

RG 472
11th ACR
3d Sqd, Org Hist
67-69
Box 1

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 11TH ARMORED CAVALRY REGIMENT
APO San Francisco 96257

AVIC-CO

15 December 1969

SUBJECT: Recommendation for Award of the Valorous Unit Award

Commanding General
II Field Force Vietnam
APO San Francisco 96266

1. 3d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment is recommended for award of the Valorous Unit Award for gallant and courageous action against a hostile force on 7 September 1969, in the An Loc area of operations.

2. Acting on information provided by a Noi Chanh on 7 September, 3d Squadron engaged elements of four separate regiments of the North Vietnamese Army in a major, three-hour battle approximately five kilometers southwest of the city of An Loc. As a result of 3d Squadron's heroic and aggressive efforts on the field of battle, the enemy was soundly defeated and the majority of his heavy weapons captured. The Squadron's actions pre-empted enemy attempts to mass his forces and conduct attacks on the civil population and allied military forces in the area, preventing the loss of countless lives and damage to property.

5 Incl

1. Narrative Description
2. Maps
3. Summary of Strengths and Casualties
4. Listing of Units
5. Proposed Citation

DOM A. STARKE
COL, Armor
Commanding

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NARRATIVE DESCRIPTION

On 7 September 1969, 3d Squadron, 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, was located in the area just southwest of An Loc, Republic of Vietnam, having just marched more than one hundred miles from Blackhorse basecamp the preceding day. The Squadron Command Post was located at Fire Support Base Aspen II (XT7483), along with the Howitzer Battery.

Since FSB Aspen II had received several rounds of indirect fire during the night of 6 September, Company M was given the mission to conduct a reconnaissance around the base on the morning of the 7th. Troops I and L were likewise given local reconnaissance missions, to begin as soon as refueling operations were completed.

During the early morning of 7 September Tran The Hung, a member of the K-7 Battalion, 101st Regiment (NVA), rallied to the village of Binh Minh (XT721862) under the China Hoi program. He stated that elements of the 1st, 2d, and 3d Regiments of the 9th VC Division were in the vicinity of the An Loc rubber plantation. He also stated that the enemy units had the mission to attack allied forces in the western portion of the An Loc rubber in conjunction with simultaneous attacks by the enemy throughout the III Corps area.

Further interrogation of the Hoi Chanh revealed that the 101st Regiment had left its sick and wounded soldiers west of Minh Duc (XT6881) on 2 September before joining elements of the 9th VC Division in the rubber near village 7 (XT7085). This time he said that the 9th VC Division also had the mission of ambushing armored vehicles between Minh Duc and QL 13. Following this mission the enemy units were to withdraw to an area fifteen days' journey from An Loc.

3d Squadron received word of the information provided by the Hoi Chanh at 071220 September, along with a report that the 9th Regiment (ARVN) was in contact with an estimated enemy battalion at XT725885.

Lieutenant Colonel David K. Doyle, 3d Squadron Commander, quickly devised a tactical plan to reconnoiter the area west of Minh Duc. Having fought a major engagement in the same area in June, 1969, and being thoroughly familiar with the terrain, LTC Doyle's plan was essentially one which took advantage of the quickest routes into the area while still covering likely enemy avenues of withdrawal.

Troop I and Company M were recalled from their reconnaissance missions and directed to move through and south of Minh Duc, then swing north into the suspected enemy location. Troop L was sent north along QL 13, then west and south to block or attack enemy attempts to withdraw from the area. (Incl 2)

At 1430 hours Company M had moved to XT714830 and at that point sighted movement to the front at XT713834. After confirming that no friendly troops and/or rubber workers were in the area (a matter of one to two minutes) the movement was sighted again and engaged. Within seconds Troop I, at the south edge of

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the rubber (X706820), engaged the enemy sighted just inside the rubber tree line. In both instances the enemy returned heavy volumes of small arms, automatic weapons, rocket-propelled grenade, and recoilless rifle fire.

Both Company M and Troop I immediately attacked into the enemy locations while Troop L continued to move to attack suspected enemy positions to the north. Immediate air strikes, gunships, and artillery support were requested to assist in the defeat of the enemy forces.

At 1440 hours an ACAV from Troop I struck a mine at X708820. Contact continued in the area of the mine until 1538 hours, when Troop I forced the enemy to withdraw to the north.

Troop L also detonated an anti-tank mine at X704845 while moving into position.

Company M drove its attack north and into the heart of the enemy fortifications. Having driven north as far as X702837, Company M then began receiving fire from the north, east, and west. The tanks continued their devastating main gun and machinegun fire, while Troop I fought its way north to take up a position on the tank company's left (west) flank.

In charging north Troop I re-established contact at 1550 hours only a few hundred meters north of their original contact point. A small security element of one M551 Sheridan and two ACAVs was left to secure the mine-damaged ACAV at the tree line. Troop I fought its way north until it was positioned on Company M's west flank at X712835.

Tactical air was employed in the stream line area between Company M and Troop L. A solid wall of artillery blocking fires was placed to the east of the contact area during the entire engagement. These fires stretched from X718846 to X720832. In addition, aerial rocket artillery and "Cobra" gunships supported the ground troops continuously despite heavy ground-to-air fire during most of the battle.

At 1620 hours the security element which Troop I had left with its mine-damaged ACAV received small arms and RPG fire. Having incurred casualties, the security element backed off from the tree line to make room for the Medevac helicopter to land. Since the Squadron Commander's command and control aircraft was nearly out of fuel, he elected to make the evacuation himself. As it approached the landing zone the aircraft received one round of recoilless rifle fire but was not hit. After delivering suppressive machinegun fire and having a gunship expend in the area, the Squadron Commander's aircraft landed. Sensing a greater enemy force still in the area, LTC Doyle then reorganized the security force and led them back to the tree line and had them place effective fire into the enemy location. The damaged ACAV was once again secured.

The battle continued into the northern portion of the battlefield until approximately 1700 hours. However, at 1620 (the time when the damaged ACAV had received enemy fire) a Medevac helicopter which had been called for to evacuate wounded from Company M and Troop I was shot down by recoilless rifle fire as it approached its LZ at X714834. Company M swept into the area once again and destroyed the enemy weapon and its crew. Of the five-man Medevac crew, two were killed and three wounded; all were immediately recovered.

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Both units continued to drill the area of contact until just prior to darkness. They then withdrew to the west approximately three hundred meters and awaited an airstrike to be placed in the center of the original enemy fortifications. Following the strike, the two units re-occupied the battlefield for the night.

The results of the first day's fighting were as follows:

2 ACAVs	—	Mine damage
1 M48 Tank	—	RPG damage
1 M551 Sheridan	—	RPG damage
1 UH1H Helicopter	—	Destroyed
2 US KIA		
27 US WIA		

32 NVA KIA

2 12.7mm anti-aircraft machineguns captured

1 75mm recoilless rifle destroyed

1 M16 rifle captured

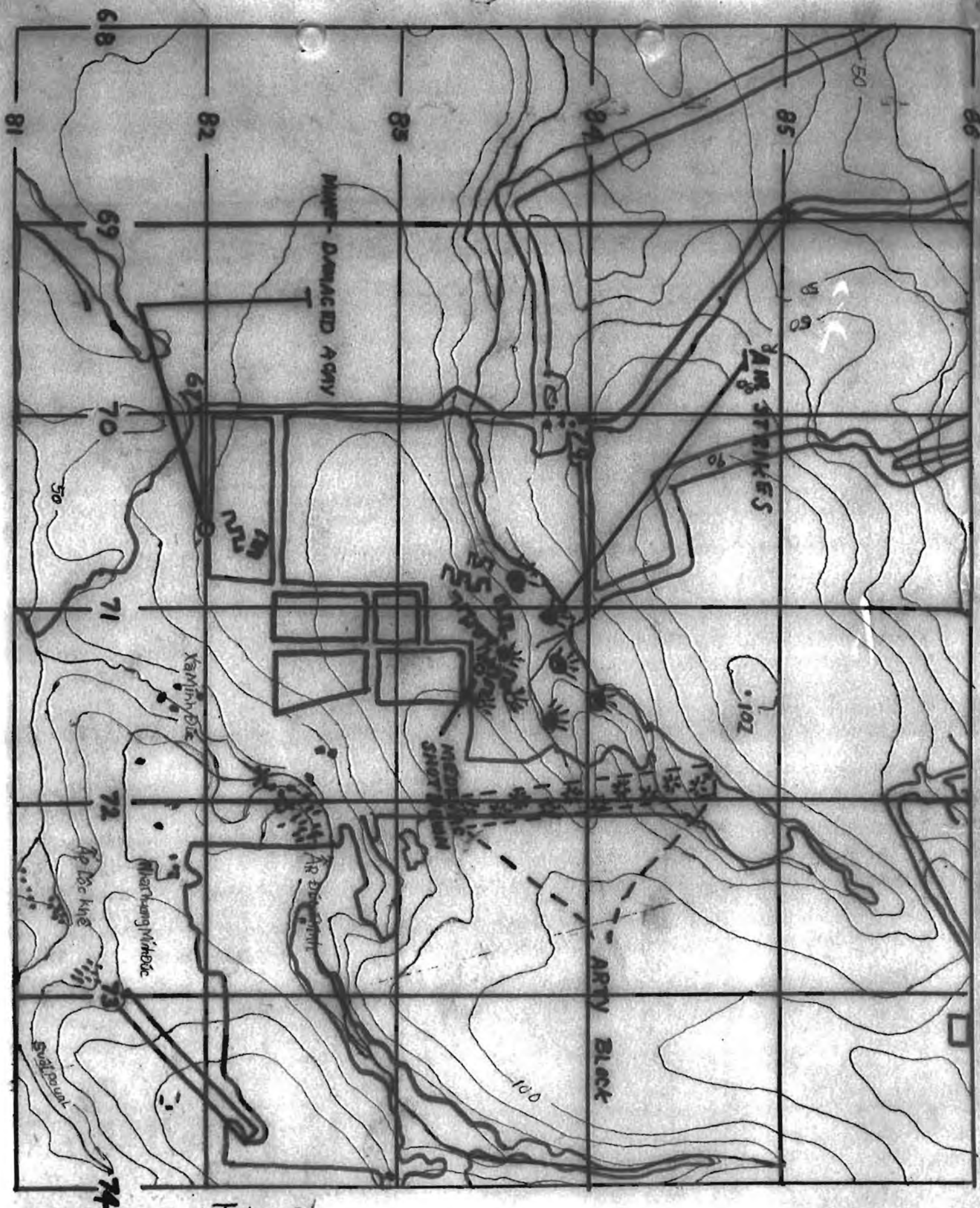
Various individual weapons and personal items captured and destroyed

Sweeps of the battle area during the next two days resulted in fifty-one more enemy dead being found. Then, on 8 September, the French plantation manager reported that his workers had buried fifteen more enemy dead at XT700699 on 10 September. The presence of the fifteen enemy dead in three separate graves at that location was confirmed by Company M. Thus, the efforts of the Squadron resulted in a total of ninety-eight enemy KIA in the battle on 7 September.

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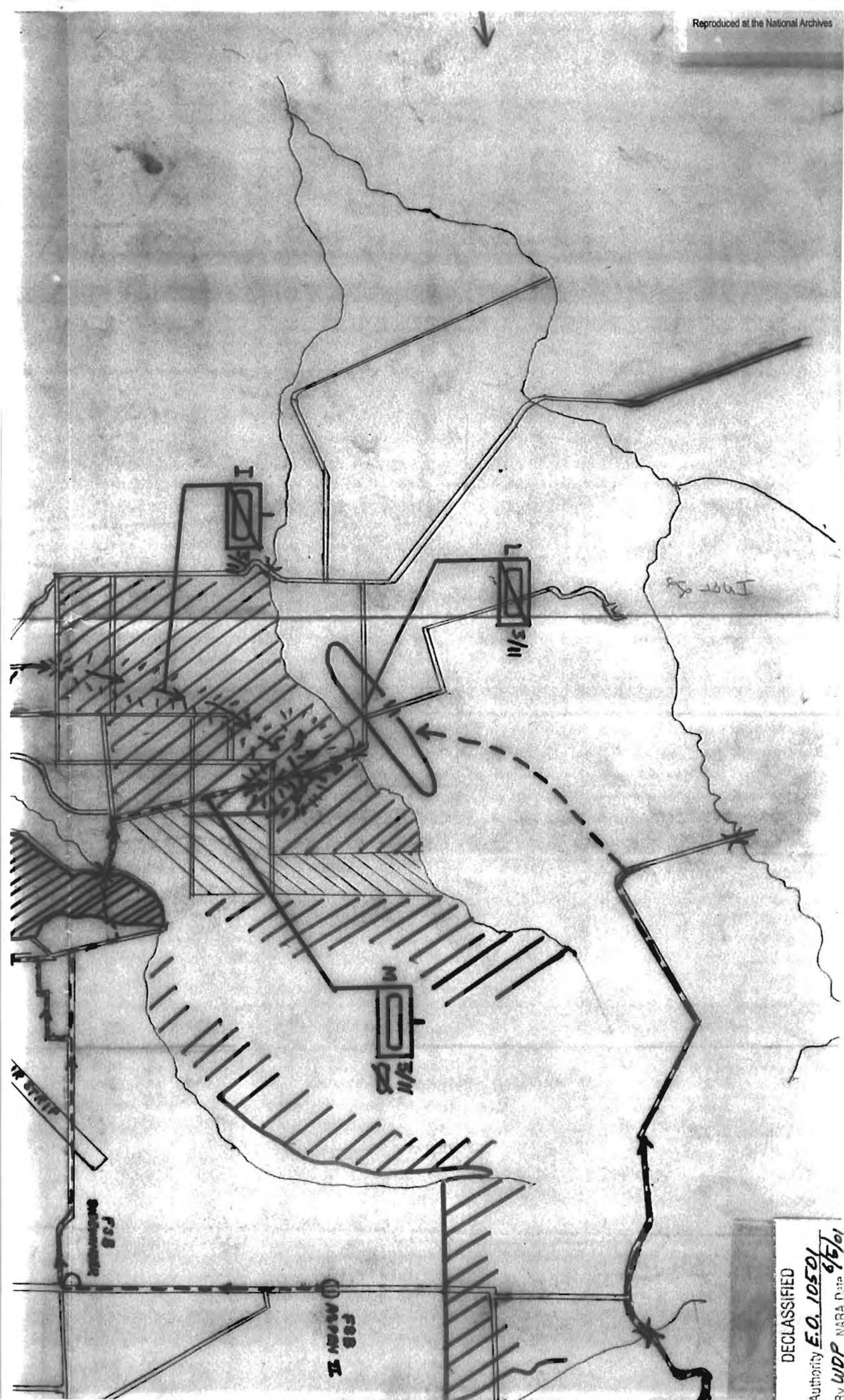


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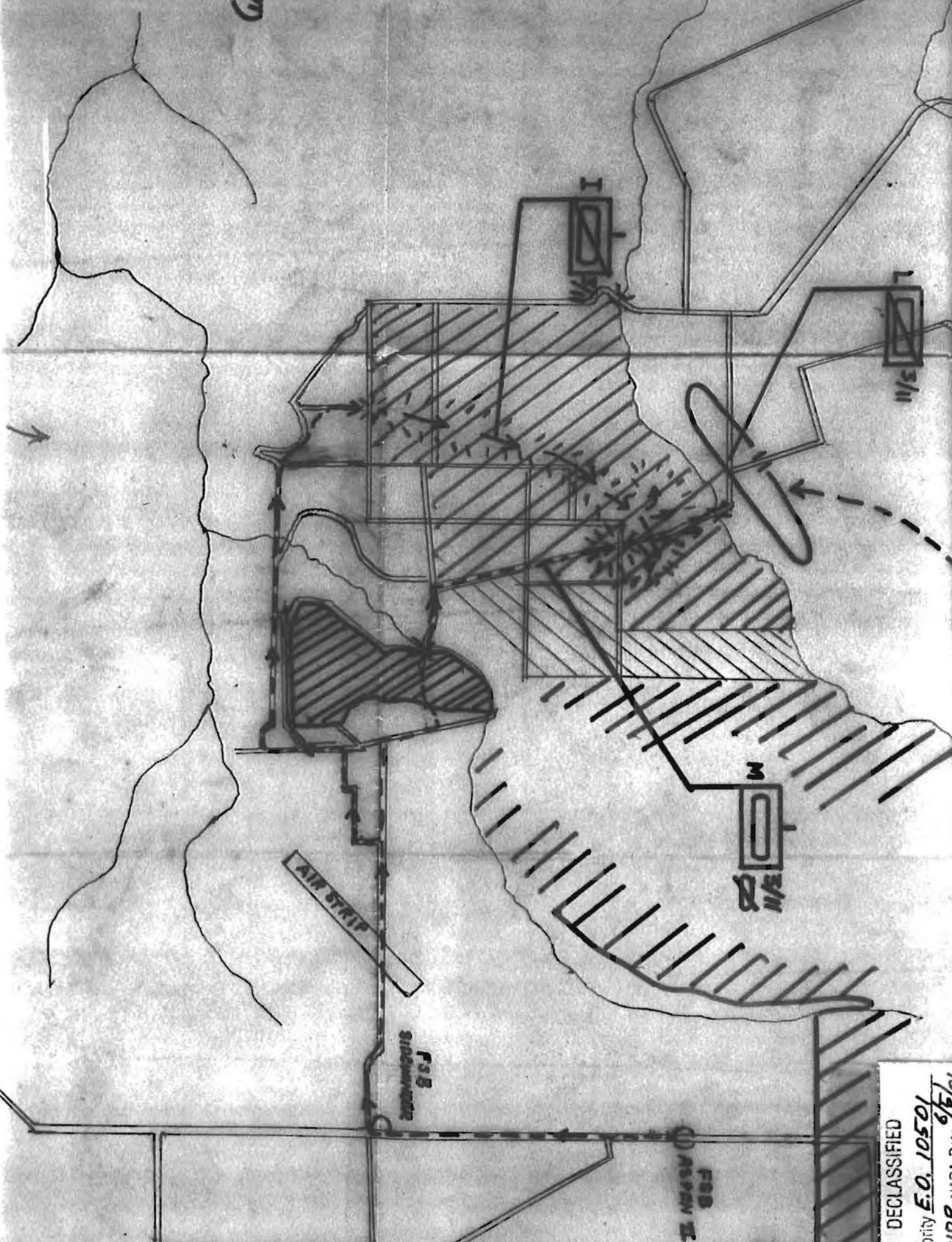
NEW RUBBER



OLD RUGGER

61 REAM

PLANTATION READS



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SUMMARY OF STRENGTH AND CASUALTIES

Friendly Forces

<u>Totals Assigned</u>	<u>KHA</u>	<u>WHA</u>	<u>MHA</u>	<u>CAP</u>
I/3/11 187	0	14	0	0
L/3/11 189	0	3	0	0
M/3/11 97	1	6	0	0
How/3/11 121	0	0	0	0
HHT/3/11 263	1	2	0	0
2/919 24	0	2	0	0
Totals: 881	2	27	0	0

Enemy Forces

<u>Estimated Strength</u>	<u>Body Count</u>	<u>Probable Casualties</u>	<u>Cap</u>
Elements of four NVA Regiments (approx 2- 3,000 troops)	98	180	1

Tab 3

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