

It is commanded by Maj. Gen. Richard T. Knowles.
These units are not expected to remain as permanent parts of the new division. The 3rd Brigade will probably return in the new division to be

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U.S. Mobility Beats Reds' Guerrilla Tactics

SAIGON (UPI) — The United States believes it has seized the offensive in a major Viet Cong stronghold in the central highlands, a significant feat in any guerrilla war and a key to pacifying other areas of Vietnam.

The secret is mobility.

A U.S. military spokesman said Thursday the experiences of Task Force Oregon may be employed in such far-flung areas as the delta region and the area just south of the demilitarized zone.

Since it went into operation last April, Task Force Oregon

has accounted for more than 4,900 Viet Cong killed in action, compared to 313 Americans killed in units under its command, officials said.

The task force has been operating in Quang Ngai Province and a portion of Quang Tin Province, an area of more than 765,000 population in the southern portion of the I Corps area of South Vietnam. One of its purposes was to free the U.S. Marines to concentrate on the northern portion of the I Corps.

The task force, composed of the 3rd Brigade, 4th Inf. Div.; 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Div.,

and the 196th Light Inf. Brigade, was designed with the idea of being able to mobilize an effective fighting force and deploy it within a few hours notice.

"The task force has been in an offensive posture since the moment of its inception," according to Lt. Gen. William Rossen, I Field Force Commander. He said the force had "disrupted the enemy's domination of the area."

He singled out the "opening" of the major north-south route, Highway one, as "one of the most important developments of the past few months."

A reporter asked whether a person could safely drive along that highway from Quang Ngai to Duc Pho, a distance of about 25 miles.

"In daylight," Rossen replied. "You'd never get me out on it at night."

One of the results of the Task Force Oregon experience, he continued, was to destroy the "shibboleth" that Quang Ngai Province could never be taken from the Viet Cong. "It demonstrated we could fight offensively in Vietnam," he added.

Rossen said the task force also showed that an intensification of

military pressure by the Allies in the lowlands has a significant effect on enemy units in the highlands.

Viet Cong units, he said, normally get their food supplies and recruits in the lowland areas while remaining in the highlands.

When this interchange is disrupted, he continued, "battalions come down on the plains. We hit them and cut them up rather badly."

In addition, he said, such activity "keeps the organized units off the backs of the areas we're trying to pacify."

Americal