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HEADQUARTERS
3d Marine Division (Forward)
FPO, San Francisco 96601

AIL/JJC/lem
15 July 1965

From: Commanding General
To: Distribution List

Subj: Lessons Learned

1. Subject lessons are forwarded for information
2. These lessons are a compilation of experiences and subsequent recommendations of the 3d Marine Division in South Vietnam. Some recommendations are already in force; others are pending approval of higher Headquarters.

A. I. LYMAN
Chief of Staff

DISTRIBUTION:


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3d Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein)(Forward)
FPO, San Francisco 96601

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12 July 1965



From: Commanding Officer
To: Distribution List

Subj: Counter Insurgency Lessons Learned (U)

Ref: (a) Yr 290844Z Jun 65

Encl: (1) Personnel/Administrative Lessons Learned
(2) Intelligence Lessons Learned
(3) Operations/Training Lessons Learned
(4) Logistics Lessons Learned
(5) Communications Lessons Learned

1. In compliance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (5) are submitted.

2. These "Lessons" were screened and edited by a Regimental Board composed of well qualified representatives from each of the infantry battalions.

3. Comments on artillery will be submitted separately by the 1st Battalion, 12th Marines.

E. B. WHEELER

Distribution: "A"

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CONFIDENTIAL**COUNTER INSURGENCY OFFICER/ADMINISTRATIVE**

ITEM: That the need exists for a special staff officer on the battalion and regimental level designated as the Counter Insurgency Officer.

DISCUSSION: Experience has shown that one staff officer should be given the additional duty as Counter Insurgency Officer. The functions of this officer fall within both the area of the S-2 and Legal/Civil Affairs Officer. The Counter Insurgency Officer's duties would include maintaining listings of the villages and hamlets within the TAOR, population count of the villages and hamlets and size of the Popular Force units in each village. The CI officer acts as coordinator with village and district chiefs in such areas as intelligence from the local populace, coordinator of operations and security with Popular Forces and supervisor of the people to people program. The Legal/Civil Affairs Officer serves as an assistant to the CI Officer. This system has proven very effective in one battalion's TAOR, where the population center is located within the Marine area of control.

RECOMMENDATION: That the additional duty of counter insurgency officer be assigned to each battalion and regimental S-2.

MEDICAL/CIVIL AFFAIRS

ITEM: The need for training of indigenous personnel for use as Corpsmen by medical elements attached to USMC units.

DISCUSSION: When operating in an area with a civilian populace present and the need for a civic action arises, the doctor and his team are normally called upon for duty. The need for a doctor operating in a village is readily apparent but what is not apparent is the need for semi-trained personnel to help in the village on a daily basis. This can be accomplished by seeking the advice of the village chief and asking him for nominations of two or three people that can act as nurses or corpsmen. Classes can be held in Vietnamese for selected personnel from the surrounding villages. In this way, wounds can be cleansed, bandages changed, salves applied and prescribed medicines administered, between visits by doctors. However, the real long range goal of this program is getting the people used to helping themselves by providing a means by which they can do so and to gain the respect and admiration of the people, in addition to obtaining valuable intelligence information.

RECOMMENDATION: That this be incorporated in the Field Medical training syllabus that doctors and Corpsmen received prior to reporting to an FMF unit.

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Enclosure (1)

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INTELLIGENCE REPORTS

ITEM: That intelligence information received from higher echelons is frequently received too late to be effective.

DISCUSSION: Most intelligence reports received are ISUMS or PIRs which report history and do not provide the using unit with concrete information on which to base future actions in offensive or defensive operations. There is a continuing need for a rapid effective means of disseminating local intelligence to battalions when this information is beyond their limited collections means. Enemy troop movements through TAORs are perhaps the most noteworthy of this void. This information should be more readily available at present, and if not, a means selected whereby it will be available.

RECOMMENDATION: Re-evaluate intelligence means and expedite information to the using level.

INTERPRETERS/TRANSLATORS/INTELLIGENCE

ITEM: That continual screening, effective distribution and maximum utilization of interpreters and translators at infantry battalion level is essential to successful counter insurgency operations.

DISCUSSION: Interpreters are the vital link between U.S. operating forces and the Vietnamese forces and people. Success is directly proportional to the ability to communicate and coordinate with the Vietnamese. Really effective day to day communications can only be accomplished through indigenous interpreters. At best, widespread language training among the U.S. Military produces limited and stop-gap results. Therefore, the maximum number of proficient interpreters must be obtained through careful screening and distributed to the infantry battalions on the basis of 8 to 10 per unit. In addition, these interpreters should have the capability to render quick translations of captured documents for the immediate benefit of the capturing units, as well as reduce the translation burden at higher echelon.

RECOMMENDATION: Although continuing to emphasize Vietnamese language training, emphasize the importance of, and organize the procurement and distribution of, indigenous interpreters to ensure optimum utilization at battalion level.

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COMMUNICATIONS - ELECTRONICS/INTELLIGENCE

ITEM: That the AN/TPS-21 is a valuable defensive supplement in locating and tracing targets, particularly at night. With this information, the effectiveness of supporting arms employed after dark is greatly enhanced.

DISCUSSION: The two AN/TPS-21s organic to the infantry battalion, if employed in battery, at two separate locations which permit target intersections, have proved to be a valuable source of data. Positions, estimated size, direction and speed of movement of Viet Cong elements moving at night can be readily detected. Utilizing this information, artillery has been employed against these area targets to harass disrupt and disperse their activities.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Re-emphasize the value of the AN/TPS-21 in the Infantry Battalion and widen and intensify unit training involving this equipment.

CAMERA/INTELLIGENCE

ITEM: That a requirement exists for a Polaroid type camera in the S-2 section of the Marine Infantry Battalion.

DISCUSSION: Experience in Vietnam is replete with repeated incidents where the capability to produce immediate photographic evidence would have provided vital intelligence data with respect to Viet Cong encampments, supplies, equipment, booby traps, etc, as well as invaluable visual aids for the corrections of maps and historical records.

RECOMMENDATION: Procure and issue one of the subject type cameras to each infantry battalion for use by the S-2 scouts.

FUNDS FOR INFORMATION/INTELLIGENCE

ITEM: That a requirement exists for the creation or implementation of a means to provide monetary compensation for intelligence information provided by indigenous personnel.

DISCUSSION: Fertile, exploitable and immediately valuable sources of intelligence data to infantry battalions are indigenous personnel who can be persuaded, by promise of reward, to provide information about local Viet Cong activities, past, present or future. The utilization of such sources, agents, informers, line crossers or just the run-of-the-mill civilians who possess information is limited only by the resources

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available as compensation for the risk of possible detection. Experimentation in this area, utilizing such items as rations, has indicated that the presence of such obviously U. S. products tend to identify the individual as assisting U. S. forces. Local currency which is not traceable to a source is an extremely more effective instrument for this purpose, and should be available to infantry units of battalion size or larger in limited amounts and administered by means of an informal accounting system.

RECOMMENDATION: Provide limited local funds as compensation for intelligence information procured from indigenous personnel or utilize army intelligence teams which have this capability.

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OPERATIONS/TECHNIQUES/ALLOCATION OF HELICOPTERS

ITEM: That rapid and effective employment of heliborne reaction force requires that a helicopter support force be continuously and specifically allocated for such a purpose.

DISCUSSION: Practice and experience clearly demonstrate that unless helicopters are on constant alert and instant call the resulting delay in the employment of reaction forces, used thus far in an attempt to exploit a favorable situation, greatly reduces, and in most cases negates, the effectiveness of the reaction force. Like a fire department, both the equipment and personnel must be maintained in a constant state of readiness, which can only be achieved by all units, air and ground, specifically designating the alert elements and restricting their activities in order to ensure timely and rapid employment.

RECOMMENDATION: Promulgation of SOPs allocating four to six helicopters to a contiguous Regimental area of responsibility, which are to be maintained in a constant alert on call status for utilization by battalion reaction forces.

FIXED WING OBSERVATION AIRCRAFT/OPERATIONS

ITEM: There is a continuing requirement for the fixed wing light observation aircraft in support of ground troops.

DISCUSSION: Although the COIN aircraft has been approved in concept and the contracts given out, it will be at least two years before this aircraft enters the inventory. At the present time, the obsolete Ol-B is in use and should not be phased out of the inventory until the arrival of the COIN aircraft. The HU-1E is not a substitute for the Ol-B. The Ol-B can remain on station in this area for three + hours. it provides a more stable platform and better observation, in addition to its superiority in loiter time and maneuverability. It is particularly valuable as an airborne platform for the artillery and naval gunfire spotter and for hand held photography.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Ol-B and Ol-C remain in the Marine inventory until the advent of the COIN aircraft.

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IMMEDIATE ACTION/OPERATIONS

ITEM: Immediate Action Drills

DISCUSSION: Immediate action drills should not stop at the rapid reaction to a vehicular ambush and the tactical employment of troops once disembarked. They should include the rapid delivery of fire into the ambush and the methods of controlling this immediate return fire. Experience has shown that the most efficient manner in which to destroy the effectiveness of an ambush is to immediately deliver an intensive high rate of fire into the ambush position, rather than maneuver the troops into an assault position or conduct an immediate frontal assault. Aggressiveness in the initial reaction is the key to the successful defeat of an ambush, particularly where jungle undergrowth limits the utilization of flank security and dictates a heavily weighted lead element as point.

RECOMMENDATION: Include delivery of live fire, when possible, when conducting immediate action drills, during training exercises. Include fire control methods in all immediate action drills.

VC TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That the VC direct their initial fires at those Marines with bipods on their M-14s.

DISCUSSION: On several occasions when Marine units were deployed on line, moving toward a village, the initial casualties from sniper fire were the AR men. This situation occurred on several occasions also when the point of a unit was hit. This has led Company Commanders to ensure all AR men remove bipods while on offensive type operations.

RECOMMENDATIONS: That unit commanders evaluate the local conditions and consider removal of the AR bipod while conducting offensive type operations.

MOVEMENT AT NIGHT/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That night operations, though essential in counter-guerrilla warfare, must be carefully planned and controlled to be effective and to prevent casualties to friendly forces.

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DISCUSSION: It has been proven that to conduct a general night patrol without positive intelligence on which to base an objective for the patrol can be dangerous. In certain areas, Popular Forces and Regional Forces can be patrolling and ambushing. Without close liaison and coordination, Marine and allied units might meet in the dark and fire be exchanged. At the present stage or phase of combat, the following methods of night operations have been most effective:

- a. Patrol to a definite point or area to confirm or react to positive intelligence information, carefully coordinating with local and adjacent units.
- b. Using darkness to cover the movement to new combat base locations, prepositioning of troops, and placement and withdrawal of ambushes.
- c. Use of the night ambush on an extensive scale to destroy VC units on the move at night.

RECOMMENDATION: That techniques of night movement control and establishment of night ambushes be stressed in training.

AMBUSH TECHNIQUES/OPERATIONS

ITEM: There is a need to improve ambush techniques employed against the VC.

DISCUSSION: All too frequently, ambushes are well laid, properly planned, and correctly positioned, only to completely fail because of some single failure on the part of the troop commander. Common deficiencies noted are:

- a. Noise discipline, coughing, talking, shifting about, clattering water canteens, etc.
- b. Springing the ambush too early or with a poor signal.
- c. Lack of sufficient fire power being placed along the entire ambush position, denying escape routes.
- d. Failure to pursue by fire when the victims jump into the underbrush opposite the ambushees.
- e. Failure to quickly exploit and search the immediate area for casualties and dead.
- f. Failure to establish a pre-planned search of the area.

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g. Failure to provide for illumination in conjunction with sweep after ambush.

h. Failure to booby-trap or block off opposite side of trails and escape routes.

i. Failure of troop commanders to utilize supporting arms (normally due to lack of communications).

Selection of the ambush site, though important, is only the first step in the development of a well organized ambush. Ambush leaders must be fully capable and provided with the necessary equipment to successfully carry out his assigned mission. Squad leaders must be capable of calling in supporting arms and instructed in methods of blocking escape routes, utilizing booby-traps, demolitions, punji traps or any other means available.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop pocket cards for squad leaders which list the essential elements in requesting mortar, artillery or air and list the more important techniques of establishing an ambush with a check-off list of equipment that can be employed in the average ambush.

JUNGLE LANE RANGES/OPERATIONS

ITEM: Experience has proven that most encounters while on patrol are sudden meeting engagements.

DISCUSSION: Meeting engagements of small units on patrol have been the most frequent contact throughout both TAORs. Initially, reaction by the point was not quick enough to deliver fire at the elusive VC who had been thoroughly trained to leap into the brush when encountered along trails. With practice, increased kills are being realized. Jungle lane type ranges with numerous surprise targets, have been a successful training device in reflex conditioning and increasing "snap-fire" marksmanship.

RECOMMENDATION: That extensive use of Jungle Lane type ranges be emphasized throughout the Marine Corps Combat Marksmanship Program.

COMMAND/CONTROL AIRCRAFT/OPERATIONS

ITEM: A requirement exists for a configured HU-1E to perform the mission of an airborne command/control aircraft.

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DISCUSSION: Operations in VIETNAM on the platoon, company and battalion level have clearly demonstrated the need for better control and coordination of troop movements and supporting arms. Two conditions encountered in VIETNAM have greatly complicated the control problem. These are the very rough terrain and dense vegetation, which makes observation and movement difficult, and secondly, the nature of the enemy encountered. This enemy is not an organized, maneuvering unit, but individuals who easily hide in this rough terrain. It is believed that an airborne command center would go a long way toward solving the command and control problems. Ideally, this would be an HU-1E helicopter, carrying the infantry unit commander, an AO, a FAC, and a helicopter unit representative. This would provide in one mobile vantage point all individuals who can influence the action. The helicopter representative can immediately approve LZs and routes, the AO and FAC can control the fire support and provide immediate intelligence information while the infantry unit commander controls the operation. The use of an HU-1E is required to give each officer a complete and collective picture of the troops deployment, application of supporting fire and the enemy, in relation to the terrain. To provide the above capability, the following radio equipment would be necessary for ground use within the helicopter:

ARC-52	-	TAD Net
ARC-94	-	TAR or Inf TAC (Depending on needs)
ARC-44	-	Artillery conduct of fire
ARC-44	-	Inf TAC

Switching panels would be required at four positions to allow each position to monitor any one radio or any combination of radios simultaneously and for each position to select any one radio for transmission. Because of the many radios, a radio operator should also be present in the helicopter. A loud speaker system for use at low altitudes to pass information or direct troops' movements would complete the equipment requirements for the command helicopter.

RECOMMENDATION: That two such HU-1E aircraft be configured immediately to fulfill this requirement.

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VC TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: VC escape method

DISCUSSION: VC, when cornered underground and when discovery is certain, will eject a grenade from a hole or aperture and during the resulting shock and smoke, attempt to escape.

RECOMMENDATION: Troops must be alert to spot these escapes after isolated grenade explosions.

LAND NAVIGATION/OPERATIONS

ITEM: Inaccurate maps and terrain that limits observation makes land navigation very difficult.

DISCUSSION: The inaccuracies of the maps and, on occasion, the dense underbrush have repeatedly pointed out the need for stressed instruction in basic land navigation, particularly in the use of the compass.

RECOMMENDATION: Increased emphasis on land navigation instruction at all levels.

USE OF HU-1E/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That the HU-1E has not as yet been used to its full potential in support of ground units.

DISCUSSION: The HU-1E has been used initially here in VIETNAM as a gun ship. Although effective as a gun ship, the large amount of Marine attack aircraft now in-country should release the limited number of HU-1Es for much needed utility missions - such as a troop commander's free aircraft on heliborne operations and, in particular, for reconnaissance missions for ground commanders and staff officers. The UH-34D is unsatisfactory for a ground commander's reconnaissance in that he is able to observe only one side adequately, thus making it difficult to stay oriented.

RECOMMENDATION: That the HU-1E be made more available to the ground commander in order that he may perform his assigned mission more efficiently.

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HELICOPTERS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That embarkation and debarkation of heli-teams is expedited by elimination of seats in the helicopters.

DISCUSSION: Even with a predesignated seat, a heli-team member laden with a weapon and ammunition, as well as a cartridge belt crowded with two canteens, poncho, etc., consumes valuable time in positioning and belting himself in the helicopter and releasing himself after the aircraft lands. In an environment where every minute a helicopter spends in the landing zone increases its vulnerability, the removal or strapping up of seats in the helicopter enables the heli-team to embark and distribute itself on the deck of the plane quickly and emerge in a similar manner, thus appreciably reducing the "on ground" time of the aircraft.

RECOMMENDATION: Discontinue the use of seats in troop helicopters in a counter-insurgency combat environment.

VILLAGE SEARCHES/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That routine village searches by patrols have not proven to be a successful means of uncovering the VC or his supply caches.

DISCUSSION: Village search techniques were not stressed sufficiently to fully inform the Marine of the numerous techniques that should be employed to perform this task efficiently. Even after repeated searches of villages with troops qualified by experience, the task is often unsuccessful. The most successful means yet discovered has been to occupy the village for ten days to two weeks, forcing the hidden VC to come above ground from his hideout to seek food and water. Basic training must be conducted to overcome to a certain degree the inhibited feeling that the average American has when going through others private property. They should honor others belongings but search thoroughly without reservation. Basic techniques which have met with a measure of success are:

- a. On entering the village:
 - (1) Always leave a covering force behind.
 - (2) Avoid being channelized into a single direction by fences, hedges, punji-traps, etc.
 - (3) Utilize villagers to precede you. They will avoid booby-traps, punji-traps and VC fields of fire.

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(4) If villagers flee at your presence, it is a good indication of a sizeable VC force's presence.

b. In the village, booby-traps are normally found:

(1) On gates, either as an explosive device or chest high, counter-weight driven bamboo stakes.

(2) Punji traps are wherever normal work does not take place as well as next to trails, in graveyards and near shrines. Normally emplaced in groups of three.

(3) In and amongst rubbish, on boards near punji stakes, planks along the trail.

c. When searching, especially look at:

(1) Rafters.

(2) Thatched roofs.

(3) Rice bags.

(4) Hay stacks.

(5) Dung piles.

(6) Wells.

d. When villagers or VC are found hiding in tunnels or bunkers, have the local villagers go in to talk them out. Do not go in after them if possible.

e. Village search techniques differ from city search techniques during clear operations. There is not the cover in grass and adobe structures that we teach in house to house fighting (Example: one Marine threw a grenade into a room and stood next to the grass wall waiting for the detonation. He was, of course, wounded by the fragments).

RECOMMENDATION: Orient Marines more thoroughly in proper search and clear techniques to be employed in guerrilla warfare as well as house to house fighting in conventional warfare.

VC TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: VC harboring sites.

DISCUSSION: When conducting sweep operations, ambushes or saturation patrolling operations, particular attention must be paid to trails, draws, bases of hills and streams. The VC travel trails almost exclusively.

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Most areas are a series of complex trails and the guerrilla is usually familiar with all the trails, thus facilitating his movement throughout the area. When he sets up a harboring site, it is normally somewhere close to fresh water. Draws at the base of a hill with water present are favorite harboring sites. Constant pressures can be applied to the guerrilla by hitting his harboring sites and keeping him off-guard.

RECOMMENDATION: That this information be emphasized in the teaching of counter-guerrilla operations.

PURSUIT BY FIRE/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That Marine units must continue the pursuit by fire after the enemy has broken off the attack at night.

DISCUSSION: The VC unit conducting the night attack will often break off the attack and stop firing. If the Marine units stop firing at that time also, the VC will use the lull in the battle to his advantage to slip out to the Marine lines to recover dead, wounded and weapons. Therefore, continued small arms, automatic weapons and supporting harrassing fires should saturate the battlefield and along likely routes of withdrawal to obtain the maximum amount of enemy casualties as he attempts to police the battlefield.

RECOMMENDATION: Continued stress on night defensive fires in training - particularly in coordination with use of illumination.

VC TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That tactics and techniques demonstrated by VC elements encountered are generally designed to exploit the U. S. concentrated effort to kill VC as well as deceive and disrupt planned operations.

DISCUSSION: Relying on the kill emphasis, VC elements have displayed an increasing readiness to offer bait, i.e. exposure at a distance, sniper fire and open smoke fires, etc, in an effort to draw patrols either into ambushes, a cross fire from prepared positions, booby-trapped areas or away from established base camps and other guerrilla facilities.

RECOMMENDATION: Unless complete surprise is achieved, response to VC harassment must be tempered with a realization that such tactics may be an attempt to induce precipitous reaction with a subsequent goal of entrapment or distraction.

DEFENSIVE TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: It is apparent that there is a need for increased emphasis on defensive tactics throughout the educational system of officers and enlisted.

DISCUSSION: Emphasis has been placed on offensive tactics to the point that we may have overlooked the basic fact that at some time the defense must be

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assumed. In counter-insurgency or counter-guerrilla operations, defense is almost a way of life. The small unit commanders, notably the platoon commanders, fail to appreciate the use of defensive terrain or the proper employment of supporting weapons in the defense. Defensive tactics have been the weakest point of recent training for several years, as evidenced by Company and Battalion tactical tests.

RECOMMENDATION: Increased emphasis on defensive tactics throughout the training system.

BARBED WIRE/OPERATIONS

ITEM: The VC have proven themselves proficient in breaching wire entanglements when the wire is not supplemented with detection devices.

DISCUSSION: Each Marine, as he undergoes individual combat training, is taught the basic of breaching double apron and concertina barbed wire entanglements. The VC practice this thoroughly and have experienced little or no difficulty in breaching tactical and defensive wire which is not covered by a detection means, i.e. AN/TPS-21, seismic intrusion detection, trip flares, mines or periodic unscheduled illumination.

CONCLUSION: The employment of barbed wire, as always, is not intended to stop a determined enemy, only to slow him down. It must always be employed with a means of detecting the approach of the enemy and covered by an effective fire delivery system.

COMMUNICATIONS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That a requirement exists for a means of communications between the pilot and embarked troops on a troop helicopter.

DISCUSSION: Utilization of the helicopter where the movement takes place on short notice with little, if any, prior planning, reflects the need for an optimum degree of flexibility and coordination between the senior embarked troop representative and the pilot of the helicopter be available in order to facilitate in flight briefing, planning, coordination and orientation.

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RECOMMENDATION: That a troop-pilot telephone type instrument be installed on all troop helicopters, similar to the device currently used to provide communications between tanks and infantry.

WEAPONS SAFETY/TRAINING

ITEM: That it is mandatory to conduct continuous daily individual training in weapons safety, the handling of ordnance available to the infantry battalion, procedures for challenging, the use of the challenge and pass word and the rules of engagement.

DISCUSSION: The cold statistics on the number of injuries and deaths resulting from one or more of the above clearly substantiated this requirement. Individual Marines, except for formal annual range shooting rarely possess live ordnance and because of this lack of intimate association have a tendency to display a deplorable lack of respect for basic safety regulations which is only emphasized by a combat environment. Continuing stress must be placed on safety to include repeated checks of weapons to ensure compliance, daily instruction in regulations and the above mentioned topics which are closely allied to the safety theme and the elimination of "accidental casualties".

RECOMMENDATION: All Marine Corps training incorporate renewed emphasis on the subjects listed in the above item.

FIELD EXPEDIENT - M-14 SLING/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That the M-14 web sling is adaptable as a shoulder harness, enabling the weapon to be carried at the ready at all times.

DISCUSSION: Extended counter-insurgency patrol operations require a continuous instantaneous reaction capability. To facilitate an at-the-ready posture, individual experiments have demonstrated that the average patrol member is better prepared to fulfill his mission by carrying the M-14 or M-14 (Modified) flung from his shoulder, utilizing the web sling affixed to the pistol grip on one end and the sling swivel at the other, thus permitting the weapon to hang free on or near his hip where its position and direction can be controlled during movement by one hand on the pistol grip. This arrangement reduces arm fatigue imposed by port arms or any arm carry technique, keeps the weapon constantly in an extremely ready position and permits rapid reaction fire.

RECOMMENDATION: Experiments to achieve a standard shoulder harness utilizing the present web sling and incorporate in instructional syllabus of counter-insurgency training.

COUNTER-INSURGENCY/TRAINING

ITEM: Need for counter-insurgency to be taught to all personnel in a leadership billet.

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DISCUSSION: The enlisted personnel presently in Vietnam have not been taught counter-insurgency. They are well versed in counter-guerrilla operations but have a lack of understanding when it comes to civic action visits to villages. The platoon commanders have a working knowledge of counter-insurgency acquired at Basic School. There is a definite need for counter-insurgency to be taught at all our stateside and overseas schools. The enlisted personnel down to squad leader must be taught the overall picture of what the government is trying to accomplish in Viet Nam. In this connection, everyone should receive basic instruction on religious customs and superstitions of the people of the area in which they are working.

RECOMMENDATION: That all Staff NCO and NCO schools begin to teach counter-insurgency operations. That a more dynamic program of area study be conducted prior to arrival into Asian countries.

SMALL UNITS OPERATIONS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: Emphasis on use of small units in operations against the guerrilla.

DISCUSSION: Evaluation of experience gained to date has brought forth renewed emphasis on the role of the small unit in operations against the guerrilla. During hours of daylight the most successful tactic has been saturation patrolling with the use of a reaction force. The saturation of an area with squad size patrols allows maximum coverage and maximum utilization of leadership capabilities of small unit leaders. It requires detailed planning by the company or higher echelon to completely coordinate the number of patrols in an area. The smaller units have a better chance of daylight contact with the guerrilla. A force larger than a platoon size will normally force the guerrilla into hiding or evasion techniques. The guerrilla is more apt to engage the squad or platoon than he is the larger force. During hours of darkness the squad is the most practical sized unit to conduct a night ambush. The squad has better noise discipline and better fire discipline than the larger sized unit. Being smaller, it has a better chance of moving into the ambush site undetected than a larger force.

RECOMMENDATION: Place renewed emphasis on squad training especially in the area of patrolling and ambushes.

TRAINING OF RF AND PF/TRAINING

ITEM: Training of Regional Force or Popular Force Vietnamese units.

DISCUSSION: Many times a Marine unit will find itself working in an area with Regional Forces or Popular Forces. Sometimes the need for training in those units is readily apparent. The Marine Commander must use tact and diplomacy in setting up training for these units. One system proven highly successful is to invite the Regional or Popular Force commander to have his unit train with yours. Then, while training the Marines in

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marksmanship, an interpreter can pass on the same information to the Vietnamese unit. This is a face saving tactic and makes the Vietnamese unit feel equal to the trained unit rather than a "poor cousin". All types of training can be accomplished in this manner. There is a secondary motive in this type training in that it forces the Vietnamese soldiers and the individual Marine closer together.

RECOMMENDATION: That ARVN units be trained with Marine units and special emphasis be given to Popular Forces platoons.

VC TACTICS/OPERATIONS

ITEM: The VC guerrilla has prepared covert mortar firing positions for use without the base plates.

DISCUSSION: Mortar firing positions have been located by patrols whereby the VC have dug a cylindrical angled hole into the ground into which a mortar tube is inserted for firing. A rock, wooden block or other similar rigid base absorbs the impact normally taken by the base plate. The hole is angled so that no aiming is required on their selected target. In this manner, several quick rounds can be fired into a CP, assembly area, supply dump, etc, and the guerrilla can flee, leaving the camouflaged weapon behind, and quickly blend in with the populace.

COMMENT: That emphasis be given to the unconventional means of weapons employment utilized by the VC. As each new technique is discovered, rapid dissemination be made to all interested parties.

REPETITION OF ACTIVITY/OPERATIONS

ITEM: That although it is a basic principle, continuing emphasis must be placed upon the danger of establishing a pattern of operations or any repetitive type activity.

DISCUSSION: In a counter-insurgency environment, where the guerrilla inflicts the maximum damage by secrecy and surprise, repetition and routine court disaster. The most invariable law of counter-insurgency operations is variety and it cannot be over-emphasized nor not applied to all details, i.e. motor transport routine movements, meal hours, guard reliefs, etc.

RECOMMENDATION: All counter-insurgency training stress avoidance of routine or pattern.

VC TACTICS/MINES-OPERATIONS

ITEM: The VC guerrilla rarely prepares mixed AP and AT mine fields.

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DISCUSSION: On the few occasions that AT type mines have been discovered, we have yet to encounter a mixed field. When AT mines are employed, they are placed exclusively on roads and trails capable of carrying vehicular type traffic. AP type mines are employed, however, on the defensible terrain nearby, so that infantrymen taking to the high ground to protect a disabled vehicle are then subjected to the AP mines and booby trap devices.

COMMENT: Stress the requirement for constant vigilance against AP mines and booby traps on nearby trails and defensible terrain whenever AT mines are encountered.

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CONCENTRATED RATION - LOGISTIC

ITEM: That a need exists for a light concentrated ration for use on prolonged clandestine patrols.

DISCUSSION: On extended patrols where resupply is limited or non-existent to enhance secrecy of operations, the present MCI has been found to be too heavy and bulky to be carried for any appreciable number of meals. The duration of the patrol is based upon the ability to locate potable water and the amount of rations portable. A concentrated ration with the necessary ingredients to maintain strength and energy, would allow deep clandestine patrols to operate for longer periods of time. These rations should be packed into flat soft plastic bags or containers which could be carried in uniform pockets or a light pack.

RECOMMENDATION: That a light concentrated ration be developed and made available to support special operations requiring such items; such as: infantry patrols, recon elements, SEAL teams, beach jumpers, pilot survival kits, etc.

AMMUNITION EXPOSURE/LOGISTICS

ITEM: That unnecessary exposure of ammunition causes it to deteriorate rapidly in a tropical climate.

DISCUSSION: It has been discovered that ammunition, particularly linked machine gun, corrodes rapidly with the links rusting overnight. Carrying belts of ammunition "Poncho Villa" style draped over the body accelerates the corroding process due to perspiration.

RECOMMENDATION: That proper stowage techniques of ammunition be practiced at all times in training and checked daily in the ordnance inspection within units in the combat area.

M49A1 TRIP FLARE/LOGISTICS

ITEM: The M49A1 Trip Flare is extremely sensitive and hazardous when handled by inexperienced troops.

DISCUSSION: The M49A1 Trip Flare, is at present, the most efficient in use, however, frequent disarming and in some cases, relocation causes them to become a hazard. The spring mechanism is too easily tripped by an individual installing the device, and the instantaneous flare-up, has on many occasions, inflicted severe burns. Additionally, frequent handling of the flare has caused one or both of the metal ends to become separated from the body. Economy minded Marines attempt to repair them, creating an extremely dangerous condition, both during the repair operation and the installation of an inferior product.

RECOMMENDATION: That the release of the M49A1 be made slightly less sensitive and that a more durable means of bonding the metal ends to the body be devised.

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CONFIDENTIALORDNANCE/LOGISTICS

ITEM: That a requirement exists for an M-79 marking round, smoke and/or white phosphorus, to designate intermediate targets.

DISCUSSION: To augment the organic mortars which mark targets beyond 1000 meters, and the grenade, rifle or hand which mark "close in" targets, there is a need for a M-79 marking round to indicate intermediate targets, i.e. 500 meters, particularly for the rapid employment of UH-1B's as gunships in support of patrols.

RECOMMENDATION: Procurement of an M-79 marking round, smoke and/or white phosphorus.

CLIP TYPE ACCESSORIES - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That a requirement exists for clip type canteen covers and jungle kits over the present hook type to provide a more silent and secure fixture to the cartridge belt.

DISCUSSION: The hook-on type canteen cover has been found undesirable in a tropical climate where a man prespires a great deal. The canteen constantly bumps the buttocks and causes an abrasion or soreness of the skin. Clip-on type equipment fastens more securely, remains in a higher and firmer position on the belt thus permitting less movement, resulting in a more silent configuration of this equipment with a reduced susceptibility to snagging on undergrowth and loss.

RECOMMENDATION: That the clip-on type canteen covers and jungle kits be issued to units in a combat area.

LOGISTICS - EQUIPMENT

ITEM: That a post battle field search at night is imperative and requires a more reliable, sustained and powerful method of illumination.

DISCUSSION: In view of Viet Cong near fanatic and almost completely successful efforts to evacuate their dead and wounded from the battle field, particularly at night, it is imperative that well planned but expeditious, detailed and complete post battle site searches be conducted. Bright and dependable illumination is essential for the success of these searches in order to adequately penetrate heavy undergrowth without causing a great loss of night vision by the searchers. Currently available means such as trip flares and illumination grenades do not satisfy the requirements. Additionally, there is a need for a quick, surprise illumination on perimeters in the position defense. Often movement is detected to the front of a position but there is too long a delay before flares and illumination grenades give effective light. By that time any person or persons are gone

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or have time to take effective concealment measures. The bright beam of a strong light source could effectively blind an intruder as he is taken under fire or captured. A large (5 cell) battery-powered lamp is required as a powerful, reliable and sustained light source for post battle site searches and quick surprise illumination. It could also be used for night guidance of helicopters, signalling, defensive obstacle illumination, etc.

RECOMMENDATION: Issue the subject type item as organizational property to infantry battalions on the basis of one per squad.

SHOT GUN - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That shot guns have proven to be excellent counter-guerrilla weapons.

DISCUSSION: Several shot guns have been drawn on temporary loan from U. S. Army Special Forces and evaluated on Marine patrol operations. In one particular encounter with a VC unit, the shot gun carried by the squad in contact delivered immediate devastating fire which accounted for two to four dead VC. Additionally, the shot gun would be excellent for riot and POW control. On patrol operations, it has proven its worth on the point, accompanied by an AR.

RECOMMENDATION: That the 12 gauge riot gun be made an organizational weapon within the Marine infantry battalion with twenty-five (25) shot guns in each battalion.

M-14-LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the M-14 rifle has proven very satisfactory in combat operations.

DISCUSSION: Despite previous unfavorable publicity, and comments upon its adoption, the M-14 rifle has proven very satisfactory under present combat conditions. Very few, if any, discrepancies have been voiced by the individual Marine or unit leader.

RECOMMENDATION: That a lighter and shorter rifle would be advantageous in the terrain encountered, but no pressing necessity exists to rapidly replace the present rifle which is rendering very satisfactory service.

60MM MORTARS - LOGISTICS

ITEM: Experimental use of 60MM Mortars with small patrols has proven its effectiveness.

DISCUSSION: 81MM mortars were taken on Company sized patrols during April 1965 as an immediate area fire weapon for use against targets in excess of the range of the M-79 or 3.5 rockets. It was soon discovered, however, that the size and bulk of the 81MM mortar made it extremely

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difficult for the patrol to maintain an acceptable rate of march. 60mm mortars were appropriated on a loan basis and subsequently employed with small patrols, and delivered accurate fire quickly. It is capable of being set up for firing in $\frac{1}{4}$ the time it required for an 81mm mortar, and the mortar crew was reduced to six per weapon. The light weight of the 60mm and its ammunition make it a highly desirable weapon in the rough terrain and tropical climate of Vietnam. Its capability to fire direct or indirect fire at targets beyond the range of M-79's or 3.5 rockets, but which do not warrant artillery or air support because of target value or time factor, is evident.

RECOMMENDATION: That a section of 60mm mortars be included in the T/O of each Rifle Company.

COMBAT BOOTS - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the current Marine Corps combat boot is essentially inadequate for offensive counter-insurgency operations in a tropical environment.

DISCUSSION: The basic deficiency in the Marine Corps combat boot is that once wet by immersion in water or simply by excessive perspiration, current construction does not permit the drainage of water from the interior of the boot, without removal and drying by the wearer. As a result of the above, the following undesirable conditions are prevalent:

- a. Widespread immersion foot problem among infantry units.
- b. Rapid deterioration of the boot evidenced by cracking leather and separation of stitching.

In addition, lace hooks have proven disadvantageous in a jungle environment by catching on vines and other undergrowth causing the wearer to trip and stumble or the detonation of vine activated booby traps.

RECOMMENDATION: Issue one pair of jungle boots with steel inserts to combat and combat support units for utilization during offensive type operations and for during the rainy season.

MOSQUITO REPELLENT AND HEAD NETS - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That issue of mosquito repellent and mosquito head nets have been proven to be unsatisfactory.

DISCUSSION: The present mosquito repellent when applied is quickly washed away by rain or body perspiration. The mosquito head net, when used at night, prohibits vision to the degree that it becomes a hazard to the wearer.

RECOMMENDATION: Develop an insect repellent that is impervious to water and perspiration. Develop a head net that does not obstruct vision.

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CAMOUFLAGE PONCHO W/LINER - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the current rubberized olive drab poncho does not serve the utility purpose presently enjoyed by the camouflaged poncho w/liner.

DISCUSSION: When operating in the tropics, a means of keeping warm at night as well as dry during the day is needed. The present rubberized poncho serves only the singular purpose of keeping one dry. In order to attain the warmth required for comfort at night, a blanket is used. This increases the load on patrol. Additionally, in defensive posture, Marines erect the ponchos for shade from the sun. These shelters can be seen for miles, as the poncho reflects light and does not blend in with the surrounding terrain. The camouflage poncho with liner serves all of these purposes.

RECOMMENDATION: That the camouflage poncho with liner be issued as organizational property to all units serving in tropical climates.

AMMO CARRIER, 81, 60, 3.5 - LOGISTICS

ITEM: There is a need for an improved ammunition carrying device for the 81mm, 60mm and 3.5 rocket rounds.

DISCUSSION: Present ammunition carriers for the subject ammunition are vest type which are hot, inhibit circulation and are extremely cumbersome.

RECOMMENDATION: Devise a pouch for each type round with a clip that can be attached to the Army type belt suspenders, one each on either side, front and rear. Complete circulation will be maintained and freedom of movement unhampered.

OIL - LOGISTICS

ITEM: The undesirability of using Marine Corps preservative oil for cleaning weapons under the present climatic and operating conditions.

DISCUSSION: That Marine Corps issue preservative oil for cleaning weapons has proven inadequate under the present climatic and operating conditions. The oil is too thin and when applied to a weapon, dries overnight, leaving the weapon without preventative oil and causing rust. Since the oil used is not holding up, substitutes have been sought. One of these, light weight motor oil with much more body than the preservative oil, has held up well under conditions of extreme heat.

RECOMMENDATION: That a heavier weight preservative oil be issued units operating under tropical conditions.

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SUSPENDERS - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the need exists for a harness type suspenders to support the cartridge belt.

DISCUSSION: In a counter-guerrilla environment the small unit is deployed on independent missions more often than in conventional warfare. In order to move out and support a patrol base, the individual Marine is required to carry more food and equipment to his patrol base. Much of this weight is carried on the hips by the cartridge belt. Many Marines are improvising and using the belt suspenders presently in the Marine Corps supply system to support the weight of the cartridge belt. This is not proving satisfactory and the use of a harness type suspenders as presently used by the U. S. Army is more desirable. The harness type suspenders permits the weight of the cartridge belt to be borne by the shoulders rather than the hips. Not only is this more comfortable to the individual Marine but weight carried on the hips exhausts a man more quickly and causes irritations on the points of the hips. Furthermore, unlike the Marine Corps belt suspenders which have a cutting effect when used to support a heavily laden cartridge belt, the harness type suspenders distributes the weight over a greater area of the shoulders thus resulting in greater comfort and reduced fatigue. For greater combat efficiency, harness type suspenders are recommended for use by combat and combat support type units.

RECOMMENDATION: Issue a pair of harness type suspenders presently in use by the U. S. Army to all combat and combat support type personnel.

NECKERCHIEF/LOGISTICS

ITEM: That a requirement exists for a multi-purpose neckerchief.

DISCUSSION: In order to exert every possible effort to offset the adverse physical effects of tropical heat and thus not only reduce heat casualties but contribute to maintaining a high rate of efficiency during offensive counter-insurgency operations, in addition to lightweight utilities, a bulk water container and a tropical headgear, there is a definite requirement for a multipurpose neckerchief which can be normally worn, dampened, around the neck to aid in reducing body temperature. This same item can be used as a towel, sling, etc.

RECOMMENDATION: Procure and issue a light, terrycloth camouflage neckerchief.

UTILITIES - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the combat tropical utilities have proven to be an invaluable item of individual clothing under the climatic conditions in Vietnam.

DISCUSSION: Light in weight, rapid drying in consistency, well ventilated in design and with more than ample pocket space, the subject utilities have aided materially in improving efficiency and reducing the drastic effects of an extremely debilitating climate.

RECOMMENDATION: Continued utilization of the subject item of individual clothing with provisions for adequate organizational replacement stocks.

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WATER CONTAINER/LOGISTICS

ITEM: That an immediate requirement exists for a light weight relatively large quantity small unit bulk water container.

DISCUSSION: Extreme temperatures in Vietnam with consequent excessive perspiration water loss demand that individual Marines consume from 6 to 8 canteens (minimum) of water per day in order to reduce the incidence of dehydration and heat exhaustion. In certain types of terrain, water sources are limited or non-existent thus necessitating water resupply. The current expeditionary can has proved too heavy and bulky a container when full and an awkward nuisance type burden to patrols when empty. Therefore, to reduce the weight a small unit patrol is required to portage, a light weight bulk water container is essential.

RECOMMENDATION: Procure a nylon type spout pouring water bag capable of back pack or shoulder carry with a 2 to 3 gallon capacity that can provide light weight bulk water resupply to the small (squad) unit and be reduced in size as the water is distributed.

GLOVES - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That individuals in sawgrass and dense underbrush, common throughout Vietnam, consistently suffer from numerous hand cuts and infections.

DISCUSSION: Patrols frequently traverse terrain that has been completely overgrown by sawgrass and dense underbrush. The lead element must cut it's way through or other members push through without a means of protection for their hands, as a result, hand infections have been a source of a multitude of minor non-battle casualties.

RECOMMENDATIONS: Issue, on an organizational property basis, leather gloves similar to those worn by Naval Aviators to combat and combat support units.

CANTEEN - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the need exists to replace the metal canteen with the plastic canteen.

DISCUSSION: The plastic canteen presently in the supply system has proven decidedly superior to the metal canteen. Lighter in weight, it reduces the overall individual load and completely eliminates metallic noises incident to the handling of the current canteen.

RECOMMENDATION: Expedite the issue of the plastic canteen to all units presently serving in combat areas.

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BODY ARMOR - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That body armor is unsuitable for strenuous activity in hot and humid climates.

DISCUSSION: Body armor has caused an unacceptable number of heat casualties if worn while undergoing even minimal physical activity. It does not permit circulation of air nor absorb sufficient moisture to support an efficient body cooling process. The weight and bulkiness have hampered the freedom of movement required on patrol.

RECOMMENDATION: Body armor to be worn only while engaged in non-strenuous activity, i.e., helicopter reconnaissance, manning defensive positions, troop vehicular movement.

HEAD GEAR - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the current Marine Corps head gear, both the helmet and utility cap have proven inadequate for extensive and intensive offensive type counter-insurgency operations in a tropical climate.

DISCUSSION: The steel helmet has proven impractical in highly mobile offensive operations as it generates and retains, heat, impairs hearing and is uncomfortable. Similarly, the current utility cap offers no protection from the heat on the top or back of the head, neck or lower face. In the monsoon weather the present cover will not shed water properly, causing additional discomfort to the wearer. Wearing of either of the afore mentioned head pieces during patrol operations resulted in a daily average of two heat casualties while during a local three week experiment with a brimmed hat, heat casualties were reduced by half although the scope and intensity of patrols increased and the weather was appreciably warmer.

RECOMMENDATION: That a high crowned, broad-brimmed, well-ventilated head cover can be developed for combat operations in tropical climates.

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HAMMOCK, JUNGLE-LOGISTIC

ITEM: That units operating out of patrol bases in jungle areas have a need for a jungle hammock.

DISCUSSION: Units operating out of jungle areas have a need for a light weight strong jungle hammock that will keep them off the ground and free of leeches, bugs, mosquitos, snakes and other pests. These pests can effectively reduce the combat efficiency of a unit. The jungle hammock presently used by the Army is lightweight and strong with built in mosquito netting. A jungle hammock being light in weight, would add very little to the combat load of the individual Marine and greatly assist him in those hours when he is able to get some sleep.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Marine Corps adopt the present Army type jungle hammock for use as organizational equipment to be issued on an as needed basis.

EQUIPMENT - LOGISTICS

ITEM: That the present Marine Corps pack is inadequate for offensive counter insurgency operations in a tropical environment.

DISCUSSION: Extended offensive patrol and search operations in a tropical climate require that the average patrol member minimally carry a poncho, extra socks and 2 meals per day. The current pack (haversack or knapsack) is not only too large, but being shoulder carried, becomes a hinderance to jungle movement by snagging on vines, bushes, etc, as well as, reducing clothing ventilation. An envelope type, small of the back pack, which snaps/clips on yoke-type suspenders or the cartridge belt is ideally suited to current operations in Vietnam.

RECOMMENDATION: Procure and issue the subject type pack similar to that tested during the infantry unit troop tests in 1960.

UNDERCLOTHING-LOGISTICS

ITEM: That white underclothing, particularly the shirt, has proven to be disadvantageous in current combat operations.

DISCUSSION: It has been noted on numerous occasions that friendly units have been easily detected at great distances due to the decided contrast of the white underwear material against a dark background of a tropical environment.

RECOMMENDATION: Authorize dying of current stocks of white underwear and procure and issue a fast green color dye through the supply system in accordance with MCO 10120.36 (Green underclothing and towels for use by FMF personnel).

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COMMUNICATION/OPERATIONS

ITEM: A requirement exists to drastically revise communications concepts on equipment employment within the Marine Infantry Battalion as an interim measure until the advance family of new radio equipment is received in the inventory.

DISCUSSION: The above proposal is based on the following factors:

- a. Need for reliable communications down to squad level since this unit has proved to be the most effective for patrolling and ambush.
- b. Total inadequacy of the PRC-6 in Jungle environment between widely dispersed units.
- c. Insufficient number of PRC-10's within the infantry battalion.
- d. Inability of the PRC-47 to be used as a mobile transmitter/receiver.
- e. Requirement for whip type antenna for wide range communications without a tendency to snag and snap in Jungle undergrowth.
- f. Complex and cumbersome construction of the 292 antenna resists rapid installation and is difficult to conceal.
- g. Inadequacy of the TRC-27 generator to support continuous communications between the infantry battalion and regiment.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

- a. Eliminate the PRC-6 and increase the number of PRC-10's to fifteen per rifle company for a total of approximately 90. This would be the ideal solution. However, a total of 60 PRC-10's would be acceptable. Current operational conditions do not require simultaneously employment of all the squads within the battalion.
- b. The PRC-47 is an excellent piece of equipment which needs to be modified to permit utilization on the move while on foot.
- c. A simple, durable, lightweight telescopic antenna should be developed to replace the 292 antenna.
- d. A larger, more durable generator should be issued to support the TRC-27.
- e. A light weight, durable telescopic antenna is needed for the PRC-10.

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CONFIDENTIAL**HEADQUARTERS**

4th Marines (Rein), 3d Marine Division
FPO San Francisco, California

3:RLT:cwm
7 July 1965

From: CO, 4th Marines (-) (Rein)
To: CO, 3d Marine Division (-) (Rein)
Subj: Counterinsurgency Lessons Learned Report
Ref: (a) Your msg P2908442

1. In accordance with reference (a), the following report is submitted.
2. Operational Tactics.

- (a) Viet Cong Long Range Fires. The VC fire with small arms at Marine units that are of a size greater than theirs. The VC will fire and move to different positions to repeat firing but do not attack a larger force. Close engagement is only established in cases of night probes by 1 to 6 VC of the FEBA. The VC will participate in close engagement when cornered or taken by surprise.
- (b) Small Unit Engagements. The VC will attack the LZ during helicopter operations when only a small force of Marines remain to be lifted. For this reason, Marine units should ensure that artillery FO Teams are one of the last units to be lifted. Prearranged fires for artillery should be plotted for close in protection of LZ.
- (c) Night Marksmanship. Current rules of engagement require illumination for night firing at suspected enemy targets. Night firing by Marines at targets at distances greater than had grenade range has not achieved a high rate of enemy kills. For these reasons Marines need more training in all phases of night marksmanship training. Night Marksmanship Training should be conducted under conditions of both illumination and non-illumination.
- (d) Vietnamese Interpreters. Village search and clear operations are conducted frequently but are not as effective as they could be due to a lack of interpreters. The language barrier curtails Marine units from obtaining vital information concerning the VC. Positive identification of the VC and their movements would be enhanced if adequate interpreters were available.
- (e) Armed HULE. The VC have shown a dislike for the HULE. When on station during operations the VC will flee from the HULE and seek cover, hence preventing Marine infantry casualties. In addition, the HULE is capable of supporting the infantry and delivering accurate fire upon VC targets. Greater employment of the HULE should be utilized at every available opportunity.

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3. Logistical Considerations.

- (a) Water. The high consumption of water by all units makes it imperative that provisions be made not only for availability but for distribution to the lowest level. This should include additional water trailers beyond those prescribed by TE/TA. During the initial stages, 5 gallon expeditionary cans must be used for distribution to lower units, with sufficient water trailers for back-up resupply. At the earliest after landing, provisions must be made for construction of water points, preferably located as close as possible to the using units. A deep-well digging rig is essential for units located on high ground. Water supply equipment and supplies must be on hand in sufficient quantity and in excellent working condition.
- (b) Supply. Strong emphasis must be placed on the attainment, maintenance and packaging to include weatherproofing of unit mount out 30 day allowance. Mount out blocks in the separate battalions should be configured so as to permit allocation to units detached to the BLT/RLT e.g. Tank Co., Ontos Co., LVT Co. etc. Provisions must be made for establishment of rear areas as soon as practicable by supply personnel so that unit supplies are received, and properly stored to reduce pilferage/loss. Subordinate attachments to BLT's/RLT's must be appraised by parent organizations as to supply/fiscal responsibilities source of supply, reports, issues and receipt of material.
- (c) Batteries. The extreme heat and the lack of refrigeration for dry cell batteries reduced their useful life significantly. A thirty-day supply may debilitate to ten or fifteen days.
- (d) Repair Parts. Repair parts for 1st and 2nd echelon maintenance for the first sixty days which consisted of a 30-day operating level and a 30-day mount out allowance is considered adequate and was extremely beneficial to this operation, however third and fourth echelon maintenance repair parts, operating levels and mount out allowances did not adequately support requirements of the ground elements, particularly in communication-electronics area and motor transport.
- (e) Class III. Provisions must be made to ensure that vehicles with a high gasoline consumption ratio such as LVTs have a source of supply during the early stages of an operation prior to establishment of a bulk fuel capability. In the CHU IAI operation, LVT's were able to refuel from an LSD and alleviated a critical shortage of MOGAS on the beach during the first few days.
- (f) Beach-Matting and Trafficability. The lack of any road network, in view of deep, shifting sands coupled with preloaded vehicles towing trailers created considerable congestion on the beach due to the vehicles inability to egress. LVTP5, TD-18s and other tracked vehicles were utilized in order to keep the beach clear and supplies and equipment moving forward. Due to the unavailability of beach-matting prior to departure from Okinawa, there was insufficient matting to establish egress roads from the beach. The lack of soil

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stability did not permit the construction of an MSR until laterite could be obtained from a distant mountainside. Due to the high priority accorded to the construction of SATS immediately after landing, engineer equipment was not readily available for improvement of the MSR.

- (g) Class V. All units landed with Basic Allowance of ammunition and this is considered to be adequate. Expenditure rates are considerably lower than those prescribed in MCO 8010.1A under the conditions which have been encountered to date, with the exception of pyrotechnics and illumination grenades which continue to be a high use item and definitely an area wherein shortages have been experienced.
- (h) Evacuation. The chain of evacuation for friendly casualties, as well as ARVN and civilian personnel must be promulgated to all concerned down to the corpsman well in advance and reiterated on a timely basis. All ARVN and civilian casualties must be evacuated to Vietnamese medical facilities available. American casualties follow the normal evacuation chain.
- (i) Personal Effects. Provisions must be made for the storage of non-essential uniforms and personal gear outside of the objective area. The maximum number of utilities and other field equipment should be brought by each individual, however only a minimum of summer service uniforms if any. Seabags which are exposed to the elements quickly mildew in this climate which is ruinous to uniform clothing, therefore provisions must be made for storage under cover.
- (j) Refrigeration. Provisions must be made to provide refrigeration equipment in the objective area as early as possible. The initial requirement is for storage of medical supplies which are subject to deterioration when exposed to hot weather. A demand for ice will exist for treatment of heat cases and casualties with high fever. Availability of refrigeration to all units would permit the serving of "A" rations at an early date.
- (k) Tracked Vehicles. Tracked vehicles are particularly suited for operations in this type of area. Ontos and LVTP5 were used for a variety of tasks, ranging from anchoring causeways to pulling bogged-down vehicles out of the sand plus daily tactical missions. It is noted that in two months of operations, the Ontos and LVT's experienced the lowest deadline rate of any other type of vehicle.

R. L. TREVINO
By direction

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HEADQUARTERS

1st Battalion, 12th Marines (-) Rein
3d Marine Division (Forward)
c/o FPO San Francisco, 96601

1/GWF/dlc
3000
8 Jul 1965

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Forward) FMF

Subj: Lessons learned from the present situation

Ref: (a) CG 3dMarDiv(Fwd)

Encl: (1) List of Lessons Learned
(2) Revised Fire Direction System

1. In compliance with reference (a), enclosures (1) and (2) are submitted.

G. W. FERGUSON

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LESSONS LEARNED

1. Personnel and Administration.

a. Personnel. It is readily apparent that a unit must be up to T/O for commitment to extended operations ashore. A unit which is initially short of T/O and which suffers normal losses through death, injury, and rotations will stay below and efficient operation level. A system is needed whereby committed units receive a rapid input of personnel. This Command has been less than 80% of T/O since being committed. This level not only impairs operations, but also effects morale and discipline. Such severe personnel shortages are especially significant when a battery has to operate in unsecured areas, or when a battery is split between a primary and forward position and must provide security for both - as happens frequently in this area. In addition to the rapid input mentioned above, a rotation system must be developed which will keep pace with the personnel situation. In many instances, personnel rotate to CONUS without contact replacements. This is a critical situation for an artillery unit, because many are specialists, and failure to replace an MOS skill with a contact relief can lead to breakdowns in the system.

b. Administration. Administration has been smooth, because it was organized and supervised in such a manner that subordinate units always knew their requirements and how to comply.

2. Operations.

a. Combat Intelligence. The standard tools of the intelligence community are of less than normal value due to a highly fluid situation. Situation maps are of little use on more than a daily basis. Information received from daily ISUMS are usually of little value due to the fact that they are distributed several days late. Timely information is in critical shortage. The lack of covered circuits at the lower echelons contributes to the lack of timely information. A covered intelligence circuit is mandatory if higher, lower, and adjacent intelligence sections are to be able to pass useful information.

b. Fire Direction Procedures. Standard firing chart procedures proved to be inadequate and cumbersome for a Direct Support Battalion reinforced by a 155mm Howitzer Battery and an 8" Howitzer Platoon. A revised chart system was devised which has proven to be adequate for any firing situation encountered. A description of this system, which may be of interest to other artillery organizations, is contained in enclosure (2).

c. Firing Battery Procedures. Because firing in several directions within a short period of time is the rule rather than the exception, azimuth stakes are placed around each piece at 800 mil increments. A rough azimuth of lay is included in each fire command, and by using the azimuth stakes for orientation, it has been found that the section chief can relay faster than with the standard system of announcing "Action...front/rear/right front...." etc. The inclusion of a rough azimuth of lay in the fire command is part of the revised chart system described in enclosure (2).

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d. T/O for the Operations Section, D/S Artillery Battalion. The current table of organization is not adequate for two reasons: the liaison section is not adequately staffed for combat operations, and the operations section is staffed only for FDC operations. There are numerous administrative and operational functions to be accomplished that are entirely separate from the fire direction business. The addition of two Fire Control Men, 0844, in the Liaison Section and one Admin Man, 0141, and one Assistant Operations Chief, 0848, in the Operations Section is required.

3. Logistics.

a. Firing Battery Mount-Out Blocks. The following items were not, but should have been, included in all firing battery mount-out blocks: 18 gallons of bore cleaner, 300 sheets of crocus cloth, 1 m-26 fuze setter, 1 M-28 fuze setter, 192 BA-42's, 1 panoramic telescope and mount, 1 range quadrant and mount, and 1 elbow telescope. The need for the above items in the mount-out block was apparent despite the fact 12 gallons of bore cleaner, 300 sheets of crocus cloth, and 24 BA-42's were carried in section chests.

b. Lack of formal account for a non-T/O task organization. The two firing batteries that made the initial landing were detached from their respective BLT's and task organized as the Brigade Artillery Group, without establishing a supply account for this organization, and in the absence of the parent units. No supplies were received by either battery for approximately 40 days, until accounting procedures were established. A more flexible supply system is apparently needed, as well as more thorough staffing of proposed task organizations.

c. Critical shortage of electronics repair parts. Garrison usage data is grossly inadequate as the basis of stockage levels for stockage levels for sustained operations. Consequently, the supply is clogged by a very high demand rate. Accurate combat usage data and corresponding supply follow-through is essential prior to deployment.

d. Critical shortages of dry cell batteries. While a more realistic mount-out level is necessary, continuing resupply is a crucial problem.

e. Insufficient FM equipment in Headquarters Battery of a D/S Artillery Battalion. There is a need for 14 vice 10 AN/PRC-9 radio sets. A recommended change to the T/E has been submitted.

f. Need for new FM equipment. Age coupled with high usage has resulted in numerous failures of the PRC series of equipment. Additionally, reliability suffers because of the alignment problem of old sets. It is recommended that the introduction of the AN/PRC-25 be expedited for units now committed.

g. Unsuitability of MK-535 for field use. This is an unsatisfactory piece of equipment. The unreliable splice and the high cost of sleeves makes this item unsuitable.

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h. Lack of Class IV Supplies. Engineer fortification materials have been and still are in critically short supply. None were received for the first 30 days ashore. These items should be made available to units mounting out.

i. Supply, General. A total of 1,616 requisitions of all priorities have been submitted since 12 April, and the fill rate of 10-15% is indicative of the problem. The lack of spare parts in all commodity groups is a continuing problem.

j. Ordnance Problem Areas.

(1) HOWTARS. In addition to firing difficulties, structural weaknesses have been noted, and a UER has been submitted. The 4.2 Inch Mortar (m-30) has been received as augmentation for the Howtars in helicopter operations.

(2) 8" Howitzer Panoramic Telescope. Frequent firing with charges 6 and 7 has caused continual sight failures.

(3) Ammunition. Obsolete ammunition has been purged, but ammunition shortages - particularly illumination shells - remain. The anticipated usage rate in the event of an all-out attack on this area is far in excess of assets. Storage of Class V is a problem because of drainage, and this problem will become more severe with the onset of the rainy season.

k. Motor Transport. Other than a lack of spare parts, no significant problems have been experienced.

l. Engineer. Engine generators have been a constant problem because of initial shortages, high usage, old equipment, and lack of spare parts. Allowances and allocations of generators should be reevaluated in the light of current experience factors.

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REVISED FIRE DIRECTION SYSTEM

Item: Fire direction procedures for a reinforced artillery battalion in a guerrilla warfare environment.

Discussion: The subject environment has required the displacement of an average of one battery per day, with up to four displacements per day, the employment of batteries by platoons with different directions of fire, with technical fire direction of separated platoons from the Battalion FDC, and the ability to fire and/or mass fires quickly anywhere in a complete circle. Although technical fire direction is normally centralized only for weapons organic to the battalion (105mm howitzers and 107mm mortars), the requirement still exists for the battalion FDC to be able to produce or check firing data for the attached weapons (155mm and 8" howitzers). Two lessons were learned: first, that standard FDC chart procedures are not suitable for the above organization and situation; second, that certain firing battery procedures had to be revised to cope with the situation.

Solutions

Firing Chart. The length and width of the firing chart must be twice the maximum range of the longest shooting weapon system in the composite unit. All data is taken from a grid intersection at the center of the chart, and permanent azimuth/deflection indexes are drawn on the chart every 100 mils. The indexes are each approximately two inches in length, drawn so that the ends protrude above and below the mil arc of a range-deflection protractor. Each index is labeled at the top with grid azimuth and at the bottom with deflection. All calibers use the same referred deflection at any azimuth; in this case, the chart system is based on all batteries being laid on grid azimuth 6400, referred deflection 2600. Therefore, the chart index at azimuth 6400 is labeled 64 at the top and 26 at the bottom. The rest are labeled accordingly. Only the right-most 100 mil increment on the mil arc of the RDP is used, with the right-most 100 mil graduation to its left labeled zero. To read azimuth to the nearest 100 mil (which will be sent to the battery in the fire command), merely look at the relationship of the left edge of the arm of the RDP to the labeled indexes, to read deflection, the hundred value is one hundred less than the number that can be seen immediately adjacent to the left edge of the arm of the RDP. Tens and unit values are read from the right-most 100 mil increment on the mil arc of the RDP, from left to right, using the index that falls within that increment. To compensate for the actual locations of the firing batteries relative to the center of the firing chart (all chart data is taken from the center of the firing chart) a template is constructed from transparent grid sheet material, on which the center of the chart and all battery centers are plotted in their actual locations. This template is then turned upside down, and is always used in this upside down orientation. To get chart data, the center of the template is placed over the target, the grid lines of the template are then aligned exactly parallel to the grid lines on the firing chart, the vertex of the RDP at the center of the chart, and then a map pin is stuck in the template location of the battery. The RDP is then used to determine range

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and deflection to the pin at this location. Chart data for other batteries is obtained by shifting the pin to the template location of those batteries. Miscellaneous chart procedures, such as data for replot and conversion of observed firing data to surveyed data, can be accomplished by several techniques that can be derived if the basic concepts are understood.

Firing Battery Procedures. Firing battery procedures are modified to compliment the revised chart procedures, and two sets of aiming posts (with night lighting devices) are mandatory to eliminate potential problems. Aiming posts are put out 3200 mils apart at the referred deflections corresponding to the azimuth of lay. For example, if laid on azimuth 6400, the aiming posts would be put out at deflection 2600; however, if laid on azimuth 6300, the aiming posts would be put out at deflection 2700. Because firing is so frequently done in directions opposite the initial azimuth of lay, it has been found that an azimuth reference system for the chief of section not only reduces the possibility of errors - particularly in night firing - but also speeds the rough lay when trails are shifted. Therefore, azimuth reference stakes are set out every 800 mils around each piece, and the azimuth of fire (to the nearest 100 mils) is included as the second element of the command from FDC. Other firing battery procedures remain unchanged.

FDC Organization. The school and textbook solution for the physical organization of the FDC has been proven unsatisfactory. Every element of the FDC must be organized so that nothing can interfere with the passage of fire missions, data and commands between the FDC, RTO's, HCO's VCO and computers. The only physical organization that satisfies this requirement is to have all these individuals facing inboard with their equipment, and no walkways between them. When the FDC will remain in a semi-permanent location, all equipment, such as charts, radio remotes, EE-8's and maps can be mounted on one central table specially constructed to accommodate these items and to compliment the functioning of the FDC.

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