

DECLASSIFIED

OPERATION STARLITE 18-24 AUG 1965

1. - - - - - (1) USMC MAP STARLITE STATISTICS
(SEE LEFT SIDE OF FOLDER)
2. - - - - - (2) SUMMARY OF OPERATION STARLITE
(Pgs 1 thru 21)
3. - - - - - MCCC HQS, USMC SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT
INTEREST PERIOD 180601 -190600 Aug 1965
OPERATION STARLITE
4. MCCC, HQS, USMC SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST
PERIOD 190601 - 200600 Aug 1965
5. MCCC, HQS, USMC SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST
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6. MCCC, HQS, USMC SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST
PERIOD 210601 - 220600 Aug 1965
7. MCCC, HQS, USMC SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST
PERIOD 220601 - 230600 Aug 1965
8. OSD Msg 192340Z Aug 65, SUBJ: PRESIDENT's congratulatory message to
GENERALD WESTMORELAND reference to American
Victory at Chu Lai.
9. CNO Msg 192341Z Aug 65, Subj: Congratulatory message to ALL HANDS, NAVY
AND MARINE CORPS who participated in OPERATION
STARLITE
10. CG,111,MAF Msg 200610Z Aug 65, III MAF SPECIAL SITREP # 10, period 200800H to
201300H Aug 65 OPERATION STARLITE
11. FMFPAC Msg 200815Z Aug 65, Subj: TELECON HQMCCC WATCH OFFICER & MAJ
WARFIELD) AND FMFPAC CDO (LT COL BARROW) 200555Z
Aug 65
12. JCS Memo for White House Subj: OPERATION STAR LITE
Situation Room 20 Aug
65
13. MCCC,HQS, USMC 20 Aug 65, MEMO FOR THE RECORD: Subj: Call from Admiral
LEMONS, NMCC w/ Encl: (10)
14. - - - - - NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE: 20 Aug 65, U.S. MARINES
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15. - - - - - NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE: 20 Aug 65, DEATH OVER-
TAKES A U.S. SUPPLY UNIT

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16. - - - - - NEW YORK TIMES PHOTOGRAPHS 20 Aug 65,
OF US MARINES TWO DAY OFFENSIVE AGAINST
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17. - - - - - THE WASHINGTON POST ARTICLE 20 Aug 1965,
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18. COMSEVENTHFLT Msg 200858Z Aug 65, PERSONAL MESSAGE for MGEN WALT, COL KNAPP,
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FROM VADM PAUL P. BLACKBURN JR.
19. MACV Msg 201130Z Aug 65, Subj: PETER ARNETT STORY ON MARINE SUPPLY
COLUMN
20. DA Msg 201310Z Aug 65, Subj: GENERAL JOHNSON, CSA, CONGRATULATIONS
TO CMC, IN THE USMC VICTORY IN BATTLE ON
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21. SECNAVY Msg 201350Z Aug 65, Subj: CONGRATULATION MESSAGE ON USMC
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22. MACV Msg 211000Z Aug 65, Subj: WRAP UP OF OPN STARLITE:
23. CINCPACFLT MSG 221220Z Aug 65, CINCPACFLT SITREP NO. 196 period
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24. MCCC,IIQS,USMC, INFO MEMO 22 Aug 65, Subj: OPERATION STARLITE
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30. MACV Msg 250340Z Aug 65, Subj: OPERATION STARLITE TERMINATED
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- 33. CG,FMFPAC Msg 290600Z Aug 65 FMFPAC SITREP # 152, period 272400Z Aug 65
Summary of Events
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- 40. COMUSMACV Msg 111203Z Sep 65, USMACV SITREP # 47 for period 091001Z to
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- 42. - - - - - USMC GRID MAP SHOWING LANDING ZONES
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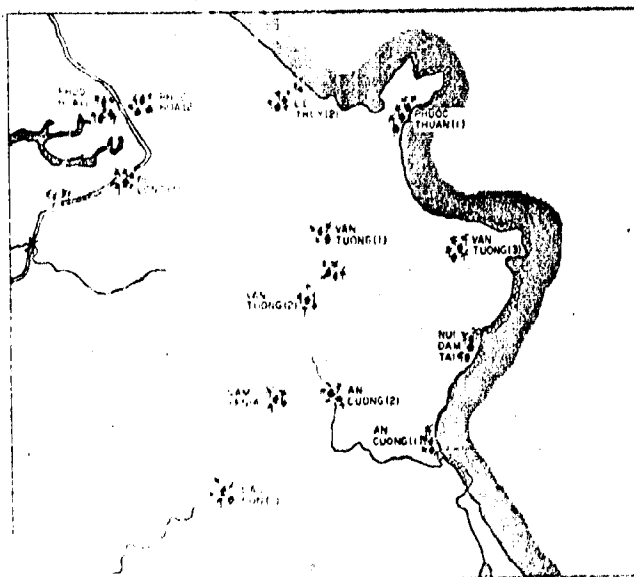
SUMMARY

Among the observations during the trip the two most important involved the large Starlight operation south of Chu Lai, and a study of the activity in the populous area south of Danang, whence so much critical publicity grew two weeks ago. These two topics will be discussed first.--

Operation Starlight. The attack on the Van Tuong complex on 18-21 August had broad significance. First, it exhibited once again the great value of intelligence, particularly that which comes to the Marines from the people as a result of our civic action efforts. It was the Vietnamese who warned us repeatedly of the large enemy concentration in the Van Tuong area. This, corroborated by ARVN intelligence and by information coming from sensitive sources, pinpointed the target precisely. Second, Starlight exhibited that a firm, sea-based position, such as Chu Lai, possesses dual virtue.--It posed a threat which induced the VC to mass to destroy it, while providing us a secure base for an air/sea attack on the VC force. Third, it reminded us that in close combat with a resolute enemy force of combined arms, we are going to have to expect casualties, as was true in Korea and World War II.

The tactics used at Van Tuong are worthy of description. They were complex, well coordinated, and based upon effective use of the sea both as a base and as factor in the encirclement.

Here is the Van Tuong peninsula:



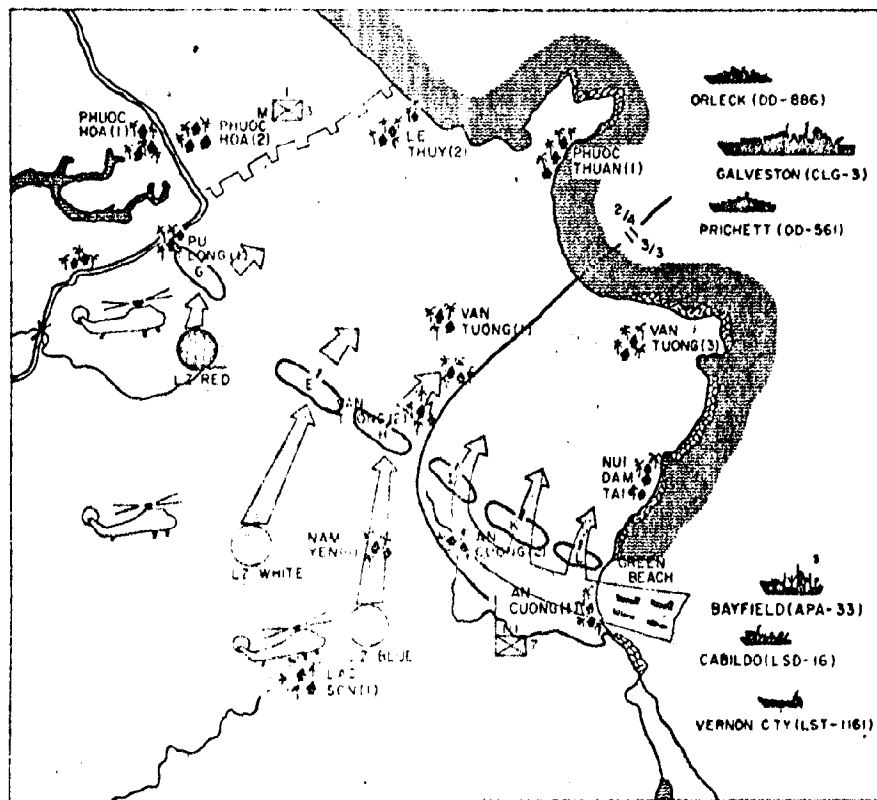
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It is a complex of tilled fields separated by six foot hedgerows. About 30 per cent is uncultivated, rocky and covered with dense undergrowth. There are about a dozen hamlets on the peninsula, including several devoted to fishing.

The tactical plan had one Marine company moving overland from the north during the preceding night to act as a blocking force, and a battalion landing by helicopter shortly after dawn simultaneously with a battalion landing over the beach in amphibian vehicles.

The idea was to compress the enemy by the advancing seaborne and heliborne forces, driving them northward and eastward where they would be caught between the blocking force and the seacoast.



The operation developed generally as planned. Having been

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conceived in great secrecy and in the space of only three days, there were no leaks, and the enemy was actually surprised. A force of about 150 VC, stationed in the seacoast area, withdrew as the sea-borne force moved in, offering sporadic resistance. Likewise the heliborne force encountered only light resistance during its initial landing.

It had to be quickly obvious to the VC that they were in a vise, and they reacted in two ways; first they fought back with vigor, using effectively an extensive system of fixed emplacements; and second, some of them set about escaping the trap.

The physical nature of the area made our own movement difficult. The hedgerows contained many emplacements, fighting holes and tunnel entrances, all of which favored the defender.

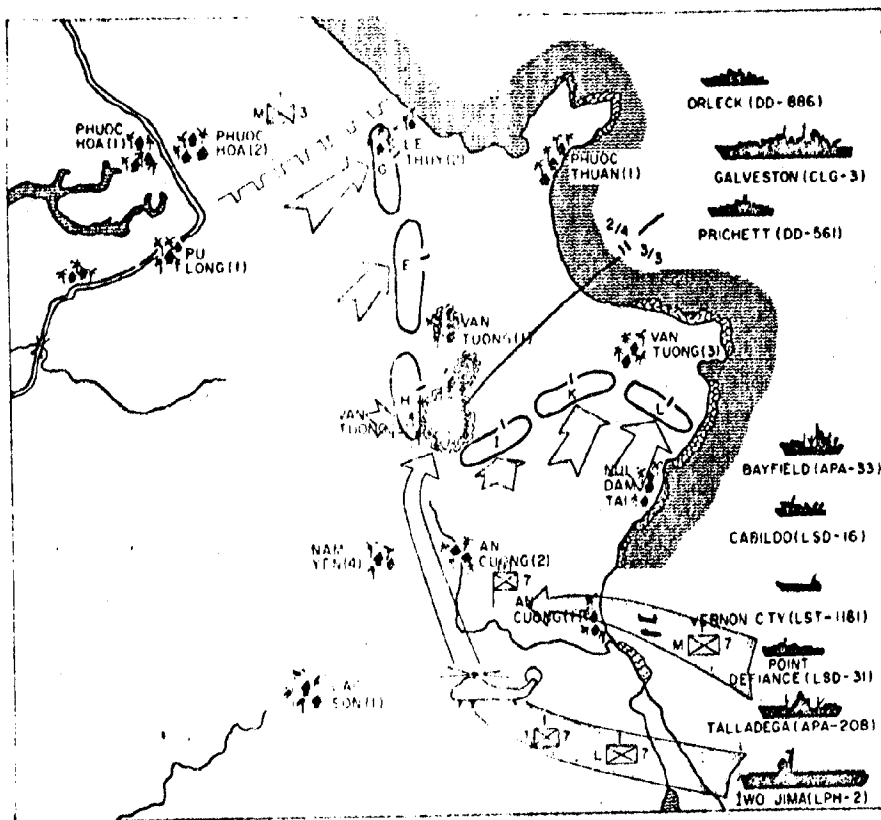
During the first day the Marines moved slowly ahead, under heavy supporting fires delivered by air, naval gunfire and artillery. The artillery, incidentally, was divided in two elements, one in the landing area itself (107mm howtar) and the remainder in the Chu Lai area proper (155mm).

The enemy resisted stubbornly, exhibiting adequate ammunition stocks and a good array of armament--small arms, automatic weapons, mortars and recoilless rifles. As the Marines advanced through their positions many of the VC went into the ground, moving through the very extensive tunnel system. Subsequently they would reappear behind our lines, and there were snipers in and around the regimental command post ten hours after the landing began. In several cases the by-passed enemy delivered anti-tank fire against our tracked vehicles, immobilizing five of them in one locality about a mile behind the foremost forces.

The extent to which the VC had dug in the area is exemplified by the fact that in one cave were found 143 civilians, two dead VC and one wounded VC. The civilians, terrified and hungry, were fed by the Marines, and were supplying our forces intelligence before noon of the first day.

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By early afternoon, the situation looked about like this:



As is evident, a gap had developed between the two advancing battalions. To fill the void and to maintain the momentum, three companies of the Special Landing Force, part of which had just arrived on the scene, were landed and entered directly into the action.

Preceding the onset of darkness, there were two attempts by VC units of about company size to escape. One tried to work its way down to the beach--perhaps to evacuate by water in the many fishing boats that are there, or perhaps to go into the numerous caves along the sea-side cliffs. In any event, these were taken under fire by USS Galveston, and the great bulk of the group were killed.

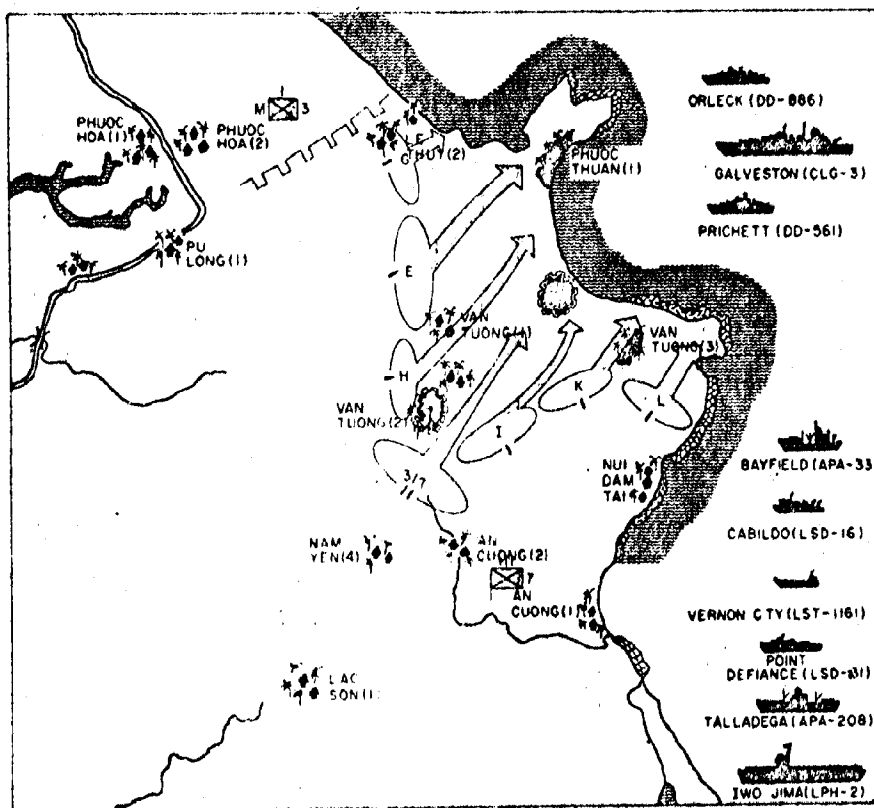
Another unit attempted to filter out to the northwest and were caught in the open by a rocket/napalm attack from 1st Wing aircraft, not much more than 100 yards from our own forward elements. These, too, were mostly killed. One survivor--taken prisoner at the time, asserted that he was all that remained of his company.

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Meanwhile the remaining enemy continued to resist the advance with much determination. Quarters were so close that helicopters engaged in evacuation and supply were under accurate fire and, at the end of the day, almost every helicopter had several holes. Only one was destroyed.

By nightfall the enemy had been compressed further, with his back to the ocean. The night was not eventful, and the attack was resumed in the morning, after a good one-hour preparatory air, artillery and naval gunfire attack.

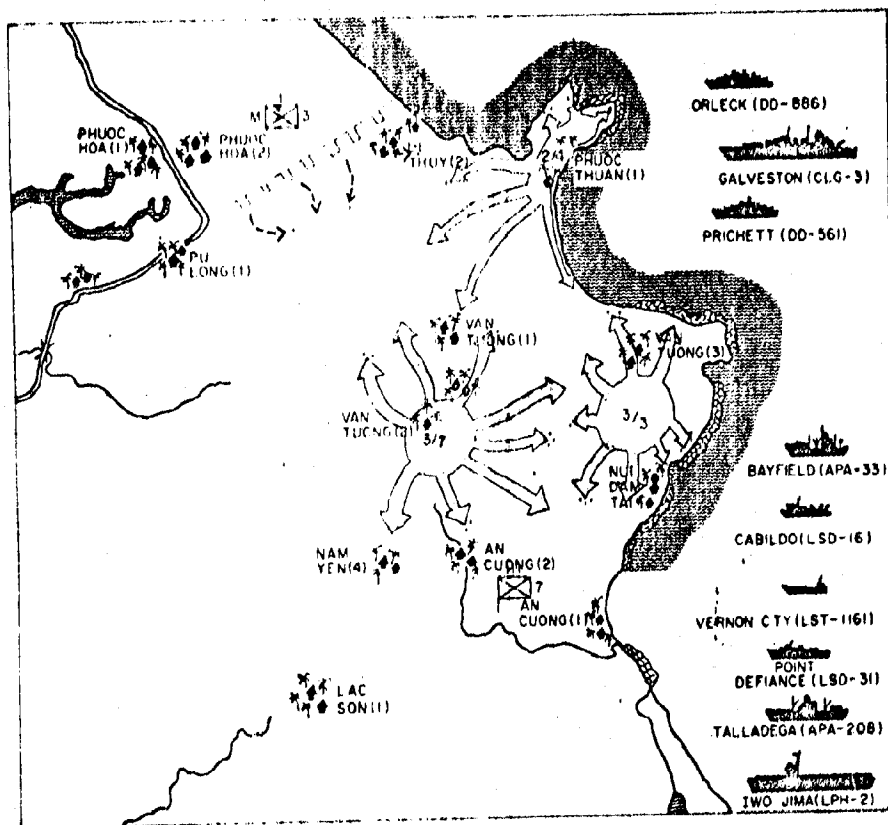


Resistance grew as the morning wore on, and as the pocket of enemy was further compressed. The enemy fought stubbornly from the maze of foxholes, and strong points in the hedgerows; and we continued to suffer casualties from concealed snipers. Another escape attempt toward the beach gave naval gunfire a point blank target, while the advancing forces seized Van Tuong village and overran what was evidently the headquarters of a large VC unit, based on the extent

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of the communication installation. Nightfall found the VC confined to two small pockets squeezed against the sea. On the third day these pockets were eliminated, and the painstaking task of policing the battlefield began;--inspecting caves and tunnels, sealing them up gathering material, and counting and burying the enemy dead.



The mop-up task was continued on the fourth day, employing one Marine and two Vietnamese battalions. With the sweep half done, some 599 bodies had been counted, and it would be hard to estimate how many more dead were in the underground areas.

There were 106 prisoners taken, of whom the number of true VC was not yet known. However, the information coming from them was already substantial. From the interrogations, it was confirmed that the enemy unit was the 1st VC Regiment, and that its four battalions were all in the battle area. One prisoner stated that they had orders to attack Chu Lai at 0700 on the 19th. Another reported having participated in sand table rehearsals of the attack plan on a mock-up. The prisoners

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repeatedly underscored the decimation of the VC force and the paralyzing effect of our supporting arms. One prisoner expressed respect for the courage of the Marine infantrymen but said that the thing that tore them up the most was our close air support delivered in such near proximity to the front lines.

A concluding point, which I feel is meaningful for every Marine-- The principal ground units in Starlight were three battalions--3/3 from Okinawa, 2/4 from Hawaii and 3/7 from California. The operation, complex in the extreme, was three days in planning, and the units coming from three different parts of the world still experienced no coordination problems whatever. Their procedures, techniques and systems were all the same. Coming out of a single time-tested mold, such as in this case, marks the troops as professional.

Pub
Talk to

Press Criticism of Marine Tactics.--One project of the visit was to look critically at the problem of the unfavorable press image resulting from our operations south of Danang ten days ago. What we may have done wrong tactically, where we erred in relations with the press, and what needs to be done in the future were the prime questions underlying our observations.

I visited the area south of the Ca de Song River where the publicised incidents occurred; talked to Marines who were--and are--involved there; talked to Vietnamese civilians and military; looked at that fraction of the region which is now under our control, and talked to several newsmen.

Significant things that I saw were these;--first, the villages of this densely populated coastal region are different from the average Vietnamese village. Where it is common for villagers to erect some protective shelters, as refuge against the fighting between the Government and the Viet Cong, the shelters in this area are intricately organized with sensible military defensive works;--trenches, bunker type weapons positions, interconnecting tunnels, and obstacles. We brought back many photographs of these installations.

Second, much of this defensive construction is new--apparently having been developed in the last two months.

Third, this area has been under nominal VC influence for some

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time, largely uncontested by the government, and has supplied important quantities of foodstuffs to the Viet Cong, not to speak of providing a convenient intelligence entree into the Danang area.

Fourth, the people are, in a substantial measure, identified with the Viet Cong, because the area has been under communist control for a long time, and because many village youths have been impressed into VC service.

Finally, crediting the ARVN intelligence, the provincial and district intelligence, as well as our own, there are more Viet Cong forces in the area than there were two months ago.

All of this generates a basic conclusion that the Viet Cong have no intention of relinquishing the area; that they are mindful of the critical loss they would suffer in foodstuffs and the consequent benefits we will realize in population control as our enclaves grow. I believe the Viet Cong are going to present us with a rough guerrilla problem in the area, to the full extent of their capabilities.

With this as a backdrop, I looked as carefully as I could into the techniques which our people have used, keeping in mind that our purpose is to help the GVN bring peace and security back to the area; that killing Viet Cong is only one element in achievement of that purpose; that their capture or their surrender are to be preferred in the end, because of their connection with non-combatants or quasi-combatants; and finally that the good will of the people needs quickly to be earned, if for no other reason because of the valuable intelligence they can provide.

I reviewed the progress of Marine operations to date in the populous areas, not only around Danang but around Phu Bai, Chu Lai and Qui Nhon also. The basic tactic employed has been uniform, involving this sequence of actions:--enter the hamlet as peaceably as possible; make known to the hamlet chief and the elders that we are there to secure the area against Viet Cong depredation, to free the villagers from terror and extortion, to support the local Popular Forces elements, and to bring such help as the hamlet chief needs and wants in the way of civic action.

The key point here, as relates directly to the Cam Ne incident which was dramatized in the press, is the expression above--"enter the hamlet as peaceably as possible". Our forces have been able to

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enter scores of hamlets, in all three enclaves, without shooting, and have been able quickly to set about the subsequent civic action steps. These are the areas where Viet Cong influence was less extensive at the outset. Our relationships with the people in these areas have become warm very quickly, our civic action efforts have flourished, the Popular Forces have grown stronger, and useful intelligence has come to us in a growing flow. As best I can determine, this category now extends to over thirty villages, comprising some 90 hamlets and about 50,000 people.

Then there are the villages where we have been obliged to fight the VC in order to enter. The Le My village complex--which has been seen by some who may read this summary--was one. Four Marines were killed and 13 wounded in clearing the VC from Le My. Twenty Viet Cong were killed and, incidentally, some dwellings were burned too. The Le My people were frightened, suspicious--or even hostile--at the beginning. Consequently, the reestablishment of peace took longer, but the same cycle was still pursued by the Marines and, in about six weeks, a reasonably normal society emerged, with an enthusiastic, Marine-trained Popular Forces element and a growing economy. Most important, our support and our civic action efforts began to generate intelligence--intelligence coming from the same diffident or antagonistic people whom our men encountered on the first day. We have now had this experience with about 15 villages of some 45 hamlets, including perhaps 25,000 people. Or, put another way, there now are some ten Le My type activities in progress simultaneously in the III MAF.

Today Le My is on its own feet. Marines no longer occupy its defenses. Its own Popular Force units provide local security, and the economy is flourishing. Our forces have moved on--with the concurrence of the village chief and elders, who are confident that they can now provide their own security. Marine patrols visit the area only occasionally, and their popularity is manifest whenever they appear.

The area around the hamlet of Cam Ne (4)--scene of the publicity two weeks ago--falls in the Le My category, and the region is already showing evidence of following the same pattern as its predecessors. In other words, the loss of property--even the loss of life--seems not to have anywhere near the impact on the people as does the prospect of security. Visible everywhere is the fact that the greatest drive that these war-surfeited peasants have is their hunger for peace and security. To the extent that we give them this, we harvest the whole bag--loyalty, support, intelligence.

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To test my own observations, I asked General Thi, Commander of the I Corps, how we could possibly ever have anything but hatred from a Vietnamese woman whose house we had burned down. His answer deserves reflection. He said, "Remember, the VC probably kidnapped the woman's son and have been extorting rice from her too. In exchange she has gotten nothing but promises. She hates the VC and will sacrifice a lot to be rid of them. She knows what peace is, and if you bring it to her, she is likely to blame everything on the VC and thank you in the end."

I hope General Thi is right. Certainly, we have some evidence that would tend to support him. Put another way, I believe the Marines' tactics are correct, and that they are proving successful.

Now, as to the specific incident at the hamlet of Cam Ne (4). I showed the CBS film clips to several of the people who took part. Their conclusions were that the film report was factually inaccurate in numerous places, and worse, that it was contrived to give a distorted picture. A careful analysis has been prepared, documented by signed statements from those involved. It substantiates that the film report was indeed inaccurate;--almost inexplicably so.

I believe that the earlier reports from III MAF outlining the reasons behind the Marine actions at Cam Ne (4) stand up well under close examination, and I believe that the validity of their tactics is going to be underscored by the success in civic action which is now being realized.

As to our relations with the press, I think we have erred in seeking to defer completely to their desires, and in allowing them essentially unrestricted entry into the combat area. The CBS man who filmed the Cam Ne incident came to Danang in a civilian aircraft, hired a vehicle, and went to war on his own. He never made his presence known to III MAF, nor did he have to do so. This degree of license is intolerable, and CG III MAF is going to recommend to COMUSMACV that a uniform policy be instituted which requires a newsman to report in to the local operational commander before venturing into a combat area. This will help a little, but not much. Beyond this, the authorities of the operational commander need to be clearly spelled out, formally and at a very high level. The newsmen are going to fight any restraint whatever, and the commander on the spot deserves to know just how much backing he is going to have in any situation.

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III Marine Amphibious Force

General. The Force has progressed, in every particular, with a rapidity that would be hard to visualize without seeing it. In six short weeks its logistic base has matured, its operations have increased in scope and variety, and the results are beginning to mount up. A few statistics:

Enemy killed in past six weeks - 827

Enemy captured in past six weeks - 153

Jet air sorties flown - 3374

Helicopter air sorties flown - 25,482

Villages in which civic action projects are now in progress - 68

Persons given medical treatment - 28,750

Popular Forces units trained - 10 companies, 16 platoons

Actions in the three Marine enclaves, while expanding in all cases, are quite dissimilar:

The Phu Bai Enclave: The Marine units are patrolling aggressively in the hinterland, establishing ambushes and seeking otherwise to keep the Viet Cong on the defensive. Their main effort, however, is in the counterinsurgency field which they are pursuing with vigor and good effect.

They have gone to work in five major village complexes; undertaking to win the confidence of the people through civic action;--medical, educational, engineering, Popular Forces training and the general provision of security. Marines have undertaken to learn the Vietnamese language and to convince the natives that they are in fact there to provide them with tranquillity and not to exploit them.

The Popular Forces units in the area, numbering six platoons, have been organized into a combined action company along with four squads of regular Marine infantry. It is commanded by a Marine lieutenant who is a Vietnamese linguist. The company lives together, shares the same food and operates as a unit. The Marines have given the Popular Forces elements good basic training and with it the pride and confidence which is

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born of professional competence.

The results have been remarkable. The units of the company spend every night in the field patrolling or ambushing Viet Cong routes of approach into the villages. The villages have consequently begun to enjoy a degree of peace which they have not seen for a long time. The Popular Forces elements have schooled the Marines in the ways of the people, as well as in the language, while the Marines have taught the Popular Forces something of the Marine approach to combat.

Now the villagers in the Phu Bai area charge the Marines no more for the things they buy than they would a Vietnamese. They confide secrets to us concerning Viet Cong and Viet Cong sympathizers and they willingly undertake to find out information which is of interest to our forces;--and they do all this without apprehension as to reprisals from the Viet Cong.

Meanwhile, the Marine battalion has established a sound rapport with the ARVN forces in the area. Indeed, I watched a combined ARVN/Marine artillery shoot which was well executed, and was built around the Marines reinforcing the fires of the ARVN unit, rather than the reverse.

All in all, the actions of the Marines at Phu Bai are very near to a model of military counterinsurgency.

Peos The Danang Enclave. This is the logistic heart of the Marine operation in Vietnam. The improvements achieved in the past six weeks are great. The deluge of people and things which has descended on this area in the past three months is beginning to be sorted out and to make its presence felt. The Force Logistic Support Group is commencing to discharge its function effectively. It is moving to new and more efficient quarters and promises soon to be in a sound state for support of the logistic operation of III MAF. The Group is in personnel trouble in the form of certain specialists such as warehousemen and ordnance technicians. We must find the necessary people and get them to Danang as soon as possible.

*Danang
Sys* The transceiver system between the Force Logistic Support Group and the logistic support units in the other enclaves is not working. While the technical problems are in process of being solved, we cannot wait and must move immediately to a push supply system in every commodity where it is possible to do so.

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The requisition fill rate is now standing at somewhere around 35 per cent, which is an improvement over six weeks ago, and there is every reason to conclude that it will continue to go uphill.

The Danang East light aircraft facility is nearing completion. It is a superior product. MAG-16 will soon be moving and will thus reduce the congestion at Danang main field.

The gargantuan project to get hawk missiles on top of Monkey Mountain is just about to bear fruit. The site and the access road are nearing completion, and hawks should be on the mountain top in about a week. One has to see the engineering feat to appreciate it.

Construction of semi-permanent logistic facilities to meet the coming winter season is going forward rapidly, but not rapidly enough. Footings are being poured for Butler buildings and many Butlers have already begun to grow. It is not likely that we can get many more buildings constructed before the rains begin than we have already on site; however, the eventual need for Butler structures will probably be in the order of 50 more than we now have on hand. We must get these buildings to Vietnam as soon as we can.

Meanwhile a quick fix for the coming monsoon is the standard Army canvas maintenance shelter, of which we now have five. They are popular and we should purchase another 20 at once and get them into the hands of the Division and Wing.

The last time I visited Danang was the day of the Viet Cong attack on the airfield. Since that day much has been done to improve the local airfield security situation. A system of perimeter lighting has been installed. Many native structures which were very near to the perimeter fence have been purchased by the Vietnamese government and cleared away, thus increasing our fields of fire. Unfortunately this progress has not been uniform on the whole of the airfield perimeter; however, the project is moving forward slowly and the security against infiltration is certainly much better than it was six weeks ago. In this regard, on the night of 17 August there was an attempt to enter the perimeter in its southwest corner. The Marines in the area detected the movement and killed two VC in our wire.

Two aspects of airfield security have seen little progress. They are both critical. The first derives from the proximity of the field to

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Danang City and its environs. There are probably 180,000 people living within mortar range of the airfield, and it would be impossible to prevent the Viet Cong from getting a mortar into one of the native houses, setting it up quickly at night and then delivering mortar fire on the field. This is a constant fear, and the Marine battalion which is responsible for local airfield defense continues to press the Vietnamese to search houses contiguous to the airfield perimeter. Our troops accompany the Vietnamese forces who conduct these searches but we do not go into the houses. Even with the increased surveillance there is still a considerable hazard.

The other area of apprehension relates to the large number of native contractor's workmen on the airfield proper, involved in such tasks as building the second runway. Each is a potential sabotage hazard for which there is no complete solution. The contractor has to have laborers and any one of the laborers can be a Viet Cong (and some probably are). Each could transport elements of demolition charges aboard the base in some form without being detected and, sooner or later, there should be incidents of sabotage.

Marine air elements are crowded on the Danang field. This crowding will be relieved somewhat by the removal of the light aircraft when Danang East is finished and, of course, will be improved greatly when the second runway is finished.

Offensive operations in the Danang enclave continue to expand in all directions, accompanied by an aggressive civic action program. Patrols and ambushes, moving as far as fifteen or twenty miles to the west and northwest, have succeeded in keeping the enemy off-balance and causing him to move into the mountains. To the southward operations are proceeding slowly in the face of the many problems posed by the heavily populated area south of the Ca de Song. These operations have been discussed earlier in connection with the discussions of press relations. Suffice to repeat here, the formula appears to be working and requires only time and patience to mature. The best way to measure the progress in this particular area would be to reflect that six weeks ago the Marines' influence extended only to the south airfield fence. Beyond that point there was strong question as to whether the VC or the ARVN were in the ascendency. Now, our influence extends generally to a distance of four miles south of the airfield and, in this area, there is a good measure of peace and security. In a relative sense, reflecting on the whole of Vietnam as the battle field, this might be considered slow progress. In an absolute sense, however, and looking at the improvement in the local situation in six weeks, progress could well be regarded as rapid.

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The Chu Lai Enclave. Logistic stability is coming to this area at a steady rate. By the onset of the northeast monsoon there should be a reasonably protected unloading area for LSTs and LCUs, contiguous to the logistic support unit. This unit, incidentally, is ideally laid out and is efficient in its operation. It is a model of the function for which it was designed. Like the others, it is in need of certain critical logistics personnel which we should get to them without delay.

Air
The expeditionary airfield is holding up well. A precautionary inspection of the northern 2500 feet of subgrade is just about completed. It was feared that this, having been laid down with an inferior grade of laterite, might not stand up under the winter rains. It has been carefully inspected and improved where necessary. The project is almost completed.

The runway is smooth and has withstood the constant pounding of daily jet and transport aircraft operations which now aggregate over 3000 take offs and landings. The taxi-way, constructed of the older M9M1 and M9M2 matting types demands more maintenance and is less satisfactory. However, it is adequate for the purpose.

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Tactical operations in the Chu Lai area have been circumscribed by the shortage of forces. While the program of day and night patrols and ambushes has been intensive, and while our influence has been extended in all directions, there is a critical need for more forces. We need to move further westward toward the Doka area, to drive the VC into the mountains and thus increase the security of the field. Also we need to move south and link up with the ARVN forces in the area around Quang Ngai City. This cannot be accomplished with the troop levels now in the enclave. For example, in order to undertake the Starlight operation it was necessary seriously to compromise the security of the rest of the Chu Lai area, as well as to bring in temporary reinforcements from Da Nang. On this basis General Walt is opposed to the continuation of our local security commitment in the Qui Nhon area, much less to its increase, as has recently been proposed.

Air
Our air operations from the Chu Lai field are proceeding smoothly. They want for nothing in the way of material or equipment and are concerned only about the status of the Class VA support. In this regard, it is less a matter of tons of bombs and rockets than it is a matter of delivery of complete components. For instance, a shipment of bombs was recently received without fins, which means that the bombs were useless until the fins could be procured. Bombs have also arrived without fuzes, or without the necessary screw-in plugs to permit their attachment to the

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bomb racks. Here again, the bomb is useless until the full component is available. What is needed is a predictable delivery of total ordnance components.

Preparations are under way to receive the 100 helicopters of MAG-36 when they arrive on the 31st of this month. Such things as food, fuel, ordnance and similar support will be waiting, but the group is going to have to set itself up using its own resources.

Preparations are also being made to receive the 2d LAAM battalion in the Chu Lai area. Battery positions have been selected which will give a fair, although not ideal, coverage for the airfield and the related logistic installations.

The Qui Nhon Enclave. The 2d Battalion, 7th Marines, plus a detachment of HMM-161, are established in the Qui Nhon enclave, conducting patrols and ambushes, and a vigorous counterinsurgency and civic action campaign.

The area, at least so far as our troops are concerned, is quite tranquil. They have killed no more than a dozen VC, despite aggressive day and night effort. Their civic action program is outstanding; fully as good as that under way at Phu Bai, and the results are equally good. The natives provide intelligence on every hand, and exhibit warm loyalty toward our people.

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Okinawa

Transition from 3dMarDiv to FMFPac (Forward) responsibility of all Okinawa based activities took place smoothly on 20 August.

While the number of men which was ultimately determined we would retain in Okinawa for base support is austere (74 officers and 448 enlisted men) the basic formula gives every promise of working efficiently.

Transient Facility. The Transient Facility is operating well, having already handled about 4000 people. It has a rapid processing system for both incoming and outgoing personnel and it cares for all of their needs promptly and efficiently. Its capability in terms of numbers is increasing rapidly and there are no serious impediment in the way of carrying out the program as we now envisage it.

3d Force Service Regiment. The 3d FSR is heavily engaged in provision of support for III MAF. Material requiring high echelon maintenance is beginning to arrive in substantial quantities from Vietnam and is repaired rapidly. Meanwhile, upon advice that an item is being returned from Vietnam for high echelon maintenance, a similar item is issued from stock (if available) without awaiting the arrival of the broken down material. By this technique, the 3d FSR absorbs the impact while the forces in Vietnam are kept up to strength. All hands are pleased with the program.

The 3d FSR is in personnel trouble, due to necessary transfers of personnel to Vietnam. This situation will abate somewhat upon arrival of the detachments of the 1st FSR and 1st Service Battalion in the near future. Meanwhile, problems of operations, maintenance, packing, crating, shipping etc. are all suffering. It is essential that we get the 3d FSR its additional civilian personnel ceiling as soon as possible. This should be pursued on an emergency basis.

Master Jet Complex. The Motobu airfield site was visited in company with the resident engineer. There is no question but that a runway of about 7500 feet, with 500 foot over-runs, can be installed without great trouble. In discussion with CG RYCOM, he expressed a feeling that we should use the Ie Shima area rather than Motobu because there is more room at Ie Shima, less civilian encroachment, and because the construction could be accomplished at lesser engineering cost.

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We also looked at Ie Shima, and I concur that there is more room and that there is less civilian encroachment. However, there is, as has been noted before, the problem of the six mile trip by water from the Okinawa mainland to the island.

CG RYCOM balances this off against the fact that it will be necessary to bring both a road system and power to Motobu, which would both be costly.

I have felt for some years that either Motobu or Ie Shima would serve our purposes for a master jet complex, and believe that neither is greatly superior to the other on the basis of an overall analysis. The important thing is to get a master jet complex started in the Okinawa area at once--on either of these sites, whichever confronts us with the least resistance to getting under way, and involves the least cost for the overall program.

Marine Corps Air Facility, Futema. At Marine Corps Air Facility, Futema we have now established VMGR-152, transferred from Iwakuni. The squadron now is nearer the 3d FBR, whence much of its airlift material originates and is comfortably disposed in the Air Facility. The Wing is in the process of examining carefully into the organization of Marine Wing Service Group-17, planning to make certain changes which will relate its function more accurately to the problems faced under the current circumstances.

1st Marine Division. CG 1stMarDiv and the forward echelon of his staff had arrived in Okinawa prior to my departure and we were able to discuss dispositions, deployment and training. Among the things which were emphasized were the following:

a. They must bear down on night training, individual conduct, weapons firing, physical conditioning, communication discipline, and camouflage. They should spend the maximum possible time in the Northern Training Area.

Also discussed was the matter of amphibious training. During the time that 1st MarDiv elements are in Okinawa they should seize every opportunity for simple, short-notice amphibious exercises whenever ships are available from the 7th Fleet. The exercises need not be planned over a long period of time, but rather should be initiated on a crash basis. The same is true of the SLF. It should miss no opportunities for simple uncomplicated landing exercises to keep our skill up, in both the planning and execution of amphibious operations.

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Miscellaneous Comments

A Comment on the General Vietnam Situation. The situation appears not to be greatly changed from that visible during my visit of six weeks ago. Such alterations as are evident, are of small dimensions, but are generally favorable.

Six weeks ago the VC appeared to be in the midst of their monsoon offensive, having achieved substantial success at places such as Dong Xoai and Ba Gia. The GVN had lost the effectiveness of several battalions as a result of these operations, and morale was low.

In the ensuing weeks large scale VC activity has diminished somewhat--probably a result of the drain imposed by their all-out effort of mid-summer. Activity in II and III Corps has been lower, although there has been a little increase in VC activity in IV Corps.

The increased numerical strength of the U.S. Army and the Marines has probably had a favorable effect. It is inevitable, as our forces range more widely in the countryside, that more useful targets are being discovered. As the number of good targets increases, the effectiveness of our air effort must increase correspondingly, with a greater destructive effect on the VC.

The counterinsurgency campaign being pursued in I Corps by the Marines is making steady progress. Where their efforts were concentrated six weeks ago on not more than three villages they are now engaged in bringing tranquillity to several score of villages.

Additionally, the Marines' Starlight victory has doubtless had a favorable effect upon GVN morale, not to speak of some erosive effect upon VC strength and material resources. Likewise, the ARVN have enjoyed a few small successes such as the Ba Long Valley and at Duc Co.

And finally, it is undeniable that the Vietnamese regime is still holding together and is pursuing its governmental affairs and its military operations, albeit it not always very effectively.

These developments cannot be regarded as reflective of a trend. The best that can be said is that they are favorable indices; indices which could be offset by a substantial VC victory or by a change in government in Saigon. It is undeniable, however, that the time we so sorely need to marshall our forces is being afforded us, and it may well be that

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the critical hour has passed in terms of whether or not it is too late for the influx of U.S. strength to have any influence on the situation. I believe it is reasonable now to conclude that we are in fact going to have the chance to apply our U.S. power and to test the strategy we have adopted. Reflecting on the valid doubts of six weeks ago, this is in itself a triumph of sorts.

Air
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Air Support and Air Observation. I discussed the matter of air support and air observation with the senior officers of both the division and the wing. I believe that this represents a fair summary of our combined conclusions:

a. During the past two months we have learned a great deal in the area of the escort capabilities of the A-4 with respect to the helicopter. What we have learned has been favorable to the capabilities of the A-4.

b. While the attack aircraft can provide excellent escort service for helicopter formations, there is still a need for last minute landing zone preparation which finds the best solution in the armed UH-1E. It was generally emphasized that this is a brief task, almost coincident with the landing of the initial helicopter waves and that it will be effective only if the armed helicopters are actually a part of the landing formation. The attack aircraft can handle all of the remaining support tasks, and can do so with efficiency. Accordingly there was general agreement that we should press for improvements in helicopter armament in order to ensure that the last minute landing zone preparation task is efficiently discharged.

c. There was also general agreement that we have erred in our decision to dispense with the O-1 type aircraft. There is a need for a very light, very simple and very quiet observation aircraft which has long endurance. The virtue of the O-1, at least in the combat environment with which we are now confronted, is its ability to stay on station and its ability to approach the critical areas very quietly and do its initial observing without being detected. We should reinstate the O-1 as a requirement.

d. The foregoing, however, does not extend to a further development and sophistication of the observation requirement into a need for a multi-purpose aircraft similar to the LARA. There was unanimity that there is no place in our spectrum for an airplane of the LARA design; that it is too complex for the O-1 task and unnecessary for the A-4 task. We must reflect this field conviction for CMC.

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e. There was enthusiastic applause for the quality of our close air support equipment, the quality of our close air support pilots and the effectiveness of our tactical air controller arrangements of today. Indeed, except for emphasis on the urgent need for a BASC capability on the spot for operations such as Starlight, there were no air operations criticisms whatever.

WD-40. There is an urgent need for metal preservative in Vietnam. The normal lubricating oils will not do the trick. What is required is a substance like WD-40 which penetrates the metal, and prevents or removes rust. This is now available in the aviation supply system and we should immediately get some to the elements of III MAF.

Antiaircraft Training. III MAF is now busy in improving the overall antiaircraft readiness of the command, through such actions as installation of .50 caliber mounts on cargo trucks, conduct of a six day .50 caliber familiarization school for classes of 50, and preparations for service practice firing of hawk missiles. We should assist in this latter program by discussing the question of air clearances with PACAF and the procurement of drone services with NAVAIRPAC and 7th Fleet.

People. The demands on our forces, spread over a 250 mile front, simply are not fulfilled by the manning level posture in which we now stand. The full T/O, at the least, is needed. We should press for this solution with CMC. We must also be careful to ensure that casualties which have been evacuated to Okinawa for treatment and convalescence are retrained and returned to duty as quickly as possible in order to keep the non-available factor at a minimum. Where a man is able to work, but is not fit to go to Vietnam for some specific reason, he should be put into Camp Butler or the 3d FSR where he can do a job commensurate with his capabilities, and another man withdrawn and sent to Vietnam. In other words we must be careful to get the most out of our resources.

The staff augmentation which CMC provided for III MAF two months ago has turned out not to be enough. The later requirements generated by the growth in troop strength, as well as the requirements incident to the assumption of the I Corps advisory function demand more people than III MAF has or has in prospect. Their additional requirements are for about 200 officers and enlisted men for the MAF Headquarters support task. We should provide CMC with the specific details on rank and MOS needs as soon as possible.

MAF Surgeon and MAF Chaplain. There is a need for a surgeon and a chaplain at the MAF level and we should so advise the Chief Bureau of Naval Personnel.

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SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST
PERIOD 180601 - 190600 AUGUST 1965

I. III MAF

a. III MAF SITREP #109 COVERING THE PERIOD 180001H TO 182400H AUG INCLUDES:

OPERATION STARLITE

THE QUALITY AND INTENSITY OF HARD CORE RESISTANCE ENCOUNTERED IN THE AMPHIBIOUS/HELIBORNE ASSAULT AGAINST THE VAN TUONG COMPLEX SOUTH OF CHU LAI TENDS TO CONFIRM THAT THE ENEMY IS DEFENDING IN REGIMENTAL STRENGTH.

THE OPERATION COMMENCED AT 180615H WITH AIR AND ARTILLERY PREPS ON THE HELD LANDING ZONE WEST OF THE TARGET AREA. 30 MINUTES LATER A HELO BORNE BATTALION ASSAULT LANDED, FOLLOWED BY ONE BATTALION OVER GREEN BEACH. A PART OF A BLT (SLF) LAY OFF SHORE AS RESERVE.

THE OPERATION, UNDER CO 7TH MARINES, APPARENTLY TRAPPED THE 1ST VC REGIMENT NUMBER ABOUT 2,000. IT WAS EVIDENT THAT THE VC WERE SURPRISED AND GENERALLY HEMMED IN BUT FOUGHT BACK STRONGLY WITH 81MM MORTARS, 57MM AND 106MM RECOILLESS RIFLES FROM A COMPLEX NETWORK OF FORTIFICATIONS.

AS ASSAULTING MARINE FORCES CLOSED IN VC ELEMENTS STOOD AND FOUGHT AND WERE DESTROYED IN LARGE NUMBERS WHENEVER FORCED INTO THE OPEN.

ONE GROUP ESTIMATED ABOUT 60, ATTEMPTING TO ESCAPE TO THE BEACH WERE TAKEN UNDER FIRE BY THE GALVESTON, THE MAJORITY BEING KILLED.

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1. III MAF (Cont'd)

NUMEROUS OCCUPIED CAVES AND TUNNELS WERE DISCOVERED, CLEARED AND SEALED.

IT IS EVIDENT THAT VC CASUALTIES NUMBER IN THE HUNDREDS, BUT DUE TO CONTINUED FIGHTING, FIGURES ARE INCOMPLETE.

MARINE CASUALTIES: 23 KIA. A SUBSTANTIAL NUMBER OF MARINE WIA'S WERE NON-SERIOUS. 97 CASUALTIES WERE FLOWN TO DANANG, THE MORE SERIOUS OF THEM BEING EVACUATED TO CLARK AFB BY NIGHTFALL.

78 FIXED WING SORTIES DROPPED 64 TONS OF BOMBS, 4 TONS OF NAPALM, 553 2.5 INCH ROCKETS AND 6,000 ROUNDS OF 20 MM IN SUPPORT OF OPERATIONS.

NGF WAS FURNISHED BY CLG GALVESTON, DD ORIECK AND DD PRITCHARD WITH EXCELLENT RESULTS.

MORE THAN 500 SORTIES WERE FLOWN BY MAG-16 AND THE 51F.

1 C-54 AND TWO C-117D FURNISHED LOGISTIC SUPPORT. TEN UH-34'S ON STANDBY FOR MED EVAC AND RESUPPLY AND 3 C-130'S FURNISHED MED EVAC TO DANANG. 3 ARMY UH-1B GUN SHIPS AND SEVERAL ARMY O1 ACFT SUPPORTED THE MARINE OPERATION.

AIR SUPPORT CONTINUED THROUGH THE NIGHT WITH TWO F-4/A-4 ON CONTINUED AIRBORNE ALERT WITH TWO USA C-123'S FOR FLARE COVERAGE.

16 OF 18 UH-34'S FROM ONE SQDN WERE HIT WHILE EVACUATING WOUNDED FROM FRONT LINES BUT ONLY ONE, WITH OVER 100 HITS, WAS DESTROYED.

CG III MAF 182354Z (S)
MACV TELECON 190205Z (C)

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III MAF (Cont'd)

b. MACV ADVISED NMCC THE LATEST INFO AVAILABLE ON OPERATION STARLITE IS AS FOLLOWS:

DURING THE NIGHT, THE VC MADE TWO STRONG ATTEMPTS TO BREAK OUT THROUGH THE 2D BN, 4TH MAR LINES BUT BOTH ATTEMPTS WERE REPULSED.

AT 19000H, FOLLOWING INTENSIVE PREP FIRES BLT 3/3 AND 2/4 CROSSED THE LD AND GAINED 800 TO 1000 YARDS BEFORE RESISTANCE STIFFENED.

AT 0830 BLT 3/3 CROSSED PHASE LINE CHERRY. AT 1045 BLT 2/4 CROSSED PHASE LINE CHERRY. PHASE LINE CHERRY IS THE LINE FROM BS 685973 TO BS 728940. REPORTED 29 VC KIA IN ONE ENGAGEMENT.

AS OF 0900H U. S. CASUALTIES WERE 36 KIA, 154 WIA, 102 MISSING.

AS OF 1400H VC CASUALTIES AS FOLLOWS: 100 KIA (BODY COUNT), AN ADDITIONAL 550 ESTIMATED KIA. 50 VC CAPTURED.

THE VILLAGE OF VAN TUONG IS A VC STRONG POINT.

AS OF 1400H THE MARINES HELD 2/3 OF THE OBJECTIVE AREA.

THE OBJECTIVE AREA IS ASSUMED TO BE THE GENERAL AREA BOUNDED BY BS 700960-690945-700932-718945.

NMCC FONECON 190440Z (S)

c. RELATIVE TO THE ABOVE, MACV ADVISED NMCC THAT REPORTS INDICATE THAT THE VC WERE NOT ABLE TO EXFILTRATE DURING THE NIGHT AS THE OPERATION CONTINUED GOING WELL.

MACV TELECON 190442Z (S)

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SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST

PERIOD 190601 - 200600 AUGUST 1965

III MAF

a. OPERATION STAR LITE.

MACV REPORTS THE LATEST USMC CASUALTIES ARE 52 KIA, 200 WIA AND TWO MIA. COMPLETE AND ACCURATE COUNT OF THE ENEMY NOT AVAILABLE AS THE AIR ACTIONS, NAVAL GUNFIRE, ARTILLERY, AND FLAME TANK OFFENSIVE ACTION HAS MADE THE COUNTING OF VC DEAD IN MANY AREAS IMPOSSIBLE. LATEST ESTIMATION OF VC CASUALTIES ARE OVER 500 KIA, SEVERAL HUNDRED WIA'S AND 82 CAPTURED. IT IS ESTIMATED THAT MANY MORE VC PERISHED IN THE TUNNELS AND CAVES WHICH WERE SEALED OFF AND DEMOLISHED BY ADVANCING MARINES.

AFTER REACHING THE FINAL OBJECTIVE AREAS ON THE BEACHES, THE UNITS OCCUPIED NIGHT DEFENSIVE POSITIONS AND WERE SCHEDULED TO COMMENCE MOP UP OPERATIONS ON THE MORNING OF 20 AUGUST.

ALL UNITS WILL REMAIN IN THE AREA FOR ANOTHER 48-72 HOURS TO EXPLOIT THE INITIAL SUCCESS OF THE OPERATION.

MACV TELECON 192145Z (S)
 MACV TELECON 191605Z (S)
 FONECON FMFPAC 192000Q (S)
 FONECON FMFPAC 200330Q (S)

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1. III MAF (Continued)

b. THE PRESIDENT SENT TO COMUSMACV HIS HEARTFELT THANKS AND CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MILITARY UNITS UNDER HIS COMMAND "WHICH HAVE ACHIEVED CLEARCUT VICTORY AGAINST THE 1ST VIET CONG REGIMENT AT CHU LAI".

OSD WASHDC 192340Z (U)

c. FMFPAC WESTPAC SITREP #142 / S OF 182400Z REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

(1) ARRANGEMENTS ARE UNDERWAY TO EMBARK 1/3 ON THE USS LENAWEE FOR RETURN TO OKINAWA. FIRST BN, FIRST MAR PRESENTLY ON LENAWEE SCHEDULED TO ARRIVE DANANG 28 AUGUST.

(2) PRESENT PLANS INCLUDE VMA-224 RELIEVING VMA-225 AT CHU LAI ABOUT 1 OCTOBER.

(3) IN CIVIC ACTION, III MAF UNITS PROVIDED MEDICAL TREATMENT TO OVER 350 CIVILIANS.

ADMINO FMFPAC 190452Z (TS)

2. ASIA

a. COMUSMACV ADVISED CINCPAC THAT IN-COUNTRY CLEARANCE HAS BEEN OBTAINED FOR THE REINFORCED ENGINEER COMPANY OF THE 25TH DIVISION. THE DESTINATION OFF-LOAD PORT IS CAM RANH BAY.

COMUSMACV 180616Z (S)

b. REGARDING EXCHANGE SERVICE IN RVN, JCS ADVISED

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SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST

PERIOD 200601 - 210600 AUGUST 1965

III MAF

a. OPERATION STAR LITE

RELIEF OF BLT'S 2/4 AND 3/3 BY BLT 1/7 COMPLETED AT 202000H. BLT'S 2/4 AND 3/3 RETURNED TO THEIR FORMER POSITIONS IN THE 4TH MAR TAOR.

BLT'S 1/7 AND 3/7 CONTINUE MOPPING UP OPERATIONS WITH MISSION OF SEEKING OUT REMAINING VC FORCE AND DESTROYING VC FORTIFICATIONS AND FACILITIES.

THIRD VN MARINE BN AND 3RD BN, 51ST REGT, ARVN, WILL BE INTRODUCED INTO THE VAN TUONG COMPLEX TODAY, 21 AUGUST. THESE TWO BN'S WILL BE OPERATING IN THE SOUTHERN AND WESTERN SECTORS OF THE OBJECTIVE AREA.

LATEST REPORT OF CASUALTIES - USMC KIA 45 (CORRECTED), WIA 209, ONE MIA. VC KIA 564 (BODY COUNT), VC CAPTURED 123.

FMFPAC FONECON 210345Z (S)
MACV TELECON 202318Z (S)

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TOP SECRET**III MAF(Continued)**

b. REGARDING THE ABOVE OPERATION, THE FOLLOWING CONGRATULATORY MESSAGES HAVE BEEN RECEIVED:

(1) "MY HEARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS ON THE IMPORTANT SUCCESS WON BY THE MARINES OF THE III MAF AGAINST THE VIET CONG SOUTH OF CHU LAI.... SIGNED PAUL H. NITZE...."

SECNAV 201350Z (U)

(2) "...STAR LITE ALSO REEMPHASIZED THE CAPABILITY OF THE NAVY-MARINE CORPS TEAM TO STRIKE RAPIDLY AND WITH DEVASTATING EFFECT. PLANNING WAS THOROUGH AND EXECUTION WAS SUPERB. WELL DONE. ADMIRAL DAVID L. McDONALD."

CNO 192341Z (U)

(3) "...THE CLEAR CUT VICTORY OF THE US MARINES IN THE BATTLE OF VAN TUONG PENINSULA... ADDS LUSTER TO THE DISTINGUISHED RECORD OF THE MARINE CORPS.... SIGNED HAROLD K. JOHNSON...."

DA 201310Z (U)

c. III MAF SITREP #111 AS OF 202400H REPORTED THE FOLLOWING:

(1) THE CRITICAL PHASE OF THE BA LONG VALLEY OPERATION IS COMPLETED AND FIRST BN, THIRD MAR ARE ON A 48 HOUR ALERT STATUS TO BACK UP THIS OPERATION THROUGH 16 SEPTEMBER.

(2) MASS TWO REPORTS THAT THE ASRT AT PLEIKU AND

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SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST

PERIOD 210601 - 220600 AUGUST 1965

1. III MAF

a. OPERATION STARLIGHT

BLTs 1/7 AND 3/7 (-) CONTINUE SEARCH AND CLEAR OPERATIONS DESTROYING CAVES, TUNNELS AND SPIDER HOLES. SPORADIC SNIPING CONTINUES WITH NO REPORTED USMC CASUALTIES. IN AN EARLIER REPORT, CG III MAF STATED ONE ROUND OF NGF WOUNDED 2 AND KILLED ONE USMC.

THE LATEST CASUALTY FIGURES ARE:

MARINES

KIA	45
DIED OF WOUNDS	5
NON-BATTLE DEATHS	2
WIA	221
NON-BATTLE INJURIES	1

VC

KIA	599 (CONFIRMED BUT STILL IN-COMplete)
CAPTURED	6

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III MAF (Cont)

NOTE: 95 VC SUSPECTS HAD BEEN CLEARED AND RELEASED, 22 STILL REMAIN IN SUSPECT CATEGORY.

REGARDING ARVN OPS IN CONJUNCTION WITH STARLIGHT (CODE NAME - TU LUC 168), COMUSMACV REPORTED TO NMCC THAT THE 3RD ARVN MARINE BN (REIN) AND THE 2ND BN, 51ST ARVN REGT COMMENCED SEARCHING CAVES, TUNNELS AND SPIDER TRAPS IN THE VAN TUONG COMPLEX AT 21000H AND HAVE ENCOUNTERED LIGHT RESISTANCE. NO MAJOR CONTACT WITH ORGANIZED VC UNITS. FOUR ARVN SCOUT DOGS WITH ARVN HANDLERS ARE BEING USED.

CLG GALVESTON AND DD PRITCHETT HAVE BEEN WITHDRAWN. DD ORLECK REMAINS ON STATION TO PROVIDE NGFS. IT IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO TERMINATE OPN STARLIGHT TODAY, 22 AUG, WITHDRAWING ALL UNITS.

CG III MAF 210240Z (S)
CG III MAF 211516Z (S)
COMUSMACV 211000Z (C)
FONCON FMFPAC 220450Q (C)

b. CG FMFPAC ADVISED CMC THAT 67 M-274 (MECHANICAL MULE) VEHICLES IN 3RD MARDIV ARE DEADLINED OUT OF 306 ON HAND. ANALYSIS REVEALS 50 ARE DEADLINED FOR ENGINE REPAIRS/REPLACEMENT.

CG FMFPAC REQUESTED CMC FOR IMMEDIATE AIR SHIPMENT OF 50 ENGINE ASSEMBLIES AND CONSIDERATION BE GIVEN FOR PROVIDING 3RD MARDIV WITH 200 NEW M-274A1 VEHICLES.

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SUMMARY OF ITEMS OF SIGNIFICANT INTEREST

PERIOD 220601 - 230600 AUGUST 1965

III MAF

a. STARLIGHT

BLTs 1/7 AND 3/7 CONTINUE SEARCH AND CLEAR OPERATIONS THROUGHOUT THE OBJECTIVE AREA. ARVN FORCES HAVE KILLED 6 VC AND CAPTURED 1 WOUNDED VC. PRESENT INTENTIONS ARE TO BACKLOAD 3/7 (SLF) NLT END OF DAYLIGHT 24 AUGUST. BLT 7 (-) WILL RETURN OVERLAND TO CHU LAI SWEEPING THE TRUNG PHAN PENINSULA (SOUTHERN END OF CHU LAI TAORI) NLT END OF DAYLIGHT 24 AUGUST.

DURING THE OPERATION OVER 100 ASSORTED SMALL ARMS, ONE 60mm MORTAR AND 67 LBS OF TNT WERE CAPTURED.

A CAPTURED VC REPORTED THAT THE 1ST VC REGT WAS SCHEDULED TO ATTACK CHU LAI AIRFIELD AT 180700H (MARINE ATTACK LANDED AT 180645H). A SAND TABLE MODEL OF THE AIRFIELD WAS REPORTED TO BE USED IN TRAINING FOR THE ATTACK. ALTHOUGH THE VC HAVE IN THE PAST AVOIDED LARGE SCALE ENGAGEMENT WITH MARINE FORCES, IT IS EVIDENT THAT THEY ARE WILLING TO TAKE THE RISK FOR A LUCRATIVE TARGET. WHEN BACKED TO THE WALL, THEY ARE CAPABLE OF TENACIOUS RESISTANCE, ESPECIALLY WHERE

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III MAF (Cont'd)

THE TERRAIN FAVORS THE DEFENDERS.

FONCON FMFPAC 222045Z (U)
MACV CC 221210Z (C)
FONCON FMFPAC 221715Z (U)
MACV 230225Z (C)

b. OTHER OPERATIONS

2/9 COMPLETED A SEARCH AND CLEAR OPERATION OF CAM NE COMPLEX. NO ADDITIONAL VC CONTACT.

A PATROL FROM CO "B", 1/9 RECEIVED SA FIRE APPROXIMATELY 4 MILES SOUTHEAST OF DANANG. THE PATROL ASSAULTED THE HEDGEROW WHERE THE FIRE CAME FROM AND VC BROKE CONTACT. IN THE SAME VICINITY, THE PATROL APPREHENDED 8 VC DRESSED AS MONKS.

ADMINO FMFPAC 220604Z (S)

c. AIR OPERATIONS

ASRT AT PLEIKU AND DANANG PLUS UPS-1 AT DANANG ARE IN A DOWN STATUS.

A RF-8A TAKING OFF ON A PHOTO MISSION HAD TROUBLE RAISING LANDING GEAR AND CRASHED. PILOT EJECTED AND PARACHUTE BLOSSOMED JUST PRIOR TO IMPACT. HE APPEARS UNINJURED. CAMERAS WERE REMOVED AND THE AIRCRAFT WAS DESTROYED BY TANKS FROM 9TH MARINES.

CG III MAF 222338Z (S)

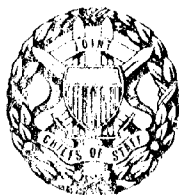
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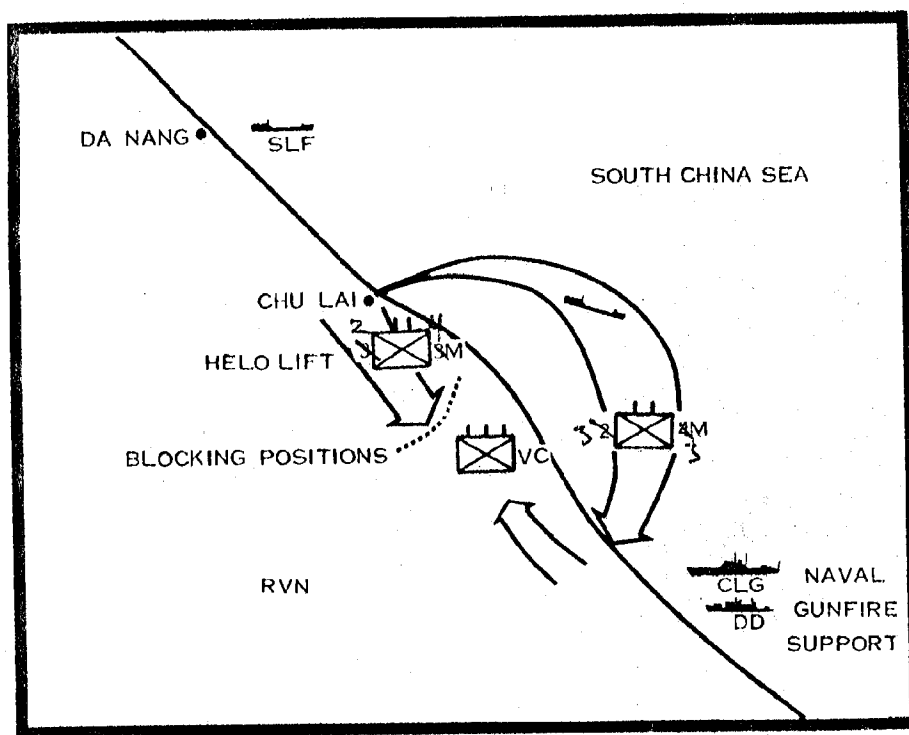
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LATE ITEM

US MARINE ACTION NEAR CHU LAI

Late yesterday US Marine forces from Chu Lai initiated a two-battalion search and destroy operation against an estimated VC regiment reported to be in an area six miles south of Chu Lai Airfield. The operation (schematic below) went according to plan, and by early



this morning the link-up between the heliborne and sea-landed units was accomplished. (C)

Reports are fragmentary and incomplete. However, it has been reported that four US personnel were killed and 25 wounded, two tanks were damaged or destroyed, and two helicopters were hit by ground fire. One of the killed is a US Army helicopter pilot. The VC were reported employing 57-mm fire from pillboxes. No estimate of VC casualties was reported. (C)

330400Z COMUSMACV TELECON 180700Z (C)

NMCC OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

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III MAF

FORM 4-52 (2) REPLACES DD FORM 173, 1 OCT 49, WHICH WILL BE USED UNTIL EXHAUSTED

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JOINT MESSAGEFORM - CONTINUATION SHEET

SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED

FROM:

OSD WASHDC

and skill of our men in battle will be matched by their
magnanimity when the battle ends. And all American military action
in Vietnam will stop as soon as aggression by others is stopped.

Lyndon B. Johnson"

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SECURITY CLASSIFICATION

UNCLASSIFIED

INITIALS

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

NAVY DEPARTMENT

UNCLASSIFIED

FORM 2110-33 (REV. 6-61)

REFERENCE ACTION PRIORITY	RELEASED BY <i>[Signature]</i>	DRAFTED BY ADM D. L. McDONALD, USN Op-00	PHONE NO. 55664
INFO PRIORITY			

P- 192341Z

FM: CNO
TO: COMSEVENTHFLT

INFO: CINCPAC
CINCPACFLT
COMUSMACV
CMC

Unclass

1. PLEASE PASS TO ALL HANDS, NAVY AND MARINE CORPS, WHO PARTICIPATED IN OPERATION STARLIGHT MY CONGRATULATIONS AND APPRECIATION IN BEHALF OF THEIR SHIPMATES THROUGHOUT THE NAVY. THOSE WHO MADE THE SUPREME SACRIFICE WILL LONG LIVE IN OUR MEMORIES.
2. THIS SIGNIFICANT AND HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL AMPHIBIOUS OPERATION AGAIN VISIBLY DEMONSTRATED THE POWER AND VERSATILITY OF BALANCED NAVAL POWER. STARLIGHT ALSO REEMPHASIZED THE CAPABILITY OF THE NAVY-MARINE CORPS TEAM TO STRIKE RAPIDLY AND WITH DEVASTATING EFFECT. PLANNING WAS THOROUGH AND EXECUTION WAS SUPERB. WELL DONE.

ADMIRAL DAVID L. McDONALD

DRAFTER: Op-00

DIST: SECNAV.. 00..09..01..03..04..05..07..09M
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 MARINE CORPS
 COMMAND CENTER

SECRET

III MAF SPECIAL SITREP NUMBER 10 PERIOD 200300H TO 201300H
 FOR OPERATION STAR LITE (VAN THONG COMPLEX)

1. SUMMARY OF GROUND ACTIVITIES IN REPORTING PERIOD
 - A. HOPPING-UP ACTIONS CONTINUE IN OBJECTIVE AREA. SPORADIC LIGHT ACTIONS THROUGHOUT AS INDIVIDUALS AND SMALL GROUPS ARE FLUSHED OUT.
 - B. BLT 1/7 IN PROCESS OF RELIEVING BLTS 2/4 AND 3/3. BLTS 1/7 AND 3/7 WILL CONTINUE HOPPING-UP ACTIONS.
2. NAVAL GUNFIRE. LIGHT CRUISER GALVESTON FIRED 66 ROUNDS 6" HIGH

PAGE 2 RUMFUAG 139 **SECRET**
 CAPACITY ON VC TROOP CONCENTRATION WITH GOOD TARGET COVERAGE.
 VC CASUALTIES UNK.
 3. AIR. AIR CAP CONTINUES ON STATION.
 GP-4
 BT

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SECRET

(When filled in)

NAVMC HQ 348-ADM
 (REV. 7-62)

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CMC	HRT	(When filled in)
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MILSEC		
ColS	BURN	JT MAT
DC/S(P&P)	BURN	
SGS		

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INFO

1401 AOA HM
 1402 MA
 1403 ASA
 CHAD
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OPERATION STARLITE

A. TELECON HQMC WATCH OFFICER & (MAJ WARFIELD) AND PHFPAC CDC (LT COL BARROW) 202552

1. THIS CONFIRMS AND AMPLIFIES REF A.
 2. COMMENCING 20 AUGUST, III MAF FORCES, WITH RVNAF UNITS JOINING ON 21 AUG, WILL CONDUCT TWO TO THREE DAY SEARCH AND CLEAR V OPERATIONS IN VAN TUNG OBJECTIVE AREA. PURPOSE WILL BE TO V DESTROY RESIDUAL RESISTANCE; AND TO COLLECT INFORMATION, VC WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT, WHICH WILL FURTHER DOCUMENT THE CRUSHING DEFEAT SUFFERED BY THE VC.

3. ALL ESTIMATES OF VC CASUALTIES HAVE BEEN, AND WILL BE, ON THE CONSERVATIVE SIDE. AN ACCURATE BODY COUNT HAS BEEN IMPOSSIBLE. THE EFFECTIVE USE OF AIR, NGF, ARTY, AND TANKS AGAINST A DETERMINED DEFENSE, MUCH OF WHICH WAS UNDERGROUND, RESULTED IN EITHER TOTAL DESTRUCTION OR BURIAL OF MUCH OF THE (EVIDENCE. FURTHERMORE, THE RAPIDITY WITH WHICH THE OPERATION WAS CONDUCTED PROVIDED LIMITED OPPORTUNITY FOR DETAILED SEARCH AND COUNT. A RECONSTRUCTION OF THE VC OB TOGETHER WITH SURVIVOR ACCOUNTS CONFIRMS THAT HEAVY LOSSES WERE SUFFERED BY THE 1ST VC REGIMENT. CURRENT SEARCH AND CLEAR OPERATIONS AND FURTHER SURVIVOR INTERROGATION SHOULD PROVIDE ADDITIONAL EVIDENCE AND DETAILS.

4. SOME OF THE MOST SALIENT AND INTERESTING POINTS ABOUT OPERATION STAR LITE ARE AS FOLLOWS:

A. THE OPERATION WAS BASED ON GOOD INTELLIGENCE.
 B. THE OPERATION WAS EXECUTED WITH GREAT DISPATCH AND EXCELLENT SECURITY, RESULTING IN THE ACHIEVEMENT OF TOTAL SURPRISE.

C. THE AMPHIBIOUS/MARITIME NATURE OF THE OPERATION WAS MANIFEST THROUGHOUT. THE SEA PROVIDED ACCESS TO THE ENEMY AND SERVED AS AN ANVIL AGAINST WHICH THE MARINES HAMMERED ENEMY ELEMENTS.

D. THE OPERATION WAS CONCEIVED ON THE INITIATIVE OF III MAF. IT WAS AN OFFENSIVE/STRIKING FORCE OPERATION, NOT ONE IN WHICH WE REACTED TO VC INITIATIVE.

E. THERE WERE INDICATORS THAT THESMC IN THE DANANG-CHU LAI AREA WERE PREPARING FOR OFFENSIVE ACTION IN THE AREA. IN PART, OPERATION STAR LITE HAS UPSET THEIR PLANS/SCHEDULE.

GP-4

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(When filled in)

NAVMC HQ 348-ADM
(REV. 7-62)

PUBLICATION CODE:

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THE JOINT STAFF

THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

20 August 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR WHITE HOUSE SITUATION ROOM

Subject: Operation Star Lite

Attached is the requested wrap-up report on Operation Star Lite with three enclosures.

CMC	HAS SEEN
ACMC	has
MILSEC	has
CofS	has
DC/S(P&P)	has
SGS	

RETURN

J. R. VASEY
Rear Admiral, USN
Deputy Director for
Operations (NMCC)
TO
MCCC

Note:

At 200015, the NMCC requested that the MCCC send an officer to the NMCC to assist them in preparing a memo for the White House. Major Surin was called in for the job.

Major Surin wrote the attached. Deleted from his proposed draft was material pointing out that this was a unilaterally planned and executed operation and in accordance with Marine Corps doctrine and that intelligence indicated that the 1st VC Regt. was forming up to hit Chu Lai.

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VR.

J. R. Vasey

-12-

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OPERATION STAR LITE

Based upon intelligence reports of a Viet Cong concentration of the 1st Main Force Viet Cong Regiment (estimated strength 2000), the US Marines on 17 August (EDT) launched a search and destroy operation in an area about six miles south of Chu Lai. The 3d Battalion, 3d Marines was sea-lifted by an LST (Landing Ship Tank), an LSD (Landing Ship Dock), and an APA (Amphibious Assault Transport) of the US Seventh Fleet to a position south of the Viet Cong unit. Simultaneously, the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines from Chu Lai was air-lifted by helicopters to a blocking position north of the Viet Cong concentration. This air landing was preceded by 20 US Marine aircraft, bombing and strafing the landing zone. A cruiser and a destroyer provided naval gunfire support. A Special Landing Force, composed of the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines and a helicopter squadron embarked aboard an LPH (Amphibious Assault Ship), was in position to provide a floating reserve force.

(Initial tactical situation in enclosure A).

By 1850 (EDT) 17 August, the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines was amphibious landed and linked up with the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines helicopter-borne troops. The assault force encountered a well-organized coordinated defensive area with an elaborate trench, tunnel and concrete bunker system. The Viet Cong were armed with rifles, automatic rifles, submachine guns, 60 and 81 mm mortars, 57 and 75 mm recoilless rifles, machine guns and 3.5 inch rocket launchers. A determined, skillful defense was conducted by the Viet Cong and the quality of resistance and use of combined arms confirmed the original estimate of a hard-core Viet Cong combat unit.

At about 0730 EDT on 18 August, two companies from the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines Special Landing Force afloat were landed by helicopters to join the attack. Subsequently, the additional two companies of the Special Landing Force afloat were landed over the beach to assist in the operation by sealing off the Viet Cong routes of escape.

Continuous support is being provided our troops by artillery, air, and naval gunfire support. Helicopter flights continue around the clock for re-supply and evacuation of wounded. C-123 aircraft are on station with flares during darkness.

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Although the Viet Cong made two attempts to break through on the first night, they were repulsed. Night illumination was provided by supporting arms and flare ships thus, it is unlikely that Viet Cong were able to escape in strength.

By nightfall of the second day of battle, the three Marine BLT's were occupying night defensive positions, having overrun the objective area. At first light on 19 August (20 August Saigon), Marines continued mop-up operations consisting of a thorough sweep of the area. A methodical search of the area is still being conducted to screen out any remaining Viet Cong, destroy fortifications, and exploit the success of the operation.

(Current tactical situation in enclosure B)

Preliminary Viet Cong casualty reports indicate the Viet Cong may have suffered an estimated 1000 killed (451 body count after searching one half of objective area), several hundred wounded, and 112 Viet Cong or Viet Cong suspects captured. The action was fast moving, making accurate casualty assessment difficult. Numerous Viet Cong were sealed in caves and tunnels by demolitions. Casualty accounting was further complicated by the nature of the casualties inflicted by bombs, napalm, flame tanks, artillery, and naval gunfire.

Latest US casualties are 52 killed and 205 wounded. It is estimated that 60 percent of these casualties were caused by small arms or machine gun fire, some of which had been bypassed in the heavy cover.

Through interrogation of prisoners and civilians the Viet Cong strength and order of battle is being reconstructed. Civilians found in the area have been cooperative.

The success of this operation is attributed to accurate intelligence, quick response, and security of operations plans. Prisoners confirm the presence of four hard-core battalions.

On 19 August, General Lam, CG, 2nd ARVN Division, offered two battalions to take part in the operation. The offer was accepted and RVN forces will be introduced into the objective area today for a period of about two days to assist in additional search and destroy operations as required and in the mop-up phase of the operation.

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MARINE CORPS COMMAND CENTER
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
Washington, D. C.

CMC	HAS SEEN	August 1965
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MEMORANDUM FOR THE RECORD

0316Q MCCC Log Entry

Subj: Call from Admiral LEMOS, NMCC

Encl: (1) Copy "Marine Supply Trip Runs Into Disaster"
by Peter Arnett - THE EVENING STAR - Night
Final Washington, D. C., Thursday, August 19,
1965

1. Received call from Admiral LEMOS, NMCC advising that the President just called referencing an article in the Evening Star by Peter Arnett.

This article was titled "Marine Supply Trip Runs into Disaster."

NMCC has sent a copy of the article to COMUSMACV info CINCPAC.

2. Subsequent to the above call, Watch Officer called FMFPAC advising of the above and that they could probably get a copy of the article from CINCPAC.

3. Approximately 0330Q, Major SERRIN called from NMCC advising that III MAF is aware of the article. Also, Lieutenant General KRULAK presently at III MAF is aware of the article.

C. D. Warfield
C. D. WARFIELD
Major, U. S. Marine Corps
MCCC Watch Officer

The basis for the President's concern was the flippant attitude taken toward marines KIA. ("These boys have mothers who will read that article...."). COMUSMACV was requested to comment by this morning.

*Very resp,
Sullivan*

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Marine Supply Trip Runs Into Disaster

By PETER ARNETT
Associated Press Staff Writer

VAN TUONG, Viet Nam—The mission of U.S. Marine Supply Column 21 yesterday was simple: get to the beachhead, resupply a line company and return to the 7th Fleet mother ship anchored a mile out in the bay.

Only one of those objectives was fulfilled. The 30-man detachment got to the beachhead.

It never found the line company. And it never returned.

Men from the column were among U.S. casualties in the fighting on the Van Tuong Peninsula that shaped up as the biggest American battle of the Viet Nam war.

The "supply pokes" figured they had an easy run.

They had heard that line companies landed earlier in the day were getting heavy fire from Viet Cong positions.

But Supply Column 21 was a formidable force made up of five steel-shod Amtracs—35-ton amphibious vehicles—to carry food and ammunition—and two M48 tanks to escort them once ashore.

The column packed a total of 287 tons of steel.

The paths that led to its destruction were paved with confusion.

Failing to locate the designated line company, the men set out to look for it.

The huge Amtracs, once out of the water, were unwieldy. The crews flopped from one rice paddy to another, calling at one battalion and then the next. No one seemed to pay much attention to it.

At 11 a.m. Supply Column 21 was about 400 yards ahead of the nearest Marine riflemen. The vehicles were deep in the Viet Cong territory and, suddenly, were deep in trouble.

Survivors said the Viet Cong rose out of hedge rows and swamps.

Lance Cpl. Richard Pass of Homewood, Ill., said his Amtrac veered aside as explosions erupted around them. The leading tank was hit with an armor-piercing shell. Two men inside were wounded.

The terraced paddyfields made tactical maneuvering difficult and the supply men were not trained for it. Attempting to get into good firing positions, three of the five Amtracs backed into a deep paddy and bogged down.

The other two edged toward the tanks for shelter. One didn't make it. A Viet Cong knocked it out by dropping a grenade down its hatch, killing two Americans inside and wounding others.

Pass saw Viet Cong with ammunition bandoliers, black pajama uniforms and camouflaged steel helmets move right up to an Amtrac 30 yards to his left.

He said doors of the vehicle clanged open as the two drivers tried to make a break to Pass' vehicle. One of the Americans was killed as he leaped out.

The other was plunging through the paddyfield swinging his Marine knife when he went down. When pulled out dead today, he still had the knife clutched in his hand.

THE EVENING STAR - Night Final
Washington, D. C., Thursday,
August 19, 1965

Encl (1)

U.S. MARINES KILL 600 GUERRILLAS IN 2-DAY BATTLE

38 Vietcong Are Captured
in Largest Operation by
Americans in Vietnam

COASTAL AREA CLEARED

Helicopters Rescue 8 G.I.'s
After Communists Overrun
an Outpost Near Laos

By NED SIEGHEAN
Special to The New York Times

DANANG, South Vietnam, Aug. 19 — In a fierce two-day battle that ended late this afternoon, United States Marines killed at least 552 Vietcong trapped on a peninsula about 72 miles south of this port town.

Marine officers on the scene estimated that the total of Vietcong dead would exceed 600. Thirty-eight guerrillas were captured and an important Communist communications center was destroyed.

The battle was the first major ground action waged solely by United States troops in the Vietnam war and the victory was one of the most striking thus far in the conflict.

A spokesman here described marine casualties as "light" in proportion to the size of the force involved, which numbered 4,000 to 5,000 men, or the equivalent of a regiment.

However, official sources in Saigon reported that the United States casualty toll was the highest suffered in a single battle in Vietnam so far.

For security reasons, the exact losses were not made public.

G.I.'s Rescued at Outpost

In another battle, eight American advisers were rescued by helicopter when Vietcong attackers overran an outpost at Dapsut, near the Laotian border. The fate of the South Vietnamese garrison was not known.

The battle, in which a large Vietcong force was trapped, took place about 12 miles south of a new United States airstrip at Chu Lai, which is being defended by elements of the Third Marine Amphibious Force.

The fighting began at dawn yesterday when three marine companies stormed ashore from the attack transport Tanadaga near the village of Anthai. The beach is just south of a small triangular-shaped peninsula that had been a Communist stronghold for two years.

A fourth marine company had moved overland from Chu Lai the night before and taken up a blocking position about two and a half miles to the north on the other side of the peninsula.

Shortly after the amphibious assault, another marine battalion was landed by helicopter in three zones two miles to the

Continued on Page 8, Column 5

Continued From Page 1, Col. 8

rear between the blocking force and the amphibious group.

One Helicopter Lost

While still landing, the helicopter force came under heavy fire from Communist automatic weapons, mortars and 57-mm. recoilless rifles. Several of the helicopters were hit. One was so badly damaged it had to land in Communist territory, where it was destroyed by marine aircraft. The crew was rescued.

The Vietcong were protected by well-fortified bunkers, tunnels and foxholes. Marine officers reported. Some of the bunkers, concealed under peasant huts, were reinforced by concrete.

Because of the heavy fighting, another Marines battalion from the helicopter carrier two Jima was thrown into the fight yesterday afternoon to reinforce the amphibious units.

By dusk yesterday, the Marines had fought their way to within a mile of the beach. During the night the troops dug in and sent out patrols to maintain contact with the Vietcong. Flares were dropped to illuminate the area and the artillery and naval bombardment continued.

At dawn the Marine infantry again pushed forward and by midafternoon had cleared the Vietcong from the entire peninsula. When night fell, the Marines were engaged in mopping up the remaining Communists in the area and in searching a maze of tunnels discovered in the cliffs above the beach.

The countryside was described as rugged terrain of plowed rice paddies crisscrossed by dense rows of trees, and rolling hills covered by rock outcroppings and patches of scrub brush that afforded the Communists good concealment.

The Marines were forced to fight their way painfully forward clearing the guerrillas from the bunkers and foxholes and suffering casualties throughout the advance.

Within three hours, however, the helicopter-borne battalion had linked up with the amphibious force and the Vietcong were effectively trapped within a small area, where they could be destroyed by the Marine infantry supported by artillery, naval gunfire and air strikes.

Aircraft Blocks Escape

A Vietcong company tried to break through the advancing Marines but was nearly wiped out by waves of F-4B Phantom and A-4 Skyhawk fighter-bombers attacking with napalm, 750-pound bombs and rockets.

The Marine jets flew 140 sorties during the two-day battle, dropping 92 tons of bombs. The cruiser Galveston and two supporting destroyers as well as artillery batteries nearby also fired thousands of shells into the Vietcong fortifications.

Prisoners Interrogated

Before the battle began Marine officers had estimated that 2,000 Vietcong were operating in the peninsula and nearby areas. Tonight, officers were interrogating prisoners to obtain a more accurate estimate of the size of the Communist force.

It was believed that some of the Vietcong might have escaped through the marine lines last night.

Senior officers were extremely pleased with the results of the operation, which they believed had been efficiently executed. The attack was planned on the basis of information obtained by numerous patrols the marines sent into the area from the Chu Lai air base.

The Vietcong had allowed themselves to be trapped with

their backs against the sea where they could be overwhelmed by the force of modern conventional arms.

"This time we fought the war our way," a marine officer said. "We called the tune."

DEATH OVERTAKES A U.S. SUPPLY UNIT

Withering Vietcong Attack Wrecks Marine Armored Column in Rice Paddy

By The Associated Press

VANTUONG, South Vietnam, Aug. 19 Under a sweltering midday sun, United States Marine Supply Column 21 lumbered to its death yesterday in the morass of a Vietnamese rice paddy.

By the end of the day the armored column, 287 tons of steel, was no more. Some of the column's 30 marines survived the withering Vietcong attack, but none escaped unmarked.

In the battlefield lay the ruins of the column, five steel-shod amtraks, 35-ton amphibious vehicles and two M-48 tanks. They were part of the toll in the battle of Vantuong Peninsula, where the Marines engaged in the heaviest United States fighting of the Vietnamese war.

The marines of Column 21 had figured on an easy run. Their mission was to get to the beachhead, resupply a line company and return to the Seventh Fleet mother ship a mile off shore.

They accomplished none of the objectives.

Amtraks Fail to Find Way

Once out of the water, the huge amtraks flopped from one rice paddy to another, unwieldy behemoths unable to find their way. Again and again, the marines called out to men in the field but failed to find the line company they had been assigned to resupply.

At 11 A.M., the column found itself deep in enemy territory.

Black-clad Vietcong guerrillas suddenly rose like locusts out of hedgerows and swamps. Explosions erupted all around the column, according to a survivor, Lance Cpl. Richard Pass of Homewood, Ill. An armor-piercing shell hit the leading tank, wounding two men inside.

The amtraks tried to maneuver into good firing positions, but three of the five bogged down in a deep paddy. The supply men had not been trained for the terraced terrain.

A Vietcong soldier knocked out one of the remaining amtraks by dropping a grenade in the hatch as it edged toward the tanks for protection. The

blast killed two Americans and wounded others inside the vehicle.

Communist shells punched three holes in one tank. Bullets piddled the wounded driver after he squeezed himself through the 18-inch escape hatch under the tank.

Mortar shells bounced off the American vehicles, and Corporal Pass watched as Vietcong soldiers with ammunition bandoliers, black-pajama uniforms and camouflaged steel helmets attacked an amtrak 30 yards to his left.

One of the two drivers was killed as he leaped out of the beleaguered vehicle. The other was cut down by bullets in the paddyfield.

The Vietcong knocked out a third amtrak and the survivors sought protection in the other two.

Men Douse Each Other

The marines ripped at the Vietcong with machine-gun and rifle fire from the vehicles, but still the Vietcong kept coming.

They took turns as sharpshooters from peepholes in their vehicles. "I couldn't maneuver up there," said Pfc. James Keefe of Seattle, Wash., who escaped with a slight wound.

The compartments of the am-

traks became cauldrons. S. Sgt. Jack Merino of Lomita, Calif., said the men splashed water on each other from resupply cans to prevent heat exhaustion.

Suddenly, a young corporal shouted: "Okay, men, we're marines. Let's do the job."

He started to climb out, but a bullet hit him between the eyes before he could raise his rifle.

In midafternoon, Sergeant Merino heard a faint whisper from outside, "Amtrak, amtrak." It was a wounded tank crewman. The sergeant and others pulled him inside.

Late in the afternoon air strikes began to ease the pressure on the remnants of Column 21.

A solitary helicopter landed at daybreak, mistaking the body-littered field for a landing zone. The Americans rushed from their vehicles to the helicopter, carrying the wounded.

The helicopter evacuated the injured in two flights. The dead were left behind.

Ground forces arrived to relieve the other survivors.

The men of Column 21 wanted to cart off their vehicles, but an officer told them:

"Take your belongings out of the vehicles. We are going to blow them up."

The relief forces counted 18 Vietcong bodies.

NEW YORK TIMES

PAGE ONE

20 AUG 65

Vietcong Inflict Casualties on Advancing Marines



U.S. marines rushing for cover as snipers open fire during large two-day offensive against Communist guerrillas in the Vamtuong Peninsula, about 70 miles south of Danang.



A marine with a head wound is led to the rear for evacuation. He was inside amphibious tank hit by guerrillas.

NEW YORK TIMES

PAGE ONE

20AUG 65

Marine Supply Column

Lumbers to Death

✓ By Peter Arnett

VANTUONG, Viet Nam, Aug. 19 (AP) Under a sweltering midday sun, U.S. Marine Supply Column 21 lumbered to its death yesterday in the morass of a Vietnamese rice paddy.

By the end of the day the armored column, 287 tons of steel, was no more. Some of the 30 leathernecks survived the withering Viet Cong attack but none escaped unmarked.

In the battlefield lay the ruins of the column - five steel-shod Amtraks - 35-ton amphibious vehicles and two M-48 tanks. They were part of the toll in the battle of Vantuong peninsula, where the Marines engaged in the heaviest U.S. fighting of the Vietnamese war.

Easy Run Expected

The "supply pokes" of Column 21 had figured on an easy run. Their mission was to get to the beachhead, resupply a line company and return to the 7th Fleet mother ship anchored a mile off shore.

They accomplished one of the objectives.

Once out of the water, the huge Amtraks flopped from one rice paddy to another, un-

wieldy behemoths unable to find their way. Again and again, the Marines called out to combat men in the field but failed to locate the line company they had been designated to resupply.

At 11 a.m., the column found itself deep in enemy territory.

Black-clad Viet Cong suddenly rose like locusts out of hedge rows and swamps. Explosions erupted all around the Column, recalled a survivor, Lance Cpl. Richard Pass of Homewood, Ill. An armor-piercing shell hit the leading tank, wounding two men inside.

The Amtraks tried to maneuver into good firing positions, but three of the five bogged down in a deep paddy.

A Viet Cong knocked out one of the remaining Amtraks by dropping a grenade in the hatch as it edged toward the tanks for protection. The blast killed two Americans and wounded others inside.

Mortars bounced off the American vehicles, and Pass watched as Viet Cong with ammunition bandoliers, black pajama uniforms and camouflaged steel helmets attacked an Amtrak 30 yards to his left.

One of the two drivers was killed as he leaped out of the vehicle. The other was cut down by bullets in the paddy-field.

Third Knocked Out

It was a little after noon now. With the sun beating down on the bloodied rice paddy, the Viet Cong knocked out a third Amtrak and the survivors sought protection in the other two.

The interior compartments of the metal monsters became cauldrons. Staff Sgt. Jack Merino of Lomita, Calif., said the men splashed water on

each other from resupply cans to prevent heat exhaustion.

Suddenly, a young corporal shouted: "Okay, men, we're Marines. Let's do the job."

He started to climb out but a bullet hit him between the eyes before he could raise his rifle.

Enemy Is Held Off

The Marines held off the enemy into the late afternoon, when air strikes began to ease the pressure on the remnants of Column 21. They stayed at their positions through the night.

A solitary helicopter landed at daybreak, mistaking the

body-littered field for a landing zone. The Americans rushed from their vehicles to the chopper, carrying the wounded.

The helicopter evacuated the seriously injured in two flights. The dead were left behind.

THE WASHINGTON POST

PAGE A-10

AUGUST 20, 1965

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IN CONSERVATION
TO RUEHUAQ/CGS 111 LAF
RUEHFOR/CTG 78.5
INFO RUEHNS/CGS 111FFAAC
RUEHGM/CGS
RUEHOL/CTF 79
BT

UNCLAS E F T O

PERSONAL FOR GEN WALT, COL KNAPP INFO GEN GREENE, LTGEN

KNUAK, GEN HENDERSON FROM BLACKBURN

1. THE BRILLIANT SUCCESS OF OPERATION STARRLIGHT ADDS YET AN-
OTHER LAUREL TO THE CROWN OF VALOR OF THE MARINE CORPS. YOUR
BROTHERS IN ARMS OFF THE SEVENTH FLEET SALUTE THE SKILLFUL PLAN-
NING, PRECISE TIMING FAULTLESS AND COURAGEOUS EXECUTION OF THIS
OPERATION WHICH WILL HAVE ITS PLACE IN HISTORY ALONGSIDE THE
MANY PRECEDING GLORIOUS EXPLOITS OF THE CORPS. PLEASE EXPRESS MY
ADMIRATION TO ALL WPK FOUGHT SO BRAVELY AND SO WELL. HEARTIEST
CONGRATULATIONS AND WARM PERSONAL REGARDS TO VADM PAUL P. BLACKBURN, JR.
BT

CMC	HRKO	RAB 21aug
ACMC	HRKO	RAB 21aug
MILSEC		
ColS	BUM	RAB 21aug
DC/S(P&P)	BUM	
SGS		

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MARINE CORPS
COMMAND CENTER

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DD-ACTION

D-INFORMATION

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NAVMC HQ 2-ADM (REV. 9-63)

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21 AUG 65 00 53Z

ACT
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TELECON ITEM FOLLOWS

O 201130Z
 FM MACV
 TO NMCC
 INFO CINCPAC
 BT

S E C R E T
 REFERENCE PETER ARNETT STORY ON MARINE SUPPLY COLUMN. THE CHIEF OF STAFF OF THE III MAF, COL. FULLER, AND THE G-3, COL. WYCOFF, FURNISHED ACCOUNT OF THE INCIDENT AFTER HAVING HAD THE ARNETT STORY READ TO THEM. COMMENTS FOLLOW:
 (3RD BN, 3RD REGIMENT ON RIGHT FLANK OF BEACHHEAD. 2D BN, 4TH MARINES ON LEFT OF 3RD BN. AN ENEMY SALIENT OF ABOUT 300 YARDS EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO BN'S AS LINK UP HAD NOT BEEN ACCOMPLISHED AT TIME OF INCIDENT.

2. SUPPLY FORCE CONSISTED OF FOUR AMTRACS, TWO M48 TANKS AND ONE FLAME THROWER TANK. THE AMTRACS ARMED WITH ONE .30 CALIBER MACHINE GUN EACH. THE STATEMENT BY ARNETT THAT MEN FIGURED HAD "EASY RUN" COMPLETELY UNTRUE. THERE IS NO "EASY RUN" IN A BEACHHEAD AREA WHICH IS HEAVILY ENGAGED WITH THE ENEMY. THAT IS WHY THE COLUMN HAD TANKS FOR PROTECTION.

3. CONFUSION DOES EXIST IN THE INITIAL STAGES OF ANY BATTLE, PARTICULARLY A BEACHHEAD OPERATION. HOWEVER, THE SUPPLY COLUMN WAS IN CONSTANT RADIO CONTACT WITH THE UNITS ON THE FRONT. THEY KNEW THAT THE COMPANY THEY WERE TO RESUPPLY WAS ABOUT 400 YARDS TO THEIR LEFT. THE COLUMN CAME OVER THE BEACH BEHIND THE 3RD BATTALION AND WAS MOVING Laterally BEHIND THEIR LINES TO REACH THE 2D BATTALION. IN DOING SO, THEY CROSSED THE SALIENT WHICH EXISTED BETWEEN THE TWO BN'S. THEY WERE TAKEN UNDER INTENSE FIRE BY HARD CORE VC WITH 75 AND 57MM RECOLILLESS RIFLES, IQMM MORTARS, MACHINE GUNS AND SMALL

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MARINE CORPS
 COMMAND CENTER

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AND THE STORY IMPLIES THAT THE COLUMN WAS LOOKING AT THE 2D BN. THIS IS SO. THEY WERE IN RADIO CONTACT, KNEW WHERE THEY WERE, BUT IN CROSSING THE SALIENT WERE ATTACKED BY SUPERIOR FIRE POWER. THEY DID NOT "CALL AT ONE BN, THEN THE NEXT WITH NO ATTENTION BEING PAID TO THEM." THEY LANDED BEHIND THE 3RD BN, AND PROCEEDED TOWARD THEIR DESTINATION, IN RADIO CONTACT AT ALL TIMES.

4. IN MANEUVERING THRU THE RICE PADDYS TOWARD THE 2D BN AND WHILE CROSSING THE SALIENT, THE COLUMN DID VEER RIGHT INTO THE SALIENT TO GET AROUND AN OBSTRUCTION. THEY WERE NOT AHEAD OF THE NEAREST RIFLEMEN BUT BETWEEN THEM IN THE SALIENT.

5. THE STATEMENT THAT THE SUPPLY MEN WERE NOT TRAINED FOR THIS KIND OF MANEUVERING IS DENIED BY THE III MAF. ALL OF THEIR MARINES INCLUDING DRIVERS ARE THOROUGHLY TRAINED IN THEIR JOBS.

6. THE COLUMN RADIOED FOR HELP. THE BN EX O OF 3RD BN, THE NEAREST UNIT, MADE UP AN ARMORED COLUMN OF TWO TANKS, THREE ONTOS AND TWO AMTRACS SUPPORTED BY INFANTRY FROM THE BN HQS. THIS FORCE ENGAGED THE VC IN THE SALIENT. THE 30 MEN IN THE SUPPLY COLUMN PULLED BACK UNDER THE COVERING FIRE BRINGING OUT THEIR DEAD AND WOUNDED.

7. THE INFANTRY ELEMENT OF THE RELIEF FORCE HELD THE SALIENT UNTIL RELIEVED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 3RD BN.

8. THE BATTLE CONDITIONS EXISTING AT THE TIME OF THE INCIDENT ARE DESCRIBED BY MARINE OFFICERS AS SIMILAR TO THOSE ENCOUNTERED ON BEACHHEAD ACTIONS IN WW II -- STRONGLY FORTIFIED POSITIONS HELD BY WELL TRAINED, HARD CORE MAIN FORCE TROOPS.

9. DETAILED BREAKDOWN OF SUPPLY COLUMN CASUALTIES WILL FOLLOW.

10. A BACKGROUND INVESTIGATION OF PETER ARNETT WAS CONDUCTED IN SAIGON IN MAY 65. IT REVEALED NO BASIS FOR JUDGING ANTI-AMERICAN BIAS. ARNETT IS NEW ZEALANDER BY BIRTH, MARRIED TO VIETNAMESE NATIONAL. HE IS TEMPERMENTAL, HAD ADMITTED WRITING SLANTED STORIES WHEN DISPLEASED BY ACTIONS OF MILITARY. IN GENERAL, HE WRITES SENSATIONAL TYPE STORIES.

GP-4

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SEA/IA SITREP
21 AUG 1965
date

20 AUG 65 16 00
ACT
INFO

UNCLAS DAT29005 FOR GENERAL
GREENE, USMC, FROM GENERAL JOHNSON, USA.
THE CLEAR CUT VICTORY OF THE UNITED STATES MARINES IN THE
BATTLE ON VAN TUONG PENINSULA, SOUTH VIETNAM, ADDS LUSTER TO
THE DISTINGUISHED RECORD OF THE MARINE CORPS. CONGRATULATIONS
AND WELL DONE FROM THE UNITED STATES ARMY. SIGNED HAROLD K.
JOHNSON, CHIEF OF STAFF, UNITED STATES ARMY.
BT

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NAVAL MESSAGE
OPNAV FORM 2110-33 (REV. 6-81)

NAVY DEPARTMENT

UNCLASSIFIED

PRECEDENCE ACTION	RELEASED BY	DRAFTED BY	PHONE NO.
PRIORITY	<i>Paul H. Nitze</i>	<i>[Signature]</i>	52002
INFO		INTCOL Spark	
PRIORITY		Marine Aide to UnSecNav	

P 201350Z

FROM: SECNAV

TO: COMUSMACV
COM 7TH FLT
CG III MAFINFO: CINCPAC
CG FMFPAC

UNCLASS

My heartiest congratulations on the important success won by the Marines of the III MAF against the Viet Cong south of Chu Lai. This action provides renewed evidence that today's generation of Marines, and the Seventh Fleet Sailors who supported them, are worthy successors to the men of the Navy and Marine Corps who have fought so well together throughout our Nation's history. I note with particular satisfaction the excellent coordination of all our arms in a complex triphibious assault against a wily guerrilla enemy well entrenched in difficult terrain. Please pass my congratulations to all who participated in the planning and execution of the battle including those Army and Air Force units whose valuable assistance contributed significantly to the successful outcome of the operation. Signed Paul H. Nitze, Secretary of the Navy

DRAFTER: SECNAV (3)

DIST: UNSECNAV, OP-00, BFR, FLAG PLOT, CMC, BUPERS *cy*

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TELECOM

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FROM: J

TO: J

INFO: CINCPAC

BT

CONFIDENTIAL

REF: A. MACV TELECOM 200806Z

B. MACV TELECOM 202318Z

C. NMCC TELECOM 210105Z

1. IN RESPONSE TO REF C THE FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED AS UP-TO-DATE WRAP-UP OF OPN STARLITE:

A. THE 1ST BN 7TH MAR HAS BELIEVED BLT 274 AND BLT 373. THESE TWO BLT'S HAVE RETURNED TO CHU LAX. BLT 177 AND BLT 377 ALONG WITH 3D ARVN MARINA (CRN) AND 2D BN 51ST ARVN REGT (REINF) ARE PRESENTLY SEARCHING OUT THE AREA BY EXPLORING CAVES, TUNNELS, SPIDER TRAPS, DEEP IN THEY ARE ALSO ATTEMPTING TO COMPLETE THE BODY COUNT AND COLLECTING WEAPONS, DOCUMENTS, AND SUPPLIES.

B. AT THE PRESENT TIME IS PLANNED TO EMBARK, ON 22 AUG THOSE ELEMENTS THAT ARE TO BE DEEMBARKED, AND THOSE ELEMENTS THAT ARE TO REMAIN ASHORE.

C. U.S. CASUALTIES FROM STARLITE WHICH ARE CONSIDERED OFFICIAL AS OF 211500H ARE 15 KIA, 270 WIA AND 1 MIA. IT SHOULD BE NOTED THAT THIS IS AN UPDATING OF PREVIOUS FIGURES AS A RESULT OF RECONCILING EARLIER REPORTS. OF THE TOTAL WIA MANY RECEIVED SUPERFICIAL WOUNDS AND HAVE BEEN RETURNED TO DUTY.

D. VC CASUALTY FIGURES WILL NEVER BE KNOWN ACCURATELY. WHILE THE ACTUAL BODY COUNT IS STILL CONTINUING, AS OF 211500H 564 HAVE BEEN CONFIRMED. MANY OTHERS ARE KNOWN TO HAVE DIED. BODY COUNT HAS BEEN CONDUCTED ON ONLY LITTLE MORE THAN 1/2 OF 20 SQUARE MILE AREA. VILLAGERS HAVE BEEN OBSERVED DISPOSING OF VC BODIES AND WEAPONS BY PLACING THEM IN CAVES, TUNNELS, SPIDER TRAPS, ETC. AND COVERING THEM.

E. 108 VCC/VCS ARE HELD. ALL VC OR VC SUSPECTS ARE INTERROGATED BY US OR RVN INTERROGATORS OR BOTH. THIS PROCESS IS STILL CONTINUING.

F. THERE IS LITTLE DOUBT THAT THE 1ST VC REGT HAS BEEN

BRIEFED IN ISI

SEARCH OFFICE

22 AUG 1965

date

CMC	R+B	24/8	Hayes
ACMC	R+B	23/8	Burn
MILSEC			
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 31 AUG 65

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NAVMC HQ 348C-ADM (CONT'D) (1-53)

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DESTROYED.

2. ARVN UNITS INCLUDE 3D VN MARINE BN, 2D BN, 51ST INF, ONE 105MM ARTY, ONE APC TROOP AND ONE CO 3D BN, 5TH INF. THE 11TH RANGER BN IS IN RESERVE AT QUANG NGAI. THESE UNITS ARE IN ADDITION TO THE REGIONAL FORCE UNITS AND INTERROGATION TEAMS WHICH HAVE PARTICIPATED FROM THE START. DETAILS OF RVN PARTICIPATION FOLLOWS:

A. GEN THI, CG I CORPS PERSONALLY CONCURRED IN THE PLAN PRESENTED BY GEN WALT.

B. RF UNITS FROM THE PROVINCE OF BINH SON ESTABLISHED FOUR AMBUSH POSITIONS TO THE WEST OF THE OBJECTIVE AREA ON THE NIGHT OF 18 AUG.

C. INTERROGATION TEAMS FROM BINH SON PROVINCE HAVE ASSISTED IN COMMANDERS FROM THE START BY INTERROGATION OF PRISONERS AND CIVILIANS.

D. COMMENCING AT 210600H THE 3D RVN MAR BN (REING) AND 2D BN WERE ENVELOPED IN SEARCHING OUT CAVES, TUNNELS, ETC. THEIR ABILITY TO CONVERSE WITH LOCAL VILLAGERS MAKE THEM VERY USEFUL FOR THIS. IT IS ANTICIPATED THAT THIS OPERATION WILL CONTINUE FOR ABOUT TWO DAYS.

E. FOUR ARVN SCOUT DOGS WITH ARVN HANDLERS ARE BEING USED IN THE SEARCH.

F. THE GALVESTON (CLG-3) AND FRITCHETT (DD-561) HAVE DEPARTED. THE ORLECK (DD-866) REMAINS TO PROVIDE NAVAL GUN-FIRE SUPPORT.

3. THE NATURE OF PRESENT RESISTANCE IS AS FOLLOWS: SPORADIC SNIPER FIRE FROM ISOLATED VC GROUPS FROM CAVES, TUNNELS, SPIDER HOLES, ETC. NO ORGANIZED RESISTANCE IS BEING MET.

4. IT IS TENTATIVELY PLANNED TO TERMINATE OPN STARLIGHT ON 22 AUG 65, AT WHICH TIME ALL UNITS WILL BE WITHDRAWN.

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BT

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NAVJAG HQ 948 C-ADM
(REV. 7-62)

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LY SITREP NO. 196 (U)

1. 731 FRANK ENOX RELOADING EFFORT THIS MORNING RESULTED IN A TOTAL MOVEMENT OF EIGHT (8) FEET. COGSWELL DIVERTED TO PRATAS AT 0100Z 10 23 AUG ATTEMPT.

2. 76/77 781

(1) 76/77 (LNO JLEA (CHM-163 EMB), TALLADEGA AND PT 3/75) REMAINING OFF VAN TUONG PREPARED TO RETRACT BLT 3/75 WHEN ADVISED.

BRIEFED IN ISI

**BRIEFED IN ISK
SEASTA SITREP**

REF ID: A66754 ATGT SECRET

1. 0100H. 4701 S I C R E T
2. 0100H. OPERATIONS AGAINST VU THOAN WIN VAN TUONG AMPHIBIOUS
3. AREA MOST EFFECTIVE TO DATE. TOTAL ROUNDS FIRED 6 IN H.C. - D
4. 5 IN AAC - 425, 5 IN ILUM - 499, 5 IN WP - 75. TOTAL 6 IN AND
5. 1000 ONE THREE NINE ONE (1391) ROUNDS.
6. 0100H. CHICKADEE AND CORAL SEA ACFT STRUCK THE THANK HOA

1. 0700Z ONE THREE NINE ONE (1891) ACROSS.
2. 0710Z ORISKANY AND CORAL SEA ACFT STRUCK THE THANK HOA
3. DESTROYING AT LEAST 8 BLDGS, AND DAMAGING OTHERS. MIDWAY
4. CONTINUED IN-COUNTRY STRIKES AGAINST VC CONCENTRATIONS AND STRUCTURES.
5. 0740Z LUCY WITH WINDS OF AUT KTS LOCATED SOUTHWEST
6. OF YOKO AND MOVING NORTHWEST AT 18 JDS, EXPECTED TO PASS
7. CLOSE ABOARD YOKOSUKA NAVAL BASE.

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NAVMC HQ 94B-ADM
(REV. 7-62)

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MARINE CORPS COMMAND CENTER
 Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
 Washington, D. C. 20380

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM IN 131

FROM: WATCH OFFICER ~~SEARCH OFFICER~~ 23 AUG 1965

SUBJ: OPERATION STARLIGHT ~~data~~

CMC	<i>has</i>	R+B
ACMC	<i>has</i>	R+B
MAJSEC	<i>has</i>	
22 August 1965		
CGS	<i>has</i>	R+B
DC/S(P&P)	<i>has</i>	R+B
SGS		

In response to questions posed by MCCC on 21 Aug, FMFPAC CC submitted the following:

I. Q. What intelligence has operation Starlight produced?

A. Intelligence indicates that the 1st Regt I CP and elements of the 45th, 60th, 80th, and 90th Bns were located in the objective area. It is likely that the heavy weapons Bn was there also. On it's recent move into the area, the Regt began extensive fortification of the region to include tunnels, caves, bunkers, and trenches. Nevertheless, it is unlikely that the Regt had deployed to the area for defensive purposes. The report that a sand table of the Chu Lai airfield area was being used for training purposes, a VCC report that an attack was scheduled for 0700, 18 Aug, and numerous previous reports that the VC were planning offensive operations during the 19 Aug holiday period, would appear to confirm the fact that the 1st VC Regt was planning to attack Chu Lai and that the attack was most likely thwarted by the timely USMC attack. Although the VC have in the past avoided large scale engagements with Marine forces, it is evident that they are willing to take this risk for a lucrative target and that, when backed to the wall, they are capable of offering tenacious resistance, especially in an area where terrain favors the defender.

SUBJ: OPERATION STARLIGHT

2. Q. What documents were captured and what type?

A. Approximately 1/3 mail bag of documents are now at the 3d ITT at Danang and more are on the way from Chu Lai. Material at 3d ITT consists of 30 propaganda items, 7 expenditure accounts for food, 6 personal diaries, 2 schematics of PRC-10 radios, and an abbreviated radio code. There are two black books of RVN personnel, political activity reports, documents on first aid and personal hygiene, and numerous other miscellaneous subjects.

3. Q. Weapons captured, number and type?

A. At Danang there are 84 assorted small arms, 67 pounds of TNT, and 100 feet of detonating cord. At Chu Lai are two BAR's, one 60MM mortar, and 30 - 40 small arms.

4. Q. What dialect do POW's speak?

A. All VCC/VCS speak the central dialect.

5. Q. Was Van Tuong the 1st Regt CP?

A. It is believed to be the CP, based on the amount of Comm lines running into the hamlet, and on the finding of telephone headsets, Telephone and radio handsets, and on the extent of fortified positions and resistance encountered there. VCC interrogation has not supported this specific location, but two locations obtained in interrogations are within the objective area.

6. Q. VC casualties?

SUBJ: OPERATION STARLIGHT


A. VC KIA 599

VCC/VCS 122 (of these 94 were cleared and released,
6 were confirmed VC, 22 are VCS).

7. Q. VC WIA?

A. The six captured were WIA. Elements of a 4th
Marines ITT spot report contains a report of VC having left the area at
200100H carrying six WIA. This is an unconfirmed report. A sweep of
the area is being conducted by USMC and ARVN units, searching caves
and tunnels.

FMFPAC CC FONECON 221315Q (U)


K. L. SMITH
Major, USMC
Watch Officer

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MARINE CORPS COMMAND CENTER
Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps
Washington, D. C.

22 August 1965

INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

From: Watch Officer

Subj: OPERATION STAR LITE

BRIEFED IN ISI

SEARCH OFFICER

23 AUG 1965

date

1. All companies of 3/7 are ashore with the last company landing at 212230Z. Present intentions are to backload 3/7 on the 24th.

TELECON: FMFPAC 222045Z (U)

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Indications pointing towards the VC planning an attack on Chu Lai included a sand table of the area, numerous reports of a 19 August offensive, and a VCC report of a 0700 18 August attack.

The amount of communications equipment found in VAN TUONG is the basis for the belief that the village was the CP for the 1st VC Regiment.

The USS Galveston, Prichett and Orlech fired over 1400 rds of 5 and 6 inch ammo in support of Operation Starlite, 18-24 Aug.

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23 AUG 65 04 12Z

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 AC 015000
 INFO A03
 23 AUG 65 04 12Z
 COMNAVJAG
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 A. REFERENCE MACV TELECON DTG 221530Z; NO OTHER SITUATIONAL CHANGE REPORTED IN THE DAK SUT AREA.
 B. REFERENCE OPN STARLITE, THE LATEST III MAF SITREP STATES:
 1. BACK LOADING AND RE-EMBARKATION OF 3/7TH WILL BE COMPLETED NOT LATER THAN ENDSOF DAYLIGHT HOURS, 24 AUG.
 2. RLT 7 (MINUS) WILL RETURN OVERLAND, SWEEPING THE TRUNG PHAN PENINSULA (BS 6500), TO CLOSE CHU LAI TAOR NLT END OF DAYLIGHT HOURS, 24 AUGUST.
 3. 51ST ARVN REGT CONTINUES SWEEPING TOWARDS THE SOUTH, PRESENT PSN VICINITY BS 6387.
 GP-4
 BT

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 (REV. 7-62)

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NATIONAL MILITARY COMMAND CENTER
MESSAGE CENTER

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RUMFUAQ/CG III MAF
RUMSBJ/2ND AIR DIV
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RUMSVC/DEP CG USARV
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RUHLHL/CINCPACFLT
RUHLHS/CINCUSARPAC
RUHLKM/CINCPACAF
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IMMEDIATE

Asia

24 05 22 '65

S E C R E T 29713 WESTMORELAND SENDS
SUBJ: VIETNAMESE REACTION TO MARINE VICTORY
1. FROM CERTAIN ARVN GENERAL OFFICERS ON THE JOINT GENERAL STAFF, WE HAVE RECEIVED A RATHER PECULIAR REACTION TO THE MARINE VICTORY SOUTH OF CHU LAI. WHILE NOT HOSTILE, THE REACTION WAS CLEARLY SOMEWHAT DISPARAGING AND PROBABLY INDICATES A SENSITIVITY TO THE EXTENSIVE PRESS COVERAGE OF THE MARINE ACTION.
2. WE INTEND TO MAKE EVERY POSSIBLE EFFORT TO PORTRAY OUR OPPTPERATIONS AS COMBINED IN NATURE. THIS MEANS WE MUST INCLUDE IN THE EARLY STAGES OF ANY LARGE OPERATION SOME VIETNAMESE ELEMENTS

TTO WHICH A FAIR SHARE OF THE CREDIT CAN BE ATTRIBUTED. WE ARE NOT OVERLY CONCERNED ABOUT THIS FIRST ADVERSE REACTION, BUT WISH TO FLBXLIT FOR ALL INTERESTED PARTIES.
3. AMB JOHNSON HAS NOTED THIS MESSAGE.

GP-4
BT

INFO...CJCS-1 DJS-3 SJCS-1 J3-8 J5-2 TSACSA-5 NMCC-1 SECDEF-1 ISA-9
DIA-15 ASD/PA-1 WH-3 CSA-2 CNO-2 CSAF-2 CMC-7 FILE-1(68)B/S

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 WESTPAC SITREP NO. ONE FORTY-SEVEN AS OF 232400Z CGN
 1. THIS SUMMARIZES ACTION AND EVENTS SINCE 222400Z. DATES ARE SPECIFIED WHERE EVENT OCCURRED PRIOR TO 222400Z.
 2. III MAF
 A. HIGHLIGHTS
 (1) COMUSMACV HAS EXPRESSED TO III MAF HIS APPRECIATION FOR THE TIMELY AND INFORMATIVE REPORTING OF OPERATION STARLITE.
 (2) A TOTAL OF 127 WEAPONS HAVE BEEN CAPTURED TO DATE AS A RESULT OF OPERATION STARLITE, INCLUDING AN ASSORTMENT OF

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RIFLES, CARBINES, SUBMACHINE GUNS, PISTOLS, AUTOMATIC RIFLES AND ONE 8.5 INCH CHICOM ROCKET LAUNCHER. INCLUDED IS A MIX OF US, RUSSIAN, FRENCH AND CHICOM WPNS. THE CONFIRMED VC BODY COUNT REMAINS AT 599 DEAD.

(3) FOURTEEN STRUCTURES WERE REPORTED DESTROYED AS A RESULT OF A4 STRIKES IN SUPPORT OF 2ND AIR DIVISION.

(4) ONE MARINE RF-8VA PHOTO A/C CRASHED SOUTH OF DANANG AFTER EXPERIENCING LANDING GEAR/ENGINE PROBLEMS SHORTLY AFTER TAKE OFF. PILOT SUCCESSFULLY EJECTED.

(5) CIVIC ACTION. THE CHIEF OF CAN RE/VEN NE VILLAGES, NEI YEN LUONG, RETURNED TO THE AREA AND IS CURRENTLY IN THE PROCESS OF DISCUSSING WITH MARINE REPRESENTATIVES THE MOST APPROPRIATE METHOD IN WHICH TO AID THE INSTALLATION OF CIVIL V GOVERNMENT IN THE AREA.

R. GENERAL. MAJGEN FIELDS, CG FIRST MARDIV ARRIVED FOR A TWO DAY VISIT AT DANANG AND CHULAI ON 22 AUG

C. THIRD MARDIV (OPERATIONS)

(1) OPERATION STARLITE

(A) THIRD BN, SEVENTH MARINES RECONNOITERED IN FORCE TOWARDS HILL 128 (BS 68072). PLANS REMAIN IN EFFECT FOR US

PAGE 3 RUMBS 3444 **SECRET**

(MARINE UNITS TO BE WITHDRAWN FROM THE OBJECTIVE AREA DURING 24 AUG.

(B) ARVN UNITS CONTINUE MOPPING UP OPERATIONS. LIGHT FRENCH RESISTANCE RESULTED IN TWO FRIENDLY WOUNDED VIC (BS 661899). THE VIETNAMESE UNITS ARE CONTINUING THEIR SWEEP TO THE SOUTH AND THEIR LAST REPORTED POSITIONS ARE AS FOLLOWS:

51ST REGT CP	-	(BS 677921)
2ND BN VNMC	-	(BS 660885)
APC TROOPS	-	(BS 645892)
2/51	-	(BS 648920)
100TH NOV BTRY	-	(BS 602723)

(2) THIRD MARINES (DANANG)

(A) FIRST BN

1. SECURITY PATROLS WITHIN THE AREA HAD NO REPORTED VC CONTACT.

2. AT 220730H APPROXIMATELY 25 VC INITIATED AN LIMITED FRONT AGAINST POPULAR FORCES VIC THONG PHUOC HUNG (AT 916727), ABOUT 8000 METERS SW OF DANANG. THE VC ATTACK WAS REPELLED, WITH THE LOSS OF TWO POPULAR FORCE KILLED AND FOUR WOUNDED. NO CONFIRMED VC CASUALTIES.

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FM CG III MAF

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SEASIA SITREP**

26 AUG 1965
date

25 AUG 65 08 20Z

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C O N F I D E N T I A L

VIET CONG WEAPONS AND AMMUNITIONS, SOURCE OF

1. INTERROGATION OF CAPTIVES HAS REVEALED NO INFORMATION AS TO SOURCE OF WEAPONS OR HOW THEY ARRIVED IN THE HANDS OF THE CAPTIVES, ONLY THAT THEY WERE ISSUED BY SQUAD AND FLT LDRS.

2. WPNS CONSIST OF 7.62 MOSSIN-NAGANT RUSSION CARBINES K-50 RUSSIAN SUBMACHINE GUNS, 40MM ROCKET LAUNCHERS, MAT 49 - FRENCH SUB MACHINE GUNS. U.S. BAR'S, MODEL 30 CARBINES, THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUNS AND M-1 GARANDS.

3. INTERROGATORS WILL CONTINUE TO SEARCH FOR DESIRED INFO.

GP-4

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S E C R EOSL

A. REFERENCE PAR 2, MACV US FORCES SITREP NUMBER 29, LATEST INFORMATION CONCERNING OPERATION STARLITE.

1. OPERATION STARLITE HAS TERMINATED, 1/7TH MARINES CLOSED CHU LAI AT 241245Z AND WERE THE LAST ELEMENTS TO CLOSE.

2. 3/7TH MARINES HAVE REEMBARKED SLF.

3. RESULTS. U.S., 45 KIA, 203 WIA, 6 DOW. VIET CONG; 614 KIA(BC), 9 VCC, 42 VC SUSPECTS (4 WIA), 155 VC SUSPECTS CLEARED AND RELEASED. 100 ASSORTED WEAPONS.

4. ARVN PARTICIPATION RESULTS; FWD: 3 WIA. VC: 7 KIA, 1 VCC(WIA), 7 IND WPNS SEIZED.

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RUCKHD/CG FMFLANT

RUABQL/CG FMFPAC/I PAC(FWD)

RUWDFD/CG THIRD LAW

RUMFCR/NIRN/USS PRINCETON

RUMFCR/BEGD/RLT-ONE

RUMFCR/LYIP/LIT ONE SLANT ONE

RUMFCR/JYIJ/ELT TWO SLANT ONE

RUMSCR/ANFF/ELT THREE SLANT ONE

BT SEC RET

FMPAC SITREP #150

1. THIS SUMMARIZES ACTION AND EVENTS SINCE 252400Z. DATES ARE SPECIFIED WHERE EVENT OCCURRED PRIOR TO 252400Z.

2. III MAF

A. HIGHLIGHTS

(1) III MAF REPORTS THAT THE P

VINCE CHIEF OFSKUANG NGWH STATES THAT IT WILL TAKE THE VC IN HIS PROVINCE SIX MONTHS TO RECOVER FROM THE CHITLAI DEFEAT. HE STATED HIS PEOPLE HAD FOUND OVER THREE HUNDRED BODIES STILL NOT BURIED AND ALSO HAD PICKED

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UP MANY WEAPONS.

(2) MARINE F4B/A4 AIRCRAFT DESTROYED A TOTAL OF SIXTH-SEVEN STRUCTURES AND DAMAGED TWENTY-FIVE OTHERS DURING ATTACKS IN SUPPORT OF III MAF AND 2ND AIRDIV IN I AND II CORPS AREA.

(3) FIVE ECM ANFETWO FIGHTER ESCORT MISSIONS WERE CONDUCTED IN NVN BY MARINE A/C.

(40 595-) 91 3; ENTY PATROLS/AMBUSHES WERE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE III MAF AREA DURING 25 AUG. ONE VC, ARMED WITH A CHICOM SUB-MACHINE GUN, WAS CAPTURED JUST NORTH OF LE KY. THIRTEEN VC SUSPECTS WERE APPREHENDED ABOUT 9000 METERS SOUTH/EAST OF DANANG.

(5) CIVILIANZ SAL VNZ THE III XPFU, S 5#84\$.-458; 18;8) -11AIRS OFFICERS CONFERRED WITH ONE QUANG NAM SECTOR MILITARY ADVISORS AND USONX/PROVINCE REPRESENTATIVES ON THE REFUGEE FOOD PROB

REPRESENTATIVES WILL SUBMIT A STATEMENT SHOWING THE LOCATION OF ALL REFUGEES WITHIN THE PROVINCE AND TRANSPORTATION REQUIRYENTS ASSOJOATED WITH SUPPLYING FOOD TO THE REFUGEES#35- S. GENERAL. MAJGI PARTY VISITED THE III MAF AREA ON 25 AUG.

C. THIRD MARDIV (OPERATIONS)

PAGE 3 RUHKG 3892 S E C R E T

(1) THIRD MARINES (DANANG) 48

(A) FIRST BN

1. CO A CONTINUES THE SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION IN THE SOUTH WEST SECTOR OF THE TAOR IN SEARCH FOR THE REPORTED VC CAMPSITE. PATROLS WERE CONDUCTED VIC (AT 865629)(AT 846679) AND (AT 879225) - NO REPORTED VC CONTACT. THE PATROLS FOUND NUMEROUS SPIDER TRAPS, SLEEPING MATS AND SOME DISCARDED CLOTHING, GIVING EVIDENCE THAT THE AREA HAS BEEN USED AS AN OVERNIGHT WAY STATION.

JSM ONE PATROL FROM CO B ENCOUNTERED A SMALL GROUP OF VC AT 251040H VIC (AT 958682). ENSUING FIRE FIGHT RESULTED IN ONE VC WOUNDED, ONE MARINE KIA.

3. THE FIRST BN WILL CONDUCT NORMAL PATROL AND AMBUSH OPERATIONS WITHIN THEIR AREA OF RESPONSIBILITY. BN IS CURRENTLY PREPARING FOR EMBARKATIONS AND RELIEF BY 1/1.

(B) SECOND BN

1. AN AMBUSH ESTABLISHED BY CO E VIC (J

894827) MADE

CONTACT WITH AN ESTIMATED FOUR VC AT 253425H. ONE VC WAS WOUNDED AND THEN CAPTURED, ALONG WITH ONE K-50 CHICOM SUBMACHINE GUN. ONE USMC WOUNDED.

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2 MISC SHIPS INFO:

1. WEXFORD CTY (LST-1163) TENT. SCHED FOR

2-15 (REAR) LIFT AS FOLLOWS:

ETA IYAKUNI 2 SEP

LOAD 2-35EP

ETA RVN 12 SEP

2. TG 76.5 (SLFD). IVO JIYA (LPH-2) AND

TALLADEGA (APA-235), WITH HWY 163 AND BLT 3/7(-) EMBARKED, ((131 448:36
778: 2-5 261515H.

UF3: PERSONNEL:

(1) III MAF DAILY STRENGTH BY ENCLAVE, AS OF 2524;):

AUGUST:

ENCLAVE	MARINE		NAVY		TOTAL
	OFFICER	ENLISTED	OFFICER	ENLISTED	
DANANG	1257	15673	129	1523	18637
CHU LAI	572	812	51	912	12273
PHU BAI	JJQY3	QYUE	30	02	2110
CHI NHON	31	1472	15	99	1633
TOTAL	2319	27555	237	2726	32517

PAGE 4 RUHPG 4254 S E C R E T D H

(2) BATTLE CASUALTIES

1. VIA

A I. NAVAL RJN FIRE. Y (1)

(1) EIGHT ADJUSTED MISSIONS WERE FIRED IN SUPPORT OF 2/3
SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION VIC TRUONG DINH NY OF LE MY. 03
ROUNDS OF 5 BUNK/33 AMMO

EXPENDED NY

*) THE USS GALVESTON, PRITCHETT AND ORLECK FIRED OVER 1422 POUNDS OF 5 AND 5 INCH AMMO DURING SUPPORT OF OPERATION "STABILITE" DURING 13-24 AUG.

3. FOOD FOR RVN. CG III MAF HAS REQUESTED THAT COMUSMACV PROVIDE ONE METRIC TON CONTROLLED LST TO TRANSPO CSU0222 SHORT TONS OF GENERAL FOOD, INC FDING RICE, WHEAT AND/OTHER TO CHU LAI. THE FOOD IS INTENDED TO ALLEVIATE THE FOOD SHORTAGE FOR APPROX 80,200 REFUGEES AND THE NORMAL POPULATION OF QUANG NGAI PROVINCE. 02

4. CITY OF HUE-OFF LIMITS. DUE TO THE RECENT POLITICAL DEMONSTRATIONS IN HUE, CG III MAF HAS PLACED THE CITY OF HUE OFF LIMITS TO ALL MILITARY PERSONNEL, EXCEPT IN THE CONDUCT OF OFFICIAL BUSINESS. THIS RESTRICTION IS TEMPORARY AND WILL BE MODIFIED AS THE SITUATION WARRANTS.

5. ALL OTHER UNITS NO CHANGE

PAGE 5 RUHPS 4264 S E C R E T

PAGE 5 RUMPS 4284 S
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RUCKCR/CG FMFLANT
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RUWDFD/CG THIRD MAU
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FMFPAC WESTPAC SITREP NO. ONE FIVE-TWO AS OF 282400Z. (C)
1. THIS SUMMARIZES ACTION AND EVENTS SINCE 272400Z. DATES ARE
SPECIFIED WHERE EVENT OCCURRED PRIOR TO 272400Z.
2. III MAF

A. HIGHLIGHTS

(1) THIRTY-NINE STRUCTURES WERE DESTROYED, FOUR BUNKERS
DESTROYED, TWENTY-FOUR STRUCTURES DAMAGED AND TWO BUNKERS
DAMAGED BY MARINE A4/F4B ACFT WHILE CONDUCTING STRIKES IN II
CORPS AREA IN SUPPORT OF 2ND AIR DIVISION.

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PAGE 2 RUHPC 4209 T O P S E C R E T

(2) MAG-16 HELOS LIFTED 1159 PAX AND 33 TONS OF CARGO IN SUPPORT OF III MAF AND ARVN FORCES.

(3) MARINE GROUND FORCES CONDUCTED A TOTAL OF 64 PATROLS/AMBUSHES DURING 27 AUG. ONE NIGHT AMBUSH WEST OF PHU BAI ACCOUNTED FOR FIVE VC KILLED AND THREE WEAPONS CAPTURED.

(4) INTELLIGENCE REPORTS CONTINUE TO GIVE EVIDENCE OF VC MOVEMENT AND A GENERAL BUILDUP IN THE AREAS WEST OF CHU LAI AND PHU BAI.

(5) ARVN UNITS OPERATING IN QUANG NGAI PROVINCE HAVE REPORTED THE DISCOVERY OF FIFTY VC BODIES WITHIN A 500 METER RADIUS OF (BS 698925). PROBABLY THE RESULT OF OPERATION "STARLITE".

(6) CIVIC ACTION. APPROX 20 TONS OF U.S. SURPLUS FOOD COMMODITIES HAVE BEEN SHIPPED FROM CATHOLIC RELIEF SERVICES IN SAIGON TO USMC HELPS IN DANANG. AN ADDITIONAL 200 TONS OF U.S. SURPLUS COMMODITIES WILL BE PROVIDED IN THE FUTURE.

3. THIRD MARDIV (OPERATIONS)

(1) THIRD MARINES (DANANG)

(A) FIRST BN.

1. CONDUCTED NORMAL SECURITY PATROL OPERATIONS VIC

PAGE 3 RUHPC 4209 T O P S E C R E T

PREPARED POSITIONS WITH NEGATIVE CONTACT.

2. COORDINATION EFFECTED FOR THE RELIEF IN PLACE OF 1/3 BY 1/1, COMMENCING APPROX 0700H ON 29 AUG. FIRST BN, THIRD MARINES PLAN TO EMBARK AND SAIL ABOARD THE USS BAYFIELD ON 1 SEPT.

(B) SECOND BN.

D MT 270330H OPERATION "BRIAR PATCH" COMMENC ONE PLATOON MOVING INTO BLOCKING POSITIONS VIC (AT 874761). A SECOND PLATOON LANDED BY HELO VIC (AT 870779)

SD MOVED SOUTH, ESTABLISHING A SECOND BLOCKING POSITION NORTH OF PHUOC SON VIC (AT 870764). AT 1420H CO F (-) REINFORCED WITH A PLATOON FROM CO H, LANDED VIC (AT 862762) AND COMMENCED THE SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION EAST THROUGH PHUOC SON. THE OPERATION WAS COMPLETED AND ALL UNITS RETURNED TO THEIR PREPARED POSITIONS BY 1641H. NO VC CONTACT.

2. SECOND BN HAS SCHEDULED EXTENSIVE PATROL AND AMBUSH OPERATIONS FORWARD OF THEIR PREPARED POSITIONS.

(C) THIRD BN, FOURTH MARINES (PHU BAI)

1. CO C, THIRD RECON BN ESTABLISHED A PLATOON SIZE AMBUSH SITE ABOUT 7000 METERS WEST OF THE AIRFIELD, VIC (YD

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US MARINE OPERATION NEAR CHU LAI

The initial surprise and tactical success effected in the USMC operation south of Chu Lai (Late Item, OPSUM 192-65) continues to be exploited as the estimated 2,000-man VC force appears to be hemmed in against the sea by the advancing Marines. More than 650 VC are estimated killed, and the operation continues "going well," according to III MAF. As of 190200 EDT, the Marines held two-thirds of the objective area. (C)

In the first day's fighting, stiff enemy resistance was encountered from VC well-fortified in tunnels, caves, and bunkers. Air, including helicopters, artillery, and naval gun fire were used extensively to support the advancing Marines. The battalion of the Special Landing Force (SLF) was ordered ashore to assist in the operation, primarily in sealing off potential routes of escape. By nightfall, the entrapment was believed complete, and no exfiltration of VC was indicated during the night. Two strong VC attempts to break out were repulsed. (C)

Latest reported Marine casualties are 36 killed and 154 wounded and 2 missing. A high percentage of the wounded were not considered serious. One hundred of the VC killed had definitely been confirmed by body count. Fifty VC were captured. (C)

SOURCE: COMUSMACV 182200Z (C); COMUSMAC TELECON 190442Z (C);
COMUSMACV TELECON 190730Z (C)

12 Aug 65

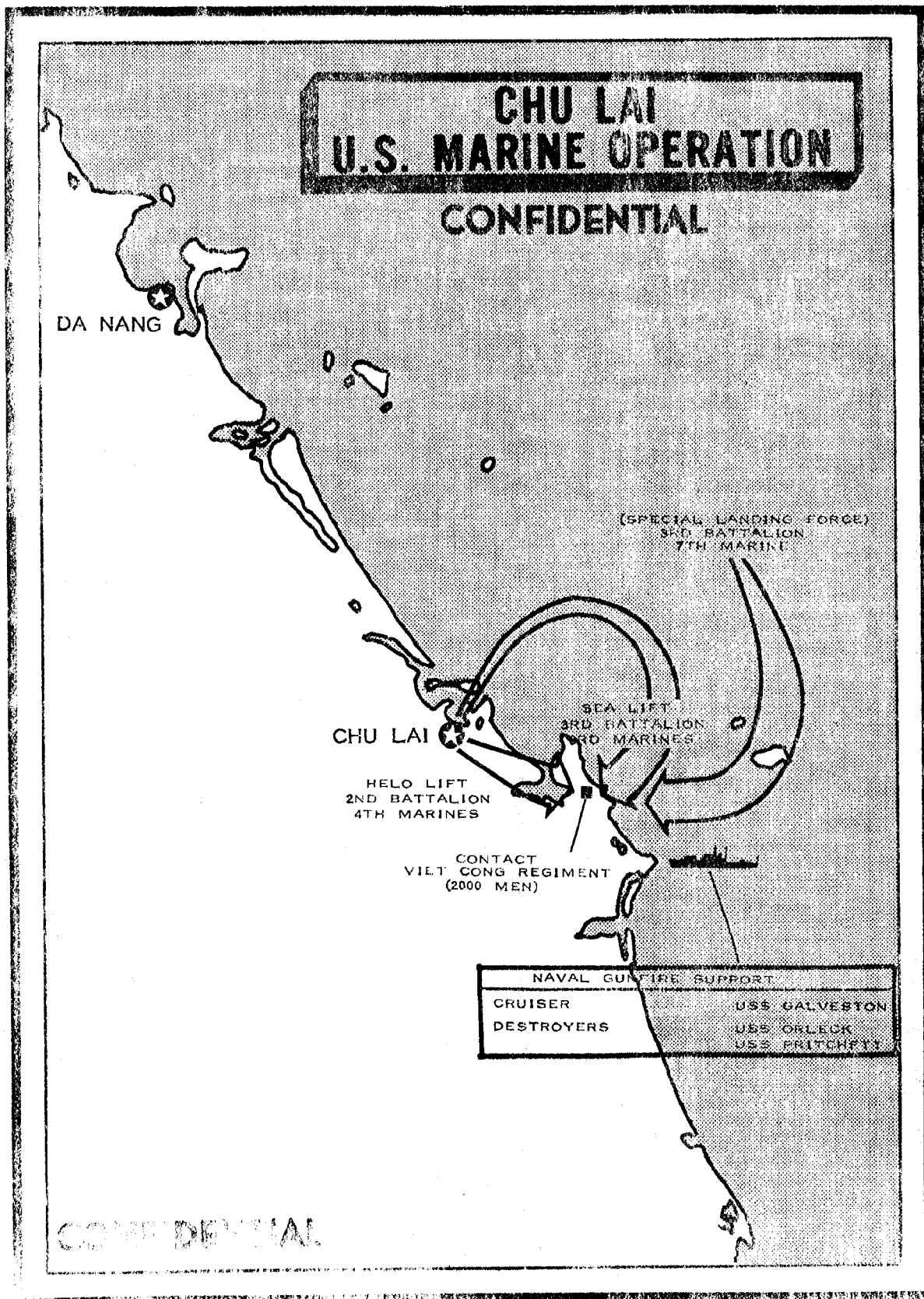
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US MARINE OPERATION ("STAR LITE")

In a highly successful action against the large Viet Cong concentration south of Chu Lai, units of the III MAF reached final objectives on the beach after a day-long fight against stubborn resistance. Units of BLT 2/4 swept Phouc Thuan Peninsula before all battalions set up night defensive positions (see map). (S)

During the fierce engagement yesterday, timely and accurate naval gunfire support was provided by the 7th Fleet ships USS GALVESTON (CLG-3) and USS ORLECK (DD-886), at times delivering fire within 100 yards of friendly units. (S)

At day break, all units resumed further search and clear operations to eliminate remaining isolated VC resistance. Caves, bunkers, trenches, and other VC installations in the objective area are being destroyed. (S)

Latest US casualty figures are 52 killed and 205 wounded. Incomplete VC casualty figures indicate that over 564 VC were killed, several hundred wounded, and 82 captured. An accurate body count has been impossible because of the destruction of caves and bunkers. (S)

SOURCES: MACV TELECON (S); MACV TELECON 191945Z (S);
III MAF 191808Z (S)

20 Aug 65

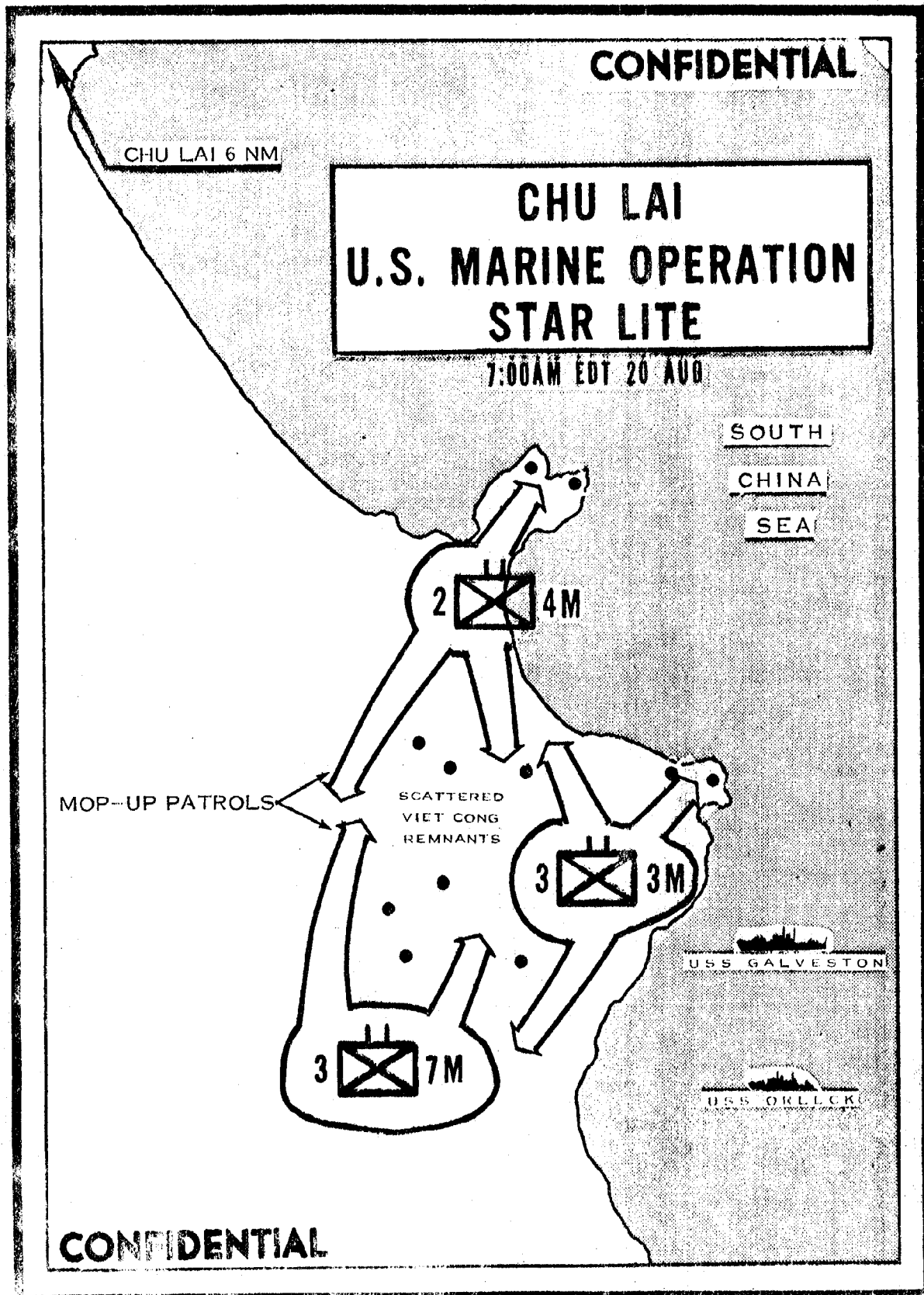
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OPERATION "STAR LITE"

In Operation STAR LITE, south of Chu Lai, two US Marine battalions of the III MAF are continuing mop-up operations with the mission of seeking out remaining VC forces and destroying VC fortifications and facilities. The concrete bunkers and fortified areas shown on the map were points of strong VC resistance in the early stages of the operation. (S)

An additional unit, BLT 1/7, was moved into the objective area from Chu Lai yesterday. The 2/4 and 3/3 have been relieved and returned to Chu Lai, leaving the 1/7 and 3/7 to continue the operation. Two ARVN units, the 3d VN Marine Battalion and the 3d Battalion, 51st ARVN Infantry Regiment, began closing the objective area at 1800 EDT last night. These forces will remain for a period of two days to assist in additional search and destroy operations as required. (S)

Latest casualty figures are:

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
US	45	209	1	
VC	564			108

VC casualty figures are expected to increase as mop-up operations discover additional bodies in collapsed caves and bunkers. (S)

SOURCES: MACV TELECON 202318Z (S); MACV PHONECONS (S)

Aug 65

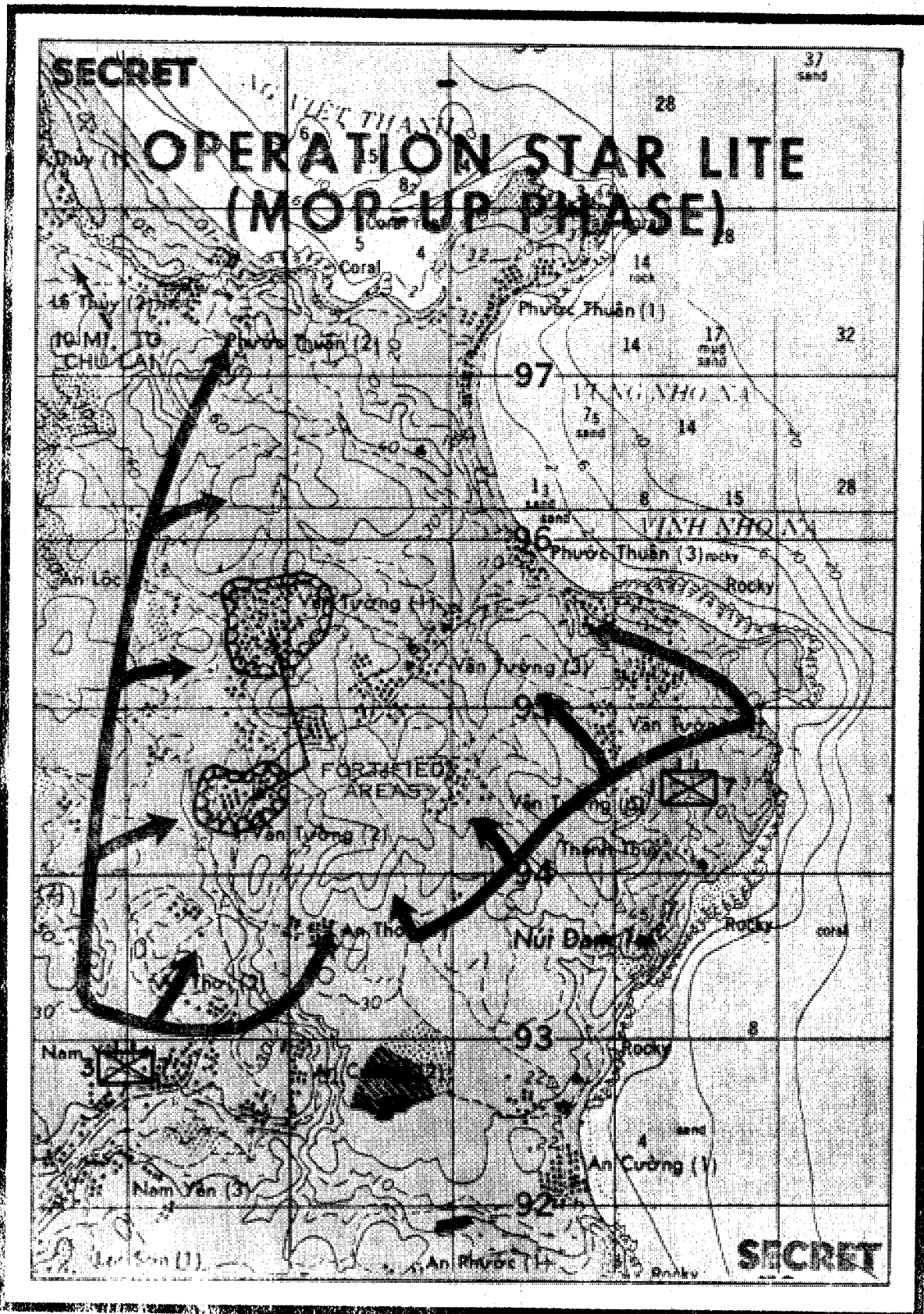
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OPERATION "STAR LITE"

The 1st and 3d US Marine battalions of the 7th US Marines, assisted by two South Vietnamese battalions, continued mop-up operations south of Chu Lai and began the consolidation phase of Operation STAR LITE. Only light enemy resistance has been encountered, principally in the form of sporadic small-arms fire. The two US Marine battalions continued search-and-clear operations, destroying caves, tunnels, and sniper positions. (S)

The 3d South Vietnamese Marine Battalion and the 2d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment, swept the area to the west and south of the US Marines and encountered only minor resistance. These forces reported eight VC killed and twelve captured. (S)

The 2d Battalion, 4th US Marines, and 3d Battalion, 3d US Marines, completed the move back to Chu Lai and are presently occupying defensive positions in that area. (S)

Based on more accurate tabulations from the field, COMUSMACV has revised the casualty reports as follows:

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
US	50	184		
ARVN		3		
VC	607			40 (S)

Ninety-four VC suspects previously being held have been cleared and released. (S)

The operation is expected to continue for one more day. (S)

SOURCE: STAR LITE TRAFFIC (S)

23 Aug 68

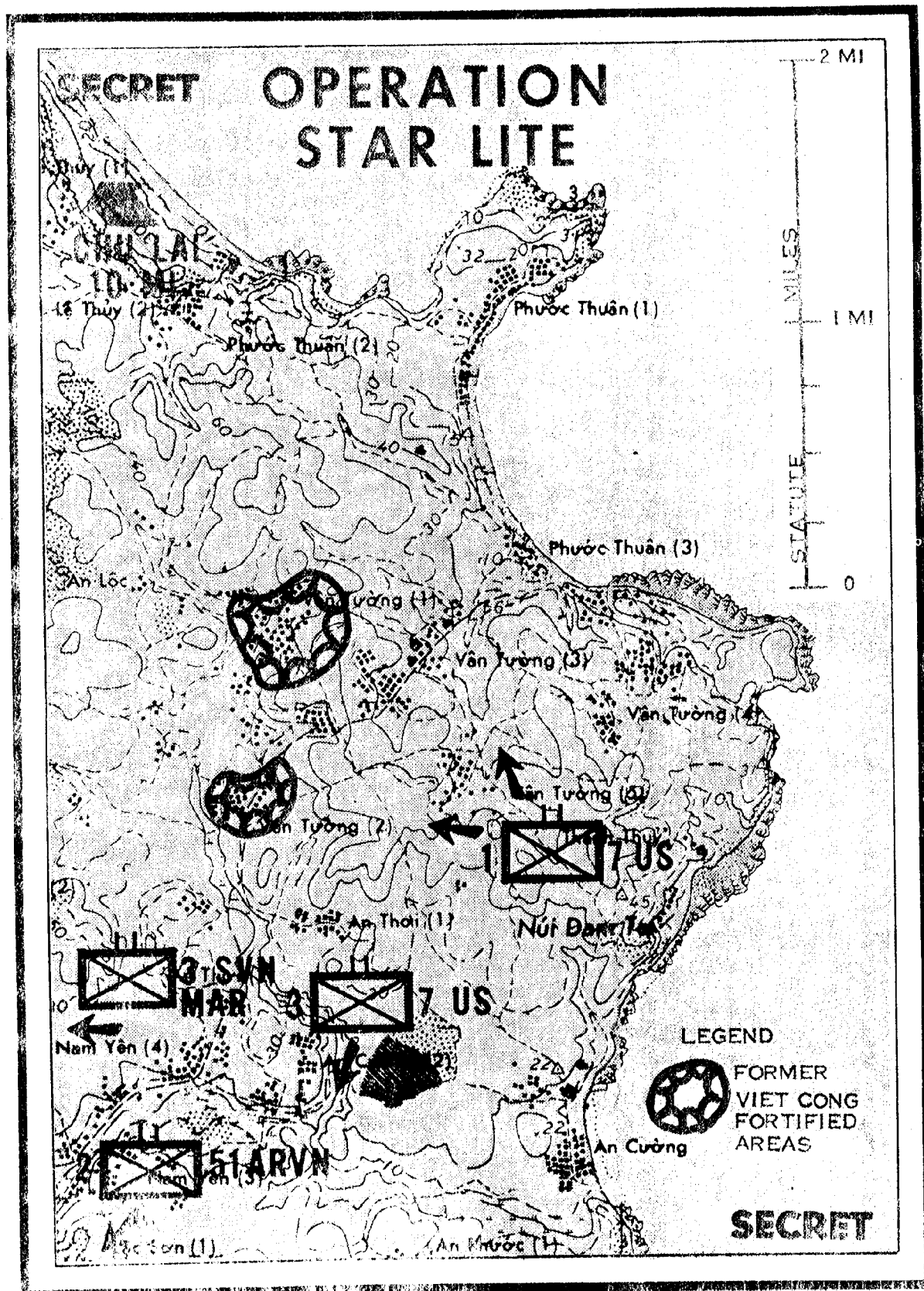
NMCC OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

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RVN SITUATION

At 231202 EDT, the Viet Cong expended approximately 21 rounds of harassing mortar fire against Bien Hoa Air Base in a 15-minute attack. The fire is believed to have come from the west bank of the Saigon River and fell on the west end of the Air Base. Twenty-four USAF personnel were injured, three seriously. In addition, five ARVN/VNAF enlisted men were injured. Thirty F-100 drop tanks were destroyed. Thirteen A-1E aircraft, 4 O-1F aircraft, 1 F-100 aircraft, and 1 U-10 aircraft received minor damage. One UH-1B helicopter, three J-57 jet engines, a USAF occupied hangar, and two USAF quarters were also damaged. All base flying facilities are operational. (S)

ARVN ground operations of battalion-size or larger again showed a decrease with 13 operations continuing. No significant ground actions were reported for 22 August. (C)

Air activity also showed a relative decrease, and pilot reports for 22 August indicated 165 structures and 4 sampans destroyed and 16 Viet Cong killed. (C)

On 23 August, in Dinh Tuong Province, forty-six helicopters lifted three ARVN battalions into three landing zones about 40 miles southwest of Saigon. The aircraft returned ground fire from the vicinity of the landing zone and aircrews reported 38 Viet Cong killed. The ground operation was a one-day search and destroy action which resulted in two Viet Cong KIA, two captured, and seven suspects taken. There were no friendly casualties. USAF and VNAF pilots flew 66 strike sorties in support of the operations. (U)

SOURCE: MACV TRAFFIC (S)

OPERATION "STAR LITE"

US Marines and RVN forces continued mopping-up operations south of Chu Lai with no contact reported. There is no change in the casualty count reported in OPSUM 196-65. (U)

Aug 65

NMCC OPERATIONAL SUMMARY

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Back loading and reembarkation of the 3d Battalion, 7th US Marines is scheduled to be completed not later than the end of daylight hours (Saigon time) on 24 August. The 1st Battalion of the 7th US Marines will complete a sweep of the operational area while returning overland to Chu Lai and is expected to close the Chu Lai tactical area of responsibility near the end of daylight hours on 24 August. The RVN operation associated with Operation STAR LITE has been terminated. (C)

SOURCE: STAR LITE TRAFFIC (C)

USMC AIRCRAFT CRASH IN HONG KONG

At approximately 232200 EDT, a USMC KC-130 aircraft crashed into the water after takeoff from Kai Tac Airport, Hong Kong. The aircraft, with a crew of six and 65 passengers, was en route to Da Nang, returning USMC personnel who had been on leave. Thirteen survivors have been recovered, including the pilot. Eyewitnesses reported that shortly after becoming airborne, the aircraft banked left and impacted into the water. Rescue operations are still in progress. (U)

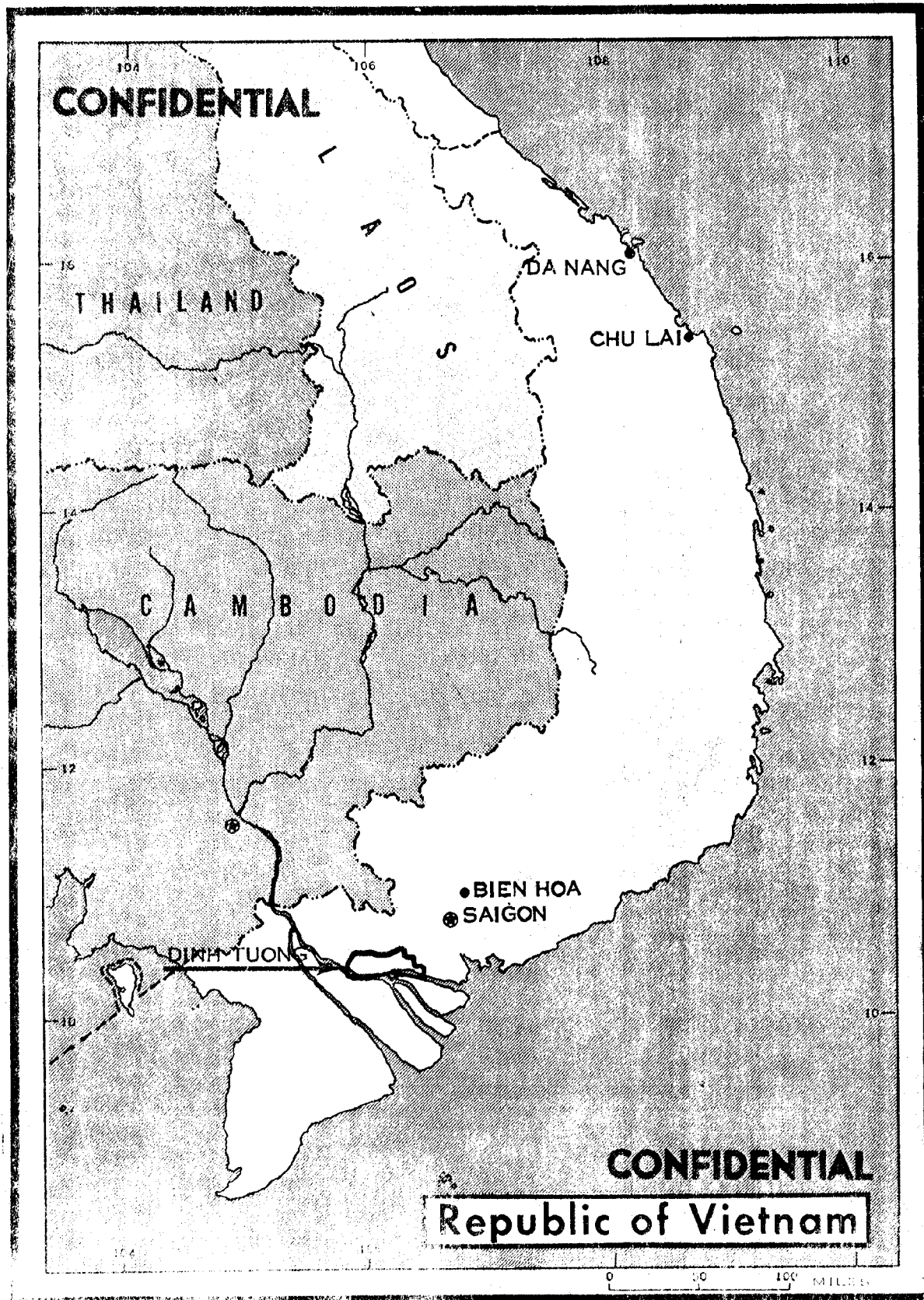
SOURCE: FONECON CINCPAC DO (U)

28 Aug 65

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OPERATION "STAR LITE"

Operation STAR LITE has been completed. The 1st Battalion of the 7th US Marines closed the Chu Lai tactical area of responsibility after completing a final sweep of the operational area without enemy contact. The 3d Battalion, 7th US Marines reembarked aboard USS IWO JIMA (LPH-2) without incident. (S)

Preliminary results of this operation are:

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>DOW</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
US	45	6	203	
VC	614			51 (includes 42 suspects) 109 assorted weapons (S)

One hundred fifty-five VC suspects were cleared and released. (S)

Results of RVN operations in STAR LITE were:

	<u>KIA</u>	<u>WIA</u>	<u>CAPTURED</u>
RVN		3	
VC	7		1 7 weapons (S)

SOURCE: MACV TELECON 250240Z (S)

(5 Aug 65

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GENERAL LEWIS M. WALT, CG III MAF, PROPOSED, ON 15AUG65, AN ATTACK ON THE 1ST MAIN FORCE VIET CONG REGIMENT (ESTIMATED 2000 STRENGTH) LOCATED IN VAN TUONG PENINSULA SIX MILES SOUTH OF CHU LAI.

BASED ON ARVN INTELLIGENCE AND INFORMATION RECEIVED FROM THE CIVILIAN POPULACE INDICATING THAT THE VC FORCE WAS PREPARING TO STRIKE CHU LAI, CG III MAF INITIATED THE UNILATERAL PLAN.

IN ACCORD WITH MARINE CORPS DOCTRINE, A HELO-BORNE BLOCKING FORCE WAS TO BE USED IN CONJUNCTION WITH A SURFACE-BORNE, AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT.

RECEIVING APPROVAL FROM COMUSMACV, CG III MAF COORDINATED WITH CG, I ARVN CORPS, WHO CONCURRED WITH AND INSISTED THAT EXTREME SECURECY BE MAINTAINED. (IT IS APPARENT THAT COMPLETE TACTICAL SURPRISE WAS ACHIEVED.)

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MAJOR FORCES OPERATION STAR LINE

U.S. MARINES

7th Regimental Landing Team*

3d Battalion, 3d Marines
2d Battalion, 4th Marines
3d Battalion, 7th Marines (Special Landing Force)
2d Battalion, 12th Marines (-) (Artillery)
1st Marine Air Wing (-)

U.S. NAVY

Amphibious Ships

U.S.S. BAYFIELD (APA)
U.S.S. IWO JIMA (LPH)
U.S.S. TALLADEGA (APA)
U.S.S. CABILDO (LSD)
U.S.S. POINT DEFIANCE (LSD)
U.S.S. VERNON CITY (LST)
2 Landing Craft Utility

Naval Gunfire Support

U.S.S. GALVESTON (Cruiser)
U.S.S. ORLECK (Destroyer)

U.S. ARMY

Armed HU-1B helicopters

Light observation planes for Forward Air Controllers

U.S. AIR FORCE

C-123's (flareships for night illumination)

* Approximately 3200 ground combat personnel.

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EXECUTION: At 180615H landing zone preparation was executed by artillery and Marine air. At 180645H the 2d Battalion, 4th Marines (2/4) was landed simultaneously in LZ's RED, WHITE, and BLUE. At 180650H 3/3 landed over GREEN Beach to link up with 2/4.

Small arms fire was received upon arrival in the LZ's. It was very heavy in LZ WHITE as the Marines rapidly deployed to clear the area. One squadron had 16 to 18 helicopters hit by small arms during the first day's operations. Tanks, NGF, artillery and air strikes were used extensively to reduce the concrete bunkers and strong points encountered.

At 1458H two companies of the SLF landed in LZ YELLOW to fill between 2/4 and 3/3 at the southern portion of the battle line. By this time, landed units had maintained the attack in the face of heavy resistance. The VC were employing large numbers of rifles and automatic weapons as well as 81mm mortars, 57mm and 106mm recoilless rifles.

The operations were described as similar to house to house fighting. The terrain varies from rice paddies to hedge rows, wooded areas and hills. This, combined with the extensive trench, tunnel and bunker systems made each move forward difficult, and demanded that each position be cleared and free of hidden enemy.

At 181930 the remaining two companies of the SLF landed over GREEN Beach and commenced securing the beach area behind 3/3. During the day a VC unit of approximately 60 men had been seen trying to escape to the sea. They were caught by NGF on the beach and almost completely decimated.

By nightfall all units were attempting to consolidate their positions and completely close the ring around the VC. The VC now had the options of attempting to break out of the perimeter and escape inland or stand and fight as they were hemmed in against the sea. On two separate occasions they attempted to break through the 2/4 lines and escape westward, however both these attacks were

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repulsed and the VC retired from the field. One company of the 3/3 was also heavily engaged during the night.

At 190700H, following intensive preparation fires, the battalions crossed their line of departure and renewed the attack. They reported gains of 800-1000 yards until the resistance again became very heavy. At this time approximately 2/3 of the objective area was in Marine hands.

After a day long fight on the 19th against stubborn resistance, the battalions reached their final objectives on the beaches of the South China Sea.

All units conducted mop up operations and destroyed caves, bunkers, trenches, tunnels and command facilities. The village complex of VAN TUONG (BS6986) provides every evidence of being a headquarters and strong point. Communication lines and trenches radiated in all directions from a well organized defensive system.

The three battalions organized defensive perimeters during the night in preparation for concluding the operation on the 20th. 2/4 returned by helicopter to CHU LAI the morning of the 20th. When mop up operations are completed, the 3/7 will reembark in the amphibious shipping and assume their role as the SLF. 3/3 will continue to mop up and search the area.

The support rendered by NGF and air are reportedly outstanding. The Army placed 6 O1E observer aircraft and 7 HU1B armed helicopters under OPCON III MAF, and the Air Force provided air evacuation of critically wounded from DA NANG to CLARK AFB. The ARVN forces established ambushes to the west of the battle area. These served to engage any fleeing VC and also act as reconnaissance elements should the VC attempt to reinforce from the west.

At 210600H the Third Bn RVN Marine Corps and the 2d Bn 51st ARVN Regiment commenced operations in the TRUNG PHAN Peninsula. Sweeping in a southern direction, they searched the area, exploring caves, tunnels and spider traps; completed the body count; and collected weapons, documents, and supplies.

BLT 2/4 and 3/3 returned to Chu Lai after being relieved by 1/7.

Effective 211500H casualty figures were:

USMC - 45 KIA
290 WIA
1 MIA

VC - 564 KIA (BC)

One half of the 20 sq mile area had been covered for this body count. Villagers had been observed disposing of VC bodies by placing them in tunnels, caves, spider traps and covering them.

On 24 August, BLT 3/7 reembarked as the SLF and RLT 7 returned overland to the Chu Lai TAOR sweeping the TRUNG PHAN Peninsula enroute.

Operation Starlite was terminated effective 241245Z, as RLT - 7 closed Chu Lai, with little doubt that the 1st VC Regiment had been destroyed.

Final Casualties:

USMC	45 KIA	203 WIA	6 DOW	
VC	614 BC	9 VCC	42 VCS	155 cleared & released
ARVN	3 WIA			
VC	7 KIA	10 VC WIA		

127 U. S., French, Russian & ChiComm weapons were captured; including a ChiCom Rocket Launcher (3.5 in.) & 60mm ChiComm Mortar.

On 26 August, the province chief of MUANG NHAN stated that it would take the VC in his province 6 months to recover from the Chu Lai encounter. He further stated that his people had found over 300 bodies still not buried.

On 28 August, ARVN units operating in Quang Ngai Province reported the discovery of 50 VC bodies within 500 meter radius of BS698925 which were probably the results of Operation Starlite.

These Latest figures from the Vietnamese, coupled with the Marine Body count, brings the VC casualties to 964 KIA.

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RUMFUU/CTF 78
ZEN/CG--USARV
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SGS	

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COM 7TH FLT - HOLD FOR INFO
USMACV SITREP (US GROUND FORCES) NUMBER 47 FOR PERIOD 091001Z TO

ACT: J3-8

INFO: CJCS-1 J1-1 J4-3 J5-2 SACS-5 NMCC-1 SAMAA-1 SECDEF-7

ASD/ISA-9 ASD/IL-3 ASD/PA-9 ASD/COMP-1 DIA-30 W/HOUSE-3 STATE-1

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1. 888 .-1 (091001Z TO 101000Z)

1. (S) INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY:

(A) OPERATION PIRANHA CONCLUDED AFTER FOUR DAYS OF SEARCH, CLEAR AND DESTRUCTION OF TUNNELS, TRENCHES AND TRAPS. VC CONTACT WAS SPORADIC, RANGING FROM SMALL ARMS FIRE AND SMALL FIREFIGHTS TO HEAVY ENGAGEMENT OF THIRTY EIGHT VC BY B 1/7 MARINES ON 9 SEP RESULTING IN SEVENTEEN KIA, TWENTY ONE VCC, AND NO FRIENDLY CASUALTIES. AREA OF OPERATION ON BATANGAN PENINSULA AND INLAND CONTAINED MANY TUNNELS, CAVES, TRENCHES, BUNKERS, BOOBY TRAPS AND PUNJI TRAPS. IT IS EVIDENT VC HAD SPENT CONSIDERABLE TIME PREPARING AREA FOR DEFENSIVE COMBAT. CONSIDERABLE QUANTITY OF DRUGS AND MEDICINES WERE CAPTURED AND ARE BEING FORWARDED TO J-2 MACV. A VC DOCTOR WOUNDED IN FIREFIGHT AT MOUTH OF TUNNEL DIED DURING INTERROGATION WHILE AWAITING MEDICAL EVACUATION, BUT DIVULGED THE FOLLOWING INFORMATION: CAPTIVE WAS SENT TO NVN TO TRAIN. HE WAS INFILTRATED INTO SVN IN APRIL 1964 WITH 300 NVN SOLDIERS. CAPTIVE COULD ONLY STATE THAT HE CAME INTO SVN ACROSS SOME MOUNTAINS. STATED HE DID NOT KNOW FINAL DESTINATION OF 300 NVN SOLDIERS SINCE HE WAS SEPARATED FROM THEM AT AN UNKNOWN LOCATION AND LED BY GUIDE TO NGHIA LAN VILLAGE (LOCATION UNKNOWN) THERE HE TREATED VC SICK AND WOUNDED AT A LARGE HOSPITAL. CAPTIVE HAD BEEN IN BATANGAN AREA FOR ONLY FIVE DAYS TREATING VC SICK AND WOUNDED. STATED HE HAD NOT TREATED ANY VC FROM OPERATION STARLITE. INTERROGATIONS OF SELECTED INDIVIDUAL VCC/VCS HAVE NOT REVEALED ANY SPECIFIC OB INFORMATION.

(B) ON 9 SEP HOA VANG POLICE CHIEF FORWARDED INFORMATION

RECEIVED FROM AGENT (B-3) THAT AN ALLEGED VC CADRE STATED 1,430 VC WERE KIA IN OPERATION STARLITE. IN ADDITION, CADRE STATED THAT AMONG KIA WAS MAJ GEN IN NINE JUNE DONG XOAI BATTLE. USARPAC NVN OB DATED FIFTEEN MAY 1965 LISTS A COL KICH AS COMMAND- INF OR HAVING COMMANDED THE 673D INFANTRY REGIMENT AND 335 INFANTRY BRIGADE.

2. (C) OPERATIONS SUMMARY:

(A) IN THE HUE PHU BAI TAOR, 3/4 MARINES CONTINUED TO DEFEND VITAL AREA AT HUE PHU BAI. SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSION WAS CONDUCTED BY C-13D RECON FROM YD 79511

TO YD 796069 WITH ELEMENTS OF L
3/7 MARINES IN A BLOCKING POSITION VIC YD 796095. THIS OPERATION

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YIELDED THIRTY FIVE VCS APPREHENDED VIC YD 790110.

(B) IN THE DANANG TAOR, 1/1 MARINES CONTINUED TO DEFEND ITS SECTOR THROUGH EMPLOYMENT OF PATROLS AND AMBUSHES. AT 092155H A D 1/1 MARINES AMBUSH FIRED ON TWO VC WHO FLED. AT 092200H, A 1/1 MARINES RECEIVED SA FIRE FROM DIRECTION VIC AT 85714. AN ARTILLERY MISSION WAS FIRED; SUBSEQUENT SEARCH REVEALED NO TRACE OF VC. AT 100025H, D 1/1 MARINES RECEIVED SA FIRE FROM TWO VC VIC AT 931717. FIRE WAS RETURNED AND AREA ILLUMINATED AND SEARCHED. ONE MARINE WAS KIA. NO VC CASUALTIES. C 1/1 MARINES COMMENCED SEARCH AND DESTROY PATROL AT 100715H OF LA CHAU (2) AREA AT 945676. BOOBY TRAPS AND SA FIRE WERE ENCOUNTERED. ONE MARINE WAS KIA, ONE REGIONAL FORCE (ARVN) WAS KIA, AND THREE REGIONAL FORCE (ARVN) WERE KIA BY BOOBY TRAPS. EXTENSIVE TUNNELING DISCOVERED ALONG WITH VC DOCUMENTS. TUNNELS WERE DESTROYED. 2/3 MARINES CONTINUED ACTIVE DEFENSE OF ITS SECTOR BY AGGRESSIVE PATROL AND AMBUSHES. AT 101100H, G 2/3 MARINES OBSERVED THREE VC WITH WEAPONS VIC AT 884797. A SUBSEQUENT SEARCH OF AREA YIELDED THREE VCS. AT 091105H, MSG RECEIVED BY 1/9 MARINES QUOTING A LOCAL AGENT TO EFFECT THAT A VC COMPANY WAS GOING TO GATHER RICE DURING CURRENT HARVEST IN AREA VIC BT 083670 AND BT 084680. ARTILLERY, AIR AND NAVAL GUNFIRE WERE AVAILABLE TO DISPERSE ILLEGAL HARVEST-
3. IDENTIFICATION OF VC AMONG LEGITIMATE FARMERS WAS CONSIDERED QUESTIONABLE. A 1/9 MARINES DIRECTED TO CONDUCT SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION FORWARD OF BN MLR IN AREA FROM BT 083670 TO BT 085660 AND IN VILLAGE OF CAU HA (2) BT 086667. APPROX 091710H A 1/1 MARINES RECEIVED HEAVY SA FIRE AND 60MM AND 81MM MORTAR FIRE; BY 091720H FIREFIGHT ENDED. THREE MARINES WERE KIA AND EIGHT WIA. TWO VC KIA AND ESTIMATED TWENTY TWO VC WIA. SEVEN VCC. ELEMENTS OF C 1/9 MARINES REINFORCED A 1/9 MARINES DURING THIS SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSION AND SUSTAINED TWO KIA'S. 2/9 MARINES CONTINUED TO OCCUPY POSITIONS SOUTH OF CAU DO RIVER. AT 091955H, F 2/9 MARINES RECEIVED ONE ROUND OF SMALL ARMS FIRE FROM YEN NE (4) AT 977676; NO CASUALTIES. G 2/9 CONDUCTED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION AT 100630H IN QUA GIANG (2) BT 090700 FOR ATKV OPQTH AND ESTABLISHED COMBAT BASE AT 965615 IN SUPPORT OF ARVN OPERATION TO SOUTH. 12 ARTY (-) FIRED MISSIONS IN SUPPORT OF COMPANY SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION CONDUCTED BY A 1/9 MARINES AT 091615H. ARTILLERY FO TEAM WITH COMPANY HAD ONE KIA AND TWO WIA. AT 101440H A TOTAL OF 328 RDS WERE FIRED AS LANDING ZONE PREPARATION FIRE FOR HELICOPTER LANDING OF 3/3 MARINES. A TOTAL OF 123 MISSIONS WERE FIRED DURING THIS PM. AMMO EXPENDED: 1026 RDS. A/3D RECON CONDUCTED
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S E C R E T 31968 SECTION TWO OF FIVE
 A RECON OPERATION VIC BS 5393 WHICH KILLED ONE VC AND CAPTURED ONE
 RIFLE AND CARTRIDGE BELT. D/3D RECON CONTINUED COMPANY RE-
 CON OPERATION IN HUE PHU BAI TAOR VIC YD 8710 WHICH TERMINATES
 ELEVEN SEP. NO VC CONTACT REPORTED. 3D TK CONTINUED IN DIRECT

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SUPPORT OF 3D AND 9TH MARINES. B/3D TK IN SUPPORT OF A 1/9 MARINES SOUTHEAST OF MARBLE MOUNTAIN VIC BT 072706, RECEIVED HEAVY SA FIRE. TWO MARINES WIA. 3/9 MARINES CONTINUED DEFENSE OF DANANG AIRFIELD PERIMETER AND CONDUCTED FIFTEEN PATROLS WITH NO ENEMY CONTACTS.

(C) IN THE CHU LAI TAOR, PLAT FROM C 1/4 MARINES CONDUCTED PATROLS IN RESPONSE TO INTELLIGENCE GAINED THROUGH A LOCAL INFORMANT THAT APPROX THIRTY VC WERE MOVING INTO SMALL ISLAND VIC BT 4712. AT 100500H, 1 C 1/4 MARINES EMBARKED IN LVT'S VIC BT 519117; LANDED VIC BT 468125, AND SEARCHED ISLAND. NO VC WERE FOUND. ALL LOCAL NATIONALS HAD PROPER IDENTIFICATION. PATROL DEPARTED ISLAND AT 100705H. 2/4 MARINES CONDUCTED PATROLS AND ESTABLISHED AMBUSHES THROUGHOUT THEIR DEFENSIVE POSITIONS. NO VC CONTACT. K & M 3/3 MARINES CONDUCTED A SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION VIC BT 4700 AND SONG TRA BONG RIVER. AT 100710H TWO CHICOM HAND GRENADES WERE FOUND VIC BT 615015. AT 101130H, OPERATION WAS CONCLUDED AND BOTH COMPANIES RETURNED TO BN AREA TO PREPARE FOR IMMEDIATE AIRLIFT TO DANANG TAOR. ALL ELEMENTS OF BN CLOSED OBJECTIVE IN DANANG TAOR BY 101840H. CONDUCTED EXTENSIVE PATROL ACTIONS IN OBJECTIVE AREA.

(D) OPERATION PIRANHA TERMINATED AT 101700H WITH RETRACTION OF RLT 7 (-) FROM BATANGAN PENINSULA. 1/7 MARINES AND 3/7 MARINES CONCLUDED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATIONS IN THEIR ZONES OF ACTION WITH 1/7 MARINES SECURING IN TIME TO BE IN BEACH SUPPORT AREA BY 101000H FOR BACKLOADING. 3/7 MARINES SECURED OPERATIONS AND IN POSITIONS BY 101230H TO COMMENCE HELILIFT TO CHU LAI. TANKS,

ONTOS AND LVT'S WERE DETACHED BY 100615H IN ORDER TO ARRIVE IN BEACH SUPPORT AREA BY 100630H AND COMMENCE BACKLOADING. LAST UNIT WAS RETRACTED AT 101630/, RESULTS OF OPN: SEE MAJOR UNIT ACTIONS, PARA 2(EBLM

(E5. MAJOR UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TYPE OF OPERATION: SEARCH AND DESTROY (INITIATED BY AMPHIBIOUS ASSAULT)
- (2) AREA OF OPERATION: QUANG NGAI PROVINCE
- (3) UNITS PARTICIPATING: 1/7, 3/7 MARINES; 3D MARINE BN (RVN); 2/4 INF (ARVN)
- (4) CONTROL HQ: HQ, 7TH MARINES
- (5) DTG INITIATED: 070630H
- (6) DTG TERMINATED: 101700H
- (7) RESULTS: FRD LOSSES (CUM)

KIA: 1
WIA: 12

ENEMY LOSSES (CUM)
KIA: 123; VCC: 46
(4 WIA); VCS: 248;
WEAPONS: 1 MAT 49, 1
FRENCH RIFLE, 3 CAR-
BINES, 2 .45 CAL PIS-
TOLS, 2 M1 RIFLES

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(F) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TOTAL NIGHT CONTACTS: TWO
- (2) TOTAL DAY CONTACTS: SIX
- (4) TOTAL CONTACTS: EIGHT
- (4) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS W/O CONTACT: NINETY NINE
- (5) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS WITH CONTACT:

PROVINCE/ COORDINATE	DATE TIME	ACTION	FRD UNIT/ LOSSES	ENEMY UNIT/ LOSSES
QUANG NGAI BS 535940	101050H	PATROL	A/1ST RECON NONE	UNK KIA: 1; SA: 1
QUANG NAM AT 945676	100025H	DEF N PSN	D 1/1 WIA: 1	UNK NONE
QUANG NAM AT 945676	100715H	PATROL	C 1/1 WIA: 1	UNK NONE
THUA THIEN YD 790110	NOT RPTD	PATROL	C & L 3/4 NONE	UNK VCS: 35
QUANG NAM AT 884797	101100H	PATROL	G 2/3 NONE	UNK VCS: 3
QUANG NAM BT 086667	091520H	PATROL	A & C 1/9 KIA: 3 WIA: 11	UNK KIA: 2 KIA: 22 (EST) VCC: 7

QUANGNAM 1020H PATROL V/9 UNK
AT 98688 --QA: KIA:
QUANGNAM PPYEH QGOL V/9 UNK
B PEYI -- NME VC

3. (PANS SUMA:R KSBNHHE HUEPHU 85-G ME RIFWCO FROM MARINS
ILL CONDUCT PATROL AND ESTABLISH A BLOCKIV POSITIMUT YD
930140 C SUPPORT OF ARVN OPERATION. ONEPLAT OF L 3/4 RINES
WILL ESTABLISH NIGHT AMBUSH POSITIONS YD 830120.
TZGYYQCMT IN THE DANANG TAOR, 1/1 MARINES WILL CONTINUE TO CON-
DUCT PATROL AND ESTABLISH AMBUSHES FORWARD OF ITS MLR POSITIONS.
2/3 MARINES WILL CONCENTRATE ON PATROLLING WESTERN SECTOR OF TARO
WITH ONE PLAT OF E 2/3 MARINES AND ONE PLAT OF G 2/3 MARINES. ONE
PLAT OF E 2/3 MARINES WILL CONTINUE TO PATROL EAST OF MSR. H 2/3
MARINES WILL REMAIN IN BN RESERVE AND PATROL RED BEACH TWO. A & D
1/9 MARINES (-) REINFORCED WITH TANKS AND ONTOS WILL OCCUPY POSI-
TIONS VIC LXA. HE HAMLET BT 090670; MISSION OF THIS FORCE WILL BE
TO DSY VC ACCESS TO RICE FIELDS TO NORTH AND EAST OF CAN BIEN
BT

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RUHLHQ/CINCPAC
RUMFUL/COMSEVENTHFLT
INFO RUHLHS/CINCUSARPAC
RUMFUAQ/CG III MAF
RUMFUU/CTF 76
RUMFUU/CTF 78
ZEN/CG-USARV
ZEN/CG 2D AIR DIV
ZEN/SA I CORPS
ZEN/SA II CORPS
ZEN/SA III CORPS
ZEN/SA IV CORPS
ZEN/SA CMR
ZEN/SA RF PF
ZEN/CTE 70.2.1.1
ZEN/USATFA
BT

912 05 56Z

See - 2 -

SEP 12 09 55 '67
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SECRET 31968 SECTION THREE OF FIVE
RIVER. SEVEN SQUAD SIZE PATROLS AND ONE LVTP-FIVE PATROL WILL BE
CONDUCTED. THREE AMBUSHES, FOUR LISTENING POSTS AND THREE SCOUT
SNIPER TEAMS WILL BE ESTABLISHED. 2/9 MARINES WILL CONTINUE TO
OCCUPY POSITIONS SOUTH OF CU DO RIVER. SIX PATROLS, THREE AM-
BUSHES, FIVE LISTENING POSTS AND THREE SCOUT SNIPER TEAMS WILL BE

ACT.....J3-8

INFO . CJCS-1 SJCS-1 J4-3 J5-2 SACS-5 NMCC-1 SAMAA-1 SECDEF-7
ASD/ISA-9 ASD/IL-3 ASD/PA-9 ASD/COMP-1 DIA-30 W HOUSE-3
STATE-1 CSA-2 CNO-2 CSAF-2 CMC-7 NIC-1 CIA-4 NSA-4 FILE-1
(108)B/L

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CONDUCTED DURING NIGHT OF TEN SEP. A/3D RECON IS PLANNING RECONNAISSANCE OPERATIONS VIC AT 8467 COMMENCING 101830H AND TERMINATING 121700H. D/3D RECON IS PLANNING OPERATIONS VIC BT 1262 COMMENCING TWELVE SEP.

(C) IN THE CHU LAI TAOR. B 1/4 MARINES (-) WILL EXECUTE OPERATION VICEROY, LANDING BY HELICOPTERS IN LZ BT 449058 AT 110615H AND CONDUCT COMBAT PATROL TO HAMLET OF KY SANH BT 445055 TO DESTROY C

VES. ONE PLAT WILL RETURN TO MLR AT 111700H. REMAINING PLAT WILL RETURN TO MLR ON 12 SEP. ONE RIFLE CO OF 2/4 MARINES WILL CONDUCT OPERATION GOOSE, A COMBAT PATROL, FROM 110700H TO 111600H VIC BT 4502.

(D) DURING NEXT TWENTY FOUR HOURS THIRD MARINE DIVISION WILL CONDUCT SEVENTH EIGHT PATROLS AND ESTABLISH TWENTY FIVE AMBUSHES.

11. HEADQUARTERS, US ARMY TASK FORCE ALPHA (091001Z TO 101000Z)
1. (S) INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY: NO SIGNIFICANT EN ACTIVITY REPORTED DURING PERIOD. 1ST AIR CAV DIV (-) & 2/7 MARINES REPORTED NO EN CONTACT. 1ST BDE, 101ST ABN DIV RECEIVED SA FIRE VIC BR 465433. A/326 ENGR RECEIVED SA FIRE FROM UNK LOCATION. 2/502 INF CAPTURED 12 VC INCLUDING ONE HAMLET CHIEF AND 6 GRENADES. 1/327 INF, CONDUCTING OPN COLDSTEEL, FOUND MANY C VES AND CAMOUFLAGED STRUCTURES VIC BR 398512. CAVES AND STRUCTURES WERE DESTROYED. TF JANSSEN RECEIVED SA FIRE FROM 12 PERSONS MOVING WEST TO EAST VIC BR 474442. NO KNOWN CHANGES TO EN ORDER OF BATTLE. EN CAPABILITIES AND PROBABLE COURSES OF ACTION REMAIN UNCHANGED.

2. (S) OPERATIONS SUMMARY:

(A) 1ST BDE, 101ST ABN. BDE CONTINUED OPN HIGHLAND. OPN COLDSTEEL (USMACV SITREP 45) WAS INITIATED BY 1/327 INF AT 100200H. 1/327 INF (-) CONDUCTED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPN WITH TWO COS WHICH INFILTRATED TO ASSEMBLY AREAS WITHIN AREA OF OPS. AT FIRST LIGHT 10 SEP, BN (-) STARTED SWEEP WITH TWO CO'S ABREAST. ANOTHER RIFLE CO WAS AIRLANDED ON A BLOCKING POSITION VIC BR 387533, ASTRIDE THE AXIS OF ADVANCE. SWEEPING FORCE MOVED TOWARD LINK-UP, DESTROYED BUNKERS, CONCEALED HUTS, AND PUNJI STAKES ENROUTE. THE BLOCKING FORCE AMBUSHED VC PATROL INFLECTING 9 KIA (BC), 4 VC WIA AND 4 VCC; FRIENDLY LOSSES TOTAL 5 WIA, INCLUDING 3. AS A RESULT OF STEPPING ON PUNJI STAKES. ELEMENTS WILL COMPLETE LINK-UP, ASSUME DEFENSIVE POSTURE AND SEND OUT AMBUSH PATROLS DURING THE NIGHT. SEARCH AND DESTROY MISSION WILL BE RESUMED AT FIRST LIGHT 11 SEP. ELEMENT OF 2/502 INF, ACTING ON INFO RECEIVED FROM 2 VC PRISONERS CAPTURED THE PREVIOUS DAY, CONDUCTED SEARCH OF VILLAGE (THUONG SON (4) BR 637477 BY ONE RIFLE CO. AT FIRST LIGHT, CO (-) SWEEP THROUGH VILLAGE CAPTURING VC HAMLET CHIEF AND

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12 CONFESSED COMBAT GUERRILLAS. ONE PRISONER LED SEARCHING ELEMENT TO A CACHE OF 5 HAND GRENADES, NO WEAPONS FOUND.

(1) TF HANSEN ASSISTED OPERATION SILVER FLASH (A ROUTE SECURITY OPN) IN COORDINATION WITH II CORPS (ARVN). AT 092810H TF HANSEN OPERED AND SECURED HWY 19 FROM BR 425443 TO BR 319461 UNTIL 101915H, ASSISTING 150 ARVN VEHICLES TO MAKE ROUND TRIPS BETWEEN QUI NHON AND PLEIKU. TF 1/18 INF CONTINUES DEFENSE OF BDE TAOR (REAR). TWO (2) SORTIES WERE FLOWN IN SUPPORT OF OPN COLDSTEEL. SORTIES PREPARED LZS PRIOR TO TROOPERS LANDING. SIX FIRE MISSIONS WERE FIRED IN SUPPORT OF BDE OPN, EXPENDING 524 RDS. BDE CONDUCTED 18 SMALL UNIT ACTIONS DURING THE PERIOD. THREE SMALL UNIT ACTIONS MADE CONTACT WITH VC ELEMENTS. RVN C/PSY OPN TEAM CONDUCTED PACIFICATION BRIEFING IN AN TAM (5), BR 488451; APPROX 300 ATTENDED. SICK CALL WAS CONDUCTED AN LUY (1) BR 485432. 75 PERSONS WERE TREATED. MED SUPPLIES WERE RECEIVED FROM USOM FOR SICK CALL PROGRAM. PSY WARFARE LEAFLETS WERE RECEIVED FOR USE IN BDE AREA.

(B) ADVANCE PARTY, 1ST AIR CAV. SUBORDINATE ELEMENTS OF DIV. (-) PARTICIPATED IN A PRACTICE ALERT FROM 1630 - 1745. UNITS MANNED DEFENSIVE POSITIONS WITH NO MAJOR PROBLEM AREAS DETECTED. WORK DETAILS PREPARING UNIT LOCATIONS HAVE COMPLETED APPROX 35 PERCENT OF OVERALL TASK OF CLEARING BRUSH AND SURVEY MARKING DIV BASE AREA. A TOTAL OF 2733 INDIGENOUS PERSONNEL WERE EMPLOYED IN CLEARING BRUSH FROM PROPOSED HELIPAD AREAS. PLAGUE INOCULATIONS WERE RECEIVED BY 25 CIVILIANS FROM THE VILLAGE OF AN TAM (3) IN A JOINT EFFORT BETWEEN US AND VIETNAMESE MEDICAL PERSONNEL. PHYSICAL EXAMS PERFORMED BY US DOCTORS REVEALED NO NEW CASES OF PLAGUE.

(C) 2/7 MARINES. E & F 2/7 MARINES CONDUCTED SEARCH AND DESTROY PATROLS IN SECTOR WITHOUT CONTACT. AN E 2/7 MARINES OP IN CA MONG, CR 043130, RECEIVED A ONE MAN PROBE, WHO FIRED ONE RD OF SA FIRE, FIRE WAS RETURNED AND ONE GRENADE THROWN BY US PERSONNEL; INDIVIDUAL FLED. ONE MARINE WAS KIA WITH MINOR WOUND NOT REQUIRING EVAC V2 MARINES CONTINUED ROAD SECURITY ALMG ROUTE ONE NGTH X X WOR NMCONTACT REVETED H/7 MARINES CONDUCTED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPS FRM GGG SE AHCR BSQ NMCMWCHREVZD ADVNISZRED LIVZD XDICAPALD O BY INQWY X PU WI CL CR OPWWPM FED RICE FRM X FIE KIVYN INPHU WI RL CRPWUQYP TO 201 CIVILIANS ADMIN-RUZRED LIVTEDM EDIKL AID O 37 CIVILIANS X PHU TAI (4).
R D MAJG UNIT ACTIONS: ME
BT

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S E C R E T 31968 SECTION FOUR OF FIVE

- (1) TYPE OF OPERATION: ROUTE AND AREA SECURITY
- (2) AREA OF OPERATION: BINH DINH PROVINCE
- (3) UNITS PARTICIPATING: 1ST BDE, 101ST ABN DIV (-)
(REINF)
- (4) CONTROL HQ: HQ, 1ST BDE, 101ST ABN

ACT: J3-8

INFO: CJCS-1 J1-1 J4-3 J5-2 SACSA-5 NMCC-1 SAMAA-1 SECDEF-7

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(5) DTG INITIATED: 250500H

KYL DTG TERMINATED: CONTINUING

(7) RESULTS: FRD LOSSES (CUM) ENEMY LOSSES (CUM)

KIA: 3

KIA: 38 (BC);

WIA: 16

KIA: 36 (EST);

WIA: 22; WIA: 12 (EST)

VCC: 46; VCS: 278

4 PACK HORSES KILLED

5 GRENADES

(E) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS:

(1) TOTAL NIGHT CONTACTS: NONE

(2) TOTAL DAY CONTACTS: ONE

(3) TOTAL CONTACTS: ONE

(4) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS W/O CONTACT: TWENTY THREE

(5) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS WITH CONTACT:

PROVINCE/	DATE		FRD UNIT/	ENEMY UNIT/
COORDINATE	TIME	ACTION	LOSSES	LOSSES
BINH DINH	NOT RPTD	PROBE	E 2/7 MARINES	UNK
CR 043130			WIA: 1	UNK

(S) PLANS SUMMARY:

(A) 1ST BDE, 101ST ABN DIV. BDE PLANS CONTINUATION OF OPN HIGHLAND AND 1/327 INF WILL CONTINUE OPN COLDSTEEL. PATROLLING AND AMBUSHES WILL BE CONDUCTED WITHIN THE TAOR DURING NEXT 24 HOURS.

(B) ADVANCE PARTY, 1ST AIR CAV. DIV (-) TO CONCENTRATE MAXIMUM EFFORT ON CLEARING BRUSH FROM HELIPAD AREA WHICH IS 60 PERCENT COMPLETED. SURVEY WORK CREWS WILL CONTINUE TO LAYOUT SUBORDINATE UNIT AREA.

(C) 2/7 MARINES. H 2/7 MARINES TO CONTINUE SEARCH AND DESTROY PATROLS AND AMBUSHES THROUGHOUT NIGHT OF 10 SEP. AT 110830H 2/7 MARINES WILL COMMENCE HELILIFT FROM PATROL BASE TO BN CP FOR DEPLOYMENT IN EASTERN SECTOR OF TAOR. E & F 2/7 MARINES TO CONDUCT PATROL AND AMBUSH ACTIVITY WITHIN SECTOR AT 110800H, 2/7 MARINES RECON PLAT TO BE HELILIFTED TO US SPECIAL FORCES CAMP CR 043331. PLAT TO SET UP PATROL BASE AT CAMP AND CONDUCT RECON SOUTH OF GRID LINE 35 AND NORTH OF GRID LINE 29 EAST OF SPECIAL FORCES CAMP.

III. 173D ABN BDE (DELAYED REPORT FOR PD 081001Z TO 091000Z)

1. (S) INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY: 1/RAR AND E/17 CAV REPORTED HEARING SA FIRE VIC VILLAGE, YT 0019 AT 2021 AND 2110 HRS. NO CON-

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ACT WAS MADE. FROM 1010 - 1245 HRS, AERIAL RECON WAS FLOWN OVER WAR ZONE "D". THE OBSERVER REPORTED CART AND FOOT TRACKS ON THE ROAD BETWEEN YT 070348 AND YT 106344. GROUND FIRE WAS RECEIVED FROM VIC YT 080348. FIRE WAS RETURNED, RESULTS UNKNOWN. GROUND FIRE WAS RECEIVED AND SEVERAL HUTS WERE SEEN IN THE AREA VIC YT 1437 AND YT 1538. TRAIL RUNNING N - S FROM YT 034222 TO YT 054267 SHOWED EVIDENCE OF VERY HEAVY FOOT AND CART TRAFFIC. NE OF HILL 58, YT 0525, ONE INDIVIDUAL WAS SEEN RUNNING INTO THE UNDERGROWTH. 93 VC SUSPECTS AND 3 CONFIRMED VC DEFECTORS CAPTURED BY ELEMENTS OF THE 2/16 INF (REINF) DURING CONDUCT OF SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION IN TAOR 7-65. THEY ARE PRESENTLY UNDERGOING INTERROGATION. NIGHT AERIAL RECON FLOWN OVER THE BDE AREA ON 9 SEP, REVEALED NO ENEMY ACTIVITY.

2. (S) OPERATIONS SUMMARY: BDE CONTINUED TO DEFEND BIEN HOA AREA WITH SQUAD AND PLAT PATROLS, AND CO OPERATIONS, AND ONE BN OPERATION THROUGHOUT THE SECTOR. DURING NIGHT OF 9-10 SEP, FOUR PLAT AND ELEVEN SQUAD PATROLS WERE CONDUCTED. A TOTAL OF FOURTEEN AMBUSH SITES WERE ESTABLISHED BY THESE PATROLS; NEG ENEMY CONTACT. 2/16 INF CONTINUED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION. IB2/503 OCCUPIED AREA G2, AT 090835H AND B 1/503 OCCUPIED AREA B11, AT 091120H AND WILL REMAIN TVERNIGHT. NO ENEMY CONTACT. 2/16 INF CP ESTABLISHED AT YS 166998; ALL OTHERS REMAIN UNCHANGED. 3/319 ARTY, 161 ARTY (RNZA), 1/7 ARTY (-), AND C 8/6 ARTY CONDUCTED FIRE MISSIONS (NUMBER UNKNOWN), EXPENDING 445 RDS.

(A) MAJOR UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TYPE OF OPERATION: SEARCH AND DESTROY
- (2) AREA OF OPERATION: BIEN HOA PROVINCE
- (3) UNITS PARTICIPATING: 2/16 INF (REING) (ERRONEOUS-
LY REPORTED PREVIOUSLY AS 2/18 INF)
- (4) CONTROL HQ: HQ: 2/16 INF
- (5) DTG INITIATED: 081700H
- (6) DTG TERMINATED: CONTINUING
- (7) RESULTS: FRD LOSSES (CUM)
NONE

ENEMY LOSSES (CUM)
VCS: 93
VC DEFECTORS: 3

(B) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TOTAL NIGHT CONTACTS: NONE
- (2) TOTAL DAY CONTACTS: NONE
- (3) TOTAL CONTACTS: NONE
- (4) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS W/O CONTACT: SEVENTEEN

IV. 173D ABN XFE (091001Z TO 101000Z)

1. (S) INTELLIGENCE SUMMARY: 2/16 INF REPORTED ARMED HELICOPTER RECEIVED SA FIRE VIC YS 234944, YS 263943, YS 252942 AND YS 247946 BETWEEN 0750 - 1330 HRS. THE HELICOPTER RETURNED THE FIRE BT.

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JCS 44316

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4.43.1.60

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BT ..

SECRET 31968 FINAL SECTION OF FIVE
IN TWO INSTANCES, RESULTS UNKNOWN. FIVE VC SUSPECTS WERE APPRE-
HENDED DURING CONDUCT OF 2/16 INF SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION;
INTERROGATION OF SUSPECTS CONTINUES. AT 1450 HRS, AN AGENT REPORT
SPECIFIED A VC BATTALION VIC YT 022226 WITH 16 AA WEAPONS. BAT-
TALION WAS REPORTED MOVING SOUTH TOWARDS XT996157 WITH MISSION
TO ATTACK BIEN HOA AIR BASE ON NIGHT OF 10 OR 11 SEP WITH MORTARS.
ARTILLERY FIRED ON SUSPECTED VC BN POSITION; RESULTS UNKNOWN.

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AERIAL RECON OF SAME AREA REVEALED NO UNUSUAL ACITIVY. AERIAL RECON NORTH OF BDE AREA REVEALED ROAD BLOCK BY VEHICLES AT XT 784495, XT 788461, XT 787466 AND XT 786475, AND ROAD BLOCKED BY TREES AT XT 785396, XT 786404, XT 790417 AND XT 793433. FOXHOLES WERE SIGHTED AT XT 658443 AND XT 745395.

2. (S) OPERATIONS SUMMARY: BDE CONTINUED TO DEFEND BIEN HOA AREA WITH SQUAD AND PLAT PATROLS, CO OPERATIONS, AND ONE BN OPERATION THROUGHOUT THE SECTOR. DURING NIGHT OF 9-10 SEP, 14 AMBUSHES WERE ESTABLISHED, 2 CO SIZE AND ONE PLAT SIZE POSITIONS WERE OCCUPIED AND SIX OP'S WERE MANNED. B 1/503 OCCUPIED AREA B11 OVERNIGHT AND CLOSED BN POSITION AT 101010H. B 2/503 OCCUPIED AREA C2 OVERNIGHT AND CLOSED BN POSITION AT 100930H; NEG ENEMY CONTACT. 2/16 INF COMPLETED SEARCH AND DESTROY OPERATION, RETURNING TO BASE CAMP AT 101700H; 3/319 ARTY, 161 ARTY (RNZA), 1/7 ARTY (-), AND C8/6 ARTY CONDUCTED FIRE MISSIONS (NUMBER UNKNOWN), EXPENDING 515 RDS.

(A) MAJOR UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TYPE OF OPERATION: SEARCH AND DESTROY
- (2) AREA OF OPERATION: BIEN HOA PROVINCE
- (3) UNITS PARTICIPATING: 2/16 INF (REINF)
- (4) CONTROL HQ: HQ, 2/16 INF
- (5) DTG INITIATED: 081700H

() DTG TERMINATED: 101700H

(7) RESULTS: FRD LOSSES (CUM) ENEMY LOSSES (CUM)
NONE VCS: 98

VC DEFECTORS: 3

ZELQYQCHT SMALL UNIT ACTIONS:

- (1) TOTAL NIGHT CONTACTS: NONE
- (2) TOTAL DAY CONTACTS: NONE
- (3) TOTAL CONTACTS: NONE
- (4) SMALL UNIT ACTIONS WITHOUT CONTACT: TWENTY THREE

GP-4
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Marine Corps
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ZNY SSSSS
P 180957Z
FM CG FMFPAC
TO RUECEM/MCO
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SECRET SECTION 1 OF 2

REF: A. CG FMFPAC 130530Z, PARA 3.C AND 2.A
B. CG FMFPAC 160500Z, PARA 2.E
C. COMUSMACV 230821Z AUG, PARA 3A (1) (PASEP)
D. CG FMFPAC 270620Z AUG, PARA 2A
E. AMEMBASSY SAIGON 204134Z
F. COMUSMACV 131110Z, PARA 1.A AND 5.A (PASEP)
G. COMUSMACV 061105Z, PARA 1.A (PASEP)
H. COMUSMACV SOPPYZ AUG, PARA 1.A
I. COMUSMACV 230821Z AUG, PARA 3.A (PASEP)

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PURGE 2 RUMPG 2343 S E C R E T

J. CG FMFPAC 270620Z AUG. PARA 2. A

K. CG III MAF 240236Z AUG. PARA 1 (PASEP)

L. CG FMFPAC 170750Z PARA 2E. (3)

1. STARLITE WAS A SUBSTANTIAL DEFEAT FOR THE VIET CONG. REFERENCES A, B, C, D, AND K PAINT A BROADENING PICTURE OF ITS IMPACT. PIRANHA, FOLLOWING IN THE WAKE OF STARLITE, AND WHILE MUCH LESS DECISIVE, STILL HAD A STRONG EFFECT ON THE VC TIMETABLE. BUT PERHAPS AS POWERFUL AS BOTH PUT TOGETHER HAS BEEN THE GRINDING PRESSURE OF OUR COMBINED MILITARY-CIVIC ACTION EFFORTS IN THE PHU BAI - DANANG - CHU LAI AREAS, WHERE SCORES OF VILLAGES AND THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE ARE BEING PROVIDED THE SECURITY FOR WHICH THEY HAVE HUNGRED, AND THE OPPORTUNITY FOR ECONOMIC BETTERMENT OF WHICH THEY HAVE DREAMED.

2. THE VIET CONG HAVE CERTAINLY BEEN THINKING THIEF PROBLEM THROUGH, AND THEIR CONDUCT DURING THE PAST WEEKS SUGGESTS THAT THEY MAY HAVE COME TO SOME CONCLUSIONS WHICH WE NEED TO PONDER IN RELATION TO OUR OWN OPERATIONS. REFERENCES E, FGXFI C, AND H UNDERSCORE THE LIKELIHOOD THAT WE MAY EXPECT THE VC TO AVOID DIRECT ENGAGEMENT OF THEIR ORGANIZED UNITS WITH OUR FORCES, AND TO USE THEIR MAJOR EFFORT ON GUERRILLA WARFARE, SABOTAGE, TERRORISM, AND PROPAGANDA, IN ORDER TO SUSTAIN A HOLD ON THE PEOPLE. SHORTLY AFTER THE STARLITE OPERATION, GENERAL THI FORECAST THIS DEVELOPEMENT TO ME, SAYING THAT THE VULT CONG ARE REALLY NOT STRONG ENOUGH TO SUSTAIN MANY MAJOR DEFEATS SUCH AS THAT ONE. ON 14 SEPT GENERAL CO (CHIEF OF JOINT GENERAL STAFF, RVN) SAID THAT IN I CORPS THE VIET CONG WERE BEING FORCED BACK ONE PHASE IN THE CLASSIC COMMUNIST PROGRAM, AND THAT OUR PURPOSE NOW SHOULD BE TO ACCELERATE THIS RETROGRESS ON IN EVERY WAY WE CAN.

3. I AGREE WITH GENERAL CO. THE VIET CONG HAVE PROBABLY SEEN THE UNWISDOM OF SET PIECE BATTLES WITH U. S. FORCES, WHERE WE CHOOSE THE CIRCUMSTANCES. HAVING LITTLE CHOICE, I BELIEVE THEY ARE GOING TO REDOUBLE THEIR GUERRILLA EFFORTS TO KEEP THE CENTRAL GOVERNMENT FROM GETTING CONTROL OF THE COUNTRYSIDE, CONCURRENTLY PROTECTING THEIR EQUITY IN THE RICE, MANPOWER, INTELLIGENCE AND SANCTUARY WHICH ARE SO ESSENTIAL TO THEIR SURVIVAL.

4. AT FIRST INSPECTION THIS VIET CONG DECISION-IF IT IS INDEED A DECISION-MAY SUGGEST SOME MAJOR CHANGE IN OUR OWN STRATEGY. IN FACT, IT DOES NOT. THE MARINES HAVE NEVER FELT THAT THE WAR STANDS TO BE WON BY THE GRAND MANEUVERS OF LARGE FORCES, BY BRILLIANT FIELD MARSHALLSHIP IN THE TANNENBERG OF CHANCELLORSVILLE IMAGE.

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NAVMC HQ 348-ADM (CONT'D) (1-63)

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PAGE 4 RUMPS 2343 S E C R E T

WHILE OUR TROOPS HAVE BEEN ALERT TO MOVE IN ON OPPORTUNITIES TO ENTRAP LARGE UNITS, THEY LEARNED, EARLY IN THE GAME, THAT THE REAL VICTORIES ARE TO BE WON IN THE VILLAGES, AND IT IS REALLY OUR CLEAR - HOLD - CIVIC ACTION - PEACEMAKING - DOMESTIC TRANQUILITY EFFORTS THAT HAVE PAID OFF; AND THIS IS WHAT IS HURTING THE VIET CONG. SEE REFERENCES C, E, F, G, I, AND L.

5. ANSAIR QUESTION IS WHY HAVE WE BEEN ABLE TO MOVE FORWARD NO EFFECTIVELY IN THIS AREA, WHEN THE ARVN HAS NOT. IT IS WELL KNOWN THAT, UNTIL JULY 20, THE AREA EXTENDING RIGHT UP TO THE SOUTH FENCE OF THE DANANG AIRFIELD WAS LARGELY VIET CONG TERRITORY. NOW COULD THIS BE? THE REASONS ARE FEW AND SIMPLE. - FIRST, THE ARVN HAS NOT THE STRENGTH TO CLEAR OUT ALL OF THE KEY AREAS, AND MUST HAVE TO FOREGO SOME IMPORTANT LOCALITIES MERELY BECAUSE OF PHYSICAL OVER-EXTENSION. IN I CORPS THE MULTIPLE VIET CONG PROBLEMS EXTENDING FROM THE DMZ TO QUANG NGAI, ARE MORE THAN THE TWO AVAILABLE ARVN DIVISIONS CAN HANDLE. THEIR CLEAR-AND-HOLD EFFORTS ARE LARGELY CLEAR-AND-FOLD, JUST BECAUSE THEY CANNOT COVER THE WATERFRONT. SECOND, IT IS A FACT THAT IN THEIR CLEAR-AND-HOLD (LIVELY THE ARVN)

IS RELATIVELY INEFFECTIVE. BEING ASIANS THEMSELVES, THEY ARE NOT INSTINCTIVELY SYMPATHETIC TO THE NEEDS AND THE WANTS OF THE PEOPLE, NOR CAN THEY -- EVEN IF THEY TRY -- LIVE DOWN THE PAST REPUTATION WHICH THEY HAVE EARNED WITH THE PEOPLE OF BEING C

SENSATE AND BRUTAL. THE FACT IS, WE ARE BETTER AT PACIFICATION THAN THEY ARE, BECAUSE OUR INSTINCTIVE STANDARDS ARE HIGHER.

6. IT IS IN THESE TWO AREAS THAT WE HAVE DONE SO MUCH GOOD. WE HAVE PUT FULLY TEN THOUSAND MARINES INTO THE CLEAR AND HOLD - CIVIC ACTION EFFORT AROUND DANANG ALONE. WE HAVE THE STRENGTH TO DO WHAT THE ARVN HAS BEEN TOO WEAK TO DO. BEYOND THIS, OURS HAS BEEN A CONFIDENCE - INSPIRING PERFORMANCE. OUR MEN HAVE BEEN SENSITIVE TO THE PEOPLE'S NEEDS. THERE HAS BEEN NO EXPLOITATION. MEDICINE, CARE PACKAGES, USOM SUPPLIES, HANDCLASP MATERIALS HAVE ALL FOUND THEIR WAY WHOLLY TO THE PEOPLE. -- THERE HAS BEEN NO SQUEEZE AND NO KICK-BACK. WE HAVE THE DOCTORS AND THE BULL-DOZERS AND THE ARTISANS NEEDED TO HELP THEM GET ON THEIR FEET. WE HAVE OPENNESS AND THE PATIENCE TO TEACH THEIR POPULAR FORCES THE RUDIMENTS OF MILITARY CONDUCT. IN SHORT THE AMERICANS ARE PURSUING THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM IN A MANNER FAR MORE EFFICIENT AND THUS FAR MORE PRODUCTIVE THAN THEIR VIETNAMESE COUNTERPARTS.

7. AND THIS POINTS THE WAY TO THE FUTURE. EXCEPT WE WANT TO DO --
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 AND INDEED ARE DOING--IS TO INTENSIFY OUR PACIFICATION EFFORTS;
 TO PUT OUR MEDICAL, LOGISTIC, SOCIOLOGICAL AND MILITARY MEANS TO
 WORK TO BRING TRANQUILLITY TO THE CRITICAL COASTAL AREAS OF THE
 I CORPS AS SOON AS WE CAN. THE MORE OF IT WE DO, THE MORE
 INTELLIGENCE WILL COME TO US FROM THE PEOPLE, AND THE GREATER
 LIKELIHOOD OF OUR BEING ABLE TO FIND THE VIET CONG LOGISTIC V
 CENTERS, HEADQUARTERS, ASSEMBLY AREAS ETC. IN DOING THIS WE SHOULD
 STRIVE TO PULL THE ARVN ALONG WITH US, INSPIRING THEM TO FIGHT
 HARDER AND TO TREAT THEIR COUNTRYMEN WITH GREATER CONSIDERATION.

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8. I SEE NO LIKELIHOOD OF THIS FORMULA MATURING WITH DRAMATIC
 SUDDENNESS. HOWEVER, IN A RELATIVE SENSE, IT IS MOVING AHEAD
 RAPIDLY NOW. IN THE BRIEF 2 1/2 MONTHS SINCE OUR FORCES BEGAN
 TO BUILD UP SERIOUSLY IN I CORPS WE HAVE BROUGHT A GOOD MEASURE OF
 PEACE TO AS MANY AS 80 VILLAGES, WE HAVE BROUGHT AT LEAST 500
 SQUARE MILES UNDER OUR CONTROL, AND WE ARE JUST GETTING STARTED.

9. I BELIEVE WE CAN WIN BIG IN VIETNAM IF THE U.S. FORCES WILL PUT
 THEIR OWN EFFORTS VIGOROUSLY INTO THE PACIFICATION PROGRAM, BEING
 ALWAYS ALERT TO ENTRAP ANY UNWARY VC MAIN FORCE FORMATIONS. AND
 WITH IT ALL WE ARE GOING TO HAVE TO EXHIBIT, FOR EVERYONE, OUR
 PATIENCE AND OUR RESOLUTION.

GPA

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