

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

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3/LCG/dab
5750
3 March 1968

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein)
Via: Commanding Officer, 5th Marines

Subj: Command Chronology for period 010001H to 292400H Feb 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMF PacO 5750.8
(c) DivO 5750.2B

Encl: (1) Command Chronology Report

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a), (b) and (c) the Command Chronology for the month of February 1968 is hereby submitted.

R. C. Wise
R. C. WISE
By direction

Declassified by the Director of Marine Corps
History and Museums in accordance with the
provisions of CNO ltr Op-942D323 Joy. Ser:
10770 P942 of 12 October 1971.

Wayne V. Roark
Signature/date

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FEB 1968

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Command Chronology
010001H to 292400H Feb 1968

Index

Part I - Organizational Data
Part II - Narrative Data
Part III - Sequential Listings of Significant
Events

ENCLOSURE (1)

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Feb 1968

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- 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines LtCol W. K. ROCKEY

H&S Co	Capt R. J. MARNELL
Co I	Capt H. KOLAKOWSKI Jr.
Co K	1stLt F. W. SMITH
Co L	Capt J. D. NIOTIS
Co M	Capt J. E. MITCHELL

- ### 3. Staff Officers

- | | |
|-----|----------------------|
| X0 | Major R. C. WISE |
| S-1 | WO J. S. BISESI |
| S-2 | WO J. W. BEVIER |
| S-3 | Capt G. W. BOWERS |
| S-4 | 1stLt G. C. BACON |
| S-5 | Capt J. A. FERNANDEZ |

- #### 4. Average Monthly Strength

USMC		USN	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
36	1171	2	54

ENCLOSURE (1)

2

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Feb. 1968

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PART II
NARRATIVE SUMMARY

There currently exists a need in the command for two 0302 Captains, three 0302 Lts., an 0202 Captain, an 0402 Captain, and one 3502 Lt. There also exist a need for 1 Master Sergeant, 2 Gunnery Sergeants, and 11 Staff Sergeants 0369. The major shortage exist in Staff NCO leadership in the 03 field. This shortage is made more evident by the fact that the Battalion has only 59% of its M/L strength in Staff NCO's, 0369.

Battalion Intelligence efforts were primarily directed toward enemy activity and large scale movement into the Danang vital area. During the month the enemy moved in large, well armed groups to attack the Danang area and its surrounding units. Sniping along Highway 1 increased a great deal during the first part of the month. Booby traps and command detonated mines were encountered in greater quantity than in any preceeding month.

The Battalion started and completed several operations within its TAOR. Intensive rocket belt patrolling was continued and numerous platoon and company sized operations were run. The Battalion started Operation HOUSTON on 26 February 1968 in Thau Thien Province. It is still in progress.

Indoctrination school was held for all newly joined personnel with all required subjects being taught. Indoctrination training was also held for members of the 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines when that organization moved in to take over 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines TAOR in Quang Nam Province. Instruction was also given the companies in the operation of the new AN/PPS6 radar set.

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTINGS OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS1. Topicsa. Personnel and Administration

(1) The Battalion began the month of February with an on board strength of 39 Marine Officers, 1213 Marine enlisted, 2 Navy officers, and 54 Navy enlisted. The current on board strength is 38 Marine officers, 1098 Marine enlisted, 2 Navy officers, and 53 Navy enlisted.

(2) One Marine officer is TAD in excess of 30 days. The current effective strength of the Battalion is 31 Marine officers and 940 Marine enlisted. Of these 6 Marine officers and 183 Marine enlisted and 6 Navy enlisted are OPCON to 1st Battalion, 5th Marines.

(3) Fifty Marine enlisted are scheduled for rotation during March 1968 as shown below:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
0141	3
0231	1
0311	23
0331	7
0341	4
0351	1
2047	1
2332	2
2511	1
2531	2
3371	1
3531	4

(4) Critical MOS shortages are shown below:

<u>MOS</u>	<u>ML</u>	<u>OH</u>	<u>SHORTAGE</u>
0302	33	29	1 Major, 2 Captain, 1 Lt
0202	1	0	1 Captain
0402	1	0	1 Captain
0130	2	1	1 Lt
3502	1	0	1 Lt
0369	34	20	1 MSgt, 2 GySgt, 11 SSgt
2867	1	0	1 SSgt
3516	6	4	1 Sgt, 1 LCpl
5931	3	1	2 Cpls

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CASUALTIES

KIA	28
DOW	2
WIAE	128
WIANE	43
NON HOSTILE	13
MIA	0

b. Intelligence(1) Personnel

(a) During the month of February the Battalion Intelligence Section lost one Intelligence Chief (SSgt 0369), two Intelligence Assistants (Sgt 0231 and Corporal 0311) to normal rotation and joined three Scout trainees, LCpl's 0311, replacements.

(b) S-2 Attachments. The two Scout Dog teams, previously in direct support were withdrawn to III MAF on 22 February. Remaining attachments include two MP's, one ITT Team, 4 Scout Sniper Teams, and one IT Sgt (0251).

(2) Collection. The two main collection/target acquisition efforts during the month of February 1968 were:

(a) The new area of Operation for 3rd Bn, 5th Marines.

(b) Our former area including the local guerrilla mode of operation analysis and a continuation of the terrain studies of those areas in which the local enemy most frequently operates.

(3) Reporting. The Battalion S-2 Section conducted at least one Commander's and Staff intelligence briefing each day and several individual and small unit briefing, during February 1968.

(4) Enemy Activity

(a) The enemy activity in our old TAOR for the month of February 1968 showed a sharp jump due to the TET offensive. Throughout the old TAOR there was much enemy activity in units up to Battalion size. Many of the units were not positively identified, indicating constant movement. The presence of at least 3 Bn sized units explains the increase of mines and booby traps throughout the old area.

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(b) The enemy activities during February have indicated the following capabilities:

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1 Continued harrassing action to include:

- a Sniping
- b Small scale attacks and ambushes
- c Use of mines and booby traps
- d Propaganda
- e Terrorism

2 Attack selected friendly installations with medium mortars and/or heavy rockets.

3 Attack isolated units in company or Battalion strength.

(5) Vietnamese Attachments

(a) Interpreters. The Battalion is presently supported by three ARVN interpreters. Two are attached to S-2 and one works with the S-5 section. The interpreters have direct liaison with the Company Commanders, enabling them to use their skills most efficiently. The value of interpreters in the field and in the combat base has been proven many times. When not in the field, our interpreters hold English classes to expand the language proficiency of all Vietnamese personnel attached to the Battalion.

(b) Kit Carson Scouts. At present, three Kit Carson Scouts are attached to the Battalion. They have provided excellent support on search and destroy operations and also on the frequent platoon-sized patrols out of the combat base. The Kit Carson Scouts attend the English language classes being given by the interpreters, when not in the field. As their skill in the language increases their value to the Battalion is also increasing.

(6) Enemy Losses. The enemy suffered the following casualties as a result of 3rd Bn, 5th Marines actions in February:

KIA	134
WIA	0
POW	20
DET	6

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(7) Weather

(a) Rainfall: 3 inches

(b) Temperature:

1 Average high - 742 Average low - 63(8) Terrain. See Command Chronology for October 1967.

(9) The following lists are the totals of weapons and equipment captured by 3rd Bn, 5th Marines during the month of February 1968.

(a) Weapons

2 - 9mm P-38 pistols

4 - 7.62 pistols

15- AK-47's

3 - SKS's

8 - 7.62 lt machineguns

5 - 7.62 assault machine guns

1 - 7.62 heavy machine gun w/wheel carriage

3 - B-40 rocket launchers

1 - B-50 rocket launcher

2 - 60mm mortars (one w/sight)

1 - M-60 machine gun (US)

1 - M-14 rifle

1 - M-16 rifle

1 - M-1 rifle

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(b) Ordinance

12 B-40 rds
5 60mm mortar rds
600 rds 7.62 ammo
700 rds 7.62 linked ammo
22 ChiCom grenades

(c) 782 Gear

4 NVA gas masks
9 NVA packs
25 AK-47 magazines
12 cartridge belts
3 ChiCom field phones
10 lbs clothing

(d) First Aid Equipment - 10 lbs assorted medical equipment.(e) Documents - 25 lbs(f) Other

1 US PRC-25 radio
25,000 lbs rice

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Training

(1) Training included lectures, demonstrations, and/or application in the following subjects:

- (a) Weapons Safety
- (b) Radio Procedures
- (c) Spot Reports
- (d) Lightning Precautions
- (e) FO & FAC Procedures
- (f) Med Evac Procedures
- (g) Fam Firing of all Individual and crew served weapons
- (h) AN/PPS6
- (i) Field Communications Expedients

(2) Additional classes for officers and Staff NCO's were held on embarkation.

(3) The organization conducted two indoctrination schools. Classes on FO/FAC procedures, and on the care, cleaning, maintenance and safety of the M-16A1 rifle are included in the school syllabus.

(4) All units fired their individual weapons for familiarization at least twice this month. All crew served weapons have been fired.

(5) Personnel attended the following schools:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|---|
| (a) SNCO Leadership School | 3 |
| (b) NCO Leadership School | 5 |
| (c) Vietnamese Language School | 2 |
| (d) Landing Force Planning (RLT) | 1 |
| (e) Basic Ammo Tech School | 1 |

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(f) Comm Crypto Security	1
(g) Officers' Leadership School	2
(h) Infantry Weapons Repair School	2
(i) Basic Organic Supply Accounting	2

d. Operations

- (1) At 060905H Alpha Command, Co M and Co F 2/3 (OPCON) depart Operation.
- (2) At 061330H Co G 2/3 OPCON to 3/5
- (3) At 071545H chop Co G 2/3 and Co F 2/3 to parent unit.
- (4) At 071545H Alpha Command returned from Operation.
- (5) At 201600H Co L OPCON to Task Force X-Ray.
- (6) At 231115H Co K OPCON 1st Bn, 327.
- (7) At 241115H Co K chop to parent unit.
- (8) At 250930H Alpha Command, Co I and Co M displaced to Phu Bai TAOR.
- (9) At 251245H 3/5 OPCON to 5th Marines.
- (10) At 261000H 3/5(-) to Operation HOUSTON.
- (11) At 281200H Bravo Command Group displaced to Phu Bai TAOR.

e. Artillery Support

(1) Battery F, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines and Battery B, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines were OPCON to 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines and supported the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines through the month of February and the heavy fighting early in the month.

(2) During the month of February, Battery F fired a total of 78 missions in support of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines and of these, 52 were observed and 26 unobserved. A total 1553 rounds were fired: 1022 HE-fuze quick, 307 HE-fuze VT, 81 white phosphorus, and 143 illumination rounds. Many of Battery F's rounds were fired in heavy prep fires. Battery B fired a total of 326 rounds in support of 3rd Bn, 5th Marines: 254 HE-fuze quick, 19 HE-fuze VT, 28 white phosphorus, and 25 illumination rounds. Seven Time on Target missions were also fired in support of 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines.

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f. Air Support

(1) Tactical Fixed Wing Support: Four strikes.

(2) Helicopter Support

(a) 73 Medevacs, including 25 emergency Medevacs.

(b) 4 Visual reconnaissance flights.

(c) 4 resupplies to troops in field.

(d) 43 flights to displace 3 companies and 2 Command Groups to the Phu Bai TAOR.

(3) Other Fixed Wing Support

(a) 13 Air Observer missions.

(b) 1 Flare Ship mission.

(4) Personnel. There are two ALO/FAC officers assigned to this Battalion. Sufficient trained personnel were available to provide radio teams at Company and Battalion level.

g. Communications

(1) The Battalion's Operations during the enemy TET offensive was supported by enlisted FAC team members. These men are permanently assigned to each company and additionally perform the duties of communications supervisors for the Company Commanders. This permits more effective management and control of equipment and provides the Commander with school trained, field experienced, communicators to assist PM and operation of all communications equipment and training in methods that may be used by the company.

(2) Two teletype Technicians and one radio repairman were sent to Division repair facilities for a period of ten days. They received excellent training and experience in their related fields.

(3) Four PPS-6's were received and checked. A four day school was conducted by the Radar Technician to re-acquaint previously trained personnel on the PPS-6 and to train additional instructors. The remaining six PPS-6's have been received but are not yet uncased due to the tactical situation.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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(4) Additional personnel were joined and all received approximately five days instruction on all phases of communications operations and procedures in use by the Battalion.

(5) The overall evaluation of the communications status is best reflected in the oral report of the Division Electronics-Maintenance Officer, following his inspection of this organization. He stated that the results were noteworthy in all aspects, and that the use of field expedient antennas and the procedures for communications supply reconciliation and support were particularly notable.

h. Logistics

(1) General. The overall logistical status of the Battalion is satisfactory. However, deadlined vehicles in the Motor Transport section are becoming an increasing problem due to parts unavailability.

(2) Supply Situation. Battalion Supply completed palletizing all its 782 gear, operating stock, and bulk stock for the fore-coming movement. Certain items of garrison and mess property as directed by Division G-4 were transferred to 2nd Battalion, 27th Marines. Disposal of all unserviceable equipment and turn in of repairable items of supply was accomplished through 1st FSR.

(a) Forty-nine tents, general purpose medium, and eight 60mm mortars were acquired to satisfy existing Table of Equipment deficiencies in those areas.

(b) FLC was notified to effect transfer of RUC gear to FLSC-A located in the Phu Bai area.

(c) Battalion Supply received its first item under the Red Ball program-Antenna 892. Requisitions were submitted for numerous items of supply under the NORS program; however there have been negative results.

(d) Supply operations are greatly hampered by the fact that some 500,000 pounds of supplies remain in the 2/27 area, south of Danang, while the Battalion is operating in the Phu Bai TAOR.

(3) Motor Transport. Considerable difficulty in obtaining repair parts for M42A1's and M274A2's (especially spark plugs, spark plug cables, magnetoes, starters, and innertubes) is being experienced. Priority 02 Division Supply, Division Motor Transport, and G-4 have been advised of this situation by direct liaison and through regular reporting channels. Maximum effort has been made to consolidate requirements for vehicles from the various sections to reduce unnecessary utilization.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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(4) Construction. Engineers have continued to improve internal road networks and road drainage.

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i. Civic Action

(1) Med Cap. 200 local Vietnamese were treated by the Battalion Med Cap team at the Med Cap Aid station. The Aid Station was only open for 3 days during the month due to the TET offensive.

(2) Psyops. There were 21,000 Psyops leaflets distributed this month by S-5 personnel and the Battalion's rifle companies. Area leaflet drops were ordered every day from 5 February until 25 February in the Thanh Quit hamlet area. One other drop was ordered in Viene Tay hamlet. On 17 February a Jeepster team showed movies in the hamlet of Nieu Bong. These movies were seen by approximately 500 people.

(3) Civil Affairs Assistance. 500 pounds of rice were distributed throughout the TAOR.

(4) Problems: None

(5) Medevacs. Eight civilians were medevaced to USOM hospital in Danang.

2. Chronology of Events

6-7 February Conducted Search and Destroy Operation.

23-28 February Displaced to Phu Bai TAOR.

26 February Commenced Operation HOUSTON.

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