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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry
15 March 77, subject: 101st Airborne Division (Aml)
APO San Francisco 96383

Declassification of
Documents

AWDC-SQ-3

7 May 1971

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned* 2d Squadron, 17th Cavalry
Period Ending 31 March 1971

TO: Commanding General
101st Airborne Division (Aml)
ATTN: AWDC-GC-H
APO 96383

1. Operations: Significant Activities.

a. During this reporting period Troop A participated in the Jefferson Glenn operation in general support of the 101st Airborne Division. 1-2 January, inclement weather prevented combat operations in the AO. 3 January, VA of RT 616 showed signs of heavy truck traffic. Gunships received 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft fire at XD 910243. One aircraft was hit with minor damage resulting. 4-5 January, inclement weather prevented combat operations in the AO. 9-16 January, Troop A performed Visual reconnaissance in the AO with emphasis on RT 616, a Ranger Relay Team was inserted on Hill 950. Numerous shot ats resulted throughout the period. Active 12.7mm pits were observed and engaged. Bunkers were spotted for TAC AIR and Artillery. 18-21 January, Troop A worked in close support with TAC AIR, ARA and Artillery to destroy bunkers, cache sites, tunnels and spider holes along RT 616. 22-23 January, inclement weather prevented combat operations in the AO. 25 January, Several sensor strings were activated and were visually checked for activity. 26-28 January, inclement weather prevented combat operations in the AO. 30 January, Troop A performed mission of flank security for 1/5 Mech in the Sanh area of operations. A downed Loh from F Troop 8th Cavalry was secured and lifted for extraction. 31 January, provided security for units in the Sanh and Sheppard areas of operation. BDA of Arc

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light was completed with satisfactory results noted.

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2-3 February, Troop A conducted VR of RT 616, extracted two Ranger teams and inserted two others. Troop D was inserted to accomplish ground reconnaissance of RT 616. 4 February, Troop A ANP was inserted into Khe Sanh combat base, to secure the arrival of Troop D and Squadron HQ. 4-7 February bad weather precluded normal operations. 8 February, Troop A crossed the Laotian border. Aircraft reported shot-ats with three aircraft reporting hits and aircraft flyable. 10 February, worked area West of Khe Sanh utilizing FAC and ARA. An Loh and ANIG were shot down, crews were extracted. Aircraft were destroyed by the crash. Seven NVA were KBH. 12-17 February were spent in support of ARVN ground elements operating in Laos. Troop A worked with FAC controlled Tac Air, ARA and it's organic gun ships to suppress enemy Anti-Aircraft fire, while teams continued their missions of VR for the ground forces. Approximately 16 NVA were KBH. 18-25 February, Troop A was engaged in it's assigned missions of VR and close screen to the ground forces. Weather during this period frequently delayed missions until 1100-1200 hrs. 26 February, Troop A had visual sighting on enemy armor. Two active tanks were sighted and an ANIG received 15 hits in the process of flying VR in the vicinity of LZ 31. 27-28 February, Troop A alternated with Troop C and Squadron Co as C&C to recover an Loh that had been shot down Vic KD 6225. Three 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft weapons were located in the area. 1 March, employed airstrikes against known and suspected enemy locations. 2-3 March, inclement weather prevented combat operations. 4-6 March, supported ARVNS at LZ Sophia and LZ Victory, employed TAC AIR and artillery on known positions. 6 March, Hae Bae were inserted to secure a downed crew at Vic KD 478 409. 7 March, Hae Bae and downed crew were extracted under heavy 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft fire from three weapons. The ANIG received 4 hits and returned

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to base where it was determined to be non flyable. A truck (5 ton) was destroyed and a bulldozer spotted. Area was marked for a FAC. 8-10 March inclement weather prevented combat operations. 11 March, Troop A conducted a VR of LZ Alou, LZ Bravo, LZ Alpha and LZ Hotel to determine condition. Sighted 5 2½ ton trucks and marked for a FAC. ARA was utilized on selected targets. 12-13 March, Troop A missions were VR and screen Vic LZ Sophia. 14-15 March, inclement weather prevented combat operations. 16-23 March, Troop A supported the 1st ARVN Division vicinity of LZ Brown with heavy teams. Air strikes were employed and remaining targets were turned over to the FAC on station. During this period an AHIG was shot down by small arms fire Vic ID 439405. Crew was extracted. Tanks were sighted on 19 March and were marked for the FAC. 24 March, continued support to 1st ARVN Division with heavy Cav teams. Marginal weather on 25 March prevented working in the AO until 1400 hrs. Route recon of 615 revealed no significant spots and no traffic, past three days. 26-28 March, Troop A performed in Visual recon role in the Lactian and Vietnamese Salient areas to spot possible targets of opportunity. Heavy small arms fire was received throughout the area of interest. 29-30 March, supported insertion of ARVN near ID 6802. And performed VR in Lactian Salient.

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b. During this reporting period Troop B participated in the Jefferson Glenn operation in general support of the 101st Airborne Division. With a primary mission of intelligence gathering through Visual reconnaissance. 1-11 January 1971, Troop B was able to accomplish only limited Visual reconnaissance due to low ceilings and inclement weather. On 6 January a detailed search was made for a missing AHIC from Troop C 2/17. During this search a AHIC listed as missing since 1969 was found near FSB Veghel. The Aero Rifle Platoon of Troop B was later inserted on this crash site to recover the remains of the crew. 14 January, an Loh was shot down at YD 385001 Vic Alouf airstrip. The aircraft and crew were secured. 16 January, the Troop B ARF secured a downed aircraft Vic YC 830889. Additionally on 16 January an Loh was shot down due to 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft fire Vic YC 558794. The crew was recovered, the aircraft was lost due to fire. 17 January, the Troop B ARF was again inserted on a downed PLIR aircraft Vic YC 870985. 19 January, Troop B ARF was inserted on a suspected enemy location Vic FSB Masket. From 20-27 January, Troop B worked in the area of the Reung Reung Valley YC 8584 supporting Co 1 Rangers. 30 January, Troop B operations moved to Quang Tri to support operations Dewey Canyon II vicinity Khe Sanh. 9 February, Troop B inserted five Ranger teams. 10 February, Troop B lost 2 Loh aircraft. The first while on convey cover in the Hai Van Pass. Troop B ARF was inserted on the site and aircraft and crew were extracted. The second was shot down in the A Shau Valley by 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft fire. The aircraft was destroyed and the crew are listed as MIA. From 11-14 February, Troop B worked the Division recon zone detecting enemy truck traffic and destroying a truck a bulldozer. 15 February, a UH1H on a night Ranger extraction crashed resulting in seven US KIA. On 16 February, five Ranger teams were extracted. From

19-20 Feb. Troop B ~~UNCLASSIFIED~~ ~~CONFIDENTIAL~~ *visual* *re*

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reconnaissance in the recon zone. 21 February, an AHIG indirect support of a Ranger contact fired too close to friendly troops, resulting in one KIA and two MIA. The team was extracted. 24 February, a Troop B Loh suffered a tree strike and set down on PSB Tomahawk. The aircraft was recovered. 25 February, Troop B extracted a Ranger team with POW Vic YD 719901. 26-27 February, Troop B secured for extraction of two aircraft Vic YD 719901 and YD 531132. 28 February, Troop B conducted Visual reconnaissance in the Division recon zone mapping enemy infiltration routes and directing air strikes in the A Shau Valley. 1-31 March, Troop B worked in the Division recon zone conducting Visual reconnaissance, checking sensor activations and UNS reports. 5-6 March, Troop B ARP secured a downed AHIG at YD 865211 and a UH1H at YD 391361. 13 March, an Loh received an unknown amount of 12.7mm Anti-Aircraft and SAF Vic YD 199129. The aircraft crashed and burned resulting in two US MIA. 14-17 March, Troop B ARP secured a downed UH1H Vic YC 727143 and an AHIG at YD 357472. 22 March, Troop B ARP secured a downed AHIG at YD 961162. 24 March, extracted Ranger teams 19a and 19w when team became in contact. 29 March, Pink team coverage was provided for downed UH1H at YD 030025. 30 March, Troop B ARP was inserted at YD 513031 to reinforce Ranger team 19h in the capture of 2 NVA POW's. During the entire reporting period additional missions included EDA of airstrikes and Arc Lights and limited ground reconnaissance.

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c. During the 1 January to 31 January reporting period, Troop C staged from Phu Bai Army Airfield participating in Jefferson Glenn operations, in general support of the 101st Airborne Division, with a primary mission of intelligence gathering through Visual reconnaissance. 1-10 January, Monsoon weather prohibited extensive reconnaissance of the Division recon zone. 11-30 January, was marked by improving weather which enabled Troop C to continue the Visual reconnaissance of the Division recon zone. A heavy increase in enemy activity was noted during this period around the Aloui airstrip and West of Tiger Mountain. An estimated NVN company was pin pointed. A "Cavalry Cobra" raid was launched and a EDA in the fifteen foot high elephant grass revealed 3 NVA KBH. It is felt that better results were obtained than those indicated by the EDA, as the team was able to silence rather intense fire in the area. During this period Troop C reacted with its Aero Rifle Platoon to five downed aircraft. Additionally Troop C supported three Ranger teams in contact. From 1-4 February Troop C staged from Phu Bai Airfield. From 5 February to 28 February, it staged from Khe Sanh combat base. 8 February, 0743 hours the Troop C commander, Major James T. Newman led the first heavy Cav team into Laos in support of the Vietnamese Rangers. 12 February, Troop C lost two AHIG's to hostile fire on the Laotian border. One crew is listed as MIA. The second crew was extracted. The area of the contact was engaged by Artillery, TAC AIR and one B52 strike. 18 February, the Troop commander extracted four or five Americans from a downed Dustoff aircraft, while the Ranger firebase was under heavy small arms, Anti-Aircraft fire and Mortars. Additionally on the 18th an Loh was shot down and it exploded. The crew is still listed as MIA. The remainder of the month of February was spent in a primary role of screening for extraction of Vietnamese Rangers, Firebases and working firebases 30 and 31. 1-31 March, Troop C staged from the Sanh com.

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bat base in general support of Lam San 719. During this period Troop C ARF manned a portion of the Khe Sanh perimeter. The ARVN movement of their forces enabled the Troop to resume it's full time job of reconnaissance. Troop C was assigned recon zone that extended westward to Techepon and to the north of Highway 9. After the ground objectives had been reached and withdrawal began, Troop C began close support by screening PZ's and reconnaissance of flight routes. The Troop also acted in resupply capacity on occasion during this period.

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d. In the period of 1-28 January, Troop D performed it's assigned missions of Eagle Reaction Force, Perimeter Defense and acted as immediate Reaction Force with Troop(-) to all insertions of any Squadron Aere Rifle Platoon. 1-4 January, overflights of the perimeter defenses were made with respect to possible enemy routes of infiltration, and possible ambush sites. Reports submitted covering this activity indicated areas of possible improvement. 28 January, warning order for movement to Quang Tri was issued. Troop was to further prepare to carry out combat operations. 2 February, Troop D made a combat assault Vic XD 854238, to conduct a ground bomb damage assessment (BDA) and a ground reconnaissance of the surrounding area that had been tentatively identified as a NVA headquarters complex. The Troop was extracted at 031500 hrs at XD 854238 and XD 848236, PZ's were green. 4 February, Troop D moved to Khe Sanh combat base in support of Lam Son 719, Headquarters (-) by convey and two platoons by air. 5-14 February, Troop D hardened the perimeter defenses. Bunkers, fighting positions and overhead cover were given priority. 15 February, Troop D was given the responsibility of security for the rear refuel point at La Con, XD 814368, and at this time assumed control of the Aere Rifle Platoons of the assigned and opcon Air Cav Troops. Ambush and sweep operations in the Squadron AO were accomplished as part of the perimeter defense plan through 14 March. 15 March, Khe Sanh combat base began to receive daily Artillery attacks by NVA 122mm field guns. 23 March, at 0230 hrs, Troop D repulsed a Sapper attack by the 2nd Co 15th NVA Engineer Battalion. This 40 man attack, supported by indirect fire, 60mm Mortars, and RPG's penetrated the 3rd Platoon position in it's attempt to reach the airfield POL and rear points. The enemy broke contact at 0645 hours. A first light check revealed 14 NVA KIA, 1 POW, 9 AK-50's, 3 RPG launchers and one

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9mm pistol captured along with numerous small arms ammunition and demolition equipment. An additional 6 NVA are estimated KIA. (Bodies were recovered by retreating enemy). US losses were 3 KIA, 5 WIA major, 13 WIA minor. 27 March, Troop D was given order to return to Quang Tri. Area was evacuated in approximately 1 hour with minimum exposure to possible indirect fire, attack. 28 March to the end of the reporting period Troop D acted as the Squadron Reaction Force for downed aircraft and crew security.

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