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 By GW NARA Date 4/5/00

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
 Troop A 2d Sqn (Ambl), 17th Cavalry  
 101st Airborne Division (Ambl)  
 APO San Francisco 96383

AVDG-SQ-A

5 March 1971

SUBJECT: Feeder After Action Report Covering the Period  
 1 February 1971 to 28 February 1971, Operations  
 Jefferson Glenn and Lam Sonh 719.

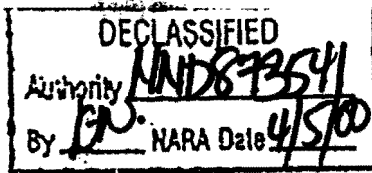
Commanding Officer  
 2d Sqn (Ambl) 17th Cavalry  
 101st Airborne Division (Ambl)  
 APO San Francisco 96383

CLASSIFIED BY: CDR, 101  
 SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION  
 SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE ORDER 11652  
 AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO YEAR  
 INTERVALS  
 DECLASSIFIED ON: 31 DECEMBER 1977

1. Summary: The missions of Troop A during the reporting period was to provide visual reconnaissance and security to elements of the 101st Airborne Division, 1st Bde 5th Mechanized Infantry Division, and I Corps ARVN. On 8 February 1971, Troop A gave the majority of its support to I Corps ARVN for the conduct of Lam Sonh 719 in Laos.
2. 1 February 71: Negative spot reports were received today due to a weather hold on missions. Aircraft maintenance was pulled throughout the day.
3. 2 February 71: Missions for the second were the same as for the last 3 days with the only change being in the A/O boundaries. The first team reporting heavy truck and foot traffic during the night heading east from the ford to XD800232; however, no trucks were spotted. The VR around 616 showed a number of bunkers and trails with recent activity then started several fires in vicinity XD813234. As the team moved east along the road they reported several structures that might have been used to park vehicles and were of heavy log construction. These were spotted in two locations and skyspots were requested on them. At coordinates XD852240, a quarry was discovered and a large stone hutch was spotted along 616 and at XD862237 a trail marker made out of a bomb fin assembly with a rock on top was spotted. At XD873229, two log bridges were spotted. Trp A continued to VR 616 and the surrounding area during the afternoon and discovered another storage site with 8-10 wood floor storage areas and two bunkers and eleven hootches. The team engaged the area and destroyed one hootch. In the VIC of XD918236 two large 15X75 meter wood structures were found. The structures were connected by a road. A possible vehicle was spotted but the team had to break station for fuel. During the afternoon Trp A extracted two ranger teams (Jackel and Atlas) and inserted two others (Cowboys and Scout). All of the LZ's and PZ's were green and were completed by 1530. Delta ground was inserted on 616 at XD855241 and a 81mm and 106mm were dropped to them at 1745. Trp A "Blues"

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GROUP 4  
 Downgraded to 3 year intervals  
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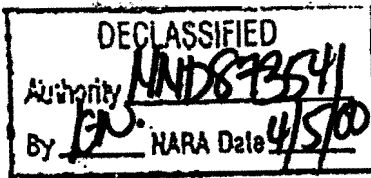
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were inserted on FSB Saigon to secure a radio relay site. Both remained overnight. The rest of the reports for the day covered the VR of 616 and showed the usual bunkers and hootches. At coordinates XD812231, a camouflaged truck was discovered with two tires missing with recent activity in the last 3 to 4 days. The team engaged with 20mm and destroyed the truck. At coordinate XD854236, a 12.7mm machinegun position was spotted by "D" Troop. It was covered with canvas and contained a mount, 100 rounds of 12.7mm, and several empty ammo cases. Two Arc Lights were scheduled for the night of the 2nd and 3rd near Delta Ground's position and approximately 10 kilometers east. BDA's will be conducted on the 3rd.

4. 3 February 71: Missions for 3 February were VR of the Vietnamese Salient and the insertion and extraction of Trp A's ARPs and Trp D. Trp A's ARPs, inserted in the VIC of FSB Saigon, acted as radio relay for D Trp who was conducting a ground reconnaissance along 616 in VIC XD854239. At 0945, A Trp extracted the heavy weapons from D Trp and re-inserted them with the ARP. Two Pink Teams worked the area along and south of 616 looking for movement along the road and trails in the area. The teams reported signs of movement to the southeast in the last twelve hours. At XD828238, Cobra engaged an area of heavy activity with negative results. At coordinates XD778220, Cobras engaged and destroyed a 15' sampan with rockets. The team also VR'd the area around "D" Troop. The ground element found several bunkers and some 12.7mm ammo (100 rds) in one. The next team on station reported the usual bunkers and hootches in the area, but the LOH took fire from XD809208. The A/C sustained no hits. The team spotted and engaged a storage site and results were 40 secondary explosions. The cache site appeared to be full of rockets. The next team employed A/S VIC XD9024. The A/S destroyed nine bunkers and two 12.7mm positions, while uncovering several more bunkers. An A/S in VIC XD335239 destroyed nine additional bunkers. The teams continued to VR along 616 to the north and reported sighting fifteen 55 gal drums. Along 616 "D" Troop was extracted from VIC XD837240 at 1530. VR of 616 continued and at XD918236, the team engaged and destroyed a 2½ ton truck. At 1644 the ARPs were extracted from Saigon. The team spotted three 12.7mm pits without weapons in VIC XD903242. All teams returned to Quang Tri.

5. 4 February 71: Today Squadron began moving to Khe Sanh by convoy and slick at 0816. Troop A ARPs were inserted at the airstrip and a LOH was assigned to the Delta Troop convoy to provide security. The team working northwestern 616 took heavy AK-47 fire and 616 showed signs of heavy truck traffic VIC XD811731. The C&C also took AK and 12.7mm fire in VIC XD9023. A large bunker complete with hootches was in the same area. Troop A "Blues" walked into a mine field on the edge of the airstrip. One was killed and three were wounded. The personnel were McGuired out (XD84542)

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Bravo Troop engaged some NVA in the open and got five KBA's and requested assistance from ARA, Troop A working VIC XD918232 spotted two flashes (possible 12.7mm positions).

6. 5 February 71: Due to bad weather teams did not get to the A/O until after 1600. The team took heavy AK fire and spotted three pits with interconnecting tunnels and engaged with negative results.

7. 6 February 71: Due to the bad weather teams did not get to the A/O until after 1400. The teams worked in the VIC of XD9123 and took extremely heavy fire all day until leaving the A/O. Arty was employed in VIC XD9123 with unknown results.

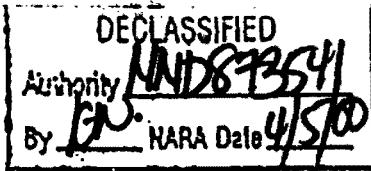
8. 7 February 71: Due to bad weather no teams flew the A/O. Log runs were made as necessary.

9. 8 February 71: Troop A today crossed the border of Laos to support operation Lam Son 719 to the west of Khe Sanh. Large numbers of bunkers, trails, hootches, pits and ammo boxes were spotted and all had recent activity. Several NVA were sited in the open. A possible motor pool was also located. Shot-ats were reported throughout the day by AK-47, .51 caliber and .30 caliber weapons. Three hits were reported; however, the A/C were able to fly back to Khe Sanh. Five KBA's were confirmed today. ARA was employed during the day to assist our heavy teams complete missions slated for the day.

10. 9 February 71: Weather prevented any missions from being flown today. All A/C and pilots were on stand by at Khe Sanh. The day was spent building a bunker and setting up operations at Khe Sanh. Near the end of the day the weather broke enough for the A/C to be flown back to Quang Tri. Maintenance was conducted on the A/C that night at Quang Tri.

11. 10 February 71: Troop A worked in the region to the west of the Khe Sanh. FAC and ARA were both utilized again today. A LOH and a Cobra were shot down and all four pilots were rescued. Both A/C were destroyed in the crash. Pits, trenches, trails, bunkers, and a garden spot were all observed, each showing signs of a recent activity. Troop A conducted a BDA for Air Force A/S. The BDA revealed the following: several bunkers destroyed, a large L-shaped trench destroyed, a .51 pit destroyed, two hootches uncovered, and a large trench uncovered. During the day, several NVA were spotted in the open. Seven were killed by Troop A pilots.

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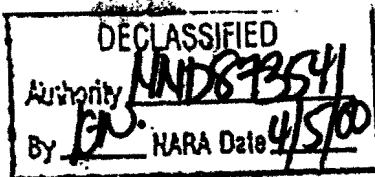
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12. 11 February 71: The mission for today was VR and support for ARVN ground elements operating in Laos. The first team in the area took heavy AK fire in VIC XD692245. No hits were received on any aircraft and the team continued with the mission. The VR showed some very recent track and wheel vehicle traffic (VIC XD6317) and a POL point at the fork of a road. The second team worked the area north and east of the first. This area showed signs of fairly recent activity with several trails, fields, and animal pens being reported. In VIC of XD589289 one NVA was spotted running into a cave which was engaged with unknown results. The third team working in the VIC XD6026 took fire from several AK's but sustained no hits. In VIC XD6026 the team spotted a large cache site two kilometers in diameter with a four lane road running around it and was heavily camouflaged. As the team worked the area they continued to receive heavy small arms fire but took no hits. After engaging the area a number of secondary explosions were seen. The C&C called for airstrikes as the relief team came on station. The fourth team working the area also took fire from 12.7mm weapon and engaged it with unknown results. The aircraft spotted two NVA and a storage POL point at XD596264. The team engaged and obtained secondary explosions. After three airstrikes, the team conducted a BDA for the FAC on station. The strikes had destroyed numerous bunkers and hootches and several secondaries were recorded. The fifth team on station brought a section of ARA to work over the 12.7mm in the area. The team once again took fire from the weapons and the team engaged the target. Our team and ARA both destroyed one weapon and ARA engaged a third weapon position. In VIC XD621280, Troop A recorded it's first confirmed kill of the day while ARA continued to engage another 12.7mm and four NVA seen running for a bunker. The team flew cover for the ground elements as they moved into the cache site to pull a ground BDA and gave Troop A five additional KBA's and captured a total of four AK-47's. As the last team left the area, six NVA were engaged with four KEA's for Troop A and two additional secondaries in the cache site. Total was ten KBA's for Troop A.

13. 12 February 71: The team returned to the area of the cache site and began working for the ground elements. The people on the ground reported the team was taking fire but the aircraft had no knowledge of this. A section of ARA working in VIC XD612264 took fire from a 12.7mm and Troop A's team engaged with unknown results. The ground troop reported that the bunker and storage pits in the area yielded four 12.7mm AAW and ammo, numerous 122mm rockets, and were still uncovering a large number of uniforms and materials.

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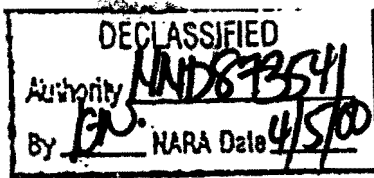
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Early in the afternoon a team spotted another cache site in VIC XD622240 with a number of large boxes, 122mm warheads, hootches, and storage sites. The team engaged the area and received five secondary explosions and three KBA's for Troop A. In the VIC XD652223, C&C aircraft reported another cache area with storage pit and boxes. The team engaged the area resulting in numerous secondaries and one KBA. The ground forces in the old cache site have captured approximately 400 individual weapons, 6 AAW, 6 machineguns, and gave Troop A credit for 50 NVA KBA's. In VIC XD650231 a hootch was destroyed with commo wire running into it from the southeast to the northwest. In the VIC of XD612224, one team engaged and destroyed a 37mm gun and received secondary explosions. The last team of the day performed a VR on 616 from Shiloh to the Laos border which showed light activity in the east but showed heavy wheel, track, and foot traffic in the last 24 hours.

14. 13 February 71: The first team in the area returned to work for the ground elements and engaged an AAW position in VIC XD610225, and got three KBA carrying AK-47's. Airstrikes were employed in this area and the team on station conducted the BDA for the FAC. The team took fire from one AK with negative hits. The team continued to work for the ground element and got five KBH's in VIC XD615252, as well as spotting another cache site at XD606253, made up of well camouflaged pits with a road around them. The cache was  $\frac{1}{2}$  kilometer in diameter. At coordinates XD608277, another storage area was spotted consisting of six 30X30 pits, four of which were camouflaged. The area also had two roads running northwest to southeast and north to south. There were also several trails running through the area with recent activity in the last 12-24 hours. In VIC XD607204, 50-75 pits were spotted camouflaged with bamboo and at XD601280, 20-25 boxes of an unknown size were spotted along a high speed trail. Also there was a blue flat bed truck, and fifteen 55 gal. drums in the same area. At XD599266 a 20X20 bamboo garage was reported with a hootch with a tin roof and a bunker. Two possible base camp areas were reported, one at XD972263 and the other at XD992251. In this same area VIC XD990264, two hootches were spotted with two water buffaloes. Both water buffalo and hootches were destroyed by gunships. The last team, while flying in the same area, took small arms fire with no hits but at XD962270 a Cobra took a hit in the fuel cell. The ship was shutdown at Vandergrift and reported non-flyable.

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15. 14 February 71: The missions for today remained the same. They were VR and support of friendly ground units. At coordinate XD552182, the team took fire from four AKs with negative hits. The team moved east to XD668178, where several telephone poles strung with commo wire were reported and followed to a hootch and 37mm gun site. A VR of Highway 921 showed truck movement in both directions. The highway also showed signs of tracked vehicle traffic in the last 24 hours. A team reported sighting five caves being used to house personnel. In VIC XD6028, several hootches and storage sites were engaged with W/P and destroyed. At XD612286 50-100 hootches were sighted in a living area with recent activity in the last 24 to 36 hours. In the area around XD5828, several heavy weapons positions were spotted and several hootches were destroyed by W/P. At 1300 a Cobra took one hit from a 12.7mm, but no serious damage was caused. The team also got several secondary explosions. Early in the afternoon, three KBA's were confirmed while Cobras engaged a storage site and a cultivated field. In VIC XD586284, a storage site and training area was spotted and several targets were engaged resulting in five secondary explosions. The area was given to ground troops to exploit. This day gave six KBH's to Troop A.

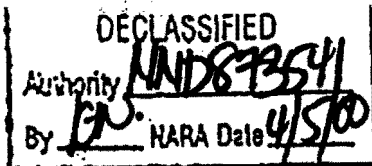
16. 15 February 71: The teams continued to support KLV as ground troops captured an NVA motor pool containing seven NVA trucks, five of which were Russian and two were of unknown origin. The team spotted three hootches 100 meters from the ground element and 600 meters north eleven water buffalo were engaged and destroyed by gunships. At XD694179, eight hootches were engaged and two were destroyed resulting in five small secondary explosions. The aircraft continued to take fire from a number of weapons in this area however no aircraft was hit. In the VIC XD6621, the team on station received 12.7mm fire and heavy AK fire while engaging the area. At XD673164 ten NVA were engaged by the team resulting in three KBA's. At XD696160, two blue parachutes were spotted with 4X2 boxes attached. At XD655177 two dummy .37mm positions were spotted and the team took fire from XD666214 while engaging another target.

17. 16 February 71: Due to aircraft entering PE and combat damage, no teams flew into the A/O today.

18. 17 February 71: Due to unfavorable weather conditions all aircraft were grounded.

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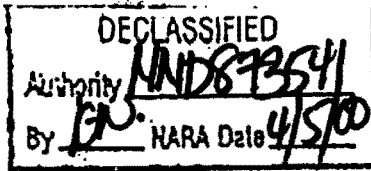
19. 18 February 71: Missions began with a team performing a VR in VIC XD4534. At 1200 a AH-1G took heavy AK and 12.7mm fire and was shot down in VIC XD470348 and both crewmen were extracted. A team from another unit was dispatched to the VIC along with a medivac bird and a section of ARA. Another AH-1G brought out the crew on the pods under heavy enemy fire. Both crewmen were returned to Khe Sahn and then to Quang Tri. The teams continued to take fire in the area while engaging hootches and bunkers and a large rice storage area in VIC XD4935. A VR of selected LZ's was made and both LZI and LZII can be opened without trouble. Between the two LZ's there is a three foot wide trail running the ridge line with a small road running east-west from XD480367 - XD490370; however, no vehicle traffic was reported. Two aircraft in VIC XD59342257 took 75 rounds of 23mm but sustained no hits. Area was submitted for sky spots tonight.

20. 19 February 71: Teams for today had good weather and began working for 1st Infantry Division elements in VIC XD572238. KLR reported he was in contact with a regimental size force and the C&C requested ARA and A/S in the area. The team working in VIC XD571225 took 12.7mm fire but could not pinpoint the location of the gun so they did not attempt to engage the area. In VIC XD659135, the same team got four KBA's wearing green uniforms and boots. The area VIC XD8232, turned up signs of heavy recent activity and trails. The team engaged a POL pipeline across a river and started a thirty foot high fire. In this same area over 100 hootches with R/A were spotted and when engaged the team observed several secondaries.

21. 20 February 71: Missions for today started in the late morning due to bad weather at Khe Sahn. At 1150, two guns were requested for a contact mission. Teams in the A/O took heavy 12.7mm fire at four different locations. At the coordinates XD6023, a AH-1G received two hits in the aircraft; one was above the engine and one was above the minigun. The aircraft was returned to Quang Tri.

22. 21 February 71: Teams for today returned to VIC KLR and the first team on station took fire at XD650267. The team expended 50-60% of their ordinance on suspected AA weapons. One NVA was spotted carrying one 155mm flare east to west wearing a green uniform. The team engaged and expended 25-50% with unknown results. KLR reported taking incoming (75mm recoilless); the FO employed arty and the team expended the remainder of ordinance and the incoming fire subsided. At 1020, LZ Delta took mortar fire from XD650267 and the team engaged. An AH-1G, took 12.7mm fire at XD600213 and sustained one hit in the canopy. C&C saw two rounds impact on Delta and firing stopped. One pilot received light shrapnel wounds in the leg. The A/C

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was landed at Khe Sahn and the pilot was taken to the medical facilities at Khe Sanh. In an attempt to move the damaged aircraft, the aircraft went out of control and hit several ARVNs, killing some and injuring several others. The aircraft was total loss. At 1435, an aircraft received 75 rounds of AK fire but sustained no hits in VIC XD495362.

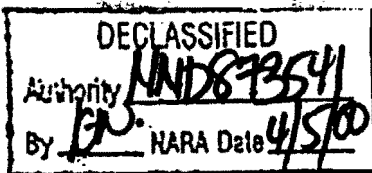
23. 22 February 71: The first team of the day worked for "Payroll Whiskey" in the VIC XD5721. The team working this area took heavy 12.7mm, 14.5mm, and AK fire; however, received negative hits. There are approximately six 12.7mm and one 14.5mm weapons in the area. In VIC XD537501, the heavy team took 37mm fire. The team engaged with gunships and TAC Air with unknown results. In the VIC XD628270, a Cobra expended on a suspected mortar position with unknown results. The two Troop A aircraft marked for FAC who engaged with TAC Air with unknown results.

24. 23 February 71: Today D Troop was inserted at XD852430, and moved down the ridgeline starting a fire at XD84854300. Trp A supported with LOH's doing VR work around D Troop position. At 1345, D Troop took 3-10 rounds of AK fire with negative casualties. At 1625 one of D Troop's personnel slipped into the canyon and was injured and a medivac was called to extract the individual. In VIC XD588223, two A Troop aircraft were fired at by 12.7mm weapon but took no hits. The team moved to KIW's position and held off while KIW called in AFS and then the team escorted a medivac in to KIW's position. At 1720, a Cobra took five hits from a 12.7mm weapon in VIC XD6023, and landed on LZ Delta. The ship was rigged and returned to Khe Sanh the 24th of February.

25. 24 February 71: Today teams did not get to the A/O until after 1200, due to weather. A UH-1H from A Trp made a precautionary landing at XD855387; the aircraft was slung out at 1620. A team pulled a road recon from XD505256 to XD413418 and spotted several turn-around points, ambush sites, side roads, a main powerline junction, a destroyed truck, a village of ten hootches, and several trails with unknown recent activities. At XD505256, a UH-1H took 12.7mm fire at 4700' receiving negative hits.

26. 25 February 71: Missions for 25 February were not started until 1100, due to bad weather at Khe Sanh. The aircraft remained at QT until 1015. A Troop's lift was on IRF for downed A/C with the Hoc Bao and one UH-1H from C Troop 2/17. The first team flew VR around the western part of the Salient near 616 and the ford. At coordinates XD794236, a LOH took light AK fire from three to five weapons but sustained negative hits while the team engaged three to five NVA in the open with unknown results. The VR showed no recent activities along 616 to the 82 grid line. The team moved

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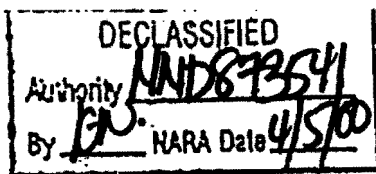
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south and east before returning to Khe Sanh to refuel and rearm. The C&C ship VIC XD307236, adjusted arty on several targets picked in the area. At 1310, the FO firing 20 rounds of 155mm at Target #1 and moved to target#2. The C&C called for the heavy pink team to join him as soon as he refueled and proceeded to XD807236, to pull a BDA on the arty strike. In VIC XD799131, a LOH took fire from a 12,7mm AAW and the C&C requested ARA and grid clearance for arty, while his team engaged to keep them from moving until ARA could arrive or arty could be cleared. ARA could not send a section so the C&C called for the last remaining Cobra to cover while two other Cobra's refueled and rearmed. At about 1530, IRF was launched to VIC LZ 31, to assist in recovering two F4 pilots that had ejected after their A/C received hits. The recovery and security team were held in orbit on the border when one of the pilots was reported to have reached friendly locations and the other was being recovered at that time. The team was diverted to the location of a downed C&C ship VIC XD21884. The Hoc Bao was inserted and a rigging team dispatched from Method Alpha. At 1735, Perfect 32 picked up the bird and returned it to Khe Sanh; the Hoc Bao were extracted at 1747 with the LZ green. At 1710 Squadron passed word that the teams were to pull out of the A/C due to weather. The C&C was working in the area of LZ 31, which was under attack by NVA medium tanks and APC's. The team had to break due to weather.

27. 26 February 71: Today's team worked both in VIC LZ31 and Aloui and provided a UH-1H for B 7/1, who was on first IRF. The first team in the area Aloui reported the area receiving fire from 122mm rockets and AAW's with a battalion size force of NVA digging in around Aloui. Airstrikes, ARA, arty gunships were being employed by the ground forces. The team had no visual sightings of tanks. The second team in the same area expended on XD497415 for "LH". The area contained a suspected battalion size force. This team received a sighting of NVA armor in the VIC of LZ31. The team returned to the area and worked for 'Snoopy 04'. The team expended on a target in VIC XD487439. The last team flew VR of LZ 31 and spotted two active tanks, one AAW, and 30-40 NVA with ARVN uniforms, packs and weapons. A Cobra received 15 hits while over the LZ. The aircraft was flown to Khe Sanh and reported non-flyable. All A/C returned to Quang Tri for the night.

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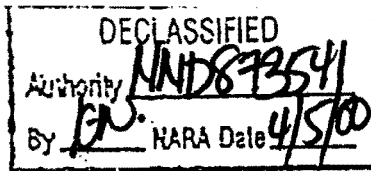
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28. 27 February 71: The weather at Khe Sanh was clear but bad weather at Quang Tri prevented teams from arriving until late in the morning. The first mission of the day was to be flown in the southern A/O but reports of enemy armor in the VIC LZ31 diverted the team until another team could be scrambled to the area. The team arrived in the area and reported LZ 30 taking incoming from mortars and possible direct tank fire from 800 meters north of the LZ. The team moved north to spot the firing positions and engaged a tree line where smoke was spotted. At the same time a unit 600 meters south of this area was in contact with an unknown size unit. The second team was allowed to return to the original mission in the southern A/O. At VIC XD 632180, three NVA were spotted wearing green uniforms and carrying AK's and a pack. The team engaged the area and a dark yellow smoke was popped. The Cobra's took moderate AK fire but sustained no hits and got seven NVA KBA's. The C&C had spotted a triangular shaped 37mm site for three weapons but no weapons were spotted. In the VIC of XD660098, a destroyed truck was spotted. At VIC XD620128, three destroyed trucks and one in good shape were observed. The team engaged the truck, doing light damage. As the other team was leaving the area an additional truck was spotted but was not engaged. In VIC XD632130, an AH-1G took one hit in the tail boom but continued to fly until sent back to Quang Tri. The third team flew the same area and engaged four NVA in the open resulting in four KBA's. The NVA were wearing green uniforms one pack, and had negative weapons. In VIC XD638136, a white tube was found sitting on a bamboo or wood frame with R/A in last 12 hours. The team spotted the truck, which was not engaged on the last mission and destroyed it. Another destroyed truck was spotted at XD643114. In VIC XD649201 to XD635145, 100-150 bunkers were spotted along the road and the surrounding areas turned up several bunkers and several piles of rock in VIC XD638124, along the road. An AH-1G took fire at XD625265, from a 12.7mm AAW and sustained one hit in the turret and a graze in the tail boom. At 1535, squadron requested the C&C to proceed to XD6225, where a B 7/1 LOH was down. The recovery aircraft was shot up going into recover the bird and revealed three 12.7mm weapons in the area. The C&C alternated with squadron and C Trp as C&C to proceed to the area of interest. The missions were called off due to weather and darkness. An Arc Light was employed during the night.

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29. 28 February 1971: Missions for Trp A were basically the same today as they have been. Teams VR'd the A/O and worked with friendlies in the area. Shot-at's were received during the day but no aircraft were shot down.

## 30. Commanders Comments:

Several lessons have been learned during operations in Laos in a sophisticated Anti-Aircraft environment. The major lessons learned are as follows:

a. The OH-6A cannot survive in the mid-intensity environment. The aircraft <sup>cannot</sup> sustain hits larger than small arms in most instances. The 12.7, 14.5, and 37mm threat make use of the LOH impracticable. Also the open terrain adds to the vulnerability of the aircraft.

b. The best enroute altitude in this environment appears to be around 4500 ft. MSL. This is out of effective range of small arms and reduces hits from 12.7's and is below the effective range of 37mm. No hits have been sustained at these altitudes.

c. The best organization in this environment appears to be three AH-1G's and a C&C. This allows all snakes to be covered and the C&C to coordinate the reconnaissance effort and also rescue crews if the need arises. To fly three Cobras in a team however, the Troop needs an augmentation of AH-1G's to keep the necessary percentage up considering combat damage.

*Jack T. Clark*

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MAJOR, Armor  
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