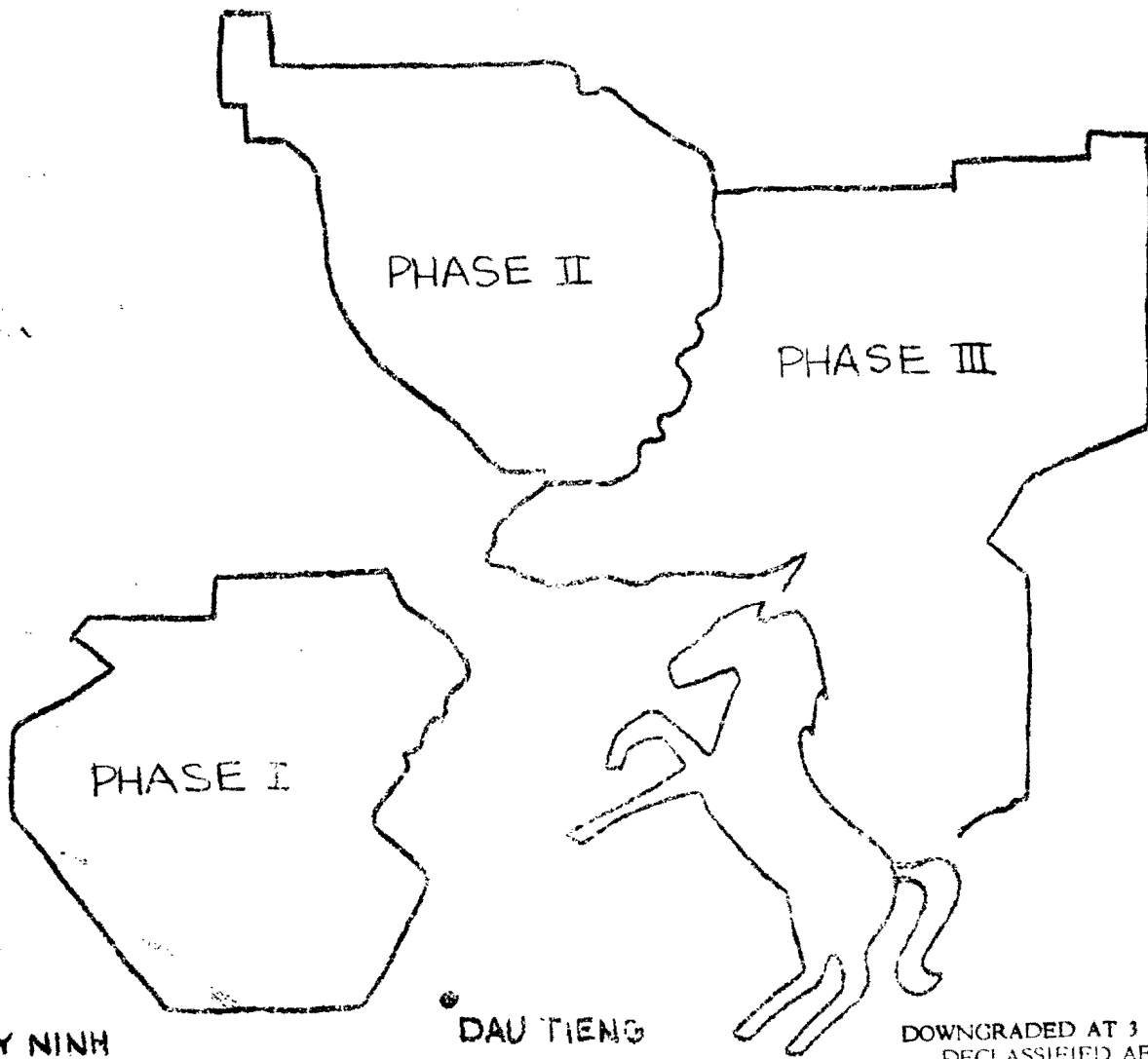


RG 492 USA UN
11th ACR 53
AARs Dec 67 - Sep 69
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THE BLACKHORSE REGIMENT ON THE MOVE

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CONFIDENTIAL

OPERATION — MONTANA RAIDER
12 APRIL - 14 MAY 1969

11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT

DECLASSIFIED
Authority NND 873541
JW NARA Date 11-15

C O N F I D E N T I A L

1. (U) REFERENCES: 1st Cavalry Division (AM) OPORD 03-69 dated 11 April 1969 and 11th ACR OPORD 03-69 dated 11 April 1969, FRAGO 1-5 (Operation MONTANA RAIDER), HQ, 11th ACR, dtg 112300 Apr 69, 191600 Apr 69, 042300 May 69, 102300 May 69, and 122300 May 69.

2. (U) NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION:

- a. Operation MONTANA RAIDER (Phases I, II, and III).
- b. Reconnaissance in Force, and Area Reconnaissance.

3. (U) DATES OF OPERATION: 12 Apr - 14 May 69.

4. (U) LOCATION: Northern III Corps Tactical Zone, Eastern War Zone C.

a. Phase I: The "Crescent", NW of DAU TIENG (XT3364) - (XT3347) - (XT4547) - (XT4964).

b. Phase II: -South of the "Fishhook" on the western bank of the SAIGON River (XT4082) - (XT5269) - (XT5676) - (XT5082).

c. Phase III: Vicinity of MINH THANH Rubber Plantation and area NE of MICHELIN Rubber Plantation (XT5677) - (XT7077) - (XT6252) - (XT4963).

5. (U) CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: Headquarters, 1st Cavalry Division (AM).

6. (U) TASK ORGANIZATIONAL OUTLINE: See Inclosure 1.

7. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. Anticipated Enemy Situation: Eastern War Zone C was known to be a rear service area and transportation zone for men and equipment entering South Vietnam from Cambodia. The exact identification and location of the enemy units were unknown, but elements of two North Vietnamese Divisions were believed to be operating in the area. Three regiments of the 1st NVA Division were thought to be dispersed west of the SAIGON River. Of these, the 95C Regiment was in the "Crescent" area, the 18B Regiment was north of Landing Zone GRANT, and the 101D Regiment was north of NUI BA DEN.

East of the SAIGON River, the 7th NVA Division was in the MICHELIN/FISHHOOK supply and infiltration corridor. The 165th NVA Regiment was thought to be north of the MICHELIN Plantation. The 141st NVA Regiment was suspected to be in the FISHHOOK area, while the 209th NVA Regiment was working along the supply corridor from a base in the MINH THANH area.

During Phase I, the 95C Regiment was believed to be operating within the AO. The Regiment had suffered heavy casualties in the preceding month and it was expected that this unit would be dispersed in small groups while they regained their combat effectiveness. While the Regiment had usually operated at a strength of about 1100, recent losses had probably reduced the strength to under 1000. Elements of the 82nd Rear Service Group were to be providing

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support services to the main force units in the area.

In Phase II of the operation, enemy units believed to be operating in the area were elements of the 96th Artillery Regiment, 82nd Rear Service Group, and possibly the 209th Regiment of the 7th NVA Division. Since the 96th Artillery Regiment and the 82nd Rear Service Group operate in small groups over a wide area, it was difficult to estimate the strength of these units actually present in the AO. The 209th Regiment had a strength of about 1100, but the entire regiment was not believed to be in the area of operations.

In Phase III of the operation, contact was expected with support and supply elements from the 82nd Rear Service Group, artillery units from the 96th Regiment, and possibly a battalion from the 165th Regiment, 7th NVA Division.

b. Enemy Capabilities: The 7th NVA Division was securing the MICH-ELIN/FISHHOOK supply route and posed a threat to the Allied forces in the area. The Division operating in battalion size units had the capability to conduct ambushes and mortar attacks against NDP's, though at the time the enemy was generally in a standdown posture. The Division was recuperating from previous losses, refitting, and resupplying their units.

c. Terrain and Weather: The terrain in all three areas of operation was quite similar, mostly double and triple canopy jungle. Numerous streams traversed the area flowing into the SAIGON River, the main water obstacle in the region. The contours of the terrain were not particularly rugged, but tanks were required to break the dense jungle. The water obstacles demanded judicious use of the AVLB's.

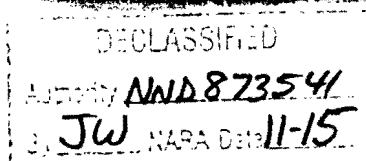
(1) Phase I: During Phase I, the Regiment encountered vast open areas in addition to jungle. Cover and concealment were poor in this open terrain, but in the jungle, the concealment was excellent and the cover fair.

(2) Phase II: Heavy bamboo jungle was predominant in the operational area. the numerous steep-banked streams were minor obstacles. The SONG TA MONG hindered north-south movement.

(3) Phase III: Many streams, some marshy areas, and heavy jungle were the primary physical characteristics in this zone. Two major roads, LTL 13, and 246 were important features, both good avenues of approach, in good condition, and permitting rapid mobility by our forces.

The weather during the third phase was affected by the transition from the dry season to the rainy, southwestern monsoon season. During Phase I, the weather was generally dry, but in Phase II, intermittent rain showers occurred. The most rain came during the closing phase of operations, and it was sometimes enough to create swollen streams and marshiness in low areas, but this did not hinder the operation significantly.

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d. Major Engagements:

(1) Phase I:

(a) On 13 April at XT428557, the Air Cavalry Troop, reinforced by A/1/11th ACR, D/2-12th Cavalry, and C/1-8th Cavalry, engaged an unknown size enemy force which was in a bunker complex. The contact resulted in 14 US KHA, 16 US WHA, 11 NVA KIA (BC), 1 AK-47 CIA, and 1 60-mm mortar tube and 10 60-mm mortar rounds CIA.

(b) On 15 April, E/2/11th ACR engaged an enemy force of undetermined size that was entrenched in a small base camp at XT398578. Tac Air was called in to support the engagement which resulted in 14 US WHA, 2 ACAV's moderately damaged, and unknown number of enemy losses.

(c) On 15 April at XT447558, C/1/11th ACR battled an unknown size NVA force. During the fire fight enemy small arms, RPG's and CS gas were used. At the end of the contact there were 2 US WHA, and 13 NVA KIA (BC).

(d) On 17 April at XT455577, HHT/1/11th ACR, while moving to establish a NDP, encountered an enemy force in a base camp. G/2/11th ACR and 919th Engineers reinforced. The two hour contact resulted in 1 US KHA, 6 US WHA, 20 NVA KIA (BC), and 6 NVA PW's. Three of the PW's were identified as members of the 18B NVA Regiment, and three as members of the C20 (Procurement Company), 82nd Rear Service Group.

(2) Phase II: on 11 May at XT626532, the Aero Rifle Platoon/11th ACR was inserted into an area where an enemy transportation detail had been sighted. Contact was initiated immediately and reinforcements from G/2/11th ACR and B/5-7th Cavalry were deployed. The contact resulted in 5 NVA KIA and 8 PW's. Six of the PW's were from the K34 Battalion, 96th Artillery Regiment, and two were members of the 82nd Rear Service Group.

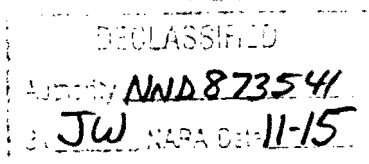
(3) Phase III:

(a) On 29 April at XT416792, C/1/11th ACR (with elements of M/3/11th ACR and D/2-7th Cavalry) received small arms and RPG fire from an unknown size NVA force. Fire was returned with organic weapons, artillery, light fire teams (LFT) and TAC Air. Results of the engagement were 55 VC/NVA KIA (BC), 2 VC/NVA KBA (BC), 25 US WHA, 2 AK-47's CIA, 1 IMG CIA and 1 B-40 CIA.

(b) An enemy force ambushed G/2/11th ACR at XT500802 on 29 April. When G Troop returned fire, the enemy fled leaving behind 7 VC KIA (BC), 4 AK-47's, 1 B-40 and miscellaneous web gear. US losses were 4 KHA and 5 WHA.

(c) On 30 April, B/2-7th Cavalry received small arms fire from an enemy position at XT478724. D/2-7th Cavalry reinforced, and ARA supported. The results of the contact were 1 US KHA, 3 US WHA, and 14 VC/NVA KIA (BC).

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(d) On 30 April, M/3/11th ACR and C/2-7th Cavalry received small arms fire from an enemy position at XT418792. Artillery and LFT supported. The encounter resulted in 19 VC/NVA KIA (BC), while US losses were 5 wounded. A sweep of the area located an underground medical facility consisting of 25 bunkers with tunnels and four operating rooms. 11,000 pounds of rice, 7 AK-47's, 1 B-40, 20 NVA uniforms, 43 Chicom grenades, and other ammunition and explosives were found in the complex.

e. Enemy Forces Encountered: During the first phase of the operation, the 18B Regiment of the 1st NVA Division was located and encountered. In addition, a transportation element of the 82nd Rear Service Group was found in the area.

In the second phase of the operation, members of the 96th Artillery Regiment were captured. Also, elements of the 82nd Rear Service Group and a subordinate unit of COSVN were positively identified. Besides these unit identifications, a senior officer in the VC Sub-Region 1 was captured in the area of operation.

In the final phase of the operation, no new or different units were located.

f. Intelligence Sources: Due to the nature of Operation MONTANA RAIDER, the intelligence sources had to be immediately exploitable. Visual reconnaissance and the information from documents and prisoners best met this intelligence requirement.

Before deploying friendly forces, the Air Cavalry Troop conducted extensive visual reconnaissance. Sightings were used to plan ground operations as well as B-52 and TAC Air strikes. In addition, the Air Cavalry guided ground elements around obstacles and to enemy positions. Order of battle information was provided the Regiment by prisoners and enemy documents. Of the captives, one was a senior VC officer who provided a wealth of political information.

There were a number of valuable documents captured during the operation but the most beneficial were from the headquarters of the 96th NVA Artillery Regiment, one of which showed the rocket firing positions used to fire on LAI KHE and DAU TIENG. Other documents disclosed the operations and missions of the 82nd Rear Service Group. During this mission, Red Haze, SLAR, Sniffer, and agents were not able to give the immediate information necessary.

8. (C) MISSION: 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment(-) will conduct multiple and concurrent reconnaissance in force (RIF) operations in areas of operations (AO's) RED, WHITE, and BLUE.

9. (C) CONCEPT OF OPERATION: The 11th ACR(-) reinforced by elements of 1st Cavalry Division (AM) conducted reconnaissance in force and area reconnaissance operations in three known enemy sanctuaries which had not recently been penetrated. The force consisted of two armor heavy task forces (1/11th

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ACR and 2/11th ACR) and one infantry heavy task force (Phase I: 1-8th Cav; Phase II: 2-7th Cav; Phase III: 5-7th Cav) with the Regimental Air Cavalry Troop in direct support. The 1-9th Air Cavalry Squadron worked in general support. The Air Cavalry's primary function was to establish and maintain contact, and to guide the tanks and ACAV's through the dense jungle areas. The 919th Combat Engineer Company (Armored) conducted route reconnaissance, mine clearing, and preparation of AVLB and ford crossing sites over the many water obstacles in the area. The Headquarters, 8-6th Artillery Battalion (1st Inf Div) was placed in direct support of the 11th ACR as a control headquarters for all artillery fires. During the operation, conventional artillery was used heavily; the maneuver elements were also supported by TAC Air, aerial rocket artillery, B-52 strikes, and helicopter gunships.

10. (C) EXECUTION: The Regiment received a warning order for Operation MONTANA RAIDER on 9 April. The next day Regimental representatives attended the II Field Force, Vietnam, planning conference, and then participated in the 1st Cavalry Division (AM) planning conference on 10 and 11 April. By 11 April, the Commander had completed the necessary coordination with II FFORCEV, 1st Inf Div, 1st Cav Div (AM), 25th Inf Div, and the 25th Inf Div (ARVN). On 10 and 11 April, at the same time that the final coordination was being completed, the Air Cavalry Troop was conducting a thorough visual reconnaissance of the anticipated area of operation, and then, to disguise their task, followed with additional reconnaissance in adjacent areas. The information that the Air Cavalry gathered was used to check the validity of the proposed B-52 bomber targets in the area, and was, of course, the most immediate intelligence available.

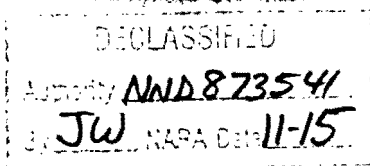
What's the evidence?

In an attempt to deceive the enemy concerning the mission and movements of the Blackhorse, a cover and deception plan was devised which, it was hoped, would make the enemy think that the Regiment was moving north of TAY NINH. The plan worked. In the meantime, on 11 April the Regimental TAC CP and quartering parties moved to DAU TIENG to await the impending orders. On the night of 11 April, final II FFORCEV approval came. The next morning, the Regiment received its final orders covering its AO, a significant intelligence update, and the expected commitment of forces. By the time this was received, elements of 1/11th ACR, 2/11th ACR, and Regimental Headquarters were speeding toward the DAU TIENG area. B/1/11th ACR was released from OPCON QMAC to join the Regiment in the DAU TIENG area.

a. Phase I:

(1) 12 April: At 0800 hours, the operational control of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment(-) passed from the 1st Infantry Division to the 1st Cavalry Division (AM). The 1st and 2nd Squadrons and the Regimental Headquarters moved from the LAM SON and BIEN HOA areas to the vicinity of DAU TIENG. The movement to this location, 78 miles from BIEN HOA, was accomplished in eight hours. The road march took the Blackhorse from BIEN

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HOA to PHU CUONG, across the SAIGON River to CU CHI, along Highway 1 to TRANG BANG, and finally to DAU TIENG. When the 2nd Squadron was 10 kilometers west of DAU TIENG, it joined up with A/1-8th Cav at FSB BARBARA. The 1st Squadron linked up with C/1-8th Cav at FSB RAWLINGS (RP297406), while Regimental Headquarters and all rear elements moved into DAU TIENG Base Camp. While the units were moving in convoy, 3rd Tactical Fighter Wing FAC's flew overhead giving constant cover. Later during the final drive from TRANG BANG to DAU TIENG, the Air Cavalry Troop gave additional cover as the convoy passed through a potentially dangerous area where ambushes had occurred previously. This massive movement was completed without incident, and by 1700 hours, the Regimental CP was completely operational and making plans for the next day's operation.

(2) 13 April: The Regiment took OPCON of the 1st Battalion, 8th Cav at LZ WHITE and began reconnaissance in force operations. TF 1/11th ACR left FSB RAWLINGS and deployed its three teams into AO SWORD, slicing the area in a northwesterly direction.

Following the orders in the cover and deception plan, 2/11th ACR ended its feint. The Squadron turned from its direction of march and raced back over the previous day's route, achieving the needed element of surprise. The 2nd of the Blackhorse positioned its CP and How Btry at FSB BRAGG II, and then deployed teams into AO SPEAR in generally a west to east direction.

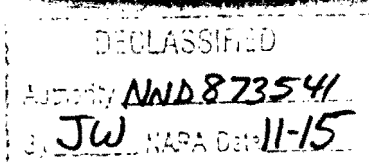
At the same time, G/2/11th ACR, one platoon of H/2/11th ACR, and a squad of 919th Engineers moved from FSB BRAGG II to LZ GRANT. Later they attempted to link up with elements of 1-8th Cav at LZ WHITE. Before entering AO KNIFE, the progress of TM G/2/11th ACR when numerous mines were hit and two AVLB crossings were required. Because of their impeded movement, the team lagged for the night approximately 1 kilometer northeast of LZ GRANT.

The day of 13 April was a busy one for the Air Cavalry Troop. A pink team (1 LOH and 1 AH-1G) was assigned to each of the task forces; also, they conducted an air BDA of B-52 strikes #32004 and #32009 and a ground BDA of strike #32029. At XH426957, while assessing strike #32029, the Aero Rifle Platoon (ARP) engaged an entrenched enemy force, the first significant contact of Operation MONTANA RAIDER. A/1/11th ACR and one platoon of D/2-12 Cav were inserted as reinforcements. After the fighting, 11 NVL KIA and one 60-mm mortar were discovered. US losses were 14 killed and 16 wounded.

(3) 14 April: In contrast to the action of the previous day, 14 April was very quiet. The RIF operations were conducted as planned, but there was no significant contact within the AO. At 0640, B-52 bombers made strike #34002, but later a BDA by the Air Cavalry Troop turned up little significant enemy activity.

(4) 15 April: At dawn, 1st Platoon of the 919th Engineers went to SUOI BA HAO, a tributary of the SAIGON River at XH47550. Using a Case 450 airborne dozer from the 1st Cav Div (AM), they engaged an AVLB and made it possible for C/1/11th ACR to cross the 80-foot gap. C Troop continued on its mission after crossing, but soon after the last track crossed the obstacle, the river bank collapsed and the bridge fell into the river. It would require two feverish days of work by the Engineers to recover the bridge from

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the water. In the meantime, C/1/11th ACR had moved only a short distance from their crossing site to XT447558 when they were hit by an unknown size enemy force firing small arms, RPG's and using tear gas. A/1/11th ACR came forward to the aid of C Troop, supported by TAC Air, artillery, and ARA. In the battle, the NVA had 13 KIA (BC). The US forces had 2 KHA and one M-48 CBL.

In another part of the AO at XT398578, E/2/11th ACR troopers were searching a bunker complex located in dense jungle when they were fired upon by an enemy force estimated at 50-75 men. Supported by TAC Air and ARA, Team E fought until 2000 hours when the enemy broke contact. Friendly losses were 8 US wounded. The next morning the area was swept; no enemy bodies were found but a large cache of munitions was uncovered. Upon investigation it was found that antitank rocket firing lanes had been cut in the jungle. All the principle routes into the area had been mined with 25-lb anti-vehicle, pressure-detonated mines emplaced in circular containers. Two vehicles were lost to these mines.

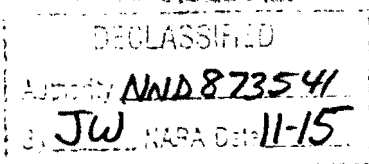
(5) 16 April: There were no significant results on 16 April, but RIF and Area Reconnaissance continued. D/1-5th Cav was airlifted into AO KNIFE to act as a blocking force. At XT447558 near the scene of 15 April's contact, TF 1-8th Cav sent out extensive day and night ambush patrols.

(6) 17 April: Due to intelligence gathered the previous day, the enemy was thought to be located in the southwestern portion of AO KNIFE. To facilitate the movement against these positions, 1/11th ACR was given an AO extension into that area and the Squadron assumed OPCON of all armored teams moving into the suspected area. 1-8th Cav placed four rifle companies in blocking positions for the 1/11th ACR drive to the north. At this time AO SWORD passed from 1/11th ACR control to 2/11th ACR. TF 2/11th ACR placed three troops in blocking positions on the western bank of the SUOI BA HAO.

Further upstream the Engineers had recovered the bridge that had fallen on 15 April. The 1st Squadron TAC CP and the engineer platoon crossed the SUOI BA HAO and proceeded to LZ WHITE. They had moved only as far as XT458583 when they were hit with RPG and small arms fire. Artillery and ARA were called in, and G/2/11th ACR came to reinforce. Before being called, G/2/11th ACR had been conducting reconnaissance operations south of LZ WHITE where they had located a sizeable enemy hospital complex at XT404594. The enemy broke contact at XT458583 in darkness, leaving 1 US killed and 6 US wounded. All the units that had been involved in the fighting spent the night in the contact area. In the morning they swept the area, cleared the bunkers, and found 20 NVA killed and captured 8 NVA.

(7) 18 April: C/1-5th Cav was placed OPCON to 1-8th Cav, providing a 5-company blocking force, as TF 1/11th ACR maneuvered north with TM's A, B, and C/1/11th ACR. By 0930 hours, A and B/1/11th ACR were in contact

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with the enemy at XT433600 and XT436598. The fighting continued throughout the day, while artillery, ARA, and 4 air strikes pounded away at the enemy. The day's results were 74 NVA killed, numerous weapons captured or destroyed, and an additional 2 NVA killed by B/1-8th Cav as they were fleeing northward. The US losses were 7 killed and 30 wounded.

During the day, TF 2/11th ACR remained in the blocking position which it had set up the day before. At XT382561 the platoon of 919th Engineers operating with 2/11th ACR located a large ammunition cache of three 81-mm mortar tubes with 260 81-mm rounds, 1 60-mm mortar, 18 rounds of 57-mm and 75-mm RR ammunition, 1600 rounds of 51 caliber ammunition, and miscellaneous other materials.

(8) 19 April: All elements of the 1st and 2nd Squadrons, 11th ACR, were alerted to move to the vicinity of DAU TIENG for a two day maintenance standdown in preparation for Phase III. C and D/1/11th ACR, G/2/11th ACR, and How/2/11th ACR remained in the field at RON locations.

(9) 20 April: Phase I ended with all elements except How/2/11th ACR moving into the DAU TIENG area for a standdown until 22 April.

(10) 21 April: How/2/11th ACR moved to DAU TIENG from FSB BRAGG II without incident.

b. Phase III: Prior to the beginning this phase of MONTANA RAIDER, a substantial redeployment of forces was necessary. To better support the mission, the Regimental Headquarters, Air Cavalry Troop, and all rear elements were relocated to QUAN LOI.

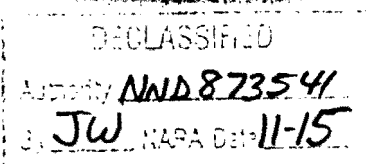
(1) 20 April: The Regimental TAC CP, quartering parties, and an engineer platoon from the 919th Engineers moved from DAU TIENG to QUAN LOI and began their preparations for Phase III.

(2) 21 April: All elements continued the maintenance standdown.

(3) 22 April: The Air Cavalry Troop moved from BIEN HOA to PHU CUONG, to join a convoy composed of 1st and 2nd Squadrons and Regimental Headquarters coming south from DAU TIENG. The convoy pushed northward on Highway 13 to QUAN LOI without incident, completing the 98 mile march in about 12 hours. At BEN CAT D/1/11th ACR left the convoy and M/3/11th ACR took its place. As in earlier moves of this type, FAC's from the 3rd TFW and the Air Cavalry Troop flew overhead. The 1st Squadron linked up with B/2-7th Cav at QUAN LOI and 2/11th ACR joined A/1-8th Cav.

(4) 23 April: All elements spent the day completing their maintenance operations and preparing for Phase III.

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(5) 24 April: Phase III began as TF 1/11th ACR and 2/11th ACR pushed southwest from AN LOC along route 246. In an attempt to speed the movement, elements of the 919th Engineers flew into the TONG LE CHON Special Forces camp and sent out sweep teams northwestward along the road to meet the task force column. During their movement, the Engineers were provided security by the CIDG forces. After progressing slowly, the two squadrons were forced to stop short of their AO. North of LZ RITA (XT540843), TF 1/11th ACR laagered for the night. To the south, TF 2/11th ACR stayed at LZ PHYLLIS (XT532816). How/2/11th ACR was to remain there that night and throughout Phase III.

(6) 25 April: The 2nd Bn, 7th Cav which was constructing LZ JAMIE (XT487721), was placed under the operational control of the Blackhorse. TF 1/11th ACR had no enemy contact on 25 April and stopped at LZ JAMIE before darkness. In TF 2/11th ACR, the CP and the Howitzer Battery remained at LZ PHYLLIS, while the rest of the task force thrust cross country into AO BLADE. As this element entered the AO boundary, it began pushing south along the western edge of the AO conducting area reconnaissance. At predetermined locations, individual troops turned to their eastern flank and sped out searching their own AO. Although TF 2/11th ACR was able to effectively cover its area of operation by this tactic, no enemy contact was gained.

(7) 26 April: In AO ARROW, TF 1/11th ACR spent the day performing aggressive RIF and area reconnaissance operations from their location in LZ JAMIE. To the west, in AO BLADE TF 2/11th ACR transferred its CP to NDP STUD (XT531733). During the day, E/2/11th ACR was fired at by an enemy unit using small arms and automatic weapons. The enemy broke contact immediately, before there were any casualties on either side. In a sweep of the area (XT531733), 6,500 pounds of rice were discovered, of which 5,000 pounds were evacuated intact. In the northwest area of AO BLUE, TF 2-7th Cav began their operation by airlifting A/2-7th Cav into an LZ in the vicinity of XT413801 to exploit B-52 target #32048. When this unit got to XT420792, it was hit with small arms fire which wounded 1 US soldier. After the fight, 1900 pounds of rice were found and evacuated. A few miles away, in AO ARROW, C/1/11th ACR and a platoon of M/3/11th ACR conducted area reconnaissance under the operational control of 2-8th Cav. The Air Cavalry Troop made BDA's of B-52 targets #32048 and #32063 throughout 26 April.

(8) 27th April: At XT426788, two Air Cavalry Troop LOH's were shot down over an enemy base camp. A/2-7th Cav quickly deployed into the area and contacted a well entrenched enemy force. The friendly forces drew back and let TAC Air, artillery, and ARA pound the enemy position. C/1/11th ACR and M/3/11th ACR tried to reinforce by moving north from AO ARROW, but they reached only as far as LZ RITA prior to nightfall. To the west, TF 1/11th ACR continued reconnaissance operations and located large enemy base camps stocked with weapons and food at XT467745 (A/1/11th ACR), and XT462728 (B/1/11th ACR). In these two camps US units recovered 2000 pounds of rice and over 190 individual and crew served weapons. In AO BLADE, TF 2/11th ACR continued to locate many small base camps and bunker complexes.

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(9) 28 April: C/1/11th ACR and M/3/11th ACR pushed along Route 246 toward A/2-7th Cav which had been in heavy contact on 27 April. The going was tough and in one position (XT463819) a blown bridge necessitated emplacing an AVLB. Finally before dark they reached A/2-7th Cav. Meanwhile, artillery continued to hammer at the contact area, supporting A/2-7th Cav. In other operational areas of Phase III, TF 1/11th ACR, TF 2/11th ACR, and TF 2-7th Cav had only sporadic enemy contact. Many small enemy complexes were penetrated and cleared, and at XT516685, E/2/11th ACR located a large hospital complex containing over 6000 pounds of rice.

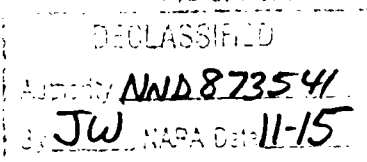
(10) 29 April: B-52 bombers struck target #32063 and later an air BDA indicated that a large enemy complex was hit. Elements in the AO cleared many base camps and bunker complexes. The most significant action occurred as A/2-7th Cav, reinforced with M/3/11th ACR and C/1/11th ACR, re-located (at XT416792) the forces that they had been battling for the two days previous. After the fighting was over, the NVA had lost 40 KIA (BC) and US casualties were 25 KHA. As two platoons of G/2/11th ACR, under the control of the CO of A/1-8th Cav, sped to reinforce A/2-7th Cav in its contact, they were ambushed at 1800 hours just north of LZ WHITE (XT500803). Enemy losses were 9 VC KIA (BC). US losses were 4 KHA and 5 WHA.

(11) 30 April: The battle of the day before continued at XT416792. A/2-7th Cav, still reinforced by C/1/11th ACR and M/3/11th ACR, killed 19 NVA (BC) while suffering 5 US wounded. US units discovered an additional 17 NVA KIA (BC) from the fighting the day before, as well as 6 tons of rice. Because of difficult terrain and downed tanks, G/2/11th ACR was never able to link up with A/2-7th Cav. Within 500 meters of LZ JAMIE (XT478724), elements of B and C/2-7th Cav, reinforced by ACAV's and Sheridans from the 1st Squadron, killed 9 NVA in an extensive three-layer bunker complex. Eleven rifles and 4 RPG-2's were captured in the fighting.

(12) 1 May: M/3/11th ACR, C/1/11th ACR, and C/2-7th Cav, which had replaced A/2-7th Cav, continued sweeps in the area of the previous day's contact. In one of these sweeps, Allied units discovered an additional 10 tons of rice. In the evening at 012030H, the enemy hit the RON location (XT420789) of C/2-7th Cav with 15 82-mm mortar rounds, killing 5 US and wounding 5 more. Elsewhere in the Phase III area of operation, TF 1/11th ACR and TF 2/11th ACR reassembled in the vicinity of LZ RITA and LZ JAMIE in preparation for their withdrawal to laager positions in the AN LOC/QUAN LOI area.

(13) 2 May: The withdrawal retraced the route of original entry into the area at the beginning of Phase III. The move back to QUAN LOI was tedious and slow. The terrain was very difficult and a number of mines slowed the progress even more so that the complete move lasted 20 hours. In an effort to speed the withdrawal, the 919th Engineers constructed a ford across the SAIGON River at TONG LE-CHON (XT624875), and in addition, sweep teams, secured by the ARP's and D/2-7th Cav, were air assaulted in

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advance of the main withdrawing column. When TF 1/11th ACR and TF 2/11th ACR moved into the AN LOC/QUAN LOI area, Phase III was completed and a 4-day maintenance standdown began.

c. Phase II:

(1) 3-6 May: During this busy period US forces carried out extensive maintenance and refitting. To complete maintenance, 1/11th ACR laagered just outside of QUAN LOI (XT810890) and 2/11th ACR established a position 7 kilometers from AN LOC (XT736818). During this period, How/1/11th ACR joined its parent squadron at QUAN LOI, and How/3/11th ACR returned to the LAM SON area. On 6 May, A/2-7th Cav was airlifted into the 1/11th ACR location and remained OPCON throughout Phase II.

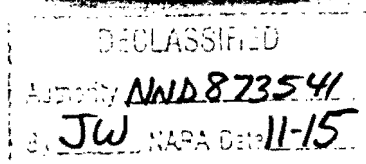
(2) 7 May: Phase II began with the movement of TF 1/11th ACR and TF 2/11th ACR southwest along Route 245, and the entry of TF 1/11th ACR into its AO, AO ANVIL, and TF 2/11th ACR into AO HAMMER. The CP and the Howitzer Battery of 1/11th ACR established FSB GREENE (XT642708). Before the main maneuver portion of TF 1/11th ACR (A and C/1/11th ACR and M/3/11th ACR) reached FSB GREENE, it turned to the west entering AO ANVIL near XT693732. Meanwhile, 2/11th ACR moved into LZ JOE (XT628664) where it linked up with B/5-7th Cav, and from there 2/11th ACR proceeded to FSB DOGPATCH (XT620645) where the CP and Howitzer Battery of 2/11th ACR were located. The maneuver elements of TF 2/11th ACR (E, G, and How/2/11th ACR) were moving along LTL 13 so that they could enter AO HAMMER from the northeast. The 5th Bn of the 7th Cav, still at LZ JOE, became OPCON to the Blackhorse Regiment and continued their local operations in the vicinity of the MINH THANH Rubber Plantation. B/1/11th ACR and one platoon of H/2/11th ACR became OPCON to 5-7th Cav.

(3) 8 May: TF 1/11th ACR and TF 2/11th ACR had no significant contacts or findings as they continued area reconnaissance in their respective AO's. TF 2/11th ACR relocated its Squadron CP and Howitzer Battery to FSB MEADOW BROOK (XT608632). In AO SHIELD, TF 5-7th Cav began area reconnaissance with D/5-7th Cav working the eastern portion after being airlifted to XT668675. To the west of the MINH THANH Plantation in AO-SHIELD, TM's D/1/11th ACR and A/5-7th Cav deployed and swept the area. B-52 bombers flew three missions hitting targets #32083, #32084, and #32085. An air BDA of these areas showed scattered enemy base camps, but none had been used recently.

(4) 9-10 May: In the morning of 9 May, the Regiment began searching the portion of the eastern bank of the SAIGON River that was within their AO. To accomplish this mission, all of TF 1/11th ACR and TF 2/11th ACR with additional infantry units were used, but no contact or finding resulted from the search.

(5) 11 May: Operations were completed in AO BOLT and 5-7th Cav was released to 1st Cav Div (AM). TF 1/11th ACR moved into AO DART, and at the same time 2/11th ACR began operating in AO JAVELIN. TF 1/11th ACR, with

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A, B and C/1/11th ACR, M/3/11th ACR, and A/2-7th Cav, established FSB SAM at XT592610 for its CP and Howitzer Battery. Then A, B, and C/1/11th ACR began sweeping southward. At XT613587, A/1/11th ACR attacked an entrenched enemy force with the additional support of TAC Air, artillery, and ARA. Four enemy were killed in the action. Another element of TF 1/11th ACR, B/1/11th ACR, killed an additional 2 VC in a bunker complex at XT819598. These actions and other information indicated that the enemy was moving eastward, so B and C/1/11th ACR drove north from AO Dart and to the south along AO JAVELIN in an attempt to intercept the enemy movement. In spite of our units' rapid response, the ~~enemy~~ was not found. During the day, TF 2/11th ACR remained at FSB MEADOW BROOK and moved E, G and H/2/11th ACR into AO JAVELIN along LTL 13 and then onto Route 239. The ARP was inserted at XT626532 because of information obtained on an earlier aerial reconnaissance. They immediately met enemy resistance and called in elements of G/2/11th ACR and B/5-7th Cav. Together the units killed 5 NVA and captured 8. One friendly soldier was wounded.

(6) 12 May: TF 1/11th ACR pushed their reconnaissance all day but made no significant contact or finding. In TF 2/11th ACR, E/2/11th ACR found the enemy at XT616570 and killed 5 NVA with no losses to themselves. The ARP was again inserted at XT626532 where it had been so successful the previous day. Together with B/5-7th Cav, under the Air Cavalry Troop's operational control, the ARP located 2 additional NVA bodies and 3 complete 122-mm rockets.

(7) 13 May: TF 1/11th ACR continued operations but gained no contact. 2/11th ACR moved south along Highway 240 to QL 13 at BEN CAT and continued into BIEN HOA.

(8) 14 May: Operations ended. The Regimental Headquarters, Air Cavalry Troop and Squadron TRANS moved back to BIEN HOA from QUAN LOI. A/2-7th Cav and B/5-7th Cav were released back to OPCON 1st Cav Div (AM) and 1/11th ACR, with M/3/11th ACR, moved along the route taken the previous day by 2/11th ACR to BIEN HOA. At 1645 hours, the Regiment was released from OPCON 1st Cav Div (AM) and returned to the OPCON of II FFORCEV for further deployment.

11. (C) RESULTS:

a. Statistical Summary:

(1) Enemy Losses as a Result of Ground Action:

	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KIA	129	97	21	247
PW	6	0	9	15
Rice (tons)	0	42	0	42

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	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Wpns (individual)	10	232	3	245
Wpns (crew served)	7	12	0	19
Ammunition (tons)	1.5	1.5	1	4

(2) Energy Losses as a Result of Air Action:

	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
TAC Air KBA	1	0	5	6
TAC Air KBA (Poss)	12	0	3	15
ACT KBA	13	0	10	23

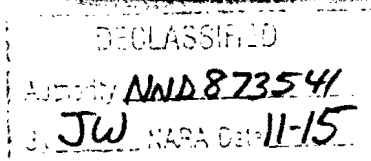
(3) Friendly Losses:

	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KHA	25	18	2	45
WIA	98	102	40	240
Tanks (CBD)	4	8	0	12
Tanks (CBL)	6	2	0	8
M551 (CBD)	2	2	0	4
M551 (CBL)	0	0	1	1
ACAV (CBD)	3	7	0	10
ACAV (CBL)	1	2	0	3
LOH (Dest)	1	2	0	3

b. Phase I: This phase provided valuable information on the disposition of regiments in the 1st NVA Division. Through interrogation, information was obtained on the 82nd Rear Service Group and their food procurement system along the SAIGON River corridor. It is thought that Phase I deterred enemy plans for attacking the DAU TIENG area, while forcing the advance elements of the 18B NVA Regiment out of staging areas north of DAU TIENG.

c. Phase III: In this phase of the operation, thirteen major caches were located. This deprived the enemy of a large quantity of food and ammuni-

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tion and put a severe strain on his logistical system. One of the larger finds was the extensive medical facility consisting of four operating rooms and twenty-five bunkers with interconnecting tunnels. Significant intelligence gathered during Phase III came from documents captured on 27 April, originating from Headquarters, 96th NVA Artillery Regiment. These included hand traced maps showing enemy firing positions used to rocket LAI KHE and DAU TIENG. Other documents captured throughout the area of operations provided useful intelligence on the operations and missions of the 82nd Rear Service Group.

Although the intelligence results were relatively light, the extensive reconnaissance that was conducted provided higher headquarters with information on an area that had not recently been explored.

d. Phase II: More information was gained on the activities of the 96th Artillery Regiment and the 82nd Rear Service Group. The most useful intelligence gathered during Phase II came from the nine captured prisoners. Six of the prisoners were from the 96th Artillery Regiment, and were transporting eight rockets to the LAI KHE area when captured. Three of the rockets were captured and five were destroyed by airstrikes. Identification of transportation elements of the 82nd Rear Service Group came from two prisoners captured on 22 May.

The most significant intelligence, however, came with the capture of LY THAI HIEN on 12 May. HIEN had been with the Viet Cong for twenty years. He held the rank of Senior Captain and served as the Political Security Chief for VC Sub-Region 1. This man is capable of providing much valuable information, and was transferred for exploitation by the South Vietnamese Government.

12. (C) COMBAT SUPPORT:

a. Artillery:

(1) The following units provided direct or general artillery support during Operation MONTANA RAIDER:

DIRECT SUPPORT

How/1/11 ACR
How/2/11 ACR
How/3/11 ACR
C Co, 2nd Bn, 19th Arty

GENERAL SUPPORT

A Co, 1st Bn, 27th Arty
A Co, 6th Bn, 27th Arty
A Co, 1st Bn, 21st Arty
C Co, 1st Bn, 77th Arty
A Co, 3rd Bn, 197th Arty

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(2) Types of Missions: Contact-close support accounted for 50% of the missions in all phases of Operation MONTANA RAIDER. Intelligence targets on B-52 strikes, radar readings, and "sniffer" missions comprised 24% of all missions, precision firing on bunker complexes and base camps accounted for 20%, and the remaining missions were registrations, marking rounds and defensive concentrations.

(3) New Techniques: An O-3 liaison officer was placed in each squadron headquarters for controlling and coordinating artillery fires. Also, an FSE was established at Regimental level for control and coordination of artillery in and around the areas of operation. The FSE was staffed by a lieutenant colonel, a major, 2 captains and 8 EM.

(4) Timeliness and Effectiveness: Poor communications during nearly half of Operation MONTANA RAIDER made clearance of fires and timeliness of fires comparatively slow. When communications were functioning correctly, the artillery response was satisfactory.

The majority of missions were close-in fires on bunkers and bunker complexes in heavily forested areas. Consequently, the 155-mm artillery fire was only marginally effective. When using delay fuze, the results were adequate but not overwhelming. 105-mm Howitzers could not do damage underground.

(5) Problem Areas:

(a) Forward Observers: It was impossible to fully utilize the FO on the ground. He could not see or direct artillery fire through the dense jungle terrain.

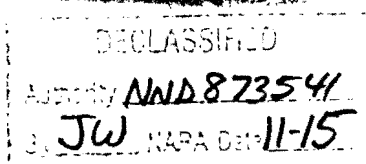
(b) Communications: Artillery frequencies were continually a problem. All frequencies used were shared by other units. The enormous amount of traffic on artillery frequencies made it essential to have a discrete frequency.

(6) Evaluation: The artillery moving with the ground troops made a substantial contribution to the success of Operation MONTANA RAIDER. 11th ACR troops were constantly under the range capabilities of their organic artillery support units. Close-in support and blocking fires consistently aided the troops in fixing the enemy in one place. Base camps and bunker complexes were destroyed or exploited after artillery bombardment. This method devastated the area and kept the NVA underground until troops were over them.

b. Air Force:

(1) Sorties Flown:

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Reconnaissance	58	63	31	152
Fighter Support	51	54	22	127



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(2) Munitions Expended (Rounds):

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
M-117	106	106	44	256
M-82	176	132	16	324
Napalm	30	50	28	108

(3) Bomb Damage Assessment:

	<u>PI</u>	<u>PIII</u>	<u>PII</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Bunkers Destroyed	100	127	45	272
Bunkers Damaged	48	44	6	98
Fighting Positions Destroyed	3	4	2	9
TrenchLine Uncovered (meters)	145	280	0	425
Confirmed KBA	1	0	5	6

c. Engineers:

(1) Task Organization: During Operation MONTANA RAIDER, the 1st Platoon of the 919th Engineer Company was in direct support of 1st Squadron, 11th ACR, and 3rd Platoon of the 919th Engineer Company was in direct support of 2nd Squadron, 11th ACR. Regimental Headquarters received support from the 4th Platoon, 919th Engineers.

(2) General: On 12 April, going by way of PHU CUONG and CU CHI to TAY NINH, the 1st Platoon left FEB HOLIDAY INN with 1/11th ACR. Later that day, they laagered at XT299518. On 13 April, while the line troops moved into the AO, the 1st Platoon escorted fuel tankers to a collection point and then proceeded to the jump CP location. Enroute, The Engineer M48A3 tank burned out a final drive. While dragging the tank back to DAU TIENG that night, the platoon came under a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire. Fire was returned and the platoon ran the ambush to RON at DAU TIENG.

On 14 April, the platoon, minus the M48A3 tank, left DAU TIENG for the jump CP location. Upon arrival, the Engineers were immediately place OPCON to C/1/11th ACR and moved out to RON at XT415543. Early the following day, the Engineers traveled to SUOI BA HAO, a tributary of the SAIGON River. Using a Case 450 dozer, the platoon emplaced an AVLB across an 80-foot gap (XT447550) and crossed C Troop. Immediately after the last tank crossed, the banks of the river collapsed and the bridge fell into the river. The next day, after RON at the bridge with 1st Platoon of A Troop, 11th ACR, the

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Engineers worked feverishly to recover and re-emplace the bridge for A and B Troops to cross and reinforce C Troop's contact. Finally by noon on 17 April, the bridge was ready once more and A and B Troops crossed without incident. With all the vehicles across, the Engineers picked up the AVLB.

The Engineers were joined by the CP element and escorted the CP north along the west bank of the SAIGON River enroute to LZ WHITE. Suddenly, in thick jungle at XT455585, the Engineers made contact with an estimated NVA battalion in heavily fortified bunkers. The Engineers engaged the enemy and a fierce firefight ensued for the next three hours. A final sweep of the area revealed 21 NVA KIA, 6 NVA PW's, and numerous enemy weapons captured at the loss of 1 US killed and 6 US wounded. Numerous blood trails indicated that the enemy may have lost many more.

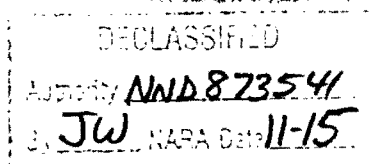
On the morning of 18 April, the platoon destroyed twenty well fortified 15' x 20' x 6' bunkers and again proceeded with the CP to LZ WHITE, where they arrived at approximately 1130 hours. On 19 April, they left LZ WHITE with C and G Troops and proceeded north to LTL 13. On 20 April, they conducted a minesweep west along LTL 13 from XT393630 to XT331573. Finishing the sweep, the platoon road marched back to DAU TIENG with 1/11th ACR for a two day standdown.

On 12 April, 3rd Plt/919th Engrs received word to move to DAU TIENG with 2/11th ACR to participate in the operation. Moving via PHU LOI, PHU CUONG, and CU CHI, they arrived and laagered in the vicinity of LZ GRANT. For several days the 3rd Platoon conducted minesweeps along LTL 13 and Route 243, and participated in recovering disabled vehicles. The Engineers also pushed up 500 meters of berm and dug one power sump as well as one drainage sump for the Howitzer Battery. During 17 and 18 April, the Platoon remained as reserve for demolition duty. The Platoon destroyed 60 bunkers, 1500 pounds of rice, 20 pounds of tetrytol, 600 rounds 51 caliber ammunition, 70 boxes of mortar fuses, and 250 assorted mortar rounds. On 20 April, the 3rd Platoon proceeded to DAU TIENG with 2/11th ACR for a maintenance stand-down.

During Phase I, 4th Plt/919th Engrs remained in general support of Blackhorse Base Camp. However, one bulldozer did accompany the 11th ACR Headquarters to DAU TIENG to prepare an ammunition dump and dig bunkers and fighting positions for the Blackhorse TOC.

On 22 April, 1st Plt/919th Engrs once again marched with 1/11th ACR, this time from DAU TIENG via PHU CUONG to AN LOC. The beginning of MONTANA RAIDER Phase III on 24 April found the 1st Squadron moving west while the Engineers were being deployed along Route 246 for minesweeping operations. For the next few days the 1st Platoon cleared the route to LZ JAMIE and then continued minesweeping between LZ JAMIE and AN LOC. On the evening of 27 April, the majority of the 1st Platoon was air assaulted to XT467798 to emplace an AVLB. Upon arrival, however, the stream was discovered to be impossible to cross at that point. In order to extract C Troop from that

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area, the platoon of Engineers moved back, replaced the AVLB, and then withdrew to LZ RITA where their ACAV's and tank joined them the next day. Early in the morning on 29 April, the Engineers, along with C Troop and M Company, assaulted the bunker complex that had kept 2-7th Inf pinned down for three days. At the end of the day, 59 NVA had been killed at the expense of 1 Engineer dead and 5 wounded. On 30 April, the armored teams and Engineers returned to the contact area and swept through the base camp. They found and destroyed numerous enemy munitions and supplies. That evening, while moving out of the bunker complex, the Engineers made contact with an NVA squad resulting in 6 NVA KIA and no Engineer casualties. The next day the 1st Platoon pulled back to LZ RITA and on 2 May they returned to QUAN LOI where they began a maintenance standdown.

On 22 April, the 3rd Platoon of the 919th Engineers once again was on the move, this time to AN LOC via CU CHI and PHU CUONG. On 24 April, Phase III began and the 3rd Platoon left AN LOC and arrived at their new AO by nightfall. During this phase the Engineers conducted minesweeps, vehicle recovery missions and demolition duties. They returned to AN LOC on 2 May to begin a maintenance standdown.

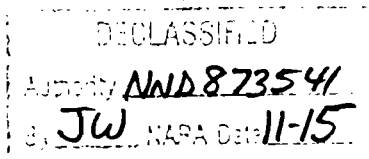
On 18 April, two squads of the 4th Platoon, 919th Engineer Company, were dispatched to QUAN LOI to support the Regimental Headquarters during Phases II and III of the operation. At QUAN LOI the following day they began construction on underground bunkers for the Headquarter's personnel, 1 20' x 40' bunker for the TOC, 9 each 10' x 10', 10' x 20', and 20' x 30' bunkers, and a road to the Air Section's maintenance area. Their efforts were greatly responsible for the negative casualties resulting from the numerous rocket attacks at QUAN LOI.

MONTANA RAIDER, Phase II began on 7 May. The 1st Flt/919th Engrs left QUAN LOI and preceded the 1st Squadron to their proposed laager position at XT642707. The Engineers immediately began construction of what was to become FSB GREENE. When 1/11th ACR arrived, the platoon had finished the berm, land clearing, had constructed a Chinook lift pad and VIP pad, dug a sump, and cleared fields of fire. During the remainder of Phase II, the 1st Platoon conducted minesweeps, escorted resupply convoys, and inserted AVLB's to facilitate the resupply of 1st Squadron.

On 7 May, the 3rd Flt/919th Engrs left AN LOC and traveled south along Route 245. At XT624705 the Engineers inserted an AVLB to cross the 2nd Squadron and then proceeded south through the MINH THANH Rubber Plantation, leaving the bridge with 1st Flt/919th Engrs. In the days that followed, the 3rd Platoon constructed two NDP's for the 2nd Squadron and conducted several minesweeps.

The 4th Platoon continued their support of Regimental Headquarters. On the night of 12 May at QUAN LOI Base Camp, the 11th ACR Headquarters came under attack from an unknown size enemy force which had breached the perimeter wire. Reacting to this threat to the TOC, the 4th Platoon was immediately

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dispatched to the berm and engaged the enemy with organic weapons. They killed and wounded many, and drove off the rest. At daylight, a sweep of the battlefield revealed 12 NVA KIA, numerous blood trails and a tremendous volume of munitions left behind, at the loss of one engineer killed and one wounded. On 14 May, along with Regimental Headquarters, the 4th Platoon left QUAN LOI enroute to BIEN HOA. Operation MONTANA RAIDER had been completed.

(3) Problem Areas:

(a) Employment of the AVLB: Several times bridge sites were chosen by commanders and the engineer platoons were told to emplace an AVLB at that point. In most every instance, either the stream was too wide, or the banks were untrafficable, thus delaying the operation considerably. It was suggested that the engineer officer who would insert the AVLB, be allowed to perform a visual reconnaissance well in advance of the proposed emplacement. In addition, the engineers should direct traffic across the bridge to prevent armor commanders from abusing them.

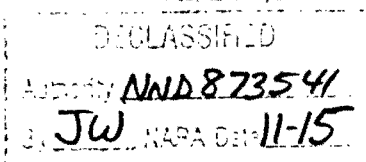
(b) 1½-ton Cargo Trailer: 1½-ton Cargo Trailers proved again to be the wrong vehicle for armor operations. There is not enough room in an ACAV for an engineer squad, tools and equipment. The trailer would be adequate on roads alone, but roads are not traditional cavalry terrain. An M548 tracked cargo carrier per platoon would ease this current and recurring mobility problem.

13. (C) ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Resupply: DAU TIENG was selected to be the Regimental forward support base for Phase I because of its proximity to the area of operations. The base had no ASP and only limited Class III storage capacity. The S-4 and the Food Service Officer flew to DAU TIENG prior to the Regiment's arrival and coordinated with the 25th S&T Battalion for Class I, III and IIIA resupply. Arrangements were made to through-put Class V from the 3rd Ordnance Battalion at LONG BINH on a daily basis. Transportation Orders for the first four days of the operation were turned in to the depot prior to leaving BIEN HOA. The quantities requested were calculated to cover daily expenditures and to gradually build up a small stock commensurate with the limited storage capacity built at the base. Subsequent requests were based on daily expenditures and were called in to LONG BINH in the evening for delivery 5 days later. The 5-day delay between request and delivery necessitated telephonic changes due to sudden draw-downs of particular items but, in general, the system worked well and delivered an average of 70 tons of ammunition a day. There were no Class II or IV facilities available at DAU TIENG. These items were shipped from LONG BINH.

All resupply from DAU TIENG to the units was carried out by CH-47, requiring 35 to 40 sorties a day to lift an average of 140 tons. Resupply was responsive as turn-around times averaged 20 minutes.

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The Regimental TRANS supported Phases II and III from QUAN LOI. Again the S-4, assistant S-4 and the Food Service Officer flew to QUAN LOI to coordinate Classes I, III and limited Class IV with the 15th S&S Battalion, 2nd FSSE and Class V with the 3rd Ordnance Battalion ASP prior to the Regiment's arrival. During Phase III all resupply was brought forward to the units by CH-47. Due to the long turn-around time (average 45 minutes), four CH-47's were required to fly the 35 to 40 daily sorties and it was necessary to resupply throughout the day. This lack of responsiveness caused by the extreme distance from the forward supply base to the area of operations had an adverse effect on tactical operations. The situation was alleviated somewhat by fixed wing delivery of Howitzer ammunition during Phase II. Ammunition was requested through the 1st Cavalry Division Support Command which arranged for delivery to a fixed wing strip near the firing batteries. The batteries picked up their ammunition at the strip and transported it in organic M548 Cargo Carriers. Although fixed wing supply took much of the pressure off helicopter resupply, it proved unreliable and CH-54 and CH-47 sorties were flown from QUAN LOI to fill the gaps.

b. Maintenance: To provide maintenance support for Operation MONTANA RAIDER, the 140th Maintenance Company Contact Team was increased from 25 to 36 men, and an M-88 VTR was added to give heavy lift and recovery capability. Major assemblies, such as tank and ACAV engines and transmissions were loaded on S&P trailers and moved with the contact team. The increases in support maintenance personnel and the procedure of having major assemblies on hand, gave good response time even though the Regiment was working up to 70 miles from their normal maintenance/supply support in LONG BINH.

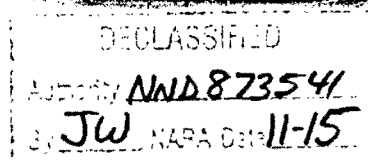
The Regiment moved initially to DAU TIENG and coordination was made with the 94th Maintenance Company Contact Team there. This contact team could provide only a limited source of repair parts on a fill or kill basis, but it was an ideal point of contact for maintenance and supply messages being passed to and from LONG BINH. Cooperation was excellent and a very good working relationship developed between the 140th and 94th Contact Teams.

When the Regiment moved to QUAN LOI for phases II and III of Operation MONTANA RAIDER, completely new maintenance areas had to be set up, new communication channels established, and repair parts started in new convoy routes. The 610th Maintenance Company Contact Team at QUAN LOI provided limited repair parts supply on a fill or kill basis. Communications to LONG BINH proved to be one of the biggest problems at QUAN LOI and it was a continuous battle to get maintenance and supply status through on the telephone circuits.

During Phases II and III, there were no roads open for maintenance personnel and parts to go forward, so extensive use was made of aerial lift to transport parts and people to the field. The CH-54 "Sky Crane" was used in the closing days of the operation to evacuate damaged M13A1's to QUAN LOI by air rather than by dragging them in with the combat elements.

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Retrograde of combat loss vehicles was extremely difficult from both DAU TIENG and QUAN LOI. Tank transporters were in short supply, and a minimum of two days turn-around time was experienced at DAU TIENG and QUAN LOI. Shortage of tie-down equipment added to the evacuation problems. When the vehicles were evacuated to LONG BINH, there was another delay on turning them in to the CC&S point because of the lack of personnel in the rear area and the amount of paperwork involved.

c. Personnel and Administration: During Operation MONTANA RAIDER, the S-1 element of the jump CP departed BIEN HOA to DAU TIENG with one captain and one sergeant first class. Difficulties in communications and erratic courier service created problems which had not been encountered by this same team in the previous operation, ATLAS WEDGE. The length and magnitude of the operation was marked by a substantial increase in the number and importance of visitors. The resultant increase in protocol affairs alone necessitated the Adjutant's presence, and an increase in personnel to one major, one captain, one sergeant first class, one sergeant/security, and two clerk/drivers.

During the operation, the forward S-1 was engaged in preparation of the Regimental Commander's correspondence, casualty reporting, liaison with UPO at BIEN HOA to provide immediate replacements for hard hit units, and to redistribute personnel assets. Courier aircraft were scheduled and controlled; however, distribution was handled by the Communications Platoon.

At DAU TIENG and again at QUAN LOI, barbers were provided in adequate numbers for the troops as they returned to the base area for maintenance standdowns. No significant problems were noted in the area of discipline, law and order. Red Cross girls were provided at every opportunity from BIEN HOA, TAY NINH, and LAI KHE.

During the three phases of the operation, twenty-nine 11th ACR personnel were killed, eight of whom were track commanders. Sixteen additional US soldiers died while under the operational control of the 11th ACR. A total of 240 men were wounded, 90 from OPCON units and 150 from the 11th ACR. Thirty-four track commanders were wounded.

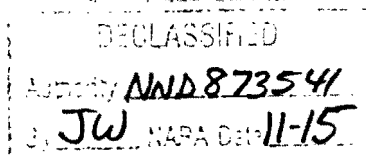
14. (C) PERTINENT OR UNUSUAL ASPECTS OF THE OPERATION:

a. During Phases I and II, most of the operational areas had not previously been penetrated by armor vehicles.

b. In contrast to the enemy base areas in the LAM SON, CATCHER'S MITT, and MICHELIN, the enemy stood fast and fought rather than attempt to break contact and withdraw.

c. This operation reinforced the theory that fortified enemy base camps should not be attacked by infantry alone; the mobility and firepower of armored vehicles is necessary both for penetration of these areas and the reduction of friendly casualties.

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d. During the operation, the Regiment moved over 1000 miles. Over 200 miles were on the roads, while nearly 800 miles involved jungle breaking operations including close enemy contact.

e. Throughout the operation, the need for extensive engineer support was constantly demonstrated. Engineers were invaluable for route reconnaissance, mine clearing, preparation of river crossing sites, clearing of landing zones, and construction of NDP's and base areas. The AVLB proved to be a key vehicle throughout the operation.

f. Most of the operation took place in heavily jungled areas without accessible or secure land LOC's. Squadrons relied heavily on M578's and M88's (recovery vehicles) to maintain the combat effectiveness of the armored vehicles over a sustained period of time.

g. Again the marriage of TAC Air, the helicopter, tank, ACAV, and the foot soldier provided an effective combat team for operations in a jungle environment.

15. (C) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. OBSERVATION: Area reconnaissance vs zone reconnaissance.

EVALUATION: When time and terrain permit, area reconnaissance is much more effective than zone reconnaissance. A zone reconnaissance permits the enemy to move in front of the advancing force thereby avoiding detection. Area reconnaissance provides for more troops in and around a given area, thereby increasing chances for making contact.

RECOMMENDATION: Whenever possible, ~~area~~ reconnaissance should be conducted in lieu of zone reconnaissance.

b. OBSERVATION: Need for infantry.

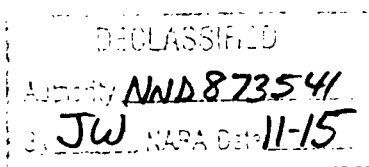
EVALUATION: The TO&E of an armored cavalry troop does not provide for adequate infantry forces needed for searching and clearing bunker complexes or providing adequate flank security for armored columns involved in extensive jungle busting operations.

RECOMMENDATION: Dismounted infantry elements should continue to be cross attached with armored elements whenever possible.

c. OBSERVATION: Tanks need highest manning priority.

EVALUATION: Tanks and M551's cannot effectively fight with less than 4-man crews although ACAV's can. Furthermore, tanks are required whenever jungle busting is involved. M551's and ACAV's are less critical.

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RECOMMENDATION: Manning priorities for armored vehicles should be in order: tanks, M551's, and ACAV's.

d. OBSERVATION: Keep crews with disabled vehicles.

EVALUATION: Often crew members of broked down or damaged vehicles are transferred to other vehicles. Once a vehicle is repaired, it often takes considerable time to round up its crew so that it can be re-employed.

RECOMMENDATION: When vehicles become inoperative, the crews should remain with them until they are repaired and ready to fight.

e. OBSERVATION: Use of disabled vehicles.

EVALUATION: Throughout the operation, vehicles that were damaged were evacuated to central NDP's and RON positions. They were then employed in a static defensive role around these positions thereby releasing more operational vehicles for combat operations. At some points in the operation, as many as 10 or 12 disabled vehicles were the primary defense around NDP's and RON positions.

RECOMMENDATION: Disabled vehicles, whenever possible, should be employed in static defensive roles.

f. OBSERVATION: Importance of engineer vehicles.

EVALUATION: Throughout the operation AVLB's, CEV's, and D7 dozers were used extensively. The Armored Vehicle Launched Bridge (AVLB) was probably the single most important vehicle in this operation. A total of 17 gaps were bridged throughout the entire operation. The CEV was frequently used to clear landing zones, improve AVLB crossing sites and provide security for engineer mine sweep teams. D7 dozers were constantly used for clearing firing positions for artillery batteries, clearing fields of fire around perimeters, and constructing fords.

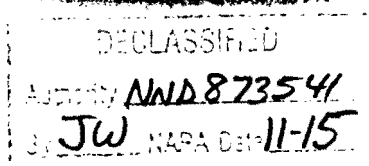
RECOMMENDATION: Adequate organic engineer support should always be provided to the Squadrons when on operations such as MONTANA RAIDER.

g. OBSERVATION: Importance of VTR's.

EVALUATION: Throughout the operation adequate LOC's into the AO's were practically nonexistent. Extensive maintenance and recovery operations were by necessity performed in the field. Extensive M578 and M88 support was required to maintain combat effectiveness.

RECOMMENDATION: Every effort should be made to provide the maximum VTR support possible to forward elements involved in similar operations.

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h. OBSERVATION: Most effective combat team.

EVALUATION: The most effective organization for combat during jungle busting operations is a headquarters element (Trp/Co), tank section or platoon, reconnaissance platoon, infantry platoon, and an AVLB and M132 Zippo if practical. This team provides speed, firepower, staying power, and the ability to effectively break jungle. The infantry is most adapted to provide security for the armored vehicles and search enemy complexes.

RECOMMENDATION: Balanced teams, to include infantry, tanks, ACAV's, and special purpose vehicles provide the most effective organization for combat during jungle busting operations.

i. OBSERVATION: Establish and maintain contact.

EVALUATION: The importance of air cavalry to establish and maintain contact ~~cannot be overemphasized~~. Air cavalry is constantly required to scout the areas, find targets, locate routes for reinforcements, as well as guide tanks and armored vehicles through the jungle.

RECOMMENDATION: Whenever possible, pink teams (1 LOH and 1 cobra) should be placed in direct support of advancing ground elements.

j. OBSERVATION: Reaction time.

EVALUATION: Although tanks and ACAV's provide the most effective reaction force, often considerable time is required for linkup, especially in heavy jungle. The decision to reinforce with armor should be made early to allow for this time lapse.

RECOMMENDATION: Don't hesitate when deciding whether or not to reinforce with armor.

k. OBSERVATION: Logistical tail wags tactical dog.

EVALUATION: Extensive jungle busting operations take a heavy toll on all types of armored vehicles. This is especially true of tanks which are always placed in the lead. Mines, RPG's and maintenance failures make sustained operations for longer than 10 days almost impossible.

RECOMMENDATION: Extensive jungle busting operations should be limited to 7 - 10 days. Adequate time for maintenance rehabilitation should be provided subsequently.

l. OBSERVATION: Food container, disposable, FSN 7360-999-3860, was introduced to the 11th ACR during Operation MONTANA RAIDER by CW2 Fryer, Food Service Advisor.

EVALUATION: The disposable food container is a styrofoam-lined cardboard box which holds three polyethylene bags to keep food warm for field serving. It holds up well under normal handling and has the same

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capacity as the standard Mer Mac insulated food container. Once it's used, it is thrown away or burned so it presents no cleaning or sanitation problem and requires no backhaul aircraft. It was first used extensively in Operation MONTANA RAIDER and was enthusiastically accepted by mess personnel of the 11th ACR and OPCON units.

RECOMMENDATION: All ground units, particularly those with limited air assets should requisition these items well in advance of extended field operations and should have enough to provide to OPCON units.

m. OBSERVATION: Water Container, air droppable, 3 gal, FSN1670-832-5917, was introduced to the 11th ACR during Operation MONTANA RAIDER.

EVALUATION: The 3 gal water container consists of a package of polyethylene tubes with tubes, and can be dropped from tree-top level with little chance of breakage to troops who have no LZ. It was used to some extent by the Aero Rifle Platoon of the Air Cavalry Troop, but it is only of limited value to the tank and ACAV troops who can clear their own LZ.

RECOMMENDATION: Infantry units can most benefit by use of this item, but the 11th ACR can use it for OPCON units and emergency resupply.

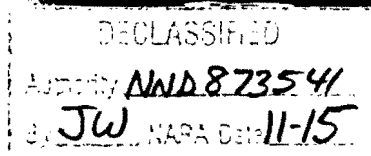
n. OBSERVATION: The CH-54 "Flying Crane" was utilized to evacuate three inoperative M113A1's during the operation.

EVALUATION: To evacuate a M113A1 by CH-54, it must be pulled to a secure LZ, the engine removed and the tracks taken off. This necessarily takes some time and planning, but if the choice is between this and dragging it over 20 miles of jungle roads with another combat vehicle, air evacuation is far superior.

RECOMMENDATION: All mechanized units should be briefed on preparation and slinging of the M113A1, so that the option of air evacuation is open to them.

15. (C). COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS: In Operation MONTANA RAIDER the sources of intelligence used by the Regiment were required to be those which could provide immediately exploitable information. The only two sources of intelligence which met this requirement were visual reconnaissance and information provided by prisoners and documents. Prior to deploying forces into any of the areas of operations, the Air Cavalry Troop flew extensive visual reconnaissance missions. Sightings made by the Air Cavalry Troop were used to plan ground operations, and target B-52 and TAC Air strikes. Once contacts were initiated in enemy base areas, the Air Cavalry Troop served to direct ground elements around obstacles and to enemy positions. Prisoners and documents provided the Regiment with Order of Battle information; however, through rapid interrogation, information from prisoners was provided to commanders in the field and served to assist ground operations.

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Other intelligence sources--Red Haze, SLAR, Sniffer, and agents, were unable to provide the immediate and readily exploitable information required by the Regiment.

In respect to intelligence gathering, Operation MONTANA RAIDER was a modest success. Phase I produced significant intelligence of the dispositions of the regiments of the 1st NVA Division. The interrogations conducted also provided useful information on the food procurement system of the 82nd Rear Service Group along the SAIGON River corridor. In Phase II we were unable to confirm the presence of the 7th NVA Division elements in the MINH THANH area, however, we were able to define the routes of travel and the cache locations used in the movement of rockets by the 82nd Rear Service Group between Cambodia and LAI KHE. In Phase III, our intelligence confirmed the presence and activities of the 82nd Rear Service Group in the area. The thirteen caches that were located during Phase III deprived the enemy of large quantities of food and ammunition, and put a severe strain on his logistical system.

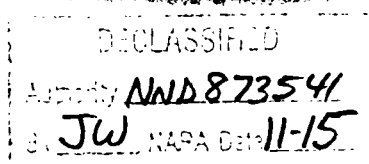
Despite the logistical problems encountered working in these remote areas, resupply was generally smooth and responsive. Careful coordination with local support units and the LONG BINH Depot kept the Regiment adequately supplied in spite of the five-day time lag between ordering and receipt of supplies. Extensive use of CH-47 and CH-54 helicopters for vehicle recovery and resupply lightened the problem of shortages in recovery vehicles and unsecure or impassible secondary roads.

Operation MONTANA RAIDER was a successful example of a Cover and Deception Plan. During Phase I, the enemy was misled into believing that the Regiment intended to operate in the vicinity of NUI BA DEN. The plan included the "loss" of fabricated overlays and the use of fictitious security slips in radio transmissions. Ground elements were moved toward NUI BA DEN and visual reconnaissance was made in that area. Once the Regiment arrived in the DAU TIENG area, the 1st and 2nd Squadrons moved along the road toward NUI BA DEN, but on the following morning they swung south across the previous day's route, surprising the enemy forces in the DAU TIENG area.

In Phase II of the operation, another Cover and Deception Plan was drawn up indicating that the Regiment intended to operate in the AN LOC area. When the 1st and 2nd Squadrons left their standdown positions on 7 May, they moved toward the proposed area but then swung sharply south into MINH THANH. This overall deception plan in conjunction with actual planned operations, reduced the probability of encountering mines and ambushes and allowed the Regiment to capitalize on its speed and mobility.

Operation MONTANA RAIDER proved that "there are no untankable areas". Much of the operation was conducted in heavily jungled terrain laced with numerous water obstacles. Although specific areas proved the match for the armored vehicles, within all AO's considerable terrain existed which could effectively be penetrated by ACAV's and Sheridan's preceded by tanks.

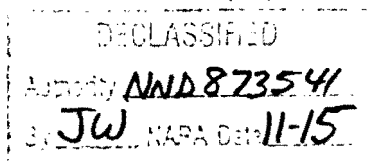
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MONTANA RAIDER demonstrated the ability of an Armored Cavalry Regiment, reinforced by infantry and air cavalry, to effectively conduct sustained operations in heavily jungled areas. MONTANA RAIDER accomplished the mission of locating enemy base camps and destroying the personnel and material found in them. MONTANA RAIDER cost the enemy dearly as reflected in the total enemy losses for the operation.

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INCLOSURE I

Task Organization Outline

12 April

The 11th ACR(-) moved to the DAU TIENG area under the following task organization:

<u>1/11 ACR</u>	<u>2/11 ACR</u>	<u>Regt Con</u>
A/1/11 ACR	E/2/11 ACR	Air Cav Trp
C/1/11 ACR	G/2/11 ACR	919 Engr(-)
D/1/11 ACR -	H/2/11 ACR -	HQ, 8-6 Arty (DS)
Plt/919 Engr(-)	Plt/919 Engr	How/2/11 ACR
		How/3/11 ACR

Upon arrival in the DAU TIENG area, 1/11 ACR assumed OPCON of C/1-8 Cav and 2/11 ACR assumed OPCON of A/1-8 Cav. B/1/11 ACR moved separately from the SAIGON-TSN area and became OPCON 2/11 ACR.

13 April

Operations in Phase I were initiated under the following task organization:

<u>TF 1/11 ACR</u>	<u>TF 2/11 ACR</u>	<u>TF 4-8 Cav</u>	<u>Regt Con</u>
A/1/11 ACR	E/2/11 ACR	B/1-8 Cav	Air Cav Trp
C/1/11 ACR	H/2/11 ACR	D/1-8 Cav	919 Engr(-)
D/1/11 ACR	B/1/11 ACR	E/1-8 Cav	HQ, 8-6 Arty (DS)
C/1-8 Cav -	A/1-8 Cav -	D/2-12 Cav	How/2/11 ACR
Plt/919 Engr(-)	Plt/919 Engr(-)	G/2/11 ACR	How/3/11 ACR
		Plt/H/2/11 ACR	C/2-19 Arty
		Sqd/919 Engr	

14 April

Plt B/1-8 Cav released OPCON 1-8 Cav.
Plt B/1-8 Cav OPCON 1/11 ACR.

15 April

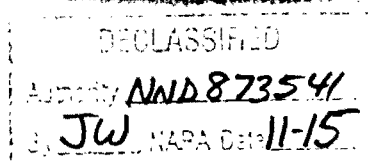
A/1/11 ACR(-), C/1/11 ACR(-), 2 Plts/D/1/11 ACR & Plt/C/1-8 Cav released OPCON 1/11 ACR.
A/1/11 ACR(-), C/4/11 ACR(-), 2 Plts/D/1/11 ACR & Plt/C/1-8 Cav OPCON 1-8 Cav.
B/2-7 Cav OPCON 1-8 Cav.

16 April

D/1-5 Cav OPCON 1-8 Cav.

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D/1/11 ACR (-2), Plt/A/1/11 ACR, & Plt/C/1/11 ACR released OPCON 1/11 ACR.
 D/1/11 ACR (-2), Plt/A/1/11 ACR, & Plt/C/1/11 ACR OPCON 2/11 ACR.
 Plt/D/1-5 Cav released OPCON 1-8 Cav.
 Plt/D/1-5 Cav OPCON 2/11 ACR.
 A/1/11 ACR(-), C/1/11 ACR(-), Plt/C/1/11 ACR, 2 Plt/D/1/11 ACR & Plt/C/1-8 Cav released OPCON 1-8 Cav.
 A/1/11 ACR(-), C/1/11 ACR(-), Plt/C/1/11 ACR, 2 Plt/D/1/11 ACR & Plt/C/1-8 Cav OPCON 1/11 ACR.
 B/1/11 ACR(-) released OPCON 2/11 ACR.
 B/1/11 ACR(-) OPCON 1/11 ACR.

18 April

C/1-5 Cav OPCON 1-8 Cav.

19 April

RIF operations were terminated on 19 April as units moved towards DAU TIENG for a 2 day maintenance standdown.

<u>1/11 ACR</u>	<u>2/11 ACR</u>	<u>Regt Con</u>
A/1/11 ACR	E/2/11 ACR	Air Cav Trp
B/1/11 ACR	G/2/11 ACR	919 Engr(-)
C/1/11 ACR	H/2/11 ACR	HQ, 8-6 Arty (DS)
D/1/11 ACR -	Plt/919 Engr	How/2/11 ACR
Plt/919 Engr(-)		How/3/11 ACR

20 - 21 April

No change.

22 April

Upon arrival in the QUAN LOI area, 1/11 ACR assumed OPCON of B/2-7 Cav and 2/11 ACR assumed OPCON of A/1-8 Cav.

23 April

D/1/11 ACR released OPCON 1/11 ACR.
 M/3/11 ACR OPCON 1/11 ACR.

24 April

The Regiment moved into the AO for Phase III with no change in task organization.

25 April

Operations in Phase III were initiated under the following task organization:

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