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*P. B. Taffey*

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FMFAC: Operation of the III MAF  
Vietnam

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# OPERATIONS OF THE III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE

VIETNAM

FEBRUARY 1966

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This is a summary of activities of the III Marine Amphibious Force in Vietnam for the month of February 1966. Its purpose is to update similar reports covering periods from March 1965 through January 1966. In addition, the introduction to this issue contains a year-end summary of Marine operations in Vietnam for the period 5 March 1965 to 28 February 1966.

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INTRODUCTION

On 8 March 1965, there were 500 Marines in Vietnam. There are now 50,000. As their strength grew, so did their contribution to the free world war effort, and it is timely to initiate this report with a review of the Marines actions during the past twelve months.

When the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade of 5000 men landed at Danang in March of 1965 it was assigned a single task--defense of an overcrowded airfield located in the middle of a densely populated area, where over 180,000 people of varying loyalties lived within mortar range of the parked aircraft. The air base fence line generally delimited the boundary between friendly and enemy control.

From that moment until the present, the Marines' responsibilities have expanded steadily, in both scope and variety. The airfield defense mission has grown to include four additional air facilities--the aluminum Marine jet field at Chu Lai, the field at Phu Bai and the large helicopter facilities at Ky Ha and Marble Mountain; all told, a major air complex stretching over 100 miles of heavily populated coastline and supporting more than 500 U. S. aircraft. Beyond this, the Marines have been authorized to take the offensive against the communists.

On its arrival the Marine Brigade found its area of commitment heavily infested by the Viet Cong. In the total I Corps area there were some ten thousand Viet Cong in organized units--so-called main force elements, and some fifteen thousand guerrillas, who were woven deeply into the fabric of the people. In general, the situation there was seriously unfavorable for the Vietnamese government. The rural people had seen little evidence of central authority for years, other than the tax collector, and when Vietnamese soldiers appeared, it was for only brief periods.

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and in no substantial sense beneficial to the people. Law and order had deteriorated and the thousands of people who craved protection from the Viet Cong found no one to whom they could turn. The result was a frightened and disorganized population slipping gradually under communist domination.

While there was a real threat to the people in the I Corps Area from the organized main force units, the Marines found the greater threat to be in the Viet Cong guerrilla penetration of the daily lives of the people through their network of terrorism, brutality, threat and extortion. In the region extending south from Danang to Chu Lai the guerrillas had, over a period of ten years, achieved domination over the bulk of the populace, from whose resources they met most of their needs--food, recruits, money, sanctuary and information.

Civilians were suffering heavily. In a brief six months period there were over 1950 acts of terrorism against civilians in I Corps. 126 local officials, and 772 private citizens were kidnapped or murdered, and the Popular Forces were taking the bulk of the military punishment.

About 54% of the Vietnamese soldiers killed in I Corps were Popular Forces troops during early 1965, although the Popular Forces made up only about 20 per cent of the Vietnamese military establishment in the area.

It was no coincidence that the Popular Forces troops constituted a major Viet Cong target. Located in the hamlets and villages, they were the group which formed the principal armed barrier between the Viet Cong and the people.

This was the situation which faced the Marine units in their early commitment; a clear evidence that, in this

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region, the battlefield lay among the people. Knowledge of all of these facts caused the Marines to conclude that the best way to fulfill their assigned airfield security task was by continuous offensive action, ranging at long distances from the airfields themselves, designed to weed out the Viet Cong guerrilla infestation from the population while concurrently, seeking out any enemy main force units that might threaten large scale attack on the valuable installations. And, through it all, it would be essential to establish a relationship with the populace which would cause them voluntarily to support the U. S. and the Vietnamese and correspondingly, to withhold support from the Viet Cong.

It was apparent that the Vietnamese people themselves held the key to success in such a program because they possessed the knowledge of who and where the enemy were. It was equally clear, however, that before this key could be exploited, three essential steps would have to be accomplished.

First, the Marines would have to demonstrate to an apathetic and suspicious populace that they were always close at hand and, moreover, that they were determined to stay as long as needed. Second, they would have to demonstrate that they could be trusted, and that they were genuine friends of the people. Finally, and perhaps most important, they would have to present unmistakable evidence that they were more than a match for the Viet Cong, both the guerrillas and the larger forces.

Demonstrating these points was a tedious job. Vietnam is not a nation of mass communications, where the population can be swayed by television, motion pictures or radios. Even newspapers are rarely seen in the rural areas. The peasants are largely illiterate, and they have become cynical through years of propaganda.

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Consequently, they have to be shown in visible ways which they can believe and understand.

Vietnamese in the III MAF tactical areas received ample demonstration that the Marines were always close at hand. From the start, Marine units were continually on the move, in evidence day and night. A total of 41,032 offensive patrols and counter-guerrilla actions were conducted in the year following the arrival of the 9th MEB in March 1965. Over 19,000 of these were conducted at night. The overall frequency and regularity grew steadily. In the month of July 1965, there were 440 small unit offensive actions. Seven months later, in February 1966, there were 8,946 which, incidentally, represented 68% of all the U. S. small unit offensive actions for that month, throughout the country.

The offensive efforts served other purposes--beyond reassurance of the Vietnamese peasants. They were also the vehicle through which the Viet Cong guerrilla force was kept on the move, harassed and hunted, in the villages, the hamlets, and in the paddies and hills. As his force was depleted and his supplies and weapons seized, his capability of hurting the airfields diminished. And, of equal importance, the forty thousand patrol actions were isolating and eliminating guerrillas whose knowledge of the area was great, and who could not readily be replaced. Finally, the anti-guerrilla effort created a situation whereby the Vietnamese peasant who wanted to pass along intelligence on Viet Cong activity, would never be long remote from a friendly ear.

Besides showing the Vietnamese that the Marines were always close at hand, there was the second, and no less important, matter of convincing them that the Marines were actually their friends. Steps to demonstrate this

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were undertaken from the start.

After peace, health is sought and treasured more than anything else by the Vietnamese. During III MAF's first year in Vietnam, over 320,000 persons were given medical treatment, 71,000 of them in February alone. Realizing that each patient had several relatives, it is evident that the medical effort embodied great and persuasive leverage. Beyond this, more than 200,000 pounds of food were distributed over the year. Sixty-three schools were opened by Marines or through Marine assistance, giving literacy and knowledge a chance to help win the battle. 4,556 critically ill civilians were evacuated. 287 construction projects were carried out, and 55 English language classes were in progress at the end of February, increasing significantly our ability to communicate with the people we seek to help.

Conservatively, these compassionate and humanitarian efforts reached a million Vietnamese people, in one way or another, bringing them food, increased health and some reassurance that the Americans were indeed to be depended upon.

But, beyond all this, the people needed persuasive evidence of the military superiority of the Marines over the Viet Cong. Their only knowledge of Caucasian prowess related to the French--whom the communists had defeated, and they had good reason, until otherwise convinced, to fear that the Americans were no match for the Viet Cong. In earlier days, it was said that the day belonged to the ARVN (or the French), but that the night belonged to the Viet Cong. The people soon saw a change. More than seventeen thousand offensive night operations were conducted by III MAF between July 1965 and end-February 1966. During this period, the enemy was engaged in night combat on 795 separate occasions; 199 of these were in

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February.

The Viet Cong were no longer the sole practitioners of the ambush technique. Instead, they were the wide-spread target of Marine ambushes. Viet Cong guerrilla units which previously had the run of the countryside were entrapped in Marine ambushes on more than 300 occasions in the eight month period from 1 July 1965 to 28 February 1966. Forty-four ambushes were successful in February alone, which was 75% of all the productive U. S. ambushes during the month.

Companion with the thousands of small unit offensive operations aimed at destroying the 15,000 guerrillas in I Corps, III MAF conducted a series of larger operations designed to destroy the main force logistic strength and to cause the main forces to suffer personnel casualties. All told the Marines have initiated 59 operations of battalion and larger size in the year under review, against a Viet Cong main force strength which averaged about 10,000 men.

During February, III MAF forces were involved in large scale operations on every day on the month, extending into four of the five provinces of I Corps. Operations up to brigade size were conducted in Thua Thien (Operation New York), Quang Nam (Taut Bow), Quang Tin (Double Eagle II), Quang Ngai (Double Eagle I). Operation Utah, in final preparatory phases on 28 February in Quang Nam, involved 8 1/2 battalions--almost division size. During the month about one third of all III MAF battalions were engaged in large unit operations aimed at destroying enemy main force units.

These larger engagements were usually fought near the enemy base areas, remote from the stream of

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Vietnamese village life. Thus, while often damaging to the main force strength, they had small effect on the guerrilla infrastructure, which most affects the heavily populated areas in I Corps.

All of the foregoing exhibits why it was that, from the beginning, the Marines found it necessary to take a balanced approach in allocation of their military resources, giving account to the need for the large scale endeavors as well as to the need for multiple smaller efforts devoted to weeding out the guerrillas from the fabric of the people. This balance has been the essence of the III MAF concept of operations in Vietnam for a year. It cannot be rationalized as a concept applicable to Vietnam as a whole, but was designed to fit precisely the situation in the geographic area to which they were assigned. It can be summarized as four concurrent and complementary offensive efforts:

- Airfield security. --An active defense of one of the most critical airfield complexes in Southeast Asia.
- Counter-guerrilla operations. --Aggressive action to comb the guerrillas out of a populous and traditionally Viet Cong infested area.
- Large unit operations. --Attacks to destroy Viet Cong main force units and their infrastructure.
- Civic Action. --Helping the Vietnamese, through organized compassionate effort, to achieve a higher level of health, stability and productivity.

The results of these convergent offensive efforts are not all readily quantified. However, many are. They are summarized below:

- The tiny beach heads established by 9th MEB in March, April, and May 1965 have grown in area from 8 square miles in March to 948 square miles in February 1966.

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-The population living in the Marine areas rose from 1,930 in March 1965 to 506,732 in February 1966. All of the people had benefited, in some way, from Marine presence.

-In March 1965, 2 villages and 6 hamlets lay in the Marine areas of responsibility. In February 1966, that number had grown to 109 villages and 543 hamlets.

-Intelligence regarding Viet Cong identifications, locations and activities has been volunteered to our forces by Vietnamese with increasing frequency. The first such instance of significance occurred in June 1965. Still increasing, February saw 29 occasions where Vietnamese voluntarily brought important military information to our forces.

-Since March 1965, III MAF operations have accounted for 3,508 Viet Cong or North Vietnamese troops killed, 619 captured, and 694 of their weapons seized.

-Prior to the arrival of III MAF, the village or hamlet official who slept overnight in his home was a rare case. By the end of February, chiefs of 125 hamlets and 43 villages considered their homes secure enough to remain there regularly overnight.

-Before the arrival of III MAF, there was a fear on the part of many that the presence of a strong, professional U. S. military force would cause the Vietnamese troops to slacken their efforts and leave the fighting to the U. S. personnel. Actually, the opposite has occurred; the Vietnamese Army in I Corps has increased its pace of activity considerably since the arrival of the Marines. In February 1965, one month prior to III MAF's arrival, ARVN in I Corps conducted some 170 battalion days of operation against the Viet Cong. By August 1965 the monthly figure had grown to 318 battalion days, and to 487 in February.

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-Marine operations protecting the fall 1965 rice harvest kept an estimated 512,400 pounds of threshed rice in the hands of its rightful owners. At the same time this amount of the valuable commodity was denied the Viet Cong, an amount sufficient to sustain 5 main force battalions for six months. Significantly, this amount represents 90% of the harvest seized by the Viet Cong the previous year, when there were no Marines to protect the harvest.

Taken individually, these are tiny indices of success. Taken in sum, they reflect unmistakable progress; small progress, but progress nevertheless. And, in a conflict where for years progress has been nonexistent or illusory, this is a significant year's work.

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SUMMARY OF FEBRUARY OPERATIONS

The III MAF effort in February continued to emphasize the balanced approach. It involved complementary elements of small unit pressure on the Viet Cong guerrilla structure, large unit impact on the VC main force, and concerted military and civic action efforts in support of the Vietnamese pacification program.

Quantitatively this represented a substantial contribution to the war effort. Of 13,128 small unit actions conducted by all US ground forces during the month, 8,946 - - 68% of the total - - were by III MAF. Of the 418 contacts made, 242 were by III MAF. At the same time, one third of the offensive ground strength of III MAF was addressed to attacking VC main force units in four of the five I Corps provinces. In the remaining province, a five-battalion ARVN operation, supported by Marine aviation, also engaged substantial VC main forces. Concurrently, sixty-three new construction projects provided schools, wells, bridges and dispensaries to hamlets and villages where previously there had been none. 70,891 civilians, for the most part rural people exposed to VC reprisal, came to III MAF for medical treatment - - a 38% increase over the number for January. Most important, GVN turned over some 45 additional Popular Forces platoons to III MAF, for training as well as operations, making a total of over sixty platoons -- a signal of growing GVN confidence in our ability to prosecute the war.

The 4262 fixed wing sorties flown by Marine pilots during the month constituted 30% of the total US in-country strike effort, and included, as well, 1080 sorties against out-of-country targets. There were 33,466 helicopter sorties, the highest monthly total

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to date. 2700 of these were in support of ARVN operations.

And, finally, III MAF continued to fulfill its critical security mission related to the five air facilities in its area.

All of this was accomplished in the face of a growing focus of VC effort to thwart III MAF's progress. Assassination of VN officials, cutting routes of communications and intensified use of mines and booby traps, gave evidence that the VC regard that progress as a great threat.

The logistic situation continued to show improvement. Port congestion was relieved and supply levels remained adequate throughout the month.

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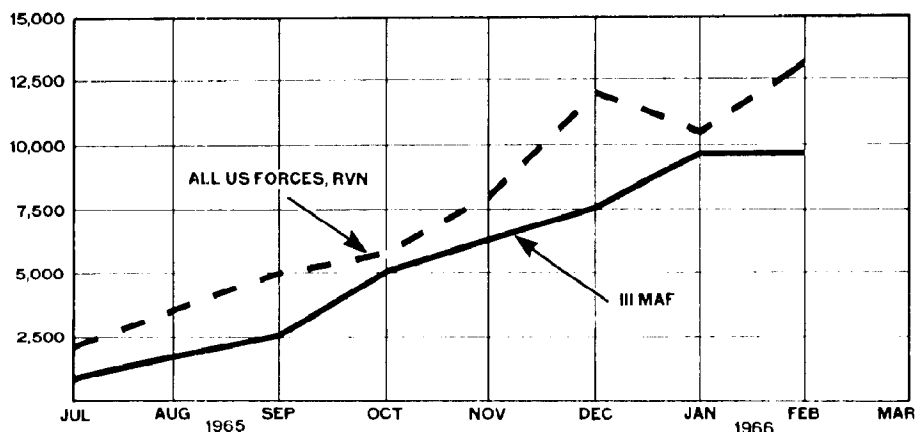
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COUNTER-GUERRILLA OPERATIONS

The task of weeding out the Viet Cong from the villages and hamlets is the heart of the battle. It involves close and frequent contact with the Vietnamese people, to inspire confidence in the central government through direct, person-to-person measures. And the project of keeping the Viet Cong on the move, harassing him and hunting him down, entails constant and aggressive movement of friendly units in, around, and through the populace.

This is best done by units of company size or smaller; - ambushes, small, fast-moving attacks and patrols of all kinds. This obliges troops to be continually on the move, day and night. In February, III MAF conducted almost 10,000 of these small-unit operations. It is interesting to review the magnitude of this effort over the past few months.

III MAF, comprising about one-third of the US combat force in Vietnam, conducted, on the average, more than 74% of all US anti-guerrilla operations. In February, III MAF carried out 8,946 such operations, 68% of all those conducted by US forces in Vietnam. 242 of those operations successfully contacted the enemy, 66 more than the number of similar contacts reported by all other US forces combined.

**ANTI-GUERRILLA OPERATIONS**

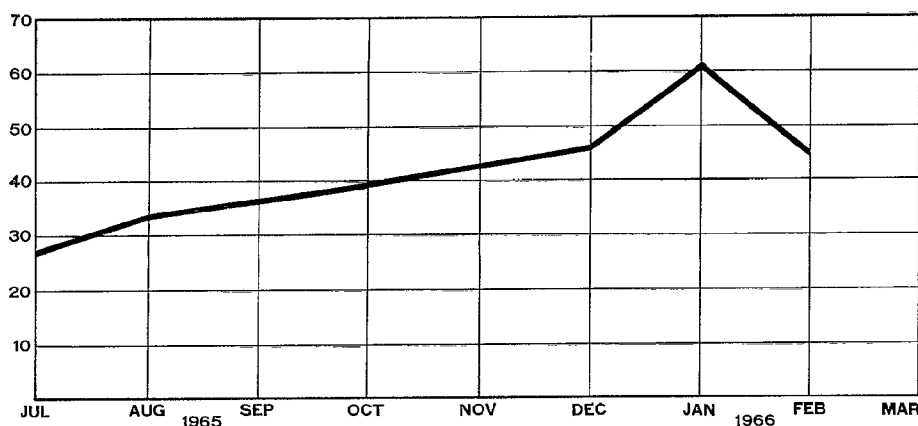
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The 3,165 ambushes set during the month reflect the high pace of activity in III MAF. From this number, III MAF Marines succeeded in ambushing the Viet Cong on 44 different occasions. During January, the figure was disproportionately high, 62, probably as a result of the unusually high nationwide Viet Cong activity during that time, between the Christmas and TET cease fires. The generally rising trend in these successful ambushes is reflected in the chart below. February's drop from January's high, while still above the average for the previous seven months, reflects the 413 fewer ambushes set by III MAF during the month, when five of its battalions were committed to large scale operations.

### AMBUSHES WITH CONTACT



The cumulative effects of this growing, month-in, month-out anti-guerrilla campaign are substantial.

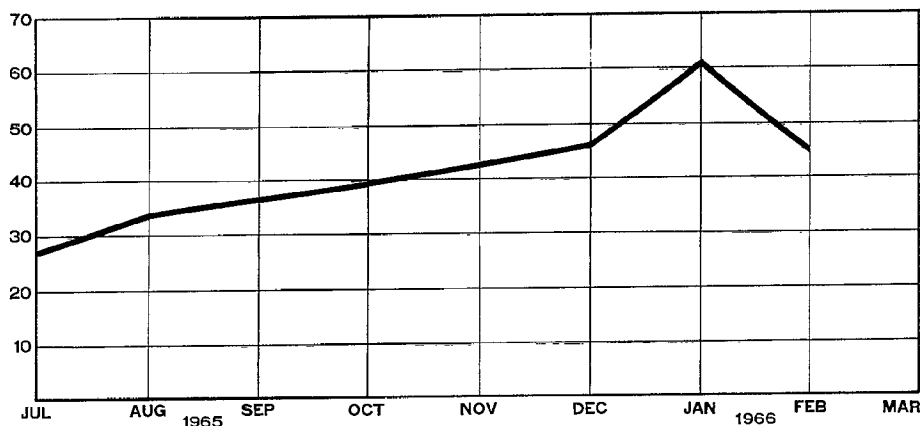
- - The guerrilla force is being steadily ground down - at least 1680 guerrillas have been killed since last March, of whom 100 were killed in February alone. The destruction of these guerrillas is significant out of all proportion to their numbers because the local guerrilla is a product of the local area. His loss is decisive because he cannot be replaced overnight by an infiltrator from the north or by some other stranger. Gradually, the local guerrilla force in the III MAF area is being slowly destroyed, and with it the terrorism, murder and resource extortion.

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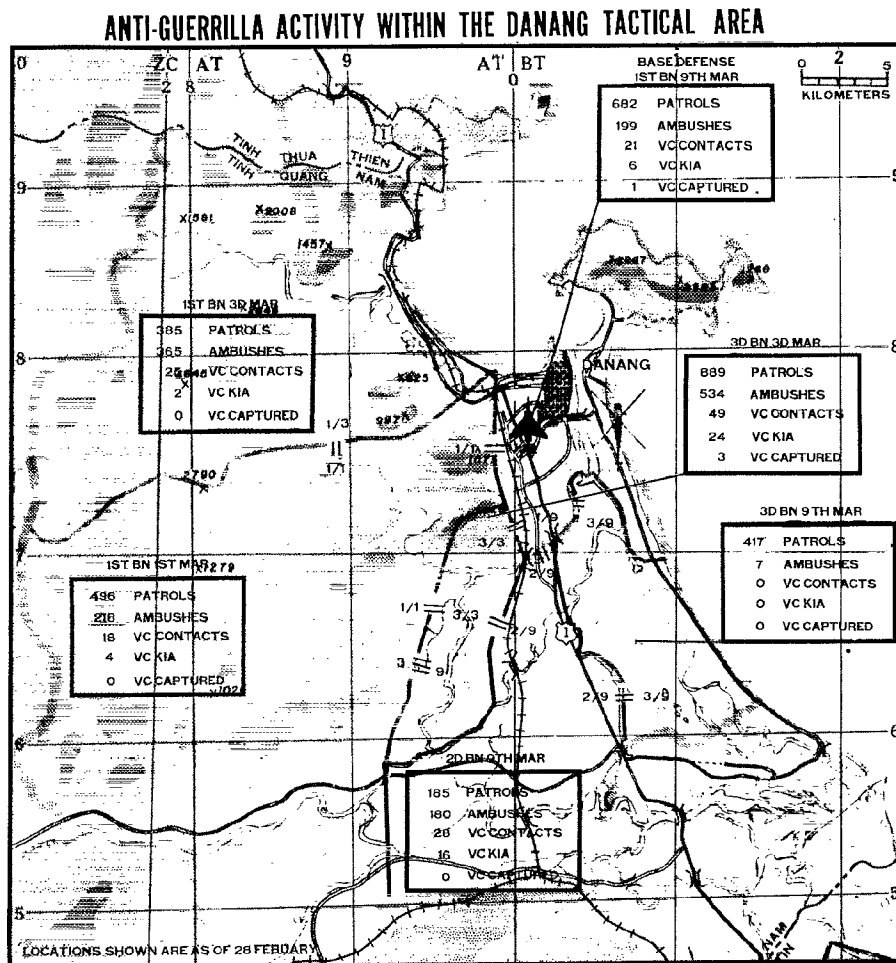
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- - Although moving slowly, the process is showing progress in an increased feeling of security among the villagers. The number of hamlet and village chiefs who remain in their hamlet or village at night is an indication of this attitude. At the end of February, chiefs of 125 hamlets and 43 villages in the III MAF area considered their home area secure enough to remain there at night. Prior to III MAF's arrival, there was almost no chief who resided at his post overnight.

The following map portrayals exhibit the breakdown of the anti-guerrilla effort by tactical areas.



The six infantry battalions regularly at Danang (2d Battalion, 3d Marines did not arrive until 27 February)

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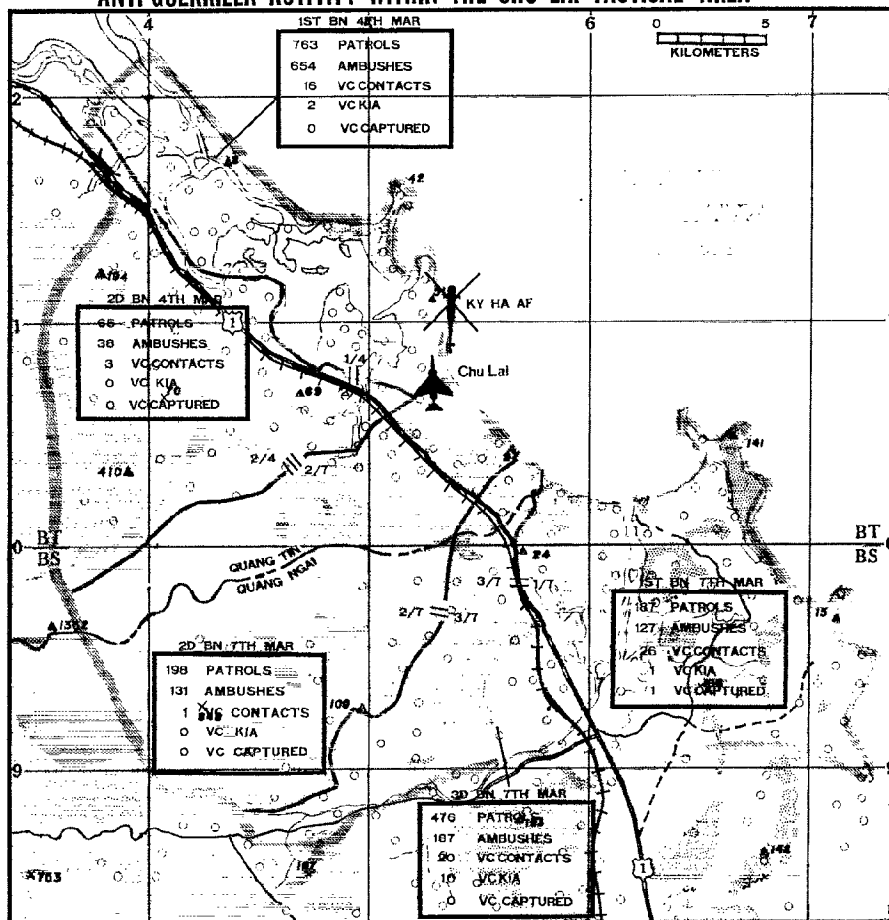
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conducted an average of over one-hundred patrols and fifty-five ambushes each day during February. As with previous months, the majority of enemy contacts were made in the thickly populated lowlands south and southwest of the air base.

## ANTI-GUERRILLA ACTIVITY WITHIN THE CHU LAI TACTICAL AREA



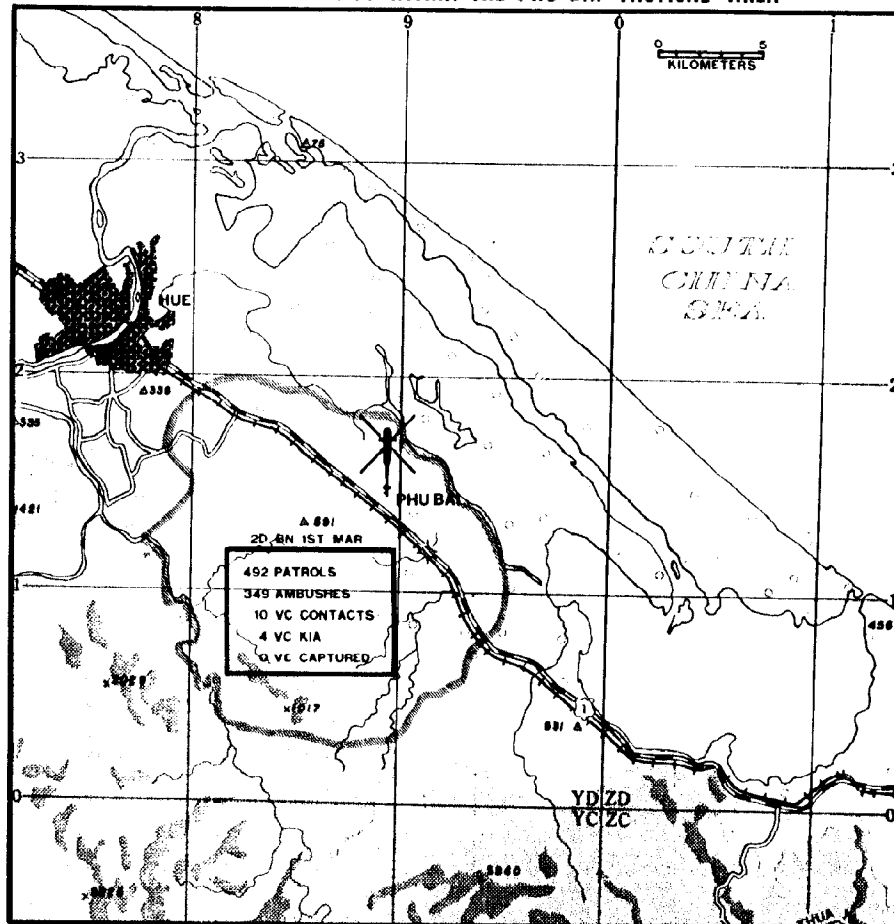
The five infantry battalions at Chu Lai conducted a daily average of over sixty patrols and forty-one ambushes. The majority of enemy contacts were in the southwestern portion of the area with a definite decrease in contacts from January recorded in the northern portion. The 2d Battalion, 4th Marines and the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines (two companies) were engaged in Double Eagle Phase I and Phase II respectively.

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## ANTI-GUERRILLA ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PHU BAI TACTICAL AREA



At Phu Bai, the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines conducted an average of over seventeen patrols and twelve ambushes each day during the month.

In all Marine operations, but particularly in small unit actions, the majority of the casualties inflicted by the VC have been from mines and booby traps. During

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February these caused fifty Marine deaths and 375 wounded, or 58% of all III MAF combat casualties. This compares with 57% in January and an average for the past six months of 54%.

The increased effectiveness of the devices can be traced to three factors. First, greater emphasis is being placed on mine warfare by the VC. Second, there is a greater availability of the materials from which the devices are fabricated; specifically US and ARVN artillery and mortar duds. The VC are aggressive in recovering duds, and the more we fire, the more duds are available. And third, there is a steady improvement in VC mine and booby trap technique. An example of this improvement is shown by the experience of a squad from Company C, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. On 2 February, while on patrol about eight miles southeast of Danang, the lead man hit a trip wire detonating three grenades simultaneously, one at the head, one in the middle, and one at the end of the patrol. At the same time, Viet Cong positioned nearby delivered small arms fire on the Marines. Luckily, only two were wounded in this incident.

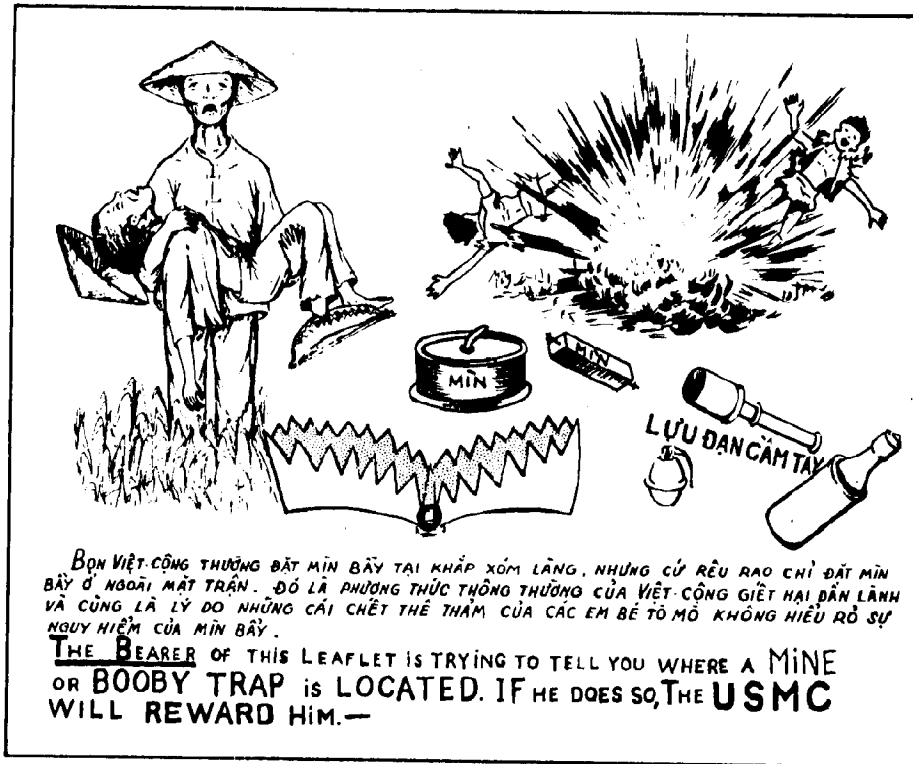
To counter this increasing threat, III MAF engineers conduct continuing anti-mine sweeps throughout the enclaves. Also, an intensive leaflet campaign has been directed at the civilian population in an attempt to gain their help in combating this problem. Two different leaflets were produced. The first was designed to be placed next to a mine or booby trap, marking its location while the villager remained anonymous. The other leaflet offered a reward for information leading to the discovery of mines and booby traps and stressed the fact that death or serious injury to innocent civilians is often caused by the hidden

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VC explosives. The figure below shows how the message on the latter leaflet is being conveyed through the use of both pictures and words.



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LARGE UNIT OPERATIONS

Complementing the thousands of monthly small unit anti-guerrilla actions are the larger offensive operations by III MAF forces of battalion or brigade size against located enemy main force units. In February, fully one-third of III MAF's infantry battalions were committed to these larger undertakings. There were, during the month, five large scale operations initiated by III MAF against enemy main forces, extending into four of the five provinces of I Corps.

The purpose of these larger operations is to destroy the enemy's main force strength-- his personnel and his equipment-- as part of the overall US/ARVN offensive, and specifically to forestall attacks against the critical military installations III MAF is charged with defending. Fought, as they generally are, in remote areas removed from the course of daily village life, they may have only indirect effect on the guerrilla infrastructure. Nevertheless, these large efforts are a necessary element of a balanced approach. III MAF has continued to devote a significant share of its effort to such operations, seeking where possible to conceive and execute them on brief notice, and in relation directly to hard information on location of enemy forces, rather than as laborious products of protracted and insecure planning.

The location of the five large-scale operations conducted in February are shown on the following page.

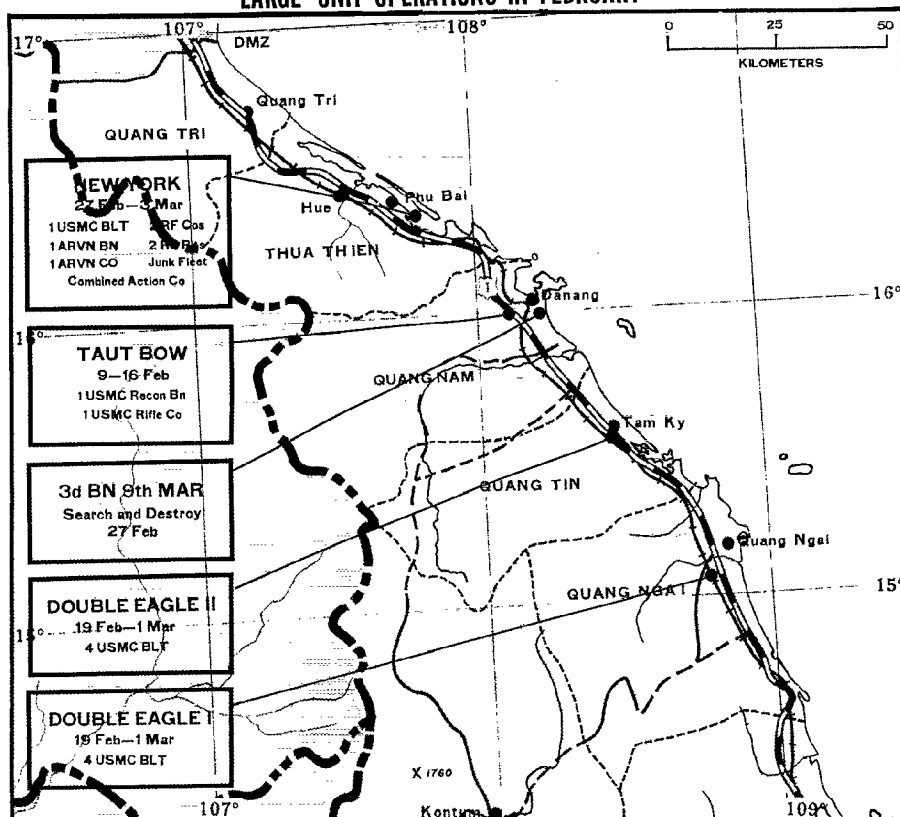
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## LARGE-UNIT OPERATIONS IN FEBRUARY



One noteworthy example of rapid coordination was Operation New York (27 Feb-3 Mar). At 2000, 27 February the Commanding Officer of the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines was briefed at the 1st ARVN Division Headquarters in Hue on an ARVN Operation underway northwest of Phu Bai. The 1st Battalion, 3d ARVN Regiment was heavily engaged with Viet Cong units estimated to be the 810th Main Force Battalion and a local force platoon (total of 350-450 men). Within an hour of this alert, a fragmentary operation order was issued to heli-lift Marines, designated as Task Unit Hotel, from Phu

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Bai to a landing zone four miles northeast of the airfield in order to relieve pressure on the ARVN battalion.

The first wave lifted off at 2320, and by 0200 three companies, F and G from 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines and Company K, 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, had completed a successful night heliborne landing under flares into the designated area.

When established in the objective area, Task Unit Hotel assumed control of all Vietnamese forces in the operation, comprised of the 1st Battalion, 3d ARVN Regiment, one ARVN Company, two Regional Force platoons and local Popular Force elements. Enemy resistance was light through the rest of the night.

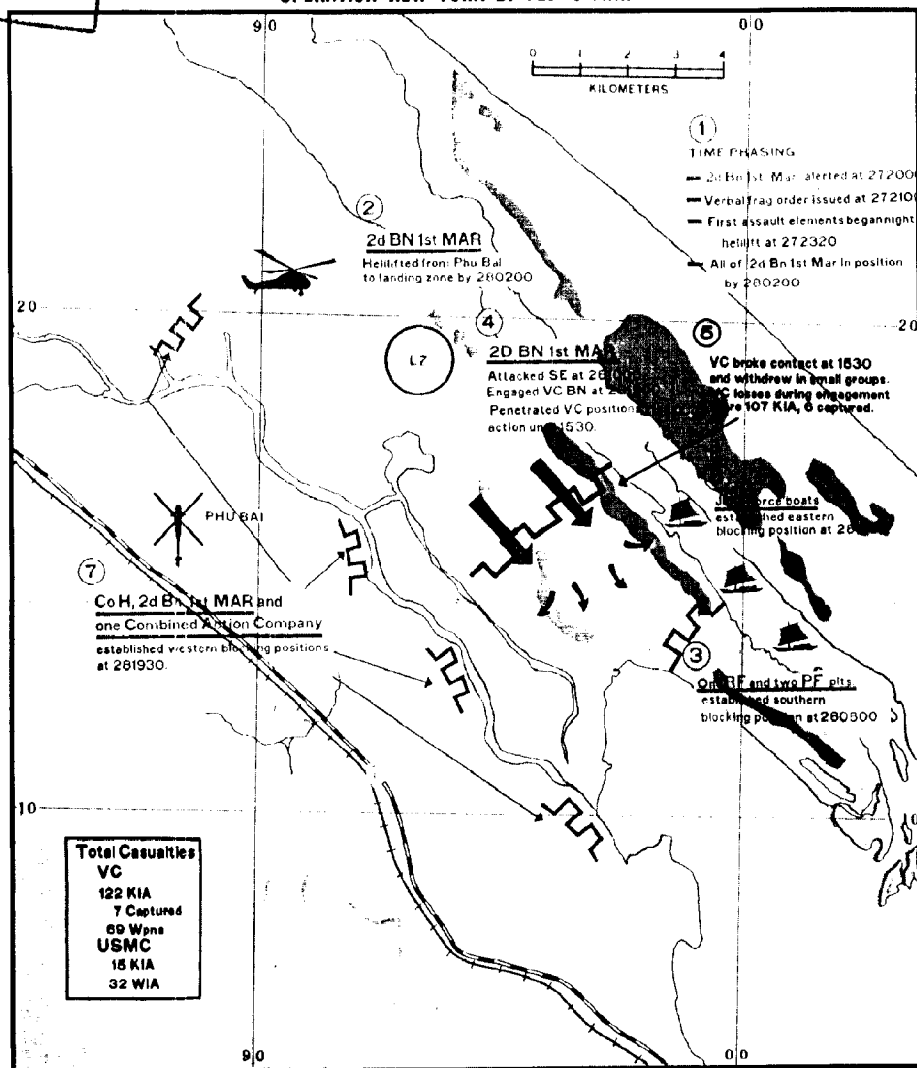
At 1000 on the 28th the Marines jumped off in the attack towards the southeast along the Phu Thu peninsula with three companies on line. One Regional Force squad was attached to each company. The 1st Battalion, 3d ARVN Regiment was directed to search and clear the area immediately north of the previous night's helicopter landing zone.

About noon, after advancing approximately five thousand meters, Company F, on the right, received light sniper fire. Within an hour this had developed into a fierce battle, as some Viet Cong positions held fire until Marines had closed to within fifty meters. Supported by artillery and close air strikes, the Marines continued the attack, penetrating the VC positions which were prepared in depth for two hundred meters.

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## OPERATION NEW YORK 27 FEB-3 MAR



The action continued until the late afternoon when the Viet Cong broke contact and withdrew in small disorganized groups. In this single action the combined Marine infantry, artillery and aviation forces killed 107 Viet Cong and captured six, while suffering fifteen KIA's and twenty-six wounded. By 1930, forces not previously committed were positioned to block possible avenues of enemy escape. Company H,

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2nd Battalion, 1st Marines and elements of the Combined Action Company were repositioned from Phu Bai to cover the western side of the peninsula. Concurrently, the Junk Fleet was used to block the waterway to the east. Earlier in the day one Regional Force and two Popular Force Platoons had been positioned across the narrow neck of the peninsula nine thousand meters southeast of the helicopter landing zone.

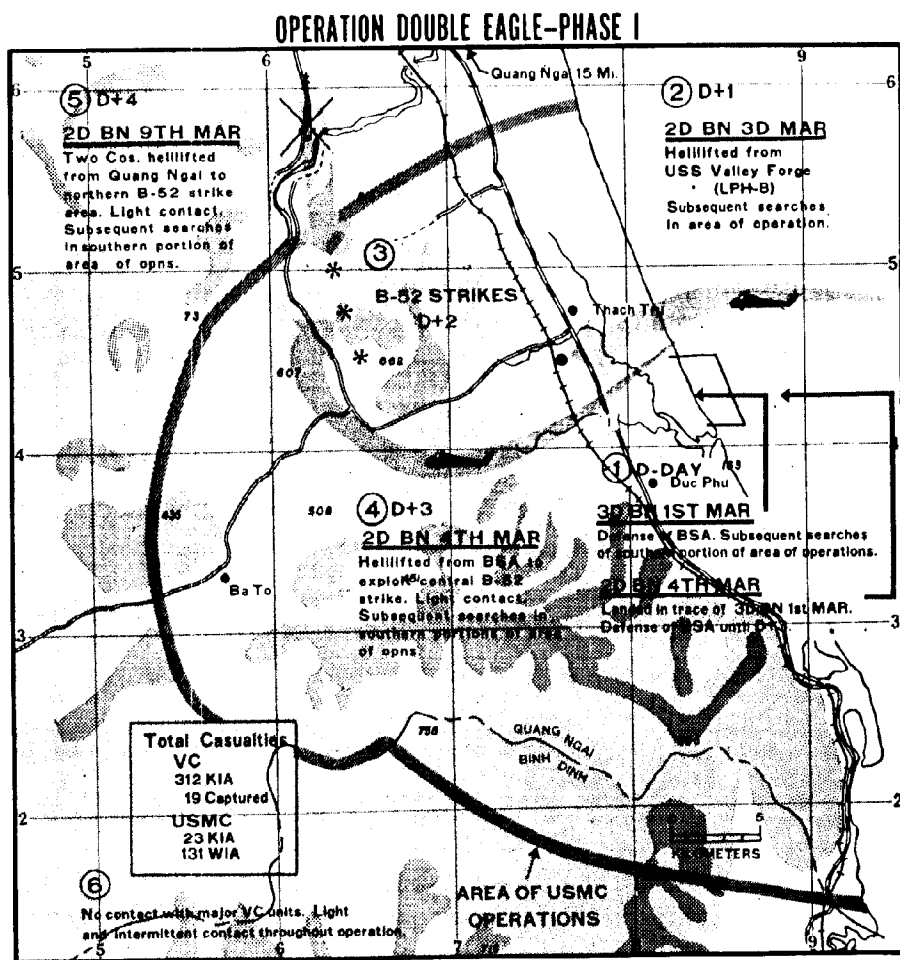
The remnants of the enemy units were not encountered again, however, and the operation continued until 3 March with only sporadic additional contact. Final VC losses were 122 KIA, seven captured, fifteen suspects apprehended and sixty-nine (including six crew served) weapons captured. Marines suffered fifteen KIA's and thirty-two wounded. Operation New York proved the value of being able to commit forces rapidly and in decisive strength, thus forcing the enemy to stand and fight. Additionally, it reaffirmed two other important tactical concepts. First, helicopters can be successfully utilized for large night troop lifts, and secondly, that combined operations with Marines and ARVN units can be highly successful. In this regard, the Commanding Officer of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines said in his after action report, "Combined operations with US Marines and ARVN units are highly successful due to the fact that presence of US Forces and US leadership seem to give the ARVN's confidence in themselves and their capabilities. Such combined operations also enable U. S. Forces to have up to date intelligence in the operation area and to surmount the language barrier between operating forces and the local population."

Double Eagle Phase I (28 Jan-19Feb) was a large search and destroy operation launched about twenty miles southeast of Quang Ngai City. Participating Marine units were 3d Bn, 1st Marines; 2d Bn, 4th Marines; 2d Bn, 9th Marines; 2d Bn, 3d Marines (Special Landing Force); Company A, 1st Amphibious Tractor Bn; Company B, 3d Engineer Bn; and Artillery, Reconnaissance and Shore Party Groups.

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The operation began with an amphibious landing, the largest of the war. By noon on D-Day both of the assault battalions, 3d Bn, 1st Marines and 2d Bn, 4th Marines, were established ashore. 2d Bn, 3d Marines was committed on D plus 1 in a heliborne assault about five miles west of the original landing beaches. 2d Bn, 9th Marines was committed by helicopter on D+4 from staging areas at Quang Ngai City.



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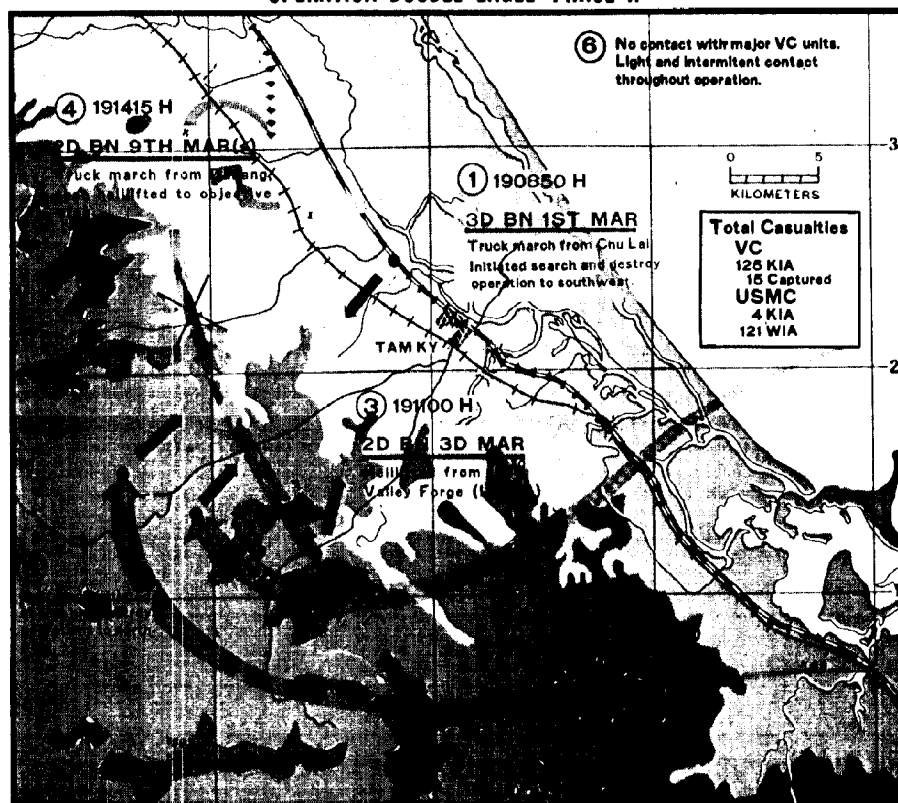
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Despite searches in every portion of the area of operations, including three B-52 strike areas, contact throughout was light. Prisoner interrogation disclosed that the bulk of the three main force regiments reportedly in the area had moved south into Binh Dinh province prior to the Marines landing. Nevertheless, the enemy suffered substantially in the sporadic fighting which did occur: 312 KIA and nineteen captured. Twenty-three Marines were killed and 131 wounded.

## OPERATION DOUBLE EAGLE-PHASE II



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~~SECRET~~Operation Double Eagle, Phase II (19Feb-1Mar).

In mid-month, intelligence sources indicated that large numbers of enemy troops were concentrating west of Tam Ky, in Quang Tin province, twenty-five miles north of Chu Lai. Accordingly, beginning on the morning of 19 February, elements of four Marine battalions, utilizing helicopters and motor transport, converged rapidly on the objective area. The Marine force was, essentially, the same as had just concluded Double Eagle Phase I south of Quang Ngai: 3d Bn, 1st Marines; 2d Bn, 7th Marines; 2d Bn, 9th Marines; 2d Bn, 3d Marines (SLF); Company B, 3d Engineer Bn; and Reconnaissance and Artillery Groups.




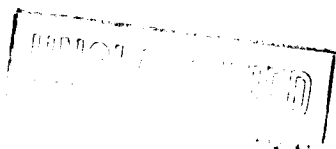
Again, the objective area was searched thoroughly, but contact was light. Retraction of the infantry battalions commenced on 22 February; by 1 March, all units had returned to their areas. 125 VC were killed and fifteen were captured. Marines suffered four KIA's and 121 WIA's.



Taut Bow (9-16Feb) was a reinforced USMC battalion sized effort in an area known as Happy Valley, about thirteen miles west southwest of Danang. The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion, reinforced by Company A, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, entered the objective area on 9 February and began a systematic search to determine VC strength, locate enemy installations, and capture prisoners. In fourteen separate incidents, seventy-two VC were engaged, but abandoned camp sites gave evidence that a large VC force had been in the area recently. Marine casualties for Taut Bow were fourteen wounded. Seven VC were killed and five weapons were seized.

3d Bn, 9th Marines Search and Destroy Operation.

On 28 February, 3d Bn, 9th Marines conducted a search and destroy operation ten miles south of Danang. The

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objective area, which had been the scene of increased contacts and mine or booby-trap incidents, was a zone about one mile wide and three miles long on the east side of the Song Vinh Dien. Thirteen VC were killed and four were captured, along with a quantity of grenades, rifle belts and small arms ammunition. Two Marines were wounded.



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CIVIC ACTION

Results of III MAF's civic action efforts were again apparent in February. As in earlier months these results were often difficult to quantify. In an effort to solve this problem, a system has been developed for assessing pacification progress, which will be used in the months to come to supplement other indicators, and to present a more precise description of the status of the pacification programs.

The basis for this system is examination in detail of five basic fields:

- Destruction of enemy military units
- Destruction of enemy infrastructure
- Establishment of local security by the Vietnamese
- Establishment of local governments by the Vietnamese
- Status of New Life Development Programs

In making this examination, the village was selected as the basic unit, since it consists of a definite geographic area which is known and clearly defined, and to which uniform standards can be consistently applied for comparative purposes. The level of progress of pacification in each village is based on a battery of indicators which are in turn subdivided into their major elements. These elements are assigned various weights, in points, so that a village which fully satisfies all aspects of each indicator, for example, would be assigned 100 points. The specific weights and subdivisions of the system are:

1. Degree of destruction of enemy organized military units. (maximum: 20 points).

- a. Enemy guerrilla and main force units destroyed or expelled - (15 points).

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b. Vietnamese military forces capable of defending village - (5 points).

2. Degree of destruction of enemy infrastructure - (maximum: 20 points).

a. Census of village completed and analyzed - (2 points).

b. Enemy political and military infrastructure discovered and destroyed or neutralized - (8 points).

c. Effective Vietnamese intelligence network established - (5 points).

d. All families interviewed by Vietnamese census grievance teams - (2 points).

e. Principal grievances evaluated, investigated and appropriate action taken - (3 points).

3. Degree of establishment of local security by Vietnamese - (maximum: 20 points).

a. Defensive plan completed - (2 points).

b. Defensive installations completed - (3 points).

c. Permanent local security forces recruited, trained and in place - (12 points). (This may turn out to be the most difficult task of all, considering the shortage of Vietnamese manpower.)

d. Communications established between Vietnamese and Free World Forces and each hamlet security force - (3 points).

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4. Degree of establishment of local governments - (maximum: 20 points).

a. Village chief and council elected and functioning - (4 points).

b. Village chief living in village and sleeping in home - (3 points).

c. All hamlet chiefs and councils elected and functioning - (4 points).

d. All hamlet chiefs living in hamlet and sleeping at home - (4 points).

e. Permanent psy-ops and public information programs established - (3 points).

f. Adequate social and administrative organization of village to meet immediate needs - (2 points).

5. Degree of completion of initial New Life Development Programs (maximum: 20 points).

a. Adequate public health programs completed to meet needs of villagers - (4 points).

b. Adequate education facilities to meet immediate needs of villagers - (4 points).

c. Adequate agricultural works completed to meet needs of villagers - (4 points).

d. Adequate ground transportation facilities established - (4 points).

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e. Necessary markets established - (4 points).

Results of the examination based on these criteria are displayed pictorially on the pages that follow. Since February is the first month for which these more detailed figures have been collected, the charts and figures do not describe change, but will serve instead as bench marks from which future change can be measured. In appraising these figures one important factor should be kept in mind; - the criteria indicated are only for those village areas which have been subjected to analysis. Many villages, shown as zero in pacification actually are enjoying substantial security by virtue of the constant Marine patrols. However, not having been analyzed formally, they are not shown as reflecting any pacification effort. This technique, which may be regarded at the outset as being conservative, has been adopted for precisely that reason; - there has been too much unmetered optimism in the past, and this should serve to ensure that there is no overstatement.

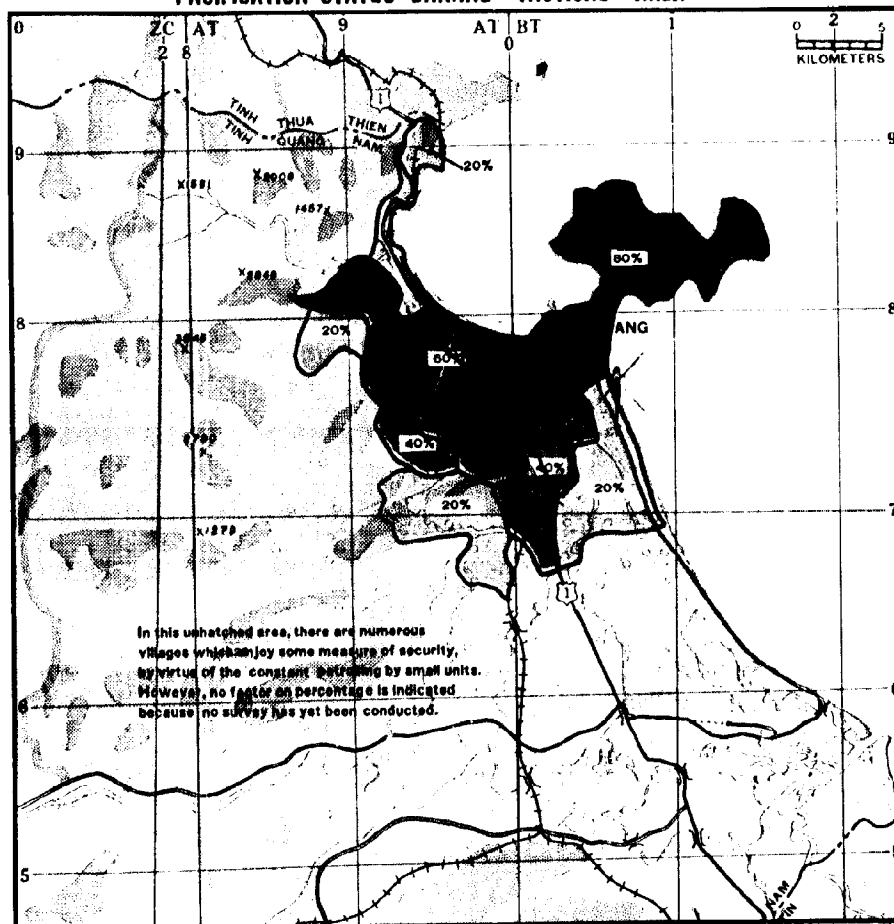
Charts displaying pacification status in each of the Marine Tactical Areas are shown on the pages that follow.

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## PACIFICATION STATUS-DANANG TACTICAL AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES	CIV. POPULATION	VILLAGES	HAMLETS
0% *	457	94,491	53	258
20%	57	36,258	9	34
40%	18	16,100	4	18
60%	26	19,036	5	22
80%	31	175,000	1	3
100%	—	—	—	—
Total	589	340,885	72	335

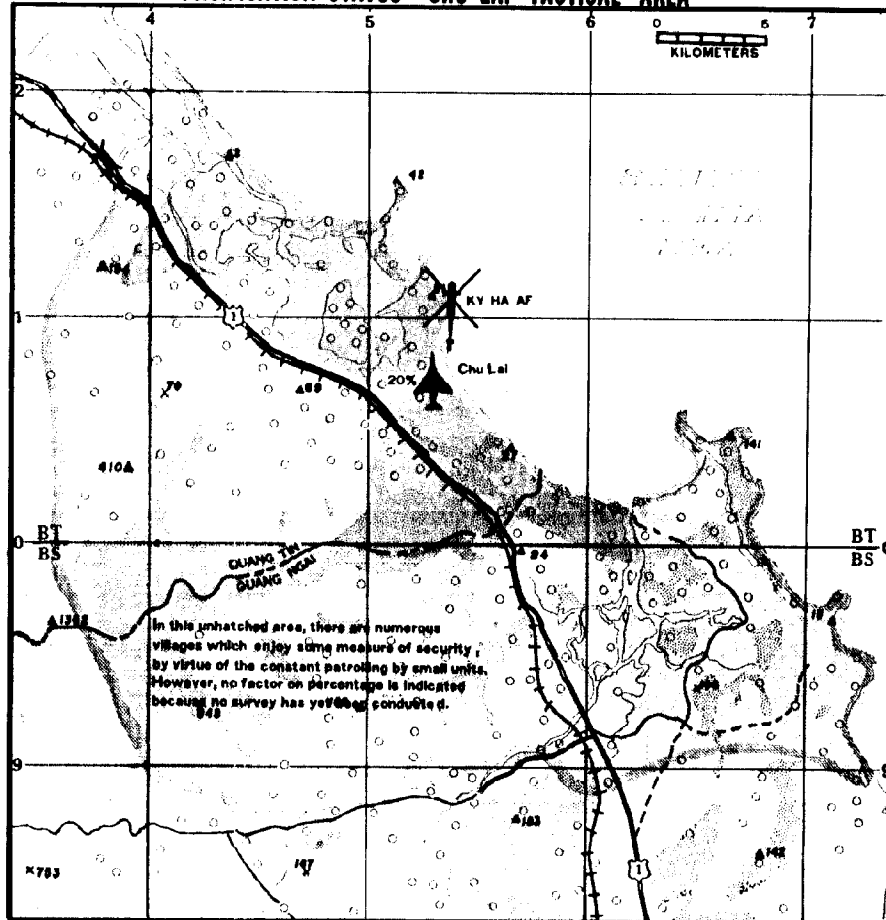
\* The regions in the 0% category are those in which effort is being applied, but where no survey has been conducted yet, or where the pacification level has not yet reached 20%. Villages in those areas which have been analyzed vary from 0% to as high as 17% pacified.

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## PACIFICATION STATUS - CHU LAI TACTICAL AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES	CIV. POPULATION	VILLAGES	HAMLETS
0% *	244	91,145	21	93
20%	30	21,624	5	37
40%	—	—	—	—
60%	—	—	—	—
80%	—	—	—	—
100%	—	—	—	—
Total	274	112,769	26	130

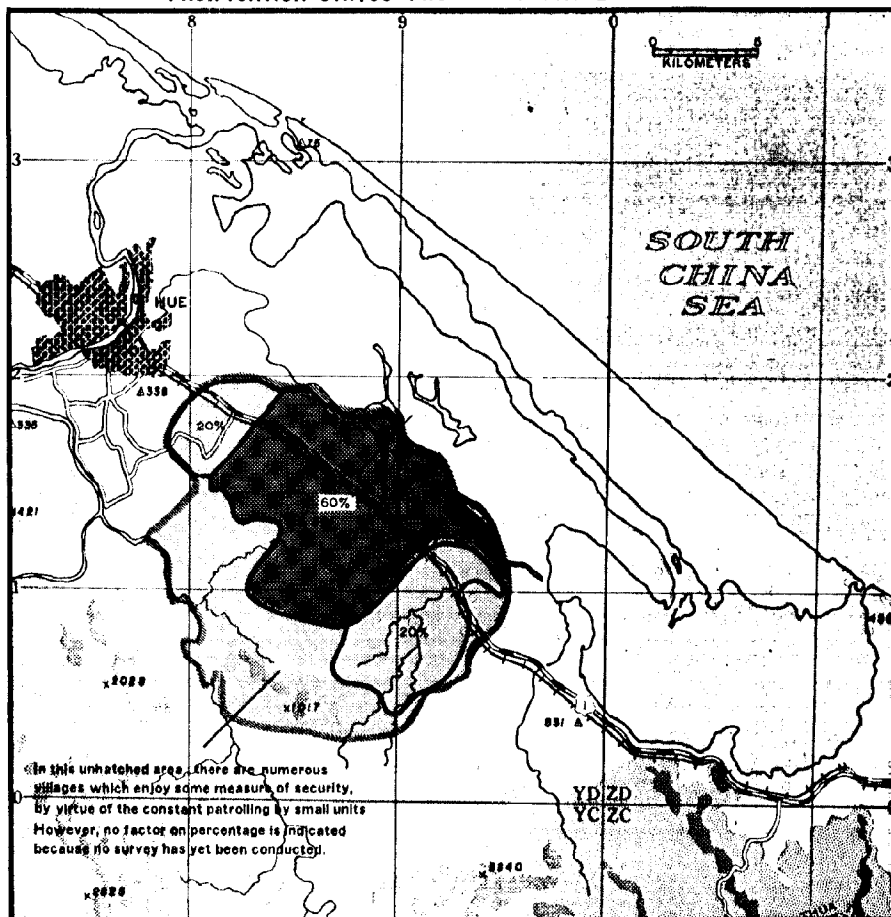
\* The regions in the 0% category are those in which effort is being applied, but where no survey has been conducted yet, or where the pacification level has not yet reached 20%. Villages in those areas which have been analyzed vary from 0% to as high as 17% pacified.

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## PACIFICATION STATUS-PHU BAI TACTICAL AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES	CIV. POPULATION	VILLAGES	HAMLETS
0% *	22	17,740	4	35
20%	25	11,852	2	4
40%	—	—	—	—
60%	36	23,486	5	39
80%	—	—	—	—
100%	—	—	—	—
Total	85	53,078	11	78

\* The regions in the 0% category are those in which effort is being applied, but where no survey has been conducted yet, or where the pacification level has not yet reached 20%. Villages in those areas which have been analyzed vary from 0% to high as 17% pacified.

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During February, 70,891 persons requested and received medical treatment from III MAF forces, a 38% increase over January. 63 construction projects were begun, providing latrines, playgrounds, rice bins, showers, and security fences in areas where previously there had been none. At the same time, 55 English classes were in progress, and the total number of medical trainees rose to 157.

III MAF Marines participated in a number of "self-help" projects during the month wherein the villagers either performed the labor themselves after having been provided the necessary materials, or work side by side with Marines in accomplishing the task. Examples of these are:

- The villagers of La Bong Hamlet assisted the Marines of the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines in clearing two hundred meters of brush.

- Villagers in Da Man began building a hamlet playground with the 12th Marines providing technical and material assistance.

- Working together, the Vietnamese and Marines renovated the school building at Yen Son and obtained furniture and supplies. At present, the school is staffed by a Vietnamese teacher who provides instruction in basic subjects. A Marine visits the school daily to instruct in physical education. It is estimated that enrollment in the school will grow in the near future from the present one hundred students to approximately three hundred.

- Six Vietnamese began training as masons and carpenters with the 3d Engineer Battalion. The men, when trained, will work on the dispensary construction project in Da Son Hamlet.

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- Firefighting apparatus and personnel, and medical teams were dispatched to help fight a fire in the hamlet adjacent to the MAF Headquarters. Further assistance was provided by the Marines in cleaning up after the fire.

- Marines from the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines and local villagers combined forces in converting an unused building into a hamlet school. The building was cleaned and painted, and desks and benches for twenty children are being constructed.

- Villagers of Da Son constructed a new footpath and bridge in the hamlet, with technical assistance and material support provided by the 3d Engineer Battalion.

- The villagers of Phong Bac Hamlet completed an additional schoolroom for the hamlet school.

- Marines of the 1st Anti-Tank Battalion advised and assisted villagers in a swamp drainage project which made 14 acres of land available for agriculture.

- Residents in seven hamlets, south of Danang, have commenced erection of security fencing, with Marine advice.

Only slow progress was made in February in the marshalling and training of Popular Forces. On 28 February they still numbered only slightly over 23,000 in the I Corps Tactical Zone, considerably less than the goal of 28,968 for year-end 1966 which, in itself, is probably inadequate. There are now five training centers in I Corps, one in each province, with a combined capacity of 2100 recruits. These centers have been operating considerably below maximum capacity (only 550 trainees in the first week of February), and it is apparent a very great recruiting and training effort must be made for the remainder of the year if this modest

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goal is to be reached. Unfortunately, the Popular Force shortage is having a serious effect on the entire pacification effort. To assist in this effort, the Commanding General, III MAF has taken steps to:

1. Place a Marine NCO in each Popular Force Training Center to provide the dual function of assisting the training advisory staff and to provide III MAF with first hand knowledge on Popular Force Training.
2. Focus attention to all levels on the importance of Popular Forces and the necessity of expanding the recruiting program.
3. Insure that advisory personnel are thoroughly familiar with the critical need for Popular Forces, and continually highlight this need in discussion with their counter-parts.

A further step by Marines toward improvement of the Popular Forces has been the expansion of the combined action company program. The high level of effectiveness of the original company, at Phu Bai, led to establishment of a second company at Danang in February. This new unit is composed of sixty-five Marines (one officer and sixty-four enlisted) and 175 Vietnamese (one ARVN officer and 174 Popular Force enlisted.) It is estimated that once this company becomes combat ready it will release an entire Marine company from the Danang Air Base Defense Unit.

An encouraging indication of growing confidence in the Marines by the Vietnamese was the assignment of additional Popular Forces platoons to Marine control, bringing the total to 69.

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A number of other encouraging signs appeared in the Ngu Hanh Son pacification program in February; some examples were:

- Morale of the approximately 250 Pacification Cadre undergoing training improved considerably when clarification of their status was received. Contrary to what they formerly believed, it was determined that the Cadre will receive full pay and allowances during the training.

- The National Police organized two intelligence cells and established a resource control program for monitoring private property.

- Four ralliers, with their weapons, turned themselves into government officials in the campaign area.

- In the field the Cadre distributed leaflets in the campaign area explaining what the Government of Vietnam is doing for villagers and personally introduced 247 newspapers into areas which formerly had no distribution. In addition, the Cadre sponsored elections for chiefs and councils in two hamlets of Hoa Chau village and organized villagers into teams to build wells, sanitary facilities, and fortifications.

- Construction of village defensive systems progressed in Hoa Chau Village, while local fortifications were completed in Trung Loung and Lo Giang hamlets of Hoa Da village. In addition, bunkers and one guardpost were completed in Liem Lac hamlet of the same village.

- The USAID Police Advisor stated that a 187 man Field Police Force will be assigned to the Ngu Hanh Son Pacification Program. The program now has only forty-three Field Police assigned.

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The month of February found the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council continuing to develop and expand its interests. Under study were problems in connection with black market control, price control, the role of National Police in the pacification program, development of Popular Forces, road improvements throughout the I Corps Zone, and the Commodities Distribution Programs.

An important indicator of the growing success of the III MAF civic action program is the increase in the amount of information about the Viet Cong passed to Marines from the villagers. Cultivation of the requisite confidence among the Vietnamese has been a tedious process. In June, before the effects of the growing civic action program and the everyday presence of the Marines were felt, there was only one reported instance of a Vietnamese volunteering information. During the ensuing eight months, the number has climbed steadily to an average of twenty-nine meaningful reports per month for the most recent four months (November - February).

These are examples of the type of practical, valuable information provided by Vietnamese.

-During Operation Double Eagle, a villager led Marines to a hidden VC cache containing sixty rounds of small arms ammunition, five hundred metal punji stakes, three wooden rafts, and an assortment of hand tools.

-On 9 February, a villager pointed out two concealed grenade mines to a 9th Marines patrol in the Danang area.

-At Chu Lai on 15 February a Marine was warned by a villager of the presence nearby of two armed Viet Cong. Their presence was subsequently confirmed.

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-On 17 February, a Viet Cong living in a village near Chu Lai was identified for a Marine patrol by other villagers and was apprehended.

-At Vinh An village, south of Chu Lai, villagers led Marines to a hidden tunnel system, a series of booby traps and exposed two Viet Cong informers.

In short, the entire pacification/civic action effort reflects progress; - slow painstaking progress, but progress nevertheless and the prime quality demanded through it all is patience!

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AIRFIELD SECURITY

During February, as in earlier months, the security of the five sensitive air installations, Phu Bai, Danang, Marble Mountain, Ky Ha, and Chu Lai, occupied a substantial share of the efforts of III MAF. The security of these areas continued to be achieved by a combination of tight internal security, conducted by headquarters and administrative personnel, coupled with aggressive actions beginning at the defensive perimeters and extending beyond the tactical areas. While the specifics of the perimeter defense of each key area differed slightly, the same basic techniques were applied. A strong complex of defensive positions functioned immediately around the facility while aggressive patrols and other offensive operations were conducted at progressively greater distances.

At Phu Bai the sole infantry unit, the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines, was concurrently responsible for the airfield perimeter defenses and for the constant patrolling throughout the area. During February 492 patrols and 349 ambushes were conducted around Phu Bai, an average of over thirty such operations each day.

Because of its paramount importance and also because it lies in an area of great population density, Danang continued, in February, to maintain the most elaborate defensive system of the five bases. The field has been surrounded by an extensive system of tactical barbed wire, which is tied in with a series of mutually supporting firing positions and bunkers. Tenant aviation units and logistic formations man a system of security posts, perimeter defense positions and conduct extensive night security patrols. Supplementing these measures, a coordinated system of some one hundred seismic intrusion devices has been installed. These devices allow

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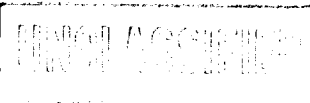
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the defenders to detect the movement of a walking man at distances of up to fifty meters from the instrument, regardless of visibility or obstacles standing in the line of sight.

In February, as in earlier months, the base at Danang and the helicopter field at Marble Mountain were defended by one reinforced battalion specifically designated as the Air Base Defense Battalion. Three rifle companies were assigned to the Danang Air Base perimeter, while the fourth company defended Marble Mountain. This responsibility was held by two battalions during the month. From the 1st through 16th the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines was designated as the Air Base Defense Battalion. In this capacity it conducted 417 anti-guerrilla patrols in the vicinity of the two fields, an average of more than twenty-six per day. On 17 February the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines assumed the responsibility. In the last twelve days of the month, that unit conducted 395 patrols and ambushes, over thirty-two each day. Throughout the entire month, the other five battalions of the Danang area gave active support to the defense of the bases. They conducted an additional 2242 patrols and 1,460 ambushes at all hours of the day and in all portions of the tactical area.

The perimeter defense of the air fields at Chu Lai and Ky Ha differed from the other tactical areas in that no single battalion held the entire responsibility. Rather, and in conjunction with security measures by tenant units, each of the five battalions operating in the vicinity of the airfield contributed, conducting a total of 1,689 patrols and 1,137 ambushes throughout the area, an average of over eighty-one such operations each day.

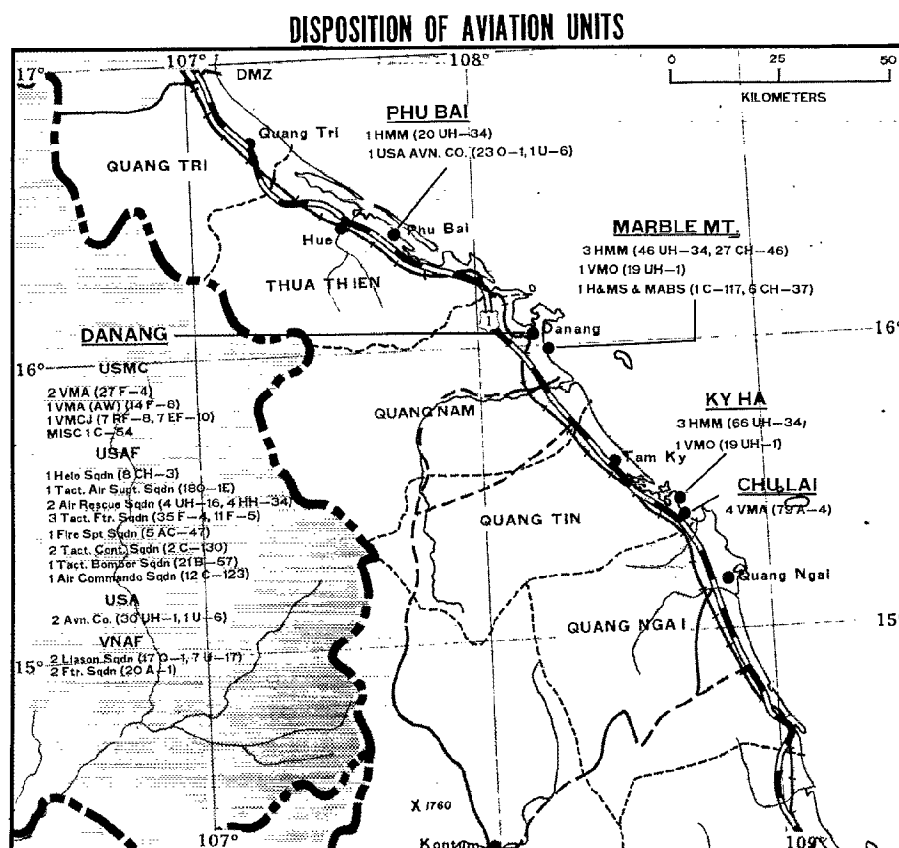
In addition to the constant patrolling, ambushes and other small unit activities, III MAF forces conducted larger operations in four of the five provinces in the

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I Corps Tactical Zone. These actions, discussed in more detail in earlier sections, were aimed at destroying larger bodies of VC whenever they could be located in an effort to eliminate this threat to the airfields at its source. Although it is impossible to measure in precise mathematical terms the contribution these actions made to air base defense, undoubtedly the 579 hard core Viet Cong who were killed in those operations presented a painful loss to the enemy.

By February the Phu Bai - Danang - Chu Lai complex had grown to be the most vital of its kind in Southeast Asia. Stretching over a hundred miles of coastline from Phu Bai south to Chu Lai and Ky Ha, these five key bases operated an average of more than 550 aircraft during the month. On 28 February there were 340 Marine, 144 U.S. Air Force, 31 U.S. Army and 44 Vietnamese Air Force aircraft operating there. This force comprised a major portion of the air power in the Republic of Vietnam.

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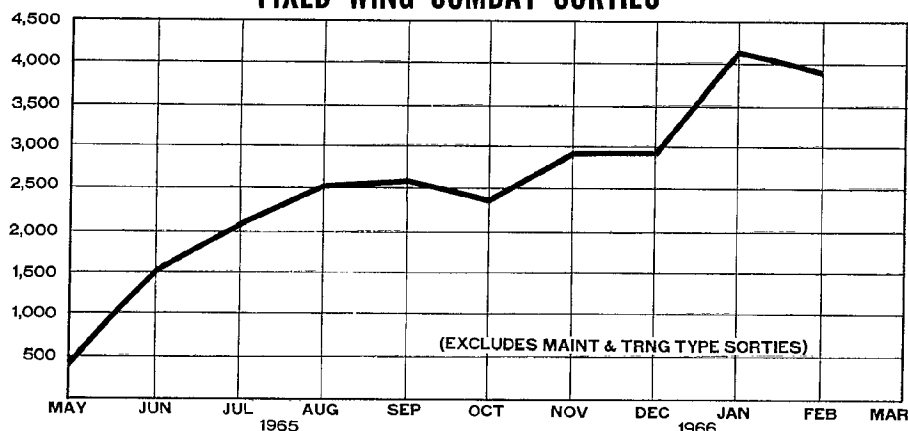


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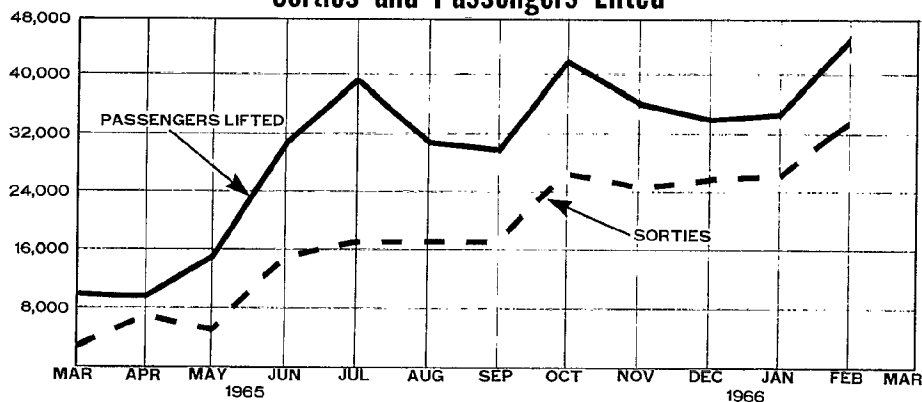
During the month Marine aircraft operating from these facilities flew more missions in support of the war effort than in any previous month. Marine fighter and attack planes flew 3933 combat sorties, 1052 of these against targets in Laos or North Vietnam. This figure represents the highest daily average of any previous month, 161, and was almost as high as the monthly record of 4190 flown during the thirty-one days in January.

### FIXED WING COMBAT SORTIES



Rotary wing aircraft utilized the fields at an even higher rate. During February Marine helicopters flew 33,466 sorties, considerably above the previous record for a one month period of 26,524 flown in December.

### HELICOPTERS Sorties and Passengers Lifted

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Considering the threat to the enemy of these bases, there is little doubt that they will continue to be primary targets for sabotage and mortar attack. Aggressive, round-the-clock, long range patrolling; carefully designed, well-equipped defensive networks and a friendly, cooperative relationship with the Vietnamese population will diminish the risk. However, the danger from suicide squads of saboteurs, or brief hit and run attacks of other kinds still exists, and will probably continue to exist through the foreseeable future.

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During February the III MAF logistical situation continued to show improvement. Shortages of some spare parts, particularly for material handling equipment, hampered logistic operations, and storage requirements continued to exceed available facilities. The average daily cargo discharge at the port of Danang declined during February due solely to a lack of ships to be unloaded. The backlog had been eliminated completely. The supply pipeline continued to expand to support the increased requirements caused by the arrival of additional units in RVN during the period. Special supply programs and delivery of repair parts via parcel post proved to be invaluable in reducing the backlog of high priority requisitions.

Port Facilities: There were no additional unloading facilities developed during February. Work continued on the LST/LCU Tourane River Bridge Facility, and it is now 33% complete. At the end of the month, one dredge was scheduled for use to expedite completion of the project.

The LST ramp at Chu Lai was improved by grading and placement of rock on the ramp and staging area. This facility is designed to handle four LST's and three LCU's. A channel 250 feet wide and 11 feet deep was dredged across the outer bar, and at month's end, the contractor was preparing to dredge a fourteen foot channel, which should be completed in March.

Supply: The general status of supply within III MAF during February remained adequate.

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Class I - Supply levels continued to increase to accommodate projected requirements; refrigerated storage facilities were limited to approximately seven days supply at III MAF stockage points.

Class II - A marked improvement in the status levels occurred during the month with the receipt of a significant number of items in short supply. The shortage of material handling equipment brake parts was alleviated in part by local fabrication at offshore facilities. The fourth monthly CRITIPAC shipment (high usage items), shipped from CONUS on 25 February, should further improve III MAF's material readiness.

Class III and IIIA - Assets on hand were adequate to satisfy all requirements.

Class IV - Sufficient field fortification materials were received to commence a stock buildup of these items.

Class V and VA - The Class V stockage objective of forty-five days was maintained except for selected high usage items. Class VA assets posture in RVN continued to improve, although continued shortages of some critical high usage items required the use of substitute items.

On 23 February the Fleet Stock Account A2 at Chu Lai became operational with the running of its first inventory updating. This account will now requisition directly from 3d Force Service Regiment on Okinawa, reducing requisition lead time and providing more effective supply support to forces in the Chu Lai enclave. To further assist supply operations, metal shelving for the new warehouse at Chu Lai was procured and sent from Hawaii.

Maintenance: Equipment availability improved primarily because new helicopters and forklifts were received.

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Shortages of repair parts continued to affect maintenance capability; however, special repair parts support programs (Red Ball, CRITIPAC) proved to be invaluable in reducing deadline rates.

An accelerated R&E program for tracked vehicles and self propelled artillery was instituted to improve the ordnance readiness of III MAF. At the end of the month, thirty-seven LVT's were enroute to RVN.

Communications/electronics, motor transport, and ordnance contact instruction teams assisted III MAF during February. These teams provided on-the-scene-technical instruction by personnel with special qualifications.

Movement and Resupply: During February a Battalion Landing Team and additional III MAF support units arrived in RVN. The 11th Marines and a detachment of 3d Force Service Regiment went ashore at Chu Lai between 23 and 26 February after unloading from one APA, one AKA, and two LST's. A detachment from 1st Engineer Battalion (1st Marine Division command post construction party) arrived at Chu Lai in two elements, one on 11 February aboard an LSD, and the other on 23 February aboard two LST's. BLT 2/3 debarked at Danang on the 27th of February from Special Landing Force (SLF) shipping. BLT 1/5, enroute to WestPac from Hawaii in the PRINCETON (LPH-5), PICKAWAY (APA 222) and ALAMO (LSD-33), was designated as the ground component of the new SLF on 28 February.

During the month of February, port congestion at Danang cleared. For four days (22-25 February) a zero cargo backlog was recorded and on two days (23-24 February) there were no ships in port at all. With fewer ships to unload, the average daily unload of cargo at Danang decreased from 4114 M/T in January to 3,528 M/T

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in February. Nevertheless, the unloading effort was substantial. February started off with 8,162 M/T unloaded on the first day of the month, and concluded with 9,013 M/T unloaded on the last day (these were the second and third highest unload rates to date, the highest being 9,301 M/T recorded on 25 January). On 31 January there were nine ships at Danang. An additional sixteen ships arrived during the month, twenty-two ships completed their unloading, and three were in port on 28 February 1966. The average cargo backlog during February was 8,112 M/T, less than half the 16,901 M/T average for January. The backlog on 28 February 1966 was 12,565 M/T.

The lack of ships to work during February gave the Naval Support Activity a chance to "catch its breath", repair lighters, and improve harbor facilities. The lull in ship arrivals during February is expected to be temporary, and projected throughout requirements for Danang during coming months are expected to tax port capabilities severely.

The Military Airlift Command (MAC) cargo channel between Kadena and Danang became fully operational in February and over 439 S/T of air cargo were lifted to Danang. Aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and the 315th Air Division still carried the major share of the load (1076 S/T); however, MAC was requested to lift 900 S/T per month over this new channel. Weekly air cargo backlogs have never exceeded weekly liftings, an indication of rapid dispatch of air cargo.

Medical: Surgical facilities at Phu Bai were completed; facilities at Chu Lai are 70% completed. (Danang facilities were completed in December). Medical stocks at FLSG Danang are presently sufficient to fill 80% of requisitions on demand.

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On 16 February the USS Repose (AH-16) reported on-line and ready to receive patients.

Engineer Operations: Generally good weather with light rains permitted satisfactory progress on road construction and improvements in February. A great deal of work was accomplished in grading, cleaning drainage ditches and surfacing with rock and asphalt. The 7th Engineer Battalion M4T6 ferry on the Tourane River continued to operate. The collapse of a span of the Tourane River bridge because of an overloaded RVN vehicle on 25 February was temporarily disruptive; however, the estimated two week repair was accomplished in three days as a result of noteworthy Naval Construction Battalion effort and the use of a 25-ton floating crane from the NAVSUPACT, Danang. Repairs to the northern end of the Chu Lai expeditionary airfield, consisting of soil cement application covered by membrane and matting, neared completion and installation of the catapult was in progress. Work commenced on the 1st Marine Division command post. Sufficient materials were on hand to accomplish the major portion of the construction.

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STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS

PERIOD X - 1 February - 28 February 1966

1. PHU BAI - There was no change to major USMC/USN forces. There was no change to the tactical area.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>
<u>Within 25 miles</u>			<u>Within 25 miles</u>		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	2	2	Battalions	1	1
Companies	2	2	Companies	2	2
Total Strength	995	995	Total Strength	550	550
<u>Within 25 to 50 miles</u>			<u>Within 25 to 50 miles</u>		
Sub Region Hq	1	1	Regt Hq	0	0
Regt Hq	0	0	Battalions	4	5
Battalions	4	3	Companies	3	3
Companies	12	12			
Total Strength	2665	2265	Total Strength	1545	1845
<u>Grand Total to 50 miles</u>	3660	3260	<u>Grand Total to 50 miles</u>	2095	2395

Comparing the January 1966 and the February 1966 confirmed enemy order of battle, it is seen that there has been an increase of 400 enemy personnel within a fifty mile radius of the Phu Bai area. The increase was caused by the eastward shifting of the enemy 806th

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Main Force Battalion to within forty-five miles of Phu Bai.

2. DANANG - On 1 February VMF (AW)-235 relieved VMF (AW)-312 in MAG-11. VMF(AW)-312 returned to Cherry Point, North Carolina. On 27 February BLT 2/3 came ashore from the Special Landing Force and returned to operational control of the 3d Marines. The addition of this unit brought the total number of Marine infantry battalions in Vietnam to fourteen. BLT 1/5, sailing from Hawaii, became the ground element of the Special Landing Force on 28 February. There was no change to the tactical area.

#### ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>
<u>Within 25 Miles</u>			<u>Within 25 Miles</u>		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	1
Battalions	2	3	Battalions	3	5
Companies	8	8	Companies	2	2
Total Strength	1540	1840	Total Strength	925	1525
<u>Within 25 to 50 Miles</u>			<u>Within 25 to 50 Miles</u>		
Regt Hq	1	1	Regt Hq	1	0
Battalions	6	5	Battalions	5	2
Companies	11	11	Companies	2	2
Total Strength	3115	3054	Total Strength	3050	1050
<u>Grand Total to 50 Miles</u>			<u>Grand Total to 50 Miles</u>		
	4655	4894		3050	2575

Comparing the January 1966 and the February 1966 confirmed enemy order of battle, it is seen that there has been a reduction of 239 enemy personnel within a

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fifty mile radius of the Danang area. This change in strength figures is not due to a reduction of the number of enemy units, but was caused by a normal enemy order of battle adjustment.

3. CHU LAI - On 17 February BLT 3/1 closed Chu Lai. The unit had originally entered Vietnam on 29 January as a part of the Operation Double Eagle landing force. VMA-311 relieved VMA-214 on 15 February in an inter-theater rotation. VMA-214 returned to Iwakuni, Japan. On 23 February Headquarters Battery, 11th Marines and the 4th Battalion (minus one battery), 11th Marines arrived from Okinawa. The 3d 8 inch Howitzer Battery arrived on 28 February from Twentynine Palms, California. There was no change to the tactical area.

#### ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Jan</u>
<u>Within 25 Miles</u>			<u>Within 25 Miles</u>		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	5	4	Battalions	2	2
Companies	9	11	Companies	0	0
Total Strength	2110	2190	Total Strength	600	600
<u>Within 25 to 50 Miles</u>			<u>Within 25 to 50 Miles</u>		
MR-V Hq	1	1	Regt Hq	1	1
Regt Hq	1	3	Battalions	6	6
Battalions	7	13	Companies	0	0
Companies	13	13			
Total Strength	5229	8099	Total Strength	2800	1900
<u>Grand Total to</u>			<u>Grand Total to</u>		
<u>50 Miles</u>	7339	10289	<u>50 Miles</u>	3400	2500

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Comparing the January 1966 and the February 1966 confirmed enemy order of battle, it is seen that there has been a reduction of 2950 enemy personnel within a fifty mile radius of the Chu Lai area. The reason for this reduction is that the 18th NVA Regiment and the 2nd VC Regiment shifted southward from Quang Ngai province into northern Binh Dinh province.

#### 4. VC LOSSES FOR FEBRUARY 1966

<u>This period</u>		<u>Total to 28 Feb</u>
662	KIA	3,508
58	VC (confirmed)	619
667	VC (suspects)	4,279
11	WIA	361

#### 5. CIVIC ACTION STATISTICS

<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>		<u>Total to 28 Feb</u>
51,413	70,891	Persons Given Medical Treatment	325,014
22	9	Persons Given Medical Training	157
26	63	Construction Projects	287
14,781	51,012	Pounds of Food Distributed	212,030
6,358	9,220	Pounds of Soap Distributed	62,201
8,543	6,208	Pounds of Clothing Distributed	148,817
87	56	Critically Ill Civilians Evacuated	4,565
36	55	English Language Classes in Progress	173
\$907	\$916	Cash Donations	21,130
22,638	14,113	Persons Fed	54,903
2,887	2,250	Students Supported	10,237

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6. III MAF OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

<u>January</u>	<u>February</u>		<u>Total to 28 Feb</u>
5,726	5,719	Patrols	25,116
3,578	3,165	Ambushes	14,421
231	254	Sniper Posts	873
1	2	Regimental or larger Opns	14
4	5	Battalion Opns	48
35	62	Company Opns	466
4,108	4,262	Offensive Air Sorties	24,664
25,744	33,466	Helo Transport Sorties	201,195

7. III MAF STRENGTH - 282400 February

Danang	28,952
Chu Lai	15,454
Hue Phu Bai	2,329
Total	46,735

8. LOGISTICS

## a. Supply Levels at End of Period:

	DANANG	CHU LAI	PHU BAI
Class I: (1000 of rations/ days of supply)			
MCI (Rations)	621/25	558/32	83/35
B Rations	350/17	315/19	133/55
A Rations	17/1	85/5	15/6

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	<u>DANANG</u>	<u>CHU LAI</u>	<u>PHU BAI</u>
Class III & III A (BULK): (1000 gallons/days of supply)			
JP-4	460/5	286/4	23/11
AVGAS	109/13	34/4	64/16
MOGAS	98/7	89/6	77/51
DIESEL	8/1	37/3	33/47
Class V and VA:			
Ground Ammo (days of Supply)	45	45	45
250 lb bombs (Number of bombs)	4,983	10,047	-
500 lb bombs (Number of bombs)	233	3,637	-
Launcher w/19 2.75 in. rockets	193	128	-
Launcher w/4 5.0 in. rockets	279	70	-

## b. Resupply Status:

(1) Surface shipping status (Danang):

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Cargo unloaded (February) - 98,793 M/T

Avg. daily cargo discharge rate - 3,528 M/T

Ships in port on 31 January -9

Ships arriving during February -16

Ships unloaded (February) -22

Ships in port on 28 February -3

Cargo Backlog (31 Jan) -16,111 M/T

Cargo Backlog (28 Feb) -12,565 M/T

Avg. daily cargo backlog (Feb) -8,122 M/T

(2) Air shipping Status:

Cargo lifted to RVN (Feb) -1,515 S/T

Cargo offered and awaiting lift -135 S/T  
Okinawa

c. RED BALL Summary (Feb):

Items at beginning of period -315

Items added -87

Items removed -124

Items remaining at end of  
period -278

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d. Maintenance (Feb)

Items evacuated from RVN - 1,121

Items repaired at 3d FSR - 1,701

Items returned to CONUS  
from 3d FSR - 128

Items disposed of on Okinawa - 789

e. Construction Projects

Roads rehabilitated or  
constructed - Maintenance only

Bridges constructed - None

Wells drilled - 1 in progress  
3 completed

Covered storage (NSA) - 160,000 sq ft in  
progress, 32,000  
sq ft completed

Maintenance facilities  
constructed - 24,000 sq ft  
in progress,  
24,000 sq ft  
completed

Ammo storage facilities  
constructed - 576 sq ft in  
progress, ASP#  
1-85% completed,  
ASP# 2-44%  
completed

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POL storage tanks

- 1 in progress, Danang; 3 in progress, Chu Lai; 2 completed, Danang

Status of:

400 Bed Hospital  
(Marble Mt)

- 70% complete

Cantonments

Danang

- 92% complete

Chu Lai

- 56% complete

Phu Bai

- 90% complete

Water supply  
distribution systems

- 69% complete

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CONCLUSIONS

The balanced approach of the III MAF military effort was exhibited in February to be abundantly sound. The three major deterrents to progress at the end of the reporting period supported the validity of this balanced approach:

--Progress in the small unit effort was being impeded by the size and roots of the enemy guerrilla structure.

--Progress in the large unit effort was limited by the inability of ARVN and Marine units to remain in the area where the battle took place.

--Progress in the pacification effort was limited by the inability of GVN paramilitary and police to move in behind III MAF. This may be the most serious impediment of all.

Our logistic effort is sound and capable of supporting the forces we have in Vietnam now.

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