

**SECRET**

BATTERY K  
 4th Battalion, 13th Marines  
 Fleet Marine Force, Pacific  
 FPO San Francisco, California, 96602

**DECLASSIFIED**  
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RCP:fal  
 005750  
 31 Jan 69

From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 13th Marines  
 Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 January 1969 to  
 31 January 1969

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2  
 (b) FMFPacO 5750.8  
 (c) 1stMarDivO 5750.2  
 (d) RegtO 5750.2

Encl: (1) Btry "K", 4thBn, 13thMar Command Chronology for  
 the subject period.  
 (2) Report of Malfunctioning Illumination Round.

1. In accordance with the instructions contained in references (a) through (d), enclosure (1) is submitted herewith.

2. This page is downgraded to UNCLASSIFIED upon removal of enclosure (1).

*R. K. Petersen*  
 R. K. PETERSEN

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*Btry 'K', 4/13*

*Jan 69*

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30 Jan 1969

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY  
1-31 January 1969  
Battery K, 4th Battalion, 13th Marines

PART I..... Organizational Data  
PART II..... Narrative Summary  
PART III..... Sequential Listing of Significant  
Events

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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Part I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. Designation:

Commander

Battery K, 4th Battalion, 13th Marines R. K. PETERSEN CAPT  
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMFPAC  
C/O FPO San Francisco, California, 96602

2. Location:

An Hoa, RVN at 86787.89 47257.71, Dai Loc  
Sheet 6640 IV, serial L7014, AMS

3. Battery Officers

|                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| Captain R. K. PETERSEN         | Commanding Officer           |
| First Lieutenant L. E. CRAIG   | Executive Officer            |
| First Lieutenant R. C. GIBSEN  | Asst Executive Officer       |
| First Lieutenant A. L. HARDING | Fire Direction Officer       |
| Second Lieutenant J. A. HENRY  | LNO/Asst Fire Direct Officer |

4. Average Monthly Strength:

| <u>USMC</u> | <u>USN</u> | <u>OTHER</u> |
|-------------|------------|--------------|
| 135         | 3          | 0            |

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30 Jan 1969**DECLASSIFIED**Part IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

Throughout the entire month of January, the task organization for combat remained under the operational control of First Field Artillery Group, General Support, Task Force Yankee, and remained in its position at An Hoa, in support of Operation Taylor Common.

With the arrival of our TD-15 on 10 January the preparation of the battery area was greatly benefited. Gun positions were prepared and moved into. Adequate position in the battery area was also improved and prepared for our truck park.

The engineers moved into the battery area on 12 January and began to build powder bunkers and the Fire Direction Control bunker. At this time it was decided to move the XO's pit to the other side of the gun position and eliminate some of the confusion resulting from having it near the end of the air strip.

It was during this period of position improvement that the XO and 2 Battalion, 11th Marines survey team relocated the Battery Center. After having Battery Center displaced several times a position was finally established at 86788 47258 near An Hoa.

During the month of January Kilo Battery 11th Battalion 13th Marines, has been supporting 2nd Battalion, 5th Marines and Recon Inserts in the An Hoa TAOR. This has been a role of "semi" - direct support for these units. During the early part of January the Battery ran short of Green Bag powder. This made it necessary to use charge 3 White Bag in the less crucial missions. This problem has now been rectified to some extent.

On 19 January the battery had an illumination round go off prematurely. Shortly after the round was fired the fuze detonated. The round had carried to a position over 2nd Battalion, 11th Marines area where it burned through a tent startling several Marines. (See enclosed report)

On 20 January, PFC ARMENTA was injured when a fuze (50141), of the same lot as that used on the premature illumination round, detonated in his hands. This resulted in some rather severe burns to his hands and forearms.

On 23 January the Battery had its guns calibrated by the airmobile team of the 177th Ord Detachment. The tubes were calibrated and borescoped and found to be serviceable in all respects.

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On 23 January, Kilo Battery, 4th Battalion, 13th Marines lost one of its old hands. "The Gravedigger", Howitzer #3081018 made its last run. This was done in expectation of a new howitzer replacement.

On 27 January, a new 2ndLt arrived to bring Kilo's complement of officers to full strength. He is 2ndLt J. A. HENRY who will act as the asst EDO.

On 28 January, Kilo saw the arrival of the long awaited new Howitzer #377661. It was moved into firing position. For the first day it was checked out and prepared for a full time role in the firing battery. That evening it test fired some rounds and was found ready.

The battery is rapidly getting its area in shape. The sand bagging of the powder bunkers and EDO is in full swing. The battery now has for its use a volley ball court. Thanks to the hard work of 1stLt GJESSE the Battery's Special Services officer and the handy work of the TD-15. In the plans is an area in which to play football.

MISSIONS FIRED DURING JANUARY  
TO 1200, 29 JANUARY

| OBSERVED | UNOBSERVED | HAI's | TOTAL MISSIONS |
|----------|------------|-------|----------------|
| 173      | 63         | 134   | 370            |

AMMUNITION EXPENDED - JANUARY  
THROUGH 1200, 29 JANUARY  
TYPE

| HE   | WE  | IL  | FG | = | TOTAL |
|------|-----|-----|----|---|-------|
| 2968 | 149 | 236 | 14 |   | 3367  |

|                   |             |
|-------------------|-------------|
| ROUNDS OBSERVED   | 2124        |
| ROUNDS UNOBSERVED | 495         |
| HAI's             | 748         |
| TOTAL             | 3367 ROUNDS |

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## SURVEILLANCE

Again this period the Battery had numerous missions in which we received no positive surveillance. We participated in TOT's and contact missions in which the nature of the targets ranged from 500MVA in the open, VC Company in the open, counter A-A to counter mortar/rocket missions

| <u>KIA</u> | <u>WIA</u> | <u>PKIA</u> | <u>MORTARS/A-A</u> | <u>Structures/Bunkers</u> |
|------------|------------|-------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| 7          | 0          | 51          | 8                  | 14                        |

Secondary Explosions

28

ORGANIZATION AND OPERATIONA. Personnel Administration1. Gains and Losses

|                       |    |
|-----------------------|----|
| (a) Admin Losses      | 8  |
| (b) Battle KIA's      | 0  |
| (c) Battle WIA's      | 0  |
| (d) Battle WIAWE's    | 0  |
| (e) Battle MIA's      | 0  |
| (f) Battle POW's      | 0  |
| (g) Non - Combat Cas. | 2  |
| (h) Replacement       | 25 |
| (i) Net (Gains)       | 15 |

The Battery is still under the administrative control of 1st Battalion, 13th Marines, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade and under the operational control of First FAC.

The Battery retains all battery level operational capabilities, including Fire Direction Resupply and First and Second Echelon Maintenance. Limited 3rd Echelon Maintenance is available through LSU, An Hoa.

The Battery is responsible for a sector of the perimeter and two of the bunkers. The Battery is continuing to improve and enlarge its perimeter defenses.

The Battery did participate in some civic action by furnishing some of the local Vietnamese with some old ammo boxes and lumber in the battery area. The Battery continues to respect and honor the Vietnamese and their traditions.

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During the period reported on training has become an important aspect of Battery life. Due to the influx of replacements to take the place of those who went to the SLT those has been a heavy emphasis on OJT. The new cannonners and EOC personnel are adjusting and learning rapidly. There are quite a few MCI courses being taken by the men in this battery, too.

At the end of this period the Battery will have 5 Howitzers operational and one and Howitzer will be a probable R and W to Danang.

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## PART III

## SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 10 January 1969 The Battery's TD-15 resulted in much progress in getting the battery's position improved.
- 12 January 1969 The Engineers moved into the area to build powder bunkers and the FPC bunker. Relocation of the XO's pit was also accomplished at this time.
- 19 January 1969 The premature functioning of the Illumination round and the detonation of a similar fuze, on 20 Jan 69; in PFC ARMENTA's hands has resulted in an investigation of these fuzes.
- 23 January 1969 The Battery received its quarterly Calibration and Boroscoping of its Howitzers. They were found to be serviceable.
- 28 January 1969 The Battery received the first of its scheduled new Howitzers. The remainder are expected in the near future.

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4th Battalion, 13th Marines  
Fleet Marine Force, Pacific  
APO San Francisco, 96602

WKP/fal  
8000  
29 Jan 1969

From: Commanding Officer  
To: (1) Commander (ORD - 0841)  
Naval Ordnance Systems Command  
Department of the Navy  
Washington, D. C. 20360  
(2) Commanding Officer (730)  
U. S. Navy Ships Parts Control Center  
Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania 17055  
(3) Commanding General (SMAP-R)  
U. S. Army Ammunition Procurement and  
Supply Agency  
Joliet, Illinois 60436

Subj: Ammunition Malfunction Report; submission of

Ref: (a) TI - 8010 - 15/1B  
(b) CG, 1stMarDiv msg 120817Z Nov 68

Encl: (1) Detailed written malfunction report

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosure (1) is submitted. Reference (b) is the preliminary report.

R. K. PETERSEN

Copy to: (1) Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code GSV)  
Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps  
Washington, D. C. 20380  
(2) Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code GSK)  
Headquarters U. S. Marine Corps  
Washington, D. C. 20380  
(3) Commanding General (ANOMA)  
U. S. Army Material Command  
Washington, D. C. 20315

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BATTERY K  
4th Battalion, 13th Marines  
Fleet Marine Force, Pacific  
FPO San Francisco, 96602

HCP/fal  
8000  
29 Jan 1969

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code C3X-8)  
(1) Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 13th Marines  
(2) Commanding General, 1st Marine Division, (Rein), FMP  
(3) Commanding General, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade  
(4) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force  
(5) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Subj: Ammunition Malfunction Report; submission of

Ref: (a) TI - 8010 - 15/1B  
(b) CG, 1stMarDiv msg 120817Z Nov 68

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- (1) Malfunction occurred in Battery K, 4th Battalion, 13th Marines.
- (2) Information details of the weapon:
  - (a) Caliber - 155MM  
Type - Howitzer (SP)  
Model - M126
  - (b) Manufacturer - WVT Ars, Cleveland Army Tank Automotive Plant
  - (c) Tube - #18882
  - (d) Type of fire - slow  
Rate of fire - one round/hour  
Duration of rate - two hours. Malfunction occurred on the second round
  - (e) Elevation 674  
Fuze Setting 25.4~  
Charge 3 white bag
  - (f) Weapon recoiled normally when round was fired.
  - (g) Range to target 6545 meters

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- (h) Last pullover gage reading was 6.15<sup>8</sup> on 11 January 1969. The timing of the breach was okay. The last serviceability check was made by FISC-A on 11 January 1969.
- (i) The weapon was not damaged.
- (j) Twenty - eight rounds were fired from the weapon on the day of the malfunction.
- (k) Total number of TFC rounds fired prior to the malfunction was 2043. Was unable to get a new pullover reading at the time of the malfunction. The malfunction occurred on 19 January 1969 and the next pullover reading of 23 January 1969 was 6.179.
- (1) Describe Malfunction.  
Malfunction was a premature burst.
  - 1 High order
  - 2 Fuze functioned at a range of less than 100 meters from the muzzle.
  - 3 There were no obstruction in the line of fire or in the tube.
  - 4 Time setting on fuze was visually checked by chief of section. It was also rechecked by the chief of section at the request of the assistant executive officer at the exec post.
  - 5 There were no nonstandard conditions affecting the mission.
  - 6 No evidence of unburned powder or residue was left in the tube.
  - 7 There were no deviation in the missions from standard procedures or instructions in the technical manual.
- (3) Small arms, fixed, and semifixed ammunition N/A
- (4) Separate loading ammunition:
  - (a) Projectile
    - 1 Caliber - 155MM
    - Type - illuminating
    - M118
    - 2 Loading Plant - Percussion Tool Co, Inc.
    - 3 Lot number \* PXT - 1 - 207
    - 4 Kind of filler - magnesium
    - 5 Type and lot number of booster is unknown.
  - (b) Propelling Charge
    - 1 Caliber - 155MM
    - Charge 3 white bag M4A1
    - 2 Manufacturer - Radger Army Ammo Plant
    - 3 Lot number - BAJ 65814
    - 4 Propelling charge weight approx 6 lbs
    - 5 The bags and wrapping were in good condition and dry.
    - 6 Pressure and velocity of round is unavailable.

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## (c) Fuze

- 1 Time fuze M 501A1
- 2 Manufacturer - Unknown
- 3 Lot number EK - 2-216 (reworked JA-2-324RB)
- 4 Fuze was a re worked fuze and its container was sealed with a black tape. The fuze was on the round for about two weeks. The round and fuze were protected from the weather during the time.
- 5 The fuze was properly seated and tighten with a fuze wrench.
- 6 Time setting on fuze was 25.4

## (d) Primer

- 1 Percussion Type M82
- 2 Manufacturer - Lone Star
- 3 Lot # L8 - 130 - 99

## (5) Guided Missile Ammunition - N/A

## (6) Grenades - black powder in saluting charges or other hazardous material - N/A

## (7) Prevailing Condition:

- (a) Weather - Clear with a ground haze.  
Temp - approximately 75° and humid
- (b) Terrain - Open area, dirt soil, no obstructions
- (c) Intercept point description unknown
- (d) Area adjacent to weapon - open, with GP tent the closest object at a distance of about 60 meters,
- (e) Round was fired at 2207hrs on 19Jan69.
- (f) Projectile did not reach the intercept point.
- (g) It is unlikely that pebbles or gravel could have been blown into the bore.

- (8) A preliminary malfunction report was submitted but the ammunition was not suspended. In this battery. We suspended the fuze lot for all missions except contact missions since it was the only lot of M501A1 fuzes that we had or could draw from the ASP. However, we have since drawn a new lot and have turned lot EK-2-216 back into ASP

## Brief description of malfunction:

The round functioned and the illumination expelled immediately out of tube. The velocity carried it approximately 150 meters where it landed on a GP tent. The parachute deployed completely and floated down about 75 - 100 meters. No shell or fuze parts were found after the malfunction.

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