

3/70

W / HCM  
file subj.  
date sub-cat  
3/70 I

HO CHI MINH TRAIL TRAFFIC - Cadre Notes

March 1970

((TN: The page preceeding the extract translation which begins on Page 2 of the O.T. contains number plates of three trucks)).

((Page 2 of O.T.))

DECLASSIFIED

CDEC Order No. & Date:

METHODS FOR CONTROLLING TROOPS

(Controlling troop strength, daily activities, and guard duty)

--++ o o o ++--

Breakfast. At 0830 hours, the unit was present at the railway station.

At 0630 hours, they finished breakfast. (At 0700 hours, the troops moved to the road).

Rice was cooked and pressed into balls for consumption during the day. The troops finished breakfast at 0600 hours ((sic)).

At 0630 hours, the units concentrated at Kho Village ((not very legible)). C2 moved first to the assembly point. The departure time was fixed at 0730 hours. At 0700 hours, the Company Executive Officer ((possibly of the 2nd Co)) and one liaison cadre were present at the assembly area predetermined by the battalion to control the troops. Each company occupied two cars ((on the train)). A cadre sat on the door step at the end of the car to control the troops. Once in the train, the troops were not allowed to leave. The train stopped at Hai Duong where the troops were allowed to take more water. In Hanoi and Hai Duong, they were not authorized to buy anything.

While the train was moving, they were not allowed to move within the car or from one car to another.

((Page 3 of O.T.))

SECURITY MAINTENANCE

29 Mar 70. The train stopped. It would continue the trip the next night.

Tomorrow, we would cook our meals at the station ((unspecified)), and then would go to receive rice at 0900 and 1600 hours. The 2nd and 3rd Companies and the battalion headquarters had one cook, Comrade Ngach.

We were allowed to bathe, wash, and sleep. Situation of the people: Fifty percent of the people living in this area made their living by trading. Guard, patrol, and security tasks were assigned to Te and Hai Nho.

29 Mar. Activity plan (continued) ((sic))

The train began to move at 0200 hours. We gathered at the meeting point upon the signal of a flashlight.

At 2400 hours, the unit moved to the railway station ((unspecified)) in the following sequence: Companies 3, 4, 1, and 2.

The train moved in darkness and it was very difficult for us to control personnel. Therefore, once getting into the train, platoon cadre and soldiers were not allowed to leave, except the company cadre.

Before leaving, the Company Executive Officer met the Chief of Staff. No one was allowed to buy anything at that station, except three comrades of the 2nd Company: Comrade Thang, a medical officer, and one liaison cadre ((sic)).

((TN: Pages 4 and 5 possibly contain expenditures for food and school items)).

((Page 6 of O.T.))

31 Mar: Trip itinerary: We continued our trip by vehicles along Highway No. 1.

Our vehicles stopped, and we got off at Bến Thu and Cầu Thu.

We had covered a distance of 75 kilometers.

At 1450 hours, we had lunch.

At 1520 hours, we were present at the assembly area.

We began our vehicular movement at 1600 hours.

t12: "Possibly Way Station 12," we arrived at Cẩm Thang ((Village)) Cẩm Xuyên ((District)), Hà Tĩnh ((Province, NVN)).

Characteristics: Cẩm Thang Village is located beside the sea on high terrain. We lived in the people's houses. The houses are small and the economic situation of the people is low. However, their political ideology is very good.

((Page 7 of O.T.))

Requirements: ((Following)) regulations concerning the safety of personnel and the maintenance of weapons and equipment by passengers: Before getting into the cars, someone must clean the weapons while two or three others arrange the packs. Finally, all of the passengers board the cars. Everybody keeps his own weapon. When getting off the cars, descend in order, and obey the orders ((given by higher echelon)). While the train is moving, no body is allowed to stand up, sit on the side of the cars, or buy and exchange anything. When coming to a new station, meals should be prepared individually.

Light discipline: Everybody, except company cadre, including all troops and liaison agents, moved at night.

((Page 8 of O.T.))

The use of tobacco and cigarettes ((was limited)) because enemy reconnaissance aircraft operated regularly.

We tied a phosphorous sign behind our hats so that we could see the man ahead. We also took precautionary measures against mosquitoes (food and drinking water).

((Additional notes))

Each car had 37 comrades.

16 Party members and 103 non-Party members.

(30 persons were loaded on a truck of C4.

((Personnel of)) C2 ((of)) C3 ((of)) D Headquarters. ((Total)) 119 persons.  
89 + 57 + 2 ).

C2 ((occupied)) three cars: 109 + 2 ((comrades from battalion headquarters))  
= 111 persons.

(10 comrades were assigned to C3).

Truck No. 1: B34: Văn, Sao CT ((sic)) take back one three-man cell.

Truck No. 2: B35: Siêu, Tong.

Truck No. 3: B32: Thang, Bac, Đề, Quân, the liaison agent.

Following are personnel who were sent to battalion headquarters for replacement:

Kính, Kiên, Thất, Yên.

Nam, Ngụ, Nhu, Công, Thúc, Hùng.

((Page 9 of O.T.))

1 Apr 70.

#### TROOP MOVEMENT PLAN

Regulations: If the road was obstructed by a military operation, the comrades who were in charge of carrying sick soldiers to the first-aid station must stop and wait. They must not carry the sick back to the unit. Regulations concerning getting on and off the cars must be strictly observed. When getting off the cars, the troops moved on a signal of a flashlight.

97  
+22 = 119 persons

Order of troop movement: Companies 1, 2, 3, and 4.

The troops were transported by four cars. Each car carried 23 soldiers. There were five extra soldiers who were put in different cars. The personnel of C2 were in cars No. 5 to No. 8.

B1 ((possibly 1st Platoon)): 21 + 2 ((one political and one liaison agent)) 23 persons.

B2: ((possibly 2nd Platoon)): 13 + 10 - B1 ((possibly 10 persons from the 1st Platoon)) = 23 persons.

B2 ((sic)): 17 + 3-B3 ((possibly three persons)) = 23 persons.

B3 ((possibly 3rd Platoon)): 21 + Nam, Phai = 23 persons.

Transferred to the 4th Company + 5

Already moved: 22

119 persons

We covered a distance of 102 kilometers.

License plate numbers:

| 1       | 2       | 3      | 4       |
|---------|---------|--------|---------|
| AA 3275 | AA 3459 | A 3283 | AA 2936 |

((Page 10 of O.T.))

1 Apr

### CHARACTERISTICS OF THE SITUATION

The entire battalion was stationed in ((the quarters of)) Units 9 and 6.

Because both our battalion ((possibly 619th Bn, 2nd Regt, VC Mr 3)) and the 2nd Battalion concentrated in one area where the people's houses were very small, some of our personnel had to sleep in hammocks. Some soldiers from the Popular Force, who had surrendered to us, left our units due to bad health. Individual letters, were collected and sent at the same time, not separately. The cadre in the forward stations were forbidden to take baths near the water well. They were only allowed to take a bath in the springs. When bathing, we had to go in groups of three-man cells to prevent drowning.

The number of Catholics in Unit 6 was very small.

Thievery occurred many times. Brother Ky paid great attention to preventing individual items from becoming lost. Although this stopover was near the market, the troops were not allowed to enter it. Guard was carefully maintained, both day and night.

((Page 11 of O.T.))

Enemy situation: At 1100 hours, we engaged in combat with F ((the enemy)). Each day, the enemy conducted one or two armed reconnaissance missions.

We stayed here and started movement again on the afternoon of 3 Apr.

Rear service activities: At 0500 hours we prepared carrying poles to carry dry rations consisting of canned meats and vegetables for two days use.

At 1500 hours on 3 Apr, we finished our meal.

Our medical officers together made a list of sick comrades who needed attention.

The following morning: We built combat fortifications.

The following afternoon: Took baths. We were not allowed to go in crowds.

Leadership: Personnel maintained high determination.

They promoted their sense of organization and military discipline.

2 Apr: Organized patrols.

Set up antiaircraft alert units.

Developed three-man cell activities.

Improved the personnel's political knowledge.

((Page 12 of O.T.))

2 Apr: Following are persons who needed to improve their health:

1. Bui Đức Công
2. Nguyễn Hồng Hà
3. Bui Đức Yên

((Each person was issued the following items)):

3 Apr: One nylon sheet, one rice ball ((meaning cooked rice pressed into balls)) and one pair of sandals.

Nylon sheets and tents were used as mobile houses.

Flashlights were carefully kept to avoid being damaged.

Cadre set good examples in executing group regulations.

Plan for continuous troop movement:

The troops continued to move by motorboats for a distance of 50 kilometers.

Departure time: 0300 - 0430 hours ((possibly at 1500 and 1630 hours)).

The units reached Station 18, Military Station 26 at Củ Nam, Bồ Trách, Quảng Bình.

Each large steamer carried 110 to 120 personnel who were divided into two compartments of approximately 60 comrades each.

Each smaller steamer carried 70 comrades which were divided into three compartments. The steamer was large in the middle and small at the bow and stern.

At 1530 hours, all troops were assembled at a graveyard. We disembarked the steamers and moved across two bridges.

((Page 13 of O.T.))

Arrangement: Packs were put on both sides of the steamers, and troops sat inside carrying their weapons and equipment with them. We got on and off the steamers only when ordered.

Requirements:

An antiaircraft cell was organized in each platoon.

Troops were required to sit at the bottom of the barges. There were cadre to maintain discipline.

Emergencies:

In case someone should fall into the river, or in the event of another emergency the command cadre were alerted by three shots.

The movement of troops was closely organized.

After getting off the boats, we had to walk a distance of five kilometers.

We carried with us a seven day supply of dry rations.

Two malaria pills were issued each week.

The first steamer: C4 ((4th Company)) and the Group Headquarters.

The second steamer: C2 + C3 + C1 ((2nd, 3rd, and 1st Companies)). When moving, we sometimes sang and smoked.

((Page 14 of O.T.))

5 Apr:

HEALTH STATUS AND SKIN-DISEASES OF PERSONNEL

1. Ha, Ech, Chi, Ma, Hoa, Cuc
2. Cuong: Scabies
3. Bao: Scabies
4. Thang: Abscess. He has many abscesses in the groin.
5. Yen + (Vong): Dysentery

---+++ 0 +++---

5 Apr: PARTY CHAPTER MEETING ON LEADERSHIP DURING THE TROOP MOVEMENT:

Party members did not set examples in executing regulations.

The ideology and behavior of the troops were poor. As a result, in some places, the people misunderstood us and were pessimistic.

6 Apr: The entire Battalion was transported by 19 cars,

11 large and eight small cars

32 ((possibly 32 troops in each large car))

The 2nd Company: 119 + 2 cadre from battalion headquarters = 121 troops

6 small cars x 20

= 121 troops (sic)

Time: 15 ((possibly by 15 Apr)), the troops were present at the bus station. The assembly area was one kilometer from the bus station. The troops moved separately.

Saucepans, bowls, and towels were well camouflaged. At 1330 hours, we had lunch, and at 1400 hours, we were present at the assembly point.

Rice was cooked and carried along with us because it was impossible for us to go to the station tonight. We stayed there for two days, 7 and 8 Apr. Time for departure was fixed at 0650 hours on 9 Apr. This time we walked from six to seven hours. The road was secret. There was a spring 200 meters long and friendly artillery units. We had to cross a two kilometer distance near the demarcation line and had to advance one company after another. The enemy conducted attacks on the communication line simultaneously with airstrikes utilizing OV10 ((possibly OV1 "Mohawk")) and F-4C "Phantoms" as he detected our troops. The aircraft flew at very low altitudes and most of the time at tree-top level. At Station 68 we met a unit of assault youths. Making noise was strictly forbidden when going to the field. We took baths when the order was given and constructed fortifications.

((TN: Page 16 concerns the prohibition of cutting down trees and Page 17 deals with various VC commo-liaison stations)).

((Page 18 of O.T.))

The terrain was concealed with thick forests. To the left, there was the ~~valley~~ road. The roads between Stations 3 and 4 and between 4 and 5 had many slopes. From Station 7 to 24 there were very few slopes and from Quang Nam there were many sloping areas. The weather was fine, but sometimes it would rain.

At present, it was hot during the day and cool at night.

It was cold in Quang Nam at that time and there were very few people. We did not understand the people's situation north of Road 9.

#### ENEMY SITUATION

The enemy planned to intercept our route of reinforcement.

He often conducted attacks on our bivouac site, trafficable routes, and rivers.

The US reconnaissance aircraft OV10 ((possibly OV1 "Mohawk")) operated all day long. The bombs C120 ((sic)) fiercely provided 20mm rounds ((sic)) on the trafficable routes.

((Page 19 of O.T.))

AD6's ((aircraft)) dived and attacked fiercely. We were notified of B-52's in the area by ((Bn)) Headquarters. According to the information, B-52's could attack us at night, as well as during the day.

Control was strictly maintained and guidance was provided for the troops. They carefully camouflaged and prevented smoke from giving away our positions.

Losses were reduced to a minimum.

Constructed fortifications.

The enemy used illumination flares and cluster bombs to attack our troops.

In some stations we had to take cover under tunnels to avoid the enemy's airstrikes.

The enemy conducted many attacks ((against our infiltration routes)) since the beginning of this year.

There were eight route crossings and one river crossing with boats.

(Enemy ground activities)

Main Force: Reconnaissance and CIDG Forces.

The Puppets organized three or four-man groups to ambush or conduct sniper fire against our troops. He also regularly conducted psywar activities. Once, he attacked one of our key positions and killed seven soldiers. Our troops were also caught twice in directional mine ambushes.

((Page 20 of O.T.))

The communication Line 559 was built in 1959 during the spontaneous uprising stage. Its mission was to ship personnel and goods to ((SVN)) battlefields.

B. Movement order of Doan ((Group)) 559 ((aka 559th Transportation Group)).

Safety - quickness - timeliness.

Ensured safety for personnel while moving to battlefields. Worked out effective combat plans and protection. Coordination was closely made between military operations, caucuses, and training activities. Strengthened the combat capabilities of the troops. Strictly implemented all orders and instructions concerning security on the communication line. Were ready to move, change, or stop the direction of movement according to the orders of ((Group)) 559.

Coordinated with commo-liaison ((cadre)).

II. PREScribed REGULATIONS FOR THE MOVEMENT.

Maintained security within the bivouac site.

Were ready for fighting.

Organized patrols and carefully camouflaged equipment.

III. REAR SERVICE: As of 68 ((possibly 6 Aug)), received rice.

((Page 21 of O.T.))

The communication line of D7 had six stations. We went to receive rice at Station 6 and stopped our movement to rest at Ô Lô Fa District Station 10. This station was located in Kham Muôn Province, in upper Laos. Travelling to each station took us from six to seven walking hours. From Station 3 to 4, there were two slopes and it took us one hour to traverse them. From Station 4 to 5, there were three slopes and it took us 30 minutes to cross them. We had to cover a distance of two kilometers from the slope to Xa Đông. This trip took us from six to seven hours. It took us six to eight hours to move from Station 5 to 7, not including the time for receiving rice. The terrain was open. We came down a slope and at 1330 hours we received rice. Then, we marched for three or four more hours. We encountered many difficulties, because it took us one hour to only go up a slope. From Station 7 to 8, the road was smooth descending the slope: 10 minutes.

The spring was dried up. It took us one hour to cross the Tả Le River and Cầu Gồ Bridge and 20 minutes to go up and down the slope. This trip took us two hours and 20 minutes.

((Page 22 of O.T.))

Upon nearing the station, it took us 10 more minutes to go down a slope. Firewood was very scarce at this station.

It took us from seven to eight hours from Station 8 to 9 and 30 minutes for crossing one slope.

The road was clear and open and we had to cross a spring. From Station 9 to 10, it took us nine to 10 hours. The road was uncovered going up the slope: 20 minutes; going down the slope: 20 minutes. We had to cross a spring 20 meters wide which, from Station 10 was two walking-hours apart. We received rice near two small springs.

The troops moved two to three meters apart from each other. The distance between A10 and B20 was 30 meters and between two companies was 200 to 300 meters. Pickaxes and shovels were carried along with the troops. Personnel moved on the route between Station 3 and 5 who needed emergency first aid were sent back to Station 3. Those who moved between Station 8 and Station 10 were sent to Station 10 for treatment. Generally, sick personnel could be sent to all stations.

((Page 23 of O.T.))

Company's caucuses: Outlines of the missions to be carried out.

Characteristics and situation of the Communication Line 559:

Enemy activities:

In the air: OV10, jet planes, and B-52 bombers; and on the ground: Vietnamese and Lao Puppet troops operated fiercely. The road is very difficult to move through, because it is a newly established communication line.

Houses-Kitchens-Fortifications.

The troops moved continuously and only stopped after crossing five or six stations.

Inhabitants: There are very few and the majority of them are an ethnic minority. They make their living by trading and hunting. Group 559 was established in May 59.

It is an excellent Transportation Group. When crossing the stations, the troops strictly implemented the regulations concerning defecation, bathing, washing, smoke, and discipline because we had to cover a long distance.

((Page 24 of O.T.))

8 Apr 70: Battalion, political, and military cadre convened a meeting to outline the regulations for the movement and positioning of troops.

1. Troop movement: Position of Command cadre.

Company cadre: The company commander and company political officer moved ahead, the company executive officer moved in the middle and the assistant company political officer and medic moved at the rear of the company formation.

The platoon leader moved in the front and the assistant platoon leader moved in the rear.

The squad leader moved in the front and the assistant squad leader moved at the rear of the formation and then to the reconnaissance cell.

The company moving in the front of the battalion organized one advance guard squad to move in the front and one rear guard squad to move at the rear of the battalion formation.

The advance guard squad locked and loaded their weapons and set them on safety.

The rear guard squad did not.

Platoon: The company executive officer commanded the cells and squads when encountering the enemy. If he was absent, a platoon leader was assigned to replace him.

((Page 25 of O.T.))

When passing an important point, one cadre was assigned to control and motivate the troops. The company commander assigned this mission to either the company executive officer or assistant political officer.

During the movement, the troops, were forbidden to talk loudly.

During their 10 minute rest, they were not to assemble in groups or wander about both sides of the road.

After eating or resting, they had to remove all traces of their presence.

## 2. In the bivouac site:

The troops were always combat ready. They kept close to their trenches and kept silent in the bivouac site.

Tonight, they would have an opportunity to see an exercise on secret penetration techniques and bivouacking procedures. They had to get up early and keep silent until tomorrow morning.

Everybody had to stay in his unit and move orderly. Moving out of the area where there were obstacles was prohibited.

((Page 26 of O.T.))

The troops were not allowed to talk with transients.

The company executive officer, assistant platoon leader, and assistant squad leader paid particular attention to the prevention of smoke. Cadre did not leave the kitchen until the cooking was completely done.

The company commander, platoon leader, and assistant platoon leader had to limit the use of flashlights to a minimum. They were only permitted to use them when necessary. Fire was forbidden during the night.

Combat plan: Personnel in charge of combat alarm sections were platoon leaders and above.

Patrol and guard within the unit were conducted day and night.

Medics prepared prescriptions and conducted sanitary activities.

Letters were collected and sent to the commo-liaison station at the same time.

At 1400 hours, medics, first-aid personnel, three platoon leaders, and the company commander convened a meeting to discuss the issuance of disease preventive medicines.

Each person was given enough medicine for one week.

The first day, we took two doses of four pills each time and the following six days, two pills each.

((Page 27 of O.T.))

9 April: Movement of troops through the Trường Sơn ((Cordillera)).

Departure time: 0600 hours

The preparation task was completed at 0530 hours.

Beside the main hot meal, the troops had to press rice into balls for use during the movement.

Movement order: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, and 4th Companies.

The distance between two squads was 10 meters; between two platoons was 20 to 30 meters; and between two companies was 200 to 300 meters. Each individual was three meters apart.

Route camouflage: The troops covered the paths with fresh leaves.

Any person needing emergency first-aid was immediately sent to the station.

The company did not organize any means for recovering stragglers.

Each unit carefully controlled its personnel by following them closely whenever they were allowed to leave.

Personnel camouflaged themselves only when the order was given.

Movement order: 1, 2, 3, ((possibly the 1st Company moved in advance, then the 2nd and 3rd Companies)).

The platoon moving in the front of the company formation was responsible for activating one reconnaissance cell to report the enemy situation to the Command Headquarters.

Each "platoon" organized two well-equipped cells ((sic)) with enough ammunition and grenades.

Command organization:

The company was divided into two platoons and commanded by one company executive officer.

Each platoon was commanded by one platoon leader.

Platoon leader 1: Commanded 1st Platoon with Squad Leader Hiep. It had two cells and one cell of the 2nd Platoon.

Platoon leader 2: Commanded the 3rd Platoon with Squad Leader, An. It had two cells and one cell of the 2nd Platoon.

((Page 28 of O.T.))

9 April: Assignment of personnel to the combat alarm section during the day was given to company and platoon cadre only.

Cadre of assistant command levels were responsible for the billeting and prevention of smoke.

The column of the company formation must extend 450 meters.

Company headquarter's cadre: Duan, <sup>^</sup>Nhat, <sup>^</sup>Hoa.

|                    |                    |
|--------------------|--------------------|
| <u>AN</u>          | <sup>^</sup> Hiep  |
| Ngũ                | <sup>^</sup> Kien  |
| <sup>✓</sup> Thang | <sup>✓</sup> Yen   |
| <sup>2</sup> Thao  | <sup>^</sup> That  |
| Dinh               | <sup>^</sup> Nhuan |
| Khoa               | <sup>^</sup> Thap  |
| Trinh              | <sup>^</sup> Binh  |
| Trai               | <sup>^</sup> Tan   |
| Thom               | <sup>^</sup> Quang |
| Kinh               | <sup>^</sup> Duc   |

Upon receiving orders from higher echelons, these people had to immediately assume their missions.

Company Commander

/S/ VAN

((Page 29 of O.T.))

((The unit)) arrived at Station 4 at 1115 hours.

Characteristics: In this area, there are forests and wide streams. This station was located near a traffic line and route K ((sic)) between kilometer-stones 91 and 58 where the enemy secretly operated. Therefore, very few cars moved on this route.

The enemy's attacks were aimed at discovering our depots and communication routes.

Area of enemy activities: OV10 aircraft made reconnaissance flights and F-48 and B-52 bombers conducted airstrikes along communication lines at 0800 hours. His Special Forces soldiers were dropped at kilometer-stone 38 on Route K.

((Enemy)) ground activities: One of the two enemy soldiers who were dropped at kilometer-stone 61 was captured.

Regulations: ((The unit had to observe the following orders))

Maintain perfect security.

Keep silent when entering the ((bivouac)) area.

Dig tunnel fortifications, cooking shelters, and latrines.

Do not cut trees.

((Page 30 of O.T.))

In the afternoon:

1530 hours: Cooking; 0700 hours: Extinguishing the fire; 1730 hours: Bathing the following morning:

0615 hours: Departed.

Fire prevention: Took all necessary precautionary measures against fire and extinguished all fires after cooking. Each station had a warning and patrol cell. In each unit, there was one guard cell.

On the way to Station 5, there were two slopes. It took us one and a half hours to traverse them, not including 10 minutes spent crossing two other small ones and one stream. The enemy attacked the slope adjacent to the stream.

The unit reached Station 5 at 1110 hours. This station was located in the forest where there were water pools and a valley.

The enemy was operating on two routes within one to two kilometers from his key position.

His B-57 and B-52 ((bombers)) were operating in this area. At 1600 hours his aircraft bombed this area.

((Page 31 of O.T.))

Two days ago, the enemy had launched attacks against our storage facilities on a high hill ((possibly near T7 or Station 7)).

Enemy ground forces: His force was divided into two elements to pursue us. In addition, he did not permit the inhabitants to pass his ((bivouac)) area, deployed his troops to obstruct the routes, and detained those who left the area without permission.

1700 - 1900 hours: Cooking.

The following morning: 0300 - 0500 hours: Cooking.

Built fortifications. Did not pitch tents. Prepared meals with the Hoang Cam cooking system. ((a special type of stove for preventing smoke)).

1400 hours: All company executive officers and assistant platoon leaders gathered at battalion ((headquarters)) for a meeting.

((Page 32 of O.T.))

((The unit)) arrived at Station 7 on 11 April at 1520 hours which was near the traffic line.

0800 - 1500 hours: VO10 continuously made reconnaissance flights over the area, three kilometers from DK ((sic)) and 500 meters from a stream.

Prevented smoke and light, conducted guard duty, and avoided cutting down trees and washing within the messing area.

Schedule for cooking: 1530 - 1800 hours.

Cooked rice for three meals: One for dinner, one for the following morning, and pressed rice into balls to be carried during the movement.

Departure time: 0600 hours. At 0700 hours, we climbed a slope, crossed over the Tả Lê River, and then passed a bridge.

((Page 33 of O.T.))

12 Apr: We reached the area at 1430 hours. It was raining. Prepared three meals a day. It was the second time we slept out in the open.

13 Apr: The unit was positioned near the traffic route, between kilometer-stones 11 and 18, and adjacent to a large stream.

Enemy operation procedures: He conducted night attacks by dropping cluster bombs and delay-action bombs on this area.

((The unit had to adhere to the following orders)):

1700 hours: Pitched tents.

Kept silent when entering the field.

The station organized one platoon to search for the enemy's Special Forces.

Schedule for cooking: Prepared three meals for the next day from 1500 - 1830 hours and then extinguished the fire.

We would continue our movement tomorrow. The unit would be divided into two elements. On the way, we should cross four slopes.

It would take us 40 minutes to cross two higher slopes and 10 minutes for two lower ones and three streams whose water - level reached the height of a man's knee. The unit would move through an open field and would carry enough rice for six days.

((Page 34 of O.T.))

The unit arrived at Station 10 at 1400 hours, which was controlled by D9, and then to Military Station 32. Its communication line was controlled by Group 559.

The bivouac site was narrow. The station was transferred to this area in December. We met many difficulties in cooking, digging trenches, washing, and bathing. Enemy E-52's conducted airstrikes at 0200 hours against an area which was three-hours walking distance.

The unit had to get rice in an area which was two hours walking distance.

The enemy dropped illumination flares and tried to discover us.

All unit members were forbidden to cook and dry clothes because the F-100 and OV10 ((aircraft)) were actively operating. The AD6 and C47 ((aircraft)) detected our lights at night. This station was located two kilometers west of QCQK ((possibly the Lao Politico Military Training School of the military region)) and east of the Lao jail.

Attention was paid to keeping abreast of the ((activities of)) wounded and sick soldiers, deserters, defectors, POW's, surrenderers, and cadre.

It took us five hours to move from Station 10 to Station 11. Afterwards, the unit rested an hour.

The unit moved from 0600 until 1200 hours, including an hour rest. The route of movement was safe. The unit did not have to cross any rivers or communication lines. On this route, there were five slopes, 10' to 15' ((possibly it took from 10 to 15 minutes to cross these slopes)), a waterfall, 5' to 7' ((possibly it took five to seven minutes to cross it)), and two open fields, one stretching 200 meters and the other 100 meters.

Station 10

Station 11

Dug trenches to avoid casualties.

The Hoang Cam Kitchen was used for messing and not for cooking.

Departure time: 0600 hours.

Pitched tents at 1700 hours.

Schedule for cooking: 1500 hours - 1830 hours.

In the morning: 0530 hours - 0730 hours.

Prepared meals for tonight and tomorrow morning at 0800 hours. Tomorrow afternoon: Prepared three meals at the same time.

About 0600 - 0730 hours tomorrow morning: All unit members were required to heighten their vigilance against transients who passed this area.

Those people who were curious about the troops and came through this area at 0800 hours were detained.

Moved quickly through two open portions of the route.

((Page 36 of O.T.))

Set up a sentry post.... ((sic)), Organized a standing committee. Maintained the regulations concerning bathing and washing. A meeting was held at 0800 hours. Unit commander ordered the confiscation of all cigarette lighters to prevent smoke and fire. Tonight, there was a briefing on the situation. Set up a schedule for various elements to cross the open fields and a schedule for bathing and washing in order to ensure good health for the personnel.

This communication line was controlled by D9 and Group 559 (Military Station 32) and was 70 kilometers long.

This route had just been opened. Water was scarce. In the area of Station 12, the enemy's B-52's conducted fierce airstrikes in support of his ground forces.

The troops were alert when moving from Station 12 to Station 13.

It was difficult to procure water at Station 12. The civilian proselyting section sold one manioc by auction for 500\$ (SVN) ((118 \$ SVN = \$1.00 US))

((Page 37 of O.T.))

We moved from Station 10 to Station 11 at 0600 hours.

It took us from five to seven minutes to cross five slopes. This route was the best one in comparison with those we had previously passed. There were many people in this area. Upon arrival at the station attention was paid to an open field of bamboo.

We moved from Station 11 to Station 12 at 0500 hours.

It took us 40 minutes to cross 15 slopes. The route was empty with withered trees along both sides. The enemy often kept an eye on friendly movement in the area of Station 12. Our unit had to change their mode of transportation six times, utilizing both roads and waterways since December. The enemy conducted more vigorous attacks. Upon arrival at the concentration point, every soldier was in his position, because in this area, there were many cluster bombs and camouflaged mines. We were not allowed to use our hammocks, and we had to dig underground tunnels for concealment. One tunnel was for two men who were three meters apart from each other. There were cadre in charge of cooking.

((Page 38 of O.T.))

From Station 12 to Station 13.

The unit awoke at 0200 hours and departed at 0300 hours. It took us one hour to move to the river bank. The road was 300 meters from the river. The water level was 80 centimeters deep. At 0515 hours, the troops all crossed over the river. They had to camouflage themselves when moving at night. At 0600 hours, the unit personnel had breakfast and took a rest. ((The following day)).

0230 - 0300 hours: We crossed the communication line. It took us 16 minutes to climb a slope. We had to move along a very steep road. The station was at the top of the slope.

This area had three high points, and the enemy ground activities were fierce.

From Station 12 to Station 13, there were no inhabitants. So far, nobody has gone through this area. It was easy to be kidnapped by the enemy and water was scarce.

From Station 13 to Station 14 we met four groups who moved on secret routes. The unit departed at 0500 hours the following morning.

((Page 39 of O.T.))

28 April: From Station 40 to Station 42. The unit departed from Station 40 to 0300 hours and reached Station 42 at 1100 hours. This military station was controlled by D11 and was located in Mũng Nóng District, Pa lakhet ((possibly Savannakhet Province, Laos)). The unit stopped beside a large stream which was one kilometer from the communication line and adjacent to Ta On District.

The enemy AD6 ((aircraft)) and OV10 operated for two consecutive nights.

The Military Region Party Committee was four kilometers from this area.

On 26 ((possibly April)), one sound detector was found.

On 22 Apr: Four enemy spies were discovered in Tả Lung and Tả Nong Villages.

Personnel of the unit were allowed to use their hammocks and dig tunnels. However they were forbidden to make noise or to cut down trees. They took baths, and did their washing in a large stream at 0530 hours.

0300 - 0600 hours: Prepared three meals.

((Page 40 of O.T.))

The following day: The unit moved from Station 42 to Station 43 at 0600 - 0700 hours. One-third of the movement route was covered with trees while the other two-thirds were open. There were two open fields. At the beginning, the unit had to climb up a small slope and move through two villages.

The special characteristics of the population in Xả Va Viêng ((in Laos)) was that they knew how to use poison. They hung "Down with Việt cộng" slogans. One hour and half walking distance from Station 43, "target-marking bombs" were dropped. The unit was ordered to move secretly and camouflage themselves carefully. They were not allowed to exchange anything during the trip. An advance guard element moved first.

29 April:

We came to the secondary field which was a 30' ((possibly 30 minute)) march from the main field. The latter had been attacked three or four times by the enemy. We were informed that three days ago the enemy dropped cluster bombs on this field ((secondary)). Our station depot was also attacked three days ago.

((Page 41 of O.T.))

((The depot)) was two and a half hours walking distance from the communication line and thirty minutes as the crow flies. To the south, and east of Phú Ông Mountain, there were villages.

Every night, enemy VO10 dropped flares and "target-marking bombs" about a 30 minutes walking distance from here. At 0300 hours, they conducted reconnaissance and dropped three enemy Special Forces personnel. Under the guidance of the local inhabitants, they attacked the station depot.

Presently, two sound detectors and three delayed bombs were dropped about thirty minutes walking distance from here. Of the three bombs, one has already exploded and the two others have not yet been found.

The unit personnel were forbidden to cut down trees and had to gather firewood on the field. They had to lie on the ground and repair fortifications to protect themselves from cluster bombs.

At 0600 hours: Pitched tents.

We prepared meals by the Hoang Cam cooking style. The enemy operated during the night until the next morning.

The troops kept guard all day and night, because the unit lost one pack and gun.

Notices:

On Phu Ong Mountain, the enemy dropped flares, and the unit had to move immediately ((to avoid detection)). The troops prepared three meals from 1500 to 1800 hours and then put out the fire. We began movement at 0530 hours. The trip took us seven hours.

The route was relatively smooth. It was easy moving on the first half of the route and difficult on the rest. In case the unit encountered enemy VO10 aircraft, we had to stop moving and wait until the aircraft had passed. During the movement, the interval between men was 3.5 meters.

A Rear Guard squad was organized.

((Page 43 of O.T.))

2 May 70.

Way Station 52 was assigned to Military Station 35 and was controlled by DL2. Its communication line was operated by Doan 5.59 ((aka 559th Transportation Group)).

The unit started at 0600 hours and arrived at the station at 1200 hours.

Terrain: It was a lone hill with two large streams flowing from the communication line. The enemy military post was seven kilometers from the station.

The enemy F.4H ((sic)) and VO10 ((aircraft)) were operating in an area three kilometers from the communication line.

Enemy operating procedures: 0550 - 0700 hours and 1400 - 1600 hours.

Twenty days ago an enemy C-130 conducted reconnaissance to collect and provide information for jet planes to attack us in an area 10 minutes walking distance from the unit location.

On the ground, enemy Special Forces and reconnaissance agents were operating regularly.

Requirements: The unit positioned itself near two large streams from 0500 to 0700 hours and from 1700 hours till evening.

The unit members carefully dried their clothes, prevented light and smoke, and properly made sanitary arrangements around the camp. We did not sell, purchase, or exchange anything. We dug tunnels with covers. Each tunnel was 1.20 meters deep.

The enemy often conducted surprise attacks against us without fixed operating procedures.

Upon discovering our unit, he immediately attacked us with cluster bombs and defoliation agents.

Schedule for cooking: 1500 - 1700 hours and 0530 - 0700 hours.

The unit moved from Station 52 at 0500 hours to Station 53, a distance of 13 kilometers. On the way to the station, there was one hill and one stream which had been marked by the enemy.

The enemy cleared an area 120 meters wide. Upon seeing enemy aircraft, the troops were immediately ordered to crouch to avoid being detected.

While travelling there we encountered five slopes. It took us 40 minutes to pass the last one.

The unit was ordered to carry rice for four days and 100 ((possibly 100 litres of rice)) for wounded soldiers. Seven comrades were assigned to carry packs (including rain coats). We concentrated at Cầu Tre.

((Page 45 of O.T.))

Location: We arrived at the valley on 4 May 70 which was 4<sup>00</sup> ((possibly 4 kilometers)) west of the enemy's position or two hours walking distance from the communication line.

Enemy aircraft increased their attacks against the communication line. During the rainy season, the enemy concentrated his forces at the secondary field in order to attack (Station 53). The enemy launched three attacks against this area and dropped three "reconnaissance personnel." One of them was captured by the station. Three hours ago, a formation of wounded soldiers were caught in an enemy ambush. However, the unit killed three enemy soldiers and seized some machine ((possibly a radio)) and a chart.

Plan for Feb 70.

Regulations: Pitched tents at 0600 hours, kept silent, did not cut down trees, kept guard, and gave proper signals upon discovering suspicious activity.

Cooking: Prepared three meals from 1400 - 1700 hours.

0630 - 0700 hours: Moved quickly through an open portion of the route where there were bomb pits. 52 combat ((sic)).

((Page 46 of O.T.))

5 May 70: The unit departed at 0530 hours and arrived at Station 54 at 1200 hours.

Requirements: Pitched tents at 1800 hours instead of using hammocks.

Did not take baths because water was scarce.

0530 hours: Prepared meal; 1430 - 1730 hours: Prepared three meals. We did not cook near the stream or concentrate in one place.

The following day:

We departed at 0630 hours through four open fields, each of about 50 to 100 meters. It took us 45 minutes, 25 minutes, and 20 minutes to cross three slopes.

The departure time was scheduled the same time as reveille.

((Page 47 of O.T.))

6 May 70:

The unit started at 0515 hours and arrived at the new station at 1130 hours. Comrade Liep took charge of finding a bivouac site for the unit which was located near a big stream, and which was concealed from the road leading to the enemy areas. It took us 45 minutes to cross the river. The Sekong River was two kilometers from Route 36 and 3.5 ((possibly three and a half hours)) from the communication line.

The enemy's No 6 Post was three hours walking distance from here to the south.

((The unit)) will reach Station 55 at 1300 hours and an ((unspecified)) village at 1500 hours which is 3.5 kilometers from the communication line to the east.

The enemy conducted airstrikes on an area from the river-bank to the stream which was 15 minutes walking distance from here. He attacked all the streams in an attempt to hit us. This was not a safe area. By 1820 hours, the enemy attacked an area which was 15 minutes walking distance from the station.

((Page 48 of O.T.))

At about 1400 to 1500 hours, our security cadre encountered the enemy's ground forces 3 - 7/4 ((sic)).

We completely repaired fortifications.

When entering the field, the troops carefully kept the regulations of light and smoke.

We were not allowed to go beyond 500 meters from the camp to a stream for a bath. Personnel slept on hammocks, not on the ground, because there were many graves of lepers.

Cooking from 1400 - 1700 hours.

Fastening hammocks at 1600 hours.

Pitching tents at 1830 hours.

Departing at 0500 hours.

We traversed four slopes. It took us 30 minutes to cross the first slope, two and a half hours for the second one, and 40 minutes to climb up and 40 minutes to descend the last two. Prepared meals before crossing the river. By 0620 hours, we crossed the river using three sampans, each carrying about 30 men.

There were very few sampans and they moved slowly. Then, ((the unit)) started at 1330 hours and reached Station 60 at 1800 hours which was approximately 20 minutes walk to the communication line and river.

We moved for three to four hours. At the beginning, the unit moved along an open route.

Regulations concerning guard and control was strictly maintained. We dug tunnels 12 meters deep for one hour.

7 May: The unit moved from Station 55 to Station 60 and arrived at the assembly point at 1230 hours. The unit prepared meals and took a sufficient quantity of rice for eight days. At 1800 hours, the unit crossed the Sekong River and then moved to Station 60.

8 May: The unit continued to move to Station 61 which was subordinate to Military Station 36 and controlled by D13.

Departed at: ((Blank)) Arrived at: ((Blank))

((Page 50 of O.T.))

#### Plan for crossing the river

The unit awoke at 0230 and departed to Station 61 at 0300 hours.

The trip to Station 61 took us seven hours. ((We crossed)) (two slopes. It took us 25 minutes to cross the first slope and 30 minutes for the second one).

0610 hours: Departure time. Close coordination was made during the movement. Medics will be the first to cross the river. Six cadre took charge of rowing three sampans. When we arrived on the other side of the river, there was a guide to show the way. (70) ((possibly 70 troops)) were divided into three sampans (one small boat carried 20 men, and the other two carried 25 men each.) On the sampan, every man carried packs on his back and a gun in his hands. Each trip by sampan took us about 10 minutes.

((Page 51 of O.T.))

The water was 10 meters deep. When reaching the other side, men moved directly to the ((bivouac )) site. Company executive offices, assistant platoon leaders, and assistant squad leader had to go ahead to designate positions for their men to sleep. The forward element was assembled at 0530 hours in order to move during darkness Regulations against light and noise were strictly observed.

#### 8 May 70

From Station 60 to Station 61, which was controlled by D13. Its communication line was controlled by Doan 5,59.

We departed at 0430 hours and arrived at the station at 1200 hours. The new station was located on a high hill adjacent to a stream and the old station.

It was located to the northeast of the communication line. OV10 operated and flew at low altitudes in an area 50 meters from the station.

We cooked from 1430 to 1730 hours and then put out the fire.

We took baths at 1700 hours and put up hammocks. 1800 hours: We pitched tents.

((Page 52 of O.T.))

The following morning, we left this location for the field, which was 30 minutes walking distance. Reveille was at 0500 hours, and the departure time was 0530 hours.

On 10 ((May))

We awoke at 0430 hours and departed at 0500 hours. (The following afternoon we prepared three meals at the same time). At the end of the next this part of the trip, there was a slope. This trip took us five hours. The unit moved along the communication line through two open fields.

9 May:

B3 ((possibly 3rd platoon))

|         |        |        |             |
|---------|--------|--------|-------------|
| pickaxe | shovel | dagger | nylon sheet |
| 1       | 0      | 2      | 1           |

B2 ((possibly 2nd platoon))

Ammunition: 2 rounds. 1 B1 ((possibly 1st platoon)) lost one shovel and a cadre lost a dagger.

|        |            |        |             |          |
|--------|------------|--------|-------------|----------|
| Dagger | Ammunition | Shovel | Nylon sheet | Rice bag |
| 1      | 2 rounds   | 2      | 1           |          |

((Page 53 of O.T.))

9 May:

Comments: While being guided through five military stations by Đoàn 5.59, our troops made great efforts ((in enduring hardships)).

1. Comrades Lai, Chiên, Vương, and Theo often complained. Cuôm and Thiên opened fire carelessly. Comrade Bình talked too much, lacked eagerness, and disobeyed orders of squad leaders.

2. Comrade Lữc, Squad Leader, supervised his men poorly, and threw away the squad's food because his men, Diên, Tán, Tiêm, Sĩ Tôt, and Thành, complained.

3. Trai was demoralized. Hiên voiced protest against his squad leader. He then complained to the platoon leaders who opposed the actions of the Squad Leader (talking too much and complaining). Thá, Khoa, and Cường An.

often complained and lacked enthusiasm in their daily activities. They lost almost all of their equipment. Comrade Vút inspected the unit's equipment, including pickaxes and shovels.

((Page 54 of O.T.))

9 May 70:

A preliminary report was made on operations during the past month to review experiences and ensure proper leadership in the days ahead.

Efforts were made to provide sound leadership to strengthen the soldiers' spirit.

Equipment, weapons, and men were properly maintained.

The maintenance of the unit's troop strength was fairly good. One comrade of C4 ((4th Company)) and three comrades of C3 ((3rd Company)) who were left behind due to their bad health. Security was strictly maintained, and the health of personnel was greatly improved. The strengthening of the troops' ideology concerning organization, discipline, and observance of regulations was rather difficult at the beginning.

The assessment of the enemy and friendly situation was poor.

Cadre strengthened the organization in order to guide and control the troops).

Our cadre made great progress, and their professional skills were improved. There were no deserters in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Companies. One member of the 4th Company deserted.

The maintenance of material facilities was fairly good. The issuance of foodstuffs was strictly carried out in accordance with the criteria of higher echelons. The food of the troops was carefully kept from becoming poisoned. Platoon cadre who set good examples were Comrade Nhat, Platoon Leader of the 3rd Platoon, and Comrade Cú, Assistant Platoon Leader of the 1st Platoon.

((Page 55 of O.T.))

These successes were due to the high sense of responsibility and solidarity of the cadre. However, there were still the following deficiencies: Soldiers balked at hardships and difficulties and often complained. Their sense of organization and discipline was poor, and they were not careful in maintaining their weapons. Regulations concerning trade were not observed.

Cadre deficiencies:

Their sense of responsibility was not regularly promoted. When the soldiers were tired, they failed to encourage them to carry out their missions. Organization and the implementation of missions were poor.

((TN: Pages 56, 57, and 58 concern political indoctrination to overcome difficulties during the movement and regulations concerning defense and cooking)). Regulations concerning cooking, prevention of smoke, and inspection

((of equipment)) were poorly enforced. Regulations were not adhered to, and some were not appropriate to the situation. When some comrades made mistakes, they lost their temper. The formation of the 3rd Company was not close due to slow deployment of troops. The 2nd Platoon was the same.

((Page 59 of O.T.))

11 May 70: 2D ((possibly two companies)): Two stragglers. We departed at 0430 hours and moved until 1230 hours from Station 250 to Station 251, controlled by D13 and D36:

12 May: Station 252 was assigned to Military Station 44 and controlled by D17. On the way to ((Station 252)) there were four open fields, two bridges, one stream, and a slope at the end of the trip which took us one hour to cross. The trip took us six hours. Each comrade dug one underground shelter.

Characteristics of the terrain in this area: Forest, large stream, and communication lines.

The enemy attacked close to the unit's location. Six enemy troops were dropped from helicopters. The inhabitants in this area are receptive. The unit was located adjacent to their villages. Unit personnel were not permitted to shoot at the people's cattle or go further than 200 meters from the camp because there were many spike pits.

Requirements: Meals were prepared according to the prescribed cooking methods of the Hoang Cam cooking system if facilities were not available.

Smoke was prevented.

((Page 60 of O.T.))

Personnel were controlled and guided to the field.

Did not cut down trees.

Did not make noise.

Sanitary arrangements were made surrounding the camp.

Unauthorized personnel were not allowed to contact the inhabitants.

Assigned men to continuously patrol and guard. Cooked at 1430 hours; and put out the fire at 1730 hours.

0430 hours: Reveille; 0500 hours: Departure.

506 DN3 + 40n = 499 ((sic))

12 May 70: We arrived at Station 252 which was under the control of D17 and Military Station 44. The stations controlled by D17 were 252, 253, 254, 255, 256, 257, and 258 which were close to the battlefield. It had the responsibility of providing necessary supplies to the battlefield which was positioned along the two communication lines, Quang Da and Region 5.

((Page 61 of O.T.))

Characteristics: Two of the seven stations were located in Laos and the other five were in Vietnam.

Most of these stations had many slopes; except for two the movement was difficult because some slopes were marshy during the rainy season. Since it is an area of emphasis, it has been attacked many times by the enemy. It was located near the communication line where there were many open fields.

The route to Station 253 had one slope. There were few open fields. This station was two days walking distance from the communication line. The enemy intensified his air activities and his OV10 and C-130 ((US aircraft)) often operated fiercely at night.

His soldiers were dropped four hours ago for operations.

Cooking ((sic))

Personnel of the unit dug tunnels and were ready to engage in combat. They were not allowed to cut down trees, to pick tea leaves, and to kill the people's pigs. If they did not obey, they were shot by the people.

We moved from 0530 hours to 0700 hours through a route which had few slopes.

((Page 62 of O.T.))

13 May:

The unit reached Station 253 which was controlled by Military Station 44 and D17. This station was located in the forest. Its surrounding area was primarily rice fields. If personnel wanted to pick vegetables, they had to go to the southeast. The personnel strength was high. This station was also located far from the vehicle route and enemy artillery positions. Enemy aircraft, including OV10, A-1, C-47, C-130, and helicopters often flew at low altitudes. Enemy ground activities: To the west northwest, seven days ago, the enemy broke contact after thirty minutes of fighting. A total strength of one battalion landed in four successive days. One guard was assassinated two hours ago in an area 20 minutes walking distance from here.

Our men who had infiltrated the enemy's base were captured and already released. The troops were required to take care of their packs, uniforms, and dry foods.

((Page 63 of O.T.))

When airstrikes occurred, every person had to hide himself in tunnels and move out only when the order was given.

The combat mobile force was always in a state of readiness.

Dug tunnels with covers.

Pitched tents at 1800 hours and removed them at 0600 hours the following morning.

In case of rain, tents were pitched and camouflaged carefully. Prepared a place for cooking. Tunnels were not dug adjacent to the cooking area. We took water from the stream for cooking which was is six minutes walking distance.

Took baths within 30 minutes and exchanged rice with the inhabitants. We did not exchange anything for manioc with the people. Unauthorized persons were not allowed to come into the station; because at this station, desertions had occurred. Every man of the unit was issued 500 grams of rice.

At 0600 hours on 14: ((possibly May)); We took rice and passed a large battlefield dispensary.

((Page 64 of O.T.))

Personnel were advised not to pick vegetables and mushrooms because they were poisonous. Cooking was carried on from 1600 to 1800 hours and 0430 to 0630 hours the following morning. The following day we prepared three meals at the same time. Each day, an additional 700 grams of rice and 0.3 grams of salt were issued to each person.

To move to Station 254, we had to cover a six or seven hour distance. The departure time was fixed at 0400 hours. We had to cross the river before 0800 hours. When moving, the unit had to camouflage itself-carefully.

We moved along the communication line to Station 28. A five day supply of rice was issued (the trip took 15 days) and we had to be issued rice two more times. The trip from Station 255 to Station 259 took 10 days. We borrowed rice.

119

x 3

40 kilograms

35.7

((TN: The pages immediately following the extract translation which ends on Page 64 of the O.T. contain reports of activities and a roster of an unspecified headquarters company, and of A1 through A9 ((squads)) of the unspecified company)).

END OF TRANSLATION