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HEADQUARTERS
MILITARY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY GROUP, VIETNAM)
APO 1143, San Francisco, California

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MAGAR-OT (OP)

15 MAY 1962

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SUBJECT: "Lessons Learned"

U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam

TO: See Distribution

1. Attached for your information are copies of "Lessons Learned" 1 thru 12.
2. The information contained in "Lessons Learned" was obtained through After Action Reports on operations in South Vietnam and by personal observations of MAAG Advisors.
3. A copy of all future "Lessons Learned" will also be furnished your headquarters.

FOR THE CHIEF:

Incl:
1-12 "Lessons Learned"

David Penson
DAVID PENSON
Lt Col, AGC
Adjutant General

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HEADQUARTERS, U. S. ARMY SECTION
MILITARY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY GROUP, VIETNAM
Saigon, Vietnam

MAGAR-OT (OP)

30 March 1962

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned Number 1.

TO: See Distribution

1. General: A heliborne operation was conducted in Cai Ngay (WG203797), An Xuyen Province, 33d DTA, III CTZ on 8 March 1962.

2. Participating Units: The units which participated in the operation were an Inf Bn, Recon Co, Ranger Co, and a Marine Bn in reserve supported by 14 H-21 helicopters, 5 AD-6's, 1 L-19, 1 LCM, 2 LCVP's and 2 wooden boats.

3. Mission: The mission of the operation was to conduct a heliborne assault on the village of Cai Ngay containing an estimated 200 VC, to kill or capture all VC personnel, and destroy all VC installations.

4. Concept: The concept of the operation was to utilize four heliborne company task forces in two lifts with an initial encirclement and gradual reduction of the objective area. The task force was to land in four separate areas and drive the VC toward the center. Air strikes were to be delivered on the objective area and in gaps between units. River forces were to protect the flight route of the helicopters.

5. Results: The operation was considered successful with 38 VC killed, large quantities of VC materiel destroyed or captured, and numerous VC installations destroyed.

6. Lessons Learned:

a. The proper utilization of close air support provides an additional means to the commander in accomplishing his mission. The 5 AD6's assisted by the L-19 spotter plane containing a VN pilot and US observer began their air strike immediately after the landing of the first lift. Their target areas were the rear of the LZ, flanks, and objective area. The spotting and observation by the L-19 plus the accuracy and effectiveness of the air strike produced excellent results.

b. The first lift of heliborne forces should be of sufficient size to encircle the objective area if possible. The first lift was composed of two companies which landed in two different zones leaving a large part of the objective area unobserved and unprotected, thereby, allowing large numbers of VC to escape.

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MAGAR-OT (OP)

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned Number 1.

c. Aggressive and forceful offensive action by heliborne forces immediately upon landing will exploit the surprise and shock created by use of helicopters. The first lift of heliborne forces into the objective area were very slow to react and take advantage of only limited and spasmodic enemy resistance. The lack of aggressive offensive action allowed the VC to organize and part of the VC force to escape.

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