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UNCLASSIFIED

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 March -- 31 March 1968

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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829268

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

UNCLASSIFIED

3/CBH/ec
005750
13 April 1968

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 of 1 March - 31 March 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 reference (a) and (b), enclosure (1) is submitted.

John H. Cahill
JOHN H. CAHILL

Copy To:
9th Marines

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1ST BN. 9TH MAR
COPY 1 OF 15 COPIES
S & C 0084-68

DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEARS INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS
DOD DIR 5200.10

1ST BN 9TH MAR

CMD CHRON

MAR 1968

UNCLASSIFIEDORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATION

1st Battalion, 9th Marines

"H&S" Company

Company "A"

Company "B"

Company "C"

Company "D"

COMMANDERSJ. F. MITCHELL
1 March - 31 March 1968Capt. J. W. CARGILE
1 March - 31 March 1968Capt. H. J. M. RADCLIFFE
1 March - 31 March 1968Capt. J. P. WILLIAMS JR.
1 March - 31 March 1968Capt. R. H. FLAGER
1 March - 31 March 1968Capt. F. L. SCHAFER JR.
1 March - 30 March 1968

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2. During this reporting 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 March - 31 March 1968

S-1

1st Lt. P. A. WOOG
1 March - 31 March 1968

S-2

1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA
1 March - 31 March 1968

S-3

Capt. C. B. HARTZELL
1 March - 10 March 1968
Major T. R. HENDERSON
11 March - 31 March 1968

S-4

1st Lt. J. M. GEORGI
1 March - 31 March 1968

S-5

1st Lt. R. J. ARBOLEDA
1 March - 31 March 1968

4. Average Monthly Strength.

USMC

OFF

ENL

39

1117

USN

OFF

ENL

2

54

ENCLOSURE (1)

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NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During this reporting period the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines were employed in Operation Scotland under the operational control of the 26th Marine Regiment. Its mission was to occupy and defend a strong-point northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (XD831417) and to provide security for a "Drop Zone" for all resupplies to the Battalions situated in the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Companies "A" and "C" were situated at XD836417 and 837418 respectively, while Companies "B" and "D" were located due west of the Battalion CP at XD835414 and XD828413.

At 0120H on the morning of 1 March 1968, a listening post from Delta Company heard movement outside the wire. Firing one hand illumination, Company "D" observed three to four persons running away from the wire. Company "D" initiated small arms fire resulting in one enemy KIA (Conf). Later at 0445, Company "D" witnessed a large explosion forward of their position. Illuminating the area with a hand pop-up, they observed four chicom claymore mines mounted atop bamboo poles; one of which had exploded. Approximately five minutes later, another of Company "D"'s listening post heard movement. Illuminating the area they spotted one figure, which they immediately took under small arms fire. A thorough search of the area at first light revealed one NVA KIA (Conf). The search also uncovered a newly constructed trench system approximately one hundred meters to the direct front of Company "D"'s lines.

At 1530, a load of supplies was air dropped on positions of Companies "A" and "C" causing damage to defensive wire, mine fields, and bunkers.

Total incoming rounds taken by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines amounted to four (60mm), twenty (82mm) and one (120mm) mortars resulting in three friendly KIA's and seven WIA's of which two were serious.

At 1050 on 2 March 1968, another poorly executed air drop resulted in the supplies being dropped on portions of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines position, resulting in five friendly non-battle casualties and extensive damage to several bunkers, mines fields and portions of the defensive wire.

At approximately 1600 hours close air support controlled by 1/9 struck targets, resulting in the destruction of three enemy trench lines and killing eleven NVA (Conf).

A total of one friendly KIA and six WIA's were suffered by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines on 2 March 1968, with eight incoming rounds received into the Battalion perimeter.

At 0745 on 3 March 1968, Company "D" located a preset directional mine beyond their outer defensive wire and the position where another such mine had been placed and detonated the previous night. The intact mine was disarmed and turned into Regimental S-2. A total of ten incoming rounds were received into the defensive perimeter resulting in eleven friendly WIA's of which three required medical evacuation.

At 0720 H on 4 March 1968, an enemy command detonated explosive device was set off, resulting in one friendly WIA working on the defensive position of Company "D".

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At 1050, a patrol from Company "D" uncovered two fighting holes and a zig-zag trench line approximately 30 feet long. This discovery along with others indicated an increase in enemy activity in the immediate area. At 1307, a patrol from Company "A" spotted an active enemy 50 caliber machinegun position being employed against aircraft in the area. An 81mm mortar fire mission destroyed the enemy emplacement, resulting in the destruction of the weapon and three NVA KIA's (Conf). Incoming rounds were two (82mm) mortars and eight recoilless rifle rounds. The Battalion's only casualty was one non serious WIA.

On the morning of 5 March 1968, at 0720, four enemy command detonated explosive devices were employed against Company "D"'s lines resulting in the destruction of segments of the defensive wire. The charges breached seventy-two feet of wire. The devices were estimated to be NVA claymore mines. A unit patrolling forward of Company "D"'s lines at noon discovered ten newly constructed fighting holes, some of which were camouflaged. An NVA entrenching tool was also found in the area. Throughout the afternoon numerous air strikes controlled by the Battalion FAC were conducted on known or suspected enemy positions, resulting in the confirmed destruction of one enemy mortar and three enemy trenchlines. Six secondary explosions were observed. At 2125, Company "D" observed six NVA forward of their position, employing a Scout Sniper Team, they accounted for two NVA KIA's (Conf). The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines received nine rounds of 82mm mortars during the day resulting in six USMC WIA's of which five required medical evacuation.

Two more incidents of employment of enemy claymore type mines occurred on the morning of 6 March 1968, the first at 0700 when a command detonated mine was activated against a returning listening post from Company "D". The second occurred at 0800 when a second command detonated mine exploded outside of Company "D"'s defensive wire. During the day, 81mm mortar fire was directed against active enemy anti-aircraft positions in the area.

Three flights of fixed wing air strike were controlled in the afternoon of 6 March 1968. The aircraft struck known enemy positions. An after action damaged estimation totaled two destroyed bunkers, one recoilless rifle probably destroyed and good coverage of an enemy forward observer position. No incoming rounds were taken during the day, but one casualty was sustained due to the explosion of a command detonated mine.

Between the hours of 1400 and 1700 H on 7 March 1968, several flights of close air support struck enemy positions in the Battalion area of operations. Patrols operating in the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines AO found fresh evidence of enemy activity; recently used trails, fresh enemy footprints and discarded enemy food containers.

A patrol from Company "A" also discovered bunkers, fighting holes and enemy trenches. The unit picked up one light assault anti-tank weapon, two hand grenades and two entrenching tools found in the area. The equipment was forwarded to the Regimental S-2. Four rounds of 82mm mortars were taken in the Battalion perimeter during the seventh of March resulting in three WIA's.

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At one minute past midnight on the morning of 8 March, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines received four rounds of 81mm mortar fire, resulting in two non-serious WIA's. Liaison determined that the fire came from an 81mm mortar platoon in an adjacent friendly unit. Two trip flares were set off in the defensive wire of Company "C" at 0345 at which time one hand grenade was thrown into their defensive position. A 60mm mortar concentration was fired in that area. A check of the area at first light revealed negative results. At 1303, a patrol from Company "B" found one bangalore torpedo which was turned into the Regimental S-2.

At 1045, a patrol from Company "D" found forward of their position two freshly dug trenchlines, one approximately 50 meters long and the second approximately 30 meters long, both were hidden by tall brush.

Total incoming rounds for 8 March 1968 were four 81mm mortars and three 82mm mortars, resulting in five minor WIA's.

At 0100 on 9 March 1968, a listening post from Company "D" received two RPG rounds resulting in one non-serious WIA. Checking the area with a starlight scope, Company "D" observed and fired upon three NVA with unknown results. At 1045, a unit patrolling forward of Company "D"'s position found an NVA cartridge belt, a grenade pouch containing four Chinese Communist grenades, a pouch of rice and a bloody bandage, all in the same area.

Air strikes controlled by 1/9 hit suspected enemy mortar positions at 1315 resulting in two secondary explosions. Total incoming and casualties sustained by the Battalion were six (60mm), four (82mm) mortars and two RPG's resulting in three non serious WIA's.

At 1015, an air drop of supplies landed in sectors of Company "C"'s position causing the collapse of two bunkers and the destruction of defensive wires and trip flares. The damage was repaired by evening.

At 1015 on 10 March 1968, Company "D" spotted one NVA carrying a mortar tube. A 105mm artillery mission was called on the enemy who disappeared after the fire for effect. At 1400 an air observer operating in support of the Battalion sighted one seven foot bunker. A 105 mm artillery mission was fired on the bunker, resulting in one confirmed NVA KIA and destruction of a bunker.

At 1620, a patrolling unit from Company "A" found eighteen (105mm) artillery rounds which they destroyed in place.

Total incoming rounds for 10 March 1968, were two (60mm), ten (82mm) and two (120mm) mortars and five rocket rounds of unknown caliber. 1/9 sustained eight non-serious friendly WIA's.

At 0135 on 11 March 1968, Company "D" observed one large secondary explosion resulting from a TPQ air strike approximately three thousand meters forward of the Battalion.

An explosion occurred in Company "B" wire at 0530. A later check of the wire revealed that two bangalore torpedoes had been detonated on the wire causing a twenty foot breach. At 1135, Company "D" spotted a suspected enemy mortar position at XD822413. Four rounds of 60mm mortars were fired, resulting in good coverage of the area.

At 1245, Company "C" received three rounds of 82mm mortars into their defensive position at XD837413 resulting in one minor WIA.

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Fifteen minutes later, Company "B" received two rounds of the same type mortar into their position resulting in one friendly WIA. Counter mortar fire was not initiated due to no fix on the enemy position. At the same time, Company "B" was taking incoming mortars, Company "D" received three rounds of the same caliber mortar into their defensive position resulting in five Marine WIA's of which three required medical evacuation.

At 1435, an observation post from Company "D" spotted one enemy bunker. Four (60mm) mortars were fired at the bunker with good coverage of target. At 1715, Company "C" while in a defensive position at XD837413 received one round of 60mm mortar resulting in one minor WIA as a result of a direct hit on his bunker. At 1755, Company "B" received one round of 82mm mortar into their defensive position resulting in one USMC KIA.

At 0935 on 12 March 1968, a unit patrolling forward of Company "A" position found four enemy bunkers, camouflaged and reinforced with bamboo poles and communication wire. The bunkers were destroyed with C-4. At 1000, an observation post from Company "A" spotted two enemy personnel moving into a treeline one carrying a rifle and heavy gear. An 81mm mortar mission was fired on the NVA with good coverage of the area. At 1505, a poorly executed air drop of supplies landed in Company "C"'s position causing damage to their defensive wire and destruction of several fighting bunkers.

Total incoming received by the Battalion on 12 March 1968, were three (60mm), thirteen (82mm) and one (120mm) mortar rounds, resulting in nine friendly WIA's.

At 0915 on 13 March, a patrol from Company "A" found and destroyed a fresh fighting hole. At 1035, Company "D" patrol observed three NVA carrying weapons who entered a hut. A 4.2 mortar mission was fired on the hut, resulting in destruction of the hut and three NVA KIA's (Conf). At 1100, a Company "D" patrol found one booby trapped claymore mine, tied to a branch in a tree, with two trip wires extending from it. It was blown in place.

At 1215, an observation post from Company "A" spotted an active enemy mortar position. 60mm mortar fired four rounds on the target with unknown results.

Total incoming rounds for this day were five (60mm) and nineteen (82mm) mortars. Casualties sustained by 1/9 were four minor WIA's and three serious.

An element of Company "D" patrolling at 1330 on 15 March 1968, found one trenchline twenty feet long, four to five feet deep, four fighting holes and one bunker. All estimated to be three weeks old. Material damage as a result of enemy fire was the destruction of a starlight scope and a 106mm recoilless rifle mount. An artillery mission controlled by Company "D" destroyed a straw hut which was a suspected enemy position. An air observer supporting 1/9 spotted four well dug mortar positions believed to be those responsible for previously received incoming mortars. An 81mm mortar mission was fired resulting in the destruction of this position. Total incoming amounted to five (82mm) and thirty one (60mm) mortar rounds. Casualties sustained by the battalion was one KIA and eight WIA's.

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On 18 March 1968, six WIA's were sustained by incoming mortar rounds. The following day, 19 March 1968, the battalion had two minor WIA's from incoming 82mm mortars. Numerous air strikes were run to the west of the perimeter resulting in secondary explosions at XD835454 and XD822427, suspected enemy mortar positions. Air strikes at XD829409, XD833399, and 826404 on 20 March resulted in secondary explosions. The battalion suffered six WIA's on 21 March from enemy mortar and artillery fire. Counter-battery fire was delayed due to air drops of resupply. These drops were off-target and did considerable damage to Companies "A" and "C"'s defensive wire.

22 March 1968, was relatively quiet, with only six minor WIA's as a result of incoming 120mm mortars. The battalion spotted, on five occasions, enemy anti-aircraft fire and called on supporting arms to suppress it. Results were unknown. Later enemy mortar rounds 60mm, 82mm and 120mm accounted for 11 WIA's of which five were medevaced.

At 1130 on 24 March 1968, a platoon patrol from Company "A" at XD821426 dispatched a squad to the northwest to reconnoiter the area. Contact was made resulting in two friendly KIA's from heavy small arms fire from an estimated fourteen NVA in well constructed bunkers and fighting holes. A second squad was sent to reinforce this squad. In the resulting fire fight three more friendly KIA's were sustained and four WIA's. The enemy strength increased to an estimated thirty NVA and twenty more were spotted moving down the ridgeline. A6 was directed to proceed to the point of contact and extricate the two squads. Friendly tanks, artillery, mortar and Huey gunships were used in support and coupled with the fire from the two squads resulted in thirty-one NVA KIA's (Conf) four bunkers and two 60mm mortar positions destroyed. Total casualties for the battalion for this day were five KIA's and fourteen WIA's, eight of which were evacuated.

At 1320 on 25 March 1968, Company "A" received two 120mm mortars in their defensive position resulting in seven WIA's of which three required medical evacuation. Company "C" at 1530 received one round of 82mm mortar in the drop zone and sustained three minor WIA's, from an unknown enemy position. Casualties sustained by 1/9 on 25 March were three serious and seven non serious WIA's.

On 26 March 1968, at 0710 an observation post from Company "B" was moving up a slope approaching the position where they were to set in when an unknown number of enemy troops appeared at the top of the hill, threw twelve chi-comm grenades at the unit and disappeared from view. The observation post immediately initiated small arms fire, withdrew and called in 60mm mortar fire on the enemy position.

At 0730, a listening post from Company "A" observed three NVA upon whom they called in 81mm mortar fire.

Two squads from Company "B" were deployed to regain the observation post, contact with the enemy had been made at 0710. Enroute they received two rounds of enemy mortar fire which resulted in two friendly KIA's. One reinforced squad assaulted the hill and were taken under fire by enemy small arms. The enemy strength at this position was estimated to be of company size, heavily armed and in well prepared positions.

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On 26 March, Company "B" made contact just outside the outer defensive wire. The contact was significant as higher intelligence information had indicated a major pullback of enemy units.

On 29 March 1968, Company "D" also made contact just outside their defensive wire and recovered documents which disproved higher intelligence information of a major relocation of enemy forces. It was determined that the 101st Regiment and the 325th C Division were still operating in the area close to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Reaffirming this information that a major relocation did not take place, was the contact made by Company "B", 1st Battalion, 26th Marines on the 29th of March with elements of the 66th Regiment 304th Division.

Significant during the last week in March was renewed enemy activity to complete a new trench leading up to Company "D"'s outer defensive wire. On two occasions NVA troops remained in fresh dug trenchlines in daylight hours until forcibly ejected or killed by ground patrols and close-in air support.

M. Weather. March brought the end of the northeastern monsoon season. Temperatures were generally in the mid 80's, cloud cover was scattered and visibility was from five to seven miles. Humidity was fairly high and during the first week in March there were light showers. During the rest of the month there was no precipitation. A light ground fog often hung over the area until mid-morning during most of the month limiting visibility at first light.

N. Communications. The laying of alternate land lines was used to offset wire communications outages due to incoming enemy fires, with excellent results. Subsequent policing and burying of lines would possibly remove the need of these alternate line which then can be reclaimed for future use. The installation of a five pair cable (buried) to Regiment greatly enhanced the communications posture of this unit. The use of cable laying equipment made for a fast and efficient installation. However, some casualties were taken when the cover of fog lifted. It is recommended that the replacement of hasty installations by permanent lines or cables be done during the cover of darkness or fog. This is especially true when using large equipment and large numbers of personnel.

The establishment of a HF Net with this battalions rear on a twice daily basis has insured the timely forwarding of equipment and personnel to the forward positions. It has also provided timely status reports on equipment under repair in the rear areas. Two circuit has also been the means of conducting administrative matters. It is recommended that in static or semi-permanent positions, KY-8 keys be issued down to battalion level. This would preclude daily trips to senior elements to set this equipment.

The extensive use of SID's has required the expenditure of much wire (WD-i/TT) that was not initially planned on. Plans for operations should include the number of SID's to be used and the total wire requirements to support them.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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Maximum supporting arms were utilized against the enemy while platoon returned to perimeter. The contact resulted in the confirmed killing of twenty-six NVA and the capture of one AK-47 rifle, one RPG round and 240mm and five chicom grenades. The unit sustained three KIA's and fifteen WIA's.

At 0940, an observation post from Company "A" sighted four enemy personnel. The observation post took the enemy under small arms fire, killing all four NVA.

At 1015 Company "D" spotted four NVA, upon whom they took under small arms fire with unknown results.

At 1100 Company "D" sighted two NVA and killed the enemy by recoilless rifle fire. At 1914 Company "D" spotted another NVA crawling through high grass. 60mm mortars were fired on the enemy's position with unknown results. Total incoming rounds received by 1/9 on 26 March 1968 were twenty-three rounds of mixed RPG and mortars.

Casualties sustained by the battalion were three KIA's and nineteen WIA's of which nine were serious.

On 27 March 1968, at 0945 an OP from Company "A" spotted five NVA, and 81mm mortars were called in on the enemy position with unknown results. At 1100, a patrol from Company "D" found freshly dug enemy trenches forward of their position. The trenches were filled in and the patrol kept on its mission.

On five different occasions elements of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines spotted active enemy locations, including three mortar emplacements, one sniper position and one automatic weapons position. In each instance 1/9's 60mm and 81mm mortars were fired on the enemy positions with unknown results. At 1530, eight flights of fixed wing air support, controlled by 1/9, struck at three known enemy positions, resulting in destruction of six enemy bunkers, two secondary explosion and two confirmed enemy KIA's.

At 1830 Company "D" observed six NVA forward of their position. A 105mm artillery mission was called in on the enemy with excellent target coverage.

Total incoming received by 1/9 were five (60mm), six (82mm) mortars and three sniper rounds. There were no casualties sustained by the Battalion on 27 March 1968.

28 March 1968, at 0930 an OP from Company "A" spotted four NVA. 81mm mortars were fired on the enemy position with unknown results.

An artillery mission was called in on an active enemy mortar position at 1635, which had been spotted by an FO from Company "D". The results of the mission was unknown.

Total incoming rounds received by 1/9 were thirteen mortar rounds and one recoilless rifle round. Casualties sustained by 1/9 were five WIA's of which one was serious.

29 March 1968, at 0635 an LP from Company "A" sighted three NVA. 60mm mortar fire was employed against the enemy but there were no confirmed results.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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Company "B" at 0725, spotted one NVA whom they took under small arms and mortar fire. No confirmed results were obtained from the incident. At 0835, Company "D" observed and fired 81mm mortars on active enemy mortar emplacement with unobserved results.

Members of Company "C" deployed as security around the "Drop Zone", spotted an active 50 caliber machinegun position. A 60mm mortar mission was called in on the area silencing the enemy position.

At 1055 Company "D" observed a recently dug, well developed trenchline immediately forward of their defensive wire. An air observer, controlled by 1/9, was requested to observe the area. The A.O. reported sighting six to eight NVA in the trench line. 81mm mortars "Prep Fired" the area and two squads from Company "D" were deployed to sweep the trenchline. While sweeping they received three enemy 60mm mortar round. Making contact with the enemy in the trench line, they initiated small arms fire, killing four confirmed NVA. Notable equipment captured from the enemy position were forty-two chicom grenades, six RPG's rounds with increments and one RPG launcher.

At 1850, Company "D" spotted one NVA and fired four M-79 rounds at the enemy with undertermined results. Total incoming rounds received were four 60mm and five 82mm mortars and two sniper rounds. Total casualties sustained by the battalion were five WIA's.

On 30 March 1968, at 0950 the 3d Platoon from Company "D" observed two NVA in a recently constructed trenchline. The enemy could not be taken under fire because of friendly troops in the area.

At 1120, an observation post from Company "A" sighted three NVA, five hundred meters west of 1/9's position and approximately one hundred meters in front of the observation post. The enemy was taken under small arms fire and 60mm mortar fire after which the NVA no longer could be observed.

At 1325, two squads deployed from Company "D" to sweep the area of the freshly dug enemy trenchlines immediately in front of their company CP. The squads made contact with an estimated twenty NVA. The enemy had thrown chicom grenades and fired small arms at the patrol. At the same time, the enemy fired two RPG rounds and four rounds of 82mm mortars at the 1/9 perimeter. Two rounds of enemy artillery and intermittent sniper fire were also received during the contact. Company "B" fired 60mm mortar fire on the active enemy mortar position, silencing the mortar fire and confirming one enemy KIA. The two squad patrol from Company "D" maintaining contact with the estimated twenty NVA, employed all available small arms and supporting arms including M-16, M-60, M-79, M-26 grenades and M-14 shot guns besides the mortars and recoilless rifle fire. Small arms accounted for ten enemy confirmed KIA's and the mortars accounted for one NVA KIA (Conf).

The two squads then withdrew back to the perimeter to allow clearance for air strikes. 1/9 controlled fixed wing air support. These flights struck the remnants of the enemy unit at the position in which contact had been previously, the night before resulting in four NVA KIA's (Conf).

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Following the air strike, Company "D" deployed two squads to sweep a portion of the enemy area. These squads found five enemy bodies.

Total confirmed NVA KIA's were fifteen as a result of the encounter. Casualties sustained from the contact were three non-serious WIA's.

At 1800, Company "D" observed one NVA by a bunker. Employing two rounds of 106mm recoilless rifle fire, Company "D" destroyed the bunker and had one confirmed NVA KIA. At the same time, Company "D" observed five NVA tending livestock in a different enemy position. A 105mm artillery mission was fired on the enemy position resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf). Total casualties sustained by the battalion on 30 March was six KIA's and nine WIA's of which four were serious.

On 31 March 1968, at 1140 and 1400, elements of 1/9 spotted active enemy mortars being employed against the battalion. A combination of 105mm artillery and 81mm mortars were fired on the enemy position in each case. Two secondary explosions were observed from the earlier mission.

At 1300 Company "A" called in and adjusted a 175mm artillery mission on a known enemy troop and bunker complex resulting in the destruction of two enemy bunkers and one secondary explosion.

Total incoming rounds for 31 March 1968 were thirteen (60mm), nine (82mm) mortars and two RPG rounds resulting in one friendly KIA and four WIA's.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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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 March - 31 March 1968, under the operational control of the 26th Marines. Its mission was to occupy, establish and defend a defensive strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (XD831417).

B. Significant Operation Conducted. The Battalion continued to carry its mission of defending a strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base as part of Operation Scotland.

C. Casualties Inflicted on the Enemy.

<u>KIA (Conf)</u>	<u>POW</u>
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109	0
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D. Casualties Sustained:

USMC KIA: 25	USN KIA: 2
USMC WIA: 169	USN WIA: 11

E. New Techniques Employed: None

F. Command Relations. During the period 1-31 March 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines has been under the operational control of the 26th Marine Regiment located at the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

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

The motor transport situation is critical. Parts for the M274A2, while are in great demand and extremely hard to come by. Twenty-three out of thirty are running and the seven that are deadlined are due to lack of parts. Tires and tubes for the mules are also a major problem. We have taken the tires from our seven deadlined mules and sent them to Khe Sanh, where there is a very high usage.

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 the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

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I. Civic Action. Due to the location of this Battalion during the month of March 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>
1	112	1	7

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>
1	116	0	9

L. Intelligence. During the month of March the 325C Division continued to operate in the vicinity of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 320th Division continued to operate in the vicinity of Thon San Tam interdicting traffic along Route #9 and was located in close enough proximity to Khe Sanh Combat Base to reinforce or support any enemy attack on the base. Artillery units supporting the 325C Division and the 304th Division established new positions which practically completed a 360 degree ring around the combat base. The enemy also attempted to interdict the air drops by the use of close-in anti-aircraft fire, but rapid and immediate response by air to this enemy action negated his attempts to effectively use this capability.

During the first half of March the enemy continued work on a high speed trench system from assembly areas up to the outer defensive wire of the Base. On the 2nd of March Company "D" discovered the first evidence of a trench system leading up to the battalion perimeter. Each evening the enemy continued work on the trench system leading up to the battalion perimeter and constantly harrassed Company "D" by employing directional mines and bangalores to destroy sections of the perimeter wire. The battalion increased its capability to detect and react to enemy movement at night by the utilization of the PPS-6 radar, NOD and SIDs. The employment of these devices indicated that the enemy unit operating in our immediate area was relieved by another unit from the northwest of the battalion area around the 16th of March 1968.

The 24th of March 1968, Company "A" on a patrol to determine enemy strength to the north of the battalion area discovered a fortified bunker complex at XD818427, and elements of an enemy battalion which was deployed on a ridgeline leading to Hill #861.

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ENCLOSURE (1)

SECRET

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O. Artillery. In the month of March three hundred and twenty-four missions were fired by the 1st Battalion, 13th Marines in support of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines. A total of two thousand, three hundred and two rounds were fired, resulting in eight KIA's, seventeen secondary explosions and five bunkers destroyed.

In coordinations with the S-2 Section, one hundred and forty-six missions were fired on sensory readings along Route #9. Concentrations were planned in the vicinity of the sensors and a twenty-four watch was set up. The damage inflicted is, for the most part, unknown. However, it was confirmed that one truck was damaged and another, while trying to avoid the artillery fire, turned over killing seventeen NVA troops.

P. Air. Throughout the month of March 1968, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines remained in position at Khe Sanh. The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines again made maximum use of air support especially in the fixed wing realm. The following statistics depict this usage.

In March a total of seventy close-in air support strikes were conducted for a total ordnance drop of 192,000 pounds. Damage assessment included thirty-nine confirmed enemy killed, thirteen secondary explosions, six mortar positions and three automatic weapons destroyed. A total of forty-eight Aerial Observers were used. These A.O. controlled additional air strikes in the Battalion's AO. 1

Helicopters were used for medevacs only. In the month, seven emergency, seven priority and six routine medevacs were air lifted to various medical facilities. The other medevacs were carried by vehicles. TPQ facilities were used heavily for a total of one hundred and eighteen strikes in March 1968.

Q. Activation/Deactivation/Redesignation. None

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TIME		SERIAL NO.	DATE TIME GROUP	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS	ACTION TAKEN	
IN	OUT				M-Maps S-Staff	T-Troops F-File
	0300	1	070300	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #1	Final	SF
	0500	2	070500	GV/26th Marines SitRep #175		SF
	0800	3	070730	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #2	Final	SF
	1016	5	070830	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #3	Final	SF
	1015	6	070940	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #4	Final	SF
	1050	7	071100	GV/26th Marines SitRep #176		SF
	1620	8	071540	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #5	Final	SF
	1700	9	071600	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #16	Final	SF
	1705	10	071700	GV/26th Marines SitRep #177		SF
	2025	11	071740	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #7	Final	SF
	2025	12	071957	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #8	Final	SF
	2300	13	072300	GV/26th Marines SitRep #178		SF
	2400	14	072300	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #9	Final	SF
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IN	OUT				M-Maps S-Staff	T-Troops F-File
	0900	1	170400	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #1	Final	SF
	0500	2	170500	GV/26th Marines SitRep #214		SF
	0900	3	170620	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #2	Final	SF
	0900	4	170855	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #3	Final	SF
	1100	5	171005	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #4	Final	SF
	1100	6	171105	GV/26th Marines SitRep #215		SF
	1220	7	171100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #5	Final	SF
	1220	9	171140	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #6	Final	SF
	1345	10	171100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #7	Final	SF
	1350	11	171230	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #8	Final	SF
	1430	12	171415	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #9	Final	SF
	1630	13	170931	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #10	Final	SF
	1703	14	171700	GV/26th Marines SitRep #216		SF
	2200	15	172106	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #11	Final	SF
	2255	16	172225	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #12	Final	SF
	2300	17	172300	GV/26th Marines SitRep #216		SF
	2325	18	172308	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #13	Final	SF
	2330	19	172325	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #14	Final	SF

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TIME		SERIAL NO.	DATE TIME GROUP	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS	ACTION TAKEN	
IN	OUT				M-Maps S-Staff	T-Troops F-File
	0500	1	220500	GV/26th Marines SitRep #235		SF
	1005	2	220915	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #1 Final		SF
	1100	4	221100	GV/26th Marines SitRep #236		SF
	1150	5	221137	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #2 Final		SF
	1717	6	221650	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #3 Final		SF
	1712	7	221700	GV/26th Marines SitRep #237		SF
	1850	8	221745	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #4 Final		SF
	2215	9	222130	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #5 Final		SF
	2400	10	222240	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #6 Final		SF
	2400	11	222240	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #7 Final		SF
	2400	12	222258	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #8 Final		SF
	2400	13	222300	GV/26th Marines SitRep #238		SF
	2400	14	222315	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #9 Final		SF
	2400	15	222400	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #10 Final		SF
	2400	16	222200	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #11 Final		SF
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TIME		SERIAL NO.	DATE TIME GROUP	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS	ACTION TAKEN	
IN	OUT				M-Maps S-Staff	T-Troops F-File
0140		1	270100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #1	Final	SF
0501		2	270500	GV/26th Marines SitRep #255		SF
1020		3	270950	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #2	Final	SF
1055		4	271100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #3	Final	SF
1245		5	271045	GV/26th Marines Spot Rep #4	Final	SF
1245		7	271100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #5	Final	SF
1245		9	271435	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #6	Final	SF
1505		10	271100	GV/26th Marines SitRep #256		SF
1559		11	271450	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #7	Final	SF
1559		12	271600	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #8	Final	SF
1700		13	271700	GV/26th Marines SitRep #257		SF
1940	214	14	271830	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #9	Final	SF
2100		15	272025	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #10	Final	SF
2100		16	272020	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #11	Initial	SF
2200		17	272200	G /26th Marines SpotRep #12	Final	SF
2300		18	271845	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #13	Final	SF
2300		19	272300	GV/26th Marines SitRep #258		SF
2300		20	272240	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #14	Final	SF

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300001 MAR 68	302100H MAR 68

TIME		SERIAL NO.	DATE TIME GROUP	INCIDENTS, MESSAGES, ORDERS	ACTION TAKEN	
IN	OUT				M-Maps S-Staff	T-Troops F-File
	0137	1	300100	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #1	Final	SF
	0500	2	3000500	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #2	Final	SF
	0500	3	300500	GV/26th Marines SitRep #267		SF
	1054	5	301100	GV/26th Marines SitRep #268		SF
	1100	6	301015	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #3	Final	SF
	1220	7	301150	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #4	Final	SF
	1340	8	301325	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #5	Final	SF
	1350	9	301120	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #6	Final	SF
	1500	10	301400	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #7	Final	SF
	1730	11	301700	GV/26th Marines SitRep #269		SF
	1805	12	301325	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #8	Final	SF
	1820	13	301800	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #9	Final	SF
	1848	14	301800	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #10	Final	SF
	2045	15	301930	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #11	Final	SF
	2045	16	302030	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #12	Final	SF
	2045	17	302030	GV/26th Marines SpotRep #13	Final	SF
	2300	18	302300	GV/26th Marines SitRep #270		SF
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HEADQUARTERS
1st Battalion, 9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 96602

271368

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From: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 9th Marines
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
Via: Commanding Officer, 26th Marine Regiment

Subj: Combat Operation After Action Report

Ref: (a) Divo 3100;1D
(b) Maps: Vietnam 1:50,000 AMS Series L7014, Sheets 6342 III
and 6342 II

1. Code Name: SCOTLAND
2. Date of Operation: 221900H January - 312400H March 1968
3. Location: Quang Tri Province
4. Task Organization:

1st Battalion, 9th Marines

LtCol. J. F. MITCHELL
22 January - 31 March 1968

"H&S" Company (-) (Rein)

"H&S" Company (-)

1stLt. M. J. WALKER
22 January - 13 February 1968
Capt. J. W. CARGILE
14 February - 29 March 1968
Capt. E. R. MILLER JR.
30 March - 31 March 1968

Company "A" (Rein)

Company "A"

FO Tm, "D" Btry 2/12

DET, "H&S" Company

FAC Team

FO Team, 81MM

Det, Med Plat.

Det, Comm Plat.

Capt. H. J. M. RADCLIFFE
22 January - 31 March 1968

1st BN. 9th MAR

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Company "B" (Rein)
 Company "B"
 FO Tm, "D" Btry 2/12
 DET, "H&S" Company
 FAC Team
 FO Team, 81MM
 Det, Med Plat.
 Det, Comm Plat.

Capt. R. T. BRUNER
 22 January - 26 January 1968
 1stLt. A. N. MANGHAM
 27 January - 2 February 1968
 Capt. J. P. WILLIAMS JR.
 3 February - 31 March 1968

Company "C" (Rein)
 Company "C"
 FO Tm, "D" Btry 2/12
 DET, "H&S" Company
 FAC Team
 FO Team, 81MM
 Det, Med Plat.
 Det, Comm Plat.

Capt. J. W. CARGILE
 22 January - 13 February 1968
 Capt. R. H. FLACGER
 14 February - 31 March 1968

Company "D" (Rein)
 Company "D"
 FO Tm, "D" Btry 2/12
 DET, Scout Sniper Tm, 26th Marines
 2d Sec, 3d Plat, "B" Co. Tanks
 DET, "H&S" Company
 FAC Team
 FO Team, 81MM
 Det, Med Plat.
 Det, Comm Plat.

Capt. F. L. SCHAFER JR.
 22 January - 30 March 1968
 Capt. J. W. CARGILE

30 March - 31 March 1968

5. SUPPORTING FORCES

a. Artillery. During Operation SCOTLAND, a total of three thousand, fifteen rounds were expended on active rocket, artillery, mortar, recoilless rifle, automatic weapons positions and enemy troops in the open. The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was supported by the 1st Battalion, 13th Marines. Artillery was unable to suppress enemy artillery due to the extreme range at which the enemy was firing. The many hills and valleys surrounding Khe Sanh provide many defilade positions for the enemy to entrench their guns and make it extremely difficult to obtain an accurate grid, or to destroy the guns with anything but a direct hit. Artillery has proven mainly effective against troops, automatic weapons positions, and neutralization of active mortars. In coordination with the S-2 Section, one hundred and forty-six missions were fired on sensory readings along Route #9. Concentration was planned in the vicinity of the sensors and a twenty-four hour watch was set up. The damage inflicted is for the most part, unknown. However, it was confirmed that one truck was damaged and another, while trying to avoid the artillery fire, turned over killing seventeen (17) NVA Troops.

b. Air. During Operation SCOTLAND, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines 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. Statistics for this operating period, included one hundred and twenty-six close-in air support controlled by the Battalion FAC Party for three hundred thousand pounds of ordnance delivered plus seventy-eight 5" 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 sixty-two aircraft. Battle assessments include forty secondary explosions, fifty-two NVA KIA's (Conf), one hundred and eighty-five structures destroyed and nine mortar positions destroyed.

Helicopters were used for both resupply and medical evacuation of wounded personnel in the field. Three resupply missions were used bringing in twenty-three sleeves of concertina. Medical evacuation facilities were used to carry nineteen emergency, eleven priority, and nine routines to various medical facilities. FPQ facilities were used heavily for a total of three hundred and fifty-two airstrikes. Other aircraft employed during this operating period were G-47 Flareships.

c. Armor. During Operation SCOTLAND, two M48A3 Gun Tanks were in direct support of the Battalion. Neither tank was deployed outside the Inner Perimeter, they were held in a defiladed positions in readiness to meet and help counter an expected enemy armor attack. The weapons on the tanks were employed in support of troops on two occasions who were in contact with the enemy. On both occasions the 90mm guns were able to deliver extremely effective fires on troops in the open and in bunkers. The range was only 900 meters on the first encounter and about 1500 meters on the second. Support problems were minimal due to the fixed position and lack of use other than stand-by.

6. INTELLIGENCE.

a. Enemy in Area. At the beginning of Operation SCOTLAND, the 325C Division was located to the north and west of the Khe Sanh and the 304th Division situated to the south and west of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 324C Division and the 304th Division were supported by long range artillery from GO-ROO in the vicinity of grid square ZD6848 of L30s. The 325C Division was supported by 122mm rockets, which were generally located eight to ten thousand meters to the north and northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 304th Division was supported by rocket positions which were generally located eight to nine thousand meters southwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The 320th Division was located to the northwest of the Combat Base in a position to interdict Route #9 and to augment the attack of the other two Divisions.

On 8 February, Company "A"'s strongpoint position, which had denied the enemy freedom of movement and disrupted his attack posture, was attacked by an estimated three NVA Companies.

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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's), one POW from the 101st Regiment and half the total weapons captured for Operation SCOTLAND to this date were 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 "D"'s PPS-5 and PPS-6 picked up 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 operation slackened.

On 15 February 1968, 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 perimeter. On the 21st of February, Company "D" made contact with an estimated enemy platoon in prepared positions less than one thousand 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 defense. During the later part of this month there were reports of enemy movement at night along the outer perimeter. On 26 February a listening post from Company "D" engaged four NVA in the wire. The result was two NVA KIA's (Conf), who wore black pajamas and only carried grenades as weapons. This clearly marked them as infiltrators whose mission was to map out the perimeter.

On 29 February 1968, 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 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.

During the first half of March 1968, the enemy continued work on a high speed trench system from assembly areas up to the outer defensive wire of the Base. On the 2d of March, Company "D" discovered the first evidence of a trench system leading up to the Battalion perimeter. Each evening the enemy continued work on the trench system leading up to the Battalion perimeter and constantly harassing Company "D" by employing directional mines and bangalores to destroy sections of the perimeter wire. The Battalion increased its capabilities to detect and react to enemy movement at night by the utilization of the PPS-6 radar, NOD and SID's.

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9. EXECUTION. At approximately 1200H on 22 January 1968, the Battalion was ordered to prepare for an immediate move to the Khe Sanh Combat Base at XD849417. Company "D" returned from a Search and Destroy Operation via helicopter to Camp Evans and was placed on standby awaiting helicopter transportation to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. At 1420H 22 January 1968, the helilift began; Company "A", Company "B", Company "D" and the Forward Command Group were then helilifted to the Khe Sanh Combat Base by shuttle. At 1645H Company "D" received two USMC WIA's at the Khe Sanh Combat Base from incoming rockets. Companies "C", "H&S" (-) and the Rear Command Group arrived at Khe Sanh at 1500H 23 January.

At 1900H on 22 January, the Battalion was relinquished operational control from the 1st Marines and became OPCON to the 26th Marine Regiment situated at the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The Battalion remained in the tactical wire at Khe Sanh Combat Base during the night of 22 January 1968.

At 230500H January 1968, the Battalion moved from Khe Sanh to the vicinity of XD831417 where a Battalion defensive strongpoint was established. A platoon from Company "A" established a platoon strongpoint at XD823416. Immediately upon occupying these defensive positions the Battalion began preparing fortified positions and laying defensive wire. On 23 January 1968, the Battalion remained in its defensive position at XD831417. Maximum effort was directed towards improving the defensive position by digging fighting holes, building bunkers, and laying tactical wire. Routine daylight patrols were employed to familiarize the Battalion with the area and listening posts were employed at night.

The period 24 to 26 January 1968, was relatively quiet for the Battalion with no significant occurrences. Routine daylight and night activities were employed.

The 27th of January, found the Battalion Command Group, Company "B" and Company "D" located at XD830415. The Battalion sustained three KIA's and fourteen WIA's as a result of approximately thirty rounds of mixed artillery and rocket fire this date.

From the 28th to the 31st of January, no significant events occurred. Daylight and night activities continued.

On 1 February 1968, the Battalion was occupying the Hill at XD833414, a dominant piece of terrain to the west of the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The major task facing the Battalion during the month was the emplacement of wire and minefield obstacles around the defensive perimeter.

At 1208 on 3 February, Alpha 1 Outpost at XD823416 spotted forty to fifty NVA wearing packs and green uniforms, carrying mortars 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 A.C. 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 FAC party controlled air strikes on an enemy mortar position with unknown results.

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The 24th of March, Company "A" on a patrol to determine enemy strength to the north of the Battalion area discovered a fortified bunker complex at XD818427, and elements of an enemy Battalion which was deployed on a ridgeline leading to Hill #861.

On 26 March, Company "B" made contact just outside the defensive wire. The contact was significant as higher intelligence information had indicated a major pull back of enemy units.

On 29 March 1968, Company "D" also made contact just outside their defensive wire and recovered documents which disproved higher intelligence information of a major relocation of enemy forces. It was determined that the 101st Regiment and the 325C Division was still operating in the area close to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Reaffirming this information that a major relocation did not take place, was the contact made by Company "B", 1st Battalion, 26th Marines on the 29th of March with elements of the 66th Regiment, 304th Division.

Significant during the last week in March was renewed enemy activity to complete a new trench leading up to Company "D"'s outer defensive wire. On two occasions NVA troops remained in fresh dug trenchlines in daylight hours until forcibly ejected or killed by ground patrols or close-in air support.

b. Weather. While in the vicinity of the Khe Sanh Combat Base during the last part of January, the Battalion experienced unseasonably warm weather and scattered cloud cover.

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 considerably 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.

March brought the end of the Northeastern Monsoon season. Temperatures were generally in the mid 80's, cloud cover was scattered and visibility was from five to seven miles. Humidity was fairly high during the first week in March; there were light showers. During the rest of the month there was no precipitation. A light ground fog often hung over the area until mid-morning during most of the month limiting visibility at first light.

7. MISSION. The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines mission was to occupy and defend a strongpoint northwest of the Khe Sanh Combat Base (XD831417) and to provide security for a "Drop Zone" for all resupplies to the Battalions situated in the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

8. CONCEPT OF OPERATION. In defense of the Khe Sanh Combat Base, by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, Companies "A" and "C" were situated at XD836417 and XD837418 respectively, while Companies "B" and "D" were located due west of the Battalion CP at XD835414 and XD828413. Units from the Battalion conducted routine daylight and night activities to include patrols, ambushes, and listening posts in defense of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

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On 4 February at 1145, five rounds of 122mm rockets were fired into the Battalion's perimeter. Observation of the rocket position was observed by the 2d Battalion, 26th Marines who fired an artillery mission with unknown results. During the rest of the day ten rounds of 60mm mortars were received into the Battalion perimeter with negative casualties. The same day the Battalion added Night Observation Devices and ground radar to the defensive perimeter.

On 5 February, the 1st Battalion 9th Marines perimeter and Alpha I Outpost received thirty rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortars, resulting in ten friendly WIA's of which one required medical evacuation. Counter fire was initiated with unknown results.

On 6 February 1968, three rounds of 60mm mortars, six rounds of 82mm mortars, four rounds of recoilless rifle and one round of 140mm rocket were received into the Battalion's defensive perimeter, resulting in eleven friendly WIA's of which three required medical evacuation. Counterbattery was fired with fixed wing air strikes on the active mortar positions with unobserved results.

On 7 February at 1710, Company "D" observed what appeared to be an artillery piece dug into the side of Hill #527 (XD792384). At 1900 Alpha I observed an anti-aircraft position. Artillery was fired on both positions and one secondary was recorded on the later. At 2015 Company "B"'s LP opened fire on two persons close to there position. Other persons began running when LP opened fire. A check of the area at first light revealed a negative result.

At 0415 on 8 February, Alpha I Outpost came under a heavy ground and mortar attack. At the same time, the Battalion perimeter began receiving incoming mortars, rocket, and artillery fire, which continued throughout the assault of Alpha I. The initial attack was beaten back. At 0610 the enemy regrouped and attacked, penetrating the wire and again was 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 Company "A" Command Group and Alpha II left to retake the hill 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" opened fire with all available arms on a large enemy force retreating from Alpha I Outpost. The results after the days action was twenty-four friendly KIA's and twenty-nine WIA's and over one hundred and fifty enemy bodies found between Companies "A" and Company "D"'s perimeter. The Battalion received over three hundred and fifty rounds of enemy supporting arms fire.

On 9 February 1968, five rounds of 82mm mortars were received into the Battalion's perimeter resulting in three seriously wounded Marines, all requiring medical evacuation.

At 100230H February, a six man listening post from Company "C" made contact with approximately twelve North Vietnamese Regular on the North side of the perimeter. Small arms fire was exchanged with three NVA, who were seen to fall. At the same time, one of Company "C"'s other LP's received two grenades from an unknown position. No casualties were sustained in either action.

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Airstrikes controlled by the TAC Party, silenced enemy positions in a village south of Khe Sanh. During the air strikes personnel were observed running into a nearby treeline. Company "D"'s FO called an artillery mission on the treeline and destroyed one bunker.

On 11 February, 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 with no casualties sustained and three incoming 60mm mortars.

On 12 February, 1/9 received four rounds of 82mm mortars with no casualties sustained. Work on anti-personnel mines and anti-tank minefields were 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 was fired, resulting in four NVA KIA's (Conf). At 2145, Company "D"'s LP observed two men, threw grenades and saw them fall. The area was checked at first light with negative results.

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 recoilless 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, Company "D" at 0850, observed a recoilless rifle firing at Khe Sanh. 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 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 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 another position. At 1815, Company "D" brought two persons under fire using Scout Snipers attached to the Company and 60mm mortars. Results of the action was unobserved. The Battalion continued to improve the defensive positions with wire, mines and FUGAS (a command detonated mine of MOGAS diesel fuel).

At 1205 on 16 February, Company "B" received 60mm mortar fire, returned fire with 60mm mortars and observed one secondary explosion. At 1230, five rounds of recoilless rifle fire killed one man and wounded two others. At 1525, one round of 82mm mortar landed in the Delta Company CP area seriously wounding the Battalion S-3. He was later medevaced.

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At 1700, Company "D" spotted two NVA at XD836408 and took them under fire with attached Scout Snipers and 60mm mortars, resulting in two NVA KIA's (Conf). At 1700, Company "B"'s platoon (-) patrol at XD834410 received recoilless rifle and automatic weapons fire from XD834411 and XD834411. 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 the same time, Company "C"'s platoon patrol received ten rounds of what was believed to be a recoilless 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, and returned fire with M-79 grenade launchers. Area was checked with negative results.

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 and the NVA seen to fall. A check of the area revealed negative results. At 2200, Company "B" spotted three NVA walking outside the wire. Four rounds of small arms fires were fired at the enemy. Large blood stains 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. At 1920, Company "D" spotted two NVA with the NOD. Using the starlight scope, the Scout Sniper Team attached to Company "D" fired one round and saw one NVA fall into some bushes, resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf). While the snipers were checking out other movement, the body was removed.

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 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 unrecovered 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 with unobserved results.

During 21 February, the Battalion received eight rounds of 82mm mortars and two rounds of artillery in the perimeter, resulting in one minor WIA. A Company "D" patrol made contact to the southwest 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 one mine in front of Company "C"'s lines was detonated.

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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 of 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. The base of fire received 50 caliber machinegun and 82mm mortars while the enveloping force received small arms fire and M-26 grenades. The patrol used small arms, 60mm's, 60mm and 81mm mortars and grenades against the enemy. The result of the action was one friendly WIA and three NVA KIA's (Conf).

At 1955, Company "D" SID detected movement and one M-79 round 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 and fourteen 82mm mortar rounds into their defensive position, resulting in thirteen friendly WIA's. Three significant artillery missions were fired during the day. Two were counter-fire at the enemy artillery and one was fired at enemy troops in the open. No results were determined.

On 24 February, the Battalion received fourteen rounds of mixed mortar and artillery into their defensive position, resulting in one Marine KIA and one WIA. Company "C" LP throw 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, the Battalion received thirty 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 WMA and the other a crossbow. No casualties were sustained.

At 0030 on 26 February 1968, Company "D" inner wire opened fire on two NVA in front of their lines. The LP used grenades and small arms, resulting in two NVA KIA's (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 the TAC Party to control seven strikes with two confirmed NVA KIA's observed. 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.

On 28 February 1968, the Battalion received eight rounds of 60mm and 82mm mortars into the perimeter, resulting in three WIA's. Four flights of fixed wing were controlled by the Battalion TAC Party during the day resulting in the confirmed killing of one NVA.

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On 29 February, at 0140, Company "C" heard a thud immediately before an explosion. A person was seen in the flash of the explosion and was taken under fire. A search of the area revealed negative results. 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 trip 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 into the Battalion area, resulting in three USMC WIA's. Later in the night, Company "D" inner wire LP heard movement to their front, illuminating 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.

At 0120H on the morning of 1 March, a listening post from Delta Company heard movement outside the wire. Firing one hand illumination, Company "D" observed three to four persons running away from the wire. Company "D" initiated small arms fire, resulting in one enemy KIA (Conf). Later at 0145, Company "D" witnessed a large explosion forward of their position. Illuminating the area with a hand pop-up, they observed four Chinese Communist Claymore mines mounted atop bamboo poles; one of which had exploded. Approximately five minutes later, another Company "D"'s LP heard movement. Illuminating the area they spotted one NVA, which they immediately took under small arms fire. A thorough search of the area at first light revealed one NVA (Conf) KIA. The search also uncovered a newly constructed trench system approximately one hundred meters to the direct front of Company "D"'s lines.

At 1530, a load of supplies was dropped on positions of Companies "A" and "C" causing damage to defensive wire, minefields, and bunkers.

Total incoming rounds taken by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines amounted to four 60mm, twenty 82mm, and one 120mm mortars, resulting in three friendly KIA's and seven WIA's of which two were serious.

At 1050, on 2 March, another poorly executed air drop resulted in five friendly non-battle casualties, and extensive damage to several bunkers, minefields and portions of the defensive wire.

At approximately 1600 close air support controlled by 1/9 struck targets, resulting in the destruction of three enemy trenchlines and killing eleven NVA (Conf).

A total of one friendly KIA and six WIA's were suffered by the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines on 2 March 1968, with eight incoming rounds received into the Battalion perimeter.

At 0745 on 3 March, Company "D" located a preset directional mine beyond their outer defensive wire and the position where another such mine had been placed and detonated the previous night. The intact mine was disarmed and turned into the Regimental S-2. A total of ten incoming rounds were received into the defensive perimeter resulting in eleven friendly WIA's of which three required medical evacuation.

At 0720H on 4 March, an enemy command detonated explosive device was set off, resulting in one friendly WIA working on the defensive position of Company "D".

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SECRET

B

At 1050, a patrol from Company "D" uncovered two fighting holes and a zig-zag trenchline approximately thirty feet long. This discovery along with others like it indicated an increase in enemy activity in the area.

At 1307, a patrol from Company "A" spotted an active enemy 50 caliber machinegun position being employed against aircraft in the area. An 81mm mortar mission destroyed the enemy emplacement, resulting in the destruction of the weapon and three NVA KIA's (Conf). Incoming rounds were two 82mm mortars and eight recoilless rifle rounds, resulting in one minor WIA.

On the morning of 5 March, at 0720, four enemy command detonated explosive devices were employed against Company "D"'s lines, resulting in the destruction of segments of the defensive wire. The charges breeched seventy-two feet of wire. The devices were estimated to be NVA claymore mines. A unit patrolling forward of Company "D"'s lines at noon discovered ten newly constructed fighting holes, some of which were camouflaged. An enemy entrenching tool was also found in the area. Throughout the afternoon numerous airstrikes controlled by the Battalion FAC were conducted on known enemy positions, resulting in the confirmed destruction of one enemy mortar and three enemy trenchlines. Six secondary explosions were observed. At 2125, Company "D" observed six NVA forward of their position, employing a Scout Sniper Team, they accounted for two NVA KIA's (Conf). The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines received nine rounds of 82mm mortars during the day, resulting in six USMC WIA's of which five required medical evacuation.

Two more incidents of employment of enemy claymore mines occurred on the morning of 6 March, the first at 0700 when a command detonated mine was activated against a returning listening post from Company "D". The second occurred at 0800 when a second command detonated mine exploded outside of Company "D"'s defensive wire. During the day, 81mm mortar fire was directed against active enemy anti-aircraft positions in the area. Three flights of fixed wing air strikes were controlled in the afternoon of 6 March 1968. The aircraft struck known enemy positions. An after action damaged estimation totaled two destroyed bunkers, one recoilless rifle probable and good coverage of an enemy forward observer position. No incoming rounds were taken into the Battalion perimeter during the day, but one casualty was sustained due to the explosion of the enemy command detonated mine.

Between the hours of 1400H and 1700H on 7 March 1968, several flights of close air support struck enemy positions in the Battalion area of operation. Patrols operating in the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines AO found fresh evidence of enemy activity; recently used trails, fresh enemy footprints and discarded enemy food containers. A patrol from Company "A" also discovered bunkers, fighting holes and enemy positions/trenchlines.

The unit picked up one light assault anti-tank weapon, two hand grenades and two entrenching tools found in the area. The equipment was forwarded to the Regimental S-2. Four rounds of 82mm mortars were taken into the Battalion perimeter during 7 March, resulting in three WIA's.

At one minute past midnight on the morning of 8 March, the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines received four rounds of 81mm mortars, resulting in two minor WIA's. Liaison determined that the fire came from an 81mm mortar platoon in an adjacent friendly unit. Two trip flares were set off in the defensive wire of Company "C" at 0345, at which time one hand grenade was thrown into their defensive position. A 60mm mortar concentration was fired into that area.

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A check of the area at first light revealed a negative result. At 1303, a patrol from Company "B" found one bangalore torpedo which was turned into the Regimental S-2.

At 1045, a patrol from Company "C" found forward of their position two freshly dug trenchlines, one approximately fifty meters long and the second approximately thirty meters long, both were hidden by tall brush.

Total incoming rounds for 8 March 1968, were four 81mm and three 82mm mortars, resulting in five minor WIA's.

At 0100 on 9 March, a listening post from Company "D" received two RPG rounds resulting in one minor WIA. Checking the area with a starlight scope, Company "D" observed and fired upon three NVA with unknown result. At 1050, a unit patrolling forward of Company "D"'s position found an NVA cartridge belt, a grenade pouch containing four chicom grenades, a pouch of rice and a bloody bandage, all in the same area.

Airstrikes controlled by 1/9 hit suspected enemy mortar positions at 1315, resulting in two secondary explosions. Total incoming and casualties sustained by the Battalion were six 60mm, four 82mm mortars and two RPG's, resulting in three minor WIA's.

At 1015, an air drop of supplies landed in sectors of Company "C"'s position causing the collapse of two bunkers and the destruction of defensive wire and trip flares. The damage was repaired by evening.

At 1015 on 10 March, Company "D" spotted one NVA carrying a mortar tube. A 105mm artillery mission was called on the enemy who disappeared after the fire for effect. At 1400, an air observer operating in support of the battalion sighted one seven foot bunker. A 105mm artillery mission was fired on the bunker, resulting in one confirmed NVA KIA (Conf) and the destruction of a bunker.

At 1620, a patrolling unit from Company "A" found eighteen 105mm artillery rounds which they destroyed in place.

Total incoming rounds for 10 March, were two 60mm, ten 82mm, and two 120mm mortars and five rocket rounds of unknown caliber, resulting in eight minor WIA's.

On 11 March at 0135, Company "D" observed one large secondary explosion, resulting from a TPQ airstrike approximately three thousand meters forward of the Battalion.

An explosion occurred in Company "D" wire at 0530. A later check of the wire revealed that two bangalore torpedoes had been detonated on the wire causing a twenty foot breach. At 1135, Company "D" spotted a suspected enemy mortar position at XD822413. Four rounds of 60mm mortars were fired, resulting in good coverage of the area.

At 1245, Company "C" received three rounds of 82mm mortars into their defensive position at XD837413, resulting in one minor WIA.

Fifteen minutes later, Company "B" received two rounds of the same type mortar into their position, resulting in one Marine WIA. Counter mortar fire was not initiated due to no fix on the enemy position. At the same time, Company "B" was taking incoming mortars, Company "D" received three rounds of the same caliber mortar into their defensive position, resulting in five Marine WIA's of which three required medical evacuation.

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At 1435, an Observation Post from Company "D" spotted one enemy bunker. Four 60mm mortars were fired at the bunker with good coverage of target. At 1715, Company "C" while in a defensive position at XD837 413 received one round of 60mm mortar, resulting in one minor WIA as a result of a direct hit on his bunker. At 1755, Company "B" received one round of 82mm mortar into their defensive position, resulting in one USMC KIA.

At 0935 on 12 March 1968, a unit patrolling forward of Company "A"'s position found four enemy bunkers, camouflaged and reinforced with bamboo poles and communication wire. The bunkers were destroyed with 4. At 1000, an observation post from Company "A" spotted two enemy personnel moving into a treeline, one carrying a rifle and heavy gear. An 81mm mortar mission was fired on the NVA with good coverage of the area. At 1505, a poorly executed air drop of supplies landed in Company "C"'s perimeter causing damage to their defensive wire and destruction of several fighting holes.

Total incoming received by the Battalion, were three 60mm, thirteen 82mm and one 120mm mortar rounds, resulting in nine WIA's.

At 0915 on 13 March, a patrol from Company "A" found and destroyed a fresh fighting hole. At 1035, Company "D" patrol observed three NVA carrying weapons who entered a hut. A 4.2 mortar mission was fired on the hut, resulting in the destruction of the hut and three NVA KIA's (Conf). At 1100, a Company "D" patrol found one booby trapped claymore mine, tied to a branch in a tree with two trip wires extending from it. It was blown in place.

At 1215, an observation post from Company "A" spotted an active enemy mortar position. 60mm mortar fired four rounds on the target with unknown results. Total incoming rounds for this day were five 60mm and nineteen 82mm mortars. Casualties sustained by 1/9 were four minor WIA's and three serious.

An element of Company "D" patrolling at 1330 on 15 March, found one trenchline twenty feet long and four to five feet deep, four fighting holes and one bunker. All estimated to be three weeks old. Material damage as a result of enemy fire was the destruction of a starlight scope, and 106mm recoilless rifle mount. An artillery mission controlled by Company "D" destroyed a straw hut which was a suspected enemy position. An Air Observer supporting 1/9 spotted four well dug mortar positions believed to be those responsible for previously received incoming mortars. An 81mm mortar mission was fired, resulting in the destruction of this position. Total incoming amounted to five 82mm and thirty-one 60mm mortar rounds. Casualties sustained by the battalion was one KIA and eight WIA's.

After receiving a sniper round, at 1540 on 18 March, Company "B" sighted the sniper and took him under small arms fire. A unit was dispatched to check out the area, but found no traces of the sniper.

At 1615, Company "D" spotted a trenchline approximately twenty meters long and two large bunkers. They called in an artillery mission which resulted in the partial destruction of two bunkers and an AO controlled by 1/9 took the area under surveillance.

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At 1645, Company "D" spotted an active 37mm anti-aircraft position. They called an artillery mission on the position resulting in two large secondary explosions.

At 1700, two NVA were spotted entering a hut, Company "D"'s FO adjusted 81mm mortar fire on the position with good coverage. By the light of a trip flare at 2215, a Listening Post, spotted three NVA who they took under M-79 fire. A check of the area at first light yielded negative results.

Total number of rounds received by 1/9 were four 60mm and eight 82mm mortar rounds, one recoilless rifle round, and one sniper round. Total casualties were six minor WIA's, all as a result of mortar rounds.

At 0800 on 19 March, a patrolling unit from Company "D" found approximately thirty, one to two man size bunkers arranged in a 360° perimeter. At this spot, they also found three bags of rice, two rolls of 7/8" diameter telephone cable, two miles of communication wire and one NVA mess kit. They destroyed the rice and cable and turned in the mess kit and a sample of cable to the Regimental S-2.

At 1645, a Forward Observer from Company "D" spotted three NVA. An 81mm mortar was fired on their position with unknown results.

At 1839, Company "B" spotted a figure which had set off a trip flare. They employed small arms against the person and a later check of the area yielded no trace of a casualty.

Total incoming rounds taken by 1/9 on 19 March were two 60mm and six 82mm mortar rounds, resulting in two minor WIA's.

At 0050 on 20 March 1968, Company "D" received one suspected RPG round followed by two simultaneous explosions in their defensive wire. Six M-79 rounds were fired at the suspected RPG launching site and a check of the area at first light revealed approximately fifteen feet of concertina had been blown out of the wire.

A patrolling unit operating forward of Company "B"'s lines found a total of seven fighting holes in two separate areas. An indication of recent activity in the area. A portion of the supplies air dropped to the 1/9 position landed in Company "C" defensive wire. The supplies were later removed and the damage to the wire repaired.

Total incoming rounds received by 1/9 were three (60mm), eleven (82mm) and one (120mm) mortar rounds. Total casualties sustained by 1/9 were one serious and six non-serious WIA's.

On the 21st of March at 0740, a wire checking party from Company "B" found an explosive device at XD828416. The device was a B-2 C-Ration can filled with C-4 explosive and had an M-26 blasting cap and assembly for a detonator. It was found along a trail but was not connected to anything. The device was turned into the S-2.

Members of a squad patrol from Company "A" at 1025, spotted an enemy automatic weapons position active against re-supply aircraft in the area. The patrol called in a 105mm artillery mission of five rounds; all coverage the target area well. The final results of the mission were unknown.

SECRET

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At 1155, four pallets of 105mm artillery ammunition re-supply was air dropped into 1/9 position. The supplies missed their target in the "Drop Zone" and landed in portions of Company "A"'s minefields and defensive wire. Engineers were employed by 1/9 to retrieve the supplies.

Again at 1207, another five loads of supplies were inaccurately dropped into the defensive position of Company "C", resulting in damage to wire and trip flares. Personnel from Company "C" removed the supplies and repaired the damage.

At 1530, the 2d platoon of Company "D" spotted an enemy bunker complex at grid XD835402. Airstrikes were later controlled by 1/9 on the enemy positions, resulting in the destruction of three bunkers, damage to six bunkers and the exposure of an enemy trenchline. One enemy KIA was also confirmed.

On 21 March, 1/9 received a total of eight 60mm, one 82mm, and four 120mm mortar rounds and four rounds of 152mm artillery. Total casualties sustained by 1/9 on that day amounted to two WIA's serious and four minor.

22 March, was relatively quiet with only six minor WIA's as a result of incoming 120mm mortars. The battalion spotted, on five occasions enemy anti-aircraft fire and called supporting arms to suppress it. Results were unknown. Later the enemy mortars accounted for eleven WIA's of which five required medical evacuation.

At 1130 on 24 March, a platoon from Company "A" at XD821426 dispatched a squad to the northwest to reconnoiter the area. Contact was made, resulting in two friendly KIA's from heavy small arms fire from an estimated fourteen NVA in well constructed bunkers and fighting holes. A second squad was sent to reinforce this squad. In the resulting fire three more friendly KIA's were sustained and four WIA's. The enemy strength increased to an estimated thirty NVA and twenty more were spotted moving down a ridgeline. "A"6 was directed to proceed to the point of contact and extricate the two squads. Friendly tanks, artillery mortar, and Huey gunships were used in support and coupled with fire from the two squads, resulted in thirty-one NVA KIA's (Conf), four bunkers and two 60mm mortar positions were destroyed. Total casualties for the Battalion for this day were five KIA's and fourteen WIA's, eight of which required medical evacuation.

At 1320, on 25 March 1968, Company "A" received two 120mm mortars in their defensive position, resulting in seven WIA's of which three were medevaced. Company "C" at 1530, received one round of 82mm mortar in the "Drop Zone" and sustained three minor WIA's from an unknown enemy position. Casualties sustained by 1/9 on 25 March were three serious and seven minor WIA's.

On 26 March at 0730, an observation post from Company "B" was moving up a slope approaching the position where they were to set in when an unknown number of enemy troops appeared at the top of the hill, threw twelve chicom grenades at the unit and disappeared from view. The observation post immediately initiated small arms fire, withdrew and called in 60mm mortar fire on the enemy position.

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At 0730, a listening post from Company "A" observed three NVA and called in 81mm mortar mission, with unobserved results. At 0800 two squads from Company "B" were deployed to regain the observation post, where contact with the enemy had been made at 0710. Enroute they received two rounds of enemy mortar fire which resulted in two friendly KIA's. One reinforced squad assaulted the hill and was taken under fire by enemy small arms. The enemy strength at this position was estimated to be of company size, heavily armed and in well prepared positions. Maximum supporting arms were utilized against the enemy while the platoon returned to the perimeter. The contact resulted in the confirmed killing of twenty-six NVA and the capture of one AK-47 rifle, one RPG round and launcher, and five chicom grenades. The unit sustained three KIA's and fifteen WIA's.

At 0940, Company "A" sighted four enemy personnel. The observation post took the enemy under small arms fire, killing all four NVA.

At 1015, Company "D" sighted two NVA took them under small arms fire with unknown results.

At 1100 Company "D" sighted two NVA and killed both of them by employing small arms fire and 106mm recoilless rifle fire. At 1914, Company "D" spotted another NVA crawling through high grass. 60mm mortars were fired on the enemy's position with unknown results. Total incoming rounds received by 1/9 on 26 March 1968, were twenty-three rounds of mixed mortars and RPG's. Casualties sustained by the Battalion were three KIA's and nineteen WIA's of which nine were serious.

On 27 March at 0945, an OF from Company "A" spotted five NVA. An 81mm mortar was fired on the enemy position with unknown results.

At 1100, a patrol from Company "D" found freshly dug enemy trenches forward of their position. The trenches were filled in and the patrol kept on its assigned mission. On five different occasions elements of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines spotted active enemy locations, including three mortar emplacements, one sniper position and one automatic weapons position. In each instance 1/9's 60mm and 81mm mortars were fired with unknown results. At 1530, eight flights of fixed wing air support, controlled by 1/9 struck at three known enemy positions, resulting in the destruction of six enemy bunkers, two secondary explosions and two confirmed enemy KIA's.

At 1830, Company "D" observed six NVA forward of their position. A 105mm artillery mission was called in on the enemy with excellent coverage of target area. Total incoming received by 1/9 were five 60mm, six 82mm mortars and three sniper rounds. There were no casualties sustained by the Battalion on 27 March 1968.

28 March, at 0635, an LP from Company "A" spotted four NVA. 81mm mortars were fired on the enemy position with unknown results. An artillery mission was called in on an active enemy mortar position at 1635, which had been spotted by an FC from Company "D". The results of the mission was unknown. Total incoming rounds received by 1/9 were thirteen mortar rounds and one recoilless rifle, resulting in five WIA's of which one required medical evacuation.

29 March 1968, at 0635, LP from Company "A" sighted three NVA. 60mm mortar fire was employed against the enemy, but no confirmed results were observed.

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Company "B" at 0725, spotted an NVA whom they took under small arms and mortar fire. No confirmed results were obtained from the incident.

At 0835, Company "D" deployed as security around the "Drop Zone" spotted an active 50 caliber machinegun position. A 60mm mortar mission was called in on the area silencing the enemy position.

At 1055, Company "E" observed a recently dug, well developed trenchline immediately forward of their defensive wire. An Air Observer controlled by 1/9 was requested to observe the area. The AO reported sighting six to eight NVA in the trenchline. Small arms fire was initiated killing four NVA (Conf). Notable equipment captured were 42 sniper rounds. Total casualties sustained by the Battalion were 5 WIA's.

On 30 March, at 0950, the 3d Platoon from Company "D" observed two NVA in a recently constructed trenchline. The enemy could not be taken under fire due to friendly troops in the area.

At 1120, an observation post from Company "A" sighted 3 NVA, 500 meters west of 1/9's position and approximately one hundred meters in front of the observation post. The enemy was taken under fire with small arms and 60mm mortars after which the NVA no longer could be observed.

At 1325, two squads made contact with an estimated twenty NVA. The enemy threw chicom grenades and fired small arms at Company "D"'s patrol. At the same time, the enemy fired two RPG rounds and four rounds of 82mm mortars at the 1/9 perimeter. Two rounds of artillery and intermittent sniper fire was also received during the contact.

Company "B" fired 60mm mortar fire on the active enemy mortar position, silencing the mortar fire and confirming one NVA KIA. The two squad patrol from Company "D" maintaining contact with the estimated twenty NVA, employed all available small arms and supporting arms including M-16, M-60, M-79, M-26, M-14, shot guns, besides the mortars and recoilless rifle fire. Small arms accounted for ten NVA KIA's (Conf) and the mortars accounted for one NVA KIA (Conf).

The two squads then withdrew back to the perimeter to allow clearance for airstrikes. 1/9 controlled fixed wing air support. These flights struck the remnants of the enemy unit at the position in which contact had been previously made the night before, resulting in four NVA KIA's (Conf). Following the airstrikes Company "B" deployed two squads to sweep a portion of the area. These squads found five enemy bodies. A total confirmed from Company "D"'s contact was fifteen NVA KIA's. Casualties sustained by the contact were three minor WIA's.

At 1800, Company "D" observed one NVA by a bunker. Employing two rounds of 106mm recoilless rifle fire, Company "D" destroyed the bunker and had one confirmed NVAKIA. Company "D" at the same time, observed five NVA tending livestock in a different enemy position. A 105mm artillery mission was fired on the enemy position, resulting in one NVA KIA (Conf). Total casualties sustained by the Battalion on 30 March 1968, were six KIA's and nine WIA's.

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On 31 March 1968, at 1140, elements of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines spotted active enemy mortars being employed against the Battalion. A combination of 105mm artillery and 81mm mortars were fired on the enemy position. Two secondary explosions were observed from the mission.

At 1300, Company "A" called in and adjusted a 175mm artillery mission on a known enemy troop bunker complex, resulting in the destruction of two enemy bunkers and one secondary explosion.

Total incoming for 31 March 1968, were 13 60mm, 9 82mm mortars, and two RPG rounds, resulting in one Marine KIA and four Marine WIA's.

10. RESULTS.

a. Casualties Sustained.

USMC KIA: 72
USMC WIA: 353
USMC MIA: 0

b. Casualties Inflicted.

VC/NVA KIA: 304
VC/NVA POW: 6

(1) Captured Materials. During this operation the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines captured the following enemy equipment:

28 AK-47 rifles, 24 AK-47 magazines, 200 rounds AK-47 ammunition, 7 RPG-2's, 3 RPG-2's, 2 RPG-7's, 1 RPG carrier, 3 RPG charges, 13 RPG rounds, 9 light machine guns, 3 heavy machineguns, 1 60mm mortar, 1 satchel charge, 1 pack, 1 entrenching tool, 2 hammocks, 19 chicom grenades, 3 cartridge belts, 6 gas masks, 2 gas mask cannisters, 4 CHICOM claymore mine mounted on a frame pack carrier, 1 pair demolition crimpers with built-in fuze lighter, two rolls of telephone cables, 2 miles of communication wire (U.S. Type), 4 pounds of rice, and numerous documents approximately 30.

c. Areas where airstrikes and artillery missions were conducted could not be searched for the most part due to the operational limitations placed on friendly activities (400 meters from the outer perimeter wire). The strikes within 400 meters (about 15% of them) were searched with the results as recorded elsewhere in this report. The area outside this 400 radius were checked out by Air Observers.

d. The NVA in this area were well equipped with equipment of Communist Bloc Country origin and seemed to make no effort to pick-up any U. S. materials.

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