

HEADQUARTERS
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:RRT:tjs
5750
5 May 1966

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF ((Attn: Field Historian)
Subj: Command Chronology
Ref: (a) DivO 5750.2A
Encl: (1) Command Chronology

101
177
1311

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted.

Walter Moore
WALTER MOORE

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Marine Corps History and Museums
in accordance with the provisions
of CGO ltr Ser 009D3E5/232095 of
230 1979

[Signature] 2/11/97

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HEADQUARTERS
1ST MARINE DIVISION, FMF
661092
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Apr 1966

TAB (10), APPENDIX A, ENCLOSURE (1) TO CG FIRST MAR DIV ltr 3: HIS
over 5750; SER: 00135-66 of 25 MAY 1966.

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750
5 May 1966

b. To accomplish this mission, the Battalion Commander assigned the following missions to his subordinate units:

H&S Company

- (1) Establish and defend the Battalion Command Post.
- (2) Conduct patrolling and tactical operations as directed within Battalion sector.
- (3) Be prepared to provide, on order, one provisional (strike) platoon reinforced for tactical employment.

Company A (-)(Rein)

- (1) Provide direct support to 1st Marines.
- (2) Provide support, as required, to Chu Lai Defense Command.

Company C

- (1) Provide direct support to 7th Marines.

(Note) See references (a) and (b).

c. Headquarters, Company A (-)(Rein) arrived in Chu Lai on 5 April. Capt. G. R. VAN HORN assumed operational and administrative control of the following platoons:

- 1st Platoon, Company B, 3rd Antitank Battalion
- 2nd Platoon, Company B, 3rd Antitank Battalion
- 3rd Platoon, Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion

(Note) Platoons from 3rd Antitank Battalion were locally redesignated 1st and 2nd Platoons, Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion. See references (c) and (d).

d. On 6 April Capt. J. W. SCHROEDER, CO, H&S Company assumed command of Company C, 1st Antitank Battalion from Capt. W. F. SNYDER. Capt. SNYDER was reassigned as CO, H&S Company. See references (e), (f) and (g).

e. During the period 8 - 9 April, Company A (-)(Rein) participated in Operation ICWA in support of the 1st Marines. See references (d) and (h).

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5 May 1966

f. Company C supported the 7th Marines on Operation NEVADA during the period 12 - 15 April inclusive. See references (f) and (i).

g. 2nd Platoon, Company B, 1st Antitank Battalion arrived at Chu Lai on 14 April 1966. Upon arrival the BLT was dissolved and the platoon CHOP to Company A (-)(Rein). The platoon was locally redesignated 4th Platoon, Company A. See references (d) and (j).

h. 1stLt. T. F. DEMPSEY, Battalion S-1/Adjutant was reassigned as S-4A on 17 April 1966. SSgt. R. L. DODGE was assigned as S-1/Adjutant. See reference (l).

i. Company C, participated in Operation HOT SPRINGS in support of the 7th Marines during the period 20 - 22 April 1966. See references (f) and (k).

j. On 25 April, 2nd Platoon, Company C participated in an ARVN victory parade in Quang Ngai City to celebrate the success of Operation HOT SPRINGS. See references (f) and (m).

k. Company A (-)(Rein) supported the 1st Marines in Operation WYOMING during the period 26 - 30 April. See references (d) and (n).

l. Battalion Operation Order 301-66, in support of 1st Marine Division Operation Order 301-66, was published on 27 April 1966. See reference (b).

3. Detailed Description of Significant Events

a. Tactical Employment of Antitank Units. A study entitled "Employment of Ontos" was prepared to familiarize higher and adjacent units with the Battalion Commander's recommendations for utilization of the Ontos in operations emanating from the Chu Lai Combat Base. It is enclosed as Tab L to Appendix 2 to this Command Chronology.

b. Intelligence. A study was prepared to provide supported organizations and subordinate units of this command with a specific knowledge of weather, terrain and hydrography and the effects of these factors on Ontos operations in and around the Chu Lai Combat Base. See Tab M to Appendix 2 to this Command Chronology.

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5 May 1966

c. The following Marines of this Command were awarded the Purple Heart Medal for wounds received on combat operations in the Republic of Vietnam.

Company A (-)(Rein)

PFC A. HERNANDEZ, 2158749
PFC T. J. CRAIG, 2103095

Company C

Sgt. C. H. BIGGS, 1864064
LCpl. S. J. MULLINS, 2037537
PFC S. A. VETRO, 2144426
LCpl. N. R. STEMPSKI, 1993318
PFC D. E. STOUT, 2108685

ENCLOSURE (1)

Appendix 1 (List of References) to 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Command Chronology (April 1966)

1. The following references apply to paragraph 2 (Commanders Narrative Summary of Significant Events) of this Command Chronology.

- Ref: (a) 1st Marine Division (Rein) Operation Order 301-66
(b) 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Operations Order 301-66
(c) 1st Antitank Battalion (-) SITREP #1
(d) Company A (-)(Rein) Command Chronology
(e) 1st Antitank Battalion (-) SITREP #2
(f) Company C Command Chronology
(g) Battalion Special Order 26-66
(h) Company A (-)(Rein) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation IOWA
(i) 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation NEVADA
(j) 1st Antitank Battalion SITREP #10
(k) Company C Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation HOT SPRINGS
(l) Battalion Special Order 39-66
(m) 1st Antitank Battalion (-) SITREP #19
(n) Company A (-)(Rein) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation WYOMING

Appendix 2 (Documentation) to 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Command
Chronology (April 1966)

1. Documentation for the 1st Antitank Battalion Command Chronology for the period 1 - 30 April 1966 is provided by the Tabs to this appendix.

TABS

- A ✓ 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Operations Order 301-66
- B ✓ 1st Antitank Battalion (-) SITREP #1, *5 Apr*
- C ✓ Company A (-)(Rein) Command Chronology, *5.30 Apr 66*
- D ✓ Company C, Command Chronology, *Apr 66*
- E ✓ Company A (-)(Rein) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation IOWA
- F ✓ 1st Antitank Battalion (-) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation NEVADA
- G ✓ 1st Antitank Battalion SITREP #10, *17 Apr*
- H - Company C Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation HOT SPRINGS
- I ✓ 1st Antitank Battalion (-) SITREP #19
- J - Company A (-)(Rein) Combat Operations After Action Report for Operation WYOMING
- K - Study: Employment of Ontos
- L - Study: The Effect of Weather, Terrain and Hydrography on Ontos Operations

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 1st Antitank Battalion
 CHU LAI, Republic of Vietnam
 271200 Apr 1966

Operation Order 301 - 66

Ref: (a) MAPS: Indochina and Thailand, Series L 509, Scale 1:250,000
 AMS Series L 701, Scale 1:50,000
 (b) BnO 3480.1 - (Operational Reports)

Time Zone: H

Task Organization:

1st ANTITANK BATTALION
 S & C LOG NO. 021-66
 COPY 1 OF 12

1st Antitank Battalion (-)

LtCol MOORE

H&S Co (-)

Capt SNYDER

Co A (-)(Rein)

Capt VAN HORN

3d Plt, Co A, 1st AT Bn
 2d Plt, Co B, 1st AT Bn
 1st Plt, Co B, 3d AT Bn
 2d Plt, Co B, 3d AT Bn

Co C

Capt SCHROEDER

1. SITUATION.

- a. Enemy forces. See Annex A (Intelligence), current ISUMS and PIRs.
- b. Friendly forces.
 - (1) Annex B (Operation Overlay).
 - (2) 1st Marine Division (Rein) defends base facilities in assigned TAOR; defends other installations as directed; conducts unilateral offensive operations within TAOR; and executes offensive operations with RVNAF as directed in RVN.
 - (3) 1st Marines/7th Marines maintain reconnaissance screens, conduct unilateral offensive operations, and occupy and defend their assigned sectors of the TAOR; conduct coordinated offensive operations in Division TAOR as directed; prepare to provide reserve/reaction forces as directed.
 - (4) Chu Lai Defense Command defends assigned vital area sector.
 - (5) 1st Reconnaissance Battalion (-) conducts unilateral reconnaissance operations in assigned sectors of RA; conducts other reconnaissance missions as directed.

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 TAB A

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- (6) 1st Tank Battalion (-) is in general support of 1st Marine Division.
- (7) 1st Engineer Battalion (-) is in general support of 1st Marine Division.
- (8) Artillery
 - (a) 1st Bn(-)(Rein) 11th Mar DS 1st Marines.
 - (b) 3d Bn 11th Mar DS 7th Marines.
 - (c) 4th Bn (-)(Rein) 11th Mar GS 1st Marine Division.

2. MISSION. First Antitank Battalion (-) provides general support to the First Marine Division in the defense of the Chu Lai Combat Base, and in unilateral and combined offensive operations as directed, anywhere in RVN.

3. EXECUTION.

- a. Concept of Operation. One antitank company in direct support of each infantry regiment; antitank support to Chu Lai Defense Command as required. Defend assigned battalion sector, and conduct unilateral patrolling and tactical operations therein; provide provisional (strike) forces as directed. See Annex B (Operation Overlay).
- b. H&S Co (-).
 - (1) Establish and defend Battalion command post.
 - (2) Conduct patrolling and tactical operations as directed within Battalion sector.
 - (3) Be prepared to provide on order, one provisional (strike) platoon (reinforced) for tactical employment.
- c. Co A (-)(Rein).
 - (1) Provide direct support to First Marines.
 - (2) Provide support, as required, to Chu Lai Defense Command.
- d. Co C.
 - (1) Provide direct support to 7th Marines.
- e. Coordinating Instructions.
 - (1) See Annex C (Rules of Engagement).
 - (2) Defense readiness conditions and MAC V Security conditions. Annex D (Alert Postures/Defense).
 - (3) Reports. See Reference (b).

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(4) Operations will be conducted so as to minimize non-combatant casualties and damage to civilian property.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS. Administrative Order 301-66 .

5. COMMAND AND COMMUNICATION - ELECTRONICS.

a. Command Posts. Units report changes when they occur.

1st AT Bn(-)	BT 512040
Co A (-)(Rein)	BT 531089
Co C	BT 547016

b. Annex G (Communication - Electronics).

ACKNOWLEDGE RECEIPT.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL MOORE:

Robert E. Harris

ROBERT E. HARRIS

Major U.S. Marine Corps

Executive Officer

ANNEXES:

A-Intelligence (to be issued)

B-Operations Overlay

C-Rules of Engagement (to be issued)

D-Alert Postures/Defense (to be issued)

E-Communications-Electronics

F-Distribution

DISTRIBUTION: Annex F (Distribution)

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 1st Antitank Battalion
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Annex E (Communications-Electronics) to Operation Order 301-66

Ref: (a) DivO P2000.1
 (b) DivO O2000.2
 (c) DivO 2302.1
 (d) BnO P2000.2

Time Zone: H

1. SITUATION.

a. Enemy forces.

- (1) See Annex B (Intelligence) to Operation Order 301-66.
- (2) The enemy has employed and will continue to employ, monitoring, imitative deception and make-shift jamming.
- (3) The enemy will continue to harrass communications systems by destroying communication facilities and disrupting metallic lines.

b. Friendly forces.

- (1) See Operation Order 301-66.
- (2) Command posts.

1st AT Bn	Vicinity of Grid coordinate BT 512040
Co A 1st AT Bn	Vicinity of Grid coordinate BT 531089
Co C 1st AT Bn	Vicinity of Grid coordinate BT 547016

2. MISSION. Communication elements plan for and install, operate and maintain continuous and reliable communications systems to support 1st Antitank Battalion (-) concepts of operations.

3. EXECUTION.

- a. Concept of Operations. See basic order and Annex B (Operation Overlay).
- b. Communication-Electronic Concepts.

- (1) To provide communication support to ground or amphibious operations.

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(2) Communication-electronic systems are installed with semi-fixed facilities. Wire is the primary means of communications reinforced by radio, messenger and visual means. The facilities systems include:

- (a) Battalion Communication Center.
- (b) Battalion Telephone System.
- (c) Battalion circuits.
- (d) Visual system. See reference (a).

c. Communication Platoon, 1st Antitank Battalion.

(1) Install, operate and maintain in accordance with reference (a), (b) and (d) the following systems and facilities.

- (a) Battalion Communication Center.
- (b) Battalion Telephone System.
- (c) Battalion Circuits.

(2) Establish systems and procedures to restore systems and to maintain circuit quality.

d. Coordinating instructions.

- (1) Communication procedures in accordance with references (a), (b), (d) and effective ACP's JANAP's, III MAF and USMACV directives.
- (2) Companies coordinate with units supported for detailed instructions concerning Communications.
- (3) Trouble shooting teams will coordinate with the Headquarters Commandant before leaving the area and must be constantly on the alert to prevent equipment and personnel damage due to mines, booby-traps and ambushes.
- (4) Battalion will provide low level cryptographic support (operational, numerical and recognition codes and authentication tables) during operations.
- (5) Radio Frequencies. See Appendix 1 (Radio Frequencies).

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

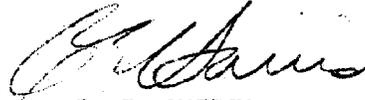
- a. See Administrative Order 301-66.

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- b. Maintenance. Every effort will be taken to maintain equipment off deadline and ready for immediate use. 1st echelon maintenance must be done properly.
- (1) All deadline equipment will be brought to the Battalion Radio Repair Shop.
 - (2) Float items will be utilized whenever possible.
 - (3) FLSG-B provides direct support during tactical operations.

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL MOORE:



R. E. HARRIS

Major, U. S. Marine Corps

Executive Officer

APPENDIX:

1-Radio Frequencies

DISTRIBUTION: Annex F (Distribution) to Operation Order 301-66

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 1st Antitank Battalion
 CHU LAI, Republic of Vietnam
 271200 Apr 1966

Appendix 1 (Radio Frequencies) to Annex E (Communication-Electronics)
 to Operational Order 301-66

Ref: DivO 0200.1

Time Zone: H

1. Radio Frequencies for 1st Antitank Battalion.

a. Battalion Headquarters.

(1) Battalion Command Net	26.8MC	M 292
(2) Battalion Tactical Net	24.8MC	M 280

b. Company A.

(1) Co A Command Net	20.3MC	M 257
(2) 1st Platoon	26.6MC	M 290
(3) 2nd Platoon	25.6MC	M 285
(4) 3d Platoon	22.2MC	M 265

c. Company B.

(1) 2nd Platoon	23.0MC	M 271
-----------------	--------	-------

d. Company C.

(1) Co C Command Net	23.8MC	M 275
(2) 1st Platoon	25.4MC	M 284
(3) 2nd Platoon	20.0MC	M 254
(4) 3rd Platoon	22.8MC	M 270

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL MOORE:


 R. E. HARRIS

Major, U. S. Marine Corps
 Executive Officer

DISTRIBUTION: Annex F (Distribution) to Operation Order 301-66

E-1-1

SECRET

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 Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam
 271200 Apr 1966

Annex F (Distribution) to Operation Order 301-66

Ref: None.

Time Zone: H

<u>Organization</u>	<u>Number of Copies</u>
CG, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF	(2)
CO, Chu Lai Defense Command	(1)
CO, 1st Marine Regiment	(1)
CO, 5th Marine Regiment	(1)
CO, 7th Marine Regiment	(1)
CO, Company A, 1st AT Bn	(1)
CO, Company B, 1st AT Bn	(1)
CO, Company C, 1st AT Bn	(1)

BY COMMAND OF LIEUTENANT COLONEL MOORE:



R. E. HARRIS

Major, U. S. Marine Corps

Executive Officer

DISTRIBUTION: Annex F (Distribution) to Operation Order 301-66

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HEADQUARTERS
 1st Antitank Battalion
 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
 FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:AJE:bey
 5 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
 To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
 Subj: SITREP 1 for period 050001H to 052400H

1. UNIT OPERATIONS

- a. Company A - Two platoons DS Chu Lai Defense Command. One platoon DS 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines.
- b. Company C - DS 7th Marines.

2. TOTAL CASUALTIES

- a. Friendly - none.
- b. Enemy - none.
- c. Captured Equipment - none.

3. ARTILLERY BOXSCORE

<u>Type Weapon</u>	<u>No. of Missions</u>	<u>Unit Supported</u>
None		

4. RECAP OF OPERATIONS

- a. Battalion Headquarters: CP location BT 548047; Forward CP location BT 512040.
- b. H&S Company conducted limited technical inspections of all Ontos to participate in Operation IOWA.
- c. Company A - CP location BT 531089. Company Headquarters (C.O. Capt G. R. VANHORN) arrived Chu Lai this date two platoons DS Chu Lai Defense Command manning positions as follows:

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TAB B

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One light section at BT 529079; One heavy section at BT 528111; One light section at BT 524091; One platoon DS 2/4 at BT 468068 (Hill 69).

d. Company C - CP location BT 547016. One light section in support of B - 1/7 at BT 605995; One heavy section in support of C - 1/7 BS 588981; One heavy section in support of F - 2/7 at BT 495036; One light section in support of 2/7 CP at BT 504030; One light section in support of L - 3/7 at BS 549996.

5. CONTACT REPORT. None.

6. RECAP OF BATTALION PLANS

a. First Antitank Battalion will support the First Marines in Operation IOWA with one antitank company (Co.A) in direct support. The concept of operation contemplates using Ontos in a 2000 yard blocking position on the first day, and in direct support of search and destroy sweeps the second day. During the next 24 hour period, the Company Commander will conduct an aerial reconnaissance of the objective area. Members of the Battalion Staff will assist the Company Commander in coordination and planning for the operation. The H&S Company will continue LTI's and refurbishing of platoons to participate in operation IOWA. During the next 24 hour period, the Company will remain DS to 1st Marines and Chu Lai Defense Command.

b. Company C, First Antitank Battalion will continue in direct support of the 7th Marines. Command of Co. C will change hands during the next 24 hour period. Capt. J.W. SCHROEDER will assume command from Capt. W.F. SNYDER, who will be reassigned as H&S Co. Commander. The incoming Company Commander will participate with one AT platoon Commander in a 3/7 foot route reconnaissance patrol on the North side of the Tra Bong river from Route One West to vertical grid line 58, in preparation for future 3/7 operations in that area.

c. On 6 March 1966, the Battalion Commander will confer with 7th Marines relative to Ontos employment in a future 7th Marines operation and continue assisting the 1st Marines in their planning and coordination of Antitank Battalion support for Operation IOWA.

WALTER MOORE

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COMPANY A
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
APO San Francisco, California 96602

JOC:joe
3500
2 May 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
Subj: Command Chronology
Ref: (a) EMO 3480.1
Encl: (2) Command Chronology

1. In accordance with reference (a) enclosure (1) is submitted.

G. R. VANHORN

C "A", 11001 AT BN

B-5014/206

TAB C

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1. Organization Data, including attachments.

a. At the beginning of the reporting period the company was located at Chu Lai, Viet Nam. At that time the company was composed of Company Headquarters and threeatoon platoons. On 14Apr66 joined the 2nd platoon, CoB, 1st AntitankBn from 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines. No attachments.

b. Period Covered: - 5Apr-30Apr66

c. Name/Rank of Commanding Officer: - Captain G. E. V. HORN

d. Average monthly strength during period:

	DEMO	N VY
Officers	4	0
Enlisted	100	1

2. Sequential listing of significant events as they related to:

a. Personnel: the personnel situation remained the same during the reporting period.

b. Operation: the company participated in operations "IOWA" period of 8-9Apr66 and operation "WYOMING" period of 26-30Apr66.

DETAIL CHRONOLOGY

5Apr66 Company headquarters arrived Chu Lai and moved into Company B, 3dATBn area. Physically joined from CoB, 3dATBn 1st, 2nd and 3rd platoons.

8Apr66 Company headquarters with 2nd and 3rd platoons participated in operation "IOWA" 1st platoon in D/S of Chu Lai Defense Command.

14Apr66 Joined from H&SCo 2/5, 2ndpl, CoB, 1stATBn.

20Apr66 VC attack by fire with MG and 57MM a position manned by 2ndpl CoB, 1stATBn. In defense of the platoon's positions PFC CRAIG and PFC HERNANDEZ were wounded. PFC CHASE received gunshot wound. PFC HERNANDEZ received shell frag wound.

26Apr66 Company headquarters and the 1st, 2nd & 4th platoons participated in operation "WYOMING", 3rd platoon in D/S of Chu Lai Defense Command.

ENCLOSURE (1)

COMPANY "C"
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
APO San Francisco, California 96602

JWS/rdb
3480
3 May 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion (Attn: S-3)
Subj: Command Chronology
Ref: (a) MNO 3480.1
Encl: (1) Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a) enclosure (1) is submitted.

J. W. SCHROEDER

TAB D

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY**II Organizational Data****a. Locations**

(1) Company Headquarters	BT 547016
(2) 1st Platoon	BT 584016
(3) 2nd Platoon	BT 509028
(4) 3rd Platoon	BS 542996

b. Period covered by report is 1 April 1966 through 30 April 1966.

c. Commanding Officer is J. W. SCHROEDER, Capt.

1st Sergeant L. L. SANDERSON, 1stSgt

Platoon Commander 1stPlt H. T. SCHMIT, 1stLt

Platoon Commander 2ndPlt H. J. CONNOLLY, 1stLt

Platoon Commander 3rdPlt D. R. WEST, 1stLt

d. Commander's Narrative of Significant Events.

6Apr66: Captain J. W. SCHROEDER, 060193/1002 USMC assumed command of Company "C", 1st Antitank Battalion.

12 Apr66: Company "C" (-) (Rein) with four entes from Company "A" moved to the field with the 7th Marine Regiment on Operation "Nevada" and on 15Apr66 returned from operation "NEVADA".

17Apr66: Presented three Purple Hearts to:

Lance Corporal STEPSKI, N. R. 1993316

Lance Corporal STOUT, D. E. 2100658

Private First Class VETRO, J. A. JR. 2144426

20Apr66: Company Headquarters departed on Operation "Hot Springs".

22Apr66: Company Headquarters returned from Operation "Hot Springs".

25Apr66: 2nd Platoon participated in a parade at Quang Nga, in addition two men were awarded Purple Hearts by the Battalion Commander; they were Sergeant BIGGS and Lance Corporal MULLINS.

e. Detailed Description of Significant Events see after action report from Operation "Nevada" and "Hot Springs" also see daily sitreps.

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COMPANY A
 1st Antitank Battalion
 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
 FPO San Francisco, California 96602

GRV:joc
 3500
 13 April 1966

From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
 Subj: After Operations Report; Submission of
 Ref: (a) BnO 3500.1A

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following report is hereby submitted.

- a. N/A
- b. Name of nickname of operation, location, inclusive dates.
 Ky Chang Village, Ly Tin District, Quang Tin Province, Operation IOWA, vicinity Hill 54 to Ong Bo Bridge, 080600H to 091030H April 1966.
- c. Identification of the command requiring the operation. RLT-1.
- d. Units conducting the operation, major supporting units.
- | | |
|--------------------------------------|------------------------|
| 1st Marines (-) | MAG 12 |
| 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines | MAG 36 |
| 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines | NGF Support Unit |
| CoA, 1st AT Bn (-) | 1st Engineer Bn (-) |
| 1st Battalion (-)(Rein) 11th Marines | 1st Shore Party Bn (-) |
- e. Type and duration of combat condition in the operation. This was a sweep and destroy mission during the full period of the operation.
- f. Number and type of major items of equipment employment in the operation.
- | | |
|---------------------|----------------------|
| 15 M50A1 Ontos | 1 M422 Mighty Mite |
| 1 MRC 36 Radio Jeep | 1 M62 Wrecker |
| 3 M37 3/4 Ton Truck | 1 M107 Water Trailer |
- g. Ammunition/ordnance expended. None.
- h. Scope of aggressor participation. Suspected VC

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TAB E

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3500j. Narrative Summary

(1) CoA, 1st AT Bn was in D/S of the 1st Marine Regiment. At 080580 CoA escorted the 1st Marine motor convoy to Hill #54 at BT 397145. 2nd plt of CoA and 2nd plt of CoC were placed in D/S of Foxtrot 2/4 with the 3rd plt CoA in D/S of Echo Co 2/4. At 081500 Echo Co pulled back to Hill 54 and 3/1 took up their position. At 081830 3/1 was pulled out of the operation and the 3rd plt was placed in general support of the Regt and were integrated into the defense of the CP. During the night the situation remained static and at 090700 2/4 jumped off from their position on Hill 54 to sweep in a southeasterly direction parallel to Highway #1. 2nd plt was in direct support of Foxtrot Co the leading element with the 3rd plt and a heavy section from 2nd plt CoC in D/S of Echo Co in trace. The light section of 2nd plt CoC was part of CoA motorized convoy escort. The operation secured at 091000 at the Ong Bo Bridge. This was the 1st time in the history of the AT Bn that a company was utilized as a company in a combat situation

G. R. VANHORN

Copy to:
CO, 1st Marines

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1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:AJE:tjs
5510
25 Apr 1966

017-06
Copy 57 of 57
1st AntiTank Bn.
S & C Files

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 7th Marine Regiment

Subj: Combat Operations After-Action Report: Operation "NEVADA"

Ref: (a) DivO 3100.LB

1. Code Name. Operation NEVADA (Search and Destroy Operation).
2. Date of Operation. 120700H - 181200H Apr66
3. Location. Quang Ngai Province RVN, Map Sheets 6756 I and IV
4. Control or Command Headquarters. 7th Marine Regiment, Colonel E. H. HAFNEY.

5. Task Organization.

Company C, (-) 1st AT Bn.
Co Headquarters

Capt. J.W. SCHROEDER

1st Platoon (-)(Rein), Co C
2nd Platoon, Co C

1stLt H.T. SCHMITT
1stLt H.J. CONNOLLY

6. Supporting Forces. Detachment of C Company, 1st Engineers; Forward Observer, 4th Bn, 11th Marines; 3d Platoon E-2/7.

7. Intelligence: See 7th Marine ISUM's pertaining to Operation NEVADA.

8. Concept of Operations: The Commanding Officer of the 1st Antitank Battalion directed Company C to provide direct support to the 7th Marine Regiment. CO Company C received verbal orders at 110900H. At approximately 111100H Company C received its alert and preparations for operation NEVADA began. Initial assignments detailed one platoon of Ontos to escort 3/11 to Nui Vo and one platoon of Ontos to escort the Regimental Headquarters and Landing Support Convoy to Quang Ngai. After the initial destination was reached further assignments of Ontos units would be directed from the 7th Marine HQ.

9. Execution.

a. D-Day.

(1) At 120605, the Company Headquarters and 2nd Platoon departed the Chu Lai Combat Base. At 0702 the convoy reached Nui Vo and 3/11 set in.

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25 Apr 1966

The Ontos platoon set up security positions around the artillery positions. At 121030H a light section of the second platoon with a security element of company headquarters conducted an overland reconnaissance to BS635837 for possible link-up with the helo lifted elements. It was noted that ARVN personnel carriers had been through the area some months earlier, that the road going to the units was wide enough and that the surrounding rice paddies were basically dry, making by-passes readily available if needed.

(2) At 120700, the 1st platoon with five ontos departed the Chu Lai Combat Base escorting the 7th Marine Headquarters and the Landing Support Area vehicles. The convoy arrived at the Quang Ngai area approximately 120830 without incident.

(3) A helicopter reconnaissance of a route to 2/7 positions was conducted at 121700H. It was noted that many deep, wide ditches, walls and other tracked vehicle obstacles had been constructed along the proposed route from BS650841 to BS687845. It was also noted that the ARVN personnel carriers had stopped their advance at BS664842. However, it was felt that with some bridging material and engineer support the route could be traversed by by-passing and bridging.

b. D plus 1. Company C (two platoons) with 3d platoon E-2/7, a detachment of C Co Engineers and a Forward Observer from 2/7 departed 131030H. The link-up force departed the MSR at BS628837 and proceeded east. At 131410H the 1st platoon was detached to escort approximately 30 refugees to the MSR and return to the 7th Marine CP for further assignment. At 1610 the link-up was effected with 2/7 and resupply and refueling was conducted with helicopters. At 132000H the 2nd platoon was attached to 2/7 for operations and the 1st platoon was placed in direct support of 3/11 for security of that unit's firing positions.

c. D plus 2. The 2nd platoon moved out with one section in support of H Company and one heavy section in support of G Company. At 140915H, after the Ontos had passed the choke point of the blown bridges at BS 695845, the Ontos were detached from 2/7 and directed to return to the 7th Marine CP because of anticipated helo lift of 2/7.

d. D plus 3. To the completion of the operation, one platoon of Ontos remained in direct support of 3/11 and one platoon provided additional security for the 7th Marine CP. The Company Headquarters and the 1st Platoon secured from operation NEVADA on order at 181215H. The Ontos escorted convoys back to the Chu Lai Combat Base as they were secured from the operation.

10. Administrative Matters

a. Supplies: Logistical Support Area was at Quang Ngai. No difficulties were experienced.

b. Maintenance: 1st and 2nd echelon maintenance common. Ordnance, motor transport and Ontos were self contained. No difficulties were experienced.

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25 Apr 1966

c. Treatment of casualties: A Corpsman was available in the Company Headquarters.

d. Transportation: Organic transportation was used to displace and resupply except when the link-up was effected.

e. Communications:

(1) Comment. Organic Communications were very bad. Communication and resupply requests were made through the 7th Marines channels.

(2) Recommendations & action taken. Conduct a thorough inspection of equipment and instruct operators on maintenance and procedures. This is being done with the assistance of the 1st Antitank Battalion Communications Platoon.

f. Medical Evacuation: No comment

11. Special tools and techniques: Two 3"X12"X12' planks were strapped to each of three Ontos in each platoon to be used to bridge the tank traps encountered. It worked very effectively once mastered. However, on the way out demolitions were used as an expedient. It was very effective and much less time consuming.

12. Recommendation:

That the Ontos be used more extensively as a direct fire support assault weapon (i.e. as a ~~tank~~) during the dry season. Trafficability is excellent, and only a ~~small~~ amount of infantry and engineer support would be required during an overland move to link-up with helicopter borne infantry forces.

Walter Moore
WALTER MOORE

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HEADQUARTERS
 1st Antitank Battalion
 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
 FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:AJE:tjs
 14 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding General, First Marine Division
 Subj: SITREP 10 for period 140001H to 142400H

1. Unit Operations

- a. One reinforced provisional platoon still opcon 7th Marines for defense of FEBA. (25 men from Co A, 25 men and 1 officer from H&S Co.)
- b. Co A remains DS 1st Marines and Chu Lai Defense Command.
- c. Co C remains opcon 7th Marines for Operation NEVADA.

2. Total Casualties

- a. none
- b. none

3. Artillery Boxscore - No Missions

4. Recap of Battalion Operations

- a. No contacts reported to this headquarters by provisional platoon.
- b. Co A. One light section of Ontos returned from Hill 54 (BT 395145) where they had provided local security for H/2/4 for two days. The section rejoined its platoon at Hill 69 (BT 468068) where they assumed DS of 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines. One platoon remains DS Chu Lai defense Command. One platoon opcon Co C with Operation NEVADA. The newly arrived platoon, Co B, 1st AT Bn was locally redesignated 4th Platoon, Co A.
- cc. Co C. (Operation NEVADA). First Platoon remained DS 3/11 for local security. From 1000 to 1700 a light Ontos section of first platoon was deployed to Quang Ngai to provide security for LSA elements during public demonstration. No incidents occurred. 2nd platoon remained DS 2/7 until 1000. Ontos had commenced sweep to the East, and had by-passed further Ontos support and the unit was relieved of DS mission 1000. 2nd platoon returned to route 1, arriving there at 1400, and then returned to 7th Marines CP at 1710

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5. Contact Report. None

6. Recap of Bn Plans. No change contemplated during the next 24 hour period.

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COMPANY "C"
 1st Antitank Battalion
 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
 FPO San Francisco 96602

JWS:fm
 5510
 5 May 1966

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From: Commanding Officer

To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion (Attn: S-3)

Subj: Combat Operation After-Action Report: Operation "Hot Springs"

Ref: (a) Divo 3100.1B

1. Code Name. Operation "Hot Springs" (Search and Destroy Operation).
2. Date of Operation. 200900H - 221645H Apr66
3. Location. Quang Ngai Province RVN, Map Sheets 6756 I, II, III, and IV.
4. Control of Command Headquarters. 7th Marines Regiment, Colonel E. H. HAFNEY.
5. Task Organization. Headquarters Company "C", 1st Antitank Battalion, Captain, J. W. SCHROEDER and 2nd Platoon, Company "C", First Lieutenant H. J. CONNOLLY.
6. Intelligence. See 7th Marines ISUM's pertaining to Operation "HOT SPRINGS".
7. Concept of Operation. The Commanding Officer of the 1st Antitank Battalion directed Company "C" to provide direct support to the 7th Marine Regiment. Verbal instructions were received at 202100H Apr66. At approximately 202140H Apr66 Company "C" was alerted and preparations for Operation Hot Springs began. Initial assignments detailed one light section to escort the convoy of Regimental Headquarters, and Landing Support Detachment to Quang Ngai and elements of 3/11 to Nui Ve and one light section to escort 3/7 from the enclave to the Logistical Support Area at Quang Ngai. After initial destinations were reached further assignments of the Onco elements would be directed by the 7th Marine Regimental Headquarters.
8. Execution.
 - a. D Day, 20 April 1966

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(1) At 0630, the Company Headquarters, 2nd Platoon and one light section of Ontos departed the Chu Lai Enclave escorting elements of the 7th Marines Headquarters, 3/11 and the Landing Support convoy.

(2) At 0730, one light Ontos section of the 2nd platoon departed the Chu Lai Enclave and escorted the truck convoy carrying 3/7 to the Quang Ngai Logistical Support Area.

(3) At 0800, the first convoy reached Quang Ngai without incident. The Ontos elements were emplaced at Nui Thien An with the regimental headquarters to await further deployment.

(4) At 0900, the 3/7 convoy arrived at the Logistical Support Area at Quang Ngai without incident. The light section of Ontos were released and returned to Nui Ve in direct support of the 3/11 units deployed in that area. The Ontos were used as security elements for the Nui Ve area.

b. D plus 1, No Change

c. D plus 2

(1) Operation Hot Springs was terminated. The Company Headquarters returned to the Chu Lai Enclave with the 7th Marine Headquarters.

(2) The 2nd platoon remained in Quang Ngai to participate in the parade and public ceremonies to be held in honor of the very successful joint Hot Springs Operation with the Army of the Republic of Viet Nam.

9. Administrative Matters.

a. Supplies. The Logistical Support Area was at the Quang Ngai Airfield. No difficulties were experienced.

b. Maintenance. 1st and 2nd echelon maintenance, ordnance, motor transport and Ontos were self contained. No difficulties experienced.

c. Treatment of Casualties. A Corpsman was available in the company headquarters.

d. Transportation. Organic transportation was used to displace and resupply the Ontos elements.

e. Communications. No comment.

f. Medical Evacuation. No comment

10. Special Tools and techniques. No comment

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5 May 1966

11. Recommendations. That the Ontos be employed in aggressive locations to be readily available when hard targets are engaged by infantry units. An example is the Caliber .50 machine gun that caused such a delay with the 2/7 units. The dry season in the Chu Lai/Quang Ngai area afford excellent trafficability during the dry season. The Ontos, a direct fire support weapon, is capable of immediate and devastating destruction of enemy emplacements, if utilized.

J. W. SCHROEDER

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HEADQUARTERS
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:AJE:tjs
25 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein)

Subj: SITREP #19 for period 250001H to 252400H

1. 2nd Platoon, Company C, 1st AT Bn participated in an ARVN victory parade celebrating the successful Operation "HOT SPRINGS". The Ontos platoon received a standing ovation from the wildly cheering throng.
2. Plans. Company A, 1st AT Bn, will be in direct support of the 1st Marines for Operation WYOMING commencing 260730H. Initial mission assigned Company A: Provide security for artillery firing positions in the vicinity of Hill 54 (BT 397145); be prepared to provide direct support to 2/5 in their assigned TAOR.

WALTER MOORE

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TAB I

COMPANY A
 1st Antitank Battalion
 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMP
 P.O. San Francisco, California 94602

MR:joc
 3500
 5 May 1966

~~_____~~
 From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
 Subj: Combat Operation After-Action Report; Operation "WYOMING"
 Ref: (a) DivO 3100.1B

1. Code Name. Operation Wyoming (Search and Destroy Operation)
2. Date of Operation. 260500H - 302030H Apr 66
3. Location. Northwest portion of My Tin District.
4. Control of Command Headquarters. 1st Marine Regiment - Col MITCHELL
5. Task Organization. Headquarters Company A, 1stABn Capt G. R. VAN BURN; 1st plt, Co., Sgt ANDRELO IGO; 2nd plt, Co., SSgt HOLMES; 2nd plt, CoB, 1stABn, Lt WALTER.
6. Supporting Forces. None
7. Intelligence. See 1st Marines LSUMs pertaining to Operation Wyoming.
8. Concept of Operation. The Commanding Officer(s) of the 1st Marine Regiment directed CoA to provide direct support to the 1st Marine Regiment. At approximately 250800H Company A was alerted and preparations for Operation Wyoming began. Initial assignments detailed two platoons of Ontos to escort 1stABn, 11thMar to BT 395151 after the initial destination was reached further assignments of Ontos units would be directed from the 1st Marines Headquarters.
9. Execution.

a. D-Day

(1) At 260500H two platoons left Company CP to join with the 1stABn, 11thMar at the entrance of their CP and highway #1. The two

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LH: jcc
3500

The two platoons joined 1stBn, 11th Marines at 260530H. The two platoons served as convoy security to the 1stBn, 11th Marines and were joined in route at hill 69 by the 2nd plt, CoB, 1stA1Bn and K Battery, 1stBn, 11thMar.

(2) At 260515H the 1st plt proceeded in convoy with 1stBn, 11thMar to vicinity of hill 54 BT 397145. They were placed as security at that position until 291630H when they moved to hill 10 BT 400150 with a platoon of infantry as security. The plt remained on hill 10 with no action until 300100H where they were moved to the Ls at hill 69 to provide local security.

(3) At 260530H the Company headquarters joined Regimental Headquarters, 1st Marines at the entrance of their CP and the MSR. We departed with the Regt Hq, 1st Marines to hill 69. The convoy arrived at hill 69 at 260800H without incident.

(4) The three platoons of CoB, 1stA1Bn were set in blocking positions as follows:

1st platoon at BT 400146
2nd platoon at BT 396145
2nd platoon, CoB, 1stA1Bn at BT 398150

The three platoons remained in these blocking positions until 271430H.

b. B plus 1

(1) 2nd plt, CoB, 1stA1Bn was placed in direct support of CoB, 2ndBn, 5thMar. With a squad of infantry and the 5 vehicles of the 2nd plt a blocking force was set up at BT 383161. At 271700H the platoon with infantry received sniper fire from BT 382158. The target was marked by the 2nd plt, CoB, 2ndBn, 5thMar. B-22 moved into firing position and fired 2 rounds of 106MM HEAT. There was no more sniper fire from that position, which was swept by the infantry squad.

(2) At 271830H the Company pulled out from BT 383161. As they moved, sniper fire was received from a house at BT 375155. Five 106MM HEAT rounds were returned and the sniper fire ceased. From the above position the Company pulled back and set up a CP at BT 377162, where they remained for the duration of the night. No further action was encountered for the remainder of the night.

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3500c. D plus 2

(1) On 280600H the Company with the Ontos moved back to BT 375155 and investigated the structure where the firing had come from the day before. During the investigation numerous bunkers and tunnels were discovered. An interpreter, with CoE, 2ndBn, 5thMar said the structure had been a VC hospital. Based on this information, B-25 fired two more 106MM HAPT rounds completely destroying the hospital. From this position the Ontos moved to BT 382158 to support CoE as they continued to sweep southeast in their assigned T/OZ. 1 mortar and two M-60 MGs were positioned with the Ontos.

(2) At 281600H the Ontos were removed from the hill at BT 382155 and covered the infantry's flank. On order the Ontos moved into a wedge formation and followed the CP at BT 395151. During darkness the heavy section was set in at BT 393148. No incidents developed throughout the night.

d. D plus 3

(1) On 290700H the Ontos and Company E proceeded to vicinity of hill 54 at BT 380144. CoE went back to grid squares 3715 - 3716 and with 400 lbs of demolitions destroyed many tunnels and trenches. The Ontos moved from BT 380144 to BT 391158 and provided support to the infantry. Later in the day the Ontos and CoE joined at BT 400145 and set in for the night.

(2) At 291000H 2nd plt, CoE, 1stATBn was placed in D/S with 2ndBn, 5thMar the platoon was repositioned at BT 371149 near a helo pad and remained over night.

e. D plus 4

(1) At 300700H the Ontos were in D/S of the 2ndplt, CoE which was sweeping 700 meters SE on the westside of Route 1. The Ontos were unable to traverse because of the terrain so they went to route 1 and supported the plt till they reached BT 429111. The Ontos platoon was secured at 301830H.

(2) At 300800H the 2nd plt, CoE stayed in defense for the shore party while they were occupied with blowing tunnels in vicinity of grid square BT 3715. At 300930H the light section moved with the

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3500

2ndBn, 5thMar Command Group. The heavy section moved in trace of CoF, 2ndBn, 5th Marines to BT 394125. The light section joined the heavy section at the above location at 301100H.

(3) At 301350H a squad of CoF, 2ndBn, 5th Marines received small arms fire from BT 395125. The Ontos moved out in support of the squad and swept through the village of Xuan Ngoc I. The Ontos returned 120 rounds of 30 cal MG fire. The sweep which followed turned up negative results. The Ontos pulled back to the CP at BT 39125 at 301400H.

(4) At 301500H A-22 was in support of CoF, 2ndBn, 5th Marines to vicinity of 392122. CoF, 2ndBn, 5thMar took heavy fire and ordered A-22 to return fire. 14 rounds of 106MM HEFT, 50 rounds of 50 cal. spot-trac and 120 rounds of 30 cal. MG fire were expended. The results are not known at this time but was reported by 2ndBn, 5thMar. 2nd plt, CoB was secured from operation Wyoming at 301630H in vicinity BT 419125.

(5) The 1st plt was secured from operation Wyoming at 301330H. The company Headquarters and the 2nd plt, CoB, 1st.TBn were security from Operation Wyoming at 302030H.

10. Administrative Matters

a. Supplies. Logistical support area was at hill 69. No difficulties were experienced.

b. Maintenance. 1st and 2nd echelon maintenance, common ordnance, motor, and Ontos was self contained. No difficulties were experienced.

c. Treatment of Casualties. A corpsman was available in the Company Headquarters.

d. Transportation. Organic transportation was used to displace and resupply, except when the linkup was effected.

e. Communications

(1) Comment. Communications were very bad, radio not working properly.

(2) Recommendations. Conduct a thorough inspection of equipment and instruct operators on maintenance and procedures.

f. Medical Evacuation. No comment.

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3500

11. Special Tools and Techniques. One ~~6" x 12"~~ plank was strapped to each Ontos in each platoon to be used to bridge the tank traps encountered. However no opportunity to use the planks arose.

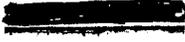
12. Recommendations

a. That Ontos be used more extensively during the dry season. That infantry Commanders utilize Ontos for close supporting fire during an assault.

G. R. VERNORN

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Unclassified when
Enclosure (1) removed

HEADQUARTERS
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

019-64

3:AJE:tjs
3500
30 Apr 1966

Copy *32* of *32*
SECRET
S.S. & C. Files

From: Commanding Officer First Antitank Battalion
To: Commanding Officer, First Marines
Commanding Officer, Fifth Marines
Commanding Officer, Seventh Marines
Via: Commanding General, First Marine Division (Rein)
Subj: Employment of Ontos

Encl: (1) Study: Ontos Employment in Offensive Operations

1. It is my urgent desire to provide addressees with the best possible support consistent with the mission and capabilities of AT units. Enclosure (1) has been prepared in furtherance of this desire and is furnished for the consideration of the addressees and subordinate commanders.

2. Any comments and/or suggestions on the subject matter are welcome and will be given my immediate attention

Walter Moore

WALTER MOORE

Copy to: CG, 1st Tank Bn
CG, 3rd AT Bn

TAB K

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Hq. 1st Antitank Bn (-)
 Chu Lai, RVN
 30 Apr 1966

SUBJECT: ONTOS EMPLOYMENT IN OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

Ref: (a) CO, 1st ATBn ltr 3:RRT:tjs over 3800 of 30 Apr 1966
 (b) CG, 3d MarDiv ltr of 7 Apr 1966; Subj: Tactics and Techniques in Assault of Fortified Hamlets
 (c) Draft ARVN FM 3-1, March 1966 (Armor Operations in Vietnam).

1. PROBLEM. To achieve optimum employment of Ontos within its capabilities in offensive operations.

2. ASSUMPTION. That the enemy does not display a capability of employing armor against the First Marine Division.

3. FACTS BEARING ON THE PROBLEM

a. Recent offensive operations of First Marine Division units have made only slight use of Ontos except as Command Post defense elements or as convoy security. (Exceptions: ICWA, NEVADA, and WYOMING)

b. During the period of dry weather (March - September) Ontos trafficability is excellent throughout the coastal plain between Tam Ky and Quang Ngai (See reference (a)).

4. DISCUSSION

a. General. Recent counter guerrilla operations have shown increased encounters of Marines with FPL type defense by the enemy. Reference (b) discusses the subject in detail and stresses the need for maximum use of all available firepower in direct support of assault troops. The traditional mobile assault weapon, the medium tank, is severely hampered by its size and weight in counter guerrilla operations to the North and South of the Chu Lai Combat Base, and in many cases cannot reach, and/or traverse the terrain of the battleground. This limitation denies needed shock, mobility and firepower to the infantry and exposes assault troops to undue casualties when they are confronted with well organized defensive positions. There is a need for an assault vehicle capable of linking up with heliborne infantry forces after their insertion into an objective area. It is the purpose of this study to explore the feasibility and desirability of using the Ontos in this role.

b. Mission of AT Units. In view of the assumption made in paragraph 2, the primary mission of the Antitank Battalion (Destruction of enemy armor) is disregarded. This leaves AT Units fully available for employment in their secondary mission: To provide direct fire support to infantry units and to motorized reconnaissance patrols when enemy mechanized attack is not probable.

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c. Characteristics of Ontos as an Assault Weapon. While designed as a defensive weapon, the Ontos possesses to a high degree the qualities of a tank: (1) Its primary armament is intended for penetration of armor, but it will as easily destroy bunkers, buildings, crew served weapons and concentrations of personnel. Fire power is further increased by two .50 caliber spotting rifles, and a coaxial .30 caliber machine gun for every Ontos. (2) The Ontos is susceptible to the fire of antitank weapons, but its armor generally affords protection to the crew from the fire of small arms weapons, and other than direct hits with heavier weapons. (3) Although a smaller vehicle, the Ontos has mobility and the attendant shock capability equivalent to that of a tank.

d. Rationale for Assault Employment of Ontos. The warfare principles of objective, offensive, mass, economy of force and maneuver all require either directly, or as corollaries, that maximum combat power be concentrated at the decisive time and place. In a counter guerrilla operation this must necessarily be where and when contact is made with the enemy. Based upon the history of armor operations in Vietnam since 1950, a draft field manual (reference (c)) has been prepared for ARVN forces. The manual covers in great detail the employment of lightly armored tracked vehicles (Armored Personnel Carriers) against guerrillas. Two paragraphs are considered particularly applicable to this discussion, and the liberty is taken of quoting them below, inserting as necessary the words "Ontos" and "Marine Corps".

Para 1-14b - "In counterinsurgency the primary tradeoff is between security forces for fixed installations and forces available for offensive employment. The great firepower of armored vehicles tempts some to use them for the defense of especially important installations. This is a gross waste of every characteristic of armor except firepower and must be steadfastly resisted. ---- All of the Armor and as much as possible of the regular infantry must be free for offensive use. So freed, they will be able to contribute directly to the security of many installations in the role of Reaction forces while still carrying the war to the enemy."

Para 2-7a ---- "The need for a weapons system capable of applying the characteristics of armor protected firepower, battlefield mobility, and shock effect is fundamental. The [Ontos] is the only [Marine Corps] vehicle so far available which is sufficiently capable of dealing with Vietnamese terrain to be able to function effectively throughout the country ----. It is, therefore, of necessity used as an assault fighting vehicle --- that is, as a tank. It will continue to be so used until such time as a true tank of at least equal mobility becomes available."

e. Obstacles to Offensive Employment of Ontos. Although Ontos have been habitually attached to, or in direct support of units conducting counter guerrilla operations, there has been a reluctance to employ them as assault vehicles.

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Rather, they have been assigned missions of CP security and convoy escort. The reasons for non-employment of Ontos seem to fall into one or more of the following categories:

- (1) Misgivings as to mechanical reliability.
- (2) Unwillingness to spare infantry for close-in security.
- (3) Desire for heavy firepower to protect CP's and artillery firing positions.
- (4) Possible forfeiture of surprise in linking up with heliborne operations.
- (5) Feeling that the additional support is unnecessary to accomplishment of the mission.
- (6) Belief that Ontos cannot traverse difficult terrain.

The foregoing objections are analyzed below:

(1) Mechanical Reliability. Like any vehicle, the Ontos requires diligent maintenance and a smooth flow of repair and replacement parts. As long as these functions are carried out, the vehicle will function with reliability. Until 27 March 1966, the two AT Companies located in the Chu-Lai area have been virtually cut off from the support and supervision of a parent unit headquarters. Supply of parts slowed to a trickle and first and second echelon maintenance procedures suffered from a lack of supervision. The resultant stop-gap measures and "bailing wire" type repairs undoubtedly gave rise to vehicle failures which were attributed to mechanical unreliability. Since arrival of this headquarters in Chu Lai, every effort is being made to obtain timely resupply and institute effective maintenance procedures. Vehicles thus far benefitted are performing with complete reliability.

(2) Close in security requirements. Due to the requirement for continuous defense of the Combat Base, as well as basic personnel shortages, infantry units are committed to operations at far under their nominal strength. The diversion of even a small number of infantry troops to provide security for Ontos moving to a link-up, or operating at the flanks imposes a sacrifice on an infantry commander. It can only be stated that the very shortage of infantry strength emphasizes the desirability of increased firepower on the battlefield. This need is considered great enough to justify direct support employment of Ontos with less than the desired amount of infantry protection, with APC borne infantry, or in some cases without any infantry, using UH1E cover while moving independently.

(3) Protection of CP's and Artillery Positions. This is, at best, uneconomical employment of Ontos, and seems to have evolved as a matter of being the simplest thing to do when no direct fire support mission has been assigned to Ontos.

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(4) The element of surprise. The helicopter provides a means of trapping the enemy with no warning. Any overt movement toward the objective area in advance of L-hour will destroy this element. This is considered a valid reason to withhold Ontos and other surface transported support until after launch of the assault force. Once the attack has commenced, Ontos can effect the link-up within one to three hours anywhere between Tam Ky and Quang Ngai.

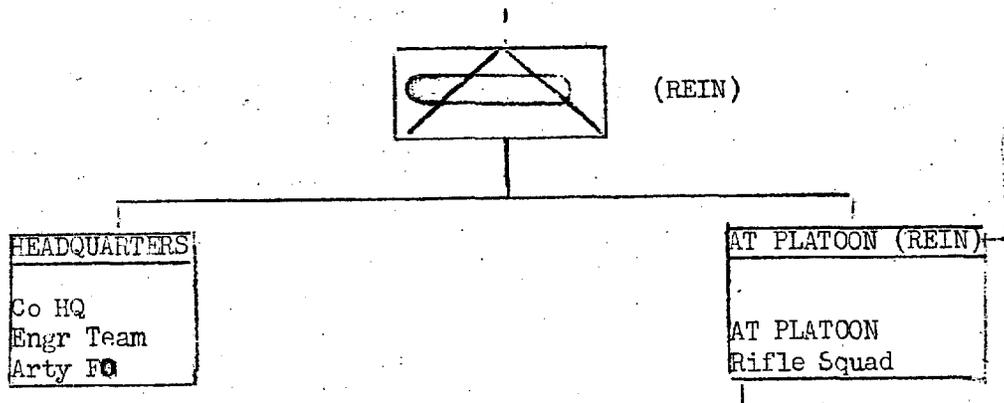
(5) Ontos support unnecessary to accomplishment of mission. The success of counter guerrilla operations must be measured in terms of losses inflicted on the enemy compared to friendly casualties, rather than the seizure of specific objectives. In this quantitative sense, it is illogical to reject any weapon as "unnecessary". Although comparative studies cannot be made, it is safe to assume that the enemy-to-friendly casualty ratio would be significantly improved if the infantry commander had Ontos available to him when enemy ambushes or improved defensive positions were encountered.

(6) Capacity to traverse difficult terrain. Ontos can and will become stuck on occasion. This is inherent in taking any vehicle off the highway. Those who hesitate to employ it for that reason are most probably those who have never observed the vehicle in cross-country operation. In Operations IOWA, NEVADA, and (as this is written) WYOMING, the commanders allowed Ontos to operate in link-ups and battalion sweeps. To date, no difficulties have been encountered in cross-country movement. Specific capabilities are listed in reference (a).

f. Operational Concepts

(1) Ontos link-up with heliborne forces.

SAMPLE ORGANIZATION



Ontos unit remains in Combat Base or other rear area until L-hour, or as otherwise directed. Representatives from the unit are flown in with each assault battalion. Unit departs by a predetermined route to link-up with infantry in vicinity of LZ.

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Rate of march can be expected to be 10-15 miles per hour with all personnel riding on Ontos (Each Ontos can take up to four passengers) unless a situation arises which requires infantry to deploy. Thus, in operations between Tam Ky and Quang Ngai, link-up should be effected in from one to three hours.

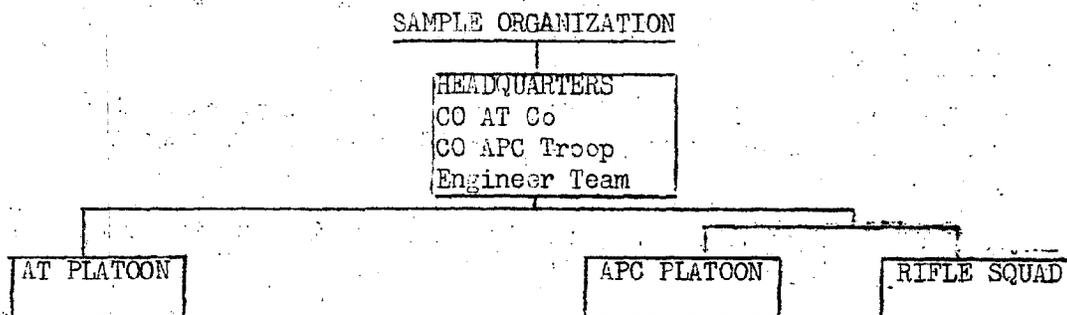
In addition to reinforcing elements, it is desirable to have overhead cover from an armed helicopter. (When the link-up route is considered relatively secure, the helicopter cover should be accepted in lieu of part or all the infantry reinforcements.).

Upon arrival at the link-up area, depending upon the terrain and situation, the AT Company could retain its reinforcements and provide direct fire support from remote flanks, or the task organization could be dissolved and the AT units operate in the vicinity of the supported infantry units.

(2) Ontos/APC/Infantry Task Forces.

There are two approaches which may be taken in forming such forces. They may be organized to provide either a mechanized heavy firepower strike force, or an infantry/Ontos force, using APC's primarily as transportation for infantry. In either method, the Ontos is used in the same manner as a tank (although much less heavily armored than a tank). Liaison with the ARVN APC troop located at Quang Ngai indicated that they would welcome an opportunity for employment with First Marine Division forces.

(a) Mechanized Strike Force



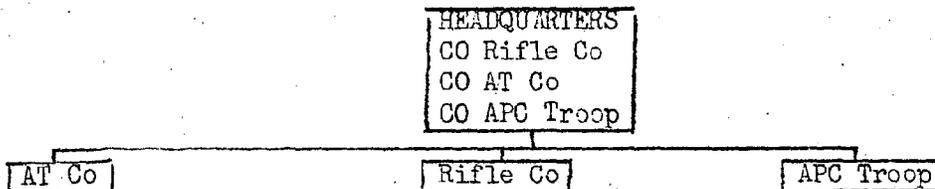
This force would be commanded by the Ontos Company Commander, who would in turn be commanded by the senior infantry commander (Regiment or Battalion). It would be used for massive direct fire support, for flanking enemy concentrations, establishing blocking forces, maintaining contact in pursuit, and as a mechanized reaction force. Both Ontos and APC's would act in the assault vehicle role, the latter vehicles carrying only one fire team each of infantry, and using the remainder of the space for operation of their weapons with organic crews.

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For this type employment, each APC mounts one M79 Grenade launcher, pedestal mounted .30 Cal. machineguns, and either a shielded Cal..50 machinegun or a twin Cal..30 Cupola. (Other configurations are available which include 81mm mortars and 57mm recoilless rifles organic to ARVN units).

(b) Infantry/Ontos/APC Force



This force would be commanded by the infantry Company Commander, and would utilize the APC's primarily as transportation for that Company. Ontos would accompany the force in the role of a tank-like vehicle. Fighting would be done with infantry dismounted from APC's. APC's could provide limited automatic weapons support. Any conventional infantry or tank-infantry mission would be suitable for this force.

(3) Ontos as Artillery.

The Ontos has a limited indirect fire capability for H&I or other area fires at ranges up to 8000 meters.

(4) Ontos as a general purpose vehicle

The Ontos can be used for retrieving wheeled vehicles that may become stuck, as transportation for command reconnaissance groups or patrols, or as a very lighted capacity resupply vehicle.

5. CONCLUSIONS

- a. That the Ontos is capable of providing close supporting fires to infantry units anywhere in the coastal plain between Tam Ky and Quang Ngai.
- b. That employment of Ontos in fire support missions is much preferable to using them as CP defense weapons.
- c. That Ontos, operating with Armored Personnel Carriers, can provide mobile striking forces that will be useful in counter guerrilla operations.

6. RECOMMENDED ACTION

- a. That infantry commanders utilize Ontos and APC support in counter guerrilla operations as suggested in paragraph 4.

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[REDACTED] - Unclassified when Encl (1) is removed

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HEADQUARTERS
1st Antitank Battalion
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3:RRT:tjs
3800
30 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Antitank Battalion
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
Subj: The Effect of Weather, Terrain and Hydrography on Ontos Operations
Encl: (1) Tactical Study of Weather, Terrain and Hydrography

1. Enclosure (1) has been prepared to provide supported organizations and subordinate units of this Command with a specific knowledge of weather, terrain and hydrography and the effects of these factors on Ontos operations in and around the Chu Lai Combat Base. Ontos going overlays are contained in Annex A to the basic study. This study will be expanded and updated as new intelligence becomes available.

2. It is felt that the enclosed study will assist tactical commanders in planning the use of Ontos in combat operations.

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Copy to:
CO, 1st Marines
CO, 5th Marines
CO, 7th Marines
CO, 1st Tank Bn
CO, 3rd Amtrac Bn

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TAB L **[REDACTED]**

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Headquarters
1st Antitank Bn (-)
Chu Lai, RVN
281800H Apr 66

TACTICAL STUDY OF WEATHER, TERRAIN, AND HYDROGRAPHY

- Ref: (a) Map: Vietnam 1:50,000 AMS Series L701 Sheets 6656 I and II, 6657 I and II, 6756 I, II, III and IV
(b) 1st MarDiv OpO 301-66
(c) CG, 3rd MarDiv ltr (FOUC) of 7 Apr 1966

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1st AntiTank Bn
S & C Files

Time Zone: H

1. PURPOSES AND OTHER LIMITING CONSIDERATIONS. The purpose of this study is to determine the effects of weather, terrain, and hydrography on Ontos operations in and around the Chu Lai Combat Base. The general area considered is the coastal plain east and west of National Route #1, between the cities of Tam Ky and Quang Ngai. The objective of this study is to provide supported organizations and subordinate units of this Command with a specific knowledge of the terrain so that the firepower and mobility of the Ontos can be exploited to the maximum.
2. GENERAL DESCRIPTION OF THE AREA.
 - a. Climate. The only significant climatic condition encountered in the study area which would materially affect Ontos operations is precipitation. Consequently, it will be discussed here to the exclusion of all others.
 - (1) Precipitation. The study area has an average annual rainfall of 81 inches. Approximately 72 percent of this rainfall occurs during the period from September through December. Maximum precipitation is received during October and November.
 - (2) Effects of precipitation on Ontos operations.
 - (a) Prime climatic conditions for Ontos operations exist from March to early September. During this period the effect of precipitation on Ontos trafficability is considered negligible.
 - (b) From mid-September to late February Ontos operations may be curtailed. It is during this period that the rainy season and its attendant flooding limits the inherent ability of the Ontos to travel cross-country.

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b. Topography.

- (1) Relief and drainage. The study area is primarily a flat coastal plain, interspersed with isolated hills and ridges which have slopes greater than 20 percent. Dikes in the rice fields are generally .6 to 1.5 meters high and 2.4 to 3 meters wide. The coastal plain is bounded on the west by an extremely rugged and extensive hill and mountain range. Drainage consists of several small rivers and streams, and irrigation canals and ditches.
- (2) Vegetation. Vegetation in the area consists of wetland rice which occupies approximately 90 percent of the cultivated land. Trees and scrub brush are scattered throughout the area.
- (3) Surface materials. On the coastal plain silty sand, sand, and silty clay are randomly distributed over layered coarse and fine-grained soils.

(h) Effects of topography on Ontos operations.

- (a) Of all the tracked and wheeled vehicles organic to a Marine Division, the Ontos has the greatest capability for negotiating the terrain encountered in the study area. Its relatively light weight and inherent mobility allow it to negotiate even the most marginal roads as well as travel cross-country in most cases.
- (b) The following information has been substantiated by experience and is presented here for information of units whose familiarity with the Ontos is limited.

fording depth (max w/o deep-water fording kit)	-----	24in.
fording depth (max with deep-water fording kit)	-----	60in.
grade ascending or descending ability (max)	-----	60%
vertical obstacle vehicle will climb (max)	-----	30in.
width of ditch vehicle will cross (max)	-----	56in.

c. Hydrography and landing beaches.

- (1) The coastline of the study area abounds in usable landing beaches. Tab B (Beaches) to Appendix 2 to Annex B to ref (b) contains an excellent and exhaustive study of this subject and the reader is referred to it for detailed information.

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(2) Effects of hydrography and landing beaches on Ontos operations.

- (a) The abundance of usable landing beaches in the study area offers the tactical commander great flexibility in employing Ontos units. The possibility of landing or retracting Ontos across the beach should be considered during initial operations planning.
- (b) Consideration of Ontos employment during Operation NEVADA illustrates a case in point. During this operation one Ontos platoon linked-up with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines midway between National Route #1 and the sea. The following day, 2/7 continued their sweep to the east with the Ontos platoon in a direct fire support role. However, 2/7 received word that they would be helilifted out later that same day. Since the Ontos cannot be helilifted (except by Flying Crane), the platoon was detached and sent back to Route #1. Consequently, for the remainder of their sweep, 2/7 was forced to operate without the major caliber direct fire capability the Ontos had been providing prior to their detachment. However, retracting the Ontos over the beach would have mitigated the necessity for premature detachment and 2/7 would have retained their fire support to the completion of the Battalion mission. Retraction of the Ontos platoon across the beach and back to the Combat Base could have been accomplished by two LCM-8's.
- (c) ONTOS-carrying capabilities of landing craft.

LCM-6	2 Ontos
LCM-8	3 Ontos
LCU (501 class)	11 Ontos
LCU (1466 class)	14 Ontos
LCU (1610 class)	14 Ontos

3. MILITARY ASPECTS OF THE AREA AND THEIR EFFECT ON ONTOS OPERATIONS.a. Observation and fields of fire.

- (1) Ground observation, while somewhat restricted by cultural features and hedges, will not handicap Ontos operations. The few isolated hills on the coastal plain offer good observation when sufficient vegetation has been cleared away from the hill-tops. Moving with the infantry, the Ontos possesses the capability of firing both direct and indirect fire missions at the command of observers located at vantage points.

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(2) The Ontos, in a direct fire support role, will have fields of fire comparable to the infantry unit it is supporting. In addition, it can place direct major caliber fire on hardened enemy point targets from hill tops and ridgelines.

(3) Ref. (c) states that in recent operations a disproportionate number of friendly casualties were incurred when Marine units were taken under final protective line (FPL) fires while attacking fortified hamlets. In future operations, when similar circumstances are encountered, the Ontos should be moved into firing positions to soften enemy emplacements.

b. Concealment and cover.

(1) Concealment is fair to good in all areas of the coastal plain. In addition, the small and irregular configuration of the Ontos can be easily camouflaged.

(2) Cover for the Ontos is excellent. The dikes of the rice paddies, the sand dunes, and the rolling terrain all offer the Ontos hull defilade firing positions. In addition, the hull of the vehicle offers the crew protection from most small arms fire.

c. Obstacles.

(1) There are substantial obstacles, both natural and man-made, which could limit Ontos movement. However, past experience (as recent as Operation NEVADA) has proven that, with an Engineer Team attached to the Ontos unit, virtually all obstacles can be breached or bypassed.

(2) The rivers in the study area present major obstacles to Ontos movement. Bridging is normally required. The many small tributaries that feed into these rivers become major obstacles during the rainy season and immediately afterward while flood conditions still exist.

d. Critical terrain features. In the study area, critical terrain features are the hill masses and ridge lines which are distributed throughout. The Ontos is designed to negotiate this type of terrain. This has been borne out in practice many times, most recently on Operation IOWA when three platoons of Ontos moved into blocking positions with the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines on Hill 54 vic BT 397145. No trails or roads were utilized to ascend this 45 degree slope.

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- e. Avenues of approach. A thorough knowledge of the terrain is an obvious requirement in planning any Ontos operations. Annex A (Avenues of Approach) to this study contains Ontos-going overlays for the area under consideration. Those not completed will be published separately. All overlays will be immediately updated as new intelligence becomes available. To this end, it is incumbent upon this Battalion to utilize its organic intelligence gathering capabilities. Intelligence will be required from external sources also. Infantry units and their attachments which have operated in the study area over a period of time should be able to provide significant information. In addition, aerial photographs and route and area reconnaissance by the AO Section of Division G-2 are vital to the preparation of an accurate and complete study.

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Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps

Commanding

ANNEXES:

A - Avenues of Approach

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ENCLOSURE (1)

Headquarters
1st Antitank Bn (-)
Chu Lai, RVN
281800H Apr 66

Annex A (Avenues of Approach) to Tactical Study of Weather, Terrain,
and Hydrography

Ref: (a) Map: Vietnam 1:50,000 AMS Series L701 Sheets 6656 I and II,
6657 I and II, 6756 I, II, III and IV

Time Zone: H

1. General. Appendices to this Annex are overlays showing Ontos avenues of approach in the study area. For ease of reference, the study area has been divided into sub-sectors designated by color code.
2. Designation of Sub-Sectors.
 - a. Sub-Sector BLUE - The general area east of National Route #1 between the Son Tra Bong River and the Song Tra Khuc River.
 - b. Sub-Sector RED - The general area west of National Route #1 to north-south grid line 44; bounded on the north by the Son Tra Bong and on the south by the Song Tra Khuc.
 - c. Sub-Sector GREEN - The general area extending inland approximately 7000 meters west of National Route #1; bounded by the Song An Tan River in the southeast and the Song Tam Ky River in the northwest.
 - d. Existing sub-sectors will be extended and new ones designated as operations emanating from the Chu Lai Combat Base are expanded.

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APPENDICES:

- 1 - Sub-Sector BLUE
- 2 - Sub-Sector RED
- 3 - Sub-Sector GREEN

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