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HEADQUARTERS
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade, FMF
APO San Francisco, 96002

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3480
29 Sep 1966
Ser: 00146-66

From: Commanding General
To: Commander, 3rd Fleet

Subj: Combat After Action Reports, Operations DESKHOUSE THREE
(PHASE I AND II) and TOLSONO

Ref: (a) CLASPCALT/COMUSMACV agreement of 14 March 1965;
Subj: Anti-sea Infiltration Operations

Encl: (1) subject reports

1. Enclosure (1) is forwarded for information and such further action as deemed appropriate.
2. Of particular importance during the planning phase was the failure to confirm the source for close air support so that adequate and timely liaison could be established. Compliance with reference (a) should alleviate this problem in the future.
3. The remainder of the operations included no variation or deviation from doctrine and no unusual problems were encountered.

M. P. RYAN

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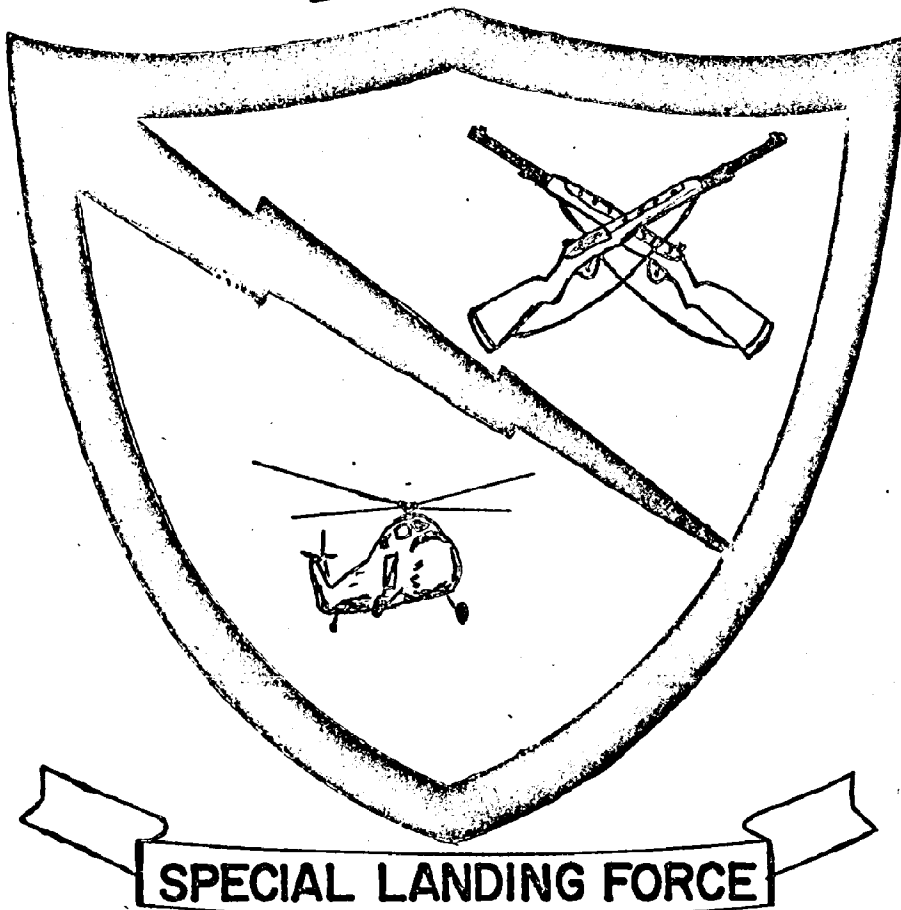
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AFTER ACTION REPORT DECK HOUSE THREE

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4. Intelligence

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a. Terrain. The amphibious objective area is characterized by jungle, swamps, and brush covered plains. Elevation varied from 100 to 200 meters until the mountainous area of the MAY TAO Mountain is reached in the northwest and NUE BE Mountain in the northeast. Several streams are interspersed throughout the area and are usually overflowing during the month of August. Lowland areas are flooded and make trafficability poor for ground troops. Vegetation consists of one and two canopy jungle with thick secondary brush and along the coast there is heavy brush and swamp grass. A dirt road parallels the beach approximately 1,000 meters inland. The trail network in the area was heavily used but could not be seen from the air. Trafficability throughout the AOA is fair to poor.

b. Beach Study. Blue Beach (YS 831699) is a straight beach extending in a northwest - southeast direction and is 300 meters long. The beach averages 85 meters in width and the offshore and nearshore approaches are unrestricted. Composition of the beach is soft sand which is firm in wetted areas. The beach gradient of the foreshore is 1:37. The beach is backed by high massive dunes, 20 to 35 feet, dropping almost vertically to an extensive swampy and marshy area. The swamp and marsh extends inland 500 to 600 meters to low cultivated rice paddies which is further backed by dense vegetation that extends well inland. Troops could move by foot across the beach to a foottrail located at the left flank. This trail leads through the swamp and marsh areas to the rice paddies eventually connecting with the loose surfaced road. Numerous foot tracks lead further inland. There were no track or wheeled vehicle exits off the beach.

c. Pre-D-Day Intelligence. Intelligence indicated that the amphibious objective area had been under absolute control of the VC for at least one year. No RVN or U. S. military operations had been conducted in this area for the past year and a half. The 5th VC Division Headquarters, located in the MAY TAO Secret Zone, has two subordinate Main Force Regiments, the 274th and 275th, each with three battalions. The base area in the MAY TAO Secret Zone, being a major supply and training installation, allows Main Force units to operate freely in BINH TUY, PHUOC TUY, and LONG KHANH Provinces. Infiltration routes have been reported along the east from vicinity of coordinates YS 814638 to 827699. These routes run in a northerly direction, following numerous trails, to the MAY TAO Secret Zone. The base area (YS 820920) is believed to have sufficient food stored to feed 10,000 troops for one year. All persons in the area were considered VC or VCS.

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d. Order of Battle.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATIONS</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEAPONS</u>
5th VC Div CP	YS 780815	6Aug66	
274th Regt	YS 810790	6Aug66	12-60mm Mortars 8-81mm Mortars
1st Bn	YS 700755	6Aug66	12-IMG 5-57mm RR
2nd Bn	YS 815735	6Aug66	3-75mm RR 3-12.7mm MG
3rd Bn	Unknown		Assorted small arms & automatic weapons
275th Regt	YT 770091	6Aug66	6-81mm Mortars 16-60mm Mortars
1st Bn	Unknown		10-57mm RR 12-12.7mm MG
2nd Bn	Unknown		18-50 Cal MG 8-30 Cal MG
3rd Bn	Unknown		Assorted small arms & automatic weapons

e. Enemy Contact. No substantial contact was made with elements listed above during the operations. There was no positive identification of any enemy units. Resistance ashore consisted of sporadic sniper fire.

5. Mission. As directed by COMSEVENTHFLT msg 140424Z (Initiating Directive), the mission of the Landing Force was to conduct search and destroy amphibious operations against VC/NVA forces in the amphibious objective area in Tinh Binh Thuy Province and/or other operations as agreed with CG, II FFORCEV in conjunction with Operation TOLEDO. In conjunction with CG, II FFORCEV the mission was further refined to include the establishment of blocking positions to support the 173rd Airborne Brigade.

6. Concept of Operation. The operation was planned as a seven to ten day search and destroy operation. The concept provided for waterborne and heliborne amphibious assault to rapidly seize assigned Landing Force Objectives and establish blocking positions in support of the 173rd Airborne Brigade. Execution was to be characterized by inherent shock capability, aggressive mobility of maneuver elements, and utilization of maximum supporting fires. Upon conclusion of the operation, the Landing Force was to conduct a tactical withdrawal.

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7. Execution. Operation DECKHOUSE THREE was executed in accordance with CTG 79.5 OpOrd 328-66 supplemented with a Frag Order published for the Binh Thuy area. By D plus 1 the Landing Force had established blocking positions in the northern portion of the AOA. (See enclosures (1) and (2) After Action Reports of BLT 1/26 and HMM 363 for details of this execution.)

8. Results. See enclosure (1).

9. Commanders Analysis.

a. Planning.

(1) Planning for DECKHOUSE THREE was initiated upon receipt of COMUSMACV msg 091202Z Aug66. During the period 11-15 August CTG 79.5/76.5 and staff representatives established liaison with CG, II FFORCEV, Long Binh, RVN. Additional liaison visits were made to Headquarters, 10th ARVN Division, 173rd Airborne Brigade and U. S. Advisors at the Ham Tan Sector Headquarters. Aerial reconnaissance of the AOA was conducted during this period, this included selection of the landing beach, HLZ's, and Landing Force Objectives.

(2) On D-Day minus one HMM 363 and BLT 1/26 conducted an aerial reconnaissance of the AOA.

(3) During the planning phase, and until early on D-Day the source of CAS for the operation had not been confirmed. Accordingly, plans were prepared to accomodate CAS from either in-country or SEVENTHFLT sources. The delay in confirming source of CAS eventually resulted in delaying H and L Hour by one hour.

b. Intelligence. Prior to DECKHOUSE THREE arrangements were made for maps, aerial photography, ITT, Red Haze, SPAR, and distribution of II FFORCEV and 173rd ABN BDE daily ISUMs.

(1) As previous intelligence had indicated, the 5th VC Division and subordinate units had moved to the west. This was evident by the lack of enemy activity in the AOA. The only significant contact occurred on D plus 3 when the Div ReconPlt engaged an estimated 30 VC at YS 753725. After a short intense fire fight the VC broke contact.

c. Command Relationships. Operation DECKHOUSE THREE was a unilateral amphibious operation with command relationships in accordance with NWP-22 (A) and JCS Pub 2, UNAAF.

d. Supporting Arms.

(1) Due to the deep inland objectives, NGF support was essential during the operation. A heavy cruiser provided the ATF adequate NGF

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coverage in the AOA and in addition provided NGF support to the 173rd Airborne Brigade operating north of the AOA. Additionally, one destroyer and a LSMR were assigned as NGF support ships.

(2) The source of Close Air Support for DECKHOUSE THREE was not identified until H minus 4 on D-Day. At that time the 7th Air Force was assigned responsibility for providing CAS. The effectiveness of AF CAS was satisfactory from the standpoint of aircraft provided, control of air when on station, and accuracy of fire. Communications aspects were less than satisfactory. The TAR net to home base proved to be unreliable and communications by any other circuit with home base was slow. A summary of communications performance on the LPH TAR Net indicates that during 50% of the period of the operation there was no communications between 7th AF and the ARG, 30% of the time period communications between 7th AF and ARG TACC was via relay and 20% of the time period ARG TACC and 7th AF were in direct communications on the TAR Net. An adequate opportunity for early planning/coordination with the Air Force, exchange of liaison officers, and the employment of airborne communications relay would diminish the problem.

e. Logistics. Prior to commencement of Operation DECKHOUSE THREE (Phase I) liaison was established with II FFORCEV to coordinate possible SLF logistical support requirements. Logistic support during Phase I was provided solely from the assets of the SLF. All supplies were delivered directly to units ashore by helo from ARG shipping. Logistic support of the BLT ashore was adequate and responsive to requirements with minimal expenditure of all classes of supply. Evacuation of the one KIA from the LPH was accomplished through the 93rd Evacuation Hospital located at Long Binh.

f. Communications.

(1) Communications nets were activated at H-1 on D-Day with no delay and were maintained throughout DECKHOUSE THREE with a minimum downtime. Communications between the ARG; CG, II FFORCEV; and the 173rd ABN BDE, via the secure on-line circuit was intermittent and an unreliable means of providing a rapid exchange of information.

(2) The radio sets AN/PRC-25 and remote sets AN/GRC-39A were invaluable. This equipment was employed on spot nets aboard the NGF support ships, in the Supporting Arms Coordination Center, and as back up for the VHF/FM radio equipment employed by the SLF aboard ship.

(3) Radio Relay was established at H plus 12 on D-Day. This circuit consisted of an AN/MRC-62 ashore and an AN/GRC-10 aboard ship. The radio relay remained operative throughout the operation and facilitated rapid and reliable communications between the SLF Headquarters and the BLT.

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The numerous VHF/FM frequencies assigned the SLF often caused interference and sometimes cancelled out the radio relay circuit. This required frequent changes of assigned frequencies in order to maintain the radio relay circuit on a non interference basis.

(4) Communications between the SLF Headquarters and the BLT ashore was maintained on Landing Force Tactical Net #1 and 2 and BLT Tactical Net #1. Landing Force Tactical Net #1 (VHF/FM) was programmed to utilize shipboard receiver-transmitter 524/VRC or a receiver-transmitter-68/GRC and an AN/PRC-25 ashore. The equipment aboard ship proved unsatisfactory as the RT-524/VRC was not operational and the RT-68/GRC could not effectively receive or transmit due to the long operating distance between the ship and forces ashore. A back-up radio set AN/MRC-109 or AN/PRC-25 was required to keep this net operational. The Landing Force Tactical Net #2 (HF/SSB) utilized a URC-32 aboard ship and a AN/PRC-47 ashore. Minor problems arose with ship board equipment and back up radio equipment and the AN/MRC-83/87 or an AN/PRC-47 was employed until shipboard equipment was operational. The BLT Tactical Net #1 (VHF/FM) employed a receiver-transmitter 524/VRC with either an AN/MRC 109 or AN/PRC-25. This net was monitored by the SLF Headquarters.

(5) One problem persists with every operation, and that is obtaining frequencies from those assigned to the SLF that are propagative during that month. This is further complicated by the fact that the ship is capable of employing only a portion of these accepted frequencies due to the limitations imposed by the transmitter coupler system aboard the present flag ship. In addition, the close proximity of the HF/AM/SSB Transmitters aboard ship creates much interference and may further reduce the effectiveness of usable frequencies.

(6) Interference by other nets was encountered on all VHF/FM assigned frequencies for brief periods of time and in some instances during the entire operation. This will continue to be a problem due to the numerous subscribers and limited number of frequencies within the AN/PRC-25 range.

(7) Had a more demanding requirement existed for HF/SSB nets and radios ashore the BB 451/U power supply for the AN/PRC-47 radio sets would have been critical. The twenty BB 451/U power supply provided the SLF as a special allowance arrived less electrolyte required for activation.

g. Tactical Air Observation. During Operation DECKHOUSE THREE (Phase I) tactical air observation was employed extensively in support of the Special Landing Force and its supporting arms. The SLF air observer utilized the UH-1E aircraft provided by MAG 36. Because of

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the wide separation of units and the double canopied jungle terrain, the TAO not only provided necessary control of supporting arms but also assisted in providing orientation and direction to tactical units during the ground maneuvers.

h. Psychological Warfare Operation. The BJU Detachment assisted the 173rd ABN BDE in providing loudspeaker operations in the area north of the SLF AOA. One mission was flown on D plus 2 broadcasting surrender appeals to suspected VC units.

i. Civic Action. The entire AOA was designated a Specified Strike Zone by COMUSMACV. No villages or populated areas were located in the AOA thus precluding civic action programs during DECKHOUSE THREE (Phase I).

PART II DECKHOUSE THREE PHASE II/OPERATION TOLEDO

Map Reference: AMS L701 1:50,000 Sheets 6442, I, II, III, IV

1. Phase II of Operation DECKHOUSE THREE commenced 40 hours after completion of SLF withdrawal from the phase I AOA with a combined surfaceborne and heliborne assault approximately 20 kilometers south of the Phase I beach. Phase II was a unilateral amphibious operation in continued support of CG, II FFORCEV Operation TOLEDO and resulted from heavy contact by the 1st Australian Task Force (1st ATF) with elements of the 5th VC Division in the vicinity of YS 479672.

2. The operation commenced on 22 August, 1966, at 0800H with the landing of surfaceborne assault forces on Green Beach (YS 688589) and a helo lifted assault force into IZ Dove (YS 645645) at 0830H. At 1200H on 24 August 1966, the SLF was CHOPPED to CG, II FFORCEV. At 2400H on 28 August 1966 OPCON of the Special Landing Force reverted to CATF in order to execute the withdrawal of the Special Landing Force. Operation DECKHOUSE THREE Phase II terminated at 291630H upon completion of the withdrawal.

a. Messages which resulted in the initiation of DECKHOUSE THREE Phase II and the subsequent passage of OPCON to CG, II FFORCEV for participation in Operation TOLEDO are as follows:

(1) COMUSMACV 201317Z - Request ARG/SLF continue Operation DECKHOUSE THREE Phase II approximately 20KM Southwest of Phase I landing area.

(2) CINCPACFLT 201738Z - Approved COMUSMACV request making ARG/SIF available during period 22-25Aug66.

(3) CG, II FFORCEV 210902Z - Frag Order to Op 27-66 (Op TOLEDO).

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(4) COMSEVENTHFLT 210948Z - Initiating directive for DECKHOUSE THREE Phase II.

(5) COMSEVENTHFLT 231626Z - Extended ARG/SLF until 27 August 1966.

(6) COMUSMACV 240023Z - Requested that SLF be CHOPPED OPCON to CG, II FFORCEV effective 241200H.

(7) CTG 79.5 240122Z - Reported Landing Force firmly established ashore and recommended termination of the amphibious operation.

(8) CTG 76.5 240342Z - Terminated amphibious portion of DECKHOUSE THREE Phase II and directed SLF CHOP to CG, II FFORCEV effective 241200H.

(9) COMSEVENTHFLT 240630Z - Confirmed CTG 76.5 termination message and provided guidance for reconstitution of the SLF.

(10) CTG 76.5 281508Z - Assumed OPCON of SLF effective 282400H and reconstituted AOA for withdrawal.

3. Task Organization. The task organization of the SLF remained unchanged from DECKHOUSE THREE Phase I.

4. Intelligence.

a. Terrain. The area of operations is characterized by a brush and swamp covered plain. Numerous levees and dikes varying two to three feet in height are located throughout the lowland areas. Many streams and swamps back the beach area. Most streams have steep banks and low natural levees. Two large rivers located in this area, the RACH SONG CAI and SONG BA DAP, flow seaward and converge at coordinates YS 585575. Lowland areas are mostly flooded June through December and make trafficability poor for ground troops. Vegetation is thick secondary brush with heavy swamp grass. A dirt road parallels the beach approximately 6 miles inland.

b. Beach Study. Brown Beach (YS 664580) is a slightly concave beach 1100 meters long all of which is usable. The right flank (east) terminates at a rocky point from which numerous rocks extend out into the surf. The left flank (west) of the beach terminates at a less defined sandy point. The average width of the beach is 85 meters and is composed of soft sand which is firm in wetted areas. The beach gradient is 1:30 to 1:45 from low water to high water increasing to 1:10 to 1:20 at high water. The nearshore approach is partially obstructed by partly drying shoals as far as 15 nautical miles from beach center. Brown Beach is backed by sparse

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brush covered dunes that extend inland for approximately 600 meters followed by dense vegetation which extends well inland. Troops and vehicles (wheeled and tracked) are able to exit the beach at the right flank by an unimproved dirt road leading inland from a village located in the same area. Green Beach (YS 685587) is located east of the rocky point marking the right flank of Brown Beach and has the same general characteristics as Brown Beach. The seaward approaches to Green Beach were unrestricted; however, the beach is backed by massive dunes which drop off sharply on the inland side to dense vegetation. Exits over the dunes are limited to foot troops and vehicles had to travel laterally along the shore to the exit on the right flank of Brown Beach.

c. Pre-B-Day Intelligence. Intelligence indicates elements of the 5th VC Division were operating in Phuoc Tuy Province. On 10 and 11 August elements of the 274th VC Regiment attacked Phu My (YS 2574) and withdrew eastward to vicinity YS 5388. The 275th VC Regt withdrew east and northeast following the 18th of August attack on the Australian Task Force at YS 4967. It is believed that a good percentage of the 5th VC Division is comprised of North Vietnamese Army personnel. The NVA 721st Anti-Aircraft Company has been infiltrating from the Cambodian border area for the past few months and are integrating with the 5th Division units.

d. Probable Enemy Locations.

(1) On 20Aug66 SPAR reports placed the CP or elements of the 274th Regt at coord YS 530880.

(2) On 21Aug66 SPAR reports placed the CP or elements of the 275th Regt at coord YS 530720.

e. No substantial contact was made with the enemy indicating the enemy's determination to evade contact and to exfiltrate the area of operations.

5. Mission. The assigned mission was to conduct a waterborne and heli-borne amphibious assault to conduct search and destroy operations within the AOA and establish blocking positions on the east bank of the SONG RAI river.

6. Concept of Operation. The concept of operations provided for a waterborne and heliborne assault to rapidly seize landing force objectives and establish blocking positions along the SONG RAI river from vicinity of YS 575680 to YS 615720. Subsequently, to conduct extensive S&D operations within the AOA. Fire support was provided by artillery from a position inland that provided all around support of the AOA.

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Deep fires in the AOA were provided by naval gunfire ships assigned to CATF and air support was furnished by the 7th Air Force. Helo support was provided by HMM 363 operating from the USS Iwo Jima (LPH-2).

7. Execution. See enclosure (1) through (3).

8. Results. See enclosure (1).

9. Commanders Analysis.

a. Planning. The planning period available for the execution of Phase II was extremely limited. No major problems were encountered in developing the landing plan or re-establishing liaison with II FFORCEV. CTG 79.5 OpPlan 328-67 provided basic guidance for subsequent Frag Orders and BLT OpO 328-66 for DECKHOUSE III Phase I was modified by Frag Order as required. An exchange of liaison personnel was arranged on D-minus 1 with II FFORCEV.

b. Intelligence. Prior to the operation intelligence of the intended AOA was up-dated by II FFORCEV and additional maps and aerial photography were obtained. ITT support, Red Haze, and SPAR reports were requested from II FFORCEV.

(1) Liaison was established and maintained throughout the operation with the District Chief at Xuyen Moc. The intelligence information provided by him was timely and accurate.

c. Command Relationships. Command relationships during Phase II were in accordance with NWP 22(A)/LFM-01 until 241200H Aug66 when the SLF was CHOPPED to OPCON of the CG, II FFORCEV. At 282400H Aug66 OPCON reverted to CATF (CTG 76.5).

d. Supporting Arms.

(1) The supporting arms available to the amphibious task force remained essentially as it was for Phase I, i.e., organic artillery of the BLT; NGF consisting of one CA, one DD and one LSMR; and CAS from 7th AF.

(2) Control of artillery and naval gunfire was passed ashore when the Landing Force was firmly established ashore. During the period when SLF was under OPCON CG, II FFORCEV, the SACC afloat monitored the supporting arms nets and acted as a relay when required.

(3) Control of CAS remained with CATF until the SLF was CHOPPED to II FFORCEV. As a result of a liaison visit to Tan Son Nhut it was determined that communications with the DASC located there would be more

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REF ID: A66666

effective than with the previously designated Paris Control used during Phase I. Communications were established between CTG 76.5 TACC and the DASC at Tan Son Nhut and was satisfactory and positive.

(4) During the period SLF was under OPCON of CG, II FFORCEV and control of air was under COMUSMACV, the ATF TACC functioned as a communications relay between SLF ashore and the DASC at Tan Son Nhut.

e. Logistics. Prior to the commencement of Operation DECKHOUSE III Phase II/TOLEDO liaison was established with II FFORCEV to coordinate additional logistic support if required. Arrangements were made to procure selected items of Class I and V from Vung Tau Sub Area Command resources. Resupply to the LPD was accomplished by ICU provided by Vung Tau Sub Area Command. The use of LFORM was held to a minimum in order to retain maximum contingency posture. All supplies were delivered directly to units ashore by helicopters from ARG shipping. Evacuation of 3 KIA's from the LPH was accomplished through the 93rd Evacuation Hospital located at Long Binh.

f. Communications. See Phase I paragraph 9.f.

g. Psychological Warfare Operation. Psychological warfare operations were not employed during Phase II of DECKHOUSE III due to lack of a sizeable enemy force encountered.

h. Civic Action. Two civic action visits were made during Operation DECKHOUSE III Phase II in coordination with the Chief of Xuyen Moc District.

(1) A team composed of SLF Staff and medical/dental personnel from the USS IWO JIMA and BLT 1/26 visited the village of Xuyen Moc (YS 6568) on 23 and 24 August 1966. Approximately 275 patients were treated for a variety of diseases and approximately 50 infected teeth extracted. Soap, clothing, and other medical supplies were distributed.

(2) In addition to the civic action visits, one seriously wounded friendly civilian (wounded by VC) was helo lifted to the LPH for medical treatment.

(3) Medical and dental supplies were furnished from SLF assets. All actions were well received.

10. Comments on Enclosures (1) and (2). The following comments are made to clarify or amplify certain statements, opinions, and recommendations contained in the After Action Report of BLT 1/26 and HMM 363.

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a. Fire Support Coordination Center. (Para 7b) encl (1). Helicopters must obtain the current status of artillery/NGF fire missions prior to entering the AOA. Two sources of information are available to the pilot. First, and most current, is from the BLT ALO located in the BLT FSCC. Second is through HDC since all supporting arms missions (air, artillery and NGF) are passed to HDC for this express purpose.

b. Helicopter operation. (para 7d) encl (1) and Para 2, encl (2) to encl (2).

(1) Two direct support helicopters are normally assigned to the BLT for intra-battalion operations. The increase of two additional helicopters during the initial and final two daylight hours is not warranted since all available helicopters are engaged in resupply during these periods.

(2) It should be noted that prior to assignment to the SLF, BLT 1/26 did not have an opportunity to conduct the requisite helicopter training. The experience gained on DECK HOUSE THREE should eliminate the discrepancies mentioned in enclosure (2).

c. Communications.

(1) Do not concur with the proposal that the BLT be augmented with additional radio personnel to maintain the ship-to-shore tac-log. There are adequate personnel within the BLT to fulfill this requirement.


(2) Both LF Tac #1 and Tac #2 must be activated at all times in order to utilize the advantages inherent in both AM and FM transmissions. The maneuvering of the LPD during flight operations changes distances, antenna attitude, and ship range making it impossible to rely on one means of modulation and wattage output.

(3) During past operations there has been no requirement to employ the radio relay set AN/TRC-27. If the radio relay AN/TRC-27 is to be employed in the future, one man can satisfactorily operate and maintain the AN/GRC-10 aboard ship.

(4) Two radio sets RT 524's are available for use by the Special Landing Force. One RT 524 was employed on the Battalion Tactical Net and one RT 524 was not operational. It is planned to use one of the two radio sets RT 524's on the LF Tac #1 when both are operational.

(5) The radio relay set AN/MRC-62 is required ashore on each operation as the most rapid and reliable means of communication. When the situation arises where it is not feasible for the BLT to lay lines to the radio relay van the artillery battery normally can accomplish this.

(6) Due to limited numbers of frequencies available it was not possible to assign each unit a frequency that would net with the aircraft radio equipment.


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HEADQUARTERS

Battalion Landing Team 1-26
c/o FPO, San Francisco, California 96602

SER:003A 245
3/PDR/dac
3121

2 September 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding Officer, Special Landing Force (CTG 79.5)
Subj: Combat After Action Report for Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I
and PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO

Ref: (a) CTG 79.5 Operation Order 328-67
(b) Maps: AMS L701 6442 I, (1:50,000) XA BINH GIA
AMS L701 6442 II, (1:50,000) XA PHUOC THO
AMS L701 6443 II, (1:50,000) XA THUA-TICH
AMS L701 6542 IV, (1:50,000) AP BINH CHAU
AMS L701 6543 III, (1:50,000) TAN TAO

Encl: (1) Report of DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I +
TAB (a) Operation Overlay
(2) Report of DECKHOUSE III, PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO +
TAB (a) Operation Overlay

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

2. Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I and II/Operation TOLEDO were two separate amphibious operations that utilized surfaceborne and helicopterborne assault forces in both instances. Although the Special Landing Force was placed under the operational control of COMUSMACV by COMSEVENTHFLT at 241200H there was no change of operation title. Direct operational control of the Special Landing Force was exercised by IIFORCEV.

3. D-day for Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I was 160900H. PHASE I ended at 201518H. D-day for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO was 220800H. At 241200H the Special Landing Force was chopped from COMSEVENTHFLT to IIFORCEV. The Special Landing Force reverted to operational control of COMSEVENTHFLT at 282400H. PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO terminated at 291630H.

4. The target area for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I and II/Operation TOLEDO was the coastal lowland of Binh Tuy and Phuoc Tuy provinces. The area was generally an uncultivated plain covered with dense one and two canopy jungle, secondary brush and heavy swamp grass.

5. BLT 1-26 Command Post initially was located aboard the USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2) for PHASE I and II. At 1039H on D-day for PHASE I the Command Post displaced ashore to vicinity of LZ EAGLE YS 829714 where it remained for the duration of PHASE I. At 1030H on D-day for PHASE II the Command Post displaced ashore to the vicinity of LZ HAWK at YS 645700 where it remained for the duration of PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO.

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ENCLOSURE(1)

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SECRET-NOFORN6. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERSa. Logistics(1) Resupply

(a) Routine resupply was requested by using units one day prior to its intended use. Whenever possible, resupply was direct from ships to using units and was programmed to peak during early morning and evening hours. As many as six helicopters were utilized in direct support to provide this service. Rapid resupply was facilitated by simultaneous staging of supplies on both the LHD and LPH. Turn around time was minimized by making maximum use of the LHD as a supply source. (The LHD is generally located closer inshore than the LPH).

(b) The BLT CP landing zone also functioned as a resupply source, providing unit distribution by D+1. Whenever supplies were programmed to be delivered to a unit on the move and a suitable landing site could not be located, supplies were delivered and held at the BLT CP. Two helicopters on standby in the landing zone could then provide 30 minute service to any unit when required. Normally, a 4 to 6 hour lead time must be anticipated for any supply requirements other than routine resupply. Example: special equipment, repair parts, etc.

(c) Emergency resupply was generally limited to Class V items and could be expected to be delivered within one hour.

(2) Maintenance. Organizational maintenance was performed by the respective units. For items requiring 2d or 3d echelon repairs, wherever possible, items were exchanged and returned to the CP or to the ships for repair. This was usually done with small arms and communications equipment. In the event items could not be repaired within an acceptable time frame, they were immediately evacuated to repair facilities aboard the LPH.

(3) Evacuation. The primary method of requesting evacuation was channeled through the S-4, to Tac-Log, and then to the Helicopter Direction Center (HDC). Units in direct communications with Tac-Log could by-pass the S-4 to avoid undue delay. In emergencies, any communications system could be utilized to effect rapid evacuation. Routine evacuees were transported by first available helicopters. Two helicopters were assigned the mission as med-evac helicopters in direct support and on flight-deck alert. Usually these helicopters would be on the scene within thirty minutes. Eventually, these helicopters remained on station at the BLT CP and were available within 15 minutes. Overall, only isolated and minor problems were encountered involving the evacuation of casualties.

(4) Transportation. The helicopter was the primary means of transportation between units ashore and the ships. The M274.2 was used extensively to support resupply in the BLT CP Landing Zone. Four M274.2 provided excellent service. They greatly facilitate the offloading of cargo from helicopters.

(5) Salvage. Recovery of individual equipment from casualties was effected by evacuating the equipment with the casualty, and recovered aboard ship by a unit representative. Other items that in any way could be useful to enemy forces were either returned to the ship for proper disposition or destroyed in place, i.e., tin cans, boxes, food stuffs.

SECRET-NOFORN(6) Communications

(a) BLT Tac-2 netted all units with the S-4 and Tac-Log. This communication system proved highly effective for ordering supplies and requesting medical evacuation. Net Control was established in the S-4 Office. Whenever units could communicate with Tac-Log, supplies were ordered direct from supply point to unit concerned. Normally, units ordered through the S-4 and this proved the better of any systems used.

(b) A separate net was also established as backup between the S-4 ashore and Tac-Log. This consisted of either a PRC-25, PRC-47 or MRC-62. The MRC-62 was used extensively throughout both operations and proved its worth many times over. The MRC-62 was helilifted into the BLT CP Landing Zone (Approximately 8 miles inland) by CH-47 CHINOOK Helicopters.

(7) Tac-Log

(a) Routine resupply requests were normally received via the Tac-Log Net or the Tac 2 Net directly from the units or from S-4. Upon receipt of requirements, the supplies were selected from pre-staged dumps aboard the LPH and IPH, and sent to the flight deck for the lift ashore. The normal resupply mission was on its way to the beach within a two hour period; emergency resupply was somewhat faster and dependent upon helicopter availability.

(b) Requests for organic equipment or equipment which had not been pre-staged was referred to the units' representative aboard that ship for collection and delivery to the hangar deck.

(8) Activities of the Ships Platoon

(a) Resupply Operations. The Ships Platoon aboard the LPH carried out its functions as the resupply working party in conjunction with the BLT Tac-Log. Upon receipt of a requirement, the Tac-Log forwarded a request form to the OIC/NCIC Hangar Deck. The Ships Platoon then filled the request. As soon as it was ready to be transported ashore, the Hangar Deck notified Tac-Log by means of a field phone. Along with this notification the supplies were sent to the flight deck by means of an aircraft elevator with the request form accompanying them. Upon reaching the flight deck, the supplies were staged near the island until the assigned helicopters were available for delivery. The ship provided forklifts and operators. This system proved to be highly satisfactory.

(b) Casualty Handling. Casualties were handled jointly by the LPH and the BLT. Ships Platoon personnel acted as stretcher bearers on the Flight Deck. The after aircraft elevator was used to bring casualties to the hangar deck. While on the elevator the casualty was stripped of all weapons, ordnance and 782 gear. This was accomplished by the BLT armorers, and ships gunnery personnel. The gear was inspected to insure that all ammunition was confiscated, then taken to the BLT armory for appropriate disposition. The casualty's clothing and personal effects were handled by the S-1 section of the BLT.

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(c) No significant problems were encountered in the operation of the Ship Platoon or in the processing of casualties.

(9) Significant Equipment Losses

(a) The following significant losses occurred as a result of being dropped while being transported by helicopter. Salvage operations were not feasible. The items were dropped in the ocean off the coast of Viet Nam. The lost communications items were part of two lifts and were secured to the M274A2 involved.

- 2 Mule (M274A2)
- 2 Chest - BC-5
- 1 Switchboard - SB-22
- 6 Battery - BB-451
- 6 Radio Set - PRC-25 (Complete)
- 1 Handset - H-33
- 1 Groundstake - GP-10
- 1 Climbers - LC-5
- 6 TS-10 Telephone (Component of CE-11)
- 6 Telephone - TA-1
- 1 Multimeter - URM-105
- 1 Accessory Bag (PRC-47) Complete, includes:
 - ... -Ant - AS-1320
 - MT-2786 - Legs Electrical
 - Cover, Battery Box - MX-4430
 - Rucksack
 - Assy Kit Frame Rucksak
 - Key Telegraph - J-45
 - Handset - H-33
 - Headset - H-70C
 - Loudspeaker - LS-166/U
 - Antenna, long wire - AS-1321
 - Cable Assembly (50 ft)
 - Cable, Special Purpose - CX-8396
 - Cable (3 $\frac{1}{2}$ ')
- 1 Assy Bag - PRC-25
 - Antenna - AT-271
 - Antenna - AT-892
 - Handset - H-138/U
 - Harness - ST-138
 - Support AB-591
- 1 Screwdriver Cross Tip
- 5 Screwdriver Flat Tip
- 1 Wrench Adjustable Open End
- 1 Pliers Diagonal 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ inch
- 1 Pliers Short, Round Nose
- 1 Wrench Set, Socket
- 1 Bag, Tool
- 1 Knife, Posket

SECRET-NOFORNb. Personnel and Administration

(1) The S-1/Adjutant established a Battalion Administrative Center aboard the LPH on D-1. The Administrative Center consisted of the Asst S-1/Adjutant, two S-1 clerks, each Company Administrative Chief and a UD/SRB clerk from each company (except A Btry, 1/13 - provided an Admin Chief only.) These administrative personnel remained on the rolls of their respective companies/batteries. The Administrative Center functioned and operated on a "Battalion Administration" level. The Asst S-1/Adjutant (OIC, Admin Center) has "By direction" authority to sign UDs, SRBs and routine matters pertaining to all units concerned. Appropriate personnel records were moved to the LPH with the Admin Personnel prior to D-day. The Admin Center was desolved after W-day.

(2) The S-1/Adjutant and the remainder of the administrative personnel displaced with the Battalion Command Post and operated in the field in accordance with the USMC Staff Manual.

(3) References, Manuals, Orders, etc.

(a) Central files and orders and directives were maintained in the Admin Center.

(b) Field elements operated with an absolute minimum of equipment. Acetate covered waterproof charts were utilized to keep an accurate up-to-date personnel daily summary of all participating units/detachments. A copy of the operation order and pertinent personnel and casualty reporting directives were the only references taken forward. The S-1/Adjutant section "desk" consisted of a hand-made waterproof box size approximately 18" x 24" x 12" which contained the necessary admin supplies and directives, i.e., memo pads, personnel rosters, notebooks, message books, JAG Manual, casualty reporting cards, pens, and pencils. A portable typewriter was not carried nor required.

(c) Casualty Reporting

1 Casualty reporting was in accordance with CMC, FMFPAC, 9th MAB and BLT directives in 3040 series. The casualty reporting center was established aboard the LPH and consisted of SLF/BLT Admin and Medical personnel. Since the BLT SRBs were maintained in the Admin Center aboard this enabled the casualty reporting center to obtain individual service records immediately as required.

2 782 gear and personal effects of casualties were inventoried and safeguarded by logistics and administrative personnel on the LPH

(d) Evacuation. Evacuation of casualties was accomplished by helicopters. Medical-Evacuees requests were handled and coordinated by the S-4 in the field and the Tac-Log aboard the LPH.

(e) Captives. Safeguarding and handling of captives was coordinated by the S-2 and the HqCmndt. After completion of interrogation all captives were delivered to the local RVN District Chief or as directed by the SLF Commander.

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(f) Civic Action. Civic Action was coordinated by the SLF Commander and his Staff. BLT Medical and Dental personnel offered their services to the nearby local village.

(g) Miscellaneous

1. There were no disciplinary problems or incidents.
2. There were no replacements required.
3. The BLT Chaplain was in the field and moved about and visited with each unit.
4. There was no personal mail delivery.
5. Guard Mail was delivered and picked up by helicopter in almost all instances.

(h) Communications

1 General

a Personnel. The number of radio nets required to be maintained during SLF Operations are considered to be too numerous to be maintained by a T/O Infantry Battalion, Communication Section. In many instances radio operators were handling as many as three and four nets at a time.

((1)) Tac-Log Communications. The requirement for the BLT communications section to maintain ship to shore and ship to ship Tac-Log communications places a severe strain upon the Battalion Radio Section. This function is normally handled at Regimental level and is not a requirement reflected in the Infantry Battalion table of organization.

((2)) Radio Communications. Radio communication between TG 79.5 and BLT 1-26 is multiplicitous in that LF TAC #1 and LF TAC #2, are parallel nets which are required to be continually activated. One radio net is more than adequate to handle the amount of traffic which is passed between TG 79.5 and BLT 1-26. The requirement to establish stations on radio nets to higher and adjacent Army units when the BLT is under Army operational control also places an undue burden upon the BLT Radio Section.

((3)) Radio Relay. The requirement to furnish personnel to maintain the shipboard station of the ship to shore Radio Relay link was met by utilizing the detachment from HqCo, 26th Marines. This arrangement proved satisfactory, but in the event that the TRC-27 is used these personnel will not be available to man the shipboard end of the MRC-62 Radio Relay Link.

2 Radio Communications. Radio Communications in general, were excellent throughout both phases of DECKHOUSE III. The one exception was the LF TAC #1. The marginal reception which occurred periodically on this net could be eliminated by utilizing the RT-524 on the SLF end of this particular net.

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3 Wire. Wire Communications within the BLT CP posed no problem during either phase of DECKHOUSE III. The use of long locals was prohibited by the nature of the terrain.

4 Radio Relay. During PHASE I of DECKHOUSE III, the MRC-62 was situated on Beach BLUE and served no useful purpose because of inability to lay wire from the MRC-62 to the BLT CP. This inability was due to the distance involved and the prohibitive nature of the terrain. The MRC-62 was helilifted into the BLT CP during PHASE II of DECKHOUSE III by Army CH-47 helicopter. This proved to be a more workable arrangement and functioned satisfactorily except for intermittent periods of outages due to generator failures and frequency interferences.

5 Recommendations

a That the BLT Communications Section be augmented with sufficient radio personnel to more adequately maintain the ship and ship to shore Tac-Log Radio Communication System.

b That the SLF Staff be augmented with Radio Relay personnel to maintain the shipboard side of the MRC-62 Radio Relay link.

c That Landing Force TAC #2 Radio Net be eliminated or reduced to a secondary/overload net and not be continually maintained in the BLT CP unless a heavy traffic load or poor communications of LF TAC #1 requires it to be activated.

d That a RT-524 be used on the shipboard side of Landing Force TAC #1.

e That every effort be made to situate the MRC-62 in close proximity to the BLT CP. If this is not feasible then the MRC-62 should remain aboard ship until the situation changes or the means to transport it becomes available.

7. SUPPORTING ARMS

a. Supporting Arms (General)

(1) Fire Support for BLT 1-26 was provided by a 105mm Howitzer Battery, a 107mm Howtar Battery, one 5"/38 Destroyer, one LSMR, one Heavy Cruiser, armed helicopters, and fixed wing aircraft from 7th Air Force. During PHASE II a 5"/54 also was made available to relieve the Heavy Cruiser.

(2) In Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I the 105's were landed over the beach by boat and the 107mm Battery was landed by helicopter. In PHASE II both batteries were landed by helicopter with the 105mm Battery helilifted into position by CH-47 CHINOOK helicopter. ||

(3) Missions fired by supporting units included on call missions, beach prep fires, landing zones prep fires, H&I fires, and night defensive fires.

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(4) Control of Artillery and Naval Gunfire was passed ashore in DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I and II. Control of Air remained afloat throughout both operations. Coordination of supporting arms was passed ashore however, but it was necessary to coordinate with the ship for helicopter safety reasons.

(5) Terrain was a limiting factor in the effective use of supporting arms since ground observation was usually severely limited.

(6) With as much information that must be relayed back to the ship, for coordination, radio relay is essential and plays an important role in this respect.

b. Fire Support Coordination Center

(1) It was discovered that should continuous illumination missions be required it is more feasible to resort to Naval Gunfire and the "firefly" aircraft, in view of artillery's limited basic allowance of illumination.

(2) The PRC-25 proved to be a most proficient piece of communications equipment for ensuring fire support directly available to supported units.

(3) It was repeatedly demonstrated that fire support could be available and effective to units not having a trained FO with them.

(4) The primary artillery frequency should be in the range of 24.9 to 54.0 if possible in order to utilize the air observer more effectively.

(5) The most perplexing problem for Fire Support Coordination involved helicopters in flight. The BLT FSCC had no positive means of knowing exactly when the helicopters were transiting the firing areas and what their destinations were. Determined efforts must be made to solve this one single problem which debilitates the mission of supporting arms for timely and accurate fires.

c. Naval Gunfire Support

(1) Operations

(a) Ships assigned in direct support of BLT 1-26 did not have cryptographic material that was compatible with the supported units ashore.

(b) Ships assigned did not have copies of the operations order and were therefore deficient in the knowledge of operations ashore.

(c) One particular ship assigned, reporting towards the end of the operation to relieve another ship, lacked even the CTG 76.5's operation order which contained such valuable information as communications information, the battalion's checkpoint system, and call signs of each supported unit. This precluded sending such information as friendly front line positions without circumventing the task force to find compatible crypto material.

(d) All ships that attended the pre-operation conference on Naval Gunfire Support, held by CTG 76.5, appeared to be most interested in working with the SACC and FSCC. They all anchored close and under the protective support

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of assigned swift boats in order to provide more accurate fires. Most ships were ready to shoot targets within the prescribed doctrinal time. The St. Paul, however, did not maintain this aggressive attitude throughout and on one occasion took 64 minutes to make a ready report for one call-fire and never provided an explanation for the delay. The target had to be cancelled due to a change in friendly front lines and any late firing would have endangered friendly troops.

(2) Communications

(a) Frequencies assigned during PHASE I were adequate; however, when changed for PHASE II, not all units received the changes and our communications were extremely limited during PHASE II by the lack of compatible channels.

(b) Ships assigned a primary mission of Naval Gunfire Support have two built in FM radios which should be utilized if at all possible, since they are capable of performing communications relay work with these units, but cannot be utilized effectively if the circuits are not compatible with their frequencies. The following array of frequencies is recommended for future operations of the SLF.

Spot 1 (pri)	30.0 - 38.2mcs.	(FM)
Spot 1 (sec)	2.0 - 11.99mcs.	(HF)
Spot 2 (pri)	38.5 - 54.0mcs.	(FM)
Spot 2 (sec)	38.5 - 54.0mcs.	(FM)
NGF Control (pri)	2.0 - 11.99mcs.	(HF)
NGF Control (sec)	2.0 - 11.99,cs.	(HF)
SFCP Local	30.0 - 70.0mcs.	(FM)

(c) Ships which are gunfire support ships secondarily do not have built-in FM equipment. The majority have a semblance of FM equipment rigged on board in order to do the job. It is recommended that the ARG/SLF be allocated PRC-25's along with RC-292 antennas and appropriate remote units, to be made available to the ships assigned Naval Gunfire Support Missions, in order to improve ship-to-shore communications in this vital area.

d. Air(1) Communications

(a) Communications between the ALO and TACC was unsatisfactory and at times non-existent for periods of up to 24 hours. The deficiency can be traced to the equipment in TACC due to the fact that the ALO could raise other stations aboard the IWO JIMA on other frequencies although he could not raise TACC. This particular problem with TACC was also experienced by the unit PAC's. The above problem was alleviated somewhat when the radio relay van was in operation, however, even this system was unreliable at times due to inherent generator problems.

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(b) Communications between the FAC's and ALO were satisfactory except when the company to which a FAC was assigned was on the move and operators were forced to use short antennas.

(2) Support. The assignment of two direct support helicopters and two Med-Evac helicopters at the Battalion CP proved to be very successful and highly desirable. It expedited intra-battalion operations. It is recommended that the Battalion have at least four direct support helicopters available for the initial hours and the final two hours of daylight in order to permit a more timely logistical support of the rifle companies which are usually on the move until dusk from early daybreak.

8. Commander's Analysis

a. Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I and PHASE II proved highly successful in imparting sound, combat experience to all the officers and men of BLT 1-26. The combat capability of the BLT was tested and improved daily. Rifle companies operated over widely separated areas and relied on small unit patrols to adequately search the area. Although the enemy in both phases was successful in avoiding any meaningful contact, the experience gained by the individual Marine and the BLT staff was deemed invaluable. Fire support coordination began slowly but improved from day to day. By the conclusion of the operation, the FSOC was a smooth, well integrated operation. Resupply by helicopter was initially a hap-hazard affair; however, by the termination of PHASE II the operation had become quite routine and most effective. The helicopter squadron, HST personnel and Tac-Log personnel were functioning as a team with a minimum of delay.

b. The transition from COMSEVENTHFLT operational control to operational control of IIFORCEV was accomplished smoothly and expeditiously. Direct liaison was established with IIFORCEV and also with the units of the 173rd Airborne Brigade which occupied areas in close proximity to our own elements. Radio nets were established with IIFORCEV forward Command Post and with another adjacent unit, the 1st Battalion, 503 Regt. Personal visits were made to these units on the ground and an outstanding working relationship was in effect. For the BLT and the individual officers concerned this contact and coordination was both professionally informative and enlightening.

c. Although little substantial intelligence was uncovered that would have been of immediate value to the BLT, it is believed that the presence of an ITT team in the BLT CP did give it the capability to exploit any intelligence that may have become available. These personnel are deemed necessary in any combat operations of this nature.

d. Civic action was effected only during PHASE II and primarily controlled by the SLF staff. However, contact was made with the District Chief and a Liaison Group of 1 officer and 4 enlisted were established at District Headquarters. When the withdrawal was executed, excess rations and other useful items were turned over to the District Chief.

e. The assignment of 2 direct support aircraft and 2 Med-evac aircraft to the BLT during daylight hours proved highly successful and permitted units

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to be kept widely dispersed and adequately supplied. As previously recommended it is believed that a total of 4 direct support aircraft would permit the BLT to resupply such items as rations, ammo, water at peak demand periods between 0600-0800 and 1600-1800 more expeditiously. The tactical consideration and not utilization should be the primary consideration in the use of helicopters. Water cans should not become a burden to a unit prior to "jump off". It is fully realized that resupply solely by helicopters has certain inherent disadvantages but the need continues to exist to lighten the basic load of the individual Marine in this particular terrain and climate to permit him to move rapidly and exploit any advantage offered. This is tantamount to success, although often a calculated but necessary risk.

f. Prior to PHASE I the intelligence information received from outside sources was slightly outdated and the operation indicated the units which had been operating in the area had moved to the west. The PHASE II intelligence information was outstanding. Indications were that in most cases BLT 1-26 units were less than 12 hours behind the VC. The VC units operating in the AOA could not be induced to make a stand nor be identified. The VC were successful in either exfiltration from the area or hiding from our forces; however, it is estimated that he suffered a major setback on Operation DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I and PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO which is evidenced by the list of items destroyed. Noteworthy was a complex of over 300 bunkers, the destruction of which it is believed set the VC Operations in Phuoc Tuy Province back by an estimated six to eight months.

A.A. Monti
A.A. MONTI

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3/INT/INT

3121

2 September 1966

REPORT OF DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I

1. Task Organization

BLT 1-26

LtCol MONTI

H&S Co (-)

Det, Btry A, 1st Bn, 13th Mar (In Tm)

Det, Hq Btry, 1st Bn, 13th Mar (NGF Ln Tm)

Det, Hq Co (-), 26th Mar

Radio Relay Tm

Det, Postal Unit

Det, Hq Bn, 5th Mar Div (Photo)

Det, Disbursing

Det, Comm Spt Co (-), 9th Comm Bn

Logistic Support Unit

Det, Command Sect

Det, MP Sect

Det, Supply Sect

Det, Maint Sect

1st Plt (Rein), Co A (-) (Rein), 5th SP Bn

1st Plt.

Det, Beachmaster Unit-1

Det, Co A (-) (Rein), 5th Med Bn

Det, Collecting Plt

Clearing Sect

Det, 15th Dental Co, FMF

Co A (Rein)

Capt VELASQUEZ

Co A

Det, H&S Co, 1-26

Det, Med Plt

1st FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plt

1st FO Tm, Btry A (Rein), 1st Bn 13th Mar

Det, 1st Plat (Rein), Co A, 5th SP Bn

Det, Hq Btry, 1st Bn, 13 Mar (NGF Spot Tm)

Co C (Rein)

Capt KAPPELMAN

Co C

Det, H&S Co, 1-26

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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Det, Med Plat
 3rd FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plt
 1st FAC Tm

3rd FO Tm, Btry A (Rein), 1st Bn, 13th Mar
 Sub Unit #1, 1st ANGLICO (NGF Spot Tm)
 2d Sqd, 1st Plt. (Rein), Co A, 5th Engr Bn
 Det, 1st Plt (Rein), Co A, 5th SP Bn

Co D (Rein)

Capt WEIDNER

Co D
 Det, H&S Co, 1-26

Det, Med Plt
 4th FO Tm, 81mm Mortar Plat
 2nd FAC Tm

4th FO Tm, Btry A (Rein), 1st Bn, 13th Mar
 3rd Sqd, 1st Plt (Rein), Co A, 5th Engr Bn
 Det, 1st Plt (Rein), Co A, 5th SP Bn
 Sub Unit #1, 1st ANGLICO (NGF Spot Tm)

Btry A (-) (Rein), 1st Bn, 13th Mar

Capt BAILEY

Btry A (-)
 Det, Hq Btry, 1st Bn, 13th Mar

107mm Mortar Btry (-) (Rein), 2nd Bn, 12th Mar

Capt MERRITT

107mm Mortar Btry
 Det, Mess Sec, Serv Plt,, Hq Btry, 2nd Bn, 12th Mar
 Det, 1st Plt, (Rein), Co A, 5th SP Bn
 1st Plt, Co A (-) (Rein), 5th MT Bn

1st Plt, Co A (-) (Rein), 5th AmTrac Bn

1stLt DIBELLO

1st Plt, (Rein), Co A (-) (Rein), 5th AT Bn

1stLt DEBILIO

1st Plt
 Det, Co Hq, Co A (-) (Rein)

1st Plt (Rein), Co A (-) (Rein), 5th Engr Bn

2ndLt DEAR

1st Plt (-)
 Det, Co Hq, Co A (-) (Rein)

81mm Mortar Plt (-) (Rein)

1stLt MOONEY

ENCLOSURE (1)

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SECRET-NOFORNd. Order of Battle.

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>DATE</u>	<u>WEAPONS</u>
5th VC Div CP	YS 780815	6Aug66	
274th Regt	YS 810790	6Aug66	12-60mm Mortars
1st Bn	YS 700755	6Aug66	8-81mm Mortars
2nd Bn	YS 815735	6Aug66	12-LMG
3rd Bn	UNKNOWN		5-57mm RR
275th Regt	YT 770091	6Aug66	3-75mm RR
1st Bn	UNKNOWN		3-12.7mm MG
2nd Bn	UNKNOWN		Assorted small arms
3rd Bn	UNKNOWN		& Automatic Wpns.
			6-81mm Mortars
			16-60mm Mortars
			10-57mm RR
			12-12.7 MG
			18-50 Cal MG
			8-30 Cal MG
			Assorted S/A & Wpns

e. No substantial contact was made with elements listed above during the operations. There was no positive identification of any enemy units. Resistance ashore consisted of sporadic sniper fire.

3. Mission. As directed by the SLF Frag Order #1 for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I the mission assigned to BLT 1-26 was:

"Commencing at H and L hours conduct waterborne and helicopterborne amphibious assault over Beach BLUE, LZ BLUEBIRD and LZ CANARY to establish blocking positions in support of 173rd Airborne Brigade and conduct search and destroy operations."

4. Concept of Operations. The BLT 1-26 scheme of maneuver for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I was as follows:

a. Commencing at H-hour land Cos A and C across Beach BLUE by LVT and landing craft to attack and seize LF objs 1 and 3; conduct search and destroy operations as directed.

b. Commencing at L-hour land Co D in LZ BLUEBIRD to attack and seize LF Obj. 2. Land Co B in LZ CANARY to act as BLT Reserve/Reaction Force. Both units to conduct search and destroy operations as directed.

c. After securing LF Objs 1, 2 and 3 and on order, Cos C and D attack and seize LF Obj 4, 5 and 6; establish blocking positions in vicinity of LF Objs 5 and 6.

ENCLOSURE (1)

5

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d. 107mm Mortar Btry to be landed in LZ EAGLE and set up in firing position. Btry A to be landed on Beach BLUE and moved inland by LVT to designated firing positions. AmTracs to remain with Btry A as a security element.

e. MT Platoon to be landed with 107mm Mortar Btry as a provisional rifle platoon. Initially AT Platoon and Tank Platoon to remain aboard ship until ordered ashore either with their major equipment or as provisional rifle platoons.

5. Execution

a. D-Day, 16 August 1966

(1) Co C landed at 0900H by LVT approximately 1000 meters to the left of beach BLUE. Co A landed at H + 4 in the same location. Shore Party, Beachmaster Unit and A Btry recon party landed at 0810H on the same beach. Due to an error in the initial landing which situated the units far to the left of the assigned landing beach, the rifle companies experienced much difficulty exiting from the beach area. When the CO's Command Group landed at 1039H only 2 platoons of Co A had entered the area immediately behind the beach on which they had been landed. The CO who had been on an aerial reconnaissance on 15 August 1966 realized that they had been landed on the wrong beach and immediately began moving Co C to the right to get it in position to move inland. After locating the correct beach, Co C began movement inland. Co A's leading elements secured LF Obj 1 at 1300H. After arrival of the remainder of Co A, LZ EAGLE was secured at 1500H and the scheduled helilifts that had been postponed after the initial delay were continued. H&S Co (-), 81mm Mortar Platoon and 107mm Mortar Btry were all landed in LZ EAGLE by 1900H. Night defenses were set in and BLT CP established. Btry A came ashore at 1338H and was in position to support by fire at 1515H. 107mm Mortar Btry was prepared to support by fire at 1730H.

(2) Co D landed at L-hour in LZ BLUEBIRD. By 1027H the helilift had been completed and Co D moved out to secure LF Obj 2. Co D found an AP mine of foreign make and exploded it in place at YS 859787. Co B was landed commencing at 1055H and the helilift was completed at 1150H. Co B was scheduled to be landed in LZ CANARY but was landed at YS 882738 on the edge of a reported minefield. Upon orienting itself Co B began to move to LZ CANARY to set up a defensive perimeter and to act as a reaction force. Co D secured LF Obj 2 at 1530H and continued the attack to secure LF Obj 6. All units landed unopposed and had no contact on D-day.

(3) Defensive perimeters were set up and units were located as follows:

(a) BLT CP - YS 820714

(b) Co A - YS 824715

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- (c) Co B - YS 866739
- (d) Co C - YS 826725
- (e) Co D - YS 856789
- (f) H&S Co (-) - YS 819715
- (g) A Btry - YS 816691
- (h) 107mm Mortar Btry - YS 823716
- (i) AmTracs - YS 816691
- (j) SP and BM - YS 818698

(4) Each rifle company sent out 2 night patrols and set 2 night ambushes. There was negative contact prior to 2400H; however, Co A and Co D reported hearing voices outside their perimeter. This resulted in calling for and receiving illumination. The flickering shadows caused considerable friendly small arms firing and a number of grenades were thrown. There was no enemy firing directed toward any friendly position. As a result of this the BLT CO directed that illumination would be utilized only if fire was being received or positive observation was made of enemy personnel.

b. D+1, 17 August 1966

(1) At 0450H 1 VC was sighted by Co A ambush located at YS 823708. One hand grenade was thrown with negative results. No further activity was reported at this ambush site.

(2) Co C continued its advance at first light and at 0618H secured LF Obj 3. At 0900H Co C discovered a VC camp at YS 815730. The camp consisted of 7 thatch huts and contained live chickens, 8 bundles of punji stakes and 4 sets of black pajamas. Co C continued its attack toward LF Obj 4 after destroying the camp, secured LF Obj 4 at 1530H. A hamlet, located at YS 784 793 was discovered at 1824H. The hamlet consisted of 9 thatched huts and contained a hospital with 6 bamboo beds, crutches, bandages and 20 lbs. of rice. Numerous tunnels were found throughout the hamlet. Due to the dampness of the material and lack of demolitions, the hamlet was not destroyed at this time. Co C continued the attack and secured LF Obj 5 at 1845H.

(3) Co D continued its attack to seize LF Obj 6 at 0745H. A delay was caused by empty water cans on hand to be helilifted cut. At 1424H LF Obj 6 (YS 833797) was secured. The attack was continued and LF Obj 6 was secured at 1730H.

(4) Co A provided BLT CP security and conducted search and destroy

ENCLOSURE (1)

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patrols toward LZ BLUEBIRD. There were no contacts with the VC. A patrol reported at 1520H that it had observed barefoot and sandal prints of 3 to 5 personnel at YS 826723.

(5) The Reaction Force, Co B, conducted search and destroy missions west along road running parallel to the beach. Co B was alerted at 1100H to be ready to move from LZ CANARY at 1400H. It retraced its path to the designated LZ and was helilifted to LZ WREN commencing at 1400H. At 1642H a local security patrol sighted and fired on 1 VC with negative results. VC escaped to the west of LZ WREN.

(6) The AT platoon was helilifted from USS VANCOUVER (LPD-2) to LZ EAGLE as a provisional rifle platoon. Engineers improved LZ EAGLE by sawing trees down and using demolitions. An accidental discharge inside an LVT caused 3 WIA.

(7) At 1800H the Division Recon Platoon was helilifted to YS 765 723. The assigned mission was to establish an OP at YS 752725. The platoon was to be extracted by helicopter at 0600H on 19 August 1966 at YS 751731.

(8) All units established defensive perimeters by nightfall as follows:

- (a) BLT CP - YS 829714
- (b) Co A - YS 824715
- (c) Co B - YS 834795
- (d) Co C - YS 786804
- (e) Co D - YS 818834
- (f) H&S C6 (-) - YS 819715
- (g) Btry A - YS 816691
- (h) 107mm Mortar Btry - YS 823716
- (i) AmTracs - YS 816691
- (j) SP and BM - YS 816691

(9) During the night voices and movement outside their lines were reported by all units. Although friendly troops fired in their direction no return fire was received. Co B sustained 1 KIA inflicted accidentally by a man in the same fighting hole.

(10) Supporting arms fired H & I and registration missions throughout the day and night.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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c. D+2, 18 August 1966

(1) Movement and voices outside perimeters continued but no contact was made. Co A and Co C reported receiving several rounds of incoming small arms fire. No friendly casualties.

(2) Co A conducted search and destroy mission in grid squares YS 8072 and YS 8073 with no enemy contact and negative results.

(3) Co B conducted a search and destroy mission through grid squares YS 8279, YS 8179 and 8079 with no enemy contact and negative results.

(4) Co C conducted a search and destroy mission through grid squares YS 7881, YS 7882 and YS 7883. In addition a reinforced platoon was dispatched to the hamlet located at YS 784793 to destroy it. They were unable to completely destroy it. At 1115H a village of 15 buildings was discovered at YS 782819. Items found in the village were 25 lbs. of rice, 1 medical kit, numerous books, propaganda material and personal papers. The village and tunnels were partially destroyed. At 1030H a local security patrol around Co C patrol base encountered 3 VC on a trail at YS 764815. The VC were dressed in black pajamas with gold headbands and were carrying small arms. The security patrol fired on the VC, 1 VC WIA dropped an M1A1 Air Travel Firing Device. The VC WIA was carried away by the remaining 2 VC. Numerous propaganda leaflets were found in the area. Another local security patrol at 1430H discovered a farm tractor with initials MF on front at YS 771813. It had a wheel missing and no gas in tank and appeared to have been abandoned approximately 1 month. No cultivation in area. Tractor was destroyed. An air strike was called on both villages mentioned above to complete the destruction.

(5) Co D conducted a search and destroy mission down the trail leading through grid squares YS 8283, YS 8383, YS 8484 and YS 8584. Another search and destroy mission was conducted through grid squares YS 8283, YS 8184 and YS 8085. Both patrols reported they had observed fresh foot prints near base of hill 568.

(6) At 1100H a patrol from Btry A destroyed an empty 25 foot fishing boat at YS 816682.

(7) The 107mm Mortar Btry was helilifted along with the provisional rifle platoon attached (MT Plt) at 1100H from LZ EAGLE to LZ WREN. The Tank Platoon had been helilifted to LZ WREN at 0900H as a provisional rifle platoon to act as a security element for the 107mm Mortar Btry. Force Recon Platoon was helilifted into LZ EAGLE at 1150H. Engineer personnel continued to improve LZ HAWK by removing trees.

(8) All units established defensive perimeters for the night. No

ENCLOSURE (1)

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patrols or ambushes were employed. Listening posts were employed extensively. Positions of units were as follows:

- (a) BLT CP - YS 829714
- (b) Co A - YS 824715
- (c) Co B - YS 834795
- (d) Co C - YS 786804
- (e) Co D - YS 818834
- (f) H&S Co (-) - YS 819715
- (g) Btry A - YS 816691
- (h) 107mm Mortar Btry - YS 834795
- (i) AmTracs - YS 816691
- (j) SP & BM - YS 816691

(9) A warning order was issued to Co's C and D to be prepared to commence withdrawal at 190800H.

(10) No contact with the enemy was made prior to 2400H. While calling H&I fires from 107mm Mortar Btry, Co D received a short round within its defensive perimeter. One casualty with shrapnel wounds resulted. Supporting arms fired H&I and registration missions throughout the period.

d. D+3, 19 August 1966.

(1) Co D reported an estimated 3 or 4 enemy to their front. Small arms fire and hand grenades resulted in no casualties to the enemy.

(2) At 0530H the Division Recon Platoon made contact with an estimated 30 VC at YS 752725 as the platoon moved toward the extraction point. The VC were taken under heavy small arms fire by the platoon and artillery fire was requested. A platoon from Co A in LZ EAGLE was lifted as a reaction force but were landed back in LZ EAGLE. The VC broke contact and moved to the east. An estimated 10 VC were KIA and an estimated 14 VC were WIA. There were no friendly casualties. The platoon was extracted by helicopter at 0700H from the scheduled extraction point.

(3) Co C was helilifted from LZ DOVE at 0930H to Beach BLUE and embarked aboard landing craft to return to LPD-2 at 1113H.

(4) Co D moved by foot at 1005H to LZ WREN and was helilifted commencing at 1300H to LPH-2. As Co D moved south from LZ HAWK VC were observed moving into LZ HAWK. Naval gunfire was called on this position by the aerial

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observer. Results were undetermined.

(5) Co A and B continued search and destroy missions with negative contact. No contact was made during the night. There were no changes in unit locations except for units moving back to assigned shipping.

e. D+4, 20 August 1966

(1) The withdrawal continued with 107mm Mortar Btry and Co B helilifted from LZ WREN commencing at 0630H to LPH-2. At 0930H the units from LZ EAGLE were helilifted to LPH-2 except for Co A and provisional rifle platoon who were lifted to Beach BLUE to be moved by landing craft to assigned shipping. DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I, terminated at 1518H.

6. Results

a. Enemy

(1) The following is an assessment of VC personnel casualties inflicted by BLT 1-26:

VC KIA POSSIBLE	10
VC WIA CONFIRMED	1
VC WIA POSSIBLE	14

(2) The following is a compilation of enemy equipment and material destroyed by BLT 1-26.

Huts -	32
AP Mine	1
Black Pajamas (sets)	4
Rice (lbs)	45
Punji Stakes (Bundles)	8
Medical Kit	1
Fishing boat 25'	1
Tractor (MF on front)	1
M1A1 Air Travel Device	1

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Crutches (Pr)

3

Assorted Documents

Assorted Bandages

b. Friendly

(1) Casualties sustained by BLT 1-26 are summarized below:

(a) Killed in Action - 1

1 Gunshot - 1

(b) Wounded in Action - 7

1 Shrapnel - 62 Gunshot - 1

(c) Non-Battle Casualties - 16

1 Heat - 52 Injuries - 53 Snakebite - 14 Immersion foot - 15 Miscellaneous - 4

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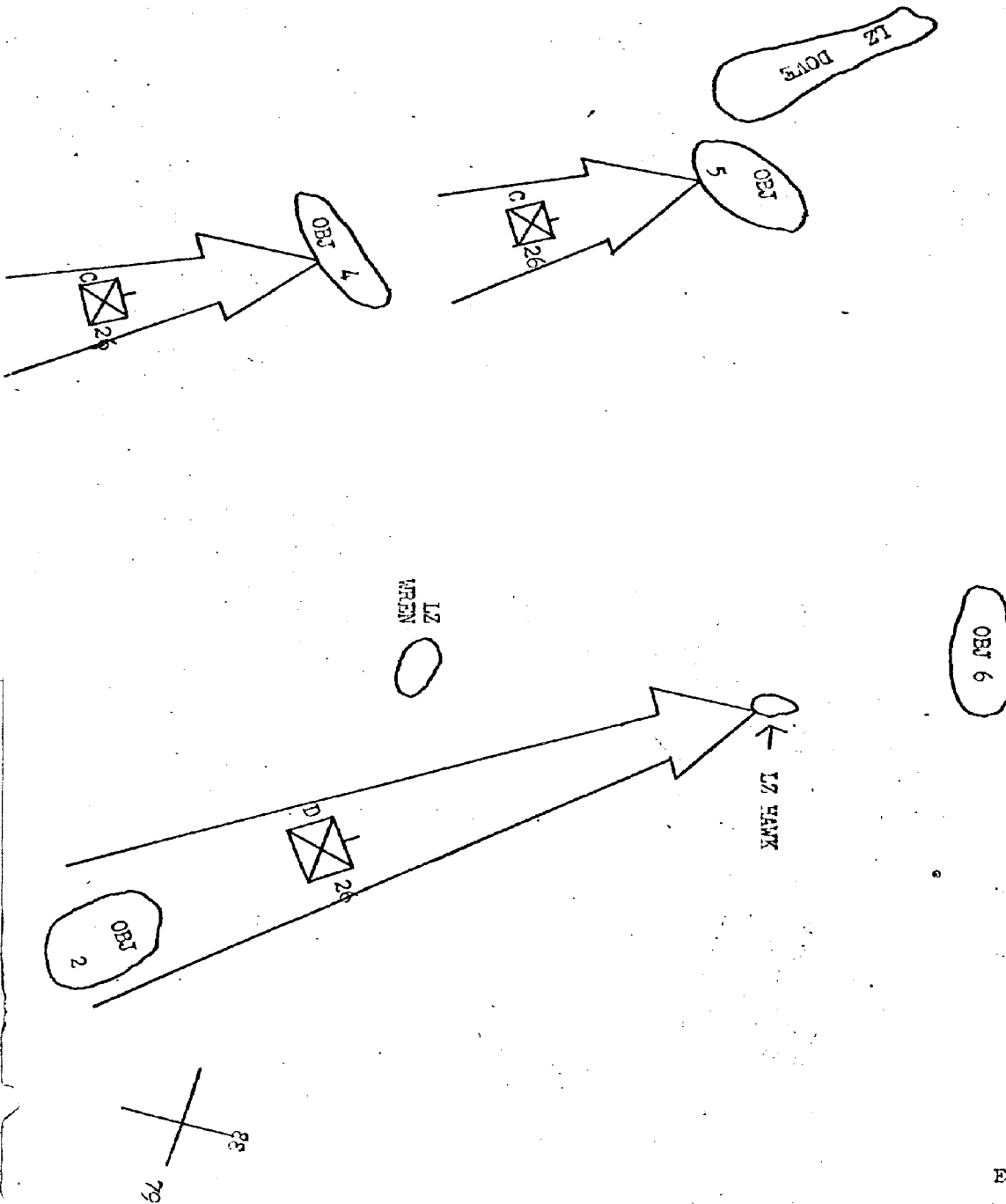
1/26

TAB (a) to Enclosure (1) Operation Overlay for
DECKHOUSE III, Phase I

Ref: Maps: AMS L701 6442 I, (1:50,000) XA BINH GIA
AMS L701 6443 II, (1:50,000) XA TIEA-TICH
AMS L701 6542 IV, (1:50,000) AP BINH-CHAU
AMS L701 6543 III, (1:50,000) TAN TAO

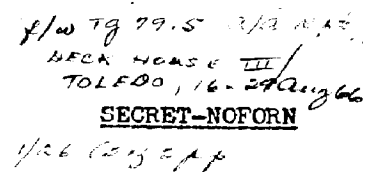
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EW 79 40.5 a/a 1/2
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74
82



ENCLOSURE (1)

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2

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3121

2 September 1966

REPORT OF DECKHOUSE III, PHASE II/OPERATION TOLEDO

1. Task Organization. Remained the same as for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE I except for the detachment of the 1st ANGLICO NGF Spot Teams. See enclosure (1).

2. Intelligence

a. Terrain: The area of operations is characterized by a brush and swamp covered plain. Numerous levees and dikes varying two to three feet in height are located throughout the lowland areas. Many streams and swamps back this beach area. Most streams have steep banks and low natural levees. Two large rivers located in this area are the RACH SONG CAI and SONG BA DAP. Both flowing seaward and converging at coordinates YS 585575. Lowland areas are mostly flooded June through December and make trafficability poor for ground troops. Vegetation is thick secondary brush, with heavy swamp grass. A dirt road parallels the beach approximately 6 miles inland.

b. Beach BROWN

Location: Left Flank: YS 662580
 Beach Center: YS 664580
 Right Flank: YS 673580

Length and Usable Length: 1100 Meters. Beach BROWN is a slightly concave shaped beach terminated on the right flank (East) by a rocky point. Numerous rocks extend out from this point and into the surf. Beach is terminated on the left flank (West) by a less defined sandy point. All beach area usable.

Beach Width: 70-100 yards (LW to HW)

Beach Gradients: 1 on 30 to 1 on 45 LW to HW
 1 on 10 to 1 on 20 HW Zone

Beach Approach: Nearshore approach partially obstructed by partly drying shoals as far as 15NM off beach center.

Surf and Tidal Range: Surf 4' or greater can be expected to occur 4% of the time in winter, 8% in spring, 21% in summer, 10% in fall. Tidal range 8.5' springs.

Material and Firmness: Sand. Firm in wetted areas, soft where dry. Rocks on right flank.

Terrain Immediately Behind the Beach: Beach backed by partly brush covered dunes which extend inland for approx 600 yards. Dunes in turn

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ENCLOSURE (2)

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backed by dense vegetation which extends well into the hinterland.

Exits Inland:

- a. For Troops. Exit directly across the beach to unimproved dirt road which leads inland from village at right flank.
- b. For Wheeled Vehicles. Exit at right flank to unimproved dirt road. Matting will probably be required when crossing dry beach sand.
- c. For Tracked Vehicles. Exit for tracked vehicles same as for wheeled vehicles.
- d. Pre-D-day Intelligence indicated elements of the 5th VC Division were operating in Phuoc Tuy Province. On 10 and 11 August elements of the 274th VC Regiment attacked Phu My (YS 2574) withdrawing eastward to vicinity YS 5388. The 275th VC Regt withdrew east and northeast following the 18th of August attack on the Australian Task Force at YS 4967. The 860th Bn is a local force unit and has operated with the 274th and 275th regiments. It is believed that a good percentage of the 5th VC Division is composed of North Vietnamese Army personnel. The NVA 721st Anti-Aircraft Company has been infiltrating from the Cambodian border area for the past few months and are intergrating with 5th Division units.

e. Order of Battle in AOA:

(1)	U/I VC Plat	YS 651645
	U/I VC Company	YS 6461
	U/I VC Plat	YS 6067
	U/I VC Plat	YS 5763
	U/I VC Company	YS 5568

(2) On 20Aug66 SPAR reports placed the CP or elements of the 274th Regt at coordinates YS 530880.

(3) On 21Aug66 SPAR reports placed the CP or elements of the 275th Regt at coordinates 530720.

(4) No substantial contact was made with the enemy or units named above. The enemy exhibited the ability to evade contact and to exfiltrate the area of operations.

3. Mission. SLF Frag Order #1 for DECKHOUSE III, PHASE II assigned BLT 1-26 the following mission:

"Conduct waterborne and helicopterborne amphibious assault at H and L hours over Beach GREEN and into designated landing zones to attack and seize LF objs, to conduct search and destroy operations and to establish blocking positions in northwest portion of AOA".

ENCLOSURE (2)

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SECRET-NOFORN4. Concept of Operations

a. Land Co D in LZ DOVE at L-hour to attack and seize LF Obj 2; conduct search and destroy missions on order.

b. Land Co B and Co A in LZ HAWK to attack and seize LF Objs 3 and 4 and establish blocking positions at these objectives.

c. Land Co C over Beach GREEN by LVT to attack and seize LF Obj 1; conduct search and destroy missions on order; act as BLT Reserve/Reaction Force.

d. Land 107mm Mortar Btry at LZ HAWK and move to designated firing positions; land Btry A at Beach BROWN and move by Army CH-47 helicopter to vicinity of LZ HAWK.

5. Execution.

a. D-day-22 August 1966.

(1) The landing commenced at H-hour, 0800H, with Co C landing over Beach GREEN by LVTP-5 and Co D being landed by helicopter at L-hour, 0830H, in LZ DOVE. Co B was helilifted to LZ HAWK commencing at 0915H and Co A, H&S Co (-), 81mm Mortar Plt and the 107mm Mortar Btry were helilifted in trace of Co B. Btry A and Shore Party landed over Beach BROWN by landing craft. Btry A was helilifted from Beach BROWN to vicinity of LZ HAWK at YS 697653 by CH-47 Army helicopters where firing positions were established. 107mm Mortar Btry was prepared to fire missions at 1130H. AT Plt, Division and Force Recon Plts were landed in LZ HAWK to provide BLT CP security and execute other missions as directed. MT Plt and Tank Plt were landed in LZ HAWK and assigned as provisional rifle plts to 107mm Mortar Btry and Btry A respectively.

(2) Co C landed on Beach GREEN and swept to the west and secured LF Obj 1 and Beach BROWN. There was no enemy contact. Co C was assigned the mission of BLT Reserve/Reaction Force and was also given the mission of conducting limited search and destroy operations. At 1645H a Co C patrol fired on 2 VC at YS 676604 and killed 1 VC and captured 1 CKC semi-automatic rifle and 30 rounds of ammunition.

(3) Co D secured LZ DOVE by 0900H and commenced the attack on LF obj 2 at 0910H. At 1100H contact was made with an unknown number of VC. The Co was hit from the rear and sides by sniper fire and one mortar round at YS 642657. Fire was returned and VC broke contact and moved in a northerly direction. Trails of blood indicated 3 (probable) or more VC WIA. At 1145H Co D secured LF obj 2. Patrols were sent out to search the tree lines on both sides of road after firing 8 rounds of 60mm Mortar HE. At 1306H and 1400H small arms fire was received from the vicinity of YS 618654 and YS 618643. A close air strike was delivered with unknown results.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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(4) At 1225H Co B commenced attack on LF obj 3 from LZ HAWK. Co B made contact with a VC column of 8 VC at YS 611678. It received an estimated 50 rounds of small arms fire. The VC retreated west around a grove of trees. Co B called NGF on target. Results are unknown.

(5) At 1433H Co A commenced attack on LF obj 4. No contact with enemy was made and LF obj 4 was secured at 2000H.

(6) At 1800H Force Recon Plt was helilifted to YS 616582 to conduct surveillance of the area.

(7) At 2000H all companies had established defensive perimeters, set ambushes and dispatched night patrols. The units were located at the following positions:

- (a) BLT CP - YS 648700
- (b) Co A - YS 617719
- (c) Co B - YS 626696
- (d) Co C - YS 675585
- (e) Co D - YS 629652
- (f) Btry A - YS 653697
- (g) 107mm Mortar Btry - YS 646705

(8) During the night Cos B and D received scattered small arms fire but no significant contact with the enemy. Artillery, Mortars and Naval Gunfire Support Ships fired registration and H and I fires throughout the night.

b. D+1 - 23 August 1966.

(1) At first light Cos A, C and D continued search and destroy operations. Co B continued advancing toward LF obj 3. At 0930H Beach BROWN was closed and Shore Party returned to the USS THOMASTON. The Amtrac plt returned to the USS VANCOUVER then was helilifted to LZ HAWK at 1300H to act as a provisional rifle plt for the BLT CP.

(2) At 1220H Co D sighted 4 VC at YS 627642 but was unable to make contact. At 1253H Co B discovered a bunker complex (75) at YS 596677. Miscellaneous supplies were found. Co B was ordered to continue investigation and destruction of the complex. Co D was ordered to move through Co B and continue the attack to seize LF obj 3 and establish a blocking position.

(3) At 1640H Co A captured 1 VCS at YS 609738. The captive was evacuated to LZ HAWK where the Army ITT team determined that the suspect was a VC. The captive was turned over to the District Chief.

(4) The Force Recon Plt was extracted at YS 604594 at 1730H and the Division Recon Plt was inserted at YS 712633.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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(5) A Co C patrol located an abandoned plt bivouac site at YS 629594 at 1130H. At 1355H the same patrol came upon a group of 6 abandoned foxholes facing east at YS 624597. One unidentified man was observed escaping west.

(6) Co B continued its investigation of the bunker complex. Bunkers were in various stages of construction and sleeping racks were found for in excess of 200 men. Bunkers were of various types and sizes. Some were trench lines uncovered. However, most were trenches (6' x 3') with the middle 3 feet covered with logs and dirt to a thickness of 2 to 3 feet. The trenches were 5 feet deep. Some bunkers had caves 4' square dug in the side. Sleeping racks for 3 men were near each bunker. Sleeping areas included hammock poles, clothes rack, fireplace, food racks and mosquito net supports. One area had sleeping racks covered with thatched roofs and tables for eating. Possibly it was an officers area. It was estimated that a plt occupied this area the night before and a company within previous 4 days. Items found in this area included 200 lbs. of rice, cooking utensils, small amounts of medical supplies, white jackets, maroon shirts, bloody bandages, tooth brushes, 2 ponchos, desks, textbooks, U. S. type survival kit and mosquito netting.

(7) All units established defensive perimeters by 2000H, dispatched patrols and ambushes and were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 615728
- (b) Co B - YS 593678
- (c) Co C - YS 675585
- (d) Co D - YS 621677

NOTE: Other units did not change.

(8) During the night small arms fire was received by Cos A, B and D. Co A suffered 2 WIA. Co B discovered an estimated VC plt moving near the company perimeter. Artillery fire was called. 1 VC WIA was confirmed. At 2319H the Division Recon Plt reported an estimated VC company at YS 712633. The enemy had not observed the Recon Plt. Artillery fires were called and the VC dispersed. Results of the supporting fires are unknown.

c. D+2 - 24 August 1966.

(1) Division Recon Plt continued to call fire on the suspected VC unit in their area. 2 WIA (confirmed) at 0130H. A Co B patrol engaged an estimated plt sized VC unit at YS 595681. Artillery was called and screams were heard from that direction. The VC broke contact and moved off to the north. At 0625H Co D received an estimated 20 rounds of sniper fire and what appeared to be an incoming mortar round to its front. Co D fired 6 rounds of 60mm Mortar HE in area and then searched the area with negative results except for discovering a VC type claymore mine and 5 U. S. type butterfly bombs. Co D received 3 WIA.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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SECRET-NOFORN

(2) At 0200H Co B heard voices in vicinity of YS 593684. Artillery was requested with unknown results. At 0230H Co B heard an estimated platoon sized force near edge of jungle at YS 592682. NGF was requested and screams were heard. Results were unknown. At 0830H a patrol from Co B investigated and found no blood or other evidence but found freshly cut trails and fields of fire running east-west from YS 592682. Co A received an estimated 50 rounds of small arms fire from vicinity of YS 616729. Artillery was requested. Results of fire are unknown.

(3) At 0950H a Co C patrol made contact with 1 VC. The VC threw an explosive hand device that resulted in 3 WIA for Co C. A Co C patrol received estimated 40 rounds of small arms fire in vicinity of obj 2. The fire was returned and the enemy broke contact and fled to southwest.

(4) At 1530H Co D discovered and destroyed 3 huts with anti-U. S. literature. At 1600H Co D sighted 2 VC who fled into jungle. It discovered 4 more huts and 1 ton of rice in storage house at YS 590673. It also found more anti-U. S. documents, food and household tools. All destroyed by fire except papers. 100 meters down the trail Co D discovered 3 huts, one of which was a first aid station. Hot water was still on the stove. Medical supplies such as sulfa, penicillin and bandages was found. Bloody bandages were also found. Buildings and supplies were destroyed by fire.

(5) Patrolling continued throughout the day. At 1200H BLT 1/26 chipped to IIFORCEV in Support of Operation TOLEDO. Co B continued investigating and destroying the bunker complex. Total number of bunkers had reached 225.

(6) The Division Recon Plt was extracted by helicopter at 1700H at YS 734642 and returned to LZ HAWK. Co D encountered thick jungle and swamp area in moving toward LF obj 3. As a result it held up about 1000 meters short of the obj.

(7) Units established defensive perimeters, dispatched patrols and ambushes. As of 2000H units were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 615728
- (b) Co B - YS 594676
- (c) Co C - YS 672585
- (d) Co D - YS 576670

NOTE: Other units did not change.

(8) During the night each company sent out 2 patrols and set 2 ambushes. No hard contact made prior to 2400H. Units continued to receive light sniper fire and supporting arms were used extensively by all units. Supporting arms fired H and I fires throughout night.

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d. D+5 - 25 August 1966

(1) A Co B recon patrol reported being surrounded at 0100H. Artillery was requested and contact was broken.

(2) Co D continued moving on LF obj 3 and secured it at 0750H. Due to thick canopy and underbrush it required an aerial spotter to fix Co D's position. At 0755H Co D discovered a hut containing an estimated 2000 50' rolls of plastic used for ponchos or ground sheets. It was destroyed by 3.5 WP rockets. Material was manufactured in Japan. At 0805H Co D fired on 2 VC who fled and discovered a 3 hut complex at YS 576675 with a dispensary and 2 warehouse huts. This complex contained 1½ tons of rice, documents, 1 dozen Chinese made grenades, 1 small home made rifle with 100 rounds of ammunition, 5 U. S. type butterfly bombs, 5 small mines, 125 flashlight batteries, 5 pigs, 12 chickens, 10 typewriter ribbons, a set of barber tools, 5 gallon can of gas, 2 small cans of oil, 4 bags of salt and 2 slaughtered hogs. All huts and their contents were destroyed.

(3) Co B continued destruction of bunker complex. Patrol returned at 1600H to report they had destroyed a clothing factory, ½ ton of rice and 5 bunkers. Documents and 13 57mm rounds returned to company area. The 57mm rounds were destroyed. At 1115H at YS 589678 a patrol discovered 87 white jackets, 65 VC gas masks, 7 U. S. field jackets, 40 U. S. Army sheets, and 1 U. S. gas mask. All were destroyed except 1 VC gas mask.

(4) Co C patrol encountered a village at 1745H at YS 613592 consisting of 4 huts with bunkers underneath which were old and unused for several months. There were 4 punji pits located around village. The buildings and punji traps destroyed.

(5) After crossing the river on a foot bridge at YS 574675 Co D reported a suspected minefield at YS 566678. After investigation only three makeshift mines were found made from 81mm Mortar rounds. They were destroyed in place.

(6) Co A reported observing 7 men in black run into cave at 1550H at YS 607738. Local woman said they were VC. No men present in village.

(7) Companies established defensive perimeters and sent out night patrols and ambushes. Units were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 615728
- (b) Co B - YS 594676
- (c) Co C - YS 672585
- (d) Co D - YS 563680

NOTE: Other units did not change.

(8) There was no enemy contact prior to 2400H. Supporting arms fired H and I fires throughout evening.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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e. D+4 - 26 August 1966.

(1) During the morning units continued with search and destroy missions. No contact was made. At 0816H a Co C patrol located a cache of 100 30 lb. bags of salt stored on a platform at YS 602585 covered with plastic sheeting and tin. A bunker and trench line nearby. All were destroyed. At 0850H at YS 605585 a Co C patrol received a hand thrown explosive device. Shrapnel inflicted superficial wounds on 1 man. The VC fled and the patrol lost contact.

(2) Co B patrol discovered and destroyed a cache of rice at 1725H at YS 591668. Co D patrol discovered an English-made tractor in good condition at 0950H at YS 557677. In the same area were 2 huts and 1 butterfly bomb. 50 meters away was a Massey-Ferguson trailer 10 ft long made of steel. All items were destroyed. Another Co D patrol discovered 4 huts at 1415H at YS 565670. Three oxcarts, a few cans of C-rations, 15 lbs of salt, tunnels and fresh footprints were in the area. The same patrol located 10 huts at YS 563605. Huts were destroyed by fire. A Co D patrol located cache of 3 tons of rice and 3 tons of wheat at 1000H at YS 555680. At 1005H at YS 591671 a company size base camp was discovered by a Co B patrol. Empty medical containers of anpheramine, calcium serym, glucose, gastral sedative, steptomycin and 3 full bottles of an unknown medecine. There were cooking utensils, a bunsen burner, sterilizer, 782 gear, 1 carbine magazine and some clothing.

(3) At 1400H Co C (-) was helilifted to LZ OWL to conduct search and destroy operations in a southerly direction. Co B was designated BLT Reserve/Reaction Force. The 3rd Plt of Co C was operating with Force Recon Plt when it discovered and destroyed an abandoned village at YS 604584.

(4) Co A captured 16 VCS at YS 707739 and evacuated them to LZ HAWK for interrogation. A patrol from Co B made contact with 4 VC at YS 589666 at 1200H. Results were 1 VC KIA and 1 VC woman captured and evacuated to LZ HAWK. She was armed with a grenade when captured. Two semi-automatic rifles were captured.

(5) Units established defensive perimeters and sent out patrols and ambushes. Units were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 615728
 - (b) Co B - YS 594676
 - (c) Co C - YS 764733
 - (d) Co D - YS 563680
 - (e) 3rd Plt, Co C and Force Recon Plt - YS 602580
- Note: Other units did not change.

(6) No contact was made with enemy during night. Supporting arms fired H and I throughout the night.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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f. D+5 - 27 August 1966.

(1) During the morning all units closed on their respective CP's. At 1220H Co C was helilifted back to Beach GREEN. At 1600H Co B was helilifted to the USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2). Co B continued as the BLT Reserve/Reaction Force.

(2) At 1000H 3rd Plt Co C with Force Recon Plt returned to village at YS 602585 destroyed 26Aug66 and discovered a store of approximately 20 gal of kerosene, assorted clothing, 45 rounds of foreign make ammo and 25 rounds of .45 cal. ammunition. Co A was ordered to move to an area across the river included in expanded AO. Due to heavy jungle, underbrush and rain it was unable to cross river.

(3) Units ashore established defensive perimeters and sent out patrols and ambushes. Units were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 589705
- (b) Co B - USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2)
- (c) Co C - YS 675585
- (d) Co D - YS 563680

(4) No contact was made during the night except for 3 explosions near 107mm Mortar Btry believed to be incoming mortar rounds but later determined to be Chinese Claymore mines that had been enplaced during a heavy rain storm. One WIA and two tires blown on 1 HOWTAR. Heavy sand bagging prevented more casualties.

g. D+6 - 28 August 1966.

(1) At 0740H Co A secured LZ CANARY. Due to swollen river stream foot bridge needed to cross was 4 feet under water. At 1300H Co A was lifted from LZ CANARY to LZ HAWK and integrated into defensive perimeter at that position. Cos C and D sent out search and destroy patrols. Co C sent 2 plts along road leading to Obj 2. Co D sent two separate plt-sized patrols into new section of AO that Co A was unable to move into because of a swollen river.

(2) A Co C patrol detonated a mine at 1205H at YS 650603. The same patrol made contact with 6 VC at 1228H. A fire fight ensued as patrol pursued VC. The VC fell back to prepared positions and delivered heavy fire. The patrol kept contact with the VC for over 1000 meters as they withdrew to east from initial contact point. NGF and aerial observers were in support but a heavy rainstorm assisted the VC in breaking contact. Results of this engagement were 3 friendly KIA, 9 friendly WIA and no enemy KIA or WIA that could be confirmed.

(3) Co D patrol located 3 huts at YS 566696 at 1300H with 500 lbs of rice. Destroyed huts and rice. Another Co D patrol located a VC training camp at YS 555693 at 1610H. It consisted of 18 huts with a hospital well stocked with medicine. It also included a bakery hut,

ENCLOSURE (2)

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a 40-man classroom, 1 rifle rack capable of holding 40 rifles, 500 lbs. of rice, 100 lbs. of flour, assorted clothing, fish, chickens, household tools, 30 tops to U. S. butterfly bombs and 1 hut used as a jail. One 5 gal bucket was booby trapped. When it was blown with demolitions it made a hole 10' deep and cleared an area 100' around. There was a large amount of basket work in this village. Items of interest were a training schedule dated 26May66 and a menu for the school. Some training manuals were dated 1966. Items of intelligence value were evacuated to the SLF and the remainder were destroyed.

(4) All units ashore established defensive perimeters. Patrols and ambushes were sent out. Units were located as follows:

- (a) Co A - YS 645700
- (b) Co B - USS IWO JIMA
- (c) Co C - YS 675585
- (d) Co D - YS 563680

Note: Other units did not change.

(5) At 2210H the 107mm Mortar Btry received 6 HE incoming rounds of unknown type. A Co A listening post received a shotgun blast that resulted in 1 friendly WIA at YS 652702. There was no other contact during the night.

h. D+7 - 29 August 1966.

(1) The withdrawal continued with Co D lifted commencing at 0710H from LZ WREN to USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2). All elements of Co D were clear of LZ WREN by 0828H. Commencing at 0830H H&S Co (-) was helilifted from LZ HAWK to USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2). At 0930H CH-47 Army helicopters commenced lifting Btry A to Beach GREEN where it was loaded aboard landing craft for return to USS THOMASTON (LSD-28). At 1000H the 107mm Mortar Btry was lifted back to USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2). The lift was completed at 1100H. At 1130H Co A was helilifted back to Beach GREEN for return by landing craft to USS VANCOUVER (LPD-2). Co A received sniper fire while holding perimeter for H&S Co (-) to be helilifted. There were no casualties. Shore Party and elements of Co C returned to assigned shipping leaving 3 LVT's and 1 plt from Co C on Beach GREEN as security for the DUKW which had been left on the beach when an LCM-6 sank. At 1600H all equipment and personnel were aboard assigned shipping. DECKHOUSE III, PHASE II/Operation TOLEDO terminated at 1630H.

6. Results

a. Enemy

(1) The following is an assessment of VC personnel casualties inflicted by BLT 1/26.

VC KIA BODY COUNT 2

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VC WIA CONFIRMED	2
VC WIA POSSIBLE	6
VCS CAPTIVE	3

(2) The following is a compilation of enemy equipment and material captured and/or destroyed by BLT 1/26:

(a) Ordinance, Weapons and Individual Equipment.

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Carbine, 7.62mm, Chicom, Type 53	4
Small arms Ammunition 7.62	130 rounds
Cartridge Belt	1
Individual Pack	1
AT Mine	2
US Survival Kit	1
Bocby Trap	3
57mm RR Ammunition	14 rounds
Grenade, Chicom Wooden Handle	12
81mm Mortar Ammunition	4 rounds
60mm Mortar Ammunition	2 rounds
Gask Mask (NVA)	65
Gas Mask (US)	1

Supplies.

(b) Hospitals, Dispensaries, Medical and Surgical

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Medical Supplies	Assorted
Dispensary	1

(c) Food and Clothing

<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Wheat	3 Ton
Rice	8.1 Ton
White Jackets	87
Maroon Shirt	6
Clothing Factory	1
Lard	28 gallons
Salt in 25 pound bags	139 bags
Slaughtered Hogs	4
Soy Bean Oil	10 gallons
Flour	30 pounds
Field Jacket	7

(d) Construction Material and Shelters.

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<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Bunkers	327
Cement in 80 pound bags	10 bags
Huts (Avg 8' x 10')	58
(e) <u>Documents</u>	
<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Document (assorted)	75 pounds
(f) <u>POL</u>	
<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Oil	9 gallons
Kerosene	100 gallons
(g) <u>Miscellaneous</u>	
<u>Item</u>	<u>Amount</u>
Cooking Utensils	Assorted
Flashlight Batteries	150
Plastic Rolls, 4' x 20'	2000 rolls
Tractor	1
Trailer	1

b. Friendly

(1) Casualties sustained by BLT 1/26 are summarized below:

(a) Killed in action - 3

1 Gunshot - 3

(b) Wounded in Action - 25

1 Shrapnel - 222 Phosphorous burns - 3

(c) Non-battle Casualties - 42

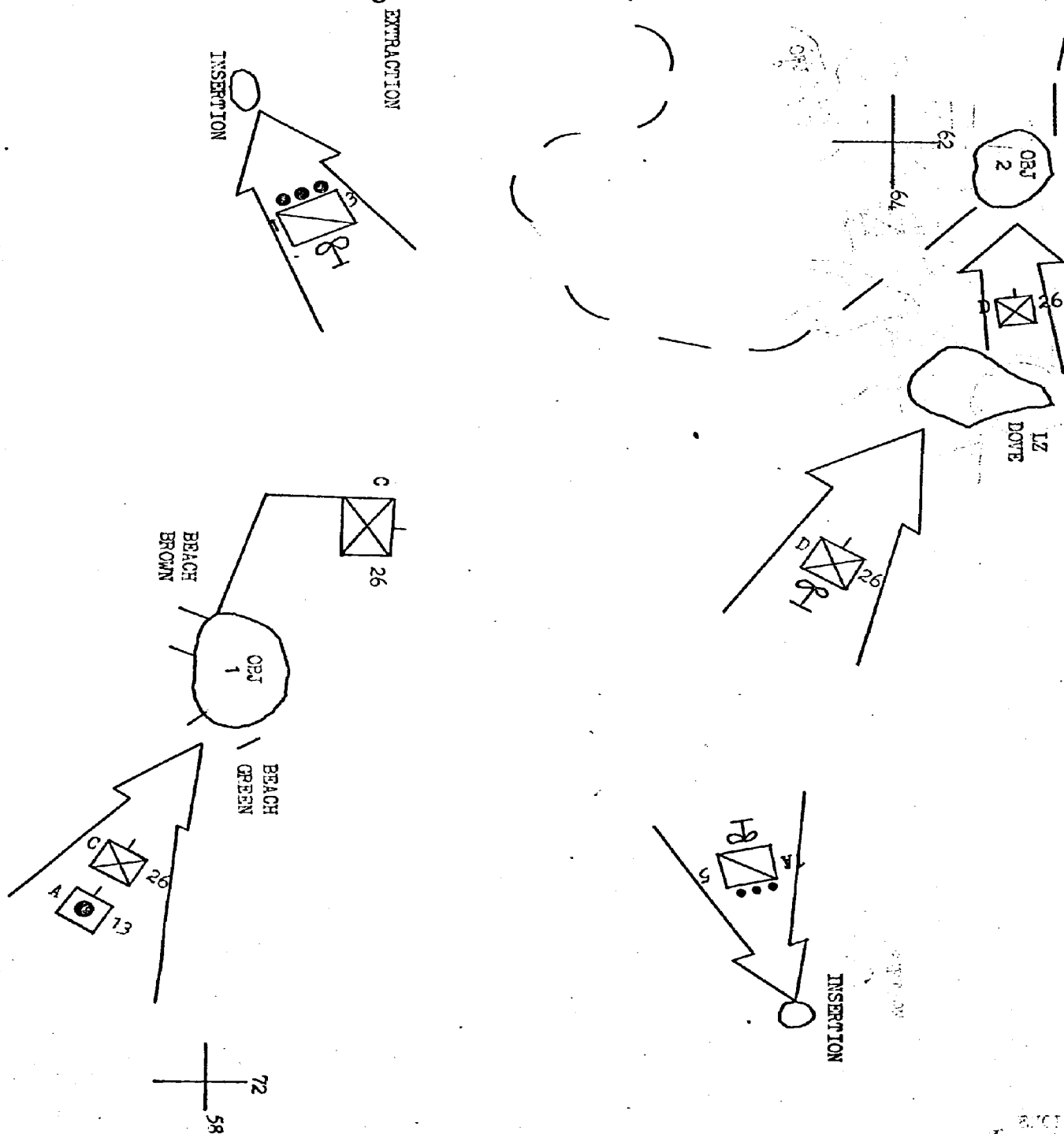
1 Heat - 92 Miscellaneous - 33SECRET-NOFORN

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TAB (a) to Enclosure (2) Operation Overlay for
for DECKHOUSE III, Phase II/Operation
TOLEDO

DINH

Ref: Maps: AMS L701 6442 I, (1:50,000) XA BINH GIA
AMS L701 6442 II, (1:50,000) XA PHUOC THO
AMS L701 6443 II, (1:50,000) XA THUA-TICH
AMS L701 6542 IV, (1:50,000) AP BINH-CHAU
AMS L701 6543 III, (1:50,000) TAN TAO



1/26 ENCLOSURE (2)

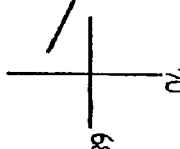
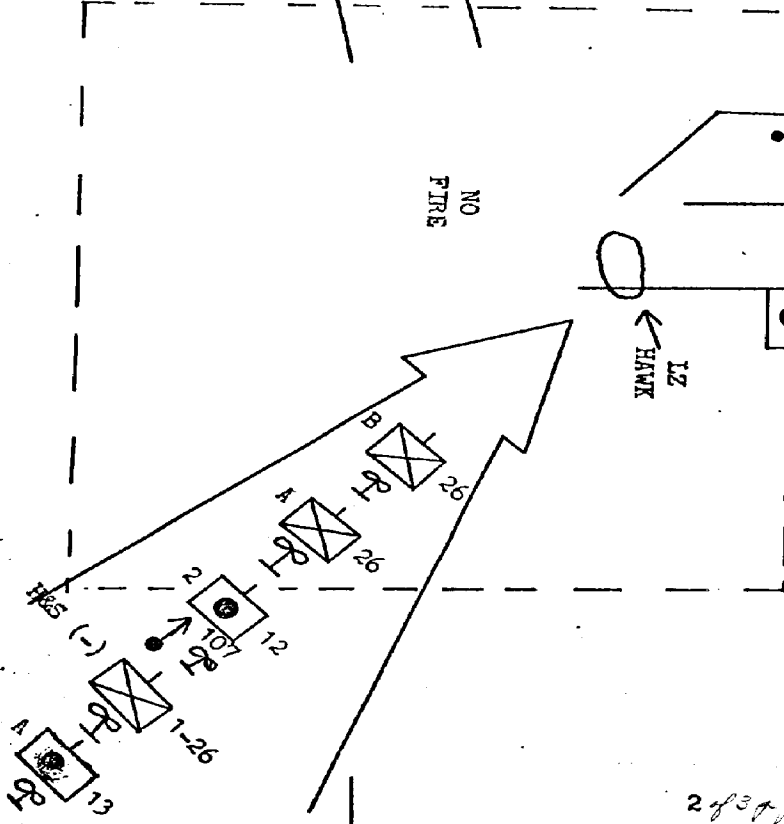
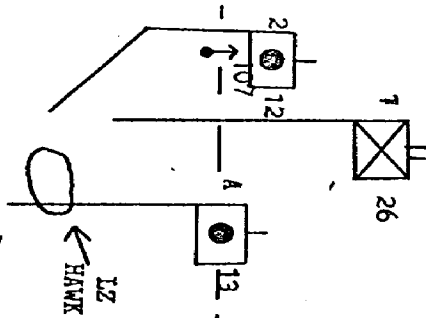
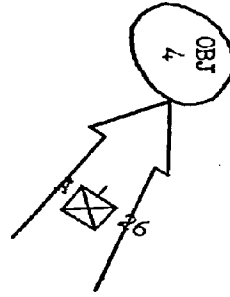
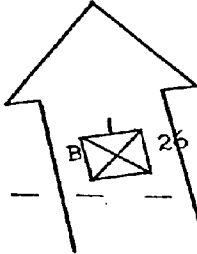
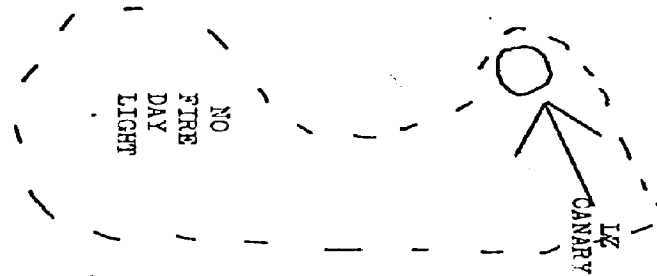
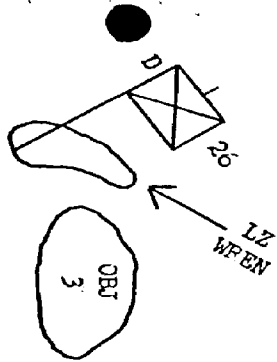
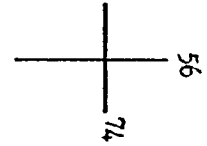
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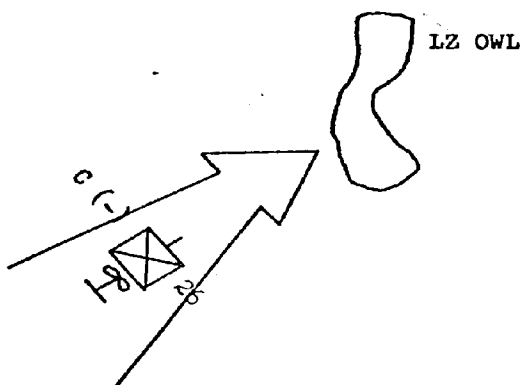
1/26 - ENCLOSURE (2)

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F/W TQ 59.5 R/A DECA
HOUSE III/704 E 140
16-29 11/7 66

2 of 3 pp

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3 of 3 pp

1/26 ENCLOSURE (2)

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4/10 79 19.5 a/a AFK HOUSE
TULLEDO, 16-29 a. 1966

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 363
Marine Aircraft Group 15 (Rein)
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade
FPO, San Francisco, 96602

3:WHG:fe
7480

1 September 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commander, Special Landing Force

Subj: After Exercise Report, Operation Deckhouse III; submission of

Ref: (a) Annex U to Operation Order 328-67

Encl: (1) Chronology of Significant Events
(2) Operational Discrepancies
(3) Statistical Summary

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1), (2) and (3) are submitted.

J. D. Mc Gough
J. D. MC GOUGH

Enclosure (2)

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CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS16 August 1966

Sixteen HMM-363 aircraft launched at 0850H to transport assault troops of 1stBn., 26th Marines from the U.S.S. Iwo Jima to shore. The initial strike zones, code named "Bluebird" at coordinates YS 895764 and "Canary" at coordinates YS 869739, were prepped by naval gunfire and U. S. Air Force F-100's. Two Klondike gunships provided escort for the strike while a third Klondike slick acted as Playboy TACA. No enemy fire was encountered throughout the strike.

Two aircraft launched early in the afternoon to transport the SLF ashore for a beach inspection. Upon completion of the inspection, twelve aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to transport H&S Company and external cargo to LZ Eagle at coordinates YS 822715 which was now occupied by advance CP Group personnel. The lift was completed after five trips and no enemy fire was encountered.

Direct support and med evac missions were flown by squadron aircraft for the remainder of the day with no enemy fire encountered.

17 August 1966

Most missions flown during the day were direct support and med evac missions for 1/26.

Two aircraft, after delivering supplies to YS 847730, picked up 2 heat casualties and then proceeded to YS 816691. Five U. S. WIA were picked up from this zone and the aircraft returned to the ship. Two additional med evacs were lifted in the afternoon from YS 799773 to the LPH-2.

Eight aircraft launched from the LPH-2 at 1435H to LZ Canary (YS 864739). Troops and equipment of Glimmer "B" were then lifted to a new location at LZ Wren (YS 834797). Six trips were required to complete the lift and no enemy fire was encountered.

At 1726H, four aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Eagle (YS 822715). A 24 man recon party was inserted at YS 788725 with no enemy fire reported.

18 August 1966

Operations began this day with two aircraft launching from the LPH-2 to LZ Eagle. After picking up 1 U. S. WIA, the aircraft proceeded to LZ Wren. One additional WIA and 1 KIA were picked up and the aircraft returned to the ship.

At 1052H, six aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Eagle. Troops and equipment of the 107MM Btry. were then lifted to a new location at LZ Wren. The lift was completed at 1452H with no enemy fire encountered.

Squadron aircraft flew direct support missions the remainder of the day and at 1700H, two aircraft were launched to conduct a broadcast mission in the May Tao secret area.

19 August 1966

Three aircraft were launched from the LPH-2 at 0545H to YS 752731 for a recon retraction. Prior to reaching the pick-up point, they were advised that the patrol was pinned down by VC. While 2 gunships flew cover for the patrol, the aircraft diverted to LZ Eagle where they were joined by two additional aircraft. A reaction force was lifted to YS 752731, but contact had been broken and they were returned to LZ Eagle. The 24 man recon patrol was then retracted to LZ Eagle without further incident.

After returning to the ship, 2 aircraft relaunched to LZ Eagle where they picked up Glimmer Six and made a recon of LZ's Hawk and Dove. One med evac was picked up at LZ Hawk and the aircraft returned to the ship after dropping Glimmer Six at LZ Eagle.

At 0912H, ten aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Dove (YS 770808). Two hundred and twenty two troops of Glimmer "C" were lifted to Blue Beach (YS 825597) in three trips with no enemy fire reported.

At 1240H, 12 aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Wren. Two hundred eighteen troops of Glimmer "D" were lifted to the ship in three trips.

The remainder of the day was spent in direct support and med evac missions for 1/26.

20 August 1966

At 0620H, 13 aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Wren and commenced lifting troops and equipment of Glimmer "B" and the Howler Btry. to the ship. Upon completing this lift, the aircraft then proceeded to LZ Eagle and retracted CP and H2S Co. personnel to the ship in five trips. To complete the retraction, Glimmer "A" was then lifted from LZ Eagle to Blue Beach. No enemy fire was reported for the retraction which lasted throughout the morning.

22 August 1966

Operation Deckhouse III, Phase II, began one day after the first phase of Deckhouse III had ended. One aircraft launched early in the morning with Glimmer Six aboard to provide an area recon, and to later provide SAR capabilities for the assault troop lift from the U.S.S. Iwo Jima.

Sixteen aircraft participated in the initial strike from the Iwo Jima with the 1st Bn., 26th Marines. The troops of Delta Company were lifted in two waves into the initial strike zone at coordinates YS 645645, code named "Dove".

Bravo Company was then lifted into a second strike zone at coordinates YS 655742, code named "Hawk". No enemy fire was encountered at either strike zone.

Immediately after the strike was completed, the aircraft began flying direct support, med evac, and aerial recon missions for the battalion for the remainder of the day.

Two aircraft inserted a twenty one man recon team from LZ Hawk in to coordinates YS 655574. No enemy fire was encountered.

23 August 1966

The majority of the day's flights were in direct support of the 1st Bn., 26th Marines. Combat cargo was transported from the U. S. S. Iwo Jima and U.S.S. Vancouver into the HST area at LZ Hawk. Other direct support missions included aerial recon flights and med evacs.

Two aircraft were launched to Xuyen Moc (YS 654685) with a civic action team. After returning to the LPH-2, the two aircraft launched again with liaison officers from the SLF and proceeded to the 1st Australian Task Force CP at YT 435683 and then to the 173rd Airborne Brigade CP in the vicinity of coordinates YT 4405. The aircraft then returned to the LPH-2.

Four aircraft escorted by a Klondike gunship, retracted a 22 man recon team from coordinates YS 607598 and returned them to LZ Hawk. A 24 man recon team was then picked up at LZ Hawk and inserted at coordinates YS 713633. No enemy fire was encountered.

In addition to the two Condition IV night med evac aircraft, four aircraft and crews were placed on a condition IV standby to provide lift capabilities for a reaction force on standby ashore in the event a recon team previously inserted needed help. The aircraft were not needed.

24 August 1966

Two aircraft launched early in the morning to Glimmer "A" at coordinates YS 615724 where two med evacs were picked up and returned to the LPH-2. The aircraft then proceeded to Glimmer "C" at coordinates YS 675585 to pick-up three additional med evacs. No enemy fire was encountered in either zone.

Two aircraft launched with a civic action team for Xuyen Moc (YS 655685). After returning to the LPH-2, they were launched immediately on a priority ammo resupply to LZ Hawk. No enemy fire was encountered.

Most flights during the day were in direct support of 1/26 carrying water and rations to the various company positions. Med evac missions were also flown with no enemy fire encountered on any flight.

A 24 man recon team was retracted without incident from YS 733642 by four aircraft and returned to LZ Hawk. Escort for the retraction was provided by a Klondike gunship.

25 August 1966

Most of this day's missions were direct support flights of logistic cargo for 1/26. Water, rations, and ammo were lifted from the LPH-2 and U.S.S. Vancouver throughout the day to "A" Co. at YS 615728, "B" Co. at YS 574676, "C" Co. at YS 675588, "D" Co. at YS 574684 and H&S Co. at LZ Hawk.

Two aircraft picked up three med evacs at Glimmer "D" position, and one med evac from the Glimmer "B" position and returned to LPH-2. No enemy fire was encountered throughout the day.

26 August 1966

Resupplies of ammo, water, rations and fresh fruit were lifted throughout the day from the LPH-2 and U.S.S. Vancouver for all elements of 1st Bn., 26th Marines ashore. Med evacs were picked up from all positions except Glimmer "B" during the day and returned to the ship.

Twelve aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to YS 675588. "C" Company was then transported from these coordinates into a strike zone at coordinates YS 732762 without incident. Three trips were required to complete the lift and escort was provided by Klondike Playboy. Just prior to the strike, the zone was prepped by Naval Gunfire and Air Force F-4C's.

Two aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to YS 591667 and YS 598755 to pick-up VC prisoners. The prisoners were returned to LZ Hawk and the aircraft returned to the ship.

Three aircraft inserted a 22 man recon team from LZ Hawk into YS 675588. No enemy fire was encountered.

27 August 1966

Eight aircraft retracted troops of "C" Company from LZ Owl (YS 731757) to Green Beach (YS 678585). Four trips were required to complete the lift with no enemy fire encountered.

Later in the afternoon, eight aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to coordinates YS 597679 to retract troops of "B" Company to the U.S.S. Iwo Jima. Four additional aircraft launched at this time to transfer 24 Antrac personnel from LZ Hawk to the U.S.S. Vancouver. They then joined the initial troop retraction, completing the lift in three trips.

Two aircraft lifted a section of 81mm mortar platoon from YS 675588 to LZ Hawk. No enemy fire was encountered.

Routine resupply missions were flown throughout the day without incident.

28 August 1966

Routine resupply missions were flown throughout the morning without any aircraft incidents. Four med evacs were lifted from YS 634615 and 1. U. S. KIA was lifted from YS 647602. All were returned to the LPH-2.

Four aircraft launched from the LPH-2 to LZ Canary (YS 598710) where they were joined by four aircraft diverted from resupply missions and began retracting "A" Company to LZ Hawk. Six of the aircraft completed the lift in six trips while two aircraft were diverted after the first trip to Glimmer "C" at YS 650602 on an emergency resupply of battle dressings. The two aircraft then picked up two med evacs at YS 641621 and returned them to the ship.

Two aircraft flew an emergency resupply of 105MM ammo from the LPH-2 to LZ Hawk. Two trips were required to complete the resupply in very marginal weather.

29 August 1966

Fifteen aircraft launched from LPH-2 to begin retracting all remaining elements of 1st Bn., 26th Marines still ashore. Delta Co. was lifted from YS 563684 to the ship in 2 trips, E&S Co. from LZ Hawk to the ship in 6 trips, and "A" Co. was lifted from LZ Hawk to Red Beach (YS 620579) in two trips. One additional aircraft provided TACA for the lift which was completed by 1300H.

Administrative runs were made to the 173rd Airborne Brigade CP and 1st Australian Task Force CP during the remainder of the day. Three U.S. KIA's were transferred to the 93rd Evacuation Hospital at Long Binh. Inter-ship transfers of cargo and passengers were also made.

One aircraft launched in the early evening to complete the operation by providing TACA for salvage operations of an LCM which had capsized 500 meters off Brown Beach.

OPERATIONAL DISCREPANCIES1. General

Helicopter operations with the 1st Bn., 26th Marines on Operations Deckhouse III and Operation Deckhouse III - Phase II, were for the most part well coordinated, however, discrepancies did appear in the general areas of communications, zone security and external cargo loads.

2. Discrepancy

a. Helicopter commanders repeatedly had difficulty reaching ground units during resupply operations on designated FM frequencies, even though the helicopters had been requested by the ground units, and the unit's ground position established and secured.

b. Eight HST personnel and one heavily loaded mule for external pick-up were all that were left for the last load during the retraction from Landing Zone Hawk on Operation Deckhouse III.

c. On both operations external loads were loaded to the extent that the helicopters could not begin to lift them from the zones.

3. Discussion

a. Ground units that have requested helicopters for their support should make all efforts to contact the helicopters as soon as possible when the aircraft appear over their position. Helicopter commanders need to know information pertaining to wind direction, zone obstructions and zone security prior to landing. Except in extreme emergency, pilots will not land in any zone where ground to air radio contact has not been established.

b. All troop retractions should be planned and coordinated so that as large a security force as is possible will be the last load lifted from any zone. The size of this security force depends upon the nature of the specific zone. Experience from past operations has proven that unless this is done, undue jeopardy is placed upon any troops remaining in the zone and upon the helicopter crews.

c. Over-loading externals to be helo lifted does not expedite any retraction. The daily high density altitude and the confining nature of most zones in South Vietnam proportionately reduces the loads the helicopters are able to lift. It will always prove more expeditious to prepare lighter than normal loads than loads that have to be torn down and prepared again.

4. Conclusion. The aforementioned discrepancies are general in their

nature. They do however, affect the effectiveness of the helicopter and its use in combat operations in Vietnam. They also do not generally reflect the combat readiness of any specific ground unit, but do reflect a lack of general understanding of the helicopter and its over-all capabilities and use in this war. All units using the helicopter for their direct support on combat operations should make themselves aware of its uses, its limitations, and its broad area of capabilities. The 1st Bn., 26th Marines have already shown a deeper insight in helicopter operations than many of their contemporary units with longer service in Vietnam, but these general areas need to be improved upon to further increase this force's effectiveness in combat.

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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

OPERATION DECKHOUSE III - PHASE I

<u>DATE</u>	<u>SCUTTLES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO TONS</u>	<u>MED EVACS</u>	<u>FLT HOURS</u>
16 AUG	428	868	35.7	3	103.6
17 AUG	217	383	11.6	10	49.2
18 AUG	293	282	31.8	6	61.2
19 AUG	209	570	6.3	6	50.4
20 AUG	122	1086	25.6	1	75.7
TOTALS:	1594	3189	112.0	26	340.1

OPERATION DECKHOUSE III - PHASE II

22 AUG	465	1064	32.0	15	127.5
23 AUG	223	243	21.6	3	58.2
24 AUG	216	141	29.6	5	54.0
25 AUG	164	104	20.9	4	48.9
26 AUG	231	321	25.4	7	65.7
27 AUG	234	482	11.1	2	62.8
28 AUG	181	254	22.2	18	44.7
29 AUG	356	832	19.1	3	95.5
TOTALS:	2070	3443	181.9	57	557.3
COMBINED TOTAL:	3664	6632	292.9	83	897.4