

Series: AWM95
Australian Army commanders' diaries
Royal Australian Armoured Corps

Item number: 2/5/18

**Item: B Squadron 3 Cavalry
Regiment**

Narrative, Annexes

1-30 September 1970

PART 1

COVERING LETTER

Reference No.....

To: OIC, Military History Section, AHQ.

1. I enclose Commanders Diary (AF C 2118) (Adapted) as indicated at Part 2.

2. Please return receipt below.

Received
31/8/72

(Signature)

[Handwritten Signature] 2H

Appointment

LO/10
(OC Unit or senior staff officer)

PART 2

AF C 2119 (Adapted)
Revised Jun, 1965

SECRET

ORIGINAL
~~DUPLICATE~~

Strike out where
not applicable

COMMANDERS DIARY

OF

Unit or Formation *B Squadron The Third Cavalry Regiment*

From *1 Sep 70*

To *30 Sep 70*

INDEX

Narrative (AF C 2118)

ANNEXES

- * A Duty officer's log
- * B Messages connected with log
- C Operation orders and instructions issued
- D Operation orders and instructions received
- * E Sitreps issued
- F Orders of battle and location reports issued
- G Intelligence reports and summaries issued; appreciations made
- H Administrative orders and instructions issued
- I Administrative orders and instructions received
- J Administrative reports and bulletins; ammunition returns; field strength returns
- * K Standing orders issued
- L Commander's policy and demi-official letters
- M Action reports (if required)
- N Other papers, eg, maps and diagrams, air photos, reports from sub units
- O Periodical summaries of operations
- Z Top Secret Supplementary Diary

Enclosure Numbers

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† NIL
† RETAINED
† Despatched to

on.....

* Only to be included during operations.
† Cross out whichever is not applicable.

COMMANDERS DIARIES INSTRUCTIONS

AIM

1. The aim of a Commanders Diary is to provide data on which to base future improvements in Army training, equipment, organization and administration, and to furnish historians with a record of the activities of units and formations in operational and non-operational periods in peace and in war.

GENERAL

2. Entries are to be made daily on AF C 2118 (Adapted) each entry being initialled by the officer detailed to keep it.

3. Commanders Diaries will conform with the rules for drafting orders given in "Staff Duties (Australia)", Chapter 2, Section 12.

RESPONSIBILITY

During Non-operational Periods

4. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled by commanders of all formations.

During Operational Periods (1)

5. A Commanders Diary is to be compiled in duplicate by:
- a. Commanders of all formations.
 - b. Each branch of the staff at formation headquarters commanded by a brigadier or above.
 - c. Heads of services not below the rank of lieutenant colonel.
 - d. Personal staffs and officers holding special appointments.
 - e. Unit commanders.
 - f. Commanders of a detachment of a unit when so ordered.

COMPILATION

6. Both original and duplicate copies are to consist of:
- a. Cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted).
 - b. Index as printed on cover.
 - c. Narrative (AF C 2118) (Adapted).
 - d. Annexes as shown in the Index.

7. All details of the unit or formation (if a detachment is concerned, the name of the parent unit), period covered and enclosure numbers of the annexes are to be shown on the cover. If there has been a change of command since the last report, the date of assumption by the new commanding officer is to be included.

8. The annexes are to be assembled in the groups shown on the cover. If there are no enclosures for an annex NIL will be entered on the cover. If additional annexes are convenient for a particular headquarters, starting at B.

for operations form Annex "Z", "TOP SECRET" be the document. It is to be prepared and disposed of as

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s as well as map references), establishment, equipment

orders given.
e day's fighting, including company movements.
mander with regard to equipment, tactics, organization

ential importance.
officers, men and equipment.
ment captured.
mployed in the time not accounted for. The type of

and to save work as much information as possible is to
ments issued and received, routine returns, etc. All
and the time of receipt or despatch is to be given.

ne annexes, but need not give a precis of any of them.

(continued on back cover)

CONFIDENTIAL **DISPOSAL** DIARIES

13. **Original Commander's Diary.** This is to be forwarded monthly, unless otherwise ordered, by the seventh day of the succeeding month direct to AHQ.

14. **Duplicate Commander's Diary.** This must be clearly marked as a duplicate. It is to be sent separately from the original to AHQ one month after the original has been despatched but not before the former has been acknowledged.

15. When overseas, both copies of diaries are to be sent through the Army Records organization in the overseas theatre but at different times.

16. **TOP SECRET Supplementary Diaries.**

a. The documents referred to in Paragraph 9 together with a list of them made out on AF C 2118 (Adapted) must be placed in separate cover (AF C 2119) (Adapted). All details must be filled in and the cover clearly marked in red: "ANNEX Z — OFFICER ONLY". It may be convenient to group the papers by appendices.

b. Supplementary diaries must be forwarded under the normal rules for TOP SECRET correspondence, to AHQ. The inner envelope must be plainly marked:

TOP SECRET
ANNEX Z to

Commanders Diary of.....(Formation or Unit)

From.....to.....(Dates)

c. The duplicate supplementary diaries must be despatched as shown in Paragraph 14 as soon as receipt of the original has been acknowledged.

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970 REFERENCE MAP PHUOC THY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
KYLIE	1 Sep	- 86.	Opcom 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II . II.
AO DROVER	"	- 30. 83.	Opcom 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II . II.
JILL	"	- 33. 96. 85A. 98.	Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	- 2. 82.	Opcom 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II . II.
AO SUSAN	"	- 1. 13. 81. 98A. 98.	MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
YS 787695	"	1230	MASSEY Force located and destroyed two gardens linked by a track and protective bunkers. Tended two days ago, they were destroyed by fire.
KYLIE	2 Sep	- 86.	Opcom 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	"	- 3. 83. 98.	Opcom 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
JILL	"	- 33. 85A.	Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	- 2. 82.	Opcom 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.

HJL

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (lapped)
Revised Jun 1966

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP DHLIOC TLY

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO SLISAN	1 Sep	-	1.13.81.98A. OA. MASSEY FORCE. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
YS 787695	"	1230	MASSEY Force located and destroyed two garden areas linked by a track and two protective bunkers. In good condition and last tended two days ago, the gardens were destroyed by fire.
KYLIE	2 Sep	-	84. Opion 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO DREWER	"	-	3(-). 83. 98. Opion 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. Opion 17 Constr. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	-	2. 82. Opion 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO SLISAN	"	-	1. 13. 81. 98A. OA. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
YS 235779	-	1000	9G escorted by 4 TP A Sqdn 1 Anna Regt to NWI DAT.
YS 457657	"	2130	11 reacted to an ARU patrol. Sweep conducted by 11 revealed <i>[Signature]</i> 2LT

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

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MONTH AND YEAR September 1970 REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
YS 457657	2 Sep	2130	led nothing. It remained with the patrol overnight.
YS 791711	"	1000	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a paddy, in good condition and last used 56 hours prior to destruction.
KYLIE	3 Sep	-	84. Opion 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	"	-	3(-). 83. Opion 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opion 17 Constr. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	-	2(-). 82. Opion 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO SLISAN	"	-	1. 13. 81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
YS 826706	"	1718	MASSEY Force located and destroyed paddy and gardens tended only 12 hours ago.
YS 8270	"	1830	MASSEY Force located 10 acres of gardens - to be destroyed.

[Signature] 2Lt

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (revised)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR September 1970 REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
KYLIE	4 Sep	- 84.	Opcon 8 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	"	- 36(.83.	Opcon 2 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
JILL	"	- 33.85A.98B.	Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	- 26(.82.	Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	"	- 1.13.81. 0A.98A.	MASSEY FENCE. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
KYLIE	5 Sep	- 84.	Opcon 8 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	"	- 36(.82.	Opcon 2 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
JILL	"	- 33.98B.85A.	Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	- 26(.82.	Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLUNG CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	"	- 1.13.81. 0A.98A.	MASSEY FENCE. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
YS 8270707	"	1846	D+E pl located a bunker system containing three bunkers with 18" OHP. Qty of miscellaneous equipment recovered. System to be destroyed.

[Signature]

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

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MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970 REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO DROVER	5 Sep	-	3(-). Opcon 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
JILL	--	-	33.98B.85A. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	--	-	2(-).82 CANCELLED. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	--	-	1.13.81. 0A.98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
KYLIE	6 Sep	-	84. Opcon 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	--	-	3(-). Opcon 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
JILL	--	-	33.98B.85A. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	--	-	2(-).82. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	--	-	1.13.81. 0A.98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
778705	--	1410	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a system of wire bunkers
			and a well, all in good condition and last used

HJ Coates

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
Continuing	6 Sep	1410	24-36 hours earlier, a small quantity of miscellaneous items was recovered, including documents suggesting liaison between XUYEN MOC District, Binh Cham Production Unit and a rear services unit (possibly 84 RSG or BA LONG).
780696	6 Sep	1200	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a system of 15 bunkers and 12 huts, all in good condition, covering an area 200 x 300 metres. Recovered were a small quantity of documents and some wooden ink stamps.
KYLIE	7 Sep	-	84. Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AD DROVER	--	-	3(-). Opcon 2 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
JILL	--	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO CARMEN	7 Sep	-	2(-). 82. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	--	-	1. 13. 81. 4A. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
785783	--	1045	MASSEY Force located and destroyed five bunkers and a lean-to. Small quantity of insignificant, miscellaneous items were recovered.
786732	--	1145	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a well. Also found were eight TARAY tins, six containing plastic explosive and the remaining two containing a smaller quantity. These items were also destroyed.
KYLIE	8 Sep	-	84. Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	--	-	3(-). 83. Opcon 2 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.

HJ Coates
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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TIN

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
JILL	8 Sep	-	33. 85A. 98A. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	-	2(-). 82. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	"	-	1.13.81. QA . 98B. Opcon MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
KYLIE	9 Sep	-	84. Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AO DROVER	"	-	3(-). 83. Opcon 2 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
JILL	"	-	33. 98A. 85A. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO CARMEN	"	-	2(-). 82. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AO SUSAN	"	-	1.13.81. QA . 98A. Opcon MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
AO SUSAN YS 802708	1 "	1320	An SAS patrol ambushing the site of NIP BEVERLY contacted three VC, killing two by body count and capturing an M1 carbine and a Garama rifle.
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B SQN 3 CAV REGT
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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
KYLIE	10 Sep	0930	86 relieves 84. Comes under opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AD DRIVER	"	-	3(-). 83. Opcon 2 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
JILL	"	-	33. 98B. 85A. Opcon 17 Comets. LCT.
AD CARMEN	"	-	2(-). 84 . Opcon 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG II.
AD SUSAN	"	-	1.13. 81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
407715	"	0900	12. Opcon 3 Tp - assist with a company lift of 2RAR back to NUI DAT.
828712	"	0800	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a 3/2 acre, L-shaped garden area, last used about three weeks ago.
798650	"	1011	Capt PARKER, on board his DS POSSUM, located two open motor boats well outside civilian access area. RAAF LFT

H.J. Coates

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Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
Continuing	10 Sep	1011	and Provost were reacted by 1 ATF, resulting in an ARVN deserter and a draft deager being detained.
838745	"	1250	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a bunker measuring 6' x 5' x 5' with 18" OHP and a hut on top of the OHP. Bunker contained a 5" naval shell and a 1000 lb bomb with part of the explosive removed.
838721	"	1416	MASSEY Force contacted two suspected main force VC who approached from the SOUTH and withdrew rapidly NORTH on contact. Identification made from jungle-green type clothing.
KYLIE	11 Sep	-	84. Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.

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Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
KYLIE	11 Sep	-	86. Opcom 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
NUI DAT	"	-	3(-). 83. In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	31. In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
JILL	--	-	33. 98B. 85A. Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
AD NAOMI	--	-	2(-). 82. Opcom 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
AD SUSAN	--	-	1.13.81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
838745	--	1400	MASSEY Force located a single bunker last used about two weeks ago. Bunker in good condition and accessible from two tracks. Hut on top of bunker contained small quantity of miscellaneous items. System to be demolished tomorrow by explosives.

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Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
840 744	11 Sep	1400	MASSEY Force located a six month old grave and a water hole.
KYLIE	12 Sep	- 86.	Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
NUH DAT	"	- 3(-).83.	In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	- 31.	In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
JILL	"	- 33.98B.85A.	Opcon 17 Constr. LCT.
HORSESHOE	"	- 2(-).82.	Opcon 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
AO SUSAN	"	- 1.13.81. 0A.98A.	MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
838 745.	"	0800	MASSEY Force destroyed a dry rice field measuring 250 metres by 150 metres.
KYLIE	13 Sep	- 86	Opcon 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.

[Signature]

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
NUI DAT	13 Sep	-	3(-). 83. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	31. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Constr. LCT.
HORSESHOE	"	-	2. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
AD SUSAN	"	-	1. 13. 81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
HOA LONG	"	1730	3(-). 83. Ambushing in sp 8 RAR.
826745	"	1200	MASSEY Force located a vegetable garden measuring 30 metres by 50 metres with entry/exit points unmining in all directions. Estimated to be one year old and to have last been used about two weeks ago, the garden was destroyed by the simple expedient of driving tanks over it.
			<i>HJ Coates</i>

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
820 743	13 Sep	1500	MASSEY Force located a second vegetable garden measuring 400 metres by 300 metres and containing four fighting pits facing in all directions. Considered to have last been used a week ago, the system is scheduled for destruction tomorrow by the normal explosive means. One garden was recovered from the system.
NLI DAT	14 Sep	-	3(-). 83. In sp SRAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	31. In sp SRAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Constr. LCT.
HORSESHOE	"	-	2. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
AO SUSAN	"	-	1. 13. 81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
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Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
845 745	15 Sep	1000	very poor condition and was destroyed by APCs driving over it.
NLI DAT	"	1123	The sentry in the watchtower sighted and reported nine Vietnamese persons entering the wire and heading towards the rubbish pit. A combined APC/SAS/RAAF force finally located and detained eight of the original nine, and Provost handed them over to National Police at BARIA. Having gained access to this base by cutting the defensive wire, they were released by the Vietnamese authorities as "innocent civilians".
			<i>[Signature]</i>

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC THY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AD SUSAN	16 Sep	-	1.13.81. GA. 98A. MASSEY Force. OP MASSEY HARRIS.
HORSESHOE	"	-	12. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn. MCT.
AD NAOMI	"	-	2. Opcon 7 RAR. OP CUNG CUNG III.
NLI DAT	"	-	3(E).32.83. In sp 8 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	31. In sp 8 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33.85A.98B. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
NLI DAT	"	1330	Maj Gen CAPE, MGO, visited the Squadron for half an hour with Maj Gen FRAZER, COMAFV.
CATHERINE	"	0800	Capt R.K. HILL, MC, assumed command of MASSEY Force.
YS 827758	"	1430	MASSEY Force located a garden measuring 300 metres by 300 metres which included a bunker containing:
			<i>[Signature]</i>

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
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Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
YS 827758	16 Sep	1430	a 1000 lb bomb, a CBU, a 5" naval shell without explosive, 1000 rds of 7.62mm, fishing gear and a small quantity of insignificant documents.
AO SUSAN	17 Sep	-	1.13.81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
HORSESHOE	"	-	12. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn. MCT.
AO NAOMI	"	-	2. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
NUI DAT	"	-	3(-). 31. 83. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	32. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
YS 855772	"	0830	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a garden and pumpkin patch measuring 60 metres by 40 metres.

[Signature]
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AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
YS 845767	17 Sep	0900	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a rice garden measuring 200 metres by 200 metres and in very good condition.
AO SUSAN	18 Sep	-	1.13.81. 8A. 98B. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
HORSESHOE	"	-	12. Opcom 1 Fd Sqn. MCT.
AO NAMMI	"	-	2. Opcom 7 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
NLI DAT	"	-	30. 83. In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	32. In sp 8 RAR. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33. 83A. 98B. Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
VLING TALI	"	0730	" Seer - single days nest in vein of R+C.
YS 826702	17	1300	Late report. MASSEY Force located and destroyed a five acre rice garden, last tended one week ago.

H.J. Coates

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REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO SUSAN	19 Sep	-	1.13.81. 98A. 98B. MASSEY Force. Op MASSEY HARRIS.
MORSESHOE	"	-	12. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn. MCT.
AO NAOMI	"	-	2. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
NUI DAT	"	-	30. 85. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
GAIL	"	-	32. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98A. Opcon 17 Consh. LCT.
YS 830760	"	0900	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a ten acre garden.
YS 828758	"	1500	MASSEY Force located and destroyed a bunker and an 80 foot long tunnel.
AO AO SUSAN	20 Sep	-	1.13.81. 98A. MASSEY Force. Operation MASSEY HARRIS.
AO NAOMI	"	-	2.82. Opcon 7 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
NUI DAT	"	-	30. 83. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.

[Signature]
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MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHLIOC TWY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
GAIL	20 Sep	- 32	In sp SRAR. Op CLING CHLING III.
JILL	"	- 33. 85A. 98B.	Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
YS 741779	"	0810	MASSEY Force located and destroyed an installation compris- ing two bunkers, with 18" OHP and a hut. In excellent condi- tion and used about two days earlier.
YS 736777	"	-	MASSEY Force located and destroyed four gardens.
YS 536559	19 Sep	1915	21A detonated an M16 mine without sustaining any damage or casualties.
YS 515625	20 Sep	1630	21B detonated an M16 mine without sustaining any damage or casualties.
			<i>H.J. Coates</i>

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TRY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO NAOMI	21 Sep	- 2.82.	Opcon 7 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 3(-).32.83.	Opcon 2 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 12.	Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
Route 44.	"	- 30/B. 31.	In sp 302 RF Bn. Route clearance.
JILL	"	- 33.85A. 98B.	Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO NAOMI	22 Sep	- 2.8.	Opcon 7 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 3(-).32.83.	Opcon 2 RAR. OP CUNG CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 12.	Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt. Op CUNG CHUNG III.
Route 44	"	- 30/B. 31.	In sp 302 RF Bn. Route clearance.
JILL	"	- 33.85A. 98B.	Opcon LCT.
GARTH	"	0800	Deployed opcon to 17th Sqn to assist in opening of a new quarry on the COURTENAY feature.

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COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO NAOMI 23	Sep	- 21.	In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
NW1 DAT	"	- 2(-) 82.	In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 3(-) 32. 83.	In sp 2 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 12.	Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt. OP CLING CHUNG III.
ROUTE 44	"	- 34B. 31.	In sp 302 RF Bn.
TILL	"	- 33. 85A. 98B.	Opcon 17 Const. LCT
GARTH	-	- 86. 85.	Opcon 1 Fed Sq. OP DOSEIDON.
AO NAOMI 24	Sep	- 22.	In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
NW1 DAT	"	- 2(-) 82.	In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 3(-) 32. 83.	In sp 2 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	- 12.	Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt. OP CLING CHUNG III.
Route 44	-	- 34B. 31.	In sp 302 RF Bn.

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COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
JILL	24 Sep	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
GARTH	"	-	86. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn. OP POSEIDON.
AO NAOMI	25 Sep	-	2(-). In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	3(-). 32. 83. In sp 2 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	-	-	12. Opcon 3/B/S Cav Regt.
ROUTE 44	-	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bn.
JILL	-	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
GARTH	"	-	86. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn.
YS 453896	"	1310	86 located a 50' long tunnel with 9' OHP and several sub-sidary tunnels, all in good condition. Two people were seen to vacate the system as 86 approached, but 86 was unable to apprehend them. The system was destroyed.

[Signature]

COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO NAOMI	26 Sep	-	2(-) In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	3(-). 32. 83. In sp 2 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	12. Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt.
Route 44	"	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bn.
JILL	"	"	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Constr. LCT.
GARTH	"	-	86. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn.
AO NAOMI	27 Sep	-	3(-) 2(-). In sp 8 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	3(-). 32. 83. In sp 2 RAR. OP CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	12. Opcon 3/B/3 Cav Regt.
Route 44	"	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bn.
JILL	"	-	33. 85A. 98B. Opcon 17 Constr. LCT.
GARTH	"	-	86. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn.



COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
AO NAOMI ⁸ 27	Sep	-	2.82. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
AO JUDY	"	-	1(-), 81. In sp 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	11. 85B. 98. Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
Route 44	"	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bw.
GARTH	-	-	86. 85. Opcom 1 Fd Sqn.
YS 458901	-	0845	86 located two RPG 7 warheads affixed on top of a 3016 CHICOM charge, creating a shaped pressure charge and located in a puddle in the centre of Route 2. Visually detected by an alert engineer mini-team, the mine was destroyed in situ.
AO JUDY ²⁹	Sep	-	1(-). 81. In sp 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	11. 85B. 98. Opcom 17 Const. LCT.
AO NAOMI	"	-	2.82. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.

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COMMANDER'S DIARY NARRATIVE

AF-C 211 (Adapted)
Revised Jun 1966

MONTH AND YEAR Sep 1970

REFERENCE MAP PHUOC TUY

B SQN 3 CAV REGT
Major H.J. COATES OC

Place/Grid Reference	Date	Time	Event or Information
Route 44	29 Sep	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bn.
GARTH	"	-	84. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn.
AO JUDY	30 Sep	-	1(-). 81. In sp 2 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
JILL	"	-	11. 85B. 98. Opcon 17 Const. LCT.
AO NAOMI	"	-	2. 82. In sp 8 RAR. Op CLING CHUNG III.
Route 44	"	-	30B. 31. In sp 302 RF Bn.
GARTH	"	-	84. 85. Opcon 1 Fd Sqn.
YS 435907	"	1405	3 pl V Coy 2RAR, operating from GARTH, contacted two VC, killing one and recovering an AK47 from the body. 84 Section was alerted to assist in following up the one enemy who escaped; this follow up was unsuccessful.

HJ Coates

B Sqn 3 CAV REGT
NUI DAT

15 Oct 70

See Distribution List.

B Sqn 3 CAV REGT AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION MASSEY-HARRIS

- References:
- A. 1 ATF Operation Instruction 35/70.
 - B. Vietnam, DAT DO, Sheet 6429-1, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - C. Vietnam, XUYEN MOC, Sheet 6430-11, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - D. Vietnam, BINH CHAU, sheet 6530-111, series L7014, 1:50000.

Name and Type of Operation

1. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was a food denial operation.

Dates

2. 29 Aug 70 to 20 Sep 70.

Location

3. AO SUSAN was bounded by the 70 Easting on the West, the 80 Northing on the North, the 87 Easting on the East and the South China Sea.

Control Headquarters

4. The operation was controlled initially by Tp HQ 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt and subsequently by Sqn HQ N Sqn 3 Cav Regt.
5. The Headquarters was located in NDP BEVERLY YS802709, NDP CATHERINE YS 832718 and NDP HEATHER YS 831753.

Officers Commanding

6. The officer appointed to command the operation was 54423 Capt W.J. PARKER, Comd, 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt. Subsequently on 14 Sep 70, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, 2IC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt was appointed officer commanding MASSEY FORCE.

Task Organisation

7. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was controlled by Troop Headquarters 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt until 14 Sep 70 and then HQ B Sqn 3 Cav Regt, provided the Second in Command of the Squadron, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, to coordinate activities.

Supporting Forces

8. 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt had removed from its control for the duration of the operation, two of its APC sections, thus leaving only the HQ, one APC section and a section AMCs.
9. The supporting forces planned for this operations were as follows;

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- a. In Command
 - (1) 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt less two APC sections.
- b. Remaining under command
 - (1) One AMC sect,
 - (2) One ACV.
- c. Under Command
 - (1) One mor sect 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (2) MFC party 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (3) One ground team 1 Psy Ops Unit.
- d. Under Opcon
 - (1) Two M548 TLC II FFV resources,
 - (2) Two M113 Flame APC II FFV resources,
 - (3) One tp A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (4) One Tk Dozer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (5) One ARV A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (6) One Tk Bridge Layer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (7) One Combat Engineer Team 1 Fd Sqn,
 - (8) D&E Pl HQ 1 ATF,
 - (9) TFMA dets as required.
- e. In Direct Support
 - (1) One H13 helicopter 161 (Independent) Recce Flt.
- f. In Support and Under Command for Movement
 - (1) One naval gunfire det (US).
- g. In Support
 - (1) Naval guns as available,
 - (2) 9 Sqn RAAF as tasked,
 - (3) CH47 aircraft as tasked,
 - (4) Sig Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC if required,
 - (5) One rifle pl 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC) at one hour's notice to move by air from NUI DAT.

10. The above was the basic organisation used with the following variations;
- a. The two M548 TLC and the two M113 Flame APC's from II FFV were not provided. The non provision of the M548 TLC seriously hampered the operation.
 - b. The TFMA detachments were in the form of a detachment of 3 Air Dispatch pers from 176 Air Dispatch Coy RAASC and one POL attendant from 8 Pet Pl RAASC.
 - c. The Sigs Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC was not required, however a detachment of a Sgt and 2 Sigs from 104 Sig Sqn was provided to operate the Task Force command net and the secure means.
 - d. A detachment from 1 Fd Hygiene Coy was provided for the first week of the operation, but was withdrawn as it could not be employed in the role of spraying soil sterilants due to the incapacity of the force to transport

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sufficient quantities of water for the task. This transport was to have been provided by the M548 TLC's which were not available for the operation.

e. Also during the operation three SAS patrols were inserted into areas of specific interest, i.e. vacated NDP's and the general area of destroyed bunkers. These patrols were given AO's within SUSAN but they were controlled by HQ 1 ATF and were independent of MASSEY FORCE.

Employment of Support

11. a. APC's

(1) There were ten APC's deployed at the start of the operation; one, however, was lost on a mine on the first day. Remaining were four headquarters vehicles, one complete APC sect (3 vehicles) and a section of AMC's (2 vehicles).

(2) As mortars are not permitted to be fired from the AMC's the weapons were dismounted from the vehicles, thus freeing the two AMC's for employment as normal APC's. One of the headquarters vehicles (c/s 19M) was attached to the two AMC's, creating an APC section of three vehicles.

(3) This then allowed the employment of 2 APC sections with the headquarters vehicles as reserve.

b. Tanks

(1) The tank troop (3 tanks) was employed mainly as base defence. This allowed the more flexible APC's to be released for transportation and work party protection. It also provided the crews with time in which to repair and service their machines.

(2) The tank dozer was used on several occasions to help clear standing and felled trees from the gardens to facilitate the delivery of 44 gal drums by UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF. It was also used to push up bunds at the NDP's as protection for the NDP.

(3) The tank bridge-layer was used in its traditional role of bridging water obstacles. It was layed six times during the operation and greatly assisted the mobility of the force.

c. Engineers

(1) The twenty-two engineers of the Engineer Combat Team provided the bulk of the work force for the operation. An advisor to the force commander was provided, as well as an element to command the actual team. This provided the capacity to split the team and perform two tasks simultaneously.

(2) During the course of the operation the engineers cleared roads of mines, demolished semi-destroyed bridges to facilitate the employment of the tank bridge layer, prepared river banks by building abutments for the tank bridge layer and set up the gardens for demolition.

d. Signals

(1) The three man detachment provided operators for the Task Force Command net and operated the secure means.

e. Infantry

(1) D&E Pl suffered an early setback when a complete section was injured in an APC mine incident on the first day of the operation. This section was replaced by a section from SRAR until D&E Pl could be brought up to strength again.

(2) D&E Pl was employed in securing a bridging site whilst the Engineers prepared it, securing gardens whilst they were destroyed and patrolling the areas surrounding the gardens. In this way they found and destroyed several bunkers and enemy living areas. They also detected two enemy who were trying to observe the destruction of the gardens but unfortunately they were unable to kill or capture them.

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f. Naval Gunfire

(1) Naval gunfire was employed principally on H&I targets and because of of intelligence, its effect was unable to be assessed. A Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities is attached as Annex A.

g. Helicopter Support

(1) All resupply was carried out by CH47 Helicopters with the assistance of 176 Air Dispatch Coy.

(2) 9 Sqn RAAF provided UH-1 Helicopters to transport 44 gal drums from the NDP's to the garden sites. They also assisted in "spotting" the drums in the exact position required for their demolition.

(3) In the latter part of the operation 9 Sqn RAAF dropped drums of diesel fuel and Mogas on to the gardens and ignited them with MG fire from the door gunners.

(4) The last gardens to be destroyed were in a remote part of the AO and the RAAF assisted by inserting and extracting D&E Pl, transporting and dropping the drums and providing gun ship support for both the insertion and extraction.

Intelligence

12. Prior to the commencement of the operation it was thought that the enemy in AO SUSAN were mainly Montagnards who were illegal residents together with a VC food production cell. The actual strength of the enemy was not known nor was there any identification of enemy formations or units operating in this area available. This information was given by Task Force Intelligence sources and from 1 Psy Ops Unit.

13. During the operation a number of bunker/camp systems were discovered which were in extremely good condition. They appeared to be related as they were all of 'T' construction with living huts built over them, and they gave the impression of having been constructed as transit camps for parties of up to 50 strong moving between the NUI MAY TAU area and the coast near BINH CHAU.

14. Documents found in bunkers - both near gardens and in the systems gave no indication of unit identities. They did however show that the task of the occupants was to produce food and catch fish. A number of fishing nets were captured and destroyed.

15. Also found in the bunkers on separate occasions were dismantled aerial bombs, home made blast grenades, an uncomplete bamboo switch, and a quantity of chicom explosives, which would indicate that the occupants were VC rather than illegal residents.

16. Only 5 enemy were sighted during the entire operation. Three of them were ambushed by SAS at NDP BEVERLY after the force had moved on. Two of these were killed and were carrying an M1 carbine and an M1 GARRAND .30 cal rifle. They carried no documents or identification.

17. The other two were seen trying to observe the garden destruction, These escaped and no identification was possible.

18. There was no indication of the permanent residence of a large enemy force.

19. Early in the operation Psy Ops Det distributed posters in the area urging the residents to rally to XUYEN MOC. However, these posters said that the force would destroy all of the gardens in the area, thus divulging the aim of the operation. Fortunately even with this information no aggressive enemy activity was noticed.

Mission

20. The mission as stated in 1 ATF Op Instr 35/70 was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas as briefed".

21. The tasks given were;

- a. Destroy all gardens, padi and produce in the specified areas.
- b. Destroy structures.
- c. Eliminate enemy who interfere with your mission. Care is to be taken

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to identify and differentiate between enemy and illegal residents. Any contact with bunker systems is to be broken immediately unless tank support can be provided.

d. Advise HQ 1 ATF immediately if illegal residents are detained.

22. From the above and the briefs given by the GSO2 (OPS), it was deduced that the mission was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas in AO SUSAN".

Concept of Operation

23. The operation was planned in four basic phases.

a. Phase 1

The move to NDP BEVERLY.

b. Phase 2

The establishment of NDP BEVERLY.

c. Phase 3

The destruction of gardens and crops, including the movement, as necessary, of the NDP.

d. Phase 4

The return to NUI DAT.

24. It was planned that there were to be two destruction teams operating, each having 3 APC's, half of the D&E Pl, half of the Engineer combat team and half of the detachment of 1 Hygiene Coy. The tanks were to provide the base defence element with the remainder of the APC's, and the Psy Ops team was to be held at the NDP to be deployed as necessary.

25. The planned destruction technique was to burn off all the surface growth and then spray the ground with a soil sterilant, thus destroying the growing crop and preventing further use of the ground for 12-14 months. The plan was arrived at in conjunction with 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) and the 1 ATF Hygiene Officer. Testing was undertaken by 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) to determine the optimum method of destroying wet and dry padi.

26. The burning was to be done by placing alternate drums of diesel fuel and Mogas fifteen paces apart (16 drums per acre of crop or garden), and place 2lbs of explosive on top of each drum and 1lb underneath. The whole lot was to detonate simultaneously, creating an extremely fierce fire and allowing the residue of the diesel fuel to spoil any growth not burnt and to assist in the souring of the soil.

27. The sterilisation of the soil was to be done by the Fd Hygiene Det spraying a powder/water mixture from the TLC's onto the soil. This would require a large quantity of water.

28. While the burning and sterilizing was being done the APC's were to provide security and if necessary transport.

29. The D&E Pl were to patrol the area around the garden to provide security and where possible, personnel to assist in garden work.

30. The Engineers were to set up the drums and demolitions and to explode the charges.

Execution

31. A briefing was held at HQ 1 ATF on 22 Aug 70, at which the staff and unit representatives advised the capacities and assistance they would lend to Operation MASSEY-HARRIS.

32. Following the briefing, 1 ATF Operation Instruction Number 35/70 was produced on 23 Aug 70.

33. The Force Commander gave verbal orders at B SQN 3 CAV REGT at 0830 on 27 Aug 70. Confirmatory notes were issued.

34. The start of the operation was delayed by 24 hrs because the tank troop was extracting itself from boggy ground elsewhere, and the operation commenced on 29

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35. A visual air reconnaissance had been flown of the route to be travelled prior to the operation; however, detailed reconnaissance on 28 Aug 70 indicated that a great deal of engineer effort on the crossing at grid YS 827713 would be necessary before the armoured vehicles could cross, as the river was flowing swiftly at a depth of approximately 5'6".

36. Consequently it was decided to establish NDP BEVERLY at YS 802709 and to destroy as many gardens on the WESTERN side of the Soui Chau as possible before crossing. The priority however, was to cross the river as quickly as possible.

37. On 30 Aug a build up of stores, supplies and equipment was made at "Beverly" using CH47 helicopters and the NDP establishment.

38. On 31 Aug, an engineer reconnaissance was carried out, on the ground, at the crossing, protection being provided by the D&E Platoon. Whilst this was being undertaken the destruction of gardens commenced on the WESTERN side of the stream.

39. Destruction of gardens and reconnaissance using the H13 continued on 1 Sep. It was also decided that the tank dozer was necessary to continue the construction of the crossing.

40. The tank dozer, escorted by three APC's, left NDP BEVERLY on 2 Sep. The dozer bogged approaching a creek crossing at YS 816705, was eventually recovered and the bridgelayer sent forward to span the gap. The bridge was layed and the dozer crossed, but a short distance further on it ran off the road and became seriously bogged.

41. This bogging required that most of the force resources be used for protection and recovery assistance at the bridge site. The D&E Pl were able to carry out local patrolling which resulted in the discovery and destruction of a bunker system on 5 Sep.

42. Also on 5 Sep two SAS Patrols were flown into BEVERLY, to be inserted into two separate AO's within AO SUSAN when the NDP crossed the Soui Chau.

43. The tank dozer was finally extracted and reached the main crossing late in the afternoon. After a small amount of dozing it once again bogged and a request was made for a size '0' dozer to be flown into the site to complete the task.

44. One of the SAS patrols had been given the task of destroying a well at YS 786723, which was outside of their allotted AO. As the resources were available an APC Section was detailed on the 6 Sep to take the patrol to that grid reference to destroy the well.

43. Whilst en route to the well two bunker systems were discovered. They were destroyed and the destruction of the well was achieved on 7 Sep. A bunker system was found near the well.

44. The size '0' dozer arrived on 7 Sep; by 1830 hrs the work was completed, the dozer in position and the crossing secure.

45. On 8 Sep the NDP was moved across the bridge and the Soui Chau to NDP CATHERINE at YS 832718. The SAS Patrols were also inserted, one at BEVERLY and the other at YS 7770.

46. On 9 Sep garden destruction resumed and the SAS Patrol remaining at BEVERLY contacted 3 VC who were scavenging the rubbish pit. Two of these VC were killed but without any unit identification.

47. On 10 Sep two fishing boats were sighted outside the civilian access area. Two of the occupants were detained for further interrogation, one as a suspected ARVN deserter and the other a suspected draft dodger. Destruction of gardens continued.

48. Around most gardens protective bunkers were found, containing a variety of utensils and equipment including explosives. These were destroyed.

/49.

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49. Also on 10 Sep the D&E Pl surprised two enemy who were trying to observe the garden demolitions. There was no result from this contact.
50. The destruction of gardens continued and on 14 Sep Capt R.K. HILL MC was inserted to co-ordinate the operation.
51. On 15 Sep the NDP was moved to YS 831753 "HEATHER".
52. Demolition of the illegal gardens continued in the normal manner until 18 Sep, when RAAF helicopters dropped drums of diesel fuel and petrol onto the gardens and ignited them with machine gun fire.
53. On 19 Sep D&E Pl and a det of engineers were air assaulted into gardens in the NORTH WEST of the AO. Four gardens and some nearby bunkers were subsequently destroyed.
54. While this was going on the remainder of the force closed HEATHER and returned to NDP BEVERLY.
5. On 20 Sep the entire force departed BEVERLY and returned to NUI DAT, arriving at 1500 hrs.
56. A summary of contacts and incidents is attached as Annex B.

Results

57. The following losses were sustained by MASSEY FORCE:

1x APC
1x Bushman Scout KIA
10x Aust WIA.

These losses were caused by an anti tank mine, detonated on the first day of the operation.

58. The following losses were sustained by the enemy:

2x VC KIA (Body Count).
1x M1 Carbine CIA.
1x Garrand Rifle CIA.
1x ARVN deserter (suspect) arrested.
1x Draft dodger (suspect) arrested.
Approx 85½ acres of rice and vegetable gardens destroyed.
Approx 10x fishing nets.
2x 1000 lb aerial bombs.
10x Blast grenade.
10 lbs Chicon explosive.
A quantity of medical supplies.
A quantity of garden tools.

Administrative Matters

59. General. It became paramount for the field equipment administrative commander to remain completely conversant with operational requirements. Frequent briefings by the force commander were essential.

60. Maintenance. As this type of food denial operation requires so many specialist organisations, continual and heavy administrative support by both units under comd and the TFMA is necessary for the force to remain completely effective.

61. Because of the remote locale of the VC food production areas, daily maintenance and destruction equipment were required to be flown into the area. This resulted in heavy aircraft requirements, particularly CH47's; these tend to be

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unreliable, being prone to maintenance breakdowns and late arrival from LONG BINH. These aircraft also lack flexibility when the relocation or crossloading of stores is necessary. It would appear that a more detailed briefing of air crews would keep them conversant with the situation and the requirements of the ground forces.

62. This also applies to RAAF UH-1H support, but it was found that co-operation towards the conclusion of the operation became excellent, due to interest developed in the operation by the pilots.

63. Heavy demands on stores and aircraft to move them necessitates detailed co-ordination between the rear elements of units under command and the administrative echelon of the commanding unit. Those units which on one or two occasions failed to co-ordinate/co-operate in this area caused both confusion and uneconomical use of aircraft both in rear and field areas.

64. Evacuation of Casualties. There was one mine incident during the operation resulting in one friendly KIA and several friendly WIA. The system of calling for DUSTOFF is good and reaction times at 1ATF excellent. However some delay was experienced as DUSTOFF pilots seem loath to navigate accurately, tending to rely too heavily on visual identification and smoke.

65. With so many aircraft in the area, hospitalization of sick and routine injuries could be effected quickly on an opportunity backload basis. The DS Possum was used in this manner a number of times.

66. Transportation was effected easily by the APC's and in some cases the tanks, but neither are built to carry 44 gallon drums of dieso/Mogas, which were used for destruction. The APC's were only capable of carrying 3x 44s and were difficult to load, leading to an increased working schedule and inefficient use of manpower. TLC's would alleviate this problem almost entirely and should be considered an essential addition on future operations of this nature.

Communications

67. Nets to be maintained were:
(a) TF Comd (Secure).
(b) TF Comd.
(c) Sqn Comd.
(d) Naval GF (to Arty Tac).
(e) Internal Net.

68. Due to the remoteness of the area, 292 antennae's were found to be essential to ensure communications to NUI DAT.

69. The distances involved and the level of the command nets demanded continued maintenance of reliable communications. The only satisfactory method is to use an M577 ACV, which has the required number and types of radio sets to ensure good communications.

Special Equipment and Techniques

70. Burning of Gardens proved a very effective method of destruction, and on dry gardens or dry rice it can produce 100% results.

71. It was found that 44 gal drums of diesel fuel and 44 gal drums of either petrol or jet fuel, simultaneously detonated, gave the desired result and the most effective system was to have at least 50% of the drums containing diesel fuel - although it is considered that the percentage could be as high as 70% - and the remainder containing petrol.

72. The drums were set up 15 paces apart, with alternate drums of petrol and diesel fuel. This created a consumption of 16 drums (8 diesel fuel and 8 petrol) per acre of crop. On the top of each drum was set 2lbs of explosive and on the bottom of each drum was set 1lb of explosive. All of the explosive set on all of the drums in each garden was connected by a ring main of detonation cord, which allowed simultaneous detonation of the entire garden. This simultaneous detonation

produced an intensely hot fireball which consumed living vegetation in it. It also produced a residue of diesel fuel which was sprayed, by the force of the explosion, over any vegetation outside the radius of the fire ball, killing any plant it fell on within 2 days.

73. Hence, for each acre of garden to be destroyed by this method, the following stores are required.

- a. 8x 44 gal drums diesel fuel.
- b. 8x 44 gal drums petrol.
- c. 48 lbs explosive (C4 or TNT).
- d. 4x rolls black insulation tape.
- e. 3x rolls detonation cord.
- f. 5 detonators, non-electric.
- g. 10 ft slow burning fuse.

74. Spraying of Gardens with Diesel Fuel. This method is more economical in materials than the exploding drum technique, and, as the tracked load carriers were not available, a spraying system was devised for use on an APC.

75. This consisted of a normal 50 gal per minute pump sitting on the lowered ramp of an APC. The ramp was supported from the locking lugs, by chains, to the roof of the vehicle, thereby removing any strain from the ramp cable. Three 44 gal drums of diesel fuel were placed in the back of the APC and the inlet pipe of the pump placed in one of the drums. The outlet was divided to provide two sprays. (These were made from garden hose with a shower rose attached as the spray nozzle).

76. The APC was driven at approximately 2 mph; with the two sprays in operation an area of approximately 40 metres by 10 metres was covered by each drum of diesel fuel, producing a consumption rate of approximately 10-12 drums per acre.

77. The vegetation sprayed died within two days of spraying. (However no rain fell during this time to wash the fuel from the leaves). After spraying, the fuel can be ignited by exploding drums of petrol placed approximately thirty paces apart.

78. Although spraying produced 100% destruction of all vegetation above ground in dry gardens, the method is not recommended due to the strain placed on the unbraced ramp hinges.

79. Aerial Dropping and Destruction. Used on two gardens toward the end of the operation, the technique employed was for UH-1H helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF to drop drums of diesel fuel and petrol from a height of 50-100 ft onto the gardens. Impact burst the drums and sprayed the contents onto the gardens. If the impact did not ignite the fuel ignition was caused by the door gunner of the helicopter firing tracer ammunition into it.

80. Though this method did not create a fire ball effect and the spread of the fuel was not as great as that achieved by either of the other methods, it should not be completely disregarded as an effective technique if the gardens to be destroyed are inaccessible to armour or infantry.

81. Digging up Crops. Any of the above methods were quite effective on dry surface crops, but difficulty was encountered in the destruction of root crops such as potatoes and wet paddy. In both cases the yield of the crop was severely reduced to the order of approximately 30% of the expected yield, but without the use of herbicides the only certain method of destruction is to pull up the roots of the crop, heap and burn.

82. Aerial Delivery and Positioning of Drums. The UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF were invaluable in this facet of the operation. They were used to transport slung loads of 5 drums to the garden sites where, if the area was clear of obstruction, they were able to position the drums in the exact place required for demolition. They also assisted in lifting drums (delivered by CH47) around for final positioning and reducing soldier fatigue considerably.

83. Lessons Learnt. In the command of a force such as MASSEY FORCE it is necessary to have a commander/co-ordinator who is entirely divorced from the actual command of any of the elements employed in the force. This allows him freedom of time and thought

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to concentrate on all facets of the operation.

84. The force deployed on Operation MASSEY-HARRIS did not have sufficient ground transport in the form of load carrying vehicles. Had two tracked load carriers been made available as planned, the necessity for the amount of UH-1 support required to transport drums from the NDP to the gardens would have been greatly reduced. It would also have allowed the spraying of crops with herbicides, or diesel fuel as appropriate, to ensure 100% destruction. Adequate ground transport must be provided to support operations of this nature.

85. Work of this nature i.e. the manhandling of 44 gal drums, the preparation of LZ's and patrolling physically tax the soldiers' endurance. This naturally reduces their capacity to perform, their specialist tasks to the degree of efficiency expected. This is supported by the incident where two enemy were found within 15 metres of a work party. Thus the size of the 'work' force should have been larger - one or two platoons of Vietnamese used as labourers would have overcome this problem.

86. Commanders should be given a translation of all Psyops posters and leaflets before they are dispersed. During this operation one of the posters urging illegal residents to rally gave the information that all gardens would be destroyed. This virtually compromised the operation's mission; fortunately however, no reaction was observed.

Commander's Analysis

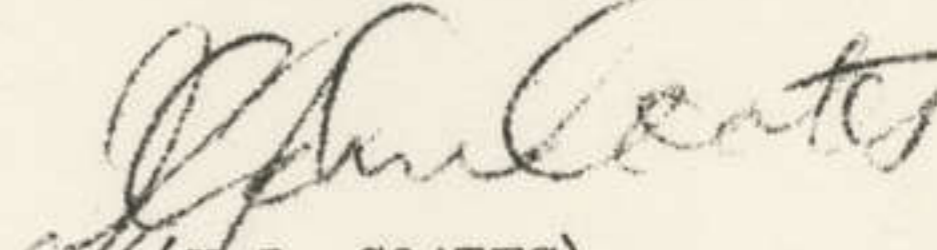
87. The operation achieved its mission. However, before operations of this nature are undertaken in the future, more research should be made into the methods of crop destruction, the means available, and the time of year at which it is undertaken. With the exception of root crops e.g. tubers, which have a short growing time, the best period for destruction of padi either "wet" or "dry" is November/December i.e. between the end of the "wet" and maturity of the rice which occurs in January.

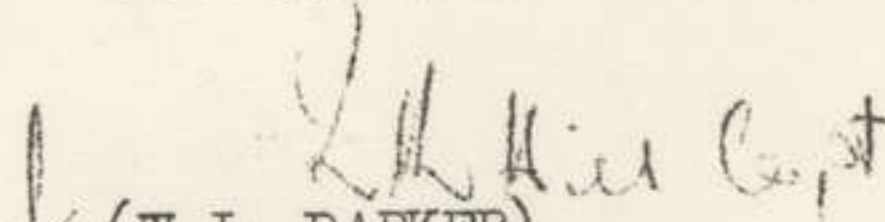
88. The force may have been able to achieve its aim more quickly had it been composed of a complete APC troop with two platoons of Australian infantry and two platoons of Vietnamese to act as labourers.

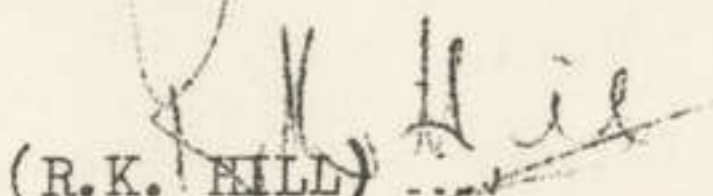
Comments of OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt

89. The experience gained from this operation has shown that command of the operation should have been vested in the OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt; whether the OC or an officer appointed by him physically commanded the force on the ground is immaterial. The operational directive should be addressed to him as the commander of the unit responsible for the administration and operational support of the force.

90. Operations designed to effect semi-permanent sterility of the soil, as distinct from immediate destruction of the crop, are not worth the additional effort involved. In almost every area treated the enemy could easily have established any number of alternative garden sites. Short of sterilizing whole regions, which for a variety of reasons is neither feasible nor advisable, the optimum solution is to wait until a crop appears and **then** destroy it.


(H.J. COATES)
Maj
OC B SQN 3 CAV REGT


(W.J. PARKER)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
29 Aug-14 Sep 70


(R.K. HILL)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
14 Sep-20 Sep 70

Annexures:

Annex A. Report on Naval Gunfire Support.

B. Contact/Incident Log

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Annex A to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

NAVAL GUNFIRE LIAISON SPOT TEAM 3-2
1st Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
Fleet Marine Force
APO San Francisco 96309

Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities
Operation Massey Harris

Naval gunfire support was provided to Operation Massey-Harris by this unit. HGF support ships involved were the USS Buck (c/s FAVOUR), the USS Lloyd Thomas (c/s BAIT HOOK), and the HMAS Hobart (c/s PACIFIC OCEAN).

Utilized were area preparatory fires, pre-planned point and area neutralization fires, and nightly H&I fires. Ships were in position to provide close support if necessary, except when they were receiving fuel, stores, or ammunition resupply, and on two occasions when high priority daytime targets were fired in the Nui Long Hai area.

During phase one of the operation selected objective areas were well covered and neutralized by prep fires. Beginning on the first night H&I missions were fired nightly except for the time period following the accident aboard the USS Lloyd Thomas which rendered her unserviceable.

There were pre-planned missions fired within AO Susan daily for the first ten days of the operation, but only occasionally thereafter due to nonavailability of suitable targets within the AO and higher priorities elsewhere. Fires out of the AO were planned so as to keep the NGF support always in position to support the operation if needed.

Respectfully submitted
Jay M. Bernstein
Sgt USMC

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Annex B to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

CONTACTS AND INCIDENTS
OPERATION MASSEY HARRIS

Contacts

- (1) 291315H at YS 791690 det of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt detonated a 30 lb mine. Results 1 Bushman Scout KIA, 10 Aust WIA, 1 APC extensively damaged.
- (2) 091320H at NDP BEVERLY YS 802709 a SAS patrol ambushing the site of the vacated NDP contacted 3 VC. Results 2 VC KIA (BC) one M1 Carbine and one Garrand Rifle. CIA No identification of VC unit.

Incidents

- (1) 310650H D&E Pl reported MG fire coming from approx YS 826703 - area engaged with mor fire nil results.
- (2) 311240H at YS 803714 sect of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt loc a garden area with one bunker, over an area of 1 acre. Last activity 18-24 hrs prior to discovery. Recovered were a small qty of documents, food, cooking utensils and tools, garden and bunker were destroyed.
- (3) 011230H at YS 787695 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed 2 VC garden areas linked by a track with protective bunkers. Gardens were in good condition and last tended two days ago. Destroyed by fire.
- (4) 011900H at YS 783693 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a VC rice field 100mx40m.
- (5) 021000H at YS 791711 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed an illegal rice paddy in good condition and last tended 36 hrs earlier.
- (6) 031718H at YS 826706 B/3/Cav Regt loc paddies and gardens tended 12 hrs before. Gardens in good condition, destroyed by burning.
- (7) 051846H at 827707 D&E Pl loc a bunker system consisting of 3 bunkers with 18" OHP. A qty of small miscellaneous eqpt incl a bag of salt and letters were found. System destroyed(?)
- (8) 061200H at 780696 3Tp 1 Armd Regt loc and destroyed a system of 15 bunkers with 2' OHP and 12 huts in an area 200mx300m. The system was good condition, est to be six months old and last used 1 month ago. Tracks into the system incl 2 from South, 4 from the East, 2 from the West and 1 main track from the North. Located in the system was a qty of eqpt and a small qty of documents.
- (9) 061410H at YS 778705 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a system of 9 bunkers with 3' OHP and 1 uncompleted well, in good condition and last used 24-36 hrs earlier. Entry was from the South. Recovered were a qty of documents indicate liaison between XUYEN MOC District, BINH CHAU Production Unit and a Rear Svcs Unit either 84 RSG or BA LONG.
- (10) 071045H at 785732 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed 5 bunkers 68x2'x2½' with 18" OHP and 1 lean to. System 6 to 7 months old used 2-3 weeks ago and 2-3 days by small gps, in fair condition found were 2 US Mugs, 1x M16 mine fuze, 1x M1 mag, clothing and med sups.
- (11) 071145H at YS 7876732 MASSEY FORCE loc a well 2'x3'x3' in good condition and used 5-7 days before. Found were 8 soft drink tins, 6 filled with plastic explosive and two others half filled. Well and explosive destroyed.
- (12) 100800H at YS 828712, MASSEY FORCE loc rice paddies covering 3½ acres and in

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good condition, 2 months old, activity 3 weeks ago. Tracks led East and West. Destroyed.

- (13) 100930H at 7865, 18 persons detained fishing outside civilian access. After investigation 16 released, one suspect deserter ARVN and one Jraft dodger handed to NP.
- (14) 10125H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc installation comprising 3 bunkers and 3 pits with 18" OHP with a hut on top, a number of ni resting places and a garden. System 2 months old and in excellent condition. Last used 2 weeks ago with signs of people in last 2 days. Tracks to South and West. Recovered were 3 live chooks, 1x5" shell, 1x1000 lb bomb with some explosive removed, food condiments, cooking gear and fishing tackle. System destroyed (?)
- (15) 110945H at YS 747617 VR sighted tracks of 10 pers across beach moving into scrub.
- (16) 1109045H at YS 731612 VR sighted tracks 1-2 pers moving across beach into the scrub.
- (17) 11400H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc a hut with bunker beneath with 2½' OHP and entry from the South. Two tracks loc in the area, main East to West and another from the North. The hut and bunker est 6 months old last used 2 weeks ago and in good condition. In the hut were a qty of cooking utensils and 4 stools. All destroyed.
- (18) 131000H at YS 826745 MASSEY FORCE destroyed a small potato crop est last tended two weeks ago. Numerous tracks in the area.
- (19) 111500H at YS 829743 MASSEY FORCE located a large illegal garden area, est last tended 1 week ago. In the area were 4x 1 man bunker with 1' OHP and numerous tracks. To be destroyed.
- (20) 151000H at 845745 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a month old garden 100mx100m, last tended 1 month ago.
- (21) 151430H at 827758 MASSEY FORCE loc an installation comprising a hut, bunker with 18" OHP, and a garden. System was 6 months old and in good condition, last used a week ago. Entry, exit was a North-South track. Located were 1x1000 lb bomb, 1x CBU, 1x empty 5" shell, 1000 rds 7.62 ammo linked, fishing tackle and a qty of documents. All destroyed.
- (22) 160800H at YS 835759 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice garden 3 months old and last tended 1-2 days ago. Tracks led to North, East and West.
- (23) 160900H at YS 845766 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice paddy 3 months old and last used 1 week ago. Well used track leads North.
- (24) 170830H at YS 855772 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden and pumpkin patch last tended a week ago - well used track to North.
- (25) 170900H at YS 845767 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden 200mx200m, last tended a week ago - well used track leads North.
- (26) 171300H at YS 826702 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden of 5 acres last tended a week ago. Track leads in from West.
- (27) 17100H at YS 825752 MASSEY FORCE loc 5 graves 6'x2'x3' - 2 graves together, 1 single 2-4 months old.
- (28) 160340H at YS 7865 HMAS HOBART reported small unidentified craft moving towards beach.
- (29) 180900H at YS 830760 MASSEY FORCE loc a garden consisting of three gardens covering an area of 10 acres - destroyed.
- (30) 181500H at YS 828758 MASSEY FORCE loc a bunker and a tunnel 80 ft long last used 6 months ago - destroyed.

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(31) 90810H at YS 741779 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed installation comprising 2 bunkers with 18" OHP and a hut, all in excellent condition, 2 months old and last used 2 days ago. Track lead East from bunker. Located were cooking stores, gardening tools clothing and misc items. Also loc at 736777 were four gardens covering large area. Tracks lead North, South, East and West. All destroyed.

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B SQN 3 CAV REGT
NUI DAT

15 Oct 70

See Distribution List.

B SQN 3 CAV REGT AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION MASSEY-HARRIS

- References:
- A. 1 ATF Operation Instruction 35/70.
 - B. Vietnam, DAT DO, Sheet 6429-1, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - C. Vietnam, XUYEN MOC, Sheet 6430-11, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - D. Vietnam, BINH CHAU, sheet 6530-111, series L7014, 1:50000.

Name and Type of Operation

- 1. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was a food denial operation.

Dates

- 2. 29 Aug 70 to 20 Sep 70.

Location

- 3. AO SUSAN was bounded by the 70 Easting on the West, the 80 Northing on the North, the 87 Easting on the East and the South China Sea.

Control Headquarters

- 4. The operation was controlled initially by Tp HQ 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt and subsequently by Sqn HQ N Sqn 3 Cav Regt.
- 5. The Headquarters was located in NDP BEVERLY YS802709, NDP CATHERINE YS 832718 and NDP HEATHER YS 831753.

Officers Commanding

- 6. The officer appointed to command the operation was 54423 Capt W.J. PARKER, Comd, 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt. Subsequently on 14 Sep 70, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, 2IC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt was appointed officer commanding MASSEY FORCE.

Task Organisation

- 7. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was controlled by Troop Headquarters 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt until 14 Sep 70 and then HQ B Sqn 3 Cav Regt provided the Second in Command of the Squadron, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, to coordinate activities.

Supporting Forces

- 8. 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt had removed from its control for the duration of the operation, two of its APC sections, thus leaving only the HQ, one APC section and a section AMCs.
- 9. The supporting forces planned for this operations were as follows;

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- a. In Command
 - (1) 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt less two APC sections.
 - b. Remaining under command
 - (1) One AMC sect,
 - (2) One ACV.
 - c. Under Command
 - (1) One mor sect 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (2) MFC party 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (3) One ground team 1 Psy Ops Unit.
 - d. Under Opcon
 - (1) Two M548 TLC II FFV resources,
 - (2) Two M113 Flame APC II FFV resources,
 - (3) One tp A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (4) One Tk Dozer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (5) One ARV A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (6) One Tk Bridge Layer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (7) One Combat Engineer Team 1 Fd Sqn,
 - (8) D&E Pl HQ 1 ATF,
 - (9) TFMA dets as required.
 - e. In Direct Support
 - (1) One H13 helicopter 161 (Independent) Recce Flt.
 - f. In Support and Under Command for Movement
 - (1) One naval gunfire det (US).
 - g. In Support
 - (1) Naval guns as available,
 - (2) 9 Sqn RAAF as tasked,
 - (3) CH47 aircraft as tasked,
 - (4) Sig Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC if required,
 - (5) One rifle pl 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC) at one hour's notice to move by air from NUI DAT.
10. The above was the basic organisation used with the following variations;
- a. The two M548 TLC and the two M113 Flame APC's from II FFV were not provided. The non provision of the M548 TLC seriously hampered the operation.
 - b. The TFMA detachments were in the form of a detachment of 3 Air Dispatch pers from 176 Air Dispatch Coy RAASC and one POL attendant from 8 Pet Pl RAASC.
 - c. The Sigs Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC was not required, however a detachment of a Sgt and 2 Sigs from 104 Sig Sqn was provided to operate the Task Force command net and the secure means.
 - d. A detachment from 1 Fd Hygiene Coy was provided for the first week of the operation, but was withdrawn as it could not be employed in the role of spraying soil sterilants due to the incapacity of the force to transport

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sufficient quantities of water for the task. This transport was to have been provided by the M548 TLC's which were not available for the operation.

e. Also during the operation three SAS patrols were inserted into areas of specific interest, i.e. vacated NDP's and the general area of destroyed bunkers. These patrols were given AO's within SUSAN but they were controlled by HQ 1 ATF and were independent of MASSEY FORCE.

Employment of Support

11. a. APC's

(1) There were ten APC's deployed at the start of the operation; one, however, was lost on a mine on the first day. Remaining were four headquarters vehicles, one complete APC sect (3 vehicles) and a section of AMC's (2 vehicles).

(2) As mortars are not permitted to be fired from the AMC's the weapons were dismounted from the vehicles, thus freeing the two AMC's for employment as normal APC's. One of the headquarters vehicles (c/s 19M) was attached to the two AMC's, creating an APC section of three vehicles.

(3) This then allowed the employment of 2 APC sections with the headquarters vehicles as reserve.

b. Tanks

(1) The tank troop (3 tanks) was employed mainly as base defence. This allowed the more flexible APC's to be released for transportation and work party protection. It also provided the crews with time in which to repair and service their machines.

(2) The tank dozer was used on several occasions to help clear standing and felled trees from the gardens to facilitate the delivery of 44 gal drums by UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF. It was also used to push up bunds at the NDP's as protection for the NDP.

(3) The tank bridge-layer was used in its traditional role of bridging water obstacles. It was layed six times during the operation and greatly assisted the mobility of the force.

c. Engineers

(1) The twenty-two engineers of the Engineer Combat Team provided the bulk of the work force for the operation. An advisor to the force commander was provided, as well as an element to command the actual team. This provided the capacity to split the team and perform two tasks simultaneously.

(2) During the course of the operation the engineers cleared roads of mines, demolished semi-destroyed bridges to facilitate the employment of the tank bridge layer, prepared river banks by building abutments for the tank bridge layer and set up the gardens for demolition.

d. Signals

(1) The three man detachment provided operators for the Task Force Command net and operated the secure means.

e. Infantry

(1) D&E Pl suffered an early setback when a complete section was injured in an APC mine incident on the first day of the operation. This section was replaced by a section from SRAR until D&E Pl could be brought up to strength again.

(2) D&E Pl was employed in securing a bridging site whilst the Engineers prepared it, securing gardens whilst they were destroyed and patrolling the areas surrounding the gardens. In this way they found and destroyed several bunkers and enemy living areas. They also detected two enemy who were trying to observe the destruction of the gardens but unfortunately they were unable to kill or capture them.

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f. Naval Gunfire

(1) Naval gunfire was employed principally on H&I targets and because of intelligence, its effect was unable to be assessed. A Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities is attached as Annex A.

g. Helicopter Support

(1) All resupply was carried out by CH47 Helicopters with the assistance of 176 Air Dispatch Coy.

(2) 9 Sqn RAAF provided UH-1 Helicopters to transport 44 gal drums from the NDP's to the garden sites. They also assisted in "spotting" the drums in the exact position required for their demolition.

(3) In the latter part of the operation 9 Sqn RAAF dropped drums of diesel fuel and Mogas on to the gardens and ignited them with MG fire from the door gunners.

(4) The last gardens to be destroyed were in a remote part of the AO and the RAAF assisted by inserting and extracting D&E Pl, transporting and dropping the drums and providing gun ship support for both the insertion and extraction.

Intelligence

12. Prior to the commencement of the operation it was thought that the enemy in AO SUSAN were mainly Montagnards who were illegal residents together with a VC food production cell. The actual strength of the enemy was not known nor was there any identification of enemy formations or units operating in this area available. This information was given by Task Force Intelligence sources and from 1 Psy Ops Unit.

13. During the operation a number of bunker/camp systems were discovered which were in extremely good condition. They appeared to be related as they were all of 'T' construction with living huts built over them, and they gave the impression of having been constructed as transit camps for parties of up to 50 strong moving between the NUI MAY TAU area and the coast near BINH CHAU.

14. Documents found in bunkers - both near gardens and in the systems gave no indication of unit identities. They did however show that the task of the occupants was to produce food and catch fish. A number of fishing nets were captured and destroyed.

15. Also found in the bunkers on separate occasions were dismantled aerial bombs, home made blast grenades, an uncomplete bamboo switch, and a quantity of chicom explosives, which would indicate that the occupants were VC rather than illegal residents.

16. Only 5 enemy were sighted during the entire operation. Three of them were ambushed by SAS at NDP BEVERLY after the force had moved on. Two of these were killed and were carrying an M1 carbine and an M1 GARRAND .30 cal rifle. They carried no documents or identification.

17. The other two were seen trying to observe the garden destruction, These escaped and no identification was possible.

18. There was no indication of the permanent residence of a large enemy force.

19. Early in the operation Psy Ops Det distributed posters in the area urging the residents to rally to XUYEN MOC. However, these posters said that the force would destroy all of the gardens in the area, thus divulging the aim of the operation. Fortunately even with this information no aggressive enemy activity was noticed.

Mission

20. The mission as stated in 1 ATF Op Instr 35/70 was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas as briefed".

21. The tasks given were;

- a. Destroy all gardens, padi and produce in the specified areas.
- b. Destroy structures.
- c. Eliminate enemy who interfere with your mission. Care is to be taken

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to identify and differentiate between enemy and illegal residents. Any contact with bunker systems is to be broken immediately unless tank support can be provided.

d. Advise HQ 1 ATF immediately if illegal residents are detained.

22. From the above and the briefs given by the GSO2 (OPS), it was deduced that the mission was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas in AO SUSAN".

Concept of Operation

23. The operation was planned in four basic phases.

a. Phase 1

The move to NDP BEVERLY.

b. Phase 2

The establishment of NDP BEVERLY.

c. Phase 3

The destruction of gardens and crops, including the movement, as necessary, of the NDP.

d. Phase 4

The return to NUI DAT.

24. It was planned that there were to be two destruction teams operating, each having 3 APC's, half of the D&E Pl, half of the Engineer combat team and half of the detachment of 1 Hygiene Coy. The tanks were to provide the base defence element with the remainder of the APC's, and the Psy Ops team was to be held at the NDP to be deployed as necessary.

25. The planned destruction technique was to burn off all the surface growth and then spray the ground with a soil sterilant, thus destroying the growing crop and preventing further use of the ground for 12-14 months. The plan was arrived at in conjunction with 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) and the 1 ATF Hygiene Officer. Testing was undertaken by 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) to determine the optimum method of destroying wet and dry padi.

26. The burning was to be done by placing alternate drums of diesel fuel and Mogas fifteen paces apart (16 drums per acre of crop or garden), and place 2lbs of explosive on top of each drum and 1lb underneath. The whole lot was to detonate simultaneously, creating an extremely fierce fire and allowing the residue of the diesel fuel to spoil any growth not burnt and to assist in the souring of the soil.

27. The sterilisation of the soil was to be done by the Fd Hygiene Det spraying a powder/water mixture from the TLC's onto the soil. This would require a large quantity of water.

28. While the burning and sterilizing was being done the APC's were to provide security and if necessary transport.

29. The D&E Pl were to patrol the area around the garden to provide security and where possible, personnel to assist in garden work.

30. The Engineers were to set up the drums and demolitions and to explode the charges.

Execution

31. A briefing was held at HQ 1 ATF on 22 Aug 70, at which the staff and unit representatives advised the capacities and assistance they would lend to Operation MASSEY-HARRIS.

32. Following the briefing, 1 ATF Operation Instruction Number 35/70 was produced on 23 Aug 70.

33. The Force Commander gave verbal orders at B SQN 3 CAV REGT at 0830 on 27 Aug 70. Confirmatory notes were issued.

34. The start of the operation was delayed by 24 hrs because the tank troop was extracting itself from boggy ground elsewhere, and the operation commenced on 29

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Aug 70.

35. A visual air reconnaissance had been flown of the route to be travelled prior to the operation; however, detailed reconnaissance on 28 Aug 70 indicated that a great deal of engineer effort on the crossing at grid YS 827713 would be necessary before the armoured vehicles could cross, as the river was flowing swiftly at a depth of approximately 5'6".

36. Consequently it was decided to establish NDP BEVERLY at YS 802709 and to destroy as many gardens on the WESTERN side of the Soui Chau as possible before crossing. The priority however, was to cross the river as quickly as possible.

37. On 30 Aug a build up of stores, supplies and equipment was made at "Beverly" using CH47 helicopters and the NDP establishment.

38. On 31 Aug, an engineer reconnaissance was carried out, on the ground, at the crossing, protection being provided by the D&E Platoon. Whilst this was being undertaken the destruction of gardens commenced on the WESTERN side of the stream.

39. Destruction of gardens and reconnaissance using the H13 continued on 1 Sep. It was also decided that the tank dozer was necessary to continue the construction of the crossing.

40. The tank dozer, escorted by three APC's, left NDP BEVERLY on 2 Sep. The dozer bogged approaching a creek crossing at YS 816705, was eventually recovered and the bridgelayer sent forward to span the gap. The bridge was laid and the dozer crossed, but a short distance further on it ran off the road and became seriously bogged.

41. This bogging required that most of the force resources be used for protection and recovery assistance at the bridge site. The D&E Pl were able to carry out local patrolling which resulted in the discovery and destruction of a bunker system on 5 Sep.

42. Also on 5 Sep two SAS Patrols were flown into BEVERLY, to be inserted into two separate AO's within AO SUSAN when the NDP crossed the Soui Chau.

43. The tank dozer was finally extracted and reached the main crossing late in the afternoon. After a small amount of dozing it once again bogged and a request was made for a size '0' dozer to be flown into the site to complete the task.

44. One of the SAS patrols had been given the task of destroying a well at YS 786723, which was outside of their allotted AO. As the resources were available an APC Section was detailed on the 6 Sep to take the patrol to that grid reference to destroy the well.

43. Whilst en route to the well two bunker systems were discovered. They were destroyed and the destruction of the well was achieved on 7 Sep. A bunker system was found near the well.

44. The size '0' dozer arrived on 7 Sep; by 1830 hrs the work was completed, the dozer in position and the crossing secure.

45. On 8 Sep the NDP was moved across the bridge and the Soui Chau to NDP CATHERINE at YS 832718. The SAS Patrols were also inserted, one at BEVERLY and the other at YS 7770.

46. On 9 Sep garden destruction resumed and the SAS Patrol remaining at BEVERLY contacted 3 VC who were scavenging the rubbish pit. Two of these VC were killed but without any unit identification.

47. On 10 Sep two fishing boats were sighted outside the civilian access area. Two of the occupants were detained for further interrogation, one as a suspected ARVN deserter and the other a suspected draft dodger. Destruction of gardens continued.

48. Around most gardens protective bunkers were found, containing a variety of utensils and equipment including explosives. These were destroyed.

/49.

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49. Also on 10 Sep the D&E Pl surprised two enemy who were trying to observe the garden demolitions. There was no result from this contact.
50. The destruction of gardens continued and on 14 Sep Capt R.K. HILL MC was inserted to co-ordinate the operation.
51. On 15 Sep the NDP was moved to YS 831753 "HEATHER".
52. Demolition of the illegal gardens continued in the normal manner until 18 Sep, when RAAF helicopters dropped drums of diesel fuel and petrol onto the gardens and ignited them with machine gun fire.
53. On 19 Sep D&E Pl and a det of engineers were air assaulted into gardens in the NORTH WEST of the AO. Four gardens and some nearby bunkers were subsequently destroyed.
54. While this was going on the remainder of the force closed HEATHER and returned to NDP BEVERLY.
5. On 20 Sep the entire force departed BEVERLY and returned to NUI DAT, arriving at 1500 hrs.
56. A summary of contacts and incidents is attached as Annex B.

Results

57. The following losses were sustained by MASSEY FORCE:

1x APC
1x Bushman Scout KIA
10x Aust WIA.

These losses were caused by an anti tank mine, detonated on the first day of the operation.

58. The following losses were sustained by the enemy:

2x VC KIA (Body Count).
1x M1 Carbine CIA.
1x Garrand Rifle CIA.
1x ARVN deserter (suspect) arrested.
1x Draft dodger (suspect) arrested.
Approx 85½ acres of rice and vegetable gardens destroyed.
Approx 10x fishing nets.
2x 1000 lb aerial bombs.
10x Blast grenade.
10 lbs Chicon explosive.
A quantity of medical supplies.
A quantity of garden tools.

Administrative Matters

59. General. It became paramount for the field equipment administrative commander to remain completely conversant with operational requirements. Frequent briefings by the force commander were essential.

60. Maintenance. As this type of food denial operation requires so many specialist organisations, continual and heavy administrative support by both units under comd and the TFMA is necessary for the force to remain completely effective.

61. Because of the remote locale of the VC food production areas, daily maintenance and destruction equipment were required to be flown into the area. This resulted in heavy aircraft requirements, particularly CH47's; these tend to be

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/unreliable

unreliable, being prone to maintenance breakdowns and late arrival from LONG BINH. These aircraft also lack flexibility when the relocation or crossloading of stores is necessary. It would appear that a more detailed briefing of air crews would keep them conversant with the situation and the requirements of the ground forces.

62. This also applies to RAAF UH-1H support, but it was found that co-operation towards the conclusion of the operation became excellent, due to interest developed in the operation by the pilots.

63. Heavy demands on stores and aircraft to move them necessitates detailed co-ordination between the rear elements of units under command and the administrative echelon of the commanding unit. Those units which on one or two occasions failed to co-ordinate/co-operate in this area caused both confusion and uneconomical use of aircraft both in rear and field areas.

64. Evacuation of Casualties. There was one mine incident during the operation resulting in one friendly KIA and several friendly WIA. The system of calling for DUSTOFF is good and reaction times at 1ATF excellent. However some delay was experienced as DUSTOFF pilots seem loath to navigate accurately, tending to rely too heavily on visual identification and smoke.

65. With so many aircraft in the area, hospitalization of sick and routine injuries could be effected quickly on an opportunity backload basis. The DS Possum was used in this manner a number of times.

66. Transportation was effected easily by the APC's and in some cases the tanks, but neither are built to carry 44 gallon drums of dieso/Mogas, which were used for destruction. The APC's were only capable of carrying 3x 44s and were difficult to load, leading to an increased working schedule and inefficient use of manpower. TLC's would alleviate this problem almost entirely and should be considered an essential addition on future operations of this nature.

Communications

67. Nets to be maintained were:

- (a) TF Comd (Secure).
- (b) TF Comd.
- (c) Sqn Comd.
- (d) Naval GF (to Arty Tac).
- (e) Internal Net.

68. Due to the remoteness of the area, 292 antennae's were found to be essential to ensure communications to NUI DAT.

69. The distances involved and the level of the command nets demanded continued maintenance of reliable communications. The only satisfactory method is to use an M577 ACV, which has the required number and types of radio sets to ensure good communications.

Special Equipment and Techniques

70. Burning of Gardens proved a very effective method of destruction, and on dry gardens or dry rice it can produce 100% results.

71. It was found that 44 gal drums of diesel fuel and 44 gal drums of either petrol or jet fuel, simultaneously detonated, gave the desired result and the most effective system was to have at least 50% of the drums containing diesel fuel - although it is considered that the percentage could be as high as 70% - and the remainder containing petrol.

72. The drums were set up 15 paces apart, with alternate drums of petrol and diesel fuel. This created a consumption of 16 drums (8 diesel fuel and 8 petrol) per acre of crop. On the top of each drum was set 2lbs of explosive and on the bottom of each drum was set 1lb of explosive. All of the explosive set on all of the drums in each garden was connected by a ring main of detonation cord, which allowed simultaneous detonation of the entire garden. This simultaneous detonation

produced an intensely hot fireball which consumed living vegetation in it. It also produced a residue of diesel fuel which was sprayed, by the force of the explosion, over any vegetation outside the radius of the fire ball, killing any plant it fell on within 2 days.

73. Hence, for each acre of garden to be destroyed by this method, the following stores are required.

- a. 8x 44 gal drums diesel fuel.
- b. 8x 44 gal drums petrol.
- c. 48 lbs explosive (C4 or TNT).
- d. 4x rolls black insulation tape.
- e. 3x rolls detonation cord.
- f. 5 detonators, non-electric.
- g. 10 ft slow burning fuse.

74. Spraying of Gardens with Diesel Fuel. This method is more economical in materials than the exploding drum technique, and, as the tracked load carriers were not available, a spraying system was devised for use on an APC.

75. This consisted of a normal 50 gal per minute pump sitting on the lowered ramp of an APC. The ramp was supported from the locking lugs, by chains, to the roof of the vehicle, thereby removing any strain from the ramp cable. Three 44 gal drums of diesel fuel were placed in the back of the APC and the inlet pipe of the pump placed in one of the drums. The outlet was divided to provide two sprays. (These were made from garden hose with a shower rose attached as the spray nozzle).

76. The APC was driven at approximately 2 mph; with the two sprays in operation an area of approximately 40 metres by 10 metres was covered by each drum of diesel fuel, producing a consumption rate of approximately 10-12 drums per acre.

77. The vegetation sprayed died within two days of spraying. (However no rain fell during this time to wash the fuel from the leaves). After spraying, the fuel can be ignited by exploding drums of petrol placed approximately thirty paces apart.

78. Although spraying produced 100% destruction of all vegetation above ground in dry gardens, the method is not recommended due to the strain placed on the unbraced ramp hinges.

79. Aerial Dropping and Destruction. Used on two gardens toward the end of the operation, the technique employed was for UH-1H helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF to drop drums of diesel fuel and petrol from a height of 50-100 ft onto the gardens. Impact burst the drums and sprayed the contents onto the gardens. If the impact did not ignite the fuel ignition was caused by the door gunner of the helicopter firing tracer ammunition into it.

80. Though this method did not create a fire ball effect and the spread of the fuel was not as great as that achieved by either of the other methods, it should not be completely disregarded as an effective technique if the gardens to be destroyed are inaccessible to armour or infantry.

81. Digging up Crops. Any of the above methods were quite effective on dry surface crops, but difficulty was encountered in the destruction of root crops such as potatoes and wet paddy. In both cases the yield of the crop was severely reduced to the order of approximately 30% of the expected yield, but without the use of herbicides the only certain method of destruction is to pull up the roots of the crop, heap and burn.

82. Aerial Delivery and Positioning of Drums. The UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF were invaluable in this facet of the operation. They were used to transport slung loads of 5 drums to the garden sites where, if the area was clear of obstruction, they were able to position the drums in the exact place required for demolition. They also assisted in lifting drums (delivered by CH47) around for final positioning and reducing soldier fatigue considerably.

83. Lessons Learnt. In the command of a force such as MASSEY FORCE it is necessary to have a commander/co-ordinator who is entirely divorced from the actual command of any of the elements employed in the force. This allows him freedom of time and thought

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to concentrate on all facets of the operation.

84. The force deployed on Operation MASSEY-HARRIS did not have sufficient ground transport in the form of load carrying vehicles. Had two tracked load carriers been made available as planned, the necessity for the amount of UH-1 support required to transport drums from the NDP to the gardens would have been greatly reduced. It would also have allowed the spraying of crops with herbicides, or diesel fuel as appropriate, to ensure 100% destruction. Adequate ground transport must be provided to support operations of this nature.

85. Work of this nature i.e. the manhandling of 44 gal drums, the preparation of LZ's and patrolling physically tax the soldiers' endurance. This naturally reduces their capacity to perform, their specialist tasks to the degree of efficiency expected. This is supported by the incident where two enemy were found within 15 metres of a work party. Thus the size of the 'work' force should have been larger - one or two platoons of Vietnamese used as labourers would have overcome this problem.

86. Commanders should be given a translation of all Psyops posters and leaflets before they are dispersed. During this operation one of the posters urging illegal residents to rally gave the information that all gardens would be destroyed. This virtually compromised the operation's mission; fortunately however, no reaction was observed.

Commander's Analysis

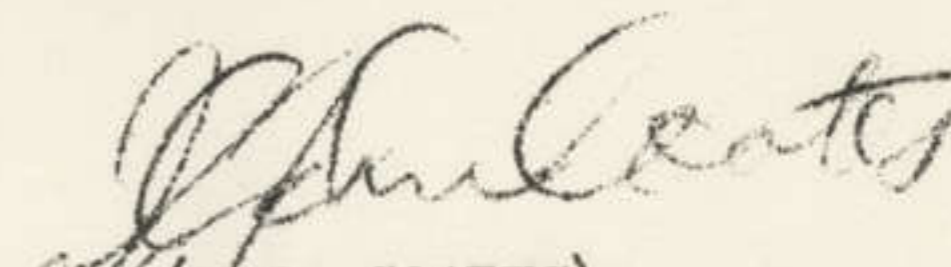
87. The operation achieved its mission. However, before operations of this nature are undertaken in the future, more research should be made into the methods of crop destruction, the means available, and the time of year at which it is undertaken. With the exception of root crops e.g. tubers, which have a short growing time, the best period for destruction of padi either "wet" or "dry" is November/December i.e. between the end of the "wet" and maturity of the rice which occurs in January.


88. The force may have been able to achieve its aim more quickly had it been composed of a complete APC troop with two platoons of Australian infantry and two platoons of Vietnamese to act as labourers.


Comments of OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt

89. The experience gained from this operation has shown that command of the operation should have been vested in the OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt; whether the OC or an officer appointed by him physically commanded the force on the ground is immaterial. The operational directive should be addressed to him as the commander of the unit responsible for the administration and operational support of the force.

90. Operations designed to effect semi-permanent sterility of the soil, as distinct from immediate destruction of the crop, are not worth the additional effort involved. In almost every area treated the enemy could easily have established any number of alternative garden sites. Short of sterilizing whole regions, which for a variety of reasons is neither feasible nor advisable, the optimum solution is to wait until a crop appears and **then** destroy it.


(H.J. COATES)
Maj
OC B SQN 3 CAV REGT


(W.J. PARKER)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
29 Aug-14 Sep 70


(R.K. HILL)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
14 Sep-20 Sep 70

Annexures:

- Annex A. Report on Naval Gunfire Support.
- B. Contact/Incident Log

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Annex A to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

NAVAL GUNFIRE LIAISON SPOT TEAM 3-2
1st Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
Fleet Marine Force
APO San Francisco 96309

Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities
Operation Massey Harris

Naval gunfire support was provided to Operation Massey-Harris by this unit. HGF support ships involved were the USS Buck (c/s FAVOUR), the USS Lloyd Thomas (c/s BAIT HOOK), and the HMAS Hobart (c/s PACIFIC OCEAN).

Utilized were area preparatory fires, pre-planned point and area neutralization fires, and nightly H&I fires. Ships were in position to provide close support if necessary, except when they were receiving fuel, stores, or ammunition resupply, and on two occasions when high priority daytime targets were fired in the Nui Long Hai area.

During phase one of the operation selected objective areas were well covered and neutralized by prep fires. Beginning on the first night H&I missions were fired nightly except for the time period following the accident aboard the USS Lloyd Thomas which rendered her unserviceable.

There were pre-planned missions fired within AO Susan daily for the first ten days of the operation, but only occasionally thereafter due to nonavailability of suitable targets within the AO and higher priorities elsewhere. Fires out of the AO were planned so as to keep the NGF support always in position to support the operation if needed.

Respectfully submitted
Jay M. Bernstein
Sgt USMC

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Annex B to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

CONTACTS AND INCIDENTS
OPERATION MASSEY HARRIS

Contacts

- (1) 291315H at YS 791690 det of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt detonated a 30 lb mine. Results 1 Bushman Scout KIA, 10 Aust WIA, 1 APC extensively damaged.
- (2) 091320H at NDP BEVERLY YS 802709 a SAS patrol ambushing the site of the vacated NDP contacted 3 VC. Results 2 VC KIA (BC) one M1 Carbine and one Garrard Rifle. CIA No identification of VC unit.

Incidents

- (1) 310650H D&E Pl reported MG fire coming from approx YS 826703 - area engaged with mor fire nil results.
- (2) 311240H at YS 803714 sect of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt loc a garden area with one bunker, over an area of 1 acre. Last activity 18-24 hrs prior to discovery. Recovered were a small qty of documents, food, cooking utensils and tools, garden and bunker were destroyed.
- (3) 011230H at YS 787695 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed 2 VC garden areas linked by a track with protective bunkers. Gardens were in good condition and last tended two days ago. Destroyed by fire.
- (4) 011900H at YS 783693 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a VC rice field 100mx40m.
- (5) 021000H at YS 791711 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed an illegal rice paddy in good condition and last tended 36 hrs earlier.
- (6) 031718H at YS 826706 B/3/Cav Regt loc paddies and gardens tended 12 hrs before. Gardens in good condition, destroyed by burning.
- (7) 051846H at 827707 D&E Pl loc a bunker system consisting of 3 bunkers with 18" OHP. A qty of small miscellaneous eqpt incl a bag of salt and letters were found. System destroyed(?)
- (8) 061200H at 780696 3Tp 1 Armd Regt loc and destroyed a system of 15 bunkers with 2' OHP and 12 huts in an area 200mx300m. The system was good condition, est to be six months old and last used 1 month ago. Tracks into the system incl 2 from South, 4 from the East, 2 from the West and 1 main track from the North. Located in the system was a qty of eqpt and a small qty of documents.
- (9) 061410H at YS 778705 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a system of 9 bunkers with 3' OHP and 1 uncompleted well, in good condition and last used 24-36 hrs earlier. Entry was from the South. Recovered were a qty of documents indicate liaison between XUYEN MOC District, BINH CHAU Production Unit and a Rear Svcs Unit either 84 RSG or BA LONG.
- (10) 071045H at 785732 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed 5 bunkers 68x2'x2½' with 18" OHP and 1 lean to. System 6 to 7 months old used 2-3 weeks ago and 2-3 days by small gps, in fair condition found were 2 US Mugs, 1x M16 mine fuze, 1x M1 mag, clothing and med sups.
- (11) 071145H at YS 7876732 MASSEY FORCE loc a well 2'x3'x3' in good condition and used 5-7 days before. Found were 8 soft drink tins, 6 filled with plastic explosive and two others half filled. Well and explosive destroyed.
- (12) 100800H at YS 828712, MASSEY FORCE loc rice paddies covering 3½ acres and in

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good condition, 2 months old, activity 3 weeks ago. Tracks led East and West. Destroyed.

- (13) 100930H at 7865, 18 persons detained fishing outside civilian access. After investigation 16 released, one suspect deserter ARVN and one draft dodger handed to NP.
- (14) 10125H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc installation comprising 3 bunkers and 3 pits with 18" OHP with a hut on top, a number of ni resting places and a garden. System 2 months old and in excellent condition. Last used 2 weeks ago with signs of people in last 2 days. Tracks to South and West. Recovered were 3 live chooks, 1x5" shell, 1x1000 lb bomb with some explosive removed, food condiments, cooking gear and fishing tackle. System destroyed (?)
- (15) 110945H at YS 747617 VR sighted tracks of 10 pers across beach moving into scrub.
- (16) 1109045H at YS 731612 VR sighted tracks 1-2 pers moving across beach into the scrub.
- (17) 11400H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc a hut with bunker beneath with 2½' OHP and entry from the South. Two tracks loc in the area, main East to West and another from the North. The hut and bunker est 6 months old last used 2 weeks ago and in good condition. In the hut were a qty of cooking utensils and 4 stools. All destroyed.
- (18) 131000H at YS 826745 MASSEY FORCE destroyed a small potato crop est last tended two weeks ago. Numerous tracks in the area.
- (19) 111500H at YS 829743 MASSEY FORCE located a large illegal garden area, est last tended 1 week ago. In the area were 4x 1 man bunker with 1' OHP and numerous tracks. To be destroyed.
- (20) 151000H at 845745 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a month old garden 100mx100m, last tended 1 month ago.
- (21) 151430H at 827758 MASSEY FORCE loc an installation comprising a hut, bunker with 18" OHP, and a garden. System was 6 months old and in good condition, last used a week ago. Entry, exit was a North-South track. Located were 1x1000 lb bomb, 1x CBU, 1x empty 5" shell, 1000 rds 7.62 ammo linked, fishing tackle and a qty of documents. All destroyed.
- (22) 160800H at YS 835759 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice garden 3 months old and last tended 1-2 days ago. Tracks led to North, East and West.
- (23) 160900H at YS 845766 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice paddy 3 months old and last used 1 week ago. Well used track leads North.
- (24) 170830H at YS 855772 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden and pumpkin patch last tended a week ago - well used track to North.
- (25) 170900H at YS 845767 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden 200mx200m, last tended a week ago - well used track leads North.
- (26) 171300H at YS 826702 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden of 5 acres last tended a week ago. Track leads in from West.
- (27) 17100H at YS 825752 MASSEY FORCE loc 5 graves 6'x2'x3' - 2 graves together, 1 single 2-4 months old.
- (28) 180340H at YS 7865 HMAS HOBART reported small unidentified craft moving towards beach.
- (29) 180900H at YS 830760 MASSEY FORCE loc a garden consisting of three gardens covering an area of 10 acres - destroyed.
- (30) 181500H at YS 828758 MASSEY FORCE loc a bunker and a tunnel 80 ft long last used 6 months ago - destroyed.

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(31) 0810H at YS 741779 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed installation comprising 2 bunkers with 18" OHP and a hut, all in excellent condition, 2 months old and last used 2 days ago. Track lead East from bunker. Located were cooking stores, gardening tools clothing and misc items. Also loc at 736777 were four gardens covering large area. Tracks lead North, South, East and West. All destroyed.

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B SQN 3 CAV REGT
NUI DAT

15 Oct 70

See Distribution List.

B SQN 3 CAV REGT AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION MASSEY-HARRIS

- References:
- A. 1 ATF Operation Instruction 35/70.
 - B. Vietnam, DAT DO, Sheet 6429-1, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - C. Vietnam, XUYEN MOC, Sheet 6430-11, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - D. Vietnam, BINH CHAU, sheet 6530-111, series L7014, 1:50000.

Name and Type of Operation

- 1. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was a food denial operation.

Dates

- 2. 29 Aug 70 to 20 Sep 70.

Location

- 3. AO SUSAN was bounded by the 70 Easting on the West, the 80 Northing on the North, the 87 Easting on the East and the South China Sea.

Control Headquarters

- 4. The operation was controlled initially by Tp HQ 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt and subsequently by Sqn HQ N Sqn 3 Cav Regt.
- 5. The Headquarters was located in NDP BEVERLY YS802709, NDP CATHERINE YS 832718 and NDP HEATHER YS 831753.

Officers Commanding

- 6. The officer appointed to command the operation was 54423 Capt W.J. PARKER, Comd, 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt. Subsequently on 14 Sep 70, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, 2IC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt was appointed officer commanding MASSEY FORCE.

Task Organisation

- 7. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was controlled by Troop Headquarters 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt until 14 Sep 70 and then HQ B Sqn 3 Cav Regt provided the Second in Command of the Squadron, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, to coordinate activities.

Supporting Forces

- 8. 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt had removed from its control for the duration of the operation, two of its APC sections, thus leaving only the HQ, one APC section and a section AMCs.
- 9. The supporting forces planned for this operations were as follows;

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- a. In Command
 - (1) 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt less two APC sections.
- b. Remaining under command
 - (1) One AMC sect,
 - (2) One ACV.
- c. Under Command
 - (1) One mor sect 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (2) MFC party 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (3) One ground team 1 Psy Ops Unit.
- d. Under Opcon
 - (1) Two M548 TLC II FFV resources,
 - (2) Two M113 Flame APC II FFV resources,
 - (3) One tp A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (4) One Tk Dozer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (5) One ARV A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (6) One Tk Bridge Layer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (7) One Combat Engineer Team 1 Fd Sqn,
 - (8) D&E Pl HQ 1 ATF,
 - (9) TFMA dets as required.
- e. In Direct Support
 - (1) One H13 helicopter 161 (Independent) Recce Flt.
- f. In Support and Under Command for Movement
 - (1) One naval gunfire det (US).
- g. In Support
 - (1) Naval guns as available,
 - (2) 9 Sqn RAAF as tasked,
 - (3) CH47 aircraft as tasked,
 - (4) Sig Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC if required,
 - (5) One rifle pl 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC) at one hour's notice to move by air from NUI DAT.

10. The above was the basic organisation used with the following variations;
- a. The two M548 TLC and the two M113 Flame APC's from II FFV were not provided. The non provision of the M548 TLC seriously hampered the operation.
 - b. The TFMA detachments were in the form of a detachment of 3 Air Dispatch pers from 176 Air Dispatch Coy RAASC and one POL attendant from 8 Pet Pl RAASC.
 - c. The Sigs Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC was not required, however a detachment of a Sgt and 2 Sigs from 104 Sig Sqn was provided to operate the Task Force command net and the secure means.
 - d. A detachment from 1 Fd Hygiene Coy was provided for the first week of the operation, but was withdrawn as it could not be employed in the role of spraying soil sterilants due to the incapacity of the force to transport

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sufficient quantities of water for the task. This transport was to have been provided by the M548 TLC's which were not available for the operation.

e. Also during the operation three SAS patrols were inserted into areas of specific interest, i.e. vacated NDP's and the general area of destroyed bunkers. These patrols were given AO's within SUSAN but they were controlled by HQ 1 ATF and were independent of MASSEY FORCE.

Employment of Support

11. a. APC's

(1) There were ten APC's deployed at the start of the operation; one, however, was lost on a mine on the first day. Remaining were four headquarters vehicles, one complete APC sect (3 vehicles) and a section of AMC's (2 vehicles).

(2) As mortars are not permitted to be fired from the AMC's the weapons were dismounted from the vehicles, thus freeing the two AMC's for employment as normal APC's. One of the headquarters vehicles (c/s 19M) was attached to the two AMC's, creating an APC section of three vehicles.

(3) This then allowed the employment of 2 APC sections with the headquarters vehicles as reserve.

b. Tanks

(1) The tank troop (3 tanks) was employed mainly as base defence. This allowed the more flexible APC's to be released for transportation and work party protection. It also provided the crews with time in which to repair and service their machines.

(2) The tank dozer was used on several occasions to help clear standing and felled trees from the gardens to facilitate the delivery of 44 gal drums by UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF. It was also used to push up bunds at the NDP's as protection for the NDP.

(3) The tank bridge-layer was used in its traditional role of bridging water obstacles. It was layed six times during the operation and greatly assisted the mobility of the force.

c. Engineers

(1) The twenty-two engineers of the Engineer Combat Team provided the bulk of the work force for the operation. An advisor to the force commander was provided, as well as an element to command the actual team. This provided the capacity to split the team and perform two tasks simultaneously.

(2) During the course of the operation the engineers cleared roads of mines, demolished semi-destroyed bridges to facilitate the employment of the tank bridge layer, prepared river banks by building abutments for the tank bridge layer and set up the gardens for demolition.

d. Signals

(1) The three man detachment provided operators for the Task Force Command net and operated the secure means.

e. Infantry

(1) D&E Pl suffered an early setback when a complete section was injured in an APC mine incident on the first day of the operation. This section was replaced by a section from SRAR until D&E Pl could be brought up to strength again.

(2) D&E Pl was employed in securing a bridging site whilst the Engineers prepared it, securing gardens whilst they were destroyed and patrolling the areas surrounding the gardens. In this way they found and destroyed several bunkers and enemy living areas. They also detected two enemy who were trying to observe the destruction of the gardens but unfortunately they were unable to kill or capture them.

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f. Naval Gunfire

(1) Naval gunfire was employed principally on H&I targets and because of intelligence, its effect was unable to be assessed. A Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities is attached as Annex A.

g. Helicopter Support

(1) All resupply was carried out by CH47 Helicopters with the assistance of 176 Air Dispatch Coy.

(2) 9 Sqn RAAF provided UH-1 Helicopters to transport 44 gal drums from the NDP's to the garden sites. They also assisted in "spotting" the drums in the exact position required for their demolition.

(3) In the latter part of the operation 9 Sqn RAAF dropped drums of diesel fuel and Mogas on to the gardens and ignited them with MG fire from the door gunners.

(4) The last gardens to be destroyed were in a remote part of the AO and the RAAF assisted by inserting and extracting D&E Pl, transporting and dropping the drums and providing gun ship support for both the insertion and extraction.

Intelligence

12. Prior to the commencement of the operation it was thought that the enemy in AO SUSAN were mainly Montagnards who were illegal residents together with a VC food production cell. The actual strength of the enemy was not known nor was there any identification of enemy formations or units operating in this area available. This information was given by Task Force Intelligence sources and from 1 Psy Ops Unit.

13. During the operation a number of bunker/camp systems were discovered which were in extremely good condition. They appeared to be related as they were all of 'T' construction with living huts built over them, and they gave the impression of having been constructed as transit camps for parties of up to 50 strong moving between the NUI MAY TAU area and the coast near BINH CHAU.

14. Documents found in bunkers - both near gardens and in the systems gave no indication of unit identities. They did however show that the task of the occupants was to produce food and catch fish. A number of fishing nets were captured and destroyed.

15. Also found in the bunkers on separate occasions were dismantled aerial bombs, home made blast grenades, an uncomplete bamboo switch, and a quantity of chicom explosives, which would indicate that the occupants were VC rather than illegal residents.

16. Only 5 enemy were sighted during the entire operation. Three of them were ambushed by SAS at NDP BEVERLY after the force had moved on. Two of these were killed and were carrying an M1 carbine and an M1 GARRAND .30 cal rifle. They carried no documents or identification.

17. The other two were seen trying to observe the garden destruction, These escaped and no identification was possible.

18. There was no indication of the permanent residence of a large enemy force.

19. Early in the operation Psy Ops Det distributed posters in the area urging the residents to rally to XUYEN MOC. However, these posters said that the force would destroy all of the gardens in the area, thus divulging the aim of the operation. Fortunately even with this information no aggressive enemy activity was noticed.

Mission

20. The mission as stated in 1 ATF Op Instr 35/70 was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas as briefed".

21. The tasks given were;

- a. Destroy all gardens, padi and produce in the specified areas.
- b. Destroy structures.
- c. Eliminate enemy who interfere with your mission. Care is to be taken

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to identify and differentiate between enemy and illegal residents. Any contact with bunker systems is to be broken immediately unless tank support can be provided.

d. Advise HQ 1 ATF immediately if illegal residents are detained.

22. From the above and the briefs given by the GSO2 (OPS), it was deduced that the mission was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas in AO SUSAN".

Concept of Operation

23. The operation was planned in four basic phases.

a. Phase 1

The move to NDP BEVERLY.

b. Phase 2

The establishment of NDP BEVERLY.

c. Phase 3

The destruction of gardens and crops, including the movement, as necessary, of the NDP.

d. Phase 4

The return to NUI DAT.

24. It was planned that there were to be two destruction teams operating, each having 3 APC's, half of the D&E Pl, half of the Engineer combat team and half of the detachment of 1 Hygiene Coy. The tanks were to provide the base defence element with the remainder of the APC's; and the Psy Ops team was to be held at the NDP to be deployed as necessary.

25. The planned destruction technique was to burn off all the surface growth and then spray the ground with a soil sterilant, thus destroying the growing crop and preventing further use of the ground for 12-14 months. The plan was arrived at in conjunction with 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) and the 1 ATF Hygiene Officer. Testing was undertaken by 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) to determine the optimum method of destroying wet and dry padi.

26. The burning was to be done by placing alternate drums of diesel fuel and Mogas fifteen paces apart (16 drums per acre of crop or garden), and place 2lbs of explosive on top of each drum and 1lb underneath. The whole lot was to detonate simultaneously, creating an extremely fierce fire and allowing the residue of the diesel fuel to spoil any growth not burnt and to assist in the souring of the soil.

27. The sterilisation of the soil was to be done by the Fd Hygiene Det spraying a powder/water mixture from the TLC's onto the soil. This would require a large quantity of water.

28. While the burning and sterilizing was being done the APC's were to provide security and if necessary transport.

29. The D&E Pl were to patrol the area around the garden to provide security and where possible, personnel to assist in garden work.

30. The Engineers were to set up the drums and demolitions and to explode the charges.

Execution

31. A briefing was held at HQ 1 ATF on 22 Aug 70, at which the staff and unit representatives advised the capacities and assistance they would lend to Operation MASSEY-HARRIS.

32. Following the briefing, 1 ATF Operation Instruction Number 35/70 was produced on 23 Aug 70.

33. The Force Commander gave verbal orders at B Sqn 3 CAV REGT at 0830 on 27 Aug 70. Confirmatory notes were issued.

34. The start of the operation was delayed by 24 hrs because the tank troop was extracting itself from boggy ground elsewhere, and the operation commenced on 29

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35. A visual air reconnaissance had been flown of the route to be travelled prior to the operation; however, detailed reconnaissance on 28 Aug 70 indicated that a great deal of engineer effort on the crossing at grid YS 827713 would be necessary before the armoured vehicles could cross, as the river was flowing swiftly at a depth of approximately 5'6".

36. Consequently it was decided to establish NDP BEVERLY at YS 802709 and to destroy as many gardens on the WESTERN side of the Soui Chau as possible before crossing. The priority however, was to cross the river as quickly as possible.

37. On 30 Aug a build up of stores, supplies and equipment was made at "Beverly" using CH47 helicopters and the NDP establishment.

38. On 31 Aug, an engineer reconnaissance was carried out, on the ground, at the crossing, protection being provided by the D&E Platoon. Whilst this was being undertaken the destruction of gardens commenced on the WESTERN side of the stream.

39. Destruction of gardens and reconnaissance using the H13 continued on 1 Sep. It was also decided that the tank dozer was necessary to continue the construction of the crossing.

40. The tank dozer, escorted by three APC's, left NDP BEVERLY on 2 Sep. The dozer bogged approaching a creek crossing at YS 816705, was eventually recovered and the bridgelayer sent forward to span the gap. The bridge was laid and the dozer crossed, but a short distance further on it ran off the road and became seriously bogged.

41. This bogging required that most of the force resources be used for protection and recovery assistance at the bridge site. The D&E Pl were able to carry out local patrolling which resulted in the discovery and destruction of a bunker system on 5 Sep.

42. Also on 5 Sep two SAS Patrols were flown into BEVERLY, to be inserted into two separate AO's within AO SUSAN when the NDP crossed the Soui Chau.

43. The tank dozer was finally extracted and reached the main crossing late in the afternoon. After a small amount of dozing it once again bogged and a request was made for a size '0' dozer to be flown into the site to complete the task.

44. One of the SAS patrols had been given the task of destroying a well at YS 786723, which was outside of their allotted AO. As the resources were available an APC Section was detailed on the 6 Sep to take the patrol to that grid reference to destroy the well.

43. Whilst en route to the well two bunker systems were discovered. They were destroyed and the destruction of the well was achieved on 7 Sep. A bunker system was found near the well.

44. The size '0' dozer arrived on 7 Sep; by 1830 hrs the work was completed, the dozer in position and the crossing secure.

45. On 8 Sep the NDP was moved across the bridge and the Soui Chau to NDP CATHERINE at YS 832718. The SAS Patrols were also inserted, one at BEVERLY and the other at YS 7770.

46. On 9 Sep garden destruction resumed and the SAS Patrol remaining at BEVERLY contacted 3 VC who were scavenging the rubbish pit. Two of these VC were killed but without any unit identification.

47. On 10 Sep two fishing boats were sighted outside the civilian access area. Two of the occupants were detained for further interrogation, one as a suspected ARVN deserter and the other a suspected draft dodger. Destruction of gardens continued.

48. Around most gardens protective bunkers were found, containing a variety of utensils and equipment including explosives. These were destroyed.

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49. Also on 10 Sep the D&E Pl surprised two enemy who were trying to observe the garden demolitions. There was no result from this contact.
50. The destruction of gardens continued and on 14 Sep Capt R.K. HILL MC was inserted to co-ordinate the operation.
51. On 15 Sep the NDP was moved to YS 831753 "HEATHER".
52. Demolition of the illegal gardens continued in the normal manner until 18 Sep, when RAAF helicopters dropped drums of diesel fuel and petrol onto the gardens and ignited them with machine gun fire.
53. On 19 Sep D&E Pl and a det of engineers were air assaulted into gardens in the NORTH WEST of the AO. Four gardens and some nearby bunkers were subsequently destroyed.
54. While this was going on the remainder of the force closed HEATHER and returned to NDP BEVERLY.
5. On 20 Sep the entire force departed BEVERLY and returned to NUI DAT, arriving at 1500 hrs.
56. A summary of contacts and incidents is attached as Annex B.

Results

57. The following losses were sustained by MASSEY FORCE:

1x APC
1x Bushman Scout KIA
10x Aust WIA.

These losses were caused by an anti tank mine, detonated on the first day of the operation.

58. The following losses were sustained by the enemy:

2x VC KIA (Body Count).
1x M1 Carbine CIA.
1x Garrand Rifle CIA.
1x ARVN deserter (suspect) arrested.
1x Draft dodger (suspect) arrested.
Approx 85½ acres of rice and vegetable gardens destroyed.
Approx 10x fishing nets.
2x 1000 lb aerial bombs.
10x Blast grenade.
10 lbs Chicon explosive.
A quantity of medical supplies.
A quantity of garden tools.

Administrative Matters

59. General. It became paramount for the field equipment administrative commander to remain completely conversant with operational requirements. Frequent briefings by the force commander were essential.
60. Maintenance. As this type of food denial operation requires so many specialist organisations, continual and heavy administrative support by both units under comd and the TFMA is necessary for the force to remain completely effective.
61. Because of the remote locale of the VC food production areas, daily maintenance and destruction equipment were required to be flown into the area. This resulted in heavy aircraft requirements, particularly CH47's; these tend to be

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unreliable, being prone to maintenance breakdowns and late arrival from LONG BINH. These aircraft also lack flexibility when the relocation or crossloading of stores is necessary. It would appear that a more detailed briefing of air crews would keep them conversant with the situation and the requirements of the ground forces.

62. This also applies to RAAF UH-1H support, but it was found that co-operation towards the conclusion of the operation became excellent, due to interest developed in the operation by the pilots.

63. Heavy demands on stores and aircraft to move them necessitates detailed co-ordination between the rear elements of units under command and the administrative echelon of the commanding unit. Those units which on one or two occasions failed to co-ordinate/co-operate in this area caused both confusion and uneconomical use of aircraft both in rear and field areas.

64. Evacuation of Casualties. There was one mine incident during the operation resulting in one friendly KIA and several friendly WIA. The system of calling for DUSTOFF is good and reaction times at 1ATF excellent. However some delay was experienced as DUSTOFF pilots seem loath to navigate accurately, tending to rely too heavily on visual identification and smoke.

65. With so many aircraft in the area, hospitalization of sick and routine injuries could be effected quickly on an opportunity backload basis. The DS Possum was used in this manner a number of times.

66. Transportation was effected easily by the APC's and in some cases the tanks, but neither are built to carry 44 gallon drums of dieso/Mogas, which were used for destruction. The APC's were only capable of carrying 3x 44s and were difficult to load, leading to an increased working schedule and inefficient use of manpower. TLC's would alleviate this problem almost entirely and should be considered an essential addition on future operations of this nature.

Communications

67. Nets to be maintained were:

- (a) TF Comd (Secure).
- (b) TF Comd.
- (c) Sqn Comd.
- (d) Naval GF (to Arty Tac).
- (e) Internal Net.

68. Due to the remoteness of the area, 292 antennae were found to be essential to ensure communications to NUI DAT.

69. The distances involved and the level of the command nets demanded continued maintenance of reliable communications. The only satisfactory method is to use an M577 ACV, which has the required number and types of radio sets to ensure good communications.

Special Equipment and Techniques

70. Burning of Gardens proved a very effective method of destruction, and on dry gardens or dry rice it can produce 100% results.

71. It was found that 44 gal drums of diesel fuel and 44 gal drums of either petrol or jet fuel, simultaneously detonated, gave the desired result and the most effective system was to have at least 50% of the drums containing diesel fuel - although it is considered that the percentage could be as high as 70% - and the remainder containing petrol.

72. The drums were set up 15 paces apart, with alternate drums of petrol and diesel fuel. This created a consumption of 16 drums (8 diesel fuel and 8 petrol) per acre of crop. On the top of each drum was set 2lbs of explosive and on the bottom of each drum was set 1lb of explosive. All of the explosive set on all of the drums in each garden was connected by a ring main of detonation cord, which allowed simultaneous detonation of the entire garden. This simultaneous detonation

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produced an intensely hot fireball which consumed living vegetation in it. It also produced a residue of diesel fuel which was sprayed, by the force of the explosion, over any vegetation outside the radius of the fire ball, killing any plant it fell on within 2 days.

73. Hence, for each acre of garden to be destroyed by this method, the following stores are required.

- a. 8x 44 gal drums diesel fuel.
- b. 8x 44 gal drums petrol.
- c. 48 lbs explosive (C4 or TNT).
- d. 4x rolls black insulation tape.
- e. 3x rolls detonation cord.
- f. 5 detonators, non-electric.
- g. 10 ft slow burning fuse.

74. Spraying of Gardens with Diesel Fuel. This method is more economical in materials than the exploding drum technique, and, as the tracked load carriers were not available, a spraying system was devised for use on an APC.

75. This consisted of a normal 50 gal per minute pump sitting on the lowered ramp of an APC. The ramp was supported from the locking lugs, by chains, to the roof of the vehicle, thereby removing any strain from the ramp cable. Three 44 gal drums of diesel fuel were placed in the back of the APC and the inlet pipe of the pump placed in one of the drums. The outlet was divided to provide two sprays. (These were made from garden hose with a shower rose attached as the spray nozzle).

76. The APC was driven at approximately 2 mph; with the two sprays in operation an area of approximately 40 metres by 10 metres was covered by each drum of diesel fuel, producing a consumption rate of approximately 10-12 drums per acre.

77. The vegetation sprayed died within two days of spraying. (However no rain fell during this time to wash the fuel from the leaves). After spraying, the fuel can be ignited by exploding drums of petrol placed approximately thirty paces apart.

78. Although spraying produced 100% destruction of all vegetation above ground in dry gardens, the method is not recommended due to the strain placed on the unbraced ramp hinges.

79. Aerial Dropping and Destruction. Used on two gardens toward the end of the operation, the technique employed was for UH-1H helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF to drop drums of diesel fuel and petrol from a height of 50-100 ft onto the gardens. Impact burst the drums and sprayed the contents onto the gardens. If the impact did not ignite the fuel ignition was caused by the door gunner of the helicopter firing tracer ammunition into it.

80. Though this method did not create a fire ball effect and the spread of the fuel was not as great as that achieved by either of the other methods, it should not be completely disregarded as an effective technique if the gardens to be destroyed are inaccessible to armour or infantry.

81. Digging up Crops. Any of the above methods were quite effective on dry surface crops, but difficulty was encountered in the destruction of root crops such as potatoes and wet paddy. In both cases the yield of the crop was severely reduced to the order of approximately 30% of the expected yield, but without the use of herbicides the only certain method of destruction is to pull up the roots of the crop, heap and burn.

82. Aerial Delivery and Positioning of Drums. The UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF were invaluable in this facet of the operation. They were used to transport slung loads of 5 drums to the garden sites where, if the area was clear of obstruction, they were able to position the drums in the exact place required for demolition. They also assisted in lifting drums (delivered by CH47) around for final positioning and reducing soldier fatigue considerably.

83. Lessons Learnt. In the command of a force such as MASSEY FORCE it is necessary to have a commander/co-ordinator who is entirely divorced from the actual command of any of the elements employed in the force. This allows him freedom of time and thought

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to concentrate on all facets of the operation.

84. The force deployed on Operation MASSEY-HARRIS did not have sufficient ground transport in the form of load carrying vehicles. Had two tracked load carriers been made available as planned, the necessity for the amount of UH-1 support required to transport drums from the NDP to the gardens would have been greatly reduced. It would also have allowed the spraying of crops with herbicides, or diesel fuel as appropriate, to ensure 100% destruction. Adequate ground transport must be provided to support operations of this nature.

85. Work of this nature i.e. the manhandling of 44 gal drums, the preparation of LZ's and patrolling physically tax the soldiers' endurance. This naturally reduces their capacity to perform, their specialist tasks to the degree of efficiency expected. This is supported by the incident where two enemy were found within 15 metres of a work party. Thus the size of the 'work' force should have been larger - one or two platoons of Vietnamese used as labourers would have overcome this problem.

86. Commanders should be given a translation of all Psyops posters and leaflets before they are dispersed. During this operation one of the posters urging illegal residents to rally gave the information that all gardens would be destroyed. This virtually compromised the operation's mission; fortunately however, no reaction was observed.

Commander's Analysis

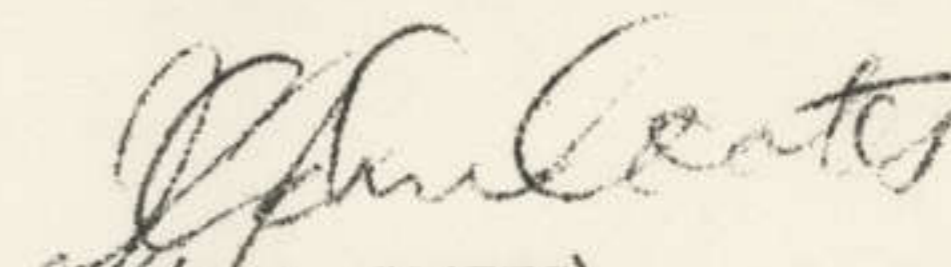
87. The operation achieved its mission. However, before operations of this nature are undertaken in the future, more research should be made into the methods of crop destruction, the means available, and the time of year at which it is undertaken. With the exception of root crops e.g. tubers, which have a short growing time, the best period for destruction of padi either "wet" or "dry" is November/December i.e. between the end of the "wet" and maturity of the rice which occurs in January.

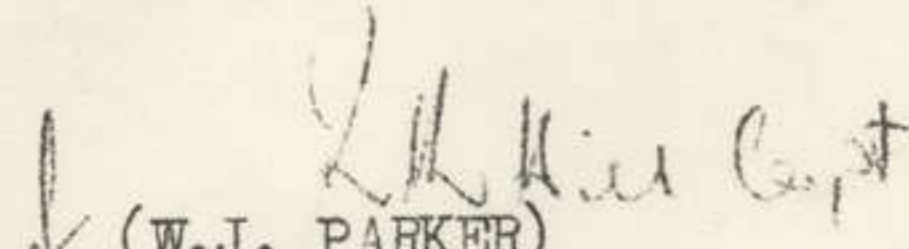
88. The force may have been able to achieve its aim more quickly had it been composed of a complete APC troop with two platoons of Australian infantry and two platoons of Vietnamese to act as labourers.


Comments of OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt

89. The experience gained from this operation has shown that command of the operation should have been vested in the OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt; whether the OC or an officer appointed by him physically commanded the force on the ground is immaterial. The operational directive should be addressed to him as the commander of the unit responsible for the administration and operational support of the force.

90. Operations designed to effect semi-permanent sterility of the soil, as distinct from immediate destruction of the crop, are not worth the additional effort involved. In almost every area treated the enemy could easily have established any number of alternative garden sites. Short of sterilizing whole regions, which for a variety of reasons is neither feasible nor advisable, the optimum solution is to wait until a crop appears and **then** destroy it.


(H.J. COATES)
Maj
OC B SQN 3 CAV REGT


(W.J. PARKER)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
29 Aug-14 Sep 70


(R.K. HILL)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
14 Sep-20 Sep 70

Annexures:

- Annex A. Report on Naval Gunfire Support.
- B. Contact/Incident Log

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<u>DISL BUTION</u>	Copy No (Incl Annexes)
A SQN 1 ARMD REGT	1
1FD SQN	2
HQ 1 ATF	3-17
104 SIG SQN	18
1 SAS SQN	19
D&E PL HQ 1 ATF	20
2RAR/NZ(ANZAC)	21-26
1 PSYOPS UNIT	27
1 FD HYGIENE COY	28
9 SQN RAAF	29
<u>INTERNAL</u>	
OC	30
2IC	31
IO	32
Comds Diary	33-38
Spare	39-44
File	45
<u>FOR INFORMATION</u>	
7RAR	46
DRAC AHQ CANBERRA	47
1 ARMD REGT PUCKAPUNYAL	48
A SQN 3 CAV REGT. HOLSWORTHY	49

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Annex A to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

NAVAL GUNFIRE LIAISON SPOT TEAM 3-2
1st Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
Fleet Marine Force
APO San Francisco 96309

Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities
Operation Massey Harris

Naval gunfire support was provided to Operation Massey-Harris by this unit. HGF support ships involved were the USS Buck (c/s FAVOUR), the USS Lloyd Thomas (c/s BAIT HOOK), and the HMAS Hobart (c/s PACIFIC OCEAN).

Utilized were area preparatory fires, pre-planned point and area neutralization fires, and nightly H&I fires. Ships were in position to provide close support if necessary, except when they were receiving fuel, stores, or ammunition resupply, and on two occasions when high priority daytime targets were fired in the Nui Long Hai area.

During phase one of the operation selected objective areas were well covered and neutralized by prep fires. Beginning on the first night H&I missions were fired nightly except for the time period following the accident aboard the USS Lloyd Thomas which rendered her unserviceable.

There were pre-planned missions fired within AO Susan daily for the first ten days of the operation, but only occasionally thereafter due to nonavailability of suitable targets within the AO and higher priorities elsewhere. Fires out of the AO were planned so as to keep the NGF support always in position to support the operation if needed.

Respectfully submitted
Jay M. Bernstein
Sgt USMC

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Annex B to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

CONTACTS AND INCIDENTS
OPERATION MASSEY HARRIS

Contacts

- (1) 291315H at YS 791690 det of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt detonated a 30 lb mine. Results 1 Bushman Scout KIA, 10 Aust WIA, 1 APC extensively damaged.
- (2) 091320H at NDP BEVERLY YS 802709 a SAS patrol ambushing the site of the vacated NDP contacted 3 VC. Results 2 VC KIA (BC) one M1 Carbine and one Garrand Rifle CIA No identification of VC unit.

Incidents

- (1) 310650H D&E Pl reported MG fire coming from approx YS 826703 - area engaged with mor fire nil results.
- (2) 311240H at YS 803714 sect of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt loc a garden area with one bunker, over an area of 1 acre. Last activity 18-24 hrs prior to discovery. Recovered were a small qty of documents, food, cooking utensils and tools, garden and bunker were destroyed.
- (3) 011230H at YS 787695 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed 2 VC garden areas linked by a track with protective bunkers. Gardens were in good condition and last tended two days ago. Destroyed by fire.
- (4) 011900H at YS 783693 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a VC rice field 100mx40m.
- (5) 021000H at YS 791711 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed an illegal rice paddy in good condition and last tended 36 hrs earlier.
- (6) 031718H at YS 826706 B/3/Cav Regt loc paddies and gardens tended 12 hrs before. Gardens in good condition, destroyed by burning.
- (7) 051846H at 827707 D&E Pl loc a bunker system consisting of 3 bunkers with 18" OHP. A qty of small miscellaneous eqpt incl a bag of salt and letters were found. System destroyed(?)
- (8) 061200H at 780696 3Tp 1 Armd Regt loc and destroyed a system of 15 bunkers with 2' OHP and 12 huts in an area 200mx300m. The system was good condition, est to be six months old and last used 1 month ago. Tracks into the system incl 2 from South, 4 from the East, 2 from the West and 1 main track from the North. Located in the system was a qty of eqpt and a small qty of documents.
- (9) 061410H at YS 778705 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a system of 9 bunkers with 3' OHP and 1 uncompleted well, in good condition and last used 24-36 hrs earlier. Entry was from the South. Recovered were a qty of documents indicate liaison between XUYEN MOC District, BINH CHAU Production Unit and a Rear Svcs Unit either 84 RSG or BA LONG.
- (10) 071045H at 785732 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed 5 bunkers 68x2'x2½' with 18" OHP and 1 lean to. System 6 to 7 months old used 2-3 weeks ago and 2-3 days by small gps, in fair condition found were 2 US Mugs, 1x M16 mine fuze, 1x M1 mag, clothing and med sups.
- (11) 071145H at YS 7876732 MASSEY FORCE loc a well 2'x3'x3' in good condition and used 5-7 days before. Found were 8 soft drink tins, 6 filled with plastic explosive and two others half filled. Well and explosive destroyed.
- (12) 100800H at YS 828712, MASSEY FORCE loc rice paddies covering 3½ acres and in

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good condition, 2 months old, activity 3 weeks ago. Tracks led East and West. Destroyed.

- (13) 100930H at 7865, 18 persons detained fishing outside civilian access. After investigation 16 released, one suspect deserter ARVN and one Jraft dodger handed to NP.
- (14) 10125H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc installation comprising 3 bunkers and 3 pits with 18" OHP with a hut on top, a number of ni resting places and a garden. System 2 months old and in excellent condition. Last used 2 weeks ago with signs of people in last 2 days. Tracks to South and West. Recovered were 3 live chooks, 1x5" shell, 1x1000 lb bomb with some explosive removed, food condiments, cooking gear and fishing tackle. System destroyed (?)
- (15) 110945H at YS 747617 VR sighted tracks of 10 pers across beach moving into scrub.
- (16) 1109045H at YS 731612 VR sighted tracks 1-2 pers moving across beach into the scrub.
- (17) 11400H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc a hut with bunker beneath with 2½' OHP and entry from the South. Two tracks loc in the area, main East to West and another from the North. The hut and bunker est 6 months old last used 2 weeks ago and in good condition. In the hut were a qty of cooking utensils and 4 stools. All destroyed.
- (18) 131000H at YS 826745 MASSEY FORCE destroyed a small potato crop est last tended two weeks ago. Numerous tracks in the area.
- (19) 111500H at YS 829743 MASSEY FORCE located a large illegal garden area, est last tended 1 week ago. In the area were 4x 1 man bunker with 1' OHP and numerous tracks. To be destroyed.
- (20) 151000H at 845745 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a month old garden 100mx100m, last tended 1 month ago.
- (21) 151430H at 827758 MASSEY FORCE loc an installation comprising a hut, bunker with 18" OHP, and a garden. System was 6 months old and in good condition, last used a week ago. Entry, exit was a North-South track. Located were 1x1000 lb bomb, 1x CBU, 1x empty 5" shell, 1000 rds 7.62 ammo linked, fishing tackle and a qty of documents. All destroyed.
- (22) 160800H at YS 835759 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice garden 3 months old and last tended 1-2 days ago. Tracks led to North, East and West.
- (23) 160900H at YS 845766 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice paddy 3 months old and last used 1 week ago. Well used track leads North.
- (24) 170830H at YS 855772 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden and pumpkin patch last tended a week ago - well used track to North.
- (25) 170900H at YS 845767 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden 200mx200m, last tended a week ago - well used track leads North.
- (26) 171300H at YS 826702 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden of 5 acres last tended a week ago. Track leads in from West.
- (27) 17100H at YS 825752 MASSEY FORCE loc 5 graves 6'x2'x3' - 2 graves together, 1 single 2-4 months old.
- (28) 180340H at YS 7865 HMAS HOBART reported small unidentified craft moving towards beach.
- (29) 180900H at YS 830760 MASSEY FORCE loc a garden consisting of three gardens covering an area of 10 acres - destroyed.
- (30) 181500H at YS 828758 MASSEY FORCE loc a bunker and a tunnel 80 ft long last used 6 months ago - destroyed.

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(31) 190810H at YS 741779 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed installation comprising 2 bunkers with 18" OHP and a hut, all in excellent condition, 2 months old and last used 2 days ago. Track lead East from bunker. Located were cooking stores, gardening tools clothing and misc items. Also loc at 736777 were four gardens covering large area. Tracks lead North, South, East and West. All destroyed.

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B Sqn 3 CAV REGT
NUI DAT

15 Oct 70

See Distribution List.

B Sqn 3 CAV REGT AFTER ACTION REPORT
OPERATION MASSEY-HARRIS

- References:
- A. 1 ATF Operation Instruction 35/70.
 - B. Vietnam, DAT DO, Sheet 6429-1, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - C. Vietnam, XUYEN MOC, Sheet 6430-11, series L7014, 1:50000.
 - D. Vietnam, BINH CHAU, sheet 6530-111, series L7014, 1:50000.

Name and Type of Operation

- 1. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was a food denial operation.

Dates

- 2. 29 Aug 70 to 20 Sep 70.

Location

- 3. AO SUSAN was bounded by the 70 Easting on the West, the 80 Northing on the North, the 87 Easting on the East and the South China Sea.

Control Headquarters

- 4. The operation was controlled initially by Tp HQ 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt and subsequently by Sqn HQ N Sqn 3 Cav Regt.
- 5. The Headquarters was located in NDP BEVERLY YS802709, NDP CATHERINE YS 832718 and NDP HEATHER YS 831753.

Officers Commanding

- 6. The officer appointed to command the operation was 54423 Capt W.J. PARKER, Comd, 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt. Subsequently on 14 Sep 70, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, 2IC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt was appointed officer commanding MASSEY FORCE.

Task Organisation

- 7. Operation MASSEY-HARRIS was controlled by Troop Headquarters 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt until 14 Sep 70 and then HQ B Sqn 3 Cav Regt provided the Second in Command of the Squadron, 51407 Capt R.K. HILL MC, to coordinate activities.

Supporting Forces

- 8. 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt had removed from its control for the duration of the operation, two of its APC sections, thus leaving only the HQ, one APC section and a section AMCs.
- 9. The supporting forces planned for this operations were as follows;

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- a. In Command
 - (1) 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt less two APC sections.
- b. Remaining under command
 - (1) One AMC sect,
 - (2) One ACV.
- c. Under Command
 - (1) One mor sect 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (2) MFC party 2RAR/NZ (ANZAC),
 - (3) One ground team 1 Psy Ops Unit.
- d. Under Opcon
 - (1) Two M548 TLC II FFV resources,
 - (2) Two M113 Flame APC II FFV resources,
 - (3) One tp A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (4) One Tk Dozer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (5) One ARV A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (6) One Tk Bridge Layer A Sqn 1 Armd Regt,
 - (7) One Combat Engineer Team 1 Fd Sqn,
 - (8) D&E Pl HQ 1 ATF,
 - (9) TFMA dets as required.
- e. In Direct Support
 - (1) One H13 helicopter 161 (Independent) Recce Flt.
- f. In Support and Under Command for Movement
 - (1) One naval gunfire det (US).
- g. In Support
 - (1) Naval guns as available,
 - (2) 9 Sqn RAAF as tasked,
 - (3) CH47 aircraft as tasked,
 - (4) Sig Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC if required,
 - (5) One rifle pl 2RAR/NZ(ANZAC) at one hour's notice to move by air from NUI DAT.

10. The above was the basic organisation used with the following variations;
- a. The two M548 TLC and the two M113 Flame APC's from II FFV were not provided. The non provision of the M548 TLC seriously hampered the operation.
 - b. The TFMA detachments were in the form of a detachment of 3 Air Dispatch pers from 176 Air Dispatch Coy RAASC and one POL attendant from 8 Pet Pl RAASC.
 - c. The Sigs Det (Retrans) at XUYEN MOC was not required, however a detachment of a Sgt and 2 Sigs from 104 Sig Sqn was provided to operate the Task Force command net and the secure means.
 - d. A detachment from 1 Fd Hygiene Coy was provided for the first week of the operation, but was withdrawn as it could not be employed in the role of spraying soil sterilants due to the incapacity of the force to transport

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sufficient quantities of water for the task. This transport was to have been provided by the M548 TLC's which were not available for the operation.

e. Also during the operation three SAS patrols were inserted into areas of specific interest, i.e. vacated NDP's and the general area of destroyed bunkers. These patrols were given AO's within SUSAN but they were controlled by HQ 1 ATF and were independent of MASSEY FORCE.

Employment of Support

11. a. APC's

(1) There were ten APC's deployed at the start of the operation; one, however, was lost on a mine on the first day. Remaining were four headquarters vehicles, one complete APC sect (3 vehicles) and a section of AMC's (2 vehicles).

(2) As mortars are not permitted to be fired from the AMC's the weapons were dismounted from the vehicles, thus freeing the two AMC's for employment as normal APC's. One of the headquarters vehicles (c/s 19M) was attached to the two AMC's, creating an APC section of three vehicles.

(3) This then allowed the employment of 2 APC sections with the headquarters vehicles as reserve.

b. Tanks

(1) The tank troop (3 tanks) was employed mainly as base defence. This allowed the more flexible APC's to be released for transportation and work party protection. It also provided the crews with time in which to repair and service their machines.

(2) The tank dozer was used on several occasions to help clear standing and felled trees from the gardens to facilitate the delivery of 44 gal drums by UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF. It was also used to push up bunds at the NDP's as protection for the NDP.

(3) The tank bridge-layer was used in its traditional role of bridging water obstacles. It was layed six times during the operation and greatly assisted the mobility of the force.

c. Engineers

(1) The twenty-two engineers of the Engineer Combat Team provided the bulk of the work force for the operation. An advisor to the force commander was provided, as well as an element to command the actual team. This provided the capacity to split the team and perform two tasks simultaneously.

(2) During the course of the operation the engineers cleared roads of mines, demolished semi-destroyed bridges to facilitate the employment of the tank bridge layer, prepared river banks by building abutments for the tank bridge layer and set up the gardens for demolition.

d. Signals

(1) The three man detachment provided operators for the Task Force Command net and operated the secure means.

e. Infantry

(1) D&E Pl suffered an early setback when a complete section was injured in an APC mine incident on the first day of the operation. This section was replaced by a section from 8RAR until D&E Pl could be brought up to strength again.

(2) D&E Pl was employed in securing a bridging site whilst the Engineers prepared it, securing gardens whilst they were destroyed and patrolling the areas surrounding the gardens. In this way they found and destroyed several bunkers and enemy living areas. They also detected two enemy who were trying to observe the destruction of the gardens but unfortunately they were unable to kill or capture them.

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f. Naval Gunfire

(1) Naval gunfire was employed principally on H&I targets and because of of intelligence, its effect was unable to be assessed. A Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities is attached as Annex A.

g. Helicopter Support

(1) All resupply was carried out by CH47 Helicopters with the assistance of 176 Air Dispatch Coy.

(2) 9 Sqn RAAF provided UH-1 Helicopters to transport 44 gal drums from the NDP's to the garden sites. They also assisted in "spotting" the drums in the exact position required for their demolition.

(3) In the latter part of the operation 9 Sqn RAAF dropped drums of diesel fuel and Mogas on to the gardens and ignited them with MG fire from the door gunners.

(4) The last gardens to be destroyed were in a remote part of the AO and the RAAF assisted by inserting and extracting D&E Pl, transporting and dropping the drums and providing gun ship support for both the insertion and extraction.

Intelligence

12. Prior to the commencement of the operation it was thought that the enemy in AO SUSAN were mainly Montagnards who were illegal residents together with a VC food production cell. The actual strength of the enemy was not known nor was there any identification of enemy formations or units operating in this area available. This information was given by Task Force Intelligence sources and from 1 Psy Ops Unit.

13. During the operation a number of bunker/camp systems were discovered which were in extremely good condition. They appeared to be related as they were all of 'T' construction with living huts built over them, and they gave the impression of having been constructed as transit camps for parties of up to 50 strong moving between the NUI MAY TAU area and the coast near BINH CHAU.

14. Documents found in bunkers - both near gardens and in the systems gave no indication of unit identities. They did however show that the task of the occupants was to produce food and catch fish. A number of fishing nets were captured and destroyed.

15. Also found in the bunkers on separate occasions were dismantled aerial bombs, home made blast grenades, an uncomplete bamboo switch, and a quantity of chicom explosives, which would indicate that the occupants were VC rather than illegal residents.

16. Only 5 enemy were sighted during the entire operation. Three of them were ambushed by SAS at NDP BEVERLY after the force had moved on. Two of these were killed and were carrying an M1 carbine and an M1 GARRAND .30 cal rifle. They carried no documents or identification.

17. The other two were seen trying to observe the garden destruction, These escaped and no identification was possible.

18. There was no indication of the permanent residence of a large enemy force.

19. Early in the operation Psy Ops Det distributed posters in the area urging the residents to rally to XUYEN MOC. However, these posters said that the force would destroy all of the gardens in the area, thus divulging the aim of the operation. Fortunately even with this information no aggressive enemy activity was noticed.

Mission

20. The mission as stated in 1 ATF Op Instr 35/70 was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas as briefed".

21. The tasks given were;

- a. Destroy all gardens, padi and produce in the specified areas.
- b. Destroy structures.
- c. Eliminate enemy who interfere with your mission. Care is to be taken

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to identify and differentiate between enemy and illegal residents. Any contact with bunker systems is to be broken immediately unless tank support can be provided.

d. Advise HQ 1 ATF immediately if illegal residents are detained.

22. From the above and the briefs given by the GSO2 (OPS) , it was deduced that the mission was "To destroy illegal crops and garden areas in AO SUSAN".

Concept of Operation

23. The operation was planned in four basic phases.

a. Phase 1

The move to NDP BEVERLY.

b. Phase 2

The establishment of NDP BEVERLY.

c. Phase 3

The destruction of gardens and crops, including the movement, as necessary, of the NDP.

d. Phase 4

The return to NUI DAT.

24. It was planned that there were to be two destruction teams operating, each having 3 APC's, half of the D&E Pl, half of the Engineer combat team and half of the detachment of 1 Hygiene Coy. The tanks were to provide the base defence element with the remainder of the APC's, and the Psy Ops team was to be held at the NDP to be deployed as necessary.

25. The planned destruction technique was to burn off all the surface growth and then spray the ground with a soil sterilant, thus destroying the growing crop and preventing further use of the ground for 12-14 months. The plan was arrived at in conjunction with 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) and the 1 ATF Hygiene Officer. Testing was undertaken by 1 Fd Sqn (RAE) to determine the optimum method of destroying wet and dry padi.

26. The burning was to be done by placing alternate drums of diesel fuel and Mogas fifteen paces apart (16 drums per acre of crop or garden), and place 2lbs of explosive on top of each drum and 1lb underneath. The whole lot was to detonate simulataeously, creating an extremely fierce fire and allc..ing the residue of the diesel fuel to spoil any growth not burnt and to assist in the souring of the soil.

27. The sterilisation of the soil was to be done by the Fd Hygiene Det spraying a powder/water mixture from the TLC's onto the soil. This would require a large quantity of water.

28. While the burning and sterilizing was being done the APC's were to provide security and if necessary transport.

29. The D&E Pl were to patrol the area around the garden to provide security and where possible, personnel to assist in garden work.

30. The Engineers were to set up the drums and demolitions and to explode the charges.

Execution

31. A briefing was held at HQ 1 ATF on 22 Aug 70, at which the staff and unit representatives advised the capacities and assistance they would lend to Operation MASSEY-HARRIS.

32. Following the briefing, 1 ATF Operation Instruction Number 35/70 was produced on 23 Aug 70.

33. The Force Commander gave verbal orders at B SQN 3 CAV REGT at 0830 on 27 Aug 70. Confirmatory notes were issued.

34. The start of the operation was delayed by 24 hrs because the tank troop was extracting itself from boggy ground elsewhere, and the operation commenced on 29

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35. A visual air reconnaissance had been flown of the route to be travelled prior to the operation; however, detailed reconnaissance on 28 Aug 70 indicated that a great deal of engineer effort on the crossing at grid YS 827713 would be necessary before the armoured vehicles could cross, as the river was flowing swiftly at a depth of approximately 5'6".

36. Consequently it was decided to establish NDP BEVERLY at YS 802709 and to destroy as many gardens on the WESTERN side of the Soui Chau as possible before crossing. The priority however, was to cross the river as quickly as possible.

37. On 30 Aug a build up of stores, supplies and equipment was made at "Beverly" using CH47 helicopters and the NDP establishment.

38. On 31 Aug, an engineer reconnaissance was carried out, on the ground, at the crossing, protection being provided by the D&E Platoon. Whilst this was being undertaken the destruction of gardens commenced on the WESTERN side of the stream.

39. Destruction of gardens and reconnaissance using the H13 continued on 1 Sep. It was also decided that the tank dozer was necessary to continue the construction of the crossing.

40. The tank dozer, escorted by three APC's, left NDP BEVERLY on 2 Sep. The dozer bogged approaching a creek crossing at YS 816705, was eventually recovered and the bridgelayer sent forward to span the gap. The bridge was laid and the dozer crossed, but a short distance further on it ran off the road and became seriously bogged.

41. This bogging required that most of the force resources be used for protection and recovery assistance at the bridge site. The D&E Pl were able to carry out local patrolling which resulted in the discovery and destruction of a bunker system on 5 Sep.

42. Also on 5 Sep two SAS Patrols were flown into BEVERLY, to be inserted into two separate AO's within AO SUSAN when the NDP crossed the Soui Chau.

43. The tank dozer was finally extracted and reached the main crossing late in the afternoon. After a small amount of dozing it once again bogged and a request was made for a size '0' dozer to be flown into the site to complete the task.

44. One of the SAS patrols had been given the task of destroying a well at YS 786723, which was outside of their allotted AO. As the resources were available an APC Section was detailed on the 6 Sep to take the patrol to that grid reference to destroy the well.

43. Whilst en route to the well two bunker systems were discovered. They were destroyed and the destruction of the well was achieved on 7 Sep. A bunker system was found near the well.

44. The size '0' dozer arrived on 7 Sep; by 1830 hrs the work was completed, the dozer in position and the crossing secure.

45. On 8 Sep the NDP was moved across the bridge and the Soui Chau to NDP CATHERINE at YS 832718. The SAS Patrols were also inserted, one at BEVERLY and the other at YS 7770.

46. On 9 Sep garden destruction resumed and the SAS Patrol remaining at BEVERLY contacted 3 VC who were scavenging the rubbish pit. Two of these VC were killed but without any unit identification.

47. On 10 Sep two fishing boats were sighted outside the civilian access area. Two of the occupants were detained for further interrogation, one as a suspected ARVN deserter and the other a suspected draft dodger. Destruction of gardens continued.

48. Around most gardens protective bunkers were found, containing a variety of utensils and equipment including explosives. These were destroyed.

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49. Also on 10 Sep the D&E Pl surprised two enemy who were trying to observe the garden demolitions. There was no result from this contact.
50. The destruction of gardens continued and on 14 Sep Capt R.K. HILL MC was inserted to co-ordinate the operation.
51. On 15 Sep the NDP was moved to YS 831753 "HEATHER".
52. Demolition of the illegal gardens continued in the normal manner until 18 Sep, when RAAF helicopters dropped drums of diesel fuel and petrol onto the gardens and ignited them with machine gun fire.
53. On 19 Sep D&E Pl and a det of engineers were air assaulted into gardens in the NORTH WEST of the AO. Four gardens and some nearby bunkers were subsequently destroyed.
54. While this was going on the remainder of the force closed HEATHER and returned to NDP BEVERLY.
5. On 20 Sep the entire force departed BEVERLY and returned to NUI DAT, arriving at 1500 hrs.
56. A summary of contacts and incidents is attached as Annex B.

Results

57. The following losses were sustained by MASSEY FORCE:

1x APC
1x Bushman Scout KIA
10x Aust WIA.

These losses were caused by an anti tank mine, detonated on the first day of the operation.

58. The following losses were sustained by the enemy:

2x VC KIA (Body Count).
1x M1 Carbine CIA.
1x Garrand Rifle CIA.
1x ARVN deserter (suspect) arrested.
1x Draft dodger (suspect) arrested.
Approx 85½ acres of rice and vegetable gardens destroyed.
Approx 10x fishing nets.
2x 1000 lb aerial bombs.
10x Blast grenade.
10 lbs Chicon explosive.
A quantity of medical supplies.
A quantity of garden tools.

Administrative Matters

59. General. It became paramount for the field equipment administrative commander to remain completely conversant with operational requirements. Frequent briefings by the force commander were essential.

60. Maintenance. As this type of food denial operation requires so many specialist organisations, continual and heavy administrative support by both units under comd and the TFMA is necessary for the force to remain completely effective.

61. Because of the remote locale of the VC food production areas, daily maintenance and destruction equipment were required to be flown into the area. This resulted in heavy aircraft requirements, particularly CH47's; these tend to be

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unreliable, being prone to maintenance breakdowns and late arrival from LONG BINH. These aircraft also lack flexibility when the relocation or crossloading of stores is necessary. It would appear that a more detailed briefing of air crews would keep them conversant with the situation and the requirements of the ground forces.

62. This also applies to RAAF UH-1H support, but it was found that co-operation towards the conclusion of the operation became excellent, due to interest developed in the operation by the pilots.

63. Heavy demands on stores and aircraft to move them necessitates detailed co-ordination between the rear elements of units under command and the administrative echelon of the commanding unit. Those units which on one or two occasions failed to co-ordinate/co-operate in this area caused both confusion and uneconomical use of aircraft both in rear and field areas.

64. Evacuation of Casualties. There was one mine incident during the operation resulting in one friendly KIA and several friendly WIA. The system of calling for DUSTOFF is good and reaction times at 1ATF excellent. However some delay was experienced as DUSTOFF pilots seem loath to navigate accurately, tending to rely too heavily on visual identification and smoke.

65. With so many aircraft in the area, hospitalization of sick and routine injuries could be effected quickly on an opportunity backload basis. The DS Possum was used in this manner a number of times.

66. Transportation was effected easily by the APC's and in some cases the tanks, but neither are built to carry 44 gallon drums of dieso/Mogas, which were used for destruction. The APC's were only capable of carrying 3x 44s and were difficult to load, leading to an increased working schedule and inefficient use of manpower. TLC's would alleviate this problem almost entirely and should be considered an essential addition on future operations of this nature.

Communications

67. Nets to be maintained were:

- (a) TF Comd (Secure).
- (b) TF Comd.
- (c) Sqn Comd.
- (d) Naval GF (to Arty Tac).
- (e) Internal Net.

68. Due to the remoteness of the area, 292 antennae's were found to be essential to ensure communications to NUI DAT.

69. The distances involved and the level of the command nets demanded continued maintenance of reliable communications. The only satisfactory method is to use an M577 ACV, which has the required number and types of radio sets to ensure good communications.

Special Equipment and Techniques

70. Burning of Gardens proved a very effective method of destruction, and on dry gardens or dry rice it can produce 100% results.

71. It was found that 44 gal drums of diesel fuel and 44 gal drums of either petrol or jet fuel, simultaneously detonated, gave the desired result and the most effective system was to have at least 50% of the drums containing diesel fuel - although it is considered that the percentage could be as high as 70% - and the remainder containing petrol.

72. The drums were set up 15 paces apart, with alternate drums of petrol and diesel fuel. This created a consumption of 16 drums (8 diesel fuel and 8 petrol) per acre of crop. On the top of each drum was set 2lbs of explosive and on the bottom of each drum was set 1lb of explosive. All of the explosive set on all of the drums in each garden was connected by a ring main of detonation cord, which allowed simultaneous detonation of the entire garden. This simultaneous detonation

produced an intensely hot fireball which consumed living vegetation in it. It also produced a residue of diesel fuel which was sprayed, by the force of the explosion, over any vegetation outside the radius of the fire ball, killing any plant it fell on within 2 days.

73. Hence, for each acre of garden to be destroyed by this method, the following stores are required.

- a. 8x 44 gal drums diesel fuel.
- b. 8x 44 gal drums petrol.
- c. 48 lbs explosive (C4 or TNT).
- d. 4x rolls black insulation tape.
- e. 3x rolls detonation cord.
- f. 5 detonators, non-electric.
- g. 10 ft slow burning fuse.

74. Spraying of Gardens with Diesel Fuel. This method is more economical in materials than the exploding drum technique, and, as the tracked load carriers were not available, a spraying system was devised for use on an APC.

75. This consisted of a normal 50 gal per minute pump sitting on the lowered ramp of an APC. The ramp was supported from the locking lugs, by chains, to the roof of the vehicle, thereby removing any strain from the ramp cable. Three 44 gal drums of diesel fuel were placed in the back of the APC and the inlet pipe of the pump placed in one of the drums. The outlet was divided to provide two sprays. (These were made from garden hose with a shower rose attached as the spray nozzle).

76. The APC was driven at approximately 2 mph; with the two sprays in operation an area of approximately 40 metres by 10 metres was covered by each drum of diesel fuel, producing a consumption rate of approximately 10-12 drums per acre.

77. The vegetation sprayed died within two days of spraying. (However no rain fell during this time to wash the fuel from the leaves). After spraying, the fuel can be ignited by exploding drums of petrol placed approximately thirty paces apart.

78. Although spraying produced 100% destruction of all vegetation above ground in dry gardens, the method is not recommended due to the strain placed on the unbraced ramp hinges.

79. Aerial Dropping and Destruction. Used on two gardens toward the end of the operation, the technique employed was for UH-1H helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF to drop drums of diesel fuel and petrol from a height of 50-100 ft onto the gardens. Impact burst the drums and sprayed the contents onto the gardens. If the impact did not ignite the fuel ignition was caused by the door gunner of the helicopter firing tracer ammunition into it.

80. Though this method did not create a fire ball effect and the spread of the fuel was not as great as that achieved by either of the other methods, it should not be completely disregarded as an effective technique if the gardens to be destroyed are inaccessible to armour or infantry.

81. Digging up Crops. Any of the above methods were quite effective on dry surface crops, but difficulty was encountered in the destruction of root crops such as potatoes and wet paddy. In both cases the yield of the crop was severely reduced to the order of approximately 30% of the expected yield, but without the use of herbicides the only certain method of destruction is to pull up the roots of the crop, heap and burn.

82. Aerial Delivery and Positioning of Drums. The UH-1 helicopters of 9 Sqn RAAF were invaluable in this facet of the operation. They were used to transport slung loads of 5 drums to the garden sites where, if the area was clear of obstruction, they were able to position the drums in the exact place required for demolition. They also assisted in lifting drums (delivered by CH47) around for final positioning and reducing soldier fatigue considerably.

83. Lessons Learnt. In the command of a force such as MASSEY FORCE it is necessary to have a commander/co-ordinator who is entirely divorced from the actual command of any of the elements employed in the force. This allows him freedom of time and thought

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to concentrate on all facets of the operation.

84. The force deployed on Operation MASSEY-HARRIS did not have sufficient ground transport in the form of load carrying vehicles. Had two tracked load carriers been made available as planned, the necessity for the amount of UH-1 support required to transport drums from the NDP to the gardens would have been greatly reduced. It would also have allowed the spraying of crops with herbicides, or diesel fuel as appropriate, to ensure 100% destruction. Adequate ground transport must be provided to support operations of this nature.

85. Work of this nature i.e. the manhandling of 44 gal drums, the preparation of LZ's and patrolling physically tax the soldiers' endurance. This naturally reduces their capacity to perform, their specialist tasks to the degree of efficiency expected. This is supported by the incident where two enemy were found within 15 metres of a work party. Thus the size of the 'work' force should have been larger - one or two platoons of Vietnamese used as labourers would have overcome this problem.

86. Commanders should be given a translation of all Psyops posters and leaflets before they are dispersed. During this operation one of the posters urging illegal residents to rally gave the information that all gardens would be destroyed. This virtually compromised the operation's mission; fortunately however, no reaction was observed.

Commander's Analysis

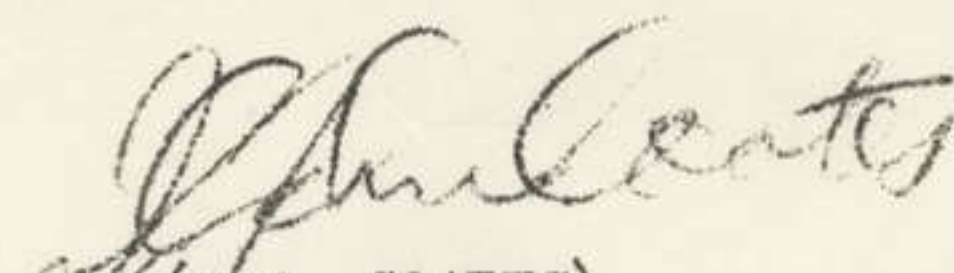
87. The operation achieved its mission. However, before operations of this nature are undertaken in the future, more research should be made into the methods of crop destruction, the means available, and the time of year at which it is undertaken. With the exception of root crops e.g. tubers, which have a short growing time, the best period for destruction of padi either "wet" or "dry" is November/December i.e. between the end of the "wet" and maturity of the rice which occurs in January.

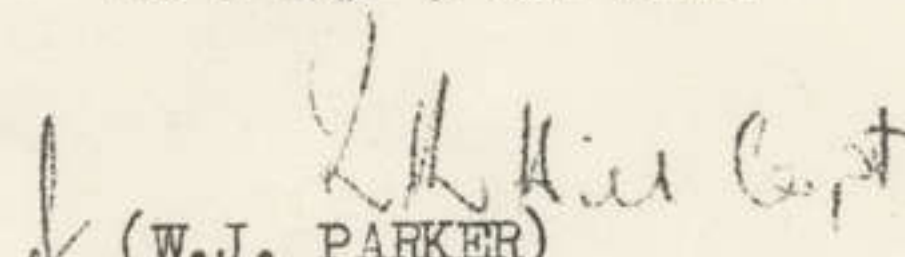
88. The force may have been able to achieve its aim more quickly had it been composed of a complete APC troop with two platoons of Australian infantry and two platoons of Vietnamese to act as labourers.

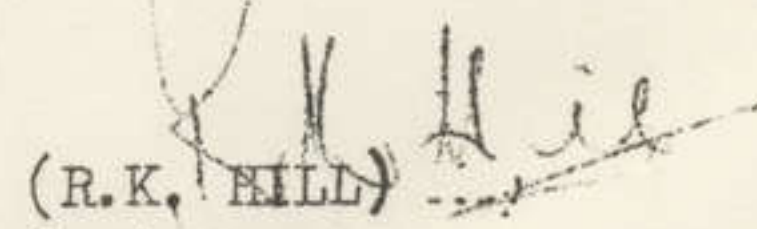
Comments of OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt

89. The experience gained from this operation has shown that command of the operation should have been vested in the OC B Sqn 3 Cav Regt; whether the OC or an officer appointed by him physically commanded the force on the ground is immaterial. The operational directive should be addressed to him as the commander of the unit responsible for the administration and operational support of the force.

90. Operations designed to effect semi-permanent sterility of the soil, as distinct from immediate destruction of the crop, are not worth the additional effort involved. In almost every area treated the enemy could easily have established any number of alternative garden sites. Short of sterilizing whole regions, which for a variety of reasons is neither feasible nor advisable, the optimum solution is to wait until a crop appears and **then** destroy it.


(H.J. COATES)
Maj
OC B SQN 3 CAV REGT


(W.J. PARKER)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
29 Aug-14 Sep 70


(R.K. HILL)
Capt
OC MASSEY FORCE
14 Sep-20 Sep 70

Annexures:

- Annex A. Report on Naval Gunfire Support,
- B. Contact/Incident Log

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Annex A to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

NAVAL GUNFIRE LIAISON SPOT TEAM 3-2
1st Air and Naval Gunfire Liaison Company
Fleet Marine Force
APO San Francisco 96309

Summary of Naval Gunfire Support Activities
Operation Massey Harris

Naval gunfire support was provided to Operation Massey-Harris by this unit. HGF support ships involved were the USS Buck (c/s FAVOUR), the USS Lloyd Thomas (c/s BAIT HOOK), and the HMAS Hobart (c/s PACIFIC OCEAN).

Utilized were area preparatory fires, pre-planned point and area neutralization fires, and nightly H&I fires. Ships were in position to provide close support if necessary, except when they were receiving fuel, stores, or ammunition resupply, and on two occasions when high priority daytime targets were fired in the Nui Long Hai area.

During phase one of the operation selected objective areas were well covered and neutralized by prep fires. Beginning on the first night H&I missions were fired nightly except for the time period following the accident aboard the USS Lloyd Thomas which rendered her unserviceable.

There were pre-planned missions fired within AO Susan daily for the first ten days of the operation, but only occasionally thereafter due to nonavailability of suitable targets within the AO and higher priorities elsewhere. Fires out of the AO were planned so as to keep the NGF support always in position to support the operation if needed.

Respectfully submitted
Jay M. Bernstein
Sgt USMC

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Annex B to
B SQN 3 CAV REGT
After Action Report
Operation MASSEY HARRIS
of Oct 70

CONTACTS AND INCIDENTS
OPERATION MASSEY HARRIS

Contacts

(1) 291315H at YS 791690 det of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt detonated a 30 lb mine. Results 1 Bushman Scout KIA, 10 Aust WIA, 1 APC extensively damaged.

(2) 091320H at NDP BEVERLY YS 802709 a SAS patrol ambushing the site of the vacated NDP contacted 3 VC. Results 2 VC KIA (BC) one M1 Carbine and one Garrand Rifle. CIA No identification of VC unit.

Incidents

(1) 310650H D&E Pl reported MG fire coming from approx YS 826703 - area engaged with mor fire nil results.

(2) 311240H at YS 803714 sect of 1 Tp B Sqn 3 Cav Regt loc a garden area with one bunker, over an area of 1 acre. Last activity 18-24 hrs prior to discovery. Recovered were a small qty of documents, food, cooking utensils and tools, garden and bunker were destroyed.

(3) 011230H at YS 787695 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed 2 VC garden areas linked by a track with protective bunkers. Gardens were in good condition and last tended two days ago. Destroyed by fire.

(4) 011900H at YS 783693 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a VC rice field 100mx40m.

(5) 021000H at YS 791711 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed an illegal rice paddy in good condition and last tended 36 hrs earlier.

(6) 031718H at YS 826706 B/3/Cav Regt loc paddies and gardens tended 12 hrs before. Gardens in good condition, destroyed by burning.

(7) 051846H at 827707 D&E Pl loc a bunker system consisting of 3 bunkers with 18" OHP. A qty of small miscellaneous eqpt incl a bag of salt and letters were found. System destroyed(?)

(8) 061200H at 780696 3Tp 1 Armd Regt loc and destroyed a system of 15 bunkers with 2' OHP and 12 huts in an area 200mx300m. The system was good condition, est to be six months old and last used 1 month ago. Tracks into the system incl 2 from South, 4 from the East, 2 from the West and 1 main track from the North. Located in the system was a qty of eqpt and a small qty of documents.

(9) 061410H at YS 778705 1/B/3 Cav Regt loc and destroyed a system of 9 bunkers with 3' OHP and 1 uncompleted well, in good condition and last used 24-36 hrs earlier. Entry was from the South. Recovered were a qty of documents indicate liaison between XUYEN MOC District, BINH CHAU Production Unit and a Rear Svcs Unit either 84 RSG or BA LONG.

(10) 071045H at 785732 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed 5 bunkers 68x2'x2½' with 18" OHP and 1 lean to. System 6 to 7 months old used 2-3 weeks ago and 2-3 days by small gps, in fair condition found were 2 US Mugs, 1x M16 mine fuze, 1x M1 mag, clothing and med sups.

(11) 071145H at YS 7876732 MASSEY FORCE loc a well 2'x3'x3' in good condition and used 5-7 days before. Found were 8 soft drink tins, 6 filled with plastic explosive and two others half filled. Well and explosive destroyed.

(12) 100800H at YS 828712, MASSEY FORCE loc rice paddies covering 3½ acres and in

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good condition, 2 months old, activity 3 weeks ago. Tracks led East and West. Destroyed.

- (13) 100930H at 7865, 18 persons detained fishing outside civilian access. After investigation 16 released, one suspect deserter ARVN and one Jraft dodger handed to NP.
- (14) 10125H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc installation comprising 3 bunkers and 3 pits with 18" OHP with a hut on top, a number of ni resting places and a garden. System 2 months old and in excellent condition. Last used 2 weeks ago with signs of people in last 2 days. Tracks to South and West. Recovered were 3 live chooks, 1x5" shell, 1x1000 lb bomb with some explosive removed, food condiments, cooking gear and fishing tackle. System destroyed (?)
- (15) 110945H at YS 747617 VR sighted tracks of 10 pers across beach moving into scrub.
- (16) 1109045H at YS 731612 VR sighted tracks 1-2 pers moving across beach into the scrub.
- (17) 11400H at YS 838745 MASSEY FORCE loc a hut with bunker beneath with 2½' OHP and entry from the South. Two tracks loc in the area, main East to West and another from the North. The hut and bunker est 6 months old last used 2 weeks ago and in good condition. In the hut were a qty of cooking utensils and 4 stools. All destroyed.
- (18) 131000H at YS 826745 MASSEY FORCE destroyed a small potato crop est last tended two weeks ago. Numerous tracks in the area.
- (19) 111500H at YS 829743 MASSEY FORCE located a large illegal garden area, est last tended 1 week ago. In the area were 4x 1 man bunker with 1' OHP and numerous tracks. To be destroyed.
- (20) 151000H at 845745 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a month old garden 100mx100m, last tended 1 month ago.
- (21) 151430H at 827758 MASSEY FORCE loc an installation comprising a hut, bunker with 18" OHP, and a garden. System was 6 months old and in good condition, last used a week ago. Entry, exit was a North-South track. Located were 1x1000 lb bomb, 1x CBU, 1x empty 5" shell, 1000 rds 7.62 ammo linked, fishing tackle and a qty of documents. All destroyed.
- (22) 160800H at YS 835759 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice garden 3 months old and last tended 1-2 days ago. Tracks led to North, East and West.
- (23) 160900H at YS 845766 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed rice paddy 3 months old and last used 1 week ago. Well used track leads North.
- (24) 170830H at YS 855772 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden and pumpkin patch last tended a week ago - well used track to North.
- (25) 170900H at YS 845767 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden 200mx200m, last tended a week ago - well used track leads North.
- (26) 171300H at YS 826702 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed a rice garden of 5 acres last tended a week ago. Track leads in from West.
- (27) 17100H at YS 825752 MASSEY FORCE loc 5 graves 6'x2'x3' - 2 graves together, 1 single 2-4 months old.
- (28) 180340H at YS 7865 HMAS HOBART reported small unidentified craft moving towards beach.
- (29) 180900H at YS 830760 MASSEY FORCE loc a garden consisting of three gardens covering an area of 10 acres - destroyed.
- (30) 181500H at YS 828758 MASSEY FORCE loc a bunker and a tunnel 80 ft long last used 6 months ago - destroyed.

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(31) 90810H at YS 741779 MASSEY FORCE loc and destroyed installation comprising 2 bunkers with 18" OHP and a hut, all in excellent condition, 2 months old and last used 2 days ago. Track lead East from bunker. Located were cooking stores, gardening tools clothing and misc items. Also loc at 736777 were four gardens covering large area. Tracks lead North, South, East and West. All destroyed.

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