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HEADQUARTERS
3D Battalion, 3D Marines
3D Marine Division (Rein) FMF
FPO, San Francisco, California 96602

3/FMF/ann
13131
6 March 1968


From: Commanding Officer, 3D Battalion, 3D Marines
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code AO3D)
Via: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF
Commanding General, III MAF
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 March 68 - 31 March 1968.

Ref: (a) MGO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8
(c) DivO 5750.1A

Encl: ✓(1) March 1968 Command Chronology.

1. In accordance with references (a), (b) and (c) enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. Group IV: Downgrade at three year intervals with declassification after twelve years. Declassified upon removal of enclosure.


DONALD C. MARCHETTE
By direction

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 March 1968 to 31 March 1968

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PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. DESIGNATION

COMMANDER

3d Battalion, 3d Marines

LtCol J.W. MARSH

1-31 March

Subordinate Units

H&S Company	Capt F.R. MATTHEWS	1 March
	Capt T.W. ARNOLD	1-31 March
India Company	Capt O.J. LEBRACK	1-31 March
Kilo Company	Capt D.R. FRANK	1-31 March
Lima Company	Capt R. ZENSEN	1-21 March
	Capt F.R. MATTHEWS	21-31 March
Mike Company	Capt W.H. MCADAMS	1-31 March

Attached Units

Light Section, 1st Plt, "C" Co, 3d Tank Bn.	GySgt R. L. JONES	1-19 March
	SSgt N.E. HOSKINS	19-29 March
Section, 2nd Plt, "A" Btry, 1st Bn, ADA, AW(SP), 44th Artillery USA	1st Lt F.W. TAUL	1-27 March
	1st Lt T. LAMPE	27-31 March
Whiskey Btry, 1st Bn, 12th Marines	Capt J.M. STRANK	29-31 March
"C" Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines	Capt O.J. RENFO	1-22 March
Detachment, 250th CMR, USA	SSgt A. ELLIOT	1-29 March
Section, 1st Plt, "A" Btry, 1st Bn, ADA AWSP, 44th Artillery, USA	Sgt F.L. PERO	1-29 March
3rd Plt, "A" Co, 3d Tank Bn.	GySgt J.R. MCCLELLAND	1-29 March
3rd Plt, "A" Co. 3rd Tank Bn.	GySgt J.R. MCCLELLAND	29-31 March
Detachment, 11th Engineer Bn.		1-29 March
Detachment, FLSG. 1		1-29 March
Naval Gunfire Team, 12th Marines		1-29 March
FO TEAM, HQ. CO., 12th Marines	1stLt WILSON	1-29 March
Detachment, Sound Plt, 2nd Bn, 26th Artillery, USA		1-29 March

2. Location:

1-31 March, Quang Tri Province, YD 175723, (A-3), RVN.

3. Staff Officers:

Executive Officer	Major C.V. LYNN	1-31 March
S-1	1stLt D.C. MARCHETTE	1-31 March
S-2	1stLt A.L. ASHBURN	1-31 March

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S-3

S-4

Major R.F. FINDLAY JR 1-31 March
1st Lt. E.N. LAWRENCE 1-31 March

4. Average Monthly Strength.

USMC	
OFF	ENL
39	1081

USN	
OFF	ENL
2	57

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NARRATIVE SUMMARY

March

The month of March saw a continued increase in enemy activity in and around the eastern DMZ area. Enemy contact in the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines AO correspondingly increased during the first half of the month. Heavy contact was gained on four occasions during the period 1-16 March. Three of the four contacts involved NVA units of estimated battalion strength. NVA units engaged during this period were not only stronger in number than those previously encountered by this unit during Operation Kentucky but were extremely well armed and equipped. On three occasions friendly elements were subjected to heavy volumes of adjusted artillery fire. This was the first occasion requiring the Battalion to react to NVA artillery fires, delivered in support of enemy ground forces in contact. On only one of these occasions was NVA artillery able to inflict a significant number of casualties on the rifle company in contact. It effectively retarded the Battalions capability to commit a reserve force from the A-3 position to the point of ground contact. In as much as the A-3 Position is situated in the trace, avenues of access and egress to the position offer virtually no cover or concealment. At such time as ground contact was gained, the NVA responded by blocking minefield free lanes and avenues from A-3 to the point of contact with artillery. Thus the capability of the Battalion to reinforce or exploit ground contact was greatly impaired. On one occasion "L" Company deployed in a patrol base, was unable to move in support of "M" Company, which was heavily engaged, as a result of accurate artillery fire simultaneously adjusted on both companies.

On 22 March "C" Company, 1st Battalion, 4th Marines was chopped from the OPCON of the Battalion, necessitating the redeployment of "L" Company to A-2. The S-3A was assigned as the defense coordinator of A-2 and the Battalion Executive Officer was returned to A-3. At 291500H the Battalion Chopped OPCON of the A-2 Position to the 2nd ARVN Regiment at which time "L" Company was returned to the A-3 Position with the exception of one platoon which was chopped to the (9th Marine Regiment).

The assumption of OPCON by the 2nd ARVN of the A-2 Position brought with it a substantial reduction in the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines AO. This refocused the operational emphasis on the areas west of A-3 and the Phu Tho area to the south. Operations to the northwest of A-3 are limited in scope to short range security patrols as a result of NVA demonstrated ability to effectively adjust artillery on friendly units maneuvering in this area.

As a result of 3d Battalion, 3d Marines ambushes and heavy patrol activity it was determined that little, if any NVA north, south infiltration was accomplished between A-3 and A-2 during this reporting period. It is suspected that infiltration of personnel and supplies to the Vinh Xa and Phu Tho area is being accomplished from a site located to the east of Route #1, via the east/west accesses south of Phu Tho. Increased attention will be devoted to developing and if possible exploiting this assumption during the following month.

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Although operational readiness and morale is considered excellent, there are definite problem areas which will require increased command attention during the following month. Heavier than usual casualties coupled with normal rotation have significantly reduced the experience factor. This high rate of attrition has created an urgent need to accelerate training and indoctrination. Training objectives have been determined and will be met during the following month.

With continued occupancy of A-3 since 29 December 1967, living conditions have continued to improve. One major area of increasing concern is the absence of a self replenishing source of water adequate for approximately 1,000 personnel. Efforts to sink a well or divert existing water sheds have met with marginal success. It is anticipated that unless a more satisfactory solution to this problem is found a major health and sanitation problem will proportionate to the increase in temperature characteristic to the summer season.

Major command and staff changes during the past reporting period included the Sergeant Major as well as the Commanding Officer of Lima Company.

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTINGS OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. Combat Missions Assigned:

a. Basic Mission. To conduct missions in assigned area of operations in accordance with 3rd MarDiv Operation Order 59-67. (Kentucky)

b. To conduct anti infiltration operations in AO with special emphasis on interdicting north/south infiltration routes, assume responsibility for enlarged AO, to include outpost of Hill #28 with not less than two rifle companies at night, defend A-3 and provide protection for construction effort on Route 566. Reference: 9th Marines Operation Plan 2-68; 9th Marine Frag Order #14 (Operation Kentucky)

c. To conduct a reconnaissance in force of Hill #31 to determine the strength and composition of enemy forces in this area and exploit supporting fires (Battalion Frag Order 6-68).

2. Significant Operations Conducted.

a. 3 March 68 - At 1445 the S-3 and Company Commander of "C" Co., 1st Bn, 4th Marines, two platoons and a heavy section of tanks deployed from A-2 and tied in with "K" Company elements at 1530 at YD 193723. Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines secured "K" Companies right flank by establishing a block at YD 189720. "K" Company and the tank section conducted a tank infantry attack into an estimated 50 NVA dug in from YD 194723 to YD 197724. The attack closely followed heavy artillery prep fires and a screen of CS from an B-8 Gas Launcher. Resistance was broken and "K" Company consolidated at YD 198723. Some enemy were destroyed withdrawing to the southeast. The majority of the enemy were killed by small arms. Resistance by the enemy was largely suppressed at the heaviest point of contact by 50 and 30 caliber machine gun fire from tanks. The enemy employed small arms, automatic weapons chi-coms and rifle grenades. Seventeen NVA bodies were found in trenches as well as 1 unwounded POW. The NVA unit was dressed in khakis, soft camouflaged covers, and cartridge belts. The NVA unit was equipped with a large supply of food, packs, new weapons, an ample ammunition supply and fresh laundry. It is established that 10-15 additional enemy were killed during consolidation and pursuit by fire. Friendly units returned to their respective positions without incident. It is worthy to note that only one minor WIA was sustained during the assault.

b. 3 March 1968. Elements of "L" Company established a platoon patrol base at YD 150727 and observed a small element moving north at YD 154735. An artillery mission was fired with marginal coverage. The Lima Company Commander with a recon element moved forward to YD 155735 to observe the results of the artillery mission and from this point

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observed small groups of enemy converging on his position. The enemy was engaged with machine gun fire. The enemy started to close with the recon element from both flanks. The recon element withdrew to the patrol base which was displaced forward to YD 155735. The enemy continued to close with increased force and engaged the patrol within grenade range. At 1400H the Battalion Commander dispatched the remainder of Lima Company to reinforce the engaged unit. By the arrival of the reinforcing element an estimated 300 NVA had been sighted north of the road in grid 1573 and the north portion of 1572. Fixed wing controlled by an AO caused a portion of enemy to break contact and withdraw to the northeast. Lima Company reinforcing element pursued the withdrawing enemy with M-79s, small arms, and LAWS. Regimental snipers accounted for nine KIA's. Under the cover of air and artillery, Lima Company elements commenced to break contact upon completion of a Med Evac. At 1645H, it appeared that Lima Company probed a battalion size enemy force moving northeast on the road, where initial contact was made. The enemy carried large packs, radios and appeared to be well equipped. The enemy were dressed in green and khaki uniforms. Snipers killed one enemy carrying binoculars while directing movement of 30 NVA. He was assumed to be an officer. Total enemy KIA's confirmed by ground fire were 84 NVA. This figure does include enemy confirmed by air and artillery. The tactical situation did not permit Lima Company to search the area for enemy weapons and equipment.

c. 6 March 1968. At 1100H while conducting a sweep at YD 154734, Mike Company point elements made contact with an estimated NVA Company reinforced dug in on both sides of the French Road. Upon cresting a ridge at YD 154734 the elements were engaged by and subsequently destroyed three machine gun bunkers on the topographical crest of the ridge. Three machine guns were captured. Only two machine guns could be carried from the hill, the third gun was destroyed. When consolidating initial gains, Mike Company lead elements were heavily engaged by several automatic weapons and heavy fire from approximately 18 fortified positions, supported by NVA employing chi-cons and AK-47's from supporting fighting holes. Mike Company committed reinforcing elements to the ridgeline. The enemy employed heavy 60mm and 81mm mortars followed by 105mm artillery which was accurately adjusted. Mike Company destroyed another 50 caliber machine gun and personnel employed the M-79 during consolidation. Early in the engagement the NVA attempted to flank Mike Company's position on the southwest and north flank. NVA elements moved under the cover of mortar fire but were engaged at more than 150 meters suffering heavy casualties. The reserve, Lima Company, was held in position at YD 163737 by heavy 105mm enemy artillery received commencing at 1100H. Difficulty was experienced in withdrawing casualties due to the distance from the point of contact to a secure landing zone. Enemy artillery and mortars also necessitated the shifting of the LZ on two occasions. The Med Evac became confused as casualties were continuously incurred throughout the entire engagement.

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Although the close contact gained initially was with an estimated NVA reinforced company it was supported and reinforced with an estimated battalion size unit located approximately 300-500 meters northwest of the initial point of contact. The non availability of gunships was critical, but the AOs made accurate adjustments of both fixed wing and artillery which eased the pressure. Mobility was lost when casualties increased to a point beyond the effective handling capability of the company. This made the company vulnerable to enemy artillery and mortars which accounted for the majority of the casualties. It is estimated that the enemy employed a combined total of 150-175 rounds of 105mm artillery and 150 rounds of mortar fire on Mike and Lima Companies.

d. 16 March 1968. "C" Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines and Mike Company deployed to sweep both sides of the railroad track in grids 1974, 1973. At 0948H "C" Company while moving at YD 195734 contacted approximately 40 NVA firing from several locations to the northwest, north and north east. The Company Commander deployed both platoons and refused his flanks to the east and west. His left flank deployed westward to meet the heaviest resistance. The Battalion Commander ultimately pulled "C" Company back to YD 197738 to consolidate and exploit artillery fires and air support. The Company Commander committed his remaining platoon from A-2 to strengthen his position. At 0915H "M" Company reported finding a freshly dug hole with abandoned NVA machine gun ammunition and 782 gear and shortly after observed movement. "M" Company continued to move east and the third platoon made heavy contact on the left flank at 0940H with 30-50 dug in NVA. "M" Company while returning fire received 60mm and 82mm adjusted mortars, small arms, machine gun fire and chicombs. Fixed wing, AO and artillery as well as heavy 81mm mortar fire were used to support while "M" Company consolidated initial gains. Elements of the NVA unit began to withdraw to the north and east. Several NVA were engaged at YD 193741 by "C" Company as they withdrew from contact, accounting for 12 NVA confirmed at about 1030H. "M" Company continued to move forward to YD 187741 to develop the contact. Mike Company finally made heavy contact with security elements of the withdrawing main force. The AO reported approximately 100 NVA in trenches 50-100 meters from Mike Company forward elements. The company held in position and called fixed wing, general and direct support artillery, gunships, 60mm and 81mm mortars. The NVA withdrew to the north astride a trail at YD 183746. 106RR and 81mm mortars were fired on NVA observed withdrawing across a rice paddy at the above coordinates, accounting for a total of 8 NVA KIA confirmed. Mike Company continued to pursue the withdrawing enemy by fire. Mike Company confirmed 56 NVA by ground fire throughout six hours of ground contact. The AO estimated the enemy as battalion size. Over 400 rounds of estimated 105mm artillery was received by Mike Company, Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines, and the A-3. Position which was poorly adjusted and generally ineffective. Fixed wing and the AO received heavy AA fire from grid 1774. The main element engaged by Mike Company were clad in new green utilities, metal flak jackets,

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helmets w/nets and camouflage. Two elements near the railroad tracks identified with camouflaged utilities and rainhats or bush hats. NVA bodies recovered did not have weapons.

Artillery and 81mm mortars were adjusted and 60mm mortars and 106 recoilless rifles were effectively employed from a vantage point on Hill #28.

3. Casualties Inflicted on the Enemy.

a. During the month of March, the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines inflicted the following casualties on the enemy; 335 NVA KIA (confirmed) and 02 POWs.

4. Casualties Sustained.

a. Name of Surgeon: Lt. Walter F. Drysdale MC USNR

b. Significant Events:

(1) On 1 March one member of H&S Company was wounded by enemy artillery. Lima Company sustained one KIA by enemy artillery.

(2) On 3 March 7 members of Lima Company were wounded and 6 members of Kilo Company wounded due to enemy action. One member of Lima and Kilo Companies were killed due to enemy action.

(3) On 5 March 2 members of Mike Company were wounded. One from enemy grenades and one from a friendly grenade.

(4) On 6 March 2 members of H&S Company were wounded by enemy mortars and 2 members of Lima Company were wounded by enemy artillery. Forty six members of Mike Company were wounded by enemy artillery and chicom. One H&S Company and 14 members of Mike Company were killed by enemy artillery.

(5) On 11 March one member of H&S Company was wounded by an accidental discharge.

(6) On 13 March one member of H&S Company was wounded by enemy artillery.

(7) On 15 March one member of H&S Company was wounded due to enemy artillery.

(8) On 16 March 16 members of Mike Company were wounded due to enemy artillery and chicom. One member of Mike Company was killed by GSW.

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(9) On 31 March 16 members of Lima Company were wounded due to an accidental discharge of a grenade and friendly artillery and one member was killed.

(10) Number of Battle Casualties:

<u>TOTALS</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>DOW</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>NBC</u>	<u>NBC KILLED</u>
USMC 3/3	19	90	00	00	13	01
USN 3/3	00	05	00	00	01	00
USMC OTHERS	00	05	00	00	04	00

(11) There was a total of 228 inoculations given during the month.

(12) Outpatient Visits:

(a) Common Complaints

(1) FUO	15
(2) Lacerations	07
(3) Venereal Disease	07
(4) Heat Casualties	00
(5) Malaria	00
(6) Dental	52
(7) Cellulitis	13
(8) Diarrhea	19

c. Medical Trends: There were no significant trends during the month of March with the exception that malaria was almost non existent.

d. Problem Areas: None

5. New Techniques Employed. None

6. Command Relations.

- a. OPCON - 9th Marines, ADCON - 3rd MarDiv
- b. 19Mar68, Lima Company chopped to OPCON of 1st Bn, 4th Marines.
- c. 21Mar68, Lima Company chopped from OPCON 1st Bn, 4th Marines to OPCON 3d Bn, 3d Marines.
- d. 22Mar68, Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines chopped from OPCON 3d Bn, 3d Marines to OPCON 1st Bn, 4th Marines.
- e. 29Mar68, The A-2 position was released from OPCON 3d Bn, 3d Marines to OPCON ARVN. 1st Platoon, Lima Company was chopped OPCON from 3d Bn, 3d Mar to OPCON 9th Marines.

7. Equipment. None

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8. Logistics.a. Supply:

(1) General: During this reporting period the battalion has continued to build up the A-3 Position and in addition has put a major effort into building up the A-2 Position. Daily resupply by helicopter is the principle means of transportation to A-3 while A-2 was resupplied twice weekly by road.

(2) Class I. A daily resupply maintains the regular supply of Class I at a three to five day level. Water buffalos are lifted in and out primarily by helicopter.

(3) Class II. There still remains a critical shortage on:

- Bayonets
- Gas masks and filters
- Magazines - .45 and M-16
- Binoculars
- Halizone Tablets
- Salt tablets

(4) Class III. No problems encountered in keeping an adequate supply of POL on hand.

(5) Class IV. Due to Operation Dye Marker no problems have been encountered in obtaining Class IV items.

(6) Class V. The battalion supply of Class V is maintained at a BA + 10 DOA.

b. Motor Transport.

(1) The present status is considered adequate for current operations on the M274A2's (mules) and M422A1 (mites). However, the battalion has only one of the four M37B1's (personnel carriers) which the battalion rates and this puts a considerable cramp on our support operations.

(a) Breakdown of M422A1 (mites);

(1) T/E	20
(2) O/H	14
(3) 2d Echelon Maint	0
(4) 3d Echelon Maint	1
(5) Code "X"ed	2
(6) Operational	11
(7) Code X'ed	6

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(b) Breakdown of M274A2 (mules);

(1) T/E	30	
(2) O/H	29	(3 TAD, 9th Marines)
(3) 2d Echelon Maint	16	
(4) 3d Echelon Maint	0	
(5) Code "X"ed	1	
(6) Operational	10	

(2) Ninth Motor Transport Battalion provides trucks to pick up and deliver supplies to the LSA for helicopter resupply and to resupply the A-2 Position. On several occasions truck support to A-2 was inadequate.

c. Engineer Assistance.

(1) The 11th Engineers have provided assistance by landscaping, digging revetments, constructing tactical wire, and laying minefields at the A-2 Position.

d. A shortage of carburetors, magnetos, ignition kits, fuel pumps, rear cables and cable leads for the M274A2 (mules) still exist in our motor transport section. Motor Transport received 50 spark plugs for mules, but were kept on priority 2 due to the fact that the life span of one spark plug is only 25 hours.

e. Ordinance.

(1) At the end of the month the battalion maintained the following status:

ITEM	T/E	O/H	OPERATIONAL	2d Ech.	3d Ech(FISU)
M-14 rifles	52	52	52	0	0
45 Pistols	329	338	334	4	0
Shotguns	13	11	10	0	1
M-60 MG	35	32	30	0	2
106RR	8	8	6	0	2
M-79	36	33	33	0	0
81mm Mortar	8	8	7	0	3
60mm Mortar	12	12	11	0	1
3.5 Rocket	32	30	29	0	1
M-16 Rifles	919	1020	1015	0	5
106RR Mounts	8	8	7	0	1
Flamethrowers	8	0	0	0	6 (4th Ech. Maint.) 2 on order

9. Civic Action. None

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10. Administration.

- a. There were no awards ceremony held during the month of March.
- b. A total of 13 court martials were held during March; 5 SPCM, and 8 SCM. Four court martials are pending. Six Battalion Commanders Office Hours were completed and none are pending. There were 11 Company Commanders Office Hours completed and 9 are pending.
- c. Special Services activity during March;
 (1) Issuance of 3d MarDiv stationery to all members of the ~~1st~~ battalion.
 (2) One free beer and soda issue.
 (3) Issuance of one transistor radio per company.
- d. Post exchange services were not available to this battalion due to the battalion being located at A-3. SP's were available to all companies.
- e. Liberty was not authorized during this period.
- f. During the month two officers and 59 enlisted Marines rotated to CONUS. Twenty three enlisted Marines were transferred within the regiment or division. Thirty four enlisted Marines were transferred as a result of medical evacuation.

11. Personnel.

- a. Gains: 4 USMC Off; 92 USMC Enl; 0 USN Off; 1 USN Enl
 b. Losses; 2 USMC Off; 141 USMC Enl; 0 USN Off; 2 USN Enl
 c. Monthly Strength (Average):

<u>MC OFF</u>	<u>MC ENL</u>	<u>USN OFF</u>	<u>USN ENL</u>
39	1081	2	57

- d. Net loss/gain;

<u>MC OFF</u>	<u>MC ENL</u>	<u>USN OFF</u>	<u>USN ENL</u>
0/2	49/0	0/0	1/0

- e. Emergency leave for the month of March; 7 USMC enlisted. There were no Humanitarian Transfers during the month of March. Twice/thrice wounded or reassigned outside of RVN due to father/brother in country; 5 USMC enlisted.

- f. There were no Hardship Discharges applied for during the past month.

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g. One administrative Discharge is pending.

h. The R&R program continues to be a major morale factor within this command. There were 79 out of country R&R quotas used during this reporting period.

i. Morale is considered to be excellent to outstanding.

j. Postal services during the month of March has been good. Mail was forwarded to the forward position via air resupply transportation when available.

12. Intelligence.

The month of March was characterized by three battalion size contacts, one company size contact and increased use of enemy artillery support for ground action.

On 3 March 68, Lima Company's platoon (Rein) established a patrol base at YD 150727. They spotted a small enemy element moving north at YD 154735. The platoon from Lima Company then moved forward to YD 155735 to check for results of an artillery mission and at this point took under fire several small enemy elements. The enemy began to close with increased force and engaged the platoon within grenade range. At 1400H, the remainder of Lima Company at A-3 YD 171732 was called to reinforce their platoon in contact. The reinforcing element arriving at the scene of the contact sighted an estimated 300 NVA north of the road in YD 1573 and the northern portion of YD 1572. Fixed wing controlled by the air observer caused a portion of the enemy force to withdraw to the northeast. The Lima Company reinforcing element pursued the enemy with small arms, M-79s and LAAWs. Long range sniper fire accounted for 9 NVA, KIA.

From this contact it is surmised that Lima Company probed a battalion size enemy force moving southwest on the French Road, where initial contact was made. Because of the tactical situation the area was not searched. The enemy carried large packs, radios and wore green and khaki uniforms. They were well armed. Lima Company accounted for 84 NVA KIAs and air and artillery claimed 48 NVA KIAs.

Simultaneous with the Lima Company contact, Kilo Company engaged with small arms two persons at YD 192720. While checking the area out Kilo Company received small arms fire and chicom grenades. Kilo Company immediately deployed using one platoon to flank the enemy on the left. After 3 hours of fire fight two platoons from Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines and a tank section from A-2 joined Kilo Company at YD 193723. Kilo Company following an artillery prep fire and a gas screen from the E-8 launcher joined with the tanks and attacked the 50 NVA dug in from YD 194723 to YD 197724. Resistance was broken and Kilo Company consolidated at YD 198723. Although the majority of enemy were killed with small arms fire, the resistance of the enemy was suppressed.

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at the heaviest point of contact by the 50 and 30 caliber machine guns of the tanks.

The enemy employed small arms fire, automatic weapons fire, chicoms and rifle grenades. Seventeen bodies were found in the area. They were clothed in khaki, with soft covers and cartridge belts. They also had a large supply of food and new weapons.

Kilo Company accounted for 21 NVA KIAs and one POW. The POW was a private with the 7th Platoon, 3d Company, 4th Bn, 52nd Regt, of the 320th Division. The prisoner stated he was with the third of three platoons moving south. The final destination was unknown to the prisoner.

On 6 March 68, Mike Company conducted a sweep at YD 154734. At 1100 the lead elements made contact with an estimated reinforced NVA Company that was dug in on both sides of the French Road. Mike Company's point came under fire from three machine gun bunkers on the crest of a ridge. The enemy positions were destroyed. Three machine guns were captured, but only two could be carried off the hill. The third machine gun was destroyed.

While consolidating initial gains Mike Company's lead element was heavily engaged by several automatic weapons and heavy fire from approximately eighteen fortified positions, supported by NVA in separate fighting holes. Shortly after friendly reinforcements reached this position the enemy employed heavy 60mm and 82mm mortar fire. This was followed by 105mm howitzer fire. All enemy fire was adjusted with speed and accuracy. During consolidation one more 50 caliber machine gun was destroyed.

During the early stages of the contact the NVA attempted to flank Mike Company from the southeast and north. The enemy moved under the cover of mortar fire. They were engaged more than 150 meters in front and suffered heavy casualties.

Reserve, Lima Company, was held in position at YD 163737 by heavy 105mm incoming. They started taking incoming at 1100H.

Enemy artillery and mortars necessitated Mike Company moving the Med Evac LZ on two separate occasions.

Initial contact was made with an estimated reinforced NVA Company. They were supported by an estimated battalion size unit located approximately 300 to 500 meters northwest of the initial contact. Artillery and mortars accounted for the majority of friendly casualties. During the eight hour contact Mike Company and Lima Company received 150-175 rounds of artillery and 150 rounds of mortars.

Mike Company accounted for 81 NVA KIAs by ground troops and 15 NVA KIAs by air and artillery.

On 16 March 68, Mike Company from A-3 and Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines from A-2 were moving to sweep both sides of the railroad tracks in grids YD 1974 and 1973.

At 160948H Charlie Company at YD 195735 made contact with approximately 40 NVA. The enemy were firing from several locations to the northwest, north and northeast.

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Mike Company at 160915H reported finding a freshly dug hole. In the hole was found, abandoned machine gun ammunition and NVA 782 gear. Shortly after Mike Company observed movement. Continuing to move east, 3d platoon made contact with 30 to 50 NVA that were dug in. Mike Company while engaging the enemy received 60mm and 82mm mortar fire. The mortar fire was being adjusted but quite ineffective. Mike Company was also taking small arms and machine gun fire and chicom grenades.

Fixed wing, artillery, heavy 81mm mortar fire and an air observer were used while consolidating initial gains and subsequently caused the enemy force to withdraw to the north and the east. Several NVA were engaged by Charlie Company, 1stBn, 4th Marines at YD 193741 as they were withdrawing from their contact with Mike Company. Charlie Company accounted for twelve NVA confirmed.

Mike Company pursued the enemy to YD187741. They made heavy contact with the security element of the withdrawing main force. Mike Company held their position, called in supporting arms and again the NVA withdrew north moving along side the trail at YD183046. While crossing a rice paddy, the enemy was observed by 106 and 81mm mortar personnel at A-3 YD171732. The 106 and 81mm mortars accounted for 8 confirmed. Mike Company continued to pursue the withdrawing enemy along with Charlie Company. They accounted for 68 NVA KIAs throughout the six hour ground contact. Supporting arms accounted for 15 NVA KIAs confirmed.

Once again the enemy employed artillery in support of their ground troops as they did on 6 March 68. However, of the 400 rounds received by Mike Company, Charlie Company and A-3 few were of any effect. Enemy adjustment was very poor and ineffective.

The AO estimated a battalion size unit, clothed in new green utilities with nets and camouflage.

The most significant factor concerning enemy activity during the month of March was the enemys ability to use and adjust artillery and mortars in support of their troops. The enemy utilized their artillery and mortars against this battalion on two occasions this month. Their supporting arms were used in great volumn, their fire was brought in quickly and adjusted effectively.

Extreme caution is being exereised in this battalion when leaving the perimeter. The NVA have our "safe lanes" well registered with artillery

ENEMY GEAR CAPTURED 1 - 31 March 68

82mm Mortar rounds	31	Picks	2
60mm Mortar rounds	15	Canteens	26
NVA Helmet (Hard)	10	Canteen covers	9
Pith Helmets	8	Uniform sets	15
Chicom grenades	11	Sandals (prs)	8
Rice (Bags)	6	1st Aid Kits	18
AK W/folding stock	1	Wallet	1
AK 47's (2w/grenade launcher)	6	Book	1

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SKS 56 carbine	1	Recoil Pads	2
IMG (RPD Type 56)	3	Drum For IMG	10
HMG Type 53-57	1	AK-47 Kits	2
RPG Launcher	1	RKT Grenade (AK-47)	1
Chicom pouches	3	AK-47 Launcher Att.	3
AK-47 mag.	10	RPG-2 rounds	10
AK-47 mag. pouches	3	Propellant charges	3
Rifle grenade (frag)	6	Fuse (cans)	15
Rifle grenade (shape charge)	1	NVA note book	1
TNT Blocks	10	Gas masks (goggles)	1
Hammocks	24	DH-10 mine	1
Ponchos	25	7.62 crimp cartg.	1
NVA Packs	22	Satchel charge	1
Gas Masks	19	60mm Mortar tube	1
Gas mask covers	13	RPG RKT case	1
E-Tools	50	7.62 Link ammo (box)	4
60/82 Mortar sight	1	Mess Kit	1
Cartridge belts	2	Leather case	1
Compass	1	Personnel kit w/pamph	1 1
Letter Case	1	Patch w/2 gold stops	1
Documents		3-turned in on seperate occasions.	

13. Communications.

a. The Communications Platoon ran normal wire and radio operations at A-3. In addition, a command group made up mostly of communicators and communications gear was established at A-2. At both positions, a covered circuit was operated. The power source at A-3 was a MRC-107, while the RT-524 at A-2 was bench mounted. Each company was assigned an eleventh radio and a wireman in addition to their normal battalion radio operator.

b. Training. Training in authentication took place this month. Constant cross training in wire and radio is continuing. As well, two message center men were trained in radio and one wireman was assigned permanently as a radio man. One message center man was sent to Crypto-Security School in Japan.

c. Equipment Status - We received three new PRC - 25s this month which have helped the battalions radio problem. We are also in the process of obtaining a new KY-8. Essential gear down is as follows:

1 MRC-83
3 PRC-25
1 PRC-41

In addition, we received 8 TA-1s , 1 PRC-25 and 2 SB-22s from Dyemarker assets.

d. Problem Areas. Personnel problems are all but solved with the

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influx of many new radio operators and wiremen. However, even with the 3 new PRC-25s we still have 11 on order. These are on Red Ball. Tape and whip antennas are still in barely adequate supply.

14. Weather. The weather for the month of March was fair. It rained sporadically, with most of the rain coming at night. Heavy rains fell in very short intervals. The mornings were usually cool. There was a lot of early morning mist and haze but disappeared by late morning. Weather during the days were warm and humid.

Average high	78 degrees	Precipitation	1.82 inches
Average low	68 degrees	Wind	8.3 knots
Average visibility	5.4 miles		from the
Humidity	82%		northwest

15. Fire Support. March was characterized by more artillery support from more units than any other month. The assumption of A-2 by 3/3 was accompanied by the shifting of C-1-40 to a reinforcing role there by making 105 support much more effective and rapid in response. With A-2 also came Lt. Wilson an A-2 representative from the 12th Marines. Lt. Wilson had his own call sign and frequency which allowed him to directly request general support Batteries from 12th Marines and this also speeded response on long range missions. This concept of an F.O. who works directly for 12th Marines seems to be an ideal solution to the support problem for units located right on the DMZ, who have observation at ranges far beyond the fire caps of direct support units. The ability to call general support units without having to go through all the channels normally used rapidly increased response capabilities.

Use of artillery in support of ground troops changed some what this month. We cut back on the use of scheduled preps and used more adjusted preps to get the fires in closer. Preps were brought in to 50 meters when contacts were made and good volumes of accurate fire was delivered during all contacts.

The volume of H&Is and TOT's increased during March and good volume of rounds were noted on most TOT's. The battalion requested five TOT's per night and outside units added more requests which increased the volume even more.

Support for the greatest part of the month was very accurate and dependable. However, during the last week the situation deteriorated greatly with four incidents of rounds impacting on or near friendlies in five days. In two cases both incoming on the first rounds of an adjusted fire mission, no explanation was found. The other two occasions charge errors were found and rounds were put inside the perimeter and in the last four casualties were caused by the charge error. These incidents greatly diminished the battalions faith in artillery which previously was at an all time high.

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a. Units Providing Direct and General Support.

- (1) Btry "D", 2d Bn, 12th Marines
- (2) Btry "E", 2d Bn, 12th Marines
- (3) Btry "F", 2d Bn, 12th Marines
- (4) Btry "H", 2d Bn, 12th Marines
- (5) Btry "A", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA
- (6) Btry "C", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA
- (7) Btry "K", 4th Bn, 13th Marines
- (8) Btry "L", 4th Bn, 12th Marines
- (9) Btry "W", 1st Bn, 12th Marines
- (10) Btry "W", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines
- (11) 1st 8", Howtizer Btry, 3d MarDiv
- (12) Naval Gunfire, 8", Newport News

b. Missions Fired.(1) Artillery

(a)	Prep Fires	117
(b)	Live Missions	30
(c)	Night Defensive Fires	19
(d)	Recon by Fire	20
(e)	Suspected enemy positions	150
(f)	Counter Battery	30
(g)	H&I's	1400
(h)	Time on Targets	155

(2) 81mm Mortars

(a)	Prep Fires	13
(b)	Practice Missions	7
(c)	Target of Opportunity	20
(d)	H&I	40
(e)	Counter Mortar	2
(f)	Night Defensive Fires	4

c. Ammunition Expended.(1) Artillery

(a)	105mm	3417
(b)	155mm	161
(c)	175mm	202
(d)	8 inch	256
(e)	4.2mm	107

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(2) 81mm Mortars

(a)	Perp Fires	335
(b)	Practice Missions	150
(c)	Target of Opportunity	1035
(d)	H&I	312
(e)	Counter Mortar	55
(f)	Night Defensive Fire	30

16. Air Support.

a. The use of air support during the month of March consisted of medical evacuations, logistics and troop helicopter lifts, reconnaissance overflights, aerial observation, air strikes and TPQ-10 missions.

b. On seventeen March the forward air controller ran two flights of fixed wing aircraft when the battalion was in contact.

c. There were 47 TPQ -10 missions run during the month.

d. Air Support Missions.

(1)	Logistic & Troop Lifts; Logistics 50 tons, 498 troops
(2)	Medical Evacuations; 23 completed for 70 troops
(3)	Air Strikes; all but two AO controlled
(4)	TPQ-10 Missions; 159 requested, 47 completed
(5)	Aerial Observations; used daily, weather permitting
(6)	Reconnaissance Overflights; two flown

17. Activities/Deactivations/Redesignations. None18. Training Report.

a. Due to operational commitments a limited amount of company training was held. Company training held stressed patrolling techniques and crew served weapons instructions.

b. Battalion classes were held on enemy aircraft and tank recognition during the month.

c. The 9th Marines held a school for selected personnel from the rifle companies and H&S Company on the operation of the AN/PPS-5 and AN/PPS-6.

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- ✓ 1. JOURNAL SUMMARY PAGE 23
- ✓ 2. FRAG ORDERS PAGE 36
Tab A 6-68
- ✓ 3. Narrative of 3/3 Contact of 6 Mar 68
- ✓ 4. 3/3 Summary of Reconnaissance of Southern DMZ Message
162200H

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JOURNAL SUMMARY MARCH 1968

1 March 68. At 0818H there was an explosion in the minefield. The explosion was believed to have been caused by a stray dog which was observed in the area. At 0915H, OP #9 at the A-2 Position observed 15 NVA in the open at YD 22848118, an artillery mission was fired and 3 secondary explosions were observed. At 1140H, the A-2 Position received incoming artillery fire. A total of 31 rounds of 105mm was received resulting in minor damage to an M42 Duster. An artillery mission was fired at YD 224818 resulting in two NVA KIA's (confirmed).

At 1645H, Lima Company made contact with an unknown sized NVA force at YD 194734 and engaged with small arms and automatic weapons fire. At 1658H, the A-2 Position received 16 rounds of 152mm artillery fire resulting in two WIA Med Evacs and one WIA Non Med Evac.

At approximately 1800H, Lima Company sustained one WIA and was breaking contact and consolidating its position. Contact was broken at 1820H. One platoon returned to the A-3 Position, one platoon remained in position at YD 199730 and at nightfall moved to their ambush site. Lima Company sustained one KIA during the contact.

2 March 68. At 0800H, Lima Company reported finding 1 NVA Helmet, 1- Chicom, 2 bags of rice and 1 Battle Dressing wrapper at YD 188732. At 1200H, Tower #9 at the A-2 Position reported sighting 60 NVA at YD-178765, an artillery mission was fired. Results of the mission could not be observed due to atmospheric conditions. At 1335H a message was received from the A-2 Position reporting an accidental discharge by a member of the 3rd Plt, "A" Co, 3rd Tank Battalion. The 3rd Tank Battalion handled the investigation. At 1737H, Hill #28 received 3 rounds of estimated 105mm artillery from an azimuth of 5300 mills at a distance of 7000 meters, no casualties were sustained. At 1740H Mike Company returned from their patrol and reported discovering two bunkers at YD 165-713. At YD 158711 the company found a bunker complex and one (1) NVA body. The body was approximately one month old. At 2025H, the A-2 Position reported having received (2) rounds of 85mm artillery fire. At 2240H, O.P. Gold reported movement to their front. An 81 mortar mission was fired at coordinates YD 172743.

3 March 68. At 0955H, Lima P-1 sighted (4) NVA in a treeline at coordinates YD 155735. At 1105H, the A-2 position received six rounds of incoming artillery, all rounds were duds. At 1150H, Kilo Company reported making contact at YD 192720. IP-1 reported making contact at YD 192-720. IP-1 reported 6 NVA at YD 155735 and was checking out area. At 1158H Kilo Company in contact at YD 192718 and moving with caution. At 1200H, Kilo Company prepared to prep fire with 60mm mortar, before sweeping area. At 1212H, Kilo Company broke contact. At 1215H, Kilo Company took a chi-oom grenade from their rear.

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At 1220H to 1247H Kilo Company reported personnel to their rear and sighted 7 NVA to their front and were taking chicom or 60mm fire. It appeared that the enemy was between Kilo 1 and Kilo 6. At 1222H, Kilo Company took fire from the rear then sighted 4-5 NVA on its right front and exchanged small arms fire. At 1240H, Kilo Company finished adjusting 60mm fire and moved to sweep area. At 1244H, Kilo Company reported 1 WIA from chicom grenades and enemy on right flank. At 1250H, elements of Lima Company were engaged at YD 155737 and receiving heavy small arms fire and were pinned down in a bomb crater. An A.O. was requested. At 1245H a message from the 9th Marines informed the Battalion that winter offensive had commenced. Objectives being military installation. At 1300H elements of Lima Company received chicom grenades and had 1 WIA. Kilo Company layed a base of fire with 60mm mortars and M-79's. At 1310H, the A-2 Position received 4 rounds of 105mm outside of the wire. At 1325H, 2 platoons of "C" Company 1st Bn., 4th Marines and a section of tanks were alerted at the A-2 Position to move with 3/3 S-3 Actual to the scene of the Kilo Company contact. OP Gold received 6 rounds of incoming artillery outside of its perimeter. At 1333H, word was received that fixed wing aircraft were on the way to the areas of contact. Kilo 6 reported trying to tie in with Kilo 3. Kilo 3 reported being pinned down 100 meters from Kilo 6's position. Kilo 3 engaged an unknown sized force with small arms to its right flank. Gunships were inbound to Lima Company's area of contact. The remainder of Lima Company departed the A-3 Position, at 1403H, for coordinates YD163735 to assist the Lima Company patrol. The Lima Company patrol requested a Med Evac. At 1415H, Lima Company reported gunships running strikes on the enemy, situation good. At 1449H, Lima Company reported movement in a rice paddy and that they were receiving sniper fire. Contact broke. Lima Company reported 2 NVA KIA (confirmed). Kilo Company received small arms fire from the west.

At 1431H to 1445H, Lima Company requested more air support and that the enemy was moving behind them. Kilo Company reported 3 NVA KIA (confirmed). Gunships were inbound after rearming. At 1450H, gunships returned to station. Kilo Company reported one friendly KIA and one WIA.

At 1510H, a Med Evac was on the way to Kilo Company. The Med Evac was completed at 1530H. At 1615H, Kilo Company and tanks were in position to move against the enemy position. Charlie Company, 1st Bn, 4th Marines remained in blocking position.

At 1629H, Kilo Company and tanks overcame enemy resistance and consolidated position and reported capturing one NVA POW. Nine NVA KIA's have been counted.

At 1645H, Lima Company reported Med Evac completed. The AO reported at 1650H that 9 NVA KIA's were in front of Lima Company's position.

At 1700H, report of casualties, Kilo Company 1 KIA, 5 WIA's, Lima Company 1 KIA, 3 WIA's.

At 1745H, Hill #28 received 5 rounds of incoming artillery fire. Lima Company returned to the A-3 Position at 1830H. At 1910H, Kilo Company returned to the A-3 Position. OP Gold at 1920H sighted one NVA in the open

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at YD 158738, a 60mm mortar mission was fired with unknown results. At 2045H, OP Gold reported hearing a tracked vehicle on the trace. An India Company Listening Post engaged 4 to 5 NV4 with small arms at YD 171730 at 2300H, unknown results. At 2300H the S-3 briefed the leader of the Recon Team which is to recon southeast of the A-3 Position.

4 March 68. At 1105H a covered circuit was installed in the COC. At 1445H, India Company received a sniper round from the northwest. At 1458H, the recon team to the southeast of the A-3 Position reported they had made contact. An air strike was in progress. At 1540H a convoy from Dong Ha arrived at the A-2 Position. At 1638H, the recon team returned to the A-3 Position. India Company received two sniper rounds at 1645H. A battalion briefing was held at 1730H. At 1815H, the A-2 Position took two rounds of incoming 85mm artillery fire. A counter battery mission was fired with unknown results.

At 2225H, a trip flare went off at the east side of the A-3 perimeter. Area was checked by radar and NODs with negative results. At 2234H a Kilo Company Listening Post reported movement to their front, a 81mm mortar illuminating round was fired. At 2250H, an 81mm mortar tube exploded on Hill #28 while firing an H&I mission. The gunner was killed and one man wounded. A fire started in the ready ammunition bunker which exploded, approximately 50 rounds of 81mm ammunition exploded.

5 March 68. At 0119H, a Kilo Company Listening Post reported movement to the front of their position. At 0150H, there was a explosion in the minefield, Kilo Company Listening Post fired M-79s in the free lane and outer wire. A night observation device detected objects outside Kilo Company's area. It was estimated to be personnel setting approximately 250 meters outside the wire. At 0240H, all companies were alerted. At 0316H an OP reported hearing a tracked vehicle at an azimuth of 0680 mils. A VT artillery mission was fired at YD 185740. At 0730H a trash can blew up in the Mike Company area. Explosion was believed to be a grenade. A Med Evac was called and completed at 0840H, for one non battle casualty.

At 1215H, OP Gold sighted one NV4 at YD 158739. A 106mm recoilless rifle was fired at the NV4 with unknown results. At 1530H, Kilo Company found 4 rifle grenades and 1 carrying case at YD 193718, the ordnance was destroyed by engineers.

6 March 68. At 0045H, a Charlie Company, 1/4 ambush reported its rear element fired at 4 NV4. The ambush moved to a new location. At 0120H, the A-2 Position received 8 rounds of 85mm artillery, a naval gunfire mission was fired.

At 0655H, Mike Company and a Command Group departed the A-3 Position. At 0930H, OP Gold reported hearing tubes firing at an azimuth of 14-1800 meters Lima Company discovered 25 81mm rounds at YD 162732 and 6 81mm rounds at YD 162734. The ammunition was destroyed. At 1105H, Mike Company made contact at YD 151730, the company received small arms and

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automatic weapons fire from YD 149733. At 1125H, Mike Company had 2 WIA Med Evac's. A Med Evac was requested and the landing zone was located at YD 152730.

At 1135H, Lima Company received incoming artillery fire. An AO sighted a mortar and 6 NV's. An artillery mission was called. At 1140H, the S-3 actual requested gunships and was informed none were available. Mike Company had enemy moving to their front with mortars. At 1152H, a counter battery mission was being fired. At 1204H, Mike Company set up 60mm mortars to cover the front of their position. Seven casualties were reported by Mike Company at 1232H. The Med Evac helicopters left to refuel and will return when situation is more secure. At 1317H, the S-3 actual requested immediate Med Evac of 9 casualties and at 1325H requested continuous air coverage with fixed wing and gunships. At 1330H, an air strike was held north of the French Road. At 1334H, Mike Company marked targets with WP and red smoke, the red smoke was canceled due to it blowing back on friendly positions. The 9th Marines S-3 notified the COC that fixed wing will remain on station, no gunships available. At 1345H, Lima Company reported taking incoming artillery. A WP round impacted 50 meters from Mike Company and a check fire was called. At 1355H, Mike Company commenced moving casualties to a secure area, reported at least two Med Evac helicopters were needed. At 1424H, one Med Evac was completed, 2 more were required for 7 WIAs and 4 KIAs.

At 1434H, the S-3 actual reported Mike Company is not pinned down, but receiving sniper fire and incoming artillery. At 1445H, the AO sighted a mortar position and fired a artillery mission. At 1500H, Mike Company received more incoming artillery and took more casualties. At 1511H, a Med Evac helicopter was inbound and Mike Company was moving casualties to landing zone. The AO reported Mike Company was receiving more artillery fire. The Med Evac helicopters were waved off.

At 1530H, Hill 428 received two incoming rounds of artillery other artillery rounds impacted in vicinity of Mike Company's LZ. Artillery from general support fired counter battery fire into grid YD 130796. Mike six advised all stations to mark positions with air panels. At 1546H, the AO reported a enemy mortar position destroyed. Fixed wing aircraft were on station at 1555H. At 1615H a Med Evac was completed. At 1624H, Mike Company while preparing to move back received incoming artillery, inflicting 7 more casualties. Mike 3 requested litter bearers. Mike 6 sent as many as possible. At 1655H, Mike Company received more artillery fire and took more casualties. The S-3 actual reported an emergency situation and advised Mike 6 to move the LZ. The A-3 Position received artillery fire. The AO (southern bravo) sighted enemy artillery at YD 135798 and fired counter battery missions. At 1747H, Kilo Company moved to a position at YD 164721 to block and assist Mike Company. At 1754H, a Med Evac helicopter was inbound, 20 casualties were at the LZ. Mike Company received incoming artillery fire. At 1806H, Kilo Company was at its position, Kilo six moved forward to get a better estimate of the situation. The Battalion Commander and S-3 were organizing landing zones. The bulk of casualties were with the Battalion Commander. At

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1839H, the AO sighted 6 NVA carrying a mortar. A Med Evac was completed at 1840H. The Battalion Commander advised the COC at 1840H that he was moving the landing zone as it was zeroed in. The A-3 Position received four rounds of artillery fire. At 1855H gunships were employed on 6 NVA carrying a mortar. The NV dropped mortar and ran into cover. At 1900H, a Med Evac was completed and Mike Company moved to Kilo Company's position. The S-3 Alpha ordered 100% watch on the A-3 Position. One platoon from Lima Company manned Mike Company lines. H&S Company personnel manned Kilo Company lines. At 1930H, Mike Company advised COC that any additional Med Evac will be run from the A-3 Position. At 1945H, the 9th Marines advised the COC that a flare ship would be in the AO if needed. At 1955H, the S-3 requested TPQ's in area of contact. Mike Company returned to the A-3 Position at 2037H. Kilo Company returned at 2055H. At 2121H, a Med Evac was completed from A-3, 4 WIA's were evaced. Total casualties for Mike Company was 14 KIA's 29 WIA's Med Evaced.

7 March 68. At 0125H, a India Company Listening Post sighted 4 NVA to their front, engaged with small arms and the movement ceased. The Listening Post fired small arms again at 0140H. At 1005H memorial services were held for Mike Company's casualties. Kilo Company reported one MIA. All companies searched company areas with negative results. At 1415H, the AO (Southern Bravo) reported NVA repairing bunkers in area of contact on 6 March 68. At 1435H, OP Gold reported two NV at YD 158739, a 106 recoilless rifle mission was fired with good target coverage. At 1438H, the AO reported 30 NVA in the open and a fixed wing air strike was run at YD 142716. At 1515H, a message from the 9th Marines directed a report to be made on the use of firecracker munitions and ordering all M3341 grenades to be turned in.

At 1616H, Lima Company commenced a M-16 familiarization fire on Hill 28, a cease fire was ordered at 1634H. At 1645H, Lt Griffith, 11th Engineer Bn. reported to position to check position for the location of observation towers. At 1803H, OP Gold observed 2 NVA in the open at YD 158739, a recoilless rifle mission was fired with good target coverage. At 1934H, the 2nd Platoon, India Company reported sighting a small helicopter go down below a ridge in the DMZ and did not come up again. The A-2 and A-3 Positions were alerted to check grid square YD 1671. Kilo Company reported hearing engine noise north of the DMZ, approximately 2000-3000 meters.

8 March 68. At 0912H, Kilo Company departed the A-3 Position to search for its MIA. At 0955H, Kilo Company reported having located MIA. Marine had become separated from his unit on 6 March 68 and was afraid to return to the position at night.

At 1018H, Kilo Company returned to A-3. At 1500H, a combined air and artillery CS Gas strike was held in the vicinity of YD 140715.

At 1830H, at the A-2 Position an ARVN soldier injured his hand. He was treated at the Battalion Aid Station and Med Evaced at 1930H. At 2137H Mike Company reported hearing engine noises. At 2200H, counter

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mortar radar at the A-2 Position detected 20 NVA moving west at YD 213773, dusters were fired and adjusted by CMR. The NVA moved into defilade at YD 216758. CMR adjusted 60mm mortars with good target coverage. The NVA dispersed. At 2254H, a Kilo Company Listening Post reported approximately 6 personnel 400 meters from safe lane. Listening Post reported at 2325H that there were 8-10 personnel moving at water point. Listening Post ordered to fire small arms with starlight scope. Personnel dispersed after first round was fired.

9 March 68. At 0005H, a Kilo Company Listening Post fired M-79s at NVA in front of their position. At 0015H, the Kilo Company Listening Post sighted more NVA, S-3 passed word to engage if within range. Radar reported down at 0104H due to dead batteries. At 0815H, due to PF activity in area Kilo Company omitted Check Point #4. At 0926H, OP Gold sighted one NVA at YD 159737, a 106RR mission was fired with good target coverage. Colonel Smith, 9th Marine Regiment Commanding Officer arrived at the A-3 Position at 1055H and departed the position at 1130H. At 1237H, Colonel Marsh returned to A-3 from A-2 Position. At 1550H, a resupply helicopter dropped a M-37, 3/4 ton truck while transporting it to the A-3 Position. The vehicle was dropped at YD 189714. Kilo Company was alerted to leave position and check vehicle. At 1558H, Mike Company reported they could check the vehicle, word was passed to Kilo Company to stand down. At 1634H, Mike Company at position of M-37 reported the vehicle completely demolished. Two tires are the only salvageable parts.

At 1700H, tower #9 at the A-2 Position observed 3 NVA at YD 237765. A 106RR mission was fired, two HEPT and two Beehive rounds were fired. The target area was hit but no definite results were observed. At 1825H, OP Gold reported tubes firing at 0700 mils at a distance of 9000 meters. OP Gold again reported hearing tubes firing at same position at 1900H. At 2014H, OP Silver observed NVA in front of their wire. At 2021H, Lima Company fired small arms at two NVA in front of their position. 60mm mortars were fired at the movement at 2031H.

10 March 68. At 0021H, a Lima Company Listening Post reported movement at 50-100 meters to their front. One figure was visible. At 0400H, a Lima Company Listening Post received two incoming artillery rounds approximately 200 meters to their front. Artillery fire was believed to be short friendly H&T fires. At 0423H, two artillery rounds impacted in Lima Company's area. The rounds came from a southeast direction and was believed to be friendly artillery fire. At 1055H, the A-2 Position received 6 rounds of artillery fire which impacted near the trash dump. Two of the rounds were duds. A counter battery artillery mission was fired at coordinates YD 210831.

At 1100H, Protestant Services were held. At 1255H Memorial Services were held for Mike Company casualties. At 1507H, OP Gold reported tubes firing at an azimuth of 5200 mils and a distance of 9000 meters. OP Gold reported hearing tubes at the same azimuth at 1535H. Also at 1535H the A-2 Position observed movement at coordinates YD236765. A 106RR fired 3 rounds to mark targets in area and set up to fire at any further

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movement. At 1715H, the A-2 Position received six rounds of enemy artillery fire. Friendly artillery was being fired at active enemy artillery at the time of the incoming. At 2000H OP Gold received 40mm fire from the A-2 Position. A check fire was called. The rounds impacted on the east side of the A-3 Position. At 2220H, Charlie Company, 1/4 caught an ARVN soldier at the water point with a case of "C" rations. The ARVN had a large amount of North Vietnamese money. He was turned over to the ARVN advisers. At 1830H, tanks at the A-2 Position fired 14 rounds at a group of NVA. The NVA ran into a treeline.

11 March 68. At 0300H Charlie Company, 1/4 ambush heard tracked vehicles moving 1200 meters to their east. At 0600H, a killer team consisting of a team leader, two M-79 grenadiers, one MG Team, 4 snipers, one corp-man, one FO Team and 2 radiomen were inserted at coordinates YD 191706. The team will return at 0830H 13 March 68. At 0930H, a Kilo Company patrol detonated some type of an explosive device, no casualties were sustained. At 1020H, Kilo Company reported another explosion, Kilo six believed mines were command detonated. Kilo Company withdrew and prep fired the area and returned for a further search. At 1135H OP Gold reported artillery firing from an azimuth of 5200 mils at a distance of 9000 meters. At 1255H, Hill #28 took two sniper rounds from the vicinity of Hill #31 (coordinates YD183740). At 1315H, Kilo Company reported sighting one NVA at YD 189706. At 1635H, the killer team was set in. At 1712H, OP Gold reported enemy artillery firing at an azimuth of 5200 mils at a distance of 9000 meters. At 1735H the A-3 Position received enemy mortar fire. OP Silver reported a tube firing at an azimuth of 0600 mils. OP Gold reported a tube firing at coordinates YD 183746. At 1740H, OP Gold fired a 60mm mission at YD 183746. The A-3 Position received 11 rounds of enemy fire. A crater analysis indicated 60mm mortar. At 1742H, a Mike Company OP observed a unidentified person at YD 194708, believed to be a enemy FO. At 1800H, a helicopter took small arms fire at coordinates YD 252768. Mike Company OP reported unidentified person sighted run into treeline. The A-2 Position received six rounds of enemy artillery fire outside of the wire, no casualties sustained. At 1950H, a Kilo Company ambush (K43) took 6-7 rounds of sniper fire. At 2050H the A-2 Position reported that heavy vehicle noises were heard by their ambush. At 2120H, OP Gold reported sighting a trip flare at coordinates YD 159738. At 2145H H&I fires impacted at scene of trip flare. At 2255H, the killer team reported hearing vehicle noises. At 2317H, a Marine from the Communications Platoon was burned severely by a gas lantern. The Marine tried to refill lantern while it was hot. At 2350H, killer team reported hearing tracked vehicle noises from the southeast.

12 March 68. At 0050H, the battalion surgeon advised the watch officer that the man burned by the gas lantern was in good condition and will be Med Evaced in the morning. At 0800H, Kilo Company discovered a freshly dug tunnel at YD 195718 and that the tunnel was destroyed by Engineers.

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At 1130H, at the A-2 Position an engineer stepped on a mine resulting in wounds to the right leg and heel. Marine was Med Evac'd. At 1320H the tower at the A-2 Position sighted 13 personnel moving north from coordinates YD 196741. A 60mm mortar mission was fired and movement ceased. At 1440H a Med Evac was completed at A-3. At 1725H the tower at A-2 sighted VietCong moving into a treeline at YD 2571. The VC changed clothes and left weapons in treeline. The A-2 Position received 11 rounds of enemy artillery fire from coordinates YD 236837. A counter battery mission was fired. Casualties were two WIA's Non Evac.

At 2145H a Mike Company Listening Post sighted two persons in a rice paddy to their front. Four persons were sighted at 2210H. A-2 Position at 2245H detected 4 to 6 NVA by radar. A 106RR was fired. The NVA disappeared.

13 March 68. At 0852H, Lima Company (-) returned with killer team. At 0925H, IAF found 90 fresh fighting holes set up along a steep ridgeline at coordinates YD 213752. The holes were set in a 180 degree perimeter and were no older than a day. At 0955H, Mike Company sighted 4-5 NVA at YD 186738 and checked area with negative results. At 1028H, LtCol Marsh departed for the 9th Marines CP. At 1106H, the A-2 Position received 26 rounds of mixed caliber enemy artillery (100mm, 130mm, 152mm) from coordinates YD 233825 and YD 220824. Counter battery was fired by artillery, naval gun fire, and a TPQ. One casualty WIA NonEvac was sustained. At 1405H, a convoy from Dong Ha arrived at A-2. At 1535H, the A-2 Position had one Med Evac, a Marine from Charlie Company, 1/4. The Marine injured his hand when he jumped in a hole during incoming. At 1705H, OP Gold received two rounds of sniper fire. OP Silver reported sniper fire at 1710H. At 2207H, Kilo Company reported movement and lights at 1700 meters, on an azimuth of 4200 mils. An artillery mission and two rounds of 90mm were fired at lights. At 2230H, Mike Company reported two NVA in the wire. At 2234H, 5 NVA were reported. Companies were put on stand by. At 2258H, four rounds of 105mm impacted on the A-3 Position, no casualties were sustained. At 2347H two 175mm rounds detonated over the A-3 Position. The 9th Marines COC was notified.

14 March 68. At 0450H, OP Gold heard artillery firing at an azimuth of 0700 mils, and a distance of 7000 meters. At 1025H, approximately 150 people were observed moving north from the A-2 Position. Twenty seven rounds of 60mm mortar WP were fired over the heads of the people. They turned south and dispersed. At 1140H, the 9th Marines Regimental Commander, Colonel Smith and LtCol Marsh arrived at A-3. Colonel Smith departed the position at 1305H. At 1310H, CMR at A-2 detected an object moving from coordinates YD 207816 to YD 194814. At 1830H, OP Gold heard artillery firing from an azimuth of 0700 mils and a distance of 9000 meters. At 1848H OP Gold sighted one NVA at YD 158736. Two 106mm RR rounds were fired with good target coverage. At 2050H Mike Company reported 4 NVA moving by the wire to the west. At 2105H, the A-2 Position reported that a ARVN unit heard what seemed to be a chinese speaking over their net.

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15 March 68. At 0002H, OP Grey reported lights in grid YD 1671, light was stationary. At 1123H, the A-3 Position received 5 rounds of enemy 60mm mortar fire from grid YD 183745. An 81mm mortar mission was fired. One casualty WIA, NonEvac sustained. At 1215H Kilo Company found an abandoned house and bomb shelter at coordinates YD 202710, engineers destroyed same. At 1614H, a fixed wing aircraft received small arms fire from approximately grid YD 173753. At 1630H, Mike Company reported it was sending a non battle casualty back to the A-3 Position. Marine fell and injured ankle. At 1710H, BAS reported that non battle casualty will remain at aid station until resupply or the 1st helicopter on 16 March 68. At 1730H a briefing was held at the COC.

16 March 68. At 0439H, one round of artillery impacted near Kilo Company's night activity. A check fire was called and no casualties were sustained. At 0722H, Mike Company departed the A-3 Position. At 0900H, Mike Company reported finding 782 gear and MG ammo at coordinates YD 188737, also reported movement in their area.

At 0940H, Charlie Company, 1/4 had a contact at coordinates YD 195734. The company received small arms fire from approximately 40 NVA from several locations to the northwest, north and northeast. Mike Company made contact with a large NVA force at YD 187736. At 0945H, enemy artillery impacted in the DMZ and near Mike Company. Mike Company marked position with air panels. At 1000H, Charlie Company requested a Med Evac at YD 199749. Landing zone was not secure (one priority and one emergency). At 1020H, an AO came on station. At 1023H, Mike Company reported a WIA's (minor). At 1031H, OP Gold sighted 30 NVA at coordinates YD 183745. At 1042H, Mike Company received enemy mortar fire and the Med Evac helicopter took small arms fire. At 1050H, Mike Company sighted a large number of NVA retreating and carrying bodies. At 1100H, Mike Company received small arms fire. At 1107H, Charlie Company 1/4 moved back to reorganize and continue the attack. The reserve platoon moved from the A-2 Position. Charlie Company's Med Evac was completed at 1130H. Helicopter moved to Mike Company's position to pick up casualty. Charlie Company received enemy artillery fire at 1207H. Med Evac was completed at Mike Company position at 1248H. At 1311H, an air strike was run. The A-3 Position received enemy artillery fire. At 1430H, OP Gold fired 106RR at NVA in the open. At 1510H, Mike Company reported being in contact along a 50 meter front. At 1526H, Mike Company reported a KIA and 4 WIA's. Fixed wing aircraft made a dummy run to assist Mike Company in getting casualties. At 1550H, an air strike was run. Mike Company recovered its casualties at 1600H. Another air strike was held at 1606H, a fixed wing aircraft was hit at 1617H and the pilot bailed out over the ocean. At 1648H, Charlie Company, 1/4 returned to the A-2 Position, and Mike Company returned to the A-3 Position at 1745H. A Med Evac was completed from the A-3 Position at 1805H. At 2224H, activities for Charlie Company, 1/4 were cancelled for 17 March 68.

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17 March 68. At 1405H, the A-2 Position reported two members of the 11th Engineer Bn. were injured by a mine while working in the minefield. At 1522H, a resupply helicopter received automatic weapons fire from coordinates YD 190708. Approximately 3 weapons fired. An artillery mission was fired.

At 1750H an air strike was held. The aircraft took small arms fire during the air strikes. At 2107H, a Lima Company Listening Post reported movement to their front. At 2125H, an undetermined number of NV were sighted by a Charlie Company ambush. Sighting was confirmed by CMR. An 81mm mortar mission was fired with good coverage of the target. The NVA were located retreating to YD 194745, and a 105mm artillery mission was fired. Movement ceased. At 2200H, tower #9 at A-2 sighted a truck convoy at YD 185805. The convoy proceeded to YD 160774 and returned to YD 185805. An artillery mission was fired with unknown results.

18 March 68. At 0930H, Kilo Company found a NVA pack at coordinates YD 206711. At 1135H, fixed wing aircraft were on station and running strikes. The aircraft took automatic weapons fire from YD 173753 and 173744 at 1515H. At 2145H, heavy rain caused flooding of a tank position. The tank and ammunition were moved. At 2210H, an artillery round impacted on Hill #28. At 2228H, the A-2 Position received 14 rounds of enemy artillery.

19 March 68. At 0145H, small arms fire reported heard in the east. The A-2 Position reported hearing small arms also but did not know origin. At 0600H, Lima Company was OPCON'ed to the 1stBn, 4th Marines. At 0950H, A2 reported a PF unit was ambushed at 0200H by an NVA platoon. No other details. At 1351H, a sniper had a accidental discharge. An investigation will be conducted. At 2105H, OP Silver reported hearing a radio and sighted a flashlight approximately 2000 meters to their front. At 2000H, a message concerning the NVA offensive was received from the 9th Marines. At 2300H, all activities for 20 March 68 were cancelled due to a arclight scheduled for the morning of 20 March 68.

20 March 68. At 0440H, OP Silver observed a trip flare go off in front of their lines. The area was checked with negative results. At 0800H, OP Silver and Gold were evacuated. At 0903H, India Company moved from Hill #28. The arc light was completed at 0950H and India Company returned to Hill #28 and manned all positions. A Med Evac was called and completed at A-2 at 1245H, (heart attack). At 2130H, a message from 3/3 rear was received requesting a report on flooding of bunkers from heavy rain. A negative report was submitted.

21 March 68. At 0507H, OP Gold reported a TPQ drop on the north side of Hill #31, secondary explosions were heard. At 0530H, Mike Company and a Command Group departed A-3 (Frag Order 6-68) and Kilo Company departed at 0620H. Charlie Company, 1/4 departed A-2 at 0640H. (Frag Order 6-68)

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At 0808H, all battalion elements were at objectives and were setting in. At 0815H, Kilo Company found numerous NVA equipment and at 0915H found 4 NVA bodies and one AK-47. At 1037H, Col Smith, 9th Marines Regimental Commander arrived at position and departed at 1105H. At 1140H, Kilo Company found a 60mm mortar tube. At 1155H the battalion S-3 officer reported that no NVA were observed on Hill #31. Mike and Kilo Companies searched the Hill. Mike Company returned to A-3 at 1448H. Lima Company had a heat casualty in the south free lane at 1448H. A corpman and M274A1 were sent to the south free lane at 1452H. Kilo Company returned to A-3 at 1450H. At 1458H, Lima Company returned from OPCON to 1/4.

22 March 68. At 0500H, Lima Company departed for A-2 and arrived at 0645H. Charlie Company, 1/4 was chopped to OPCON of 1/4. At 1056H, OP Gold reported hearing small arms fire in grid YD1674. An AO was requested. At 1102H, the AO checked grid 1674 and surrounding area. At 1119H, the AO reported a bunker complex at coordinates YD 154743. At 1245H, OP Gold heard artillery firing at 0200-500 mils. A briefing was held at the battalion COC at 1730H. At 1800H, the A-2 Position sighted 3 NVA in the open at YD 230775. A 81mm mortar mission was fired with good target coverage. The NVA moved into a tomb used as a bunker. H&I fires were scheduled for coordinates YD 230775. At 1940H, OP Gold reported hearing heavy machine gun fire from an azimuth of 500 mils at 3000-4000 meters. At 2030H a message received from regiment ordering the battalion (covered circuit) to be up on a 24 hour basis. Unable to comply due to lack of power source. At 2100H, Lima Company at A-2 Position reported one Marine taken ill due to drinking native liquor. Marine was taken to A-2 BAS. At 2125H, a message received from Regimental S-2 indicating enemy offensive could start tonight. At 2359H, the radar (AN/PPS-5) detected movement at several locations between 2000-3600 mils from A-3. An artillery mission was fired.

23 March 68. At 0220H, a message was received from the 9th Marines to anticipate jamming of radio nets. At 0810H, Mike Company sighted 2-3 NVA at YD 193709. An artillery mission was fired. At 1155H, OP Gold reported hearing small arms fire at an azimuth of 5900 mils at a distance of approximately 200 meters. An artillery mission was fired. At 1426H, the A-2 Position received 26 rounds of 85mm enemy artillery. There were 4 casualties, (WIA, Med Evac). Casualties were personnel from 44th Artillery, USA. The Med Evac was requested at 1440H and completed at 1515H. At 2105H, the A-2 Position reported a light at coordinates YD 202746. The CMR picked up 4-5 moving objects. A 81mm mortar mission was fired with good target coverage. At 2210H the cluster section commander reported secondary explosions at coordinates YD 185942 after firing H&I fires.

24 March 68. At 0210H, Kilo Company reported movement to their front. At 0608H, a Mike Company ambush received 6 rounds of incoming enemy artillery and that there were no casualties. At 1115H, a Marine at the A-2 Position was injured while unloading a helicopter. The Marine suffered a possible fracture of the right knee. The Med Evac was completed at

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1210H. At 1500H, Lima Company found a direct weapon site at coordinates YD 233742. At 1700H, Kilo Company found one satchel charge, one chicom and one E-Tool on Hill #31. The ordnance was destroyed and the E-Tool turned into S-2. The A-2 Position sighted two personnel moving north at coordinates YD 217750. An 81mm mortar mission was fired with good coverage of target.

25 March 68. At 0605H, Kilo Company reported a mine detonated in front of fighting hole #2. At 0630H, the A-2 Position received 6 rounds of unknown caliber artillery. All rounds impacted outside of the wire. At 1330H, tower #9 at A-2 sighted 30 personnel, mostly women moving north at coordinates YD 198738. A mortar mission was fired over their heads. The civilians returned south. At 1800H a battalion briefing was held at the COC.

26 March 68. At 1240H, the radio relay circuit to the 9th Marines failed due to generator trouble. At 1345H India Company sighted 20-30 personnel at YD 213693. Personnel seemed to be building positions. An artillery mission was plotted to be fired if needed. At 1354H, an AO was sent to check personnel observed by India Company. At 1300H, the A-2 Position sighted a group of people moving north at YD 197743. An 81mm mortar mission was fired over their heads. As the people continued north 12 rounds of HE were fired. Personnel then returned south. At 1412H, the AO reported 30 fresh fighting holes at coordinates YD 213693 with men working on them, also some civilians are in area. The S-3 actual reported he believed positions would probably be used against Route #1.

At 1450H, two artillery rounds impacted in the middle of India Company column and one casualty (Non Evac) was sustained. A check fire was called. At 1600H, India Company found and exhumed 3 fresh graves at YD 197711. Immediate area was littered with 4 walking sticks, 3 small rice bags, 3 pith helmets and bloody clothing. Bodies had been dead 3-5 days and were believed to be killed by an artillery mission called on 22 March 68 in response to a sighting. At 1507H, OP Gold reported hearing enemy artillery firing from an azimuth of 0500 mils at an unknown distance. At 1830H the A-2 Position sighted 4 NVA at YD 226775. A 81mm mortar mission was fired with good coverage of target.

27 March 68. 0100H the Marine thought to be wounded from friendly artillery impacting near Company I was not wounded but bruised seeking cover. At 0725H the A-2 Position sighted 4 NVA at coordinates YD 233766. A 81mm mortar mission was fired with good coverage. At 0725H, the Battalion Commander and S-3 Officer made an aerial recon of the area of operations. At 1420H, Company M discovered a VM-10 mine and one RPG round. Ordnance was destroyed in place by engineers. At 2100H a trip flare went off by the east gate. Area was checked out with negative results.

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28 March 68. At 0150H, a 155mm artillery round impacted inside of the wire at coordinates YD 177727, between holes 9 and 10. More rounds impacted outside the wire. An investigation will be requested. At 0240H radar detected what appeared to be a tracked vehicle. At 0900H Company K reported a Marine was suffering stomach cramps, one squad from Company M departed A-3 to return Marine to perimeter. The squad returned to A-3 at 0940H. At 0950H, the A-2 Position received 67 rounds of enemy artillery (152mm) from coordinates YD 21048312. A counter battery mission was fired. At 1002H Company K sighted one NVA, small arms were fired at NVA with unknown results. At 1025H, OP Gold reported enemy tubes firing from an azimuth of 0200 mils. At 1030H the Regimental Commander (Colonel Smith) arrived at A-3. At 1050H a Med Evac was requested and canceled. Marine was evacuated by resupply helicopter. At 1135H the A-3 Position received 7 rounds of enemy artillery (105mm). The rounds impacted outside of the perimeter. The 9th Marine Regimental Commander departed position at 1140H. At 1345H, Company K reported finding 2 NVA packs and 3 broken entrenching tools at YD 160707. At 1425H, Company K found tracked vehicle tracks at YD 154704. The tracks were approximately 1 to 2 months old. At 1625H the A-2 Position received 15 rounds of enemy artillery fire (152mm) from YD 214817. A counter battery mission was fired.

29 March 68. At 0433H, Company M reported a artillery round impacted in company area. At 0436H a mine detonated in Company K's area. A check of artillery and mortars revealed no missions were being fired at time round impacted. Incoming round heard by Company M was believed to be the mine detonating. At 0950H, OP Gold reported enemy artillery firing from an azimuth of 5800 mils. At 1023H an artillery round detonated over the A-3 Position. At 1205H Company L arrived at A-3. A convoy departed the A-2 Position at 1614H and arrived at A-3 at 1638H. OPCON of the A-2 Position was chopped to the ARVN at 1500H. The convoy departed A-3 at 1745H.

30 March 68. At 0425H Company M reported its radar down due to battery supply. At 1130H a message from 9th Marines S-2 reported two enemy howitzers located in the vicinity of coordinates YD 171768 and a battalion of the 320 Division at coordinates YD 190745. At 2058H, OP Gold reported receiving shrapnel from artillery rounds impacting in front of their position.

31 March 68. At 0345H a message from 9th Marines advised that enemy offensive would start at 0300H throughout Vietnam (B-2 rating). At 0645H the Battalion Commander departed with Company I. At 1700H friendly artillery fire from C-1 impacted on OP Silver, resulting in 4 WIA's. One WIA was Med Evacuated at 1855H. An investigation was requested. At 1750H, Company I and the Battalion Commander returned to A-3.

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3d Battalion, 3d Marines
3d Marine Division, (Rein) FMF
WFO, San Francisco, California 96602

Copy of Copies
3d Bn, 3d Mar
A-3 Position
18 March 68

Frag Order 6-68

Map: Vietnam 1:50,000 AMS Series L7014, Sheets 6442 IV and 6442 III.

Time Zone: H

Task Organization.

Company K (Rein)

Capt. D.R. FRANK

FAC/TACP Team

FO Team, 81mm Mortar Plt.

FO Team, "C", Btry, 1/12

One Sniper Team, Hq Co, 9th Marines

ARVN Interpreter

Dog Team, 3d MP Bn.

Company M (Rein)

Capt W.H. McADAMS

FAC/TACP Team

FO Team, 81mm Mortar Plt.

FO Team, "C" Btry, 1/12

One Sniper Team, Hq. Co., 9th Marines

ARVN Interpreter

Company "C", 1st Bn. 4th Marines

Capt. O.J. RENO

FAC/TACP Team

FO Team, 81mm Mortar Plt.

FO Team, "C" Btry, 1/12

1. Situation.

a. Enemy Forces.

(1) On 16 March Company M and Company C, 1st Bn, 4th Marines made contact with an enemy force believed to be battalion size in strength on an extended front dug in on Hill #31 (Grid YD 187743) Contacts we made simultaneously from YD 183728 to YD 196745. The enemy was well equipped and supported by medium artillery which was adjusted throughout the duration of the six hour engagement. The enemy was thought to be only a portion of a much larger element attempting to mass on the eastern DMZ for the purpose of attacking a major base

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or populated area in the general area. There are no indications that he has withdrawn all forces from the prepared positions encountered.

b. Friendly Forces.

(1) Operation Kentucky continues and the 9th Marines AO remains the same.

(2) 1st Bn, 4th Marines is presently conducting a sweep of the Pho Oc and Loc Son area.

2. Mission. Conduct a recon in force of the Hill #31 to determine the strength and composition of enemy forces in this area and exploit supporting fires.

3. Execution.

a. Concept of Operations.

(1) See Annex A (Scheme of maneuver).

(2) Move with one company at H-Hour under cover of darkness to seize Objective #1 at H + 30 minutes.

(3) Move with one company (rein) to seize Objective #2 and establish a position to support the seizure of Objective #3.

(4) Move one company (rein) from the A-2 Position to establish a blocking position in the vicinity of Check Point #3 at H + 1 1/2.

(5) On seizure of Objective #2 move one reinforced company from Objective #1 to Objective #3 and establish a blocking position/patrol base.

(6) On seizure of Objective #3 be prepared to seize Objective #4 with one company from Objective #2.

(7) Conduct patrols of opportunity from patrol bases on Objective #3 and #4 up to a limit of 500 meters.

b. Company M.

(1) Furnish a platoon size ambush in the vicinity of the Pagodus at YD 194730, to be in position not later than 2000 on D-1. Move with the remainder of the company from Hill #28 at H-Hour and consolidate the area secured by the ambush patrol. Furnish a platoon size patrol to probe the approaches to Objective #3 and on order seize Objective #3 to include the high ground to the immediate north. From this position be prepared to support by fire the movement of Company K to Objective #4. On order furnish one platoon size patrol of opportunity to screen the area 500 meters east of Objective #4.

c. Company K.

(1) Move at H + 45 to seize Objective #2. From this position be prepared to support by fire Company M's seizure of Objective #3. On

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order secure Objective #4 and conduct limited platoon size patrol of opportunity not more than 500 meters to the east/northeast.

d. Company C, 1st Bn, 4th Marines.

(1) Move from A-2 at H + 1½ to Check Point #3. Establish a defensive blocking position and attempt to engage by fire enemy personnel entering the area from the west. Be prepared to conduct limited security patrols not more than 500 meters to the north/northeast.

e. 106RR Platoon.

(1) Establish firing position on A-3 and Hill #28 to support either attacking company by fire and to block withdrawal routes in the vicinity of YD 183746. Targets in the vicinity of the rice paddy at YD 183746 may be engaged with positive clearance providing an officer or S/NCO are available at the position to verify the target and locations of friendlies.

f. 81mm Mortar Platoon.

(1) Be prepared to engage targets of opportunity as requested by the maneuver elements.

g. Coordinating Instructions.

- (1) D-Day 20 March 68
- (2) H-Hour 0530
- (3) Line of Departure - Outer wire A-3, A-3A, A-2.
- (4) Reference Points - Coins 1773, Gems 2174.
- (5) Report arrival at all Check Points and Objectives.
- (6) Submit SitReps every half hour.
- (7) Be prepared to employ CS and LAAs.
- (8) Stress camouflage and fire discipline.
- (9) Specific avenues of approach will be coordinated by the attacking Company Commander.
- (10) Maximum use of supporting fires and deliberate movement will be emphasized.
- (11) Fighting holes will be dug on Objectives #2, #3, and #4 immediately on seizure.
- (12) Ensure all units are briefed as to the location of friendly units.
- (13) Stress the concept of mutual support.
- (14) Keep a detailed list of all equipment captured or destroyed.

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4. Administration and Logistics.

- a. All personnel will drink not less than two canteens of water and take four salt tablets between H-Hour and H-8.
- b. Companies will carry not less than 10 stretchers, two of which will be pole stretchers.
- c. Casualties will be evacuated to the vicinity of Objective 4.
- d. Particular care will be exercised to remove 782 gear and weapons from Med Evacs.
- e. Troops will carry one meal and BA, normal equipment, T/O weapon and E-Tools.
- f. Each fire team will carry one air panel.

5. Command and Communications.

- a. Signals:
 - (1) 3.5 WP, enemy personnel.
 - (2) Red star cluster, point of enemy contact.
 - (3) Yellow or Green Smoke, friendly lines
- b. The Alpha Command Group will remain at A-3 less the S-3 who will accompany Company M.

J. W. MARSH
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding

OFFICIAL

R. F. WINDLEY JR
Major, U.S. Marine Corps
S-3

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Annex A (Operation Overlay) to OP Order 6-68

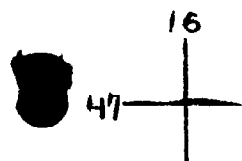
Ref: (a) Map: Vietnam, 1:25,000, Series L8020, Sheet 6442 IV N.

(b) 9th Marines OP Order 4-68

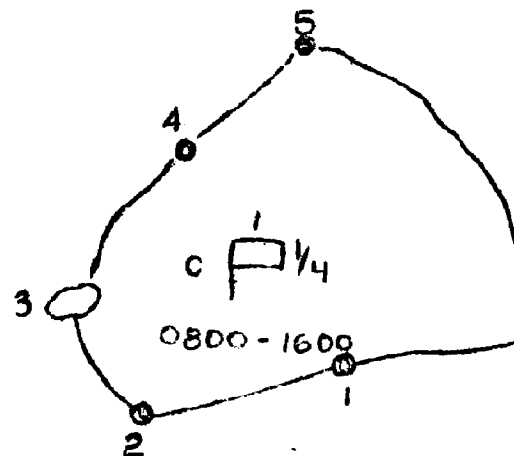
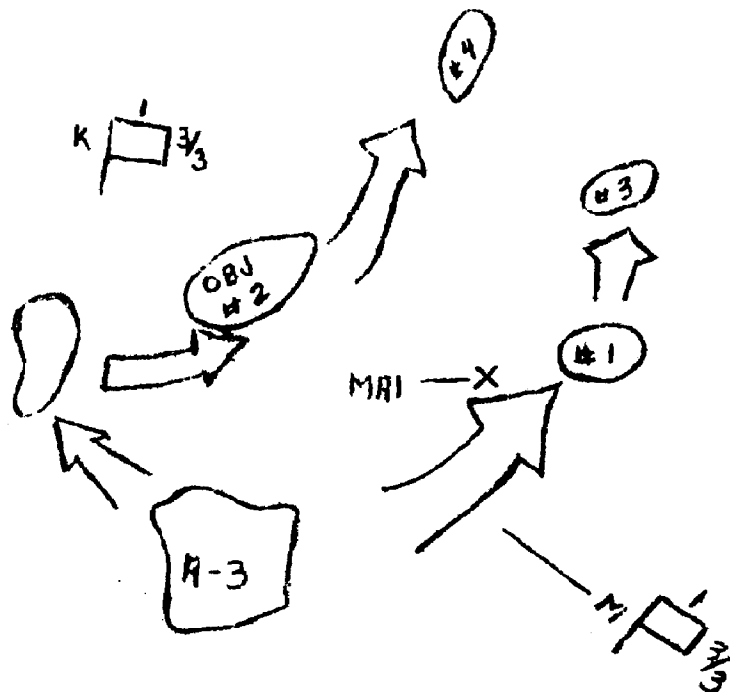
Time Zone: H

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IA1-X



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R. F. FINDLAY JR.
Major, U.S. Marine Corps
S-3

J. W. MARSH
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS
9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, 96602

10Mar68

From: S-3, Third Battalion, Third Marines
To: S-3, Ninth Marines

1. On 6 March 1968 Company "M" and the battalion command group (-) closed with a well organized and equipped NVA unit, dug in on a broad front from YD 150734 to YD 155738. Contact was initially made by a squad size security element while checking out a ridge line to the company's forward left flank, which dominated the company's chosen route of advance at YD 153733. The ridge line was the key terrain in the immediate area, and intervened between company "M" and the yet undiscovered NVA force, which was deployed in a well camouflaged and coordinated NVA fortified position, dug in on both sides of the French road (Route #561).

As the squad moved across the topographical crest of the hill, three machine gun positions were sighted 30 to 50 meters away. The guns were in open holes and oriented to the southwest. The squad opened fire with small arms and M-79's and the three positions were overrun before the NVA could react. All three guns were captured. The Marine unit was immediately engaged at a greater distance from approximately 28 to 30 fortified emplacements on both sides of the road, taking heavy casualties. The Squad withdrew as its parent platoon was moved forward to reinforce. The company commander committed a second platoon to cover an exposed flank, and the platoon initially engaged, pulled back from the killing zones and consolidated the ridge line. A hasty perimeter defense was established by the company.

2. The NVA employed several machine guns from approximately 30 fortified emplacements, which were "backed up" by fighting holes and connecting trenches from which AK-47's and Chi-coms and RPG's were employed. Although the friendly perimeter was defensible and the Marines maintained some freedom of maneuver, movement forward to the enemy position was not possible. The enemy positions were not only heavily fortified but obscure from air and ground observation. Enemy mortars were employed approximately 800-1500 meters to the northwest of Route #561.

One platoon (rein) was committed by the NVA to out flank the position from two different directions but was effectively engaged and held at a distance of 125-150 meters from M/3/3's flank. A great deal of time was required to evacuate casualties 300 meters to the rear, to a secure LZ. Five KIA's and 11 WIA's had to be moved and only a small number of personnel could be spared from the perimeter to assist, because of the continuous efforts on the part of the enemy to breach the perimeter.

Shortly before the arrival of the medevac chopper, the friendly position received mortars and artillery inflicting another KIA and 2 WIA's. Once the medevacs were completed the company began to pull back with their walking wounded. Chi-coms and small arms fire continued along with heavy artillery and mixed mortars. Casualties continued to mount and each time a landing zone was established, enemy artillery would be effectively adjusted until it was no longer possible to carry KIA's and WIA's and hold the enemy ground forces outside of effective Chi-com and small arms range. A decision was made to risk a medevac, even though the zone had previously received two volleys of artillery fire.

Kilo company had by this time established an effective blocking position through which Mike finally withdrew toward A-3 position. Items of interest:

(1) Gunships were available as medevac chase on station for approximately 45 minutes, but would not support ground troops. Gunships when requested to fire indicated they were required to reserve their fire until medevacs had been completed and the birds had cleared the area. This was critical in that gunships requested for support purposes were not available.

(2) NVA artillery was very accurate and adjusted with the highest degree of effectiveness yet observed by this command.

(3) The scout dogs warning was not entirely heeded by the platoon commander. This is somewhat mitigated by the fact that a platoon commander thoroughly investigated each alert of a scout dog, would reduce his rate of movement to an unacceptable degree. Perhaps more emphasis on knowing the characteristics of each dog would be beneficial in this regard.

(4) This was the first occasion experienced by this command during KENTUCKY, where NVA ground troops in contact

were effectively supported by their own artillery, not only was Mike company effectively adjusted upon, Lima company at YD 163737 and Kilo company deployed from A-3 were both engaged by NVA artillery. This was a apparent effort by the enemy to prevent 3/3 from reinforcing.

(5) It is assumed the area to the northwest of the French road at YD 150734 is a deliberate defensive strong point and not a position intended for short term occupancy based on the following:

(a) NVA 1/Lt killed with dress insignia on collar (red field with two stars), which is normally not worn by unit subject to close contact or capture. Individual was apparently a company commander.

(b) Rapid adjustment of fires in support flanking movements indicate preplanning of fires as well as a responsive communication capability.

(c) Weapons captured were spotlessly clean and new, not like those carried by troops subject to continuous movement, or in contact for any length of time.

(d) NVA wore no helmets or packs, or were noted with any equipment normally carried by a maneuvering unit.

(e) Holes, emplacements and tunnels were most elaborate. Eighteen frags grenades were thrown down or around one hole and three magazines fired in the hole. Seconds later one NVA raised up from the hole killing two Marines with small arms.

(f) This area gives access to several lucrative north-south infiltration routes and could be used to harbor and support maneuver elements to the south by NVA.

(g) Past actions over the past 11 months indicate the NVA will spare nothing to hold this ground. (1/9, 1/4, 3/4, 3/3).

(6) A unit, not pinned down, will frequently lose mobility a result of inability of a company (150 personnel) to carry 20 dead or wounded any appreciable distance. Experience indicates this may require up to 80 men of 4F the personnel are to be moved simultaneously which would be impractical if security and fire superiority are to be ensured.

(7) Continuous casualties over a long period of time renders it difficult to impossible to maintain an accurate and current estimate of medevac requirements at all times.

(8) Medevac estimates were further clouded by the fact that choppers carried from 7 to 11 medevacs based on the desires of the aircraft commander and the salesmanship ability of the battalion Air Liaison Officer.

(9) It is estimated that the battalion engaged a company size unit in close contact, perhaps on an OPLR closely supported by the major portions of a battalion.

(10) There is little doubt that the enemy will conduct an all out defense of this area.

(11) Light and medium artillery would have little or no effect in neutralizing these positions. Nothing less than D-4 (delay) or accurately adjusted 175's would reduce these types of positions.

(12) The use of CS is considered one of the major break throughs. The lack of gas masks somewhat reduces the capability of friendlies to exploit this capability.

Ray Finlay
RAY FINLAY

Enclosure (1)

- Kuntz* *G-3* *206* *COC*
- A. 3/3
 - B. 162200H
 - C. YD 183758
 - D. Summary of 3/3 recon. of southern DMZ
 - E. At 160200H I/3/3 and M/3/3 and command group commenced movement to deploy for first light sweep from PLD on railroad tracks between YD 180760, and YD 192754 through the 1775 grid, while completing the initial deployment of the two companies at XE 160800H. Elements of I/3/3 spotted 20 NVA in green uniforms with packs and helmets moving from YD 178761 at approx. 160803H. I/3/3 discovered approx. 60 82mm mortar rnds. while employing to engage the approaching NVA, I/3/3 was heavily engaged by another force of approx 30 NVA from concealed fighting positions at YD 183758 as I/3/3 closed in on the bunkers. They were also engaged from their rear by several NVA in spider traps. Bunkers were well constructed and camouflaged and covered approaches from the railroad tracks. Bunkers were screened by trees and undergrowth which somewhat negated the effect of LAWS, M-79's and M-26's. DH-10 mines and booby-trapped chi-coms were discovered in the area. Friendly stand off distance of the enemy was as little as 5 meters. Enemy elements not in bunkers withdrew and arty. and gunships and fixed wing were called in with excellent results. M/3/3 was deployed north to I/3/3 rear to prevent encirclement, after approx. 3 hrs. of close in fighting. I/3/3 attacked bunkers by fire and pushed enemy back from bunkers a sufficient

ANNEX D

distance to extract casualty. Air and gunships were again called in to engage the retreating enemy and had outstanding results. MEDEVAC completed, the sweep continued as planned at 161412H. M/3/3 elements detonated a booby-trap device "C" TYPE unknown at 180758 resulting in one USMC casualty, MED-EVAC.

Movement from south to DMZ was restricted to file along railroad tracks. Due to waist deep marsh and rice paddies on each side. Bunkers throughout the area were organized and heavily fortified with construction materials. Extended to the point of contact west to the AN-XA area, evidence of recent movement of large number of enemy personnel north and south through the AN-XA area. No evidence of tracked vehicles. Casualty and KIA's incurred primarily were of the upper body from gunshot wounds. Enemy were dislodged from bunkers primarily as results of effective deployment of the M-79 CS. Enemy casualties do not include a result of the gunships, this information will follow later.

F. 4 KIA'S

G. 6 WIA'S MEDEVAC

H. NEG.

I. TOT 24, breakdown 14 fixed wing, 10 arty. unknown

J.-N. NEG.

TOR: 0007

3D MAR DIV:

9TH MAR: #

DECLASSIFIED

HEADQUARTERS
9th MARINE REGIMENT
3d MARINE DIVISION (NEIN), PMF
FTO SAN FRANCISCO, 96602

3/JIN:sm
3000
11 Mar 1968

From: Commanding Officer
To : Commanding General, 3d Marine Division

Subj: 3d Battalion, 3d Marines enemy contact of 6 March 1968.

Encl: (1) Narrative of 3/3 contact of 6 March 1968

1. Enclosure (1) was received by this Headquarters in the "rough". It was retyped and forwarded for your general information/appropriate action.

2. It is believed that the following points extracted from enclosure (1) are noteworthy.

a. It is realized that the "rules of engagement" prescribed for gunships accompanying medevac helicopters are for a purpose and under normal conditions should be adhered to. However, in this related instance the nature of the target, the tactical situation, the non-availability of requested gunships, and the ground commanders request, should have been sufficient justification, to deviate from normal procedures.

b. The highly effective employment of enemy mortars and artillery (the second example of such within a week) in direct support of enemy units, may indicate that the employment of larger sized patrols near the enemy's prepared positions may no longer be practical. This regiment will limit the activities of large sized patrols to within 500 meters of known prepared enemy positions.

R.B. SMITH

Annex 3

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