

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

HEADQUARTERS
3rd Battalion, 5th Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
APO San Francisco, California 96602

SERIAL NO. 00210-67

COPY# 3 of 50 COPIES

3/DEE/plb
3121
24 May 1967

From: Commanding Officer, Third Battalion, Fifth Marines
To: Commanding General, First Marine Division
Via: Commanding Officer, Fifth Marines

Subj: Combat After Action Report

Ref: (a) Division Order 3480.1 dtg, 13 April 1966
(b) 1st MAR DIV Frag Order 59-67

Encl: (1) Route Overlay of Command Group

5TH MAR S&C FILES

00770-67

COPY NO. 1 OF 11

1. Code Name. Operation UNION.
2. Date of Operation. 211500H April 1967 to 170600H May 1967.
3. Location. Quang Tin and Quang Nam Provinces, Republic of Vietnam.
4. Command Headquarters. See Task Organization.
5. Task Organization.

3rd Bn (-) (Rein), 5th Marines

LtCol D. E. ESSLINGER

H&S Co (-)

Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Mar (Ln Tm)

Det, 1st SP Bn (HST)

Det, 1st Eng Bn

Co I (Rein)

Capt STACKPOLE

Co I

Det, H&S Co

Det, Med Plat

Det, 81mm Mort Plat (FO Tm)

Det, Comm Plt (FAC Tm)

Det, Int Sect (Scouts and Interpreters)

Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Mar (FO Tm)

Det, 1st Eng

Det, 1st SP Bn (HST)

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

DOWNGRADED AT 3-YEAR INTERVALS

DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

DOD DIR 5200.10

UNCLASSIFIED

3121

24 May 1967

Co K (Rein)

Co K
 Det, H&S Co
 Det, Med Plat
 Det, 81mm Mort Plat (FO Tm)
 Det, Comm Plat (FAC Tm)
 Det, Int Sect (Scouts, Interpreter and Chieu Hoi)
 Det, Btry F, 2nd B, 11th Mar (FO Tm)
 Det, 1st Eng
 Det, 1st Sp Bn (HST)

1/Lt R. O. TILLEY
 2/Lt PASCARELLA
 2/Lt HUNYEN
 2/Lt HAWKS

Co M (Rein)

Capt McELROY
 2/Lt JOHNSON

Co M
 Det, H&S Co
 Det, 81mm Mort Plat (FO Tm)
 Det, Med Plat
 Det, Comm Plat (FAC Tm)
 Det, Int Sect (Scouts, Interpreter and Chieu Hoi)
 Det, Btry F, 2nd Bn, 11th Mar (FO Tm)
 Det, 1st Eng
 Det, 1st SP Bn (HST)

Bn ReserveCo L (Rein)

1/Lt MURRAY

Co L
 Det, H&S Co
 Det, 81mm Mort Plat (Mort Sect & FO Tm)
 Det, Med Plat
 Det, Int Sect (Scouts)
 Det, F Btry, 2nd Bn, 11th Mar (FO Tm)
 Det, 1st Sp Bn (HST)
 Det, 1st Eng

6. Supporting Forcesa. Artillery

(1) During the course of Operation UNION the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines received artillery support from five batteries. Batteries A and B, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines and Batteries D, F, W, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines. At no time during the course of the 75 miles covered was the battalion without artillery support.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(2) Artillery was used to prep company and battalion objectives on a continuing basis. Preparation fires were very effective and timely.

(3) Only at one time were the H&I fires reduced and this was caused by a shortage of ammunition due to heavy firing the day before.

b. Air

(1) Operation UNION took place inclusively from 21 April to 17 May. There were no periods during the operation where weather was a deterrent to utilization of close air support.

(2) Fixed wing support was utilized well during the earlier phases of the operation averaging two per day. One strike by UH-1Es from VMQ-6 was conducted during the first week. However, on 13 and 14 May, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines coordinated and controlled 16 air strikes in a period of 20 hours against NVA troop concentrations resulting in a significant number of confirmed and probable KIAs as well as 38 structures destroyed.

(3) All fixed wing air strikes in our support were controlled either by a Forward Air Controller or a Tactical Air Controller (Airborne). It was shown again that quite often the ground Forward Air Controller was ineffective in the control of air strikes because of the poor target acquisition from the limited ground visibility caused by heavy foliage and rough terrain.

(4) Maximum utilization of flare ships for night activity was effected. The cooperation of these units was of the highest order and should be emphasized.

(5) The AN/PRC-25 proved to be a reliable unit and served as our primary communication gear. The AN/PRC-41 was servicable as a UHF ground to air system but was only marginally satisfactory due to various small malfunctions.

(6) The airborne controllers proved their worth on many occasions both in their effective control of air strikes and in their highly effective aerial reconnaissance.

(7) On 15 May a Marine F4B from VMFA-314, Mag-13 dropped on the wrong target after successfully striking the target on his first pass. Even though the airborne controller (Black Coat 8) yelled "No Drop" the bombs fell amidst the 1st Plt, 1 Co and inflicted 10 friendly casualties (WIA); however all other close air support was accurate and well executed.

UNCLASSIFIED

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(8) On numerous occasions throughout the operation, Army, Air Force, and ARVN (VNAF) aircraft were observed flying through areas when Marine units were conducting air strikes. Since the aircraft were operating on their own frequencies, communication with ground units was not possible. Finally on 15 May, a flight of what appeared to be U.S. Army UH-1Es fired 4 salvos of 2.75" rockets directly into our area. Miraculously no casualties were incurred. Clearly a need for closer high level coordination of troop employment with supporting arms is indicated.

c. Fire Support Coordination

(1) The fire support that was available to the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines on Operation UNION was artillery from five different batteries, fixed wing aircraft of all types, 81mm mortars and 60mm mortars.

(2) In at least two instances the combination of Artillery, air and mortars laid waste to the enemy allowing the infantry to sweep through an area suffering a minimum of casualties.

(3) The time consuming process of obtaining a save-a-plane prior to firing an artillery mission caused undue delay during some critical movements. A number of times prime enemy targets were lost while a save-a-plane was violated by air craft and the artillery had to check fire allowing the enemy to move safely out of sight. On the other hand during the 13th, 14th and 15th of May in the vicinity of Phouc Duc (4) (BT 091353), coordination between air and artillery was excellent. A minimum of time was lost between air strikes and artillery saturation missions. The gap between the two was effectively filled by the Battalion 81mm mortars.

(4) During the last few days of the Operation the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines had prep fires cancelled and prime targets escaped when fire missions were cancelled by an adjacent battalion. A fire coordination line had been established and there should have been no problem. All the prep fires and the fire missions that were cancelled were well within the 3rd Battalion's area of responsibility, on its side of the FCL. When using a FCL between different infantry units a close and constant liaison must be maintained between the battalion FSCCs to insure safe coordinated employment of all supporting arms.

7. Intelligence

a. The enemy forces that were expected to be encountered on Operation UNION were elements of the 3rd NVA Regiment located in the AT 9331 area. Also reported was the 2nd NVA Division Headquarters located in the BT 0023 area. The 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines also encountered an unknown number of local force guerrillas working throughout its operational area.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

b. Contact during the first 22 days was considered to be very light as compared to the last 5 days. The action was mainly sporadic sniper fire, occasional night probes of the defensive positions and contact with 5-6 man guerrilla units; there was one exception to this. Kilo Company ran into an estimated 40 man ambush in the AT 9523 area; many local force guerrillas operate from this mountainous river valley area close to Hiep Duc and the ambush was probably a guerrilla delaying force for withdrawing NVA units. The early part of Operation UNION was spent sweeping the mountains to the south and west of Nui Lac Son in pursuit of elements of the force which hit Foxtrot Company, 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines. It is believed that the same elements that this battalion ran into in the BT 0835 area on the 13th and 14th of May were the same as those that hit Foxtrot Company. This conclusion was drawn from the fact that the enemy had M-16, M-79, and M-60's; the same type weapons that Foxtrot Company had lost during their encounters with the enemy. Captured documents revealed that these units were two battalions designated the 305th and 307th. Interrogation of a captured NVA Regular showed that he left Hanoi January of 1967 as part of 3rd Battalion, 2nd Regiment NVA which had come into this area. He with others had been sent over to reinforce these two battalions. He did not know the unit designations since he had been with them for only 2 days. Through the use of the interpreter information was gained from the people concerning these two battalions. The intentions of the two battalions were to take control of the Que Son area as they had done in Hiep Duc. The people said that the NVA Regulars did not want to fight the Americans, but it was found in the documents that they had waited 12 days for the Marines to come through. These NVA units were armed with assorted Chicom small arms, M-16's, machine guns, Chicom 60mm and 82mm mortars. Knowledge of the 60mm mortar Chicom model was gained when Alpha Company 1/5 found one that was booby trapped. It was later destroyed.

c. The area in which the battalion operated consisted of many different types of terrain which can be divided into 4 main groupings. The first was in the lower elevations and rice paddies which afforded some cover and concealment for troops; all hamlets encountered possessed extensive trench and cave systems to afford protection from aerial observation, air strikes and artillery fire. The second was in the mountains and river valleys along the AT 9623 to AT 8623 area going west. These mountains provide a great number of hiding and staging areas for VC troops. The villagers in this area paid a high tax in rice to guerrillas. The third area was in the populated area of Hiep Duc which was controlled heavily by the VC due to no ARVN, PF, or American activity in that area for the past several years. The area provided food and living area for the VC with an abundance of trenches and caves in the area. The fourth was similar to the first with many hedgerows and fortified hamlet areas.

d. The reactions of the civilians to civic action and psychological warfare efforts was very satisfactory. Civic Action efforts varied from

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(3) At 020930H the Command Group moved out to cross the river (BT 026207).

(4) At 021000H Co K (BT 039208) followed a blood trail finding one wounded VC who later died. Saw 2 more VC running, opened fire and downed both. Results were 3 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 Chi-Com rifle serial No. 8168741, 1 Chi-Com rifle serial No. D4334, 2 packs, 2 cartridge belts and 1 pith helmet.

(5) At 021100H Co K (BT 014209) spotted a man 10 ft ahead of column. Marines fired on man downing him. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 Chi-Com rifle serial No. 7059544, 1 M-26 grenade, 2 Chi-Com grenades, 1 E-tool, 1 cartridge belt, and 1 canteen cup.

(6) At 021130H all units had crossed the river.

(7) At 021330H Co K (BT 005214) made contact with an estimated 20 VC wearing green uniforms. Point began firing and pursuing enemy. Point was ambushed from three sides by an estimated 40 VC. Received intense automatic fire. Called in artillery mission, Air strikes and 20 rds of 60mm mortars were fired. The air strike caused secondary explosions. Results were 2 USMC KIA med-evaced, 2 USMC WIA med-evaced, 7 VC KIA (probable) and 1 K-44 rifle captured serial No. A9718 captured.

(8) At 021535H Co K (BT 005214) while waiting for an air strike received 3 sniper rds all hitting the same Marine. An artillery mission was called in on snipers position. Results were 1 USMC WIA med-evaced.

(9) At 021730H Command Group and Co A arrived at night position Bt 006213.

(10) At 021840H Co M (AT 9931218) spotted a VC in the bushes with a rifle. They fired on and downed him. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 Chi-Com rifle serial No. 10945, 100 rds 7.62mm, 1 pack, documents, maps, sketches, 1 helmet, 1 cartridge belt and 1 poncho.

(11) All units moved in column along the trail using flankers where possible. The vegetation was very thick at times. Co A provided Command Group security.

(12) At nightfall units were located as follows:

- (a) Command Group and Co A - BT 006213
- (b) Co K - BT 000217
- (c) Co M - AT 993217

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

3121
24 May 1967

(13) At 021900H the intelligence officer and interpreter talked to many civilians that stated that they saw an estimated 30 man force dragging 5 or 6 wounded men with them. All were dressed in green and black uniforms and had weapons. At one time they were only three hours ahead of us moving west. Results were 5 VC KIA (probable).

m. 3 May 1967

(1) At 030630 all units left their night positions and continued the attack to the West.

(2) At 030755H Company K (AT 988219) spotted a man sneaking through the tree line. Marines fired and downed the man. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(3) At 031230H an observation aircraft in support of 3/5 spotted 6 VC in the open moving west at AT 913218. An artillery mission was called. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed) and 1 VC KIA (probable).

(4) At 031100H Company K S-2 scouts found 2 NVA packs, 31 rds of M-1 ammunition and some first aid gear in a tunnel. Villagers said that the VC were moving in groups of 4 to 5 and all were heading for the hills. Scouts also found four 20mm rds rigged as booby traps and 1 VCS in a tunnel.

(5) All units again moved in column deploying strong flankers. Company A provided Command Group scouts.

(6) At nightfall units were located as follows:

(a) Command Group and Company A - AT 966228

(b) Company K - AT 957227

(c) Company M - AT 945227

n. 4 May 1967

(1) At 040730H Command Group left night positions.

(2) At 040738H Company M at AT 932226 received 3 sniper rds. 41 small arms rds were returned and the area was swept. Found 3 VCC in cave.

(3) At 041205H Company M at AT 923220 and AT 918222 found 8 VN males and 2 VN females in 4 different caves with some VC literature and medical supplies. Results were 10 VCS.

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

~~SECRET~~3121
24 May 1967

(4) At 041105H Company A (AT 930225) had a round cook off in an M-16 as it laid in the hot sun. 3 USMC WIA med-evac'ed.

(5) At 041530H Company K (AT 904238) arrived at the location of a downed helicopter and commenced to search the area. A repair crew landed and received sniper fire. A squad loaded aboard the repair helicopter and flew across the river to engage the enemy. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed) and 2 VC KIA (probable). Found 5 VCS in a cave near the downed helicopter. The FAC team called in an air strike on the area where sporadic sniper fire was being received. An air observer (airborne) reported 10 VC KIA (probable) from the air strike.

(6) At 041800H Command Group, Company A and Company M arrived at night positions with 1/5 in Hiep Duc.

(7) Company K and Company M moved to find river fords at different locations. Company K was ordered to procede ASAP to the downed helicopter. Company A provided security for the Command Group.

(8) At nightfall units were in the following locations;

(a) Command Group, Company A and Company M - AT 910245

(b) Company K - AT 904238

o. 5 May 1967.

(1) In the morning all companies thoroughly searched local assigned areas. 1/5 left at 0500 for their assigned area. One of the VN of this area said that about 5 days ago there were some 300 VC in this area but that they left.

(2) At 051100H Company K (AT 903243) picked up 8 VN that wanted to be evacuated to New Life Hamlet at Tam Ky.

(3) At 051130H Company M (AT 900244) found 4 VN males believed to be VCS and at (AT 901241) 2 more VN males in cave. People in cave had VC documents and medical supplies. Results were 6 VCS.

(4) At 051200H Company M (AT 900244) picked up 4 VN that wanted to be evacuated to Tam Ky.

(5) At 051400H the Commanding Officer 3/5 (AT 901244) while on a short patrol captured 4 VN males who after initial interrogation proved to be VCC. Chieu Hoi and interpreters interrogated them and found out cave locations at (AT 897245) and (AT 985246). They said rice is stored there and that 10-20 VC visit that area each night. Results were 4 VCC, 2 VC gas masks, assorted clothes and 5lbs medical gear.

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

1121

24 May 1967

p. 6 May 1967

(1) At 060835H Co K (AT 898241) sqd patrol received 3 sniper rds from 2 VC across river wearing black PJs, both carrying weapons. Patrol returned 10 rds SAF and 5 rds M-79. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VC KIA (p).

(2) At 060845H Co B (AT 899251) recieved heavy sniper fire from rice paddy. Marines returned heavier volume of fire and swept through village. Found: 1 VC female KIA (confirmed) and 2 VCS males also found 12ga. pump shotgun serial No. 53202 Stevens Model No. 77, 20 rds carbine ammo, 1 belt (50 rds) cal 45 ammo, document and roster.

(3) At 061400 downed helicopter was successfully lifted out.

(4) At 061730 Command Group evacuated approximately 50 refugees by helicopter. At least 150 more refugees remained that were being fed and cared for.

(5) At 061800H units were in the following locations.

Command Group AT 925251

Co K AT 926252

Co M AT 926250

Co B AT 924252

q. 7 May 1967

(1) At 070715H Command Group left present location. Co M escorted over 150 refugees. At 0700 B 1/5 came under 3/5 control.

(2) At 070925H Co K (AT 965267) spotted 5 VC (AT 964275) running across a rice paddy toward a tree line. Marines fired 30 rds SAF, 1 VC fell and was helped off. Results: 1 VC KIA (probable).

(3) At 070935H Co K (AT 943271) spotted 1 VC running into brush. Marines challenged, he didn't stop. Marines killed him. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(4) At 070945H Co K (AT 970254) began a sweep through objective. Observed 2 50 cal machinegun emplacements with 50 cal cartridge belt. Marines continued search with negative results and set in at present position.

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

UNCLASSIFIED

(5) At 071050H Command Group enroute to turn refugees over to Co I (AT 274987) at Nui Loc Son for helicopter evacuation. Observed 10 VC running into bushes, called arty mission. Results: 1 VC KIA (probable).

(6) At 071130H Co B broke off the column and headed into the hills just east of hill 441.

(7) At 071330H Co I arrived to pick up refugees.

(8) At 071730H arrived at tonight's location:

Command Group and Co K BT 001293

Co M AT 993297

(9) At 071900H operational control of Co B was transferred to 1/5.

r. 8 May 1967

(1) At 08000H all units left last night's position.

(2) At 080720H the 3/5 CP (AT 992298) was with Company K waiting for Company M to take obj 10 (AT 978066) hill #38 complex, which was heavily prepped. Company I is on its way down from Nui Loc Son to attack hill #270 complex (AT 999315). Operational Control was transferred to 3/5 this morning at 0800.

(3) At 080810H Company M (AT 984304) picked up 1 VCC male and found 200 lbs rice. VCC was evacuated and rice was destroyed.

(4) At 081145H Company M (AT 992327) sighted 3 people running 300 meters in front of column. Point fired killing 1 VC woman. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 MAS rifle serial No. 9978.

(5) At 081158H Company K (AT 995322) sighted 1 VC who jumped up and ran when Marines approached. VC was flushed and killed by the flank security squad. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 MAS rifle serial No. 2581.

(6) At 081245H Company K (AT 994324) spotted 1 VC who jumped out of cave and ran. Marines challenged and VC failed to obey. Marines killed him. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(7) At 081330H Command Group arrived at night position. (AT 999325).

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(8) At 081330H Company M (BT 003337) saw 3 men running, one had weapon. Marines fired 25 rounds and searched area. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed) 2 VCC, one of the captured is a tax collector, tax documents were found on him.

(9) At 081630H Company M had 3 VN males and their families turn themselves in as Chieu Hoi. Results: 13 VCC Chieu Hoi.

(10) At 081630H Company K (BT 000327) saw 1 VC running (AT 998325). Marines challenged and VC failed to obey, Marines fired 19 rds SAF felling him. Results 1 VC KIA (confirmed) and VC documents and propaganda.

(11) At 081700H these were the positions of:

Command Group & Co K - BT 000324

Company M - AT 991332

Company I - BT 012323

(12) At 081820H Co I LZ (019329) received 150 rds SAF and 4 rifle grenades when resupply helicopter was landing. Marines fired 7 rds 60mm mortar, 5 rds 3.5in rockets and 400 rds SAF. Called in arty mission. Observed 2 bodies. Searched area and found blood tracks and VC blanket roll. Results 2 VC KIA (probable), 1 VC blanket roll.

(13) At 082130H Company I (BT 011326) observed VC trip booby trap. Perimeter opened fire, with 17 rds SAF and searched area finding 1 wounded VC. He later died. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

s. 9 May 1967

(1) At 090500H all units are stayed in the same locations while sending out heavy combat patrols.

(2) At 090550H Company K (BT 005322) spotted 2 VC running from Marines. Marines challenged but received no response. Marines fired 16 rds SAF. Results: 2 VC KIA (confirmed) 1 male, 1 female.

(3) At 090600H Company K (AT 999329) approached a village and 1 VC male ran from the Marines ignoring all commands to halt. Fired 35 rds. Results: 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121

24 May 1967

(4) At 090620H Company K (BT 005322) received 1 rd S/A fire from village and saw 2 VC running out the other side. Marines assaulted the village and challenged VC without any response. 2 VC KIA (confirmed) 1 male, 1 female. Also received secondary explosion from village upon burning it.

(5) At 090630H Company K (BT 013324) approached village and saw 1 VC run ignoring all warning. Marine fired 1 rd. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed) found in VC's hut 6 green utility uniforms.

(6) At 090830H Company K (BT 016335) spotted 1 VC running from cane field who ignored all warnings. Marines fired 5 rds. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed)

(7) At 091100H Company K (BT 011328) found a large tunnel complex measuring some 300-400 meters long, 4-6 feet high and 3 feet wide. It was about 8-10 feet below the ground. It took 40 cratering charges to destroy the tunnels. In them also were found 2 male VCS.

(8) At 091300H Command Group left last night's position.

(9) At 091345H Command Group arrived at tonight's position at BT 011328.

(10) At 091430H Company M (BT 001341) received 30 rds automatic fire from a small enemy ambush. Company M returned 225 rds small arms and 5 M-79 rds and searched out the area finding 5 bodies and 2 drag marks. Results were 3 USMC WIA med-evac'd, 5 VC KIA (confirmed), 2 VC KIA (probable). Gear that was found included 1 MAS 36, rifle serial no 17565, 2 khaki uniforms, 4 sets of black PJ's, 2 cartridge belts, 1 first aid packet, 1 canteen and case, 1 ChiCom grenade, 1 M-26 grenade, 126 rds 762 mm and 2 carbine magazines with 45 rds.

(11) At 091630H Company I (BT 015325) found a cave complex with an unknown number of people in it. Marines entered the cave 3 times firing 10 rds Cal 45, threw 2 M-26 grenades and 2 CS grenades. Prior to the Marines entering the cave an interpreter and Chieu Hoi tried to convince the people inside to come out. All efforts along this line were in vain. One VN male came out of the cave and stated that there was no one else in the cave. Digging was begun to open up another entrance. Marines broke through and found two bodies and heard noises of more people further back in the cave. The exits were sealed and the cave filled with smoke from burning leaves. The Marines reentered the cave finding 3 more bodies and weapons plus some gear. Outside the cave a VCS was captured. Results were 5 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VCC, 1 VCS, 2 ChiCom bolt action rifles, 1 ML Carbine serial no 3495209, 2 M26 grenades, 1 ChiCom grenade, 2 cartridge belts & ammo pouch, small amount of medicine and a MG tripod, and gun platform.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121

24 May 1967

(12) At 091700H these were the unit positions.

(a) Command Group & Company K - BT 011328

(b) Company I - BT 018318

(c) Company M - BT 014338

(13) At 091720H Company M (BT 009338) found 1 VCS male going into cave after they had received 1 sniper round near that area. He was very uncooperative during questioning. Results: 1 VCS.

t. 10 May 1967

(1) At 100600H Command Group left last night's position.

(2) At 100830H Company I (BT 013326) spotted men run from hut as Marines approached. They had no weapons. Marines physically ran them down. After questioning it was revealed that 1 was VCC, 2 were VCS and the fourth was a small boy who was released.

(3) At 100830H Company I (BT 013326-BT 028314) found 6 sets of helicopter booby traps. Each set consisted of 4 poles with interconnecting wires & grenades attached to each pole. All were destroyed.

(4) At 100950H the 5th Marines Commanding Officer flew in to convey the Division Commander's "Well Done" to the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

(5) At 101100H Command Group arrived at intended night position (BT 056322).

(6) At 101345H Command Group moved out to assist 1/5 and 1/3 who were heavily engaged.

(7) At 101400H Operational Control of Company M was transferred to 1/5.

(8) At 101700H Company M was heli-lifted to BT 038374. Operational Control of Company A was transferred to 3/5.

(9) At 101900H Command Group arrived at night position (BT 061381).

(10) At 102015H all units were at the following positions:

(a) Command Group & Company I (-) - BT 061381

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(b) Company K - Between BT 063388-BT 061381

(c) Company I (-) Between BT 06338- BT 066394

(d) Company A - BT 049383

(11) At 102245H Command Group received word that there would be an aerial broadcast in our area encouraging the VC and NVA to surrender,

u. 31 May 1967.

(1) At 110625H Company I (BT 066393) saw VC in green utilities. Marines killed him as he threw away his rifle. Results 1 VC KIA (confirmed) 1 cartridge belt, canteen, M-14 magazines.

(2) At 110645H Company I (BT 077390) saw 4 armed VC in back of blocking position moving SW. Marines fired 60 rds small arms and 2 rds M-79. One VC fell. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 2 VC KIA (probable), 1 cartridge belt, 1 message packet, 1 M-14 magazine, 1 pouch.

(3) At 110845H Company I (BT 066390) received 50 rds auto & semi-auto fire, from 5 VC. Marines returned 200 rds S/A fire, 1 LAW, 7 rds 60mm mortars and 7 rds 82mm mortars. Mortars covered target very effectively. Results were 3 VC KIA (probable).

(4) At 110900H observation aircraft in support of 3/5 spotted 2 VC in green utilities and conical hats. 1 had weapon, aircraft fired MG and dropped grenades on enemy. He spotted one body and saw the other crawl away. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VC KIA (probable).

(5) At 110930H scouts attached to Company M (BT 036383) identified NVA unit as 17th Bn, 320 B Division, from captured documents.

(6) At 111050H Company K (BT 061394) FAC team spotted 1 VC on trail. With the help of an aerial observer the FAC located, closed with and killed the VC with his pistol. The VC was wearing a grey uniform and was carrying 1 Chicom grenade, 1 E-tool, a first aid packet, 1 poncho, approximately 2 lbs of 82mm mortar increments and 9 point detonating fuses for either 60mm or 82mm. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(7) At 111100H Command Group arrived at present position and set the Battalion in blocking positions for a sweep by 1/3 and 1/5.

(8) At 111229H Company I (BT 058395) spotted 3 VC (BT 059397) in black pajamas running across rice paddy. Marines fired 70 rds S/A fire and 1 LAW. Saw one man fall and not get up. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(9) At 111300H Company A (BT 049383) spotted a VC coming up the trail. One of the USMC snipers was called up. Within the next 20 minutes the USMC sniper had fired 6 rds downing 4 enemy. Results were 4 VC KIA (confirmed).

(10) At 111600H Company I (BT 055400) searched out a hamlet and found two huts with false walls. Inside the walls the Marine found a wooden rifle, an enemy flag, a briefcase full of papers, a homemade map, 1 M-26 grenade, a large chart with Chinese writing on it, a gas mask and a small quantity of medical gear.

(11) At 111610H an FO with 81mm mortars at the 3/5 CP spotted 5 VC run into a tree line. Called an 81mm mortar fire mission on the tree line and only 2 VC ran out. Results were 3 VC KIA (probable).

(12) At 111815H Company K (BT 063388) stopped 2 Vietnamese females carrying an NVA's body. The woman said he had been killed last night during the fire fight. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(13) At 111830H Company K (BT 056389) was fired upon by a VC with an M-2 carbine. He was spotted running across a rice paddy. Marines opened fire with 5 rds S/A fire. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(14) At 112100H Company A (BT 056384) spotted and heard 3 or 4 groups of infiltrators. Each group consisted of 2-3 people. Company A received 2 incoming grenades and 20 rds small arms. Returned 100 rds small arms, 3 grenades, 7 rds 81mm mortar. Mortars were on target. Results were 3 VC KIA (probable).

(15) All units moved a short distance to improve their blocking positions today. Stayed in these blocking positions waiting for 1/3 and 1/5 to sweep in and close the gap.

(16) At nightfall the units were located as follows:

- (a) Command Group - BT 059385
- (b) Company I - from AT 997364 - AT 990391
- (c) Company K - from BT 057383 - BT 057383
- (d) Company A - from BT 056383 - BT 053383

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

v. 12 May 1967

(1) At 120545H Company K (BT 059384) had a man run through their lines and into rice paddy. Marines challenged, VC disregarded, Marines killed him. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(2) At 120745H Company I (BT 058394) swept through hamlet where they saw 12 VC run last night. They found 1 VCS male with box containing uniforms and documents. Results were 1 VCS.

(3) At 120830H 3/5 ~~assumed~~ OPCON of Company A.

(4) At 120900H 3/5 relinquished OPCON of Company A to 1/5 and received OPCON of Company D.

(5) At 121230H Company K (BT 062384) fireteam was on waterrun and observed VCS who ran. Marines challenged and apprehended. Results were 1 VCS.

(6) At 121400H Gen NICKERSON visited the Command Group.

(7) At 121415H Company I (BT 057394-BT 049393) found 3 VCS with small amount of medical supplies and documents. Results were 3 VCS.

(8) At 121750H all units moved out from last night's position (BT 059385) toward night positions as follows:

(a) Command Group and Company M at BT 091361

(b) Company K at BT 103366

(c) Company D at BT 010361

(d) Company I at BT 097357

The order of march was Delta Co. 1/5 leading out followed by India and Mike. The CP was with Mike. Kilo was not in the column but was proceeding across country direct. At approximately 121750H delta encountered the enemy at BT 082365. Delta turned into the enemy, but were stopped by intense semi-automatic, automatic fire and mortars. India, who was directly behind Delta, started to Delta's North, but on order moved around to the rear of Delta and on down to their South flank where they received intense S/A fire and a few incoming mortar rds. India then regrouped and set up in a 360 degree perimeter as by this time it was dark. When Delta first encountered the enemy Kilo continued on their compass heading until they were directly north of Delta. Kilo then on order turned South to link up with Delta at 122015H. This link up was very successfully accomplished.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121

24 May 1967

(9) At 122335H Company K (BT 082365) med-evaced the last of their emergency casualties and resupply was accomplished. Results which were finally evaluated came to 15 USMC KIA, 26 USMC WIA med-evaced, 18 WIA NE, and 2 MIA, 15 VC KIA (probables).

w. 13 May 1967.

(1) At 130800H Company K (BT 089361) fired on VC who ran as Marines came sweeping through the bushes. Fired 5 rds. No weapons or documents found on VC. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(2) At 130810H Company M (BT 075378) spotted people in uniforms and fired 81's on them. 81's fired 15 rds with excellent target coverage. Results were 7 VC KIA (probable).

(3) At 130845H Company I (BT 086354) while sweeping area for bodies came under mortar and S/A fire. Returned 12 M-79 and 400 rds M-60 which neutralized rifle fire. Called air strike on enemy mortar position with good coverage. Recovered 6 VC bodies wearing khaki uniforms also 1 Chinese Sub-MG. Results were 9 VC KIA (confirmed), captured 1 Chicom MG, 3 Chicom grenades, 1 NVA pack, 2 canteens, 1 Chicom assault magazine, 1 cartridge belt, 1 E-tool, 2 gas masks and documents.

(4) At 131130H Command Group (BT 079361) received report from aerial observer which spotted 50 VC with weapons and packs. Called in 2 Arty missions, 1 air strike and fired 50 rds of 81mm mortars. Results were 19 VC KIA (confirmed) and 6 VC KIA (probable).

(5) At 131300H Company I (BT 093358) encountered large enemy force while searching and sweeping assigned area. Received a heavy volume of both S/A fire and mortars. Range between enemy was at times, as close as 100m. Called in many Arty, mortar and air strikes with good coverage. Results were 2 Marines KIA (med-evaced), 29 VC KIA (confirmed), 33 VC KIA (probable).

(6) At 131330H Company K (BT 088358) received intense S/A fire and mortars from enemy position (BT 088353). Called in 2 Arty missions and 3 air strikes. During the air strikes the enemy ran into the open and were cut down by accurate and heavy volume of S/A fire. Results were 8 VC KIA (confirmed), 10 VC KIA (probable).

(7) At 131500H Company K (BT 088358) while attempting to regroup and resupply with ammo was again taken under intense S/A fire and received incoming mortars. Called in 7 Arty missions, 4 air strikes and 81mm mortar missions. As the air strikes hit the enemy positions, they would jump from

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

their positions and run. The Marines cut them down. Results were 15 VC KIA (confirmed), 20 VC KIA (probable).

(8) At 131635H Company M (BT 086358) spotted 45 enemy (BT 093357) carrying their casualties and 2 mortar tubes across an open area. Called in 35 81mm mortar rounds with good target coverage. Results were 19 VC KIA (confirmed), 23 VC KIA (probable) after intense search of the above area 25 VC KIA (confirmed) and 37 VC KIA (probable) were recorded due to many blood trails and drag marks.

(9) At nightfall units were at following positions:

- (a) Command Group and Company K and D - BT 079361
- (b) Company M - BT 086360
- (c) Company I - BT 092358
- (d) Company A - BT 080359

(10) The following is a Narrative Summary of Combat Action for 13 May 1967:

(a) 0730: Cottage Delta was pulled back to CP location, (BT 079361) within Mike's lines to resupply and reorganize after heavy night contact. India and Kilo Companies located at BT 086366 jumped off on search and destroy missions to seize objectives at BT 084372 and BT 088368.

(b) 0830: India met heavy contact on their right flank at BT 090363 and received automatic weapons fire and 60mm mortars.

(c) 0845: Kilo was diverted to assist India on its right flank at BT 084360.

(d) 0900: Kilo arrived at India's right flank and came under heavy small arms fire immediately at a range of 200 meters from well-dug-in enemy force. Enemy had mortars, many automatic weapons and wore green and khaki uniforms, cartridge belts and jungle helmets. Estimates from front line units are that enemy force was a reinforced NVA battalion.

(d) 1030-1500: Heavy contact with enemy at close range; many sightings of enemy units moving in 30 and 40 man units. Mike sent to relieve heavy pressure on Kilo at BT 086360. During this period, 8 air strikes were called on the area of Phuoc Duc (4), BT 088353.

(e) 1500-1800: Enemy activity subsided and the following casualties were determined: friendly KIA's 9, friendly WIA's 63. All friendly casualties were med-evaced. Enemy KIA (confirmed) 122, enemy KIA (probable) 156. Two large enemy sightings were reported as follows:

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

1 Kilo saw aircraft drop napalm on approximately 100 enemy as they were coming across an open field towards Kilo's position.

2 Mike spotted a group of some 45 enemy who were carrying casualties and 2 mortar tubes. An 81mm mortar mission of 40 rds was called on top of them with excellent coverage.

(11) At 132340 Company M, I and A (BT 086354) came under heavy S/A fire, A/W fire and mortar fire from approximately 1 Company of VC. Received 115 rds of mortars both 60 and 82mm, also S/A fire, A/W fire, and 3 mortars missions and 4 Arty missions. Flare ship illuminated. Results were 2 Marines KIA (med-evaced), 20 Marines WIA (med-evaced), 32 VC KIA (confirmed), 35 VC KIA (probable). Captured were 2 Chicom light MGs serial number 906888 and 883782, 3 Chicom S/K rifles Serial numbers 7056283G, 7063083 and 8151807, assorted packs and equipment. Book with note referring to 307 Battalion, soldering iron, solder, demolitions kit.

x. 14 May 1967.

(1) At 140705H Company I searched through tree line where enemy was last night, found 1 VCC killed, 5 VC in bunker with 3.5 rocket. Found mortar site and 7 rds, 60mm mortar. One VCC states he is from 1 Battalion, 2nd Regt but will not state original unit. Found book on VCC states VC had been in area 12 days. Results were 5 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VCC. Captured: 21 Chicom grenades (destroyed), 2 M-26 grenades (destroyed), 1 K-44 assault rifle serial number 7065861, 3 AK-47 assault rifles 7.62mm serial number 10062289, 10065875 and 9473998, 4 helmets, 1 box 7.62 MG ammo (linked), 1 BAR mag, 4 M-14 mag, 16 banana mags for AK-47's, 550 rds short 7.62, 150 rds short 7.62 (linked), 1 long rope, 13 cartridge belts, 8 E-tools, 6 plastic ponchos, 8 canteens, 2 stretchers, 4 gas mask, 1 Chicom MG serial number 908232.

(2) At 141400H the local people say that 2 Battalions of NVA, the 305th and the 307th, came into the area with the intention of fighting the ARVN at Que Son. They were to split the Battalions for the attack but the Marines had forced the fight before they had split. The NVAs did not want to fight the Marines. Now they have split up into squad and platoon sized units and gone off in different directions.

(3) At 141554H CO 3/5 (BT 079361) fired the 500th 81mm mortar rd of Operation UNION. He fired at BT 091358 in the area of Phuoc Duc (4). The round was a WP resulting in 1 VC KIA (probable)

(4) At 141630H Company I (BT 092366) came upon two shallow graves. The graves contained two Marines. One was positively identified as BASSNET. The other was tentatively identified as CABLE. Both were KIA's from Company D.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

- (5) At 14165H Colonel HOUGHTON paid the 3/5 CP a visit.
- (6) At 141730H all units moved out to a new location.
- (7) Throughout most of the day all units stayed in their last night's positions patrolling their immediate areas and blocking for 1/1. During the late afternoon all units moved independently to their new locations.

(8) At nightfall units were located as follows:

- (a) Command Group, Company K and Company D - BT 076369
- (b) Company A - BT 076364
- (c) Company M - BT 070374
- (d) Company I - BT 074374

y. 15 May 1967.

- (1) At 150600H Operational control of Company D was transferred to 1/5.
- (2) At 150605H all units moved out from last night's position to locate, close with and destroy the enemy.
- (3) At 150850H aerial observer (BT 082382) in support of 3/5 spotted 15 VC, BT 104374, wearing green and khaki uniforms. Artillery and 2 air strikes were called on them. Results were 3 KIA (confirmed), 5 KIA (probable)
- (4) At 150835H India (BT 089383) was sweeping toward the morning's objective; a mortar site was located at the above coordinates. The site was fresh and the base plate impression was such that it looked as if the mortars were fired towards hill 65, (BT 093392).
- (5) At 151300H Company K and Command Group arrived at night position, (BT 085385).
- (6) At 151100H to 151700H Mike and India were on line with Mike on the north of India at BT 092385 and BT 092384 when India came under intense S/A fire and received incoming 82mm mortars. India then called in artillery, mortars, and an air strike on the enemy position. A Huey made a strafing run through India's CP. No one was injured. The fixed wing air strike: each plane, of two, made 1 pass and were right on target. On the next pass the heading was changed to make it safer for friendly troops. As the flight leader came in he mistook the USMC area for the enemy's area and dropped

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

two bombs on a platoon of India wounding 10 Marines. After the air strike Company M moved SE and Company A moved NE to link up so Company I could pull back between them, evac their wounded and regroup. Both Company M and Company A helped India pull back their wounded. Once all the med-evacs were out Company I again moved between Company M and Company A to resume their position on the front. At approximately 1410 Company K and the CP started toward the action when they ran into snipers. Company K took care of the snipers. 4 mortar missions were called on the enemy's area to the east of the Mike, India, & Alpha lines. One of these missions destroyed an enemy 82mm mortar position. 11 artillery missions were also called in on this area. Results were 8 USMC KIA, 30 WIA, 6 WIANE, 22 VC KIA (confirmed), 27 KIA (probable), 1 VCC, 4 VCS.

(7) At 151615H the CP, (BT 085380) spotted 6 VC wearing green and khaki uniforms and carrying two rifles. The perimeter opened up on them knocking one down. Results were 1 VC KIA (probable). Found 1 NVA helmet and 1 illumination grenade.

(8) During the day the Battalion moved with 3 companies up and Company K providing the Command Group security. All units were using spread formations due to flat and open terrain.

(9) At nightfall units were located as follows:

- (a) Command Group and Company K - BT 090380
- (b) Company M - BT 099383
- (c) Company I - BT 099382
- (d) Company A - BT 096381

z. 16 May 1967.

(1) All units at 160615H moved out from night positions to locate, close with and destroy the enemy.

(2) At 160630H - 160700H Artillery fired 4 prep missions between the following coordinates, BT 112399 and BT 112383.

(3) At 160730H - 160800H Artillery fired same prep missions.

(4) At 160830H Company A (BT 104385) found a booty trapped Chicom 60mm mortar, complete, and a dead VC male in a cave nearby. The mortar had been set up as if it had been just fired. There were 5 wires leading from

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

3121

24 May 1967

various parts of the mortar, leading to a Chicom grenade which was semi-buried. 3 of the wires were loose trip wires and 2 of the wires were taught trip wires. Underneath the corner of the base plate was yet another explosive device. This was rigged with what seemed to be a pressure release firing mechanism. The entire mortar, Chicom grenade and the second explosive device were all destroyed in place rather than risk a Marine's life disarming it. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(5) At 160840H Company A (BT 106382) swept through hamlet where this unit received heavy fire yesterday. Found an NVA cartridge belt, poncho, hammock and three heavy blood trails. Results were 3 VC KIA (probable).

(6) At 160955H LtCol D. E. ESSLINGER (BT 100381) spotted a VC running (BT 105381) and took him under fire with first an M-14 and then M-16; he downed him. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed).

(7) At 161030H Company Alpha's interpreter talked to an old man (BT 116390) who stated that approximately 100 NVA troops slept and ate around his house last night. At first light they moved off together toward the northeast.

(8) At 161315H Company M (BT 118393) while searching a village found 4 containers of fuses and increments for 61mm mortars.

(9) At 161415H Company I (BT 119395) discovered cave complex at BT 115393 which appeared to be used as a medical facility. One VCS male, very uncooperative, was found inside the cave. At the same location a booby trap was encountered when one Marine took off his pack and accidentally dropped it on a trip wire. The explosive device was evidently a combination of a frag and WP. One end of the trip wire was connected to a tree and the other was secured to the explosive device. Results were 4 USMC WIA med-evaced.

(10) At 161930H all units arrived at tonight's position at BT 151408.

(11) At nightfall units were located as follows:

(a) Command Group and Company K - BT 152408

(b) Company I - BT 150403

(c) Company M - BT 158409

(d) Company A - BT 143407

aa. 17 May 1967.

(1) At 170600H Operation UNION was secured.

35

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

3121
24 May 1967

UNCLASSIFIED

11. Resultsa. Enemy

(1) The following is an assessment of VC personnel casualties inflicted by 3/5:

- (a) VC KIA (confirmed) - 288
- (b) VC KIA (probable) - 372
- (c) VC WIA (confirmed) - 3
- (d) VCC - 35
- (e) VCS - 77
- (f) Chieu Hois - 3
- (g) Refugees taken out of VC controlled areas - 283

(2) The following is a completion of enemy equipment and material captured or destroyed by 3/5.

- (a) NVA packs with gear (destroyed and evaced) - 30
- (b) Chicom grenades (destroyed) - 56
- (c) M-26 grenades (destroyed) - 9
- (d) Documents (destroyed and evaced) - 75 lbs
- (e) Medical supplies (destroyed and evaced) - 50 lbs
- (f) 1 60mm Chicom mortar destroyed

(g) The following is a list of weapons that were captured and evaced.

- 1 K-44 - 8
- 2 K-47 - 2
- 3 AK-47 - 4
- 4 Chicom LMG - 3

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

- 5 MAS 36 - 3
- 6 Chicom Carbines - 2
- 7 US M-1 Carbine - 1
- 8 12 gauge Shotgun - 1
- 9 Total of 25 captured rifles.

(b) Rice destroyed - 62,100 lbs

b. Friendly

(1) Casualties sustained by 3/5 were as follows:

(a) Killed in Action - 16

1 Gunshot - 8

2 Shrapnel - 8

(b) Died of wounds - 4

1 Gunshot - 1

2 Shrapnel - 0

3 3 Marines died when a helicopter went down at sea enroute to a hospital ship - 3

(c) Wounded in Action - 215

1 Gunshot - 67

2 Shrapnel - 148

(d) The above casualties do not include the casualties sustained by the companies from 1/5 that were attached to 3/5 at various times.

(2) The following is a list of weapons and equipment lost or destroyed by 3/5:

(a) 1 M-60 MG destroyed

(b) 1 Cal .45 pistol destroyed

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

- (c) 2 Cal .45 pistols lost
- /(d) 2 M-79 grenade launchers destroyed
- (e) 6 M-16 rifles lost
- (f) 12 M-16 rifles destroyed
- (g) 30 packs with gear destroyed

12. Administration

a. Resupply.

(1) Resupply was accomplished from the Logistical Support Area (LSA) at Tam Ky.

(2) Normal resupply of all ~~classes~~ of supply was accomplished every other day. Emergency resupply was accomplished when requested. Usually the companies were resupplied in their own LZs. Occasionally, a problem arose when two or more companies used the same LZ. The resupply would be brought to the LZ and the companies would not know which gear was theirs because they had not retained a copy of their own resupply request; this was easily corrected.

(3) Availability of helicopters was a controlling factor but overall support was excellent.

(4) The HST net was used as a logistical and administrative net and a helicopter control net. Some problem was encountered due to the fact that the same radio was used to accomplish both of these functions. When a helicopter came to land the administrative net would have to shut down to control the helicopter. An additional radio with HST, with a standby frequency, would alleviate this problem.

b. Maintenance.

(1) Maintenance of equipment was accomplished through the LSA. Replacement of defective equipment took place in the field. One requirement, however, which caused a minor problem at first was that the LSA would send a man to effect the exchange of equipment. If the defective weapon or equipment wasn't in the LZ when the new gear arrived, it resulted in the man from the LSA staying in the field until he physically made the exchange; this was corrected.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967c. Treatment of casualties and evacuation and hospitalization.

(1) Evacuation of personnel was accomplished smoothly and usually in a minimum of time. Again, availability of helicopters was a big factor. One problem that developed was that a med-evac would be requested before an LZ was secured and before the Marines to be med-evac were at the LZ. This resulted in copters either circling for long periods before coming in or returned to their base empty. Wounded were removed expediently from the battlefield and excellent care was received throughout the evacuation chain.

d. Transportation.

(1) No problems were encountered with transportation. Replacements and special supplies were transported by truck to the LSA. All resupplies and replacements were delivered to the field by helicopter from the LSA.

e. Communications.

(1) The PRC-25 proved to be a thoroughly dependable, adequate means of communications. Initially a PRC-47 was included in the equipment taken to the field. The PRC-47 is considered impractical. It is too heavy and battery resupply and recharge presents more problems than it's worth. The PRC-47 was returned. It is recommended that the PRC-47 not be considered for use by mobile battalions.

(2) The RC-292, less the AB-135's, proved adequate for distances which exceeded the capabilities of the whip antenna. This tree-top 292 is portable and can be attached to a bamboo pole and tied or leaned on trees.

(3) The initial confusion of frequencies expected on one hour mount-out were about the same as experienced on operations in which considerable time is consumed in preparation. This does require that a reference frequency be designated by name to have an assigned number e.g. Daisy-42.0. Frequencies are passed by saying Daisy - the required amount to give the required frequency. This should be considered to supplement the COI.

f. Medical Evacuation.

- (1) Total number of medical evacuees. 303
- (2) Killed in action. 16
- (3) Wounded in action. 180

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

- (4) Wounded in action non-evac. 42
- (5) Died of wounds 1
- (6) Non-combat deaths 3
- (7) Combat injuries-non wound
 - (a) Contusion -6
 - (b) Sprained Ankles - 2
- (8) Non-combat injuries - 95
 - (a) urinary tract infection -1
 - (b) Burns -2
 - (c) Allergy -1
 - (d) Sprains -7
 - (e) Heat Strokes -2
 - (f) Heat Exhaustions -29
 - (g) Muscle Strains -3
 - (h) Amebiasis -12
 - (i) Possible malaria -7
 - (j) Fever unknown origin -11
 - (k) Possible Appendicitis -1
 - (l) Abdominal cramps -2
 - (m) Ingrown toenail -1
 - (n) Cellulitis -4
 - (o) Knife wound -1
 - (p) Sores on feet -1

40

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

- (q) Contusions -2
- (r) Laceration -1
- (s) Gastruenterites -2
- (t) ~~Poison~~ Ivy -1
- (u) Skin ulcer -1
- (v) Diarrhea -8
- (w) Snake bite -1
- (x) Athlete's foot -1
- (y) Possible heart attack -1
- (z) accidental discharge -1

13. Special Equipment and Techniques

a. The companies from 1/5 that were OPCON to 3/5 at various times had attached to them Scout-Sniper Teams. These teams were observed closely by the CO of 3/5 and ascertained to be highly effective. This was especially true in both stable blocking positions and against long range snipers.

b. The Battalion S-2 brought some piasters from his reward fund to the field to pay the local people for the use of their land for bivouac sites, for the use of their water and for damage done by the Marines to their property. This proved highly effective in establishing a cordial relationship between the local VN and the USMC.

14. Command's Analysis. Operation UNION was a totally successful, and fruitful endeavor. For over three weeks this Battalion maneuvered deep in enemy territory in pursuit of VC and NVA units and sustained relatively light casualties while inflicting considerable damage to the enemy and gaining a valuable psychological advantage in having free movement in solidly held VC areas. Upon finally finding and fixing the large NVA forces on 12-14 May, this Battalion was able to close off the enemy's escape routes and effectively destroy the majority of one reinforced NVA battalion and capture much of its equipment. The Battalion moved well throughout the operation, only once requiring water resupply and keeping non-battle casualties to a minimum. In the heat experienced the removal of armored vests considerably improved the fighting effectiveness of the troops by giving a lighter load per man and increasing the freedom of movement.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

15. Recommendations

a. The HST be issued an additional radio to insure continuous control of all their nets.

b. That a special fund be set up to pay the VN civilians for services rendered to the Marines while on operations.

c. That Scout-Sniper teams be attached to the battalion in further operations.

d. That the PRC-47 not be considered for use by mobile battalions.

e. That an adequately secure and simple reference frequency system be devised for use when on operations to supplement the COI.

f. That constant and continuous instruction and supervision be given by both officers and NCOs on care, cleaning and maintenance of the M-16 rifle when in the field.

B. R. Cummins
B. R. CUMMINS
By direction

UNCLASSIFIED

SECRET

5VC run SW on trail
140445/044398/FM 3VC KIA (P)
092398 'C' Obj ^{to}
sweep area at
24 plo type in beer can / pressure type / on surface
190835H / Blown in place

UNCLASSIFIED

3121
24 May 1967

(b) Company A - BT 079212

(c) Company K - BT 069206

(d) Company M - BT 059203

k. 1 May 1967

(1) At 010430H all units left their present positions to continue the attack.

(2) At 010530H Company K (BT 205055) was moving down a trail in the dark when 7 VC ran through the side of the column. Company K immediately opened fire and apprehended what VC were close at hand. Results were 6 VCC captured, one of which was wounded.

(3) At 010535H Company C (BT 051206) apprehended one VCS male who ran into the rear of the column just after the firing mentioned in the last entry ceased. VCS was carrying a pack containing rice and clothing.

(4) At 010750H Company C (BT 047207) received 5 rds sniper fire from BT 046209. Returned 50 rds small arms and sent squad to search area with negative results. Results were 1 USMC KIA.

(5) At 010825H Company M (BT 066213) received 3 sniper rds from BT 064215 wounding 1 Marine in the leg. Co M returned 30 rds small arms and three 3.5 WP rds. A platoon swept through the enemy position finding a heavy blood trail. Results were 1 USMC WIA and 1 VC KIA (probable).

(6) At 010845H Co K (BT 023213) received 5 rds sniper fire which wounded 2 Marines. Co K returned a heavy volume of fire and searched out the area with negative results. Results were 2 USMC WIA med-evaced.

(7) At 010850H Co M (BT 065215) received 6 rds of sniper fire. Co M returned 40 rds of small arms and 2 rds of 60mm mortars. Searched the area finding a large blood trail and drag marks. Results were 1 VC KIA (probable).

(8) At 011000H Operational Control of Company A was transferred to 1/5.

(9) At 011050H Co M (BT 057218) received 7 rds sniper fire from BT 055216 wounding one Marine. Co M returned 50 rds small arms. Results were 1 USMC WIA med-evaced.

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

2122

24 May 1967

(10) At 011100H the Command Group joined Co K in their blocking position at BT 027211.

(11) At 011130H Co K (BT 023208) spotted two VC with weapons across the river (BT 023207) and took them under fire. One VC dropped and the other helped him into the bushes. Results were 1 VC KIA (probable).

(12) At 011218H Co M (BT 048219) received 5 rds sniper fire and returned 20 rds small arms then searched the area finding 3 blood trails and 1 dead VC male in a cave with a cartridge belt. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed) and 2 VC KIA (probable).

(13) At 011425H Co K (BT 123211) spotted 3 VC, one with a weapon. Marines took them under fire (BT 021209) downing one. Results were 1 VC KIA (probable).

(14) Between 010900H and 011830H Company A was subjected to accurate sporadic sniper fire from the north resulting in 7 USMC casualties. As each incident occurred Company A returned a heavy volume of fire and finally an air strike and an 81mm mortar mission was called on the last suspected enemy position. All areas were searched out with negative results except that the air strike and mortars entirely covered the suspected enemy positions. The results were 7 USMC WIA med-evaced, and 1 VC KIA (probable).

(16) At nightfall the units were located as follows:

- (a) Command Group and Co K - BT 026211
- (b) Company M (-) - BT 035214
- (c) Company M (-) - BT 035217
- (d) Company A - BT 038209

1. 2 May 1967

(1) At 020831H one platoon of Company K crossed the river. As yet no contact. Prep fires were on target.

(2) At 020910H Company K (BT 038205) received light sniper fire and saw man in camouflage utilities running. Marine returned 25 rds and man went down. Results were 1 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 ChiCom rifle serial # B7033, grenade pouch, 1 US canteen, 5 S/A rds, cartridge belt, blue-grey uniform and pack.

UNCLASSIFIED