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RM # 5-077

HEADQUARTERS  
3d Battalion, 26th Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF  
APO San Francisco 96602

51868

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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D), Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps,  
Washington, D. C.  
Via: (1) Commanding General, FMF PAC  
(2) Commanding General, III MAF  
(3) Commanding General, 3dMarDiv  
Subj: Command Chronology  
Ref: (a) MCG 5720.2A  
(b) FMFPAC O 5750.8  
(c) 3dMarDiv O 5750.1A

Encl: ✓(1) Command Chronology for period 1-31 December, 1967 (U)

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

2. Downgraded at 3 year intervals. Declassified after 12 years IAW DOD Instruction  
5200.10.

*H. L. Alderman*  
H. L. ALDERMAN

DISTRIBUTION:

CG, 3dMarDiv (7)  
CG, 26thMar (1)  
S-3, 3/26 (1)  
File (1)

3RD BN/26TH MAR

CMD CHRON

DEC 1967

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HEADQUARTERS  
3d Battalion, 26th Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein), FPF  
APO San Francisco 9602

## COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 December to 31 December 1967

PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II - NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III - SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- A - Combat missions assigned and significant operations conducted
- B - Casualties
- C - Command Relations
- D - Communications - Electronics
- E - Fire Support
- F - Air Support
- G - Administration
- H - Personnel
- I - Intelligence
- J - Civil Affairs
- K - Psychological Warfare
- L - Logistics
- M - Medical - Dental
- N - Training

PART IV - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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## PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONSCOMMANDER

3d Battalion, 26th Marines

LtCol H. L. ALDERMAN (1-31Dec67)

SUBORDINATE UNITSH&S Company  
Company I  
Company K  
Company L  
Company MCapt A. LARDIZABAL, Jr (1-31Dec67)  
Capt W. H. DABNEY (1-31Dec67)  
Capt N. JASPER Jr (1-31Dec67)  
Capt R. D. CAMP Jr (1-31Dec67)  
Capt J. J. GILGEE Jr (1-31Dec67)2. STAFF OFFICERSExecutive Officer  
S-1/AdjutantPersonal Officer  
S-2

S-3

S-4

Comm Officer

Supply Officer

Motor Transport Officer

Medical Officer

Maj J. M. LOUGHRAN (1-31Dec67)  
1stLt R. POST Jr. (1-20Dec67)  
1stLt E. J. PAURAZAS (21-31Dec67)  
1stLt R. POST Jr (21-31Dec67)  
Capt C. F. KIDNEY (1-2Dec67)  
Capt A. LARDIZABAL Jr (3-31Dec67)  
Maj M. P. CAULFIELD (1-31Dec67)  
1stLt J. A. BRAGE (1-31Dec67)  
Capt D. A. ROBERTS (1-31Dec67)  
2ndLt E. K. ECKMANN (1-31Dec67)  
2ndLt K. WOODS (1-31Dec67)  
Lt R. W. BUTCHLER, USN (1-5Dec67)  
Lt S. J. FALKENSGAARD, USN (6-31Dec67)3. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTHUSMCUSNOTHEROFF  
41ENL  
1158OFF  
2ENL  
59OFF  
0ENL  
1

ENCLOSURE (1)

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## PART II

## NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The narrative summary contains only major events of activity for the battalion during the month of December. From 1 to 13 December, the battalion was assigned the mission of conducting search and destroy operations in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan and My Chanh areas. On 13 December, the battalion left for Dong Ha to chop operational control to the Ninth Marines, but the battalion was only there a few hours before tactical commitments forced immediate transportation to Khe Sanh.

From 13 to 25 December, the battalion's mission was to conduct search and destroy operations in the Khe Sanh AO. During that time, the battalion deployed to a suspected heavily concentrated enemy area on and around Hill 918, XD 726444 and Hill 862 vic XD 717447, but was unable to engage the enemy during that time.

From 25 to 31 December, the battalion provided the defense for Hills 861 and 881S. Company K was on Hill 861, and Company I on Hill 881S. Company H remained on Regimental Reserve, and Company L provided security for the defense perimeter of the Khe Sanh Combat Base.

1 December 1967

At 2140H, an ambush from Co I in vic (YD 585250) noticed movement 30 to 50 meters to the front of and moving away from the ambush. They fired and observed 2 VC hit and fall. A thorough search was attempted under illumination, but the terrain was too difficult. A search in the morning revealed two large pools of blood, battle dressings, and drag marks. Results were 2 VC KIA(P).

4 December 1967

At 1355H, in vic 603266, a three man point from I-4 which was moving to destroy a bamboo railbridge, received fire from 1 VC on a raft about 200 meters away. Fire was returned, and the man fell on the raft, his weapon falling into the river. A second VC opened fire from the bank, and then attempted to recover the body on the raft. He was fired at, and fell into the river. Three to four VC then opened fire from the bank, and the patrol returned fire, moving on. The patrol was unable to recover the bodies. Results were 2 VC KIA(C).

7 December

At 1640H, while operating in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley, the "B" Command Group with companies K and L, received approximately 50 rounds of incoming 82mm mortars over a 15-20 minute period. Counter mortars and artillery were fired from YD 560230 to YD 560233. Results were 5 USMC WIA (minor).

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10 December 1967

At 1600H, while operating in vic (YD 420373), L-3 came by surprise upon a group of 7 or 8 VC. Two were captured immediately, and the rest fled. L-3 fired at them, and they returned fire. Three VC were seen falling. Because of terrain, burden of POW's, L-3 could not pursue. Huey gunships were called on the enemy area and provided good coverage. Results were 1 VC KIA(C), 3 VC KIA(P) and 2 VC IDW.

13 December 1967

On 13 December, Companies K, L and M moved by convoy to Dong Ri, and then by helicopter to Khe Sanh, and Company I moved to Khe Sanh the following day.

22 December 1967

At 0630H, a Marine from K-3 tripped an M-26 grenade in the vic (XD 752441). The unit corpsman administered immediate treatment and requested an emergency medevac. A few minutes later, the request was changed to routine because the injured man had died. Results were 1 USMC KIA.

24 December 1967

At 1400H, all Companies were notified of a truce that was to extend from 1800H 24 December, to 1800H 25 December. There were to be no combat patrols, no H&I fires no ambushes, only local patrols and LP's would be conducted. All enemy sightings were to be reported.

31 December 1967

At 1446H, all Companies were notified of a truce that was to extend from 1800H 31 December, to 0600H, 02 January 1968. There were to be no combat patrols, no H&I fires, no ambushes, only local patrols and LP's would be conducted. All enemy sightings were to be reported.

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## PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## A. COMBAT MISSIONS ASSIGNED

1. From 1 to 13 December, the mission of the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines was to conduct multi-company search and destroy operations in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan (YD 563248) and My Chanh areas (YD 442396).

2. From 13 to 25 December, the mission of the battalion was to conduct search and destroy operations in the Khe Sanh AO.

3. From 25 to 31 December, the mission of the battalion was to provide defense for Hills 861 and 881S and have one company on standby as Regimental Reserve.

## B. CASUALTIES

## Friendly Casualties

KIA 2  
WIA 28  
TOTAL 30

## C. COMMAND RELATIONS

1. With Higher Units. From 1 to 13 December, the battalion was under the operational control of the 4th Marines at Camp Evans and from 14 to 31 December under the 26th Marines at Khe Sanh.

2. With other Marine Units.

a. At Camp Evans and Khe Sanh, close liaison was maintained with infantry battalions operating in adjacent areas.

b. For the defense of Hills 861 and 881S from 25 to 31 December, the following units were under the battalion's operational control:

Det, Btry C, 1st Bn, 13th Marines  
Det, Scout/Sniper Plt, Hq Co, 26th Marines  
Det, Scout Dog Team, 1st MP Bn  
Det, A Co, 3d SP Bn (HST)  
Det, 1st Plt, Co A, 3d Engr Bn

3. With ARVN/PF/RF Units

a. While at Camp Evans, the battalion maintained close direct liaison with local Vietnamese Forces, which provided intelligence data which was used frequently in establishing ambushes and planning patrol operations.

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## D. COMMUNICATIONS - ELECTRONICS

## At Camp Evans

1. Message Center. All message traffic was picked up at or delivered to the Fourth Marines Message Center. Distribution was not changed.
2. Radio. The two command groups terminated their own tactical net at their command posts. The battalion tactical net terminated in the COC and had both command groups on it. Normal supporting arms radio nets were also operated.
3. Wire. Normal intra-battalion wire facilities were in use. In addition, three trunklines from 3/26 to 4th Marines, 1/9 and 3/12 were utilized. Direct hotlines from the 3/26 COC to the 4th Marines COC and 1/9 COC, and from the 3/26 FSCC to the 3/12 FDC.

## At Khe Sanh

1. Message Center. The 3/26 message center opened on 13 December, with 1st Marines holding the 3/26 traffic, and distribution remaining the same.
2. Radio. All battalion tactical nets terminated at the 3/26 COC. Normal supporting arms radio nets were also operated. When the battalion moved to the fish for operations, the radio retransmission site on Hill 950 was used to relay messages.
3. Wire. On 19 December, normal wire facilities were established at Khe Sanh. Two trunklines were utilized from 3/26 to 26th Marines and Hill 881S via radio relay.

## E. FIRE SUPPORT

1. Camp Evans. From 1 December to 13 December, the battalion was supported by 3d Bn, 12th Marines. The FSCC conducted normal operations. H&I's were fired based on intelligence reports and map reconnaissance. Numerous fire missions were called against sighted VC/NVA.
2. Khe Sanh. From 14 to 31 December, the battalion was supported by the 1st Bn, 13th Marines. During the battalion's operation to Hills 918 and 862, preparatory fires were employed, as well as screening and orienting missions called for by the FO teams. Subsequent to the operation, the FSCC conducted normal operations. H&I's were fired by the battalion, based on intelligence from the Regimental S-2 and S-3.

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## F. AIR SUPPORT

1. Air Defense. No enemy aerial activity was encountered during the month of December.

2. Air Support.

a. Fixed Wing - Four flights (8 aircraft) made airstrikes in the Co B1 Thanh Tan Valley in support of the battalion.

## b. Helicopter

- (1) A total of 35 personnel were medevaced.
- (2) A total of 250,880 lbs of equipment were transported, and 2003 personnel were moved for tactical deployments.
- (3) AO's were used as needed.
- (4) Command and control flights were utilized as necessary to familiarize unit commanders with terrain.

## G. ADMINISTRATION

1. No major administrative difficulties were encountered during the period covered by this report. Battalion level personnel accounting continues to be very effective. During the reporting period the Battalion S-1 was separated from the battalion for about a week to 10 days but this did not create any serious administrative problems.

## H. PERSONNEL

1. During the month of December, the battalion joined four officers and 216 enlisted, while three officers and 113 enlisted were transferred. One officer and 22 enlisted were reassigned out of country by service records as the result of medical evacuation. Three enlisted were reassigned out of country due to members of their immediate family serving in RVN.

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## I. INTELLIGENCE

1. Summary.

a. Weather - At Camp Evans, the maximum temperature was 81°; the minimum was 59°. Average relative humidity was 89%; precipitation total was 10.7"; and winds averaged 5 knots from the northwest.

At Khe Sanh, the maximum temperature was 79°, the minimum was 53°. Average relative humidity was 92%; total precipitation was 3.00" and winds averaged 11 knots from the north.

## b. Terrain

(1) The area around Camp Evans is characterized by coastal, lowland plains which are mostly poorly drained rice cultivation areas. Elevation rarely exceeds 35 ft, except in the southern portion of the AO where the elevation rises sharply to heights of 600-700 meters. The vegetation consists mostly of low shrubs and bushes. As the elevation rises the vegetation is characterized by dense jungle.

(2) The terrain in the Khe Sanh area is very irregular with elevations averaging around 800 meters. The vegetation consists of 6-8' high elephant grass on the hilltops and very dense jungle in the valleys which makes for very poor trafficability.

## c. Avenues of Approach

(1) The main avenues of approach in the Camp Evans area are the Hoa My trail running through Camp Evans, the railroad tracks running to the east of Camp Evans in a northwesterly direction, the Song O Bo River valley leading generally east into the Song Bo River valley, and the trail systems throughout the Xom Phu Le - Xom Bo Dien complex (YD 5631).

(2) In the Khe Sanh AO, there are two avenues of approach from the northwest. One crosses the Laos/Vietnam border at XD 6653, continues down the valley to the Riviera De Raq Quan, then follows the river down to Route #9. The other crosses the border at XD 6646 and continues along the ridgeline to hill 881S. Route #9 is the major east-west avenues of approach across the AO. From the southeast the approach is the De Krong Valley which enters the AO at YD 0035 and continues northwest to Route #9 at XD 9241. An approach from the northeast enters the AO at XD 8551 and runs southwest along the Khe Xa Bai River to a point north of hill 558 (YD 8245).

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2. Enemy Situation.

a. The enemy continued to harass friendly units in the Camp Evans AO with the use of booby traps, mines and occasional sniper fire. The enemy continued to infiltrate foodstuffs into the mountain south of Hill 674.

b. In the Khe Sanh area, the only enemy incidents were two probings of Hill 861.

3. Incidents.

a. Numerous sightings of the enemy were made during the first part of December especially in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley. Most of these sightings were of small groups of 3-5 enemy, with a few larger sightings of from 20-30. As the patrolling in the valley became more intense, many booby traps were tripped, inflicting injury on several marines. The most significant incident occurred on 7 December, when "B" Command Group received approximately 50 incoming rounds of 82mm mortars.

b. Incidents in the Khe Sanh area were limited to a few sightings of small groups of the enemy, a few sightings of lights at night and two probing incidents of hill 861.

4. Cumulative Totals

## a. Enemy personnel losses:

KIA(G)	18	
KIA(P)	41	
Detainees	20	POW (VC) 3

## b. Enemy equipment losses:

Ind Wpns	3
CS Wpns	0

## J. CIVIL AFFAIRS

1. Due to operational commitments, there were no Civil Affairs conducted during the month of December.

## K. PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

1. From 1 to 4 December, the 4th HB team from the 244th PsyOps Co continued broadcasts in the My Chanh area (YD 4438). Broadcasts were in conjunction with infantry search and destroy missions in that area.

2. On 2 December, while on a sweep with "L" Company (vic YD 447386) AP team detained three women and two men. One of the women was on the blacklist. All five detainees were turned over to and interrogated by My Chanh Headquarters.

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## I. LOGISTICS

1. General. Logistical support was satisfactory during the month of December. There were no major problems in obtaining basic supplies, transportation or food service.

2. General Supplies. General supplies were adequate except for supply of BA-1100/U batteries, and a short supply of certain boot sizes.

3. Transportation. Satisfactory service and transportation was furnished by 9th Motor Transport. Due to the overall commitment of the battalion, tactical runs were not necessary. Administrative runs were held to a minimum.

4. Resupply. At Khe Sanh, all resupply was conducted by helicopter.

5. Maintenance Support. Maintenance support was furnished by FLSC-A, Phu Bai. Service was satisfactory.

6. Ordnance Support. Ordnance support was provided by FLSC-A, Phu Bai.

7. Food Service. The tactical and mobile situation of the battalion, limited food service.

a. This unit subsisted in three field mess halls. Twenty-Sixth Marine Regiment, 1stBn, 13th Marines and 1stBn, 26th Marines.

b. This unit consumed one hot meal per day, in the above listed field mess halls. The food was adequate in quantity and quality.

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(5) Terrain precluded rotating the companies into the base camp. It was easier to rotate the companies to Camp Evans for a "Drying Out" period. Moreover, Camp Evans had facilities for this purpose that could not be duplicated in the field. In fact, the biggest success during the period, occurred after the My Chanh base camp was disestablished. Company I was rotated to Camp Evans for a period of 3 days for personnel and equipment rehabilitation. Then, Company I was assigned to the My Chanh area, and in two days killed 4 VC and captured 2. The adverse effect of severe monsoon weather on troops and equipment is attested to by the fact that prior to their rotation to Camp Evans, Company I made over 46 personnel for emersion foot. All of them were evacuated on the 7th or 8th day of the operation, even though every precaution was taken by unit leaders to avoid weather casualties. In this regard, experience indicated that six days is the maximum period of time that troops can be exposed to severe monsoon weather without a marked decrease in combat effectiveness. Experience also indicated that a drying out period of three days is sufficient to restore troops and equipment to full duty.

C. Although the total tonnage of equipment and number of personnel transported by helicopter is impressive (paragraph 5c), helicopter support during Operation NEOSHO was not truly responsive to the ground commander. An essential element of success in counter guerrilla warfare is employment of a reaction force in a timely manner. During NEOSHO, helicopters had to be fragged 48 hours in advance. In addition, squadron regulations prohibit landing in a zone unless it is secure. The definition of secure has been strictly interpreted to mean surrounded by friendly personnel. Such regulations are overly restrictive. On many occasions the enemy was observed in the open less than 3,000 meters from Camp Evans and less than 1,500 meters from friendly outposts. The only recourse the commander had was to request artillery and mortar fire, since terrain prohibited timely deployment of a reaction force by surface means. On one occasion, a company commander observed eleven VC in the open during a visit to Hill 51. He dispatched a platoon to the Camp Evans LZ. Within 5 minutes the platoon was ready to board helicopters which were in the LZ. However, the pilot stated he was not allowed to land in an unsecured zone, even though the terrain was flat, open and under observation from Hill 51. A request for additional helicopters was disapproved because it wasn't fragged 48 hours in advance. It is obvious that such a situation is unacceptable as it results in missed opportunities to defeat the enemy wherever and whenever sighted. In short, Marine Helicopter Support has not been responsive to the needs of this battalion. Unless the present trend is reversed, the entire concept of Marine Air Support could be placed in serious jeopardy.

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## M. MEDICAL - DENTAL

1. Personnel. This Battalion Aid Station had a total of 63 personnel. These consists of 61 Hospital Corpsmen, one Medical Officer and one Chaplain.

2. Capabilities. This BAS was capable of treating all minor medical and surgical problems. Patients requiring more extensive care were evacuated to the 3d Medical Battalion in Phu Bai or Dong Ha. One tropical hardback was used for treatment and surgical problems, one for the Doctors Office and one for the Corpsmen Quarters, while the battalion was at Camp Evans. At Khe Sanh, a tent was used to set up the BAS.

3. Supply. Medical supplies were obtained from FLSU-2 at Phu Bai.

4. Dental. There were no facilities for dental care at the BAS. Patients requiring limited care were referred to the Regimental Aid Station for treatment. Patients requiring extensive dental care were evacuated to the 3d Medical Battalion.

5. Malaria Prophylaxis. Chloroquine-Primaquine tablets were taken once a week on Sunday, with meals. This battalion had three confirmed malaria cases and four probable cases in December.

6. Sanitation. Sanitation reports were made weekly to the Battalion Commander.

7. Statistics. The following were the statistics for the period beginning 1Dec67 and ending 31Dec67.

DIAGNOSIS	H&S	I	K	L	M	OTHERS	TOTAL
BURNS	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
INFECTIONS	19	12	12	21	12	0	76
DIARRHEA	6	4	5	10	3	0	28
LACERATIONS	2	1	2	4	1	0	10
FUO	1	1	0	1	0	0	3
COLDS	5	7	9	5	3	0	29
DENTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
RASH	3	24	19	10	14	0	70
STOMACH DISORDERS	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
HEADACHES	0	0	1	3	0	0	4
EYES	1	2	1	3	0	0	7
FOOT DISORDERS	8	46	21	8	1	0	84
BACK DISORDERS	1	2	2	1	1	0	7
KNEE DISORDERS	1	0	1	2	3	0	7
OTHERS	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
MALARIA	3	0	0	0	0	0	3
TOTALS	53	100	73	68	38	0	332
KIA	0	0	1	1	0	0	2
MIA	5	9	6	4	3	0	27

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## N. TRAINING

The following training was conducted during December:

1. Orientation. Personnel joined as replacements during the month received an orientation to Vietnam from the Battalion Commander.

2. Familiarization and Zero Firing of Personal Weapons. All personnel joining the battalion in December fired their M-16's for familiarization, and all personnel who had not zeroed their weapons, did so. Personnel issued .45 cal pistols were also required to fam-fire their weapons.

3. Hospital Corpemen received on the job training under the supervision of the Medical Officer and the Chief Hospital Corpeman. Classes were held by the Medical Officer giving additional instructions on field medical techniques and diagnostic care.

4. All personnel joining the battalion in December were given a thorough familiarization with mines and booby traps. In addition, personnel were shown the various types of warning signs which the VC/NVA use to warn of mines and booby traps.

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## PART IV

## SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS / HFF

1. The following messages and orders governed the activity of the battalion during the month:

- a. Fourth Marines OpOrder 55-67
- b. Fourth Marines OpOrder 57-67
- c. Ninth Marines 110230Z DEC67
- d. Twenty-Sixth Marines 140020Z DEC67
- e. Fourth Marines 140810Z DEC67
- f. Twenty-Sixth Marine 141100Z DEC67
- g. Twenty-Sixth Marines 141259Z DEC67
- h. Twenty-Sixth Marines 151505Z DEC67
- i. Twenty-Sixth Marines 170530Z DEC67
- j. Twenty-Sixth Marines 251101Z DEC67
- k. Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 15-67
- l. Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 19-67
- m. Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 20-67
- n. Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 21-67
- o. Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 22-67
- p. Third Bn, Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 10-67
- q. Third Bn, Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 11-67
- r. Third Bn, Twenty-Sixth Marines OpOrder 12-67

Added: S. A/A Rpt (Op N NEOS#0)

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3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF  
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Ser: 003A013-68  
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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, Third MarDiv  
Via: Commanding Officer, Fourth Marines

Subj: Combat After Action Report (U)

- Ref: (a) Maps: VIETNAM, Series L7014, 1:50,000, Sheets 6442 II, 6441 I, 6441 IV  
6442 III  
(b) Third MarDiv IOI (U) 1-67  
(c) Third MarDiv O FO 2000.2E (COI)  
(d) Third MarDiv O FO 2000.2F (COI)  
(e) Third MarDiv O FO 2000.4C (COM SOP)  
(f) Third MarDiv O 3100.1C (Operation Reports)  
(g) Fourth Marines 310100Z OCT67  
(h) Fourth Marines 310635Z OCT67  
(i) Fourth Marines 310637Z OCT67  
(j) CG, Third MarDiv 310701Z OCT67  
(k) Fourth Marines 041500Z NOV67  
(l) Fourth Marines 041501Z NOV67  
(m) 2dBn, 26th Marines 070230Z NOV67  
(n) CG, Third MarDiv 110929Z NOV67  
(o) Fourth Marines 141445Z NOV67  
(p) Fourth Marines 150710Z NOV67  
(q) Fourth Marines 160610Z NOV67  
(r) Fourth Marines 200610Z NOV67  
(s) Fourth Marines 210130Z NOV67  
(t) Fourth Marines 211036Z NOV67  
(u) Fourth Marines 251445Z NOV67  
(v) CG, Third MarDiv 260815Z NOV67  
(w) Fourth Marines OpOrder 55-67  
(x) Fourth Marines OpOrder 57-67  
(y) Ninth Marines 110230Z DEC67

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ENCLOSURE (7)  
TABS

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1. Code Name. Operation NEOSHO, a Search and Destroy Operation.
2. Dates of Operation. 010001BNov67 - 130530HDec67
3. Location. Phong Dien District, Quang Tri Province, RVN
4. Task Organization.

<u>UNIT DESIGNATION</u>	<u>COMMANDER</u>
3d Battalion, 26th Marines	Lt Col H. L. ALDERMAN (1Nov-13Dec67)
H&S Company	Capt J. J. GILLES (1-28Nov67)
Company I	Capt A. LARIZABAL (28Nov-13Dec67)
Company K	Maj M. P. CAMFIELD (1-23Nov67)
Company L	Capt W. H. DABNEY (23Nov-13Dec67)
Company M	Maj J. R. BROWN Jr (1-22Nov67)
	Capt M. J. JASPER Jr (22Nov-13Dec67)
	Capt R. D. CAMP (1Nov-13Dec67)
	Capt A. LARIZABAL (1-28Nov67)
	Capt J. J. GILLES (28Nov-13Dec67)

5. Supporting Forces.

a. Artillery Support

(1) During Operation NEOSHO, 3dBn, 26th Marines was under the operational control of the Fourth Marines.

(2) Two 105mm Howitzer batteries and two Provisional 155mm Howitzer batteries of the 3dBn, 12th Marines, supported the battalion during the operation. All calls for fire were cleared at the Fourth Marines Regt FSCG.

(3) Artillery was employed against enemy personnel, enemy bunkers and tunnel complexes and against suspected enemy positions. At night, H&I fires were employed to cover friendly troop movements and defensive positions, and illumination was available upon request.

b. Tracked Vehicle Support

(1) On the 3rd and 4th of December, the battalion was resupplied in the field by a platoon of Otters from the Third Motor Transport Battalion.

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c. Air Support

(1) Air support was requested by the ALO through the Fourth Marines ALO. During Operation MEO SHO:

- (a) 45 personnel were medevaced
- (b) 515 personnel and 257,910 pounds of equipment were transported by helicopter.
- (c) 16 command and control flights were utilized to familiarize unit commanders with terrain.
- (d) Five flights (10 aircraft) made fixed wing airstrikes.

6. Intelligence

a. Terrain. Hills 51 and 674 are the key terrain features in the AO. The main obstacle in the area is the Song O Ho River and its numerous contributing streams, especially north of Hill 51 and south of Camp Evans. After heavy rains these become impassable except in a few places. There is no significant cover in the area other than a few buildings in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Free-Fire-Zone. The concealment is generally good, consisting mainly of low brush and bushes and several areas where trees are in groups. The contributing streams of the Song O Ho River is a uniformly good stretch of heavy vegetation on both sides of the streams, offering excellent concealment. Observation from Hills 51 and 674 is excellent, but observation is limited from Camp Evans. The main avenues of approach are the Hoa My Trail, run ing through Camp Evans, the railroad tracks running to the east of Camp Evans in a northwesterly direction, the Song O Ho River draining from the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley, and the trail system throughout the Xom Phu Le-Xom Bo Dien complex (YD 5631).

b. Enemy Situation

(1) Significant enemy activity: Enemy movement was characterized by movements of small groups of about 3-5 people. There was much movement, probably transportation of foodstuffs through the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley and then up to the northeast of Camp Evans along the Song O Ho River. There was very little if any probing of the Camp Evans perimeter during Operation MEO SHO.

(2) Indications show that there are two main force companies located near Hill 674, a squad of guerillas in the Ap Pho Minh-Ap Hien Si area and a squad in the Phu Le-Xom Bo Dien area.

c. Enemy Activity

(1) Sightings: The majority of sightings were made by patrols in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley and the My Chanh area. Most of the groups sighted were small about 3-5 people with a few large groups of 20-30 people also sighted.

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(2) Mines and Boobytraps: Many mines and booby traps were found in the AO. The KC Scouts were very helpful in finding booby traps, but many others were tripped, resulting in many friendly WIA's.

(3) Tactics: The VC continued to harass friendly troops with the use of mines and booby traps, sniper fire and mortar attacks. They also avoided contact at all extremes.

7. Mission: During Operation DEOSHO, from 1-21 November, the battalion's assigned mission was: to provide security and perimeter defense for Camp Evans, Hill 51 (Regt OP vic YD 547261) and Radio Retransmission Site on Hill 674 (YD 516219); provide security for LCB Construction Teams, daily road sweeps, Regimental Water Point, and Rough Riders, as required; to maintain one platoon on 15 minute alert as Sparrow Hawk for reinforcement of District Headquarters at Phong Dien, Quong Dien, Huong Dien and Huong Tra; to conduct patrols and search and destroy operations in assigned AO with available forces.

From 21 to 23 November, the battalion was in preparation for Operation COVE, but on 23 November the battalion's role in the Operation was cancelled. The battalion continued to conduct search and destroy operations from 24 November to 13 December in the areas of Ky Chan and Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley.

#### 8. Concept of Operations

a. General: From 1 to 21 November, the battalion provided security for Camp Evans, Hill 51, Hill 674, LCB Construction Teams, Regimental Water Point, and Rough Riders, as required, with two rifle companies. The remaining available forces were utilized in aggressive small unit patrols and search and destroy operations. From 21 to 23 November, the battalion prepared for Operation COVE, but the battalion's part of the mission was cancelled. From 24 November to 13 December, the battalion conducted search and destroy operations in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley and Ky Chan area.

b. For the perimeter defense at Camp Evans, supporting units included:

2nd Plt(-), Btry D, 1/44th Arty  
Co C(-), 3d Tank Bn  
Co B(-), 3d Ingr Bn  
Plat(-), Co C, 3d AF Bn  
Prov Plt, 3d Bn, 12th Mar  
Prov Plt, H&S Co, 1st Bn, 4th Mar

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c. On 5 November, Company M chopped operational control to 2dSn, 26th Marines at Nam Hoa, and Company L returned to the 3dSn, 26th Marines. On 19 November, 1stSn, 9th Marines commenced their relief of the perimeter defense at Camp Evans, and on 20 November, they assumed the mission of the security of Hills 51 and 674, and PK-17. On 22 November, a company from 1stSn, 9thMar relieved Company M at Nam Hoa, and Company K returned to 3dSn, 26thMar.

d. On 24 November, Company L moved to the My Chanh area, and the Bravo Command Group with Companies K and I moved to the Co Si-Tham Tan Valley. On 25 November, Company M and the Charlie Command Group moved to join Company L at My Chanh. On 2 December, Company L returned to Camp Evans, and on 4 December they moved to the Co Si-Tham Tan to relieve Company L, while Company K and the Charlie Command Group returned to Camp Evans. On 5 December, Company I returned to Camp Evans. On 8 December, Company K returned to Camp Evans, and Company I moved to My Chanh. On 11 December, all companies had returned to Camp Evans to prepare for the move to Dong Ha. On 13 December, Operation NIOSRO terminated for the 3dSn, 26th Marines.

e. Fire support was rendered as stated in paragraph 5.

#### 9. Execution.

9 November 1967

At 1440H, the Scout-Sniper team operating from Hill 51, spotted 1 VC moving in vic YD 575262. They fired and observed him fall. Three more VC came out of a treeline to drag away the body, and the team received fire from the treeline. They returned fire and called an artillery mission, observing 2 VC take a direct hit. Results were 3 VC KIA(P).

18 November 1967

At 0740H, the Scout-Sniper team operating from Hill 51, spotted 1 VC to their front in vic YD 582270. The team opened fire, killing the VC. The body and equipment were recovered. Equipment included 1 rifle model #53, 1 pack, 1 poncho, 1 raincoat, 25 rounds 7.62 short, and rations. Results were 1 VC KIA(C)

23 November 1967

At 2359H, a patrol member of K-1 in vic YD 563249, observed 3 VC moving east of his position at a distance of 100 meters. He opened fire and observed 1 VC fall. A patrol was dispatched to check the area, but found nothing under illumination. A patrol the following morning, however, found heavy blood stains and dragmarks. Results were 1 VC KIA(P).

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28 November 1967

At 1100H, K-3 patrol sighted 20 VC moving down a trail vic (YD 540243). Artillery mission was called. K-3 observed direct hits and VC bodies flying in. Results were 11 VC KIA(C) and 4 VC KIA(P).

30 November 1967

At 1900H, while moving into an ambush site in vic (YD 442384), the point man of L-1 heard personnel approaching. The ambush opened fire, and observed two personnel jumping into a hedgerow. Illumination was requested, a search revealed one VC KIA(C), female, age 35, who had been transporting rice. Results were 1 VC KIA(C).

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1 December 1967

At 2140H, an ambush from I Company in vic (YD 585250) noticed movement 30 to 50 meters to their front and moving away from the ambush. They fired and observed 2 VC hit and fall. A thorough search was attempted under illumination, but the terrain was too difficult. A search in the morning revealed two large pools of blood, battle dressings, and drag marks. Results were 2 VC KIA(P).

4 December 1967

At 1335H, in vic (YD 603266), a three man point from I-4 which was moving to destroy a bamboo railbridge, received fire from 1 VC on a raft about 200 meters away. Fire was returned, and the VC fell on the raft, his weapon fell into the river. A second VC opened fire from the bank, and then attempted to recover the body on the raft. He was taken under fire and fell into the river. Three to four VC then opened fire from the bank, and the patrol returned fire, moving on. The bodies in the river were unrecoverable. Results were 2 VC KIA(G).

7 December 1967

At 1840H, while operating in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley, the Bravo Command Group with Companies K and L, received approximately 50 rounds of incoming 82mm mortars, during a 15 to 20 minute period. Counter mortars and artillery were fired from YD 560230 to YD 560 233. Results were 5 USMC WIA (minor)

10 December 1967

At 1600H, while operating in vic (YD 420373), I-3 came by surprise upon a group of 7 or 8 VC. Two were captured immediately, and the rest fled. I-3 fired at them and received fire in return. Three VC were seen falling, but because of the terrain and the burden of POW's, I-3 could not pursue. Huey gunships were called on the enemy area and provided good coverage. Results were 1 VC KIA(G), 3 VC KIA(P) and 2 VC POW's.

10. Results.

## a. Friendly Casualties

KIA 3  
WIA 49

## b. Enemy Casualties

VC KIA(G) 16  
VC KIA(P) 59  
VC POW 2

## c. Weapons Captured

IND WPNS 2  
CSW 0

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11. Administrative Mattersa. Supply

(1) Resupply of units providing security for Hill 51 and Hill 674 was accomplished by helicopter. When the battalion was operating in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan and My Chanh areas, resupply was accomplished by helicopter and Otters.

b. Maintenance

- (1) First and second echelon maintenance was performed by battalion units.
- (2) Third echelon maintenance was performed by LSU/FLSG-A.

c. Treatment of Casualties, Evacuation and Hospitalization.

(1) All casualties were treated in the field by company corpsmen and either returned to duty or evacuated to A-Med at Phu Bai. Serious casualties were further evacuated to NSA at Da Nang or to hospitals outside of RVN.

d. Transportation

(1) Transportation was provided by the Third Motor Transport Battalion through the Fourth Marine Regiment (S-4).

(2) Due to the overall tactical commitments of the battalion, tactical runs were frequent. Administrative runs with organic vehicles were held to a minimum.

e. Communications

(1) Radio - All battalion nets and Regimental TAC net terminated in the COC bunker. Contact with operating elements was made possible through the use of the Radio Relay Station on Hill 674.

(2) Wire - Normal intra-battalion wire facilities were in use during the month. A trunk line directly connecting the 3/26 COC to the Fourth Marines COC aided greatly in administrative and tactical communications.

(3) On operations in the area it was found that normal antenna accessories were not capable of transmitting from the lowland and valley areas.

f. Medical Evaluation

(1) Throughout Operation MASHO, the BAS remained at Camp Evans, with the capability of handling all routine medical problems and performing minor surgical operations.

(2) The BAS did not have the facilities for more extensive surgical care, and patients requiring major surgery were evacuated to A-Med at Phu Bai.

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12. Special Equipment and Techniques.

a. During operations in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan and Ky Chan areas (24 Nov-13 Dec), the battalion CP was located in Camp Evans. Command Group Bravo with two rifle companies was established in the Co Bi-Thanh Tan Valley. Command Group Charlie, with two rifle companies, was established in the Ky Chan area. The concept was to establish base camps in both areas to afford operating companies some relief from the monsoon weather. The planned stockage objective at each base camp was 10 days. Although the above organization permitted the Battalion Commander to exercise maximum control over both Command Groups, it seriously dissipated the Staff resources of the battalion.

13. Commanders Analysis.

a. Prior to 24 November, one company was under the operational control of another battalion and the remainder of the battalion was committed to the defense of Camp Evans, Rough Rider security, and squad sized security details. Therefore, no continuing operations were conducted. During the period of 24 November to 13 December, the entire battalion was deployed in search and destroy operations which were highly successful. The success is attributable to deploying rifle companies in AO's for an indefinite period of time. The AO's were deliberately located in known enemy areas of infiltration. The mission of each company was to saturate the AO with patrols and ambushes. Since personnel became as familiar with the terrain as the enemy, successes began to multiply.

b. The concept of establishing Command Groups to control two rifle companies and to establish base camps has merit in theory, but in fact, proved more of a burden than an asset. Experience proved that such a concept had the following disadvantages:

- (1) It seriously dissipated the Staff resources of the battalion.
- (2) It tied one rifle company to the task of building a base camp and security for the Command Group.
- (3) The base camp was static in nature and did not afford the advantage of mobility.
- (4) Severe monsoon weather (ie. 7-10 days of heavy cold rain) prohibited logistical support of the base camp as originally planned. At no time did the base camp reach its stockage objective of 10 days. In fact, subsistence levels of Class I and V were only affected by emergency resupply. As a result, the base camp did not afford protection from adverse monsoon weather. The result was a marked decrease in efficiency as monsoon casualties began to take a heavy toll in personnel and equipment.

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14. Recommendations.

a. That Camp Evans be utilized to rotate operating companies during monsoon weather, rather than build base camps in the field.

b. That rifle companies operate in independent AO's, without the imposition of a Command Group.

c. That rifle companies establish mobile patrol bases, instead of static base camps.

d. That the ground commanders of each Regimental AO establish and promulgate regulations for the employment of helicopters.

e. That the current regulations which restrict employment of Marine Helicopters in support of ground troops in Vietnam be reevaluated.

*H. L. Alderman*  
H. L. ALDERMAN

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