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HEADQUARTERS
3d Reconnaissance Battalion
3d Marine Division (Forward)(-)
FPO, San Francisco, California, 96601

160-65

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9 June 65

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3d MARDIV (FWD)

S4C # 1060-65

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)
Via: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Forward) FMF

Subj: Command Diary

Ref: (a) MOD 3480.1
(b) Operation Order 301-65

Encl: (1) Operation Overlay, Co. C
(2) Operation Overlay, Co. A
(3) Operation Overlay, Co. C
(4) FRAG Order #3, RLT-4
(5) Operation Overlay, 3d Reconnaissance Battalion
(6) Operation Order, 326-65
(7) Operation Overlay, Co. A
(8) Operation Overlay, Co. A
(9) Operation Overlay, 2d Platoon, Co. C
(10) Operation Overlay, 2d Platoon Co. C
(11) FRAG Order #5, RLT-4
(12) Map: 6757 III.
(13) FRAG Order #12
(14) Action Brief 150900 May 1965
(15) Operation Order 321-65
(16) Map: 6658 I
(17) Map: 6659 II
(18) Map: 6659 III
(19) Map: 6659 IV
(20) Map: 6559 I
(21) Map: 6559 IV
(22) Map: 6560 II
(23) Map: 6560 III
(24) Operation Overlay, Co. C, 3d Platoon, Co. B.
(25) Operation Order 328-65 Co. A
(26) Operation Overlay 1st Platoon Co. A
(27) Operation Overlay 2d Platoon Co. D.

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3d Recon Bn

9 May - 2 Jun 1965

1. ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

- a. Reporting Unit: 3d Reconnaissance Battalion
- b. Period covered: 7 May 1965 to 2 June 1965
- c. Date of Submission: 8 June 1965
- d. Commanding Officer: LtCol D. H. BLANCHARD, 039061
- e. Command Post: CHU LAI 525069; DA NANG 955754
- f. Subordinate Units:

- (1) B&S Co: Major BRAUSE, Bernard, B., Jr. 062096
- (2) Co. A: Captain BADOLATO, Edward, V., 079769
- (3) Co. B: Captain COMPTON, James, L., 071749
- (4) Co. C: Captain COLASSARD, Barry, S., 068372
- (5) Co. D: Captain COLLINS, Patrick, B., 076230

2. MISSION

The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion was assigned reconnaissance missions in support of the landing of RLT-4 at CHU LAI. Reconnaissance elements were required to report all information concerning enemy strength, composition, disposition and all conditions that would influence the landing. Upon the completion of the landing, the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion was assigned to conduct reconnaissance missions and establish observation posts and screen the left flank of the TAOR within the Regimental TAOR. On 19 May 1965 the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion was assigned the establishment of a reconnaissance net when directed between PPU BAI, DA NANG, and CHU LAI and to displace to DA NANG via sea lift.

3. WEATHER AND TERRAIN

a. Weather. The climate in the area of operations is divided into two major seasons: The Southwest monsoon is the period of maximum precipitation. During the period reported on, the winds were generally from the Southwest quadrant. Wind speeds of upto 12 knots were experienced with an average of 5 knots being normal. Temperatures throughout the reporting period were recorded as having a mean daily minimum and a maximum of 74 to 93 degrees respectively. Precipitation was experienced through the media of thunderstorms during 6 days of the reporting period. The mean average cloud coverage within the area of operations was on a whole 60 percent.

b. Terrain.

(1) CHU LAI. The zone of action in this area comprises mostly lowlands with the maximum elevation being 410 meters in hill complex that runs generally East to West in the Southwest area. The average elevation in this hill mass is 250 meters. Drainage is provided by numerous streams, however the drainage is fair to poor in the lowlands with flooding conditions during the rainy season. Vegetation in the lowlands consists mostly of rice paddies and sparse grass, bamboo and open forest. The surface material in the lowlands runs from sand to sandy clay. In the beach area there is a sandy strip approximately 2 miles wide. The highlands and forest are characterized by underbrush with scattered roads and trails.

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(2) DA NANG. The terrain features in the DA NANG Area are well varied. The flat coastline to the mountains is broken up by intermittent rice paddies and low rolling hills. The mountains ranging from 200 meters to 900 meters are characterized by very thick brush and straw grass. An overhead canopy of 50 to 100 feet is very common in the higher areas.

(3) HUE PHU BAI. The Eastern portion of the PHU BAI is flat with pockets of scrub brush throughout. Southeast of the airfield is generally sandy and has many cultivated rice fields, however drainage is generally poor due to the marshy areas. The northern area is characterized by small rolling hills with scrub brush approximately 3 to 6 feet high, however movement is not restricted. Streams generally run from East to West and are potable. The Western portion of this area is similar to that of the Eastern portion, small ridges and rolling hills become flat close to the SONG TA TRACH river which runs North to South. Vegetation is relatively thick in some areas the kiwi grass is 5 to 6 feet high. Streams are numerous and again are potable.

4. TRAINING CONDUCTED.

Extensive training has been accomplished in scouting, patrolling, mapping, land navigation, rubber boat handling, rapid reporting/communications sketching, and terrain appreciation. Lectures and practical application problems have been conducted placing emphasis on small unit leadership. This training has been followed up by training patrols that were executed within the secure areas of the TAOR. Instructional maintenance has been conducted on all equipment and daily reports have been submitted on the condition of the equipment.

5. MORALE AND DISCIPLINE.

The fact that extensive dependence has been placed on the Reconnaissance Marine in VIET NAM today has added greatly to the morale of 3d Reconnaissance Battalion personnel, in that he has been able to utilize his past training in actual situations. A great sense of accomplishment has been felt in this area as the count of V.C. KIA's and WIA's mount. In addition to their fighting role the marines have had the opportunity to satisfy their keen interest in SOUTH VIET NAM. Since the arrival of the Battalion in DA NANG there have been two USO shows which were attended by available marines. Other factors sustaining the morale of the troops have been the steady flow of mail, weekly church services, and pay call held twice monthly. The present combat situation has been the primary factor that has held disciplinary incidents to a minimum as there have been only four NJP's during the period covered.

6. OPERATIONS

The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion (-) landed on RED BEACH ONE, CHU LAI, Republic of Viet Nam at 071319 May 1965 and moved to a CP location at coordinates 552042 on the left of RL7-4's TAOR. The mission of the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion was to screen the left flank of the TAOR.

Co. C moved into two LP/OP positions on 8 May enclosure (1). No enemy contacts were reported. On 9 May both Co. A and Co. C displaced to outpost positions between check points 122 and 125 enclosures (2)(3) and (4). At approximately 0020 suspected V.C. probes of 2 to 4 man elements were reported on one Co. C check point and four check points of Co. A. These probes continued throughout the early morning and ceased approximately 0415 at which time the suspected V.C. moved back through the screen. There were no USMC casualties and there was an estimated, but unconfirmed, report of 2 V.C. KIA and 4 WIA.

On the night of 10 May Co. A and Co. C moved to ambush positions between check points 122 and 125 enclosure (5). No enemy contacts were made. The following night, 11 May, Co. A and Co. C moved to the low ground to establish moving ambush patrols between check points 122 and 125. Several suspected sightings were reported, however no contacts were made enclosures (6)(7)(8)(9)(10)(11).

On 12 May the 3d Reconnaissance Battalion displaced to a new CP location at coordinates 525069 enclosure (12). The mission assigned, was to patrol the TAOR North of route #1, and to furnish security for the airfield construction and assist in civilian control. 3d Reconnaissance Battalion was placed in general support of RIT-4 Ref. (b).

The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion conducted sweeping patrols around the CP perimeter to clear the area purchased from civilians during the period from 13 May to 22 May, enclosure (13).

At 230030 May the Battalion CP displaced from CHU LAI via WESTCHESTER county LSP 1167 to DA NANG arriving 230730 May and ashore and establish the present CP at coordinates 955745, enclosure (14). Authority to execute the displacement was initiated by teletype from Lt. Col. Joseph E. MUIR, 049816, G-3, 3d Marine Division (Forward) on 19 May at 1500.

The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion upon establishing the new CP site improved positions, living conditions, and installed communications throughout the area. The Battalion was notified to be prepared to establish a reconnaissance net between CHU LAI, DA NANG and HUE PHU BAI, enclosure (15).

Realignment of the Battalion was established on 26 May by displacing Co. C to HUE PHU BAI by motor convoy and returning 3d Platoon Co. B to the CP at DA NANG on 27 May by the same means along route #1, enclosures (16)(17)(18)(19)(20)(21)(22)(23) and (24).

The 3d Reconnaissance Battalion vehicles comprised the third series of the convoy, which departed DA NANG at 0900 and arrived at HUE PHU BAI at 1215. The return motor march commenced at 0900, 27 May from HUE PHU BAI and arrived at DA NANG at 1300. No incidents were reported. On 24 May Co. D commenced to rejoin the Battalion at the CP and came under the latter's OPCON. By 27 May Co. D had completed the move and were prepared for operations.

The 1st Platoon Co. A on 31 May was directed under the OPCON of the 1st Battalion 3d Marines for operations in the Southwestern portion of the TAOR. Two LP/OP's were established to assist in the operation. No contacts with the enemy were reported, enclosures (25)(26).

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The 2d Platoon of Co. D was assigned under the OPCON of 2d Battalion 3d Marines in the Southwestern portion of their TAOR. Two LP/OP's were established during the early morning of 31 May and moved to two new locations on 1 June. The patrol returned on 2 June and made no contacts or sightings of the enemy, enclosure (27).



D. H. BLANCHARD
LtCol. U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

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