

July 20

1.120 Extraction

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(11) 15 Aug 76

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DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY  
OFFICE OF THE ADJUTANT GENERAL  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20315

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AGDA-A (M) (2 Apr 71) ST-UT-761152

WATTS-471

SUBJECT: Operational Report, Lessons Learned, Headquarters, 1st  
Airborne Division, 1st Airborne Division

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DISTRIBUTION

Operational rpt. for General  
General ending 31 Aug 76

1. The attached report is forwarded for review and evaluation in accordance with para 4b, AR 525-15.
2. The information contained in this report is provided to insure that lessons learned during current operations are used to the benefit of future operations and may be adapted for use in developing training material.
3. Information of actions initiated as a result of your evaluation should be forwarded to the Assistant Chief of Staff for Force Development, ATTN: FOR OT UT within 90 days of receipt of this letter.
4. The aerial flame technique discussed in paragraph 2c(1)(b) of the inclosed report is being evaluated by the US Army Combat Developments Command. Pending final results of this evaluation, Army-wide use of this technique is not recommended.

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

*[Signature]*  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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(Continued on page 2)

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Regraded unclassified when separated from classified inclosure.

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Page 45  
Acoustic Surveillance  
Sensors  
Range limited  
P. 45

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n. (U) Artillery

(1) The 101st Airborne Division Artillery (Airmobile) provided close and continuous fire support to maneuver units throughout the reporting period. Light howitzer battalions continued to provide direct support to the infantry brigades, with the 2d Bn (Ambl), 310th Arty (105) in direct support of the 3d Brigade; the 2d Bn (Ambl), 320th Arty (105) in direct support of the 1st Brigade; and the 1st Bn (Ambl), 321st Arty (105) in direct support of the 2d Brigade.

AVDG-GC

SUBJECT: Operational Report - Lessons Learned, 101st Airborne Division (Airmobile), Period Ending 31 July 1970, RCS CSFOR-65 (R2) (U)

Battery D, 2d Bn (Ambl), 320th Arty (105) remained attached to the \_\_\_\_ Bn (Ambl), 506th Infantry in II Military Region.

The 2d Bn (Ambl), 11th Arty (155), the 4th Bn (Aerial Arty), 77th Arty, and A Btry (Avn), 377th Arty remained in general support of the division.

The following 108th Artillery Group units were located in the division area of operations in a general support role: Btry A, 2d Bn (8"/175) (SE), 94th Arty at C1; Btry A, 1st Bn (8"/155) (SP), 59th Arty at SF/OB Rakkasan; Btry B, 1st Bn (8"/175) (SP), 39th Arty at FS/OB Barbara; Btry C, 1st Bn, (8"/155) (SP), 39th Arty at Camp Evans; Btry A, 1st Bn (82/175) (SP), \_\_\_\_ Arty at FS/OB Bastogne; Btry B, 1st Bn (82/175) (SP), 83d Arty at FS/OB Birmingham; and Btry C, 1st Bn (8"/175) (SP), 83d Arty at FS/OB Veghel.

Btry B, 2d Bn (8"/175) (SP), 94th Arty of the 108th Artillery Group was located at Camp Carol in Northern I Military Region and provided fires in general support of the division.

Btry D (M42), 1st Bn, 49th Arty and a section of Btry C (M55), 65th Arty of XXIV Corps Artillery were deployed in the division AO to provide fires for base and bridge security.

(2) Artillery fires were employed throughout the division area of operation to disrupt enemy lines of communication and infiltration routes. This was accomplished through artillery raids and fires in reaction to sensor activations, radar detections, serial surveillance, and intelligence. Extensive artillery fires were employed nightly in the "rocket belt" areas on the periphery of the populated lowlands and in the area adjacent to military installations.

(3) Throughout the reporting period, US and ARVN artillery units continued to employ coordinated fires in support of combined operations. The division artillery aerial surveillance program continued to locate and adjust fires on enemy forces and to provide observation for artillery registrations.

(4) During the period of heavy enemy contact in the vicinity of FS/OB Ripcord in July, Btry B, 2d Bn (Ambl), 310th Arty suffered heavy damage when a CH47 aircraft crashed and burned in the 105mm ammunition storage area, causing a major fire on the firebase. All six 105mm howitzers of the battery were destroyed.

(5) Repositioning of Artillery Support:

DATE	UNIT	FROM	TO
2 May	C/2-320	Tomahawk	Kathryn
3 May	A/2-11	Granite	Rakkasan
4 May	C/2-320 A/2-320 C/2-319	Veghel Bastogne Granite	Bastogne Shock Gladiator
9 May	B(-)/2-11 A/2-320	Eagle Shock	Bastogne Veghel
10 May	A(-)/1-321 A(-)/1-321 C(-)/1-321 C(-)/1-321	Birmingham Arsenal Evans Evans	Evans Evans Birmingham Arsenal
26 May	C/2-319 B/2-320	Birmingham Kathryn	Kathryn Brick
10 Jun	A/2-11	Rakkasan	Ripcord
14 Jun	A(-)/2-11	Ripcord	Rakkasan
16 Jun	B/2-11 B/2-11	Veghel Zon	Zon Veghel
22 Jun	A(-)/2-11 C(-)/2-11	Ripcord Arsenal	Shepherd Sarge
23 Jun	B/1-321 B/1-321 A(-)/1-321	Los Banos Musket Evans	Husket Los Banos Los Banos
24 Jun	A(-)/1-321	Los Banos	Evans
25 Jun	A(-)/2-11	Sheperd	Ripcord
26 Jun	C(-)/2-11	Sarge	Arsenal
6 Jul	A(-)/2-11	Rakkasan	Ripcord
9 Jul	B/2-11	Veghel	Sarge
11 Jul	B/2-11	Sarge	Vandergrift
16 Jul	B/2-11	Vandergrift	Veghel
18 Jul	B(-)/2-11 B/2-320	Veghel Brick	Kathryn Gladiator
23 Jul	A/2-11	Ripcord	Eagle
26 Jul	C/2-319 B/2-320	Kathryn Gladiator	Gladiator Kathryn
27 Jul	A/2-11	Eagle	Rakkasan
29 Jul	C/2-320 B/2-319	Bastogne Evans	Maureen Bastogne

On 6 July, additional artillery (three 155mm howitzers) from Btry A, 2d Bn (Ambl), 11th Arty were moved from FS/OB Rakkasan to FS/OB Ripcord in support of operations in that area. Six 105mm howitzers of Btry B, 2d Bn (Ambl), 319th Arty and six 155mm howitzers of Btry A, 2d Bn (Ambl), 11th Arty were located on the firebase at that time.

On 13 July, General William C. Westmoreland visited the division.

At 140203 hours, vicinity ID 352188, Co D, 2d Bn (Ambl), 501st Inf, while in their night defensive position on Hill 805, again received RPG and small arms fire from an enemy force, 20 meters northeast of their position. The element returned organic weapons fire and employed M55 .50 caliber fire (Quad 50) from FS/OB Ripcord, and 81mm mortar fire, air strikes, and ARA. Contact terminated at 0307 hours and a first light check of the area revealed five NVA KIA. The company suffered six KIA and nine WIA. At 2253 hours, the company received small arms fire and RPG fire and satchel charges, and at 0159 hours, received thirty-seven 82mm mortar rounds, impacting around their ZDP. Organic weapons, ARA, tube artillery and mortar fire was employed against the enemy. One US was killed in the action. A first light sweep revealed numerous blood trails.

On 14 July, Companies A and B and the Recon Plt, 2d Bn (Ambl), 501st Inf, in yet another attempt to eject the enemy from Hill 1000, was engaged by RPG, small arms and mortar fire, resulting in one US KIA and 20 WIA. Organic weapons, ARA, tube artillery and air strikes were employed against enemy positions and well fortified bombers on the hill. Partial sweeps of the area revealed five NVA KIA. Elements withdrew to the vicinity of \_\_\_325189, where, at 1715 hours, they received 82mm mortar fire without casualties. Artillery was employed on the suspected enemy location.

Operation Clinch Valley was terminated at 151002 July.

At 181330, a CH-47 in logistical support of FS/OB Ripcord, was shot down by enemy ground fire and crashed in the 105mm ammunition storage area, causing a major fire and extensive damage on the firebase. All six 105mm howitzers of Btry B, 2d Bn (Ambl), 319th Arty were destroyed. In reaction, the 1st Bn (Ambl) (-), 501st Inf passed to operational control of the 3d Bde, and assaulted into FS/OB Gladiator to secure the firebase for insertion of Btry B, 2d Bn (Ambl), 320th Arty. This move was made to insure adequate artillery coverage for the Ripcord area.

More than 2200 rounds of mixed caliber artillery ammunition were fired in support of the extraction of the 2d Bn (Ambl) 506th Inf on 25 July. Fourteen CH-47 aircraft were employed commencing at 0545 hours to extract 22 sorties, which included six 155mm howitzers, two M-405 dozers, communications equipment, and one M55 (Quad 50) machinegun. The CH-47 extraction operation proceeded smoothly until 0740 hours, when one

CH-47 was shot down on the firebase by 12.7mm machinegun fire. The aircraft was forced to land among the 105mm howitzers which had been destroyed on 18 July, and thus prevented the extraction of the artillery pieces and two 106mm recoilless rifles. The CH-47 received a direct hit by an enemy mortar round, causing the aircraft to burn and explode. Eight additional CH-47 aircraft received hits during the extraction, four were later determined non-flyable. Co B, 21 Bn (Ambl), 506th Inf began extraction at 0745 hours by UH1H but was delayed until 0935 hours by heavy enemy 60mm and 82mm mortar fire. The extraction was conducted by infiltrating one UH1H aircraft into the firebase at a time.

During the extraction, FS/OB Ripcord was under continuous enemy mortar fire, with several hundred rounds impacting throughout the firebase. Air, artillery, and ARA destroyed several enemy mortar and machinegun positions. In addition, numerous enemy, driven into the open by CS were killed by US firepower.