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LTC Reed's
taped interview
LTC REED

I'll begin by talking about the period when the Rome Platoon left the Squadron on March 7, up through the time we moved into the Dog Head on 24 March. This particular period, after the Rome Platoon were completed was characterized primarily by a screening action on the part of the Squadron across the entire front of the northern portion of the Sqdn. AO from the "Source No" River west to just east of "Ku Tomb." We moved the Sqdn. CP ~~from~~ forward from FSB Sara to Sharon, right on Hqy. 296 about in the center of the AO and then worked the troops north from there. The first several days of the period we went into maintenance stand-down for each of the troops to try to catch them up on their scheduled train. And then I tried to work the troops in the same general area, that is C 7 up to the east, B 7 up to the west using D Co as a RRF and for local patrolling. During this entire period A 7 up has been taken away from us and sent over to the Dog Head's area working under the 1st Bde, so we were a 7 up short.

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We tried to concentrate on automatic ambushes & interdiction of the trail network. - During the first 13 days of March we were heavily engaged by elements of the 75C Regt. Usually in all cases, major engagements were initiated by the enemy. One case with B 7ys - they were ambushed while sweeping down Hwy 246. We committed D Co into that along with B 7ys - and managed to push north into a little area just west of BO TUC. We found that the area just east of BO TUC & north of Hwy 246 was heavily trafficked & had in it large series of lumber complexes - most of them fairly old, but they continued to have traffic. Also the area just south of Bo Tuc in another triangular patch of woods we found quite a lot of lumber & traffic. It appeared to be a major trail leading out of Cambodia down into Bo Tuc going straight down the Mustang trail.

Two of the enemy attacks occurred on C 7ys NPP with a first-light stand-off involving neither of these were accompanied by serious ground probes. And in both cases through the

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moved into the D
this particular period,
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of reinforcing troops cause some enemy casualties. Mines also were used by the enemy to a great degree right out in the middle of the jungle. I think what they were doing was using mines as a kind of perimeter security for their fighting positions. They would put them out on the trail and out in the jungle so that when we would push into their base camps areas or fighting positions we would hit them. Particularly in one occasion with C 7 troops when the enemy stayed and fought and then a day later ambushed us again in the exact same area. We lost 3 vehicles to mines as they pushed on into the enemy positions - lessons learned from all of this, once you operate in a jungle area, it's almost, well it's absolutely necessary not to take the same trail time & time again, also, if you look at the map carefully you'll see certain choke-points in the open areas where it's obvious the easiest way to go is right down through the place. Those obviously easy places passages or the places you'll find mines generally.

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about the period
the Squadron on March,
we moved into the Dpgs

The enemy has the advantage of moving in and attack when he wants to, or go away if he doesn't want to fight. After the first 13 days of March the enemy apparently decided to go away. Kills with auto ambushes dropped off to all but zero. We had no further attack by fire or ambushes and we able to find almost no trail activity in the entire AO. Just the day before we made our move into the Dog's Head AO, ~~we~~ there were a couple of SPARKS, and some ^{little} trail activity and one go-to-air fire. It would appear to me that the enemy may have been moving back into the area again.

To back up a little bit before the first 13 days of March, the high point we had during the period was preceded by an increased number of SPARK activation in the night along the AO shortstop and Cambodia which would indicate that large amounts of preparation for coming down & attacking the U.S. forces.

Now our move to the Dog's Head was made on very short notice. We got word at midnight to move first light the next

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NARA Date 1/10/01

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morning and by 2330 hours the following day we had moved about 55 mi. We closed into a new FSB just north of "Tin Yon". Our mission was to start operating across an AO which extended across the northern portion of the Dog's Head area. We were to start operating east to west across this. The northern portion of the DH is reasonably open and fairly trafficable except for one major river which flows northeast to southwest through it and has proved to be a major barrier to our operations.

I suppose the biggest problem we've had since we moved into the DH, particularly, has been logistics and maintenance support. Our FSA had moved to 17 Loc as a result of shifting back toward the eastern portion of War Zone C and only A 7's war area remained in Tay Ninh because A 7's was already working out of the DH and it was a shorter route for them. Once the decision was made to move the entire squadron back to the DH, there was an attempt made to leave the FSA, except for A 7's in Q-L to supply primarily by

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DATE 11/10/01

ing about the period at
the Squadron on March 7,
and into the D's

fixed wing to Tin Yan airstrip and then
hook on out to the troops from there. This
is a workable solution but did not prove to
be feasible primarily because of lack of
ability of the AF to fly the number of sorties
at the schedule we needed to get the bulk of
to supplies in here. As a result of this problem
the FSA again moved from OC back
to Tay Ninh. Their primary move was done
on 2 ^{and} March and should be completed by
the night of 2nd or 4th March. This ~~age~~ move again
throws us behind in our maintenance program
to some degree. However in the long run
it should improve our logistics at least to
the point we can survive at least, working
this far north.

Talking a little about combat operations.
since we have been in the D's H. A couple
of major contacts the Sqdn. has gotten into.
A 7th had a big contact under 2/4th 8th
when one company got into an enemy bunker
complex and appeared to be in pretty deep
trouble. A 7th listed jungle to them, came to
their support and took the pressure off the infantry
company and managed to make an extraction

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NARA Date 4/10/01

Interview
DEED

while killing, I believe 88 of the enemy. On the 31st of March, B 7ip, while going in a recon discovered an enemy bunker complex very close to the Cambodian border and began taking some small-arms fire, nothing significant, but the further it got into the complex the bigger it got - D Co was committed into the same area and as D Co was comm., the enemy resistance became slightly stronger. It was a curious battle. The bunkers were quite large & well-constructed. However, of the 43 enemy that were killed or captured, there were only a handful, maybe 2 or three teams of two or 3 each, really fought tenaciously. The majority of the men captured did not have weapons. There were really very few weapons. I think only 2 AK-47's and one SKS ~~was captured~~ a light MG and a 60mm mortar tube were the weapons captured. Because the enemy was not fighting too hard, the techniques of driving up on bunkers and mental steering until they were crushed came in very handy.

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NARA Date 11/10/01

There was one 57mm RL that kept firing at one of D Co's tanks. Never did hit it because the brush was so thick that the rounds would go off before they got to the tank. Once that was eliminated it was just a mopping up operation. After the area had been pushed through & secured, then B 7-1 went back in & began digging out the bunkers. Most of the prisoners were dug out of the bunkers, literally buried alive. The prisoners appeared to be quite young and stated they had moved into the area for training. One of the first things CPT Hunt commented on when he first got into the bunker complex was that it looked like a school room because of the way the bunker was constructed with hootches above them, map boards, blackboards, that type of thing.

There is particular lesson learned, I think, in this fight. It was unusual in the number of prisoners taken. There were 16 taken & a total of 27 bodies counted after the battle was over.

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NARA Date 11/10/01

I think the thing I can comment on here is it really became apparent to me during the contact that reporting enemy killed during the contact was a dangerous thing to do, because you don't really know with a recon. you won't know many you have killed. Each vehicle is fighting its own individual battle. Although you can keep some sort of a running tally during the battle by what people say over the radio, people don't really know if they have killed 4 or 14 until they get the area secured, go back through it line up the bodies and count them. My policy is now that we will report very few, if any, enemy killed during the battle until we can go back and sweep the battlefield & see what we can come up with.

The next day, 1 April, A 7ip which had been sent back to Spdm on Nov 31st was coming to come to Camp Hazard for a main stand-down. They had moved about 300 meters from their NDP when they came under SA and RPG fire. B 7ip was quickly

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turned around & inserted into the fight which lasted just about 3 1/2 hours. Turned out to be a repeat of the previous day's action. There were 13 enemy killed & 1 captured. Driving through, aggressively continuing, when you come on a bunker you just neutralize it until you crush it and then go on to the next one. The prisoner stated that his squad of 15 men had been sent specifically to attack the ACAV's; it would appear that we got 14 of the 15 men that had been sent to do the job.

Overall comment: the enemy has reacted very rapidly to our presence in the D's H. It has taken them only 3 or 4 days to get their mines in order and place them where we have been and where we are likely to go. Mines continue to be a major

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