

NVA 5th Div - official translation

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From: Stephen Radovich <srad50@aol.com>

Date: May 3, 2017

To: dposs@dposs.com, jonnhayes@gmail.com

Subject: Submitting an official translation of the 5th NVA Division's account of the Battle of Bien Hoa, TET 1968, Bien Hoa Air Base.

This is an official translation of what the 5th NVA Division *said* they did before, during, and after Tet '68. As an active participant from the other side, I would caution the reader to exercise great latitude in swallowing the NVA line, as they tend to be rather expansive in their descriptions, particularly of how many enemy were killed and how many enemy vehicles were destroyed. There is a couple of references to US Marines in the chapters, and while I certainly mean no disrespect to my Jarhead brethen, kindly note that there were no Marines in III Corps during Tet '68. Most of the 'armor' references were to either 2-47th Inf (Mech), or to elements of the 11th ACR. Happy reading!

HISTORY OF THE 5TH DIVISION (LICH SU SU DOAN 5)

Editorial Supervision: Headquarters and Party Current Affairs Committee of Military Region 7

Authors: Lieutenant Colonel Ho Son Dai (Primary editor, Chapter 5, Conclusion),

Major Nguyen Van Hung (Introduction, Chapters 1, 2, 3, 4, and 6)

Assistance provided by: Tran Quang Toai, People's Army Publishing House, Hanoi, 1995

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CHAPTER TWO PARTICIPATING IN THE GENERAL OFFENSIVE AND UPRISING ON THE EASTERN APPROACHES TO SAIGON (1968-1969)

After the American imperialists had spent two dry seasons in unsuccessful attempts to conduct a "strategic counter-offensive" using two pincer tactics, "search and destroy attacks aimed at breaking the back of the Liberation Army" and rural pacification operations, by the end of 1967 American forces had been forced into a passive, reactive posture and were being pulled out and stretched thin in accordance with our strategic plans. The defeats on the battlefields of South Vietnam had placed the American government in a difficult economic, political, and diplomatic situation. On the international arena and even inside the United States opposition to the war of aggression had exploded and was growing, creating significant uncertainty and divisions within the American ruling class.

In late December 1967, however, under pressure from the "hawks" in both houses of Congress and from the industrialist warmongers,

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President Johnson decided to send 100,000 additional troops and additional weapons to South Vietnam, raising U.S. troop strength there to 480,000 men. He also ordered the U.S. military command in Vietnam (MACV) to put together plans for a third strategic counter-offensive. This counter-offensive was to begin in late December 1967 and last until April 1968. The counter-offensive was to focus primarily on a number of targets in the Eastern Cochinchina [Eastern Nam Bo] theater of operations.

In the primary theater, Eastern Cochinchina, in early December 1967 two brigades of the 101st Airmobile Division were hurriedly moved in to reinforce the Binh Long-Hon Quang-Dau Tieng sector. U.S. mobile reserve forces and the puppet 5th Division hastily carried out an offensive plan aimed at blocking Eastern Cochinchina's main force units in Phuoc Long and along Route 14. These forces then launched a counter-attack to capture our revolutionary base areas in Tay Ninh and Song Be. The objectives of the Americans and their puppets in this third offensive campaign were to draw in Liberation main force units to deal with their attacks in order to enable them to isolate and inflict casualties on our 5th, 7th, and 9th divisions; to attack our revolutionary base areas; to push our forces away from the Saigon-Gia Dinh area; to gradually improve the situation and expand the security perimeter surrounding Saigon; and to enable U.S. and puppet forces to retain the strategic initiative.

On our side, after the great victories won by our side during the 1966-1967 dry season, South Vietnam's Liberation armed forces had made major strides in their command organization and ability to command forces in combat and had gained considerable experience in building a people's war posture to respond to the two American imperialist counter-offensives.

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Assessing the status of the revolution in South Vietnam at that time, in July 1967 a Plenum of the Party Central Committee stated that, "The enemy's limited war strategy has failed at the most basic level and is currently confused and on the strategic defensive on the battlefields of South Vietnam. This is a tremendous failure for the over-all strategy of the American war of aggression in South Vietnam." The Central Committee Plenum directed all battlefields throughout South Vietnam to conduct a fall-winter campaign to push the enemy back onto the defensive and into further difficulties, to develop new strength and a new offensive posture to provide the South Vietnamese revolution with new opportunities, and to move toward securing a decisive victory.

Implementing the orders from the Party Central Committee, the armed forces of Eastern Cochin China focused on massing, consolidating, and building their forces while simultaneously actively preparing the battlefield for the 1967 Fall-Winter campaign. From the end of the 1967 rainy season onward, Eastern Cochin China's main force divisions, with support from the great rear area in North Vietnam, received reinforcements of both manpower and weapons. They were built into three full-strength main force divisions, each with three infantry regiments and a number of support battalions (mortar, recoilless rifle, 12.7mm anti-aircraft, engineer, reconnaissance, signal, medical, transportation, and sapper battalions). Their weapons and equipment were upgraded with new weapons and various types of technical equipment to support command and communications from the company up to the division level.

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After an extended period of arduous combat operations in the remote Ba Ria-Long Khanh area, in late September 1967 5th Regiment and the 5th Division's combat support units marched back to Khe Sanh in Phuoc Long to regroup, rebuild, and prepare for the 1967 Fall-Winter campaign. During this period the division was strengthened by the addition of the 88th Regiment to the division's combat formations.

88th Regiment traced its ancestry back to the Tu Vu Regiment of the 308th Division, which as the first main force unit in the People's Army of Vietnam had fought and scored outstanding combat victories in our nation's resistance war against the French colonialists. In June 1965 the regiment received orders to march south to fight in South Vietnam. In 1967 the regiment moved down from the Central Highlands to join the battle in Eastern Cochin China. In September 1967 88th Regiment became a part of the combat formations of the 5th Division. At this time Comrade Sy was the Regimental Commander and Comrade Ba Lanh was the Regimental Political Commissar.

Upon their return to Khe Sanh to participate in the Fall-Winter campaign, the units of 5th Division vigorously reorganized, held political training classes to digest the content of the Central Committee Resolution, and received supplementary training to help them built resolve to successfully accomplish their assigned missions during the 1967-1968 Winter-Spring Campaign. During this period the unit made tremendous efforts. In only a little over one month, 5th Regiment and the division's support units received and

assimilated 500 new recruits, together with new equipment and weapons, while at the same time conducting supplementary training and strengthening the unit's Party chapters at the lowest levels.

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By early November 1967 the division had reorganized and strengthened its three infantry regiments (4th, 5th, and 88th Regiments) and its nine support battalions and was hurriedly preparing to launch the campaign. The entire division participated in political training to build combat resolve. The Division Headquarters and Party Committee directed a campaign of wide-ranging political activities within the Party chapters with the goal of building "three good" Party Chapters and having all Party and Youth Group members sign up to become "Hero Killers of Americans" and "Hero Destroyers of Vehicles." This campaign created a widespread emulation movement throughout the entire division.

In the Ba Ria-Long Khanh area, 4th Division worked with local forces to conduct continuous attacks against enemy positions along Route 15. In late November, on orders from the COSVN Military Command in preparation for the 1968 Winter-Spring campaign, 4th Regiment's 2nd Battalion was ordered to conduct supplemental training in urban combat operations. Regimental Commander Nguyen Nam Hung and a sapper reconnaissance cell were sent to infiltrate the city disguised as a group of vehicle mechanics. There they studied enemy targets in the Newport and Hang Xanh Intersection areas and made contact with agents of the revolution to develop infiltration routes for later use to move 2nd Battalion into the city to serve as a deep penetration force and attack targets assigned to it in Phase 1 of the 1968 Spring General Offensive and Uprising. After one month of carrying out the Fall-Winter campaign, COSVN main force units and the armed forces of Eastern Cochinchina had eliminated large numbers of enemy troops while at the same time completing preparations of all kinds for the 1968 Spring campaign.

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Our troops, equipment, and weapons were quickly being moved into the areas around Saigon-Gia Dinh, creating springboard positions north, northwest, southwest, and northeast of Saigon.

As soon as they began to carry out their third strategic counter-offensive the Americans and their puppets were heavily attacked in Tay Ninh, on Route 16 in Tan Uyen, and in the Xuan Loc area of Long Khanh. In mid-December, however, after discovering that our pressure in the area surrounding Saigon-Gia Dinh was growing day by day, Westmoreland personally ordered the postponement of the counter-offensive, withdrew U.S. military units on the outer perimeter north of Saigon, and moved in forces from Vung Tau and the Central Highlands to defend the middle perimeter and the outskirts of the city as a precaution against attacks by our forces.

In December 1967 the Party Politburo issued a resolution on the revolutionary opportunity in South Vietnam and directed the launching of a general offensive and general insurrection throughout South Vietnam. To implement this Politburo resolution, the COSVN Military Headquarters and COSVN Military Party Committee issued the "Quang Trung" resolution to provide guidance for a general offensive and general insurrection. The resolution provided concrete guidance to direct the actions of all Liberation armed forces in South Vietnam. To carry out the Party's strategic design and to directly command and guide the general offensive and general insurrection in the focal point

sector of the "Tet 1968 Spring Campaign," the COSVN Military Command and Military Party Committee decided to dissolve the Eastern Cochinchina Military Region [Military Region 7] and the Saigon-Gia Dinh Military Region.

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In their place five sub-regions were formed covering the five primary attack sectors into Saigon. Also formed was Sub-Region 6, consisting of the inner city itself, to directly command the sapper, urban commando, and mass popular political struggle forces in the precincts of the inner city.

In the principal offensive sectors leading to the focal-point targets of the general offensive, we would use COSVN's main force divisions and specialty branch units to attack U.S. and puppet army units to tie down U.S. and puppet main force units on the middle perimeter in order to enable a number of main force units to penetrate into the inner city to cooperate with sapper and urban commando forces in attacking and seizing the important key leadership targets and to support the people in uprisings to seize control of the city.

In the area east and northeast of Saigon (Sub-Region 5 and a portion of Sub-Region 4), the primary attack elements would be 5th Division and COSVN's 724th Artillery Regiment. These units, supported by one sapper battalion from Sub-Region 4 and one Bien Hoa City urban commando company, were assigned the missions of attacking and capturing Bien Hoa Airbase, the U.S. 2nd Field Force Headquarters, the puppet 3rd Corps Headquarters, the Thu Duc Officers School, the Thuc Duc Electrical Power Plant, and the Bien Hoa Prison, and of supporting local armed forces and the popular masses in uprisings to liberate Bien Hoa City. On 14 December 1967 the Bien Hoa Front was formed. Comrade Tran Minh Tam, acting Commander of the 5th Division, was appointed Front Commander (*Footnote: In late November 1967 5th Division Commander Comrade Nguyen The Truong was transferred to a new assignment*).

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Comrade Nam Dung, Deputy Division Political Commissar, was appointed Political Commissar of the Bien Hoa Front. Comrade Tran Cong An, Commander of the Bien Hoa Province Military Unit, was appointed Deputy Front Commander, and Comrade Phan Van Trang, Secretary of the Bien Hoa City Party Committee, was appointed Deputy Political Commissar.

To ensure the maintenance of secrecy for the attack while at the same time moving forces down to the targets to be in place on time to open fire when the campaign was launched, on 20 January 1968 the Bien Hoa Front Headquarters sent cadre forward to conduct reconnaissance of the targets while simultaneously ordering the units to begin their approach marches. On the night of 20 January a cadre team assigned to reconnoiter the Bien Hoa Airbase left Trang Bom to close in on the enemy to study U.S. troop deployments around the airbase. The cadre team was made up of Comrades Tran Minh Tam, Tran Cong An, Nguyen Minh Thang, and a sapper-reconnaissance element.

After one day and night spent clinging to the enemy positions, the cadre team was both tired and hungry. As they departed the area our reconnaissance team encountered an enemy ambush. The enemy detected our team's presence, opened fire, and surrounded them. The entire cadre team had to dive into an underground culvert next to the Binh Sau strategic hamlet to hide. Hearing the gunfire, local guerrilla teams quickly moved in to block the enemy force. They rescued our study team and provided

guides that led the group safely back to the base area. On 25 January 5th Regiment and the division's combat support units received their orders to participate in the campaign. They were directed to rapidly move their personnel to the designated assembly positions and arrive at the pre-determined time.

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The units marched day and night, crossing rivers, cutting trails, eating dry rations and drinking cold water in order to arrive in time to open fire on schedule. By the night of 29 January 5th Regiment had crossed the Dong Nai River and arrived at its assembly point at Hamlet 3 of Tan Dinh village. The division's combat support units had arrived at the division's forward command post at Hoc Ong Ta. 4th Regiment (under the command of Deputy Regimental Commander Nguyen Minh Thang and Deputy Regimental Political Commissar Nguyen Minh Quang) marched from the Suoi Quyt base west of Route 2 to the area west of Trang Bom. 2nd Battalion, the deep penetration unit, accompanied by Regimental Commander Nguyen Nam Hung, was in place in Guerrilla Zone 6 of Thu Duc village. Everyone was prepared for the order to launch the attack and annihilate the enemy.

On the night of 31 January all units moved forward to reach their assault positions in accordance with the plan. In 4th Regiment's assault sector, by 2000 hours 1st Battalion and the Sub-Region 4 sapper battalion had reached the airbase perimeter fence. At 2330 hours all troops of the sapper battalion had penetrated three rows of fence and were deployed along the enemy's patrol pathway. 1st Battalion ran into problems getting past the enemy obstacles deployed outside the fence-line. 3rd Battalion missed its target and lost contact with the regimental command post.

In 5th Regiment's sector, 1st and 2nd Battalions had closed on 2nd Field Force Headquarters at 2200 hours. While deploying its forces into attack formation 1st Battalion ran into the enemy headquarters outer perimeter security forces and had to halt in place. Meanwhile 2nd Battalion had reached the perimeter fence around the Field Force Headquarters' helicopter landing field.

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3rd Battalion and the Bien Hoa sapper company had been given the mission of attacking the puppet 3rd Corps Headquarters. While approaching the target 3rd Battalion ran into an enemy force deployed in an outer blocking position and was forced to deploy into attack formation one kilometer from the objective. In accordance with the coordination plan, the sapper company had moved its troops in and deployed in accordance with the attack plan.

At 2250 hours, of the attack formations of 5th Division and Bien Hoa's armed forces, only three battalions, one company, and the artillery units had occupied their assault positions. Three battalions and one sapper company, blocked by enemy forces, had not yet reached their assault positions.

Faced with this difficult situation, the Front Headquarters decided to proceed with the attack at the campaign's scheduled "H" hour. The Headquarters issued orders to 1st Battalion, 4th Regiment that when we began shelling Bien Hoa Airbase the battalion was to quickly eliminate enemy forces on the outer perimeter, cut the wire, and attack alongside the sapper battalion to seize their assigned objectives in the northern portion of the airbase. Headquarters told 3rd Battalion, 5th Regiment that when it heard the sound

of gunfire the battalion was to quickly mass its forces to attack the enemy position on the outer perimeter and then attack and capture the puppet 3rd Corps Headquarters. The battalion was then to deploy one company to block enemy counter-attacks along the main road and cut the footpath through the area of the Ho Nai station. 1st Battalion, 5th Regiment, was ordered to overcome all obstacles, push its assault formation forward, and mount an attack in coordination with 2nd Battalion to overrun the assigned targets in the 2nd Field Force Headquarters. 4th Regiment maintained contact with other units and moved 3rd Battalion in to occupy its assigned positions.

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At 0000 hours on 31 January the Tet 1968 General Offensive and uprising began! On the Bien Hoa Front, 1st Battalion, 274th Regiment fired three volleys of DKB [122mm] rockets into the enemy command center on the airbase. Other types of heavy weapons fired barrages against enemy petroleum storage tanks, ammunition bunkers, troop barracks, and aircraft hangars and revetments. The soldiers of Sub-Region 5's sapper battalion quickly overran enemy positions along the patrol pathway, and then continued the attack into the airbase. 1st Battalion, 4th Regiment maneuvered to bypass the rubber trees that the enemy had cut down, to climb over the obstacles, lines of spikes and piles of trees, and to cut through the fences to enter the airbase. After 30 minutes of fighting the entire battalion had crossed three fence-lines and joined the sapper battalion in an attack aimed at destroying a U.S. Marine battalion [sic] assigned to reinforce the defenses in the northeastern sector.

Our troops fought a ferocious battle against the enemy from 0100 to 0400 hours, our two battalions inflicted heavy casualties on one U.S. battalion. Even though they had suffered severe losses, supported by enemy tanks and artillery the enemy troops stubbornly launched counter-attacks to block our forces. 1st Battalion and the sapper battalion were unable to penetrate deep into the airbase. At first light, 3rd Battalion, 4th Regiment opened fire in the southeastern sector of the airbase. After four hours of passive reaction to our surprise attack, with most of the enemy pulling back and putting up only weak resistance, at 0500 hours on 1 February the enemy began to launch a series of powerful counter-attacks.

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Enemy helicopters circled overhead, dropping flares and firing volleys of rockets and streams of 20mm cannon fire into the combat formations of 4th Regiment and the sapper battalion. Enemy infantry and tanks edged forward, pushing our attack spearhead back through the airbase perimeter fences. The situation became extremely difficult for us. The battalions ran out of B-40, B-41, and AT anti-tank ammunition. Our casualties soared to almost 50%. In spite of these problems our units continued to fight back with incredible heroism. At 0530 hours enemy aircraft bombed and napalmed 4th Regiment's command post. The regiment was ordered to pull back to the division's forward command post.

At 0700 hours in the morning one enemy battalion and two troops of armored vehicles surrounded 1st Battalion and the sapper battalion on three sides. Savage fighting broke out on the northeastern perimeter of the airbase. 1st Battalion, supported by the sapper battalion, drove back one of the enemy's tank and infantry columns and managed to move its units to the outside. At 1100 hours, when 4th Regiment reached the division forward command post at the "Motorcycle Base," the Americans, using armored

personnel carriers, closed in on the regiment by following field telephone lines which we had not had time to retrieve. 4th Regiment established defensive positions that drove back many enemy counterattacks, destroying five M-113s and killing many enemy troops. In 5th Regiment's sector, in the area of 1st and 2nd Battalion's planned attack on 2nd Field Force Headquarters, at 0115 hours 2nd Battalion opened fire and destroyed the enemy force guarding the airfield. After 30 minutes of fighting, 6th Company drove through a penetration in the perimeter fence to destroy five enemy helicopters.

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Terrified, the enemy defenders pulled back and used bunkers and pre-fabricated blockhouses to put up a ferocious resistance. At 0400 hours the enemy sent in reinforcements, one Marine battalion and one armored troop. These reinforcements launched a massed counterattack against 2nd Battalion, supported by armed helicopters that laid down heavy fire on the combat formations of 7th and 8th Companies. On the morning of 1 February the enemy sent out troops who tightly encircled 6th Company, which had penetrated deep into the interior of the airfield.

There were also problems in 1st Battalion's attack sector. Our forces were blocked by one enemy Ranger battalion and enemy tanks, which launched a determined counterattack. By 0500 hours the battalion still had not reached its assigned objective. In 3rd Battalion's sector, between 0100 and 0400 hours there was savage close-quarter fighting between our troops and the enemy. At 0500 hours the enemy sent in a battalion of reinforcements that, supported by tanks, attacked 3rd Battalion. Regimental headquarters lost contact with the battalion. The attack columns of 5th Regiment's three battalions all were having severe problems and losses were heavy. Faced with this situation, the Front Headquarters ordered 5th Regiment to pull back to the assembly point.

After receiving these orders, reconnaissance cells were sent out twice to pass orders to 3rd Battalion and 6th Company, 2nd Battalion to break through the enemy lines, but both times all members of the reconnaissance cells were killed. On the third try the reconnaissance troops broke through the enemy line and delivered the orders to 3rd Battalion and 6th Company just as the Americans had encircled them on three sides. Surrounded by enemy troops, 6th Company and 3rd Battalion fought with extraordinary heroism, using every tree-trunk, every mound of earth, every house and fortification to drive back wave after wave of attacks by enemy tanks and infantry.

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At 1100 hours 6th Company had only about a dozen combatants left, and almost all of these fighters were wounded. Under the command of Deputy Company Commander Nguyen Van Chanh, the company continued to fight on. At 1700 hours the company had only four combatants left, all wounded. Deputy Company Commander Chanh crawled into a drainage culvert to try to find a way through enemy lines. By 1900 hours the last four combatants had all been killed. Although he had multiple wounds all over his body, Deputy Company Commander Nguyen Van Chanh still struggled to escape through the enemy lines. After a night spent stumbling and crawling forward, he had covered more than 10 kilometers and reached the outskirts of the Cay Kho strategic hamlet. On the morning of 2 February Mother Muoi, a local resident, was out looking at her crops when she saw him laying unconscious on the side of a rice-field dike. She immediately took him home, tended

his wounds, and made contact with our agents, who sent him to the division's forward surgical station. 3rd Battalion had been unable to contact regimental headquarters since the morning of 1 January [sic - should read 1 February]. Surrounded by dozens of tanks and two battalions of American troops, the cadre and enlisted men of 3rd Battalion stubbornly dug in and repelled wave after wave of enemy counterattacks. In the area of the Tam Hiep Intersection 12th Company and a recoilless rifle element from 22nd Battalion drove back a series of counterattacks by two Marine companies and dozens of tanks.

At 1500 we still had all traffic on Route 1 cut. The enemy assembled a huge composite force, made up of aircraft, artillery, tanks, and infantry, which concentrated heavy fire to destroy our blocking position at Tam Hiep. Fighting amidst blinding smoke, the 92nd Recoilless Rifle Company, led by Comrade Vo Van Tang, drove back seven counterattacks by enemy tanks and infantry. At 1600 hours, out of ammunition and with his guns smashed, Vo Van Tang, with ten separate wounds all over his body, struggled to support a fellow soldier with a broken leg as he led his unit in an escape through enemy lines.

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At 1700 hours 3rd Battalion withdrew from the battlefield. During its withdrawal the enemy continued to attack the battalion with artillery and air strikes, inflicting heavy losses on 3rd Battalion.

Meanwhile 2nd Battalion/4th Regiment, the deep penetration force under the command of Battalion Commander Comrade Tu On, attacked the Thu Duc Officers School, supported by Sub-Region 4 forces and Thu Duc self-defense guerrilla fighters. Because we were so heavily outnumbered and because of poor coordination between our own forces, the enemy was able to concentrate his attacks on 2nd Battalion. Our forces made a fighting withdrawal to Guerrilla Zone 6 of Thu Duc village. The enemy encircled the battalion, cutting off all escape routes. 2nd Battalion continued to fight on against the enemy counterattacks. Front Headquarters subsequently transferred the battalion to Sub-Region 4, where it continued to operate in the Thu Duc area.

After two days of determined fighting against vastly superior numbers of American and puppet troops, who had the maximum air and artillery support, even though they had not been able to totally annihilate the enemy or gain complete control of their objectives, the division's units had inflicted heavy losses on enemy forces. They killed hundreds of enemy troops, destroyed 49 enemy tanks and armored vehicles and five aircraft, blew up two enemy ammunition warehouses, and destroyed large quantities of enemy military equipment. At the same time, they had supported the armed forces of Sub-Region 5 and the people of Bien Hoa province in coordinated and simultaneous attacks against important U.S. and puppet targets, inflicting heavy losses and totally upsetting their strategic posture on the battlefield.

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After withdrawing, however, the division suffered heavy losses of personnel, weapons, and equipment. The number of troops killed, wounded, and missing in two days of combat rose to 728 men. During 5th Regiment's return to base the troops ran out of rice, food, and dry rations as they fought a continuous series of battles against U.S. troops making leap-frog attacks and sweeps into the rear base. Regimental Commander Xuan Thanh was killed during these battles.

The first days of the 1968 General Offensive and uprising were very challenging days for the division. While enduring countless difficulties and adversities, the division also received the whole-hearted support and assistance of all Party and governmental elements and of the people of Bien Hoa. For two straight days the women working in the Sub-Region's civilian coolie labor force braved enemy bombs and shells to transport weapons to the front, to bring hundreds of wounded troops to the rear, and to supply rice, Tet cakes, and drinking water to the troops. Comrade Phan Van Trang, Secretary of the City Party Committee, and the other city leadership cadre remained behind with our rearguard elements to arrange the safe transport of more than 1,000 wounded soldiers from the Bau Tien Surgical Aid Station across the Dong Nai River to the rear.

By 5 February all of 5th Regiment had crossed to the eastern side of the Dong Nai to regroup, reorganize, and receive replacements personnel, weapons, and equipment. Rear Services Group 84 sent porters carrying almost 200 tons of food, weapons, equipment, and supplies to the forward supply warehouse at Bau Ham-Cay Gao for issue to units of the division.

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With tremendous assistance and support from the local government, the local population, and other friendly units, 4th Regiment quickly regrouped and returned to combat. On the eastern approaches to Saigon 4th Regiment and Bien Hoa local forces continuously attacked enemy troop concentrations in the field in the area of Trang Bom and the Long Binh logistics facility. On the night of 18 February 4th Regiment attacked an American mechanized infantry position two kilometers north of Trang Bom. After two hours of fighting 3rd Battalion and two companies from 1st Battalion had eliminated over 100 enemy from the battlefield and destroyed 70 military vehicles. During that same night of 18 February 2nd Company, 1st Battalion, in cooperation with a recoilless rifle company from 724th Artillery Regiment and a company of Bien Hoa local forces, shelled the Long Binh logistics base, setting two ammunition warehouses on fire and annihilating one company of enemy troops.

4th Regiment's clear-cut victories helped to build combat resolve throughout the Bien Hoa Front and encouraged the division's other units and local armed forces to continue to build on these victories by continuously combating enemy counter-attacks, fighting off enemy sweeps, and conducting ambushes to erode enemy troop strength on the Bien Hoa-Long Thanh perimeter. These attacks inflicted heavy losses on enemy forces.

By the end of Phase 1 of the General Offensive (from 31 January to 15 March 1968) the division's units had eliminated thousands of enemy troops and destroyed 119 enemy vehicles, five aircraft, two ammunition warehouses, and large quantities of equipment and supplies.

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In recognition of these efforts and achievements, 3rd Battalion, 4th Regiment was awarded the Military Achievement Medal, Third Class. Comrades Nguyen Van Chanh and Vo Van Tang were awarded the Liberation Combat Achievement Medal, Second Class.

Main Identity

From: "peter tressider" <peace_maker67@yahoo.com>
To: "peter a tressider" <peace_maker67@yahoo.com>
Sent: Sunday, February 22, 2004 8:58 AM
Attach: NVA 5th Division.doc
Subject: Tet 68 and the NVA 5th Div - Courtesy of Doc Pardue

This was sent to me by someone who was in the 2/47th Infantry 9th Infantry and it is a history by the NVA who fought against us during TET 68 and they called us Marines, so much for intelligence.

Subject: Fw: 2-47th at Tet Date: Sat, 21 Feb 2004 19:22:17 -0500

FYI from Dave Zabecki, 2/47th Vet and Editor, Vietnam Magazine. I think any of you who were involved in TET 68 will find the attachment interesting.

Bob

----- Original Message ----- From: "David Zabecki" <zabeckid@compuserve.com> To: "Bob Pries" <rpries@cinci.rr.com> Sent: Monday, February 16, 2004 1:58 AM Subject: 2-47th at Tet

Bob,

Attached is something that I'm sure all 2-47th vets will want to see. Merle Prebbenow sent this to me recently. It is an English translation excerpt from the NVA's official history. This chapter deals with the Bien Hoa-Long Binh area during Tet 1968. According to them, we were Marines. There are some other great laughs in there as well.

I was finally demobilized about two weeks ago. From February through June I was the Director of USAREUR's Deployment Operations Center, responsible for synchronizing and coordinating the movement of some 33,000 troops and their equipment from Europe to the Gulf. We were also responsible for getting the

4th ID from the States and into and through Turkey--and of course we all know how that played out in the end. At one point we had well over 40 ships stacked up in the Med, before the decision was finally made to turn them south through the Suez Canal. My son was also in Iraq as an infantry squad

3/4/2004

leader in the 6th Marines.

From July through January I was attached to the State Department as the Security Advisor and Military Deputy of the U.S. Coordinating and Monitoring Mission in Israel--otherwise known as the U.S. Roadmap Team. I was the principal military negotiator between the Israelis and the Palestinians. That was another real big success.

I've now reverted back to my normal reserve job as USAREUR's Deputy Chief of Staff for Mobilization and Reserve Affairs. As part of that job I've been designated USAREUR's Task Force Commander for the Normandy D-Day

60th Anniversary observances this June. For the next several months I'll be overseeing the planning and preparations in a reserve status, and starting in May I'll go on active duty again for about six weeks for the execution phase. Fortunately I've been able to keep just barely afloat with Vietnam Magazine over the past year. I'm way behind in correspondence and submitted manuscripts, but I should be able to get dug out within the next couple of weeks.

It's a strange feeling sometimes being one of the last Vietnam vets still in uniform.

Dave Zabecki Editor, Vietnam Magazine.

peter a tressider

Air/Security Police

Jul 65 - Oct 78

Bien Hoa AB RVN 66-69

DaNang AB RVN 71-72

SSgt USAF

Med Ret Oct 78

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