

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
HEADQUARTERS, 52D COMBAT AVIATION BATTALION
APO SAN FRANCISCO 96318

AVGD-CC

10 May 1969

SUBJECT: Operational report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,
RCS-CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

Section I - Significant Organization Activities

1. (C) General:

This report covers the period 1 February 1968 through 30 April 1968, and is submitted in compliance with Headquarters, I Field Forces Vietnam Regulation 1-3, dated 23 March 1967, and Headquarters, 17th Combat Aviation Group Regulation 1-3, dated 12 July 1967.

a. Mission: The mission of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion is to command those units assigned and attached to it and provide aviation support as directed by the 17th Combat Aviation Group to U.S. Forces, Republic of Vietnam Forces, and Free World Assistance Forces. Priority has been to 4th Infantry Division, 22d, 23d & 24th Infantry Divisions, Army of the Republic of Vietnam, 5th Special Forces Group (Airborne) and other units of I Field Forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone.

b. Station Plan: The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion is located at Camp Holloway, Pleiku RVN and is commanded by LTC Raymond G. Lehman Jr. Subordinate elements of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion are: (Detailed list of assigned and attached units are shown in Inclosure 1.)

(1) Headquarters & Headquarters Detachment Camp Holloway, Pleiku RVN.

(2) 57th Assault Helicopter Company, Kontum, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Helicopters.

(3) 119th Assault Helicopter Company, Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Helicopters.

(4) 155th Assault Helicopter Company, Camp Coryell, Pan Me Thuot, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Helicopters.

(5) 170th Assault Helicopter Company, Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Helicopters.

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(6) 189th Assault Helicopter Company, Camp Holloway, Pleiku, RVN.
Equipped with UH-1H and UH-1C(A) Helicopters.

(7) 179th Assault Support Helicopter Company, Camp Holloway, Pleiku
RVN. Equipped with CH-47A Helicopters.

(8) 355th Assault Support Helicopter Company (Heavy), Camp Holloway
Pleiku, RVN. Equipped with CH-54A Helicopters

c. Type aircraft authorized and on hand as of 30 April 1968:

	AUTH	ON HAND
(1) UH-1H	115	89
(2) UH-1C(A)	40	35
(3) UH-1C	2	0
(4) CH-47A	16	16
(5) CH-54A	9	3
(6) U-6A	1	1

See Incl 2 Recapitulation of Flying Hours (U) and Aircraft
Availability (U).

2. (C) Intelligence: The S-2 section continued publication of the
daily intelligence report with the addition of two other recipients of
the report. On 7 April 1968 the S-2 was given authority to grant inter-
im secret and top secret clearances, final secret clearances and to val-
idate secret and top secret clearances.

A. Enemy activity. The general TET Offensive which started on 30
January reported in ORLL for Nov 67 - Jan 68, continued into this re-
porting period. Contact in all major cities, Kontum, Pleiku, and Ban
Me Thuot was continuous through 5 Feb 68. Kontum was taken under enemy
mortar and 122mm rocket attack on 1 Feb. A combination ground and mor-
tar/rocket attack was launched against the city on 2 Feb and a 122mm
rocket attack on both 3 and 4 Feb. The city was secured on 4 Feb. In-
terrogation of PW's and document analysis subsequently determined all
3 Bn's of the 24th NVA Regiment, MR5, the 304th Local Force Bn and the
406th Sapper Bn were involved in the attack. Elements of the 40th
Artillery were attached to the 24th Regiment for rocket support. All
3 major units participating in the attack suffered approximately 50%
personnel casualties. One Russian model LPO flamethrower was captured
during the city fighting, the first indication of this weapon in Regi-
mental units in the highlands area. Fighting in Pleiku began 30 Jan
with the mortaring of the 937th Engineer Compound.

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Camp Holloway came under enemy mortar fire and a ground attack at 0305 and by 0330 action throughout the city was heavy. During the daylight hours, 3d ARVN Cav and 52d Avn Gunships were credited with killing 45 enemy of a unit located in a valley just west of Camp Holloway. Fighting continued through 1 Feb. On 2 Feb, Camp Holloway came under mortar and 122mm rocket fire approximately 0420, sustaining 15 WIA and considerable damage. On 2 Feb, 3d ARVN Cav, with the support of gunships from the 52d Avn Bn, 4th Div, and aircraft from 219th RAC succeeded in trapping the H-15 Local Force Bn on the SW entry to the city and in the ensuing action literally destroyed the H-15 Bn, accounting for 206 enemy KIA and 36 PW's. At 031240, Camp Holloway again came under enemy rocket attack with negative casualties. By 4 February the city was secure, units taking part in the Pleiku portion of the TET Offensive included the H-15 Local Force Bn, 408th Sapper Bn, 21st Det of the K-28 Sapper Bn, 3d, 4th and 9th VC District Local Forces Co's, 6th and 7th District Local Force Platoons, and possibly the 5th VC District Local Force Co's. It was later determined that the main attack against Pleiku was to take place on 2 Feb, using the 32d NVA Regt and the 4th Bn, 95B NVA Regt which waited in an area 15 to 20 KM's west of Pleiku. Destruction of the H-15 Bn (lead element for the attack) caused Commitment of the two NVA units to be cancelled. By far the greatest loss to the VC in Pleiku was the hundreds of valuable Local Force personnel and guerrilla cadre thrown into the battle awaiting commitment of the NVA units. In Darlac, fighting centered in and around Ban Me Thout City. The first attack was made on 30 Jan at 0156 hours. During the day all friendly elements in Ban Me Thout came under ground, mortar, and rocket attacks. By 0915 hours the VC occupied a large percentage of the city and areas of nearby villages which were attacked early in the day. On 31 Jan the VC unleashed a ground and mortar attack against Ban Me Thout airfield. The majority of VC in Ban Me Thout City at this time were Local Force. On 1 Feb contact was made by friendly forces with an estimated NVA Regt headed for Ban Me Thout, located approximately 13 km SSW of the city. Heavy contact lasted throughout the night in Ban Me Thout and on 2 Feb elements of the 173d Abn Bde were sent into town to reinforce. On 4 Feb there were still an estimated two VC Co's in the city. On 5 Feb at 0154 Ban Me Thout Airfield received 20 rounds of 60 mm mortar fire, and between 0154 and 0517 another 110 + rounds of mortar fire impacted in the city. The 155th AMC was again mortared at 052300 as was Ban Me Thout East Airfield and 23d ARVN Div supply point. By 6 Feb large numbers of VC were leaving the area and the city was relatively secure by the evening hours. Units participating in the battle included the 33d NVA Regiment, 301st Local Force Bn, 401st Local Force Bn (no information on this unit prior to the TET Offensive), the 39th Main Force Bn, K101 NVA Bn (Both of which reportedly had been integrated into the 33d Regt), the 5th and 6th Local Force Companies and rocket elements of the 40th Artillery Regiment. Since the end of the TET Offensive, sporadic attacks by fire have been conducted against 52d Avn elements in Pleiku, Kontum, and Ban Me Thout cities. On 6 Feb Camp Holloway received approximately 20 rounds of 122mm rockets causing light damage

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and no personnel casualties. On 8 Feb, Camp Holloway was taken under fire by an unknown number of VC using 82mm mortars. All rounds landed outside the perimeter at 0210. On 10 Feb Holloway received 120-140 82mm mortar rounds from vic AR 827 490. Results for this attack were 1 US KIA, 46 US WIA, and damage to numerous aircraft, vehicles, and buildings. On 18 Feb, 58th AHC, Kontum received approximately 50 rounds of 82mm mortar fire with no damage or casualties. On 230200 Feb, the 155th AHC in Ban Me Thuot received an estimated 75 rounds of mortar fire with negative personnel damage and light damage to UH-1H. At 260255 Feb, Camp Holloway received approximately 70 rounds of mortar fire resulting in 11 US WIA, one POL tanker destroyed, one 2 1/2 ton van damaged and extensive damage to buildings in the compound. On 4 March there were widespread attacks by fire with Ban Me Thuot, Ban Het, Dak To, Kontum, and Camp Enari being the main targets. Kontum airfield received seventeen 122mm rockets from the northeast at 0300, with negative damage. At 0205, multiple targets in Ban Me Thuot received an unknown number of mortar rounds. The 155th AHC suffered one KIA, 32 WIA and one UH-1C destroyed. On 5 March, within a four minute period, three targets in Pleiku were mortared by the VC. At 0315, the 937th Engr compound and the 330th RRU compound received approximately 17 and 15 rounds of 82mm mortar fire respectively, results were nine WIA in the 937th Engrs and three WIA in the 330th RRU. At 0318 hours Camp Holloway received approximately 40 rounds of 82mm fire, seven personnel were WIA and extensive damage to buildings and billeting areas in the compound. An item of interest in this attack was the probable use of 82mm mortar rounds which were used, minus the CS agent for delivery of hundreds of anti-Vietnam war propaganda leaflets. The leaflets were evidently printed in early 1967 in North Vietnam for use in the I Corp area. On 0614Z March, Camp Holloway was again the target, receiving approximately 30 rounds with two US WIA, major damage to one Helicopter, minor damage to two others and extensive vehicular damage. At 100100 March Camp Holloway received 43 rounds of 82mm mortar fire resulting in 13 US WIA (10 from the 80th S&S Bn). During the mortar attack the VC succeeded in penetrating the 815th Engr Bn perimeter in the Holloway AO and set scattered charges resulting in one US KIA, two US WIA and extensive damage to engineer equipment. Two VC were killed by small arms within the perimeter. Max Pleiku Airbase was also taken under fire by enemy mortars during the same period with no US casualties and light damage to two "spooky" aircraft. On 132227 Mar, Ban Me Thuot City received approximately 200 rounds of mortar fire, 51 of which impacted in the 155th AHC area. Friendly losses were one KIA and 10 WIA. At 172255 Mar, Kontum City received 36 rounds 122mm rocket fire. Rounds impacted within the vicinity of the 24th STZ Hq, 299th Engr, 2/1 Cav, 57th AHC and 503 Abn Inf Bn. Negative US casualties were reported. Kontum airfield was again taken under fire by rockets with 3 attacks in rapid succession at 202350, 210400 and 211245 April. There were no personnel casualties, and light damage to one UH-1C, one truck and the 57th AHC mess hall. At 241802 Mar the 57th AHC received three rds of 122mm rocket fire which impacted outside the companies west perimeter

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causing negative casualties or damage. At 262310 March, Ban Me Thuot 155th ARG received and unknown number of mortar rounds with negative US casualties. At 290145 March an ammo pad located in the ARVN ASF was tenated by Sapper Personnel. At 0200 Camp Holloway received 33 rounds of 82mm mortar fire, resulting in three WIA's, one UH-1H destroyed, three UH-1C and three UH-1H moderate damage, three UH-1C, six UH-1H and one O-1 light damage and light damage to the control tower and several buildings. Enemy activity against 52d Aviation units in April was light. On 4 April, a coordinated sapper-mortar attack was launched against Camp Holloway and the 815th Engineer Compound in the Holloway AO. Sappers attempted to enter the engineer perimeter at 0105, eight NVA were killed in the wires. At 0117 Camp Holloway was taken under mortar attack, receiving approximately 35-40 rounds. No personnel casualties were sustained. A 52d security detachment patrol immediately took the mortar positions under fire with gunships supporting. Four more NVA were killed at the mortar sites and one wounded NVA captured. Material captured at both the quarry and the mortar positions included one 82mm mortar tube and base plate, ten unexpended mortar rounds, three AK-47's, one D40 RK T/three rounds, 31 satchel charges, numerous grenades, and a complete company sized med-Scal kit. Tentative identification of the NVA unit involved is the 408th Bn based on one infiltration pass taken from one KIA at the mortar site. Interrogation of the IW was not possible due to paralysis from brain damage. On 14 April at 2330 hours the VC made another attempt to mortar Camp Holloway. Alert radar crews, however, picked up movement and counter-mortar fire and small arms fire was brought on the area. The VC left before firing any rounds. A sweep was brought on the area on 15 April revealed three prepared mortar positions and approximately sixty 82mm fuze well plugs. The VC returned on the night of 16 April and mortared 815th Engineer Bn at the rock quarry. The last attack on a 52d unit during the reporting period took place on 26 April at 2315 hours. The 155th ARG received from 40-60 rounds of 82mm mortar fire from positions approximately one kilometer NW of the airfield. Results of the attack were nine U.S. WIA, three UH-1H heavy damage, one UH-1C, one UH-1H and one UH-1D moderate damage. Numerous attacks by fire on friendly installations in the Kontum, Pleiku, and Ban Me Thuot areas were recorded during the reporting period which did not involve 52d Aviation units.

b. MOVEMENTS

During the reporting period there was a significant shift of enemy forces in the highlands area. In early February, the 174th Regiment, after attacking Tan Canh on 4 February, moved South to positions East and West of Highway 14N between Pleiku and Kontum and between mid February and mid March conducted numerous ambushes on the highway. The 32d Regiment, minus the Sixth Battalion, moved to Darlac in February, where it was reported to be the nucleus for a new division. In mid March a new unit, the 209th Regiment, was infiltrated into the western Kontum area from LAOS. Between February and March the NT 1 Division Headquarters

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moved south from the Dak To area to the Pleiku Province. In late March the major portion of the 66th Regiment left the Dak To area and moved south to the Pleiku - Kontum Province western border area. Completion of the Plei Trap road linking route 512 and Laos and from Kontum Province south into Pleiku to a point directly west of Plei Djereng Special Forces camp allows movement of heavy trucks and tracked vehicles along its entire route and as of the closing period, heavy infiltration of both equipment and personnel continues. Work on the Dak Pek road north continues, and contacts by CIDG units with NVA forces has been heavy during the closing two weeks of this period. The future months should show an increase in infiltration into SVN along these routes as the NVA place more importance on action or a major victory in the highlands as a must for establishing a political bargaining position.

c. NEW UNITS

During the reporting period several new units were confirmed in the highlands area. The 406th Sapper Battalion, active in Pleiku Province during the last reporting period, participated in the TET attack on Pleiku City and has been thought to be responsible for every mortar attack on Pleiku, and since (then) has been in contact several times during the reporting period. There is sufficient information to carry only the 21st Company of the battalion in order of battle, however, documentation has shown the company probably to have been formed as early as December 1966 or January 1967, and active in Pleiku Province since that time. In late February the entire 209th NVA Regiment (AKA 320th Regiment) infiltrated from North Vietnam entering the Kontum Province from the Tri-border area. The 406th Sapper Battalion is believed to have infiltrated from North Vietnam, placed subordinate to the Kontum Provincial Military Committee, and was first contacted in Ban Mo Thuot City during the TET offensive. There has been one additional contact with the 401st Battalion since then. The K-39 Infantry Battalion was contacted during TET and indications are the battalion, after infiltrating from North Vietnam, was placed OICOM to the 33d Regiment for the TET offensive. During the later part of the reporting period contact was established north of Dak Pek with the 10th Regiment. The regiment is believed to be a transportation-engineer unit subordinate to the NVA 559th Transportation Group, and engaged in resupply and road building north of Dak Pek. There is insufficient evidence to confirm the unit's status at this time. During the latter portion of the reporting period there were continuing agent reports that elements of the NT2 NVA Division had infiltrated into the northern Kontum Province above Dak Pek, however, there is no evidence to confirm these reports.

d. NEW WEAPONS

Several weapons, new to the Corps area and of concern to aviation units, were introduced during the reporting period. In late February, the first indication of an AA unit processing 14.5mm AA MG's and 37mm

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AA guns was received from a PW captured west of Dak To on Route 512. Following this, proof of the guns in the highlands area came with a rash of airburst incidents and gun position sightings by LRP's, particularly in the area west of Kontum City and along the length of the Plei Trap Road. One radar-controlled 57mm gun was verified in country by 7th Air Force at the northern terminus of the Plei Trap Road. Flame throwers were used against friendly troops for the first time in the highlands during the reporting period. On 1 February, one Soviet Model LPO flame-thrower was captured during the city fighting in Kontum from a member of the 24th NVA Regiment. One PW, a company commander in the 24th Regiment, verified there were two of the LPO's assigned to the Regiment. On 26 March 1968, elements of the 209th NVA Regiment used flamethrowers against US forces in an attack against the 3/8th Infantry FSB west of Kontum. Flamethrowers were again used against elements of the US 1/22 Inf Bn during an early morning attack on 29 April. The NVA unit involved is unknown at this time but believed to have been elements of the 209th Regiment. Chemical elements of the NT1 Division were believed to have possessed flamethrowers; however, the 24th NVA Regiment was subordinate to NR 5 during the TET Offensive and there is no indication that the 209th Regiment is subordinate to NT 1 Division at this time. Relocation of the flamethrowers to regimental-sized units indicates the probability of more widespread use of the weapon against friendly units and installations in the highlands during the coming months.

c. SITUATION

(1) KONTUM: The 24th NVA Regiment minus, is located approximately 30-35 Km W NW of Kontum City. The 6th Bn of the regiment, with rocket support elements, probably from the K-32 Battalion, 40th Artillery Regiment, is located in an area approximately 18 Km north and northeast of Kontum City. The 304th Local Force Battalion, OFCON to the 24th Regiment as the K-3 Battalion, 24th NVA Regiment, is unlocated north of Kontum City, as is the 406th Sapper Battalion. The entire 209th (AKA 320th) Regiment is located 35 to 40 Km west of Kontum. The 66th Regiment minus, is unlocated but believed currently refitting west of Kontum near the Tri-Border area. The 7th Battalion, 66th Regiment is reported OFCON to the 209th Regiment and believed located in the same area. The 179th NVA Regiment is unlocated, as is the supporting AK-6 Battalion, 32d NVA Regiment; both are believed operating in the western Kontum-Pleiku border area, approximately 35 Km southwest of Kontum City.

(2) PLEIKU: The 95B Regiment has split its resources. The regimental headquarters and 5th Battalion are located approximately 40 Km southeast of Pleiku City. The 4th Battalion is located in its base area approximately 26 Km west of Pleiku. The 408th Sapper Battalion is located in its base area 20 Km northeast of Pleiku City. The 31st (AKA X-200) Artillery Battalion is unlocated, but believed located in close proximity to the 4th Battalion, 95B Regiment, west of Pleiku. The H-15 Local Force Battalion, reconstituted since TET, is currently located in its base area

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32-35 Km southeast of Pleiku. The X-17 and X-18 Engineer (Sapper) Companies are currently unlocated in eastern Pleiku.

(3) DARLAC: The 32d NVA Regiment minus the 6th Battalion, is situated in an area generally north of the Mewal Plantation and approximately 20 Km from Ban Me Thout City. The 33d NVA Regimental Headquarters and the 1st Battalion are located on the Cambodian-Darlac border, approximately 50 Km West Southwest of Ban Me Thout. The 3d Battalion, 33d Regiment is located approximately 18 Km North of Ban Me Thout. The K101 NVA Battalion is unlocated, believed to be operating in an area approximately 23 Km south of Ban Me Thout. The K-39 Battalion is unlocated south of Ban Me Thout and the 301st and 401st Local Force Battalions are unlocated.

f. CAPABILITIES

(1) KONTUM: To attack Kontum City with up to 12 NVA Infantry battalions of the 66th, 209th (AKA 320th), 174th, 24th and 32d NVA Regiments, plus the 304th Local Force Battalion and the 406th and 408th Sapper Battalions, supported by rockets and heavy mortar from the 40th Artillery Regiment. As an alternate course, conduct coordinated attacks against both Plei Klong Special Forces Camp and Kontum City using the same forces and interdiction of Highway 14N, utilizing elements of the 24th NVA Regiment and the 304th Local Force Battalion.

(2) PLEIKU: To attack Pleiku City with up to 6 NVA Battalions, the 4th and 5th, 95d NVA Regiment, the 1st, 2d and 3d Battalions, 174th Regiment and the 966 (AKA K-6) Battalion, 32d NVA Regiment. In addition, the H-15 Local Force Battalion, the 408th Sapper Battalion and Local Forces from VC Gia Lai Districts 3, 4, 6, 7 and 9 would be used. As an alternate course, using the 174th Regiment and the 966th Battalion, 32d NVA Regiment, conduct multi-battalion attacks against Plei Krong or Plei Djereng Special Forces Camps, continuous interdiction of Highways 19E and 14 N using elements of the 3d VC District, the 21st Co, K-20 Sapper Battalion, 5th Battalion, 95d NVA Regiment, the H-15 Local Force Battalion and the X-17 and X-18 Engineer (Sapper) Companies.

(3) DARLAC: To attack Ban Me Thout and outlying areas with up to 6 NVA Infantry battalions from the 32d and 33d Regiments, the K101 NVA Battalion and the K-39 NVA Battalion. Additional support provided by the 301st and 401st Local Force Battalions and rocket elements from the 40th Artillery Regiment. Continuous interdiction of Highways 14N and 21E utilizing elements of the 301st and 401st Local Force Battalions and the 5th and 6th Local Force Companies.

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3. (C) Operations and Training:

a. Operations:

(1) Support: The 5th AB supported numerous operations during the reporting period which included MacArthur; (90 days, Prairie Fire; (90 days), and Omega; (60 days). II Corps DSA was supported with one assault helicopter company minus and the 4th Infantry Division by two assault helicopter companies. ARVN units in the II Corps Combat Tactical Zone were supported by one assault helicopter company. The percentage of the battalion lift capability allocated by month follows:

	FEB	MAR	APR
4th Inf Div	40%	41%	42%
ARVN	15%	15%	15%
OMEGA/PRAIRIE FIRE	20%	14%	14%
II Corps DSA	15%	16%	15%
Other	10%	14%	14%

(2) Operational Statistics (1 Feb - 30 April 1968)

COMBAT SORTIES	OTHER SORTIES	UH-1H HOURS*	UH-1C HOURS*	CH-47A HOURS	CH-54A HOURS*
103,711	7156	25,466	6731	3298	220
TOTAL HOURS	TOTAL PAX	CARGO TONS	A/C HITS	A/C DAM/DEST	
35,715	151,716	24,980	75	75/14	
CHOW INTAKE	ENERGY KBA	STRUCT DEST	IED EVAC	SORTIES CXL/DELAYED	
24/0	344	177	725	0/0	

(3) UH-1H and UH-1C Support: During the reporting period this battalion had increased difficulty in meeting its commitments as a result of combat damage to aircraft received during several rocket and mortar attacks on the aircraft cantonment areas of Camp Holloway (Pleiku), Camp Coryell (Ban Me Thuot), and Kontum airfields. The major contributing factor was the loss of the UH-1 type aircraft. Replacement aircraft were received, but not in sufficient quantity. This battalion is short an average of two UH-1H and one UH-1C type helicopters per company in addition to shortages that existed during the last reporting period.

(4) The 355th Aviation Company (Heavy Helicopter) has contributed immeasurably to the combat effort in the 4th Div AO and the II Corps

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tactical zone. The 355th Assault Support Helicopter Company became operational on 22 Feb 68. The organic OH-54A helicopters of this unit have moved heavy combat engineer equipment which has played a key role in the success of ground unit's combat mission. In addition to the engineer equipment, the OH-54 helicopters have moved complete 155 howitzer batteries. This lift capability has added to the success of artillery fire support missions through rapid and versatile employment of the artillery units.

(5) CH-47A Support: During this reporting period the CH-47A helicopter has been required to perform an increasing role in resupply of forward combat units. Statistics compiled indicate an increase in combat cargo and passengers moved from secure airfields to secure airfields. As a result a greater number of hours were flown by each aircraft to complete the ground unit's resupply mission. It was necessary to reinforce the 179th ASHC with a portion of two other ASHC's.

(6) Major Operations Supported: During this reporting period the 52d CAB has continued support of Operation MacArthur in the Dak To area. In addition, 52d CAB provided all aviation support of operations conducted by the 173rd Abn Bde and 3d Bde of the 4th Inf Div in the Kontum area.

(7) Weather: Weather has slowly degressed from high ceilings, moderate winds and good visibility to conditions that are beginning to restrict aircraft operations, especially during the early morning and later afternoon hours. Visibility and density altitude were readily affected as the transition to wet season conditions approached. Smoke and haze were very hazardous to flight during the month of April.

b. Training

(1) During the 90 day reporting period the following subjects outlined in the 17th Combat Aviation Group SOP for training were stressed:

(a.) Aviator training: The assault companies instructed aviators in tactical instrument procedures. Tactical instrument check rides were given to a maximum of personnel. In addition, aviators received instructions on the following subjects:

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1. Pre-Flight Inspection
2. Rules of Engagement
3. Formation Flying
4. Escape and Evasion
5. Safety and Emergency Procedures

c. Ground Training: This battalion has met the requirements outlined in USAMV Reg 350-1. An eight hour block of instruction was presented to a maximum of personnel in each assault company. Post Headquarters completed the zero and qualification range of 25 Feb 68. Maximum benefit is being derived as a result of the bi-monthly firing. The assault companies have presented instructions on the following subjects to a maximum of assigned personnel:

1. Code of Conduct
2. Rules of Engagement
3. Geneva Convention
4. Victory Practices
5. Security and Sentry Duties

d. Research and Development: The XM229 and XM427 rocket warheads were available in Class V supply channels during the last two weeks of this reporting period. A USAMV project team presented mechanical and tactical employment of these two on 10th April, but insufficient material and statistics are available to make an evaluation of the warhead at this time. There were no other significant evaluations made of other operational equipment.

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4. (C)

a. CLASS I: Fresh milk distribution was started during the period. Combat rations were issued during the height of the Tet offensive in Kontum and Ban Me Thout. No significant problems were noted during the reporting period.

CLASS II: Command emphasis continues on control and turn-in of excess equipment and empty containers. The 119th AHC underwent a 1st AWH BDE Check on 30 Apr 1968. All units are preparing for the Annual General Inspection due in May, 1968. Courtesy inspections and assistance visits were initiated at Battalion and Group level to assist each unit and detachment in preparing for the Annual General Inspection.

b. CLASS III & IIIA: There were no significant problems in Pleiku or Ban Me Thout, however, fuel availability in the Kontum area is marginal. Non-availability of 10,000 gallons fuel bladders necessitates daily fuel convoys into Kontum. Over 435,000 gallons of JP-4 were dispensed in Kontum for the period. Total fuel consumption for the Battalion exceeded 2,700,000 gallons.

c. CLASS IV: Field fortification materials became critical following the Tet offensive. Bunker construction increased tremendously throughout the period. All units are improving and weather-proofing bunkers in preparation for the rainy season.

d. CLASS V: Ammunition resupply to the Kontum and Ban Me Thout airfields was critical during the Tet offensive. Resupply was accomplished primarily by organic aircraft. Rigging equipment hampered the resupply operation and led to all aviation units being required to procure external lift equipment for emergency use. All phases of ammunition supply and storage are receiving command emphasis. Ammunition storage facilities expansion is planned for all three airfields sites.

5. (U) Civil Affairs

a. The Tet offensive was a tremendous setback to the local civic action program. At present, the Battalion Civic Action officer is working to make up for the losses suffered in this program during Tet. Goods continue to come in from individuals and organizations in the US. These items include clothing, soap, vitamins, seeds and medical supplies. Presentation of these goods is arranged through the local village chiefs, hospitals, and other church or religious groups.

b. The chaplain has aided the Civic Action program with the following:

- (1) Approximately 10 boxes of sheets, clothing, soap and drugs

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were received. These items were distributed to the Christian Missionaries and the VNCS Clinic-hospital.

(2) Three hundred fifty cases of chocolate milk was received and distributed to the Aloiku Catholic orphanage and the Gma Reprosarium.

(3) Cash donations:

- (a) VNCS Clinic-hospital-Aloiku \$76.75
- (b) White Church in San Me Thout (for repair of damages suffered during Tet) \$71.10
- (c) Baptist Seminary-Siagon \$90.50

.. (C) Personnel

a. All activities during the period February-April 1968:

- (1) Printed releases 14
- (2) Pictorial releases 12
- (3) Hamtown releases 59
- (4) Hamtown Pictorial releases 30
- (5) Number of Taped Interviews 45
- (6) Newsmen and Representatives Supported 6

(7) The "Dragon Fire" continues to be published although not as often as desired. Limited facilities and periodic shortages of paper are responsible for this.

(8) A new item is the appearance of the public information officer on the local TV station with stories of interest to members of the 52nd Combat Aviation. Also, through the local radio station, periodic taped news briefs were released.

b. Special Services Activities for the period February-April 1968.

(1) During the period, a total of 539 out of country R&A quotas were received. Of these, 409 were filled. Also, 115 standby orders were given.

(2) A total of 12 in country R&A quotas were received, 2 for officer and 9 for enlisted men. This is an increase from last quarter.

(3) The Arts and Crafts shop as well as the library have expanded to a seven day a week operation. Also, returned to operation in this quarter was the photo lab portion of the crafts shop.

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SUBJECT: Operational report for quarterly period ending 30 April 1966.
AOS-66SRK-65 (RI) (U)

c. Awards and Decorations:

(1) Total number of awards and decorations submitted during this period are as follows:

	No. Submitted:	No. Approved:
Silver Star	19	7
Legion of Merit	2	0
Distinguished Flying Cross	67	3
Soldiers Medal	0	4
Bronze Star w/"V" device	42	1
Bronze Star	30	30
Air Medal w/"V" device	61	110
Army Commendation Medal w/"V" device	97	0
Air Medal	1439	2337
Army Commendation Medal	20	29
Purple Heart	119	140
TOTAL	1952	2696

d. Personnel problems during the period February-April 1966.

The problem of receiving replacements in our critical AOS area still exists. Most critical during the period were Helicopter Technical Inspectors (AOS 67W), Aircraft Armament Repairman (AOS 45J), and Unit Supply Sergeant (AOS 76Y).

e. Command and Staff Changes

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AWGD-00 (10 Aug 1960)

Subject: Operational report for quarterly period ending 30 April 1960.

ROS-0010A-15 (RI) (U)

(1) The following new commanders assumed command and staff changes were made on the dates indicated:

<u>NEW COMMANDER</u>	<u>OLD COMMANDER</u>	<u>UNIT</u>	<u>DATE</u>
1LT Robert L. Bitten 05337750	1LT Graham W. Baker 05421530	52nd Stry Det	5Feb68
1LT Leon D. Jackson 05310350	CPT Robert C. Hancock 091745	IHD	6Feb68
1LT John A. Bohl Jr 05332124	1LT John C. Robertson 05330050	Pathfinder Det	10Feb68
LTC Raymond G. Lehman Jr 050021	LTC Edward T. Lukert Jr 063915	52nd Avn Bn	6Mar68
1LT Walter Urbach Jr 073900	1LT Billy L. Goodall 090110	155th Avn Co	15Mar68
C2 Stuart A. Todd W3201019	CPT Albert L. Fisch 05000470	20th Sig Det	16Mar68
1LT Robert W. Cook 054144	1LT Jessie L. Stewart 076660	17th Avn Co	25Mar68
1LT William D. Goss Jr 012000	LTC George L. Burnison 079206	57th Avn Co	3Apr68
1LT Robert F. Wetherbie 04047425	1LT Donald C. McCabe 04010223	179th Avn Co	4Apr68
CPT Merrill J. Hirman 05200600	CPT David L. Weinberg 02325544	3th Med Det	5Apr68
CPT Fred C. Marclin 05042726	CPT Valentine Menis 05541459	94th Med Det	5Apr68
1LT William W. Fraker 04010700	1LT Neil I. Leva 081479	189th Avn Co	15Apr68
1LT David C. Whitworth 050933	1LT Richard D. Caldwell 059429	84th TC Det	10Apr68
1LT Warren A. Porter 04021305	1LT Joseph R. Campbell 074057	119th Avn Co	24Apr68
LTC Robert D. Craig Jr 0107410	LTC Eddie L. Ford 01070132	XC 52nd Avn Bn	11Feb68
LTC Thomas L. Williamson 081500	LTC Robert D. Craig Jr 01007410	DrC 52nd Avn Bn	11Feb68
LTC George L. Burnison 079206	1LT Richard V. Coulter 087712	S-3 52nd Avn Bn	3Apr68

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 ROS-CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

UNIT	OFFICERS AUTH/OH	WO AUTH/OH	EN AUTH/OH	TOTAL AUTH/OH
189th ACH	15/13	52/39	152/156	219/208
606th TC	1/1	1/2	70/68	72/71
6th TC	0/1	1/0	8/8	9/9
355th AMB CO	16/9	16/7	97/87	111/103
662nd TC	1/1	1/1	57/58	59/60
INF	22/28	2/6	87/141	111/175
94th MED	1/2	0/0	8/10	9/12
755th MED	1/1	0/0	8/9	9/10
344th ASD	1/0	0/0	20/6	21/6
52nd SECURITY	1/2	0/0	151/140	152/142
68th RADAR	0/0	0/0	19/18	19/18
TOTAL				
52nd CAB	140/124	313/248	1819/1763	2273/2137

(b) CIVILIAN

UNIT	DAC AUTH/OH	VN AUTH/OH	3rd NATL. AUTH/OH
INF	0 0	19 38	0 0
57th	0 0	14 10	0 0
119th	0 0	11 17	0 0
155th	0 0	13 20	0 0
170th	0 0	11 5	0 0
172th	1 1	9 9	0 0
189th	0 0	11 6	0 0
344 ACD	0 0	3 3	0 0

In addition to the above the following civilian contingents are employed at Camp Holloway:

PA&E- (4) AMERICANS, (14) 3rd NATIONALS (KOREANS), 152 VN.
 LSI - (14) AMERICANS
 BELL HELICOPTER - (1) AMERICAN
 LY COMING - (2) AMERICANS
 SY CORSKI - (2) AMERICANS
 PRATT WHITNEY - (1) AMERICAN
 DECCA - (3) AMERICANS
 US ROX ENG/CO - (10) KOREANS

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AVG-65 (10 May 1968)

Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending: 30 April 1968,
AFG-CSEFOR-65 (R1) (U)

g. Morale

The morale of officer and enlisted personnel throughout the battalion continues to be exceptionally high. This is attributed to the following:

- (1) Maximum recognition for job accomplishment through promotions, awards and decorations, and letters of appreciation.
- (2) Liberal leave, pass, and R&R policies.
- (3) Continuous improvement in living standards.
- (4) Improvement to post facilities.
- (5) Continual indoctrination in job performance and mission orientation.

h. Religious Activities

- (1) During the quarter, the battalion chaplain was responsible for all religious activities at Camp Holloway and the operational sites. Protestant services were conducted at Camp Holloway by the battalion chaplain.
- (2) Religious Services were provided for the 155th Avn Company at Ban Ph Thuot on a weekly basis by the protestant and catholic chaplains from MACV.
- (3) Religious services for the 57th Avn Company at Kontum were provided by the MACV Protest Chaplain and the ARVN Catholic Chaplain.
- (4) Catholic services and coverage for Camp Holloway were provided by the PKSAC Chaplain.
- (5) Transportation was provided for Jewish personnel from Camp Holloway to 71st Evac Hospital each Friday for services.
- (6) LDS, Seventh-Day Adventist and other denominational services were attended by men of Camp Holloway when and where they were provided.
- (7) The Protestant and Catholic congregations continue to designate one offering each month for various in-country religious organizations and activities.
- (8) During the quarter, an electronic organ was acquired and installed along with an amplifier-speaker system in the Camp Holloway Chapel.

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AVGP-66 (10 May 1968)

AVGP-66: Operational Report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,
AVGP-66-66 (P1) (U)

7. (C) Post Headquarters, Camp Holloway:

a. The mission of Post Headquarters is to supervise, monitor and control activities on Camp Holloway (other than tactical operations) and Camp Holloway 04. Post Headquarters is responsible to the Post Commander for the overall planning, administration, operations, security and maintenance of Camp Holloway. Its functions generally fall in the following areas:

- (1) Services and Logistics.
- (2) Security and Post Operations.
- (3) Airfield Operations/Defense.

b. During this reporting period, Post Headquarters continued normal operations and continued effort was extended on various projects with the goal of improving post facilities and defense structures.

c. The following projects were completed during the reporting period:

- (1) Perimeter Lighting
- (2) Two company sized heliports
- (3) Revetments and maintenance hardstand for 355th Aviation Company (Heavy Helicopter).
- (4) Completed move to new perimeter defense sites.
- (5) Remodeled Transient Officers' Quarters.

d. The following projects were initiated during the reporting period:

- (1) Construction of two wooden 10' x 144' aircraft maintenance bays for the heliports. (Estimated completion date 31 May 1968.)
- (2) Construction of one 75' x 202' metal aircraft maintenance bays for the 179th Assault Helicopter Company. (Estimated completion date 30 June 1968.)
- (3) Construction of the cantonment area for heliport to include 14,000 square foot BEQ's, two 400 square foot mess halls, and two 1,000 square foot orderly rooms/supply rooms. (Estimated completion date 31 May 1968.)
- (4) Road surfacing of roads.
- (5) Construction of Pontagnard Long House.
- (6) Initiated central sandbag filling point.

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AVR-66 (10 May 1966)

Standardization report for Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1966,
AS-66-33 (RI) (U)

8. (C) Safety and Standardization:

a. Standardization: The Battalion Standardization Pilot flew 24 check-rides in February, 11 in March, and 20 in April:

(1) 4 SDF (Standardization Pilot).

(2) 4 LP (Instructor Pilot).

(3) 5 AC (Aircraft Commander).

(4) 33 Quarterly check-rides and In-Country Standardization and orientation.

(5) No post accident check-rides were given.

Primary emphasis during all flights has continued to be emergency procedures. Significant indications of impending aircraft failures, proper interpretation of aircraft operating instruments, sources and causes of fire, tail rotor failure, (hovering and cruise), Hydraulic control boost failure and autorotations have been the main points stressed. It is of definite interest to note that no one, with whom the Battalion SDF has flown has been involved in an aircraft accident. Commitment of helicopters to operational missions continues to prevent having aircraft available for unit flight training on a daily basis. Standardization will be supervised by the training section of S-3 during the next reporting period.

b. Safety:

(1) The accident rate (per 100,000 flight hours) was 29.9%. All were major accidents except for one minor accident.

(a) February: Four accidents, rate 21.6%.

(b) March: Four Accidents, rate 30.5%.

(c) April: Three accidents, rate 29.0%.

(2) The following causes are cited:

(a) 15 Feb 66; UH-1H

1. Improper hover entry, down-wind
2. Self-induced haste.

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SUBJECT: Operational Report For Quarterly Period Ending 30 April 1968,
RCS-CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

(b) 23 Feb:68; UH-1H

1. Engine Failure.
2. Failure of maintenance to see trend.
3. Failure to heed warnings of engine failure.
4. Failure to execute proper autorotation.
5. Unsuitable terrain.

(c) 24 Feb 68; UH-1C

1. Airfield obstacle (minor).
2. Failure to recognize obstacle.
3. Overweight condition.

(d) 27 Feb 68;

1. Engine failure.
2. Hidden obstacles in forced-landing site.

(e) 4 Mar 68; UH-1H (2 totaled - 1 damaged)

1. Intermeshing rotor blades hovering.
2. Revetments too close together.

(f) 11 Mar 68; UH-1C

1. Engine Failure.
2. Failure to heed maintenance.
3. Failure to execute successful autorotation.
4. Self-induced haste.

(g) 17 Mar 68; UH-1H

1. Tail rotor strike.
2. Pass debarking at hover in stumpy LZ.
3. A/C followed Bn Cncls, Request and failed to use judgment.

(h) 21 Mar 68; UH-1C

1. Attempted take-off down-wind.
2. No wind indicator at partially constructed airfield
3. Self-induced haste.

(i) 19 April 68; UH-1H (2 totaled)

1. Mid-air collision.
2. Unnecessary close formation.

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ACD-00 (10 May 1968)

SUBJECT: Operational Report for quarterly period ending 30 April 1968,
RCS-CSFOR-65 (RI) (U)

(j) 22 April 68; UN-1C

1. Engine failure.
2. Unsuitable terrain.

(k) 26 April 68; CH-47A

1. Mid-air disintegration.
2. Cause unknown.

(3) The traffic flow plan is still to be implemented.

(4) A significant break-through in the reduction of FOD (foreign object damage), has resulted from a battalion policy which requires a rated crew-member to personally perform FOD inspection prior to the first flight of the day. This is intended until a "last chance filter" is produced. The issue of leather boots (without cleats which carry items causing FOD) and strong emphasis on detailed police has also helped reduce FOD.

(5) A battalion policy requires pilots preparing for test flights to review aircraft records for the last 100 hours prior to flight. This is expected to help determine trends in maintenance and repeated defects in aircraft. Pilots who have been queried stated that they are in favor of the program and benefits have already been gained.

(6) It was shown that gunships involved in engine failure forced landings were having difficulty jettisoning rocket pods. Armaments section (recently consolidated at battalion level) conducted a survey and found that 75% of the jettison systems were damaged by maintenance personnel not concerned or knowledgeable with the armaments system. All systems were corrected on a one time basis and a letter sent out to educate personnel on this problem and its causes.

9. (C) Signal

a. During the TET Offensive, land line communications between 52d CAB Headquarters at Pleiku, the 155th AHC at Ban Mo Thuot and the 57th AHC at Kontum were unreliable and inoperative for a period of five days. Ground mounted AI/ARC-102's were used as primary communications between 52d CAB Headquarters and the two outlying companies.

b. Due to unreliability of land line communications to the two outlying companies, the 17th Combat Aviation Group authorized the issue of two AI/ARC-106 located at this headquarters. Transmission range and voice quality have been increased considerably over the AI/ARC-102's. This increase in range and reliability has enabled this battalion to remain in radio contact with these two outlying companies on a 24 hour basis.

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c. Dial telephone installation at Camp Holloway has been completed. The new dial system has increased the speed of communication between this Battalion and its subordinate units. A direct dial capability has also been incorporated into the dial system allowing direct dial service to Tan Son Nhut, Da Nang, Da Nang, and Qui Nhon.

10. (U) Aircraft Maintenance

a. Maintenance Statistics

	UH-1H	UH-1C(A)	CH-47	CH-54
Aircraft Authorized	115	40	16.0	9
A/C Assigned (AVG)	17.9	4.4	15.6	3
Availability Rate	88.5	76.9	68.0	55.0
EDM	17.6	16.9	22.0	36.0
EDF	3.9	4.2	2.0	36.0

(For detailed statistical data, see Incl. 2)

b. During the reporting period the aircraft armament sections of the assault companies were consolidated into one armament pool. There was a shortage of experienced aircraft armament repairmen (POS 45J20) in the assault helicopter companies. Cross training of experienced personnel with unexperienced personnel was greatly facilitated. In addition, benefits were gained as a result of combined and consolidated PLL. The armament section now provides a 24 hour response to any aircraft armament problem.

c. Aircraft Status As Of 30 April 1966

UNIT	UH-1H AUTH/OR	UH-1C(A) AUTH/OR	CH-47 AUTH/OR	CH-54 AUTH/OR	U6-A AUTH/OR
157th AHC	23/17	8/3			
119th AHC	23/12	8/3			
155th AHC	23/13	8/7			
170th AHC	23/18	8/4			
169th AHC	23/19	8/3			
179th ASCH			16/16		
355th AC(UH)				9/3	
TID					1/1

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RCS-COFOR-65 (RI) (U)

11. (C) FLIGHT SURGEON

a. The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion Dispensary has continued to increase its patient load. The dispensary currently supports, in addition to 52 CAB, all other United States Army and civilian personnel located at Camp Holloway. A peak in dispensary visits was reached in March, when 3,903 patients were treated.

b. The dispensary functioned with efficiency during the enemy mortar attacks. On the night of 10 February 1968 fifty patients were treated for wounds received in mortar attack. In all of the mortar attacks only one KIA resulted.

c. Following the onset of the mortar attacks the dispensary personnel constructed a bunker which is large enough to hold 18 beds. It is partially under ground and is covered with 7 layers of sandbags.

d. A new addition to the dispensary has been completed with four doctors offices, NCO office, pharmacy and injection and immunization room. This addition makes the dispensary much more efficient and allows adequate storage space for drugs and supplies.

e. The dispensary has started to support the 52d Security Force by assigning a medic to the force each night. He accompanies patrols which are outside the perimeter.

12. (C) Significant Activities: The following is a detailed summary of significant operations and activities as required by: Para 12a, AR 525-15 and USARPAC/REG 525-15. This information is extracted from the DAILY JOURNAL (J), DAILY INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY (I), DAILY OPREP/5 (W), DAILY AIRCRAFT ALLOCATION (A), JSAFIDR SHOP AT REPORT (H), and AFTER ACTION REPORT FILES (R).

a. Units and activities supported by the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion are:

- (1.) 4th Infantry Division
 - (a) Operation MacArthur
(1st Bde, 4th Inf Div) SPARTZ AO - Search and Destroy
 - (b) Operation MacArthur
(3d Bde, 4th Inf Div) MIDDLETON AO - Search and Destroy
 - (c) Operation MacArthur
(3d Bde, 4th Inf Div) SULTAN A - Search and Destroy
 - (d) Operation MacArthur
(Task Force 22 4th Inf Div) WAINRIGHT AO - Search and Destroy
- (Amap of the operational area is included as incl. 7)

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(2) ARVN: Includes all II Corps ARVN units primarily in the KONTUM, DARLAC, and PLEIKU PROVINCES.

(a) Road Clearing Operations

(b) Search and Destroy

(c) Cordon and Search

(3) DSA II Corps:

(a) Headquarters II Corps, Pleiku, RVN

(b) Province Chiefs of KONTUM, PLEIKU, DARLAC, PHU BOI, and TUYEN DUC-Command and Control.

(c) Senior advisors 23d and 24th ARVN Div - Command and Control.

(4) Project OMEGA, 5th Special Forces - Clandestine Operations.

(5) Operation Prairie Fire - 5th Special Forces - Clandestine Operations

(6) Company B, 5th Special Forces - Command and Control, and Administrative/Liaison for Special Forces camps controlled by Det C-2, 5th Special Forces.

(7) IFV Artillery (41st and 52d Artillery Group)-Command and Control and Administrative/Liaison for group headquarters.

(8) Press Corp - Administrative support of authorized representatives of civilian news agencies.

(9) 2/1st Cavalry - Supported convoys with armed helicopter escort.

(10) In addition the following units were support on special aircraft allocation basis and activities varied from direct combat support to Administrative/Liaison.

(a) GRID - DCS (7days)

(b) WERID - DCS (5days)

(c) 3/506 ABN I IF - DCS (12 days)

(d) 22d ARVN - DCS (9 days)

(e) VIP FLIGHTS - (4 days)

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b. SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

TET Offensive

The Communist TET offensive in the central highlands consisted of determined attacks against the three major cities of Pleiku, Kontum, and Ban He Thuot during the period 29 January through 5 February 1968.

The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion participated in 46 airmobile operations during the period of this report. It must be pointed out that the TET offensive in this area terminated on 5 February 1968. Combat actions after that date were in response to the anticipated second phase and consisted of battalion sized operations with a search and destroy mission. As early as 30 January this unit continued its primary mission of providing responsive aviation support to US and ARVN forces throughout the central highlands. Therefore, the total airmobile operations stated above can not be considered solely in direct response to the TET offensive.

Airmobile operations conducted during the period of this report were on a small scale involving the movement of company sized forces. There were no significant airmobile operations in which Army Aviation played a decisive role.

This battalion accomplished 2575 resupply missions during the period 29 January through 29 February 1968. Included were 1219 by UH-1H, 1300 by CH-47 and 56 by CH-54 missions. Armed helicopter escort was required on 268 UH-1, 15 CH-47, and all 56 of CH-54 missions to insure successful accomplishment.

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The 52d Combat Aviation Battalion was on normal operational alert status when the Communist TET Offensive erupted during the early morning hours of 30 January 1968. Though deployed at three separate locations, ranging from Kontum in the north and Ban He Thuot in the south, attacks were carried out almost simultaneously at all three locations, and moderate to heavy fighting continued until 5 February. The following summation describes the actions of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion during the period in an effort to repel and defeat elements of the North Vietnamese Army and National Liberation Front forces in the provinces of Kontum, Pleiku and Darlac, Republic of Vietnam.

The objectives of the enemy during the considered period is not yet fully understood. However, it suffices to say that the overall offensive plan was well organized, coordinated and executed, with major attacks being launched against civilian government strongholds and US supply and combat support installations.

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RCS-C FOR-65 (R) (i)

30 JANUARY 1968

The first attack against the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion was launched against Camp Holloway, Pleiku, at 0140 hours by an unknown main force unit. The enemy mortar crews (three 82mm mortar tubes) moved into position (R 817477) under the cover of darkness, and at 0140 hours fired ten to fifteen rounds, impacting north to south on a lateral swath 200 meters wide; the majority of rounds falling within the aircraft refueling area. The location of the enemy position was visually confirmed by the airfield tower, and counter-mortar fire was immediately initiated and gunships launched to neutralize the target. As the gunships were launched, fifteen additional rounds of mortar fire was received in the same general location. The firing ceased however, when airborne gunships engaged the enemy position with aerial rocket and mini-gun fire. At the same time, harassing and interdiction fire was placed on all avenues of approach and escape, virtually eliminating any possible coordinated attack by enemy infantry and sapper elements.

A sustained attack against the 57th Assault Helicopter Company at Kontum began at 0212 hours. The enemy plan was to eliminate support facilities in the Kontum area before seizing the local government and the city itself. The airfield, the primary objective, was attacked by approximately 200 enemy personnel including sapper, security and indirect fire elements. When the enemy was detected during the early morning hours, the enemy had maneuvered to a point within fifty meters of the defensive wire. Upon detection, the 57th brought deadly fire to bear upon the enemy. Gunships were launched from Kontum and shortly received reinforcements from the Battalion at Pleiku. Using mini-guns and 40mm grenade launchers, the enemy attack was broken and escape routes sealed off. Enemy troops were caught in the wire and in ditches adjacent to the wire, and the intense fire cut them down. As daylight came, fifty-nine (59) bodies were counted around the perimeter. Numerous others could not be recovered due to heavy sniper fire along the east end of the airfield. Throughout the day sniper, rocket and mortar fire continued, inflicting only minor damage. 57th personnel were well disciplined and suffered only light casualties; however, combat damage was sustained by seven of the attacking gunships.

Camp Coryell at Ban Lo Thuot was attacked by mortars at approximately 0250 hours, when twenty (20) rounds fell within the confines of the 155th perimeter. At the time of the attack, the compound was at one hundred percent alert, with gun and flareships airborne over the area. As the mortar rounds fell, enemy ground probing attacks were launched from the south and east, supported by automatic weapons fire and B-40 rockets. In a coordinated effort, sappers attempted to breach the perimeter. However, friendly fires soon reached such proportions as to drive the enemy elements back, seeking cover. Two of the enemy mortar positions were destroyed and forth (40) of the enemy lay dead in and

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around the perimeter wire. No friendly casualties were sustained, but six aircraft received light to moderate damage during the brief engagement.

As daylight came the morning of 30 January, reports filtered in that the enemy elements near Pleiku were moving in the open, taking advantage of the already-branched Tet Cease Fire. One reinforced company was located northeast of Long Holloway by gunships, but permission to engage was denied at the time, and surveillance instructions were issued. Shortly thereafter, a battalion, later identified as the H-15 Battalion, was reported moving from the south towards Pleiku. Three pairs of 52d gunships were diverted to the reported location, and almost simultaneously the entire line was cancelled by III Corps Headquarters and permission to engage hostile targets was granted. The first gunship to engage received a withering barrage of small arms fire and took numerous hits. However, his machine turned in and numbers of the enemy riflemen fell to his guns. Again and again the H-15 Battalion was attacked, and by early afternoon had been completely decimated. The previously reported company size enemy element broke and ran as it was engaged. Though casualties were suffered in their ranks, most managed to reach the safety of a large wooded area further to the north. Gunships were called off and armored cavalry elements pursued in an attempt to seek out and destroy the enemy.

This was one of the most intense engagements ever recorded between enemy ground and Army air elements in the Central Highlands, resulting in an overwhelming victory for allied forces. When captured later in the day, the H-15 Battalion Commander stated his forces no longer existed due to the extremely heavy casualties. Only very minor casualties and light damage was suffered by the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion. A confirmed enemy count indicated twenty-five (25) captured and a conservative estimate of two hundred (200) killed. Cavalry elements reported an additional 175 captured and one hundred (100) killed.

On 30 January, all attempts to breach perimeter of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion were thwarted. Though fire continued throughout the day and night, aviation companies continued to fly as directed and meet normal mission requirements and inflict damage on the enemy.

31 JANUARY 1968

During the late evening hours of 30 January and the early morning hours of 31st, tension continued to mount in the Central Highlands. Enemy elements in battalion strength or larger were reported moving on Pleiku, Kontum and Ban Me Thout.

Between the hours of 0200 and 0330, a series of reports from the 24th Special Tactical Zone indicated a serious enemy threat was developing in the Kontum sector. An NVA/VC force, estimated at 150 strength,

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was reported overrunning their perimeter and final bunkers had been occupied. A 105mm artillery battery was also reported to be infiltrated and possibly in enemy hands. The 52d TOC was also notified that MACV and the B-24 compounds were being overrun. Tactical air was immediately requested and gunships were again launched to support the beleaguered compounds. In each instance, the enemy was caught in the open, attempting to breach the perimeter wire. Repeatedly, 52d gunships braved heavy enemy fire and made firing passes until the enemy forces withdrew, leaving numerous dead and equipment behind in the wire entanglements. Before dawn, an enemy force of 300-500 troops was reported east of Kontum and moving toward the airfield complex. The 57th Assault Helicopter Company Commander again requested gunship reinforcements. The enemy force was immediately taken under fire by security elements, and shortly thereafter were engaged by UH-1Cs. A devastating array of firepower was unleashed on the enemy, and again he failed to breach the perimeter. As daylight came, seven enemy bodies were counted in the wire and numerous blood trails led the way to the south. Forty-seven enemy dead were counted in and around the B-24 complex, and thirty more were reportedly in and around the other compounds mentioned. Based on the size of the reported attacks, no doubt untold numbers went unreported.

An all out effort was being made by the enemy to occupy the city of Ban Me Thuot. Elements of the 155th were fired on throughout the day, but no concentrated attacks were launched against the airfield. Even so, gunships continued to fly and engage the enemy, while ground personnel bolstered their own defenses.

At Pleiku, the enemy occupied the southern and western parts of the city, and house-to-house fighting ensued. Due to the proximity to civilian personnel, tactical air or artillery could not be employed against enemy positions; consequently, the "Flying Dragons" gunships were called in once again. Throughout the day, cavalry elements fixed known enemy pockets of resistance and gunships engaged with rockets, grenades and mini-guns to expel the enemy. Block by block the enemy was driven back, and by nightfall the southern half of the city was in friendly hands.

By the end of the second day of contact, crews of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion had been airborne almost continuously for forty-eight hours. Although gunships were primarily engaged in destruction missions, UH-1H helicopters repositioned ground elements throughout the period to meet new threats. CH-47s worked around the clock resupplying badly needed ammunition and supplies. Though all units were bone tired, personnel began making preparations for another twenty-four hours of the same.

1 FEBRUARY 1968

Personnel of the 155th Assault Helicopter Company at Ban Me Thuot were only to have a brief reprieve, for at 0210 hours, enemy mortar rounds again fell within the compound. Gunships and flareships were

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immediately dispatched. Once the aircraft became airborne and the enemy mortar crews were engaged, the hostile fire ceased. Nevertheless, the 155th sustained six casualties during the engagement and five aircraft received light to heavy damage. Sniper fire continued as the enemy made an all out effort to totally overrun Ban Me Thuot. Gunships remained over the city and surrounding terrain most of the day inflicting heavy but unconfirmed casualties on the enemy.

At 0230 hours on 1 February, 52d gunships were again diverted to Kontum and were employed throughout the remaining hours of darkness against built-up areas within the city and to the north. During the day sniper fire continued along the eastern and western portions of the 57th perimeter. Another rocket and mortar attack was launched by the enemy at dusk, but ended when counterfire was called in. However, the enemy began to probe the 57th defenses at 1910 hours. Once again gunships were called in to expel the enemy elements attempting to penetrate the perimeter. Repeated firing runs were made adjacent to the wire on all sides of the compound and a concentrated attack failed to materialize.

Elements of the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion had sustained heavy aircraft damage during the previous seventy-two hours as a result of rocket and mortar attacks and engagement with enemy ground elements. However, maintenance crews frantically made repairs, as by this time, the mere survival of battalion elements depended on its fleet of helicopters. Under impossible conditions, aircraft were made flyable, and the Battalion made ready for its fourth day of uninterrupted combat.

2 FEBRUARY 1968

In Kontum, a coordinated mortar, rocket and ground attack was launched against the MACV, Signal and Special Forces complexes at about 0220 hours. Six light gunship teams were dispatched to support allied forces in the city against heavy fire. Again, enemy elements were engaged attempting to breach the friendly positions, and gunships inflicted heavy casualties. Scattered fighting continued after the initial assault was broken, and a cumulative body count (NVA/VC) of 203 was reported.

Camp Coryell came under mortar attack at 0310 hours, suffering moderate aircraft damage. However, personnel discipline remained excellent and no casualties were sustained.

Camp Holloway was attacked by elements of the 40th NVA Artillery Regiment at 0400 hours. Twenty-five rounds were fired into aircraft revetments and motor park areas from four 82mm mortar tubes located at AR 615475. Immediately, friendly artillery, mortars and gunships were employed and engaged the enemy firing positions. Enemy casualties suffered were unknown; however, friendly elements suffered light personnel casualties as a result of the attack and moderate equipment damage.

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3 FEBRUARY 1968

In the early morning hours of the 3rd, Camp Holloway was once again attacked by an unknown size element of the 40th NVA Artillery Regiment. Six rounds of 122mm rockets were fired into the compound. But of the six rounds fired, only two detonated. The only damage resulted when a 10,000 gallon JP-4 bladder was ignited and destroyed before the fire could be brought under control. The attack was discovered by the 52d Security Detachment when they sighted the first round leaving the launcher. Gunships were sent aloft and the rocket site engaged; whereupon, incoming fire ceased. Possible enemy casualties could not be confirmed, though several blood trails were found at dawn leading away to the north.

In the Kontum and Ban Me Thuot areas, enemy activity decreased noticeably. However, the enemy continued to rocket and mortar the airfields at random intervals throughout the day and night.

For the first time in five days the tempo of action was beginning to wane. Friendly ground forces were securing the cities and surrounding terrain; thus allowing 52d elements to breath again and begin rebuilding and reorganizing against further hostilities.

4 FEBRUARY 1968

Kontum and the 57th Assault Helicopter Company were relatively inactive during the day, except for a 122mm rocket attack at 1600 hours. The city itself was reported secure except for sporadic sniper fire. However, the 57th remained at one hundred percent alert and maintained continuous illumination during the hours of darkness.

Ban Me Thuot was still partially occupied by scattered enemy elements, but resistance was diminishing. Nevertheless, an 82mm mortar attack, supported by B-40 rockets, was launched against Camp Coryell with negative personnel casualties. Equipment damage was reportedly moderate.

Pleiku was completely in the hands of allied forces by 4 February.

5 FEBRUARY 1968

Camp Coryell at Ban Me Thuot was hit by enemy mortars at 0150 hours, as approximately twenty rounds fell within the confines of the compound. Since personnel were already at one hundred percent alert status, no casualties were incurred, and only light equipment damage was reported.

An estimated enemy battalion moved to within three kilometers of the MCV compound in Kontum during the early morning hours, and were immediately engaged by gunships from the 52d Combat Aviation Battalion. After a heavy exchange of fire, the enemy was dispersed and turned back with only minor contact with friendly ground elements. Though the gunships

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obviously killed and wounded numbers of the enemy, no confirmed kills could be established due to darkness.

Period 1 Feb

a. Weather: Local Summary (Averaged)

- (1) Ceiling: 3,500 (Scattered) 8,000 (Thin Broken)
- (2) Visibility: 7-10 miles (Smoke and Haze)
- (3) Density Altitude: 4,300 (High 15 Hours)
- (4) Temperature: (High) 80 Degrees (Low) 58 Degrees
- (5) Wind: 110 Degrees at 8-15 Knots (variable)

b. Aircraft Allocations:

ELEMENT	UH-1H	UH-1C	CH -47L
4th Infantry Division	14	9	4
ARVN	10	4	0
IFEV Artillery	1	0	0
DSA II Corps	10	0	0
Press	1	0	0
5th Special Forces Group	2	0	0
Prairie Fire	9	4	0

c. Significant Events:

(1) 1 Feb, normal direct combat support was provided by the battalion. An early morning mortar attack on Camp Holloway delayed aircraft take off times approximately two hours. The 155th AHC was attacked by mortar fire and 20 rounds fell within the airfield containment area causing injuries to six personnel, minor to moderate damage to four buildings and five aircraft. (For more detailed information see Inclosure 5.)

d. Operational Statistics:

<u>COMBAT</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>OTHER</u> <u>SORTIES</u>	<u>UH-1H</u> <u>HOURS</u>	<u>UH-1C</u> <u>HOURS</u>	<u>CH-47L</u> <u>HOURS</u>
1018	63	139	63	19
<u>TOTAL</u> <u>HOURS</u>	<u>TOTAL</u> <u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u> <u>TONS</u>	<u>A/C</u> <u>HIT</u>	<u>A/C</u> <u>DAM/DEST</u>
161	869	154	1/0	1/0
<u>CREW</u> <u>WIA/MIA</u>	<u>ENEMY</u> <u>KPA</u>	<u>STRUCT</u> <u>DEST</u>	<u>IED</u> <u>EWAC</u>	<u>SORTIES</u> <u>CXL/DELAYED</u>
0/0	0	0	2	0/0

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Period 2 Feb - 8 Feb 68:

a. Weather: Local Summary (Averaged)

- (1) Ceiling: 4,000 (Scattered), 7,500 (Thin Broken)
- (2) Visibility: 6-10 miles (Smoke and Haze)
- (3) Density Altitude: 4,650 (High 1500 Hours)
- (4) Temp: (High) 82 degrees. (Low) 59 degrees
- (5) Wind: 070 degrees, 5-15 knots variable
- (6) 0500-0800 8 Feb, there was heavy ground fog 1/4 visibility throughout the AO.

b. Aircraft Allocations:

ELEMENT	UH-1H	UH-1C	CH-47A
4th Infantry Division	18	9	4
ARVN	7	4	0
IFTV Artillery	1	0	0
DSA II Corps	10	0	0
Press	0	0	0
5th Special Forces Group	1	0	0
Prairie Fire	4	0	0

c. Significant Events:

(1) 02 Feb - The Ban Me Thuot (155th AHC), Kontum (57th AHC), and Holloway Airfields (52d CAD), were taken under mortar attacks simultaneously. Information concerning these attacks may be found in After Action Reports attached as Inclosures 3, 4, and 5.

(2) 02 Feb - (159th AHC), Two UH-1C's (66-694 and 66-693) received one hit and five hits respectively in the vicinity of LR 775895. Two crew-members were WIA.

(3) 03 Feb - (119th AHC), UH-1H aircraft (66-16536) received light damage as a result of shrapnel while shut down in LZ (YB874316). Two crewmembers were injured.

(4) 03 Feb - Holloway Army Airfield; six rounds of 122mm rocket were received, but only two detonated. There was negative damage to personnel or aircraft. One building and one POL fuel bladder was destroyed.

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(5) 04 Feb - The Kontum and Ban Me Thuot Airfield Contonments were taken under enemy mortar attacks. (For detailed information see Inclosures 4 and 5.)

(6) 04 Feb - The 119th AHC conducted a CA/FINAL EXTRACTION in the vicinity of Dak To (YB880327), for 1/8th Inf Bn during which 260 pax's were moved in 90 sorties. Five aircraft were hit and one crew-member was injured.

(7) 04 Feb - (189th AHC); UH-1H aircraft (66-16158) received 18 hits from small arms fire in the vicinity of YB880327. One crew-member was KIA.

(8) 05 Feb - The Ban Me Thuot Airfield (155th AHC); was attacked by enemy mortar and small arms fire. In both incidents, the aircraft parking areas were the primary targets. Seventeen aircraft were damaged and eight personnel were injured. (For detailed information see Incl 5.)

(9) 05 Feb - (170th AHC) UH-1H aircraft 66-16532 crashed at YA296204. The aircraft received major damage, negative injury to crew.

(10) 06 Feb - HMAF (52d CAB) was attacked by 18 rounds of 122mm rocket fire. There were no personnel injured and two aircraft received light damage. (For detailed information see Inclosure 3.)

(11) 06 Feb - HMAF (52d CAB) UH-1H aircraft 66-16066 was hit by recoilless rifle fire in an LZ causing major damage to the aircraft, negative crew-members injured.

(12) 06 Feb - HMAF (52d CAB), approximately 30 - 40 rounds of 82mm mortar were fired but impacted outside the Holloway cantonment area. (For detailed information see Inclosure 3.)

d. Operational Statistics:

COMBAT <u>SORTIES</u>	OTHER <u>SORTIES</u>	UH-1H <u>HOURS</u>	UH-1C <u>HOURS</u>	CH -47 <u>HOURS</u>
6917	474	1352	392	223
TOTAL <u>HOURS</u>	TOTAL <u>PAX</u>	CARGO <u>TONS</u>	A/C <u>HIT</u>	A/C <u>DAM/DEST</u>
1967	7566	1163	8	7/1
CREW <u>KIA/KIA</u>	ENEMY <u>KIA</u>	STRUCT <u>DEST</u>	MED <u>EVAC</u>	SORTIES <u>CXL/DELAYED</u>
5/0	65	64	53	0/0

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