

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry
198th Infantry Brigade, Americal Division
APO San Francisco 96219

AVDF-BCP

3 July 1968

SUBJECT: After Action Report

Commanding Officer
198th Infantry Brigade (IT)
ATTN: S3
APO San Francisco 96219

"A" 1/46th NOT
INVOLVED

1. Type of Operation: **Night movement and engagement**
2. Date of Operation: **080001 to 092400 June 1968**
3. Location: Chu Lai, RVN
Map Reference: 1:25,000
Sheet Number: 6639 I
4. Command and Control Headquarters: **1st Battalion, 52d Infantry**
5. Reporting Officers:
 - a. LTC Elbert E Fuller Jr, CO, 1-52d Inf, 198th Inf Bde
 - b. CPT John A Bierden, CO, Co A/1-52d Inf
 - c. CPT Leonard G Goldman, CO, Co B/1-52d Inf
 - d. 1LT Jack W Sorenson, CO, Co D/1-52d Inf
 - e. 1LT Peter L Miller, CO, Co D/1-46th Inf
6. Task Organization:
 - a. Headquarters, 1-52d Inf
 - b. A Company, 1-52d Inf
 - c. B Company, 1-52d Inf
 - d. D Company, 1-52d Inf
 - e. D Company, 1-46th Inf

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7. Supporting Forces:

- a. C Battery, 1-14th Arty
- b. 14th Aviation Battalion
- c. Mortar Section, E Company, 1-52d Inf

8. Intelligence:

a. Terrain:

(1) The terrain provided the enemy with excellent cover and concealment from ground and air observation. Numerous deep gorges gave the enemy excellent protection from air and artillery. The narrow valleys with steep slopes offered protection from all but direct hits by aerial rockets, bombs and artillery. The enemy had knowledge of all trails in the area and had excellent speed of movement.

(2) Friendly units experienced difficulties in confirming their locations due to the double and triple canopy. The rugged terrain limited the ground commander's ability to maneuver rapidly. The slopes were steep and restricted their movement. Water was plentiful in nearly all the valleys leading up into the high ground. Landing Zones for resupply were extremely difficult to locate and prepare. It required two days effort and an engineer squad with chain saws to establish a one ship Landing Zone.

b. Weather: The temperature ranged from a high of 98° to a low of 67°. This coupled with the dense vegetation increased troop fatigue.

c. Enemy:

(1) Available intelligence initially confirmed several enemy units in the area. Intelligence obtained from a POW and captured documents, indicated that the 80th Battalion, 1st VC Regiment, 2d NVA Division was in the area of operation. On 7 Jun 68, documents taken from another VC KIA stated that elements of the 409th Main Force Sapper Battalion were also operating in the area.

(2) Information from other sources listed the 80th Battalion at a strength of approximately 350 men. The 80th Battalion was deployed with one company vicinity coord BT215063, one company vicinity coord BT227067 and one company as a reserve in vicinity coord BT215058. It was also indicated that the mission of the 80th Battalion was to provide a security force for the 1st VC Regimental Headquarters believed to be located on the ridge line 3000 meters to the south vicinity coord BT225035.

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9. Mission: The 1-52 Inf will conduct a night movement from present location beginning 082000 Jun 68 to occupy positions north of the Song Bong Mieu River. On order, units will conduct a night river crossing and search the area in the vicinity of the B-52 air strike.

10. Concept of Operation: The operation was conducted in two phases.

PHASE I: B, C, D/1-46 Inf moved to the west as arranged with 1-6 Inf so that operational control would change to the 1-6 Inf. A, B, D/1-52 Inf stayed at their previous night locations and searched area in the vicinity of their locations. Companies prepared Landing Zones and received their resupply which was necessary for the night movement.

PHASE II: The second phase involved the conclusion of the transfer of B, C, D/1-46 Inf to the control of the 1-6 Inf. In conjunction with the transfer, all units proceeded to their preplanned objectives on the ridge north of the Long Bong Mieu River as indicated by the operational overlay.

11. Execution:

a. At the beginning of the operation on 8 Jun 68, B, C, D/1-46 Inf and A, B and D/1-52 Inf were under the operational control of the 1-52 Inf. The companies were directed to search out the area in which they were presently located and prepare for the night movement to the river beginning 082100 hrs.

b. At 081000 Jun 68, at coord BT229073, B/1-46 located 800 pounds of grain, a portion of which was booby-trapped. The searching continued, and C/1-46 located one base plate for a 60mm mortar and 1000 pounds of rice at 081114 Jun 68 coord BT226078.

c. Companies B, C, D/1-46 moved towards the 1-6 Inf area of operation so that the plan to transfer operational control could be completed. The search and move continued without any further finds. At 081850 Jun 68, 1-6 Inf assumed operational control of B, C/1-46 Inf.

d. 1-52 Inf at 082100 Jun 68 began its planned movement to the Bong Mieu River. At 090145 Jun 68, D/1-52 Inf observed four personnel moving east to west at coord BT226063. Artillery was requested but clearance was not granted because of the proximity of friendlies. D/1-46 Inf under operational control of the 1-6 Inf engaged a VC force at 090200 Jun 68 coord BT222057, resulting in 6 VC KIA and 1 VC CIA. D/1-46 Inf then proceeded south into 1-52 Inf area of operation. Because of D/1-46 Inf location after their contact, the 1-52 Inf assumed operational control of 1-46.

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e. B/1-52 Inf followed initially by A/1-52 Inf came into contact with double and triple canopy vegetation which hampered all movement. During the conclusion of the movement no enemy were contacted. All units proceeded to their preplanned location so that they could be prepared to cross the river.

12. Results:

a. Enemy Losses:

- (1) 1800 pounds of grain destroyed
- (2) One 60mm mortar base plate, captured
- (3) 6 VC KIA
- (4) 1 VC CIA

b. Friendly Losses: negative results

13. Administrative Matters: Movement was all done by foot and no resupply was given once the movement commenced. Once the operation was completed, Landing Zones had to be literally cut into the thick vegetation so that resupply could be received. Communications during the operation was continuous and without difficulties. The ground troops carried their normal basic load of ammunition and two days rations.

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: During the operation, B/1-52 Inf used Scout Dogs. This improved the companies' alertness and security. At the completion of the movement all units used panel markers so that an air observer could pinpoint all locations.

15. Commanders' Analysis: Commanders all agreed that this move had disproved a previous statement that units could not move in the jungles during the hours of darkness and still remain an effective, maneuverable force. B/1-52 Inf hacked their way foot by foot through the triple canopy vegetation and still kept their bearing and remained an effective fighting force. The success of the movement is evident by the rapid withdrawal of all enemy in the area of operation.

2 Incls

1. Operation Overlay
2. Intelligence Overlay

For Andrew M. Sander Maj Inf Xo

WALTER M SANDERS

Major, Infantry

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