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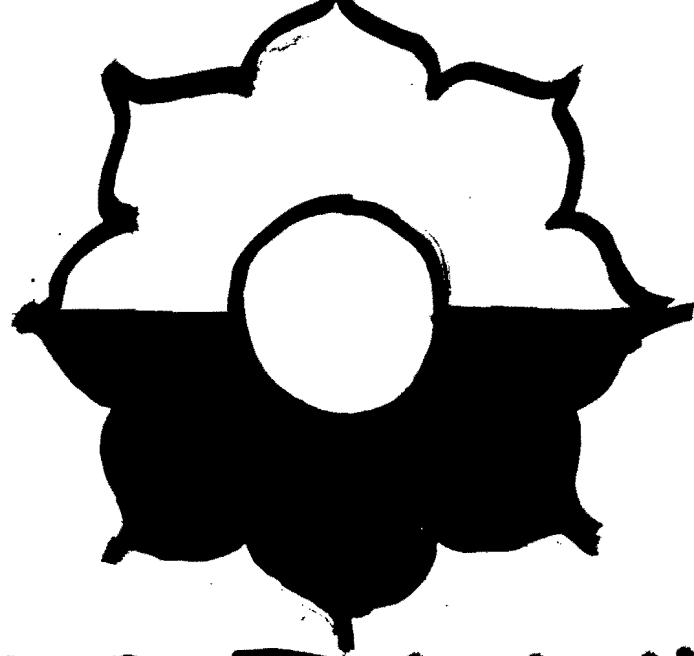
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Box # 4

9th Inf. Div. ORLL's

~~9TH INF. DIV.~~



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THE

31 OCT. 68

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 1ST BRIGADE  
9TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96371

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

Commanding General  
9th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDE-MH  
APO San Francisco 96370

## SECTION I

### Significant Organization/Unit Activities

1. (C) INTRODUCTION: During the quarter beginning 1 August and ending 31 October 1968, the First Recondo Brigade continued Operation Toan Thang (VI) which it joined on 23 June 1968 from the Tan An base (XS5464). The mission of the brigade in Long An Province has been to conduct strike operations against Viet Cong/Army of North Vietnam (VC/NVA) units, block major infiltration routes through the Province, provide road, bridge and convoy security along highway 4, and overwatch the Saigon and Nha Be rocket belts south of Saigon. To accomplish its four-fold mission, the Recondo Brigade has conducted daily strike operations throughout Long An and southern Gia Dinh Provinces, utilizing Air Cavalry and airmobile assets to conduct reconnaissance in force (RIF) operations, armed aerial reconnaissance, eagle flights, cordon and search, and to insert Recondo Checkerboard Operations along infiltration routes or in the vicinity of intelligence targets. The brigade has also conducted numerous joint operations with Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), Regional Forces/Popular Forces (RF/PF), and National Police elements. These operations have been quite successful in apprehending VC infrastructure and gaining vital intelligence of enemy activities. The engineer resources of the brigade have continued their mission of upgrading the road network throughout Long An Province. The engineers have supplemented ARVN engineers in construction projects, such as the rebuilding of the Ben Luc and Cau Tram Bridges. The base facilities of Tan An and the Tan An Airfield have been upgraded substantially during the period, and several battalion base camps have undergone major construction to upgrade the facilities.

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AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

Due to the daily operational commitments neither of the strike battalions (Bn) has been able to stand down for semi-annual refresher training on a battalion basis, however each battalion has conducted weekly training on the company level with emphasis on maintenance, tactics and small arms proficiency. At the close of the quarter the First Recondo Brigade is continuing Operation Toan Thang (II) and is confidently looking forward to another successful quarter of operations in the tactical area of interest (TAOI).

2. (C) ORGANIZATION: The First Recondo Brigade began operations in this quarter with three Infantry battalions (2-39, 2-60, 6-31) and one mechanized battalion (5-60). On 14 August the 6-31 was released from Operational Control (OPCON) of First Brigade and placed under OPCON of the 199th Light Infantry Brigade. On 11 September the First Brigade assumed OPCON of the 3-39 from 3rd Brigade. On 13 September OPCON of 5-60 Inf (M) was released to the 1st Div and First Brigade assumed OPCON of 2-47 Inf (M). At the close of the quarter the First Brigade is continuing operations with three Infantry battalions (2-39, 2-60, 3-39) and one mechanized battalion (2-47). In addition to the OPCON battalion, the brigade has received almost daily OPCON of A Trp, 3-17 Cav and one airmobile company. Headquarters for the maneuver elements are as follows: 2-39th Inf at Rach Kien (XS740698), 2-60th Inf at Tan Tru (XS654623), 2-47th Inf (M) at Binh Phuoc (XS610552) and the 3-39th Inf at Can Giuoc (XS829717).

b. The following inclosures are attached:

- (1) Inclosure 1, Organizational Structure.
- (2) Inclosure 2, Roster of Key Personnel.
- (3) Inclosure 3, Map of Brigade Tactical Area of Interest (TAOI).
- (4) Inclosure 4, Enemy Unit Locations.

3. (U) PERSONNEL AND ADMINISTRATION: There have been no significant changes made in the area of personnel and administration since the previous report.

4. (C) INTELLIGENCE:

a. At the beginning of August enemy operations were characterized by general evasion of contact while maintaining massed battalion-size elements in anticipation of a Third Offensive with Saigon, again, the primary objective. The enemy order of battle (see map, Inclosure 4) held the 294 NVA Bn split into companies scattered through Rach Kien district, (XS6671), the 265 generally in southern Can Giuoc District (XS8460), the 1st Long An also known as (AKA 506) Bn in eastern Can Giuoc District (XS9070), the 2d Independent (AKA 508) Bn in

AVDE-BA-T

**SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968**  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

southeastern Can Giuoc District (XS7062), and the 6th (aka 5th Nha Be) Bn in northeastern Can Giuoc District (XS8976). Interdiction, guerrilla, and terrorist activities at the beginning of the reporting period were minimal. On 3 August A/3-17 Cav initiated contact in Thuan My (V), Binh Phuoc (d) (XS7254). Contact continued sporadically with the insertion of elements of 2-39 and 2-60 through the morning of 5 August. A PW subsequently taken from the area of contact identified his unit as the 520 Local Force Battalion of Kien Hoa Province. The displacement of a local force battalion from its native province indicated that enemy strength in Long An Province was insufficient to fulfil the requirements of a major offensive against Saigon from the south; it indicated also, however, that the offensive was still a firm plan, and, therefore, reinforcements in the form of the 520th Bn were infiltrating into Long An to offset personnel shortages. On 7 August C/4-39 engaged an enemy force in eastern Can Giuoc District (XS9070). Contact continued through 8 August with elements of 4-39, 6-31 and 5-60 conducting an encirclement of the area of contact. Prisoners taken from the contact included members of the 1st Long An Battalion, the 3d Battalion, previously unidentified in Long An, the 6th Battalion, the 261 Battalion, and the Dong Phu Battalion. The prisoner of the Dong Phu Battalion, a platoon leader, provided confirmation of the previously reported but unverified merger of the Dong Nai and Phu Loi II Battalions. The primary enemy element engaged was identified as one company of the 1st Long An Battalion. On 12 August C/5-60 engaged an enemy element in Thuan My (V), Binh Phuoc (d) (XS7055); elements of 5-60, 2-39, 2-60, and 4-47 were inserted and encircled the enemy element. Prisoners taken from the contact identified the engaged unit as the entire 520 Battalion. Contact continued through 13 August. On the following day C/2-60 engaged an unknown size enemy force in eastern Tan Tru District (XS6964). A prisoner indicated that he was assigned to the 2d Independent Battalion, but until recently he was a member of the 294 NVA battalion. Documents and prisoners taken in later engagements confirmed the dissolution of the 294 NVA Battalion, which had been reduced from a strength of 600 men to 200 men by mid August. The remnants of the battalion were eventually assigned to the 1st Long An and 2d Independent Battalions. On 18 August B/2-60 made contact in southwestern Can Giuoc District (XS8264). Elements of 2-60 and 2-39 were inserted to encircle the engaged enemy unit. Prisoners, Hoi Chanh, and documents taken in the engagement identified the 265 Main Force Battalion. Prisoners stated that the 6th Local Force (aka 5th Nha Be) had been absorbed by the 265 battalion. The Recondo Brigade encountered small, guerrilla units in short engagements through 27 August when A/3-17 Cav engaged a small group of armed VC. C/2-39 was inserted into the area of contact near Phouc Lam (V), Can Giuoc (d) (XS7769). Prisoners indicated that elements of the 1st Long An and 2d Independent Battalions were engaged. Contact was quickly broken by the enemy before an encirclement could be effected. On 30 August contact was initiated by A/3-17 Cav again in the Phouc Lam area (XS7869) C/2-60 inserted. The enemy disengaged immediately after initial contact. On prisoner taken identified his unit as the 1st Long An Battalion. Engagements during the

AVDE-BA-T

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-MDFZTO) (U)

first half of September in Long Hiep (XS6774) Long Dinh (XS6572), Long Cang (XS6770) and Phuoc Van (7070) Villages of Rach Kien District were characterized by small units, usually platoon, accepting encirclement by U.S. units, with the surrounding U.S. elements receiving mortar and small arms fire from positions outside of the encirclement. Through the latter part of September contact with elements of the Local Force and NVA battalions located in Long An diminished. A trend of interdiction and guerrilla activity increased simultaneously with the apparent evacuation of larger units. Prisoners taken during this period who were assigned to the 1st Long An Battalion indicated that the mission of their unit was support of local force guerrillas. Enemy small unit operations continued into October with more and more "phase I and phase II" enemy activity occurring. On 11 October A/3-17 Cav searching the Xom Bo Canal line (XS7365) in response to an agent report engaged several VC.

2-39 inserted in an attempt to encircle. During the subsequent encounter two prisoners were taken; Senior Captain Trach and Captain Doan, the Chief and Deputy, respectively, of sub region three (SR3) training section. Several documents depicted hand drawn maps of earlier engagements between various enemy units and the 1st Recondo Brigade. Prominent was an accurate portrayal of the encirclement of the 520 Battalion on 12-13 August. Analysis by 9th Division G2 Combined Document Exploitation Center (CDEC), and Combined Military Interrogation Center (CMIC) concluded that a high level meeting of key battalion personnel sponsored by (SR3) - the objective of which was to discover means of defeating the 1st Recondo Brigade's encirclement and "pile-on" tactics - was in progress. Other data indicated plans for a new offensive against Saigon to take place in early November. Subsequent engagements occurring through the remainder of October indicated further breaking down of enemy battalions into squad size elements. Throughout the reported period the Dong Phu and 3d Battalions remained unengaged and unlocated. The 3rd battalion, according to captured documents, is an artillery battalion composed of local artillery elements; it is armed with 107mm rockets (including twelve-tube launcher as unearthed on 15 September by elements of the 46th ARVN Regt), mortars, and anti aircraft weapons.

b. The primary element of enemy tactics encountered during the reported period was defensive in nature. Essentially it consisted of breaking down battalions into platoons and squads and dispersing them over larger areas. The apparent objective of this maneuver was to prevent the encirclement of any elements larger than a platoon and then engaging the surrounding forces from behind with mortars and small arms. While the innovation was partially effective in that no unit larger than a platoon was successfully encircled during September and October, the tactic was self defeating. This dispersal of enemy battalions prevented them from conducting offensive operations in strength. Accordingly, while attacks by fire continued at the same or increased levels, ground attacks, even against small outposts, diminished.

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968.  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

A corollary result was the increase in guerrilla and interdiction missions minings and "hit and run" night engagements against small patrols increased significantly.

c. Enemy personnel and equipment losses for period 1 Aug 68 to 20 Oct 68:

(1) Personnel: VC KIA (BC)	1293
Prisoners of War	134
Civil Defendants	102
Hoi Chanhs	15

(2) Equipment Captured: 1 Aug to 17 Oct 68:

AK-47	318
M-16	4
M1 Carbine	6
M1	3
M3A1	1
M2 Carbine	2
Bolt Action Rifle (NFI) *	1
BAR	1
RPD	4
Chicom AAM6	1
Chicom Carbines	4
SKS	9
M-79	1
LMG (NFI)	3
Russ 7.62	1
MG (NFI)	9
.38 Cal Pistol	1
Russ 7.62 Pistol	1
9mm Pistol	18
Pistol (NFI)	4
60mm Mortar Sight	3
Mortar Sight (NFI)	1
Aiming Device (NFI)	1
Starlight Scope	1
Binoculars (NFI)	1
MG Tripod (NFI)	1

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

Telescope (NFI)	1
PRC-25	1
PRC battery	1
Chicom Radio (NFI)	1
Survival radio (NFI)	1
Walkie Talkie	1
Pistol Belt	2
Pistol holster	6
Ammo pouch	2
Entrenching tool	1
NVA Pistol Belt	3
NVA uniform	2
Canteens	11
Ponchos	1
Clothing misc	2
Medical supplies	19 lbs
Wire cutters	15 lbs
Rice	1
Documents	800 lbs
USSR flag	50 $\frac{1}{2}$ lbs
Piasters	1
82mm mortar	474,600
82mm sight	2
60mm mortar	1
RPG-7 RL	2
RPG-2 RL	64
RPG-7 rd	25
RPG-2 rd	31
60mm mortar rd	270
107mm Rocket rd	66
57 R.R. rd	2
75 R.R. rd	55
M-72 LAW	13
AK-47 ammo rds	2
7.62 ammo rds	3,890
5.62 ammo rds	400
.30 cal ammo rds	420
9mm ammo rds	3,400
Grenades (NFI)	20
Chicom Smoke Grenades	70
Chicom Frag Grenades	2
M-16 mags	2
	143

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

AK-47 Mags	315
BAR Mags	10
RP6-2 Charges	107
C-4	10 lbs
Blasting Caps	150
Bangalore Torp	30
RP6-7 sight	1

(3) Equipment Destroyed 1 Aug 68 to 17 Oct 68:

Bunkers	11,189
Structures	101
Hootches	69
Sampans	129
AK-47 ammo	200 rds
AK-47 mags	2
.50 cal ammo	75 rds
7.62 ammo	270 rds
5.56 ammo	400 rds
60mm ammo	17 rds
82mm ammo	6 rds
105mm ammo	3 rds
155mm ammo	5 rds
RPG-2 ammo	15 rds
RP6-2 Boosters	70
RP6-7 ammo	15
US Claymores	2
Chicom Claymores	1
US Frag grenades	19
US CS grenades	8
Chicom grenades	7
TNT	72 lbs
Gunpowder	20 lbs
CBU Bomblets	4
Booby Traps (NFI)	13
Anti-Tank mines	9
Lubrication Oil	2 qts

\* NFI - Not Further Identified

d. In response to the shifting emphasis of enemy activities back to guerrilla phases I and II, 1st Recondo Brigade operations oriented increasingly against small local force and infrastructure targets. While continuing intel-

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AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

elligence acquisition and surveillance with radar, Side Looking Airborne Radar (SLAR) Red' Haze, and Air Cavalry, greater attention was directed toward agent reports and Intelligence Civic Action Projects (ICAP), two sources of intelligence capable of identifying individual cadre men and members of the political infrastructure. The ICAP is a combination of a Civic Action Project, usually a MedCap, with an MI team, which conducts a poll among the hamlet and village people benefitting from the Civic Action Project, in an effort to gain fundamental information of local cadre and infrastructure. This means of acquisition is still in the initial stages and an evaluation of its efficiency is not yet available. In conjunction with the effort against cadre and infrastructure, full time liaison between the individual battalions and their nearby District Intelligence Operations Coordination Centers, (DIOCC's) as well as liaison between Brigade proper and Long An Sector Province Intelligence Operations Coordination Center (PIOCC), was established for the purpose of exchanging intelligence and planning combined operations.

e. Due essentially to a lack of required helicopter and gunship support Long Range Patrol (LRP) activity in Long An remained at a low level during August and September. In October, a working relationship between LRP teams and US Navy (USN) elements at Nha Be was coordinated to permit the insertion of LRP teams by boat and support from USN gunships. Consequently, infiltration and resupply routes into Long An from the Rung Sat Secret Zone (XS9860) and Go Cong (XS8446) were uncovered by the LRP's.

f. A paradox presently exists in known enemy aspirations where obvious plans for an upcoming offensive against Saigon are opposed by a highly fragmented, tactically defensive posture precluding any but small, local operations. The limited capabilities of the enemy are further compounded by low man power levels at all echelons and a high density of NVA who do not know the terrain and who have difficulty submerging into the population. The increasing numbers of Hoi Chanhs within Long An Province indicate a growing dissatisfaction and disillusionment among the enemy's ranks further complicating the enemy capabilities. While the enemy in Long An Province is by no means defeated, he is being forced into a reassessment of his abilities and a consideration of retrogression to the more elementary phases of insurgency. An alternative solution is the reinforcement of low strength battalions from nearby provinces. It would appear, however, that enemy personnel shortages exist throughout the 9th Division TAOI. He retains the ability to conduct psychologically damaging attacks by fire, notably rockets, against major population centers and allied military installations.

5. (C) OPERATIONS:

a. The First Recondo Brigade has participated in Operation Toan Thang (II)

DE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

throughout the quarter and is continuing the operation at the close of this report. The following narrative outlines the operation and applicable results for the quarter.

b. Operation Toan Thang (II) (23 June to Present): The First Brigade continued Operation Toan Thang (II) which it assumed on 23 June 1968, from 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. The Brigade has continued the operation with three infantry battalions (2-39, 2-60, 6-31) and one mechanized battalion (5-60). The 6-31 Inf primarily performed defense against rocket and mortar attack (DARMA) missions in the Nha Be and southern Saigon Rocket belts. One company of 6-31 has been used to conduct strike operations within the battalion area of operations (AO) or in support of other Brigade contacts. The 5-60 Inf (M) has performed the missions of road, bridge and convoy security along Highway 4. One company of 5-60 (M) has been available for strike operations throughout the Brigade TAOI. On the 14th of August the 6-31 Inf was released from OPCON of First Brigade and placed under OPCON of 199th Light Infantry Brigade. On 11 September the 1st Brigade assumed OPCON of the 3-39th Infantry from 3rd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division. The 3-39 Inf has continued DARMA operations in the Nha Be and southern Saigon Rocket belts as well as conduct strike operations throughout the Brigade AO. On 13 September OPCON of 5-60 Inf (M) was released to the 1st Inf Division and First Brigade assumed OPCON of 2-47th Inf (M). The 2-47th Inf (M) assumed responsibility for assisting in the security of the Ben Luc (XS616758), Cau Voi (XS572693), Cau Doa (XS58722) and Tan An bridge (XS549655) sites. This is accomplished by offensive night ambushes along the approaches of the bridges. Additionally it provides road and convoy security along highway 4. Elements of all battalions under OPCON of the First Brigade have conducted strike operations in Long An and southern Gia Dinh Provinces to locate and destroy the VC/NVA units, AVRN and RF/PR installations in the Brigade TAOI.

On 7 August two companies of the 6-31 made contact with an estimated VC battalion at XS905705. Seven additional companies were inserted into the contact area resulting in a complete encirclement of the enemy force. Artillery was concentrated in the area throughout the night and the avenues of escape cut off by the maneuver elements aided by continued illumination of the area by C47 flare ships. A sweep of the contact area on the morning of eight (8) August yielded 46 VC body count, 11 POW's, 14 individual weapons and one (1) 82mm mortar. During the morning of 12 August elements of 2-39 made contact with an estimated VC battalion at XS705547. In this engagement ten companies were employed to complete the encirclement of the VC unit. Air Strikes and artillery were directed into the objective area while the maneuver elements closed the area of the encirclement. The police of the battle area resulted in 104 VC body count, eight (8) POW's, two (2) Chieu Hois, 21 individual weapons and five (5) machine guns. On 19 August a company from 2-39 made contact with two VC companies vicinity XS825650. This company, supported by the air cavalry, air and artillery, fixed the enemy in position

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

while eight additional companies were rapidly inserted to support the contact. The result of this contact was 93 VC body count, 15 POW's, six (6) Chieu Hois and 45 captured weapons. During the period 4 to 6 September elements of the 2-39, 2-60 and 5-60 engaged a VC battalion which was fragmented into small units in an area three miles west of Can Guioc (8372). A total of six companies were employed continuously in the different areas to destroy the enemy force. This engagement produced 131 VC body count, 12 POW's, 1 Chieu Hoi, 25 individual weapons and seven (7) crew served weapons. On 10 and 11 September, elements of the 2-39 and 2-60 in two separate recon in force operations, accounted for 78 VC body count, 10 POW's and 114 weapons; 96 weapons were found in a cache by a company of 2-60. On 24 September in the vicinity of XS660736, 1 Co of 2-60 made contact with an unknown size VC force in bunkers. The 2-60 reinforced the contact with three additional companies (one company of 3-39 was placed under OPCON of 2-60). The four companies maneuvered to encircle the enemy force while air strikes and artillery was placed into the enemy positions. Sporadic contact continued through the late afternoon and during the night. At first light on 25 September a sweep of the area was begun which yielded a two day total of 42 VC (BC), nine (9) POW's, one (1) Chieu Hoi and 14 weapons. At 0840H on 11 October a Light Observation Helicopter (LOH) scout ship supporting C/2-39 was shot down by enemy automatic weapons fire at XS743648. The pilots were extracted by another helicopter as Co C maneuvered into the location of the downed helicopter. Co's A and E/2-39 were inserted into the area to support Co C. Shortly after moving out of their landing zone (LZ) at XS756647) Co E came into contact with an estimated VC company. Nine (9) air strikes were directed into the target area while the companies of 2-39 reinforced by Co A/2-60 moved into position to cut off the enemy escape routes. At 1230H the four companies, supported by the air cavalry troop and artillery, swept into the objective area. The results of the operation were 50 VC (BC), two (2) POW's and six (6) weapons. In addition to the major contacts outlined above the First Brigade has conducted numerous RIF missions on which contact has been made with small local force units or fragmented main force elements. These contacts, made throughout Long An and southern Gia Dinh Provinces, have kept the enemy off balance by disrupting his lines of communication, destroying infrastructure elements and making it extremely difficult for the enemy to mass any large forces within the provinces. Throughout the reporting period the First Brigade has conducted combine operations with ARVN, RF/PF, Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) and National Police elements. One of the most successful combined operations for the period was conducted on 28 September when one (1) company of 2-39 and one (1) company of 3-39 joined elements of Long An Province RF/PF, PRU's and National Police in a cordon and search of the village of Phuoc Van (XS664726). The two 1st Brigade companies were inserted as part of the cordon force which was airmobiled into position at 280749H. Upon completion of the cordon and search the Government of Vietnam (GVN) elements conducted a detailed search of the area. The results of this combined operation were: 15 VCI and 34 VC/CD captured.

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

The combined operations have been quite successful in destroying VC/NVA elements, eliminating the VC infrastructure and gathering vital intelligence. These operations have also produced an outstanding working relationship between the first brigade and the ARVN forces within Long An Province. Significant results of the operation for this reporting period include:

(1) US Losses: 97 KHA, 324 WHA

(2) Enemy Losses: 1293 KIA (EC), 134 POW's, 15 Hoi Chanks, and 453 weapons.

c. A Combat After Action Report for Operation Toan Thang (II) will be submitted under separate cover upon termination of the operation.

d. Combat Support Activities.

(1) Artillery Support:

(a) During the period of 1 August 1968 to 31 October 1968, the Direct Artillery support was received from the 2nd Bn, 4th Arty.

(b) A statistical chart is as follows:

CONFIRMED TGTS	ACQUIRED TGTS	COUNTER BTRY TGTS	PREPARATION TGTS
1-31 Aug	93	259	29
1-30 Sept	65	131	27
1-26 Oct	73	154	15
INTERDICTION TGTS	SPEC PURPOSE TGTS	ARVN SUPPORT TGTS	TOTAL ROUNDS FIRED
1-31 Aug	87	174	44
1-30 Sept	88	131	27
1-26 Oct	102	117	15

(2) Helicopter Gunship Support: A Troop, 3rd, 17th Cavalry, provided almost daily gunship support to the First Reconnoiter Brigade during the reporting period. Using AH-16 (Cobra) gunships and OH-6A (LOH) in combination with Airborne/Man-pack Personnel Detectors "People Sniffer", A Troop gunships have developed most of the significant First Brigade contacts during the reporting period. Additionally, A Trp/3-17 Cavalry's gunships and Assault Helicopter Companies' gunships have supported all insertions and extractions of the First Brigade combat units. The Air Cavalry, working in conjunction with air mobile infantry elements, has been

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968.  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

very successful and contributed greatly to the encirclement and destruction of numerous enemy forces. Light Fire Teams, working out of Tan An or Dong Tam have provided support to the First Brigade night operations, reacting to contact developed by patrols and providing the overwhelming firepower needed to destroy the enemy in locations where ground reinforcements would be too slow to be employed.

(3) Tactical Air Support: Tactical air support in support of First Brigade tactical operations and enemy contacts was continually provided by Seventh Air Force resources during the period of this report. With the use of F-100, F4C, F5, A-37, and B-57 type aircrafts, maximum utilization of all strike aircraft available in these areas was achieved. The Forward Air Controllers assigned to the First Brigade flew 350 visual reconnaissance missions and controlled 424 strike missions in conducting their combined air support duties. Of the 424 strike missions flown, 374 were preplanned and 50 were immediates. The preplanned strikes included LZ preps, VC base camp targets, bunker complex targets, intelligence targets and SKY-SPOT. Ordnance expended during this period consisted of 2,742 bombs, 864 cans of napalm, 58 pods of rockets, 10 pods of CBU's, and 268,000 rounds of 20mm. Combined known results determined by actual bomb damage assessment (BDA) provided by Forward Air Controllers and ground forces included 250 KBA (Body count), 75 KBA (possible), 642 bunkers destroyed, 414 bunkers damaged, 86 fighting positions destroyed, 40 fighting positions damaged, 117 structures destroyed, 88 structures damaged, 9 sampans destroyed, 4 sampans damaged, and 11 secondary fires and explosions.

(4) Strategic Air Support: N/A

(5) Naval Fire Support: N/A

(6) Chemical Support: During the period 1 August - 27 October 1968, a total of 164 E-158 CS Cannister Clusters have been dropped in support of the First Reconno-Brigade combat operations. Utilizing A Trp/3-17 Cavalry's helicopter support, almost daily Airborne or Man-Pack Personnel Detector - "People Sniffer" missions have been flown in support of airborne/riverine/footmobile reconnaissance in force operations throughout the brigade TAOI, searching likely places of enemy locations and attempting to flush the enemy by employing CS on these likely positions.

6. (C) TRAINING:

a. Due to operational commitments none of the Infantry maneuver battalions have been able to stand down for the week of semi-annual refresher training. Each battalion is conducting refresher training on the company level as each company stands down on a weekly basis. The following subjects are presented to each company

AVDE-BA-T

SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDFZTO) (U)

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
Operations and Tactics	35
Weapons Training	17
Maintenance	98
First Aid	6
Adjustment of Artillery Fire	16
Intelligence	7
Command Information	12
CBR	.6
Map Reading	4
Character guidance	4
Base Camp Improvement	62
OJT	143

b. Beginning on or about 28 December 1968, a mobile training team from First Brigade will conduct refresher training for three ARVN battalions. Each training cycle is 28 days in length and the following Program of Instruction (POI) will be used with variations to meet the requirements of the ARVN Battalions:

<u>SUBJECT</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
Combat Marksmanship	14
Crew Served Weapons	4
Explosives	8
Land Navigation	6
Patrolling	8
First Aid	4
CBR	3
Adjustment of Supporting Fires	3
Offensive Tactics	34
Defensive Tactics	7
Battalion Operations	28
Battalion Field Operations	3 trng days
Concluding Evaluation Exercise	3 trng days

7. (C) LOGISTICS:

a. Supply: During the period 1 August through 31 October the First Reconno Brigade continued operations in Long An and southern Gia Dinh with its organic and OPCON battalions in widely separated base camps. Resupply of the battalions was conducted from Tan An by road utilizing the battalions' organic vehicles. Class I was drawn by Reconno Brigade and supporting units from the Forward Supply Element

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board service was extended to the brigade base camp area. Some difficulty still exists in establishing this service to the area of the air field due to defective cable; however, it is anticipated that a new cable will be installed and in operation within the next week or so.

12. (C) ARMY AVIATION:

a. First Brigade Aviation Section has continued to support 1st Bde operations on a daily basis with command and control, visual reconnaissance, courier service, personnel transportation and minor resupply missions. On several occasions the Section performed emergency medical evacuations which greatly improved the chances of survival for the wounded soldiers. The section received four Light Observation Helicopters, OH-6A's, the last week of August and immediately transferred their model OH-23G helicopters to the 9th Avn Bn. The exchange went without any difficulties. The Aviation Section has and will continue to support the 1st Bde in every way possible within the capabilities of the aircraft and aviators.

b. Assault Helicopter Company (AHC): The 1st Recondo Brigade's successful operations during the reporting period are largely due to the daily use of the AHC. Using the AHC the First Recondo Brigade refined a technique termed "Jitterbugging", in which numerous insertions and extractions of lifts of five and/or ten sorties each are made, covering a maximum number of possible enemy locations with a minimum number of U.S. troops, and without tiring the Infantrymen with overland marches through rice paddies.

13. (C) CHEMICAL OPERATIONS: In this quarterly period, only one (1) chemical operation has been conducted in the First Recondo Brigade TAOI, that is the Rach Kien Defoliation Project (XS6770 - XS7270 - XS7166 - XS6668). This operation was flown on 2 August, following the first spraying which was flown on 14 July. Utilizing 900 gallons of the defoliation chemical ORANGE, 230 Hectares of land were effectively covered. Results of the operation have shown almost 99% of the foliage covered has died. This area of the Rach Kien District had been one where mines and ambushes occurred frequently, because of growth near Hwy 226. Since the Rach Kien Defoliation Project, incidents along Hwy 226 have decreased considerably. Although the decrease in incidents cannot be solely attributable to the defoliation of the area, this chemical operation did contribute to the safety of personnel moving along Hwy 226.

14. (C) BASE DEVELOPMENT: During the period 1 August through 31 October the main effort was concerned with improving the trafficability of roads within the base camps. Plans are being made for the construction of a new mess hall for Tan An Base and housing for an additional rifle company at Tan Tru and Rach Kien.

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HEADQUARTERS  
2ND BRIGADE  
9TH INFANTRY DIVISION

OPERATIONAL REPORT  
FOR PERIOD ENDING  
31 OCTOBER 1968

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By JW NARA Date 6-1-97C [REDACTED]  
DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS 2ND BRIGADE, 9TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96372

AVDE-BB-T

1 November 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report of 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division for Period  
Ending 31 October 1968, RCS CSFOR-65 (U)THRU: Commanding General  
9th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDE-MH  
APO 96370TO: ACSFOR  
Dept of the Army  
Washington, DC 20310

Reference: AR 525-15, dated 26 January 1968

SECTION I

## Operations: Significant Activities

## 1. (C) Introduction:

a. During the reporting period the 2nd Brigade continued offensive operations as an integral part of the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF). The combined Army-Navy team increased the tempo of strike operations directed specifically at destroying the enemy, denying him the opportunity to reorganize and redistribute his personnel and resources, and impeding his efforts to launch large scale offensives against Government of Vietnam (GVN) forces and cities within the Mokong Delta. During this period the MRF conducted 16 tactical operations in support of Operation Quyet Chien which commenced on 4 August 1968. On several occasions, operations were initiated to interdict routes of infiltration and exfiltration, to deny base camps and safe areas and to destroy enemy concentrations which posed threats to major populated areas. All missions and tasks, specified and implied, were planned and executed with marked professionalism. Close cooperation and coordination between River Assault Flotilla One (Task Force 117) and the 2nd Brigade, 9th Infantry Division allowed the MRF to take maximum advantage of the combined firepower and mobility provided by the infantry battalions and river divisions of Task Force 117. Operations were conducted

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by two organic maneuver battalions of the 2nd Bde, while one maneuver battalion remained under operational control (OPCON) of 9th Division Support Command (9th DISCOM). Twice a Vietnamese Marine battalion was attached to the 2nd Bde to give increased combat power and greater flexibility. Maximum effort was made to achieve close cooperation with Rural Force/Popular Force (RF/FF) and Army of Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) units and their US advisors. Combined US Forces-Vietnamese Forces operations were conducted whenever possible. When security missions denied VN forces the opportunity to participate as maneuver elements, operations were planned so as to utilize the VN static positions as blocking forces.

b. Reconnaissance in force (RIF) was the basic combat operation conducted during the reporting period. Contacts with enemy forces were generally limited to the engagement of small groups of insurgents. The enemy attempted to avoid decisive engagement and broke contact whenever possible. Friendly ground units were fired on with small arms, automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades. Night locations were frequently subjected to harassing attacks by mortars. The enemy devoted considerable effort to ambushing riverine movements; armored troop carriers and assault support patrols boats were frequently attacked with automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenades.

c. The MRF was involved in combat operations during the entire reporting period with the exception of brief periods of transit and stand downs for maintenance and preparations. The 2nd Bde successfully accomplished its mission as a mobile strike force and further expanded its operational capability by adding deep land based penetrations to its activities.

d. Training was conducted concurrently with combat operations, during transits and stand downs, and during periods of land based operations at Dong Tam when battalions were under OPCON of 9th DISCOM.

## 2. (C) Organization:

a. The MRF presently consists of the 2nd Bde, 9th Inf Div and Group Alpha of River Assault Flotilla One. The two commands are co-equal, and operations are conducted through close coordination and cooperation.

b. The 2nd Bde has three assigned infantry battalions: 3rd Battalion 47th Infantry, 4th Battalion 47th Infantry and 3rd Battalion 60th Infantry. Headquarters and Headquarters Company and the three maneuver battalions are organized under the Riverine Modified Table of Organization and Equipment. The 3rd Battalion 34th Artillery is the brigade direct support artillery; this artillery battalion has also undergone modifications for adaptation to riverine warfare. The 9th Inf Div has tasked 2nd Bde to provide one maneuver battalion to OPCON of 9th DISCOM. This task is rotated among the three maneuver battalions on a semi-regular basis. Each battalion spends approximately two months in Dong Tam with 9th DISCOM and approximately four months with the 2nd Bde.

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c. Group Alpha of River Assault Flotilla One is composed of Flotilla headquarters and two river assault squadrons. The squadrons consist of two river divisions each. Each river division is capable of providing transportation and direct fire support for one maneuver battalion.

d. The absence of the third maneuver battalion is compensated by combined operations with VN forces in the area of operations.

(1) Operations in Kien Hoa Province are frequently conducted in conjunction with the 10th ARVN Regiment stationed at Ben Tre, province capital.

(2) During the Vi Thanh Campaign, 30 July to 8 August 1968, the 5th Vietnamese Marine Battalion was under the OPCON of the 2nd Bde.

(3) On 15 October 1968 the 3rd Battalion, Vietnamese Marines, was placed under OPCON of the 2nd Bde. This attachment continues through the end of the reporting period.

e. The implementation of MRF OPLAN 4-68 (Operation Homestead) on 15 September 1968 placed the 3rd Bn 47th Inf in a semipermanent area of responsibility with a continuing pacification type mission in Kien Hoa Province. This mission required augmentation of equipment and personnel. The areas requiring the most augmentation were vehicle transportation and communications equipment and personnel. Operations in Kien Hoa Province have further required that the 2nd Bde also maintain a land based forward command post near province headquarters.

### 3. (C) Personnel and Administration:

#### a. Personnel:

(1) Unit Strength: The average assigned strength of major subordinate units during the period 1 August - 30 October 1968 was:

UNIT	OFF	EM	TOTAL
HHC, 2nd Bde	30	119	149
3rd Bn 47th Inf	42	772	814
4th Bn 47th Inf	31	747	778
3rd Bn 60th Inf	35	735	770

(2) The field maneuver strength of each infantry battalion was approximately three-fifths of its assigned strength. This percentage does not include personnel who were involved in administrative requirements and other matters such as hospitalization, details, R&R, leave, transit, sick call; neither are personnel with profiles and light duties because of wounds included. To increase the field maneuver strength, commanders and their staffs were urged to take aggressive administrative action to increase the number of personnel available for employment in combat. Personnel having MOSs in the 11 series were removed from headquarters sections and placed in line units in order to increase the strength of the rifle companies.

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(3) During the reporting period, there were several changes in the key personnel of the Brigade; these were as follows:

(a) Colonel George E. Bland assumed command of the 2nd Bde, 9th Inf Div, replacing Colonel Robert E. Archer, on 6 September 1968.

(b) LTC William F. Ankley assumed command of the 4th Bn 47th Inf, replacing LTC Lawrence E. Bryan, on 5 August 1968.

(c) Major James B. Walling Jr. assumed the duties of the 2nd Bde S2, replacing Major Carl E. Marwitz, on 22 October 1968.

(4) Casualties as a result of hostile action for the reporting period were:

	UNIT	MONTH	KHA	WHA	MHA
3rd Bn 47th Inf	August	0	4	0	
	September	10	23	0	
	October	3	23	1	
4th Bn 47th Inf	August	23	132	0	
	September	2	35	0	
	October	2	13	0	
3rd Bn 60th Inf	August	2	14	0	
	September	3	50	0	
	October	7	29	2	

(5) Total casualties as a result of hostile action for the reporting period were:

KHA	WHA	MHA
52	313	3

b. Administration:

(1) Awards and Decorations:

(a) Number of awards and decorations recommended and approved:

	3rd Bn 47th Inf		4th Bn 47th Inf		3rd Bn 60th Inf	
	Recom	Apprvd	Recom	Apprvd	Recom	Apprvd
CMH	0	0	0	0	0	0
DSC	0	0	0	0	0	0
SS	5	0	24	16	22	8
LM	0	0	0	0	0	0
DFC	0	0	0	0	0	0
SM	1	0	0	0	2	1
BS(V)	21	12	67	29	38	27
BS	20	15	38	15	58	18
ACM(V)	19	12	32	12	48	27
ACM	38	17	190	91	59	43
COG	4	0	0	0	7	0
AM	8	1	184	146	171	129

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(5) As in the past, morale remained extremely high throughout the period. Excellent living conditions, well prepared food and continuous success during combat operations contributed toward maintaining an extremely high state of morale throughout the command. Throughout the reporting period, Special Services provided a number of musical programs for the MRF. This aided considerably in maintaining the high state of morale. Since the men of the 2nd Bde live on the ships within the MRB, they have little or no opportunity to use the recreational facilities of Dong Tam or any other land base areas. Our constantly changing areas of operation, and the fact that our personnel are quartered on five different ships, makes it extremely difficult for the men to participate in existing conventional recreational programs. Due to the limited recreational facilities aboard the ships of the MRF, this command requested the Division Special Services Section to assist in the establishment of a special recreational program for the men. The program, designed to meet the problems peculiar to our environment, has been initiated. By close coordination with the Special Services section, a number of recreational items were obtained for use on the ships. Special shelving was obtained for each of the ships; then a field library of approximately 1000 volumes was obtained for each unit. At the present time, each ship has its own system of maintaining records of books on hand. Recreational kits consisting of games and gymnastic equipment were also purchased for each of the battalions. The recreational program is being expanded continuously and in the future should continue to aid in maintaining a high state of morale. One of the most effective morale boosters is the monthly visit of the Red Cross girls to the MRF. These visits are devoted to playing various games with the men, listening to the problems of the troops, and visiting injured men in the hospital areas. The Red Cross girls work extremely hard and their visits are greatly appreciated by the men of the 2nd Bde.

(6) During the reporting period, the 2nd Bde experienced its first "C" Day. On 21 October 1968 the conversion of all old series MPC to new series MPC was accomplished with a minimum of effort. By close coordination between the S1, the Headquarters Company Commander and the Division Finance Office, problem areas were quickly eliminated and the conversion was completed with no delay or hinderance to combat operations.

4. (C) Intelligence:

a. During the reporting period enemy activities have been primarily those of recruiting, reorganizing, resupplying and training. In August the enemy attempted to initiate his third general offensive. While this attempt has not been successful indications are that he will continue to initiate such an offensive. Reports indicate that he desires that this third offensive be so timed as to influence the Paris peace talks and the general election of the United States in November. Toward the end of the last reporting period (July 1968) the enemy began upgrading many of his local guerrillas and district coordinated units and main force units. Upgrading the units and recruiting the many replacements required to replace casualties have created a weakened enemy structure. Units are generally untrained and personnel dislocations have created low morale. During this reporting period in the northern portion of the TAOI the enemy reorganized from company sized units down to cells consisting of three to six men. In the western portion he reorganized from regimental sized units down to battalion sized units. In the southern portion his units remained unchanged. The enemy units have lost hard core cadre personnel and the

individual guerrillas are disenchanted with the Viet Cong movement because of the hardships imposed by operations, lack of adequate financial support, insufficient food, and prolonged absences from their families. Agents and prisoners of war continue to state that one of the enemy's greatest vulnerabilities is his fear of air-strikes and artillery fire.

b. Enemy operations have predominantly consisted of, but have not been limited to, harassing mortar attacks, ambushes, and sniper activities. He has increased his use of sapper engineer and sapper frogmen, who now employ complex land and water explosives which have proven very effective. The Ben Luc Bridge has been damaged several times by sappers during this reporting period and an artillery barge of the 3rd Bn 34th Arty was severely damaged at Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPB) David, Kien Hoa Province, by an underwater explosion.

c. Since the 2nd Bde initiated its protracted operations in Kien Hoa Province the morale of the enemy forces has reached an unprecedented low. This is characterized by the nearly 100% increase in Hoi Chanhs. Some of these Hoi Chanhs have been North Vietnamese Army (NVA) cadre assigned to units in Kien Hoa as instructors. Prisoner of war reports indicate that the enemy units have suffered a great number of casualties and desertions. Further, they are having difficulty recruiting and in forcing the local civilians to assist them in their operations. The 2nd Bde's aggressive thrust into Kien Hoa Province has forced a noticeable change in the enemy's tactics and organization. Ben Tre city, provincial capital of Kien Hoa, had been subjected to eight standoff attacks 1-14 September, prior to the 2nd Bde Kien Hoa Offensive on 15 September. Since that time Ben Tre has not received an attack by fire. The 516th Main Force Battalion has organized a "boat hunter team" whose mission is to harass the MRF vessels. They are usually located in Giong Trom District and their weapons include 82mm mortars and rocket propelled grenades.

d. Major movement trends were primarily from the south moving north and east. Many small harassing operations and scattered minings were used to cover these movements. The enemy continues to place high priority on propaganda and proselytizing aimed at both the US and GVN personnel as well as local civilians. Incidents aimed at the Revolutionary Development cadre personnel have also increased.

e. Information and intelligence was exchanged liberally between all collection agencies and the Bde by means of liaison officers, message traffic and personal coordination and liaison. Although the exchange had previously been satisfactory and beneficial, a concentrated effort has ensured an even more harmonious working relationship among agencies. Significant intelligence information and material has been obtained from the following sources: The 9th Military Intelligence Detachment in Dong Tam, prisoners of war and GVN sympathizers, 7th ARVN Division Agent Net, the 525th Military Intelligence Detachment, field information reports from the Naval Intelligence Liaison Office, spot reports, intelligence summaries and electronic devices. Improved collection efforts have resulted in more timely intelligence and has thus resulted in more effective exploitation by the Bde.

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f. Enemy capabilities and limitations exhibited during the reporting period remain the same. He retains the capability of conducting platoon and company sized attacks on outposts and villages, as well as battalion sized attacks on district and provincial towns and military installations. He can also conduct standoff mortar and rocket harassing attacks. Indications are that infiltrations, proselytizing, and resupply activity will continue on a large scale, in addition to the interdiction of major lines of communications. Gaining control of rural populations will continue to be a priority mission, even though the enemy is presently unable to maintain the desired degree of political and military control. The enemy remains vulnerable to air attack, massed artillery fire, and ground operations. The enemy's possible courses of action are recruiting, training and resupply activities, the initiation of attacks in strength against minor targets and intensified harassment of major lines of communications and military installations. Attempts to intensify the third offensive will probably continue. Acts of terrorism and sabotage will be increased. Attacks on district capitals and local outposts will be increased in number and intensity.

5. (C) Combat Operations:

a. The Bde conducted Operation Quyet Chien from 3 August 1968 to the present. Separate combat operations in support of Operation Quyet Chien numbered 16; missions to be accomplished by these operations were:

- (1) Destroying VC main and local force offensive capability.
- (2) Destroying enemy training and replacement activities.
- (3) Denying the enemy refuge in previously safe areas.
- (4) Denying the enemy access to and from major population centers.

b. Significant major operations conducted in support of Operation Quyet Chien:

(1) Vi Thanh Campaign, 30 July-8 August 1968. This operation was conducted in Chuong Thien and Kien Hoa Provinces in accordance with OPORD 62-68. Forces participating in the operation were: HHC, 2nd Bde, 4th Bn 47th Inf, 3rd Bn 60th Inf, 5th Bn Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) and 3rd Bn 34th Arty. An assault helicopter company (AHC) and two troops of air cavalry supported the ground forces.

(a) On the initial day of the operation both the VNMC and 3rd Bn 60th Inf made heavy contact. At approximately 1600H, while moving to their night locations, the two battalions engaged a large VC force. The contact continued until nightfall. The action resulted in 45 VC KIA and a large number of weapons were captured. There were two VNMC WHA and no US casualties.

(b) For the next two days all three maneuver elements conducted search operations within their assigned areas. These operations were marked by numerous small contacts. On 3 August the 4th Bn 47th Inf conducted multiple airmobile insertions, supported by Co C, 7th Bn 1st Cav. These airmobile operations netted 25 VC KIA with only two US WHA.

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(c) On 4, 5 and 6 August the 3rd Bn 60th Inf and 5th Bn VNMC conducted both beach assaults and airmobile operations while 4th Bn 47th Inf acted as FSPB security and brigade ready reaction force (RRF). The two maneuver elements made frequent contacts, resulting in 53 VC KIA.

(d) On 7 August the VNMC Bn returned to Can Tho. However the 4th Bn 47th Inf and 3rd Bn 60th Inf continued operations through 8 August.

(e) The Vi Thanh Campaign was significant from several standpoints:

1. It was a combined forces operation with the 5th Bn VNMC under OPCON of the 2nd Bde.

2. The operation was the first penetration of US Forces into the U Minh Forest region.

3. The entire 2nd Bde, including logistics support, was land based, with lines of communication extending 50 miles to the MRB located near Can Tho.

4. Enemy losses as compared to friendly losses:

a. Friendly Losses: 3 US/VNMC KHA, 6 US/VNMC WHA.

b. Enemy Losses: 249 VC KIA; 18 PW; 278 small arms, 24 automatic weapons, one 120mm mortar, one 75mm pack howitzer, one 106mm recoilless rifle, 832 hand grenades, 119 mines and one 500 lb bomb were captured.

(2) Operations conducted under OPORD 71-68. This operation in Kien Hoa Province was conducted to support the establishment of a semipermanent battalion land base in the province. The maneuver elements were the 3rd Bn 47th Inf and 4th Bn 47th Inf; they were supported by the 3rd Bn 34th Arty. The maneuver elements conducted RIF operations southeast of the province capital of Ben Tre and north of the Ben Tre River. Daylight operation and night ambushes and patrols provided the security required for initial base camp construction. Airmobile insertions, beach assaults and air cavalry reconnaissance were conducted for five days. Enemy losses were: 64 VC KIA, 30 detainees, 130 bunkers destroyed and numerous small caches of ammunition, uniforms and field equipment captured or destroyed.

c. The implementation of OPLAN 4-68 (Operation Homestead) on 15 September 1968 added new scope to operations conducted by the 2nd Bde. To keep constant pressure on the VC in Kien Hoa Province, the 3rd Bn 47th Inf has been placed in a semipermanent land base in Kien Hoa with a pacification mission. The VC no longer has a US stand down period which he can use to reorganize his forces and rest his troops. He can no longer use a lull in action to conduct his political activities, but must remain on constant alert, keeping his unit moving and/or dispersed at all times. The 3rd Bn 47th Inf conducts company sized operations daily in their assigned area; each night the area is patrolled and ambushes are placed at critical points.

## d. Summary of enemy losses for the period.

KIA	PW	CD	DET	IND	WPN	CREW	WPN	DOCU	BUNK	AMMO	STRU	RICE	BOOBY TRAPS
658	100	113	314	148	15	561	3/4lb	1266	611HE	258	884TN	181	27665SA

## e. Combat Support Activities:

(1) Artillery. During the reporting period, the 3rd Bn 34th Arty continued its direct support role in MRF operations, employing its firing batteries from floating barges. On several occasions one firing battery was deployed from Dong Tam Base. For the last 45 days of the period, Battery C has been positioned at FSPB Claw (vic XS620278) in direct support of the 3rd Bn 47th Inf while conducting Operation Homestead. Throughout the period, the Brigade's 4.2 inch mortars (also mounted on barges) were attached to the 3rd Bn 34th Arty. The 4.2 inch mortar barges travel with the 3rd Bn 34th Arty, and their fires are coordinated by the battalion fire direction control center in order to ensure the best distribution of fire support for all elements of the brigade. The mortars were employed on counter mortar missions as well as defensive fires and blocking fires for the infantry battalions. Employment of the mortars in this manner allows the artillery battalion greater flexibility in responding to fire missions. Co-locating the mortars with the artillery presented minimum quadrant elevation problems for the firing batteries.

(2) Army Aviation. Throughout the period, Army aviation assets were used to complement the mobility and firepower of the MRF. Aviation support included air cavalry, AHC, helicopter fire teams, command and control helicopters, and utility and cargo helicopters for resupply. Tactical plans were occasionally modified when air assets were unavailable or diverted to other missions. Assault helicopters played a major role in positioning ground forces to block and engage the enemy; AHCs made possible the rapid employment of reaction forces. Air cavalry troops were used for reconnaissance and reaction missions.

(3) Tactical air support. Tactical air support to the 2nd Bde was provided by the 7th US Air Force (USAF). Support provided consisted of both preplanned and immediate airstrikes which were employed against enemy forces in the open and against fortified positions; airstrikes were also used to prepare landing beaches. On several occasions Spooky gunships flew missions in support of brigade elements in contact; on occasion flare ships also supported night operations of the brigade.

(4) Naval fire support. The organic weapons of the Navy river divisions provide direct and indirect fire support for all water movements. These fires are coordinated with artillery supporting fires. In movements through specified strike zone (SSZ) areas, Navy elements recon by fire all known and suspected ambush sites. Naval fires are included in defensive fires for the MRF; when the MRF is anchored, Navy assault support patrol boats (ASPB) fire reconnaissance and harassing and interdiction fires into hostile river banks. Naval gunfire is used in conjunction with airstrikes and artillery fires in beach preparation missions. On 13 September 1968 the destroyer USS Dupont supported 2nd Bde operation in the Binh Dai Secret Zone. This was the first time the MRF employed gunfire from a ship located at sea.

f. Tactics and Techniques. The 2nd Bde employed five significant new techniques during this reporting period:

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(1) Reentry: This tactic was devised to counter the VC practice of moving into an area just evacuated by Free World Military Forces. An operation is conducted in a known base or refuge area. After extensive search for caches, bunker destruction, and the elimination of any VC within the area, the friendly unit leaves. When the delay period, usually 24 hours, expires, the unit, or another friendly unit, executes a rapid reentry into the area and conducts offensive operations against VC who have infiltrated the area. This type operation reduces the advantage the VC gain from their intelligence network which attempts to guide them to safe areas.

(2) Multiple Watermobile Insertions: This tactic is a variation of Eagle Float operations. It is conducted over a larger area with the beachings more widely spaced and the inland penetrations deeper. The landing force searches and clears the banks, then backloads to continue operations. Detailed planning is required to ensure that the navigational restrictions of low tide do not prevent deep penetrations on inland waterways.

(3) Cart Wheel: The cart wheel tactic is based on recent intelligence. A base or hub is established in an FSPB near the center of the target area. An airmobile force reacts to the intelligence by making insertions on the perimeter, or rim of the wheel. This force maneuvers inward toward the hub. The base element force reacts when the outer force makes a contact, maneuvering toward the rim.

(4) Selected area screening: Selected screening utilizes the principles of cordon and search. The target area is small and has been under intensive surveillance for an extended period of time. When the intelligence input indicates a lucrative target, the area is sealed off and all people within the cordon are detained. A large group of National Police (100 is the optimum number) conducts the search and screen the population to identify all individuals not loyal to the GVN. Ideally, the operation should last a week to allow the National Police adequate time to conduct intensive, very detailed screening and searching activities.

(5) Eagle Cushion: This tactical operation employs a joint air cavalry-air cushion vehicle (ACV) task force. It is designed for use in areas where heavy brush and marshy ground prohibit the insertion of troops by helicopter and where foot troops cannot rapidly pursue an enemy force because of the slow movement caused by marshy terrain. The eagle cushion tactic is also an ideal economy of force operation; less mobile forces can be inserted to block the fleeing enemy or reinforce against a large enemy force. The tactic makes maximum use of the combined shock effect of the air cavalry and the speedy air cushion vehicle. Very lightly loaded and equipped troops are mounted on the ACVs; additional ammunition and communications equipment may be carried on the vehicles themselves. Once a target area that is not suitable for airmobile or riverine insertion is selected, the eagle cushion task force is assigned the mission of armed reconnaissance of the area. The ACVs move through the area, normally adjacent to a stream, river, or canal, making frequent incursions into suspicious locations. The investigation of suspicious areas must be persistent, with frequent reinvestigations of the same area. The air cavalry is operating concurrently, with the missions of observing hostile movement and sealing off likely avenues of escape; the cavalry mission also results

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in a broad area reconnaissance. After an enemy element is flushed, one or more ACVs may establish a blocking position. The ACVs rapidly close with the enemy; once very close contact is gained, troops dismount the ACVs and close with the enemy force using the vehicles' organic weapons for supporting fire. The cavalry engages the enemy, normally on a flank; the cavalry also attacks stragglers and small bands of enemy who have managed to escape the infantry/ACV assault. The air cover provided by the cavalry serves to alleviate the threat of enemy ambush or flanking attack against the friendly troops. Close coordination by FM radio between the air and ground commanders is essential. Once the enemy is sighted a hasty fire coordination line must be established. Ground troops must remain oriented on the ACVs to prevent them from being erroneously attacked by the air elements. If the enemy force proves too strong for the task force, it reverts to a fixing force mission and delays the enemy until reinforcements can arrive.

6. (C) Training:

a. Individual and unit training was intensified in areas requiring improvement as determined from an analysis of shortcomings detected during combat operations; all combat operations are critiqued. Training was conducted by the battalions afloat during period of transit and stand downs. Formal classroom instruction and weapons zeroing and firing were emphasized by the battalions during their rotation period in Dong Tam.

b. The brigade continued to place command emphasis on care and maintenance of individual and crew served weapons. Battalion weapons training included zeroing of individual weapons and zeroing, boresighting and familiarization firing of all organic weapons.

c. Other training conducted by the battalions included classes on:

- (1) Communications.
- (2) River/stream crossing techniques.
- (3) Fire and maneuver.
- (4) Preparation of night resupply kits.
- (5) Safety.
- (6) Land navigation.
- (7) Airmobile operations.
- (8) Medical evacuation.
- (9) Perimeter defense.
- (10) Navy customs and courtesy.



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By JW NARA Date 6-1-97

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
HEADQUARTERS, 3D BRIGADE, 9TH INFANTRY DIVISION  
APO San Francisco 96373

AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1) (U)Commanding General  
9th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDE-MH  
APO San Francisco 96370

## Section I: Significant Organizational/Unit Activities

## 1. (C) Introduction:

a. During the reporting period the 3d Brigade concluded Operation TRUONG CONG DINH and participated in two other major operations, QUYET CHIEN and TOAN THANG (PHASE II).

(1) Operation TRUONG CONG DINH was conducted during the period 23 June - 5 August 1968. The mission of 3d Brigade was to conduct offensive operations in Dinh Tuong Province, in close coordination with the 7th Infantry Division (ARVN); to locate and destroy VC main and local force battalions and their base areas; to improve security on Hwy 4 and to provide security for Engineer elements working along Hwy 4. The area assigned to the 3d Brigade during this operation was broken into two AO's, AO Bubble (south of Hwy 4) and AO Badlands (north of Hwy 4). During the conduct of this operation, the 3d Brigade continued to support the pacification program, to conduct civil affairs and to assist IV ARVN Corps to upgrade RF/PF forces to a high level of effectiveness.

(2) On 6 August 1968, Operation QUYET CHIEN was initiated. QUYET CHIEN continues at this time, however, during the period 20 August to 11 September, it was superceded by Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II). Operation QUYET CHIEN is aimed at impairing, neutralizing and destroying VC/NVA capability in Dinh Tuong and Go Cong Provinces by maintaining constant pressure on main force VC units, striking into base areas and interdicting infiltration routes. In close cooperation with 7th Infantry Division (ARVN), the 3d Brigade continues to assist and to upgrade RF/PF forces; to upgrade local security and to actively support and participate in District Intelligence Operations

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AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons-Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1)(U)

Coordination Centers which aided local authorities in attacking VC infrastructure. In addition, the 3d Brigade aggressively support pacification activities and revolutionary development in its assigned TAOI's.

(3) Between 20 August and 11 September 1968, Operation QUYET CHIEN was interrupted for priority Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II). It was the mission of 3d Brigade to conduct combined offensive operations in Long An Province; to seek out and destroy VC/NVA units who were preparing for a third offensive against Saigon. The fact that a third VC/NVA offensive did not occur is a measure of 3d Brigade's successful completion of its assigned mission.

b. During the reporting period, the 3d Brigade was involved in 92 days of combat operations. Training has been conducted whenever combat requirements have allowed time. The 3d Brigade has established a highly flexible program of instruction for remedial or refresher training which its units have been conducting during periods of "stand down". This program has definitely aided 3d Brigade in maintaining its high state of combat effectiveness.

## 2. (C) Organization:

a. As of the end of the reporting period, the 3d Brigade has three attached maneuver battalions, 4-39 Inf, 5-60 Inf (prior to 21 October, 1-16 Inf), and 6-31 Inf. During the reporting period, 3d Brigade also had under its operational control 3-39 Inf, TF Starlight and a number of smaller specialized units such as an Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) element. D/3-5 Air Cavalry Troop has supported 3d Brigade in approximately 40% of its engagements for the current reporting period. Direct artillery support has been provided by 1-11 Artillery Battalion. Normal service units have also supported the 3d Brigade. A breakdown of organizational structure is included in Inclosure 1 to Section I.

b. Changes in the unit disposition of the 3d Brigade during the reporting period has resulted in the following major organizational changes:

(1) 1st Battalion, 16th Infantry (now 5th Battalion, 60th Infantry): On 12 September 1968, 1-16 Inf became opcon to the 3d Brigade. On 16 September, 1-16 Inf conducted its first combat mission under 3d Brigade. On 23 September, the 1-16 Inf Bn CP was established at FS/PD Moore vic XS 267506. The Bn CP was moved forward to My Phuoc Tay vic XS 203600, where highly successful operations were carried out against a battalion size VC force. On 16 October, the Bn CP was moved forward again to FS/PE Bull vic WS 982478. The Bn CP returned to FS/PD Moore on 19 October, moving again the following day to Dong Tam. On 21 October, 1-16 Inf was redesignated 5-60 Inf. The Bn CP returned to FS/PD Moore on 23 October. As of the end of this reporting period 5-60 Inf remains opcon to 3d Brigade.

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AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1) (U)

(2) The 3d Battalion, 39th Infantry, with few exceptions, was opcon to 3d Brigade from the beginning of the reporting period until the 11th of September 1968, when it became opcon to the 1st Brigade. It participated in Operations TRUCNG CONG DINH and TOAN THANG (PHASE II) as well as part of Operation QUYET CHIEN. At the beginning of this reporting period, 3-39 Inf was opcon to 3d Brigade for Operation TRUONG CONG DINH, operating from Dong Tam into central and western Dinh Tuong Provinces. On 5 August 1968, 3-39 Inf began Operation QUYET CHIEN. The 3-39 Inf CP moved to Nhon Trach vic YS 000585, on 8 August 1968, after which the battalion began conducting operations in Long An Province. The battalion returned to Dong Tam on 11 August, where it became opcon to Division Artillery on 12 August for a one-day period, returning to 3d Brigade on 13 August. The battalion returned to Long An Province, establishing a forward CP at Can Giuoc vic XS 833725 on 14 August 1968. On 20 August 1968, Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) was initiated. Operations continued in Long An Province in preparation for a third VC/NVA offensive against Saigon. Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) was concluded on 11 September 1968, and at that time, 3d Battalion, 39th Infantry became opcon to 1st Brigade.

(3) 4th Battalion, 39th Infantry (MRF) was opcon to the 1st Brigade at the beginning of the reporting period. On 9 August, 4-39 Inf returned to the 3d Brigade which was engaged in Operations QUYET CHIEN. Utilizing Nha Be, vic XS 915825, as its base, the 4-39 Inf conducted operations throughout Long An Province. Operations continued on 20 August when Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) was initiated. Upon completion of Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) on 11 September, 4-39 Inf became opcon to the 199th Infantry Brigade. On 20 October, 4-39 Inf again became opcon to the 3d Brigade, establishing headquarters at FS/PB Moore.

(4) The 6th Battalion, 31st Infantry became opcon to the 3d Brigade on 12 September when Operation QUYET CHIEN was re-initiated following completion of Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II). Operations were conducted from Dong Tam. On 15 September, 6-31 Inf had a battalion CP and two companies opcon to 2d Brigade. On 23 September, Bn CP was relocated to Cai Nua vic XS 112488, where it remained until 28 September when it moved to Cai Be vic XS 136424. 6-31 Inf proceeded to My Phuoc Tay, vic XS 196595, on 29 September, where highly successful operations were initiated against a battalion size VC force on 4 October. On 8 October, it moved to forward positions in the field vic WS 953530 and Cai Be vic XS 130420, where it remains as of 23 October.

c. The resultant impact of organizational change on the 3d Brigade was as follows:

(1) When limited to two maneuver battalions, the requirement to provide static defensive support such as for artillery sites had reduced the ability to react in force which is necessary for successful operations. This was evidenced during operations against a VC battalion, 4 - 6 October, when additional forces had to be made opcon to 3d Brigade to relieve units

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AVDE-ECO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1)(U)

providing static defense for FS/PD Moore (XS 267506) so full Brigade strength could be brought to bear on the enemy.

(2) Operationally, the Brigade functions better with three battalions rather than two for several reasons:

(a) An additional battalion would allow more recuperative time for line troops and cut down the number of casualties suffering from immersion foot and other diseases brought about by excessive exposure to the wet, muddy and hot environment of the Delta.

(b) A third battalion would provide a large enough ready reaction force to exploit heavy contacts rapidly.

(c) A third battalion would allow for more overnight bushmaster operations.

### 3. (C) Personnel and Administration:

a. The strength figures have not changed significantly over the last reporting period.

b. Casualties during the reporting period were as follows:

- (1) KHA - 30
- (2) WHA - 266
- (3) DOW - 6
- (4) MIA - 1
- (5) Misc - 6

#### c. Discipline, Law, Order:

- (1) Article 15's imposed - 197
- (2) Summary Courts-Martial - 4
- (3) Special Courts-Martial - 13
- (4) General Courts-Martial - 8 (3 tried, 5 pending)

#### d. Maintenance of Morale:

- (1) R & R (3-39 Inf, 4-39 Inf, 5-60 Inf, 6-31 Inf, and HHC, 3d Bde)

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Out of Country	677	662
In Country	188	188

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Authority ND8254  
By JW NARA Date 6-198

AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968

(2) VC tactics during this period have been as follows:

(a) During the day, to stay dispersed in small groups along canals and in the nipa patches. At night the units come together in company size elements and move to predesignated locations.

(b) When in contact units generally break up into small groups and exfiltrate the area of contact by crawling through rice paddies and hiding under the grass along the dikes. Occasionally they try to exit by sampan. Enemy movement is almost exclusively by sampan at night along canals. In fact enemy battalions are probably 100% sampan mobile. Time of movement is usually between 2000 and 0200 hours. Movement by foot is usually single file 3 to 5 meters between men. Companies move on parallel axis's with one to three kilometers separating companies.

(3) Employment of weapons. He relies mainly on B-40 and 41 rockets and automatic weapons in meeting engagements and seldom uses mortar or recoilless rifles when in contact with U.S. forces. About the only time he uses mortars is at night when U.S. forces have encircled his positions and are in a relatively static position against fixed installations. This indicates that he is either not proficient in the rapid enforcement of mortars for fire support, lack of ammunition or lack of suitable ground to employ their weapons.

(4) Increased emphasis has been placed on targeting units and on attempting to establish VC unit patterns of movement. In this regard close coordination is maintained between the 3d Brigade S2 and the 9th Division G2.

c. During the reporting period moderate rainfall predominated with seasonal changes beginning. Throughout this period trafficability on all primary and secondary roads was fair to good. Although the water level in the rice paddies offered some disadvantages to ground troops it did not effect the movement of tracked vehicles to any great degree. Inundation is common in almost all operational areas in the brigade TA01 in Dinh Tuong Province.

c. Operational Summary:

(1) At the beginning of the reporting period 3d Brigade CP was located at Dong Tam and Operation Truong Cong Dinh was being conducted in Dinh Tuong Province. At that time, 3d Brigade had two maneuver battalions, the 3-39th Infantry and the 4-39th Infantry. Support was provided by D/3-5 Air Cavalry Troop and an Air Cushion Vehicle (ACV) element. Operations were conducted from 1-5 August 1968. During 1-3 August 1968, operations were conducted in AO Mandarin in the southeastern portion of Base Area 470. D/3-5 Cav conducted reconnaissance and People Sniffer operations to develop targets in the AO followed by airmobile assaults with 3-39 Inf. In the first two days of operations, contacts were light, resulting in 2 VC KIA and 2 VC PW. In the last day of operations, airmobile reconnaissance in force operations resulted in 23 VC KIA. During the period 4-5 August, Kinh Ba Beo Canal (XS 3157-XS 4162) was surveyed by an engineer work party supported by an ACV element. Contact occurred when the ACV element was ambushed resulting in two U.S. WIA. On 5 August Operation Truong Cong Dinh was completed. Some operational

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AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968

statistics are as follows:

## Enemy Personnel Losses:

VC KIA - 126

POW - 39

## Enemy Equipment Losses:

Small Arms:	10
Crew-served Weapons:	3
Mines/Bobby Traps:	16
Rice:	8,790 lbs
HE Rounds:	3
Small Arms Rounds:	2,031
Medical Supplies:	6 lbs
Documents:	16 lbs
Structures:	133
Foxholes:	79
Funji Pits:	7
Bunkers:	1,668
Sampans:	136
Protective Masks:	1

(2) On 6 August 1968, Operation QUYET CHIEN was initiated and continues at this time. The 3d Brigade Mission is to impair, neutralize and destroy VC/NVA capability in Dinh Tuong and Go Cong Provinces. The 3d Brigade CP was at Bong Tam.

(a) 6-8 August 1968: The 3d Brigade CP remained at Dong Tam. B and C/3-39 Inf and a rifle platoon of D/3-5 Cav conducted eagle flights and recon in force operations into eastern AO Bubble in an area between Dong Tam and My Tho and both north and south of the Song Tien Giang river. Results were two VC KIA and one AK-47 captured.

(b) 8-11 August 1968: The 3d Brigade CP moved to Nhon Trach vic LS 003857. Operations were conducted west of Nhon Trach in AO Shark (CM) (XS 9786). Both maneuver battalions supported by D/3-5 Cav were committed throughout this period in airmobile and waterborne operations. During the first two days of the operation, eight VC were killed. Further action west of AO Shark resulted in one VC KIA and eight detainees. LRRP activity vic XS 975865 resulted in three VC PW.

(c) 11-13 August 1968: On 11 August, 3d Brigade CP moved back to Dong Tam. Units of 4-39 Inf conduct a series of very successful airmobile and waterborne RIF operations in AO Strike (CM) (XS 8665). C/4-39 Inf killed 23 NVA soldiers in six platoon size actions, capturing five PW's three AK-50's and five AK-47's. D/3-5 Cav killed five NVA and captured one NVA in operations in the same AO.

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AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968

(d) 13-17 August 1968: On 13 August, the 3d Brigade CP was moved to Nha Be vic XS 936799. Airmobile and waterborne assaults and RIF operations were conducted east of Can Giuoc (XS 834725) by 4-39 Inf supported by D/3-5 Cav. Operations for 13 August resulted in a total of fourteen VC KIA, two detainees apprehended and the following enemy equipment captured: four AK-47 rifles, four SKS rifles, two Chicom carbines, two U.S. carbines, one RPG launcher, a mortar sight and a quantity of small arms ammo. During the latter half of the period, 3-39 Inf conducted searches in the same vicinity while 4-39 Inf conducted blocking actions, resulting in eight VC KIA and the destruction of seven Chicom grenade traps.

(e) 17-19 August: On 17 August, the 3d Brigade CP returned to Dong Tam. During this period, footmobile and waterborne RIF operations were conducted in AO LEO (CM) (XS 6851). Contact was light during the period. On 18 August at 1850 hours a CH-47 conducting a resupply sortie was hit by small arms fire slightly wounding the pilot and aborting the mission.

(f) 19-20 August: On 19 August, the 3d Brigade CP was relocated to Dong Son vic (XS 725495). During this period both maneuver battalions engaged in RIF operations in AO LEO (CM) (XS 6851). These operations resulted in four VC KIA and the discovery of 144 bunkers which were subsequently destroyed.

(g) 20 August to 11 September: Operation QUYET CHIEN was suspended for priority operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II). Details of this operation are included in para 5.d. of this report.

(h) 11 September to 23 September: On 11 September the 3d CP returned to Dong Tam from Can Giuoc (XS 825718). Operation QUYET CHIEN was renewed on 12 September with 1-16 Inf and 6-31 Inf as the 3d Brigade maneuver battalions, the 3-39 Inf on having been transferred to the 199th Infantry Brigade the day previously. Contact was light during the period 11-16 September. At 0130 hours on 15 September, an unknown size VC forces propelled four 30 pound satchel charges at FSPD Moore vic XS 237506. Three landed inside the perimeter with two detonating. One detonated outside the perimeter. Two U.S. WIA resulted. Heavy fire was directed against the suspected VC positions with unknown results. Later that day C/1-16 Inf sustained one U.S. WIA from sniper fire. On 17 September both battalions conducted airmobile and footmobile RIF operations and riverine operations in AO Kudzu (CM) (XS 3542) against suspected VC mortar positions. Numerous contacts were made resulting in 10 VC KIA and the capture of three rifles. On the 19th, operations were conducted in two areas, one north of My Tho (CM) (XS 5255) and one West of Dong Tam. A/3-17 Cav killed eight VC and captured one AK-47 rifle. On 20 September in AO Sleeper (CM) (XS 5058), A/1-16 Inf killed one VC and found three KIA. During the operation, a large number of booby traps were found resulting in seven U.S. WIA. Operations in AO Cowboys on 21 September with 6-31 Inf supported by D/3-5 Cav, resulted in three VC KIA (two by D/3-5 Cav and one by a LRRP patrol. One OH-6A belonging

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AVDE-BCO

31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Reports-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968

to D/3-5 Cav was forced down into a canal for mechanical reasons. The crew escaped without injuries and the OH-6A was extracted the next day. On 22 September, B/1-16 Inf reacting to an ambush on Hwy 4, suffered three U.S. WIA from a VC RPG round. Later that day operations were conducted in AO Cowboys and AO Forty-Niners with both battalions resulting in three VC KIA.

(i) 23-29 September: On 23 September the 3d Brigade CP was moved to FS/PB Moore vic XS 267506. On 23 September one Hoi Chanh was picked up by C/6-31 Inf vic XS 193430. A/1-16 Inf killed two VC vic XS 256529 on 24 September, while conducting a footmobile RIF operation. A second VC was killed vic XS 358384 by D/3-5 Cav. On 25 September in the same vicinity as the previous day's contact, A/1-16 killed three more VC. On 26 September operations were conducted with seven companies in AO's Forty-Niners and Titan. A heavy contact vic XS 11060 was exploited by both battalions who encircled a VC force killing eight. A sweep of the area the next day revealed six more VC KIA during the contact on 26 September. Intelligence reports, however, state that VC casualties totaled at least 40 VC KIA and 30 VC WIA.

(j) 29 September-9 October: On 29 September, the 3d Brigade CP was relocated to My Phuoc Tay vic XS 203600. Operations were centered in AO Titan vic (CM) (XS 160540) where D/3-5 Cav killed seven VC and captured one Hoi Chanh in a number of contacts. During the next four days there were few contacts and no body count. On 3 October, A/6-31 Inf found five sampans loaded with 30 cases of grenades and a large number of mines vic XS 090613, during the conduct of eagle flight operations west of My Phuoc Tay. In the same series of eagle flights C/6-31 Inf captured one PW and two detainees and D/3-5 Cav killed two VC. In LRRP action to the east of My Phuoc Tay, two main force VC soldiers were captured vic XS 233558. Both were fully equipped and one had a weapon. Heavy contact was made 4-6 October with the 261 B Main Force VC Battalion. Contact was initiated when B/1-16 Inf inserted into a hot LZ vic WS 993567. Heavy anti-aircraft fire downed two UH-1D aircraft and damaged five others the 240th Assault Helicopter Company. Another helicopter from the company was shot down vic XS 0522, a short time later. The Commander, 3d Brigade inserted all his forces into the vicinity of the contact with 20 UH-1D's provided by CG, 7th Inf Div (ARVN). Contact continued into the night. On the 5th, the area was searched by 1-16 Inf, 6-31 Inf, and D/3-5 Cav with a resulting body count of 120 VC KIA, eight Hoi Chanh, and one PW. Some of the captured material included two complete 82mm mortars, 110 mortar rounds, 89 AK-47's, two heavy antiaircraft machine guns and 82,000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition. The entire list of items captured is too extensive for this report, however, a 3d Brigade after-action report is being prepared which will detail the action and the results of the operation. Intelligence estimates of the operation state that the 261 B VC Battalion is now combat ineffective. A reliable intelligence source has stated that only 48 members of this VC battalion were alive at the end of this action. The search was completed on 6 October, following which operations were initiated in AO Halo (CM) (XS 1362) with two companies of 1-16 Inf and D/3-5 Cav. Two VC KIA resulted; one by D/3-5 Cav and the second by a LRRP. The LRRP also captured one PW. During the operation D/1-16 Inf found a rice cache consisting

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31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1)(U)

of 50 100lb bags and 17 200lb bags. This rice was extracted and given to the My Phuc Tay camp commander. On 8 October during eagle flight operations east of My Phuoc Tay (vic XS 203600), D/3-5 Cav, which was supporting 6-31 Inf, made contact eight times, killing 10 VC, capturing two VC, destroying 5 sampans and capturing one AK-47 and pack. Also found was an ammunition cache consisting of 58 cases of grenades and 12-30lb cases of TNT and 37 75mm recoilless rifle rounds.

(n) 10-11 October: On 10 October, the 3d Brigade CP returned to Don Tam. During the following two days maintenance and training were conducted.

(1) 12-13 October: On 12 October, the 3d Brigade CP was relocated to FS/PB Moore vic XS 207506. Eagle flight operations northwest of Don Tam were conducted on 12 October with two companies of 1-16 Inf and three companies from 6-31 Inf supported by D/3-5 Cav. A heavy contact resulted in vic XS 575409 with four VC KIA. LRRP activity vic XS 575409 resulted in four VC KIA. LRRP activity vic XS 575409 resulted in four more VC KIA. B/6-31 Inf operating in the field vic XS 1-6534 engaged and killed three VC and captured two weapons, bringing the day's body count to 12 VC KIA. On 13 October contact was limited to 1-16 Inf which conducted search operations through a number of objectives west of Don Tam. A/1-16 Inf conducting operations to the east of A/1-16 Inf killed one VC, captured two VC and one AK-47 at vic XS 384533. Later, a Hoi Chanh was also captured by Co C. During the extraction of D/1-16 Inf, a CH-47 was shot down by small arms fire which wounded two of the crew. The CH-47 landed safely and extracted under its own power the next day.

(m) 14-18 October: On 14 October the 3d Brigade CP was relocated to Giao Due vic WS 9 88398. Two VC PW's were captured during light contact on 14 October. Heavy contact was made on 15 October when 1-16 Inf, supported by D/3-5 Cav conducted eagle flight operations in western Dinh Tuong Province. Seven VC KIA and one VC PW resulted from four actions around (CM) WS 988488. D/3-5 Cav killed an additional four VC, bringing the day's totals to 12 VC KIA and 4 VC PW. During airmobile assault operations in AO Aries (CM) WS 9453 16 October, A/3-17 Cav in support of 6-31 Inf killed 21 VC in seven contacts. Units of 6-31 Inf killed one VC and captured one VC PW. During operations, 17 October, in AC Taurus (CM) WS 9846 and AO Libra (CM) WS 9345. D/3-5 Cav supporting three companies of 1-16 Inf, killed four VC and captured three weapons. On 18 October, 1-16 Inf supported by D/3-5 Cav conducted airmobile XIF operations in western Dinh Tuong Province. Two VC were killed early in the operation vic XS 059453. Heavy contact occurred in the afternoon vic XS 04085 when a UH-1D from D/3-5 Cav was shot down with an RPG round resulting in one KIA and two WIA. Ground fire became so intense that an air rifle platoon from D/3-5 Cav which had just inserted, had to be extracted. Commander, 3d Brigade inserted 6-31 Inf to exploit the contact and called in artillery and airstrikes. On 19 October a search of the area of contact was made resulting in a total body count of 48 VC KIA, in addition to which eight PW's and eight Civil Defendants were captured. Some of the captured equipment included 13 AK-47's, one 75mm recoilless rifle with sight

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31 October 1968

SUBJECT: Operational Report-Lessons Learned Period Ending 31 October 1968  
(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1)(U)

and bipod, seven rounds of 75mm ammunition, two .45 caliber pistols, 1078 rubber gas masks with cannisters and spare parts and 200 plastic bag type gas masks.

(n) 19-25 October: On 19 October, the 3d Brigade CP was relocated to FS/PB Moore vic XS 267506. Maintenance, training, troop hygiene and administrative activities were carried out during the next few days. On 20 October, 4-39 Inf became opcon to 3d Brigade for an indefinite period. On 21 October 1-16 Inf was designated 5-60 Inf Bn in ceremonies at Dong Tam. The same day, LRRP activity vic XS 292401 resulted in four VC PW's. Eagle flight and airmobile FIF operations were conducted on 22 October by 4-39 Inf supported by D/3-5 Cav in central Dinh Tuong Province. Contact was made by ground troops, but the only body count of the day went to D/3-5 Cav which killed five VC in three separate engagements. On 23 October, both bushmaster and airmobile RIF operations were conducted. RIF operations were conducted. D/3-5 Cav supported operations and again made the only body count; killing two in widely separated actions. On 24 October contact was light, resulting in one PW captured. Heavy contact was made on 25 October by 5-60 Inf during local patrols around FS/PB Moore vic XS 267506. A/5-60 Inf received heavy automatic weapons while patrolling vic XS 314489. Co A managed to trap three VC in a hut where they were engaged and killed.

(o) 26 October: On 26 October, the 3d Brigade CP returned to Dong Tam from Giao Duc vic WS 978398. The 3d Brigade is continuing Operation QUYET CHIEN at this time.

d. Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) was initiated 0700 hours, on 20 August 1968 as a priority mission to provide Saigon with a defense against a possible third VC offensive. On 20 August the 3d Brigade CP was moved to Can Giuoc vic XS 825718 from Dong Son vic XS 725495 where it remained until the completion of Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II).

(l) 20 August-10 September: With the 3d Brigade CP relocated to Can Giuoc vic XS 825718, operations began in Long An Province. Extensive riverine operations were conducted by both 3-39 Inf and 4-39 Inf battalions with negative results. On 21 October airmobile RIF operations were conducted in eastern Can Giuoc, resulting in one VC KIA. Contact was heavier on 22 August when 3-39 Inf conducted RIF operations in the same region as the day previous. A body count of four VC KIA resulted during the morning's operations. At 1330 hours vic XS 874657, C/4-39 Inf joined 3-39 Inf in the vicinity of the contact on 23 August. A sweep of the area of contact revealed 12 VC KIA. On 25 August extensive mobile riverine RIF operations were conducted in AO Scarlet Ribbon and AO South Dixie (CM) (XS 7879). In four separate contacts, 3-39 Inf killed six VC. D/4-39 Inf made contact with an estimated VC platoon vic XS 863646, killing eight. In a separate action E/4-39 Inf discovered 23 RPG-7 rounds. During the night, two ambushes resulted in three VC KIA, for a total of 17 VC KIA. On 27 August, during the conduct of airmobile RIF operations in AO

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31 October 1968

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(RCS/CSFOR-65 R-1)(U)

Scarlet Ribbon, C/4-39 Inf found one dead VC. A D/3-5 Cav air rifle platoon killed four more VC in two separate contacts during the operations. During the period 28 August to 1 October, contact was extremely light, though a large number of units were committed to operations during the period. No body count was made, but a cache of 23 B-40 rockets and one AK-47 were found. On 2 September, both maneuver battalions conducted waterborne and airmobile assaults in AO Scarlet Ribbon. One VC was killed and three PW's captured in a number of separate actions. Operations in AO Scarlet Ribbon continued through 7 September, with light and sporadic contact. A total of five VC KIA and one PW. On 8 September airmobile and footmobile RIF operations northwest of Can Giuoc vic (XS 826718) resulted in one VC KIA and one AK-47 captured. A/3-17 Cav made contact on 10 September vic (XS 842639) and in two separate actions killed three VC. Insertions were made in the vicinity of the contacts but no further body count resulted.

(2) 11-12 September: On 11 September the 3d Brigade CP returned to Dong Tam. Operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) was successfully concluded. Change of unit operational control occurred, with 3-39 Inf becoming opcon to 1st Brigade and 4-39 Inf becoming opcon to 199th Infantry Brigade. Two new battalions were made opcon to 3d Brigade. These were 1-16 Inf (now 5-60 Inf) and 6-31 Inf. The results of operation TOAN THANG (PHASE II) are as follows:

## Enemy Personnel Losses:

VC KIA (BC)	51
VC PW	3

## Enemy Equipment Losses:

Small Arms	15
Mines/booby traps	23
Rice	800
Grenades	15
HE rounds	70
small arms rounds	1271
Medical Supplies	101bs
Documents	81bs
Structures	24
Foxholes	29
Bunkers	465
Sampans	11
Gas Masks	1

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(RCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDF2AA) (U)TO: Commanding General  
9th Infantry Division  
ATTN: AVDE-iH  
APO US FORCES 96370

## Section 1 Significant Organization/Unit Activities

## 1. (C) Introduction:

a. The mission of the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry during the reporting period was to conduct counterinsurgency operations by means of route security, reconnaissance in force, cordon and search, search and clear, and night ambush killer operations. Specific missions included securing Wunder Beach and LZ Hard Core, the access road (SkyKing Blvd) from Wunder Beach to Hai Lang and conducting normal counterinsurgency operations within the area of operations. The Squadron's activity was characterized by work in conjunction with Regional Forces, National Police Field Forces and units from 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) and by a variety of application of new tactactical principles such as armor-air assault linkups, night cordon and search operations and night reconnaissance in force operations.

b. During the reporting period the 3d Squadron, 5th Cavalry was engaged in operation "Jeb Stewart III".

c. While participating in the above mentioned operation, the 3d Squadron 5th Cavalry (-) remained OPCON to 2d Bde, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile). Trp D, 3-5 Cav, provided two OH-23's for reconnaissance and command and control purposes. The remainder of Trp D remained OPCON to the 9th Infantry Division for the entire reporting period. Co C, 2-34 Armor remained OPCON to the 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).

d. The Squadron spent the entire 92 days of the reporting period in active combat operations. Early in October, the Squadron also started preparations for a move south to rejoin the 9th Infantry Division. The move was scheduled to begin on 1 Nov 68, but was postponed on 27 Oct 68 by order of the COMUSMACV-CC, USARV, when the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) was ordered to move south. However, the Squadron did depart from Wunder Beach and took up a new base camp location at Camp Evans (YD541322) on 31 Oct 68.

## 2. (C) Organization:

a. The Squadron's Organization remained as changed for the deployment to ICTZ in Feb 68: Trp D remained OPCON to the 9th Infantry Division, but provided one OH-23 scout section to the Squadron for reconnaissance and for command and control purposes. The Squadron received OPCON of two companies from the 2d Bde with units from platoon to troop size. Also, D/1-9 Cav, from HQ, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), was OPCON to 3-5 Cav for operational purposes from 2 Aug 68 to 5 Oct 68. Co C, 2-34 Armor, still attached to the Squadron, remained OPCON to 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile).

b. Organization Structure, Roster of Key Personnel and Chart of Enemy Losses are attached as inclosures.

- (1) Inclosure 1: Organization Structure
- (2) Inclosure 2: Roster of Key Personnel
- (3) Inclosure 3: Chart of Enemy Losses

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SUBJECT: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 31 Oct 68  
ACCS/CSFOR-65) (UIC-WDF2AA) (U)

8 November 1968

3. (U) Personnel and Administration:

a. As reflected on the last force status report, this unit currently carries a CL rating for personnel. This report also reflects that 90% of the TOE positions are filled by qualified personnel, but lacking in practical experience.

b. Morale in the Squadron is high, as evidenced by consistently superior performance in both combat missions and administrative tasks. Only 7 members of the command have been tried by court-martial, and no personnel were lost by disciplinary action.

4. (C) Intelligence:

a. The enemy continued to conduct small scale actions, harassments with mines, sniper fire and ambushes. The K-8 and the K-10 Sapper Battalions moved through the area presenting a continuing threat within the AO. The VG local forces conducted harassing activities with mines and booby traps and acted as guides for the main force or NVA units. Enemy movement also included rice gathering parties and political indoctrination squads. Between 20-23 Aug 68, the Squadron had one major contact with the NVA K-8 Battalion. The action is described in para 5a of this report.

b. Enemy Losses:

(1) Personnel:

- (a) KHA - 80
- (b) WHA - unknown
- (c) POW - 89
- (d) Detainees - 305

(2) Materiel, Equipment and Facilities Captured:

- (a) Weapons: 91 individual and 8 crew served
- (b) Ammunition: 6,000 rounds of small arms, 24 RPG-2 rounds, 34 82mm and 24 60mm rounds, and 2 106 recoilless rounds.
- (c) Munitions: 45 booby trapped grenades, 17 booby trapped 105mm rounds, 11 mines and 66 lbs explosive (TNT or C-4)
- (d) 73,380 lbs of rice
- (e) Assorted clothing, field gear and documents and medicine.

c. Weather and Terrain: During the month of August and September, the weather had no significant effect on operations with the exception of a major flooding which interdicted operations from 6-11 Sep 68. The majority of the terrain in the operational area of the Squadron was largely favorable to armored cavalry operations. The sands provided a firm footing for tracked vehicles and long range observation was possible in most areas. The rice paddies and canals in the southern portion of the AO restricted movement somewhat, but not to an extent which prohibited successful operations. The roads in the area provided rapid movement although few bridges could support tanks. However, during the month of October a transition from the Southwest Monsoon to the Northeast occurred resulting in an increase of typhoons and tropical storms. Rainfall reached its maximum annual mean in the I CORPS area during October. The rains caused flooding in the entire southern portion of the AO and the road between Wunder Beach and LZ Hard Core became impassable. All rivers and canals were out of their banks; however, the coast and dunes areas were not affected by flooding and operations continued as usual in this portion of the AO.

d. Capabilities and Vulnerabilities of the Enemy:

(1) Capabilities: The existence of enemy battalion and regimental size units in areas near and sometimes within the Squadron's AO gave the enemy the capabilities of attacking Wunder Beach in strength and to seriously interdict the road between Wunder Beach and LZ Hard Core. However, the Squadron's combat power, mobility, command and control equipment and its ability to react rapidly and aggressively to any situation virtually eliminated the enemy's ability to stage or conduct any sizeable operations within the AO. The enemy had the capability to conduct ambushes, mining operations and rocket or mortar attacks.

(2) Vulnerabilities: The enemy was vulnerable to ambush, artillery, air strikes, ground operation and aerial observation.