

DECLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

ORIGINAL

00813-67

4078

HEADQUARTERS, 5TH MARINES
1st Marine Division (Rein) Fleet Marine Force
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California 96602

3/RJA/1ch
5750
22 June 1967

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, FMF
Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 - 31 May 1967
Ref: (a) MC0 5750.2
 (b) FMFPac0 5750.8
 (c) Div0 5750.2B
Encl: ✓(1) 5th Marine Regiment Command Chronology
 ✓(2) Headquarters Company, 5th Marines Command Chronology
 ✓(3) 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology
 ✓(4) 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology
 ✓(5) 5th Marine Regiment After Action Report, Operation UNION
Filed w/Chron(5)

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a), (b) and (c), enclosures (1) through (5) are submitted.

R. J. ALGER
By direction

S & C FILES
HEADQUARTERS
1ST MARINE DIVISION, FMF

67 2714

Copy 4 of 7 copies

~~DECLASSIFIED~~

Downgraded at 3 Year Intervals
Declassified After 12 Years
DOD DIR 5200.10

MAY 1967

DECLASSIFIED

5750
22 June 1967

HEADQUARTERS, 5TH MARINES
1st Marine Division (Rein) Fleet Marine Force
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY
1 May 1967 to 31 May 1967

INDEX

- PART I → ORGANIZATIONAL DATA
- PART II → NARRATIVE SUMMARY
- PART III → SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS
- PART IV → SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

ENCLOSURE (1)

5750
22 June 1967

PART I
ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. DESIGNATION

5th Marine Regiment (-)

Colonel Kenneth J. Houghton

SUBORDINATE UNITS

Headquarters Company, 5th Marines

Capt R. G. Babich 1-13 May 67
Major L. E. Johnson 14-16 May 67
1stLt G. E. Crowell 17-31 May 67
LtCol P. L. Hilfpartner
LtCol D. E. Esslinger 1-27 May 67
LtCol C. R. Webster 28-31 May 67

1st Battalion, 5th Marines
3rd Battalion, 5th Marines

2. LOCATION

Quang Thang Binh, RVN

3. STAFF OFFICERS

- (1) XO
- (2) S-1
- (3) S-2
- (4) S-3
- (5) S-4
- (6) S-5
- (7) ALO
- (8) CommO
- (9) RegtSurg
- (10) RegtChap

LtCol W. H. Draper
Lieutenant J. W. Horton
Capt H. D. Pettingill 1-15 May 67
GySgt J. F. Argazzi 16-31 May 67
Major F. V. White 1-14 May 67
Major R. J. Alger 15-31 May 67
Major L. E. Johnson 1-26 May 67
Major R. E. Walker 27-31 May 67
Capt W. F. Bell
Capt W. F. Clark 1-9 May 67
Major J. P. Byrum 10-31 May 67
Major R. E. Walker
Lt. T. E. Brunnell MC USNR
LCDR W. D. Bruner CHC USN

4. AVERAGE STRENGTH

Officer	Enlisted
80	2348

Officer	Enlisted
3	102

ENCLOSURE (1)

5750
22 June 1967PART II
NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The month of May was devoted to the planning and preparation for, execution of and recovery from Operations UNION and UNION II. The establishment of a combat base at Que Son was effected, as well as the displacement of the supporting artillery battery from its former position to the new combat base. The Regimental Command Post remained co-located with the Headquarters of the 5th ARVN Regiment.

Supply support for the month of May was provided by the LSA at Tam Ky. The majority of transportation requirements were satisfied by helicopter, replenishment items for the Regimental Command Post were transported by vehicle.

Improvement of the combat base at Nui Lac Son continued, and long range planning initiated for major engineer support prior to the arrival of the monsoon transitional period. Civic action/Civil Affairs projects were initiated in the Que Son/Nui Lac Son areas, and hundreds of refugees were removed from VG - controlled areas and relocated. Psychological warfare operations were conducted extensively in support of all tactical missions assigned during Operations UNION and UNION II.

PART III
SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. Personnel and Administration. The regiment experienced a turnover of approximately 196 personnel, 69 rotated to CONUS, with 127 being med-evacuated out of country. Approximately 310 replacements were received during the month. The average battalion changeable strength was 33 Marine Officers and 1004 Enlisted personnel.

Shortages of officers in the 0130, 0202, 0402 and 0430 MOS's continue to exist. These shortages, although not critical, tend to impair the operational capabilities of the regiment. Expected personnel losses for the coming month are 107 personnel due for rotation to CONUS. Expected losses in the next three months of SMC rank are considered to be of the utmost concern.

ENCLOSURE (1)

5750
22 June 1967

Casualties for the month of May are as follows:

	KIA	WIA(N)	WIA(E)	NBC	MIA	TOTAL
HqCo	8	5	6	0	0	11
1/5	42	50	141	75	2	311
3/5	40	103	164	9	0	316
TOTAL	82	158	311	85	2	638

2. Intelligence. Operation UNION continued until 17 May 1967. During the period 17-26 May 1967 the S-2 section continued to disseminate intelligence to subordinate, attached, adjacent and higher headquarters. Preparations and development of plans were made for Operation UNION II. Enemy cumulative losses for this period included: 14 VC KIA (Conf) and 77 VG KIA (Prob); 19 Detainees, including 9 PW's and 10 released; 6 individual weapons were captured.

Operation UNION II commenced on 26 May, continuing into June. Cumulative enemy personnel and weapons losses will be included in the applicable After Action Report.

Unit identifications were tentatively established from captured documents as elements of the 2nd and 3rd Battalions of the 21st NVA Regiment. These units engaged ARVN Ranger elements, conducting coordinated S&D operations in conjunction with the 5th Marines during the initial phase of Operation UNION. A preponderance of mixed units encountered (i.e., a 40 man enemy patrol with khaki uniforms, some with packs and helmets, all armed.....etc) indicated that regular units in this area of operations have in fact suffered numerous casualties and are having difficulty obtaining NVA replacements. It is believed that replacements are being furnished by local force and in some cases hamlet, guerrillas.

3. Training. M-16 Rifle training was emphasized throughout the month; to include nomenclature, functioning, care and cleaning, assembly and disassembly and familiarization firing. Because of personnel shortages resulting from losses during Operations UNION and UNION II an accelerated indoctrination training program has been established for all incoming replacements. This indoctrination training program, conducted over a two-day period consists of the following subjects:

ENCLOSURE (1)

5750
22 June 1967

Mines and Booby Traps
 FO Techniques
 Listening Posts and Ambushes
 Principles of Patrolling
 Code of Conduct
 Rules of Engagement
 Field Sanitation
 M-16 Rifle (to include the firing of 125 rounds for familiarization firing)

The following schools were utilized by 5th Marines during the month of May:

<u>COURSE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER ATTAINED</u>
Vietnamese Language Crse	Okinawa	6
Vietnamese Language Crse	DaNang	6
Infantry Weapons Repair Crse	Okinawa	1
Basic Ammo Tech Crse	Okinawa	1
NCO Leadership Crse	Okinawa	2
Field Radio Operators Crse	Okinawa	3

4. Operations. During the period between Operations UNION and UNION II the 3rd Battalion returned to Tan Ky while the 1st Battalion continued improvements to its Combat Bases at Nui Lac Son and Que Son, and conducted extensive patrolling and Search and Clear operations. Numerous enemy contacts were made by the 1st Battalion during this period. 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines remained under ADCON of this headquarters, with OPCON exercised directly by the Commanding General, First Marine Division. 2nd Battalion was chopped to 5th Marines for a brief period of time during UNION II.

5. Fire Support. 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines was the artillery battalion D/S during the month of May for UNION and UNION II.

<u>OBS</u>	<u>UNOB</u>	<u>H&I</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>WPN</u>	<u>TYPE & NR OF RDS EXPENDED</u>
293	131	587	1611	105mm	HE 8376
					ILLUM 260
					WP 503
					Other 113
				<u>TOTAL</u>	<u>9252</u>

ENCLOSURE (1)

5750
22 June 1967

91	31	249	371	155mm	HE	2588
					ILLUM	54
					WP	73
					TOTAL	2715
23	18	108	149	4.2"	HE	1039
					ILLUM	145
					WP	50
					TOTAL	1234
0	13	9	22	175mm	HE	64
					TOTAL	64

6. Air Support. Air Support for the month of May was as follows:

(1)	Total Requests/Total Filled	51/43
(2)	Troop Lifts	3
(3)	Prisoner Lifts	0
(4)	Escorts	2
(5)	Unit Commander	4
(6)	TAR	30
(7)	Medical Evacuation	81
(8)	Cargo	1,158,305 lbs
(9)	Troop Total	525
(10)	TAC(A)	18
(11)	Flareship	21

7. Logistics. All logistic support for the regiment in the month of May was provided by the LSA at Tam Ky. Both UNION and UNION II, as well as the combat bases at Que Son and Nui Lac Son, and Regimental Headquarters at Hill 29, received all of their support from the LSA. Transportation was provided exclusively by helicopter except for the movement of the 3rd Battalion from Thang Binh to Tam Ky and the resupply of the Regimental Headquarters.

8. Civil Affairs/Civic Action. Civil Affairs/Civic Action activities between UNION and UNION II consisted primarily of meetings with local Vietnamese officials at Que Son and Nui Lac Son to discuss the presence and problems of USMC units operating in the subject areas. MEDCAP was initiated in both areas. One solarium payment was processed. Conferences were held at Nui Lac Son on the subject of the local refugee problem. Civil Affairs/Civic Action surveys of both new operating areas were initiated by the S-5 personnel.

ENCLOSURE (1)

9. Psychological Operations. Two leaflet drops with the following themes were conducted between Operations UNION and UNION II: "Rewards for Mines and Booby Traps" and "Rewards for Weapons".

10. NBC or Other Special Type of Warfare. NBC training was not accomplished due to operational commitments. Decontamination and fallout prediction capabilities are satisfactory. NBCD equipment is at T.E. level. Field protective masks are issued to individuals as needed for field operations and training.

11. Medical. A total of 440 patients were treated during the month; 57% were from Headquarters Company, 5th Marines, 26% were from other 5th Marine units, and 17% were from outside the regiment. Field sanitation was much improved during May with the erection of a mess tent and a dry storage tent. Company "B" First Engineer Battalion constructed a soakage pit for disposal of liquid waste, a screened garbage house and four permanent burn-type latrines. The Regimental Aid Station was improved and enlarged and is now capable of handling patients overnight.

12. Dental. During the month of May the Dental Clinic treated a total of 177 patients; 39% from 3rd Battalion, 28% from Headquarters Company, 17% from 2nd Battalion 11th Marines, 10% from 1st Battalion, and 6% from other units. The DENTCAP program treated 24 patients at the Providence Hospital in Tan Ky.

PART IV
CHRONOLOGY OF SUBORDINATE COMMANDS
AND SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. *Filed* ENCLOSURE (2) Headquarters Company, 5th Marines Command Chronology
Filed ENCLOSURE (3) 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology
Filed ENCLOSURE (4) 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Chronology
Filed w/c/chron ENCLOSURE (5) 5th Marine Regiment After Action Report, Operation UNION

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

HEADQUARTERS, 5TH MARINES

1st Marine Division (Rein) Fleet Marine Force
c/o Fleet Post Office
San Francisco, California 966023/RJA/phm
3121
20 June 1967From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, First Marine Division

Subj: Combat After Action Report

Ref: (a) DivO 3480.1
(b) 1st MarDiv Frag Order 59-67Encl: (1) 1st Battalion, 5th Marines Combat After Action Report
(2) 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines Combat After Action Report

1. Code Name. Operation UNION.
2. Date of Operation. 21 April 1967 to 17 May 1967.
3. Location. Quang Tin and Quang Nam Province, Republic of Viet Nam.
4. Command Headquarters. See Task Organization.
5. Task Organization.

5th Marines (-)(Rein)	Col K.J. Houghton
5th Marines (-)	
HQ Co (-)	Capt R.G. Babich
1st Bn (-)(Rein), 5th Mar	LtCol P.L. Hilgartner
3rd Bn (-)(Rein), 5th Mar	LtCol D.E. Esslinger
1st Bn (-)(Rein), 1st Mar	LtCol V.D. Bell, Jr
13 May-17 May 67	
Co B(-) 1st AT Bn	Capt A.R. Green, Jr
Co B(-) 1st Engr Bn	Capt R.W. Falkenbach
Co B(-) 1st SP Bn	Capt A.H. Miller

UNCLASSIFIED

Det, 9ITT

Det, 1st Dent Co

Det, HQ Btry, 2nd Bn, 11th Mar

6. Mission.

- a. Conduct search and destroy operations westward to vicinity Hiep Duc, thence northwestward in Hiep Duc - Que Son - Thang Binh basin and adjacent high ground to locate and destroy enemy forces in area, capture or destroy enemy supplies and equipment, disrupt enemy operational and logistical intentions and evacuate refugees.
- b. Be prepared to maintain one battalion vicinity Que Son/Nui Lac Son on long term basis to conduct operations against enemy forces and to extend GVN influence and protect friendly inhabitants and installations in area.
- c. Be prepared to extend operations into vicinity Base Area 116.
- d. Be prepared to establish Regimental CP and one battalion vicinity Thang Binh on long term basis to conduct operations against enemy forces, extend GVN influence and protect friendly inhabitants and installations in the area.
- e. Be prepared to close LSA at Tam Ky and reopen vicinity Thang Binh upon establishment of the Regimental CP.

7. Concept. Conduct two battalion search and destroy operations throughout Hiep Duc - Que Son - Nui Lac Son basin in concert with TF 79.4.8. Results.

a. Personnel.

(1) Friendly.

- (a) KIA 110
- (b) WIA 473
- (c) MIA 2
- (d) NBC 8

(2) Enemy.

- (a) NVA KIA CONFIRMED 468

UNCLASSIFIED

(b) VC KIA CONFIRMED	397
(c) NVA KIA PROB	222
(d) VC KIA PROB	555
(e) DETAINEE	215
(f) PW	173

9. Administrative Matters.

a. Resupply.

(1) At the onset* of Operation UNION the decision was made that battalion supply assets would supplement the LSA. This reduced the operating stocks of the battalions since it was anticipated that the regiment would operate in the field for a period in excess of four months and be resupplied from the LSA during that time, and also reduced the need of resupply by utilizing on-hand stocks of class II items.

(2) Helicopter support elements located at all levels of command gave effective control of logistical aircraft and coordination of the tactical and logistical requirements. Additionally, HST nets were utilized for submission of resupply requests. Unfortunately, radio assets of the Shore Party Battalion do not permit an additional radio at the infantry company level and it remains necessary for helicopter support teams to switch frequencies to accomplish their mission.

b. Treatment of casualties and evacuation and hospitalization. Battalion corpsmen performed their duties with such a degree of proficiency that it was unnecessary for the collecting and clearing platoon to do anything further than forward the most seriously wounded on to hospital facilities and retain those with minor wounds and illnesses. Utilizing the 20 bed facility and two medical officers made it possible to reduce the time lost due to these minor wounds and non battle casualties.

c. Communications.

(1) Despite lengthy distances, rapidly changing tactical situations, and impeding terrain configurations in the operational area, communications were consistently maintained with senior and subordinate units. Numerous difficulties were encountered during Operation Union. As a result of experience gained the following comments and recommendations are offered so these problems areas can be surmounted in future operations.

UNCLASSIFIED

(2) Problem areas.

(a) Supply support for Message Center. Supply support from the LSA at Tam Ky was particularly poor, and at times, non-existent. Particular difficulty was experienced in obtaining ditto rolls (Purple, Spirit Rectified Teletype Rolls, FSN 7530-985-7114), ditto fluid (Fluid, Duplicating, Direct Process, FSN 7510-272-9800), duplicating paper (Paper, Duplicating, Yellow, FSN 7530-228-2097), and teletype tape (Tape, teletype, 7/8" width, FSN 7530-634-6237). The time lag between the request for and the receipt of these items caused this command to have to obtain sufficient quantities direct from other Communications Centers, on several occasions, in order to maintain operations. (Requests submitted early in the operation for ditto fluid have at this late date still not be received; the request for teletype tape, submitted by FSN was filled by substituting a narrower tape which is unusable in the equipment held by this section - no other teletype tape has been received.).

(b) Teletype equipment. It has been the experience of this command that the Teletypewriter, AN/TGC-14 does not stand up under the almost continuous use to which it is necessarily subjected by this unit. An inordinate amount of equipment failure, many times requiring repair at FLSG-B, was experienced.

(c) Teletype equipment repair support. Although required to evacuate equipments to the LSA at Tam Ky for repair, the LSA did not have the required repair capability. In every instance, the equipment had to be further evacuated to FLSG-B, causing a further delay in the return of the equipment, which in turn contributed to more equipment failure due to the non-availability of back-up equipments with which to rotate those on-line.

(d) Messages reproduction. The experiences of this command with the ditto rolls (Purple, Spirit Rectified Teletype Rolls, FSN 7530-985-7114) now in use indicate that this item is unsatisfactory for the climatic conditions of South Vietnam. Heat appears to be the major problem, causing the rolls to dry out and become unusable due to the extremely poor quality of reproduction they provide. This in turn, complicated by the fact that the AN/TGC-14 does not print hard enough to overcome the dried out condition of the rolls, unless modified with a stronger Ditto Print Spring. (These springs are in short supply; only one has been obtained by this command.)

UNCLASSIFIED

(e) Dissemination of changes to CEOI. On the installation phase at Hill 29, change 5 to the CEOI was not held by this command. Therefore frequency problems delayed assumption of command by the forward CP for approximately two hours.

(f) Airborne retransmission. The tactical situation on Operation Union I was such that relay stations were required on Nui Lac Son. Airborne retransmission was also required on the first phase. Airborne retransmission teams were not briefed properly and did not carry Mike numbers, necessitating transmission of frequencies in the clear. This happened with each relief of aircraft.

(g) Remote capability. Nui Lac Son retransmission team did not have remote sets which necessitated working in the open.

(h) RT-524/VRC. RT-524/VRC receiver alignment was a continuous problem. On at least two occasions all four RT-524/VRC's organic to this command were down due to this problem. Overheating problems were also encountered. This was eliminated when 60 cycle power was available for fans external to the equipment. When 60 cycle power was not available, wet sand bags were used. In all cases this was not an efficient means of cooling; especially during severe temperatures of the mid-day. On these occasions equipment either had to be secured or rotated (when additional equipment was available).

(i) KY-8. Two problems were encountered with the KY-8's. One was overheating. KY-12's had to be rotated every few minutes in extreme heat conditions. External fans and wet sand bags were not always sufficient cooling agents. Overheating was the cause of equipment failure in several cases. The second problem was encountered when external power other than the MRC-110 was used as a power source. The PP-388 is not considered an efficient power source when connections are made directly to 24 volt DC output. Variations of voltage was considered as a cause of some of the KY-8 equipment failure. This problem was solved when vehicle storage batteries were installed between the PP-388 and the equipment mount.

(j) Radio equipment repair support. Support was considered adequate with the exception of equipment repair and float items. The ISA at Tam Ky was not geared with sufficient repair facilities and almost all items of equipment for repair had to be evacuated to Chu Lai for even minor repairs. With the distance involved and the transportation problems encountered, equipment down time is considered excessive. An efficient means of checking RT-524/VRC by repair agencies has not been

UNCLASSIFIED

devised. When this equipment is returned to the using agency, in most cases the same problems still exist and in some cases complicated by new problems. In the case of one RT-524/VRC, the equipment has been sent to FLSG-B at least seven times for receiver problems. Three of these times during Operation Union I. Up to, and including this date, the equipment is not operational.

(3) Recommendations.

- (a) Supply Support. It is recommended that the LSA stock the items of material which experience has shown to be necessary to support Communication Center Operations.
- (b) Teletype equipment. If a sufficient number of AN/TGC-14's are on hand to enable the rotation of those on-line with those having been taken off-line and thoroughly PM'd (the equivalent of a weekly PM seems to be required approximately every other day due to the conditions of extreme heat, dust, and humidity encountered), down time can be appreciably reduced. (This comment is applicable to all teletypewriter equipments used by this command but especially so for the AN/TGC-14). One hundred per cent back-up appears to be minimal. All AN/TGC-14's should be modified with the stronger Ditto Print Spring.
- (c) Electronics equipment repair support. It is recommended that the LSA have the capability of at least 3rd Echelon Repair.
- (d) Message reproduction. Some means of keeping ditto rolls under constant refrigeration is required. This will enable the rotation of a roll from us (when poor reproduction capability occurs) with a roll from under refrigeration. Although this does not completely solve the problem, it does help. This command has been experimenting with the use of Ditto Mats (6" X 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", FSN 7530-634-5329) as a substitute for ditto rolls. Thus far, the reproduction capability of this item excels that of the ditto rolls without requiring refrigeration. Additionally some AN/TGC-14's held by this command need not be modified with the stronger Ditto Print spring when these Ditto Mats are used; good reproduction is obtained with a lighter printing strike, although even better quality is obtained when the AN/TGC-14 is modified with the stronger Ditto Print Spring. The use of Ditto Mats, because of their size, does somewhat slow down operations. They must be inserted and removed from the teletype each time a page of a message has been completed, whereas operation with a ditto roll is continuous in this regard. It is recommended that the acquisition of a continuous roll (ditto roll) of the same composition

UNCLASSIFIED

found in the ditto mat mentioned above be considered for Marine Corps use in South Vietnam.

10. Civil Affairs/Psychological Warfare. During operations UNION the following civil affairs/psywar operations were conducted:

- a. 13 leaflet drops totalling 3,138,000 leaflets.
- b. 283 refugees evacuated out of the operational area and removed to Vietnamese government-controlled refugee hamlets.
- c. Four aerial broadcasts conducted.
- d. Two Chieu Hois taken through Marine lines (one of those reported by 3/5 after interrogation was determined to be a refugee).
- e. POET team exploited one Chieu Hoi and one hamlet chief. Results were two printed Chieu Hoi leaflets.
- f. Noteworthy was the evacuation of 141 refugees from the Hiep Duc area to Nui Lac Son. The refugees chose to walk rather than be left behind under VC domination.

11. Commander's Analysis. Operation UNION was a highly successful operation which dealt the North Vietnamese Regular Army units and Viet Cong Main and Local Force Guerrilla units in the Quang Tin and Quang Nam Provinces a staggering blow. The infantry units with their supporting arms and reconnaissance observation posts killed a total of 865 confirmed North Vietnamese and Viet Cong and probably killed another 777. The prolonged operations by the Fifth Marines in the agriculturally rich Hiep Duc - Que Son - Thang Binh corridor broke the VC control of the area that spanned almost twenty years. With the establishment of two permanent bases deep in this corridor, the fixing and subsequent destruction of hundreds of the enemy, the capture of significant quantities of supplies, equipment and weapons the enemy loss in prestige in the eyes of the people is readily apparent. The psychological impact of Operation UNION equalled or even excelled the material damage done to the communist effort in this area of operation.

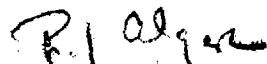
12. Recommendations.

- a. That more positive command relationships be established in operations conducted in conjunction with the Special Landing Force to provide for better fire support coordination.
- b. That tanks be employed in the future in this area to provide a more rapid shock reaction capability to offset the enemy's inherent initial advantages of tactical surprise and organization of terrain.

UNCLASSIFIED

c. That in order to prevent aircraft from other services from straying into an area where airstrikes or artillery missions are being conducted, clearance procedures similar to the ones used by Marine aircraft checking into the appropriate DASC be promulgated and/or coordinated with other services. At present the only method available is for the Tactical Air Control Party at Battalion level to transmit in the blind over "Guard" frequency utilizing the PRC 41.

d. That a minimum of 2000 pounds of cratering charges be maintained in the LSA during field operations for employment by the engineers in the destruction of cave and tunnel complexes.



R. J. ALGER

By direction