

14 NOVEMBER

1. OPERATIONS SUMMARY:

Few units that have a rendezvous with destiny have an inkling of their fate until the historical moment touches them. So it was with the 1/7 Cav on the morning of 14 November. It was to be a routine operation, in so far as any operation deep in enemy territory can be routine. B company had moved back to the battalion positions near PLEI ME to prepare for the lengthy airlift into an area adjacent to the CHU PONGS.

At 1050 hours the first company, Bravo, had landed at L-Z X-RAY (YA 935010) and by 1210 hours, the bulk of the battalion had closed. With C company securing the L-Z, B company was moved north and west toward a finger extending down from the CHU PONG hill mass. At 1245 hours the company became moderately engaged and by 1330 hours was being attacked by at least two companies of N-V-A infantry. The ~~westerly~~ platoon of B company was cut off in the violence of the first enemy assault and remained an isolated island of resistance until it was retrieved the following day.

Simultaneously with the engagement of B company, a few rounds of mortar fire began to fall on the L-Z and on B company. Rocket fire also was experienced in several sectors. A company was moved up to the left flank of B company and immediately became engaged with a company-sized N-V-A force that was driving toward Bravo's left rear. Fire was then coming into the landing zone itself, and aircraft bringing in the balance of the battalion had to be waved off. Thus far, all the action had occurred to the west and northwest of the L-Z in heavy jungle and tall grass. (Inclosure 16)

Then C company, which had moved off the L-Z to the east was attacked by a two-company force of enemy. Elements from D company were moved to reinforce and, combined with the tactical air, aerial and tube artillery support called to within a 100 meters of friendly positions, the attack was beaten off and the eastern portion of the L-Z then became secure and relatively free of fire.

In learning of the intensity of the fight, the brigade commander alerted B co, 2/7 Cav, which originally had been slated for brigade security duty at STADIUM, to move directly to X-RAY.

The remainder of the 1/7 battalion, including the Recon Platoon, landed by 1500 hours and were fed into positions on the eastern fringe of the landing zone. Attempts to retrieve the isolated platoon by Bravo and a platoon of Alpha company had failed and both companies were instructed to pull back and tighten up their interior lines. (Inclosure 17). Communication was maintained with the isolated platoon throughout the fight. By then it was apparent that the battalion had engaged a force of at least 600 men.

By 1800 hours B 2/7 Cav landed in the L-Z and initially was placed in reserve as a battalion reaction force. Later, one platoon of B 2/7 reinforced C 1/7 and the recon platoon was pulled back to join the reaction force. The perimeter for the night of 14 November was generally as depicted in Inclosure 18.

Throughout the night the N-V-A attempted to crack the perimeter of the isolated platoon, but intensive artillery protective fires that ringed the position broke up every attack. The main perimeter was also subjected to repeated probes, and these too were repulsed. The two artillery batteries at FALCON pumped more than 4,000 rounds of high explosive in close support of X-RAY. Tactical air flew missions throughout the night and the Air Force flare ship maintained constant illumination of the battle area. Pilots of the lift ships braved the dangers of the fire-swept L-Z to bring in reinforcements and re-supply and carry out wounded and dead.

Meanwhile, brigade had alerted the 2/5 Cav for commitment to X-RAY. The battalion extracted two companies from patrol positions south of FALCON and flew them to L-Z VICTOR (YV964994), with the CP and D company moving in from FALCON.

B company, on a search mission north of FALCON, fell back to that position at night fall and was prepared to join the battalion at first light. The battalion was to move by foot into X-RAY the next morning.

2/7 Cav continued its operations south of PLEI ME, with C company and D company, while A company was moved to STADIUM to be a reaction force for the night.

C Troop, 1/9 Cav Sqdn made visual reconnaissance of the immediate battle area in an effort to pinpoint movement of N-V-A forces.

2. TASK ORGANIZATION:

3D BRIGADE  
No Change

DIVISION  
No Change

3. INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY:

Some of FIELD FRONT's assault elements had gotten under way before dawn on the 14th, bound for PLEI ME. At noon, when Cavalry helicopters disgorged troopers at the foot of the CHU PONGS, absolute surprise had been achieved. Instead of launching a divisional attack on PLEI ME and possibly regaining tactical initiative, the N-V-A division found itself engaged in a struggle to defend its own base.

The CHU PONG mountains and IA DRANG valley long had been a sanctuary for the VIET CONG and N-V-A forces. It was one of the numerous so-called "secret" bases which provided the insurgents with a secure area in which to store supplies, conduct training, carry out administrative functions, manufacture and repair arms and equipment and provide an operating base for combat units.

Since 1954 at the latest no Vietnamese government units had penetrated the CHU PONG massif. Undisturbed, VIET CONG units had enjoyed years of safety in the mountains and their sheltered valleys. It was from the sanctuary and the supply bases in the IA DRANG valley that FIELD FRONT and the 32d and 33d Regiments had moved on PLEI ME on 19 October. Now the sanctuary was threatened.

Reacting swiftly to the Cavalry landings, FIELD FRONT ordered the 66th Regiment to attack the landing zone. Strong elements of the regiment were established on the ridgeline overlooking the landing zone to provide a base of fire. The 9th and 7th battalions of the 66th and a composite battalion of the 33d (formerly the 2d and 3d battalions) provided the initial assault forces.

The attacks came in company and multi-company force and were pressed with great determination. They continued throughout the day and into the night. Despite the elan of the attacks, the regiments were unable to overrun the position. The attacking elements tried to maintain as close contact as possible, not only to exert the maximum pressure, but also to prevent tactical air and artillery from being used to help the defenders. Despite this tactic, US aircraft slashed repeatedly at the N-V-A ranks, coming within 100 meters of the Cavalry's front lines. Murderous artillery barrages were called in very close to friendly lines, breaking up the attacks and taking a terrible toll of men and equipment.

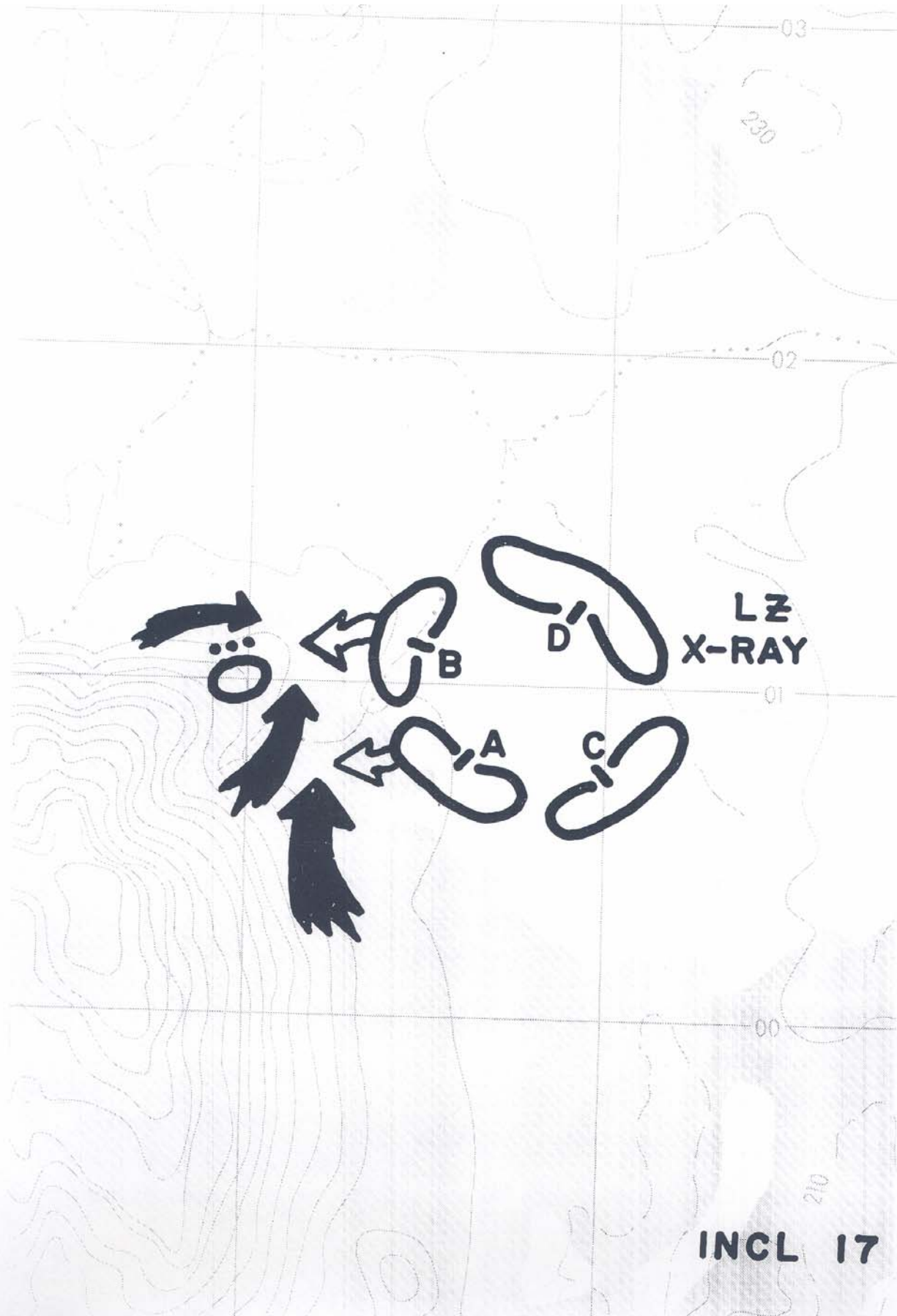
4. ACTIVITIES STATISTICS:

<u>FRIENDLY LOSSES</u>	
KIA	6
WIA	49
MIA	0

ENEMY LOSSES  
Because of the intensity and continuity of the action, the enemy losses will be summarized on the report of the 16th.

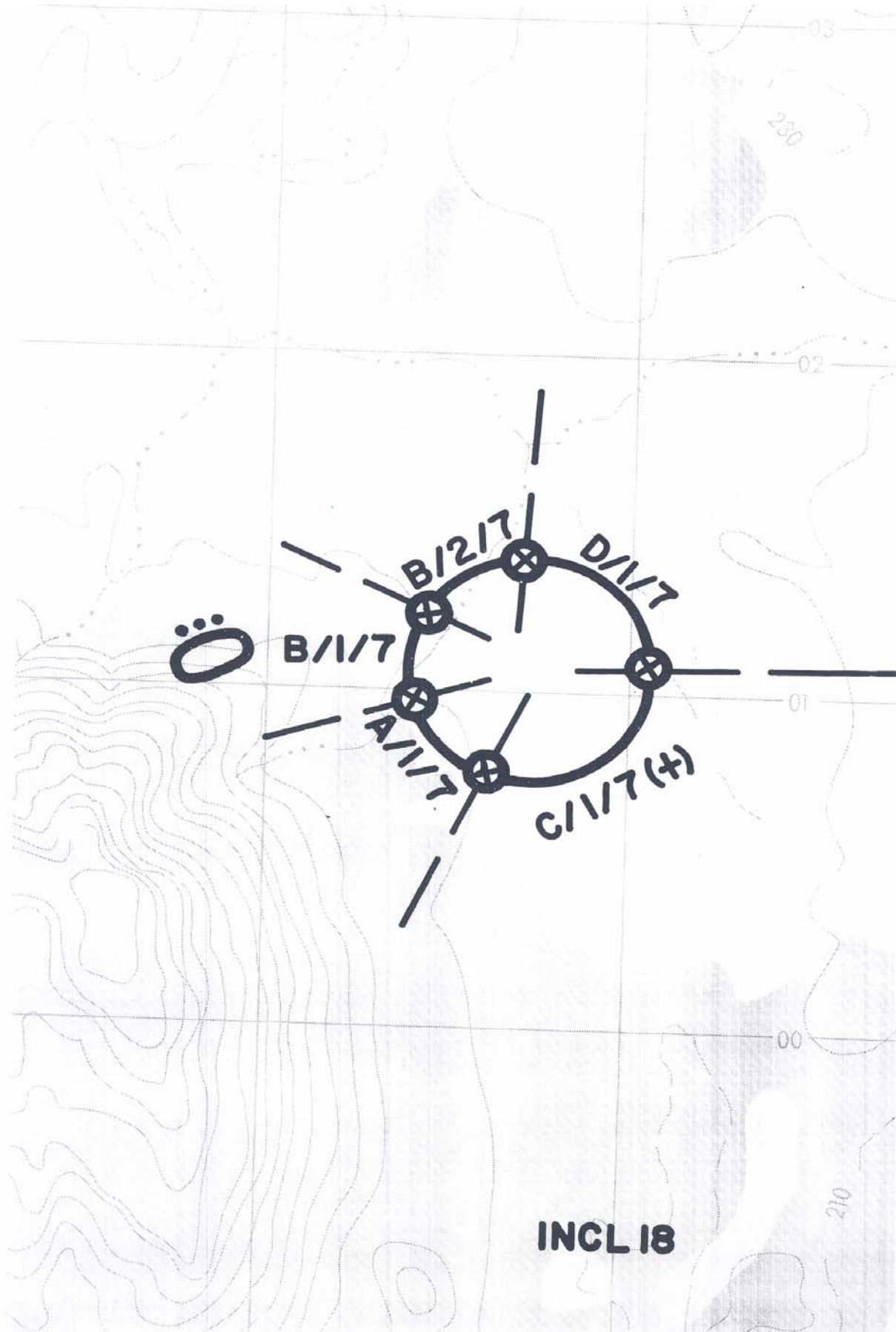


**INCL 16**



LZ  
X-RAY

INCL 17



**INCL 18**