

OPTIONAL FORM NO. 10

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

MAG-16
Oct 65~~TO~~ FOR: COMMANDING GENERAL

DATE: 27 OCTOBER 1965

FROM : ASSISTANT CHIEF OF STAFF G-3

SUBJECT: Information on VC attack of Marine Corps units at Marble Mountain
and Chu Lai on 27 October 1965.

1. A transcript of significant telephone calls from III MAF on the VC attack on Marine airfields at Marble Mountain and Chu Lai are attached herewith.
2. In a recent check (1900) with III MAF, the III MAF Command Center reports the following information:
 - a. VC boats came over the beach north of Marble Mountain Air Facility at BT 063753.
 - b. Believe that ALL damage to aircraft at Marble Mountain done by "Sappers" (VC troops) and not by mortars.
 - c. Heavy mortar fire received in the MCB-9 area. Some satchel charges were found in the MCB-9 area.

Very respectfully
A. Woessner

C/S RF

Declassified by the Director of
Marine Corps History and Museums
in accordance with the provisions
of CNO ltr Ser 009D323/232095 of
21 Feb 1979

A. Woessner Signature Date 27 Oct 65

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(1-3 attached)

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2. III MAF

A. HIGHLIGHTS

(1) THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION IS BASED ON INITIAL REPORTS ON VC ATTACK ON MARINE POSITIONS EARLY ON 28 OCT. THE ENEMY ACTION WAS COMPRISED OF THREE SEPARATED BUT COORDINATED SUICIDE ATTACKS WITH SATCHEL CHARGES, UNDER COVER OF MORTAR FIRE, AGAINST THE DANANG, MARBLE MT AND CHU LAI AIRFIELD COMPLEXES. IN THE CASE OF MARBLE MT, THERE IS EVIDENCE THAT ATTACKERS WERE LANDED BY BOAT. LOW LEVEL INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED BY III MAF INDICATED A POSSIBILITY OF VC ACTIVITY SOUTH OF MARBLE MOUNTAIN. A COMPANY SWEEP IN THE AFTERNOON FOUND NOTHING.

(2) IN THE EARLY EVENING A REPORT WAS RECEIVED BY III MAF AT 272030H THAT A VC BN WAS MOVING OUT OF HAPPY VALLEY VIC (AT 8568) TOWARDS DANANG. THE AREA WAS IMMEDIATELY TAKEN UNDER FIRE BY ARTILLERY WHICH FIRED SEVERAL HUNDRED ROUNDS. LATER 3/9 AMBUSH ENGAGED AN ESTIMATED VC CO SIZE FORCE MOVING TOWARDS DANANG, VIC (BT 030642). ENSUING FIRE FIGHT RESULTED IN 15 VC KILLED, WITH REMAINDER OF FORCE DISPERSED INTO THE NEARBY VILLAGE OF ^{AN TU} ~~AMTU~~ (1) VIC (AT 025635). THIS VILLAGE ALSO TAKEN UNDER FIRE BY ARTILLERY AND SUBSEQUENTLY SEARCHED BY 3/9 PATROLS. NO REPORTS OF RESULTS TO THIS TIME. BELIEVE THIS AGGRESSIVE ACTION INITIATED BY 3/9 AND SUPPORTING ARTILLERY UNITS THWARTED THE MAIN VC ATTACK AIMED AT THE DANANG AIR BASE.

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(3) AT APPROX 280005H, THE VC LAUNCHED A COORDINATED ATTACK AGAINST MARBLE MT AF AND THE CHU LAI AIRFIELD. MARBLE MT RECEIVED AN ESTIMATED 40-50 ROUNDS OF 60MM MORTAR FIRE, MANY OF WHICH FELL IN MCB-9 CANTONMENT AREA, INFLECTING 60 WIA. VC MORTAR POSITIONS WERE LOCATED AND SILENCED BY 30 ROUNDS OF 105MM HOW FIRE. VC SACHEL CHARGES WERE ALSO FOUND IN MCB-9 AREA. SEVEN VC WERE KILLED AND THREE VC WIA/CAPTURED.

(4) AT 280230 UNIDENTIFIED BOATS WERE OBSERVED OFF BEACH AT MARBLE MT. BOATS WERE TAKEN UNDER FIRE BY TANKS, ARTILLERY AND ROCKETS. A FLARE PLANE IN THE AIR AT THE TIME RAN OUT OF FLARES BEFORE RESULTS COULD BE OBSERVED. ONE VC WIA/CAPTURED STATED ON INTERROGATION THAT ALL ATTACKERS HAD COME IN BY BOAT. (LATE REPORT FROM III MAF STATES THAT BOATS LANDED VC AT (BT 063753) TO NORTH OF MARBLE MT. AF).

(5) ATTACKING FORCE AT CHU LAI WAS STOPPED AT THE MLR. TWO VC CAPTURED WITH SACHEL CHARGES. VERY LITTLE MORTAR FIRE WAS ACTUALLY RECEIVED AT THE AIR FIELD - NO DAMAGE TO THE RUNWAY.

(6) VIET CONG CASUALTY REPORT:

MARBLE MT.	15 KIA	4 WIA
DANANG	15 KIA	-
CHU LAI	9 KIA	2 WIA
TOTAL	39 KIA	6 WIA

(7) USMC/USN CASUALTY REPORT:

MAG-16	3 KIA	15 WIA
MCB-9	-	60 WIA
1/9	-	1 WIA

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MAG-12	-	2 WIA
4TH MAR	-	2 WIA
TOTAL	3 KIA	80 WIA

IT IS ESTIMATED THAT APPROXIMATELY 50% OF WIA WILL RETURN TO DUTY WITHIN 24 HOURS.

(8) AIRCRAFT DAMAGE REPORT:

FIVE (5) UH-34	STRIKE DAMAGE
THIRTEEN (13) UH-34	DAMAGED
SEVENTEEN (17) UH-1E	STRIKE DAMAGE
FIVE (5) CH-37	DAMAGED
TWO (2) A4	STRIKE DAMAGE
ONE (1) A4	BRAVO DAMAGE
FOUR (4) A4	DAMAGED

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RESULTS OF TELECON RECEIVED 271515 FROM III MAF COMMAND CENTER

AIRCRAFT DAMAGE:

5 - H-34 STRIKE DAMAGE
13 - H-34 DAMAGED
2- A4 STRIKE DAMAGE
4- A4 DAMAGED
1- A4 BRAVO DAMAGE
17- UH1E STRIKE DAMAGE
5 - CH-37 DAMAGED

CASUALTY REPORT:

MAG-16 - 3 KIA AND 15 WIA
MCB-9 - 60 WIA
1/9 - 1 WIA
MAG 12 - 2 WIA
4thMAR - 2 WIA

TOTAL: 3 KIA AND 80 WIA

VC CASUALTY REPORT:

MARBLE MT. - 15 KIA AND 4 WIA
DANANG - 15 KIA
CHU LAI - 9 KIA AND 2 WIA

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CORRECTED COPY - DESTROY ALL PREVIOUS VERSIONS

TELECOM FROM GEN WALT TO GEN KRULAK 271430W OCT 1965

IT IS NOW LIKELY THAT THE ATTACK WAS TO BE A COORDINATED EFFORT AGAINST ALL THREE MARINE AIRFIELDS, DANANG, MARBLE MT., AND CHU LAI.

THERE IS INDICATION THAT IT WAS BOTH A WATER BORNE AND LANDBORNE ATTACK.

LOW LEVEL INTELLIGENCE RECEIVED BY III MAF YESTERDAY GAVE A CLUE OF SOME VC ACTIVITY SOUTH OF MARBLE MT. AREA SWEEPED BY III MAF AND NOTHING FOUND.

AT 272030H III MAF RECEIVED AN INTELLIGENCE REPORT THAT A VC BN WAS MOVING OUT OF HAPPY VALLEY AND TOWARD THE DIRECTION OF DANANG. III MAF TOOK THE DESIGNATED REGION UNDER FIRE BY ARTILLERY. LATER 3/9 CAUGHT A CO SIZE VC FORCE HEADED IN SAME DIRECTION OF ABOVE VC BN. 15 WERE KIA OUT OF THE CO SIZE FORCE. CO SIZE FORCE OF VC DISPERSED INTO NEARBY VILLAGE, WHICH WAS TAKEN UNDER ARTILLERY FIRE.

9TH MARINES NOW IN AREA OF VILLAGE CONDUCTING SEARCH AND DESTROY. NO REPORT OF RESULTS YET.

LITTLE INFORMATION TO ADD TO THE CASUALTY INFO WE HAVE NOW.

VERY LITTLE MORTAR FIRE HIT CHU LAI. THAT RECEIVED WAS LUCKY TO HIT AIRCRAFT. NO DAMAGE TO RUNWAY.

0230 UNIDENTIFIED BOATS WERE OBSERVED OFF BEACH AT MARBLE MT. BOATS WERE TAKEN UNDER FIRE BY TANKS, ARTILLERY AND ROCKETS. FLARE PLANE RAN OUT OF FLARES. RESULTS WERE NOT OBSERVED. NOW BEING RECONNOITERED (0730 LOCAL).

APPROXIMATELY $\frac{1}{2}$ OF THOSE LISTED AS WIA WILL BE BACK ON DUTY TODAY.

PRESS WAS HELPFUL AT PRESS CONFERENCE. ASKED TO GO LOOK FOR THEMSELVES BUT NOT REPORT INFO THEY CONSIDERED HELPFUL TO ENEMY.

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COMMAND CENTER
FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFICSIGNIFICANT TELEPHONE CALLS 0745 to 1200 27 OCTOBER 1965 (Cont'd)

1115 Called MCCC (WARFIELD) Advised no new info available on VC attacks however are awaiting momentary report from III MAF.

1120 III MAF REPORTED: 1st attack 280005H. 2nd attack 280110H. 0400 WRAP-UP: 17 UH1E confirmed destroyed; 18 UH 34: 17 damaged, 1 destroyed; 5 H-37 damaged; VC Marble Mountain 10 KIA, 3 WIA; VC Chu Lai 3 KIA, 1 WIA; VC 9th Marines adjacent to Marble Mt Air Facility 15 KIA; MCB-9 38 WIA; MAG-12 2 WIA; MAG-16 2 KIA, 15 WIA; MAG-12 2 A-4 destroyed, 1 A4B damaged, 5 A4 damaged. Naval component personnel were in tents asleep and recieved heavy mortar incoming which accounts for their heavy casualties - please pass this info to COMSERVPAC. III MAF expects daylight reports from units at about 0645H, will have report for us about 0730 - 0800.

(LCDR Nystedt discussed SeaBee casualties with COMSERVPAC, they indicate closer to 66-68 MCB WIA's, with about 44', including 15 critical, already air evacuated).

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TELECON OF GEN WALT TO GEN KRULAK AND AS RELAYED TO GEN MANGRUM 270945

1. THE VC ATTACK AGAINST MARINE POSITIONS WAS A THREE PRONGED ATTACK AGAINST DANANG, MARBLE MT. AND CHU LAI AT MIDNIGHT. THE MARBLE MT. ATTACK WAS THE MOST SUCCESSFUL. THE CHU LAI ATTACK WAS LESS SUCCESSFUL AND THE DANANG ATTACK WAS FRUSTRATED. THE ATTACK WAS MADE BY THE VC WITH SACHEL CHARGES UNDER THE COVER OF MORTAR FIRE.
 2. APPROXIMATELY 40-50 ROUNDS OF 60MM FIRE RECEIVED AT MARBLE MT. THE MORTAR WAS LOCATED AND 30 ROUNDS OF 105 FIRE WAS PLACED ON IT. SEVEN VC WERE KIA, THREE VC WIA CAPTURED. ONE OF THE CAPTURED VC INDICATED THAT THE VC CAME INTO THE BEACH BY BOAT.
 3. AT CHU LAI THE VC ATTACK WAS STOPPED AT THE MLR. THERE WERE 10 KIA, 1 WIA AND 2 CAPTURED VC'S WITH SACHEL CHARGES.
 4. SAME MORTAR FIRE WAS RECEIVED IN THE AREA NEAR THE AIRFIELD AT DANANG MAIN. ONE OF 3/9 PATROLS ON AN AMBUSH WAS HIT BY A FORCE OF VC ABOUT COMPANY SIZE WHICH WAS HEADED TOWARD THE AIRFIELD. 15 VC WERE KIA IN THIS ENCOUNTER. REMAINDER OF VC DISPERSED INTO LOCAL VILLAGE WHEN TAKEN UNDER ARTILLERY FIRE. RESULTS OF ARTILLERY FIRE UNKNOWN.
 5. TOTAL CASUALTIES: 32 VC KIA
5 VC WIA
6 VC CAPTURED
- USMC: 1 KIA
11 WIA
6. UNDER DARKNESS IT APPEARED THAT FOLLOWING AIRCRAFT WERE DAMAGED:
 - 2 A4'S
 - 14 H 34'S
 - 13 UH 1E'S

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COMMAND CENTER
FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC

SIGNIFICANT TELEPHONE CALLS 0745 to 1200 27 OCTOBER 1965

- 0750 Called III MAF Command Center (MIXSON) for info on VC attacks on Danang East/Chu Lai. He stated they were putting together the figures and would call back.
- 0900 MCCC (Maj GRIFFIS) called for latest attack info. Advised UPI releases A4N, A8N, A13N, A18N, A20N, 1st add to AZON received.
- 0925 MCCC (Maj GRIFFIS/Col DOWSETT). Asked for latest info inasmuch as JCS were in tank - informed them Gen KRULAK had received telecon from III MAF. Col DOWSETT requested Gen KRULAK call Gen MANGRAM in JCS tank.
- 0932 Called III MAF Command Center. Talked to Capt MIXSON and Col AXTELL. Col AXTELL reported available info had just been passed to Gen KRULAK. Repeated that 14 UH-34's and 13 HU1E's destroyed or damaged (how much destroyed or damaged not known at this point). Five (5) VC WIA captured and 7 KIA at Danang East, 1 WIA captured at Chu Lai. POW stated 200 VC landed by boat. Col AXTELL said a battalion ambush probably caught many VC. They will have good report in about half an hour (need to code) - we will return call.
- 1015 Called MCCC (WARFIELD) to relay info that Gen KRULAK had passed to Gen MANGRAM (they had monitored Gen KRULAK's call and had below figures - which we verified):

2 A/4's destroyed or damaged
14 UH 34's destroyed or damaged
13 HU1E's destroyed or damaged
1 KIA (USMC)
11 WIA (USMC)
32 KIA (VC)
5 WIA (VC)
6 captured (VC)

Three pronged attack on Danang Main, Danang East, and Chu Lai. Danang Main attack thwarted by 3/9. POW stated 200 VC landed by boat.

- 1025 Called III MAF Cnd Cntr (MIXSON). He advised they had not finished coding report and would call us back immediate as soon as it is done.

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Capt MIXSON - III MAF Command Center

Spot Report

0715 Marble Mountain Air Facility

Hit by mortar fire, SA, automatic weapons.
Eight A/C (Helos) burning
Damage control teams in area putting out fires.
Mortar fire started 280000H, lasted 20-25 minutes.
Known Marine casualties - 2 WIA.
Penetration # unknown
VMO area being cleared.

MAG 12 at Chu Lai has received mortar fire on runway and parking area.
Two aircraft burning.

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