

UNCLASSIFIED

2 Bn. 7th Marines  
Log No. 00143-68HEADQUARTERS  
Battalion Landing Team 2/7  
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade  
FPO, San Francisco, California 96602Copy No. 6 of 263/LCS/mar  
3000  
1 Aug 1968  
Ser. No. 0035-68

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commander, Special Landing Force Bravo  
Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-31 July 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2  
(b) FMFPACO 5750.8  
(c) 9th Mar BrigO 5750.8

Encl: ✓(1) Battalion Landing Team 2/7 Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a), (b), and (c) enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. This letter downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1).

*L. E. Watson*  
L. E. WATSON

BLT 2/7

CMD CHRON

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BATTALION LANDING TEAM 2/7  
COMMAND CHRONOLOGY  
1 - 31 July 1968

ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATAPERIOD COVERED

1-31 July 1968

A. UNIT DESIGNATION

## 1. Battalion Landing Team 2/7

Company E

Company F  
Company G

Company H

H&S Co (-) (Rein)  
 2nd Plat (Rein), Co B, 1st Tank Bn  
 3rd Plat (Rein), Co A, 5th AT Bn  
 2nd Plat (Rein), Co A, 1st MT Bn  
 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
 3rd Plat (Rein), Co B, 3rd Amtrac Bn  
 1st Plat (Rein), Co E, 1st Recon Bn  
 C & C Plat (Rein), Co A, 5th Med Bn  
 Det, 1st SP Bn  
 Det, Hq Bn, 1st Mar Div  
 Det, Hq Co, 7th Marines  
 Det, LSU, For Log Cmd

LtCol C. E. MUELLER

1-29 Jul 1968

LtCol L. E. WATSON

30-31 Jul 1968

Capt. J. F. ABELE

1-28 Jul 1968

Lt. S. R. MATULICH

29-31 Jul 1968

Lt. G. W. HUMPHREY

Capt. R. R. O'NEILL

1-29 Jul 1968

Lt. G. HEATLY

30-31 Jul 1968

Lt. J. E. HALSEY

1-18 Jul 1968

Capt. T. P. E. HOLM

19-31 Jul 1968

Capt. T. A. WILLIAMSON

Lt. M. E. HASTINGS

Lt. D. L. BROWN

Lt. E. T. CHARBONNEAU

Lt. D. C. PATTERSON

Lt. M. E. NELSON

Lt. W. H. MCCLOSKEY

Lt. (MC) J. M. SEXAUER, USN

Lt. I. J. STEVENS

WO W. PICKARSKI

Sgt. J. L. KAVANAUGH

Lt. J. E. MCDANIELS

## 2. Attached Units

Btry H, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines  
 Mortar Btry, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines

Lt. J. R. GILL

Lt. M. S. MOSELEY

1-23 Jul 1968

Capt. G. D. BERGER

24-31 Jul 1968

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B. STAFF OFFICERS

XO  
S-1  
S-2

S-3  
S-4  
Personnel Officer  
Embarkation Officer  
Communication Officer

Air Liaison Officer  
Supply Officer  
Mortar Transport Officer  
Chaplain  
Medical Officer

Maj. E. M. DUNN  
Lt. J. M. CARTER  
Lt. R. J. PETRELLA  
1-11 Jul 1968  
Lt. J. R. PIPPEN  
12-31 Jul 1968  
Maj. J. R. RUFFINI  
Capt. D. W. CHAMBERLAIN  
Lt. R. HARRELLE  
LT. P. S. MANAGH  
Lt. J. N. KENNEDY  
1-29 Jul 1968  
Lt. T. T. DABNEY  
30-31 Jul 1968  
Capt. P. H. MCKINNIS  
Lt. R. D. DODSON  
Lt. L. A. RAYMOND  
LT. (CHC) B. LOVEJOY  
LT. (MC) M. A. NAPONIC, USN

C. LOCATION1. BLT 2/7

- a. 1-3 Jul 1968: Exercise HILLTOP XX - Zambales Training Area, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines.
- b. 3-4 Jul 1968: USS VALLEY FORGE (LPF-8), relieved by USS TRIPOLI (LPF-10), Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines.
- c. 5-7 Jul 1968: En route to Vietnam.
- d. 8 Jul 1968: DaNang Harbor, Vietnam.
- e. 9-22 Jul 1968: Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV-THUA THIEN Province, RVN.
- f. 23-31 Jul 1968: Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK-QUANG NAM Province, RVN.

2. Detachments

- a. Co F, BLT 2/7: 211600H-230700H Jul 1968

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3. Attachments

a. Co D, 1/5: 190800H-211600H Jul 1968.

D. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>	<u>Officer</u>	<u>Enlisted</u>
60	1,580	8	78

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## PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

From 1-2 July 1968 BLT 2/7 conducted an amphibious landing, Exercise HILLTOP XX, in the Zambales Training Area, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. This was the final phase of intensive training to prepare the BLT to perform its mission as the ground combat element of Special Landing Force Bravo (CTG 79.5). On 3 July 1968 the BLT tactically withdrew from the Zambales Training Area, reembarking aboard ARG shipping. Concurrent with the BLT's withdrawal, the Provisional Service Battalion, 9th MAB concluded the BLT equipment rehabilitation program.

On 4 July 1968 the BLT Command Post and those BLT units aboard the USS VALLEY FORGE (LPH-8) were disembarked and reembarked aboard the USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10) in the harbor of Subic Bay, as the USS TRIPOLI officially relieved the USS VALLEY FORGE. At 051400H July 1968 the BLT sailed from Subic Bay and arrived off the Coast of the Republic of Vietnam on 7 July 1968.

During the period 9-22 July 1968 BLT 2/7 participated in Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV (see TAB A). Of special significance on this operation was the fact that at 090500H July 1968 BLT 2/7 landed one company by LVT's over Green Beach, thereby proving the BLT's capability of landing on a beach before first light.

On 22 July 1968 the BLT was reembarked aboard ARG shipping, returning to the operational control of Commander, Special Landing Force Bravo at 1600 that day. At 230900H BLT 2/7 launched an amphibious assault in QUANG NAM PROVINCE, commencing Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK. Again the BLT proved its wide ranging versatility and exceptional capabilities, having landed on Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK in QUANG NAM PROVINCE only 17 hours after having concluded Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV in THUA THIEN PROVINCE. For the remainder of the reporting period, from 23-31 July 1968, BLT participated in Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK.

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## PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTSA. COMBAT MISSIONS ASSIGNED

1. During the period 1-3 Jul 1968 BLT 2/7 conducted landing Exercise HILLTOP XX in the Zambales Training Area, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. The purpose of the landing exercise was to complete the final training phase for preparing the BLT to perform its mission as the ground combat element of the Special Landing Force Bravo.
2. For missions assigned during the period 9-22 Jul 1968 see PART IV - Combat After Action Report (Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV).
3. During the period 23-31 Jul 1968 BLT 2/7 participated in Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK. The original mission assigned was to conduct an amphibious assault in the amphibious objective area to find, fix and destroy enemy forces, capture or destroy enemy material and destroy enemy fortifications in the area. (See TAB B).
4. On 31 Jul 1968 the mission of the BLT was expanded when it relieved 3rd Battalion, 27th Marines in the vicinity of PHU LANH, QUANG NAM PROVINCE. At this time the BLT became the force providing security to the heavy equipment and engineers working on the land clearing operation on "GO NOI Island". The previous mission of combat sweep operations continued to be carried out in the new area by two companies reinforced, the remaining companies and attachments in support and providing physical security for the land clearance operation.

B. SIGNIFICANT OPERATIONS CONDUCTED

1. Landing Exercise HILLTOP XX - Zambales Training Area, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines - 1-3 Jul 1968.
2. Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV - THUA THIEN PROVINCE, RVN, 090500H-221600H Jul 1968 (see TAB A).
3. Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, QUANG NAM PROVINCE, RVN, 230900H-312400H Jul 1968.

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C. CASUALTIES INFLICTED ON THE ENEMY AND WEAPONS CAPTURED1. 1-8 Jul 1968

None

2. 9-22 Jul 1968

(see TAB A)

3. 22-31 Jul 1968

- a. VC KIA : 4
- b. VC POW : 10
- c. 6,400 lbs. rice
- d. 30 gallons of salted fish
- e. 100 lbs. peanuts
- f. 625 lbs. of potatoes

D. CASUALTIES SUSTAINED1. USMCOfficerEnlisted

<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIAE</u>	<u>WIANE</u>	<u>NBCE</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIAE</u>	<u>WIANE</u>	<u>NBCE</u>	<u>NBCK</u>
1	3	2	2	17	81	18	172	1

2. USNOfficerEnlisted

<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIAE</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIAE</u>	<u>WIANE</u>	<u>NBCE</u>
0	0	0	4	2	10

E. NEW TECHNIQUES

None

F. COMMAND RELATIONS

- a. 120800H Chop OPCON Task Force X-Ray
- b. 160700H Chop OPCON 5th Marines
- c. 190800H Assumed OPCON Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Marines
- d. 211600H Chop OPCON Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Marines and Co F BLT 2/7 to 1st Bn, 5th Marines

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- e. 220600H Chop OPCON CTG 79.5
- f. 221600H Assumed OPCON Co F, BLT 2/7
- g. 241600H Chop OPCON 27th Marines

#### G. EQUIPMENT

Two M-48's, two M-35's and one 109 were submitted to 1st FSR for repair during this reporting period. Other repair parts for BLT equipment and vehicles were obtained by the Logistic Support Unit, and 2nd and 3rd echelon maintenance was performed by LSU contact teams.

#### H. LOGISTICS

1. The TAC-LOG for operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV was aboard the USS VANCOUVER (LPD-2). For operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, the TAC-LOG was established aboard the USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10).
2. Initially a BLT LSA was established aboard the USS TRIPOLI (LPH-10) for both operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV and operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK. As operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV progressed, the LSA was moved ashore to CAU DOI, 12 July 1968. For operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK the LSA was moved ashore to 27th Marine's C.P., 25 July 1968.
3. MECHANIZED EMBARKATION DATA SYSTEM (MEDS) was up-dated for the BLT with 79% of Card #1, 58% of Card #2, and 61% of Card #3 completed by the end of the reporting period.
4. On 28 Jul 1968 BLT units and cargo aboard the USS WASHBURN (AKA-108) were debarked and re-embarked aboard the USS MERRICK (AKA-97) on 30 Jul 1968. While ashore vehicles and personnel were staged at 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines C.P. and 11th Motor Transport Battalion C.P.
5. Transportation for the LSA operation at CAU DOI during operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV was provided by the BLT Truck Platoon. Water was hauled from a water point on the SONG THUOI River. Re-supplies came from FLSG-A at PHU BAI. Transportation for the LSA operation at 27th Marine's C.P. during operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK was also provided by the BLT Truck Platoon. Water was hauled from a water point near DaNang, RVN.

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I. CIVIC ACTION

TDS

No significant Civic Action was taken by the BLT during this reporting period; no Civic Action projects were initiated or completed. Both operations EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV and SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK were characterized by swift strikes by the BLT into areas known to be infested by the enemy and cleared of all friendly civilians. This type of operation does not lend itself to a program of Civic Action activities nor does it require these types of activities.

J. ADMINISTRATION

1. Awards

This organization submitted recommendations for one Silver Star and two Bronze Star Awards during the period covered by this report.

2. Legal and Discipline

During this period four investigations were initiated and one was completed. Non-judicial punishment was awarded in 23 instances. Seven Marines were confined during the month.

3. Postal

Mail service during the period improved. Availability of transportation for mail and designated mail clerks remained sporadic during the month of July.

4. R&R

There were no quotas allotted for the BLT for the month of July.

5. Promotions

Regular promotions effected during the month were one to Sergeant, twelve to Corporal, 53 to Lance Corporal, and six to PFC. There were five promotions to First Lieutenant and one Warrant Officer promotion to WO-2.

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6. Pay and Allowances

Pay call was held 5 Jul 1968 for the month of June. Pay call for the month of July will not be held until mid-August due to operational commitments.

7. Post Exchange

Ship's store provided ample exchange items. While in the field, health and comfort items were available from sundry packs distributed on a regular basis.

8. Personnel Change

a. Losses	USMC		USN	
	Off	Enl	Off	Enl
Battle	1	34	0	4
Administrative (Transfers, Rotations, MEDEVACS)	10	70	1	3
b. <u>Replacements</u>	13	105	1	6

9. Religious Servicesa. Divine Services

Date	Time	Type Service	Place	Total Attendance
7 July	1000H	Holy Communion	USS TRIPOLI	57
7 July	1330H	Holy Communion	USS VANCOUVER	14
14 July	1000H	Holy Communion	in field	82
14 July	1830H	Holy Communion	in field	82
17 July		Visit Hospital Ships	Repose, Santuray, 12 patients.	
21 July	0800H	Holy Communion	USS TRIPOLI	33
22 July	1615H	Memorial Service	USS TRIPOLI	700
22 July	1730H	Memorial Service	USS VANCOUVER	300
22 July	1830H	Holy Communion	USS VANCOUVER	6
22 July	2215H	Holy Communion	USS TRIPOLI	15
28 July	1830H	Holy Communion	in field	35

b. Counseling

The Battalion Chaplain held 18 individual counseling sessions, made daily visits to the hospital facilities aboard the USS TRIPOLI, and processed 34 American Red Cross Health and Welfare requests.

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K. MEDICAL AND DENTAL AFFAIRS

1. MEDICAL

During the period 1-4 Jul 1968 the BAS was aboard the USS VALLEY FORGE. From 5-31 Jul 1968 the BAS operated aboard the USS TRIPOLI. There were 336 routing sickcall patients seen and 236 MEDEVACS received from the field during the reporting period. During Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, from 9-22 Jul, 192 persons were medivaced. Of these, 183 were received by the BAS, eight went to PHU BAI, and one to the USS SANCTUARY. Of 98 MED-EVACS during the period 23-31 Jul 68, 53 were received by the BAS, 20 went to NSA, Naval Hospital Danang and 25 were evacuated to 1st Hospital Company, 1st Marine Division located at Danang. Of 67 WIA's received aboard the USS TRIPOLI during the reporting period, 33 were returned to duty; of 158 non-battle casualties evacuated, 114 were returned to duty.

Post-operational inservice training for Hospital Corpsmen from Companies "G" and "H" was conducted by LT. M. A. NAPONIC and included the following:

- a. Helicopter MEDEVACS - Types and Indications
- b. Heat Casualty Syndromes - Diagnosis and Treatment.
- c. Neil Robertson Sling - Methods of employment
- d. Hemorrhage Shock Kits - Dispersal of and Indications For

Post-operational inservice training for Hospital Corpsmen from Companies "E" and "F" were to be given by LT. T. F. KOZLEK on the USS VANCOUVER, but were cancelled when transportation was diverted for operational commitments.

2. DENTAL

Dental care was provided by the Dental Department on the USS TRIPOLI. There were no combat casualties that required treatment by the Dental Department.

3. SANITATION

Sanitation aboard the USS TRIPOLI was inspected by the ship's Medical Department. Sanitation in the field was inspected by the company corpsmen. There were no sanitation problems encountered.

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4. MEDCAP

There was only one small MEDCAP conducted by the BLT which took place on 11 July 1968 in Vinh Loc District. 15-20 Vietnamese civilians were treated by two corpsmen.

L. INTELLIGENCE

1. For the period Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, 9-22 July 1968, see TAB A.
2. Prior to commencing Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK on 23 July 1968, the most recent intelligence reports indicated that one U/I NVA Regiment (possibly the 141st) was located in Base Area 116. According to various captured documents the enemy intended to attack DUY XUYEN, DIEN BAN, HOI AN and the forward Marine installations in the southern sector of the DaNang Tactical Area of Responsibility with the 38th Regiment, 68th Artillery Regiment (-), D-7 Bn and U/I Bn between 20 July and mid-August. Indications were that the enemy would escalate his attacks by fire and contact was expected to increase in frequency and intensity. Contrary to these reports, however, for the period Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, 23-31 July 1968, BLT 2/7 had little contact with the enemy units in the amphibious operations area and found no significant signs of an NVA Regiment in Base Area 116. Enemy units encountered were squad size or smaller and limited their activities to either delaying type actions or completely evading friendly forces altogether. The enemy made extensive use of booby traps and mines in an attempt to both delay and inflict casualties on the BLT. Because of the enemy's evasive action and light contact encountered, no determination could be made as to the identification and composition of the enemy nor were there any indications that the enemy would launch any other than harassment type activities against friendly positions in the amphibious operations area.

M. COMMUNICATIONS

1. For the period Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, 9-22 July 1968, see TAB A.
2. For the period Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, 23-31 July 1968, communications were generally satisfactory. The KY-8 covered circuit performed without much difficulty and has proved invaluable as a means of accurate and secure communications. Antennas, RC-292,

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were employed and improved communications throughout the AOA. The BLT message center remained aboard the USS TRIPOLI throughout the reporting period.

N. WEATHER

Weather for the reporting period was characteristically hot and sunny. The weather had no adverse effects on either operation except that intense heat and humidity occasionally slowed the speed of movement of the troops.

O. FIRE SUPPORT

1. For the period Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, 9-22 July 1968, see TAB A.
2. For the period Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, 23-31 July 1968, fire support was responsive and adequate to the needs of the BLT. In addition to BLT 2/7's organic 81mm Mortar Platoon and two attached artillery batteries, Mortar Btry, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines, and Hotel Btry, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines, fire support was available from Foxtrot Btry, 2nd Bn, 13th Marines and aircraft. The AOA of Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK was out of range of Naval gunfire ships. From 23-31 July 1968 artillery support consisted of 47 observed fire missions, 215 unobserved missions, and 50 registration missions. A total of 1,206 HE, 213 WP, and 61 Ill rounds were expended for a grand total of 1,480 rounds fired. H&I fires were delivered on areas of known enemy activity and in response to intelligence information passed from higher echelons.

P. AIR SUPPORT

1. For the period Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, 9-22 July 1968, see TAB A.
2. For the period Operation SWIFT PLAY/ALLEN BROOK, 23-31 July 1968, BLT 2/7 continued to primarily utilize helicopters provided by CTG 79.5 from HMM 265 aboard the USS TRIPOLI for helicopter support. On two particular occasions the BLT was forced to rely solely on in-country sources for helicopter support (HMM-164 and HMM-364). These two occasions were from 272125H-291700H July 1968 and from 300700H-310830H July 1968 when HMM 265 was forced to ground all its aircraft because of fuel problems. During the same period 20 close air support missions were flown in support of the BLT. A total of 23 air observer flights,

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in O-1E, OV-10, and U-H1E aircraft, were utilized to conduct artillery and close air support missions as well as help coordinate movement of ground units.

#### ② TRAINING

1. At 010700H Jul 1968 BLT 2/7 commenced amphibious landing exercise HILLTOP XX in the Zambales Training Area, Subic Bay, Republic of the Philippines. One company was landed by LVT's across GREEN BEACH and two companies by helicopter into landing zones OAK and ASH. As soon as the lead elements of the BLT had secured fire base areas ashore, Battery H, 3/11, was landed over GREEN BEACH and Mortar Battery, 3/11, was landed in LZ OAK.

The exercise was somewhat hampered by rain that continued intermittently throughout the operation. Despite the adverse weather, the BLT learned lessons during the exercise which have since proved valuable. Both Battery H, 3/11, and Mortar Battery, 3/11, were displaced forward from their original positions without incident. A Battalion Support Activity was established at GREEN BEACH on the first day of the exercise and functioned smoothly for the remainder of the exercise. A full Battalion Command Post was established ashore, thereby giving the Command Group a chance to actually test systems for coordinating communications, fire and air support, tactical employment of units and processing spot reports, casualty reports, situation reports, and frag orders. Systems for requesting and obtaining resupplies and MEDEVACS were tried, improved upon, and tested again in an effort to come up with that method that would prove the most expedient and viable in combat in the Vietnam environment.

Perhaps the most beneficial aspect of the landing exercise was that it provided for the first time a chance for all the units of the BLT to work together as one cohesive organization. Most important, BLT 2/7, HMM 265, SLE Bravo, Ships and Navy staff worked together towards accomplishing a single mission and as a result arrived at solutions to problems encountered during the exercise, which have proven themselves in subsequent combat operations in Vietnam.

Overall, the landing exercise was characterized by a high degree of enthusiasm, cooperation, by all to make the training as beneficial and realistic as possible. In retrospect, the training and knowledge gained from the landing exercise have proved invaluable. The success of HILLTOP XX is reflected each time the BLT makes an amphibious landing.

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2. BLT 2/7 provided RVN oriented indoctrination training for 103 enlisted Marine replacement personnel during the reporting period.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

1. TAB A Combat After Action Report (Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV).  
TAB B Operation Overlay of SWIFT PLAY.

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~~SECRET~~  
LEGEND

VIET 1:50,000

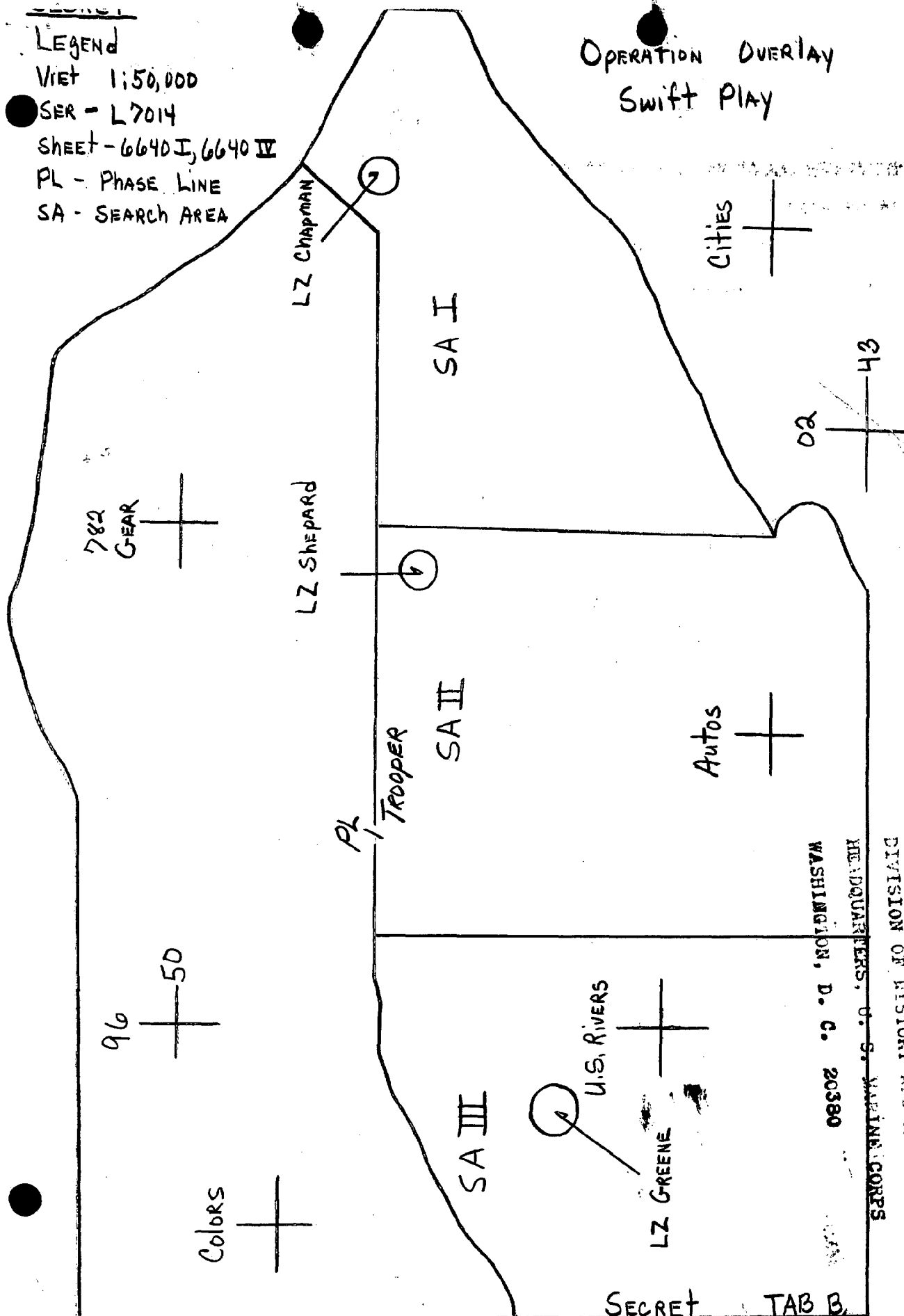
SER - L7014

SHEET - 6640 I, 6640 II

PL - PHASE LINE

SA - SEARCH AREA

OPERATION OVERLAY  
Swift Play



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Battalion Landing Team 2/7  
APO, San Francisco, 96602

3/LCS/mar  
3000  
23 Jul 1968  
Ser. No. 0033-68

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commander Task Group 79.5

Subj: Combat After Action Report (Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV)

Ref: (a) CTG 79.5 Operation Plan 120A-67  
(b) MAPS: AMS Vietnam 1:50,000, Series L7014 Sheets 6541 I, II, III, IV, 6542 III

Encl: (1) Operation Overlay for EAGER YANKEE *missing*

1. Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV

2. Dates and Location

- a. Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV, a two phase operation, began on 9 July 1968 and was terminated on 22 July 1968.
  - (1) Phase I of Operation EAGER YANKEE commenced 090500H Jul 68 and ended 120800H Jul 68. Phase I was executed under OPCON CTG 79.5 and took place on the island of Vinh Loc east of PHU BAI.
  - (2) Phase II commenced 120800H Jul 68 when BLT 2/7 passed under OPCON of Commanding General, Task Force Xray. BLT 2/7 continued with basically the same mission as before. During Phase II the BLT moved from Vinh Loc island to the main land opposite and continued the attack.
  - (3) At 160700H Jul 68 OPCON of BLT 2/7 was passed to Commanding Officer, Fifth Marines as BLT 2/7 was helilifted into the jungle canopy in the vicinity of the Operation HOUSTON IV area.
- b. The mission assigned to BLT 2/7 was to conduct an amphibious assault in the AOA in order to find, fix, destroy enemy forces, and capture and destroy enemy material and fortifications, and to conduct such other operations as assigned. The mission remained unchanged throughout the operation. The exact boundaries of the area of operation were adjusted numerous times. See enclosure (1).

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3. Command Headquarters

- a. EAGER YANKEE 090500H - 120800H Jul68 - SLF BRAVO (CTG 79.5) aboard USS Tripoli.
- b. EAGER YANKEE 120800H - 160700H Jul68 - TASK FORCE XRAY - TASK FORCE XRAY Combat Base (Phu Bai).
- c. HOUSTON IV 160700H - 220600H Jul68 - FIFTH MARINES - FIFTH MARINES REGT Combat Base (Phu Bai).

4. Task Organization

BLT 2/7

H&S Co (-) (Rein)

Det, Hq Bn, 1st Mar Div  
 Det, Hq Co, 7th Mar  
 Det, Btry H (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar  
 Det, Comm Plat, Hq Co, 7th Mar  
 Det, Dental Co, 9th MAB  
 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
 Det, LsU, For Log Gnd  
 C & C Plat, Co A, 5th Med Bn, 9th MAB  
 Det, Co C, 1st SP Bn  
 2nd Plat, Co A, 1st Mt Bn

LtCol. C. E. MUELLER

Capt. T. A. WILLIAMSON

Co E (Rein)

Co E  
 Det, H&S Co  
     FAC Tm  
     FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plat  
     NGF Spot Tm  
 Det, Btry H, (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar  
 Tm, 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
 HST Tm, Det Co C, 1st SP Bn

Capt. J. F. ABELE

Co F (Rein)

Co F  
 Det, H&S Co  
     FAC Tm  
     FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plat  
     NGF Spot Tm  
 Det, Btry H (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar  
 Tm, 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
 HST Tm, Det, Co C, 1st SP Bn

1stLt. G. W. HUMPHREY

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Co G (Rein)

Capt. R. R. O'NEILL

Co G  
Det, H&S Co  
FAC Tm  
FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plat  
Det, Btry H (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar  
Tm, 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
HST Tm, Det, 2nd Plat, Co C, 1st SP Bn

Co H (Rein)

1stLt. J. H. HALSEY  
1-18 July 1968  
Capt. T. P. E. HOLM  
19-22 July 1968

Co H  
Det, H&S Co  
FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plat  
Det, Btry H (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar  
Tm 2nd Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Engr Bn  
HST Tm, 2nd Plat, Co C, 1st SP Bn

Btry H (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar

1stLt. J. R. GILL

Mortar Btry (Rein), 3rd Bn, 11th Mar

1stLt. M. S. MOSELEY

81mm Mortar Plat

2ndLt. D. J. MCMAHON

2nd Plat, Co B, 1st Tank Bn

1stLt. M. E. HASTINGS

3rd Plat, Co B, 3rd Amtrac Bn

2ndLt. M. E. NELSON

1st Plat, Co E, 1st Recon Bn

1stLt. W. H. MCKLOSKEY

2nd Plat, Co A, 11th MT Bn

1stLt. E. T. CHARBONNEAU

Co D, 1st Bn, 5th Mar

Capt. HARRINGTON

5. Intelligence

- a. Enemy Strength Prior to Operation. A minimum of two companies, the C 117 and C118 Local Force Companies, and a maximum of two battalions, the K-15 and K-10 NVA Battalions, were reported to be operating in the EAGER YANKEE AOA, specifically in the Phu Vang and Phu Thu Districts. Elements of the K-4 Battalion were believed to be in the Vinh Loc District area and were using four hospitals for the care and rehabilitation of their wounded.

The HOUSTON IV AOA was considered the operating area of the 5th Work-site (AKA 5th Regiment, 22nd Regiment), which consists of the K-10 Bn (810th Bn), K-4 Bn, and the K-15 Bn (815th Bn), plus the 12th Sapper Bn and the K-32 Artillery Bn. A number of harbor sites were also believed to be in the area.

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- b. Enemy Strength, Mission, and Tactics During The Operation. During Operation EAGER YANKEE there were no major contacts with the enemy. The enemy encountered were squad size or smaller Local Force units who limited their activities to booby traps and harassing type contact. Many booby traps were found in the Phu Thu and Phu Vang areas. Enemy harassment consisted mainly of night probing of unit base camps with small arms fire, B-40 rockets, 60mm mortars, grenades, and M-79 rounds. The local populace was quite willing to give information concerning the enemy in their area. The morale of the enemy appeared low as evidenced by the number of Chieu Hoi and the accuracy of the information they readily supplied. A hospital, which was a converted school house, and four individual weapons were located with the help and guidance of three different Chieu Hoi. In Vinh Loc District the enemy avoided contact and fled from the southern end of the peninsula to the vicinity of Ke Vo (YD 955248) and Vinh Mai (YD 940234), where he remained until friendly forces departed the area. At that time he was observed from the air in three columns headed south. A Chieu Hoi from the peninsula stated that the force that moved North was a mixture of NVA, VCMF, and VC Young Men/Womens Association that numbered approximately 600 with an additional 50 wounded.

During Operation HOUSTON IV the strength of the enemy encountered ranged from squad to platoon size. In the initial stages of Operation HOUSTON IV the enemy fought a delaying action. 60mm mortars were used by the enemy against landing zone OAK during initial entry into the AOA. B-40 rockets, small arms, and automatic weapons were also used by the enemy in his delaying action. What began as a delaying maneuver by the enemy later developed into a defensive posture in order to protect and prevent the discovery of a large weapons cache at YD944988, a harbor site with a hospital at YD94190, and another extensive harbor site at YD941987. The weapons and ammunition captured were sufficient to supply at least a company size unit or larger force. The harbor sites and bunker complexes were large enough to accommodate a battalion size unit. Numerous fresh graves were found in the vicinity of the harbor sites and examination of the bodies showed most were killed either by air or artillery. Accurate enemy unit identification could not be made, but the enemy's determination, coordinated tactical employment, and his equipment indicated that he was NVA. Prior to the enemy's withdrawal from his harbor sites, his morale appeared to be quite good, as evidenced in his spirited defense of the weapons cache and harbor sites.

- c. Terrain. The terrain in the EAGER YANKEE AOA was generally flat and barren. In the Vinh Loc District the terrain was only suited for tracked vehicles due to the predominance of soft sand. The Phu Thu and Phu Vang areas were suitable for limited wheeled vehicle use.

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The terrain in the HOUSTON IV ROA consisted of steep hills with a canopy ranging from 20 to 150 feet with a thick secondary growth. Water was non-existent in the higher hills. Unless on a trail, movement was extremely slow and difficult due to the thick secondary growth.

- d. Weather. The weather had no adverse effects on the operation with the exception of the intense heat and humidity which slowed the speed of movement of the troops.
6. Mission. BLT 2/7's mission during Operation EAGER YANKEE was to conduct an amphibious assault in the amphibious objective area in order to find, fix, destroy enemy forces, and capture and destroy enemy material and fortifications, and to conduct such other operations as assigned.
- The mission of Operation HOUSTON IV was for elements of BLT 2/7, through a helicopter assault into LZ OAK (YD953005) and LZ BIRCH (YD965995), to conduct offensive operations to seek, locate and capture or destroy enemy forces, weapons, material, and positions in the assigned area of operations and in particular to attempt to locate fresh grave sites.

7. Execution.

- a. Concept. Operation EAGER YANKEE. At 082300H Jul 1968 two reconnaissance teams were covertly inserted by helicopter, one in vicinity ZDO47160 to provide surveillance of GREEN BEACH and one in vicinity ZDO85097 to provide surveillance of LZ CEDAR (ZDO70102) and PINE (ZDO85097). On D-Day (9 Jul 68) BLT 2/7 landed at H-Hour (0500) and L-Hour (0600) with one company in LVT's and two companies by helicopters. The operation was conducted in two phases.

Phase I. This phase was characterized by the sequential establishment of a series of blocking positions against which a sweep force pushed. The initial blocking position was established by a surface landed assault force (Company "E") in the vicinity of Ap My Mot (ZDO52129). Companies "G" and "H" landed by helicopter in LZ's PINE (ZDO85097) and CEDAR (ZDO70102) and provided the sweep force which swept north and then northwest up the peninsula towards Company "E"'s blocking position. Subsequent blocking positions were established in the vicinity of Thon Ha Uc (from ZDO13167 to ZDO26180) and Thon Ha Thanh (1) (from YD980200 to YD995186), moving north on Dam Thuy Tu to the northern portion of the area of operation. Following in trace of the BLT sweep force were PF and RF forces from Vinh Loc District who reswept the area. In so doing they capitalized on intelligence reports that had been passed down from higher echelons and expanded the boundaries of secure territory to which the people on the island could migrate.

Phase II. Operations similar in character to those conducted during Phase I were employed during Phase II west of Dam Thuy Tu. Commencing at the northern extremity of the area of operations in the vicinity of Thon Quang Zuyen (YD880250), combat sweep operations were conducted in a southeasterly direction pushing against sequential blocking positions in the southern portion of the area of operations in the vicinity of Thon Ha Bac (YD982155).

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Operation HOUSTON IV. At 160700H BLT 2/7 landed two companies in LZ BIRCH (YD965995) and the remainder of the BLT in LZ OAK (YD953005) and attacked west on an axis of advance between Hill 224 and Hill 273, continued Southwest past Thon Mu Kham, then wheeled north on an axis of advance parallel to route 545. Company base camps were progressively established along the axis of advance from which deep lateral patrols were conducted to seek enemy forces, graves and positions. Regimental objective #1 (YC 925987) was searched and a base camp established in that area.

b. Significant Events. The following is a summary of significant events and contacts with the enemy.

- (1) Vinh Loc District 09 - 11 Jul 1968. In a three day period, sweep operations in the Vinh Loc District area resulted in picking up 14 detainees and two Chieu Hoi (with M-1 Carbine). The 14 detainees were captured at the following times and places: 090945H at ZD082102, 091430H at ZD065108, 091745H at ZD083128, 100805H at ZD058134, 111330H at ZD049141, and 111745H at ZD045143.
- (2) AP Hai (1) (ZD085120) 11 Jul 1968. A Chieu Hoi lead a Company "G" platoon size patrol to a school house used as a hospital for NVA and VC. The hospital was 150 feet long and 30 feet wide with a capacity for 100 bed patients. Two sandbags full of medical supplies were also found at this site.
- (3) Phu Thu District (YD918214) 13 Jul 1968. A helicopter in process of resupplying Company "F" was shot down by three snipers with automatic weapons. Security was established by Company "F" around the helicopter. At 1400H Company "F" received three rounds of B-40 rocket fire; one round hit the helicopter and set it on fire. A CH53 retrieved the downed helicopter at 140905H.
- (4) Phu Thu District (YD913217) 14 Jul 1968. While attempting to extract Company "F", a helicopter fuel line burst. One platoon from Company "G" was dispatched to provide security along with the remainder of the Company "F" unit in the LZ. At 150330H the security unit took heavy small arms fire, mortar rounds, and B-40 rockets which hit the downed helicopter. The security unit returned small arms fire and called an 81mm mortar fire mission.
- (5) Dong Truoi Mountains (YD940989) 17 Jul 1968. A Company "F", platoon size combat patrol received heavy small arms and B-40 rocket fire from an estimated 20 enemy in well prepared positions. The platoon returned small arms and automatic fire, requested artillery support, Huey gunships, and two flights of fixed wing. A sweep of the area revealed eight NVA KIA and one AK-47.

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- (6) Dong Trui Mountains (YD937990, 041990, 944988) 18 - 21 Jul 1968.  
While sweeping westerly from LZ BIRCH (YC965995), Company "F" encountered heavy resistance from an estimated platoon size enemy force in well prepared positions. Company "F" consolidated their position and requested artillery and air strikes. Company "D", 1st Battalion, 5th Marines passed under OPCON BLT 2/7 at 190800H Jul 1968 and was helilifted into the Dong Trui Mountains vicinity of Hill 897. From there Company "D" attacked in a northerly direction while Company "F" continued to fix the enemy's position, apply pressure from the east, and make use of available supporting arms. On 21 July 1968 the enemy was forced to withdraw and Companies "D" and "F" linked up and began a thorough search of the area. An enemy harbor site was soon found containing a large cache of weapons and ammunition. Those items that could be helilifted out were sent back to 5th Marine Headquarters; the remaining were destroyed. Thirty huts, a messhall, a hospital, numerous bunkers, and an intricate tunnel complex were also found and destroyed. The entire complex was estimated to have been large enough to accomodate a battalion and the materials left behind by the enemy could have easily equipped a company or larger size unit.

c. Supporting Arms

- (1) General. The quality and quantity of fire support available was excellent. In addition to BLT 2/7's organic 81mm mortar Platoon and two attached artillery batteries, Mortar Btry, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines, and Hotel Btry, 3rd Bn, 11th Marines, fire support was available from Foxtrot Btry, 2nd Bn, 11th Marines, Lima Btry, 4th Bn, 11th Marines, Naval gunfire ships, and aircraft. In the initial stages of Operation EAGER YANKEE use of available supporting arms was limited due to the large number of civilians in the area and wide ranging NO FIRE ZONES established in conjunction with the Vinh Loc District Chief. Due to these restrictions initial landing zones PINE and CEDAR were not preped. H&I firing was virtually non-existent during Phase I of Operation EAGER YANKEE.
- (2) Artillery. Artillery support consisted of 49 observed fire missions, 78 unobserved missions, and seven registration missions. A total of 929 HE, 77 WP, 266 ILL and two smoke rounds were expended for a grand total of 1,274 rounds fired. H&I fires were delivered on areas of known enemy activity and in response to intelligence information passed from higher echelons. Firing units were cooperative and responsive. Communication difficulties were minimal. Overall, artillery support was not used too extensively due to the nature of the tactical situation, but when it was employed it produced excellent results.

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- (3) Naval Gunfire. Naval Gunfire was limited to the AOA of Operation EAGER YANKEE. The AOA of Operation HOUSTON IV was out of range of the Naval gunfire ships. Within the AOA of Operation EAGER YANKEE the use of Naval gunfire was further limited due to the large civilian population and extensive NO FIRE ZONES. In all, two ships fired a total of two missions, expending 7 Ill, 12 WP, and 48 HE rounds for a total of 67 rounds fired.
- (4) Air Support
- (a) CAS. BLT 2/7 used 15 two plane flights consisting of Marine A-4's and F-4B's. These planes dropped 84 500 lb. bombs, 44 400 lb. Napalm bombs, and expended thousands of 20mm rounds and over one hundred 5 inch Zuni rockets. Reported battle damage was 10 NVA confirmed killed. The reason CAS was not used more extensively was due to the large NO FIRE ZONES in the AOA and frequent close proximity of friendly and enemy troops.
  - (b) TPQ-10's. No TPQ-10's were utilized due to proximity of targets to friendly forces.
  - (c) Flareships. Flareships were used twice to support night emergency resupply. The illumination during these two instances was outstanding.
  - (d) AO's. BLT 2/7 had the services of AO's in O-1, OV-10 and 4H-1E aircraft. The endurance time of all aircraft used in this mission proved more than satisfactory.
  - (e) Medevacs. HMM 265 provided helicopters for medevacs throughout the reporting period. The majority of the casualties were evacuated to the USS Tripoli (LPH-10). A few casualties were evacuated to PHU BAI because the medevac helicopter happened to be from a squadron based in that area. The Neil Robertson sling and jungle penetrator were used and are considered a necessity in the type of terrain encountered on Operation HOUSTON IV. The medevac flights, though sometimes slow, overall provided BLT 2/7 with adequate support.
- d. Logistics
- (1) The LSA was established aboard the LPH-10 on D-Day and remained aboard until 12 Jul 1968 at which time it was transferred to CAO DOI (ZD052034) for the remainder of the operation. CAO DOI proved to be the most feasible place for operating resupply. Supplies were requested through Helicopter Support Teams, which were attached to each of the major units in the field. Palletizing proved to be more of a problem than

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a help in the landing of supplies because once the palletized supplies were delivered to the field, there were no means available to handle them.

- (2) HMM 265 provided helicopters for resupply from 9 Jul 1968 through 16 Jul 1968. After this period resupply helicopters were furnished from PHU BAI.
  - (3) The LSA at CAO DOI was the primary source of all classes of resupplies with the exception of Class II, which was supplied by the command vessels for Operation EAGER YANKEE/HOUSTON IV. The following items were either not in stock or in a limited quantity: strobe lights, whip antenna bases, SP packs, and assorted medical supplies, such as battle dressings and field stretchers.
  - (4) Items requiring 2nd, 3rd, and 4th echelon maintenance were back loaded aboard assigned shipping and repaired by Contact Teams from the Logistics Support Unit. Items not repairable by contact teams were off-loaded and evacuated to the Maintenance Battalion at Da Nang.
- e. Communications. During the initial phase of the operation, radio communications in the lower frequencies was poor especially over the Bn Tac net. This problem was solved by switching to a frequency of over 60 mcs. Communications from the command group to the ship remained sporadic, possibly due to the ships sailing pattern. The same thing occurred over the covered circuit. In addition, some difficulty was experienced with the equipment becoming overheated on the covered net. While working in the third CP site, a TRC-27 shot was tried. Results were negative as a clear line of sight path between stations could not be obtained.
- While OPCON to FIFTH MARINES two sets of the AN/PRC-77 were borrowed and used. This equipment proved highly efficient and satisfactory with one exception. While working in the cypher position, anyone else working on the same frequency and in the clear would block out the two cypher stations. Therefore, when using this equipment it is necessary to have a frequency that is clear of any unwanted stations.
- Antennas, RC-292, were employed and were mandatory for communications throughout the AOAA.

## 8. Results

### a. Friendly

#### (1) USMC Casualties

##### (a) Enlisted

KIA	:	15
WIA	:	58
WIANE	:	14
NBCE	:	106
NBCK	:	1

## (b) Officers

KIA	:	0
WIA	:	1
WIANE	:	1
NBCE	:	0

## (2) USN Casualties

## (a) Enlisted

KIA	:	0
WIA	:	2
WIANE	:	0
NBCE	:	9

(b) Officers : None

## (3) Equipment Damage

(a) Helicopters: 1 Damaged by S/A fire  
1 Destroyed by B-40 Rocket

(b) Truck: 1 Broken axle

## b. Enemy

## (1) Personnel

(a) NVA KIA	:	32
(b) VC KIA	:	9
(c) Detainees	:	65
(d) Chieu Hois	:	7

## (2) Weapons Captured

(a)	(1)	Springfield Rifle
(b)	(5)	Shotguns
(c)	(2)	B.A.R.'s
(d)	(13)	S.K.S.'s
(e)	(2)	Eddiston Rifles
(f)	(3)	RP-46 Light Machine Guns
(g)	(1)	British Sten II SM-6
(h)	(4)	1891 Sniper Rifles
(i)	(4)	MAT 49 Sub-machine guns
(j)	(7)	K-44's

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- (k) (3) MAS-46's
  - (l) (2) 60mm mortars complete
  - (m) (2) AK-47's
  - (n) (5) M-1 Carbines
  - (o) (3) 7.62 Machine Guns w/bipods and two spare barrels
- (3) Grenades and Mines Captured
- (a) (17) Chi Comm Grenades
  - (b) (2) Soviet Anti Personnel mines
- (4) Ammunition Captured (by rounds)
- (a) (57) Blasting Caps
  - (b) (255) Rounds 60mm Mortar
  - (c) (804) Rounds AK-47
  - (d) (144) 60mm mortar heads
  - (e) (10) Rounds 57 Recoilless Rifle
  - (f) (140) B-40 rocket rounds
  - (g) (1,000) Sticks of Dynamite
  - (h) (27) RPG's
  - (i) (125) 12 Gauge Shotgun shells
- (5) Miscellaneous Equipment Captured
- (a) 1,200 lbs. rice
  - (b) (2) bags assorted medical gear
  - (c) (1) PRC-25 battery
  - (d) Assorted documents, clothing, and 782 gear
  - (e) 80 lbs. Tetrol

9. Commander's Analysis

The most unique part of the operation between 9 Jul and 22 Jul was the variety of terrain and enemy encountered. On the one hand-a helicopter borne assault was conducted in relatively open, flat, sandy terrain in conjunction with an amphibious operation and on the other a heliborne assault in a high canopy, jungle area. The variety of enemy encountered ranged as widely from para-military Youn Men and Womens Association members to NVA troops.

Poor intelligence characterized the entire operation. This included incorrect/incomplete beach studies which failed to reveal a large sand bar across the entire landing beach. Hasty selection of landing zones resulted in LZ's that proved inadequate as operations developed in the canopy.

Enemy contact was insignificant. If the proper amount of time, at least an additional week, had been spent in Vinh Loc District, the island complex could have been cleared of all VC/NVA and turned over to district officials and PF and RF forces, having been "pacified" by most current criteria and indica. In both VINH LOC and PAU THU districts the people were ready to

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defect, as evidenced by the number of detainees and Chieu Hoi acquired in those districts. An active Civic Action program and the establishment of a Combined Action Platoon would have been able to provide Vinh Loc with the necessary future backing for local PF and RF forces, if the BLT had had enough time to effect a thorough uprooting and destruction of the local VC infrastructure.

Medical Evacuation was unsatisfactory at times due to poor communications with the USS Tripoli. It was much more expedient to go to the organization under whose control the BLT was presently operating for MEDEVAC aircraft requests. On occasion MEDEVACS were delayed because a ship based surgeon, without seeing the man concerned, challenged, on a radio, the emergency claimed by the medical corpsmen in the field. If they (the doctors) feel this is necessary then they should be employed with the rifle companies and/or a BAS established in the field. There are times, in the heat of battle, that a corpsman will call a priority MEDEVAC an emergency, but this happens seldom enough so that it is not or should not be made a major issue. It becomes a major issue when an emergency MEDEVAC, while waiting for a decision as to the seriousness of his case, dies of wounds. It is highly recommended that this type of controversy be avoided.

In the final analysis I consider portions of this operation largely unsuccessful, particularly efforts in Phu Thu and Vinh Loc Districts, where a tremendous potential for a major success was present but not exploited. I consider the HOUSTON IV Phase successful due largely to the sizable caches discovered, the bodies found and the fact that it once again demonstrated that a Marine battalion can be swiftly moved from one operational environment to another without loss of mobility, fighting spirit, or command and logistical control.

  
C. E. MUELLER

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