

147668

HEADQUARTERS

UNCLASSIFIED

1st Battalion, 9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 96602

The Walking Deed

3/EC/ec
005750
8 March 1968UNCLASSIFIED
APPROVED

68-4310

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A0 3D)Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
(2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
(3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-29 February 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPACO 5750.8
(c) DIVO 5750.1A

Encl: (1) 1st Battalion, 9th Marines Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a) and (b) enclosure (1) is submitted.

J. F. MITCHELL
1st Battalion, 9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 966023/35/68
005750
8 March 1968

SHEAR

RECORDED

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines **UNCLASSIFIED**
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A0 3D)Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
(2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
(3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force PacificDEGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS;
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS.

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-29 February 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPACO 5750.8
(c) DIVO 5750.1A

Encl: (1) 1st Battalion, 9th Marines Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a) and (b)

1st BN. 9th MAR
COPY 10 OF 20 COPIES
S & C 0058-68

8961 874

UNCLASSIFIED

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 February - 29 February 1968

INDEX

PART I	ORGANIZATIONAL DATA
PART II	NARRATIVE SUMMARY
PART III	SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS
PART IV	SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS (<i>none</i>)

ENCLOSURE (1)

S

UNCL

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

PAGE 1

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATION

1st Battalion, 9th Marines

"H&S" Company

Company "A"

Company "B"

Company "C"

Company "D"

COMMANDERSLtCol. J. F. MITCHELL
1 February - 29 February 19681st Lt. M. J. WALKER
1 February - 13 February 1968Capt. J. W. CARGILE
14 February - 29 February 1968Capt. H. J. M. RADCLIFFE
1 February - 29 February 19681st Lt. A. N. MANGHAM JR.
1 February - 2 February 1968
Capt. J. P. Williams JR.
3 February - 29 February 1968Capt. J. W. CARGILE
1 February - 13 February 1968
Capt. R. H. FLAGLER
14 February - 29 February 1968Capt. F. L. SCHAFER
1 February - 29 February 1968ENCLOSURE (1)1. DESIGNATION

1st Battalion, 9th Marines

"H&S" Company

Company "A"

Company "B"

"H&S" Company

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
UNCLASSIFIED1st Lt. M. J. WALKER
1 February - 13 February 1968
Capt. J. W. CARGILE
14 February - 29 February 1968
Capt. H. J. M. RADCLIFFE
1 February - 29 February 19681st Lt. A. N. MANGHAM JR.
1 February - 2 February 1968
Capt. J. P. Williams JR.
3 February - 29 February 1968Capt. J. W. CARGILE
1 February - 13 February 1968
Capt. R. H. FLAGLER

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

2. During this reporting period the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was located at a strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer

Major J. A. DONNELLY
1 February - 29 February 1968

S-1

1st Lt. P. A. WOOG
1 February - 29 February 1968

S-2

1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA
1 February - 29 February 1968

S-3

Major E. M. RINGLEY
1 February - 16 February 1968
Capt. C. B. HARTZELL
17 February - 29 February 1968

S-4

1st Lt. J. M. GEORGI
1 February - 29 February 1968

S-5

1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA
1 February - 29 February 1968

4. Average Monthly Strength

USMC

OFF
40

ENL
1126

USN

OFF
2

ENL
56

ENCLOSURE (1)

~~SECRET~~

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~

UNCLASSIFIED

PART IIISEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. FMF Organizations committed to combat and the SLF.

A. Combat Missions Assigned. The Battalion was employed in Operation Scotland from 1 February-29 February 1968, under the operational control of the 26th Marines. Its mission was to occupy, establish and defend a defensive strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sahn Combat Base (XD831417).

B. Significant Operation Conducted. The Battalion continued to carry its primary mission of defending a stronpoint northwest of Khe Sanh Combat Base as part of Operation Setland.

C. Casualties Inflicted on the Enemy

<u>KIA (Conf)</u>	<u>KIA (Prob)</u>	<u>POW</u>
166	11	0

D. Casualties Sustained:

USMC KIA: 41	USN KIA: 3
USMC WIA: 154	USN WIA: 5

E. New Techniques Employed. During the month of February, the Battalion began employing a number of intrusion detectors. These were the Night Observation Device, Seismic Intrusion Device, PPS-5 and PPS-6 radar. Use of the starlight was continued and increased due to the addition of eleven more starlight scopes. Thus far, our findings have indicated that the NOD is outstanding when there is no fog or heavy rain. However, almost every night during February it has been foggy for most of the night. The starlight scope is similiar to the NOD in that it is not useful in fog. The Battalion has not yet gotten a confirmed kill with the starlight scopes. The SID's seem to work well regardless of terrain, fog, etc. The units pick up movement nearly every night and this has been born out by recent events. The PPS-5 and PPS-6 radar have not been used enough for a truly accurate analysis, however, the hilly terrain around Khe Sanh, with its heavy vegetation severly limits the effectiveness of the ground radar units. Heavy wind also causes considerable background clutter. In recent weeks, little use has been made of the radar because of power supply difficulties and parts-replacement problems. Radar personnel feel that even if the optimum battery life of the radar is obtained, the battery is still inadequate. A power supply lasting up to five days needs to be developed.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

~~SECRET~~
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

F. Command Relations. During the period 1-29 February 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines have been under the operational control of the 26th Marines located at the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

G. Equipment. During this reporting period organic motor transport has been engaged in household, administration and supply runs for the Battalion.

The motor transport situation has improved slightly in the case of the M422A1. The 3d and 4th echelon service organization have been showing complete cooperation in the rapid repair/replacement of these vehicles.

H. Logistics. During this reporting period the Battalion has been located at Khe Sanh with the Rear Area in Dong Ha. The bulk of logistical effort has been directed towards the support of the Battalion. The majority of Classes I, III and V items have been furnished by the 26th Marines leaving Classes II and IV in our hands, as well as personnel to be shuttled from Dong Ha to Khe Sanh Combat Base.

I. Civic Action. Due to the location of this Battalion during the month of February no Civic Action Program was undertaken.

J. Administration. Nothing significant to report

K. Personnel. The following personnel were transferred from this Command.

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
2	140	1	8

Personnel who were joined to this Command.

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
2	123	1	1

L. Intelligence. In the month of February the following enemy units operated in the vicinity of Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 325C Division, which was located to the north and west of Khe Sanh and the 304th Division which was located to the south and west of the Combat Base. Each Division was supported by an artillery Regiment in their respective areas. The 320th Division was located to the northwest of the Combat Base in a position to intrude Route #9 and to augment the attack posture of the other two Divisions.

ENCLOSURE (3)

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~~~UNCLASSIFIED~~PART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

On the first of February 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was occupying the hill at XD833414, a dominant piece of terrain to the west of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The Battalion's mission was to seize, occupy and defend the hill. The major task facing the Battalion during the month was the emplacement of wire and minefield obstacles around the defensive perimeter.

On the 1st and 2d of February 1968, no significant events were reported. Work continued on the defensive positions.

At 1208 on 3 February, Alpha I outpost (XD823416) spotted forty or more NVA wearing packs and green uniforms, carrying a mortar and employing an elephant as a beast of burden. The enemy was moving east to west at XD840381. An artillery mission was fired with unknown results. Later an AO spotted enemy at XD840382 in a woodline. The enemy were changing into black pajamas and filtering out of the woodline in groups of two and three. They were brought under fire with unknown results. At about 1700 the Battalion's TAC Party controlled air strikes on an enemy mortar position.

On 4 February 1968, at 1145 five rounds of one hundred twenty-two millimeter rocket were fired into the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines perimeter. 2d Battalion, 26th Marines observed the rocket site and called an artillery mission on it. During the afternoon, ten rounds of sixty millimeter mortars were received. 1/9 returned fire at all instances. No friendly casualties were sustained during the day. One Night Observation Device and ground radar were added to the Battalion's defensive position.

On 5-February 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines perimeter and Alpha I Outpost received twenty-two rounds of sixty millimeter mortar and twelve rounds of eighty-two millimeter mortar. Counter-fire was initiated in all instances. In addition, an air strike was run on one 60mm mortar position. Friendly casualties were ten WIA of which one was medevaced.

On 6 February 1968, three rounds of 60mm mortars, six rounds of 82mm mortars, four recoilless rifle and one round of 140mm rocket were received into our perimeter. Counter-battery was fired and one fixed wing air strike was run off an 82mm mortar position. Results for the encounter was eleven WIA of which three were medevaced.

On 7 February 1968, at 1710 Company "D" observed what appeared to be artillery pieces dug into the side of Hill #527 (XD792384). At 1900 Alpha I observed an active anti-aircraft position. Artillery was fired on the position and one secondary explosion resulted. At 2015 Company Bravo's LP opened fire on two persons close to their position. Other persons began running when the LP opened fire. The area was checked with negative results.

ENCLOSURE (1)

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

At 0415 on 8 February 1968, Alpha I Outpost came under a heavy ground and mortar attack. At the same time, the Battalion perimeter began receiving mortar, rocket and artillery fire which was continued throughout the attack. The initial attack was beaten back. At 0610 the enemy regrouped and attacked again, penetrating the wire and were again beaten back. The attack continued in waves and the enemy managed to take the northwest slope of the perimeter. At 0740 a relief column consisting of the Alpha Command Group and Alpha II left to retake and consolidate the Alpha I Outpost. At 0825 the relief column reached the crest of the hill. Fighting continued until approximately 1100 when the Outpost was retaken. At the same time Company "D" observed a large number of enemy withdrawing from the Alpha I Outpost. Company "D" opened fire with all available arms. The results after the days fight was twenty-four friendly KIA, 29 friendly WIA and over one hundred and fifty enemy bodies were found by Companies "A" and "D". Between 0400 and 1400 on 8 February the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines received over three hundred and fifty rounds of enemy supporting arms fire.

On 9 February 1968, five rounds of 82mm mortars landed within the Battalion perimeter seriously wounding three Marines. All three were medevaced.

At 0230H on 10 February 1968, a six man listening post from Company "C" made contact with approximately twelve NVA on the north side of the perimeter. Small arms fire was exchanged with three NVA seen fall by the LP, resulting in three NVA KIA (Prob). At the same time, CL1 received two grenades from an unknown position. No casualties were sustained. Air strikes were controlled by the FAC Party, silencing enemy positions and partially destroying a possible anti-aircraft position in a village south of Khe Sanh. During the air strikes personnel were observed running into nearby treeline. Company "D" s FO called artillery on the treeline and destroyed one bunker. Other results could not be observed.

On 11 February 1968, Company "A" moved to Alpha I Outpost, their mission was to recover four MIA's, all useable gear and destroy all positions on the hill. The mission was completed by 1245. While on the hill Alpha Company received three rounds of 60mm mortars. No casualties were sustained.

On 12 February 1/9 received four rounds of 82mm mortar. No casualties were sustained. Work on anti-personnel and anti-tank mine-fields was begun with assistance from the Marine Corps Engineers.

At 1945 Company "D" used the NOD to spot four NVA on the former Alpha I Outpost. Six rounds of 106mm recoilless rifle and an artillery mission were fired, resulting in four NVA KIA (Conf). At 2145 Company "D" s short range LP observed two men, threw grenades and saw them fall, resulting in two NVA KIA (Prob). The area was checked at first light with negative results.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

At 0730 on 13 February 1968, Company "D" 's LP observed seven people moving west on a trail at XD822412, artillery was fired with unobserved results. At 1600H Company "C" 's FO spotted fifteen NVA running into a treeline at XD879408. An artillery mission was fired with unobserved results. At 1615 "D" Company FO adjusted artillery on a recoiless rifle, resulting in one secondary explosion. Company "D" received three rounds of 60mm mortars, and sustained no casualties. Work continued on defensive positions.

On 14 February, Company "D" received three rounds of 60mm mortars resulting in one serious WIA and one non-serious, and later received two rounds of 82mm mortars. One of these landed in a bunker doorway, killing two and seriously wounding another Marine.

On 15 February, 1/9 continued to improve the defensive positions with wire, mines and FUGAS (a command detonated mine of Mogas diesel fuel). At 0850 Company "D" observed a recoiless rifle firing at Khe Sahn. "Company "D" 's 60mm mortars silenced the weapon. At 1115 a squad patrol from Company "B" encountered thirteen NVA in prepared positions at XD832409. Small arms fire was exchanged. The squad called in 81mm mortars for support. When they began receiving small arms fire from one flank the squad withdrew. The patrol suffered one serious and two minor WIA's. At 1230 a 60mm mortar round landed in a trenchline killing one and seriously wounding three. At 1455 the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines TAC Party controlled an AO and fixed wing. Two anti-aircraft positions were destroyed and TPQ's were requested to knock-out other positions. At 1815 Company "D" brought two people under fire using Scout Snipers attached to the Company and 60mm mortars. Results of the action was unobserved.

At 1205 on 16 February 1968, Company "B" received 60mm mortar fire, returned fire with 60mm mortars and observed one secondary explosion. At 1230 five rounds of recoiless rifle fire killed one man and wounded two men. At 1525 one round of 82mm mortar landed in the Delta Company CP area seriously wounding the Battalion S-3. He was medevaced. At 1700 Company "D" spotted two NVA at XD836408. Company "D" attached Scout Snipers and 60mm mortars opened fire, resulting in two NVA KIA (Conf). At 1700 Company "B" 's Platoon (-) patrol at XD834410 received recoiless rifle and automatic weapons fire from XD834411 and XD831411. The patrol returned fire with organic weapons and 81mm mortars. The patrol broke contact after sustaining one KIA and five WIA's of which one was serious. At about 1700 a patrol from Company "C" received ten rounds of what was believed to be a recoiless rifle. The patrol avoided contact and completed the patrol. No casualties were sustained. At 1745 Company "B" received a 60mm mortar round seriously wounding one USMC personnel. He was later medevaced. At the same time they received twenty rounds of sniper fire from XD832416 with negative casualties. Company "B" returned fire with M-79 grenade launchers. Area was checked with negative results.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

On 17 February, no enemy fire was received in the Battalion perimeter. Seismic Intrusion Devices were received and emplaced under cover of fog. At 2300 Company "B" had indications of movement on the SID at XD833417. Company "B" withdrew its ambush from the area and fired 81mm mortars into the area. A check of the area revealed no results.

At 0305 on 18 February, Company "C" caught an enemy in the act of cutting the outer wire. One M-26 grenade was thrown resulting in one NVA KIA (Prob). At 2200 Company "B" spotted three persons walking outside the wire. Four rounds of small arms were fired at the enemy. Large bloodstains were found upon checking the area.

On 19 February the Battalion received eight rounds of 82mm mortars and three recoilless rifle sustaining eleven WIA's of which five were medevaced. The recoilless rifle was spotted at 1600 at XD822402 and fired on by 60mm mortars. During the morning two patrols from Company "D" found trails around the perimeter. These were plotted for H&I fire. At 1920 Company "D" spotted two people with the NOD. Using the starlight scope, the Scout Sniper Team attached to Company "D" fired one round and saw one man fall into some bushes. The lower part of his body was observed sticking out of the bushes, resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf). While the Snipers were checking out other movement, the body was moved.

On 20 February the Battalion received three rounds of 82mm mortars and two rounds of 85mm artillery resulting in one Marine WIA who was medevaced. A patrol from Company "D" discovered a fighting hole at XD832410. At 1300 some air cargo was dropped off target some landing in the perimeter wire and some about 2200 meters from the perimeter. The Battalion TAC Party called in fixed wing air strikes at 1730 to destroy some of the unrecoverable cargo. At 2055 Company "D" using the NOD observed light in the area of the air cargo. An 81mm mortar mission was called on the area.

During the 21 of February 1968, the Battalion received eight rounds of 82mm mortars and two rounds of artillery in the perimeter resulting in one WIA non serious. A Company "D" patrol made contact to the south west of the perimeter at 1205 with an NVA squad. The enemy was firing recoilless rifle and 50 caliber machineguns. Company "D" broke contact with no casualties sustained.

During the night the SID's picked up movement three times. Once in Company "B" 's area and twice in Company "D" 's sector. Two flares were set off and mine mine in front of Company "C" 's lines.

In the early hours of 22 February activity around the perimeter continued. Three more incidents of movement on the SID were reported and fired upon. At 0915 a man in the 3d Platoon of Company "B" strayed into a minefield in front of his position, resulting in one serious WIA. At 1322 Company "D" spotted a mortar position and fired one round recoilless rifle with negative results. At 1600 Company "D" patrol while checking out a recent airstrike began taking small arms fire at XD832405 from a dug-in enemy position to their front.

UNCLASSIFIED

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

SECRET

UNCLASSIFIED

The base of fire received .50 caliber machinegun and 82mm mortars while the enveloping force received small arms and M-26 grenades. The patrol used small arms, LAAW's, 60mm and 81mm mortars and grenades against the enemy. The result of the action was one friendly WIA and three NVA KIA (Conf). At 1955 Company "D" 's SID detected movement and one M-79 was fired at the area with unknown results.

On 23 February at 0913 a man from Company "C" stepped on a mine while checking the wire causing one serious Marine WIA. During the day the Battalion received one 60mm mortar, seventeen artillery rounds and fourteen 82mm mortars into their perimeter resulting in thirteen friendly WIA's. Three significant artillery missions were fired during the day. Two were counter-fire at enemy artillery and one was fired at enemy troops in the open. No results could be determined.

On 24 February 1968, the Battalion received fourteen rounds of mixed mortar and artillery into their perimeter resulting in one Marine KIA and one WIA. Company "C" 's LP threw one grenade at two persons in front of the wire. 60mm mortars were fired at their escape routes with unknown results. Artillery missions were fired during the day at anti-aircraft positions again with unknown results.

On 25 February 1968, the Battalion received 30 rounds into their perimeter of mixed mortar, artillery and rocket fire, resulting in three Marine WIA's. At 1530 a patrol from Company "B" found two booby-traps. One was a Malaysian Wipe and the other a crossbow. No casualties were sustained.

At 0030 on 26 February, Company "D" 's inner wire opened fire on two NVA in front of their lines. The LP used grenades and small arms, resulting in two NVA KIA (Conf). The bodies were turned into the Battalion S-2 for intelligence value along with the grenades found on them. Throughout the day the Battalion received twenty-five rounds of mortar fire into their perimeter resulting in eight friendly WIA's.

On 27 February clear weather allowed fixed wing aircraft to deliver close air support. The TAC Party controlled seven flights with two NVA KIA (Conf) delivered. During the daylight hours two incidents occurred on the perimeter. Company "D" saw two flares go off and could distinguish one person. They fired M-16 rounds and saw one anti-personnel mine go off, heard further movement and called illumination. No results could be found in the morning. At 0540 Company "C" reported a mine going off in front of their lines. No results could be determined. During the remainder of the day, the Battalion received nineteen rounds of mixed artillery and mortar fire into there position with negative results.

On 28 February, the Battalion received eight rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortar fire into their perimeter resulting in three WIA's. Four flights of fixed wing were controlled by the Battalion TAC Party during the day resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf).

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

[REDACTED]
UNCLASSIFIED

On 29 February 1968, at 0140 Company "C" heard a thud immediately before an explosion. One person was seen in the flash of the explosion and was taken under fire. A search of the area revealed negative. At 0325 Company "D" observed an active enemy mortar and fired upon it with artillery with unobserved results. At 0700 Company "D" observed movement in front of their position setting off four flares. At the same time one round of 82mm mortar was received. During the remainder of the day fifty-three rounds of mixed artillery and mortar fire was received in the Battalion area resulting in three USMC WIA's. Late in the night Company "D" inner-wire LP heard movement to their front, illuminated the area with hand illumination and spotted one person. The LP opened fire resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf). The body was forwarded to the Battalion S-2 for evaluation.

ENCLOSURE (1)

[REDACTED]
UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

This the largest concentration of troops to confront any allied force to date in the Republic of Vietnam, was the enemies obvious attempt to initiate a successful QuanTri/Thua Thien - Winter/Spring Campaign.

Initial enemy plans were to overrun Khe Sanh Combat Base by the 2d of February, but the enemy plans were believed to have been disrupted by increased friendly forces and the fact that this Battalion occupied one of his main avenues of approach.

On the 7th of February in conjunction with an attack on Hill 861 and a rocket and artillery barrage on Khe Sanh Combat Base, the enemy used tanks to breach the perimeter defenses at the Lang Vei Special Forces Camp and overrun the position. The fact that the enemy used tanks in this attack confirmed earlier intelligence that, the attack on Khe Sanh Combat Base and the surrounding areas, was to be an all out enemy effort and he would use most of the resources he had at his disposal.

On 8 February Companies "A" strongpoint position, which had denied the enemy freedom of movement and disrupted his attack posture, was attacked by an estimated three Companies. The attack was well planned as proved by a captured document. The results of this encounter was one enemy Battalion rendered ineffective. (126 NVA KIA), one POW from the 161st Regiment and half the total weapons captured for Operation Scotland to this date was accounted for. Among the weapons captured were thirteen crew-served weapons; three heavy machineguns; nine light machineguns and one 60mm mortar. Two highly important documents were captured and many other documents and letters of prime intelligence value.

On 9 February Company's "D" PPS-5 and PPS-6 picked up heavy movement and supporting fires were brought to bear. An hour later Company "C" had heavy movement in front of their position and a listening post was engaged by thirty-five to forty NVA as they returned to the inner perimeter. The enemy tried to breach the wire by using satchel charges but their attempts failed. The resistance rendered by the platoon from Company "A" on the strongpoint position and the immediate response and action by Companies "C" and "D" appeared to have upset the enemies timetable and enemy contact during the middle of the month slackened. During this period the enemy appeared to be reconsolidating and his movement was at a slower and more determined pace. The enemies harassing and interdictory efforts through the use of supporting arms, however, were increased. In attempt to disrupt supply lines, Khe Sanh Combat Base, became a more frequent target of artillery, mortar and rocket attacks. The enemy began to consistently mortar the Battalion position from various mortar positions in the vicinity of Hill 552.

On 15 February a patrol from Company "B" made contact with seven to ten NVA in prepared positions within one thousand meters from the perimeter. In subsequent days Company "D" noticed increased activity to the south of the Battalion position. On the 21 of February Company "D" made contact with an estimated enemy platoon in prepared positions less than 1000 meters from the Battalion position. The enemy platoon appeared to be a screening force for a larger unit and it became obvious the enemy was denying friendly freedom of movement while he continually inched closer to the perimeter defenses. During the later part of the month their were reports of enemy movement at night along the outer perimeter. On 26 February a listening post from Company "D"

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED
[REDACTED]

engaged four NVA in the wire. The result was two NVA KIA (Conf), who wore black shorts and only carried grenades as weapons. This clearly marked them as infiltrators whose mission was to map out the perimeter.

On 29 February, more movement was detected by one of Company "D" 's listening post and four enemy were taken under fire, with one NVA KIA (Conf) as the result. Upon a thorough check of the area a trenchline was discovered seventy-five meters from the outer perimeter plus four Chinese claymore mines. The NVA KIA had very little of intelligence value on his person and appeared to be a member of a well disciplined sapper group. The evidence of a trenchline in such close proximity to the perimeter and sapper activity denoted the enemy remained in an attack posture at the end of the month.

M. Weather. For more than three quarters of the month of February the weather in the Khe Sanh area was strongly determined by the influences of the Northern Monsoon. The temperature was consistently cool (low 60's to high 70's) and the sky was continually overcast. During the last few days in the month the overcast lifted and cloud cover became scattered to broken with temperatures rising to the low 80's.

N. Communications. During the month of February the Battalion developed an extensive defensive perimeter which required a complete inner communication system and also communications with other units in the Khe Sanh area. To meet these requirements, radio and wire lines were used extensively.

a. Radio

PRC-25. These radios are used in both the Battalion and Regimental tactical nets. Although no remotes are employed, the 25's are remoted using a field expediency technique. Whip antennas are situated atop the Battalion Command Bunker and are connected to the radios with communication wire. This system has worked very well and eliminates the need for carrying and maintaining remote units.

MRC-109 Radio Jeep. This vehicle has been employed extensively. It is equipped with a KY-8 wire scrambler which enables the Battalion Commander to talk to higher headquarters in the "clear". The KY-8 eliminates the need for time consuming shackling procedures thus saving valuable time. In an emergency situation this radio could be used on the Division Tactical Net with the same results.

PRC-41. Used by our Battalion FAC Teams to control air strikes in this AO. A problem developed with the power supply (BB-451) in that this Battalion didn't have a generator to power a battery charger. Regimental Headquarters presently recharges the batteries. A minimum of four BB-451's is required to keep this circuit operational.

UNCLASSIFIED
UNCLASSIFIED
[REDACTED]ENCLOSURE (1)
[REDACTED]

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~
~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

PRC-47. A circuit is established three times daily with Battalion Headquarters (Rear). This has proven to be useful in handling administration type traffic, eliminating difficult phone calls. The same power supply (BB-451) is used on the PRC-47, requiring a battery charger. It is felt that in the present situation, a generator would hinder rather than help the operation due to the noise and maintenance problems.

Telephone Systems. No serious problems have arisen in this area. Two switchboards (SB-22) have been used to terminate the entire system, including two trunk lines (3d Battalion, 26th Marines and 26th Marine Regiment). Battery powered phones (BA-312) are the primary ones used with sound power phones (T4-1) employed on Company loops. Two "Hot Lines" (Regimental COC and FSCC) have proven using and time saving.

O. Artillery. While participating in Operation Scotland during February, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was supported by the 1st Battalion, 13th Marines. Target included active rocket sites, artillery sites, active mortar sites, recoilless rifles, automatic weapons positions and NVA troops. A total of 435 rounds were expended on a total of one hundred and seventy-six fire missions.

Artillery at times, was unable to suppress enemy artillery due to poor visibility and for the most part because of the range at which the enemy was firing. This made it difficult to determine the exact location of the guns. The many hills and valleys surrounding Khe Sanh provides many defilade positions for the enemy to entrench their guns and makes it extremely difficult to obtain an accurate grid, or to destroy the guns with anything but a direct hit. The solution to this problem seems to be aerial observation and air support. On clear days when air was on station a minimum number of incoming rounds were received. On days with little or no air support, the incoming was at a maximum, despite counter-battery fires returned by supporting artillery. Artillery has proved mainly effective against troops, automatic weapons positions, and neutralization of active mortars.

P. Air Support. During the month of February 1968, this Battalion made effective use of fixed wing aircraft for both close and deep air support. On several days when the Forward Air Controllers were able to keep fixed wing on station, or with a minimum time lapse between flights, enemy offensive activity was cut appreciably and incoming rounds were practically eliminated.

Effectiveness of close air support strikes was very obvious in direct relation to pilot delivery techniques. Air Force on target percentages were constantly higher than Marine strikes. The reason for this being that Air Force delivery techniques allow individual pilots to release in close proximity to the target. Also, the Air Force techniques drew less hostile ground fire.

ENCLOSURE (1)

~~UNCLASSIFIED~~~~UNCLASSIFIED~~

UNCLASSIFIED

Statistics for the month includes fifty-six aircraft of various types controlled by ground controllers for one hundred and ninety-eight thousand, five hundred pounds of ordnance delivered plus seventy-eight five inch rockets, one hundred and ninety (2.75" rockets) and thirty-eight thousand rounds of 20mm ammunition. Airborne observers working in conjunction with the ground controllers, controlled another fourteen aircrafts. Battle damage assessments include twenty-seven secondary explosions, thirteen NVA (Conf) KIA's with 30 NVA (Prob) KIA's; one hundred and eighty-five structures destroyed and three mortar positions destroyed.

Helicopters were used for three resupply missions bringing in twenty-three sleeves of concentina. Medical evacuation facilities were used to carry twelve emergency, four priority and three routine. A UH-1E flight was used one time as TAC (A). Other aircraft used included C-47 flare ship.

Q. Activation/Deactivation/Redesignation. None

UNCLASSIFIED