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# 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division Airmobile



## Combat

# After Action Report Operation

# 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division UNCLASSIFIED BOWIE

# 7-28 March 66

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1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) Operation JIM BOWIE

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HEADQUARTERS 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
APO US Forces 96490

AVCGT

8 May 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (RCS MACV J3/32)

THRU: Commanding General  
I Field Force Vietnam  
APO US Forces 96240TO: Commander  
US Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
APO US Forces 96243

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation JIM BOWIE - search and destroy.
2. DATES OF OPERATION. 070600 - 281615 March 1966.
3. LOCATION. Vinh Thanh and An Tuc Districts, Binh Dinh Province.  
Refer to Overlay 1.
4. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)
5. REPORTING OFFICER. The reporting officer is Major General Harry W.O. Kinnard. Principal commanders and senior staff officers participating in this operation were:

Major General Harry W.O. Kinnard - Division Commander

Brigadier General John M. Wright - Assistant Division Commander

Colonel William A. Becker - Assistant Division Commander

Colonel George S. Beatty, Jr - Chief of Staff

Colonel John J. Hennessey - CO, 1st Brigade

Colonel Harold G. Moore - CO, 3d Brigade

Colonel William F. Brand Jr - CO, Division Artillery

Colonel Allen M. Burdett Jr - CO, 11th Aviation Group

Lt Colonel James C. Smith - CO, Support Command

Lt Colonel Robert M. Shoemaker - CO, 1st Squadron, 9th Cavalry

Lt Colonel Robert M. Malley - CO, 8th Engineer Battalion

Lt Colonel John D. White - ACofS, G1

Lt Colonel Bobby R. Lang - ACofS, G2

Lt Colonel Earl K. Buchan - ACofS, G3

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Lt Colonel Benjamin S. Silver - ACoS, G4

Lt Colonel Monroe Kirkpatrick - ACoS, G5

6. TASK ORGANIZATION.

a. No organic units were detached from the Division during JIM BOWIE.

b. Major non-organic units attached to this Division remained unchanged during Operation JIM BOWIE. Units remaining attached included:

3d Bn, 18th Arty (8"/17tmm SP)

2d Bn, 17th Arty (105mm Towed)

Battery B, 29th Arty (Searchlight)

17th Aviation Company (CV-2)

478th Aviation Company (CH-54)

191st MI Detachment

c. The 10th RRU continued under operational control of this Division during Operation JIM BOWIE.

d. Battery A 1/30 Arty (155mm How, Towed) was attached to this Division and supported Operation JIM BOWIE during the period 14 - 21 March. This unit was moved by CH-54 and CH-47 from Phu Cat to firing positions via LZ DOVE (BR 666822) which was occupied until 18 March. On 18 Mar the battery displaced to the 3d Brigade area (BR 538942) and remained at that location until returned to parent unit control at Phu Cat closing 212230 Mar.

e. Division Task Organization as announced in Division OPORD 6607 (JIM BOWIE) issued 071600 Mar was:

1st Bde

1/8 Cav

2/8 Cav

1/12 Cav

B Trp, 1/9 Cav (OPCON)

2/19 Arty (DS)

Plat, Co A, 8th Engr Bn

Plat (-), 545 MP Co

Sig Spt Tm, 13th Sig Bn

Team 1, IPW/CI, 191 MI Det

Team 1, 54th Inf Det (Radar)

Team 1, 10th RRU

3d Bde

1/7 Cav

2/7 Cav

2/5 Cav (NOTE 1)

C Trp, 1/9 Cav (OPCON)

1/21 Arty (DS)

Plat, Co C, 8th Engr Bn

Plat (-), 545 MP Co

Sig Spt Tm, 13th Sig Bn

Team 3, IPW/CI, 191 MI Det

Team 3, 54th Inf Det (Radar)

Team 3, 10th RRU

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Team 1, 16th Weather Det (USAF)	Team 3, 16th Weather Det (USAF)
Team, 41st CA Co	Team, 41st CA Co
Fwd Spt Element, Spt Cmd (Spt)	Fwd Spt Element, Spt Cmd (Spt)
Water Point, 8th Engr Bn	Water Point, 8th Engr Bn

2d Bde (NOTE 2)

1/5 Cav  
2/12 Cav  
2/5 Cav (-) (eff 151000 Mar)  
1/77 Arty (DS)  
Sqd, 545 MP Co

NOTES: 1 - 2/5 Cav (minus one company) was detached from 3d Bde and attached to 2d Bde effective 151000 Mar.

- 2 - The 2d Brigade mission during Operation JIM BOWIE was defense of the Division base and offensive operations in the Tactical Area of Responsibility (less portions of the JIM BOWIE area of operations located within the TAOR). 2d Brigade operations did not directly influence JIM BOWIE operations and for this reason are not discussed in this report.

7. SUPPORTING FORCES.

a. The USSF/CIDG company under control of USSF B-22 Detachment at An Khe conducted patrolling and security operations in Vinh Thanh Valley from the camp located at BR 610600. A Division forward refueling point was co-located at BR 615606 (LZ EDDY) to take advantage of the security offered by the CIDG Camp. 1st Squadron, 9th Cav was charged with security of the forward refueling point and coordination with the CIDG camp from 10 - 15 Mar when this responsibility was changed to 2d Brigade. The forward base was closed at 201800 Mar.

b. USAF Tac Air Support. A total of 284 sorties were used in support of JIM BOWIE operations. Tac Air support was incorporated into deception operations (Phase 1, 7 - 12 Mar) conducted by 1/9 Cav in the Suoi Ca Valley east of the JIM BOWIE AO. Damage assessment of strikes during JIM BOWIE was severely limited due to the rugged terrain and heavy vegetation. Pre-planned requests were submitted on Army communications (phone or teletype) to I Field Force Vietnam. Immediate requests were transmitted by USAF radio communications to DASC Alfa (Nha Trang). The average reaction time for immediate requests was 10 minutes. A detailed summary of USAF Tac Air support is contained in Inclosure 2<sup>1</sup>.

8. INTELLIGENCE.

a. Intelligence developed during the Bong Son Campaign ending 6 Mar 66 in northeast Binh Dinh Province plus reports during the period prior to JIM BOWIE indicated that several headquarters and service support units were located in the Kon Truck secret base area. No maneuver units were known

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to be in the area but there were indications that the tactical headquarters of VC Military Region V and the Sao Vang Division were located in the area. Numerous suspect locations of radio transmissions monitored before the attack seemed to bear this out. It was expected that any VC units encountered would attempt to avoid contact.

b. The terrain in the area of operation was the most difficult yet encountered by this Division in Viet Nam. Terrain in the Kon Truck area is characterized by steep hills rising to an elevation of 3215 feet on the east side of the Dak Kron Bung river and to 2000 feet on the west side. Numerous streams flow from deep ravines and heavy vegetation is found throughout the area. Vegetation included tall jungle canopy trees, scrub brush and elephant grass. The terrain severely limited ground movement and observation. Natural landing zones were scarce in the area resulting in the use of hilltop LZ's improved by engineer clearing operations. Heavy rains and low visibility delayed entry into the JIM BOWIE area for three days (10 - 12 Mar) but thereafter generally fair weather prevailed throughout the operations. Forecast of local conditions such as ground fog were accurate.

c. During the deception phase in the Suoi Ca Valley 7 - 12 Mar 66 no significant contact was made and only scattered firings at aircraft took place. On the day that operations were scheduled to begin in the Kon Truck area (10 Mar) intelligence reports were received which indicated that the Military Region V and Sao Vang Division headquarters had moved away from Kon Truck toward the North west. During Phase II operations in the Kon Truck area 13 - 17 Mar several prisoners captured stated they were part of the H810 Provincial Bn. The prisoners contributed some information on the H810 Bn such as the existence of production and transportation sections and two engineer platoons. No contact or evidence of the two unidentified regiments reported in the area was developed. Documents captured during this period provided ammunition usage data and valuable information on the Sao Vang Division's ammunition status and confirmed the presence of 120mm mortars and at least 2 each 75mm US Pack Howitzers in the division. 2d Bn, 7th Cavalry discovered a 120 bed hospital facility with medical supplies at BR 600830 on 16 Mar. As operations shifted NW of the Kon Truck area for Phase II 17 - 22 Mar only light contacts were made with the enemy. Several small training camps and one assembly area with a tunnel system were discovered. One document captured during this period provided the strength of the Sao Vang Division as of late Dec 65. During Phase IV 23 - 28 Mar in the upper Song Ba Valley NW of the Division Base Camp the 3d Brigade encountered harassing fire from mortars, small arms, and automatic weapons for the first four days but no major contact could be gained. One arms cache was located but no contact was gained with the VC 407th Bn which was believed to have withdrawn into the area after attacking the Division base camp on 20 Feb 66.

d. A detailed intelligence incident overlay is attached as Inclosure 1. Enemy losses are summarized in paragraph 12.

#### 9. MISSION.

a. Operation JIM BOWIE was initiated by the 1st Cavalry Division in response to guidance from I Field Force Vietnam which indicated the desirability of continuing offensive operations in Binh Dinh Province. Objectives and considerations leading to the selection of the JIM BOWIE area of operations included:

(1) Operations in the Kon Truck area would allow follow-up on reports developed during the Bong Son campaign of headquarters and service facilities located in this area.

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(2) Destruction of enemy units and facilities would enhance the security of the Vinh Thanh Valley and since this area lies just outside the Division TAOR, would contribute to the general security of the Division base.

(3) Operations in the Kon Truck area would provide additional experience in conducting airmobile operations in rugged, mountainous terrain with limited natural LZ's.

b. The Division mission as stated in the JIM BOWIE operation order was: "Division attacks on 10 March to destroy enemy forces and installations in the Kon Truck area (BR 5983), continues offensive operations in TAOR, and provides two bns as a reserve/reaction force for I FORCEV."

#### 10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION.

a. The Division planned to conduct search and destroy operations in the Kon Truck area with two brigades. The 1st Brigade was to air assault into the East portion of the area of operations on the morning of D-Day and seal off routes of egress to the north and east into the Kim Song Valley. Aircraft lift resources would then be shifted to the 3d Brigade for assault into the western portion of the area to block routes to the north and west. Once established in their sectors the brigades were to saturate the area with small unit patrols and blocking positions astride trails and water courses. The blocks would be progressively tightened in an attempt to encircle any forces or installations in the center of the area and to force enemy movement. Each brigade was directed to maintain one battalion as a reserve for commitment against any significant enemy force or installation. Reconnaissance prior to D-Day was limited and 1/9 Cav was to execute a deception operation in the Suoi Ca Valley (BR 7767) on 8 - 9 Mar (actually conducted 7 - 12 Mar). 1st Sqdn, 9th Cav was also tasked to screen the outer limits and approaches to the JIM BOWIE area of operations and to coordinate with the Vinh Thanh Valley USSF/CIDG Camp. The 2d Brigade was to conduct base defense and TAOR operations. JIM BOWIE was to be supported from the Division base at An Khe.

b. Fire support for JIM BOWIE emphasized initial use of TAC Air as preparations for initial assaults and to assist in LZ construction. Operation schedules provided for early displacement of artillery into firing positions to support assaults into other LZ's. Since resupply was limited to air, artillery planning provided for attack of targets by the massed fires of multiple fire units rather than volley fire by a single unit.

#### 11. EXECUTION.

a. Division OPORD 6607 (JIM BOWIE) was issued 071600 Mar and was preceded by separate instructions to 1st Squadron, 9th Cav to initiate deception operations in the Suoi Ca Valley east of the JIM BOWIE area commencing 7 Mar 66. D-Day was established as 10 Mar 66 however low ceilings and heavy rains caused postponement on 10, 11, and 12 Mar 66. It is possible that the weather delay contributed to the generally light contact encountered in the area. On 13 Mar 1st Bde elements encountered a VCS vicinity BR 6783 with an ARVN friendship pass. Upon questioning this individual stated that about 8 - 10 March the local VC were told that the Americans were coming and to go into hiding with the local VC moving generally North. Interrogation of other VCC, VCS and documents tend to substantiate the fact that VC/NVA elements withdrew from the area about 8 March. The lack of military and individual residue indicates that any withdrawal was orderly and planned.

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b. JIM BOWIE operations will be covered in the following phases in this after action report:

- (1) Phase I - 7-12 March - 1/9 Cav deception operations in the Suoi Ca Valley.
- (2) Phase II, 13-16 Mar. 1st and 3d Brigade operations in the Kon Truck base area.
- (3) Phase III, 17 - 22 March. 1st and 3d Bde operations in the NV extension of the area of operations.
- (4) Phase IV, 23 - 28 Mar. 3d Brigade operations in the upper Song Ba Valley.

NOTE: Areas of operation corresponding to the four phases above are shown on Overlay 1.

c. Phase I, 7 - 12 March. 1/9 Cav conducted deception operations in the Suoi Ca Valley with the objective of misleading the enemy as to the Division's area of operations. 1/9 Cav operations consisted of landings of rifle platoons and reconnaissance operations. These activities were supported by aerial rocket artillery and Psy War activities. One loudspeaker mission of 150 minutes with the theme "Don't Fire at Aircraft" and six leaflet missions (270,000 leaflets) were used in support of this phase. There were no friendly losses during this phase. Scattered ground to air firings and one sighting are depicted on the intelligence incident overlay (Inclosure 1).

d. Phase II, 13 - 16 March.

(1) 13 March.

(a) 1st Brigade - GENERAL: Following a two hour delay due to ground fog within the objective area the Brigade conducted simultaneous air assaults at 1000 hours to seize battalion Objectives COLUMBUS and PHENIX CITY. Upon seizure of these objectives, artillery was moved into the area to support the landings of the third battalion into blocking positions to the north and east. At 1300 hours brigade units commenced to sweep to the north from PHENIX CITY and to the west from COLUMBUS to locate enemy personnel and installations within the operational area. The brigade forward C<sup>o</sup> departed base camp at 1355 and was operational within the objective area by 1425. 1/8 Cav: At 0936 hours B Company lifted off the GOLF COURSE at Camp RADCLIFF and air assaulted LZ COLUMBUS NORTH (BR 653875) at 1000 hours. There was no enemy contact on the ground and the LZ was reported secure at 1007. B Battery, 2/19 Arty began movement from the base camp at 1020 to COLUMBUS NORTH. At 1025 hours C and D Companies departed the GOLF COURSE with C Company closing into blocking position GUSSETTA (BR 637899) by 1050 hours and D Company deploying around COLUMBUS as a security force. ARA and gun ships from 1/9 Cav engaged two automatic weapons vicinity LZ GUSSETTA with unknown results. A Company lifted off at 1215 hours and landed at COLUMBUS SOUTH (BR 654864) closing at 1250. At this time the battalion had completely closed into the objective area and the battalion CP was established at COLUMBUS NORTH. At 1325 hours A and B Companies began a sweep to the west and by nightfall were located at BR 640854 and BR 633865 respectively. C Company established platoon ambush sites along trails in the vicinity of GUSSETTA. 2/8 Cav: One platoon of B Company lifted off the GOLF COURSE at 0930 hours and air assaulted

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LZ PHENIX CITY (BR 629820) at 0951. The platoon experienced no enemy contact and rapidly set to work improving the LZ enabling the remainder of the company to land at 1000 hours. D Company followed B Company into the LZ beginning at 1010 hours and assumed the mission of securing the area from B Company. A and C Companies departed the GOLF COURSE at 0930 hours and air assaulted LZ NAIL (BR 643824) with A Company closing at 1055 and C Company closing at 1100 hours. The battalion CP closed PHENIX CITY at 1124 followed by the final elements of A Battery 2/19 Arty which closed that position at 1240 hours. The recon platoon reported closing blocking position SAW (BR 640843) at 1250 hours having landed earlier at a small LZ a short distance to the north. B Company at 1112 hours began a sweep from PHENIX CITY to blocking position FLIERS (BR 623834) reaching that position at 1920 hours. Enroute the company encountered 5 VC and following a brief firefight estimated 1 VC KIA. At 1300 hours A and C Companies began a coordinated sweep to the north toward the blocking positions established by B Company and the recon platoon. One platoon from C Company remained on blocking position DRILL (BR 642819). By nightfall A Company was located vicinity BR 639827 and C Company was located vicinity BR 642827. 1/12 Cav: A Company lifted off the GOLF COURSE at 1225 hours and closed LZ DUCK (BR 670919) at 1247 hours. B Company departed the GOLF COURSE at 1330 and closed LZ QUAIL (BR 693840) at 1349 hours. The company minus remained at QUAIL to secure the battalion CP which closed at 1700 while one platoon from the company moved overland to blocking position 4 closing at 1710 hours. C Company departed the GOLF COURSE at 1415 hours and landed approximately 1000 meters east of blocking position 5 (BR 667823). From this location the company moved overland to the blocking position closing at 1655 hours. D Company landed vicinity BR 702980 at 1350 hours and moved overland to blocking position 3 (BR 690885). The company closed the position at 1640 hours. The battalion reported negative enemy contact during the day.

(b) 3d Bde - The first elements of the 2/5 Cav began to move at 131300 March 1966. Companies C and D and the Forward CP air assaulted to Position DOUG to secure the Brigade CP and B Battery, 1/21 Artillery. Company A air assaulted to Position NEW REDBOY vicinity BR 611832 to secure A Battery, 1/21 Artillery. Company B remained at Camp RUDCLIFF as the Brigade reserve on 30 minute alert. The 1/7 Cav began an air assault at 131521 March 1966; with Company A moving into LZ 3 vicinity 576907, and the remainder of the Battalion moving to LZ 1 vicinity 525894. No enemy contact was made that day. The 1/21 Artillery CP moved to the Division forward refueling point vicinity Vinh Thanh CIDG Camp on 13 March 1966.

(2) 14 March.

(a) 1st Brigade - GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued to utilize one battalion in blocking positions to the north and east of the area of operation while two battalions continued coordinated sweeps toward established blocking positions SAW and CUSSETA. 1/8 Cav: At 0730 hours A and C companies continued their joint sweep to the west and by nightfall were located vicinity BR 625854 and BR 625865. Five VC with weapons were observed and engaged by artillery with unknown results. C Company remained at CUSSETA conducting platoon size patrols around that location. D Company and the battalion CP remained at COLUMBUS NORTH. During the day elements of the battalion located a ten-hut fortified village at BR 600855 and at BR 645885 discovered the body of a VC who had been killed by mortar fire the previous day. 2/8 Cav: B Company remained on blocking position FLIERS. Elements of the company fired on an armed VC vicinity BR 623833 but were unable to locate the body after finding blood in the area. A and C Companies continued their push against blocking positions FLIERS and SAW closing at sunset. At BR 638838 a recently occupied battalion rest area was found and nearby at BR 640837 two dead VC armed with M-1 carbines were discovered in an area where twenty bunkers had been constructed. A continued search of the area during the afternoon uncovered one VC whose arm had been blown off the preceding day by artillery

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fire. Additional caves and a fresh grave containing a VC body were also found in the area. 1/12 Cav: All units of the battalion conducted local patrols from their blocking positions with the exception of A Company. Blocking position 2 was considered to be too inaccessible and the company was ordered to a new location. The company was in the progress of moving and spent the night vicinity BR 683893. A Battery, 1/30th Arty (155mm) was air lifted into blocking position 5 closing at 1440 hours. C Company was assigned the additional mission of securing the battery. Throughout the day the battalion reported negative enemy contact.

(b) 3d Brigade - At 140830 March 1966 the 1/7 Cav began movement toward blocking positions in the North and West of the Brigade sector. At 140937 March 1966 the 2/7 Cavalry began an air assault into LZ A vicinity BR 568820 closing at 141155 March 1966. The Battalion immediately began movement toward blocking positions in the West and South of the Brigade sector. C Battery, 1/21 Arty, moved to LZ 1 during the morning of 14 March 1966. The 2/5 Cav reconnaissance platoon made contact with a small force of VC, coordinates BR 617890, in the morning resulting in 1 VC KIA and 1 VCC.

(3) 15 March.

(a) 1st Brigade - GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued to employ one battalion as a blocking force while the second battalion completed a two company sweep and the third battalion began search and destroy operations in previously uncovered areas of their sector. 1/8 Cav: The battalion continued a two company sweep in sector with A and B Company pushing to the north against blocking position CUSSEMA. At 1021 hours A Company was air lifted to LZ ROPE (BR 615870). Upon closing ROPE at 1036 hours the company continued to push to the north with B Company on its east flank. Both units discovered numerous trails and huts during the day but reported negative enemy contact. By 1430 hours the companies had reached their objective (CUSSEMA) and linked up with C Company. Prior to the link up of the companies C Company had conducted extensive local patrolling in the area surrounding CUSSEMA with no significant sightings reported. Commencing at 1506 hours B Company was extracted from CUSSEMA and closed LZ TRIG BR (BR 645885) at 1530 at which time A Company was air lifted into the LZ closing at 1625 hours. The battalion CP remained at COLUMBUS NORTH with D Company conducting security patrols out to 1500 meters from the CP area. 2/8 Cav: At 0940 A Company lifted off from SAW and air assaulted LZ PICK (BR 640828) closing at 1018. The company dispatched patrols out to 1500 meters with negative contact. By 1530 the patrols had returned to PICK and the company was extracted and closed into a LZ vicinity BR 487794 from where they swept to BR 645803 prior to dark. The company discovered 30 - 40 bunkers at BR 643834. Throughout the day C Company and the recon platoon swept east from SAW to BR 648842. Vicinity BR 648844, the unit killed a VC armed with a pistol. Two other VC were fired on vicinity BR 648838 and blood stains found in the area indicated at least 1 VC WIA. The recon platoon captured 1 VCS in black shirt and trousers wearing a NVG pistol belt at BR 649842. B Company in the meantime swept to the west with no contact reported and remained overnight vicinity BR 625837. At BR 626838 the unit located a possible hospital site. Bunkers in the area had been covered over and the odor in the air indicated they may have been utilized as graves. Additional foxholes and bunkers were discovered vicinity BR 628839 and BR 631839. 1/12 Cav: The battalion remained in their assigned blocking positions and conducted numerous small unit patrols in sector. A Company closed into their new blocking position at BR 695895 at 1141. All elements of the battalion reported negative enemy contact

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(10)  
during the period.

(b) On 15 March 1966 1/7 Cav and 2/7 Cav began platoon sized saturation patrolling in the 3d Brigade sector. The only contact that day was sniper fire in LZ 1 and at BR 557801. Two friendly WLAs from C Company, 2/7 Cav, resulted from action in the second location. The Battalion discovered and destroyed a recently evacuated VC rest camp at BR 476826 and a training camp at BR 557801. The 2/5 Cav, less A Company and Reconnaissance Platoon, was moved to Division Base Camp and attached to the 2d Brigade. A Company and Reconnaissance Platoon continued to secure Position DUFF and REDBOY.

(4) 16 March.

(a) 1st Brigade - GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued a two battalion search and destroy operations and utilized the third battalion as a blocking force to the north and east. At 1020 hours B Troop 1/9 Cav air landed the troop rifle platoon at BR 720827 to check an area from which aircraft had been receiving small arms fire. After searching villages and tunnels in the area the platoon picked up one VCS and were extracted at 1238 hours. 1/8 Cav: B Company continued to search for the enemy from TRIGGER overland to vicinity BR 655895 from where they were extracted at 1701 hours and closed COLUMBUS NORTH at 1758 hours. A Company remained at TRIGGER as a reserve prepared for attachment to the 1/12 Cav in the event that the FFORCEV reserve battalion was committed. C Company remained at CUSSALA and conducted platoon size patrols out to 2000 meters with no contact reported. At BR 643892 the company discovered a platoon size area with huts, a water tower, and 100 pounds of rice all of which were destroyed. At 1600 the company was extracted and closed COLUMBUS NORTH at 1711 hours. The recon platoon conducted a sweep from COLUMBUS NORTH to BR 668875 from where they were extracted at 1355 and closed back into COLUMBUS NORTH at 1424 hours. D Company continued to provide security for the CP elements at COLUMBUS. 2/8 Cav: A Company continued to search from BR 640797 to BR 638798. At BR 631789 the company discovered 3 huts with warm stoves and cooking utensils. B Company conducted local patrols around its patrol base during the day and remained at BR 625837 during the night. C Company continued to sweep overland toward HILL which was occupied by one platoon from the company. Vicinity BR 657841 the company located a platoon size rest area and were fired upon by one VC who escaped. D Company continued to secure the battalion CP and artillery positions at HANIX CITY. 1/12 Cav: The battalion continued to occupy blocking positions and provide the FFORCEV Reserve/Reaction Force. The battalion provided a company as a standby reaction force for B Troop, 1/9 Cav during its operation to the east. At BR 685811 a C Company ambush site received four rounds of sniper fire but was unable to locate the sniper.

(b) 3d Brigade - On 16 March 1966 the Brigade continued small unit saturation patrolling in the area of operations with sporadic enemy small arms fire but no significant contact.

(5) Phase II actions are illustrated on Overlay 2.

e. Phase III 17 - 22 Mar.

(1) When it became apparent that no significant forces or major headquarters would be found in the Kon Truck area Division planned to shift operations to the Northwest in an attempt to regain contact. The 1st Bde was relocated about 30 KM to the NW of their Phase I area and oriented to conduct operations generally toward the SE - this relocation was coordinated with a reorientation of the 3d Brigade generally to the NW.

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(2) 1st Brigade actions during this phase are summarized as follows -

(a) 170001 - 172400 Mar. GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued to occupy blocking positions and conduct search and destroy operations in sector. One battalion supported by two artillery batteries air assaulted into the new area of operations assigned under OPORD JIM BOWLE-NORTHWEST. 1/8 Cav: At 1250 hours C Company was airlifted from COLUMBUS SOUTH and air assaulted LZ TARZAN (BS 481073) at 1307 hours. No enemy contact was encountered and the company closed at 1336. B Company and the battalion CP followed C Company into the LZ closing by 1456. D Company was next lifted into TARZAN and closed the LZ at 1524. A Company completed the battalion move when it was lifted from TRIGGER and closed TARZAN at 1650 hours. Earlier in the day at 1345, B and C Batteries 2/19 Arty commenced movement to TARZAN. Both batteries and the battalion CP closed prior to 1715 hours. 2/8 Cav: A Company remained at their patrol base vicinity BR 638798 and during the day conducted patrols out to 1500 meters from the base area. B Company conducted a sweep from BR 623832 to BR 633831 where they remained at a PZ. C Company continued to sweep from BR 662840 at LZ PICK (BR 640833). At 1345 an additional platoon of C Company was airlifted from DRILL to the C Company location at PICK. D Company continued to secure the battalion CP and artillery battery at PHENIX CITY. 1/12 Cav: The battalion continued to occupy assigned blocking positions within sector. At 0600 the battalion was relieved of the FFORCEV Reserve/Reaction Force mission by 1/8 Cav. C Company on Objective 5 received 20 rounds of small arms fire from the north at 2000 hours. There was no other contact reported during the day.

(b) 180001 - 182400 Mar. GENERAL: The 1st Brigade utilized one battalion to secure the brigade combat base at LZ TARZAN and provide the FFORCEV Reserve/Reaction Force. The other two battalions air assaulted into their assigned sectors, and commenced search and destroy operations in an effort to locate the enemy forces which were suspected to be in the region. 1/8 Cav: The battalion continued to secure LZ TARZAN, which included two artillery batteries, the brigade CP which closed at 1600 hours, and forward refueling facilities. B Company conducted a sweep from LZ TARZAN to BS 498075 where a VC company was reported to be guarding a supply installation. The company searched the area but was unable to find any indications of enemy activity and returned to TARZAN. 2/8 Cav: A Company was airlifted from BR 640797 and assaulted LZ ROBIN (BS 428024) at 0903 hours. By 0935 hours the company had closed and reported negative enemy contact. At 0925 hours B Company was air lifted from AL PICK and assaulted LZ PEACOCK (BS 429021) closing at 1018 hours. C Company was then air landed at LZ ROBIN closing at 1140. The battalion CP and A Battery 2/19th Arty followed C Company into ROBIN closing by 1240 hours. The recon platoon air assaulted LZ WREN (BS 421026) closing at 0936 hours. C Company began a sweep to the northeast from ROBIN and discovered an estimated regimental size assembly area vicinity BS 429023 with 50 - 60 two man foxholes, warm ovens, slogans and pamphlets. Suspecting the withdrawal route was to the north, B Company was airlifted from PEACOCK to LZ SPARROW (BS 424040) closing at 1227 hours. All units of the battalion continued to search for the enemy throughout the afternoon and by nightfall had returned to the vicinity of the LZ's which they had utilized during the initial assaults. The recon platoon had swept from LZ WREN to PEACOCK where they remained for the night. 1/12 Cav: C Company air assaulted LZ SPADES (BS 458035) at 0848 hours and closed by 0950 hours. The remainder of the battalion followed C Company into LZ SPADES with D Company closing at 1015 hours, A Company closing at 1150, and the battalion CP and B Company closing 1056. D Company remained at SPADES to secure the battalion CP while the line companies moved out from

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(12) SPADES to conduct search and destroy operations within assigned sectors. At sunset A Company was located vicinity BS 472027, B Company vicinity LZ CLUBS (BS 441028), C Company vicinity LZ HEARTS (BS 460060) and the battalion recon platoon at BS 469033. 1/9 Cav: Following the departure of C Company 1/12 Cav from Objective 5 (LZ DOVE) the rifle platoon from B Troop assumed responsibility for the 155mm battery located there. At 0390 hours a CH-54 was hit by small arms fire while lifting out an artillery piece. The helicopter landed at LZ COLIN BUS SOUTH and was repaired and continued its mission. Scouts of B Troop checked the area and one of their ships was also hit by ground fire. The rifle platoon of the troop swept the area where the fire had originated but the sniper was not found. The 155mm battery completed its move to the 3d Brigade sector and B Troop closed TARZAN at 1755 hours.

(c) 190001 - 192400 Mar. GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued search and destroy operations within its assigned area of operations with two battalions. The third battalion continued to secure LZ TARZAN and provide the EFFORCEV Reserve/Reaction Force. 1/8 Cav: The battalion continued to secure LZ TARZAN and provide the reserve/reaction force. Platoon size patrols were conducted around the area. Two patrols from A Company terminated at a pick up zone vicinity BS 498058 from where the patrols were extracted at 1540 hours and closed TARZAN at 1603 hours. 2/8 Cav: At 0830 hours the recon platoon lifted off PLOCOCK and air assaulted LZ STARLING (BS 390000) at 0840 hours. From STARLING the platoon moved overland to PINCH (BR 385995) searching for major trails enroute. A Company lifted off ROBIN at 0901 and assaulted LZ PENQUIN (BS 399060). The company then began to sweep to the southwest toward QUAIL (BS 380029) and by nightfall were located vicinity BS 393048. B Company continued to sweep their assigned sector and established a company base vicinity BS 427053 for the night. The battalion CP, C and D Companies remained at ROBIN during the day. There was no enemy contact reported. 1/12 Cav: D Company and the battalion CP remained at SPADES. A Company swept west and then south closing into LZ DIAMOND (BS 456011) at 1150 hours. B Company conducted patrols vicinity LZ HEARTS and at 1600 hours were extracted from HEARTS and closed into DIAMOND at 1700. The battalion recon platoon moved from their location and swept to LZ SPADES closing at 1415 hours.

(d) 200001 - 202400 Mar. GENERAL: The 1st Brigade continued Operation JEN BOWIE-NORTHWEST with one battalion continuing to secure TARZAN, one battalion conducting search and destroy operations, and the 3rd battalion air lifted to AN KHE. 1/8 Cav: The battalion continued to secure the brigade combat base by saturation patrolling around the LZ and provided the reserve/reaction force. 2/8 Cav: At 0900 hours the recon platoon was air lifted from PINCH and closed into ROBIN. A Company continued their sweep to the southwest and closed position QUAIL at 1500 hours. At 1530 hours the company was extracted and closed into ROBIN at 1630 hours. B Company conducted platoon size patrols throughout the day from a company base vic BS 437053. At 1350 hours the company was airlifted to ROBIN closing at 1635 hours. At 1002 hours C Company lifted off ROBIN and air assaulted LZ EAGLE (BR 455973) at 1007 and established a patrol base. Platoon size patrols were conducted out to one kilometer with no contact. The company was extracted from EAGLE and closed ROBIN at 1435 hours. 1/12 Cav: At 0815 hours B Company lifted off SPADES and air assaulted LZ PASS (BS 493040) at 0820 hours. The company swept south along a creek and then returned to PASS. At 1445 hours the company began air movement to AN KHE and closed at 1730 hours. At 0830 hours A and C Companies began search and destroy sweeps from DIAMOND to Objective BLACK (BS 473000) and JACK (BR 467986) respectively. Both companies reached their objectives and returned to DIAMOND. A Company began extraction at 1253 hours and closed AN KHE at 1427 hours. C Company began movement at 1400 hours and closed AN KHE at 1630 hours. At 1800 hours the

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battalion C and D Company lifted off SPADIS and closed AN KHE at 1830 hours. B/1/9 Cav: The troop remained in general support of the brigade. At 1007 hours the rifle platoon was air landed vic BS 555070 to search for a possible VC radio transmitter. They moved overland to a PZ vic BS 570078 from where they were extracted at 1205 hours with no contact.

(e) 210001 - 212400 Mar 66. GENERAL: The 1st Brigade concluded Operation JIM BOWIE-NORTHWEST by deploying 2 battalions and supporting artillery to CAMP RADCLIFF. 1/8 Cav: The battalion continued their security mission of THAZAN by conducting saturation patrols. At 1505 hours the battalion was relieved of the EFFORCEV Reserve/Reaction Force missions by the 2/8 Cav. At 1227 hours the battalion commenced deployment by OH-1D and OH-47 from THAZAN to AN KHE with D Company closing at 1545 hours, C Company closing at 1545 hours and B Company closing at 1654 hours. A Company and elements of the battalion CP remained at THAZAN securing the area until the last elements of 2/19th Arty cleared. The artillery cleared at 1925 hours and A Company and the battalion CP extracted closing CAMP RADCLIFF at 2020 hours. 2/8 Cav: The battalion commenced movement to AN KHE at 0926 hours by OH-1D and OH-47 from ROBIN. The battalion closed CAMP RADCLIFF at 1505 hours and assumed the reserve/reaction mission from the 1/8 Cav. 1/12 Cav: The battalion remained at CAMP RADCLIFF and conducted care and maintenance of equipment.

(3) 3d Brigade actions 17 - 22 Mar follow:

(a) On 17 Mar 66 the 2/7 Cav air assaulted into LZ's Y (BR 535929), Z (BR 500968), and V (BR 544960) on the East of the Suoi Kon River.

(b) During the period 17 - 22 Mar 66 the Brigade conducted extensive patrolling in the area of operations. Enemy contact during this period was limited to sniper fire and harassment from VC forces of squad size or smaller. At 171535 March 1966, B Company, 1/7 Cav, killed one VC and captured one VCC at BR 522954. At 190935 March 1966 D Company, 1/7 Cav, using a daylight ambush, killed a sniper that had been harassing the Battalion in LZ 1 for several days. On 201645 March 66 Company A, 1/7 Cav, made contact with an unknown number of VC at BR 582872. At 201120 March 66 Company B 2/7 Cav, made contact with an unknown number of VC at BR 538988 killing 3 VC and suffering 2 friendly W/L. At 201320 hours contact was again made at BR 537997 resulting in 1 VC KL. At 211545 March 66 Company B, 2/7 Cav, made contact with an estimated 5 VC at BR 523995 killing one and capturing his weapon. At 221520 March 66 Company A and Reconnaissance Platoon, 2/5 Cav were released to the 2d Brigade and replaced by Company B, 2/12 Cav.

(c) During the period 13 - 22 Mar 66 frequent intercepts of enemy radio transmissions were made and patrols were dispatched to capture or destroy the enemy equipment and operators; however, the patrols were unable to locate any transmitters.

(4) Unit locations and movements during Phase III are depicted on Overlay 3.

f. Phase IV 23 - 28 Mar.

(1) The final phase of JIM BOWIE was conducted by the 3d Brigade. Operations during this phase were initiated vicinity the abandoned USSF/CIDG camp at Kannack (BR 422647). There had been repeated instances of firing at Division aircraft in this area prior to the start of JIM BOWIE and there was a possibility that elements of the VC 407th Battalion would be contacted.

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(2) 3d Brigade operations are summarized as follows:

(a) On 23 March 66 the Brigade moved to a new area of operations in the Division TAOR encompassed generally by coordinates BR 2953, BR 4270, BR 3069, and BR 4960. Movement commenced at 0815 hours when the 2/7 Cav secured an artillery position at LZ GOLD, vicinity Bk 364596, for C Battery, 1/21 Arty. The 1/7 Cav then began air assault operations into multiple LZ's in Areas ZOLA I and II. Company B made contact with a small number of VC vicinity BR 310655 at 231052 March, killing 3 VC. Following the movement of the 1/7 Cav, the 2/7 Cav air assaulted into area HIRPITY using 10 LZ's. The Battalion immediately began patrolling in the area but made no enemy contact during the day.

(b) At 231000 March 66 the Brigade S-3, in the TOC Ship, captured a VCG at coordinates Bk 537926. This VC had read the instructions on a safe conduct pass and was observed standing on a bald hill, weapon slung muzzle down, waving a towel at passing aircraft.

(c) Company B, 1/7 Cav, began receiving mortar and small arms fire, vicinity BR 320657, at 231905 March 66 that continued intermittently from the North until 241445 March 66. The enemy attack was estimated to be a reinforced squad supported by mortars. Company A was airlifted to support Company B and artillery and MIA were employed in support; however, contact could not be gained, and no estimate of enemy casualties could be made. Two friendly casualties were suffered from enemy grenades.

(d) A CH-47 was damaged by enemy fire in LZ 1 at 231238 March 1966 and was not extracted until 241230 March 1966. The CH-47 was secured by a platoon of the 1/7 Cav. Battery B, 1/21 Arty, and Company B, 2/12 Cav remained at Position DOUG until 241430 March 1966 providing fire support. Beginning at 241430 March 1966 Company B, 2/7 Cav, moved to join the brigade CP at Position PIRAKA, vicinity BR 422647, and Battery B, 1/21 Arty, moved to Position GOLD. A CH-47 was hit by enemy fire while landing at Position GOLD and crashed and burned killing one man from the 1/21 Arty.

(e) On 25 March 1966, the Brigade continued saturation patrolling of the area of operations with no contact. Company A, 1/7 Cav, sustained one MIA from a sniper, vicinity 309659, at 250941 March 1966.

(f) On 26 March 1966 the Brigade continued OPERATION JIM BOWIE II with the 1/7 Cav air assaulting into areas ZOLA III and IV, followed by the 2/7 Cavalry into Area HOP. The 1/21 Arty moved firing batteries into Area BUFFALO, coordinates BR 497550, Area HIRPITY, coordinated Bk 370461 and the Base area. The 2/7 Cav left small stay behind ambush patrols in area HIRPITY. The ambush in Position GOLD made contact with 5 VC; however, it was sprung prematurely and did not achieve the desired effect. On 26 and 27 March 1966 the Brigade conducted small unit saturation, patrolling in the area of operations with no contact.

(g) Beginning at 230800 March 1966 the Brigade moved to the Division Base Area. Stay behind patrols were also used when departing Area HOP with no contact. OPERATION JIM BOWIE terminated at 281615 March 1966.

(h) Phase IV actions are illustrated on Overlay 4.

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12. RESULTS.FRIENDLY

KIA - 3

WIA - 377 (NOTE 1)

EQUIPMENT LOST: 1 - CH-47

ENEMY

KIA (BC) - 27

KIA (Est) - 3

WIA (Est) - 7

VCC - 17

VCS - 9

Ralliers - 2

Individual Weapons - 19

Flare Gun - 1

Ammunition:

Grenades - 47

Mortar - 2

57 RR - 6

Mines - 6

Other Materials:

PA Set - 1

Telegraph Machine - 1

Telephones - 1

Rice - 12 tons

Corn - 1 ton

Facilities:

Training Camps Destroyed - 4

1 120-bed hospital destroyed

NOTE 1: The WIA total resulted almost exclusively from punji stakes of the simple type stuck in the ground at about a 30 to 45 degree angle. Over half these wounds were treated by company aidmen with no evacuation beyond company level. Only seven punji wounds required evacuation beyond Division.

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS.

a. Operation JIM BOWIE was supported by the 1st and 3d FSE's from the Division base at An Khe using air resupply out to a maximum distance of 65 KM. The 1st and 3d FSE's were supported directly from Support Command with the An Khe GS/DS Battalion providing backup support. Reports from the committed brigades indicated that the support provided during JIM BOWIE was the most complete and responsive since the Division has been in Vietnam.

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(16) b. Support Command established an emergency aircraft refueling and rearming point near the Vinh Thanh Valley CIDG Camp to conserve "on station" time for armed aircraft over the operational area. When this point was closed out on 20 Mar similar points were established at LZ COLUMBUS and LZ TARZAN.

c. A light contact team (1 1/4 ton w/trailer, 1 M274 mule with shop set and 6 personnel) was placed with the 1st Bde at LZ TARZAN on a trial basis and favorable results were obtained.

d. The following quantities of supplies were delivered by air resupply in support of Operation JIM BOWIE:

Class I	- 179.7 tons
Class III & IIIA	- 94,834 gallons
Class V	- 446.5 tons

The supplies listed above were delivered primarily by helicopter. Some artillery ammunition was delivered by CV-2 using medium velocity air drop and LOLEX to supplement helicopter delivery. The good results obtained by CV-2 delivery indicates that increased use of this method will be made during future operations.

e. Medical evacuation support requirements were met by two UH-1D medical evacuation helicopters. Eight casualties were evacuated on medical helicopters. No special problems were encountered other than difficulty in communicating with ground units equipped with the PRC-25 due to the steep hills and the requirement to operate from confined areas.

f. Reliable radio and teletype communications were maintained between the Division base and brigades in the forward areas for both operational and administrative traffic.

#### 14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES.

a. A new method of sling loading 105mm howitzers and accompanying ammunition load was refined and used as a standard technique during JIM BOWIE. This new technique involves suspending the ammunition beneath the 105mm howitzer as a second external load. The new system is advantageous for displacements of up to 35 - 40 KM in that the ammunition is placed ready for use and the CH-47 is able to depart the LZ with reduced ground stay time. This sling technique is illustrated in sketches attached as Incl 3.

b. Due to the great number of separate squad and platoon operations and the rugged nature of the terrain it was found that small units could not always locate themselves with enough accuracy for fire control purposes. When this occurred a "No-Fire Box" was established around the last reported location of the unit using lapse time and rate of march as the basis for establishing the dimensions of the box. This fire control measure was maintained in effect until an accurate location of the unit was determined.

c. Natural LZ's were virtually non-existent in the Phase II - III JIM BOWIE areas. Helicopter landing zones and CP locations were frequently established on ridge lines and hill tops. These locations were advantageous in reducing security requirements. Under these conditions the 8th Engineer Battalion was able to use the TD-340 dozer for helipad construction. This light dozer is moved by CH-47 and accomplished as much clearing as an entire engineer platoon with hand tools. Over 20 helipads were constructed during JIM BOWIE using one TD-340 dozer.

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d. The KYB-6/TSEC crypto sets had been introduced to the Division during the Bong Son Campaign in February 66. However this device was fully used for transmission of classified messages during JIM BOWIE. Highly satisfactory results were obtained in reducing transmission and response time to classified messages.

## 15. PSY WAR AND CIVIL AFFAIRS ACTIVITY.

## a. Psychological Warfare.

(1) Personnel in the JIM BOWIE area were expected to be VC/NVA members of organized units and possibly a few local tribesmen engaged in "slash and burn" agriculture in support of the VC/NVA. There were no cultural features in the entire area except a few small villages in the extreme western portion of the Kin Song Valley area.

(2) The Psy War organization and resources coordinated by the Div Psy Op Officer for JIM BOWIE included:

(a) 1st Cav Div JUSPAC representative provided professional advisory services and interpreter capability. This representative has also furnished transportation for tape recording and daily delivery of leaflet materials.

(b) The 245th Psy Op Co (I Field Force Vietnam) provided leaflets and ground loudspeaker teams.

(c) The 5th Air Commando Squadron (USAF) provided U-10 loudspeaker aircraft, tape recorders, and selected tapes. All leaflet drops were conducted by this unit.

(d) USSF/CIDG camps provided local interpreters and evaluated themes projected for appeals to tribal groups.

## (3) Psy War support for JIM BOWIE included:

(a) Thirty-nine loudspeaker missions (57 hours of speaker time) were conducted in Vietnamese and Bahnar. Tape themes included "Don't Fire on Aircraft", general Chieu Hoi instructions and specific area Chieu Hoi instructions. A variety of high quality general Chieu Hoi tapes in north and south Vietnamese dialects have become available for use. This Division combines use of the general Chieu Hoi tapes with specific rally instructions in conjunction with the local tactical situation. The national Chieu Hoi tape program has been reproduced in tribal language by this Division.

(b) Forty-three leaflet missions (1,675,000 leaflets) were conducted during JIM BOWIE. Themes included Choice of Life, Don't Fire on Aircraft, Safe Conduct Passes, specific Chieu Hoi instructions, Good Treatment at the Hands of the GVN, and the Duc Co Poem.

(c) Rally themes used during JIM BOWIE are attached as Inclosure 4.

(d) Division experience based on interrogation and voluntary statements by ralliers is that promises of good treatment, food, and medicine are favorably received. It has been determined that there is a need to continually emphasize that the rallier will not be harmed and that themes should avoid ideas that could be associated with "surrender". Loudspeakers are regarded as more effective media than leaflets.

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(18) (4) Ground loudspeaker teams were available to support JIM BOWIE but the opportunity for their use did not arise due to the absence of major contact and the lack of civilian population.

(5) A novel use of the aerial loudspeaker was to reestablish contact with a patrol whose radio became inoperative. Within 25 minutes after starting to broadcast the ground unit was able to disclose the location to the aircraft and contact was restored by immediate delivery of an operable radio.

b. Civil Affairs. No significant civil affairs activities were conducted in support of JIM BOWIE due to the absence of a civilian population.

#### 16. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS.

##### a. Summary.

(1) The hoped for objective of contact with significant VC forces or major headquarters installations was not achieved during JIM BOWIE. IPW reports, documents, and observations by friendly units indicated that VC elements had conducted an orderly and planned withdrawal from the area several days prior to the start of JIM BOWIE. Food stocks and facilities uncovered in the area were more characteristic of facilities to support the movement of groups through the area rather than permanent occupation by large forces or major headquarters. No major trail was found in the Kon Truck area. The multiple small trails that did exist had a primary North-South orientation.

(2) Despite the light contact and inability to locate major installations there were significant benefits from conduct of the operation. The experience and training gained by operations in terrain as difficult as any expected to be encountered in Viet Nam will assist future operations in comparable areas. It is felt that only an airmobile division could have covered the large area within the time allocated. The thorough coverage of the area by platoon and squad sized ground elements has eliminated speculations that the area contained a base for major VC units.

##### b. Lessons Learned.

(1) The TD-340 dozer delivered by CH-47 is effective at clearing LZ's on hilltops and ridge lines. A single dozer can perform as well as an engineer platoon with hand tools.

(2) Hilltop positions were advantageous for command posts and artillery battery positions due to the improved communication and increased security resulting from these positions.

(3) A problem was encountered in delivering fuel and water bags to LZ's. Due to the steep terrain and slopes prevalent on most LZ's the bags had a tendency to roll and endanger personnel in the immediate area. It was determined that units must have "chock crews" ready to receive bags under these conditions.

(4) The double sling load method of displacing 105mm howitzers and ammunition illustrated in Inclosure 3 has proven to be most suitable for movements up to 35 - 40 KM. This technique places the ammunition in a ready to use location with respect to the howitzer location and reduces CH-47 ground time on the LZ. For longer range displacements the increased drag of the external load would offset the advantages of double slinging.

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(5) Outstanding responsiveness and economy of effort resulted from supporting JIM BOWIE from the Division Base. It was generally accepted that 65 KM radius is the outer limit for support from the Division base.

(6) Deficiencies of the AN/PRC-6 radios were even more pronounced during JIM BOWIE than previous operations. The low power output is inadequate to meet requirements of platoon communications when operating in dense vegetation.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

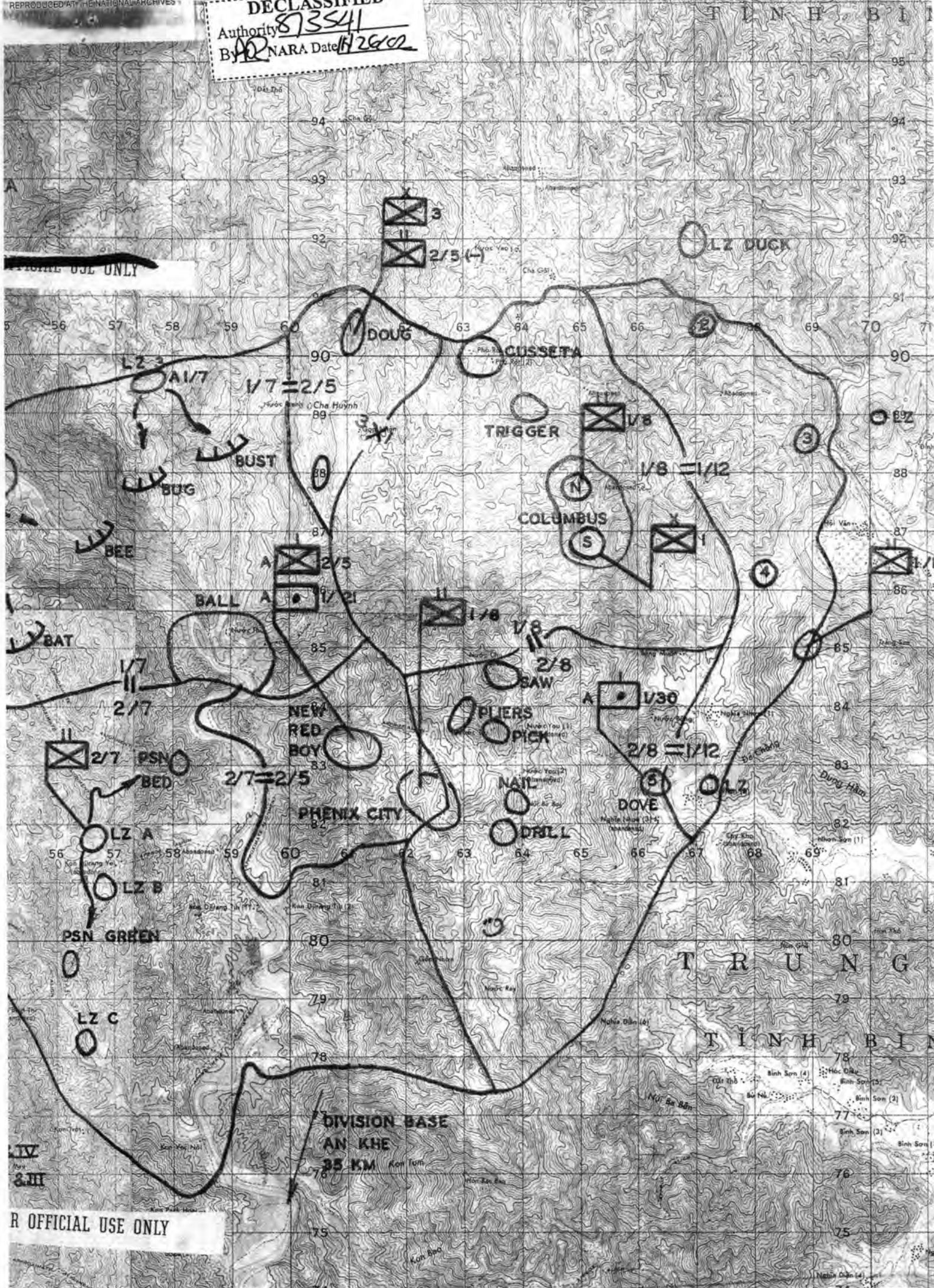


MALCOLM R. BAER  
Lt Col, AGC  
Adjutant General

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DIVISION BASE  
AN KHE  
35 KM

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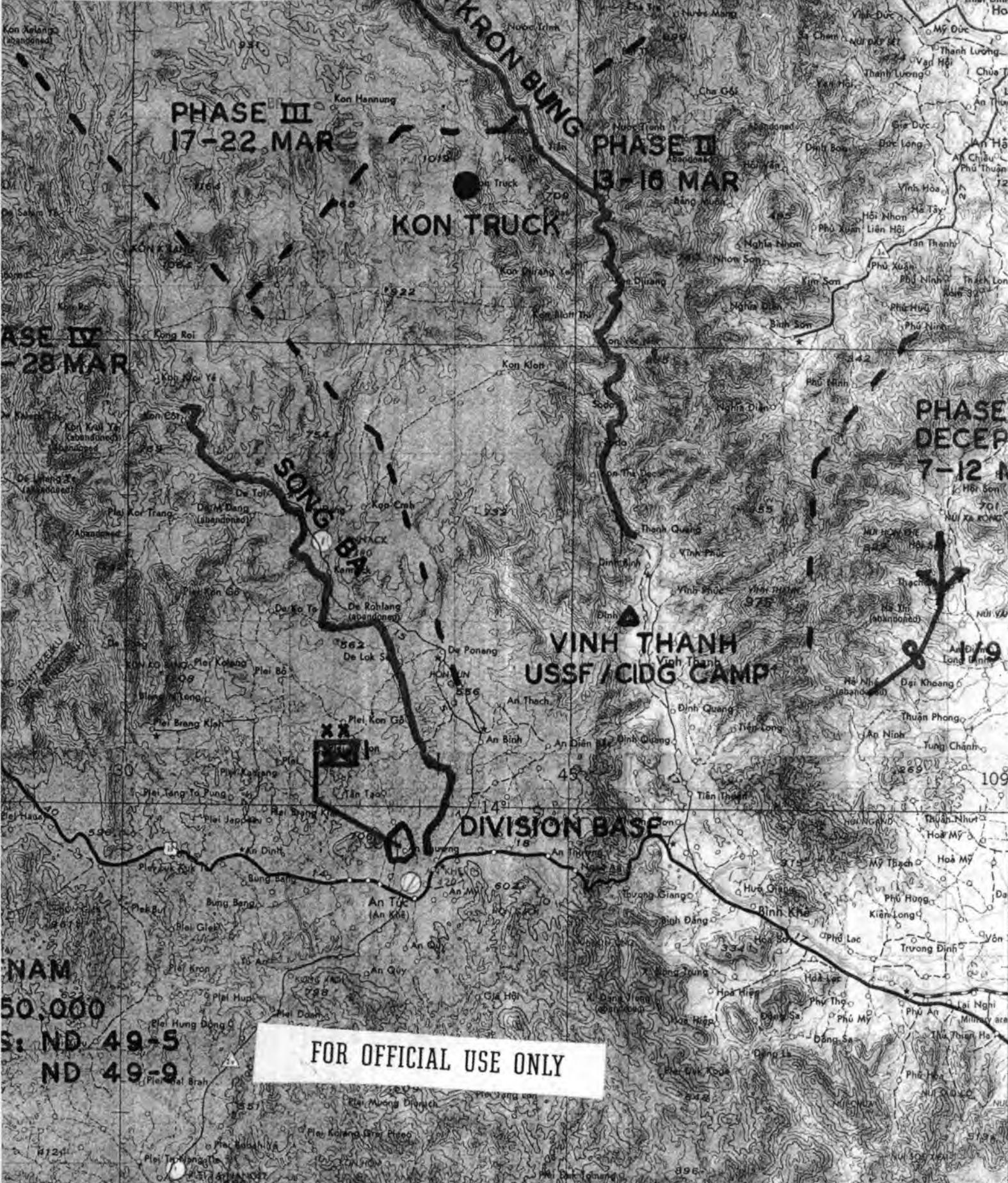
T I N H B I N H

Binh Son (4)  
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ND 49-9