

RG 472

USARV Command Historian

AARs

Box 31

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
 HEADQUARTERS
 3RD SQUADRON 4TH CAVALRY
 APO S.F. 96225

AVDCCAV-3

18 April 1969

SUBJECT: After Action Report

COMMANDING GENERAL
 25th Infantry Division
 ATTN: Division Historian
 APO 96225

1. Name of Operation: N/A
2. Date: 10-11 March 1969
3. Location: Vicinity Cau Khoi Rubber Plantation, XT377423.
4. Control Headquarters: Headquarters, 25th Infantry Division.
5. Reporting Officer: Commanding Officer, 3rd Squadron, 4th Cavalry.
6. Task Organization: A Troop, 3/4 Cav, w/2 Engr Sweep Teams attached. Helicopter Troop organic to Squadron.
7. Supporting Forces: Artillery, Tac Air
8. Intelligence: Sec Annex B to OPORD 4-69.
9. Mission: A Troop was to establish a night defensive position Southwest of the large Cau Khoi Rubber plantation on 10 Mar 69. At first light the following morning A Troop had the mission to sweep portions of the alternate supply route and upon completion conduct a RIF in an assigned portion of the Squadron AO.
10. Concept of Operation: By employing three platoons in a night laager position, A Troop commander provided himself with maximum security on a 360° front. Utilization of barb wire and RPG screen carried on the tracks, along with trip flares and claymore mines, enabled the troop perimeter to not only increase its own defensive position but to serve as an added deterrent to any possible attacks. Bunkers were dug 10-15 feet to the right of each vehicle and each position was equipped with a ground mounted M60 or 50 caliber machine gun. To further enhance the possibility of detecting an approaching enemy, organic radar, night vision scopes, the XM44E1 infrared device on Sheridan vehicles, and one LP per platoon were deployed. In addition, standard Troop SOP provided for at least one man awake and manning a weapon/radio in each vehicle. The attached forward observer plotted defensive artillery concentrations around the troop laager position.
11. Execution: At approximately 2330 Hours, 10 March 1969, the third platoon LP, 150 meters from the main body, spotted a squad of enemy soldiers moving south from the Cau Khoi Rubber Plantation. 10 minutes later, the

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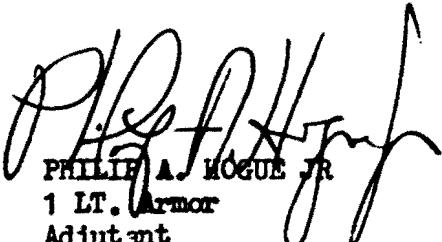
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second platoon LP sighted 40 to 50 personnel, also moving south, walking towards the perimeter. At this time the troop commander recalled his LP's, placed his command on 100% alert, and ordered maximum use of all night vision devices. The radar scan up until this time had given negative indications of any movement. Reports from various sectors of the perimeter indicated to the troop commander that he had some 70 to 80 hostile personnel moving towards his position. During the course of events leading up to this time the troop commander had arranged for a light fire team from D Troop, the helicopter unit organic to the Squadron, and a Spooky flare ship. Satisfied that all was in readiness, the troop commander gave the order that upon the next sighting, all elements were to open fire. At 2355 hours, a Sheridan in the third platoon fired upon a group of advancing soldiers approximately 75 meters from the perimeter. At this time all organic weapons and claymore mines were utilized. The Spooky flareship subsequently illuminated the contact area which in turn was saturated by the D Troop Gunship Teams. Artillery blocking fires were utilized on the eastern portion of the perimeter. The enemy broke contact at 0242 11 March, and dustoffs were accomplished by helicopters from the 25th Aviation Battalion. A sweep of the contact area the next morning revealed 38 NVA killed, 3 POW's, numerous automatic and anti-tank weapons, ammunition, and other enemy equipment. 3 US personnel were slightly wounded from enemy fire and all were returned to duty.

12. Comments: By employing all available defensive means the A Troop Commander was able to detect and defeat a large enemy force that in effect never had an opportunity to initiate their night attack. Several instances occurred where the RPG screens took direct hits with no damage to vehicles, and the effect of the alert LP's on the entire action can hardly be overemphasized. The results indicate what a security conscious and alert unit can accomplish with minimum casualties.


PHILIP A. HOQUE, JR.
1 LT. Armor
Adjutant

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