

HEADQUARTERS, 1ST BATTALION, 12TH INFANTRY
4TH INFANTRY DIVISION
APO San Francisco 96262

SUBJECT: RECAPITULATION OF BATTALION OPERATIONS
FROM 23 MAY 1969 THROUGH 27 MAY 1969

2 June 1969

On the 22nd and 23rd of May 1969, the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry was airlifted from LZ Mile High at coordinates ZA 936930 to LZ Nicole, coordinates ZA 173784, and was assigned the following area of operation (AO). Coordinates ZA 107825 - 180840 - 210810 - 210760 - 100750.

May intelligence reports strongly indicated that the enemy had been blocked from infiltrating further to the east and had massed his troops just north of the Kontum - Pleiku provincial border. There was a heavy concentration of intelligence reports in the western and southwestern portion of the 1st Battalion, 12th Infantry's area of operation.

The terrain throughout the area of operation is rolling hills to flatlands, vegetation in some areas is very thick with elephant grass 2-4 feet high and thick vines. There are some open areas that were previously under cultivation. The trees had single and double canopy, with no triple canopy. Visibility was good to limited, depending on the area.

On 23 May 1969, the battalion received word that they would be moving into a new area. Weather factors prevented them moving before 1400 hours. They moved at 1400 hours. B Company who had been under operational control, and the 2nd of the 35th were directed to move overland from LZ Carmen to LZ Nicole. C Company was airlifted from LZ Dot to LZ Bass, on a direct exchange basis, with C Company 3rd of the 8th, who had closed at LZ Bass by convey

D Company was airlifted from LZ Shoshone to LZ Nicole on a direct exchange from D Company, 3rd of the 8th. Recon platoon was partially airlifted on 23 May 1969 with a direct exchange from Recon Platoon, 3rd of the 8th. C Company convoyed from LZ Bass to Mary Lou and remained there for the night. The battalion began its initial operation in this area of operation on 24 May 1969, with three companies abreast: Companies A, B, and C. From north to south moving from the eastern border of the area of operations toward the western border.

From the onset of this operation beginning 24 May 1969 through 27 May 1969, there were numerous findings and sightings that indicated the enemy was in the area of operations. Bunker complexes were found throughout the AO as the mission progressed. Most of these bunkers had been recently used (within the past 24-48 hours). Intelligence reports continued to plot in the west southwest portion of the area of operations.

The weather during the period 24 May 1969 through 27 May 1969 included early morning ground fog, skys overcast to broken and scattered, rain showers and thunderstorms in late afternoon and evenings. Visibility was 3-6 miles, winds variable, 15-25 knots.

On 24 May 1969, weather again prevented air movement by the battalion until approximately 1330 hours, at which time the remainder of the recon platoon was moved to LZ Bass. Tactical Operations Center equipment was airlifted from LZ Bass to LZ Nicole. A Company was airlifted from LZ Mile High to LZ Nicole. Upon arrival of the battalion elements into LZ Nicole, Companies A, B, and C moved out to night logger's positions in preparation for starting a battalion operation.

On 25 May 1969, C Company moved around to the south of a village with instructions to go and by-pass the village as it was connected with another operation. Companies A and B moved to objectives 1 and 2 respectively. On the evening of the 25th, Companies B and C formed a cordon around the village, east of objective 3; with 2nd platoon of company D enclosing the last part of the cordon when mercenaries entered the area. Intelligence information proved inaccurate as the suspected Viet Cong rendezvous was farther south. At the first sign of daylight on 26 May 1969 a search of the area began. The units then moved south as far as the area of operations would permit, trying to encircle the Viet Cong. The results were one captured Viet Cong, from this cordon. B Company returned into their sector to continue operations and moved to objectives 5 and 8. A Company continued their operations in moving to objective 7. C Company moved to objective 6.

On the morning of 27 May 1969, continued moving in their area of operations and at 1130 hours, Company C initiated contact with what was believed to be seven NVA armed with small arms and automatic weapons. This contact progressed into a much larger contact with the NVA employing small arms, automatic weapons, and B-40 rockets. Shortly after initial contact had been made and several friendly casualties had been taken, choppers had flown in to remove the wounded and the LZ appeared to be safe. Lieutenant Colonel Carter knowing that the Company C Commander had been wounded, had flown in. The First Sergeant, and the Assistant S-3 who was prepared to take over command of Company C if necessary, had been awaiting movement from the fire control base, and were finally flown into the area of contact about 1630 hours. At 1700 hours, Lieutenant Colonel Carter flew into a secured LZ to talk with

the Company C Commander, and to insure him that if necessary he would be evacuated. As Lieutenant Colonel Carter was moving into the area, the enemy re-instituted contact. Lieutenant Colonel Carter suffered a wound to his right leg and the personnel of Company C tried to put him into a position of relative safety when a sniper round struck Lieutenant Colonel Carter in the chest killing him instantly.

Contact with the enemy was broken at 1930 hours, 27 May 1969. Enemy casualties numbered: 40 NVA Killed in action.

On 28 May 1969, the first dustoff ship took back 6 friendly casualties that had been wounded in action at 0130 hours. At 0145 hours, the second dustoff ship carried back 9 wounded in action, and at 0150 hours 2 of the wounded in action were declared killed in action. At 0220 hours the third dustoff ship took back 7 casualties who had been wounded in action.

27 May Time Sequence

- 1105: Company "C" was clover leafing the area around ZA 125758, and found a trail 1' wide running north to south, recent use.
- 1130: Company "C" made contact at grid ZA 125767 with 7 NVA believed one was killed. Company "C" initiated the contact, neg friendly casualties.
- 1155: Company "C" receiving B-40 and small arms fire, believe to have 2 friendly WIA
- 1350: No confirmed casualties report yet, last word 10 WIA, 1 KIA.
- 1355: Company "B" spotted dinks in the wood line at grid ZA 124774.
- 1420: One of Company "C" platoons to the east is still receiving small arms fire.
- 1540: Company "C" has a secure LZ at this time.
- 1550: We had 5 people dusted off at this time.
- 1555: Company "C" called back to report back 3 KIA's and 29 WIA's at this time.
- 1611: Bde command ship took out 4 WIA's.
- 1635: Bde command ship took Sgt Graves to Mary Lou.
- 1650: Company "B" killed one NVA soldier that walked out into the open.
- 1735: Company "B" received 2 rounds of 82mm. Neg casualties.
- 1810: Received a call that Lt, Col. Carter (81) was killed.
- 1825: Started moving Company "B" down to link up with Company "C".
- 1850: Company "C" is receiving small arms and B-40 fire.
- 1908: Check fired red leg, putting spads to work at this time.
- 1910: Spooky 21 on station.
- 1910: Company "C" still receiving small arms and B-40 fire.
- 2130: Company "C" reports that LT. Col. Carter was in the Co. CP at the time he was hit, he was hit with sniper fire in the neck, shoulder, and knee.
- 0130: First Dustoff ship took 6 WIA's.
- 0145: Second Dustoff ship took 9 WIA's.
- 0150: 2 of the WIA's are now KIA's.