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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
14TH MILITARY HISTORY DETACHMENT  
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
APO San Francisco 96490

AVDAMH

22 January 1970

SUBJECT: Enemy Launched Attack Against FSB IKE on 4 November 1969

Commanding Officer  
2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry  
ATTN: S-3  
1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile)  
APO San Francisco 96490

1. Some discrepancies have arisen between 1st Brigade, Division G-2, and Military History reports submitted concerning captured and destroyed enemy equipment and weapons, enemy killed, and number of supporting artillery rounds fired on the morning of 4 November 1969.

2. Request you check the following figures against you S-3 Staff Journal and submit any corrections, additions, or deletions to this office.

55 KIA, 2 additional bodies found on 7 Nov 69 - Total 57  
10 KBH  
~~33~~ KIA during withdrawl phase  
100 KIA

5 POW

1xRadio  
1xRPG 7  
8xRPG 2  
1x30 Cal MG w/wheels & mounts  
15xRPG  
14xAK 47  
2xK54 Pistols  
15xB41  
13xB40  
4xBangalore Torpedoes  
2xShaped Charges  
1xBox 7.62 Ammo  
95xChicom Grenades  
2xB41 Rocket Launchers  
1xAK 50 (Dest)  
1,000 rds of SA Ammo  
1x120 mm Mortar Round

SAME

3

ie

A/1-77 Arty fired

3 Beehive

42 Firecracker

2 WP

589 HE

126 Illum

762 Rds

3 Sections of Blue Max

Spt Arty Fired 1,011 Rds

2 Shadow Acft

60,000 rounds S/A Expended

4 UH-1 Flare Ships

2-5 Cav 81MM Mortars Fired

1,175 HE

174 WP

284 Illum

1,633 Rds

3. Your cooperation in this matter is greatly appreciated.

*John M Manguso*  
JOHN M MANGUSO  
CPT FA  
Division Historian

Subject: ENEMY ATTACK ON FSB IKE ON 4 NOV. 69

1. The following is a true count of the weapons, ammo, equip, ~~and~~ KIA'S, & POW'S AS a direct result of the attack on FSB IKE 4 NOV. 1969.

2. Captured weapons & equipment, & Body count

a. Weapons:

HK 47	RIFLE	16
RPG-7	RL	3
RPG-2	RL	8
MG-30	CMC	1
<del>AK-50</del>	MG	1 (DEST)
K 54	PISTOLS	2

b. Ammo.

82mm rds	38	B 41	15
RIFLE Grenades	13	B 40	23
		BANGALORE Torpedoes	9
		Shnpe charges	4
		Satchel charges	8
		7.62 MG Ammo	200. rds
		Chicom Grenades	95
		S/A Ammo	1000 rds.

D, EQUIPMENT.  
2. RADIO. 01

C. Body count.

2. KIA 57

6. KBH 10

C. KIA DURING WITHDRAWAL PHASE 33

8. TOTAL - 100

A. POW. 5

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 14TH MILITARY HISTORY DETACHMENT  
 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
 APO San Francisco 96490

AVDAMH

19 January 1970

SUBJECT: The attack on Fire Support Base Ike, 1-70

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

1. Operation: N/A
2. Period Covered: 4 November 1969
3. Location: War Zone C, Tay Ninh Province, III CORPS, RVN
4. Control Headquarters: 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).
5. Supporting Elements: N/A.
6. Mission: To conduct Airmobile and Ground Reconnaissance Operations to interdict and locate enemy forces and destroy enemy Base Areas and cache sites throughout the Tactical Area of Operations and to provide security for FSB Ike.
7. Persons Interviewed:
  - a. CPT Roy S. Carlson 534-36-1683, CO, A/1-77 Field Artillery.
  - b. Master Sergeant Lewis P. Fetzer, 200-22-9724, S-2 NCO, 2/5 Cav.
  - c. Sergeant First Class Ivan H. Ronda Pavon, 558-40-5728, Mess Sergeant, HHC, 2/5 Cav.
8. Additional Source:
  - a. Letter, 1st Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), dated 4 December 1969, Subject - Summary of Enemy Actions Before, During and After the Attack on Fire Support Ike on 4 November 1969.
9. Interviewer: 1LT William S. Jenks III, 497-46-9285, Assistant Division Historian.
10. Task Organization: Bn CP, B&C/2-5 Cav, A/1-77 Arty, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).
11. Map information- 1/100,000, Series L607, Sheet 6232III

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Fire Support Ike, located in War Zone C about 23 kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh City in III Corps Tactical Zone, was attacked by elements of the 9th VC Division during the early morning hours of 4 November 1969. At the time of the attack, the Fire Support Base (FSB) was occupied by the B&E Companies, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry and Battery A, 1st Battalion, 77th Artillery of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

Reconstruction of the enemy movements leading up to the actual attack has been developed by the G-2 Intelligence Section at division level with extensive reference being made to prisoner of war interrogation reports, trail movements by ground and air resources, captured documents, enemy history, and information available from higher headquarters. In reconstructing the sequence of events, it was determined that in early October, Fire Support Bases Ike, St. Barbara and Grant were undergoing thorough reconnaissance which was being conducted by the C95 Reconnaissance Company of the 9th VC Division. All three of the FSB's are located in the same general area within War Zone C so it was felt by American commanders that one of these bases was going to receive an attack, but when and which one were unanswered questions. Sources indicated later that in early October, while the 272d Regiment of the 9th VC Division was operating in War Zone C, the 271st Regiment of the same division began moving westward from Binh Long Province into the Fishhook area and eventually into eastern and central War Zone C. Both the 271st and the 272d had participated in the enemy initiated offensive in Binh Long Province during mid-August of 1969 and both had sustained exceedingly heavy casualties. By the 15th of October, small elements of the 1st Battalion (Bn) and C-20 Signal Company of the 271st Regiment were detected 8 to 10 kilometers northeast of FSB Ike engaging in operations that appeared to be basically reconnaissance in nature, to locate base areas and establish cache sites. Furthermore, it appeared that these elements were

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Assembly/CP Area

IKE

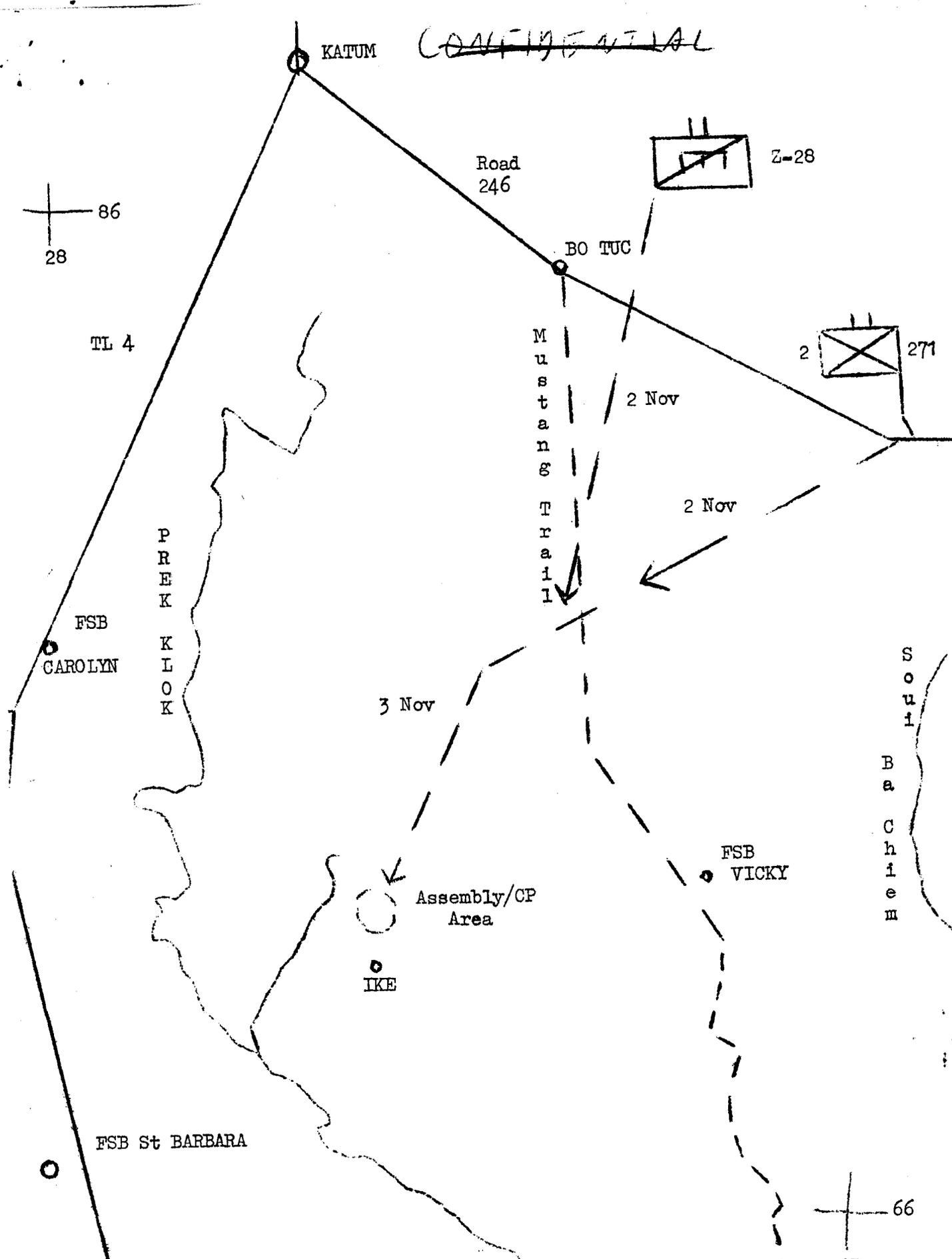
FSB St BARBARA

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MAP # 1

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also reconning trails for a troop movement south, possibly their parent regiment. During the last week in October, the 3d Bn of the 271st Regiment moved into the area that had previously been reconned by the 1st Bn while the regimental headquarters remained further to the north with security elements from the 1st Bn. While these moves were in progress, the 2d Bn of the 271st moved to a base area further to the northeast of FSB Ike and about 10 kilometers from the Cambodian border. The Z28 Sapper Bn, which was a subordinate unit of the 9th VC Division previously known as the Z95 Sapper Bn, had already moved out of Cambodia and by mid-October had positioned itself roughly 14 kilometers north of FSB Vicky, which is east of Ike.

By 2 November something appeared to be in the making. The Z28 Sapper Bn left its base area north of FSB Vicky and moved to another base area roughly 7 kilometers north of Ike which had been occupied by the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment. In the meantime, the infantry battalion had moved out the previous afternoon to locate in a new base area in the same vicinity, so that by 2200 hours on 2 November there were two battalions sitting 7 kilometers north-northeast of FSB Ike. Both units rested in this posture the remainder of the night while the unit commanders concluded their plans for an attack on an American base, thus far designated "A-2 Point". Information was disseminated to the men of these units that they were going to attack an American base, after which the units would return to North Vietnam for a rest.

The units remained in this area until 1600 hours on 3 November when the Sapper Bn departed the staging area and moved south-southeast for six hours to an assembly point 200 meters north of FSB Ike, arriving there at 2200 hours. After giving the sapper unit an hour head start, the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment left the staging area to follow and join the sapper unit at the assembly area. Both battalions had radios, but maintained radio silence

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during the move. After reaching the assembly area, the sapper bn established a CP approximately 150 meters to the north of Ike while the infantry battalion established its CP approximately 250 meters north of the fire support base. Communication wire was then strung between the two CP's and also to points north, east and west of the fire base so the progress of the battle could be passed on and commanders kept informed. The wire also enhanced the capability of the enemy to maintain continuous coordination.

The battalion commanders had planned for three 16-man sapper teams to position themselves to the north, east and west of the fire support base. During an intense indirect fire attack the sapper units were to breach the perimeter from all three sides. As the first wave of sappers reached the FSB perimeter, a second wave also consisting of three groups of 16 sappers was to attack in support. The sappers were to fight their way to the center of the FSB in the vicinity of the tactical operations center (TOC), reorganize, and on a prearranged signal the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment was to attack from the same three sides using B-40, B-41 rockets, AK-47's and prepositioned machine gun fire. After the attack and overrunning of the FSB, killing all the Americans, and confiscating all the available equipment, the men were to regroup to the north at their battalion CP's for withdrawal to the previous night's base areas. The CP's were to wait for 30 minutes after the attack and then begin the withdrawal. Guides and porters were to be left behind to escort and carry the wounded and stragglers back to the staging area.

Additionally, indirect fire support was to be provided by the heavy weapons element of the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment, and the 22d Artillery Bn of the 9th VC Division. The units were to use 82mm mortars, 60mm mortars, 107mm rockets and 57mm recoilless rifles which would be augmented by the sappers who would carry and employ B-40 and B-41 rockets, hand grenades, and satchel

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charges. The attack was to begin at 2330 hours on 3 November, but was delayed more than an hour while the sapper and infantry units positioned themselves.

Three .51 caliber machine guns were also to be provided by the 24th Anti-Aircraft Bn of the 9th VC Division to further support the operation. These weapons were to alleviate the pressure placed upon the attacking elements by directing fire at US aircraft and to help divert attention away from the selected routes of withdrawal. The weapons were to be placed some 400 to 1000 meters from the perimeter to the north northeast and were to be moved during the fighting from one position to another to avoid detection and destruction.

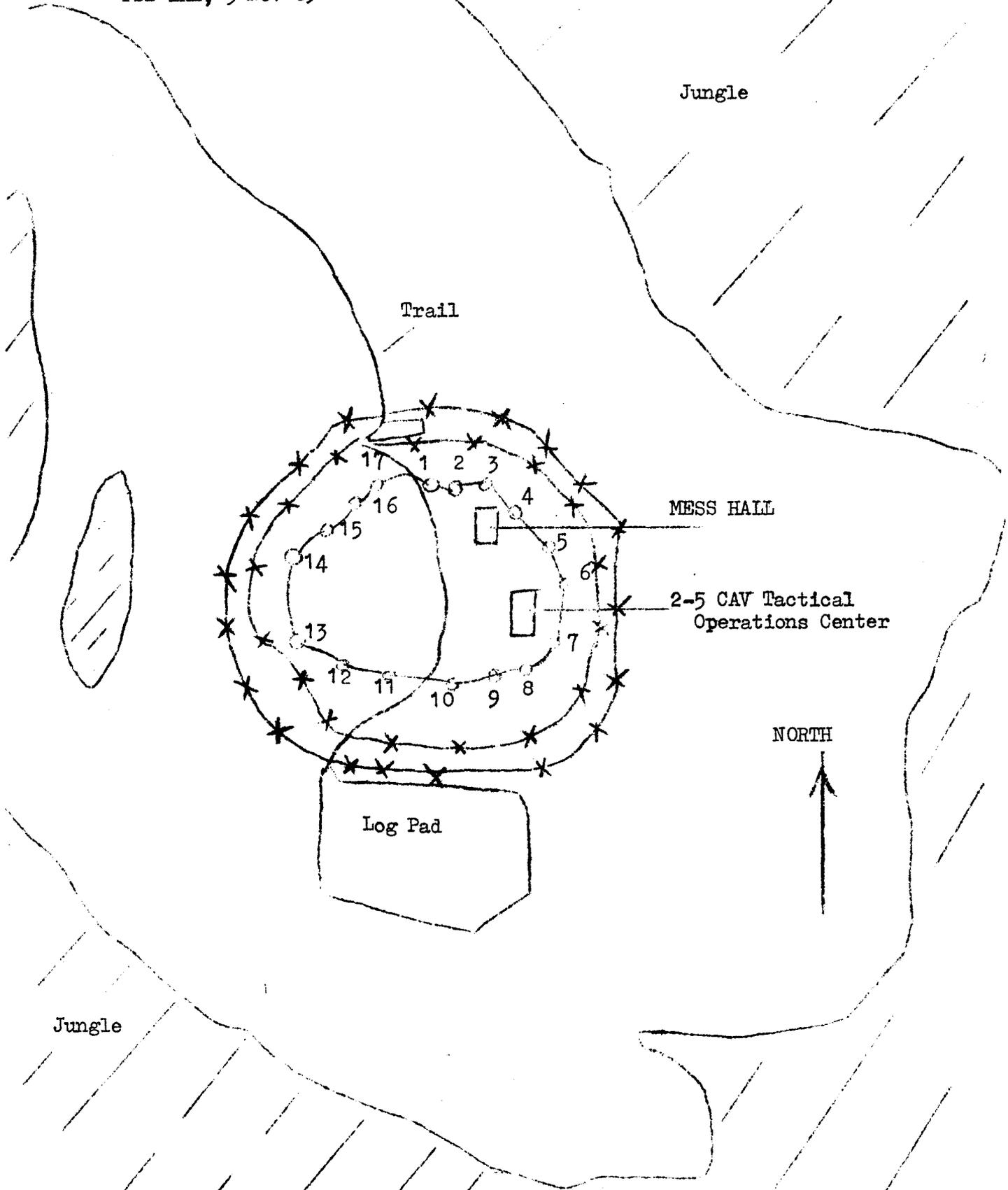
Various intelligence sources indicated movement in the vicinity of FSB Ike during the night of 3 November and A/1-77 fired 105 howitzer rounds into the suspected areas. As was earlier mentioned, it was felt that one of the fire support bases in War Zone C was going to receive an attack because of the small unit contacts, intelligence readouts and enemy movements. But no one, except for the enemy, knew which base it was going to be until the attack actually took place. Consequently, all the bases were alert to the possibility of the existing enemy threat.

The night of 3 November at FSB Ike was no different from the other nights during the past few weeks. However, at 0045 hours on the morning of 4 November, the base began receiving intense indirect fire from an unknown size enemy force. Almost immediately enemy soldiers were inside the perimeter and as word frantically passed from bunker to bunker it became apparent that FSB Ike was under a full scale attack. The base was receiving B-40 and B-41 rocket fire, mortar fire, small arms fire, and automatic weapons fire with the majority of the fire coming from the northeast. However, by this time the entire

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FSB IKE, 3 Nov 69



Jungle

Jungle

Trail

MESS HALL

2-5 CAV Tactical  
Operations Center

Log Pad

NORTH

MAP #2

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base was on 100% alert. Although there is some disagreement as to the exact time, it is agreed that shortly after the base began receiving incoming, a trip flare went off on the northeast side of the perimeter and almost immediately sappers were inside the wire. This was around 0100 hours and by 0115 heavy fighting had erupted inside the perimeter of FSB Ike in the northeast sector. Sappers had penetrated the berm in the vicinity of the mess hall and had blown up two bunkers with satchel charges. (Due to the monsoon rains, the two destroyed bunkers were filled with water and were therefore unoccupied) At roughly 0120 hours, A/1-77 received a report that there were enemy soldiers in the mess hall. CPT Roy S. Carlson, the battery commander, directed that one of the 105 howitzer tubes be lowered and fire a direct fire round into the mess hall, thereby destroying it and killing 12 NVA soldiers. During this same time, Sergeant First Class Ivan H. Ronda-Pavon, the mess sergeant, held at bay and killed an additional 7 NVA soldiers, who were occupying one of the blown-up bunkers. The combined efforts of CPT Carlson and SFC Ronda-Pavon virtually eliminated the enemy penetration of the fire base and ended the threat. The quick reaction force, consisting of an infantry platoon, immediately deployed to the northeast portion of the perimeter, and by 0210 hours the perimeter had been completely restored. By this time, the small arms fire being received was sporadic but the incoming continued. From 0200 to 0315 hours, the situation remained touch and go with movement and fire being detected and received from the east and west. At 0315 hours radar at FSB Ike detected movement to the north and away from the FSB. This indicated that the enemy was withdrawing and that it was time to assume an offensive role and seal off the enemy's escape. Sporadic fighting continued on into the 5th of November with contact being established several times with body burial details resulting in further enemy being killed. From the berm to the woodline a

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total of 54 enemy bodies had been counted at FSB Ike, 19 of which had been killed inside the wire. Ten additional soldiers were killed by Aerial Rocket Artillery making a total of 64 enemy soldiers that were killed in and around the fire support base. As the enemy withdrew to the north, PPS-5 radar detected their move which confirmed the belief, based on analysis of known bunker complexes, trail systems, and other pertinent intelligence data, that the enemy would withdraw to the bunker area northwest of FSB Ike. With the radar readings indicating the enemy moving to the northeast, A Troop, 1-9 Cav, the Air Force Forward Air Controller, the artillery FO and the brigade scouts were briefed on this situation, and all available air resources were directed over the predicted routes of withdrawal at first light. Additionally, a company of 1-12 Cav and a company of 2-5 Cav air assaulted into two likely areas of withdrawal, and the A/1-9 Cav infantry platoon was inserted into another area, thus enabling the friendly units to take the offensive in blocking the enemy's retreat. As a result of the combined air and ground effort, the enemy lost one .51 caliber machine gun and an additional 39 of their men were killed while attempting to withdraw. This brought the total to 103 enemy soldiers killed during their attack on Ike.

Throughout the attack, flare ships, Shadow, and AH-1G's from the 2d Bn, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery) combined their fires with those of the fire support base as well as supporting artillery fires from FSB's Grant, Jamie, Carolyn and St. Barbara, and ARVN Arty from Vicky and Carolyn. During the fighting three anti-aircraft positions went into action but were engaged by the aircraft they fired on plus artillery on FSB Ike which was fired by sighting through the breach and aligning the bore on the tracers of the .51 caliber machine guns. It was not determined whether the anti-aircraft positions were destroyed, but two of the weapons ceased firing after they were

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engaged by friendly fire. Artillery from Ike alone fired 3 Bee Hive rounds, 42 ICM rounds, 2 white phosphorous rounds, 589 High Explosive rounds, 126 Illumination rounds, to make a total of 762 artillery rounds that were expended by A/1-77. Other artillery fired 1900 rounds. E/2-5 Cav mortars fired 1400 rounds. Three sections of Aerial Rocket Artillery, which consisted of 6 Cobras, expended on station. Also, 2 Shadow aircraft were employed along with 4 flare ships. The terrific fire power from small arms and automatic weapons from the 2-5 Cav on the FSB coupled with the previously mentioned fire support crushed the enemy attack. By 0355 hours, the base was no longer receiving indirect fire and the attack was over. However, at 0445 hours, the fire base received a short burst of AK-47 fire from the east from a sniper. The sniper was silenced by A/1-77 direct fire. At 0615 hours in the morning, A 1st Bde: PSYOP aircraft was on station and broadcasted a surrender appeal to the evading enemy forces. Shortly thereafter, at 0645 hours, US Forces on

FSB Ike found 3 NVA soldiers that had been hiding in bunker number 3 on the northeast side of the perimeter where the heavy fighting had taken place earlier in the morning. The 3 prisoners were found in an extreme case of fright and evidently got as far as the bunker and gave up feeling that death was imminent if they continued on. Two other prisoners were later captured who were wounded and found outside the perimeter.

The final results of the action were as follows: 1 US KIA (a cook on the northeast side of the perimeter), 11 US WIA, 103 NVA KIA, and 5 POW. In addition to enemy personnel losses, US Forces captured or destroyed the following enemy equipment: 11 AK-47's, 8 B-40 rocket launchers, 1 B-41 rocket launcher, 1x.30 caliber machine gun on wheels, 1 K54 pistol, 30 AK-47 magazines, 500 small arms rounds, 2x10-lb. shaped charges, 1 NVA field phone, 51 Chicom grenades and 28 RPG rounds. Since the FSB attack, additional enemy bodies and incidental items of equipment and ammunition were found near the FSB and

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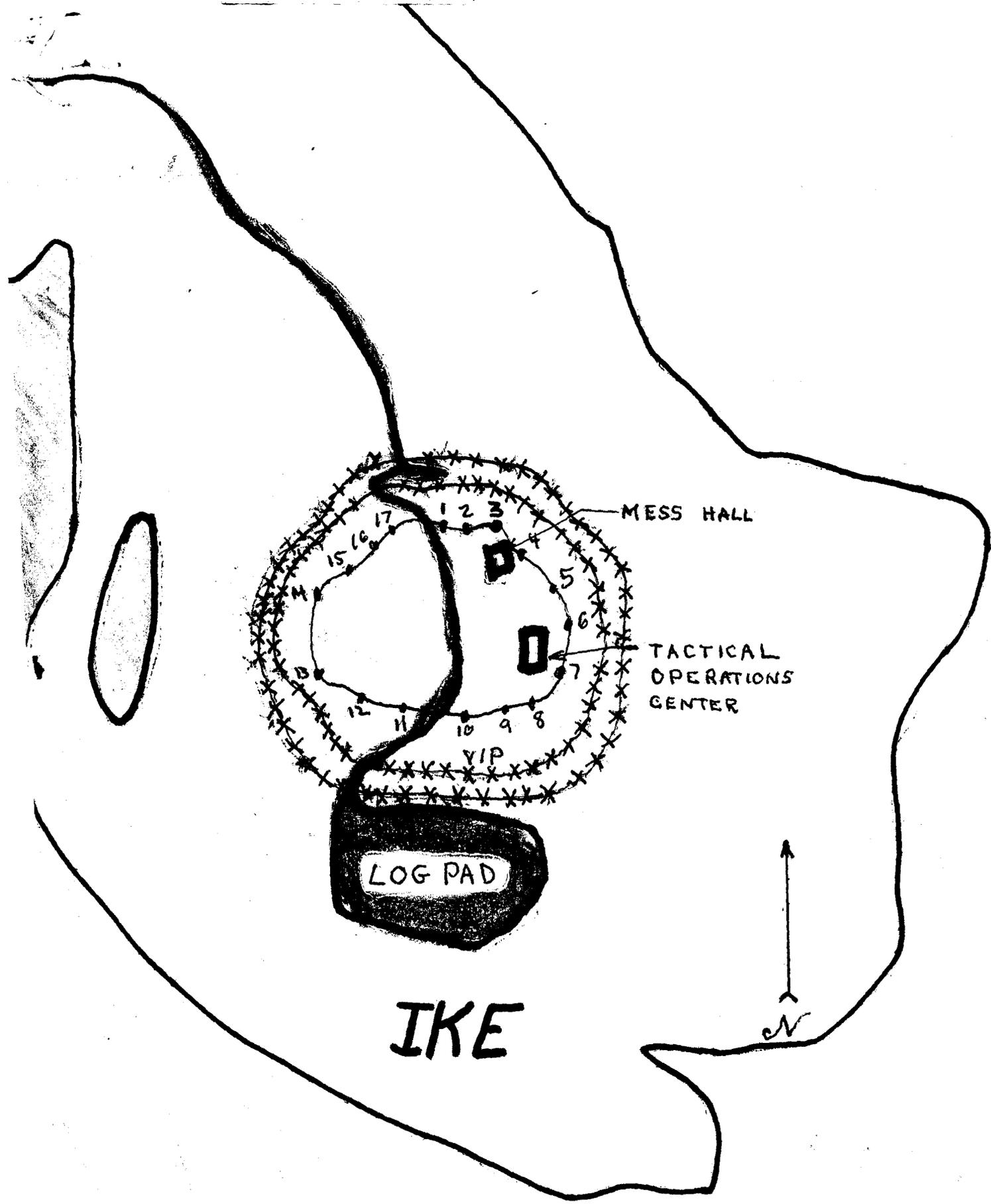
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along the enemy withdrawal routes, undoubtedly related to the attack.

A number of reasons were evident for the overwhelming defeat of the NVA. The two primary reasons were the fantastic firepower displayed by the US Forces and poor coordination on the part of the enemy. In the first place, the sapper elements that were supposed to have penetrated the northern and western sectors of the perimeter were unable to accomplish their mission because the sapper element that hit the eastern section began prematurely, thereby disclosing the enemy intentions and alerting the US Forces within the fire base. As a result of their early discovery, the remaining sapper and infantry elements could not penetrate the perimeter because of the overwhelming firepower unleashed from FSB Ike. The elements that did manage to penetrate the perimeter went directly to the mess hall (possibly indicated a lack of intelligence about the FSB's layout). Several questions arise from this. It is generally felt that the NVA is suffering from food shortages. Could this have been a break in discipline to alleviate the hunger pangs? Or was the assault on the mess hall a result of poor training? The poorly coordinated attack could possibly be linked to poor training if one remembers that the 271st Regiment received very heavy casualties from the Battle of Binh Long Province in August of 1969. Could this attack have been an extremely costly training mission for green NVA soldiers? Consideration must also be given to President Nixon's speech on Vietnam policy which was delivered on 3 November. This attack could have possibly been moved up to coincide with the speech which could explain the poorly coordinated attack and why the enemy completely bypassed ARVN-occupied fire support bases located further to the north near the Cambodian border. In any event, this attack was the sixth ground attack against Fire Support Base Ike in six months and was the sixth successive major defeat for the enemy. FSB Ike has and continues to severely hamper enemy operations in War Zone C.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 14TH MILITARY HISTORY DETACHMENT  
 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)  
 APO San Francisco 96490

AVDAMH

19 January 1970

SUBJECT: The attack on Fire Support Base Ike, 1-70

OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF MILITARY HISTORY  
 DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

1. Operation: N/A
2. Period Covered: 4 November 1969
3. Location: War Zone C, Tay Ninh Province; ~~1ST~~ CORPS, RVN
4. Control Headquarters: 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).
5. Supporting Elements: N/A.
6. Mission: To conduct Airmobile and Ground Reconnaissance Operations to interdict and locate enemy forces and destroy enemy Base Areas and cache sites throughout the Tactical Area of Operations and to provide security for FSB Ike.
7. Persons Interviewed:
  - a. CPT Roy S. Carlson 534-36-1683, CO, A/1-77 Field Artillery.
  - b. Master Sergeant Lewis P. Fetzer, 200-22-9724, S-2 NCO, 2/5 Cav.
  - c. Sergeant First Class Ivan H. Ronda Pavon, 558-40-5728, Mess Sergeant, HHC, 2/5 Cav.
8. Additional Source:
  - a. Letter, 1st Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), dated 4 December 1969, Subject - Summary of Enemy Actions Before, During and After the Attack on Fire Support Ike on 4 November 1969.
9. Interviewer: 1LT William S. Jenks III, 497-46-9285, Assistant Division Historian.
10. Task Organization: Bn CP, D&C/2-5 Cav, A/1-77 Arty, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).
11. Map information- 1/100,000, Series L607, Sheet 6232III

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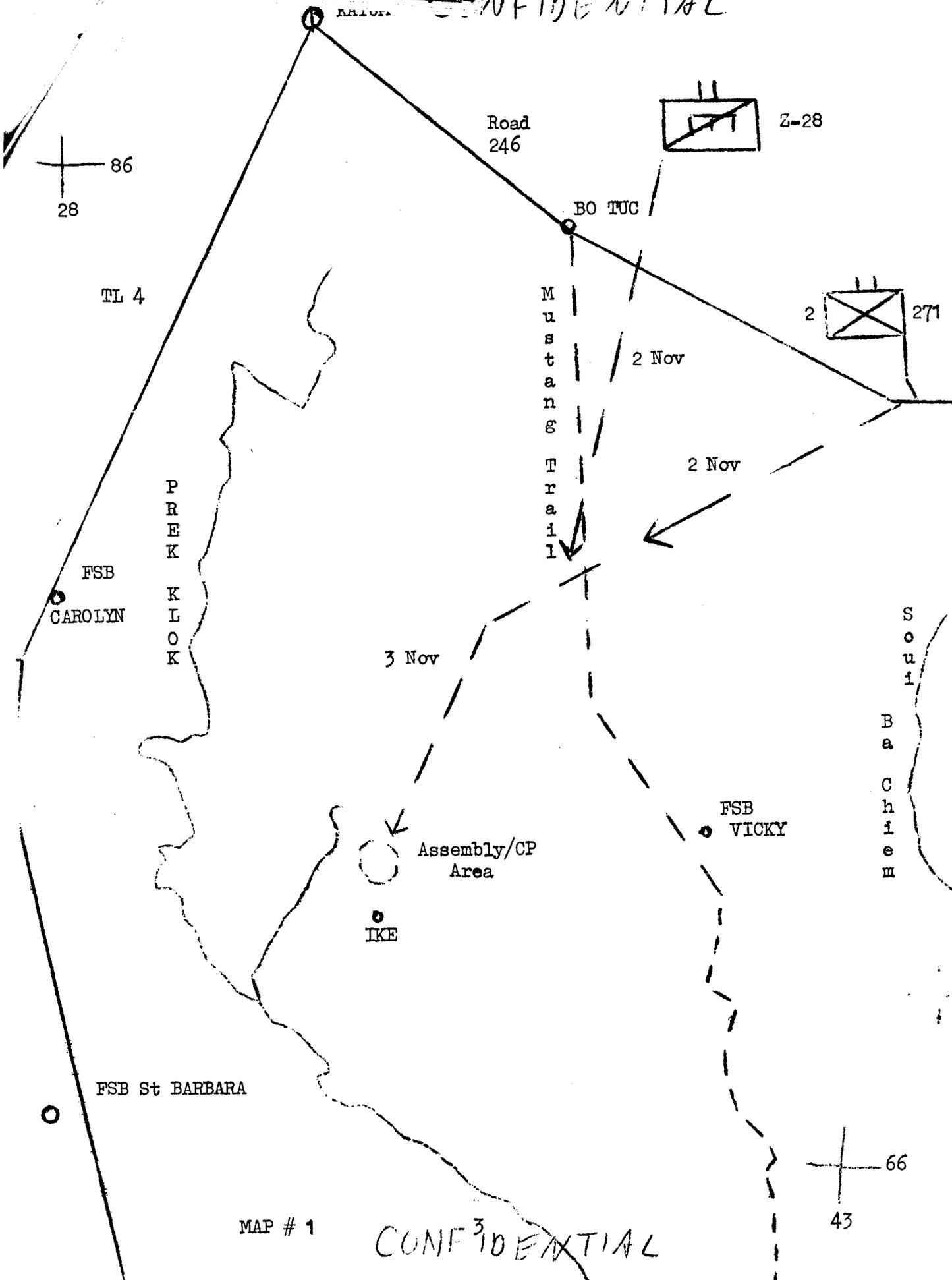
Fire Support Ike, located in War Zone C about 23 kilometers northeast of Tay Ninh City in III Corps Tactical Zone, was attacked by elements of the 9th VC Division during the early morning hours of 4 November 1969. At the time of the attack, the Fire Support Base (FSB) was occupied by the B&E Companies, 2d Battalion, 5th Cavalry and Battery A, 1st Battalion, 77th Artillery of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile).

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MAP # 1

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By 2 November something appeared to be in the making. The Z28 Sapper Bn left its base area north of FSB Vicky and moved to another base area roughly 7 kilometers north of Ike which had been occupied by the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment. In the meantime, the infantry battalion had moved out the previous afternoon to locate in a new base area in the same vicinity, so that by 2200 hours on 2 November there were two battalions sitting 7 kilometers north-northeast of FSB Ike. Both units rested in this posture the remainder of the night while the unit commanders concluded their plans for an attack on an American base, thus far designated "A-2 Point". Information was disseminated to the men of these units that they were going to attack an American base, after which the units would return to North Vietnam for a rest.

The units remained in this area until 1600 hours on 3 November when the Sapper Bn departed the staging area and moved south-southeast for six hours to an assembly point 200 meters north of FSB Ike, arriving there at 2200 hours. After giving the sapper unit an hour head start, the 2d Bn, 271st Regiment left the staging area to follow and join the sapper unit at the assembly area. Both battalions had radios, but maintained radio silence

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Three .51 caliber machine guns were also to be provided by the 24th Anti-Aircraft Bn of the 9th VC Division to further support the operation. These weapons were to alleviate the pressure placed upon the attacking elements by directing fire at US aircraft and to help divert attention away from the selected routes of withdrawal. The weapons were to be placed some 400 to 1000 meters from the perimeter to the north northeast and were to be moved during the fighting from one position to another to avoid detection and destruction.

Various intelligence sources indicated movement in the vicinity of FSB Ike during the night of 3 November and A/1-77 fired 105 howitzer rounds into the suspected areas. As was earlier mentioned, it was felt that one of the fire support bases in War Zone C was going to receive an attack because of the small unit contacts, intelligence readouts and enemy movements. But no one, except for the enemy, knew which base it was going to be until the attack actually took place. Consequently, all the bases were alert to the possibility of the existing enemy threat.

The night of 3 November at FSB Ike was no different from the other nights during the past few weeks. However, at 0045 hours on the morning of 4 November, the base began receiving intense indirect fire from an unknown size enemy force. Almost immediately enemy soldiers were inside the perimeter and as word frantically passed from bunker to bunker it became apparent that FSB Ike was under a full scale attack. The base was receiving B-40 and B-41 rocket fire, mortar fire, small arms fire, and automatic weapons fire with the majority of the fire coming from the northeast. However, by this time the entire

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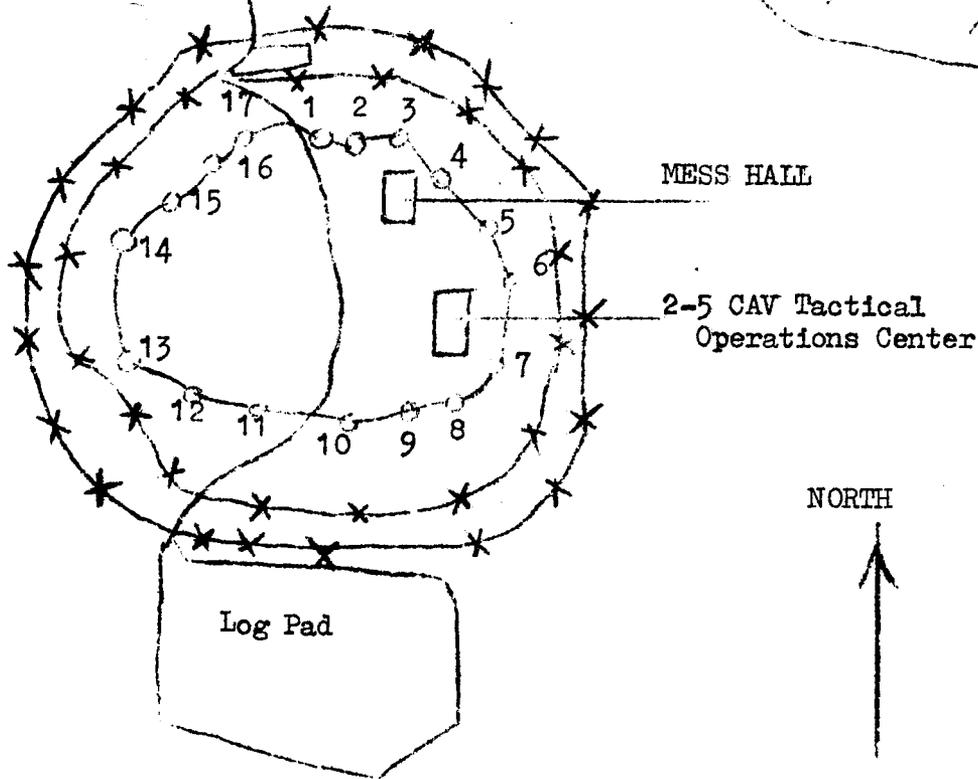
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FSB IKE, 3 Nov 69

Jungle

Trail



Jungle

NORTH

MAP #2

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base was on 100% alert. Although there is some disagreement as to the exact time, it is agreed that shortly after the base began receiving incoming, a trip flare went off on the northeast side of the perimeter and almost immediately sappers were inside the wire. This was around 0100 hours and by 0115 heavy fighting had erupted inside the perimeter of FSB Ike in the northeast sector. Sappers had penetrated the berm in the vicinity of the mess hall and had blown up two bunkers with satchel charges. (Due to the monsoon rains, the two destroyed bunkers were filled with water and were therefore unoccupied) At roughly 0120 hours, A/1-77 received a report that there were enemy soldiers in the mess hall. CPT Roy S. Carlson, the battery commander, directed that one of the 105 howitzer tubes be lowered and fire a direct fire round into the mess hall, thereby destroying it and killing 12 NVA soldiers. During this same time, Sergeant First Class Ivan H. Ronda-Pavon, the mess sergeant, held at bay and killed an additional 7 NVA soldiers, who were occupying one of the blown-up bunkers. The combined efforts of CPT Carlson and SFC Ronda-Pavon virtually eliminated the enemy penetration of the fire base and ended the threat. The quick reaction force, consisting of an infantry platoon, immediately deployed to the northeast portion of the perimeter, and by 0210 hours the perimeter had been completely restored. By this time, the small arms fire being received was sporadic but the incoming continued. From 0200 to 0315 hours, the situation remained touch and go with movement and fire being detected and received from the east and west. At 0315 hours radar at FSB Ike detected movement to the north and away from the FSB. This indicated that the enemy was withdrawing and that it was time to assume an offensive role and seal off the enemy's escape. Sporadic fighting continued on into the 5th of November with contact being established several times with body burial details resulting in further enemy being killed. From the berm to the woodline a

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total of 54 enemy bodies had been counted at FSB Ike, 19 of which had been killed inside the wire. Ten additional soldiers were killed by Aerial Rocket Artillery making a total of 64 enemy soldiers that were killed in and around the fire support base. As the enemy withdrew to the north, PPS-5 radar detected their move which confirmed the belief, based on analysis of known bunker complexes, trail systems, and other pertinent intelligence data, that the enemy would withdraw to the bunker area northwest of FSB Ike. With the radar readings indicating the enemy moving to the northeast, A Troop, 1-9 Cav, the Air Force Forward Air Controller, the artillery FO and the brigade scouts were briefed on this situation, and all available air resources were directed over the predicted routes of withdrawal at first light. Additionally, a company of 1-12 Cav and a company of 2-5 Cav air assaulted into two likely areas of withdrawal, and the A/1-9 Cav infantry platoon was inserted into another area, thus enabling the friendly units to take the offensive in blocking the enemy's retreat. As a result of the combined air and ground effort, the enemy lost one .51 caliber machine gun and an additional 39 of their men were killed while attempting to withdraw. This brought the total to 103 enemy soldiers killed during their attack on Ike.

Throughout the attack, flare ships, Shadow, and AH-1G's from the 2d Bn, 20th Artillery (Aerial Rocket Artillery) combined their fires with those of the fire support base as well as supporting artillery fires from FSB's Grant, Jamie, Carolyn and St. Barbara, and ARVN Arty from Vicky and Carolyn. During the fighting three anti-aircraft positions went into action but were engaged by the aircraft they fired on plus artillery on FSB Ike which was fired by sighting through the breech and aligning the bore on the tracers of the .51 caliber machine guns. It was not determined whether the anti-aircraft positions were destroyed, but two of the weapons ceased firing after they were

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gaged by friendly fire. Artillery from Ike alone fired 3 Bee Hive rounds, 42 ICM rounds, 2 white phosphorous rounds, 589 High Explosive rounds, 126 Illumination rounds, to make a total of 762 artillery rounds that were expended by A/1-77. Other artillery fired 1900 rounds. E/2-5 Cav mortars fired 1400 rounds. Three sections of Aerial Rocket Artillery, which consisted of 6 Cobras, expended on station. Also, 2 Shadow aircraft were employed along with 4 flare ships. The terrific fire power from small arms and automatic weapons from the 2-5 Cav on the FSB coupled with the previously mentioned fire support crushed the enemy attack. By 0355 hours, the base was no longer receiving indirect fire and the attack was over. However, at 0445 hours, the fire base received a short burst of AK-47 fire from the east from a sniper. The sniper was silenced by A/1-77 direct fire. At 0615 hours in the morning, A 1st Bde. PSYOP aircraft was on station and broadcasted a surrender appeal to the evading enemy forces. Shortly thereafter, at 0645 hours, US Forces on FSB Ike found 3 NVA soldiers that had been hiding in bunker number 3 on the northeast side of the perimeter where the heavy fighting had taken place earlier in the morning. The 3 prisoners were found in an extreme case of fright and evidently got as far as the bunker and gave up feeling that death was imminent if they continued on. Two other prisoners were later captured who were wounded and found outside the perimeter.

The final results of the action were as follows: 1 US KIA (a cook on the northeast side of the perimeter), 11 US WIA, 103 NVA KIA, and 5 POW. In addition to enemy personnel losses, US Forces captured or destroyed the following enemy equipment: 11 AK-47's, 8 B-40 rocket launchers, 1 B-41 rocket launcher, 1x.30 caliber machine gun on wheels, 1 K54 pistol, 30 AK-47 magazines, 500 small arms rounds, 2x10-lb. shaped charges, 1 NVA field phone, 51 Chicom grenades and 28 RPG rounds. Since the FSB attack, additional enemy bodies and incidental items of equipment and ammunition were found near the FSB and

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ong the enemy withdrawal routes, undoubtedly related to the attack.

A number of reasons were evident for the overwhelming defeat of the NVA. The two primary reasons were the fantastic firepower displayed by the US Forces and poor coordination on the part of the enemy. In the first place, the sapper elements that were supposed to have penetrated the northern and western sectors of the perimeter were unable to accomplish their mission because the sapper element that hit the eastern section began prematurely, thereby disclosing the enemy intentions and alerting the US Forces within the fire base. As a result of their early discovery, the remaining sapper and infantry elements could not penetrate the perimeter because of the overwhelming firepower unleashed from FSB Ike. The elements that did manage to penetrate the perimeter went directly to the mess hall (possibly indicated a lack of intelligence about the FSB's layout). Several questions arise from this. It is generally felt that the NVA is suffering from food shortages. Could this have been a break in discipline to alleviate the hunger pangs? Or was the assault on the mess hall a result of poor training? The poorly coordinated attack could possibly be linked to poor training if one remembers that the 271st Regiment received very heavy casualties from the Battle of Binh Long Province in August of 1969. Could this attack have been an extremely costly training mission for green NVA soldiers? Consideration must also be given to President Nixon's speech on Vietnam policy which was delivered on 3 November. This attack could have possibly been moved up to coincide with the speech which could explain the poorly coordinated attack and why the enemy completely bypassed ARVN-occupied fire support bases located further to the north near the Cambodian border. In any event, this attack was the sixth ground attack against Fire Support Base Ike in six months and was the sixth successive major defeat for the enemy. FSB Ike has and continues to severely hamper enemy operations in War Zone C.

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