

OPERATION ORANGE.  
QUANG BINH PROVINCE.

1st Battalion 3rd Marines  
3rd Marine Division

CONFIDENTIAL

4/18/66

13. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

a. Scout dogs were used in conjunction with search and destroy operations, without notable success. It is felt that the dogs performance was adversely affected by extreme heat and large amounts of powder and WP residue in the area.

b. The 3d Marines Sniper Squad, employed for the first time in search and destroy operations, conclusively proved by an excellent performance their worth and effectiveness in engaging enemy forces at ranges beyond the average capability of infantrymen armed with the M-14.

c. Smoke and CS were used to good effect in search and destroy operations against tunnels, caves and bunkers.

14. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS.

The area of operations for ORANGE was such that the confluence of the SONG VU GIA and its tributary, the SONG COK, effectively divided the area into three distinct and separate sectors - two to the north of the VU GIA and one to its south. Because of the location of the air field and the projected Special Forces Camp, control of and therefore operations in each of the sectors was required. Each sector in itself by virtue of its area alone required the presence of at least one rifle company.

Because of the requirement to rapidly open and sweep the airfield, and because the airfield was located to the north of the VU GIA, it was decided that the initial days assault would be conducted there. On D-day two companies landed in and secured that portion of the two northern sectors adjacent to the airfield and the airfield itself. At the same time one company was retained as reserve should the requirement exist.

On D+1, events having progressed as anticipated on D-day, the third, or reserve company, in conjunction with a blocking platoon taken from north of the VU GIA, landed to sweep the sector south of the river. At this point all the available forces of the battalion were employed - there was no reserve immediately available.

As events turned out the forces south of VU GIA met the only organized enemy forces of any strength encountered during the operation. Enemy strength incidentally was considerably larger than had been anticipated, based on available intelligence. The friendly force employed was insufficient to rapidly overcome the enemy resistance and there was no reserve force or sufficient other forces immediately available to block enemy escape from the area.