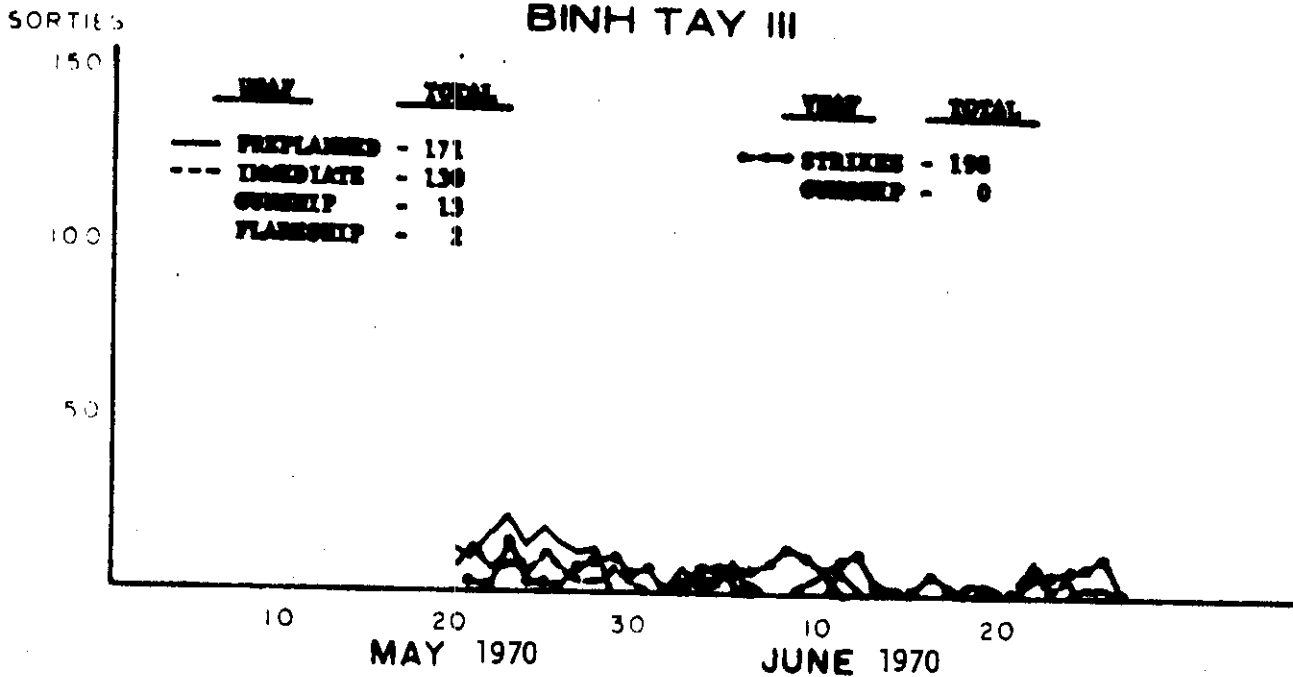


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AIRSTRIKES BINH TAY III



AIRSTRIKES CUU LONG I

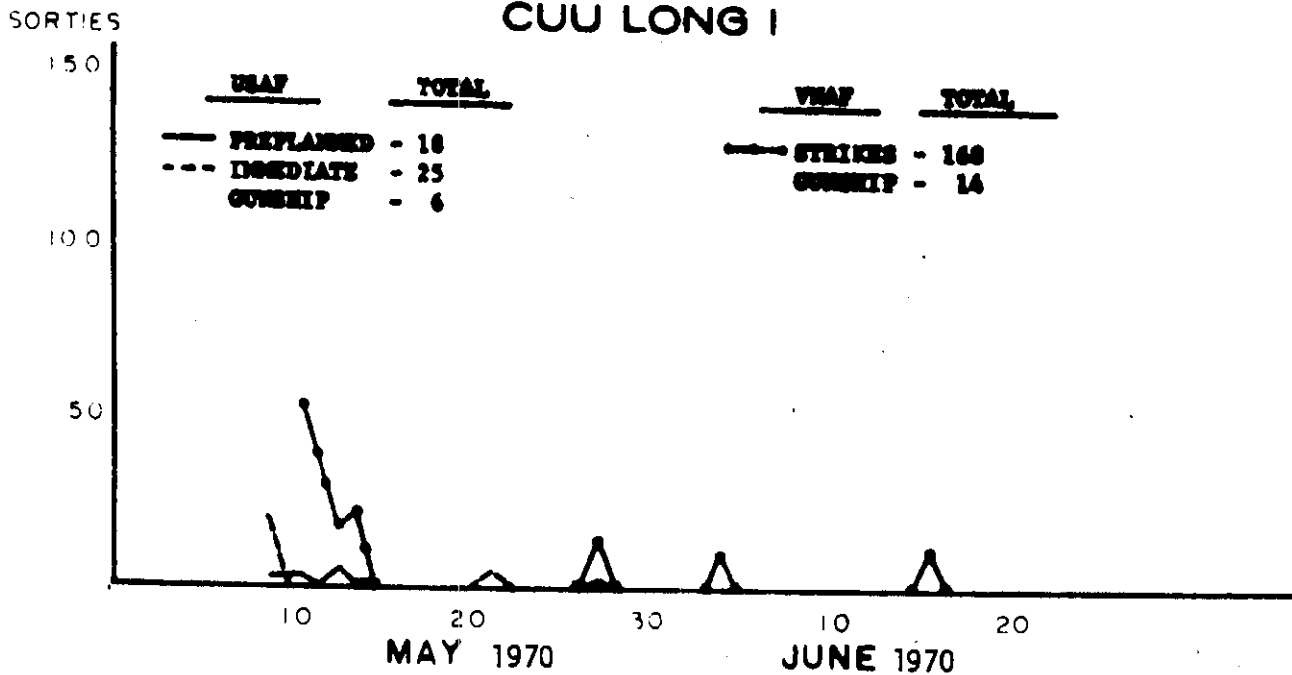
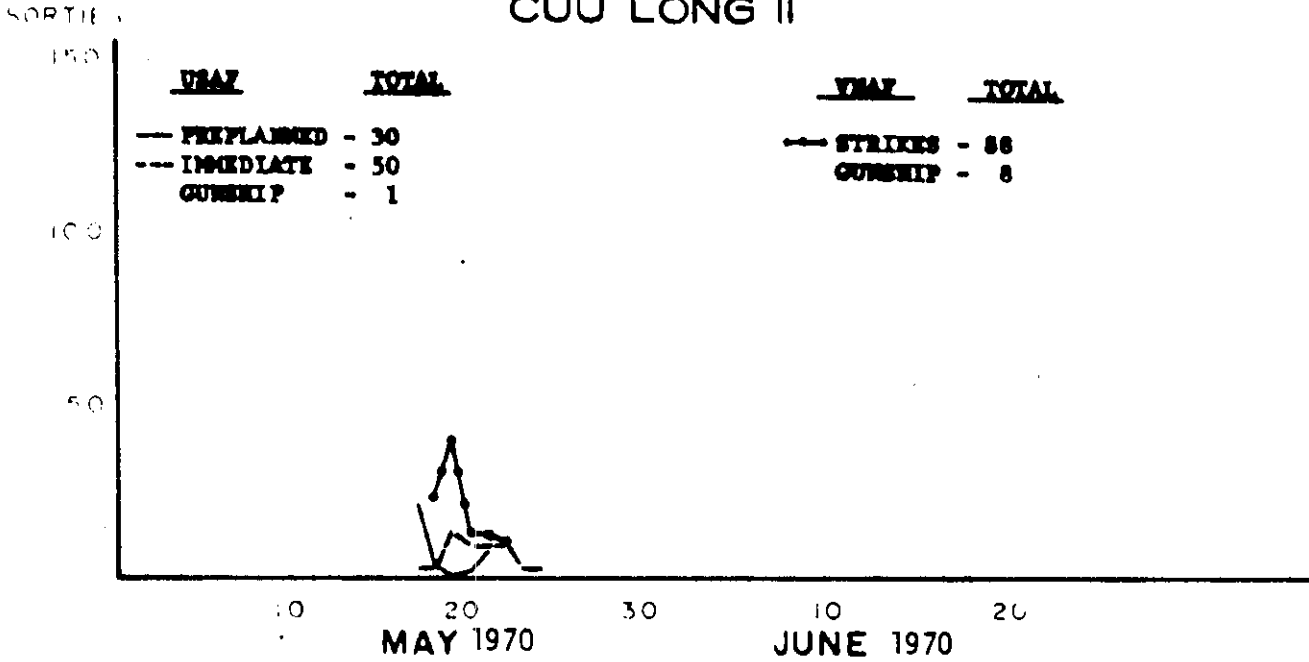


FIGURE 15

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AIRSTRIKES CUU LONG II



AIRSTRIKES CUU LONG III

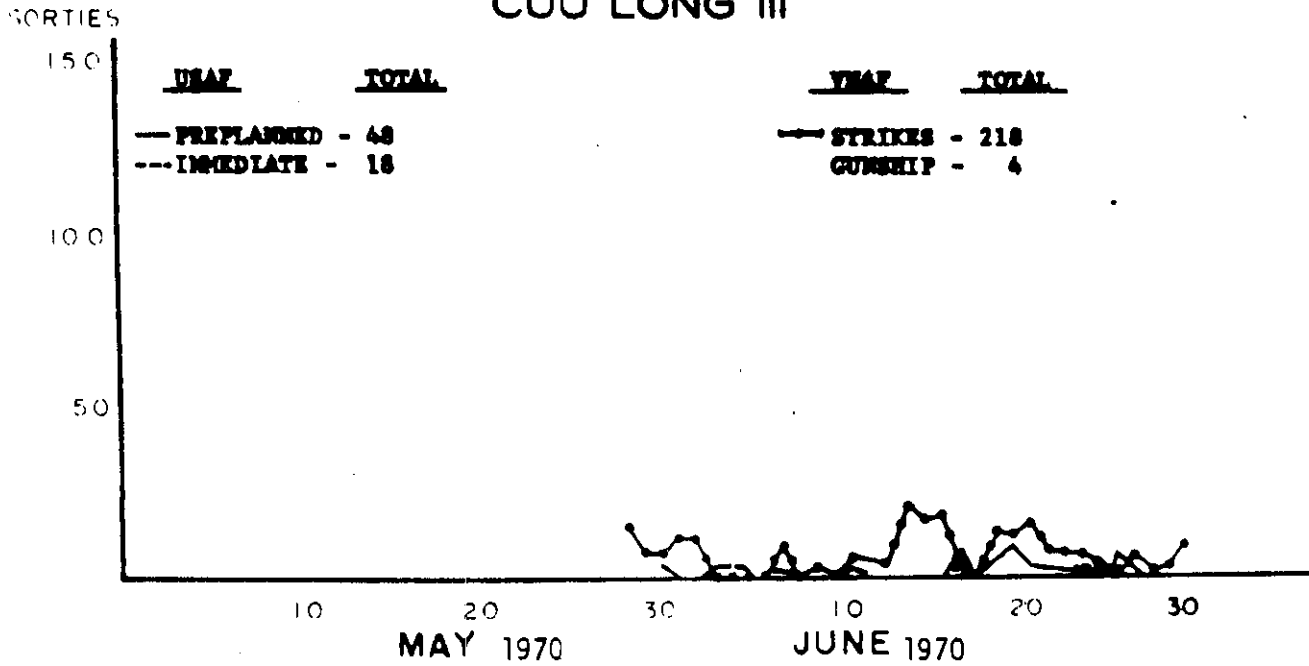


FIGURE 16

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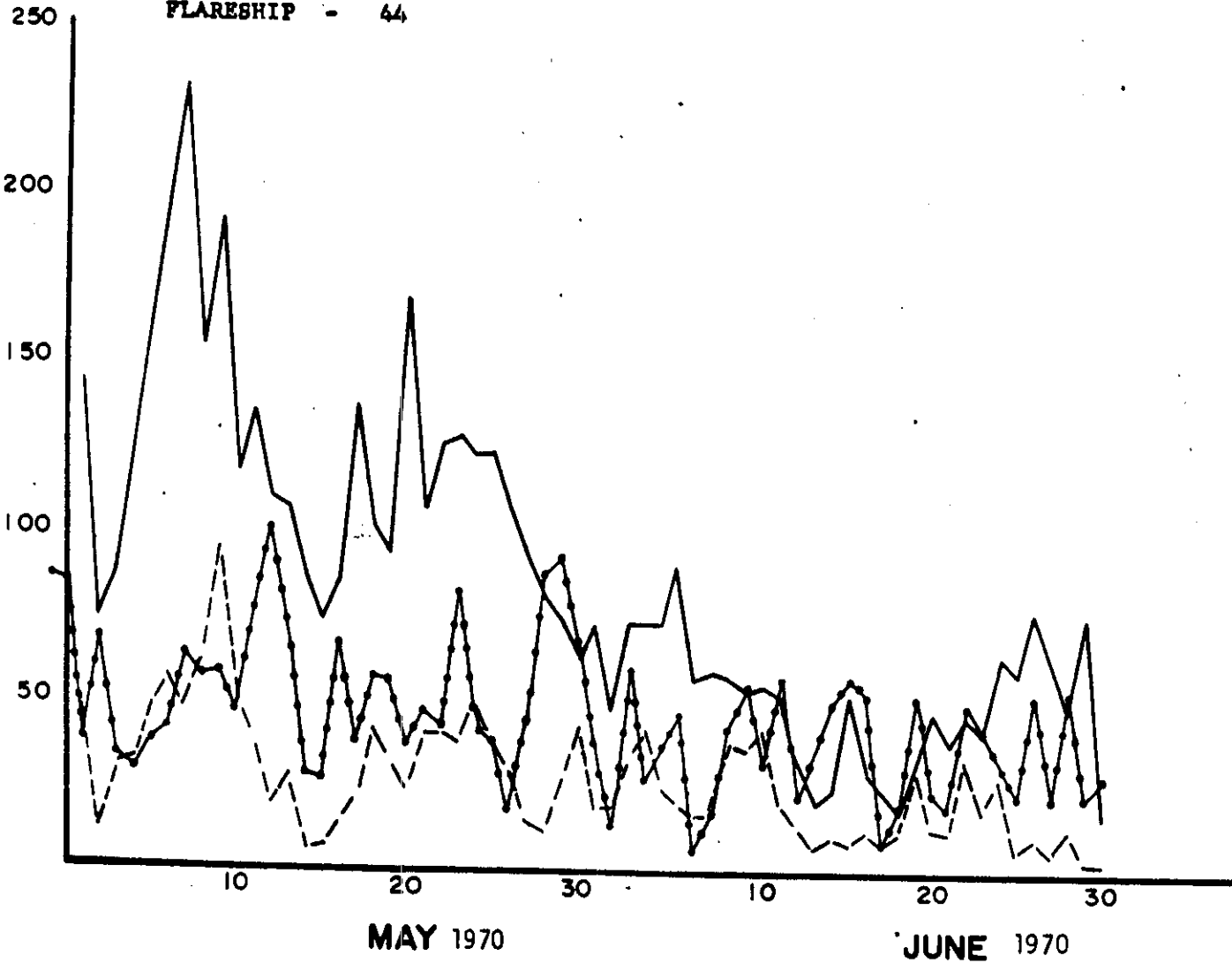
AIRSTRIKES

CAMBODIA

	<u>USAF</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
—	PREPLANNED	- 5189
- - -	IMMEDIATE	- 1675
	GUNSHIP	- 193
	FLARESHIP	- 44

	<u>VNAF</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
—●—	STRIKE	- 2691
	GUNSHIP	- 184

SORTIES



SOURCE: TACC BRIEFING NOTES

FIGURE 17

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wounded.

The USAF FACs attached to the ARVN units also served in numerous other roles. They were the first to note civilian and refugee locations and passed this information to advisers in the field and political advisers in the province to prevent inadvertent bombing of civilian noncombatants. USAF FACs scouted the areas ahead of ground movements and advised commanders of terrain conditions and the possible location of enemy defenses. On one occasion, a USAF FAC led an ARVN medevac helicopter through intense ground fire in one-half mile visibility to locate a friendly position. He adjusted artillery on the enemy positions while the medevac evacuated the wounded.^{21/}

Ground commanders' appreciation for the air support they received was reflected in a letter to Gen. George S. Brown, Deputy Commander for Air Operations, MACV, from Lt. Gen. Michael S. Davison, Commander, II Field Force Vietnam:^{22/}

"Fran Roberts has just provided me with a succinct recapitulation of the close air support we have received in the border areas of III CTZ during the period 1 May - 10 June 1970. I find the total effort expended on our behalf to be extremely impressive, and am enclosing the report as rendered to me, on the chance that perhaps this information hasn't reached you in quite this form.

"I'm most appreciative, not only of the amount of support your units have provided to the II FFV and III Corps maneuver elements, but also of the extremely adept and timely manner in which it's been delivered. It has been a professional performance of the highest quality."

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Air Resources

Prior to beginning the Cambodian operation, 7AF advised MACV that in-country resources could provide adequate support without augmentation provided sortie and munitions limitations were temporarily lifted. This estimate proved to be substantially correct as the only augmentation required in support of the ground operations through 30 June 1970 was three C-130 flareships from Ubon which were deployed to Cam Ranh Bay and four A-1 aircraft deployed from Nakhon Phanom to Bien Hoa for SAR efforts.

The attack sortie surge in support of the Cambodian campaign peaked during the second week in May to 4,336 sorties, 2,400 in-country and 1,936 in Cambodia (Fig. 18). This compared to a pre-Cambodian weekly average of 2,850 sorties in 1970 and 3,150 in 1969. The additional sorties were obtained by picking up the sorties from Da Nang, Phu Cat, and Tuy Hoa made available from the interdiction campaign in the STEEL TIGER area of southern Laos, because of the onset of the Southwest Monsoon, and by increasing the fighter aircraft utilization rates from pre-Cambodian levels of .75 - .80 sorties per day per aircraft to peak levels of 1.13 for F-4s, 1.38 for A-37s, and 1.44 for F-100s (Fig. 19).

The campaign did not affect air support for I Corps which actually increased about 200 sorties per week (Fig. 20). IV Corps support also continued at about the previous level. This was achieved by having USAF preplanned sorties fill in for the VNAF flights, most of

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SORTIE DISTRIBUTION

	APRIL				MAY				JUNE				
	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-5	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-7	8-9	10-16	17-23	24-30
I CORPS													
FREE WORLD - I	169	271	275	178	366	375	202	336	327	318	148	217	142
FREE WORLD - P	740	710	613	623	627	779	665	647	667	734	645	660	650
VNAF	80	122	147	81	118	142	156	146	154	140	104	122	138
TOTAL	989	1053	1035	882	1111	1296	1023	1129	1150	1192	897	999	930
II CORPS													
FREE WORLD - I	566	662	429	643	267	162	170	135	123	117	121	104	144
FREE WORLD - P	128	182	258	279	161	199	103	142	222	230	173	175	189
VNAF	141	143	127	148	93	8	-	36	10	27	68	44	81
TOTAL	835	987	814	870	521	369	273	313	355	374	362	323	414
III CORPS													
FREE WORLD - I	140	192	160	193	89	63	29	54	70	52	30	24	80
FREE WORLD - P	371	226	230	305	351	223	203	329	274	180	250	169	181
VNAF	377	381	320	279	138	134	99	90	83	207	146	122	139
TOTAL	888	799	720	777	578	420	331	473	381	439	426	315	400
IV CORPS													
FREE WORLD - I	50	82	76	92	62	66	42	64	56	49	80	50	58
FREE WORLD - P	112	40	36	77	129	111	111	173	164	198	170	160	190
VNAF	277	242	233	296	136	138	63	46	61	141	94	109	140
TOTAL	439	364	345	465	327	315	216	283	281	388	344	319	388
TOTAL IN-COUNTRY													
FREE WORLD	2274	2313	2097	2190	2052	1978	1525	1800	1853	1878	1617	1558	1474
VNAF	820	888	849	804	485	422	318	318	312	515	412	397	498
CAMBODIA													
FREE WORLD - I					159	359	155	351	248	274	177	310	266
FREE WORLD - P					595	1134	698	879	561	452	472	494	978
VNAF					375	443	374	326	450	272	284	234	287
TOTAL					1129	1936	1227	1556	1253	1102	933	1038	1131
LAOS													
FREE WORLD	2398	2437	2604	2226	1961	2019	1607	1791	1563	1372	944	826	943

SOURCE: TACC BRIEFING NOTES

FIGURE 18

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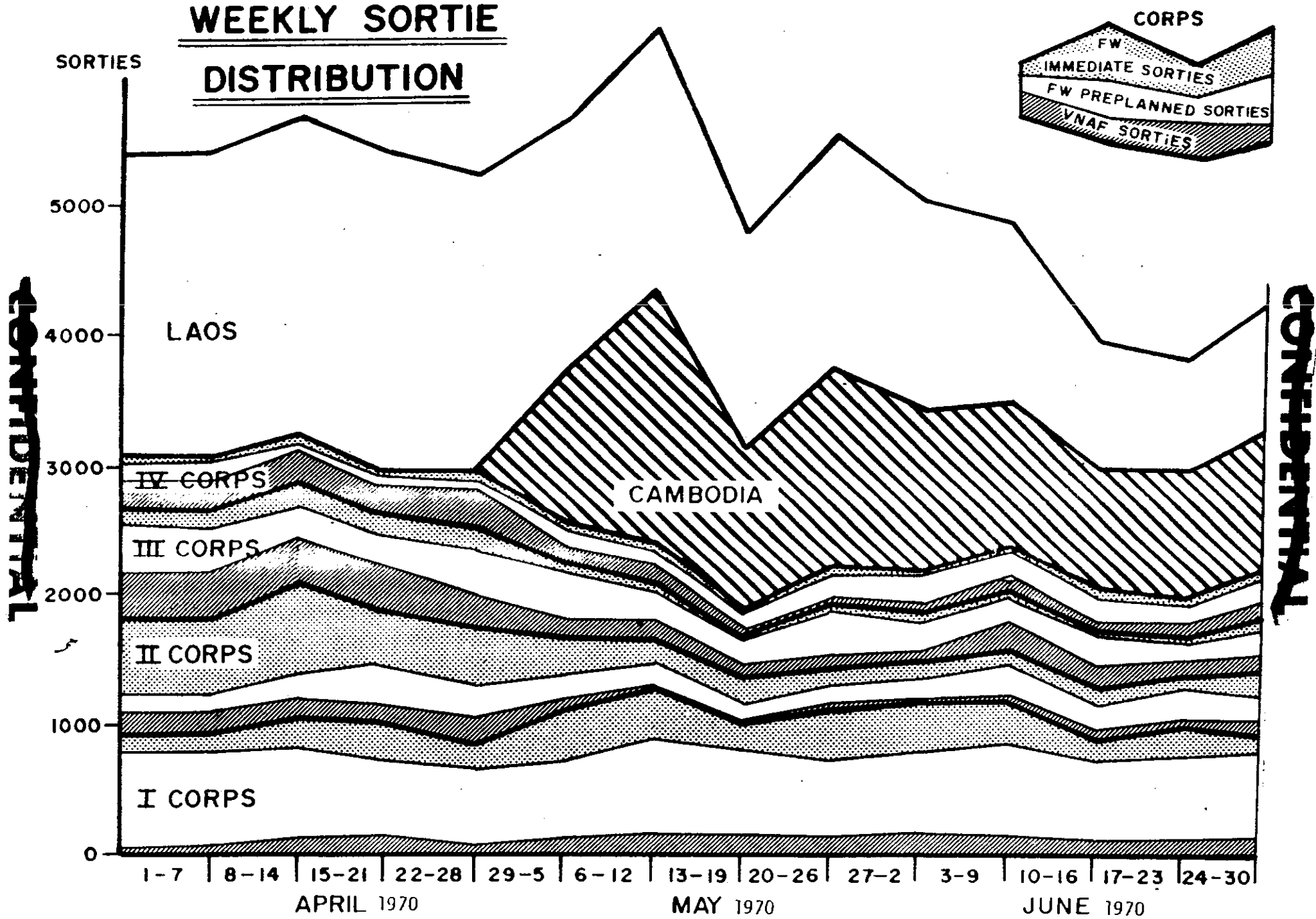
AIRCRAFT UTILIZATION

	1-7	8-14	15-21	22-28	29-5	6-12	13-19	20-26	27-2	3-9	10-16	17-23	24-30
3 TFW (F100)	.95	1.00	.95	.94	1.24	1.44	.84	1.06	.77	.83	.78	.90	UTS-banded
31 TFW	.76	.88	.89	.79	.97	.89	.71	.90	.81	.92	.75	.76	.94
35 TFW	.80	.93	.87	.82	1.03	1.08	.81	1.13	.93	.94	.67	.64	.95
366 TFW	.70	.70	.91	.66	.80	1.05	.79	.86	.90	.88	.65	.78	.93
12 TFW	1.31	1.16	.90	1.03	.92	.94	.81	.97	.90	.97	.66	.84	1.12
3 TFW (A-37)	.87	.82	.80	.89	1.20	1.38	.98	1.28	.89	.95	.74	.83	1.02
TOTAL	.85	.89	.87	.83	1.03	1.09	.82	1.04	.89	.93	.71	.77	.98
USMC	1.15	1.20	1.20	1.22	1.37	1.68	.96	1.33	1.01	1.10	.98	N/A	N/A
RAAF	1.00	1.00	1.00	1.10	1.03	1.10	1.00	1.10	1.12	1.12	1.00	N/A	N/A

SOURCE: TACC BRIEFING NOTES

FIGURE 19

WEEKLY SORTIE DISTRIBUTION



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SOURCE: TACC BRIEFING NOTES

FIGURE 20

which diverted to Cambodia. Although the preplanned sorties remained at about previous levels in II and III Corps, the total number of sorties in these corps dropped by more than half. The cause was the shifting of most of the VNAF sorties and USAF immediate sorties into Cambodia along with the ground forces.

Tactical air operations in Cambodia began on 29 April 1970 with VNAF fighter aircraft flying 166 sorties in support of TOAN THANG 42 in the Parrot's Beak. The VNAF continued to supply the bulk of the support as USAF aircraft flew only 310 sorties compared to 1,604 by the VNAF (Fig. 11). For TOAN THANG 43 in the FISHHOOK, however, USAF aircraft flew 3,000 sorties and the VNAF 364. This pattern held true for the other operations with USAF aircraft supplying nearly all of the support in areas adjacent to II and III Corps and the VNAF providing the major support for TAN THANG 42 and areas adjacent to IV Corps (Figs. 11, 13-16). In addition to the 754 USAF and 374 VNAF fighter sorties flown during the first week, 27 USAF gunship and six flare-ship missions provided night support which continued throughout the campaign. The first psychological warfare (psywar) missions started on 3 May, and during the same week COMMANDO VAULT missions cleared four helicopter landing zones with 15,000-lb. BLU-82 bombs.

The peak effort of the entire campaign came in the second week (6-12 May) as ground forces launched four operations--TOAN THANG 44, 45, 500, CUU LONG I--and increased activity in BINH TAY I which had

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begun on 5 May. In addition to 1,936 USAF and VNAF fighter sorties, 71 USAF and 32 VNAF gunships flew missions in Cambodia.

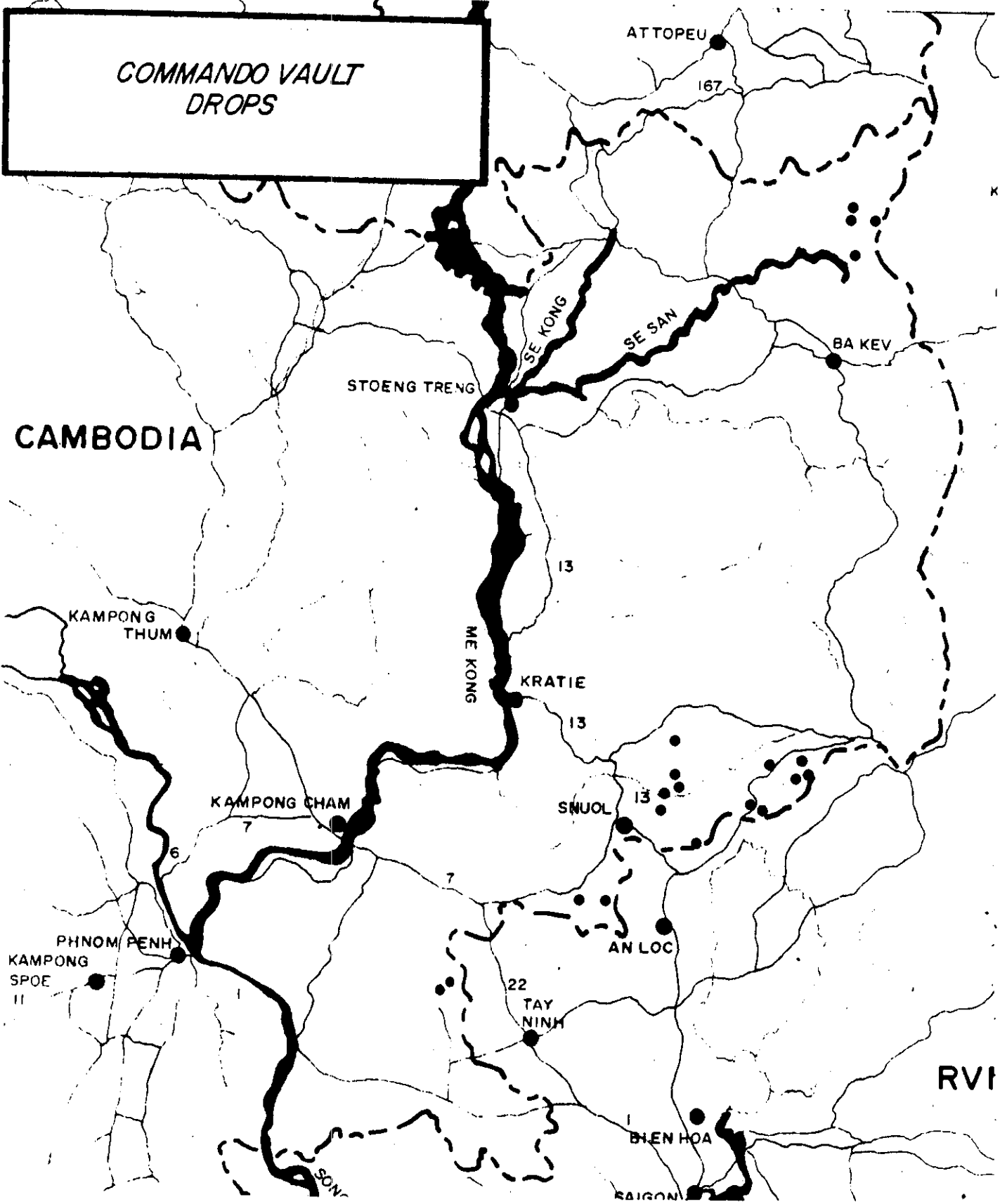
The number of airstrikes dropped off the third week as TOAN THANG 44 and 500 ended and activity decreased in the FISHHOOK and Parrot's Beak. Sorties surged again the next week (20 - 26 May) when improved weather brought increased activity in all of the areas and BINH TAY III was launched. Airstrikes in support of ground forces declined steadily as certain operations terminated at the end of May and troops concentrated on clearing out the caches through June.

The USAF delivered 20 COMMANDO VAULT helicopter landing zone (HLZ) weapons in support of the cross-border operations (Fig. 22). Sixteen of these deliveries resulted in usable HLZ areas--nine one-ship areas, six two-ship, and one three-ship. Dropped by parachute extraction from a C-130 between 6,000 and 12,000 feet above ground level, the COMMANDO VAULT weapon, either a 10,000-lb. M-121 or 15,000-lb. BLU-82 bomb, was fuze-extended to detonate about three feet above ground level. The resulting blast cleared the jungle canopy out to a 60-meter radius. Delivery of the instant HLZ weapons was done by specially trained crews of the 463d Tactical Airlift Wing, Clark AB, Philippines, who operated out of Cam Ranh Bay.

Of the four COMMANDO VAULT deliveries which failed to provide a landing zone, one bomb fell 2,500 meters from the desired point of impact and another landed on sloping terrain unsuitable for an HLZ. One bomb failed to separate from its launching platform and landed as

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COMMANDO VAULT
DROPS

CAMBODIA

RVI

FIGURE 22

SOURCE: 834th Air Division

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BOMB DAMAGE ASSESSMENT BY OPERATION

	TT - 47	TT - 43	TT - 44	TT - 45	TT - 46	TT - I	TT - II	TT - III	CL - I	CL - II	CL - III	TOTAL
	DEBT	DEBT	DEBT	DIST	DEBT	DEBT	DEBT	DEBT	DIST	DEBT	DEBT	DEBT
	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH	DAH
KILLED BY AIR	464	218	53	63	9	42	32	20	0	25	0	926
	334	37	0	6	54	21	40	20	467	17	80	1358
STRUCTURE	2789	1044	317	536	47	432	128	159	471	138	208	729
	211	74	48	91	0	39	10	48	198	67	127	913
PERSONS	1643	192	344	678	72	250	53	54	46	103	53	5270
	175	350	52	120	31	41	0	1	39	9	38	861
SEC FIRE/EXP	31	207	179	67	12	61	17	12	0	5	0	591
	34	84	21	21	3	55	48	21	5	2	0	124
VEHICLES	18	14	0	15	3	3	2	8	0	0	0	63
	0	2	1	14	0	1	0	3	1	0	0	22
POI POSITIONS	563	289	31	28	8	0	0	0	5	0	0	924
	147	25	11	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	187
ROADS	0	2	0	24	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	29
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
BRIDGES	4	7	2	12	6	14	1	4	0	0	0	50
	0	2	0	9	4	1	0	1	0	0	0	17
WATER BUFFALO	2	0	0	0	0	11	38	0	7	0	0	58
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WAREHOUSES	0	0	0	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	4
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
AUTO WPN POSITIONS	17	3	1	7	1	1	1	0	0	7	0	38
	2	1	0	0	3	1	0	0	0	0	0	7
ASSEMBLY	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	3
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RICE (TONS)	1	41	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	42
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
POL DRINKS	2	0	0	36	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	41
	0	0	0	25	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	25
MOTOR CYCLES	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FOOD CACHES	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	4
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
MAPS	0	0	0	0	0	66	0	16	0	0	0	82
	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2
RICE CACHES (NO.)	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	4
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FRAG BOMBS	1	1	0	0	8	0	1	25	0	0	0	36
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
GASPS MEDICINE	0	0	0	0	0	0	17	0	0	0	0	17
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
FOX HOLE	114	0	0	0	0	10	33	21	10	14	0	203
	0	0	0	0	0	0	15	2	0	3	0	20
CLIP POSITIONS	75	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	75
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
SAITPAIRS	1	1	0	1	0	1	0	0	69	0	0	77
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
WELLS	0	2	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

SOURCE: TACC Briefing Notes

FIGURE 23

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ORDNANCE DELIVERED				
	USAF	VNAF	USAF	VNAF
BLU1B FIRE BMB	1834		MK 82 GPB72FUS	40
BLU1OB FIRE BMB	4		MK82HDGPB	16,262
BLU27 FIRE BMB	4798		MK36 GPB 500	1,097
BLU32B FIRE BMB	2427		M117 GPB 750	1,317
CBU12 INC SMK	2		M117HDGPB 750	496
CBU22	14		M117 GPB36FUSE	239
CBU19 RIOT CTL	4		MK83 GPB 1000	8
CBU24 AN PR/MT	669		MK84 GPB 2000	85
CBU25 AN PR/MT	751		MK84 GPBKMU35	2
CBU42 WAAFM	2		M478 SMK BOMB	148
CBU46 ANTI MAT	229		M35 INC CLS	8
CBU46 ANTI PER	6		M36 INC CLS	3
CBU49	252		MLU1OB AIR MINE	143
LAU3 RKT LNCH	1771	416	ACM-12 BULLPUP	4
LAU59 RKT LNCH	9		A1M-7 SPARROW	4
MK81 GPB 250	8	48	ADU272 DISPENSER	91
MK82 GPB 500	12325	5907	ADU253 DISPENSER	20
MK82 GPB18FUS	68		MK-77 NAPALM	64
MK82 GPB36FUS	164		CBU39	14

ARC LIGHT SUMMARY					
BDA		SORTIES			
KIA	194	FIGHT POS	133	BINH TAY I	47
WIA	28	BUNKERS	2031	BINH TAY III	24
BRIDGES	8	STRUCTURES	504	TOAN THANG 45/46	218
CREW WPNS	5	TRENCH	1437	TOAN THANG 43	323
POL	18	SEC EXP	1001	TOAN THANG 44	18
HUTS	93	RICE CACHES	4	CUU LONG II	23
LOC	17	AMMO CACHES	217	TOTAL	653
TUNNELS	19	WPNS CACHES	276		
VEHICLES	90				

FIGURE 24

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a dud. The fourth failure resulted from detonation at treetop level, well above the optimum burst height.^{23/}

By 30 June, all U.S. ground operations had ceased and after 1 July only CUU LONG III continued with VNAF support. In support of the cross-border campaign, USAF aircraft flew 5,189 preplanned and 1,675 immediate airstrike sorties as well as 193 gunship and 44 flare-ship missions. The VNAF flew 2,691 strike sorties and 184 gunship missions. The bomb damage included 926 confirmed and 1,358 probable KBA, 6,269 structures and 5,270 bunkers destroyed, 50 bridges destroyed, and numerous other items (Fig. 23).

In addition to the tactical air support provided, B-52 ARC LIGHT missions flew 653 sorties in support of six of the twelve operations in Cambodia (Fig. 24). ARC LIGHT airstrikes provided massive firepower for LZ and objective preparations prior to initial combat assaults into each of these areas. B-52 missions were then targeted against suspected COSVN headquarters and other enemy locations beyond the 30-kilometer limitation for U.S. ground forces as shown in Fig. 9.

Campaign Results

Except for some initial heavy contacts during TOAN THANG 42 in the Parrot's Beak and Binh Tay I and II in Base Areas 701 and 702, all operations were characterized by light contacts with scattered enemy units. Intelligence indicated that COSVN elements received up to several days' warning, although subordinate units were alerted only a

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few hours in advance. All of the main VC/NVA forces retreated into the interior of Cambodia, leaving only small suicide blocking forces and elements of rear service units behind. Evidence indicated that a few units split up into small groups and infiltrated into RVN behind the attacking forces.^{24/}

Retreat of the enemy allowed friendly ground forces to sweep through the base areas with only 1,147 killed in action, compared to 11,562 enemy losses. These odds would likely have been much less favorable had tactical air not been available to coerce the enemy from his fortified defenses. His past experience with Allied tactical air was undoubtedly a major factor in his decision to withdraw. Thus the threat as well as the employment of airpower contributed to the ground forces' ability to advance rapidly enough to uncover the numerous caches and exploit these caches relatively unmolested.

The extensive storage areas discovered in the sanctuary bases far exceeded the estimates made by CICV Logistics Section prior to the campaign (Figs. 4, 26). Among the supplies captured were: (1) rice to feed 37,798 enemy soldiers for one year at reduced ration (1 lb. per day); (2) individual weapons to equip 55 full strength VC infantry battalions; (3) crew-served weapons to equip 33 full strength VC infantry battalions; and (4) mortar, rocket, and recoilless rifle rounds to sustain 18,585 enemy attacks by fire.

Of the 204 significant caches uncovered (Fig. 26), three of the

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AS OF 302400H JUNE 70

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**TACTICAL AIR SUPPORT
FOR
CAMBODIAN OPERATIONS**

BINH TAY I
INITIATED: 050000Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 230000Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 595
VNAF 152

BINH TAY II
INITIATED: 140030Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 270040Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 209
VNAF 73

TOAN THANG 40 (Hoc Ma)
INITIATED: 040800Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 090000Z JUN 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 256
VNAF 53

TOAN THANG 43
INITIATED: 040720Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 300000Z JUN 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 3047
VNAF 332

TOAN THANG 44 (Tia Chay)
INITIATED: 060000Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 140000Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 442
VNAF 4

BINH TAY III
INITIATED: 200000Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 270030Z JUN 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 290
VNAF 198

TOAN THANG 45 (Giong To)
INITIATED: 060000Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 300000Z JUN 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 1607
VNAF 33

TOAN THANG 500
INITIATED: 070000Z MAY 70
TERMINATED: 123400Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 24
VNAF 7

CUU LONG III
INITIATED: 260000Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 64
VNAF 200

CUU LONG B
INITIATED: 10 MAY 70
TERMINATED: 230000Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 80
VNAF 64

CUU LONG I
INITIATED: 000700Z MAY 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 43
VNAF 161

TOAN THANG 42 (Rubberusher)
INITIATED: 200000Z APR 70
SORTIES FLOWN
US 255
VNAF 1689

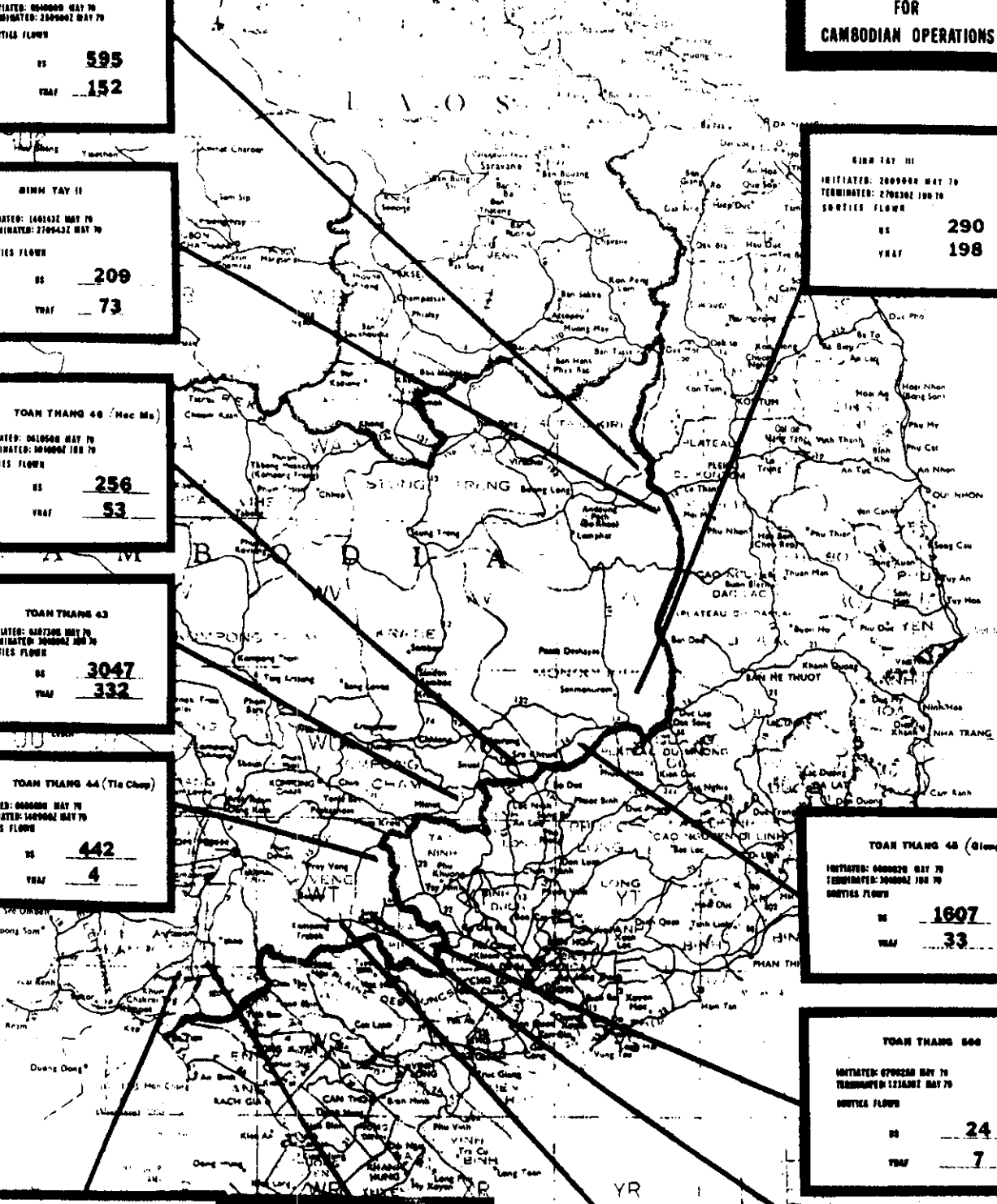


FIGURE 25

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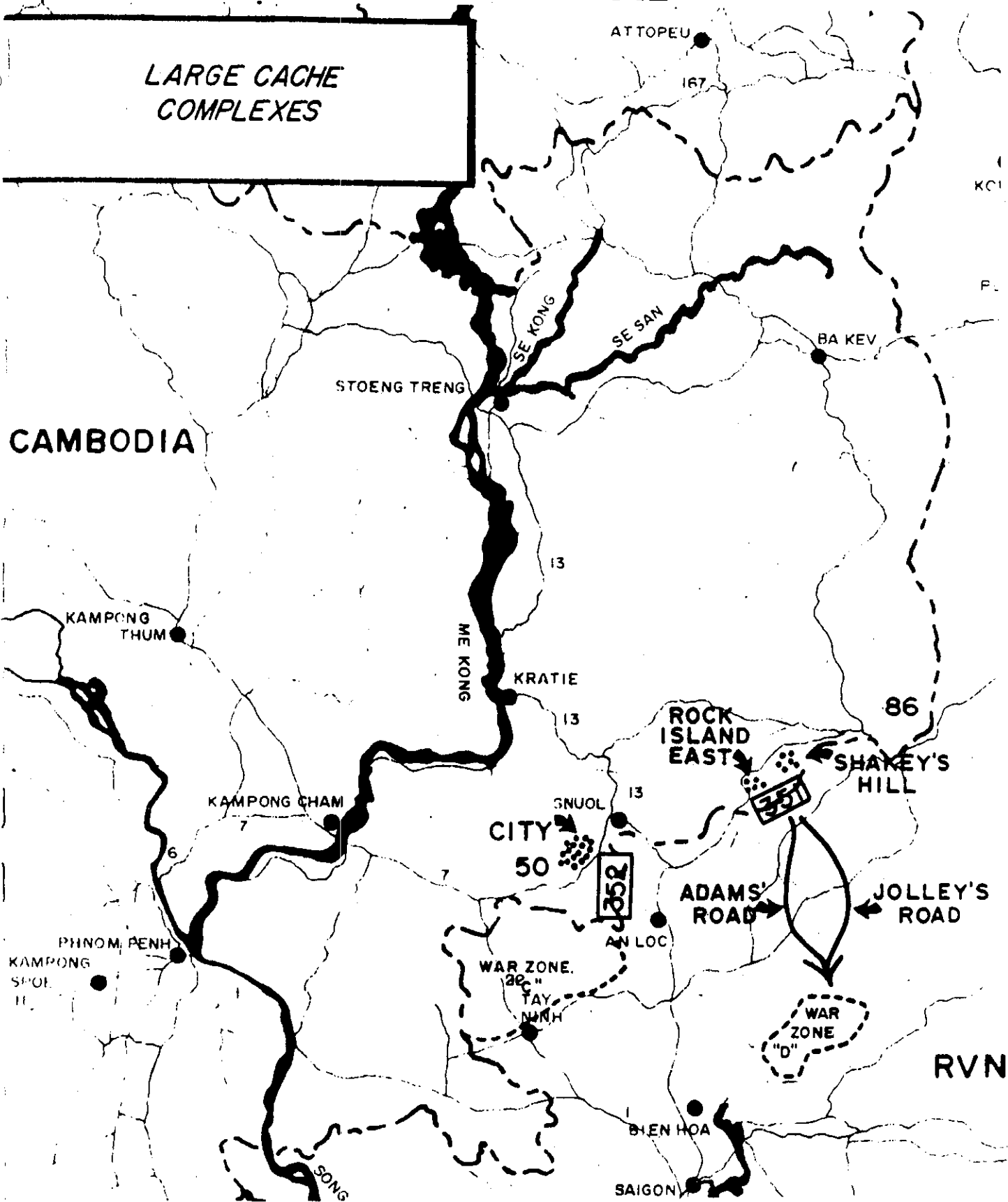
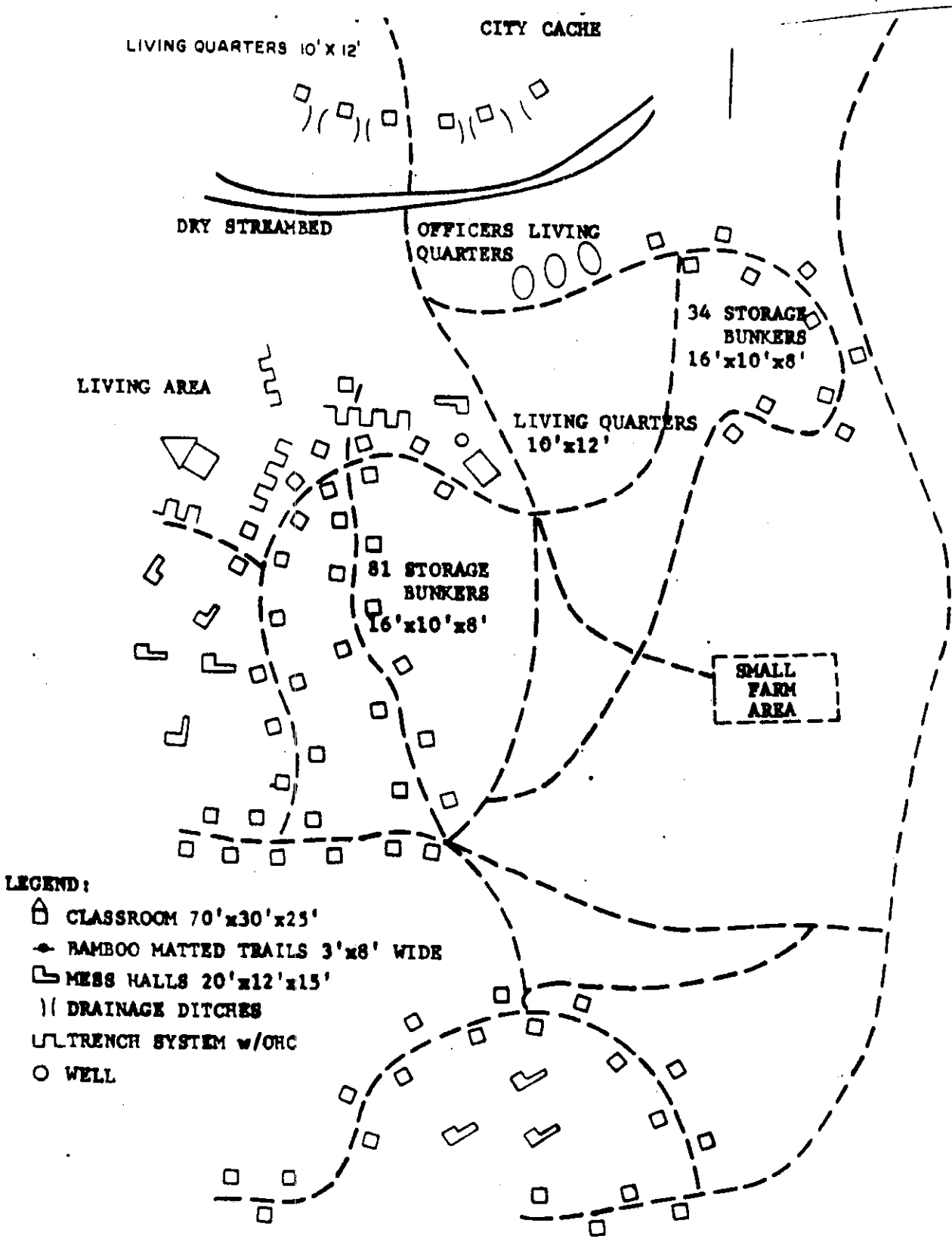


FIGURE 27

SOURCE: OB Logistics, CICV

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LEGEND:

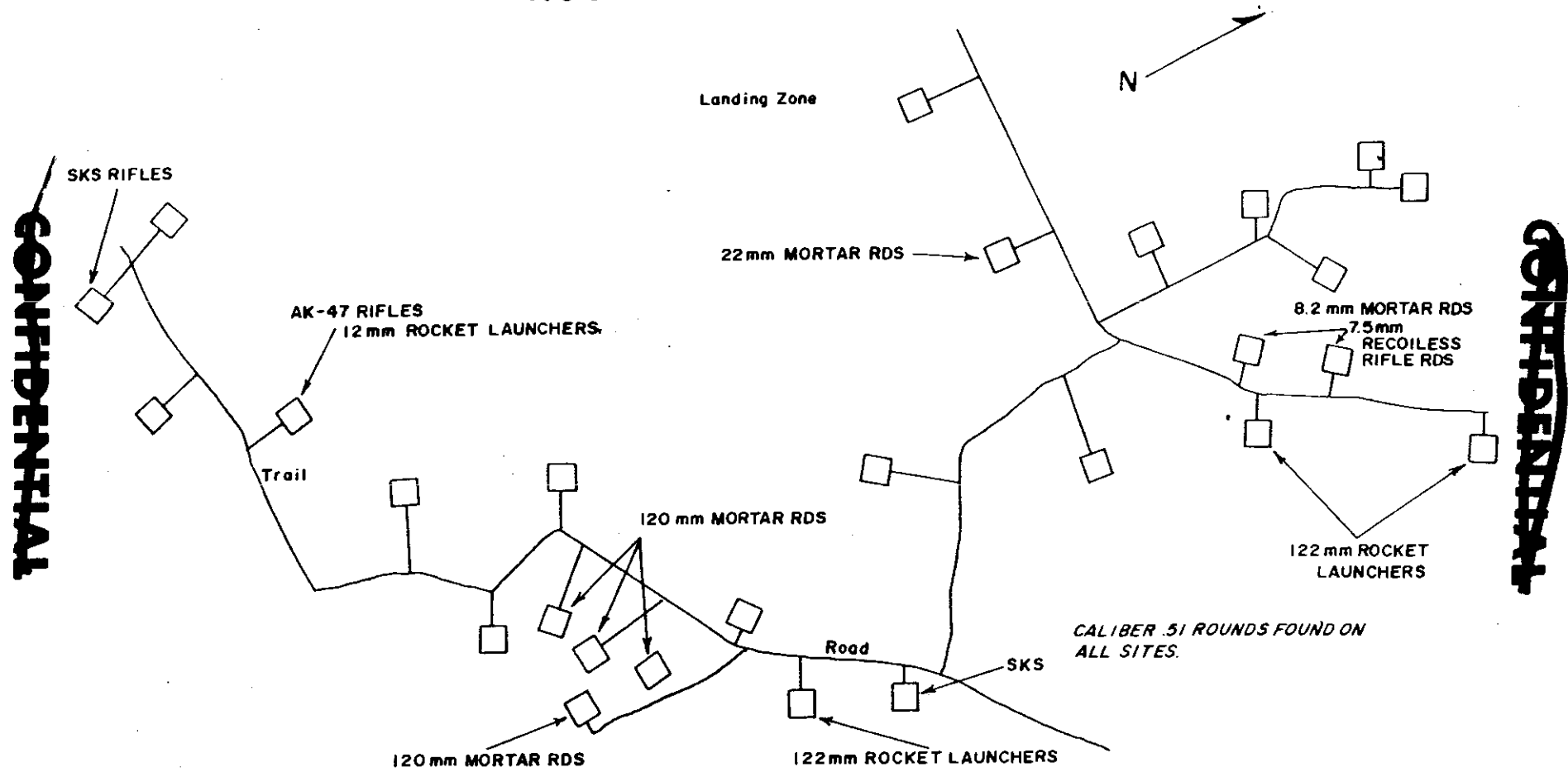
- 🏠 CLASSROOM 70'x30'x25'
- ➡ BAMBOO MATTED TRAILS 3'x8' WIDE
- 🏠 MESS HALLS 20'x12'x15'
- || DRAINAGE DITCHES
- └┘ TRENCH SYSTEM w/OHC
- WELL

SOURCE: II FFORCEV PERINTREP NO. 21-70

FIGURE 28

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ROCK ISLAND EAST CACHE



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SOURCE: II FFORCEV PERINTREP NO. 21-70

FIGURE 29

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largest cache complexes were discovered by elements of the 1st Air Cav Div in areas outside of the originally identified base areas (Fig. 27). On 4 May, elements of the 1st Air Cav Div discovered a large cache north of Base Area 352. It became well known as the "City." The complex contained a storage area and a training area (Fig. 28). The storage area contained 182 bunkers with more than 175 tons of supplies ranging from weapons and ammunition to bicycle tires. The bunkers were constructed both above and below ground and the camouflage varied from black plastic covered with brush to deeply dug bunkers covered with logs, earth, and brush. The entire area was covered by a dense forest canopy which prevented easy detection from the air.

"Rock Island East" cache was discovered on 8 May to the north of Base Area 351. Although not as well developed as the "City," it contained the greatest number of supplies with contents estimated at 330 tons. It was apparently a temporary transshipment point as the roads were unimproved and no attempt had been made to protect the supplies from the weather. They were stored at 28 individual sites and seemed to be sorted for loading on trucks (Fig. 29).

The most well-concealed complex was discovered by accident when Bravo Company, 5th Bn, 7th Cav came under attack while looking for a jungle highway. "Shakey's Hill," named after a Private First Class who was killed shortly after discovering it, contained 58 bunkers, or caves, tunneled deep into the hillside. They eventually disgorged

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approximately 170 tons of weapons and supplies.^{25/}

Based upon accepted enemy strengths prior to the start of the cross-border operations and estimates that the enemy desired to maintain six-month stocks of food and ammunition, the CICV Logistics Section estimated that Allied forces had captured the following percentages of the enemy's food and ammunition stockpiles:

<u>CATEGORY</u>	<u>AREA</u>	<u>CAPTURED (Tons)</u>	<u>PERCENT OF STOCKPILE</u>
Food	No. II Corps	683.3	65
	So. II Corps and III, IV Corps	6,193.0	129
Ammo	No. II Corps	40.6	09
	So. II Corps and III, IV Corps	1,761.4	81

The percentage of weapon stockpiles captured could not be adequately assessed, because even with sizable weapons losses within the RVN during the preceding two years, there had been no reports that indicated the enemy had faced any weapons shortages. It could only be concluded that considerable effort would be required to replace the large amount of weapons captured.

CICV Logistics personnel attempted to project the impact of the loss of these supplies on the enemy. CICV reasoned that as the VC/NVA were cut off from resupply by sea, they would have to expand their transportation system in the Laotian panhandle to meet southern RVN requirements. If the enemy could procure all of his food in Cambodia, his remaining requirements would still be about 5,000 tons a year for

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southern RVN. Considering the distance from Laos to the using units and the need to replace his losses in Cambodia, the enemy's supply goal from Laos into northeastern Cambodia would be about 10,000 tons per year. To carry this increased load, the Lao logistic system would have to be expanded by roughly 50 percent. Although there were stockpiles available in the Laotian panhandle, shipment during the rainy season of even normal monthly ammunition requirements for southern RVN would tax the enemy's capabilities.

CICV Logistics therefore concluded the enemy would have difficulty maintaining his current requirements during the rainy season and could be expected to initiate a massive campaign to move supplies into Cambodia when the weather improved in November 1970. Because of the distance the material would have to travel, it would probably be February 1971 before these efforts would be felt in southern RVN. Thus, results of the cross-border operations had been to impair severely the enemy's logistic system, an effect he would feel for at least six to eight months. ^{26/}

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CHAPTER III
INTERDICTION

Enemy Offensive

While withdrawing from the Allied advance against his base areas in the border region, the enemy remained active in other parts of Cambodia (Fig. 32).^{1/} He initiated a westward thrust from northeast Cambodia toward the Mekong River and Phnom Penh, continued his efforts to isolate the capital by cutting the major LOCs, and increased his pressure on the government positions in the northeast.^{2/}

On 5-6 May 1970, the enemy captured Kratie on the Mekong. Kratie was the FANK ordnance depot for much of central Cambodia, and the supplies seized there partially offset some of the enemy losses in eastern Cambodia. After Kratie fell, two VC/NVA battalions turned north along the Mekong toward Stung Treng, about 125 kilometers away, and during the night of 14-15 May launched their attack. By 18 May, the city had fallen, giving the enemy control of the major LOCs north of Kratie. To further weaken FANK control in the north and northeast, enemy pressure was increased on Lomphat, Bakiev, and Labansiek. The first two were attacked on 14 May and almost nightly thereafter.

Enemy forces also exerted pressure south of Phnom Penh near Phum Banam and increased their activity near the provincial capital of Kampong Cham, about midway between Kratie and Phnom Penh. On 11-12 May, the

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enemy captured Tonle Bet, just across the Mekong from Kampong Cham City. The Cambodian government reinforced Kampong Chan the same day. The city was attacked early on 15 May, and although the FANK forces remained in control, their families were evacuated the next day. Government forces retook Tonle Bet on 15 May, and on 18 May the FANK announced that all enemy forces had withdrawn from Kampong Cham.

In the northeast on the night of 20-21 May, both Lomphat and Labansiek were attacked. Both attacks were repulsed, but the situation, especially at the former location, continued to deteriorate. On 23 May, the enemy burned a key bridge on the road between the two towns, virtually cutting off Lomphat from all but air communication and supply. Labansiek was unsuccessfully attacked again on 24 May. Khmer troops reinforced the position on 26 May, and the siege was lifted. Lomphat, however, was reported surrounded on 26 May with the airfield in enemy hands. The deteriorating situation forced the defenders to withdraw to Labansiek on 31 May, leaving only it and Bakiev as significant government-controlled towns in the northeast. Since these two locations denied the enemy use of critical portions of Routes 19 and 194, his pressure against them continued.

Svay Rieng, in extreme southeast Cambodia, and Prey Veng, about mid-way between Svay Rieng and Phnom Penh, were also attacked on 26 and 28 May, respectively, by enemy forces, although neither was captured. West of the Mekong, enemy forces were increasingly noted in the vicinity of the critical provincial capital of Kampong Thom on Route 6. By controlling

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that city, the enemy would be able to seek the active aid of the 150,000 Vietnamese in the food-rich Tonle Sap area and also cut the Route 6 supply line into the northwest. On 30 May, Kampong Thom was reported isolated from the capital, and the next day it was struck by enemy mortar fire. The communist activity around Kampong Thom and the growing number of reports of enemy activity west of the Mekong signaled a change in communist objectives. In addition to controlling the LOCs east of the Mekong, the communists sought to topple Lon Nol's government.

Establishment of Interdiction Campaign

In early May, the Secretary of Defense (SECDEF) asked the CJCS for a transition plan from the Cambodian level of effort to that necessary to fulfill the strategic objectives in SEA.^{3/} In response, the JCS submitted an outline plan for air interdiction operations in eastern Cambodia and on 16 May 1970 forwarded a copy to COMUSMACV for further planning. The plan was based on an intelligence estimate: (1) the enemy could be expected to attempt to consolidate his position in the northeastern provinces of Cambodia in preparation for renewed efforts in RVN; (2) closing of Cambodian ports would force the enemy to rely heavily on LOCs from Laos to maintain adequate logistical support of his forces in Cambodia and RVN; (3) increased use of Routes 13, 132, 14, 19, 194, 195, 1941, 1942, and the Mekong River and its tributaries; and (4) construction of new routes from Laos south into Cambodia could be anticipated.^{4/}

The mission stated in the plan was to maintain surveillance of enemy

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activities in Cambodia east of the Mekong River and to attack those activities as necessary to restrict enemy preparations for operations in Cambodia and RVN. The area of operations was defined as that portion in Cambodia east of a line 200 meters west of the Mekong River and north of Route 13 (Fig. 33). The tactical air operations outlined were viewed as an extension of the STEEL TIGER operations being conducted in Laos. The plan would use USAF forces then based in RVN and Thailand, and Navy aircraft from Task Force 77 for interdiction, air support of friendly troops in contact, and reconnaissance. ARC LIGHT strikes would be coordinated by COMUSMACV with approval for strikes requiring concurrence of the U.S. Embassy, Phnom Penh, and the Government of Cambodia (GOC). Restrictions for ARC LIGHT strikes were a minimum of one kilometer from the nearest noncombatants, not less than three kilometers from friendly combatants, and they were to avoid monuments, temples, and other cultural landmarks. Overall operating rules stated: (1) all targets and areas of operation had to be validated by the U.S. Ambassador, Phnom Penh, or his designated representative; (2) no operations could be conducted within the environs of Phnom Penh, unless specifically requested by the U.S. Embassy; (3) strikes had to be conducted under the control of an authorized FAC or using all-weather bombing systems, unless the U.S. Embassy authorized striking targets of opportunity; and (4) unless otherwise specified by the U.S. Embassy, fighter aircraft were authorized to strike any sites in Cambodia which fired at U.S. aircraft. The plan called for the U.S. Embassy, Phnom Penh, to coordinate operating areas, operating instructions, and target validations with the GOC.^{5/}

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After receiving the JCS plan, 7AF representatives joined the J-3 staff at MACV to draft a proposal for air interdiction operations in Cambodia. They noted there was neither an identified LOC network similar to that in STEEL TIGER nor a corresponding logistics flow. Consequently, initial air support requirements would focus largely on support of friendly ground force operations (FANK or ARVN) but would include some interdiction. Implementation of the air interdiction program would require concentrated surveillance of the waterways and roads in northeastern Cambodia.

The draft proposed that to minimize U.S. involvement, requests for ARC LIGHT strikes, air support for ground forces, and interdiction strikes should pass directly from the National Forces of Cambodia (FANK) through Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) channels to the TACC or MACV, as appropriate. Targets developed through all-source U.S. intelligence and recommendations for special operating areas would be passed to the VNAF for coordination with the FANK. Since the communications capability for fast coordination of air activities in special operating areas was not available, special Rules of Engagement (ROE) would have to be developed with GOC/FANK representatives.

The proposal stated that FAC procedures would be essentially the same as for in-country operations. The interdiction effort would be controlled exclusively by USAF FACs, while air support of ground forces could be controlled by USAF or VNAF FACs, dependent upon the source of air support. An exception to FAC procedures might be a requirement for

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a FANK observer to fly with a USAF FAC to overcome language difficulties. There would be a requirement to collocate a Tactical Air Control Party (TACP) and ALO with the FANK Combat Operations Center (COC). The VNAF was expected to be able to provide this support. Special Operating Areas were to be established with FANK concurrence and targets within these areas would be considered validated. Targets outside these areas would require case-by-case validation by the FANK. To implement the procedures, the draft proposed that the GVN arrange with the GOC for a coordination meeting between FANK, RVNAF, and MACV representatives in Saigon. COMUSMACV forwarded the proposal on 19 May 1970^{6/}.

The next day, the JCS informed COMUSMACV the proposal to provide air support for the FANK ground forces went beyond the authority anticipated for air operations in Cambodia. The VNAF could support the FANK within established guidelines, but any bonus effect for ground forces within Cambodia from U.S. air would have to come from interdiction operations. The JCS asked for a new proposal under these guidelines to include target identification procedures, methods to prevent noncombatant casualties, and the number of sorties anticipated.^{7/}

On 21 May 1970, COMUSMACV responded that air support for U.S. and ARVN forces through 30 June 1970 would continue as it was then being conducted and that air interdiction efforts would be directed against lucrative targets developed by reconnaissance flights. After 1 July 1970, air interdiction was to be conducted essentially as outlined on 19 May except for those portions of the proposal concerning close air support. The

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early establishment of special operating areas and close coordination with the FANK would be necessary to insure target identification procedures adequate to prevent noncombatant casualties. The use of FANK observers in USAF FAC aircraft to validate interdiction targets was considered the best procedure available. Some 52 interdiction targets had been identified and surveillance was continuing to determine which ones should be hit. Sortie levels through 1 July 1970 were estimated at approximately 100 per day, dropping after the withdrawal of U.S. ground forces to 50 per day.^{8/}

On 24 May 1970, JCS replied with an execute message. The plan outlined in the message incorporated proposals made by COMUSMACV within the guidelines provided by JCS. It identified the area of operations as that part of Cambodia bounded by a line 200 meters west of the Mekong River on the west, the Laotian Border on the north, the South Vietnamese Border on the east, and Route 13 on the south (Fig. 35). Authority was granted to execute the plan as soon as necessary coordination could be made with the FANK and RVNAF.^{9/}

Although the JCS plan conceived of the project as an extension of the STEEL TIGER operation, geography and past working relations with MACV dictated that operational direction was most logically a task for the TACC. The Deputy Director of the Tactical Air Control Center and his Chiefs of Plans and of Operations did the planning personally because of the close security imposed on the project.^{10/} Plans for implementing the operation were basically completed after receiving the execute message on 24 May 1970.

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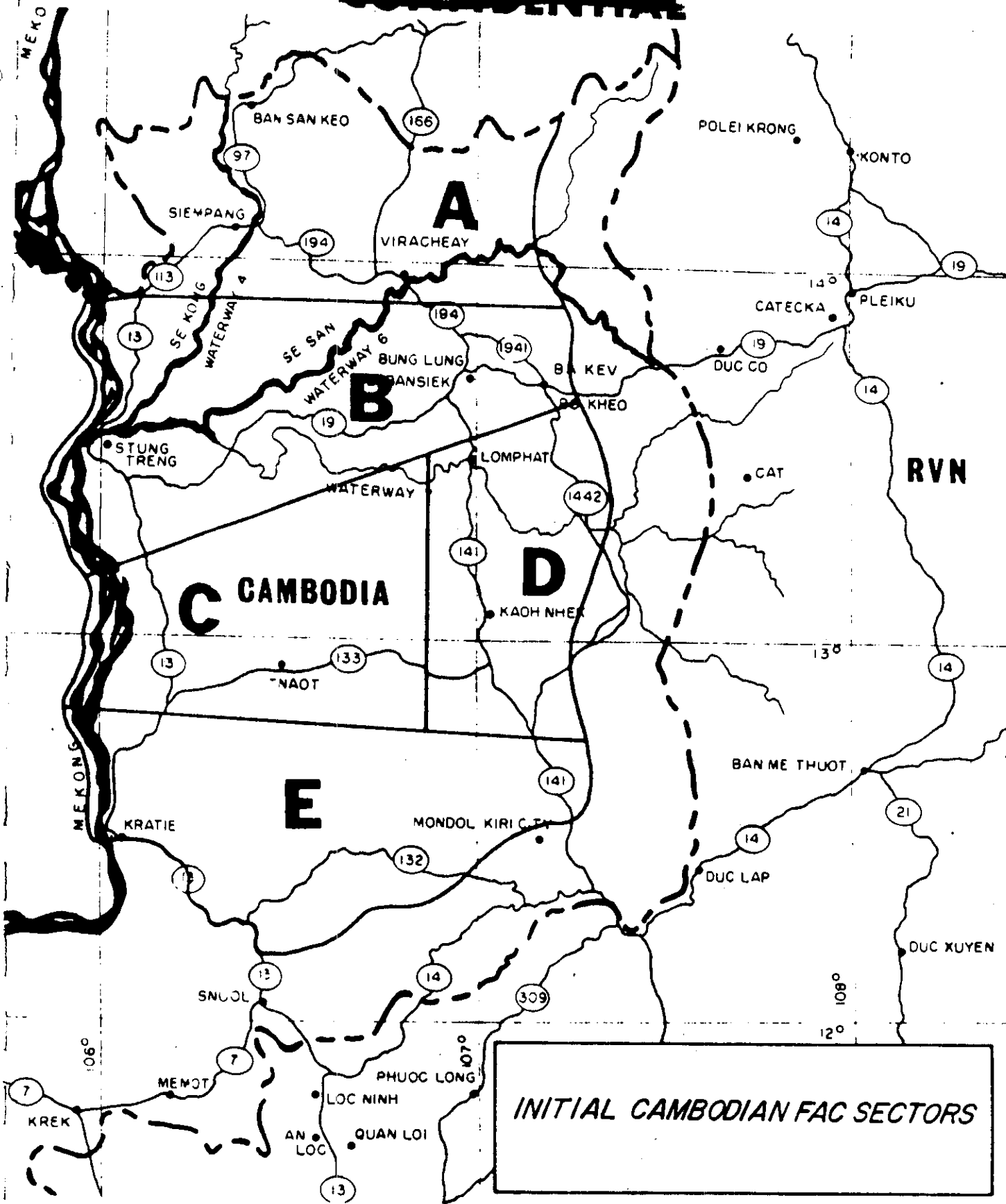


FIGURE 36

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Within four hours, a message went out from 7AF TACC tasking appropriate units to establish a special Cambodia LOC TACP at Pleiku AB. Manning for the TACP called for one ALO, seven FACs, five OV-10 aircraft, three radio operators, one Intelligence NCO, and one Administrative NCO. The ALO reported to the TACC for a detailed briefing and on 25 May, Eliot FACs started flying VR missions out of Pleiku AB.^{11/}

On 25 May, the 7AF TACC tasked the fast-mover Stormy FACs flying F-4 aircraft out of Da Nang AB to provide three sorties per day. On 27 May, the TACC directed the 3d Tactical Fighter Wing (TFW) at Bien Hoa AB to fly three A-37 FAC sorties daily under the call sign Typhoon. Stormy FACs began flying VR missions on 27 May and Typhoon FACs on the 29th. North-eastern Cambodia was divided into five sectors with Stormy flying in the north, Eliot in the central area, and Typhoon in the south (Fig. 36). All VR reports were submitted by Flash message to 7AF TACC and Intelligence. Hand-held photography was processed on highest priority, annotated, and forwarded by courier.^{12/} Provisions to assimilate the FAC reports with photo reconnaissance readouts and all-source intelligence were made on 21 May by establishing a Cambodian Task Force in the targeting division of 7AF Intelligence.^{13/}

With provisions made for generating targets and directing airstrikes, all that remained was to work out details of coordination procedures and Rules of Engagement. There was insufficient time to create a target validation system in Cambodia similar to the large system allowing the American Embassy in Laos to validate targets. COMUSMACV, therefore, took

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the position that successful and timely initiation and continuance of the operation necessitated a military validation system among the FANK, JGS/RVNAF, and MACV. These representatives met in Saigon on 29 May 1970, at which time a Memorandum of Agreement on Rules of Engagement in Cambodia was signed.^{14/}

FACs would control all airstrikes, except those validated and cleared for delivery by radar. Pilots were authorized to return ground fire immediately unless it came from an urban area, town, village, or hamlet; in these instances FANK validation of the target was required. If ground fire were not received, airstrikes against populated areas required the known presence of enemy forces or storage areas plus FANK validation of the target. If noncombatants were present, the strike was not to be conducted until the inhabitants had been warned by loudspeakers or leaflets to leave the area. Strikes were prohibited on 15 areas of cultural value to the Cambodian people, unless the target were requested and validated by FANK.

The ROE provided for the FANK to designate special operating areas in which there were no friendly forces, noncombatants, or populace. Prior approval was granted by the FANK to strike any target in these areas suspected to contain enemy forces, supplies, or installations. To prevent injury to the populace who might use or live along the waterways and overland routes traveled by the enemy, those certified for airstrikes were to be identified as Category A or B LOCs. Category A LOCs were those along which there were no friendly personnel, traffic, installations, or dwellings.

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INTERDICTION TARGET REQUEST NET

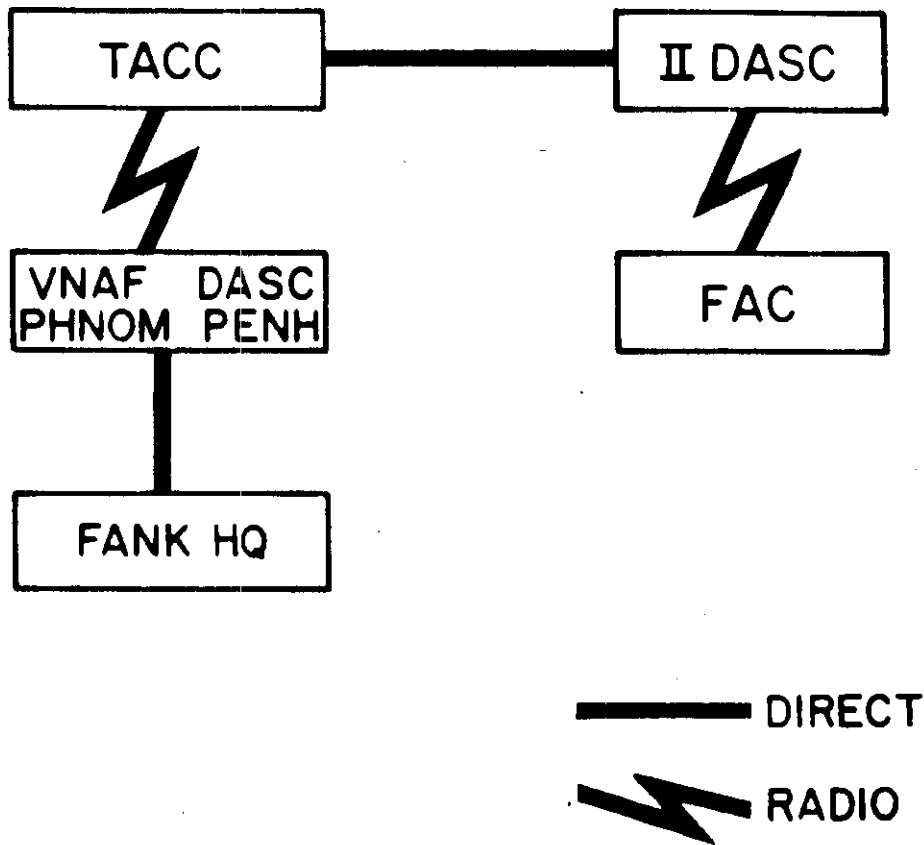


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Airstrikes within 1,000 meters of each side of the waterway or route were permitted against any suspected targets. Category B LOCs were those used by the enemy but along which there were friendly personnel, traffic, installations, or dwellings. Prior to initial airstrikes along Category B LOCs, psychological warfare aircraft had to drop leaflets or use loudspeakers to warn the populace not to travel at night and that during daylight hours any motor-powered boat or motor vehicle observed would be destroyed. After such warning, aircraft were allowed to strike any motor vehicle or moving watercraft at night and all motor-powered boats or vehicles during daylight hours. Category B strikes were restricted to 500 meters on each side of the LOC and to within 500 meters of any inhabited village or hamlet containing 15 or more structures. A LOC could contain both Category A and B segments divided by distinguishing geographic points.

The communications net for requesting and validating targets is depicted in Fig. 38. The initial link between Phnom Penh and 7AF was one 100 word-per-minute TWX with very circuitous routing. The situation was somewhat alleviated with the establishment of radio communications between the VNAF DASC at Phnom Penh and 7AF TACC in early June. All communications from the FANK were routed through the VNAF DASC to the TACC which in turn controlled the FAC and fighter aircraft through II DASC. Two English-speaking FANK liaison officers were located at 7AF TACC with authority to validate targets for immediate strike request from FACs operating without an on-board FANK observer. They maintained current intelligence of the location of friendly forces and noncombatants in the

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interdiction area and passed this information to the FANK observers at Pleiku. Three English-speaking FANK aerial observers flew with the FACs out of Pleiku. They too had authority to declare a potential target hostile or friendly, so that immediate airstrikes could be directed against fleeting targets.

The ROE provided for use of ARC LIGHT strikes in special operating areas and along Category A LOCs. All other ARC LIGHT targets required validation by the senior FANK liaison officer at the TACC. The implanting of IGLOO WHITE seismic and acoustic sensors was permitted anywhere in the interdiction area, and area-denial weapons could be used in special operating areas, along Category A LOCs, and in any other area validated for such munitions by the senior FANK liaison officer.^{15/}

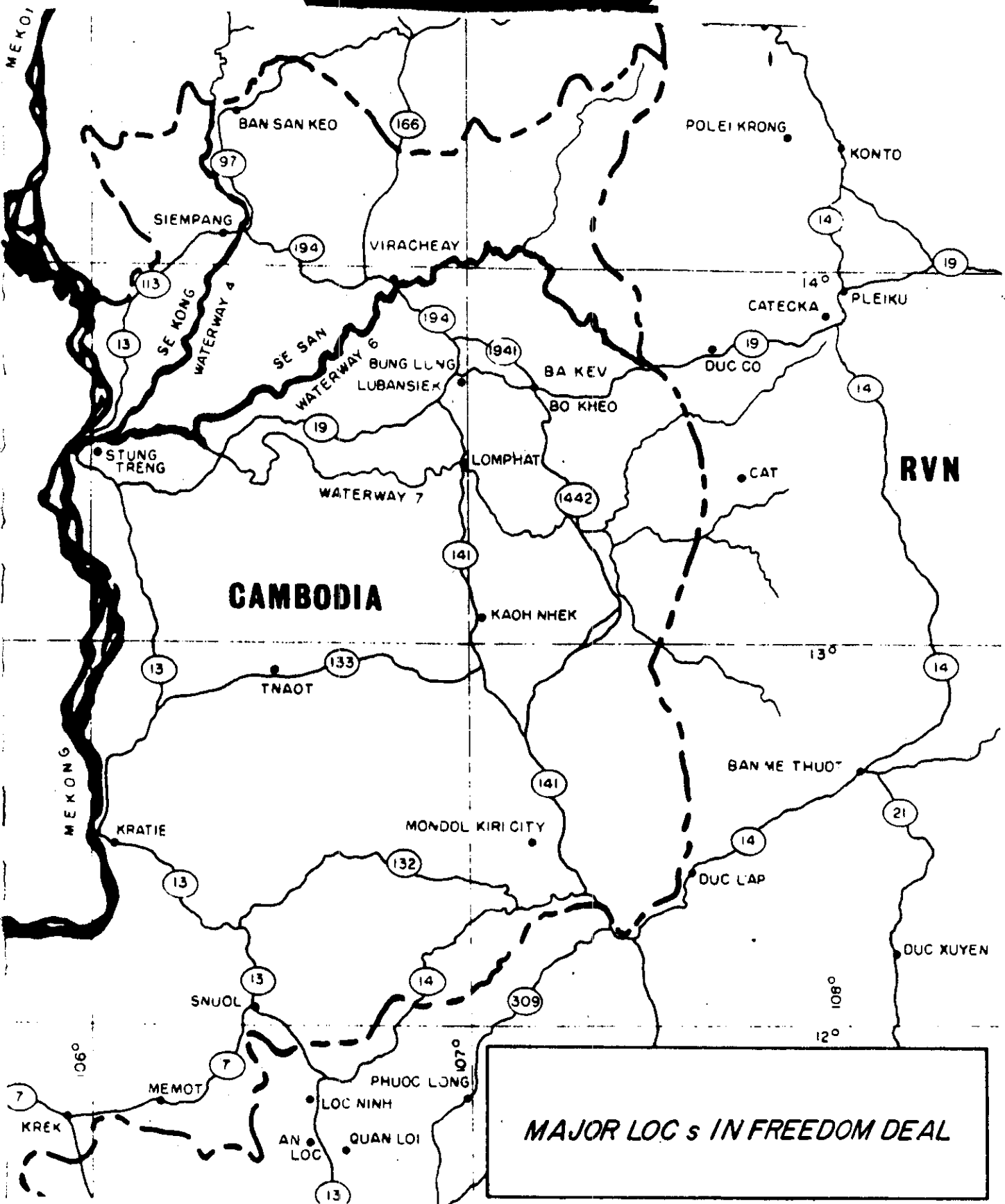
The signing of Rules of Engagement on 29 May 1970 completed planning for the operation.

Target Development

The initial assumption behind the establishment of an interdiction area in Cambodia was that there was a well-developed LOC system which could be interdicted in much the same way that operations in STEEL TIGER had been conducted during the previous several years. If this were the case, it was reasoned, then a mission of surveillance and attack would be appropriate. Information on Cambodia was scarce, however.^{16/} Although 7AF had been working on building a Cambodian target base since the beginning of operations in May, there had been little information on possible LOC status or targets beyond the 30-kilometer limit of American penetration.^{17/}

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MAJOR LOC s IN FREEDOM DEAL

FIGURE 41

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On 20 May, the JCS requested submission of a list of targets in Cambodia for interdiction operations.^{18/} By that date, the target development process for Cambodia, initially applied within the 30-kilometer area, had been expanded to include the Northeast, but no targets had yet been identified. Seventh Air Force intelligence personnel narrowed some 3,640 inputs to the target data base down to a possible 52 targets suitable for interdiction. Personnel from the TACC, with experience as fast-mover FACs, reviewed existing maps and photography of the Cambodian LOC network and picked 25 possible targets. The results of the two efforts were merged, and a consolidated list of 25 targets was dispatched to the JCS on 21 May by MACV.^{19/} These targets included 18 fords, bridges, and interdiction points (IDPs); three POL storage areas; one general storage area; one military complex; one strong point; and one fort complex.^{20/} It was generally agreed, however, that more photo, infrared (IR), ARDF, and visual reconnaissance was needed to produce a really satisfactory list of possible targets.^{21/}

Systematic surveillance of Cambodian LOCs had begun on 1 May 1970 and visual reconnaissance over other Cambodian areas on 9 May.^{22/} On 21 May, CINCPAC expanded the reconnaissance area by authorizing flights over Cambodia in an area bounded on the east by the RVN Border, on the north by the Laotian Border, on the west by a line one kilometer west of the Mekong River to its intersection with a line 60 kilometers from the RVN Border, thence south along the 60 kilometer line to the Gulf of Thailand (Fig. 39). Flights in the vicinity of Phnom Penh were prohibited.^{23/} The

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reconnaissance program was further broadened on 22 May when the JCS authorized a one-time GIANT NAIL (U-2) overflight of 43 airfields throughout Cambodia.^{24/}

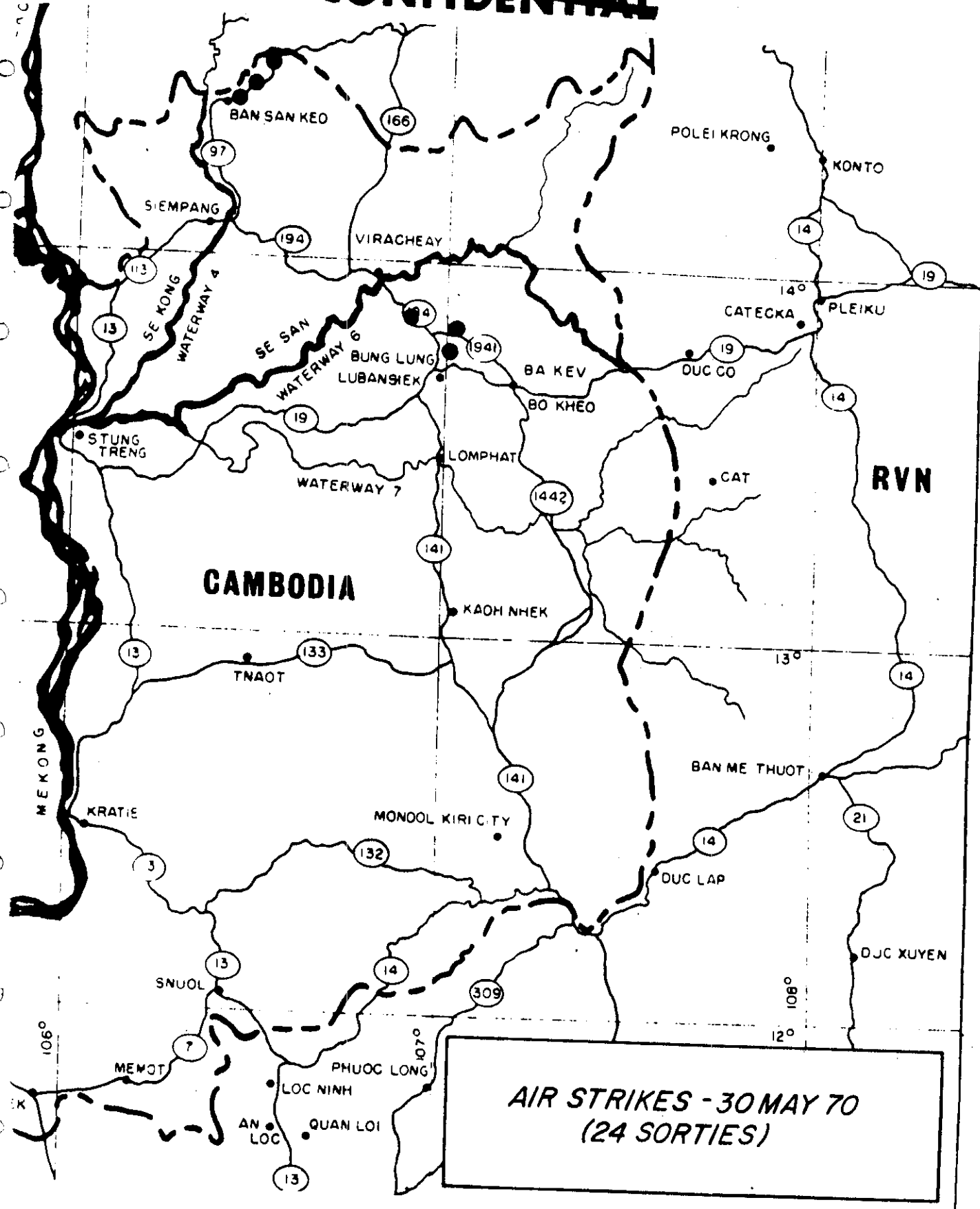
Absorption of the Cambodian workload by existing reconnaissance assets was done primarily by decreasing the number of sorties flown in RVN, although some increase in total sorties was also necessary. The average number of reconnaissance sorties flown in RVN per day during April was 22. This number dropped to 16 on 3 May, 10 on 6 May, and 8 on 8 May, while the number flown in Cambodia during the first 8 days of May rose from 0 on 1 May to 7 on 3 May, and 17 by 8 May. For the month, the average was 14 per day in RVN, 11 per day in Cambodia, and 2 per day that covered targets in RVN and Cambodia. The daily average of in-country reconnaissance sorties thus increased from 22 in April to 27 in May.

On 31 May, management of Cambodian reconnaissance was shifted to the out-country reconnaissance branch of Headquarters 7AF. This caused the number of reconnaissance sorties designated as out-country and flown by RVN based aircraft to increase from a daily average of 12 in May to a daily average of 18 in June. This increased sortie rate was met by assets previously flown for in-country missions. The Cambodian mission had no significant impact on the number of sorties flown in Laos since that number decreased in May due to poor weather. On 28 June, the reconnaissance force over Cambodia was augmented by two aircraft from Udorn RTAFB.^{25/}

EC-47 aircraft flew airborne radio direction finding orbits along

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**AIR STRIKES - 30 MAY 70
(24 SORTIES)**

FIGURE 42

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the Cambodian/RVN Border. This activity was extended into the Lomphat area on 7 May; and on 26 May, ARDF missions were authorized for the entire northeast area, adding still another source of targeting information.^{26/}

At the 29 May meeting, FANK officers validated for immediate strike three fords, three IDPs, and two bridges from the original list of 25 sent to the JCS.^{27/} Six of these targets were struck the following day by 24 fighter sorties (Fig. 42). Three of the targets were a bridge and two fords on Route 97, the only route leading from Attopeu, in southern Laos, into Cambodia. The other three were a ford and two IDPs on roads leading into the area of Lomphat, Bakiev, and Labansiek. Of the two not struck, one was a bridge found to already have one span down and the other an IDP found to be within 500 meters of a village.^{28/}

By 1 June 1970, targeting was rapidly falling into the mold that had been successfully built by experience in Laos. VR, photo reconnaissance, and other intelligence sources were being used to develop a computerized targeting list containing all pertinent information available on any particular target. In addition, previous strikes on the target and BDA were recorded. Since the interdiction effort was still relatively small, the object was to build a "shopping list" for the FANK in its search for lucrative targets, and to increase the capability for more extensive operations if they were needed.^{29/}

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Operation FREEDOM DEAL

The 24 strikes on 30 May marked the beginning of interdiction beyond the 30-kilometer limit originally established for U.S. operations in Cambodia. There were no further interdiction strikes until 4 June when, after extensive leaflet drops and loudspeaker warnings to the populace, 34 sorties struck 11 targets (Fig. 43). These strikes destroyed or damaged 10 watercraft, 40 structures, 9 bulldozers and roadgraders, started 8 secondary fires, and destroyed numerous POL drums.^{30/} Interdiction strikes were flown daily after 4 June. The interdiction operation was christened FREEDOM DEAL by CINCPAC on 6 June with the publication of the FREEDOM DEAL Basic Operations Order. The mission was: "To maintain surveillance of enemy activities in Cambodia, east of the Mekong River...and to attack those activities as necessary to protect U.S. forces in the Republic of Vietnam." The tasks to be accomplished included: (1) destruction of those facilities and materials that contributed to the support of aggression and insurgencies in RVN; (2) interdiction, harassment, disruption, and impedance of movement of the enemy and his materials through Cambodia into the RVN; and (3) denial to the enemy of the use of LOCs in eastern Cambodia to the maximum extent possible.^{31/}

The additional targets struck on 4 June had been validated by the FANK representatives when they returned to RVN on 2 June. They had actually come back with a rather permissive attitude toward interdiction and with a very large area validated for strikes at will. Acting on 7AF advice, however, they considerably reduced the special operating area and FANK

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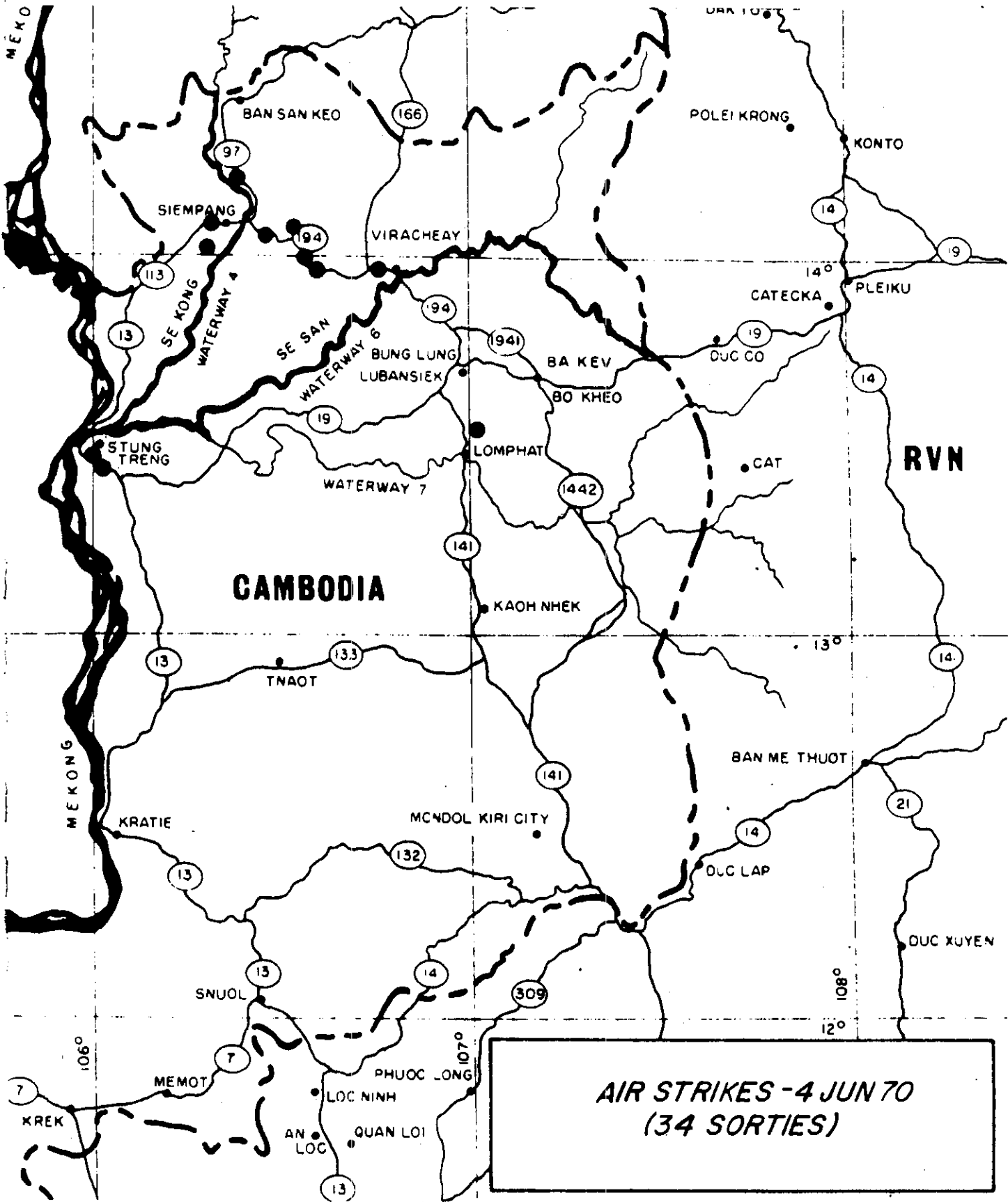


FIGURE 43

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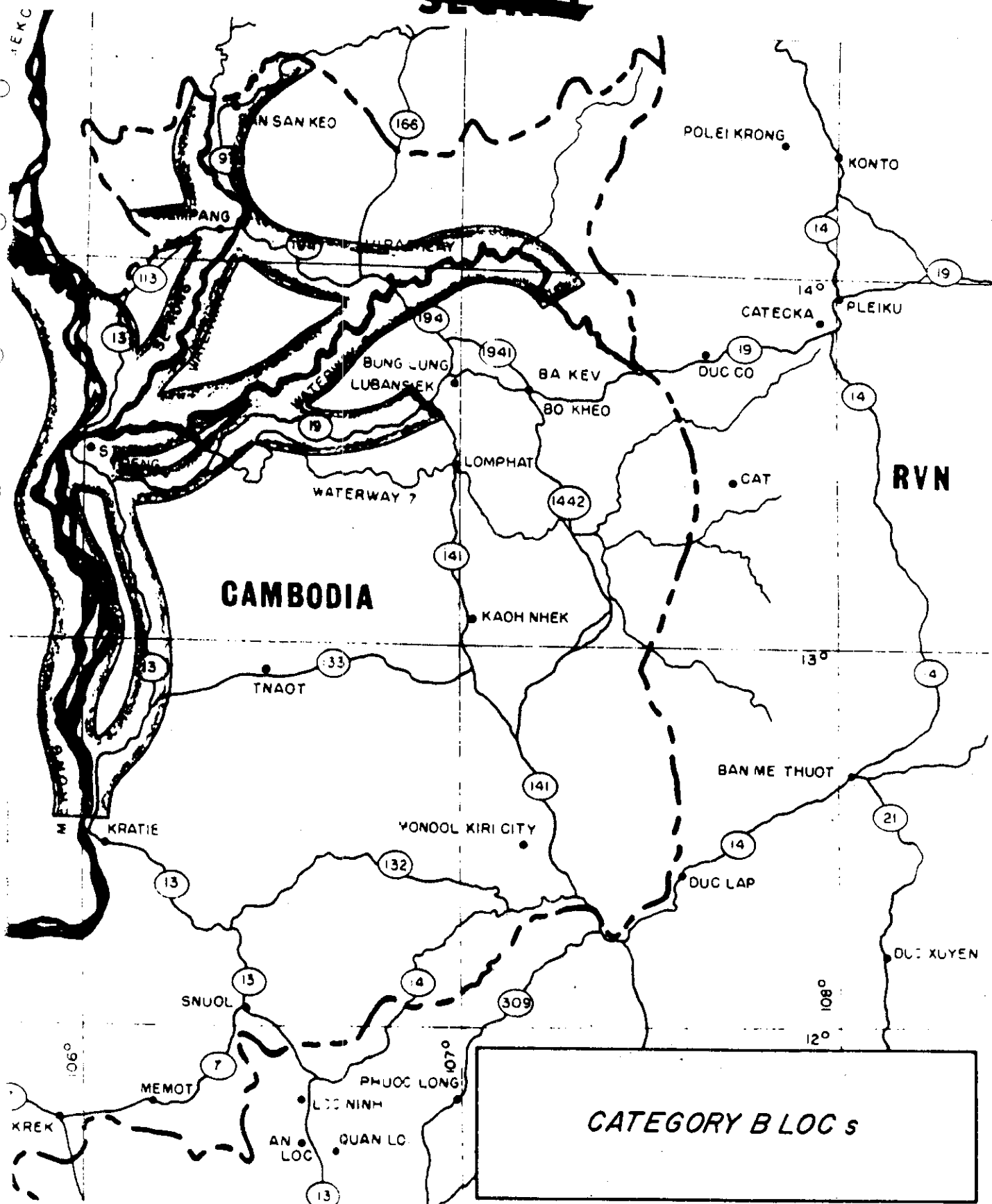


FIGURE 44

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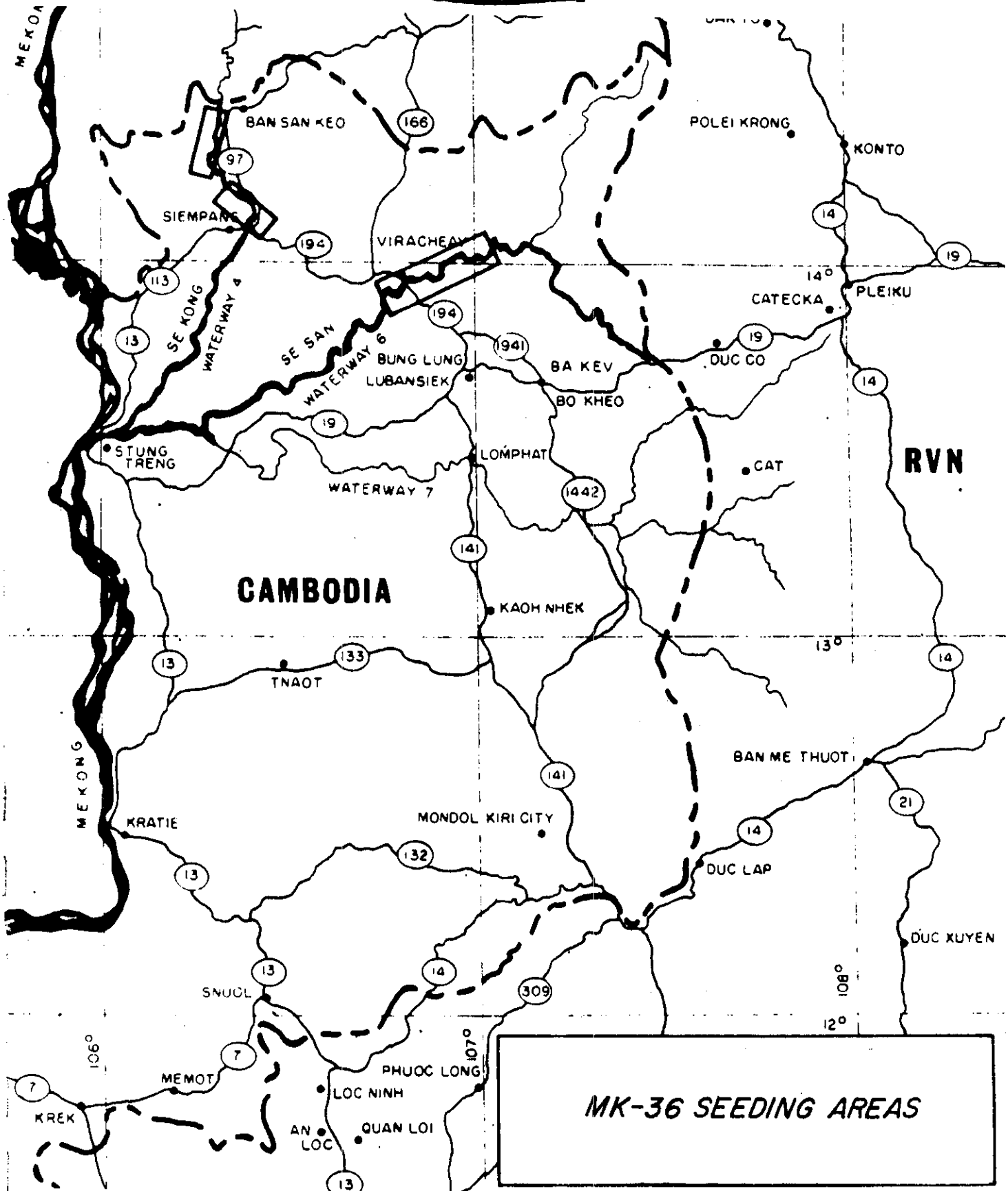


FIGURE 45

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representatives became more cautious in validating targets.^{32/} On 4 June, five Cambodian Air Force officers were posted to RVN stations. Two were located at the TACC at Tan Son Nhut to validate targets, while the other three were placed at Pleiku to fly with the FACs to acquire and validate targets. After 9 June, only the FANK officers at the TACC could validate targets. The three flying with the FACs were limited to target nomination.^{33/}

As provided in the ROE, a number of LOCs were designated as Category B. Those identified included portions of the Se Kong, Se San, and Mekong Rivers, Highway 13 from Kratie north to the Laos Border, and portions of Highways 194, 19, and 136 (Fig. 44).^{34/} On 11 June, the entire Mekong River from Kratie to the Laos Border was validated as the Category B LOC.^{35/}

By 15 June, more than 550 MK-36 mines had been placed in the Se Kong to inhibit water traffic into Cambodia from the Attopeu area of southern Laos. Mining was also carried out on the Se San to curtail supply shipment from the base areas in the northeast to the Mekong and on into the more populated areas of central Cambodia (Fig. 45).^{36/}

Increased air surveillance was initiated in southern Laos, particularly the area of Attopeu and southward, to determine the quantity of supplies being shipped into Cambodia from that area. The NVA had captured Attopeu on 29 April. They also made a concerted effort to gain control of the LOCs along the eastern edge of the Bolovens Plateau. These efforts were viewed by 7AF Intelligence as possible forerunners of an increased supply corridor development into Cambodia. In early May, photo coverage of the

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waterways and roads in the vicinity of Attapeu was increased to twice a week, and the number of IGL00 WHITE sensor strings in the area increased from one to four. Visual reconnaissance of the entire area increased to monitor truck movements and, after the use of Thai-based resources in Cambodia was authorized on 3 June 1970, an AC-123 patrolled the area in southern Laos and into Cambodia on a nightly basis. There was very little river or vehicular traffic observed.^{37/} On 8 June, COMUSMACV requested authority from the JCS to expand the tactical reconnaissance area to include all of Cambodia on a recurring basis.^{38/} This authority was granted on 9 June with the restriction that flights would not be conducted in the vicinity of Phnom Penh, that those outside the interdiction area would be unarmed, and that flak suppression would not be employed.^{39/} To cover the expanded area, tactical reconnaissance missions increased from 315 sorties in May to 324 sorties during the first 20 days in June with 424 reconnaissance objectives completed.^{40/}

Both preplanned and immediate attack sorties were allocated to the interdiction campaign. During the period 1-20 June, prior to expansion of the interdiction area, 414 preplanned and 224 immediate sorties were flown into the FREEDOM DEAL area (Fig. 46). About 320 were flown by F-4s, 246 by F-100s, 50 by A-37s, and 12 by A-1s.^{41/} All but 21 of the strikes came from in-country resources. Cumulative BDA for FREEDOM DEAL through 20 June included 94 vehicles, 112 watercraft, 446 military structures, and five bridges destroyed or damaged.^{42/} The area of concentration of the initial interdiction strikes was the LOCs from Stung Treng north to

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