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

3/1A4/dew  
3100  
003A154-62  
2 June 1968

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code 403D),  
Headquarters U.S. MARINE CORPS, Washington,  
D.C. 20380

Attn: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division  
(2) Commanding General, III MAF  
(3) Commanding General, FMF PAC

Subject: Command Chronology

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A  
(b) FMFPAC O 5750.6  
(c) 3d MarDiv O 5750.4A

Enc: (1) Command Chronology for period 1-31 May 1968

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

*R.R. Blair*  
for J.C. STUDE

REGISTRATION:

CG, 3d MarDiv (7)  
CO, 26th MAR (10)  
E-3, 3/26 (1)  
File (1)

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

## COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 May to 31 May 1968

## 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 Relationships
- D - Communications - Electronics
- E - Fire Support
- F - Air Support
- G - Administration
- H - Personnel
- I - Intelligence
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- L - Logistics
- M - Medical-Dental
- N - Training

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## PART I

## ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

**SECRET**1. DESIGNATIONSCOMMANDERS**UNCLASSIFIED**

3d Battalion, 26th Marines

LtCol J.C. STUDE (1-31 May68)

SUBORDINATE UNITS

H&S Company  
Company I  
Company K  
Company L  
Company M

Capt A. LARDIZABAL (1-31 May68)  
1st Lt J.T. ESSENGER (1-31 May68)  
Capt P.L. SNEAD (1-31 May68)  
Capt J.D. BENNETT (1-31 May68)  
Capt W.C. JENKINS (1-31 May68)

2. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer

Maj J.M. LOUGHRAN (1-2 May68)

S-1/Adjutant

Maj R.R. BLAIR (7-31 May68)

Personnel Officer

1st Lt F.D. TYSON (1-31 May68)

S-2

1st Lt E.J. PAURAZAS (1-31 May68)

S-3

1st Lt R.M. FOLEY (1-31 May68)

S-3A

Maj M.P. CAUFIELD (1-31 May68)

S-4

Capt L.A. LUTHER (1-31 May68)

Comm Officer

1st Lt J.A. BRACE (1-31 May68)

Supply Officer

Capt D.A. ROBERTS (1-17 May68)

Motor Transport Officer

1st Lt G. DURAN (17-31 May68)

Medical Officer

1st Lt G.L. ELSTON (1-31 May68)

Chaplain

1st Lt W.L. MILLER (1-31 May68)

Lt I.H. STEIGER (1-31 May68)

LtCmdr W.R. HAMPTON (1-31 May68)

3. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

USMC		USN		OTHER	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
35	1069	2	52	0	0

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## PART II

## NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The narrative summary contains only the major events of the Battalion during the month of May. From 1 to 17 May the Battalion conducted Squad, Platoon, Company, and Battalion size operations in an AO which was generally to the South and West of Quang Tri City. During this time frame, the Battalion guarded the Ga Bridge, was prepared to defend either Quang Tri City or the Quang Tri Combat Base, and continuously conducted rice denial operations. From 1 to 5 May the Battalion provided for the defense of LZ BATTY vic (YD 335503) with one Company and LZ SHARON vic (YD 304487) with one Company.

On 17 May, this Battalion was chopped OPCON to the 1st Marine Division for Operation HAMEL LIKE THRUST. On 19 May the Battalion attacked to the west from Hill 10 vic (AT 923691) towards Hill 1235 vic (AG 200620)/Happy Valley to find, fix, and destroy the enemy forces and installations in its zone of action.

2 May 1968

At 0835H, L-3 on patrol tripped an explosive device at (YD 271541).

Device was located under an enemy pack. Results were 1 USMC KIA.

From 0930H to 1500H, 3/26(-) conducted a search and destroy operation in GS2553, 2755 and at (YD 273542), (YD 273545), and (YD 275542).

At 0930H, Company L proceeded to a block position without incident.

On order, Company L drew up the block position and swept the east side of the river while Company B swept the west side of the river. Found one recently used, camouflaged grass hut. Hut was burned. Four well constructed bunkers were found and destroyed by demolitions. Numerous spiderholes, punji pits and punji sticks were found and destroyed. 3/26(-) Command Group while moving CP to a new location, triggered a large surprise firing device mortally wounding the Battalion Executive Officer. Results were 1 USMC KIA, 4 USMC WIA, 1 sandbag containing numerous 7.62mm rounds, cooking and eating utensils. 1 NVA KIA(C) believed to have been shot previously by Company L.

4 May 1968

At 1905H, 3/26 Command Group requested gunships to check treeline at GS2043. The gunship spotted 1 NVA and opened fire. Results were 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 2300H, M-1 killer team sighted 4 VC moving along trail vic (YD 233501). Killer team opened fire with small arms. Results were 1 VC KIA(C), 1 canvas pack with 3/4 pound TBT enclosed, 1 flashlight, and miscellaneous clothing.

5 May 1968

At 0620H, 3/26 position at LZ SHARON received 15 rounds of 122mm rockets. Results were 1 USMC WIA, 1 USMC M109 destroyed.

At 0700H, Company L swept area of contact at (YD 233501). Results were 1 VC KIA(C), 1 anti-tank mine.

At 1545H, L-3 made contact with approximately 15 enemy at (YD 285471).

While maneuvering into a better position, enemy broke and ran. 3 VC KIA(C). Sire with small arms. Results were 3 NVA KIA(C).

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9 May 1968

At 1755H, K-1 spotted 5 enemy at (YD 286536). K-1 patrol Base and K-1 killer team opened fire with small arms. The enemy withdrew to the brush. K-1 moved to block enemy from the north while L-3 and L-4 maneuvered toward K-1. L-3 came under fire by 2 enemy and returned fire which killed both enemy, one of which was an officer. L-4 was fired on by 3 more enemy, L-4 killed one and captured the other two. Results were 4 USMC KIA, 6 USMC WIA, 1 VC KIA(C), 2 NVA KIA(C), 1 VC POW, 1 AK-50, 2 AK-47's, 1 carbine caliber .30, medical supplies, 1 notebook, and a large amount of ammunition.

At 2223H, K-1 killer team sighted 1 VC at (YD 288531). Opened fire with small arms. Results were 1 VC KIA(C), 1 sandbag used as pack containing Ho Chi Minh sandals and black civilian clothing, 2 illumination parachutes.

At 2130H, K-1 killer team ambushed 10 enemy and opened fire with small arms killing 8 NVA. While checking bodies a large number of enemy were seen approaching. K-1 left and joined another Kilo killer team. Enemy opened fire with small arms and grenades and then withdrew. K-3 minus its killer teams moved towards K-1 to reinforce. Results were 2 USMC KIA, 8 VC KIA(C), 3 pair black pajamas, \$21.00 LIC, 1 cigarette lighter.

At 2235H, K-1 killer team contacted enemy at (YD 293535). K-1 opened fire with small arms. Results were 1 VC KIA(C).

10 May 1968

At 0817H, Company M swept area of enemy contact 9 May 1968 at vic (YD 289537). Found a blood trail and 1 NVA. Results were 1 NVA KIA(C), 1 diary (possible log), 1 letter, 1 NVA newspaper clipping, 1 wallet containing personal pictures, 1 cigarette lighter, 1 package w/unknown pills, 2 sandbag type packs with one containing NVA uniforms, both camouflaged and khaki, 1 hammock, green illumination parachute, 1 pack containing 10 lbs rice, 1 jungle type hammock, vitamin tablets, battle dressings, soap, 1 NVA uniform (jungle type), civilian clothing, transistor radio, 10 blasting caps, 6 rigged caps.

At 0930H, Company M was following a heavy blood trail. 1 surprise firing device was triggered at (YD 285539) wounding one Marine. K-1 continued pursuit and found 1 enemy body. Results were 1 USMC WIA, 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 1115H, K-1 sweeping area, engaged 1 VC in firefight at (YD 283533). Results were 1 VC KIA(C).

At 1835H, Company L, moving into new position vic (YD 278482), discovered 1 enemy killed by artillery. Results were 1 VC KIA(C).

11 May 1968

At 1915H, L-3 killer team/PRU ambush was moving into position. The Marine point observed 1 enemy (point) and 3 other enemy moving towards him. The enemy column halted and went into a house. The Marine point observed 5 other enemy and other movement which he could not observe due to bend in trail. Marines/PRU set in hasty ambush vicinity of the house. One enemy observed the ambush set in and the Marines/PRU opened fire with small arms. Four enemy moved up to the house and were shot. Enemy appeared to panic. 6 enemy ran out of the house and brought under fire by the Marines/PRU. 6 enemy were shot. The house was demolished by L-26 grenades, L-49 grenades and MG fire.

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81mm mission was called on trail. 2 enemy were spotted in foxhole. One VC female armed with sickle ran towards a Marine who shot her. PRU began to advance and police area when the patrol spotted 20-40 enemy on the left flank and received a report that another group of enemy was on the right flank and rear. Gunships, artillery and 81's were called in. The patrol leader ordered immediate withdrawal. The enemy began to deliver large volumes of fire from the flanks. Marines were low on ammunition and PRU's were out. The Marines/PRU's withdrew hastily while enemy tried to encircle them. Withdrawal was slowed due to 1 PRU being wounded who later died. Marines and PRU's took turns carrying wounded man. At vicinity (YD 322520) the patrol received AK-47 and machinegun fire. The Command Group sent a link up force and called in gunships, 81's and artillery. Fire ceased and link up was completed without further incident. Results were 1 PRU KIA, 18 NVA KIA(C), 1 AK-47 captured.

At 2005H, Company K point elements moving into ambush site at (YD 306455) engaged 15 enemy in a firefight with small arms. Results were 5 VC KIA(C).

12 May 1968

At 0928H, Company K, while moving to 3/26 position across bridge at (YD 346477) tripped a surprise firing device. Results were 4 USMC KIA.

At 1910H, L-3 killer team, while setting in ambush at (YD 309510), and adjusting claymore mines, were fired upon by 4 enemy. The Marines returned fire, resulting in 2 NVA KIA(C).

At 0100H, 3/26 received a report from the ARVN Battalion that the fire mission called in on enemy troops vic (YD 378538) by the 3/26 artillery liaison officer on the night of 9 May 1968 at 0100 was highly effective. Results were 14 VC KIA(C).

13 May 1968

Between the hours of 0900H and 1200H, Company L guarding the Ga Bridge, were helped by a Vietnamese boy who had breakfast with the Company. The boy pointed out 3 VC attempting to cross the bridge into the city of Quang Tri. Results were 3 VC Detainees.

14 May 1968

At 1645H, Company L, while moving into night positions, observed one Vietnamese male running from a hut. Male Vietnamese was apprehended and search of hut revealed a female. Suspects were sent to 3/26 S-2 for questioning. Further search of hut revealed a document stating that the son of the male and female was a NVA soldier. Results were 2 VC Detainees.

16 May 1968

At 1300H, L-1 was chopped (PCON to III LAF.

17 May 1968

At 1515H, 3/26(-) chopped O. CON to the 1st Marine Division and displaced from the Quang Tri Combat Base to Hill 10 located southwest of Danang.

At 2200H, H&S Company sighted 2 NVA outside their wire at the Quang Tri Combat Base. Results were 2 NVA KIA(C), 2 AK-47's.

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20 May 1968

At 1700H, M-1 spotted 3 NVA at (AT 878655), called in 60mm mortar fire. Results were unknown.

21 May 1968

At 1500H, 3/26(-) controlled air strike vicinity (AT 860678). Results were 2 large secondary explosions.

22 May 1968

At 0850H, I Company uncovered unoccupied bunker and foxhole complex vicinity (AT 858673). Results were 20 fighting holes, 4 log bunkers destroyed.

23 May 1968

At 1140H, AO sighted 4 NVA vicinity (AT 866676). Gunship fire mission called in. Results were unknown.

At 1145H, 3/26(-) heli-lifted to Hill 502 vicinity (AT 839658) without opposition.

24 May 1968

At 1035H, I Company uncovered a large harboring complex at (AT 824658) consisting of 80 living bunkers and 11 bamboo houses. Results were 30 60mm rounds, 2 82mm rounds, 5 mortar fuzes, 2 RPG rockets, 1 ChiCom grenade plus assorted individual combat equipment. 10 NVA KIA(C) from artillery prep fires found in freshly dug graves. Harboring site destroyed.

27 May 1968

At 1214H, I Company found 4 NVA killed by artillery prep fires at (AT 803649). Results were 4 NVA KIA(C).

At 1630H, I Company uncovered freshly dug company size defensive position vicinity (AT 814648), also uncovered four freshly dug graves. Results were 4 NVA KIA(C) by artillery prep fires; complex destroyed.

28 May 1968

At 0910H, I Company uncovered 2 fresh graves coordinates unknown. Occupants recently killed by artillery prep fires. Results were 2 NVA KIA(C).

At 1140H, I Company uncovered company size harbor site consisting of 12 living bunkers and 8 caves. Found 4 freshly dug graves. Occupants killed by artillery prep fires. Results were 4 NVA KIA(C), harbor site destroyed.

29 May 1968

At 1925H, CH-46 with 11 passengers aboard crashed vicinity (AT 805648). Burning aircraft ignited 81mm ammo dump. Results were 1 USMC KIA, 14 USMC WIA, 1 CH-46 destroyed, 4 81mm mortars destroyed, 2 106mm destroyed, 3 60mm mortars destroyed, 34 M-16 rifles destroyed, 2 4.2 mortars destroyed, 1 PRC-41 destroyed, 1 PRC-25 destroyed, 1 250 gallon water bladder destroyed plus a large amount of 782 gear destroyed.

30 May 1968

At 1030H, M-1 patrol tripped surprise firing device vicinity (AT 802649). Results were 1 USMC KIA, 3 USMC WIA.

31 May 1968

At 1250H, I company received small arms fire vicinity (AT 803649).

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At 1300H, I Company engaged 2 NVA vicinity (AT 8046). Results were 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 1545H, H Company engaged 3 NVA vicinity (AT 803636). Results were 1 NVA POW, 1 AK-47, 2 Chi Com grenades, 2 AK-47 magazines.

At 1800H, I Company uncovered old enemy harboring complex. Complex was destroyed.

At 1930H, I Company ambushed 4 NVA at (AT 806643). Results were 2 NVA KIA(C).

## PART III

## SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

## A. COMBAT MISSIONS ASSIGNED

1. From 1 to 17 May the mission of the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines was to guard the Ga Bridge, be prepared to defend either Quang Tri City or the Quang Tri Combat Base, and to conduct rice denial operations.

2. On 19 May, the Battalion attacked to the west to find, fix, and destroy the enemy located on Hill 502 vic (AT 8366), Hill 1025 vic (AT 8463), and Hill 1235 vic (ZC 2062).

## B. CASUALTIES

## Friendly Casualties

KIA	07
WIA	37
TOTAL	44

## C. COMMAND RELATIONSHIPS

1. With Higher Units. From 1 to 31 May the Battalion was under the operational control of the 26th Marines.

2. With Other Marine Units.

a. From 1 to 17 May, the following units were under the Battalion's Operational Control:

Det, Btry C, 1st Bn, 13th Marines  
Det, Scout Dong Plt, 3d LP Bn  
Det, 1st Plt, Co B, 3d Engr Bn  
Det, 1st Plt, Co A, 3d Engr Bn  
C Troop, 3d Squadron, 5th Armored Cav  
Det, Scout/Sniper Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines  
Det, Comm Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines

b. From 17 to 31 May the following units were under the Battalion's Operational Control:

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Det, Btry C, 1st Bn, 13th Marines  
 Det, Scout Dog Plt, 3d LF Bn  
 Det, 1st Plt, Co B, 3d Engr Bn  
 Det, 1st Plt, Co A, 3d Engr Bn  
 Det, Scout/Sniper Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines  
 Det, Comm Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines

3. With ARVN/PF/RF Units. From 1 to 17 May, the Battalion maintained direct liaison with the 1st ARVN Regt at Quang Tri City.

#### D. COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS

1. Message Center. All message traffic was picked up from and outgoing traffic was delivered to, the 3d Marine Division Rear Communication Center at Quang Tri.

2. Radio. From 1-5 May the Battalion tactical net, 26th Marines tactical net, Regt TACP local, C Btry 1/13 and 81mm Mortar COF nets all maintained stations in the COC at LZ SHARON. They were then moved to the field, back to Quang Tri and then to Danang on 17 May. The Battalion Administrative net handled logistic and administrative matters between the Battalion Rear and Companies and the forward CP. The Battalion maintained a covered capability on the Regimental tactical net during the entire month.

3. Wire/Radio Relay. Switchboards were operated at LZ SHARON and the Battalion Rear at Quang Tri from 1 to 17 May. Normal inter Battalion locals, trunk and hot lines to higher headquarters and adjacent units were installed and operated. While at LZ SHARON the Battalion was supported with a radio relay team from Regiment.

4. General. During May, one AN/MRC-109 radio vehicle, one AN/PRC-25, four H-44 head and chest sets, four telephones TA-1/PT, four telephones TA-312, one radio mount AN/GRC-125 and one handset H-189 were destroyed due to enemy action. Communications was adequate throughout the month.

#### E. FIRE SUPPORT

From 1 to 17 May the Battalion was supported by the 1st Bn, 40th FA, USA. From 19 to 31 May, the Battalion was supported by "A" Btry, 1st Bn, 13th Marines. All calls for fire were cleared by the Battalion FSCC. F&I fires were based on company requests, intelligence as well as map and photo reconnaissance. TPQ's were requested by the Battalion FSCC on targets which required air coverage.

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## F. AIR SUPPORT

**SECRET**1. Fixed Wing Support.

a. During the month of May, 46 air strikes and 21 TPQ's were conducted in support of this Battalion. On 7 occasions an aerial gunship was used on known and suspected enemy positions.

2. Helicopter Support.

a. During the month of May external resupply loads were flown from Dong Ha and LZ 495 at Hill 10. Local resupply totaled 263,637 lbs. Helicopters totaled 96 troops. On 2 May 550 troops were lifted from the Quang Tri Combat Base to LZ EAGLE vic (YD 273452) for tactical deployment. On 26 May 750 troops were lifted for Hill 502 vic (AT 8366) to Hill 1025 vic (AT 8463) for tactical deployment.

## G. ADMINISTRATION

1. No major administrative difficulties were encountered during the period 1-17 May. From 17-31 May, major administrative difficulties were encountered due to the 120 miles separation between the Battalion located near Danang and its administrative rear located near Quang Tri. Couriers were dispatched from both locations on a daily basis which helped to alleviate the problem.

## H. PERSONNEL

1. During the month of May, the Battalion joined 2 officers, and 82 enlisted while 3 officers and 86 enlisted were dropped. 56 enlisted were reassigned out of country by service records as a result of medical evacuation.

## I. INTELLIGENCE

1. Summary.

a. Weather - The maximum temperature for the month was 104 degrees. The minimum was 70 degrees and the mean temperature was 91 degrees. Relative humidity was 66%. Total precipitation was 9 inches and winds were variable at 7 knots.

b. Terrain - The terrain in the Quang Tri AO consists mostly of rolling hills and rice paddies. There is a multitude of water in the Quang Tri AO but by the end of the summer only major rivers and streams will have water. The average elevation in the AO is 24 meters and the vegetation is very thick around rivers and streams with heavy shrub brush and elephant grass which grows from 4 to 8 feet in height. In the other areas the vegetation consists of scattered shrub.

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3 to 5 feet in height. The terrain in the Danang AO is very rough with the elevation averaging around 500 meters. The vegetation consists of very thick brush and elephant grass which grows from 4 to 5 feet in height. There are also many different types of trees in this area that range in height from 4 to 30 feet. Water in the AO is plentiful in the valleys but very scarce in the higher terrain.

c. Avenues of Approach - In the Quang Tri area is Route #1 running from South to North through Quang Tri City and the Song Vihn Dinh River from the Northeast moving South. Another avenue of approach is the Song Thach Han River which runs from the Southwest to the North and from (YD 1446) moving East; also, from (YD 2055) moving South is a road which can be used for mass movement. Another road from (YD 2346) moving East and paralleling the Song Thach Han River has a natural cover of elephant grass and heavy bush.

In the Danang AO there are two likely avenues of approach which could facilitate a large body of troops and equipment. One is known as Happy Valley running in a North to Southeasterly direction. The other avenue of approach is Mortar Valley running in a North to Southwesterly direction. Other possible avenues of approach exist, but due to the continual movement of the Battalion cannot be determined.

## 2. Enemy Situation.

a. During the first portion of the month, this Battalion continued its operation in the Quang Tri AO. The enemy's primary objective was collecting harvested rice. They also launched mortar and rocket attacks against Quang Tri Combat Base, LZ SHARON and LZ BATTAY for harassment with negligible results. The enemy also had the capability of launching a ground attack on Quang Tri City or Quang Tri Combat Base. Numerous patrol probes and small unit sorties were unsuccessful because of the effective use of patrols, killer teams and the relocation of the Battalion in a key location.

b. During the latter portion of the month, the Battalion was relocated in the Danang area and was chopped OPCON to the 1st MarDiv. As the Battalion moved out on the first phase of the operation the main threat was the enemy's capability of mortar and rocket attacks and the possibility of a coordinated ground attack of battalion size. The enemy has retained this capability throughout the operation. The enemy avoided contact with the Battalion as it moved further into the AO, but still has the capability of attacking in battalion force.

3. Incidents. In the Quang Tri AO contact was initially light during the first phase of Operation RICE, but increased considerably during the latter portion. The NVA were mostly seen in 5 to 7 man groups, but on two occasions, larger groups were spotted. Most contacts were made by killer team ambushes with no significant large unit contact. Incidents accounted for 67 NVA KIA(C) and 2 NVA POW's plus

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and equipment captured. In the Lanang area contact was first phase of Operation NAMELUNG THRUSE but the Battalion large bunker and cave complexes plus harboring sites of Battalion size. Numerous freshly dug graves and bodies were found which was attributed to the Battalion's effective use of extensive prep fires. There were also several incidents involving surprise firing devices, mines and a helicopter which crashed resulting in a number of friendly KIA's and WIA's. Accumulative total for this period is 36 NVA KIA(C), 1 NVA POW and various captured equipment.

#### 4. Totals.

##### a. Monthly totals:

NVA KIA(C) 108

POW's 06

##### b. Cumulative totals:

Quang Tri

NVA KIA(C) 72

POW's 05

Wpns 10

Denang

NVA KIA(C) 36

POW's 01

Wpns 01

#### J. CIVIL AFFAIRS

1. There was no civil affairs conducted by this Battalion during the month.

#### K. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1. There was no PSYOPS conducted by this Battalion during the month.

#### L. LOGISTICS

1. General. Logistical support was satisfactory throughout the month. There were very few problems in obtaining supplies.

2. General Supplies. General supplies were adequate except for a shortage of certain items, such as: utilities, jungle (sm.), critical size knots. A laundry facility was available which was operated by Vietnamese Civilians. Service was satisfactory.

##### 3. Transportation.

a. Transportation was furnished by 3d Motor Transport Battalion and the 1st Motor Transport Battalion, through the 26th Marine Regiment (S-4). From 1 May thru 15 May transportation was furnished by the 3d Motor Transport Battalion. 16 May thru 31 May transportation was furnished by the 1st Motor Transport Battalion. Transportation was adequate and satisfactory.

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b. Due to the situation of the Battalion, runs were made with 3d and 1st Motor Transport vehicles.

4. Resupply. From 1 thru 17 May, resupply was accomplished by conveyors and helicopters. 18 May thru 31 May resupply was accomplished by helicopters. Various resupply problems occurred from 18 thru 31 May due to the difficulty of resupplying a Battalion continuously by helicopter.

5. Maintenance Support. 1 thru 17 May, maintenance support was furnished by FISC-B, Dong Ha, 18 May through 31 May by 1st FSR and FIC, Da nang with satisfactory results.

6. Ordnance Support. Ordnance support was furnished by FISC-B and 1st FSR, with satisfactory results.

7. Food Services. From 1 thru 17 May this Battalion operated a field mess. From 18 thru 31 May, this Battalion Rear at Hill 10 subsisted in the 1/7 field mess hall while the Battalion(-) subsisted on MLI. The Administrative Rear at Quang Tri subsisted in the 3d Motor Transport mess hall.

#### M. MEDICAL

1. Personnel. This Battalion Aid Station has a total of 56 personnel. These consist of 54 Hospital Corpsmen, one Medical Officer and one Chaplain.

2. Capabilities. This Battalion Aid Station was capable of treating all minor medical and surgical problems. Patients requiring more extensive care were evacuated to the 16th Surgical Hospital, 3d Medical Battalion, 1st Hospital Company and NSA Da nang. At the Quang Tri BAS, one tent is being used for treatment and ward, one tent for Medical Supply and administration, one for supply and Officer's and CPO Quarters, and one for the Corpsmen's Quarters. At the Hill 10 BAS, one hard back is being used for a ward and one for a treatment area (the BAS is shared with 1/7). The forward BAS is responsible for evacuating seriously injured patients from the field.

3. Training. Hospital Corpsmen receive on the job training under the supervision of the Medical Officer and the Chief Hospital Corpsman. Classes are held by the Medical Officer giving additional instruction on field medical techniques and diagnostic care.

4. Dental. There are no facilities for dental at the BAS. Patients requiring dental care are referred to 3d Dental Company and 1st Hospital Company, Da nang.

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5. Malaria Prophylaxis. Chloroquine-Primaquine taken once a week, preferably with Sunday meals. This Battalion confirmed case of Malaria.

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6. Sanitation. Sanitation reports were made weekly to the Battalion Commander and should be referred to.

7. Statistics. The following statistics for the month of May are:

DIAGNOSIS	H&S	I	K	L	M	OTHER	TOTAL	APRIL TOTAL
CONCUSSION	03	00	01	03	00	00	07	02
STOMACH PROBLEM	05	03	03	01	02	01	15	14
LACERATIONS	02	02	01	02	00	02	09	16
DIARRHEA	02	03	01	03	03	00	19	12
EAR PROBLEM	01	02	06	06	02	02	19	12
EYE PROBLEM	07	07	00	05	04	00	23	17
DENTAL	15	31	12	24	23	00	111	20
UPPER RESPIRATORY INFECTION	06	01	01	01	01	01	11	07
FEVER UNKNOWN ORIGIN	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	02
LEG PROBLEM	02	03	04	03	05	00	17	17
FOOT PROBLEM	02	07	12	13	15	01	40	41
ARM PROBLEM	04	00	05	01	00	01	11	10
BACK PROBLEM	08	05	03	01	03	00	20	14
MALARIA	00	00	00	00	00	00	01	00
INFESTION	10	07	04	03	11	03	39	15
IMMUNIZATIONS	07	02	15	02	01	03	30	200
VENEREAL DISEASE	00	05	01	02	02	00	10	09
SHRAPNEL WOUNDS	00	01	00	00	00	02	03	28
BLISTERS	00	01	03	00	02	00	06	00
IMMERSION FOOT	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
HEAT EXHAUSTION	00	02	00	00	05	00	07	00
HEAT STROKE	0	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
RETURN VISITS	18	39	28	45	35	00	165	263
TOTALS	97	123	100	112	120	16	563	699

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## N. TRAINING

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The following training was conducted during May:

1. Personnel joined as replacements during the month received an orientation lecture by the Battalion Commander, XO, S-3, S-1 and Company Commanders.
2. Other limited training was conducted including squad tactics, platoon tactics, mines and booby traps, demolitions, patrolling and ambush techniques, and familiarization of weapons.
3. Hospital Corpsmen received on-the-job training under the supervision of the Medical Officer and the Chief Hospital Corpsman.
4. All personnel joining the Battalion had their weapons battle sighted and fired 200 rounds for M-16 familiarization.

## PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS - *NFC*

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

- a. 26th Marines OpOrder 2-68
- b. 3d Bn, 26th Marines OpOrder 16-68
- c. 3d Bn, 26th Marines OpOrder 17-68
- d. 3d Bn, 26th Marines OpOrder 18-68
- e. 3d Bn, 26th Marines OpOrder 19-68
- f. 3d Bn, 26th Marines OpOrder 20-68
- g. 3d Bn, 26th Marines 012230May68
- h. 1st MarDiv OpOrder 301-68
- i. 26th Marines OpOrder 3-68
- j. 3d Bn, 26th Marines 211600May68

Added: ✓K A/ARPT (OpN RICE)

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

420000

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003A145-68  
24 May 1968

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division  
Via: Commanding Officer, 26th Marines

Subj: Combat After Action Report (U)

Ref: (a) Map: VIETNAM, Series L7014, 1:50,000, Sheet 6442 III  
(b) 26th Marines OpOrder 2-68  
(c) 3dBn, 26th Mar OpOrder 16-68  
(d) 3dBn, 26th Mar OpOrder 17-68  
(e) 3dBn, 26th Mar OpOrder 18-68  
(f) 3dBn, 26th Mar OpOrder 19-68

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3/26  
A/ASST (OPN/ICE)

17 APR 1968  
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1. Code Name. Operation RICE, a search and destroy operation.
2. Dates of Operation. 171700HAPR68 - 171515HMAY68.
3. Location. Mai Linh District, Quang Tri Province, RVN.
4. Task Organization.

3d Bn, 26th Marines

LtCol J. C. STUDD  
 (17Apr68-17May68)

H&S Company

Capt A. LARDIZABAL  
 (17Apr68-17May68)

Company I

Capt L. A. LUTHER  
 (17Apr68-27Apr68)  
 1stLt J. T. ESSLINGER  
 (28Apr68-17May68)

Company K

Capt P. L. SNEAD  
 (17Apr68-17May68)

Company L

Capt W. F. HURLEY  
 (17Apr68-29Apr68)  
 Capt J. D. BENNETT  
 (30Apr68-17May68)

Company M

Capt W. C. JENKINS  
 (17Apr68-17May68)

5. Supporting Forces

a. Artillery Support

(1) During Operation RICE, the Battalion was supported by the 1stBn, 40th FA, USA and C Btry, 1stBn, 13th Marines. All calls for fire were cleared at the 26th Marines Regiment FSCC.

(2) H&I fires were based on company requests, intelligence reports, as well as map reconnaissance. TPQ's were requested by the Battalion FSCC on targets which required air coverage.

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b. Air Support

(1) Air support was requested by the Battalion ALO through the 26th Marines ALO. In addition, aerial gunships were requested directly from the 229th ARA at LZ Sharon.

(2) During Operation RICE:

(a) 62 personnel were medevaced.

(b) 550 troops were air lifted for tactical deployment.

(c) 36,000 pounds of equipment were transported.

(3) Aerial gunships and flareships were on station and available during the hours of darkness.

6. Intelligence

a. Terrain

(1) The area West and South of Quang Tri City consists of rolling hills and rice paddies. There is a multitude of water in the Quang Tri AO but the water level is dropping at the present time. The average elevation in the Quang Tri area is 24 meters. The vegetation around the rivers and streams consists of very thick shrub brush and elephant grass and grows from 4 to 8 feet in height.

(2) Avenues of approach in the Quang Tri area are Route #1 running from South to North through Quang Tri City and the Song Vihn Dinh River from the Northeast moving South.

b. Enemy Situation

(1) The enemy avoided contact in the Quang Tri AO and appeared to be primarily interested in rice collection. He occasionally utilized rockets and mortars for harassment with negligible results. He had the capability of attacking either Quang Tri City or the Quang Tri Combat Base with ground forces located in Base Area 101 or from the East of Quang Tri City.

c. Enemy Activity

(1) Sightings: Initially, enemy movement was slight but increased during the latter portion of Operation RICE. The NVA were mostly seen in

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5 man groups. On two occasions, larger groups of NVA were spotted.

(2) Contacts: There was no significant large unit contact during Operation RICE. 90% of all contact was initiated by 4 man killer teams with excellent results.

d. Tactics: Throughout Operation RICE, enemy tactics were trademarked by his attempt to avoid contact and he appeared to be primarily interested in rice collection. However, this Battalion had the advantage of making contact when and where it chose to do so. The enemy attempted to compensate but was not successful.

7. Mission. During Operation RICE the Battalion's mission was to find, fix and destroy the enemy throughout the AO and to prevent the collection of rice. In addition, the Battalion was to be prepared to defend Quang Tri City, the Quang Tri Combat Base, and to provide for the defense of the Ga Bridge.

#### 8. Concept of Operations

##### a. General

(1) From 17 April to 17 May this Battalion conducted Squad, Platoon, Company, and Battalion size operations in an AO which was generally to the South and West of Quang Tri City. During this time frame, the Battalion continuously guarded the Ga Bridge, was prepared to defend either Quang Tri City or the Quang Tri Combat Base, and continuously conducted rice denial operations.

(2) From 18 April to 5 May the Battalion provided for the defense of LZ BETTY vic (YD335505) with one Company and LZ SHARON vic (YD304487) with one Company.

##### b. The Battalion's supporting units for Operation RICE were:

Det, Btry C, 1stBn, 13th Marines  
Det, Scout Dog Team, 3d MPBn  
Det, 1stPlt, Co B, 3d EngrBn  
Det, 1stPlt, Co A, 3d EngrBn  
C Troop, 3d Sqdn, 5th Armored Cav  
Det, Scout/Sniper Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines  
Det, Comm Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines

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## 9. Execution

17 April 1968

The Battalion assumed the defense of LZ's BETTY AND SHARON and assumed responsibility for operations within a new AO.

20 April 1968

At 1545H, Company L tripped chi-com grenades rigged with pressure type devices at vic (YD353468) and (YD355462). Wire and stick markers were found in vicinity of booby traps. Results were 2 USMC WIA.

At 1835H, Company M sighted 1 VC with poncho at vic (YD273517). Fired 5 rounds small arms. Results were 1VC(C), green black uniforms, poncho, knife, assorted pictures and 1 US canteen captured.

23 April 1968

At 1415H, Company L tripped a chi-com grenade rigged with trip wire at vic (YD309494). Results were 1 USMC WIA.

25 April 1968

Village of Thoh Nue Le was cordoned and a Med-Cap was held. Interrogation revealed 2 VC suspects who were detained.

27 April 1968

At 1900H, 1stLt J. T. ESSLINGER assumed command of Company I, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines.

30 April 1968

At 0800H, Captain J. D. BENNETT assumed command of Company L, 3d Battalion, 26th Marines.

At 0800H, M-1 spotted 3 enemy personnel at vic (YD277525). Took under fire with small arms. Results were 1 NVA(C) officer and 1 POW, 1 AK-47 and 1 carbine captured.

At 1630H, M-2 spotted 7 enemy persons with khaki shirts, trousers, packs, and bolt action weapons. Took under fire with small arms. Results were 2 NVA(C), 1 bolt action weapon, 1 pack captured and 1 USMC WIA.

At 1730H, M-3, while setting in position, received automatic sniper fire from vic (YD275539). Results were 1 USMC WIA.

At 2000H, M-2 sighted 4 enemy persons at vic (YD261536). Took under fire with small arms. Results were 1 NVA(C).

2 May 1968

At 0835H, M-3 on patrol tripped an explosive device at (YD271541). Device was located under enemy pack. Results 1 USMC WIA.

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From 0930H to 1500H, 3/26(-) conducted a search and destroy operation in GS2553, 2755 and at (YD273542) (YD273545) (YD275542).

At 0930H Company "L" proceeded to block position without incident. On order, Company "L" drew up block position and swept east side of river while Company "M" swept west side of river. Found 1 grass hut, camouflaged and recently used. Hut was burned. Four well constructed bunkers were found and destroyed by demolitions. Numerous spiderholes, punji pits and punji sticks were found and destroyed. 3/26(-) Command Group while moving CP to a new location, triggered a large surprise firing device mortally wounding the Battalion Executive Officer. Results: 1 USMC KIA, 4 USMC WIA, 1 NVA KIA(C), 1 sandbag containing numerous 7.62mm rounds, cooking and eating utensils. 1 NVA(C) believed to have been shot previously by Company "M".

4 May 1968

At 1905H, 3/26 Command Group requested gunships to check treeline at GS 2043. The gunship spotted 1 NVA and opened fire. Results: 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 2300H, M-1 killer team sighted 4 VC moving along trail vic (YD233501). Killer team opened fire with small arms. Results: 1 VC KIA(C), 1 canvaspack with 3/4 pound TNT enclosed, 1 flashlight, and miscellaneous clothing.

5 May 1968

At 0620H, 3/26 position at LZ SHARON received 15 rounds of 122mm rockets. Results: 1 USMC KIA, 1 USMC M109 destroyed.

At 0700H, Company "M" swept area of contact at (YD233501). Results: 1 VC KIA(C), 1 anti-tank mine.

At 1545H, I-3 made contact with approximately 15 enemy at (YD285471). While maneuvering into a better position, enemy broke and ran. I-3 opened fire with small arms. Results: 3 NVA KIA(C).

9 May 1968

At 1755H, M-1 spotted 5 enemy at (YD286536). M-1 Patrol Base and M-1 killer team opened fire with small arms. The enemy withdrew to the brush. M-1 moved to block enemy from the north while M-3 and M-4 maneuvered toward M-1. M-3 came under fire by 2 enemy and returned fire which killed both enemy, one of which was an officer. M-4 was fired on by 3 more enemy. M-4 killed one and captured the other two. Results: 4 USMC KIA, 6 USMC WIA, 1 VC KIA(C), 2 NVA KIA(C), 1 VC POW, 1 NVA POW, 1 AK-50, 2 AK-47's, 1 carbine caliber .30, 1 cartridge belt, 1 pack containing civilian clothes, wallet, writing material, medical supplies, 1 notebook, and large amount of ammunition.

At 2223H, M-1 killer team sighted 1 VC at (YD288531). Opened fire with small arms. Results: 1 VC KIA(C), 1 sandbag used as pack containing Ha Chi Minh sandals and black civilian clothing, 2 illumination parachutes.

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At 2130H, K-1 killer team ambushed 10 enemy and opened fire with small arms killing 8 NVA. While checking bodies a large number of enemy were seen approaching. K-1 left and joined another Kilo Killer Team. Enemy opened fire with small arms and grenades and then withdrew. K-3 minus its killer teams moved towards K-1 to reinforce. Results: 2 USMC WIA, 8 VC KIA(C).

At 2230H, Company "K" elements moving to reinforce K-1 killer team had 1 indigenous personnel approach point. Person started to run. Kilo element opened fire with small arms. Results: 1 VC KIA(F)(C), 3 pair black pajamas, \$21.00 MPC, 1 cigarette lighter.

At 2235H, M-1 killer team contacted enemy at (YD293535). M-1 opened fire with small arms. Results: 1 VC KIA(C).

10 May 1968

At 0817H, Company "M" swept area of enemy contact 9 May 1968 at vic (YD289537). Found a blood trail and 1 NVA dead. Results: 1 NVA KIA(C), 1 diary (possible log), 1 letter, 1 NVA newspaper clippings, 1 wallet containing personal pictures, 1 cigarette lighter, 1 package w/unknown pills, 2 sandbag type packs with one containing NVA uniforms, both camouflaged, and Khaki, 1 hammock, green illumination parachute, 1 pack containing 10 lbs of rice, 1 jungle type hammock, vitamin tablets, battle dressings, soap, 1 NVA uniform (jungle type), civilian clothing, transistor radio, 10 blasting caps, 6 rigged caps.

At 0930H, Company "M" units in pursuit on heavy blood trail. 1 surprise firing device was triggered at (YD285539) hitting one Marine. M-1 continued pursuit and found 1 enemy body. Results: 1 USMC WIA, 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 1115H, M-1 sweeping area engaged 1 VC in firefight at (YD283543). Results: 1 VC KIA(C).

At 1835H, Company "L" moving into new position vic (YD278482) discovered 1 enemy killed by artillery. Results: 1 VC KIA(C).

11 May 1968

At 1915H, I-3 killer team/PRU ambush was moving into position. The Marine point observed 1 enemy (point) and 3 other enemy moving toward him. The enemy column halted and went into a house. The Marine point observed 5 other enemy and other movement which he could not observe due to bend in trail. Marines/PRU set in hasty ambush vicinity of the house. One enemy observed the ambush set in and the Marines/PRU opened fire with small arms. Four enemy moved up to the house and were shot. Enemy appeared to panic. 6 enemy ran out of the house and were brought under fire by the Marines/PRU. 6 enemy were shot. The house was demolished by M-26 grenades, M-79 grenades and MG fire. 81mm mission was called on trail. 2 enemy were spotted in fox-hole and shot. One VC female armed with sickle ran toward a Marine who shot her. Marines/PRU began to advance and police area when the patrol spotted 20-40 enemy on the left flank and received a report that another group of enemy was on the right flank and rear. Gunships, artillery and 81's were called in. The patrol leader ordered immediate withdrawal. Marines were to deliver large volumes of fire from the flanks. Marines were located on ammunition and PRU's were out. The Marines/PRU's withdrew hastily while enemy tried to encircle them. Withdrawal was slowed due to 1 PRU being wounded.

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who later died. Marines and PRU's took turns carrying wounded man. At vicinity (YD322520) the patrol received AK-47 and machinegun fire. The Command Group sent a link up force and called in gunships, 81's and artillery. Fire ceased and link up was completed without further incident. Results: 1 PRU KIA, 18 NVA KIA(C), 1 AK-47 captured.

At 2005H, Company "K" point elements moving into ambush site at (YD306455) engaged 15 enemy in a firefight with small arms. Results: 5 VC KIA(C).

12 May 1968

At 0928H, Company "K" while moving to 3/26 position across bridge, at (YD346477) tripped a surprise firing device. Results: 4 USMC WIA.

At 1910H, I-3 killer team, while setting in ambush at (YD309510), and adjusting Claymore mines, were fired upon by 4 enemy. The Marines returned fire, resulting in 2 NVA KIA(C).

At 0100H, 3/26 received a report from the ARVN Battalion that the fire mission called in on enemy troops vic (YD378538) by the 3/26 artillery liaison officer on the night of 9 May 1968 at 0100 was highly effective. Results: 14 VC KIA(C).

13 May 1968

Between the hours of 0900H and 1200H, Company "L" guarding the Ga Bridge, were helped by a Vietnamese boy who had had breakfast with the Company. The boy pointed out 3 VC attempting to cross bridge into city of Quang Tri. Results: 3 VC Detainees.

14 May 1968

At 1645H, Company "M" while moving into night positions, observed one Vietnamese male running from a hut. Male Vietnamese was apprehended and search of hut revealed a female. Suspects were sent to 3/26 S-2 for questioning. Further search of hut revealed a document stating that the son of the male and female was a NVA soldier. Results: 2 VC Detainees.

16 May 1968

At 1300H chopped L-1 OPCON to III MAF.

17 May 1968

At 1515H, 3/26 Bn(-) chopped OPCON to 1st Marine Division.

# 10. Results

## a. Friendly Casualties

KIA - 5  
WIA - 36

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b. Enemy Casualties

NVA(C) - 74  
 NVA POW - 3

c. Weapons Captured

Ind Weapons - 8  
 CSW - 0

11. Administrative Matters

a. Supply

(1) Resupply of units was accomplished primarily by organic vehicles with assistance from 3d Motor Transport Battalion. Resupply of companies in the field was by helicopter.

b. Maintenance

(1) First and second echelon maintenance was performed by Battalion units.

(2) Third echelon maintenance was performed by both FLSG-A and FLSG-B.

c. Treatment of Casualties, Evacuation, and Hospitalization

(1) All casualties were treated in the field by company corpsman and either returned to duty or evacuated to the Battalion BAS at the Quang Tri Combat Base or "D" Med at Dong Ha.

d. Transportation

(1) Transportation was provided by the 3d Motor Transport Battalion through the 26th Marine Regiment (S-4).

(2) Due to the overall tactical commitments of the Battalion, tactical runs were frequent. Administrative runs were held to a minimum.

e. Communications

(1) Radio: All Battalion and Regimental nets terminated in the bunker.

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(2) Wire: Normal intra-battalion wire facilities were in use during the operation.

(3) During OPERATION RICE, heavy interference was continuous on the Battalion's Tactical Net. This was due to the fact that another Marine Infantry Battalion was assigned the same frequency and was operating within 20 kilometers of this Battalion's position.

f. Medical Evacuation

(1) Throughout OPERATION RICE, the BAS remained in the Quang Tri Combat Base 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. Patients requiring major surgery were evacuated to "D" Med at Dong Ha.

12. Special Equipment and Techniques

a. Scout dogs were employed with each rifle company in the field and proved to be invaluable in spotting the enemy. They were limited by the heat in the Quang Tri area and usually only proved to be effective for 2 to 3 days. After this time they required a medevac.

b. On one occasion, this unit worked closely with a RVN Popular Reconnaissance Unit. This unit was familiar with the terrain, well trained, and was a definite asset on the night of 11 May 1968.

13. Commander's Analysis

a. None.

b. There were no PSYOPS conducted by this Battalion during this Operation

14. Recommendations

a. None.

R. R. BLAIR  
By direction

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