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Ser: 00935 66

23 AUG 1966

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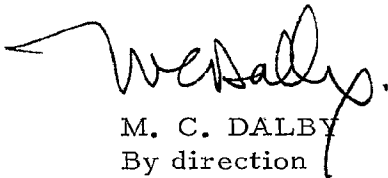
SECOND ENDORSEMENT on CO SLF ltr 1:BSM:jdc over 3000 Ser  
001-66 of 9Jun66

From: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)

Subj: Command Chronology, submission of (U)

1. Forwarded.

  
M. C. DALBY  
By direction

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6 July 1966

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FIRST ENDORSEMENT on CO, SLF ltr 1:BSM:jdc over 3000 Ser:  
001-66 dtd 9 Jun 1966

From: Commanding General

To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)

Via: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

1. Forwarded.

  
HERMAN HANSEN Jr.  
Chief of Staff

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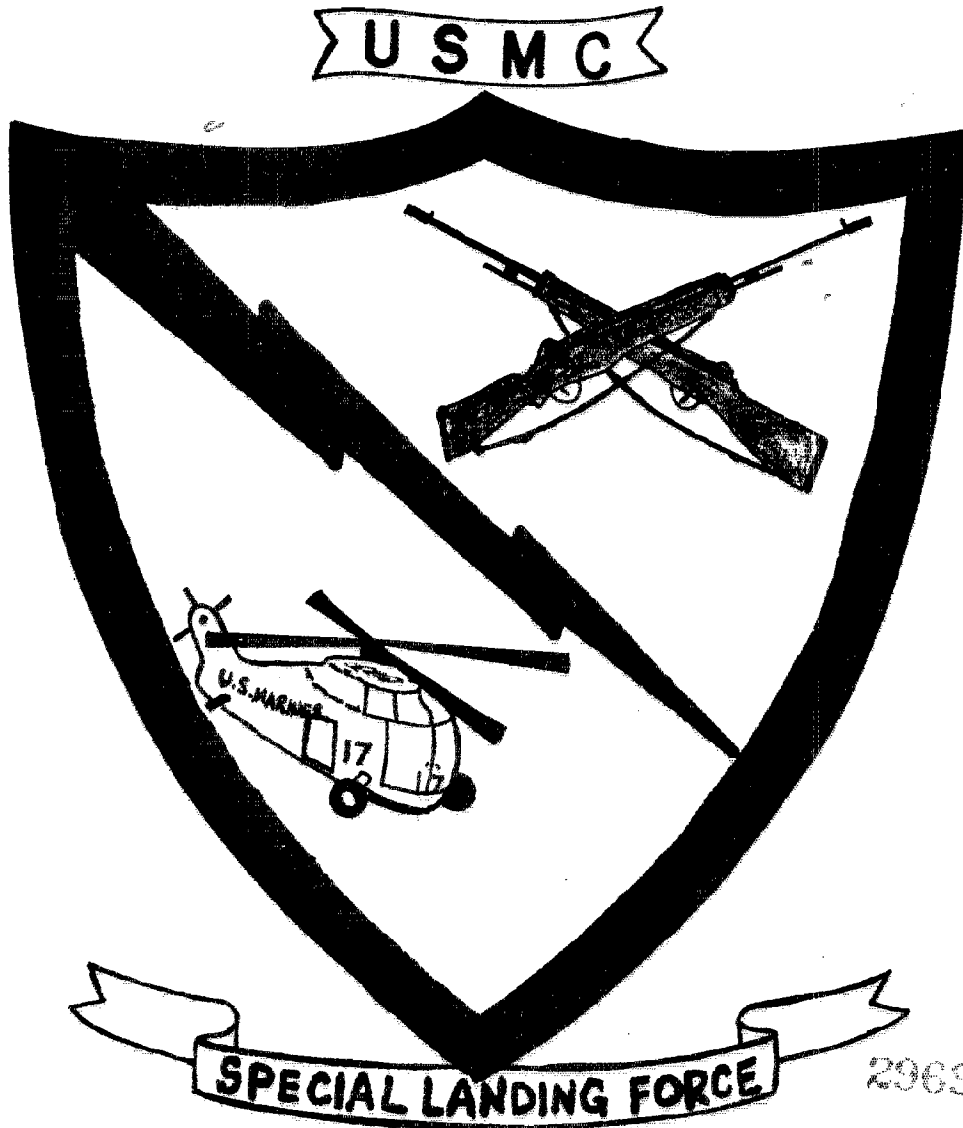
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66-6478  
#0010044  
Encl 1

# COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

3120

## SPECIAL LANDING FORCE (TG 79.5)



296381

HISTOR  
3480

1 JANUARY - 31 MAY 1966

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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

TAB A - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - ELT 2/3 *2 Jan - 27 Feb, filed 2/3*

TAB B - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - HMM 362, *6 Jan - 8 Apr, filed HMM 362*

TAB C - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - BLT 1/5 - *filed 1/5, 29 Feb - 7 May 66*

TAB D - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - HMM 364 *" HMM-364, 2 Apr, May*

TAB E - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - BLT 3/5 *filed 3/5, 13-31 May 66*

TAB F - SLF AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN DOUBLE EAGLE

TAB G - BLT 2/3 AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN DOUBLE EAGLE } *filed sep*

TAB H - HMM 362 AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN DOUBLE EAGLE }

TAB I - SLF FRAG ORDER FOR JACKSTAY

TAB J - SLF AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN JACKSTAY

TAB K - BLT 1/5 AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN JACKSTAY } *filed sep*

TAB L - HMM 362 AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN JACKSTAY }

TAB M - SLF FRAG ORDER FOR OSAGE

TAB N - AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN OSAGE

TAB O - COMSEVENTHFLT HILLTOP LOI

TAB P - POST EXERCISE REPORT HILLTOP III

TAB Q - POST EXERCISE REPORT HILLTOP IV

TAB R - HILLTOP V FRAG ORDER #1 TO HILLTOP OPERATION ORDER 330-66

TAB S - POST EXERCISE REPORT OF HILLTOP V

TAB T - LIST OF REFERENCE MATERIAL PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED

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HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

1:BSM:jdc  
3000  
Ser: 001-66  
9 Jun 1966

SECRET-NOFORN

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code AO3D)  
Via: (1) Commanding General, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade  
(2) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology, submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2  
(b) CG, 9th MAB msg P180436Z

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for the Special Landing Force (TG 79.5)  
during the period 1 January to 31 May 1966

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded in accordance with references (a) and (b).

GP-4

*R A Brennenman*  
R. A. BRENNEMAN

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY1. Organizational Data

a. Designation. The Special Landing Force had the Task designator of Task Group 79.5.

b. Composition. The Special Landing Force was composed as follows:

1-5 January 1966

SLF - Col J. R. BURNETT  
BLT 2/3 - LtCol W. K. HORN  
HMM 261 - LtCol M. E. PORTER

6 January-27 February 1966

SLF - Col J. R. BURNETT  
BLT 2/3 - LtCol W. K. HORN  
HMM 362 - LtCol J. ALDWORTH

28 February - 6 April 1966

SLF - Col J. R. BURNETT  
BLT 1/5 - LtCol H. L. COFFMAN  
HMM 362 - LtCol J. ALDWORTH

7-8 April 1966

SLF - Col R. A. BRENNEMAN  
BLT 1/5 - LtCol H. L. COFFMAN  
HMM 362 - LtCol ALDWORTH

9 April-7 May 1966

SLF - Col R. A. BRENNEMAN  
BLT 1/5 - LtCol H. L. COFFMAN  
HMM 364 - LtCol D. A. SOMMERVILLE

8-13 May 1966

SLF - Col R. A. BRENNEMAN  
No BLT assigned this period.  
HMM 364 - LtCol D. A. SOMMERVILLE

14-31 May 1966

SLF - Col R. A. BRENNEMAN  
BLT 3/5 - LtCol E. J. BRONARS  
HMM 364 - LtCol D. A. SOMMERVILLE

c. Location. The Special Landing Force was embarked aboard the Amphibious Ready Group during the periods indicated below:

(1) 1 January-4 March 1966: USS VALLEY FORGE (LPH-8) USS MONTROSE (APA-212) and USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35). During the period 5 January-17 February 1966 CTG 79.5 and staff were embarked aboard the USS PAUL REVERE for planning and execution of DOUBLE EAGLE, Phase One.  
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(2) 5 March-31 May 1966. USS PRINCETON (LPH-5), USS PICKAWAY (APA-222), USS ALAMO (LSD-22).

d. Average Monthly Strength.

SLF Staff: USMC OFF 9 USMC ENL 16 USN OFF 0 USN ENL 0  
 BLT: USMC OFF 63 USMC ENL 1567 USN OFF 5 USN ENL 68  
 HMM: USMC OFF 50 USMC ENL 171 USN OFF 1 USN ENL 3

e. Commanding Officer and Staff.

J. R. BURNETT	Colonel	Commanding Officer (1Jan-6Apr66)
R. A. BRENNEMAN	Colonel	Commanding Officer (7Apr-31May66)
T. E. GLEASON	LtColonel	Executive Officer/S-3 (1Jan-11Mar66)
		Executive Officer (12Mar-31May66)
L. M. DUFFY	LtColonel	S-1/S-4 (1Jan-11Mar66)
G. L. BARTLETT	Major	Asst S-3 (1Jan-11Mar66)
		S-3 (12Mar-21May66)
H. B. CROSBY III	Major	S-3 (22-31May66)
F. E. GRUBE	Major	S-2 (1Jan-9Mar66)
G. ALBANS	Captain	Asst S-2 (1Jan-31May66)
T. G. BEERS	Captain	Asst S-1/Combat CasReptO (18Apr-13May66)
W. H. HORNER	Captain	CommO (11Mar-31May66)
R. A. LIST	1stLieutenant	CommO/Asst S-3 (1Jan-10May66)
J. T. DOLAN	1stLieutenant	Air Observer/Asst S-3 (30Jan-7Apr66)
B. S. MCKENNA	1stLieutenant	Air Observer/Asst S-3 (16Apr-31May66)
D. C. SCHULTZ	2ndLieutenant	Asst S-4 (Formerly logistics chief. Commissioned on 27 May 1966 )

2. Chronology of Significant Events During the Period 1 January 1966 to 31 May 1966. The events related in this Command Chronology depict the activities of the Special Landing Force during the period indicated. Detailed information on the BLT's and HMM's assigned to the SLF during this period is shown in the appropriate command chronologies of these units. The details of special operations and HILLTOP exercises conducted during the period are shown in the appropriate command chronologies, after action and post exercise reports. A complete listing of these documents is found on page 5 of this enclosure and indicated by TABS A through S. A list of pertinent Operation Orders, previously submitted, is shown in TAB T.

a. 1-19 January 1966. On 1 January 1966, the ARG/SLF was in Buckner Bay, Okinawa after having off loaded BLT 3/4 on Okinawa on 30 December 1965. BLT 2/3 began embarkation on 1 January 1966 aboard the USS VALLEY FORGE (LPH-8), USS MONTROSE (APA-212) and USS MONTICELLO (LSD-35), and completed loading on 2 January 1966. The USS MONTROSE and USS MONTICELLO departed Okinawa on 3 January and arrived in Subic Bay 6 January 1966. The USS VALLEY FORGE, with CTG 79.5, CTG 76.5, HMM 261 and elements of BLT 2/3 embarked, departed Okinawa on 3 January 1966 and arrived at Chu Lai, RVN on 6 January 1966. The rotation of HMM 261 with HMM 362 at Chu Lai was completed aboard the USS VALLEY FORGE on 7 January 1966. The USS VALLEY FORGE arrived in Subic Bay on 8 January 1966 where BLT 2/3 and HMM 362 were off loaded for training ashore during the in-port period from 6-19 January 1966. BLT 3/1 as part of the landing force for operation DOUBLE EAGLE, was embarked in Task Group 76.6 shipping 10-11 January 1966,

at Buckner Bay, Okinawa, chopped OPCON to CTG 79.5 on 12 January 1966, arrived in Subic Bay on 16 January and conducted training ashore during period 16-19 January 1966.

b. 20 January-28 February 1966. A rehearsal landing at Green Beach, Zambales Training Area, was conducted on 21 January in preparation for HILLTOP III which was conducted in the San Jose area of Mindoro Island, R. P. from 23 to 24 January. CTF 79 was present and observed the D-Day operations. On 24 January the SLF departed San Jose for Operation DOUBLE EAGLE. On 26 January CTG 79.5 Operation Order 324-66 (Operation DOUBLE EAGLE) was issued. Operation DOUBLE EAGLE, Phase One commenced on 28 January and ended on 17 February. At the completion of phase one BLT 3/1 chopped to OPCON of CG 3rd Marine Division. Phase Two commenced on 19 February and ended on 28 February. BLT 2/3 off-loaded at DaNang 27-28 February and chopped to OPCON CG, 3rd Marine Division on 27 February 1966.

c. 28 February-7 April 1966. On 28 February BLT 1/5 which had arrived in Subic Bay aboard new ARG shipping, chopped to OPCON of CTG 79.5 and became the SLF BLT. CTG 79.5 and staff members visited Nha Trang for conference with CG FFV 1-2 March concerning probable operations in the vicinity of Phu Cat in II Corps and subsequently rejoined the SLF at Subic Bay on 3 March. With the rotation of ARG shipping CTG 79.5 and staff moved from USS VALLEY FORGE (LPH-3) to the USS PRINCETON (LPH-5) on 5 March. The S-3 of TG 79.5 on 10 March made a liaison visit to San Jose, Mindoro with local officials and a representative from COMNAVPHIL concerning exercise HILLTOP IV. CTG 79.5 Operation Order 329-66 (HILLTOP IV) was distributed on 10 March. On 12 March the ARG/SLF departed Subic Bay and conducted a CASEX/FIREX for HILLTOP IV in the Zambales Training Area, followed by a rehearsal landing at Green Beach, Subic on 13 March. On 15-16 March HILLTOP IV was conducted in San Jose, Mindoro, R. P. Twenty Philippine Military observers observed D-Day operations and were briefed aboard the USS PRINCETON. CTG 79.5 paid calls on the Mayor of San Jose and Vice Governor of Mindoro on 15 March. The SRG/SLF returned to Subic Bay on 17 March. On 23 March CTG 79.5 accompanied by CTG 76.5 and the Commanding Officer and the S-3 of BLT 1/5 departed Subic for Saigon and conference with COMUSMACV concerning pending operations. During the period 26 March to 7 April Operation JACK STAY was conducted by the SLF.

d. 8 April-2 May 1966. Upon completion of Operation JACY STAY the ARG/SLF departed the Rung Sat Special Zone, RVN and on 8 April rotated HMM 362 and HMM 364 in Chu Lai and subsequently arrived in Subic Bay, R. P. on 10 April. Major BARTLETT, S-3 of TG 79.5 effected liaison 16-17 April with CG III MAF concerning future operations in I CTZ, RVN. HMM 364 helo-lifted Republic of Philippines President MARCOS, Admiral SHARP, U. S. Ambassador BLAIR and party from the U. S. Embassy, Manila to USS ENTERPRISE at Subic Bay on 15 April. CG FMFPAC/IMAC (FWD) was briefed on SLF operations by CTG 79.5 and CTG 76.5 aboard the PRINCETON on 18 April. On 19 April the ARG/SLF departed Subic Bay, R. P. and arrived at DaNang, RVN on 21 April. CTG 79.5 and CTG 76.5 and staff representatives effected liaison with CG III MAF concerning possible employment in the I CTZ, RVN and visited 3d Marine Division for details of

Enclosure (1)



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certain plans. On 22 April CTG 79.5, the Commanding Officer of BLT 1/5 and members of the SLF Staff flew to the Hue-Phu Bai area for liaison with the Commanding Officer of the 4th Marines and conducted an aerial reconnaissance of Co Bi-Thanh Tau area (Northwest of Hue). CTG 79.5, CTG 76.5, Commanding Officer of BLT 1/5 and staff representatives flew to DaNang for coordination on Operation OSAGE, and a helo reconnaissance was made of the Phu Loc area (ZD 125005). All arrangements for air support, liaison officers interpreters, civil affairs and psychological warfare were completed for the operation by 26 April. Operation OSAGE was a unilateral amphibious operation conducted in the Phu Loc area of ICTZ from 27 April to 2 May 1966. ISO support was provided during Operation OSAGE by a three man ISO team from 9th MAB on Okinawa. The SLF Casualty Reporting System was established for Operation OSAGE when one officer assigned to the SLF and one SNCO TAD from 9th MAB instituted the SLF CRCC.

e. 3 May-31 May 1966. On 3-5 May CTG 79.5 and CTG 76.5 effected liaison with CG III MAF and CG, 1st Marine Division concerning possible employment of the SLF in Operation MONTGOMERY and the pending off loading of BLT 1/5 at Chu Lai. On 6 May BLT 1/5 commenced off loading at Chu Lai and chopped OPCON to CG III MAF on 7 May. On 8 May CTG 79.5 and S-4 departed DaNang for Okinawa for liaison with CTF 79 concerning embarkation of BLT 3/5, and briefing on 11 May of CG FMFAC on SLF operations. The SLF/ARG departed Chu Lai on 8 May and arrived in Buckner Bay, Okinawa on 11 May and commenced loading BLT 3/5. CTF 79 visited CTG 79.5 and CTG 76.5 aboard the USS PRINCETON on 13 May. The SLF departed Okinawa on 14 May for Subic; however, arrival there was delayed until 20 May due to Typhoon "IRMA". The Operation Order for HILLTOP V was published on 17 May, and a frag order for HILLTOP V was issued on 18 May. HMM 364 aircraft flew Deputy Under Secretary of the Navy BEAUMONT from NAS Sangley Pt., R. P. to the American Embassy, Manila and to Manila International Airport on 20 May. The SLF staff effected liaison with COMNAVPHIL in conjunction with Exercise HILLTOP V. LtCol GLEASON, Executive Officer of TG 79.5 attended the COMUSMACV-CINCPACFLT Amphibious Planning Conference on Okinawa from 23-27 May. On 23 May the SLF conducted a combined surface and heliborne landing on Green Beach and helo landing zones in the Zamboales Training Area, Subic Bay as rehearsal for HILLTOP V. The ARG/SLF departed Subic on 24 May and conducted Exercise HILLTOP V in the San Jose area of Mindoro Island from 25 May to 27 May. On 25 May, nineteen Philippine Military Observers observed D-Day operations of HILLTOP V and were briefed by CTG 79.5 and CTG 76.5 aboard the USS PRINCETON on 26 May. The SLF arrived in Subic Bay on 28 May, and conducted maintenance and training ashore during the remainder of the period, while maintaining a 96 hour reaction time for possible deployment in Southeast Asia.

Enclosure (1)  
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SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

TAB A - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - BLT 2/3  
TAB B - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - HMM 362  
TAB C - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - BLT 1/5  
TAB D - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - HMM 364  
TAB E - COMMAND CHRONOLOGY - BLT 3/5  
TAB F - SLF AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN DOUBLE EAGLE  
TAB G - BLT 2/3 AFTER ACTION REPORT OPN DOUBLE EAGLE  
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TAB O - COMSEVENTHFLT HILLTOP LOI  
TAB P - POST EXERCISE REPORT HILLTOP III  
TAB Q - POST EXERCISE REPORT HILLTOP IV  
TAB R - HILLTOP V FRAG ORDER #1 TO HILLTOP OPERATION ORDER 330-66  
TAB S - POST EXERCISE REPORT OF HILLTOP V  
TAB T - LIST OF PREVIOUSLY SUBMITTED DOCUMENTS

HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)  
770 San Francisco 96001

1500:30a  
17 Mar 1966

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From: Commander  
To: Commander Task Force 79  
Subj: Current After Action Report  
Re: (1) Operation Overlay

1. Operation Double Eagle was an amphibious operation combining a surface-borne and helicopter assault force. It was conducted in accordance with MIA 22(A).
2. Operation Double Eagle was conducted in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin provinces of South Vietnam. It was conducted in two phases, Phase One commenced on 28 January 1966 and ended on 17 February 1966. Phase Two commenced 19 February and ended 28 February 1966.
3. Command headquarters for the Amphibious portions of the operation were located aboard the LST Paul Harvey (LPA-248) for Phase One and aboard the USS Valley Forge (LPH-8) for Phase Two.
4. Task Organization.

Landing Force (TF 79.5)  
Landing Force Hqs

Col BURNETT

INF 368

LtCol ALDWORTH

BLT 2/3

LtCol HORN

BLT 3/1

LtCol YOUNG

2nd Bn, 4th Marines

LtCol TOWING

Co "A", 1st Airborne Bn

Maj HELMER

Prov Recon Grp

Capt COMPTON

Co "B", 3rd Eng Bn

Capt WESTPHAL

Prov Arty Grp

LtCol PAGE

Shore Party Grp

Maj DEAN

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Tab 15

79 79.5 (SLF) DOUBLE EAGLE I, II

28 Jan - 28 Feb 66

### 5. Intelligence.

(a) Enemy activity, reconnaissance sightings, captured prisoners, interrogations and agent reports had tended to confirm the presence of the below listed enemy in the Thanh Tra (BS 757470) - Duc Pho (BS 818385) - Nhat (BS 571387) - Nhat Duc (BS 874325) area of Quang Ngai province prior to the commencement of Operation Double Eagle:

18th Regt, 325th PAVN Div  
 7th Bn, 18th Regt  
 8th Bn, 18th Regt  
 9th Bn, 18th Regt  
 2nd VC Regt (-) CP  
 10th Bn, 2nd VC Regt  
 11th Bn, 2nd VC Regt  
 12th Bn, 2nd VC Regt  
 13th Main Force Bn

(b) Although evidence to the contrary was not produced, no substantial contact with elements of the above listed units was made in the objective areas. The original estimate that the enemy would fight small unit delaying and harassing engagements held true. Enemy strength was limited to small local force units. Evidence indicated that portions of the above mentioned units had at one time been located within the objective area but that they had moved south of the area into northern Binh Dinh Province prior to the commencement of the operation or shortly thereafter.

6. Mission. As directed by COMSEVENTHFLT message 120150Z January 1966, the mission of the Landing Force was as follows: In coordination with CG III MAF conduct an amphibious landing subsequent to 15 January east of Thanh Tra in order to assist III MAF in coordination with I Corps to seek out and destroy PAVN and Viet Cong units operating in Quang Ngai province.

7. Concept of Operations. Operation Double Eagle was to be conducted in a series of consecutive phases, designed to position the LF and subsequently Task Force Delta in the objective area for the ultimate purpose of finding and destroying major enemy forces. The build up of forces was to be accomplished in such a manner as to deceive the enemy as to the ultimate intentions. The operation was to commence with every effort made to create the impression that forces were ashore to conduct a search and destroy operation within a zone extending approximately 6,000 to 8,000 meters to the west and north of the landing area. The deep ranging flexibility inherent in helicopter operations was to be sacrificed in the initial phase. As this initial phase progressed, forces, supplies, and equipment were to be built up ashore in anticipation of operations in the mountainous areas further inland. Subsequent events were to involve the destruction of enemy positions by strikes by helicopter forces and by ARCLIGHT bombing missions with fast follow-on amphibious search and destroy operations. Simultaneously, elements of ARVN I Corps and Field Force Vietnam were to conduct coordinated operations to the north and south of the Landing Force (Task Force Delta) area of operations.

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The Landing Force portion of the operation was to commence with the surface landing of BLT 3/1 over Blue Beach in southern Quang Ngai province, east of Thanh Tra, to conduct search and destroy operations in its assigned zone to secure a suitable area for the RMA. BLT 2/4 was to land in trace of BLT 3/1 and conduct search and clear operations to the north of BLT 3/1 in its assigned zone. BLT 2/3 was to remain aboard the LPH and on order land by helicopter and conduct search and clear operations as directed. HMM 962 was to provide support as directed by CLF and be prepared specifically to land BLT 2/3 upon order. When BLT 3/1 had seized the initial zone and Task Force Delta command and control elements were in position (estimated to be either D-day or D plus 1), the landing force would be firmly established ashore. At that time, control of operations ashore would pass to CG Task Force Delta on request. The beach support area would be established commencing on D-Day. It would be rapidly built up and prepared to support Task Force Delta operations for a period of two to three weeks. Task Force artillery, DASC, and NSC would be established in the RMA.

#### 8. Planning.

(a) The COMSEVENTHFLT original initiating directive was dated 120150Z January 1966. This original initiating directive designated COMSEVENTHFLT FIVE (CTG 76.6) aboard the USS Paul Revere as the CATF for the operation. It directed him to provide shipping to embark BLT 3/1 in Okinawa. Commander Special Landing Force (CTG 79.5) was designated as CLF for the operation. Control of Landing Force units would pass ashore to CG III MAF or his designated representative when Landing Force units were firmly established ashore. In addition, it directed that HMF support for Operation Double Eagle would take precedence over all other HMF missions during the duration of the operation. CTG 79, CTG 76, CTG 79.5, and CTG 76.6 were authorized direct liaison with CG III MAF and CG Task Force Delta for concurrent and parallel planning. Operational control of all landing force units would pass to CLF upon embarkation of the units. CLF would pass OPCON ashore when Landing Force was firmly established. The revised initiating directive (COMSEVENTHFLT message 171432Z January 1966) modified the original in that BLT 2/4 was included as a landing force unit upon embarkation in Chu Lai subsequent to the rehearsal. It further modified the original directive in that it specifically directed that CATF and CLF conduct the amphibious landing (Military III) at San Jose, Mindoro, R.P. This would also constitute the rehearsal for Operation Double Eagle.

(b) The Commander and elements of the Staff of CTG 79.5 arrived in Okinawa on 8 January 1966 after spending two days in Danang and Chu Lai conferring with CG III MAF and CG Task Force Delta and conducting a helicopter reconnaissance of the landing beaches and objective area. They immediately commenced concurrent and parallel planning with CTG 76.6. This planning continued until 27 January. Preliminary decisions were made as to the composition of the Landing Force, the site and time for the rehearsal, the location of the landing beaches, the scheme of maneuver ashore, supporting arms coordination, command relationships, communications requirements, embarkation plans, landing plans, and the methods by which the passing of the

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command ashore could be facilitated. It was determined that all fixed wing aircraft would be supplied by CG First Marine Aircraft Wing throughout the entire operation. Helicopters would be provided by HMQ-36 and from the organic complement of the SLF. RVN advisors/interpreters were also requested. The Landing would be established aboard the USS Catamount which was designated the PCS for the duration of the operation. The buoyant ship where DASH lines would be constructed at the southern extremity of the landing beach. CGM 79.5 Operation Order 324-66 promulgated the detailed plans for the amphibious portion of the operation as it pertained to the landing force.

## 9. Amphibious

(a) D-Day - 28 January 1966 - The first scheduled wave of BLT 3/1 landed over Blue Beach One at 280700H. This wave consisted of eight LVT-4's. Light small arms fire was received from the center of the beach. By 280800H, "I", "K" and "M" companies were conducting search and clear operations in their assigned zones. By 280830H, BLT 2/4 had landed with "Q", "M" and "F" companies passing through BLT 3/1 positions and conducting search and clear operations in their assigned zone to the north. In the meantime, visibility continued to decrease as the surf and wind began to increase. By noon, all ship-to-shore operations involving LCM-6's and smaller craft were suspended. The two BLT's continued to receive sporadic harassing fire from small groups of VC in the area. All air operations with the exception of emergency relief/resupply missions were suspended at approximately 281400H due to worsening crash conditions. Initial elements of Task Force Delta command group landed prior to suspension of small craft operations and LT Delta notified CTF that his command group was prepared to coordinate ground operations in the event of an enemy attack. That night boat operations were resumed at about 281730H as the surf abated. Both BLT's continued to receive harassing small arms fire throughout the afternoon but no major contact was made. All areas within Phase Line Orange were secured by dusk. The BLT's assumed night positions and commenced aggressive patrol and ambush operations. As night came, the weather continued bad. Boat operations were secured again at 282119H. Oklahoma City fired MAF illumination missions in support of BLT 3/1 and BLT 2/4 during the night. A total of thirteen ambushes were established by the BLT's. Neither the patrols nor the ambushes resulted in any enemy contact.

(b) D plus 1 - 29 January 1966 - Poor weather continued to hamper off-loading operations. Two LCM's and one LCU-8 were directed to offload early in order to augment the LCM-6's which were having difficulty in the marginal surf. One of the LCU's eventually beached on the beach, thereby reducing the rate of offloading. Small boat operations were resumed at approximately 291245H but were again suspended at 291545H. The tempo of the offloading had increased during this period but it lagged far behind requirements. Ten Green County was the first LCU to beach at 291600H. The Vinham County beached at 291540H after unsuccessful attempts to marry with an LCU. The marriage was attempted in the absence of an end section of causeway. BLT 2/3 conducted pre-dawn transfers from the Montrose to the LPH throughout the afternoon and early evening. Transfers were completed at 292130H. In the meantime, Co "M" of BLT 2/3 was helilifted ashore to Task Force Delta.

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"C" (see overlay) which they subsequently secured with no resistance. BLT 3/1 and BLT 2/4 conducted patrols and ambushes in assigned zones during hours of darkness. Negligible contact was made.

(c) D plus 2 - 30 January 1966 - During the night, the two beaches LST's were partially offloaded. The offloading had been delayed while constructing temporary sand ramps. Weather conditions remained marginal throughout the morning. By 301300H, Windham County was only twenty per cent offloaded and Tom Green County was only forty-five per cent offloaded. Construction and maintenance of the sand ramp was hampered by the surf and current. An airdrop of supplies by L-130 was conducted over the beach at 301045H. The first ARVN LIGHT strike of the operation was made in the vicinity of BS 6546 at 300730H. BLT 3/1 and BLT 2/4 continued deliberate search and clear operations in assigned zones to Phase Line Orange. The scheduled link-up between 2/4 and ARVN forces at Thanh Tru was cancelled. L-hour for BLT 2/3 was delayed until 301500H due to limited visibility. At 301330H, Monticello was detached from the Task Group to proceed to Chu Lai to pick up an end section of pontoon causeway and a warping tug. L-hour was executed at 301500H after scheduled air preparation of the landing zone. "P", "Q", and "R" companies along with the BLT command group "A" and elements of H&S company were helolifted to the landing zone in the vicinity of BS 720424. The lift was completed at 301710H. No enemy contact was made. Weather conditions continued to improve as the day progressed. Westchester County beached at 301400H. Tom Green County completed offloading at 301700H and retracted at 301815H. Windham County was only fifty per cent offloaded at this time. The sand ramp had still not been completed, however, LBU/LCN offloading continued at an increased rate as the weather gradually improved. BLT's 3/1, 2/4, and 2/3 continued deliberate search and clear operations until dusk at which time they assumed night defensive positions and prepared to conduct patrols and ambushes within their assigned zones. BOF missions were fired in support of the BLT's throughout the night.

(d) D plus 3 - 31 January 1966 - Upon arrival of the causeway section and warping tug at 310645H, the rate of offloading of the remaining LST's was increased. Improved surf conditions permitted continuous smooth offloading by smaller landing craft. During the night, BLT 3/1 made light patrol contact. BLT 2/4 and BLT 2/3 had no enemy contact. By 311300H, Westchester County was thirty per cent offloaded. Installation of the buoyant ship-to-shore fuel line commenced at 311130H. Commander Landing Force established his command post ashore and then passed OPORD of ground forces ashore to 33 Task Force Delta at 311210H (CTG 79.3 message 310850Z). Control of air and naval gunfire remained afloat. At this time, BLT 3/1 was preparing to assume responsibility for an expanded zone to include that held by BLT 2/4. BLT 2/4 continued to maintain their defensive positions as they prepared to helolift one company and a radio relay unit to a position in the vicinity of BS 618368. They also were making preparations to helolift the BLT (-) to a landing zone in the vicinity of BS 610395. BLT 2/3 continued to maintain its defensive positions in the vicinity of BS 720424. Company "E" (BLT 2/3) continued to hold defensive positions on Task Force objective "C". One 105mm Howitzer battery had been helolifted to vicinity of BS 721420 commencing at 310857H. This lift was completed at 311030H. The lift of the company from BLT 2/4 and the radio relay unit was eventually delayed

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until 011700H due to the existing Grachin conditions. In addition, the lift of BLT 2/4 (-) was delayed until 011500H.

(e) D plus 4 - 1 February 1966 - Westchester County completed offloading at 011300H. All scheduled offloading was completed at this time. Control of air passed ashore at 010225H. Eighteen naval gunfire missions were fired in support of troops ashore during the night. The provisional company of BLT 2/3 landed over Blue Beach Two at 011200H.

(f) D plus 5 - 2 February 1966 - No significant events. Commander Landing Force maintained radio and radio relay contact with CG Task Force Delta. CG Task Force Delta maintained all control of forces ashore.

(g) D plus 6 - 3 February 1966 - A subsidiary amphibious landing of BLT 3/1 (-) was conducted over Green Beach One (BS 92312) at 031500H under the operational control of Commander Landing Force. Twelve LVT's composed wave one. Fifteen LVT's of wave two landed at 031505H. Two companies of BLT 3/1 were to conduct search and clear operations inland to Highway One and then south. Over Green Beach Two, six LVT's comprised wave one. They landed at 031500H. The two LVT's of wave two landed at 031505H. Wave three consisted of one LCU with three 155mm self-propelled guns and three radio jeeps embarked. The purpose of the landing on this beach was to establish one infantry company and the provisional artillery unit ashore to support Task Force Delta operations in the southern portion of the objective area. All units chopped UPON back to Task Force Delta at 031605H.

(h) D plus 7 - 4 February 1966 - No significant events. Commander Landing Force maintained radio contact and radio relay contact with CG Task Force Delta. CG Task Force Delta maintained control of all forces ashore.

(i) D plus 8 - 5 February 1966 - The second subsidiary amphibious landing was conducted over Green Beach Three in the vicinity of BS 923192. Wave one, consisting of six LVT's followed by two LVT's landed at 050927H. Wave two which was composed of nine LVT's landed at 050933H. The LCU with three 155mm self-propelled guns and three radio jeeps was diverted to Green Beach Four in the vicinity of BS 924217 when hazardous rock and coral formations were discovered at Green Beach Three. To accomplish this, one infantry platoon reinforced and two LVT's were moved north along the beach to secure the site on Green Beach Four where the LCU would beach. Although wave one over Green Beach Three had received what appeared to be small caliber mortar fire when it was approximately 800-1000 yards from the beach and had returned this fire from the LVT's, the column moving along the beach to Green Beach Four encountered no resistance. The landing of the guns was accomplished without incident and the column proceeded back down the beach without incident. The total forces landed consisted of one infantry company from BLT 3/1 and the provisional artillery unit from Task Force artillery group. Their mission was to support Task Force Delta operations in the southern portion of the objective area. These forces chopped UPON to Task Force Delta when they were firmly established ashore.

(j) D plus 9 to D plus 14 - 6-11 February 1966 - CG Task Force Delta



retained OPCON of all forces ashore. Commander Landing Force maintained radio and radio relay contact with Task Force Delta. Units ashore continued to conduct search and clear operations.

(k) D plus 15 - 12 February 1966 - Blue Beach Three (BS 837430) was determined to be the most suitable beach over which to conduct the withdrawal of forces ashore. The buoyant fuel line was dismantled and embarked aboard LCU 1603. Enough fuel was available ashore at this time to satisfy requirements for the remainder of the operation. USS Catspaw loaded landing force vehicles and departed for Chu Lai to offload and return to the AGA. Two hundred and fifty troops and the equipment from Howler battery 3/12 were helilifted to the Valley Forge at 121445H. Troops were from Howler battery, Recon platoon and M4S Company of BLT 2/3.

(l) D plus 16 - 13 February 1966 - The 155mm self-propelled guns and the jeeps from the provisional artillery unit were backloaded over Green Beach Four by LCU and moved to Blue Beach where they were debarked. Windham County beached at Blue Three at 131600H and commenced loading excess landing force supplies. Non-tactical units began phasing back towards the BSA. Tactical units continued to conduct search and clear operations.

(m) D plus 17 - 14 February 1966 - Windham County continued to load Landing Force supplies at Blue Three. Units ashore continued to phase back towards the BSA as search and clear operations continued.

(n) D plus 18 - 15 February 1966 - Windham County completed loading and retreated from Blue Beach Three at 151530H. It sailed immediately for Chu Lai to unload and return. Tioga County beached at 1615H. During the day, Navarro loaded 367 troops from BLT 2/4, 180 drums of POL, 65 tons of Class V, and 4 tons of general cargo. Valley Forge embarked 394 troops from BLT 2/3 who were helilifted aboard. Montrose embarked 130 troops from 6/2/3. Paul Revere embarked 30 troops from LT 3/1. The 1st LVTB embarked the provisional company from BLT 2/3 at Blue Beach and took them to vicinity of Green Beach where they embarked on the Montrose. Fort Marion loaded 39 troops, one 155mm howitzer and two trucks. Units continue to close the BSA. Control of air passed back to the CAIF at 151841H. Embarked troops reverted to OPCON of Commander Landing Force.

(o) D plus 19 - 16 February 1966 - Tioga County completed loading landing force vehicle at 1330H. Tom Green County beached at 161000H and commenced loading elements of Task Force Delta command group, the RASC, and elements of MAG-36. Fort Marion, Navarro, Montrose, and Montrose commenced loading of personnel and equipment at Green Beach Four at 160800H. Six hundred troops, 3 tractors, 4 trucks, 9 LVT's and 6 LVTB's were backloaded. Loading was completed at 161215H. Backloading commenced at Blue Beach at 160800H. The BSA equipment was completely backloaded at 161500H. All helilifted personnel and equipment completed backload at 161645H. All artillery with the exception of the LVTB's was aboard ship by 161700H. Task Force Delta CP in the objective area was secured and transferred to Chu Lai at 161720H. Remaining ashore for the night was BLT 3/1 command group "A", "I", "L" and "M" companies from 3/1, eleven LVT's, six LVTB's and one platoon from BLT 2/3 located on hill 163.

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(g) 8 plus 20 - 17 February 1966 - The final withdrawal of elements at 170000H. All elements which remained ashore the previous night were completely withdrawn by 171157H. The following approximate totals were landed/ beached for Double Eagle I: 6200 personnel, 2100 tons of supplies and fuel, and 400 vehicles of all types. 581 naval gunfire missions were fired in support of operations ashore. 2844 helicopter sorties were logged from the LPH.

(h) 18 February 1966 - Pre-L-Hour transfers of "G" and "H" companies of BLP 2/3 commenced at 181300H in preparation for the commencement of Double Eagle II on 19 February. These transfers were completed at 181600H.

(i) BLP 2/3 commenced helolift to assigned landing zone at 191000H. BLP 362 and elements of MAG-36 were used for the lift. OPOC of BLP 2/3 was passed to CG Task Force Delta effective 191145H. OPOC of BLP 362 remained with CLF. BLP 362 on call in support of Task Force Delta as requested. CLF maintained radio contact and liaison with Task Force Delta throughout the operation.

(j) BLP 2/3 shipped OPOC to Commander Landing Force upon resumption of operations on 20 February.

10. Commander's Analysis. Operation Double Eagle emphasized the importance and reaffirmed the validity of the doctrine set forth in BLP 22(A). Lessons learned for the most parts were not new, but rather pointed out the many pitfalls that can be encountered when adherence to doctrine is circumvented or ignored. Specific areas are covered in succeeding paragraphs.

(a) Planning. During the planning phase little opportunity was available to conduct the necessary detailed and concurrent planning with all elements of the Landing Force. This was caused by one BLP (BLP 2/4) and supporting forces (artillery, shore party, engineers, etc.) being physically located at a distance from the Landing Force headquarters which was afloat and unable to effect the necessary close liaison. This resulted in much of the exchange of essential information being conducted entirely by message traffic which, at best, is a poor substitute for close personal liaison between the various elements of the Landing Force. Although the Landing Force Commander sent liaison officers to Task Force Delta for the initial planning conference and at intervals subsequent to this, it was still not considered adequate. In an operation of this magnitude the Landing Force Commander must have the capability to effect liaison at any time to keep all staffs abreast of developments in order that they may proceed with their concurrent planning. Conversely other staffs must ensure that their information needed by the Landing Force is received by the Landing Force Commander.

(b) Initiating Directive. The initiating directive must be specific and cover in detail all aspects concerning the operation. The initiating directive for Double Eagle was defective in that it failed to:

- (1) Establish an AOM.
- (2) Specify conditions for termination of the operation.

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(3) Provide detailed instructions for command relationships.

(4) Provide instructions for command after termination. It further was not specific to how the Landing Force Commander was to provide instructions on support requirement after termination.

In situations such as this where the special Landing Force is committed in support of in-country forces and the Commander of the Special Landing Force is designated as Landing Force Commander and thus assumes the responsibility for the success of the initial phases of the operation, the initiating directive must be explicit to preclude misinterpretation which may endanger the success of the operation.

(c) Situation Reports. The awkward command relationships further complicated the situation reporting, with one BIF reporting to Task Force Delta while still under the OPCON of the Landing Force. This resulted in delays in getting the complete Task Force picture presented in the CATF sitrep. Reports must be submitted on time, be accurate, and in sufficient enough detail to preclude the necessity of going back to the reporting units with additional time consuming messages requiring amplification of certain items either omitted or not clear.

(d) Command Relationship. The concept of command relationships provided CTO 79.5 as GCP and further established that the Landing Force would chop OPCON to OG Task Force Delta when the Landing Force was firmly established ashore. The time frame for this condition was estimated to be not later than D plus 1 with the possibility of DCP on D-Day. It was also provided that the Landing Force Commander would have OPCON of all embarked forces; however, it was apparent that certain of these supporting fires (artillery, engineers, shore party) were not cognizant of this relationship and they considered themselves operating under OPCON of Task Force Delta. This resulted in some initial confusion on D-Day which was resolved on the beach shortly after Task Force Delta elements commenced arriving on the beach. The command relationship also in effect created a dual command structure for the period D thru D plus 3. Although the Landing Force Commander had responsibility and ostensibly command, this command was diluted by the awkward command relationships existing. When Task Force Delta did not assume OPCON of Landing Force elements on D-Day as expected, but rather the Commander Landing Force retained OPCON, Task Force Delta in order to execute its original plan was forced to transmit its desires to the Commander Landing Force. Although this did not adversely affect the operation, it caused some delay and confusion which in other situations with different conditions of enemy, weather, or terrain, the results might have been disastrous. Command and responsibility are inseparable and the person designated as Commander Landing Force with his commensurate responsibilities must have the requisite authority and control of all forces to execute the plan.

(e) Amphibious Objective Area. Although NWP 22(A) states that the CATF shall have command of all forces within the AOI, during Double Eagle this did not hold true. In the initial landing a company of Marines and a company of RVN were within the AOI, on a hill overlooking the beach, but were not under OPCON of the Landing Force nor was there communications between these units and the Commander Landing Force. In the unopposed landing this was not critical.

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however, if the landing had been opposed, command and control of these units would have been mandatory.

(f) Communications. Internal landing force communications during the operation were dependent entirely on FM radio equipment. The inter-ship and ship-shore radio relay proved to be quite reliable as long as line-of-sight was maintained between terminals. The necessity to rely on semi-directional antennas and the length of the coaxial cables between transmitters and antennas considerably reduced the normal range capabilities of the FRC-62 type equipment. Voice radio nets were terminated by RT-67 and RT-68 radios aboard ship and by AN/PRC-25 radios ashore. Reception and reliability were excellent to outstanding. Reception was hampered only when units were separated by high mountains. Communication and control are synonymous. The Landing Force Commander must have reliable communication at all times to maintain the required control. To achieve this capability it is felt that the LFF should have organized AN/PRC-25 radios for use in all operations. FRC-25 type radios were supplied by the supported command for this particular operation only.

(g) Logistics. Subordination planning for Double Eagle required that all Landing Force supplies be embarked aboard amphibious shipping assigned to Task Force Delta. The initial TAC/LOG organization, embarked aboard USS Octonaut (LSD-17), was composed of 1 officer each from the Logistics and Operation Sections of BLT's 2/4 and 3/1. TAC/LOG for BLT 2/3 was embarked aboard the USS Valley Forge (LPH-8). Operations of the TAC/LOG were satisfactory for D-Day, however upon completion of assault battalions being landed, the respective battalions no longer had a requirement for TAC/LOG representation. Consequently these individuals were phased ashore leaving the Primary Control Ship with limited Marine TAC/LOG representation. The lack of a Task Force Delta TAC/LOG Group aboard the Primary Control Ship to coordinate the movement of equipment and supplies subsequent to D-Day somewhat hampered control of logistic support ashore. Logistics support of forces ashore was never in jeopardy because of the foregoing. Unloading operations ashore were further hampered by the inability of LST's to beach and discharge equipment and supplies without extensive preparation of beach ramp facilities.

(h) Intelligence. The intelligence furnished to the Landing Force, by Task Force Delta appeared to be both timely and accurate. Analysis of the enemy's probable courses of action was also accurate. Terrain was adequately described on most occasions and the weather was typical for this time period. Aerial photos supplied to, or taken by the Landing Force, were extremely useful in selection of beaches, avenues of approach, areas for search and clear operations and in locating natural obstacles. An engineer report by Task Force Delta to the Landing Force described the sand berm, which backed the beach, as being 30 meters high. Aerial photos showed the height to be much closer to 30 feet. Mosaics made from these photos were used extensively in the briefing of personnel down to company level. They were extremely well received and were considerably more accurate than the maps which were in some instances, outdated. Particularly noteworthy were periscope photographs taken by the submarine Perch. A strip mosaic made from these photos was most valuable in

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giving someone a head's eye view of the beach and in identifying land marks as seen from the water rather than as they would appear from the air.

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MC HOSPITAL IS TRAINING FACILITY IN AREA BOUNDED BY AS 9461, 9464, 9664, 9661.

MC BR AND WATER-IND. FACTORY COMPLEX (225 ENGR BN) AREA AS 9660, 9663, 9963, 9960.

MC BASE COMPLEX (1/56) AREA 9764, 9767, 9967, 9964.

(3) TERRAIN. THE TERRAIN THROUGHOUT THE RBSZ IS CHARACTERIZED BY EXTENSIVE MANGROVE SWAMPS. THE AREA IS UNDER CONSTANT INUNDATION AND ONLY SMALL PATCHES OF HIGH DRY GROUND EXIST. ROADS AND TRAILS ARE NON-EXISTENT EXCEPT IN THE EXTREME SOUTHERN PORTION BETWEEN DONG HOA AND CAN GIO. MOVEMENT IS RESTRICTED TO FOOT TRAVEL OR BY BOAT. NO ALL WEATHER ROADS EXIST. DIFFICULT TERRAIN AND HYDRO CONDITIONS MAKE TRAVEL IN THE RBSZ BY ANY MEANS ENTIRELY SLOW AND HAZARDOUS SIX HUNDRED METERS PER HOUR IS CONSIDERED AVERAGE MOVEMENT RATE. U.S. ADVISORS REPORT MUCH USE IS MADE OF MINES AND BOOBY TRAPS ALONG THE FEW TRAILS THAT DO EXIST. BOATS TRAVELING RIVERS AND STREAMS ARE HIGHLY SUSCEPTIBLE TO AMBUSH AND WATER MINES.

(4) BEACH.

(A) BEACH YS 054472

(B) GRADIENT. 1 ON 150 TO 1 ON 350 LW TO HW, 1 ON 120 TO 1 ON 250, HW ZONE. NEARSHORE BOTTOM IS FLAT SHOREWARD OF 18 FT DEPTH CONTOUR 4 TO 13 NAUTICAL MILES OFF LW LINE.

(C) SURF. SURGING WAVES BETWEEN 1 AND 2 FT HIGH. DURING THE MONSOON SEASON WIND GENERATED WAVES REACH 6 TO 8 FT.

(D) CURRENT. 6 KNOTS FROM SE TO NW.

(E) TIDE AND ASTROL: (NAVADGRU MACV TIDE TABLE PREDICTIONS - 1966)

(F) OBSTACLES. THE NEARSHORE ZONE IS OBSTRUCTED BY SHOALS WHICH EXTEND OFF THE SHOAL OFF THE COMPLEX DONG NAI DELTA. THE SEAWARD EDGE OF THE SHOALS COINCIDES GENERALLY WITH THE 3 FATHOM CURVE, WHICH RANGES FROM 4 AND 13 NM OFFSHORE BUT SEAWARD OFF THE SHOALS, DEPTHS INCREASE RAPIDLY. EXCEPT WHERE INTERSECTED BY CHANNELS, DEPTHS IN THE SHOAL AREA ARE GENERALLY LESS THAN 2 FATHOMS, AND FISHING STAKES ARE SCATTERED THROUGHOUT.

(G) NATURE OF BOTTOM. DEPENDING ON SPECIFIC AREA, EITHER MUD OR SAND, AND IS SUITABLE FOR LCM-6 OPERATIONS.

(H) WIDTHS. 800-1000 YARDS AT LW; 5-20 YARDS AT HW.

B. FRIENDLY FORCES.

(1) CTF 77 PROVIDE GAS AND HELICO ESCORT.

(2) CTG 76.5 PROVIDE TRANSPORT, NGF AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT.

(3) COMUSMACV (CTF 115) PROVIDE SUPPORT AS REQUESTED.

(4) ARVN AND VNM FORCES IN RBSZ TO PROVIDE SUPPORT AS REQUESTED

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AS HOSPITAL AND TRAINING FACILITY IS WELL BOUNDED BY AS 9461, 9464, 9664, 9661.

AS BRIDGE AND WATER-PIPE FACTORY COMPLEX (225 BRIDGE BN) AREA AS 9660, 9663, 9963, 9960.

AS BASE COMPLEX (1/56) AREA 9764, 9767, 9967, 9964.

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## C. ATTACHMENTS.

- (1) UHLE DET
- (2) HEAVY HELO DET
- (3) ARVN LQA
- (4) LNO R33Z
- (5) R33Z ADVISORS

2. MISSION. LANDING FORCE, COMMENCING AT H & L-HOUR ON D-DAY LAND ON THE LONG THANH PENINSULA YS 1150 AND CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS TO DESTROY VC INSTALLATIONS AND CAPTURE OR DESTROY VC PERSONNEL IN THE LONG THANH AREA. ON ORDER ESTABLISH BATTALION AND COMPANY BASES IN SUITABLE AREAS OF THE R33Z AND CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS TO DESTROY VC INSTALLATIONS AND CAPTURE OR DESTROY VC PERSONNEL IN THE REMAINDER OF THE TAOR, IN ORDER TO FACILITATE PACIFICATION OF THIS CRITICAL AREA AND TO ASSIST IN ESTABLISHING POSITIVE RVN CONTROL OVER VITAL SHIP CHANNELS BETWEEN SOUTH CHINA SEA AND PORT OF SAIGON.

## 3. EXECUTION.

A. CONCEPT OF OPNS: FOR EASE OF CONTROL AND COORDINATION THE R33Z HAS BEEN ARBITRARILY DIVIDED INTO SIX AREAS BOUNDED BY WELL DEFINED GEOGRAPHICAL FEATURES. THESE AREAS HAVE BEEN GIVEN ALPHABETICAL CODE NAMES OF ALFA, BRAVO, CHARLIE, DELTA, ECHO, AND FOXTROT. AS DEPICTED ON OPERATION OVERLAY ISSUED SEPARATELY. THE R33Z OPERATION IS A UNILATERAL ANTHIEICUS OPERATION EMPLOYING A BALANCED NAVAL AND LANDING FORCE. IT WILL BE CONDUCTED IN TWO PHASES. THE FIRST PHASE WILL BE TO ATTACK AND SEIZE THE LONG THANH PENINSULA BY HELIBORNE AND SURFACE ASSAULT AND TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN THIS AREA FOR ABOUT TWO DAYS. ON ORDER PHASE II WILL BE THE ESTABLISHMENT OF BATTALION AND/OR COMPANY BASES WITH INFANTRY AND SUPPORTING ARTILLERY FROM WHICH TO CONDUCT EXTENSIVE PATROLS AND SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS. A TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL BY ALL FORCES WILL BE EXECUTED ON ORDER.

## B. BLT 1/5.

(1) COMMENCING H AND L-HOUR D-DAY, LAND BY SURFACE AND HELICOPTER MEANS OVER BEACHES AND HLZ'S IN AREA ALFA, SEIZE LF OBJECTIVES 1, 2, AND 3.

(2) ON ORDER BE PREPARED TO LAND BY SURFACE & HELICOPTER IN AREAS BRAVO AND CHARLIE TO ESTABLISH BASES FROM WHICH TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS WITHIN THESE AREAS WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON LF OBJECTIVES 4, 5, 6, 7, AND 8.

(3) SUBSEQUENTLY BE PREPARED ON ORDER TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN AREAS DELTA, ECHO, AND FOXTROT WITH PARTICULAR EMPHASIS ON LF OBJECTIVE 9.

(4) BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT A TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL ON ORDER.

## C. HHM 362.



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(1) PROV TRF LIFT, AERIAL RECON, ABN SPOT, TAC(A), TAO, RESUPPLY, AND EVAC MSMS AS DIR.

(2) BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT LEAFLET DROPS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH ALL LANDINGS AS DIR BY CLF.

D. RECON DET. BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT RECONNAISSANCE AS DIRECTED BY RECON AND SURVEIL ELEMENT OF CATF.

E. FIRE SUPT COORDINATION IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANNEXES D, G, AND H, REF A AND BELOW.

(1) CAS AND NGF ON CALL H MINUS 15 MINUTES HLZ'S AND BEACHES TO BE PREP IF REQ.

(2) ARTILLERY BASES WILL BE ESTABLISHED AS NECESSARY TO SUPPORT OPERATIONS IN THE RSSZ WITH ON CALL MISSIONS.

F. COORD INSTR

(1) ON D-DAY AN AOA WILL BE ESTAB AS FOLGS:

(A) THE RSSZ BOUNDED BY ES 2546, YS 2575, XS 9085, AND XS 9046 AND AN ARC 25 NM TO SEAWARD FROM YS 1050.

(B) RESTRICTED AIRSPACE UP TO 25,000 FT.

(2) ALL OPNS CONDUCTED IAW NWP 22(A) FL 31-11 LFM-61.

(3) D-DAY 26MAR, H-HR 0630H, L-HR 0645H; TO BE CONFIRMED.

(4) W-HR AS DIR BY CATF.

(5) RIOT CONTROL AGENTS ON AND CS ONLY APPROV FOR USE. AGENT DM (VOLITING AGENT) WILL NOT BE USED NOR ISSUED.

(6) PASSWORD AND COUNTERSIGN:

PRIMARY	ALTERNATE
26MAR JUNGLE JIM	HAPPY DAYS
27MAR AMERICAN BEAUTY	SHORT SMORTER
28MAR WASHINGTON IRVING	BRUCE WAYNE
29MAR JOINT SESSION	POST TIME
30MAR RAT FINK	THINK BIG
31MAR GOOINLY BIRD	SLIM JIM

(7) REPORTS AS CONTAINED ANNEX U REF A.

(8) CODE NAME: JACK STAY

4. ADMIN AND LOG.

A. ANNEX K TO REF A AS MODIFIED BELOW

(1) BLT ESTAB TACLOF ABD PCS AND LPH

(2) MED EVAC: EVAC CASUALTIES TO AH OR LPH AS DIRECTED. EVAC BY HELICO PREF

(3) CIVIC ACTION-INCLUDE MED TREATMENT, DISTRIBUTE FOOD, MED SUPPLIES AS PRACTICABLE.

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B. PUBLIC INFO: SEE ANNEX V REF A.

## 5. CMD AND COM-ELECT

A. ANNEX N TO REF A AS MODIFIED BELOW:

- (1) BLT 1/5 BE PREPARED TO PROVIDE RELAY TEAM TO VUNG TAU AREA ON ORDER.
- (2) DELETE FREQUENCY 2675 ON CLF TAG NR 2.
- (3) THE FOLLOWING FREQUENCIES ARE CLEARED FOR USE ON PRC-25. TO USE ANY OF THESE FREQUENCIES WITH HR C-10 SERIES, ADD 50 KCS TO DESIGNATED FREQUENCIES.

35.05 MCS	36F3	2W	M40
35.65 MCS	-do-	-do-	M41
36.45 MCS	-do-	-do-	M42
37.65 MCS	-do-	-do-	M43
39.55 MCS	-do-	-do-	M44
40.05 MCS	-do-	-do-	M45
42.55 MCS	-do-	-do-	M46
43.55 MCS	-do-	-do-	M47
44.95 MCS	-do-	-do-	M48
45.35 MCS	-do-	-do-	M49
45.95 MCS	-do-	-do-	M50
46.85 MCS	-do-	-do-	M51
56.55 MCS	-do-	-do-	M52
57.05 MCS	-do-	-do-	M53
58.75 MCS	-do-	-do-	M54
59.95 MCS	-do-	-do-	M55
61.55 MCS	-do-	-do-	M56
62.75 MCS	-do-	-do-	M57
64.45 MCS	-do-	-do-	M58
66.15 MCS	-do-	-do-	M59
(4) M12A	4690 (P)	3A3J	NGF CONTROL
M12E	3550 (A)		SPOT NET

B. CMD POSTS

## (1) AFLOAT

CTG 79.5	USS PRINCETON
CTG 76.5	USS PRINCETON
BLT 1/5	USS PRINCETON
HIM 362	USS PRINCETON

## (2) ASHORE

BLT 1/5 RPT CP LOC WHEN ESTAB

PAGE 6

C. REL BETWEEN COMUSMACV AND SEVENTHFLT UNITS LAW UNAAF PARAS 30278 AND 30279 WITH COMUSMACV AS SPTD CMDR.

D. CALL SIGNS (ADDL TO APP II TO ANNEX N OF REF A).

- (1) PRINCETON - BULLHORN
- (2) PICKAWAY - KEYBROOK TOLF
- (3) ALAMO - DITTYBOX ALFA
- (4) DD -
- (5) MERRICK - CAMSHAFT QUEBEC

E. NGF SUPT FREQS AS PER ANNEX G REF A.

F. VISUAL COMM PER ANNEX N REF A.

6. LANDING PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANNEX I REF A. BLT WILL PREPARE NECESSARY DETAILED PLAN.

7. AIR OPERATIONS.

A. REF PTS AND CONT PTS

- (1) SAR REF PT: CAN GIO - YS 163518
- (2) A/C ENTRY AND EXIT PT SUE 290 DEGREES PRINCETON TACAN 8 NM.
- (3) HELO LAVE BREAK-UP AND RENDEZVOUS PT PENSACOLA; 360 DEGREES PRINCETON. TACAN 4 NM.
- (4) HELO PENETRATION PT: TAMPA YS 167513  
HELLO PENETRATION PT: SAN DIEGO XS 938576  
HELLO PENETRATION PT: FRESNO XS 960707

B. HLZS. PRI SPARROW YS 143514 PRI ROBIN YS 113503  
ALT HAWK YS 146504 ALT CARDINAL YS 124505

C. NAV AIDS USS PRINCETON TACAN: CH 5 IDENT IS SP

D. PRIMARY SAR SHIP IS USS PRINCETON

E. HELO APPROACH AND RETIREMENT LANE

- (1) FLORIDA  
PENSACOLA TO TAMPA  
TAMPA TO SPARROW (272 DEGREES, 1.3 NM)  
TAMPA TO ROBIN (264 DEGREES, 3.2 NM)

- (2) CALIFORNIA  
PENSACOLA TO FRI3CO (YS 0546) TO OAKLAND (9357) 314 DEGREES 9.2 NM TO LOS ANGELES (XS 9169) 350 DEGREES 6.8 NM TO OCEANSIDE 070 DEGREES 2.6 NM TO FRESNO.

8. WITHDRAWAL.

A. ON O CATF BLF WILL CONDUCT TAC WITHDRAWAL BY SURFACE AND HELO MEANS FROM DESIGNATED BEACHES AND DESIGNATED HLZ'S TO PREV ASSIGNED AMPHIB SHIFTING.

B. DETAILED WITHDRAWAL PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED BY BLT.

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PAGE 2

- C. H-HOUR WILL BE DESIG BY CATF AND CONFIRMED IN ADV TO EXTENT FEASIBLE.
9. EXACT DEFINITION OF AOA AIRSPACE STILL UNDER DISCUSSION. THIS DIRECTIVE ISSUED TO FACILITATE THE COMPLETION OF SUPPORTING PLANS. MODIFICATIONS AS REQUIRED WILL BE ISSUED ASAP.
10. THIS MSG DOWNGRADED TO SECRET ON D-DAY.

GP-4

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HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS Princeton (LPH-5)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

1:JRB:raj  
3500  
7 Apr 1966

From: Commander  
To: Commander Task Force 79

Subj: Combat After Action Report, Operation Jack Stay

Encl: (1) Subject Report

1. Enclosure (1) is hereby forwarded.

J. R. BURNETT

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Tab 1

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T.G. M.C. (SLF) 4/12 JACK STAY 661126

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Enclosure (1): COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT, OPERATION JACK STAY

1. Operation Jack Stay was an amphibious operation combining surfaceborne and heloborne assault forces. It was conducted in accordance with NWP-22(A).

2. Operation Jack Stay was conducted in the Rung Sat Special Zone, a marshy, mangrove swamp south of Saigon, Vietnam. The operation commenced with the landing of assault forces on the Long Thanh Peninsula on 26 March 1966 and terminated on 6 April 1966 with the withdrawal of all forces back to assigned shipping.

3. Command headquarters for this amphibious operation was located aboard the USS Princeton (LPH-5).

4. Task Organization.

Landing Force (TG 79.5)

Landing Force Headquarters

HMM-362

BLT 1/5

4th RVNMC Bn (D plus 9 to end of opn)

5th RVNMC Bn (D plus 7 to end of opn)

Col BURNETT

Col BURNETT

LtCol ALDWORTH

LtCol COFFMAN

5. Intelligence.

a. The Rung Sat Special Zone is a densely covered mangrove swamp area of approximately four hundred square miles. The native population is approximately 15,000, all of whom live in one of nine villages which are located on the relatively few dry islands in the area. No roads exist. All movement is restricted to the use of the extensive waterway system. Streams and rivers are shallow, narrow, and winding. Dense vegetation severely limits access to interior areas. Extensive flooding at high tide impedes the movement of foot troops, even when they are able to clear paths through the vegetation. Sea approaches to the RSSZ are limited to shallow water or the few relatively deep channels forming the main shipping route up river to Saigon. Although several VC installations have been identified, the RSSZ is primarily a transient area for them with several exceptions. Their organization and strength varies considerably from day to day. Bunkers, ammunition and gun factories, caches, and VC units of company size are known to be based in the zone. It is also believed that VC engineer units were operating in the area on a regular basis in an attempt to block the shipping channel to Saigon. During late February and early March, several instances of VC attacks on shipping in the channel were experienced.

b. Enemy activity, reconnaissance sighting, captured prisoners, interrogation and agent reports, had tended to confirm the presence of the below listed enemy and enemy installations in the Rung Sat Special Zone prior to the commencement of Operation Jack Stay.

DESCRIPTION	GRID SQUARE COORDINATES
VC hospital and training facility	XS 9461, 9462, 9463, 9561, 9562, 9563
VC small arms, watermine complex	XS 9660, 9661, 9662
Support facilities for VC 225 EngrBn	XS 9760, 9761, 9762, 9860, 9861, 9862
VC base complex of 1stBn 56Regt	XS 9764, 9765, 9766, 9864, 9865, 9866
VC EngrCo and C-54 Co	YS 0171, 0172, 0173, 0271, 0272, 0273
VC Co C-138	YS 0747, 0748, 0749, 0847, 0848, 0849, 0948, 0949, 0950, 1048, 1049
VC Co 138 plus Local Force Platoon	YS 1149, 1150, 1249, 1250, 1350, 1351, 1450, 1451

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VC Co 308 and one Landing Force Platoon  
VC Platoon

YS 0857, 0858, 0859, 0957, 0958, 0959  
YS 0672, 0673, 0674, 0772, 0773, 0774

c. No substantial contact with elements listed above was made. The hospital, aid stations, arms and watermine factory were destroyed. Evidence that units had been in the above areas was found; however, there was no positive identification of above units.

6. Mission. As directed by COMSEVENTHFLT message 201134Z March (initiating directive), the mission of the Landing Force was to "conduct an amphibious operation in the Rung Sat Special Zone of South Vietnam to locate and destroy Viet Cong forces and base areas in order to assist in establishing positive RVN control over the vital ship channels between the South China Sea and the port of Saigon."

7. Concept of Operations. Operation Jack Stay was to be an unilateral amphibious operation conducted by the ARG/SLF, augmented by certain non-organic forces and equipment. The operation was scheduled to last about ten days and was to be conducted in two phases. Phase I encompassed the heloborne and surfaceborne assault of the Long Thanh Peninsula (XS 055472 - XS 167518) in order to conduct search and destroy operations and secure an area suitable for a base camp from which subsequent operations could be initiated. Phase II encompassed the extensive search and destroy operations throughout the RSSZ in an attempt to locate, fix and destroy VC forces, training areas, small arms and watermine factories, medical facilities, and other logistics installations.

#### 8. Execution.

a. D-Day - 26 March 1966 - The provisional company of the BLT landed over Red Beach in the vicinity of Dong Hoa on the Long Thanh Peninsula at 0715H. "C" Company was landed by helicopter in Landing Zone Sparrow at 0720H. UH-1E's made a leaflet drop at L-Hour. At 0820H, naval gunfire and close air support aircraft prepared Landing Zone Robin prior to the landing of the remainder of the BLT. "A" Company secured LZ Robin and established defensive positions at 0940H. "D" Company, upon landing in LZ Robin, moved west to link up with the provisional company which had landed over Red Beach. They conducted search and destroy operations along their path. The BLT Command Group landed in LZ Robin at 1025H, followed by "B" Company at 1100H. "B" Company attacked east from the LZ to link up with "C" Company in the vicinity of LZ Sparrow. The provisional company and "C" Company had set up blocking positions upon landing. The 105mm Howitzer Battery was landed at 1700H at high tide at Red Beach. Prior to darkness, surveillance teams composed of Marines from reconnaissance elements of the BLT, and Navy men from UDT and SEAL teams were placed in positions north of the BLT positions to detect and prevent exfiltration and to provide intelligence. Coordination of naval gunfire support passed ashore to the BLT FSCC at 1658H. During the day, close air support aircraft from SeventhFlt carriers pounded suspected VC concentrations throughout the AOA. By dusk, Landing Force elements ashore had consolidated their gains and established night defensive positions. The Battalion CP was located at YS 111503 in the vicinity of LZ Robin. "A" Company was at YS 109503. "B" Company was at YS 131503. "C" Company was at YS 143513. "D" Company had secured Landing Force Objective 2 and established defensive positions from YS 100493 to YS 071470. The Howitzer Battery position was at YS 117503. The provisional company and the 105mm Howitzer Battery were located from YS 070402 to YS 071470. All units established ambushes and patrols throughout their areas. Enemy action throughout the day had been limited to small arms fire and harassment. One friendly KIA was sustained from sniper fire. Six

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friendly WIA's were sustained when a mine exploded in the middle of the "B" Company column as it advanced towards LZ Sparrow. Engineers destroyed booby traps, .50 cal ammunition, one VC boat, and a tunnel in the vicinity of LZ Robin. "C" Company sustained two KIA's from an enemy grenade thrown into their position during the night. Total casualties for the day: USMC; 3 KIA, 8 WIA; 39 heat casualties; 3 non-battle casualties.

b. D plus 1 - 27 March 1966 - Special surveillance teams were extracted at dawn. "B" and "D" Companies continued their advance to link up with blocking forces to east and west on the Long Thanh Peninsula. By the end of the day both link-ups had been accomplished with negligible contact being made. "D" Company secured Landing Force Objective 3. The provisional company and the 105mm Howitzer Battery were helo-lifted to LZ Robin from Red Beach. "B" Company was helo-lifted from LZ Sparrow to LZ Robin. "A" Company was lifted from LZ Robin to Red Beach. "C" Company was lifted from LZ Sparrow to Red Beach. "A" and "C" Companies embarked on LST, Washoe County, from Red Beach at 2000H. Units remaining ashore established patrols and ambushes throughout the area during the hours of darkness. Artillery and naval gunfire fired numerous harassing and interdiction missions throughout the night as VC continued harassment and attempted to infiltrate friendly positions.

c. D plus 2 - 28 March 1966 - Phase II of the operation commenced at 0900H with the Arclight strike on Landing Force Objective 4. Subsequently, "A" and "C" Companies landed over Blue Beach at 0955H and commenced moving into the objective area. With "B" Company remaining in the vicinity of the Battalion CP at LZ Robin, "D" Company was lifted to LZ Blackbird in Landing Force Objective 9A. The provisional company (minus two platoons) and the 107mm Howitzer Battery were helo-lifted to LZ Bluejay in the vicinity of XS 937587 to provide supporting fires for the companies advancing into Landing Force Objective 4. Two platoons of the provisional company remained at LZ Robin to provide security for the Battalion CP. The 105mm Howitzer Battery remained in the vicinity of LZ Robin to support "D" Company. Throughout the day, "A", "C", and "D" Companies conducted search and clear operations in their assigned zones, advancing slowly through the dense vegetation and waist deep water. Only light contact was made with the VC. The VC continued to attempt to exfiltrate the areas, leaving only token resistance behind to harass advancing companies. At dusk, all units established night defensive positions and established ambushes and patrols in their vicinity. Artillery and naval gunfire conducted harassing and interdiction fires throughout the night on suspected VC positions and routes of exfiltration. (Marine recon/surveillance team engaged VC in firefight killing two, and wounding two). "D" Company received one incoming high explosive round which killed one and wounded five marines.

d. D plus 3 - 29 March 1966 - At 0845H, the Battalion CP was helo-lifted from LZ Robin to LZ Crow in the vicinity of XS 963704. Subsequently "D" Company was lifted from LZ Blackbird to LZ Crow. "B" Company, the 105mm Howitzer Battery and the two remaining platoons of the provisional company were then lifted from LZ Robin to LZ Crow. "A" and "C" Companies continued their search and clear operations in the vicinity of Landing Force Objective 4. Navy/Marine civic action team provided medical and dental care to the villagers in Can Gio on the Long Thanh Peninsula and distributed Handclasp materials. At dusk, all units established night defensive positions and sent out patrols and ambushes. Artillery and naval gunfire again conducted H & I fires on suspected VC positions and exfiltration routes.

e. D plus 4 - 30 March 1966 - "A" and "C" Companies completed search and destroy operations in Landing Force Objective 4 as the remainder of the BLT established a combat base in the vicinity of LZ Crow. Navy/Marine civic action team



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provided medical and dental care to villagers in Ly Nhon (vic XS 9358). Combined surveillance teams were inserted at likely exfiltration sites at dusk. Ambushes and patrols were set out. "A" Company ambushed a VC junk in the vicinity of XS 955634, killing 4 VC and recovering one U.S. 1917 Springfield rifle and documents. "C" Company also ambushed a VC junk, killing four VC and capturing documents and clothing. The provisional company ambushed an estimated VC squad east of LZ Bluejay in the vicinity of XS 947582 with an estimated 12 VC KIA and 4 VC WIA. The Howtar Battery provided fires in support of this ambush. Artillery and naval gunfire again conducted H & I fires throughout the AOA. VC activity during the night was limited to sniper fire and grenades thrown at frontline positions.

f. D plus 5 - 31 March 1966 - "A" and "C" Companies were withdrawn from vicinity of Landing Force Objective 4 by LCM-6 via the Soi Rap River. "B" and "D" Companies moved from LZ Crow to vicinity of Landing Force Objective 5 by LCM-6 to commence search and destroy operations. They landed in the vicinity of XS 976604 at 0948H. Upon landing they discovered that the area contained VC bunkers and met no initial enemy resistance. However during the day contact was made by both companies which resulted in 24 VC killed. By dusk, "B" Company had advanced to positions in the vicinity of XS 975618 to XS 978618. "D" Company had advanced to XS 980616 - XS 983616. "D" Company discovered a large, camouflaged VC village with bunkers and a tunnel network and machinery caches. They found and commenced destroying an arms factory which contained 18 carbines (U.S. make) and over 1,000 grenades. "B" Company also discovered and began destroying caves, tunnels, and an arms factory. The Navy/Marine civic action team visited Quang Xuyen village. All units set out ambushes and patrols in their areas during the night. Artillery and naval gunfire fired H & I missions throughout the night. One Marine from "D" Company was killed by sniper fire.

g. D plus 6 - 1 April 1966 - "B" and "D" Companies continued their advance through Landing Force Objective 5 uncovering additional VC installations. "A" and "C" Companies commenced advance south from LZ Crow into Landing Force Objective 6. All units continued to discover extensive VC base areas as they advanced. All installations were destroyed before continuing the advance. Dense vegetation and swampy terrain continued to slow movement. At dusk, the provisional company (minus) and the 107mm Howtars were providing support from LZ Bluejay to advancing units. The Battalion CP, the 105mm Howitzer Battery, the 81mm mortars, and two platoons of the provisional company remained in LZ Crow. "A" Company was located in the vicinity of XS 974683 - XS 983684. "B" Company was located in the vicinity of XS 987628 - XS 995627. "C" Company was located in the vicinity of XS 966680 - XS 974680. "D" Company was located in the vicinity of XS 980629 - 985628. HMM 362 lifted additional demolition materials into Landing Force Objective 5 to destroy VC installations. All units set out patrols and ambushes during the night as the artillery and naval gunfire continued H & I fires.

h. D plus 7 - 2 April 1966 - "A" and "C" Companies continued their attack to the south into Landing Force Objective 6. "B" and "D" Companies continued their attack to the north into Landing Force Objective 5. All companies continued to uncover and destroy numerous VC installations of various sizes. Civic action teams distributed wooden ammunition boxes to villagers in Quang Xuyen. The 5th RVNMC Battalion landed in Tam Hiep Thon (vicinity YS 0671) and conducted search and clear operations. After screening villagers, they reported that there was no known VC activity in the village. By nightfall, "A" Company had

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advanced to vicinity of XS 957681. "B" Company had advanced to vicinity of XS 985647. "C" Company had advanced to vicinity of XS 959684. "D" Company had advanced to vicinity of XS 969641. Again, ambushes and patrols were set out by all units and the artillery and naval gunfire provided H & I fires in suspected VC positions and likely avenues of exfiltration.

e. D plus 8 - 3 April 1966 - "A" and "C" Companies continued attacking to the south into Landing Force Objective 6. "B" and "D" Companies continued attacking to the northwest into the southern portion of Landing Force Objective 6. Search and destroy operations were continued as the companies discovered a VC base camp, a medical facility, and additional arms manufacturing sites and water mine factories. Medical supplies, water mines, Russian 7.62mm ammo and 300 pounds of gunfire were destroyed. Marine recon elements searched the lower reaches of Ly Nhon Peninsula with negative results. The 5th RVNMC Battalion continued sweeping in their assigned zone. No opposition was encountered and no significant VC installations were uncovered. Marine units as dusk were located as follows: CP - XS 963704; "A" - XS 957668; "B" - XS 964655; "C" - XS 957675; "D" - XS 963645; Prov Co - XS 936585; 105mm How Btry - XS 963704; 107mm Howtar Btry - XS 936585. All units set out patrols and ambushes. Artillery units fired H & I missions. "C" Company began to enlarge the landing site in the vicinity of the VC medical installation in order that additional engineers and demolitions could be helo-lifted into the area.

j. D plus 9 - 4 April 1966 - The 4th RVNMC Battalion was helo-lifted into the Long Thanh Peninsula at 0700H preceded by air and naval gunfire preparation. "A", "B", and "D" Companies were moved by LCM from positions along the Vam Sat to LZ Crow. "C" Company and engineers continued the destruction of the VC installations. The 5th RVNMC Battalion completed the search and clear operation within the area encompassed by YS 124700 - 145695 - 122666 - 164673 at 1500H. The Battalion CP, the 105mm Howitzer Battery, and "A", "B", and "D" Companies remained in the vicinity of LZ Crow during the night. "C" Company remained in the vicinity of the VC medical installation. The 4th RVNMC Battalion established night defensive positions on the Long Thanh Peninsula and the 5th RVNMC Battalion returned to their CP area at Tam Hiep Thon. During the night "C" Company ambushed a VC sampan and killed four VC. VC activity against friendly units continued to be limited to sniper fire and other harassing activity.

k. D plus 10 - 5 April 1966 - "A", "B", and "D" Companies moved by LCM to positions along the Rach La River. From these positions they commenced search and destroy operations in Landing Force Objective 7 at approximately 1000H. As they moved toward the Long Tau River they encountered little VC resistance. The provisional company minus two platoons and the Howtar Battery were backloaded to the Princeton (LPH), and the Alamo (LSD). "C" Company completed destruction of the large VC installation and was helo-lifted to LZ Crow to act as the battalion reserve for the search and destroy ops being conducted by the other three companies. Artillery and 81mm mortars fired preparation fires and H & I fires in support of the operations in Landing Force Objective 7. The 4th RVNMC Battalion was withdrawn by helicopter to Wung Tau at 1500H. Two Marines from "B" Company reported missing in action were believed drowned while crossing river (vicinity YS 013733). Bodies were not recovered. At dusk, the Battalion CP and the 105mm Howitzer Battery remained in the vicinity of LZ Crow, together with "C" Company and two platoons of the provisional company providing security. "A" Company was located at YS 026707. "B" Company was located at YS 014745. "D" Company was located in the vicinity of YS 033705. The 105mm Howitzer Battery continued H & I fires throughout the night. All units established night defensive positions

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and set out ambushes and patrols.

l. D plus 11 - 6 April 1966 - "A", "B", and "D" Companies were withdrawn from the banks of the Long Tau River by LCM and taken directly to the two LST's. The Battalion CP group, and "C" Company were helo-lifted from LZ Crow to the LPH. The provisional company was disbanded and personnel reverted to control of their parent organizations. Later in the day, "A", "B", and "D" Companies were moved to Vung Tau by the Washoe and Henry Counties. "A" Company was put ashore and helo-lifted to the LPH. "B" and "D" Companies transferred from the LST to the USS Pickaway. The 105mm Howitzer Battery embarked on the Henry County and moved to Vung Tau where they were transferred to the LSD.

m. D plus 12 - 7 April 1966 - Remaining personnel and equipment of the BLT who were in Vung Tau were transferred to the appropriate ARG ship. PRC-25 radios borrowed from CTF 115 returned at Vung Tau. The SLF made preparations to get underway.

#### 9. Results.

##### a. Casualties.

U.S. KIA - 5; WIA - 24; MIA - 2 (presumed drowned); Captured - 0.

VC KIA - 63; KIA (possible) - 84; WIA - 5; WIA (possible) - 6; Captured - 0

##### b. Equipment Or Installations Captured Or Destroyed (Summary).

- (1) S/A weapons (rifles, carbines, shotguns) - 24
- (2) Hand grenades - 1,520
- (3) Rifle grenades - 40
- (4) 60mm Mortar rounds - 55
- (5) VC campfires - 14
- (6) Arms factories - 2
- (7) Huts - 90
- (8) Bunkers - 270
- (9) Hospitals/Aid stations - 2
- (10) S/A ammo (7.62mm) - 60,000 rounds plus
- (11) Med supplies; vitamins, morphine, bandages, other medications and surgical instruments, plasma, medical books
- (12) Land mines - 200
- (13) Water mines - 180
- (14) Mine manufacturing supplies and equipment; gunpowder, mine casings, detonators, manufacturing instructions
- (15) Manufacturing equipment - anvil, hack saws, washers, hammers, grinding stones, brazing torches, pistons, 13 acetylene tanks, tool kits, metal stock, drill press, etc.
- (16) Rice - approx 2,200 lbs
- (17) Sampans - 4
- (18) Water Supplies - approx 800 gals
- (19) Clothing and personal supplies - approx 200 pr pajamas, shorts, packs, ponchos; approx 70 hammocks
- (20) 55 gal drums and 55 gals jugs; 27 some with diesel oil
- (21) Documents: numerous propaganda documents, bulletins, rosters, diagrams, etc. (Sent to J-2 MACV)
- (22) Misc - fishing gear, water jugs, paint, personal items.
- (23) 81mm Mortar base plates - 2

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10. Commander's Analysis. This analysis is concerned with those matters at the Special Landing Force level. A report on problems encountered and lessons learned at the Battalion and Squadron level will be submitted in separate subsequent enclosures.

a. Planning. Planning for Operation Jack Stay was initiated at preliminary planning conference held in Saigon 9-11 March 1966 and attended by representatives of the Landing Force, the BLT, the Amphibious Task Force, as well as representatives from COMUSMACV. CTF 115 was designated as COMUSMACV's point-of-contact for all matters relating to subsequent ARG/SLF in-country requirements and liaison. Aerial reconnaissance was made of the RSSZ. Maps and photos were obtained, and liaison was made with advisors located in the zone. Planning progressed rapidly and subsequently logistic liaison was accomplished by Landing Force representatives with the logistic agencies at Saigon and Vung Tau. Planning further took into consideration the need for a heavy lift helo capable of lifting the 105mm Howitzer, in order to ensure a rapid and timely displacement of the 105mm battery in as much as aerial delivery was the only possible means in some situations. In addition the need for armed UH-1E's for control, observation, and protection of extensive river operations and many solely helo operations was evident. These were requested from CTF 79, and subsequently two Marine CH-46's and two Marine UH-1E's were assigned to the SLF from III MAF resources. As planning developed, it became apparent that the operation could be considered in the same light as an extended Batten Down operation. Since a published operation order existed (CTG 79.5 OpOrd 328-66), it was decided to use this order as the basic document and publish a "Frag Order" for the Rung Sat Special Zone. The SLF staff and the ARG staff, conducted close, concurrent and detailed planning and, as a result, the Frag Orders of both complemented each other. RSSZ was arbitrarily divided into six areas bounded by well defined geographical features and Landing Force Objectives located within these areas. Operations subsequent to the exploitation of the Arclight strike were planned daily and frag orders promulgated to all concerned. In all cases the two staffs were able to complete the detailed planning and issue the necessary orders for timely and efficient execution. No problems were encountered that were not within the capability of the ARG/SLF to accomplish.

b. Command Relationships. The RSSZ operation was initially designed to be a unilateral amphibious operation; however, as the operation unfolded the RVN indicated a desire to participate and requested that first one and then two VN Marine Battalions be included. Appropriate RVN staff officers and advisors and their counterparts were sent to the flagship to develop the concept of operations and to prepare the necessary coordinating instructions. The 4th and 5th RVNMC Battalions were given areas of operation that would be separate and non-interfering with the U. S. Marine Corps operations but would be mutually supporting. The command relationship agreed upon provided that the two RVNMC Battalions were a part of the Landing Force and were considered as under the coordination control of the Landing Force. This was reflected as such in the Frag Order issued by the Landing Force prior to commitment of the RVNMC Battalions. Mission type orders were assigned to both battalions by the Commander, Landing Force, and the details of the execution were left to the discretion of the RVNMC Battalion Commander. The fact that the RVN participated in such force and under the CATF/CLF is considered most significant. There were no major problems encountered; however, the necessity of maintaining close liaison became readily apparent. Although the VNMC Battalions were assigned a specific agreed upon TAORs to operate within, one battalion, the 5th, nevertheless, on the second day of its employment operated in another area without the approval or cognizance of the Landing

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Force Commander. This did not adversely affect Landing Force operations being conducted at that time; however, it could have had serious results if not detected. In a combined operation involving VNMC forces it is considered that exchange of liaison officers is mandatory and that these officers have complete information and understanding of their units' plan. It is axiomatic that the overall commander must be kept informed of all operations being conducted within his area of responsibility in order that he may properly plan and coordinate all aspects of the operation.

c. Geographical Problems. Initially the RSSZ was looked upon as an impenetrable jungle where the VC had complete freedom. As the operation unfolded it became apparent that the Navy/Marine Corps team had, with little augmentation, the material, know how, and will to fight the VC in his sanctuary and on his terms. The troops learned quickly how to live in the jungle, move through the swamp, and how to effectively ambush the VC. The long shallow water approaches that plagued the ARG/SLF in the IV Corps Tactical Zone in Batten Down planning were found to be over-emphasized. The helicopter was developed for deep penetrations and was used most effectively in this operation. Shallow draft ships and additional armed landing craft were brought into the Task Force and they more than proved their worth in their ability to act as floating hotels, mother ships, and at times as direct and indirect fire support ship; the landing craft carried the troops in combat river penetrations.

d. Use of Reconnaissance Personnel. Upon examination of the RSSZ and its many waterways, it became apparent that a means of detecting and preventing exfiltration as well as locating the enemy was going to be a major problem. After analysing the assets available to the Task Force it was decided to group the Marine reconnaissance personnel, the SEALs and the UDT personnel into a Reconnaissance and Surveillance element of the ATF. These forces were then to be used in much the same manner as in advance force operations, directly under the CATF. They were positioned aboard the LPD (USS WEISS) from which they were inserted and retracted by means of landing craft, rubber boat, and plastic boats into those areas within the AOA which were believed to be the most probable routes of VC activity or egress. The density of the terrain dictated that these teams be inserted at or near river mouths and streams where observation could be maintained. This group did provide information of VC movement and additionally these units succeeded in killing several VC.

e. Intelligence.

(1) The intelligence materials and information furnished by CTF 115 were accurate. The analysis of the enemy's probable courses of action were correct. It was never ascertained what particular units were encountered by the battalion; however, enemy personnel were contacted in locations where unidentified units had been plotted. Weather was typical for the period with the exception of a very untimely thunderstorm on D-Day which postponed the operation for approximately one hour. Terrain was adequately described.

(2) Aerial photography 1:5,000 scale and 1:25,000 scale was extremely useful and was outstanding throughout the operation for planning. The special study of the Rung Sat Special Zone proved very useful.

(3) The target folder that was to be provided by CTF 115 did not materialize in the form of a target folder, but rather in information such as overlays, photo mosaics, and tide tables, at different intervals prior to the operation. The materials as provided were adequate and well prepared.

(4) Side looking Airborne Radar (SLAR) and Infra Red "Red Haze" (IR) missions were flown nightly, when possible, by the 73rd Army Aviation Company

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Enclosure (1)

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from Vung Tau and reports were delivered daily. The reports were instrumental in pinpointing areas of interest and determining presence of activity following strikes by aircraft and naval gunfire.

f. Helicopter Operations. During Operation Jack Stay, helicopter support was provided by HMM 362 augmented by detachments from VMO-2 and HMM 164. Together with the armed landing craft the helicopters were the primary assault vehicles during this operation. In addition to vertical assault, 24 hour med-evac aircraft were utilized and resupply, reconnaissance, administrative, and liaison commitments were accomplished. The lack of acceptable LZ's in the Rung Sat area was most evident and in many cases, resupply insertions and retractions had to be accomplished by hoist because of the dense mangrove canopy. In some instances these hoist operations were to and from the plastic assault boats which accompanied the troops on the river operations. These lifts included both personnel and material. This type of employment did, to a certain degree, restrict the load capability of the helicopters with a corresponding increase in time to accomplish lifts.

g. Supporting Arms. Generally, the terrain and its limiting effects on observation was the key factor affecting the employment of all supporting arms. Control of all arms was mostly limited to an airborne controller (TAO or TAC(A)) and proved to be effective. BLT 1/5 was provided artillery support by D-2-11 and Howtars-2-11. The support included day and night H & I fires, HLZ and beach preps, and on-call missions. The 105 Battery was initially landed by LCU and later re-located by CH-46 helicopter while the Howtars in all instances were displaced by helicopter. Fire missions were occasionally controlled by FO's, when the terrain permitted, and by TAO's, with coordination provided by the FSCC ashore. Naval Gunfire Support was provided by one 5"54 destroyer (USS Robison) and LST's on river operations. Missions fired included day and night H & I's, HLZ and beach preps, on-call missions, and river bank neutralization fires, with all observed missions controlled by a TAO. Control remained afloat with SACC. Air support included CAS, troop transport, logistical resupply, reconnaissance, and gunfire control and was provided by carrier attack aircraft, HMM 362, a CH46 detachment from HMM 164, and a detachment of UH-1E's from VMO-2. Additional support on an as requested basis was provided for landing craft on river operations by Air Force FAC's, SLAR/IR aircraft, and CH 47's. Air strikes were conducted primarily by TAC(A)'s and control of air remained afloat with the TACC throughout the operation.

h. B-52 Strikes. A great deal of stress was placed on B-52 strikes during the planning phase for Operation Jack Stay. Initially it appeared that the Landing Force scheme of maneuver must be based on the time and place of B-52 strikes promulgated by CTF 115. After an exchange of messages, between COMUSMACV, CTF 115, COMSEVENTHFLT, and subordinate 7th Fleet commands, it was determined that the strike would be conducted on D plus 2 and would be exploited by the Landing Force. It is considered a basic principle that all supporting fires are based on and conducted to support the scheme of maneuver, not the converse. The planning for the B-52 strike did not at any time take the Landing Force scheme of maneuver into consideration. The actual exploitation was not the classic maneuver when considered in terms of a rapid movement to the target area and timely exploitation. Lack of HLZ's in or near the target area made it necessary to land the exploiting force by landing craft near the area and move by foot through extremely difficult terrain before reaching the designated area. Although it is recognized that the B-52's are normally a highly effective and destructive weapons system, their employment must be measured in terms of the nature of the target to be attacked, the effect on ground operations being conducted and the capability of the Landing Force to accomplish rapid exploitation.

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Enclosure (1)

**SECRET**i. Communications.

(1) Ship to shore communications were maintained between the Commander Landing Force and the BLT on the CLF Tac 1, a FM circuit and CLF Tac 2, a HF circuit. Communications were hampered by the necessity for the LPH to operate 10-15 miles from the beach because of hydrographic conditions. A relay station was established on Vung Tau about 8 miles SW of the RSSZ on D-1 to offset the changing distances involved. During the operation communications on the CLF Tac 1 net was maintained thru the relay station utilizing a PRC-25 in the BLT CP and the relay station, and an RT 68 aboard the LPH. CLF Tac 2 was a direct circuit between CLF and BLT utilizing the LPH HF single sideband equipment and a PRC-47 ashore. This circuit proved to be unreliable due to a serious problem with the PRC-47, namely the power supply, the BB 451 battery. It was necessary to helo-lift a MCR-83 radio jeep ashore to provide reliable HF communications.

(2) In the initial planning it was recognized that the flat swampy terrain and the distances to be covered in the RSSZ would present communications problems. To overcome this fifteen AN/PRC-25 radios were requested from CTF 115 for the BLT, to assist in increasing reliability. Even utilizing the PRC-25 radio, communications were difficult to maintain with the rifle companies. Their scheme of maneuver and the environment necessitated that overall equipment to be carried be reduced to the bare minimum eliminating availability of the RC-292 antennas. Several dead areas for communications were encountered and even with use of RC-292 antenna in the BLT CP, contact was marginal. An airborne manually operated radio relay aircraft was requested and remained on station trying to improve contact with the companies. It met with little success and was subsequently secured on the second day after establishing only limited contacts.

(3) A Radio Relay circuit was established between the LPH and the AGC; it provided a reliable, four-channel circuit during the entire operation.

j. Logistic Support. Logistic support for Operation Jack Stay was provided for the initial phase only from supplies embarked aboard SLF shipping. Subsequently, it was accomplished from prepositioned Class I, V, and limited Class II, items at Vung Tau provided from U. S. Army sources (III MAF for Marine Corps peculiar items) as requested from CTF 115. On D-Day 2 LST's were each loaded with 4 days Class I, 5 days Class II (batteries) and 3 days Class V for Vung Tau. These vessels became mobile supply bases for daily support of the battalion once the operations extended further into the RSSZ. The close proximity of the LST's to the BLT provided the necessary daily support without requiring the use of helicopters for heavy logistic support over extended distances. In addition, build up of supplies within the battalion CP area was negligible thus providing the commander with an arrangement which was highly responsive to the tactical mobility of operating units.

11. Lessons Learned.a. Command Relationship.

(1) Comment - Command Relationships with RVNMC Battalions during the operation posed certain problems to ensure cooperation.

(2) Discussion - Although a coordinating type of OPCON may be agreed upon, when operating with RVNMC Battalions, experience proved that their battalions at times operate independently according to their own desires.

(3) Recommendation - That informed liaison officers be exchanged and maintained to preclude misunderstandings which may arise from message correspondence and staff planning conferences.

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Enclosure (1)

**SECRET**b. B-52 Strikes.

(1) Comment - The B-52 strikes used in conjunction with Landing Force Operations were initially planned with little regard to the Landing Force scheme of maneuver.

(2) Discussion - The time and place of the initially proposed B-52 strikes and the actual strike were chosen almost independently of the CATF/CLF, with little consideration given as to whether the Landing Force could effectively exploit the strike. As a result the Landing Force could not exploit the strike as rapidly as desired.

(3) Recommendation - That in future operations involving the employment of B-52 strikes, the strikes be planned and conducted based on the Landing Force scheme of maneuver and stated requirements when such strikes are intimately associated with Landing Force operations.

c. Helicopter Operations.

(1) Comment - The lift capability of helicopters operating in the RSSZ was reduced a considerable degree.

(2) Discussion - When operating in the mangrove swamps with its high canopy, HLZ's had to be prepared hastily by engineer personnel. These HLZ's were of necessity small and the helicopters were forced to lift directly out. This reduced the lift capability from seven troops to as low as two or three troops per helicopter. It was also noted that the CH-46 helicopter could only lift the 105mm howitzer under optimum conditions.

(3) Recommendation - That all concerned be made aware of the greatly reduced lift capability of the helicopter when operating in conditions of high temperature, humidity, and terrain such as was encountered in the RSSZ. Plans must allow for smaller and slower troop lifts to accomplish the mission.

d. Locating Position on Ground.

(1) Comment - Due to the nature of the terrain ground units found it virtually impossible to accurately report their location by grid coordinates.

(2) Discussion - To overcome the problem of fixing a units position on the ground and map, the helicopter and ground personnel devised a simple system to accomplish this. When the requested helicopter was observed over a units position, they would indicate their location by marking with smoke grenades. The helicopter pilot could then relate this to grid coordinates and inform the unit of its precise location.

(3) Recommendation - That helicopter and ground units practice this technique in training exercises to ensure familiarity with the system.

e. Communications

(1) Comment - The power supply for the PRC-47 radio posed certain problems of maintenance and replacement.

(2) Discussion - The power supply for the PRC-47 is the BB-451 silver zinc, wetcell battery. As this battery ages it discharges very rapidly and must be recharged constantly. For short term operations, batteries may be brought aboard ship for recharging; however, during Jack Stay this procedure imposed serious transportation and logistical problems.

(3) Recommendation - That an extensive maintenance and replacement program be instituted to increase the reliability of the power supply for the

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PRC-47. Further it is recommended that if the SLF is committed in long term operations additional batteries should be made available.

(4) Comment - The PRC-25 radio proved invaluable.

(5) Discussion - Operation Jack Stay demonstrated the reliability of the PRC-25. With its greater range and longer life span of batteries it proved to be an indispensable item of equipment.

(6) Recommendation - That 10 PRC-25 radios be assigned to the SLF for use of the BLT and attachments to ensure constant reliable communications.

f. Supporting Arms.

(1) Comment - The TAC was forced to perform various type missions throughout the operation.

(2) Discussion - The terrain seriously limited observation in the RSSZ and reliance was placed on TAO to conduct artillery registrations, on-call fires, and intelligence gathering.

(3) Recommendation - That provisions be made in the plan to regularly schedule TAO missions (a minimum of four a day is suggested) to ensure that all requirements are met.

(4) Comment - The 105mm Howitzers presented a problem of being displaced.

(5) Discussion - The CH-46's were unable to lift the 105mm Howitzer under all weather conditions, and caused modification of several scheduled lifts. It was found that only under optimum condition could the CH-46 lift and displace the 105.

(6) Recommendation - That the 105mm Howitzer Battery be prepared to rapidly break down their guns so that the displacement can be effected. The 105mm Battery should practice this during training periods.

g. Individual Load.

(1) Comment - The effect of high temperature and humidity, combined with difficult terrain, is a vital factor when determining individual loads.

(2) Discussion - The extreme conditions met in the RSSZ greatly affected the rates of advance and predicted time schedules. It was found that troops must operate with a minimum load if they are to maintain any relatively fast rate of advance. A high state of physical conditioning is mandatory.

(3) Recommendation - That in training periods strict attention be given to the amount of load individual may carry and still operate efficiently. Troops must train with same or similar type loads that they will carry into combat.

TAB A - Operation Overlay

TAB B - After Action Report BLT 1/5 (To be forwarded when completed)

TAB C - After Action Report HMM 362 (To be forwarded when completed)

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Enclosure (1)

FILE

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HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS Princeton (LPH-5)  
FFO San Francisco 96601

1:TEG:raj  
3500  
22 Apr 1966

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Seventh Fleet  
Subject: Combat After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY  
Re: (a) CO SLF ltr 1:JRB:raj over 3500 of 7Apr66, Combat After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY  
Re: (1) CO BLF 1/5 ltr ser 0015 of 12Apr66, Combat After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY (11 Copies) *copy only. Serial 15, 28 Dec 70 May 66*

1. The subject report of BLF is forwarded herewith as TAB B to enclosure (1) of reference (a) and should be attached thereto.

2. The following comments are made to clarify or amplify certain statements, opinions, and recommendations contained in enclosure (1):

a. Ship-to-Shore Movement D-Day (Para 10a(1))

The approach to the beach by assault waves was approximately 3 miles due to hydrographic conditions. A severe thunderstorm during the approach reduced visibility to near zero and to a considerable degree negated the light system established as a navigation aid for the ship-to-shore movement. This coupled with an adverse current made control a most difficult task for wave guides and coxswains. The reduced visibility and the mechanical failure of an LCM-6 during the approach caused a delay of H-Hour by 45 minutes. It was recognized in preparation of the plan that any delay in H-Hour would preclude landing the artillery battery until the next high tide; this was acceptable in view of other support available. The artillery support, while desirable, was required primarily for subsequent operations on I plus 2 to provide support for a helicopter assault into LZ Blackbird and Objective 9A.

b. Use Of Reconnaissance Personnel (Para 11d)

The desirability for the BLF to retain control of reconnaissance personnel was carefully considered during the planning phase. It was determined, however, that these personnel could be better utilized in conjunction with UDT and Seal teams to effect surveillance over a much larger area of the Hong Sab than that assigned to the BLF at any one time. It is noted:

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Tab B, Tab E

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that utilization was in manner similar to that recommended in Amphibious Operations Conference Report, page 4-4.

c. Communications (Para 14h)

Twenty AN/PRC-25 radios were borrowed from CTF 115 for use by the SLF in this operation. Concur that these radios are required in this type terrain to ensure satisfactory communication reliability. Reference (a) recommended 10 AN/PRC-25 radios be assigned to the SLF on a permanent basis for issuance to the SLF BLT for envisaged SLF operations.

d. Casualty Evacuation In-Country (Para 12c)

Administrative control problems arise when SLF personnel are evacuated away from facilities in support of the SLF. In this operation evacuation of casualties from the Casualty Evacuation Control Ship (USS PRINCETON) to in-country hospitals created personnel accounting problems. The FMFPac SOP for casualty evacuation (FMFPacO P3040.2A) directs that parent commanders retain on their rolls personnel hospitalized within RVN. This arrangement is desirable for those units physically located in-country; however, it presents an accounting problem for units of the SLF which return to ARG shipping at the conclusion of an operation. It is considered that once the SLF departs RVN, all hospitalized personnel of the SLF should be transferred by staff return to the Commanding Officer, Camp Butler.

  
R. A. BRENNEMAN

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FILE

HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

1:TEG:ajl  
3500  
26 Apr 66

From: Commanding Officer  
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Seventh Fleet

Subject: Combat After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY

(a) CO SLF ltr 1:JRB:raj over 3500 of 7Apr66, Combat After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY

(1) CO HMM 362 ltr 30:WRS:wjj over 03A10166 of 11Apr66, After Action Report, Operation JACK STAY, 26 Apr 66, HMM 362

The subject report of HMM 362 is forwarded herewith as TAB C to enclosure of reference (a) and should be attached thereto.

The following comments are made to clarify or amplify the opinions and recommendations contained in enclosure (1).

a. Motor Transport Equipment

The current Marine Corps Table of Organization and Tables of Equipment for the SLF have been approved by CMC and CG FMFFac and are considered necessary to accomplish all missions the SLF may be ordered to execute. The current configuration is applicable to most any contingency operation the BLT may be called upon to execute. The loading of DLT vehicles on the flight deck of the LPH and its effect on flight operations was fully considered both from the point of view of contingency operations and Operation JACK STAY. Although the flight deck is recognized as being most desirable, flight operations during Operation JACK STAY were conducted without adversely affecting the overall operation. ARG/SLF loading plans are continuously being evaluated to provide the SLF Commander with required shipping flexibility.

b. Refueling Cycle

It is recognized that for most effective operations, the time spent refueling can be a critical factor during multi-squadron operations. The problem of the slow refueling cycle due to the possibility of insufficient pressure has been brought to the attention of the Commanding Officer of the LPH.

*R. A. Brennan*  
R. A. BRENNAN

TO: CTG 76.5  
CO, LPH-5

Tab C to Tab F

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IMMEDIATE 252121Z

FM: CTG 79.5

TO: BLT 1/5TH 364

INFO: CTG 76.5/CG III MAF/CTG 70.8/CTF 79/CTF 76/COMUSMACV/CG FIFTH PAC/COMBIVENT FLT/  
CINCPACFLT/CINCPAC/CTF 77/CTG 115.3/CG FIRST MAF/CG THIRD MARDIV/US3 PRINCETON/  
US3 ALAMO/US3 PICKAWAY/US3 TAYLOR/US3 JALKER/US3 COOK

SECRET

OPERATION OSAGE (U)

A. CTG 79.5 OPORDER 328-66

B. COMBIVENTFLT 250930Z

C. CTG 76.5 OPORDER 328-66

D. MPAS: AMS SERIES 701, SHEET NOS 6560 II, 6659 II, III, & IV, 6559 I & II

E. CTG 76.5 OPORD 328B-66, 251616Z

TIME ZONE: HOTEL

THIS IS CTG 79.5 MSG FRAG ORD 7/1 FOR THE CONDUCT OF CTF OSAGE AND IS DERIVED FROM  
REFS (B) AND (E).

TASK ORGANIZATION

CTG 79.5

BLT 1/5

TH 364

ATTACHMENTS (SEE PARA 10)

1. SITUATION.

A. WEATHER, ENEMY, TERRAIN, HYDRO, ASTRO AND TIDAL DATA.

(1) WEATHER: AREA LIES UNDER INFLUENCE OF N.E. MONSOON. DRY PERIOD FROM MAY  
NOVEMBER. APRIL IS TRANSITION MONTH WITH SOME RAINFALL. MEAN AVG PRECIPITATION FOR  
APRIL IS 2.1 INCHES. AVG TEMP FOR PERIOD IS 82 DEGREES WITH HIGH HUMIDITY. CRACKIN  
WEATHER OCCURS INFREQUENTLY, USUALLY DISAPPEARING BY LATE APRIL.

(2) ENEMY:

(A) MOST RECENT ACCEPTED COB FOR PHU LOC AREA INCLUDES BUT IS NOT  
LIMITED TO THE FOLLOWING:

1. ONE U/I CO VIC AU 805053, EST STRENGTH 65
2. 810TH LF BN VIC ZC 054923, EST STRENGTH 400
3. ELEMENTS OF 95TH REGT (NVA) OPERATING IN THE PROVINCE. WHEREA

ABOUTS UNK.

(B) UNITS CAPABLE OF REINFORCING INCLUDE 1 C/I BN VIC AT 9089, EST  
STRENGTH 300, HUONG THUY CO (MF) VIC YD 8009, EST STRENGTH 100, EST GUMILLA STRENGTH  
THUA THIEN PROVINCE EST 1500 WITH HALF AVAILABLE FOR DEPLOYMENT OF AREA.

(3) TERRAIN. CHARACTERIZED BY LOW FALT RICE PADDY AREAS AND ISOLATED HILLS

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Tab m SECRET

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PAGE TWO

NEAR THE BEACHES GIVING WAY TO VERY RUGGED MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN WITHIN 6000 METERS. HIGHWAY NO 1 RUNS THROUGH THE FLAT AREA AND GENERALLY FOLLOWS THE COAST LINE IT IS A HARD SURFACED (BLACKTOP) ROAD PRESENTLY OPEN TO TRAFFIC. A LOOSE SURFACED 1 LANE ROAD RUNS FROM PHU LOC TO BACH MA (ZC 0591). CROSS COUNTRY MOVEMENT IS RESTRICTED DUE TO THE EXTENSIVE PADDIES. HOWEVER FOOT TROOPS COULD CROSS THE AREA WITH RELATIVE EASE. THE MOUNTAINOUS AREA IS COMPOSED OF VERY STEEP DENSELY OVERGROWN HILLS AND MOUNTAINS. DOMINATING PEAKS ARE AT BACH MA (1448 METERS); LOC THUY ON THE RIGHT FLANK OF WHITE BEACH (592 METERS); NUI TRON TO THE SOUTH WEST OF WHITE BEACH (282 METERS) AND PHU GIA AT AU 8401 (333 METERS).

## (4) HYDRO DATA

(A) WHITE BEACH - VIC ZD 176066

(B) LENGTH - APPROX 3300 YDS ALL USEABLE

(C) WIDTHS - 40 TO 200 YDS AT LW; 20 TO 100 M.

(D) GRADIENTS - 1 ON 30 TO 1 ON 150 L.W. TO H.W. 1 ON 15 HW ZONE

(E) APPROACHES - GENTLE TO MILD SHOREWARD TO 6 FT DEPTH 90-285 YDS OFF HW LINE. APPROACHES FLANKED BY ROCKY HEADLANDS. BOTTOM IS SAND AND MUD. NEAR-SHORE APPROACH PARTLY OBSTRUCTED BY SHIFTING SANDBAR OFF RIVER MOUTH ON LEFT FLANK.

(F) SURF - 4 FT OR GREATER 11% OF TIME. TIDAL RANGE IS 2 FT AND OCCURS ONCE A DAY.

(G) MATERIAL AND FIRMINESS - SAND; FIRM IN WETTED AREA; SOFT WHERE DRY.

(H) TERRAIN IMMEDIATELY BEHIND THE BEACH CONSISTS OF BRUSH COVERED DUNES EXTENDING APPROX 200 YDS INLAND BACKED BY A FEW RICE PADDIES IN THE CENTER. FOUR HUNDRED YDS INLAND A FORESTED, MOUNTAINOUS COMPLEX EXTENDS FROM THE FLANKS OF THE BEACH IN A CONVEX PATTERN TO COMPLETELY ENCLOSE THE BEACH.

(I) EXITS AND COMMUNICATIONS TO HINTERLAND INVOLVE CROSSING THIS MOUNTAINOUS TERRAIN WITH EXCEPTION OF A TRAIL ON THE LEFT FLANK.

## (5) ASTRO DATA

DATE	BENT	SUNRISE	SUNSET	BENT	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONPHASE
27	0546	0626	1906	1946	1143	0020	NEW
28	0546	0626	1906	1946	1245	0116	1st QTR
29	0536	0626	1906	1946	1347	0209	1ST QTR
30	0534	0624	1947	1947	1449	0254	1ST QTR

## (6) TIDAL DATA CHOK BAY 16 DEG 20'N LAT., 108 DEG 01'E LONG (HEIGHT IN FT)

DATE	TIME HIGH HT	TIME LOW HT
27	1500 4.3	2345 1.5
28	1603 3.5	
29		0052 1.5

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PAGE THREE

## B. FRIENDLY FORCES.

## (1) CG III MAF PROVIDES:

- (A) CAS, TAC(A)/TAC, HELICOPTER ESCORT, AND AERIAL RECONNAISSANCE SUPPORT
- (B) OTHER SUPPORT AS REQUESTED.

## (2) CTG 76.5 PROVIDES TRANSPORT, NAVAL GUNFIRE, AND LOGISTIC SUPPORT.

## (3) REGIONAL FORCES:

COORDINATES	UNITS
ZD 040025	922ND REGIONAL FORCES CO
ZD 151010	1 PLT REGIONAL FORCES
AD 832998	916 REGIONAL FORCES CO
ZD 196012	1 PLT REGIONAL FORCES
ZD 038124	955 REGIONAL FORCES CO
ZD 097006	108 POPULAR FORCES FLT
ZD 145015	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT
ZD 095007	120 POPULAR FORCES FLT (1 SQD)
ZD 190002	122 POPULAR FORCES FLT (1 SQD)
ZD 086006	120 POPULAR FORCES FLT (PLT (-))
ZD 098007	115 POPULAR FORCES FLT
ZD 128010	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT (1 SQD)
ZD 136010	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT (1 SQD)
ZD 147011	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT (1 SQD)
ZD 154009	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT
ZD 198010	112 POPULAR FORCES FLT
2 - 105 HOW LOC AT PHU LOC SUB SEC HQTRS ZD 085006	
2 - 105 HOW MY GIA AT 832998	
U.S. ADVISORY TEAM AT PHU LOC SUB SEC HQTRS ZD 085008	

## C. ATTACHMENTS.

- (1) ARVN LANG QUAL ADVISORS
- (2) III MAF (FMAW) LNO
- (3) 1ST DIV, ARVN LNO

2. MISSION. LANDING FORCE, COMMENCING AT H AND L HOURS ON D-DAY, LANDS OVER BEACHES AND HLZ'S TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS AND PROVIDE RICE HARVEST PROTECTION IN PHU LOC AREA.

## 3. EXECUTION.

A. CONCEPT. LANDING FORCE LANDS BY LANDING CRAFT OVER WHITE BEACH AND HELICOPTER IN HLZ'S CROW AND HAWK TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS AND TO PROVIDE RICE HARVEST PROTECTION IN THE PHU LOC AREA, WITH SPECIAL EMPHASIS ON THE PHU GIA (NU 84C1)

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PAGE FOUR

NUI GION (AU 8307), LOC THUY (ZD 1305) HILL MASSES AND THE AREA SOUTH OF HIGHWAY #1 BETWEEN N-3 GRID LINES ZD 10 AND 20. WHEN DIRECTED CONDUCT A TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL OPERATIONS NOT EXPECTED TO EXCEED THREE DAYS TO BE COMPLETED BY 1 MAY.

F. ELT 1/5.

(1) COMMENCING AT H AND L HOUR D-DAY, LAND BY SURFACE AND HELICOPTER ASSAULT OVER WHITE BEACH AND IN HLZ'S CROW AND HAWK TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN LF OBJ'S 1 & 2.

(2) ON ORDER CONTINUE ATTACK TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN LF OBJ'S 3, 4, 5, & 6.

(3) PROVIDE RICE HARVEST PROTECTION.

(4) PROVIDE LN OFF TO PHU LOC DISTRICT HQTRS D-1.

(5) ELT F30C PASS ARTY FIRE INFO TO SACC.

(6) BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT A TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL ON ORDER.

G. HIN 364

(1) PROVIDE TROOP LIFT, AERIAL RECON, MES SUPPLY, AND EVACUATION MISSIONS AS DIRECTED.

(2) BE PREPARED TO CONDUCT LEAFLET DROPS SIMULTANEOUSLY WITH ALL LANDINGS AS DIRECTED BY CLF.

D. COORDINATING INSTRUCTIONS. (IN REF A AND BELOW).

(1) SLE OPERATION OVERLAY (ISSUED SEPARATELY).

(2) ON D-DAY AN AOA WILL BE ESTABLISHED AS FOLLOWS.

(A) AOA IS DEFINED BY AN ARC OF 25 NAUT MILES RADIUS TO SEAWARD AND 10 MILES RADIUS INLAND, CENTERED AT ZD 125005. THE ARC SWINGS INLAND FROM ZD 0615 TO EC 193863 THENCE FOLLOWING RIVER AND RIDELINE NORTHERLY TO THE QUANG NAM/THUA THIEN PROVINCIAL BOUNDARY: THENCE EASTERLY ALONG THE BOUNDARY TO AT 8791, THENCE NORTHERLY TO AT 864955 AND EASTERLY ALONG THE SHORELINE TO COAST AT AT 890960. SEAWARD ARC SWINGS BETWEEN A LINE OF BEARING 008 DEGREES T FROM ZD C60150 AND A LINE OF BEARING 043 DEGREES T FROM 898960, EXTENDING 25 NAUT MILES FROM EACH POINT.

(B) AIR AOA 10 NM RADIUS CIRCLE CENTERED AT ZD 125005 FROM SURFACE TO 20,000 FEET.

(C) CATF WILL COORD AND CONTROL ALL AIR, SEA, AND LAND OPERATIONS WITHIN AOA.

(3) FIRE SUPPORT IN ACCORDANCE WITH ANNEXES D, G, AND H OF REF A AND BELOW

(A) NGF ON CALL H-15 MINUTES.

(B) CAS ON STATION COMMENCING H-20 THROUGH DAYLIGHT HOURS D-DAY.

(C) CAS PREP OF AREAS ADJACENT TO WHITE BEACH FROM H-20 TO H-5.

(D) CAS PREP OF LZ CROW AND ADJACENT AREAS FROM L-20 TO L-5

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PAGE FIVE

(4) ALL OPERATIONS CONDUCTED IAW IAWP 22(A).

(5) D DAY TENTATIVELY 27 APRIL H HOUR 0630, L HOUR 0630.

(6) RCA (CI AND CS) ONLY APPROVED FOR USE. AGENT (VC 111VC AGENT)  
WILL NOT BE USED NOR ISSUED.

(7) PASSWORD AND COUNTERSIGNS: (ISSUED SEPARATELY)

(8) REPORTS IAW ANNEX J REF A EXCEPT AS MODIFIED FOR CASUALTY REPORTING,  
(SEE PARA 4 BELOW)

(9) CODE NAME: OSAGE

(10) FIRES WILL NOT BE DELIVERED ON RTE #1 OR THE RR ADJACENT TO BN GRID  
LINE 01 DUE TO POPULAR AND REGIONAL FORCES ~~TRANSITING~~ AOA ON THESE ROUTES.(11) ALL UNITS MUST BE ADVISED THAT POPULAR AND REGIONAL FORCES ARE  
STATIONED IN AOA (SEE PARA 1.B. (3) ABOVE)

(12) LANDING PLAN IAW ANNEX I REF A. BLT WILL PREPARE SELECTED PLANS.

(13) AIR OPERATIONS.

(A) REF AND CONTROL PTS

1. SAR REF PT MAY TAY - ZD 161090

2. A/C ENTRY AND EXIT PT DUE 325 DEGREES/26 NM DAMANG TACAN

3. HELO PENETRATION PT - AUSTIN ZD 110110

(B) HLZ'S

1. EAGLE - ZD 174068

2. CROW - ZC 138973

3. HAWK - ZD 130007

(C) NAV AIDS - USS PRINCETON TACAN ON 5 IDENT IS KP

(D) SAR SHIP IS USS PRINCETON

(E) HELO APPROACH AND RETIREMENT LANE

1. TEXAS - AUSTIN TO CROW (170 DEGREES, 7.3 NM)

(14) WITHDRAWAL

(A) ON ORDER CATF, BLT WILL CONDUCT TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL BY SURFACE AND  
HELO MEANS FROM DESIGNATED BEACHES AND HLZ'S TO PREVIOUSLY DESIGNATED SHIPPING.

(B) DETAILED WITHDRAWAL PLAN WILL BE DEVELOPED BY BLT

(C) W HOUR WILL BE DESIGNATED BY CATF AND CONFIRMED.

4. ADMIN AND LOG.

A. IAW ANNEX K TO REF A AS MODIFIED BELOW.

(1) BLT ESTABLISH T CLOG AND PCS AND LPH

(2) MED EVAC: LPH DESIGNATED CECS; ALL CASUALTIES EVAC TO LPH.

(3) CIVIL AFFAIRS: INCLUDE MED TREATMENT; DIST OF FOOD AND MED SUPPLIES  
AS PRACTICABLE.B. CASUALTY REPORTING: CTC 79.5 CRCC ESTABLISHED AND LPH. BLT AND **SECRET**

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WILL SUBMIT COMBAT AND NON-COMBAT CASUALTY REPORTS TO CTG 79.5 0800 BY MOST EXPEDITIOUS MANNER. MESSAGE FORMAT, TYPE OF REPORT AND FREQUENCY AS SEPARATELY DIR BY CTG 79.5

C. OUR INFO: IAW ANNEX V REF A.

5. CMD AND COMM-ELECT

A. CG III MAR AND SEVENTHFLT UNITS IAW JCS PUB 2, PARAS 30278 AND 30279 AND NWP 22(1).

B. CMD POSTS

(1) AFLOAT

CTG 79.5	USS PRINCETON
CTG 76.5	USS PRINCETON
BLT 1/5	USS PRINCETON
HMM 364	USS PRINCETON

(2) ASHORE: BLT RPT CR LOC WHEN LST

C. COMMUNICATIONS IAW ANNEX H TO REF A AS MODIFIED BELOW.

(1) PARA 3.B. (5) CRYPTOGRAPHIC - ADD NEW SUB PARA (E) "KAC 140 WILL BE AVAILABLE FOR USE BETWEEN BN CP AND LANDING FORCE HQTRS.")

(2) APPENDIX 1 (AIR FREQUENCIES) MAKE FOLLOWING CHANGE:

NET	FREQ	COLOR CODE
TAC	2422	N/A
TATC	366.4	VIOLET
TAD	236.2	BLACK
TAO	262.7	GRAY
HD	328.2	RED

(3) APPENDIX 3 (CRYPTOGRAPHIC INSTRUCTIONS) PARA 1 E. CHANGE "COOLZ" TO READ "COOLH".

(4) TAB B (FREQUENCY PLAN) TO APPENDIX 4 (RADIO PLAN) MAKE THE FOLLOWING CHANGES:

NET	FREQ	DESIGNATOR	EMISSION	POWER
CLF TAC NR 1	40.2 P	M-9	36F3	16W
	46.7 S	M-20	36F3	16W
CLF TAC NR 2	2675 KCS P	M-23	3A3J/6A3	200W
	3143 KCS S	M-25	3A3J/6A3	200W
	6269 KCS S	M-26	3A3J/6A3	200W
	10894 KCS S	M-9K	3A3J/6A3	200W
FOR INTERNAL ASSIGNMENT				
BY BLT	21.6 F63	M-1	36F3	16W
	22.5 KCS	M-2	36F3	16W

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NET	FREQ	DESIGNATOR	EMISSION	POWER
	23.1 MC3	M-3	36F3	16W
	25.7 MC3	M-4	36F3	16W
	27.7 MC3	M-5	36F3	16W
	35.2 MC3	M-6	36F3	16W
	38.2	M-7	36F3	16W
	39.6	M-8	-do-	-do-
	40.9	M-10	-do-	-do-
	41.1	M-11	-do-	-do-
	41.5	M-12	-do-	-do-
	41.7	M-13	-do-	-do-
	41.8	M-14	-do-	-do-
	42.1	M-15	-do-	-do-
	42.3	M-16	-do-	-do-
	42.6	M-17	-do-	-do-
	44.8	M-19	-do-	-do-
	49.4	M-21	-do-	-do-
	50.2	M-22	-do-	-do-
	3900	M-24	3A3J/6A3	200W
	4613	M-93	3A3J/6A3	200W
BY HIM	43.7	M-18	36F3	16W

## D. CALL SIGNS (T.B B TO APP 4 TO ANNEX B TO REF A) AND BELOW

- (1) PRINCETON - BULLHORN
- (2) PICKAWAY - KEYBROCK GOLF
- (3) ALAMO - DITTY BOX ALFA
- (4) JOHN W. THOMASON - MAINLAND
- (5) WALKER - HERDB VD
- (6) REGIONAL FORCE ADV - ARTIQUE

GP-4

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# COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT OPERATION OSAGE



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HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

1:RAB:jds  
3500  
11 May 1966

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, SEVENTH Fleet

Subj: Combat After Action Report, Operation OSAGE

Encl: (1) Subject Report

1. Enclosure (1) is submitted herewith. Tab A to this enclosure is an overlay depicting the progress of the operation, Tab B the After Action Report of BLT 1/5 and Tab C the After Action Report of HMM 364.

2. Comments on Tab B and Tab C to enclosure (1) are shown in paragraph 12 of enclosure (1).

  
R. A. BRENNEMAN

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ENCLOSURE (1): Combat After Action Report, Operation Osage

1. Operation Osage was an amphibious operation combining surfaceborne and heliborne assault forces and conducted in accordance with NWP-22(A).

2. Operation Osage was conducted in the area of Phu Loc, Thua Tien Province, I CTZ RVN (VIC ZD 0800). The operation commenced on 27 April 1966 with the simultaneous landing of surfaceborne assault forces on White Beach northeast of the Loc Thuy hill mass, and heliborne assault forces in a landing zone seven miles inland. The operation terminated on 2 May 1966 with the tactical withdrawal of the SLF back to ARG shipping.

3. Command headquarters for Operation Osage was located aboard the USS PRINCETON (LPH-5).

4. Task Organization.

Special Landing Force (Landing Force)

Col R. A. BRENNEMAN

HMM-364

LtCol D. A. SOMMERVILLE

BLT 1/5

LtCol H. L. COFFMAN

5. Intelligence.

a. The Phu Loc area is characterized by low flat rice paddy areas and isolated hill masses near the beach giving way to very rugged mountain terrain within 6000 meters. National Highway No 1 runs through the flat area and generally follows the coast line. It is a hard surfaced (blacktop) all weather road. A loose surfaced, one lane road runs from Phu Loc to Bach Ma (ZC 0692). Cross country vehicular movement is restricted due to extensive paddies. Foot troops crossed this area with relative ease. The mountainous area is composed of very steep, densely overgrown hills and mountains. Dominating peaks are Bach Ma (1448 meters); Loc Thuy (529 meters); Nui Tron (282 meters) and Phu Gia (333 meters).

b. White Beach (VIC ZD 176066) is approximately 3300 yards long, and entirely useable. The beach is 40 to 200 yards wide at low water, decreasing to 20 to 100 yards at high water. Composition is soft sand, but firm where wet. The beach gradient is 1 on 30 to low water line; 1 on 150 from low water to high water line; and 1 on 15 in the high water zone. Approaches to shoreward are gentle to mild, and flanked by rocky headlands. The 6 foot depth occurs 90 to 285 yards from the high water line. The bottom material of the approaches consists of sand and mud. The near shore approach is partially obstructed by a shifting sand bar off the mouth of the Bu Lu River on the left flank of White Beach.

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The surf is 4 feet or greater 11% of the time. The tidal range is 2 feet, occurring only once a day.

c. Terrain immediately behind the beach consists of brush covered dunes extending approximately 200 yards inland, backed by a few rice paddies in the center. A forested, mountainous complex extends in a concave pattern from Cape May Tay on the right flank to the mouth of the Bu Lu River on the left flank, and begins approximately 400 yards inland from the center of the beach. Exits to the hinterland are limited to cross country movement over mountainous terrain and to a trail leading from the extreme left flank of the beach along the Bu Lu River.

d. Intelligence reports indicated VC activity during the recent rice harvest in the Phu Loc area centering on the coastal hamlets of Canh Durang, Dong An, Binh An, and Phu Hai. One unidentified company (Strength - 65), the 810th Battalion (Strength - 400), and elements of the 95th Regt (NVA) were reported to be operating in the Phu Loc area.

e. No substantial contact with elements listed above was made. Numerous caves on the Nui Tron, Nui Gion and Loc Thuy hill masses were destroyed. One hundred U. S. fragmentation grenades, a few small arms weapons and documents were captured. The grenades were destroyed and all documents along with photographs of weapons were forwarded to COMUSMACV J-2. While forces ashore did receive light small arms sniper fire, and one incident of command controlled mining occurred, there was no positive identification of any units, nor any indications that units of any significant strength were in this area.

6. Mission. As directed by COMSEVENTHFLT message 250930Z April (Initiating Directive), the mission of the Landing Force was to "conduct an amphibious landing in coordination with and when requested by CG III MAF in landing zones and over beaches to be designated in the Phu Loc area of RVN, in order to assist CG III MAF in search and destroy and rice harvest protection operations".

7. Concept of Operations. Operation Osage was a unilateral amphibious operation conducted by the ARG/SIF, augmented by certain non-organic forces and equipment. The operation was scheduled not to exceed three days and be completed by 1 May 1966, however it was extended to 2 May to exploit the contact with the VC made on 29 April. The amphibious operation encompassed landing the landing force by landing craft over White Beach and by helicopter in HLZ's Crow (ZD 139970) and Hawk (ZD 129006) to conduct search and destroy operations and to provide rice harvest protection in the Phu Loc area, with special emphasis on the Phu Gia (AU 8401), Nui Gion (AU 8307), Loc Thuy (ZD 1605) hill masses and the area south of Highway #1 between N-S grid lines ZD 10 and ZD 20. Fire support was to be provided by two DD's, CAS from

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1st MAW, and organic artillery of the BLT. The SLF would conduct a tactical withdrawal when directed.

8. Execution. (See TAB A Operation Overlay, TAB B - After Action Report BLT 1/5 and TAB C - After Action Report HMM 364.)

9. Results.

a. Casualties.

U. S. KIA - 8; WIA - 9; MIA - 0; Captured - 0.  
VC KIA - 8; KIA (possible) - 3; WIA - 2; Captured - 0.

b. Equipment or Installations Captured or Destroyed (Summary).

- (1) French Sub-machine gun, 9mm (Converted to 7.62mmP)-1.
- (2) Rifle, Springfield, Cal. 30 - 1.
- (3) Ammo, U. S. Cal. 30 - 4 rds.
- (4) Ammo, Soviet 7.62P - 200 rds.
- (5) Grenades, Fragmentation, U. S. - 102.
- (6) Documents - 6 (Sent to J-2 MACV).
- (7) Mine (AP) - 1.
- (8) Shell, 5" - 1.
- (9) Wire, barbed - 50 ft.
- (10) Hut, bamboo - 1.
- (11) Observation post - 1.
- (12) Caves - 11.
- (13) Punji pits - 5.

10. Commanders's Analysis. This analysis is concerned with those matters at the Special Landing Force level. Reports on problems encountered and lessons learned at the Battalion and Squadron level are shown in TABs B and C.

a. Planning. Planning for Operation OSAGE was initiated when a representative of TG 79.5 made a liaison trip on 16 April from Subic to III MAF Headquarters to discuss the possible utilization of the SLF in IOTZ. Subsequently planning conferences were held at III MAF Head-

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quarters in Danang, RVN 21-26 April 1966 and attended by CTG 79.5, CTG 76.5, CO of BLT 1/5, CO of HMM 364; and representatives of the Special Landing force, the BLT, the Amphibious Task Force, as well as representatives from III MAF. Aerial reconnaissance was made of the Phu Loc area. Maps and photos were obtained, and liaison was made with Army and Marine Corps advisors in the area. Planning took into consideration the utilization of close air support from 1st MAF vice TF 77 due to their relative proximity to the area of operation. In addition the need for UH-1E's for tactical air control, observation, and helicopter escort operations was evident and CAS and TAC (A)/TAO aircraft were requested from 1st MAF. Subsequently, this support was allocated to the Landing Force for D-Day, and was placed on an on-call/as available basis for the remainder of the operation. Operation OSAGE was planned as a BATTEN DOWN Operation in accordance with CTG 79.5 OpOrd 328-66, and a "Frag Order" was published for the Phu Loc area. The ARG and SLF staffs were able to complete the detailed planning and issue the necessary "Frag Orders" for timely and efficient execution.

b. Command Relationships. Operation OSAGE was designed to be a unilateral amphibious operation. The command relationships were in accordance with NWP-22(A) and UNAAF, para 30278-30279.

c. Intelligence. The intelligence material furnished by III MAF was accurate. Analysis of the enemy's courses of action were correct. The unit listed in the Order Of Battle as the 810th IF Battalion was not encountered. An unidentified company was listed in the Order Of Battle. Contact was made with units in the area but no identification was made. Weather was typical for the period with the temperatures averaging 82 degrees with high humidity, and a trace of precipitation. Aerial photograph 1:5,000 was very useful in determining helo landing zones and locating possible enemy emplacements.

d. Civic Action. One Civic Action visit was made during Operation OSAGE. A second was planned, however operational commitments precluded its being effected. A civic action team composed of medical/dental personnel from PRINCETON and ALAMO and representatives from SLF staff visited the hamlet of Cau Hai near Phu Loc District Headquarters. The visit was coordinated with the District Chief and his U. S. Army Advisor. The medical team treated approximately 600 patients for a variety of ailments and the dentist extracted approximately 300 infected teeth. Villagers were given soap, medicines and vitamins and the local health workers were presented with medical supplies. The dental officer instructed the village health director in tooth extraction procedures and gave him some dental equipment. The visit was well received and the District Chief appeared well pleased with the results.

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e. Helicopter Operations. HMM 364 provided helicopter support for Operation OSAGE. Helicopters were utilized for vertical assault, medical-evacuation, resupply, reconnaissance, and administrative/liaison missions. Due to the mountainous terrain and dense vegetation in the area, there were numerous occasions when resupply had to be accomplished by helicopter hoist. One aircraft was seriously damaged when its rotors struck a tree. Another helicopter crashed in a similar occurrence, and was subsequently destroyed. (Detailed report in TAB C).

f. Communications. During the operation, ship-to-shore communications were maintained over Landing Force TAC Net Nr 1 and 2. Landing Force TAC 1 was an FM voice circuit utilizing an RT 68 radio aboard ship and a PRC-25 ashore with the Battalion. Landing Force TAC 2 was a Single Side Band voice circuit utilizing a VRC-32 aboard ship and a PRC-47 ashore. Both circuits proved to be completely reliable and excellent communications were maintained throughout the operation.

g. Casualty Reporting. Casualty reporting for Operation OSAGE was coordinated and controlled at the SLF Headquarters level. The BLT and HMM were tasked to prepare the required messages and submit them to the SLF CRCC for release. Instructions for casualty reporting were developed and distributed in the form of a proposed Appendix I to Annex E of the SLF 201 Plan. The proposed Appendix proved to be sound and acceptable as a Casualty Reporting Appendix and will be used in future operations.

h. Supporting Arms. Control of supporting arms during Operation OSAGE remained afloat on the PRINCETON, and coordination was provided by the FSCC ashore. Artillery support was provided by Battery D, 2/11 and the 107mm Howtar Battery, 2/11. Fire missions were controlled by FO's and TAO's. Naval gunfire support was provided by two destroyers (USS WALKER and USS THOMASON) employing 5"/38's. Close air support by F-8, F-4, and A-4 aircraft from the 1st Marine Air Wing under the control of TAC(A)'s was provided by 1st Marine Air Wing. Due to dense vegetation FAC's were unable to control CAS missions. Ordnance employed included napalm, Zuni rockets, and 20mm cannon fire. When UH-1E 's were not available, HMM 364 provided TAC(A) support in UH-34 aircraft.

i. ARVN Participation. The 1st ARVN Division during a conference with the CATF and CLF requested that an ARVN company participate in Operation OSAGE by conducting a sweep in an area immediately east of Landing Force Objective 2. III MAF subsequently approved this request, the ARVN company established liaison with the LF, and on 27 April conducted a sweep of an area bounded by ZD 1601, ZC 1697, ZD 145970 and ZC 1401. They had no enemy contact and withdrew the same night. No problems of coordination were encountered.

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j. Psychological Warfare. A leaflet drop warning the Vietnamese not to interfere with the operation and not to run from Marines, was conducted during D-Day over the villages in the vicinity of LZ's Hawk and Crow. People were observed picking up these leaflets, and there was no interference by civilians during the operation.

k. Landing Zone Preparation. Landing zone preparation by CAS aircraft was planned for LZ's Crow and Eagle from 0610H to 0620H on D-Day. The strikes were to be controlled by two (2) TAC(A)'s, and the pilots were briefed for the mission by members of the CATF and CLF staffs. On D-Day both UH-1E aircraft reported on station at 0615H, five minutes late. CAS aircraft were on station at 0609H. Landing Zone Eagle was prepared, but Landing Zone Crow was not. The TAC(A) controlling the strike aircraft for LZ Crow stated to the SLF Air Observer in the air-strike aircraft that he saw no targets to prepare despite the requirement placed upon the 1st MAF to conduct this preparation. Further, no report was made to the TACC that the LZ prep was not conducted, and the CATF/CLF were not aware until after the landing that the preparation had not been conducted. Although in this particular instance the landing in LZ Crow was not opposed, the apparent lack of targets in and around a LZ does not ensure the absence of a well camouflaged, dug-in enemy. Unless specifically delegated to the TAC(A), the decision not to conduct a planned LZ preparation is that of the CATF/CLF. Furthermore, the CATF/CLF must be kept informed of any proposed deviation from the plan.

# 11. Lessons Learned.

## a. Communications.

(1) Comment - Prior to the execution of Operation OSAGE ten AN/PRC-25 radios were requested and obtained from CG III MAF to increase the range and improve reliability of FM radio communications within the Landing Force.

(2) Discussion - Once again the PRC-25 proved its superiority over the present family of FM equipment i.e. (PRC-6, 8, 9, & 10). Excellent FM communications were maintained with the PRC-25 both ship-to-shore and within the Landing Force ashore.

(3) Recommendation - That the SLF be augmented with ten AN/PRC-25 radios to improve reliability of FM communications. A recommendation was separately submitted to the CG, FMF SEVENTH Fleet on this subject on 7 May.

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b. Casualty Reporting.

(1) Comment - Casualty reporting for Operation OSAGE was coordinated and controlled at the SLF Headquarters level. (See para 10.g).

(2) Discussion - Prior to Operation OSAGE the SLF staff was augmented by a Captain and GySgt from 9th MAB to establish and coordinate the functioning of the CRCC during OSAGE. This system established, proved to be sound, however there is a continuing need for administrative personnel to coordinate the SLF CRCC. 9th MAB augmentation, although desirable, is not entirely responsive to the short reaction time which the SLF is normally required to maintain.

(3) Recommendation - That the T/O of the SLF staff be increased to provide for a SNCO with a MOS of 0141 to coordinate the SLF CRCC. This SNCO will also be utilized for many other administrative tasks required of the SLF Headquarters.

c. Tactical Air Observer/Tactical Air Controller (Airborne).

(1) Comment - After the morning of D-Day TAO/TAC(A) support was sporadic, and airborne control of CAS aircraft was not always available when needed. After D-Day, TAO/TAC(A)'s operating within the AOA were not always fully apprised of the scheme of maneuver and disposition of friendly units.

(2) Discussion - The immediate availability of TAO/TAC(A) support subsequent to D-Day was dependent on other commitments placed on the 1st MAW. The Air Observer organic to the SLF was utilized only during the morning of D-Day and reembarked aboard the LPH due to the uncertain availability of observation aircraft. This lack of a continuous TAO/TAC(A) limited the responsiveness of supporting arms, and eliminated an important source of information on the friendly and enemy situation.

(3) Recommendation - That a minimum of two (2) armed UH-1E helicopters be attached to the SLF for the duration of any operation. The ready availability of these aircraft would insure timely and efficient tactical air observation and tactical air control (airborne) for CAS aircraft. The pilots of the UH-1E aircraft and SLF Air Observer would be continually apprised of the tactical situation during the operation when based aboard the LPH.

12. Comments on TAB B and TAB C. The following comments are made to clarify or amplify certain statements, opinions, and recommendations contained in the After Action Reports of BLT 1/5 and HMM 364:

## a. TAB B (BLT 1/5) Combat After Action Report).

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(1) Planning (Para 14.a.(2) of TAB B).

The Phu Loc area was not divided into six geographical areas, but rather within the AOA six Landing Force Objectives were established. BLT 1/5 further assigned BLT objectives for additional control purposes.

(2) Use of Reconnaissance Personnel (Para 14.d. of TAB B).

The utilization of reconnaissance personnel prior to D-Day was thoroughly considered by the BLT Commander. Control of the reconnaissance personnel was retained by the BLT commander and at no time was there any denial of the planned BLT employment of these personnel.

b. TAB C (HMM 364 After Action Report).(1) Tactical Air Observer/Tactical Air Controller (Airborne)  
(Item 1) (See Lessons Learned, para 11.c of above)(2) Close Air Support and LZ preparation (Item 2)

## (a) LZ Preparation (See para 10.k. above)

(b) The CATF requested that CAS be on station from 0730 until 1200 to cover the withdrawal of the landing force. It is considered that the failure to provide these aircraft on a relieve-on-station basis during the extremely critical phase of the operation could have had serious consequences if the enemy had elected to strongly oppose the withdrawal.

(3) Helicopter Mission Request (Item 3).

Concur in the recommendation that the HDC be the single agency through which the helicopter unit receives its instructions; however the procedure established prior to OSAGE was a reflection of this standard procedure. The procedure established for handling mission requests was that requests from the BLT for routine medical evacs, logistic resupply and recon missions were sent to the BLT TAC LOG which in turn submitted to the HDC as the agency to coordinate with the helicopter squadron. All requests received by the TACRON over the TAR net were submitted to the HDC in a similar manner. On occasions such as emergency med-evacs the BLT did contact aircraft in the air to divert them from a routine mission in order to expedite the emergency mission.

(4) Reports (Item 5).

The six hour SITREP is required due to the requirement imposed upon the LF commander to submit 6 hour SITREPS as part of the CATF

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report. In the future the Daily Summary of Flight Operations and TACRON Daily Summary of Air Operations will be consolidated and submitted once daily to TACRON which will effect the necessary distribution.

TAB A = Operation Overlay

TAB B = After Action Report of BLT 1/5

TAB C = After Action Report of HMM 364

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# COMBAT AFTER ACTION REPORT OPERATION OSAGE



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UNITED STATES PACIFIC  
COMMANDER SEVENTH FLEET

CONFIDENTIAL

FF/7/BRF: jca  
3010  
Ser: N6-051  
25 February 1966

CONFIDENTIAL

From: Commander SEVENTH Fleet  
To: Distribution List

GROUP-4  
Downgraded at 3 year intervals;  
Declassified after 12 years.

Subject: Letter of Instruction (LOI) for Exercise HILL TOP Series (U)

Ref: (a) NWP 22(A)  
(b) FXP 5(A)  
(c) Maps: Philippines: 1:50,000 AMS Series S711 Mindoro  
Sheets: 1:50,000 AMS Series Tabones Target Area, Luzon;  
1:50,000 AMS Series, Green Beach, Subic Bay, Luzon

Encl: (1) Schedule of Events  
(2) Forces Assigned  
(3) Command Relationships  
(4) Exercise Control Organization

1. Purpose. This letter provides fundamental information on the series of amphibious exercises to be conducted under the nickname HILL TOP. As each exercise is scheduled, specific instructions for that exercise will be promulgated by supplementary message using this letter as the basis reference.

2. Background.

In addition to normal amphibious training requirements, there are certain factors that militate in favor of conducting amphibious training, specifically designed for the ARG/SLF.

- (1) Frequent rotation of ships of the ARG.
- (2) Frequent rotation of the BLT and HMM of the SLF.
- (3) Readiness to meet contingency operations anywhere.

The most desirable time to conduct amphibious training is on some rotation of the SLF/BLT as feasible.

3. General.

This series of exercises, employing a balanced naval and landing force, is primarily designed for training the ARG/SLF in the techniques of amphibious raid operations.

HILL TOP is an unclassified, assigned nickname which specifically denotes an amphibious raid training exercise.

To permit the use of this LOI on a recurring basis with a minimum of administrative changes, the exercise number and PHIBLEX identification number (assigned by CINCPACFLT) will be promulgated by message prior to the planning phase of each HILL TOP exercise. It is envisioned that only minor changes will be required each time this LOI is implemented. Changes will be promulgated by message.

All HILL TOP exercises in this series, unless directed otherwise, will be conducted in the San Jose area, Mindoro, R.P.

Tab O  
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FE/7/001:jas  
30104. Exercise Objectives.a. General.

(1) The exercise is designed to parallel certain contingency plans. Various phases are designed to test the capabilities of staff planning, unilateral coordination, and leadership with special emphasis on the company level and below; also, the capability of a balanced landing force to conduct rapid movement from ship-to-shore, execute assigned tasks, accomplish the mission, and execute a planned, covered withdrawal. This is to be accomplished in an environment within the confines of territory controlled and dominated by fictitious hostile forces.

(2) Availability of shipping, supporting forces, time available, etc., may dictate the necessity to incorporate appropriate changes in the scope of HILL TOP, training objectives (both Navy and Marine) or the revision of other instructions contained herein. To provide for this eventuality, this LOI is designed to provide the Officer Conducting the Exercise (OCE) the necessary flexibility to implement required adjustments. However, if a major departure from the scope of the exercise is desired, authorization for such will be requested.

b. Joint Training Objectives.

(1) To test tactical unit application of current doctrine in the conduct of amphibious operations with special emphasis on:

- (a) Ship-to-Shore movement by surface and air means.
- (b) Organization for ground combat.
- (c) Amphibious withdrawal at conclusion of a raid.

(2) To test the capability of the Landing Force to reconstitute its organization upon completion of a raid for quick response to a subsequently assigned mission (staff problem).

(3) To test the ability of the Task Force to disseminate intelligence, reported by reconnaissance and UDT elements, to its subordinate components while underway to and/or in the amphibious objective area. Emphasis to be placed on timeliness and accuracy in dissemination.

(4) To test and evaluate established procedures in the conduct of, rearranged and untested under gunfire missions and close air support missions. Emphasis to be placed on rapid, timely reaction and adequacy of communications.

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c. Navy Training Objectives.

(1) Within the framework of paragraph 4.a. and b. above, to focus training on the following:

(a) Control of the shore-to-ship movement during an enemy contested withdrawal.

(b) Coordination and control of fire support during the withdrawal with emphasis on pre-arranged fires to cover the withdrawal.

(c) Defense against swimmers, small boat and ground weapon attacks.

(d) Clandestine pre D-Day beach reconnaissance.

(e) Clandestine pre D-Day and D-Day deception operations.

(f) Delivery and coordination of naval gunfire and air prearranged and on-call fires by means of a FIREX/CASEX.

d. Marine Training Objectives.

(1) Within the framework of paragraph 4.a. and b. above, focus training on the following:

(a) Develop and test established principles and doctrine for the application of Marine Corps tactics in the conduct of amphibious raids, to include rapid movement from ship-to-shore, rapid deployment of forces ashore, and execution of a planned covered withdrawal.

(b) Provide for a reliable, secure communications system for use by Force Reconnaissance Teams prior to the arrival of the Amphibious Task Force in the objective area.

(c) Disseminate last-minute intelligence and changes in operations without materially changing the normal pattern of electronic emissions.

(d) Rapid build-up of combat power ashore to maximize shock and surprise inherent in a raid.

(e) Plan and operate a primarily ship-based logistic support system that is responsive and flexible, and which will permit minimum build-up of supplies ashore.

(f) Achieve prompt target acquisition by air and ground forces.

(g) Plan and execute fires in support of withdrawal with emphasis on effective displacement seaward of landing force artillery.

(h) Test current doctrine in casualty evacuation to seaward.

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3010Concept.

Purpose. The purpose of the exercise is fourfold: first, for the Navy-Marine Corps Team to gain experience in the planning and execution of a JAB-scale amphibious raid; second, by devoting attention to the training objectives enumerated above, to develop and refine certain raid techniques and procedures; third, to test the capability to conduct a planned, covered withdrawal of all forces, equipment and supplies to seaward and to reembark within a given time frame; and finally, to test the capability of the landing force to reconstitute its organization for quick response to a subsequently assigned mission.

Scenario.

(1) The United States Government, in carrying out its treaty agreements, has been engaged in in-country operations in support of FRIENDLY NATION's military effort against Communist insurgent forces of ENEMY NATION. Insurgent forces have enjoyed considerable success in recent months despite increased FRIENDLY NATION and U.S. military strength and activity. As a result insurgency is approaching Phase VI (war of movement characterized by military organization and employment along conventional lines).

(2) Covert, usually reliable intelligence sources have reported increased enemy buildup of supplies, equipment and forces in the border between the belligerent nations; these same sources have also reported similar activity along certain coastal areas of ENEMY NATION. There is growing evidence to support the contention that the insurgents are training organized combined armed units of battalion, regiment and brigade size. Also, that the enemy has stepped up conscription input, thereby substantially increasing his trained ground reserve potential.

(3) In order to cause the enemy to focus attention elsewhere and divert his efforts to building his ready forces for commitment to landward operations are thwarted at least temporarily, the JCS has ordered amphibious raids to be executed on the enemy homeland. It is hoped that these raids, along with other operations, will cause the enemy to divert sufficient regular forces so as to preclude, or at least delay commencement of Phase III operations for a period long enough for FRIENDLY NATION, with U.S. military support, to continue vigorous search and destroy operations. It is the objective of the total effort to contain the insurgency and prevent expansion into Phase III.

(4) In accordance with instructions from the JCS, CINCPAC ordered CINCPACFLT to conduct amphibious raids on specified targets within ENEMY NATION. Raids were to be rapid, of short duration (less than 24 hours), and limited penetration. Raid missions were essentially to destroy enemy troops, equipment and supplies and to destroy and disrupt communications. Special operations required the destruction of roads, bridges, tunnels, railroads and specific major utilities and facilities. In compliance with CINCPACFLT orders, COMSEVENTHFLT

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Coastal Commanders TF 76/79 to execute specific raid plans. Several amphibious raids were conducted, however, lucrative results were not obtained.

(5) COMSEVENTHFLT has directed Commanders TF 76/79 to execute HILL TOP (No.), an amphibious raid on TENCHAM and COMMCHAN. These are targets located in the vicinity of a specified landing beach on the coast of ENEMY NATION.

(6) Hence, the landing force will conduct an amphibious raid with the mission to attack and destroy TENCHAM, a combined air training camp, and to eliminate enemy forces located therein; to attack and destroy COMMCHAN, a vital radio relay station. Upon completion of assigned tasks, CLF will conduct a rapid withdrawal from the landing beach and CAFF/CLF, in a coordinated effort, will execute the amphibious withdrawal of the landing force. Upon re-embarkation, CAFF will withdraw to seaward to carry out assignments as directed by COMSEVENTHFLT.

(7) Pre D-Day clandestine reconnaissance and surveillance of the landing beach will be conducted.

(8) The raid will be characterized by rapid movement and limited penetration inland. Every effort will be used to achieve surprise in attacking COMMCHAN. Close air support will be on-call at all hour prescribed by CAFF/CLF. Maximum time authorized ashore to complete assigned tasks is 72 hours from H-Hour with the withdrawal planned for the morning of D+3.

3. Execution. Exercise HILL TOP (No.) is a unilateral MAU-scale amphibious raid to be conducted in the San Jose area, Mindoro, R.P. A FIREX/CASEX will be conducted at Tabones Target Area, Subic Bay, Luzon, R.P. followed by a rehearsal landing at GREEN BEACH, Subic Bay, Luzon, R.P. HILL TOP (No.) will be controlled and opposed. A fleet-type submarine will perform the dual role of early insertion of Force Reconnaissance Teams into the objective area and will oppose the Amphibious Task Force during its movement. Marine VMA/VMFA aircraft operating from NAS, Cubi Point, R.P. or SEVENTH Fleet carrier-based aircraft will provide close air support for the exercise. For forces assigned see enclosure (2). The exercise will include:

(1) Prepositioning of aggressors and supporting exercise forces. (See Special Instructions, paragraph 13 below.)

(2) Beach and inland reconnaissance operations within the objective area.

(3) A FIREX/CASEX at Tabones, Target Area, Subic Bay.

(4) Rehearsal at Green Beach, Subic Bay and rehearsal critique.

(5) Opposed movement and underway replenishment of the Amphibious Task Force enroute to the objective area.

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(6) Pre H-Hour simulated destruction of obstacles and defenses by naval gunfire, air and demolitions.

(7) Amphibious raid landing.

(8) Not more than 72 hours operations ashore followed by an opposed tactical withdrawal on the morning of D+3.

(9) Defense of the ATF in the AOA.

(10) Staff planning for subsequently assigned amphibious missions.

(11) Critique.

5. Schedule of Events. See enclosure (1) (Schedule of Events).

6. Command Relationships. See enclosure (3) (Command Relationships).

a. COMSEVENTHFLT is the officer scheduling the exercise (OCE).

b. COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT is the Exercise Director and has overall responsibility for coordination of planning, preparation, and execution of the exercise.

c. Commander Amphibious Ready Group is designated officer conducting the exercise. (OCE)

d. Exercise Control Organization. See enclosure (4)

(1) Navy Exercise Coordinator (NEC): Commander Amphibious Ready Group.

(2) Troop Exercise Coordinator (TEC): Commander, Special Landing Force (SLF).

(3) No Exercise Intelligence Center (EIC) will be established. NEC and TEC will perform the functions of the EIC.

(4) Umpires will be specified by TEC. Aggressor activity will be controlled directly by NEC and TEC.

e. Task Organization.

(1) Commander Amphibious Ready Group or OCE is assigned task designator CTG 76.5.

(2) A Command Information Bureau (CIB) will not be established for the exercise.

(3) Commander Amphibious Ready Group is designated Commander Amphibious Task Force (CATF). Task designator CTG 76.5 is assigned.

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(4) Commander Special Landing Force (SLF) is designated Commander Landing Force (CLF). Task designator CTC 79.5 is assigned.

(5) Direct liaison between Exercise Director, OCE, CATE, CLF, CINCPACREP PHIL and commanders providing forces for the exercise, as applicable, is authorized. Direct liaison between subordinate commands is authorized for planning and conducting the exercise.

## 7. Public Affairs.

a. The OCE will provide for public information coverage and will make the initial press release. He will coordinate in these matters with CINCPACREP PHIL who is requested to coordinate with the U.S. Embassy and government concerned prior to submission to COMUSMACV.

b. Publicity will be commensurate with the scope and size of the exercise.

### c. Public Relations Themes.

(1) Navy-Marine Corps Team readiness posture.

(2) Continuous training to meet contingencies in any location.

(3) Balanced raid force capability.

(4) U.S./Philippine cooperation (can be demonstrated by coordinated participation of Philippine Forces and attendance of Philippine observers).

d. Appropriate civic action program should be planned and conducted concurrent with the operation (to include distribution of leaflets and material).

## 8. Support Requested from CINCPACREP PHIL. It is requested that the following support be provided for the exercise.

a. Provide liaison and coordination as required.

b. Assist CLF in settlement of claims.

c. Assist OCE in acquisition of clearances for coalitions and requirements.

d. Assist OCE in coordinating air operations to insure no interference with air defense and aid of acquisition of necessary air support.

e. Arrange for maneuver area and sea/air approaches thereto.

9. Reports Required. No formal Post Exercise Report is required. A message report evaluating the exercise from both the CATE and CLF points of view will be submitted as soon after completion of the exercise as feasible.

## 10. Logistics and Administration.

a. Logistics and administration will be in accordance with normal operating procedures for naval forces and as directed by COMUSMACV/PHIL for Marine Forces.

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b. Commander Landing Force will appoint a Claims Officer who will investigate all claims. Claims which cannot be settled immediately will be submitted through normal channels.

11. Security. Handling of exercise classified material will be in accordance with current directives. In the interest of rapid dissemination of material and maximum training benefits, modified handling of CONFIDENTIAL material will be authorized when appropriate.

12. Communications.

a. Commander Amphibious Task Force and Commander Landing Forces will submit frequency requirements to CINCPACREP PHIL, copies to COMSEVENTHFLT and COMPHIBFORSEVENTHFLT, as early as practicable and no later than 20 days prior to the execution phase of the exercise. These requirements will include frequency, purpose, geographical location and area, hours of operations, emission, power output, and required dates.

b. Task organization designators applicable only to the exercise are effective for communications upon commencing exercise operations and are dissolved when the amphibious exercise is declared terminated.

c. All exercise communications will carry the unclassified nickname Exercise HILL TOP (No.) at the beginning of each message. Off-line encrypted exercise messages will carry the unclassified nickname Exercise HILL TOP (No.) external to the encrypted text. The words "Exercise HILL TOP (No.)" will not be used in message authentication.

13. Special Instructions.

a. Requests for U.S. Navy units and personnel not provided for in this letter of instruction will be submitted to COMSEVENTHFLT.

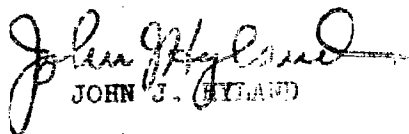
b. Safety of personnel, ships, aircraft and equipment will be paramount.

c. Only conventional weapons play will be exercised during the Exercise HILL TOP series.

d. All precautions will be taken to avoid damage to Philippine property and injury to Philippine Nationals.

e. Check out of the MOVREP system is not authorized.

14. Cancellation. This letter of instruction will be cancelled by separate directive.

  
JOHN J. HYLAND

Distribution:

CINCPACFLT (5)	CTG 79.3 (10)	CTG 79.2 (20)
CG FMFPAC (2)	CTF 76 (10)	
COMNAVPHIL (2)	CTG 76.5 (10)	CTF 73 (11)
COMNAVBASE SUBPAC (2)	(2) CTG 79.5 (20)	
COMPHIBPAC (2)	CINCPACREP PHIL (2)	

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## Enclosure (1)

Tentative Schedule of Events

<u>Line</u>	<u>Event</u>
On promulgation of supplementary message to this LOI.	CTG 76.5 and CTG 79.5 commence planning phase.
D+5	Position Aggressor Force and required exercise control personnel at San Jose, Mindoro.
D+4	FIREX/CASEX, Tabones Target Area, Subic Bay.
D+3	Pre-sail conference.
D+2	Rehearsal and critique, Green Beach, Subic Bay. Insert Recon/UDF Teams into objective area.
D+1	Enroute San Jose area. Opposed movement and underway replenishment.
D-Day	D-Day, Exercise HILL TOP (No.).
D+1 and D+2	Operations ashore and in ACA.
D+3 (a.m.)	Withdrawal and reembarkation of Landing Force, critique and movement out of objective area.

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Enclosure (2)

Forces Assigned

1. The following forces are assigned for planning purposes to participate in Exercise HILL TOP (No.) in a friendly role:

a. U.S. Navy

- 1 LPH
- 1 APA (or LPD)
- 1 LSD
- \*1 SS
- 1 TACRON DET
- 1 UDT DET
- 1 NBG DET
- 1 BJU DET
- 2 DD
- 1 AO (support as requested)

b. USMC

- 1 MEU HQ
- 1 BLT
- 1 HMK
- 1 VMA/VMFA DET

2. The following forces are assigned for planning purposes to participate in Exercise HILL TOP (No.) in an aggressor role:

a. U.S. Navy

- \*1 SS

b. USMC

As determined by TEG.

\*This submarine will perform in a friendly role for covert insertion of Force Reconnaissance Teams prior to D-Day. Following completion of this mission the submarine will revert to the Naval Exercise Coordinator (NEXC) to oppose the Amphibious Task Force during its movement to the objective area.

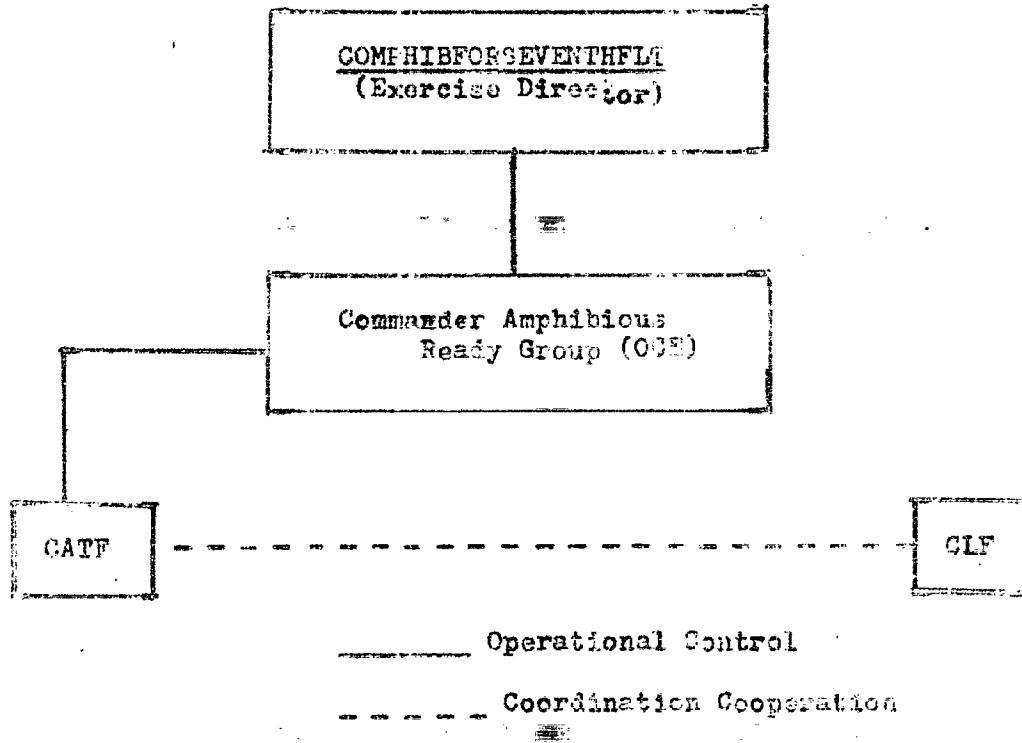
Enclosure (2)  
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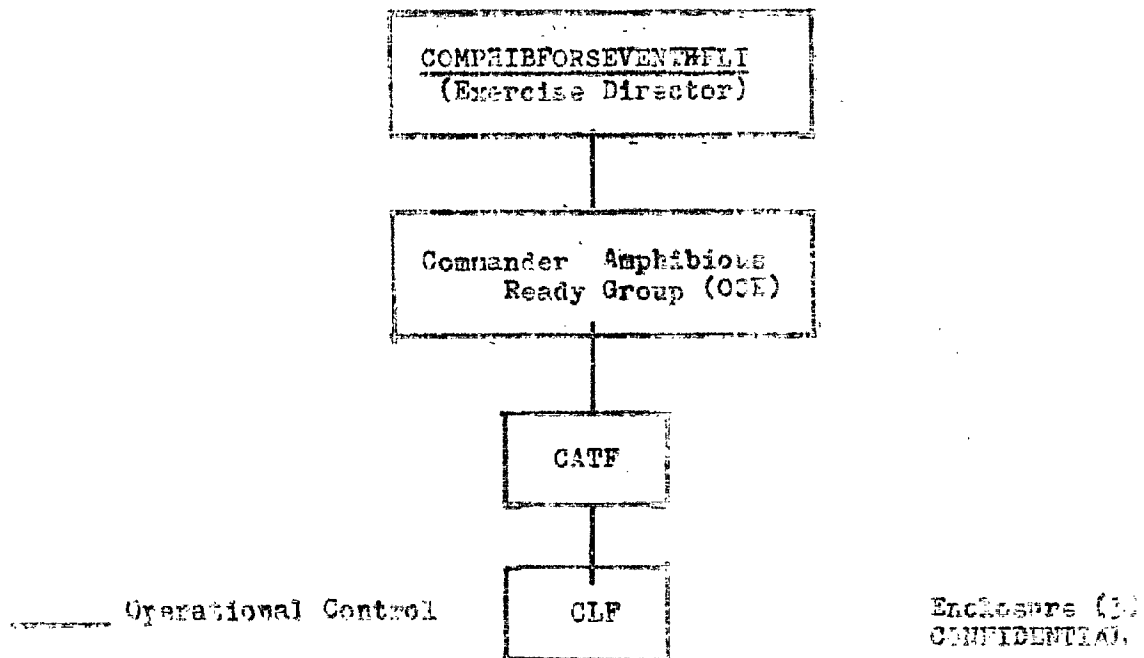
Enclosure (3)

Command Relationships

A. PLANNING PHASE

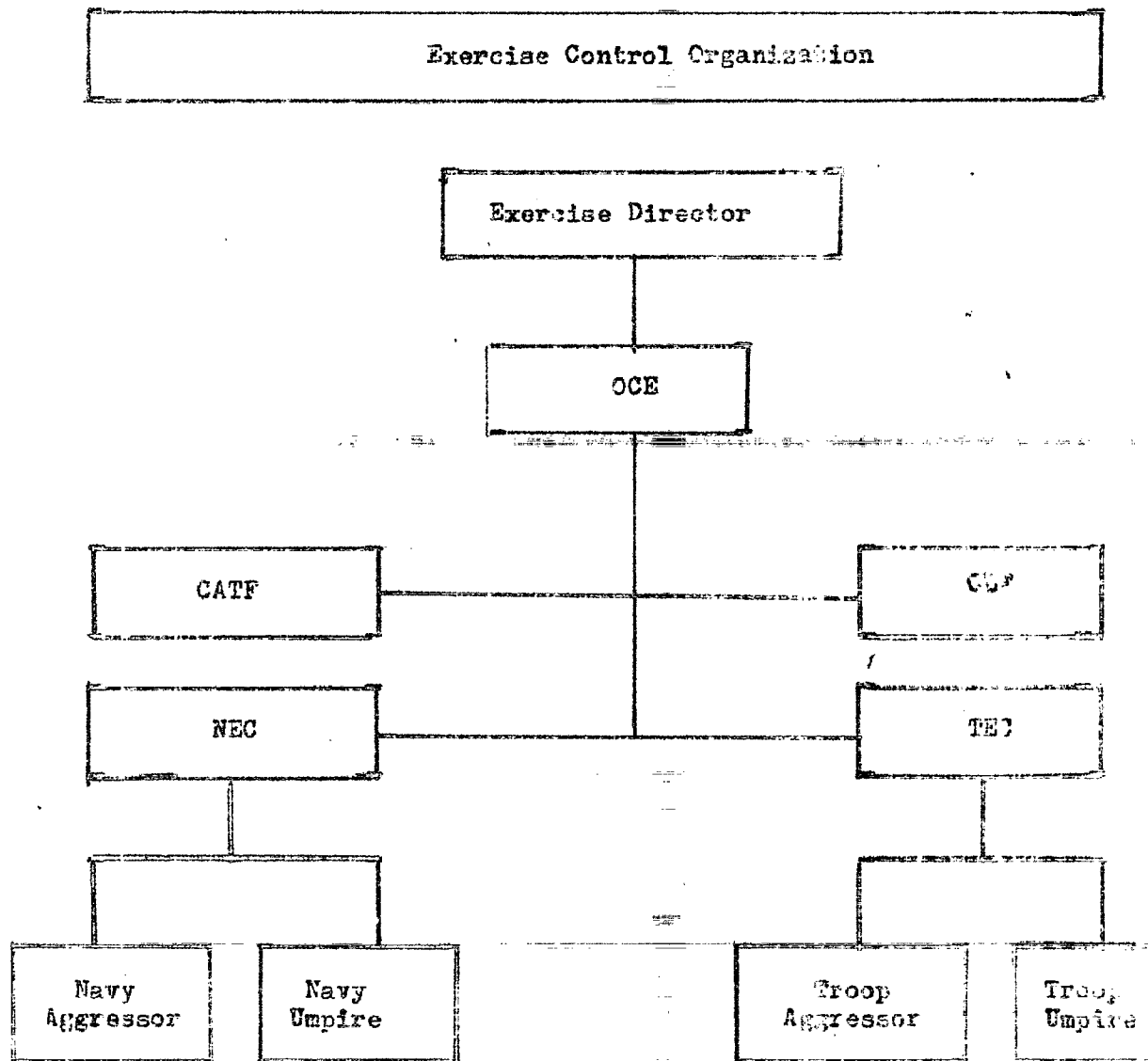


B. OPERATIONAL PHASE



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Enclosure (4)



Notes: Refer to FXP 5(A)

Enclosure (4)  
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Hilltop

HEADQUARTERS  
Task Group 79.5  
USS Valley Forge (LPH-8)  
FPO San Francisco, 96601

TEG:ms  
25 February 1966

From: Commander  
To: Commander, Fleet Marine Force, U. S. Seventh Fleet (Commander,  
Task Force 79)

Subj: HILLTOP III - Post-Exercise Report

Ref: (a) COMSEVENTHFLT ltr 3010 Ser N6-0325 of 17Nov65  
(b) COMSEVENTHFLT 130244Z Jan66  
(c) Commander, Task Group 79.5 OpOrder 325-66  
(d) NWP 22(A)  
(e) LFM 01

Encl: (1) Task Organization, U. S. Marine Forces  
(2) Task Organization, U. S. Navy Forces  
(3) Exercise events  
(4) Comments and Recommendations

# 1. GENERAL.

a. Exercise HILLTOP III was designed initially to prepare the BLT and HMM of the Special Landing Force for Dagger Thrust operations and to test amphibious raid procedures. The original objectives were set forth in Commander, Seventh Fleet Letter of Instruction, reference (a), but were subsequently modified by reference (b) and a compressed time schedule to be a rehearsal for Operation DOUBLE EAGLE employing both waterborne and helicopterborne ship-to-shore movements with an additional BLT employed.

b. The initiating directive promulgated by COMSEVENTHFLT, reference (a), designated Commander, Task Group 79.5 as Commander Landing Force. Reference (b) reassigned the responsibility of Commander Amphibious Task Force from COMPHIBRON THREE to COMPHIBRON FIVE, CTG 76.6.

c. Seventeen (17) Philippine observers were present and observed both the waterborne and helicopterborne assaults.

# 2. SUMMARY OF EVENTS.

a. Preliminary Events. Planning with COMPHIBRON FIVE was initiated on 8 January 1966 when CTG 79.5 and members of his staff arrived in Okinawa and boarded the USS PAUL REVERE. Concurrently planning was initiated for DOUBLE EAGLE. Planning conferences were held in Subic Bay during the period 16 thru 18 January. The CTG 79.5 OpOrder for HILLTOP III was issued on 17 January 1966. A final pre-sail conference was held on 19 January aboard the USS PAUL REVERE at which all participating commands were represented.

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Tab P

79.5 (SLF)

CTG 79.5, HILLTOP III (Exercise)

20-24 Jan 66

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(1) BLT 3/1 was embarked in Task Group 76.6 shipping at Buckner Bay, Okinawa, between 10 and 12 January, chopped to OPCON of CTG 79.5 upon embarkation, and was transported to Subic Bay, Philippines, arriving on 16 January.

(2) The SLF BLT, BLT 2/3, was embarked in Task Group 76.5 (ARG) shipping at Okinawa on 31Dec-1Jan and departed for Subic Bay, Philippines on 2 January, arriving 6-8Jan.

(3) HMM 362 embarked aboard the USS Valley Forge (LPH-8) on 6 January at Chu Lai, Vietnam and arrived in Subic Bay on 8 January.

(4) During the period 16-19 January extensive liaison with CTG 76.5, CTG 76.6, and other HILLTOP III planners and participants was conducted.

(5) From 17 through 19 January the two BLT's conducted an intensive program of training ashore, including forced marches, survival techniques, physical conditioning, AmTrac indoctrination, helicopter training, and wet net procedures. The helicopter squadron conducted operational training with the BLT's and performed upkeep and maintenance on Helicopters.

b. Exercise Events: The exercise was conducted during the period 20-24 January and included the following events which are covered in more detail in Enclosure (2):

(1) Naval Gunfire/Close Air Support exercise on 20 January in the Tabones target complex, located adjacent to Subic Bay, Philippines. Aircraft for this exercise and for the subsequent HILLTOP III were provided by CTG 79.3. NGF ships were provided by CTG 70.8.

(2) A rehearsal on 21 January at Green Beach, Subic Bay, utilizing all waterborne forces but limited helicopterborne forces.

(3) Movement to the objective area, located in the San Jose area of the island of Mindoro, Philippines, on 21-22 January.

(4) Waterborne amphibious assault by BLT 3/1, and a helicopterborne assault by BLT 2/3, in the San Jose amphibious objective area commencing at 0800 on D-Day, 23 January 1966.

(5) Operations ashore, including securing of a beach support area, seizing designated landing force objectives, conducting search and clear operations within assigned zones, linkup between BLT's, and the conduct of a tactical withdrawal from the objective area on 24 January.

### 3. OBJECTIVES.

a. Major Joint Objectives: The major joint objectives were to test tactical unit application of current doctrine in the conduct of amphibious operations with special emphasis on:

- (1) Ship-to-shore movement by surface and air means.
- (2) Organization for ground combat.
- (3) Amphibious withdrawal at conclusion of a raid.

b. Major Marine Corps Objectives:

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(1) The objectives prescribed by the LOI were as follows:

(a) Develop and test established principles and doctrine for the application of Marine Corps tactics in the conduct of amphibious raids, to include rapid movement from ship-to-shore, rapid deployment of forces ashore, and execution of a planned covered withdrawal.

(b) Provide for a reliable, secure communications system for use by Force Reconnaissance Teams prior to the arrival of the Amphibious Task Force in the objective area.

(c) Disseminate last-minute intelligence and changes to operations without materially changing the normal pattern of electronic emissions.

(d) Rapid build-up of combat power ashore to maximize shock and surprise inherent in a raid.

(e) Plan and operate a primarily ship-based logistic support system that is responsive and flexible, and which will permit a minimum build-up of supplies ashore.

(f) Achieve prompt target acquisition by air and ground means.

(g) Plan and execute fires in support of withdrawal with emphasis of effective displacement seaward of landing force artillery.

c. Exercise Modifications. Due to the shortened time frame to plan and execute HILLTOP III, the shift in emphasis from a Dagger Thrust type operation of one BLT, and one HMM, to a rehearsal for the subsequent DOUBLE EAGLE Operation and resultant two BLT's, one HMM operation, the scope and objectives of HILLTOP III were correspondingly modified.

(1) Objective 3b(1)(b) concerning communications by Force Reconnaissance Teams was not tested due to the deletion of the insertion of the Force Recon Teams into the objective area.

(2) Objective 3b(1)(c) concerning dissemination of last minute intelligence was not tested. Intelligence play was limited to the initial intelligence.

(3) Objective 3b(1)(e) concerning ship based logistic support system was not tested due to limited duration of operation, and no requirement to land vehicles or to build up any supplies ashore.

(4) Objective 3b(1)(g) concerning displacement of landing force artillery was not tested. No artillery was landed to conform with the planned DOUBLE EAGLE Operation.

d. Major Navy Objectives: These were limited to:

- (1) Control of ship-to-shore movement.
- (2) Control of fire support during a withdrawal.
- (3) Defense of the transport area.
- (4) The delivery and coordination of naval gunfire and air support.

**CONFIDENTIAL**4. OBSERVATIONS.

a. Planning was effectively accomplished despite the initial wide geographical separation and last-minute arrival of some of the participants.

b. The CASEX/FIREX provided an excellent opportunity to exercise the TACC and SACC and to train and further refine the skills of the SFCP's and TACP's.

c. The facilities of the PAUL REVERE proved adequate for the CLF to control operations ashore.

d. The tactical withdrawal was executed smoothly and effectively, although not within the time frame specified within the OpOrder, because the tactical situation and increased size of the forces assigned dictated a slower withdrawal than had been planned.

J. R. BURNETT

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TASK ORGANIZATION FOR HILLTOP III - U. S. Marine CorpsLanding Force (TG 79.5)

Col J. R. BURNETT

HQ LF

BLT 2/3 (TU 79.5.2)

LtCol HORN

2dBn, 3rd Mar  
 2d Plt, Co A, 3rd MTBn  
 Btry B, (Rein), 1st Bn, 12th Mar  
 2d Plt (Rein), Co A, 3rd EngrBn  
 107mm Howtar Btry, 3rd Bn, 12th Mar  
 2d Plt (Rein), Co A, 3rd ATBn  
 2d Plt (Rein), Co A, 3rd Tank Bn  
 2d Plt (Rein), Co A, 3rd Recon Bn  
 3rd Plt (Rein), Co B, 1st AMTrac Bn (Note 1)  
 Det, HqBn, 3rd MarDiv  
 Det, Col and Clearing Plt, Co A, 3rd MedBn  
 Det, 1st ServBn  
 Det, 3rd FSR  
 Det, Recon Plt, 1st Force Recon  
 Det, 1st SPBn  
 Det, BMU  
 SFCP, Hq Btry, 1st Bn, 11th Mar (Note 1)

BLT 3/1 (TU 79.5.1)

LtCol YOUNG

3rd Bn, 1st Mar  
 1st Plt, Co A, 1st MTBn  
 Btry C (Rein), 1st Bn, 11th Mar  
 3rd Plt, Co A, 1st EngrBn  
 3rd Plt, Co A, 1st ATBn  
 3rd Plt, Co A, 1st Tank Bn  
 3rd Plt (Rein), Co A, 1st ReconBn  
 1st Plt, Co B, 3rd AMTracBn  
 Det, HqBn, 1st MarDiv  
 Det, Col and Clearing Plt, Co A, 1st MedBn  
 Det, 1st ServBn  
 Det, 3rd FSR  
 Det, Recon Plt, 1st Force Recon  
 Det, H&SCo, 1st SPBn  
 Det, BMU

HMM 362 (TU 79.5.3)

LtCol ALDWORTH

NOTE 1: Detached to BLT 3/1  
 effective 200800H.

Enclosure (1)  
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TASK ORGANIZATION FOR HILLTOP III - U. S. Navy

Amphibious Task Force (TG 76.6)

Capt MADDOCKS, USN

PAUL REVERE (APA-243)  
SKAGIT (AKA-105)  
CATAMOUNT (LSD-17)  
VALLEY FORGE (LPH-8)  
MONTROSE (APA-212)  
MONTICELLO (LSD-35)  
BARRY (DD-933)  
WEISS (APD-135)  
TACRON 11 DET  
UDT 11 DET C  
BMU DET

Enclosure (2)  
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EXERCISE EVENTS1. CASEX/FIREX.

a. General. This was designed to provide a coordinated exercise in which close air support aircraft and naval gunfire ships worked in conjunction with SFCP and TACP to improve combat readiness of ships and aircraft providing supporting forces. Additionally to exercise SACC in overall coordination of supporting arms and finally but no less important to provide needed experience for SFCP and TACP's in calling in actual missions.

b. Execution.

The SFCP and TACP from BLT 2/3 were prepositioned ashore in the Tabones Target Area prior to the commencement of the exercise. The CASEX commenced at 0800 with aircraft from VMA 311 conducting four tactical air strikes and expending 500 rounds of 20mm cannon fire, 36 MK76 bombs and 24 rockets. During this phase of the exercise, the SFCP called in simulated NGF missions to the destroyer in order to provide additional input to the SACC. The FIREX commenced at 1100 with the USS BARRY providing the NGF support.

c. Evaluation.

The CASEX/FIREX proved to be an excellent vehicle to improve readiness and functioning of personnel in SACC, the SFCP and TACP's in addition to exercising the supporting NGF ship.

2. REHEARSAL GREEN BEACH.

a. General. The rehearsal at Green Beach on 21 January was designed to test the landing plan, communications and control procedures, capability of supporting forces and to ensure troop familiarity with plans.

b. Execution. The rehearsal landing included landing of all the scheduled waves and a limited number of helicopter waves. Pre-D-Day transfers were effected by both BLT 3/1 and BLT 2/3. All scheduled surface waves were landed; however only a token number of each helilifted rifle company was landed. Emphasis was placed on rapid and correct deplaning and debarking procedures and tactical deployment at the beach and in the landing zone.

c. Evaluation. Although somewhat limited in scope, it is considered that the rehearsal was effective, and the mission was accomplished.

3. MOVEMENT TO THE OBJECTIVE AREA.

This was accomplished on 21-22 January with no significant events resulting.

4. SURFACE AND HELIBORNE ASSAULTS.

a. General. The concept of the assault phase was to land BLT 3/1 by surface means and BLT 2/3 by helicopter to conform to their subsequent method of employment in Operation DOUBLE EAGLE.

b. Execution. The surface ship-to-shore movement was effected as planned with H-Hour established at 0800. BLT 3/1 was landed in four waves utilizing LVTP's in the first two waves followed by two waves boated in LCM-6's, and an LCU. The scheduled waves were landed by H plus 25 in

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accordance with the landing plan. Both command groups for the BLT were also landed as were the on-call waves. Non-scheduled serials were not landed during the exercise.

c. The helicopter ship-to-shore movement was accomplished as planned with L-Hour established as 0830. BLT 2/3 was landed in the designated landing zones in 180 lifts with a total of 1175 troops landed. No difficulties were encountered during any phase of the movement.

5. OPERATIONS ASHORE.

a. Operations ashore were designed to simulate the forthcoming Operation DOUBLE EAGLE. BLT 3/1 was given the mission of securing a BSA, conducting deliberate search and clear operations, effecting a linkup with BLT 2/3, then conducting a tactical withdrawal on order. The initial LF objectives were secured by 1100 and both BLT's commenced conducting search and clear operations within assigned zones. At approximately H plus 6, BLT 3/1 was directed to effect the linkup with BLT 2/3 and this was completed by H plus 8. A warning order was issued that W-Hour was tentatively set for 0700 24 January. The withdrawal plan provided for BLT 2/3 to be withdrawn entirely by helicopter with BLT 3/1 covering; then BLT 3/1 was to conduct a tactical withdrawal back to the beach and withdraw by landing craft. W-Hour was executed as scheduled and withdrawal of all units completed by 241430. Although the prearranged schedule indicated a more rapid withdrawal, it was apparent that the schedule could not be met due to the tactical situation imposed, time/distance factors, and the effect of high temperature and humidity on the troops.

b. Evaluation. Operations ashore brought out the following:

- (1) The detailed coordination required in linkup operations.
- (2) The effect of heat and humidity on pre-set time schedules.
- (3) The necessity for a withdrawal plan to be flexible.

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COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. a. Comment. The over all evaluation of HILLTOP III is that it is an excellent training vehicle.

b. Discussion. It is considered HILLTOP III proved to be an extremely worthwhile training exercise for all participants. In spite of modifications necessitated by a change in concept to conform more closely to operation DOUBLE EAGLE, it is felt that the exercise objectives, as modified, were successfully accomplished.

c. Recommendation. That similar HILLTOP type exercises be scheduled for SLF BLT's prior to their commitment in RVN operations.

2. a. Comment. Use of Aggressor Forces.

b. Discussion. The limited time frame in which to conduct the planning and subsequent operation precluded the use of aggressor forces. Although it is recognized that aggressors add realism to the problem, create additional intelligence play, and cause more troop interest, the lack of an aggressor force did not materially degrade the exercise.

c. Recommendation. Time and situation permitting, the use of an aggressor force is recommended; however care should be exercised to ensure that sufficient planning time is allotted to ensure close integration of the aggressor plan to attain the troop exercise objectives.

3. a. Comment. The area for HILLTOP III was not large enough for a two BLT size operation.

b. Discussion. The area originally selected for HILLTOP III was designed for only a one BLT operation. The resultant modification with two BLT's employed was not accompanied by a corresponding increase in area.

c. Recommendation. That liaison with CINCPACREP PHIL make provisions to allow for changing the exact area to conform to the size force actually used.

4. a. Comment. SOP type HILLTOP order.

b. Discussion. If, as presently indicated, the SLF BLT's will conduct a "HILLTOP" type exercise on a continuing basis, the availability of an SOP type order would greatly outdown the planning time required.

c. Recommendation. That such an order be developed utilizing the HILLTOP III order as a basis, and Mindoro as the exercise area.

5. a. Comment. Duration of the exercise.

b. Discussion. The time allotted for operations ashore was inadequate to fully exercise the BLT's. This was particularly evident at the company level where some companies had to prepare for withdrawal shortly after landing. This was dictated in this particular situation by the overall time schedule; however in future operations time ashore should be sufficient to allow all units to function effectively.

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c. Recommendation. That time ashore be a minimum of two days with withdrawal executed on D plus 2.

6. a. Comment. The CLF must be fully appraised of all arrangements and coordination of activities that occur between CINCPACPHIL REP and agencies external to the landing force and the Government of the Republic of the Philippines.

b. Discussion. Certain minor instances occurred during HILLTOP III which could have been avoided by adherence to more formalized coordination procedures. One such incident involved confusion as to the location of Handclasp supplies in San Jose. On another occasion, prior to the termination of the exercise, there was some difficulty in locating a claims officer.

c. Recommendation. That CINCPACPHIL REP publish to the landing force, a detailed schedule of events that he has coordinated to include those activities of agencies external to the Landing Force. Further, that CINCPACPHIL REP make no commitments involving the Landing Force without prior consultation with and notification to the Landing Force Commander.

7. a. Comment. That the Officer Conducting the Exercise (OGE) be allowed more flexibility in interpreting the basic Letter of Instruction (LOI).

b. Discussion. The changes brought about by the modification of the initial HILLTOP III LOI necessitated numerous small changes that could have been settled easily at the Task Group level but required confirmation by higher authority.

c. Recommendation. That the OGE be granted the authority necessary to ensure flexibility in the planning and execution of future HILLTOP exercises.

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ROUTINE

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R 291314Z

FM: CTG 76.5

TO: COMSEVENTHFLT

INFO: CTF 76/CTF 79/COMNAVPHIL/CINCPAC RMPHIL/CTG 79.5

EXERCISE HILLTOP IV POST EXERCISE REPORT (U)

A. COMSEVENTHFLT LTR SER 6-051 OF 25 FEB 66

B. CTG 76.5 OORDER 304-66

THIS IS A CTG 76.5/CTG 79.5 MESSAGE

1. CHRONOLOGY

12 MAR TG 76.5 UNDERWAY SUBIC FOR TABONES FIRING COMPLEX TO CONDUCT FIREX/CASEX. ALL UNITS FIRED WITH EXCEPTION OF ALAMO, WHO COULD NOT COMMUNICATE WITH SFCP.

PRE R-DAY TRANSFERS CONDUCTED AT NIGHT FOLLOWING FIREX IN OPEN SEA. SHIPS NIGHT-STEAMED IN LOCAL OPAREAS AND PREPARED FOR REHEARSAL LANDING GREEN BEACH SUBIC BAY.

13 MAR HELICOPTERBORNE AND WATERBORNE SHIP-TO-SHORE LANDINGS CONDUCTED. H-HOUR 0600H - L-HOUR 0610H. CRITIQUE AND PRE-SAIL CONFERENCE HELD IN PRINCETON AFTER BACKLOADING.

14 MAR

0455 COMMENCED PRE D-DAY TRANSFERS AT ANCHOR SUBIC BAY.

0800 TG 76.5 SORTIED FOR SAN JOSE MINDORO.

15 MAR

0600 H-HOUR RED BEACH.

0610 L-HOUR HDZ SPARECM.

16 MAR

0500 W-HOUR SIGNALLD. COMMENCED TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL OF ALL UNITS FLT 1/5 BY HELICOPTER AND BOAT

1200 ANDERSON DETACHED.

1430 TACTICAL WITHDRAWAL COMPLETED

1600 TG 76.5 UNDERWAY FOR SUBIC BAY

2. DEGREE OF ATTAINMENT OF EXERCISE OBJECTIVES:

A. GENERAL COMMENTS. SINCE THE COMPOSITION OF TG 76.5 SHIPPING HAD BEEN RECENTLY CHANGED AND THE EMBARKED FLT 1/5 HAD NOT PREVIOUSLY ENCOUNTERED ARG/SLF OPERATIONS, IN PARTICULAR HELICOPTERBORNE OPERATIONS, THE EXERCISE PROVIDED AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO BEND ALL THESE FORCES TOGETHER AND OBTAIN THE MAXIMUM AMOUNT OF DIVERSIFIED TRAINING IN THE SHORTEST TIME FRAME POSSIBLE.

TG 79.5 (SLF)

2/12 HILLTOP IV

12-16 MAR 66

Tab 9

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B. JOINT TRAINING OBJECTIVES. NO MAJOR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED. CURRENT DOCTRINE REGARDING HELICOPTERBORNE AND WATERBORNE SHIP-TO-SHORE MOVEMENT WAS TESTED AND FOUND ADEQUATE IN ALL RESPECTS. AMPHIBIOUS WITHDRAWAL UNDER EXERCISE CONDITIONS WAS SATISFACTORY. FIRE SUPPORT PROCEDURES WERE SATISFACTORY ALTHOUGH SOME DIFFICULTIES PREVENTED FULL ATTAINMENT OF TRAINING OBJECTIVES.

C. NAVY OBJECTIVES. NO MAJOR PROBLEMS ENCOUNTERED IN ATTAINMENT OF THESE OBJECTIVES. DUE TO OTHER OPERATIONAL COMMITMENTS WHICH NECESSITATED THE SCALING DOWN OF THE EXERCISE NO CLANDESTINE BEACH RECONNAISSANCE OR OPPOSED UNLIFT CONDUCTED WHILE ENROUTE TO THE AOA, AND NO SWIMMER OR SMALL BOAT ATTACKS CONDUCTED.

D. MARINE OBJECTIVES. THE LANDING FORCE EXERCISE OBJECTIVES OF AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION PLANNING, HELICOPTER OPERATIONS, AND SURFACEBORNE SHIP-TO-SHORE MOVEMENT WERE TESTED AND THE DOCTRINE FOUND TO BE ADEQUATE. HILLTOP IV WAS CONSIDERED AN EXCELLENT OPPORTUNITY TO EXERCISE AND ACQUAINT BLT 1/5 WITH ARG/SLF PROCEDURES AND FURTHER REFINED THE TACTICAL SKILLS OF ITS SMALL UNITS. IN ADDITION TO THE REFINEMENT OF INFANTRY SKILLS, THE TACP AND SFCP WERE ALSO EXERCISED AND AFFORDED EXCELLENT TRAINING THROUGH PARTICIPATION IN THE CASEX/FIREX. ALTHOUGH THE LACK OF AGGRESSOR ACTIVITY, DUE TO THE COMPRESSED PLANNING TIME, SOMEWHAT DETRACTED FROM THE REALISM OF THE EXERCISE, THIS DID NOT MATERIALLY DEGRADE THE ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THE STATED OBJECTIVES. IT IS CONSIDERED, HOWEVER, THAT FUTURE HILLTOP EXERCISES SHOULD INCLUDE AGGRESSOR FORCES, IF AT ALL PRACTICABLE. IN CONCLUSION, HILLTOP IV WAS CONSIDERED AN EXCELLENT TRAINING VEHICLE AND MATERIALLY CONTRIBUTED TO BLT 1/5'S READINESS FOR FORTHCOMING SPECIAL OPERATIONS.

3. COMMENTS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

A. FIREX/CASEX

COMMENT. MAJOR PROBLEM ENCOUNTERED WAS FAULTY COMMUNICATIONS. AS A RESULT BACC TRAINING WAS LIMITED AND FULL COORDINATION BETWEEN NGF AND CAS NOT ACHIEVED. USS ANDERSON PERFORMANCE OUTSTANDING. PREPARATION, PARTICULARLY BATTERY ALIGNMENT, EXCELLENT. PARTICIPATION BY PRINCETON AND PICKAWAY PROVED ONCE AGAIN THAT AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS CAN PROVIDE NGF SUPPORT IF REQUIRED TO SUPPLEMENT ASSIGNED NGF SHIPS. VHF(A) 214 PROVIDED EXCELLENT PARTICIPATION FOR THE EXERCISE OF TAC.

RECOMMENDATION. AMPHIBIOUS SHIPS RECEIVE CONTINUAL TRAINING IN GUNNERY FOR SELF PROTECTION AND FROM THE VIEWPOINT THAT THEY CAN PROVIDE LIMITED NGFS IN EMERGENCIES WHEN OTHER SOURCES ARE NOT AVAILABLE.

B. CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM

COMMENT. DURING THE SHORT TIME SPAN THAT THE ARG WAS IN THE SAN JOSE AREA A TWO-PART CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM WAS UNDERTAKEN: (1) TO PAINT ONE OF THE LOCAL SCHOOL HOUSES; (2) TO DISTRIBUTE HANDCLASP MATERIAL. SOME DIFFICULTIES WERE

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ENCOUNTERED IN CARRYING OUT THE FIRST PART OF THIS PROGRAM. IT IS BELIEVED THESE COULD HAVE BEEN AVOIDED BY CLOSER LIAISON WITH THE SAN JOSE LOCAL OFFICIALS. MEMBERS OF THE CIVIC ACTION TEAM WERE NOT PROVIDED WITH TRANSPORTATION AT THE BEACH AS PREVIOUSLY ARRANGED. INITIALLY THE MAYOR OF SAN JOSE SEEMED RELUCTANT TO HAVE A SCHOOL PAINTED AT ALL, STATING THAT HE PREFERRED TO HAVE THE PAINT SO HE COULD DO THE JOB WITH LOCAL LABOR. LATER HE DIRECTED THE CITY'S CHIEF ENGINEER TO SELECT THE BUILDING TO BE PAINTED. THE CHIEF ENGINEER WAS SPECIFIC AS TO WHAT BUILDING TO PAINT AND WHEN PAINTING WAS TO BEGIN. BECAUSE OF THESE DELAYS ACTUAL PAINTING DID NOT COMMENCE UNTIL TWO HOURS AFTER THE TEAM ARRIVED AT THE BEACH. THE WORK WAS HAMPERED BY LACK OF SCAFFOLDING, LADDERS AND DROP CLOTHS. ALTHOUGH THE PROJECT COULD NOT BE COMPLETED EVERYONE CONCERNED SEEMED HAPPY AT THE EFFORT EXPENDED AND MATERIALS (65 GALS PAINT AND ASS'T BRUSHES AND ROLLERS) WERE LEFT FOR THE PROJECT TO BE COMPLETED BY LOCAL LABOR AT THE REQUEST OF THE SCHOOL PRINCIPAL. THE SUPERINTENDENT OF EDUCATION PERSONALLY THANKED THE OIC AT THE TIME HE LEFT THE AREA. SOME OF THE BENEFIT THAT CAN ACCRUE FROM CIVIC ACTION PROGRAMS OF THIS TYPE APPEARS TO HAVE BEEN LOST DUE TO THE LACK OF DETAILED ON-THE-SCENE LIAISON WITH LOCAL OFFICIALS. IN THE SECOND PHASE OF THE PROGRAM, HANDCLASP MATERIAL WAS PRESENTED TO LOCAL OFFICIALS FOR LATER DISTRIBUTION TO CITIZENS OF THE COMMUNITY. THE MATERIAL WAS ENTHUSIASTICALLY RECEIVED AND NO DIFFICULTIES WERE ENCOUNTERED IN THIS PHASE OF THE PROGRAM, ALTHOUGH IT IS QUESTIONABLE WHETHER THE LOCAL POLITICAL OFFICIALS ARE THE PROPER POINTS OF CONTACT FOR DISTRIBUTION FOR THIS MATERIAL. ZZZZZZZZ

RECOMMENDATION. (1) THAT COMNAVPHIL ENSURE ADEQUATE LIAISON IS CONDUCTED PRIOR TO UNDERTAKING ANY ADDITIONAL CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS IN FUTURE HILLTOP EXERCISES. (2) THAT HANDCLASP MATERIAL BE DISTRIBUTED THROUGH LOCAL CHARITY OR CHURCH ORGANIZATIONS IN ORDER TO ENSURE DISTRIBUTION TO THOSE WHO ARE IN MOST NEED AND TO ENHANCE THE PRESTIGE OF THESE ORGANIZATIONS.

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PRIORITY

FROM: CTG 79.5

TO: BLT 3/5  
HMM 364INFO: CINCPAC  
CINCPACFLT  
CG FMFPAC  
COMSEVENTHFLT  
CTF 79  
CTF 76  
CTG 76.5  
USS PRINCETON  
USS ALAMO  
USS PICKAWAY  
USS COOK

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OPERATION HILLTOP V

A. COMSEVENTHFLT LOI, HILLTOP SERIES OF 25FEB66

B. CTG 76.5 OPORD 330-66

C. CTG 79.5 OPORD 330-66 DTD 12MAY66

TIME ZONE: HOTEL

THIS IS CTG 79.5 MSG FRAG ORD #1 FOR THE CONDUCT OF OPN HILLTOP V. REF B(B AND (C) ARE THE BASIC ORDERS FOR ALL HILLTOP EXERCISES. THIS MSG SUPPLEMENTS REF C AND PROVID SPECIFIC INFORMATION AND INSTRUCTIONS FOR THE CONDUCT OF HILLTOP V.

## 1. SITUATION.

A. WEATHER, ENEMY, TERRAIN, HYDRO, ASTRO AND TIDAL DATA.

(1) WEATHER: THE MONTH OF MAY IS A TRANSITION PERIOD BETWEEN THE N.E. AND S.W. MONSOONS AND PRECEDES THE RAINY SEASON WHICH BEGINS IN LATE JUNE. SHOWERS AND MODERATE RAINFALL CAN BE EXPECTED DURING THIS PERIOD. THE WEATHER IS GENERALLY HOT WITH TEMPERATURES IN THE HIGH 80'S ACCOMPANIED BY RELATIVELY HIGH HUMIDITY.

(2) ENEMY: IAW ANNEX B TO REF A AND HILLTOP V INTSUMS.

(3) TERRAIN: DURING THIS PERIOD, TERRAIN WILL BE DRY AND EASILY TRAFFICABLE FOR TRACKED VEHICLES AND FOOT TROOPS. THE SAN JOSE AIRFIELD LOCATED AT (TP 8767) IS 3600 FT LONG AND IS RATED AT C-47 CAPACITY. HIZ'S ABOUND THROUGHOUT THE ACA. SEE ANNEX B REF C FOR FURTHER DETAILED TERRAIN INFORMATION.

(4) BEACH DATA: SEE TAB A (LANDING BEACH) TO APPENDIX 1 (INTELLIGENCE ESTIMATE) TO ANNEX B (INTELLIGENCE) TO REF (C).

(5) ASTRO DATA:

DATE	BMNT	SUNRISE	SUNSET	BENT	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONPHASE
24	0439	0529	1815	1904	0843	2209	CRESENT <i>Tab R</i>

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DATE	BMNT	SUNRISE	SUNSET	BENT	MOONRISE	MOONSET	MOONPHASE
25	0438	0529	1815	1905	0940	2303	1ST QTR
26	0438	0529	1815	1905	1052	2355	1ST QTR
27	0438	0529	1815	1905	1151	—	1ST QTR
28	0438	0529	1815	1906	1248	0039	1ST QTR

## (6) TIDAL DATA:

DATE	TIME	HEIGHT
25	1235(H)	4.7
	2206(L)	-0.8
26	1327(H)	4.5
	2303(L)	-0.6
27	1428(H)	4.1
	2352(L)	-0.4
28	1543(H)	3.7
	0032(L)	-0.1
	1708(H)	3.2

## B. FRIENDLY FORCES:

(1) CTG 76.5 PROVIDES TRANSPORT, NAVAL GUNFIRE, LOGISTICAL, RECON, UDT AND EJU SUPPORT.

(A) USS COCK PROVIDES NGF SUPPORT COMMENCING H-15

(2) CTG 79.3 PROVIDE RED BEACH PREP H-15 TO H-5; OTHER SUPPORT IAW ANNEX, G? REF C.

2. MISSION: SEE REF C.

3. EXECUTION: CONDUCT OPNS IAW REF C.

## A. COORDINATING INST IAW REF C AND BELOW:

## (1) REHEARSAL - (GREEN BEACH)

- a. D-DAY - 23 MAY 1966.
- b. H-HOUR AND L-HOUR - TBA.
- c. PRE-D-DAY TRANSFER - 22 MAY 1966.

## (2) HILLTOP V

- a. S-DAY - 23 MAY 1966.
- T-HOUR - 2200H TENTATIVE.
- b. D-DAY - 25 MAY 1966.
- c. PRE D-DAY TRANSFERS - 24 MAY 1966
- d. W-HOUR - TBA

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## (3) CHALLENGE AND PASSWORDS:

a. DATE	CODE
24 MAY66	14
25 MAY66	17
26 MAY66	23
27 MAY66	31
28 MAY66	44

## 4. ADMIN AND LOG: IAW REF C.

A. PUB AFFAIRS - IAW REF C.

## 5. CMD AND COMM-ELECT:

A. CMD POSTS. IAW REF C

B. COMMUNICATIONS. IAW REF C. ~~FREQS~~ TO BE PROMULGATED SEPARATELY.

C. CALL SIGNS. IAW REF B AND C AND BELOW:

BLT 3/5	GLOVE
HMM 364	WHITEGOLD
PRINCETON	BULLHORN
PICKAWAY	KEY BROOK GOLF
ALAMO	DITTY BOE ALFA
COOK	CAPETOWN BRAVO

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HEADQUARTERS  
Special Landing Force  
USS PRINCETON (LPH-5)  
FPO San Francisco 96601

3:TEG:jds  
Ser: 02-66  
14 June 1966

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From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet (CTF 79)

Subj: HILLTOP V - Post Exercise Report

Ref: (a) COMSEVENTHFLT ltr 3010 Ser N6-051 of 25Feb66  
(b) CINCPACFLT 040518Z May66 (NOTAL)  
(c) CTG 76.5 280604Z May66  
(d) CTG 76.5 Operation Order 330-66  
(e) CTG 79.5 Operation Order 330-66  
(f) BLT 3/5 Operation Order 330-66

Encl: (1) BLT 3/5 After Action Report for HILLTOP V  
(2) HMM 364 After Action Report for HILLTOP V *joined up*

1. General.

a. Exercise HILLTOP V was conducted during the period 25-27 May 1966 in the vicinity of San Jose, Mindoro Island, R.P. The assigned objectives set forth in reference (a) were modified by reference (b) to the extent that no CASEX-FIREX was conducted at Tabones prior to the exercise.

b. Reference (c) is a joint CTG 76.5/CTG 79.5 Post Exercise Report for HILLTOP V submitted in accordance with reference (a). Enclosures (1) and (2) contain the After Action Reports of the subordinate units within the Landing Force. This report amplifies portions of reference (c) pertaining to the Landing Force.

2. Summary of Significant Items.

a. Planning Phase.

(1) CTG 76.5 was CATF and promulgated his operation order (reference (d)) on 16 May 1966. Reference (e) is CTG 79.5 basic operation order for the conduct of HILLTOP exercises and was used on HILLTOP V for the first time augmented by CTG 79.5 Frag Order published on 18 May. During the conduct of this exercise the basic Operation Order proved adequate and only minor changes are required to certain annexes within the order.

(2) Initial planning presented no major problems from the Landing Force point of view except that pre-arranged NGF on landing beaches and HIZ's was not prepared as alternate fire support means in the event air was not available. This requirement will be positively stated in future plans and orders.

7.9.79.5(SLEF) a/c HILLTOP V 25-27 May 1966

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b. Execution Phase.

(1) Operations. Adverse weather conditions which existed throughout the exercise placed heavy commitments on the helos for lifts that would normally have been handled by organic means. Movement ashore of wheeled and tracked vehicles was restricted to existing roads, and high water in streams and rivers required the BLT to modify the withdrawal plan from the HLZ's and the beach.

(2) Communications.

(a) HF communications between the SLF Headquarters and the BLT ashore was established utilizing the AN/URC-32 aboard ship and the PRC-47 ashore. This circuit proved completely reliable throughout the exercise; no problems were encountered in utilization of the BS-451 batteries.

(b) FM communication was marginal to poor throughout the operation due to the limited range of the AN/PRC-8, 9 and 10 radios. Part of the trouble was attributed to shipboard FM equipment and associated antennas. Also, no capability existed on board to align the shipboard and BLT FM radio equipment.

(c) Radio relay (AN/MRC-62) was landed late on D-Day and was established inland between the BLT CP and the ship on D+1. This circuit was marginal due to shipboard equipment problems and the fact that its location for maximum effectiveness was limited due to the restricted movement in the objective area.

(d) Upon completion of Exercise HILLTOP V the ARG/SLF returned to Subic Bay for upkeep, training and maintenance. At that time all ship and BLT FM radio equipment and associated antennas were given a complete overhaul; in addition the ship received a FM signal generator which should eliminate any equipment alignment problems in future operations.

(3) Provisional Rifle Company. This unit was organized from artillery, motor transport, tank and anti-tank units. It was activated on D-1 and landed by surface means to provide CP security for the BLT, thereby releasing one rifle company for search and destroy operations. Reference (f) did not provide for activation of this unit, however no problems were experienced in establishing the company.

(4) Supporting Arms. Due to poor weather CAS was not available during the exercise and heavy reliance was placed on artillery and NGF to provide fire support for the BLT. Coordination of supporting arms was passed ashore late on D-Day; however, control remained aboard ship within the SACC.

3. Objectives.

a. Major Joint Objectives. All objectives set forth in reference (a) were accomplished with the exception of testing and evaluating procedures in the

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conduct of close air support. This could not be tested due to unfavorable weather which precluded utilization of CAS. Intelligence information developed prior to the commencement of the exercise materially assisted the BLT in the preparation of their operation order. The insertion of reconnaissance units into the AOA resulted not only in additional exercise intelligence data but also actual information on conditions ashore which proved invaluable to the BLT in completing final plans.

b. Major Marine Corps Objectives. With the exception of the TACP, which was limited to helicopter control all objectives were accomplished on HILLTOP V. The implementation of the high surf plan brought to light certain weaknesses in maintaining continued NGF support during the withdrawal phase; however corrective action has been taken for institution of procedures to ensure continuous NGF support in subsequent operations.

#### 4. Observations.

a. HILLTOP V again highlighted the requirement for a sure means of communications when operating over extended distances. The AN/PRC-8, 9 and 10 radios are at most a marginal means of contact under conditions of widely separated units in rugged terrain and dense foliage.

b. In the event that a FIREX/CASEX cannot be accomplished prior to a HILLTOP exercise, a SACC/FSCC CPX is essential to insure smooth operations of these units in control and coordination of supporting arms.

c. All other items contained in enclosure (1) and (2) are being resolved within the SLF and lessons learned will be passed to subsequent BLT and HMM units assigned to the SLF.

*R. A. Brenneman*  
R. A. BRENNEMAN

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## REFERENCES

1. The following documents referenced in the report have been previously submitted:

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 324-66 (DOUBLE EAGLE) SAC 287 827

BLT 2/3 OPN ORDER 324-66 (DOUBLE EAGLE)

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 328-66 (JACKSTAY) \*

File 1/5 - BLT 1/5 OPN ORDER 328-66 (JACKSTAY)

\* 328-66 "BATTEN DOWN" (in  
basic O. SAC 289 800 added)

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 328-66 (OSAGE) \*

File 1/5 - BLT 1/5 OPN ORDER 330-66 (OSAGE)

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 325-66 (HILLTOP III) SAC 287 829

BLT 2/3 OPN ORDER 325-66 (HILLTOP III)

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 329-66 (HILLTOP IV) SAC 289 800

BLT 1/5 OPN ORDER 329-66 (HILLTOP IV)

CTG 79.5 OPN ORDER 330-66 (HILLTOP V)

File 1/5 - BLT 3/5 OPN ORDER 330-66 (HILLTOP V)

See TG 79.5 (SLE): Orders, Jan - Mar, for the  
above [indicated by SAC #]

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Tab T