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177 HARVEST MOON  
Returned by 9/4/76

Copy no. 34 of 100 copies  
Task Force Delta  
DA NANG, RVN  
C70800H Dec 1965  
SER: 00158-66

Operation Order 1-65

Ref: (a) Map: AMS Series L701 1:50,000 Sheets 6657 I, IV, 6658 II, III  
(b) Div OpnO 343-65  
(c) DivO 02000.2c

Time Zone: II

Task Organization: Annex A (Task Organization)

1. SITUATION.

a. Enemy forces. Annex B

b. Friendly forces.

Classified By \_\_\_\_\_

DOWNGRADE TO:  
Secret on \_\_\_\_\_

Confidential on \_\_\_\_\_

DECLASSIFY ON . . . . . SEP 25 1972

(1) 3d Marine Division continues operations against the Viet Cong. AUTH DCJS 6-3 ON 25 SEP 72

(2) FIAW continues operations against the Viet Cong provides close air support and helicopter support as required.

(3) ARVN Forces.

(a) One ARVN regiment (-) on D-1 in coordination with Task Force Delta advances northwest between Highway 1 and railroad to THANG BINH. On D-Day advances southwest to Phase Lines A and B. It is anticipated that enemy contact will be made in the vicinity of PL B. Every effort will be made by ARVN Forces to maintain this contact.

(b) Provides security at selected bridge sites along route # 1.

(c) 3d Battalion, 5th Regiment (-) (Rein) RF on order feints attack west from HIEP DUC District Headquarters and blocks along line AT 970275 to AT 980260. Annex D (Concept of Operations).

(4) Special Landing Force, Seventh Fleet. Operational control upon arrival objective area. DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS.

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(5) Air Support. Annex C (Air Support).

DOD DIR 5200.10

(6) Naval Gunfire. One (1) DD and one (1) CL provides naval gunfire support.

2. MISSION. Commencing D-Day Task Force Delta in coordination with participating ARVN forces will fix and destroy organized VC elements in the QUE SON-VET AN - HIEP DUC valley complex. This operation is

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essentially a spoiling attack to prevent the Viet Cong from their announced objective of capturing QUE SON. The operation will also eliminate VC forces that have isolated the ARVN outpost at Viet An, permitting ARVN to reestablish lines of communications.

### 3. EXECUTION.

a. Concept of Operation. Annex D (Concept of Operations).

b. 2d Bn, 7th Marines.

- (1) On D-Day, M-Hour proceeds by motor march to TAM KY, defends and prepares for helicopter-borne assault.
- (2) On D+1 conducts helicopter-borne assault objective 1 on order.
- (3) On order conducts search and destroy operations as directed.
- (4) On order returns to TAM KY by helicopter and stages for motor march return.
- (5) Provides one platoon security "M" Btry, 4th Bn, 11th Marines motor march, and subsequently provides security for LSU at HUONG XUAN.

c. 3d Bn, 3d Marines.

- (1) On D+1, M-Hour proceeds by motor march to HUONG XUAN defends and prepares for helicopter-borne assault.
- (2) By 1500 on D+1 be prepared for helicopter-borne assault within TAOR.
- (3) On order conduct search and destroy operations as directed.
- (4) On order returns to HUONG XUAN by helicopter and stages for motor march return on order.

d. Co C (-), 3d Recon Bn.

- (1) On D+1, on order, proceeds by motor march to HUONG XUAN. On order, helilifts to QUE SON.
- (2) Be prepared to conduct reconnaissance of helicopter landing zones and/or conduct general reconnaissance of objective area on order.

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e. Co C (-), 3d Engr Bn.

- (1) Provides combat engineer support as required.

f. Provisional Arty Bn.

- (1) On D+1, K-Hour Bn (-) proceeds by motor march to HUONG XUAN, Helilifts to objective area and establishes firing positions in vicinity QUE SON.
- (2) Provide artillery fire support Task Force Delta.
- (3) On D-Day, G-Hour Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines proceeds by motor march from CHU LAI to HUONG XUAN, provides artillery fire support ARVN Regt(-) and Task Force Delta.
- (4) On D+1 Btry F 2d Bn, 12th Marines proceeds by motor march from DA NANG to HUONG XUAN and prepares to helo lift to QUE SON on order. On D+2 Btry C, 1st Bn, 12th Marines proceeds by motor march from DA NANG, to HUONG XUAN and prepares for helo lift into the objective area on order.
- (5) Be prepared to assume operational control ARVN artillery as directed.

g. Logistic Support Unit.

- (1) Provides combat logistic support as required. (Admin Plan 1-65).

h. 3d Motor Transport Bn.

- (1) Provides motor transportation for motor march to and from objective area.
- (2) Provides motor transportation in objective area as required.

i. Reserve Special Landing Force, BLT 2/1.

- (1) Operation control Task Force Delta on arrival objective area.
- (2) Be prepared to land by helicopter to reinforce, block, counterattack or exploit gains by Task Force Delta.

j. Coordinating Instructions.

- (1) D-Day 8 Dec
- (2) M-Hour 0600H
- (3) K-Hour 0600H

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- (4) G-Hour, 1200H.
- (5) This order effective for planning on receipt.
- (6) EEI's.
- (7) Use CN/CS on authority this Headquarters.
- (8) Coordination with ARVN units in objective area through Headquarters Task Force Delta.
- (9) Minimize noncombat casualties and damage to crops.
- (10) Rules of engagement as detailed in reference (b) shall be strictly observed.
- (11) The unclassified code name for this operation is HARVEST MOON.
- (12) Each U.S. Unit will plan for psychological warfare and civic actions.
- (13) Captured personnel and documents in accordance with Annex B (Intelligence).
- (14) Fire Coordination Line. Appendix 1 (Operation Overlay) to Annex D (Concept of Operations). ARVN units will not fire to the west or north of the FCL without coordinating with Task Force Delta headquarters (FSCC). Task Force Delta fire support elements will not fire to the east or south of the FCL without coordinating with 5th ARVN Regt Headquarters.

#### 4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

- a. See Administrative Plan 1-65.

#### 5. COMMAND AND COMMUNICATIONS-ELECTRONICS.

- a. Communications-electronics.

(1) Annex E (Communication-electronics) and reference (c).

- b. Command Posts.

(1) Task Force Delta

BT 024349

(2) All units report command post locations when established.

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Executive Officer

ANNEXES:

- A - Task Organization
- B - Intelligence (To be issued)
- C - Air Support
- D - Concept of Operation
- E - Communications-Electronics
- F - Distribution

DISTRIBUTION: Annex F (Distribution) to  
Operation Order 1-65

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Annex A (Task Organization) to Operation Order 1-65

Ref: (a) CG, 3d Mar Div msg 061407Z Dec

Time Zone: H

Task Organization:

Commander Task Force Delta

Brig Gen HENDERSON

Hq

Composite Comm Plat  
 Det Hq Co, Hq Bn

2d Bn, 7th Marines (-) (Rein)

LtCol UTTER

2d Plat, Co C, 3d Engr Bn  
 HST, Co A, 3d SP Bn

3d Bn, 3d Marines (-) (Rein)

LtCol DORSEY III

4th Plat, Co C, 3d Engr Bn  
 HST, Co A, 3d SP Bn

Provisional Arty Bn

LtCol SNYDER

Det Hq Btry, 12th Marines

~~Btry C, 1st Bn, 12th Marines Btry "A" 1/11~~

Btry F, 2d Bn, 12th Marines

Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines ~~Btry "A" 1/11~~

Co C (-), 3d Recon Bn

Capt REVELL

Co C (-), 3d Engr Bn

Capt O'LAUGHLIN

Logistic Support Unit

Maj BENSTEAD

A Co (-) (Rein), 3d Shore Party Bn

Det, Bulk Fuel Co, FLSG

Det, Ammo Co, FLSG

Det, Ration Co, FLSG

Det, EOD, FLSG

Det, MABS (TAFDS), MAG (HMM)

Clearing Plat (-) (Rein), 3d Med Bn

Plat, MP Co, Hq Bn

Btry L, 4th Bn 12th Marines

A-1

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Det, 3d Engr Bn  
Det, 1st Bridge Plat, 7th Engr Bn  
Det, 1st (-)

3d MT Bn (Rein)

Maj BAKER

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D/1/1

D/1/3

H/2/9

2d Bn 1st Marine

(BLT 2/1)

W/2/11

3d Engr Bn

9th MT Bn

3d MT Bn

G/2/4

A-2

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## Annex C (Air Support) to Operation Order 1-65

Ref: (a) Maps: AMS Series, L-701, 1:50,000 Sheets 6657 I, IV; 6658 II and III  
(b) FMFM 7-3 Air Support  
(c) FMFM 7-1 Fire Support Coordination  
(d) Third Marine Division OP Order 343-65

Time Zone: H

1. SITUATION.

- a. Enemy forces. See Annex B (Intelligence).
- b. Friendly forces.
  - (1) FMAW provides tactical air support to include offensive air support, air assault support and an airborne command/control capability as required.
  - (2) 7th Fleet provides naval gunfire and amphibious support to Task Force Delta on request.

2. PROCEDURES.

- a. Commander Task Force Delta establishes bomblines and publishes changes thereto as they occur.
- b. Air support missions will be conducted in accordance with the schedule contained in Appendix 3 to this Annex and as otherwise directed.
- c. Air-to-Ground strikes within the bomblines must be under positive control of TACP, TAC (A) or ASRT. Objective area is within range of both ASRT's (Da Nang and Chu Lai).
- d. Coordination of supporting fires in accordance with references (b), (c) and (d). When Marine Air Support is called into support the ARVN, ARVN artillery will be called off.
- e. Mark friendly front lines with front line marking panels and/or colored smoke prior to executing air-to-ground strikes.
- f. Use UTM **grid** contained in reference (a) for all air support missions.
- g. Use normal mission request procedures as indicated in references (b) and (c).
- h. Control and Orbit Points for air support flights will be designated in Tactical Air Requests.


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- i. Alert status of on-call support aircraft as follows:
    - Condition I - Two minutes
    - Condition II - Five minutes
    - Condition III - Fifteen minutes
    - Condition IV - Thirty minutes
    - Condition V - As ordered
  - j. Medical evacuees will be brought to the clearing station at the LSA. They will be further evacuated to C Med or B Med at the discretion of the Medical Platoon. ARVN Med Evacs will be taken to the ARVN hospital at Da Nang unless otherwise directed.
  - k. Aerial Delivery. See Appendix 2 (Aerial Delivery)
  - l. Prisoners of War (POW) will be taken to QUE SON (BT 1742) unless otherwise directed.
  - m. Aircraft accidents or incidents should be reported in detail to DASC or FSCC by the most expeditious means giving complete details.
3. Command and Communications-Electronics. In accordance with Appendix 1.

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## APPENDIXES:

- 1 Air Communications
- 2 Air Delivery
- 3 Air Support Schedule (To be issued separately)

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 Operations Order 1-65

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Appendix 1 (Air Communications) to Annex C (Air Support) to Operation Order 1-65

Time Zone: Hotel

1. General. Air communications in accordance with this Appendix and Annex E.
2. Call Signs
  - a. Air communications call signs in accordance with TAB (A). Additional call signs are contained in Annex E (Communications Plan).
  - b. Aircraft voice call signs will contain the respective air group call sign, event number and position of the aircraft in the flight.
3. Frequency Plan. All frequencies and net activation will be in accordance with TAB (B).
4. Navigational Aids. As contained in standard aviation publications.

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TABS:

A - Call Signs

B - Frequency Plans

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TAB A (Call Signs) to Appendix 1 (Air Communications) to Annex C (Air Support) to  
Operation Order 1-65.

Time Zone: Hotel


Organization

TADC  
DASC (DA NANG)  
DASC (AIRBORNE)  
DASC (FORWARD)  
DASC (CHU LAI)  
MAG -11  
MAG -12  
MAG -16  
MAG -36  
VMGR 152 DET  
VMCJ -1  
TAC (A)  
TAO (A)/AO  
MED EVAC  
ASRT (DA NANG)  
ASRT (CHU LAI)  
TACP (WITH ARVN)

Voice Call

JOYRIDE  
LANDSHARK  
LANDSHARK XRAY  
LANDSHARK BRAVO  
LANDSHARK ALPHA  
CONDOLE  
OXWOOD  
ROSEANNE  
NAILFILE  
ANCESTOR  
COTTON PICKER  
PLAYBOY  
GERONIMO  
DEADLOCK MEDEVAC/KLONDIKE MEDEVAC  
DEVASTATE BRAVO  
DEVASTATE ALPHA  
MONROE KILO 14

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TAB B (Frequency Plan) to Appendix 1 (Air Communications) to Annex C (Air Support) to  
 Operation Order 1-65

Time Zone: Hotel

<u>Circuit</u>	<u>Code</u>	<u>Frequency</u>	
TATC-1	SILVER	300.2	A
TATC-2	GOLD	236.2	B
TAD-1	RED	312.0	C
TAD-2	GREEN	325.0	D
TAD-4	VIOLET	318.5	E
TAD-5	YELLOW	269.5	F
TAD-6	BROWN	383.5	G
HD-1	MAROON	273.8	H
HD-2	BLACK	314.6	I
TAO #2		283.4	J
TAR #1	H.F.	7995	K
TAR #2	H.F.	2196	L
TAC #1	H.F.	2422	M
TAC #2	H.F.	5270	N
LZ Control	F.M.	49.8	O
DISTRESS		243.0	P

Landshark Monitors - A, C, D, (DEVASTATE BRAVO) TAC 2422, H, I, L, O, & P  
 Landshark Xray Monitors - B, F, I, P, K, or M  
 Landshark Bravo Monitors - B, F, I, O, P, K or M

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Appendix 2 (Air Delivery) to Annex C (Air Support) to Operations Order 1-65

Time Zone: Hotel

1. Organization

a. Aerial Delivery Platoon, Supply Company, Force Logistics Supply Group.

2. General. First Marine Aircraft Wing provides aerial delivery of supplies from airfields to be designated.

3. Operating Procedures

a. Elements of Aerial Delivery Platoon, operating at such airfields as may be directed, establish packing and handling facilities for air delivery of supplies as directed.

b. Submit requests for air delivered supplies via command channels to Task Force Delta Air Officer or his representative using the format contained in TAB A.

c. Make maximum effort to salvage parachutes and air delivery containers. Turn in daily to Battalion S-4.

4. Communications-Electronics. See Appendix 1 (Air Communications) and Annex E (Communications-Electronics) to Operation Order 1-65.

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TABS:

A - Aerial Delivery Request Form

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TAB A (Air Delivery Request) to Appendix 2 (Air Delivery) to Annex C (Air Support) to  
Operation Order 1-65

Time Zone: Hotel

Air Delivery Request

ALFA  
BRAVO  
CHARLIE  
DELTA  
ECHO  
FOXTROT  
GOLF  
HOTEL  
INDIA  
JULIET


Support unit  
Pickup point  
Pickup date  
Drop Time  
Drop zone chart numbers  
Drop zone coordinates  
Controller freq, PRI/Sec  
Call signs: ACFT/Control Agency  
Vehicles/Class Cargo/Cargo Weight  
Drop zone markings:

1. Panel color/pattern
2. Smoke color
3. Pyrotechnics color

KILO  
LIMA  
MIKE

Contact origin and phone number  
Contact pickup point and phone number  
Remarks

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Annex D (Concept of Operations) to Operation Order 1-65

Time Zone: H

1. Concept of Operations.

a. General. Task Force Delta consisting of two Marine Battalions, the Special Landing Force, 7th Fleet (SLF), and other supporting 3d Mar Div elements in coordination with an ARVN Regiment, will conduct a three stage search and destroy operation in the QUE SON-VIET AN-HIEP DUC valley complex. Marine logistic support will be from an established base complex, in the vicinity of HUONG XUAN.

b. Defination of Stages.

- (1) Stage I. Period D-1 and D-Day. D-1 ARVN forces search and destroy enemy forces in vicinity of THANG BINH. D-Day ARVN forces cross LD at 0500H proceed generally southwest along Route 35 to vicinity Phase Line B. Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines, with one rifle platoon from 2/7, moves by motor march from CHU LAI enclave to vicinity of HUONG XUAN to provide artillery fire support for ARVN forces in vicinity of Phase Line B. 2d Bn, 7th Marines motor marches from CHU LAI to vicinity TAM KY.
- (2) Stage II. Period D+1 to D+10. ARVN forces maintain contact enemy force. 2d Bn, 7th Marines is helolifted on D+1 to vicinity Objective 1, seize ~~objective~~ and is then prepared to move out to seek out and destroy the enemy as ordered. On D+1 all other elements of task force except SLF moves from DA NANG enclave to either the THANG BINH or QUE SON complex. Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines continues to support from position at HUONG XUAN. 3d Bn, 3d Marines and SLF prepare for immediate commitment to objective area on order. Logistic Support Unit supports force from D+1 to D+10 from ISA vicinity HUONG XUAN. Force Command Group, Prov Arty Bn (-), Recon Co (-) bases at QUE SON on D+1. No major displacement of this element, with the exception of the Recon Co (-), is contemplated prior to D+10.
- (3) Stage III. D+11 to D+12. All elements of Task Force Delta withdraw by helo/foot/motor march to their respective enclaves. LSA transfers surplus supplies to FLSG control in enclave. Operation HARVEST MOON terminates D+12.

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APPENDIX

1 - Operation Overlay

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Annex E (Communication-Electronic) to Operation Order 1-65

Ref: (a) 3d Mar Div O 0200.2c (COI)

Time Zone: H

1. SITUATION.

a. Enemy forces.

(1) See Annex B (Intelligence) to Operation Order 1-65

(2) The enemy has the capability to:

- (a) Employ imitative deception.
- (b) Conduct extensive wire tapping.
- (c) Jam any radio circuit.

b. Friendly forces.

(1) See Operation Order 1-65.

(2) Command Posts.

(a) D-Day

Task Force Delta	955750
Prov Arty Bn	955750
2d Bn, 1st Marines	AFLOAT
3d Bn, 3d Marines	975708
2d Bn, 7th Marines	380225
3d Motor Transport Bn	DA NANG TAOR
Logistic Support Unit	DA NANG TAOR

(b) D+1

Task Force Delta	Vicinity of 023349
Prov Arty Bn	023349
2d Bn, 1st Marines	AFLOAT
3d Bn, 3d Marines	150450
2d Bn, 7th Marines	000315
3d Motor Transport Bn	DA NANG TAOR
Logistic Support Unit	160420

(c) Report Command Post locations when established.

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2. MISSION. Commencing 0200H communications electronic elements of Task Force Delta provide continuous support for operations in the objective area.

3. EXECUTION.

a. Composite Communications Platoon.

- (1) On D-Day establish communications center within 3d Mar Div CP.
- (2) Establish radio communications with subordinate elements and ARVN forces.
- (3) Be prepared to displace to objective area on D+1.
- (4) Establish radio-relay circuit from objective area to 3d Mar Div Headquarters employing a relay station at LSU Headquarters.
- (5) Attach three Radio Sets, AN/MRC-62 to the Logistic Support Unit for movement to the objective area. One (1) AN/MRC-62 to be equipped with slings and basket for helilift.

b. 2d Battalion, 1st Marines.

- (1) Enter appropriate Task Force Delta radio nets when directed.

c. 3d Battalion, 3d Marines.

- (1) Enter appropriate Task Force Delta radio nets on D-Day at 0001.

d. 2d Battalion, 7th Marines.

- (1) Enter appropriate Task Force Delta radio nets upon departure from the CHU LAI TAOR.

e. 3d Motor Transport Battalion.

- (1) Provide convoy control communications as required.

f. Logistic Support Unit.

- (1) Enter appropriate Task Force Delta radio nets prior to departure from the DA NANG TAOR.
- (2) Provide radio-relay equipment to be employed on Task Force Delta-3d Mar Div link with a suitable operating site within the logistic support area and necessary food and fuel for a period of about ten days.
- (3) Establish internal wire system as required.
- (4) One channel of multi-channel radio-relay equipment is designated for Logistic Support Unit use. See Appendix 1 (Radio-Relay Plan).

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c. Helicopter availability became a problem as the intensive tempo of helicopter operations continued day after day without let up. Helicopter maintenance units were unable to keep pace as all available aircraft were utilized, providing little or no time for necessary preventive maintenance. Availability diminished daily until the end of the operation.

d. While ~~not~~ problem areas, the following support was considered essential and contributed greatly to the success of the operation.

(1) Airborne DASC was considered essential in an operation such as this. The period of time from the commencement of the operation until the Task Force FSCC/DASC is in operation is a crucial one and the airborne DASC is an excellent means of bridging this gap.

(2) Utilization of experienced pilots in UH-1E's as TAG(A)'s to coordinate heliborne assault missions and fixed wing support was essential in setting up heliborne assaults on short notice (2-4 hours). Also utilization of these pilots who were familiar with the area, to lead resupply and Med Evac helicopters into hard-to-locate landing zones in marginal weather proved extremely successful.

(3) Provision of a Helicopter Support Team (HST) augmented by experienced helicopter operations personnel with the necessary communications at the Logistics Support Area contributed immeasurably to the success of the operation. This support was especially required since the LSA also served as the main helicopter staging area. A deficiency in this area, however, was the lack of adequate night lighting at the LSA and the absence of navigational aids such as radio beacons or homing equipment.

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## COMMUNICATION REPORT

1. Communication-Electronics Reporta. General.

(1) Communications were generally satisfactory throughout the operation with the exception of D+1 when considerable difficulty was encountered in communicating with higher headquarters employing high frequency radios equipment which relies on storage battery, BB-451 as a power source. Means of communication from Task Force to subordinate maneuver elements were limited almost exclusively to voice radio employing Radio Set AN/PRC-25. When units were operating in mountainous terrain it was necessary to establish up to two relay stations in order to maintain continuous contact. When convenient and appropriate, staff officers picked-up and delivered traffic on helicopter flights to senior and subordinate headquarters.

(2) Communications security was a major problem in issuing orders and receiving reports to and from subordinate units. Establishment of a "covered" teletype circuit met this requirement from Task Force to higher headquarters.

b. Radio.

(1) Tactical radio nets employing Radio Set AN/PRC-25 were effective and reliable. The Task Force Tactical Net was burdened to capacity handling both tactical and administrative traffic. Relay stations were established on this net to ensure continuous contact with tactical units operating in mountainous terrain.

(2) Command radio nets were of varying quality and value. The Task Force Command Net was of limited use in communicating with maneuver elements. The major problem encountered in this respect was in the very unsatisfactory power supply, Storage Battery BB-451, for Radio Set AN/PRC 47 which a highly mobile battalion command group is required to employ and which they are totally incapable of recharging. At Task Force Headquarters mobile radio equipment was employed which was lifted in to the command post by helicopter. This equipment provided satisfactory communications with Division and III Marine Amphibious Force Headquarters.

(3) Additional radio nets are required for organizations of this size and complexity. Recommended are:

(a) Task Force Intelligence Net - Linking all intelligence staffs together and providing on an "As Required" basis a net which special intelligence agencies may enter. Should employ FM portable equipment.

(b) Task Force Logistics Net - Linking logistics staffs and logistics supporting units together. Should employ HF SSB mobile and portable equipment.

c. Wire.

(1) A switching central with local telephones to staff sections within the Task Force Headquarters and to units within the immediate vicinity was installed.

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(2) Trunks to Division Headquarters and the Logistic Support Unit employing radio relay were invaluable throughout the operation.

(3) Hot lines linking the Task Force G-2 with the Division G-2 and the Task Force G-3 with the Division G-3 were installed early and received heavy use. Radio relay was employed to provide these circuits.

(4) The wire system installed was highly satisfactory and heavily burdened. A portion of the problem of the heavy traffic load was caused by a voice channel on radio relay being of marginal value although entirely satisfactory for superimposed teletype. The establishment of the recommended additional radio nets would further alleviate this problem.

d. Radio Relay.

(1) Radio relay was of inestimable value on this operation. A radio relay system was established employing four Radio Sets AN/MRC-62 as follows: terminal at 3d Mar Div Headquarters, terminal at Logistic Support Unit Headquarters, a second terminal at Logistic Support Unit Headquarters and a terminal at Task Force Delta Headquarters. Channel 1 of both links terminated in the Logistic Support Unit switchboard, Channels 2,3, and 4 were "patched" between terminals at Logistic Support Unit and provided the G-2 to G-2, G-3 to G-3 and common user with a superimposed teletype circuit respectively.

(2) The terminal at Task Force Delta Headquarters was lifted to the Command post site by helicopter. This is both practical and feasible and highly recommended. The H-34 and H-37 helicopter is capable of making the lift of the necessary shelter and equipment less M-37 truck. Generators and trailer make a second lift.

e. Message Center.

(1) Message Center employing 60 wpm teletype equipment and KW-7 cryptographic equipment provided the Task Force Headquarters with a secure circuit for the passage of classified traffic to higher headquarters. This proved to be of great value throughout the operation.

(2) In addition to the above it is highly recommended that teletype reperforating equipment be employed on future operations to provide greater circuit efficiency.

f. Special Problems.

(1) A general shortage of satisfactory operating frequencies both HF and VHF. The high frequencies were "cluttered" to the point of uselessness at times. Additional frequencies above 12 MC are needed. Very high frequencies employed by FM equipment overlapped in some instances and were employed by both U.S. and Vietnamese units.

(2) The Storage Battery BB -451 is an impossible power source for highly mobile infantry units operating in difficult terrain and relying on helicopter for logistics support. The life of this battery prior to recharge is consider-

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ably less than expected (4-6 hours) and impossible to recharge under the circumstances encountered.

(3) Radio Set AN/PRC-6 continues to prove virtually useless. Radio Set AN/PRC-10 should replace it at the rifle company level.

(4) Radio Set AN/PRC-25 proved to be highly reliable and formed the backbone of the communications system to subordinate maneuver elements. This radio set is required within the infantry and artillery battalions and at higher echelons.

(5) Ground/air identification of units was a continuous problem. Providing units and organizations down to rifle company level with panels indentifying the company/battalion and parent regiment are recommended. Example of rifle company A 7 and infantry battalion 1 3. Each numeral or letter designator should be in black on a white background visible at 1000 ft and each on a separate panel. It is further recommended that they be of a lightweight material such as nylon that can be folded compactly for ease of carrying, and provided as a standard supply item..

(6) Vehicular radio equipment must be scheduled for helilift to the CP site early in the operation to ensure continuous, reliable communications with higher headquarters located at a considerable distance from the objective area.

Enclosure (4)

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**UNCLASSIFIED**PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1. Psychological warfare operations conducted during Operation HARVEST MOON, 080900 Dec to 201700 Dec 1965 consisted of the following:

a. At 101700, with the consent of the District Chief, a talk was given to a group of people (approximately 200) in the QUE SON District Headquarters area, explaining the reason for the presence of US troops in Vietnam. The talk was well received.

b. On 11 Dec between 1330 and 1400, 60,000 leaflets 22-65 were dropped in the area BT 0525-0825-0823-0523 in direct support of a Task Force Delta action underway against VC main force units in the area.

c. On 12 Dec, 30,000 each of two leaflets were dropped which had been made from a North Vietnamese captive's notes. On the same flight the recorded voice of the captive was broadcast, speaking the message.

d. On 14 Dec, 75000 leaflets 22-65 were disseminated in the area of BT 0625-0925-0923-0623.

e. At 151300H Dec each of three B-52 strike areas hit on 13 and 14 Dec had 100,000 leaflets SA-1 dropped on them. 100,000 leaflets 22-65 mixed with 50,000 leaflets each of SA-4 and 23-65 were dropped from BT 0227 south to BT 0215, while the recorded speeches of the North Vietnamese captive and a North Vietnamese rally were broadcast, introduced with the Vietnamese National Anthem.

ENCLOSURE (5)

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## SURVEILLANCES

ARTILLERY	Confirmed	Estimated*
KIA	16	270

\*Due to the heavy contact on D day and D plus 1 plus the fact that most of the lucrative targets were fired in support of ARVN in their area of operation, accurate and immediate on the ground body counts were impossible. The majority of the surveillance came from AO's in the air.



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INTELLIGENCE1. Estimate of the Situation Anticipated in Objective Area.

a. Current intelligence in the area of operations had indicated that the 1st Viet Cong Regiment had returned to its old operating area in the mountains and valley regions of HIEP DUC, VIET AN and QUE SON and thus posed a formidable threat to RVN forces in the area. The Viet Cong had developed a variety of base areas which were scattered throughout the area of impending operations. This was believed to be a well-developed complex containing medical facilities; training camps; food, weapons and ammunition storage areas; and printing facilities. The population was considered to be pro-Viet Cong.

b. Composition. Units expected to be encountered in the area of operations consisted of:

## 1st VC Regiment

60th Battalion  
80th Battalion  
90th Battalion  
400th Arty

70th Battalion  
CHU DUNG Battalion  
49th Battalion (?)  
U/I Battalion  
D-20 Company  
D-21 Company

Units considered to be outside the area of operations but within reinforcing distance were:

7th Battalion  
A-16 Company  
A-19 Company  
D-22 Company

c. Dispositions. See Figure 1.

d. Combat Effectiveness of Viet Cong Forces in Area of Operations. The combat effectiveness of the 1st Viet Cong Regiment was considered to be good. Although they had suffered heavy losses in Operation STARLITE, there were indications that they had recouped their strength. The recent attack on HIEP DUC indicated that the regiment was again capable of coordinated action. The area of operations was well-known to the regiment and the local populace was expected to support them. No information was available to judge the combat effectiveness of other reported units. Their combat effectiveness was thus considered to be excellent until proven otherwise.

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ENCLOSURE (2)

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e. Probable Courses of Action. Analysis of enemy capabilities resulted in the following being published as the enemy's probable courses of action in Operation HARVEST MOON:

- (1) Withdraw to mountainous areas while using local force and guerrilla units to harass and delay friendly forces.
- (2) Defend if engaged and unable to avoid friendly units, breaking contact and exfiltrating at first opportunity.
- (3) Harass friendly units with small arms, automatic weapons, mortar and recoilless rifle fire.
- (4) Conduct ambushes of patrols and maneuvering forces.

## 2. Viet Cong Strength and Situation Actually Encountered in Objective Area.

a. Prior to the commitment of Marine Corps units in Operation HARVEST MOON, the 11th ARVN Ranger Battalion was believed to have engaged the 70th Battalion on 8 December. The following day, the 1st Battalion, 5th ARVN Regiment was believed to have engaged both the 60th and 70th Battalions. These actions took place in the southeastern sector of the planned area of operations and generally coincided with the anticipated enemy dispositions. Statements of captives taken during the operation indicate that the Viet Cong in the area were planning an attack on a District Headquarters. This would account for VC unit displacements resulting in new location and subsequent encounters by ARVN units in the initial phases of the operation.

### b. Units Identified.

(1) 519th AA Bn (AKA 195th AA Bn) - Identified as having been in contact through interrogation of captives, two Ralliers, and translation of captured documents.

(2) 80th Bn - Identified as having been in contact and in the area of operations through the interrogation of one captive, translation of captured documents and markings found on captured pack.

(3) 90th Bn - Identified as having been in the area through the translation of captured documents being processed by the G-2, ICT2.

(4) A10 Co - Identified as having been in the area of operations by the translation of captured documents and markings found on captured packs.

(5) T119 Co - Identified as having been in the area of operations by translation of captured documents.

### c. Other Significant Intelligence Gained.

(1) Infiltration of PAVN Anit-Aircraft Unit. The 519th/195th AA Bn was identified as having infiltrated into QUANG-TIN-QUANG-NAM Provinces. The infiltration, as reported by 5 captives and 2 Ralliers, began in late June and was completed by late November or early December. The route was not located exactly,

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but reportedly started in VINH LINH, passed through LAOS, and possibly entered RVN in the vicinity of KONTUM. The infiltration was accomplished by the echelonment of three separate companies. They carried their equipment and personal effects with them as well as a small amount of ammunition.

(2) OOB of 519th/195th AA Bn. See Figure 2.

(3) DONG LINH Logistics Base. Prior to Operation HARVEST MOON, numerous reports had been received through various sources from a variety of agents to the effect that the DONG LINH valley area was a major Viet Cong logistics base. Following a B-52 strike on 12 December, the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines proceeded down the valley in a search and destroy mission. In the course of three days in the valley, this battalion discovered many of the reported caches wherein considerable quantities of materiel were captured and either destroyed or turned over to the local District Chief for further disposition locally. The importance of the DONG LINH Logistics Base can be judged on the basis of the amounts and types of materiel it contained. This involved 45 tons of rice, 11 tons of tea, 3 tons of salt, along with large stores of fish oil, peanuts, sugar and soup mix; weapons and ammunition stores including three light machine guns and 34 new CHICOM 7.62mm Moissin-Nagant Carbines still in preservative grease; a uniform factory with uniforms, a stock of 3800 meters and 40 bolts of material of excellent quality, 3 sewing machines, 15,000 buttons, and bundles of thread.

(4) Location of Viet Cong Assembly Areas. The interrogation of captives and Ralliers indicate that the 519th AA Bn assembled and regrouped at CAO NGAN (BT 068268) following the fighting with the ARVN on 9 and 10 December. Interrogation of suspects enlarged upon the picture of CAO NGAN being both an assembly area and rallying area not only for the 519th AA Bn, but also another unidentified battalion size unit. Prisoner interrogations further indicate that AN TRANG (1) (AT 990259) was the assembly area for the 519th AA Bn following their participation in the HIEP DUC attack and prior to their deployment to the high round on NUI GIAI (BT 0427) and NUI CHAP CHAI (BT 0727). It was further determined that AN TRANG (1) would also be the rally point for the 519th AA Bn if and/or when exfiltration from the area of operations was to be effected.

(5) Infiltration of North Vietnamese into QUANG NAM-QUANG TIN, I CTZ. Undeniable evidence of PAVN infiltration into I CTZ by the 519th/195th AA Bn was obtained through the interrogation of prisoners and Ralliers. This infiltration was accomplished by tactical units in complete secrecy. During interrogation two captives stated that they had heard that the PAVN 36th Regiment has been infiltrated into RVN to "replace" the 1st Viet Cong Regiment. The presence of the 36th Regiment is not accepted on the basis of such hearsay. The presence of the 519/195th AA Bn in the area of operation during Operation HARVEST MOON is accepted. It would appear, however, that this battalion suffered considerable losses in personnel and equipment as a result of repeated air attacks.

(6) Miscellaneous Order of Battle.

(a) During the interrogation of captives, several unit designations were mentioned. The 84th Regiment and the 36th Regiment were both mentioned, however,

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the captives had no definite information and could only say that they had "heard" that these units were in the QUANG NAM-QUANG TIN area.

(b) The T202 Co. was reported by the Rallier Lai SO. No information is held concerning this unit, however, the designation "T" has generally been connected with training units. This Rallier also stated that the AKA for this unit is "THANH MAI" which is a known AKA for the 80th Bn. An analysis of the VCC's statement indicates the T202 Co, trained in eastern BINH SON District with 1st VC Regiment, departing that area on 14 Aug, four days prior to Operation Starlite.

(c) Captive Nguyen Tung TU claimed to have been from the 3d Co, 411th Bn, 312th Regt. This battalion was reported to have the strength of 200 men. The regiment was reported to consist of two battalions, the 411th and 412th. The captive was considered unreliable; however, it is possible that he had trained with elements of the 312th in North Viet Nam. A note of interest is the parallel between known PAVN unit designations. There is a confirmed 312th Division with a 141st Infantry Regiment and a 142d Heavy Weapons Battalion. There seems to be no correlation between these units and those mentioned by the captive except for the similarity in the numerical designations.

(d) Although still speculative, the presence of the 519th AA Battalion suggests the possibility that a PAVN regiment has infiltrated or is about to infiltrate into this area. This speculation is supported by the overall scale of infiltration, reports of which continue to be received.

(7) Psychological Vulnerability of 519th AA Bn Personnel. The 519th/195th AA Bn was considered a lucrative psywar target due to the recent and repeated air strikes on their positions. Nguyen Quang DAT and Nguyen Van HUNG indicated that due to these strikes, low food supply, no mail, and sickness, the morale was low. Many others wanted to defect but that they were watched by their officers. Captives were persuaded to write letters for leaflet drops and make tape recorded broadcasts to be played over airborne loudspeakers. Other captives indicated that these leaflets were dropped on the target unit and that in one instance the officers gathered them up and refused to let the men read them. In another instance, they were ignored. The short term results of these leaflets cannot be assessed; however, there is every reason to believe that the remnants of the 519th AA Bn continues to be a vulnerable psywar target.

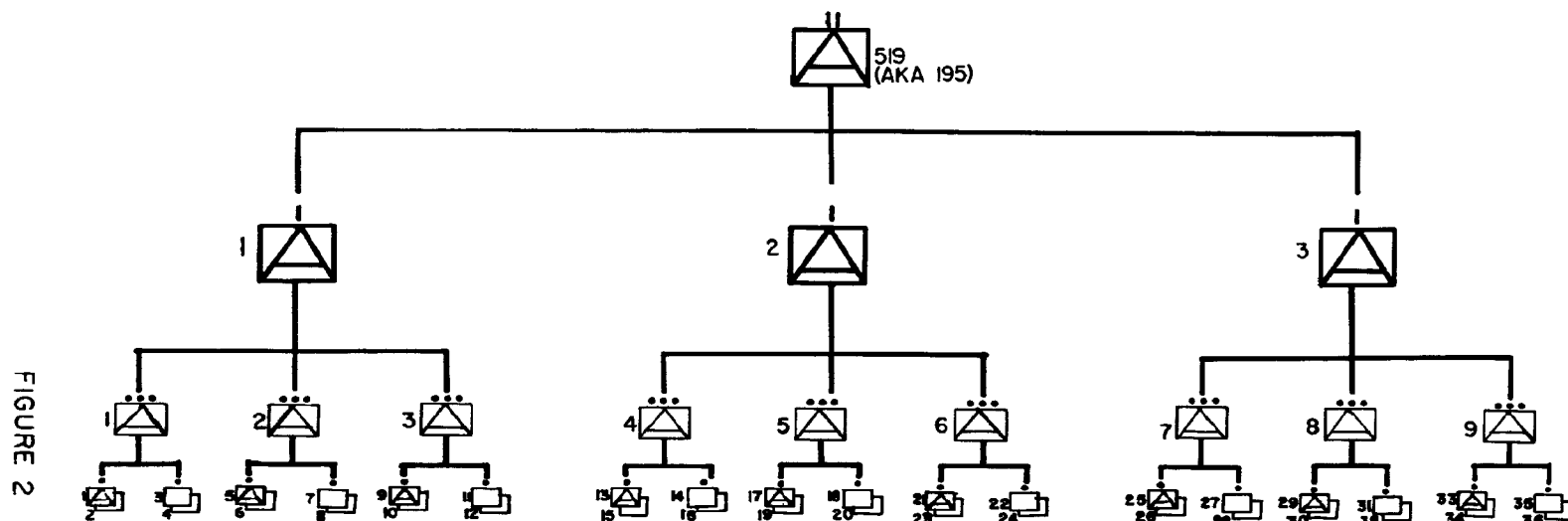
### 3. Terrain Description.

a. The area of operations was generally located in a flat, cultivated valley bounded on the north, west and south by rugged mountains covered by secondary growth and interspersed with tropical rainforest. The major valley area and the numerous highland valleys in and between the mountains contained terraced paddy and dry crop areas dotted by islands of relatively wooded high ground where are located the houses and living areas of the local populace. There are numerous hedgerows which bound and interweave among the cultivated fields and paddies.

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## 519th AA BATTALION



STRENGTH -- 470

AA ARMAMENT -- EIGHTEEN 12.7mm MG's

### DISTRIBUTION

BN -- 18

CO -- 6

PLT -- 2 (2 Gun Squads & 2 Ammo Squads)

(B/A -- 300-500 Rd's per Gun)



### 1st COMPANY

CO -- Nguyen-Van-BONG

XC -- Tran-Van-TY  
(AKA LUU?)

PO -- Nguyen-Ban TUAT  
(Reported KIA)

### 519th BATTALION

CO -- Nguyen-Cuong-PH/N  
(AKA Nguyen-Hong-TUYEN)

XC -- Tran-Van QUANG

### 2d COMPANY

CO -- TUYEN

XC -- COI

PO -- TUE

### 3d COMPANY

CO -- NGONG  
(AKA CUANG?)

XC -- TUU

PO -- CONG

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b. Observation and Fields of Fire. Long range observation and fields of fire were afforded the Viet Cong over the approaches into the area of operations from the east by the high ground dominating the valley on three sides and the numerous rises of ground across the entire valley floor.

c. Cover and Concealment. There was considerable cover and concealment available in the valley area for relatively large units due to the numerous pine stands, hedgerows, cane stands and built-up living areas on the numerous islands. Long range detection was possible, however, due to the barren paddy and dry crop areas which were subject to excellent observation from the surrounding hill masses.

d. Obstacles.

(1) Manmade. The two roads leading west from National Route 1 to QUE SON and VIET AN were effectively interdicted by countless cuts and destroyed bridges over the numerous rivers and streams in the valley.

(2) Natural. The entire valley floor was interlaced with a river and stream complex which at this time of the year was an effective barrier to freedom of cross-country movement. The rain further contributed to the natural obstacles by inundating the great portion of the valley and turning the rice paddies into effective barriers to easy cross-country foot movement. The rugged, overgrown hill masses and mountains bordering the valley were natural obstacles which tended to channelize and restrict movement.

e. Key Terrain Features.

(1) Hill 280 (BT 0438) and the northern hill mass commanding local route 82 dominated the northeastern ground approach into the area of operations.

(2) Hill 441 (AT 9828) and 445 (AT 9925) dominated the western extremity of the QUE SON valley and the narrow entrance to the HIEP DUC valley.

(3) The southern mass of hills running east from VIET AN and including hill 401 (BT 0427), hill 407 (BT 0727), hill 378 (BT 0526), hill 330 (BT 1127), hill 434 (BT 0924) and hill 479 (BT 1324) dominated the southern approach into the area of operations, VIET AN, the DONG LINH valley and the area between the QUE SON valley and the SONG CHANG river valley.

f. Avenues of Approach.

(1) The entire QUE SON valley formed a northeast to southwest approach into the area of operations.

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(2) The pass between HON NUI TAU and NUI CHOM in the vicinity of AT 9637 formed an avenue of approach into the western extremity of the QUE SON valley in the area of operations.

(3) The valley of the SONG LAU past VIET AN formed an avenue of approach into the southwestern extremity of the QUE SON valley.

(4) The HIEP DUC valley formed a western avenue of approach into the QUE SON valley.

#### 4. Weather

a. Weather in the area of operations consisted of intermittent rain and overcast skies with corresponding low ceilings. There was no variation from the average temperatures for this time of the year.

b. Effects on Enemy Operations. There was no known adverse effect of weather on Viet Cong operations. It is assumed that their cross-country movement was hampered somewhat and hindered the evacuation of their dead and wounded and the resupply of their combat units. To what degree weather affected Viet Cong operations cannot be determined at this time.

c. Effects on Friendly Operations. In general, the extended periods of rain in the objective area restricted our full employment of helicopters and close support aircraft. Ground operations were hampered due to the reduced visibility in the mountains during periods of heavy overcast and rain. Flooded paddies and swollen streams caused by the constant rain further hampered ground operations and cross-country mobility.

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AIR SUPPORT OPERATIONS**UNCLASSIFIED**1. Summary of Air Support Operations

"Harvest Moon" was planned and put into execution in a very short time frame and only personnel with a "need to know" were informed of the operation. In consonance with most counterinsurgency operations in Vietnam, the nature of the terrain and enemy activity in the objective area dictated intensive use of air support from the initial stages of planning for the operation. A Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) (as contained in Annex D to Operation Order 1-65) was designated for the operation and approved by the ARVN Commander I Corps. Initial planning included a heliborne assault on D+1 by 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines on Objective One (LZ-BT 017185), a hill mass southwest of the town of Que Son. Subsequent operations envisioned "fix and destroy" operations against the Viet Cong in the area, as ordered, utilizing any or all elements of Battalions 2/7, 2/1, or 3/3. The First Marine Air Wing was directed to provide air support for the operation. The First Marine Aircraft Wing was later augmented by the helicopter resources of HMM-363 and HMM-261 who have been under OPCON of FIELD FORCES Vietnam, and the Special Landing Force, respectively.

The operation encompassed a period of approximately 12 days. An airborne Direct Air Support Center (DASC), utilizing a KC-130, was employed from L-Hour minus one on D-Day plus one, through D-Day plus two when the Task Force Delta DASC was set up at Que Son, adjacent to the Command Group. For the remainder of the operation the DASC at Que Son (Landshark Brave) controlled air support operations. Tactical air requests were handled by Landshark Brave over the TAR net as well as through the Task Force S-3 to the DASC.

The Logistics Support Area (LSA) at (BT 154-450) served also as a helicopter staging area. Aircraft fuel was available on D+2 at the LSA. An element of MAG-16 operations established a helicopter control team with the necessary communications to control helicopters in and out of the LSA. This control team was also tied in to Landshark Brave, the DASC at Que Son, by both phone and radio.

After the initial heliborne landings of the three battalions on D+1 and D+2, there were approximately 60 additional helicopter lifts of platoon size or larger, plus the numerous daily Med Evac, reconnaissance, liaison and smaller resupply and administration missions. The nature of the operation dictated minimum time between planning and execution of these missions. The major portion of these lifts were conducted in marginal weather conditions with ceilings of 300 to 1500 feet and visibility from  $\frac{1}{2}$  mile to 3 miles. Coupled with the mountainous terrain and enemy fire, these weather conditions were extremely hazardous for air operations. Helicopters and fixed wing aircraft were successfully employed under these conditions, however.

In accordance with First Marine Aircraft Wing doctrine, all assault lifts into unsecure zones were preceded by landing zone prep by A4 and F4 attack aircraft. Helicopter escort and landing zone CAP by A4 attack aircraft plus armed UH-1E fire suppression support were also provided. Weather, as mentioned earlier, influenced the effectiveness of air support to a considerable extent and dictated the ordnance utilized. Napalm, 20MM rockets and 250 lbs M-81 bombs with Snakeye fins and Daisy Cutter fusing were employed for this low level work. Normally two or four fixed wing aircraft were on station continuously during daylight hours when weather per-

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mitted and eight aircraft were on 15 minute ground alert at Danang and Chu Lai during darkness and bad weather. A flare plane at Danang and Med Evac helicopters at the LSA were also on 15 minute ground alert throughout the operation. Air Support Radar Teams at both Danang and Chu Lai controlled TPQ-10 missions in the objective area during the periods of darkness. While the ASRT has the capability of controlling bombing drops within 500 meters of friendly troops, there was no requirement for TPQ-10 drops that close on this operation. Four targets in the objective area were interdicted by USAF B-52 bombing raids during the "Harvest Moon" operation. This required close coordination to insure the safety of ground troops and aircraft in the vicinity.

CH-37 helicopters proved invaluable in transporting batteries of stripped down 105 howitzers and carrying communications vans and jeeps into the objective area. One stripped down UH-34 was retrieved by a CH-37. Two Army CH-47's assisted in the operation by picking up several other UH-34's forced down by mechanical trouble. Two helicopters were lost in the "Harvest Moon" operation. One UH-34 forced down by mechanical trouble was destroyed by the VC with grenades before a security force could be brought in to protect it. The crew was safely evacuated. A UH-1E was shot down on a night Med Evac mission, the pilot was killed and three crew members were WIA.

There were a total of 106 incidents in which helicopters reported being fired at. Fifty three aircraft were hit with over 160 rounds. A number of these were .50 caliber rounds. Total casualties incurred by aviation personnel were 1 KIA and 12 WIA.

Armed UH-1E helicopters played a vital role in escorting road convoys from Chu Lai and Danang to the LSA and return. Along with Army OLB's, they also provided valuable reconnaissance information. UH-1E pilots provided a valuable source for TAC(A) requirements.

A summary of the operation shows that the A-4 and F-4 aircraft flew a total of 523 sorties and 710 flight hours during "Harvest Moon. The helicopters flew 9,230 sorties and 3,262 flight hours. They lifted 12,177 troops and 638 tons of cargo. KC-130 aircraft made three air drops of 105 and 155 ammunition totaling 90,000 pounds and received 10 hits from small arms fire. Ordnance expended included 1058 MK-81/ANM-57 250# bombs, 539 MK-82/ANM-64 500# bombs, 173 napalm 208 5" Zuni rockets, 1529 2.75 FFAR and Lazy Dogs.

## 2. Problems Encountered

a. Weather was a critical factor in the operation. Both helicopters and fixed wing aircraft conduct operations in weather that was below safe operating minimums. At these low altitudes and reduced visibility, aircraft were exposed not only to the hazards of the terrain, but to excessive small arms and automatic fire as well. Low altitude operations also restricted the type ordnance delivered at low altitudes could be employed.

b. Heavy Lift Capability was not adequate for the operation. While the CH-37 helicopters utilized did an outstanding job, the operation emphasized the need for a helicopter capable of lifting 105 howitzers and downed UH-34's without having to strip or disassemble them. This is especially true in the case of downed UH-34's where retrieval time must be minimal to avoid destruction of the aircraft by the VC. Demonstration of the value of this capability was provided when Army CH-47 helicopters retrieved several HU-34's after only the rotor blades were removed.

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g. Air Support communications. See Annex C (Air Support) to Operation Order 1-65.

h. Coordinating Instructions.

(1) Communications Center.

(a) See Appendix 2 (Cryptographic).

(b) Use GMT (ZULU) in all date time groups.

(2) Messenger Service.

(a) Helicopter messenger service as required.

(b) Foot and vehicle messengers must be provided with adequate security prior to departure from command posts.

(3) Radio.

(a) Tactical radio call signs in accordance with reference (a) and Appendix 3 (Radio Call Signs).

(b) See Appendix 4 (Radio Frequency Employment Chart).

(c) See Appendix 5 (Radio Frequency assignment).

(4) Wire.

(a) Internal CP wire systems only until the tactical situation permits the installation of trunks.

(b) See Appendix 6 (Switchboard Code Names).

(5) Integrated Wire/Radio Relay. See Appendix 1 (Radio Relay Plan).

(6) Visual, Sound, Pyrotechnics. See reference(a).

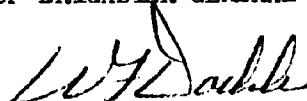
4. ADMINISTRATION AND LOGISTICS.

a. See Administrative Order 1-65.

b. Resupply of wire and common use batteries available from LSU.

c. Emergency air evacuation of electronic equipment to Force Logistic Support Group (DA NANG TAOR) as required.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL HENDERSON



W.F. DOEHLER

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps  
Executive Officer

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APPENDIXES:

- 1 - Radio Relay Plan
- 2 - Cryptographic
- 3 - Radio Call Signs
- 4 - Radio Frequency Employment Chart
- 5 - Radio Frequency Assignments
- 6 - Switchboard Code Names

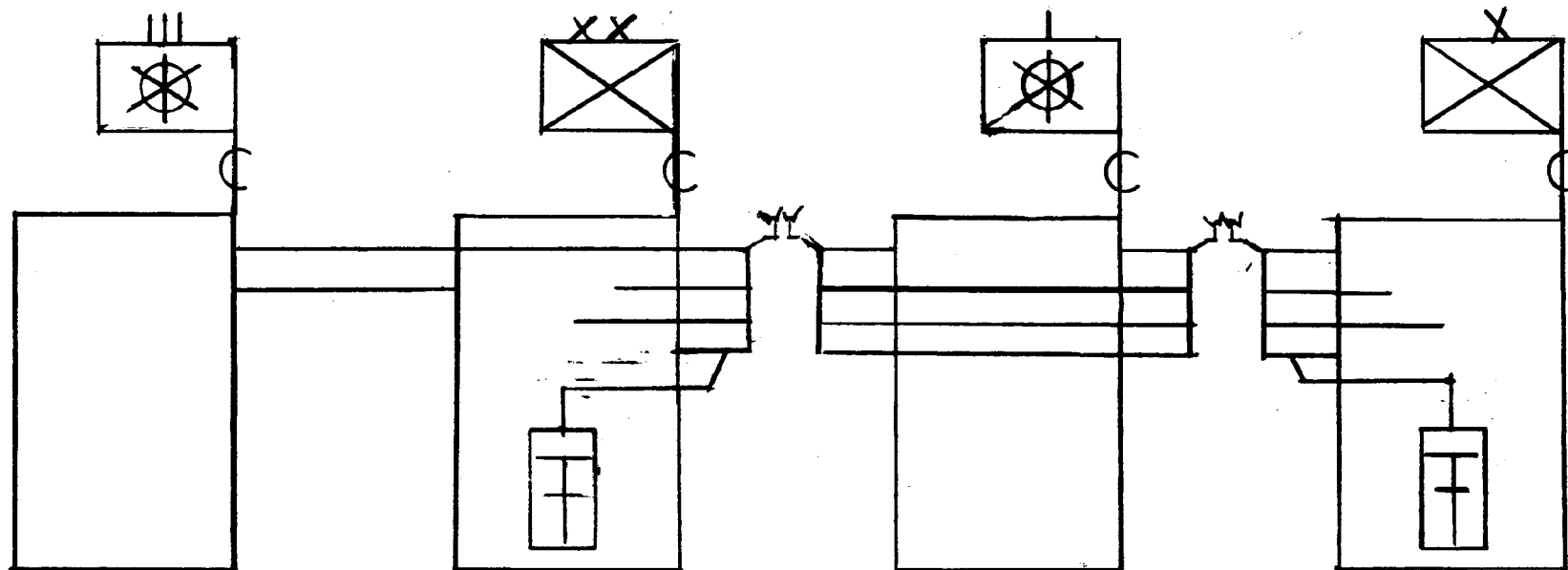
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APPENDIX 1 (Radio Relay Plan) to Annex E (Communication-Electronics)  
to Operation Order 1-65

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TASK FORCE DELTA  
DA NANG, RVN  
070800Z DEC 1965



BY COMMAND OF BRIGADIER GENERAL HENDERSON

*W. F. Doebl*  
W. F. DOEBLER

Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
Executive Officer

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DA NANG, RVN  
070100H Dec 1965

Appendix 2 (Cryptographic) to Annex E (Communication - Electronics) to

Operation Order 1-65

Ref: None

Time Zone: H

1. CRYPTOGRAPHIC

a. Authentication

- (1) KAA-60 has been designated as the in-country authentication system and will be used on all radio circuits external to Task force Delta and on all internal radio circuits guarded or controlled by Task force Delta. KAA-60 may be used on all other task force circuits.

b. Numeral Codes

- (1) KAC-138 is effective for joint use in plain language messages.

c. Crypto Channels

- (1) KAK-2641 is the common on-line SECRET crypto channel for Task Force Delta and 3rd Marine Division.

BY COMMAND OF BRIGDIER GENERAL HENDERSON

  
W.F. DOEHLER

Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
Executive Officer

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 070100H Dec 1965

Appendix 3 (Radio Call Signs) to Annex (Communication-Electronics) to  
 Operation Order 1-65.

Ref: None

Time Zone: H

3 Mar Div	Monroe
TF Delta	Murphy
3D Bn 3D Mar	Warehouse
2D Bn 7TH Mar	Dixie Diner
2D Bn 1ST Mar	Glimmer
3D MT Bn	Slow Roll
Liaison O/ARVN Regt	Monroe Kilo
TACP W/ARVN Regt	Monroe Kilo 14
Logistic Spt Unit	Ripe Peach Alpha
DASC	Landshark Bravo
DASC (Airborne)	Landshark X-Ray
Arty Bn GRP	Ring Broom
Btry 1/12	Permission Charlie
"F" Btry 2/12	Sunrise Foxtrot
"W" Btry 1/11	Henpecked
"M" Btry 4/11	Ruggles Mike
"C" Co 3D Recon Bn	Scat Charlie
Air Observer	Rosemont (Phonetic Suffix)

BY COMMAND OF BRIGDIER GENERAL HENDERSON



W.F. DOEHLER

Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps  
 Executive Officer

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Appendix 4 (Radio Frequency Employment Chart) to Annex E (Communication-Electronics) to Operation Order 1-65.

Ref: None

Time Zone: H

**LEGEND:**

C - Net Control  
 X Guard  
 O - When Directed  
 Y Copy  
 R - As Required  
 L - Listen

Emission Symbol  
 O, 1A1 A  
 3A3J B  
 3A7J C  
 36F3 D  
 6A3 E  
 19B F

UNIT	CALL SIGN	EM	FREQUENCY		CIRCUIT TITLE	CIRCUIT DESIGNATOR	CIRCUIT		COLUMN
			PRI	SEC			PRI	SEC	
TF Delta	MURPHY	X	2244	3925	Div Tac#1	D-4	D-27		1
Liaison O/ARVN Regt	MONROE KILO	X	43.1		Div Tac#2	D-208			2
3d Bn, 3d Mar (-)	WAREHOUSE	X	45.9		TF Tac	D-231			3
2d Bn, 7th Mar (-)	DIXIE DINER	X	3725		TF Cmd	D-95			4
2d Bn, 1st Mar (SLF)	GLIMMER	X	38.7		TF AirObs/Arty AirSpot	D-181			5
Arty Bn Grp	RING BROOM	X	3384		3d Bn, 3d Mar Tac#1	D-20			6
Logistic Spt Unit	RIPE PEACH ALPHA	X	42.9		3d Bn, 3d Mar Tac#2	D-206			7
3d MT Bn (-)	SLOW ROLL	X	3217		2d Bn, 7th Mar Tac#1	D-15			8
DASC	LANDSHARK BRAVO	X	46.1		2d Bn, 7th Mar Tac#2	D-232			9
DASC (Airborne)	LANDSHARK X-RAY	X	45.6		2d Bn, 1st Mar Tac	M-28			10
NGF Spot Team	MURPHY 26C	X	312.0		TAD#1	W-455			11
		X	325.0		TAD#2	W-456			12
		X	273.8		HD#1	W-459			13
		X	326.6		HD#2	W-482			14
		X	236.2		TATC				15
		X	4631	5270	TAC	W-453	W-454		16
		X	7995	2196	TAR	W-451	W-452		17
		X	19.8		Iz Control	D-249			18
		X	38.2		Arty Grp Cmd/Fd				19
		X	4301	8630	NGF Control	D-30	D-68		20
		X	3224	5120	SEG Spot	D-16	D-39		21
		X	262.2	318.6	NGF Air Spot	D-300	D-307		22
		X	48.6		NGF Local	D-343			23
		X	7843	3095	ISU Cmd	D-59	D-89		24
		X	5069		HST Logistics	D-37			25

E-2-1

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*W.F. DoeHLer*

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Task Force Delta  
DA NANG, RVN  
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Appendix 5 (Radio Frequency Assignment) to Annex E (Communications- Electronics)  
to Operation Order 1-65.

Ref: None

Time Zone: H

1. Radio Frequency Assignment.

<u>EMISSION</u>	<u>SYMBOL</u>	<u>EMISSION</u>	<u>SYMBOL</u>
0.1A1	A	36F3	D
3A3J	B	6A3	E
3A7J	C	6A9B	F

Net	Frequency	Designator	Emission	Power
Div Tac #1	(P) 3925	D-27	BA	500
	(S) 2244	D-4	BA	500
Div Tac #2	(P) 43.1	D-208	D	16
Task Force Cmd	3725	D-95	BA	200
Task Force Tac	45.9	D-231	D	16
Task Force LSU Cmd	7843	D-59	BA	200
MP Cmd	3095	D-89	BA	200
Convoy Control	40.0	D-191	D	16

2. Naval Gunfire.

Net	Frequency	Designator	Emission	Power
NGF Control	(P) 4301	D-30	B	100
	(S) 8630	D-68	B	100
SFC Spot	(1) 3224	D-16	B	100
	(3) 5120	D-39	B	100
SFCP Local	48.6	D-243	D	16
NGF Air Spot	(P) 262.2	D-300	E	10
	(S) 318.6	D-307	E	10

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3. Tactical Air Nets.

TAR # 1	(P) 7995	W-451	B	500
	(S) 2196	W-452	B	500
TAD #1 (Red)	312.0	W-455	E	25
#2 (Green)	325.0	W-456	E	25
TATC	236.2			
TAC	(P) 4631	W-453		
	(S) 5270	W-454		
TFAO/ArtyAirSpot	38.7	D-181	D	16

4. Helicopter Nets.

HST Lob	5069	D-37	B	100
LL Control	49.8	D-249	D	1
HD # 1 (Maroon)	273.8	W-459	E	25
# 2 (Black)	326.6	W-482	E	25

5. 2d Bn 1st Marines.

Bn Tac #1	(P) 41.1	M-30		
#2	(S) 45.6	M-38		
81 Mort. C of F	42.6	M-37		
Co E Tac	51.4	M-39		
Co F Tac	49.6	M-40		
Co G Tac	52.6	M-41		
Co H Tac	51.6	M-42		
TACP Local	41.8	M-33		

6. 3d Bn 3d Marines.

Bn Tac #1	3384	D-20	BA	100
Bn Tac #2	42.9	D-206	D	16
81 Mort C of F	44.4	D-219	D	16

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106 RR Cmd	45.6	D-228	D	16
Co I Tac	54.4	D-275	D	1
Co K Tac	52.4	D-262	D	1
Co L Tac	47.6	D-240	D	1
Co M Tac	54.8	D-273	D	1
TACP Local	45.2	D-225	D	16

7. 2d Bn 17th Marines.

Bn Tac #1	3217	D-15	BA	100
Bn Tac #2	46.1	D-232	D	16
81 Mort C of F	43.2	D-209	D	16
106 RR Cmd	40.2	D-193	D	16
Co E Tac	43.4	D-211	D	1
Co F Tac	41.1	D-277	D	1
Co G Tac	45.1	D-224	D	1
Co H Tac	41.2	D-276	D	1
TACP Local	45.9	D-231	D	16

8. Artillery.

Arty Bn Grp Cmd/FD.	38.2		D	16
G Btry 1/12 C of F	(P) 27.3	D-133	D	16
	(S) 29.7	D-148	D	16
F Btry 2/12 C of F	(P) 37.4	D-177		
"W" Btry 1/11 C of F	27.7	M-26	D	16
M Btry 4/11 C of F	(P) 35.1	D-155	D	16
	(S) 27.2	D-132	D	16

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9. 3d Motor Transport Battalion.

Bn Cmd	52.4	D-262	D	16
Bn Control	40.6	D-196	D	16

10. Reconnaissance.

C Co, Cmd	(P) 3862	D-25	BA	200
	(S) 51.0	D-255	D	16

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Appendix 6 (~~Switch~~board Code Names) to Annex B (Communications-Electronics) to  
 Operation Order 1-65

Ref: None

Time Zone: H

3d Mar Div

SHOVE

TF Delta

PINCH HITTER

3d Bn, 3d Mar

SWAIN

2d Bn, 7th Mar

FATSTUFF

2d Bn, 1st Mar

TBA

3d MT Bn

YAGHT

Logistic Spt Unit

PANHANDLE ALFA

DASC

DEVESTATE BRAVO

Prov Arty Bn

PINCH HITTER 24

C Btry 1/12

GOOSE CHARLIE

F Btry 2/12

WAGON MASTER FOXTROT

W Btry 1/11

TBA

M Btry 4/11

PLAID MIKE

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Time Zone: H

COMUS MAC V	5
FMFPAC	5
III MAF	7
I CORPS	3
3d MAR DIV	15
FMFAW	5
ADC CMD GRP, CHU LAI	3
3d MARINES	2
4th MARINES	2
7th MARINES	2
9th MARINES	2
11th MARINES	2
12th MARINES	2
2d BN, 7th MARINES	5
3d BN, 3d MARINES	5
SLF, BLT 2/1	5
PROV ARTY BN	6
CO D, 3d RECON BN	1
CO G, 3d ENGR BN	1
LOGISTIC SUPPORT UNIT	3
3d MT BN	3
FILE	10
TOTAL	94

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F-2

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TASK FORCE DELTA  
3d Marine Division (-), FMFCopy 20 of 2 copies.  
Hq, TASK FORCE DELTA  
DANANG, RVN  
28 December 1965  
Serial No: 00176

From: Commanding General, Task Force Delta  
 To: Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command Vietnam (Attn: J321),  
 APO U. S. Forces 96243  
 Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division, FMF  
 (2) Commanding General, III MAF

Subj: After Action Report, Operation HARVEST MOON

Ref: (a) MACV Directive 335-8\*, dtd 1 Jul 65

Encl: (1) Artillery  
 (2) Intelligence  
 (3) Air Support  
 (4) Communications  
 (5) Psychological Warfare  
 (6) Administrative Matters (Not included)  
 (7) Daily Operation Overlays  
 (8) Letter from Citizens of Que Son

1. NAME OF THE OPERATION. Operation HARVEST MOON, was a search, fix, and destroy operation in coordination and conjunction with elements of the 2d Division, I Corps, ARVN, in the QUE SON - VIET AN - HIEP DUC Valley complex.

2. DATE OF OPERATION. 080600H to 202130H December 1965.

3. LOCATION. The QUE SON - VIET AN - HIEP DUC Valley complex in QUANG NAM and QUANG TIN Provinces between the DA NANG and CHU LAI enclaves encompassed by grid coordinates BT 100510, BT 960390, BT 870290; BT 900250, BT 040210, BT 280250; AMS Series L701 1:50,000 Sheets 6657 I and IV, 6658 II and III.

4. COMMAND HEADQUARTERS. Headquarters, Task Force Delta.

5. REPORTING OFFICER. Brigadier General J. M. PLATT, Commanding General; Task Force Delta.

6. TASK ORGANIZATION.

Commander Task Force Delta.

Brig Gen HENDERSON  
8 Dec - 10 Dec

Brig Gen PLATT  
10 Dec - 20 Dec

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JAN 6 1966

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PD-99-66

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(ENCL 4)



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Hq

Composite Comm Plt  
Det Hqs Co, Hqs Bn  
Plat MP Co, Hqs Bn

2d Bn, 7th Marines (-) Rein

Co H, 2d Bn, 9th Marines (13-19 Dec)  
2d Plat, Co C, 3d Engr Bn  
HST, Co A, 3d SP Bn

LtCol UTTER

3d Bn, 3d Marines (-) Rein

Co L, 3d Bn, 3d Marines  
Co E, 2d Bn, 9th Marines  
Co G, 2d Bn, 4th Marines (15-19 Dec)  
Co G, 2d Bn, 9th Marines  
4th Plat, Co C, 3d Engr Bn  
HST, Co A, 3d SP Bn

LtCol DORSEY III

BLT 2/1. (Special Landing Force)

LtCol HANIFIN

Provisional Arty Bn.

Det Hq Btry, 12th Marines  
Btry A, 1st Bn, 11th Marines  
Btry F, 2d Bn, 12th Marines  
Btry L, 4th Bn, 12th Marines  
Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines

LtCol SNYDER

Co C (-), 3d Recon Bn

Capt REVELL

Composite Co (-), 3d Engr Bn

Capt O'LAUGHLIN

Logistic Support Unit

A Co (-), 3d Shore Party Bn  
Det, Ammo Co, FLSU  
Det, Ration Co, FLSU  
Det, EOD, FLSU  
Clearing Plat (-) (Rein), 3d Med Bn  
Det, 3d Engr Bn  
Det, 1st Bridge Plat, 7th Engr Bn  
Det, MABS 36, MAG 36 (TAFDS)

Maj BENSTEAD

3d MT Bn (Rein)

Maj BAKER

Co H, 2d Bn, 9th Marines (12 Dec security LSU)

Capt GORMIEY

Co D, 1st Bn, 3d Marines

Capt SPENCE

Co D, 1st Bn, 1st Marines

Capt MILLER

Plat, Mortar Btry, 1st Bn, 12th MarinesPlat, Mortar Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Marines

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a. 1st Bn, 7th Marines; convoy security from Chu Lai enclave.

b. Marine Air.

(1) MAG 16

VMO- 2

HMM - 361

HMM - 263

HMM - 161

(2) MAG 12

VMA - 224

VMA - 223

VMA - 214

VMA - 211

(3) MAG 36

VMO - 6

HMM - 362

HMM - 364

HMM - 363

(4) MAG 11

VMFA - 323

VMFA - 115

VMCJ - 1

(5) HMM 261, Special Landing Force

VMGR 152

c. USAF

(1) Strategic Air Command (B-52 strikes)

(2) 4th Air Commando (Flare planes)

d. Army Air Units

1st Cav Div (Helicopter lift of downed H-34)

e. Regional Forces

2d Recon Co, 529th, ARVN

RF Co, QUE SON

RF Co, THIEN PHUOC

8. INTELLIGENCE. See Enclosure (2).

9. MISSION. Commencing D-Day Task Force Delta in coordination with participating ARVN forces fix and destroy organized VC elements in the QUE SON - VIET AN - HIEP DUC Valley complex. The operation was essentially a spoiling attack to prevent the Viet Cong from their announced objective of

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capturing QUE SON. The operation was also to have eliminated VC forces that have isolated the ARVN outpost at VIET AN, permitting ARVN to reestablish lines of communications.

#### 10. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

a. General. Task Force Delta consisting of three Marine infantry Battalions, (including BLT 2/1, the infantry element of the Special Landing Force, 7th Fleet (SLF), and other supporting 3d Mar Div elements, in coordination with an ARVN Regiment, conducted a three stage search and destroy operation in the QUE SON - VIET AN - HIEP DUC Valley complex. Marine logistic support was staged from a combat established logistic support area in the vicinity of HUONG XUAN.

#### b. Definition of Stages.

(1) Stage I. Period D-1 and D-Day, D-1 ARVN forces conducted search and clear mission in the vicinity of THANG BINH. On D-Day ARVN forces crossed LD at 0500 H and proceeded generally southwest along Route 35 to vicinity Phase Line A. Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines, with one rifle platoon from 2/7, moved by motor march from CHU LAI enclave to vicinity of THANG BINH to provide artillery fire support for ARVN forces in vicinity of Phase Line B. 2d Bn, 7th Marines motor marched from CHU LAI to vicinity TAM KY.

(2) Stage II. Period D+1 to D+10. ARVN forces were to establish and maintain contact with enemy force. 2d Bn, 7th Marines was to be helo-lifted on D+1 to vicinity Objective 1, seize objective and then be prepared to move out to seek and destroy the enemy as ordered. On D+1 all other elements of task force except the SLF were to move from DA NANG enclave to either the THANG BINH or QUE SON complex. Btry M, 4th Bn, 11th Marines was to continue to support from position at THANG BINH. 3d Bn, 3d Marines and SLF were to be prepared for immediate commitment to objective area on order. Logistic Support Unit supported this force from D+1 to D+10 from LSA vicinity HUONG XUAN. Force Command Group, Prov Arty Bn (-), Recon Co (-) bases at QUE SON on D+1. No major displacement of this element, with the exception of the Reconnaissance Co (-), was contemplated prior to D+10.

(3) Stage III. D+11 to D+12. All elements of Task Force Delta withdraw by helo/foot/motor march to their respective enclaves. LSA transfers surplus supplies to FLSG control in enclave. Operation HARVEST MOON was scheduled to terminate on D+12.

#### 11. EXECUTION.

a. During the first few days of December the G-2 Section, 3d Marine Division developed information that indicated the presence of the 1st Viet Cong Regiment in the QUE SON - VIET AN - HIEP DUC Valley complex. On 4 December the Commanding General III MAF met with the Commanding General I Corps; both concurred in the intelligence indications and the necessity to launch a sizeable attack in that area to destroy, disrupt, and impede whatever progress had been made by the 1st Viet Cong Regiment in establishing an area of operations.

b. The following day Task Force Delta was formed. The major elements

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consisted of the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines who had been alerted and pre-designated for such operations by 3d Marine Division contingency plans. A provisional artillery battalion was formed from elements of the 11th Marines and the 12th Marines. Additionally, plans called for the employment of BLT 2/1, Special Landing Force, (SLF) to participate as Task Force Delta's reserve. Logistic support was to be provided by a Logistics Support Unit to be established in the objective area.

c. The Task Force Delta staff was formed on 5 December from personnel within the 3d Marine Division. Planning commenced on 5 December in conjunction with the 2d Division, I Corps, ARVN. On 7 December plans and orders were completed and issued.

d. Operations D-Day, 8 December.

(1) Task Force Delta commenced operation HARVEST MOON when 2d Battalion, 7th Marines departed CHU LAI enclave at 080500H via motor march and closed assembly area vicinity TAM KY BT 3025 at 081530H. The battalion established defensive positions and prepared for helicopter lift into objective area on order. Btry M, 4th Battalion, 11th Marines departed DA NANG enclave as planned and was positioned (BT 1641) for action by 081445H. No contact was established. The 5th ARVN Regiment consisting of the 1st Battalion 5th Regiment and the 11th Ranger Battalion advanced southwest on an axis parallel to and south of the SONG LY LY. At 081330 at vicinity (BT 0934) the 11th Rangers came under heavy fire from an estimated VC Battalion. The Rangers withdrew to vicinity (BT 1235) and were reinforced in the late afternoon by the 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment, ARVN transported by Marine helicopters from TAM KY. At 1600H 11th Rangers had reorganized and were in position with 1st Battalion, 6th Regiment, ARVN.

e. Operations D+1, 9 December.

(1) On D+1, 9 December, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines helolifted from vicinity TAM KY to BT 016318 to threaten the flank and rear of units that made contact with the 5th ARVN Regiment on D-Day. The lift was completed at 1335H. By 1755H the Battalion C.P. Group, Companies E and H had advanced through objective A, BT 030315, and had secured objective B, BT 050315. Companies G and F followed in trace from the landing zone. By darkness D+1 Companies G and F occupied and defended objective A while Companies E and H held objective B.

(2) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines commenced their motor march from the DA NANG enclave at 0500. Lead elements arrived in the LSA vicinity HUONG XUAN at 1030H. At 1400H the battalion helolifted to BT 144306 to reinforce the 1st Battalion, 5th Regiment, ARVN some 2,500 meters to the northwest. At 1500H the battalion with Company L and 2 platoons of E advanced toward Hill 43 BT 122321. At 1530H Company L moving northwest made contact. Movement continued. At 1645H the battalion turned to move toward Hill 43. At 1700 the battalion came under heavy fire from an estimated 200 Viet Cong supported by mortars and machine guns. The firefight

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lasted until 1830H. Periodic small arms fire continued until 2030H. Night defensive positions were established in the vicinity of BT 122316. Company G and one platoon of E established night defensive positions on Hill 43 BT 122321.

(3) Initial units of the LSU arrived at HUONG XUAN and commenced operations of logistic support of Task Force Delta.

(4) Task Force Delta command group "B" helolifted from DA NANG to HUONG XUAN to QUE SON BT 042347. By midmorning contact had been established with the principal elements of the Task Force. The Command Group "C" proceeded to HUONG XUAN by motor march with the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines and joined the command group at QUE SON in midafternoon after being helolifted from HUONG XUAN. BLT 2/1 (SLF) was alerted and permission received to commit two companies and the command group of BLT 2/1 in support of Task Force Delta operations ashore. The two remaining companies were not available but were to be landed upon arrival in the Objective Area.

f. Operations D+2, 10 December.

(1) At 0945H Company F (-), BLT 2/1 and elements of Command Group "A" were helolifted to BT 071293 and came under heavy small arms and mortar fire. The remaining elements of Company F and Company G were landed via helicopter from the USS Valley Forge at BT 067304. Company G, BLT 2/1, and Company E, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines covered the withdrawal of Company F (-) from the initial landing zone. By 1900H enemy contact was broken. Companies F and G, BLT 2/1, and Company E, 2d Battalion, 7th Marines had consolidated into a battalion perimeter defense from coordinates BT 076302 to BT 079302 by 110300H.

(2) The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines continued their advance from objectives A and B to objective C BT 082325. During the advance the battalion met light resistance. At approximately 1515H Co E junctured with Co F, BLT 2/1, and commenced a coordinated attack on Viet Cong elements in the vicinity of BT 078292. At 1610H Company H had secured Objective C. At 1650H the battalion command group and Companies F and G were 600 meters from Objective C and closed shortly thereafter.

(3) At 0645H 3d Battalion, 3d Marines crossed the LOD in their advance to Hill 43, BT 123321. At 1300 the battalion had secured Hill 43 and had established defensive positions there. At 1400H the battalion was ordered to Objective C to juncture with the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines. By 1535H the battalion was located at BT 095330 proceeding toward Objective C. By 1730H the battalion had closed Objective C and had established night defensive positions in conjunction with elements of 2d Battalion, 7th Marines.

(4) Company C (-), 3d Reconnaissance Battalion arrived in QUE SON the evening of the 9th. On 10 December the Company patrolled approximately 2,500 meters south of QUE SON and received occasional small arms fire during the patrol.

(5) The LSU became fully operational and provided logistic support via helicopter for the elements of the Task Force.

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(6) Companies E and H, BLT 2/1 conducted an at sea transfer from the USS Montrose to the USS Valley Forge in preparation for helolift into the objective area on 11 December.

g. Operations D+3, 11 December.

(1) BLT 2/1 prepared to receive Companies E and H for a planned advance south. Companies E and H were lifted into vicinity BT 0930 from USS Valley Forge. BLT 2/1, after arrival of Companies E and H, commenced their advance south by 1800H the units dispositions were; Companies E and G consolidated from BT 085285, to BT 087285, Company F BT 082287, Company H BT 075296. The BLT had met light to moderate Viet Cong resistance.

(2) At approximately 0630H 2d Battalion, 7th Marines advanced from Objective C with Companies E, G, and H to the south to link-up with Companies E and G of BLT 2/1. At approximately 1000H the over land juncture was accomplished in the vicinity BT 097301. Company F, and 81mm mortars and 106 recoilless rifles were helolifted from Objective B to Objective C. The Battalion then advanced Company H south in an assault of Hill 407, BT 0727 by 111830H the leading elements were at the top of Hill 407. The company closed shortly thereafter and consolidated for the night. Companies E and G with the Battalion CP were disposed in a perimeter defense for the night at BT 067302 to BT 068302 to BT 064299 to BT 064304. Company F and 81mm mortars and 106 recoilless rifles remained on Objective C in coordinated defense with 3d Battalion, 3d Marines.

(3) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines occupied Objective C and patrolled 1800 - 2000 meters to the west and 1,000 meters to the east. An extensive tunnel and cave system was found in vicinity Objective C, BT 076323 and BT 083325. The system included areas large enough to house 75 people and included cooking and ventilation vents. These caves were searched in detail and destroyed.

(4) The Task Force CP continued to operate from QUE SON. TPQ air strikes by Marine aircraft were planned and conducted during the night on targets; BT 098275, BT 106275, BT 104270, BT 125280, BT 135280, BT 082227. Targets were suspected assembly and storage areas, and unit locations.

h. Operations D+4, 12 December.

(1) At 1900H BLT 2/1 commenced advance southwest through grid squares BT 0828 and 0927. A defensive position vicinity BT 113277 to BT 106272 was established that evening.

(2) Previous plans to helolift the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines were cancelled due to bad weather in the battalions location. At 1335H the mission was modified and the battalion directed to occupy an area vicinity of BT 045292, Hill 106. Company F moved from Objective C and joined the Battalion at 1550H. The battalion advanced overland in tactical column to Hill 106; the leading elements arriving at 1735H. The remaining elements closing at 1830H. Night defensive positions were established for Companies E, F, and G in the

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vicinity BT 045291. The battalion CP was located at BT 047294. Company H remained at Hill 407, BT 077276.

(3) At 120730H the first of an eventual series of four B-52 strikes occurred. This strike hit a reported VC base area in the valley SE of Hill 330 (BT 0925-1227-1326-1124). Considered noteworthy in this strike was the timing and coverage. Immediately after the first strike, three additional strikes were planned by G-3 USMACV and CG Task Force Delta based on current intelligence. During this planning, CG TFD was informed that 1000 meters was the deflection safety distance for friendly troops.

(4) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines were helolifted from vicinity Objective C commencing approximately 0900H to landing zone BT 145285 with the assigned mission of searching and destroying to the south in the valley BT 1328 and BT 1125 and to provide damage surveillance of the B-52 SAC strike conducted between 0705H and 0730H 12 December. At 1005H the leading elements had arrived and secured the landing zone vicinity BT 145285. The remaining elements were all landed by 1015H. At approximately 1115H Companies L and G advanced on either side of the valley. At 1400H Company L had secured Hill 100 BT 1228. Company G came under heavy small arms and mortar fire at the base of Hill 180 BT 1327. Air and artillery strikes were called in support but Company G could not advance due to an unfordable river. The Company retracted and helolifted to Hill 180 commencing 1650H. The lift was supported by air preparation of the hill and completed at 1725H. During the afternoon the 2d Reconnaissance Company, 529th ARVN, junctured with the Battalion and conducted patrols and established outposts to the south and east. By darkness Companies L and G established defensive positions on Hills 100 and 180 respectively, the remaining units established defensive positions in conjunction with the Battalion CP.

#### 1. Operations D+5, 13 December.

(1) At approximately 130400H a message was received from 3dMarDiv with information that the B-52 strike requested for that day would occur at BT 0623-0625-0925-0923. The message also directed that no friendly troops be within 3000 meters of the strike zone. This necessitated the withdrawal of all friendly troops to the north of grid line 28 and postponement of a planned helicopter lift of a mortar platoon and troops to the top of hill 407. The withdrawal of troops was completed by approximately 0815H.

(2) At 130440H, 2/1 was ordered to withdraw to north of grid line 28 because of the scheduled B-52 strike. At 1015H the BLT was ordered to continue their search and destroy mission to the south and to advance commencing 1300H. By 1800H the BLT was disposed from BT 100267 to BT 109273. There had been no enemy contact except that Company H had apprehended eight (8) Viet Cong dressed as women on Hill 330 BT 1127. The BLT had advanced slowly over rough terrain across a 2,000 meter front.

(3) At 1130H 2d Battalion, 7th Marines conducted a heliborne assault from BT 043291 to secure Hill 185 BT 0228. Company H, early D+5 was moved north of east-west grid line 28 in preparation for B-52 strike. At 1015H Company H commenced movement to Hill 407 Bt 0727 to secure position for one platoon of 4.2 mortars sited for fire support of operations further to south

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in the hill mass. At approximately 1420H the battalion was disposed from BT 029288 to BT 031283 with Company F at BT 029288 prepared to advance to Hill 185. Company H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines now attached to the battalion remained at previous night's battalion CP location, prepared to reinforce. At 1610H the battalion was ordered to advance south to VIET AN BT 0226. At 1940H the lead elements reached VIET AN, the remaining elements closed shortly thereafter and established defensive positions. The Battalion met light resistance during the day.

(4) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines continued the search of the valley and the entrance to the valley. Many caves were found throughout the valley area. At BT 127277 caves were found containing cats, blankets, and medical supplies. At 1700H the battalion located caves containing sewing machines, large quantities of medical supplies, large quantities of uniform material, flash light batteries, ball point pens, and documents. At darkness the search ended, units established positions for the night. The battalion CP was located at Hill 100 BT 129286.

j. Operations D+6, 14 December.

(1) BLT 2/1 continued their advance south over Hill 370 BT 0926 toward TRUNG LAM (3) in vicinity BT 0925. The battalion received occasional small arms fire. Extremely rough terrain necessitated cutting through dense jungle growth. At 1830H the BLT established a perimeter defense in vicinity BT 074240. The battalion was directed to provide damage surveillance of the B-52 strike zone in its area of operations, but because of rough terrain, bad weather, and time limitations was able to search only the east quarter of the strike zone during this and the next day.

(2) The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines executed a heliborne assault to the high ground vicinity BT 0023 in an effort to block along a reported Viet Cong ferry site on the SONG CHANG. At 1125H the battalion reported no fire from the landing zone, however, helicopters were receiving 50 Cal MG fire from vicinity of AT 994222. Air and 81mm mortars were directed at the MG location with excellent results. At 1430H the front line positions were reported from AT 999233 to BT 002223. At 1440H a mortar platoon of 1/12 was laid and ready to fire at BT 999232. The battalion dispatched one unit to secure the ferry crossing at the suspected location AT 993221. The battalion CP with Company F and Company H, 2d Battalion 9th Marines consolidated and defended for the night at BT 000232, Company G established defensive positions at BT 002232.

(3) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines continued the advance through the valley to the southwest. Again found many caves, and located an abandoned guerrilla base camp at BT 133274. From BT 131274 to BT 131265 the battalion found surgical uniforms, ID cards and bandages. At BT 129270 found 1300 lbs of rice. Additionally large quantities of salt, gasoline and 3 sewing machines were found. At BT 119265 in the area hit by B-52's, the battalion found 12 bodies with cartridge belts, grenades and a Russian carbine. At 1554 the battalion had searched to BT 115253.

k. Operations D+7, 15 December.

(1) BLT 2/1 continued search and destroy operations. Platoon patrols searched in the following areas: Company E, BT 0624; Company G, BT 0623; Company H,

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BT 0723. The patrols encountered many tunnels and occasional Viet Cong suspects in caves. By evening the BLT had consolidated for the night in the following positions: Company E, from BT 066242 to BT 069243; Company F, from BT 069243 to BT 069238; Company G, from BT 069238 to BT 066237; Company H, from BT 006237 to BT 066242.

(2) The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines remained in the ferry site area and conducted patrols in and around that area. Company F patrolled in an area AT 985227 to AT 986230 southwest to grid line 23 and south to the river. Company H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines patrolled from the river BT 000218 to BT 000227 to BT 024220 and south to the northern edge of the SONG CHANG and northwest along the river. Company H rejoined the battalion at 1330H and remained with the battalion and Company G at BT 024220. At 1630H the ferry site was located at AT 993221 by Company F who disposed to occupy and control the site. By darkness Companies F and H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines had established defensive positions in conjunction with their CPs located at AT 996219 and BT 003218 respectively. The remaining Companies established night defensive positions in conjunction with the battalion CP at BT 001232.

(3) The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines continued their search of PHUOC HA Valley area finding several weapons including three TSMG's and one BAR and four dead at BT 143280. At 1100H shortly after finding the above weapons and bodies the battalion made contact at BT 144283 with the enemy who employed 60mm and 81mm mortars. Shortly thereafter, 1114H, Company G received small arms fire in the vicinity BT 145279. Artillery fire was directed against the area and a platoon dispatched to search the area. The fire was believed to be diversionary to detract from the search area where weapons were found. At 1330H BT 142289 Company G found one cloth pullover gas mask. At 1500H Company G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines arrived at the battalion CP and came under OPCON of the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines. Additionally the battalion found large quantities of rice, fish oil, and 5,000 meters of communications wire. By darkness the battalion established defensive positions.

#### 1. D+8, 16 December.

(1) At 0850H as BLT 2/1 continued their search north toward 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, they received sporadic small arms fire from coordinates BT 093233. At 1130H the battalion made and maintained contact at BT 110240 with an estimated 40 to 50 Viet Cong. By midafternoon the Viet Cong Company broke contact and withdrew. By evening the battalion established defensive positions as follows: Company E, BT 105239 to BT 108239; Company G, BT 105239 to BT 104236; Company H, BT 107326 to BT 100239; the battalion CP was located at BT 107230.

(2) At 0730H the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines departed the ferry site to conduct search and clear operations to the east. Swollen streams caused by the continuous heavy rains slowed the tactical column throughout the day. At BT 039210 the battalion found what appeared to be a Viet Cong staging area. One of the buildings at the site contained many blood stains and used bandages. Several caves were found in the area. The battalion established defensive perimeter positions in the vicinity BT 068211.

(3) 3d Battalion, 3d Marines continued their search of the PHUOC HA Valley area. During the morning Company G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines located ten tons of rice at BT 128294. At 1015H Company E at BT 127277 and Company G, 2d Bat-

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talion, 4th Marines at BT 117257 were alerted and prepared to move south to block or attack those Viet Cong units in contact with BLT 2/1. The battalion was not employed in a blocking role and continued their search. Additional caves were discovered at BT 133294 which contained small quantities of medical supplies. At 1540H the ARVN reconnaissance Company under OPCON of the battalion discovered a cave at BT 119258 containing 25 Viet Cong bodies wearing dark grey uniforms. At 1700H the battalion established night defensive positions in conjunction with the battalion CP.

m. D+8 through D+12, 17 through 20 December.

(1) On the evening of 16 December Task Force Delta issued orders to the three participating battalions to commence search and clear operations to the east and northeast toward Highway 1 for eventual retraction afrom the area of operations.

(2) BLT 2/1 commenced their advance at 170930H. At 171230H the lead elements were located at BT 113252. At 171334H BLT 2/1 reported their front lines at BT 126269 with no significant occurrences. At 175050H the BLT reported that they were closing on Hill 180 BT 1327 and had received occasional small arms fire during the move from BT 125269. At 172000H the BLT defended from the following positions: Company E, BT 133275 to BT 135276; Company G, BT 131276 to BT 134278; Company H, BT 134278 to BT 135279. At 180945H the BLT advanced from their night positions. At 181320H the forward elements of the BLT had reached the river at BT 183304. The river was swollen and impassable requiring a helolift. At 181800 the helo-ferry-lift was completed and unit dispositions for the night were: Company E, BT 187305 to BT 187302; Company G, BT 190304 to BT 187305; Company H, BT 187303 to BT 190304. The BLT CP was located at BT 189308. On the 19th the BLT continued their movement and closed at L and M Battery positions BT 2331 during the afternoon; by dark all BLT units were helolifted to the SLF for deployment and future relief of units at the PHU BAI enclave.

(3) At 170855H the 2d Battalion, 7th Marines continued to search and clear to the east. At 170959H the battalion reported their leading elements at BT 096213. By 171114H the battalion reported their lead element at BT 110218. The battalion continued their movement east reporting their lead element at BT 130218 at 171217H. At 171250H the battalion received long range small arms fire in the vicinity of BT 133219 to BT 129219. At 171430H the battalion reported its lead elements at BT 144219. At 171810H the battalion lead elements halted for the day and established night positions of Company F and Company H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines at BT 164222. Company G, upon closing established their defensive positions to the east and in conjunction with Company G and H defensive positions. At 180800H the battalion continued its movement to the east. At 181005H the lead elements were reported at BT 220227. At 181009H the battalion halted their advance to helo-evac medical casualties and equipment from BT 177219. The advance continued after the lift and at 181303H the lead elements of the tactical column were located at BT 225228. At 181330H the battalion reported lead elements in contact with an estimated Viet Cong platoon at BT 225223, the platoon was taken under fire, broke contact and withdrew. At 181350H the Viet Cong attacked the center of the battalion at two locations BT 212224 and at BT 219225 in an attempt to cut the tactical column. In addition to small arms fire the Viet Cong employed

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mortars, machine guns, and 57mm recoilless rifles; their strength was estimated at more than a reinforced company. The battalion consolidated their positions in KY PHU BT 2122 while Company F flanked the attacking Viet Cong. Company H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines, supported by artillery, made their way from the rear to reinforce and rejoin the center of the column. The attack lasted approximately three hours after which the remaining Viet Cong elements withdrew. The battalion suffered light casualties while the Viet Cong, after final count the following morning, suffered over 100 KIA. By evening the battalion established defensive positions from BT 215226 to BT 218227 to BT 215224 to BT 218225. On the 19th the battalion conducted a search of the Viet Cong positions finding a trench line and bunker system. Weapons and many bloody bandages found in the bunker system indicated numerous wounded, but not counted, during the previous days battle. After destroying the enemy positions the battalion continued their advance east. At 191445H the battalion reported its location at THON HAI BT 2425 and headed for BT 280225 where they were to entruck to stage at TAM KY for the motor march back to the CHU LAI enclave. However, the highway bridge at BT 291240 was rendered impassable due to damage by the enemy action and the convoy could not make the assigned entrucking area. In order to juncture with the convoy a foot bridge was installed at BT 263253. At 191750H the last element of the battalion crossed the foot bridge on their way to entruck north of the damaged bridge BT 291240. Upon reaching the road Company H, 2d Battalion, 9th Marines entrucked and departed for the ISA where they joined a convoy for the DA NANG enclave closing DA NANG late that evening. The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines entrucked and after receiving and returning small arms fire from the village of PHOUNG HOA (2) BT 2923 departed for the CHU LAI enclave.

(4) At 170805H the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines commenced their advance northeast. Movement was difficult due to heavy rains and near impassable streams. At 171400H Company E received small arms fire at BT 155293, the battalion returned fire and called armed helicopters killing two (2) Viet Cong. The battalion proceeded to vicinity BT 179313 where the stream was impassable. Helicopters commenced lifting Company G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines and the 2d ARVN Reconnaissance Company, 529th, from BT 175314 to L Battery positions BT 235316. The lift began at approximately 171700H and halted at 171750H due to bad weather. During the night Companies E and G remained with the battalion CP at BT 175313 while the two lifted companies remained at Battery L's positions. The next morning Companies E and G were helolifted to BT 235316 where they joined Company G, 2d Battalion, 4th Marines entrucked and proceeded to the ISA BT 1544. The battalion was then lifted at approximately 181500H, via helicopter to DA NANG. The lift was completed at 181900H.

(5) At 191350H the Task Force CP began displacing to the ISA BT 1544 to better control the retraction of all units from the objective area.

(6) Artillery and other combat support and logistic units commenced

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phase-out in conjunction with the retraction of infantry units. Sufficient infantry security was provided all supporting units during the retraction. On the 20th the last remaining security and logistic support elements departed the ISA at 1815H via motor march closing the DA NANG enclave at 2030H. At approximately the same time Task Force Delta CP closed the DA NANG enclave.

n. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE. See enclosure (5).

## 12. RESULTS.

a. General. Most significant results of Operation HARVEST MOON are the severe losses inflicted on a major Viet Cong Command, destruction of a large enemy supply installation, and the psychological impact on both the Viet Cong forces and the local populace of friendly offensive operations, conducted almost at will, in an area which had been strongly controlled by the Viet Cong.

b. Friendly Equipment and Material losses.

(1) One H-34 helicopter due to mechanical failure.

(2) One UH-1E helicopter due to ground fire.

(3) One AN/PRC 10 radio with MIA forward observer accompanying ARVN Forces.

c. Enemy Equipment and Material losses.

(1) Supplies: 45 tons of rice, 11 tons of tea, 1,200 gallons of fish oil, 3 tons of salt, large store of peanuts, 500 lbs of sugar, 300 lbs of soup mix, 125 gallons of fuel, 500 flashlight batteries, medical supplies, 3,800 meters plus 40 bolts uniform cloth, 600 complete uniforms, 15,000 buttons, large quantities of paper and rolls of brown plastic material.

(2) Equipment: 9 bicycles, 31 pick/mattock, 15 entrenching tools, 200 bamboo signal drums, 3 sewing machines, 1 16 inch loud speaker, 1 cloth pullover gas mask, 4 AN/PRC-10 radios, 1 AN/PRC-9 radio, 1 AN/PRC-6 radio and 2,000 meters of communications wire.

(3) Weapons: 107 total:

(a) Crew served: 2 57mm recoilless rifles, 1 81mm mortar, 1 60mm mortar, 1 .50 Cal MG, 2 M1919A4 MG, 1 DPM MG, 1 French MG, 2 CZECH BRNO MG (1 is CHICOM copy), and 2 B-40 rocket launchers.

(b) Individual: 12 US BAR, 6 TSMG, 14 M-1 rifles, 4 M-1 carbines, 1K-50, 5 MATK-49, 1 AK, 38 K-44, 8 MAJ-36, 3 MAUSERS, 1 ENFIELD, 1 UNK SMG, and 1 UNK rifle.

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(c) Miscellaneous: 2 grenade launchers, 1 12.7 mm AA MG tripod and 1 81mm mortar base plate.

(d) Ammunition: 10,000 small arms rds, 24 57 recoilless rifle rds, 13 81mm mortar rds, 73 60mm mortar rds, 14 cases 50 Cal.

d. Friendly Losses: KIA - 44, WIA - 265\*, DOW - 6, MIA - 1, NBD - 1.

\* As of 23 December 112 WIA had been returned to duty.

e. Enemy Losses.

(1) KIA:	<u>CONFIRMED</u>	<u>POSSIBLE</u>
Ground Forces:	314	327
Marine Air:	69	284
SAC:	24	UNK

(2) WIA: estimated 100

(3) VCC: 33 (including 4 PAVN)

(4) VCS: 231

(5) Ralliers: 3 (including 2 PAVN)

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS. See enclosure (6).

14. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS.

a. Enemy.

(1) Noteworthy in this operation was the very apparent lack of response/reaction by VC units against potentially lucrative targets in the objective area, some static for relatively long periods of time. In certain of these cases, such as the Task Force Command Post and the Logistic Support Area, the risk was recognized but accepted on a carefully considered basis, with due precaution exercised. In other cases the presentation of targets to VC activity was involuntary, often dictated by conditions beyond the control of the Task Force. Notable among these was bad weather which at times prevented movement of certain heavy support weapons. Although active operations detrimental to the VC effort continued to be initiated from these positions, there were no significant enemy efforts directed against such targets.

(2) Similarly, the VC failed to respond to the large-scale use of Route 1 by troop, artillery, and supply convoys proceeding south from DaNang and north from Chu Lai to the objective area, a distance of 22 and 41 miles respectively. Fifty-four convoys were conducted over Route 1 during the period 9-20Dec with

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only occasional small arms fire and occasional mortar rounds directed at vehicles. One vehicle was damaged by a mine, slightly wounding the driver and assistant driver, and several troop within trucks were hit, none seriously, by small arms fire. There was no serious opposition by the Viet Cong.

(3) Although ARVN officers familiar with the objective area cautioned about extensive minefields and defensive positions in certain areas deep within the VC homeland which we planned to penetrate, subsequent movement of units through these areas revealed an almost total lack of such defenses.

b. Weather and Terrain.

(1) Of the eleven days that Task Force Delta was actively engaged in operations against VC forces and installations, good weather (clear and sunny) was experienced on only two days; marginal weather was encountered on three days (ceilings 500 - 1200 feet; visibility 1 - 3 miles; light, intermittent rain); and bad weather was the order of the day during the other six days.

(2) The terrain was either high and rugged or low, flat, wet ground with very little average between the two. The few existing roads and trails had been systematically destroyed by the VC during a period of better than a year. An engineer estimate indicated a major engineer effort of approximately a month's duration was necessary to place one road, which could have been used as an MSR, into use. Accordingly, trafficability in the area was poor; mobility was vested in two means: foot or helicopter.

(3) These adverse conditions of weather and terrain dictated a positive requirement for detailed alternate plans, particularly in view of the heavy reliance on helicopters dictated by poor ground trafficability. When helicopters were unable to fly, primary plans had to be cancelled and alternate plans immediately substituted for troop commitments and troop and supporting weapon movement.

c. General. Most lessons learned in this operation are merely reaffirmation of existing doctrine. Certain recommendations contained in annexes to this report as submitted by various participating units and staff sections, are being evaluated within the 3d Marine Division. Additional items considered significant follow:

(1) Artillery was used extensively in the operation. Two towed batteries of 155mm Howitzers were convoyed to firing positions along Route 1 and covered a large portion of the TAOR. Two batteries of 105mm Howitzers were lifted by helo into position generally in the center of the objective area providing additional coverage. Remaining areas that could not be covered by artillery were covered by 4.2" mortar and howtar platoons helolifted into suitable positions with plans to leap frog them along in trace of the wide-ranging battalion.

(2) The UH-1E helicopter was used extensively as a reconnaissance

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and command vehicle, and when gunfigured, for close support of infantry and troop convoys, particularly when weather prevented the use of fixed wing air. In the widely extended and rapidly moving situation experienced in HARVEST MOON, the UH-1E was essential for the overall commander and highly desirable for use by the battalion commanders, to whom it was made available on many occasions.

(3) Where possible, landing zones for lifts of assaulting units and landing sites for resupply of units moving overland, were selected on high ground. It was found that little, if any, opposition was experienced in the use of such LZ's. The VC seemed to have prepared his defenses solely on the lower slopes of those hill masses he defended.

(4) Accurate, systematic and timely reporting is mandatory. Reports must have sufficient detail to answer at least who, what, when, where, and when possible, how and why. The reporting requirement demands the meticulous attention of commanders at all echelons.

(5) The requirement for positive and easy identification of widely separated friendly unit locations on the ground to aviators and observers airborne was re-emphasized during this operation. The identification problems stemmed primarily from difficult terrain, adverse weather, and unfamiliarity of some pilots with the area. Better solutions to existing air-ground identification procedures are being sought within the 3d Marine Division.

(6) Several B-52 strikes were employed in support of the ground operation during HARVEST MOON. The bombs were dropped where they were supposed to be dropped, when they were supposed to be dropped and with excellent area coverage. A need exists to promulgate troop safety limits to field commanders and to develop a means of immediately and directly informing the field commander when the last bomb is dropped.

(7) During most of the operation, troops of the infantry battalions in particular, were exposed to heavy, frequent rainfall and almost continual wading through flooded paddies, streams, and rivers. Several problems were developed because of this constant exposure which kept the individual Marine and all of his weapons and equipment thoroughly soaked.

(a) Immersion foot became a real problem. Certain antidotes in addition to medical treatment, were used during the operation such as the automatic issue of thousands of pairs of new, dry socks during resupply of the battalions; fires were built where possible to dry feet, socks and boots; and units of company size were rotated out of the operation with fresh companies assigned as reliefs.

(b) Field boots rotted very rapidly and a high replacement rate was experienced. Issue of needed boots was also effected, on request by battalions, during the daily helo resupply.

(c) The jungle boot inner sole chafed feet badly after continued immersion in water. An unsatisfactory equipment report is being prepared on this item.

(d) A definite need exists for weapons cleaning gear which is an

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individual, waterproofed item of issue. Cloth swabs for bore cleaning, for example, are currently packaged in large, un-waterproofed bundles, usually wrapped in only regular department store-type wrapping paper. These large bundles containing thousands of patches arrived at battalions in resupply runs, already water-soaked even before distribution to companies. A return to the WW II small waterproof packet containing about ten cloth swabs is needed. Lubricating oil is received most often in large, several gallon containers, or larger, which complicates distribution to the individual and often results in much waste through spillage. Smaller containers are essential. A water-proof, spray type lubricant of the WD-40 type appears to be highly desirable for operations in extremely wet climates.

(8) The attitude of the villagers in the QUE SON District Headquarters is worthy of note. The village had been surrounded by VC for more than a year. The only road into the village from the coast and Route 1, was impassable because of extensive demolition by the VC during that year. Buses and other vehicles were parked within the village, stranded, unable to proceed more than 500 meters along the road in any direction. The village was slowly being constricted and strangled. An air of hopelessness and apathy pervaded the entire area. This changed to cheer, hopefulness and optimism, almost overnight, when sizeable numbers of friendly forces began to arrive in the vicinity. It was obvious that the villagers were under the impression that these forces were going to stay. They welcomed the Americans whole-heartedly and, on departure of the troops ten days later, sincere regret was evinced not only by the village officials, but also by a large part of the population. (Enclosure (8)).

(9) Insofar as civic action is concerned, hundreds of villagers were treated in the village dispensary by the small medical staff attached to the Task Force Headquarters. Medical supplies and blankets were made available to the village dispensary through the District Chief, obtained from Civic Action Medical Assistance Program sources. Certain obvious damage to private property, primarily that caused by air resupply drops, was settled on the spot through the District Chief or other local officials, using small amounts of captured funds made available by 3d Marine Division G-2 for this purpose. Otherwise time and geographical remoteness of the village precluded major civic action endeavors.



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## PROVISIONAL ARTILLERY BATTALION

Chronology6 December 1965

The warning order for Operation Harvest Moon was received. Organization of the Provisional Artillery Battalion commenced, with the formation of a reduced strength Headquarters Battery of five officers and fifty enlisted. A task organization was developed, consisting of two 105mm howitzer batteries and, initially, one 155mm howitzer battery.

7 December 1965

All battery commanders, including CO, Battery M, 4th Battalion, 11th Marines, from CHU LAI, were briefed, as were forward observer teams for employment with ARVN forces, the liaison officer for ARVN artillery, and the NGF spot team. Assembly and equipping of personnel of the Headquarters Battery was completed, including the formation of a 24-man communication platoon. Plans were made for staging all units to assembly areas and thence to the LSA or fighting positions, as appropriate.

8 December 1965

Battery M, 4/11, departed CHU LAI at 0800H for THANH BINH. Occupying a position initially at BT158444, this battery was subsequently displaced to BT165413 to support the attack of the 1st Battalion, 5th ARVN Regt. and the 11th ARVN Ranger Battalion. FO teams had joined ARVN units, and had a liaison team with the ARVN artillery and a NGF spot team. One Marine FO team with an ARVN unit which was overrun was rescued by helicopter. CO, Battery M, formed a replacement FO team. Two (2) additional ARVN 105mm howitzers were heliolifted to QUE SON at 1830H. At the Battalion CP in DA NANG, Operation Order 1-65 and Admin Order 1-65 were received and distributed to all units of the Provisional Artillery Battalion. By 2400 of this date, Battery M had fired 52 rounds on one observed fire mission at BT105330 and 9 unobserved missions.

9 December 1965

At 0600, Battery M, 4/11, fired at a reinforced VC Battalion at BT103337. Four observed missions were fired, expending 202 rounds. Initial surveillance indicated over 100 VC casualties. During the period, all radio contact was lost with Marine FOs with ARVN units. The artillery battalion recon party departed DA NANG by helicopter at 0830H for the LSA, arriving at 0900H. The recon party departed the LSA for QUE SON at 0920H, and arrived at that location at 0930H. A liaison officer

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ENCLOSURE (1)

was immediately sent to the ARVN battery located in the town. By 1010H, wire communications had been established with the ARVN battery and it was prepared to support the attack by 2/7 on Objective 1. At 1000H, an AO reported that FO Mike 1's position had been overrun; at 1345, the team was located on Hill 43 (BT123320). Food and a radio were supplied to the team by helicopter. At 1430H, contact was regained with this team. Battery M, 4/11, fired a total of 280 rounds in 31 missions for FO Mike 1. Surveillance indicated over 200 VC bodies. The first elements of Battery "F" 2/12, arrived at BT045343 at 1212H. Preparation fires supporting the 2/7 attack on Objective 1 were begun by the ARVN battery at 1240H and were completed at 1312H. By 1700H, the artillery Battalion command post has completed displacement from QUE SON to BT045343. Battery F completed its helo lift and was laid and ready to fire at 1630H. Batteries F and M had completed a registration by nightfall. Battery M fired, in addition, 12 observed missions during the period, for a total of 545 rounds in 52 missions. The battalion FIC had been partially dug in by sundown, and fighting and foxholes for troops had also been prepared. Digging in of ammo pits had commenced. Radio communications at the close of the day consisted of trunk lines to the ARVN battery, the Task Force FSCC, and Battery F. Radio circuits included the battalion command/fire direction net, air spot net, and a helicopter landing zone control net, as well as Battery M conduct of fire net. Additional wire lines were a trunk to the Task Force admin board and to Company "D", 1/3, which had moved in to protect the artillery position.

#### 10 December 1965

The ARVN battery at QUE SON fired in support of a Recon Company patrol at BT027339. Battery F fired in support of 2/7 on automatic weapons at BT080248, BT079286 and BT083285. The automatic weapons fire ceased. Directed by an AO, Battery F fired on four .50 caliber MGs and troops at BT019275. The MGs were silenced. Also controlled by an AO, the ARVN battery fired on automatic weapons at BT035275. The weapons were silenced. Battery F fired on a suspected VC position at BT002290, coordinates supplied by the Task Force FSCC. During the period, restrictive fire areas for both ARVN and USMC artillery were delineated. Work continued on improvement of position, with the Battalion FDC being completely dug in. With the protective rifle company in position, the perimeter defenses were improved. Ammunition supply was built up slowly. With the arrival of 2/1 in the objective area, communications were established with the artillery liaison officer. Also, an additional artillery battalion command/fire direction net was activated, with 2/7 liaison officer on this net.

#### 11 December 1965

The first elements of Battery "A", 1/11 arrived at BT046344 at 0950H. Only a portion of the battery had arrived, however, when, due to weather,

further lifts were suspended at 1025H. Later in the day, lifts were resumed, and by 1550H, the entire battery was in position, laid, and ready to fire. In the morning, Battery F fired preparation fires for the landing of 2/1, and the ARVN battery fired on an estimated 100 VC at BT955365. Battery F fired missions at coordinates BT087284, BT088267 for 2/1, and at VC bunkers at BT017351. The ARVN battery fired at 2 VC at BT968358, directed by an AO. With Batteries F and A reinforcing, Battery H fired on an estimated 400 VC at BT090345. Battery F fired on a VC assembly point at BT095285. Battery L, 4th Battalion, 12th Marines arrived in the objective area, taking position at BT230315, being laid and ready to fire at 1910H. Battery A fired on a suspected VC CP at BT061285. By the end of the period communications had been expanded to include Battery L operating on the Battery H conduct of fire net. Contact had been established with Liaison officers with 3/3, 2/7, and 2/1. Wire communications had been laid from the battalion FDC to Battery A. Improvement of position continued with the arrival of sandbags and concertina. Ammunition supply was being built up toward the goal of a minimum of three days of ammunition on position.

#### 12 December 1965

During the period, Battery A fired preparation fires for 2/1, and at VC at coordinates BT094271 and BT064272. Battery F fired in support of 3/3 on a bunker at BT995352 and in support of a recon patrol at a VC company at BT064272. Battery F was registered, and Battery A fired in a barrage for 2/1. Battery L fired at a suspected mortar position at BT132278, on automatic weapons at BT144276, on 20 VC in to open (in support of 3/3) at BT160274, and, under the control of an AO, at VC in the open at BT132277. Battery F fired illumination in support of 2/1 at BT099275. During the period a restriction was placed on the firing of unobserved missions by 155mm howitzers because of the necessity of conserving ammunition. This restriction continued through the remainder of the action. A resupply of batteries was obtained on this date and improvement of positions continued with revetment of the howitzers and ammo pits using dirt-filled ammo boxes and sandbags. Battery FDCs were dug in.

#### 13 December 1965

One platoon (two weapons) from Mortar Battery, 1/11, arrived in the objective area and were laid and ready to fire at BT077276 by 1430H. Registration of Batteries A, F and L was accomplished during the period. Battery L fired at VC at BT08022754, BT122260 and BT146275. Battery A fired at targets at BT117267 and BT127270. Battery F fired at 10 to 15 VC at BT134281, and at 7 VC in a village at BT025267. Plans were made to displace two 105mm howitzers of Battery A to a position at BT016270 where fires could be delivered in support of 2/7. Work on improvement of all positions continued. The battalion communications systems was expanded to include a mortar battery conduct of fire net.

ENCLOSURE (1)

14 December 1965

One platoon (three weapons) from Mortar Battery, 1/12 arrived in objective area and took position at BT999232, being laid and ready to fire by 1440H. At 1030H, displacement of two 105mm howitzers from Battery A commenced. This movement was never completed, inasmuch as only one H-37 helicopter was available, and that for only a short time. Also, one 105mm howitzer carriage was set down 300 meters from the desired position; reassembly of that howitzer was thus never possible. Had these two howitzers been landed complete and capable of firing, they could have engaged an ~~estimated~~ <sup>relocated</sup> 500 VC in grid squares 9933, 9937, 9922, 9921 and 0320. During the period, Battery F fired on VC in trenches at BT998286 (controlled by AO), and together with Battery A, on VC at BT055390 in support of ARVN actions. Battery F also fired illumination for 2/7 at BT019293 and BT023285. Battery A fired on VC at BT127270 in support of 3/3. Battery M displaced from its original position to BT234314, being in position and ready to fire by 2000H. That night the mortar platoon from 1/11 fired illumination for 2/1. Battery M displaced to Battery L position area at 2040H to continue support of operation. Communications expansion this date included the addition of a conduct of fire net for the mortar platoon from 1/12, and a conduct of fire circuit for the ARVN artillery advisor. General improvement of all positions continued.

15 December 1965

Registration of Batteries M and L was completed this date. The platoon of howitzers from Battery A was returned to its original position. AO-controlled missions were fired by Batteries A and F at coordinates BT053388, BT998341 (13 VC), BT010409 (30 VC carrying wounded) and BT011407.

In support of ARVN operations, Batteries A and F fired at coordinates BT033392, BT052390 (estimated VC battalion), BT054398, BT022392, BT025393, BT023386, BT057440, BT048404, BT033406, BT028402, BT056390, BT051394, BT044396, BT033391, BT024390, and BT020390. Battery L fired in support of 3/3 on all weapons at BT114283. Mortar platoon, 1/11 fired illumination for 2/1 at BT062242. Improvement of position continued with overhauling of some of the ammo pits, and installation of more protective wire.

16 December 1965

Warning order for retraction was issued, and a recon party from Battery A helilifted to LSA. By 1420H all Battery A had completed lift to the LSA and was in position, ready to fire from that area. Battery L fired in support of 3/3 at BT125260 and for 2/1 at BT112242. Registration of Batteries M and L was accomplished. Battery F fired for 3/3 at a VC platoon at BT115295. Battery L illuminated at BT125260 for 3/3.

ENCLOSURE (1)

17 December 1965

Plans were made to displace the artillery battalion CP to the LSA. Control was passed to Battery M and the CP was struck. Bad weather grounded helicopters and the displacement was cancelled. The CP was reestablished at the same location and communications was re-installed. Control was resumed. Battery F fired locating rounds to enable a lost patrol from Company D, 1/3 to return to position.

18 December 1965

Displacement of the artillery battalion CP to the LSA commenced at 1120H and was completed at 1200H. By mid-afternoon, all communications had been installed and control was assumed from Battery M. During the period, the mortar platoon, 1/12, displaced to the LSA, and thence to DM NG, in conjunction with 3/3. A part of Battery F (three howitzers) displaced to the LSA. Battery M fired for 2/7 on VC at BT178212, BT210220, BT229219, BT210219 and BT175215. At the LSA, plans for defense were made, incorporating Battery A, the three howitzers from Battery F, and the mortars of Company D, 1/1. That night Battery A fired H&Is. The battalion CP received some SA and automatic weapons fire during the night.

19 December 1965

Battery M, 4/11 displaced to CHU LMI by road, arriving at 1745H. The mortar platoon, 1/11 displaced by helicopter to the aircraft carrier. Battery F completed displacement to LSA and took up firing positions. At 1230H, Battery F commenced overland displacement to DM NG, arriving there at 1430H. With the arrival of Company D, 1/3, in the LSA, plans were made for integration of this company's mortars into the defense of the LSA. Battery A fired extensive H&I fires during the night. Plans were firmed up for convoy protection the following day. Communications were established with a liaison officer at DIEN BAN and TAM KY, through whom RVN artillery forces were available on call. In addition an artillery CO was on station to cover both north and south bound convoys. Battery L was laid to provide fire for north-bound convoys, Battery I was prepared to fire south.

20 December 1965

Battery L and the artillery battalion headquarters commenced motor movement to DM NG at 0920H, arriving there at 1300H. Battery A commenced displacement at 1000H and arrived at DM NG at 1430H.

ENCLOSURE (1)

## DECLASSIFIED

## AMMO EXPENDITURES

	AMO	H&I	OBS	UTOBS	REGIST
081330 - 091800	377	---	1	21	---
091800 - 101800	553	69	39	---	---
101800 - 111800	689	44	17	24	---
111800 - 121800	1273	140	29	1	2
121800 - 131800	441	63	22	4	5
131800 - 141800	402	16	7	2	2
141800 - 151800	665	50	12	3	4
151800 - 161800	839	214	8	4	2
161800 - 171800	303	43	---	1	---
171800 - 181800	439	62	5	11	---
181800 - 191800	201	15	3	---	---
191800 - 201800	264	12	---	---	---
TOTALS	6386	728	143	71	15

ENCLOSURE (1)

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM

17 December 1965

From: People of QUE SON District  
To: Commanding General, USMC, Headquarters, Task Force Operation,  
at QUE SON

Dear General, all Officers and men of the USMC in OPERATION HARVEST MOON

In the anti-Communist struggle to establish peace in the Republic of Vietnam and safeguard world peace, the USMC has had occasion to station troops in QUE SON District.

Our Vietnamese people are very joyful and admire the heroic actions of the USMC during the operation commanded by you and your staff.

Before you and your men leave here, we would like to express our deep and warm thanks on behalf of all classes of people in QUE SON District.

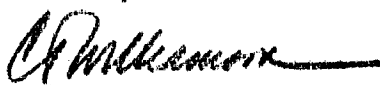
It is not enough only to thank the USMC for their heroic actions, but we desire to unite the will of the people in consolidating the rear and assisting the Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces and Allied Forces to eliminate the Communists. This will bring peace to Vietnam and contribute to the construction of a strong Free World peace sooner.


Respectfully yours,

In the name of the people, we sign ourselves:

NGUYEN HUE, Representative of all Notables  
CAO DANG, Representative of Well Known People  
NGUYEN TRUC, Representative of Old Men  
LE LUYEN, Representative of Associations  
VAN PHU CAM, Representative of Political Party  
NGUYEN HAO, Representative of Cadres  
LE THI BICH HUONG, Representative of Women  
DUONG THI BUU, Representative of Women Cadres  
NGUYEN PHUOC QUANG, Representative of Youth

CERTIFIED A TRUE TRANSLATION:

  
MAJOR, U. S. MARINE CORPS  
G-2

ENCLOSURE 

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