

CO

HEADQUARTERS
1ST BATTALION (AIRBORNE) 8TH CAVALRY
1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)
APO San Francisco, California 96490

AVCIC-CO

8 June 1966

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

TO: Commanding Officer
1st Airborne Brigade
1st Air Cav Div
ATTN: S3
APO US Forces 96490

1. NAME AND TYPE OPERATION:

- a. Name: CRAZY HORSE
- b. Type: Search and Destroy

2. DATE OF OPERATION: 201300 May - 051836 June 66

3. LOCATION: Reference, Map, Vietnam 1:50,000 Sheets 6753 I and II.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: 1st Airborne Brigade

5. REPORTING OFFICER: Lt Col Levin B. Broughton

6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

A 1/8

B 1/8

Bn Control

Recon Plat 1/8

Pathfinder Tm

RRU Team

C 1/8

D (-) 1/8

7. Tac Air and ARA were used extensively in close combat support roles when contact was made with the enemy. Air Cavalry was used sparingly each day at first light and last light to screen throughout the Bn sector and when contact was made to try to locate routes of withdrawal of the enemy.

8. INTELLIGENCE: Intelligence reports received through various sources revealed there were VC/NVA units operating in the Bde AO in the vic BR 697638 (HAPPY VALLEY). First reports on 19/20 May by other Bde elements already in contact, indicated the enemy was of platoon size. Later reports on the morning of 20 May, revealed possibly a battalion size enemy force had been encountered. The 1/8 Cav was committed on the afternoon of 20 May to relieve the 2/12 Cav at LZ HORSE (BR 693632).

On 210700 May at LZ HORSE, Co A, the LZ security element, received sniper fire from the SW. A Co maneuvered toward the direction of the enemy fire. In the meanwhile, Co's B and C moved toward the NE of LZ HORSE down a valley. At 210855 vic 701636, Co C killed 1 VC sniper. At approximately 0940 B Co received heavy AW fire from an area between them and Co C. B and C Co maneuvered against the enemy, believed to be about squad size. Artillery was called in and the entire area swept with negative further contact. At 211510 May vic 704629 A Co patrol engaged 3 VC wearing khaki rain jackets, black pajamas, web gear, and

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armed with AK-47 SMG's. 1 VC KIA (BC) and 1 VC KIA (EST). At about the same time B Co engaged an estimated re-inforced VC company with heavy weapons vic 710635 (see Incl #1, sketch of battle area). Heavy fighting continued throughout the afternoon and night which lasted to about 0200 hours, 22 May 1966. Reports revealed that the VC were well dug in, disciplined, utilizing heavy automatic weapons, and had excellent supplies and morale. Captured documents from dead VC personnel identified the unit B Co engaged as the 8th Battalion, 22nd NVA Regt (AKA: QUYET TAM), 610 Division (AKA: SAO VANG). Artillery was called in late on 21 May and during the morning of 22 May. B Co reported 30 VC KIA (BC), 18 VC KIA (EST), and 19 VC WIA (EST). 211500 May D 1/8 patrol encountered 2 VC digging along a well defined trail vic 694644. 1 VC WIA (EST). 211730 D 1/8 patrol killed 1 VC (BC) vic 684629 on a trail. VC was wearing a khaki uniform with a pack and M79 bandoleer. During the night of 21-22 May D 1/8 patrol found 5 VC bodies in bunkers vic 687637. All VC had khaki rain jackets and black pajama trousers, but no weapons.

On the morning of 22 May a small enemy force probed LZ HORSE from the SW. D 1/8, part of the LZ security force, repulsed the probe with negative known results. B and C Co's swept the area vic 710635 and reported finding an additional 21 VC KIA (BC). At 1115 hours Co C engaged an estimated VC squad vic BR 711635. Results unknown. Vic LZ STEER C 2/8 (then OCA 1/8 Cav) coord 720646 killed a VC courier and captured a Top Secret document from him. Co A engaged a small VC force vic LZ HORSE, resulting in 1 VC KIA (EST). As of 221800 a composite report from B and C Co's showed following from the 21-22 May engagement at coord 710635: VC KIA (BC) - 60, VC KIA (EST) - 20, VC WIA (EST) - 20, 2 - 30 Cal MG w/tripods, 2 - AK47 SMG's, 1 - M1 Carbine (US), 1 - PRC-6 handset, 6 - handgrenades, 400 - 30 Cal MG ammo, other CHICOM ammo, documents, and assorted NVA uniform and web gear.

On 23 May C Co found 4 VC bodies in graves vic 714633 along with a destroyed SKS carbine, documents, and several packs. No further enemy contact was reported.

Co B discovered 3 more VC KIA vic 694635 on 24 May. Bn moved from LZ HORSE to Psn SAVOY (616606), closing savoy at 241245 May. At 211345 the bn air assaulted into LZ COLT (744517) with negative enemy contact.

Co A encountered 6 VC at BR 424544, killing 2 VC (BC) and capturing two Top Secret Crypto documents. Co B at LZ COLT received two rounds sniper fire from SE side of LZ at 1530 hours. Fire was returned with negative results. 1/9 Scouts sighted one VC vic 759511 engaged and killed him (BC).

On 26 May A Co found clothes and documents in spider holes and bunkers vic 738546. Co C killed 1 VC (BC) wearing black pajamas vic 775545. At 1810 hours, Co C engaged 10-15 VC vic BR 780546, resulting in 4 VC (BC) KIA, 2 VC KIA (EST), 2 VC WIA (EST), and 1 VCC. VCC identified a local guerrilla squad in hamlet vic 790545.

At 270100 May Co B received 3 rounds sniper fire from SE of LZ COLT. Then at 270115 May a heavy volume of AW fire and sniper fire was received at LZ COLT from vic 747515. No friendly casualties. Targets engaged with mortars with negative results. 0830 Co A captured one 12-gauge single shot shotgun, and 1200 lbs rice which was destroyed. D 1/8 captured 3 VCS vic 755515 at 1110 hours. D 1/8 captured 1 VCC vic 744528 at 1530 hours. Initial interrogation revealed that VCC was a political instructor working for the VC in the local area. He also had observed 200 NVA soldiers with Chicom weapons pass through vic LZ COLT on 20 May 1966, carrying many wounded by artillery. NVA troops headed to the SE.

During 28 May three contact were made. At 0905 Recon Plat D 1/8 engaged 3 VC in a fire fight at 725516. ARAs and artillery were called in front of the withdrawing enemy. Negative results. At 1015 the AT Plat D 1/8 wounded two VC carrying rifles and wearing black pajamas vic 753511. Initial interrogation revealed that a Main Force VC Plat was operating in a large hill mass approximately 1.5 km directly East of LZ COIT. The 2 VCC were also part of a local 30 man guerrilla force located in MY THANH (BR 785455). The mission of the Main Force VC Plat was to attack LZ COIT sometime that day and, if heavily engaged by US Forces, they were to withdraw into the aforementioned hill. Artillery was called into the location given for the MF VC Plat. Results unknown. At 1955 hours, approximately 6 VC threw 3 handgrenades and fired AW fire during a probe of the SE sector of LZ COIT. Co B repulsed attack with results unknown.

On 29 May the Bn (-) air assaulted into LZ CORAL (734702) and B and C Co's into LZ HARVARD (705719) with negative enemy contact. D 1/8 engaged 5 VC vic 727689 with mortars. Results unknown.

On 30 May 1966 C Co liberated a captive ARVN soldier vic 691732 who had been a POW of the VC since 5 January 1965. ARVN claimed to be a member of the 40th Regt, 22nd ARVN Div and was captured in an ambush site vic DEO NHONG HILL near Phu Cat. ARVN soldier identified the 22nd NVA Regt as having secured the valley (Crows Foot) on 28-30 April, while the 610 Div (AKA: SAO VANG) staff planned its maneuvers in a hut located at 691732. 610 Div, 2 regts, support units, having 2 105mm howitzers were to have moved into the surrounding hills on or about 30 April. The village and the entire valley from which the ARVN soldier was liberated serves as a rear services area for the Sao Vang Division. The ARVN soldier was evacuated for further interrogation. C Co also found 3 tons of rice which was spread about. Recon Plat D 1/8 fired on 2 VC vic BR 743730. Est 1 VC WIA. Both VC were dressed in camouflaged shirts and shorts and were armed. At BR 744726 Recon Plat D 1/8 destroyed 5 tons of rice by burning and spreading on the ground. At 1749 A Co air assaulted into LZ CRATER (724518) with negative enemy contact. Sporadic enemy fire was received during the night with negative friendly casualties. Recon Plat D 1/8 ambushed 7 VC vic 741737 at 2125 hours, killing 6 VC (BC) and capturing 1 VCC. No weapons were recovered, although one VC threw one handgrenade before he was killed.

No significant enemy contact was made during 31 May. A Co returned to LZ CORAL and B and C Co air assaulted into LZ JOE (672669) with neg enemy contact. There was no enemy activity reported during 1 - 2 June.

At 031700 June A Co found 1 M16, 2 M79's, 1 M1 Carbine (US), 1 LAW 100 rds 50 Cal ammo, and 1 dead VC KIA (BC) at LZ HERFORD (662628) all of which appeared to have been abandoned.

At 040730 June A Co found 3 VC bodies vic 660628 in shallow graves. B Co captured 4 VCS and 1 VCC with one handgrenade (M26) vic 547642 at 041000 June. The VCC identified a VC hospital located west of the Vinh Thanh Valley which had 1 doctor, 4 medios, 16 nurses, and 16 patients in it on 1 June.

9. MISSION: 1/8th Cav executed an air movement into LZ HORSE (BR 693632) to relieve elements of the 2/12th Cav and conduct search and destroy operations within assigned AO.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Beginning 201345 May 66, 1/8th conducted an air movement into LZ HORSE (BR 693632) to relieve elements of the 2/12 Cav and conduct search and destroy operations to the NE in assigned AO. The battalion closed LZ HORSE at 1600 hours with C 1/8 moving overland from LZ HORSE to a position at (BR 697638) to relieve C 2/12 and prepare for a two company sweep to begin on 21 May 66.

11. EXECUTION: Commencing 201346 May 66, 1/8th Cav executed an air mobile operation into LZ HORSE (BR 693632) with C 1/8 followed by the Bn (-). The Bn closed into LZ HORSE at 1600 hours with negative enemy contact and C 1/8 moved overland to establish a combat base at (BR 697638) closing at 1745 hours.

Commencing 210659 hours B 1/8 began overland movement to join C 1/8 and conduct a two company sweep to the NE. At 0750 hours the two companies linked up and moved out on the sweep operation to the NE. Local patrols were conducted around LZ HORSE by A 1/8 and D 1/8. Sporadic sniper fire and contact were made with small isolated VC groups during the day by A and D companies. Companies B and C had sporadic contact with the enemy during their operation until approximately 211510 hours when B 1/8 began receiving heavy machine gun and sniper fire. Tac Air strikes and artillery were called in on the enemy and B 1/8 with one platoon from C 1/8 maneuvered to assault the estimated VC Company. This engagement lasted for approximately four hours until B 1/8 over ran the enemy positions causing the remainder of the VC to withdraw out of the area. Companies B and C then linked up and set up a perimeter defense for the night after evacuating their casualties back into defensive perimeter. Negative enemy contact was made during the remaining hours of darkness. An active H & I program was fired by organic mortars and artillery in support.

Commencing 22 May at first light C 1/8 moved back into the area of activity and initially gained contact with a VC squad which withdrew, C 1/8 found numerous enemy bodies and equipment in the area. B 1/8 remained in place where they evacuated their casualties and re-supplied in order to continue operations. At 1335 hours C 2/8 came under operational control of 1/8 at LZ STEER (BR 719648). Sporadic contact was made during the day. C 2/8 conducted local patrolling around LZ STEER during the afternoon and established a perimeter defense for the night. Companies B and C established a perimeter defense for the night via BR 706638 and the Bn (-) remained at LZ HORSE. Negative enemy contact was made during the night.

Commencing 23 May the Bn (-) planned to move to LZ STEER but due to bad weather could not move. C 2/8 and C 1/8 moved overland to check out two suspected hospital areas. No hospitals were located at the suspected areas and both units closed into LZ STEER for the night. B 1/8 remained at coordinates BR 706638 to evacuate equipment that could not be evacuated due to bad weather. The Bn (-) remained at LZ HORSE. Sporadic contact was made during the day and negative contact was made during the night.

Commencing 240720 May C 2/8 was air lifted from LZ STEER to rejoin the 2/8 (-). Following this, the 1/8th was air lifted from LZ STEER and LZ HORSE back to an assembly area at SAVOY (BR 615605) and prepared for an air assault into LZ COIT (BR 744517). Beginning at 1400 the 1/8th air assaulted into LZ COIT with the battalion closing at 1555 hours. At 1847 hours A 1/8 moved overland from LZ COIT to establish ambush sites. At 2205 hours C 1/8 moved overland from LZ COIT to establish ambush sites. Negative enemy contact was made during the night and an active H & I program was fired by organic mortars and supporting artillery.

Commencing 250625 May A and C 1/8 moved from ambush sites to establish new positions. Only VC contact was made by A 1/8 at coordinates BR 724544. A 1/8, C 1/8 and Recon Platoon established ambush sites for the night with negative enemy contact. Local patrols were conducted around LZ COIT with negative enemy contact.

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On 26 and 27 May the battalion continued to occupy ambush sites and conduct local patrols around LZ COLT. C 1/8 was the only element with any major contact with the enemy. An active H&I program was continued during the hours of darkness.

On 28 May the battalion continued local patrols and prepared for relief in sector by ROK forces. All elements were ordered to move back to LZ COLT in preparation for movement to LZ CORAL. At 1715 hours A 1/8 was airlifted to LZ CORAL (BR 733701) and placed under operational control of 1/5th Cav. The Bn (-) ooiled at LZ COLT for movement the following morning. Sporadic engagements were made during the day and 2 captives with individual weapons were captured and evacuated during the day.

Commencing 290700 May the Bn (-) was air lifted to LZ CORAL (BR 733701) and A 1/8 reverted to 1/8th control. B 1/8 and C 1/8 air assaulted into LZ HARVARD (BR 705720) and at 1310 hours moved overland to establish ambush sites. Negative enemy contact was made during the night.

The battalion continued to conduct ambush operations on 30 May with companies B, C, and the Recon Platoon. At 1710 hours A 1/8 was alerted for movement to assist a CIDG company. At 1749 hours A 1/8 air assaulted into LZ CRATER (BR 721618) to assist the CIDG. Sporadic fire was received during the night. At 2125 hours the Recon Platoon engaged an estimated 8 VC caught in their ambush. Artillery fires were called in by A 1/8 and the Recon platoon in support of their engagements. Companies B and C were alerted for air lift to LZ JOE (BR 672668) to relieve elements of the 1/5th and conduct patrolling and ambush operations within the area.

Commencing 311222 May companies B and C were air lifted into LZ JOE (BR 672668). Continuous patrolling was conducted by companies A, B and C with negative enemy contact. At 1815 hours A 1/8 was airlifted from LZ CRATER (BR 721618) back to LZ CORAL (BR 733701) closing at 1855 hours.

The battalion continued to conduct operations with B 1/8 and C 1/8 in vic of LZ JOE on the 1st and 2nd of June.

Commencing 030730 June A 1/8 air assaulted into LZ MILTON (BR 657636) preceded by TAC air and artillery preparations. Companies A, B and C conducted sweep and destroy operations to the west during the remainder of the day towards the valley floor. At 031235 hours company D and the Bn CP were air lifted to SAVOY (BR 616606) closing at 1425 hours.

On 3 June the battalion continued the sweep and destroy operations to the west with the three rifle companies, terminating with all three units closing position SAVOY at 1426 hours. At 1500 hours C 1/8 moved overland to assume security mission for position COBRA (BR 612587) closing at 1645 hours. At 1700 hours the battalion assumed the mission of the Brigade reaction force with B 1/8 on a 30 minute alert.

Commencing 050855 June the Battalion minus company C began a motor movement back to An Khe closing at 1045 hours. Co C remained at psn COBRA as the Bde reaction force until 1650 hours at which time it began a motor movement back to An Khe closing at 1836 hours.

12. RESULTS:

- a. Enemy: KIA (BC) - 85, KIA (EST) - 22, WIA (EST) - 23, VCC - 5, VCS - 7, ARVN POW liberated - 1, Individual weapons Co B - 2 AK47, 1 SKS, 1 US Cal 30 MG w/tripod; Co C - 1 SK Carbine, 1 US Cal .30 Carbine, 1 US Cal MG w/tripod, 1 SKS (Partially destroyed); Co A - 1 Single Shot Shotgun; Co D - 1 Bolt action German Mouser, 1 single shot French MAS 36; Recovered/recaptured US Wpns - Co A - 1 M16, 2 M79's, 1 M1 Carbine, 1 LAW. Total individual wpns - 14, crew served wpns - 2. Rice found or destroyed 8½ tons, Documents captured - 20 lbs, (including 3 Top Secret Doc), PRC - 6 handset - 1, Grenades - 12, MG Ammo Cal.30 - 400 rds, .50 cal ammo - 100 rds, web gear, ponchos, and uniforms - 100 lbs.
- b. Friendly: KIA - 12, WIA - 54
- c. US equipment destroyed during operation: None

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

- a. Logistical and service support was excellent.
- b. The proximity of An Khe to the operational area during this operation simplified resupply. Adequate aircraft were available and companies could be resupplied direct from base camp without a second handling in the forward area.
- c. Two UH1D's were used to resupply two companies with an emergency resupply of ammo and C-rations. This was dropped from approx 150 feet with little or no damage to supplies.
- d. CH47's with winches had to be used for the extraction of wounded, killed and equipment NE of LZ HORSE due to the lack of LZ's. The winches themselves proved unreliable. One winch would not operate upon arrival and two broke down shortly after commencing extraction. It took four CH47's before the extraction could be completed. Delays encountered delayed operations for an entire day.
- e. There were three medical evac's at night, with very good results. All LZ's except one were secure with pathfinder control. Med Evac responded to all calls with very little or no delay.

14. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS:

- a. Operation CRAZY HORSE was a highly successful operation. Friendly losses are not considered excessive in view of the results obtained.
- b. The enemy will usually attempt to break contact and withdraw once he is engaged. Therefore his withdrawal routes must be interdicted by artillery and mortar fire.

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- c. Body bags are desirable for evacuation of both casualties and equipment when utilizing the CH47 with winch.
- d. Units cannot be expected to follow a strict timetable when moving through difficult terrain for long distances.
- e. Contact with the enemy must be maintained. Loss of contact allows the enemy to regain the initiative and fight again on the ground of his choosing. The enemy places a high value on the recovery of his dead and their equipment.
- f. Gas handgrenades are not effective in jungle fighting due to limited range. Also the wearing of the protective mask by friendly forces greatly lowers their combat effectiveness in the jungle climate.
- g. The leaving of unburned and unburied trash, small arms ammunition, claymore mines, handgrenades, unused radio batteries, and so forth is a serious deficiency in the 1st Cavalry Division.
- h. CIDG troops will not generally operate at night. Their security is lax. A company of CIDG should never be equated from a combat power standpoint as being equal to a US infantry company. The CIDG are irregulars and are not trained or equipped to fight VC who are in bunkers and other positions.
- i. Villagers in the AO were found to possess sums of money in excess of that normally expected to be in the hands of Vietnamese farmers. It would appear that they were being paid by the VC to act as porters or to provide rice, clothing and information.

15. COMMANDERS RECOMMENDATIONS:

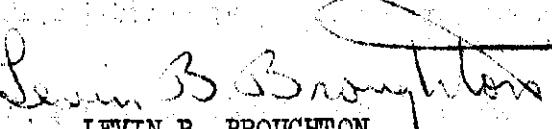
- a. That increased command emphasis be placed on security during extraction operations, on digging foxholes chest deep, on light and noise discipline. Laxness increase markedly in the absence of VC contact.
- b. That more thought be given to dispersion within a defensive perimeter to avoid excessive casualties from enemy mortar or automatic weapons fire. If an area can be effectively covered by interlocking fire from two positions, additional positions should not be placed between them. The perimeter must be expanded or contracted as troops are introduced or withdrawn from the perimeter.
- c. That the AT Platoon be provided two M60 machine guns. This platoon is frequently assigned missions of security, patrolling and ambushing. The cal.50 machine gun is too heavy except when employed in a static position.
- d. That funds be provided at battalion level to buy information from villagers.
- e. That CIDG be assigned missions commensurate with their capabilities.
- f. That troops departing on a patrol pack only that portion of the C-rations that they intend to eat. Approximately 1/4 of each C-ration meal is usually discarded.
- g. That a hand file be attached to each machette case. The machette stays sharp for approximately one hour of use only.

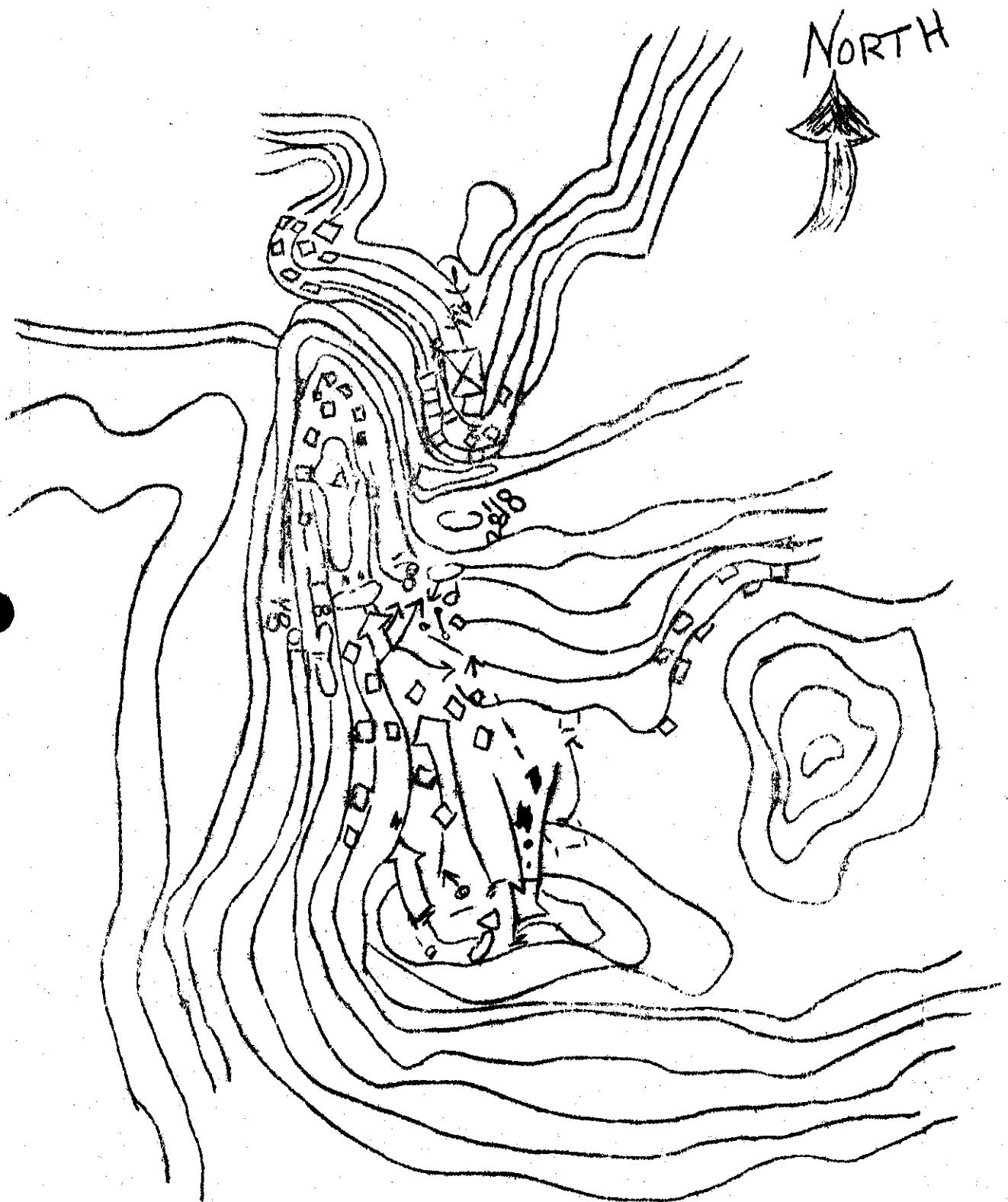
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- b. That two magazines of M-16 tracer ammunition be carried by fire team and squad leaders so that they can direct the fire of their men.
- i. That a search be made immediately of a battle area to gather equipment, documents, and wounded VC.
- j. That interdictory fires be instituted along possible routes of VC withdrawal immediately after contact is made.
- k. That command emphasis from Division level down be placed on the police of areas being evacuated by 1st Cavalry units.

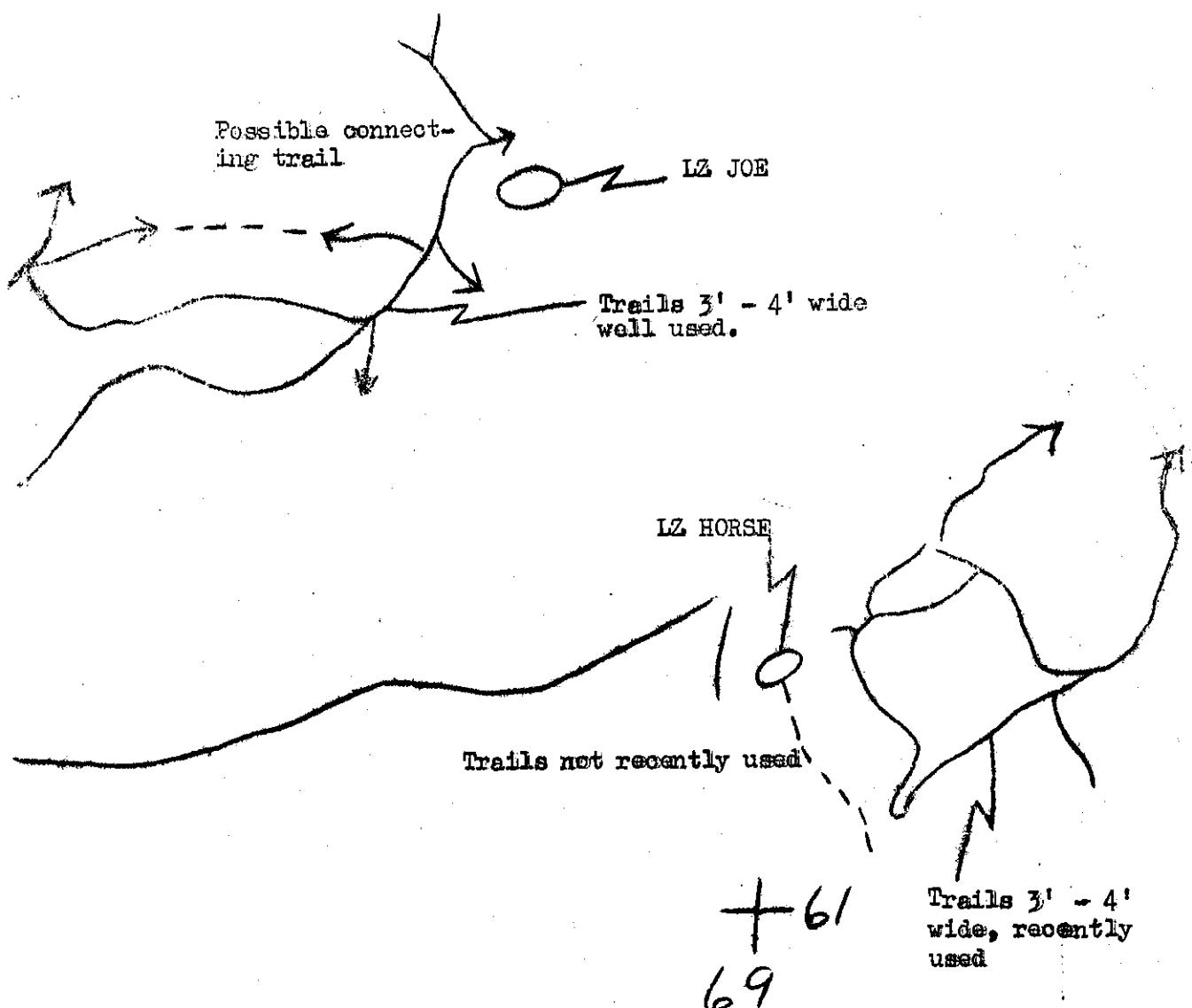
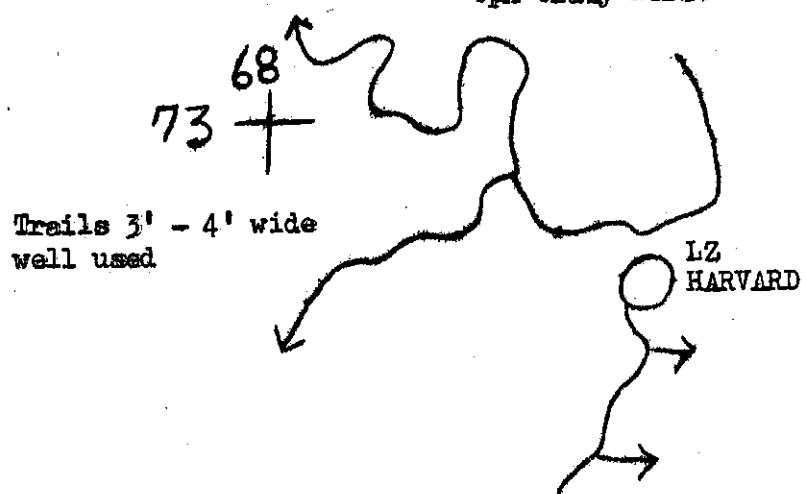

LEVIN B. BROUGHTON
Lt Col, Infantry
Commanding



LEGEND

- Fortified Psn
- Hasty fortified psn
- CP bunker
- Route of attack

Trails Overlay
1/8 Cav
Opm Crazy Horse



TAC AIR-ARTY-ARA SUMMARY20 May 66

ARTY: 1,478 rds

21 May 66

ARTY: 758 rds

22 May 66TAC AIR: 0700-0705
1140-
1320-1353

ARTY: 355 rds

23 May 66

ARTY: 894 rds

24 May 66TAC AIR: 0805-0816
0920-0935
1110-1120
1319-1328
1430-1435

ARTY: 1,375 rds

25 May 66

ARTY: 204 rds

26 May 66TAC AIR: 0650-0708
0735-0740
1005-1030
1040-1048

ARTY: 153 rds

29 May 66

ARTY: 145 rds

ARA: 192

30 May 66

ARTY: 553 rds

31 May 66

ARTY: 285 rds

1 June 66

ARTY: 189 rds

ARA: 96

2 June 66

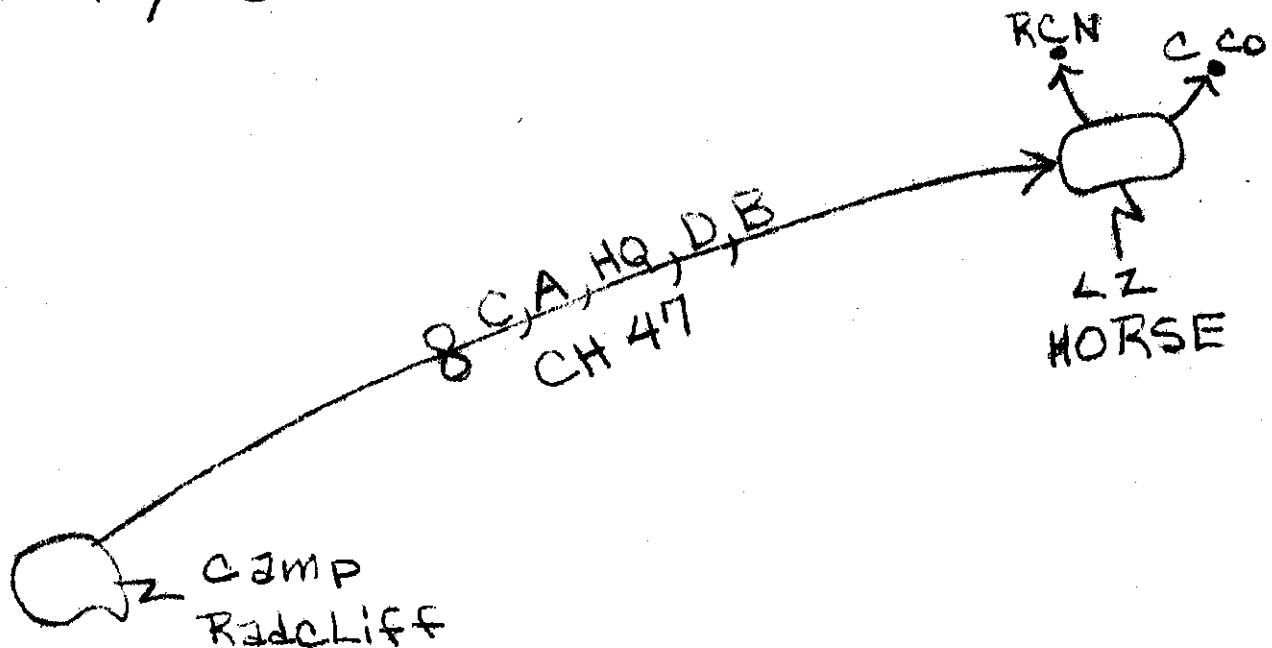
ARTY: 973 rds

3 June 66TOTALSTAC AIR: 12 strikes
34 sorties

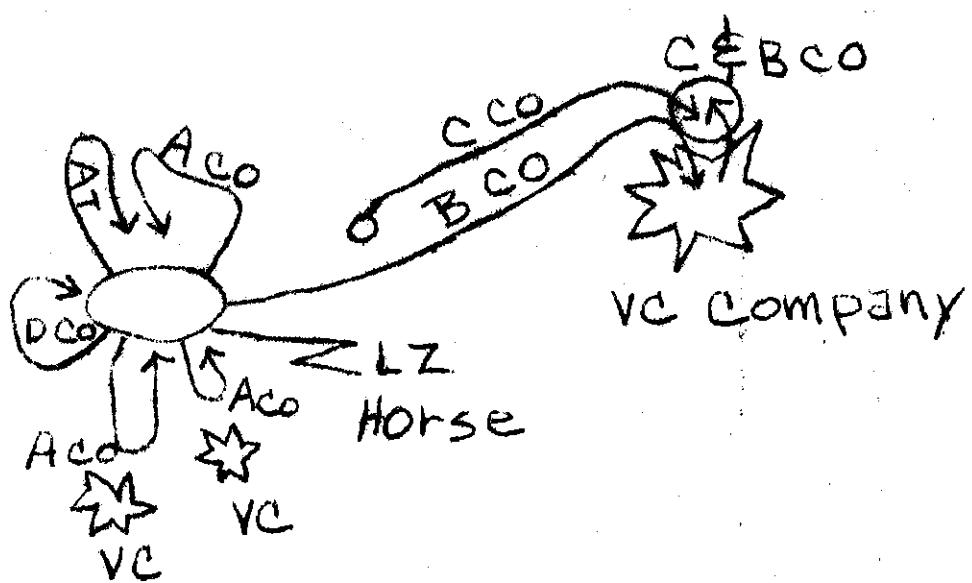
ARTY: 7,362 rounds

ARA: 422 rockets

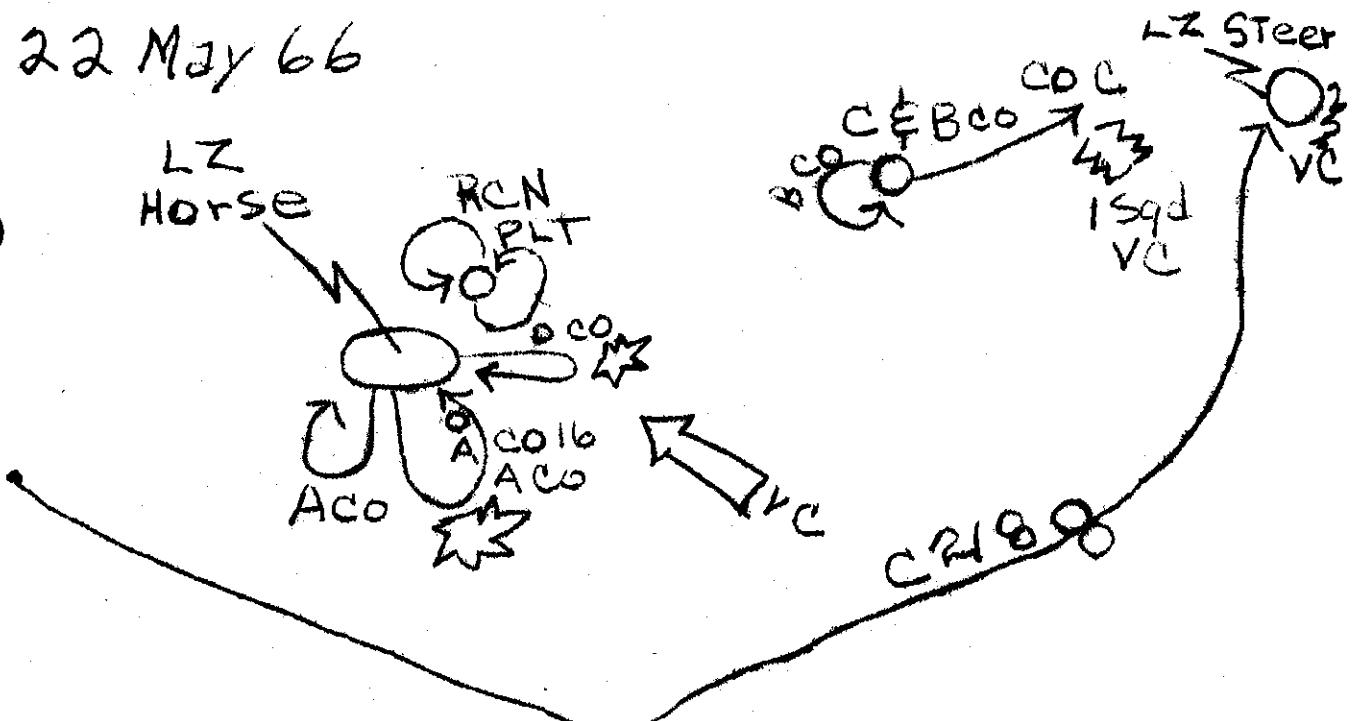
20 May 66



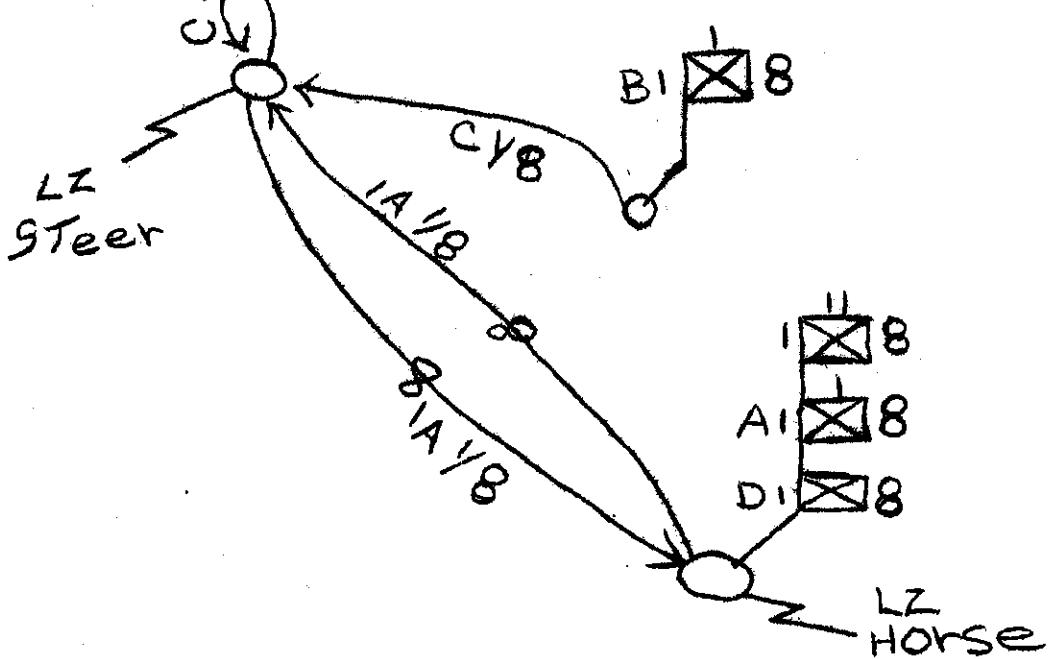
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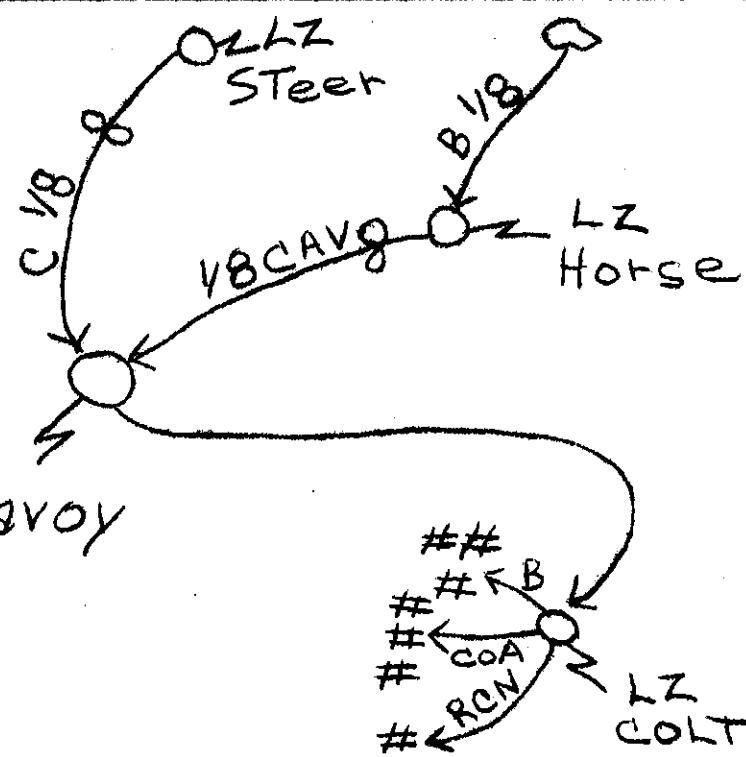
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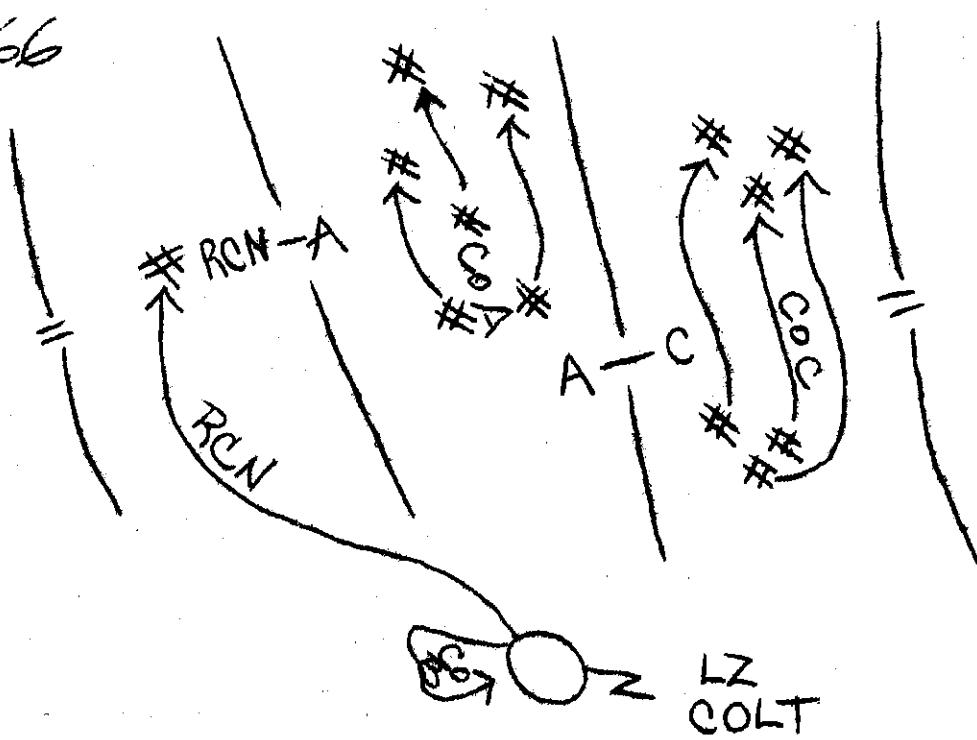
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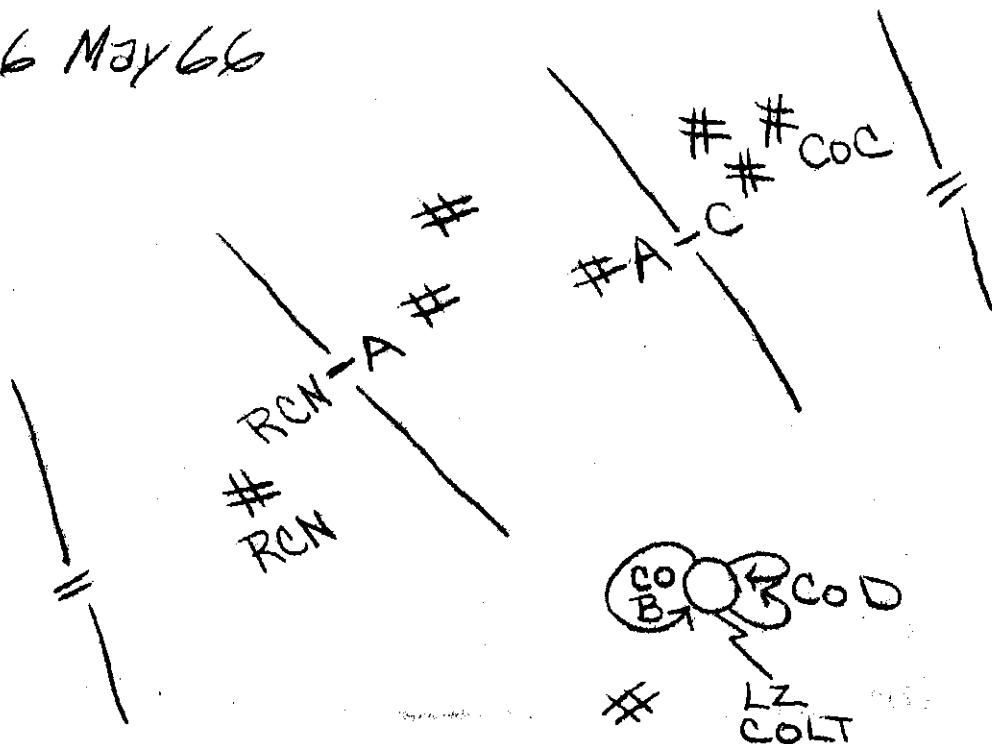
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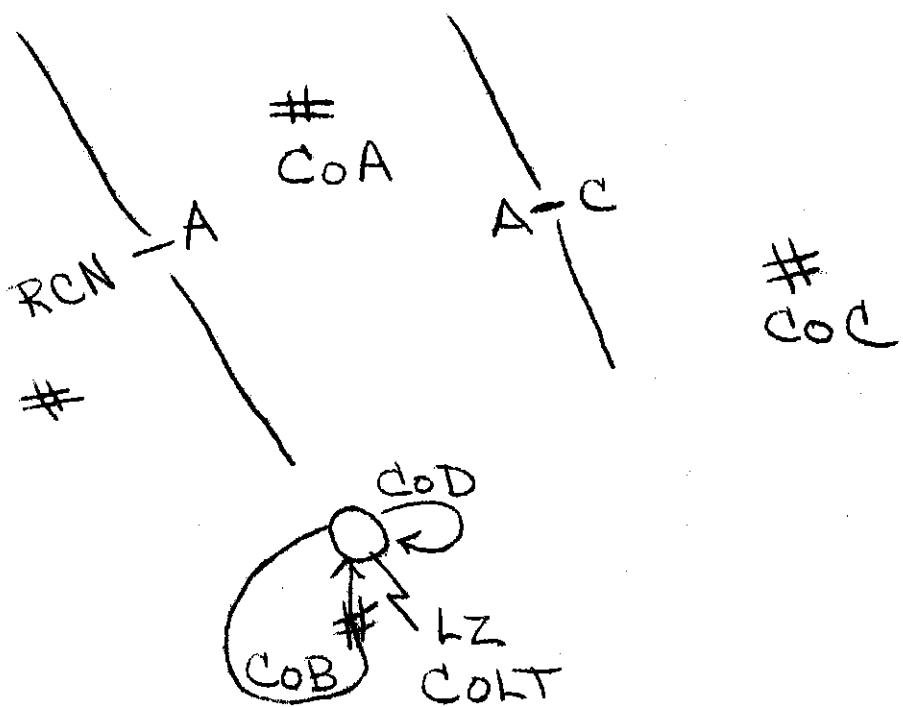
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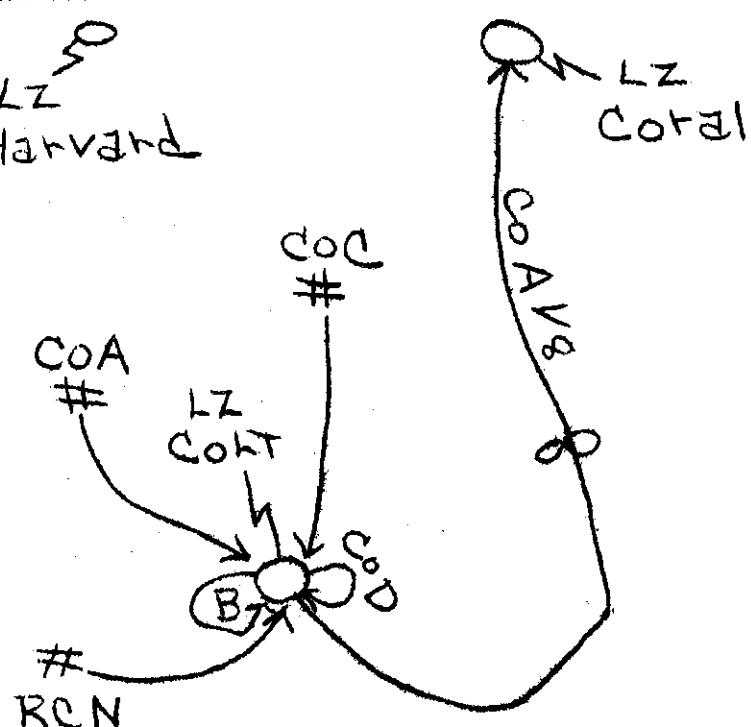
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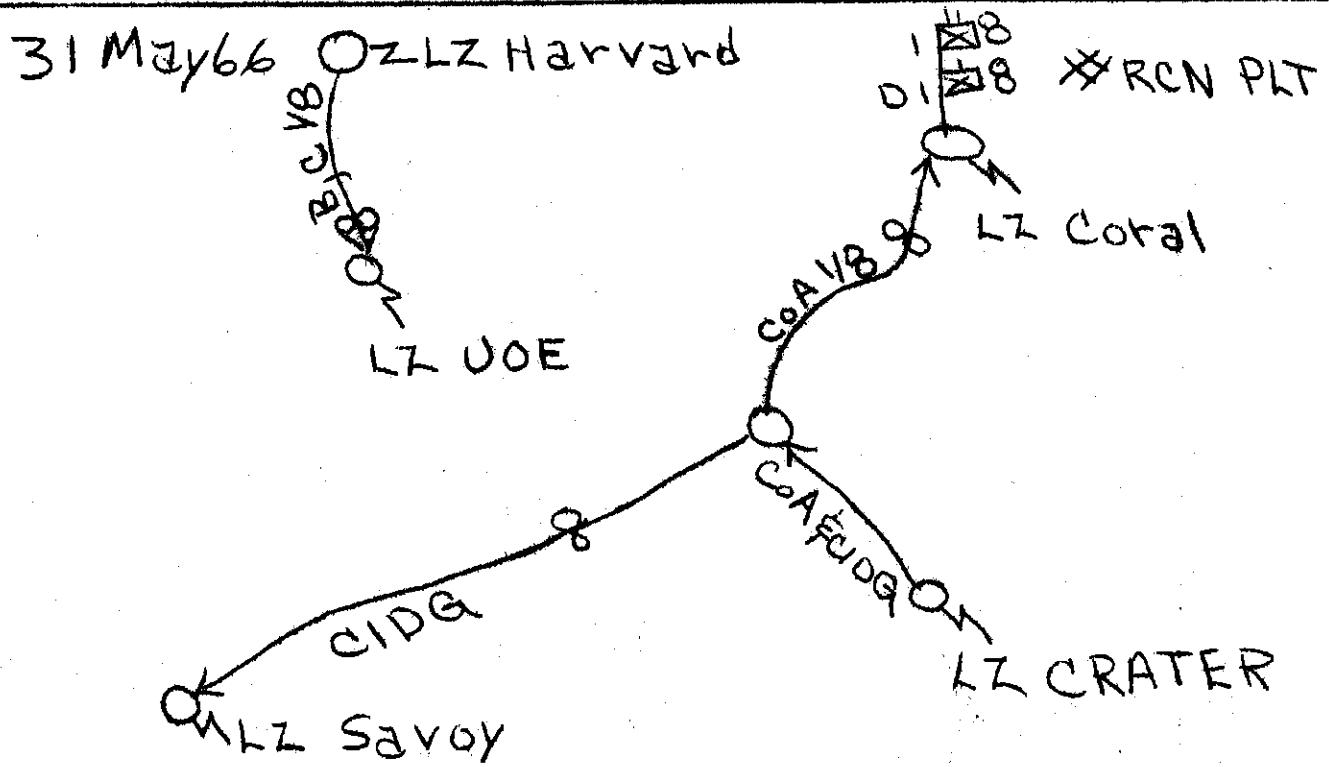
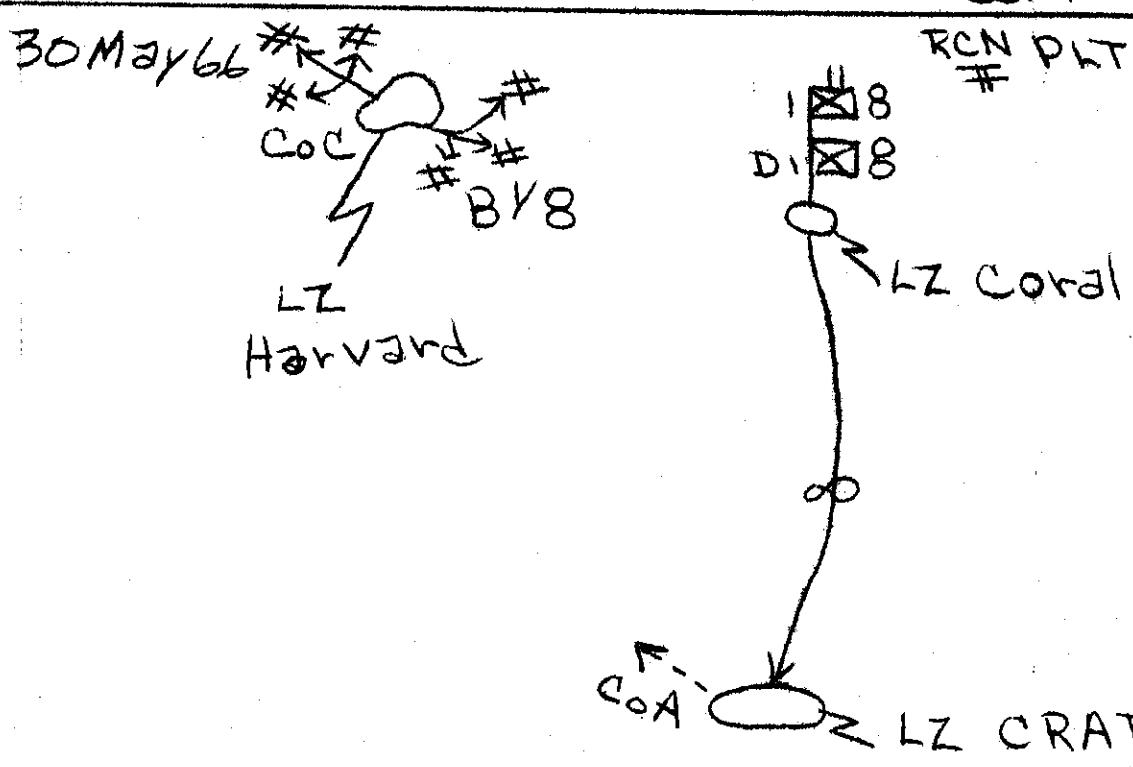
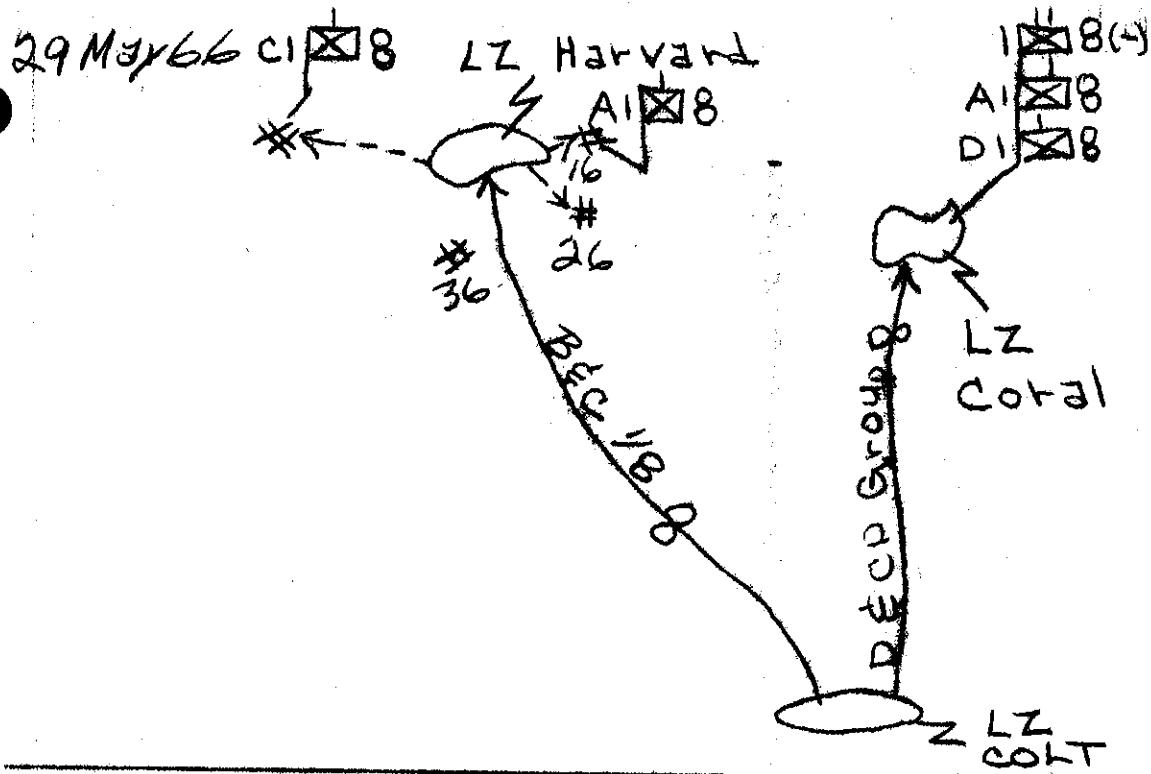


27 May 66

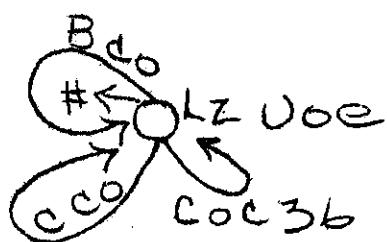
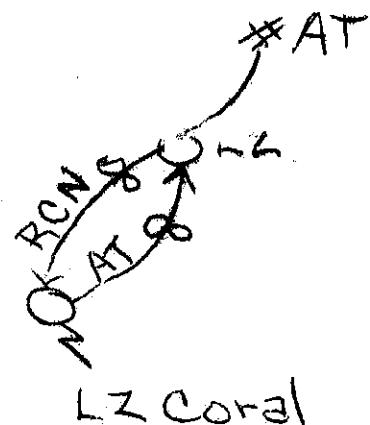


28 May 66 S
LZ
Harvard

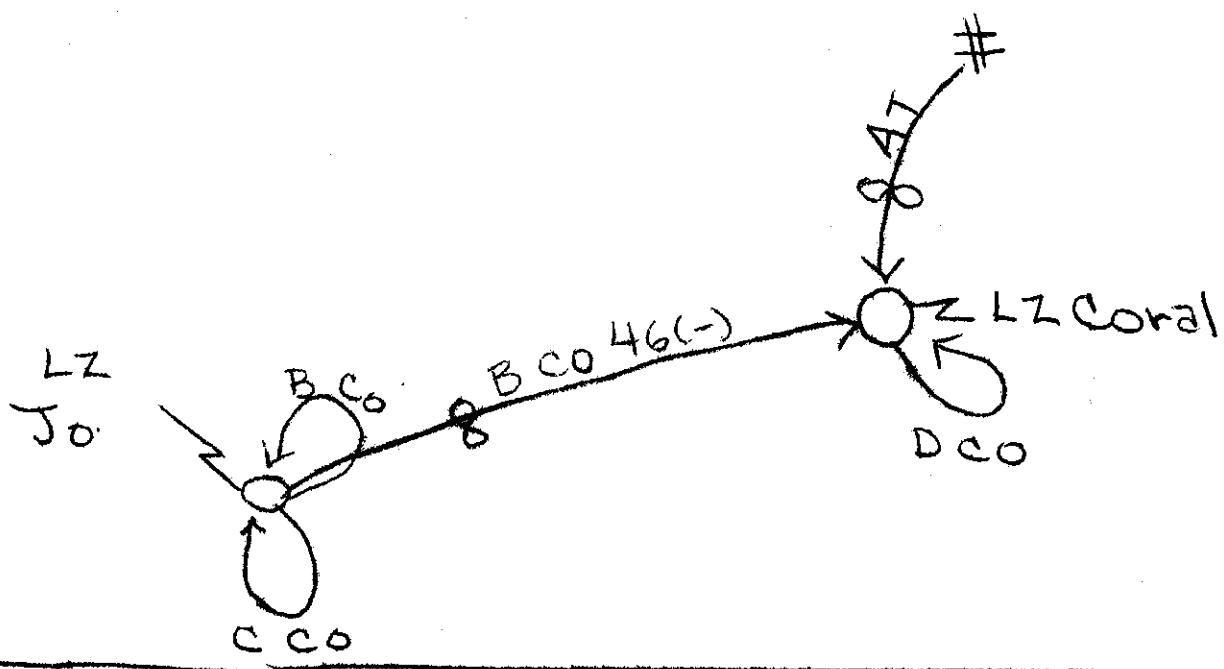




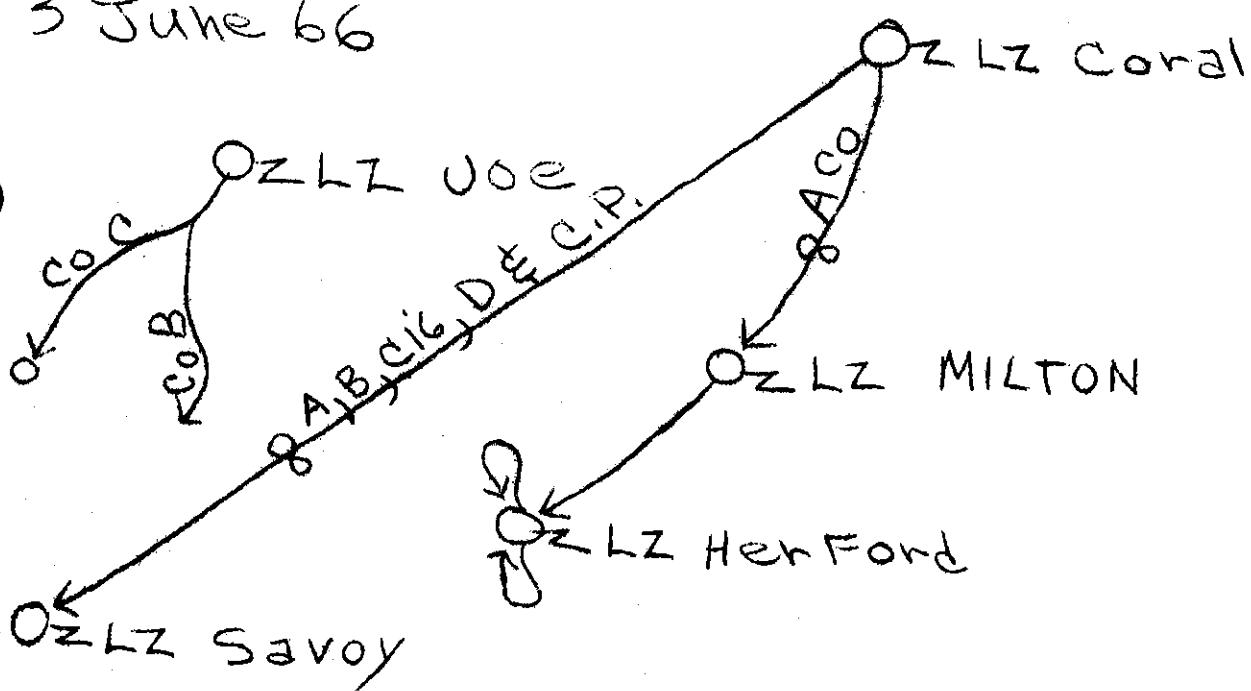
1 June 66



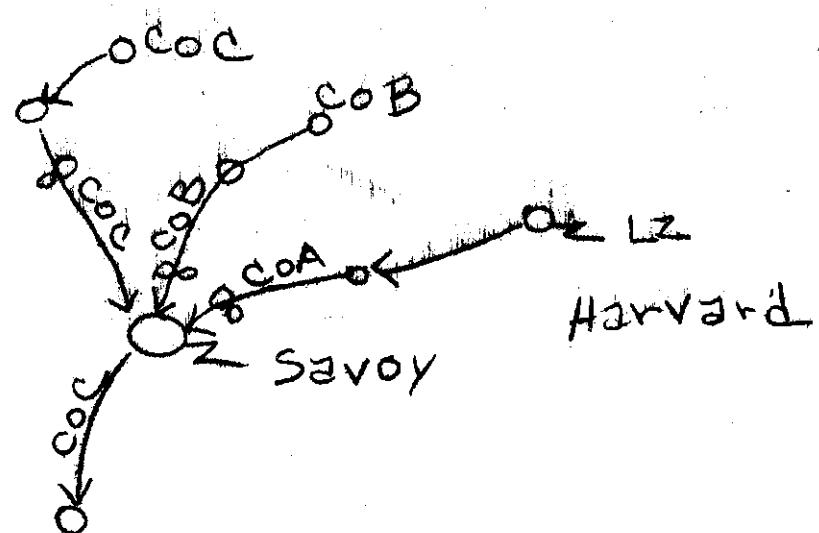
2 June 66



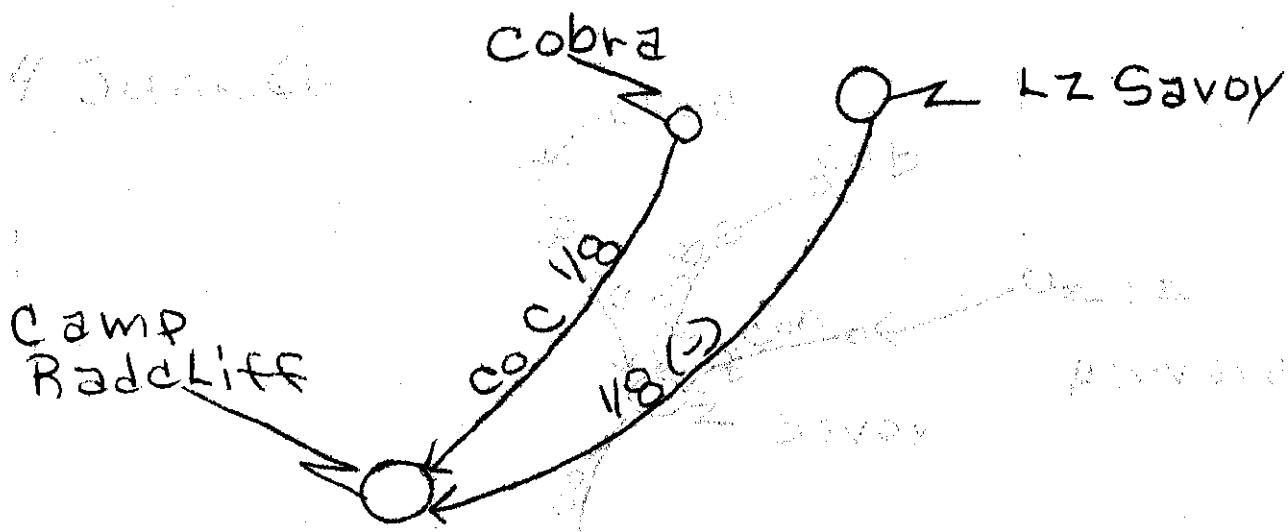
3 June 66



4 June 66



5 June 66



Incl #9, to Combat Operations After Action Report, 1/8 Cav, dtd 8 June 66.

