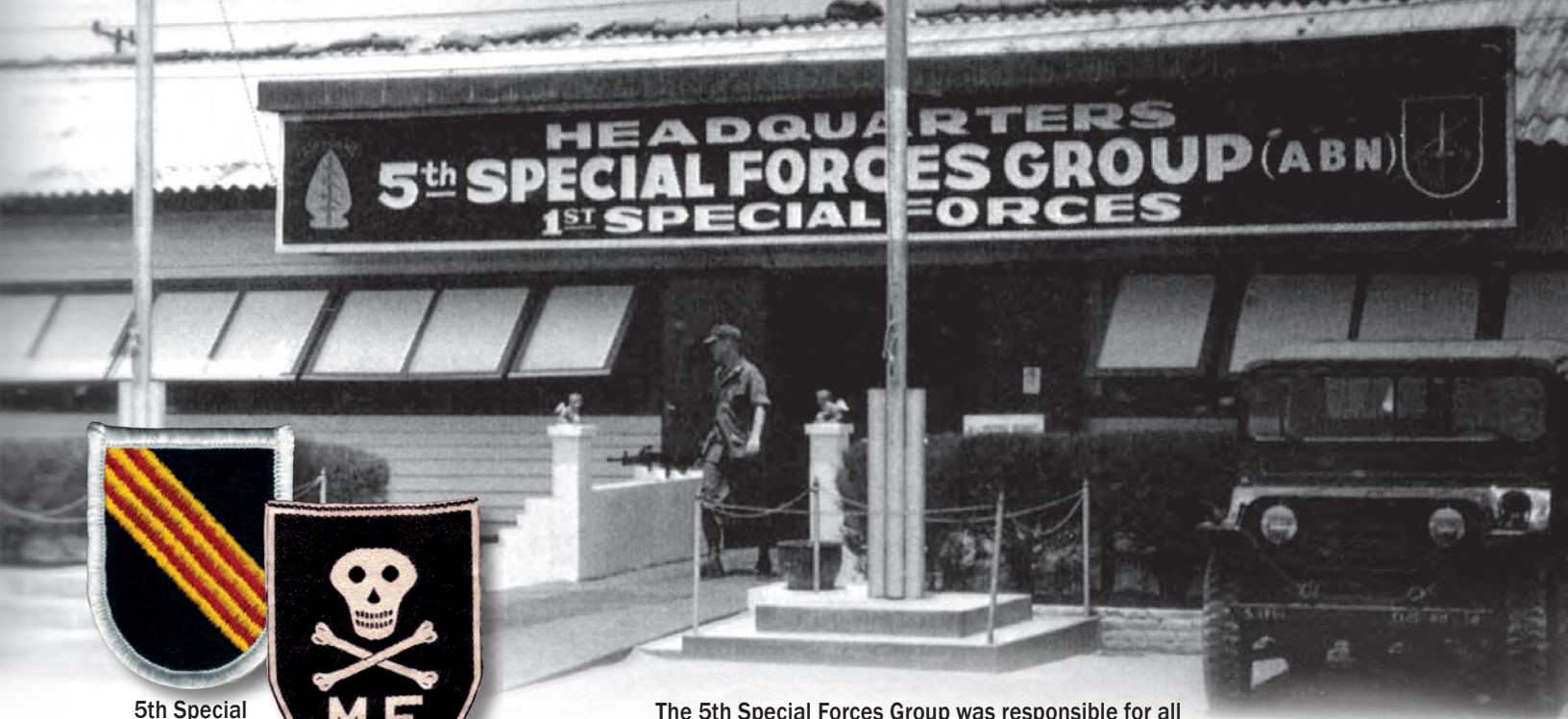


“Colonel Mike”

The Origins of the
MIKE Force
in Vietnam

by Kenneth Finlayson



5th Special Forces Group Vietnam Flash



MIKE Force Patch

The 5th Special Forces Group was responsible for all Special Forces operations in Vietnam from October 1964 until the Group returned to Fort Bragg in March 1971. From its base at Nha Trang, 5th SFG controlled over 1400 Special Forces personnel in 1965.

1965 was a critical year in the course of the Vietnam War. A resurgent Communist Viet Cong (VC) joined with a growing number of North Vietnamese Army (NVA) units to launch a general offensive against the South Vietnamese Army and its American allies. The frequency and ferocity of the Communist attacks were largely responsible for accelerating the deployment of American conventional forces in 1965. The U.S. Army made its role as advisors to the South Vietnamese Army secondary and took on an increasingly greater role in ground combat operations against the Communist forces. U.S. Army Special Forces (SF) also adapted to these changing tactics. SF became more aggressive in finding and fixing the VC and NVA units and interdicting supply lines into South Vietnam. One long-lasting change that resulted from the 1965 VC offensive was the creation of the MIKE Force.

This article will focus exclusively on the situation and events that promulgated the formation of the MIKE Force battalion in June 1965. The mobile strike and reaction forces that subsequently evolved became an integral element of Special Forces operations throughout Vietnam until late 1972.¹ A comprehensive history of MIKE Force operations during the Vietnam War is beyond the scope of a single article. But the formation, organization, and operations of the first MIKE Force unit will demonstrate how Special Forces overcame a series of setbacks and in doing so, created an offensive capability that had lasting impact on the conduct of the war.

In 1965 the 5th Special Forces Group (5th SFG), headquartered in Nha Trang, controlled all SF operations in Vietnam. The 5th SFG arrived in Vietnam in October 1964. By June 1965, the Group had over 1400 SF personnel organized into a Group Headquarters, four "C" detachments with regional responsibilities, 11 "B"

detachments with sector missions in each region, and 48 "A" detachments in the B detachment operational areas.² The primary mission of the SF A detachments was to train and advise the South Vietnamese Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) forces.

The CIDG program was jointly developed by the U.S. and South Vietnamese governments to gain control of the ethnic minorities and reduce their susceptibility to Communist influence. The ethnic Vietnamese tendency to marginalize the various minorities made them a prime target for Communist propaganda. By organizing minority paramilitary units, the counter-insurgency effort against the VC could be strengthened and the loss of control of large, strategic land areas to the Communists prevented. Initially under the supervision of the U.S. Military Assistance and Advisory Group (MAAG), the program began in 1961 at Buon Enao and rapidly spread through the country. By 1963, proponenty for the program passed to the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) under Operation SWITCHBACK. By 1965, there were 80 CIDG camps manned by Special Forces elements.³ New camps were established near the Cambodian and Laotian borders for border surveillance and to increase security. The effectiveness of the program disrupted VC operations and resupply and consequently triggered more attacks on the camps.⁴

Operationally the Special Forces C detachments were aligned with the four South Vietnamese Army (ARVN) Corps Tactical Zones (CTZs). One of the most hotly contested zones was the III CTZ that ran from the Cambodian border southeast to the sea and included the capital city of Saigon. Within the III CTZ were three VC strongholds, War Zones C and D, and the "Iron Triangle."⁵ As a result, several CIDG camps were located north and west of Saigon astride the primary VC supply

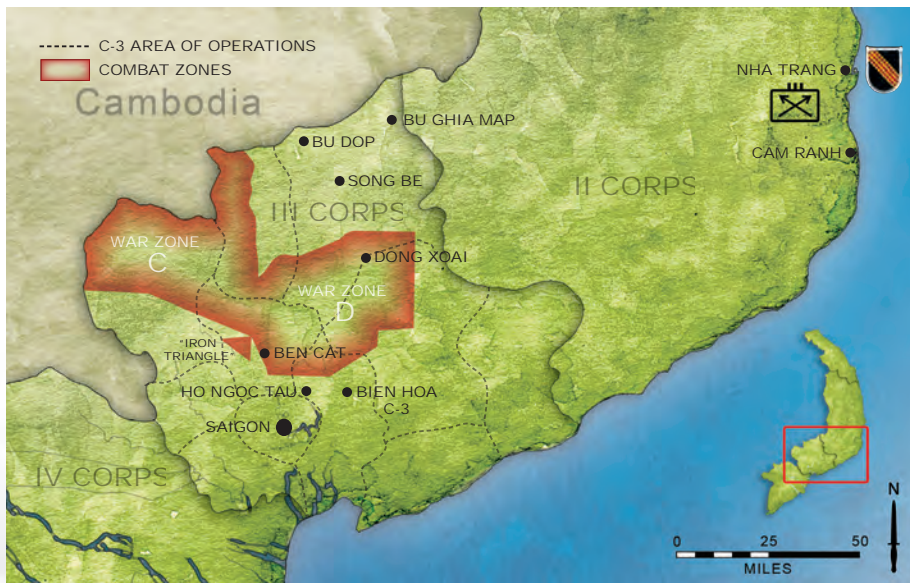
routes from Cambodia to the capital. They became the targets of several major VC assaults in 1965. The attacks revealed serious deficiencies in the CIDG forces.

Special Forces operations in the III CTZ in 1965 were the responsibility of Detachment C-3 at Bien Hoa that was commanded by Lieutenant Colonel (LTC) Miguel de la Peña. In January, Captain (CPT) Joseph S. Stringham took command of Detachment A-301 at the Ben Cat CIDG camp.⁶ Several major VC attacks in and around Ben Cat from December 1964 through May 1965 led to the formation of the MIKE Force.

Ben Cat was constructed in September 1964 adjacent to the Iron Triangle to the south and War Zones C and D to the north. At Ben Cat, A-301 had three 150-man CIDG companies and a South Vietnamese Army Special Forces (LLDB) detachment.⁷ Two of the CIDG companies, 348 and 349, were made up of Chinese Nungs and the third, 346, was filled with ethnic South Vietnamese from the Saigon area.

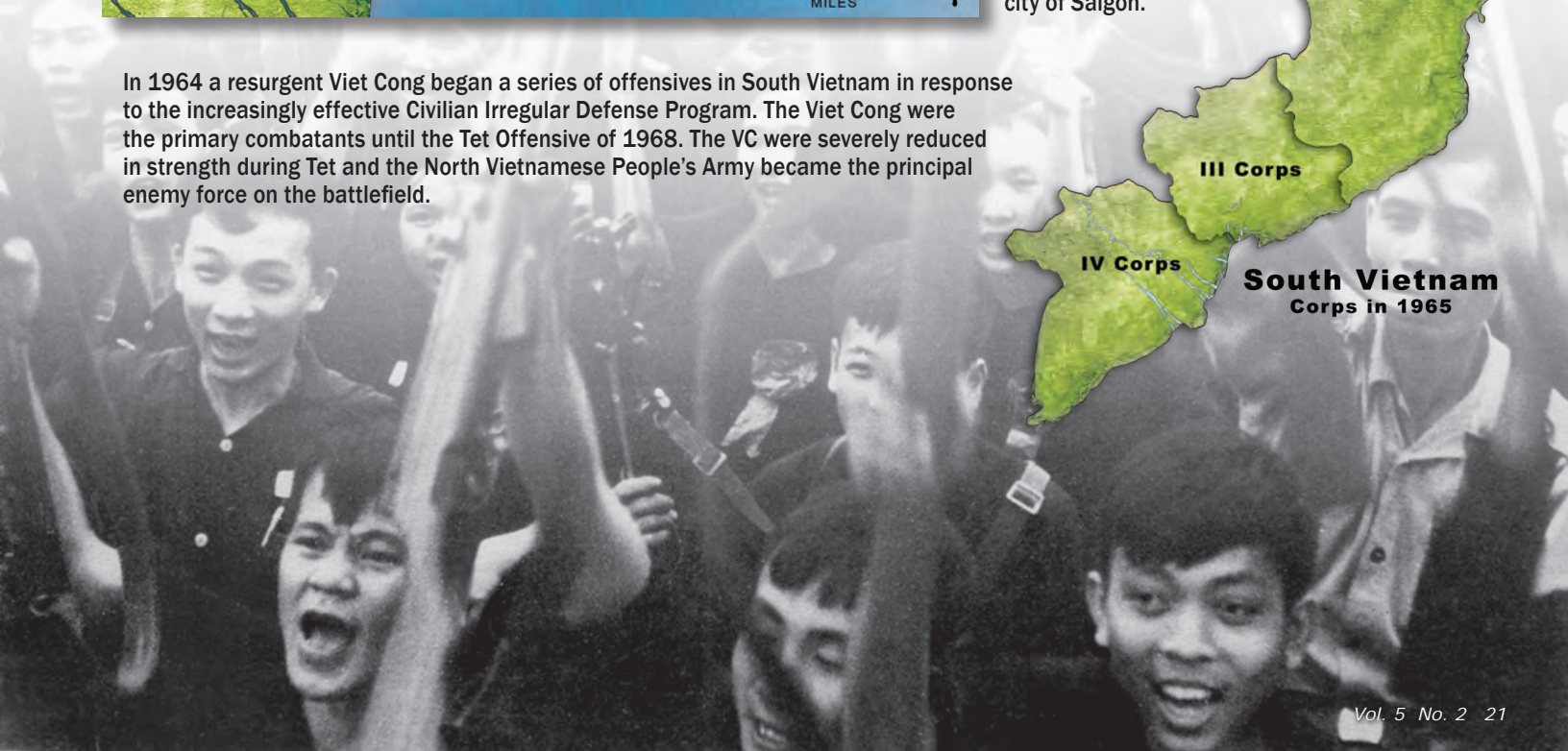
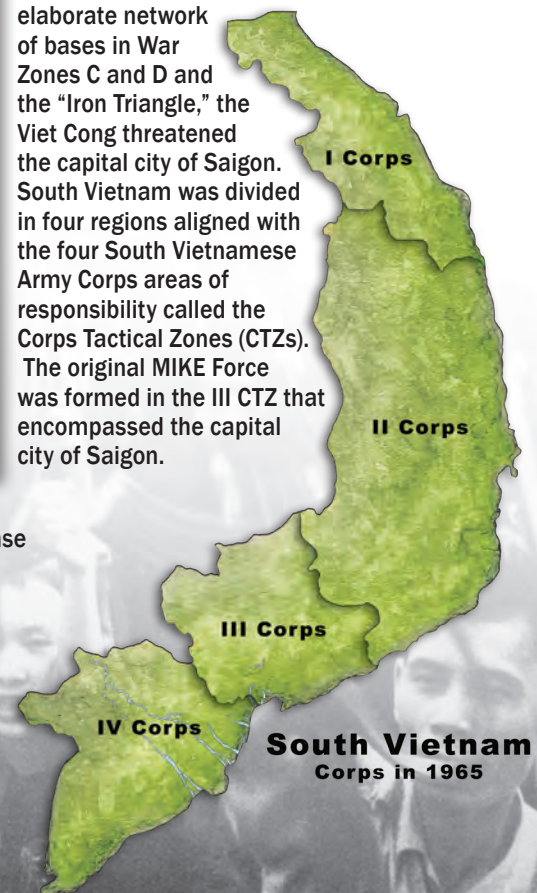


Captain Joseph S. Stringham commanded Detachment A-301 during his second tour in Vietnam. Given the mission to organize and train a reaction force to support the CIDG camps, he formed the first MIKE Force with ethnic Chinese Nung soldiers in June 1965.



The III CTZ was a stronghold for the Viet Cong insurgency in 1965. From an elaborate network of bases in War Zones C and D and the "Iron Triangle," the Viet Cong threatened the capital city of Saigon. South Vietnam was divided in four regions aligned with the four South Vietnamese Army Corps areas of responsibility called the Corps Tactical Zones (CTZs). The original MIKE Force was formed in the III CTZ that encompassed the capital city of Saigon.

In 1964 a resurgent Viet Cong began a series of offensives in South Vietnam in response to the increasingly effective Civilian Irregular Defense Program. The Viet Cong were the primary combatants until the Tet Offensive of 1968. The VC were severely reduced in strength during Tet and the North Vietnamese People's Army became the principal enemy force on the battlefield.





An aerial view of the CIDG training camp at Ho Ngoc Tau. The camp was the training site for the MIKE Force.

“The Nungs were Chinese that had been run out of China [into Vietnam in the 3rd century BC],” recalled CPT Joseph Stringham. “There was no doubt where their loyalties lay. They were 100% anti-Communist.”⁸ The tough, experienced Nungs became the nucleus of the MIKE Force after proving themselves in two fierce battles near Ben Cat.

The first action took place at Dong So on 30 December 1964. In the small village, the CIDG 346 Company of 150 South Vietnamese and their three SF advisors, were overrun after a violent night battle with the 272nd VC Regiment, a main force unit roughly 1000 strong. The 346 Company was quickly overwhelmed by the huge enemy force. It happened so fast that the 349 Company, just two kilometers away, could not react to help. Only one SF advisor with 346, SGT Roy Jacobson, survived.⁹ In late January 1965, the evening before the Tet holiday began, Captain Stringham took command of Detachment A-301 at Ben Cat. Five months later a disaster similar to Dong So occurred.

“We [349 Nung company] got overrun on 22 May 1965, at high noon,” said CPT Stringham. “We got out with only the 348th Company.”¹⁰ A VC ambush at Madame Nhu’s dairy farm five kilometers from Ben Cat destroyed 349 Company in an open clearing.¹¹ When the fighting ended, a severely depleted A-301 was barely holding on to the camp. The two attacks cost the lives of more than 200 CIDG soldiers.¹² The remnants of A-301, with 348 Company and a handful of Cambodian CIDG strikers were directed to abandon Ben Cat on 6 June and reestablish themselves at Ho Ngoc Tau, a training camp near the village of Thu Duc between Bien Hoa and Saigon.¹³ Meanwhile, the VC continued their attacks on the camps in the area.

While A-301 was recovering at Ho Ngoc Tau, Detachment A-342 at Dong Xoai was attacked on 9 June by an estimated Viet Cong Regiment (1000+). A-342 had arrived at the abandoned ARVN Ranger camp on 25 May 1965 with three CIDG companies and a contingent of Navy SeaBees and was in the process of rebuilding the camp when the VC attacked.¹⁴ After fourteen hours of vicious fighting, the camp was evacuated by A-342. The Detachment Executive Officer, First Lieutenant



The Special Forces camp at Song Be came under heavy attack from the Viet Cong, who assaulted from the woods in the upper right. The VC offensive against the SF camps led to the formation of the MIKE Force.

(ILT) Charles Q. Williams earned the Medal of Honor during the heavy fighting.¹⁵ A very frustrated CPT Joseph Stringham could only listen to the radio traffic during the battle.

“Here we were only thirty miles away and could do nothing,” lamented CPT Stringham. “We were all beat up and could not help.”¹⁶ After the Dong Xoai battle, Stringham went to see LTC de la Peña at C-3 headquarters. “I told him I had a good 150-man company ready to use and nothing to do.” An experienced combat veteran of World War II and Korea, de la Peña, “told me to go back, sit down, and be quiet.”¹⁷ Within an hour, Stringham was recalled to the C Team and given a new mission: Form a reaction force.

The recent battles at Ben Cat, Dong Xoai, and Song Be revealed how vulnerable the CIDG companies were at night. Since the South Vietnamese Army did not operate after dark, they would not reinforce the besieged camps until daylight. Darkness also precluded the use of close air support. Viet Cong sympathizers in the ranks made the



In the fierce two-day battle at Dong Xoai, Detachment A-342 barely retained control of the camp. Here South Vietnamese Army troops battle on the outskirts of the village.



The MIKE Force trained at the CIDG camp at Ho Ngoc Tau. Marksmanship and small-unit tactics were the primary training focus.



LTC Miguel "Mike" de la Peña. A World War II and Korean War veteran, LTC de la Peña's nickname was adopted by the MIKE Force.



A U.S. Air Force B-52D Stratofortress dropping 500 pound bombs over Vietnam. The first MIKE Force mission was to conduct a bomb damage assessment following a B-52 strike.

CIDG companies unreliable. From near-by VC-controlled villages, the enemy could get close to the camps to launch their attacks with impunity. The inhabitants would not alert the defenders. The solution was to create a reaction force of well-trained troops to quickly reinforce a camp under heavy attack. Forming, training, and leading this new force became Detachment A-302's mission.¹⁸

"There was only one MIKE Force battalion activated as it was, by COMUS MACV [Commander U.S. MACV] letter order," said retired Brigadier General Stringham. "The order was sent from 5th Group that directed C-3 to form one reaction force battalion."¹⁹ Time was critical. A-302 was given less than two weeks to train the new unit. Filling the ranks with new recruits, issuing equipment, and training had to be accomplished by 22 June 1965. After that date, the battalion was to be on call to respond to emergencies in the hotly disputed III CTZ

"The unit was named the MIKE Force. This came from LTC Miguel 'Mike' de la Peña. 'Mike' was his code name," said Stringham.²⁰ The MIKE Force was composed of three 150-man companies. With 348 Company as the nucleus, A-302 recruited Nungs to fill the ranks of the other companies. Nungs were also hired to form the reconnaissance platoon.²¹ There were no Vietnamese CIDG or Special Forces in the first MIKE Force. The strong family ties among the Nungs made the recruitment easy and virtually eliminated the security problems.

"Nepotism was the name of the game," said Stringham. "Most of the older Nungs were ex-French Foreign Legion [French Colonial Army] guys and they would vouch for the younger ones. It was kind of a 'self-vetting process,' but we didn't have a lot of time."²² New recruits were given a cursory physical by the A-302 team medics to check for diseases and fitness. The troops were issued one set of tiger-stripe fatigues and M-2 carbines. Each company weapons platoon had three M-1919A1 .30 caliber machine guns and three 60 mm mortars.²³ For communications, they were issued PRC-25 radios. The equipment for the MIKE Force came from the 5th SFG logistics base at Nha Trang. Being on the MIKE Force was economically advantageous for the troops. MIKE Force Nungs were paid considerably more than their CIDG counterparts. Each man received 6600 piastres (\$55.00) per month as opposed to the 1500 p (\$12.00) that was the CIDG monthly wage.²⁴

"I was the battalion commander," said Stringham. "Two NCOs [non-commissioned officers] worked with each company. The guys lived with their companies."²⁵

The Apache Force

The formation of the original MIKE Force in June 1965 also saw the concurrent creation of another special purpose unit, the Apache Force. Formed as a response to the identified need for a pathfinder element to secure the Landing Zones (LZs) prior to the helicopter insertion of combat troops, the Apache Force was organized and trained in the III Corps Tactical Zone (III CTZ) by members of A-302 and SFC Frank Kokosza of C-3.

SGT Roy Jacobson was given the mission of organizing and training the Apache Force teams. The eight-man teams were composed of Nungs from the CIDG strike force companies. "Our training program was one of intensive marksmanship and land navigation training," said Jacobson, a competent Vietnamese speaker. "They were also given airborne training along with the MIKE Force, one helicopter jump per man. I jumpmastered about sixty jumps in ten days when we were getting trained up."¹ SFC Frank Kokosza, a former Lodge Act soldier and Special Forces veteran was attached from the C Team to run the training. Kokosza's teams became part of the C

Team recon element. Kokosza would receive missions from the C Team S-2.²

Three members of the Apache Force prior to a parachute jump at Ho Ngoc Tau. The Apache Force was airborne qualified after four hours of training and one training jump from a helicopter.



The impetus for the formation of the Apache Force came from Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) as a response to a series of operations where air assault troops were landed on "hot" LZs. When tasked by MACV, the 5th Special Forces Group designed a ten-man team of two U.S. Special Forces advisors and eight indigenous troops. Six such teams were formed in C-3.³ Missions for the Apache Force came from MACV to the C Team.⁴ Of the six teams formed, the C Team S-2 reconnaissance unit used three and three were devoted to the pathfinder mission, primarily in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade in III CTZ.⁵ Once on the ground, the team worked for the ground commander.

Unlike the MIKE Force concept that expanded to all the corps tactical zones in the years after 1965, the Apache Force was a short-lived experiment that was soon supplanted by other reaction forces, both U.S. and indigenous. The Apache Force became the recon element for the III CTZ MIKE Force.

Endnotes

- 1 Roy Jacobson, interview with Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 14 May 2009, interview notes, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 2 Frank Kokosza, interview with Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 29 May 2009, interview notes, Fort Bragg, NC, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Jacobson interview.
- 3 Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, "Apache Force (Pathfinder/Reconnaissance/Combat) Concept, 4 July 1965, National Archives, RG 472, Box 5, 5th Special Forces Group C Detachment Reports.
- 4 Jacobson interview.
- 5 Jacobson interview.

SGT Roy Jacobson (c) was the primary trainer of the Apache Force. Originally designed as pathfinders to secure the landing zones for helicopter insertions, the Apache Force became the reconnaissance platoon of the III CTZ MIKE Force. SSG William Parnell (l) and SSG Richard Johnson (r) are at the far right. The Special Forces soldier kneeling front left is unknown.





The bunker on the northwest corner of the camp at Bu Dop prior to the battle. Strong defensive bunkers were located on all four corners of the camp perimeter. The VC destroyed this bunker with recoilless rifle fire.

A-302 focused on marksmanship and infantry small-unit tactics to get the MIKE Force operational. That test came on 22 June 1965.

"The first mission was to take three 6-man teams by helicopter into an area between Highway 13 and the Michelin Rubber Plantation to do a [bomb damage] assessment after a B-52 strike," recalls Stringham. "The B-52s came out of Guam, but due to a mid-air collision during refueling, they missed the target. All they did was knock down enough stuff to make it hard to move through. We got inserted, ran around a while and got picked up. Not a great beginning for the MIKE Force."²⁶ The real combat evaluation came a month later.

On 19 July 1965, orders came from the C detachment to prepare a MIKE Force company to aid the SF team at the CIDG camp at Bu Ghia Map under attack by two VC battalions. The Mike Force mission was to evacuate the SF team and their CIDG strikers. 348 Company, the new 4th Nung company and the recon platoon were trucked to Tan Son Nhut Airbase to load two C-123 aircraft for the flight that night to Bu Ghia Map near the Cambodian border.²⁷

"We went in very light, no rucksacks or food. We landed and it was very dark," said Stringham. "I ran off the plane and straight into a ditch. When we got into the camp, I put my people on the perimeter, and got theirs [the camp occupants] off the wall, since they were likely compromised. There was half an A detachment and a handful of strikers there."²⁸ There was little contact the rest of the night. The arrival of the MIKE Force had prompted the VC to switch their main attack to the nearby Bu Dop camp. In the early morning the C Team ordered Bu Ghia Map abandoned and the MIKE Force to move to reinforce Bu Dop.

At daylight on 20 July, the C-123s began to arrive to evacuate the CIDG, the MIKE Force and their SF advisors. Stringham's team placed explosive charges throughout the camp, on a five-minute delay. After the MIKE Force was flown out to Song Be, CPT Stringham and two NCOs, SSG William Parnell and SSG Elliot Wilson, were to



Aerial view of the CIDG camp at Bu Dop. The Viet Cong attacked the north and west sides of the camp. The SF billets were in the center of the camp.

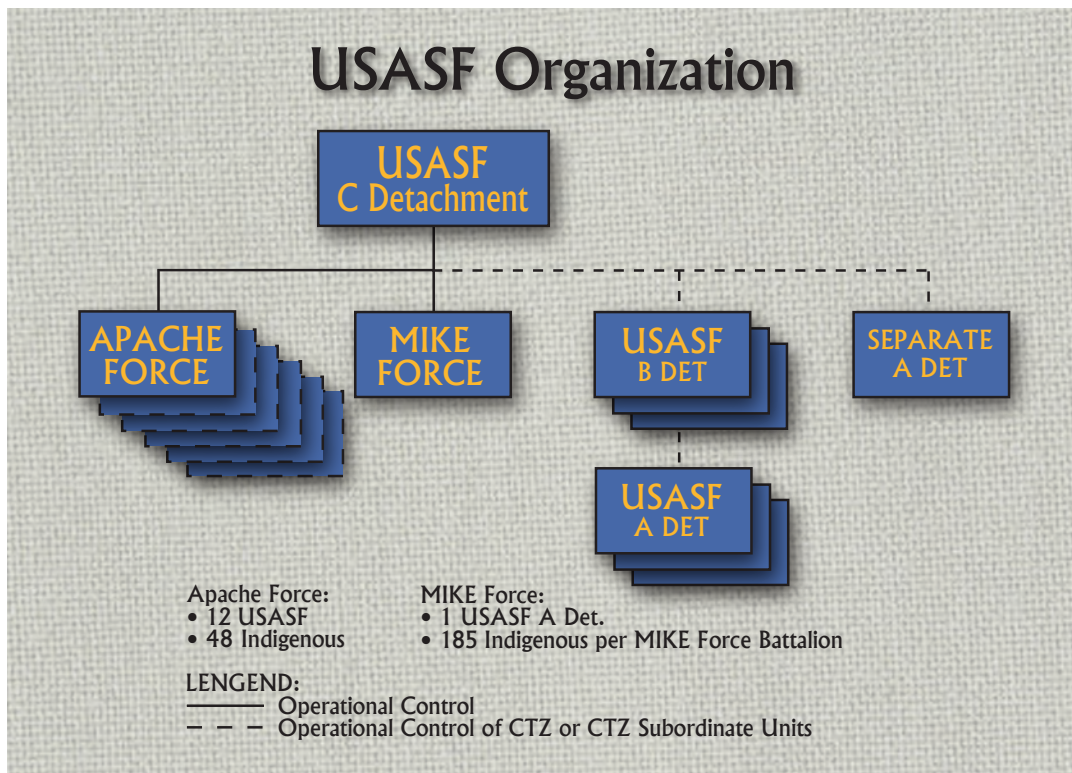


The ruins of the Special Forces team billets at Bu Dop after the battle. Little was left of the camp after the heavy Viet Cong assault.

detonate the charges.²⁹ A helicopter picked up the three Americans, just before the explosives went off. Bu Dop had been hit hard the previous night. Two SF advisors and twenty CIDG strikers had been killed.³⁰

Arriving at Bu Dop in the afternoon of 20 July, Stringham positioned his MIKE Force personnel on the south side of the camp perimeter and relocated the CIDG defenders onto the north side. The assumption of the A-302 members was that a good percentage of the CIDG strikers were turncoats and would give the VC access to the camp. The enemy did attack the camp again that night, but could not penetrate the defenses. In the morning, CPT Stringham, now in command at Bu Dop, sent a reconnaissance platoon under SSGs Parnell and Collins out to find the enemy. Since Bu Dop was very close to the Cambodian border, locating the enemy escape route to safety across the border was not difficult. But there were still problems inside the camp.

The team discovered that the claymore mines emplaced on the perimeter defenses had been reversed during the night aiming them into the camp. Based on this, the SF soldiers began to thoroughly interrogate the civilians



and CIDG personnel in the camp. Not surprisingly, there was a mass exodus from Bu Dop. With the MIKE Force to strengthen the defenses and the Communist sympathizers driven off, the threat of further attack was minimal.³¹ This established the pattern for the employing the MIKE Force that was used at Dong Xoai.³²

The Nungs, whose loyalty to the Americans was unquestioned, became a major force multiplier. By November 1965, CPT Stringham and most of the members of A-302 involved in the formation of the original MIKE Force had completed their tours and rotated back to the United States. Their legacy, the III CTZ MIKE Force composed of Nungs, was the genesis of one of the most successful Special Forces initiatives in the Vietnam War.

Drawing on the combat experience and loyalty of the Nungs, the original MIKE Force was a reliable, well-trained hard-hitting combat unit that could be rapidly moved to reinforce or relieve CIDG camps when they were attacked by overwhelming enemy forces. The Special Forces C Teams in the other Corps Tactical Zones were soon directed by 5th SFG Headquarters to establish MIKE Force battalions.³³ These MIKE Force elements caused a major shift in CIDG operations from defense to offense against the VC and NVA. Mobile Strike Groups and other variations of the original MIKE Force model quickly proliferated enabling Special Forces and their CIDG strikers to aggressively seek out and destroy the enemy.

The purpose of this article was to show how several successful VC attacks against the III CTZ CIDG camps prompted the organization of the first MIKE Force. The loyal, high-quality Nungs of the 348th Company became the nucleus of the MIKE Force. LTC Miguel “Mike” de la Peña, whose nickname became associated with the

original MIKE Force battalion, saw his moniker attached to reaction forces countrywide. As the Vietnam War evolved, the term “MIKE Force” came to be applied to a variety of units at different times and places. Future articles will examine the varied and complex history of these units that were labeled MIKE Forces. ▲

The author would like to thank BG (ret) Joseph Stringham, LTC (ret) Miguel de la Peña, the other former MIKE Force members who reviewed the article, and especially Roy Jacobson for their invaluable assistance.

Kenneth Finlayson is the USASOC Deputy Command Historian. He earned his PhD from the University of Maine, and is a retired Army officer. Current research interests include Army special operations during the Korean War, special operations aviation, and World War II special operations units.

Endnotes

- 1 A forerunner of the MIKE Force units was Eagle Flight, a quick reaction force established in the II Corps Tactical Zone in October 1964. Francis J. Kelly, *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971* (Washington DC: Department of the Army, 1973), 54.
- 2 Kelly, *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971*, 82.
- 3 Kelly, *Vietnam Studies: U.S. Army Special Forces, 1961-1971*, 80.
- 4 United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, “Civilian Irregular Defense Group Program in the Republic of Vietnam – Monthly Report for March 1964,” National Archives, RG 472, Box 1, 18-23.
- 5 John M. Carland, *Stemming the Tide: May 1965 to October 1966* (Washington DC: Center of Military History, 2000) 212-213.
- 6 Operational Detachment A-314 was redesignated A-301 when Captain Stringham took command.
- 7 LLDDB stands for *Lac Luong Dac Biet*, the name of the ARVN Special Forces.

- 8 Brigadier General (retired) Joseph S. Stringham, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 30 January 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, digital recording, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **Nung is a Chinese term for farmer.**
- 9 Roy Jacobson, *Hai Si*, unpublished manuscript dated 1 February 2005, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC, 1-14. **At the time of the Dong So battle, Jacobson was a member of ODA-314, 5th Special Forces Group, that had arrived in country only weeks before. A-314 was replaced in May by A-301 after the second battle near Ben Cat. Jacobson was reassigned to A-301. A description of the battle at Dong So is found in Ray A. Bows, *Vietnam Military Lore: Legends, Shadows & Heroes* (Hanover, MA: Christopher Publishing House, 1998), 907-960.**
- 10 Stringham interview.
- 11 Roy Jacobson, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 14 May 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC. **Trần Lê Xuân, better known as Madame Nhu, was the sister-in-law of South Vietnamese President Ngo Dinh Diem who was assassinated in 1963.**
- 12 Jacobson interview; 5th Special Forces Group, Annex A to Memo 12, Monthly Operational Summary dated 12 December 1965, National Archives RG 472, Box 5, "C Detachment Operational Reports."
- 13 Joseph S. Stringham, email to Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 27 May 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 14 James T. Taylor, email to Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 28 May 2009, copy in the USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 15 Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, "Dong Xoai After Action Report," National Archives, RG 472, Box 5, "5th SFG After Action Reports," 2-3. **At the battle of Dong Xoai, Construction Mechanic Third Class Marvin G. Shields, USN, also earned the Medal of Honor posthumously and Staff Sergeant James T. Taylor won the Distinguished Service Cross. Taylor later joined the MIKE Force.**
- 16 Stringham interview.
- 17 Stringham interview; Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, Annex A to Memo 12, "Monthly Operational Summary" dated 12 December 1965, National Archives RG 472, Box 5, "C Detachment Operational Reports."
- 18 **Captain Stringham was selected by LTC de la Peña to replace the team leader of A-301 after the battle at the dairy farm in May. A-301 was redesignated A-302 when it assumed the MIKE Force mission.** Jacobson interview, 14 May 2009.
- 19 Lieutenant Colonel (retired) Miguel de la Peña, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 29 April 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Stringham interview.
- 20 de la Peña interview; Stringham interview.
- 21 Stringham interview.
- 22 Stringham interview.
- 23 Roy Jacobson, interview by Dr. Kenneth Finlayson, 22 May 2009, Fort Bragg, NC, interview notes, USASOC History Office Classified Files, Fort Bragg, NC; Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, Letter of Instruction # 2, "Multi Purpose Reaction Force (MIKE Force)," 1 August 1965, USASOC Archives, Fort Bragg, NC.
- 24 Stringham interview. **Each CIDG striker and Nung was eligible for a "death gratuity," equivalent to one month's pay given to a relative in a single lump sum. This program was riddled with graft and corruption and was a continual headache for 1LT Kenneth Kubasik, the A-301 Detachment XO.**
- 25 Stringham interview.
- 26 Stringham interview; de la Peña interview.
- 27 Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, "Initial Report VC Attack at Bu Dop," 22 July 1965. National Archives, Record Group 472, Box 1, "5th Special Forces Group After Action Reports."
- 28 Stringham interview.
- 29 Stringham interview.
- 30 Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, "Initial Report VC Attack at Bu Dop," 22 July 1965. National Archives, Record Group 472, Box 1, "5th Special Forces Group After Action Reports."
- 31 Stringham interview.
- 32 **The events at Bu Gia Map, Bu Dop, and Dong Xoai became the basis for the popular 1968 movie "The Green Berets," starring John Wayne, that was adapted from the book by Robin Moore.**
- 33 Headquarters, 5th Special Forces Group, Letter of Instruction # 2, "Multi Purpose Reaction Force (MIKE Force)," 1 August 1965, USASOC Archives, Fort Bragg, NC.

The ruins of the CIDG quarters at Bu Dop after the attack by two reinforced VC battalions. The enemy used bamboo ladders like the ones shown to cross the moat in front of the walls.

