

Mess DTP 2 MAY

1. General situation:

A. There was a decrease in activity in the Kontum province. FSB 41 VIC Kontum pass reported an enemy attack. Cobras reported two 51 caliber MGS and one mortar in the vic of FSB 41. Polci Hing received fire from the north during the evening of 2 May. ARVN reported it as tank fire but this is highly suspect. In Pleiku province the exodus continues. Overloaded buses and trucks are constantly on the move.

B. In Binh Dinh province the situation at LZ English continues to deteriorate. Several ground attacks and ABF's were launched during the day. There was one report of 37 mm fire in the area. The C-130 resupply drop for the early morning of 3 May was cancelled. It is anticipated that the defenders will evacuate the base on foot during the night of 2-3 May.

C. an ARVN Battalion Commander was killed the afternoon of 2 May with the other occupants of his jeep when they struck a mine on the road between Firebase November (ZA 207938) and HTON city.

D. Privately held pessimism is increasing here regarding ARVN ability to hold Kontum. Public expression remains confident. We are making the necessary plans for our units in conjunction with SRAG in the event the situation deteriorates out of control.

2. Synopsis of operations:

42/14/6 West 16/6/4 East 18/8/2

Hook.	Sorties	Par	Tons	hours
West	137	1,023	67	31
EAST	15	7	121	12

3. Air com operations: (A) B/7/17
at 1200 hrs. during an ARVN light BDA West of FSB Lam Son an estimated company was sighted and engaged with unknown results. Numerous other small groups of enemy were sighted. TAC AIR was requested but due to poor weather and apparent priority of effort to other areas none was received for several hours. Freshly constructed fighting and unoccupied arty positions were sighted 24 N of KTM city.

B. C/7/17: VR Missions W & WSW of Pleiku were negative. Beginning 3 May the troop will be open to the 22nd ARVN Div rather than Pleiku province. This will make

little difference since the Troop will still be operating in the same general area.

4. Vulnerability Data: During the afternoon of 2 May A C-130 taxied into a Cobra parked along side the main runway at Koutoun. The Cobra had shut down (with blades tied) due to hydraulic failure. The C-130 being struck the rotor causing damage to the main rotor and head. It was reported that 8 other C-130's had previously passed by the Cobra without mishap.

5. TOW DATA.

A. Operational mission: Hawk's claw was tasked to destroy four M41 Tanks that were in enemy controlled Territory west of QL-14 and 200 meters North of FSB Lam Son. A/C NR 553 carried a crew of three and four missiles. The first tank was engaged at 020930H from an altitude of 1800 Feet (A.G.L) and at an estimated slant range of 2800 meters. The approach paralleled QL-14 from South to North. The first round was a direct hit which immediately caused the tank

to burst into flames. The next two rounds were also direct hits. The third tank also began burning. The fourth missile was not fired due to an electrical failure in the tube. After rearming and refueling at Holloway a direct hit was attained on the fourth M41. An arty piece (105mm) and 2 1/2 ton Truck inside FSB Jan Son were hit, also. One round apparently malfunctioned and as a consequence impacted approximately 100 meters East of the FSB. There were six hits out of seven landings.

B. Lessons Learned:

- (1) The range estimation problem encountered by the gunners, against terrain targets, did not cause any difficulty during the material target engagements on 2 May.
- (2) There have been two rocket firings where the wire was not cut. Initially this appeared to be an electrical malfunction. During ground check the wire cutter worked flawlessly. After reviewing the gunner's procedures, it was determined that the malfunction resulted from the gunner prematurely

stowing the right before the time required (18 sec) for the automatic wire cut.

C. Concept of employment: The TOW package consists of the UH-1B, one C+C, and two escort guns. Pending notification of a target the package loagers at holdaway on strip alert.

D. If aircraft (UH-1B) are shot down they will be destroyed under provisions of PARA 4C (1) (B)

USARV Reg 750-16 and USARV M750 26 0612 Z MAY 71 (subject: Change to USARV Reg 750-16) The destruction of an aircraft is warranted when material of significant intelligence value is on board.

Air borne components of TOW package must not fall into enemy hands.