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HEADQUARTERS
TASK FORCE DELTA
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

~~SECRET~~

3:HDM:jhs
3480
Ser:00431-66
17 Sep 1966

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From: Commanding General
To: Commanding General, Third Marine Division (Rein), FMF
Subj: Combat After Action Report - Operation HASTINGS
Ref: (a) Divo 3100.1B

1. Enclosure (6), Combat After Action Report of 3d Bn, 5th Mar was submitted to Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF, San Francisco 96602 and is omitted from this report.

L. E. ENGLISH
/s/ L. E. ENGLISH

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ENCLOSURE (6)

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ENCLOSURE 767

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SECOND EDITION: SECRET on CC IF Delta ltr 3:11M:jhs over 3480 ser: 00431-66
of 17Sep66

From: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
To: Commander, Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Attn:J343)

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report, Operation HASTINGS

1. Forwarded concurring in the analysis of the Commanding General, 3d Marine Division.
2. Operation HASTINGS was the precursor of a major redistribution of III Marine Amphibious Force forces which ultimately resulted in the 3d Marine Division's deployment to Phu Bai and a control headquarters, 3d Marine Division (Forward) being permanently assigned to Dong Ha, Quang Tri Province. The deployment of these forces decisively thwarted the attempted infiltration of the NVA 324B Division and the threat to GVN efforts and RVN forces in Quang Tri Province.
3. The execution of Operation HASTINGS clearly demonstrated the flexibility and capability of the III Marine Amphibious Force logistical support concept. The absence of a sea port had to be overcome initially by temporarily opening the Cua Viet River to LCU's to Dong Ha as well as heavy use of the Dong Ha airfield, even though it lacked adequate surface. These, along with "Rough Rider" convoys, insured sufficient logistic support for the operation.
4. Casualty evacuation direct to USS REPOSE or USNH, Danang was adequate and precluded establishment of a major medical facility in Quang Tri Province.
5. As a result of Operation HASTINGS, permanent improvements are being made to the HUE ICU ramp, trafficability of the Cua Viet River to Dong Ha, the Dong Ha ramp facility and the Dong Ha airfield.

L. W. WALT

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FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CG, Task Force Delta ltr 3:HLA:jhs 3480 Ser: 00431-66 of 17 Sep 66.

From: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF
To: Commander U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Attn: J 343)
Via: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation HASTINGS)

Ref (a) COMUSMACV Inst 335-8 of 2 April 1966

1. Readdressed and forwarded in accordance with reference (a), concurring with the analysis of the Commanding General, Task Force Delta.
2. The observation concerning dispersion of troops, paragraph 14.a.(1), and the comments concerning enemy ambushes and use of mortars, paragraphs 14.a.(2) and (3), reaffirm recurring problems. Reminders have been published in "Lessons Learned" reports, have been included in indoctrination lectures, and are emphasized by commanders. Efforts to inculcate troops with an appreciation of these fundamental matters must be continuous.
3. The inadequacy of Marine Corps air observation assets during the time frame of HASTINGS together with the considered importance of this function is pointed out in paragraph 14.a.(4). The disparity between requirements and capabilities of organic 1st Marine Aircraft Wing assets was reduced when ten OIC's became operational during September 1966. Further improvement is anticipated as a third VMO becomes operational during mid-January, 1967.
4. The recommendations contained in paragraph 4 of enclosure (8) are believed to be basically sound. However, co-location of command posts and of helicopter advanced bases and CP's as suggested in paragraphs 4.(b) and (c) of enclosure (8), would form very lucrative targets. Plans to co-locate major CP's must be approached with caution and will be feasible only in exceptional instances when the threat of enemy attack is negligible or risk can be taken.
5. HASTINGS was the largest Marine Corps operation to date in the Vietnamese conflict. As a result of the battle, the 324th B NVA Division suffered a crushing defeat and enemy designs for capture of Quang Tri province were thwarted. The operation proved again the flexibility and capability of the units involved and the validity of basic operating

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Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report (Operation HASTINGS)

procedures. It was a significant victory for the United States and represents a tribute to the courage, skill and resourcefulness of the personnel and Units involved.

W.B. KYLE

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Task Force Delta

3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

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17 Sep 1966

From: Commanding General

To: Commanding General, Third Marine Division (Rein), FMF

Subj: Combat After Action Report (U)

Ref: (a) DivO 3100.1B

- Encl: (1) After Action Report, 1st Bn, 1st Mar (-)
 (2) After Action Report, 2d Bn, 1st Mar
 (3) After Action Report, 1st Bn, 3d Mar (-)
 (4) After Action Report, 2d Bn, 4th Mar (-)
 (5) After Action Report, 3d Bn, 4th Mar (-)
 (6) After Action Report, 3d Bn, 5th Mar
 (7) After Action Report, 3d Bn, 12th Mar (-)
 (8) Air Support
 (9) Psychological Warfare Summary
 (10) Reconnaissance Support Summary, 4th Marine
 (11) Intelligence Summary Trails Overlay
 (12) Operation Overlay 1 through 7
 (13) *ADDENDUM TO*

1. Code Name. HASTINGS, Search and Destroy2. Date of Operation. 150800H July 1966 to 031200 Aug 19663. Location. CAM 10, DONG HA - QUANG TRI Province, Republic of South Vietnam. Bounded by YD 1073 to YD 1043 and XD 9760 to YD 2760.4. Control or Command Headquarters

C/G, TFD

C/S, TFD

1st Bn, 1st Mar
2nd Bn, 1st Mar1st Bn, 3d Mar
2d Bn, 4th Mar
3d Bn, 4th Mar3d Bn, 5th Mar
2d Bn, 9th Mar
3d Bn, 12th MarCo B, 3d AT Bn
Co B, 3d Engr Bn
Co A, 3d SP Bn
Recon Gru "B"Brig Gen
ColLtCol
LtColLtCol
LtCol
LtColLtCol
LtCol
Major
Capt
Capt
Major
Major

L. E. ENGLISH

D. W. SHERMAN 15 Jul to 30 Jul

A. D. CERGHINO 30 Jul to 1 Aug

V. D. BELL

R. T. HANIFIN, JR. 1-8 Jul 66

J. D. SPAULDING 9 Jul - 3 Aug 66

R. R. DICKEY

A. E. BENCH

S. A. VALE 1-28 Jul 66

W. J. MASTERPOOL 29 Jul - 3 Aug 66

E. J. BRONAR

J. J. HESS

S. M. MORROW

D. C. SATCHEL

G. H. ROOT

D. E. BENSTEAD

D. A. COLBY

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5. TASK ORGANIZATION

a. Task Force Delta

(1) 1st Bn (-), 1st Mar

Co B

Co C

Co D

(2) 2d Bn, 1st Mar

Co E

Co F

Co G

Co H

(3) 1st Bn (-), 3d Mar

Co A

Co B

Co D

(4) 2d Bn (-), 4th Mar

Co E

Co G

Co H

(5) 3d Bn (-), 4th Mar

Co I

Co K (15 July 66 to 19 July 66)

Co L

Co M (20 July 66 to 3 Aug 66)

(6) 3d Bn, 5th Mar (SLF)

Co I

Co K

Co L

Co M

(7) 2d Bn (-), 9th Mar

Co G

Co H

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(8) 3d Bn (-) (Rein), 12th Mar

HqBtry
Btry B/1/11
Btry F/2/11
Btry H/3/12
Btry I/3/12
Btry L/4/12
Btry M/4/12
Btry W/1/11

- (9) Co B, 3d AT Bn
- (10) Co B, 3d Engr Bn
- (11) Co A, 3d SF Bn
- (12) Recon Group Bravo

6. Supporting Forces

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a. Units

- (1) 220th Aviation Company - U. S. Army
- (2) Advisory Team #2 - MACV (PSYOPS)
- (3) Beachjumper Unit - USS Princeton (CTG 79.5 - KOTG 76.5)
- (4) 1st Mar Air Wing
- (5) Co D, 3d Medical Bn
- (6) 1st Platoon, Co B, 7th Engr (FMF)
- (7) Platoon Transport Co, 9th MT Bn
- (8) 1st Platoon Co A, 1st MT Bn

b. Detail discussion of the requirements and support provided are found in the following enclosures:

- (1) Artillery. Enclosure (7)
- (2) Air Support. Enclosure (8)
- (3) Psychological Warfare Operations. Enclosure (9)
- (4) Reconnaissance. Enclosure (10)

7. Intelligence Summary

On 19 May 1966 a North Vietnamese Army soldier surrendered to South Vietnamese Army forces operating 10 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.

This soldier was part of an advanced party of the 324th B NVA Division that was making a reconnaissance of the Quang Tri area.

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He stated that it was the intention of the 324th B NVA Division to infiltrate across the DMZ into South Vietnam and take over Quang Tri Province.

During the latter part of May and the month of June low level agent reports indicated that elements of the 324th B were infiltrating into Quang Tri Province from North Vietnam.

U. S. Marine Corps reconnaissance units began operating in the Quang Tri area on 22 June. During the period 1 through 15 July a total of eighteen reconnaissance patrols were conducted, fourteen of which had to be withdrawn early due to significant enemy contact. A total of 343 North Vietnamese soldiers were observed by the reconnaissance patrols indicating a sizeable infiltration of a major enemy force into the area.

In the meantime, South Vietnamese forces were conducting limited operations in the Quang Tri area. On 5 July they captured a North Vietnamese soldier who stated that he was a member of the 5th Battalion, 812th Regiment, 324th B North Vietnamese Division.

On 10 July, a Lieutenant from this same unit surrendered to South Vietnamese forces operating in Quang Tri. The Lieutenant stated that the mission of the 324th B Division was to "liberate" Quang Tri Province and further to destroy South Vietnamese forces operating in that Province.

Based on this intelligence Task Force Delta was formed and phased into Operation Hastings on 15 July.

Contact between Task Force Delta units and the 324th B Division was initially heavy.

On 18 July an estimated 1,000 enemy soldiers attacked the rear elements of a Marine Battalion column. A three hour battle ensued in which 183 North Vietnamese soldiers were killed, and another 362 were estimated to have been killed.

On 19 and 20 July many enemy positions were overrun in which large quantities of equipment, clothing, and supplies were found. Several company size bivouacs recently abandoned with everything but weapons indicated a large unit was fleeing before our troops. Discovery of a Regimental or Division size Command Post as well as supplies for 500 men in the Dong Ha Mountains served to further substantiate this.

Company to battalion size enemy units were engaged by four battalions during the period 21 to 23 July as the enemy sought to escape to the north and west.

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On 24 July an enemy force of two reinforced companies in heavily fortified positions in the vicinity of Hill 362 was engaged by one Marine Corps company. After an 18 hour battle, 49 North Vietnamese were dead and another 119 were probably dead as a result of this action.

During the next few days contact continued to be made by all units as small groups of the enemy tried to find a way past our units who were astride all major routes into and out of the battle area.

On 28 July a force of 150 to 250 enemy were sighted moving to the northwest. Artillery and Air strikes killed 65 and probably killed twice that many. Total enemy KIA by body count was 788.

A total of 17 North Vietnamese soldiers were taken by Task Force Delta units during Operation Hastings. These captives were from five of the battalions of the 324th B Division. Most of them were young and had been drafted into the North Vietnamese Army. All reported that their units had infiltrated South Vietnam during May and June. The majority of these captives reported that their units were last seen headed in a northerly direction toward the DMZ, after the 15th of July, from the Operation Hastings area.

During Operation Hastings contact was made with six infantry battalions. Three from the 90th Regiment, the 1st Battalion of the 803d Regiment, and the 5th and 6th battalions of the 812th Regiment. A heavy weapons battalion of the 90th Regiment was also engaged.

Detailed interrogation of the captives, translation of captured documents and points of contact between Task Force Delta units and the 324th B Division gave indications of enemy unit movements and locations during Operation Hastings.

We feel that in addition to those units mentioned above, the remaining elements of the 324th B Division and the Division command elements were probably located in the Operation Hastings area although they were not located.

(See overlay for known locations of enemy units during Operation Hastings)

Terrain The terrain in the area bounded on the west by the north-south grid line YD 06 to the north-south grid line YD 10 on the east is characterized by rolling hills covered with shrubbery offering little concealment and virtually no cover. The terrain in the area bounded on the west by the north-south grid line XD 91 to the north south grid line YD 06 on the east is extremely mountainousness, rugged and heavily vegetated offering considerable concealment and cover to both enemy and friendly troops.

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Numberous mountain streams presented minor obstacles, but did not hinder movement of foot troops to any appreciable degree. Tracked and wheeled vehicles cannot operate west of north-south grid line YD 06. The area to the east of the line could possibly be used by tracked vehicles, but not by wheeled vehicles.

The most prominent critical terrain features for Task Force Delta were:

1. CAM LO DISTRICT TOWN (YD 135595)
2. ROUTE NO. 9
3. THON KGE TRI HILL (XD 979559)
4. High ground adjacent to SONG NGAN (YD 0566 to YD 0163)
5. Hill 314 (YD 020622)
6. Hill 362 (YB 011617)

Avenues of approach into the area are:

1. Route 9 from east or west
2. A vast, well defined trail network found throughout the area. Many trails are located within the DMZ and originated or connect with a well developed road and trail net in NVN North of the BEN HAI. (See enclosure (11) Trail Overlay)

Weather throughout the operation period consisted generally, of partly cloudy skys with some evening thunder shower activity. High winds and turbulence of 25-26 July hampered controlled aircraft preventing them from remaining in the target area at times. Occasional thundershowers closed point targets, however this occurred on a very infrequent basis causing no major problem. Temperatures ranged from a high of 94 to a low of 77 degrees.

8. MISSION

Commencing not later than 15 July 1966 Task Force Delta, in conjunction with operations being conducted by the 1st ARVN Division, was to conduct multi-battalion search and destroy operations as an expansion of Operation Hastings in QUANG TRI Province (CAM LO-DONG HA), Republic of Vietnam. The mission was to search out enemy build-up and strong points, to stop infiltration to the south and to destroy the enemy, his supplies, and his will to resist.

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9. Concept of Operation

The reinforced battalion sized operation was to be expanded to a multi-battalion operation by the introduction of Task Force Delta into the area. One battalion was to land in the vicinity of Grid Square YD 0364 to establish blocking positions across the primary trail network in the area. A second battalion was to land in the vicinity of Grid Square 0866, and conduct search and destroy operations toward the initial battalion, searching for the Command Post of the 224th B NVA Division. A third battalion would remain in reserve at CAM LO and DONG HA. After search was completed of initial area, units would move into remainder of the operation by either helo-lift or movement overland.

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10. Execution

a. D-14 to D-1 (1 July to 14 July 1966). During the period of 1 through 14 July the 2d Bn, 1st Mar reinforced with the 1st Force Recon Company and Btry H 3d Bn, 12th Mar, conducted extensive recon operations in the proposed Hastings Operation area. As a result of the intelligence gathered during this period Task Force Delta was activated ~~on 13 July~~ to conduct offensive operations in the area. Friendly casualties to this point were one (1) KIA and eight (8) WIA. Enemy casualties were thirteen (13) KIA confirmed, nineteen (19) KIA probable and no VCC-4WAC.

b. As a result of the contacts and finding of the reconnaissance units and of the ARVN units operating in the area of D-5, it was determined that a large scale operation was needed in the area. The initial planning conference was held at the First ARVN Division Headquarters in HUE at 1000H on 11 July 1966. Members of the conference consisted of the CG, I Corps, ADC 3d MARDIV, CO 1st ARVN Division, and CO 4th Marines. During this conference a general concept of operation against the increased enemy forces located West of DONG HA was accepted. D Day was set for 13 July 1966. At 1900H on 11 July the Commanding Officer of the Fourth Marines held a briefing on the situation to his staff and commanders. A planning conference to determine feasibility, requirements, and task in connection with expansion of Operation Hastings was scheduled and held in the conference room of the 3d Marine Division bunker at 121400H July. On 12 July, CG, 3d MarDiv message to Fourth Marines directed the activation of Task Force Delta at 130800H and designated Brigadier General Lowell E. ENGLISH as CG, Task Force Delta. At 130800H the Fourth Marines were chopped OPCON to Task Force Delta. Personnel of HqCo 4th Mar were utilized as the nucleus for Task Force Delta with augmentation personnel from Division. Planning directive 8-66 from CG, 3d MarDiv to CG, Task Force Delta assigned the following mission. Commencing not later than 15 July, Task Force Delta will conduct multi-battalion search and destroy operations as an expansion of operation Hastings in QUANG TRI Province. (DONG HA - CAM LO area).

c. D-1 (14 July 1966). At 0945H Task Force Delta closed its Command Post at YD 865134 and reopened it at YD 132592. All units conducted security and ambush patrols, listening and observation posts on a small unit scale. Recon Group Bravo units were being inserted at various locations throughout possible infiltration routes.

The convoy which had been underway from PHU BAI since 130630H arrived at the CP at 1045H. It had been delayed overnight because of an impassible bridge at MY CHANE (YD 461399). BLOWN BY VC.

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d. D-Day (15 July 1966). At 0800H the first wave of 3/4 touched down in LZ ORCH (YD 039648) with negative contact. During the first wave of 3/4, three CH-46A crashed in the LZ when they collided with trees on landing, resulting in two friendly KIA and seven WIA. All three CH-46A's were too badly damaged to be flown out and were later destroyed. At 0935H, the first wave of 2/4 touched down in LZ DOVE (YD 082659) with negative contact. 3/4 lift was completed at 1020H, the last wave receiving A fire when approaching the LZ, resulting in one friendly KIA. On completion of lift, 3/4 moved to objective ONE (YD 038640) and moved into blocking positions. At 1025H, Command Group 1/3, D/1/3 and elements of A/1/3 arrived at DONG HA. Task Force Delta assumed OPCON of 1/3 elements and assigned battalion mission of providing security for DONG HA airfield/LSA complex, Task Force Delta Command Post, 3/12, and to conduct small unit operations in defense of the perimeter and in their area of responsibility. At 1815H, 2/4 observed A/W fire, believed to be .50 caliber, delivered on a CH-46A as it approached the LZ in vicinity of the 3/4 CP. CH-46A caught fire and crashed in 3/4 CP area, resulting in 12 friendly KIA. At 1914H, 3/4 received fire from northwest and east of their position. Artillery and air strikes were called in on suspected positions. At 1930H, 3/4 reported they were completely surrounded and receiving fire. At 2000H, 3/4 reported that enemy fire had ceased and that it was possible that NVA had moved north. At 1230H, a patrol from 3/D/1/3 ambushed a group of NVA at YD 132608, resulting in two NVA/KIA confirmed and one 60mm mortar with ammunition and grenades captured.

Casualties recorded as of this time were; friendly, 18 KIA and 20 WIA; enemy, 31 KIA confirmed and 23 KIA probables.

e. D-1 (16 July 1966). 1/3 continued to provide security for DONG HA units, CP of 1/3 and 3/12. 2/4 commenced a helo lift. At 0730H the first wave touched down at YD 066655. Lift was completed at 0840H without contact. Task Force Delta assumed OPCON of 1/1 at 1320H. Contact continued light but large amounts of munitions, supplies, and weapons were discovered. Ammunition and explosives were destroyed in place. At 0628H the 3/4 CP and I/3/4 perimeter received some twenty rounds of incoming mortar fire. Artillery and air attacks were called in and the incoming ceased. AO related there had been some twenty NVA in the impact area. Results of action was determined unknown until K/3/4 at 0832H discovered 25 NVA KIA in front of their position. One NVA was wounded and taken prisoner. At 0840H K/3/4 encountered heavy opposition at YD 037639 from well prepared positions. It was extremely difficult to bring any force to bear on enemy due to heavy undergrowth which restricted movement. At 0900H units of 2/4 killed two NVA at YD 056658 and recovered one semi-automatic weapon and one automatic weapon, plus one 12.7mm machine gun, two chicom grenades, one 12.7mm machine gun tripod, green trousers, and khaki shirts with assorted NVA 782 gear. At 1030H 2/4 reported receiving heavy caliber machine gun fire from YD 047656 and between 1030H and 1900H units continued on search and destroy operations, encountering light contact. KIA's from artillery and air strikes, and numerous weapons and equipment items were discovered. Units of 3/4

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discovered one 7.62mm carbine, one chicom automatic rifle, 35 boxes of 12.7mm ammunition, 24 anti-tank mines, 11 pull type grenades, 25 empty shoe mine boxes, 72 blasting caps, one chicom grenade, 3 barrels of NVA 782 gear, and 1,000 rounds of small arms ammunitions. 2/4 continued search and destroy operations enroute to link-up with 3/4. Link-up effected at 1448H. At 1920H K/3/4 made contact with an estimated one NVA company of approximately 100 NVA. Enemy immediately taken under fire with small arms, grenades, M-79, and artillery. Illumination was provided by mortars, artillery, and flare ships. Results of this action was one friendly KIA, 5 WIA in good condition. 3/4 units discovered a partially cleared area being used as a 200 bed hospital. Also discovered was a cache of approximately 250,000 rounds of 7.62 ammunition, 183 82mm mortar rounds, 1,200 pounds of medical supplies, 3 chicom service rifles, 31 grenades, and numerous documents. K/3/4 troops were commended during this period as being superb. At 2053H 2/1 received 90-95 rounds of incoming mortar fire at YD 062059. Artillery mission fired on suspected position. Mortar fire ceased at 2105H.

*BY COMUSMACV

f. D+2 (17 July 1966). K/3/4 at 0058H, in vic of YD 037641, started receiving small arms fire. Med-Evac helicopters also received fire from approximately 100 NVA who were reported to be within 20 meters of the perimeter. A two hour and forty-five minute fight ensued. Artillery was walked in on the NVA in the killing zone. Illumination was provided by flare ship. Result unknown at that time. At 0445 2/4 and 3/4 reported receiving incoming mortar fire on outer perimeter of their command post. Mortar position could not be determined but artillery was called in and adjusted to provide maximum coverage on target. Sporadic mortar fire continued as a few rounds every hour until about 0540H. Position was later located and silenced by artillery at about 0545H. K/3/4 reported 35 NVA KIA confirmed at 0744H as a result of fire fight during the night and one NVA WIA captured in good condition. 2/1 commenced a helo lift into XD 984566 at 0815H. Lift was completed at 0927H without contact. At 0935H K/3/4 reported another five rounds of incoming mortar fire and three 81mm illumination from an unknown origin. 2/1, 2/4, and 3/4 conducted small unit search and destroy operations in assigned zones. 1/1 remained in Task Force Delta reserve and 1/3 continued to provide security for Task Force Delta Command Post and 3/12 units. Casualties at the end of this period were recorded as 28 friendly KIA and 54 WIA. Enemy casualties were recorded as 137 KIA confirmed, 119 KIA probable, and 1 NVAC.

g. D+3 (18 July 1966). 1/1 continued mission of Task Force Delta reserve. 1/3 and 6/2/1 continued to provide security for TFD CP and 3/12 units, conducting platoon and squad size patrols and ambushes. K/3/4 reported probing around perimeter which commenced at 172355H. At 0120H reported light probing on southern edge of perimeter by estimated 4 or 5 NVA. At 0140H K/3/4 and I/3/4 continued to receive small probes throughout their perimeter. At 0317H K/3/4 reported an estimated 50 NVA probing perimeter. Requested flare ship and artillery mission. NVA broke contact at 0325H. At 0330H approximately 50 NVA began probing entire perimeter of K/3/4 with small arms fire, grenades, and automatic fire from left flank.

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Unit sustained two minor WIA's. 2/4 at first light commenced movement northeast conducting search and destroy operations along route to vicinity of YD 055666 and establish blocking force positions. 2/1 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zones. At 0515H to 0815H H/2/1 received four rounds of 81mm mortar fire and approximately 35 rounds, semi-automatic weapons fire from vicinity of YD 993585. Between 1030H and 1100H B/2/1 received fire from three sides. The main body received small arms sniper fire from several snipers in tree line to their right. When the main body began to maneuver toward the front position they received semi-automatic and automatic weapons fire from the tree line vic of XD 998549. First platoon returned fire while main body moved around the hill firing machine guns and small arms and throwing grenades into tree line. One reinforced NVA squad moved from the draw, vicinity of XD 997550 in an attempt to move left of the company's position. Artillery mission called in with good coverage on target. Four NVA KIA were visible after the end of the artillery mission. Firing continued from the tree line. At this time NVA opened fire with what was believed a .50 caliber machine gun from the tree line vicinity XD 998549. NVA broke contact at approximately 1230H. Friendly unit sustained six MedEvac's and three non-MedEvac's. Enemy count was four KIA confirmed and 12 NVA KIA probables. At 1015H E/2/1 caught one reinforced NVA squad estimated to be 15 NVA on trail eating. NVA taken under fire and pushed physically. Results one NVA KIA and four friendly WIA. At 1255H first wave of 3/5 touched down at YD 181229. At 1307H second wave of 3/5 lift touched down in LZ DOVE, and at 1330H, M/3/5, upon entering LZ CROW received heavy auto/semi-automatic weapons fire from XD 046623 from an estimated NVA company. Fire returned immediately, called in armed helos and fixed wing air strikes. M/3/5 advanced by fire and maneuver under covering fires of machine guns. NVA withdrew to the northeast. Results were recorded as 21 NVA KIA confirmed, 25 KIA probables and 2 WIA with 15 WIA probables. At 1530H 3/5 Command Post was established at YD 076606 and M/3/5 at YD 067610. The 3/5 lift was completed at 1630H. 2/4 reported recovering and destroying 10,260 rounds of 12.7mm rounds at 1600H. At 1605H 3/5 reported that M/3/5 had enemy contact at YD 070610. Results were recorded as friendly 5 KIA and 5 WIA. Enemy, as 17 NVA KIA confirmed and 10 NVA WIA estimated. At 1615H 3/4 reported one platoon of K/3/4 pinned down by small arms fire in 3/4 landing zone. L/3/4 was deployed to extricate them. 3/4 asked 2/4 for assistance in securing high ground along route. At 1625H CG, Task Force Delta approved the request. At 1740H as K/3/4 moved out bringing up the rear of the column they started receiving mortar fire. Fire was walked up the column cutting it in several spots. Column also began receiving small arms and automatic fire from an estimated 1000 NVA. Artillery and air was called in and as of 1750H was still being used. NVA attempted to set up mortars in LZ at YD 038648 and were hit by napalm. At this time 2/4 had established position on high ground giving security for further movement. Mortar fire and small arms fire had diminished. At 1720H H/2/4 observed five NVA moving up trail with weapons at XD 045665 wearing green uniforms. H/2/4 established an ambush and killed two NVA and wounded three. At 1730H L/3/5 made contact with an estimated 20 NVA in khaki uniforms at YD 060612. NVA fired

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machine guns and automatic weapons. L/3/5 returned fire and advanced toward well concealed enemy positions. Results were two NVA KIA confirmed, five NVA KIA probables, and one machine gun (chicom) and one .30 caliber machine gun captured. Friendly casualties to this period were 33 KIA and 117 WIA. Enemy casualties were 181 KIA confirmed, 177 probable, and 2 VCC.

h. D+4 (19 July 1966). 1/1 still providing TFD reserve. 1/3 providing security for TFD Command Post, 3/12, and maintaining Sparrow Hawk. At 0530H H, 2/4 observed approximately 6 to 8 NVA apparently coming in search of ambush. NVA opened fire at the same time the ambush commenced firing. It is believed ambush held too long and may have been compromised. This action resulted in 2 friendly KIA and 2 WIA. Enemy casualties were 3 KIA confirmed and one sub-machine gun captured. At 1030H 3/5 reported that further search of area where M/3/5 engaged NVA on 18 July resulted in 2 NVA KIA, and a number of weapons and equipment captured. At 1200H G/2/1 was lifted to 3/4 Command Post. G/2/4 chopped OPCON to 3/4 at 1120H. At 1120H K/3/4 was lifted to DONG HA. K/3/4 at 1315H was lifted via fixed wing aircraft to PHU BAI Combat Base. They arrived at PHU BAI at 1500H. 3/4(-) commenced movement at 1800H to vicinity of YD 054655 to establish blocking positions. 3/5 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zone. 2/4 commenced movement at 1130H in southerly direction and conducted search and destroy operations en route from YD 057664 to hill 208 at YD 043642. At 1815H K/3/5 discovered old NVA KIA at YD 049604 and recovered one new weapon with bayonet, large caches of 30 packs and equipment, supplies, rice and ammo, nine grenades and nine uniforms.

Cumulative totals at this time were recorded as Friendly, 51 KIA and 129 WIA; enemy recorded as 332 KIA confirmed, 549 KIA probables, and 2 VCC.

i. D+5 (20 July 1966). At 0945H M/3/5 made contact with three NVA at YD 029013. They took enemy under fire resulting in one NVA KIA. The other two went northwest. At 1201H 1/1 helo lifted to YD 051620 from Landing Zone CROW was completed. At 1250H M/3/4 arrived at Task Force Delta Command Post with OPCON chopped to 1/3. At 1415H the advance party of 2/9 arrived at DONG HA. OPCON assumed at that time. At 1445H plans were initiated to lift M/3/4 to 2/1 Command Post. At 1630H the first wave of M/3/4 commenced, and touched down at YD 087567 at 1650H. At 1700H Task Force Delta was notified that all of 2/9 units would close DONG HA at 1800H. 2/9 assumed mission of Task Force Delta Reserve. Enemy contact for this period was light, however M/3/5 discovered what appeared to be a division or regimental size command post. Upon search of the area found 2 NVA KIA, 2NVA and 1 WIA. M/3/5 recovered two 7.62mm Chicom semi-auto. matic rifles, 30 wood handled grenades, 10 pounds of documents, 150 packs with equipment and one knapsack containing medical supplies. At 1315H D/1/1 was engaged while advancing. They encountered

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automatic weapons fire from five NVA at YD 045625. One weapon was reported as a heavy machine gun. Artillery mission and air strike were called in. D/1/1 sustained one KIA. B/1/1, while advancing at 1340H at YD 050621 tripped a 60mm booby trap and sustained one WIA MedEvac. At 1455H 1/1 reported an estimated two or three NVA platoons along the sides of a ravine in the vicinity of YD 045628, YD 047629, and YD 050629. NVA well dug in and equipped with automatic weapons. At least two machine guns and one heavy caliber machine gun was reported. NVA wearing green and khaki uniforms with camouflage. At 1500H AO on station reported an enemy concentration in ravine at YD 051629 to YD 051631. Several USAF and USMC aircraft attacked the area with all types of ordnance. Aircraft received automatic weapons fire. At 1610H K/3/5 discovered a NVA bivouac position at YD 041593 estimated to be a battalion or two company size units. K/3/5 discovered NVA manuals on mortars, 150 packs and expended heavy machine gun rounds. All equipment was new and all was destroyed in place. Documents were evacuated. At 1800H 3/4 reported that a platoon size patrol had been engaged by an undetermined number of NVA in vicinity of YD 060660. Air strikes were used to reinforce where assistance was being sent out. Command post of 3/4 was under attack by mortars and small arms from the ridge across the valley at YD 050655. The platoons succeeded in extracting themselves from contact. MedEvac helos were called in at the Command Post site. The first helo was loaded and lifted. The second helo landed and received fire in the LZ. Contact was broken and a sweep conducted. The sweeping unit recovered ten mortar rounds, 60mm mortar, one base plate, one hipod, two heavy caliber machine guns, one Chicom carbine and some grenades. As the platoon regrouped and evacuation of casualties continued, enemy fire resumed. Fire returned immediately. 81mm mortars, small arms, air strikes and armed UH-1E aircraft were directed. At 2057H 3/4 units returned to CP, fires had ceased. Unit sustained 6 KIA and 27 WIA. Enemy casualties were reported as 8 KIA confirmed, 10 KIA probable. At 1945H E/2/4 and 2/4 Command Post received approximately 25 rounds of 81mm mortars from YD 038652. Returned fire with 81mm mortars and artillery. Enemy fire ceased. At 2345H CAM LO District Headquarters reported receiving one round of 60mm mortar fire from a NVA ambush along highway 9 from YD 063571 to YD 025564. At 2355H YD 051620 1/1 Command Post received approximately 50 rounds incoming mortar fire believed to be 81mm. Enemy position believed to be in vicinity of GS 0263 or YD 027620. Artillery called into GS 0263. At this time 1/1 checked with 3/5 who has troops near YD 027620. 3/5 troops report negative results. 1/1 Command Post sustained 3 friendly WIA from the mortar attack. Cumulative friendly casualties for this period were reported as 56 KIA and 164 WIA. Enemy was reported as 387 KIA confirmed and 549 KIA probable with 4 NVAC.

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J. D+6 (21 July 1966). At 0920H M/3/5 reported having found an area containing about 30 pounds of TNT (C-1), blasting caps and some field phones. At 0950H 1/1 Command Post displaced to YD 040632. Then at 1020H D/1/1 in searching area YD 045631 discovered eight NVA bodies in shallow graves. Bodies had been recently killed by small arms. At 1115H 2/4 reported suspected jamming of UHF 131.5. At 1130H 3/5 discovered 4 NVA KIA in shallow graves at YD 046634. Bodies had not yet decomposed. It was estimated that they had been killed by small arms within the last thirty-six hours. 1/3 at 1200H was displaced to YD 052649 to assume mission of 3/4. 3/4 was displaced to YD 132592 to assume mission of 1/3. Lifts were completed at 1400H. 1/2, 2/2, 2/4 and 3/5 units continued to conduct search and destroy operations in assigned zones. Task Force Delta at 1355H received a report from CAM LO District doctor that villagers from outlying villages are frightened due to presence of numerous NVA with mission of "liberating" QUANG TRI Province and THUA THIEN Province. Exact location of enemy was unknown. M/3/5 at 1700H reported finding 12 enemy KIA at YD 028618 on a trail near two uncovered bodies. Those in the grave were so killed by air or artillery. Those uncovered on the trail were so fresh it appeared that they may have been killed by either M/3/5 or automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire from an estimated 30 NVA. Artillery mission was called in with results not checked. L/3/5 at 2014H received heavy caliber machine gun fire and mortar fire from XD 995605. At 2120H H/2/1 reported receiving small arms fire and six mortar rounds and one heavy caliber machine gun fire at XD 994596 from an unknown number of NVA. Artillery mission fired with unknown results. Units sustained one KIA and seven WIA. This days action added 12 friendly KIA and 68 WIA to the cumulative total. Enemy losses for the period was 106 KIA confirmed and 5 probable with one NVAC.

X K. D+7 (22 July 1966). At 0130H 2/1 reported that at 212100H H/2/1 and M/3/4 were probed by NVA and F/2/1 were heavily attacked by NVA using small arms and mortar fire. Suspected enemy positions were taken under fire by artillery and mortar fire. Attack by NVA had been mounted from all directions by unknown number of NVA. Enemy activity gradually subsided and NVA broke contact at approximately 0300H. Commander of 2/1 reported it appeared that the NVA were attempting to destroy his units' blocking position in vicinity of GS YD 9959 in order to skip out to the West. At 0935H, area indicated by captive containing Regimental Command Post on hill 314 in YD 0262 had been reached by M/3/5. Report indicated area honey-combed with placements and bunkers, fighting holes and AA positions. Area unoccupied at this time. At 1400H 3/4 chopped OPCON M/3/4 to 3/12, located at YD 119589 and at 1400H 3/12 chopped OPCON G/2/1 to 2/1 currently at XD 897563. M/3/5 observed and engaged a company size unit of NVA moving east at 1530H in vicinity of YD 018632. Unit was moving into 1/1 zone of action and 3/5 requested permission from 1/1 to pursue NVA into their zone. C/1/1 was sent to block at YD 026034. 2/4 was informed of action.

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This pursuit continued until 1715H when M/3/5 lost contact with NVA. M/3/5 was not able to determine direction enemy fled. No results were reported other than one NVA KIA on initial report. At 1830H L/3/5 was reported to be in contact with unknown number of NVA at YD 027612. At 1855H G/2/4 encountered an unknown number of NVA firing automatic and semi-automatic weapons. Returned fire immediately with small arms and M-79. Area was searched and one NVA KIA was discovered dressed in khaki. At 1930H G/2/4 received one incoming mortar round that burst in the trees above Marines that were drawing rations at the Company Command Post. Source of round unknown. Unit sustained two KIA and five WIA. Artillery was fired on suspected enemy position with results unknown. H/2/1 at XD 995594 in an ambush encountered two NVA at 2015H moving north along stream bed. Ambush was activated immediately. NVA broke contact and fled. NVA sustained two KIA probables.

1. D-8 (23 July 1966): At 0600H M/3/5 position at YD 033636 came under fire by automatic weapons and hand grenades. Two NVA were in a fighting hole. M/3/5 returned fire and killed the two NVA and captured one 7.62mm machine gun. H/2/1 moving to an ambush site engaged ten NVA moving north at 0600H. NVA returned small arms fire and grenades. NVA broke contact and fled. At 0815H, L/3/5 in a blocking position observed one NVA at YD 033636. NVA was taken under fire and killed. C/1/1 made contact with an estimated 25 to 30 NVA at 0920H in vicinity of YD 033636. NVA were well dug in. Units of C/1/1 moved to encircle the NVA position. NVA broke contact. C/1/1 sustained two WIA as a result. Enemy casualties unknown. At 0945H H/3/4 at YD 038651 received A/W and semi-automatic fire. Fire was returned. Unit sustained two KIA and four WIA. Two enemy KIA were confirmed. M/3/5 sighted group of NVA at 1000H in vicinity of YD 033627. M/3/5 took them under fire killing two and wounding one. The bodies were left in open with their weapons in hope that NVA would attempt recovery of them. At 1202H elements of DELTA and CHARLIE 1/1 made contact with NVA. C/1/1 in sporadic contact and D/1/1 in heavy contact. At 1215H information was received that a UH-34 and an OLB USAF had collided in mid-air and both aircraft were down in grid square XD 9564. At that time all personnel had been retracted from the helo. The USAF pilot had not been located. Two Marine Officers were MedEvac to D-MED and the USS REPOSE in good condition. Extent of injuries not known at this time. The MedEvac's were CO, HqCo, 4th Marines and Task Force Delta Paywar Officer. H/2/1 received two rounds of 82mm mortar fire and some automatic weapons fire at 1320H in vicinity of XD 997596. H/2/1 returned 4.2 mortar on suspected enemy position. Results unknown. At 1320H a report from 1/3 stated that a UH-34 had gone down in 1/3 CP. No casualties were reported. The cause of the crash was determined to be due to mechanical failure. 2/4 at 1330H reported having sporadic contact. Enemy appeared to be to the northwest of 2/4. C/2/4 en route to 1/1 position encountered controlled mines which caused several casualties. At 1430H H/2/1 received two rounds of 81mm mortar fire from an unknown location. E/2/1 heard the mortars firing and fired an artillery mission at XD 999545.

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Mortar fire ceased. Results were unknown. A/1/3, as a result of a second search in vicinity of YD 055661, at 1500H, recovered 6 82mm rounds, 10 fuses, 3 chicom grenades, 117 rolls of mortar increments, 3 82mm mortar base plates, 1 roll communications wire, 11 shovels, 6 packs, 4 packs of ignition cartridges with seven loose cartridges, 782 gear, 2 tripods made of bamboo and 2 heavy machine gun mounts. At 1515H, I/3/5 discovered cache of equipment at YD 017807. At this time one NVA surrendered to I/3/5. I/3/5 recovered two machine guns, one AN/PRC-10 radio, 48 wood handled grenades, 180 .30 caliber rounds, 738 7.62 rounds, one heavy machine gun, ammo drum, two large weapon cover bags, 82mm mortar clearing equipment, 1 flag, 31 pr. sneakers, 14 gas masks, 12 ruck sacks, 24 shovels, entrenching tools, 22 mosquito nets, 25 uniforms, 6 shelter halves, 2 flashlights, 1 alarm clock, 1 machete, 2 bushels of rice, 7 small mortars or R/Rifles, 1 night lighting device, medical supplies, and documents. Every item reported in good condition or new. There were also about eighty fighting holes in the area. At 1700H, B/1/3 discovered and recovered large amounts of clothing, 782 gear, 12.7 ammunition, one 12.7 A/A gun complete with mount and two sights. At 1830H, F/2/1 began receiving small arms fire from NVA position. Artillery was fired and scored direct hits on NVA position. Results were five NVA KIA probable. Area was not searched. At 2300H in the vicinity of XD 995595 a squad patrol from 2d Platoon of HqCo 2/1 made contact with 3 or 4 NVA moving north along a stream bed. The patrol opened fire expending about 150 rounds of small arms ammunition and one fragmentation grenade. The NVA broke contact. Results were estimated as 2 NVA KIA probable. From 2345H to 240015H, in vicinity of YD 998593 listening post #3, H/2/1 received mortar and small arms fire into their position from an estimated NVA platoon. H/2/1 commenced firing with approximately 45 rounds of small arms and grenade. The listening post reported 3 or 4 NVA KIA probable. The listening post returned to the CP. At 2350H, H/2/1 Command Post received two incoming mortar rounds which landed outside H/2/1 lines in vicinity of XD 998593. Location of the NVA mortar position could not be determined at this time. This action continued on into the next day.

m. D+9 (24 July 1966). I/3/5 at 0004H discovered a NVA KIA wearing camouflage utilities w/US helmet and cover. At 0005H H/2/1 received two more incoming mortar rounds in their CP, at approximately the same time H Co ambush established at YD 998598 was sprung; results unknown. At 0545H, H/2/1 received approximately 200 rounds S/A fire from XD 997596. NVA were engaged w/S/A, grenades, and 4.2 mortar fire. NVA broke contact. A search resulted in the discovery of 3 NVA KIA confirmed and four weapons of an unknown type, six full magazines, and six grenades. 2/4 conducted a search forward of their perimeter at 0600H in response to moaning heard approximately 150 meters forward of their position throughout the night. Search resulted in capture

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of one NVA with AK-47, five magazines, six grenades, cartridge belt, canteen, first aid packet, and assorted personal gear. Captive was WIA and dressed in a khaki uniform. Captive stated he was a squad leader and his mission was to ambush USMC moving down stream. He had no idea where his squad was. Captive was forwarded to prisoner collection point. At 0655H, H/2/1 engaged two NVA vicinity XD 995594. H pursued along stream south, toward G/2/1 ambush site. NVA broke contact and fled. Attempt to force NVA into G/2/1 ambush vicinity XD 998577 was successful. At 0700H in vicinity TD 005605, L/3/5 was approached by NVA wearing camouflage utilities and US helmet w/cover. Thinking him a USMC, L/3/5 allowed him to continue approaching, NVA opened fire. A/W fire returned immediately, NVA fled. At 0800H Recon Team inserted vicinity YD 9360. At 0830H, H/1/1 (armed) sighted rope bridge, vicinity XD 951599, suspended over stream. No action taken. At 0900H, I/3/5 discovered 21 NVA KIA, 15 vicinity YD 016615 and 6 vicinity YD 15617. This was site of L/3/5 ambush of 1-2 NVA squads at 232215H. At 0920H, Recon Team observed 6 to 10 men walking north in canopy vicinity XD 953545. Men wore utilities, floppy hats, and web gear, fire mission was called, unable to observe effects. At 0920H, H/2/1, while searching ridge line in vicinity YD 039653 received four rounds sniper fire from approximately 50 meters away; 15 rounds 7.62 immediate fire returned. Area searched with negative results. At 1009H, 1/1 sighted NVA position on slope of ridge vicinity YD 026643. Position appeared to have been hit by arty/air strikes. Position consisted of four bunkers and approximately 20 fighting holes. 1/1 unable to call artillery fire mission due to units of 2/4 in the area. 2/4 notified of the positions. At 1010H Recon Team extracted from vicinity YD 938602. At 1015H, E/2/1 ambush vicinity XD 989597, killed one NVA and recovered NVA weapon. At 1030H, H/2/4 searching ridge line vicinity YD 039651 discovered enemy position along the length of the ridge; position contained seven NVA KIA; discovered one AK-47 in open area. At 1030H patrol from 107mm Batry attached to 3/5 discovered battalion camp site vicinity YD 083614, area contained 4 to 5 lean-to's and 40 fighting holes/trenches; empty magazine pouches were found in the area. At 1055H, K/3/5 vicinity YD 045619 discovered one NVA KIA, NVA was dressed in brown uniform, appeared to have died of wounds 2 or 3 days previous. Had no weapon or equipment on his person. At 1120H, Recon Team extracted from vicinity YD 085655. At 1215H, I/3/5 engaged four NVA vicinity YD 011616; two were captured, 1 KIA and one was wounded but managed to get away. Contact was made on well used trail running north and south. At 1240H, I/3/5 made contact with NVA force originally reported as of undetermined strength in vicinity YD 011616. At 1245H, D/1/1 patrol discovered one NVA KIA vicinity YD 027631. This was site of fire fight on previous day. NVA apparently died of bullet wound in the head. Patrol recovered one rifle, one carriage and receiver with barrel for heavy machine gun, one pack with rice, 10,000 rounds 7.62mm and 4 Chicom grenades. Also bloody battle dressings in the area. Grenades were destroyed in place. At 1300H, E/2/1 encountered three NVA, vicinity

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XD 989605, took them under fire killing two. The patrol physically pursued remaining NVA. When 1st Platoon F/2/1 moved into area in an effort to trap remaining NVA they discovered one AK-47, one SKS, misc. equipment, and documents. At 1330H, Recon Team observed six men attempting to establish an ambush along the stream vicinity XD 939577. No action taken due to loss of contact. At 1330H, B/1/1 initiating a detailed search of NVA Base Camp, now identified as approximately 100 men in strength and moving northeast toward YD 0262 from YD 0161. I/3/5 vicinity of YD 011616 received sniper and mortar fire. At 1630H B/1/3 apprehended one NVA WIA; rendered medical aid. At 1730H, K/3/5 in contact vicinity YD 016616. M/3/5 in contact vicinity YD 024635. V/3/5 moving to assist I/3/5. At 1750H, C/1/1 on patrol in vicinity of I/1's contact of 23 July discovered two NVA bodies dressed in khaki uniforms. The bodies were covered with leaves, also found was a severed right hand from an undiscovered body. At 1800H B/1/1 returning from a patrol found one NVA body dressed in green uniform vicinity YD 060633, NVA apparently killed by single gun shot wound. At 1848H, 3/5 reported one UH-34 down in M/3/5's area vicinity YD 012628. Helo downed by small arms penetration of transmission oil pan. M/3/5 platoon provided security at location of the down helo. At 1930H, Cb's E and H and 2/4 CP received approximately 25 81mm mortar rounds. G Co location vicinity YD 039655 at the same time received approximately 25 rounds 60mm mortar. Fire was returned immediately with 60mm, 81mm, and artillery. Units sustained one KIA and 60 WIA. The attack appeared to be well coordinated, incoming mortars ceased as friendly counter-fire began. 1/3 called and observed the counter-fire reporting excellent effect on target with secondary explosions observed. At 1952H, 1/3 and 3/5 reported mortar flashes in vicinity YD 025647 appeared to be mortars firing on 2/4, artillery counter-battery fire called in. At 2030H MedEvac while attempting to evacuate casualties in LZ at K/3/5 position received 12.7mm machine gun fire from vicinity YD 013623. All WIA evacuated without incident after enemy fire neutralized. At 2100H WIA not evacuated from I Co due to 12.7mm fire, fire doing little damage, mostly going overhead, WIA were moved to a secure zone so helo's could land. Cumulative casualties as of the end of this reporting period recorded as friendly, 91 KIA and 332 WIA. Enemy casualties were recorded as 576 KIA confirmed and 638 KIA probables and 8 NVAC.

At 2430 (25 July 1966), 1/1, 1/3, 2/4, 2/5, 3/5 units continue to conduct search and destroy operations in zones of responsibility. Units encountered light contacts. 1/1 prepared to support 3/5 operations. 2/4 commenced movement to YD 0565 to support 1/3. 1/3 displaced to YD 067670. L/3/5 continued to move in direction of I/3/5 position. K/3/5 was 300 meters to the east. I/3/5 moved to the west. Contact remained very light. At 1305H Arc Light strike 141 was dropped in vicinity of YD 9364, a secondary explosion resulted. 1/1 on order moved to LZ CROW in vicinity of YD 050620. I/3/12 was helo-lifted from YD 092517 to 2/1 Command Post. Lift was completed at 1730H.

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During this day of operation contact was considered light but significant. At 0645H, C/1/3 discovered two NVA KIA at YD 056661. Patrol also found two dispatch cases with documents at YD 052661. At 0825H, a recon patrol observed 40 to 50 civilians carrying bundles and wearing mixed clothing and herding cattle, moving East on a road at XD 981544. 2/1 at 0850H, reported that they had 50 to 60 civilians that were moving East along route 9 in a close proximity to their position. 2/1 reported they were holding them there currently and had requested ITT. At 1015H, 2/1 reported that the civilians being detained by F/2/1 at XD 991556 were interrogated and investigation revealed that 18 families of a Montagerde Village from the QALU Area were moving to CAM LO. The village head man had in his possession, a letter of introduction from QALU to the CAM LO District. The reason given for moving was to leave the area under bombing and artillery fire. At 1425H, B/1/1 was under mortar attack. B/1/1 returned 12 rounds of mortar at suspected NVA at YD 025647. Artillery mission also called in on NVA position with results unknown. G/2/4 at 2512H, was under mortar attack. G/2/4 received 22 mortar rounds estimated to be 82mm, from a position suspected to be an NVA position from YD 053647 to YD 055652. G/2/4 returned fire with artillery and 81mm mortars. Incoming mortar fire ceased immediately. Unit sustained no casualties and results of counter fire unknown. At 1630H, L/3/5 engaged some 20 NVA at YD 011616. The NVA commenced firing. L/3/5 returned fire immediately killing four NVA confirmed and 18 probables. At 2017H, Recon radio relay at YD 098522 reported contact with NVA. Mortars and small arms fire was received by the radio relay unit. Fire was returned by the unit and NVA fire had ceased by 2040H. Unit sustained no casualties.

o. D+11 (26 July 1966). Units on search and destroy operations began to move South and Southwest. Use of supporting arms being brought to bear more heavily on targets and suspected targets. 1/1 continues moving toward CAM LO while 2/1 and 1/3 continues search and destroy operations in their zone of responsibility. 2/4 had displaced to DONG HA after being replaced by 2/9 on this date. 2/4 upon arriving at DONG HA assumed role of Task Force Delta reserve. Contact was very light during this period. Casualties reported as friendly 2 KIA and 6 WIA. Enemy casualties were reported as 2 KIA with 17 probables and no NVAC.

p. D+12 (27 July 1966). At 0800H 1/3 and 2/9 crossed the line of departure and moved South to seize and occupy their assigned objectives. These objectives were, ONE at YD 0762, TWO at YD 0665, THREE at YD 0765 and FOUR at YD 0763. By 1020H 1/3 had seized and occupied objective ONE, no contact was made. 2/9 continued to move South toward objectives TWO and FOUR. At 0845H 2/4 commenced air lift from DONG HA to PHU BAI via fixed wing aircraft. At 1045H, the rear point of a patrol observed one NVA coming through at YD 102600. The point and

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patrol took cover and prepared to ambush the NVA. NVA came within close proximity of the patrol and patrol jumped out to grab him. The NVA raised his hands and presented a safe conduct pass. At 1100H, M/3/5 was moving. One unarmed NVA approached the end of the column at YD 014617. He stated that he wished to surrender as he had originally been captured by the NVA and ordered to gather information on the U.S. Forces. Captive was evaluated. G/2/4 departed DONG HA at 1130H via Rough Rider Convoy south as security for the convoy to PHU BAI. 1/3 continued the attack to seize and occupy objective TWO. At 1345H objective TWO was seized. 1/3 then occupied objectives ONE and TWO and was consolidated on these positions for the night. 2/4 left to PHU BAI was completed at 1205H. 2/4 continued to provide one company or two hour alert and the Battalion (-) on a four hour alert in compliance with their assigned mission as Task Force Delta reserve. 3/5 continued to conduct search and destroy operations in assigned zone and completed displacement of their Command Post by 1247H to XD 979586. 2/9 continued attack to seize objective THREE. Objective THREE was seized by 1445H and was occupied by 2/9. Friendly casualties were recorded as 122 KIA and 437 WIA with 661 NVA KIA confirmed, 837 KIA probables, and 12 NVAC. These casualties were cumulative from D-14 on 1 July 1966.

g. D+13 (28 July 1966). In hours of darkness units conducted night defensive operations in assigned areas of responsibility. Ambushes, patrols, and listening posts were conducted. 2/4 at PHU BAI continued to maintain one company on two hour alert and the battalion (-) on four hour alert in compliance with assigned mission as Task Force Delta reserve. 3/4 provided security for Task Force Delta Command Post and maintained a Sparrow Hawk Squad. 1/1, 2/1, and 3/5 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zones. 2/9 at 0800H crossed phase line RED, moved south to seize and occupy objective FOUR. At 0830H patrol of 1st Force Recon reported approximately 150 to 250 NVA in their area vic XD 919528. Artillery was called in on NVA position. As a result the patrol reported 15 NVA KIA confirmed. Air strikes were called in. Results 50 NVA KIA confirmed. At 0840H the 1st Force Recon patrol reported 50 NVA at XD 919528 carrying out their dead. Artillery mission again called in on position. Total results by artillery and air was reported as 65 KIA confirmed and 20 WIA probable. At 1215H, M/3/5 discovered a cache of NVA gear at XD 999593. Recovered 1 machine gun, 1 oil case, 1 bayonet w/scabbard, 1 map case, 4 blankets, 41 sweat shirts, 12 khaki uniforms, 6 pr. of drawers, 4 pr. of socks, 5 bags of rice, 5 hammocks, 2 pr. sneakers, 1 canteen, 1 magazine, 150 rounds of 7.62mm ammunition, 40 feet of primer cord, and 200 pounds of TNT.

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At 1315H, M/3/5 discovered another cache at XD999593 which included 14 sweat shirts, 84 pair trousers, 9 hand grenades, 30 hammocks, 5 bags of medical supplies, and 40 pair shorts. The area had been used within the past two days. H/2/1 at 2245H ambushed an unknown number of NVA at XD 977572. Engaged NVA with small arms and 60mm mortars with results unknown.

r. D-14 (29 July 1966). 1/1 conducting search and destroy operations in assigned zone. Operations consisted of small unit search and destroy type patrols seeking NVA stragglers. At 0900H 3/12 displaced Battery F/2/11 to SLF. 2/1 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zones with emphasis on patrolling out from the company positions. 1/3 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zone with emphasis on patrolling to the north. 2/4 remained as Task Force Delta reserve located at PHU BAI. 3/4 continued to provide security for TFD Command Post and to maintain the Sparrow Hawk Squad. 3/5 conducted search and destroy operations in assigned zone, except I/3/5 and K/3/5 continued to make preparations to displace. 2/9 moved overland by foot to TFD Command Post at YD132592. 2/9 arrived at TFD at 1105H. Whiskey Battery lift commenced at 1145H to DONG HA and was completed by 1355H. At 1200H, 2/9(-) departed their command post by truck convoy and arrived DONG HA at 1530H. Both units will remain in DONG HA overnight and move to DA NANG on 30 July 1966. At 1330H I/3/5 and K/3/5 lift commenced to return to ships of the SLF. At 1405H D/1/1 apprehended one NVA who walked up to D/1/1 position waving a white cloth and surrendered. NVA was evacuated to the Command Post. At 1800H patrol of First Force Recon unit was ambushed by six NVA at XD975978. NVA were wearing black P.J.'s and armed with bolt action type weapons. The ambush was activated about 15 meters from patrol. Patrol killed two NVA and wounded one. Napalm delivered into area appeared to have killed the remaining four to include the WIA. The recon unit sustained 4 WIA, not serious. Patrol was retracted at 1930H from XD 974472. Casualties are recorded as: friendly; 123 KIA and 440 WIA, and enemy; 788 KIA confirmed, 902 KIA probable, and 14 NVAC.

s. D-15 (30 July 1966). At 0630H, 1/1 displaced from YD 072604 to CAM LO at YD 132592. 1/1 arrived there at 1030H. 2/1 continues to conduct search and destroy operations in zone of responsibility and prepares to assume responsibility of 3/5 zone upon the displacement of 3/5 to the SLF. 1/3 continued to conduct search and destroy operations in assigned zone and at 0630H assumed control of 1/1 zone. At 0720H, 2/9 commenced lifting units via fixed wing aircraft to DA NANG. 2/4 continued assigned mission as Task Force Delta reserve and commenced movement by Rough Rider Convoy to DONG HA at 0800H. Movement completed at 1320H. 3/4 continued to provide security for TFD, Command Post, LSA, 3/12 and to maintain Sparrow Hawk Squad. 3/5 displaced from this command.

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post at XD 980585 to 2/1 command post at YD 980563 pending lift to SLF where OPCON will be chopped at completion of lift. At 1000H, Colonel D. W. SHERMAN passed the command of 4th Marine Regiment to Colonel A. D. CERECHINO. At 1145H, 1/1 departed CAM LO enroute to DONG HA via truck convoy to await transportation to DA NANG. At 1800H OPCON of 2/9 chopped to 9th Marines at 1332H. 3/5 lift was completed at 1525H. OPCON of 3/5 chopped to CTG 76.5 at 1525H. 2/9 and "W" Battery displacement completed at 1645H. Fourth Marines Rough Rider Convoy south to PHU BAI arrived at 2000H. 3. July

t. D-16 (31 July 1966). Units continued to conduct defensive operations which included ambushes, patrols, listening posts, and observation posts. Enemy contact was light. 1/3/12 outpost received two incoming grenades and several rounds of small arms from a small group of NVA. E/2/1 also sighted 4-5 NVA at XD 980559. 2/1 continued to conduct search and destroy operations in assigned area. 1/3 moved to CAM LO for transportation to DONG HA by truck convoy. 2/4 remained as TFD reserve and assumed responsibility for Sparrow Hawk Squad and the defense of DONG HA. In addition 2/4 provided one company as reactionary force. 1/3/4 arrived and OPCON chopped to 3d Signal Party Battalion. 3/4 continued providing security for the Task Force Delta command post. 1/1 was chopped OPCON to First Marines at 0900H. E/2/1(=) was lifted to DONG HA to provide security for Rough Rider Convoy return to PHU BAI. First Force Recon patrols made contact with NVA while on an insertion. One patrol sustained one WIA as a result and extraction was made immediately.

u. D-17 (1 August 1966). 1/3 lift was made to DA NANG by fixed wing aircraft. OPCON of 1/3 chopped to Third Marines at 0700H. 2/1 was lifted to DONG HA via helicopter. A platoon of 2/1 was lifted to YD 340698 to provide security for tanks that made trip to DONG HA in LCU's. At 1200H Task Force Delta was deactivated and control of Operation HASTINGS reverted to Commanding Officer, Fourth Marines. 1 Aug

v. D-18 (2 August 1966). All units continued their assigned missions. 2/4 provided security for DONG HA, the Sparrow Hawk Squad, rapid reaction company, and 4th Marines reserve. 3/4 provided security for the Fourth Marines forward command post. The only contact was 1/3/4 bridge security observed two persons outside their protective wire and took under fire. Individuals withdrew rapidly to the south.

w. D-19 (3 August 1966). Operation HASTINGS terminated 1200H August 1966. Fourth Marines (.) displaced to PHU BAI via Rough Rider Convoy and continued assigned mission.

11. Results

a. Friendly casualties. 124 KIA, 440 WIA.

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b. Enemy casualties

- (1) 788 KIA (confirmed)
- (2) 908 KIA (probable)
- (3) 17 NVAC

c. Friendly equipment losses. Negligible.d. Enemy equipment losses

(1) Weapons	220
(2) Web Gear	10 Barrels
(3) Grenades	684 each
(4) Packs	684 each
(5) 12.7 rounds	18,200 rounds
(6) Mines	40 each
(7) 81/82mm Mortar	302 rounds
(8) 7.62 rounds	311,193 rounds
(9) Money	20,000 Piasters
(10) Documents	300 pounds
(11) TNT	262 pounds
(12) Medical supplies	1,225 pounds

12. Administrative Mattersa. Strengths

(1) Effective in the field strengths of Headquarters, Task Force Delta, Infantry and Artillery battalions, and the reconnaissance group on the day they were committed are as follows:

UNIT	OFFICER		ENLISTED		DATE COMMITTED
	USMC	USN	USMC	USN	
HqCo 4th Mar (includes TFD Augmentation)	36	1	186	1	15 Jul
2ndBn 4thMar	26	1	500	27	15 Jul
3rdBn 4thMar	24	1	475	25	15 Jul
1stBn 3rdMar	24	2	477	25	15 Jul
3rdBn 5thMar (SLF)	60	4	1220	49	18 Jul
1stBn 1stMar	19	0	437	25	16 Jul
2ndBn 1stMar	28	1	642	34	15 Jul

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UNIT	OFFICER		ENLISTED		DATE COMMITTED
	USMC	USN	USMC	USN	
2ndBn 9thMar	19	0	305	17	20 Jul
3rdBn 12thMar	31	5	533	12	15 Jul
Recon Group	7	0	95	7	15 Jul

b. Casualties

KIA

DEATHS
 124

WIA
 472

(Of this total 126 did not
 require evacuation and were
 not evacuated from their units)

NON-HOSTILE

2

MIA
 0

CAPTURED
 0

c. Casualty Reporting

(1) Casualty Reporting was carried out in accordance with 3d Marine Division Order 3040.

(2) The 3d Battalion, 5th Marines accomplished its own casualty reporting.

(3) Casualty Reporting Teams were stationed at all evacuation points. "A" and "D" Med, the PRINCETON and REPOSE. "O" Med and NSA DANANG were covered by representatives from Division Casualty Reporting Center. At these points identification and medical information concerning the casualty were gained. This information was then forwarded to the point where Service records were located. The necessary service record information was then matched with the identification and medical information. Forms with the completed information were then forwarded, in most instances by courier to Division CRCC.

(4) Service records of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines were located aboard the USS PRINCETON. Service records of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines were moved from DANANG, and service records from all PHU BAI based units were moved to a centralized location in the 4th Marines CP at PHU BAI. One of the difficulties encountered was in acquiring casualty information from the USS REPOSE because of a lack of communication and/or transportation. This difficulty was resolved by a courier from the casualty reporting team aboard the REPOSE, utilizing whatever transportation possible, delivering casualty reporting forms to PHU BAI. The trip from the USS REPOSE to PHU BAI on occasion took as long as 36 hours to complete.

d. Supply

(1) the primary source of supply was from:

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- {(a) Force Logistics Support Group "A"
{(b) Force Logistics Support Unit #2

FLS 6A
FLS U 2

(1) Chronology of Logistics build up.

(a) 13 July 1966 a base of all classes of supply was established at LSA located in DONG HA. The base established was 10 days Class V and 5 days classes I through IV for 1 battalion and 1 battery.

(b) 15 July 1966 a build up commenced to 5 days all classes for 3 infantry battalions and supporting artillery. This action was completed on 18 July 1966 and involved the transport of 1.3 million pounds, all by fixed wing air with the exception of a very small amount of Class V transported to the LSA by convoy from PHU BAI.

(c) As 4 battalions and 2 batteries were added, lift requirement were increased to attain a goal of 8 days Class V and 5 days all other classes. This requirement necessitated an average daily sustaining rate of 115 tons per day by air in addition to build up.

(3) Supply point distribution was established for 2 battalions, 4 batteries and the Headquarters. Unit distribution was established for 5 battalions and 2 batteries. Supply point distribution averaged about 100 tons per day; Unit distribution by helicopter averaged about 75 tons per day with a peak day of 110 tons.

(4) During Operation Hastings the LSA received some 4,500 tons of supplies by fixed wing aircraft and 160 tons of supplies by rough-rider. Additionally 100 tons of Class IIIA was delivered by LGU and 240 tons of Class IIIA and 240 tons of Class V by USN LARKS loading from YFU's. During the same time 1190 tons of supplies were sent to units by helicopters and 900 tons were picked up by units at the LSA by trucks. At the close of Operation Hastings, dump levels on most items were 15 days allowance for a regiment. In particular the objective was as follows:

CLASS	DAYS
I <i>infantry</i>	15
II <i>TF</i>	5
III <i>pol</i>	5
IV <i>unit</i>	5
V <i>ammo</i>	15 (less 4.2 which was established at 10 days)

e. Maintenance

(1) Limited 3rd echelon maintenance for ordnance, motor transport and communication equipment was available in the LSA. Equipment requiring maintenance beyond organic or LSA capability was evacuated on a

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priority basis.

f. Treatment of casualties and Evacuation and Hospitalization

(1) A Shock and Resuscitation Unit was established at the LSA at DONG HA. Casualties were evacuated through this facility. Casualties were then further evacuated to "A" Med and the more serious ones were further evacuated to "C" Med as well as NSA DANANG. As the operation progressed, the facilities aboard the USS Princeton as well as the USS Repose were utilized.

(2) During the period 14 July through 31 July, a total of 902 patients were treated by "D" Med. Evacuation was as follows:

<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>
339	USS REPOSE
107	USS PRINCETON
107	"A" MED
164	"C" MED,
39	ARVN to ARVN collection point
5	Captives to collection point
141	Returned to duty
<u>902</u>	

g. Transportation

(1) Transportation was primarily by air with fixed wing from DANANG and PHU BAI and helicopter in the objective area. Trucks were used to convoy some personnel and supplies from PHU BAI to DONG HA. One additional convoy from DANANG resupplied the LSA with some Class I and Class V. YFU's were utilized to transport Class III and Class IIIA from NSA to DONG HA.

h. Communications

i. Medical Evaluation.

(1) The establishment of a Shock and Resuscitation Unit at the LSA proved to be an excellent advantage. The close proximity of this unit to the objective area saved several lives which may have been lost if a longer medical evacuation had have been required. The close cooperation and coordination of medical evacuation by helicopter is noteworthy.

13. Special Equipment and Techniques.

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14. COMMANDER'S ANALYSIS

a. Lessons Learned. Although most of the following lessons learned have been stated before, they are still important enough to emphasize again.

(1) Troop Dispersion. Troops bunching up continues to be the most flagrant violation of basic military principles. It occurs in every phase of an operation. It is worse in the landing zone (both on landing and extraction), at times of resupply on position, and when the troops have been relieved from the lines and they are moving into bivouac. Company Commanders, Platoon Leaders, and Squad Leaders must be told repeatedly to keep their men well dispersed at all times in the combat zone. Once is not enough. This must be done every day and prompt corrective action must be taken every time troops are not properly dispersed.

(2) Ambushes by Enemy. The ambush is an art with guerrillas, main force, and North Vietnamese troops. Proper use of scouts and patrols is the only solution to the problem. No unit should move into ambush terrain without complete security to front, flanks, and rear. Standard North Vietnamese tactics make use of decoys to lure units into ambushes. Individuals or small groups that make themselves obvious and run into areas where good cover and concealment exist are good indicators of an ambush. The area they have entered should be saturated with artillery before the area is carefully probed by scouts and mutually supporting patrols. The main body of any element should be moved into an area with great caution and then only when a complete base of fire has been built up and mortars have been registered. A squad of the enemy isn't worth the life of even one Marine. Movement into ambush terrain must be preceded by a thorough search of all the high ground. We want to kill the enemy with our supporting arms-not with rifles, grenades and bayonets. If detailed probing isn't practical then recon by fire must be used. This means artillery, mortars and air as the primary means and organic infantry weapons as the secondary means. When scouts and patrols make contact, they should be withdrawn under the cover of the base of fire and the area saturated with supporting arms.

(3) Enemy use of Mortars. Any unit that occupies a position for more than 24 hours can expect to be mortared. Particularly hazardous is terrain surrounded by higher ground and covered with trees. Tree bursts intensify the lethality of mortars. Most mortar attacks are experienced at resupply time when the arrival and departure of helicopters give away the unit location or at night after the enemy has observed preparations for digging in for the night. Troops who do not wear helmets are particularly vulnerable to tree bursts even when in foxholes. Another enemy tactic is to lob a few rounds into advancing troops, then wait until groups congregate to help the wounded and drop more mortars right in on top of them.

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(4) AO's and FAC(A). This operation again demonstrated the pitifully inadequate capability of the 1st Marine Airwing to provide even minimum essential air observation over the battlefield and brought sharply into focus the requirements for additional FACs to control air strikes while airborne. The TACA provided did yeoman's service but could not possibly cover all the targets or areas in which units were engaged. Without the outstanding service provided by the Air Force AO's and FAC(A) Marine units in Operation Hastings would have achieved less success.

(5) Artillery Fire on Enemy Sightings. Time and time again enemy troops were sighted by recon and other units who called a few rounds of artillery in on the enemy. While it is not suggested that artillery ammunition should be wasted, the practice of firing one or two rounds at a time on small groups of enemy is an ineffective use of artillery. Battery volleys should be used and repeated as long as there is a reasonable chance of hitting the enemy.

(6) Withdrawal from offensive/defensive position. An essential part of moving a unit out of an offensive/defensive position is the use of supporting arms to cover the movement whether on foot or by helicopter. All avenues of approach available to the enemy must be covered by fire. These fires must be continuous whenever possible to keep the enemy from massing a force to attack the unit while it is leaving the position. The last elements to leave a position must be covered by elements which have already moved out. No gap should be permitted to develop between the main body and the rear guard. Timing of a withdrawal is vital, and nothing must be permitted to delay the movement. Resupply must be anticipated and must not hold up the movement.

(7) Recovery/repair of Helicopters. The need for a heavy lift helicopter to retrieve downed helos was again demonstrated. Tactical troops were required to remain too long in exposed areas to protect downed helos. Either they should be lifted out or repair teams dispatched quickly, to eliminate the crisis that always develops just before dark, of having to withdraw troops during poor conditions or, equally as bad, having to reinforce and resupply a unit tied down on such a mission.

(8) Flare Plane Availability. In an environment such as Hastings continuous coverage by one or more flare plane is a must. The minimum acceptable posture is ~~strip~~ alert capable of dropping the first flare in 10-15 minutes. If cooperation does not provide this level of support, then request to MACV should be made to direct that it be provided.

(9) Control of Helicopters. Positive control of helicopters can only be assured by proper briefing of all pilots. Pilots who have not flown in the area and especially those from DANANG and CHU LAI must be briefed on procedures and restrictions in the combat area. Permission to land must be obtained from the DASC and the area for landing must be clearly delineated and ~~used~~.

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(10) The term "days of supply" for ammunition and fuel becomes meaningless when the average daily expenditure exceeds the DOS by two or three times. Everyone concerned must be kept informed of the number of items on hand, the number of items expended, and the number of items being brought into the dumps. Dump levels must be predicated on expenditures instead of on a theoretical level stated in terms of DOS.

(11) Arc Light Strike. The Arc Light Strike is an effective tactical weapon, however, it must be properly fitted into the ground commander's scheme of maneuver. Arc Lights must be in response to his request, not forced upon him. Time space factors of troop movements are controlling factors in determining whether an Arc Light is desired. In mountainous, jungle terrain it may take a unit three days to move the 3,000 meters safety distance, making the Arc Light an obstacle rather than a benefit to the ground forces.

(12) Marking of LZ's. Helicopter landing zones must be clearly marked with panels by all units and manned by personnel who have been trained to direct the pilot to a landing.

b. Most of the operating area was uninhabited, resulting in very little civil affairs activities. The Psychological Warfare Operations are discussed in detail in enclosure (9).

15. Recommendations.

There are a number of recommendations included in the enclosures. A majority of them can, and will be acted on by this headquarters. Of particular note are those included in enclosure (8)(Air Operations).

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1/RVO/mg
3100
31 Aug 1966

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CO 1stBn, 1stMar ltr 3/JPT/jmb 3100 of 6Aug66

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Marines
To: Commanding Officer, 4th Marines

Subj: Combat After-Action Report 8-66

1. Readdressed and forwarded.

J. J. KEEFE
By direction

4TH MARINE BRIGADE
660421
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ENCLOSURE (1)

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1st BN, 1st MAR LOG 0040-66

HEADQUARTERS
1st Battalion, 1st Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein) FMF
San Francisco, California, 96602

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3/JPT/jmb
3100
Ser No.
6 August 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, Task Force Delta
Via: Commanding Officer, 1st Marines

Subj: Combat After-Action Report 8-66

Ref: (a) Maps VIETNAM, 1:50,000 AMS Series 1701, Sheets 6461 III,
6460 IV, 6361 I and 6361 II
(b) CG, 3rd MarDiv Msg 122310Z July 1966

Encl: (1) Operations Overlay - *NF 22 Aug 67*
(2) Sketch of NVA Campsite, *in 4a b*
(3) Stream Overlay
(4) Trail Overlay
(5) Sequence of Events

1. Code Name: HASTINGS.
2. Dates of Operation: 161045H - 310830H July 1966
3. Location: QUANG TRI Province. See Enclosure (1).
4. Control or Command Headquarters: Task Force Delta
5. Task Organization:

1st Bn, 1st Marines (-)

Lt Col BELL

Command Group Alfa
LnTm, Btry A, 1st Bn, 11th Marines

1ST MARINES SEC CONTROL NO. 492-66

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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Company B

Capt LANE

Co B
 FO Tm, Btry A, 1st Bn, 11th Marines
 FO Tm, 81mm Mort Plat, H&S Co
 Det Comm Plat, H&S Co
 Det Med Plat, H&S Co

Company C

Capt MARSH

Co C
 FO Tm, Btry A, 1st Bn, 11th Marines
 FO Tm, 81mm Mort Plat, H&S Co
 Det, Comm Plat, H&S Co
 Det, Med Plat, H&S Co

Company D

Capt MORIARTY

Co D
 FO Tm, Btry A, 1st Bn, 11th Marines
 FO Tm, 81mm Mort Plat, H&S Co
 Det, Comm Plat, H&S Co
 Det, Med Plat, H&S Co

81mm Mort Plat (-), H&S Co

SSgt DAVIS

6. Supporting Forces. Reference (b).

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7. INTELLIGENCE. Operation HASTINGS was a search and destroy operation in the CAM LO District of QUAN TRI Province. Prior intelligence indicated that elements of the 324-B North Vietnamese Division, with an estimated strength of 8,000 to 10,000 men, had infiltrated across the demilitarized zone into South Vietnam during the month of June, and was presently located in a staging area in the piedmont and jungle covered mountains west of CAM LO village. Information received from several North Vietnamese ralliers revealed that the 324-B Division had the mission of liberating QUAN TRI Province and defeating the First ARVN Division during the coming monsoon season. Further information received from these ralliers stated that the 324-B Division was made up of three (3) infantry regiments, the 90th, 308th, and 312th, plus one (1) 120mm mortar company, one (1) 82mm recoilless company, one (1) engineer battalion, one (1) 12.7mm anti-aircraft company, one (1) signal company and one (1) medical company. Each infantry regiment consisted of three (3) infantry battalions. Weapons reported to be used by each infantry battalion were as follows: 82mm, 81mm and 60mm mortars, 57mm recoilless rifles, B-40 rockets, heavy and light machine guns and assorted automatic and semi-automatic small arms weapons.

a. Significant Events.

(1) At 201230H, Company D received a heavy volume of automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire from an estimated two (2) NVA platoons, well entrenched on both sides of a stream vicinity coordinates (YD 044626), (YD 050626), and (YD 049629). Fire was received from at least two (2) light machine guns and one (1) heavy machine gun hidden in well camouflaged positions on either side of the stream. Initial enemy fire resulted in one (1) USMC KIA and two (2) USMC WIA (Evacuated). Artillery and air strikes were called on enemy positions with good coverage of target area.

(2) At 201645H, Company D moved through the enemy positions noted above and found four (4) NVA KBGF. A search of the area revealed approximately 300 one-man covered fighting holes, two (2) machine gun bunkers, one (1) ChiCom semi-automatic carbine, two (2) ChiCom submachine guns, two (2) ChiCom grenades, two (2) NVA packs w/accessories, three (3) NVA gas masks, 250 rounds of Russian 7.62mm intermediate ammunition, five (5) magazines for ChiCom submachine gun, one (1) drum-type magazine for ChiCom 7.62mm light machine gun, and one (1) map case containing personal letters and the Communist Propaganda Order for QUAN TRI Province, classified SECRET.

(3) At 202400H, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines Command Post located in landing zone CROW (YD 050620) received approximately 50 rounds of 81mm mortar fire from NVA position believed located vicinity (YD 035620), resulting in three (3) USMC WIA (Evacuated). Artillery mission called on suspected enemy mortar position with undetermined results.

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(4) At 210930H, Company D found an abandoned NVA camp site at coordinates (YD 045628). A search of the camp site revealed eight (8) fresh NVA graves, 1000 rounds of Russian 7.62mm intermediate ammunition, two (2) NVA packs w/accessories, one (1) 7.62mm heavy machine gun barrel, and 10, one-man covered fighting holes. Believe this camp site to be a squad-sized bivouac area. Bodies believed killed during fire fight with Company D on 20 July. Camp site appeared to have been hastily abandoned.

(5) At 211100H, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines Command Group discovered a large abandoned NVA bivouac area at coordinates (YD 049629). Believe this area to be possible battalion command post. Search of the area revealed 150, one-man covered fighting holes, eight (8) cooking shelters, four (4) fresh NVA graves, six (6) ChiCom grenades, 100 rounds Russian 7.62mm intermediate ammunition, six (6) pick axes, four (4) entrenching tools, 12 ponchos, 10 mosquito nets and numerous personal items littered throughout the area. All four (4) NVA bodies are believed to have been killed by Company D during fire fight on 20 July. The entire bivouac area appeared to be hastily abandoned.

(6) At 230930H, Company C and D engaged an estimated 200 man NVA force well entrenched on ridge lines located (YD 030633) and (YD 027630). Both companies received a heavy volume of automatic, semi-automatic and rocket fire. Friendly units returned fire with small arms, M-79 and 60mm mortar fire. Artillery and armed helicopter missions were called on enemy positions with excellent coverage of target. A search of the enemy positions revealed eight (8) NVA KBGF and six (6) NVA KBMTOWS. Many blood trails were found leading west and southwest from the enemy positions and it is believed that the NVA force sustained 30 WIA (Probable). Also found were: four (4) ChiCom semi-automatic carbines, two (2) ChiCom submachine guns, one (1) B-40 rocket round, six (6) B-40 rocket launchers, eight (8), U. S. M-26 fragmentation grenades, 15 ChiCom grenades, 1,200 rounds Russian 7.62mm linked ammunition, five (5) drum-type magazines for ChiCom 7.62mm light machine gun, two (2) NVA packs w/accessories and assorted personal equipment. Two (2) NVA WIA were captured and forwarded to ITT for interrogation. U. S. casualties were: two (2) USMC KIA, two (2) USN KIA, 19 USMC WIA (Evacuated).

(7) At 231650H, Company D located at (YD 033630) received 200-300 rounds of small arms fire from an estimated 15-20 NVA located at (YD 028628) resulting in two (2) USMC WIA (Evacuated). Returned fire with small arms and called artillery fire on enemy position. A search of the enemy position revealed several blood trails and three (3) fresh NVA battle dressings. Three (3) NVA WIA (Probable).

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(8) At 241255H, Company D patrol found the body of one (1) NVA KBGF at coordinates (YD 027631). This was same area Company D engaged NVA force on 23 July. Also found were one (1) ChiCom Submachine gun w/2 magazines, one (1) wheeled carriage w/mount for heavy 7.62mm machine gun, one (1) 7.62mm barrel for heavy machine gun, one (1) NVA pack w/accessories, four (4) ChiCom grenades and 1,000 rounds of Russian 7.62mm linked ammunition.

(9) At 241330H, Company B patrol conducted search of NVA camp site located (YD 046630). The following NVA equipment was found: one (1) bag of documents, five (5) cans of 7.62mm linked ammunition (3,000 rounds), one (1) box of mortar fuses (5 fuses), one (1) ammunition pouch, two (2) blocks ChiCom TNT, three (3) ChiCom grenades, two (2) knives, two (2) entrenching tools and assorted medical and personal equipment.

(10) At 241750H, Company C patrol found two (2) NVA KBGF at coordinates (YD 031633). Both bodies were wearing khaki uniforms and were buried under leaves. No weapons or equipment were found with the bodies. One (1) right hand was found not belonging to either dead NVA. Two (2) NVA KBGF, one (1) NVA WIA (probable).

(11) At 241830H, Company D patrol found the body of one (1) NVA KBGF at coordinates (YD 060633). No weapons or equipment were found with body.

(12) At 251455H, Company B located at (YD 043637) received 12 rounds of 81mm mortar fire from NVA mortar position believed located at (YD 025047). Air and artillery fire mission called on suspected NVA position with good coverage of target. No USMC casualties.

(13) At 260820H, Company C found four (4) Russian 82mm rocket rounds w/case, one (1) poncho, one (1) cartridge belt, three (3) ammunition pouches and eight (8) ChiCom grenades hidden in brush at coordinates (YD 050625).

(14) At 271030H, Battalion S-2 Scout patrol apprehended one (1) NVA soldier at coordinates (YD 102600). NVA soldier was unarmed and had a safe conduct pass in his possession. NVA brought to Battalion Command Post for initial interrogation and was sent to IIT for further interrogation.

(15) At 291405H, Company D patrol apprehended two (2) NVA soldiers on trail at coordinates (YD 102600). Both NVA soldiers carried ChiCom Submachine guns, packs and ChiCom grenades, but readily turned over their weapons to the Marine patrol. Both soldiers had safe conduct passes in their possession. Both were brought to the Battalion Command Post for initial interrogation and were turned over to IIT for further interrogation.

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b. NVA Positions Encountered. During Operation HASTINGS, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines encountered four (4) North Vietnamese positions which together could accommodate a battalion. Each of these positions were located along streams for easy access to water. All had excellent cover from aerial observation because of the jungle canopy. Cooking ovens were dug into stream banks. Each area contained numerous one-man fighting positions covered with logs and dirt for protection from artillery and/or aerial bombardment. Each position encountered is shown in Enclosure (2), figures (1) through (4).

c. Streams and Trails.

(1) Streams. Several streams were found to exist which were not indicated on the maps used by friendly forces. Each stream encountered has been noted and is indicated on enclosure (3).

(2) Trails. Only one (1) well used trail was found to be in the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines area of operation, which was not indicated on maps used by friendly forces. Numerous infrequently used paths were found and several new trails were cut by Marines during this operation. The one (1) well used trail found during this operation is believed to be a main infiltration route used by the NVA to enter large valley which lies just west of CAM LO village. This trail and several new trails cut by Marines are shown in enclosure (4).

d. Uniforms and Equipment.

(1) Uniforms. All NVA soldiers encountered by 1st Battalion, 1st Marines during Operation HASTINGS were either khaki or green uniforms. Most uniforms appeared to be new. Nearly all NVA soldiers wore soft jungle covers with camouflaged material sewed on them. Most of the NVA soldiers wore "Ho Chi Minh" sandals although some canvas boots with rubber soles were noted.

(2) Equipment. All NVA soldiers appeared to be well equipped with fairly new web gear and packs. Nearly every NVA soldier carried a new first aid packet, mosquito netting, poncho, mess gear, eating utensils, and home-made gas mask. These gas masks were made from plastic material sewed in the shape of a hood with draw strings around the neck. Eyes were cut out of the hood and clear plastic disks sewed in their place. Inside each mask was thick cotton nose mask resembling a doctors surgical mask. This apparently was worn in conjunction with the plastic hood. It was also noted that every soldier carried a home-made wooden circular disk approximately seven (7) inches in diameter. A line was attached to this disk and this disk was secured to each soldier's pack. Branches and large leaves were then attached to these wooden disks for camouflage purposes.

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e. Weapons and Ordnance.

(1) Weapons. The NVA soldiers encountered during Operation HASTINGS were well armed with the newest of ChiCom small arms weapons. Primary emphasis was placed on lightweight automatic and semi-automatic weapons. Most frequently encountered weapons were the ChiCom semi-automatic carbine, Type 56 (Soviet SKS) and the ChiCom 7.62mm Submachine gun Type 56, (Soviet AK). Also used were the ChiCom 7.62mm Squad Light Machine gun, Type 56 (Soviet RPD), ChiCom 7.62mm Light Machine gun, Type 53 (Soviet DPM) and the ChiCom 7.62mm Heavy Machine gun, Type 53 (Soviet Goryunov M 1943). During Operation HASTINGS, six (6) B-40 rocket launchers were captured along with three (3) B-40 rocket rounds.

(2) Ordnance.

a. Grenades. Although eight (8) U. S. M-26 fragmentation grenades were captured, the primary grenade used by the NVA soldiers was the ChiCom Stick Hand Grenade. Each NVA soldier appeared to be armed with a minimum of four (4) ChiCom grenades. A total of 56 such grenades were captured during the operation.

b. Ammunition. The ChiCom 7.62mm cartridge and Russian 7.62mm intermediate cartridge were the only two types of ammunition encountered during the operation. Each NVA soldier was well supplied with these cartridges. It is estimated that each NVA soldier carried a minimum of 350-400 rounds of ammunition as his basic ammunition allowance.

f. Tactics Employed by the NVA. The tactics employed by the NVA against the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines during Operation HASTINGS consisted of a series of strong delaying actions designed to slow the advance of Marine units while covering the withdrawal of maximum number of NVA troops from the main battle area. The NVA made maximum use of high ground to cover draws and ravines to which Marine units were restricted because of the dense jungle vegetation. Each defensive position consisted of a series of mutually supporting, well camouflaged, covered fighting holes centered around two (2) or more machine guns. Each delaying action encountered appeared to be well coordinated. Heavy, accurate automatic and semi-automatic small arms fire was suddenly brought to bear on advancing Marine units. As soon as Marine units regained fire superiority or employed supporting arms against the NVA positions, the enemy broke contact and withdrew along prearranged routes of withdrawal, generally in a west or southwesterly direction. NVA mortar fire appeared to be thoroughly registered throughout the area because of the accuracy of first rounds on target and fire for effect on target.

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g. Morale and Discipline. The morale and discipline of the NVA soldiers encountered by the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines during Operation HASTINGS underwent a steady decline as the operation progressed. This trend was contributed to the massive employment of supporting arms and the strong, aggressive actions and patrolling carried out by Marine units. NVA units elected to fight only when the terrain or numerical superiority in manpower were in their favor. Often, NVA units broke contact and hastily retreated, leaving dead and wounded behind. On several occasions, the NVA actually dropped their weapons and equipment and fled when Marine units gained fire superiority. Information received from NVA ralliers and prisoners indicated that approximately 50% of the NVA soldiers encountered were recent draftees with little military training, and who did not want to fight in South Vietnam. Another 25% did volunteer to come to South Vietnam and the remaining 25% had no preference. Additionally, up to 60% of the personnel of many units were suffering from malaria. The large number of casualties inflicted by Marine air and artillery in rear areas definitely produced terrorizing psychological effect on the enemy. All these factors contributed to the almost complete collapse and breakdown of the NVA morale and discipline towards the end of Operation HASTINGS.

h. The complete results of Operation HASTINGS were as follows:

(1) NVA KBGF - (31) confirmed

NVA KBUSMCA - (6) confirmed

NVA KDMTOWS - (30) probable

NVA WIABGF - (3) confirmed

NVA WIABGF - (30) probable

NVA WIDMTOWS - (2) probable

NVA POW - (5) captured

(2) Weapons captured:

(a) ChiCom 7.62mm Submachine gun, Type 56 (Soviet AK) - (7)

(b) ChiCom 7.62mm Semi-automatic carbine, Type 56 (Soviet SKS) - (5)

(c) ChiCom B-40 Rocket Launchers - (6)

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(3) Equipment and ordnance.

- (a) NVA Gas masks - (6)
- (b) CHICOM Stick Hand Grenades - (56)
- (c) U.S. M-26 Fragmentation Grenades - (8)
- (d) B-40 Rocket rounds - (3)
- (e) NVA packs w/accessories - (10)
- (f) Ponchos - (15)
- (g) Mosquito Netting - (10)
- (h) NVA cartridge belts - (6)
- (i) NVA canteens - (13)
- (j) NVA ammunition pouches - (24)
- (k) NVA first aid packets - (10)
- (l) Wheeled carriage w/mount for CHICOM 7.62mm Heavy Machinegun, Type 53 (Soviet Goryunov M1934) - (1)
- (m) Spare barrels for above Heavy Machinegun - (3)
- (n) 82mm Russian rocket rounds w/case - (4)
- (o) NVA pick axes - (14)
- (p) NVA entrenching tools - (6)
- (q) CHICOM 7.62mm linked ammunition - (5,000 rounds)
- (r) Russian 7.62mm intermediate ammunition - (2,500 rounds)
- (s) CHICOM TNT - (3 blocks)
- (t) Magazines for CHICOM Submachinegun - (9)
- (u) Drum-type magazines for CHICOM Light Machinegun - (13)
- (v) Map Case w/SECRET NVA documents - (1)

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- (w) Carrying case (canvas) for heavy machinegun - (1)
- (x) Machette - (5)
- (y) Knives - (2)
- (z) Box for mortar fuses (5 fuses) - (1)
- (4) Facilities destroyed
 - (a) Structures - (14)
 - (b) Covered fighting holes - (100)
 - (c) Canvas - (1)
- (5) Miscellaneous
 - (a) Medical supplies - (25 lbs)
 - (b) Food - (250 lbs)
 - (c) Documents - (10 lbs)

8. Mission: 1st Bn, 1st Marines (-), upon arrival at DONG HA Airfield was assigned as Task Force Delta Reserve and was to be prepared to execute operations as assigned.

9. Concept of Operations: 1st Bn (-), consisting of a Command Group and two rifle companies landed at DONG HA Airfield and occupied defensive positions, prepared to commence operations as assigned by Task Force Delta

10. Execution: See Enclosures (2) through (5).

11. Results

- a. Friendly casualties: KIA - 7
WIA - 28
- b. Enemy casualties: KIA - 37
KIA (Prob) - 30
WIA - 3
WIA (Prob) - 32
POW - 5
- c. Friendly Material Losses: None
- d. Enemy Material Losses: See Paragraph 7

12. Administrative Matters: No significant problems encountered.

13. Special Techniques: None

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14. Commanders Analysis:

- a. The rapid response of assaulting elements on the enemy firing positions contributed significantly to the destruction of NVA forces. This response coupled with air and artillery fire power virtually enabled the NVA units ability to defend their positions.
- b. Artillery fire support, although highly effective, had difficulty penetrating the thick canopy within the jungle. It was not until the canopy was destroyed, that the total destructive power of the artillery became thoroughly effective.
- c. Communications was and remains a severe problem when operating in dense jungle or rugged mountainous area. This factor on occasion seriously hampered the control aspects of the operation.
- d. Psychological Warfare Operations although productive, could have been exploited more fully. Leaflet drops should have been continuous throughout the operation, rather than occasional.
- e. Skin infections were encountered during the operation. A total of 130 skin infections were treated by Company Corpsman. Of this total, five (5) men were evacuated because of Lymphangitis and Axillary Entites of the arms. The diseases treated consisted of tropical ulcers, impetigo and secondary infections of lacerations and abrasions. It was noted that various medical supplies were not in stock at the LSA. If antibiotics, skin ointments, Q-Tips, and gauze bandages were available, proper treatment could have been given and the skin infections treated early.
- f. Operation HASTINGS clearly demonstrated the versatility of the helicopter in a rapid moving situation. The Corps' doctrine of vertical envelopment continues to prove itself in the dense jungle and mountainous terrain of Vietnam.

15. Recommendations

- a. It is strongly recommended that the AN/PRC-6 and AN/PRC-10 radios be replaced with the AN/PRC-25. The present radio's are inadequate for operations in jungle and mountainous terrain. It is also recommended that a communications "stock pile" be established within the LSA, so as to expedite replacements if required.
- b. Within the LSA there is also a need for spare crew-served weapons, that can be immediately exchanged for un-serviceable or damaged weapons. Particular emphasis should be given to the M-60 machinegun replacements, and spare parts.

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- c. The current machette within the Marine Corps is not adequate in the jungles of Vietnam. The 1st Battalion purchased local hand axes which proved quite useful. The "Woodsmans Pal" product issued to helicopter pilots is also ideal and quite useful when preparing landing sites. It is recommended that a new and heavier machette similar in design to the "Woodsmans Pal" product (Ser No. 681-MIL-S-S642C) be issued to all infantry companies.
- d. During the operation several occasions arose when helicopters were unable to land due to the thick canopy or dense jungle brush. It is recommended that the helicopters be equipped with baskets and lowering cables when operating in such an environment. This would expedite the removal of casualties and aid in the resupply of units which are unable to move to or have no landing zone.
- e. The present water can, both plastic and metal, imposes an unnecessary burden on the commander. This burden creates a logistical problem and has also delayed tactical operations. The cans, by their very nature, require commanders to return them for re-use. This requirement could be eliminated by the use of a disposable container. Such containers would allow the commanders to move immediately and not wait for transportation to remove empty cans. It is strongly recommended that a disposable water container be developed that would withstand rugged combat conditions. This would facilitate resupply without landing sites, by dropping the containers from hovering helicopters.
- f. As mentioned above, Artillery needs a fuze which will allow sufficient delay when firing into the thick canopy of the jungle. It is recommended that a study be made to determine what time delay would be best suited for this type of environment.
- g. Leaflet drops and aircraft with speakers should be employed daily. It is recommended that daily leaflet drops be conducted in order to saturate the enemy forces. During Operation HASTINGS prisoners reported searching the jungles for "Safe Conduct Passes". Saturation of the objective area with Psy/War leaflets will increase the number of enemy captured.
- h. Map reading in jungle environment poses difficulty to small unit leaders. It is recommended that greater emphasis be placed on map reading down to and including fire team leaders, in all military schools within the Marine Corps.
- i. Finally, it is recommended that the battalion medical officer remain in the LSA and assist the medical personnel from the Medical Battalion. This would ease the demands for surgeons and help in the emergency treatment of battle casualties. During Operation HASTINGS this proved much more effective than having the Medical Officer at the Battalion CP. This is based upon the fact that casualties were evacuated from the companies directly to the LSA.

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- Cooking shelters
- Covered fighting holes (150)
- Fresh NVA graves discovered

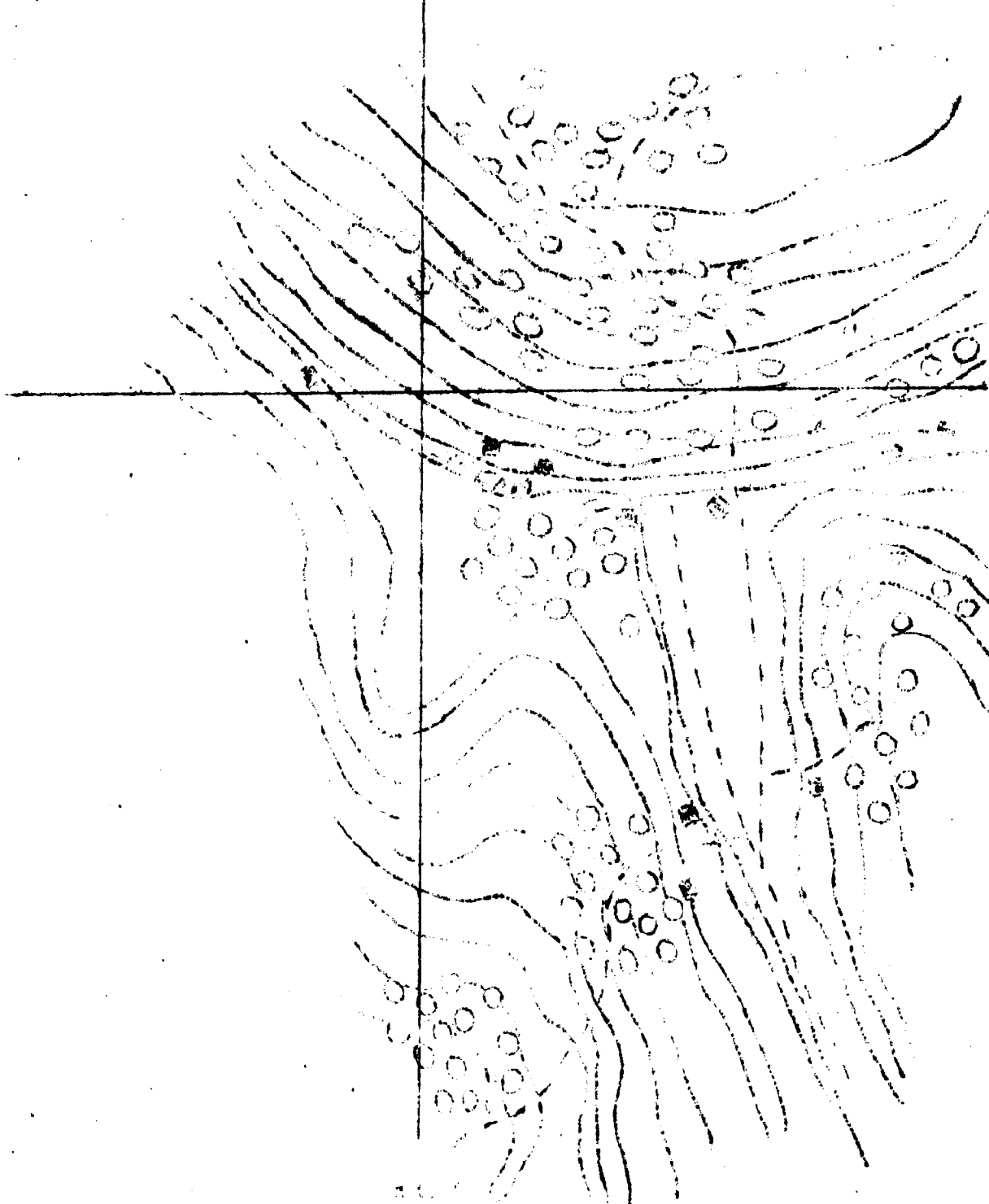
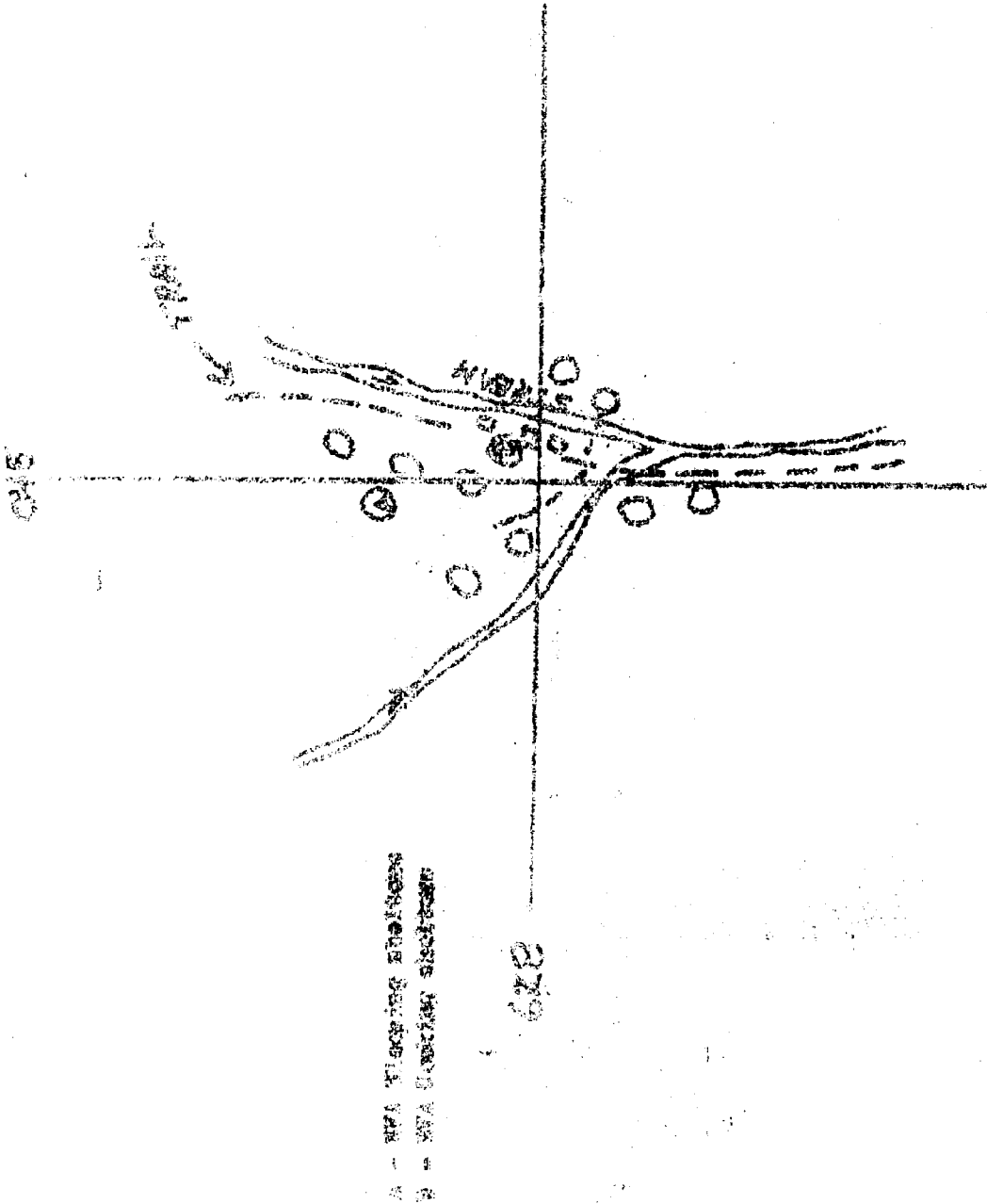


Figure 1 NVA BATTALION CP CAMP SITE (NOT DRAWN TO SCALE)

ENCLOSURE (2)

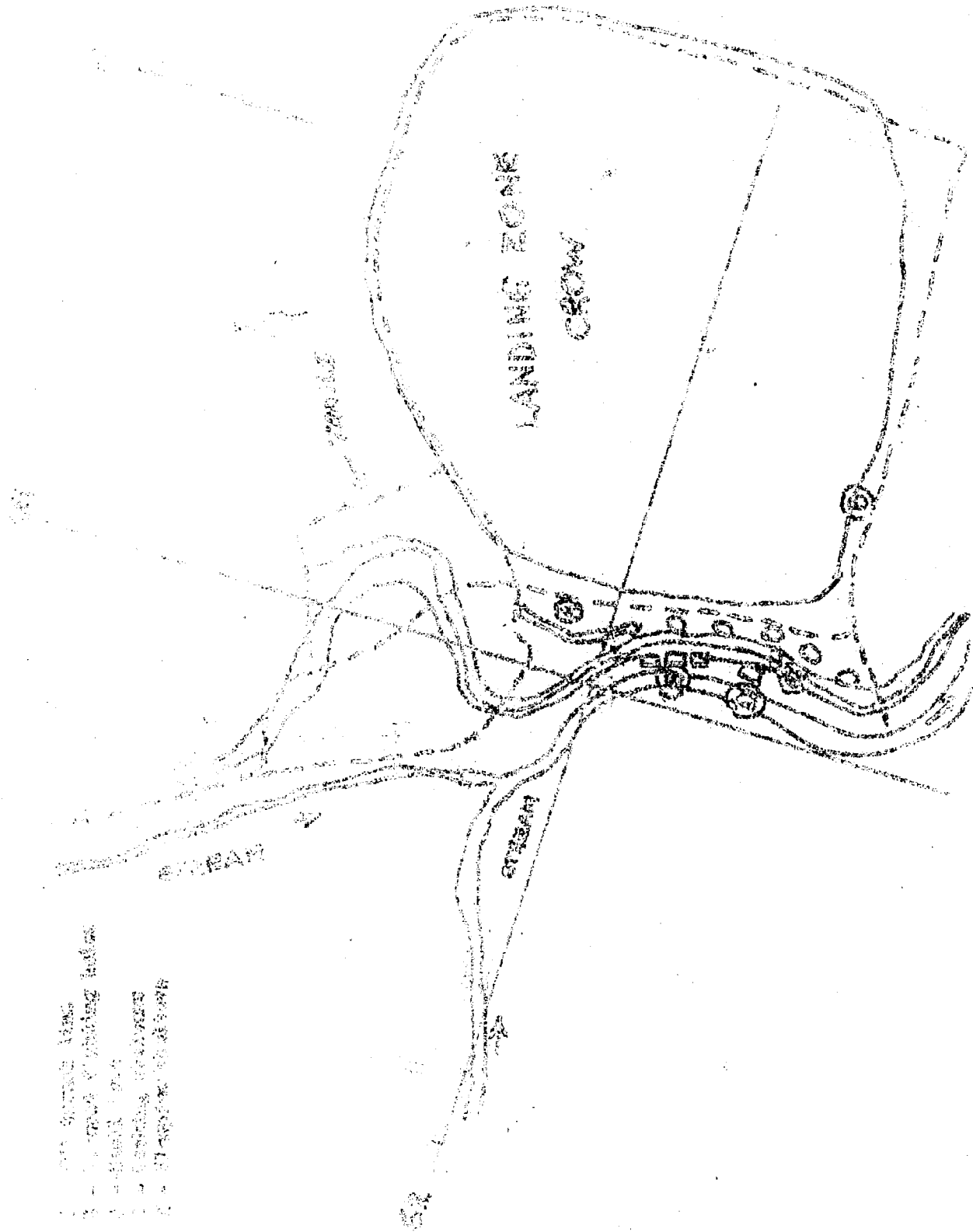
ENCLOSURE (1)



ENCLOSURE (2)

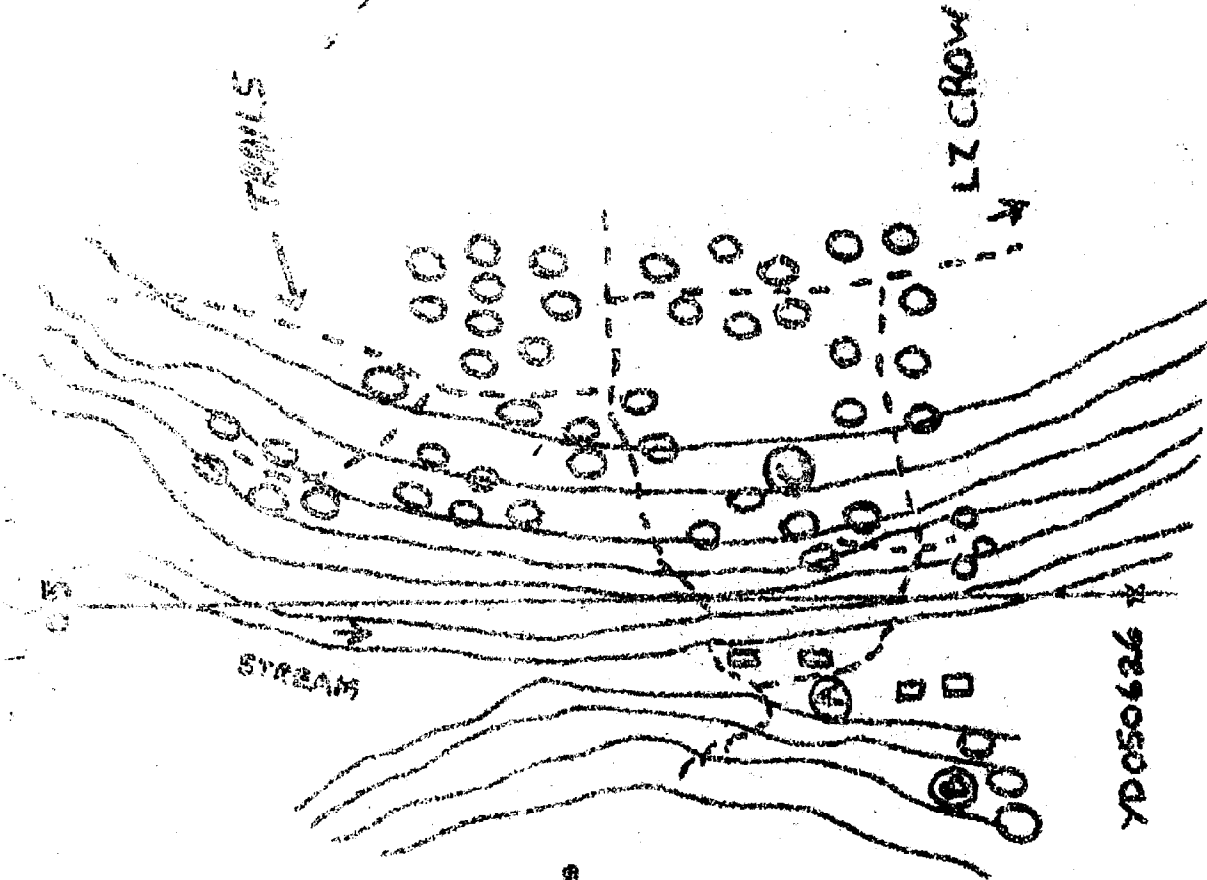
Figure 2. WVA TRUCKING STATION CAMP SITE (NOT DRAWN TO SCALE)

ENCLOSURE (1)



ENCLOSURE (2)

ENCLOSURE (17)



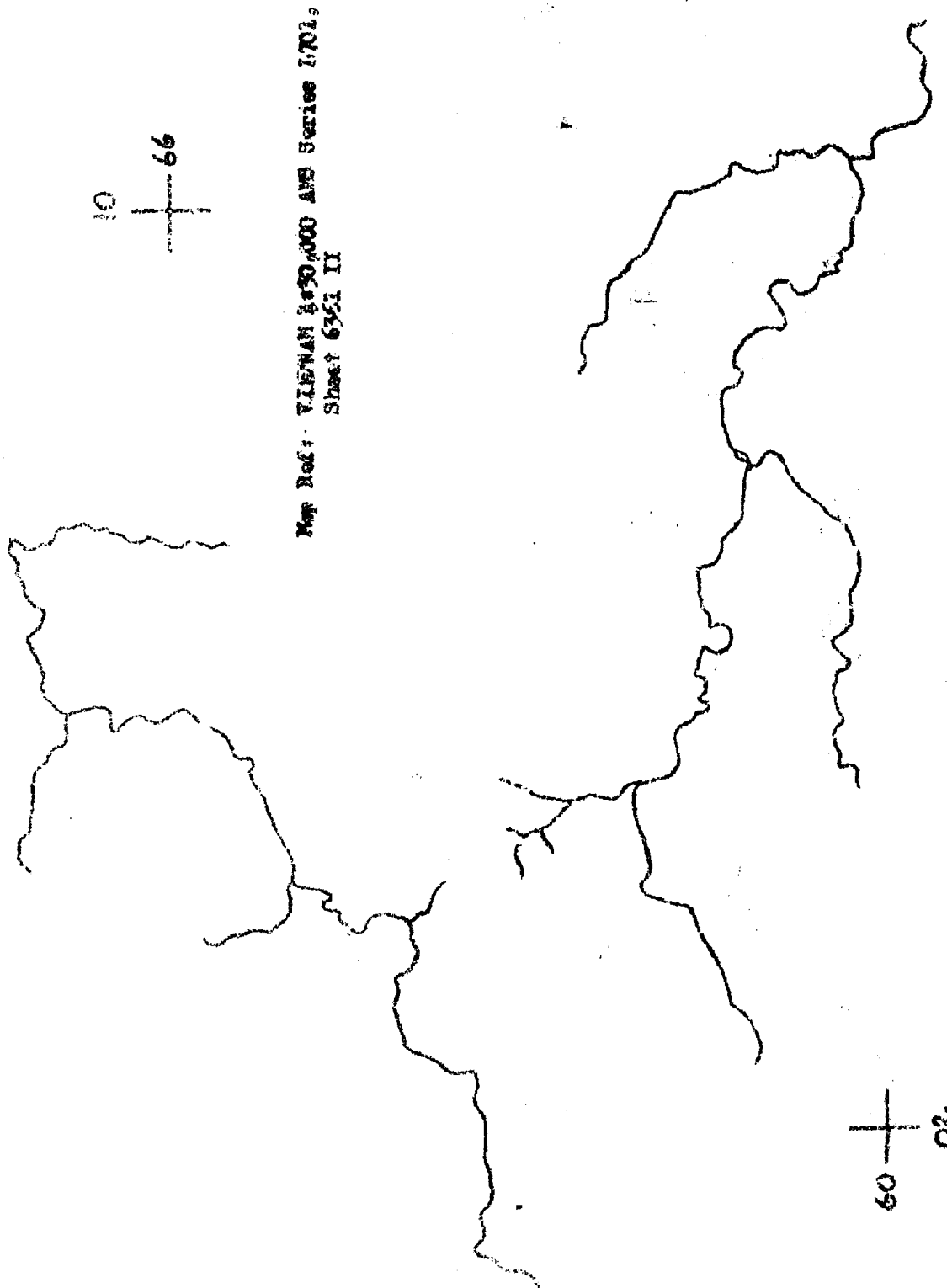
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- 1 - WPA Working site here and across
- 2 - 43 covered fighting holes
- 3 - 120 covered fighting holes

Figure 4. WPA COMPANY-SIZE CAMP SITE (NOT DRAWN TO SCALE)

ENCLOSURE (2)

ENCLOSURE (1)



Map Ref: VIETNAM 1:50,000 AMS Series 1701,
Sheet 6351 II

ENCLOSURE (3)

Stream Overlay

ENCLOSURE (1)

10
+
66

Well used NVA trail
New trails out by USMC during Operation HASTINGS

Map Ref: VIETNAM 1:50,000 AND Series LTOL
Sheet 6361 II



61
+
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ENCLOSURE (1)

ENCLOSURE (4)

Trail Overlay

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SEQUENCE OF EVENTS

1. 16 July - 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (-), commenced movement from the rear command post at 1045H, by motor march, to the DANANG Airfield. At 1145H the Command Group arrived at the airfield, and at 1300H embarked on C-130 transport aircraft for the airfield at DONG HA. At 1320H 1st Battalion, 1st Marines came under Operational Control of Task Force Delta upon arrival at the airfield at DONG HA. At 1430H Company D arrived, followed by Company C at 1600H. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines administratively bivouaced at the airfield for the night.
2. 17 July - At 0020H Frag Order 6-66 was received designating 1st Battalion, 1st Marines as Task Force Delta Reserve. At 2220H Frag Order 7-66 was received. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines continued the mission as task force reserve. Companies remained in administrative bivouac.
3. 18 July - Frag Order 10-66 was received at 2320H. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, continued assigned mission as task force reserve. Positions of rifle companies remained the same.
4. 19 July - 1st Battalion, 1st Marines continued mission as task force reserve. Disposition of all units remained the same.
5. 20 July - At 0020H Frag Order 11-66 was received. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was assigned the mission of clearing the area of operations in accordance with Task Force Delta Operations Overlay (See enclosure (1)). At 0915H, Company B, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines arrived at DONG HA Airfield, and came under the operational control of 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. At 1030H the first elements of 1st Battalion, 1st Marines boarded UH-34D aircraft for lift to Landing Zone Crow at (YD 054620). At 1040H the first elements were airborne. At 1110H the first elements touched down in the predesignated landing zone. Company D moved out in the attack, sweeping through the low ground in center of sector. The axis of advance was in a westerly direction. Company B moved out on the right flank to secure the high ground in that area. Company C advanced on the left to secure high ground in its area of responsibility. At 1125H, Company D had advanced to the vicinity of (YD 051624). At this point they located the bodies of 4 NVA killed in previous action. Continuing the advance, at (YD 049623) Company D came under heavy machinegun fire from well prepared positions at (YD 047625). Preliminary indications were that fire was coming from two machineguns, covering both sides of the draw at given coordinates. Two USMC WIA's were sustained in the initial burst of fire. An air strike was called on the NVA position utilizing fixed wing attack aircraft. The area of contact was subjected to heavy bombing. During the air strike Company B continued its advance on the right flank. At (YD 053621) a booby trapped 60mm mortar round was detonated, resulting in (1) USMC KIA, and 1 USN WIA. Upon completion of airstrikes Company D continued the attack. At (YD 047625) Company D came under a heavy volume of enemy fire from at least 5 well prepared, mutually-supportive positions at

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(YD 045625). One (1) USMC KIA was sustained in the initial burst of fire. At this time it was estimated there was at least (1) .50 caliber machinegun and assorted small caliber automatic weapons firing on the advance units. The company immediately returned a heavy volume of small arms fire on the NVA position killing two. When enemy fire intensified air strikes and artillery missions were called. Supporting fires were controlled by an aerial observer on station. Fixed wing aircraft utilized napalm and heavy ordnance in attacking enemy positions making air strikes within 50 meters of friendly positions. As the NVA began to withdraw, Company D delivered a heavy volume of well-aimed fire on the withdrawing forces. An estimate of the enemy force was subsequently revised to two, and possibly three. Well dug in platoons equipped with a large number of automatic weapons. Company D continued the attack. While moving through the area, (4) NVA bodies were found along with (3) automatic rifles. Companies B and C continued the advance and secured the high ground on the right and left flanks. At 1645H all companies had reached their objectives and established defensive positions for the night. The Battalion CP was located at (YD 051620). Company B CP at (YD 056625), Company C CP at (YD 042626) and Company D CP at (YD 049627). At 1755H the 81mm Mortar Platoon (-) was lifted into the Battalion CP to provide additional supporting arms capability. As darkness approached all units dug in. At 2400H the Battalion CP came under NVA mortar fire. An estimated (50) rounds impacted in the CP area. Three Marines were wounded during the attack. The enemy mortar positions were believed to have been in the vicinity of grid square (YD 0263). An artillery fire mission was called on the suspected positions.

6. 21 July - After close coordination had been effected with adjacent units the attack was resumed. At 0830H the 81mm mortar sections were helo lifted back to the airfield at DONG HA. At 0845H all units were on the move. At 0930H Company D located an NVA supply cache. A total of 1000 rounds of Russian 7.62 ammunition, 2 packs, and the barrel for a 7.62 Russian manufactured machinegun were located. At 1020H, elements of Company D at (YD 045631) located 8 NVA bodies in shallow graves. The NVA soldiers had been killed by small arms fire approximately 24 hours previously in the initial contact by Company D, the bodies were located in a bivouac area which was comprised of a large number of covered positions. It was estimated that the enemy force which had occupied the area was of battalion size. The large amounts of personal gear and equipment left in the positions indicated that the NVA had withdrawn under pressure. At 1130H the Battalion Command Group, following in trace of Company D located 4 additional NVA bodies, hastily concealed at (YD 046630). The NVA soldiers had been killed by small arms fire during the previous 24-36 hours. Enemy casualties were attributed to the Company D fire fight. At 1410H a Frag Order designating the limits of advance and assigning defensive area was issued by Task Force Delta.

ENCLOSURE (5)

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The battalion command post was established at (YD 040633). Company B moved to position from (YD 047635) to (YD 040637). Company C commenced movement to assigned positions, extending from (YD 038631) to (YD 040637). Company D extended its force, occupying an area from (YD 038631) to (YD 047635). At 1510H Company D dispatched a platoon (Rein) patrol to search out the major valley extending to the west. At 2305H Frag Order 12-66 was received from Task Force Delta Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was instructed to conduct search and destroy operations in the assigned area of responsibility. In addition, the battalion was to establish a blocking force from (YD 028640) to (YD 040640); to support operations of 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines.

7. 22 July - At 0600H Company C moved from its night position to the designated blocking positions. Patrols conducted deliberate searches of all draws and ravines for enemy personnel. Surveillance was maintained along the ridgelines for possible NVA bivouac sites and/or arms and equipment caches. At 1328H Company C reached its objective area and began deploying its forces in blocking positions. At 1530H Company M, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, reported heavy contact with an estimated NVA company. It was believed portions of the NVA forces were moving toward 1st Battalion, 1st Marines area of responsibility. Elements of Company C moved to an alternate blocking position from (YD 025634) to (YD 025631), in an attempt to exploit 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines contact. By nightfall all patrols had returned to their Company positions. No enemy contact had been made. Local security and ambushes on likely avenues of approach within the 1st Battalion area of responsibility were established by all companies. At 2235H Frag Order 13-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was directed to continue aggressive patrolling and ambushing in assigned area of operations. Verbal instructions received earlier in the day, amplified the basic order by designating grid square (YD 0263) as an area for extensive patrolling.
8. 23 July - At 0728H 1st Platoon, Company C began moving toward a new blocking position in grid square (YD 0363). At 0920H the platoon began to advance through a ravine at coordinates (YD 033631). At this point the platoon was taken under intense fire from what was believed to be 30 NVA troops well dug in at (YD 033636). The North Vietnamese had several heavy machineguns and a predominance of automatic rifles. The platoon took moderate casualties in the initial contact, but recovered and advanced to suitable firing positions and placed a large volume of automatic and semi-automatic weapons fire on the NVA positions. The Battalion Commander departed for the 1st Platoon, Company C position. At 1120H elements from Company D moved into the battle area and were immediately engaged by an enemy force estimated

ENCLOSURE (5)

5-3

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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to be in excess of 10 troops well dug in and in mutually supporting positions. Estimates of enemy forces occupying positions in the battle area were revised to 2 NVA Companies. Companies C and D continued to deliver heavy fire on the NVA positions and began to maneuver into assault positions. When NVA fire intensified, UH-1B helicopters on station were called and strafing and rocket runs were commenced. At about 1230H the combined attack of infantry and air forced the NVA to withdraw. An artillery mission was called at coordinates (YD 022627) to seal off the retreating NVA. At 1330H friendly units began to advance through the enemy positions. Company C located a total of 8 NVA bodies. Two wounded North Vietnamese were taken captive, and a total of 6 automatic rifles were found. Two of the weapons were Chinese made AK-44's. The other four were advanced type AK-47 assault rifles. In addition, six B-40 rocket launchers were captured along with (1) rocket round. A large number of CHICOM and U.S. grenades were found in the battle area. An aerial observer, flying a surveillance mission for artillery, counted (6) NVA bodies in one open area which had been subjected to heavy artillery fire. Company D searched enemy positions in their area of contact and found no bodies. However, 10 blood trails were found in the area, indicating that the NVA had removed their dead and wounded. During the contact, 1st Platoon, Company C, sustained 3 KIA and 13 WIA. Company D sustained 1 KIA and 5 WIA. Figures on enemy personnel losses were (14) KIA confirmed, 2 WIA captured, (30) KIA Probable and an additional (30) WIA Probable. Units involved in the action moved back to company positions for resupply of ammunition and other critical items. All dead and wounded were evacuated. At 1650H, 2nd Platoon, Company D received approximately (200-300) rounds of small arms fire from an estimated NVA squad at (YD 028628). Two Marines were wounded by this fire. An artillery fire mission was immediately called on the NVA position. Upon completion of the mission the area was swept and searched thoroughly. A pool of blood and (3) bloody battle dressings were found indicating that at least 3 NVA had been wounded or killed by the artillery fire. At 2122H Frag Order 14-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. All units were directed to continue operations in assigned zones. Night ambushes were employed by all companies on principle avenues of approach.

9. 24 July - 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, dispatched a total of four platoon reinforced patrols. Patrols from Companies C and D returned to the previous day's area of contact and conducted a detailed search. At 1245H Company D at (YD 027631) located the body of (1) NVA soldier killed during the contact on the 23rd. In addition, the patrol captured (1) AK-47 assault rifle, a wheeled carriage, armor shield, and receiver group from a 12.7mm CHICOM machinegun/anti-aircraft gun, (2) barrels for a CHICOM heavy 7.62mm machinegun, assorted packs, and 1000 rounds of 7.62mm linked ammunition of Russian manufacture. At 1330H, Company B

ENCLOSURE (5)

5-4 F

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located an NVA base camp at (YD 053625). Within this base camp were found assorted documents, 1000 rounds linked 7.62mm Russian ammunition, a box of mortar fuzes, and assorted packs and personal gear. At 1750H Company C patrol at (YD 031633), found 2 NVA bodies which had been hastily concealed in the brush. Both soldiers had died as a result of multiple small arms wounds. At 1800H Company D patrol, returning to the company position found 1 NVA KIA in a shallow trench, vicinity (YD 060633). The NVA soldier had died of a single gunshot wound.

10. 25 July - At 0025H, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was notified by Task Force Headquarters to have one company displace at first light to (YD 025626) to relieve Company M, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines, on security of a disabled helicopter. At 0100H Frag Order 15-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, was assigned the mission of either supporting operations of 3rd Bn, 5th Marines, or displacing all units to the original landing zone. At 0230H, Company C was assigned the mission of providing the security for the downed helicopter. At 0600H, Company C moved out to effect relief of Company M, 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines on security of the downed aircraft. At 0745H, relief was effected. At 0945H, a resupply helicopter, landing in Company B landing zone, struck a tree and sheared off its tail rotor. The aircraft went out of control and crashed. One crew member was killed and the other was injured. Both pilots were uninjured. The helicopter was badly damaged. Aircraft personnel were subsequently evacuated from the Company B position. At 1000H, Company C was relieved of security duties on the disabled aircraft when a recovery plane arrived and lifted it back to DONG HA. At 1240H orders were received from Task Force Delta Headquarters to execute portions of Frag Order 15-66, involving displacement of the battalion to landing zone Crow. At 1320H, Lt. General WALT visited 1st Battalion, 1st Marines CP. General WALT commended all personnel for a job well done. At 1330H orders were issued to prepare to displace to the landing zone. At 1500H Company B forming for movement at (YD 043637), received 12 rounds of incoming mortar fire from an NVA position believed to be in the vicinity of (YD 025647). An aerial observer was called on station, and an artillery mission was fired on the suspected mortar position. Company B sustained no casualties in the brief attack. At 1550H the damaged aircraft in Company B zone was burned in compliance with orders from Task Force Headquarters. At 1700H, all units were on the move towards the objective area. At 1600H, Company C was ordered to proceed to the recently vacated battalion CP located at (YD 043633); and to remain there for the night, displacing at first light to the landing zone. At 2000H, Companies B and D and the battalion Command Group had arrived at the landing zone and had established a night defensive perimeter. At 2245H Frag Order 16-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st

ENCLOSURE (5)

5-5

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ENCLOSURE 117

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Marines was ordered to effect a foot march to CAM LO and then proceed by vehicle to DONG HA.

11. 26 July - At 0755H, Company C arrived at the landing zone. At 0815H all units were assembled and prepared to move out. At 0900H, the battalion moved in a tactical column. Company D led, followed by the Battalion CP group, Company B, and Company C. At 1040H, the column arrived at the 3rd Battalion, 5th Marines Command Post. At this time a verbal modification to assigned orders was issued by the Task Force S-3, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was assigned an area of responsibility west of CAM LO. The Battalion CP was positioned at (YD 082604). Company B established defensive positions on the high ground to the south at (YD 085597), (080596) and (087598). Company C established a Company defensive position blocking the floor of the valley from (YD 072606) to (YD 073608). Company D occupied the northern high ground with a company defensive position at (YD 083618). By nightfall all companies had extended their perimeters and established squad-size ambushes. At 1945H Company C reported movement at (YD 067606). An artillery fire mission was called on the suspected enemy troop movement. At 2305H, Frag Order 17-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was assigned the mission of patrolling and maintaining control and surveillance of the valley and immediate high ground.
12. 27 July - Three reinforced platoon patrols were sent out during daylight hours. In addition, a patrol composed of the S-2 Scouts covered the area east of the battalion CP. At 1147H, the Scouts captured one NVA. The soldier had a safe conduct pass which he had picked up after a leaflet drop. The Battalion Commander requested an interrogation team be sent to the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines CP, from Task Force Headquarters. The team arrived by helicopter and the captive gave locations where he felt more deserters might be hiding. Subsequently, additional patrols were dispatched, but no prisoners were taken. At 2150H, Frag Order 18-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, was ordered to continue patrols and ambushes in the assigned area of operations.
13. 28 July - Five daylight patrols were sent out to cover the area of operations. No enemy contact was made. At 1645H General WESTMORELAND, COMUSMACV, visited 1st Battalion, 1st Marines CP. General WESTMORELAND was accompanied by Lt. General WALT, Major General KYLE and Brigadier General ENGLISH. LtCol BELL briefed the Generals on the battalion's activities during the operation. At 2227H Frag Order 19-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was ordered to continue patrolling and ambushing in assigned area.

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14. 29 July - Three reinforced platoon sized patrol were dispatched to cover the assigned area of operations. At 1030H, verbal instructions were received directing the battalion to move to CAM LO on 30 July 1966. At 1405H, 1st Platoon, Company D captured one NVA who approached the platoon position waving a white piece of cloth. The North Vietnamese soldier was carrying two magazines from an AK-47 assault rifle and four CHICOM grenades. At 1410H the 2nd Platoon, Company D, at (YD 084616), apprehended one NVA soldier. The soldier approached the patrol and voluntarily surrendered. He turned over to the Marines two AK-47 Assault rifles, with magazines. Both captives were brought to the battalion CP. ITT was flown in and conducted an immediate interrogation. One prisoner was determined to be a 2nd Lt in the Army of North Vietnam. Both were forwarded to Task Force Headquarters. At 1847H, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines Frag Order 30-66 was transmitted to all companies. The order established a march column for the movement to CAM LO. At 2220H, Frag Order 20-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters. 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was instructed to proceed overland to CAM LO, and from there proceed by truck to DONG HA. This confirmed verbal orders received at 1030H.
15. 30 July - At 0800H, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, moved out in tactical column for CAM LO. Company D was assigned the mission as the Advance Guard. The Command Group, 81mm mortar platoon (-), and Company B moved in trace of Company D. Company C moved as the Rear Guard. At 1115H, advance units, reaching CAM LO boarded trucks and proceeded to DONG HA. At 1340H, all units were assembled at DONG HA and administratively bivouacked for the night. At 2115H Frag Order 21-66 was received from Task Force Headquarters, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was ordered to board C-130 transport aircraft and proceed to DA NANG, OPCON to be shifted to 1st Marine Regiment upon departure.
16. 31 July - At 0830H, first elements departed for DANANG on C-130 aircraft and OPCON was shifted to 1st Marines. At 0900H, lead elements arrived at DANANG Airfield. At 0905H, lead elements boarded trucks for 1st Battalion, 1st Marines CP, arriving at 1000H. At 1330H, all elements had returned to 1st Battalion, 1st Marines CP.

ENCLOSURE (5)

5-7

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ENCLOSURE (11)

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HEADQUARTERS
2nd Battalion, 1st Marines
1st Marine Division (Rein), BME
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

4TH MARINES (REIN)
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5213
7 August 1966
SerNo: 00377-66

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 4th Marines

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report

Ref: (a) 2nd Bn, 1st Marines Operation, Order 215-66
(Operation HASTINGS)

1. Code Name: Operation HASTINGS: A combined arms multi-battalion search and destroy operation.

2. Dates of Operation: 071600H July-031200H August 1966.

3. Location: QUANG TRI Province.

4. Control/Command Headquarters:

Task Force DELTA BGen Lowell ENGLISH, USMC

2nd Battalion, 1st Marines LtCol R.T. HANIFIN, JR. USMC

1-8 July 1966

LtCol J.D. SPAULDING, USMC
9 July-3 August 1966

H&S Company

Capt A.J. SIBLEY, USMC

7-9 July 1966

1stLt R.P. KLINER, USMC

10 July-3 August 1966

Company "E"

Capt R.A. LARSEN, USMC

7-29 July 1966

1stLt C.P. LEVENDIS, USMC

30 July-3 August 1966

Company "F"

Capt J.R. SPENCE, USMC

7-22 July 1966

1stLt D.W. PICKERSGILL, USMC

23 July-3 August 1966

Company "G"

Capt R.E. LAVAN, JR., USMC

7-17 July 1966

1stLt C.C. KRULAK, USMC

18 July-3 August 1966

Hdqs 2/1stMarDiv

Log No. 377-66

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ENCLOSURE 121

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Company "H"

1st Lt J.R. GILES, USMC
7 July-3 August 19665. Task Organization:

2nd Bn, 1st Marines

H&S Company

Company "E"

Company "F"

Company "G"

Company "H"

"H" Btry, 1st Bn, 11 Mar

"H" Btry (Rein), 3rd Bn, 12 Mar

2nd Plat, B Co, 3rd AF Bn

Det, Recon Group "B"

Det, 3rd SP Bn

Det, 2nd Plat (-), Co B, 3rd Engr Bn

Det, Comm Co, Hq Bn, 3rd MarDiv

3 Sniper Tm's, 4th Marines

Det, 1st Radio Bn, 3rd MarDiv

Viet Liaison Tm

Det, E Co, 3rd MT Bn, 3rd MarDiv

6. Supporting Forces

a. During the period 7-14 July 1966, "H" Btry, 3rd Bn, 12th Marines reinforced with 2 howitzers of "H" Btry, 4th Bn, 12th Marines provided direct artillery support from their position at CAM LO. Their mission was to support reconnaissance efforts west of DONG HA and to provide defensive fires for the air field at DONG HA. During this period, the battery fired 2000 rounds on 250 observed and unobserved missions and was considered effective in their support. With the arrival of Task Force DELTA "H" Battery joined the other batteries of 3rd Bn, 12th Marines (Rein) in general support of the Task Force for the remainder of the operation.

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b. In addition, during the period 17-29 July 1966, 4.2 Mortar Battery, 1st Battalion, 11th Marines was in direct support of this battalion from positions located within the Bn CP (XD 983563). During the period, the battery fired 6500 rounds on 670 observed and unobserved missions. Initially, the battery's response to fire missions was considered slow; however, the more the battery fired, its response became quicker and more accurate.

c. During 29 July-1 August general support was provided the Task Force by 3rd Bn, 12th Marines (Rein). "I" Battery was located at the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines Command Post with a mission to support Task Force DELTA with longer range fires than could be provided by the batteries located at CAM LO.

d. The night of 21-22 July 1966 was one of the most active for the FSCC and the battalion's supporting arms. At 2115H "H" Company reported receiving small arms fire from the north and the 4.2" mortar battery was called upon to silence it. Several minutes later "H" also reported very heavy movement and running to their south along a north-south stream and trail network which connected with "M" Company, 3rd Bn, 4th Marines to the south. The 81's were given the fire mission of sweeping along the trail between the two companies and expended approximately 100 rounds. Both of these missions were ended by 2210H. At 2220H "H" again reported movement on all sides and "M" Company, 3rd Bn, 4th Marines reported additional movement and digging sounds in the trail network to their north. The 4.2's began sweeping back and forth along the northern ridgeline while the 81's covered the west flank of "H" and the trail north of "M". Until about 0030H, the 4.2's and 81's were firing almost continuous missions at the heavy movement, VC small arms firing positions, and suspected mortar positions. Several times the batteries were required to fire several different missions simultaneously. During these peaks, all radio circuits available were utilized to adjust the fire. Several times there were two missions on the artillery net, one on battalion tactical net, and one or more over the 81's net all being conducted simultaneously. Missions were called and adjusted by 81 FO's, artillery FO's, and company commanders. The FSCC fired unobserved missions at possible escape routes and mortar positions whenever there was a break in observed missions. This multiple use artillery agencies and available radio circuits permitted considerable flexibility in meeting simultaneous threats to the battalion. However, the conduct of fire missions on the Battalion Tactical Net tended to tie this net up somewhat.

e. During the entire operation the battalion was dependent upon helicopters for personnel movement and resupply. Generally, the support was satisfactory; however, more often than not the helicopters could not be relied upon to meet the pick-up time requested. Fixed wing, when requested, was responsive. However, 40-60 minutes were often required from the time of request until the aircraft were on station. The following is a detailed

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ENCLOSURE (2)

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summary of air operations during the period 7 July - 3 August 1966:

7 July: Two CH-46's and 2 UH-1E's used for reconnaissance overflight.

Two UH-1E's used for radio relay.

One CH-46 used for med evac of own US ill.

8 July: Three CH-46's and 2 UH-1E's used for reconnaissance platoon extraction.

Two VF used for helicopter escort.

Two CH-46's and 2 UH-1E's used for reconnaissance overflights.

Three CH-46's and 2 UH-1E's used for insertion, immediate extraction, reinsertion, and again immediate extraction of recon platoon.

Two CH-46's used to lift reaction force.

Four VF's used for LZ CAP.

One CH-46 and 2 UH-34's used for two med evac's for 3 MIA's.

Two A-4's and 4 VF's conducted air strikes against enemy troops controlled by USARV OI-N.

9 July: Four UH-1E's used to insert recon team.

Two F-4's conducted air strike against automatic weapons emplacement controlled by two UH-1E's.

Two F-4's used for landing zone CAP and conducted air strike against an area target.

Two UH-1E's used for radio relay.

Four UH-1E's used for extraction of a reconnaissance team.

Two UH-1E's used for battalion commander's reconnaissance.

Two UH-1E's used for two reconnaissance overflights.

Two CH-46's used for eleven man parachute jump and night reconnaissance overflight.

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10 July Four UH-1E's, used to insert a reconnaissance team.

Two UH-1E's used for radio relay.

Two VF's used for landing zone CAP.

Four UH-1E's used for reconnaissance team extraction.

Four VF's used for air support against enemy troops.

Two UH-1E's used for two reconnaissance overflights.

Two F-4's controlled by an Air Force O1-E conducted an air strike against enemy bunkers.

Two Air Force flare aircraft on station all night.

Three sorties of A-4's with flares were on station for possible illumination missions.

11 July Four UH-1E's used for reconnaissance team insertion.

Two VF's used for landing zone CAP and conducted air strike against enemy structures.

Two UH-1E's used for radio relay.

Four UH-1E's used for reconnaissance team extraction.

Two UH-34's used for reconnaissance overflight.

Two CH-46's and two UH-1E's used for reconnaissance overflight.

One CH-46 used for medical evacuation of one U.S. ill.

12 July Four UH-1E's used to insert reconnaissance team and immediately extract them.

Two A-4's used for landing zone CAP.

Two CH-46's and two UH-1E's used to insert a reconnaissance platoon.

Two UH-34's used for reconnaissance overflight.

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Two CH-46's and two UH-1E's used to insert a reconnaissance platoon.

Two VF's used for landing zone CAP and conducted air strike against suspected enemy troop position.

Two UH-34's used for night reconnaissance team.

13 July Four UH-1E's used to insert a reconnaissance team.

Two VF's used for landing zone CAP and conducted air strike against area target.

Two UH-1E's used for radio relay.

Two VF's were controlled by two UH-1E's and conducted air strike against area target.

Three CH-46's and two UH-34's used for forty-man troop lift.

Four A-4's used for helicopter escort and landing zone CAP.

Two UH-34's used for radio relay.

Four UH-1E's used to extract a reconnaissance team.

Four CH-46's and two UH-1E's used to extract reaction force and reconnaissance team.

One CH-46 used for administrative troop lift.

Two CH-46's and two UH-1E's used for reconnaissance overflight.

Four CH-46's used to lift reaction force but did not land them.

Two UH-1E's and two UH-34's used as radio relay.

Two VF's requested but not used.

14 July Four UH-1E's used to insert two reconnaissance teams.

Two F-4's used for landing zone CAP and conducted air strike against two area targets.

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Two UH-34's used for a 35-man administrative troop lift and a ten-man administrative troop lift.

Four UH-1E's used to extract a reconnaissance team.

Two UH-34's used as radio relay.

Two UH-34's used for three reconnaissance flights by unit commanders.

Two A-4's used for helicopter escort and conducted air strike against enemy structures.

15 July Ten CH-46's and two CH-37's used for tactical troop lift but troops were not landed.

16 July Twenty UH-34's and thirteen CH-46's used for tactical troop lift.

Two UH-34's used for medical evacuation of two U.S. ill and six WIA's.

One UH-1E used to lift battalion commander to task force headquarters.

17 July Two UH-34's used for medical evacuation of two WIA's and one KIA.

Twelve UH-34's and eight CH-46's used for tactical troop lift.

18 July Four UH-34's used to evacuate thirteen WIA's and five heat casualties.

Two UH-34's used to withdraw nineteen men.

Two A-4's controlled by Army 01-D conducted air strike against suspected enemy troop positions.

Two UH-34's used to lift battalion commander to task force headquarters.

19 July Two UH-34's used for medical evacuation of one WIA.

Two UH-34's used to transport two company commanders to battalion CP and back.

Two UH-34's used for courier flight to task force headquarters.

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20 July Eight CH-46's used for administrative troop lift of 110 men.

Air Force flare aircraft utilized for illumination throughout the night.

Two UH-34's used for aerial reconnaissance by battalion commander and company commander.

21 July Two UH-34's used for three medical evacuation missions: four KIA, eight WIA, and one Ill.

Two UH-34's used to take battalion commander to task force headquarters.

22 July Two UH-34's used for three medical evacuation missions: 21 WIA, and four KIA.

Two F-4's and two A-4's conducted air strikes against suspected enemy mortar position.

Two UH-34's used to take battalion commander to task force headquarters.

Two UH-34's used for administrative troop lift of 23 men.

Two UH-34's used to take M-60 machine gun from battalion CP to rifle company.

Two VF's conducted air strike against suspected enemy positions.

23 July Two UH-34's used for administrative lift of 10 troops.

Two UH-34's used to take 250 pounds of clothing from Battalion C.P. to rifle company.

24 July Two F-4's conducted an air strike against a suspected enemy harboring site.

Eight UH-34's were used to tactically interchange two rifle companies.

Two UH-34's used for medical evacuation of one WIA.

25 July Two UH-34's used for aerial reconnaissance by battalion commander and company commanders.

26 July Four UH-34's used to interchange two rifle companies.

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- One UH-34 used for courier to carry overlay.
- 27 July Two F-4's conducted air strike against suspected enemy positions.
- Two UH-34's used for administrative lift of nine men.
- 28 July Four UH-34's used for administrative lift of 20 men.
- Two UH-34's used for aerial reconnaissance by battalion commander and company commanders.
- Two UH-34's used to lift one staff member to the LSA.
- Two UH-1E's conducted air strikes against area target.
- 29 July Eight UH-34's used to lift 4.2" mortar battery to LSA.
- Two UH-34's used for medical evacuation of two U.S. ill.
- 30 July Four UH-34's used for administrative lift of 33 men to the LSA.
- One UH-1E used to lift one VIP and one correspondent from battalion C.P. to rifle company.
- Two UH-34's used for administrative lift of three men to the LSA.
- 31 July Ten UH-34's used for administrative lift of 57 men to the LSA.
- Two UH-34's used to lift battalion commander to outlying company.
- Two UH-34's used to lift battalion commander to task force headquarters.
- 1 August Four UH-34's used for administrative lift of 39 men to the LSA.

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Twenty UH-34's and two CH-37's used to lift one artillery battery and three rifle companies with battalion command group to the LSA.

2 August. No air activity.

3 August. No air activity.

7. Intelligence

a. Terrain

(1) The terrain between DONG HA and CAM LO is primarily a flat and open cultivated area, with populated areas concentrated astride the SONG CAM LO River. North of the 61 grid line the ground begins to form into low rolling hills covered with scrub growth and elephant grass. Commencing with the 10 grid line and continuing west from the piedmont, the terrain rises in a series of razor-back ridgelines to heights of up to 500 meters. The upper slopes of the ridges are covered with dense jungle growth and canopy. Foot movement is limited to the trails and dry stream beds scattered throughout the area.

(2) The area of operation in vicinity XD 9856 was situated in a "T" shaped valley encompassed by a series of razor-back, canopy-covered ridgelines reaching heights of 200 to 400 meters. The SONG THIRINH HIN River, flowing generally in a easterly direction through the area, is joined by the SONG CAM LO River. The SONG CAM LO cuts the western portion of the valley flowing in a southeast direction. Several small streams, originating in the surrounding ridgelines, flow into the SONG CAM LO River. Vegetation in the valley varies from 6-10 foot elephant grass in the southern sector to jungle underbrush on the lower slopes of the hills. Stream lines may be traced by the heavy ribbon of jungle undergrowth and canopy, which ranges from heights of 10 to 30 feet. Upon reaching the 100 meter height, the vegetation becomes heavy to impenetrable; the secondary growth reaches a height of 10 to 20 feet with the canopy climbing to heights of 50 feet and over. Foot movement is limited to existing trails throughout the canopy.

b. Enemy

(1) Indications that the enemy was active in the area of operations became apparent during the first week of July. Recon teams, attempting insertion, encountered groups of VC around the LZ; on several occasions, they met resistance within minutes after landing. The area of recon operations was generally

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 in the vicinity of grid squares of YD 0056 and YD 0162. ARVN units, operating in the THON PHUONG AN (D-5) area (YD 0951), established contact with the enemy units up to regimental size. During the period 7-15 July, the combined actions of Marine and ARVN units established the probable routes of infiltration into the Province from the DMZ, occupied defensive areas, and the tentative identification of the enemy unit as being the 324B NVA Division.

(2) On 8 July the VC fired approximately 25 rounds of small arms fire into the left flank positions of an Echo Company ambush in their night time position in the vicinity of YD 117590. One hundred and fifty rounds of small arms fire were returned which resulted in the VC breaking contact.

(3) A sniper, located in the vicinity of YD 151601, fired 7 rounds of small arms at random into Echo Company positions on 13 July and then withdrew.

(4) A reconnaissance team encountered 4 VC on 9 July while in an ambush position. The VC, in the vicinity of XD 995594, were fired on by the recon team resulting in 4 VC KIA. Before the VC bodies could be searched, 2 additional VC were observed and movement to the west of the recon team was heard. Due to the size of the recon team and the VC movement, extraction was accomplished. Patrol insertions by recon teams on 11, 12, and 13 July were limited to minor contacts and enemy sightings resulting in 4 VC WIA. During overflights and "feints" prior to insertions, moderate to heavy small arms and machine gun fire was encountered.

(5) Contact was not established by the battalion with NVA forces until the night of 16 July when elements of 2/1 received approximately 95 rounds of 81/82mm mortar fire from several guns located in the YD 0565 and YD 0665 grid squares.

(6) The morning of 17 July, the battalion was helo-lifted to the XD 9856 grid square without incident. Contact on 18 July was established by two platoons of Echo Company in separate patrol actions in the vicinity of XD 992549 and XD 998557. An active fire fight ensued in both platoon areas, resulting in 9 NVA KIA (confirmed), 17 NVA KIA (probable), 5 NVA WIA (confirmed), 1 AK-47, and 1 7.62 Goryunov Machine Gun captured in the vicinity of XD 992579. Patrol activity on 18 July by Hotel Company encountered several NVA. The NVA were taken under fire resulting in 1 NVA KIA (confirmed) 2 NVA KIA (probable), and the capture of 1 DPM (LMG) with 500 rounds of ammunition.

(7) During the search and destroy operation on 20 July along the ridgeline in the vicinity YD 003552, Echo Company encountered 3 NVA. Small arms fire by point elements resulted in 1 NVA WIA (confirmed) and the capture of several documents and medical equipment.

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(8) Foxtrot Company, while enroute to their blocking position during the night 20-21 July, were fired on by 2 NVA with automatic weapons. The NVA hit two elements of Foxtrot at different locations along the trail in the vicinity of XD 995585. Small arms fire returned by Foxtrot resulted in 2 NVA KIA (probable). A search of the area the following morning resulted in one AK-47. Patrol activity on 21-22 July by Hotel Company units resulted in the locating of 5 NVA KIA, 4 of which were found in shallow graves. An ambush, initiated by Hotel Company during the night of 22 July, resulted in 1 NVA KIA (confirmed). Foxtrot patrol was fired on by an estimated 3 to 6 NVA during the morning hours of 22 July. The patrol returned fire and when the NVA broke contact, an artillery mission was called on the withdrawing NVA. The fire mission resulted in 1 NVA KIA (probable) and 1 NVA WIA (probable). The ambush set in by elements of Hotel Company during the hours of darkness on 23 July had contact with an estimated 4 NVA. Small arms fire by the ambush resulted in 4 NVA KIA (probable).

(9) On 24 July Hotel Company positions received approximately 200 rounds of small arms fire from an unknown number of NVA probing their positions. After contact was broken and the NVA withdrew, Hotel Company dispatched elements to search the area in the proximity of the probe. The search in the vicinity of YD 000602 resulted in 4 NVA KIA (confirmed), 5 AK-47, 15 magazines, and 7 Chicom grenades. Echo Company patrols and ambushes on the 24th of July established contact with the NVA. A search of the area of contact (XD 989597 to XD 989605) resulted in 3 NVA KIA (confirmed), 2 AK-47, 1 SKS Assault Rifle, 4 hand grenades (stick type) and 4 AK-47 magazines (full) and 90 rounds of loose ammunition.

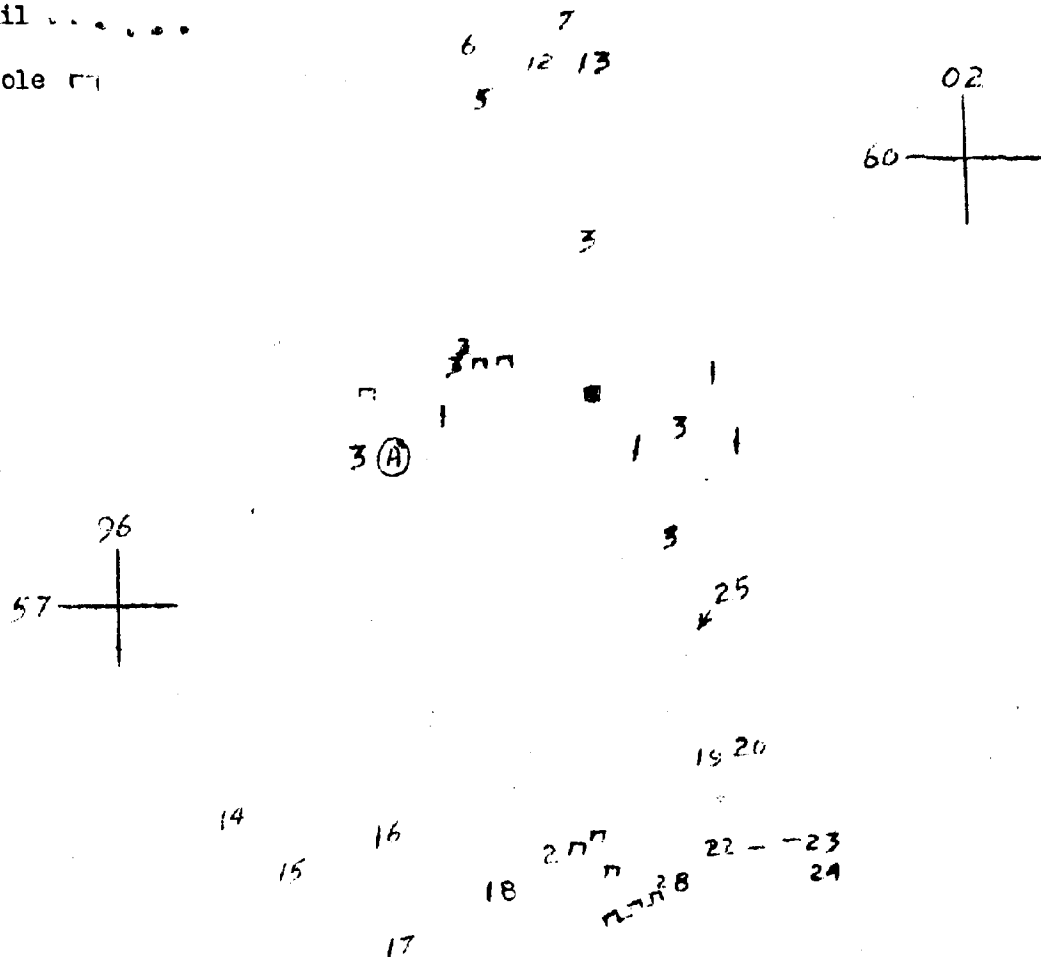
(10) On 26 July "G" Company observed 9 NVA moving along ridgeline and fired small arms and 60mm mortars at them. The following day (27 July), a Hotel Company patrol searching the area found a blood trail giving evidence of 1 NVA WIA (confirmed).

(11) The artillery battery (I/3/12) was probed on two separate occasions during the night of 28-29 July. The first group, estimated between 2-3 NVA, fired approximately 25 rounds of automatic fire into the battery positions. Shortly after midnight, a second probe by an estimated 6-8 NVA fired automatic weapons and threw grenades into the battery positions. On both occasions, small arms and machine gun fire forced the NVA to break contact and withdraw. A possible third group of NVA fired small arms into the Hotel Company positions while a Hotel Company ambush fired on an unknown number of NVA moving near the ambush site. Foxtrot Company patrol on 30 July, searching a NVA bivouac area, found 4 graves, each containing one NVA body.

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LEGEND

Main trail
 Secondary trail
 Feeder trail
 Bunker ■
 Fighting hole □



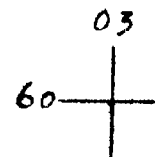
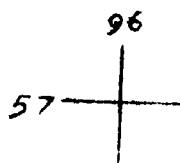
1. Cooking (16) oven holes along stream bank
2. Harboring site
3. Fighting holes all along stream and trail
4. Platoon staging area
5. Mortar position
6. Sniper position (XD 986605)
7. Bn size area-bunkers, comm wire
8. Harboring site
9. Harboring site
10. Area NVA moved to along ridgeline
XD 960615 to YD 000618
11. 100-150 spider holes along ridgeline
12. Fighting holes
13. Mortar position
14. 10' canopy
15. Trail visible but not used.

16. All elephant grass 6'-10'
17. All houses destroyed.
18. Intermittent stream.
19. Echo contact (18 July 1966)
20. NVA aid station.
21. Bunkers, fighting holes, trenches.
22. NVA holding station for casualties, medical bunker for operating
23. Contact with 3 VC (19 July).
24. Fortified position, holes.
25. Two water holes.
26. Bridge blown.
27. Trenches in 360' with holes on crest
28. Fortified area-bunkers, fighting holes.
29. 4 - 81/82mm position.

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MAP: Sheet 6361 II, 1:50,000

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LEGEND

Main trails (heavily used)

Secondary trails

Feeder trails

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1-17-6-14

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c. Summary of Enemy Casualties, Prisoners and Captured Equipment:

(1) DONG HA/CAM LO (1-6 July): None

(2) Operation HASTINGS (7-31 July)

(a) NVA KIA (confirmed) 27, (probable) 26

(b) NVA WIA (confirmed) 7, (probable) 1

(c) VCC - 0

(d) VCS - 0

(e) Returnee - 0

(f) Equipment

1. Weapons: 9 AK-47, 1 SKS Assault Rifle, 1 SG-43 (Goryunov) machine gun (Chicom Type 53), 1 DPM (LMG)

2. Equipment: 2540 rounds of ammunition, 12 hand grenades, 3 packs, assorted uniforms (green and light gray), documents, web gear (5 cartridge belts, 3 magazine carriers, 3 grenade carriers).

8. Mission

a. 7-14 July 1966: To conduct recon operations in recon zones designated; provide and maintain a mobile strike force to reinforce/assist in recon extractions; be prepared on order to exploit targets of opportunity, as required; coordinate ARVN artillery within range of recon teams; provide security for ASRA^T site; conduct patrolling and ambush activities; and be prepared to carry out such orders as directed by CO, 4th Marines.

b. 15-16 July 1966: Provide TF DELTA reserve; be prepared on order to conduct search and destroy operations in area designated by TF Commander; initially, provide security to installations at DONG HA and CAM LO until relieved on 15 July 1966.

c. 17 July - 1 August 1966: Displace to vicinity XD 983563, establish blocking positions, and conduct search and destroy operation in zone.

d. 2-3 August 1966: Constitute TF DELTA reserve.

9. Concept of Operations

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a. 7-14 July 1966: Two rifle companies located at DONG HA provide ASRAT site security and the base of operations for recon activities. One rifle company provide security for the artillery located at CAM LO. Maximum patrol/ambush effort will be made.

b. 15-16 July 1966: Initially, provide installation security with two companies at DONG HA and two companies at CAM LO while continuing assigned mission of supporting recon effort. When relieved on 15 July 1966, constitute TF DELTA reserve; be prepared for employment in the TF DELTA zone of action to conduct search and destroy operations and establish blocking positions as directed with three companies abreast and one company in reserve.

c. 17 July-1 August 1966: Initially, provide blocking position with three companies located vicinity XD 974567, XD 991579, and XD 983563. During the period 20-27 July 1966, 2 companies occupied blocking positions vicinity XD 990598 and XD 993508, one company occupied high ground at XD 974567 and XD 991579, and remaining company, with command group, remained vicinity XD 983563. During the period 28 July-1 August 1966 company blocking positions were shifted to vicinity XD 995549; XD 983563; XD 974567 and XD 991579; and YD 002592.

d. 2-3 August 1966: Constitute TF DELTA reserve from base camp at GIA LE.

10. Execution

a. 7 July - TF DELTA message 071600H directed the commencement of Operation HASTINGS. There was one platoon extraction and one insertion by Det A, Recon Group BRAVO. Nine squad size patrols, 10 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts, and 18 listening posts were employed. Two scout sniper teams were assigned to Recon Group BRAVO and 3 scout sniper teams from 4th Marines were assigned to 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines.

b. 8 July - At 1000H 2nd Platoon, Force Recon Company was successfully extracted by helo at coordinates YD 077469. At 1630H 1st Plat, "A" Company, Recon Group BRAVO was successfully inserted in RZ "C" at coordinates YD 060495. At 1835H Sparrow Hawk was helolifted to YD 090501 to provide security of a downed CH-46 which was on fire. CH-46 was completely destroyed by fire and Sparrow Hawk returned at 1937H. At 2310H E6B patrol in ambush at YD 117590 received 25 rounds of small arms fire from an unknown direction; the patrol returned fire with 150 rounds of small arms. Area was searched at first light with negative results. There was one extraction and one insertion by Det A, Recon Group BRAVO; nine squad size patrols, 14 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts and 18 listening posts were employed.

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Three scout sniper teams from the 4th Marines were assigned to this battalion and two scout sniper teams were assigned to Det A, Recon Group BRAVO.

c. 9 July - At 0605H recon element was inserted and established an ambush on a well-used trail in vicinity of YD 092593; a 4-man VC point walked into the ambush resulting in 4 VC KIA. The recon team immediately requested extraction because of a large fire fight with a large patrol of VC. Team was extracted under heavy VC contact. UH-1E gun ships were requested and artillery was directed by an AO. Results of contact: 4 VC KIA (confirmed). VC wore camouflaged utilities and rainhats; one VC carried an automatic rifle with a drum magazine on top and a second carried a non-descript rifle. There was one recon platoon insertion and one extraction. Five squad size patrols, 8 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts, and 18 listening posts were employed; three scout sniper teams from the 4th Marines were assigned to this battalion.

d. 10 July - At 1200 E & F Companies completed exchange of position: E Company now at DONG HA and F Company now at CAM LO to provide security for artillery positions. At 2025H "F" Company received 2 rounds of suspected 82mm mortars at YD 130585. Artillery returned fire on suspected mortar positions; the mission was unobserved. There was one recon platoon insertion and one extraction; eight squad size patrols, 9 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts, and 18 listening posts were employed. Three scout sniper teams from 4th Marines were assigned to this battalion.

e. 11 July - At 1255H a recon unit observed 5 VC bivouaced at XD 889558. Recon opened fire with small arms in attempt to wound and capture the VC. Area was strafed by UH-1E gun ships before VC could escape. VC fled in an unknown direction with 2 VC WIA (probable). Sparrow Hawk alerted to assist in recon extraction; however, recon unit extracted without incident at 1323H and Sparrow Hawk not required. At 1730H "G" Company arrived DONG HA from GIA LE. There were one recon platoon insertion and one extraction, eight squad patrols, 9 squad ambushes, 18 outposts, and 18 listening posts. Three scout sniper teams from the 4th Marines were assigned to the battalion.

f. 12 July - Upon landing to insert a recon platoon at 0605H in vicinity of XD 997645, the lead UH-1E received small arms fire from 5 to 6 VC moving towards the LZ from XD 989655. Two men got out of the helicopter and were left when it immediately lifted off; they moved to XD 997648 without further incident and were extracted at 0648H without further contact. F-4 aircraft dropped 4 napalm tanks and fired rockets into the area; UH-1E gun ships fired 1000 rounds of 7.62mm and 5.2.75" rockets. Results unknown as the entire area was aflame.

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At 0759H One AT section displaced to CAM 10, OpCon "F" Company. There was one recon platoon insertion and one extraction: eight squad size patrols, 7 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts and 18 listening posts were employed. Three scout sniper teams from the 4th Marines were assigned to this battalion.

g. 13 July - At 0300H Echo Company vicinity YD 244604 received 7 sniper rounds from vicinity YD 257604. No fire returned as sniper continually shifted his position. Area was searched at first light with negative results. At 0920H Sparrow Hawk was listed to assist in recon extraction. Sparrow Hawk landed and swept area without making contact; successfully extracted at 1148H. Sparrow Hawk again alerted at 1835H to assist recon team at YD 005635 which might have to be extracted. Sparrow Hawk launched at 1920H, but did not land since recon element remained undetected and Sparrow Hawk returned at 2010H. There were 3 daylight recon insertions, 1 nighttime insertion and 2 extractions. Seven squad patrols, 8 squad ambushes, 18 outposts and 18 listening posts were employed. Three scout sniper teams from 4th Marines remain assigned to this battalion.

h. 14 July - At 0010H 4-6 VC attempted to infiltrate F3B patrol's lines along the river at YD 182587 to damage the bridge at that location. F3/B fired 10 to 15 rounds of 7.62 and physically pursued the VC. Contact was lost in heavy undergrowth. At 2305H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 1-66 was received: All units execute Operation HASTINGS at 150800H; 2/1 to be in reserve. There was one recon team insertion and one extraction. Five squad size patrols, 8 squad size ambushes, 18 outposts, and 18 listening posts were employed. Three scout sniper teams from 4th Marines remain assigned to this battalion.

i. 15 July - At 1320H, TF DELTA directed 2nd Bn, 1st Marines to place one platoon on 15 minute stand-by to enter the operating area to provide security for downed helicopter. At 1400H F/1 was launched and landed at 1455H. At 1635H TF DELTA directed that one company (Echo) be alerted for possible lift to 3rd Bn, 4th Marines area vicinity YD 037641. At 1750H E/1 and Echo Command Group boarded CH-46's and departed DONG HA for operating area. At 1800H one CH-46 carrying 12 marines from E/1 and 4 crew members was shot down in vicinity of YD 050654 by a .50 Cal machine gun. Twelve Marines from E/1 and 2 crew members were KIA. At 1835H a second CH-46 with crew and remainder of E/1 returned to DONG HA. There were five squad size patrols, 8 squad ambushes, 9 outposts, and 9 listening posts were employed. Three scout sniper teams from 4th Marines remain assigned to this battalion.

j. 16 July - At 0020H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 3-66 received: 2nd Bn, 1st Marines to land in LZ at YD 066655 commencing 160730H, remain in LZ for further orders, and be prepared to move to 2nd Bn, 4th Marines on order. At 0620H 2nd Bn,

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1st Mar departed DONG HA CP for the airfield. At 0730H "E" and "F" companies lifted off for LZ ROBIN. At 0900H all units of 2nd Bn, 1st Marines arrived on Hill 100. At 1130H units reported in position: CP at YD 067565, H&S Company at YD 06565, E Company at YD 065656, F Company at YD 072652, H Company at YD 06553, and G Company (in reserve) at YD 245597. Units were directed to commence short range patrols. At 1335H the battalion was forced to shift positions to vicinity YD 064660 due to a grass fire. All lines were tied in following the move. F Company from YD 060659 to YD 060664, H Company from YD 063657 to YD 067662, and E Company from YD 060659 to YD 067660. Night time activities commenced at 1930H. At 2053H "E" Company and 81mm mortar platoon received 95 rounds of suspected 82mm mortar fire on their position, the last round landing at 2108H. An artillery mission was fired on the suspected VC mortar position in vicinity of YD 067654. Results of artillery fire were unknown, but mortar fire ceased. Friendly casualties: 1 KIA, 7 WIA. There were 9 squad ambushes, 10 outposts and 10 listening posts employed.

k. 17 July - At 0009H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 6-66 was received: 2/1 commence landing at 0830H in LZ vicinity YD 984561 to conduct search and destroy operations in area and assume OpCon at 170600H of "W" Battery, 1st Bn, 11th Marines. At 0810H all units lifted from LZ ROBIN (YD 066655). At 0923H new CP located at XD 984563. At 0920H all units of 2/1 landed at new location: E Company at XD 988559, F Company at XD 975565 and H Company at XD 985574. At 1228H, 4.2"/1/11 in position at Bn C.P. At 1430H F/2 patrol sighted a VC sniper in a tree at XD 975574; patrol fired 40 rounds of small arms and 3 rounds of 81mm mortar. The area was searched with negative results. At 2012H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 7-66 was received: 2/1 continue assigned search and destroy operations in assigned area of operation. There were 2 platoon patrols, 4 squad patrols, 8 outposts, and 9 listening/ambushes employed.

l. 18 July - Between 0515H and 0700H H/1 received 4 rounds of 81 or 82mm mortar fire and approximately 350 rounds of small arms fire both semi- and automatic weapons located in the vicinity XD 993585. LP's pulled in and artillery/mortar fire was brought on suspected positions. Mortar fire forced NVA to move and fire was adjusted accordingly. At 0620H one NVA squad was observed moving along streambed vicinity XD 995585; fire mission called. Area of these contacts swept by "H" Company after completion of fire missions. Results of the engagement: Two NVA KIA (probable), 1 DPM machine gun, 500 rounds 7.62mm ammunition, and various articles 782 gear captured. A considerable amount of blood found in the area. At 1045H B/1 on a combat patrol made contact with the security elements of an estimated NVA squad, reinforced with one machine gun, in the

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vicinity XD 996545. Receiving a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire, the platoon deployed and commenced the assault. A combination of heavy undergrowth and the well-positioned enemy machine gun slowed the attack. After calling an artillery mission, the platoon resumed the assault utilizing all its organic weapons and overran the enemy position. Results of the engagement: 3 NVA KIA (confirmed), including 1 officer; 6 NVA KIA (probable); 1 Goryunov machine gun (Chicom type), and 1 AK-47; friendly losses: 1 DOW 8 WIA. At 1100H E/3, also a combat patrol, sweeping eastward along high ground vicinity XD 999558 made heavy contact at close quarters with an estimated NVA platoon reinforced with 2 and possibly 3 machine guns. The NVA opened fire from well concealed, dug-in positions at the edge of the canopy. E/3 returned fire and commenced the assault of the position. Suffering several casualties, E/3 held its position and called in 81mm and 4.2" mortar fire, which was walked down the ridgeline into the enemy position. One round of 4.2" WP forced 4 NVA to break from their position: they were killed by E/3's small-arms fire as soon as they were in the open. As the attack continued about 25-30 NVA were observed moving from the south to reinforce the enemy position. As the direction of their movement would have cut off the main body of E/3 from the covered area where the platoon had assembled its wounded, the platoon moved to cover the wounded and called artillery missions on both enemy threats. At that time due to both heat and battle casualties, the platoon was reduced to an effective strength of 20. The wounded were medevaced and the main body fell back to make full utilization of all supporting arms. Air (including napalm), artillery, and mortar fires were brought to bear against the enemy positions with very effective coverage. A later sweep of the area revealed well-dug-in, mutually supporting positions. Results of the engagement were: Friendly, 8 WIA, 5 heat casualties; 6 NVA KIA (confirmed), 12 NVA KIA (probable). At 1020H H/1 patrol found a company/battalion camp site in the vicinity of XD 982582. There were numerous fighting holes, bomb shelters, tables, chairs, and an altar. It was estimated that this position had been occupied during the past two days. At 1130H the patrol located a suspected command bunker at XD 995584 surrounded by 6 fighting holes. An ammo bunker showing signs of recent use was also found. At 1815H "H" Company sighted 67 NVA moving inside the tree line at XD 979588. A fire mission was called forcing the NVA back into the canopy with unknown casualties. At 2110H "H" OP # 4 heard sound of heavy enemy movement at XD 989588. OP fired small arms and threw grenades; noises ceased. At 2153H "H" OP # 1 heard heavy movement along stream bed and around canopy in vicinity XD 985583. Four NVA were seen 30 meter in front of OP which opened fire. NVA ran and fell into bush. Results unknown. At 2317H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 10-66 received: 2/1 continue assigned mission. At 2335H one member F/2/B patrol shot himself in foot; returned to company area; patrol continued. At

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2400H 2/1 issued FRAG ORDER for 19 July: All units continue assigned missions. There were 7 platoon sized patrols, 9 squad ambushes, 8 outposts, and 10 listening posts employed.

m. 19 July - At 0800H "I" Battery commenced prep fires in support of "E" Company at YD 000559 and XD 997558. At 0840H the battery commenced prep fire in support of "F" Company at XD 968570 and XD 976573. At 1140H "E" Company found a VC aid station at YD 002559 with stretchers and bloody bandages which were believed to have been used to treat yesterday's casualties. At 1255H "E" Company found 4 bunkers with rice (30 pounds) and a make-shift operating room and medical bag at YD 004552. Bunkers were destroyed and medical supplies returned to CP. At 1305H "E" Company lead elements at YD 002559 were fired on by 3 NVA snipers who fled abandoning packs. The fire was returned and the snipers were pursued with negative results. There were 2 company size patrols, 3 squad patrols, 10 squad ambushes, 10 listening posts and 8 outposts employed.

n. 20 July - At 0043H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 11-66 received: 2nd Bn, 1st Marines continue assigned mission in present zone. At 1120H "E" Company discovered foxholes and 1 bunker at XD 987547 which were destroyed. At 1500H "I" and "F" Companies directed to move overland from present positions to establish blocking position vicinity XD 995596 and XD 990590 respectively. Route of march along stream bed and trail running generally north from vicinity XD 998570; order of march "I", then "F". 1710H H/3/4 OpCon to 2/1 and in position at XD 974566 with one platoon and company (-) at XD 992578. At 1800H "H" Company in position at XD 995598. At 1845H "H" Company patrol fired on 2 NVA moving north vicinity XD 995594. NVA broke contact and fled to north. At 2105H "F" Company moving along route to new position made contact with unknown number of NVA in the vicinity of XD 995585. The company was split as the contact was made with the center of the column. The contact hit the FAC team, resulting in one friendly KIA and one WIA. The contact was repulsed in hand to hand combat. An artillery mission and a flare ship were requested to assist "F" Company. Contact was lost with F/3 and FAC team. At 2220H "H" Company ambush at XD 992592 heard movement near position, opened fire with small arms and called for illumination with negative results. At 2350H same ambush had one NVA walk into ambush site. Ambush opened fire resulting in 1 NVA KIA (confirmed). There were 2 company patrols, 1 platoon patrol, 2 squad patrols, 8 outposts, 8 squad ambushes and 8 listening posts employed.

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o. 21 July - At 0030H "F" Company regained radio communications with F/3 and continued efforts to consolidate its position. At 0310H F/3 and FAC team effected physical contact and proceeded to link up with rest of company. At 0455H "F" Company reunited and set in position the remainder of the night. At 0730H "F" Company linked up with "H" Company and began to move into position. Results of "F" Company contact: 3 friendly KIA and 2 friendly WIA. NVA casualties: 2 KIA. At 1025H an unknown number of NVA took F/3 under fire as it was moving into position. F/3 returned fire and attempted to locate NVA with negative results. At 2050H both H and F Companies received automatic weapons fire along entire line. 4.2" and 60mm mortar fired at suspected positions. At 2115H M/3/4 observed 6 NVA moving south from the vicinity of XD 976562. Artillery/mortar fire mission called. At 2117H "H" Company noted heavy movement moving south in streambed at XD 992595. Artillery fire called to "walk" down valley. At 2142H M/3/4 sighted 6 NVA at XD 992582 and fired 5 rounds M-79 at them. NVA withdrew to north. At same time M/3/4 noted heavy movement to northwest and north. The sound of metal striking metal (suspected mortar position) was also noted. 81mm mortar mission called and movement ceased. This movement to and fro (north and south) along the streambed trail seemed to indicate that an unknown number of NVA were moving back and forth attempting to escape the artillery fire. Mortar/artillery fire was continually adjusted to cut off their escape or drive them into friendly lines. At 2148H "H" Company received 82mm mortar fire from north. At 2155H "H" Company directed mortar mission on target at XD 995605 with "F" Company FO observing. At 2210H mortar attack against "H" Company ceased. At 2230H M/3/4 noted movement in brush at XD 992582 and called mortar mission. At 2224H "H" Company OP # 1 heard sound of people running at XD 995600, OP withdrew and artillery mission called. At 2240H "H" Company heard heavy NVA movement at XD 997604, and called artillery. At 2310H "H" Company observed green light similar to mortar aiming stake to rear; light disappeared after mortar mission was fired. At 2320 M/3/4 reported 3 minor WIA's from previous 81mm mortar mission. At 2340H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 12-66 received: 2/1 continue search and destroy operations in assigned area of responsibility. There were 5 platoon patrols, 2 platoon ambushes, 10 squad ambushes, 9 outposts and 9 listening posts employed.

p. 22 July - By 0030H the attacks against "F" and "H" Companies had gradually subsided. (See paragraph 6d., for discussion of artillery support during this period). From the enemy's action it was apparent that the NVA forces were making a concerted effort to eliminate the blocking positions (XD 990598 and XD 004598) manned by "F" and "H" Companies. As the attack progressed it appeared to become increasingly disorganized giving proof to the success of the battalions' actions. At 0100H "H" Company requested med evac for 3 WIA's.

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med evac was completed at 0140H. Total casualties for night's engagement: Friendly: 2 KIA and 13 WIA; NVA KIA and WIA, unknown. At 1040H F/2 patrol point came in contact with 3 to 6 NVA at XD 998604. Point opened fire with small arms, NVA broke contact and disappeared into the mountain canopy. An 81mm mortar fire mission was called with excellent coverage of target area. Contact results: 2 friendly WIA's, 1 NVA KIA (probable), and 1 NVA WIA (probable). At 1425H M Co 3/4 replaced on position by G Company, 2/1; M Company 3/4 returned to parent unit. At 2015H H/1/A patrol ambush sighted 10 NVA coming from the south moving north along stream bed in vicinity XD 99559. The patrol opened fire with small arms and grenades. The NVA then broke contact, results: 2 NVA KIA (probable). Artillery fire mission called with unobserved results. At 2225H F/3 patrol in ambush opened fire on 3-4 NVA in vicinity XD 986598, NVA broke contact in unknown direction, and F/3 ambush returned to CP since ambush site was compromised. At 2345H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 13-66 received. 2/1 continue search and destroy operations in area of responsibility. There were 3 platoon patrols, 3 squad patrols, 10 squad ambushes, 8 outposts and 8 listening posts employed.

g. 23 July - During period 0001-0250 emergency resupply of 4.2" and 81mm mortar ammunition effected. At 0800H "E" Company commenced move overland to relieve "F" Company on position; move completed at 1300H and "E" Company position now in vicinity XD 990598. At 1317H "F" Company started movement and was in position vicinity XD 983563 at 1758H. At 1220H "G" Company observed 2 unidentified persons in vicinity XD 967592; 106mm RR and 81mm mortars fired on suspected personnel with unknown results. At 1320H "H" Company received 2 rounds of 82mm mortar and sporadic automatic weapons fire from vicinity XD 997596; 4.2" mortar fires were called on suspected enemy position and enemy mortar and automatic weapons firing ceased. Between the hours of 0800H and 1700H H/3 patrol located a platoon-size NVA camp site in vicinity XD 994588-XD 982588: the site contained numerous fighting holes and cooking areas, in addition to four 81mm or 82mm mortar positions at XD 988588 and 100 to 150 spider holes along the ridgeline. Area searched and destroyed by H/3 patrol. At 2251H 2nd Bn, 1st Marines FRAG ORDER for 23 July was issued: Companies "E" and "F" to conduct platoon size patrols paying attention to draws, stream beds and trails; "G" Company commence helo lift from present position to relieve "H" Company on position in vicinity of XD 997597 and then conduct extensive patrolling to north and west in platoon size patrols. At 2300H H/2/A patrol made contact with 3 to 4 NVA moving south to north along stream bed coordinates XD 995595. H/2/A patrol opened fire with 150 rounds of small arms and threw grenades. NVA returned semi and automatic fire and threw

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1 grenade and then broke contact. H2A machine gun jammed and patrol returned to CP because ambush was compromised. Results: 2 probable NVA KIA. Two platoon patrols, 5 squad patrols, 8 squad ambushes, 8 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

r. 24 July - At 0001H "H" Company LP # 3 at XD 998593 made contact with approximately 30 NVA. LP opened fire and expended 45 rounds of small arms and 10 grenades. NVA forces broke contact in all directions and LP returned to CP. "H" Company received 4 rounds of suspected 82mm mortars landing at XD 998593. At 0005H booby traps which were planted at XD 998598 were tripped by an unknown source and fire missions from 4.2" Battery were fired at coordinates XD 998593. Negative assessment on fire mission. Results of contact of LP # 3: 4 NVA KIA (probable). At 0545H "H" Company reported receiving heavy small arms fire and mortar fire from vicinity of XD 998596. Fire missions by the 4.2" Battery and illumination by 81mm mortars were called and enemy activities ceased. A search of the area was conducted at first light and 4 NVA KIA (body count), 5 weapons, 7 grenades and 15 full magazines were found at XD 99598. At 1300H E/3 patrol made contact with 3 NVA on trail in vicinity XD 989605, opened fire with small arms, killing 2 NVA, physically pursued and captured 2 weapons and combat equipment. Patrol lost contact with NVA forces and returned to CP. Psy War Broadcast aircraft requested, but mission aborted due to foul weather. There were 4 platoon patrols, 3 squad patrols, 9 squad ambushes, 7 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

s. 25 July - At 0155H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 15-66 received: 2nd Bn, 1st Marine to continue search and destroy operations in assigned area. At 0240H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 25 July sent: all companies conduct search and destroy operations in assigned sectors paying particular attention to trails, draws, and other avenues of withdrawal or approach leading north and northwest; all units are to mine main trails and maintain proper records; all patrols to be in platoon strength. At 1730H "I" Battery, 3rd Bn, 12th Marines arrived at Hn CP and set in gun positions to provide longer range general support for TF DELTA. At 2000H two booby traps were sprung by an unknown source at XD 998578 and all units were alerted for possible enemy activity. At 2300H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 26 July sent: "E" and "F" Companies exchange positions by helo lift commencing 0800H; upon completion "E" Company conduct search and destroy operations in zone paying particular attention to GS YD 0056 and YD 0057 north of route # 9 and "F" Company expand operations in zone to North and West to uncover trails, etc; "G" and "H" companies continue search and destroy operations in assigned zones; all companies

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employ platoon sized patrols. At 2344H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 16-66 received: 2/1 continue assigned mission. There were 4 platoon patrols, 2 squad patrols, 8 squad ambushes, 7 outposts, and 7 listening posts employed.

t. 26 July - At 0800H "F" Company commenced helilift to relieve "E" Company on position vicinity XD 980598; "E" Company moved into "F" Company's positions vicinity XD 974566 and XD 991579 on the return flights. At 1315H F/1 patrol OP sighted 3 unidentified men running over the hill to the southwest in vicinity of XD 988594. OP fired 15 rounds of 60mm mortars with an unknown effect. At 2125H "F" Company received 5 rounds of suspected 60mm mortars from vicinity XD 578594. 81mm mortars were called on suspected enemy position and enemy mortaring ceased. At 2215H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 27 July issued: upon arrival 3/5 units in 2/1 zone "F" and "G" Companies be prepared for helilift to LZ's to be designated; "E" and "H" companies continue search and destroy operations in assigned zones. At 2337H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 17-66 received: 2/1 continue search and destroy operations in assigned areas and move units in accordance with adjusted boundaries. There were 3 platoon patrols, 5 squad patrols, 10 squad ambushes, 10 outposts, and 7 listening posts employed.

u. 27 July - 0930H 3/5 units commenced move into 2/1 zone. At 1225H "F" Company staged excess gear at "G" Company's position and at 1300H commenced overland movement to vicinity XD 9855 along streambed. At 1500H "G" Company commenced movement in trace of "F" Company to new positions vicinity YD 005565. At 1830H all units in position and northern FCL established along GL 58. At 2110H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 18-66 received: 2/1 continue assigned search and destroy operations. At 2200H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 28 July issued: All units continue search and destroy operations in assigned areas. There were 2 company patrol's, 3 squad patrols, 9 squad ambushes, 7 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

v. 28 July - Between 0216H and 0340H three unexplained explosions (thought to be grenades) occurred near CP. Each investigation proved negative. At 1445H a warning order was issued to "E" Company to be prepared to be helo-lifted to vicinity GS XD 9152 to conduct search and destroy operations. At 290105H warning order was cancelled. Daylight patrols had negative contact. Between the hours of 2125H and 2312H "H" Company at XD 969573, "H" Company ambush # 2 at XD 977572, and "I" Battery 3/12 were probed by an undetermined number of NVA's believed to be attempting to infiltrate their positions. NVA's fired small arms and threw grenades. This was answered with vigorous small arms, mortar, and M-79 fire. NVA broke

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contact in unknown directions. Areas were swept at first light with negative results. At 2307H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 19-66 received: 2nd Bn, 1st Marines to continue search and destroy operations in assigned area; "F" Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Marines moves to DA NANG at 291200H July. There were 1 platoon patrol, 4 squad patrols, 2 platoon ambushes, 7 squad ambushes, 8 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

w. 29 July - At 0030H "I" Battery, 3/12 received small arms fire from 6 to 8 NVA's in position at XD 997571 and XD 973561; fire was returned by small arms, 106mm RR and 105mm direct fire. All enemy activity ceased. The areas were swept at first light with negative results. At 0105H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 29 July issued: all companies continue search and destroy operations in assigned areas; 81's and 105's provide fire support on order and 4.2" be prepared to move to DONG HA at 291200H. Commencing at 0940H 3/5 units moved south into 2/1 zone to be helilifted from 2/1 LZ at 1400H. At 1200H W/1/11 commenced lift from their positions. At 1315H 3/5 elements commenced lift. Daylight patrols had negative contact. At 2240H TF DELTA FRAG ORDER 20-66 received: 2nd Bn, 1st Marines continue operations in assigned area; one platoon to be detached 300900H to provide Rough Rider security and report to C.O. LSA upon arrival at DONG HA. At 2355H 2nd Bn, 1st Marines issued FRAG ORDER for 30 July: all units continue search and destroy operations in assigned areas; "E" Company be prepared to detach one platoon at 300900H to provide Rough Rider security: platoon to report to C.O. LSA upon arrival at DONG HA. There were 3 platoon patrols, 2 squad patrols, 9 squad ambushes, 8 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

x. 30 July - At 0900H remaining 3/5 units moved into 2/1 area from north; lifted out at 1300H. Daylight patrols had negative contact. At 2000H 2/1 northern boundary established along 60 GL. Between 2130H and 2342H CP lines probed by several rounds small arms and grenades which were answered with small arms fire; negative results; no friendly casualties. At 2235H Task Force DELTA FRAG ORDER 21-66 received: 2/1 continue operations in assigned area and to be prepared to heli-lift one platoon "E" Company at 310900 to provide Rough Rider security to DONG HA. At 2247H 2/1 FRAG ORDER for 31 July issued: all units continue search and destroy operations in assigned areas; "E" Company detach one platoon effective 310900H to provide Rough Rider security. There were 1 platoon patrols, 5 squad patrols, 8 squad ambushes, 7 outposts, and 8 listening posts employed.

y. 31 July - At 0210 "E" Company saw 4-5 NVA in front of position, threw grenades and NVA retired. Daylight patrols had negative contact. At 2120H 2/1 issued FRAG ORDER for 1

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August 1966: commencing 011000H 2/1 moves by helo to DONG HA and subsequently to GIA LE on 2 August. There were 5 squad patrols, 11 squad ambushes, 9 outposts, and 12 listening posts employed.

2. 1 August - At 0830H commenced helolift of I/3/12 and 2/1 to DONG HA; 1230H lift completed. At 1500H H&S, G, F and a platoon of E Companies departed DONG HA by Rough Rider for GIA LE arriving at GIA LE at 1830H without incident. All companies - except E Co occupied previous positions on the lines; E Co provided security for 2/4 area and artillery positions. There were 6 outposts, 12 listening posts, 2 company patrols and 1 platoon patrol.

aa. 2 August - At 1230H H Co arrived by Rough Rider from DONG HA. There were 8 outposts and 10 listening posts employed.

bb. 3 August - Operation HASTINGS terminated 1200H in accordance with 3rdMajDiv message 041320Z. There were 3 platoon patrols, 9 squad patrols and 15 listening posts employed.

11. Results

a. Friendly Personnel and Equipment

(1) Personnel strength of participating units during Operation HASTING was as follows:

USMC

USN

Officers 28 Enlisted 791 Officers 2 Enlisted 44

(2) Friendly Casualties

(a) Battle Casualties - 18 KIA's and 38 WIA's.

(b) Non-battle Casualties (including ill) - 228 (170 were non-evac). Totals include all attached units.

(3) Discipline, Law and Order: No problems encountered.

(4) Burial and Graves Registration: No problems encountered.

(5) Morale: Normal for an operation of this type and duration.

(6) No friendly equipment was lost during the operation however, considerable personal property and individual equipment stored at DONG HA was lost or destroyed.

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b. Enemy Personnel and Equipment

- (1) NVA KIA Confirmed - 27
- (2) NVA KIA Probable - 26
- (3) NVA WIA Confirmed - 7
- (4) NVA WIA Probable - 1
- (5) Equipment captured: 1 Goryunov MG, 1 DPM, 1 SWS, 9 AK-47, 12 hand grenades, 2540 rounds 7.62, 3 pac's, 5 cartridge belts, 3 magazine carriers, 3 grenade carriers, assorted medical equipment, assorted uniforms, documents, and 10 feet. primacord.

c. Air strike assessments. All areas in which air strikes were called by this battalion were searched by ground forces without significant results.

12. Administrative Mattersa. Logistics

(1) No logistical problems were encountered during the operations, mainly due to the outstanding cooperation of the LSA.

(2) All resupply and medical evacuations were accomplished by helicopter.

b. Medical

(1) Battle Casualties: These were for the most party evacuated by helicopter from the site of the casualty to "D" Medical Company, 3rd Medical Battalion located in DONG HA. Some of the minor casualties were seen at the Battalion Aid Station located in the CP and retained in the area or returned to duty.

(2) Non-Battle Casualties: These were seen at the Battalion Aid Station and either treated and returned to duty or evacuated to "D" Medical facility.

(3) Special Problems: The only problem encountered was with the water supply. Seven cases of ear infections (attributed to the water) were treated at the Battalion Aid Station; one of these required evacuation. On approximately the 12th day of the operation the water source (a flowing stream) became cloudy and numerous dead fish were noted.

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This was attributed to H&I artillery fire. The stream was closed as a water point for two days during which time the water cleared. There was no appreciable amount of diarrhea noted.

c. Communications

(1) General. Operation HASTINGS was conducted in two phases by this unit. The first phase consisted of the defensive mission at DONG HA and CAM LO while the second phase was the committing of this unit to the offensive portion of the Operation HASTINGS. As these phases reflect diversified communications requirements, they are covered as such in this report.

(2) Phase One - Defensive mission at DONG HA and CAM LO;

(a) Radio

1. Internal. Internal Battalion communications posed no problems and communications were established in accordance with normal unit operating procedures.

2. External

a. In order to expand the external communications system, a Communications Central, TSC-15, was activated to provide a voice and teletype circuit between DONG HA and the Fourth Marines at PHU BAI. This system proved to be very unstable and, therefore, not acceptable. Initially, the problem lay in insufficient equipment to establish the teletype circuit. Additional equipment was obtained from the 4th Marines. However, after another equipment failure there was insufficient equipment to continue this circuit. The Third MarDiv was requested to provide both technical and equipment assistance, which was quickly received. Repeated efforts to establish a stable and reliable circuit to PHU BAI were unsuccessful, and it was, therefore, decided to attempt to establish this circuit direct to the Third MarDiv at DA NANG. Although the circuit was now becoming acceptable, an unusual number of equipment failures began to occur. Additional equipment and technical assistance were employed at both terminal units until the equipment problems began to be resolved about 14 July. From this point on, the only problem encountered was with frequencies which were not considered to be beyond acceptable limits. It should be noted that experience with high frequency single side band communications equipment in and around the PHU BAI area has always reflected an unacceptable response. It has continually been easier to

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establish and maintain this type of radio communications with DA NANG than to communicate with PHU BAI. As of this time no satisfactory explanation of this phenomenon can be advanced.

b. A secondary external communications circuit was established by laying two trunk lines to the Air Force Switchboard at DONG HA. This provided two telephone circuits to HUE, PHU BAI and DA NANG. Unfortunately, the Air Force was experiencing similar difficulties with their radio telephone circuits and these were not considered reliable.

c. A tertiary means of communication was established with the Fourth Marines at PHU BAI by radio. Again, the high frequency circuit in and out of the PHU BAI Combat Base was not sufficiently reliable to provide 24 hour communications

(b) Wire. Normal wire communications were established and maintained with no difficulties encountered.

(c) Message Center Operations. This unit provided normal message center facilities for Battalion; later the LSA unit superimposed itself on the Battalion Command Post. It is to be noted that during this operation, the battalion message center maintained two message centers: one at the GIA LE Command Post and one at DONG HA. This dual operational requirement tended to over-extend a small, eight-man section both in personnel and equipment. This problem is best alleviated by having an MOS cross-training program in effect which will allow the utilization of personnel of the other sections in the message center.

(3) Phase Two - Offensive Phase of Operation HASTINGS

(a) Radio

1. Radio communications were established and maintained with a minimum of difficulty.

2. One difficulty noted however, was the tendency to operate the companies to the limits of AN/PRC-25 range. This tended to out-distance the capability of the PRC-10 with the 81mm FO Teams and the PRC-9 of the Artillery FO Teams. Until the receipt of the full T/E allowance of AN/PRC-25's, this will continue to be a problem requiring close attention.

(b) Wire. Limited wire communication was employed during this phase of Operation HASTINGS.

(c) Message Center Operations. (See Phase One).

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13. Special Equipment and Techniques. None employed.

14. Commander's Analysis

a. One serious failing throughout the operation and especially during that phase in which this unit was committed was the complete lack of information flowing down from higher headquarters. No OpSuns and only a few IntSuns were received. This resulted in this unit operating in a partial vacuum. Daily visits by CG TF DELTA and principal staff members tended to alleviate the situation.

b. No significant difficulties which can not be corrected at the local level were encountered during the operation.

c. Lessons Learned

(1) The 60mm mortar proved invaluable both in the offense and defense. It was useful for providing "reconnaissance by fire" and "prop fires" during a company's advance. It was also very useful in covering avenues of approach into a company's position which were otherwise difficult to cover. Its effectiveness was limited, however, when the unit moved into the canopy.

(2) The use of booby traps - emplaced and removed during the hours of darkness - around a company position were found to be very useful in signaling the approach of the enemy. These can be either prepared items or improvised from flares, hand grenades, etc.

(3) While the canopy restricted all radios, the AN/PRC-25 proved the more reliable. The AN/PRC-10 radio could not be depended on to penetrate the canopy.

(4) It was noted that likely ambush sites along trails appeared to be occasionally marked by small (one foot in length) sticks laid across the trail.

(5) Whenever feasible, giving the company commanders as much freedom of action as possible within his assigned zone provides him considerable choice of movement in the conduct of search and destroy operations. It allows him to capitalize on the unit's strong points and minimize the weakness. This, in conjunction with a coordinated patrol effort, provides excellent coverage of a large area.

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(6) The absolute necessity of responding to any NVA -- contact with an immediate and large volume of fire was consistently demonstrated throughout the operation.

d. Psychological Warfare Activities were of two types: formal pre-planned broadcasts and leaflet drops from aircraft and improvised signs placed in known NVA harboring areas by one of the rifle companies. The aircraft broadcasts and leaflet drops which were provided by TF DELTA on several occasions during the course of the operation covered the area very well. The broadcasts could be heard rather well and were understandable. The leaflets blanketed the area and many torn-up ones were found throughout. One of the companies improvised signs which they placed throughout the area. No evaluation can be made as to the effectiveness of the Psy War effort inasmuch as no captives were taken by the battalion.

15. Recommendations: The forces participating in this operation now have a good knowledge of the area and the suspected enemy positions within it. As of this date there are already indications that the NVA is flowing back into the vacuum created by the withdrawal of Task Force DEIT Forces. Therefore, it is recommended that the long range reconnaissance effort in this area be continued and that at appropriate times and locations Marine infantry battalions with suitable supporting arms be employed in this area to deny the NVA freedom of movement and to keep him off balance.

J. D. SPAULDING

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3/GRK/cm

3120

11 August 1966

FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CO 1stBn 3dMar After Action Report 3/SEN/addh 3120
of 7Aug66

From: Commanding Officer, 3d Marines
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division
Via: Commanding General, Task Force Delta

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report

1. Forwarded.

G. H. RIPLEY
By direction

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3/SEN/ddh
3120
7 Aug 1966

1/3

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division
Via: Commanding Officer, 3d Marines
Commanding General, Task Force Delta

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report

Ref: (a) CG 3d MarDiv Msg 131330Z Jul 1966
(b) CG 3d MarDiv Msg 140341Z Jul 1966

Encl: (1) 1st Bn, 3d Marines Dispositions and Movements, 15-31
Jul, Operation HASTINGS - NIF
(2) Unit Journal - NIF

1. Code Name. Operation HASTINGS, Multi-Battalion Search and Destroy.
2. Date of Operation. 150630H July - 010630H Aug 1966.
3. Location. QUANG TRI Province.
4. Control or Command Headquarters

Task Force Delta

BrigGen L. E. ENGLISH

5. Task Organization

- 1st Battalion, 3d Marines
 - H&S Co (-)(Rein)
 - HST, 3d SP Bn
 - Arty Liaison Tm, 1st Bn, 12th Mar

LtCol R. R. DICKER III
Capt E. J. McBRIDE

Co A (Rein):

1st Lt M. H. CRAFTON

Det, H&S Co
Det, Med Platoon
81mm FO Tm
Det, Hq Co, 3d Mar
Sniper Tm
Det, 1st Bn, 12th Mar
FO Tm
Plat, 768th Co, 52d Bn, DA NANG RF

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Co B (Rein)

Capt A. G. WHITTELSEY

Det, H&S Co
 Det, Med Plat
 FAC Tm
 81mm FO Tm
 Det, Hq Co, 3d Mar
 Sniper Tm
 Det, 1st Bn, 12th Mar
 FO Tm

Co D (Rein)

Capt B. M. SUMMERLIN

Det, H&S Co
 Det, Med Plat
 FAC Tm
 81mm FO Tm
 Det, Hq Co, 3d Mar
 Sniper Tm
 Det, 1st Bn, 12th Mar
 FO Tm

6. Supporting Forces

a. Artillery. Artillery was used extensively for preparatory fires on assigned objectives during the advance of the battalion during search and destroy operations conducted during the period 22-31 July. These fires were effectively delivered, although friendly air operations in the zone of action occasionally prevented adherence to planned times of execution. Artillery was also used for extensive H&I missions, and on the one occasion they were called by this unit on an active enemy element, the enemy mortars shelling 2d Battalion, 4th Marines positions on 241930H Jul, the response was timely and coverage was excellent, with a secondary explosion observed.

b. Air. No close air support missions were requested by this battalion during the operation. AO support was generally excellent and was furnished without undue delay in the majority of instances when it was requested. Helicopter support of all categories, troop and equipment lifts, logistic support, and medical evacuation, was excellent to outstanding, both on pre-planned and on call missions.

7. Intelligencea. Enemy disposition

(1) Within the area of operations:

90th Regt (Str 1500)
 324thB Division Hq (Str unknown)

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(2) Outside the area of operation, but within reinforcing distance (24 hours or less):

803d Regt (Est Str 1500)
812th Regt (Est Str 1500)
4th Bn, 270th Brig (Str unknown)
U/I LF Unit (Str unknown)

b. Recent activity prior to Operation HASTINGS. Reconnaissance patrols in the area of operations and adjacent areas had many sightings and contacts prior to the commencement of Operation HASTINGS. In addition, aircraft received A/W fire from prepared positions and one aerial observer sighted 100 VC in prepared positions.

c. Enemy strength and situation. From 15-21 July, the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines remained in a defensive position as security for Task Force DELTA Headquarters. During this period only two contacts occurred between elements of the Battalion and VC forces.

(1) 151920H - Company "D" patrol in the vicinity of (YD 133609) made contact with an estimated VC mortar squad. The Marines killed three VC (confirmed) and captured one 60mm mortar, five 60mm rounds and three CHICOM grenades.

(2) 201500H - A patrol from Company "A" in the vicinity of (YD 228558) received fire from across the VINH PHUOC River from an estimated 15 VC. The patrol returned fire and at the same time received additional fire from an estimated 9 VC located in the vicinity of (YD 232562). The Marines then shifted their fire to the new target. Two Unic gunships entered the area to investigate the firing. The Squad Leader marked his position with green smoke and threw red smoke in the direction of enemy positions. The Unis then added their fire and later reported 30 VC KIA (confirmed).

(3) Upon the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines insertion into the area of operation, Company A dispatched a patrol to the vicinity of (YD 056658), an area where on 19 July elements of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines had engaged a VC force of unknown size. A search of the area revealed numerous hastily dug fighting holes and enemy equipment consisting of two 82mm mortars, three base plates, 59 rounds 82mm mortar ammunition, one heavy 7.62mm machine gun and two wheeled mounts for same, and one LMG along with numerous miscellaneous 782 gear and small arms ammunition. These indicated the probable presence of a heavy weapons company. Another indication of this was the type collar insignias worn by NVA troops who had been in the area. This was discovered from photographs found in [REDACTED] ment.

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(4) Company "B", while located in the vicinity of (YD 053657) from 22-25 July, captured 100 packs with personal effects and uniforms, 37 cases of 12.7 ammunition, seven SKS carbines, a large amount of linked HMG type 7.62 ammunition, one complete 12.7 AA machine gun with extra parts and a large amount of 782 gear, further indicating the presence of a heavy machine gun company, or possibly an AA company.

(5) Company "D", on 28 July, while moving to Regimental Objective 3, engaged 2 NVA in the vicinity of (YD 088628) resulting in one probable NVA WIA. Seven packs, 1 U.S. carbine, 1 SKS carbine and numerous cooking utensils were captured. In this same vicinity several huts, fighting holes and a kitchen were found and subsequently destroyed.

d. Enemy units identified. Company "B" on 24 July captured an NVA WIA in the vicinity of (YD 053658). An initial interrogation of this captive revealed he was a member of the 4th Company, 7th Battalion, 90th Regt, 324B Div. He was subsequently forwarded to Task Force Delta Headquarters.

e. Weather and terrain

(1) Weather. The weather conditions in the area of operations imposed no problems with regard to tactical operations.

(2) Terrain. The terrain in the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines area of operation was characterized by low rolling hills covered with a heavy growth of elephant grass and jungle type vegetation. This offered good concealment for troops. There were some burned over areas which afforded ease of movement. Jungle growth restricted movement to trails and dry ravines. Good observation was offered from the tops of hills subject only to the limits of vegetation and other terrain features.

8. Mission. Reference (a) directed that 3d Marines provide one battalion (-) of three companies to Task Force Delta. At a planning conference conducted by the Commanding Officer, 3d Marines at 140730H, the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines was assigned this mission. At a briefing conducted at Task Force Delta Headquarters at 140915H, the battalion was assigned the initial mission of providing security for Task Force Delta Headquarters, 3d Battalion, 12th Marines (Rein) positions, and for the Logistic Support area at DONG HA. Reference (b) was furnished the Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines at this briefing.

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9. Concept of Operation

a. See reference (b).

b. Commencing 150600H 1st Battalion, 3d Marines (-)(Rein) moves by motor march to DA NANG airbase then by fixed wing aircraft to DONG HA. One rifle company (Rein) occupies defensive positions to provide security for the Logistic Support Area at DONG HA vicinity (YD 244598). One rifle company (Rein) proceeds by motor march to vicinity (YD 118579) and occupies defensive positions to provide security for 3d Battalion, 12th Marines (Rein). One rifle company (Rein) proceeds by motor march to Task Force Delta Headquarters at CAM LO vicinity (YD 132593) and occupies defensive positions to provide security for that installation. 1st Battalion, 3th Marines OP located at CAM LO vicinity (YD 132593). One section 81mm mortar platoon (-) attached to each rifle company.

10. Executiona. Planning

(1) At 132307H Jul, a message from the Commanding Officer, 3d Marines was relayed from the 9th Marines, under whose OpCon the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines was operating in Operation MACON, stating that the Commanding Officer and two staff members should be prepared to be picked up by helicopter at 140630H for a conference at 3d Marines CP.

(2) The Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines, with two staff members, departed by helicopter from the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines CP in the area of operations, Operation MACON, (BT 057548) at 140705H for the 3d Marines CP.

(3) A planning conference at the 3d Marines CP concerning assignment of the mission assigned to the 3d Marines by reference (a) to the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines was conducted by Commanding Officer, 3d Marines at the 3d Marines CP at 140715H.

(4) At 140815H, the Commanding Officer, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines and 2 staff members departed DA NANG by fixed wing aircraft for DONG HA, and further proceeded by helicopter to Task Force Delta Headquarters at CAM LO for a briefing on the mission assigned the battalion in connection with Operation HASTINGS, returning to DA NANG by helicopter and fixed wing aircraft after the briefing.

(5) By 141300H, all elements of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines assigned to Operation MACON had returned to the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines CP and preliminary planning oriented toward the mission assigned the Battalion in Operation HASTINGS commenced. At 141500H a staff planning conference was conducted by the Commanding Officer.

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(6) At 141900H, a final planning conference attended by the Battalion Staff and Company Commanders was conducted by the Commanding Officer.

b. Operations

(1) 150600H - Loading elements of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines commenced motor march from their CP to the DA NANG airbase.

(2) 150830H - The Command Group and Company "D" departed DA NANG by fixed wing aircraft, arriving DONG HA at about 150910H, and proceeded to CAM LO by motor march, arriving at 151000H.

(3) 151530H - All elements of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines arrived in assigned positions and commenced execution of assigned mission.

(4) 151920H - A squad patrol from Company "D" sighted 4 VC approaching them on a trail in the vicinity of (YD 133609). The patrol established a hasty ambush and engaged the VC, killing two in the initial exchange of fire. Remaining VC returned fire with small arms and grenades. The Marine patrol assaulted the VC position, capturing 1 60mm mortar, 5 60mm rounds with fuzes, 3 ChiCom grenades, and 2 packs. One additional VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VC KIA (probable). Two members of the patrol were WIA. The patrol commenced withdrawal with captured enemy material, and received 60mm mortar fire. No additional friendly casualties were incurred. An additional squad was dispatched to assist the patrol. Both squads returned to Company "D" positions at 152300H. The casualties were treated, one was scheduled for routine Med Evac on 16 July. The remaining casualty was not evacuated. 3 VC KIA (confirmed), 1 VC KIA (probable), 2 USMC WIA (one evac).

(5) 160700-170700H - All units conducted patrol and ambush activity in zone without enemy contact. Task Force Delta Frag Order #4 chopped OpCon of Company "A" to LSA. Company "G" (-), 2d Battalion, 1st Marines was designated Task Force Delta Reserve with OpCon chopped to 1st Battalion, 3d Marines at 161545H.

(6) 170700H-180700H - Intensive patrol and ambush activity was continued in the area of responsibility. OpCon of Company "B" chopped to 3d Battalion, 12th Marines at 171130H. There was no enemy contact during the period.

(7) 180700H-190700H - the Battalion continued patrol and ambush activity in its area of responsibility, without enemy contact.

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(8) 190700H-200700H - Patrol and ambush activity in the Battalion area of responsibility was continued, without enemy contact. At 191130H, OpCon of Company "G", 2d Battalion, 1st Marines chopped to parent organization. At 192245H, one USMC KIA, one ARVN PF KIA, and 6 PF WIA resulted from an accidental engagement between friendly forces in the vicinity of (YD 147600). The 6 PF WIA were evacuated by helicopter from Task Force Delta Headquarters, to which they and the USMC KIA had been brought by ARVN truck following the incident.

(9) 200700H-210700H - All units of the battalion continued assigned mission, conducting patrol and ambush activity in the Battalion's area of responsibility. At 201140H, Task Force Delta notified the Battalion Commander that 1st Battalion, 3d Marines would relieve the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines at about 211200H. The initial mission of the battalion was to be the establishment of a blocking position at the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines present positions, in the vicinity of (YD 054650). At 201500H, a squad combat patrol from Company "A" was fired on by an estimated 15 VC from across the VINH PHUOC River, in the vicinity of (YD 220558). Fire was returned by the patrol, which then received fire from an estimated 9 VC in the vicinity of (YD 22562). The patrol shifted a portion of its fire to this enemy position. Two UH1E gunships in the area approached to investigate. The squad leader, having no communications with the aircraft, marked his position with green smoke and threw red smoke in the direction of the enemy. The gunships engaged the VC and enemy fire ceased. Returning UH1E pilots reported 30 VC KIA confirmed in the area. There were no friendly casualties. At 202200H, a premature burst from a 105mm shell shortly after leaving the muzzle resulted in one WIA (evac) from Company "B".

(10) 210700H - 220700H - All elements of the battalion were moved to the Task Force Delta CP by 211000H, preparatory to helicopter lift to positions of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines. The lift was executed as scheduled and without incident, with the Battalion Command group and Company "D" landing at 211205H. The lift and relief lines was completed by 211310H. A battalion defensive perimeter was established with the battalion CP located in the vicinity of (YD 054652). Patrol activity was commenced at 211600H, and ambushes and local listening posts were established during the hours of darkness. At 212300H, 18 rounds of friendly 105mm artillery fire fell in the battalion defensive positions, resulting in one WIA from Company "B" (Med Evac). There was no enemy contact during the period.

(11) 220700H - 230700H - At 221025H, Company "B" was assigned the mission of seizing and holding the ridgeline in the vicinity of (YD 053657), with the attack to commence about 221200H. At 221200H, two short rounds of 81mm mortars fell in the vicinity of the Battalion CP location while registering defensive fires, resulting in one WIA (evac). Company "B" crossed the LOD at 221310H following the delivery of artillery, mortar, and small arms preparatory fire on the

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objective. At 221515H, personnel from Company "B" activated what was presumed to be a mine, resulting in one KIA and two WIA (one med evac). Company "B" completed seizure of the objective by 221700H and commenced consolidation of defensive positions. During the attack, the company reported locating several NVA KIA, as well as large amounts of enemy material, weapons, and ammunition. All elements of the battalion conducted ambush activity during hours of darkness, without enemy contact.

(12) 230700H - 240700H - Company "D" was ordered to attack an objective in the vicinity of (YD 059667). As this objective was being fired on by 81mm mortars at 230900H, preparatory to Company "D"'s attack, it was discovered that a Recon team of 5 Marines was in the area being fired on. Fire was ceased, Recon Team was extracted by helicopter. The attack was delayed until it was positively determined the area was clear of friendly troops. Further delay was occasioned by friendly air activity in the area which prevented resumption of preparatory fires on the objective. Company "D" crossed the LOD at 231232H, secured its objective by 231400H, and commenced consolidation of defensive positions. A patrol from Company "A" recovered a large amount of enemy material and weapons from the stream bed in the vicinity of (YD 056658). Company "B" continued to recover and evacuate large amounts of enemy material, weapons, and ammunition in the vicinity of its position; and found 2 more NVA KIA. There was no enemy contact during the period.

(13) 240700H - 250700H - All companies of the battalion conducted patrol activity. At 241630H, a patrol from Company "B" apprehended one NVA WIA in the vicinity of (YD 053658). The prisoner had been wounded 5 days previously and was determined to be a reconnaissance scout. He gave his organization as Co. 4, 7th Bn, 90th Reg't. The NVAC was evacuated to Task Force Delta Headquarters by helicopter. Company "B" continued to locate and evacuate large quantities of enemy material, ammunition and weapons. All companies conducted ambush activity during hours of darkness. There was no enemy contact.

(14) 250700H - 260700H - At 251045H, the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines CP displaced to the vicinity of (YD 067670), with elements of Company "D" providing security. Company "B" commenced its advance to an objective located in the vicinity of (YD 063665). Following the displacement of the Battalion CP and upon relief of its lines by elements of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines, Company "A" advanced to the vicinity of the Battalion CP and established defensive positions. Company "D" remained in position in the vicinity of (YD 060667) to cover the advance of Companies "A" and "B". At 251417H, one round of friendly 105mm WP landed in the vicinity of the Battalion CP (YD 067670). There were no friendly casualties. All units of the battalion conducted night ambush activity. There was no enemy contact.

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(15) 260700H - 270700H - Company "D" commenced the attack on its first objective, Hill 72 (YD 076673) at 260700H, following 81mm mortar and artillery preparatory fires. Company "B" commenced the attack on its assigned objective in the vicinity of (YD 067654) at 260940H following preparatory fires on the objective. Company "D" seized its initial objective at 261047H, and continued the attack to the south. Company "B" seized its assigned objective at 261330H, with no enemy resistance, and continued its advance to more defensible terrain. Company "D" halted its advance on its objective in the vicinity of (YD 076663), establishing a defensive perimeter at that position. The Battalion CP displaced by helicopter to the vicinity of Company "B"'s position, establishing the new CP at (YD 073656). Company "A" then advanced to the vicinity of the Battalion CP, establishing a perimeter with Company "B" in the vicinity of (YD 071654) to (YD 073657). Ambush activity was conducted by all companies during the hours of darkness. There was no enemy contact.

(16) 270700H - 280700H - At 270800H, Companies "A" and "D" moved out in the attack to the south. Company "D" reached its final objective and consolidated in defensive positions in the vicinity of (YD 093637) at about 271712H. Company "A" established positions on its final objective in the vicinity of (YD 078637) and H&S Company (-) displaced forward by helicopter, establishing the Battalion CP in the vicinity of (YD 078637). Company "B" then displaced forward and tied in with Company "A" in the vicinity of (YD 081637). Ambush activity was conducted during the hours of darkness with no enemy contact. At 272150H, 6 rounds of friendly 105mm artillery landed in the Battalion CP and Company "A" positions. There were no friendly casualties. At 280630H, Company "B" commenced the attack towards Task Force Objective 3 located on Hill 84 (YD 091609).

(17) 280700H - 290700H - At 280830H, Company "B" secured its objective. Company "D" commenced its attack toward Objective 3 at 270902H. The Battalion Command Group and H&S Company (-) (less 81's) commenced movement to the objective at 271015H, arriving at 271215H. At 281105H, Company "D" fired on 2 VC in the vicinity of (YD 088628), resulting in one VC WIA (probable). The VC fled under fire. A search of the area resulted in the discovery of a VC Base Camp. One US Carbine, one SMS carbine, 7 ChiCom grenades, 2 M26 grenades, miscellaneous 782 gear, 25 lbs of rice, 25 lbs of clothing, and 11 lbs of medical gear were captured. Company "A" advanced to the objective after covering the helicopter lift of the 81mm mortar platoon, ammunition, and supplies, arriving at 1426H, and tied in with Companies "B" and "D". Ambush activity was conducted during the hours of darkness, with no enemy contact.

(18) 290700H - 300700H - The Battalion conducted intensive patrol activity throughout the day and ambush activity during the hours of darkness, with no enemy contact. There was no change in the Battalion's positions.

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(19) 300700H - 310700H - At 300730H, Company "D" commenced its advance to positions being vacated by the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines. At 300756H, displacement of the Battalion CP commenced. The new CP was established at (YD 086605) at 300900H. Company "D" established defensive positions in the vicinity of (YD 085594). Company "A" occupied new positions in the vicinity of (YD 071603), (YD 074607) and (YD 071609) at 301015H. Company "B" covered the advance of Company "D", H&S Company, and Company "A", and at 301258H displaced to positions in the vicinity of (YD 088619). Patrol and ambush activity was conducted, with no enemy contact. At 301735H, 3 rounds of friendly 105mm artillery fire fell near the battalion's positions at (YD 094603). There were no friendly casualties.

(20) 310700H Jul - 010700H Aug - At 310730H, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines units commenced movement to Task Force Delta Headquarters at CAM LO. All elements arrived by 311200H. At approximately 311415H, movement of the Battalion to DONG HA by motor march commenced and was completed by 311740H. There was no enemy contact during the period. At 010730H, the return of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines to DA NANG by fixed wing aircraft commenced, and OpCon of the Battalion dropped to 3d Marines.

11. Results

a. Enemy personnel losses

- 39 KIA confirmed
- 9 KIA probable
- 1 WIA probable
- 1 NVAC WIA

b. Enemy material captured

- 1 AK 47 Assault rifle
- 1 US Carbine
- 40 S&S Carbines
- 1 Soviet RPD (Degtyarev) LMG Cal. 7.62mm
- 1 BBG Cal. 7.62
- 2 82mm mortar tubes with bipods
- 3 82mm mortar baseplates
- 1 82mm mortar sight
- 2 wheeled mounts for HMG Cal. 7.62mm
- 1 HMG Cal. 12.7 with tripod, 3 shields, 2 AA sights
- 59 ChiCom 82mm mortar rounds
- 70 82mm mortar round fuzes
- 2 cans ignition cartridges
- 8 loose ignition cartridges
- 12 packs inorements
- 9 cases Cal. 7.62 ammunition
- 45 cases Cal. 12.7 ammunition, linked and loose

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4 packs containing loose rounds Cal 12.7 ammunition
 2 barrels, Cal. 7.62 machine gun
 2 magazines, drum type, for Cal. 7.62 machine gun
 4 sets heavy wheels
 94 ChiCom grenades (potato masher type)
 2 ChiCom AP mines
 2 US M26 grenades
 1 60mm mortar tube
 11 60mm mortar rounds with fuzes
 28 rounds ammunition, carbine, Cal. .30
 2 ChiCom field phones
 2 rolls communication wire
 3 night firing devices for mortar
 1 set cleaning gear for mortar
 2 cases RPG-2 rockets (5 per case)
 1 case Claymore mines (old US type)
 100 packs, plus miscellaneous items of 762 gear, web belts,
 grenade and ammunition pouches, canteens, belts
 2 large bags hammocks and netting
 400 pounds uniforms
 25 pounds miscellaneous clothing
 21 pounds medical supplies and equipment
 40 pounds documents
 100 pounds plastic material
 10 cooking pots
 2,025 pounds rice, destroyed
 1 flag with Soviet emblem (Hammer and Sickle)

c. Friendly personnel losses

2 KIA
 7 WIA (5 evac)

d. Friendly equipment losses

None

12. Administrative Matters

a. Supply

(1) Method of resupply in the operating area was by helicopter. Resupply was excellent. The HST assigned to this Battalion from 3d SP Battalion performed in an exceptionally efficient manner.

(2) Combat loads carried by troops of this Battalion were well suited to the demands of the operation.

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ENCLOSURE (3)

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b. Maintenance. Equipment requiring repair was evacuated to LSA and replacement items requested. Service was excellent.

c. Treatment of casualties, evacuation and hospitalization. The Battalion Surgeon treated non-evac casualties at the Battalion Aid Station. Evacuation of serious casualties was by helicopter. Helicopter evacuation of casualties was timely.

d. Transportation. Transportation means used between DONG HA and DA NANG were fixed wing aircraft, between DONG HA and CAM LO motor march, and within the zone of operations helicopter and foot march. Transportation was adequate and movements were accomplished without incident except for delay in the return of some elements of the Battalion to DA NANG occasioned by adverse weather conditions, which caused two aircraft to divert to HUE/PHU BAI and land for refueling after turning back from DA NANG. A total of 95 helicopter missions were flown in support of the Battalion's operations.

e. Communications. Both radio and land line communications were used during the Battalion's operations. The Battalion guarded the following radio nets: Task Force Delta Command, Task Force Delta Tac, TAD, TAR, TACP Local, LZ Control, Battalion Tac, DAO, Arty Conduct of Fire, 81mm Conduct of Fire, and Logistics Support. 24 miles of wire were laid during the conduct of Search and Destroy Operations in the period 21-31 July. With three exceptions, all Companies were linked to the Battalion CP by land line when in night defensive positions during this period. The PRC25 proved invaluable in maintaining radio contact, which was never lost during any phase of the operation. Communications between the Battalion and Task Force Headquarters was maintained with short tape antennae on PRC25's while on the move in densely vegetated terrain at points only 2000 meters from the DMZ. It was noted that in several instances better communications was achieved by the PRC25 than was obtained from the use of HF equipment. PRC292 antennae were not required at any time. The SB22 switchboard was used in the Battalion CP each night. Electronic maintenance support was excellent. Electronic supply support was excellent except in the case of BA270's. 19 cases of dead BA270's were received during the last 5 days of the operation, which severely restricted the communications capabilities of Company Tac Nets. All Companies made excellent usage of internal wire systems. The KAM60 and KAC138 were extensively used throughout the operation.

f. Medical Evaluation. A 3 man medical team, consisting of one medical officer and two corporals, participated in the operation. The primary cause of non-battle casualties in the Battalion was skin rash induced by the inability of troops to maintain required standards of cleanliness of the body and clothing due to lack of bathing water and the tactical situation. It was also impossible to obtain resupply through normal channels. Recommendations: (1) Supply of water compatible with requirements of personal hygiene. (2) Stockage of required items for medical resupply at LSA.

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13. Special Equipment and Techniques. None.

14. Commander's Analysis. The employment of this Battalion in Operation HASTINGS was well conceived and effectively executed. The Battalion was able to carry out its assigned missions with ease. Of particular note was the excellent communications on all nets where the PRC25 radio was used. Another notable feature of the operation was the timeliness and completeness of resupply.

15. Recommendations. None.

R.R. Dickey
R. R. DICKEY III

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ENCLOSURE (3)

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HEADQUARTERS

2d Battalion, 4th Marines (-) (Rein)
3rd Marine Division, FMF
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

1/17/66
CLO-66
9/10/66

2/4

SAC FILE
HEADQUARTERS
2d BATTALION 4th MARINES (Rein)
11 Aug 66
611-66
Copy 6 of 14 Capt.

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, 4th Marines
Subj: Combat Operation After Action Report

Ref: (a) RegtO 3120.3B
(b) Frag Order 1 - Operation Hastings
(c) Maps: Vietnam 1:50,000, AMS 2701 6361 I & II, 6461 III & IV

1. Code Name: "OPERATION HASTINGS"
2. Date of Operation: 150800H July 1966 - 031200H August 1966
3. Location: Quang Tri Province RVN
4. Command Headquarters:

2d Battalion, 4th Marines
Company E
Company G
Company H
81mm Mortar Platoon

LtCol BENCH
Capt LEE
Capt LEONARD
Capt HILLIERS
2dLt LEE

5. TASK ORGANIZATION:

2d Bn (-) (Rein), 4th Mar

LtCol BENCH

H & S Company (-)
1st Plt (-) Co B, 3rd Engr Bn
Arty Ln Tn, Btry H, 3rd Bn, 12th Mar
HST Tn, Co A, 3rd Shore Party Bn

Company E (Rein)

Capt LEE

FO Tn, Btry H, 3rd Bn, 12th Mar
1st Sqd, 1st Plt, Co B 3d Engr Bn
Det, H & S Co, 2d Bn, 4th Mar

FO Tn, 81mm Mortar Plt
Det, Med Plt
Interpreter
S-2 Scout Tn

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Company G (Rein)

Capt LEONARD

FO Tn, Btry H, 3rd Bn, 12th Mar
 2d Sqd, 1st Plt, Co B, 3rd Engr Bn
 Det, H & S Co, 2d Bn, 4th Mar
 FO Tn, 81mm Mortar Plt
 Det, Med Plt
 Interpreter
 FAC Tn
 S-2 Scout Tn

Company H (Rein)

Capt HIGGS

FO Tn, Btry H, 3rd Bn, 12th Mar
 3rd Sqd, 1st Plt Co B, 3rd Engr Bn
 Sniper Tn, Sniper Plt, 4th Mar
 Det H & S Co, 2d Bn, 4th Mar
 FO Tn, 81mm Mortar Plt
 Det Med Plt
 Interpreter
 S-2 Scout Tn

6. Supporting Forces:

a. 1st Platoon, Company B, 3rd Engineer Battalion. Utilized for mine clearance, destroying duds, enemy ammunition, and blowing trenches and caves.

b. Artillery support by 3rd Battalion, 12th Marines.

c. Air was provided by 1st Marine Air Wing and consisted of troop helilift with HU1E escort, medical evacuation and close air support with varied ordnances.

7. Intelligence: It was believed that the 90th Regiment of the 324B Division was operating in the planned area of operation.

Information obtained from documents and ITT reports indicated that the 90th Regiment and four supporting companies of the 324B Division were encountered.

Terrain: The terrain consisted mostly of hills covered by heavy foliage making trafficability slow and difficult. All avenues of approach which severely channelized friendly forces could be observed from the hills without detection.

Weather: The weather was generally clear and hot during the period with heavy showers toward late afternoon and evening.

Psychological Warfare: Broadcasting from aircraft and speakers on the ground was excellent both in quantity and quality but had little if any effect on North Vietnamese Army (NVA) troops.

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8. Mission: In accordance with provisions of reference (b) 2d Battalion, 4th Marines was to conduct search and destroy operations against enemy forces in the assigned objective area.

9. Concept of Operation:

To employ the Battalion as part of a larger ~~task force~~ ^{task force} to conduct search and destroy operations against NVA forces in a coordinated effort with the other operational Battalions of the Task Force. 2/4 to be inserted by helicopter into the area of operations and to move by foot through the area of operations to link up with 3/4. To further exploit the blocking position occupied by 3/4 and then pull back to a second blocking position to take greater advantage of forces available and terrain. Upon relief conduct reconnaissance activities in the assigned area to searchout and destroy a probable North Vietnamese Division Command Post. Upon completion to search and secure other blocking position then return by helicopter to provide Task Force reserves.

10. Execution:

a. 11 July 1966.

At 1600H the warning order for "Operation Hastings" was issued by 4th Marines.

At 1900H a briefing was held by the 2/4 Battalion Commander.

b. 12 July 1966.

At 1200H a warning order was received from the 4th Marines to be prepared to depart for Hue/Phu Bai at 1500H.

At 1415H truck convoy arrived at 2/4 Command Post (CP).

At 1430H Command Group and Company G departed.

At 1500H truck convoy arrived at airfield.

At 1510H first aircraft departed for Dong Ha.

At 1615H Command Group and Company G arrive at Dong Ha, and were placed under operational control (CPOON) of 2d Battalion 1st Marines (2/1).

At 1650H Company E arrived at Dong Ha from Da Nang.

At 1800H CO, S-2, S-3, and PSOC made liaison with 2/1.

At 1830H Company H arrived at Dong Ha from Da Nang.

At 1830H 2/4 reverted to CPOON, 4th Marines.

c. 13 July 1966.

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At 0730H received warning order for Task Force Delta (TFD) to send a 15 man forward party to vicinity of YD117568.

At 0745H forward party arrived at YD117568.

At 0940H all elements of 2/4 (-) at YD117568.

At 1015H received message from TFD that on order 2/4 will be helilifted back to Dong Ha.

At 1400H all 2/4 (-) units returned by helicopter to Dong Ha.

d. 14 July 1966.

At 0830H CO 2/4 attended briefing at 2/1 CP.

At 0915H assumed OPCON 1st Plt (-), Co B, 3rd Engineer Battalion.

At 1445H CO, S-3 and Company Commanders made aerial reconnaissance of operation area.

At 1500H Battalion CO and party departed for briefing at TFD CP at Cam Lo.

At 1500H Catholic and Protestant services were held 2/4 CP.

e. 15 July 1966.

At 0915H Company E helilifted to YD085656 and furnished landing zone security. At 1025H all units were in LZ. At 1050H Company H on the left and Company G on the right began search and destroy operation moving in a westward direction to objectives at YD071651 and YD066654. 2/4 Command Group and Company E following in trace of Company G. Company H discovered a company size harboring site which had been used within the past week. No contact was made during the day.

At 1700H all companies prepared night defensive positions with Company E at YD067654, Company H at YD070652, and 2/4 CP and Company G at YD066655.

At 1815H from positions at YD066655 observed NVA anti-aircraft gun firing at helicopter. One helicopter was hit and crashed in vicinity YD040645.

At 1820H made spot report forwarded to TFD about the helicopter incident.

At 1820H requested artillery and 81mm Mortar fire be delivered on enemy anti-aircraft position at YD054654. There was no further enemy contact during the night.

f. 16 July 1966.

At 0600H commenced prep fire on area at YD055658.

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At 0645H lifted artillery fire.

At 0630H Company G began moving to vic YD055658.

At 0805H Company G arrived at stream at YD055658 and encountered two NVA entering harboring site. Brought small arms fire on the two NVA killing both of them. Captured two semi-automatic weapons. Company G continued moving along the stream in a south westerly direction.

At 1045H Company G received heavy fire from YD047657. As a result of this fire fight Co G received two friendly KIA and seven WIA and killed six NVA (confirmed). Company G continued returning fire with organic weapons and an air strike was called with two direct hits on enemy positions. Company G was credited with 20 NVA KIA (probable).

At 1120H Company G captured two 12.7mm anti-aircraft machine guns and 50 boxes of ammunition. Could not evacuate so destroyed in place.

At 1230H Company H spotted two NVA carrying ammunition cans at YD054655. Company H fired ten rounds 7.62mm killing one NVA. It is believed the second NVA was wounded and escaped with both of the weapons.

At 1545H 2/4 Command Group and Companies E and H arrived at 3/4 CP at YD038647.

At 1700H began preparing defensive positions in conjunction with 3/4.

At 1830H Company H patrol encountered three NVA at YD042647. In the exchange of fire the three NVA were killed and two AK-47 automatic rifles were captured.

At 2230H Company E ambush at YD040649 was sprung when approximately seven NVA approached the ambush position. The ambush fired unknown number of 7.62 rounds and one M-26 grenade. NVA withdrew without return fire. Ambush moved to an alternate position. No other enemy contact was made during the night.

f. 17 July 1966:

2/4 remained in defensive positions.

At 1230H Company H with one platoon from Company E began a search and destroy operation from present position to the northeast, searching both sides of the stream for about 600 meters.

At 1230H Company G sent one platoon on a reconnaissance combat patrol to the high ground vicinity of YD039040 and one platoon to the area in vicinity of YD035642. No enemy contact was made by these patrols.

At 1450H Company H flushed one NVA out of a spider hole and killed him as he fired on friendly troops at YD052655. One Chi-Com semi-automatic carbine was captured.

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ENCLOSURE (4)

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At 1530H Company H while searching the stream banks with elements of Company E found five NVA who had been killed by small arms fire in the action of 16 July 1966 in which Company G was involved. One AK-47 automatic rifle and one tripod for a 12.7mm machine gun was found.

g. 18 July 1966:

At 0140H Company H received four incoming hand grenades. Did not return fire as there was no definite target and did not want to disclose friendly positions. Two M-26 grenades were thrown in response.

At 0310H Company G requested illumination as they believed there was an enemy target in front of their position. After receiving illumination they were unable to locate enemy.

At 0620H Companies E & H with Command Group Alpha commenced movement to the northeast along stream. Company E responsible for stream and left bank, Company H on the right of the stream.

At 0720H Command Group Bravo with Company G began moving in trace of forward elements.

No major incidents occurred in the move from grid squares YD0364 to YD0566. 2/4 units were in position by 1530H in vicinity of YD056664.

At 1500H 3/4 reported heavy fire.

At 1530H CO 3/4 requested assistance from 2/4.

At 1530H 2/4 requested and received permission from TFD to furnish one company from 2/4 to assist 3/4.

At 1625H 2/4 Command Group Alpha and Company G departed to link up with Company I, 3/4 who had been placed under 2/4 operational control. Company I was to secure the high ground on west side of stream in vicinity YD053654. Company G to secure the high ground on the east side of the stream in vicinity YD054653. Command Group Alpha was to remain with Company G.

At 1700H Company H ambush reported hearing NVA talking in vicinity YD048666. As the enemy approached the ambush site the enemy were fired upon with forty rounds 7.62mm. Two NVA were wounded but escaped.

At 1730H Company H ambush at YD045665 saw five NVA moving on trail with weapons wearing green uniforms. As they neared the ambush site they were fired upon killing two of them and wounding the other three who were able to escape. One Chi-Com automatic weapon was captured.

At 1745H Company H ambush at YD053663 saw one NVA moving downstream with several canteens. The ambush opened fire. NVA was able to escape but was later found dead.

h. 19 July 1966:

At 0130H Command Group Alpha and Company G and Company I, 3/4

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At 0730H Company G began moving from YD052648 toward objective at YD049640.

At 0840H 81mm mortars fired 25 rounds on suspected target at YD038650.

Company E conducted patrols to the south and west of hill 208.

At 1100H Company H moved to vicinity YD038649 to search area where the unit from 3/4 was attacked. The search located eight friendly KIA and miscellaneous equipment.

At 1335H Company G was dispatched to vicinity YD041648 to assist Company H in their retraction.

At 1345H Company H discovered two NVA; killed one and captured the other at YD040647. Two AK-47 automatic rifles were captured.

At 1505H while Med Evac helicopter was trying to land approximately 40-50 NVA opened up with automatic and semi-automatic weapons. The enemy fired from vicinity YD040651 and YD043652. Company H returned fire with all organic weapons. Company G being in a better location to deliver fire on the enemy, fired a heavy volume of fire on the suspected enemy positions. Both air and artillery fire were delivered on suspected enemy positions. During this fire fight Company H killed three NVA (Confirmed) and seven NVA (Probable). Company G killed two NVA (Confirmed) and 15 NVA (Probable). Company H had 2 WIA, one was evacuated by helicopter.

At 1715H Company H commenced their retraction with an additional 14 Chi-Com semi-automatic and automatic rifles; captured enemy weapons discovered in battlefield search. Enemy 782 gear and fifty five Chi-Com grenades were destroyed in place. The search revealed twenty-three NVA bodies from the 3/4 action of 18 July 1966. No enemy contact was made during the night.

k. 22 July 1966.

At 0600H artillery began prep fires in vicinity YD040650. 105 and 155 howitzers were fired with a total of 405 rounds fired.

At 0810H Company G moved to YD041648 to furnish support for Company H movement to YD038648.

At 0945H Company E began moving from Hill 208 to vicinity YD039649.

At 0950H Company H began moving from YD052648 to vicinity YD037648

At 1115H Company H spotted three NVA at YD035650 and brought them under fire with M-79 and 3.5s. Results unknown.

At 1220H Company H received sporadic automatic and semi-automatic small arms fire from YD036652. Company H had one KIA.

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returned to 2/4 CP and set in night defensive positions; Company I returned to 2/4.

At 0430H Company H ambush at YD055665 heard movement near their position. NVA were talking and throwing rocks as if they were trying to locate the ambush site. As the enemy neared the ambush site there appeared to be six or eight of them. The ambush and the NVA began firing at about the same time. It is believed the NVA spotted the ambush site as illumination flares were lighting the general area at this time. Killed three NVA and captured three Chi-Com automatic rifles AK-47. Two friendly KIA and two WIA.

At 1030H received warning order from TFD to be prepared to move from present position to hill at YDQ48640 and from there to hill 208.

At 1130H Companies E & G began moving with Command Group Alpha. Command Group Bravo following Company G, with Company H furnishing rear and flank security for Command Group Bravo.

At 1255H Company E arrived at YD052648.

At 1430H all 2/4 units were in position in vicinity YD052648. There was no enemy contact during the move. From 1300H to 1500H air strikes were made on hill 208.

At 1700H CO briefed staff and Company Commanders.

At 1830H patrol from Company E reported they found no enemy activity, but did find fighting holes that had not been used for several months in vicinity YD047647.

2/4 units set in defensive position and had no enemy contact during the night.

1. 20 July 1966.

At 0630H aircraft began bombing hill 208 and ceased at 0700H.

At 0700H Company E began a search and destroy operation from YD052647 going in a southwesterly direction to the top of hill 208 without enemy contact. Company H was searching for a trail that would lead to the top of hill 208, but they were stopped by dense jungle. Company H was then diverted to search the area at YDQ48460. Company H located a battalion size harboring site which contained a large number of personal items, 37 boxes of 12.7 ammunition, and a part of a 12.7mm machine gun. The company commander believed the NVA had left the area to conduct operations and would eventually return to get the gear they left behind. Because of this and the unfeasibility of defending the area due to limited visibility, heavy vegetation, and lack of an LZ the Battalion Commander decided to withdraw Company H to their previous position at YD052657.

All units less Company E remained in night defensive positions in vicinity YD052648. Company E remained on hill 208.

2. 21 July 1966.

At 0700H commenced air strike on target at YDQ48640. Air strike completed at 0720H.

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At 1255H Company E and Company H received fire from vicinity YD042648 and YD037653. Both companies returned fire on suspected targets. Company E had three KIA and one WIA. During the initial encounter with the enemy and the retraction of the KIA and WIA the 81mm mortars fired a total of 127 rounds and Company G fired a large volume of small arms covering fire. Company H fired thirty 60mm mortar rounds. Company E credited with 10 NVA KIA (probable). Company H was credited with four NVA KIA (confirmed) and the capture of three AK-47 rifles, and Company G with six NVA KIA (confirmed) and 13 KIA (probable).

At 1545H all firing had ceased and the Med Evacs were completed.

At 2130H one incoming mortar round burst in the trees causing two KIA and four WIA from Company E.

At 2130H artillery fired thirty rounds on suspected mortar position at YD037656.

No other enemy contact was made during the night.

1. 23 July 1966.

At 0710H Battalion Commander held briefing.

At 0835H Company G began movement from YD041649 to YD036641 to link up with Company C, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines (1/1).

At 0920H Company H began movement to YD034646.

At 0930H Battalion CP received sniper fire from unknown position.

At 0935H Company H received sporadic automatic weapons and machine gun fire from vicinity YD038651. The second platoon killed three NVA in their position with small arms and 3.5 rounds. This action continued periodically until 1300H. When action started Company H tried to maneuver elements to the flank and rear of suspected enemy positions, but was unable to do so because of dense foliage. During maneuver two NVA were KIA in their positions. Company H withdrew troops so artillery and air strikes could be called on the strong enemy targets. The Commanding Officer of Company H believed there were approximately 20 well armed and well dug-in NVA in the area when the action began. The company was credited with 10 KIA (probable). During this action Company H had one KIA and 14 WIA.

At 1430H Company G reported their position at YD038644.

At 2040H Company E requested emergency Med Evac for snake bite victim.

m. 24 July 1966.

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At 0140H the S-3 duty officer and radio operator heard moaning coming from hill where Company H had fought. He reported to the wounded and calling for help. A G-2 scout patrol was readied for 0630H.

At 0630H H & S Company captured one wounded NVA at YDQ46051.

At 0710H Battalion OD briefed staff, company commanders, and attachments.

At 0920H Company H received 4 rounds of sniper fire from vicinity of YDQ35653. Companies E & H returned fire at suspected enemy position. Checked area with negative results.

At 1030H Company H located exposed enemy position along length of ridge line in vicinity YDQ39651, also found eleven NVA KIA in same area, from the action of the previous day adding seven more to the count and captured six automatic rifles, AK-7.

At 1535H Company E patrol received automatic fire from YDQ37653 resulting in two friendly KIA.

At approximately 1930H 2/4 received 50 rounds of 82mm mortar fire from vicinity YDQ39655. Returned fire with 40-60mm mortar, 145-81mm mortar and 339 artillery rounds. Incoming fire ceased at 1945H. As a result of incoming mortars 2/4 had 1 KIA and 64 WIA.

At 1950H Company G received approximately 50 rounds of automatic and semi-automatic small arms fire, but suffered no casualties.

At 2100H Med Evac of serious WIA commenced.

At 2300H Company E listening post received 20-25 rounds of automatic weapons fire. Returned fire with thirty 7.62 rounds. Company E had one KIA.

At 2330H Med Evac of 35 WIAs completed.

n. 25 July 1966.

At 0830H commenced air strikes on suspected enemy positions at YDQ28653. Dropped a total of twenty-four 250 lb., twelve 500 lb., and eight napalm bombs.

At 1135H Company G had moved into positions at YDQ52647 to cover 2/4 units movement from YDQ38648 to YDQ56654.

2/4 movement to vicinity YDQ56654 was delayed until 1235H because of non-availability of helicopters to evacuate water cans and other miscellaneous equipment.

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At 1515H the Battalion Command Group and Companies G and H at YD052647 received approximately 20 rounds 82mm mortar fire from vicinity YD036656. No casualties were received. Artillery and 81mm mortars were called on suspected enemy targets. Enemy fire ceased.

At 1955H Company H patrol at YD052654 killed two NVA and captured two Chi-Com carbines AK-47.

No other enemy contact was made during the night.

o. 26 July 1966.

At 1115H Company H commenced helilift to Dong Ha.

At 1315H the last elements of 2/4 (-) arrived at Dong Ha.

While at Dong Ha no mission was assigned 2/4 other than its own security.

At 2300H received Frag Order 17-66 from TFD; 2/4 assigned mission of TFD reserve.

p. 27 July 1966.

At 0700H Company G departed Dong Ha as security on a convoy to Phu Bai.

At 0830H first element departed Dong Ha by fixed wing aircraft for Phu Bai.

At 1205H last unit arrived at Phu Bai airfield.

At 1215H Company G arrived at 2/4 CP by truck convoy.

At 1400H all 2/4 units at 2/4 CP from the airfield.

2/4 continues as TFD reserve, on four hour alert with Company F on a two hour alert.

q. 28-29 July 1966.

Remained at Phu Bai.

r. 30 July 1966.

At 0900H 2/4 Command Group Alpha and Companies E & H departed Phu Bai for Dong Ha by truck convoy.

At 1115H one truck in convoy detonated a mine at YD434476. One Marine was wounded and evacuated to Phu Bai by helicopter.

At 1305H 2/4 Command Group Alpha and Companies E & H arrived at Dong Ha.

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31 July 1966.

At 0930H Command Group Bravo and Company G departed Phu Bai by truck convoy for Dong Ha, and arrived at Dong Ha at 1215H.

t. 1 August 1966.

At 1000H Company F departed Phu Bai by truck convoy for Dong Ha, and arrived at Dong Ha at 1230H.

u. 2 August 1966.

2/4 remained at Dong Ha as TFD reserve..

v. 3 August 1966.

At 1200H "Operation Hastings" terminated.

11. RESULTS: A total of 56 NVA KIA confirmed and 68 probable were credited during the operation. Two were captured. It cannot be determined the number of enemy killed by aircraft.

A total of 40 weapons was captured along with thousands of rounds of ammunition. A large amount of NVA 782 gear, personal items, and documents were also captured.

The areas in which air strikes were made were not searched except in those places where strikes were held in direct support of our units. Most areas hit by air were inaccessible to friendly forces.

12. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS:

a. Supply: Supply support from the LSA was generally good, however the evacuation of water cans and other types of equipment was slow on several occasions. There should be more emphasis on the importance of the evacuation of these items because a unit cannot move until these items are evacuated or destroyed.

b. Medical: Supply of medical supplies was extremely slow from the LSA to the Battalion.

At the present time 2/4 is short corporals; five being wounded on this operation further reducing an already understrength medical platoon.

c. Communications: On several occasions communications equipment returned from the LSA that had supposedly been repaired was found to be unservicable. Closer supervision should be placed on the repairing of the communications equipment at the LSA. Also more attention should be shown in the handling of communications equipment by helicopter crew members and the personnel off loading at the LZ.

An AN/PRC-25 and a RC-292 enabled good communications with the TFD at Cam Lo.

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13. Special Equipment and Techniques:

a. A Psychological Warfare Team provided by a U.S. Navy Beach-jumper team from the SLF was utilized on the afternoon and evening of 24 July 1966. The effort made offered food, medical care, and good treatment in return for their surrender. The appeal included instructions on how to surrender and also contained a timely direct personal appeal to the enemy personnel in the immediate area by the ARVN Liaison Officer. Though there were no prisoners obtained as a direct result ~~with the first broadcast the Battalion Command Post~~ and three companies were brought under heavy mortar attack.

b. The team was committed late in the operation after the initial shock of attack and after one unit had been sorely pressed by the enemy in the area. The optimum moment was lost as the enemy had time to recover from the initial shock and raise morale ~~by what they thought~~ was an apparently successful attack on friendly units. The recorded appeals were obviously pre-prepared. The direct contact made by the Liaison Officer capitalizing on the immediate local situation was more personal and therefore more effective.

14. Commanders Analysis: The combat efficiency and performance of the Battalion continued at an excellent level throughout the operation. Despite attrition from casualties the effectiveness of the command did not change and remained at a peak when diverted to Task Force Reserve. The particular area of operations was over terrain which tended to be advantageous to the enemy. Only the professional skill of the individual Marine and small unit leaders offset this advantage and resulted in the operation being an unqualified success.

15. Recommendations:

a. That during an operation involving two or more battalions, each battalion commander have at his disposal at least one helicopter on short notice.

b. That when helicopter availability precludes administrative service to a battalion ready to move, the battalion commander be given a definite answer rather than procrastinate for three or four hours then tell him to destroy equipment to facilitate a move.

c. That Psychological Warfare Loudspeaker Teams with portable equipment and an interpreter be available for immediate employment to exploit the initial shock of attack.

A. E. BENCH

A. E. BENCH

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HEADQUARTERS

3d Battalion, 4th Marines (-) (Rein)
3d Marine Division, Fleet Marine Force
c/o FPO, San Francisco, 96602

4TH MARINES (REIN)
SRC FILES

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3120
10 August 1966
0031-66

660159

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division, FMF
Via: Commanding Officer, 4th Marine Regiment

Subj: Combat After Action Report (Operation HASTINGS)

Ref: (a) RegtO 3120.3B

Encl: (1) Operations Overlay
(2) Detailed After Action Report on 20 July 1966 by
Company Commander, Company I
(3) Detailed After Action Report on 15-18 July 1966 by
Company Commander, Company K

1. CODE. Operation HASTINGS
2. DATE OF OPERATION. 15 July - 03 August 1966
3. LOCATION. Cam Lo - Dong Ha Area (Enclosure 1)
4. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS. Headquarters, Task Force Delta, Brig. Gen. L. E. ENGLISH, Commanding, and 3d Bn., 4th Marines, LtCol S. A. VALE, Commanding until 1000, 28 July 1966. LtCol W. J. MASTERPOOL, Commanding from 1001, 28 July 1966.
5. TASK ORGANIZATION. 3d Battalion, 4th Marines (-) (Rein)
6. SUPPORTING FORCES.

(1) Artillery Support

- a. Bravo Battery 1/11 - 105's general support
- b. Foxtrot Battery 2/11 - 105's general support
- c. Hotel Battery 3/12 - 105's general support
- d. Lima Battery 4/12 - 155's general support
- e. Mike Battery 4/12 - 155's general support
- f. Mortar Battery 1/11 - 4.2mm general support
- g. Headquarters Battery 3/12 - general support

(2) Air Support

- a. L-15 to L-Hour - 8 fixed-wing aircraft for LZ prep.
- b. L-Hour to L plus 180 - 4 fixed-wing aircraft on station.
- c. Remainder of Operation - 2 fixed wing aircraft w/NAP

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- on 15 min. alert: 2 aircraft w/NAP on 30 min. alert: 2 aircraft on 15 min. alert from 0600 to 1900 daily: 2 aircraft on 15 min. alert from 1900 to 0600 daily.
- d. AO on station 24 hours a day.
 - e. UH - 34 radio relay on one hour stand-by from 1900 to 0700 daily.
 - f. Flare ship available on request - AC airborne from 1900 to 0600 daily.
 - g. Aircraft for resupply and Medical Evacuation available on request.

7. INTELLIGENCE. On 19 May 1966 a North Vietnamese Army rallier surrendered to Vietnamese Army Forces operating 10 miles south of the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) in Quang Tri Province, South Vietnam.

This NVA soldier stated that he was a member of a 200 man advance party from the 324th B NVA Division that was making a reconnaissance of the Quang Tri area. He further stated that it was the intention of the 324th B NVA to infiltrate south across the DMZ into South Vietnam and take over Quang Tri Province.

During the latter part of May and the month of June, low level agent reports stated that elements of the 324th B Division were infiltrating into Quang Tri Province from North Vietnam.

Reconnaissance units began operating in the Quang Tri area on 22 June. During the period 1 through 15 July, a total of eighteen recon patrols were conducted - fourteen of which had to be extracted prematurely due to significant enemy contact. A total of 343 North Vietnamese soldiers were observed by the recon elements, indicating a sizeable infiltration of a major enemy force into the area.

In the meantime, South Vietnamese forces were conducting limited operations in the Quang Tri area. On 5 July they captured a North Vietnamese soldier who stated that he was a member of the 5th Battalion, 812th Regiment, 324th B North Vietnamese Division.

On 10 July, a lieutenant from this same unit surrendered to South Vietnamese forces operating in Quang Tri. The lieutenant stated that the mission of the 324th B Division was to "liberate" Quang Tri Province and further destroy South Vietnamese forces operating in the Province.

Based on these intelligence reports, numerous low level reports, aerial photographs and reconnaissance and the reports received from recon units the following units were established to be in the vicinity of the area of operations: the 90th Regiment, the 812th Regiment, and the 803d Regiment. Each of the three infantry regiments composing the 324th B Division was estimated to have a strength of 1500 men. In addition to the three infantry regiments, the headquarters and supporting units of the 324th B Division were believed to be in the area. Supporting units were tentatively identified to consist of a communications company, an engineer company, and a reconnaissance company.

Based on the foregoing intelligence, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines (-)(Rein) became part of Task Force Delta and was phased into Operation HASTINGS on 15 July 1966.

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8. MISSION. Commencing at L-Hour, land in assigned landing zone and conduct search for CP of 324th B Division reported at YD 0564. On order establish blocking positions vicinity YD 036641 to prevent enemy movement through area.

9. CONCEPT OF OPERATION. See operation overlay (Enclosure 1).

10. EXECUTION.

a. 12 July 1966

(1) At 122310Z Frag Order was received from Task Force Delta to conduct Operation Hastings.

b. 13 July 1966

(1) At 0545H the battalion displaced to Phu Bai airport for airlift to Dong Ha

(2) At 0605H the battalion arrived at Phu Bai airport

(3) At 0740H the battalion began airlift to Dong Ha by fixed wing aircraft

(4) At 1020H the battalion completed airlift to Dong Ha

c. 14 July 1966 (Dong Ha)

(1) At 1620H, H&S Company received one incoming .50 Cal. round at YD 254598. Results, 1 WIA USMC

(2) At 2245H TFD Frag Order 2-66 was received which modified TFD Frag Order 1-66

d. 15 July 1966

(1) At 0730H the battalion commenced helicopter lift into operation area

(2) At 0810H three CH-46 helicopters crashed in Landing Zone at YD 038648. Results 1 KIA USMC, 1 KIA Navy and 3 WIA USMC

(3) At 0830H the battalion completed helicopter lift to operational area at YD 038648

(4) At 0845H Company "I" captured (1) WIA NVA

(5) At 0846H Company "L" received small arms fire from sniper.

Results, 1 WIA USMC

(6) At 0935H Company "K" spotted 1 NVA guarding a rifle cache at YD 037641. Company "K" opened fire on NVA. Results, 1 KIA NVA

(7) At 1030H Company "I" spotted approximately 12 NVA moving in stream at YD 037655. As the NVA were taken under fire they withdrew upstream. Results, 2 NVA KIA, 3 NVA probable

(8) At 1215H Company "K" was taken under fire by approximately 15 NVA. Company "K" returned fire. Results, 2 KIA USMC, 2 WIA USMC, 2 KIA NVA probable

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- (9) At 1350H Company "I" recovered 1 NVA KIA at YD 035655 which resulted from earlier contact
- (10) At 1700H Company "I" spotted 3 NVA running east on trail. NVA were taken under fire with small arms. Results, negative
- (11) At 1745H 2d Platoon, Company "K" received sniper fire, returned fire with small arms. Result, 1 KIA NVA
- (12) At 1800H Company "I" reported that gun position located at YD 067654 was firing on helicopter
- (13) At 1808H helicopter inbound east over river received automatic weapons fire, one CH-46 was hit, caught fire and crash landed in the battalion CP. Results, 13 KIA and 3 WIA from burns (Casualties were crew members and personnel from 2d Battalion, 1st Marines)
- (14) At 1815H the battalion CP was taken under fire with small arms and automatic fire from all sides. Returned fire with small arms, 81mm, and fired artillery mission on suspected NVA positions. Results 2 KIA USMC, 5 WIA USMC, unknown results on NVA
- (15) At 1850H Company "K" fired on 1 NVA sniper, which had been firing on Company "K" since early morning. Results, 1 KIA NVA
- (16) At 2045H Company "K" reported that their positions were being hit by approximately 100 NVA. Flare ship requested by Company "K"
- (17) At 2315 Company "K" reported enemy withdrew main force and they were receiving only sporadic sniper fire.

e. 16 July 1966

- (1) At 0100H the battalion received emergency ammunition resupply by helicopter
- (2) At 0120H battalion received TFD Frag Order 3-66
- (3) At 0600H NVA broke contact with Company "K". Search of area will be conducted at first light
- (4) At 0628H the battalion CP and Company "I" lines received approximately 20 rounds of incoming mortar fire at YD 039648. Artillery mission called on suspected enemy position, in addition fixed wing was also called. Mortar fire ceased, AO observed 20 NVA in area
- (5) At 0810H Company "K" reported that they had found 25 NVA bodies from previous night action. In addition 9 WIA USMC from Company "K" were reported.
- (6) At 0830H Company "I" searched area of suspected enemy movement which was fired on during darkness (YD 042647). Results 2 KIA NVA
- (7) At 0930H Company "K" reported 50-75 NVA had attacked their night time positions from all sides. Company "K" returned fire with small arms, grenades and M-79. Results, 4 WIA USMC, 25 KIA NVA, 25 KIA probable
- (8) At 0930H Company "L" searched area where it had fired upon unknown number of NVA. Results, 1 KIA NVA and several drag marks leading away from area
- (9) At 1103H Company "L" cache containing mines, small arms and mortar ammunition and other gear
- (10) At 1130H Company "I" fired on 11 NVA moving upstream at YD 041649. Results, 1 KIA NVA
- (11) At 1500H Company "L" spotted 4 NVA heading south down river at YD 037654. Fired upon NVA with 60mm mortar, M-79 and small arms. Results, 1 KIA NVA

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- (12) At 1515H elements of 2d Battalion, 4th Marines arrived at 3d Battalion, 4th Marines CP
 (13) At 2000H Company "K" received fire from approximately 100 NVA attacking around their perimeter. Contact continuing
 (14)

f. 17 July 1966

- (1) At 0030H Company "K" reported that contact with the enemy had closed. Results, 1 KIA USMC, 5 WIA USMC, 32 KIA NVA, 40 KIA NVA (probable)
 (2) At 0105H Company "I" reported they were receiving small arms fire from approximately 200 meters in front of their position
 (3) At 0115H Company "I" reported an unidentified explosion approximately 200 meters in front of their position
 (4) At 0210H Battalion received Frag Order 6-66 from TFD
 (5) At 0610 Company "K" reported mortar fire being received in vicinity of YD 055641. Fire mission was called and adjusted to provide maximum area coverage.
 (6) At 1300H one man from Company "I" was wounded by a concussion grenade. Area was swept. Results, (1) NVA surrendered and was evacuated to TFD
 (7) At 1422H Company "L" departed for Company "K" position
 (8) At 1522H Company "L" reported that they were completely tied in with Company "K"
 (9) At 2008H Company "K" reported that 1 NVA tripped a flare in front of their position. Results, 1 NVA KIA
 (10) At 2145H Frag Order 7-66 was received
 (11) At 2250H Company "K" spotted 4-5 NVA near river YD 038640. NVA opened with grenades. 81mm illumination was utilized and S/A fire delivered. Effect on enemy is unknown
 (12) At 2355H Company "K" reported enemy probing their perimeter with S/A and grenades. 81mm illumination, S/A and M-79 rounds were fired in return. Effect on enemy is unknown

g. 18 July 1966

- (1) At 0330H Company "K" reported that they had made contact with approximately 50 NVA around their perimeter. Company "K" opened fire with S/A and an artillery mission was called in. Results 3 NVA KIA confirmed, 15 NVA KIA probable, 1 magazine captured. 2 minor WIA USMC
 (2) At 0335H Company "K" reported that it had destroyed an automatic weapons position, which was firing from the left flanks of their Company position
 (3) At 0656H Company "K" reported that 1 AN/PRC 10 was damaged by H&I fires at approximately 0615H
 (4) At 0915H Company "K" spotted 1 NVA at YD 040639. Enemy was taken under M-79 and S/A fire. Effect on enemy is unknown
 (5) At 1021H the battalion CP and Company "L" defensive position received small arms fire from approximately 5-6 NVA. Returned fire with 81mm and small arms. Results, unknown

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(6) At 1500H the Battalion column began moving from its old CP, enroute to new position. At approximately 1530H the column was hit with 20 rounds of mortars. The column became separated in several places and separated from the two rear security platoons of Company "K" which were still in the old CP area, closed with the rear security of approximately 66 Marines. The NVA made their approach from four separate ave. The NVA then set up six of their mortars in the old mortar position of the battalion. Heavy close range fighting took place between the Marines and the NVA. At 1615H Company "L" with the Battalion Executive Officer, began moving back to the old CP area to assist Company "K". Due to the terrain and volume of small arms fire received by Company "L", movement was slow and difficult. In the meantime the Battalion Commander directed artillery and air strikes on the NVA. At approximately 1700H Company "L" joined with elements of Company "K" and assisted in extracting the Company "K" personnel who had been out off from the company. The wounded and dead were carried to the LZ for evacuation and temporary burial. Contact was finally broken when the NVA withdrew at approximately 1800H. The artillery and air strikes coupled with the fires of Companies "K" and "L" were extremely effective on the NVA and an estimated 500 NVA were KIA during this action.

(7) At 1900H the Battalion CP joined 2d Battalion, 4th Marines at 2d Battalion, 4th Marines position (YD 057664)

(8) At 2355H Task Force Delta Frag Order 6-66 was received

h. 19 July 1966

- (1) At 0105H Companies "K", "L" and "I" arrived at Battalion CP
- (2) At 1130H Company "I" reported a man wandering around in field
- (3) At 1140H Company "I" identified man to be Lt. WILSON, artillery FO from Company "K", believed to be KIA during previous days action, Company "I" requested Medical Evacuation
- (4) At 1230H Medical Evacuation completed
- (5) At 1255H the battalion departed 2d Battalion, 4th Marines area enroute to the new position
- (6) At 1325H the battalion arrived at the new position (YD 055652).

i. 20 July 1966

(1) At 1700H to 2000H the 2d Platoon of Company "I" was in heavy contact with approximately 75 NVA's. An air mission was called in support of 2d Platoon, Company "I". The 1st Platoons of Companies "I" and "L" with the Commanding Officer of Company "I" in command proceeded to assist the patrol and to aid in a Medical Evacuation. The 1st Platoons of Companies "I" and "L" attacked through the NVA strong point, capturing 2-82mm mortar bipods and 3 machine guns. As the 2d Platoon of Company "I" started to move out, they again met NVA resistance. Company "G", 2d Battalion, 1st Marines (OpCon) was dispatched to assist, air strikes were again called. At 1930H contact was broken with NVA. Throughout this action the battalion CP received small arms fire from the surrounding valley and hills adjacent to the CP area. Results, 7 KIA USMC, 35 WIA USMC, 15 KIA NVA

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j. 21 July 1966

- (1) At 1201H the Battalion commenced a helicopter lift to Task Force Delta CP and remained at that position as CP security until 3 August 1966

k. 27 July 1966

- (1) At 2240H Company "L"'s patrol reported that PF's cited VC in vicinity of YD 177586 and requested illumination. Results negative

l. 03 August 1966

- (1) At 1200H Operation HASTINGS terminated
 (2) At 1500H the Battalion commenced motor march from Cam Lo enroute to Phu Bai TACR
 (3) At 1750H the Battalion arrived at Phu Bai

11. RESULTS

a. Casualties. USMC/KIA - 20, USMC/WIA - 194, USN/KIA - 3, NV/KIA - 279, KIA probable - 432, NVC - 2

b. Enemy Equipment and Material Losses.

(1) Weapons: 47 total

(a) Individual: 29 Chicom Carbines, 7 AK-47 SMG, 4 Sten Guns (British), 1 K 53 SMG, 1 Buckshot signal pistol, 3 - 7.62 Russian MG, 2 - 82mm Mortars w/base plates.

(b) Ammunition: 361,760 rds small arms, 73 Chicom Grenades, 183 - 82mm Mortar rds, 24 AT Mines, 32 Empty Shoe Mines, 16 Stick Grenades adapted for booby trapping, 5 blasting caps, 10 - 82mm Mortar HE Light Rounds

(c) Equipment: 20 packs, 65 assorted magazines, 250 lbs. assorted web gear, 1200 lbs Medical Supplies, 3 - 82mm Mortar base plates, 2 - 82mm Mortar bipods, 3 - 7.62 Russian MG barrel, 30 small shovels and picks, 25 canteens, 12 hammocks, 1 Armor Shield to MG, 1 Heavy Machine Gun Mount, assorted extra parts to MG, 4 sets mess gear, 30 lbs. of documents, 50 lbs. of individual clothing (in packs); 30 lbs. khaki uniforms (in packs); 20,000 piastres.

c. Friendly Equipment and Material Losses.

(1) Weapons: 10 total; 7 pistols .45 Cal, 2 Machine Guns M-60, 1 Grenade Launcher M-79

(a) Equipment: 61 packs, 52 ponchos, 22 K-Bars, 18 bayonets, 51 M-14 magazine pouches, 70 E-tools, 12 1st-Aid packs, 14 cartridge belts, 15 grenade pouches, 5 bayonet scabbards,

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8 knives, 7 knife cases, 4 pack boards, 3 helmets (complete), 1 M-60 pintle, 1 M-60 E&T, 1 mosquito headnet, 31 canteens, 2 guy lines, 1 sleeping bag cover, 1 mosquito net, 1 .45 Cal. magazine pouch, 3 tent poles, 6 blanket roll straps, 5 belt suspender straps, 9 M-14 magazines, 3 canteen covers, 3 shelter halves, 1 blanket, 1 W.P. bag, 20 tent pins, 4 canteen cups, 9 forks, 9 knives, 9 messpans, 9 messpan covers, 20 machetes, 2 AN/PRC - 10 radios, 2 AN/PRC - 6 radios, 4 pair field glasses (7&50), 12 compasses, 3 wire cutters, 5 air panels, 11 M-76 grenade launchers, 5 M-15 sights, 2 map cases, 2 M-9 pyro guns

12 ADMINISTRATIVE

- a. Supply throughout Operation HASTINGS was considered adequate, there were some items needed through resupply which were unavailable or available in limited quantity.
- b. It did not appear that the LSA was prepared to support the operation with such items as individual clothing and 782 gear. While Battalions begin operations fully equipped with these items, it cannot be expected that they will last through an extended operation.
- c. Several errors occurred in transmitting coordinates on resupply requests. This resulted in supplies being delivered to the wrong location. No determination could be made as to what may have caused the majority of errors, however, it is believed that the primary cause was the shackling and unshackling of coordinates. The solution would be to have supply personnel and all concerned with resupply be further schooled and to double check coordinates.
- d. Treatment and evacuation of casualties was considered adequate. Some problems occurred in casualty reporting. These have been alleviated, with a coordinated effort in standardizing procedures to be used.
- e. Body bags were unavailable at the LSA. This necessitated utilizing ponchos to cover and evacuate bodies.

12A. MEDICAL

- a. On 13 July 1966, at 0830H, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines flew from Phu Bai airport and arrived at Dong Ha 1000H. The Battalion set up in an assigned area around the air strip for approximately two days.
- b. All sanitary needs were taken care of immediately and a trash pit and straddle trench immediately dug. No medical problems were noted dealing with sanitation other than minor ones.
- c. On the morning of 15 July 1966, the Battalion was split into helo-teams and was flown to the Landing Zone. Upon landing, one Hospitalman attached to 81mm mortars was killed in action. Shortly after landing at the new site, a BAS was established. Once set up

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for action, the BAS immediately started receiving KIA's and WIA's, and it was necessary to gain assistance from the air officer for helo evacuation of the dead and injured.

d. It was noted that many of the patients being processed through the BAS had not been "tagged by their companies, resulting in considerable amount of confusion in identifying the dead. In one instance, it was necessary to call Marines from the line, back to the BAS to make positive identification of a deceased individual.

e. Operation HASTINGS came to an end on 3 August 1966. The total casualties suffered by the Medical Department were 3 Hospitalman killed in action, and 3 Hospitalman Medically Evacuated to other medical facilities. Numerous Hospitalman received minor wounds, but were left in a duty status due to the nature of the injuries. For the entire Battalion, there were 23 KIA's and 194 WIA's.

13. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES. None were utilized.

14. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS. During Operation HASTINGS the control and coordination of supporting arms became quite difficult. The proximity of adjacent battalions and the relatively narrow frontages of the battalions compressed all artillery, close air support missions and helicopter missions into an extremely small area. On occasion fire missions and air strikes called by adjacent battalions were interfering with one another. This at times resulted in an inability to utilize available supporting arms in the most timely, effective manner. Due to the congestion in the operating area, delays of up to thirty minutes were experienced when artillery missions were requested.

15. RECOMMENDATIONS. That a local study be initiated to determine the methods of improving the means and methods of coordinating and controlling supporting arms with particular emphasis on situations in which many units having narrow frontages are operating in close proximity to each other.

W. J. Masterpool
W. J. MASTERPOOL
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

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ENCLOSURE (5)

On 20 July 1966, "I" Company, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines (-)(Rein) was part of the Battalion perimeter setting in from coordinates YD 057656 to coordinates YD 058652. At 0800 on the morning of the 20th, the Battalion S-3 issued an order to "I" Company to prepare and send out a platoon size patrol with an artillery FO team, FAC, and an 81mm mortar attachment assigned to the patrol.

At 0845H the 2d Platoon of "I" Company was chosen to be the platoon going on patrol and Staff Sergeant Moses L. WILLIAMS Jr. the platoon commander was given the patrol order and visually shown the route of his patrol from a vantage point in the Battalion perimeter. Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS patrol was to start at 1200H and return by 1600H. The patrol's mission was search and clear an area that was being considered for a Battalion landing zone for the following day. His patrol was to pay special attention to any trails or avenues of approach into the landing zone and also search out the high ground around the proposed landing zone. The check points for Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS' patrol were at the following coordinates. Check Point 1 YD 059657, Check Point 2 YD 069660, Check Point 3 068665, Check Point 4 058664. The briefing for Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS was over by 0915H and he was given the rest of the morning to prepare his platoon for their patrol. At 1100H the communications gear for the patrol was checked. Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS was carrying a PRC-10 which was on the Battalion tac frequency. He also had an artillery FO team with a radio and a FAC team with a radio.

At 1200H on the 20th Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS' patrol departed the Initial Point. He was moving in a column formation with a point squad out about 75 meters and was using flank security as he left the command post area.

Visual contact with the patrol was lost after they had gone about 200 meters and was not regained again until the patrol reached check point #4. Radio contact was made with the patrol on the rest of the route and they reported in at check points #1, #2, #3 and #4, each time reporting no contact.

At approximately 1530H the patrol was checking in at check point #4 and at the same time that they were checking in an unidentified man was seen moving at coordinates YD 053656 by members of the 3d Platoon of "I" Company and members of H&S Company. The man was not fired upon because of the fear that he might be a friendly straggler.

Because the India patrol was in the area or heading in the direction of where the man was seen the Battalion Commander changed the route of the patrol and asked that they attempt to intercept the unidentified man.

The patrol departed check point #4 and headed on an azimuth of 175 degrees from check point #4 in a direction to intercept the man that was sighted from the Battalion position. After they had gone about 200 meters the point squad was taken under heavy automatic weapons fire from their flank and front. The lead squad was at coordinates 056658 and had just begun to cross the stream at that point when they began receiving fire from the ambush site. This squad received one KIA and three WIA's in the initial burst of fire from the ambush site.

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Enclosure (2)

ENCLOSURE (5)

The point squad led by Sergeant JAMES and the rest of the platoon led by Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS immediately deployed and began returning fire to their front and right flank and fired into the stream bed from which they had come back out of.

At this time the patrol lost communications with its PRC-10 and communications with the Battalion had to be maintained over the FAC's PRC-25 by changing the frequency back and forth as needed..

This fire continued for about thirty minutes and during this time there was a great amount of confusion because of the inability to communicate with the patrol and the inability to contact helicopters which were hovering above the Battalions positions and close to the ambush site. Neither artillery support, 81mm or air support could be called in because of the helicopters in the area.

When the helicopters were finally removed from the area an A.O. aircraft came in and marked a target which was later reported by the platoon commander Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS as at least 100 meters in front of his lines and right on the enemy positions. The A.O. aircraft was followed by a fixed wing jet aircraft which dropped two 250 pounds bombs, both of which fell short and landed on the 2d Platoons positions causing 3 KIA's and 8 WIA's.

At this time Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS requested med-evac and additional troop support from the company. Originally "G" Company had been designated as the relief company in case the patrol ran into trouble but a platoon from "I" Company had also been alerted when the patrol was first ambushed and also a platoon from "L" Company was standing by because they had just gotten back from an ambush site which had been at coordinates 054654. The Battalion Commander told me to take out the platoon from India and Lima Company's platoon.

We moved out from the Battalion Command Post at 1615 and because there was no firing going on from the enemy positions or from our own friendly positions I had Lima's platoon sweep down toward our friendly positions and through coordinates YD 059657 where I felt the enemy positions were. I then took the first platoon of "I" Company down a trail which led into the left flank of Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS platoon's deployed positions. Just as we reached Staff Sergeant WILLIAMS positions two med-evac helicopters were loading casualties on his left flank. As our relief platoon approached the helicopters two mortar rounds landed right next to the helicopters forcing them off the ground and wounding three more men who were close by. More mortar fire and auto. fire came into the 2d Platoon and 1st Platoon which was now deploying on Staff Sergeant WILLIAM's right flank and also getting many of the casualties to a safer position. This new outburst of mortar fire and automatic weapons fire caused three more KIA's and 18 more WIA's over a time span of about two and a half hours.

Enclosure (2)

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ENCLOSURE (5)

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After deploying the two platoons on line and getting fire put on the enemy positions, of which many could be observed including at least two mortar sites. I attempted to call in artillery fire support or air support after attempting to clear Lima Company's platoon from the area that they were in. Lima's platoon had lost contact with some of its elements in the general area of coordinates 059657 which was the same area from which we could observe mortar rounds leaving the tubes.

Because we could not directly talk to Lima's platoon and they were having trouble regaining their control in very rough terrain we had to wait an hour and a half before Lima's platoon finally broke through to our positions, coming in our left flank approximately the same place I had lead the first platoon of "I" Company into. I had placed Lima's platoon on line with the first platoon of India Company and put the now understrength patrol of 2d Platoon in reserve with a mission of carrying wounded and dead and also covering our flank from which we had taken flanking fire earlier.

Rather than risk the time to call in supporting fire now that the area was clear of Lima's platoon and get caught out in this area during the hours of darkness I called the Battalion Commander and requested permission to immediately assault the enemy positions with two platoon's on line and asked for supporting fire from UH-1E gunships on our right flanks at coordinates 053656 and the rest of that ground area while we carried out our assault. I received the go ahead from the Battalion Commander so we commenced our assault with two platoon's abreast consisting of the platoon from Lima on the left flank and my first platoon on the right flank. The second platoon was carrying casualties towards our left flank in trace of Lima's platoon.

We received minor resistance in the assault, receiving three more WIA's and counting at least 15 enemy KIA's and capturing several weapons as we moved through. After reaching the area of coordinates 059657 I left the assault line which continued on the Battalion position and went up to the trail that we had used to get the relief column to 2d Platoon and met Gulf Company's Commander and company who had been sent out to help carry casualties and sweep the area for any lost gear or weapons and any more enemy that might still be in the area. The time was now about 2000H. By 2045H we had the 1st and 2d Platoon's of India Company back with all their gear and casualties and also the platoon of Lima company returned to Lima's lines. The rest of the night we spent in getting the lines reestablished and taking care of the KIA's and WIA's. For the days action India Company had 7 KIA's and 33 WIA's. 15 enemy KIA's were found and an estimated 20 to 30 more which had been spotted and fired upon by Huey's in the area of coordinates 053565 were probably killed.

This concluded the action for 20 July 1966.

Enclosure (2)

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ENCLOSURE (5)

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15 July 1966

Company K's initial assault in the landing zone at coordinates 039649 was marked by sporadic enemy small arms fire. The second platoon under Lieutenant D. A. RICHWINE which was landed first, immediately set up a perimeter defense and minutes later, when the 1st platoon landed they killed one NVA in the landing zone. After the 1st platoon and the command group landed, the 3d platoon dropped approximately two hundred meters to the West at coordinates 035048. At approximately 1000H the company was prepared to move from the landing zone to its blocking position at coordinates 038631. The route to our objective was a trail along a stream running North to South. While enroute, numerous freshly dug fighting holes were observed. Five hundred meters out of the landing zone the 1st platoon received sniper fire from 2 NVA who were subsequently killed. The column then pushed forward and when the point squad of 2d platoon was 100 meters short of the hill at 036641, Lt. RICHWINE went forward to check out the hill. He deployed his lead squad atop the hill in a 360° perimeter. A search of the hill revealed an ammunition and medical cache. A NVA was found guarding the cache and was killed. Shortly thereafter, another squad observed 8 - 10 enemy fleeing the area to the Southwest. The 2d platoon attempted to go after them but could not negotiate a stream 200 meters to the South. When two additional attempts to cross the river failed, the platoon and the rest of the company pulled back to the top of the hill at coordinates 036641. At 1100H, the 2d platoon was sent on a patrol to find a spot where the river could be crossed. After moving out in column and moving about 150 meters, voices were heard on their left flank and an immediate ambush was set up. The enemy moved into the killing zone and sustained 10 NVA KIA. The second platoon sustained 2 Friendly WIA. At the same time 10 more NVA were observed moving into the thick brush to the platoon's left. A squad was sent to investigate, got caught in a cross fire and 2 Friendly KIA resulted. The bodies could not be retrieved at the time because of the heavy fire and the platoon returned to the top of the hill. I immediately called in Artillery and the Huey gunships to hit the area. At 1430H, I sent the 2d platoon back to retrieve the bodies. The platoon was again taken under fire resulting in another friendly KIA and 2 WIA. Four enemy were also killed in the process. The bodies were recovered and returned to the hill.

Permission was requested from 3/4 command post to remain at coordinates 036641 for the night. We continued to search the area and when the second platoon returned at 1830H we began preparing defensive positions. An oblong defensive perimeter was established with three platoons. The North-South flanks were separated by 150

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Enclosure 3

ENCLOSURE (5)

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meters, while the East-West flanks were separated by only 30 meters. At 2030H the perimeter started to receive sporadic fire on all flanks which quickly increased. I would estimate that a minimum of two NVA platoons attempted to take the hill. During the ensuing two and one half hour fire fight, mostly with automatic weapons and grenades, the enemy suffered excessive casualties while friendly casualties remained light. After the fire fight dragging of bodies was heard from 2400H to 0400H. A search of the area at first light revealed twenty-five NVA bodies plus numerous automatic weapons, two .30 caliber machine guns and approximately fifty grenades in addition to packs, clothing and documents. All gear was tagged and stored at our landing zone for subsequent pick up. A prisoner was also taken that day.

16 July 1966

After the search of the area at first light on the morning of the 16th, at about 0830H the 1st platoon was sent to again check the river to the South for a possible crossing site. The platoon moved South down a trail in column, to the river. The area was searched, however, no suitable location was found. The area searched contained numerous fighting holes, well prepared, and obviously capable of covering each other by fire. On the opposite side of the river the platoon also noted what appeared to be several well emplaced bunkers. 3.5 rocket fire was placed on these bunkers. On their return to the command post, enemy voices were heard and an immediate ambush was set up, but no contact was made. Artillery and air strikes were called on the enemy positions in an effort to neutralize them. The platoon returned to the command post at 1130H. The rest of the day was spent improving defensive positions. Late in the afternoon our dead and wounded from the previous night were evacuated. At 1930H a NVA unit estimated in excess of a company hit the perimeter on all flanks, but particularly on the left where Lt. RICHWINE's platoon was set up. Again, it was automatic fire, grenades and occasionally a mortar round. The fire fight lasted for 3½ hours during which Lt. RICHWINE's platoon repulsed three suicide attacks, one of them coming within 5 meters of his position. It was also during this action that ammunition became a critical factor. After two hours of continuous fighting, the entire company was short on bandolier ammunition and grenades. We had several cases of machine gun linked ammunition stored near the landing zone 150 meters away, which was just enough to get us through the night. Artillery fire and a flare ship which stayed with us all night were instrumental in stopping the enemy. Several casualties were sustained by Company K this night along with an engineer being killed. Approximately thirty to forty more minor wounds were also sustained but none required evacuation. Most of these

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Enclosure 3

ENCLOSURE (5)

wounds were the result of grenades being thrown back and forth from distances as close as 10 meters.

This night was repetitious of the night before in that we could hear bodies being dragged away through the jungle for 4 hours after the shooting stopped. A thorough search at first light revealed 79 enemy dead by body count and another fifty to seventy-five probable kills. Approximately 15 weapons, both automatic and machine guns were found, along with packs, clothing and more documents. One prisoner was taken and him along with our wounded were evacuated late that afternoon.

17 July 1966

On the 17th of July no further attempts were made to get to our original blocking position, as we received word to remain where we were. We did however, call in air and artillery strikes on positions 800 meters to the South. The rest of the day was uneventful as far as enemy contact. During the day I requested reinforcements, because of the possibility of a full scale attack that night. Two platoons of Lima Company arrived and manned positions on our perimeter. At 2230H the first contacts were made with sporadic firing and probes all around the perimeter. However no major attack was mounted. A search of the area at first light revealed 3 enemy dead with another 5 probable. One enemy rifle was captured that morning. No friendly casualties were sustained.

18 July 1966

The morning of the 18th of July, we were ordered back to the battalion command post. We moved out at 0900H with the third platoon leading, followed by the command group, the first platoon, and the second platoon bringing up the rear. The second platoon was also assigned to destroy any buildings or equipment that were left at the time. We reached the battalion command post at approximately 0930H and set up in a perimeter defense around the landing zone. At 1000H I was given the mission of providing rear security for the battalion when we moved out at 1400H. The second platoon was assigned the mission of further providing flank security for the battalion command group, and the first platoon was assigned rear point security and security for a squad of engineers who were to destroy three downed helicopters left in the landing zone. At about 1430H, when the middle of the company column was through the landing zone, approximately 1,000 NVA opened up on SSgt MCGINTY's first platoon with automatic weapons fire, small arms, and mortars. SSgt MCGINTY's platoon was pinned down in the landing zone because of fire coming from all directions and two of the squads became separated. The third platoon was also pinned down and became separated from the first. The company headquarters element was further pinned down and

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ENCLOSURE (5)

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couldn't move because of heavy fire coming from the north and the area around the landing zone up into the stream bed. Shortly after the attack started, two of SSgt MCGINTY's squads started to take heavy casualties which couldn't be moved because of the heavy fire.

About 1500H, air strikes and artillery were called in on the surrounding area and the enemy was pounded for several hours. When the pressure on the first platoon did not ease, 2/Lt MCCART's third platoon managed to maneuver into position and give SSgt MCGINTY some covering fire, but it wasn't enough to get the dead and wounded out. At approximately 1530, I called the battalion and requested reinforcements to relieve the pressure on the company. Major HENRY brought Company L to our position at approximately 1700. Coordination between Companies K and L was initiated and Company L proceeded about four hundred meters in the direction of the landing zone to help my first and third platoons. Once in position, fire superiority was gained, the pressure was reduced and the first platoon with the help of Company L was able to evacuate the wounded. We did not have enough men to carry the dead and wounded and provide security, so an additional two platoons of India Company were requested to provide the security. After the wounded and dead were brought about five hundred meters up the stream bed, the wounded were treated and major wounds were separated from minor. We formed a column of walking wounded, wounded to be carried, security, and then proceeded another five hundred meters upstream to the helicopter zone where the wounded were evacuated that night.

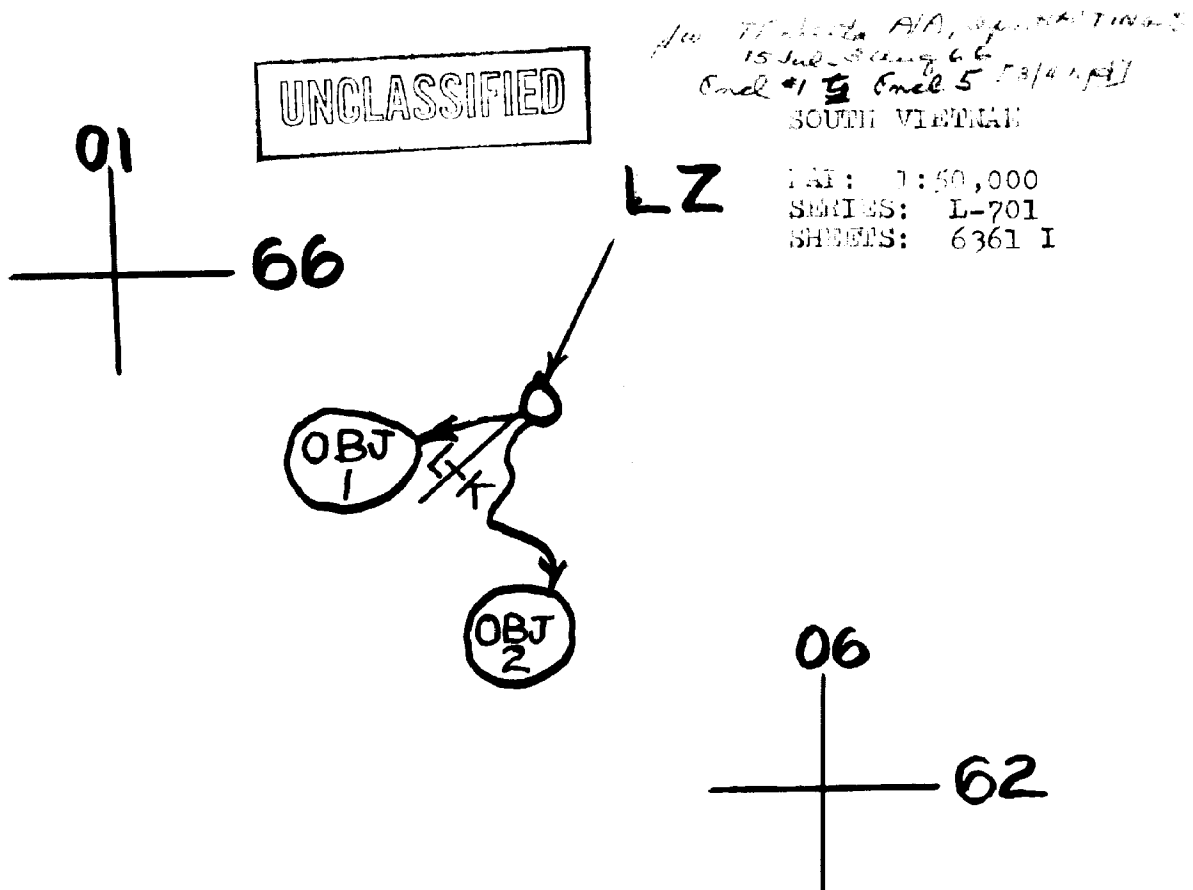
This concluded the action for 18 July.

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ENCLOSURE (3)

ENCLOSURE (5)

DECLASSIFIED



W. J. EASTMPOOL
Lieutenant Colonel, U. S. Marine Corps
Commanding

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HEADQUARTERS

Battalion Landing Team 3/5
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

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3/EJB/jec
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1 August 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Special Landing Force (Commander Task Group 79.5)
Subj: Combat After Action Report for Operation DECKHOUSE II and Operation HASTINGS
Ref: (a) Commander Task Group 79.5 Operation Order 328-66
(b) Battalion Landing Team 3/5 Operation Order 328-66 (Operation DECKHOUSE I)
(c) Battalion Landing Team 3/5 Frag Order #1 (Operation DECKHOUSE II)
(d) Maps: AMS Series L701 - 6342 I (1:50,000)
AMS Series L701 - 6342 II (1:50,000)
AMS Series L701 - 6442 I (1:50,000)
AMS Series L701 - 6442 III (1:50,000)
AMS Series L701 - 6442 IV (1:50,000)
Encl: (1) Report of Operation DECKHOUSE II
Tab (a) Overlay of AOA, Operation DECKHOUSE II
(2) Report of Operation HASTINGS
Tab (a) Operations Overlay of Operation HASTINGS (Part 1)
Tab (b) Operations Overlay of Operation HASTINGS (Part 2)

1. This report is submitted in accordance with instructions contained in reference (a).

2. Operation DECKHOUSE II was an amphibious operation which utilized surface borne and helicopter borne assault forces. Operation HASTINGS employed the Special Landing Force by assigning the Battalion Landing Team the mission of search and destroy in a designated TAOR; the Special Landing Force was placed under the operational control of Task Force Delta.

3. D-day for Operation DECKHOUSE II was 16 July 1966. At 180800H Operation DECKHOUSE II terminated when operational control of the Special Landing Force was chopped from Commander Task Group 76.5 (Commander Amphibious Task Force) to the III Marine Amphibious Force (Task Force Delta). Operation HASTINGS commenced at 180800H and terminated at 301515H when operational control of the Special Landing Force reverted to Commander Task Group 76.5.

4. The target area for Operation DECKHOUSE II was the northeastern third of Gio Linh District, Quang Tri Province--a region of flat, poorly drained land with sand dunes stretching 3000 to 3500 meters from the beach. The target area for Operation HASTINGS was the Cam Lo area of the same province--an area of uncultivated, heavily vegetated, rolling valleys and steep, thickly vegetated mountains.

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5. Battalion Landing Team 3/5 Command Post initially was located on the USS PRINCETON (LPH-5). At H+5 on D-day, the Command Post was established ashore at YD 307727 in the vicinity of Landing Force Objective ALPHA. On D+2, the Command Post displaced to YD 803604 for Operation HASTINGS. On D+11 it displaced to XD 979585. The Command Post was located at this location for the remainder of the operation.

6. Administrative Matters

a. Resupply

(1) Operation DECKHOUSE II. Unit resupply was accomplished entirely by helicopter. In order to facilitate resupply, units submitted requests during the evening for the following day's resupply. This allowed the Logistic Support Unit the opportunity to pull and stage the supplies during the evening and early morning hours. Reaction to a unit's announcement that it was prepared to receive resupply at a specific landing site was accomplished promptly; the time-consuming job of pulling and staging supplies had already been accomplished.

(2) Operation HASTINGS

(a) Unit resupply during Operation HASTINGS was initially seriously deficient. Phasing in the Battalion Landing Team into the operation overburdened the unit resupply function of the Landing Support Area. This temporary deficiency was overcome by providing a logistics team from the Battalion Landing Team at the Logistic Support Area. This team, consisting of the Battalion Landing Team Supply Officer or Supply Chief, medical representatives, communication technicians and selected supply personnel, greatly relieved the Logistic Support Area by processing Battalion Landing Team requirements. This arrangement ensured that Battalion Landing Team resupply requests received prompt and careful attention and provided adequate personnel to process casualties and to recover weapons and equipment.

(b) Communications between the Logistic Support Area and the Battalion Landing Team S-4 was accomplished over the Battalion Landing Team Administrative Net. Traffic on the Task Force Delta Logistics Support Net, which was utilized by all battalions in submitting resupply requests, was generally heavy and the availability of independent Battalion Landing Team communications to the Logistic Support Area proved very beneficial.

b. Casualty Reporting. Reporting by the units during Operation HASTINGS was in most cases excellent; however, there were several errors in encoding. In some cases this caused lengthy delays in obtaining accurate information and delayed reporting to higher headquarters. It is recommended that a coded casualty reporting format utilizing code words should be standardized and adopted for use on operations.

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c. Evacuation. Casualty evacuation was accomplished utilizing the facilities of Company D, 1st Medical Battalion, at Dong Ha. During the first two days of Operation HASTINGS, the Battalion Landing Team S-1 did not maintain a liaison section at this facility, resulting in confusion when casualties were evacuated. Further, the destination of casualties leaving Dong Ha was not known. On the 20th of July the Battalion Landing Team S-1 sent a representative to Dong Ha to assist in accounting for our casualties. This system proved to be effective and resulted in accurate casualty reporting.

d. Communications

(1) Radio

(a) General. FM radio communications on Operation DECKHOUSE II and Operation HASTINGS were improved immeasurably by the acquisition of the AN/PRC-25 family of radios. Not only were positive communications with organic units and higher headquarters maintained throughout, but the greater capabilities of this radio enabled the Battalion Landing Team Commander to maneuver his companies at distances previously impossible.

(b) Radio Distribution. The Battalion Landing Team was issued a total of seventy-four AN/PRC-25 (of which seven are the radio components to the AN/GRC-125's that were issued). However, since the attached units and Special Landing Force had not received the AN/PRC-25's, it was necessary for the Battalion Landing Team to provide them with sets. Distribution was made as follows:

Rifle Companies (8 each)	32
81mm Mortar Platoon	10
Battalion Landing Team Command Post	9
Battalion Landing Team Commander	1
Special Landing Force	3
Tactical Air Control Party/	
Forward Air Control Teams	3
Artillery Liaison Officer/	
Forward Observers	5
105mm Howitzer Battery	2
107mm Mortar Battery	2
Naval Gun Fire Liaison Officer/	
Spot Teams	3
Reconnaissance Teams	3
Shore Party Team	1
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Since three radios were deadlined for repair early in the operation, the Battalion Landing Team Command Post was left with only six radios and was forced to secure two of their five nets (Tactical Logistics Net and Administrative Net) temporarily in order to displace.

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(c) Maintenance and Supply. The only maintenance and supply problem encountered with the AN/PRC-25 radio was that no spare parts were issued with the sets. Although excellent turn-around service was provided at the Logistics Support Area during Operation HASTINGS, it is most desirable when a component part, such as a handset or an antenna base, is lost or broken during an operation that an immediate replacement be available. The BA-386 batteries performed most satisfactorily, offering as much as thirty-six to forty-eight hours of service.

(d) Radio Nets

1 External

a Operation DECKHOUSE II. Radio nets to higher headquarters on Operation DECKHOUSE II were an FM tactical net and a HF tactical net. Communications on these nets was sporadic due to the constantly shifting position of the ship and due to the fact that the ship's radio equipment was not working properly. However, when the FM net was switched from the ship's radio to the back-up AN/PRC-25 provided to Special Landing Force by the Battalion Landing Team, a marked improvement was noted. Traffic over these nets was moderate during the day, but after 2000 hours traffic over the HF net was reduced to hourly radio checks.

b Operation HASTINGS. Radio communications from Battalion Landing Team 3/5 to Task Force Delta on Operation HASTINGS was superior to that experienced with Special Landing Force on Operation DECKHOUSE II. This is probably due to the fact that Task Force Delta was a fixed land station. Radio nets from Battalion Landing Team 3/5 to Task Force Delta consisted of an FM Tactical Net and an FM Command Net. An HF Command Net existed for back-up purposes, but this was never used by Battalion Landing Team 3/5 since FM communications was outstanding at all times.

2 Internal

a Communications from the Battalion Landing Team down to its subordinate units was excellent on both Operation DECKHOUSE II and Operation HASTINGS. Only when the companies were on the move and passing under heavy canopy did communications become marginal. However, at all times one company was in a position to relay traffic to another.

b The activation of an FM Battalion Landing Team Administrative Net to handle resupply requests, medical evacuations, lengthy situation reports, logistical landing zone control and all other administrative traffic proved very satisfactory. Overburdening the Battalion Landing Team Tactical Net with routine and logistical traffic was avoided and urgent tactical traffic was not delayed. It is strongly recommended that a Battalion Landing Team Administrative Net be activated in all future Special Landing Force operations.

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(e) Frequencies and Call Signs. Frequency designators of a number of the frequencies assigned to the Battalion Landing Team for use on Operation DECKHOUSE II were changed by the Special Landing Force prior to the operation. Although this was done to simplify identification of frequencies within the Special Landing Force, confusion arose during Operation HASTINGS since Task Force Delta had different designators for many of the same frequencies. Other minor problems arose because a complete list of call signs and frequencies utilized by Task Force Delta was never provided.

(f) Comments. A final comment must be made to emphasize the outstanding results with the AN/PRC-25 radio. The AN/PRC-25 radio provided flexibility in maneuvering the rifle companies and in exercising supporting arms. Artillery Forward Observers, Forward Air Control Teams and Naval Gun Fire Spot Teams maintained positive communications with the Fire Support Coordination Center at all times. Results certainly justify assigning AN/PRC-25 radios to exercise these supporting arms. It is also recommended that all HF nets be replaced by FM nets--the range of the AN/PRC-25 is equal to that of the AN/PRC-47; the weight and bulk of the AN/PRC-47 makes it difficult for supporting arms teams to keep up with the infantry units to which assigned; maintenance and resupply problems inherent in the use of the NB-451 battery are significant; atmospheric, climatic and terrain conditions in South Vietnam adversely affect the effectiveness of the AN/PRC-47 radio.

(2) Wire/Radio Relay. Nothing new was encountered with wire or radio relay on Operation DECKHOUSE II or Operation HASTINGS. Once again a radio relay shot was made from the Battalion Landing Team to the Special Landing Force on Operation DECKHOUSE II. Radio relay was effective and afforded outstanding communications.

(3) Recommendations

(a) The Battalion Landing Team assigned to the Special Landing Force should be equipped with a full allowance of AN/PRC-25 radios.

(b) AN/PRC-47 radios are too heavy to carry in the rugged terrain and intense heat experienced in South Vietnam; battery recharging and resupply causes additional complications. The AN/PRC-47 radio should be replaced by the AN/PRC-25 radio if at all possible.

(c) Thorough communications coordination prior to the commencement of combined operations is essential.

7. Supporting Arms

a. Artillery

(1) Operation DECKHOUSE II. In this operation the 105mm Howitzers were landed by LCU and the 107mm Howitzers were landed by helicopter. No problems were encountered. Communications and observation were excellent.

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(2) Operation HASTINGS

(a) The 105mm Howitzers were displaced by helicopter to new gun positions at the commencement of Operation HASTINGS.

(b) No major problems were encountered. At times observation was limited by terrain and/or vegetation; however, adequate support was possible at all times. Communications were satisfactory at all times due primarily to the use of the AN/PRC-25.

(c) Reaction times were excellent on most missions and acceptable on all missions. Fires were quick and accurate. Clearance of missions requested outside of the Battalion Landing Team TAOR was granted promptly.

(d) At times the Conduct of Fire Net tended to become overloaded due to the passing of administrative traffic.

b. Naval Gun Fire

(1) Operation DECKHOUSE II. The support of the USS OKLAHOMA CITY, USS LOFBERY and USS WHITE RIVER were used only for three rounds of illumination for Company I due to negligible enemy contact. The use of two spot teams and AN/PRC-25 radios for the spot net proved highly effective. The AN/PRC-47 control net provided borderline communications throughout. Recommend further use of the AN/PRC-25 for the Naval Gun Fire nets with small, two or three man, spot teams.

(2) Operation HASTINGS. No naval gunfire support was used due to range. The Shore Fire Control Party was used as artillery forward observers for M&S Company patrols and for manning artillery observation posts within the TAOR.

c. Air(1) DECKHOUSE II

(a) During Operation DECKHOUSE II only three (3) helicopter requests were submitted by the Tactical Air Control Party for support. Battalion Landing Team 3/5 was directly supported by HMM-363. Tactical Air Control Center was subordinate to Commander Task Group 76.5. One request for helicopter observation for retreating VC elements was submitted requesting support as soon as possible. The helicopter was on station one hour later. Flight time from the LPH-5 to the objective area was approximately ten minutes. A fifty minute delay in approval and communications is indicated. The second request for helicopter observation of artillery fires for registration was approved and the helicopters were on station within

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thirty minutes. FM radio communication could not be established between the helicopters and the artillery battery and the mission was not accomplished. A third request for aerial observation or artillery fires for registration was denied.

(b) Observations

1 Shipboard HF facilities were poor and communications between Tactical Air Control Party and Tactical Air Control Center were difficult.

2 Tactical Air Control Center was slow to approve and forward the first mission. The hour delay from request to on station gave enemy elements time to escape and conceal themselves.

3 Radio communications were marginal. Tactical Air Control Party had one AN/PRC-25 radio, one AN/PRC-41 radio, and one AN/PRC-47 radio. Both Forward Air Control Teams had one AN/PRC-25 radio and one AN/PRC-41 radio each. Requests for air support were made by Forward Air Control Teams to Tactical Air Control Party on the AN/PRC-25 radio. Tactical Air Control Party relayed the requests to Tactical Air Control Center via HF on the AN/PRC-47 radio.

4 By relaying requests from the Forward Air Control Teams, the Tactical Air Control Party retained control over requests and the Forward Air Control Teams gained greater mobility by not carrying the heavy and cumbersome AN/PRC-47 radio.

5 The Tactical Air Control Party local frequency was 42.35 megacycles. This AN/PRC-25 radio frequency is considered unsatisfactory for units which frequently communicate with aircraft. Aircraft FM equipment tunes only to tenth of megacycles.

(c) Recommendations. When terrain permits and when unit dispositions are within the range capabilities of the AN/PRC-25 radio, Forward Air Control Teams should operate with the AN/PRC-25 radio and the AN/PRC-41 radio (for ground to fixed wing air communications) and should not carry the AN/PRC-47 radio.

(2) Operation HASTINGS

(a) Helicopter support was generally good. Some difficulty was experienced in obtaining helicopter support during the initial phase-in period, but this resolved itself as the operation progressed.

(b) Fixed wing support for the most part was excellent. A few missions were cancelled because communications with aircraft could not be established. Many of the communications difficulties resulted from failure

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to advise the Air Liaison Officer of estimated times on station and of call signs. Lack of coordination was also a problem during utilization of flare ships for night illumination. Air/ground communication was most reliable on FM bands, using Tactical Air Control (Airborne) and ground AN/PRC-25 radios. Control of air strikes was much more effective from the air than it was from the ground.

8. Commander's Analysis.

a. Operation DECKHOUSE II resulted in no significant contact with the enemy and terminated too quickly to allow planned civic action efforts to be accomplished. Operation HASTINGS introduced Battalion Landing Team 3/5 for the first time to jungle combat against well-equipped, well-trained North Vietnamese Army units. It was also the first time that Battalion Landing Team 3/5 fought in rugged, densely vegetated, mountainous, jungle terrain. The combat environment experienced in Operation HASTINGS was a sharp contrast to the Viet Cong and the less rugged terrain that had been encountered in earlier operations. Lessons learned on previous operations did not fully apply to this more difficult environment; tactical decisions and small unit tactics reflected this fact.

b. Operation HASTINGS was characterized by sharp, violent contact with an enemy who fought from prepared, well camouflaged, mutually supporting, heavily fortified entrenchments; an enemy who was capable of delivering a heavy volume of fire from an excellent inventory of semi-automatic weapons and automatic weapons ranging in caliber from 12.7 to 7.62mm; an enemy supported by 82mm mortars and 57mm recoilless rifles.

c. Under these conditions it was extremely important to make maximum use of supporting artillery and air. Prep fires against suspected enemy positions and dangerous avenues of movement is practically a tactical necessity. The tactical decision of the Company and Platoon Commander to aggressively press to the attack when in close and violent contact with the enemy or to fall back slightly in order to effectively use supporting arms is critical. Such encounters develop rapidly and very often the unit commander has no alternative but to overrun an enemy position without the delay inherent in calling for supporting arms. Whenever the situation permitted, however, the delay paid large dividends in the form of fewer casualties.

d. The steep slopes that characterized the operating area very often made it difficult for artillery to deliver effective fires against enemy positions located in narrow draws or on the slopes of the high ground within the draws. Under these conditions air on station, preferably with a Tactical Air Controller (Airborne) to control the strike, becomes the most desirable form of support and, in some instances, the only form of support that can be used by maneuvering units. The dense vegetation often makes it impossible for a Forward Air Controller to effectively control an air strike and, more important, not every company can be provided with a

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Forward Air Control Team and the AN/RC-41 radio required to communicate with fixed wing aircraft. The response time required to get air on station from strip alert status is unsatisfactory; too often the twenty to sixty minute delay experienced is simply twenty to sixty minutes too late.

e. Civic action and population and resources control measures in the TAOR's assigned to Battalion Landing Team 3/5 during Operation HASTINGS were not required. This was a battlefield unencumbered by a civilian population.

f. The AN/PRC-25 radio is a fabulous piece of equipment. It provides dependable communications over distances in excess of 12,000 meters in a physical environment of terrain and vegetation which would have precluded the use of the AN/PRC-10 radio at 1,000 meters.

g. Problem areas encountered and recommendations relative to them have already been covered extensively elsewhere in this report. The following comments are designed to emphasize certain lessons learned not adequately covered elsewhere.

(1) The enemy confronting the Battalion Landing Team was not actively seeking contact. He was, however, prepared to take advantage of his strongly entrenched positions in densely vegetated, steep-sided draws and rugged mountainous terrain to inflict maximum casualties against an enemy maneuvering against him. Under these conditions it is imperative that supporting arms be liberally used against suspected enemy positions or along dangerous avenues of movement. Whenever contact is established and the situation permits, unit commanders should conduct intensive artillery and/or air strikes against the fixed enemy positions before trying to overrun them.

(2) The nature of the enemy's tactics and the physical nature of the operating area made air on station with a Tactical Air Control (Airborne) to control the most desirable, and sometimes the only, form of supporting arms which a maneuvering unit in contact with the enemy could use.

(3) The danger of ambush in this environment is ever-present. The use of security to the front and flank, however, is not always effective in avoiding well-prepared and well-executed ambushes. Reaction to an ambush must be automatic and must be based on extensive quick-reaction drills.

(4) Resupply by helicopter is undoubtedly necessary and unavoidable. Every effort should be made to reduce the number of resupplies in order to minimize the attendant disadvantage of pinpointing the location and disposition of all friendly units being resupplied.

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(5) Ambushes, both day and night, are one of the most effective means of inflicting personnel casualties on the enemy. Ambushes should be at least 500 to 1000 meters distant from unit night defensive positions.

E. J. Bronars
E. J. BRONARS

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REPORT OF OPERATION DECKHOUSE II

1. Task Organization

BLT 3/5

Lt Col BRONARS

H&S Co (-)
Det, Btry F, 2d Bn, 11th Mar (Ln Tm)
Det, Hq Btry, 2d Bn, 11th Mar (NGF Ln Tm)
Det, Radio Relay Sec, Comm Plat, Hq Co, 5th Mar
Det, Hq Bn, 1st Marine Division, FMF
Det, Radio Relay Plat, Comm Co
Det, Disbursing Plat, Serv Co
Det, Postal Unit, Adj Sec, Div Hq, Hq Co
Det, 1st Dental Co, FMF
Det, 1st Medical Bn
Det, Serv Sec, Co Hq, 3d Coll Sec, Coll Plat
Logistic Support Unit
Det, Prov Serv Bn, 9th MAB
Det, Supply Sec
Det, Maint Sec
Det, H/S Sec
Det, H&S Co, 3d FSR
2d SP Tm, Co B, 1st SP Bn
2d Landing Spt Plat
Det, H&S Co, 1st SP Bn
Det, Beachmaster Unit-1

Co I (Rein)

Capt GLAIZE

Co I
Det, H&S Co
Det, Med Plat
Det, 81mm Mort Plat
Det, S-2 (Bn Scouts)
FO Tm, Btry F (Rein), 2d Bn, 11th Mar
1st Sqd, 3d Plat (Rein), Co B, 1st Engr Bn

Co K (Rein)

Capt MARESCO

Co K
Det, H&S Co
Det, Med Plat
FAC Tm
Det, 81mm Mort Plat
Det, S-2 (Bn Scouts)
FO Tm, Btry F (Rein), 2d Bn, 11th Mar
Det, Hq Btry, 2d Bn, 11th Mar (NGF Spot Tm)

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Co L (Rein)

Capt TATUM

Co L

Det, H&S Co

Det, Med Plat

PAC Tm

Det, 81mm Mort Plat

Det, S-2 (Bn Scouts)

FO Tm, Btry F (Rein), 2d Bn, 11th Mar

2d Sqd, 3d Plat (Rein), Co B, 1st Engr Bn

Det, Hq Btry, 2d Bn, 11th Mar, (NGF Spot Tm)

Btry F (-)(Rein), 2d Bn, 11th Mar

Capt HARRIS

Btry F (-)

Det, Hq Btry, 11th Mar

107mm Mort Btry (Rein), 2d Bn, 12th Mar

Capt MERRITT

107mm Mort Btry

Det, Mess Sec, Serv Plat, Hq Btry, 2d Bn, 12th Mar

2d Plat (Rein), Co B, 3d AmTrac Bn, FMF

Lt GRESSLY

2d Plat

Det, Co Hq, Co B, 3d AmTrac Bn

3d Plat (Rein), Co B, 1st AT Bn

Lt BUCHANAN

3d Plat

Det, Co Hq, Co B, 1st AT Bn

3d Plat (-)(Rein), Co B, 1st Engr Bn

Lt TOTH

3d Plat (-)

Det, Med Plat, H&S Co, 1st Engr Bn

Det, Engr Spt Co, 1st Engr Bn

2d Plat, Co B, 1st MT Bn

CWO HENSON

2d Plat

Det, Maint Sec, Co Hq, Co B, 1st MT Bn

100mm Recoilless Rifle Plat (Rein)

Lt CHRISTIANS

100mm Recoilless Rifle Plat

Det, Med Plat, H&S Co

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1 August 19665th Plat (-)(Rein), 3rd Force Recon Co, FMF

Lt O'DONNELL

5th Plat

Det, Parachute Maint/Rpr Sec, Supply/Serv Plat

3d Plat (Rein), Co B, 1st Recon Bn

Lt GREEN

3d Plat

Det, Medical Sec, Serv Plat, H/S Co, 1st Recon Bn

2d Plat (Rein), Co C, 1st Tk Bn, FMF

Lt SKEY

2d Plat

Det, Hq Sec, Co Hq, Co C, 1st Tk Bn

Det, H&S Co, 1st Tk Bn

BLT Reserve

Capt PETTENGILL

Co M (Rein)

Co M

Det, H&S Co

Det, Med Plat

Det, 81mm Mort Plat

Det, S-2 (Bn Scouts)

Det, FQ Tm, Btry F (Rein), 2d Bn, 11th Mar

2. Intelligence

a. Terrain. Operation DECKHOUSE II was conducted 16 to 18 June in Quang Tri Province of the Republic of Vietnam. The area of operations was a predominately flat sandy area. All terrain features were as predicted prior to commencement of the operation with the exception of the area adjacent to the stream 6000 meters inland from the beach. This was reported to be cultivated in wetland rice whereas in actuality the area was farmed in dry crops. The beach report of BLUE Beach stated that the inner sand bar, 40 to 60 yards off the beach, might cause LCVP to ground. Although the landing took place three hours after low tide, boats did ground and assault troops were forced to wade through four to five feet of water to the beach. An opposed landing would have required more extensive preparations of the beach.

b. Enemy Situation. Prior to the landing it was estimated that only local force Viet Cong (VC) units were present in the area of operation. Very little actual contact was made during the operation. However, the installations discovered and equipment captured verified reports by Vietnamese civilians that a local force VC company operated in the AOA. In addition, the three VC KIA were identified by local officials as being local force VC members of the company. The members of this unit evidently fled the area of operations and/or went into hiding when friendly forces arrived.

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3. Mission. As directed by the Special Landing Force Frag Order #1 for Operation DECKHOUSE II, the mission assigned to Battalion Landing Team 3/5 was:

"Commencing at H and L-hours on D-day, land simultaneously by surface and helo assault over BLUE Beach and HLZ STORK to seize LF Objectives A, B, C, D, E, and F; on order conduct search and destroy operations in the Dong Ha area and establish a Beach Support Area to assist the Commanding General, III Amphibious Force within the I Corps tactical zone."

4. Concept of Operations. The Battalion Landing Team 3/5 scheme of maneuver in the Dong Ha area during Operation DECKHOUSE II was planned to be conducted in two phases over a period of seven to ten days.

a. Phase I. In the conduct of Phase I, plans were made to: land Company K over BLUE Beach to attack and seize Landing Force Objective ALPHA; land Company I over BLUE Beach to attack and seize Landing Force Objective BRAVO; land Battery F over BLUE Beach to proceed to predesignated firing positions; land 2d Platoon, Company B, 3d Amphibian Tractor Battalion over BLUE Beach to land elements of Battalion Landing Team 3/5, to assume beach defense and to position Battery F; land 3rd Platoon, Company B, 1st Antitank Battalion and 2d Platoon, Company C, 1st Tank Battalion as provisional rifle platoons to provide security for Battery F and Amphibian Tractor Platoon; land Company L by helicopter in Landing Zone STORK to attack and seize Landing Force Objective DELTA; land 107mm Mortar Battery by helicopter in Landing Zone STORK to set up firing positions in the vicinity of the landing zone; land 2d Platoon, Company B, 1st Motor Transport Battalion by helicopter in Landing Zone STORK as a provisional rifle platoon to provide security for 107mm Mortar Battery; maintain Company M aboard LPH-5 as Battalion Landing Team Reserve; land H&S Company and other combat service support elements by helicopter in vicinity of Landing Force Objective BRAVO to establish the Command Post and provide security for Command Group.

b. Phase II. Phase II of Operation DECKHOUSE II was planned as follows: Company L was to attack and seize Landing Force Objective ECHO; Company I was to revert to Battalion Landing Team Reserve; Company M was to be landed by helicopter in Landing Zone JAY to attack and seize Landing Force Objective FOXTROT. Companies K, L, and M were to conduct search and destroy operations within the AOA.

5. Execution

a. D-day - 16 July 1966

(1) Company K landed by LVTP-5 over BLUE Beach at 0630H (H-hour), followed by Company I in LCVP at 0635H. The landings took place without incident; both companies reported the beach secured and clear. At 0710H,

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Company I commenced movement to attack and seize Landing Force Objective BRAVO, while Company K moved southwest toward Landing Force Objective ALPHA. Company L was helilifted at 0630H (L-hour) into Landing Zone STORK; no enemy contact was made and the Landing Zone was reported secured. At 0715H, the 107mm Mortar Battery was helilifted into Landing Zone STORK and assumed firing positions at YD 290701; once this was accomplished, Company L moved northwest to secure Landing Force Objective DELTA. The Command Group was helilifted to YD 307727 at 1100H and fifty minutes later control of naval gun fire and artillery was passed ashore. At 1530H Battery F landed across BLUE Beach by LVTP-5 and proceeded to designated firing positions at YD 302727; at the same time, Company M was helilifted into Landing Zone STORK. Company M (-) moved into positions at YD 281695, leaving one platoon at Landing Zone STORK as local security for the 107mm Mortar Battery.

(2) Operations on D-day consisted of search and destroy operations by Companies I, K, and L. Company I swept north from Landing Force Objective BRAVO to within 2000 meters of the Demilitarized Zone, where the company immediately took up defensive positions. Company K conducted search and destroy operations southwest of Landing Force Objective ALPHA and Battalion Landing Team Objective 1. Company L moved north and northeast from Landing Force Objective DELTA to secure Landing Force Objective ECHO and FOXTROT. There was no enemy contact on D-day.

(3) At 0720H, Company K, while moving from BLUE Beach to Landing Force Objective ALPHA, discovered a cache at YD 322720. This included ammunition, maps, documents, packs, one .38 cal pistol and four blocks of TNT. Company K also found and destroyed two booby traps in this same area. At 1055H, Company I found two freshly dug foxholes, digging tools, rice, .30 caliber brass, two canteens and a smoldering fire at YD 304735. At 1125H, Company L talked to an English speaking priest in the village of Xan Phong who told of VC operating out of the village at YD 280690. He also told of mines and booby traps in the vicinity of Battalion Landing Team Objective 2.

(4) At 1450H, Company I discovered one 9.8 Mauser rifle, ninety rounds of assorted ammunition, one block of TNT and one friction-pole grenade at YD 295750.

(5) By nightfall of D-day all Landing Force Objectives had been secured except for Landing Force Objective CHARLIE. Night defensive positions were located as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 307727.
- (b) Company I - YD 292753.
- (c) Company K - YD 316706.
- (d) Company L - YD 263747.

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(e) Company M (-) - YD 281695.

(f) 107mm Mortar Battery, reinforced with one platoon of Company M - YD 290701.

(g) Battery F - YD 302727.

(h) Shore Party - YD 320723.

(6) During the night of D-day and early morning of D+1, Companies I and K made contact with the enemy. At 1855H, Company K received small arms fire and grenades from three VC located at YD 316706 who were hidden within their perimeter. All three VC were killed and two Chinese burp guns were taken. At 2300H, Company I fired on three groups of three VC moving along the beach area. On the morning of D+1, one Mauser rifle was found on the beach near where the VC were fired upon. Company K also reported finding an additional Chinese submachine gun and magazine on the same morning.

b. D+1 - 17 July 1966

(1) At first light on D+1, all Battalion Landing Team 3/5 units were engaged in search and destroy operations within the assigned AOA. Company I conducted their search and destroy operation up to the Demilitarized Zone, then returned to the south. Operating with Company I were three tanks from the 2d Platoon, Company C, 1st Tank Battalion; no enemy contact was made during the day.

(2) Company K conducted a search and destroy operation south and southwest from Landing Force Objective ALPHA to Landing Force Objective CHARLIE. Both companies primarily were concerned with searching villages in their assigned area of operation. Neither company reported enemy contact.

(3) On D+1 Company L (-) was helilifted from YD 262752 to YD 279719; one platoon was lifted separately to YD 285711 to establish a blocking position. Company L (-) conducted a search and destroy operation toward the blocking force. After completing the sweep, Company L (-) moved on towards Landing Force Objective CHARLIE; no enemy contact was reported.

(4) Company M conducted a search and destroy operation to the southern boundary of the Battalion Landing Team 3/5 AOA at YD 264635. There was no enemy contact in this operation.

(5) Night defensive positions on D+1 were as follows:

(a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 307727.

(b) Company I - YD 325699.

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(c) Company K - YD 305683.

(d) Company L - YD 283706.

(e) Company M - YD 264635.

(f) 107mm Mortar Battery - YD 290701.

(g) Reconnaissance Platoon (Division) - YD 302688.

(h) Reconnaissance Platoon (Force) - YD 260754

(i) Battery F - YD 302727.

(6) During the night of D+1, there was no enemy contact reported by units of the Battalion Landing Team.

c. D+2 - 18 July 1966

(a) At 0800H on D+2 the Special Landing Force came under operational control of the III Marine Amphibious Force (Task Force Delta). This ended Operation DECKHOUSE II.

6. Results

a. Enemy

(1) The following is an assessment of VC personnel casualties inflicted by Battalion Landing Team 3/5:

(a) 3 - VC KIA (Body Count).

(2) The following is a compilation of enemy equipment and material captured and/or destroyed by Battalion Landing Team 3/5:

(a) 1 - .38 cal Smith and Wesson revolver.

(b) 2 - German 9.8 Mauser rifles.

(c) 1 - U.S. .30 cal submachine gun.

(d) 1 - French 9mm submachine gun.

(e) 1 - Chinese burp gun.

(f) 4 - Wooden handle hand grenades.

(g) 1 - Large signal drum.

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- (h) 1 - Burp gun magazine with 150 rounds.
- (i) 20 - .30 cal rounds.
- (j) 1 - 7.62mm clip with ten rounds.
- (k) 1 - Brown beret with insignia.
- (l) 2 - Bushel of rice.
- (m) 1 - Bushel of sweet potatoes.
- (n) Numerous packs and equipment, both U.S. and foreign.
- (o) Numerous documents, maps and notebooks.
- (p) 5 - Blocks of Chinese explosives.
- (q) 2 - Booby traps.

b. Friendly

(1) Casualties sustained by Battalion Landing Team 3/5 are summarized below:

(a) Non-Battle Casualties - 17.

1 Heat - 8.

2 Injuries - 9.

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SHEET #6442 IV
SERIES L701

Tab (a) to Enclosure (1)
Overlay of AOA
Operation
DECKHOUSE II

AOA

LZ DOVE

F

28

75

LZ JAY

E

24

69

LZ CROW

D

B

LZ STORK

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BLUE
BEACH

A

A-1

C

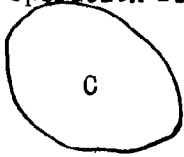
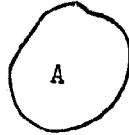
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Tab (a) to Enclosure (1),
Overlay of AOA,
Operation DECKHOUSE II

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A-2

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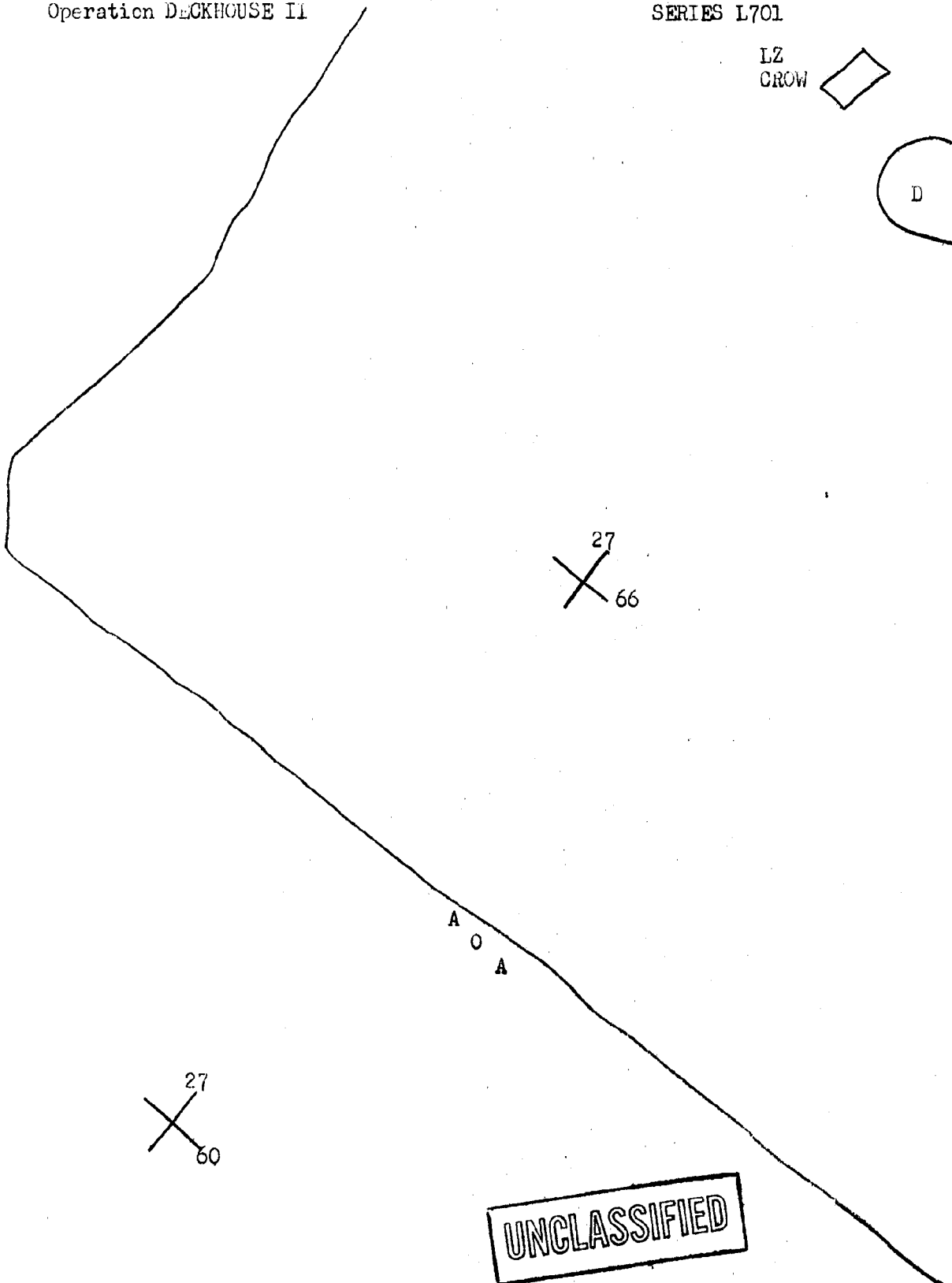
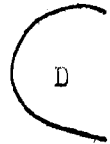
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Tab (a) to Enclosure (1), Overlay of AOA,
Operation DECKHOUSE II

SHEET #6442 IV
SERIES L701

LZ
CROW



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REPORT OF OPERATION HASTINGS

1. Task Organization. Remained the same except for the 81mm Mortar Platoon which was placed in general support of the Battalion Landing Team.

2. Intelligence

a. Operation HASTINGS was conducted by U.S. Marine Forces in the mountains of western Quang Tri Province. The zone of action in which Battalion Landing Team 3/5 operated was bordered generally on the north by east west grid line 63, on the west on a line from YD 105630 to YD 446597, on the south along the Seng Cam Lo River, up north south grid line 01 to 585 and east to YD 930585, and on the east along north south grid line 93.

b. The area is dominated by a horseshoe shaped hill mass with Dong Ha mountain at YD 091593 at the apex. This forms the three main valleys in which Battalion Landing Team 3/5 operated. The canopy formed by the jungle is 60 to 90 feet high and makes observation of the ground from the air impossible in 90 to 95 percent of the area. Trails around the area, are well marked and well used. There are a number of streams in the area not indicated on the map which are suitable for drinking, cooking and sustaining large numbers of personnel.

c. Weather conditions, influenced by typhoon Ora, turned windy and overcast the afternoon of 24 July. High winds made flying conditions marginal for the next three days causing a number of delays in medical evacuation, resupply and close air support.

d. No friendly forces had operated in Battalion Landing Team 3/5's initial zone of action prior to its entry. A B-52 strike had been conducted in the western portion of the area prior to our arrival, but specific intelligence as to what was to be expected was not available. It was suspected, however, that the area might include a regimental size command post, and perhaps even the Command Post of the 324B North Vietnamese Army (NVA) Division.

e. Company M made contact with the enemy immediately upon landing in Landing Zone CROW at YD 043623. Company M came under fire from an estimated reinforced NVA Platoon. Small arms fire was returned and supporting arms called in on the enemy resulting in twenty-one NVA KIA (Body Count), two NVA WIA confirmed, fifteen NVA WIA (Possible) and fourteen weapons captured including one 12.7mm machine gun and one 30 caliber machine gun. This action set the stage for the rest of the operation as it was apparent that the enemy was present in our zone of action and would fight to protect the area.

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f. Contact with the enemy was limited, except in two encounters, to units of under twenty or thirty NVA. Actions with five or ten NVA predominated the action. The small units appeared to be one of two types: those who were assigned to delay and harass friendly units and those who had become separated from their present units and stumbled into contact with Battalion Landing Team 3/5.

g. The most significant encounters with NVA forces occurred on 22 July and 24 July. Company M moved out on the morning of 22 July in reaction to a report by an NVA captive who reported a regimental headquarters site to be in the vicinity of Hill 314 in grid square YD 0262. Company M searched the area discovering 200 to 300 reinforced bunkers. These were new bunkers, covered by fresh foliage and had recently been abandoned. Company M continued its search around Hill 314 and at YD 034625 came under heavy automatic weapons fire and grenade bombardment from an estimated forty to forty-five NVA. The NVA were positioned in bunkers reinforced by logs and were occupying high ground above Company M, who was then in a draw. Some of the NVA were bandaged from previous wounds. An Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) interpreter with Company M repeatedly called for the NVA to surrender but they refused to do so. Company M then returned fire, maneuvered against and overran the NVA position. The results of the action were seventeen NVA KIA (Body Count) and seven weapons captured.

h. The most significant contact of the operation took place 1215H 24 July when Company I encountered strong enemy positions at YD 013616. Company I was moving along a ridge line on a narrow trail when the lead element of the company came under heavy automatic weapons fire and grenade bombardment. Within minutes the lead elements of the company were pinned down by fire. The jungle was so thick at the point of contact that often muzzle flashes could not be seen when enemy forces were firing at point blank range. Company I was then taken under fire by mortars. Artillery and air strikes were called in and automatic weapons fire slowed down and the mortar fire temporarily ceased. By this time the Commanding Officer of Company I estimated that he was under attack by two NVA Companies. At 1640H Company I attempted medical evacuation of the wounded but the helicopters received an intense volume of fire and were forced out of the area. At about 1700H the mortar fire on Company I positions resumed.

i. At 1735H Company K, moving toward Company I from the southeast, made contact with an estimated forty to fifty NVA in the vicinity of YD 018614. The NVA were positioned in bunkers reinforced with logs. Company K returned fire, maneuvered and then withdrew a short distance to bring in artillery and air strikes. The fire was called in and the results of the action were seven NVA KIA (Body Count) and an estimated thirty-five NVA KIA (Probable).

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j. Company I continued to receive mortar and automatic weapons fire until about 2010H when artillery fire was directed at suspected mortar positions in the vicinity of YD 021628. Two secondary explosions resulted and Company I received no more incoming mortar fire. Company I did receive heavy small arms fire during the rest of the night and during most of the following day.

k. Reports by the company commanders and reports from NVA captives definitely established the enemy force facing those companies was an NVA Battalion. NVA captives identified the unit as the 6th Battalion, 812th Regiment of the 324B NVA Division. This battalion was composed on three rifle companies of a strength of ninety to ninety-five each and a heavy weapons company armed with four 82mm mortars and four 57mm recoilless rifles.

l. When the action ceased and an evaluation of the battle area could be accomplished, the following enemy losses were assessed: twenty-five NVA KIA (Body Count); one hundred twenty-one NVA KIA (Probable); thirty NVA WIA (Possible); three mortars captured or destroyed; twenty-seven rifles and submachine guns captured; one 57mm recoilless rifle destroyed; one 12.7mm machine gun destroyed; over two hundred grenades destroyed; over 15,500 rounds of ammo captured; over fifty-two mortar and AT rounds destroyed; and numerous packs and uniforms captured and destroyed.

m. Eight major enemy installations were discovered by Battalion Landing Team 3/5 in the zone of action. Six of these installations could each accommodate a battalion size or larger unit. A number of smaller living areas were also discovered. The major installations were:

(1) 191625H - Company L discovered at YD 040620 what appeared to be a battalion size Command Post. Eight huts were found, over one hundred and forty prepared bunkers and holes and about twenty pigs and chickens. No documents or items of equipment were found, but the area had been evacuated quite recently.

(2) 201300H - A patrol from the 106mm RR Platoon discovered at YD 098619 what appeared to be a political reception center for the new North Vietnamese Troops. The site included a hut and seven large bunkers. Two sacks of propaganda material were found at the site including posters, pamphlets, leaflets, paper North Vietnamese Flags and receipt books that appeared to be used for recording membership in party organizations. Found also were three large banners which said (translated liberally): "Welcome to the liberation of South Vietnam. National Liberation Front", "Help defeat the American Imperialists and their Lackies", and "Save the people from Ky and his government of thieves". The site had recently been occupied; the diggings were fresh; food including fresh bread and fruit was found.

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(3) 201610H - Company K discovered at YD 044598 a battalion or possibly regimental sized Command Post and a bivouac location. The area included over three hundred packs, over five hundred sixty uniforms, three hundred twenty-three blue sweat shirts, four hundred thirty-five shelter halves, two hundred ninety-seven pair of Ho Chi Minh sandals, two hundred sixty-eight machettes, and numerous magazines and rounds (mostly 12.7mm). There was a great deal of expended 12.7mm brass about the area and about seventy pounds of documents including letters, diaries, and instruction books on mortars and heavy weapons. The area included tables, benches, class room type areas, two large huts and over four hundred bunkers and shelter holes. All gear was new or almost new and in excellent condition.

(4) 210920H - Company M found at YD C24618 an area believed to be a battalion sized bivouac area. The area contained over two hundred recently used bunkers and shelter holes. Captured at the site were six thousand rounds of 12.7mm ammunition, seventy-seven pounds of TNT block, thirty pounds of TNT flake, eleven Anti-tank mines, claymore mines, forty-five nonelectric blasting caps, eighty-eight pressure pull type fuses, one mine sweeper, five hundred feet time fuse, two crimpers, one splicer, four reels of communications wire, four weapons, forty pounds of documents including engineer training manuals, diaries and letters, and various items of 782 type gear. The bivouac site obviously supported an engineer battalion which vacated in a great hurry less than 24 hours in advance of Company M's arrival.

(5) 231000H - Company M discovered at YD 033627 an area which contained four large huts and twenty to thirty large bunkers. The complex was protected by both entrances by a system of fortified positions. Two NVA were sighted in this complex and were killed.

(6) 220930H - Company M investigated an NVA captives report of a regimental size Command Post located in the vicinity of Hill 314 in grid square 0262. Company M found on the northeast side of Hill 314 over two hundred freshly prepared bunkers reinforced with logs and covered by fresh foliage. The area had been vacated less than 24 hours prior but no equipment or documents were found.

(7) 231555H - Company I at YD 017607 discovered a battalion size bivouac site and a large supply of enemy equipment. In the area of the cache was an NVA soldier who had deserted and surrendered. The following items were captured in the cache: two Chinese submachine guns; one AN/PRC-10 radio; forty-eight wooden handle grenades; one hundred eight rounds .30 caliber ammunition; seven hundred thirty-eight 7.62mm rounds, two large canvas bags probably covers for heavy mortars, 82mm mortar cleaning gear; one flag; thirty-two pair sneakers; twelve full rucksacks; twenty-five kahki uniforms; numerous items of 782 gear and medical supplies; and numerous diaries, letters and assorted documents. All items of equipment were new or in excellent condition. About eighty to one hundred bunkers (two or four man) were found in the area.

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(8) 241155H - An H&S Company patrol located an enemy bivouac site at YD 083614 - again for a battalion sized unit. The area included four huts and about one hundred forty reinforced bunkers. A limited amount of gear and documents was found.

Although Battalion Landing Team 3/5 made contact with only one identified unit (The 6th Battalion, 812th Regiment) and, as stated before, met most of its resistance in the form of small delaying groups it is estimated that at least one NVA Regiment and an Engineer Battalion occupied the zone of action prior to Battalion Landing Team 3/5's arrival. It is possible that the headquarters of the 324B Division may also have been located in the area. The facilities were there but the interpretation of the captured documents, letters and diaries will have to verify this conjecture.

3. Mission. As directed by Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force, Battalion Landing Team 3/5 was to aggressively conduct search and destroy operations in assigned areas of responsibility. (see Tab A)

4. Concept of Operation. Battalion Landing Team conducts search and destroy operations within assigned TAOR with four rifle companies executing search and destroy operations from east to west within assigned zones of action.

5. Execution

a. D+2 - 18 July 1966

(1) Battery F was lifted by helicopter commencing at 0830H to assigned firing positions south of Cam Lo; the battery was in position ready to fire by 1620H. At 1215H Companies M and L were lifted by helicopter to Landing Zone CROW. The Landing Zone received moderate small arms and automatic weapons fire and Company M met enemy resistance as it secured the Landing Zone. By 1330H solid contact with the enemy was established. Air strikes were called, and Company M overran the enemy positions located at YD 043623. Of an approximate forty khaki-clad enemy, Company M counted twenty-one KIA, two WIA, and eighteen WIA (Possible). Captured were one .30 cal machine gun; one .50 cal machine gun; five 7.62 automatic rifles; six 7.62 semi-automatic rifles; ten wooden hand grenades, two AT mines; one AT rocket launcher; and 1000 rounds of small arms ammo.

(2) Company L found ten rounds small arms ammunition after landing in Landing Zone CROW but had no enemy contact until 1810H when an unknown number of NVA were encountered at YD 060610. This action resulted in one NVA KIA.

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(3) Companies I and K landed by helicopter in Landing Zone DOVE at 1330H. They encountered no enemy resistance as they landed or when they pushed forward to the west.

(4) At 1730H Company L received machine gun and automatic rifle fire from an estimated twenty NVA at YD 060612. Company L returned the fire, resulting in two NVA KIA (Body Count) and five KIA (Probable). One sub-machine gun was captured and one .30 caliber machine gun was destroyed.

(5) At dusk on D+2, Battalion Landing Team 3/5 units were in positions as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 076605.
- (c) Company K - YD 065607.
- (d) Company L - YD 049619.
- (e) Company M - YD 049622.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.
- (g) Division Reconnaissance (1) - YD 080597.
- (h) Division Reconnaissance (2) - YD 066605.
- (i) Force Reconnaissance - YD 092619.

b. D+3 - 19 July 1966

(1) There was little contact during the morning of D+3. At 0650H Company L received three 60mm mortar rounds at YD 049619. Company M at YD 043623 found two additional bodies from the action of D+2. At 0845H Company I found a seven round clip of ammunition on a trail at YD 071597.

(2) During the afternoon of D+3 contact was made by Company L at YD 045625 with a NVA Platoon armed with automatic weapons. Company L returned fire and killed four NVA (Body Count) with two WIA (Confirmed). They captured two automatic weapons and one rifle. At 1408H, Company K brought fire to bear on three NVA's at YD 058608, resulting in one WIA (Confirmed) and three captured hand grenades. At 1815H Company K at YD 049605 found one dead NVA believed to have been wounded in an

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earlier action. The soldier was armed with a new semi-automatic rifle in excellent condition. Also in the area was a large cache of packs, equipment, supplies, rice, ammo and uniforms - all new. At dusk on D+3, Battalion Landing Team units were in positions as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604,
- (b) Company I - YD 070596.
- (c) Company K - YD 051605.
- (d) Company L - YD 039617.
- (e) Company M - YD 039617.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.
- (g) Division Reconnaissance (1) - YD 080597.
- (h) Division Reconnaissance (2) - YD 066605.
- (i) Force Reconnaissance - YD 092619.

(b) During the night of D+3, there was no enemy contact by any units of the Battalion Landing Team.

c. D+4 - 20 July 1966.

(1) At first light on D+4 all Battalion Landing Team Companies resumed search and destroy operations west in their assigned TOAR's. Reconnaissance elements of Battalion Landing Team 3/5 came under the operational control of Reconnaissance Group Bravo at 0700H to perform missions as directed in support of Task Force Delta operations.

(2) At 0645H a Company L Observation Post at YD 038622 fired on four NVA but reported no results. At 0915H Company L completed destruction of the NVA Headquarters located at YD 040620. At 0945H Company M at YD 028616 brought three NVA under fire, killing one. The others fled to the northwest.

(3) At 1130H Company M fired on five NVA's at YD 022610, killing three, capturing two, and wounding one. This area appeared to be the site of a Regimental Command Post. Captured were two Chinese 7.62 semi-automatic rifles, one light machine gun, one M-14 rifle (serial number 520895), thirty hand grenades, fifteen boxes of ammunition, over two hundred packs, and forty to fifty lbs of documents. At 1215H Company L killed one NVA at YD 030614. At 1300H an H&S Company patrol discovered a bivouac site at YD 098619 containing propaganda materials. The area

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appeared to be a reception center for incoming NVA troops. At 1610H Company K discovered a second bivouac area containing over three hundred packs, a large quantity of equipment and mortar instruction manuals. At 1815H Company L fired on and killed two NVA (Body Count) at YD 025610, capturing two others; all were armed with hand grenades. At 0100H a patrol from Company K ambushed an estimated ten to fifteen NVA at YD 041596. A daylight search of the area revealed no confirmed KIA.

(5) By dusk on D+4, Battalion Landing Team units were in positions as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 062589.
- (c) Company K - YD 039594.
- (d) Company L - YD 023608.
- (e) Company M - YD 025612.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

(6) During the night of D+4, Company L at 2105H, ambushed an NVA squad at YD 019609 resulting in three NVA KIA (Body Count), four NVA KIA (Probable), and the capture of one .50 caliber machine gun, one automatic rifle, and one anti-tank weapon.

d. D+5 - 21 July 1966

(1) All Battalion Landing Team companies continued their search and destroy operations west through the assigned Battalion Landing Team TAOR.

(2) Company M at 0920H located prepared positions at YD 024618 and found TNT, C-4, blasting caps and other equipment. The areas contained two hundred or more bunkers and shelter holes, as well as a hospital and a mess hall. At 1520H, a Company K patrol at YD 038592 made contact with one NVA who withdrew under fire. At 1700H Company M discovered a Chinese Communist mine detector at YD 028618. Also at 1700H two NVA bodies and twelve graves were found in the same location. The casualties were apparently caused by artillery fire, or an earlier contact with Company L or Company M.

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(3) By dusk on D+5, Battalion Landing Team units were in position as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 043588.
- (c) Company K - YD 038595.
- (d) Company L - YD 010607.
- (e) Company M - YD 023612.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

e. D+6 - 22 July 1966

(1) Continuing search and destroy operations to the west, company M reached Hill 314 (grid square YD 0262), which intelligence sources indicated was the site of a regimental Command Post. Search revealed numerous fighting holes but no abandoned equipment. At 1300H one NVA soldier was fired on and killed at YD 024625; one 7.62mm semi-automatic rifle was recovered.

(2) At 1545 Company M received heavy automatic weapons fire and a grenade bombardment from an estimated thirty to forty NVA in the vicinity of YD 034625. Some of the NVA were wounded, although an ARVN interpreter repeatedly demanded their surrender, resistance continued and Company M overran the position. The action resulted in twenty NVA KIA (Body Count) and one .30 caliber machine gun captured.

(3) While evacuating wounded from this action, Company M was taken under fire from YD 034623. Returning fire, the enemy position was overrun and two NVA were killed (Body Count) and two automatic rifles captured.

(4) At 1700H an ambush patrol of Company L fired on four NVA in the vicinity of YD 025610. Shortly thereafter a squad from Company L reinforced the patrol and continued the action. This encounter resulted in four NVA KIA (Body Count); one NVA KIA (Probable); and one 7.62mm semi-automatic rifle captured.

(5) At 1845H near YD 026608 Company I encountered twelve to fifteen NVA with automatic weapons. Fire was returned and the enemy withdrew.

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(6) Night positions on D+6 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 019607.
- (c) Company K - YD 028612.
- (d) Company L - YD 005600.
- (e) Company M - YD 034623.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

(7) In defensive positions at YD 005600, Company L at 2045H received ten rounds of incoming mortar fire. The firing ceased, then resumed at 2210H. At this time, Company H, 2d Battalion, 1st Marines sighted muzzle flashes, reporting their position to Battalion Landing Team 3/5. Artillery fire directed on this target resulted in secondary explosions and cessation of the firing. Company H reported definite destruction of the mortar and three NVA KIA (Probable).

f. D+7 - 23 July 1966

(1) Early on D+7 at 0040H Company M was again taken under fire from YD 034625. Fire was returned resulting in two NVA KIA (Body Count); two NVA KIA (Probable); four WIA (Confirmed); and one captured semi-automatic rifle.

(2) At 0815H Company L fired on and killed one NVA at YD 010605; one Mauser rifle was captured.

(3) At 1000H Company M sighted three NVA in a clearing in the vicinity of YD 033627. Friendly fire resulted in two NVA KIA (Body Count), one NVA WIA (Confirmed), and the capture of one Chinese submachine gun. At the same time Company K discovered one dead NVA at YD 025611, who apparently had died as a result of artillery or air strikes.

(4) Company I at 1105H sighted two NVA near YD 018602. Fire was delivered, resulting in the capture of one 57mm recoilless rifle with two rounds, one NVA KIA (Body Count), one NVA WIA (Confirmed) and one NVA captive.

(5) At 1530H Company K found one dead NVA in a stream bed, coordinates YD 029613. The soldier had died of bullet wounds and carried no weapon.

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(6) At 1555H Company I discovered a large equipment cache at YD 017607. In the immediate vicinity was one NVA soldier who surrendered when sighted. The cache contained two Chinese submachine guns; one AN/PRC-10 radio; forty-eight hand grenades; fourteen plastic gas masks; and a large store of ammunition and equipment.

(7) At 1830H an outpost from the 107mm Mortar Battery reported three to five NVA in the vicinity of YD 052624. Artillery fire scored direct hits on the NVA position, resulting in an estimated five NVA KIA (Probable).

(8) Night positions on D+7 were as follows:

(a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 803604.

(b) Company I - YD 016609.

(c) Company K - YD 028612.

(d) Company L - YD 005600.

(e) Company M - YD 034623.

(f) Battery F - YD 117579.

(9) At 2230H Company L received sniper fire from YD 005605. Fire was returned, resulting in one NVA KIA (Body Count) and the capture of one Chinese Communist semi-automatic rifle.

g. D+8 - 24 July 1966

(1) At 0700H on D+8 Company L was approached at YD 005605 by two NVA soldiers wearing camouflaged utilities and U.S. helmets. Because of the possibility they might be Marines, the soldiers were allowed to continue their approach. The NVA opened fire and fled. One was killed, but the other was able to make good an escape.

(2) At 1115H Company I discovered twenty-one NVA bodies near YD 016617. The bodies were 3 to 4 days old and had been found in the area of Company L's 202105H ambush.

(3) At 1115H a patrol from the 107mm Mortar Battery encountered four NVA near an enemy bivouac site at YD 083614. They were brought under fire, but no casualties were reported. The NVA soldiers were armed with one Browning Automatic Rifle, two .30 caliber carbines, and one 9mm French submachine gun.

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(4) At 1200H Company I made contact with three NVA near YD 011616 on a well used trail running north and south through the area. One NVA was killed and two were captured, along with two rounds of 82mm mortar ammunition. Later, at 1215H, Company I was brought under fire in the vicinity of YD 013616. Small arms fire was received from both sides in addition to incoming mortar rounds. Preliminary interrogation of captives indicated a force of one hundred NVA positioned near Hill 314 (YD 022622); that another ninety-five were moving north 500 meters from the action; and that mortar emplacements were located near YD 015629. Company I returned fire but an accurate damage assessment was made impossible by the thick vegetation.

(5) At 1425H Company I received mortar and automatic weapons fire while moving up a small draw at the base of Hill 362 (YD 011616). The enemy advanced as close as thirty yards, but were repulsed by intense fire from Company I.

(6) Two hours later, air strikes were directed by Company I at YD 018623. At this time, all incoming mortar fire ceased. At 1640H Company I attempted a medical evacuation of casualties, but heavy fire forced the helicopter out of the area.

(7) At 1705H Company I again received mortar fire and moved to positions higher on Hill 362 (YD 011617).

(8) Moving to the assistance of Company I, Company K at 1735H made contact with thirty to forty NVA near YD 018614. Assaulting elements of Company K killed six NVA (Body Count) and three NVA (Probable).

(9) Night positions on D+8 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 011616.
- (c) Company K - YD 018616.
- (d) Company L - YD 005600.
- (e) Company M - YD 025636.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

(10) At 2010H artillery fire was directed at suspected mortar positions near YD 021628. Two secondary explosions were observed and incoming mortar fire ceased in Company I's positions. It is estimated that two mortars of unknown caliber were destroyed.

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(11) At 2130H a 107mm Mortar Battery Observation Post took an estimated NVA squad under fire at YD 055606. It is estimated that three NVA were killed (Probable).

(12) At 2335H Company M was probed at YD 025636 by five NVA. Fire was returned, resulting in an estimated two NVA KIA (Probable).

h. D+9 - 25 July 1966

(1) During the early morning of D+9, Company I was continually probed by forces of an estimated two NVA reinforced companies. These probes continued until 0430H when the enemy broke contact. At 0015H, one NVA walked into the lines of Company L at coordinates YD 005605; when challenged, he ran and was killed by small arms fire. Six hand grenades were recovered, but the NVA carried no weapon.

(2) At 0950H an air observer reported the sighting of two NVA bodies, one damaged mortar, and one rifle at YD 014627. This damage was evidently the result of artillery fire directed into this area the night of 24 July.

(3) At 1000H Company L encountered one NVA YD 016607. The soldier was killed and his semi-automatic rifle captured. At 1500H a patrol from Company L sighted seven NVA (YD 011612) and opened fire, killing one who was armed with three hand grenades. Later at 1630H Company L was attacked by approximately twenty NVA at YD 011616. Returning fire, Company L killed four (Body Count) with ten KIA (Probable).

(4) At 1645H Company L received three incoming grenades of an unknown tear gas agent. The attack, which took place at YD 011617, caused only minor eye irritation which was not long lasting. Although the grenade canisters were never found, it was reported that the agent was neither CS nor CN.

(5) Company K at 1700H conducted a search of YD 018617, an area which was occupied by NVA troops the afternoon and evening of 24 July. Six bodies were discovered along with numerous blood and drag trails, indicating an additional thirty NVA KIA (Probable). A large store of equipment was captured including machine guns, submachine guns, one M-14 rifle, hand grenades, demolitions, and uniforms.

(6) By 1715H Company I had completed a patrol search of the area around YD 011617. Fourteen NVA bodies were found, along with blood and drag trails indicating thirty-six NVA KIA (Probable).

(7) Night positions on D+9 were as follows:

(a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.

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- (b) Company I - YD 011616.
- (c) Company K - YD 011616.
- (d) Company L - YD 011616.
- (e) Company M - YD 020635.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

i. D+10 - 26 July 1966

(1) The 11th day of the operation was relatively quiet, with contact consisting chiefly of small probes. Company M joined Companies I, K, and L in preparation for the foot movement to a newly assigned TAOR (see Tab b).

(2) Night positions on D+10 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - YD 083604.
- (b) Company I - YD 011616.
- (c) Company K - YD 011616.
- (d) Company L - YD 011616.
- (e) Company M - YD 011616.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

j. D+11 - 27 July 1966

(1) Continuing to probe company positions atop Hill 362, five to six NVA attacked Company L at 0015H. The hand grenade and small arms attack was repulsed with unknown results.

(2) After conducting intensive air strikes and artillery preparation, Companies I, K, L, and M moved by foot westward to designated positions in the new TAOR. The Battalion Landing Team Command Post displaced by helicopter.

(3) At 0815H on the 27th Company L received sniper fire from two NVA at YD 011617. Fire was returned, resulting in one NVA KIA (Body Count) and one NVA captive. Also captured were two Chinese submachine guns.

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(4) At 1100H Company M was approached at YD 014617 by a Montanard farmer who had been forced to work for the NVA and now wanted to surrender. He was accordingly taken prisoner and returned to higher headquarters for interrogation.

(5) No other contact was reported during the march; night positions on D+11 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - XD 979585.
- (b) Company I - XD 989596.
- (c) Company K - XD 997595.
- (d) Company L - XD 988593.
- (e) Company M - XD 995597.
- (f) Battery F - XD 117579.

(6) At 2030H a Command Post Forward Observer reported the sighting of three small lights blinking on and off near YD 985606. As it was suspected that these lights were aiming devices for mortars, artillery was fired at the target. Two secondary explosions resulted and it is estimated at least three NVA were killed.

k. D+12 - 28 July 1966

(1) The following companies conducted search and destroy operations against NVA Forces in the grid squares indicated:

- (a) Company K - XD 9760.
- (b) Company L - XD 9660.
- (c) Company M - XC 9860, XD 9960, and XD 0060.

(2) At 1215H Company M found a cache at XD 999593 of enemy equipment as follows: one machine gun barrel case, one bayonet scabbard, one map case, four blankets, six ponchos, forty-one sweat shirts, twelve sets of khaki uniforms, six undershirts, twelve drawers, four pairs of socks, five rice bags, five hammocks, two pairs of sneakers, one canteen, one ammo magazine with one hundred fifty 7.62 rounds, forty feet detonating cord, and two hundred pounds of TNT. The area had four defensive holes but was unoccupied.

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(3) At 1315H Company M found another cache at XD 999593 which included fourteen sweat shirts, eighty-four trousers, eighty-one khaki shirts, nine hand grenades, thirty hammocks, five bags medical supplies and forty drawers. The area had been used for one or two days before discovery.

(4) At 1400H Company K received ten to twenty rounds of sniper fire in the vicinity of XD 987592 from three or four NVA. Company K returned the fire with unknown results; enemy fire ceased.

(5) At 1605H Company L made contact with four or five NVA snipers at XD 965603. Artillery was directed against this location. A search of the area revealed no trace of the enemy.

(6) At 1815H Company I moved into the Battalion Command Post area to provide Command Post security and assume the mission of Battalion Reserve.

(7) Night positions on D+12 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - XD 979505.
- (b) Company I - XD 979585.
- (c) Company K - XD 987592.
- (d) Company L - XD 985594.
- (e) Company M - XD 994598.
- (f) Battery F - YD 117579.

1. D+13 - 29 July 1966

(1) At 0915H Company K (the lead element) commenced movement toward Landing Zone BLUEJAY (vicinity XD 983563) for subsequent helilift to USS PRINCETON. Other units following in trace were elements of H&S Company, and the 2d Platoon, Company B, 1st Motor Transport Battalion. Company I provided rear security on the march. The helilift was completed by 1610H.

(2) Battery F commenced helift from vicinity YD 117579 at 0900H to USS PRINCETON and were transported by boat from PRINCETON to USS ALAMO.

(3) During the afternoon the 2d Platoon, Company B, 1st Motor Transport Battalion, and Companies I and K were transported by boat from the USS PRINCETON to assigned shipping.

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(4) At 1227H a patrol from Company M sighted twenty-five to thirty NVA at XD 989613 digging a mortar position and a 50 caliber machine gun position. An artillery mission was conducted followed by an air strike; four direct napalm and six 500 pound bomb hits were delivered. Estimate; fifteen NVA KIA (Probable), one 82mm mortar destroyed and one 12.7mm machine gun destroyed (Probable).

(5) During a search conducted by Company M a trail eight to ten feet wide was discovered in the general area of grid squares XD 0161 to 9661; it was noted that tall trees were pulled and lashed together to complete the jungle canopy over the trail. The trail showed signs of frequent use. The trail extended the length of the ridge line and had communications wire installed throughout its length.

(6) Night positions on D+13 were as follows:

- (a) Battalion Landing Team Command Post - XD 979585.
- (b) Company L - XD 985594.
- (c) Company M - XD 987591.

m. D+14 - 30 July 1966

(1) At 0830H on D+14, Companies L and M and the remainder of H&S Company commenced movement toward Landing Zone BLUEJAY (XD 985562). Helicopters lifted the first elements of Company M at 1305H, and by 1530H all units of Battalion Landing Team 3/5 were aboard assigned shipping.

(2) The Special Landing Force ^{CTG 71.5} reverted to the operational control of Commander Task Group 76.5 at 1515H.

6. Results

a. Enemy

(1) The following is an assessment of NVA personnel casualties inflicted by Battalion Landing Team 3/5:

- (a) NVA KIA (Body Count) - 155.
- (b) NVA KIA (Probable) - 167.
- (c) NVA WIA (Confirmed) - 12.
- (d) NVA WIA (Possible) - 45.

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(e) NVA CAPTIVE - 7. (2 died of wounds after interrogation)

(2) The following is a compilation of enemy equipment and material captured and/or destroyed by Battalion Landing Team 3/5;

- (a) 47 - Soviet 7.62 Assault Rifle AK-47.
- (b) 7 - Mauser Chinat 7.62.
- (c) 2 - Soviet RP6 Grenade Launchers.
- (d) 2 - US M-14 Rifles.
- (e) 3 - .30 caliber Machine Guns.
- (f) 2 - .50 caliber Machine Guns.
- (g) 2 - Soviet Carbine, M1944.
- (h) 22 - Soviet 7.62 Carbine SKS.
- (i) 3 - Soviet RPD 7.62 light Machine Guns.
- (j) 2 - 57mm Recoilless Rifles.
- (k) 2 - US M-3 .45 caliber Submachine Guns.
- (l) 1 - Mine Detector, VIM203.
- (m) 3 - 82mm Mortars.
- (n) 1 - 12.7mm Heavy Machine Guns.
- (o) 28,553 Rounds, small arms ammunition.
- (p) 9,700 - Rounds, 12.7mm ammunition.
- (q) 369 - Hand grenades.
- (r) 6 - spare .30 caliber Machine Gun barrels.
- (s) 75 - Entrenching tools.
- (t) 1,020 - Electric blasting caps.
- (u) 132 - Pounds TNT.

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- (v) 1 - AN/PRC-10 Radio
- (w) 1 - Field Phone
- (x) 21 - 82mm Mortar Rounds
- (y) 17 - 60mm Mortar Rounds
- (z) 22 - LAWS
- (aa) 1 - Claymore mine
- (bb) 5 - Anti Tank Rockets
- (cc) 235 - Yards Comm wire
- (dd) 898 - Khaki uniform shirts
- (ee) 853 - Khaki uniform trousers
- (ff) 810 - Packs with equipment
- (gg) 443 - Shelter halves
- (hh) 297 - Pair "Ho Chi Minh " sandals
- (ii) 41 - Pair Sneakers
- (jj) 269 - Machete Knives
- (kk) 10 Map cases
- (ll) 114 - Mosquito nets
- (mm) 88 - Pressure-pull type fuses.
- (nn) 223 - Ponchos.
- (oo) 55 - Pounds medical supplies.
- (pp) 76 - Canteens.
- (qq) 33 - Grenade pouches.
- (rr) 32 - Cooking pots.
- (ss) 11 - 57mm Recoilless Rifle rounds.

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- (tt) 28 - Gas masks.
- (uu) 7 - Canvas weapon bags (82mm mortar).
- (vv) 3 - Helmets.
- (ww) 173 - Hammocks
- (xx) 1 - Splicer.
- (yy) 1 - Crimper.
- (zz) 1 - Hand drill.
- (aaa) 15 - Antitank mines.
- (bbb) 450 - pounds documents, diaries, and letters.

b. Friendly

(1) Casualties sustained by Battalion Landing Team 3/5 are summarized below:

- (a) Killed in Action - 48.
 - 1 Gunshot - 42.
 - 2 Shrapnel - 6.
- (b) Died of Wounds - 3.
 - 1 Gunshot - 2.
 - 2 Shrapnel - 1.
- (c) Wounded in Action - 162.
 - 1 Gunshot - 25.
 - 2 Shrapnel - 137.
- (d) Deaths, Non-Battle - 2.
 - 1 Shrapnel - 1.
 - 2 Malaria - 1.
- (e) Non-Battle Casualties - 98.
 - 1 Heat - 20.
 - 2 Injuries and Miscellaneous - 78.

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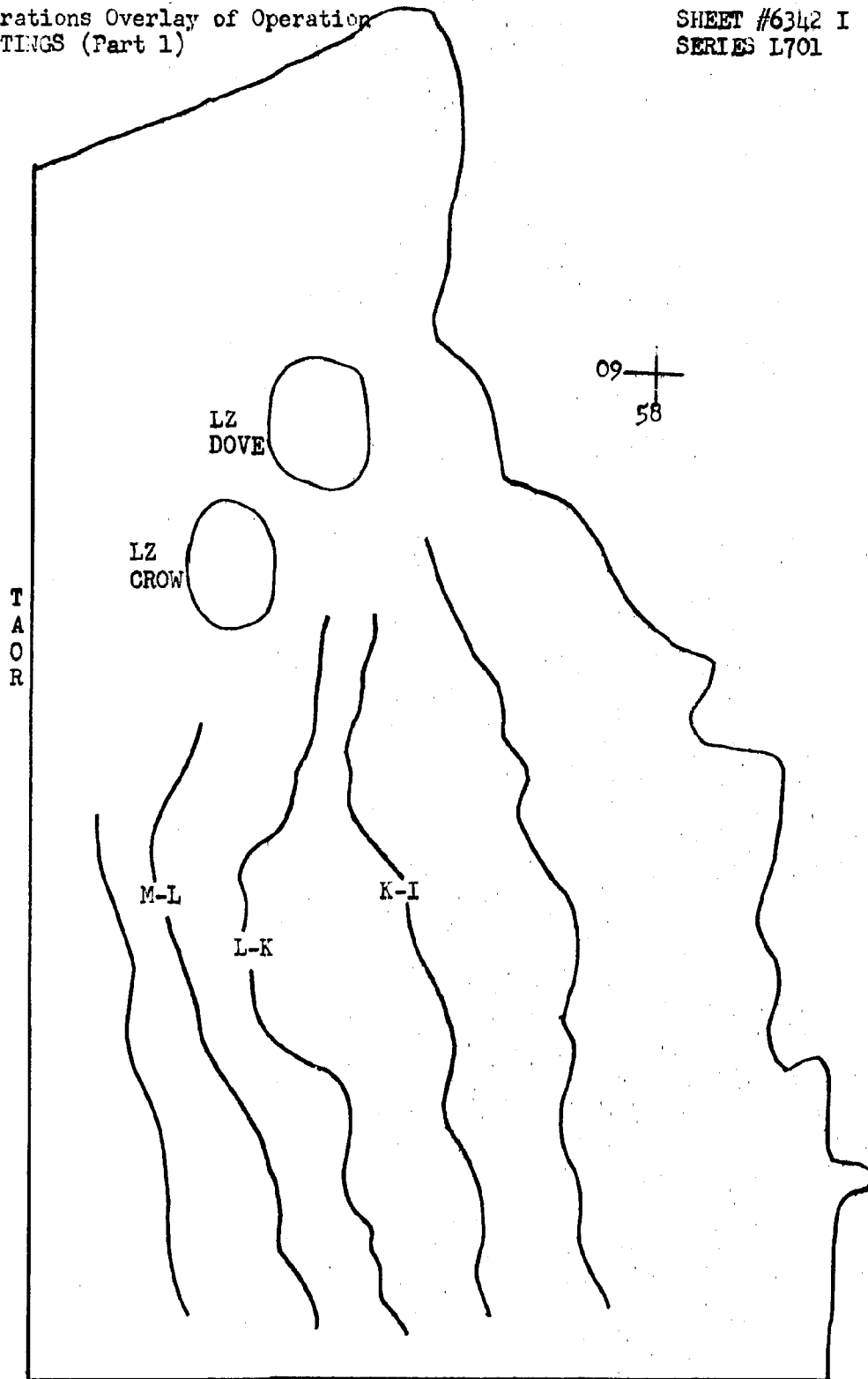
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Tab (a) Operations Overlay of Operation
HASTINGS (Part 1)

SHEET #6342 I
SERIES L701



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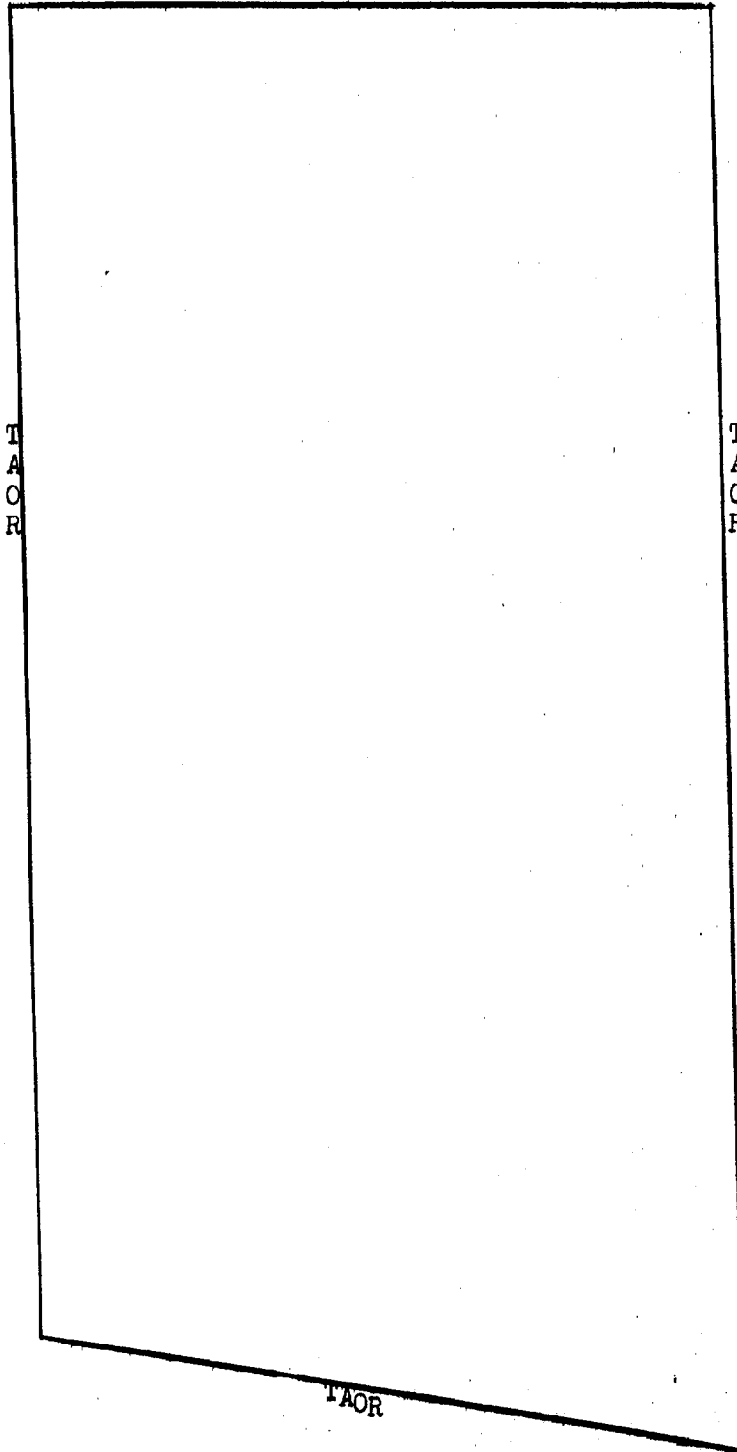
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Tab (b) Operations Overlay of Operation HASTINGS (Part 2)

SHEET #6342 I
SERIES L701

TAOR



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02

LZ
BLUEJAY



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B-1

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HEADQUARTERS
3d Battalion, 12th Marines (Rein)
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
c/o FPO, San Francisco 96602

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3/BNB/rr
03480
4 August 1966

3/12

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, Task Force Delta

Subj: Combat After Action Report

Ref: (a) 4thRegtO 3120.3B
(b) Task Force Delta FragO 1-66

02066

Encl: (1) - Daily Chronology of Events
(2) - Table of Ammunition Expenditures, Types of
Missions Fired, and Casualty Assessments

1. In compliance with references (a) and (b), the following
Combat After Action Report is submitted for the 3d Battalion,
12th Marines (-) (Rein).

2. Code Name. HASTINGS

3. Dates of Operations. 15 July to 3 August 1966.

4. Location. Operation "Hastings" took place in the north
eastern portion of Quang Tri Province. Area A was bounded on
the east by Route #1, on the north by the DMZ, on the west
generally by easting grid line 10, and on the south by Route
#9. Area B was bounded on the east generally by grid line 10,
on the north by the DMZ, on the west generally by easting grid
line 93, and on the south by Route #9. Area C was bounded by
Route #9 on the north and west, on the south generally by
northing grid line 45, and on the east generally by easting
grid line 09.

5. Command Headquarters. Task Force Delta

6. Task Organization.

UNIT

3d Bn, 12th Marines(-)(Rein)
Headquarters Battery

COMMANDING OFFICER

Maj. S. M. MORROW

Capt. G. J. SOMMERVILLE

4TH MARINES (REIN)
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UNITCOMMANDING OFFICER

Battery "H"

Capt P. T. SUDMEYER

Battery "I"

Capt B. T. CHAMBLESS

Battery "B", 1stBn, 11th Marines

Capt F. S. CARR

Battery "F", 2dBn, 11th Marines

Capt J. E. HARRIS

Battery "L", 4thBn, 12th Marines

Capt John POWERS

Battery "M", 4thBn, 12th Marines

Capt J. B. WAY

107mm Mortar Btry, 1stBn,
11th Marines

Capt R. J. GRAHAM

7. Intelligence. Intelligence sources indicated that the 324th North Vietnam Army Division had infiltrated into the area of operations. The mission of the 324th was to destroy the 1st ARVN Division and liberate Quang Tri Province commencing the 20th of July. Terrain in the area ranged from low rolling hills with scrub brush to very steep terrain with a heavy overhead canopy.

8. Mission. The 3d Battalion, 12th Marines (-) (Rein) mission was to provide direct support to Task Force Delta, the ARVN Airborne Division, and to provide reinforcing fires to the 1st ARVN Division Artillery.

9. Concept of Operation. Initially, two batteries of 105mm howitzers and two 155mm howitzers were to be located in the vicinity of Cam Lo (YD 1157) to support Task Force Delta's operations in Area B and to reinforce the fires of the 1st ARVN Division Artillery in Area A and the ARVN Airborne Division in Area C. One 105mm battery was placed at D-5 (YD 0951) to provide direct support to the ARVN Airborne Division operating in Area C.

10. Execution

- a. See enclosure (1) for a daily chronology.

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b. GFT Settings. During the early stages of the operation it was impossible to conduct any registrations. On 19 July a high burst registration was conducted for all 105mm howitzer batteries. The small range and deflection corrections determined by these registrations explained the reason why "closed stick" computations had been so accurate during the early stages of the operation. Throughout the remainder of the operation, due to the met effect cancelling the VE and drift effect, no GFT setting was used.

c. Artillery Thrust Lines. Two artillery thrust lines were established. They were used by forward observers for the purpose of position reporting.

d. Survey. All artillery battery position areas were surveyed from a common battalion SCP. This SCP was located at a map inspected road junction. Directional control was originated from an astronomic observation of the sun.

11. Results. Total KIA confirmed credited to artillery was 109 and probable KIA was 50. Interrogation of prisoners indicated that artillery fire was a major factor in lowering the morale of their units.

12. Administrative Matters

a. Supply. Except for Battery "I" and the 107mm Mortar Battery which received unit distribution, all supply was handled by supply point distribution. As a general rule all classes of supply were maintained at a satisfactory level, and supply support throughout the operation was excellent to outstanding.

b. Maintenance. The high state of maintenance of the ordnance equipment was due primarily to the availability of ordnance contact teams and the 12th Marines Regimental Ordnance Officer throughout most of the operation. Through their efforts an outstanding job was done in maintaining the maximum number of howitzers in firing condition at all times.

In the case of the 155mm howitzer (towed) M 114A1, more adequate Class II, Type II repair parts are needed in the supply system to support this weapon. With the large number of rounds fired, a high maintenance tempo was required. Due to the lack of adequate parts, locally fabricated parts were obtained to maintain weapons in a firing condition.

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c. Medical. A total of 23 Marines were evacuated from the Battalion units without any difficulties. These included 2 DOW, 8 WIA, and 22 non-battle casualties.

d. Civil Affairs. A civil affairs program was conducted in two villages in the Cam Lo area and a Catholic mission in Dong Ha. A MEDCAP program with about 300 villagers receiving treatment was conducted; however, the program was limited, due to the lack of supplies. All batteries participated in the program. Two local barbers were employed to cut hair for all batteries.

e. Transportation and Movement

(1) Headquarters Battery. An advance element of the Battalion Headquarters was flown by C-130 to Dong Ha on 13 July along with organic transportation. On 14 July, Hq displaced to Cam Lo to establish the Bn position area. The Bn Hq (-) moved by Rough Rider on 14 and 15 July to Cam Lo. The Bn Headquarters returned to Phu Bai by Rough Rider on 3 August.

(2) Battery "H". Battery "H" was positioned in Cam Lo as part of Task Unit Charlie on 22 June 1966 by Rough Rider. Upon arrival of the advance element of the Bn Headquarters, the battery joined the advance element in the newly selected battalion position area. The battery returned to Phu Bai by Rough Rider, echeloning elements over 30, 31 July and 1 August.

(3) Battery "I". Battery "I" was flown by C-130 to Dong Ha without prime movers on 13 July. On 15 July the btry was lifted by helicopter to D-5 located at YD 095530. On 25 July, upon withdrawal of the ARVN Airborne Division, the btry was helicopter-lifted to a new position area in the vicinity of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines. On 2 August the battery was helicopter-lifted to Dong Ha where it was joined by its prime movers which had been brought from Phu Bai by Rough Rider. The battery returned to Phu Bai by Rough Rider on 2 August.

(4) Battery "G". Battery "G" was moved to Cam Lo by Rough Rider, echeloning elements over three days (30, 31 July and 1 August). The battery initially took the same position as was vacated by Battery "H", but on 2 August, the battery was moved to a new position at YD 128588 for Operation "Prairie".

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(5) Battery "B". Battery "B" moved to Cam Lo by Rough Rider on 14-15 July with the Battalion Headquarters (-). The battery returned to Phu Bai by Rough Rider on 3 August.

(6) Battery "M". Battery "M" was flown to Dong Ha with its prime movers on 13 July. On 14 July the battery moved to Cam Lo with the advance elements of the Battalion Headquarters where it set up its position area within the Battalion position area. On 17 July the battery was moved to a new position at YD 098573. On 2 August the battery moved back into the battalion position area and on 3 August moved, less one platoon attached to Battery "G", with the Battalion Headquarters by Rough Rider back to Phu Bai.

(7) Battery "L". Battery "L" was flown to Dong Ha with prime movers on 15 July and then moved overland to Cam Lo to setup in the Battalion position area. On 1 August the battery moved to Dong Ha where it was flown by C-130 to Da Nang. One platoon of 155mm howitzers were left in Dong Ha as a detachment under the Op con of Battery "G".

(8) 107mm Mortar Battery. The Mortar Battery was flown to Dong Ha from Da Nang on 16 July. On 17 July the Battery was Helicopter-lifted into the vicinity of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines (YD982562), and they subsequently were attached to the infantry battalion. On 29 July the Battery was lifted out by helicopter and then flown to Da Nang by C-130.

(9) Battery "F". Battery "F" was Helicopter-lifted from SLF shipping into the Battalion position area on 18 July. On 29 July the Battery was helicopter-lifted back aboard SLF shipping.

f. Communications.

(1) Radio. Extensive use was made of radio during the operation. At the peak point in the operation, five conduct of fire nets were in use supporting seven USMC infantry battalions and the three airborne battalions of the ARVN Airborne Division. In order to support this amount of radio communications, it was necessary to pool the assets of subordinate batteries. The Battalion was able to accomplish this since the bulk of the Battalion's batteries were located in a common Battalion position area. Extensive use was made

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of the radio set AN/PRC-25, which performed in an excellent manner. However, due to the lack of field remote equipment for the AN/PRC-25, the radios had to be located in close proximity to one another, causing mutual interference between radio sets. This situation necessitated special coordination of radio operators within the FDC, reducing the efficiency of the nets significantly during peak traffic periods. The introduction of remoting equipment for the AN/PRC-25 will solve this problem.

(2) Wire. Wire was used primarily for internal communications within the battalion. One trunk line to Task Force Delta was established in addition to one hot line to the Task Force Delta FSCC. A minimum of maintenance was required to maintain the wire system established. Telephones were at a premium since a rear command post at Phu Bai was maintained and local security phones were needed to support the infantry company attached to provide security to the battalion.

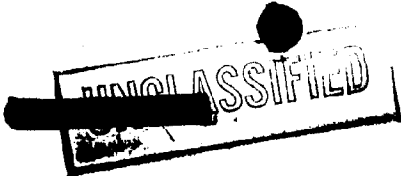
(3) Communications Security. A special radio team from the 12th Marines was sent to the battalion with a radio set AN/MRC-83 and an on-line crypto capability. This team was used to send daily situation reports to the 12th Marines Headquarters. This eased the comm-crypto guard responsibility of Task Force Delta.

13. Special Techniques

a. H&I Center. In order to handle the large volume of H&I missions and still answer promptly all calls for fire, an H&I center was established. This Center was an extension of the Battalion Fire Direction Center and manned 24 hours a day by Battery "F". A special phone was emplaced from the Task Force Delta FSCC to the H&I Center so that all H&I's were phoned directly to the H&I Center for processing. After processing, the H&I's were delivered to the battalion FDO for spot checking and transmittal to the batteries for subsequent firing.

b. H&I Clearance. The normal practice for handling H&I sav-a-planes during the night is to submit one sav-a-plane covering the entire H&I program. ~~Thus~~, when a requirement existed for a resupply or med-evac at night, it was necessary to cease fire on all H&I's. Consequently, a system of dividing the entire operating area into four zones and then submitting four sav-a-planes was developed.

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Using this system certain portions of the operating area could still receive H&I concurrently with resupply and med-evacs.

c. Multiple Mission Handling. On many occasions during this operation more than two missions were processed at the same time requiring a system of keeping each of the different missions separated. To do this the concentration number assigned the mission was used to precede all radio transmissions and commands within the FDC. This provided an identity to what would otherwise not have been meaningful communications.

14. Commander's Analysis.

a. Fire support coordination during this operation functioned more efficiently than on any other operation since the Battalion has been in Phu Bai. In order to insure timeliness of supporting arms it is mandatory that one centralized agency have the authority to clear all missions. To be capable of clearing missions promptly, it is necessary that all information of a tactical nature be made available to that clearing agency.

b. A very heavy work load was placed on radio communications during the operation, with five conduct of fire nets operating simultaneously in a satisfactory manner. With the introduction of the radio set AN/PRC-25 a significant improvement was made over the radio set AN/PRC-9; however, until the remoteing equipment for these radios is made available the full potential will not be realized.

c. With five batteries of artillery centralized with technical fire direction in the Battalion Fire Direction Center, it is possible for one battalion FDC to handle multiple missions if two FDO's are on duty. During this operation, when more than three missions were in progress, the Battalion S-3 handled missions as an FDO in addition to the regular FDO.

d. By maintaining a centralized technical fire direction capability at the battalion level, maximum control and flexibility was maintained in addition to reducing the cost of men and equipment.



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e. Due to the heavy volume of H&I's fired into enemy territory, it appears that VC/NVA soldiers don't always recognize observed missions when they are in progress if the initial rounds impact at a distance that is harmless, and tend to be complacent with artillery fire until it gets on target. One incident occurred on the 28th of July which is described in enclosure (1). Recon patrols have reported this complacency on other occasions.

15. Recommendations.

a. That maximum efforts be made to complete the provisioning of the new family of radio equipment (AN/PRC-25).

S. M. Morrow

S. M. MORROW

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DAILY SUMMARY OF EVENTS

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10 July

The Bn S-3 was called to the 4th Marines area to be briefed on an upcoming operation. At 1700H the S-3 briefed the Bn staff and battery commanders on the operation. Known as Operation "Hastings", it was to commence the following day, 11 July. Batteries "H", "I", "M", and "B" would participate along with others yet to be designated. "Hastings" would be a combined ARVN, USMC operation in the Dong Ha, Cam Lo area. The designated batteries prepared to road march to the objective area on 11 July 1966.

11 July

At 110020H a request for rules of engagement in case of hostile artillery or mortar fire from the DMZ was sent to the 12th Marines.

At 110400H word was received from the 4th Marines that a bridge at coordinates YD461399 had been dynamited by VC. The battalion was notified of the plan to transport Batteries "I" and "M" to Dong Ha via fixed wing aircraft. A request for six 105mm helo slings was made at the same time.

12 July

At 0800H the battalion commander made a reconnaissance of the CP site and gun positions at Cam Lo in conjunction with the Commanding Officer, 4th Marines.

At 0900H the battalion S-3 attended a planning conference at the 4th Marines CP, concerning alternate transportation to the "Hastings" area.

Battery "M" commenced moving personnel and equipment to the Phu Bai airstrip for transportation to Dong Ha via fixed wing aircraft at 1100H.

At 1130H Battery "I" moved to the Phu Bai airstrip for further transport to Dong Ha via fixed wing aircraft. An advance party of the battalion survey section accompanied the air-lifted batteries and upon arrival put in a hasty position area survey in the Dong Ha area (YD 116579) for the night, since the batteries were not to move to Cam Lo until the following day.

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At 1700H the Battalion CO, the Battalion S-3A, and the Battalion FDC section departed Phu Bai for Dong Ha via fixed wing aircraft.

At 1900H the Battalion S-3 attended a planning conference at the 4th Marines CP, concerning the latest developments on "Hastings".

13 July

At 0730H Headquarters Battery and Battery "B" joined a convoy of other elements of Task Force Delta for movement to the Operation "Hastings" area. No problems were encountered until approximately 0930H when the convoy arrived at the Song La River Bridge at YD 459400. This bridge had been destroyed by VC a few days before and an ARVN ferry was the only means available to cross river. The procedure was very slow allowing only two vehicles to cross the river approximately every ten minutes. Consequently, due to the large numbers of vehicles in the convoy (68) plus the ARVN vehicles that were required to cross the river, the complete convoy did not finish crossing the river that day and set up a defensive position in the vicinity of the firing site. The Battalion S-3 and CommO effected liaison with the District Headquarters at Hai Lang (YD 418481). No incidents occurred during the night.

At 0800H the Battalion S-3A attended a briefing in Dong Ha at the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines CP. Plans were made to move the Task Force Delta CP and elements of the 3d Battalion, 12th Marines into Cam Lo on the afternoon.

At 1030H the advance elements of Battery "L" started to arrive at Dong Ha. The Battery Commander requested to stay at Dong Ha until all the battery's equipment and personnel had arrived.

At 1430H the Task Force Delta Headquarters Commandant led the convoy to Cam Lo. The Battalion Commander pointed out the battery position areas and occupation of the area was begun. Priority was given to putting in the tactical wire.

Battery "H", who had been positioned at Cam Lo in support of Task Unit Charlie since 22 June 1966 was displaced to a new position area within the battalion perimeter at YD 114578. This move was complete by 1800H.

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Battery "M" was designated as the Battalion FDC until such time as complete communications were established and the rest of the battalion arrived in position.

At 1800H Battery "L" arrived in the Battalion area and occupied a position at YD 115575. Survey was completed by 1830H for all three batteries.

14 July

At 0730H the remainder of the convoy had crossed a floating bridge over the Song O Lau River after the ARVN worked most of the night constructing it. The convoy moved out at this time for Dong Ha arriving there without incident at 1030H. At 1130H after receiving new infantry security the Headquarters Battery and Battery "B" moved out on Route 9 for Cam Lo arriving at 1150H without incident.

Battery "B" was shown its position area and occupied immediately at YD 117577. All batteries continued to improve position areas.

15 July

At 0725H prep fires were commenced for the landing of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines. At 0855H prep fires were commenced for the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines. In both cases 20 minutes of prep fires were given, expending 780 rounds of mixed caliber artillery ammunition.

Light contact was made during the morning. During the afternoon a number of observed missions were fired with the most significant mission being fired by an AO at 1840H who fired on a NVA squad in the open at YD 050653. Thirty-eight rounds of 105mm howitzer HE were expended, killing 6 NVA confirmed.

At 1030H the battery commander of the 107mm Mortar Battery reported to the Battalion CP to announce the arrival of his battery with four 4.2" mortars in Dong Ha from Da Nang. The mission initially given the battery was to provide artillery support in defense of the Dong Ha military facilities. The battery was decentralized for technical control and centralized for tactical control. Two more 4.2" mortars were to be flown from Chu Lai to bring the shooting strength of the battery up to six tubes.

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At 1400H Battery "L" apprehended 2 VC's observing their position. They were taken to the Task Force Delta CP for interrogation.

16 July

At 0630H K Co, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines reported in contact with "many" NVA soldiers. Battery "B" expended 101 rounds of HE. Surveillance was 12 to 13 KIA probables.

During the afternoon numerous unobserved missions were fired based on intelligence. In the early evening hours Force Recon inserted an OP "Night Sticker" at YD 979559 on Hill 264. At 1858H "Night Sticker" fired three observed missions on NVA soldiers in the tree line and open at YD 996564. 82 rounds of 155mm Howitzer ammunition were fired killing a confirmed 33 NVA soldiers.

At 2155H K Co., 3d Battalion, 4th Marines reported in heavy contact and surrounded. Battery "B" fired 85 rounds at YD 037637 with excellent effect on target silencing all small arms fire. Forward observer passed his personal "Thank You" for getting them out of a tight spot.

At approximately 1300H Lt McMullen, an FO with G Co., 2d Battalion, 4th Marines was killed while engaged with the enemy.

17 July

At 0630H Battery "M" displaced to a new position area at YD 098573 in order to extend the artillery fire capability to the west, where it could more adequately support the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines and Recon patrols. Contact during the day was very light and no significant missions were fired.

At 1430H the 107mm Mortar Battery displaced by helo to YD 984563 in support of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines. The battery was attached to the battalion.

18 July

At 0600H the battalion fired a preparation for the helo landing of the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. One-hundred and two rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition were expended.

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At 1030H the advance party of Battery "F", 2d Battalion, 11th Marines arrived by helicopter led by the battery commander, Captain J. B. HARRIS. The Battalion Commander and S-3 briefed Captain HARRIS on the situation and instructed him to occupy the position area recently vacated by Battery "M" at YD 116579. At 1115H the main body of the battery began arriving. One sling supporting one of the Battery's 105mm howitzers broke one of its cables, causing the howitzer to land with the muzzle pointing straight down. By skillful maneuvering of the CH-46 aircraft and the prompt and effective action on the part of the battery personnel on the ground, the piece was landed with no damage to it or to the aircraft.

At 1230H Battery "F" reported ready to fire.

Throughout the day the volume of fire placed on the enemy was high with the bulk of fire going to the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines. Commencing around 1520H the battalion was processing multiple missions with the peak volume coming from 1900H to 2300H. During this time as many as five missions were handled by the fire direction center with maximum responsiveness and efficiency. Although not confirmed casualties were given in surveillance/later interrogation of company commanders involved in the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines action revealed artillery had done an excellent job and caused many casualties, but the exact number was unknown.

19 July

Throughout the day the Battalion continued to fire at a high rate. At 1220H a 257 round prep fire was commenced in support of the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines.

At 1330H a precision registration was fired using Battery "B".

The Battalion was visited by the Commanding Officer of the 12th Marines during the afternoon.

Due to the heavy volume of H&I missions that were being received by the infantry battalions in the field the Battalion S-3 decided to establish an H&I center as a branch of the battalion FDC. Battery "F" was designated to man the center on a 24 hour basis. The H&I center functioned in a completely separate FDC and computed all H&I's for all batteries. Upon computation of the H&I's, the computed data was brought to the Battalion FDC where it was spot checked and then transmitted to the batteries.

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20 July

Throughout the day a large number of observed missions were fired. At 2015H a VC mortar position which was attacking the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines was attacked with 36 rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition. This mission silenced the mortar located at YD 041649. At 2135H the 3d Battalion, 5th Marines reported being fired on by automatic weapons. Seventeen rounds of 155mm howitzer ammunition were fired, silencing the fire, which was coming from YD 010605.

At 2200H Battery "M" reported a premature burst of a 155mm howitzer round approximately 10 feet from the muzzle. PFC Ernest D. MITCHELL, 2168571/0811 USMC DOW. Cpl Patrick H. DENT, 1973549/0844 USMC WIA.

21 July

A heavy volume of observed fire was continued throughout the day. At 2100H a Battalion TOT was fired on the 803rd Regimental Command Post at YD 020622. One-hundred and seventy-one rounds were expended on this target. The source of the intelligence was a prisoner who was captured from the regiment.

22 July

A heavy volume of fire continued to be requested by all infantry battalions; however, there were no missions of any significance.

23 July

At 0300H a member of Battery "F" on a security outpost shot and killed another outpost member. The dead Marine was from "M" Company, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines and was assigned as part of the artillery battalion perimeter security. He had gone forward of the outpost to bed down without notifying all other members of the guard.

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24 July

At 0035H intelligence sources revealed the location of three NVA unit command posts. These targets were attacked with 65 rounds of 155mm howitzer ammunition.

At approximately 1400H, 100 to 150 rounds of small arms and automatic weapons fire were received in the Battalion area. The infantry company acting as security returned fire and captured two VC's. One Vietnamese girl, aged 11, was killed in the exchange. No Marine casualties were sustained.

At approximately 1430H one of the forward observers with 3d Battalion, 5th Marines reported his company pinned down. Nineteen rounds were delivered by Battery "M" upon which the FO's remarked on the beautiful effect on target and the fact that the company was able to get out of the area. Throughout the evening, numerous counter-mortar missions were fired which resulted in silencing the mortars, and on different occasions secondary explosions were observed.

25 July

At approximately 0130H three missions were fired on VC harbor sites and suspected mortar positions. Three secondary explosions were reported by the observer.

At 1400H the new 4th Marines Regimental CO, Colonel CEREGHINO, visited the Battalion CP as well as the firing batteries.

At 2100H 96 rounds of mixed calibers were delivered on a reported supply cache.

Extremely strong winds were experienced by the Battalion throughout the night. Extensive damage to canvas was sustained.

26 July

During the morning hours some three hundred and forty-eight rounds of 105mm were expended on area neutralization fires in support of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines.

At 1615H Captain A. P. BARRY, Regimental S-2, arrived with two 155mm howitzers (towed). He was attached to "L", 4/12 for the duration of the operation. Another officer and 2 more howitzers were scheduled to arrive the following day.

At 1700H the Battalion received a message from CG, 3d Marine Division directing the expenditure of 4000 rounds of

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artillery per day.

At approximately 2200H a grenade exploded near the perimeter wounding a member of Battery "F" slightly. Origin of the explosion was never determined. The wounded Marine returned to outpost duty.

At 1830H, 324 rounds of 105mm ammunition were fired on NVA radio stations which had been located by very current intelligence.

27 July

At 0800H a preparation was fired for 3d Battalion, 5th Marines. A total of 390 rounds were expended on this mission.

At 1400H Captain MCNEAL arrived with two more 155mm howitzers (towed). The officer was assigned to Battery "L" while two howitzers were turned over to Battery "M".

A TD-15 tractor also arrived in the Battalion area. It was to be used to improve the individual battery positions by constructing gun pits and ammunition storage pits.

At 1450H intelligence sources located an NVA radio station at YD 153541, and 108 rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition were fired at the target.

Colonel READ, Commanding Officer of the 12th Marines, visited the battalion at 1500H.

28 July

At 0645H a high angle mission was fired at 2 NVA soldiers crossing a stream at XD 923528. During the adjustment, 5 more NVA soldiers appeared in the location. It appeared to the recon patrol, who was adjusting the fire, that the artillery fire did not bother the NVA soldiers since they kept walking as nothing had happened. When fire for effect was called in, the artillery was right of target. The recon patrol noted 3 NVA KIA and 2 WIA. In fire for effect, 5 volleys of a 105mm howitzer battery were fired. During the firing at least 45 more NVA soldiers appeared in the area. More artillery was called in with excellent effect on target, and still more NVA soldiers appeared. At this point the recon patrol counted over 75 NVA soldiers in the impact area. The NVA soldiers were trying to remove their wounded and dead. There seemed to be mass confusion as more and more artillery was brought in. The recon patrol was unable to get an exact count of the

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dead and wounded but observed at least 58 KIA and possibly more. The patrol could count at least 150 NVA soldiers, and they estimated that there could be 200 more. When air came on station, they attacked the target, and the patrol moved out of the area so the air strike could be called in.

At 1130H a mission was fired at an NVA radio site located in the vicinity of YD 053643. One-hundred and eight rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition was expended on this target.

The major effort in the Battalion went towards the improvement of the battery position areas. Battery "M" dug its gun and ammunition pits with the aid of the newly arrived TD-15.

29 July

At 0800H Battery "F" was helo-lifted from its position area back to the SLF ships. At 1000H the Mortar Battery was helo-lifted to the Dong Ha airstrip for return to its parent organization.

Battery "L" continued to improve its position by building gun and ammunition pits with the TD-15 tractor.

No contact was made during the day, but the volume of H&I's was ordered to be high to keep the NVA units off balance.

30 July

At 0655H a 72 round TOT was fired by Batteries "B" and "H" on a NVA bivouac area at YD 0156 reported by 2d Battalion, 1st Marines.

Improvement of the positions was continued. Battery "B" completed construction of their gun and ammunition pits with the aid of the TD-15.

At 1300H two guns of Battery "G" arrived in position thus commencing the relief of Battery "H". Two guns of Battery "H" departed at 1500H for the Phu Bai area.

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Catholic and Protestant services were conducted during the day in the battalion area. During the morning hours three missions were fired based on intelligence information reported from the Task Force Delta G-2. Two-hundred and nineteen rounds of mixed caliber were fired on three targets located at YD 022637, 147502, and 147507.

At 1000H the remainder of Battery "G" headquarters and 2 more gun sections arrived in the battalion position area. At 1100H the remainder of Battery "H" headquarters and 2 gun sections left for Phu Bai with a Rough Rider.

Information was received that Battery "L" would depart on 1 August for Da Nang by fixed wing aircraft. Battery "I" was alerted to be prepared to move by helo to the Dong Ha air strip and for a further transportation by Rough Rider to Phu Bai at 1530H.

1 August

The Battalion S-3 and Commanding Officer, Battery "G" went on a recon for a new battery position to be occupied during Operation "Prairie". A location at YD 128588 was chosen. Immediately after the recon development of the position commenced.

At 0900H Battery "I" was helo-lifted to Dong Ha. One 105mm howitzer was moderately damaged in the move when it was dropped from a height of 10 feet.

At 1900H the last two guns from Battery "H" left by Rough Rider for Phu Bai. At 1015H Battery "L" commenced departing by air for Da Nang.

Information was received at 1830H that Operation "Hastings" would secure at 031200H, and the Battalion would return to Phu Bai on that day.

2 August

~~At 0900H~~ the Battalion Commander reconnoitered the Dong Ha area for a position area for the two 155mm howitzers to be positioned in that area.

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4 August 1966

Throughout the day work was continued in the new Battery "G" position area with the Battery moving into the position at 1400H.

Battery "M" sent the two Battery "L" 155mm howitzers to Dong Ha to occupy that position area at about 1300H. The position area chosen was located at YD 248596.

At 1730H the remaining weapons of Battery "M" moved from their position area into the Battalion perimeter.

3 August

At first light all batteries which were to displace to Phu Bai by Rough Rider commenced preparation for the move. By 1100H all units were ready to move; however, the convoy including the 4th Marines Headquarters, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, and other elements of the 4th Marines were not ready to leave until 1430H. The Rough Rider trip to Phu Bai was slow and uneventful with the Battalion arriving at 1900H.

ENCLOSURE (1)

UNCLASSIFIED

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MISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF	15th	16th	17th	18th	19th	20th	21st	22nd	23rd	24th	25th	26th
4th Mar	23	51	6	39	78	22	21	43	22	14	40	39
3/4	98	27	6	117	30	32	17	0	0	0	0	0
2/4	20	32	36	24	6	35	61	48	34	43	63	3
Recon	3	12	2	12	8	18	3	7	10	3	2	8
3/12	5	1	1	1	4	1	2	0	6	1	0	0
2/1	0	30	56	54	117	139	125	118	104	177	71	107
Air	0	0	3	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	1
3/5	0	0	1	26	22	18	29	20	16	25	24	29
ARVN	0	0	0	8	15	15	11	0	24	27	29	0
I/1	0	0	0	0	0	13	16	17	7	6	18	24
2/3	0	0	0	0	0	0	21	37	10	31	29	20
2/9												0
TOTAL	149	153	111	281	280	294	306	290	234	327	276	223

AMMO EXP

IO7HE	0	0	155	146	606	361	482	416	346	810	553	465
WP	0	0	4	40	76	0	10	0	41	41	0	0
ILL	0	0	1	0	29	92	4	6	25	51	14	17
IO5HE	1033	1350	602	1129	782	776	1100	814	710	1206	1011	2172
WP	27	36	174	34	38	172	156	107	213	291	314	224
ILL	0	0	0	0	19	49	9	12	39	4	0	0
I55HE	752	569	209	534	350	531	436	769	655	952	1468	659
WP	31	25	43	4	20	49	20	24	22	122	51	52
ILL	0	107	10	0	0	8	0	59	0	0	0	9
TOTAL	1843	2087	1198	1887	1920	2038	2217	2207	2051	3477	3411	3598

MISSIONS FIRED

Prep Fires	57	12	13	23	7	1	4	18	4	13	6	10
H&I	56	103	41	201	213	231	217	206	163	238	164	18
FRE	0	11	3	0	0	8	16	14	6	0	17	
TOTAL UNOBS	113	126	57	224	220	240	237	238	173	251	187	20
Target of Opp	25	25	16	54	48	59	60	42	31	73	76	2
Regis	0	0	0	1	5	2	0	0	6	5	0	
Def Conc	11	2	3	2	6	3	9	12	7	0	1	1
TOTAL OBS	36	27	19	57	59	64	69	54	44	78	77	3
GRAND TOTAL	149	153	76	281	279	304	306	292	217	329	264	23
SURVEILLANCE KIA (Conf)	6	33	2	0	4	0	1	1	0	2	0	2
SURVEILLANCE KIA (Prob)	0	12	6	5	4	3	4	2	3	4	4	0

UNCLASSIFIED (2)

ENCLOSURE (7)

-1-

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

MISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF	27th	28th	29th	30th	31st	1st	2nd	TOTAL
4th Mar	43	77	138	208	131	94	106	1227
3/4	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	328
2/4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	405
Recon	7	3	2	0	0	3	3	106
3/12	0	3	0	1	0	0	0	26
2/1	90	75	17	29	131	0	0	1440
Air	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	6
3/5	6	71	12	0	0	0	0	299
ARVN	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	131
1/1	24	25	25	0	0	0	0	157
1/3	4	8	19	29	0	0	0	208
2/9	16	15	0	0	0	0	0	31
TOTAL	193	279	243	267	262	97	109	4364

UNCLASSIFIED

AMMO EXP

107HE	384	435	0	0	0	0	0	5159
WP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	212
ILL	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	241
105HE	1409	2078	827	2138	2360	1006	531	23034
WP	276	112	322	119	21	4	297	3127
ILL	26	8	2	0	65	0	0	233
155HE	413	338	480	1216	529	299	146	11305
WP	16	0	5	251	0	10	0	735
ILL	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	193
TOTAL	2514	2973	1636	3724	2975	1319	974	44239

MISSIONS FIRED

Prep Fires	10	3	0	0	0	0	1	182
H&I	149	234	238	261	242	94	106	3339
FFE	8	17	0	2	0	0	0	111
TOTAL UNOBS	167	254	238	263	242	94	107	3632
Targets of Opp	20	22	4	2	4	3	1	586
Regis	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	21
Def Conc	6	3	0	2	0	0	0	77
TOTAL OBS	26	25	4	4	4	3	2	684
GRAND TOTAL	193	279	242	267	246	97	109	4316

CONFIDENTIAL

SURVEILLANCE	KIA (Conf)	0	58	0	0	0	0	109
	KIA (Prob)	5	0	0	0	0	0	50

DECLASSIFIED

AFTER ACTION REPORT

HASTINGS
Air Support

1. Planning. The planning phase of Operation HASTINGS presented very few difficulties. This is credited primarily to the fact that previously formed contingency plans of Task Force Delta were implemented during Operation HASTINGS. In this respect, the plans relied heavily upon the Lessons Learned of prior Task Force Delta and Fourth Marine operations. Close coordination with the First Marine Aircraft Wing and the 1st ARVN Division insured that all plans for air support were mutually acceptable. Most noteworthy of the planning phase is the fact that all three staffs, Task Force Delta, First Marine Aircraft Wing and the 1st ARVN Division insured that all plans for air support were mutually acceptable. Most noteworthy of the planning phase is the fact that all three staffs, Task Force Delta, First Marine Aircraft Wing, and 1st ARVN Division, had previously worked together and had formed informal operating procedures which had proven acceptable to all. These associations generally guaranteed smooth planning and are credited with expediting the planning and allowing the fast reaction to the tactical situation which Hastings presented.

2. Cooperation and Coordination. Operation Hastings in the planning and execution phases represents an outstanding model of cooperation and coordination.

a. Planning Plan.

(1) The First Marine Aircraft Wing readily agreed to support the entire requirements established for Hastings. Additionally, the Air Wing assisted in the selection of landing zones which would meet the tactical requirements of the concept of operation and offered technical and tactical assistance to improve the proposed operation. Most noteworthy was the rapid establishment of an advanced base at DONG HA and an air control element with the TASK Force Delta command Post at CAM LO.

(2) ARVN units starting adjacent operations planned their air support requirements to compliment those of Hastings rather than to conflict with them. Their air lifts were scheduled to follow Hastings lifts by a time period sufficient to allow stabilization of the USMC tactical situation prior to using USMC lift capability. This close coordination and cooperation is considered a prime factor in the orderliness of the entire operation. Noteworthy is the agreement reached between ARVN and USMC forces to share resources. For example, it was agreed that ARVN forces could use USMC air whenever it was available. Likewise, if an ARVN resource was more readily available, then USMC forces could use it, i.e., ARVN observation aircraft (USAF FAC(A)) would be made available to USMC forces if needed.

b. Execution Phase. During the execution of HASTINGS, coordination and cooperation were outstanding.

(1) The First Marine Aircraft Wing established an advanced base at DONG HA and co-located a command element with the Task Force CP at CAM LO. This enhanced the operation by establishing an environment wherein both aviation and ground elements had a mutual understanding of

Enclosure (8)

ENCLOSURE (8)

the capabilities and limitations of each other. This allowed maximum utilization of the capabilities and minimum obstruction by the limitations.

(2) Co-location of the ARVN CP and the Task Force CP magnified cooperation and coordination between the two. The exchange of ideas and information was beneficial, but the actual exchange of resources was the paramount benefit. Displaying outstanding cooperation, ARVN Forces greatly assisted the USMC effort by providing FAC(A) capabilities throughout the operation.

3. Execution. Air support provided to Task Force Delta during Hastings was commendable. Generally, ample resources were made available to accomplish the mission. Although the helicopters were often subjected to heavy fire, they pursued their missions to successful completion. Fixed wing attack support was outstanding. On station aircraft were utilized to meet the threat during daylight hours, thereby assuring quick response to any situation. On several occasions this response was instrumental in the ultimate success. Night radar controlled bombing interdicted enemy routes of egress and undoubtedly inflicted heavy casualties and confusion upon the enemy. A summary of operations follows:

a. Sorties Flown

(1) Helicopter	10,769
(2) Close Air Support	458
(3) Interdiction	782
(4) Radar Controlled Bombing	427

b. Ordnance Expended

(1) Bombs/Napalm	1,176 tons
(2) 20mm	26,840 rounds
(3) Helicopter Rockets	6.2 tons
(4) 7.62	91,099 rounds
(5) 50 cal	18,010 rounds
(6) USAF/USN Diverts	(not counted)

c. Supplies/Troops flown

(1) DANANG-DONG HA Transport	110 Tons/daily
(2) Helicopter	140 Tons/daily
(3) Helicopter	600 Troops/daily

4. Lessons Learned. Many of the lessons learned are not truly lessons learned, but rather amplification of previous lessons learned from past operations. As such, they support the need for continually reviewing past lessons learned and particularly as they apply to "in country" operations.

a. Need for a DASC. Although a DASC was present throughout the operation, Hastings stands as an outstanding example of the need for a full fledged DASC during an operation of its magnitude, scope, and remoteness from other DASC facilities. The initial DASC, an expedient until the main DASC could be established, did a commendable job within its capabilities, but the size and rapidity of the operation early appeared to pass its limitations. Recommendation It is recommended that a full fledged mobile DASC be established to accompany operations such as Hastings and that it be packaged so that it can be either preemplaced or be emplaced on 24 hour notice.

b. Co-location of Command Posts. The co-location of CPs of Task Force Delta, First Marine Aircraft Wing command elements, and ARVN units, was used on Hastings. Again, it proved to be invaluable. Recommendation It is recommended that whenever possible all commands engaged in an operation or adjacent operations co-locate their CPs and that this co-location involve the physical side by side placements of the operations centers and fire support coordination centers.

c. Co-location of the Helicopter Advanced Base with the Task Force CP. Although the Air Wing had a command element co-located with the Task Force CP, space limitation at the site prohibited co-locating the helicopter advanced base with the CP. Accordingly, it was located approximately 7 miles away at an already established air field. Its remoteness from the Task Force caused communications problems to enter some delay in its responsiveness to the needs of the Task Force. Recommendation It is recommended that whenever possible that the helicopter advanced base be co-located with the Task Force CP. It is further recommended that this be a major consideration in the selection of future CP sites.

d. Use of Helicopters Assigned to the Operation. Most important in affording responsiveness and flexibility to the operation was the support of the operation by a package of aircraft rather than by individually assigned aircraft and missions. MAG-16 was assigned a daily number of aircraft to support the operation. Accordingly, in his planning, the Commanding General could work within the flexibility and capability of those aircraft. Recommendation It is recommended that whenever possible that helicopter advanced bases with assigned helicopters be established to support operations, thereby giving the commander the flexibility contained therein.

e. Observation/TACA Capability. Operation Hastings vividly displayed the need for observation and TACA/FAC(A) capability. Even though contact was established which was often extremely close, the terrain often kept the FAC from controlling air strikes because the enemy was able to close to "shoulder to shoulder" range before detection. Under these circumstances, observation capability is mandatory to detect the enemy prior to contact. TACA/FAC(A) capability is necessary in this same environment to assist the FAC in distinguishing between friendly and enemy forces. Additionally, because

of the restricted visibility due to tropical terrain and canopy, the TAC/FAC(A) is needed to conduct most air strikes immediately removed from the FAC's front. During Operation Hastings, the USAF provided 279 hours of FAC(A) capability and the U.S. Army provided 340 hours of observation/FAC(A) capability. Without this capability, nearly all formal observation would have been lost and approximately 90% of positive control TACA/FAC(A) capability would have been lost or in need of replacement from USMC resources.

Recommendation It is recommended that prior to all future operations observation TACA/FAC(A) capability be given priority consideration. Once the operation starts, it is often too late to consider the need, for the resource may well be exhausted.

f. Economical Use of on Station Air On station alert aircraft is the quickest aerial response to a threat; however, if not used, it becomes somewhat expensive since it dilutes resources. During Hastings, secondary targets were so abundant that it was possible to keep on station air as a counter to an enemy threat and to divert it to secondary targets just prior to its returning to base if it were not otherwise used. This allowed an outstanding reaction capability combined with a block by fire and interdiction capability. Recommendation It is recommended that whenever possible the procedure of using on station air for reaction be adopted, but that it only be done when the threat is sufficient to warrant it or when secondary targets are available.

g. Formation Bombing. Arc-light strikes were used extensively to interdict enemy concentrations. Although these are extremely effective as far as area coverage is concerned, they are lacking in desired responsiveness since it takes so long to procure a strike. Accordingly, it remains to find a substitute, to replace the Arc-light in shock effectiveness. On one occasion during the operation, a mass USMC formation flight with 39 tons of ordnance was used to bomb an enemy concentration. While still not approximating an Arc-light, it was most effective and more responsive to the Task Force needs. Recommendation It is recommended that a search be made within USMC resources to procure a strike capability more nearly approaching the Arc-light in shock effect and total effectiveness. Formation bombing controlled by the ASRT might well be a good departure in this search.

h. Fallacy of Battle Damage Assessment as a Measure of Effectiveness A review of Operation Hastings produces very few meaningful battle damage assessments for air strikes. This was due partly to the heat of battle but more nearly the dense canopy and difficult terrain. Under these circumstances BDA was all but impossible to obtain. Time after time, aircraft engaged automatic weapons fire, or even AA fire, only to silence the fire and report "Excellent coverage of area". There can be no doubt the air strikes were effective, but a "body count" will never support that thought. Such a count was made impossible due to the rapidity of the air-ground battle, the dense canopy and difficult terrain.

Recommendation It is recommended that the effectiveness of air not be based on a BDA basis and that BDA be used for informational purposes only. Further, it is recommended that new criteria be established for measuring BDA for air strikes, i.e., if 200 troops are in a known area and the attack area is judged 80% covered then the BDA would be judged 160 KIA probable.

PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

OPERATION HASTINGS

150800H July 1966 to 031200H Aug 1966

MISSION. The mission of Psychological Warfare operations is to support combat operations and to assist civilian agencies in the control and administration of the adjacent hamlets; to preclude the necessity of mass destruction of land and property; and to limit, as much as possible, the loss of Marine lives, as well as those of the Vietnamese civilians and the Viet Cong.

OBJECTIVES. The objective of Psychological Warfare in Operation Hastings was to: (1) strengthen the credibility of Marine Corps might by creating in the minds of the VC-NVA, belief in the futility of their operations; (2) to provide ways and means whereby the weaker members of the VC-NVA can return to the recognized government without fear for themselves or their families; (3) expose the weakness of the VC-NVA and their communistic regimes, and to show their failure to satisfy human needs and dignity.

CONCEPT. Subordinate units, coordinated by this headquarters, would implement Psychological Warfare programs in conjunction with higher headquarters, U.S. Armed Forces and Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces.

CAPABILITIES

1. TASK FORCE DELTA

a. Task Force Delta had, within its own capabilities, one loud-speaker unit with tape recorder which could be mounted in aircraft for live or taped broadcasts, vehicle mounted for live or taped broadcasts, or could be ground-mounted and used for live or taped broadcasts.

b. Task Force Delta had the capability of leaflet drops on a limited area coverage such as might be requested by a unit in contact on a quick run requirement.

2. SUPPORTING FORCES

a. Advisory Team 3, MACV, played the major support role in Operation Hastings by daily scheduled leaflet drops and taped broadcasts. Two U-10 aircraft daily dropped 200,000 leaflets on each flight and taped broadcasts ranging from one and one-half hours to three hours each flight. One C-47 aircraft, used at night, dropped some 600,000 leaflets per flight, on a one flight a night schedule. One hour and a half to four hour broadcasts were conducted. These aircraft were also available and utilized for on call special drops and broadcasts. During the nineteen days of Operation Hastings, an estimated 16,000,000 leaflets were dropped on sixteen weather permitting days. An estimated 92 hours of taped broadcasts were also conducted.

Enclosure (9)

b. Beach Jumper Unit 1 of LSF CTG 76.5 provided ground and r, live and taped broadcasts on two special requests by Task Force Delta. This unit also made a leaflet drop of safe conduct passes on the morning of 020800H Aug 1966, in a special objective where intelligence reports indicated a number of straggler/deserters.

RESULTS. Results of Psychological Operations of this type are very difficult to determine. Effect on the morale of VC-NVA troops cannot be fully evaluated, nor can the number of deserters defecting to the South or returning to the North due to Psyops. The operation did, however, show indications of Psyops interest in that a number of KIA and captives had Psywar leaflets on their person. Four NVA defectors were credited to Psywar. Three of the defectors were officers and one a private first class. All surrendered with safe conduct passes.

Enclosure (9)

HEADQUARTERS

4th Marines (Rein), 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Force Recon Co
To: Commanding Officer, 4th Marines

Subj: Combat After Action Report (Operation Hastings)

Ref: (a) RegtO 3120.3

Encl: (1) Overlay of Operation Area

1. Operation Hastings.
2. 15 July - 031200H Aug 1966
3. QUANG TRI Province, RVN, primarily in CAM LO District.
4. Command Headquarters co-located with Hq Task Force Delta.
5. TASK ORGANIZATION

CO, Det A, Recon Group Bravo
CO, 1st Force Recon
CO, Co A (-) 3d Recon Bn
1st Plt, Co A, 3d Recon Bn
2d Plt, Co D, 3d Recon Bn
5th Plt, 3d Recon Co
3d Plt, Co B, 1st Recon Co

Major COLBY
Major COLBY
Captain BEST
1stLt TERRYBONNE
2dLt BUHL
1stLt O'DONNELL
1stLt GREEN

6. Supporting Forces

X a. M4G-16 supported the reconnaissance effort with a direct frag of helicopters.

b. 3/12 supported the reconnaissance effort by placing artillery pieces in direct support of reconnaissance elements.

c. The support afforded by the above units was timely and effective. Most insertions and extractions were by helicopter and only seldom was the scheduled time missed. The effectiveness of the artillery support can be judged by the fact reconnaissance elements killed 99 NVA confirmed with artillery, 123 probable killed and 37 wounded.

7. Intelligence. 324B NVA Division was reported located in the operating area. As the operation progressed, all three of the regiments of this Division were identified in the operating area.

8. Mission. To provide early warning of enemy movement into and/or out of the Task Force objective area.

Enclosure (10)

9. Concept of Operation. To maintain a continuous reconnaissance screen around the Task Force objective area laying particular emphasis on natural avenues of approach.

* 10. Execution. Reconnaissance elements were inserted 72 times in as many different locations to provide the required information. The reconnaissance effort commenced 15 days prior to the actual start of Operation Hastings during which time the enemy was located and his principal routes of movement identified. The subsequent scheme of maneuver of the Task Force was based on this information. The areas covered by recon insertions are depicted on the overlay (encl (1)). Of primary significance is the close cooperation between recon and artillery. General Support artillery was placed frequently in direct support. On one occasion, a 5 man reconnaissance team observed approximately 250 NVA 400 meters from their position. They called in artillery killing 50, then called in fixed wing air on the remainder. The first bomb, a 2,000 pounder was right on target. This patrol was conducted 260645H - 290753H July 1966 and the contact occurred 280645H - 280830H. (See OpO 45-66 and resulting patrol report). No USMC casualties.

11. Results

a. <u>NVA</u>	<u>KIA(C)</u>	<u>KIA(P)</u>	<u>KBA</u>	<u>KBarty(C)</u>	<u>KBarty(P)</u>
	15	0	50	99	144

<u>WIA(C)</u>	<u>WIA(P)</u>
41	323

b. <u>USMC</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
	0	6	0

c. Captured. 2 chicom pistols, maps, overlays, unit roster, three packs, assorted individual equipment.

d. Lost. 7 weapons. 6 destroyed in fire resulting when helicopter crashed.

12. Administrative Matters

- a. No resupply.
- b. No maintenance.
- c. Casualty evacuation by helicopter. Well and timely executed.
- d. Transportation generally by helicopter. Normally good.
- e. Communications by PRC-25, Radio relay sites and airborne radio relay both utilized to maintain contact with patrols.
- f. None.

13. Special Equipment and Techniques

a. The UH-1E slick was used extensively for inserting and extracting small teams. It proved invaluable. Far more flexible than the UH-34 or CH 46 for small teams.

* b. The arrangement whereby recon elements call directly to the guns for artillery support is one of the best innovations of this war. Recon elements are a truly deadly force hiding in among enemy units with this capability in hand. It proved itself frequently in this operation.

c. Helicopters were fringed directly to recon on operation Hastings. This ensured rapid response to the reconnaissance requirements of the Commanding General and allowed maximum flexibility in the recon effort. This direct fring is encouraged for future operations where reconnaissance is expected to play a major role.

14. Commanders Analysis. From the reconnaissance standpoint, this was a good operation. Most of the recon skills were used and used well. The importance of the recon/artillery package, when recon is operating within artillery range, cannot be over emphasized.

15. Recommendations. That a major reconnaissance effort be a part of any large operation.

DECLASSIFIED

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

3/RAN/ddh
3120
19 Aug 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division
Via: Commanding Officer, 3d Marines
Commanding General, Task Force Delta

Subj: Addendum #1 "Marine Corps Matters" to 1st Battalion, 3d
Marines After Action Report, Operation HASTINGS

Ref: (a) DivO 3100.1B
(b) RegtO 3120.1B
(c) 1st Bn, 3d Mar After Action Report, Operation HASTINGS

1. During Operation HASTINGS this Battalion encountered three problem areas which are considered worthy of note and possible command action.

a. Reconnaissance elements were frequently inserted into a Battalion zone of action without consulting with the Battalion on planned operations in the zone or whether or not the Battalion could handle the reconnaissance mission within its own zone. On one occasion, a reconnaissance element was erroneously inserted on an objective which this Battalion was preparing to seize and two members of the reconnaissance team were injured from preparatory fires called on the objective by this Battalion. See paragraph 10b. (12) of reference (c).

Recommendations: That reconnaissance units operate primarily in reconnaissance zones and that their employment within a unit's zone of action be closely coordinated with that unit prior to insertion.

b. Boundaries and Fire Coordination Lines between adjacent Battalions were frequently ill-defined and had to be resolved by mutual agreement between the battalions concerned. This caused some delays in the delivery of supporting arms fires because the higher headquarters FSCC was not always well informed on the exact location of boundaries and Fire Coordination Lines.

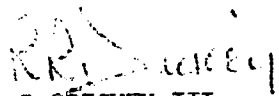
Recommendation: That boundaries and Fire Coordination Lines between units be assigned by a common superior headquarters.

ENCLOSURE (2)

DECLASSIFIED

c. Helicopter flights often restricted the use of supporting arms. On numerous occasions mortar and artillery fire had to be stopped because of helicopter flights in or near the target area and on other occasions artillery batteries could not fire because of helicopters operating near the artillery positions. Long delays in obtaining preparatory fires on objectives were caused by helicopter flights in the area.

Recommendation: That air activities be closely coordinated with ground units and supporting arms so that routine resupply and administrative flights do not interfere with ground fire support by indiscriminate overflight. The use of helicopter approach and retirement lanes or some other suitable control measure is considered necessary.


R. R. DICKEY III

HEADQUARTERS

4th Marines (Rein), 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

From: Commanding Officer, 1st Force Recon Co
To: Commanding Officer, 4th Marines
Subj: Combat After Action Report (Operation Hastings)
Ref: (a) RegtO 3120.3

Encl: (1) Overlay of Operation Area

1. Operation Hastings.
2. 15 July - 031200H Aug 1966
3. QUANG TRI Province, RVN, primarily in CAM LO District.
4. Command Headquarters co-1 coterminous with Hq Task Force Delta.
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CO, 1st Force Recon
CO, Co A (-) 3d Recon Bn
1st Plt, Co A, 3d Recon Bn
2d Plt, Co D, 3d Recon Bn
5th Plt, 3d Recon Co
3d Plt, Co B, 1st Recon Co

Major COLBY
Major COLBY
Captain BEST
1stLt TERRYBONNE
2dLt BUHL
1stLt O'DONNELL
1stLt GREEN

6. Supporting Forces

a. Hq-16 supported the reconnaissance effort with a direct frag of helicopter.

b. 3/12 supported the reconnaissance effort by placing artillery pieces in direct support of reconnaissance elements.

c. The support afforded by the above units was timely and effective. Most insertions and extractions were by helicopter and only seldom was the scheduled time missed. The effectiveness of the artillery support can be judged by the fact reconnaissance elements killed 99 NVA confirmed with artillery, 123 probable killed and 37 wounded.

7. Intelligence. 324B NVA Division was reported located in the operating area. As the operation progressed, all three of the regiments of this Division were identified in the operating area.

8. Mission. To provide early warning of enemy movement into and/or out of the Task Force objective area.

Enclosure (14)

9. Concept of Operation. To maintain a continuous reconnaissance screen around the Task Force objective area laying particular emphasis on natural avenues of approach.

10. Execution. Reconnaissance elements were inserted 72 times in as many different locations to provide the required information. The reconnaissance effort commenced 15 days prior to the actual start of Operation Hastings during which time the enemy was located and his principal routes of movement identified. The subsequent scheme of maneuver of the Task Force was based on this information. The areas covered by recon insertions are depicted on the overlay (encl (1)). Of primary significance is the close cooperation between recon and artillery. General Support artillery was placed frequently in direct support. On one occasion, a 5 man reconnaissance team observed approximately 250 NVA 400 meters from their position. They called in artillery killing 50, then called in fixed wing air on the remainder. The first bomb, a 2,000 pounder was right on target. This patrol was conducted 260645H - 290753Z July 1966 and the contact occurred 280645H - 280830H. (See OpO 45-66 and resulting patrol report). No USMC casualties.

11. Results

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	<u>WIA(C)</u>	<u>WIA(P)</u>			
	41	323			

b. <u>USMC</u>	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
	0	6	0

c. Captured. 2 chicom pistols, maps, overlays, unit roster, three packs, assorted individual equipment.

d. Lost. 7 weapons. 6 destroyed in fire resulting when helicopter crashed.

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- a. No resupply.
- b. No maintenance.
- c. Casualty evacuation by helicopter. Well and timely executed.
- d. Transportation generally by helicopter. Normally good.
- e. Communications by PRC-25, Radio relay sites and airborne radio relay both utilized to maintain contact with patrols.
- f. None.

13. Special Equipment and Techniques

a. The UH-1E slick was used extensively for inserting and extracting small teams. It proved invaluable. For more flexible than the UH-34 or CH 46 for small teams.

b. The arrangement whereby recon elements call directly to the guns for artillery support is one of the best innovations of this war. Recon elements are a truly deadly force hiding in among enemy units with this capability in hand. It proved itself frequently in this operation.

c. Helicopters were fringed directly to recon on operation Hastings. This ensured rapid response to the reconnaissance requirements of the Commanding General and allowed maximum flexibility in the recon effort. This direct frag is encouraged for future operations where reconnaissance is expected to play a major role.

14. Commanders Analysis. From the reconnaissance standpoint, this was a good operation. Most of the recon skills were used and used well. The importance of the recon/artillery package, when recon is operating within artillery range, cannot be over emphasized.

15. Recommendations. That a major reconnaissance effort be a part of any large operation.

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JAN 17 1967

(UNCLASSIFIED UPON REMOVAL OF ENCLOSURE (1))

From: Commanding General
To: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force

Subj: Marine Corps Matters Addendum to Combat After Action Report,
Operation HASTINGS

Encl: (1) Ltr from 3d Bn, 4th Mar 3/WEM/dld Ser: 0030-66 of 11 Aug 1966
(2) Ltr from 1st Bn, 3d Mar 3/RAN/ddh 3120 of 19 Aug 1966

1. Enclosures (1) and (2) are forwarded separately from the Combat After Action Report for Operation HASTINGS, as they pertain specifically to internal Marine Corps matters.

2. The problems concerning close air support, employment of reconnaissance elements, assignment of boundaries and fire coordination lines, and lack of coordination between helicopter flights and supporting arms which are discussed, could have been avoided had doctrinal practices been employed by units and individuals concerned. Instructions relating to the problems which were encountered and to their solution are to be published to all 3d Marine Division units.

W.B. KYLE

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11 August 1966

0030-44

ADDENDUM TO AFTER ACTION REPORT ON OPERATION HASTINGS

Ref: (a) DivO 3100.1B Ch#2

1. In accordance with reference (a) this Addendum to After Action Report on Operation HASTINGS is submitted.

2. AIR SUPPORT.

a. No problems were encountered with Air Support during Operation HOLT. During Operation HASTINGS several problem areas were brought to light. These incidents generally involved a lack of adherence to established procedures. The following paragraphs will attempt to point out these incidents and bring about a re-emphasis of the procedures not being adhered to.

(1) On the first day of Operation HASTINGS the Battalion Air Officer was unable to contact any helicopters inbound to the Battalion Landing Zone or in the vicinity of the Battalion operating area. It was later learned that the helicopter pilots had been briefed to monitor different frequencies. It is believed that two helicopters would not have received hits from enemy gunners during this operation had the pilots been monitoring the same frequencies as the ground units' Air Officer. It is imperative that both pilots and ground unit Air Officers be briefed to monitor the same frequencies prior to the commencement of an operation such as this. The ground unit's Air Officer can brief the pilots on these frequencies - prior to the aircrafts entering the battle area - on such matters as disposition of landing zone, enemy positions, safe approach routes, possible enemy fire, etc. Adherence to such procedures is mandatory in order to avert the loss of friendly lives and aircraft.

(2) Another problem encountered was the fact that too often helicopters working in support of adjacent units interfered with artillery and close air support missions in the operation area of this battalion. Since these aircraft, when working with adjacent

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units, are not always able to monitor the same frequencies as the unit receiving the artillery or close air support, this unit cannot always inform them of this support. All units should be aware of any artillery or air support being provided adjacent units. This information should be passed to any aircraft entering the area by the DASC, regimental FSOC, or the unit for which these aircraft are performing a mission. If such interference continues legitimate enemy targets may be lost or friendly aircraft inadvertently destroyed as a result. If the aircraft interfering with such support are on a higher priority or more urgent mission than that support, then the unit receiving this support should be so informed and the support missions ceased or postponed by either the DASC or regimental FSOC until such time as they can be safely continued.

(3) Another incident indicating non-adherence to established procedures involved an aircraft firing a rocket into friendly positions (no casualties). The pilot of this aircraft did not have communications with the TAC (A) or the ground units FAC and had only sporadic communications with his flight leader. The 4th Marines Operation Order 301-66 clearly states that no close air support strikes will be flown without positive control of a TAC(A) or an FAC. It must continually be emphasized to pilots flying close air support missions that they are not to participate in such strikes when they do not have communication with the person controlling the strike, whether TAC(A), FAC or both. This procedure has been established to preclude ordnance being dropped on friendly positions. Non-adherence to these procedures can result in the same type of incident as this with, quite possibly, friendly casualties as a result.

The above incident also points out the all-important fact that positive target identification is absolutely necessary prior to running a Close Air Support Strike. This also is to preclude ordnance being dropped on friendly positions.

The above incident also pointed out a lack of adherence to established radio procedures. The ground FAC had switched his radio frequency to the Battalion TAC net from the air control frequency so that the patrol leader could make a report to the Battalion COC. It is mandatory that FACs remain on air control frequency at all times. Any information that must be passed to higher echelons can be relayed over these nets if the proper nets are imperative. When a FAC switches

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to another frequency in such a situation he is, in effect, relinquishing control of any aircraft that may be working with him at the time. Again, these procedures must be adhered to in order to prevent ordnance being dropped on friendly units.

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ENCLOSURE (5)

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