CONT OPNS VIC KS AND LZ THOR

1-7 CAV CONT OPNS WEST OF LZ MIKE

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON AND TOM

2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC FRENCH FORT

2-12 CAV CONT OPNS VIC HILL 471 AND KS HAMLET

## 1ST BDE 1 ACD

1-12 CAV CONT ATTACK W OF LZ SNAPPER

1-8 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAPPER AND WEST OF  
LZ SNAPPER

## 26TH MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT ATTACK W OF HILL 471

3-26 MAR CONT OPNS VIC HILL 881 (S)

1-26 MAR CONT OPNS N OF KS

26 MAR (-) ATTACKED WEST FROM KS

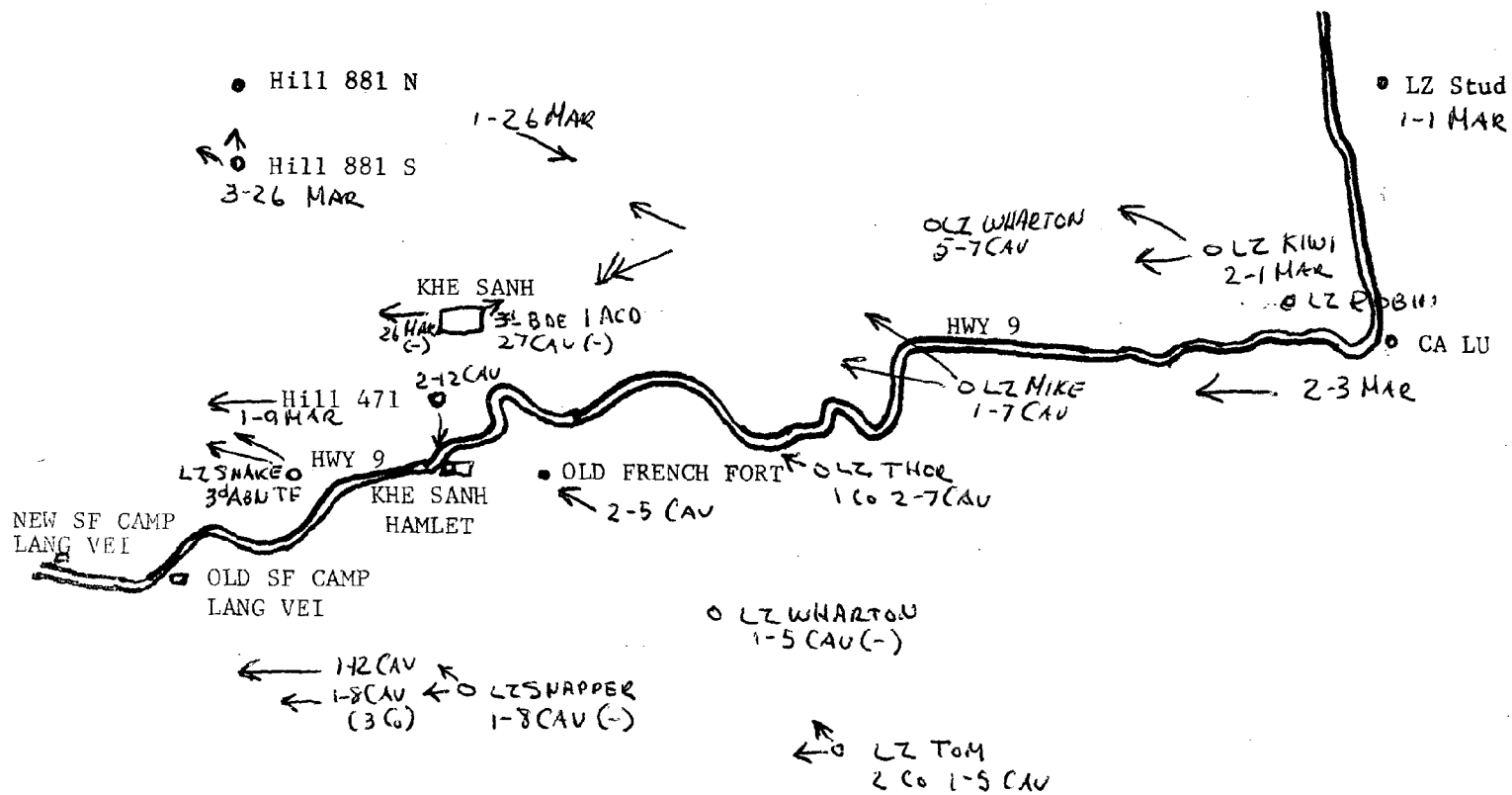
## 3D ABN TF (ARVN)

8th BN CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAKE

6th BN CONT ATTACK NW OF LZ SNAKE

3D BN CONT ATTACK W OF LZ SNAKE

D+8 9 APRIL



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

## TAB B INCLOSURE 10

D + 9 10 APRIL

## 1st MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS WEST OF CA LU

## 3D BDE 1 ACD

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS IN HIGH GROUND ENE OF KS

2-7 CAV CONT OPNS AT KS WITH 1 CO AT LZ THOR

1-7 CONT OPNS WNW LZ MIKE

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON AND TOM

2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC FRENCH FORT

2-12 CAV CONT OPNS VIC HILL 471 AND KS HAMLET

## 1ST BDE 1 ACD

1-12 CAV ATTACKED AND SEIZED OLD SF CAMP

1-8 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ SNAPPER AND WEST  
OF LZ SNAPPER

## 26th MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT ATTACK WEST OF HILL 471

3-26 MAR CONT OPNS VIC HILL 881 (S)

1-26 MAR CONT OPNS N OF KS

26 MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK W OF KS

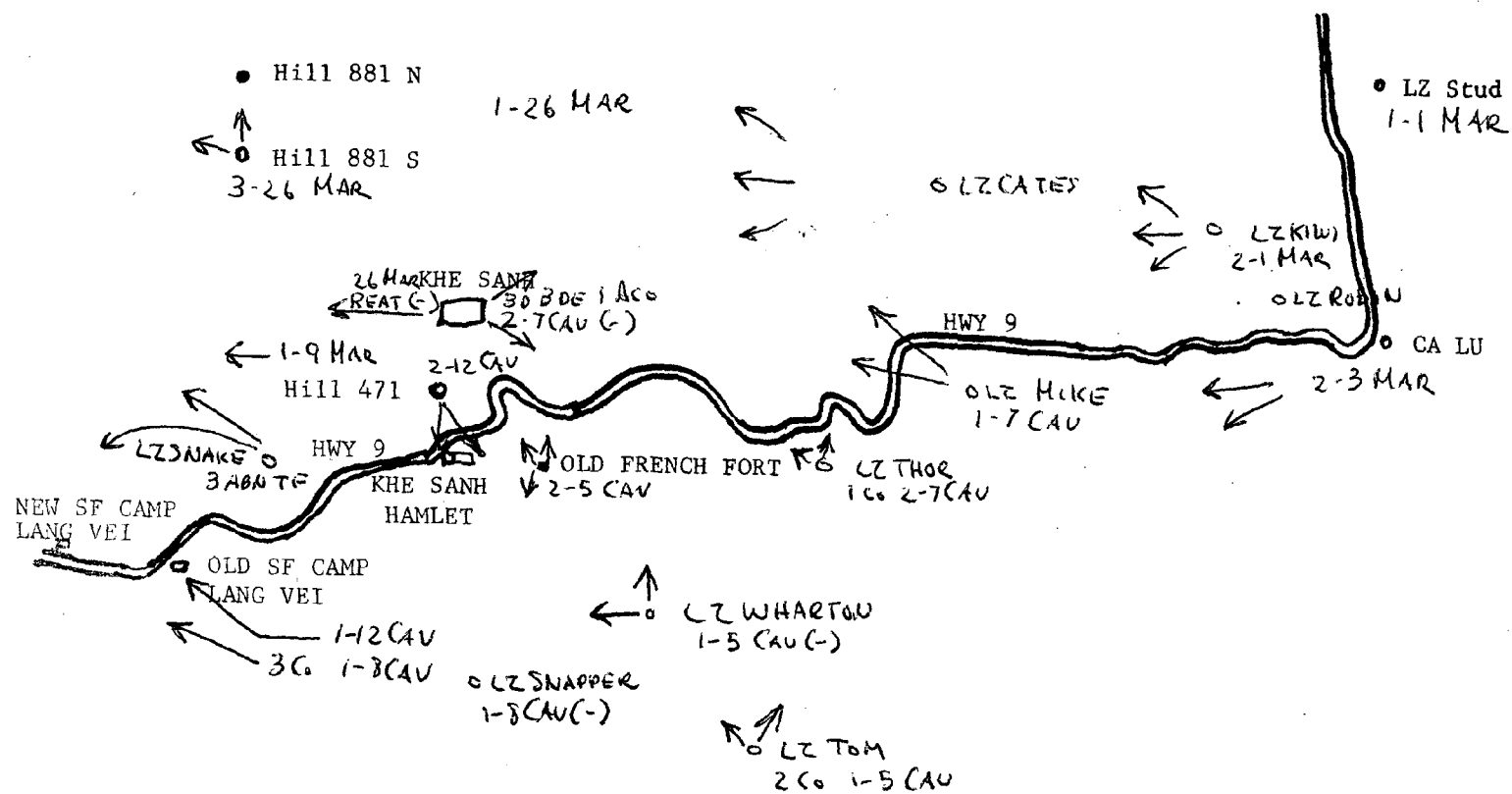
## 3D ABN TF

8th BN CONT SCTY LZ SNAKE

6th BN CONT ATTACK NW OF LZ SNAKE

3D BN CONT ATTACK W OF LZ SNAKE

D+9 10 APRIL



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 11

D + 10 11 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1st MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS WEST OF CA LU.

## 3D BDE 1 ACD

1-7 CAV CONT OPNS NW OF LZ MIKE AND ALONG  
HWY 9

2-7 CAV CONT OPNS VIC KS AND ALONG HWY 9

5-7 CAV CONT OPNS ENE OF KS

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON AND TOM

2-12 CAV AIRLIFTED TO LZ STUD IN PREPARATION  
FOR FURTHER MOVE TO CAMP EVANS2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC FRENCH FORT, ALSO CONT  
OPNS NW TO HILL 471

## 1ST BDE (-) 1 ACD

1-8 CAV AIRLIFTED TO LZ SHARON

1 BDE (-) CP AIRLIFTED TO LZ BETTY

1-12 CONT ATTACK ON NEW SF CAMP PLACED OPCOM  
2D BDE.

## 26th MARINE REGT

1-9 MARINES CONT ATTACK WEST

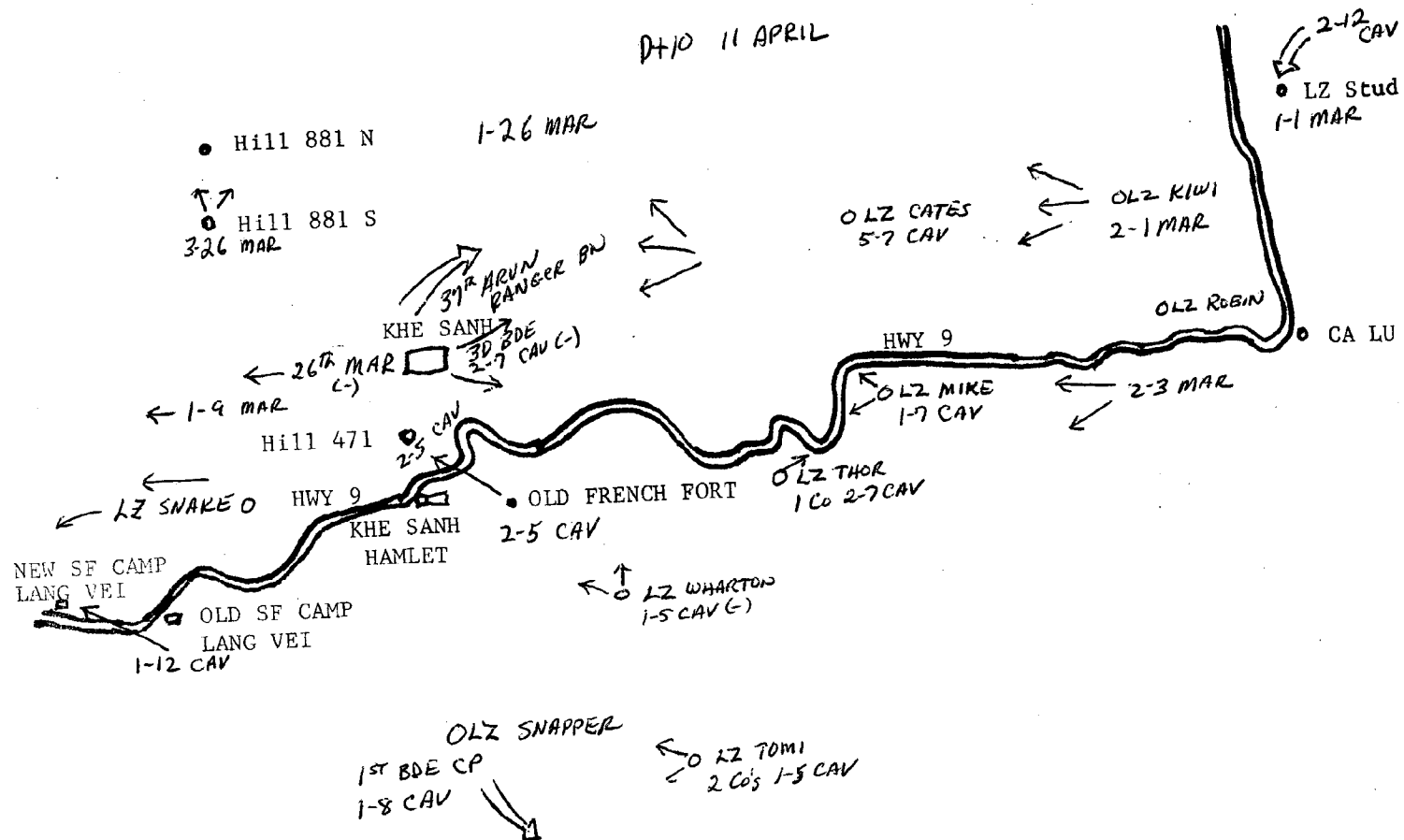
26 MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS W, NW AND N OF KS.

37th ARVN RANGER BN AIRLIFTED FROM KS TO DA  
NANG

## 3D ABN TF (ARVN)

8th BN CONT SCTY LZ SNAKE

3d AND 6th BN's CONT ATTACKS WEST AND SW AT  
LZ SNAKE



## OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 12

D + 11 12 APRIL

## 1st MARINE REGT

1-1 MARINES CONT SCTY LZ STUD  
131 MARINES REGT (-) CONT OPNS WEST INTO  
EXTENDED AO

## 3d BDE 1 ACD

1-7 CAV AIRLIFTED TO LZ STUD  
5-7 CAV (-) CONT OPNS VIC KS. TWO CO'S AIR-  
LIFTED TO CAMP EVANS  
2-7 CAV CONT OPNS VIC KS.

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

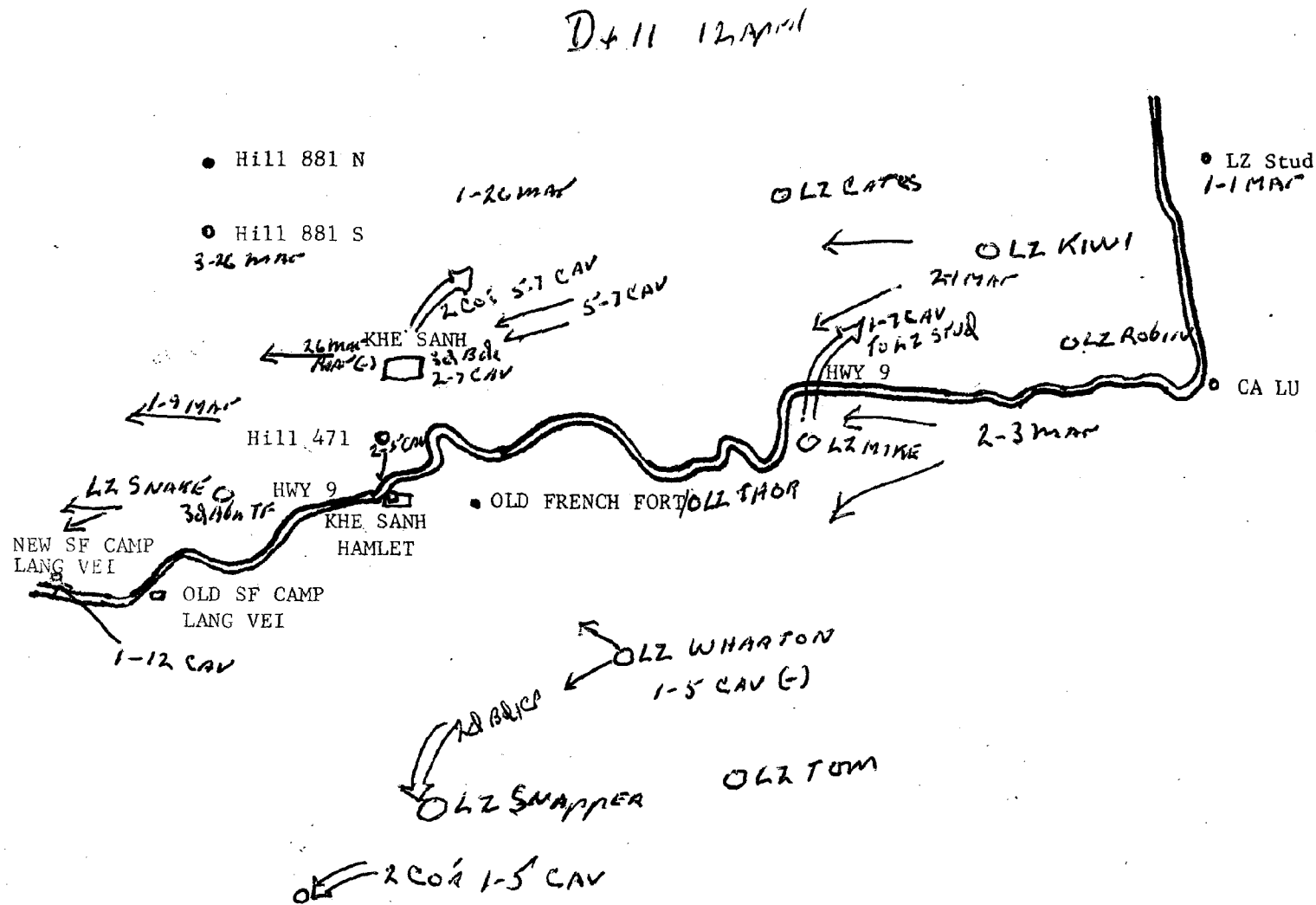
BDE CP AIRLIFTED TO LZ SNAPPER  
1-5 CAV (-) CONT OPNS VIC LZ WHARTON, TWO  
CO'S AIR ASSAULT INTO RED LZ  
2-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC HILL 471 AND KS HAMLET  
1-12 CAV CONT ATTACK TO NEW SF CAMP SIEZE  
CAMP AT 1155H.

## 26th MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT ATTACK W  
3-26 MAR CONT OPNS NW AT KS  
1-26 MAR CONT OPNS N OF KS  
26 MAR REGT (-) CONT ATTACK W OF KS

## 3d ABN TF (ARVN)

8th BN CONT SCTY LZ SNAKE  
6th and 3D BN CONT ATTACKS W AND SW OF LZ  
SNAKE



## OPERATION IBCRUSUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 13

D + 12 13 APRIL

## 1st MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS W OF CA LU,  
SECURING HWY 9

## 3D BDE 1 ACD

1-7 CAV AIRLIFTED TO CAMP EVANS

2-7 CAV, TWO CO'S AIRLIFTED TO CAMP EVANS,  
BN (-) CONT OPNS VIC KS

5-7 CAV (-) AIRLIFTED TO CAMP EVANS

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

2-5 CAV 1 CO AIRLIFT TO KS OPCON 2-7 CAV BN  
(-) CONT OPNS VIC HILL 4711-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ's WHARTON, SNAPPER  
AND SW OF SNAIPER

1-12 CAV CONT OPNS VIC NEW SF CAMP

## 26th MARINE REGT

1-9 MAR CONT ATTACK W OF HILL 471

3-26 MAR CONT OPNS VIC HILL 471 (S)

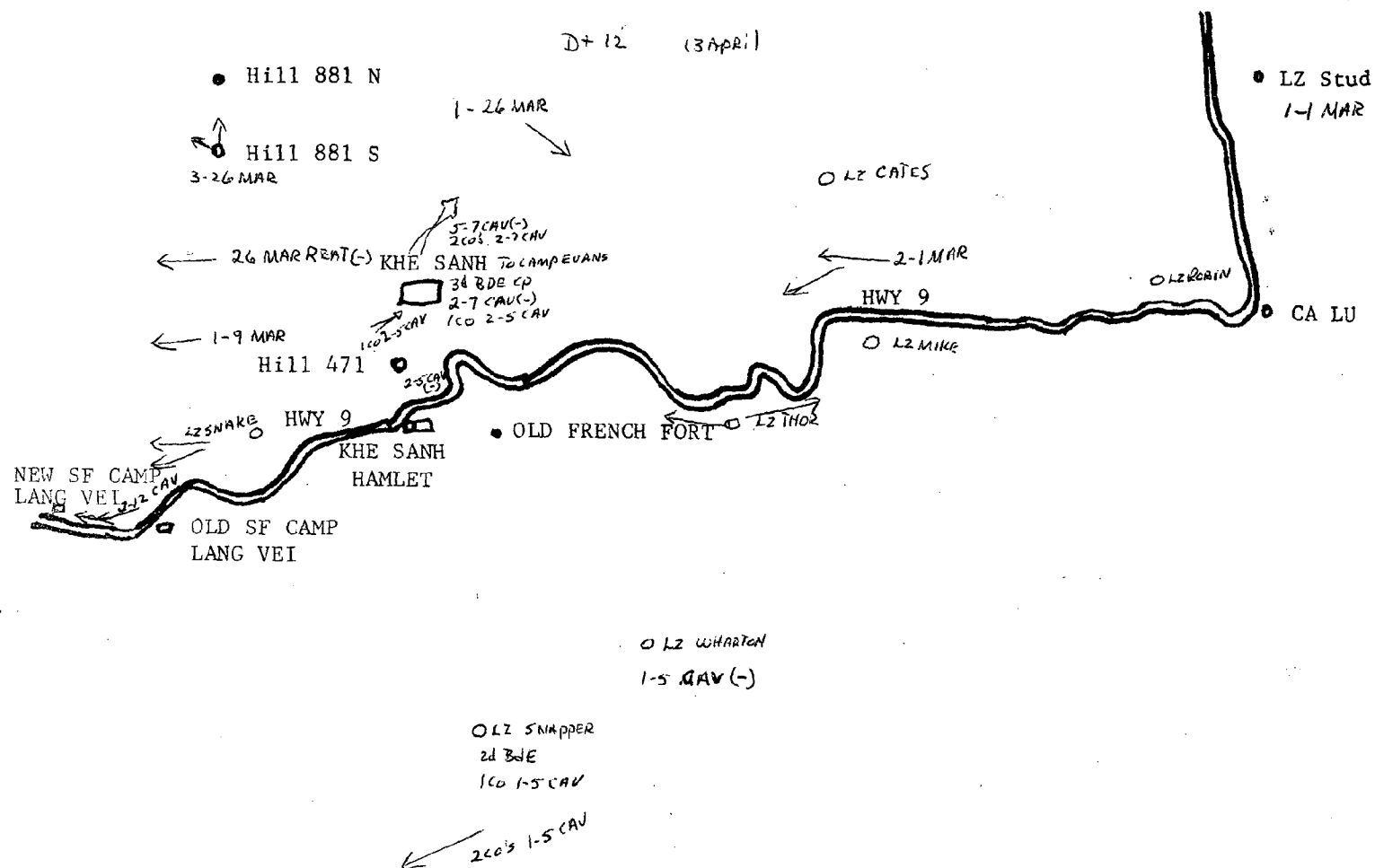
1-26 MAR CONT OPNS N OF KS

26 MAR REGT 9-) CONT ATTACK W OF KS

## 3D ABN TF (ARVN)

8th BN CONT SCTY LZ SNAKE

6th AND 3D BN'S CONT ATTACKS W AND SW OF LZ  
SNAKE



## OPERATION PEGASUS AERIAL ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 14

D + 13 14 APRIL

## 1ST MARINE REGT

1-1 MAR CONT SCTY LZ STUD

1ST MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS N AND S HWY 9

## 3d BDE 1 ACD

2-7 CAV (-) CONT AIRLIFT TO CAMP EVANS

BDE CP AIRLIFT CAMP EVANS

## 2D BDE 1 ACD

1-5 CAV CONT OPNS VIC LZ'S SHARON, SNAPPER  
AND SW OF LZ SNAPPER.

2-5 CAV (-) AIRLIFTED TO KS

1-12 CAV AIRLIFTED TO QUANG TRI, MOVED BY  
TRUCK TO LZ SHARON DELETED OPCON 2d BDE  
BDE CP AIRLIFTED TO KS BDE ASSUMES SECURITY  
MISSION OF KS

## 26TH MARINE REGT

1-9 MARINES CONT OPNS WEST OF HILL 471

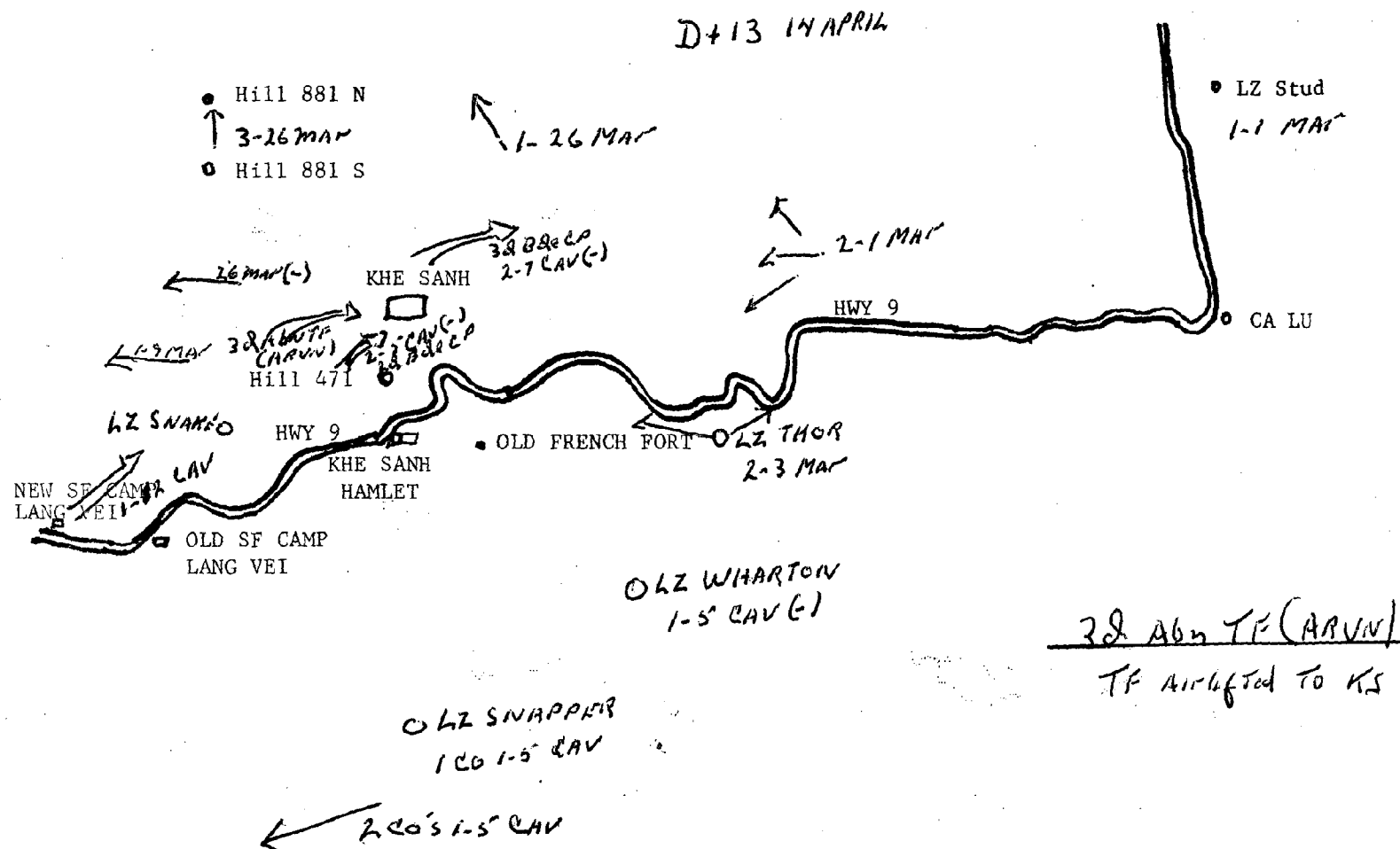
3-26 MARINES ATTACK NORTH, SEIZE HILL 881 N.

1-26 MAR CONT OPNS N OF KS

26 MAR REGT (-) CONT OPNS WEST OF KS

## 3D ABN TF (ARVN)

TF AIRLIFTED TO KS



OPERATION PEGASUS AFTER ACTION REPORT

TAB B INCLOSURE 15

D + 14 15 APRIL

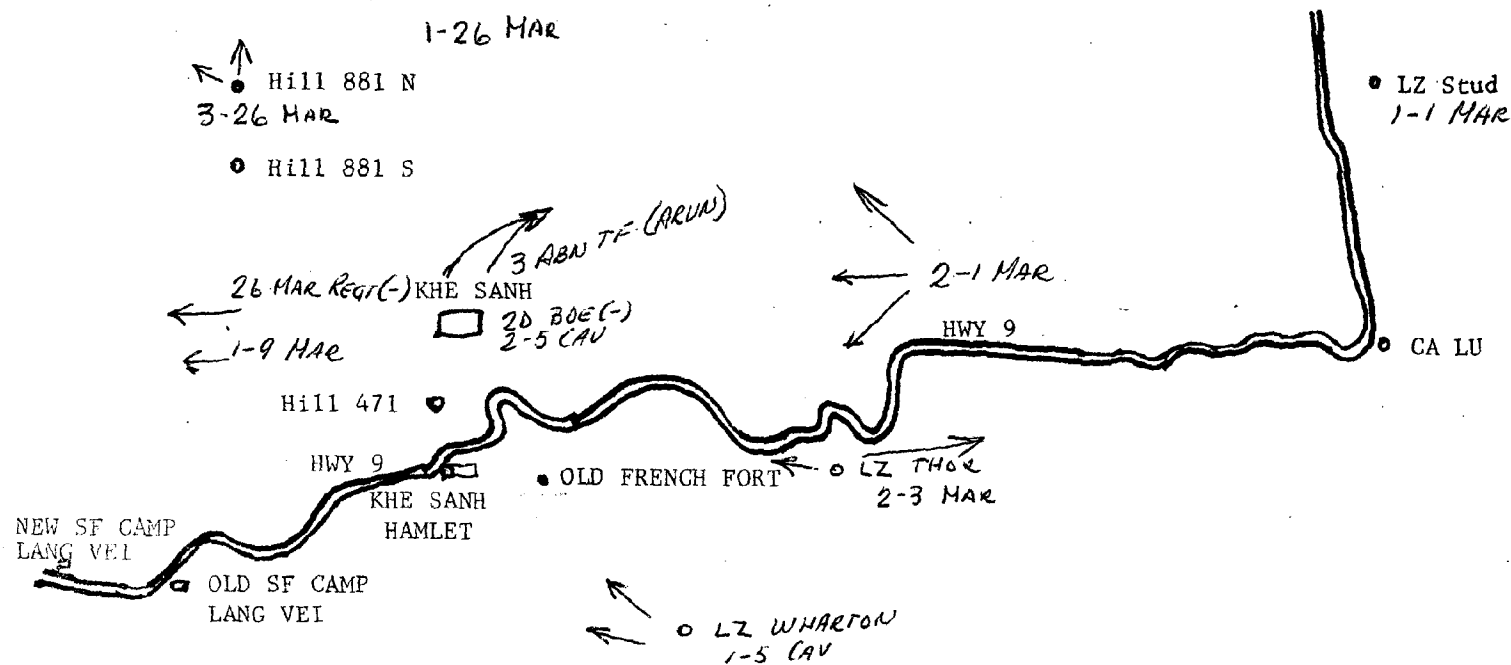
1st MARINE REGT  
RELEASED OFCON 1 ACD 0800H

2d BDE (-) 1 ACD  
PLACED OFCON TF CLICK 0800H

26TH MARINE REGT  
RELEASED OFCON 1 ACD 0800H

3D ABN TF (ARVN)  
COMMENCED AIRLIFT TO HUE-THU BAI, COMPLETED  
181715H.

D+14 15 APRIL



1

	<u>USA</u>	<u>USMC</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
1. Friendly Losses:				
a. KIA	59	51	33	143
b. WIA	236	459	187	882
c. MIA	5	0	0	5
2. Enemy Losses:				
a. NVA killed	536	404	260	1302
b. VC killed	2	0	0	2
c. NVA Captured	6	7	5	18
3. Enemy Equipment and Ammunition captured/destroyed:				
a. Individual weapons		557		
b. Crew served weapons		206		
c. Radios		3, P-105		
d. Large cal ammunition		12,608 rounds		
e. Small cal ammunition		261,760 rounds		
f. A/A, Artillery pieces		2		
g. Wheeled vehicles		5		
h. Tank		1		
i. Mines/grenades		9,527		
j. Rice		3,075 tons		

Confidential

Extract from Address by LTG John J. Tolson, CG, XVIII Airborne Corps and Fort Bragg, to the Michigan Aeronautics and Space Association, Detroit, Michigan, 14 September 1968:

\* \* \* \*

"To me, the real pinnacle of airmobile operations in Vietnam was reached in the 1st Cavalry Division's relief of the Khe Sanh Combat Base this past April. This operation, which was called Pegasus, will go down in history as a military classic, with firepower and mobility joined on a scale never witnessed before. As you may remember, from 21 January until 1 April, over 13,000 tons of bombs were dropped by our Air Force in the vicinity of Khe Sanh and the Marines had fired over 105,000 rounds of artillery in its defense. In other words, firepower by itself had already made a tremendous contribution to the defense of Khe Sanh. But still the enemy was present and active. The Marines could even see trenches being dug up to their perimeter.

"In early March, I was given the mission to plan a deliberate operation to relieve Khe Sanh. My instructions were simple:

"(1) Relieve Khe Sanh Combat Base.

"(2) Open Highway 9, the road leading into Khe Sanh from the coast.

"(3) Destroy the enemy within the area.

"In order to accomplish my mission, in addition to the 1st Cavalry Division, I was given control of two Marine regiments, including the one at Khe Sanh, and their supporting artillery, Marine engineers and Navy seabees. We were part of a great force that also included South Vietnamese airborne and ranger units, Marine air and U. S. Air Force tactical and strategic elements.

"D-Day was set for 1 April. On D-minus 6, our Air Cavalry Squadron, the Division's scouting force, started reconnaissance operations. The Air Cavalry Squadron gradually extended its reconnaissance in increasing concentric circles up to Khe Sanh, working at all times with Air CAP from the 7th Air Force or the 1st Marine Air Wing and with ample support from SAC with B-52 strikes. Thus, the reconnaissance established enemy locations, anti-aircraft positions, and strong points that we would try to avoid in our initial assaults and obviously in the selection of our landing zones. As was always the case, the support given by the Air Force and Marine Tactical Aircraft was superb, and particularly with assistance of our helicopter scout

*End 3*

ships pinpointing targets, a very close relationship existed with the fighter pilots. The work of this pre-D-Day reconnaissance force was so effective that in the subsequent assaults of three brigades of the 1st Cav and the ARVN Airborne Task Force, not a single chopper was hit by ground fire -- a real achievement!

"On D-Day, 1 April, we air assaulted one brigade on the high ground controlling Route 9 into Khe Sanh, and at the same time a Marine regiment with engineers started toward Khe Sanh repairing the road and bridges. Everything went like clockwork, and by 8 April (D-Day plus 7), we had air assaulted two more brigades and the ARVN Airborne Task Force of three battalions.

"By this time, we had linked up with the Marines at Khe Sanh. We had established commanding positions, all within mutual artillery support of each other, on the high ground overlooking the whole area of Khe Sanh proper. It was obvious that the NVA was well emplaced and deployed to defend against a conventional attack up the highway toward Khe Sanh. The important thing is that, with our air assaults, we had rapidly encircled the enemy and he was just simply overwhelmed with our mass of troops and firepower, artillery and air. We used 53 strikes by SAC B-52s starting on D-minus 6 and continuing through the two weeks of this operation. In addition, we had all the close air support we could use from the 7th Air Force and the 1st Marine Air Wing. Between the B-52 bombardment and the massiveness and lightning-like thrusts of our airmobile operation, the immediate resistance in the area adjacent to the Khe Sanh complex never had a chance to succeed.

"The relief of Khe Sanh Combat Base, Operation Pegasus, was the dream come true for a combat commander. Our casualties were comparatively light, and the victory will be remembered not so much for the skirmishes that were fought, but for the battles that were not. All eyes were focused on this magnificent allied force as it pressed the fight that was to have decided the war in General Giap's favor. The Dien Bien Phu of the sixties never developed because of its gallant action."

\*

\*

\*

\*

NAVS0 5216/5 (7-66) S/N 0104-904-1760

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

*Memorandum*

AK/RBT/jdm

DATE : DEC 23 1968

FROM : Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower)

TO : Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3

SUBJECT : Historical Monograph: "The Battle of Khe Sanh, April 1967 - April 1968"

Ref: (a) CMC ltr AO3D-rem of 7Dec68 (S&amp;C #S-807 373)

1. In reply to reference (a), the following comments concerning the subject Monograph are furnished:

a. On page 151 of the document, the statement is made that "closely correlated with the enemy's retrograde movement (i.e. in March 1968) was the large influx of refugees into the KSCB." In actuality, the large influx of refugees (Vietnamese and Bru tribesmen and CIDG, etc.) into KSCB and adjacent villages began on 23 January 1968. During the period 23 - 28 January 1968, 1,050 Vietnamese with their families, plus the Bru Tribal leaders and their families, were air-evacuated from Khe Sanh to Danang and then onward to Quang Tri City. Subsequently, some 1,800 Bru tribesmen and their families completed a march from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo via the Ba Long Valley to escape the fighting. An additional 3,000 (plus) Bru attempted to walk to Cam Lo from Khe Sanh in about March 1968 but were prevented from doing so by the NVA. It is apparently these 3,000 Bru to which the Monograph refers in the statement (P. 151) "During the journey, however, the North Vietnamese intercepted large numbers of the....etc."

b. Captain James G. COLLINS, 093027, USMC, now of the 5th Marine Division, was the 3d Marine Division G-5 Civic Action Officer for the Khe Sanh Area from 1 December 1967 to 20 April 1968. He also had collateral duties as the Regimental S-5/Regimental PsyWar Officer for the 26th Marine Regiment and used KSCB as his base of operations to accomplish his duties. For further details and clarification of the information reported on page 151, it is suggested that a copy of the subject document be forwarded to Captain COLLINS for comment.

2. The above information was furnished by LtCol R. B. THOMPSON, 060990, USMC former Assistant Chief of Staff, G-5, 3d Marine Division who returned from WestPac 16 October 1968.

  
 H. WICKERSON, JR.


Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan

AK/RBT/jdm

DEC 23 1968

Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower)

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3

Historical Monograph: "The Battle of Khe Sanh, April 1967 - April 1968."

Ref: (a) CMC ltr AO3D-rem of 7Dec68 (S&amp;C #S-807 373)

1. In reply to reference (a), the following comments concerning the subject Monograph are furnished:

a. On page 151 of the document, the statement is made that "closely correlated with the enemy's retrograde movement (i.e. in March 1968) was the large influx of refugees into the KSCB." In actuality, the large influx of refugees (Vietnamese and Bru tribesmen and CIDG, etc.) into KSCB and adjacent villages began on 23 January 1968. During the period 23 - 28 January 1968, 1,050 Vietnamese with their families, plus the Bru Tribal leaders and their families, were air-evacuated from Khe Sanh to Da Nang and then onward to Quang Tri City. Subsequently, some 1,800 Bru tribesmen and their families completed a march from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo via the Ba Long Valley to escape the fighting. An additional 3,000 (plus) Bru attempted to walk to Cam Lo from Khe Sanh in about March 1968 but were prevented from doing so by the NVA. It is apparently these 3,000 Bru to which the Monograph refers in the statement (P. 151) "During the journey, however, the North Vietnamese intercepted large numbers of the....etc."

b. Captain James G. COLLINS, 093027, USMC, now of the 5th Marine Division, was the 3d Marine Division G-5 Civic Action Officer for the Khe Sanh Area from 1 December 1967 to 20 April 1968. He also had collateral duties as the Regimental S-5/Regimental PsyWar Officer for the 26th Marine Regiment and used KSCB as his base of operations to accomplish his duties. For further details and clarification of the information reported on page 151, it is suggested that a copy of the subject document be forwarded to Captain COLLINS for comment.

2. The above information was furnished by LtCol R. B. THOMPSON, 060990, USMC former Assistant Chief of Staff, G-5, 3d Marine Division who returned from WestPac 16 October 1968.

H. NICKERSON, JR.

DEC 23 1968

Deputy Chief of Staff (Manpower)

Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3

Historical Monograph: "The Battle of Khe Sanh, April 1967 - April 1968"

Ref: (a) CMC ltr AO3D-rem of 7Dec68 (S&amp;C #6-807 373)

1. In reply to reference (a), the following comments concerning the subject Monograph are furnished:

a. On page 151 of the document, the statement is made that "closely correlated with the enemy's retrograde movement (i.e. in March 1968) was the large influx of refugees into the KSCB." In actuality, the large influx of refugees (Vietnamese and Bru tribesmen and CIDG, etc.) into KSCB and adjacent villages began on 23 January 1968. During the period 23 - 28 January 1968, 1,050 Vietnamese with their families, plus the Bru Tribal leaders and their families, were air-evacuated from Khe Sanh to Danang and then onward to Quang Tri City. Subsequently, some 1,800 Bru tribesmen and their families completed a march from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo via the Ba Long Valley to escape the fighting. An additional 3,000 (plus) Bru attempted to walk to Cam Lo from Khe Sanh in about March 1968 but were prevented from doing so by the NVA. It is apparently these 3,000 Bru to which the Monograph refers in the statement (P. 151) "During the journey, however, the North Vietnamese intercepted large numbers of the....etc."

b. Captain James G. COLLINS, 093027, USMC, now of the 5th Marine Division, was the 3d Marine Division G-5 Civic Action Officer for the Khe Sanh Area from 1 December 1967 to 20 April 1968. He also had collateral duties as the Regimental S-5/Regimental PsyWar Officer for the 26th Marine Regiment and used KSCB as his base of operations to accomplish his duties. For further details and clarification of the information reported on page 151, it is suggested that a copy of the subject document be forwarded to Captain COLLINS for comment.

2. The above information was furnished by LtCol R. B. THOMPSON, 060990, USMC former Assistant Chief of Staff, G-5, 3d Marine Division who returned from WestPac 16 October 1968.

H. NICKERSON, JR.

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-11H

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## b. Enemy Situation Prior to Operation PEGASUS

## (1) General

(a) Since January 1968, the enemy had attempted to isolate the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Movement of friendly troops outside their perimeter wire became hazardous at all times. The enemy gained control of much of the high ground around KSCB and could bring effective mortar and artillery fire upon the base at any time. The only overland resupply route, Highway 9, had been interdicted by the enemy and had been closed from the ROCK PILE (48Q XD 9856) to KHE SANH forcing all resupply to be made by air. Heavy anti-aircraft fire frequently restricted supply missions, especially during periods of low visibility. LANG VEI SPECIAL FORCES CAMP (48Q XD 7835), the only obstacle denying the enemy use of Route 9 from the west, was overrun by the enemy on 7 February, thus leaving an excellent approach route from the west into the Combat Base at Khe Sanh. Trenches had been constructed from Route 9 to the perimeter wire of the base, and reports of tunneling activity, under the base itself, were reported. (SUBSEQUENT INVESTIGATION OF THE BATTLEFIELD PROVED THE REPORTS OF TUNNELING TO BE WRONG.)

(b) The enemy had been observed constructing weapons positions in preparation for an assault against Khe Sanh Combat Base. Heavy concentrations of mortar and rocket positions, anti-aircraft and automatic weapons positions, and strong points were sighted to the north, south, and west. According to various intelligence reports and counter-battery radar readings, the CO ROC Mountain Area, located to the southwest, vicinity 48Q XD 7431, had become a major supply and artillery base. Attacks by fire against Khe Sanh were a daily occurrence with a record of 1,300 rounds (estimate) being received on 23 February. Although shelling continued, the number of rounds received in a day began to taper off in the week prior to Operation PEGASUS.

(c) Evidence of the enemy buildup was also indicated by an increase in the number of intelligence reports and sightings of enemy artillery and armor in the Khe Sanh area. One returnee stated that in December 1967, he had seen 20 artillery pieces being towed on a road in LAOS only a few miles from the RVN border. Another individual stated that in February 1968, he had seen approximately 170 vehicles on Highway 9, again, only a few miles from the border. On 21 February, an aerial observer sighted self-propelled artillery north of Khe Sanh, and on 25 February, an aircraft engaged three self-propelled artillery guns northwest of KSCB. On 3 March, an aerial observer sighted a large mobile gun with a tube approximately 30 feet long mounted on a tracked-vehicle. On that same day, a BTR-40 was identified by an imagery interpreter. On 18 March, airstrikes reportedly destroyed ten occupied 57mm anti-aircraft positions only a few miles southwest of Khe Sanh Combat Base.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## (2) Strength

(a) The first indication of a major threat against the combat base occurred with the movement of the 304th NVA Division in December 1967, into an area that had normally been the AO of one or possibly two regiments of the 325C NVA Division. This brought the total enemy force in the vicinity of Khe Sanh to 15 to 20 thousand men in two NVA divisions and one to three armor battalions. Attacks by fire against the base increased, and new weapons positions and anti-aircraft sites appeared on a daily basis as the enemy surrounded Khe Sanh. An attack appeared imminent, and only after elements of the 29th Regiment, 325C Division were sent to HUE, during the Battle of Hue City, did the question arise as to the enemy's real intentions in this area.

(b) Heavy bombardment from B-52's, Tac Air, and artillery began to take their toll as the enemy build-up continued. Refugees from the DRU tribe reported seeing hundreds of NVA bodies littering a hillside, as a result of these strikes. Frequent probes that often resulted in heavy contact were made against the perimeter wire of KSCB, also producing many enemy casualties. Intelligence estimates prior to the initiation of Operation PEGASUS revealed that approximately 14,000 NVA, including 16 maneuver battalions, remained in the area. (See para 12g)

(3) Disposition. Enemy units surrounded the combat base with regimental-size elements on at least three sides. The bulk of the 304th NVA Division was positioned to the south and southeast. The 101D Regiment, 325C NVA Division, was believed to be located to the west of KSCB, and the 95C Regiment, 325C NVA Division was carried to the north and northwest of the friendly installation. Numerous intelligence reports fixed artillery positions to the north and south of Khe Sanh. The 68th Artillery Regiment, 304th NVA Division, was believed to be located in the south in support of its division, while elements of the 164th Artillery Regiment were considered to be in the north, in support of the 325C NVA Division. The armored element was unlocated, but was probably somewhere to the west of Lang Vei.

## c. Situation During Operation PEGASUS

(1) General. Operation PEGASUS began on 310301 March 68, with extremely light opposition as Free World Military Armed Forces (FWMF) moved from Ca Lu along Highway 9 toward the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The operation evidently caught the enemy by surprise as large caches of weapons and supplies were found in relatively insecure areas. Enemy opposition was disorganized, and coordination between the enemy infantry units and their support elements (artillery, rockets, mortars, etc.) was virtually non-existent. Intensity of attacks by fire in the Khe Sanh base declined as the enemy withdrew. The speed of the withdrawal was apparent by the large number of enemy bodies and weapons found.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

(2) Significant Contacts. Contacts with enemy units were characterized by sporadic, but intense, engagements with what appeared to be remaining rear guard elements. On 5 April, the 1st Bn, 9th Marines became involved in the first major contact of the operation. This occurred after the Marines had captured Hill 471, located three kilometers south of KSOB. Although artillery fire accounted for 30 enemy KIA during the initial assault of the hill, the Marines counted 122 more NVA killed after a counter-attack by what is believed to have been elements of the 7th and 9th Bns, 66th Regt, 304th NVA Division. On that same day, the 1st Bn, 9th Cavalry engaged several squad-size groups of enemy further south of the base and killed 53 NVA. On 6 April, the 37th ARVN Ranger Bn, with the aid of an artillery and air attack, produced 70 NVA KIA. Also on 6 April, the 2d Bn, 26th Marines engaged an unknown-size enemy force in heavy contact that resulted in 48 NVA killed. On 8 April, the 3d ARVN Airborne Task Force came under a heavy ground attack from an estimated battalion-size force. Eighty NVA were killed. The only other major contact that occurred during Operation PEGASUS was on 14 April when elements of the 3d Bn, 26th Marines assaulted Hill 881 North and encountered an estimated NVA battalion. Artillery and tactical air supported the attacking Marines in a contact that cost the enemy 106 dead and one NVA prisoner from the 8th Independent Bn (probably the 8th Bn, 29th Regt, 325C Div). (See para 22 f)

### (3) Strength and Disposition.

(a) As the operation progressed, it became evident that the 304th NVA Div was the only division remaining in the Khe Sanh area. The 325C Division had withdrawn immediately before the initiation of the operation. Prisoners of War captured from the 304th Division and from elements of the 325C Division indicated that the 325C Division had moved from Khe Sanh, but there was no agreement among the prisoners as to its destination. The individuals captured from the 325C Division apparently had been left in the area as guides and filler personnel for the 304th.

(b) One PW captured from the 8th Independent Bn stated that his unit had been attached to the 29th Regiment, 325C Division. The prisoner said his battalion remained in the area when the 7th and 9th Bns went to Hue. A document captured on 4 April identified the 3d Co, 8th Bn, 29th Regt, east of Khe Sanh, thus supporting the prisoners statement.

(c) Eleven of the 21 individuals interrogated identified elements of three regiments of the 304th Division. The remaining prisoners were either from units that could not be further identified with parent organizations, or were from training units that had recently been sent into South Vietnam as replacements. Elements of the 204th Division, the 330th Division, and the 4th Division were each identified by one prisoner, while the 308th Division was identified by two prisoners. These

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-4H

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-23)(K-1)

individuals were probably trained by the identified divisions and then sent south as replacements.

d. Enemy Situation at the Completion of Operation PEGASUS

Although the total enemy strength in the area was reduced by the movement of the 325C Division out of the PEGASUS AO, the arrival of replacement personnel actually produced an increase in the strengths of the units within the 304th Division. Considering the enemy confirmed losses of 1,325 men and the displacement of the 325C Division, against the input of replacements, the total enemy strength in the operational area at the completion of PEGASUS was estimated to be 10,350 NVA.

e. Intelligence Gained

(1) 325C NVA Division

(a) The 325C NVA Division had moved south from the Khe Sanh area to the B-3 Front (II CTZ). Its withdrawal from the area began about one week before the initiation of Operation PEGASUS.

(b) The 8th Bn, 29th Regt, 325C Div, which had been located in the Khe Sanh area as a part of the 325C Division, is now believed to be an independent battalion operating between KCSB and Ca Lu. The 29th Regt, 325C Div, which is located west of Hue, is believed to contain three battalions: the 7th and 9th Bns, and a new 8th Bn which infiltrated from North Vietnam in early January 1968.

(2) 304th NVA Division

(a) On the basis of documents and interrogation reports, the 24th Regt, 304th Div, which had been carried near Hue, is now believed to be located in the Khe Sanh area. (At least two bns of the 24th Regt did participate in the Battle of Hue; but apparently returned to the Khe Sanh area sometime in late February or March.)

(b) Although the 57th Regt is organic to the 304th Div, according to unit history, only one prisoner (from a transportation group) stated that the 57th Regt was subordinate to the 304th Div. He stated that the 304th Div contained four regiments: the 9th, 24th, 57th, and 66th. However, none of the 11 prisoners captured from the 304th Div stated that the 57th Regt was an element of the division. Although the 57th is still carried on the enemy order of battle as subordinate to the 304th Div, its status is questionable. If it is subordinate to the 304th Div, it is either a fourth infantry regiment, or it is also known as (AKA) the 24th Regt.

(c) Five prisoners gave unit designations that were

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-23)(K-1)

either different from the known order of battle or else recognized as training divisions located in North Vietnam. Although infiltration numbers for these units are not known, it is believed that two battalion-size groups from the 308th Div, and possibly one battalion-size group from the 330th Div came into the Khe Sanh area to supply replacements to the 304th Div.

(3) 78th Artillery Regiment. Documents picked up in the Khe Sanh area identified the 78th Artillery Regt. NVA order of battle indicates this unit was subordinate to the 325 NVA GARRISON Division in North Vietnam. This is the first indication of the 78th Artillery Regt in South Vietnam.

(4) Anti-Aircraft Artillery. Numerous reports emanating from the Khe Sanh area concerning NVA use of AAA weapons were received before Operation PEGASUS began. Although pilots claimed to have seen air bursts and imagery interpreters revealed AAA weapons and emplacements in the area, no confirmation of the presence of these weapons was made until 6 April. On that day Co C, 1st Bn, 12th Cav discovered one partially destroyed 57mm AAA piece and 200 rounds of 57mm ammunition. This weapon was produced by the Soviet Union and was the first 57mm AAA weapon captured in the Republic of Vietnam.

(5) Armor. Armor had been confirmed in the Khe Sanh area since 7 February when seven PT-76 tanks were destroyed in an enemy coordinated Infantry/Armor assault on the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. Although armor was used in direct support of this attack, there was a lack of the coordinated use of armor either in a direct or general support role during Operation PEGASUS. Armor elements evaded contact with FVMAF units throughout the operation. Several tanks were sighted and engaged, but only one is known to have been destroyed during the operation.

9. (U) Mission: Provisional Corps Vietnam, reinforced by Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Task Force, attacked to open Highway 9 from Ca Lu west to Khe Sanh Combat Base; link up with KSCB; and destroy enemy forces in the northwest portion of the PCV zone.

10. (U) Concept of Operation:

a. 3d Marine Division initiated a deception plan by launching an attack at 300600H March 68, generally north toward the DMZ along the Gio Linh Coastal Plains northeast of Dong Ha (TF KILO).

b. 1st Cav Div (Airmobile) (Reinforced) attacked on 1 April 1968, in coordination with the 3d ARVN Abn TF, in a combined ground and heli-borne operation, to clear and open Highway 9 from Ca Lu west to Khe Sanh Combat Base and to destroy the enemy confronting the base.

11. (U) Execution: Inclosure 1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVIIL-PH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS:MACJ3-32)(E-1)

## 12. (c) Results

## a. General

(1) Operation PEGASUS succeeded in reopening Highway 9 and relieving the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Although contact had not been as heavy as anticipated, the enemy suffered the loss of 1,325 personnel in the 15 day operation. The capture of large caches of ammunition and supplies undoubtedly handicapped the enemy and curtailed any operational plans in the Khe Sanh area.

(2) The enemy changed from an offensive posture to a defensive attitude as he was forced into mountain retreats and west into LAOS. As the friendly units contested the control of the area, the enemy was denied the initiative to launch an attack against the combat base without a major regrouping of his forces.

## b. Enemy Personnel Losses

	<u>NVA</u>	<u>VC</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Killed	1302	2	1304
Captured	18	2	20
Hoi Chanh	1		1
Totals	<u>1321</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1325</u>

## c. Enemy Material Losses

<u>Individual Weapons</u>	<u>Captured</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
U.S. M-1 Rifle	6	
U.S. M-1 Carbine	15	
U.S. M-2 Carbine	3	2
U.S. Browning Automatic Rifle	6	
U.S. M-14	1	
U.S. M-16	18	
U.S. Pistol cal .45	5	
U.S. M-72 LAW	5	
U.S. M-79 Grenade Launcher	4	
Sub-machine gun (Not further identified)	3	
Shotgun 12 gauge	1	
SKS	149	
AK-47	95	
AK-50	8	

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

Carbines (Not further identified)	18
Mausers (Not further identified)	2
Soviet 7.62mm Pistol	1
MAT-49 SMG (Not further identified)	1
Flare Pistols (Not further identified)	2
Sniper Rifles (Not further identified)	4
Individual Weapons (Not broken down)	208

Total

555

2

## Crew Served Weapons

CapturedDestroyed

U.S. M-60 Machine gun	2
Machine gun cal .30	7
Machine gun cal .50	
RPD Light Machine gun	29
Light Machine gun (Not further identified)	4
Heavy Machine Gun 12.7mm	3
Rocket Launcher 3.5in	2
Rocket Launcher RPG-2 (B-40)	23
Rocket Launcher RPG-7 (B-41)	2
Recoilless Rifle 57mm	2
Recoilless Rifle 90mm	1
Recoilless Rifle 106mm	
Recoilless Rifle (Not further identified)	1
Mortar 60mm	4
Mortar 82mm	6
Mortar 4.2 in	
Mortar Tube (Not further identified)	4
Crew Served Weapons (Not broken down)	84

Total

174

33

## Anti-Aircraft Artillery

CapturedDestroyed

Anti-Aircraft Artillery 12.7mm

2

Total

2

0

## Vehicles

CapturedDestroyed

Tank PT-76	
Trucks	1
One-Quarter Ton	
Trailers	
Bus (Civilian Type)	
Bicycles	3
Motor Scooter	1

1

4

2

4

1

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCM: 1A043-32)(K-1)

Ammunition		<u>Captured</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
Cal .30	2 Cases plus	24,490	
Cal .30 Carbine		2,000	
7.62mm		60,650	100 rds
Cal .45		5,000	
Cal .50	140 Cases plus	8,515	10 boxes
12.7mm		1,700	
Small Arms (Not broken down)		3,932	10 cases
M-79		80	
3.5in			10 boxes
B-40		879	6 rds
90mm RR		5	
Rockets (Not further identified)			15 skts
60mm Mortar		2,795	400 rds
81mm Mortar		20	
82mm Mortar	4 Cases plus	1,493	110 rds
105mm Arty			4 rds
155mm Arty	3 Pallets		
Mines, grenades & Claymores	370 Cases plus	6,888	73
TNT	1 Crate plus	1,180 lbs	120 lbs
Equipment and Supplies		<u>Captured</u>	<u>Destroyed</u>
Gas Masks		58	2
Canned Foods	132 Cases plus	280	
Radios			
US		6	
Chicom		1	
NVA		1	
Not Specified		3	
Field Phones			
US		3	
Not Specified		6	
Antenna (RC-292)		2	
Packs (NVA)		63	2
Mess Kits		112	
Picks and Shovels		400	
Rubber CBR Suit		1	
Radio Repair Kits		4	
Ice Chest		1	

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

13 Apr XD 788405 HOANG VAN LAN 6th Co, 2d Bn, 1st Regt, 3250 Div  
 14 Apr XD 774457 BUI NGOI LAN 8th Independent Bn

\* HOI CHAN (Returnee)

## g. Comparison of Strengths in AO Before and After PEGASUS

UNIT	BEFORE PEGASUS		AFTER PEGASUS	
	EST STRENGTH	LOCATION	EST STRENGTH	LOCATION
304th NVA Div	7,750	XD 8727	10,000	XD 7239
HQ and Support	1,450	-do-	1,700	-do-
9th Regt	1,700	XD 8230	1,800	XD 7045
1st Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
2d Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
3d Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
24th Regt		Vic Hue	1,700	Vic Lang Vei
4th Bn		-do-	(350)	-do-
5th Bn		-do-	(350)	-do-
6th Bn		-do-	(350)	-do-
57th Regt	1,700	XD 8323	1,800	S of Khe Sanh
4th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
5th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
6th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
66th Regt	1,700	XD 9231	1,800	S of Khe Sanh
7th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
8th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
9th Bn	(350)	-do-	(450)	-do-
68th Arty Regt		Unlocated	1,200	Vic Khe Sanh
3250 NVA Div	5,200	W of Khe Sanh	Unlocated	
HQ and Support	1,450	-do-	Unlocated	
101D Regt	1,700	XD 7838	Unlocated	
1st Bn	(350)	-do-		
2d Bn	(350)	-do-		
3d Bn	(350)	-do-		

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

95C Regt	1,700	XD 7148	Unlocated
4th Bn	(350)	XD 8212	Unlocated
5th Bn	(350)	XD 8546	Unlocated
6th Bn	(350)	XD 7947	Unlocated
8th Bn, 29th Regt	350	Khe Sanh	350 W of Ca Lu
Unidentified	UNK	Lang Vei	UNK Laos
Armor Regt (-)			

Total Before PEGASUS

Total After PEGASUS

304th NVA Div - 7,750  
 325C NVA Div - 5,200  
 164th Arty Regt - 1,200

304th NVA Div - 10,000  
 8th Bn, 29th Regt - 350

Total 14,150

Total 10,350

## 13. (FOUO) Administrative Matters:

## a. Supply

(1) On 28 February 1968, the HQ, MACV Forward Joint Staff Planning Group was established, with representation by the Office of ACofS G4, MACV FWD. Logistical feasibility studies were completed, together with logistical support concepts and plans for the forthcoming campaign, to include Operation PEGASUS.

(2) On 16 and 17 March 1968, the Office of the ACofS, G4, PCV, conducted a logistical planning conference incidental to Operation PEGASUS. The conference was attended by representatives of the following organizations: III Marine Amphibious Force; Force Logistics Command, Danang; 26th General Support Group of the U.S. Army Support Command, Danang; Force Logistics Support Group A; 1st Cav Div (Airmobile); 101st Abn Div; and the 3d Marine Div.

(a) The primary objective of the planning conference was to formulate a concept of logistical support for Operation PEGASUS, to include delineation of resupply requirements for forces to be supported.

(b) The conferees determined that the operation was feasible from a logistical standpoint, but only with uninterrupted use of Route 9, and prestockage of five (5) days of supply (DOS), all classes, in the vicinity of Ca Lu, the site of the Forward Support Area and LZ STUB.

(c) Logistical support for Operation PEGASUS was a joint

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVIIL-PM

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

effort, coordinated by III MAF, using U.S. Army Support Command, Fleet Logistics Command, and Naval Support Activity assets, culminating in a flexible and responsive logistical support system. Supply support for the operation was to come from the FSA established in the vicinity of Ca Lu. The FSA was operated by U.S. Army Support Command, Danang, with personnel and equipment augmentation provided by Fleet Logistics Command. Co-located with the Ca Lu FSA was the Forward Support Element (FSE) established by the 1st Cav Div (AM). The logistical support concept was promulgated in the PCV Operation Plan 1-68.

(3) On 21 March, the Ca Lu FSA was established and prestockage, all classes, was set at 5515 STONS. On 31 March, 80 percent of the prestockage objective was achieved and normal resupply of the attacking forces began on 1 April. Daily resupply requirements were 1133 STONS. Stockage levels proved adequate to meet all operational requirements, and employment of the prestock concept greatly facilitated the operation, particularly during its initial stages. Supplies were provided from two major supply points, FLSG-B, Dong Ha, a subordinate element of FLC, Danang, and the Logistic Over The Shore (LOTS) site, established at Wunder Beach on 4 March. Operation of the LOTS site was a joint effort employing the assets of the 159th Transportation Bn (Terminal), a subordinate element of USASUPCOM, Danang, and the 625 Supply and Service Company, a subordinate element of the 26th General Support Group. Employment of the LOTS concept materially enhanced the supply posture for northern I CTZ (NICTZ).

(4) An informal cross service agreement was achieved on ammunition resupply before the commencement of the operation. This agreement not only facilitated bookkeeping, but assured the commanders of continued ammunition support in the event heavy contact should cause a severe drawdown of one service's stocks.

(5) Initial drawdown on stocks at Khe Sanh Combat Base, through consumption and restriction of resupply, commenced on 9 April. However, the Ca Lu FSA remained the primary logistical installation in support of Operation PEGASUS.

(6) Fleet Logistics Command assumed responsibility for the operation of the Ca Lu FSA subsequent to the termination of Operation PEGASUS.

#### b. Transportation

(1) The Ca Lu FSA was prestocked and resupplied primarily via Route 9, employing the transportation assets of the 57th Transportation Bn (Truck), augmented by transportation truck assets belonging to FLC, Danang.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-AM

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

(2) On call aerial resupply was available for resupply support of Operation PEGASUS; however, uninterrupted use of Route 9 negated this requirement.

(3) During the early stages of the operation the Khe Sanh Combat Base continued to be resupplied by air; however, on 15 April, the first truck convoy provided resupply to the base.

#### c. Communications

(1) Positive communications were required from LZ STUD to the Khe Sanh Combat Base, as well as to Camp Evans and Phu Bai, once the 1 Cav Div (AM) assumed OPCON of the 26th Marine Regt. Voice circuits into KSCB were routed over the AN/TRC-97 tropospheric scatter system to the Hue-Phu Bai area and were then transferred to the high capacity tropo system between Hue and Khe Sanh.

(2) Upon termination of Operation PEGASUS, the Marine AN/TRC-97 terminals were left in place but returned to Marine control. They were then used for internal control by the 3d Marine Division. The Army equipment used in the operation was returned to the 63d Signal Bn contingency assets for use in subsequent operations.

(3) Careful prior planning, thorough coordination, and mutual cooperation on the part of signal staffs of III MAF, PCV, 1st Cav Div (AM) and the performance of elements of the 63d Signal Bn, 1st Signal Brigade (STRATCOM) combined to score a unique communications success and contributed to the favorable outcome of the operation.

#### d. Medical Service

##### (1) Field Evacuation Procedures

(a) The evacuation of patients from the field pick-up sites to the clearing stations was accomplished by helicopter. Several different concepts were used - depending on the service.

(b) The 1st Cav Div (AM) utilized organic air ambulances for all field pick-ups. These air ambulances also provided field pick-ups for the ARVN Abn TF.

(c) The 1st Marine Regt detailed two helicopters for the specific mission of evacuating casualties. By doing so, they utilized a system similar to that of the 1 Cav Div (AM). These helicopters were positioned at the composite Regimental Aid Station for immediate dispatch to the field pick-up site.

(d) The 26th Marine Regt utilized normal aviation

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-4H

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

support of the 3d Mar Div to make field pick-ups. They did not use helicopters specifically detailed for air evacuation, but utilized any helicopter available in the area.

## (2) Initial Medical Treatment Facilities

(a) Clearing stations or comparable facilities were used extensively as the initial treatment facility in the chain of evacuation during this operation. This differs somewhat from other operations, where casualties were often evacuated from the field directly to a hospital.

(b) The 1st Cav Div (AM) had two clearing stations located at LZ STUD. Nearly all patients were evacuated from the field pick-up sites to one of these two clearing stations.

(c) The 1st Marine Regt utilized a composite Regimental Aid Station and attached medical support team. This gave it a capacity similar to an Army clearing station. This facility was located at Ca Lu and provided initial treatment for personnel of the 1st Marine Regt.

(d) The 26th Marine Regt was supported by Co C (-), 3d Med Bn, 3d Mar Div. This unit's facility was located at Khe Sanh and was comparable to an Army clearing station. Initial treatment was provided prior to evacuation. Also considered a part of the initial treatment facilities utilized by the Marines was D Co, 3d Med Bn, 3d Mar Div, in Dong Ha. This unit has a greater capability than does an Army clearing station. Co D was utilized to provide emergency resuscitation and as a collecting point for patients being evacuated south by fixed wing aircraft.

(e) The ARVN Abn TF employed a surgical team, located at LZ STUD, in close proximity to the 1 Cav Div (AM) clearing stations. This team provided initial treatment to the ARVN personnel prior to further evacuation.

## (3) Evacuation and Hospitalization

(a) U.S. Army personnel were largely evacuated from the clearing stations by "Dustoff" helicopter ambulance to the 18th Surgical Hospital, Quang Tri. Some patients were evacuated directly to the 22d Surgical Hospital, Phu Bai.

(b) The ARVN Abn TF personnel were evacuated from the surgical team facility by "Dustoff" and U.S. Air Force fixed wing to the Nguyen Tri Phong Station Hospital, Hue. Some of the more seriously wounded were evacuated to the Province Hospital, Quang Tri.

(c) Marine personnel belonging to both the 1st Marine

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-1H

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (FCR: 13003-32)(U-1)

Regiment and the 26th Marine Regiment were evacuated from the Regimental Aid Station and Co C to "Delta Med" (Co D, 3d Med Bn) in Dong Ha. From there they were evacuated by fixed wing aircraft to the 3d Med Bn (-), in Phu Bai, where definitive care was begun. A few personnel of the 1st Marine Regt went directly to C Co, 1st Med Bn, Phu Bai.

#### (4) Evaluation

(a) Although separate systems were used for various elements, there was little duplication of effort. Provisions were made for joint utilization of evacuation and treatment facilities when necessitated by the workload or in the best interests of the patient.

(b) There was some disadvantage to Marine personnel because of the location of the 3d Med Bn (-) in Phu Bai. This made the chain of evacuation to surgical treatment quite long. This situation will be eliminated when the 3d Med Bn (-) moves to Quang Tri.

#### 14. (U) Engineer Effort

a. Engineer operations prior to, and during Operation PEGASUS were focused toward the accomplishment of three major missions: construction of the FSE/FSA at LZ STUD with the supporting C-123 airfield; opening and restoring Route 9 from the vicinity of Ca Lu to KSCB; and direct support of infantry elements in combined ground and heliborne operations.

b. Engineer support for the operation was provided by elements of the U.S. Army, Navy and Marines. Responsibility for coordination of the engineer mission was assigned to the Division Engineer, 1 Cav Div (AM), with the major construction effort being provided by the Navy and Marine elements. Close combat support was provided for tactical operations by the 8th Engr Bn and elements of the 3d Mar Div.

c. The establishment of the forward support base and airfield at LZ STUD and the opening of Route 9 to Khe Sanh were difficult engineer tasks which were necessary for the success of Operation PEGASUS. They were accomplished by a combination of the military engineer forces of three services and represent an outstanding achievement in interservice teamwork.

CONFIDENTIAL

## FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## 15. (FOUO) Commander's Analysis

a. Operation PIGASUS was a highly productive interservice undertaking of the utmost remuneration - an end product of a high order of teamwork. This teamwork, involving Army, Marine, Air Force, Navy Seabees, and Navy logistics elements, reaped benefits in terms of a cross fusion of ideas and experiences - particularly in the realm of airmobile tactics and techniques.

b. The operation focused attention on the need for extensive low level reconnaissance to develop the situation in an area characterized by uncertain intelligence. As an example: the assault plan could not be finalized until reconnaissance had revealed acceptable approach routes, landing zones, and the location of enemy anti-aircraft emplacements.

c. The operation was an ideal example of the synchronization of massive B-52 strikes, tactical air support, and artillery firepower, with ground maneuver; all based on detailed pre-planning and fire support coordination, centralized under the Commanding General, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). Under these conditions, it was possible to achieve selectivity, flexibility, responsiveness and a saturation effect as desired. This capacity, coupled with speed of execution made possible by airmobility, proved to be decisive - disrupting the enemy's cohesiveness and control.

d. The operation was made possible by imaginative logistical support. The development of the logistics base at LZ STUD enabled the attacking elements to be supplied by helicopter from this base until Highway 9 could be opened forward of STUD.

e. The deception plan, implemented by the Commanding General, 3d Marine Division, was exceedingly well executed and appears to have been successful in confusing, if not deceiving, the enemy as to our true intentions.

f. In addition, the operation was conducted in an aura of intense press interest which defied stringent control and which resulted in detailed reporting of intelligence. Much of this information was of value to the enemy.

FOR THE COMMANDER:



L. H. SCHWEITER  
BG, USA  
Chief of Staff

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Maj Gen John J. Tolson III

NVA - 30,000

1 ACD upon III MAF 22 Jan.

Had moved from Bong Son II Corps

Chain of ~~of~~ events started on 25 Jan when  
Cushman ordered 1 ACD to prepare contingency plan  
for relief of K.S.

Tet off attempts

1 ACD upon arrival Hue.

~~March~~ March. March on strip at Ca Hue for logrotran

MCV 7th. Prov. Corps Km. activated at Phu Bai 1201 16 March.

Lt. Gen. William B. Rosson

(over)

1 reg. 3d Mar Air diving attack north from  
 Dong Ha. Took Four Kilo. (2/4, 3d Agd 5th Cav,  
 (1 + 2 Bn 1st ARVN Inf.  
 D-Day H-Hour 30 0600 M. Sub. Reg.

5 Km west of Dong Ha. Concluded on 1 Apr.

30 Mar LZ Still 82% complete C7A + later C-123s

#3

Proc. Corps M. Termites Pegasus on 15 April.

Tank Force Klich of 3d Mar Div reinforced

by 2d Bde(-) 1st AD assumed resp. for

Ops in the South. Operation: Scatter **II**

DECLASSIFIED

Hq. PROV CORPS VN. Combat Opns APP Operation Pegasus (C)

p-16.

Totals: 72.

	Army	Marines	ARVN
KIA	41	51	33
WIA	207	459	187
MIA	5		

Enemy (killed by)

KIA	Army	Marines	Armed	
	640	404	260	1304
POW	6	9	6	
Med W/ps.	404	69	84	557
Ch W/ps	160	31	16	207

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

8 April 1/9 signed Hill 869 at 0730 no operation #2

2/26 pushed NW of base.

1st Bde SW of base.

2d Bde RD 858387 old French post

3d Bde moved into base & assumed responsibility for security.

Route 9 officially opened on 1600 April 1.

11th Eng Bn, FME

8th Eng Bn 1ACD.

Gen. West. Hercules

(over)

DECLASSIFIED

16 days - 14 km roads. upland or upland?  
 bridges + 17 log-passes. Mosky craters +  
 landslides.

11 Apr. Extraction begins 1st Plt (minus 1 km)  
 airlifted to Quang Tri City + 37th ARVN to Da Nang.  
 prep. for Op. Reliance.

13 Apr. 1 ACD CT + 3d began extraction for Reliance

3 Bn/26 0800 14th assaulted 881N from 881S

killed 106 NVA 7 C/Suyn 59 ind unexp 6 USMC KIA  
 14 WIA.

DECLASSIFIED

Battle #1

~~Company~~ 11th Eng. Bn. followed &  
upward road.

4 April 0600 1/9 moved SE toward Hill 471  
Hill secured at 1720. 30 WVA KIA  
little resistance.

Dummy night 1922 (82, 122 + 152mm)  
7 KIA 34 WVA.

0515

5 April 7th Bn, 66th Reg, 304th attached 1/9 on 471.

1 USMC KIA 19 WVA 122 WVA KIA.

6 Apr. 2 Bn 12th Cav. relieved 1/9 on 471  
+ 1/9 started sweep to northwest.

DECLASSIFIED

1400 on 6 Apr. 5th Bn 7th Cav. northeast of KSCB KD 850425  
 2d Bn 7 Cav to south west.

6 Apr. 6/2/26 NWest of KSCB engaged NVA  
 company killed 48 NVA lost 4 VMC.

contact link up 1350 6 April

a company from ARVN Airborne TF  
 linked up with 37th ARVN.

See Chaisson

D.E. I - Walt + Thi<sup>platt</sup> place for II  
limited number people access to info.  
move up quickly to Tom Ky.

MA G-36 ~~capabilities~~  
as pilot in seat  
" " in test  
traps - slip patch.

mobile DASC

great comm.  
face-to-face element

then to 3 measures.

artillery at Ba To (presence of

~~such~~ <sup>such</sup> relations with Army / support base

Army entry / Marine /

entry.

Gen. Hamard ? sp.

... .. will be high

Artillery ammo down RT 1 at night

Hot line NVA (just 1st contact)

... .. to ... ..  
use of RT 1 at night.

Will 50 representative CP

W. L. M. R. ... ..  
(... ..) ... ..

Political

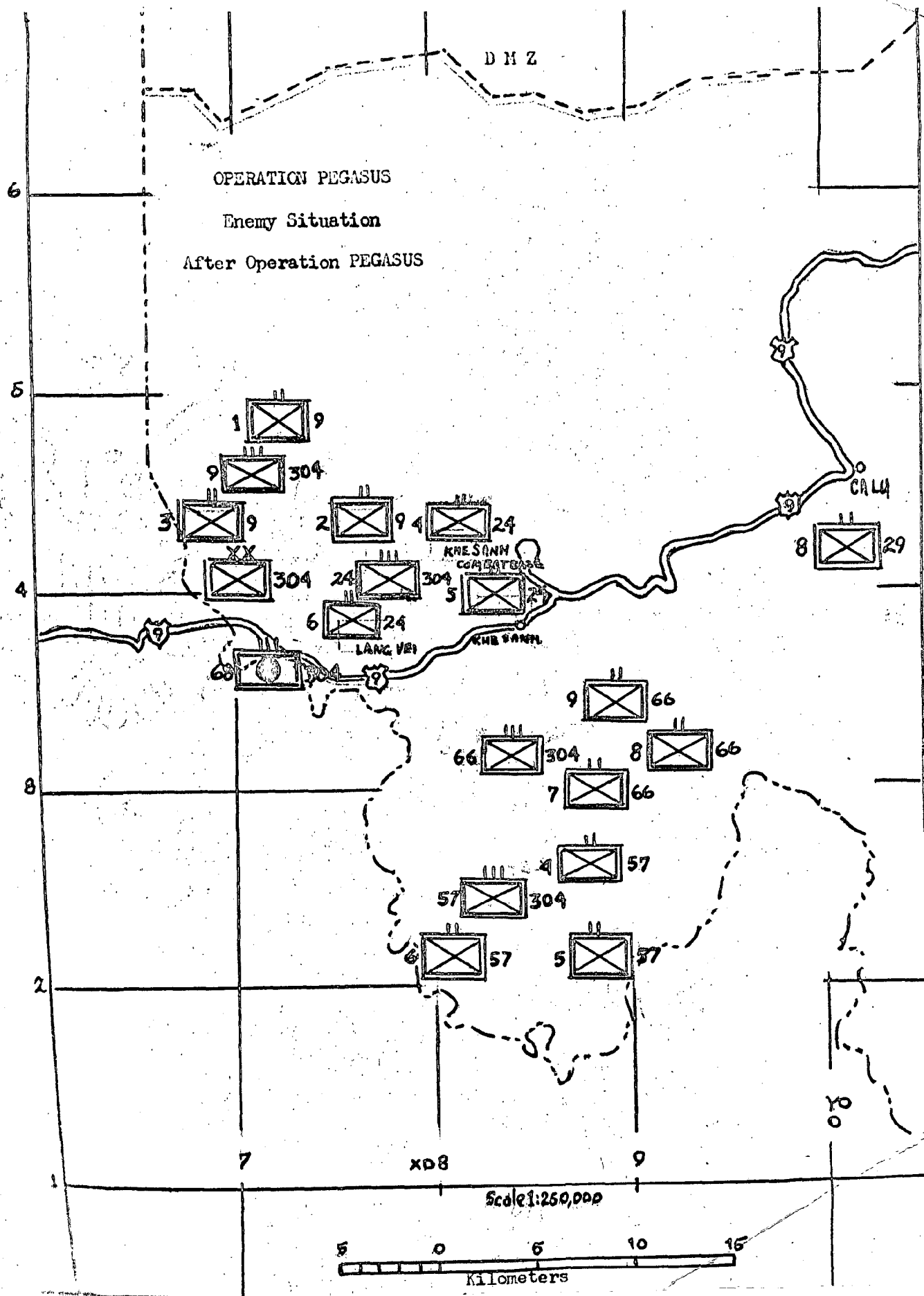
... ..

... ..

... ..

Cas - absolutely ... ..

... ..



**SECRET**

position to oversee the base and reinforce if the need arose.

*The med area was even... ( )*

Consequently, the ~~ensuing~~ battle there did not even have an  
*hmc* ( )  
 official name.

### The Hill Fights

On the morning of 24 April 1967, approximately 30 men from the 2d Platoon, Company B, 1/9 along with an 81mm mortar section, moved from the Khe Sanh Combat Base to Hill 700, a ridgeline roughly 3,000 meters northwest of the airstrip. Their mission was to provide supporting fire, if needed, for the two remaining platoons of Company B which were conducting a sweep through a suspected enemy cave complex north of Hill 861. Once the mortars were in position, First Lieutenant Phillip H. Sauer took four men, including a forward observer (FO), a radioman, and two riflemen for security, and headed for the top of Hill 861 to establish an observation post (OP). As the team approached a bamboo thicket some 200 meters from the crest of the hill, it was ambushed. The point man, a scant five meters from the opening fusillade, was immediately cut down and the other rifleman was also killed. Lieutenant Sauer quickly ordered his men to pull back, then stood firing at the enemy with his pistol to cover

( ) Ibid.

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

the withdrawal. That was the last time he was seen alive. A fourth member of the team, the radioman, was also hit and killed; only the FO managed to escape. Although the fire fight lasted but a few minutes and, on the surface, appeared to be just another small unit encounter, it triggered one of the bloodiest and hardest-fought battles of the war. The "Hill ( ) Fights" had begun.

Even after the lone survivor of the ambush on Hill 861 returned, the Marines of the 2d Platoon did not know how large a force was between them and the rest of Company B. In an attempt to recover the bodies of their comrades and determine the size of the enemy unit, several men from the 2d Platoon moved up to the area of contact but were halted by heavy sniper and small arms fire. Finally, the platoon commander, Second Lieutenant Thomas G. King, took nine men and returned to the ambush site. Moving cautiously through the heavy elephant grass, they found two bodies but saw no sign of the NVA. Popping a smoke grenade, Lieutenant King guided an H-34 helicopter in to evacuate the bodies but its wheels had no sooner touched the

---

( ) 3d Marines Khe Sanh AAR, 9 June 1967, pp. 13, 14 (S); Interview with SSgt Leon R. Burns, USMC, dtd 12 May 1967, No. 993 (Oral History Collection, HistBr, HQMC) (S); Interview with 2dLt Thomas G. King, USMC, dtd 12 May 1967, No. 994 (Oral History Collection, HistBr, HQMC)(S).

**SECRET**

**SECRET**

ground when the entire crest of Hill 861 (approximately 300 meters in width) erupted in a hail of heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire. Lieutenant King and his men dropped to the ground unscathed but the chopper took 35 hits in a matter of seconds. The only thing that saved the H-34 from destruction was its escort--two UH-1E (Huey) gunships which swooped down and raked the hilltop with their machine guns. As the enemy fire slackened, the H-34 lumbered into the air while Lieutenant King and his men scurried down the slope to a friendlier environment. There was at least a reinforced company entrenched ( ) on the top of that hill.

While the mortars on Hill 700 and the heavier artillery at KSCB shelled the enemy positions, the 1st and 3d Platoons of Company B were directed to abandon their original mission, wheel to the southwest and hit the NVA from the rear. They were roughly 2,000 meters north of their new objective. The company (-) had moved only about 300 meters on the new line of march when it, too, walked into a hornet's nest. The point squad had just moved down the reverse slope of a small knoll

---

( ) 3d Marines Khe Sanh AAR, 9 June 1967, pp. 13, 14 (S); Interview with 2dLt Thomas G. King, USMC, dtd 12 May 1967, No. 994 (Oral History Collection, HistBr, HQMC) (S).

**SECRET**

GENERAL OFFICERS  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS  
ON ACTIVE DUTY

DF-wfw  
3 Oct 1968

<u>GENERAL</u>	<u>DUTY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>LTD</u>
CHAPMAN Leonard F Jr	Commandant of the Marine Corps	
<u>LIEUTENANT GENERALS</u>		
WALT Lewis W	Assistant Commandant of the Marine Corps (1/68)	6/67
BUSE Henry W Jr	CG FMFPac	6/68
CUSHMAN Robert E Jr	CG III MAF (6/67)	3/67
WEEDE Richard G	CG FMFLant/CG II MEF	7/67
NICKERSON Herman Jr	Dir Pers/Dep CofS (Manpower) (1/68)	11/67
VAN RYZIN William J	Chief of Staff HQMC	6/68
FIELDS Lewis J	CG MarCorDev and Educ Comd, Quant	7/68
THARIN Frank C	Dep CofS (Plans and Programs) HQMC (9/68)	8/68
<u>MAJOR GENERALS</u>		
LEEK Frederick E	ADep CofS (Plans) HQMC	10/66
TYLER Paul R	QMGMHC HQMC (3/65)	2/65
ROBERTSHAW Louis B	Insp Gen MC HQMC (7/68)	7/67
TOMPKINS Rathvon McC	DepComdr III MAF (5/68)	11/67
FONTANA Paul J	DepComdr FMFPac/CG V MEF	7/68
MASTERS John H	Dep CofS CINCLANT	11/67
BOWMAN George S Jr	MCLnOff OP-09M CNO	7/68
YOUNDALE Carl A	CG 1st MarDiv	6/68
SIMPSON Ormond R	CG MCRDep PISC	11/67

<u>MAJOR GENERALS</u>	<u>DUTY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>LTD</u>
ANDERSON Norman J	DepComdr FMFLant	7/68
MCCUTCHEON Keith B	Dep CofS (Air) HQMC	6/66
JONES William K	DepDirPers HQMC	1/67
DAVIS Raymond G	CG 3d MarDiv (5/68)	3/68
QUILTER Charles J	CG 1st MAW	6/68
ELWOOD Hugh M	ACofS, J-3 PACOM	8/68
ROBERTSON Donn J	CG MCB CamPen/CG 4th MarDiv Hq Nucleus	7/68
ENGLISH Lowell E	CG MCRDep San Diego	2/67
THRASH William G	COMCAB West/CG MCAS El Toro	2/67
CARL Marion E	CG 2d MAW (8/68)	5/66
ADAMS Arthur H	CG 3d MAW	6/68
METZGER Louis	Dep CofS (RD&S), HQMC	2/68
PLATT Jonas M	ACofS, G-1 HQMC (3/68)	1/67
DRAKE Clifford B	DepComdr XXIV Corps Vietnam	5/68
ROBINSON Wallace H Jr	CG MCSA Phila (3/66)	3/64
OWENS Robert G Jr	ACofS, G-3 HQMC	1/68
ANDERSON Earl E	CofS III MAF	12/67
RYAN Michael P	Dep Educ/Dir Educ Cntr (6/68) with additional duties as Dir Command and Staff College MCDEC Quant	6/67
CHAISSON, John R	Spl Asst to the Dep CofS (P&P) HQMC (9/68).	7/68
WHEELER Edwin B	CG 2d MarDiv (11/67) with additional duties as CG MCB Cam Lej (9/68)	9/66
<u>BRIGADIER GENERALS</u>		
VAN STOCKUM Ronald R (Ret)	Navy Dept Bd Dec & Meds	8/67
HUTCHINSON Homer G Jr	DepDir, Plans, J-5, STRICOM	9/68

<u>BRIGADIER GENERALS</u>	<u>DUTY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>LTD</u>
BANNING Virgil W	Dep Spt/CG MCB MCDEC Quant	9/68
GARRETSON Frank E	ADC 3d MarDiv	8/68
DOOLEY George E	ADep CofS (Programs) HQMC	9/66
FULLER Regan	CG ForTrpsPac/CG MCB 29Palms	10/66
PEATROSS Oscar F	Dir Mgt Analysis Gru HQMC (5/67)	6/66
HERBOLD James E Jr	CG MCSC Barstow	11/67
SAWYER Webb D	Dep ACoFS G-3 HQMC	4/68
KELLER Robert P	CG 4th MAW/CG MARTC Glenview (6/68)	5/68
ARMSTRONG Alan J	DepDev/DirDevCntr, MCDEC, Quant	2/68
AXTELL George C	ACoFS G-4 HQMC (2/68)	11/66
WEBSTER George D	DepComdr FMFPac (Fwd) (8/68) TAD for about 30 days dur Oct as ADC 3d MarDiv	4/68
FEELEY James A Jr	Enroute for du as CG FLC EDA 17 Oct 1968	
LAHUE Foster C	CG ForTrpsLant/4th MEB	5/68
WIDDECKE Charles F	Dir Marine Corps Reserve, HQMC	9/68
WILSON Louis H	CofS FMFPac	9/68
MCLAUGHLIN John N	Dir COC USMACV (6/68)	2/68
GLICK Jacob E	Dep Dir for Commands/Areas J-3 JCS	9/68
WILLIAMS John E	CG 9th MAB (8/68)	5/68
FAIRBURN Robert R	CG MCSC Albany	4/67
LAWRENCE James F	DepAsst to the Secretary (Legislative Affairs) DOD (6/67)	9/63
HILL Homer S	AWC 1st MAW	4/68

<u>BRIGADIER GENERALS</u>	<u>DUTY ASSIGNMENT</u>	<u>LTD</u>
DOYLE Edward J	Chief, Middle East, Africa and So Asia Div, Plans & Policy Directorate (J-5) JCS	12/67
DULACKI Leo J	CG 5th MarDiv (9/68)	6/68
OLSON Harry C	CG ForLogComd FMFPac During Oct68 enroute MCSA, Phila for du as CG EDA: 24Nov68	9/67
HOFFMAN Carl W	ADC 1st MarDiv (8/68)	1/68
JOHNSON William G	Asst Dep CofS (Air) HQMC	1/68
HISE Henry W	AWC 1st MAW	2/68
SIMMONS Edwin H	Dep Fiscal Dir HQMC (8/67)	8/66
CARNEY Robert B Jr	Enroute to 3d MarDiv for du as ADC EDA: 1Nov68	
POGGEMEYER Herman Jr	Dep ACofS G-4 HQMC	3/68
CHIP William C	Sick, USNH Bethesda (Ward T-14)	9/68
SPANJER Ralph H	Dep Asst Dir Plans, Prog & Systems, Defense Supply Agency	9/67
CONLEY Robert F	COMCAB East/CG MCAS CherPt	8/68
HAYNES Fred E Jr	Legislative Asst to CMC HQMC (8/68)	12/67
SNODDY Lawrence F Jr	Asst Dir Pers, HQMC (7/68) Attending: Adv Mgt Prog, Harvard Univ (9/68-12/68)	7/67
DWYER Ross T Jr	ADC 1st MarDiv (8/68)	6/68
HOUGHTON Kenneth J	Dep ACofS G-1 HQMC (8/68)	3/68
FEAGAN Joseph C Jr	Enroute for du as ADC 2d MarDiv EDA: 11 Oct 1968	
BROWN Leslie E	Dep J-3 USEUCOM	8/68
HUBBARD Jay W	Dir of Information HQMC	10/68

## CONFIDENTIAL

AVI-1E

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## (1) Attached:

559th Engr Det (Terrain)  
 172d Engr Det (Utilities)  
 552d TC Co (CAR)(-)

## (2) Area Support:

63d Signal Bn  
 Aviation Co (Prov)  
 Co A, 504th MP Bn

## b. Provisional Corps Vietnam Artillery

HMB, Corps Artillery  
 108th Arty Gp (-)  
 2d Bn, 94th Arty (175 Gun)  
 8th Bn, 4th Arty (175 Gun) (-)  
 1st Bn, 44th Arty (AW)(GS) (-)  
 Btry G, 65th Arty (M55) (-)

## c. 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)

## (1) 1st Bde

1st Bn, 8th Cav  
 1st Bn, 12th Cav  
 2d Bn, 19th Arty (105 How)(IS)  
 B Btry, 1st Bn, 30th Arty (155 How)  
 A Co, 8th Engr Bn (DS)  
 2 Sqds, 25th Inf Plat. (Secret Dept)  
 Det, Pathfinder  
 Det, E Co, 52d Inf (LRP)  
 Tm, 13th Sig Bn  
 Tm, IPW/GI, 191st MI Det  
 Tm, 245th PSYOPS Co  
 Tm, 5th Weather Sqdn  
 Plat, 545th MP Co  
 RSE

## (2) 2d Bde

1st Bn, 5th Cav  
 2d Bn, 5th Cav  
 2d Bn, 12th Cav

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVIIL-III

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: PACJ3-30)(K-1)

1st Bn, 77th Arty (105 How)(DS)  
 A Btry, 1st Bn, 30th Arty (155 How)  
 B Co, 8th Engr Bn (DS)  
 Sqd, 25th Inf Plat (Scout Dogs)  
 Det, Pathfinder  
 Det, E Co, 52d Inf (LRP)  
 Tm, 13th Sig Bn  
 Tm, IPW/CI, 191st MI Det  
 Tm, 245th PSYOPS Co  
 Tm, 5th Weather Sqdn  
 Plat, 545th MP Co  
 FSE

## (3) 3d Bde

1st Bn, 7th Cav  
 2d Bn, 7th Cav  
 5th Bn, 7th Cav  
 1st Bn, 21st Arty (105 How)(DS)  
 C Btry, 1st Bn, 30th Arty (155 How)  
 C Co, 8th Engr Bn (DS)  
 2 Sqds, 34th Inf Plat (Scout Dogs)  
 Det, Pathfinder  
 Det, E Co, 52d Inf (LRP)  
 Tm, 13th Sig Bn  
 Tm, IPW/CI, 191st MI Det  
 Tm, 245th PSYOPS Co  
 Tm, 5th Weather Sqdn  
 Plat, 545th MP Co  
 FSE

## (4) 1st Marine Regiment

1st Bn, 1st Marines  
 2d Bn, 1st Marines  
 2d Bn, 3d Marines  
 1st Bn, 11th Marine Arty (Rein)(DS)  
     3-105 Btrys  
     1-155 Btry  
     1-4.2" Mortar Btry  
 2-Plat Tanks (on call)(3d Mar Div)  
 1-Plat, AT Co (ONTOS)(3d Mar Div)  
 Co A (-), 1st Engr Bn (1st Mar Div)  
 Co A (-), 1st Shore Party Bn (1st Mar Div)  
     1-Shore Party (3d Mar Div)  
 Co A (-), 1st Motor Transport Bn (1st Mar Div)

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## (5) 26th Marine Regiment

1st Bn, 26th Marines  
 2d Bn, 26th Marines  
 3d Bn, 26th Marines  
 1st Bn, 9th Marines  
 FOB 3  
 1st Bn, 13th Marine Arty (Rein)(DS)  
     3-105 Btrys  
     1-155 Btry  
     1-4.2" Mortar Btry  
 Co A (-), 3d AT Bn (ONTOS)  
 Plat, Co B, 3d Tank Bn  
 Co B, 3d Recon Bn  
 Coordination:  
     37th ARVN Ranger Bn

## (6) Division Artillery

HMB, 1 Cav Div (Airmobile) Arty  
 2d Bn, 20th Arty (ARA)(GS)  
 1st Bn, 30th Arty (-) (155 How)(GS)  
 A Btry, 1st Bn, 83d Arty (8") (GSR)  
 B Btry, 1st Bn, 83d Arty (8") (GSR)  
 1st Bn, 44th Arty (AW)(GSR)(rotation of btrys)  
     G Btry, 65th Arty (155)(GSR)(rotation of secs)  
 6th Bn, 33d Arty (105 How)(GSR)

## (7) Division Troops

HHC (-), 1 Cav Div (Airmobile)  
 2d Bn, 8th Cav  
 1st Bn, 9th Cav  
 8th Engr Bn (-)  
 11th Avn Gp  
 Det (-), 5th Weather Sdn  
 13th Sig Bn (-)  
 545th MP Co (-)  
 371st RR Co  
 191 MI Det (-)  
 Co D (-), 52d Inf (LFP)  
 184th CML Plat  
 14th MH Det

## (8) Coordination:

3d ARVN Airborne Task Force

4

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RSC: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

3d ARVN Abn Bn  
 6th ARVN Abn Bn  
 8th ARVN Abn Bn  
 C Btry, 1st Bn, 30th Arty (10-12 Apr)(DS)

## (9) Engineer Task Force

Command & Control Element, 8th Engr Bn  
 11th Engr Bn, FMF  
 Navy Mobile Construction Bn 5

## d. Task Force KILO (3d Mar Div)

TF HQ  
 2d Bn, 4th Marines  
 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav (-) (USA)  
 C-Co, 2d Bn, 34th Armor  
 Co A, 1st Bn, 502d Abn (101 Abn Div)  
 Coordination:  
 1st Bn, 2d ARVN Regt  
 3d Bn, 1st ARVN Regt

## e. Supporting Forces

7th Air Force  
 7th Fleet  
 1st Marine Air Wing  
 U.S. Army Support Command, DaNang  
 Force Logistics Command, DaNang  
 Naval Support Activity, DaNang  
 1st ARVN ALC, DaNang  
 67th Medical Gp  
 18th Surgical Hospital  
 22d Surgical Hospital  
 571st Med Det (Air Ambulance)  
 NSA Hospital, DaNang  
 3d Marine Med Bn (-)  
 Co B, 1st Marine Med Bn  
 Co C, 1st Marine Med Bn  
 Nguyen TRI PHONG Station Hospital, HUE  
 DUY TAN General Hospital, DaNang

## 7. (U) Supporting Forces:

## a. Artillery

(1) Forces: (See Task Organization)

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MAC3-32)(K-1)

## (2) Employment and effectiveness:

(a) Two thousand four hundred twenty-two (2422) artillery fire missions were fired in support of Operation PEGASUS. During the period 210000H Mar - 150000H Apr, 31,546 rounds were expended in support of the operation. Five hundred sixty-three (563) missions were observed fire.

(b) One hundred two (102) tubes of artillery supported the operation from within the 1 Cav Div (Airmobile)'s AO, while an additional 39 tubes of 105mm howitzer and 16 tubes of 175mm gun artillery supported from outside the area.

(c) The lack of a suitable road network and the capability of the aerial supply system were major considerations in the employment of artillery. Even with these limitations, 26 battery-size moves were executed within the AO during the course of the operation.

(d) Although the margin of fire superiority had to come from air support, the air-artillery mix was effective.

## b. Air Support:

(1) ArcLight: Forty-five B-52 strikes, with a total of 269 aircraft were flown in support of the operation. Nineteen of these strikes were in direct support of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (KSCB) or in the immediate vicinity.

(2) Tactical Air: One thousand six hundred twenty-five (1625) tactical air strikes were delivered by Marine, Air Force and Navy aircraft during the 15 day period. Sorties were flown as follows:

(a) Marines	650
(b) Air Force	463
(c) Navy	436
(d) Service unknown	57
Total	1625

(3) Supply of Khe Sanh: Air Force C-123 and C-130 aircraft delivered 343 tons of supplies to Khe Sanh Combat Base by air drop or ground parachute delivery during the period 31 Mar - 8 Apr. C-123's landed and off-loaded 132 passengers during the period 31 Mar - 4 Apr. The KSCB airstrip was open to all types of aircraft on 9 April.

## 8. (C) Intelligence: 538

6

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Compat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## a. Area of Operations

(1) Weather. Transitional weather between the Northeast and Southwest Monsoons prevailed during Operation PEGASUS. Low stratus and ground fog characterized the late evening and early morning hours with ceilings to 500 feet and visibility less than 1 1/2 miles. Ceilings lifted to 2500 feet and were broken to occasionally scattered for the remainder of the day. Visibility at ground level was usually five miles during the day, while haze restricted visibility from the air to four miles. Although precipitation did fall, there was no significant accumulation. Temperature ranged from a high of 98 degrees to a low of 67 degrees. Weather did not seriously hinder operations for any period of more than 12 hours.

## (2) Terrain

(a) Observation and Fields of Fire. The multi-canopied forests and the steep mountains restricted observation and direct fire and hindered the registration of indirect fire weapons. The valley floors allow fair observation and fields of fire except for local erosion features and the dense undergrowth along stream beds. The rolling hills and plains allow good observation and direct fire, limited only by occasional dense forests.

(b) Cover and Concealment. Both are excellent in the rugged mountains and in the multi-canopied forests. Local erosional features, dense undergrowth along stream beds, and occasional dense forests provide good cover and concealment in the rolling hills and plains.

(c) Obstacles. Steep slopes and dense undergrowth are major obstacles to movement in the rugged mountains. Rivers and streams remain fordable throughout the year except when channelized and during periods of abnormal precipitation.

(d) Key Terrain. The high ground along Highway 9 and the terrain overlooking the Khe Sanh Combat Base is key terrain.

(e) Avenues of Approach. Highway 9 provides an excellent avenue of movement in an East-West direction for vehicles and heavy equipment. The DA KRONG, the BAO QUAN, and the QUANG TRI River Valley complex provide good avenues into and through the area from the northwest, east, and southeast. Highway 921, an excellent avenue of movement, and its junction with the XE PON River Valley provide a very good approach from the west.

(f) Cross-country Mobility. The rugged mountains and dense jungle forests restrict all vehicle movement. Foot movement is generally restricted to existing trails, intermediate ridge lines, and stream beds. Valley floors and the plains permit fair to poor movement of tracked vehicles and poor movement of wheeled vehicles. Movement in the valley and on the rolling plains is restricted by erosion and dense vegetation.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-MH

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

## d. Friendly Personnel Losses

	<u>ARMY</u>	<u>MARINES</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KIA	41	51	33	125
WIA	207	459	187	853
MIA	5	0	0	5
Total	253	510	220	983

## e. Enemy Losses Attributed To:

	<u>ARMY</u>	<u>MARINES</u>	<u>ARVN</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KIA	640	404	260	1304
CAPTURED	6	9	6	21
IND WEAPONS	404	69	84	557
C/S WEAPONS	160	31	16	207

## f. Prisoners of War Interrogated During PEGASUS

<u>Date</u>	<u>POC</u>	<u>Name</u>	<u>Unit</u>
5 Apr	XD 834347	HAI NINH TRANG	1st Co, Yen Tu Transportation Co
5 Apr	XD 834347	DOAN VAN SINH*	7th Co, 5th Bn, 2d Regt, 304th Div
5 Apr	XD 848407	BUI VAN TINH	3d Co, 3d Bn, 3d Regt, 304th Div
5 Apr	XD 848407	HOANG VAN KHOI	2d Co, 7th Bn, 66th Regt, 304th Div
5 Apr	XD 848407	HOANG HIEU TOI	6th Co, 9th Bn, 66th Regt, 304th Div
5 Apr	XD 840400	DINH VAN THANG	12th Co, 9th Bn, 66th Regt, 304th Div
6 Apr	XD 964398	NINH VAN LIEV	11th Co, 3d Bn, 1st Regt, 304th Div
7 Apr	XD 848394	DANG TUAT	3d Co, 7th Bn, 66th Regt, 304th Div
7 Apr	XD 870370	NGUYEN DAC HOA	14th Bn, 4th Regt, 408th Div
8 Apr	XD 775378	BUI VAN BINH	23d Co, 24th Arty Bn, 304th Div
8 Apr	XD 815383	NGUYEN VAN MAIN	2d Co, 85th Bn, 2d Regt, 204th Div
8 Apr	Khe Sanh	TRINH VAN KHUONG	7th Bn, 3d Regt, 304th Div
8 Apr	Khe Sanh	NGUYEN VAN HOA	14th Co, 7th Bn, 308th Div
8 Apr	Khe Sanh	NGUYEN VAN HOANG	C-6
9 Apr	XD 810390	NGUYEN VAN THANH	1st Co, 7th Bn, 3d Regt, 304th Div
10 Apr	XD 854364	HA VAN PHEN	11th Co, 3d Bn, 12th Regt, 330 Div
12 Apr	Lang Vei	NGUYEN VAN HAI	7th Co
13 Apr	XD 873396	LUONG VAN CHUC	1st Co, 2d Bn, 4th Regt, 4th Div
13 Apr	XD 788405	NGUYEN HONG XUY	6th Co, 2d Bn, 1st Regt, 325C Div

CONFIDENTIAL

/ Operations

#1

~~30~~ 30 April TF Kila - attack concluded on 1 Apr. but  
LZ Stud later continued.

0700 1 April 2/1 and 2/3 attack west  
Engineer follow up. 1/1 remained LZ Stud

later in aft. 1 April 3d Bde to LZ Mike (935410) and  
LZ Bates 928438 (midway) followed by  
entry of 1/21.

D+2 3 April  
~~1225~~ 1225 2d Bde air assaults LZ Tom 900345  
and LZ Turnstone 880360. Followed by entry 1/77

4 April 26th Mainms push out 1/9 to Hill 471  
5 Apr. Continuation attack 471 2/26 + 3/26 N + NW of base.

5 Apr. 1st Bde stages at LZ Stud + front entry 2/19.  
elements land LZ Snapper. 845344

6 Apr. 2d Bn, 12th Cav (2d Bde) relieved 1/9 on  
471. 1/9 to NW to 689.

6 Apr. G/2/26 fight NVA company 4USMC + 48NVA

1300 6 April - initial link up our company ARVN Abn  
TF airlifted to KSCP. joined 37th ARVN.

(Over)

7 Apr. discussion in contacts

one com. ARVN TK to LZ Snake 815374  
1314

8 April ~~0350~~ 3d ARVN Abn Bn CP attached (812372)  
(0350 to 0715) 11 ARVN - 74 NVA.

All three bns (3(-) 6th + 8th) arrived LZ Snake  
7 Km west of K50B.

8 April 0730 1/9 surge 869. no ops  
87 NVA killed.

11 April Route 9 apparently opened 1600 H.  
1st Bde (minus 1 Bn) airlifted out  
Quang Tri City -

14th 3/26 attacks 881N kills 106 losses 6.  
7 c/s + 59 ind weapons.

15 Apr Terminated 1 ACD prepare for Helms  
2d Bde<sup>(-)</sup> attached to TF Glitch of 3d Marine  
for <sup>future</sup> K5 operations 15 April Sealthorn II begins.

## OPERATION PEGASUS

The "Battle of Khe Sanh" began on 21 January 1968, just eight days before the enemy launched his TET offensive throughout the Republic of Vietnam. The North Vietnamese Army (NVA) forces, which hammered the Khe Sanh Combat Base daily with rocket, mortar, artillery, small arms, and automatic weapons fire, were estimated to be 30,000 strong.<sup>1</sup> Principal Free World Military Armed Forces

---

1

"Victory at Khe Sanh", Time Magazine, Asia Edition, Apr. 12, 1968, p. 27.

---

(FWMAF), blocking the enemy's avenue of approach into Quang Tri Province at Khe Sanh, were the 26th Marine Regimental Landing Team and the Army of Vietnam (ARVN) 37th Ranger Battalion. Support elements from the U. S. Army, Navy, and Air Force backed up the Marines and Rangers defending the combat base.

Within hours after the enemy launched his attack on the bastion at Khe Sanh, the U. S. Army's 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) (1 ACD) opened its forward command post in the Hue - Phu Bai (48Q YD 8020) area. Elements of the 1 ACD had been moved into the I Corps Tactical Zone (I CTZ) from the Bong Son (49P BS 8090) area in the II Corps Tactical Zone (II CTZ), and the headquarters became effective,

under operational control (OPCON) of the III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF), in its new location at 1200H hours, 22 January 1968.<sup>2</sup>

---

2

Yeagley, Jack, Maj. Liaison Officer, 1st CAV DIV (Airmobile), Interview with--May 1968.

---

On 25 January, Lieutenant General Robert E. Cushman Jr., USMC Commanding General, III MAF, directed the Air Cavalry Division to prepare a contingency plan for the relief and/or reinforcement of the Khe Sanh base.<sup>3</sup> This action started the chain of events

---

3

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 251428Z Jan 68, subject: Contingency Planning (Fm CG, III MAF to CG, 1 ACD)

---

that was later to emerge as OPERATION PEGASUS. But other events, including the Communist TET Offensive (29 January - 14 February), the Battle of Hue City (31 January - 25 February), the establishment of Headquarters, U. S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam, Forward (MACV FWD) (13 February), and its conversion into Headquarters, Provisional Corps, Vietnam (PCV) (10 March), were to take place before the operation became a reality.

During the month of February and into early March the 1 ACD conducted operations in and around the City of Hue and participated in destroying the enemy forces west of the walled city. In preparation for future operations, III MAF on 16 February directed that a Marine regiment, consisting of three battalions, would conduct the Khe Sanh operation with the 1 ACD.

The 1st Marine Division (1 Mar Div) designated the 1st Marine Regiment (1st Marines) to work with the cavalrymen.<sup>4</sup>

---

4

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 160058Z Mar 68  
MSG, HQ 1 MAR DIV, dtg 160942Z Mar 68

---

Major General John J. Tolson III, Commanding General, 1 ACD, on 2 March briefed General Creighton W. Abrams, Deputy Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam Forward (DEFCOMUSMACV FWD) on his concept of the operation to open Route 9 into Khe Sanh and relieve the pressure on the surrounded garrison. On 4 March, instructions were issued to begin construction on an airstrip in the vicinity of Ca Lu (48Q YD 0145) to provide the logistical flexibility considered necessary for the opening of Route 9. III MAF directed that construction be started on or about 12 March on an airfield capable of handling U. S. Air Force C7A

(Caribou) aircraft. The 3d Marine Division (3d Mar Div) was tasked to provide the necessary security for movement of the engineer equipment along Route 9 from Dong Ha (48Q YD 2461) to Ca Lu. The 11th Engineer Battalion, Fleet Marine Force (11th Engr Bn), and the U. S. Navy Mobile Construction Battalion 5 (NMCB 5) were to assist the 8th Engineer Battalion (Combat) (8th Engr Bn), 1 ACD. The strip was to be expanded later to take C-123 aircraft.<sup>5</sup>

---

5

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 040516Z Mar 68, (Pm CG, III MAF to CG, 1 ACD, CG, 3 Mar Div, COMNAVFORV REF DNG)

---

A conference was held at III MAF headquarters in Da Nang (49Z BU 0880) on 5 March on the transition of MCV FWD to Provisional Corps Vietnam and the resultant command relationships. The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), the 3d Marine Division, and the 101st Airborne Division (101 Abn Div) which had just deployed to I CTZ were to be OPCON of PCV. The provisional corps in turn was to be OPCON of III MAF.<sup>6</sup>

---

6

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 041128Z Mar 68, subject: Command Support Forthcoming Deployments, (Pm CG, II MAF to DEP COMUSMACV FWD)

---

LTC Cushman informed General William Westmoreland, Commander U. S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam, (COMUSMACV) General

Abrams, DEPCOMUSMACV, and Lieutenant General William B. Rosson, Commanding General - designee, PCV, that he intended to task the corps, on activation, to employ the 1 ACD and other required elements of PCV to open Route 9 and to conduct offensive operations in the Khe Sanh area. The III MAF commander now envisioned that construction of the airstrip at Ca Lu should begin on or about 20 March.<sup>7</sup>

---

7

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 081605Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, III MAF to COMUSMACV AND DEPCOMUSMACV FWD)

---

Provisional Corps Vietnam was activated at Phu Bai at 1201H hours, 10 March, and LTC Rosson assumed command. In accordance with LTC Cushman's instructions the 1 ACD was directed to prepare a briefing on their plan for the construction and security of the 67A strip at Ca Lu. The briefing was to be presented to LTC's Cushman and Rosson at PCV headquarters on 12 March.<sup>8</sup>

---

8

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 100822Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, PCV to CG, 1 ACD; CG, 3d Mar Div; COMNAVFORV)

---

General Westmoreland and General Abrams arrived at PCV headquarters on 10 March to receive a briefing by LTC Rosson on planned operations. One aspect of the briefing covered the attack to open Route 9 and

to destroy the enemy forces around the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The operation was to begin on or about 1 April depending on the weather. General Westmoreland agreed to the concept of using a Marine regiment to open Route 9 in conjunction with air assaults by the 1 ACD and an over-land attack by an ARVN Task Force. He agreed that weather was the controlling factor on timing of the attack, and stressed that appropriate forces should be used to take the fight to the enemy and to relieve the garrison at Khe Sanh.<sup>9</sup>

---

9

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 110514Z Mar 68, subject: Visit of COMUSMACV to HQ Prov Corps Vietnam.

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 120954Z Mar 68

---

The plan for construction and security of the Ca Lu airstrip was presented by MG Tolson at PCV headquarters on 12 March. Design and construction management was to be the responsibility of the 8th Engr Bn. The Division Engineer, 1 ACD was responsible for coordination of the engineer effort with the 11th Engr Bn providing the bulk of the equipment, with an augmentation from elements of the 3d Navy Construction Brigade (3d NCB). The field was to be expanded to a C-123 aircraft capability, with the surface to be compacted and stabilized with asphalt cut-back or

penetration. If the construction site could be secured at night to allow for a ten hour work-day the strip could be ready for C7A's by 19 March and for C-123's on 24 March. If the work force had to retract into the Ca Lu perimeter each night the schedule would have to be revised to 22 March for C7A aircraft and 28 March for C-123's. As was true for the entire operation, the construction of the airfield could be greatly affected by weather. It was agreed at the conference that the CG, 1 ACD and the CG, 3d Mar Div would arrange security details.<sup>10</sup>

<sup>10</sup>

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 141505Z Mar 68, (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

Three days later, on 15 March, LTG Rosson's headquarters requested LTG Cushman's headquarters to effect the coordination necessary to obtain the approval of Lieutenant General Lam, CG, I CTZ, and the Vietnamese government, for the participation of the ARVN Task Force.

III MAF was informed that PCV would welcome the designation of a Task Force of three battalions from the newly activated ARVN air-

<sup>11</sup> borne division. III MAF was also asked to designate two Marine

<sup>11</sup>

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 150235Z Mar 68, (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

battalions to participate in the operation and to deploy them to the vicinity of Ca Lu, under OPCON of PCV, by 30 March. The two battalions, from III MAF resources were to be further placed under OPCON of a regimental headquarters from the 3d Mar Div. The Marine division was also tasked to provide a battalion to fill out the Marine Regimental Task Force.<sup>12</sup>

---

12

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 150240Z Mar 68, (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF and CG, 3 Mar Div)

---

Headquarters, III MAF was also informed on 15 March of the requirement for additional Army engineer support for PCV. In normal tactical operations the division engineer battalion furnishes one company in support of each brigade, thus leaving very little reserve. Both the 1 ACD and the 101st Abn Div engineer battalions were small battalions, and were equipped mostly with airmobile and/or airdroppable equipment; yet they provided engineer support for rather protracted areas of operations (AO). In addition, the deployment to I CTZ required extensive engineer effort to include construction of helipads, base camps, and defensive perimeters. Future planned operations which were to involve development of logistical bases, fire support bases and road improvements made it apparent that engineer requirements exceeded the engineer

capabilities. In view of the increasing requirements PCV requested the deployment of another Engineer Battalion (Combat).<sup>13</sup>

13

MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 150712Z Mar 68, subject: Army Engineer Support for PCV, (Fm CG, PCV to CG, III MAF)

In order to expedite the completion of the Ca Lu airstrip, LTC Rosson instructed the CG's of the 1 ACD and 3d Mar Div to provide an additional rifle company each, not later than 1500H hours 16 March, for security of the construction site. To deceive the enemy, the company of the 1 ACD removed their division patches from their shoulders and were airlifted into Ca Lu by Marine helicopters. The Commanding Officer, 3d Bn, 9th Marines, 3 Mar Div was responsible for coordinating security for the airstrip.<sup>14</sup>

14

MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 151350Z Mar 68, subject: Ca Lu Airstrip (Fm CG, PCV to CG, 1 ACD and CG, 3 MAR DIV)

A Logistical Planning Group was formed at PCV headquarters at 1300H hours, 16 March. Representatives of the three divisions under OPCON of PCV were directed to participate while requests were submitted through III MAF for representation by III MAF,

Da Nang Support Command (DSC), Navy Support Activity, Da Nang (NSA), and Fleet Logistic Command (FLC). The group was formed to determine logistical requirements for the up-coming operation.<sup>15</sup>

<sup>15</sup>

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 150940Z Mar 68, subject: Formation of Logistic Planning Group, (FM PCV TO CG, III MAF; CG, 1 ACD; CG, 3D MAR DIV; CG, 101 ABN DIV; CG, DSA; CG, FLC; CDR, NSA)

Also on 16 March, III MAF replied to PCV's request of the previous day for designation and deployment of two marine battalions. III MAF outlined that since all of the 3d Mar Div regimental headquarters were fully committed, it was their intention to deploy and to pass OPCON of a Marine regiment (reinforced), less one battalion, from the 1st Mar Div to participate in the planned operation. A third battalion (reinforced) would be provided from the 3d Mar Div. The 1st Marine Division, in turn, designated the 1st Marine Regiment and instructed them to participate in a joint planning conference with the 1 ACD.<sup>16</sup>

<sup>16</sup>

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 160058Z Mar 68 (FM CG, III MAF TO CG, PCV)

MSG, HQ 1st MAR DIV, dtg 160942Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 1st MAR DIV TO CG, III MAF AND CG, TF XRAY)

General Westmoreland, accompanied by LTG Cushman, Brigadier General

Edward M. Flanagan Jr., Deputy Chief of Staff for Operations, III MAF, and Brigadier General John W. Olsson, Director, Combat Operations Center, JC, MACV, visited the three divisions under OPORD of PCV on 17 March. At the 1 ACD command post MG Tolson briefed COMUSMACV on the division's Operation Plan 1-68 (Operation PEGASUS) for the attack toward Khe Sanh.<sup>17</sup>

---

17

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 190114Z Mar 68 (Fm CG, III MAF to COMUSMACV)

---

Logistical Support for Operation PEGASUS was to be provided from a logistical base in the vicinity of Ca Lu. The base would be operated by U.S. Army Support Command. To insure continuous support the forward support activity (FSA) was to be pre-stocked prior to 1 April. Daily convoys between Ca Lu and Dong Ha were to commence on 22 March into the FSA established on 21 March. The Commanding Officer, 57th Transportation Battalion was designated as the point of contact for the daily convoy.<sup>18</sup>

---

18

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 191448Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, III MAF to CG, PCV; CG, FLC; CG, DSC)

---

The coordinated engineer effort got under way on schedule.

Commencing on 20 March, upon order CG, PCV, equipment of the 11th Engineer Battalion augmented with equipment by NACB 5 and a command and control element of the 8th Engineer Battalion staged at Dong Ha Combat Base in preparation for movement west on Route 9 and subsequent initiation of construction for the FSE/FSA and airfield. From D-12, 20 March, until D - Day, 1 April, the major portion of the 11th Engr Bn was directly committed to the construction of POL area, ammunition storage area, command and control bunkers, helicopter revetments, and internal road net, and perimeter clearance of fields of fire for site security. Simultaneously, elements of NMCV 5, with heavy equipment augmentation, began work, initially on a C7A Type II capable airfield consisting of 1500 by 60' runway, and a 150 by 450' parking apron, compacted and stabilized with penoprime. This strip was ultimately expanded to C-123 Type II by lengthening of the runway to 2300 ft and addition of an aircraft turnaround area.

19

MEMO, AVII-CE, HQ PCV, 23 April 1968, subject: Engineer Summary, Operation Pegasus, 20 March to 15 April 1968, (Memorandum for Record by Marshall, R.S., COL, CE, USA Corps Engineer, PCV)

The Deputy Senior Advisor, I CTZ, informed III MAF and PCV on 21 March that the CG I CTZ, had approved the participation of an ARVN task force in Operation PEGASUS. The task force would consist of three airborne battalions and would be made available on 28 March. LTC Lam authorized Brigadier General Ngo Quang Truong, CG, 1st ARVN Infantry Division, direct liaison with LTC Rosson's headquarters.<sup>20</sup>

20

MSG DSA I CTZ, dtg 210100Z Mar 68, ( FM DSA, I CTZ TO CG, III MAF; INFO: CG, PCV

The 1st ARVN division had earned the respect of all FPMF throughout Vietnam for their actions during the Battle of Hue. General Rosson commented in his Commander's Daily Summary, on 21 March, that planning for the counter offensive was "proceeding on schedule." 21

---

21

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 210420Z Mar 68 (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

---

Preliminary planning revealed a need to upgrade communications into the Ca Lu/Khe Sanh area by at least 24 channels to provide necessary command/control communications . . . . . It was determined that CG, 1 ACD would establish a forward command post in the Ca Lu area on D Day. CG, PCV would require 12 channels of voice and teletype to CG, 1 ACD. An additional 12 channels to connect 1 ACD (rear) at Camp Evans 48Q YD 5332 to 1 ACD (forward) at Ca Lu (LZ Stud) would be required. . . . Location of LZ Stud in a valley surrounded by high peaks posed a need for a Signal Hill complex from which communications could be relayed to the valley and to rear areas. . . . . In coordination with Signal Officer, 1 ACD, Hill 450 (48Q YD 978 557) was selected as the Signal Hill for Operation PEGASUS. 1 ACD would be responsible for preparation and security of the installation, as well as airlift of all equipment to the hill and subsequent resupply. The hill was to be prepared and ready for occupancy by 26 March; communications were to be operational by 28 March, in anticipation of a 1 April D Day.

---

22

MEMO, AVII-SC, HQ PCV, 28 April 1968, Subject: Communications Support of Operation PEGASUS, (Memorandum for Record by Grombacher, Gerd S., LTC, SigC, USA, Corps Signal Officer, PCV)

---

During this period, the combat base at Khe Sanh was continuously harassed by enemy fire including 130mm and 152mm artillery.

The great distance involved, difficult terrain, and bad weather made it almost impossible to pinpoint the exact location of the enemy guns firing from the northwest and southwest. Employment of airborne observers/forward air controllers and U.S. Air Force O-2 aircraft had a suppressing effect on the enemy fires but were not completely successful in determining the firing locations. <sup>23</sup>

---

23

MSG HQ 3 MAR DIV, dtg 220450Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, 3 Mar Div to CG, PCV)

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 220605Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, PCV to CG, III MAF)

---

The 1 ACD planned to initiate reconnaissance around the Ca Lu area on 26 March utilizing the 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry (1/9Cav). To support the 1/9 Cav the division requested FV Artillery to pass OPCON of a 105mm howitzer battery and an eight inch battery to the 1 ACD. The batteries were to be positioned in the vicinity of Ca Lu. <sup>24</sup>

---

24

MSG HQ 1 ACD, dtg 220540Z Mar 68, subject: Request for OPCON of Howitzer Batteries, (Fm CG, 1 ACD to CG, PCV)

---

Radio profile path studies revealed that line of sight communications from any high ground in the Ca Lu area back to Thu Bai (HQ PCV) or to Camp Evans (1 ASD rear) would be marginal. The solution was the establishment of a tropospheric scatter (tropo) communications system. Resources of the cavalry division and the 63d Signal Battalion (63d Sig Bn) did not include sufficient equipment to meet the requirement. Augmentation in terms of two 24-channel systems were necessary. Both III MAF and U.S. Army Vietnam (USARV) made the additional systems available; however, the decision was made to utilize the Marine equipment because of its smaller size and easier transportability.<sup>25</sup> In addition,

---

25

MEMO, AVII-SC, HQ PCV, 28 April 1968, op.cit.

---

USARV directed the 1st Signal Brigade (1 Sig Bde) to provide four one-quarter ton trucks equipped with radios having a multi-channel voice capacity to provide communications between the corps and division. The four vehicles were to be used in conjunction with aircraft equipped with an aerial FM relay capability and provide a degree of the desired communications duplication.<sup>26</sup>

---

26

MSC, HQ PCV, dtg 231105Z Mar 68, (FM CG, USARV to CG, PCV)

The air traffic approach pattern into Khe Sanh was such that had it continued to be used once the operation began the attacking forces would have been denied vital air and artillery support. The 3d Mar Div, on 23 March, recommended that the pattern be changed to route Dong Ha and Quang Tri helicopter traffic north of the axis of advance and then into Khe Sanh. PCV recommended that III MAF adopt the 3d Mar Div recommendation because of its apparent benefit to aircraft.<sup>27</sup>

---

27

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 231212Z Mar 68, (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO CG, PCV)

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 271540Z Mar 68, (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

MSG HQ 1 MAW (1st Marine Air Wing), dtg 280320Z Mar 68, (FM CG, 1st MAW TO CDR, 7TH AF, OTHERS)

---

LTC Rossen held a meeting of his division commanders at Camp Evans on 22 March. At this meeting the relief of the 1 ACD by elements of the 101 Abn Div was formulated. To assure that sufficient forces would be available to off-set any now or only threat to the Hue area, General Rossen recommended that an effort be made to retain the Vietnamese Marine Task Force at that location. In the event the Task Force could not be retained he requested that

a fourth Vietnamese Airborne battalion be obtained for the Hue area and that additional U.S. Forces be made available for employment in the Hue area.<sup>28</sup> LTG Cushman forwarded LTG Rosson's

28

MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 231215Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, PCV to CG, III MAF)

request to COMUSMACV with the recommendation that the Airborne Task Force be raised to four battalions and that the task force close into Quang Tri to enhance the deception plan and to place the task force closer to the ultimate zone of action in Operation PEGASUS. General Cushman planned to employ the fourth battalion in the vicinity of Hue.<sup>29</sup> He invited LTG Rosson; the Commanding

29

MSG, III MAF, dtg 250538Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, III MAF to COMUSMACV)

Officer, Task Force Clear Water; and the Commander, Naval Support activity, Da Nang to visit III MAF to discuss the deception plan and to determine the details of its implementation and its effects on logistical support in Norther I CTZ (NICTZ).<sup>30</sup>

30

MSG, III MAF, dtg 231118Z Mar 68, (Fm CG, III MAF to CTF CLEAR-WATER; CG, PCV; COMNAVSUPPACT DNG)

Battery A, 6th Battalion, 33d Artillery (105mm howitzer, towed) and Battery A, 1st Battalion, 83d Artillery (81mm) arrived in the Ca Lu/ LZ STUD area on 25 March, and were positioned as reinforcing fires for the 1 ACD Artillery.<sup>31</sup> The 2d Battalion, 1st

---

31

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 2400LH to 242400H Mar 68, No. 081

FRAG ORDER, HQ 1 ACD, dtg 251658 (FM CG, 1 ACD TO CG, PCV)

---

Marines closed into LZ STUD on 24 March. They were placed under OPCON of 1 ACD at 0800H 26 March with the mission of providing security for LZ STUD and Signal Hill. They also assumed OPCON of Company C, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry. The Cavalry company was responsible for providing security for Battery A, 1/83d Arty which was positioned at Ca Lu. Companies E, G, and H provided security to the airstrip and construction at LZ STUD while Company F secured the communications site in the vicinity of Signal Hill.<sup>32</sup>

---

32

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 28000LH to 282400H Mar 68, No. 88

FRAG ORDER, HQ 1 ACD, dtg 251658 (FM CG, 1 ACD TO CG, PCV)

---

The 3d Battalion, 9th Marines assumed responsibility for security of Ca Lu on 29 March.<sup>33</sup>

---

33

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 28000LH to 292400H Mar 68, No. 89

The 3d Mar Div issued their Operation Order on 25 March to cover both the deception plan being executed in the north-eastern portion of their AO, in conjunction with the 1st AAVN Div, and their actions in Operation PEGASUS. The 4th Marine Regiment was to secure Route 9 in their zone and provide convoy security. The 9th Marine Regiment would provide security of Route 9 in their zone. The 26th Marine Regiment, in Khe Sanh Combat Base, was alerted to come under OPCON of 1 ACD on order. The 12th Marines were instructed to support with artillery the attack of 1 ACD within their capabilities.<sup>34</sup>

---

34

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 251032Z Mar 68, (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO 3dMAR DIV: TF ROBBIE; 3d SQDN, 5th CAV)

---

The 1 ACD declared a no Bomb Zone in their assigned portion of the Operation PEGASUS AO effective 26 March. In order for the 1/9th Cav to conduct reconnaissance in the area between Khe Sanh and Ca Lu, all bombs dropped in the area had to be requested and controlled by the division. Targets in the PEGASUS AO, outside the No Bomb Zone, were to be handled routinely and the Marines and Air Force continued to deliver massive air support to the 26th Marines at Khe Sanh.<sup>35</sup>

---

35

MSG HQ 1 ACD, dtg 250900Z Mar 68, (FM CG, 1 ACD TO CDR, 7 AF)

The CG, Task Force X RAY, 1st Mar Div, was instructed by the CG, 1st Mar Div to deploy the 1st Marine Regiment, minus one battalion, on or about 27 March to close at Ca Lu not later than 30 March. Units which were placed under OPCON of 1st Marine Regiment by Task Force X RAY included: Company A (minus) (reinforced), 1st Engineer Battalion; Co A (minus) 1st Shore Party Battalion; Company A (minus), 1st Motor Transport Battalion; and 1st Battalion (minus, 11th Marines. The 1st Bn, 11th Marines consisted of: one 105mm artillery battalion minus one battery; one provisional 155mm artillery battery (four 155mm howitzers, towed); and one 4.2in mortar battery (three 4.2in mortars and one Howtar).<sup>36</sup>

---

36

MSG HQ 1 MAR DIV, dtg 260200Z Mar 68 (FM 1 MAR DIV TO CG, TF XRAY; CG, PCV; 11 MAR; 11 MT BN)

---

An analysis of all enemy actions and activities around Khe Sanh indicated a possibility of a decreasing threat to that base. Third Mar Div elements at Khe Sanh had light contact on 26 and 27 March with only 42 incoming rounds during the 24-hour period from noon of the 26th until noon of the 27th. All courses of action were considered before LTG Ressen notified LTG Cushman on 27 March that he had approved MG Tolsen's plan for the 1 ACD portion of Operation PEGASUS. He added that the enemy situation was being closely watched.<sup>37</sup>

---

37

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 270425Z Mar 68 (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

---

Information was received on 27 March that the request to retain the Vietnamese Marine Task Force in the vicinity of Hue would not be approved. III MAF further informed PCV that the additional U. S. battalion, which PCV had requested to be made available if the Marine Task Force was withdrawn, would not be provided. Adequate reaction to any Hue City contingency could be provided by other U. S. forces.<sup>38</sup>

---

38

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 270816Z Mar 68, (FM CG, III MAF TO CG, PCV)

---

Planning for the operation continued at PCV headquarters as representatives of the 1 ACD, 3d Mar Div, and 101 Abn Div, met with Lieutenant Colonel Floyd W. Baker, Corps Surgeon, to plan medical support for Operation PEGASUS<sup>39</sup>

---

39

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 251331Z Mar 68, subject: Medical Planning Conference (FM CG, PCV TO CG, 1 ACD; CG, 3d MAR DIV; CG, 101 ABN DIV)

---

At 1200H hours the same day, the 101st Abn Div Main command post opened at Camp Eagle (48Q YD 808162). The 101 Abn Div Rear headquarters remained at Bien Hoa (48P YT 0525)<sup>40</sup>

<sup>40</sup>

MSG HQ 101ABN DIV, dtg 252310Z Mar 68, Subject: Command Post (FM CG, 101ABN DIV TO CG, PCV, OTHERS)

Considering that the major support of Operations PEGASUS would be by Route 9; taking into account the large volume of supplies to be moved and the marginal capability of the roadway; and recognizing the possibility that the enemy might attempt to interdict this main supply route, III MAF on 28 March requested that preparations be made for providing an air-drop resupply capability for Operation PEGASUS. This all weather drop capability was to be augmented by air-landing supplies into Ca Lu utilizing C-123 aircraft.<sup>41</sup> Logistical

<sup>41</sup>

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 280600Z Mar 68, (FM CG, III MAF TO COMUSMACV)

support for all items not peculiar to the Marines are to be coordinated with the 1 ACD and would be supplied by the FSA established by the U. S. Army Support Command. These items

utilized only by the Marines were to be requested from Fleet Logistical Support Group Bravo through the FMA.<sup>42</sup>

---

42

MSG HQ FORLSECOPD, dtg 230854Z Mar 68 (FM CG FLC TO CG 1 MAR WEST AND FLAG BRAVO)

---

General Westmoreland visited III MAF headquarters in Da Nang on 28 March. LTC Cushman and LTC Rosson were present for the conference, and General Rosson presented the overall concept for Operation PEGASUS. General Cushman and Rosson indicated to General Westmoreland that preparations for PEGASUS, to include logistic support, redistribution of forces, and construction of the C7A airstrip at Ca Lu, would be ready for the planned attack on 1 April. The deception plan calling for a regimental size attack by the 3d Mar Div from the vicinity of Dong Ha towards the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) was also discussed. General Westmoreland stated that Operation PEGASUS should go as scheduled.<sup>43</sup>

---

43

MSG HQ III MAF, dtg 290448Z Mar 68 (FM CG, III MAF TO COMUSMACV)

---

PCV Operation Plan 1-68 was redesignated PCV Operation Order 1-68, on 29 March. Instructions were issued to execute the

operation order with D-Day being established as 010001 April.

The CG, 3d Mar Div ordered the execution of his Operation Order 8-68 and established D-Day, H-Hour for Task Force Kilo as 300600H March. Task Force Kilo was the name given the U. S.

elements participating in the coordinated ARVN and U. S.

attack northeast of Dong Ha. The ARVN portion was designated LAM CON 203. It was to consist of the 1st Battalion, 2d Infantry and the 3d Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiments under control of the 1st ARVN Infantry Division. Task organization of the U. S. elements under control of the 3d Mar Div were: 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry (minus); Company C, 2d Battalion, 34th Armor; Company A, 1st Battalion, 502d Airborne, (101st Abn Div); and the 2d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment.<sup>44</sup>

---

<sup>44</sup>

SIT REP 021, HQ PCV, 300001H to 302400H Mar 68

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 290238Z Mar 68, Subject: Execution, OPLAN 1-68 (FM CG, PCV TO CG, 1 ACD; CG, 3d MAR DIV; others)

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 290515Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO 3d MAR DIV; TF ROBBIE; 3/5 CAV)

---

Throughout the period tactical air was being concentrated on interdicting the enemy's main avenues of approach into the area

surrounding Khe Sanh and the larger AO of the 1 ACD. Special emphasis was placed on neutralizing known and suspected locations of NVA artillery and anti-aircraft artillery positions. B-52 missions continued to give priority to the support of Khe Sanh Combat Base and the pending operation.<sup>45</sup>

---

45

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 291448Z Mar 68 (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

MSG HQ 1 ACD, dtg 300215Z Mar 68, Subject: Air Support Operation PEGASUS, (FM CG, 1 ACD TO CG, PCV)

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 310235Z Mar 68 (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF)

---

On 30 March General Westmoreland in a message to LTG Cushman expressed his confidence that weather was being closely watched to insure that it did not inhibit getting the operation off to a good start. Weather was still the major factor in determining the timing of the attack. General Westmoreland also expresses his feeling for the important role that the Vietnamese Airborne Task Force was to have in the operation.<sup>46</sup>

---

46

MSG HQ MACV, MACO4334, dtg 301150Z Mar 68 (FM GENERAL WESTMORELAND TO LTG CUSHMAN, INFO: LTC ROSSON)

Engineer projects at the Ca Lu (Landing Zone STUD) airstrip were eighty-two percent complete by 30 March. The water point was in place, 12 bunkers had been completed, logistic convoys had arrived with M5A1 matting for the airfield and barrier material was delivered. The fuel system for refueling aircraft was being completed and the estimated completion date for up-grading of the strip to C-123 capacity was 6 April.<sup>47</sup>

---

<sup>47</sup>

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, dtg 301815Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 1 ACD TO CG, PCV)

---

At 0600H hours, 30 March, U. S. Army, Marines, and ARVN forces initiated the deception plan for Operation Pegasus five kilometers northeast of Dong Ha. The search and destroy operation attacked generally north toward the DMZ along the Gio Linh Coastal Plains (area between the Cau Viet River and the DMZ). All units reached the assigned phase line by that afternoon. Results of the first days operations: Killed in Action: U. S.--five; ARVN - 14; Enemy - 150. Wounded in Action: U. S. - five; ARVN - 75; Enemy - unknown. Missing in Action: U. S. - six. Detainees: Enemy - three. The 3d Bn, 1st ARVN Regt. and the 3d Sdn, 5th Cav. each lost one armored personnel carrier destroyed while the 3/1st ARVN captured 22 individual and 11 crew served Weapons from the enemy.<sup>48</sup>

48

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 300001H to 302400H Mar 68, No. 021

The 3d Mar Div augmented the 1st Mar Regt with the following elements on 30 March: two 4.2 in mortars; two platoons (10) of tanks (available within four hours of any request); one platoon (4) of CNTCS; and one shore party. Engineer support could not be made available because of the heavy commitment of the 11th Engr Bn. A 105mm artillery battery was to be provided from other PCV resources.<sup>49</sup>

49

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 301910Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO CG, PCV)

Operation JEB STUART terminated 310800H March. Operational control of the 1st Marine Regiment had passed to the 1 ACD at 1500H hours, 29 March, and the 3d Mar Div passed OPCON of the 26th Marines in Khe Sanh to the 1 ACD.<sup>50</sup> The 1 ACD

50

MSG HQ PCV, dtg 311223Z Mar 68, Subject: Operation JEB STUART, (FM CG, PCV TO CG, III MAF; OTHERS)

MSG HQ 1ST MAR DIV, dtg 291057Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 1st MAR DIV TO CG, PCV; CG, 1 ACD; OTHERS)

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 310001H to 312400H Mar 68, No 022

Tactical Operations Center became operational at LZ STUD and the 1 ACD assumed responsibility for the PEGASUS AO. Operation PEGASUS began at 0801H hours 31 March, and OPCON of the 1st Bn, 9th Marines, also in Khe Sanh, was passed to the 1 ACD at that time.<sup>51</sup>

---

51

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 310701Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO CG, 1 ACD and 4th MAR REGT)

MSG HQ 3d MAR DIV, dtg 010450Z Mar 68 (FM CG, 3d MAR DIV TO CG, 1 ACD and 26th MAR REGT)

---

On 31 March, radio contact was established between all points, and by morning of D-Day most voice circuits were in operation. Installation of teletype circuits proved difficult. Some were established by the evening of 1 April. Activation of all teletype circuits; however, was delayed by several days. The problem was one of interface between U. S. Army VHF and USMC tropo equipment. The problem was solved by mutual and constant cooperation between Army and Marine communicators at the operator, command and staff levels.<sup>52</sup>

---

52

MEMO, AVII-SC, HQ PCV, 28 April 1968, op. cit.

---

NOTE:

With Operational Control of the 26th Marine Regiment passing from the CG, 3d Marine Division to the CG, 1st Cavalry Division, Operation SCOTLAND I was terminated at 0600H hours, 31 March 1968. Statistics for operations involving Khe Sanh Combat Base prior to that date have been reported as a part of Operation SCOTLAND.

Inclosure 1 to Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS: MACJ3-32)(k-1)

HISTORICAL STUDY

3-68

"OPERATION PEGASUS"

310801H March 1968 to 150800H April 1968

Prepared By

31st Military History Detachment  
HQ PROVISIONAL CORPS, VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96308

May 1968

## CONFIDENTIAL

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, PROVISIONAL CORPS VIETNAM  
APO San Francisco 96300

AVII-24

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RGS: MACJ3-32)(K-1)

THRU: Commanding General  
III Marine Amphibious Force  
PFO San Francisco 96602

TO: Commanding General  
United States Military Assistance Command Vietnam  
APO San Francisco 96222

1. (U) Name of Operation: OPERATION PEGASUS
2. (U) Date of Operation: 310800H Mar 68 to 150800H Apr 68
3. (U) Location: Northwest quadrant of Quang Tri Province, I CTZ
4. (U) Central Headquarters: Provisional Corps Vietnam
5. (U) Major Unit Commanders:
 

a. Provisional Corps Vietnam	LTC William B. Roosan
b. Provisional Corps Vietnam Artillery	EC Lawrence H. Garuthorn, Jr.
c. 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)	MG John J. Tolson III
6. (G) Task Organization:
 

a. Provisional Corps Vietnam
HQ Co, PCV
Military Intelligence Det (Prov)
33d Chemical Det
PI Flt Det (Prov)
Signal Det (Prov)
31st Military History Det

NOTE: This report REGRADED - FOR  
OFFICIAL USE ONLY 6 months after  
completion of operation (15 Oct 68).

CONFIDENTIAL

The 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) (reinforced) attacked, on 1 April, by a combination of air and ground assaults to establish fire support bases and conduct offensive operations on an axis from Ca Lu to Khe Sanh. The attack was to clear and open Route 9 from Ca Lu to Khe Sanh Combat Base and to destroy the enemy forces in the assigned area of responsibility.

At 0700H hours, the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, and the 2d Battalion, 3d Marines, attacked west out of Ca Lu. The 1st Marines' battalion attacked to the north of Route 9 and seized Objective 6 (48Q XD 997467), while the 2d Bn, 3d Marines attacked south of Route 9 and took Objective 1 (48Q YD 014437). Meeting little resistance the 2d Bn, 3d Marines continued on to overrun Objective 7 (48Q YD 005431).

As the Marines initiated tactical operation west of Ca Lu, Company B, 11th Engineer Bn, commenced the repair and up-grading of Route 9. As the operation progressed, and as infantry maneuver elements cleared the flanks of the road, two additional engineer companies were committed to the project. The engineers constructed four bypasses and cleared 1.5 kilometers of Route 9 on D-Day.

Early morning fog delayed the planned 0700H air assault by elements

2

of the 3d Bde, 1 ACD. The western Corps zone was cloudy during the morning hours with ceilings 0 to 300 feet. Visibility was reduced to 0 to 2 miles in fog and light drizzle during the morning hours. By early afternoon the weather had cleared sufficiently for the lift and the brigade began landing in support bases north and south of Route 9. The Brigade headquarters moved into LZ MIKE (48Q XD 935410) with the 1st Bn, 7th Cavalry (closed at 1350H) and the 2d Bn, 7th Cavalry (closed at 1650H). The 5th Bn, 7th Cavalry assaulted into LZ GATEC (48Q XD 928438) and closed at that location by 1455H hours.

By nightfall the two Marine battalions were on a line extending from 48Q XD 9847 to 48Q XD 9942, with units of the 3d Bde having established defensive positions in the vicinity of LZ MIKE and LZ GATEC.

The deception operation northeast of Dong Ha was concluded on 1 April with light contact. The friendly forces, consisting of the 2d Bn, 4th Marines, 3d Sqdn, 5th Cav (U.S. Army), and the ARVN Task Force (1st Bn, 2d Inf. and 3d Bn, 1st Inf.) secured objectives on the south side of the DMZ with no PWAF casualties reported.

Eight B-52 strikes were flown in support of Operation Pegasus.

3

four of which were in the vicinity of Khe Sanh Combat Base. Poor weather in the morning cut tactical air support to 66 sorties at Khe Sanh. U.S. Air Force resupply of material consisted of eight C-130 and four C-123 air drops for an input of 115.6 tons. Twenty-four helicopters landed cargo to boost the total input to 149.5 tons. One C-123 landed with 44 passengers.<sup>53</sup>

---

53

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 010001H to 012400H Apr 68, No 023

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 010001H to 012400H Apr 68, No 22-68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOO), 010900H to 020900H Apr 68

CDR'S DAILY SUM, HQ PCV, 011200H to 021200H Apr 68

---

Operation PEGASUS continued on 2 April with the 2d Bn, 1st Marines and the 2d Bn, 3d Marines attacking west, in zone, commencing at 0655H. Completing a vertical envelopment at 1745H, Co E, 2d Bn, 1st Mar received small arms and automatic weapons fire from an unknown-size enemy force in the vicinity of 48Q XD 963448. Fire was returned and a helicopter gunship supported the Marines. Results of the engagement were one U.S. KIA, four U.S. WIA, three NVA KIA, and two detainees. Four AK-47 rifles, one B-40 rocket launcher, and

4

one Chinese Communist (Chicom) grenade were captured. Moving from the area a booby trap was detonated wounding an additional Marine. At 2000H the western most defensive position for the 2d Bn, 1st Mar were at 483 XD 965445 (Co's. E and G) and for the 2d Bn, 3d Mar at 483 XD 985420 (Co's. F and H). The 1st Bn, 1st Marines remained responsible for security of Ca Lu and LZ 2200. The combined effort of the U.S. Army and Marine Engineers and the Navy Construction Battalion completed two bridges and two more bypasses as they cleared almost three kilometers of Route 9.

The 2d Bn, 7th Cavalry conducted an air assault beginning at 1300H into a landing zone in the vicinity of 483 XD 890405 (LZ THOR). All D plus One objectives were taken with only light contact throughout the PEGASUS AO. Other elements of the 3d Bde conducted clearing operations in the vicinity of their operating bases.

Six B-52 strikes with a total of 36 aircraft were flown in support of Operation PEGASUS. Five of the strikes were in the area around KCSB. The U.S. Navy flew 87 tactical air sorties, the Air Force flew 32, and the Marine Air Wing flew 23 in support of PEGASUS. Air Force resupply of material into Khe Sanh consisted of seven C-130 and four C-123 air drops for an input of 91.4 tons.

Thirty-six helicopters landed with cargo to raise the total cargo delivered to 162 tons.

Weather in the PECUSUS area was marginal until noon due to ground fog and haze. Scattered clearing developed after noon returning to fog and haze by 1800H. Visibility was going to 3 to 5 miles, lowering again after sunset.<sup>54</sup>

---

54

SIT REF, HQ PCV, 020001H to 022400H Apr 68, No 024

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 020001H to 022400H Apr 68, No 23-68

SPEC REF, HQ PCV (TOC), 020900H to 030900H Apr 68

CDR'S DAILY SUM, HQ PCV, 021200H to 031200H Apr 68

---

When the 3d Bde, 1 ACD units air assaulted into LZ's CATES and MIKE on D-Day they were followed by 105mm batteries of the 1st Bn, 21st Artillery. By early evening Battery C had airlifted into LZ CATES while Battery B was moved into LZ MIKE. After the 2d Bn, 7th Cav completed its air assault into LZ THOR of 2 April, Battery A of the 21st Artillery closed into the landing zone at 1650H.<sup>55</sup>

---

55

ARTILLERY SIT REF, HQ PCV, 1 Apr and 2 Apr 68

General Rosson lauded the logistical effort which had been largely responsible for Operation PEGASUS being able to meet the tight schedule imposed to take maximum advantage of the weather. He recognized that the launching of the operation on schedule had been due in a large part to the outstanding and dedicated efforts of the logistical agencies supporting PCV. General Rosson informed General Cushman:

Against short deadlines, and with exercise of the highest degree of professional expertise, the officers and men of Naval Support Activity, Force Logistical Command, United States Army Support Command (Prov), the 11th Marine Force Engineers, and the 3d Naval Construction Brigade developed a logistics base at the place required, at the time required and at effective stockage levels. All concerned have acquitted themselves with distinction.

This truly joint effort provides not only a source of pride and gratification, but reflects great credit on the logistical elements of participating Services. WELL DONE.<sup>56</sup>

---

56

MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 020200Z Apr 68, Subject: Operation PEGASUS, (Fm CG, PCV to CG, III MAF)

---

On 3 April, MSG Rosson notified MG Tolson that BG Troung had concurred with the concept for the use of ARVN forces in linking-up with the 37th Ranger Battalion in Kho Sanh. In accordance with General Tolson's plans, a company of the ARVN Task

Force was to be made available to him at Quang Tri on the morning of 4 April.<sup>57</sup>

---

57

MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 031339Z Apr 68

---

Two battalion-size air assaults and one battalion airlift by elements of the 2d Bde, 1 ACD, previously scheduled for D plus Three, were moved up to D plus Two in order to extend ground actions in Operation PEGASUS to the southeast of Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 1st and 2d Battalions, 5th Cavalry and the 2d Battalion, 12th Cavalry conducted an airlift to LZ STUB to stage for commitment into their portion of the 1 ACD's AO. At 1225H the 2d Bde began the air assaults. The 2d Bn, 5th Cav attacked LZ TOM (48Q XD 900345). The 2d Bn, 12th Cav assaulted into LZ TIMOTHY (48Q XD 880360) and secured the area for the landing of the 1st Bn, 5th Cav. All 2d Bde units, including A, B, and C Batteries, 1st Bn, 77th Artillery, closed into the brigade AO with only light contact. At 1330H in the vicinity of LZ TOM. Co. D, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav, received four rounds of recoilless rifle fire resulting in one U.S. KIA, and five wounded. LZ TIMOTHY came under artillery attack at 2215H, while the 3d Bde's LZ MIKE came under mortar

attack about ten minutes later. Three men were killed at LZ THORNY while the 1st Bn, 7th Cav. at LZ MEK2 suffered no casualties.

3d Bde elements conducted local ground operations around LZ MEK1, LZ THOR, and LZ GATES on 3 April, while the 1st Marine Regiment units advanced to the western boundary of their assigned AO. Engineer units working on Route 9 were working on the bridge at 482 KD 976435 at the close of D plus Two.

Weather in the Khe Sanh area on 3 April was low overcast with heavy fog during the morning. Partial clearing by 1400H permitted resupply until marginal conditions returned at 2200H. Air Force resupply of material consisted of five C-130 and three C-123 air drops for an input of 75.4 tons. Nine helicopters landed with cargo and the total input on 3 April was 85.6 tons. The lower input into Khe Sanh was requested because desired stockage levels inside the combat base had been reached.

Five B-52 strikes were flown in support of PEGASUS with all of the missions supporting the Khe Sanh complex. One hundred thirty-six tactical air sorties were flown by Air Force, Marine, and Navy pilots in support of the operations.

The deception plan, initiated on 30 March, had been so successful that it was continued as a separate operation by the 3d Mar Div. The 3d Bn, 3d Marines in coordination with the 2d ARVN Regt, began sweeping south from Gio Linh (48Q YD 213732) with final objectives west of Dong Ha.<sup>58</sup>

---

58

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 030001H to 032400H Apr 68, No 025

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 030001H to 032400H Apr 68, No 24-68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOC), 030900H to 040900H Apr 68

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 030001H to 032400H Apr 68

---

On 4 April, the 26th Marine Regiment, under OPCON of the 1 ACD since 31 March, attacked out of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. At 0600H, the 1st Bn, 9th Marines moved southeast with Hill 471 (48Q YD 846939) as their objective. Prior to and during the assault, the Marines were supported by extensive artillery fire. Although the attacking force met little resistance, 30 NVA bodies were discovered. The hill was secured by 1720H. During the night, the Marines received one hundred eight 82mm mortar, seventy-two 122mm rocket, and twelve 152mm artillery rounds into their positions. Seven Marines were killed and thirty-four wounded.

vicinity of Khe Sanh.

Total Air Force resupply of material accounted for 105.9 tons. Five C-130 and four C-123 air drops were made with three of the C-130's delivering cargo using the ground parachute extraction system. Fifteen CH-46 and two CH-53 helicopters landed with cargo boosting the input to 170 tons. One C-123 landed with 44 passengers.

Northern I Corps was overcast during the early morning hours with ceilings ranging from 0 to 300 feet. Visibility was 0 to 3 miles in fog during the early morning hours. After 0900H visibility was generally 3 to 5 miles in haze and fog.<sup>59</sup>

---

59

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 040001H to 042400H Apr 68, No 026

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 040001H to 042400H Apr 68, No 25-68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOC), 040900H to 050900H Apr 68

---

At 0515H on the morning of 5 April, an estimated NVA battalion launched a counter-attack against elements of the 1st Bn, 9th Marines occupying Hill 471. In what was later to be described by LTG Cushman as one of the highlights of the battle for Khe Sanh.<sup>60</sup>

cavalrymen and Marines concentrated on company-size operations to secure the dominating terrain around Khe Sanh and along Route 9. Elements of the 1st Bn, 5th Cav; 1st Bn, 8th Cav; 2d Bn, 7th Cav; 1st Bn, 12th Cav; as well as the 1st Bn, 9th Marines made contact with enemy units of up to estimated battalion strengths.

At 1100H, an aerial rocket artillery (ARA) helicopter engaged an enemy tank seven kilometers south of KSCB (vic 48Q 8635). The tank had been firing into LZ TIMOTHY and withdrew to the south when fired upon with 2.75 in. rockets.

Route 9 had been reconstructed for a distance of 5.5 kilometers from Ca Lu; four bridges and twelve bypasses had been completed by the end of D plus Four. Resupply efforts into Khe Sanh accounted for 180.7 tons. Eighty-four point one tons were airlifted by helicopter while the Air Force C-123 and C-130 air drops delivered 96.6 tons. A 30 day supply of rations and 17 plus days of major ammunition was on hand in the combat base as plans were made for the 1 ACD units to start drawing from Khe Sanh stocks as well as from the FSA/FSE at Ca Lu.

Weather in the northern portion of the Corps area of operations was marginal with overcast ceiling ranging from 0 to 500 feet in the early morning. After 1200H the area was partly cloudy

to cloudy with ceiling above 3000 feet. After 2000H, all areas had ceilings ranging from 800 to 2000 feet. Visibility was 0 to 3 miles in fog during the early morning hours. After 1000H visibility was 4 to 6 miles in haze.

Two Arc Light (B-52) strikes with a total of 12 aircraft were flown in support of the operation. Tactical air strikes flown in support of PEGASUS added up to 140 sorties. Of these the Marines flew 72, the Air Force 17, and the Navy 51. Eighty-nine of these were delivered in the immediate vicinity of Khe Sanh Combat Base.

The base itself continued to be harrassed by enemy artillery and mortar rounds. A total of 57 incoming rounds were accounted for during the period 0900H, 5 April to 0900H, 6 April. Cumulative results for the first five days of Operation PEGASUS showed 302 enemy killed, 35 individual and 16 crew-served weapons captured.<sup>61</sup>

---

61

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 050001H to 052400H Apr 68, No 027

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 050001H to 052400H Apr 68, No 26-68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOG), 050900H to 060900H Apr 68

SIT REP, HQ 1 AGO, 050001H to 052400H Apr 68, No 096

During the early morning hours (0410H to 0500H) of 6 April, Company B, 1st Bn, 12th Cav received two B-40 rocket and 15 60mm mortar rounds into their positions southwest of LZ SNAPPER. Small arms and artillery were called in on the enemy location. A search of the area, following the encounter, revealed 12 NVA killed. Eight B-40 rocket rounds, two AK-47's, one AK-50, four gas masks, 12 AK-47 magazines and some miscellaneous documents were captured. No friendly casualties were sustained. Later in the morning elements of the 1st Bn, 12th Cav conducting security operations in the general area where the enemy tank had been engaged the previous day found 28 NVA bodies, 12 individual and one crew-served weapon. West of LZ SNAPPER, at 0800H, A Company, 8th Cav found an additional NVA body and one AK-47 rifle.

Within the 2d Bde's AO, the 1st and 2d Bn, 5th Cav conducted local operations around LZ's TIMOTHY and TOM. At 1152H, Company D, 1st Bn, 5th Cav in the vicinity of TIMOTHY, was hit with 70 rounds of unknown size mortars. Artillery was fired on the suspected enemy positions with unknown results. Forty-seven U.S. soldiers were wounded by the enemy attack.

The 2d Bn, 12th Cav moved northeast from LZ TIMOTHY to relieve the 1st Bn, 9th Marines on Hill 471. With the relief effected by 1200H, the Marines initiated a clearing attack to the northwest.

At 1400H G Company, 5th Bn, 7th Cav air assaulted into the high ground northeast of Khe Sanh Combat Base in the vicinity of 48Q XD 850425. Thirty-five minutes later, Company B, of the same battalion, assaulted northeast of Khe Sanh into 48Q XD 860422.

Making a sweep southwest of KSCB, C Company, 2d Bn, 7th Cav engaged a sniper at 1346H, resulting in one NVA KIA. Continuing their operations to within three kilometers of the base, the company killed 14 of the enemy and captured 15 individual weapons, five crew-served weapons, six cases of 60mm mortar ammunition, 100 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition, one motor cycle, and 100 rockets of Russian manufacture.

Five kilometers northwest of KSCB, G Company, 2nd Bn, 26th Marines engaged a company-size force. The Marines received heavy small arms, automatic weapons, and artillery fire. Fire was returned, supported by mortars and artillery. Contact which began around noon continued until 1930H. The results were four USMC KIA, 47 wounded, and 48 NVA killed.

The initial relief of Khe Sanh and the link-up of forces came at 1350H, 6 April, when a company from the ARVN Airborne Task Force air-landed in the base and linked-up with the ARVN 37th Ranger Battalion. Sweeping outside their perimeter, in con-

conjunction with the operations of the 26th Marine Regiment, the Ranger battalion moved into an area previously hit with tactical air and artillery support. The Vietnamese units found 70 NVA dead, four 60mm mortars, 16 AK-47's, six SKS's, two RPG's, one 12.7mm heavy machinegun, and one flare pistol.

Artillery support at LZ SNAPPER was increased on 6 April over the one 105mm howitzer battery (Battery A, 2d Bn, 19th Artillery) which was air land on the previous day. Battery B, 2d Bn, 19th Arty was airlifted into SNAPPER at 1145H, and Battery B, 1st Bn 30th Arty at 1745H.

Resupply of materials amounted to 76 tons dropped from C-123's and C-130's while helicopters landed an additional 112 tons.

Two B-52 strikes delivered a total of 360 tons of explosives in support of the Khe Sanh perimeter, while 115 tactical air strikes were flown in the PEGASUS AO. The Marine Corps flew 63, the Air Force flew 48, and the Navy flew 4 sorties.

Weather in the Khe Sanh area was marginal on 6 April with fog until 1000H and thereafter clear.<sup>62</sup>

---

62

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 060001H to 062400H Apr 68, No 028

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 060001H to 062400H Apr 68, No 27-68

SIT REP, HQ 1 AGD, 060001H to 062400H Apr 68, No 097

Enemy resistance in the immediate vicinity of Khe Sanh Combat Base began to decrease on 7 April as elements of the 1 ACD; the 26th Marine Regiment, with the 1st Bn, 9th Marines; and the 37th ARVN Ranger Battalion cleared to the south, east, and north. While the enemy initiated attacks by fire were fewer, ground probes against friendly positions continued.

One battalion of the ARVN Airborne Task Force began air assaulting into LZ SNAKE (48Q XD 815374), two kilometers southwest of Khe Sanh Base, at 1314H. The initial landing of the battalion (minus one company which had air-landed in Khe Sanh the previous day) was unopposed. However, at 1435H heavy mortar and artillery fires were received in the landing zone. The battalion (minus) closed into LZ SNAKE by 1650H.

At 1335H Company B, 2d Bn, 7th Cav south of LZ THOR, in the vicinity of 48Q XD 881400, found 24 NVA bodies believed to have been killed in the previous days fighting. Shortly after finding the enemy dead the company observed and killed five additional NVA. Less than 2,000 meters to the west D Company, 2d Bn, 7th Cav, found 30 NVA soldiers, in uniform, in a mass grave.

F and G Companies, 2d Bn, 26th Marines, operating northwest of KSCB in the vicinity of 48Q XD 811431 contacted an estimated enemy company

in well dug-in positions. The NVA employed small arms, automatic weapons supported by mortars. The Marines attacked with organic weapons supported by mortars. Contact was broken by the Marines at 2030H. Friendly casualties were two KIA and 21 wounded. Enemy casualties were unknown.

Artillery ground and air observers were particularly successful on D plus Six in placing fire on hostile elements. They were credited with 46 enemy killed.

Weather in the PEGASUS area was clear following an early morning haze and 242 tactical air strikes were flown in the operational area. The 7th Air Force topped the list with 108, while the Navy ran a close second with 91. The Marines flew the rest. Only two B-52 strikes hit in the PEGASUS area as US and ARVN ground troop worked on all sides of the previously surrounded outpost.

By 7 April, the engineers working on Route 9 had completely re-constructed over 8 kilometers of the road and had replaced or rebuilt five of the nine bridges to Khe Sanh.<sup>63</sup>

63

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 070001H to 072400H Apr 68, No 029

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOC), 070900H to 080900H Apr 68

CDR'S DAILY SUM, HQ PCV, 071200H to 181200H Apr 68

In the 2d Bde AO, the 1st Bn, 5th Cav worked out of LZ TIDOTHY and LZ TOM with the 2d Bn, 5th Cav conducting operations in the vicinity of an old French fort at 48Q XD 858387. The 2d Bn, 12th Cav, situated on Hill 471, sent two companies attacking to the south into the village of Khe Sanh (48Q XD 847382).

Within the 1st Bde's area of operation, the 1st Bn, 12th Cav continued operations southwest of Khe Sanh Combat Base. At 1000H Company D, 1st Bn, 12th Cav engaged an unknown size enemy force at 48Q XD 829398. The enemy broke contact at 1030H. The results of the actions were five U.S. KIA and three enemy killed with five weapons captured.

Attacking to the west of Khe Sanh, the 1st Bn, 9th Marines seized Hill 869 (48Q XD 803409) at 0730H with no opposition. Northwest of KSCB Companies F and G, 2nd Bn, 26th Marines found 37 NVA killed from a contact the night before at 2030H.

A total of 119 sorties of tactical air struck in support of the area with ninety in the vicinity of Khe Sanh. Air Force resupply consisted of two C-130 and four C-123 air drops. Thirteen helicopters land with cargo while two C-123's landed with 45 passengers.<sup>64</sup>

64

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 080001H to 082400H Apr 68, No 030

SPEC REP, HQ PCV (TOC), 080900H to 090900H Apr 68

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 080001H to 082400H Apr 68, No 29-68

The 1st Bde on 9 April conducted operations around LZ SNAPPER with offensive maneuvers to the north northwest. Eight kilometers south of Khe Sanh Combat Base (48Q XD 831326), Co A, 1st Bn, 8th Cav received sniper fire at 1014H. Artillery and tactical air support were called in on the enemy's positions. The results were one friendly and eight enemy killed.

At the same time, Company B, 1st Bn, 12th Cav engaged two individuals attempting to avoid contact; results: two NVA KIA.

A cache was discovered in the area (48Q XD 7853557) consisting of: 300 Chicom grenades, 50 B-40 rockets, one AK-47 rifle, one Chicom 7.62mm rifle, one SKS rifle, and one M-60 machinegun..

Moving northeast (48Q XD 834384) they found 50 NVA killed by either tactical air strikes or artillery at 1114H.

At 1855H Company C, 1st Bn, 12th Cav received 22 rounds of artillery. Counterfire was placed on the suspected enemy location (48Q XD 770320). Enemy losses were unknown while one US soldier was wounded.

In operations four kilometers south of KSCB, Company D, 1st Bn, 12th Cav found a large weapons and ammunition cache containing: 15 AK-47's, 29 SKS's, four 82mm mortars (three with baseplate), one 81mm mortar with baseplate, one Browning Automatic Rifle,

one 82mm launcher (B-10), two .45 cal. pistols, one M-60 machinegun, three B-40 rocket launchers, one PPS-43 sub-machinegun, five light machineguns, four M-16's, 943 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition, 153 B-40 rockets, 617 rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition, 20000 Chicom grenades, 50,000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 500 pounds of TNT, and 25 pounds of medical supplies.

The 1st Bn, 5th Cav continued to secure LZ TOM and TIMOTHY within the 2d Bde's area of operation. South of Khe Sanh the 2d Bn, 5th Cav and the 2d Bn, 12th Cav conducted offensive operations. Company D, 2d Bn, 5th Cav uncovered a grave containing 35 NVA bodies at 0905H in the vicinity of 48Q XD 855375. Moving further to the south, they found an ammunition cache at 1330H. The cache contained 141 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition, 48 rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition and one individual weapon.

At 1100H Company A, 2d Bn, 12th Cav located a cache (48Q XD 858 394) consisting of: 34 Chicom grenades, 22 B-40 rockets, seven Soviet rifle grenades, six Chicom anti-personnel mines, five Chicom rifle grenades, 13 60mm mortar rounds, 700 light machinegun rounds, 150 AK-47 rounds, 30 pounds of Chicom explosives, one SKS rifle, and 16 Chicom gas masks.

Another cache was found at 1615H, in the vicinity of 48Q XD 849 375, by A Company, 2d Bn, 5th Cav. Included in the find were six

SKS's, five AK-47's, two light machineguns,, one M-2 carbine, one .45 cal. submachine gun (grease gun) and one 12-gauge shotgun.

In the 3d Bde area, the 2d and 5th Bns, 7th Cav conducted offensive operations in the area around the Khe Sanh base, while the 1st Bn, 7th Cav continued to secure LZ MIKE and LZ THOR. The command post of the 5th Bn, 7th Cav was airlifted into the combat base proper.

The 26th Marine Regt continued to initiate attacks to the northwest of Khe Sanh in an effort to secure the base. An element of K Company, 1st Bn, 26th Marines found eight NVA bodies in a shallow grave at 1100H (48Q XD 779445). To the south of that location, the 3d Bn, 26th Marines received automatic weapons and 120 mm mortar fire at 1115H. Artillery returned fire on the suspected enemy positions. The results were one Marine killed and 13 wounded. Enemy losses were undetermined.

Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 1st Bn, 9th Marines, received 18 rounds of 82mm mortar fire at 0720H. Artillery supported the Marines. Friendly casualties were two KIA and four wounded.

In operations northwest of LZ STUD, B Company, 1st Bn, 1st Marines at 1047H attempted an airlift into an LZ at 48Q XD 995512. The landing had to be aborted because of intensive ground fire. Heavy preparatory fires preceded the second assault and the unit successfully landed at 1215.

The 3d ARVN ABN TF continued offensive operations out of LZ SNAKE on 9 April. An element of the 6th ABN Bn received a grenade into their defensive position in the early morning hours. At 0600H, the ARVN unit maneuvered against the enemy force, five kilometers south of KSCB, and succeeded in capturing an NVA officer. An unknown size enemy force attacked the 8th ABN Bn at 0800H near LZ SNAKE. The enemy employed small arms and automatic weapons fire. Contact was broken at 0815H with eight enemy killed and five individual and one crew-served weapon captured. The 3d ABN Bn (48Q XD 795393) at 1208H came under artillery attack with enemy losses unknown. At 1555H, the same unit, received mortar and small arms fire approximately one kilometer southeast of the previous encounter. Counter-mortar fire was returned, again with unknown enemy losses. Ten additional ARVN soldiers were wounded. Battery C, 1st Bn, 30th Artillery was airlift into LZ SNAKE from LZ STUD, during the day to support the Task Force.

Three C-123's landed at Khe Sanh along with nine helicopters to deliver 19 tons of equipment. There were no air drops on 9 April because the airstrip was open to all types of aircraft.

One hundred five sorties were flown in support of the area with 69 strikes in the immediate vicinity of the combat base. There were no B-52 strikes flown in support of Operation PEGASUS.<sup>65</sup>

65

SIT REP, HQ PCV, 090001H to 092400H Apr 68, No 031

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 090001H to 092400H Apr 68, No 30-68

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 090001H to 092400H Apr 68, No 100

Operation PEGASUS continued on 10 April with supporting fires accounting for the majority of enemy casualties inflicted. The reconnaissance element of the 1 ACD, the 1st Bn, 9th Cav was extremely active. At 0945H an element of Company A, 1st Bn, 9th Cav killed one NVA in the vicinity of 48Q XD 793363. At the same time an aircraft from the same unit observed a PT-76 tank located in a suspected enemy assembly area. Tactical air strikes were called on the enemy tank. The PT-76 was destroyed and 15 NVA were killed. The camouflaged tank was located near 48Q XD 720375.

Later in the day another aircraft from Company A observed what the pilot estimated to be one hundred NVA in the vicinity of 48Q XD 746368. Artillery was called on the target with 30 NVA killed by artillery fires. Four secondary explosions were also observed. At 1615H in the vicinity of 48Q XD 793365, A Company engaged an additional 15 individuals who attempted to evade contact. Results of the action were three NVA KIA.

A cache of weapons was found by Company A, 2d Battalion, 5th Cav at 1205H. The cache, located at 48Q XD 854366, contained one 12.7 mm anti-aircraft weapon, one light machinegun, one B-40 rocket launcher, 50 SKS rifles, three AK-47 rifles, one M-2 carbine, and two flare pistols. Company C, of the same battalion had discovered six NVA killed at 1130H (48Q XD 849422). At the same location where the weapons cache was found by Co A, 2nd Bn, 5th Cav, the unit also found: 12 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition, two rounds of 60mm mortar ammunition, 900 rounds of .50 cal. ammunition, 315 pounds of TNT, one Chicom radio receiver, 50 cans of powdered milk, 30 cans of tea, two lanterns, 112 mess kits, 2 US maps, one ice chest, 200 pounds of canned food, 600 pounds of sugar, 45 NVA packs and 25 pounds of medical supplies.

The 2d Bn, 26th Marines, located on Hill 861 (48Q XD 804444), received three rounds of 82mm mortar fire. The sporadic firing resulted in the wounding of one Marine at 1620H.

At 0350H on the morning of 8 April, an element of the ARVN Airborne Task Force came under a ground attack near the 3d ARVN Abn Bn Command Post (48Q XD 812372). The element again received small arms with mixed mortar fire at 0410H. The enemy withdrew at 0715. A sweep of the area revealed 74 enemy KIA with two detainees and 39 weapons captured. ARVN casualties were 11 KIA and 30 WIA.

The 1st Co, 3d ARVN Abn Bn, engaged an estimated enemy squad at 1600H. The squad was protecting an artillery forward observer party in the vicinity of 48Q XD 889388. At 1735H contact was terminated with one friendly KIA, one enemy KIA, three individual weapons and one radio captured from the enemy.

All elements of the 3d ARVN Abn TF, which consisted of the 3d (minus 1st Co), 6th and 8th Abn Bns, closed at IBSNAKE seven kilometers west of Khe Sanh Base. The task force began offensive operations to the west along Route 9.

Completing the 3d Bde, 1 ACD's link-up with the Combat Base, C Co, 2d Bn, 7th Cav closed at Khe Sanh at 1000H, followed by the 3d Bde headquarters at 1015H. The 1st and 5th Bns, 7th Cav continued to secure the area around LZ MIKE, LZ CATES, and LZ THOR. Companies B and C, of the 5th Bn, 7th Cav had received small arms fire and nine rockets into their perimeter (48Q XD 851425) earlier that morning.

60

MSG, HQ III MAF, dtg 060252

A, B, and D Companies of the 9th Marines held off the enemy force. Contact continued throughout the day as the enemy employed small arms, automatic weapons, B-40 rocket and mortar fire against the friendly positions. Tactical air, artillery and mortar fire supported the Marines. The battalion lost one man killed and 19 wounded while accounting for 122 NVA killed and five prisoners. The prisoners revealed that the Marines had successfully thrown back the 7th Bn, 66th Regiment, 304th NVA Division. The enemy also lost 13 Light machine guns, 29 AK-47 rifles, two SKS rifles, one B-40 rocket launcher, one AK-50 rifle, one 60mm mortar and miscellaneous grenades, equipment, and food stuff.

The 1st Bde, 1 ACD began moving to LZ STUD where they were to stage in preparation of an air assault into their assigned AO.

By 1330H the first assault elements of the Bde landed in LZ SNAPPER (48Q XD 845344). Meeting no resistance on the LZ, the Bde, less the 2d Bn, 8th Cav closed by 1515H.

Contact was moderate to heavy throughout the operational area as

The 2d Bn, 1st Marines and the 2d Bn, 3d Marines, west of Cabu, concentrated on clearing the area around Route 9. G Company, 2d Bn, 3d Mar south of Route 9, engaged seven enemy soldiers at 1545H. Artillery was fired resulting in one NVA killed and one AK-47 rifle captured.

At LZ THOR, the 2d Bn, 7th Cav continued to secure the area around the landing zone. Companies A and C engaged an enemy force of unknown size in the vicinity of 483 XD 883399, at 1340H. Artillery supported the two companies. Result of the engagement were: two U.S. KIA, five U.S. WIA, seven NVA KIA, four AK-47's, one Light machine gun, one Soviet transformer, one Chicom Claymore mine, and an assortment of ammunition captured.

The artillery build-up within the operational area continued with the airlifting of Battery A, 1st Bn, 30th Artillery into LZ TIMOTHY at 1510, and Battery B, 1st Bn, 77th Artillery into LZ TOM at 1600H.

Six B-52 strikes were flown in support of the Kho Sanh area, delivering 900 tons of ordnance. Tactical air strikes flown during the day included 11 U.S.M.C., 51 Air Force, and 114 Navy sorties. Sixty-two of the strikes were in the immediate

over 14 kilometers of road, repaired or replaced 9 bridges and constructed 17 by-passes. In addition numerous sections of the road had to be cleared of landslides and craters.

Although enemy initiated attacks by fire increased, contacts consisted primarily of small unit actions as the 1 ACD elements began to withdraw from the PEGASUS AO in preparation for Operation DELAWARE. The 1st Bde, less the 1st Bn, 12th Cav airlifted into an area south of Quang Tri City, and the 37th ARVN Ranger Bn moved to Da Nang. The weather deteriorated to rain in the afternoon to slow the extraction of the 1 ACD units.

Beginning late in the morning of 11 April, A, B, and C Companies, 1st Bn, 12th Cav began moving toward the site of the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp (48Q XD 783358). The camp had been over-run by NVA Forces on the night of 6-7 February. At 1437H Companies A and C received 14 rounds of undetermined size artillery in the vicinity of 48Q XD 785360. As dusk approached (1800H), B Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav made contact with an estimated 30 individuals. Artillery and tactical air were called in on the enemy's bunkers and fighting positions. Two cavalymen were wounded while the enemy lost 27 killed. Equipment captured by the company was primarily U.S. equipment which the enemy apparently had seized when the Lang Vei camp was taken. Included were: eight carbines, one

M-1 rifle, one 3.5 in. rocket launcher, one light machinegun, two 57mm recoilless rifles, and one 61mm bipod.

An element of A Company, 1st Bn, 9th Cav, operating in the area on 7 April (48Q XD 781355) had destroyed four .50 cal. machine guns, eight .30 cal. machine guns, two 106mm recoilless rifles, two 3.5 in. rocket launchers, ten 82mm mortars, and five 4.2 in. mortars.

No aerial resupply of Khe Sanh Combat Base was made on 11 April. The levels of supply in the base remained at a satisfactory level even though some 1 ACD units were drawing on these stocks. And the FSA/TSE at Ca Lu remained the primary logistical installation in support of PEGASUS.<sup>67</sup>

---

<sup>67</sup>

CDR'S DAILY SUM, HQ PCV, 111200H to 121200H Apr 68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV, 110900H to 120900H Apr 68

PEG, HQ 1 ACD, dtg 111425Z Apr 68

---

Continuing the operation in the vicinity of the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp on 12 April, B Company, 1st Bn, 12th Cav, located approximately one kilometer east of the camp, received an artillery attack at 1130H. Two U.S. cavalymen were wounded. Conducting a

search of the area, the company, at 1525H, found 13 NVA bodies in the southwest portion of the camp. Ten of the enemy had been killed by small arms, and three by artillery as the battalion fought to secure the base. In the same area, and in the vicinity of the 1st Bn, 9th Cav's engagement of 7 April, B Company found seven machineguns, two M-1 carbines, four AK-47's, two M-79 grenade launcher, one M-16 rifle, one BAR, one M-1 rifle, one 81mm mortar base plate, and the two 106mm recoilless rifles destroyed in the earlier action.

Company C, 1st Bn, 5th Cav encountered small arms fire from an estimated platoon-size force while being airlifted into an LZ (48Q XD 828321) at 1410H. With artillery supporting, fire was returned which resulted in 18 NVA killed and no U.S. casualties. Seven AK-50 machineguns,, two U.S. gas masks, three M-16 magazines, five Chicom grenades, and assorted web equipment and medical supplies were captured from the enemy element. At 1630H, Companies B and C, 1st Bn, 5th Cav observed approximately 18 rounds of artillery outside their perimeter. There were no casualties.

Near the village of Khe Sanh (48Q XD 845380), Company A, 2d Bn, 5th Cav found one AK-47, one SKS, one carbine, two radio antenna (RC-292), one U.S. telephone (TA-1), one rectifier, one case of flares, two radios (AN/PRC-10), one radio (AN/GRC-9), 13 60mm rounds, 17 hand

flares, 20 carbines, 17 M-79 rounds, 20 U.S. gas masks, 5000 rounds .45 cal. ammunition, 20,000 rounds .30 cal. ammunition, 2000 rounds carbine ammunition, 4 trailers, 2 one-quarter ton trucks, one GMC truck, one civilian type bus, three bicycles, and one motor scooter. At 1518H, they located eight partially destroyed bunkers containing six rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition and one AK-47 rifle.

Northwest of KSCB, Company L, 3d Bn, 26th Marines operating between Hill 881 South (48Q XD 7743) and Hill 881 North (48Q 7745) discovered a bunker and trench complex at 0715H. The Marines received an undetermined number of 120mm mortar rounds as they were moving into the abandoned enemy positions. Five U.S. were wounded.

The Battalion Command Post operating from Hill 881-S was hit between 1000H and 1530H with 152 rounds of 120mm mortar fire and 35 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. Fire was returned on enemy position on Hill 881-N with unknown enemy casualties. Twenty-eight Marines were wounded in the attack by fire.

At 0905H, the 2d Bn, 26th Marines operating approximately three kilometers east of Hills 881 N and 881 S received two rounds of mortar fire. The 82mm mortar attack wounded one Marine.

Company B, 1st Bn, 9th Marines, at 1200H found 27 bunkers containing 50 pounds of rice, 400 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 13 Chicom grenades, two 60mm mortar rounds, eight bamboo bangalore torpedoes, and assorted items of uniforms and equipment (48Q XD 815400). Company A, in the vicinity of 48Q XD 787405, at 1500H, received 14 rounds of 60mm mortar fire. Artillery and mortar returned fire. Ten U.S. were wounded with three NVA killed. Five AK-47's were captured while 97 rounds of 82mm mortar and 47 Chicom grenades were found and destroyed.

At 1145H, the 3d Bn, 3d ARVN Abn TF exchanged fire with an undetermined size enemy force. The action which occurred in the vicinity of 48Q XD 793390, resulted in four ARVN wounded and five NVA killed. The airborne unit also captured one 60mm mortar. At 1230H, the 8th Abn Bn, received three rounds of 130 mm artillery in the vicinity of LZ SNAKE. Fire was not returned since the location of the enemy artillery position could not be determined. One ARVN soldier was killed and four were wounded.

Visibility of 10 miles was reported by Forward Air Controllers as two B-52 strikes and 41 tactical air sorties were flown in support of the operation. 68

68

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 120001H to 122400H Apr 68, No 103

SPEC REP, HQ PCV, 120900H to 130900H Apr 68

Light resistance was encountered on April 13 throughout the PEGASUS area as the 1 ACD continued its redeployment of forces into the Quang Tri/Camp Evans complex. Two sorties of C-130 aircraft, seven sorties of C-123, and 31 sorties by CH-47 helicopter lifted personnel and equipment to the vicinity of Camp Evans. The 1st Bde, less the 1st Bn, 12th Cav and elements of the 3d Bde completed their moves out of the PEGASUS AO, as marginal weather continued to delay the movement schedule. The 1st Bn, 12th Cav came under OPCON of the 2d Bde, 1 ACD.

At 1120H the 3d ARVN Abn Task Force in the vicinity of 48Q XD 787384, received seven rounds of 82mm mortar fire and returned fire with artillery on the suspected enemy position. Five minutes later, the 6th Bn, 3d ARVN Abn TF received two rounds of 82mm mortar about 150 meters to the northeast. Four ARVN paratroopers were wounded in the two attacks by fire.

During the period 1152 to 1425, A and B Companies, 1st Bn, 12th Cav moved in and occupied the site of the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp. The cav troops had gone quickly through the camp at dusk.

Two B-52 airstrikes hit enemy positions in the vicinity of Lang Vei (48Q MD 794363). Tactical air provided 89 sorties in support of the operation, while 177 artillery fire missions were delivered with 2,932 rounds expended.

The enemy continued to pull away from the Khe Sanh area. U.S. Army, U.S. Marines, and ARVN forces were operating in and all around the combat base with the 3d Bde, 1 ACD being responsible for the immediate security of the base itself.

Artillery elements in support of the 1 ACD began to make their extraction from the area of operation as units of the 1st and 3d Bdes began moving into the Quang Tri area.<sup>66</sup>

---

66

ATT REP, HQ FCV, 100001H to 102400H Apr 68, No 032

INTSUM, HQ FCV, 100001H to 102400H Apr 68, No 31-68

---

Route 9 into Khe Sanh Combat Base was officially opened April 11 as a Class 50 Road at 1600H. General Westmoreland and LTC Rosson expressed their congratulations to the 11th Engr Bn, FTF, and the 8th Engr Bn, 1 ACD for their initiative, drive, and outstanding display of engineering skill. General Westmoreland described the task as "herculean". In 11 days the engineers had reconstructed

on 11 April and moved some 1000 meters to the east to the location of an older camp which had been abandoned when the newer camp was constructed. The two companies found a weapons and ammunition cache consisting of: 21 .30 cal. machineguns, six BAR's, one .50 cal. machine gun, one Soviet machinegun, one RPD light machinegun, eight carbines, one M-16 rifle, two AK-47's, six U.S. M-1 carbines, one unidentified sub-machinegun, four 81mm mortar tubes, three 57mm recoilless rifles, two B-40 rocket launcher, two M-79 grenade launchers, various mortar and machinegun base plates, tripods and bipods, 5000 rounds of 81 mm mortar, 2700 rounds of .50 cal. ammunition, 1000 rounds of 57mm recoilless rifle ammunition, 50 rounds of 106mm recoilless rifle, 300 rounds of 4.2 in. mortar, 400 M-79 grenades, 1000 rounds of .45 cal. ammunition, 10000 rounds of carbine ammunition, 75000 .30 cal. rounds, 25000 rounds for M-1 rifle, 200 fragmentation grenades, 50 white phosphorous grenades, and 70 smoke grenades. Also found were one radio receiver, and 11 NVA bodies.

No B-52 strikes were flown in support of the area and tactical air sorties were limited to 57 USMC flights as weather generally hampered support operations.

The 1 ACD CP and elements of the 3d Bde began their extraction

from the PEGASUS operational area, in preparation for Operation  
DELAWARE.<sup>69</sup>

69

SIT REP, HQ 1 ACD, 130001H to 132400H Apr 68, No 104

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 130001H to 132400H Apr 68, No 34-68

SPEC REP, HQ PCV, 130900H to 140900H Apr 68

On the morning of 14 April between 0240 and 0255 hours, the 1st Bn, 5th Cav received eight unknown-sized rockets, ten to fifteen mortar rounds, satchel charges, small arms and automatic weapons fire southeast of Khe Sanh (48Q XD 828321). There were six cavalrymen killed and nine wounded. Artillery fire was called in on the enemy's position. At 0410H the 1st Bn received seven more rounds of mortar; there were no casualties. As a result of the artillery support one NVA was killed.

The Khe Sanh airfield (48Q XD 8442) was hit with thirteen rounds of unknown-sized artillery and two 122mm rockets at 1200H. No casualties were sustained. Artillery support was called in on the suspected enemy's position (48Q XD 7244). At 1900H the airfield received one round of 82mm mortar.

Responsibility for Khe Sanh passed from the 3rd Bde, 1st AGD to the 2d Bde at 1400. Companies A and C, 1st Bn, 5th Cav were airlifted into Khe Sanh. LZ SNAPPER and LZ TOM were secured by D and C Companies respectively.

In the 2d Bn, 5th Cav, Company A conducted offensive operations near Hill 471 while B Company continued security operations around Khe Sanh. Company C was airlifted into Khe Sanh leaving D Company to secure LZ TIMOTHY.

The 26th Marines conducted operations north and northwest of Khe Sanh. At 0800H the 3d Bn (Companies I, K, L, and M) assaulted Hill 881 N from Hill 881 S. With artillery and tactical air support, the Marines encountered an estimated NVA battalion. At 1428H the Marines seized Hill 881 N killing 106 NVA and capturing two detainees. Seven crew-served and 59 individual weapons were captured. The Marines suffered six killed and 14 wounded.

In offensive operations northwest of Khe Sanh (48Q XD 803443), the 2nd Bn, 26th Marines received one round of sniper fire at 0920H. They returned fire with negative results. At 1255H the Marines found one AK-47, one gas mask, two packs, three helmets, three entrenching tools, two canteens and other assorted equipment.

The Command Post of the 2d Bn, 3d Marine Regiment received twelve

rounds of 81mm mortar at 1500H in the vicinity of 482 XD 894404. 81mm mortar fire was returned with negative results. There were no Marine casualties.

At 1530 Company F found between twenty-five and thirty bunkers and fighting holes (482 XD 865400). In addition the Marines found one TNT bangalore torpedo, three B-40 rockets, three Chicom grenades, two rolls of wire, 20 electrical caps with cords, two 82mm mortar rounds, nine 1 1/2 pound blocks of TNT, four boxes of time fuses, seven boxes of blasting caps, and other assorted articles.<sup>70</sup>

---

70

SIT REF, HQ 1 ACD, 140001H to 142400H Apr 68, No 105

INTSUM, HQ 1 ACD, 140001H to 142400H Apr 68, No 105

INTSUM, HQ PCV, 140001H to 142400H Apr 68, No 35-68

---

Provisional Corps Vietnam terminated Operation PEGASUS on 15 April at 0800H. The operation had successfully opened Route 9 from Ca Lu to Kho Sanh and routed the enemy from their strongholds around the Combat Base. Task Force Glick of the 3d Marine Division, with the 2d Bde (minus), 1 ACD under its OPCON, assumed responsibility for tactical operations in the Kho Sanh area. Operation SCOTLAND II

was launched by the 3d Mar Div at 0801H, 15 April.<sup>71</sup>

---

<sup>71</sup> MSG, HQ PCV, dtg 170731Z Apr 68, Subject: PEGASUS/SCOTLAND  
II (U)

---

The 1st Cav Div (Airmobile), the 101st Abn Div, and the 3d ARVN  
TF were already preparing to launch Operation DELAWARE.

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10  
MAY 1962 EDITION  
GSA FPMR (41 CFR) 101-11.6

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

# Memorandum

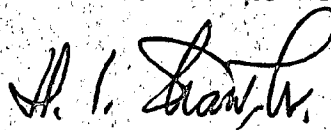
TO : Members of Writing Section

AO3D1-rem  
DATE: 12 NOV 1968

FROM : Head, Writing Section

SUBJECT: Absence on TAD 13-30 November 1968

1. During my absence on TAD, Lieutenant Colonel CLIFFORD will act as Head, Writing Section. Bi-weekly progress reports will be made to him on 18 November 1968, including any information germane to the revision of the production chart in the Administrative Section. He will process book reviews for the Navy library system and assign new books for review.
2. In the event that the page proofs for Volume V, World War II come back from GPO during this period, LtCol CLIFFORD will make the assignments to those section members who will assist in the proof-reading process.
3. Manuscripts which have been circulated within the section for editorial comment will be submitted to LtCol CLIFFORD for final review prior to being submitted to the Head, Historical Branch.

  
H. I. SHAW, JR.

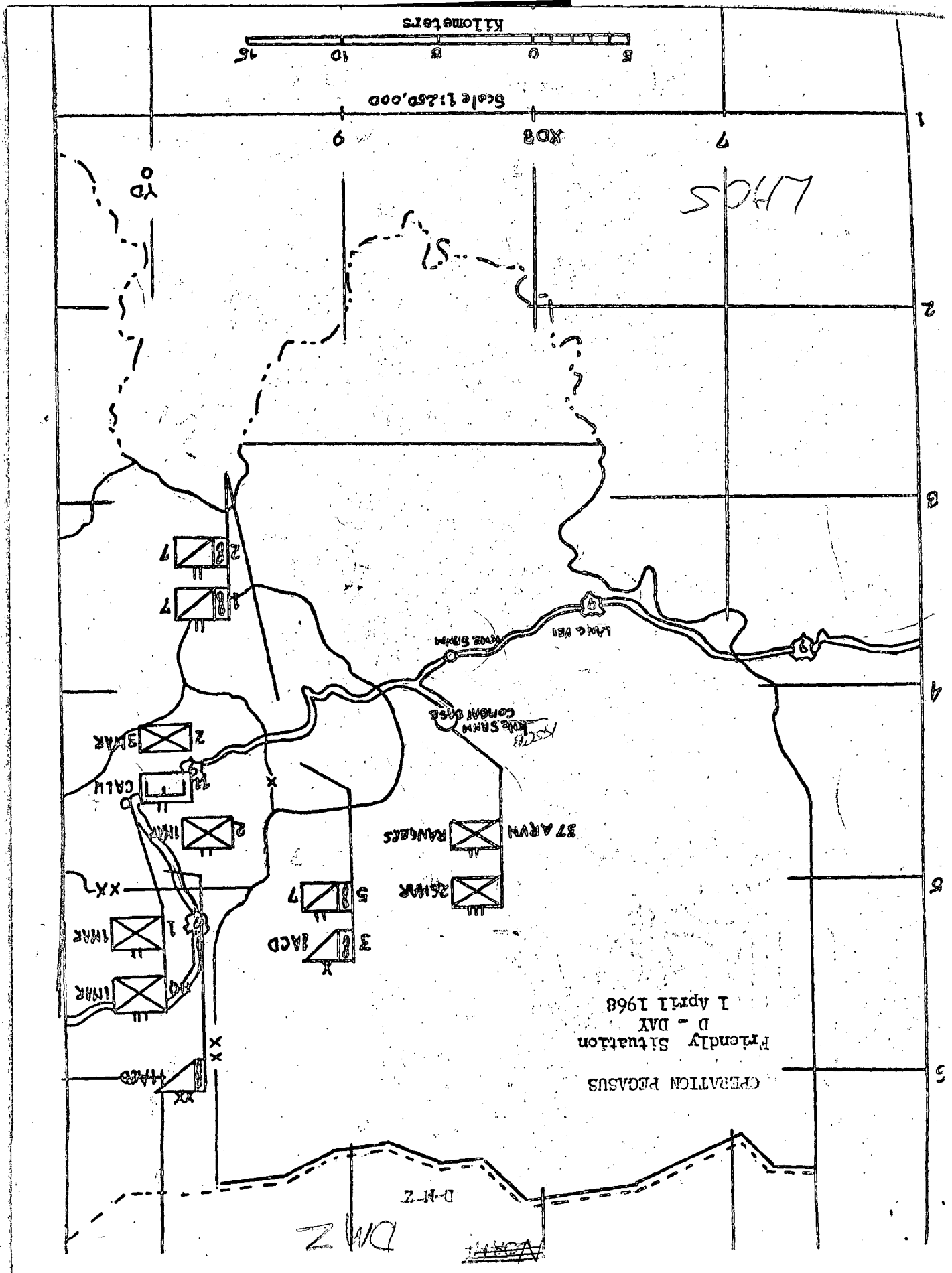
Copy to:  
Head, Historical Branch  
Head, Administrative Section  
All members, Writing Section

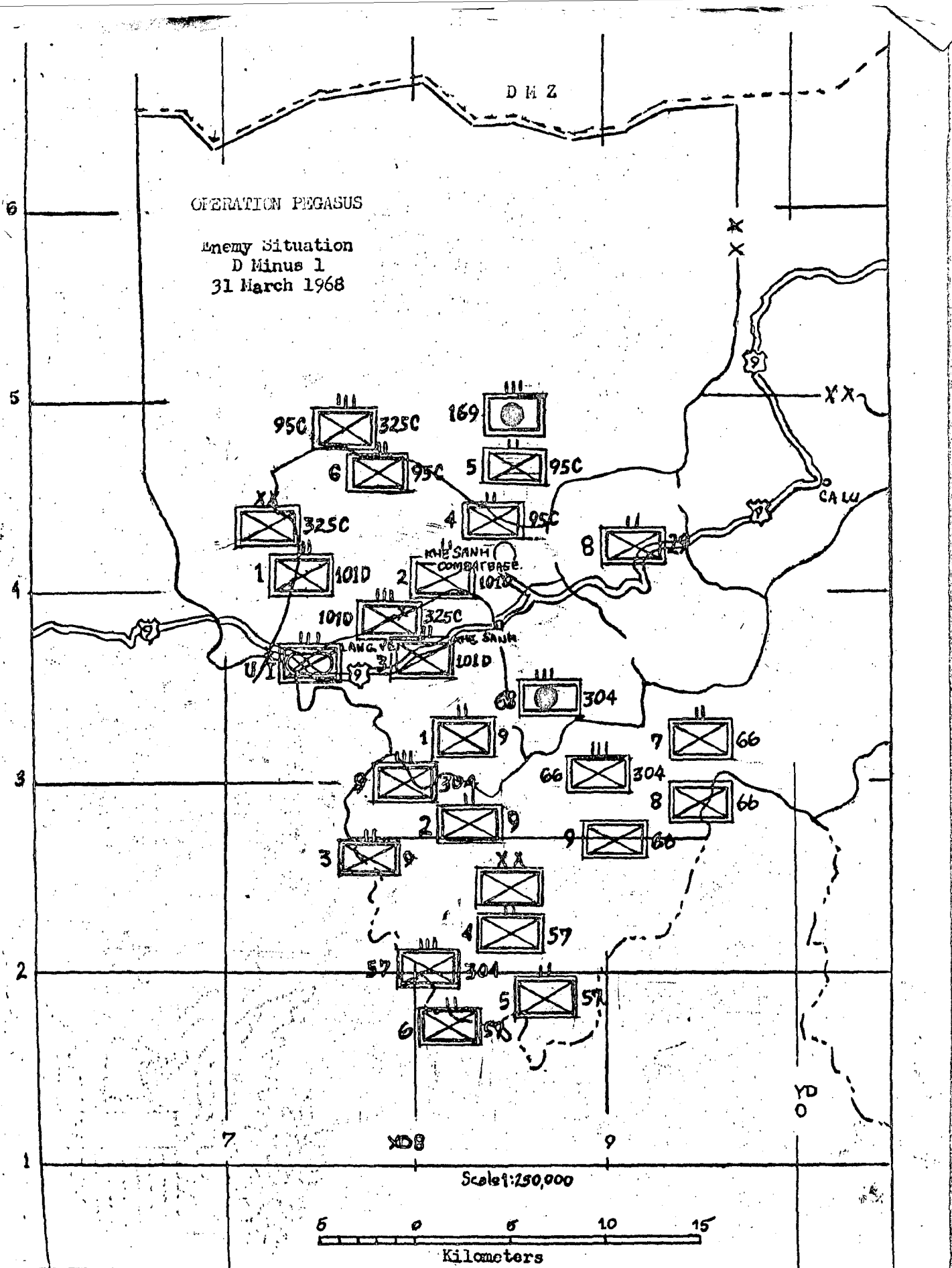


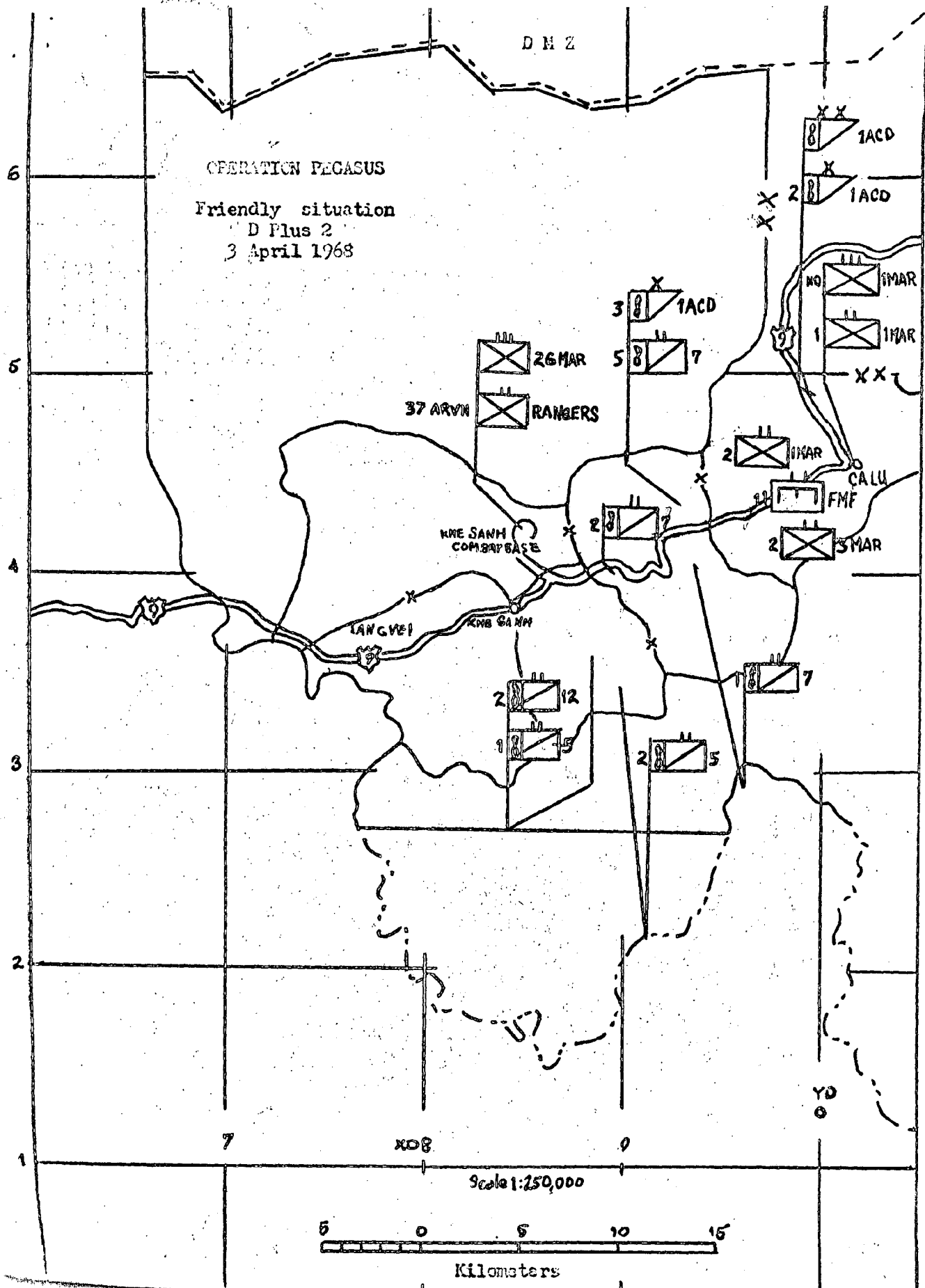
5010-108

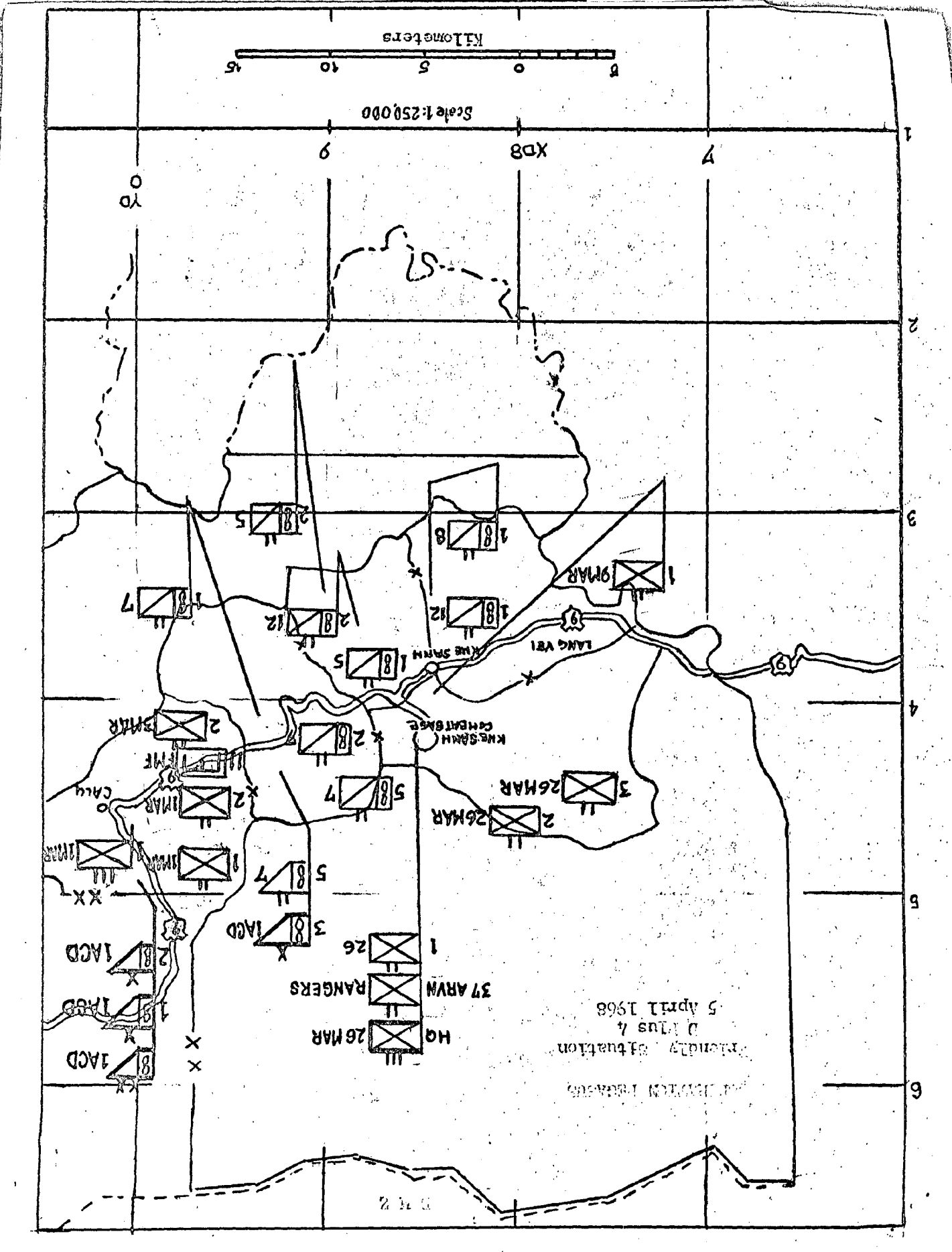
Buy U.S. Savings Bonds Regularly on the Payroll Savings Plan











The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION to

TWENTY-SIXTH MARINES (REINFORCED),  
THIRD MARINE DIVISION (REINFORCED)

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism in action against North Vietnamese Army forces during the battle for Khe Sanh in the Republic of Vietnam from 20 January to 1 April 1968. Throughout this period, the 26th Marines (Reinforced) was assigned the mission of holding the vital Khe Sanh Combat Base and positions on Hills 881, 861-A, 558 and 950, which dominated strategic enemy approach routes into Northern I Corps. The 26th Marines was opposed by numerically superior forces - two North Vietnamese Army divisions, strongly reinforced with artillery, tank, anti-aircraft artillery and rocket units. The enemy, deployed to take advantage of short lines of communications, rugged mountainous terrain, jungle, and adverse weather conditions, was determined to destroy the Khe Sanh Combat Base in conjunction with large scale offensive operations in the two northern provinces of the Republic of Vietnam. The 26th Marines, occupying a small but critical area, was daily subjected to hundreds of rounds of intensive artillery, mortar and rocket fire. In addition, fierce ground attacks were conducted by the enemy in an effort to penetrate the friendly positions. Despite overwhelming odds, the 26th Marines remained resolute and determined, maintaining the integrity of its positions and inflicting heavy losses on the enemy. When monsoon weather greatly reduced air support and compounded the problems of aerial resupply, the men of the 26th Marines stood defiantly firm, sustained by their own professional esprit and high sense of duty. Through their indomitable will, staunch endurance, and resolute courage, the 26th Marines and supporting units held the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The actions of the 26th Marines contributed substantially to the failure of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army winter/spring offensive. The enemy forces were denied the military and psychological victory they so desperately sought. By their gallant fighting spirit and their countless individual acts of heroism, the men of the 26th Marines (Reinforced) established a record of illustrious courage and determination in keeping with the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY CROSS to

COLONEL DAVID E. LOWNDS  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism while serving as Commanding Officer of the Khe Sanh combat base in connection with operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam from August 1967 through March 1968. Upon assuming command of the vital combat base located in western Quang Tri Province and tasked with the responsibility of interdicting major North Vietnamese resupply routes and blocking any enemy invasion attempt from the west into the northern provinces of South Vietnam, Colonel Lownds immediately established combat outposts on Hills 881 South, 861, and 950, and launched extensive and highly effective patrol activities throughout his area of responsibility. Despite the hazardous, mountainous terrain, thick jungle foliage, and adverse weather conditions, Colonel Lownds' valiant combat leadership and indomitable command ability were the central instrument in achieving and maintaining the superb combat posture of the base. On 28 January 1968, when North Vietnamese divisions launched a coordinated attack on the Khe Sanh combat base with rockets, artillery, mortar, and machine-gun and small-arms fire, and with their main attack directed at Hill 861-A, Colonel Lownds' superb knowledge of and appreciation for the terrain and his aggressive utilization of all supporting arms minimized the effectiveness of the enemy attack and resulted in a large number of enemy casualties. During daily enemy rocket and artillery attacks, and on 23 February, when the firing reached its peak with more than 1,300 rounds impacting on the combat base, his superior tactical judgment, calm leadership, brave demeanor, and resolute endurance were an inspiration to all around him and were a prime factor in maintaining a high level of morale among his men. Giving no thought to his own safety, while exhibiting a compassionate concern for the welfare of his Marines, he gallantly and repeatedly exposed himself to hostile fire making daily visits to outlying units to observe tactical operations and to study conditions confronting his unit commanders. During the period 1 November 1967 to 31 March 1968, Colonel Lownds organized and directed Operation SCOTLAND, a highly effective search and destroy operation throughout the Khe Sanh tactical area of responsibility, which resulted in numerous enemy casualties, the capture of several enemy, and a large number of weapons confiscated. By his gallant leadership, distinguished personal bravery, and selfless devotion to duty throughout, Colonel Lownds upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

For the President,

Secretary of the Navy

MLA (Is-mel)  
2200152

Appd by SecNav  
12 Mar 68

The President of the United States takes pride in presenting the NAVY CROSS posthumously to

CORPORAL JOHN R. BURKE  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

**CITATION:**

For extraordinary heroism while serving as a Sniper Team Leader with Headquarters and Service Company, First Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division (Reinforced), in the Republic of Vietnam on 6 June 1967. Assigned the mission of defending an outpost on Hill 950 at Khe Sanh, Quang Tri Province, Corporal Burke's team was taken under attack by a numerically superior enemy force. During the initial assault, Corporal Burke was wounded by an enemy grenade. Ignoring his wound, he administered first aid to a severely wounded comrade and placed him in a relatively safe position, covering the wounded man with his own body to protect him from further injury. Heeding a call for help from outside the bunker, he unhesitatingly went to the aid of another Marine. While he and a companion were moving the man to the security of the bunker an enemy grenade exploded, knocking him and his comrade into the bunker. Although seriously wounded, he moved the wounded man to a tunnel to protect him from the devastating enemy fire. With all his team members casualties, Corporal Burke unhesitatingly and with complete disregard for his own safety armed himself with grenades, and shouting words of encouragement to his men, stormed from the bunker in a valiant one-man assault against the enemy positions. While firing his weapon and throwing grenades at the enemy positions, Corporal Burke was mortally wounded. By his dauntless courage, bold initiative and devotion to duty, he was instrumental in stopping the enemy attack and saving his men from possible further injury or death, thereby reflecting great credit upon himself and the Marine Corps and upholding the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. He gallantly gave his life for his country.

For the President,

PAUL R. KENNEDY

Secretary of the Navy

30 APR 1968

From Doc 5 M. (Is-mel) to the President

Indefinite

Disposal

1. 100

1. 100

1. 100

1. 100

LA-lts-rpa  
2127413

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the NAVY  
CROSS to

SERGEANT RICHARD E. MOFFIT  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism while serving as a Fire Team Leader with Company G, Second Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division (Reinforced) in Quang Tri Province, Republic of Vietnam on 16 and 17 May 1967. Company G was conducting a search and destroy operation during Operation HICKORY, south of the Demilitarized Zone, when it came under devastating enemy mortar and automatic weapons fire from a deeply entrenched and heavily defended North Vietnamese Army force. Sergeant (then Corporal) Moffit's squad was assigned the mission of clearing the enemy from cleverly concealed positions in the outlying hedgerows. As he diligently maneuvered his squad toward the objective, they were pinned down by a heavy volume of machine-gun fire. Quickly assessing the situation, and with complete disregard for his own safety, he courageously jumped to his feet and charged directly at the enemy position, firing as he went. Upon reaching the position, he fearlessly jumped into the fighting hole, and singlehandedly killed its two occupants. As the operation continued on 17 May 1967, the company again came under a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire which halted the forward elements. Once again he gallantly withstood the intense enemy fire as he singlehandedly charged toward the enemy position, throwing grenades to overwhelm and kill the enemy gun crew. By his intrepid fighting spirit, exceptional fortitude and gallant initiative, Sergeant Moffit served to inspire all who observed him and contributed in large measure to the success of his unit. His great personal valor reflected the highest credit upon himself and upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

For the President, *[Signature]*

*[Signature]*  
PAUL R. IGNATUIS

Secretary of the Navy

R - San Francisco, CA  
B - Guam, NM  
14 November 1967

DL A-sld  
1539245

Signed

Appd by SacNa  
14 Feb 1967  
Bd Ser 1039

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting  
the NAVY CROSS to

SERGEANT DONALD W. SCOTT  
UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS

for service as set forth in the following

CITATION:

For extraordinary heroism while serving with Company E, First Battalion, Twenty-sixth Marines, Third Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force, in the Republic of Vietnam on 18 September 1966. As the Company approached the village of Gia Binh, the point was taken under attack and sustained many casualties; the platoon commander was killed. After surveying the situation, Sergeant Scott reacted quickly and alertly and without regard for his own personal safety as he moved forward to aid the fallen men. Subjected to intense fire from enemy automatic small-arms directed upon the wounded men, Sergeant Scott, on six separate occasions, courageously worked his way up through the hail of enemy fire and retrieved his dead and wounded comrades. When he himself was painfully wounded, he refused medical attention and went back to retrieve the last of his dead men. On his last trip into the village he was again wounded, but continued on beyond the point required by duty and succeeded in recovering the body of a fellow Marine. Through his daring and courageous actions in the face of almost certain death, and while seriously wounded, Sergeant Scott personally saved the lives of three Marines, and recovered the bodies of three of his fallen comrades. By his daring initiative, valiant fighting spirit and selfless devotion to duty, Sergeant Scott reflected great credit upon himself and the Marine Corps and upheld the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

For the President,

1429/67

CC: MRD San Diego for pre to  
NSgt Scott

Secretary of the Navy

Division Library copy  
Data processing copy

