

SECTION II
SAN ANGELO

The 1st Brigade was alerted for an operation in an area northwest of SAIGON, near CAMBODIA, near the end of Operation KLAMATH FALLS. The new operation, named SAN ANGELO, commenced on 16 January 1968. This operation was directed by II FFORCEV. The mission of the 1st Brigade was to conduct search and destroy operations in QUAN BO DUC and QUAN PHOUC BINH provinces, to find, fix and destroy VC/NVA forces, and to establish blocking positions along the CAMBODIAN border during the TET truce period. Operation SAN ANGELO continued until 9 February 1968.

Weather did not have any adverse effects upon the conduct of operation SAN ANGELO.

The 1st and 2d Battalions, 327th Infantry and the 2d Battalion 502d Infantry conducted air assaults into the area of operations north and northeast of SONG BE. The 3d Battalion 506th Infantry continued operations in the SONG MAO area. An airborne assault by the 506th was planned on a drop zone west of SONG BE. Operation requirements, resulting in the deployment of the 506th to the PHAM THLET area, caused the last minute cancellation of the drop.

On 9 January 1968, the advanced party of the 2d Battalion, 320th Artillery left for SONG BE. The battalion headquarters/operations section was functioning smoothly after a short time an additional liaison requirement was incurred during this operation. A team consisting of one officer, one NCO and a RTO was dispatched to the MACV compound in SONG BE city. Their mission was to effect liaison between the 1st Brigade and the ARVN forces operating in the area.

Initially, the countermortar radar was employed in the brigade base camp. The radar was displaced to a fire base north of SONG BE in order to provide better coverage. However, due to tactical necessity, the radar was returned to the brigade base camp. The 320th Artillery was responsible for fire support coordination in the SONG BE area. This included the countermortar/counterrocket programs were updated and disseminated to all fire units within range, from 81mm mortars to 8" howitzers. The effectiveness of the program was demonstrated by the sharp decrease in mortar attacks during the initial phase of the operation. Defensive targets were planned in front of, on, and behind the Brigade perimeter.

In this new area the "Redlegs" again were exposed to any enemy capable of employing mortars and rockets. The operations center again operated from an underground bunker. A more elaborate bunker was constructed for this operation. It was approximately ten feet by eighteen feet and housed the entire S-3 and S-2 sections. Additionally, personnel bunkers were strategically placed throughout the battalion area. These bunkers were greatly appreciated during the ten mortar attacks on the SONG BE base camp. During one of these attacks, on 24 January, eight 82mm mortar rounds impacted in and around the battalion mortar pool, resulting in the destruction of one 2½ ton truck, one ½ ton truck, and damage to one ¼ ton truck. Two major personnel changes took place on 1 February 1968.