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DE
 QUARTERS, 510 FENCIBLE (SEPARATE)
 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AIRMOBILE)
 APO San Francisco 96490

AVDAGT-P

14 November 1971

SUBJECT: After Action Report: Operation by 3rd Bde (Sep), 1st Cav Div
 (AM), 5-12 November 1971 to Recover US Prisoners of War

Commanding General
 Third Regional Assistance Command
 APO In-Country 96375

1. (C) Preparation. Commanding General, 3rd Bde (Sep), 1st Cav Div (AM) on 4 November 1971 received mission from HQ TRAC to conduct a combat operation to locate and evacuate American Prisoners of War in the Dinh Quan area. A Special Operation Team from MACSO, Task Force 1AE (a combat Ranger Team of 58 personnel) was placed OPCON to CG, 3rd Bde for the duration of the operation. Detailed staff planning and limited visual reconnaissance were conducted on 5 November 1971, followed by a Bde staff concept briefing to appropriate Commanders; Operation Order 9-71 (Inclosure 1) was published shortly thereafter which outlined the Bde plan for accomplishing the mission.
2. (C) General Concept. The 3rd Bde organized a tailored task force consisting of a forward Bde Task Force CP element, an Airmobile Infantry Battalion, three six man Bde Ranger Teams, an Air Cavalry Troop, TF 1AE, and a slice of the Bde aviation lift, MEDEVAC, flareship, and gunship support. The operation was planned to be conducted in three phases. Phase I was the deployment of TF Garry Owen to the objective area; insertion and positioning of TF 1AE forces, and seizure of an American POW. Phase II was to be further development of the situation and exploitation to locate additional POW's suspected to be in a "Shelter" area. Phase III was to be commitment of 2-5 Cav in the conduct of normal operations in the area and deployment of TF Garry Owen forces to home station. Duration of the operation was estimated at five days. The Bde OPCRD depicted several planning options and other details.
3. (C) Execution. Progression of events was as follows:
 - a. 04 Nov 71 - CG 3rd Bde received mission from CG TRAC.
 - b. 051700H - Bde staff concept briefing for commanders and staff at Bde CP (Dien Hoa). Desire expressed by CO TF 1AE to commence operations on 7 Nov rather than 6 Nov, as ~~tax~~ collection point would not be operational on Sunday, 7 Nov 71.

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October 1971 to Recover US Prisoners of War

- c. 070830H - Ede TF CP departed for LZ Rock (YT477335) by CH-47 helicopter.
- d. 071100H - TF CP operational.
- e. 071455H - Assault Team B (two back up teams numbering 23 men) of TF 1AE arrived at LZ Rock by UH-1H helicopter.
- f. 071745H - Flaeship and elements of D-229th AHD in position at Rock.
- g. 071920H - Assault Team A (28 men) of TF 1AE inserted by CH-47 at LZ Nancy (YT565385).
- h. 071940H - TF 1AE(-) began ground march to objective area from Nancy.
- i. 080600H - 10 ship ready-flight, 2 sections AFA, MEDEVAC on station at Mace; D-229th AHD on station at Rock.
- j. 091700H - Flaeship positioned at rock.
- k. 090020H - TF flaeship dispatched as airborne relay; Rash FAC airborne relay aborted due to adverse weather conditions between objective area and Dien Hoa.
- l. 090600H - All TF aircraft in position ready to respond to situation requirements.
- m. 090710H - TF 1AE reported that it was misoriented.
- n. 091210H - TF 1AE located by JUH-1H aircraft. Location passed to commander on ground by TF Garry Owen Commander. TF 1AE was positioned short (east) of the objective by 1700 meters.
- o. 091630H - Flaeship positioned at Rock.
- p. 092100H - TF 1AE(-) resumed movement to objective area.
- q. 100555H - All aircraft in position ready to respond to situation requirements.
- r. 101630H - Flaeship positioned at Rock.
- s. 102100H - TF 1AE(-) reported its location as 150m from the objective area.

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- t. 102200H - Received intelligence report from US Advisor, Dinh Quan, of current tax collection operations along the trail leading to the objective area. Intelligence forwarded to TF 1AE(-).
- u. 111330H - TF 1AE(-) dispatched six man team to recon objective area.
- v. 111630H - Flareship positioned at Rock.
- w. 112300H - TF 1AE(-) heard several shots fired near the objective area from their assembly area. TF 1AE(-) suspected recon team might be in trouble.
- x. 120600H - All aircraft on station.
- y. 120650H - TF 1AE(-) reported they had not been in contact with their six man recon team for a considerable period of time.
- z. 120915H - Recon team called on "UHF Guard Freq" requesting extraction.
- aa. 120930H - "Pink Team" from D Trp, 229th AHD located and extracted the recon team.
- bb. 121030H - TF 1AE(-) extracted by D Trp, 229th AHD.
- cc. 121200H - 2-5 Cav began insertion of its units. Area of operation turned over to CO, 2-5 Cav.
- dd. 121205H - Bde Ranger Teams 76, 77, and 72 insertion completed.
- ee. 121215H - Ranger Team relay site operational at Nancy.
- ff. 121300H - D Co, 229th AHD released to Bde control for conduct of normal operations.
- gg. 121325H - TF 1AE completed return movement to Long Thanh by CH-47 helicopter from Rock.
- hh. 121500H - TF CP began movement by road convoy to Bien Hoa.
- ii. 121635H - TF CP closed Bien Hoa.
- jj. 121715H - 2-5 Cav insertions completed.

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4. (C) Summary.

a. Task Force 1AE(-) was extracted at the request of their commander, on the ground, five days after insertion. The TF 1AE(-) became disoriented the first night when walking off FSD Nancy; as a result, only 1000 meters were covered during the first night's movement. On the fourth night (10 Nov) the TF 1AE Commander reported he was in position, approximately 150 meters from the objective area. While in the ambush site position, 10-12 Nov 71, a tax collection point was not observed to be established by TF 1AE. The TF 1AE Commander felt his position may have been compromised early in the operation due to the density of woodcutters and other personnel in the area. The area of operation contained numerous unmarked trails which made orientation difficult. These factors required TF 1AE(-) to move with increased caution, hindering desired quickness of movement to the objective area.

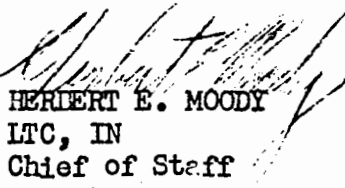
b. US Air Force "Rash FAC" pilots and US Army Aviators performed admirably and professionally during extreme adverse nighttime weather conditions while maintaining an airborne relay which insured continuous communications with the ground element.

c. During the Task Force Garry Owen Commander's debriefing of the TF 1AE(-) personnel, upon extraction on 12 Nov 71, it was discovered that a woodcutter had been tied to a tree on 9 Nov 71 to prevent compromise of the operation. A 3rd Bde "Pink" Team (one OH-6A and one AH-1G) was dispatched to the area with two members of the extracted task force and the woodcutter was released.

d. The operation was concluded with the insertion of the three Brigade Ranger Teams and the 2-5 Cav in multiple LZ's to conduct Phase III operations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as


HERBERT E. MOODY
LTC, IN
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION: Special¹
CG TRAC - 2
CG, 3rd Bde (Sep), 1st Cav Div - 1
DCO-A - 1
S-3 - 5
CO, 229th AEB - 2

D Trp, 16th Cav - 1
CO, 2-5 Cav - 2
S-2 - 1
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Note 1 - Distributed less previously issued Incl 1 (OPORD 9-71)

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