

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(5) At 070945H vicinity XD020565, a convoy from the 3d Battalion, 3d Regiment was ambushed with unknown number and type of rounds, resulting in five WIA with two ARVN and two US trucks damaged.

(6) At 070950H vicinity XD617278, the 4th VNMC Battalion found 30 KBA.

(7) At 070950H vicinity XD497336, the 4th Battalion, 3d Regiment received a ground attack, resulting in one ARVN WIA, two M16 rifles destroyed, 18 enemy KIA, six AK47 rifles and one B40 destroyed.

(8) At 071000H, the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment, vicinity XD410364, discovered the graves of 23 NVA KIA.

(9) At 071015H vicinity XD353320, the 3d VNMC Battalion found eight enemy KBA and one 12.7mm machine gun.

(10) At 071020H vicinity XD618278, the 4th Battalion, 147th VNMC Brigade found 15 NVA KBA, three AK47 rifles, two B40, 30 NVA uniforms, 400 bags of rice and 400 individual rations.

(11) At 071035H vicinity XD335255, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment found two enemy tanks destroyed by air.

(12) Between 071125H and 1230H, FSB Lo Lo and the 1st Infantry Regiment CP received an unknown number of mixed 82mm, 152mm and 107mm killing three ARVN, wounding 24 and destroyed three bulldozers.

(13) At 071130H vicinity XD326455, the 2d Regiment Reconnaissance Company engaged an unknown size enemy force killing six NVA and capturing one B40, eight 82mm mortars, two tons of rice and four rolls of telephone wire.

(14) At 071300H vicinity XD699218, the 1st Battalion, 147th VNMC Brigade contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in one Marine KIA, six enemy KIA and six AK47 rifles captured.

(15) At 071340H vicinity XD704316, the 3d VNMC Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in two Marines WIA, 12 NVA KIA, eight AK47 rifles, one B40 and 15X12.7mm machine guns captured.

(16) From 071430H to 2100H vicinity XD730276, the 2d VNMC Battalion engaged an estimated two companies. There were 17 Marines killed, 50 WIA, 250 enemy KIA, seven AK47 rifles and four B40 captured.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(17) At 071430H vicinity XD738315, the 3d VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force killing ten enemy and capturing four AK47 rifles and one B40.

(18) Between 071500H and 1800H vicinity XD370374, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment found 112 enemy KBA, 32X82mm mortars, five 12.7mm machine guns, six B40, 18XAK47 rifles and 15 tunnels destroyed by air.

(19) At 071500H, an OH58 from the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) vicinity XD652382, was downed by enemy fire. Two crew members were picked up by ARVN forces and evacuated to FSB Bravo (XD643378). Two PAX were MIA.

(20) At 071530H vicinity XD722318, the 1st VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in six enemy KIA and one AK47 rifle captured.

(21) At 071630H vicinity XD622268, the 4th VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force killing 11 enemy and capturing four AK47 rifles, one B40, 80 rounds of B40 ammunition, 18X82mm rounds and 2,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition. In the same area the unit found 25 enemy KBA.

(22) During recovery operations of the seven US crewmembers stranded in Laos, the Hac Bao Company killed 12 enemy and discovered 90 enemy KBA.

(23) On 7 March there were 655 helicopter gunship sorties flown. There were 11 B52 strikes resulting in 67 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to four. There were 217 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in three water craft, 12 bunkers, 26 vehicles, one cache site and seven gun positions destroyed. There were nine vehicles damaged, seven interdiction points struck, 32 secondary explosions and 15 secondary fires.

8 MARCH

(1) At 080315H at FSA 1, enemy sappers penetrated the perimeter and destroyed four 10,000 gallon fuel bladders resulting in 40,000 gallons of JP4 and 8,600 rounds of 20mm ammunition destroyed.

(2) At 081000H vicinity XD742316, the 3d VNMC Battalion contacted an enemy platoon resulting in six enemy KIA, two AK47 rifles captured and four Marines WIA.

(3) At 081225H - 1640H vicinity XD334446, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment found 52 NVA KIA, three 12.7mm machine guns, 27XAK47 rifles, 17 CKC and 50X140mm rockets.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(4) At 081500H vicinity XD590396, the 5th Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 12 ARVN WIA, 78 enemy KIA (55 by Tac Air), one 75mm recoilless rifle destroyed, 21XAK47 rifles, two B40 launchers, 5,000 rounds 12.7mm, 57X75mm recoilless rifle rounds, 97XB40 rounds, and 62 rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition captured or destroyed.

(5) At 081540H vicinity XD635270, the 7th VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 11 enemy KIA, three AK47 rifles and one RPD captured, and 4,000 rounds of mixed mortar and rocket ammunition destroyed.

(6) At 081600H vicinity XD497337, the 4th Battalion, 3d Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 19 enemy KIA, six AK47 rifles, one B40 and one unknown type machine gun captured. There were negative friendly casualties.

(7) At 081700H vicinity XD493356, the 3d Battalion, 3d Regiment made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in nine enemy KIA and five AK47 rifles captured.

(8) At 082145H, the 2d Battalion, 1st Regiment vicinity XD450357, engaged an enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA, ten WIA and unknown enemy losses.

(9) On 8 March the locations of remaining ARVN forces in Laos were as follows: The 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment in the town of Xe Pon XD323444; the 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment on the north bank of the Xe Pon River XD335432; the 4th Battalion on the south bank of the Xe Pon River XD332423, and the 5th Battalion remained vicinity of LZ Sophia.

(10) On 8 March there were 528 helicopter gunship sorties flown. There were 12 B52 strikes totaling 952 tons of ordnance resulting in 31 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 282 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in two water craft, nine bunkers, two structures, 41 vehicles and five gun positions destroyed. There were 15 vehicles damaged, 183 secondary explosions and 87 secondary fires.

9 MARCH

(1) At 090200H vicinity XD3342, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment commenced crossing the Xe Pon River, and at 0600H the crossing was completed.

(2) At 090815H vicinity YD002565, the 1st Transportation Battalion received an unknown number of B40 rounds, resulting in one ARVN KIA and 21 WIA.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(3) At 091100H, one company of the 8th Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force vicinity XD508402, resulting in five enemy KIA and two AK47 rifles captured.

(4) At 091105H vicinity XD553358, the 1st Battalion, 3d Regiment discovered a base camp destroyed by Arc Light, containing three 12.7mm machine guns, one Soviet truck, 1,000X55 gallon drums of fuel and 200X 60mm mortar rounds.

(5) At 091130H vicinity XD542302, the 1st Battalion, 3d Regiment found 14 enemy KBA, five AK47 rifles, one B40, one 12.7mm machine gun, 1,500 pounds of rice and four 2X6X2 meter bunkers containing canned rations destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

(6) At 091220H and 1300H, the 3d Battalion, 3d Regiment found 37 enemy KBA, 12XAK47 rifles and one 60mm mortar destroyed by B52 strikes in the vicinity of XD486335.

(7) At 091245H vicinity XD425418, the 1st Regiment reported sighting enemy tanks, called artillery and destroyed five tanks.

(8) At 091300H vicinity XD546296, the 1st Battalion found eight enemy KBA, four AK47 rifles, and one hut destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

(9) From 091320H to 091530H vicinity XD3735, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment found a hospital with surgical ward, one tank, one unknown size recoilless rifle and two truck mounted 37mm antiaircraft guns destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

(10) At 091350H vicinity XD632264, the 2d VNMC Battalion received 20X82mm mortar rounds, resulting in six Marines wounded. At 091430H, contact was made with an unknown size enemy force resulting in one Vietnamese Marine killed, four wounded, 14 NVA KIA, seven AK47 rifles, and 25 hand grenades captured.

(11) At 091630H vicinity XD671207, a long range reconnaissance patrol of the 147th VNMC Brigade found an NVA base camp destroyed by Arc Light strikes containing four Chicom telephones, 2,000 meters of telephone wire, 5,000X122mm rounds, 1,500 AK47 rifle rounds, 200 B40 rounds and four AK47 rifles all destroyed except for the AK47 rifles.

(12) On 9 March there were 77 gunship sorties flown and 12 B52 strikes totaling 957 tons of ordnance resulting in 49 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 96 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 36 vehicles and four gun positions destroyed. There were seven interdiction points struck, 105 secondary explosions and ten secondary fires.

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVIL-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

10 MARCH

(1) At 100740H, the 1st VNMC Battalion vicinity XD709309 received a ground attack from an unknown size enemy force, resulting in six Marines killed, 19 wounded, 27 NVA KIA, 119XAK47s, two BARs, two M79s, two light machine guns, 35 field packs, and 25,000 rounds small arms ammunition captured. At 091500H vicinity XD709309, the unit later found two tunnels with 30 NVA KBA.

(2) At 100915H vicinity XD625269, the 1st VNMC Battalion found 30 NVA bodies. The following equipment was found and destroyed: two B40 launchers, 160X82mm mortar launchers, 310X60mm rounds, 100 blocks of dynamite, 250 grenades and seven AK47 rifles.

(3) At 101030H, FSB Sophia received 120 rounds of mixed 82mm mortar and 120mm mortars resulting in six 105mm howitzers damaged and 13 ARVN WIA.

(4) Between 101130H and 1600H vicinity XD709300, the 1st VNMC Battalion engaged a multi-company size enemy force resulting in 72 enemy KIA, one 57mm recoilless rifle, two BARs, two semiautomatic rifles, four B40, two M79s and 19XAK47 rifles captured. Six Marines were KIA and 18 WIA.

(5) At 101215H vicinity XD377348, XD362332, XD356332, XD354335 and XD359350, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment conducted BDA of Arc Light strikes and discovered 79 NVA KBA, 12 Russian trucks, eight tracked vehicles, three towed 122mm guns, two 37mm antiaircraft guns, four 12.7mm machine guns, two 122mm rocket launchers, 400XAK47 rifles, 30X82mm mortars, 18XB40, 100X122mm rockets, eight tons of mixed ammunition, six tons of rice and 60 Ghicom radios. The majority of the equipment was destroyed by air. They also captured five NVA.

(6) At 101230H vicinity XD677456, the 1st Ranger Group CP received an attack by fire consisting of 30X82mm and 105mm rounds resulting in one ARVN KIA and five WIA.

(7) At 101325H vicinity XD378340, the 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment found a 120 bed hospital and six huts destroyed by Arc Light strikes, 80 enemy were KBA and two CKCs captured.

(8) At 101500H vicinity XD375339, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment while conducting a BDA of an Arc Light strike, found 62 NVA KBA, 24 AK47 rifles, four 122mm rocket launchers and 100X122mm rockets destroyed. Later the unit discovered 26 NVA KBA, one 122mm howitzer and captured five POW vicinity XD377346.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(9) At 101830H, the 2d Airborne Battalion, while searching vicinity XD586410, discovered 150 NVA KBA.

(10) At 101835H vicinity XD756487, 1/C/1-11 discovered the graves of seven NVA killed by artillery.

(11) At 102330H, the 9th Airborne Battalion employed a mechanical ambush vicinity XD526401, killing five NVA and capturing one POW, three individual weapons and two crew served weapons.

(12) During the night of 10-11 March, the 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment interdicted Route 914 from positions on the high ground north of the road vicinity XD374339.

(13) On 10 March there were 97 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 888 tons of ordnance resulting in 49 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 285 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 28 vehicles, five cache sites and two gun positions destroyed. There were four interdiction points struck, 58 secondary explosions and 148 secondary fires.

11 MARCH

(1) The 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment moved by air from FSB Liz to LZ Brown commencing at 111402H and completing at 111530H.

(2) Between 110800H and 111025H, vicinity XD353392, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in two ARVN WIA, 12 enemy KIA and nine AK47 rifles captured.

(3) At 110830H vicinity XD5280, the 9th Airborne Battalion found 11 enemy KBA, one B40, three AK47 rifles, and one flamethrower destroyed by Tac Air. One prisoner was captured.

(4) At 110935H vicinity XD490340, the 4th Battalion, 3d Regiment received 40X82mm mortar rounds resulting in nine ARVN WIA.

(5) At 111100H vicinity XD356400, the 2d Regiment Reconnaissance Company contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in two ARVN WIA, one M79 destroyed, eight enemy KIA, six AK47 and two B40 captured.

(6) At 111115H vicinity XD368395, the 3d Battalion, 1st Regiment found 14 graves, two 12.7mm machine guns, two 82mm mortar tubes and nine AK47 rifles.

(7) At 111200H vicinity XD450357, the 2d Battalion, 1st Regiment found 37 enemy KBA, two 12.7mm machine guns, one 82mm mortar, 20 AK47s, four B40s, one ton of rice, and 50 pounds of rations. In the same area

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

battalion received 30X82mm mortar rounds destroying one M79 and two M16s.

(8) At 111500H vicinity XD429357, the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force, resulting in six ARVN WIA, five enemy KIA and two AK47s captured.

(9) At 111530H vicinity XD505407, elements of the 8th Airborne Battalion and 11th Armored Cavalry Squadron made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in three ARVN WIA, 20 enemy KIA, four AK47s, one B40, one light machine gun, 40XB40 rounds, and 50 blocks of dynamite captured.

(10) At 111600H vicinity XD634264, the 2d VNMC Battalion, while searching found three enemy KIA, two AK47 and one B40 captured. In the same area the 2d Battalion destroyed 45X82mm mortar rounds and 241XB40 rounds.

(11) At 111750H vicinity XD457848, the 2d Battalion, 1st Regiment found 29 enemy KBA, one 82mm mortar, one 12.7mm machine gun, three B40s, three B41s, 200X82mm mortar rounds and 30 cases of 12.7mm machine gun ammunition destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

(12) At 111830H vicinity XD335398, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force, resulting in one ARVN WIA, seven enemy KIA and six AK47s captured.

(13) On 11 March there were 689 gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 894 tons of ordnance resulting in 23 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to three. There were 329 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in two water craft, 39 bunkers, 11 structures, 32 vehicles and one gun position destroyed. There were two bunkers, eight structures and 14 vehicles damaged, 23 interdiction points struck, 165 secondary explosions and 57 secondary fires.

12 MARCH

(1) There were 621 aircraft landings in Laos on 12 March. Nine aircraft were hit by hostile fire, of which three were declared non flyable (two UH1H and one AH1G). There were no aircraft destroyed on 12 March and no aircraft related personnel casualties.

(2) At 120500H vicinity XD453358, the 2d Battalion, 1st Regiment received a ground attack by an USEF, resulting in one ARVN KIA, three WIA, 12 enemy KIA, three AK47s, one B40 and 200 blocks of dynamite destroyed.

CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(3) At 120940H vicinity XD622268, the 4th VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in eight enemy KIA, two AK47s, one 82mm mortar, and 150X82mm mortar rounds captured.

(4) At 121000H vicinity XD615301, the 1st Battalion, 258th VNMC Brigade contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in five Marines WIA, six enemy KIA, two AK47s, two B40s and 24XAK47 magazines captured.

(5) At 121015H vicinity XD540443, the 9th Airborne Battalion found a tunnel containing 242X82mm mortar rounds and 5,600 AK47 rounds.

(6) At 121030H vicinity XD436355, the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA and four WIA. Enemy losses were six KIA and one AK47 captured.

(7) At 121045H vicinity XD554426, the 7th Airborne Battalion contacted an enemy force resulting in one ARVN WIA, one enemy KIA, five bags of rice, 50 sets of fatigues, 20 gas masks and some medical supplies captured.

(8) At 121120H vicinity XD505396, elements of the 8th Airborne Battalion and the 11th Armored Cavalry Squadron received 60X82mm mortar and 10X57mm rounds resulting in one ARVN KIA and 21 WIA. Two M16s were destroyed.

(9) At 121220H vicinity XD365326, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment found one truck destroyed by air.

(10) At 121500H vicinity XD536340, the 1st Battalion, 2d Regiment discovered on 37mm antiaircraft gun.

(11) At 121530H, elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Squadron and the 8th Airborne Battalion received 30X82mm mortar rounds and seven 75mm recoilless rifle rounds vicinity XD505369 resulting in eight ARVN WIA.

(12) The 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment commenced a combat assault into LZ Moon (XD495336) at 121635H from LZ Liz. The lift was completed at 121645H. The lift of the 4th Battalion to LZ Brown (XD505357) was completed at 121745H. Eight 105mm howitzers were abandoned on FSB Sophia and destroyed by 8,000 pounds of bombs dropped on the LZ by Tac Air.

(13) At 121700H vicinity XD556425, the 7th Airborne Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in three enemy KIA, one light machine gun, 1,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, 40XB40 rounds, 300X82mm rounds and four tons of unpolished rice destroyed.

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operation After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(14) At 122315H, the 7th Airborne Battalion contacted an enemy force vicinity XD505406, killing 18 and capturing six AK47s, one light machine gun, one Chicom radio. Three ARVN were KIA and two MIA.

(15) On 12 March there were 895 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 12 B52 strikes totaling 973 tons of ordnance resulting in 46 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 256 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one water craft, 39 bunkers, 11 structures, one base camp and 17 foxholes destroyed. There were three interdiction points struck, 46 secondary explosions and 35 secondary fires.

13 MARCH

(1) There were 377 aircraft landings in Laos on 13 March. There were nine aircraft hit by hostile fire and one aircraft (OH58A) was destroyed. Three UH1Hs were hit on 13 March and declared nonflyable. All other aircraft were considered to be flyable. Two US crewmen were WIA on 13 March. One crewman carried as MIA was picked up as KIA. The 1st Ranger Group received nine resupply sorties, the Airborne Division 42, the 1st Infantry Division 28, and the Vietnamese Marine Division 29. Four sorties of 155mm howitzers were lifted to FSB Hotel. Weather again hampered Tac Air operations on 13 March. A total of 115 Tac Air sorties were flown to include 17 sorties flown to destroy FSB Sophia.

(2) Between 130005H and 130400H, FSB Phu Loc received three attacks by fire totaling 25X82mm mortar rounds. Two ARVN were WIA.

(3) At 130040H vicinity XD433362, the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in three friendly WIA, 11 enemy KIA, five AK47s and 30XB40 rounds captured.

(4) Elements of the 2-327 Infantry detonated a booby trap vicinity XD997577 at 130938H, resulting in three US KIA, one Kit Carson Scout KIA and five US WIA.

(5) Between 131000H and 1600H, FSB Delta received five separate mortar and rocket attacks totaling 20X122mm rockets and 50X82mm mortar rounds which resulted in four Marines KIA and four WIA.

(6) At 131030H vicinity XD436355, the 1st Battalion, 1st Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA and four WIA. Enemy losses were six KIA and three AK47s captured.

(7) At 131320H vicinity XD508408, elements of the 11th Armored Cavalry Squadron received 25X74mm recoilless rifle rounds resulting in two ARVN WIA and one APC destroyed.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(8) At 131340H vicinity XD710304, the 3d VNMC Battalion discovered six enemy killed by artillery. 4,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition was captured along with 20 tons of rice and 14 rice storage areas destroyed.

(9) At 131530H vicinity XD540380, elements of the 11th Airborne Battalion received unknown type and number rounds of indirect fire, resulting in two ARVN KIA and 13 WIA.

(10) At 131615H vicinity XD704284, the 1st VNMC Battalion discovered 14 enemy killed by artillery and captured four AK47s, one B40, 50XB40 rounds and 3,000 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition..

(11) At 131700H vicinity XD755375, elements of the 4th Composite Tank Battalion received an attack by fire followed by a ground attack resulting in three ARVN KIA, four WIA, three MIA, one tank destroyed, and one tank damaged.

(12) At 131700H vicinity XD558423, elements of the 7th Airborne Battalion found seven new graves.

(13) At 131830H, FSB Bravo received an attack by fire resulting in two ARVN KIA and six WIA.

(14) On 13 March there were 808 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1053 tons of ordnance resulting in 30 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to four. There were 199 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in two water craft, 37 bunkers, four foxholes, and one gun position destroyed. There were eight secondary explosions and 48 secondary fires.

14 MARCH

(1) Between 140700H and 1500H vicinity XD389364, elements of the 3d Battalion, 1st Regiment received 82mm mortar fire and a ground attack resulting in two ARVN KIA and five WIA. Nine enemy were KIA, one B40 and six AK47s captured.

(2) TF 1-1 Cavalry and elements of the 59th Engineer Company (LC) working in the vicinity of XD718368, received an attack by fire from 122mm artillery and 82mm mortars, resulting in five US KIA and three US WIA.

(3) At 140830H vicinity XD646390, elements of the 6th Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 12 enemy KIA, five AK47s and one light machine gun captured.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(4) At 140917H vicinity XD943603, elements of 1-501 Infantry engaged an unknown size enemy force. A search of the area revealed three enemy KIA and three AK47 rifles. Elements set up a mechanical ambush vicinity of the bodies and later observed three enemy attempting to disarm the mechanical ambush. The enemy were engaged with small arms fire resulting in three more enemy KIA and three AK47s captured. An additional mechanical ambush was detonated and two more enemy were KIA.

(5) Between 141050H and 1730H, FSB Lo Lo received 200X122mm rockets and 100X152mm rounds resulting in three ARVN KIA and two WIA. One D4 bulldozer, one M60 and eight M16s were destroyed and two 105mm howitzers were heavily damaged. Counterbattery was not fired because of unknown enemy locations.

(6) At 141130H vicinity XD462333, the 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment received 22 rounds of 82mm mortar resulting in three ARVN WIA.

(7) From 141210H to 1700H vicinity XD712373, B/1-39 Artillery and A/8-4 Artillery and elements of B/1-11 Infantry received an attack by fire with 60 rounds of unknown type resulting in three US KIA, four US WIA and one 175mm gun damaged.

(8) On 14 March there were 211 helicopter gunship sorties flown and ten B52 strikes totaling 831 tons of ordnance resulting in 30 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 211 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in three water craft, one bunker, one structure, ten vehicles, six cache sites, two gun positions and one tank destroyed. There were 46 secondary explosions and six secondary fires.

15 MARCH

(1) At 150750H vicinity XD652396, the 11th Airborne Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA, four WIA, 18 NVA KIA, one BAR, one B40 and one 75mm recoilless rifle destroyed.

(2) At 150900H vicinity XD612273, the 4th VNMC Battalion found four enemy KBA.

(3) At 150920H vicinity XD610274, the 4th VNMC Battalion found 14 enemy KBA, eight SKS, eight AK47s, and 120 packs.

(4) At 151030H vicinity XD609270, the 4th VNMC Battalion found and destroyed one half ton of salt, 15 huts, seven packs, 40 uniforms and an unknown amount of small arms ammunition.

(5) At 151120H vicinity XD473298, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment contacted an unknown size enemy force and received 120X82mm mortar

64

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

rounds resulting in one ARVN KIA, 15 enemy KIA and five AK47s captured.

(6) At 151135H vicinity XD471314, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment found 2,000 bangalore torpedoes destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

(7) From 151705 to 1915H, Khe Sanh base received 180X122mm artillery rounds resulting in five ARVN WIA, and two US WIA. Counterbattery was fired at selected enemy locations with unknown results. A total of five UH1H, three AH1G and four 1/2 ton trucks were damaged.

(8) At 151705H vicinity XD948603, elements of the 1-501 Infantry detonated a mine resulting in three US KIA, four US WIA and one Kit Carson Scout WIA.

(9) At 151751H vicinity XD469336, the 3d Battalion, 1st Regiment found 18 huts, a large quantity of salt and 9 tons of unpolished rice destroyed by Tac Air.

(10) At 151635H vicinity XD648395, the 11th Airborne Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in ten enemy KIA, one 12.7mm machine gun and one light machine gun captured.

(11) At 151750H vicinity XD470316, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment found a 200 bunker complex which has been destroyed by Tac Air. The unit found two light machine guns, five 12.7mm machine gun barrels, nine switchboards, ten tons of copper and tin wire, and 20 enemy in a mass grave. During the search the unit received 60X82mm mortar rounds resulting in three ARVN WIA.

(12) At 152200H, FSB Lo Lo was abandoned. Four 105mm howitzers and one 155mm howitzer were damaged beyond use. Three 155mm howitzers were destroyed in place by ARVN.

(13) On 15 March there were 542 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 12 B52 strikes totaling 989 tons of ordnance resulting in 12 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to four. There were 240 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 48 vehicles, one gun position, two tanks destroyed and 25 meters of road cut. There were five tanks damaged, 41 secondary explosions and 17 secondary fires.

16 MARCH

(1) At 160800H vicinity XD579436, the 2d Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 11 enemy KIA, two AK47s, and two B40s captured.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

- (2) At 160800H vicinity XD648395, the 11th Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 17 enemy KIA, two AK47s, one light machine gun, and one B40 captured. There were no friendly casualties.
- (3) At 160830H vicinity XD474296, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment found 150X55 gallon drums of POL, 100 barracks, and three tons of rice destroyed by Arc Light strikes.
- (4) At 160930H vicinity XD480339, the 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment found six enemy KBA.
- (5) At 161000H vicinity XD464284, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment found 18 enemy KBA, one 82mm mortar, four AK47s and 130 barracks with under ground bunkers destroyed by Arc Light strikes.
- (6) At 161200H vicinity XD412389, the 2d Infantry Regiment reported that gunships had destroyed five enemy trucks.
- (7) At 161200H vicinity XD652387, elements of the 11th Airborne Battalion found 15 enemy KBA.
- (8) At 161245H vicinity XD620250, the 4th VNMC Battalion found 16 enemy KBA, two AK47s, two 12.7mm machine guns, one B40, one 82mm mortar, one radio and 2,000X82mm mortar rounds.
- (9) At 161315H vicinity XD507408, elements of the 8th Airborne Battalion received an attack by fire and a ground attack resulting in five WIA. Enemy losses were unknown.
- (10) At 161635H vicinity XD620250, the 4th VNMC Battalion found 36 enemy KBA, five AK47s, two B40s and two 12.7mm machine guns destroyed.
- (11) Between 161903H and 1932H, Khe Sanh received 68 rounds, reported to be 82mm. However, the majority of the rounds impacted outside the perimeter. Four US were WIA, two UH1H received shrapnel damage, one 3/4 ton truck was destroyed and four other vehicles were damaged.
- (12) At 162015H vicinity XD648301, the 147th Brigade CP received 400 rounds of mixed rocket and artillery fire resulting in eight Marines WIA.
- (13) At 162030H vicinity XD630265, elements of the 7th VNMC Battalion received approximately 400X82mm mortar rounds resulting in five Marines WIA.

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(14) Improved weather conditions permitted maximum air support to RVNAF forces on 16 March. Over 200 Tac Air sorties and 1,300 helicopter sorties were flown. There were 320 aircraft landings in Laos on 16 March. Four US personnel debarked their aircraft and all were extracted. Eight aircraft were hit by hostile fire, of which one was destroyed, and six other were declared nonflyable. US casualties for air operations on 16 March were three WIA.

(15) 1st Infantry Regiment reported the following results occurring 14-16 March:

Headquarters - 3 KIA	
1st Battalion - 15 KIA	50 WIA
2d Battalion - 9 KIA	21 WIA
3d Battalion - 5 KIA	3 WIA
4th Battalion - 20 KIA	70 WIA
Reconnaissance Company - 3 KIA	9 WIA
Artillery - 13 KIA	12 WIA

Enemy losses were reported as 1,100 KIA, two 75mm recoilless rifles, six 82mm mortars, 12X12.7mm machine guns, 31XB40/41 rocket launchers, eight radios, and 270 AK47s captured.

(16) The move by air for the 3d Regiment CP and an Engineer Company from FSB 31, and the 4th Battalion, 3d Regiment from a PZ at XD5331 to Khe Sanh was completed at 161220H. At 161330H the 3d Regiment and the 4th Battalion, 3d Regiment departed Khe Sanh by convoy to LZ Sally. At 161745H the 2d Battalion, 3d Regiment moved by vehicle from LZ Sally to Hue, closing at 161030H. The 39th Ranger Battalion departed Da Nang on 16 March and closed at Dong Ha at 161700H.

(17) On 16 March there were 637 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1068 tons of ordnance resulting in 30 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 271 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in five bunkers, five structures, 43 vehicles and three gun positions destroyed. There were 20 meters of road cut, 61 secondary explosions and 42 secondary fires.

d. Repositioning of Forces.

(1) Phase IV (17 Mar - 6 Apr)

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(a) Operations Narrative.

(1) During this period the phased extraction of all ARVN units from Laos was completed, and emphasis shifted to establishment of an active defense in RVN. The extraction by air of the 1st Infantry Regiment was effected under heavy enemy pressure during 18-21 March. The Airborne Division, including the Armored TF, initiated a phased delay, evacuated Aloui, and moved all units by road except the 2d and 7th Airborne Battalions to the vicinity of FSB Alpha on 19 March. The movement was subject to only sporadic enemy contact and there was only one significant enemy ambush. The 2d and 7th Airborne Battalions had continued heavy enemy contact until 19 March, when they broke contact and moved to a safe PZ and extracted on 20 March. The Airborne Division (-) and the Armored TF continued their overland movement on 21-23 March during which time the enemy interdiction efforts caused heavy losses of armored and wheeled vehicles. On 22-23 March enemy tanks attempted to follow and attack the Airborne/Armored column but were stopped by US air and artillery. The Marine Division continued operations in the southeast portion of the AO in Laos until 24 March. Throughout the week enemy pressure continued to build around FSB Delta. The 147th VNMC Brigade reinforced FSB Delta with the 2d and 4th Battalions in order to support the extraction of artillery. During the night of 22-23 March a heavy infantry attack supported by tanks forced the evacuation of the firebase. On 23 March the 147th VNMC Brigade moved to a PZ and by evening all units of the 147th and 258th VNMC Brigades had been extracted from Laos leaving only a few stragglers behind.

(2) US forces continued to provide security for QL 9 and critical installations in the LAMSON 719 AO. Efforts were intensified in the western portion of the AO to locate and neutralize the enemy's artillery and rocket positions and to eliminate his ground elements. An additional maneuver battalion (1-77 Armor) was shifted from the 3d Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (Aml) AO west to the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) AO. The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) elements assisted RVNAF in their passage of lines into RVN from Laos. The 1st and 3d Infantry Regiments were released and were returned to their home stations. The 54th Infantry Regiment moved to Khe Sanh and relieved the 2d Regiment which was released for return to home station. The Airborne Division, following the retrograde of all its units, began standing down at Dong Ha as Corps Reserve.

(3) Nearly all helicopter extractions were accomplished only by moving away from FSBs, and applying continuous fire support with Tac Air, helicopter gunships, and artillery. Frequently, lifts were halted by unacceptable levels of enemy antiaircraft fire forcing units to move to a new PZ. The extractions of the 2d and 7th Airborne Battalions north of FSB Alpha, the extraction of the 2d Regiment units near LZ

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

Brown, and that of the 147th VNMC Brigade northeast of FSB Delta, were strongly opposed by the enemy and disengagement was difficult to accomplish. Exceptions were the evacuation of FSB Delta 1, and extraction of the 258th VNMC Brigade from FSB Hotel on the Co Roc on 24 March.

(4) Tactical Air support continued at a high pace. There was a slight increase in Tactical Air sorties flown, even though on two days commitments to the strikes in North Vietnam resulted in fewer aircraft being available to support the LAMSON 719 operation. Arc Light support was maintained at approximately the same level as the previous period, while helicopter gunships and troop lift sorties were increased by over 30 percent. Logistical and air cavalry sorties remained at the same level. Logistical support for RVNAF was maintained and adequate stocks were on hand to meet demands.

(5) Combat efficiency and effectiveness of RVNAF units was greatly affected by the intense activities of the preceding week. Some units in contact in Laos suffered very heavy casualties and were rendered combat ineffective. The 1st Armored Brigade lost over 60 percent of its M41 tanks, approximately 50 percent of its armored personnel carriers, and ceased to be an effective brigade force. The bulk of the losses suffered by the TF occurred during the ambush on 19 March on Route 9, vicinity XD675379. The TF extracted 98 vehicles including 22 M41 tanks, 54 armored personnel carriers and one D2 bulldozer. Aerial photography on 23 March of QL 9 from Aloui to the Laos/RVN border revealed that the unit had left 21 tanks, 26 armored personnel carriers, 13 bulldozers, two roadgraders, 51 miscellaneous vehicles and two trailers along the route. Most artillery pieces were extracted by heavy lift from FSBs Aloui, Alpha and Bravo; however, several towed artillery pieces in the 1st Armored TF column were destroyed in the enemy ambush. On 25 March, Tac Air, helicopter gunships and artillery were employed against the abandoned M41 tanks on Route 9, which were being used by the enemy as stationary machine gun positions; as well as against enemy PT76 tanks on Route 9 from Aloui to the RVN border.

(6) The enemy's daylight commitment of PT76 and T54 tanks when relatively clear skies exposed them to US air and heavy artillery attacks indicated either a reckless disregard of his own losses and his desire to close with and attempt to destroy RVNAF forces in Laos; or, an amazing overconfidence in the ability of his equipment to withstand air and artillery attacks.

(7) RVNAF extracted all units from Laos and heavy losses were inflicted on the enemy, principally by Tac Air and B52 strikes. However, there were two principal areas in which allied forces failed during their extraction from Laos, particularly in the area of equipment losses both in armored vehicles and artillery pieces. Secondly, although allied

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

forces, principally through the use of Tac Air, temporarily destroyed the enemy's capability to employ artillery against Khe Sanh, the threat to that installation by smaller indirect fire weapons and sappers was not eliminated.

(b) Significant Contacts:

17 MARCH

(1) Between 190600H and close of the period, FSB Aloui received two attacks by fire resulting in two ARVN KIA and 11 WIA. One communications vehicle was also destroyed.

(2) At 170600H ARVN units at Lao Bao received 10X82mm rounds resulting in two KIA and nine WIA.

(3) At 170615H vicinity XD630265, the 7th VNMC Battalion received a mortar and ground attack resulting in one Marine KIA, four WIA and 16 enemy KIA.

(4) At 170730H vicinity XD523414, the 1st Airborne Battalion contacted an enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA and six WIA. Enemy losses were unknown. At 170800H vicinity XD504360, the 5th Battalion, 2d Regiment received 300X82mm mortar rounds resulting in five ARVN WIA.

(5) At 170945H vicinity XD575435, the 2d Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in one ARVN KIA, 13 WIA, 19 enemy KIA, five AK47s, one machine gun, two B40 launchers and one map captured.

(6) At 171015H vicinity XD495355, the 5th Battalion, 2d Regiment discovered 82 enemy KBA, 66XAK47s, two 82mm mortars, one 75mm recoilless rifle and 43 bunkers destroyed. An estimated ton of ammunition was destroyed in place.

(7) At 171110H vicinity XD710263, the 3d Battalion, 258th VNMC Brigade engaged an enemy force resulting in five enemy KIA, two AK47s captured, ten huts and five tons of rice destroyed.

(8) From 171200H to 1330H vicinity XD453384, the 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment was in contact with a large size enemy force resulting in 50XARVN KIA, 80XWIA, 567 enemy KIA, 172 AK47s, 29XB40/41, 12X12.7mm machine guns, seven 82mm mortars, 120 blocks of dynamite, and 3,000 12.7mm rounds captured.

(9) At 171800H vicinity XD670310, the Marine Division Reconnaissance elements found 17 enemy KBA, three AK47s and one 82mm mortar destroyed by Arc Light strikes.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(10) At 171900H vicinity XD701383, FSB Ta Bat received five 130mm artillery rounds resulting in two ARVN WIA and one M41 tank destroyed.

(11) At 172030H, the 1st Ranger Group CP and FSB Phu Loc received a mortar and ground attack resulting in nine Rangers WIA. There were 20 enemy KIA and seven AK47s captured.

(12) On 17 March there were 635 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 999 tons of ordnance resulting in 61 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to seven. There were 310 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one water craft, 27 bunkers, two structures, 40 vehicles and five gun positions destroyed. There were 11 vehicles and ten bunkers damaged, five interdiction points struck, 18 enemy KBA, 66 secondary explosions and 53 secondary fires.

18 MARCH

(1) The 1st Infantry Regiment CP, 1st Battalion, 2d Battalion, and 3d Battalion were extracted from a PZ vicinity XD510378 and lifted to Khe Sanh completing the lift at 181230H. The 4th Battalion was reported in heavy contact at mid-day, but was moving to a PZ vicinity XD453384 for extraction. At 181452H, one UH1H landed at the PZ and extracted 17 personnel from the 4th Battalion. A second UH1H landed at the PZ and took hits on lift off and landed east of the PZ. The crew and eight ARVN were subsequently extracted. An AH1G was hit by ground fire and exploded on impact. A second AH1G was hit by hostile fire in the same vicinity and made a precautionary landing at FSB Delta 1. Attempts continued, and the 4th Battalion was completely extracted at 181644H.

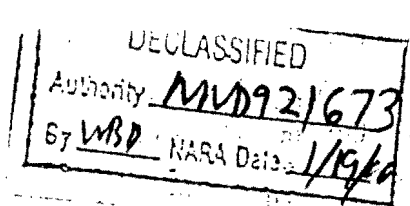
(2) At 180600H vicinity FSB-Phu Loc, the 1st Ranger Group CP received 63 mixed 130mm and 82mm rounds resulting in nine WIA.

(3) At 180655H vicinity XD636278, the 7th VNMC Battalion received a mortar and ground attack. The enemy employed non lethal gas. Gunships and Tac Air supported. Results were three Marines KIA, 10 WIA, 42 enemy KIA, seven AK47s, one B40 launcher, 80 B40 rounds, 85 AK47 magazines and 120 blocks of dynamite captured.

(4) At 1801045H vicinity XD693276, the 1st VNMC Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force, resulting in 21 enemy KIA, one PW, 60 blocks of dynamite, six AK47s and one 82mm mortar with 100 rounds captured.

(5) At 181150H vicinity XD702340, the Reconnaissance Company of the 258th Vietnamese Marine Brigade found and destroyed four tons of rice.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(6) At 181445H vicinity XD736364, elements of TF 1-11 Infantry received an unknown number of 82mm rounds, resulting in one US KIA and six WIA.

(7) Between 181500H and 1900H vicinity XD716371, elements of the 2d Battalion, 94th Artillery received an unknown number and type of rounds resulting in 16XUS WIA and one 175mm gun damaged.

(8) Between 181600H and 190600H vicinity XD512348, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment was in contact with an unknown size enemy force. The battalion also received indirect fire, resulting in 33 ARVN WIA and five MIA. Enemy losses were unknown.

(9) Between 181600H and 190600H vicinity XD522345, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment was in contact with an unknown size enemy force. The battalion also received indirect fire resulting in two ARVN KIA, 23 WIA and three MIA. Enemy losses were unknown.

(10) Between 181600H and 190600H, the 2d, 3d and 4th Battalions were in contact with enemy forces which employed both ground and indirect fire attacks. The 1st Battalion, 3d Infantry Regiment and Headquarters, 2d Infantry Regiment remained in the vicinity of FSB Delta 1. Advisor reports state that at 191350H, the 2d, 3d and 4th Battalions were in contact with the enemy. Tac Air, gunships, and artillery as well as MEDEVAC were supporting contacts of the 2d Infantry Regiment units. Air Cavalry elements reported killing 25 in an engagement at 191130H.

(11) At 181700H vicinity XD553404, the 7th Airborne Battalion made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in four ARVN KIA and three WIA.

(12) At 181700H vicinity XD523410, the 7th Armored Cavalry Squadron contacted an unknown size enemy force with unknown enemy casualties. 17 ARVN were WIA and one M41 tank was damaged.

(13) At 181830H vicinity XD546386, the 1st Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force, resulting in nine ARVN KIA, nine ARVN WIA, 80 NVA KIA, and five AK47s captured.

(14) There were 823 aircraft landings in Laos on 18 March. Seventeen personnel debarked their aircraft, and all were extracted. A total of 21 aircraft were hit by hostile fire. Four aircraft were destroyed (two UH1G, one CH47 and UH1H). Six aircraft were declared nonflyable.

(15) The following extractions by air were completed: 1st Regiment CP, 1st and 3d Battalions, 3d Regiment from a PZ vicinity XD510378 to Khe Sanh. Movement was completed at 181230H. The 2d Battalion,

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

1st Regiment from a PZ vicinity XD500376 to Khe Sanh completed at 181230H. The 5th Battalion, 2d Regiment from LZ Brown vicinity XD4935 to Khe Sanh completed at 1545H. The 4th Battalion, 1st Regiment from a PZ vicinity XD4538 to Khe Sanh completed at 1615H. The 6th VNMC Battalion moved by vehicle from YD213674 and closed at Khe Sanh at 181300H. The 1st Regiment with four battalions moved by vehicle from Khe Sanh to La Vang (YD348498) closing at 1845H. The 77th Ranger Border Defense Battalion moved from Khe Sanh to the FSB Phu Loc area (XD700477) closing at 1430H.

(16) Three of the five heavy artillery batteries located at Lao Bao (XD7138) moved along QL 9 to positions at Lang Vei and Khe Sanh.

(17) On 18 March there were 1,236 helicopter sorties flown and 10 B52 strikes totaling 631 tons of ordnance resulting in 22 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 252 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 13 bunkers, 28 vehicles and 12 gun positions destroyed. There were ten enemy KBA, ten interdiction points struck, 636 secondary explosions and 74 secondary fires.

19 MARCH

(1) Between 190600H and 1800H vicinity XD525400, the 8th Airborne Battalion was in sporadic contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in six ARVN KIA, 26 WIA and unknown enemy losses.

(2) Between 190600H and 191800H vicinity XD521401, the 9th Airborne Battalion was in intermittent contact with an unknown size enemy force. Results were two ARVN KIA, three WIA, 50 NVA KIA, four AK47s, three B40s, one B41, one antiaircraft gun and one flamethrower captured.

(3) Between 190600H and 1800H vicinity XD643377, elements of the 1st Tank Troop, 3d Cavalry Squadron made contact with an unknown size enemy force, resulting in six ARVN KIA, three WIA and unknown enemy losses.

(4) The 2d Airborne Battalion between 190600H and 191800H was in contact vicinity XD583434 with an unknown size enemy force. Friendly losses were unknown. There were 380 NVA reported KIA, 12 AK47s, two B40s, two light machine guns and two 82mm mortars captured.

(5) FSB Aloui was evacuated on the morning of the 19th. The 1st Airborne Brigade units and Armored TF units commenced eastward movement toward FSB Alpha. At 190730H elements of the column reported light contact with an unknown size enemy force and FACS reported four tanks moving toward Aloui vicinity XD523417.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

- (6) At 190715H vicinity XD705290, the 1st VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in 20 enemy KIA, five AK47s, two B40s, nine packs, nine shovels and 50 huts destroyed.
- (7) At 191300H vicinity XD709299, the 1st VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in one Marine KIA, 12XWIA, 14 enemy KIA, five AK47s, two B40s, 220 pounds of rice, and 15 huts destroyed with no friendly casualties.
- (8) At 191300H vicinity XD723327, the 8th Airborne Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in six enemy KIA, one BAR, one AK47, and 400 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition captured.
- (9) At 191445H vicinity FSB Delta 1 (XD552345), C/14th Artillery received 251X122mm rockets and 75mm recoilless rifle rounds resulting in four 105mm howitzers and 1,365 rounds of 105mm ammunition destroyed.
- (10) At 191540H vicinity XD629363, elements of TF 1-11 Infantry received small arms and B40 fire resulting in one US KIA and four WIA. Enemy losses were unknown.
- (11) At 191800H vicinity XD648301, the 147th VNMC Brigade CP on FSB Delta received an attack by fire. There were an unknown type and number of rounds fired. Three Marines were KIA, 25 WIA and four 105mm howitzers reported to be 60 percent damaged.
- (12) At 192300H vicinity XD514353, the 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment received a ground attack by an unknown size enemy force resulting in five ARVN KIA, 40XWIA, two MIA, 87XNVA KIA, 49XAK47s, ten B40s and seven B41s captured. Two company commanders of the 3d Battalion, 2d NVA Division were among the NVA KIA.
- (13) At 192300H vicinity XD512343, the 2d Battalion, 2d Regiment received a ground attack by an unknown size enemy force resulting in five ARVN KIA, 11XWIA, 85XNVA KIA, 47XAK47s, two 60mm mortars, three light machine guns, and 20XB40 rocket launchers captured.
- (14) At 192300H vicinity XD518342, the 4th Battalion, 2d Regiment received a ground attack by an unknown size enemy force resulting in three ARVN WIA, five ARVN MIA, 195XNVA KIA; 59XAK47s, three CKCs, seven B40s, two 60mm mortars, two flamethrowers, four light machine guns, three radio telephones and four heavy machine guns captured.
- (15) The 1st Armored Brigade column moving east from FSB Aloui (XD553380) was ambushed resulting in one vehicle of the 18 in the column receiving hits and blocking the road. The column included four disabled tanks which were being towed. The 1st Armored Brigade CP requested air strikes to destroy the disabled vehicles and Tac Air

74
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

reported 18 vehicles destroyed.

(16) On 19 March there were 686 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 14 B52 strikes totaling 1,158 tons of ordnance of a magnitude of two to five. There were 246 Tac Air sorties resulting in 15 bunkers, nine vehicles, two cache sites and three gun positions destroyed. There were two vehicles and four gun positions damaged and 45 meters of road cut.

20 MARCH

(1) At 200530H vicinity XD648301, the 147th VNMC Brigade CP on FSB Delta received an attack by fire consisting of 30 rounds of mixed 82mm and 122mm fire resulting in five Marines WIA. Two 105mm howitzers were reported to be moderately damaged.

(2) In the TF 1-11 Infantry AO at 200904H vicinity XD734365, reconnaissance elements found two mines in the road which the unit destroyed in place. The elements providing security contacted an unknown size enemy force. After an artillery strike the unit swept the area and received seven 82mm rounds. Artillery was placed on the enemy locations. The results of a search of the area were one enemy KIA and one AK47 captured. The minesweep of the road continued. At 201040H vicinity XD737364, another element attempting to link up with the reconnaissance elements received B40 and small arms fire from an enemy force resulting in one US KIA, five WIA and two vehicles damaged. Contact was broken at 201200H then reestablished at 201245H when one US was KIA. Contact was broken again at 201337H.

(3) At 201000H vicinity XD675490, elements of 3-187 Infantry made contact with an unknown size enemy force resulting in no friendly casualties, 19 NVA KIA, one AK47 and one bag of miscellaneous mail captured.

(4) At 201040H, B/1-1 Infantry vicinity XD737364, received RPG and small arms fire resulting in one US KIA, five WIA, one M151 and one M113 damaged.

(5) At 201320H, extraction of the 3d Battalion, 2d Regiment from a PZ vicinity XD512344 to Khe Sanh was completed. During the extraction 28 of 40 ships received hits.

(6) At 201520H vicinity XD710329, the 1st VNMC Battalion contacted an unknown size enemy force resulting in four Marines KIA, six NVA KIA, and two AK47s captured.

(7) At 201630H, seven 105mm howitzers, four 155mm howitzers and one 3/4 ton truck moved from a PZ vicinity FSB Alpha to Khe Sanh.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(8) At 201930H, the 2d and 7th Airborne Battalions moved by air from Khe Sanh to Dong Ha.

(9) At 202100H vicinity XD602376, the 8th Airborne Battalion and the 11th Armored Cavalry Squadron were in contact with an enemy force which resulted in one ARVN KIA and two WIA. Enemy losses were 60XKIA, 29XAK47s, seven B40s, and one B41 captured.

(10) B Battery, 8-4 Artillery moved its 175mm guns from the Ranger Camp (XD6845) east along Red Devil Road to a position north of Khe Sanh (XD8244).

(11) On 20 March there were 1,388 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 909 tons of ordnance resulting in 27 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to four. There were 270 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one bunker, 46 vehicles, seven cache sites and 12 gun positions destroyed. There were 10 enemy KBA, 15 interdiction points struck, 236 secondary explosions and 44 secondary fires.

21 MARCH

(1) At 210300H, the 2d and 4th Battalions, 2d Infantry Regiment received an indirect fire and ground attack vicinity XD513343, resulting in 37XARVN KIA, 58XWIA, and 15XMIA. Enemy losses were 245XKIA and the following equipment destroyed: 52XB40/41, 17 machine guns, seven 60mm mortars, five 82mm mortars, eight flamethrowers, nine 12.7mm machine guns, 65XAK47s, and five radios.

(2) At 210425H, sappers attacked the refuel/rearm point at FSB Vandegrift and destroyed two 10,000 gallon JP4 blivets. One NVA was KIA.

(3) The 147th Brigade continued operations in the vicinity of FSB Delta to secure the area for extraction of artillery from the FSB. FSB Delta received eight UHLH resupply sorties during the period which MEDEVACED 23 Marines. Elements in the vicinity of FSB Delta were in contact sporadically during the day and each time helicopter resupply sorties came into the area the LZ was subjected to indirect fire attacks.

(4) At 210600H, the 7th VNMC Battalion was in contact with elements of the 29th NVA Regiment. The contact lasted until approximately 220600H and was supported with 13 Tac Air sorties, resulting in 85 Marines KIA, 283XWIA, 600 enemy KIA (400 KBA) and five PW. Sixty crew-served and 200 individual weapons were found.

(5) At 211300H, extraction of the 1st Airborne Brigade CP from FSB Alpha to Khe Sanh was completed.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(6) At 211300H vicinity XD772358, C/1-77 Armor received RPG and small arms fire resulting in two US KIA and three US WIA.

(7) At 211450H, extraction of the 5th Airborne Battalion and personnel from two artillery batteries from FSB Alpha to Khe Sanh was completed. During the convoy movement of artillery from Lao Bao to Lang Vei elements received small arms and B40 fire vicinity XD7436, resulting in eight US WIA.

(8) At 211800H, extraction of the 2d and 4th Battalions of the 2d Regiment to Khe Sanh was completed.

(9) The last two heavy artillery batteries to occupy positions along the Laotian border moved to positions vicinity Khe Sanh (XD8238).

(10) On 21 March there were 788 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 921 tons of ordnance resulting in 22 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 157 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in three structures, 37 vehicles and one gun position destroyed. There were 18 vehicles damaged, 30 enemy KBA, 31 secondary explosions and nine secondary fires.

22 MARCH

(1) The Khe Sanh Base area received four separate attacks by fire totaling 59 rounds of 122mm artillery between 220700H and 221600H resulting in two US KIA, 12 US WIA, one UH1H, three 1/2 ton trucks, one 3/4 ton truck, one water truck, and one fire truck damaged. Four rounds struck the main runway causing damage and temporary closing of the airstrip.

(2) At 220955H vicinity XD735384, elements of TF 1-77 Armor received an attack by fire of an unknown number of possible 122mm rounds, resulting in five US WIA.

(3) At 221045H vicinity XD710378, the 2d Airborne Brigade CP received an attack by fire consisting of 10X75mm rounds, resulting in one ARVN KIA and five WIA.

(4) At 221210H vicinity XD735365, elements of TF 1-77 received an attack by fire of an unknown number and type of rounds resulting in eight US WIA.

(5) At 222148H vicinity XD726483, elements of TF 3-187 received grenades and small arms fire from an estimated five to 15 enemy. Friendly units returned fire and employed artillery. Flareships were called on station and the action resulted in five US KIA and four WIA.

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(6) At 221530H, the 2d and 4th Battalions, 2d Regiment moved by vehicle from Khe Sanh to Dong Ha.

(7) On 22 March there were 713 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1,100 tons of ordnance and resulting in 27 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 172 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one bunker, three structures, 43 vehicles, and two tanks destroyed. There were 11 vehicles and three tanks damaged, three interdiction points struck, 51 secondary explosions and 33 secondary fires.

23 MARCH

(1) At 230315H, Khe Sanh received mortar rounds followed by a ground attack by 40 sappers resulting in three US KIA, 14XUS WIA, 14 NVA KIA, one NVA WIA (PW), one AH1G destroyed, three AH1G damaged, 10 US vehicles and three US bunkers destroyed. Six AK47s and numerous batchel charges captured.

(2) At 230630H, the Armored TF column crossed the border into the RVN and effected a link up with the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech). All vehicles were out of Laos by 1120H.

(3) At 231135H vicinity XD7435, TF 1-77 Armor received small arms and B40 fire resulting in seven enemy KIA and four enemy KBA.

(4) At 231345H, the 1st, 8th and 9th Airborne Battalions closed at Khe Sanh and moved by air to Dong Ha at 231800H.

(5) At 231453H, 430 (of which 230 were WIA) Marines of the 147th VNMC Brigade has been extracted by air to the Marine Division CP (XD862390). The remaining Marines were extracted to Khe Sanh later during the day.

(6) At 231525H vicinity XD745356, elements of A/1-1 Cavalry conducted reconnaissance of the area after three airstrikes on suspected enemy locations and found a bunker complex and three enemy KBA, one AK47 and one B40. Enemy small arms fire was received and AFA was employed. Elements continued to search and found five additional KBA, six KIA, two B40, four AK47s, one M16, 22XB40 rounds, seven grenades, six 60mm mortar rounds and miscellaneous items. There were no friendly casualties.

(7) At 231800H, the 2d Airborne Brigade with 2d and 11th Battalions moved by air to Dong Ha. During a two hour period 10 enemy tanks were destroyed (eight by Tac Air, one by ground fire and one by unknown causes). Two 122mm guns were destroyed by Tac Air (believed to be the guns shelling Khe Sanh).

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(8) On 23 March there were 756 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 941 tons of ordnance resulting in 77 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 283 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one bunker, three structures, 30 vehicles, one cache site, 22 gun positions and two tanks destroyed. There were four bunkers, four vehicles and two tanks damaged, seven interdiction points struck, 30 enemy KBA, 354 secondary explosions and 136 secondary fires.

24 MARCH

(1) At 240800H vicinity YD001566, elements of the 2-506 Infantry heard small arms and B40 fire on the north side of QL 9. The unit moved to the area and engaged an unknown size enemy force setting up an ambush. The enemy did not return fire and fled. At 0925H elements engaged another enemy force. The enemy returned fire and fled. The unit suffered one US KIA and one WIA. The enemy losses were nine KIA, five AK47s and one B40 captured.

(2) At 240915H vicinity XD585224, elements of C/4-3 Infantry made contact with an estimated three enemy squads. Friendly elements received small arms, B40 and 60mm mortar fire. The unit returned small arms fire and employed gunships and artillery, and was reinforced by two platoons. Contact was broken at 241115H. Results were four US KIA and six WIA. Enemy losses were unknown. A search of the area continued.

(3) At 240950H, vicinity XD690360, B/7-17 Cavalry engaged one PT76 tank and destroyed it. At 0952H vicinity XD681363, the unit damaged two PT76s. At 0955H vicinity XD663368 the unit engaged three PT76s with unknown results. At 1151H vicinity XD661367 the unit observed seven light tanks and called in air strikes with unknown results. At 1200H vicinity XD655366 the unit observed eight light tanks, called in airstrikes and reported six tanks burning.

(4) At 241347H, the 1st VNMC Battalion was moved by air from FSB Hotel to an LZ vicinity XD830345 along with the 3d Battalion.

(5) At 241614H vicinity XD956426, A/3-5 Cavalry assisted an ARVN convoy which was being ambushed. Results were two US KIA, three US WIA, one M113 destroyed and one M151 damaged. One NVA PW was seriously wounded and later died; one NVA was KIA.

(6) On 24 March there were 703 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1,095 tons of ordnance and resulting in 35 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 255 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in two water craft, 17 bunkers, two foxholes, 25 vehicles, 40 cache sites, eight gun positions and 14 tanks

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

destroyed. There were 11 vehicles and six tanks damaged, four meters of road cut, 21 interdiction points struck, 20 enemy KBA, 84 secondary explosions and 36 secondary fires.

25 MARCH

(1) At 251005H vicinity XD857385, B/1-82 Artillery received an unknown number of 122mm artillery rounds resulting in one US KIA and five US WIA.

(2) At 251141H vicinity XD813485, B/1-1 Cavalry made contact with a well dug in enemy platoon. The elements were reinforced with two platoons and Tac Air and artillery were employed. The contact resulted in six US KIA, five WIA and 36 enemy KIA.

(3) At 251300H, six soldiers from the 4th Battalion, 1st Infantry Regiment reported to the 1st Infantry Division Forward CP at FSB Nguyen Hue. They had been missing since 19 March when FSB Lo Lo was evacuated.

(4) At 251600H vicinity XD9855, a convoy received small arms and B40 fire. The contact was supported by gunships and reaction forces from 2-506 Infantry, resulting in one ARVN KIA and 12 ARVN WIA.

(5) At 251800H vicinity XD977585, the 1-506 Infantry received small arms, B40 and 60mm mortar fire, resulting in three US KIA, six WIA, one armored personnel carrier damaged and one enemy KIA.

(6) The 2-94 Artillery (- A Battery) departed the Khe Sanh area for positions at Vandegrift (XD0048).

(7) On 25 March there were 324 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 16 B52 strikes totaling 1,001 tons of ordnance resulting in 152 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 236 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in two water craft, 33 bunkers, 72 vehicles, one cache site and nine gun positions destroyed. There were two bunkers and 24 vehicles damaged, 47 meters of road cut, seven interdiction points struck, 30 enemy KBA, 56 secondary explosions and 26 secondary fires.

26 MARCH

(1) At 261225H vicinity XD710440, the 21st Ranger Battalion received 50X122mm rockets resulting in one friendly KIA and four WIA.

(2) At 261305H, A/2-17 Cavalry gunships observed and engaged an enemy force resulting in nine enemy KBA.

80
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(3) At 261750H on QL 9 vicinity YD055564, an ARVN convoy received small arms, B40 and 82mm fire from an estimated enemy platoon. Artillery and AFA were employed resulting in one US KIA, six US WIA, one Vietnamese civilian killed, five ARVN KIA, two ARVN WIA, two 2 1/2 ton trucks destroyed and four damaged.

(4) At 262010H vicinity YD033561, an ARVN convoy from Khe Sanh to Dong Ha received an unknown number of mortar rounds and B40 fire, resulting in one ARVN KIA, twelve WIA, three trucks destroyed and three trucks damaged.

(5) B Battery, 1-39 Artillery (175mm) moved from Khe Sanh and occupied a position at Vandegrift (YD0048).

(6) On 26 March there were 342 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 14 B52 strikes totaling 1,140 tons of ordnance resulting in 40 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to eight. There were 220 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 15 bunkers, seven structures, 48 vehicles and one gun position destroyed. There were two water craft and 17 vehicles damaged, 105 meters of road cut, 15 interdiction points struck, one enemy KBA, 61 secondary explosions and 23 secondary fires.

27 MARCH

(1) At 271250H vicinity XD753366 and XD747358, ARVN stragglers reported to the CP of TF 1-77 Armor that two US bodies were found with NVA notes pinned to the bodies. Translations read "To all ARVN troops. The Liberation Army is surrounding you now. You have the way to escape. Return to the Liberation Army now. Now is your time and chance. Go along QL 9 and hold this note. We are welcoming you and will take you to a safe place". D/3-5 Cavalry was employed and located the three US bodies and three ARVN bodies at XD735365. The bodies were approximately two days old. Air strikes were employed adjacent to the bodies, resulting in secondary explosions. Destroyed were several covered bunkers and 20 fighting positions. At 1630H, D/3-5 Cavalry discovered one US body at XD745366.

(2) At 271330 to 1530H vicinity XD9725 and XD9420, A/2-17 Cavalry gunships fired on two platoon size NVA forces resulting in 14 enemy KBA.

(3) At 271338H vicinity XD943592, 1-501 Infantry received small arms and 12.7mm machine gun fire from an unknown size enemy force resulting in three friendly KIA, four WIA and unknown enemy casualties.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(4) At 271805H vicinity XD943592, C/1-501 Infantry received an attack by fire consisting of 12X82mm mortars resulting in two US KIA and four WIA. AFA and stinger were employed with unknown results.

(5) At 271900H vicinity XD855480, an M551 from C/3-5 Cavalry, while moving to a night defensive position, detonated a pressure type mine resulting in five US WIA and causing moderate damage to the vehicle.

(6) At 272230H vicinity YD000561, elements of A/2-506 Infantry heard movement around their positions and three fragmentary grenades. A search at first light revealed six enemy KIA, one wounded enemy captured, six AK47s, one B40, one 9mm pistol, miscellaneous food, ammunition, 20 satchel charges, and other explosives.

(7) On 27 March there were 344 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 12 B52 strikes totaling 1,066 tons of ordnance resulting in 1,073 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to 15. There were 205 Tac Air sorties resulting in nine bunkers, one structure, 49 vehicles, five cache sites and six gun positions destroyed. There two bunkers, 19 vehicles and two tanks damaged, 73 meters of trail cut, sixteen interdiction points struck, four enemy KBA, 58 secondary explosions and 20 secondary fires.

28 MARCH

(1) At 280735H, FSA 1 at Vandegrift, received an attack by fire of 17-18X122mm rockets which resulted in three US WIA, one AHIG, one UH1H, one Mogas blivet, 1,301X155mm, 97X6X8 huts destroyed, and two Mogas blivets damaged. A total of 7,000 gallons of Mogas was destroyed.

(2) At 280945H vicinity XD962448, Ranger Team #4 (101st Airborne Division) made contact with an estimated 30 enemy. Mortars and AFA were employed with unknown results. The team was extracted at 281113H with three US WIA. A MEDEVAC helicopter received small arms fire wounding two crewmen as the aircraft was lifting off. The aircraft landed safely at Khe Sanh. A supporting UH1H received small arms and 12.7mm fire, was forced to make a precautionary landing, and was subsequently extracted. Four crewmembers of the helicopter were WIA. A total of 12 friendly WIA were reported. A search of the area by ground elements revealed six enemy KIA.

(3) At 281355H vicinity XD953429, A/4-3 Infantry convoy received one RPG round from vicinity XD953429. The unit returned fire with .50 caliber and mortars. At 1405H, requested gunships came on station. AFA on station observed six to seven enemy in the area of

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

XD955450 with one light machine gun, one RPG launcher and six to seven AK47s. At 1443H an airstrike was called in on XD955456 with unknown results. Results of the contact were two friendly KIA and five WIA.

(4) At 281435H vicinity XD936585, elements of 1-501 Infantry received small arms, B40 fire and grenades from four enemy 25 meters outside their position resulting in four US WIA. Elements returned organic weapons fire, AFA and artillery. At 281920H the same elements received additional small arms fire and B40 fire as well as three 82mm rounds resulting in one US KIA and five WIA. At 282150H elements received five rounds of suspected 160mm fire with no casualties or damage. Total casualties for the contact were one KIA, nine WIA and unknown enemy casualties.

(5) On 28 March there were 231 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 strikes totaling 967 tons of ordnance resulting in 55 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 191 Tac Air sorties resulting in 28 bunkers, one structure, 58 vehicles, and three gun positions destroyed. There were five vehicles damaged, one meter of road cut, three interdiction points struck and two enemy KBA. There were 75 secondary explosions and 74 secondary fires.

29 MARCH

(1) At 291230H vicinity XD910495, elements of TF 3-5 Cavalry moving west on Red Devil road received small arms and B40 fire from an unknown size enemy force resulting in two US KIA, eight WIA, one M113 destroyed, one M113 and one M551 damaged. The area was searched with negative results.

(2) At 291409H vicinity XD963586, one platoon of A/1-501 Infantry received small arms fire, mortar, grenades, RPG and 51 caliber fire. Elements returned organic fire and airstrikes were called in at 1530H. AFA and artillery were employed resulting in five US WIA and unknown enemy casualties.

(3) At 291405H vicinity XD890404, A US and ARVN convoy traveling west on QL 9 received small arms and B40 fire, resulting in one 2 1/2 ton ammunition truck destroyed. Three other trucks were destroyed and one damaged. Personnel casualties were one US KIA, five US WIA and five ARVN WIA.

(4) On 29 March there were 356 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1,136 tons of ordnance resulting in 77 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to seven. There were 186 Tac Air or sorties resulting in 28 bunkers, two structures, 41 vehicles and five gun positions destroyed. There were 12 vehicles damaged, 248 secondary explosions and 29 secondary fires.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

30 MARCH

On 30 March there were 261 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1,038 tons of ordnance resulting in 99 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to ten. There were 174 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in three water craft, 24 bunkers, 52 vehicles and six gun positions destroyed. There were 15 vehicles destroyed, 49 interdiction points struck, two enemy KBA, 62 secondary explosions and 39 secondary fires.

31 MARCH

(1) Between 310300H and 0315H Dong Ha Combat Base received 12X122mm rockets resulting in one US WIA, one ARVN WIA, three trucks damaged and an unknown amount of Mogas and JP4 destroyed.

(2) Commencing at 310825H, 22 Tac Air sorties prepared four large LZs in support of a raid south of the Laotian Salient. The initial preparation terminated at 311030H. Low level helicopter reconnaissance revealed the presence of antiaircraft weapons. The LZ was reprepared and LZ time rescheduled for 1130H. Between 311050H and 1125H six more sorties prepared the LZ and at 311128H six sorties smoked the LZ vicinity YD046038. At 311130H a UH1H combat assault of a 300 man RVNAF force commenced into a cold LZ. The force consisted of members of the Hac Bao Company and Reconnaissance Company, 1st Infantry Division. The raiding force reported no contact, initially. Search of the area of the Arc Light strike revealed 85 enemy KBA and 18 weapons destroyed. At 311430H vicinity YD043030, elements received small arms fire resulting in one ARVN WIA and one enemy KIA with one AK47 captured. At 311630H vicinity YD046038 the force discovered 12 huts, 27XAK47s, 11X AK50s, one ton of rice, and one ton of ammunition, including 60mm and 82mm mortar rounds. Brush fires and smoke in the area reduce visibility and limited the use of Tac Air from about 311500H through the end of the day. During the night the force assumed a night defense position vicinity YD0403 and reported no contact with enemy forces. Tac Air, gunships and flareships were employed in the area.

(3) During the night of 31 March and 1 April, a raiding force reported trucks both north and south of positions vicinity YD0403. Sightings were passed to FACs in the area. Fixed wing gunships accounted for five trucks destroyed vicinity YD012155. At 011115H the raiding force found 1,000 gallons of POL and one 1.5 kilowatt generator vicinity YD052026, which had been destroyed by air. They also discovered a cave that had been used to hide track vehicles. Air Cavalry and Tac Air engaged antiaircraft positions in the area as planned. Extraction of the raiding force commenced at 011214H from PZ vicinity YD051036. Extraction was completed at 011230H and the force was lifted to Hue.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVIL-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(4) Headquarters, 108th Artillery Group moved its CP from Khe Sanh to Camp Carroll, and two of the remaining four heavy artillery batteries departed Khe Sanh for positions at Khe Ghio (YD0355) and Vandegrift (YD0048).

(5) On 31 March there were 380 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 13 B52 strikes totaling 1,087 tons of ordnance resulting in 93 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 121 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 53 bunkers, two structures, 35 vehicles and five gun positions destroyed. There were nine vehicles damaged, 14 interdiction points struck, three enemy KBA, 57 secondary explosions and 27 secondary fires.

1 APRIL

(1) At 010330H vicinity XD715446, the 77th Ranger Border Defense Battalion received an attack by fire from 50-cal 122mm rockets, resulting in one friendly KIA and five WIA.

(2) Air Cavalry elements provided support to raiding force operations in Laos, and accounted for eight enemy KBA, one truck, three huts, one bunker, and three storage sites destroyed.

(3) At 0615H vicinity XD725477, A C130 aircraft observed 20-30 enemy moving on a trail. FACs put two air strikes in the area resulting in seven enemy KBA. Air Cavalry elements engaged the area killing three additional enemy.

(4) At 011645H vicinity XD978585, elements of 1-506 Infantry received 11X122mm rockets which impacted 50 meters north of their position. Artillery and airstrikes were employed against selected enemy locations vicinity XD983622, resulting in five enemy KIA, three secondary fires, and one rocket launching site destroyed.

(5) On 1 April there were 371 helicopter gunship sorties flown and ten B52 strikes totaling 852 tons of ordnance resulting in 20 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to five. There were 108 Tac Air sorties resulting in 15 bunkers, three structures, four cache sites and four gun positions destroyed. There were 18 enemy KBA, two vehicles damaged, nine interdiction points struck, nine secondary explosions and three secondary fires.

2 APRIL

(1) At 020510H vicinity XD715446, the 77th Ranger Border Defense Battalion received an attack by fire from 50-cal 122mm rockets, resulting in one friendly KIA and five WIA.

AVII-GC

14 May-1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(3) The 77th Ranger Border Defense Battalion and the 3d Company, 79th Ranger Border Defense Battalion moved by vehicle from Khe Sanh to Dong Ha closing at 051830H.

(4) There were 707 logistical sorties flown in support of US forces and 207 logistical sorties flown in support of ARVN forces. Three aircraft were hit by hostile fire during the reporting period and all were declared nonflyable. Ten Tac Air missions were flown with no BDA reported.

(5) On 5 April there were 118 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 11 B52 sorties totaling 963 tons of ordnance resulting in 14 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to three. There were 77 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in one bunker, one foxhole, 62 vehicles and one gun position destroyed. There were six interdiction points struck, 78 secondary explosions and 33 secondary fires.

6 APRIL

(1) At 060425H vicinity YD342462, the 4th VNMC Battalion received an attack by fire of 50X82mm mortar rounds followed by a ground attack from an unknown size enemy force resulting in two ARVN KIA, one ARVN WIA, eight enemy KIA, one PW, four AK47s, one B40 rocket launcher and 50 blocks of dynamite captured.

(2) At 061008H, 150 personnel of the Hac Bao Company conducted a combat assault into XD948209 to exploit Arc Light strikes in the area. They conducted search operations and encountered no enemy resistance. Extraction time was 061708H from XD9421. Results of the operation were 15XNVA KIA, 17XAK47s, two 12.7mm machine guns, nine tons of rice, one ton of food, and 16Xhuts/bunkers destroyed.

(3) At 061155H vicinity XD973589, B/1-506 Infantry received small arms fire from an unknown size enemy force in bunkers. Elements returned automatic weapons fire and the enemy withdrew. A search of the area revealed four NVA KIA. Friendly losses were two US KIA.

(4) The 1st Battalion, 2d Regiment moved by air from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo and further moved by vehicle to Dong Ha closing at 061200H.

(5) The 1st and 4th Battalions, 54th Regiment moved by air from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo and further moved by vehicle to Lang Tho (three kilometers southwest of Hue) closing at 061430H.

(6) TF 1-77 Armor repositioned forces within AO Cheetah covering the extraction of the 5th ARVN Regiment. At 061500H, the TF initiated

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 May 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

retrograde actions along QL 9 passing through the 1st Infantry Brigade, recovering two battalions passing OPCON to the 3d Brigade, 101st Infantry Division.

(7) The 5th Regiment CP and 1st Battalion moved by air from Khe Sanh to Cam Lo and arrived at 0615H, closing at 061515H.

(8) Elements of TF 1-11 Infantry moved by air vicinity XD8639 to Quang Tri Combat Base, phasing out of Operation LAMSON 719.

(9) There were 415 logistical sorties flown in support of US forces and 61 logistical sorties in support of ARVN forces. Two aircraft were hit by hostile fire during the reporting period. One crew member was WIA. There were 16 Tac Air missions flown against enemy bunker complexes resulting in 14 bunkers destroyed, 18 bunkers damaged, six NVA KBA, two sustained fires, ten secondary explosions and one AK47 destroyed.

(10) All bridge recovery operations were completed. All M4T6 and AVLB bridges between Khe Gio (XD026561) and Khe Sanh were retrograded to Quang Tri.

(11) On 6 April there were 259 helicopter gunship sorties flown and 12 B52 strikes totaling 1,059 tons of ordnance resulting in 80 secondary explosions of a magnitude of two to 15. There were 143 Tac Air sorties flown resulting in 35 bunkers, 67 vehicles, five cache sites and three gun positions destroyed. There were 41 vehicles damaged, 18 interdiction points struck, 20 secondary explosions and 21 secondary fires. One enemy was killed.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

CONFIDENTIAL

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

12. (C) Results

a. Friendly personnel and equipment losses by allied forces during LAMSON 719.

(1) Friendly Troops:	US	RVNAF	TOTALS
(a) Killed	215	1,549	1,764
(b) Wounded	1,149	5,483	5,532
(c) Missing	38	651	689

(2) Friendly major items of equipment lost or destroyed as a result of hostile actions:

	US	RVNAF	TOTALS
(a) Small Arms Individual Weapons	363	2,107	2,470
(b) Small Arms Crew Served Weapons	98	320	418
(c) Trucks	67	211	278
(d) Combat Vehicles	76	87	163
(e) Tanks	17	54	71
(f) Artillery	4	93	97
(g) Radios	61	1,516*	1,577*
(h) Bulldozers	6	31	37

*Figures provided by RVNAF and used as the basis for requisitioning replacement items.

b. Enemy personnel and equipment losses as reported by Headquarters I Corps. Variances in the number of enemy tanks and ammunition destroyed exist between US verified and ARVN reported figures. RVNAF figures include enemy killed by Tac Air and B-52 strikes.

(1) Enemy losses caused by:	US	RVNAF	TOTALS
(a) Killed	4,795	14,565	19,360
(b) Captured	8	49	57

CONFIDENTIAL

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

- (2) Enemy equipment captured or destroyed
- (a) Individual weapons 5,170
- (b) Individual Crew Served Weapons 1,963
- (c) Vehicles 2,001 reported by USAF (RVNAF ground troops confirmed 422 trucks)
- (d) Combat Vehicles 11
- (e) Tanks 106 (US verified 88)
- (f) Artillery/mortars 13/93
- (g) Radios 98
- (h) Ammunition 170,346 tons (US verified 20,000 tons)
- (i) Rice 1,250 tons

c. Of the 615 target boxes struck by Arc Light strikes, BDA by ground troops was conducted on 55 targets. The tactical situation prevented friendly forces from conducting a greater percentage of strike assessments.

13. (C) Administrative Matters.

a. Adequacy of Plans. There were no significant GI problem areas encountered during the actual conduct of the operation. However, the following problems were associated with the planning stage:

(1) Personnel strength and casualty reporting procedures should be established during the planning phase to insure that all units are prepared to submit the required data and a communications system can be established to provide timely reporting.

(2) The GI and other staff sections with responsibility for administrative functions were precluded from active participation in advance planning of any significant amount. This forced administrative support to be provided piecemeal; however it proved adequate.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

b. Treatment and evacuation of casualties. US medical personnel performed as true professionals and rendered outstanding medical support under adverse conditions that were further complicated by language problems which caused occasional delays or cancellations of medical support due to the inability to communicate. For the ARVN medical units and facilities, Operation LAMSON 719 was an invaluable experience. Their medical operations got off to an initial slow start, but with assistance and guidance from their US advisors they became fully organized and operations. At the close of the operations, ARVN medical units had great confidence in their ability to provide medical support (see Annex B (Personnel and Administration)).

c. Logistics

(1) The basic plan visualized USASUPCOM DNG establishing a US base in the vicinity of Quang Tri. As the attack proceeded toward Khe Sanh, a forward support area (FSA 1) was to be established in the vicinity of Vandegrift, and be operational on D-Day. As QL 9, which is a one-way defile between Vandegrift and Khe Sanh was improved, FSA 2 was to be established in the second vicinity by D+4 and became operational by D+6. For 11 days, (from D+7 to D+18) ARVN forces in the Khe Sanh area were to be supported from FSA 2 with Class V to allow build-up by I ALC in the forward areas.

(2) The stockage objectives quoted in days, were 15, 3 and 3 days for BSA, FSA 1 and FSA 2 respectively. It was visualized that one-way traffic along QL 9 between FSA 1 and FSA 2 would be the limiting factor on tonnage that could be moved overland. Accordingly, planning incorporated delivery by C130 aircraft of 500 tons daily into Khe Sanh airfield, beginning at D+4. Included in the 500 tons were 48,000 gallons daily of JP4 to be delivered by C130 "bladder birds". Further visualization required the delivery by truck of 1,000 tons per day to FSA 2. ARVN Class III requirements were to be met from US stocks at FSA 2. Subsequent to D+17, airlift into the Khe Sanh airfield would be devoted to ARVN support.

d. All support was to be rendered by the 26th General Support Group of the Da Nang Support Command. This is a normal support arrangement for US forces in Vietnam. However, as XXIV Corps was the senior US headquarters, close and continuous coordination and liaison were required. The location of the headquarters of the 26th General Support Group in the vicinity of XXIV Corps headquarters was extremely helpful. Representatives of HQ, DSC or 26th General Support Group were included in all XXIV Corps briefings and planning conferences (see Annex D (Logistics)).

14. (C) Special Equipment or Techniques.

a. Cavalry-Engineer Team. A technique exploited by the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) during the Operation LAMSON 719 was the mechanized engineer armored cavalry road building team. The cavalry-engineer

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

team usually consisted of one mechanized engineer platoon with one or two bulldozers plus one armored cavalry platoon. This organization was able to provide a highly armed road building team on restricted grades and terrain which limited the use of wheeled vehicles. A pioneer road was constructed rapidly through rugged terrain and steep grades. As required, the grades were reduced and the road surface improved for wheeled vehicles. The armored vehicle also provided rapid reconnaissance in areas with high elephant grass. It is significant that during the entire operation cavalry-engineer teams were attacked only twice when the road building was pushed into known areas of enemy operation.

b. Remote controlled ambush. Remote controlled claymore mechanical ambushes were employed in conjunction with sensor devices by the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mech) with satisfactory results. It is recommended that this technique be developed for increased use of the system.

c. Perimeter Defense. On semi-fixed fire bases and patrol bases, it was essential to reposition armored vehicles on the perimeter after dark. This technique denied the enemy knowledge of vehicles and weapons positioning and denied the enemy accurate knowledge of the defensive positions.

d. Resupply in Areas of Rugged Terrain. The value of the M548 cargo carrier was demonstrated daily in the resupply of armored units. Many units were located in terrain that could not be negotiated by wheeled vehicles. The successful delivery of necessary supplies by M548s permitted combat operations to continue with minimum interruption.

e. Rigging. A field expedient was used for Flame Drop Operations in an attempt to overcome the shortage of green tape and padding material used to pad the metal parts of cargo nets and slings used in flame drop operations. The 101st Airborne Division (Ambl) used rubber strips from sections of unserviceable inner tubes. Filler was placed around the metal ring or clasp and the rubber strips were placed in place with nylon cord.

f. Generator use. In order to reduce the number of generators required to power FM radios in the division TOC (FWD), the 101st Airborne Division (Ambl) used rectifiers from AM radio sets and powered by an AC generator to power FM radios. This freed DC generators for use at fire support bases and ground relay station sites.

g. LZ Preparation. A technique in fire planning for the preparation of an LZ used by the I Corps Artillery Commander was the division of a LZ into a quadrant for each fire support means available. Tac Air, AFA, artillery and gunships could be employed simultaneously when concurrently available. This technique can be considered based upon variables

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

such as size of LZ, availability of fire support, time available prior to insertion, etc.

h. Arc Light Strikes. In attempts to counter enemy strong points situated on prominent terrain features, GVN forces requested Arc Light strikes on these targets in preference to Tac Air strikes. It was felt that the heavy target saturation compensated for ordnance that was delivered on the target by Tac Air and fell on the slopes of the position causing little or no damage to strong point positions. To further increase the effectiveness of saturation bombing a two by one kilometer box instead of three by one kilometer box was suggested.

i. Artillery to Supplement Arc Light Strikes. A technique developed to supplement Arc Light strikes involved a 20-30 minute artillery preparation on draws and stream beds adjacent to target areas prior to the strike. During and immediately after the strike, heavy fires were delivered along either side of the long axis of the target box. Thirty minutes to one hour after the strike, fires were suddenly delivered into the target box itself. This was reported to be an effective means of forcing adjacent enemy units into the target box and inflicting casualties on search teams who entered the box to look for survivors of the strike.

j. Joint Coordination Group.

(1) Background.

(a) Early in Phase II it became apparent that greater coordination was required between I Corps and XXIV Corps in planning the use of US assets in support of the RVNAF effort in Laos. The initial channel for requests went from Commanding General, I Corps located at TAC GP at Khe Sanh to I Corps Forward at Dong Ha to XXIV Corps Forward at Quang Tri, where tasking missions were passed to appropriate US agencies. The need for a coordination facility that could keep the Commanding General, I Corps and his staff advised of available assets to serve as a basis for decision making became manifest when requirements could not be met from available assets.

(b) To remedy this situation, a joint coordination group to serve as the XXIV Corps Commanders personal liaison with the Commanding General, I Corps was formed. The group was directed by a general officer and staffed with representatives from XXIV Corps G3, Corps Artillery, the 101st Abn Division (Ambl) and US Air Force. The group provided information on available US assets to the Commanding General, I Corps and his staff permitting them information was then passed to XXIV Corps (Fwd) TOC for translation into required orders to US units.

(2) Establishment.

94
~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(a) On 1 March the JCG was established at I Corps TAC CP with the Commanding General, XXIV Corps Artillery serving as its head. The Assistant Division Commander (Operations), 101st Abn Div (Ambl), serving as aviation officer, initiated personal coordination with Chief JCG and CG, I Corps. On 3 March a USAF air liaison officer and a permanent liaison team from the 101st Abn Div (Ambl) joined the group and on 4 March the group was completed with the addition of a representative from G3 XXIV Corps and ODCSOPS, 7th US Air Force who participated on a part-time basis. The CG, ARVN Artillery command was designated as special assistant to CG, I Corps and served as the principal point of contact to Chief, JCG.

(b) Communications were established by 12th Signal Group and included secure FM nest to XXIV Corps (FWD), TOC and 101st Abn Div (Ambl); radio teletype to I Corps (FWD) at Dong Ha, and land line communications to the other major agencies involved in the operation.

(3) Operation.

(a) The success of the JCG was attributable to the fact that the Chief, JCG was immediately available to CG, I Corps and was able to rely on extensive communications to obtain data and, where necessary, the decisions of CG, XXIV Corps.

(b) The Aviation Officer, JCG, was able to provide current availability data on aircraft and was thereby able to assist CG, I Corps by providing information required for his decision. This allowed realistic plans to information on helicopter availability.

(c) The integration of information gained from reports of ARVN Commanders to CG, I Corps and status of US support elements involved in operations in progress permitted the Chief, JCG to make recommendations to both CG, I Corps and CG, XXIV Corps. In the latter case, when recommendations resulted in decisions affecting employment of US assets, communications were available for the immediate issuance of orders.

(d) It is important to note that the JCG did not assume any of the functions of the I Corps or XXIV Corps staffs.

(4) Assessment of JCG.

(a) The effectiveness of the JCG is not subject to quantifiable factors. Subjectively, it appears that the JCG provided a vital link in the successful application of US resources in support of Operation LAMSON 719.

(b) The JCG did not and could not supplant the existing advisory echelons. Rather, it complemented the actions of the advisors in that it was the source of current information on available US assets. Additionally, the JCG facilitated coordination efforts between the advisory

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

elements and XXIV Corps.

(c) The use of a joint coordination group concept is worthy of consideration in any host country where large scale operations are to be supported by US forces. It can serve to insure a more effective and efficient use of US assets in support of the host country commanders's decisions in the accomplishment of his mission.

(d) Airmobile operations.

(1) Command Control. Enough C&C aircraft and parties for continuous airborne command control over each critical point in the airmobile operation should be provided. A requirement exists for separate air mission commanders and C&C aircraft and parties for each element of the airmobile team freeing the senior air mission and ground commanders to concentrate on the combat assault itself with full confidence that responsible commanders were effectively handling all other aspects of the operation.

(2) Reconnaissance. Thorough, early reconnaissance of flight routes, landing and pick up zones, and the entire objective area by air cavalry is required in addition to continuous reconnaissance during conduct of the airmobile operation, particularly the combat assault. Within an area designated by the ground commander, air cavalry should select recommended landing zones, pick-up zones, flight routes, approach and departure routes prior to arrival of the air mission and ground commanders. In conjunction with artillery and forward air controllers, the air cavalry commander commences preparatory fires on landing zones and approach and departure routes. After the ground and air mission commanders arrive at the objective area and assume control of preparatory fires, air cavalry continues reconnaissance activities around the objective area and assists in target acquisition and direction of supporting fires. When the ground and air mission commanders judge the LZ and approaches to be adequately prepared for the combat assault, they shift supporting fires and direct the air cavalry commander to conduct low level reconnaissance of the landing zone to determine if it is ready for the combat assault to begin. This final reconnaissance just before the launching of the combat assault is the most critical reconnaissance of all. The air mission and ground commanders usually approve the air cavalry commander's recommendation either to begin the combat assault or to employ additional preparatory firepower.

(3) Selection of landing zone. Practices and patterns in selecting landing zones should be varied. Constructed LZs should be used in preference to natural LZs and slope and lower ground LZs should be used in preference to high ground LZs. High ground landing zones are vulnerable to preregistered enemy mortar and artillery fires and permit enemy weapons on surrounding low ground 360 degree coverage of approach and departure routes. Landings zones on slopes and on relatively low ground are less likely to be anticipated by the enemy, less likely to receive preregistered indirect fire attack, and offer some defilade from enemy fires.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-OG

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

(4) Determination of LZ time. LZ time and the commencement of a combat assault are keyed to adequate firepower preparation of the landing zone and approach and departure routes rather than to an arbitrarily pre-determined time. The ground and air mission commanders have the authority to establish LZ times whenever they decide that the LZ has been adequately prepared by supporting firepower for safe insertion of the troop-lift aircraft.

(5) Firepower. Concentrated, massive volumes of firepower are placed on landing zones, adjacent areas, and along approach and departure routes prior to all combat assaults. Air strikes, artillery and armed helicopter fires are employed in the preparatory fires. Of these fires, air strikes are the most destructive and decisive. At a time the ground and air mission commanders consider the landing zone and approaches to have been adequately prepared with firepower, they shift the fires to adjacent areas and send the air cavalry to conduct low-level reconnaissance. If the air cavalry draws enemy fire or sees enemy activity or installations or suspicious areas which they judge to require additional preparatory firepower, the reconnaissance commander recommends resumption of preparatory fires. The fires are resumed until once again the ground and air mission commanders decide that the time has come to shift the fires and have the air cavalry conduct another low-level reconnaissance. Only when the air cavalry recommends and the ground and air commanders decide that the landing zone and approach route firepower preparation is adequate, does the air mission commander launch the combat assault. When the combat assault begins, supporting fires shift to adjacent targets. The supporting fires continue until the combat assault is completed. All commanders should be alert to the possibility of the NVA concealing themselves and withholding fire during the air cavalry's low-level reconnaissance in order to deliver surprise fire against the troop-lift aircraft when they enter the landing zone.

(6) Air strikes. The massive firepower provided by air strikes is especially useful in support of airmobile operations, particularly combat assaults. Multiple B52 strikes frequently begin preparatory fires on objective areas for combat assaults. Tactical air strikes are employed to assist in preparing landing zones and approach and departure routes for combat assaults. Ideally, a forward air controller is continuously overhead and air strikes are scheduled on station every ten or fifteen minutes from beginning of preparatory fires until completion of the combat assault. In LAMSON 719, both Vietnamese and US commanders normally gave first priority of air strikes to support of combat assaults or extractions, and it required a senior commander's decision to change this priority of allocation of air power.

(7) CBU smoke. Prior to initial touchdown of the first aircraft in the combat assault, and ideally lasting for the duration of the landing of the troop lift aircraft, USAF aircraft lay down a smoke screen mixed with casualty producing CBU munitions to screen the downwind flank of the

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

landing zone from enemy fires and observation. A minimum of four sets of air are required to provide a reasonably effective smoke screen. Considerable care is taken to insure that the smoke does not drift over and obscure the landing zone itself.

(8) Flight routes. Flight routes are planned to avoid known enemy AAA weapons and to pass over friendly positions when possible, thus providing safe havens for aircraft and crews that may be forced to land. Flight routes are varied and changed from day to day and mission to mission depending upon the location of friendly units and enemy AAA weapons.

(9) Low level, nap of the earth flight. Under certain circumstances combat assaults, resupply missions, and medical evacuation were better conducted by low level, nap of the earth flight rather than by high altitude flight. Aircraft flying the nap of the earth present fleeting targets to enemy gunners and gain surprise by their sudden and unexpected appearance in the landing zone and quick departure. When this tactic is used, a guide aircraft must fly at a higher altitude above the low flying aircraft to vector them to their objective. Nap of the earth flight is often appropriate and effective when aircraft fly into a firebase or friendly position surrounded by enemy who use "hugging" tactics and place accurate fire on the landing zones.

(10) Approaches to and departures from landing zones. Steep, rapid descents to and ascents from landing zones while maintaining varying velocities in three directions reduces the effectiveness of fire against aircraft from enemy weapons located near the landing zone and along approach and departure routes. Approaches and departures normally followed the same route in order to take maximum advantage of the prelanding reconnaissance and preparatory firepower.

(11) "Secure" landing and pickup zones. Secure landing and pickup zones did not exist in LAMSON 719. Friendly firebases and positions were so small and widely dispersed and enemy forces and weapons so numerous and pressed in so close to friendly forces and positions, that every landing zone and pickup zone in Laos was potentially and usually subject to enemy fire. Consequently, every airmobile operation was planned as a combat operation, complete with reconnaissance and fire support. Proximity of friendly forces inhibits use of defensive fires during missions into "secure" LZs and PZs. Commanders and aviators prefer going into new LZs by combat assault supported by unrestricted firepower rather than into the so called "secure" LZs and PZs where friendly troops locations inhibit employment of supporting and defensive fires.

(12) Breaking off a combat assault. The most difficult decision a commander must make during an airmobile operation is to break off or interrupt a combat assault once it has begun. When the landing of troops has begun, the pressures are great to continue the combat assault until

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

all troops are on the ground. When enemy fire against troop lift aircraft entering and departing the landing zone becomes so heavy and accurate and aircraft and human losses become so great that the success of the combat assault is jeopardized, the commander must break off the combat assault and create conditions that permit its resumption. There are several actions the commander can take to resume an interrupted combat assault. He can use additional firepower, change approach and departure routes and altitudes, aircraft touchdown points, or the landing zone itself. Troops already in the landing zone can assist by attacking and destroying enemy forces and weapons and by securing the original or an alternate landing zone. At such time, there is a premium on the imaginativeness, resourcefulness, determination, and professional competence of the ground, air mission, and air cavalry commanders, as well as on the courage and will of the aircraft crews and ground troops.

(13) Senior commander aloft. A senior airmobile commander should be aloft over the operational area during the crucial phases of airmobile operations, particularly during combat assaults and extractions. This senior commander is separate from the ground and air mission commanders. His presence expedites decision making and coordination and facilitates acquiring additional resources needed to support the operation. The senior airmobile commander monitors appropriate radio nets, follows the action closely, provides guidance to the air mission commander, keeps higher headquarters informed, and calls for additional resources or support as needed. He is a decision maker and expeditor. Most importantly, the senior airmobile commander aloft receives the recommendations of the air mission and ground commanders and personally makes the crucial "go" or "no go" decisions for crucial combat assaults and extractions. This command arrangement is essential for a combined operation such as LAMSON 719. The principle may be equally valid for unilateral US Army airmobile operations.

15. (C) Evaluation

a. LAMSON 719 was a combined operation conducted under unique circumstances. An international boundary defined and restricted the operations of the forces involved. There was no single command of the two nation force and ARVN forces were operating in Laos without the possibility of reinforcement or direct support from US ground forces and without the traditional assistance rendered by the US advisors. Additionally, ARVN forces operated out of their traditional areas of operation against large, well equipped conventional enemy forces.

b. As such, Operation LAMSON 719 was a real test of the effectiveness of the RVNAF and the Vietnamization program. A noteworthy consideration is the fact that for the first time in the conflict the RVNAF could conduct two simultaneous out-of-country operations without jeopardizing the security of the populated areas in South Vietnam. Aside from the measurable local effect, this in itself will have

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

14 MAY 1971

an as yet undetermined impact on North Vietnamese plans and operations in the future. The enemy will no longer be able to assume the impunity from attack he had in Laos and Cambodia prior to 1970. Far reaching effects will be felt in the diminution of supplies and forces available to support his operations in South Vietnam and against the Royal Laotian and Cambodian forces in their respective countries.

c. The operational lessons learned and tactics developed will prove to be invaluable when properly applied to future planning and operations. Specific tactics and lessons learned in each area of interest are addressed in detail in the respective Annexes of this report. For this reason the tactics and lessons learned will be addressed in general terms as they applied to the entire operation.

(1) Command and control.

(a) The lack of unity of command and the existence of two equal headquarters in the same general area with overlapping tactical areas of interest compounded problems generated by lack of information of available assets required by staffs to conduct viable planning. A great deal of the difficulty was headed off by initial joint planning. However, due to the close-hold nature of the operation, the planning staff was extremely small and it later became necessary to establish a joint coordination group to serve as personal liaison to the Commanding General, I Corps.

(b) In an attempt to enforce the strictest security measures, information on plans and operations was often withheld until the latest possible moment before staff planning and coordination was begun. CG, I Corps had to weigh the advantages of close-hold planning against the loss of support an informed properly directed staff could offer. On the other hand, communications security was often violated by the use of non-secure communications lines to discuss plans and intentions with key subordinate commanders. Communications security is the key to operational security and any advantage to close-hold planning was often negated by the failure to properly apply communication security techniques.

(2) Operations.

(a) The mobility granted an ARVN Commander in Laos by American helicopter assets was undoubtedly one of his greatest advantages over the enemy. Mobility must also be considered in terms of economy of force so as to provide mass at any point. Reliance on helicopters as an almost exclusive means of transportation, particularly over minimal distance and for low priority missions, constituted a misuse of an invaluable asset.

(b) The failure of RVNAF to actively patrol and operate away from a base allowed the enemy to bring his fire teams within 82mm mortar range of firebases, inflict casualties, hamper MEDIVAC and resupply operations, and eventually build sufficient strength to enable him to strangle

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

14 MAY 1971

AVII:GC

SUBJECT: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

and overtake the position. The tactics of remaining static on a firebase and allowing the enemy to mass in an attempt to destroy him massive air power, artillery and gunships transferred the initiative to the enemy and allowed him to tie down forces, inflict casualties by attrition and attack at the time of his choosing. As such, the whole traditional concept of the fire support base as used by both US forces and RVNAF must be critically examined before it is used in a mid-intensity environment as existed in LAMSON 719. Consideration should be given to placing the fire support base in other than prominent terrain where it can be precisely located and targeted by the enemy. Fire support bases located in valleys, taking maximum advantage of cover and concealment, employing more mortars in relation to light artillery to aid in close in defense and the movement of the base before the enemy can locate it sufficiently to mass against it, might offer a workable alternative in the type of environment that existed in LAMSON 719.

(3) Lines of Communication.

(a) There were basically two lines of communication; one air and one ground, for the forces committed to LAMSON 719. Within the boundaries of the ARVN, QL 9 was secured by US forces who screened and conducted a mobile defense against a determined enemy effort to interdict this road. As ARVN forces proceeded into Laos this protection could not be extended. The reliance on helicopter movement has already been discussed, but QL 9 inside Laos was the only ground LOC available to the Armored brigade. Problems encountered along this route point out the requirement to secure a ground LOC for forces that are air transportable or airmobile. Failure to maneuver off the main road and the inability to evacuate damaged vehicles from the route seriously hampered movement along the route of withdrawal and caused the significant loss of tanks, armored personnel carriers and other equipment.

d. While the total effects of LAMSON 719 may not be completely evaluated for some time to come, conclusive results that can be stated are:

(1) Enemy plans for movement of supplies and equipment south during the months of February and March were changed by LAMSON 719.

(2) Enemy units and replacement personnel enroute south were diverted to the enemy forces opposing LAMSON 719.

(3) Thousands of tons of ammunition, POL and other supplies and equipment were destroyed. The enemy had planned to use these supplies in support of future operations and planned on stockpiling large quantities of supplies in Base Area 604. In addition to consuming large quantities of supplies while engaging friendly forces committed to LAMSON 719, the enemy had to remove supplies already stored in Northern

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

AVII-GC

14 MAY 1971

Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAMSON 719 (U)

Military Region 1 and move them back to his base areas.

(4) Enemy personnel losses were extremely heavy. While these losses can eventually be replaced, the requirement to replace losses in such regiments as the 1st VC, 29th, 36th, 64th and 803d will draw off replacement personnel programmed for other units and will probably cause the main force and local force units to have a low priority for replacements for an extended period.

(5) Detailed knowledge is now available concerning enemy depot locations, POL pipelines, and road networks in Base Area 604. This knowledge is permitting more precise targeting and assisting in the further destruction of enemy storage areas, truck parks, depots and other logistic installations.

(6) LAMSON 719 has added to the confidence and experience of the RVNAF. The exploits of individual officers, the men and their arms has added to the history and traditions of those units that participated.

16. (U) Recommendations. In the weeks and months ahead, US advisors and commanders who work with and support RVNAF must stress the noteworthy performance and achievements of the RVNAF and the general positive aspects of the results and effects of LAMSON 719. The RVNAF need to be reassured that their efforts and sacrifices during LAMSON 719 were significant in furthering the overall GVN effort against continued NVA aggression against the Republic of Vietnam. At the same time, advisors must tactfully stress the correction of deficiencies determined during the operation, and take those actions necessary to maintain the forward momentum of the RVNAF.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

L. B. Proctor
L. B. PROCTOR

Lieutenant Colonel, AGC
Adjutant General

15 Annexes

A - Task Organization

B - Personnel and Administration

C-- Intelligence

D - Logistics

E - Civil Military Operations

F - Air Support

G - Artillery

H - Aviation

I - Chemical

J - DEFCORDS

K - Engineer

L - Information

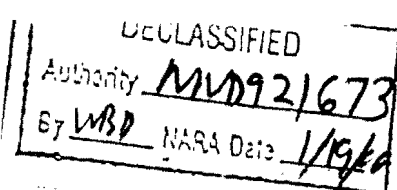
M - Signal

N - USMC Support

Z - Distribution List

102

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, XXIV CORPS
APO San Francisco 96349

AVII-GCO

14 June 1971

SUBJECT: Letter of Transmittal

SEE DISTRIBUTION

Attached herewith as inclosures 1 through 5 are pages 103 through 107 (figures 1-5) to Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation LAM SON 719, for addition between page 102 and Annex A, basic report, 14 May 1971.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

W. H. Smith
W. H. SMITH
CPT, AGC
Asst AG

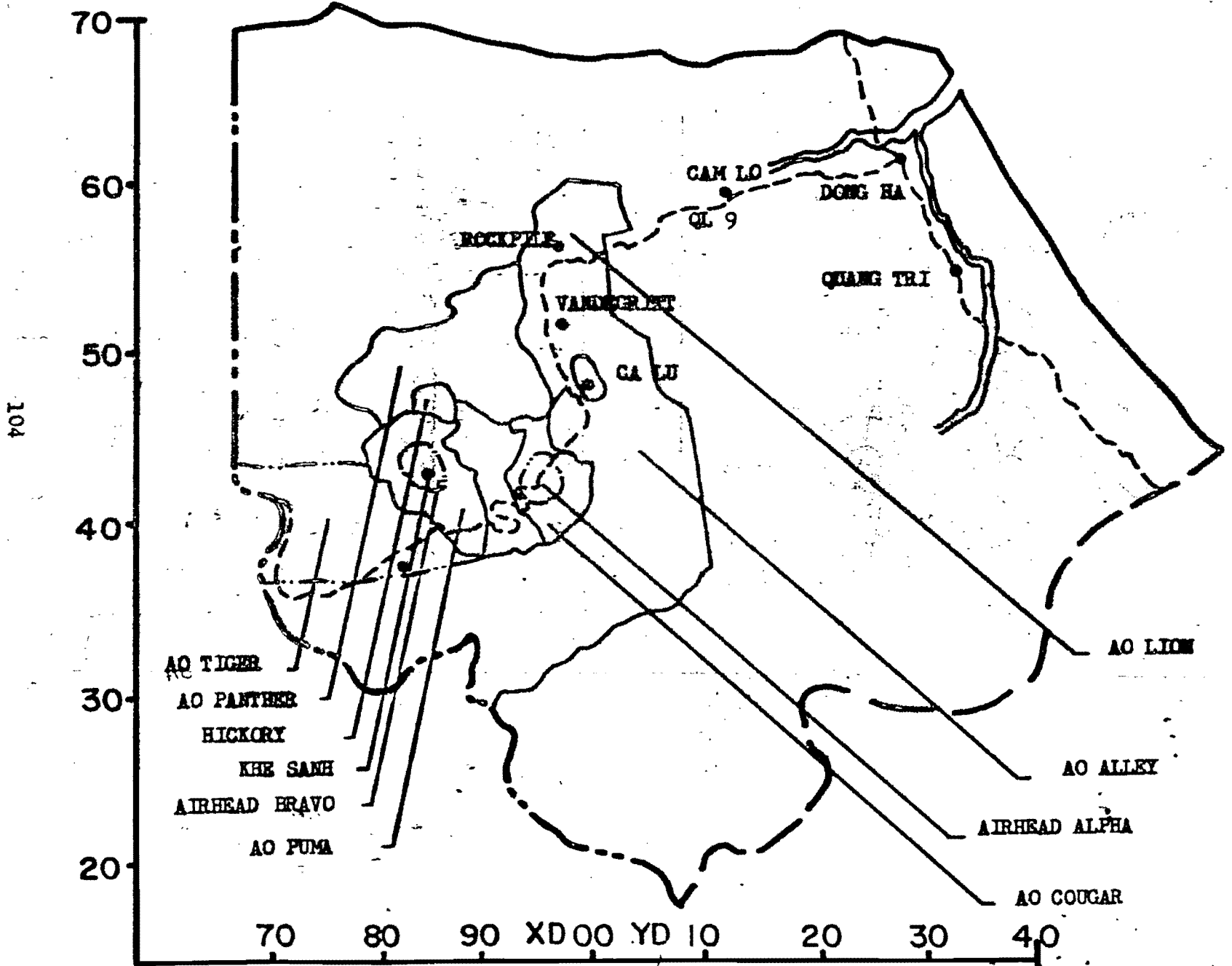
DISTRIBUTION:
Annex 2

Regraded unclassified
when separated from class-
ified inclosures

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DECLASSIFIED
Authority MM0921673
by WSP NASA Date 1/9/16

Figure Number 2 to Combat Operations After Action Report LAMSON 719 (U)

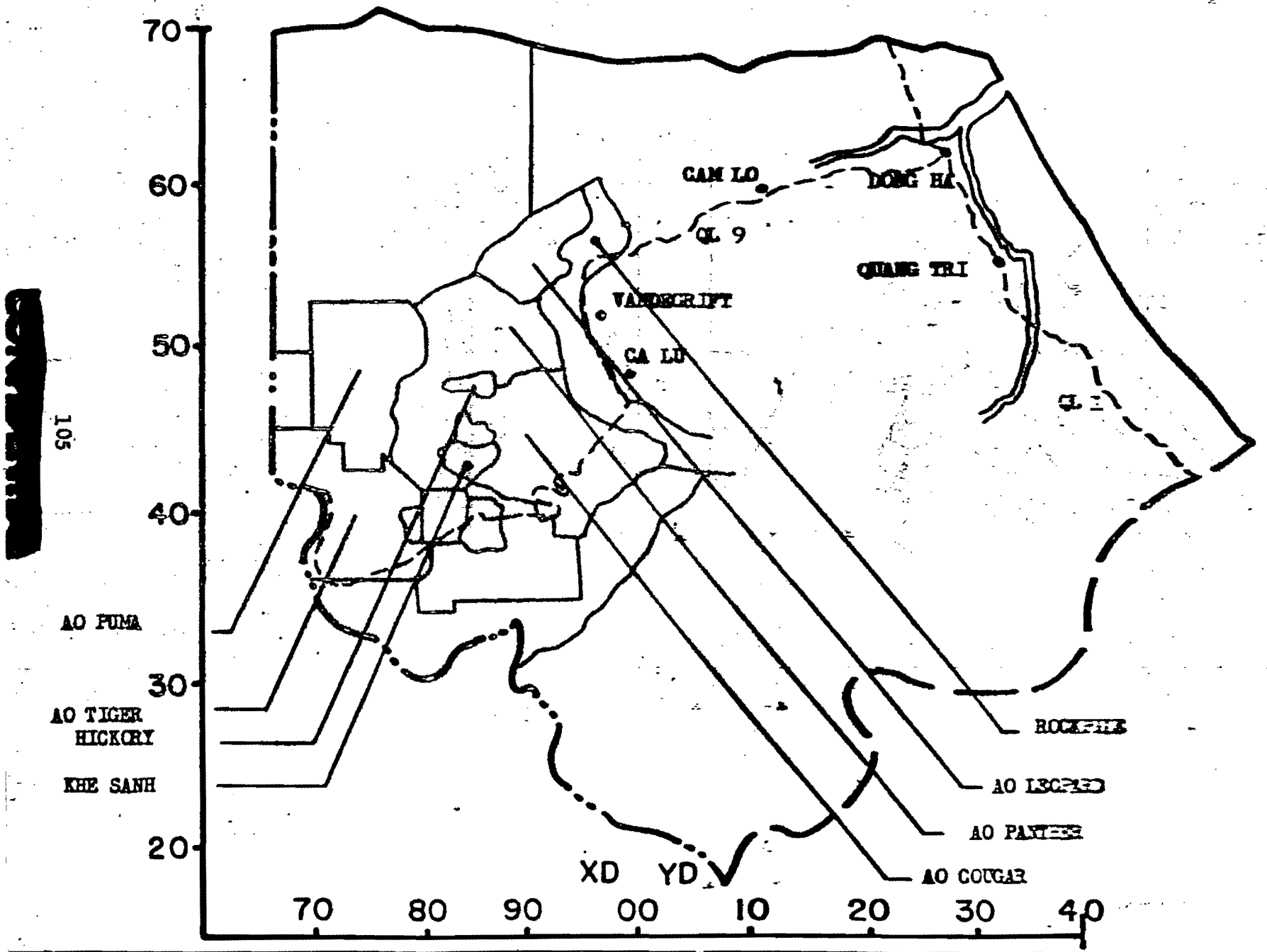


Continued

DECLASSIFIED
 Authority MWD921673
 by W8D NASA Date 1/19/18

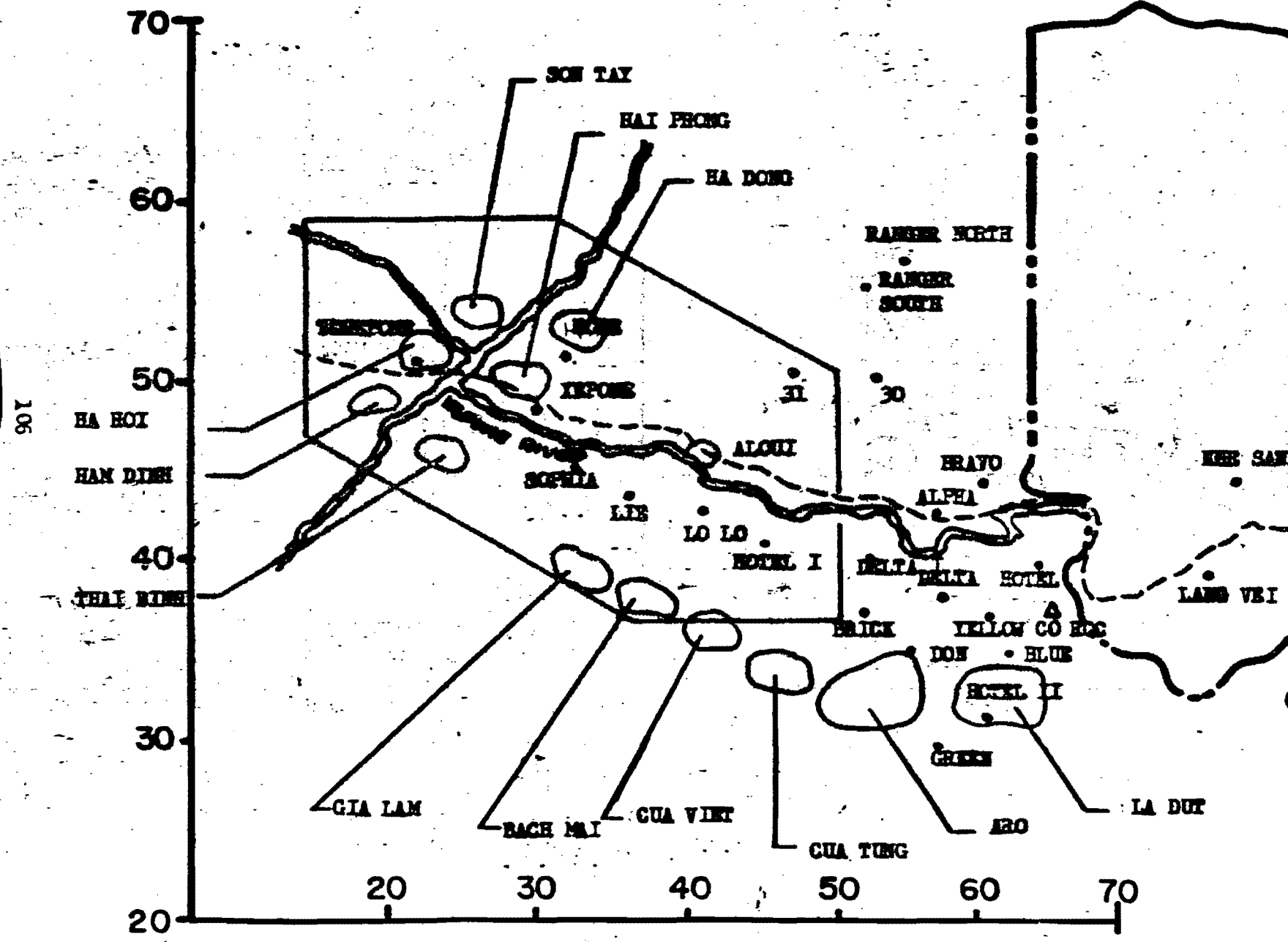
Figure 3 to Combat Operations After Action Report LAMSON 71.9 (U)

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~



UNCLASSIFIED
 Authority: *MM921673*
 67 M8D
 NSA Data 1/19/64

Figure 4 to Combat Operations After Action Report LAMSON 719 (U)



DECLASSIFIED
Authority: MD921673
BY: W8D NARA Date: 1/9/16

Figure 5 to Combat Operations After Action Report
LANSON 719 (U)

