

## CHAPTER IV

### SUBVERSIVE INSURGENCY

The basic principle of war is to preserve oneself and to annihilate the enemy.<sup>1</sup>

--Mao Tse-tung

There is war in Vietnam. The communist tide of subjugation of free people has flowed across the borders of South Vietnam, and her people are engaged in a crucial struggle. Freedom or tyranny will be the outcome. The United States, in its continued hope that out of the war will emerge freedom for the Vietnamese, is fully committed to the people of Vietnam. American forces are fighting in Vietnam for that purpose. The airmobile division is there, fighting against the Viet Cong and units of the Peoples Army of Vietnam, the invading forces from communist North Vietnam.

Analysis of the current concept for employment of the airmobile division against these forces must include an appreciation of how the insurgent forces fight and a

---

<sup>1</sup>Mao Tse-tung, Selected Works, "Strategic Problems in Guerrilla War," in Vol. II: 1937-1938 (New York: International Publishers Co., Inc., 1954), p. 121.

determination of their strengths and weaknesses. This is the objective of this chapter.

It is generally accepted that this is a different kind of war. There are no frontlines, yet battles of regimental and division size are fought. It is not a repetition of World War II or Korea. It is neither a general war nor even a limited war, but it could be the fuze for World War III. Various names applied to this war by the U.S. Army include subversive insurgency, Phase III insurgency, war of movement, and insurgent war. The communists call it revolutionary war.

General de Gaulle once remarked, "I know of two types of warfare: mobile warfare and positional warfare. I have never heard of revolutionary warfare."<sup>2</sup> Subsequently France was defeated in two revolutionary wars, Indo-China and Algeria, although the French conducted successful operations in both. They lost because the wars were protracted, and because of their length the French economy, the will of the French people to pursue the wars, and adverse world opinion forced France to seek settlements and withdraw. These were colonial wars with objectives fundamentally different from those of the United States in support of the

---

<sup>2</sup>Bernard B. Fall, Street Without Joy (4th ed.; London: Pall Mall Press, 1965), p. 370.

people of Vietnam today. However, an important lesson is that in a protracted war an underdeveloped country can prevail against one of the world's most powerful nations.

In his thesis "On the Protracted War," Mao reasoned that in a short war the inferior force would surely be defeated. Therefore, the objective of the insurgent force must be to protract the war in order to wear down its physically stronger opponent while building its own strength. To do this he proposed a strategy of avoiding decisive battle except under the most favorable circumstances. Mao concluded that by continuing to resist, regardless of the sacrifice, the morally stronger insurgent will win in the protracted war.<sup>3</sup>

The thesis of the protracted war has been adopted by Ho Chi Minh and his followers. The strategy and tactics of Mao Tse-tung and Ho Chi Minh will be discussed next, but first the findings of the International Control Commission of the Geneva Convention are cited as evidence of communist North Vietnam's direction and support of subversive insurgency to subjugate the free people of South Vietnam.

. . . armed and unarmed personnel, arms, munitions and other supplies have been sent from the Zone in the North to the Zone in the South with the object of supporting,

---

<sup>3</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "On the Protracted War," in Vol. II, pp. 157-170.

organizing and carrying out hostile activities, including armed attacks, directed against the Armed Forces and Administration of the Zone in the South.<sup>4</sup>

#### Insurgent Doctrine

Ho Chi Minh said of his war against the French, "For every ten of our force killed, we will kill one of yours and we will eventually win."<sup>5</sup> There is no more succinct description of a protracted war. But Ho Chi Minh is a political leader; what of his generals?

Mao's influence over General Vo Nguyen Giap, North Vietnam's Deputy Premier and Defense Minister, is reflected in People's War, People's Army, in which General Giap explains the victory of the Viet Minh over the French by paraphrasing the strategy and tactics expounded by Mao.<sup>6</sup> The same philosophy dominates General Giap's thinking today and is evident in the following excerpt from a recent

---

<sup>4</sup>U.S., Department of State, Aggression from the North: The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign To Conquer South Viet-Nam, Publication 7839 (Far Eastern Series 130; Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 30, quoting a report of the International Control Commission, Geneva Convention, 2 June 1962.

<sup>5</sup>U.S. Army Command and General Staff College, "Patterns of Communist Aggression," Subject A1810 (Fort Leavenworth, Kans.: The Command and General Staff College, 13 September 1965), app 1 to adv sheet, p. 21.

<sup>6</sup>Vo Nguyen Giap, General [Commander-in-Chief, Viet Nam People's Army], People's War, People's Army [a translation] (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962).

article by him.

. . . a new development of the revolutionary military art . . . is to rely mostly on man, on his patriotism and revolutionary spirit, to bring all weapons and techniques available to defeat an enemy with modern weapons and equipment. [Parallels Mao's premise for revolutionary warfare.]

The U. S. expeditionary corps, deprived of an ideal to fight for, is possessed of a low morale . . . it has to cope with a people's war. Its strategy and tactics based on the bourgeois military outlook are of no use. [Parallels Mao's conclusion.]

Though they [the United States] may bring in hundreds of thousands of troops, they cannot avoid being driven into passivity in strategy, compelled to scatter their forces in the defensive as well as in the offensive, and cannot easily wrest back the initiative. [Parallels one of Mao's five mistakes an "imperialist" force makes to secure a hostile population: "dispersion of his main forces."]<sup>7</sup>

Perhaps the best writing on protracted war by the leadership of the Democratic Republic of Vietnam is Truong Chinh's "The Resistance Will Win," which is included in his Primer for Revolt.<sup>8</sup> Chinh, who is currently the president of the North Vietnamese legislature, published the primer, which deals with the communist takeover in Viet Nam, in 1947 to guide the Viet Minh in their war against the French. It borrows heavily from Mao's "On the Protracted War,"

---

<sup>7</sup>"Operation Masher: The War Goes On," Life (11 February 1966), p. 24B, quoting General Giap; and Mao Tse-tung, "On the Protracted War."

<sup>8</sup>Truong Chinh, "The Resistance Will Win," in Primer for Revolt: The Communist Takeover in Viet-Nam (New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1963).

expounding the same ideas in the same sequence.

It may be concluded that the struggle in South Vietnam is controlled from North Vietnam and that the communist practitioners of this subversive insurgency are students of Mao Tse-tung. Insight into the strategy and tactics of the Viet Cong and the Peoples Army of Vietnam may be gained by examining the insurgent doctrine of Mao and Chirh. A thorough examination of protracted war would be a thesis in itself; however, in the space allotted here sufficient understanding of insurgent doctrine can be developed to permit analysis of the current concept for employment of the airmobile division in counterinsurgency operations.

Mao Tse-tung described the sixteen-word slogan that follows as the best and basic principle of insurgent warfare.

Enemy advances, we retreat;  
 Enemy halts, we harass;  
 Enemy tires, we attack;  
 Enemy retreats, we pursue.<sup>9</sup>

Stated differently this slogan directs that when the enemy is stronger and is exercising the initiative, the insurgent will avoid battle. When the enemy defends and sacrifices initiative in the field in order to secure the area, the insurgent will take up the initiative and strike weak points

---

<sup>9</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "Problems of China's Revolutionary War," in Vol. I: 1926-1936, p. 212.

in order to sap the strength of his stronger opponent. When the enemy is made confused and weary, has lost his morale, and has frittered away his strength, the then-stronger guerrilla will convert to mobile warfare and attacks. Finally, the beaten enemy will be annihilated.

In the lexicon of the insurgent there are three types of warfare: positional warfare, guerrilla warfare, and mobile warfare. Positional warfare involves frontlines and the siege of cities and has as its objective the wearing down of the enemy. Guerrilla warfare is at the other end of the spectrum and involves ambush and the seizure of weakly defended points with the objective of wearing down and annihilating the enemy. Mobile warfare is in the middle of the spectrum, analogous to but on a larger scale than guerrilla warfare, and has the sole objective of annihilating enemy forces.<sup>10</sup> These three types of warfare may be carried on at the same time. That is, mobile warfare may be supplemented by positional and guerrilla warfare.<sup>11</sup> This is essentially the situation in Vietnam today and will be discussed later.

"Wearing down" and "annihilation" as used above are the objectives of different types of warfare. Wearing down

---

<sup>10</sup>Truong Chinh, pp. 152-154 & 183.

<sup>11</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "Protracted War," II, 224-225.

is now sapping the enemy of his physical strength while the insurgent builds his own strength with captured equipment and material. With respect to annihilation, Mao has repudiated attrition and has said: "To wound all the ten fingers of a man is not so effective as to chop one of them off; to rout ten of the enemy's divisions is not so effective as to annihilate one of them"<sup>12</sup>

Mao frequently exhorted his commanders with these orders:

Make wiping out the enemy's strength our main Objective . . .

In every battle, concentrate an absolutely superior force (two, three, four and sometimes even five or six times the enemy's strength), encircle the enemy forces completely, strive to wipe them out thoroughly and do not let any escape from the net. . . . Strive to avoid battles of attrition in which we lose more than we gain or break even.<sup>13</sup>

Basic directives established by Mao for his forces were adopted and expanded for the Viet Minh by Truong Chinh. In regard to initiative, flexibility, and planning, Chinh wrote:

To keep the initiative is the essential principle of tactics in general, and of guerrilla and mobile warfare in particular. . . .

To lure the enemy . . . into a trap . . . worry him on the left before attacking suddenly on the right . . .

<sup>12</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "China's Revolutionary War," I, 252.

<sup>13</sup>Mao Tse-tung, "Present Situation and Our Tasks," in Vol. V: 1945-1949 [n.d.], p. 161.



. . . attack the enemy's exposed and weak points in order to make it impossible for him to defend himself.  
 . . . When the enemy moves, we lay in ambush to attack him. . . .  
 . . . wage guerrilla warfare everywhere in order to scatter and wear down the enemy, and to enable our regular forces to launch sudden attacks to annihilate him in determined positions.  
 . . . move skillfully . . . attacking important points, with a view to obliging the enemy troops to regroup, thus upsetting their predetermined battle plan.  
 . . . clearly know the enemy's situation in order to be able to concentrate our regular troops rapidly and move our reserve forces swiftly to the required areas to act in good time.  
 . . . centralize the leadership in the hands of higher command. But the local commands must act according to the situation at the front, and must fight according to their own initiative in order not to miss good opportunities.<sup>14</sup>

Concerning offensives in a defensive war and battles of quick decision in a protracted war, Chinh wrote:

Our strategy is to protract the war; therefore, in tactics, we should avoid unfavourable fights to the death, because we must maintain our forces. . . . We must bear in mind that . . . our strategy is defense, but our tactics are those of constant attack. . . . In strategy, the war must be prolonged, but in tactics, lightning attacks must be launched and rapid decisions won.<sup>15</sup>

To achieve battles of quick decision in a protracted war, Chinh directed:

Make careful inquiries into the enemy's position, his forces, his weapons, his morale, the character of the commander, etc., with a view to drawing up a detailed plan, and then secretly make careful preparations . . .

Concentrate forces superior to those of the enemy

---

<sup>14</sup>Chinh, pp. 185-187.

<sup>15</sup>Chinh, pp. 180-181.

and such as will enable us to annihilate him in one battle. . . .

The troops must be divided for the advance and regroup to attack, encircle, work around the enemy positions and finally take them by storm . . .

We should concentrate our forces to defeat the enemy at one point in a sudden attack . . .

Launch lightning, surprise attacks availing ourselves of moments when the enemy is off his guard . . .

Hold any position taken in an attack, or, if we do not intend to hold it, retreat immediately in order to preserve our forces for new battles . . .

Make full and thorough use of the victorious attack to enhance the prestige of our troop and the morale of our whole army and people.<sup>16</sup>

Mao described his war as the people's war. His strength is the support of the people, a fact which Chinh appreciates.

Guerrilla warfare must be the tactic of the people as a whole, not of the army alone.

To achieve good results in guerrilla and mobile warfare, we must mobilize the people to support our armed forces enthusiastically and to fight the enemy together with them. The people are the eyes and ears of the army, they feed and keep our soldiers. It is they who help the army in sabotage and in battle. The people are the water and our army the fish. The people constitute an inexhaustible source of strength to the army. To increase their numbers, the troops must recruit new fighters from among the people.<sup>17</sup>

Chinh discussed base areas as follows:

A resistance base is an area in which it is safe for us to train our regular army, train cadres, produce arms and munitions, tend our wounded, etc.

There are many kinds of bases: mountainous areas, in delta and in marshy areas . . .

When we occupy a place, we must have always in mind the moment when we may have to leave it. When we defend

<sup>16</sup>Chinh, pp. 184-185.

<sup>17</sup>Chinh, pp. 116-117.

a place, we must always have in mind the moment when we may have to abandon it. . . .

. . . we should conceal military objectives, and endeavor to prevent enemy planes from causing us harm

. . .  
Concerning security, we should wipe out traitors to the nation, restrict and control the circulation of persons, and deprive the enemy of all news.<sup>18</sup>

It is evident from the Viet Cong "Five-Point Field Order" below that they are fighting today along the familiar lines of the Viet Minh.

SLOW and meticulous attack preparations and rehearsals;  
FAST closing in with the enemy and attack;  
FAST and determined destruction of enemy resistance;  
FAST mopping-up of the battle area (arms, prisoners, own casualties);  
FAST withdrawal to base areas.<sup>19</sup>

In summary, insurgent doctrine calls for initiative, flexibility, and planning to carry out offensives in a defensive war and battles of quick decision in a protracted war. The objective of the insurgent is the wearing down and annihilation of the enemy by sudden attack, though avoiding battle except under the most favorable conditions. Mobile warfare is analogous to but on a larger scale than guerrilla warfare.<sup>20</sup> The people are encouraged by propaganda to give

---

<sup>18</sup>Chinh, pp. 188-190.

<sup>19</sup>Bernard B. Fall, The Two Viet-Nams: A Political and Military Analysis (rev. ed.; New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964), p. 367.

<sup>20</sup>Chinh, p. 146. Both Mao and Chinh described the protracted revolutionary war in three phases. The first

their sons, their rice, and their moral support. Traitors to the nation are "wiped out."

### Mobile Warfare

Insurgency in South Vietnam has advanced to a state of mobile warfare with both sides employing regimental and division size forces. It is a free wheeling war with the Viet Cong and PAVN (Peoples Army of Vietnam) attacking outposts and ambushing relief columns, and the ARVN (Army of Vietnam) and allied forces endeavoring to trap and destroy insurgent units. At the same time the political and propaganda cadres and district and village level guerrilla forces continue to operate, to control the peasants, and to extend Viet Cong influence over the countryside and population. These elements blend into the population when threatened but continue as an effective force. Guerrilla warfare supports mobile warfare by harassing the ARVN and allied forces, developing intelligence, enforcing counterintelligence, and sustaining regular forces with food and recruits.<sup>21</sup>

---

phase is contention (characterized by mobile warfare, supplemented with guerrilla warfare and positional warfare). The second phase is equilibrium (characterized by guerrilla warfare, supplemented by mobile warfare and positional warfare). The third phase is the general counteroffensive (characterized by a return to mobile warfare, supplemented by positional warfare and guerrilla warfare).

<sup>21</sup>Chinh, p. 146.

In June of 1965 the town of Don Xoai, north of Saigon, was attacked by an estimated two regiments of Viet Cong. The besieged defenders radioed for help. Surface relief columns were ambushed and suffered heavy casualties. An ARVN battalion helicoptered to Don Xoai but was ambushed and annihilated on landing. Another force landed later in an undefended landing zone; the relief column fought its way through; and the siege was lifted. The Viet Cong broke contact and withdrew without being pursued.<sup>22</sup> In this action the enemy had the initiative, fought a battle of annihilation, and withdrew intact upon the arrival of friendly reinforcements. Siege is positional warfare and supports mobile warfare. The insurgent's greatest gains accrue from the large scale ambushes characteristic of mobile warfare.

A PAVN force attacked the village of Plei Me, south of Pleiku, in October of 1965. Again relief columns were dispatched and again they were ambushed. For seven days, artillery and close air support enabled the defenders to withstand the siege until an airmobile force arrived and a ground relief column fought its way through. This time the PAVN were pursued to their base area in the Ia Drang River

---

<sup>22</sup>New York Times, 10 June 1965, p. 1; 11 June 1965, pp. 1 & 3-4; 12 June 1965, p. 2; 13 June 1965, p. 1; 14 June 1965, p. 1; and 15 June 1965, p. 1.

valley near the Cambodian border, where they elected to fight. Having lost the initiative by the unexpected pursuit, the PAVN were forced to defend a well supplied base area until it could be evacuated. They conducted a series of determined counterattacks that were repulsed by United States firepower and close combat. Heavy casualties were sustained by both sides, but the toll was nearly ten to one against the PAVN.<sup>23</sup> In this action the enemy violated insurgent doctrine twice, and his mistakes proved costly. First, the base was not mobile, forcing its defense when withdrawal might have been the better choice. Then, having lost the initiative and fighting with improvisation instead of exhaustive preparation, he underestimated the ability of the American fighting men and the effectiveness of their firepower, and he pressed for a battle of annihilation for the propaganda and morale value. For the insurgents Plei Me was as successful as Don Xoai, but their pitched battle at Ia Drang was a costly gamble and a rather incompetent shift to positional warfare.

"Operation Harvest Moon," conducted by ARVN units

---

<sup>23</sup>Ibid., 20 October 1965, p. 3; 21 October 1965, p. 1; 22 October 1965, p. 6; 23 October 1965, p. 3; 24 October 1965, pp. 1 & 3; 25 October 1965, p. 1; 26 October 1965, p. 2; 27 October 1965, p. 1; 9 November 1965, p. 1; 16 November 1965, p. 1; 17 November 1965, p. 1; 20 November 1965, p. 1; and 21 November 1965, p. IV-1.

and U.S. Marine units north of Qui Nhon in December of 1965, was more characteristic of mobile warfare. An estimated Viet Cong regiment was engaged. It defended initially, then delayed, and withdrew into the rugged mountains of the highlands when threatened with encirclement by an airmobile envelopment. Both sides suffered casualties, but the enemy force was able to withdraw intact to fight again.<sup>24</sup> This action illustrates the principle of mobile warfare in which the insurgent force avoids a battle against a superior force which has the initiative.

In January of 1966 a large helicopter and land assault was launched against an enemy division size base area in the Ho Bo Forest, north of Saigon. There was sporadic fighting, but by the time the main force arrived the area had been deserted. The enemy must have left this area reluctantly, because it contained extensive fortifications, tunnels, and provisions for classrooms, hospitals, and supply stores. Yet he left it rather than risk destruction of his force.<sup>25</sup> The enemy withdrew intact and avoided an unfavorable battle because he was prepared to move his base

---

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 9 December 1965, p. 24; 12 December 1965, p. 1; 13 December 1965, p. 1; and 14 December 1965, p. 1.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid., 9 January 1966, p. 1; 10 January 1966, p. 3; and 11 January 1966, p. 3.

if and when it was strongly attacked. This action is an example of mobile warfare, although the insurgents might have been expected to delay long enough to inflict some casualties on their attackers. A hasty withdrawal is justified, however, if there is danger of encirclement or if the tunnel escape routes are in danger of being cut off.

In January of 1966 "Operation Masher" was launched north of Qui Nhon, where "Harvest Moon" had been conducted six weeks before by the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), U.S. Marine units, and ARVN units. The objective was to trap and destroy two Viet Cong and two PAVN regiments. The insurgent force defended and suffered heavy casualties, but before the trap could be closed, it broke contact and escaped into the forested, rugged mountains of the highlands.<sup>26</sup> The fight was carried to the enemy in his base and he was forced to go on with the fight until he could find a route of escape, again illustrating mobile warfare in which an inferior enemy force was nearly encircled but escaped before being annihilated. It demonstrated again the basic insurgent doctrine--simply, to fight when he can win and to run when he cannot. A massive allied effort had been

---

<sup>26</sup>Ibid., 28 January 1966, p. 12; 29 January 1966, p. 2; 30 January 1966, p. 1; 31 January 1966, pp. 1 & 8; 1 February 1966, p. 1; 2 February 1966, pp. 1 & 15; 7 February 1966, p. 6; and 8 February 1966, p. 13.



mounted, one which would have overwhelmed the inferior insurgent force in a conventional battle. But in mobile warfare in the rugged, forested hills of Vietnam, when the allied force closed the trap the valley was deserted.

Some conclusions about the tactics of the Viet Cong and the PAVN can be formed from an examination of insurgent doctrine and recent actions of the war in Vietnam.

Insurgent forces can attack with any force from one guerrilla in ambush to two regiments supported by artillery. In the conduct of mobile warfare they will probably continue to attack lightly defended places, especially hamlets, the seizure of which offers a propaganda value. In accordance with their doctrine, insurgent forces can be expected to lay ambushes for relief columns hastily dispatched in reaction to their well prepared attacks. During the monsoon season, when the mobility and firepower advantages are reduced, insurgents will probably increase their attacks with the objective of annihilating isolated forces for the propaganda advantage. It is unlikely that they will endeavor to lay siege to a strongly defended area, or to engage forces of brigade or stronger size.

Although the enemy can defend with any force from a guerrilla company up to two regiments supported by artillery, he is unlikely to defend any area except to cover the

evacuation of a base area, or unless encircled and forced to fight. If forced to defend, he will probably endeavor to inflict maximum casualties and then withdraw under cover of darkness into more favorable terrain. The defense belongs to positional warfare, which plays a supporting role in mobile warfare.

Insurgents will normally delay under three circumstances. One is when they are engaged by a superior force and are unable to break contact. To prevent encirclement they will delay until darkness or the character of the terrain permits them to break contact and withdraw. The second situation is when they are conducting a decoy operation to entrap a force. In this role a unit might delay while moving to favorable terrain where a larger unit waits in ambush for the purpose of encircling and annihilating a pursuing force. The third situation is one in which a large insurgent force is threatened with encirclement by a number of converging columns. Small forces will attempt to delay several of these columns while the main force masses in an attempt to encircle and annihilate one of the converging columns. The delay is more suited to mobile warfare than to the defense.

The Viet Cong and PAVN will attempt to withdraw when faced by a superior enemy force. A precept of protracted

insurgent warfare is the avoidance of battle when the odds are against the insurgent. This principle applies to guerrilla warfare and to mobile warfare.

Guerrilla warfare will be actively pursued to isolate a selected battle area and to disrupt and distract counterinsurgency forces. Surface lines of communications are excellent guerrilla objectives. Guerrilla action also supports mobile warfare by making a "noise in the east before an attack in the west."

The insurgent forces employ rifles, light and heavy machine guns, mortars, and cannon artillery as anti-aircraft fire. They have developed an off-set sight for the machine gun, and they conduct intensive training in procedures for developing an accurate lead on a flying aircraft. Although some helicopters are hit by ground fire, few are knocked down. Better results are achieved in landing zones where machine gun fire or indirect mortar fire may be pre-planned and delivered when a flight of helicopters is in the landing zone.<sup>27</sup> This last technique underlines the need for suppressive fires and reconnaissance of landing zones prior to and during the landing of large helicopter formations.

---

<sup>27</sup>U.S., Department of State, p. 53; and personal letter from William Roll, Maj, Inf, S3, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 21 January 1966.

## The Enemy

Opposing forces in mobile warfare are employed in a jigsaw pattern (see Plate XII). Each side has strongholds from which its influence radiates. ARVN and United States strongholds are generally well defended base camps, whereas insurgent strongholds are mobile bases in difficult terrain.

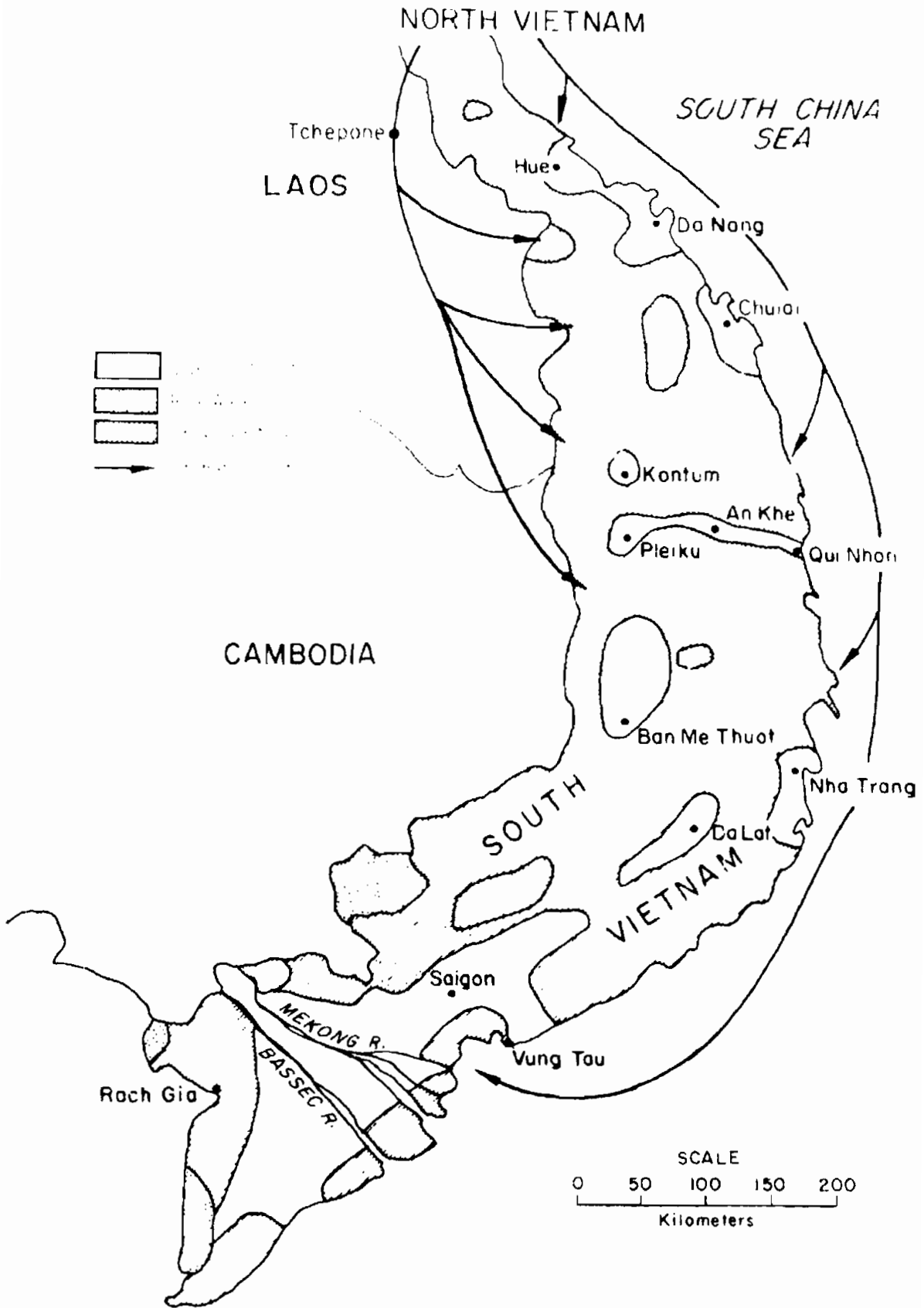
The importance of the delta is in its people and its rice. The Viet Cong demonstrate appreciation of this fact in their dispositions along the Cambodian border and in the coastal swamps from which they extend their influence over the delta's wealthy plains. From base areas in the rugged, forested hills of the lowlands the influence of the insurgent is extended over the fertile river plains by propaganda, terror, and guerrilla raids. They have interrupted traffic over South Vietnam's arterial highways and railroad running through the lowlands, by blowing bridges, ambushing convoys, and eluding even large scale operations designed to locate and destroy them. The rugged hills of the highlands, contiguous to the Laos and Cambodian borders, form a natural base area for the insurgents. Though infertile and sparsely populated, it is from these highland strongholds that the insurgent extends influence over the rest of South Vietnam.

Although the figures change constantly, some idea of the strength of insurgent forces may be gained from recent

## PLATE XII

## ENEMY BASES AND INFLUENCED AREAS

Sources: U.S., Department of State, Aggression from the North: The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign To Conquer South Viet-Nam, Publication 7839 (Far Eastern Series 103; Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965), p. 1; and "South Vietnam: A New Kind of War," Time Magazine, LXXXVI, No. 17 (22 October 1965), 29.



estimates. In January of 1966 PAVN strength was estimated to be 9 regiments, each with 2 or more battalions of 500 men per battalion. The main force of the Viet Cong in June of 1965 was estimated to number 65,000 guerrillas who were armed, equipped, and rigorously trained. Both these forces employ light infantry weapons and are supported by limited mortar and artillery fire.<sup>28</sup>

Some 80,000 to 100,000 part-time guerrillas "mix" insurgency with farming. Working in their native villages and districts, these guerrillas provide intelligence and a ready pool of replacements to the main force Viet Cong units.<sup>29</sup>

An estimated 30,000 political and propaganda cadre-men operate in South Vietnam. Infiltrated from the north to win the minds of the people, they educate, propagandize, and recruit for the Viet Cong. Cadremen are the hard core communists who motivate the guerrilla and influence the peasant. Although their numbers are small and they may or may not bear arms, they leave no stone unturned in providing continuing

---

<sup>28</sup> New York Times, 17 June 1965, p. 1, quoting Robert S. McNamara, Secretary of Defense, U.S. Department of Defense; "Operation Masher," Life, 24B; and U.S., Department of State, p. 23.

<sup>29</sup> New York Times, 17 June 1965, p. 1, quoting McNamara; and U.S., Department of State, pp. 22-24.

spark to the insurgency effort.<sup>30</sup>

The insurgent forces are reinforced by infiltration from the north at an estimated rate of 4,500 men per month. Arms and equipment flow down the Ho Chi Minh trail. While this is considered to be the primary source of resupply, the enemy still relies on captured personnel, arms, and supplies. When main force Viet Cong units suffer casualties, their replacements are obtained locally by elevating part-time guerrillas from the ranks of district and village forces.<sup>31</sup>

#### Strengths and Weaknesses

By the standards of conventional warfare insurgents are an inferior force, short in numbers and poorly equipped. But the Viet Cong and PAVN have no intention of fighting on the terms of superior conventional forces. Instead, they have devised tactics to protract the war to sap their enemy's strength while building their own. Exhaustive preparation for a quick, decisive battle is their offensive technique; moving to hide in difficult terrain is their defensive technique. Neither can be accomplished without

---

<sup>30</sup>New York Times, 17 June 1965, p. 1, quoting McNamara; and U.S., Department of State, pp. 22-24.

<sup>31</sup>New York Times, 17 June 1965, p. 1, quoting McNamara; and U.S., Department of State, p. 24.



support from the people.

Insurgents are rigorously trained from the lessons learned in nearly a quarter century of war in Vietnam. They have superior knowledge of the terrain and they use it expertly. Foot mobility in difficult terrain, one of their main strengths, enables them to approach an objective from any direction and then to withdraw and disappear.

The Viet Cong have excellent intelligence and counterintelligence. Where they have the support of the people they have a thousand eyes to watch and report on activities of the friendly forces. By blending with the peasants to reconnoiter and by making slow, careful preparations, the Viet Cong can develop detailed knowledge to support their attacks. Likewise, the people and part-time guerrillas provide early warning of the advance of friendly forces. Moreover, the peasants are reluctant to provide information of guerrilla activities to friendly forces. Security is enhanced by sentries posted in depth around base areas. The insurgents, past masters at camouflage, light and noise discipline, and movement by stealth, are able to conceal even large forces.

In the personnel area the insurgents have several strengths. Replacements are locally available by drawing on the part-time guerrillas. A stream of some 4,500 infiltrate

from North Vietnam each month and includes new units and trained replacements for existing units. Communists are careful to bolster the morale of their soldiers through propaganda, because those who believe they are fighting a people's war against American imperialists and their lackies are willing to endure great hardships for this cause. In the communist theory of the protracted war the moral strength of the army and the people will prevail, and every effort is made by education and propaganda to maintain that moral strength.

Logistically, the fact that insurgent forces can exist with minimal support is a source of strength. Some weapons, ammunition, mines, and explosives are provided by North Vietnam. Additional weaponry is obtained by sweeping the battlefields at every opportunity to recover anything that might be of military value and by converting bamboo spikes to booby traps and obstacles. Food is locally procured. Hospitalization facilities and medical treatment are meager. The guerrilla is accustomed to short rations, the climate, the local water, and disease. He lives by a fortitude that overcomes difficulties.

It must be conceded that the enemy has the support of large portions of the civil population. This support is the result of propaganda, terror, and guerrilla raids and is

grudgingly given by peasants who seem to want only to be left in peace to live and farm. A deliberate campaign to kill or kidnap teachers, village chiefs, doctors, and government administrators has gone a long way to eliminate opposition leadership. Supporters of the government are termed reactionaries--enemies of the people or lackies of the imperialists. Communist doctrine is to eliminate them to bring about a true democracy of the people. There is resentment of the Viet Cong, but real and lasting security must be provided before the people dare open resistance.

The area of operations favors the Viet Cong and PAVN forces in their conduct of insurgent warfare. Proximity to North Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia, plus the concealed routes from each of these countries through the rugged highlands, facilitate outside support of the insurgent forces. Rugged terrain and dense vegetation provide flexibility in the selection of base areas and facilitate breaking contact when pursued. Restricted routes make it possible to isolate large parts of the country by interdicting only a few roads or trails. The population gives active and passive support to the insurgents. Success in protracted war is premised on the support of the people and their continued resistance to the government forces. This support affords the insurgent political as well as military advantages that could be

decisive in a protracted war.

Weaknesses of the insurgent forces may be considered in three parts. First, their popular support is based on propaganda, terror, and dissatisfaction with the government. This support can be destroyed by demonstrating the lies in the propaganda themes, by providing real and lasting protection from reprisals against the people, and by government institution of popular social and economic programs. These measures are beyond the capability of the airmobile division, but it can participate in these overall programs, especially in the area of providing continuous security for the people.

The second part of the weaknesses is that insurgent logistics are dependent on outside support and captured material. Interdiction of outside support and denial of arms and ammunition require coordinated efforts by government, ARVN, and allied units. These efforts can effectively utilize the airmobile division.

Finally, the insurgents are limited to foot mobility, have limited firepower, and, because of inferior signal communications, may have difficulty in coordinating fast moving operations in which they do not have the initiative. The airmobile division has the capability to exploit each area of the third part of weaknesses of insurgent forces.

The war in Vietnam is subversive insurgency, and the objective of the insurgent force is to protract the war by fighting only battles of quick decision in which it has superior forces and avoiding all others. The Viet Cong and the PAVN are masters of mobile warfare, capitalizing on the local population, the terrain, and their own moral courage to sustain themselves.

In counterinsurgency operations the airmobile division must first find an insurgent force, fix it, and then destroy it. The insurgents are excellent at concealing their locations, movements, and strengths, thus making the task of locating them difficult. They can move rapidly in any direction through Vietnam's difficult terrain and heavy forests, which enables them to elude destruction by disappearing. Speed in closing with insurgents by utilizing airmobile forces should assist in preventing their escape. Insurgent excellence in ambush, however, makes hasty operations hazardous. That and their firepower make the assumption of risks for the sake of speed a dangerous practice. These problems are pursued in the next chapter by analysis of the current concept for employment of the airmobile division against insurgent forces.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT CONCEPT

At times, airmobile operations permit greater gains which often are accompanied by greater risks . . .<sup>1</sup>

--Lieutenant General C. W. G. Rich  
Test Director, Project TEAM

Insurgent forces do not employ the guerrilla warfare and mobile warfare of the protracted war by choice, but rather because their inferior combat power demands that they seek every advantage of geography. Considering relative combat power, the airmobile division has, or can call on, overwhelming firepower, greater mobility, better communications, and more sophisticated means for reconnaissance and surveillance. Appreciating this, insurgent forces prefer to engage in battles of their own choosing, in which, on their initiative and with superior forces, they can gain a quick decisive victory. To destroy insurgent forces the airmobile division must first find them and then hold them in place so

---

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Army Test, Evaluation and Control Group, Project TEAM [Test, Evaluation Air Mobility], Field Test Program: Army Air Mobility Concept, Vol. I: Basic Report (Fort Benning, Ga.: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, 15 January 1965), p. 8.

that its superior combat power can be brought to bear. But, lest the hunter becomes the hunted, the airmobile division must be wary of a carefully laid ambush, for while the insurgent has less combat power, he is dedicated, well trained, and armed well enough to give a good account of himself.

The airmobile division evolved from the air assault division. When the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) came into being in July of 1965, its employment was guided by years of development and testing of a concept--the air assault concept. The first part of this chapter is a discussion of the air assault concept for employment of airmobile forces as it applies to counterinsurgency operations in an underdeveloped area. The concept will then be analyzed in terms of the capabilities and limitations of the airmobile division, the effects of the area of operations, and the strengths and weaknesses of the insurgents.

### The Air Assault Concept

The air assault concept envisions an airmobile task force selecting an inferior force, bringing it under fire, rapidly attacking it by landing close by for followup assault on foot. The concept is described as follows:

Airmobile operations exploit the close tactical integration of troop lift and supporting fires applied with

precision and speed over extended distances and terrain obstacles to achieve tactical surprise. The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot. . . . Protection of forces during the approach, landing, tactical maneuver, reinforcement, and withdrawal is provided by closely integrating the fires of ground and aerial fire support elements with the close air support provided by the Air Force.<sup>2</sup>

Study of this description reveals three significant aspects of the air assault concept. First, tactical surprise is sought in engaging the enemy because that tends to increase the combat power advantage of an airmobile task force. Second, there is mutual dependence between maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence, and support. Therefore limitations in any of these areas, intelligence in particular, will adversely affect airmobile operations. Third, airmobile forces land directly on an undefended objective area or in the close proximity of a defended area.

In the air assault concept increased maneuver capability and tactical surprise are considered to permit less dependence upon heavy sustained ground fire.<sup>3</sup> Airmobile operations are feasible with reduced sustained ground fire

---

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



so long as the airmobile force can envelop both the bulk of the enemy's obstacles and prepared fire and can attack from flank or rear. Tactical surprise tends to reduce the need for preparatory fire. It is to be understood that the aerial fire support of aerial rocket artillery, aerial gunships, and close air support are available to the airmobile force.

In the air assault concept airmobile forces orient either directly on a located enemy force to destroy him or indirectly by securing terrain that will block enemy movement.

Airmobile forces operate relatively free of the terrain influences that restrict surface operations. Operations are carried out to locate and destroy enemy forces and installations or to seize terrain objectives and to prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, supply, or the shifting of reserves.<sup>4</sup>

Actions are undertaken to locate enemy forces and to determine their weaknesses. "Intelligence for airmobile operations is characterized by . . . heavy reliance upon aerial collection means [although] . . . the necessity for ground reconnaissance is not eliminated."<sup>5</sup>

When the enemy is located he is fixed by means of firepower and mobility of aerial weapons systems that are rapidly brought to bear in an effort to limit his maneuver.

---

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-1 & 4-2.

Infantry units are then landed in his close proximity to destroy him by close combat. The infantry assault is supported by surface and aerial fires.<sup>6</sup>

The following description gives a succinct picture of the air assault concept for the employment of an airmobile task force:

Airmobile operations are characterized by rapid execution and timely withdrawal based upon detailed prior planning. Rapid execution of successive operations enables airmobile forces to seize and maintain the initiative, to utilize local tactical surprise and to avoid becoming engaged by superior hostile forces or defeated in detail. . . . A significant advantage is created by the ability of airmobile forces to detect and select concentrations of enemy forces, then to land, attack, destroy, disengage, and withdraw or move to initiate subsequent attacks on other enemy concentrations before enemy forces can effectively react.<sup>7</sup>

Vulnerability to air defensive fires is recognized. It is compensated for by reliance on effective suppressive fires of all kinds and emphasis on accurate and timely intelligence.<sup>8</sup>

Surface artillery is displaced to secure firing positions within supporting distance. The displacement may precede, follow, or be concurrent with the movement of the airmobile force.<sup>9</sup> Considerations which affect displacement include surprise, requirement for supporting fires, and

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 4-1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 4-2.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 5-1.

aircraft availability.

Distances between units and bases of operation are influenced by mission, terrain, enemy capabilities, and the situation. These distances must be determined separately for each operation. "Counterinsurgency operations for air-mobile units may be over large areas with considerable distances between elements, whereas operations against a sophisticated enemy may be at rather close distances."<sup>10</sup>

For independent operations in a conventional war environment, the air line of communications may be extended up to 150 nautical miles (see Plate XIII). In counterinsurgency operations in an underdeveloped area, however, it is considered that the air line of communications is capable of supporting the division base up to 125 nautical miles from the logistic base, brigade bases up to 50 nautical miles from the division base, and battalion bases an additional 35 nautical miles beyond the brigade bases, for a total of 225 nautical miles.<sup>11</sup>

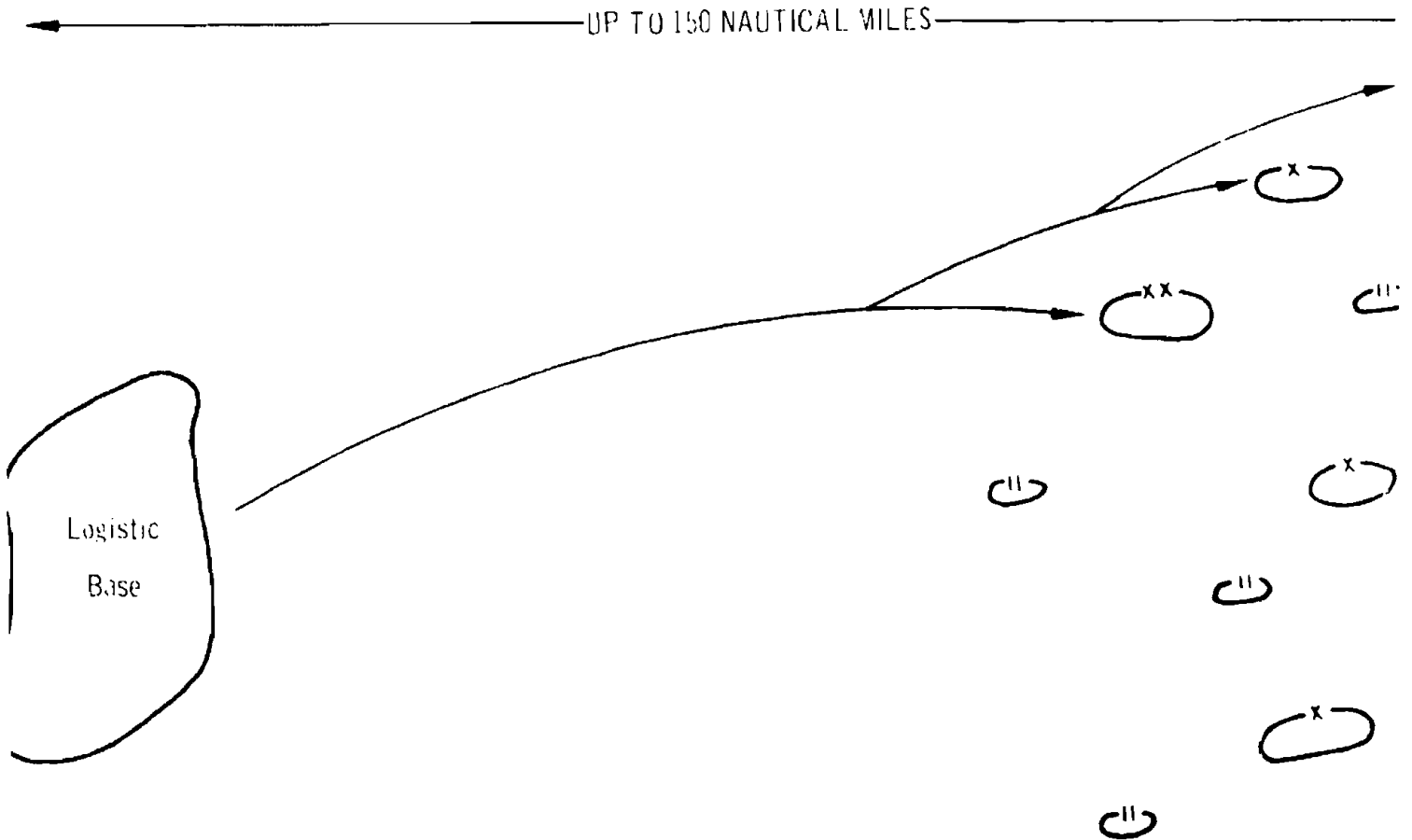
Combat service support is considered to have a capability for mobility equal to the division to sustain

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 4-19.

<sup>11</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Air Lines of Communication (AirLOC) Operations, In Support of the Air Assault Division, ST 55-7 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963), p. 27.

PLATE XIII



AIR LINE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Source: U.S., Department of the Army, Army Air Mobility Concept (Washington, Department of the Army, 12 December 1963), p. A-1.

operations by making maximum use of Army and Air Force aircraft in forward areas to provide airlift tonnage requirements to sustain airmobile forces at rates and distances involved in tactical operations.<sup>12</sup>

#### Air Assault Concept in Counter-insurgency Operations

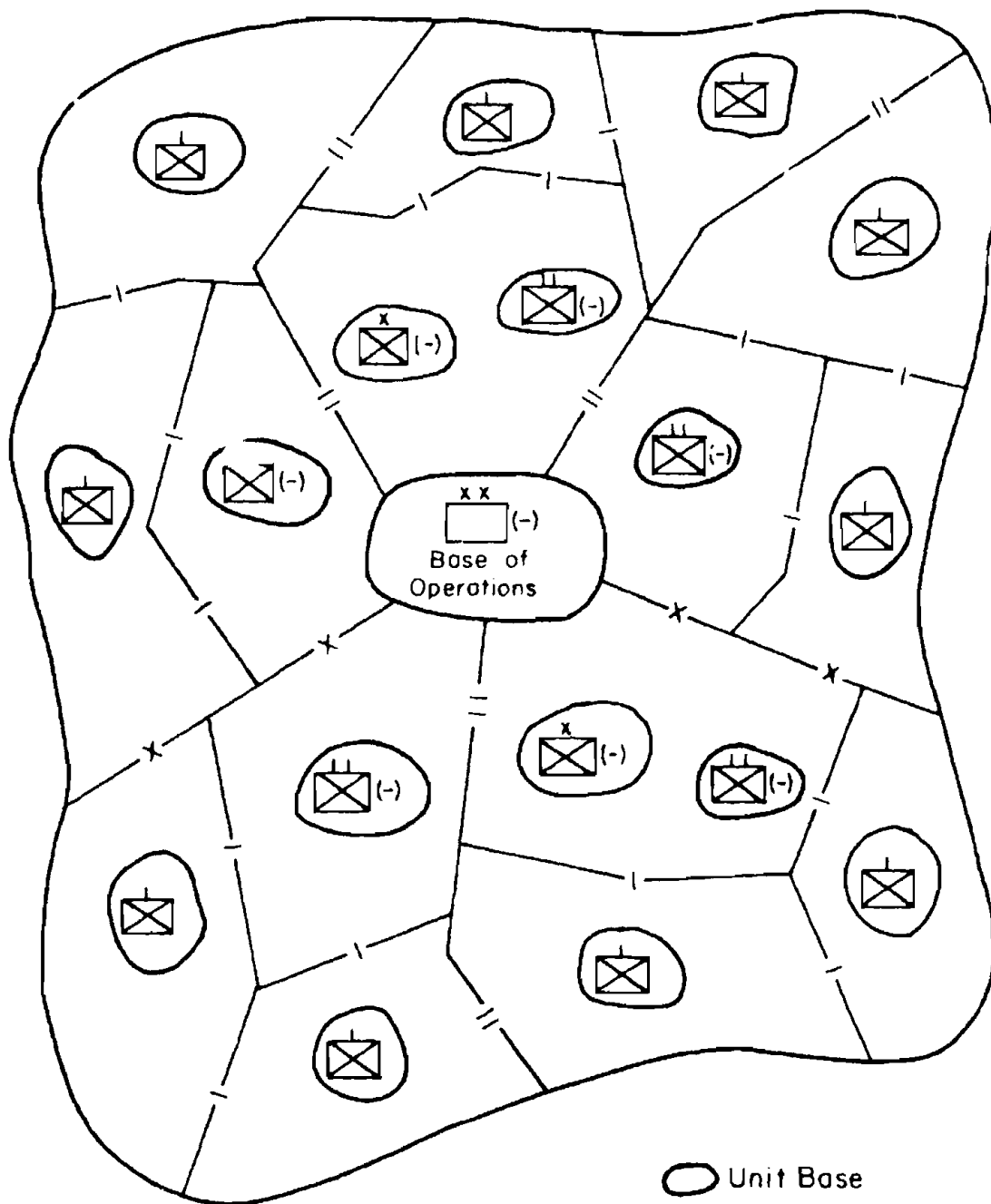
Within the air assault concept counterinsurgency operations are conducted by relatively small, self-sustaining elements operating from mobile bases. Offensive operations are directed to the location and destruction of guerrilla forces, with minimum consideration of terrain objectives. Even though heavy reliance is placed upon aerial reconnaissance, intelligence techniques adapted to the enemy, the terrain, and the environment are employed.<sup>13</sup>

Plate XIV illustrates schematically the air assault concept for employment of the airmobile division in an underdeveloped area controlled by insurgent forces. The division mission is to destroy the enemy and establish control over the area. The mission is performed by systematically locating and destroying enemy forces. All sources of information and the element of surprise are exploited in the

---

<sup>12</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 6-1.

<sup>13</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 4-11 & 4-12.



### AREA SEARCH AND CONTROL

Source: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-13.

conduct of airmobile operations to locate, isolate, and defeat enemy forces in detail. Each division echelon retains a reserve at its base of operations. Ground patrols are increased during non-flying weather.<sup>14</sup>

This example is more suited to guerrilla warfare than mobile warfare. The example and the air assault concept from which it stems do not provide for different levels of insurgent threat--jumping from guerrilla warfare to limited war opposing conventional forces. Mobile warfare is analogous to guerrilla warfare, but the insurgent employs larger forces. The ensuing analysis of the air assault concept is conducted in the context of Phase III insurgency, mobile warfare as it is being conducted by Viet Cong and PAVN units in Vietnam today.

#### Analysis of the Air Assault Concept for Employment of the Airmobile Division

Analysis is developed within the following areas:

1. Concept of operations: general approach to the mission of locating and destroying insurgent forces in an underdeveloped area.

2. Location of the enemy: actions taken to find an insurgent force and to determine its strengths and

---

<sup>14</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 4-12 through 4-14.

disposition short of initiating a battle to destroy it.

3. Engagement of the enemy: actions taken to fix an insurgent force by restricting its maneuver. Engagement includes actions to determine enemy strength and dispositions that are likely to lead to a battle being joined.

4. Destruction of the enemy: actions taken to destroy or capture an insurgent force by means of fire and maneuver.

#### Concept of Operations

The current concept of operations is characterized by wide area coverage by small, self-sustaining forces, with separate bases of operation for each deployed brigade, battalion, company, and platoon. This concept is analyzed in terms of mutual support, security of bases of operation, and the role of security forces as reserves.

Both offensive and defensive capabilities depend on mutual support when small forces are widely dispersed. Two units are in mutual support if they can come to the aid of each other before either can be defeated separately. Mutual support is a function of the capabilities of the two units, the capabilities of the enemy, the terrain, and the weather.<sup>15</sup> Conversely, in counterinsurgency operations,

---

<sup>15</sup>Department of Military Art and Engineering, Notes



mutual support must also include the ability of two units to come to the aid of each other before a located guerrilla force can escape. Separated airmobile forces may be mutually supporting when adequate landing zones exist, when weather flying minimums obtain, and when aircraft are available. However, if one of these conditions is denied and support is dependent upon a foot mobile force moving the same distance, possibly through difficult terrain, mutual support is lost. Such forces may be unable to destroy located guerrilla forces or, even worse, may suffer defeat in detail.

Mutual support may be a minor consideration in operations against guerrillas, with their inferior combat power, but its importance increases when opposed by insurgent forces of battalion and greater size operating in rugged, forested terrain. Such a force constitutes significant combat power. This is especially true in mobile warfare, in which the enemy seeks quick, decisive battles of his choosing. Restricted landing zones, darkness, monsoonal rains, and periods of fog and low clouds favor his fighting a quick battle of annihilation before a small force can be reinforced by an airmobile operation.

The enemy threat in terrain favoring his operations is such that the airmobile division must muster significant combat power to restrict his maneuver and destroy him. Even blocking forces positioned to restrict enemy maneuver must be of sufficient size to avoid being defeated in detail. Because the geography of Vietnam generally favors the defense, infantry units attacking to destroy an insurgent force must be significantly stronger than the enemy, even after his maneuver is blocked and supporting fires are applied. An airmobile task force may require a combat power advantage well above three to one to fix and finish a relatively small force.

Security of multiple bases, with forces being used in a security role at each echelon, reduces forces available for commitment in offensive operations. For instance, up to a rifle company may be required to secure a battalion base of operations employed outside of the brigade base. Such an installation, with the battalion's organic vehicles, tents, aid station, limited stocks of supply, and activities, lacks the passive security of mobility. In a counterinsurgency environment it lacks the active security afforded by frontlines or a larger unit perimeter. If the requirements of a battle result in commitment of security forces in their reserve role, unacceptable vulnerability is incurred.

Security of both forward and rear installations was identified as a deficiency of technique in tests of the air assault concept.<sup>16</sup>

The base of operations at each echelon is secured by the reserve, which gives that force a dual role. The roles of reserve and security force are mutually exclusive when there is a likelihood that the larger force may require reinforcement of its combat operations while at the same time having a significant security threat to its base of operations. In chess parlance this is known as a pin--when one piece cannot be moved because it will expose a more valuable piece to loss. A clever enemy could employ a diversionary effort for the purpose of drawing away reserves and then attacking the exposed base of operations--"make a noise in the east and attack in the west."

During airmobile operations in an underdeveloped area against insurgent forces engaged in mobile warfare, a concept of operations visualizing dispersion of small, self-sustaining units and multiple bases of operations has the following deficiencies:

1. Combat power is dissipated at a time when the enemy threat, his tactics, and the nature of the area

---

<sup>16</sup>Project TEAM, I, A-1-6.

indicate that it should be massed.

2. Separate bases of operations for each deployed brigade and battalion pose a significant requirement for security forces throughout the division.

3. The roles of reserve and security force are mutually exclusive for one unit.

These deficiencies can be overcome by basically massing the airmobile force. The current and the proposed concepts follow.

[Current:] Operations are conducted by self-sustaining elements of relatively small size that operate from mobile bases.

Proposed: Operations are conducted by self-sustaining elements of relatively large size that operate from mobile bases.

Airmobile task forces of brigade and battalion size are employed to conduct offensive operations in an assigned area to locate, fix, and destroy insurgent forces. As larger insurgent forces are located, two or more brigade size airmobile task forces may be committed to engage and destroy them.

#### Location of the Enemy

The air assault concept for locating the enemy is characterized by heavy reliance on aerial reconnaissance complemented by ground reconnaissance, the use of reconnaissance in force, and raids. Concept analysis is in terms of

---

<sup>17</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 4-11.

Tactical surprise is achieved through delivery of assault forces immediately adjacent to a known or suspected guerrilla force. Trained shock troops are committed in the initial assault wave.<sup>31</sup>

The reasoning appears to be that an airmobile force usually lands where there are few fixed defenses or well organized combat troops, and that this description covers the guerrilla (insurgent) forces. Therefore, airmobile landings are made immediately adjacent to insurgent forces. Should an insurgent force present significant combat power, it is to be overcome by "trained shock troops" making the initial assault. This technique promotes faster closing with the enemy to fix and destroy him, but it may incur undue damage to an airmobile force.

The remaining technique, an unopposed landing followed by a coordinated attack, is to be used if the terrain and enemy situation do not permit landing on or immediately adjacent to objectives.<sup>32</sup> This technique is not included in the air assault concept, apparently because:

1. It is essentially slower and requires a longer ground attack.

---

<sup>31</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Forces, FM 31-22 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 12 November 1963), p. 49.

<sup>32</sup>Department of the Army, Airmobile Operations, p. 18.

2. Aerial suppressive fires and tactical surprise are considered sufficient to neutralize enemy defensive fires.

In accordance with cited Army doctrine, unopposed landings should be sought when the enemy has fixed defenses or well organized combat troops. The insurgent forces currently operating in Vietnam do have these characteristics; available cover and concealment degrade suppressive fires; tactical surprise cannot always be relied on--all these indicate that airmobile forces should seek unopposed landings.

Tactical surprise does not require taking the enemy unaware, but, rather, that he becomes aware of the attack too late to react effectively. When insurgent forces are disposed in difficult terrain, a significant ground and air reconnaissance effort must be made to locate them and to discover enough information of their strength and dispositions to develop a plan of attack. The likelihood is that during the process of locating an insurgent force it will become aware of impending attack and react quickly. If the insurgents intend to avoid contact, the main body will withdraw into more difficult terrain and a covering force will prepare to engage and delay the airmobile force. If the insurgents choose to defend, the terrain will favor their

defense, which will be organized with prepared positions, automatic weapons, and mortars covering likely landing zones and avenues of approach. After some exposure to airmobile operations, it will be difficult to surprise insurgents with the speed or size of an airmobile attack.

Deficiencies of the air assault concept for engaging an insurgent force include:

1. Heavy reliance on aerial firepower to restrict the maneuver of insurgent forces; but the terrain and vegetation reduce the effect of fires and favor undetected movement by the insurgent.

2. Airmobile landings in the close proximity of an insurgent force for followup assault on foot; but the combat power of the insurgent, including his use of the terrain, favor unopposed landings.

3. Tactical surprise which is considered to degrade the insurgents' combat power; but necessary pre-assault reconnaissance alerts the insurgent to impending attack.

In consideration of these deficiencies the following modifications to the current air assault concept are proposed:

[Current:] Operations are carried out to locate and destroy enemy forces and installations or to seize terrain objectives and to prevent enemy withdrawal rein-

forcement, supply or the shifting of reserves.<sup>33</sup>

Firepower and mobility are employed to fix enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and support friendly maneuver forces in the seizure of terrain and the destruction of the enemy.<sup>34</sup>

The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into the undefended objective areas from any direction or into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot.<sup>35</sup>

Proposed: Operations are carried out to locate, fix, and destroy enemy forces or to seize terrain objectives which prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, supply, or the shifting of reserves.

Firepower and maneuver are employed to develop the enemy situation, fix enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and to provide an advantage prior to attacking to destroy him. Should the enemy endeavor to withdraw, actions to fix him are repeated.

Airmobile forces are landed on undefended objectives or in undefended landing areas for subsequent ground attack to secure defended objectives.

#### Destruction of the Enemy

Within the air assault concept the enemy is destroyed by the application of fires followed by the landing of infantry in his close proximity for followup assault on foot. Although these techniques as they apply to

---

<sup>33</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-1.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.



operations against insurgent forces in Vietnam today were discussed above, their deficiencies are reiterated here for clarity.

1. The effects of supporting fires are reduced by heavy foliage, mud, and dissected terrain. If the insurgent force has prepared positions with overhead cover, suppressive fires may not neutralize his fires over available landing zones.

2. Landing in the close proximity of the insurgent force and just outside the dispersion pattern of friendly supporting fires exposes aircraft to air defensive fires to which they are vulnerable.

To overcome these deficiencies the following modifications to the current air assault concept are proposed:

[Current:] Firepower and mobility are employed to locate enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and support friendly maneuver forces in the seizure of terrain and the destruction of the enemy.<sup>36</sup>

The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into the undefended objective areas from any direction or into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot.<sup>37</sup>

Proposed: After an insurgent force has been fixed maximum aerial and surface fire support is applied, followed by a coordinated ground attack to close with and destroy or capture the enemy.

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

## Combat Service Support Considerations

No concept for employment of the airmobile division would be valid if it could not be supported logistically. Combat service support requirements for the modified concept are reduced from levels required for the air assault concept because, with battalions and brigades remaining essentially massed, there is a reduced transportation requirement for resupply and evacuation.

It is advisable to group the battalion bases of operation within the brigade base of operation. Activities in the battalion base include the battalion command post, aid station, and organic maintenance. The battalion mess section currently remains in the brigade base.<sup>38</sup> The main command post can remain in the brigade base, with a small tactical command post accompanying committed elements and communicating via organic AM-SSB radios. Casualties are evacuated by air and can readily be delivered from the battle area to the brigade base by aircraft normally returning there. In counterinsurgency operations in underdeveloped areas there is little use for organic surface vehicles of

---

<sup>38</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Infantry Battalion, Air Assault Division, ST 7-20-1 (Fort Benning, Ga.: Combat Developments Command, 11 September 1964), pp. 57-59. The 1st Brigade of the 11th Air Assault Division habitually operated in this manner during tests of the air assault concept.

the battalion, with a correspondingly reduced requirement for organic maintenance support forward. Finally, requirements on the air line of communications are in no way increased, because under either concept supply and evacuation for combat and combat support elements are the same, with supplies being transported forward from the brigade base and wounded being evacuated to the division clearing stations located there by division aircraft.<sup>39</sup>

By consolidating battalion bases within the brigade base, initial aircraft requirements are reduced because service support facilities are not transported forward of the brigade base, shortening their displacement distance from the division base. Supplies to be consumed by service support facilities are transported only as far forward as the brigade base, further relieving the air line of communications. Additionally, less troops are required for securing one consolidated base for the brigade than for securing separate bases for each battalion in addition to a brigade base.

#### Summary

In summary, the air assault concept for employment

---

<sup>39</sup>Army Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 6-6 through 6-8.

of the airmobile division in counterinsurgency operations calls for forces to be widely dispersed over a large area, with separate bases of operation for each deployed brigade, battalion, company, and platoon. The enemy is located through heavy reliance on aerial reconnaissance and surveillance, with ground reconnaissance to complete the picture. He is engaged by firepower and mobility of aerial weapons systems that deny him freedom of maneuver. He is destroyed by infantry units that are landed with surprise in his close proximity for followup assault on foot.

Analysis revealed that the air assault concept may be suited for counter guerrilla warfare in relatively open terrain but must be modified for counterinsurgency operations involving mobile warfare within restricted terrain.

A modified concept was evolved from the analysis and is proposed for employment of the airmobile division in counteroffensive operations against insurgent forces in mobile warfare in an underdeveloped area. The concept of operations calls for massing the combat power of the division and employment of minimum bases of operation. The enemy is located through heavy reliance on ground reconnaissance, coordinated with aerial observation. He is engaged by the deliberate employment of infantry units, supported by aerial fires, making unopposed landings and then maneuvering

to develop the enemy situation, restrict his maneuver, and provide an advantage prior to attacking to destroy him. Should the insurgent force endeavor to withdraw, actions to restrict his maneuver are repeated. The enemy is destroyed by the application of aerial and surface fires and the maneuver of infantry units that close with him in a coordinated ground attack.

## CHAPTER V

### ANALYSIS OF THE CURRENT CONCEPT

At times, airmobile operations permit greater gains which often are accompanied by greater risks . . .<sup>1</sup>

--Lieutenant General C. W. G. Rich  
Test Director, Project TEAM

Insurgent forces do not employ the guerrilla warfare and mobile warfare of the protracted war by choice, but rather because their inferior combat power demands that they seek every advantage of geography. Considering relative combat power, the airmobile division has, or can call on, overwhelming firepower, greater mobility, better communications, and more sophisticated means for reconnaissance and surveillance. Appreciating this, insurgent forces prefer to engage in battles of their own choosing, in which, on their initiative and with superior forces, they can gain a quick decisive victory. To destroy insurgent forces the airmobile division must first find them and then hold them in place so

---

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Army Test, Evaluation and Control Group, Project TEAM [Test, Evaluation Air Mobility], Field Test Program: Army Air Mobility Concept, Vol. I: Basic Report (Fort Benning, Ga.: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, 15 January 1965), p. 8.

that its superior combat power can be brought to bear. But, lest the hunter becomes the hunted, the airmobile division must be wary of a carefully laid ambush, for while the insurgent has less combat power, he is dedicated, well trained, and armed well enough to give a good account of himself.

The airmobile division evolved from the air assault division. When the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) came into being in July of 1965, its employment was guided by years of development and testing of a concept--the air assault concept. The first part of this chapter is a discussion of the air assault concept for employment of airmobile forces as it applies to counterinsurgency operations in an underdeveloped area. The concept will then be analyzed in terms of the capabilities and limitations of the airmobile division, the effects of the area of operations, and the strengths and weaknesses of the insurgents.

### The Air Assault Concept

The air assault concept envisions an airmobile task force selecting an inferior force, bringing it under fire, rapidly attacking it by landing close by for followup assault on foot. The concept is described as follows:

Airmobile operations exploit the close tactical integration of troop lift and supporting fires applied with

precision and speed over extended distances and terrain obstacles to achieve tactical surprise. The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot. . . . Protection of forces during the approach, landing, tactical maneuver, reinforcement, and withdrawal is provided by closely integrating the fires of ground and aerial fire support elements with the close air support provided by the Air Force.<sup>2</sup>

Study of this description reveals three significant aspects of the air assault concept. First, tactical surprise is sought in engaging the enemy because that tends to increase the combat power advantage of an airmobile task force. Second, there is mutual dependence between maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence, and support. Therefore limitations in any of these areas, intelligence in particular, will adversely affect airmobile operations. Third, airmobile forces land directly on an undefended objective area or in the close proximity of a defended area.

In the air assault concept increased maneuver capability and tactical surprise are considered to permit less dependence upon heavy sustained ground fire.<sup>3</sup> Airmobile operations are feasible with reduced sustained ground fire

---

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-1.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid.



so long as the airmobile force can envelop both the bulk of the enemy's obstacles and prepared fire and can attack from flank or rear. Tactical surprise tends to reduce the need for preparatory fire. It is to be understood that the aerial fire support of aerial rocket artillery, aerial gunships, and close air support are available to the airmobile force.

In the air assault concept airmobile forces orient either directly on a located enemy force to destroy him or indirectly by securing terrain that will block enemy movement.

Airmobile forces operate relatively free of the terrain influences that restrict surface operations. Operations are carried out to locate and destroy enemy forces and installations or to seize terrain objectives and to prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, supply, or the shifting of reserves.<sup>4</sup>

Actions are undertaken to locate enemy forces and to determine their weaknesses. "Intelligence for airmobile operations is characterized by . . . heavy reliance upon aerial collection means [although] . . . the necessity for ground reconnaissance is not eliminated."<sup>5</sup>

When the enemy is located he is fixed by means of firepower and mobility of aerial weapons systems that are rapidly brought to bear in an effort to limit his maneuver.

---

<sup>4</sup>Ibid.

<sup>5</sup>Ibid., pp. 4-1 & 4-2.

Infantry units are then landed in his close proximity to destroy him by close combat. The infantry assault is supported by surface and aerial fires.<sup>6</sup>

The following description gives a succinct picture of the air assault concept for the employment of an airmobile task force:

Airmobile operations are characterized by rapid execution and timely withdrawal based upon detailed prior planning. Rapid execution of successive operations enables airmobile forces to seize and maintain the initiative, to utilize local tactical surprise and to avoid becoming engaged by superior hostile forces or defeated in detail. . . . A significant advantage is created by the ability of airmobile forces to detect and select concentrations of enemy forces, then to land, attack, destroy, disengage, and withdraw or move to initiate subsequent attacks on other enemy concentrations before enemy forces can effectively react.<sup>7</sup>

Vulnerability to air defensive fires is recognized. It is compensated for by reliance on effective suppressive fires of all kinds and emphasis on accurate and timely intelligence.<sup>8</sup>

Surface artillery is displaced to secure firing positions within supporting distance. The displacement may precede, follow, or be concurrent with the movement of the airmobile force.<sup>9</sup> Considerations which affect displacement include surprise, requirement for supporting fires, and

---

<sup>6</sup>Ibid., p. 4-1.

<sup>7</sup>Ibid.

<sup>8</sup>Ibid., p. 4-2.

<sup>9</sup>Ibid., p. 5-1.

aircraft availability.

Distances between units and bases of operation are influenced by mission, terrain, enemy capabilities, and the situation. These distances must be determined separately for each operation. "Counterinsurgency operations for air-mobile units may be over large areas with considerable distances between elements, whereas operations against a sophisticated enemy may be at rather close distances."<sup>10</sup>

For independent operations in a conventional war environment, the air line of communications may be extended up to 150 nautical miles (see Plate XIII). In counterinsurgency operations in an underdeveloped area, however, it is considered that the air line of communications is capable of supporting the division base up to 125 nautical miles from the logistic base, brigade bases up to 50 nautical miles from the division base, and battalion bases an additional 35 nautical miles beyond the brigade bases, for a total of 225 nautical miles.<sup>11</sup>

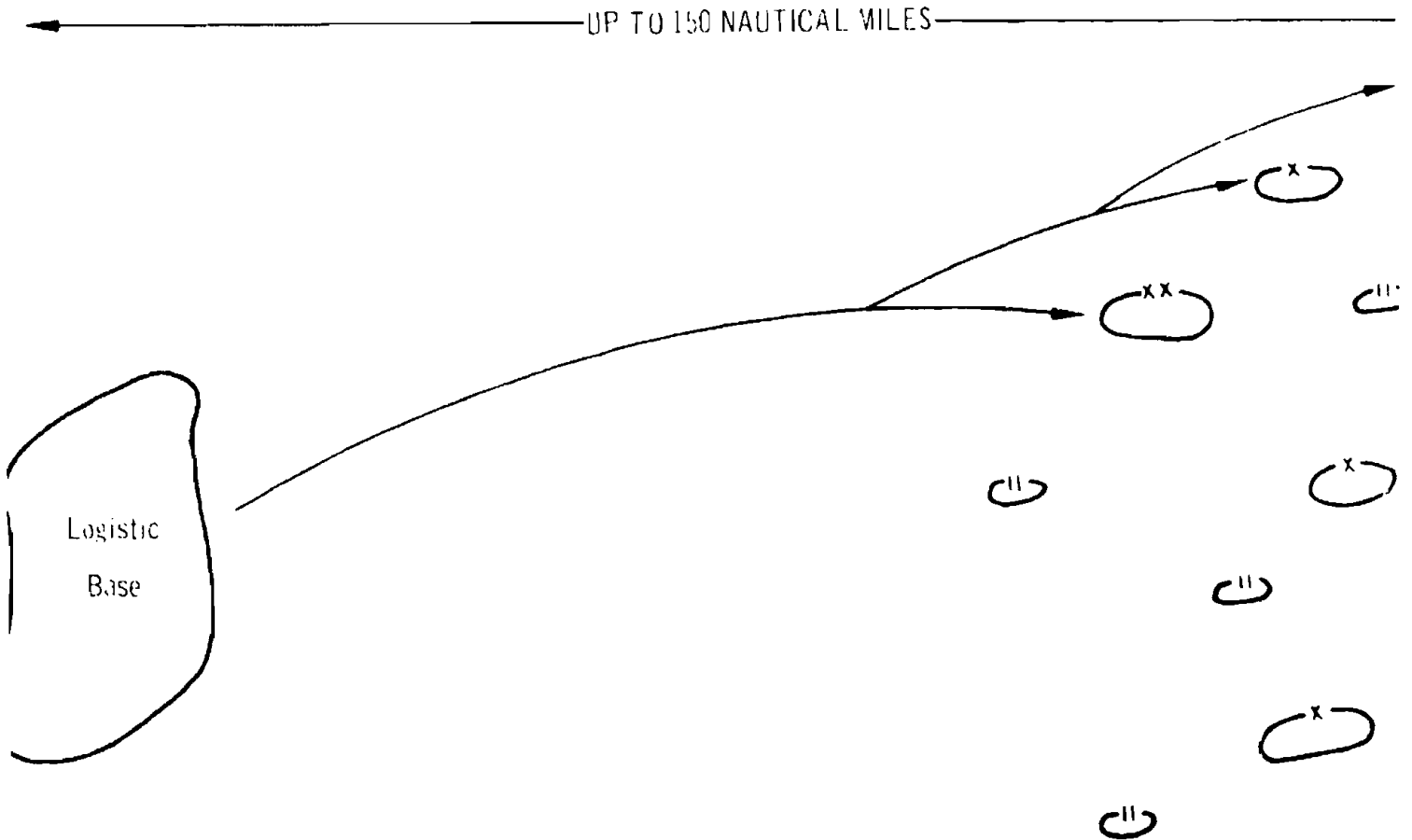
Combat service support is considered to have a capability for mobility equal to the division to sustain

---

<sup>10</sup>Ibid., p. 4-19.

<sup>11</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Air Lines of Communication (AirLOC) Operations, In Support of the Air Assault Division, ST 55-7 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963), p. 27.

PLATE XIII



AIR LINE OF COMMUNICATIONS

Source: U.S., Department of the Army, Army Air Mobility Concept (Washington, Department of the Army, 12 December 1963), p. A-1.

operations by making maximum use of Army and Air Force aircraft in forward areas to provide airlift tonnage requirements to sustain airmobile forces at rates and distances involved in tactical operations.<sup>12</sup>

#### Air Assault Concept in Counter-insurgency Operations

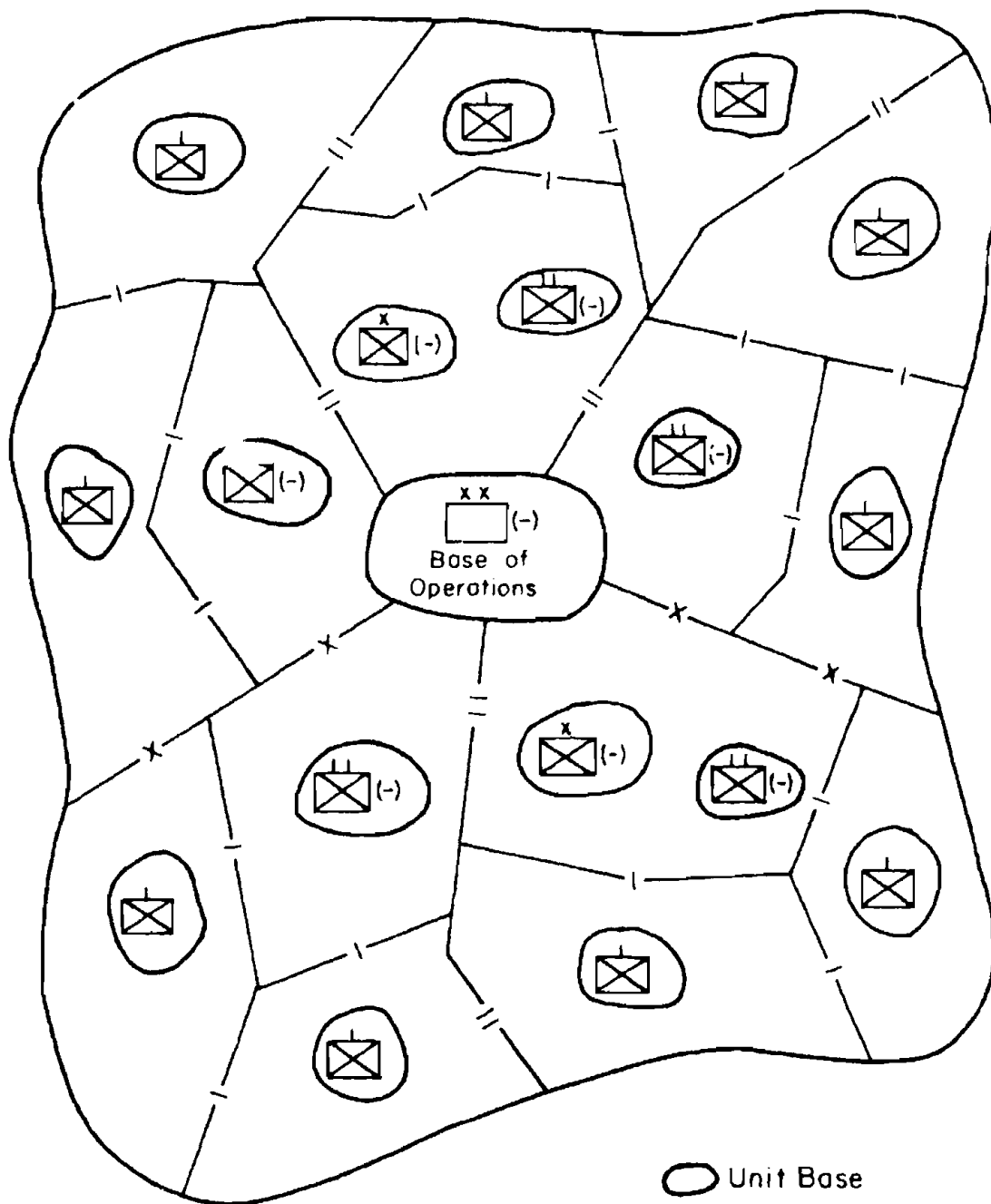
Within the air assault concept counterinsurgency operations are conducted by relatively small, self-sustaining elements operating from mobile bases. Offensive operations are directed to the location and destruction of guerrilla forces, with minimum consideration of terrain objectives. Even though heavy reliance is placed upon aerial reconnaissance, intelligence techniques adapted to the enemy, the terrain, and the environment are employed.<sup>13</sup>

Plate XIV illustrates schematically the air assault concept for employment of the airmobile division in an underdeveloped area controlled by insurgent forces. The division mission is to destroy the enemy and establish control over the area. The mission is performed by systematically locating and destroying enemy forces. All sources of information and the element of surprise are exploited in the

---

<sup>12</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 6-1.

<sup>13</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 4-11 & 4-12.



### AREA SEARCH AND CONTROL

Source: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-13.

conduct of airmobile operations to locate, isolate, and defeat enemy forces in detail. Each division echelon retains a reserve at its base of operations. Ground patrols are increased during non-flying weather.<sup>14</sup>

This example is more suited to guerrilla warfare than mobile warfare. The example and the air assault concept from which it stems do not provide for different levels of insurgent threat--jumping from guerrilla warfare to limited war opposing conventional forces. Mobile warfare is analogous to guerrilla warfare, but the insurgent employs larger forces. The ensuing analysis of the air assault concept is conducted in the context of Phase III insurgency, mobile warfare as it is being conducted by Viet Cong and PAVN units in Vietnam today.

#### Analysis of the Air Assault Concept for Employment of the Airmobile Division

Analysis is developed within the following areas:

1. Concept of operations: general approach to the mission of locating and destroying insurgent forces in an underdeveloped area.
2. Location of the enemy: actions taken to find an insurgent force and to determine its strengths and

---

<sup>14</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 4-12 through 4-14.

disposition short of initiating a battle to destroy it.

3. Engagement of the enemy: actions taken to fix an insurgent force by restricting its maneuver. Engagement includes actions to determine enemy strength and dispositions that are likely to lead to a battle being joined.

4. Destruction of the enemy: actions taken to destroy or capture an insurgent force by means of fire and maneuver.

#### Concept of Operations

The current concept of operations is characterized by wide area coverage by small, self-sustaining forces, with separate bases of operation for each deployed brigade, battalion, company, and platoon. This concept is analyzed in terms of mutual support, security of bases of operation, and the role of security forces as reserves.

Both offensive and defensive capabilities depend on mutual support when small forces are widely dispersed. Two units are in mutual support if they can come to the aid of each other before either can be defeated separately. Mutual support is a function of the capabilities of the two units, the capabilities of the enemy, the terrain, and the weather.<sup>15</sup> Conversely, in counterinsurgency operations,

---

<sup>15</sup>Department of Military Art and Engineering, Notes



mutual support must also include the ability of two units to come to the aid of each other before a located guerrilla force can escape. Separated airmobile forces may be mutually supporting when adequate landing zones exist, when weather flying minimums obtain, and when aircraft are available. However, if one of these conditions is denied and support is dependent upon a foot mobile force moving the same distance, possibly through difficult terrain, mutual support is lost. Such forces may be unable to destroy located guerrilla forces or, even worse, may suffer defeat in detail.

Mutual support may be a minor consideration in operations against guerrillas, with their inferior combat power, but its importance increases when opposed by insurgent forces of battalion and greater size operating in rugged, forested terrain. Such a force constitutes significant combat power. This is especially true in mobile warfare, in which the enemy seeks quick, decisive battles of his choosing. Restricted landing zones, darkness, monsoonal rains, and periods of fog and low clouds favor his fighting a quick battle of annihilation before a small force can be reinforced by an airmobile operation.

The enemy threat in terrain favoring his operations is such that the airmobile division must muster significant combat power to restrict his maneuver and destroy him. Even blocking forces positioned to restrict enemy maneuver must be of sufficient size to avoid being defeated in detail. Because the geography of Vietnam generally favors the defense, infantry units attacking to destroy an insurgent force must be significantly stronger than the enemy, even after his maneuver is blocked and supporting fires are applied. An airmobile task force may require a combat power advantage well above three to one to fix and finish a relatively small force.

Security of multiple bases, with forces being used in a security role at each echelon, reduces forces available for commitment in offensive operations. For instance, up to a rifle company may be required to secure a battalion base of operations employed outside of the brigade base. Such an installation, with the battalion's organic vehicles, tents, aid station, limited stocks of supply, and activities, lacks the passive security of mobility. In a counterinsurgency environment it lacks the active security afforded by frontlines or a larger unit perimeter. If the requirements of a battle result in commitment of security forces in their reserve role, unacceptable vulnerability is incurred.

Security of both forward and rear installations was identified as a deficiency of technique in tests of the air assault concept.<sup>16</sup>

The base of operations at each echelon is secured by the reserve, which gives that force a dual role. The roles of reserve and security force are mutually exclusive when there is a likelihood that the larger force may require reinforcement of its combat operations while at the same time having a significant security threat to its base of operations. In chess parlance this is known as a pin--when one piece cannot be moved because it will expose a more valuable piece to loss. A clever enemy could employ a diversionary effort for the purpose of drawing away reserves and then attacking the exposed base of operations--"make a noise in the east and attack in the west."

During airmobile operations in an underdeveloped area against insurgent forces engaged in mobile warfare, a concept of operations visualizing dispersion of small, self-sustaining units and multiple bases of operations has the following deficiencies:

1. Combat power is dissipated at a time when the enemy threat, his tactics, and the nature of the area

---

<sup>16</sup>Project TEAM, I, A-1-6.

indicate that it should be massed.

2. Separate bases of operations for each deployed brigade and battalion pose a significant requirement for security forces throughout the division.

3. The roles of reserve and security force are mutually exclusive for one unit.

These deficiencies can be overcome by basically massing the airmobile force. The current and the proposed concepts follow.

[Current:] Operations are conducted by self-sustaining elements of relatively small size that operate from mobile bases.

Proposed: Operations are conducted by self-sustaining elements of relatively large size that operate from mobile bases.

Airmobile task forces of brigade and battalion size are employed to conduct offensive operations in an assigned area to locate, fix, and destroy insurgent forces. As larger insurgent forces are located, two or more brigade size airmobile task forces may be committed to engage and destroy them.

#### Location of the Enemy

The air assault concept for locating the enemy is characterized by heavy reliance on aerial reconnaissance complemented by ground reconnaissance, the use of reconnaissance in force, and raids. Concept analysis is in terms of

---

<sup>17</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 4-11.

the capabilities of aerial reconnaissance, considerations of surprise, the nature of insurgent forces in an undeveloped area, the characteristics of reconnaissance in force, and raids.

The means of aerial reconnaissance available to the airmobile division are side-looking airborne radar (SLAR), infrared (IR), photography, and visual observations. SLAR is suited to detection of movement by motorized or mechanized forces when its radar beam is not interrupted by terrain or foliage. It is not an effective means of locating a foot mobile, lightly equipped insurgent force in difficult terrain. IR is not dependent upon line-of-sight characteristics, but it is relatively insensitive to the characteristics of insurgent forces, which limits its application and dependability. Photography, of course, is dependent upon line-of-sight, which limits its effectiveness in locating insurgent forces. On the other hand, photography is useful in maintaining surveillance of an area over a period of time for indications of insurgent presence and for changes in the condition of anticipated landing zones. It is a useful tool in planning airmobile operations. Visual observation is also line-of-sight and although an aerial observer can collect relatively detailed intelligence within a large area, forces and activities concealed by heavy foliage and

dissected terrain will escape his view.

While aerial reconnaissance is faster than ground reconnaissance, it is not as reliable. Airmobile forces are sensitive to timely and accurate intelligence and need the dependable intelligence that can be gained only by ground reconnaissance.

Because of the limitations of aerial reconnaissance in this environment, the intense effort required to gain essential information is exerted at the expense of surprise. During tests of the air assault concept much of the success of air assault operations was attributed to intelligence gained by aerial scouts who made repeated low-level passes and by commanders who hovered over troop formations.<sup>18</sup> This practice not only requires extended exposure to air defensive fires, but it also reveals the intentions of the command. An alerted insurgent force may use precious minutes to move out of the area to avoid battle or to defend or reinforce likely landing zones, especially landing zones that are restricted. Surprise is considered essential in the air assault concept, and yet heavy reliance on aerial reconnaissance is a built-in contradiction that alerts the enemy to impending attack. While ground reconnaissance may

---

<sup>18</sup>Project TEAM, I, A-1-5.

also sacrifice surprise, there is at least the possibility of stealth--seeing without being seen.

The purpose of a reconnaissance in force is to discover and test the enemy's position and strength or to develop other intelligence. Its size and composition must cause the enemy to react strongly and definitely to the attack, thus disclosing his locations, dispositions, strength, planned fires, and planned use of reserves. The force is extricated if it becomes closely engaged.<sup>19</sup> Reconnaissance in force should be considered as part of engagement of the enemy because it is dependent upon some initial knowledge of the enemy's location. Also, once launched the action may be advanced beyond efforts to locate the enemy, with the battle being joined.

When faced with a reconnaissance in force, an inferior insurgent force will not reveal a strong defensive plan. He will endeavor to withdraw into more difficult terrain to avoid battle. A superior insurgent force would seek a quick battle of annihilation, thus making it necessary for the airmobile force to be extricated. The execution of an aerial withdrawal while under strong enemy attack, without

---

<sup>19</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, The Division, FM 61-100 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 25 June 1965), p. 77.

suffering the loss of a relatively large rear guard, was cited as a deficiency in technique during tests of the air assault concept.<sup>20</sup> Superior firepower would facilitate attempts of an airmobile force to break contact and withdraw. However, the insurgents' better knowledge of the local area, their better mobility on foot, and the protection against indirect and aerial fires afforded by the cover and concealment of heavy vegetation would permit them to maintain heavy pressure and contact. The result is that an airmobile force erroneously committed would be subject to destruction. Reconnaissance in force belongs to tanks because of their ability to give and take severe punishment. It does not belong to airmobile forces because of their sensitivity to intelligence, vulnerability to air defensive fires, and corresponding low margin for error.

A raid, like a reconnaissance in force, is a means of engaging the enemy. Detailed intelligence is essential to its success.<sup>21</sup> The intelligence value of a raid lies in capturing personnel, documents, or equipment for intelligence purposes, not in gaining information vital to the

---

<sup>20</sup>Project TEAM, I, A-1-6.

<sup>21</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, Airmobile Operations, FM 57-35 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 17 September 1963), p. 35; and Department of the Army, The Division, pp. 138-139.



conduct of an insurgent battle. A raid is not a means of locating insurgent forces but, rather, is dependent upon that knowledge.

In conventional warfare, information gathered by either a reconnaissance in force or a raid might be valid for hours, even days. Against insurgent forces it would be obsolete almost before the action was broken off. Exceptions to this would be rare.

The local population is potentially the richest source of information concerning the location and strength of insurgent forces. The willing cooperation and support of these people may be influenced by political conditions, attitudes, or the need for security from insurgent reprisals beyond the ability of the airmobile division to control. Every action of an airmobile force must be considered in light of its effect on the population, with the goal of influencing people to cooperate with the counterinsurgency effort, especially by providing information. This favorable condition may be advanced by the use of indigenous intelligence teams in support of airmobile task forces.

Deficiencies of the air assault concept in the area of locating insurgent forces include those listed below.

1. Heavy reliance is placed on aerial reconnaissance, which is faster but may prove less reliable than

ground reconnaissance.

2. A basic contradiction exists between an intensive aerial reconnaissance effort and the gaining of surprise in a subsequent airmobile operation.

3. Reconnaissance in force and raids are not suitable techniques for an airmobile force to employ to develop intelligence of enemy strength and dispositions because of the dependence of airmobile operations upon timely and accurate intelligence.

4. Minimal consideration is given the intelligence value of the civilian population in counterinsurgency operations.

These deficiencies can be overcome if the current concept quoted below is modified as indicated by the proposed concept that follows it.

[Current:] Intelligence for airmobile operations is characterized by a high degree of centralized planning in the pre-assault phase, decentralized control during the execution phase, and heavy reliance upon aerial collection means throughout all phases of the operation.<sup>22</sup>

Intelligence techniques suited to the tactics, enemy, and environment common to this type of combat [counterinsurgency] are employed.<sup>23</sup>

Reconnaissance in force and raids by airmobile forces of appropriate size continue to locate and destroy enemy

---

<sup>22</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 5-8.

<sup>23</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 4-12.

found operating within this area [of operations].<sup>24</sup>

Proposed: Intelligence for airmobile operations is characterized by a high degree of centralized planning in the pre-assault phase, decentralized control during the execution phase, and coordinated aerial and ground reconnaissance with heavy reliance on ground collection means throughout all phases of the operation.

Extensive ground patrolling by organic units and indigenous teams is conducted to locate insurgent forces. These patrols may be supported by helicopters which move them to a clandestine landing zone from which they can patrol by stealth.

Every effort that can be made in good faith is advanced toward gaining the cooperation of the local populace in providing information of insurgent forces. Indigenous intelligence teams are essential to counterinsurgency operations in a host country.

#### Engagement of the Enemy

Within the air assault concept, engagement of the enemy is characterized as follows:

1. Little distinction is made between fixing and destroying the enemy.
2. Firepower and mobility are employed to fix enemy forces.
3. Airmobile forces land on undefended objectives or in close proximity when the objective is a guerrilla force, with followup assault on foot.
4. Speed and surprise are stressed in rapid

---

<sup>24</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 4-14.

execution and timely withdrawal, both of which are based on detailed prior planning.

Engagement of the enemy is analyzed in terms of fixing the enemy, landing of the airmobile force, tactical surprise, and aerial withdrawal while engaged.

As partially borne out in the name given the operation, "locate and destroy" or "search and destroy," little distinction is made between fixing and destroying the enemy. The current concept is to locate the enemy, restrict his maneuver by the application of fires from mobile aerial platforms, and then land infantry units in his close proximity for followup assault on foot. The combat power of an airmobile force of battalion or brigade size applied in this manner against an insurgent force of company or battalion size caught in the rice paddy land of the delta or on a wide, grassy plateau of the highlands would probably yield decisive results. However, insurgent forces pursuing mobile warfare endeavor to avoid battles under conditions unfavorable to them. They will usually be engaged in swamp forests or forested mountains that favor their defense or withdrawal. The effectiveness of aerial fire support is therefore reduced by both an inability to see the insurgent force and the attenuating effect of heavy forest and swampland mud on high explosive ammunition. It is unlikely that the maneuver

of an insurgent force will be restricted by aerial fire support alone.

In landing the infantry units in the close proximity of the insurgent force to destroy him by followup assault on foot, the bulk of the fire support is provided by aerial platforms. Unless the insurgent force is caught completely unaware, the landing will be in difficult terrain of his choosing. Landing zones will be restricted and those available will be covered by fire. In short, landings in the close proximity of the enemy force may be difficult and dangerous. If the insurgent chooses to withdraw, heavy forests will assist him. If he chooses to defend, he will have prepared positions and the airmobile force will be heavily engaged on landing. In neither situation is the enemy held in place, nor is an advantage gained by maneuver that will advance propitious conditions for delivering an overwhelming attack to destroy the enemy. Landing of airmobile units in the close proximity of aggressor prepared positions was cited as a deficiency in technique during tests of the air assault concept on the basis that combat experience does not support the assertion that aerial suppressive fires can destroy the aggressor ground capability before a landing.<sup>25</sup>

---

<sup>25</sup>Project TEAM, I, A-1-6.

Insight into the air assault concept of landing in the close proximity of the enemy may be gained from a brief discussion of applicable Army doctrine. Within Army doctrine, airmobile landing are divided into three groups. One involves landing directly on an undefended terrain objective. The second involves landing in the close proximity of a defended objective for followup assault on foot. The third involves an unopposed landing followed by an attack to seize the objective.<sup>26</sup> The following doctrinal statements are applicable to involvement of the second group.

The assault begins when the fires of the maneuver force have eliminated or neutralized effective enemy fire. This may occur either at the final coordination line or anywhere between this line and the enemy position.<sup>27</sup>

Because of the dispersion pattern of indirect supporting fires . . . the final coordination line is normally located within 100 to 150 meters of the enemy position on the objective, or as close to the enemy position as attacking troops can move before becoming dangerously exposed to friendly supporting fires. It should be easily recognized on the ground. Ideally, it should have concealment and cover.<sup>28</sup>

The assault starts from the landing zone, which is

---

<sup>26</sup>Department of the Army, Airmobile Operations, p. 18.

<sup>27</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, Rifle Platoon and Squads: Infantry, Airborne and Mechanized, FM 7-15 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 10 March 1965), p. 28.

<sup>28</sup>Ibid., p. 25.

as close to the enemy positions as friendly supporting fires will permit. Considering the vulnerability of helicopters to air defensive fires, it must be presumed that great dependence can be placed on the ability of supporting fires to suppress enemy fire in the vicinity of the landing zones. Since combat experience against any enemy employing machine guns with overhead cover does not support this presumption, landing in the close proximity to such an enemy is likely to result in undue damage to an airmobile force.

The reasoning which is used to support adoption of the technique of landing in the close proximity of insurgent forces within the air assault concept is revealed in the following sequence of doctrinal statements:

The assault phase of an airmobile operation begins with the landing of the lead elements and continues through the seizure of the objective area and the occupation of the initial security positions.

The fact that an airmobile force usually lands where there are few fixed defenses and few well organized enemy combat troops facilitates rapid seizure of initial objectives.<sup>29</sup>

The assault phase of the airmobile operation begins with the landing of the lead elements and continues through the destruction of the guerrilla force.<sup>30</sup>

---

<sup>29</sup>Department of the Army, Airmobile Operations, p. 18.

<sup>30</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, Counterguerrilla Operations, FM 31-16 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 19 February 1963), p. 33.

Tactical surprise is achieved through delivery of assault forces immediately adjacent to a known or suspected guerrilla force. Trained shock troops are committed in the initial assault wave.<sup>31</sup>

The reasoning appears to be that an airmobile force usually lands where there are few fixed defenses or well organized combat troops, and that this description covers the guerrilla (insurgent) forces. Therefore, airmobile landings are made immediately adjacent to insurgent forces. Should an insurgent force present significant combat power, it is to be overcome by "trained shock troops" making the initial assault. This technique promotes faster closing with the enemy to fix and destroy him, but it may incur undue damage to an airmobile force.

The remaining technique, an unopposed landing followed by a coordinated attack, is to be used if the terrain and enemy situation do not permit landing on or immediately adjacent to objectives.<sup>32</sup> This technique is not included in the air assault concept, apparently because:

1. It is essentially slower and requires a longer ground attack.

---

<sup>31</sup>U.S., Department of the Army, U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Forces, FM 31-22 (Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 12 November 1963), p. 49.

<sup>32</sup>Department of the Army, Airmobile Operations, p. 18.



2. Aerial suppressive fires and tactical surprise are considered sufficient to neutralize enemy defensive fires.

In accordance with cited Army doctrine, unopposed landings should be sought when the enemy has fixed defenses or well organized combat troops. The insurgent forces currently operating in Vietnam do have these characteristics; available cover and concealment degrade suppressive fires; tactical surprise cannot always be relied on--all these indicate that airmobile forces should seek unopposed landings.

Tactical surprise does not require taking the enemy unaware, but, rather, that he becomes aware of the attack too late to react effectively. When insurgent forces are disposed in difficult terrain, a significant ground and air reconnaissance effort must be made to locate them and to discover enough information of their strength and dispositions to develop a plan of attack. The likelihood is that during the process of locating an insurgent force it will become aware of impending attack and react quickly. If the insurgents intend to avoid contact, the main body will withdraw into more difficult terrain and a covering force will prepare to engage and delay the airmobile force. If the insurgents choose to defend, the terrain will favor their

defense, which will be organized with prepared positions, automatic weapons, and mortars covering likely landing zones and avenues of approach. After some exposure to airmobile operations, it will be difficult to surprise insurgents with the speed or size of an airmobile attack.

Deficiencies of the air assault concept for engaging an insurgent force include:

1. Heavy reliance on aerial firepower to restrict the maneuver of insurgent forces; but the terrain and vegetation reduce the effect of fires and favor undetected movement by the insurgent.

2. Airmobile landings in the close proximity of an insurgent force for followup assault on foot; but the combat power of the insurgent, including his use of the terrain, favor unopposed landings.

3. Tactical surprise which is considered to degrade the insurgents' combat power; but necessary pre-assault reconnaissance alerts the insurgent to impending attack.

In consideration of these deficiencies the following modifications to the current air assault concept are proposed:

[Current:] Operations are carried out to locate and destroy enemy forces and installations or to seize terrain objectives and to prevent enemy withdrawal rein-

forcement, supply or the shifting of reserves.<sup>33</sup>

Firepower and mobility are employed to fix enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and support friendly maneuver forces in the seizure of terrain and the destruction of the enemy.<sup>34</sup>

The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into the undefended objective areas from any direction or into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot.<sup>35</sup>

Proposed: Operations are carried out to locate, fix, and destroy enemy forces or to seize terrain objectives which prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, supply, or the shifting of reserves.

Firepower and maneuver are employed to develop the enemy situation, fix enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and to provide an advantage prior to attacking to destroy him. Should the enemy endeavor to withdraw, actions to fix him are repeated.

Airmobile forces are landed on undefended objectives or in undefended landing areas for subsequent ground attack to secure defended objectives.

#### Destruction of the Enemy

Within the air assault concept the enemy is destroyed by the application of fires followed by the landing of infantry in his close proximity for followup assault on foot. Although these techniques as they apply to

---

<sup>33</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. 4-1.

<sup>34</sup>Ibid.

<sup>35</sup>Ibid.

operations against insurgent forces in Vietnam today were discussed above, their deficiencies are reiterated here for clarity.

1. The effects of supporting fires are reduced by heavy foliage, mud, and dissected terrain. If the insurgent force has prepared positions with overhead cover, suppressive fires may not neutralize his fires over available landing zones.

2. Landing in the close proximity of the insurgent force and just outside the dispersion pattern of friendly supporting fires exposes aircraft to air defensive fires to which they are vulnerable.

To overcome these deficiencies the following modifications to the current air assault concept are proposed:

[Current:] Firepower and mobility are employed to locate enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and support friendly maneuver forces in the seizure of terrain and the destruction of the enemy.<sup>36</sup>

The integration of maneuver, firepower, control, intelligence and support is maximized to introduce airmobile forces directly into the undefended objective areas from any direction or into a landing area in close proximity to the defended area for follow-up assault on foot.<sup>37</sup>

Proposed: After an insurgent force has been fixed maximum aerial and surface fire support is applied, followed by a coordinated ground attack to close with and destroy or capture the enemy.

---

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

## Combat Service Support Considerations

No concept for employment of the airmobile division would be valid if it could not be supported logistically. Combat service support requirements for the modified concept are reduced from levels required for the air assault concept because, with battalions and brigades remaining essentially massed, there is a reduced transportation requirement for resupply and evacuation.

It is advisable to group the battalion bases of operation within the brigade base of operation. Activities in the battalion base include the battalion command post, aid station, and organic maintenance. The battalion mess section currently remains in the brigade base.<sup>38</sup> The main command post can remain in the brigade base, with a small tactical command post accompanying committed elements and communicating via organic AM-SSB radios. Casualties are evacuated by air and can readily be delivered from the battle area to the brigade base by aircraft normally returning there. In counterinsurgency operations in underdeveloped areas there is little use for organic surface vehicles of

---

<sup>38</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Infantry Battalion, Air Assault Division, ST 7-20-1 (Fort Benning, Ga.: Combat Developments Command, 11 September 1964), pp. 57-59. The 1st Brigade of the 11th Air Assault Division habitually operated in this manner during tests of the air assault concept.

the battalion, with a correspondingly reduced requirement for organic maintenance support forward. Finally, requirements on the air line of communications are in no way increased, because under either concept supply and evacuation for combat and combat support elements are the same, with supplies being transported forward from the brigade base and wounded being evacuated to the division clearing stations located there by division aircraft.<sup>39</sup>

By consolidating battalion bases within the brigade base, initial aircraft requirements are reduced because service support facilities are not transported forward of the brigade base, shortening their displacement distance from the division base. Supplies to be consumed by service support facilities are transported only as far forward as the brigade base, further relieving the air line of communications. Additionally, less troops are required for securing one consolidated base for the brigade than for securing separate bases for each battalion in addition to a brigade base.

#### Summary

In summary, the air assault concept for employment

---

<sup>39</sup>Army Combat Developments Command, The Division, pp. 6-6 through 6-8.

of the airmobile division in counterinsurgency operations calls for forces to be widely dispersed over a large area, with separate bases of operation for each deployed brigade, battalion, company, and platoon. The enemy is located through heavy reliance on aerial reconnaissance and surveillance, with ground reconnaissance to complete the picture. He is engaged by firepower and mobility of aerial weapons systems that deny him freedom of maneuver. He is destroyed by infantry units that are landed with surprise in his close proximity for followup assault on foot.

Analysis revealed that the air assault concept may be suited for counter guerrilla warfare in relatively open terrain but must be modified for counterinsurgency operations involving mobile warfare within restricted terrain.

A modified concept was evolved from the analysis and is proposed for employment of the airmobile division in counteroffensive operations against insurgent forces in mobile warfare in an underdeveloped area. The concept of operations calls for massing the combat power of the division and employment of minimum bases of operation. The enemy is located through heavy reliance on ground reconnaissance, coordinated with aerial observation. He is engaged by the deliberate employment of infantry units, supported by aerial fires, making unopposed landings and then maneuvering

to develop the enemy situation, restrict his maneuver, and provide an advantage prior to attacking to destroy him. Should the insurgent force endeavor to withdraw, actions to restrict his maneuver are repeated. The enemy is destroyed by the application of aerial and surface fires and the maneuver of infantry units that close with him in a coordinated ground attack.



## CHAPTER VI

### DISCUSSION OF PARAMETERS AND CONCLUSIONS

Air cavalry should be compared to a surgeon's scalpel--  
not a blacksmith's anvil.<sup>1</sup>

--James M. Gavin

Lieutenant General, USA, Ret.

Analysis so far has centered on the current struggle in Vietnam. Certain deficiencies were isolated in the air assault concept for employment of the airmobile division against the Viet Cong and units of the PAVN in that area. In consideration of characteristics of the division, the area, and the insurgent force, an alternative concept has been proposed. To be sure, the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) has modified the air assault concept, which it tested as the 11th Air Assault Division, and in the field has evolved a concept similar to that developed in this thesis.

#### Discussion of Parameters

Which, if any, of the conclusions developed

---

<sup>1</sup>Personal letter from James M. Gavin, USA, Ret., to Brigadier General H. W. O. Kinnard [November 1963].

regarding the situation in Vietnam are applicable to other levels of insurgency or to other parts of the world? Which would remain true if the insurgent force employed certain sophisticated weapons? The answers to these questions are discussed in the following paragraphs. The discussion points out that the ruling consideration is relative combat power, to include the effects of local geography.

1. Phase III insurgency.--To vary this parameter up to conventional war or down to Phase II insurgency (guerrilla warfare) would be outside the scope of the problem addressed in this study. That the struggle in Vietnam is, in fact, Phase III insurgency is attested to by the insurgent's use of battalion and regimental size forces in the conduct of his mobile warfare. His organization, equipment, and doctrines resemble those of insurgent forces of the past in China, Indo-China, Algeria, and Cuba and can reasonably be expected to be present in Phase III insurgency in other parts of the world. This is especially true when considering subversive insurgency supported and fostered by the world Communist sphere.

2. Insurgent paramilitary forces.--Paramilitary forces are an inherent ingredient of Phase III insurgency and are included in its definition. The term includes the Viet Cong and will encompass the PAVN in light of the

following considerations. Even though they are units of the regular army of the DRVN, they fight with little supporting artillery, no air support, and minimal logistic support, and their tactics resemble those of insurgent forces in mobile warfare as expounded by Mao, Truong Chinh, and their commander, Giap. If the parameter is varied up to conventional armed forces or down to guerrilla forces, it results in conventional war or Phase II insurgency, both outside the scope of this thesis. The Viet Cong and PAVN resemble paramilitary forces of the past, and those of other parts of the world should have similar characteristics.

3. Underdeveloped area.--The aspects of an underdeveloped area germane to the airmobile concept are its geography, climate, and people. While these vary from country to country and even within the same country, basic similarities permit certain generalizations and conclusions. Rugged mountains, forested plateaus, and plains would favor the insurgent force in parts of South Africa, South America, South and Southeast Asia, Southeast Europe, South China, and Korea essentially as they do in the highlands of Vietnam. Taller mountains such as the Himalayas would further hinder the airmobile division by the reduced lift of aircraft flying at higher altitudes. Deserts, plateaus, and plains with limited vegetation or cultivated fields (such as in parts of

Australia, North Africa, Southeast Europe, South America, and the plains of Northern China and Western Russia) would favor aerial observation and unrestricted aerial maneuver of units much as in the delta and lowlands of Vietnam. Climate follows patterns, too; and only in areas where aviation weather is markedly worse than in Vietnam would it affect an airmobile concept applicable to Vietnam. Such areas are monsoonal Asia north of Hue, where monsoons are accompanied by extreme cloudiness and high mountains, such as the Himalayas or Andes, where prevailing winds and clouds would interrupt aviation operations. Poor weather conditions favor the proposed concept over the air assault concept because of its greater use of ground reconnaissance and ground combat.

So long as the struggle is insurgency, the people caught in the area of operations are under the influence of both the insurgent and government forces, and operations should be influenced by the political considerations of gaining and maintaining the support of the people. Population distribution is also a variable that will affect the airmobile concept. People throughout the underdeveloped areas of the world generally live on fertile river plains, with arid highlands being sparsely populated. Where the insurgent operates amongst the people the proposed concept

is superior to the air assault concept because reliance on ground patrols permits better differentiation between civilians and guerrillas. The people should have a smaller effect on operations in sparsely populated highlands.

Another consideration of the geography of underdeveloped countries is their size, which will affect logistics supporting the airmobile division. Since South Vietnam is the coastal strip of continental Southeast Asia, lines of communication within the country are not long. However, operations into the heart of a vast country such as China or deep into Africa would require long lines of communications. If these were on the ground and subject to insurgent interdiction they would affect the ability of the airmobile division to fight by restricting its resupply. An air line of communications from a secure port to the division base would place heavy combat service support demands on supporting fixed wing aircraft and would decrease their availability for combat operations.

4. Offensive operations to locate and destroy insurgent forces in a specific area.--This parameter is varied by considering two alternate missions: to secure a specific area or to interdict a border. In the first mission it must be presumed that the insurgent threat has been considerably reduced, permitting dispersed operations by the

airmobile division with small forces not being endangered by defeat in detail. This condition would obtain also in sealing a border where the principal concern is the interdiction of supplies, not combat against large forces operating overtly. Although the size of airmobile task forces would be reduced, the concept for locating, engaging, and destroying elements of the insurgent force is covered by the same considerations of relative combat power and terrain that dictate the proposed concept. The proposed concept should be valid for the division in performing security and interdiction missions.

5. Contemporary (1965-66).--Consideration of future counterinsurgency operations must deal with developments on both sides of the struggle. Were the capabilities of the insurgent force improved significantly above the level encountered in Vietnam, it would be a conventional force and the struggle would be conventional war, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Future developments in the airmobile division would have to significantly improve the division's capabilities in order to affect the airmobile concept. The areas of mobility, firepower, and communications are technologically advanced beyond the surveillance capability. Development of some piece of equipment offering instant intelligence, equal to that currently gained by tedious

ground patrols would permit acceleration of the tempo of operations consistent with the air assault concept.

A more reasonable future trend is the expansion of insurgency to other underdeveloped countries of the world. Considering geographical variations discussed above and no unforeseen technological developments, the proposed airmobile concept should be valid in the future.

6. Neither side employs nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons. --Should nuclear weapons be employed, the struggle escalates to nuclear warfare, which is beyond the scope of this thesis. Extensive use of chemical agents would affect the proposed concept as follows. Defoliation on a large scale would permit better results from aerial observation, tending to increase the possible tempo of operations. Non-lethal gasses could immobilize insurgent forces, permitting their capture without casualties on either side. Lethal agents would also permit elimination of insurgents with minimum casualties to the airmobile division. Rapidly dispersed persistent agents would speed efforts by the airmobile division to restrict the maneuver of a located insurgent force, which would also tend to increase the tempo of operations. Although the use of non-lethal agents may be the most humane way of eliminating the insurgent, the controlling disadvantage in the use of

chemical agents is the adverse effect on the population. Civilian casualties attributed to the use of gas would interfere with efforts to win the hearts and minds of the people.

Insurgent forces have neither the capability to disperse large amounts of chemical agents nor the protective equipment to exploit their use. Persistent agents might be employed to deny landing zones, which would significantly retard airmobile operations. Should this ensue, the proposed concept is superior to the air assault concept by requiring ground reconnaissance prior to the landing of the main body of an airmobile task force.

Biological agents are generally slower acting and attack the insurgent force indirectly by affecting his livestock, food, and health. Since they are not employed during the conduct of an operation, that is, from the time the force is located until the time that same force is destroyed, they would not affect the proposed airmobile concept.

7. Enemy has limited air defense capability.--If the parameter is varied to a level where the insurgent force has an effective air defense capability, in the form of weapons similar to the U.S. Army's anti-aircraft automatic weapons or Red Eye missile, it will adversely affect



airmobile operations by the airmobile division. There is controversy over the extent to which such weapons can interrupt helicopter operations. That controversy will not be settled here, but the following observations do suggest one conclusion. Imagine the effect of a "Quad 50" that suddenly opens fire on a flight of sixteen UH-1D helicopters as they flare out to land in a landing zone thought to be clear. This vulnerability of helicopters to air defensive fires is recognized, with reliance placed on accurate, timely intelligence and suppressive fires to neutralize ground-to-air fires. However, the proposed concept is favored over the air assault concept because of the requirement for ground reconnaissance as opposed to aerial reconnaissance; since it affords more accurate observations and reconnoitering of landing zones before landing the main body of an airmobile task force.

8. Enemy has limited electronic countermeasure capability.--Should an insurgent force be able to jam radio nets of the airmobile division or insert bogus messages, these actions would tend to disrupt airmobile operations. However, the effect of jamming is markedly reduced by parallel radio nets on FM, AM-SSB, and UHF. Heliborne commanders may be in contact over all three modes at the same time. Heavy reliance is placed on FM for operational coordination

among infantry, aviation, and artillery so that jamming of local FM frequencies could seriously hinder the execution of an operation. Even in this case, there are parallel FM nets (infantry battalion command, aviation/pathfinder, fire direction) and alternate frequencies that will permit key leaders to rapidly reestablish communications. Further, because of the ability of the helicopter to fly low over a ground station, the heavy jammer would have to be close to the force on the ground or have mobility comparable to the helicopter, if he were to continuously disrupt radio contact.

The possibility of significant bogus traffic is reduced because key officers heliborne and using headsets, or on the ground and personally coordinating a complex operation, use the radio themselves with minimum reliance on radio operators. These officers know each other and understand the current operation, so that a strange voice or out-of-line message would be questioned. Should the enemy overcome all these difficulties and still successfully employ electronic countermeasures, airmobile operations, by any concept, would be disrupted. The proposed concept should be slightly favored over the air assault concept in this situation due to its demands for a greater intelligence effort.

9. The airmobile division operates from a secure

division logistics base.--Depending on the threat, from one to three infantry battalions may be required to secure the division base. If this force is provided by the armed forces of the host nation, or if some other security is provided, then organic battalions can be released to the division for the pursuit of combat operations. On the other hand, if security forces are not provided from outside resources, the strength of the division in the field is reduced.

A further consideration is the sultry climate and generally forested, rugged terrain in which counterinsurgency operations are most likely to be conducted. Debilitating effects of this environment require the periodic rotation of units from wearing, offensive operations in the field to the lighter duty of the rear, such as securing the relatively fixed defenses of the division base. Due to the possibility of joining the requirement for periodic rotation (which itself reduces the division's field strength) with the security task, securing the division base by indigenous forces would not materially increase the rifle strength of the division in field operations. The manner of securing the division base in this environment does not materially affect the proposed concept as it relates to the conduct of operations by airmobile task forces in the field.

10. Civil affairs and civic action support are provided when these responsibilities are incurred.--In the pursuit of combat operations, the airmobile division's first concern with the civilian population is to prevent interference with combat operations, and its second is to gain information about insurgent activities. Indigenous intelligence teams can assist the division immeasurably in doing this. Other aspects of civil affairs and civic action (including relief of hardship and fulfillment of national policy commitments and environmental improvements) are part of pacification. These efforts assist in the mission of securing an area, its people, and its resources. In turn, they permit the functioning of government under law. As such, the major civic action and civil affairs efforts are outside the scope of this thesis.

Should the division have civil affairs and civic action responsibilities and not be augmented with specialists, a significant diffusion of effort from combat to political and welfare activities will result. To this extent, the capabilities of the division to pursue combat operations will be reduced, within any concept. Other than reducing resources available for offensive operations, civil affairs and civic action augmentation does not affect the proposed concept for the execution of operations.

11. Parachute capability of one brigade is not employed.--The parachute capability of one brigade (three infantry battalions, a 105mm artillery battalion, and the division engineer battalion) provides two advantages to the airmobile division. First, it extends the tactical range of operation to that of Air Force aircraft. Also, it permits accelerated buildup in an objective area by the simultaneous delivery of airmobile and airborne forces.<sup>2</sup> The extended range permits the initial assault to secure a division base for the purpose of initiating operations in a new area. The airborne assault would be followed by the airlanding of personnel and equipment. Helicopters would be flown into the new division base area without loads, possibly employing auxiliary fuel tanks to extend their range. Entry into the interior of a large underdeveloped country could be made this way. Subsequent operations would have to be sustained by a ground or air line of communications, as discussed previously. In this respect the airborne capability does not affect the proposed concept for execution of counterinsurgency operations.

---

<sup>2</sup>U.S. Army Test, Evaluation and Control Group, Project TEAM [Test, Evaluation Air Mobility], Field Test Program: Army Air Mobility Concept, Vol. I: Basic Report (Fort Benning, Ga.: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, 15 January 1965), p. A-2-1.

The capability to build up forces rapidly in an objective area can be employed in counterinsurgency operations. In an action where the situation has developed the enemy's strength, composition, and disposition and has fixed him, a large airborne force, immediately available, could be committed to land by parachute assault to destroy the insurgent force. However, such an operation would normally be infeasible due to the mobility of guerrilla forces, which makes them difficult to hold in place for long; the difficulties in developing the necessary timely, accurate intelligence; the dearth of suitable drop zones in the difficult terrain favored by the insurgent force; and, above all, the high cost in battalions and Air Force aircraft that would be idle while marshalled and waiting for the call to action. Such air operation would be hopelessly slow if the airborne force was not on runway alert or air alert at the time it was needed. In this light the division's airborne capability does not affect the proposed concept, although the proposed concept must be favored over the air assault concept because of its stress on developing better intelligence.

Each of the parameters above defines the subject of this thesis, does not influence the analysis, or in some way affects the relative combat power between the airmobile division and the insurgent force. Changing the level of

conflict, the type of enemy, or the mission of the division throws the discussion outside the scope of the subject, although some valid observations are possible and are offered.

The analysis is not influenced by projecting the discussion into the future because there are no foreseeable changes in the characteristics of the division, an underdeveloped area, or the insurgent force. Provision of indigenous forces to serve the division base does not influence the analysis because of the requirement in the debilitating environment to rotate forces from offensive operations to less strenuous duty, which can include the security of the division base. Analysis is not influenced by the division parachute capability because airborne operations either are outside the scope of the subject or are infeasible within its context.

Relative combat power is affected by the following parameters: the military geography of different underdeveloped countries; enemy capability to employ nuclear weapons, chemical and biological agents, air defense weapons, and electronic countermeasures; and augmentation of the division to execute civil affairs and civic action responsibilities.

Conclusions based on the military geography of Vietnam should be valid in other underdeveloped countries with a

similarly difficult, confining environment, such as the remainder of Southeast Asia, Southern China, Korea, South Africa, and parts of South America. Some other areas with unforested plains and plateaus and deserts favor the air assault concept, which depends on unrestricted aerial observation and landing zones to promote an accelerated tempo of operations. Where the military geography favors the insurgent the proposed concept should be valid.

Because of its particular characteristics, the airmobile division is vulnerable to enemy capabilities such as the use of persistent chemical agents on landing zones, air defensive fires, and electronic countermeasures. When employed by insurgent forces these actions can disrupt the relative combat power advantage of the airmobile division. Only by timely, accurate intelligence can airmobile task forces avoid exposure to disadvantageous situations. In this, the proposed concept is favored over the air assault concept because of its reliance on ground reconnaissance to confirm aerial observations and reconnoiter landing zones, and because of the inherently slower, more deliberate tempo of operations tailored to the intelligence capability of the airmobile division.

Augmentation of the airmobile division with civil affairs and civic action teams to execute division



responsibilities in these areas, preserves the division's combat power for the conduct of offensive operations. Of more importance are indigenous teams to accompany airmobile task forces to assist them in preventing civilian interference in combat operations and to gain intelligence of insurgent activities from the people.

The proposed concept should be valid in other environments where the relative combat power of the airmobile division and the insurgent force is similar to that existent in Vietnam. Where the enemy and the geography combine to pose a significant threat, a deliberate approach, stressing security ahead of assuming risks for the sake of speed and surprise, is superior to the hasty approach embodied in the air assault concept. On the other hand, where enemy capabilities are reduced and the geography favors the airmobile division, unobstructed aerial observation and unrestricted landing zones permit the quality of intelligence and complete flexibility essential to the hasty operations of the air assault concept.

### Conclusions

As a result of the material presented and analyzed in this thesis, the following concept for employment of the airmobile division against insurgent forces in an

underdeveloped area is proposed. While developed through the theoretical interplay of the airmobile division, insurgent forces in South Vietnam, and the geography of that area, it is reinforced by the experiences of the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) during its first months of combat in Vietnam.<sup>3</sup>

For a division mission to locate and destroy insurgent forces in a specific area the concept of operations must provide for massing sufficient forces to fix and destroy a located enemy force of significant size. When the enemy threat merits, the bulk of the division's maneuver and combat support units may be formed into brigade size airmobile task forces for employment in a relatively small area. The main body of each brigade is kept in reserve while operations are undertaken to locate a suspected insurgent force and to define its strength, composition, and dispositions.

Proposed: Operations are conducted by self-sustaining elements of relatively large size that operate from mobile bases.

Airmobile task forces of brigade and battalion size are employed to conduct offensive operations in an assigned area to locate, fix, and destroy insurgent forces. As larger insurgent forces are located, two or more brigade size airmobile task forces may be committed to engage and destroy them.

---

<sup>3</sup>Personal letter from William Roll, Maj, Inf, S3, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 21 January 1966.

Efforts to locate the enemy depend on a coordinated aerial and ground search. Ground patrols are positioned by air; aerial observations are confirmed by ground patrols if the enemy situation permits. Once enemy presence in a specific location is established, both air and ground reconnaissance are intensified to determine the size of the force, its organization of the ground, avenues of egress open to it, and available landing zones. Every effort is made to deceive the enemy as to the interest or possible intentions of the airmobile force. However, considerations of security are paramount and must take precedence over surprise, and reconnaissance is pursued to gain necessary intelligence, especially of the condition and defenses of landing zones.

Proposed: Intelligence for airmobile operations is characterized by a high degree of centralized planning in the pre-assault phase, decentralized control during the execution phase, and coordinated aerial and ground reconnaissance with heavy reliance on ground collection means throughout all phases of the operation.

Extensive ground patrolling by organic units and indigenous teams is conducted to locate insurgent forces. These patrols may be supported by helicopters that move them to clandestine landing zones from which they can patrol by stealth.

Every effort that can be made in good faith is advanced toward gaining the cooperation of the local populace in providing information of insurgent forces. Indigenous intelligence teams are essential to counterinsurgency operations in a host country.

As intelligence permits, small forces are committed to make unopposed landings in order to block anticipated avenues of egress and to secure landing zones for elements of the main body. Howitzer batteries are positioned by helicopter and the enemy is taken under fire by all available surface and aerial fires. Elements of the main body are landed in secure landing zones in unopposed landings and move to further restrict the maneuver of the insurgent force.

Propose . Operations are carried out to locate, fix, and destroy enemy forces or to seize terrain objectives which prevent enemy withdrawal, reinforcement, supply, or the shifting of reserves.

Firepower and maneuver are employed to develop the enemy situation, fix enemy forces, reduce enemy firepower, limit enemy maneuver capabilities, and to provide an advantage prior to attacking to destroy him. Should the enemy endeavor to withdraw, actions to fix him are repeated.

Airmobile forces are landed on undefended objectives or in undefended landing areas for subsequent ground attack to secure defended objectives.

Maximum fires are applied until infantry units are positioned. Finally, a coordinated ground attack is made by the infantry with supporting fires shifting to assist in blocking avenues of egress.

Proposed: After an insurgent force has been fixed maximum aerial and surface fire support is applied, followed by a coordinated ground attack to close with and destroy or capture the enemy.

Large scale employment of airmobile forces is in the

process of revolutionizing warfare. Traditional barriers to surface maneuver are hurdled, and operations are conducted with a tempo and over distances unimaginable a few years ago. Airmobile operations offer opportunities for speed, flexibility, surprise, and exercise of initiative in battle; at the same time they demand superior intelligence and special consideration for security. The air assault concept places full emphasis on the offensive capabilities of the airmobile division, occasionally without regard for its limitations. The military geography of an area such as Vietnam constitutes a hostile environment for the airmobile division. Insurgent forces, taking maximum advantage of geography, pose a worthy opponent, able to give a good account of themselves. Even so, the airmobile division has a significant combat power advantage that, if intelligently employed, can bring victory in every battle. A concept has emerged in this thesis that is proposed for this purpose.

APPENDIX

---

## GLOSSARY

Aerial command post: UH-1D helicopter with radio console, in which the commander of an airmobile task force and selected staff may operate during an airmobile operation.<sup>1</sup>

Aerial rocket artillery: UH-1B helicopter armed with 2.75in rockets; provides direct fire from an aerial platform.<sup>2</sup>

Aerial weapons ship: UH-1B helicopter armed with 7.62mm machine gun, and 2.75in rockets; provides aerial escort for airmobile elements and suppressive fires.<sup>3</sup>

Air line of communications: An aerial route which connects an operating military force with a base of operations along which supplies and reinforcements move.<sup>4</sup>

Assault helicopter: UH-1D helicopter; provides tactical air movement of maneuver units.<sup>5</sup>

Assault support helicopter: CH-47 helicopter; provides tactical air movement of maneuver and combat support units, supplies, and equipment.<sup>6</sup>

---

<sup>1</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964), p. III-1.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid., p. 3-2.

<sup>3</sup>Ibid., p. 3-2.

<sup>4</sup>U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, Air Lines of Communication (AirLOC) Operations, In Support of the Air Assault Division, ST 55-7 (Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963), p. 2.

<sup>5</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 3-3.

<sup>6</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 3-3.

Battalion base: Base of operations containing elements necessary to support battalion operations.<sup>7</sup>

Brigade base: Base of operations containing elements necessary to support brigade operations; includes elements similar to those found in the division base.<sup>8</sup>

Division base: Base of operations containing elements necessary to support division operations; includes elements of division artillery, support command, aviation group, and an instrumented airfield; may contain the division main command post, the division reserve, the maneuver, combat support, and combat service support units, and the division rear echelon.<sup>9</sup>

Landing zone: An area in which troops, equipment, and supplies are landed for participation in airmobile operations.<sup>10</sup>

Logistic base: Base located in the field army service area or other secure area from which elements of the field army support command, or other tailored combat service support units, provide logistical support to the airmobile division; rear terminus of surface and air line of communications to division and brigade bases of operation.<sup>11</sup>

Pickup zone: An area in which troops, equipment, and supplies are loaded into helicopters for participation in airmobile operations.<sup>12</sup>

<sup>7</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 6-5.

<sup>8</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 2-2.

<sup>9</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 2-2.

<sup>10</sup>The 11th Air Assault Division, Air Assault Techniques and Procedures (Fort Benning, Ga.: Headquarters The 11th Air Assault Division, 1 August 1964), p. 2.

<sup>11</sup>Combat Developments Command, AirLOC Operations, pp. 4-5.

<sup>12</sup>The 11th Air Assault Division, Techniques and Procedures, p. 2.



Weather minimum: The worst weather condition under which operations may be conducted; usually prescribed as a minimum visibility and ceiling and/or hazard to flight.<sup>13</sup>

---

<sup>13</sup>Combat Developments Command, The Division, p. 7-9.

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

## BIBLIOGRAPHY

### Public Documents

#### Army Regulations

U.S. Department of the Army. Dictionary of United States Army Terms, AR 320-5. With Changes No. 2, 21 February 1966. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 23 April 1965.

#### Field Manuals

U.S. Department of the Army. Airmobile Operations, FM 57-35. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 17 September 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. Armored Cavalry Platoon and Troop Air Cavalry Troop and Divisional Armored Cavalry Squadron, FM 17-36. With Changes No. 1, 6 May 1963. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 21 December 1961.

\_\_\_\_\_. Army Forces in Joint Airborne Operations, FM 57-10. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 15 March 1962.

\_\_\_\_\_. Counterguerrilla Operations, FM 31-16. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 19 February 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. Field Service Regulations: Operations, FM 100-5. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 19 February 1962.

\_\_\_\_\_. Operations Against Irregular Forces, FM 31-15. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 31 May 1961.

\_\_\_\_\_. Rifle Platoon and Squads: Infantry, Airborne and Mechanized, FM 7-15. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 10 March 1965.

- \_\_\_\_\_ . Staff Officers' Field Manual: Organization, Technical, and Logistical Data, FM 101-10. Part I: Unclassified Data. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 25 October 1961.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . The Division, FM 61-100. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 25 June 1965.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . U.S. Army Counterinsurgency Forces, FM 31-22. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 12 November 1963.

### Special Texts

- U.S. Army Combat Developments Command. Air Assault Division Brigade, ST 7-30-1. Fort Benning, Ga.: Combat Developments Command, 10 September 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Air Assault Division: Combat Service Support and the Support Command, ST 54-2-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 7 January 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Air Assault Division Signal Battalion, ST 11-105-1. Fort Monmouth, N. J.: Combat Developments Command, August 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Aircraft Maintenance Support, Air Assault Division, ST 55-47-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Air Lines of Communication (AirLOC) Operations, In Support of the Air Assault Division, ST 55-7. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . Aviation Group, Air Assault Division, ST 1-18-1. Fort Rucker, Ala.: Combat Developments Command, 1 September 1964.
- \_\_\_\_\_ . C-Level Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Support, ST 55-42-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, August 1964.

- . Division Medical Service (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 8-15-1. Fort Sam Houston, Tex.: Combat Developments Command Medical Service Agency, June 1963.
- . Engineer Battalion, The Air Assault Division, ST 5-215-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, August 1964.
- . Field Artillery Battalion, Aerial Rocket, Air Assault Division, ST 6-102-1. Fort Sill, Okla.: Combat Developments Command, June 1963.
- . Ground Equipment Maintenance Service, Air Assault Division, ST 9-30-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 15 June 1963.
- . Infantry Battalion, Air Assault Division, ST 7-20-1. Fort Benning, Ga.: Combat Developments Command, 11 September 1964.
- . Military Police Support, Air Assault Division, ST 19-87-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 31 January 1964.
- . Supply and Field Services Support, Air Assault Division, ST 10-50-1. Fort Lee, Va.: Combat Developments Command Quartermaster Agency, June 1963.
- . The Division (Air Assault Division Supplement), ST 61-100-1. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 25 June 1964.

### Tables of Organization and Equipment

- U.S. Army Combat Developments Command. Administration Company, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 12-77T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- . Aerial Artillery Battery, Field Artillery Battalion, Aerial Artillery, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-727T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

- 
- . Aerial Weapons Company, Assault Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-157T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Air Cavalry Troop, Cavalry Squadron, Airmobile Division, TOE 17-98T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Airmobile Division, TOE 67T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Airmobile Division Artillery, TOE 6-700T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Assault Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-155T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Assault Helicopter Company, Assault Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-158T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-165T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Assault Support Helicopter Company, Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-167T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Aviation Battery, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-702T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-100T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Cavalry Squadron, Airmobile Division, TOE 17-95T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

- 
- . Cavalry Troop, Cavalry Squadron, Airmobile Division, TOE 17-99T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Combat Engineer Company, Engineer Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 5-217T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Combat Support Company, Infantry Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 7-58T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Command Operations Company, Signal Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 11-207T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Engineer Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 5-215T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Field Artillery Battalion, Aerial Artillery, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-725T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Field Artillery Howitzer Battalion, 105mm Towed, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-705T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Field Artillery Howitzer Battery 105mm Towed, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-707T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Forward Support Detachment, Maintenance Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-87T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . General Support Company, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-102T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-701T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Airmobile Division, TOE 67-2T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Band, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-42T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Assault Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-156T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Assault Support Helicopter Battalion, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-166T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Aviation Group, Airmobile Division, TOE 1-101T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Engineer Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 5-216T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Infantry Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 7-65T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Infantry Brigade, Airmobile Division, TOE 67-42T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Maintenance Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-86T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.



---

. Headquarters and Headquarters Company, Transportation Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 55-406T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters and Headquarters Troop, Cavalry Squadron, Airmobile Division, TOE 17-96T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters and Support Company, Medical Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 8-26T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Battery, Field Artillery Battalion, Aerial Artillery, Division Artillery, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-726T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Battery, Field Artillery Howitzer Battalion 105mm, Towed, Airmobile Division, TOE 6-706T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, Signal Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 11-206T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company, Support Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 92-96T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Infantry Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 7-55T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

---

. Maintenance Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-85T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

- 
- . Medical Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 8-25T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Medical Company, Medical Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 8-27T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Military Police Company, Airmobile Division, TOE 19-87T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Quartermaster Aerial Equipment Support Company, Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 10-67T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Rifle Company, Infantry Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 7-57T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Signal Battalion, Airmobile Division, TOE 11-205T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-95T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Supply Company, Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-97T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 29-41T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Transportation Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 55-405T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.
- 
- . Transportation Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Company, Transportation Aircraft Maintenance and Supply Battalion, Support Command, Airmobile Division, TOE 55-407T. Fort Belvoir, Va.: Combat Developments Command, 10 July 1965.

Others

Canada. Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, Geographical Branch. Indo-China: A Geographical Appreciation. (Foreign Geography Information Series No. 6.) Ottawa: Department of Mines and Technical Surveys, 1953.

U.S. Department of Defense, The Military Assistance Institute. Country Study: Republic of Viet Nam. Washington: American Institute for Research, 1965.

U.S. Department of State. Aggression from the North: The Record of North Viet-Nam's Campaign To Conquer South Viet-Nam, Publication 7839. (Far Eastern Series 130.) Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. Laos--Viet-Nam Boundary, International Boundary Study No. 35. Washington: The Geographer, 29 June 1964.

U.S. Department of the Army. Army Air Mobility Concept. Washington: Headquarters, Department of the Army, 12 December 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_. U.S. Army Area Handbook for Vietnam, DA Pamphlet No. 550-40. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, October 1964.

U.S. Senate. "Joint Meeting of the Two Houses of the U.S. Congress, 19 April 1951," Representative Speeches of General of the Army Douglas MacArthur. (88th Cong., 2d Sess.; Document No. 95.) Compiled by Library of Congress Legislative Reference Service. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1964.

## Books

Department of Military Art and Engineering. Notes for the Course in the History of Military Art. West Point, N. Y.: United States Military Academy, 1956.

Fall, Bernard B. Street Without Joy. 4th ed. London: Pall Mall Press, 1965.

- . The Two Viet-Nams: A Political and Military Analysis. Rev. ed. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publishers, 1964.
- Mao Tse-tung. Selected Works. Vol. I: 1926-1936; Vol. II: 1937-1938; and Vol. V: 1945-1949 [n.d.]. New York: International Publishers Co., Inc., 1954.
- Osanka, Franklin Mark (ed.). Modern Guerrilla Warfare: Fighting Communist Guerrilla Movements, 1941-1961. New York: The Free Press of Glencoe, 1962.
- Sun Tzu Wu. The Art of War. Translated by Lionel Giles with an introduction and notes by Brigadier General Thomas R. Phillips, U.S. Army. (Military Classics.) Harrisburg, Pa.: The Military Service Publishing Co., 19'4.
- Truong Chinh. Primer for Revolt: The Communist Takeover in Viet-Nam. New York: Frederick A. Praeger, Publisher, 1963.
- Vo Nguyen Giap, General [Commander-in-Chief, Viet Nam People's Army]. People's War, People's Army [a translation]. Washington: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1962.

#### Articles and Periodicals

- Chapelle, Dickey. "Water War in Viet Nam," National Geographic Magazine, CXXIX (February 1966), 272-296.
- New York Times. 10-15 & 17 June 1965; 20-27 October 1965; 9, 16-17 & 20-21 November 1965; 9 & 12-14 December 1965; 9-11 & 28-31 January 1966; and 1-2 & 7-8 February 1966.
- "Operation Masher: The War Goes On," Life (11 February 1966), 20-25.
- Sochurek, Howard. "Americans in Action in Viet Nam," National Geographic Magazine, CXXVII (January 1965), 38-65.
- . "Slow Train Through Viet Nam's War," National Geographic Magazine, CXXVI (September 1964), 412-444.

"South Vietnam: A New Kind of War," Time Magazine, LXXXVI, No. 17 (22 October 1965), 28-39.

"Viet Nam, Cambodia, Laos and Eastern Thailand" [a loose map], National Geographic Magazine, CXXVII (January 1965).

### Reports

The 11th Air Assault Division. Air Assault in Action. Fort Benning, Ga.: The 11th Air Assault Division, 27 January 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. Air Assault Techniques and Procedures. Fort Benning, Ga.: Headquarters The 11th Air Assault Division. 1 August 1964.

\_\_\_\_\_. Tactical Standing Operating Procedure. Fort Benning, Ga.: The 11th Air Assault Division, 28 August 1964.

U.S. Army Command and General Staff College. "Patterns of Communist Aggression," Subject A1810. Fort Leavenworth, Kans.: The Command and General Staff College, 13 September 1965.

\_\_\_\_\_. The Division, RB 61-1. Fort Leavenworth, Kans.: The Command and General Staff College, 1 July 1965.

U.S. Army Test, Evaluation and Control Group. Phase I Report: Air Assault Infantry Battalion (Reinforced). Fort Benning, Ga.: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, 1 December 1963.

\_\_\_\_\_, Project TEAM [Test, Evaluation Air Mobility]. Field Test Program: Army Air Mobility Concept. Vol. I: Basic Report. Fort Benning, Ga.: U.S. Army Combat Developments Command, 15 January 1965.

### Unpublished Reports

The 11th Air Assault Division. "The Air Assault Concept." [Fort Benning, Ga.: [n.p.], 1965.] (Mimeographed.)

\_\_\_\_\_. "How Does the Division Fight?" [Fort Benning, Ga., 1964.] (Mimeographed.)

#### Other Sources

Personal letter from James M. Gavin, USA, Ret., to Brigadier General H. W. O. Kinnard [November 1963].

Personal letter from William Roll, Maj, Inf, S3, 1st Battalion, 12th Cavalry, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile), 21 January 1966.