

HEADQUARTERS
1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 8TH C. VALRY
"JUMPING MUSTANGS"
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMObILE)
APO San Francisco, California 96490

AVCIC-00

23 March 1966

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report (MACV/RCS/J3/32)

TO: Commanding Officer
1st Airborne Brigade
1st Air Cavalry Division
ATTN: S3
APO San Francisco, California 96490

1. NAME AND TYPE OPERATION:

a. Name: JIM BOWIE
b. Type: Search and Destroy

2. DATE OF OPERATION: 130900 Mar - 222030 Mar 66

3. LOCATION: Reference, Map, Vietnam, 1:50,000 Sheets 6754 II & III, 6753 I & IV.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 1st Airborne Brigade

5. REPORTING OFFICER: Lt Col Levin B. Broughton

6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

A 1/8	C 1/8	Bn Control
Tm A/8 Engr		Pathfinder Tm
		RRU Tm

B 1/8	D 1/8
Tm A/8 Engr	

7. TAC AIR, Artillery and ARA fire support was used extensively throughout the entire operation. Engineer support was directed primarily in preparation and improvement of PZ/LZ's. Air Cavalry provided support in the operational area on a mission type basis screening areas of interest both to the battalion and brigade. Continuous pathfinder assistance was used in the control of aircraft in the PZ/LZ's. TAC Air support was used on preplanned, immediate and secondary missions throughout the operation.

8. INTELLIGENCE: Intelligence sources revealed elements of the SAU VANG Division, unidentified support units such as transportation, quartermaster, ammunition, medical, and tactical forces up to regimental size, as well as an unidentified AAA Bn, were believed to be located in the area of interest.

On the first day, 13 Mar 66 no contact was made. Ten (10) sightings were reported, the most significant being five (5) VC sighted by the 1/9 Aerial Scout Team at coordinates BR 625691, at 1130 hours. The VC were armed with a machine gun, reportedly firing at our lead aircraft. The VC were taken under fire by the scout team, however results are unknown. (see Incl # 1)

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On the second day, 14 Mar 66 still no contact was made. A total of 25 sightings were reported. The most notable being five (5) VC dressed in khaki uniforms reported by Co C at 1200 hours (Coord BR 632901), who ran into bunker. Artillery and AAT's were called in and the bunker was destroyed. Results are unknown. At 141632 hours, BR 628908 Co C reported one (1) VC in khaki uniform. Organic mortars were used, resulting in one VC KIA. (See Incl # 2) During the entire period of the 8 day operation no close contact was made.

The weather during the operation was favorable for airmobile operations, with the exception of early morning and late evening hours when heavy ground fog settled around the lowlands. The terrain in the operational area provided excellent cover and concealment to a ground force. One (1) large landing zone (LZ T-RZ-N BR 480027) was used during the operation. The LZ was large enough to accommodate 12-24 heliicopters. With few exceptions other small LZ's were easy to locate and easily accessible. (See Incl # 6).

Search and destroy operations in the area revealed numerous trails and fortifications. (See Incl # 1 thru 5) Two (2) platoon size camp-sites were discovered by Co C on 14 March (See Incl # 2) indicating recent use, i.e., freshly cooked rice, which indicated the enemy had moved out just prior to our arrival. There were no indications of a large enemy force operating in the Battalion AOR.

Intelligence agencies available to the Battalion during the operation were as follows:

- (1) 1/9 Cav Scout Team
- (2) 3 man RRU Team
- (3) L-19 Psy War Broadcast and Leaflet
- (4) One (1) Mohawk a/cft for recon/photo mission
- (5) SLAR/IR coverage
- (6) Air Force Photo Coverage (Of initial area of operation)
- (7) 48 hour weather forecasts
- (8) IPW Team (Bde level)

Personnel and equipment losses for the period are as follows:

KIA (BC)	KIA (EST)	WIA (EST)	VCC	VCS	WPNS
1	0	0	0	0	0

HUTS/STRUCTURES DESTROYED	RICE DESTROYED	ELEPHANTS DESTROYED
55	9,500 lbs	4

WATER BUFFALO DESTROYED
35

* A large field of seeded punji stakes were discovered in the vic of AREA RED, (BR 616865) which hampered ground movement and resulted in a considerable number of injuries.

In summary both battalion TAOR's during Operation JIM BOWIE appeared to have been occupied at some time by VC or NVA units. Resupply points, caches, major thorough-fare trails leading NW-SE directions, anti-heliborne and punji stakes were predominates throughout the area, but no substantial enemy personnel were found. Intelligence sources revealed significant activity in the TAOR prior to the execution of JIM BOWIE. In light of the numerous VC/NVA logistical sites and lack of training/operational bases in the TAOR, analysis of the terrain from the Cambodian border to the South China Sea, and review of past heavy engagements in the Bong Son Area and the Cambodian border, it is felt that these two TAOR's are located on a major infiltration/exfiltration route W-E into RVN.

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The TAOR appears to be a rest haven along the suspected route. SLAR/IR activities were the only ineffective agency due to poor weather conditions. The importance of SLAR/IR activity will be stressed on future operations because of the immediate tactical intelligence it produces. Communication security violations were noted throughout the operation and are being given special emphasis and command attention at this level.

9. MISSION: 1/8 Cavalry executed air assault operations into assigned sectors to conduct search and destroy operations throughout the assigned sector.
10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Beginning 131000 Mar 66, 1/8 Cav conducted an air assault into LZ COLUMBUS (BR 653868), to secure and establish a battalion base of operations and conduct search and destroy operations into LZ CUSSETTA (BR 627897) and to secure and establish ambush and blocking positions along the suspected routes of enemy withdrawal.
11. EXECUTION: Commencing 131000 Mar 66, 1/8 Cav executed an air assault into position COLUMBUS with B 1/8 preceded by a TAC Air strike and ARA preparation. COLUMBUS was secured with negative enemy contact. Immediately following this assault C 1/8 was air assaulted into LZ CUSSETTA again preceded by TAC Air and ARA preparations. CUSSETTA was also secured with negative enemy contact. Upon closing into CUSSETTA C 1/8 conducted search and destroy operations throughout the immediate area and established ambush and blocking positions by 1810 hours. The Bn (-) closed LZ COLUMBUS at 1250 hours. At 1325 hours companies A and B began their search and destroy operations towards area RED (BR 620860). Negative enemy contact was made during the day and both companies closed into separate defensive positions for the night. An active H & I program was conducted during the hours of darkness with both mortars and artillery.

Commencing 140730 the Battalion continued the search and destroy operations with A and B continuing in area RED and C around Objective CUSSETTA. Two TAC Air strikes were conducted in area RED during the day. Various camp sites were discovered throughout the Battalion sector ranging from platoon size to company size with a few rice oashes found and destroyed. Only two sightings of the enemy were made during the day and mortar and artillery was called in on the target as it was out of range of small arms. The companies again set up blocking and ambush positions for the night. An active H & I program was executed during the night.

Beginning 150730 the Battalion continued the search and destroy operations. At 1010 hours the AT Platoon air assaulted into LZ ROPE (BR 614870) to secure it for the landing of A 1/8 in CH47 aircraft. At 1015 hours A 1/8 was extracted from a PZ (BR 627858) in area RED by CH47 and air lifted to LZ ROPE to continue search and destroy operations toward objective CUSSETTA. Upon A 1/8 closing LZ ROPE the AT Platoon was returned to position COLUMBUS. At 1500 hours Companies A and B were air lifted from selected PZ's to LZ TRIGGER (BR 645885) where they were joined with their mortar platoons and established a two company perimeter for the night and prepared for further operations. All elements closed into LZ TRIGGER by 1710 hours. Negative enemy contact was made during the operations. An active H & I program was continued during the night.

Commencing 160807 Mar B 1/8 and C 1/8 began their search and destroy operations in the northern sector and the Recon Platoon in sector around position COLUMBUS. A 1/8 was held at position TRIGGER as a reserve force for 1/12 Cav if committed. TAC Air strikes were conducted in sector on suspected target areas. Negative enemy contact was made during the operations and Companies B and C were air lifted back to position COLUMBUS starting at 1600 hours. All elements had closed COLUMBUS at 1750 hours and the Battalion established a perimeter defense of LZ's TRIGGER and COLUMBUS. The H & I program was continued during the night.

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The Battalion continued to secure position COLUMBUS on the morning of 17 Mar and prepared to conduct an air assault into LZ TARZAN (BR 484073) to secure for the Brigade and Battalion base of operations. Commencing at 1300 the Battalion executed the assault on TARZAN with C 1/8 leading the assault. LZ TARZAN was secured with negative enemy contact. The assault was preceded by TAC Air and ARA preparations. The Battalion closed into TARZAN at 1651 hours. The Battalion immediately established a perimeter defense and conducted a "Mad Minute" firing around the entire perimeter. H & I fires were conducted during the night and negative enemy contact was made during the operation.

On 18 and 19 Mar the Battalion continued to secure position TARZAN and conducted only local security patrols within the area of operation. Negative enemy contact was made. The "Mad Minute" was fired at 0630 and 1845 hours and H & I fires were conducted during the night.

On 20 Mar the Battalion continued the mission of securing position TARZAN. At 0900 hours Lt Col Levin B. Broughton assumed command of the Battalion as Lt Col Kenneth D. Martel departed the Battalion to assume duties as Deputy Commander of the 1st Airborne Brigade. The Division Commander, General Harry W. O Kinnard, accepted the Battalion Colors from the departing commander and then presented them to the new commander.

Commencing 210630 local security patrols were dispatched as the Battalion continued to secure position TARZAN. Negative enemy contact was made during the operations. Beginning 1227 hours the first elements of the Battalion started their return to An Khe. When approximately 75% of the Battalion had closed into the base camp the operation was ceased until the artillery and scout elements could depart TARZAN. The last extraction of the Battalion began at 2000 hours and last elements of the Battalion closed into LZ MUSTANG at 2030 hours.

12. RESULTS:

- a. Enemy KIA -1, EST KIA -0, EST WIA -0, VCC -0, VCS -0, WPN -0
- b. Friendly Forces - Total 85 (Punji wounds - 58, other 27)
- c. US equipment destroyed during operation - None
- d. Huts/structures destroyed - 55
- e. Rice destroyed - 9,500 lbs

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

- a. Resupply was effected with no difficulty due to the fact that adequate support was available and adequate aircraft was available for support.
- b. The only resupply problem encountered was the lack of medium sized fatigues, a problem in existence for approximately 1½ months. This will shortly reach the critical stage.
- c. Medical evacuation was no problem during this operation. All medical evacuation was done during daylight.
- d. A CH47 was used to resupply a rifle company on 14 Mar 66 at 1900 hours. No LZ was available and the foliage was approximately 150 ft high. The internal wrench was used to lower the resupplies into the company base. This worked very well and the sling was received leaving no heavy equipment for the unit to carry. The problems encountered were the manhandling of the supplies out of the aircraft, the weight limitations of the wrench and supplies falling from the sling while being lowered due to the turbulence caused by the rotor downwash. In spite of these problems, this method should be considered when no LZ's are available and the height of the jungle canopy precludes dropping from a helicopter.

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14. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

- a. The operation was a success even though very little enemy contact was made. Many caches of rice were destroyed and much was gained from the training it afforded thus allowing the newly arrived personnel got a better orientation into air assault operations.
- b. TAC air was used extensively throughout the operation (33 sorties). The availability of TAC air was highly satisfactorily.
- c. Air Cavalry was used effectively to screen to the front flanks and rear of elements and afforded the units a better chance at locating targets which might have otherwise been by-passed.
- d. Artillery was used extensively throughout the operation and especially the ARAs in that some of the LZs were not within range of the conventional artillery.
- e. Engineers support was used extensively for the preparation and improvement of PZ/LZs. The Bulldozer assisted greatly in leveling off helipads on the tops of the ridges.
- f. Pathfinders were again used to the maximum in controlling the air traffic in conjunction with the supporting artillery firing going on almost constantly.
- g. Med Evac was used both with the conventional Med Evac ship and using the CH47 with the basket. Med Evac on this operation was the most improved support and was outstanding in their quick responses.
- h. Photo coverage of LZs was used on this operation and greatly assisted in planning for the air assaults.

15. COMMANDERS RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. The continued attachment of engineer and pathfinder elements to the infantry battalions.
- b. That more emphasis be placed on finding the enemy so that the infantry can close with and destroy them.
- c. That aerial photography be used more for recon and planning and that the reaction time for obtaining a photo be reduced to the minimum, preferably four hours if possible.

LEVIN B. BROUGHTON
Lt Col, Infantry
Commanding

118
109

1300 Scout acft recd AW fire (ARA struck TGTA 1300, Resunk-also request AIR) at coord 616855

1315 Scouts rpts numerous punji stakes at coord 629858

1215 30 Water Buffalo sited by Co C, Fixor to destroy (5 to 10 killed 1240 hrs.) at coord 625887

1805 Fixer White sited acft fired upon, at coord 629891
2 pers in black pj's
Recon by fire - results unknown at coord 617880

1030 2 Elephants sited by skippers at coord 641885

1720 Fixer Red rec'd SP fire- Co C notified
Fixor White checking (Lt 1500 ft) Single Shot- acft hit at coord 655945

1115 1 ACIT received fire at coord 650900

1325 Scouts rpts numerous punji stakes at coord 629858

1700 60 pers dressed in Black PJ's, packs some in uniform-moving East. Rept'd by Rich Patron at coord 665945

70
60

- (1) 0815 10 water buffalo sighted by S2 on recon, coord 630857, no action taken.
- (2) 1040 Co C found recent VC plat size camp site, cooking utensiles, 500 punji stakes.
- (3) 1130 Co C found 3000 lbs rice, some in containers, some documents, 45 water gourds. Rice and gourds destroyed. Doc to be evac. Also found camp site same general area possible company size - destroyed.
- (4) 1200 5 pers sighted by Co C coord 632901 - pers ran into bunker, khaki uniform. Village same location. Arty called to fire on bunker. Co C to take village
- (5) 1207 Co A rpt 6 water buffalo sighted coord 633857. Destroyed at 1300 hours.
- (6) 1235 Co C found fresh cooked rice coord 632897, dest.

18

16 15 17 11 13
 9 7 1 100 12 14

29°⁶
30°4

3

(7) 1320 Co A found trails running N-S, well used
coord 628856.

(8) 1321 camp fires and trails in village coord 645855

(9) 1325 burned out camp site w/punji stakes coord 624858

(10) 1330 concealed cave about 3 ft in diameter

(11) 1330 3 huts coord 625867

(12) 1330 12 huts coord 629871

(13) 1335 1 hut w/trails coord 625872

(14) 1340 well used trails NE - SW along ridgeline coord 628872

(15) 1341 6 bunkers being checked by Co A coord 625855

(16) 1345 1 large hut possible bunker under hut coord 618879

(17) 1450 punji stakes throughout area coord 627864

(18) 1500 village of 10 huts w/bunker and 1 trench w/two
villages running N - S, coord 600855.

(19) 1632 1 man in khaki uniform, coord 628908, checking by
Co C. Later rept'd 1 VC killed by ntr fire. 88

INTEL OVERLAY FOR 15 MAR 66
1/8 CAV

1410 Co A rpts 4 huts 618881 destroyed

0700 coords. 623866 & 623867
destroyed 1500 lbs rice at
each location

0845 Co B destroyed 4000 lbs
coord 631867

1520 4 Lg elephants sighted by
1/9 Cav moving SW. 4 KIA
coord 641881

1315 Co C rpt anti-heliborne stakes
8 - 10 ft and principle trails
N-S coord 642900

0910 Co C found and destroyed
17 water buffalo coord 633896
& small amount of rice.

1200 Co C found 1 hut &
small qty of rice (dest)
coord 637907

1330 Co C dest
20 water buffalo
coord 643908

1700 Co C found well used trails
numerous punjis around trail,
also rice cache & fresh foot-
prints on trails coord 653899

INTEL OVERLAY 16 Mar 66
1/8 Cav

92 +
62

1300-634892 Co C Rpts
plat size area E-W trail
w/numerous B traps, not
recently used.

1150 643892 Co C Rpts finding
plat size area w/huts, watch tower,
100 lbs rice (all destroy)

0950-651999-647897
Co C Rpts anti heliborne
stakes along E-W trail

1040-651894 Co B destroy 1 hut
and bundles of pungi stakes

1010-654892 Co C Rpts anti
heliborne stakes (destroy)

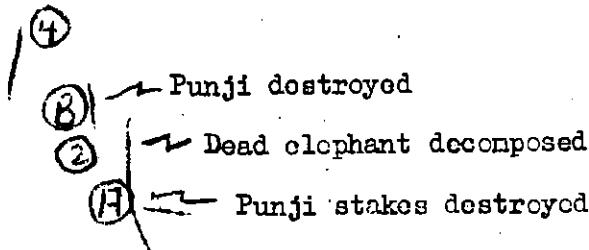
1330-652889 scout Rpts
new village w/1-8 huts

+ 86
68

61
90+

TRAAILS OVERLAY 15 MAR 66
1/8 CAV

(3)



4-5 huts
abandoned

- (1) N-S trail along stream, having numerous smaller trails loading E-W. Trail well used, but not recently. $1\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 ft wide. Numerous unoccupied huts dot pathway.
- (2) Both trail networks well used, but not recently. Approx $3\frac{1}{2}$ - 2 ft wide. Follows general stream bed "4" goes over ridgeline "5".
- (3) Principle trail network wide enough for 1 man, well used and fresh footprints found. 67
- (4) Major trail one man wide. Numerous punji stakes, well used. Appeared to have been used recently.

LZ OVERLAY (UH1D)

62
+ 91

○ 6 - 12

○ 4

○ 2 - 4

○ 2 - 4

○ 2 - 4

○ 2 - 4

○ 2 - 4

4 ○ 01

○ 2 - 4

○ 3

○ 4

○ 2 - 4

○ 12 - 24
Rice Paddy

○ 12-24
Rice Paddy

○ 12 - 24
Open Rice Paddy

+ 81
68

TAC AIR-ARTY-ARA SUMMARY

13 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 0910-0919 BR 660860
 0923-0930 BR 652859
 1038-1044 BR 639896

ARTY:
 295 rds

ARA:
 787 rds

14 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 0900-0915 BR 620883
 1425-1440 BR 610860
 1757-1810 BR 615860

ARTY:
 297 rds

ARA:
 80 rds

15 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 1015-1023 BR 660889
 1030-1035 BR 640905

ARTY:
 1154 rds

ARA:
 80 rds

16 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 1042-1047 BR 663870
 1100-1115 BR 650912
 1215-1237 BR 663870

ARTY:
 81 rds

17 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 1240-1250 BS 484080
 1645-1700 BS 476053
 1705-1720 BS 500074

ARTY:
 128 rds

ARA:
 113 rds

18 March 1966

TAC AIR:
 1045-1059 BS 498075

ARTY:
 517 rds

19 March 1966

ARTY:
 102 rds

ARA:
 80 rds

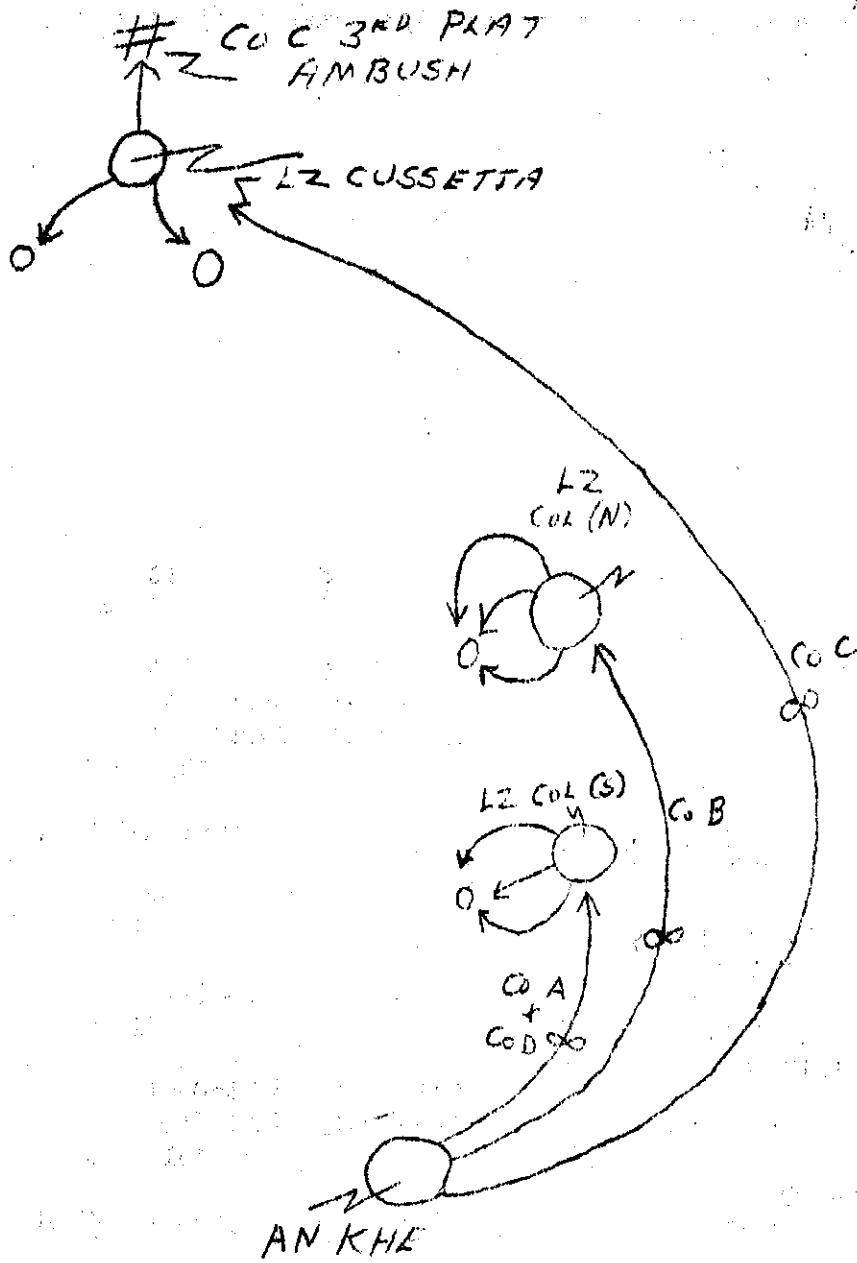
TOTALS:

TAC AIR: 15 strikes RECAP: 33 sorties

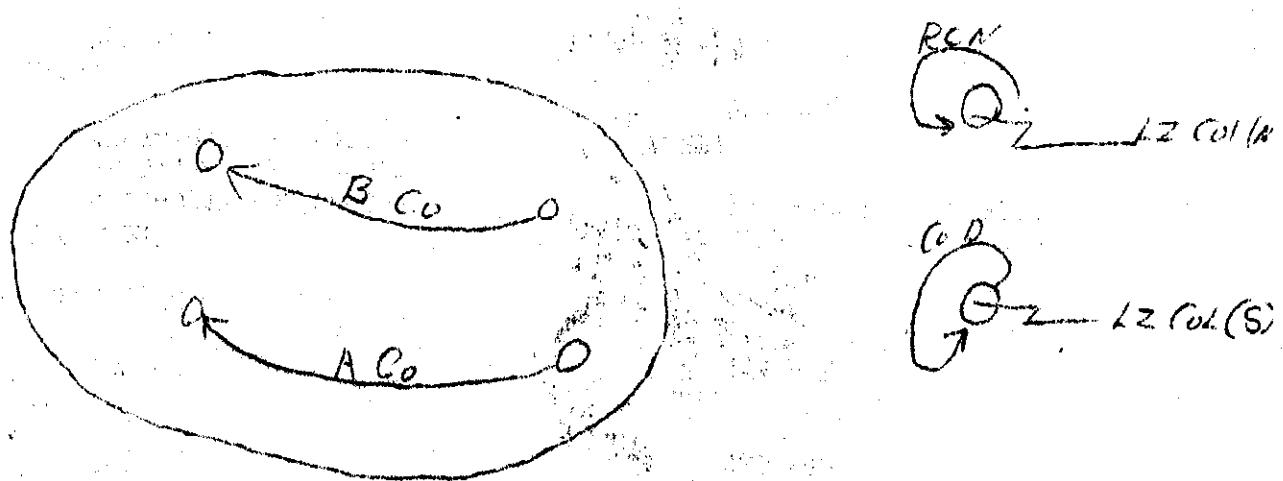
ARTY: 2474 rds

ARA: 1140 rds

13 MARCH 66

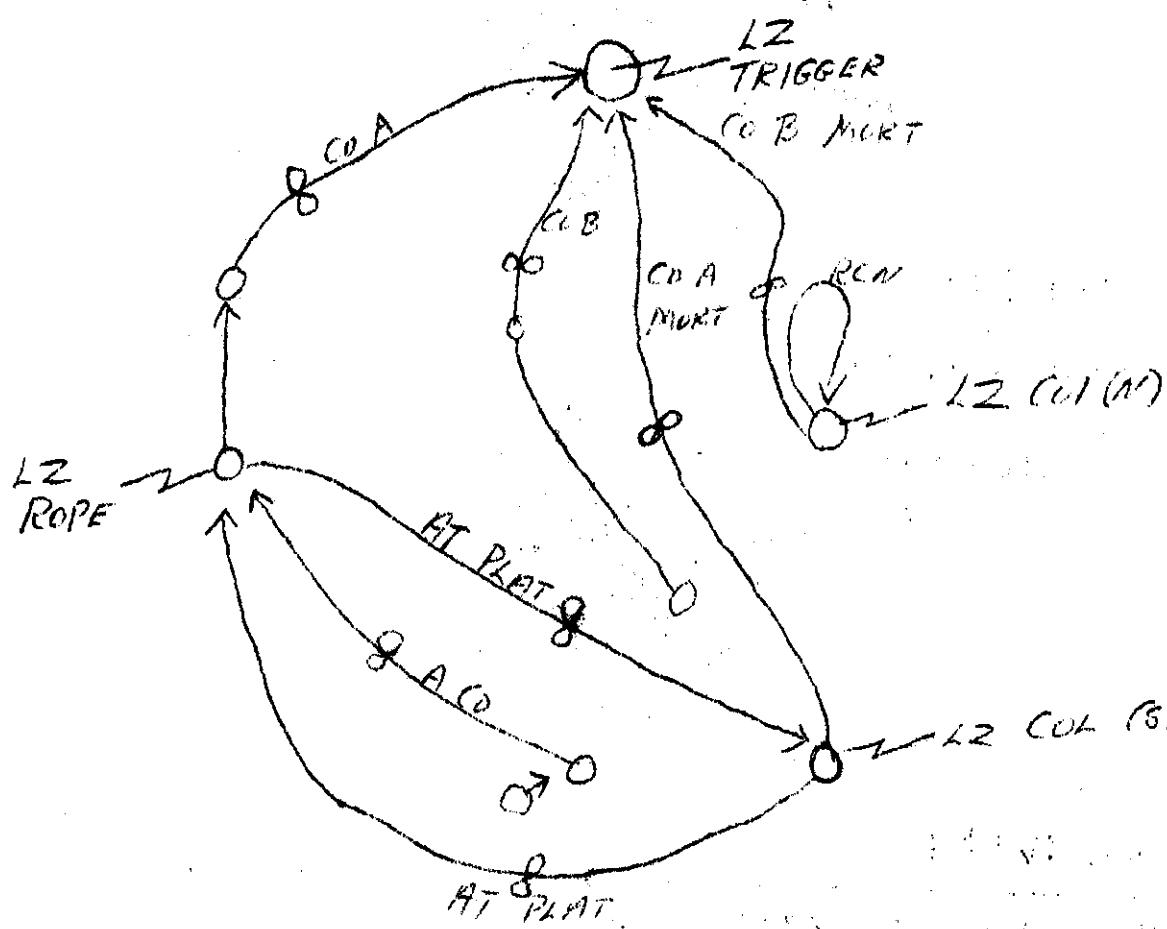
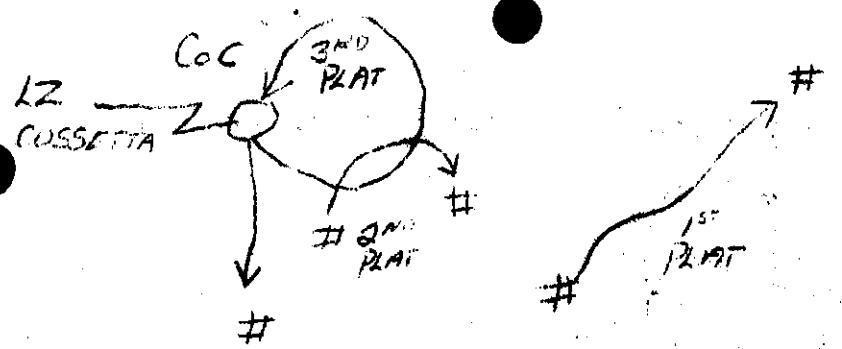


14 MARCH 66

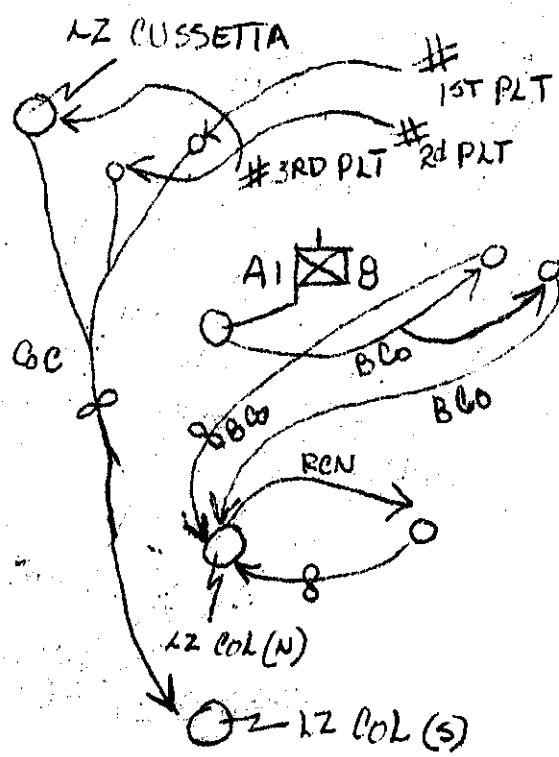


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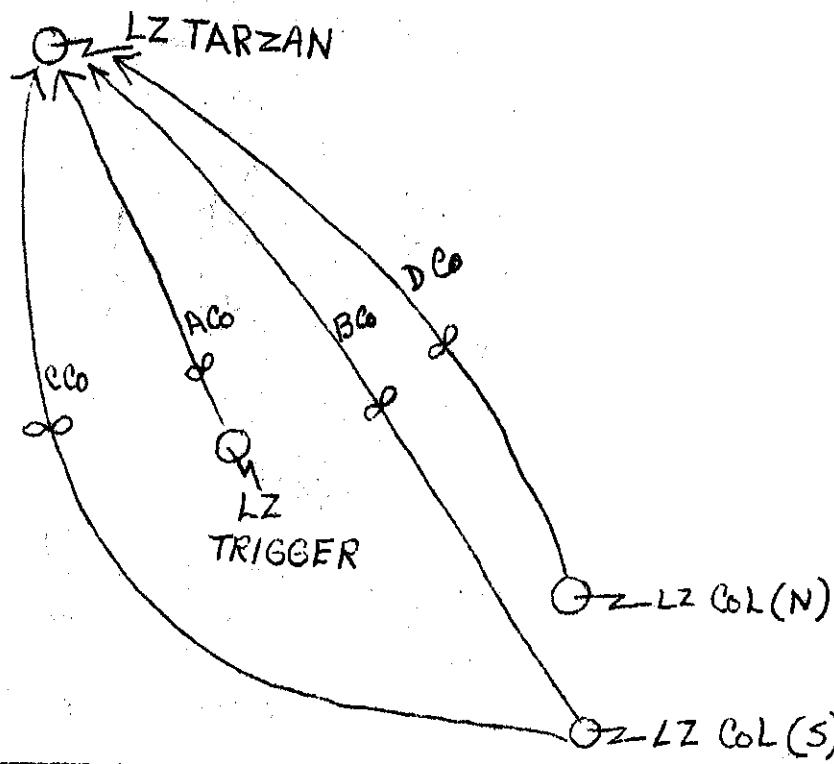
15 MARCH 66



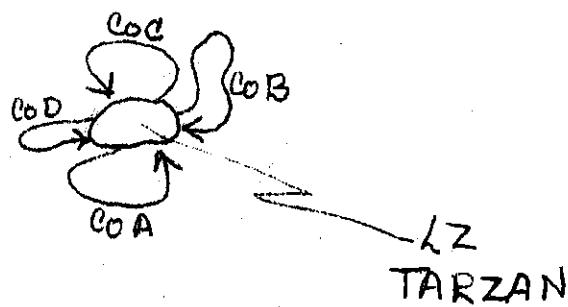
16 MARCH 66



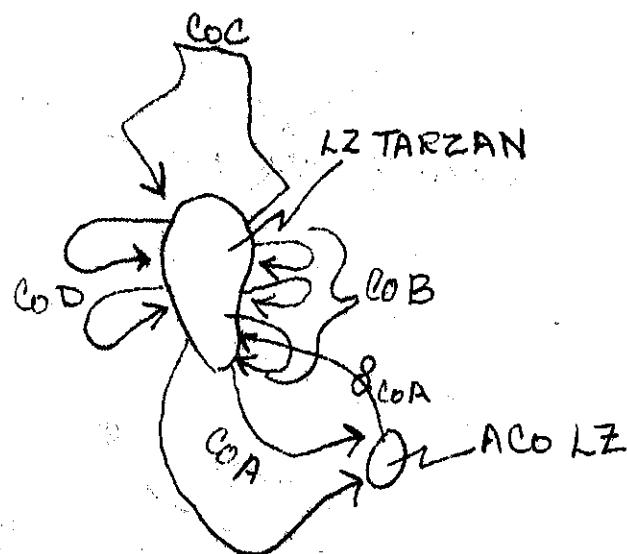
17 MARCH 66



18 MARCH

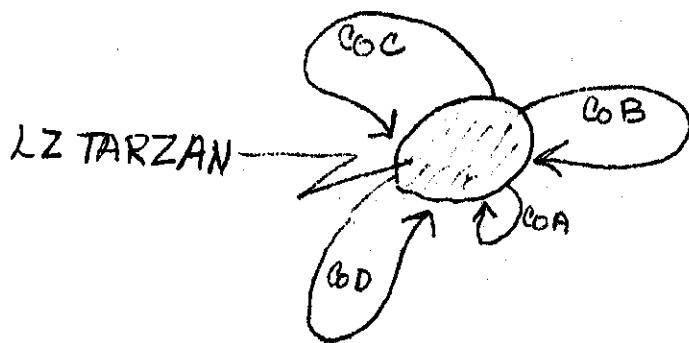


19 MARCH



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21 MARCH

