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HEADQUARTERS
3rd Battalion, 7th Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
FPO, San Francisco 96602

3:FLH:hws
5750
2 May 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
Via: Commanding Officer, 7th Marines

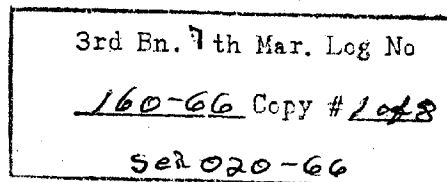
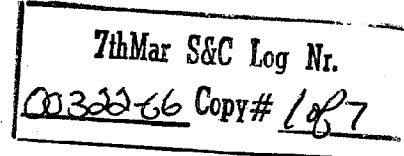
Subj: Command Chronology; month of April 1966

Ref: (a) DivO 5750.1

Encl: (1) 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines Command Chronology with Attachments

1. In accordance with reference (a), the command chronology for the month of April 1966 is submitted with attachments.

C. H. BOZLEY
C. H. BOZLEY



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DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.
DOD DIR 5200.10

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3RD BATTALION, 7TH MARINES COMMAND CHRONOLOGY WITH ATTACHMENTS

A. ORGANIZATIONAL DATA:

1. Designation and location of reporting unit: 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF, Chu Lai, Republic of Vietnam
2. Period covered: 1-30 April 1966
3.

Commanding Officer	LtCol C. H. BODLEY
Executive Officer	Maj H. G. BALOGH
S-1 Adjutant	1stLt J. J. COVERT
S-2 Officer	Capt W. M. CLAPP
S-3 Officer	Maj R. A. CLARK
S-4 Officer	Capt H. E. F. VONCAMP
Communications Officer	Capt E. T. FITZGERALD
Supply Officer	GySgt L. A. WEST
Motor Transport Officer	GySgt R. J. LABOUE
Bn Surgeon	Lt (MC) M. G. ASHKAR (1-6 April)
	Lt (MC) L. J. SHIVERS (6 - 30 April)
Bn Chaplain	Lt (ChC) E. W. EPPS
H&S Company Commander	Capt E. T. FITZGERALD
"I" Company Commander	Capt J. E. CLEMENTS
"K" Company Commander	1stLt W. M. LINGENFELTER
"L" Company Commander	1stLt E. W. HUMAN, Jr. (1-18 April)
	Capt M. J. QUINN (18-30 April)
"M" Company Commander	Capt T. V. DRAUDE
4. Average Strength:

USMC: 29 Officers	850 Enlisted
USN: 3 Officers	49 Enlisted

During the month of April 190 USMC enlisted and 12 USN enlisted were joined to the Battalion. In addition, 119 USMC enlisted, 1 officer and 10 USN enlisted were dropped during the month as a result of casualties, rotation and EAS.

B. SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS:

6 April - A platoon combat patrol from Company M located vicinity coordinates BS 585919 received six incoming 60mm mortar rounds and automatic weapons fire resulting in one friendly WIA med-evac. The platoon returned fire and called in an artillery mission on the suspected enemy position. The platoon then maneuvered and swept the area - no evidence of VC casualties was revealed. However, on 8 April a member of the BINH SON Advisory Team reported to this Headquarters that the advisory team had received information from a very reliable source that seven VC were killed, nine wounded, and four weapons destroyed, including one 60mm mortar, during the engagement.

ENCLOSURE (1)
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10 April - The civil affairs team was invited to celebrate the anniversary of the death of NGUYEN PHAM's ancestor. PHAM lives in TRI BINH (1) (BS 555987). The celebration lasted from 1100 to 1400 during which time refreshments were served to the Marine guests. After the celebration the civil affairs team distributed clothing through the hamlet chief to 125 villagers. Toys were distributed to 150 children. The above items were a gift from the Church of Christ of Fallbrook and San Pedro, California.

11 April - A fireteam reconnaissance/OP from Company K located vicinity coordinates BS 540930 sighted eight VC moving east on a trail vicinity coordinates BS 549928. The OP called and received an artillery mission with excellent coverage. Two of the eight VC were seen after the mission was fired and then disappeared in the underbrush. The remaining six VC did not reappear.

A squad blocking force from Company M located vicinity coordinates BS 572933 fired on approximately six VC fleeing from a Company M sweeping force. One VC was shot and captured. Three other VC were knocked down by friendly fire but could not be located. The VC was evacuated to 3rd ITT.

A UH1E (Command Ship) on station for a Company M sweep observed one VC wearing a green uniform in vicinity coordinates BS 578955. The VC fled after being seen. The UH1E fired on the VC wounding him. A second UH1E lifted a fireteam from Company M to the area and captured the VC. The VC was carrying a rice bag. His name appeared on the black list. The VC was evacuated to 3rd ITT.

A fireteam OP from Company K located vicinity coordinates BS 540930 observed one VC who ran when observed by the OP. The OP fired on the VC when he failed to halt, wounding him. The VC was evacuated to 3rd ITT.

Company M apprehended 26 female and seven male VCS as a result of a search and destroy operation in the PHU LE (1) village complex located vicinity coordinates BS 575938. The VCS were evacuated to 3rd ITT. It was later disclosed by 3rd ITT that 14 of the females and five of the males were affiliated with VC organizations.

15 April - Captain Robert L. HOFFMAN 079674 USMC reported to this organization from Marine Barracks, PEARL HARBOR for temporary additional duty for a period of 60 days in accordance with FMFPacO 1550.5.

20 April - Operation "SHORT CHANGE" (See Appendix (2)). While participating in a company size search and destroy operation in the DUC AN hamlet complex (BS 504913), Company K discovered a cache containing an estimated 25,000 pounds of rice. Rice was evacuated to the BINH SON District Headquarters by helicopter.

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21-26 Apr - A MAG-36 helicopter dispersal plan was executed on several occasions during this moonless period. Ten H-34 aircraft were positioned overnight within the confines of the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP perimeter.

21-23 Apr- Operation "HOT SPRINGS" (See Appendices (2) and (3)) was based on intelligence information disclosed from a VC rallier who surrendered on 20 April 1966. By 211315H the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines had landed by helicopter in QUANG NGAI Province and was conducting a coordinated search and destroy operation in conjunction with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines and elements of 2nd ARVN Division. At 211445H the first contact was made - Company M continued the sweep keeping pressure on the withdrawing VC elements. The last VC position was overrun at 211900H. During the engagement Company M suffered four KIA and 15 WIA; the VC element suffered 31 KIA and an unknown number of WIA. Except for sporadic sniper fire only one other contact was reported resulting in VC KIA. Activities ended at 231930H.

24 April - A Command Group from the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines assumed command of the CHU LAI Airfield Defense. 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines also provided one rifle company (Company K) as did 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines (Company E) to make up the nucleus of the defense group.

25 April - Company L (-) was helilifted to the TIEN DAO village complex (BS 577916) for a one day search and destroy operation on suspected VC in that area. While Company L was sweeping they surprised two VC on a trail killing one platoon leader and recovering a U.S. made Thompson sub-machinegun.

On this date the following personnel went to QUANG NGAI to receive the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry Medal for their actions in Operation "HOT SPRINGS". The awards were presented by Major General LAM, Commanding General, 2nd ARVN Division: Cross of Gallantry with Palm: Captain T. V. DRAUDE; Cross of Gallantry with Gold Star: Staff Sergeant J. F. ROMEO; Cross of Gallantry with Silver Star: HN2 R. L. LEWIS, Corporal O. S. CAPOZZOLI, Lance Corporal D. K. MCMILLIAN; Cross of Gallantry with Bronze Star: Corporal R. E. BETTS, Corporal V. J. KWIALEK, Major R. A. CLARK, Sergeant R. D. BITTER.

27 April - The Commanding General, III MAF, Lieutenant General L. WALT and the Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, Major General L. J. FIELDS visited TRI BINH (1) (BS 555987). After meeting the village officials, a short talk was given to the school children explaining how the children would be the future leaders of their country.

CIVIL AFFAIRS: During the month of April the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines civil affairs team treated over 1,413 villagers. These villagers received over 3,979 treatments. Almost daily visits by the team was made to TRI BINH (1) (BS 555987), TRI BINH (4) (BS 561978), and TRI BINH (5) (BS 566971). During April music appreciation, medical aid and English classes were emphasized.

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C. DOCUMENTS:

- ✓1. Frag Order 6-66 (Appendix (1))
Concept of Operations (SHORT CHANGE) (Appendix (2))
- ✓2. After Action Report, Operation "HOT SPRINGS" (Appendix (3))
- ✓3. ✓Battalion Position Overlay #1 (Appendix (4))
✓Battalion Position Overlay #2 (Appendix (5))
✓Battalion Position Overlay #3 (Appendix (6))
✓Battalion Position Overlay #4 (Appendix (7))

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3rd Battalion, 7th Marines
CHU LAI, RVN
210715H April 1966

Frag Order 6-66

Ref: (a) 3rdMarDiv OperO 343-65

Time Zone: H

1. SITUATIONa. Enemy Forces

- 1) A VC rallier reported the existence of the 1st VC Regiment in Central SON TINH District, QUANG NGAI Province on 20 March 1966. This information has been confirmed and places the elements of the 1st Regiment in the following locations:
 - a) 1st VC Regimental CP - Vicinity BS 531819
 - b) Unidentified subordinate battalion (Infantry) - Vicinity BS 547827
 - c) Unidentified subordinate battalion (Infantry) - Vicinity BS 547817
 - d) Unidentified subordinate battalion (Infantry) - Vicinity BS 539808
 - e) Unidentified subordinate battalion (Hvy Wpns) - Vicinity BS 530808
 - f) 21st NVA Regimental CP (Unconfirmed) - Vicinity BS 532816
- 2) Weapons of the 1st Regiment are a polygot mixture of small arms, but heavier weapons are known to exist in the hands of this unit as well. Both 57mm and 75mm recoilless rifles, and 81mm and 60mm mortars, are known to be in the inventory of the 1st VC Regiment. A battery of six 12.7mm anti-aircraft machineguns is organic to the Weapons Battalion.
- 3) Enemy Fortifications. See Annex A (Enemy Defensive Fortifications Overlay)
- 4) It is anticipated that the enemy force will attempt to withdraw from the objective area when major friendly forces are introduced. He possesses the capability to defend in strength from previously established defensive positions.

b. Friendly Forces

- 1) 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines (Regimental Reserve)

3rd Bn 7th Mar. Log No
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- 2) 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines
- 3) 11th Marine Artillery Group
- 4) MAG-36
- 5) MAG-12
- 6) 1st VN Marine Corps Battalion
- 7) 5th ARVN Ranger Battalion
- 8) WRM-6

c. Attachments

- 1) 3rd Platoon, Co C, 1st Ranger Bn
- 2) FC Tn, Btry 1, 3rd Bn, 11th Mar
- 3) RST, 1st SF Bn
- 4) Scout Dog Tn, III MAF

2. MISSION. 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines (-)(Rein) in conjunction with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 5th ARVN Ranger Battalion and the 1st Battalion VN Marines will conduct a heliborne landing into the central section of the SONG TIN District, QUANG NGAI Province to locate, fix, and destroy all enemy personnel and positions.

3. EXECUTION

- a. Concept of Operations. Two companies, two sections of RI's, and the Battalion Command Group will be transported by vehicle from the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to the QUANG NGAI Airport commencing at 210630H. A third company will be helilifted from the DUC AN Hamlet complex to the QUANG NGAI Airport commencing at 211030H. Commencing at 211000H the Battalion will be helilifted to Landing Zone #1 vicinity coordinates BS 523922 to conduct a search and destroy operation to the east in conjunction with 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines and elements of 2nd Division, ARVN.

b. Company M

- 1) Commence movement from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to QUANG NGAI by vehicle at 210630H.
- 2) At QUANG NGAI be prepared to helilift to Landing Zone #1.
- 3) Provide landing zone security.
- 4) On order, be prepared to commence a search and destroy operation of BINH BOC #1 (BS 538832).

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c. Company L

- 1) Commence movement from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to QUANG NGAI by vehicle at 210830H.
- 2) At QUANG NGAI be prepared to helilift to Landing Zone #1.
- 3) Upon landing at Landing Zone #1 move to an assembly area vicinity coordinates BS 531872.
- 4) On order, be prepared to conduct a search and destroy operation of BHANH MY (3) (BS 532838).

d. Company M

- 1) At 210900H commence a helilift from BUC #1 (1) helilift to the QUANG NGAI Airport.
- 2) At QUANG NGAI be prepared to be helilifted to Landing Zone #1.
- 3) Upon landing at Landing Zone #1 move to assembly area vicinity coordinates BS 530838.
- 4) On order, be prepared to assume mission of Company K or Company L.

e. Company Orange "A" and "B"

- 1) Commence movement by vehicle from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to QUANG NGAI Airport at 210830H.
- 2) Be prepared to helilift from QUANG NGAI Airport to Landing Zone #1.
- 3) Upon landing at Landing Zone #1 establish a forward command post vicinity coordinates BS 530835.

f. 3rd Marine Flatoon

- 1) Commence movement of two sections by vehicle from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to QUANG NGAI Airport at 210830H.
- 2) Be prepared to helilift from QUANG NGAI Airport to Landing Zone #1.
- 3) Upon landing at Landing Zone #1 move to and establish initial firing position at BS 530835.
- 4) Initially lay guns on azimuth of 1600 mils.
- 5) Be prepared to displace on order.
- 6) Be prepared to provide HE, UP, and illumination as needed.

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C. 3rd Plt., Co C, 1st Bn, 7th

- 1) Attach one engineer squad to Companies M, K, and L.
- 2) Provide mine detector and demolition equipment.

D. Operating Instructions

- 1) D-day - 21 April 1966
- 2) L-hour - 0900H
- 3) Motor Convoy depart 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP - 210830H
- 4) Helicopter Loads - Estimated to be 7 per aircraft
- 5) Landing Zone #1 - BS 523822
- 6) Unclassified code name - "HOT SPRINGS"
- 7) Rules of Engagement - In accordance with reference (a)

E. Reporting Instructions

- a) All enemy sightings, contacts, and discovery of caches
 - 1) Use SPOTREP format
 - 2) Use CAVES format
 - 3) Use SITREP format
 - 4) After action report due this Headquarters (S-3) 48 hours after completion of operation.

b) Position Reports

- 1) Thrust Lines
 CAR - BS 560030
 BEER - BS 530800
 HMR - BS 590810

- 9) Fire Coordination/Boundary Line - East-West Grid Line B3
- 10) Unit commanders will insure necessary measures are taken to provide adequate flank and advance/rear guard security at all times.
- 11) Duration of Operation - Estimated 3 days
- 12) CS and CE authorized (Report was immediately to this Headquarters).

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13) Fire Support Coordination

- a) Silence does not constitute consent. The FSCC must positively and vocally clear all missions.
- b) All missions outside the Battalion Zone of Action must be cleared by the Regimental FSCC.
- c) Initial rounds of observed missions must be at least 600 meters from friendly troops. The only exceptions to this will be when the enemy is actually engaged and closing with friendly troops. In this case the FO will include a danger element in his fire request.
- d) Villages must not be fired upon unless organized resistance is received from the village, and then only with the consent of the Battalion Commander.
- e) Night Defensive Firms and H&I's will be submitted by 1800 daily when practicable. Concentration numbers will be assigned by the FSCC.
- f) All Say-I-Plans reports will be submitted by Regimental FSCC. This does not relieve the FO the responsibility of insuring that his area is free of friendly aircraft before firing.
- g) Stopwatches will be submitted at least once every 30 minutes and:
 - 1st When halted
 - 2nd When crossing phase lines
 - 3rd When setting into a permanent position
 - 4th When enemy contact is made

h) Coordinating Instructions

- 1st Slim Water Platoon (-) initial estimate of fire - 1600 miles
- 2nd Btry 1, 3rd Bn, 11th Mar initial estimate of fire to be announced.
- 3rd Thrust points: 5085 (ANY CAR), 5280 (13 B&H), 5981 (ANY NAME)
- 4th Frequencies: Primary (2-152) 15.0
Secondary (2-150) 29.7

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- 1) For the purpose of assigning priorities of fires, if a unit is engaged in heavy contact and taking significant casualties, the words "up tight" will be inserted in the initial fire request.

4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICSa. Supply1) General

- a) Source of supply: LSA located at QUANG NGAI
- b) Prescribed Loads
 - Class I - 4 meals
 - Class II - Combat essential
 - Class V - Basic allowance

2) Control and Distribution

- a) S-4 located with CP Group
- b) Companies request supplies with Rapid Request format.
- c) Requests from Battalion to LSA via HST Net.
- d) Unit distribution.

3) Resupply

- a) Routine request prior to 1400 for evening or early morning delivery.
- b) Emergency request ASAP.
- c) Delivery times will be confirmed.

b. Evacuation and Hospitalization1) Evacuation

- a) USMC to 1st Med via helicopter.
- b) Vietnamese to QUANG NGAI via helicopter.
- c) Submit request to S-4 via fastest means.
- d) Battalion to Regiment via HST Net.

- 2) Hospitalization. At discretion of Commanding Officer of medical activity to which evacuated.

CONFIDENTIAL**a. Transportation**

- 1) Preparation. Motor Transport Officer provide at 210030:
 - a) One platoon, Company I to French Port.
 - b) Company M and H&S units from line to Battalion CP.
 - c) 1st Bn, 7th Mar unit from roadblock to Battalion CP.
 - d) H&S unit from CP #35 to Battalion CP.
- 2) To Objective Area:
 - a) H&C, Co H, Co L by convey at 210830 to include five artillery ammunition trucks, oxcn.
 - b) Co X by helicopter to objective area.

d. Services. Electronics and ordnance maintenance in LSA.**e. Personal. In accordance with current SOP.****f. Miscellaneous**

- 1) Units maintain CP (Rear).
- 2) Treat all local water.
- 3) 3-1 and Battalion Supply furnish men to 1st Med.
- 4) Normal arms and equipment and flak jackets and entrenching tool.
- 5) Tag evacuated equipment and personal effects.
- 6) Insure adequate amounts of salt are consumed - Force-feed if necessary.

5. COMMAND AND COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS**a. Radio**

- 1) All Battalion Tac Net radio operators have the new frequency.
- 2) During initial stages of the operation pass only tactical traffic over Battalion Tac Net.
- 3) All new call signs are listed in Regimental COL.
- 4) All Company Tac frequencies remain the same.
- 5) Detach TAGP with equipment to ALC.

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C) Battalion Two will be used for intra-convoys communications.

b. Wire

- 1) Limited wire in the CP.
- 2) Establish hot line to 81mm mortars as soon as possible in each CP.

c. Message Center

- 1) Use Division authentication tables.
- 2) Use Regimental shackle within 7th Marines. Use SEC-138 for traffic outside Regiment.

d. Coordination Instructions

- 1) Bring three batteries per radio.
- 2) Limited repair at Battalion CP.
- 3) Bring two message books per radio operator.

G. E. BOILEY
Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding

ANNEXES:

- A -- Navy Defensive Fortification Overlay
B -- Operation Overlay

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3rdBn, 7thMar

17 Apr 1966

CHANGE TO THE CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS

D-day. 20 April 1966

Under cover of darkness commencing D-2 move one platoon (rein) to establish OP/blocking positions vicinity BS 518919, BS 511921 and BS 520910 (See Operation Overlay). At L-hour on D-day, from Landing Zone ROBIN, simultaneously helilift one platoon into Landing Zone CRAB, BS 496921 and one platoon into Landing Zone SCALLOP, BS 500908. Immediately thereafter one platoon will be helilifted into Landing Zone LOBSTER, BS 497912. This platoon will establish OPs with primary responsibility to the west, and a secure area for the Battalion Command Group.

Upon completion of the initial helilift into Landing Zone CRAB, SCALLOP, and LOBSTER turn-around aircraft will lift one platoon into the previously established OP/blocking positions vicinity BS 511921 and one company (-) into OP/blocking position vicinity BS 520910. A Battalion Command Group and one section of 81mm mortars will be helilifted to Landing Zone LOBSTER. All units will conduct a coordinated search and destroy operation centered about the DUC AN Hamlet complex.

On the afternoon of D-day one company and the Battalion Command Group will be retracted to Landing Zone ROBIN to resume increased night activity responsibilities.

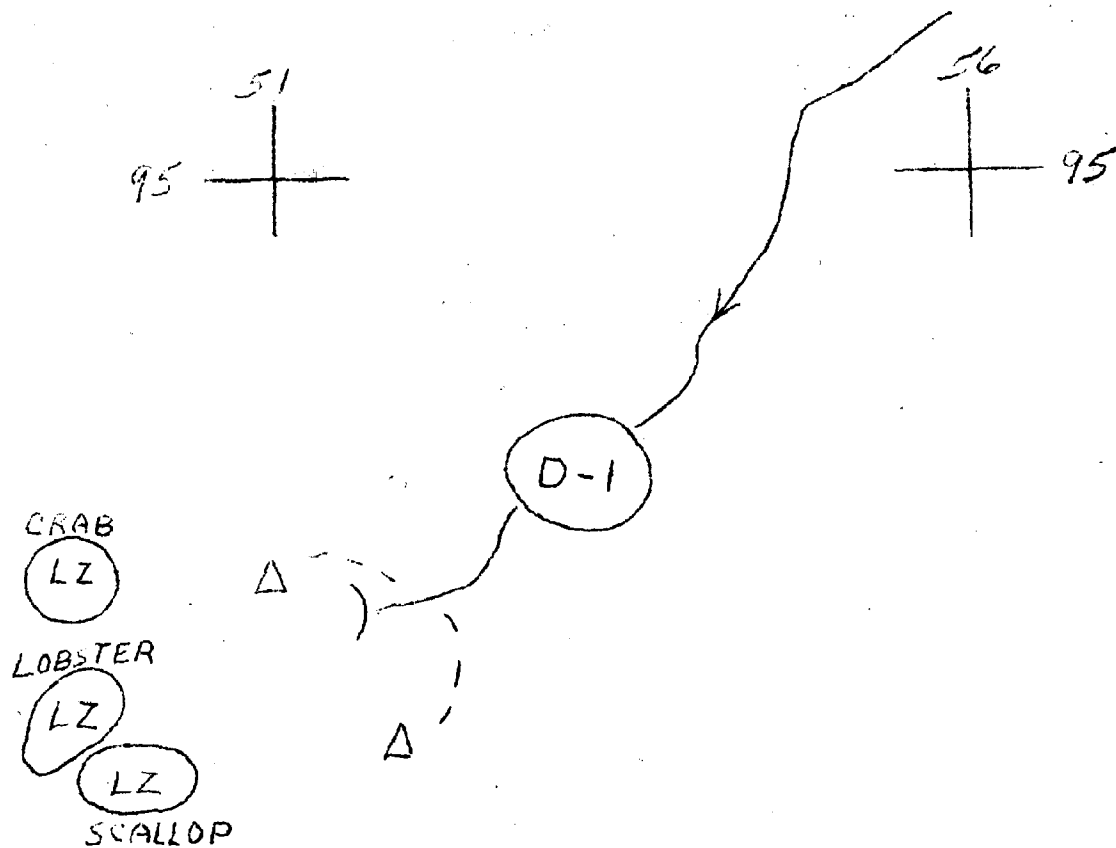
On the afternoon of D+3 all remaining units will be retracted to Landing Zone ROBIN from a landing zone to be announced.

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On the afternoon of D+3 all units will be retracted to Landing Zone ROBIN from a landing zone to be announced.

3. Operation Overlay:



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3rdBn, 7thMar (20)

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HEADQUARTERS
3rd Battalion, 7th Marines
1st Marine Division, (Rein) FMF
FPO, San Francisco 96602

3:RHS:FLH:hws
3480
30 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 7th Marines
Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report
Ref: (a) Frag Order 6-66

1. Operation "HOT SPRINGS" - Search and Destroy
2. 210830H to 231930H
3. SON TINH/BINH SON District, QUANG NGAI Province
4. 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, 1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
5. Lieutenant Colonel C. H. BODLEY USMC
6. Task Organization
3rd Bn, 7th Mar (-)
3rd Flt, Co C, 1st Engr Bn
FO Bns, Btry I, 3rd Bn, 11th Mar
ISO Bn, 7th Mar
HST, 1st SF Bn
Scout Dogs, III MAF
7. Supporting Forces
 - a. Air (Chronological utilization)

On 21 April 1966 at 1215 the ho lift of the Battalion was commenced from QUANG NGAI Airfield. Sixteen helicopters were utilized for the movement and the lift was completed at approximately 211315H. At 211735H two A-4 aircraft arrived on station and remained on station until 211815 at which time their control was relinquished by the Battalion and turned over to an airborne FAG who controlled them on an airstrike in a different sector. At 211830H two F-8 aircraft arrived on station and remained under Battalion control until 211910H at which time darkness and low fuel state compelled them to return to base. This flight of F-8 aircraft was not utilized against an enemy target. At 212000H a Snokey Gold aircraft arrived on station and provided illumination throughout the night. At first light on 22 April 1966 the Snokey Gold aircraft departed.

On 22 April 1966 at 1540 a request for helicopters to lift 30 troops of Company M to NUI VO was submitted to DASC. At 221700H four H-34's

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arrived and completed the requested lift. At 222015H Nailfile Lamplighter arrived on station and provided illumination until first light of the 23rd.

At 230600H Nailfile Lamplighter departed. At 230845H a request for two H-34's was submitted to lift six Vietnamese PAT's and interpreters from BINH SON to our position. This mission was completed at 231035H. At 230930H a request was submitted to lift the Battalion Commander from coordinates BS 518880 to Landing Zone ROBIN at 1600H. At 231230H a request for one priority med-evac was submitted. This med-evac was completed at 231305H. At 231320H another med-evac was requested for a man from Company L. At 231350H the helicopters arrived at Company L's position, and completed the evacuation. These same helicopters additionally evacuated two VGS from the Battalion CP's position.

b. Fire Support

1) Fire support was provided by 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines (-) (Rein) consisting of Batteries H and I, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines, a composite 155mm Howitzer Battery (Towed) from the 4th Battalion, 11th Marines, and two platoons of 8" Howitzers from the 3rd 8" Howitzer Battery, F&G. Organic fire support units included two sections of 81mm mortars from H&S Company, 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines and the companies' 60mm mortar sections.

2) From 210730H April until 221700H April, all artillery was in general support of the units participating in the operation. At 221700H, Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines was detached from 3rd Battalion (-) (Rein), 11th Marines and attached to 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines for whom they provided direct support until detached at 231800H. The two sections of 81mm mortars were retained in general support of the Battalion, and the 60mm mortars were in direct support of their respective companies.

3) During the operation a total of 174 artillery rounds were fired during the conduct of seven missions. In addition, 23 rounds of 81mm mortar ammunition were fired during two missions. No significant surveillances were received for any missions.

4) Chronological summary of events

211300 - The FSCG landed with the 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to commence operations in the objective area. One mission was called at 211350H by Company L at BS 553837. It was assigned to the 8" howitzers but was ended after two rounds were fired and landed approximately 1,000 meters over the target. The nature of target was preparatory fires.

211415 - The Battalion CP was established at BS 543832.

211446 - Fire mission from Company L at BS 553838 was called. The nature of target was automatic weapons fire. The mission was fired by Battery H, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines and excellent coverage was received.

211521 - A fire mission was received from Company M on VC firing from trees at BS 543826. 81mm mortars were fired with poor effect as the rounds could not be brought on target. Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines then fired on the same target with excellent coverage.

211635 - A fire mission was received from Company M on heavy automatic weapons fire at BS 551827. A total of 28 rounds were fired with no surveillance. The FSCG's FRC-25 went dead and poor communications only were established among the FO Teams, the FRC, and the FSCG.

211705 - A fire mission was received from Company M on automatic weapons and mortars at BS 545824. Fire for effect was never entered as the company pulled back to allow air strikes at these coordinates. Company M's FO was wounded and evacuated, and his scout observer took over the team.

211820 - A fire mission was received from Company M on heavy automatic weapons and mortars at BS 547829, and the company pulled back to allow fire for effect coverage. The mission was fired by Battery H, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines and the rounds landed at approximately BS 542829, behind Company M and in close proximity to the CP. A cease fire was called and the mission was ended.

211930 - A fire mission was received from Company M on automatic weapons and mortar fire at BS 552827. Due to ned-evac and the proximity of friendly troops, the mission was never completed. A total of four rounds were fired.

22Apr - No artillery fire except H&M's were fired in support of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines. The 81mm Mortar Platoon fired on registration.

230900 - A request for a marking round was received from Company M at BS 549854. Shell illumination was fired by Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines.

231800 - The Alpha CP Group was extracted from the objective area by truck and returned to 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines area. Battery I, 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines was returned to the control of 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines.

5) Comments and Recommendations

a) Fire support was generally outstanding although on two occasions initial rounds were far enough off target to pose a danger to friendly forces (See paragraph 4.a) and 4.g)).

b) Communications was maintained throughout the operation, although the FRC-25 issued to the FSCG gave spotty performance.

c) Close liaison was maintained between the Battalion and Regimental FSCG. This seemed to head off many trouble areas before they developed into problems. The FSCG was constantly aware of the location of friendly units.

d) Company M made extremely effective use of artillery support by using the cover of artillery fire to actually maneuver troops. It was the first time that this technique has been used, and it worked quite well.

e) A naval gunfire spot team was provided to augment the personnel on the FO teams. They were employed as a team and assigned to Company L. This allowed the use of full teams with each company. They performed in a highly commendable manner. It is recommended the naval gunfire augmentation be provided in future operations where no naval gunfire support is provided.

7. Intelligence

a. Anticipated Strength and Situation of Enemy

1) Operation "HOT SPRINGS" was an operation conducted in reaction to the sudden acquisition of valid intelligence on the location and the activities of the 1st VC Regiment. Within a day after this information was received, a multi-battalion operation was organized and mounted. The accuracy of the intelligence was confirmed by the operation.

2) The pre-D-day information placed the 1st VC Regimental Headquarters in an area of rolling hills in west central SON TINH District, QUANG NGAI Province (vicinity BS 531819). The subordinate battalions of the Regiment, four in number, were grouped in an unusually tight formation in the same general area. Unidentified at the time of the report, these battalions were reported to be at BS 547827, BS 547817, BS 539808, and BS 530808, respectively. The latter coordinates represents the reported location of an unidentified Weapons Battalion, supposedly armed with at least six 75mm recoilless rifles and an unknown number of 12.7mm anti-aircraft machineguns and other heavy weapons.

3) It was anticipated that the enemy force, when confronted with major friendly units would fight a series of delaying actions with relatively small forces in an effort to extricate the majority of their troops. Probable routes of withdrawal were considered to be primarily to the southeast, with northerly and southwesterly routes believed to be secondary. Obviously, the enemy did possess the capability to defend in strength from prepared positions known to exist throughout the area.

b. Currency and Source of Intelligence

1) This operation provides an excellent example of the increasingly frequent use in our areas of "hot" intelligence expeditiously exploited. The intelligence gained on the location of this major VC unit was as current as could be possibly expected.

2) The basic source of information on enemy dispositions and location was provided by a defector who voluntarily gave himself up to ARVN personnel at NUI TRON outpost, southwest of the objective area. This VC soldier pinpointed the locations of the various elements of the enemy force both from a helicopter and on a map. This information was proven to be quite accurate when the operation was conducted.

3) Although the defector provided excellent information which was later confirmed, the decision to execute the operation was at least partially based on agent reports developed by 2nd ARVN Division at QUANG NGAI and others, as well as classified intelligence gathering means.

c. Strength and Situation Actually Encountered

1) This organization, along with one other U.S. Marine battalion and two Vietnamese battalions, made the initial heliborne assault. 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines and the two Vietnamese units landed first in landing zones west of the objective area after several hours of heavy air and artillery preparation. Shortly after landing and sweeping east, these units

established solid contact with VC forces. This Battalion landed shortly thereafter in a landing zone just northwest of the objective area and began sweeping east towards the reported location of the 1st VC Regimental CP. No contact was made for several hours, due to the heavy preparation of landing zones which undoubtedly drove enemy units from the area.

2) Contact with a reinforced VC company was made by Company M at approximately 1500 on the afternoon of D-day. Using 60mm mortars, machine-guns, and other automatic weapons, the enemy tenaciously defended their prepared defensive positions from CHAU NHAI hamlet (vicinity BS 547829). In the course of the three hour fight 31 enemy were killed with an additional five considered possible.

3) This contact with VC forces on D-day was the only major contact made during the course of the operation. Some very light sniper fire was received on D+2, but it constituted only minor harassment.

d. VC Units Identified

1) Although contact was made with a company sized element of Main Force Vietcong on the first day of the operation, the engagement was of such a sharp, violent nature that no prisoners nor documents were taken with which to identify the enemy unit. Consequently, the enemy force was not identified by this organization. Documents captured by other units indicate that the 1st VC Regiment, was, in fact, the enemy unit present as had been previously reported. It is logical to presume that the enemy company was a subordinate element of the 1st VC Regiment.

e. Significant Intelligence Gained

1) Information Gained from the Population. Due to the heavy artillery and air bombardment of the objective area which drove them away only a very limited number of civilians were contacted throughout the operation. Those that were seen were either very old or children, and provided no really valuable information. This lack of civilian personnel hampered somewhat considerably the intelligence collection effort.

2) VC Tactics. In the one engagement with Company M, the VC element demonstrated a willingness to fight, as usual only on their terms and at places of their choosing. They did combine automatic weapons, small arms, and 60mm mortars in a flexible and effective defense of the CHAU NHAI area. Mortar gunnery was most accurate indicating either exceptionally proficient gunners and crews or pre-registration, probably the latter. As the friendly force approached the hamlet, they received fairly heavy harassing sniper fire from different locations in an obvious VC attempt to force a deployment of forces prematurely. The use of this tactic as well as the vigorous defense of a key point in the northern end of the objective area, suggests that the enemy defense was conducted in order to allow the withdrawal of a larger or more important unit, possibly the 1st VC Regimental Headquarters.

3) VC Casualties. As a result of Company M's engagement with the enemy in and around CHAU NHAI, 32 enemy were killed with another five considered possible. Most of these kills were as a result of the employment of infantry small arms, machineguns, and grenades, at very close quarters.

One enemy machinegun, a .30 caliber Browning was captured, along with a BAR.

f. Weather and Terrain

1) Weather. During the course of this operation, very clear weather prevailed. There was no significant cloud cover to interfere with air operations. The combination of temperatures over 100° and humidity of 90% did pose some problem to infantry foot mobility. This was particularly true in the case of newly joined unacclimatized replacements, several of which became heat casualties. Salt pills, taken religiously under the supervision of small unit leaders, are a must on operations in which the Marine must carry heavy loads under such adverse heat/humidity conditions.

2) Terrain. Terrain encountered by this Battalion in the zone of action is analyzed as follows:

a) Critical Terrain: The hill mass at BS 546829 is critical in its dominance of surrounding terrain in all directions. Additionally, the ridge line running from BS 578376 to BS 578862 and adjacent high ground to the north and northwest is critical in that it commands a wide expanse of lower ground to the east, southeast and southwest. Certain of the hamlets, in the area, particularly CHAU NHAI (BS 547829) are critical terrain by virtue of their existing fortifications.

b) Observation and Fields of Fire: From the areas indicated as critical, good observation of surrounding terrain may be established. Fields of fire from these areas vary, but in general are limited by terrain configurations and intervening vegetation adjacent to hamlets in the area. These are a wide variety of locations throughout the Battalion's zone of action in which excellent observation and fields of fire may be had over flat, presently uncultivated rice paddies and dry crop fields.

c) Cover and Concealment: Concealment, and, to a lesser degree, cover are provided by heavy natural and cultivated vegetation in and around the hamlets in the area. Excellent cover is provided by the trench system and fighting holes in CHAU NHAI (vicinity BS 547829).

d) Obstacles: Limited natural obstacles were encountered in the form of typical Vietnamese farm country hedgerows and occasional sugar cane fields. A relatively small number of man-made shallow ditch-type obstacles were encountered in CHAU NHAI (vicinity BS 547829). The defensive trench surrounding the hamlet with its accompanying bamboo and wire fence is a defensive type obstacle.

e) Avenues of Approach: Routes, by which any given point in the objective area and subsequently assigned zone of action may be approached, are virtually unlimited, due to the reasons stated under cover and concealment.

8. Mission. 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines (-)(Rein) in conjunction with the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines, 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, 5th ARVN Ranger Battalion and the 1st Battalion Vietnamese Marines conduct a heliborne landing into the central section of the SON TINH District, QUANG NGAI Province to locate, fix and destroy all enemy personnel and positions in the objective area.

9. Concept of Operation. On D-day at 0830H two rifle companies, two sections of 81mm mortars and the Battalion Command Group to be transported by vehicle from 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines CP to the QUANG NGAI Airport. A third company to be helilifted from the DUC AN Hamlet complex vicinity coordinates BS 505913 to the QUANG NGAI Airport at 1030H on D-day. Commencing at 211100H the Battalion (-)(Rein) to be helilifted into Landing Zone #1, BS 526826, to commence a coordinated search and destroy operation to the east in conjunction with other Marine and ARVN units. Artillery to be provided by the 3rd Battalion, 11th Marines (-) with 105's located at NUI VOI Hill, BS 624847, 155's located at QUANG NGAI and the 8" guns located at OP #39, BS 573964.

10. Execution

a. Background/Planning. On 20 April 1966 a VC rallier surrendered and disclosed information on the whereabouts of various VC elements located in the QUANG NGAI Province. At 202230H a planning conference was held at the 7th Marines Command Post. By 210030H detail planning by the Battalion staff was underway and Frag Order 6-66 was published by 210400H. At 210840H this Battalion commenced the first phase of the operation - the vehicular movement to the QUANG NGAI Airport.

b. D-day, 21 April 1966. At 210840H 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines (-)(Rein) departed their Command Post by vehicle for transportation to the QUANG NGAI Airport arriving at 211045H. At 211130H Company K commenced a helilift from DUC AN (1) vicinity coordinates BS 504912 to the QUANG NGAI Airport. The lift was completed at 211200H. At 211130H the Battalion commenced a helilift into Landing Zone #2, BS 534834. The landing zone was changed by Computation 6, Nailfile 6, and Crepe Myrtle 6 during a reconnaissance flight immediately prior to the execution of the landing. The lift was conducted in the following order: Company M, Company L, H&S Company, and Company K. By 211325H all elements of the Battalion had arrived in the landing zone. The landing was unopposed. The Battalion CP was established at BS 535835. Company K assumed the role of Battalion Reserve and provided CP security. Upon landing Company M secured the landing zone and then upon being relieved of this responsibility swept to the southeast on a search and destroy of BINH BAC (1), BS 540833. No contact was made in this hamlet and Company M continued to the east to the high ground at BS 546829. Upon landing Company L commenced sweeping in an easterly direction to the high ground at BS 553837. At 211425H Company L reached coordinates BS 543835 and held up to provide fire support for Company M, if needed, who at this time was receiving 60mm mortar and heavy automatic weapons fire from BS 552825. At 211600H Company L resumed their sweep to the east reaching the high ground vicinity BS 553837. At 1700 Co L reported finding seven bodies decayed beyond recognition in shallow graves on this hill. Company L established night time positions and remained in this location with no contact until D+1. At 211410H the Alpha Command Group displaced to BS 540833. The Bravo Command Group displaced to the same location at 211500H. While continuing their sweep of CHAU NHAI (5) coordinates BS 546827 forward elements of Company M became engaged with an estimated VC company in the vicinity of CHAU NHAI (5) Hamlet. An artillery mission was called on the enemy position. At this time one platoon was moving to an assault position and one platoon was used as a covering force. The assault platoon received heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire and simultaneously the covering force received accurate

60mm mortar fire. During this encounter five VC were seen to fall and later confirmed by body count. During this encounter Company M suffered six WIA med-evac and one KIA. At this time Company M pulled back to regroup and evacuate their casualties. Simultaneously artillery missions and air strikes were called on the enemy position in preparation for a second assault on CHAU NHAI (5) hamlet, BS 546826. At 211800H Company M launched the second attack with one platoon assaulting from the left and one platoon used as a covering force. As Company M came in contact with the enemy a heavy volume of small arms and automatic weapons fire from an extremely close range was exchanged and lasted for approximately 30 minutes. The assault element fought while using hand-to-hand combat and hand grenades on the VC. During this fierce engagement 26 VC were killed. Company M captured one U.S. made .30 caliber machinegun with tripod and a Browning automatic rifle during this close combat. The assault element led by the base of fire assaulted to the far limits of the hamlet illuminated by burning houses stopping only because of darkness. After routing the VC from the hamlet Company M pulled back to BS 544828 to organize, retrieve, and evacuate their casualties which consisted of: 3 KIA, 10 WIA med-evac, 3 WIA non-evac, and 3 heat casualties. By 212030H all med-evacs had been evacuated and Company M then moved to coordinates BS 540829 to set up their night defensive positions. No further contact was made during the night of 21 April 1966.

c. D41, 22 April 1966

At 220800H a Vietnamese male was observed hiding in the brush at BS 556832. When approached by a fireteam the suspect failed to halt when challenged. The VC was fired on and killed.

At 220830H Company M was placed in Battalion reserve and provided security for the Battalion CP. At 220900H Company K was taken out of reserve and ordered to conduct a sweep to the east on the right flank of the Battalion zone of action. Company K swept to the east to TRA BINH DONG (3) coordinates BS 588838 with no contact. Company K suffered two non-battle casualties, one heat casualty, one sprained ankle. At 221630H Company K was ordered to remain in TRA BINH DONG (3) and to set in night defensive positions.

At 220830H Company L commenced a sweep to the east on the left flank of the Battalion zone of action. At 221230H Company L linked up with Company K and continued the sweep to the east with two companies abreast. At this time Company L reported a heat casualty to be evacuated. The two scout dogs with Company L became heat casualties and had to be evacuated. During the sweep Company L destroyed one 105mm dud at coordinates BS 567846. One VCS was apprehended at BS 582845 with no ID card and a large sum of money. Company L swept to TRUONG THO (6) coordinates BS 596846 without further contact. Company L established night time positions in TRUONG THO (6) coordinates BS 596846. At 222230H a Company L CP located BS 598847 observed ten VC moving southeast across a rice paddy towards railroad tracks. Small arms fire was exchanged and the VC broke contact.

At 221350H the Alpha Command Group and an element of Company M displaced to the new CP site located BS 592843 arriving at 221500H. At 221520H the Bravo Command Group and Company M displaced to the new CP site by 221800H. At 221700H a 30 man security platoon departed the CP by helicopter to provide security for Battery I, 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines

located at BS 624847. The night defense was set in and no contact was made during the night.

d. D+2. 23 April 1966

At 230511H all companies and the Battalion CP had been resupplied. Company M was taken out of Battalion reserve and moved northwest to the high ground vicinity coordinates BS 578865 to provide OP's along the high ground during the Battalion's search and destroy operation to the north in grid squares BS 5985, BS 5986, BS 5987, BS 5885, BS 5886, and BS 5887.

At 230900H reconnaissance helicopters received small arms fire from an estimated three VC at BS 585839. The helicopters returned fire and the area was later searched by Company M with negative results.

At 230830H Company L commenced a sweep to the north in grid squares BS 5985, BS 5986 and BS 5987 with Company K on their left flank, the two companies abreast. Company L swept to coordinates BS 595865 with no contacts. Company L then moved to the pickup point arriving at 231630H.

At 230800H Company K commenced a sweep to the north in grid squares BS 5885, BS 5886, and BS 5887. Company K reported receiving sniper fire from one VC located BS 573947. Company K fired on the sniper and searched the area. However, he could not be located. No other contacts were made. Company K with Company L on the right swept east to the railroad and then to the pickup point located BS 619879 arriving at 231630H.

At 231100H the Alpha Command Group displaced following in trace of the Battalion sweep to coordinates BS 586864. At 231200H the Bravo Command Group displaced to the new CP site coordinates BS 586864 arriving at 231245H. One heat casualty was evacuated from the CP. The Battalion CP remained at this site until Company K and Company L had completed their sweep. At 231500H the Battalion CP moved to the pickup point located BS 619879 arriving at 231645H.

At 231500H Company M moved from their OP's on the high ground to the pickup point arriving at 231830H. One VCS was apprehended at coordinates BS 595865 and evacuated to 3rd ITT.

At 231725H the Battalion commenced retraction by truck. Retraction was executed in two serials. The move was completed at 231930H.

11. Results

a. Friendly

- 1) KIA - 4
- 2) WIA - 15
- 3) MIA - 0
- 4) ERA - 0
- 5) Equipment Lost - None

b. Enemy

- 1) KIA (Confirmed) - 32
- 2) KIA (Possible) - 5
- 3) WIA - Unknown
- 4) WIA (Possible) - Unknown
- 5) MIA - Unknown
- 6) KB Air/Arty/Mortars - Unknown
- 7) Captured VCC - 0
- 8) Captured VCS - 3
- 9) Equipment/Material Losses: 1 Browning Automatic Rifle
1 .30 Caliber Machinegun, U.S.

12. Administrative Matters

a. Supply. Resupply throughout this operation was excellent. Supplies were delivered accurately and on time. The HST attached to the Battalion received requirements for supplies and services and utilized their own radio network to order and then control the delivery of them. The attachment of this 24 man team is highly recommended for future operations. Each rifle company had a three man HST team attached to it solely for landing zone operations.

b. Medical. Medical service throughout the operation was satisfactory. The Battalion maintained a BAS with the CP group and the normal complement of corpsmen with the rifle companies. Evacuation was by helicopter. Requests for evacuation were submitted via the HST, a system new to this Battalion, that provided excellent results.

c. Transportation. The CP group and Companies L and M were transported by truck to QUANG NGAI on the morning of D-day. Company K was flown by helicopter from the field to join the Battalion at QUANG NGAI. The Battalion was then flown to the objective area by helicopter. Retraction of the Battalion on D+2 was by truck. The retraction arrangements were made via radio on D+1. All transportation was accomplished without incident.

13. Special Equipment

a. Scout Dogs were utilized on this operation. Their services were again demonstrated when on numerous occasions the dogs discovered bomb shelters, caves and positions that would otherwise have been overlooked. A definite limitation that should be brought out is the dogs' inability to function for extended periods during conditions of high heat. It was noted on three occasions that the sweeping elements were held up to allow the dogs to cool down.

14. Commander's Analysis

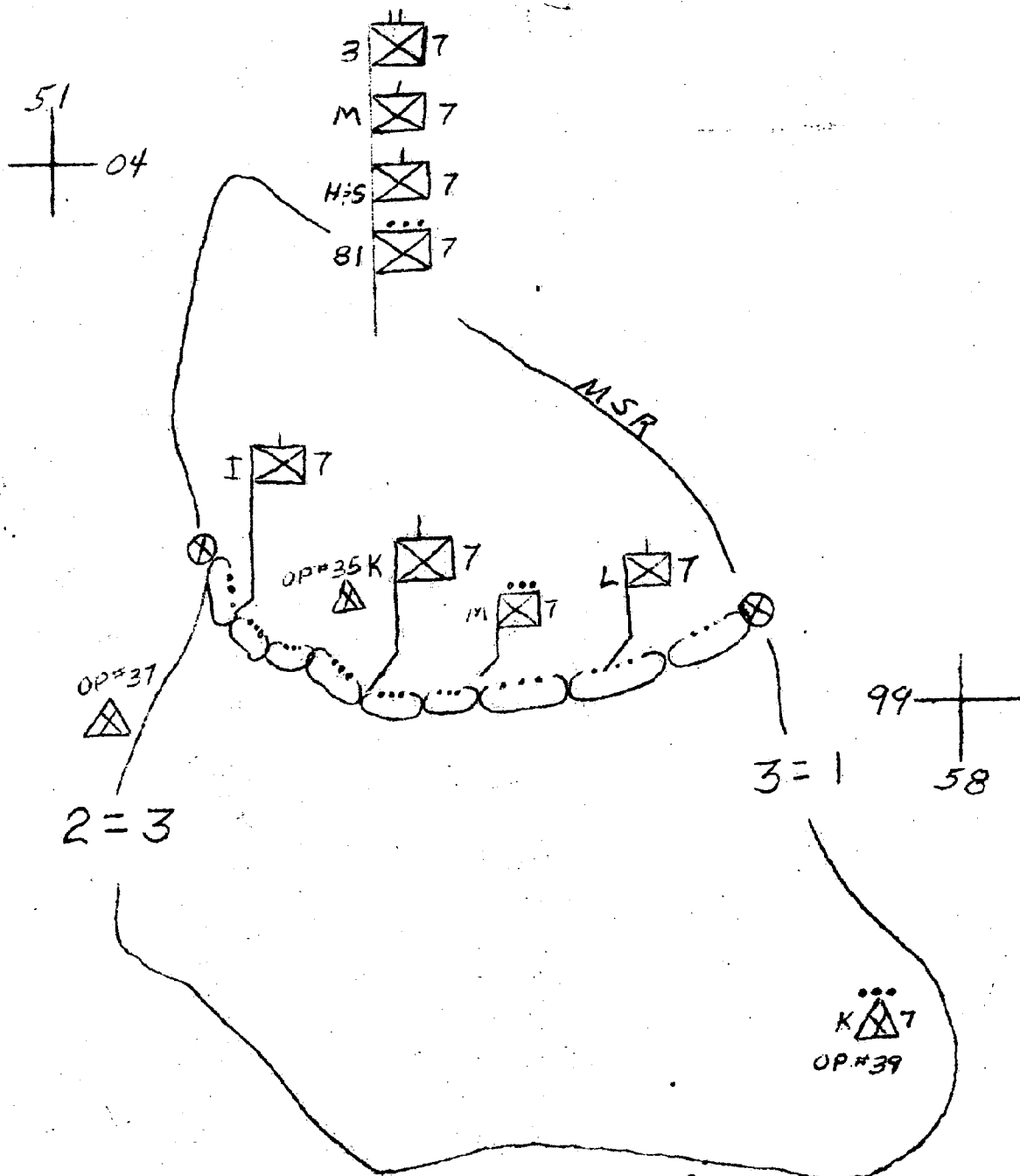
Once again the Battalion exhibited its capability to react on short notice in a thorough and professional manner.

Although this Battalion landed early on the afternoon of D-day, solid contact was made with the enemy by 1450. Company M found itself pitted against a well armed and entrenched VC company. Using artillery and close air support to the maximum for some two hours, Company M found itself, near dark, ready to attack. At 1800 the company attacked the hamlet with two platoons, assaulting with two squads of their platoons. The enemy withstood the heavy bombardment and napalm and fought a determined battle. Perhaps an earlier landing with more daylight the enemy could have been pursued beyond the hamlet and a resultant bigger dividend, as it was darkness limited the attack to the hamlet illuminated by the burning buildings.

It is believed that the VC fought an effective but costly rear guard action. This encounter was evidence that the VC will use determined resistance to delay their enemy in order to provide the time necessary for an exfiltration of the main body. Thus it is that when such resistance is encountered, serious consideration should be given to the use of helicopters and exploiting forces to permit pursuit.

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C. H. BODLEY

Weekly Operational Summary
3 April - 11 April 1966
MAP: L701, 1:50,000,
Sheets 6757 III and IV

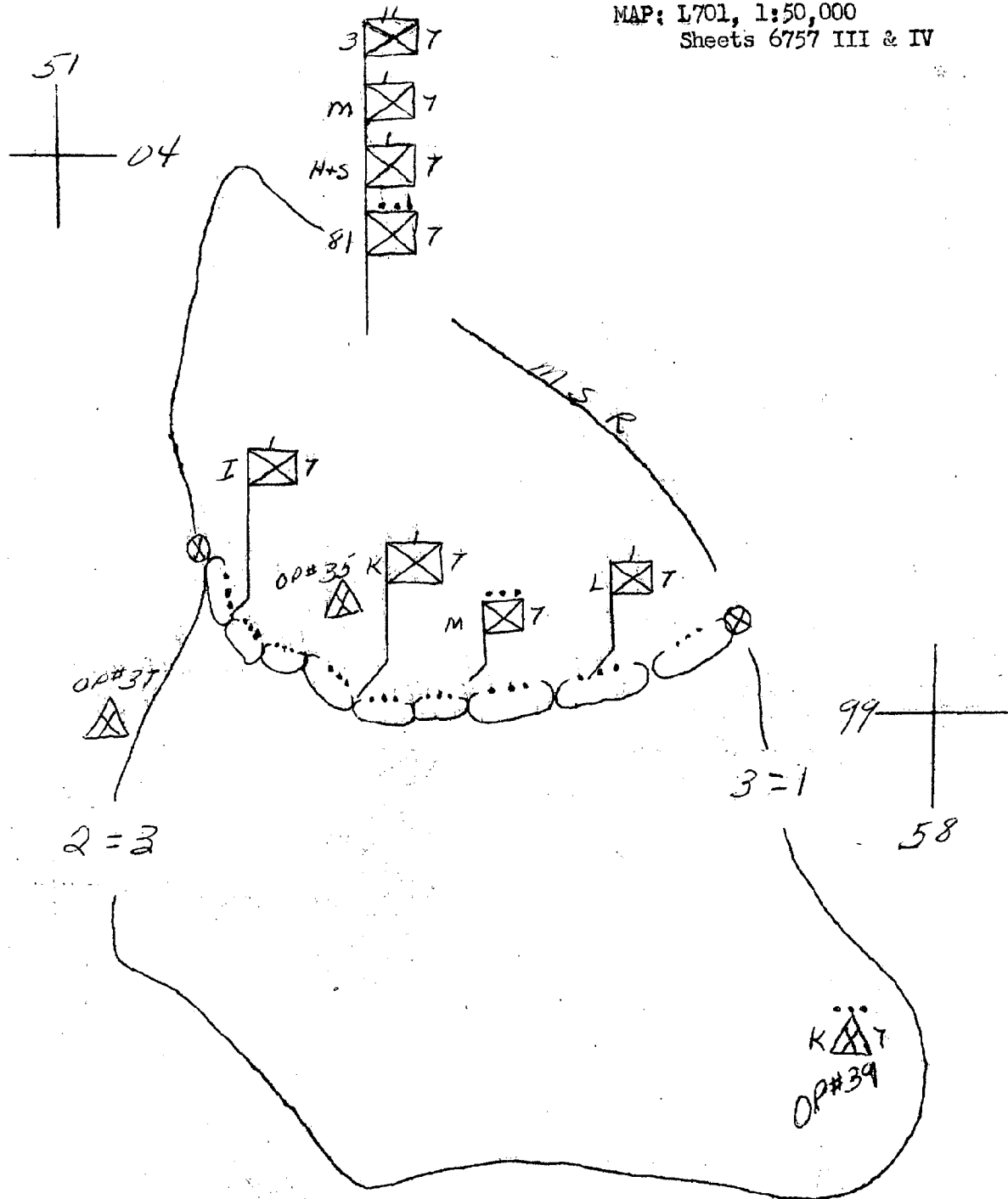


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Weekly Operational Summary
 10 - 17 April 1966
 MAP: L701, 1:50,000
 Sheets 6757 III & IV



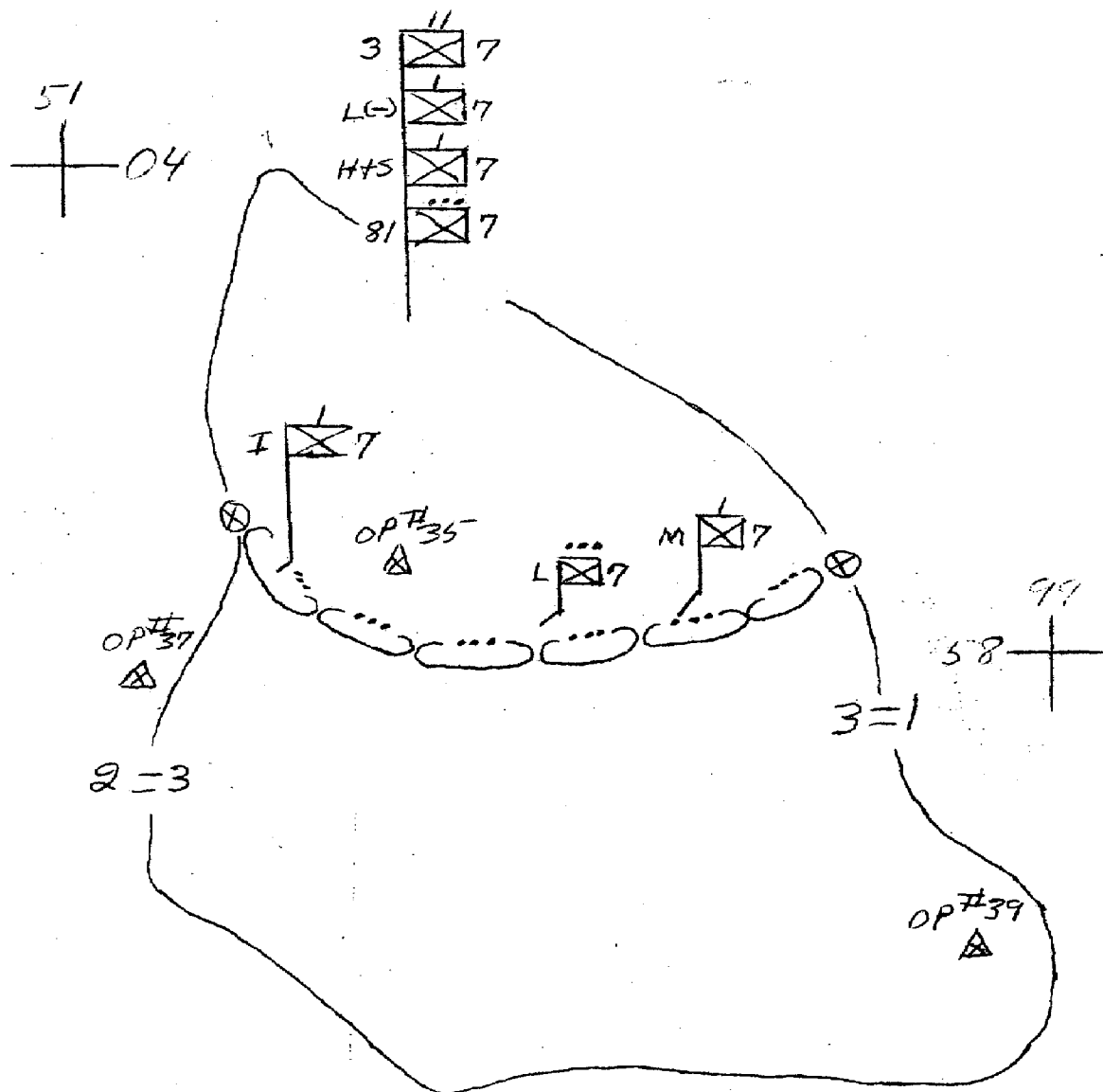
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Weekly Operational Summary
17 - 24 April 1966
MAP: L701, 1:50,000
Sheets 6757 III & IV



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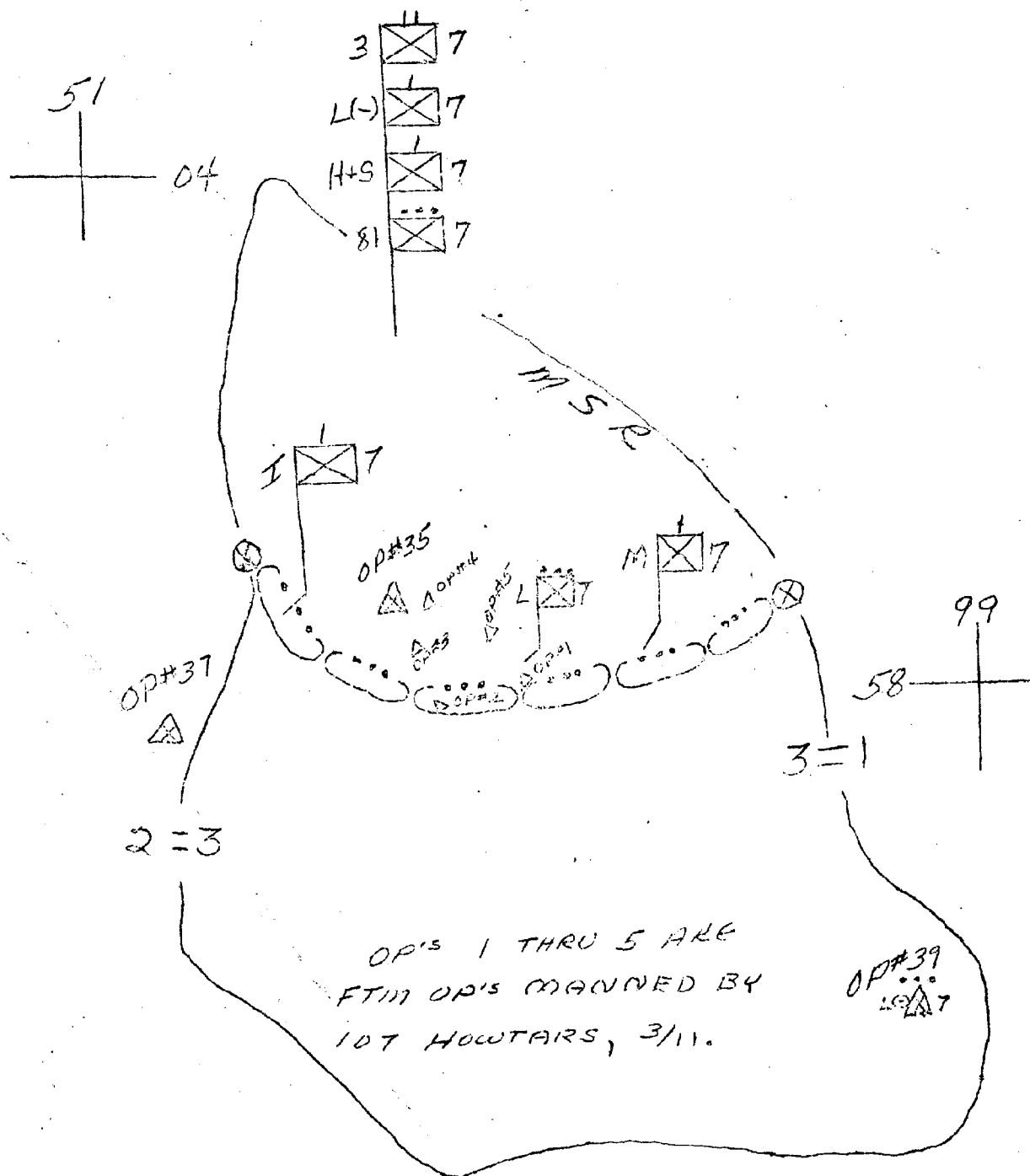
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Weekly Operational Summary

24 April - 1 May 1966

MAP: L701, 1:50,000, Sheets 6757 III & IV

1 May 1966



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