

3/26 S&C
1186-68
2 of 15

HEADQUARTERS
3d Battalion, 26th Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 96602

3/BAJ/daw
3100
8 Oct 1968

Serial 003A261-68

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

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 to 30 September 1968

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPasO 5750.8
(c) 1st MarDivO 5750.2B

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for period 1-30 September 1968

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

J.W.P. Robertson
J.W.P. ROBERTSON

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Page 1 of 12 Pages

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3RD BN/26TH MAR

CMD CHRON

SEP 1968

HEADQUARTERS
3d Battalion, 26th Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
APO San Francisco 96602

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY
1 September to 30 September 1968

PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II - NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III - SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

PART IV - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

Page 2 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

PART I
ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. DESIGNATION

3d Battalion, 26th Marines

COMMANDER

Lt. Col. J.W.P. ROBERTSON
(1-30 Sept 68)

SUBORDINATE UNITS

H&S Company

Company I

Company K

Company L

Company M

Company K, 3d Bn, 5th Marines (OpCom)

Capt. L.A. LUTHER

(1-30 Sept 68)

1st Lt. R.M. FOLEY

(1-30 Sept 68)

Capt. F.L. FOX

(1-30 Sept 68)

Capt. J.D. BENNETT

(1-30 Sept 68)

Capt. J. TURRIETTA

(1-30 Sept 68)

Capt. D. MYERS

(1-30 Sept 68)

ATTACHED UNITS

Det., 1st Plt., Co A, 3d Signal Party Bn (1-30 Sept 68)

Det., 1st Plt., Co A, 3d Engr Bn (1-30 Sept 68)

Det., Scout/Sniper Plt., 26th Marines (1-30 Sept 68)

Det., Scout Dog Plt., 3d MP Bn (1-30 Sept 68)

Det., 1st Plt., Co C, 3d MT Bn (1-30 Sept 68)

Det., Co C, 11th MT Bn (25-30 Sept 68)

2. LOCATION

1-30 Sept 68: Phu Gia Pass (Hill 148), Thua Thien Province, RVN

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer

2-1/ Adjutant

Personnel Officer

Maj. C.H. KNOWLES

(1-30 Sept 68)

1st Lt. F.D. TYSON

(1-30 Sept 68)

1st Lt. F.D. TYSON

(1-30 Sept 68)

Page 3 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

3. STAFF OFFICERS (cont'd)

COMMANDER

S-2

1st Lt. W.J. TOBIN
(1-30 Sept 68)

S-3

Capt. H.W. JENKINS
(1-30 Sept 68)

S-3a

1st Lt. J.T. ESSLINGER
(1-30 Sept 68)

S-4

1st Lt. J.A. BRAGE
(1-30 Sept 68)

S-5

1st Lt. W.J. TOBIN
(1-30 Sept 68)

Comm Officer

1st Lt. G. DURAN
(1-30 Sept 68)

Supply Officer

1st Lt. J.S. CONNRY
(1-30 Sept 68)

Motor Transport Officer

1st Lt. W.L. MILLER
(1-30 Sept 68)

Medical Officer

Lt. H.L. SIMPSON
(1-30 Sept 68)

Chaplain

Lt. R.L. HENSLEY
(1-30 Sept 68)

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

<u>USMC</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
39	1059

<u>USN</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
2	51

<u>OTHER</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
0	0

PART II NARRATIVE SUMMARY

A. Operations: During September 1968, the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines carried out the primary mission of providing security for the main supply route, National Route #1 from Hai Van Pass, at the southern boundary of Thua Thien Province, north to Phu Lac Village. This mission was accomplished through the use of platoon strong points and aggressive small unit maneuvers. The presence of Kilo Company, 3d Bn, 5th Marines in an OpCon status enabled the battalion to keep a mobile force operating in the mountainous terrain south and north of the highway. This unit's use of Killer Ambush Teams and imaginative use of supporting arms enabled the battalion to approach a seemingly defensive mission with an offensive attitude.

Page 4 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

On 02 September, Lima Company began a company operation in the mountain peaks west of Hai Van Pass. This operation was designed to clear out the enemy forces which had been harrassing the road north of the pass. Lima operated for 07 days and made limited contact. One small contact led to the capture of a document which listed the table of organization and equipment for a NVA platoon operating in this area. Lima was near the highest peak-hill 1192-when Typhoon Beza struck.

On 04 September, Typhoon Beza struck the mainland with little prior warning. This storm greatly hampered tactical operations and wrecked havoc with the physical facilities of the battalion. The storm persisted through 05 September and caused the cancellations of convoys and the closing of Hai Van Pass due to mud slides. Concentrated, coordinated efforts by all concerned enabled the battalion to return to full operational efficiency within 36 hours following the peak of the storm. Engineer effort cleared the pass, logistical support replenished the physical plant, and tactical operations were resumed immediately. In addition, the refugee settlement near Lang Co Village was declared a disaster area. Food and building materials were provided for the residents.

On 14 September, India Company began a company operation in the "bumps" area north of Claymore Pass near Phu Loc. The company was moved by helicopter and operated for seven days. Enemy contact was sporadic and light. The purpose of this operation was to deny the area to the enemy and interdict the flow of rice through that which intelligence reports is a major rice route.

On 15 September, M Company cordoned Thua Lam Hamlet and the national police held a census. The battalion commander addressed the people and explained the battalion's policy for the area.

On 17 September, Kilo Company began a one platoon operation near hill 943, west of Hai Van Pass. This operation lasted three days and was designed to keep pressure on enemy forces in the area. Enemy contact was light.

On 18 September, a truck convoy was ambushed at ZD 107017. 3/26 units capable of supporting by fire were brought under mortar fire. Damage to the convoy was light.

On 19 September, a platoon from Lima Company moved to the beach vicinity AU 824064 to provide security for a Navy barge grounded during the typhoon. During the next two days the Navy conducted an unsuccessful salvage operation on the barge.

On 22 September, a Marine Phantom jet crashed near the northern coast vicinity AU 8004. Elements of I Company, L Company, Mike Company, and Kilo Company, 3d Bn, 5th Marines, provided security for the investigation team, recovered the bodies and conducted a sweep of the surrounding areas. The area was heavily booby-trapped but the mission was accomplished.

Page 3 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

On 23 September, a Killer Team from Lima Company ambushed a superior NVA force moving toward Nam Huet bridge apparently with attack intentions. The Killer Team sustained several casualties, but succeeded in thwarting any further enemy intentions.

On 24 September, a platoon from Lima Company cordoned the village of Phu Gia vicinity AU 8201 and conducted a search of the village. This action was a reaction to several mining incidents near the village. The only find was a large amount of rice.

On 29 September, Lima Company began a company operation along the ridge line south of Lang Co village. This operation extended into October.

B. Administration. During the period 1-18 September, administration was handled at the battalion rear at Quang Tri Combat Base. On 18 September the S-1 and company offices displaced to Phu Gia Pass and joined the remainder of the battalion. As a result of this move, coordination between the S-1 and other staff sections improved considerably as did company administration.

The S-1 and Division G-1 had to contend with a distance factor but daily courier runs alleviated this problem. The clerks and other administrative personnel quickly adapted themselves to the directive and orders changes involved in the switch from 3d Marine Division to 1st Marine Division.

1. Personnel.

No. officers joined	-	0
No. enlisted joined	-	116
No. officers transferred	-	3
No. enlisted transferred	-	50

C. Intelligence.

1. The enemy situation in the 3/26 AO centers around the 4th NVA Regt and the C.118 Local Force Company. A Sapper/Engineer Company in the critical Hai Van Pass area rounds out the enemy forces. The 4th NVA Regt is headquartered in the vicinity of ZC 1092. The Regiment is composed of the K4B Battalion (TC 1496) and the K4C Battalion (TC 0896). Local ARVN Intelligence sources coincide with these reports of enemy locations. The K4B Battalion has recently been reported to be the most active with limited size operations into the rice lowlands. An NVA Platoon size element has been reported in the ZC 1899 area. The K5 Battalion, disbanded after the Tet Offensive, is reportedly reorganizing in the mountainous area ZC 1695. The C.118 Local Force Company is centered around ZC 1505 with elements in the vicinity of AU 2005. The Sapper/Engineer Company is operating in the Hai Van Pass with a CP in the vicinity of AT 8991.

Page 6 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

2. The 4th NVA Regt numbers some 700 troops or approximately 300 in each Infantry Battalion and 100 in the Regimental Headquarters. The Regiment is believed to be armed with six 81mm mortars, twelve 60mm mortars, four 57mm RR, and several 3.5" rocket launchers. Anti-aircraft fire has been received by several helicopters flying over the AO. The C.118 local Force Company totals approximately 100 guerrillas. Two platoons operating in the Binh An area, vicinity ZD 82D5 are believed to be reinforced with a special intelligence squad of 17 men. Most of the intelligence concerning this local force company is derived from RVN intelligence and friendly villagers. The Sapper/Engineer Company numbers approximately 100 men and is armed with several 60mm mortars and at least one .50 caliber machinegun.

3. The mission of the 4th NVA Regiment seems to be of a passive nature, on a whole it has avoided contact and prepares for a future offensive. Its main objective seems to be training and stocking rice and supplies. The company foray reported by local intelligence seemed to be aimed at influencing local farmers and gathering a great deal of rice. For these reasons the 4th Regt is largely dependent on the local VC guerrillas for supplies, rice and intelligence on friendly forces. The local forces are undoubtedly experiencing a critical time in view of the rice harvest and friendly operations. Extensive ambushing along known rice routes has accounted for a large portion of the months 18 VC KIA. Most of the enemy initiated contacts in the last month occurred between 1900 and 2200.

4. At 100440H, September 1968, Co K/3/5 vic ZD 154020 observed 30 VC moving north. An ambush resulted in 7 VC KIA, 1 SKS, and 1000 pounds of rice. The recovered SKS was in very good condition and still had heavy grease protective coating. All major parts carried the original serial number and the sling was in excellent condition. At 111430H, September 1968, 2 Vietnamese riding a motorbike on Route 1 over the Hai Van Pass attempted to steal hand grenades and C-Rations from USMC personnel. The two were apprehended and turned over to the National Police at District Headquarters. At 261045H, September 1968, a local village youth stated that 3 VC entered his village on 23 September. Two were wounded, one of whom subsequently died, while the other two left at daybreak. One headed east on Route 1 and the other went into the hills.

5. Weather: The mean temperature was 85 degrees while a high of 102 degrees and a low of 71 degrees was experienced. Tropical storm Bess caused extensive damage and affected the nearing rice harvest.

6. Terrain: The 3/26 AO is composed of rice paddies with the exception of the south and southeastern highlands. The vegetation consists mostly of short grass, shrubs and treelines; whereas, in the western and southern portion double canopy is experienced.

3100
8 Oct 1968

7. Avenues of Approach: In the western portion of the AO, Route 1 forms the main avenue of approach. Other avenues of approach are formed by lowlands via AU 2005 stretching to Thua Lam Hamlet and then into the mountains via ZD 2097.

8. Totals:

16 VC KIA
2 Detainees
5 MW
2000 lbs of rice

D. Civil Affairs

Throughout the month the Battalion conducted extensive civil affairs and maintained close liaison with Phu Loc District Headquarters and ARVN units. A barb wire fence was constructed around the hamlet of Thua Lam ZD 2001. A MacGap was conducted on 14 September in the wake of tropical storm Bess. On 20 September an errant ARVN fire mission destroyed part of an orphanage via ZD 157002. The Battalion S-5 was dispatched and has coordinated with the US Army in Phu Bai for 20 bags of cement to be sent to the local CAP unit for repair of the orphanage.

E. Psychological Warfare

Most of the PayOps efforts were aimed at the return of ammunition and explosives. Several 81mm mortar rds, M-79 and 40mm rds were returned as a result of this effort. Company Commanders were given 4,000 Piasters for the immediate use in the rewards fund program. Company Commanders were given the list of recommended rewards for lost explosives. Chien Hoi balls and pens were distributed to the youngsters in the villages and hamlets throughout the AO.

F. Fire Support - The battalion used supporting arms offensively during the month. Extensive nighttime and daytime H&I fires were plotted daily. In addition, during September, 17 preparation fires were fired in support of ground operations; mortar suppression missions were coordinated with the movement of convoys through the AO, and NGF was used to support and supplement all supporting arms roles. The battalion maintained fire plans and provided fire support for CAP units in the AO, and engineering teams cutting LZ's.

1. Total expenditure for September

a. 105mm	6549
b. 155mm	2148
c. 4.2 in.	4485
d. 81mm	3365
e. NGF	4077
f. TPQ	80

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

G. Logistics

1. General. Logistical support was generally satisfactory during the month of September. General resupply was adequate, except for a short supply of concertina, 5 foot engineer stakes, and sandbags.
 - a. Transportation was furnished by 3d Motor Transport Battalion until the 25th of September. At that time 19th Motor Transport Battalion supported this battalion with five (5) trucks (G25).
 - b. Resupply was accomplished by trucks (G25) until 25 September. Since 25 September it has been necessary to resupply primarily by helicopter.
 - c. Maintenance support was furnished by ISA - Phu Lee, FLSC-A Phu Bai, PIC Maintenance - Da Nang, and 1st PSR - Da Nang.
 - d. Ordnance support was furnished by ISA - Phu Lee, ASP-1 and ASP-2 with satisfactory results except for a shortage of 81mm HE at ASP-1.
 - e. The battalion subsisted on "A" and "C" rations for the month of September. All rations were in good quantity.

H. Communications

1. Radio. Battalion nets were guarded in the COC, a HST net was guarded in the S-4. A naval gunfire net was established and guarded in the COC on a as required basis.
2. Message Center. On 9 September the battalion lost teletype capabilities for the rest of September. A messenger service was established with Regiment to pick up and deliver message traffic.
3. Radio Relay/Wire. On 9 September the AN/MRC-62, which provided radio relay support was replaced by a portable radio relay, Telegraph Terminal AN/PCC-1. Although communication was re-established the quality and dependability was reduced.

I. Medical-Dental

1. Personnel. The Battalion Aid Station has a total of 50 men: 48 Hospital Corpsmen, one Medical Officer, and one Chaplain.
2. Capabilities. The aid station was capable of treating all minor medical and surgical problems. Patients requiring more extensive care were evacuated to 1st Hospital Company, NSA Da Nang, and the USS Repose. Facilities consist of a bunker, four tents for supply, administration, ward and quarters, which are adequate. The BAS is responsible for evacuating seriously injured or ill patients from the operation site.
3. Training. Hospital Corpsmen receive classroom training and on the job training under the supervision of the Battalion Surgeon. The Chief Hospital Corpsman teaches field medical techniques and diagnostic procedures.
4. Dental. Dental facilities are now available and provided by the 1st Dental Company. A dental corps officer and one dental corpsman are on board.
5. Malaria Prophylaxis. Chloroquine-Primaquine tablets were taken once a week, preferably with Sunday meal. In addition, Depsane tablets were taken daily.

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

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

Diagnosis	TTS	I	K	L	H	Other	Total
Concussion	00	00	00	03	00	01	04
Stomach Problems	02	01	00	02	03	03	10
Lacerations	04	03	00	03	01	10	23
Diarrhea	02	00	03	03	02	03	10
Ear Problems	03	00	00	04	01	05	13
Eye Problems	00	00	00	01	00	03	04
Dental Problems	03	02	01	00	01	01	08
Upper Resp Infection	03	01	00	02	00	04	10
Fever Unknown Origin	01	01	01	01	00	02	06
Leg Problems	02	01	00	03	02	04	14
Foot Problems	02	01	00	04	04	04	17
Arm Problems	03	01	01	03	02	07	17
Back Problems	01	04	00	01	01	05	12
Malaria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Infections	35	13	11	09	27	25	120
Immunisations	170	168	177	164	148	00	827
Venereal Disease	06	03	03	02	01	06	21
Shrapnel Wounds	00	06	02	03	06	03	20
Blisters	03	01	01	01	02	06	14
Immersion Foot	00	00	00	03	03	00	06
Heat Exhaustion	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Heat Stroke	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Return Visits	25	00	00	07	06	12	50
Other	15	10	05	05	15	15	65

J. Training. The following training was conducted during September:

1. Replacements received by the battalion were thoroughly indoctrinated in accordance with existing directives and the Battalion SOP for Troop Indoctrination. In addition, they all fired their weapon for familiarisation.
2. Companies conducted cross training on organic weapons.
3. Three companies received a presentation on Mines and Booby Traps by a 1st MarDiv Engineer Contest Team.
4. The flame section was brought to T/O and trained to accomplish their mission.
5. Classes were held in all companies in the proper employment of the Killer Team concept.
6. Companies conducted formal and informal classes on General Military Subjects.
7. The Battalion Surgeon held numerous classes on field medicine for the hospital corpsmen.

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

K. Casualties
1. KIA 8
2. WIA 38
3. NBC 43

PART III
SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- 01 Sept At 0450H, a man from M-2 heard movement and threw a hand grenade. He was wounded in the resulting explosion. Result: 1 WIA USMC.
At 2300H, Kilo received 01 RPG round at AF 937915. Result: 1 WIA RVNAP.
- 02 Sept At 1200H, India took 03 rounds 60mm mortar at AF 910948.
- 04 Sept At 0300H, M-2 position at Bridge 14 received 10 rds RPG fire. Result: 04 WIA USMC.
- 05 Sept At 0915H, while on company sweep, Lima sustained point to point contact with several NVA at AF 903916. Result: 2 WIA USMC, 1 NVA(C).
- 06 Sept At 2245H, Mike received incoming round of unknown size. Result: 1 WIA USMC.
- 08 Sept At 0145H, K/3/3 Killer Team ambushed estimated squad of VC at ZD 154020. Result: 1 VC(C).
At 1015H, a Seabee bulldozer hit a booby trap at AF 914941. Result: 1 WIA USMC.
- 10 Sept At 0545H, K/3/3 ambushed approximately 30 VC at ZD 154020. Result: 7 VC(C), 1 SKS captured.
- 11 Sept At 1430H, India apprehended 02 Vietnamese attempting to steal hand grenades. Result: 02 VC(S).
- 12 Sept At 2350H, Lima Killer Team ambushed small enemy force. Result: 1 VC(C).
- 16 Sept At 2135H, India Killer Team received several rounds incoming small arms fire. Result: 1 WIA USMC.
- 17 Sept At 1458H, Lima Killer Team ambushed 03 VC. Result: 02 VC(C).

Page 11 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED

3100
8 Oct 1968

- 18 Sept At 1600H, a convey passing through the AO was ambushed at ZD 1C7017. All 3/26 units capable of returning fire with artillery were mortared. Results: 1 WIA USA.
- 19 Sept At 1810H, Lima sustained a point to point contact with estimated 15-20 VC. Result: 8 VC(C).
- 20 Sept At 1610H, convey received 82mm mortars at ZD 153010. Result: 2 WIA USA.
At 2300H, Kilo Killer Team engaged unknown size enemy force. Result: 02 WIA USMC.
- 21 Sept At 1000H, Lima tripped a M-26 booby trap. Result: 01 WIA USMC.
At 1800H, an F-4 crashed in vic AU 8003. Result: 2 KIA USMC.
- 22 Sept Security was provided for downed plane and sweep of area was conducted. Result from booby trap: 02 KIA USMC, 05 WIA USMC.
- 23 Sept At 2110H a Lima Killer Team sustained contact with numerically superior NVA force. Result: 03 KIA USMC, 01 WIA USMC, 03 NVA(C).
- 25 Sept At 0730H, CAP 7 ambushed 3 VC at ZD 194032. Result: 01 VC WIA.
- 26 Sept At 2030H, Lima Killer Team had point to point contact with enemy force of unknown size. Result: 01 WIA USMC, 01 VC(C).

PART IV
SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS - CEE

CG, 1st Mar Div 301-68
CG, Task Force XRay OpOrder 301A-68
CG, 1st Mar Div O 3480.1a
CG, 1st Mar Div FragO 25-68 (191401Z Jul68)
CG, Task Force XRay (230107Z Jul68)
26th Mar FragO 24-68 (Opn Houston)
26th Mar FragO 28-68 (Opn Owen Mesa)

Page 12 of 12 Pages

UNCLASSIFIED