lst 8" Howitzer Battery (SP)

3d Marine Division, FMF FPO San Francisco 9000

 ${f pt}$ 196ar c

(Unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1))

Commanding Officer

To:

Commanding General, 3d Marine Division, FMF

Command Chronology for the period 1 August 1968 to 31 August 1968 Subj:

Ref:

MCO 5750.2A (a)

FMFPac0 5750.8 (b)

1st & Howitzer Battery (SP) Command Chronology

(2) Explanation of Method used To Engage Enemy Helicopters

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted.

Copy to: CO, 12th Marines

Downgraded at 3 year intervals, declassified after 12 years. DOD Dir 5200.10

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Enclosure (/)

CONFIDENTIAL

1st 8" Howitzer Pattery (30) 3d Varine Division, TMF PPO San Francisco 96602

COTAND CHRONCLORY 1 August 1968 to 31 August 1968

INDEX

PART I - CRGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II - NARRATIVE SUM ARY

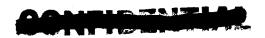
PART III - SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SEGMINICANT EVEN PART IV - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS



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Enclosure (/)

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Enclosure (/)

PART I

CROAD HEAT CHAL DATA

1. DECLEMANION

lst 3 Howitzer Battery (5°)

COMMITE

Major F.T. CAPTA 0776230/0802/0430 1 Aug 1966 - 35 Aug 3506

Capt. P.J. TOMETED 087362/0409 16 Aug 1966 - 31 Aug 1968

2. LOCATION

"A" Batoon

Haug-7 Aug 1968 - Two 8" Howitzers (MILO) at 0-1, RVN Haug-31 Aug 1968 - Two 8" Howitzers (MILO) at A-3, RVN

"P" Platoon

1 Aug-15 Aug 1968 - Two 8" Howitzers (M110) at Rockpila, RVF 16 Aug-25 Aug 1968 - Two 8" Howitzers (M110) at C 4 HVN 26 Aug-31 Aug 1968 - Two 8" Howitzers (M110) at Rockpile, HVN

"C" Matoon

Aug-3 Aug 1968 - Two & Howitzers (M110) at C-2, RVN Aug-5 Aug 1968 - Two & Howitzers (M110) at A-4, RCN Aug-7 Aug 1968 - Two & Howitzers (M110) at C-2, RVN Aug-31 Aug 1968 - Two & Howitzers (M110) at A-4, EVN

3. STARY OFFICERS

NOT APPLICABLE

4. Avenage monthly strength

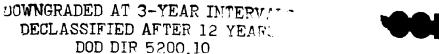
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PART II

Enclosure (/)

NARRATIVE SUTARY

During the month of August "B" Platoon has been under the OPCCN of 4th Bn., 12th Marines. Their primary mission, from both the Rockpile and

C-2 has been to support infantry operations.

"C" Platoon was under the OPCON of the 108th Artillery Group (U.S. Army) on L and 5 August. On 8 August, both "A "and "C " came under the OPCON of the 106th Artillery Group. Their primary mission has been the destruction of enemy artillary weapons. In the month of August, this unit has been accredited with 19 enemy guns destroyed and an additional 25 enemy guns damaged.

"C " Platoon, firing from A-4 (Con Thien), also engaged probable helicopters on several occasions. Three times they fired at targets described by F.O.'s as "helicopters on the deck". All three times the F.O. reported seeing secondary explosions and resultant fires. On another occasion, "C " Platoon engaged helicopters in flight using the method described in enclosure (2).

During the month of August, the howitzers of this command fired 237 observed missions and 314 unobserved missions, expending 5738 rounds of 1106

(HE) and 26 rounds of M404 (HE)

Also included in this report is the informal fter action report on Operation Thor which this unit took part in during the month of July. Operation Thor was the largest operation by supporting arms in this war. It combined massive air power (both B-52 and TacAir Sorties) with the firepower of 4 8" Howitzers, 4 175MM Gun Batteries, and 4 155MM Howitzer Batteries. The report was not available at the end of last month

PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. CG'BAT MISSION ASSIGNED

GENERAL SUPPORT OF THE THIRD MARINE DIVISION

B. SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS CONDUCTED

- 1. Operation Kentucky 2. Operation Highrise
- 3. Operation Saline II
- 4. Operation Lancaster II
- 5. Operation Lancaster July
- 6. Operation Scotland East
- 7. Operation Highrise Thor

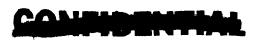
C. CASUALTIES INFLICTED ON THE ENEMY

- 1. 11 Confirmed KIA's
- 2. 37 Probable KIA's
- 3. 19 Artillery Guns Destroyed
- 25 Artillery Guns Damaged
- 4 Helicopters Destroyed (Freighte)

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Enclosure ()

PART III (cont)

- 7. 2 Fighting Holes Destroyed
- 8. 42 Bunkers Destroyed
- 9. 6 Bunkers Damaged
- 10. 7 Structures Destroyed
 11. 1 Structure Damaged
- 12. 105 Meters of Trenchline Destroyed
- 13. 1 Bridge Damaged
- lli. 92 Secondary Explosions
- 15. 14 Secondary Fires
- 16. 1 O.P. Tower Damaged
- 17. 1 Truck Destroyed
- 18. 1 Radio Antenna Destroyed
- 19. 1 Ammo Dump Destroyed (Burned for 21/2 hours)
- 20. 1 Sampan w/supplies Destroyed
- D. CASUALTIES SUSTAINED Two (2 WIA
- E. NEW TECHNIQUES EMPLOYED See Enclosure (2)
- COMAND RELATIONS N/A
- G. EQUIPMENT The 8" Howitzers (M110) continue to function satisfactorily. The obtaining of replacement parts is an ever-increasing problem. As a result, a weapon may sometimes be "down" for several days for lack of a minor part. The Motor Transport Desdline rate is increasing slightly, also due to a lack of replacement parts. We have yet to receive any of the new M151 jeeps.
- H. LOGISTICS We are able to resupply all our positions with no major difficulties except as noted in G. above.
- I. CIVIC ACTION The MEDCAP program for the village outside C-l, which this unit was instrumental in starting, has been taken over almost completely by a U.S. Army unit (C-1-40th Artillery Battery) at C-1. The corporan assigned to MAN Platoon does make the trip from A-3 to C-1 at least once a week to assist the U.S. Army medic.
- J. ADMINISTRATION No problems
- K. PERSONNEL The Battery has joined 20 and dropped 20 enlisted men, resulting in a personnel operating percentage of 84. The Eattery has joined 3 and dropped 2 officers, resulting in an operating percentage of 82. Enclosure (/)

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- L. INTELLICENCE No Comment
- M. COM UNICATIONS

 Communications have been more difficult to maintain due to increased distances between plateons. We are attempting to alleviate this by mounting the RC-292's on telephone poles.
- N. WEATHER Generally hot, windy, and clear with occasional thundershowers.
- O. FIRE SUPPORT
- P. AIR SUPPORT
- Q. ACTIVATIONS DEACTIVATIONS REDESIGNATIONS

PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. After-Action Report on Operation Thor (Enclosure 1)
2. Explanation of System Used to Attack Helicopters in Flight (Enclosure 2)



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Elimbones (1)

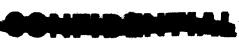
INFORMAL ARTER ACTION REPORT ON OFFRATION THER

- 1. Statistical Summary
 - (1) Observed missions 42
 Rounds fixed on observed missions 887 HE, 42 Fixecrackor
 - (2) Unobserved missions 201
 Rounds fired on unobserved missions 1507 HE, 14 Firecracker
 - (3) Total rounds fired 2394 HE, 55 Firecracker
 - (h) Observed missions with negative surveillance (including "100 X 100" with no report of damage) 20
 - (5) Reported damage inflicted by 22 observed missions.
 - (a) Buildings destroyed 65
 - (b) Buildings damaged 1
 - (c) Bunkers damaged 9
 - (d) Bunkers destroyed a 6
 - (a) Secondary explosions 12
 - (f) Secondary fires 20
 - (g) Fuel dumps lis
 - (h) Artillery pieces 2
 - (i) Artillery pieces 1 (probable)
 - (1) Meters of trenchline 95
 - (k) Fighting holes 6
 - (1) Pack animals 3
 - (m) KIA (confirmed) 3
 - (n) KIA (probable) 2



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- 2. Chronology of Significant Events
- (1) On 2 July 1968, this unit moved into position at A-3. The convoy experienced some initial operational confusion since it was formed of elements coming from four different locations (C-1, C-2, C-3, and Dong Ha). The gams were in position, laid, and ready to fire by 1500.
- (2) On 5 July 1968, from 0855 to 1200, this unit fired a mission on a "fortified ville". Total rounds expended was 116 with a serveillance of 15 buildings destroyed, & fuel dump destroyed (two units were firing on it, this unit received half credit), 2 large secondaries, and 2 secondary fires.
- (3) On 5 July 1968, from 2000 to 2020, this unit fired at a suspected Regtimental CP. This unit was given a box 1000 meters by 550 actors upon which to fire. The box was divided laterally into a boxes 250 x 550. Each gun was given 2 deflections and 3 quadrants and directed to fire 3 rounds at each of its deflection-quadrant settings. Total expenditure was 72 rounds. The mission was officially observed but several secondary fire could be seen from A-3.
- (4) On 6 July 1968, this unit engaged a " fortilized wills and storage area". Total rounds expended was 156. Total surveillance was 23 huildings destroyed, I building damaged, 3 secondary explosions, 4 secondary fires, and I fuel dump destroyed.
- (5) On 8 July 1968, this unit reprograded from A-3 back to its previous positions. This convey experienced no difficulties.
- 3. Lassons Learned
- (1) No new lessons were learned as this was a virtual " by the book" artillery operation.
- 4. Innovations
 - (1) No impovations were decided necessary.
- 5. Problems Bacountered
- (1) Invariably this unit would experience extreme difficultable that both transmitting and receiving on the AN/FRC-25's immediately before, during, and up to 15-30 minutes after R-52 strikes were held over the DMZ. The Communications Chief of this unit, after checking all other possibilities, theorized that possibly ECH gear on the B-52's was causing the difficultities.

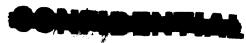
(2) Numerous problems with maintenance of the weapons were encountered. These apparently stemmed from lack of exercise given the guns during their

long stays in stated positions.

(3) Due to hasty escupation of the position and the heavy lead placed on the engineers prior to the operation, our gun positions were not satisfactory. The projectile and the propellant pits on the guns were only partially covered. The supplementary powder and projectile pits were not covered. If we had been subjected to any accurate incoming, we could have lost a large persentage of our ammentation.

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6. Commanders Comments

(1) Puring Operation Thor this Battery was under operational control of the lat Battalion, 63rd Artillery, USA. The lat of the 63rd retained tact-ical fire direction control while this Pattery retained tactical fire direction. A Battery Liaison NCO was provided lat of the 53rd. This system worked extremely satisfactorily during the entire operation as reporting systems and procedures peculiar to this Battery were explained to the 1st Battelion by the Liaison NCO. Thus changing procedures of one unit to meet the needs of the other was not required. Recommend that this system be used in future operations with the U.S. Army.

(2) Operation Thor, during a five day period, provided this Sattery with observed targets in quantities not normally obtained in a month of normal operations. In lieu of this, it was considered successful. Recommend that future

operations of this natura be conducted.



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Enclosure (2)

EXPLANATION OF METHOD USED TO STRAGE ENTRY HELICOPEERS

On the night of 9 Aug 1968 between 2030 and 2230, *6 "Plateon, in conjunction with a highly sophisticated radar system located at Con Thien engaged enemy helicopters. While the radar system employed was a classified system, it is felt that this same method could be used in conjunction with the Q-10 radar. The preparations necessary are these:

1) Determine (based on past sightings) the area in which the halicophere

are most likely to appear.

2) On a map, place an OF fan with the vertex at the Baitery (if the two are co-located this will simplify the tracking on the map).

3) Decide on a range at which the probable errors are at a minimum

for Fuze Time M564.

4) Draw an arc on the OF fan at the range selected.

5) Fick a series of points along the arc, spaced 200 mile apart.
5) Compute the firing data for the guns at the chosen range with a

particular altitude for each of the points. (This unit used 5 points, A,B,C,D&E and an altitude of 350 meters).

The sequence of actual firing is as follows:

1) The round is located. Since the range is objective is the same, the time setting is not going to change. (The objective will be to hit the helicopter as it crosses the arc).

2) The tube is elevated to the quadrant necessary for the pre-determined HOB. (If the helicopter is at an altitude other than the date

is computed for, the change in QE will only be a chaple of mile).

3) The tube is laid on the middle deflection for maximum flexibility.

4) As radar begins to thack an enemy helicopter, it should first announce the altitude of the craft. The PDC can (using the mil relation)

determine the change to the QE and announce same to the guns.

5) As soon as radar can predict the flight pattern of the helicopter, they should announce how many mile left or right of one of the rec-determined points, it will cross the arc. (For Example "Stand by.....Albitude 250cms 50 mile left of Do..."). The target deflection is then sent to the guant.

6) The command to fire will depend upon the speed of the redar seem. If they can determine the speed of the target and compute the amount of time it will take to reach the arc, they can, knowing the time of flight, time the command to fire. Lacking this accuracy, the guns should be put on a "Fire as soon as possible " basis.

Using this method, "C" Platoon of 1st 8" Howitzer Battery scored one damaged helicopter (the radar determined one round exploded 40 meters from the target) and one possibly destroyed helicopter (immediately after the rounds exploded, a bright light was seen burning directly below them on the dack.)

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