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17TH MILITARY HISTORY DETACHMENT  
1ST INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96345

AVDB-T (MHD)

19 April 1969

SUBJECT: Combat After Action Interview Report: Operation Atlas Wedge - 18  
Mar - 2 Apr 69 (U)Office of the Chief of Military History  
Department of the Army  
Washington, D.C. 203151.(U) Name: Operation Atlas Wedge2.(U) Inclusive Dates of Operation: 18 Mar - 2 Apr 693.(C) Location: Michelin Rubber Plantation, an area bounded by east-west grids 45 and 58 and north-south grids 50 and 60, center of mass X555515. Maps Vietnam, 1:50000, Series L7014, Sheets 6231 I and 6231 II (Incl 5).4.(U) Control or Command Headquarters: Operation Atlas Wedge was a multi-division, II FFORCEV directed operation, with major participants being the 25th Infantry Division, 1st Cavalry Division (AM), 1st Infantry Division with OPCON of elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. The 1st Infantry Division subordinate control headquarters were 3d Bde and Hq, 11th ACR.5.(C) Task Organization:

3d Bde	11th ACR
TF 1-4	TF 1-11
1-4 Cav(-2 Trps)	B/1-11 Cav
A/1-28 Inf	C/1-11 Cav
TF 1-28	D/1-11 Cav
1-28 Inf(-2 Cos)	A/2-28 Inf
B/1-4 Cav	A/1-5 Cav(1st Cav Div (AM))
Plat/B/2-34 Arm	3-11 Cav
1-18 Inf(-1 Co)	H/2-11
2-33 Arty(-)(DS)	K/3-11
	L/3-11
	8-6 Arty(-)(DS)

Subsequent changes to above organization for combat are provided in para 12, Execution.

6.(C) Supporting Forces:  
Artillery ObserversDECLASSIFIED AT 3 YEAR INTERVAL  
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS,  
DOD DIR 5200.10

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Forward Air Controllers  
 Light Fire Teams  
 Tactical Air Sorties (Incl 6)  
 Artillery  
 D/1-5 Arty

7.(U) Interviewing Officer: MAJ William W. Campion, 17th Mil Hist Det, 1st Inf Div.

8. (U) Persons Interviewed:

- a. LTC William C. Haponski, Commanding Officer, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division (Incl 1)
- b. CPT James L. Selsor, Commanding Officer, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division (Incl 2)
- c. LTC Robert E. Price, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, and CPT Milton R. Menjivar, Commanding Officer, Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division (Incl 3)
- d. LTC Carmen D. Negaard, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, and MAJ Larry T. Bennett, Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division (Incl 4)

9.(C) Intelligence:

- a. Operation Atlas Wedge was directed against the 7th NVA Division minus its 165th NVA Regt which remained north of the area of contact.
- b. First indications that the 7th Div Hq was in the plantation area was obtained from an 19 Mar PW from the C21 Company, 209th Regt. The source stated the Hq of the Div was located a half hour walk north of his place of capture (XT5552). Two days later (21 Mar 69) vic XT575588 3/11 ACR captured a PW who identified his unit as the 28 Sapper Bn, 7th Div. At this time there was no Bn known as K28 subordinate to the Division; however, the source said his unit was a specialty group. Since the Division had been out of contact for a long period it may have added such a unit. Source went on to say that the 7th NVA Div and V17 (141st) and V19 (209th) were in the Michelin, and the V15 (165th) was to arrive soon. On 21 Mar A/1-5 Cav captured documents vic XT552582 which consisted of a letter from C61 (AKA 141st) to D70B (AKA 7th Div). The document also contained another AKA and an LBN of the 7th NVA Division.
- c. The 141st Regt was identified on 17 Mar by a PW from the 2d Bn/141st captured at XT465498. Source indicated his Regt had been located near village no. 13 (XT585521) for about a week. Their mission was to keep the villagers in their villages. His unit was soon to be replaced by V15 (165th) and the 141st was to move into Binh Long (P). PW said they were to move due to losses suffered in the attack on FSPB Mahone II, artillery, and air strikes.

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The 141st was again identified on 18 Mar vic XT600510 by documents. One document contained the mission of the 141st Regt, which was as follows:

- (1) Wear down US and destroy its war material
- (2) Disintegrate GVN units
- (3) Disrupt the accelerated rural development program
- (4) Assist the local movement
- (5) Destroy the enemy with the 25th Div as a target

d. Documents stated the 2d Bn/141st was given reinforcements to attack US/GVN from two directions, Dau Tieng (XT4947) and Thuy Tinh. The Bn was to attack CIDG, aircraft, and armor vehicles then coordinate with local forces to destroy rural development and strategic hamlets at villages 2, 4, 10, 13, and 14.

e. The 141st Regt was again identified on 21 Mar vic XT568619 by documents captured by elements of the 1/5 Cav.

f. PWs from the 209th Regt indicated that the 141st Regt withdrew from the Michelin on 21 Mar, and the absence of contact with the Regt after this date suggests they did leave about this time.

g. Throughout the period of the operation the 209th Regt was identified through contacts and by PWs. On 16 Mar vic XT5662, C/1-5 Cav captured a volume of documents and PWs which identified the 209th Regt. On 18 Mar US forces engaged an unknown size enemy force in the northern Michelin. The contact resulted in 61 KIA and 5 PWs. PWs gave their unit as being C18, 209th Regt. Their unit and a K7 Bn with a strength of 250 was located with the Regt Hq. The K8 Bn with a strength of 300 and K9 Bn with a strength of 250 were also in the area. On 19 Mar vic XT5651 1/11 Cav captured 2 PWs from the 209th Regt. One PW, a senior sergeant, said the 209th Hq was located vic XT5653. The K7 and K8 Bns were vic XT5853. Source said the 209th Regt moved from Cambodia on 8 Mar and arrived at the present location on 15 Mar. Source stated the Regt was to stay in the Michelin "at all costs". The other PW, an assistant company CO of the C6 Company said the 7th Div minus the 165th Regt had a mission to defend the Michelin. As a part of this mission the 209th Regt was building defensive positions between village 6 (XT515486) and village 14 (XT558-522). Documents captured in contact by elements of the 11th ACR on 20 Mar vic XT595575 contained an extensive rice and supply list and identified the supply section of the C16 Mtr Co, 209th Regt. The 209th Regt continued to be identified by documents captured 21 Mar vic XT560595 on 22nd and 23rd Mar at XT566553 and XT573663 respectively. PWs were captured who identified the 209th Regt. The PW of 22 Mar stated his unit C25/209 was to attack hamlet No 2 in the Michelin. The PW of 23 Mar stated he was a cook on the staff section of the 209th Regt. According to source an unknown Bn of the 209th Regt was located 300 meters from XT573663. From this point to the end of

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the month, the volume of contact with the 209th Regt became negligible, and the Regt was felt to have relocated to an area north of the Michelin.

h. The 165th Regt of the 7th Div remained uncommitted during Atlas Wedge and was identified only on 23 Mar and 24 Mar. Documents captured north of the Michelin on 23 Mar vic XT500583 identified the 165th Regt. On 24 Mar D/1-5 Cav captured a PW north of the Michelin. Source stated he was acting as a guard for a 47 man group that was returning from a meeting north of village 13. Other than the identifications, the 165th Regt avoided contacts while probably making preparations to enter the Michelin near the concluding date of Atlas Wedge.

i. Annex B, OPORD 7-69, in Volume II of this report provides a complete intelligence estimate as reviewed prior to the operation. Included are appendixes on Order of Battle, Trails, Enemy Installations, Landing Zones and Rome Plowed Areas, Terrain and Weather in and vicinity of the Michelin Plantation.

10.(C) Mission: Commencing 18 March 1969, 1st Infantry Division conducts operations in the Long Nguyen Secret Zone south and east of the Michelin Plantation and establishes an air cavalry screen north and northeast of Minh Thanh for a minimum period of 5 days to detect, fix, and destroy VC/NVA forces in the area. See OPORD 7-69, Volume II, this report.

11.(C) Concept of Operation: For a period of approximately 5 days 1st Infantry Division employs maximum available forces in an area of operations south and east of the Michelin as a part of a larger joint 1st Inf Div, 1st Cav Div (AM), and 25th Inf Div operation designed to detect, fix, interdict, disrupt, and destroy major elements of the 7th NVA Div. Moderate risks will be taken in secure areas and areas of diminished threat in the Division TAOI. Airstrikes B-52 Strikes, artillery, and chemical munitions will be utilized to interdict known routes out of the AO, destroy known base areas, and canalize the enemy into killing areas favorable for the combined employment of mechanized and airmobile forces. See OPORD 7-69, Volume II, this report.

12.(C) Execution: Preliminary planning provided that 1st Infantry Division and 11th ACR participation in Operation Atlas Wedge commence on 19 Mar. Due to a series of events described below the Operation commenced on 18 March.

On the evening of 16 Mar the 11th ACR requested and secured permission to conduct visual reconnaissance missions on 17 Mar over areas of the Michelin. During conduct of these missions, aircraft from the Air Cav Trp of the 11th ACR at 0855 hours on 17 Mar received heavy anti-aircraft fire vic XT586-541 from an estimated battalion size base camp. Since fire was received from a location then within an area of operation of the 1st Cav Div (AM), permission to engage was requested by and granted to the 11th ACR. This action resulted in the placing of Trp C/1-5 Cav, a unit of the 1st Cav Div (AM), under OPCON of the 11th ACR and explains their appearance in later actions. The original planning had not envisioned this arrangement which was necessary due to proximity of Trp C/1-5 to the area of activity on 17 Mar.

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The 17 Mar engagement proved to be a sizeable one lasting for the major portion of the day. Continuous light fire team support and tactical air strikes expended in the area throughout the day resulting in 30 VC KBA(BC) and 15 VC KBA(Poss). The strikes additionally uncovered 6 tons of rice, 10 fully loaded bicycles, and 15 fully loaded rucksacks. Late in the day at 1830 hours vic XT590510 the Air Cav Trp of the 11th ACR engaged an additional 15 VC resulting in 5 VC KIA.

On 18 Mar, one day ahead of that planned as D-day, the 3d Bde, 1st Inf Div, and 11th ACR commenced participation in Operation Atlas Wedge with initial deployments. The planned program for deployment was not followed in actual execution.

TF 1-28 planned to commence operations on D-day with Hq/1-28 Inf moving by rotary wing from Lai Khe to FSPB Lorraine vic XT708400. Co C was to conduct an airborne assault vic XT657490 and establish FSPB Picardy vic XT659492. Co D was to move by rotary wing from Thunder II to FSPB Lorraine. A troop from 1-4 Cav and a platoon from B/2-34 Arm would move overland from Lai Khe to FSPB Lorraine. The task force, after initial deployment, would attack to seize its initial Objective 10 (Annex A, OPORD 7-69 of Volume II, this report) and conduct a search of the objective area.

On the same day, TF 1-4 would move overland from Di An to Lai Khe, assume OPCON of A/1-28 Inf, move north on Hwy 13 to Thunder I and attack west to seize and search Objective 9 (Annex A, OPORD 7-69).

Still on D-day the 1-18 Inf (-) was to conduct an airborne assault from Lai Khe to an LZ vic XT630412 and attack north to seize Objective 4 (Annex A, OPORD 7-69).

Finally TF 1-11 would commence operations by moving into the Michelin from the east and conduct RIF operations in the northwestern edge of the Michelin from vic XT605522 to XT582578. It would be followed by the 3-11 Cav (-) which would search the western portion of the 11th ACR AO in the Michelin from vic XT605520 to XT563522 to XT562578. A/2-28 would be deployed ahead of the moving columns to secure the engineer sweep teams engaged in mine clearing operations.

Artillery deployments in support of the operation would occur on D-day with movement by rotary wing of A/2-33 Arty (105) and E/2-33 Arty (4.2") to FSPB Picardy, overland move of a Plat/D/8-6 Arty (8") to Thunder II, overland move of B/8-6 Arty (155) from Thunder II to a location vic XT613520, and rotary wing move of D/1-5 Arty (105) from Lai Khe to a location vic XT613520. The field location of the final two units listed above was initially known as FSPB Tipperary, subsequently as FSPB Doc.

This initial planning envisioned the units using multiple routes into the Michelin from the east so as to sweep and enclose the enemy in the final area of operation. The 11th ACR had options of moving southwest from An Loc

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through Minh Thanh along Hwy 245, generally west from Chan Thanh (Thunder III) on Hwy 239, or west along Boundary Road (Giant Swath), a Rome plow cut running west from Thunder III, into the Michelin. The 3d Bde could use the Boundary Road approach and Hwy 240 running northwest from Ben Cat to the Michelin.

However, with advancement of D-day from 19 Mar to 18 Mar, a number of options and planned actions were affected.

Initially TF 1-11 assumed OPCON of A/1-5 Cav, 1st Cav Div (AM), effective 180600 Mar due to circumstances previously mentioned.

On 18 Mar TF 1-28, under OPCON of the 3d Bde, initiated operations by establishing FSPB Picardy vic XT659492 from which RIF and night patrol operations were conducted south of the Michelin. The planned use of FSPB Lorraine was not exercised to the extent planned due to the tight time schedule. TF 1-4 moved overland from Di An to commence RIF and night patrol operations west of Thunder I vic XT749453. The 1-18 Inf (-) moved by rotary wing from Lai Khe to commence RIF and night patrol operations south of the Michelin. This unit encountered the first significant contact of the operation among units with the 3d Bde as, during the evening hours, an ambush patrol from C/1-18 Inf vic XT596470 engaged an unknown size enemy force for approximately two hours resulting in 1 US killed and 7 US wounded. Subsequent battlefield searches produced 13 enemy KIA, 1 radio, 2 RPG launchers, 8 AK 47s and enemy maps and documents.

Units of and under OPCON of the 11th ACR commenced operations with TF 1-11 movement overland from Thunder II vic XT782556 to the Michelin to commence RIF and night patrol operations. Any plan to use Hwys 245 and 239 as multiple approach routes would have been difficult due to the one day advance in operations. Significant contact with enemy forces was established by Trps B and C of that task force at 1600 hours vic XT600510. A total of 24 enemy were killed in a brief 15 minute contact while 4 US soldiers were wounded.

Simultaneous with these actions the 3/11 Cav moved overland from positions east of Lai Khe to the Michelin via Boundary road behind TF 1-11 as planned. Co M (-) of this unit participated in the most productive contact of this first day of operations vic XT575555 when it engaged and killed 34 of an unknown size force. In addition, 5 enemy PWs, 2 51 cal MGs and 1 light machine gun were captured. Other elements of the 3/11 Cav, Trps L and H, engaged enemy units in the late afternoon vic XT565550 and XT574544 resulting in 12 enemy killed at a cost of 12 US wounded.

Throughout the 18th of Mar the Air Cav Trp of the 11th ACR engaged groups of enemy forces in the northern Michelin resulting in 39 enemy killed (confirmed) and 12 enemy killed (possible).

On 19 Mar TF 1-28 continued a search of Objective 10 and attacked northeast to seize and search Objective 7 (Annex A, OPORD 7-69). The 1-18 Inf (-) attacked northwest to seize and search Objective 8. These units experienced little contact on this date.

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However, action with elements of the 11th ACR continued at high levels on 19 Mar 69 during search operations in the northern half of the Michelin. In the late afternoon at 1800 hours Trp B of TF 1-11 engaged and killed 24 enemy and captured 1 PW in a 20 minute skirmish vic XT553521. Shortly thereafter elements of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) from the Minh Thanh Special Forces Camp, operating with the 11th ACR, encountered an enemy force vic XT562576. After a quick exchange of fire the contact broke. Co M and Trp L/3-11 Cav moved to reinforce and reestablished contact approximately 15 minutes later. A two hour contact supported by light fire teams, artillery, and Air Force C47 "Spooky" aircraft, resulted in 24 enemy killed and one captured.

Adjustments were made in the Task Organization of elements of the 11th ACR on 19 Mar with new alignment as follows.

TF 1-11	3-11 Cav (-)
B/1-11	H/2-11 (-1 Plat)
C/1-11	L/3-11
D/1-11	M/3-11 (-1 Plat)
A/2-28	
D/2-28	
A/1-5	
How/1-11	

TF 1-28, after ambushing vic XT6149 and XT6250 during the evening of 19 Mar, moved on 20 Mar to mobile blocking positions along the stream from XT6054 to XT6158. TF 1-4 moved from ambush positions vic XT7053 and XT6853 to blocking positions vic XT6154. The 1-18 Inf (-) moved from ambush positions to occupy blocking positions along the southeastern edge of the Michelin from XT5960 to XT5747. Again these units experienced little enemy contact with the event of greatest note being the capture of a 12.7 mm anti-aircraft machine gun vic XT593503 by D/1-28 Inf. The 1-18 Inf (-) participation in Atlas Wedge terminated this date as the unit was moved by rotary wing from south of the Michelin to Di An.

Again 20 Mar proved a lucrative day for 11th ACR elements operating in the northern Michelin. A major engagement in the operation occurred at mid-morning with insertion of the Aero Rifle Platoon vic XT595575 to conduct bomb damage assessment missions. The platoon began to receive fire at 1130 hours. As contact developed, the unit was reinforced by a platoon from M/3-11 Cav, a platoon from L/3-11 Cav, and Trp C/1-5 Cav, the 1st Cav Div (AM) unit. Light Fire teams, artillery, tactical air strikes, and Air Force Spooky aircraft supported the contact which continued sporadically until 1745 hours. Total results were 1 US KIA and 12 US wounded while 74 enemy killed were counted in subsequent searches with 28 AK 47 and 20 SKS rifles captured.

Task organization underwent further change on 20 Mar as operational control of A/2-28 and A/1-5 was transferred to 3-11 Cav and a CIDG Company was given to 3-11 Cav.

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On 21 Mar TF 1-28 conducted RIF operations in areas southeast of the Michelin while TF 1-4 conducted reconnaissance-in-force operations north to blocking positions vic XT6154 and XT6155. TF 1-11 and 3-11 Cav continued search operations in the northeastern portion of the Michelin. There were very few engagements on this date and none of major proportions. During the early morning hours FSPB Picardy received 18 to 20 rounds of 60 mm mortar fire which caused no casualties or damage. During the day the Air Cav Trp of the 11th ACR engaged two small groups of enemy resulting in a total of 4 VC killed. The 3-11 Cav moved from the operational area overland to FSPB Doc (XT613520) in preparation for termination of its participation in Atlas Wedge.

On 22 Mar TF 1-28 was moved overland from field positions to FSPB Picardy. TF 1-4 continued search operations vic XT6154 and was transferred to OPCON of 11th ACR for continued operations in the Michelin. Elements of the 3-11 Cav terminated participation with an overland move from FSPB Doc to positions east of Lai Khe. TF 1-11 continued search operations northeast of the Michelin. The major contact of the day occurred when the Air Cav Trp sighted 13 VC vic XT600625. C/1-11 moved to the area and engaged the enemy sporadically for approximately four hours suffering 5 US wounded while killing 11 of the enemy and capturing 1 PW and one AK 47 rifle.

On 23 Mar the 1-28 Inf (-) conducted reconnaissance operations to the east of FSPB Picardy without significant contact. Meanwhile TF 1-11 and TF 1-4 continued search operations northeast of the Michelin. Realigned task organization for TF 1-11 and TF 1-4 was as follows.

TF 1-11	TF 1-4
B/1-11	C/1-4
C/1-11	A/1-28
D/1-11	A/2-28
H/2-11 (-)	Plat/B/1-4
D/2-28	
Plat 919 Engr	

Again the only contact of note on this date was with the Air Cav Trp which sighted 10 VC vic XT598562 and engaged them resulting in 4 VC KIA. A later search of the area by C/1-11 Cav located 3 AK 47s, 1500 lbs of rice, and miscellaneous medical supplies.

On 24 March 69 TF 1-28 continued to conduct reconnaissance-in-force and night ambush operations vic FSPB Picardy experiencing several small contacts throughout the day. In the early morning RCN/1-28 sighted approximately 25 VC 500 meters from their position vic XT649471. The enemy force was engaged with artillery resulting in 6 VC KIA (Poss). At approximately the same time an ambush patrol from RCN/1-28 engaged and killed 3 enemy. A light fire team supporting the contact was also credited with 3 VC KIA. Later in the morning RCN/1-28 again engaged 2 VC vic XT649471, killing one of them.

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On the same day TF 1-11 continued overland movement from its field positions northeast of the Michelin to Thunder II and terminated its participation in the Operation. Operational control of TF 1-4 returned to 3d Bde effective 241500 Mar thus removing the 11th ACR from the Operation as a control headquarters. Records indicate that TF 1-4 is referred to as TF Haponski after this date.

Again 25 Mar found TF 1-28 and TF Haponski conducting RIF and ambush operations near FSPB Picardy and northeast of the Michelin respectively. Neither element experienced significant contact. TF Haponski moved elements into and occupied FSPB Doc on 25 Mar.

The next significant engagement for either of the units occurred on 28 Mar when, early in the morning hours, FSPB Doc was subjected to a heavy indirect fire and ground attack from several directions. Enemy strength was estimated in excess of one company. The engagement resulted in 4 US KIA and 26 US WIA with 2 tanks and 1 APC suffering damage. A sweep of the perimeter area just after daylight and on 1 Apr located 10 enemy KIA and 2 RPG launchers. Scattered small engagements and attacks by fire continued throughout the area during the morning.

Contact in the area of operation was negligible again until 30 Mar when TF Haponski engaged in one of the most significant contacts of Atlas Wedge. On 30 Mar, task organization, after several previous adjustments, was as follows.

1-28 Inf (Picardy)

B/1-28  
C/1-28  
D/1-28  
RCN/1-28

TF Haponski (Doc)

B/1-4  
C/1-4  
D/1-11(=)(OPCON)  
PLAT/A/1-28  
A/2-28  
PLAT/B/2-34

On 30 Mar TF Haponski was to conduct RIF with three teams from FSPB Doc, TM C/1-4 was to RIF to vic XT570550, TM B/1-4 was to move to blocking positions vic XT585552, and TM D/1-11 was to RIF to vic XT583558. Contacts occurred early and continued through the major part of the day. At 0750 hours vic XT585535 Tm C engaged a small force resulting in 7 VC KIA. At 0835 hours at the same location an estimated enemy platoon was engaged. This brief contact resulted in 3 US KIA and 5 US WIA. Later at 0910 hours the Hq section of 1-4 Cav was fired upon vic XT566548 with contact breaking soon thereafter. A search located 5 VC KIA. Tm D/1-11, in process of executing its RIF mission, first engaged the enemy vic XT575546 at 0920 hours during which 1 US was killed and 6 wounded. Activity intensified at 1030 hours as the third of the three teams, Tm B/1-4, made contact vic XT560555. As the contact was supported by artillery, tactical air strikes, and hunter killer teams, Tm C/1-4 moved to reinforce. This one hour engagement resulted in 52 VC KIA and 21 weapons captured while US forces suffered 11 killed and 13 wounded. A 31 Mar sweep of the area located 4 additional wounded PWs. A contact was reestablished

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in this same area at 1525 hours by Tm B which broke almost immediately. The contact resulted in 7 enemy killed and one enemy wounded captured while there was one US wounded.

Search and RIF operations around the two FSPBs (Picardy and Doc) and in the northern Michelin continued during the period 31 Mar - 2 Apr. On 2 Apr TF Haponski was alerted to prepare to discontinue operations in the Michelin and disestablish FSPB Doc. These actions did occur on 3 Apr as TF Haponski moved overland to via FSPB Lorraine thus effectively terminating 1st Infantry Division participation in Atlas Wedge. The CIDG Company was moved by rotary wing to Minh Thanh the same date. The 1-28 Inf continued to operate out of FSPB Picardy after this date but not as a participant in Atlas Wedge.

**13.(C) Psychological Operations:**

Psychological operation support was conducted in two phases. The first was the softening up phase where the VC/NVA units were warned of their impending defeat. The second phase consisted of the support of combat operations related to the operation. This phase included both preplanned targets as well as quick reaction responses to units in contact. The division dropped over 2,130,000 leaflets in support of the operation with approximately 750,000 in the first phase, 1,000,000 in the second phase, and 380,000 in Quick Reaction.

Approximately 15:30 minutes of loudspeaker hours were flown with the breakdown as follows: 1st plane - 4 hours, 2nd plane - 5 hours, 3rd plane - (Quick Reaction) 6:30 hours.

Leaflets used in support of the operation were:

a. Phase I

- (1) Safe conduct passes. Target VC/NVA.
- (2) Message to the 7th NVA warning them of their eventual defeat. Target 7th NVA Division.
- (3) Warning of B52 strikes. Target VC/NVA.

b. Phase II

- (1) Safe conduct passes. Target VC/NVA
- (2) Rally, you have lost leaflets. Target VC/NVA
- (3) Fear of B52 strikes. Target VC/NVA
- (4) Rally or die leaflet. Target VC/NVA
- (5) Exploitation of ralliers from C-61 and A55.

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## (6) Exploitation of ralliers.

Most units in contact had only safe conduct passes dropped with various themes being broadcast.

14.(U) Logistical Operations: The concept of logistical support for units engaged in Operation Atlas Wedge was primarily by rotary wing aircraft from a fixed base camp area to temporary locations in the area of operations. Battalion trains areas were situated at Lai Khe base camp. Trains personnel secured all classes of supply from facilities at Lai Khe based upon requests from units in the field. Supplies were then moved to resupply helicopter pads, loaded/rigged, and moved by helicopter external load to the field location.

15.(U) Engineer Operations: Operation Atlas Wedge was supported by the 1st and 2d Squads, Co B, 1st Engineer Bn. The squads performed a total of four mine sweep operations in support of 1-4 Cav elements. In addition they were needed on numerous occasions to provide assistance in the destruction of munitions and booby traps and clearing of tunnel complexes. The two squads performed in a wide range of their fundamental missions.

16.(C) Results: (Incl 8)

- a. Friendly losses:
  - (1) KIA: 22
  - (2) WIA: 100
- b. VC Personnel Losses:
  - (1) KIA(EC): 421
  - (2) KIA(Poss): 115
  - (3) PW: 16
- c. VC Equipment Losses:
  - (1) Weapons: 20(CS), 103(SA)

17.(U) Lessons Learned:a. Item: Maneuvering of tracked vehicles in rubber.

(1) Observation: Rubber plantations offer advantages and disadvantages in terms of maneuverability for cavalry operations.

(2) Evaluation: In the Michelin Plantation during Operation Atlas Wedge cavalry units found north-south movement relatively free of complications, east-west movement slightly less so, and diagonal movement extremely difficult. The grain of the rubber trees, i.e. the direction in which rows are planted, and distance between rows of trees are the critical factors. There is an advantage in that rows of rubber trees assist in control of formations since they serve to keep vehicles properly dispersed. There are difficulties when encountering obstacles since maneuvering from one row to the next can be a difficult proposition, particularly if the adjacent row

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is occupied by another vehicle. There is real danger in passing the enemy in his bunkers to the extent that he is located between two vehicles. The enemy has a flank shot at both vehicles; in addition the vehicle engaged from the flank must return fire on enemy with friendly elements directly beyond in line of fire.

(3) Recommendations: The 1-4 Cav, through testing of several maneuver methods during this operation, found that movement forward with one empty row of rubber between adjacent vehicles best suited all advantages and disadvantages simultaneously. Vehicles were close enough together to preclude bypassing enemy bunkers and thus permitting him the flank shot. At the same time the single empty row between vehicles permitted maneuver to the flank in event an obstacle were encountered (i.e. deadfall, ant hills such as are found in the Michelin, etc.) Finally the 1-4 Cav accepted the fact that diagonal movement was virtually impossible and accounted for that fact in its planning of operations.

b. Item: Anticipating Enemy Actions.

(1) Observation: During Operation Atlas Wedge enemy forces displayed a propensity for quickly returning to areas of operation which are vacated by US forces.

(2) Evaluation: Much of the 1st Division success in Operation Atlas Wedge can be traced to the decision to remove all forces from the Michelin temporarily in order to permit the Plantation to fill again with enemy. The enemy did, in fact, move back into the Plantation on the heels of the US departure, thus allowing himself to be once again fixed in location. Fixing the enemy is often a difficult achievement for US forces. This same type of propensity to move into voids left by departing US forces was evidenced when the enemy moved into FSPB Doc a few hours after it was disestablished. For a more complete discussion see interview with LTC Negaard at Incl 4. In connection with the enemy's return to the Michelin, the 1-4 Cav felt, in retrospect, that destruction of fortifications in the Michelin prior to the initial departure would have enhanced their success on return. On their return they found the enemy had reoccupied many of the same bunkers from which he had been originally evicted.

(3) Recommendation: That consideration be given to temporarily departing selected areas of operation with expectation that the enemy will return. Fixed fortifications should be destroyed prior to the temporary departure in order to preclude the enemy's use of the fortifications when US forces reenter an area. This appears to be a technique for fixing the enemy forces which has most merit when the area is one vital to the enemy's

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needs, i.e. one such as the Michelin.

*John W. Campion*

11 Incl WILLIAM W. CAMPION  
1-Interview Report: LTC Haponski Major, Infantry  
2-Interview Report: CPT Selsor Commanding  
3-Interview Report: LTC Price/CPT Menjivar  
4-Interview Report: LTC Negaard/MAJ Bennett  
5-Map of Operational Area  
6-Summary of Tactical Air Support  
7-Summary of B-52 Strikes  
8-Summary of Results  
9-Psychological Operations Leaflets  
10-Photographs of Operation(16 each)  
11-Tapes of Interviews(2 each 5" reels)

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## COMBAT AFTER ACTION INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWEE: LTC William C. Haponski, CO, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division.

INTERVIEWER: MAJ William W. Campion, CO, 17th Military History Detachment,  
1st Infantry Division.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview is being conducted with LTC William C. Haponski, Commanding Officer, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division, on 8 April 1969, at Lai Khe, Republic of Vietnam. LTC Haponski assumed command of this Squadron on 5 January 1969. The interview concerns the participation of his unit in operation Atlas Wedge during the period 18 March to 2 April 1969.

Sir, in way of beginning, I wonder if you would describe your mission as you saw it, or as it was given to you, your concept of how you would accomplish that mission, and how you were organized for combat?

HAPONSKI: The mission was to seek out and destroy the NVA forces which intelligence indicated were in the vicinity of the Michelin Plantation, both in the rubber and in the jungle areas surrounding the plantation. My task organization was initially Bravo Troop and Charlie Troop of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, each having an infantry platoon and an engineer squad. During the course of the operation, I added at one time Delta Company of the 1st Squadron of the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment. I also picked up responsibility for a Fire Support Base titled Doc which had Alpha Company of the 2-28 Infantry securing it, along with a 105 battery from Bravo Btry, 2-33 Artillery, and a 155 platoon with three tubes. There were other miscellaneous attachments such as signal and special engineer attachments. Later on, Delta Troop of the 1-11 ACR was switched with Mike Company, 3-11 ACR. In addition, during the initial stages of the operation, I also had Alpha Company, 1-28 Infantry attached, and I organized them much as a Cavalry Force giving them substantial cavalry forces so they could operate in a mountain fashion. They later left me during the course of the action.

CAMPION: Thank you, sir. As a second question, could you provide us a brief narrative description of the operation between 18 Mar and 2 Apr? Your more detailed observations on encounters on 30 and 31 March would be interesting. These are the days of heaviest contact for elements of your unit.

HAPONSKI: From 18 through 21 March we conducted jungle busting operations in the vicinity of the Michelin, both to the east of it and to the south and east of it. During this period we found some evidence of recent traffic, and we had one fairly sharp clash. Charlie Company, 1-4 Cav, Hq element, 1st Squadron, 4th Cav, on 21 March contacted an estimated 2 NVA ~~troops~~ <sup>troops</sup> ~~had participated~~ <sup>had participated</sup> and the circumstances were such that we could not maneuver effectively against them. We had negative results on either side from it.

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Combat After Action Interview, Haponski continued.

From 22 through 25 March we operated in the Michelin Plantation, in the rubber itself, initially under the operational control of the 11th ACR. On the 1st day, the 22nd of March, we had a short contact with 2 NVA which resulted in one killed and one captured who provided us valuable intelligence information. That night in our RON position we received about an estimated two squad probe and again there were negative casualties apparently on either side. We continued our operations in the Michelin on the following three days with some scattered contacts with negative results. We found on the 24th a very large rice and munitions cache in the southern part of our area. There were brand new bunkers built in there, some of them without overhead cover, and we had just begun to develop the total before daylight ran out on us on the 24th. The NVA continued to probe us during that period, and we returned fire at distances too great to have affected any kills. On the 25th we continued to find bunkers and equipment and conducted an extensive destruction program in one base camp which resulted in crushing or blowing about 150 newly constructed bunkers of the three to five man or eight man variety, total capacity when fully occupied could be as many as 1500 NVA. This base camp we destroyed. On the 25th of March we had a sharp engagement with 3 NVA recon men in which we killed the three. The Hqs section of the Squadron and the Hq section of Charlie Troop were actually the ones most involved. We had two US wounded on that particular day but no unit identification on these NVA.

From the 25th through the 29th of March, starting late on the 25th, we occupied FSPB Doc with one troop this time. One of my troops, Bravo, was detached from me and moved south to another task force. Not much happened initially around Doc. We conducted RIFs to the northeast and Charlie Troop, 1-4 Cav, secured a downed chopper in which 5 were killed on the 27th. On the 28th there was a major attack launched on the Fire Support Base beginning at 0220 hours. It was a magnificently coordinated attack with massive mortar rounds and RPGs coming in simultaneously exactly at that time to include machine gun and AK fire from outside the perimeter. The mortar rounds landed squarely in the center of the Fire Support Base and spread out on all sides into the wire and out beyond the wire where my Charlie Troop was RONing - the bulk of Charlie Troop. The RPGs came from all sides, and I could not begin to estimate the number. The reports were that they were being fired from every side of the perimeter, and I can personally verify by watching them come in and listening to them that this was the case. As I say, it was a magnificently coordinated attack - a standoff attack initially. The mortaring ceased after a period of, I would estimate, 20 to 30 minutes and we were able to evacuate the wounded and the dead. We sustained casualties both from the RPG fire and from the mortar fire. In the initial stages of the attack we had a contingency plan that one platoon of the Charlie Troop, upon any attack, would sweep immediately outside around the perimeter, wagon wheel around the perimeter, firing to the outside. This was done, and I feel this was the determining factor in discouraging any major ground attack. The closest that the NVA got to the wire was about 75 meters. I feel that they probably would have come in had they felt that they could take it; but with the Charlie

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Combat After Action Interview, Haponski continued.

Troop platoon wheeling the perimeter and firing, it made it difficult for them. Unfortunately during the course of this action, at about 0330 in the morning, one of the Charlie Troop vehicles threw a track and another one became bogged in a swamp just outside the Fire Support Base which immobilized the platoon for a period long enough for the NVA to group and attack the platoon. The platoon responded with massive fire power. We continued to call in artillery which had been coming in all this time, and this attack was defeated with the wounding of only one of our own men. The attack again was launched with mortars and with RPGs and with small arms fire. The one thing that did bother me all night long as we continued to receive this fire was the twelve man patrol. This patrol we had in the stream bed about 500 meters from our position, and it was obvious that there was a major attack on the Fire Support Base, and for a period of time we lost communications with this patrol. And with all the firing that was going on, it was difficult to tell if they were in difficulty. As it turned out, they were not, and the night passed with no incident. The shell craters the next morning revealed that there were in excess of 150 rounds of mortars -- 60s and 82s -- and there were three 107 rockets which were fired during the course of the attack. We could not estimate how many RPGs were fired from outside the perimeter. Many of them were launched as mortars in the standoff attack from I would estimate anywhere from 200 to 400 meters out. In the morning, General Smith came to survey the situation, and shortly after that, I believe it was around 0830, General Talbott came. As General Talbott was talking to me on the western edge of the perimeter, another mortar attack hit just outside the perimeter along with RPGs. This time the entire Cavalry Troop was outside the perimeter, and they ~~saw~~ the spot from where the RPGs were launched. They immediately went to it and raked it with fire. Unfortunately apparently the small element that had fired the RPGs had escaped before we were able to close with them. The sniping continued around the Fire Support Base until about noon-time and after that there was no more activity. That then is a recap of the events of the night of the 28th - the attack on the Fire Support Base.

On the 29th we conducted RIFs locally and on the 30th went back into the Michelin. The plan was to put down an AVLB in the southern edge of my area of operations and to sweep north. However, in moving the AVLB in position at first light, we made a contact with a sizeable force. It was at least a platoon, and the report was that they were fleeing north. In the fire fight three of my men were killed and additional ones were wounded. Since the report was that they were going north, I immediately discontinued putting the AVLB in and sent one Troop to the north on the eastern side of a stream in an attempt to cut the fleeing NVA off, and in fact it turned out that they did just this. They hooked into them as they made a western move and immediately came under fire and returned fire on both sides of the column to the north and to the south. My feeling was that the major portion of the enemy was still to the south of them after having outraced them to the north. Consequently I turned the Troop to the south on line, brought my Delta Company of the 11th Cav in, and turned them on line. Thus with Charlie Company of the 1-4 Cav and Delta of the 1-11 Cav on line, we began our sweep south. Bravo Troop at this time had been sweeping to the north on

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Combat After Action Interview, Haponski continued.

the eastern side of the stream, and I brought them into a position just to the rear of the two southern sweeping elements. We had barely begun the sweep when Delta Company was hit by heavy RPG fire and small arms fire. In this engagement one tank was knocked out and one man was killed. I received the report again that large numbers of the enemy were fleeing to the south, and I therefore echeloned Charlie Troop facing generally south, but with their right flank further extended than the left in an attempt to form a block, as I moved Bravo Troop through the Delta Company which had sustained the casualties and, in my opinion, was not ready to press on with the fight. Bravo Troop passed through Delta Company, and by this time I had closed two sides of a square: Charlie Troop facing east, forming a block and engaging the enemy as they fled south; Bravo Troop pressing through Delta Company and going to the south across the front of the block. Bravo Troop went through with all weapons firing, putting out an amazing volume of fire as a Cavalry Troop can, and yet they ran into a second screen of NVA RPG men. (It was) a very strong screen, and this screen hit three of their vehicles and caused severe casualties. The total killed for Bravo Troop in those three vehicles was eight. Bravo Troop, however, did continue to press the attack after pulling back to reorganize. And when Bravo Troop hit this second line of RPG men, I had my first set of fires on station and began putting in sets of fighters. I believe the total was six, into the box that was formed by Bravo Troop on the north, Charlie Troop on the west, and the open stream on the east. The only flank that was not covered by forces or by Air Cavalry screening was the south, and we were putting the air strikes in that area in the box to the south and artillery across the south. As a matter of interest, one of the prisoners whom we captured the next day who had been wounded —we captured four of them down to the south. One of them indicated that about 60, he thought, had managed to flee south, many of them wounded. His group of ten then split up into a smaller group of four and the disruption was caused in fact by the artillery and the gunships and the airstrikes that were put into the south. So apparently large numbers of casualties were inflicted on the fleeing enemy by the blocking fires. I swept Charlie Troop across the contact area to the east. We did not take time to pick up weapons or count casualties or anything like this. They merely grenade bunkers as they went and went all the way across in front of Bravo Troop. Then Bravo Troop was brought down to the south grenade bunkers and pulling out the dead NVA, collecting weapons and equipment. Unfortunately my time ran out, and it got dark before we were able to complete our sweep through this complex. Therefore I feel that the total body count in the two days of operations of 90 killed and 6 captured was only a portion of the body count that we would have gotten had we not run out of daylight. As a matter of fact, for the next two days as we were sweeping the area we found areas where NVA had been buried, where they had been dragged off, and many blood trails going off in all directions from the area of contact. Our feeling is, based on the intelligence that we gained from this contact, that we hit squarely into at least one NVA rifle company and one artillery company from the 7th NVA Division. With a total body count of 90 and 6 PWS, it is obvious that those two companies at least are now combat ineffective. The operations after the 30th of March and for the next three days until the 2nd of April, while

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Combat After Action Interview, Haponski continued.

we remained in the Michelin, were sweeps, destruction of bunkers, finding of more equipment, poking as many possible areas as we could to develop the situation. But we had no more enemy contact after the 31st. I believe I mentioned earlier that on the second day of the operation we did in fact kill four and capture four.

CAMPION: Sir, another question here. How do you view these operations in the rubber plantation, the Michelin Plantation, recalling the area which is more routine for your operations in the vicinity of Di An - Phu Loi? In other words, how do you look at the Michelin Plantation as an area of operation for armor?

HAPONSKI: Unquestionably the Michelin and areas like this are where the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, should be in terms of Division resources in my opinion. We can operate in the Plantation with no problem whatsoever. We can bring our massive firepower to bear, and we can maneuver. Of course we can do the same thing in the Di An area and in the Phu Loi area, but we don't find major NVA forces down there; and we find ourselves doing such things as poking around back yards with sticks to try to find a tunnel or two. This has a deleterious effect on the units after a while. They don't get to feel that they are operating as Cavalry classically can operate. So we look upon the Michelin operation as a challenge. It was the first major engagement for this squadron since last fall when the Squadron went north to the An Loc - Loc Ninh area, again in the rubber, and scored very well. For Charlie Troop it was the first major engagement since May of last year. All the people are new; all of the people were inexperienced. Charlie Troop in the Di An area hadn't even had a small contact. Bravo Troop had had a few small contacts in the Di An area, but as a whole we must say that the 30th of March, or I suppose we could say the 28th of March — the attack on the Fire Support Base — and the 30th of March in the rubber, were the first real tests for this Squadron in a long time. I am pleased with the opportunity to be able to operate in this area. The unit morale is high; the troops like it. For one thing it is cool under the trees in the rubber. They can operate, and they feel that they are doing the job that the Cavalry can do. I especially like to operate with my Delta Air Troop in the rubber and around the fringes of the rubber with the whole Squadron conducting sweeps and gaining intelligence as the classical Cavalry Squadron is designed to do.

CAMPION: Sir, as a closing question to this interview, did you or your unit bring away from the operation any pertinent lessons learned?

HAPONSKI: We most certainly did. One of the lessons that we learned was the importance of accurate reporting. I am convinced in my mind that we sustained some casualties because of erroneous reports, or incomplete reports perhaps I should say. These were reports given in the heat of battle which a more seasoned unit perhaps would not have given. I am thinking specifically of the report that the enemy was fleeing south which was given to me which was my reason for passing Bravo Troop without waiting for an artillery

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preparation in the area. Of course with enemy units fleeing south in droves as they were reported, and with the massive firepower of the Cavalry, the thing to do in my mind is to pursue; and this is what we did. However, what was not reported was that the enemy apparently was in bunkers which were unknown to us and that they in fact had an extensive RPG screen and this is what caused the casualties when Bravo Troop passed through. The casualties that Delta sustained were no more than casualties normally sustained in a combat or a fleeting combat of this nature. But the ones that were sustained were definitely from troops that were well entrenched in bunkers - well disciplined troops and those that would stand up in the face of cannister rounds, 50 caliber, small arms fire delivered at them by the Cavalry Troop as it progressed. And had I had a more accurate report, if it could have been given by my subordinate commanders at that time, we would have held up for the artillery preparation in that particular area. As it was, I put my air in; but my air was south of the point of heaviest contact due to the obvious requirement to keep the impact away from the friendly troops. That is one lesson that we learned, the absolute necessity of accurate reporting even in the heat of battle.

Another lesson is in reference to operating in the rubber. Generally speaking, as I said, we can maneuver very well in the rubber. However, in the Michelin you can maneuver very well in only one direction and that is north and south. You can maneuver fairly well in an east - west direction, and you can't maneuver at all if you are going across the grain of the rubber. The Michelin from the air looks nice and clean, as if you ought to be able to drive down these roads with no problem. But, in fact, due to artillery, air strikes, and natural causes, these lanes are clogged in many cases with trees. There are bunkers in them. There are huge anthills which have to be by-passed. So it is not just a question of getting on line and sweeping through a rubber plantation. You have to maneuver in the plantation, and you have to plan your maneuver in this particular case so that you go north - south or east - west and not in one of the diagonal directions. The streams play an important role in the Michelin. They can be both a hindrance and a help. They are a help in that they provide good control features, they provide avenues where you can place your artillery and your air, and effectively block. And of course they also block your movement. An AVL is absolutely necessary for operation in this area. In fact you must have two of them in case one malfunctions. The AVL itself is not adaptable to being pushed through the trees, so that you have to plan your approaches to your stream crossings carefully and you must have good engineer support with you at all times.

Another lesson that we learned is that you take time to blow bunkers if at all possible. We did this when we first went into the Michelin on the 22nd, but we were called out to allow the Michelin to fill up with NVA forces and to go back in on the 30th which was, in fact, what happened. But in pulling out early, we were unable to destroy many bunkers, and these bunkers that we did not destroy, that we in fact did not even locate, were the ones that caused Bravo Troop the casualties in that short and fierce engagement. We know that you must destroy these bunkers. They are fairly easy to build

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Combat After Action Interview, Haponski continued.

again - true; but nevertheless if you are going back in in a hurry, these bunkers at least will not be ones that the NVA will be fighting from.

About the only other lesson I can think of that we learned is that the artillery employment in the Plantation is as imperative as it is anywhere. The rubber trees are easy to see through relatively by an LOH flying at treetop level. And in this respect the Air Cavalry is invaluable because they can count the bunkers and they can mark the bunkers very easily. It is not like in the jungle area where you have a dense canopy. The LOH down in the tree-tops can in fact spot these bunkers and can spot active base camps. The Cavalry should be employed with its Air Cavalry Troop in rubber plantations, and it should be prepared to use all the artillery and air as in any engagement that it possibly can.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview has been conducted with LTC William C. Haponski, the Commanding Officer of the 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry of the 1st Infantry Division and concerns the participation of his unit in operation Atlas Wedge during the period 18 March to 2 April 1969.

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COMBAT AFTER ACTION INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWEE: Captain James L. Selsor, Commanding Officer, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, 1st Infantry Division.

INTERVIEWER: Major William W. Campion, Commanding Officer, 17th Military History Detachment, 1st Infantry Division.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview is being conducted with CPT James L. Selsor, Commanding Officer, Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, of the 1st Infantry Division at Lai Khe Republic of Vietnam, on the 8th of April, 1969. The interview concerns the participation of his unit in operation Atlas Wedge with particular emphasis placed on the period of 30 - 31 March 1969, during which time his unit engaged in one of the heavier contacts of the 1-4 Cav in this operation. CPT Selsor, I wonder if you could give us a narrative description of your observations of the activities on the 30th and 31st of March? These are the days of heaviest contact for your unit.

SELSOR: We had been in the Michelin about four days before we went into this operation, and the days we had been in there we had had small contact with a total of 5 NVA. It was finally decided that these were recon forces so the concept was to pull back into Doc, pull everybody out of the Michelin in the hopes that we would get a main force in there. We pulled out for a total of about three days I believe it was. The concept of the operation for that morning when we left was for my troop to lead, and I had two AVLBs with me. There was one creek running before you actually get into the rubber where we had to launch the bridge to get across. We were then to go into the Michelin, and there are natural barriers there. There is a stream that runs north and south which splits our AO of the Michelin in half. Before when we had operated in there, we had to go farther north to get across the creek. We had to go quite far north into our AO in order to get across the creek and then sweep south in this area where we had found base camps. The concept that morning was to launch a bridge, an AVLB, across the creek at a southern point, go across it, and then get on line and sweep north up through the base camp area. We left at 0545 in the morning. We had the first bridge in place by 0630. We had gone across that with no incidents. We had cut up through the rubber and cut up to the place where we planned to put the AVLB in. We were still in column. I was in column with three platoons in column and my troop headquarters behind the 1st platoon. The third platoon was leading, and the third platoon leader had the AVLB with him.

CAMPION: I wonder if I could interject a question here and ask you to give me a general statement or two about what other troops or elements of the task force were doing simultaneously with your movement in column?

SELSOR: The Squadron had Bravo Troop and also had Delta Troop from the 1-11 ACR which was the tank company. Bravo was supposed to sweep north on the east side of the stream. We were crossing over to the west side.

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

Bravo was supposed to sweep north on the eastern side. The tank company was supposed to follow me across, and they were to be part of my right flank and sweep north along with me. So they were right behind me in the column of march. We reached the second AVLB site, and the platoon had pulled up, and they had their squad of engineers with them who had dismounted and started to sweep the road with security forces of their own. There were about six men on the ground with a tank right behind them on the road. The AVLB was directly behind them, and the tank was behind that as security. As we started to approach the creek, the platoon started to see people running through the woods. The first report we got was that there were three NVA running north through the woods, and they were loaded with RPGs as the way it came across the air. I reported it to the Squadron, and we were told to engage them. So we started to engage them with 50 caliber and the main gun of the tank with HE rounds because we were about 300 to 500 meters away from the wood line, which would make a good shot with HE rounds. Just about the time the exchange of fire began, an RPG or claymore exploded down by the bridge site killing two of my men that were down there securing the engineers and wounded two of the engineers. At the time of the contact, we pulled the third platoon on line facing west. There was a clearing across the creek. We were parallel to the creek and on the opposite side of it shooting across the clearing into the woodline - shooting at the NVA running north. We had the wounded and the two KIAs laying on the ground in front of the AVLB. We went up and tried to see whether we could still launch the AVLB across the site and determined that it was impossible, that the gap was too wide for the AVLB to span. So we continued to deploy north. We had an alternate plan in case the AVLB couldn't be launched there. We had an alternate plan where we would go further north and cross at our normal crossing, get on line, and sweep south. I'd be on the western flank, and the tank company would be on my left on the eastern flank sweeping south. This was basically the plan we used. We moved up north, changed our formation into a double column formation for added security since we had already had a little bit of contact. We went up to our normal crossing site and started sweeping west. We swept straight west in a double column formation. As we got further west, we were about 300 meters beyond the stream where the grain of the rubber makes it impossible to keep a double column formation, before we got on line. As we were getting to the point where we were going to go on line and start sweeping south, I started receiving fire from both sides of the road or trail that we were on - a trail that moves through the rubber. We engaged at that time deploying into a herring-bone formation so we could bring fire to both sides of the road. A herring-bone formation is where the tracks just alternate the direction that they are facing. We were all in column facing in one direction, and when we herring-bone, one track turns to the left and the other turns to the right. This way they can bring their 50 calibers, their 7.62 machine guns, and also main guns in fire in opposite directions. It gives you all around security. After the contact subsided, we couldn't actually see whether we had inflicted any casualties at all. We took no casualties. We got on line heading south, and the tank company came up behind us; and they

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

got on line heading south so at this time they were on my left flank. The forces we saw running through the woods before we had turned across the creek were about a platoon size. Finally we had seen almost twenty to thirty people running through the woods heading north. When we turned west, I actually believe we cut them in half. That is why we received fire from both sides. I think we were engaged probably with no more than a squad, but we had cut them in half; and that is why they had to fight, and they really did not want to engage us at that time. I had previously neglected to state that when we moved out from our AVLB site — we had left that deciding we couldn't launch the AVLB — and we were moving north paralleling the creek, the main unit or the lead unit, the 3rd platoon, spotted 3 NVA in a creek bed running and crouching in the creek bed running north. We engaged them with a cannister round from the main gun killing two of them. The third one got away in the creek bed because we could not get down in there with our vehicles. We never did find him. We crossed the creek and, as I said, we were on line heading south. We had gone about 200 to 500 meters south when the left flank, the tank company, was engaged. All I know of that contact is what I heard over the radio. I never actually saw the contact. From what I heard over the radio, the tank company on my left was starting to take heavy RPG rounds. And initially they had one killed and one tank knocked out, and they held in place. In fact I think they backed off a little bit after they got the wounded out. They backed up about 50 meters. I held in place, but we were delayed in holding in place. We were sort of echelon. We were ahead of them, maybe up to a hundred meters ahead of them, and I was echeloned back to link up with them. We stayed in place for about an hour and a half. We never actually had any contact during this time except that my left flank element, which was my 3rd platoon, could see people running through the woods. They would give me periodic reports that they could see five people, ten people, anywhere up to twenty people. I think we counted a total of sixty people running through the woods who they engaged with their 50 caliber. These people were 600 meters away that we were shooting at so we never knew whether we were hitting them or not, but we were putting fire down that way directly to the south. This contact was taking place about nine oclock. I believe it was that time because I remember looking at my watch when we were starting to put the AVLB in when we had our first initial contact and that was about 0730. And it would have taken us an hour and a half to get to the position that we were in, maybe a little bit longer. But it was nine oclock — ten oclock, somewhere around in there. While we were in position, they were bringing in artillery and light gun ships to the area to our front on these people we saw running away and also close support. And I could hear the Squadron Commander maneuvering Bravo Troop which had been sweeping north. He was swinging them around to cross the creek, and his plan was to pass them through the tank company and continue our sweep to the south. As Bravo Troop came on line, they were still getting close support from the gunships, and I believe the Tac Air had started in about that time also so we had Tac Air support. Bravo Troop broke through the tank company, or passed through the tank company, and from what I could hear, they hadn't gone more than fifty meters — they were firing with

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

everything they had — before they were also engaged with heavy RPGs and small arms fire. They took or it sounded as if they immediately took 8 casualties - 8 KIA and many wounded and losing about four tracks and at least two ACAVs. The fire was so heavy that it forced them to pull back also about on line with the tank company. I am not sure exactly how far back they pulled, but I believe it was on line with the tank company. It was at this time that we received an order to flank the bunkers. We had received no fire over on my side. I was on the right flank, and we had received no fire. So I held my left flank in place and swept around. We did a turning movement so that we were facing east at this time. We had sort of an "L" formation with Bravo and the tank company over on the north, and I was on the west. I had a north - south line facing east. Again we received close air support, and we continued to move on through to the contact area. My right flank element never saw anything. They never had any contact at all. There were a few bunkers that they threw grenades into, but there was never any fire received from them. The left flank and part of the center platoon were the ones that received the brunt of the fire which, at this time was just sporadic. We received no RPG that I know of. We just received sporadic AK fire. I think the reason was that, when we were sweeping west, the gun ports were all to the north; and the only things that were facing us were the entrances and exits to the bunkers so that the people in them couldn't actually fire at us very well. And as we moved, I dismounted the infantry and also dismounted some of the people from the tracks. As the tracks moved along they threw hand grenades into the bunkers and fired their small arms, their M16s, into the bunkers while the advancing line kept 50 (cal) fire close into the front of the tracks to keep their people in the bunkers to keep their heads down. They received some secondary explosions in the bunkers, and actually we didn't stop to count and see who we had inside the bunkers. There was fire coming from them so we just threw the grenades in them and kept sweeping on through.

CAMPION: I wonder if, at this point, you could describe the configuration of one of these bunkers and just exactly how one would go about throwing a grenade in it if he were moving through the area on a tracked vehicle or beside a tracked vehicle? Particularly off a tracked vehicle.

SELSOR: The bunkers were "L" shaped would be the best way to describe them, and at one end of the "L" was their firing port. This was facing north, and at the other end of the "L" was the entrance or exit. This was a wider opening, and it was more of a straight up and down type thing where it would be difficult for a man to fire a weapon from it. So we came along — some of the tracks in the lead, if they kept up their 50 fire in there, they would be unable to even poke their heads up to fire at us because the 50s were pretty good at going right through their overhead cover. We took a look at it later and the 50s would go right through the dirt and the logs and go into the bunker. So I imagine we were keeping their heads down, and as the track would pass by, the gunner would lean way out over the side of the track and just drop a grenade down inside of it. It was a vertical drop on most of them. We also had dismounted people. We were running about

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

four people per track so that we could dismount one or two and fire our 50s and drive the track and still have people on the ground throwing the grenades, and I also had an infantry platoon with me.

CAMPION: I would gather that these were log and dirt bunkers with the silhouette above the ground?

SELSOR: They rose just slightly above the ground. I would say maybe two or three feet was the hump of dirt above the ground, and then they were sunk into the ground three or four feet so a short man could stand up inside it. They were good sized bunkers. They had a firing port so that they could stand up inside it and fire straight ahead. This was probably why Bravo Troop received their fire. The man could put an RPG in there and fire with relative safety, and the way that we were coming they could not fire at us very well. That is why we received only sporadic fire.

CAMPION: Are you satisfied with the manner or the technique in which you neutralized these bunkers? In retrospect, can you see a better way it could have been accomplished?

SELSOR: I think I would change the formation just slightly. Instead of putting all three platoons on line, I think I would keep one in reserve. With the infantry back there, let the lead elements fire at the bunkers and try to neutralize them that way and let this platoon in the rear be the ones to throw the grenades in and actually sweep through the area and make sure we had gotten everybody in them; because after we had made our sweep all the way through, Bravo Troop swept south. And at this time it (Trp B) was to our direct rear. And they were still finding people alive in the bunkers where they were getting sporadic fire.

CAMPION: So the idea there then is that there is some value to having a man on the ground beside the bunker to make a thorough check of it rather than going by on a vehicle?

SELSOR: Definately. The only thing the tracks could do was to keep their heads down, and of course the grenade was the best weapon that we had out there because, even though the 50s did penetrate the bunkers, I don't know how effective they were inside. And you couldn't get anything else inside there. So as long as you could keep their heads down so that they weren't shooting at you and get up close enough to get a grenade inside, that was the best weapon that we had out there. You had to have the man on the ground to throw the grenade in there. We continued to sweep to the east until we reached the clearing. We were now on the opposite side of the creek where we tried to launch the bridge. We came out into a clearing across there. We held on line there, and they had Bravo Troop sweep south to our rear. They did a fine (job) of policing up the battlefield, and they were still finding people alive in there. As for the extent of the actual fighting, this was the end of it for us. We pulled into the clear-

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

ing and resupplied out there.

CAMPION: All right. Could you give me an idea of the total distance you moved during the duration of the morning? Also the physical dimensions of the area in which you were operating, in other words - north and south, east and west, how big an area were you operating in?

SELSOR: Well, I don't have a map with me, but when we moved out we moved from Doc. Doc is, I'd say, maybe two miles from where we tried to launch our bridge or where we had our initial contact. From there we went on up to where our stream crossing site was; I would say three or four kilometers. We went across there going due east, and we went about four kilometers and we got on line heading south. Now my formation was three platoons on line heading south. Now we usually use, or this day we used, three to four rows of rubber between each vehicle. I extended on line then from eight hundred to a thousand meters with my Troop. We learned also from when the tank company got hit that they were too spread out, so we closed it up later on and only had about one row of rubber between the tracks. This was when we were making our assault. When we were this close, our extension is about five hundred meters. Our assault across Bravo Troop's front and the tank company's front was maybe two to three kilometers at the most into the clearing.

CAMPION: Can you give me your estimate at this point of the capabilities of the enemy force that you faced? What is your assessment of his capability and abilities?

SELSOR: As I have said earlier, we received sporadic AK fire. In fact, as we checked the bunkers for the next few days, I think we found a total of about 5 AKs and I think that Bravo Troop maybe turned up about the same number. What they really seemed to be loaded with were RPGs. They have found it to be an effective anti personnel weapon, and it is also effective against the tracks. So I think that this would be their basic weapon. I really think that we surprised them that day, and that is why we saw them running through the woods. But they had those bunkers prepared, and what we ran into was probably a screening force that was screening for a larger force that was running to the south. No one ever tried to give up, although I don't know how much chance they had. But they fought until they didn't have any ammunition. This maybe is another reason why we didn't receive so much fire. As I say, we received some secondary explosions when we were throwing grenades in the bunkers but not many. So they may have fired all of their ammunition at Bravo Troop, and had nothing left. This may be their biggest weakness - that they have only what they are carrying on their backs, and they can't resupply that well in a big fire fight.

CAMPION: Then I gather you would describe them as a disciplined force that did not wish to make contact at that particular time?

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

SELSOR: Yes, that would basically be it, because the bunkers we were running into, although you could fire from them, I don't think that they were fighting bunkers. They looked more like this was a staging area. They were re-supply bunkers - a place where they had overhead cover from air observation and a place where it was cool inside there. There was a stream nearby. I'm sure it was a re-supply area or a staging area, and they didn't want to make contact in there.

CAMPION: Without a map here, I am going to ask the Captain to describe as best he can the exact location of this bunker complex.

SELSOR: There are natural streams that cut the Michelin and there is this upper portion — the northeast portion — and we were finding them in the southwest corner of this northeast portion. It was actually just a little off center from the geographic center of the Michelin - just a little bit northeast of the center of the Michelin. We had been working in that area before, as I said, maybe four or five days before we went in there. And we had found this base camp area where we had found quite a large cache. We had gone in there the next day with engineers and blown up all these bunkers, but when we went in there on this day of contact, all these bunkers had been rebuilt. They had gone in there and completely rebuilt everything we had destroyed.

CAMPION: Captain, in closing here let me preface this question with the remark that your unit or your armored element had not had recent previous experience operating in the rubber such as one finds in the Michelin. Your area of operation is normally down around the Di An - Phu Loi area or on occasion in jungle maybe, or near jungle, but not in a rubber plantation as such. In view of that could you give me what you feel to be your one or two most pertinent lessons learned from this engagement?

SELSOR: One of them, I have already mentioned, is that you can't be dispersed widely inside the rubber. We learned that in the initial contact. And, as I said before this, we were putting four maybe five rows of rubber between the tracks which just gives you visual contact, and it is maybe twenty five meters between the vehicles, but when you are going into a bunker complex, you can't see the bunkers until you are right on top of them. If they get in between the tracks, they have got good flank shots at the vehicles. In fact Bravo Troop took some flank shots. This is where they got a lot of their casualties, because they had gone right through the bunkers or right past them before they saw them. So we changed it after that. We would leave only one row of rubber between the vehicles. This gives you enough room to maneuver your vehicles slightly if they run into an obstacle where they can go into the next row and get back on line. And also insures that you are not going to leave a bunker untouched, that you are not going to go by one and leave it in between you. I think this is the biggest lesson that we learned. Also you need depth to your formation if you run into these bunkers. We went in there on line, all three

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Combat After Action Interview, Selsor continued.

platoons on line, with just a few vehicles like my troop headquarters in the rear the first time. If we went back in there again, as I said, I would put another platoon in the rear with the ground elements to sweep through the bunkers, to insure that we had swept through it and gotten everybody in the bunkers. There is very little control problem inside the rubber, because the rubber has a natural grain to it where you can put your track in. Once you are in the grain of rubber and you have got your tracks on line, the only thing is you've got to keep them on line and that is not very hard because they can see each other looking right and left. They have only got one direction they can go. You don't have them deviating to the right or the left as long as they stay in the row of rubber.

CAMPION: Do the trees pose any problem in traversing and firing to the flanks with your gun tubes?

SELSOR: You can traverse slightly. Actually it all depends on the rubber. There are different sections. Where we were this day, the rubber was wide enough that it would take a tank, and as long as it is wide enough for the tank, he can traverse a good ways. There is no problem there. When we got on line to sweep east, we were going against the grain of the rubber, and we were lucky this day. It wasn't too bad. But we ran into a point where there just weren't any rows wide enough for a tank to go, and we had to crash a whole row of rubber for the tank to get through which slowed us down considerably. And there are different sections in there where this happens, where the ACAVs can get through there alright, but the tanks have trouble because the rows of rubber are so close. But in the Michelin, going north or south, the rows are wide enough to take a tank and there is no problem. But when you go east or west, that is when you start to run into the narrow rows where you have a little bit of difficulty.

CAMPION: Let me ask an additional question here. If one of your vehicles approaches one of these bunkers, how would you describe the method in which it is engaged, both with the main gun and your 50 caliber? Give me a little description of that.

SELSOR: (In) the main gun we were using entirely cannister, and this is effective up to five hundred meters - anywhere from two hundred to five hundred meters. And we used this just to generally fire in front of us. I don't think anyone actually fired a cannister round into the bunkers, because it would be difficult to get the gun tube into this configuration. We used this mainly to keep the heads down of the enemy in front of us. And then as we approached it we could see the bunkers, and 50 (cal) fire almost next to or directly in front of the vehicles and into the bunker was the most effective weapon that we had until the ground units could get up there with the grenades. Like I said, the 50s were able to penetrate their overhead cover, and I believe this was effective in keeping the enemy troops under cover.

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Combat After Action Interview, Salsor continued.

CAMPION: In view of the extensive use made by the enemy of the RPG weapon, let me ask you if you moved buttoned up in any of these engagements, and if so, in what manner?

SELSOR: I think most of the tank drivers drove buttoned up that day, because we had been attacked before during a mortar attack; and we had taken some casualties with drivers that remained unbuttoned. The ACAV drivers, the majority of them, remained unbuttoned, just peering over the top of their hatches. I think most of them feel that they have just as much chance looking over it as down inside the ACAV because if you took an RPG in the front, it would penetrate it very easily. There would be no question on that - if you took one in the front that the driver would be a casualty. So they remained unbuttoned so they could see better and probably protect themselves better. Most of them carry a rifle or 45 up there next to them.

CAMPION: This interview has been conducted with Captain James L. Salsor, who is the Commanding Officer of Troop C, 1st Squadron, 4th Cavalry, of the 1st Infantry Division and has to do with the engagements and participation of his unit in operation Atlas Wedge particularly during the period 30 - 31 March, 1969.

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## COMBAT AFTER ACTION INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWEES: LTC Robert E. Price, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division and CPT Milton R. Menjivar, Company Commander, Company C, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division.

INTERVIEWER: MAJ William W. Campion, Commanding Officer, 17th Military History Detachment, 1st Infantry Division.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview is being conducted with LTC Robert E. Price, the Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, of the 1st Infantry Division. Colonel Price assumed command of this unit on 15 December 1968. The interview is being conducted on the 10th of April 1969 and concerns participation of Colonel Price's unit in Operation Atlas Wedge during the period 18 March to 20 March 1969.

Sir, in way of beginning this conversation, I wonder if you could describe your mission in this operation as you saw it, your concept of how you would accomplish that mission, and how you were organized for the task given you?

PRICE: Well, our mission was a very simple one: to find VC who were believed to be someplace a few kilometers southeast of the Michelin Rubber Plantation - an unknown size force. I had to accomplish my portion of this task three of my companies: Bravo, Charlie, and Delta. About mid-morning on 18 March, I inserted Bravo, Charlie, and Delta into the southern portion of grid square 6241. We moved about a half a kilometer to the east from there, and then began moving in a column of companies on a reconnaissance-in-force operation, northwestward up along the river bed. We were looking for any signs of enemy activity as we moved to the northwest toward the Michelin Rubber Plantation. The rest of the daylight hours that day were spent moving up this river bed and along the wooded areas to the west of it. The move was rather uneventful. We found nothing significant. We placed one air strike into a heavily wooded area to our front as we moved. We used artillery to our front and flanks as we moved. We did quite a bit of reconnaissance by fire as we moved. Very late in the afternoon as we reached an area approximately two kilometers southeast of the Michelin Rubber Plantation, our companies then began to split out into areas where they were to spend the night. My Bravo Company's southern most element placed itself into a company sized RON position. Northwest of Bravo my Delta Company broke out into three platoon sized ambushes. Delta Company's ambushes were generally astride the 61 grid line and just south of the 47 grid line. My Charlie Company continued to move to the northwest closer to the Michelin and set up three platoon sized ambush positions approximately one and one half kilometers southeast of the edge of the Michelin Plantation. I will backtrack for a moment and mention that fairly late in the afternoon, as Charlie Company was about to receive resupply and the resupply slick aircraft was coming into Charlie's position, the aircraft, just as he was about to touch down, suddenly moved very quickly skyward and disappeared from the area. This puzzled us all until the pilot radioed back that he had just been locked onto by radar and so had moved quickly out of the area. A few minutes later, he did return to the area and

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Combat After Action Interview, Price - Menjivar continued.

deliver the supplies. This was the only significant indication that we had received during the day of VC activity in the area. It was impossible to determine the location of this radar, and we were told by the pilot that we could not determine its location or its range but that he was certain that his aircraft had been locked onto by radar. As darkness fell, Captain Menjivar, Charlie Company Commander, set up his three platoon ambush sites generally on a line north to south. He placed himself with his center ambush platoon in an open rice paddy, situated it along a rice paddy dike, quite a high dike I might add, which was to be a very important factor in a fire fight which his company engaged in later that night.

CAMPION: Thank you, sir. At this point we will ask Captain Milton R. Menjivar, the Company Commander of Charlie Company, to describe the actions of his unit on the evening of 18 March in the rice paddy and dike area that the Colonel just mentioned. Captain Menjivar assumed command of Charlie Company on the 20th of February 1969. Captain Menjivar.

MENJIVAR: At approximately 2030 hours I had my three ambush positions set up generally in the 59 - 46 grid square generally paralleling the 60 grid line. My northern-most ambush was covering a trail junction. My center ambush, the one I had my Charlie Platoon with, was in the center of the rice paddies with clear fields of fire in all directions. My southern-most ambush was covering a trail that went through a thick wooded area to my south. We had not completely set up the ambushes when my northern-most element reported hearing voices to their front. Later it was explained by one of my Kit Carson Scouts with that element that the voices were inquiring as to who was in that area. Shortly after this happened, about a minute or so after this happened, one of the men who was directly facing the trail that runs east to west saw a VC in front of his position and triggered off the ambush. Immediately after this, all the claymores in that ambush went off. A fire fight started. The VC, apparently taken by surprise, conducted counter ambush techniques and assaulted the ambush. We could see from our center element generally where the fire was coming from, and I had one machine gun open up directly in front of the killing zone. This way the VC were walking into this flanking fire as well as the fire from the ambush. I got secondary reports from the platoon leader of the northern-most ambush that they had, in fact, suffered about six casualties and that there were dead VC intermingled with the wounded and that hand to hand fighting was going on. At this time I sent one half of the platoon I was with, the center platoon, north to reinforce this AP and help them pull their wounded back. At the same time I had my southern-most ambush move from their location to the position where I was at and started setting up a perimeter. This action took about fifteen minutes to be completed. The southern most ambush joined me in my central location. The northern-most ambush pulled back with their wounded, and we formed a perimeter in the center of the rice paddy. At that time it had been reported to me that six bodies had been counted in the location where the ambush had been popped. There was a lull in firing that lasted about twenty minutes at this time, at which time we got only sporadic small arms

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Combat After Action Interview, Price - Menjivar continued.

fire. Just at the time that the perimeter had been completed and the troops were digging in, we got hit by small arms, mortar, and RPG fire from the northern section of the perimeter, from the western section, and we continued to get probes from the eastern section. From the west we spotted two men crawling on their bellies towards our location. We put fire on them, and the next morning one body was revealed in this location. The only action we got from the south was a few sporadic rounds apparently from VC trying to break contact or who had been separated from their element. When this action first took place, I had artillery illumination brought in to my north, and I had artillery HE brought in approximately 400 meters to the west where the action was taking place in order to keep this enemy force from pulling back. As soon as my people had been consolidated in the perimeter, a fire fly team reported in location, and they went ahead to give me cover and screen my flanks with their spotlights and with their gun ships. A helicopter flare ship also reported in with them and continued to provide illumination. At that time the artillery illumination was discontinued. These elements provided support for approximately 40 minutes until which time a "spooky" flare ship reported on station to cover the duties while the helicopter elements went back to refuel and rearm. The first "spooky" stayed on station until about 2200 hours at which time he departed, and the fire fly team returned. The fire fly team worked the area all around my perimeter. He did not spot any enemy activity with the exception of two VC whom they spotted in the wood line to my south where my southern-most ambush had once been located. At about midnight the fire fly team departed and was replaced on station by another "spooky" which worked in the area until 0200 in the morning. At that time he departed and the artillery took over the illumination. The last rounds fired by the enemy were fired at approximately 2200 hours. The whole action lasted about two hours with a lull of about twenty minutes which took place at the time I was reorganizing my elements.

CAMPION: Captain, I have a couple of questions here I want to ask you. First, can you give me a brief resume of the casualties on both sides? Second, did you get any indication of unit identification, and if so, how did that identification come to you? Third, I want to ask you, in your considered opinion, what you felt the size of the element was that you came up against that night in all the positions?

MENJIVAR: A resume of casualties on both sides: my company suffered one man killed in the initial contact and six men wounded, one of whom later died of wounds. In addition to the six bodies that had been observed on the northern ambush site after my element had pulled back, we found seven bodies around my perimeter, most of them on the northern side with the closest about three feet from the perimeter. I estimate the enemy force to be no smaller than twenty men and no larger than fifty. The material that we captured initially included a radio which was concealed in an ammunition can, about ten pounds of documents including maps, fire direction center equipment, a great deal of medical supplies, and then the normal paraphernalia or gear and weapons carried by NVA. Upon screening of these documents it was later found out that this element was part of the 271st NVA Regiment.

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Combat After Action Interview, Price - Menjivar continued.

CAMPION: I am going to turn at this point back to Colonel Price who has a couple of comments that he brought forth in a conversation that we had a moment ago that I would like to have included here.

PRICE: Although we will never know for sure just how large the enemy force was which hit Charlie Company that night, I can think at the moment of at least four factors, four things, to which I can attribute Charlie Company's success that night and the fact that they did not sustain more casualties than they did. One is Captain Menjivar's decision to consolidate his company at the time that he did, to prevent any enemy infiltration in between his platoons. That's something that the enemy was attempting to do. Two is his fortunate selection of an area in which to consolidate his company. He selected a rectangular rice paddy which was surrounded most fortunately by unusually high paddy dikes, and this was of great help to his people that night during the fire fight. Three, I think the illumination support which he received all night long was a major factor in the success of the company and the discouraging of the enemy from launching any further attacks against Charlie later on in the night hours. Illumination support was outstanding. Four, I think we can attribute the company's success that night to the simple fact that Charlie Company just fought like hell.

CAMPION: I will ask the Colonel at this point to carry on with a narrative description of the operation as he saw it commencing on the 19th of March.

PRICE: I don't have much of significance for the operation of the 19th except that in the morning following Charlie Company's more thorough sweep of the immediate area, I had my Delta Company then move over and link up with Charlie and move through the wooded area to the north of Charlie Company from which we suspected the enemy force may have emerged the night before. Before I moved Delta into that area, however, I had called in an air strike and worked over the wooded area rather thoroughly. When Delta Company moved through the area, they found nothing of significance in the area. I continued on to the northwest with Delta Company on a reconnaissance-in-force on that day. Charlie Company then moved out on a reconnaissance-in-force in its own direction, and Bravo continued to the north on a recon-in-force. That night all elements ambushed again, and on Thursday the 20th of March all elements continued reconnaissance-in-force operations. All of my elements were extracted for return to Di An on the afternoon of 20 March.

CAMPION: Sir, I would like to ask you a question regarding the area in which you were operating southeast of the Michelin. How do you view that area, remembering your more routine operational area which is in the vicinity of Di An?

PRICE: The area immediately southeast of the Michelin was for my troops a more pleasant area in which to operate, if we can say that any area is pleasant, because the area there is more open. There are more open spaces. Maneuver is easier. The jungle is not quite so thick as it was in the area

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Combat After Action Interview, Price - Menjivar continued.

where we were working just a few days prior to this. And for several weeks prior to this operation, my battalion had been operating in the Di An area where there is a lot of water. There are a lot of swampy areas, and my troops had been in the water quite a bit of the time day and night. Going is extremely slow in such terrain and the troops are always wet. They have foot problems because of immersion foot, and maneuver is extremely difficult. But we found that up near the Michelin things were a lot different. We could maneuver much more easily, and we had better observation and fire against the enemy.

CAMPION: Sir, as a final question here, I would like to ask you if you or your unit brought away from the operation any lessons learned?

PRICE: Let me answer that question by saying that, first, I think on the first day the battalion gained good experience - not necessarily a lesson, but good experience. Having worked in the Di An area pretty much in platoon and company sized operations quite a bit, we needed more experience in operating together as a battalion. And we got a little bit of experience on the 18th when we were able to insert as a battalion, conduct the reconnaissance-in-force as a battalion, and then break off into company ambush areas later that day. That was only one day, but it was valuable for all leaders concerned - operating as a battalion.

Now so far as lessons learned are concerned, I can think of one important lesson that was learned, and that was learned by Charlie Company specifically, and that is the value of locating platoon sized ambushes within a company within reinforcing distance of one another. That became quite obvious that night, and it was a big factor in the success of the company.

CAMPION: Captain Menjivar, I will ask you to add any lessons you may feel you have learned out in this operation?

MENJIVAR: I feel that an important lesson learned is that, once that you have been detected by the enemy, your prime concern should be to get good fields of fire, to consolidate your elements, and get illumination to exploit these fields of fire. In other words, try not to concern yourself too much with concealment, but concentrate on cover, fields of fire, getting good killing zones, and having illumination available to use these killing zones.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview has been conducted with LTC Robert E. Price, who is the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 18th Infantry, and one of his unit commanders, CPT Milton R. Menjivar, who commands Charlie Company of that unit.

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COMBAT AFTER ACTION INTERVIEW

INTERVIEWEES: LTC Carmen D. Negaard, Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division and MAJ Larry T. Bennett, Executive Officer, 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division.

INTERVIEWER: MAJ William C. Campion, Commanding Officer, 17th Military History Detachment, 1st Infantry Division.

CAMPION: This combat after action interview is being conducted with LTC Carmen D. Negaard, the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, of the 1st Infantry Division, on the 15th of April 1969, at Lai Khe, Republic of Vietnam. Colonel Negaard assumed command of his unit on the 21st of September 1968. This interview concerns the participation of his unit in Operation Atlas Wedge during the period 18 March to 2 April 69. Colonel, perhaps an appropriate question to start with might be one of asking you your mission as you began this operation, how you planned to accomplish that mission, and the task organization with which you were equipped in order to go about it?

NEGAARD: Our mission on this operation was really three-fold. First, we had to build a Fire Support Base -- Fire Support Base Picardy -- just south of the Michelin Rubber Plantation from which to support the 1-4 Cav in their operations up in the rubber, since there was no other artillery outfit that could reach them and support them. Our second mission was to search out certain designated objective areas, find out if there were any VC in the area, and destroy their base camps. Our third mission was a blocking role just south of the Michelin, to catch and destroy any of the VC that may flee south from the 11th Cavalry and 1-4 Cavalry operations in the Michelin itself. For our task organization during this period, I had my Bravo Company over on Thunder I and Thunder II locations so they were not available for the operation. I cross-attached my Alpha Company to the 1-4 Cav, and in turn received Bravo Troop of the 1-4 Cav to join the Black Lions. I used Charlie Company to build Fire Support Base Picardy. This was a pure infantry outfit, and Delta Company was cross-attached with 1-4 Cav. This really left me with two maneuver units, both cross-attached with the mech -- Bravo Troop and Delta Company -- and my Recon Platoon as an additional platoon sized maneuver unit. We started the operation on the 18th of March. I had my Tac CP at Fire Support Base Lorraine, but Charlie Company from Lai Khe (went to) the Fire Support Base Picardy area. They conducted a sweep of the area and began to build the Fire Support Base. My Delta Company, as I mentioned, had been on the Thunder positions. I had them switched with Bravo. We picked them up at the Thunders and brought them to Picardy where, late in the day, they were cross-attached with Bravo Troop of the 1-4 Cav as they passed through Picardy from south to north. These two maneuver elements then moved up to ambush and blocking positions vic of grid square 6149 and 6250. Each one of these maneuver units did put out a platoon sized ambush to pick up any enemy in the area, and the main elements were of course in blocking positions. We used the Recon Platoon to ambush in the local vicinity of the Fire Support Base the first few days in the hopes they could pick up any body that might work into the Fire Support Base

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Combat After Action Interview: Negaard - Bennett continued.

to see what we were up to. We had negative contact on the night of the 18th. We started out the morning of the 19th with Delta Company searching out the objective in the Thi Tinh area which was in the vicinity of grid square 6150. Bravo Troop went to the southeast vic of grid square 6249, again to search out the area, destroy the base camps, and any enemy in the area. We had negative significant findings this day. After the sweeps we again ended up in the same basic blocking positions as the previous night, again with two platoon sized dismounted ambushes. Since we had negative contact in this basic area and evidently the 11th Cav and 1-4 Cav were not flushing any enemy forces south out of the Michelin, it was decided that on the 20th we would move over on the west side of the Thi Tinh River where we had had previous good luck during the month of February and early March with our ambush operations. So we proceeded with a battalion minus, more or less of a column move, up through the south edge of the Michelin Rubber Plantation to get some good crossing sites across the Thi Tinh and get over to the west side. As we moved through the edge of the rubber -- on the edge of our Rome plow area -- our Delta Company, which was the second company in the column, spotted some fresh digging. They dismounted and swept the area and found some anti-aircraft positions back in the Rome plow area just to the rear of the bunkers in a well concealed bunker. In this bunker we found a 12.7mm anti-aircraft weapon in perfect condition with ammo and a complete kit. It was a significant find. That night we occupied blocking positions west of the Thi Tinh with Delta Company in grid square 5746, Bravo Troop of the 1-4 Cav in grid square 5846. Again we had negative contact in this area. On the 21st of March, we searched out some objective areas that were known base camp areas. We had ambushed around these particular areas during several periods in February and early March, usually coming up with a good body count, but not wanting to go in the base camp areas with a pure infantry unit. This day Delta Company spent the basic part of the day in grid square 5646, found numerous bunkers and miscellaneous gear and equipment, but no significant findings. Bravo Troop worked basically in grid square 5946 again with negative findings. That particular night, Delta Company occupied a blocking position vic grid square 5846 and Bravo Troop in 6045 again with negative contact that evening. During the early morning hours on 22 March, at 0400 hours I believe, Fire Support Base Picardy received 20 rounds of 60mm mortar fire. The fire came from 600 to 700 meters to our south. All the rounds did land outside the barbed wire, we had negative casualties. Our Recon Platoon which had been conducting local ambushes heard the rounds going off, gave us an accurate location, we had rapid counter mortar which silenced the mortars and was a significant factor in our negative casualties. During the day of the 22nd, since we had had very little action west of the Thi Tinh, it was decided to move Bravo Troop and Delta Company back to the east side of the Thi Tinh River -- in fact all the way back over to the east side of Fire Support Base Picardy -- to search out an area where Dogface (1-18 Inf) earlier had had some significant contact. We crossed the Thi Tinh River vic XT623463, had no contact in crossing the river. After crossing the river, moving back to Fire Support Base Picardy, Bravo Troop lead tank hit a mine at XT648472. At the same time they did spot 2 VC, and there was a possibility that this was a command det-

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Combat After Action Interview: Negaard - Bennett continued.

onated mine. They returned fire with negative results. They also had negative friendly casualties. They towed the tank with them back to Fire Support Base Picardy. Delta Company which was following Bravo Troop also had one of their tanks hit a mine about XT662447 again with negative casualties; but by the time this happened it was almost dark, and they RONed in that location for the night. Again that night we had negative action. On the morning of the 23rd we returned Delta Company to the Fire Support Base and switched Charlie Company, which had been in the Fire Support Base, with Delta. These two units then -- Charlie Company and Bravo Troop, 1-4 Cav -- searched out the area to the east of Fire Support Base Picardy, that is Charlie Company to the east of Fire Support Base Picardy and Bravo Troop to the northeast of the Fire Support Base. Again we found numerous base camps, but the VC seemed to have evacuated the area. We had negative contact. On the 24th of March these units continued their search of the area northeast of Fire Support Base Picardy. This particular day we sent Recon to the area of the mining incidents in the hopes that they could pick up some of the VC that had been sighted in that area which up to this time had been the only sighting. This tactic paid off with about the only results of this operation when vic XT649471 in the early morning hours Recon sighted 25 VC. Unfortunately they were about 500 meters away, too far to engage with small arms. They did engage with artillery, and watching through the starlight scope, they estimated that 6 were killed in action. They were credited with 6 KIA(Poss). A few minutes later 3 VC came walking out on the edge of the Rome plow right to the front of Recon - about 10 meters in front of Recon. They did engage these three with small arms and claymores and killed three of them. Again a little later just before daylight, observing through the starlight scope, they saw 3 VC to their east out on the Rome plow cut, very possibly 3 of the initial 25 that were trying to get out of the area. They were too far to engage again with small arms. However they did have the light fire team in the area, and this light fire team was directed in by Recon on these 3 VC with result of getting all three of these VC. Just before daylight two more VC came along the edge of the Rome plow cut in front of the Recon position, and they engaged these two getting one of them as a KIA. The other one escaped. However, he was wounded. They did have a blood trail. On the 25th of March I was scheduled to go on R&R to Hong Kong, so I turned the command of the Battalion over to Major Bennett, the Executive Officer. He will pick up the action from here.

CAMPION: This interview will be continued here with Major Larry T. Bennett who is normally the Executive Officer of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry. However, in the absence of Colonel Negaard, he was the acting Commanding Officer during the period 25 to 31 March 1969. Major Bennett.

BENNETT: The morning of the 25th of March saw the two teams -- Bravo and Team Charlie -- moving back out conducting RIF operations back to Hwy 240. We received the mission from Brigade that morning that we were to lose those elements of the 1-4 Cav and those that were from the 34th Armor as of 1400 hours that afternoon. As a consequence we wanted to position our Charlie

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Combat After Action Interview: Negaard - Bennett continued.

Company down in the southern portion of our area to conduct platoon sized ambushes. So we used the 1-4 Cav elements to run Charlie Company down to the southern area and to drop them off at a distant point. At that time we released control of the 1-4 Cav element, and they moved back up into the area vic of Fire Support Base Doc. At the same time we placed our Delta Company to the west in a rather lucrative area where Recon Platoon had their contact earlier. Between the 26th of March and the 30th, the 1st of the 28th (-) continued to conduct bomb damage assessment in the southern portion of our area of operation during the day, and at night we continued conducting platoon sized ambushes with negative results. We saw very little movement, in fact no movement at all, and the trail traffic seemed to have dried up. On the 30th of March, in the early hours of the morning our Charlie Company was air assaulted into a strike area just north of the Michelin Rubber. The mission was to of course conduct bomb damage assessments ending up in a night blocking position to support Task Force Haponski, which was operating in the Michelin. At 1700 hours Colonel Haldane, the Brigade Commander, gave Defiant (1-28th Inf) a company of tanks. Consequently, I joined them in the Michelin, took them north, and married them up with our Charlie Company. That night we established a company sized or a reinforced company sized ambush position in the northern edge of the rubber. The next morning we conducted a mobile blocking operation across the northern portion of the rubber. At 1100 hours we received the word that the one tank company would go back to the operational control of the 1-4 Cav. Our Charlie Company was picked up at 1400 hours and air assaulted again into the southern portion of our area of operation to conduct another bomb damage assessment. Attached to them was one platoon of tunnel rats from the 1st Engr Bn. On the 1st of April, our Charlie Company down in the south continued conducting a reconnaissance-in-force looking for recent trail activities and trying to locate base camp areas. Our Reconnaissance Platoon departed in the early morning hours to the north and east on a 4 day operation in an attempt to pick up recent trail activities and perhaps locate base camps. About mid-morning on that day they ran into a small base camp complex which contained in excess of three tons of rice. Some of it was old and rotten and was destroyed in place. The remainder was extracted back to Lai Khe and turned into the Brigade S-5 for use in civic action projects. The remainder of the day saw no significant activities and on the 2nd of April, although continuing to conduct our reconnaissance-in-force during the day and our ambushes at night, there was negative further contact.

CAMPION: At this point we will turn the interview back over to Colonel Negaard who will provide closing remarks regarding the operation.

NEGAARD: Although the operation called Atlas Wedge was officially terminated on 2 April, the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, continued to operate out of Fire Support Base Picardy up until today actually. We were operating as an infantry unit with no mech forces with us. However, we were reinforced by Alpha Company from 2nd Battalion, 28th Infantry, so this gave us three company size maneuver units plus our Recon Platoon. We operated basically east of the Michelin Rubber Plantation and in the east edge of the rubber itself, and just south of the Michelin Rubber Plantation with a considerable degree of

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Combat After Action Interview: Negaard - Bennett continued.

success. We reverted really to the ambush type of operations we had used in February and early March. In the Operation Atlas Wedge itself, we did not meet with any particular success mainly because the VC had moved out of the area. It is my opinion that the movement of the 7th NVA Division into the northern edge of the Michelin Rubber Plantation had necessitated pulling the locals, the 93rd Rear Service Group people, up into the rubber to support the 7th NVA Division to operate as guides and to provide food and so forth which left this area that we were operating in relatively barren of enemy forces. We had a relatively significant action when they closed out Fire Support Base Doc. It's a known fact that the VC do come in and dig up the positions and the sumps looking for discarded material that may be of value to them - C-rations and so forth. On the evening that Fire Support Base Doc was evacuated, we sent our Recon Platoon up to the southern edge in an ambush position where they could observe the Fire Support Base itself. Just prior to dark they did observe 9 VC out in the open in the vicinity of Fire Support Base Doc with an additional two observing down the road to the south. We called in a light fire team which came in up Route 240 low level over the Recon's position and caught these VC in the open. The light fire team got a body count of 6 VC at this time. They worked the area over until dark at which time we continued artillery in the area. Later that night, the Recon Platoon ambushed in two separate encounters three VC, and later on one VC, getting four body count by small arms. Searching the area the next morning, they picked up an additional 3 VC that had been killed by artillery for a total of 13 VC in this particular action. We've had several other contacts, most of them small, running anywhere from 1 VC to 11 or 12 VC in each particular ambush. So basically it is the same type of operation as we previously conducted - small platoon sized ambushes. Today is the 15th of April, and I turned over my battalion in a change of command ceremony at Fire Support Base Picardy to LTC Kenneth Sweeney; and, as of this date, they are continuing to operate out of Fire Support Base Picardy. A significant incident might be that the last thirty minutes before I left, they had just had another contact on the east edge of the Michelin with 4 VC with at least 1 body count so they are continuing to operate with success.

**CAMPION:** This combat after action interview has been conducted with LTC Carmen D. Negaard, the Commanding Officer of the 1st Battalion, 28th Infantry, 1st Infantry Division, and concerns the participation of his unit in Operation Atlas Wedge in the Michelin Rubber Plantation during the period 18 March to 2 April 1969. Also included is MAJ Larry T. Bennett, who is the Executive Officer of the same battalion, who discussed operations during the period from 25 to 31 March during which time he commanded the unit.

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## Summary of Tactical Air Support

<u>TOT</u>	<u>TGT</u>	<u>ORD</u>	<u>TYPE A/C</u>	<u>BDA</u>
180935	XT 575535(BC)	4-Napalm 4-500#	2/F100	2 barracks damaged 2 barracks destroyed 7 KBA
180955	XT 573535(BC)	8-750# 1600-20mm	2/F100	7 barracks destroyed, 5 damaged, 3KBA(BC), 3 KBA(Poss)
181030	XT 573515(BC)	4-750# 4-Napalm 1600-20mm	2/F100	2 barracks destroyed, 4 damaged, 1 KBA(BC), 5 KBA(Poss)
181210	XT 600512(BC)	4-750# 4-Napalm 1600-20mm	2/F100	NBDA
181230	XT 590511(BC)	8-750#	2/F100	5 barracks destroyed, 10 damaged, 2 KBA
181340	XT 516530(BC)	4-750# 4-rockets	2/F100	4 barracks destroyed, 7 damaged, 1 KBA(Poss)
181345	XT 576530(BC)	4-750# 4-rockets	2/F100	4 bunker destroyed, 7 damaged, 1 KBA(Poss)
181407	XT 574539(BC)	4-500# 4-Napalm	2/F100	3 bunker destroyed, 3 damaged, 4 KBA(Poss)
181425	XT 575538 (BC)	8-500# 574540	2/A37	4 bunker destroyed, 8 damaged, 4 KBA(Poss)
181900	XT 598564(BC)/ TIC	4-500# 4-Napalm	2/F100	NBDA
190826	XT 593567(BC)	10-Napalm	2/F100	75 meters tunnel destroyed, 5 bunker damaged.
190910	XT 592569(BC)	4-500# 4-Napalm	2A37	3 bunker destroyed, 1 SEC exploded.
191120	XT 558536(BC)	12-500#	3/A1E	27 bunker destroyed, 9 damaged, 5 KBA(BC)
191235	XT 580545(TIC)	8-500#	2/F100	2 bunker destroyed, 2 damaged, 5 KBA(Poss)

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191520	XT 581523(BC)	8-500#	2/A37	8 bunkers destroyed, 5 structures destroyed, 15 bunkers damaged, 1 KBA(BC)
200900	XT 592575(LZ/P)	16-500#	2/F100	8 bunker destroyed, 4 bunker damaged, 1-107 mortar destroyed
201228	XT 591580(TIC)	8-500# 1600-20mm	2/F100	2 bunkers damaged, 3 KBA(Poss)
201312	XT 592518(BC)	8-napalm	2/F100	3 bunkers destroyed, 3 damaged, 5 KBA(BC)
201330	XT 592578(BC)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	1 bunker destroyed, 3 damaged, 5 KBA(BC)
201422	XT 585579(BC)	8-500#	2/A37	5 bunkers destroyed, 2 damaged, 200 meters tunnel destroyed.
211106	XT 585578(BC)	8-750#	2/F100	NBDA
211200	XT 593583(B)	6-500# 8-napalm	2/F4C	3 KBA(BC), 7 bunkers destroyed, 12 damaged.
211130	XT 590578(BC)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/A37	NBDA
211518	XT 598587(BC)	8-750#	2/A37	3 bunkers destroyed, 3 damaged
211530	XT 598587(BC)	12-500#	2/A1E	8 bunkers destroyed, 21 damaged
211720	XT 605565(BC)	4-750# 4-napalm	2/F100	NBDA
220849	XT 593587(BC)	8-750#	2/F100	1 FP damaged, 8 bunkers destroyed
221204	XT 604625(UC/ Open)	4-750# 4-500#	2/F100	NBDA
221240	XT 604625(UC/ Open)	8-750#	2/F100	NBDA
230955	XT 598567(UC/ Open)	4-napalm 4-750#	2/F100	5 bunker destroyed, 3 damaged, 5 KBA (Poss), 1 KBA (BC)
231035	XT 598578(UC/ Open)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	10 bunkers destroyed, 20 sector fires, 8 KBA(Poss)
231110	XT 598578(UC/ Open)	4-750# 4-napalm	2/F100	6 bunkers destroyed, 5 KBA (Poss), 100 meters tunnel destroyed.

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231237	XT598560(BC)	8-500#	2/F100	4 bunkers destroyed, 7 damaged, 4 uncovered.
281045	XT600540( UC/ Open)	16-500#	2/F100	NBDA
281110	XT600540( UC/ XT587574 Open)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	NBDA
281225	XT587574(BC)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	3 bunkers destroyed, 1 AA weapon exploded.
300836	XT570532(BC)	8-750# 1600-20mm	2/F100	1 bunker destroyed, 2 FP destroyed
301020	XT588577(LZ/P)	16-500#	2/F100	NBDA
301030	XT588577(LZ/P)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	NBDA
301053	XT588577(LZ/P)	6-500# 8-napalm	2/F4C	NBDA
301206	XT566540(TIC)	4-500# 4-napalm	2F/100	6 KBA(BC)
301220	XT573525(TIC)	8-750#	2/F100	NBDA
301340	XT608555(LZ/P)	8-750#	2/F100	NBDA
301348	XT608555(LZ/P)	8-750#	2/F100	NBDA
301445	XT646364(TIC)	4-500# 4-napalm	2/F100	1 bunker destroyed
301732	XT573575(BC)	8-napalm	2/A37	5 FD destroyed, 2 tunnel entrances destroyed.
011550	XT673538(BC)	8-500#	2/F100	4 bunkers destroyed.
021153	XT602547(TIC)	6-500# 4-napalm	2/F4C	2 bunkers destroyed.

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## SUMMARY OF B52 STRIKES

<u>DTG</u>	<u>TARGET NO.</u>	<u>LOCATION*</u>	<u>BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT</u>
200430H Mar	BL 2775	XT 595560 604553 615569 607574	Destroyed: 35 Bkr, 55 Ftg Psn, 380 M Trench Exposed: 3 Bkr, 1 Tun Ent, 12 Grenade boxes
200630H Mar	BL 2776	XT 590560 590580 600580 600560	Destroyed: 44 Bkr, 2 Struc, 210 M Trench Exposed: 38 Bkr Ground follow-up: Unit discovered 74 VC KIA (BC) cause unk.
200920H Mar	BL 2774	XT 606550 614545 624562 616567	Destroyed: 5 Bkr Exposed: 3 Bkr
190155H Mar	BD 2770	XT 687516 693508 703528 709519	Destroyed: 29 Bkr, 47 FP, 215 M trench Damaged: 4 Bkr, 100 M Trench
190420H Mar	BD 2771	XT 650526 650516 670516 670566	Destroyed: 20 Bkr, 300 M Trench Exposed: 1 Bkr
211845H Mar	BL 2763	XT 670540 670550 700540 700550	Destroyed: 68 Bkr, 90 FP Exposed: 10 Bkr, 34 FP, 440 M Trench
011630H Apr	BL 5013	XT 580590 580580 610590 610580	Destroyed: 6 Bkr; Exposed: 36 Bkr, 10 FD, 350 M Trench

\*Four Corner Coordinates

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## SUMMARY OF RESULTS

	<u>US</u>	<u>VC</u>	<u>Enemy Equip. Capt/Dest</u>
	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u> <u>PW</u> <u>KIA(Poss)</u>
(18 Mar 69)			
C/1-18	1	7	13
Air Cav Trp		1	1 radio, 2 RPG launchers, 8AK 47s.
Air Cav Trp			
B/C/1-11		4	39
M/3-11			24
			34 5
L/3-11		12	12
H/2-11			6
A/1-5			4
CIDG		2(CIDG)	1
TAC AIR			10 29
(19 Mar 69)			
D/1-28			1 M14
B/1-11			1
B/1-11			23 1
H/2-11		1	2
M/3-11			24 1
11th ACR elements			75 RPG rounds, 26-82mm mortar rounds, 6-75 PR rounds.
3-11 O&C Ship		1	
TAC AIR			6 5
(20 Mar 69)			
D/1-28			1-12.7 mm Anti-aircraft MG
11 ACR elements	1	12	28 AK47s, 20SKSs.
with C/1-5			
B/1-11			1 SKS, 2 RPG launchers, 5 AK47s
L/3-11			misc munitions & documents.
			60-82mm mortar rounds, 50-120 mm mortar rockets rounds, 1-120mm mortar tube & tripod.
H/2-11			1
H/2-11		2	1
Arty Spt			5
CIDG			1
TAC AIR			8
(21 Mar 69)			
Air Cav Trp, 11 ACR			4
TAC AIR			14

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	<u>KIA</u>	<u>US WIA</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>VC PW</u>	<u>KIA(Poss)</u>	<u>Enemy Equip Capt/Dest</u>
(22 Mar 69)						
C/1-11		5	11	1		1 AK47.
D/1-11			2			1 AK47, 1 RPG launcher.
Air Cav Trp, 11ACR	1	2				
TF Haponski			4	1		4 AK47, 1 RPG launcher, & documents.
(23 Mar 69)						
Air Cav Trp, 11ACR			4			3 AK47.
Tac Air			1		18	
(24 Mar 69)						
1/28			7		5	
TF Haponski					6	1 M1 carbine, 6500 lb rice, 35-75 RR rounds, 5 bicycles, misc clothing & munitions.
(25 Mar 69)						
1-28					6	
TF Haponski		7	3			1 AK47, 500 lb rice.
Tac Air					6	
(26 Mar 69)						
TF Haponski	5	24	10		12	1 RPG launcher, 1 AK47.
(29 Mar 69)						
1st Avn Bn			1			
(30 Mar 69)						
D/1-4				9	3	
ARP/D/1-4						1 AK47.
HQ/1-4				5		
D/1-11	1	6				
EE/C/1-4	11	13	59			21 AK47, 1 ChiCom MG, 50-60mm mortar rds, 24-82mm Mortar rds, 1-60mm mortar(complete), misc munitions & webb gear.
B/1-4					1(rallier)	
B/1-4					1	
Tac Air			6			
(31 Mar 69)						
B/1-4			4	4		
(1 Apr 69)						
RCN/1-28						3 ton rice.
(2 Apr 69)						
C/1-4						1-50 cal MG, 1-60mm mortar tube.

8-2

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<u>KIA</u>	<u>US</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>VC</u>	<u>KIA(Poss)</u>	<u>ENEMY EQUIP CAPT/DEST</u>
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(2 Apr 69 con-  
tinued)

CIDG 2(CIDG) 4

TOTALS 22 100 421 16 115

1 radio, 12 RPG launchers, 1 M14, 1 M1 carbine, 80 AK47s, 21 SKS rifles, 3 hvy MGs, 2 lt MGs, 1-12.7mm AA MG, 1-120mm mortar tube w/tripod, 1-60mm mortar complete, 13,500 lbs rice, 1-60mm mortar tube, miscellaneous food, documents, munitions, & equipment.

8-3

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