

HEADQUARTERS
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing FMFPac
FPO San Francisco 96602

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0030/10366
13 April 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing (Attn: ACofS, G-3)

Subj: Command Chronology (U) *Mar 66*

Ref: (a) Wing Order 5750.1B

Encl: ✓(1) Part One - Organizational Data
✓(2) Part Two - Narrative Summary
✓(3) Part Three - Significant Events
✓(4) Part Four - Supporting Documents

- A/A Report, DOUBLE EAGLE, 28 Jan - 28 Feb 1966

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (4) are submitted for the month of March 1966.

William G. Johnson
WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

Copies to:

CG, 1st MAW (Copy 1 of 6 plus enclosures)

CG, 1st MAW (Copies 2 thru 5 of 6 less enclosure (4))

File (Copy 6 less enclosure (4))

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PART I

1. Organizational Data - Period 1 to 31 March 1966

a. Commanding Officer and Staff of MAC-36:

CO	JOHNSON, William G.	COL
XO	PORTER, Mervin B.	LTCOL
ADJ	AMBROSE, Raymond H.	2NDLT
S-1	BRAY, Richard P.	MAJOR
S-2	YATES, Charles E.	CAPT
S-3	SOMMERVILLE, Daniel A.	LTCOL 1 to 22 Mar
	ZITNIK, Robert J.	LTCOL 23 to 31 Mar
S-4	GARROTTO, Alfred F.	LTCOL
Chaplain	HOWARD, Marvin	LCDR
Flt Surgeon	SCHENK, Thomas	LT (USN)
MTO	MOFFETT, Forrest L.	CAPT
EMB	PARKER, George R.	2NDLT
ORD	PARKER, George R.	2NDLT
MAINT	GARDINER, Joseph C. Jr.	MAJOR
LEGAL	TROYER, Paul D.	1STLT
COMM	MEEKS, Clarence I.	CAPT
Civil Affairs	MERRITT, Max A.	MAJOR
Avn Safety	GOODSELL, William J.	MAJOR
NATOPS	VOBORA, George	MAJOR 1 to 12 Mar
	KUGI, Dick	MAJOR 12 to 31 Mar
Security	JESSEN, Thomas F.	CAPT

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b. Commanders and Staff of attached units:

H&MS-36

CO	MOONEY, Thomas G.	LTCOL
XO	HATCH, Robert D.	MAJOR
MAINT O	GARDINER, Joseph C. Jr.	MAJOR

MBS-36

CO	KENNEDY, Jack A.	MAJOR 1 to 30 Mar
	TWEED, MacDonald D.	LTCOL 31 Mar
XO	COLLINS, Michael E.	CAPT 1 to 30 Mar
	KENNEDY, Jack A.	MAJOR 31 Mar

HMM-261

CO	COSTELLO, Keith W.	LTCOL
XO	GUAY, Robert P.	MAJOR
OPS	PATE, Gerald S.	MAJOR

HMM-363

CO	KEW, George D.	LTCOL 1 to 16 Mar
	McGOUGH, J. D.	LTCOL 17 to 31 Mar
XO	KELLOGG, Willis D.	MAJOR 1 to 14 Mar
	VOBORA, George J.	MAJOR 15 to 31 Mar
OPS	GRAHAM, Wallace H.	MAJOR

HMM-364

CO	LUCAS, William R.	LTCOL 1 to 22 Mar
	SOMMERVILLE, Daniel A.	LTCOL 23 to 31 Mar
XO	NEEDHAM, Michael J.	MAJOR
OPS	MICHEELS, Herman M.	MAJOR

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4. VIPS to MAG-36.

The following VIP's visited the MAG-36 area during the month of March 1966:

<u>Date</u>	<u>VIP</u>
8 March	BGEN PLATT
10 March	BGEN PLATT BGEN CARL
16 March	LTGEN CASSIDY MAJGEN KYLE BGEN HURD
17 March	LTGEN KRULAK
21 March	BGEN ENGLISH

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VMO-6

CO	ZITNIK, Robert J.	LTCOL 1 to 23 Mar
	PRESSON, Robert R.	MAJOR 23 to 31 Mar
XO	PRESSON, Robert R.	MAJOR 1 to 23 Mar
	PURCELL, Robert D.	MAJOR 23 to 31 Mar
OPS	PURCELL, Robert D.	MAJOR 1 to 23 Mar
	HARKEY, Herbert J. Jr.	MAJOR 23 to 31 Mar

2. Task Organization and Unit Location:

Unit Designation	Location	Date
H&MS-36	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66
MABS-36	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66
HMM-261	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66
HMM-362	(embarked - SLF)	1 - 31 Mar 66
HMM-363	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66
HMM-364	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66
VMO-6	KY HA	1 - 31 Mar 66

3. Average monthly strength: March 1966

Unit	Mar. Off.	Mar. Enl.	Navy Off.	Navy Enl.
H&MS-36	39	323	0	0
MABS-36	14	365	4	27
HMM-261	52	167	1	0
HMM-363	49	155	1	0
HMM-364	56	159	1	0
VMO-6	34	151	0	0

Average monthly strength of MAG-36 was 248 Officers and 1461

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At 011330H one UH-1E accompanied by a UH-34D from HMM-261 departed on a TACR sweep. The A/C worked with "K" Co. 3/7 who had located a sniper. The infantry pursued the sniper unsuccessfully until the door gunner of the UH-1E took him under fire and wounded him. The Marines then effected the capture.

2 March. At 021545H two UH-34D's departed Ky Ha to transport passengers from RLT 1 to Hue Phu Bai. During the return to Ky Ha at 021815H after receiving indications of an engine malfunction (a chip detector light) one A/C made a precautionary landing at BT 355 287. The crew, their weapons, and all confidential communications papers were rapidly lifted by the wingman. Small arms fire was received as the A/C lifted. The wingman orbited the scene attempting to provide security by fire until a reaction force could be brought to the scene. MAG-36 HQ was notified at 021855H and a reaction force was requested from the 1st Marines and two UH-1E's from VMO-6 were launched to the scene. HMM-363 manned ten aircraft and commenced lifting to pick up the reaction force at 021915H. At 021920H DASC relayed information that the downed aircraft had been set afire. Subsequent reports indicated the aircraft was engulfed in flames. 021935H recovery procedures were cancelled. The crew of the downed aircraft were returned to Ky Ha at 021750H.

3 March. At 030715H ten UH-34D's departed on a strike mission in support of the 2nd ARVN Division. After briefing the flight launched for an unsecured LZ at BS 681 840 escorted by two UH-1E gunships, with 213 ARVN troops and 11 U. S. Advisors. Light sniper fire was received from BS 684 824. The flight stood by for further action for one hour upon completion of the lift. Two UH-34D's remained at Quang Ngai as Med Evac aircraft until 1700H. At 031020H two UH-34D's lifted a blocking force consisting of 17 troops, two 106MM Recoilless rifles and 1050 pounds of ammo and supplies from LZ Leopard to BT 650 005. The flight received light small arms fire from the vicinity of BS 633 983 on the initial approach to LZ Leopard.

4 March. At 040800H twenty UH-34D's of HMM-261 and HMM-364 escorted by four UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 arrived at Quang Ngai air field for a lift of 440 ARVN troops of the 37th Ranger Battalion. Commencing at 040805H a detailed briefing was conducted with the supported unit and the helicopters were loaded and lifted for a 040900H L-Hour into an unsecure zone at BS 543 833. LZ prep was provided by A-4, F-4 and B-57 aircraft. As the transport helicopters approached the zone heavy small arms and .50 caliber fire was received from the surrounding area. By 040908H all four UH-1E gunships escorting the UH-34D's had been hit. Three of the aircraft were able to return to Quang Ngai air field, but the fourth was hit in the engine fuel cell and landed in an unsecure zone at BS 539 821.

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PART II

1. Narrative Summary:

a. During this month MAG-36 participated in three major operations within Quang Ngai Province. Col. W. G. JOHNSON, the MAG-36 Commanding Officer, was designated as the Tactical Air Commander for these operations by the CG 1st MAW and functioned as such throughout Operations UTAH, TEXAS, and INDIANA.

(1) Operation UTAH commenced on 4 March 1966 with the lift of an ARVN battalion and the 2nd Bn., 7th Marines into an unsecure landing zone at BS 535 835. The ensuing action of this operation resulted in MAG-36 being recommended for a Navy Commendation. (See appendix 1)

(2) Twelve days after the conclusion of Operation UTAH, on 20 March 1966; Operation TEXAS began. This major operation, involving three Marine battalions and several ARVN units, all helilifted into the operation area, again demonstrated the ability of MAG-36 to react quickly and efficiently in the execution of large scale troop movements on short notice. (See appendix 2). This operation concluded on 24 March 1966.

(3) On 28 March, Operation INDIANA began with a battalion size lift in support of an ARVN operation several kilometers northwest of Quang Ngai. A second Marine battalion was lifted into the objective area on the following morning. On the third and final day of this operation one Marine battalion and a large amount of supplies used by the engaged units were withdrawn by MAG-36 helicopters. (See appendix 3).

b. All three of these operations were classic demonstrations of the flexibility and mobility permitted by the use of helicopters in this type of warfare. These operations were all executed on extremely short notice and indicates the evergrowing potentialities of the heliborne Marine force. The lessons learned and tactics developed during the preceding six months were put to good use on these three highly successful and lucrative operations.

c. The following is a daily narrative for the month of March 1966.

1 March. At 010715H two UH-34D's departed on a routine mission to Tam Ky and Quang Ngai. Enroute from Tam Ky to Quang Ngai YZ 77 developed engine trouble and made a forced landing at BT 392 162. All crewmembers were immediately picked up by the other UH-34D without incident and returned to Ky Ha. The two UH-34D's on SAR duty at Chu Lai capped the zone until relieved by other aircraft from Ky Ha. The incident occurred at approximately 0820H. At 0853H seven UH-34D's lifted a 48 man reaction force from the 1st Marines into the zone. A CH-37 lifted an engine to the zone and the aircraft and reaction force were recovered without incident at 010755H.

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forcing him to down his aircraft at Quang Ngai. Leadership of the flight shifted to the only remaining division leader, Major D. SPURLOCK of HMM-263 whose aircraft was subsequently forced down in the LZ after receiving intense enemy fire soon after he assumed the lead. Succeeding flight leaders were also forced out of the lift and leadership finally rested with Captain J. P. KENNY of HMM-261 who completed the lift with nine aircraft. Two HMM-263 aircraft were forced down in the landing zone, one was recovered that evening, the other downed aircraft could not be recovered until the next morning due to enemy activity in the area. A CH-47 Chinook lifted the aircraft out of the zone at 061000H. Later in the day at 051155H twelve UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-263, HMM-363 and HMM-364 escorted by two VMO-6 gunbirds proceeded to Quang Ngai Air Field to pick up 500 ARVN troops of the 2nd ARVN Division for lift to an unsecure zone at BS 549 839. L-Hour was originally 051200H but slipped to 051335H and subsequently 051405H. LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). Heavy small arms fire was received from areas surrounding the LZ and three aircraft were hit, none seriously. Mission accomplished. During the evening hours UH-34D aircraft continued to make emergency resupply of ammunition, medical supplies, rations and water. Med Evacs were picked up on the return trips. On several occasions ground units waved off the resupply birds because of the intense small arms fire. One aircraft flown by Lt. T. J. RICHARDSON of HMM-364 received eight hits during his approach but successfully dropped his cargo and returned to Ky Ha. Missions were flown until 160330H.

6 March. Major efforts in support of Task Force Delta on 6 March consisted of resupply and Med Evac missions. In addition, UH-1E aircraft from VMO-6 and VMO-2 controlled fixed wing strikes for all of the units in the objective area. During the evening hours of 6 March ten UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363 and HMM-364 performed resupply and Med Evac missions for various units of the task force. At approximately 061930H three airbursts at 2500 feet were sighted in the vicinity of BS 5988. Resupply and Med Evac missions secured at 062130H. VMO-6 pilots took full advantage of the full moon and controlled fixed wing air strikes in support of 3/1, 2/4 and 1/7. Army armed UH-1B's also provided suppressive fire support for those units and conducted search and attack missions on VC egress routes along the Song Tra Khuc River West of BS 49 Grid line.

7 March. Commencing at 071300H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 commenced retracting 433 troops of 3/1 from BS 569 847 back to the north end of Chu Lai Airfield. The lift was completed without incident and the aircraft returned to BS 551 839 at 071430H and lifted 120 ARVN troops of the 2nd ARVN Division back to Quang Ngai Airfield. The aircraft returned again to BS 540 839 and lifted an additional 150 troops of 3/1 to Chu Lai Airfield, 47 troops of 1/7 to LZ

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The crew, guns and classified material were immediately picked up by an HMM-261 UH-34D, and lifted to Quang Ngai. The lift continued and six additional aircraft were hit and limped back to Quang Ngai. Sixteen additional UH-34D's from HMM-363 were rapidly manned and joined into the lift. Upon completion of the ARVN lift all aircraft returned to BT 500 050 and lifted 665 Marines of 2/7 into the zone occupied by the 37th Ranger Battalion. Heavy small arms fire continued to be received from the area surrounding the landing zone. Five additional aircraft were hit and seven minor WIA's were incurred by MAC-36 personnel during the entire lift. One UH-34D of HMM-364 was forced down in the LZ at BS 538 833 with holes in all fuel cells. The crew was retracted to Quang Ngai. The lift was completed at 041305H. A platoon from 2/7 fought its way into the area surrounding the downed UH-1E and a maintenance crew was lifted into the zone. They stripped the aircraft of blades and engine and it was extracted from the zone at 041735H by a U. S. Air Force CH-3A and returned to Ky Ha. A separate internal fuel cell was installed in the downed UH-34D and other minor repairs to the fuel system were effected and the aircraft was flown out at 041637H. All other aircraft down at Quang Ngai with battle damage were repaired and returned to Ky Ha by 050730H. Meanwhile, at 041500H thirty one UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-263 and HMM-363 escorted by UH-1E gunships from VMO-6 and VMO-2 lifted two reinforced companies plus a command group of BLT 3/1 from BT 533 078 to a marginally secure zone at BT 554 875. This lift was completed without incident. Commencing 041630H aircraft from all squadrons commenced emergency resupply missions lifting in ammunition, medical supplies and batteries to all units throughout the night. Heavy small arm and automatic weapons fire was received from areas surrounding the drop zones and several aircraft were hit. Med Evac missions were flown throughout the night, and patients were also lifted from Bravo Med at Chu Lai to medical facilities at Danang and to the hospital ship USS REPOSE.

5 March: The dawn of a new day did not slow down the tempo of operations. At 050650H ten UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by two UH-1E gunbirds from VMO-6 lifted 90 additional troops of I Company 3/1 from BT 533 078 to BLT 3/1 zone of action at BS 554 875. The mission was accomplished without incident. At 050800H thirty UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-263, HMM-363 and HMM-364 escorted by gunbirds from VMO-2 commenced lifting 368 troops of BLT 2/4 (*) from Hill 69 (BT 468 057) into an unsecure zone at BS 562 791. Bravo Company 1/7 was lifted from BS 604 995 into the same zone. L-Hour was 050830H. LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft. Heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire was encountered during the lift from the surrounding area and six aircraft were hit and limped back to Quang Ngai. During this lift, LTCOL M. B. PORTER, the Flight Leader, received two hits on his aircraft on his second trip into the zone and four more hits on his third trip,

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Tomcat (BT 583 017) and 134 troops of 2/7 to LZ Goose (BT 503 038). All of these troop lifts were escorted by armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 and fixed wing aircraft. At 071730H 12 UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by two armed UH-1E of VMO-6 retracted 250 troops from various task force units and the task force CP personnel from BS 569 847 to BT 583 018 without incident.

8 March. To complete the operation armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 provided escort aircraft for convoys from Quang Ngai back to Chu Lai Enclave.

9 March. At 090755H three UH-34D's launched on a recon insert and retraction mission in support of Recon Group Bravo. The first portion of the mission, a retraction from BT 380 064 was aborted due to weather. The aircraft then proceeded to LZ Quail (BT 558 048) picked up 16 troops and inserted them into an unsecure zone at BS 444 967. The aircraft then retracted 15 troops from BS 445 767 to LZ Quail. Flight returned to Ky Ha and with a break in the weather launched again at 091202H and retracted 16 troops from BT 380 064 to LZ Quail. All missions accomplished without incident.

10 March. At 091330H eight UH-34D's escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft lifted 30 troops and 50,000 lbs of cargo from Quang Tin to Hau Duc (BT 070 060). Near completion of the lift one UH-34D experienced engine chip detector light and made a precautionary landing at the Hau Duc outpost. It was subsequently determined that an engine change was required. The aircraft RON at Hau Duc and a MAG-16 CH-37 lifted a new engine for the downed bird to Hau Duc at 100901H. Repairs remain in progress. At 100740H eight UH-34D's departed for Quang Ngai for a 2nd ARVN Division resupply mission. Thirty six pax and 31,000 lbs of cargo were lifted to Minh Long (BT 454 515), Sa Huynh (BS 935 230), and Duc Pho (BS 805 382). Weather forced the aircraft to abort the second portion of the mission to lift 211 pax and 70,000 lbs of cargo between An Hoa (BS 484 382) and An Diem (BS 548 833). Mission was escorted by Condole F-4 aircraft. At 100715H three UH-34D's escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft inserted 12 Recon troops of Recon Group Bravo from ADC pad (BT 532 095) into an unsecure zone at BT 405 055. The aircraft then retracted 14 Recon troops from BT 383 035 and returned them to ADC pad. Mission accomplished without incident.

11 March. At 111540H two UH-34D's launched on Med Evac mission to lift one WIA from BS 572 938. Weather was 300 feet overcast in heavy rain. WIA expired enroute to Bravo Med.

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12 March. At 120745H twenty two UH-34D's from HMM-363 and HMM-364 escorted by four UH-1E's from VMO-6 departed for Quang Ngai Airfield where they were briefed for an ARVN mission. 413 troops of the 5th ARVN Ranger Battalion were lifted from Quang Ngai Airfield to an unsecure zone at BS 780 550. L-Hour was 120900H. LZ prep was provided by Oxwood A-4 aircraft from 120845H to 120900H controlled by USAF Birdog. Light small arms fire was received from vicinity of BS 781 550. No hits. Ten UH-34D's and two UH-1E's remained at Quang Ngai upon completion of the lift until 121220H for contingency purposes. Two UH-34D's remained at Quang Ngai until 121800H for Med Evac. Mission accomplished without incident. At 121210H eight UH-34D's departed for a resupply mission from Hoi An (BT 152 570) to Que Son (BT 453 350). Enroute the aircraft diverted and lifted a 56 man rapid reaction force of Kilo 3/7 from LZ Robin into two LZ's at BS 558 943 and BS 555 936. As the aircraft approached the zones, about 15 VC with packs and rifles broke from a Hamlet at BS 572 933 and commenced to run from the zone. UH-34D gunners opened up and were credited with two possible KBA's. Two UH-1E's on a TAOR sweep joined into the encounter and fired on the VC resulting in two possible KBA's. At 111430H two UH-1E on a TAOR sweep provided reconnaissance for Kilo 3/7 in the vicinity of BS 586 923 from which the ground unit was receiving fire. Suppressive fire was delivered into the area at the request of Kilo 3/7 and rural pacification work was accomplished by destroying three VC structures. The 111730H TAOR sweep continued to provide support to Kilo 3/7 and delivered suppressive fire at BS 580 920 at the request of the ground unit. One VC sniper was wounded and he subsequently surrendered to Kilo 3/7. At 120630H two UH-1E lifted off on a TAOR sweep. At approximately 120800H three VC were sighted in a trench at BS 583 923. Again Kilo 3/7 requested suppressive fire be delivered. Two VC were killed and the third was wounded. After a careful check of the area one aircraft landed and accomplished the second CBA (captured by air) mission for MAG-36. The wounded VC was lifted from the trench along with one U. S. M-1 and one U. S. .30 caliber carbine. The VC was only slightly wounded and was turned over to 3/7 for interrogation along with the weapons. The UH-1E returned to the same area and sighted eight more VC with packs and weapons. They were taken under fire and two additional possible KBA claimed. Maj. R. D. PURCELL, Sgt. J. E. DRIVER and SSgt. G. L. ARMSTRONG effected the capture.

13 March. At 131730H two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted a four man recon team of Recon Group Bravo from LZ Quail (BT 558 048) to an unsecure zone at BS 385 038. Mission accomplished without incident. At 131915H two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 and Oxwood A-4's lifted to BT 389 033 for an emergency retraction of the four man recon team inserted at 131415H who had been compromised. The aircraft made no radio contact with the team and with darkness closing in were unable to sight the team. Mission aborted.

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At 130800H four UH-34D's launched to Cu Lao Re Island (BT 980 010) on a MAG-36 Civil Affairs mission. Twenty six dental patients were treated and 80 extractions accomplished. Ninety eight medical patients were administered to. Five hundred pounds of clothes, candy, and medical supplies were distributed. At 131600H four aircraft returned to the island and retracted the Civil Affairs team. At 131030H eight UH-34D's departed for Quang Tin and lifted 43 tons of cargo and 253 troops and pax to Tien Phuoc (BT 113 137) and Phuoc Lam (BT 072 081). At approximately 131600H on the sixth lift into Phuoc Lam, one of UH-34D experienced power settling and crash landed on VN civilians and rice bags. The right strut was broken and aircraft body landed on some of the civilians. Two VN civilians were lifted to Quang Tin for medical treatment and an undetermined number with undetermined injuries were taken away by relatives. A maintenance crew was dispatched to the scene and jacked up the hull and the aircraft was flown back to Ky Ha and landed on a prepared platform.

14 March. At 140728H eight UH-34D's departed on an I Corps resupply mission. 4 U. S., 1 ARVN soldier and 15 tons of cargo were carried from Quang Ngai to Nui Tho (BS 758 471). 2 U. S. military, 2 U. S. civilian, 25 ARVN troops and eleven tons of cargo were carried between Quang Ngai and Nui Vang (BS 817 384). At 141325H two UH-1E gunships and one UH-1E Slick launched to recover a lost Recon team. The team was located at BT 335 128 where three of the members were recovered. The body of the fourth man was recovered from BT 327 128. During the pick-up of the KIA, small arms fire was received from BT 324 123. The escorting gunships delivered suppressive fire during the pick-up. No claims.

15 March. At 150940H seven UH-34D's launched to Quang Tin and lifted 23,350 lbs of cargo, 16 ARVN, 10 VN civilians and 5 U. S. military to Phuoc Lam (BT 072 061). 3,700 lbs of cargo and one ARVN were lifted from Quang Tin to Ky Tra (BT 328 082). The flight received small arms fire from the vicinity of BT 325 079. No hits. At 151550H five UH-34D's escorted by two A-4 aircraft proceeded to the vicinity of BT 363 127 for a Recon retraction. On arrival in the area the Recon unit was engaged in a fire fight with an undetermined number of VC. The flight touched down in the zone and two aircraft were hit. One co-pilot received a serious wound in the neck and the pilot was hit with plexiglass fragments. The flight retracted the 32 Recon troops plus two VN civilians to ADC pad and the wounded pilots were lifted to Bravo Med. At 150645H six UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's from VMO-6 lifted 78 troops of Delta 1/7 from LZ Leopard (BS 624 996) into two unsecured LZ's at BT 623 007. The VMO-6 flight acted as TAC(A) for Oxwood A-4 on LZ prep and provided suppressive fire of their own. At 151045H the six UH-34D's and two UH-1E's returned and retracted the 78 troops from BT 657 011 and returned them to LZ Leopard.

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The 150915H TAOR sweep sighted new diggings at BT 4170 area and the 151200H sweep received fire from BT 364 064. The 151430 sweep diverted to a Recon team position at BT 363 127 who were receiving fire from BT 364 130 and BT 367 123. The UH-1E delivered rocket and machine gun fire while the Recon team withdrew. The flight lifted one KIA from the Recon team to Bravo Med. Flight returned to Ky Ha, refueled and returned to the area and controlled A-4 strikes at BT 364 130. Two VC in green uniforms were sighted in gun positions at BT 366 142 and took them under fire. No claims.

16 March. Five TAOR sweeps were flown during the period. The 1200 flight worked with Bravo 2/4 who was engaged with the VC. The UH-1E sighted five armed VC in a trench at BT 375 142 and took them under machine gun and rocket fire. Claim one VC KBA. At 161050H two UH-1E's launched on a Med Evac to BY 382 150 and picked up two USMC WIA's while the ground unit laid down a base of fire to protect the aircraft. The patients were delivered to Bravo Med at 161119H. At 161425H four UH-34D's escorted by A-4 aircraft conducted a resupply mission from Quang Ngai to Hon Ba (BS 555 605) lifting 8,100 pounds of cargo and 12 pax. The flight also lifted 4 ARVN to Duc Pho (BS 806 378).

17 March. At 170710H sixteen UH-34D's, escorted by four UH-1E gunships launched to lift two companies and a command group of 2nd Bn, 4th Marines to an unsecured LZ at BT 305 133. A total of 298 troops were lifted from Hill 69 (BT 420 070) to the LZ in three waves. Six Oxwood aircraft controlled by UH-1E TAC(A)'s conducted the LZ prep and Cap. Small arms fire was received from BT 309 139, BT 316 131, and BT 305 130. During the lift 12-15 VC were sighted at BT 297 124 and were taken under fire by the escorting UH-1E's. Five possible VC KBA are claimed. Due to continual small arms and automatic weapons fire an actual bodycount was not possible. At 171644H twenty UH-34D's escorted by four UH-1E gunships launched to retract 3 companies of 3rd Bn., 7th Marines to LZ Robin (BT 536 023). Enroute to the pick up zone a thirty minute delay was requested by the ground forces. At 1730 the flight relaunched and lifted 522 Marines and 20 VC POW's from BS 544 899 and BS 532 896 to LZ Robin. Small arms fire was received from BT 541 896 and BS 552 911. The escorting gunships controlled the escorting Oxwood flight during an air strike at BS 552 911.

18 March. At 181255H four UH-34D's accompanied by four CH-46's of HMM-164 and escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft lifted 15 ARVN, 46 VN civilians, and 200 lbs of cargo to Son Ha (BS 393 705) from Quang Ngai. Two aircraft then diverted to BS 582 750 and lifted 3 ARVN WIA's and one KIA to Quang Ngai. Seven ARVN and 15,000 lbs of cargo were then lifted from Quang Ngai to Nui Vo (BS 622 848), and three U.S. advisors, one

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ARVN and 3,500 lbs of cargo were lifted from Quang Ngai to An Hoa (BS 484 875). At 180700H ten UH-34D's augmented by two HMM-364 aircraft and escorted by four UH-1E's of VMO-6 departed for Quang Ngai for pick-up of 251 ARVN of the 5th Ranger Battalion. The troops were lifted into an unsecure zone at Thuan Hoa (4) (BS 513 733) at 180800H. USAF Bird-dog controlled the LZ prep and the armed UH-1E's delivered suppressive fire during the landing. Mission accomplished without incident. Ten UH-34D's and two UH-1E's remained at Quang Ngai until 181200H for contingency purposes.

19 March. At 191350H ten UH-34D's from HMM-261 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 responded to a request from I Corps via CG, 1st MAF for a troop lift of 120 ARVN of the 2nd ARVN Division from Quang Ngai to the outpost at An Hoa (BS 478 867). Communications had been lost with the outpost on the previous night, but had been reestablished on the morning of the 19th, and was believed to be under friendly control. The 129 ARVN troops were lifted from Quang Ngai Airfield, and as the flight approached the landing zone ARVN soldiers, women, and children were observed in the zone. No enemy activity was observed, but as the first UH-34D touched down heavy enemy fire commenced from 360° around the zone, including .50 caliber machine gun fire from the hill overloading the zone. The second aircraft was forced to wave off due to heavy battle damage. The third and fourth aircraft managed to discharge their troops and evacuate some of the wounded and non combatants. During the insertion effort five of the six aircraft that approached the zone were hit by enemy fire. The lift was aborted at this time due to the intense enemy fire. After an evaluation of the situation at 2nd ARVN Division Headquarters it was decided to retract the 30 ARVN troops previously inserted. After a one hour LZ prep by fixed wing aircraft on the surrounding hillsides and suspected enemy positions, four UH-34D's escorted by Condole F-4's and armed UH-1E retracted the 30 ARVN troops and returned them to Quang Ngai. During the retraction all aircraft came under intense small arms, automatic weapons and .50 caliber fire. On the retraction all four aircraft were hit by enemy fire. On the entire operation five crew members were wounded.

20 March. At 200845H twenty four UH-34D's of HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E's from VMO-6 and Oxwood A-4 aircraft lifted 425 ARVN troops from Quang Ngai Airfield to an unsecure LZ at BS 432 869. Oxwood aircraft prepped the zone and provided smoke aircraft to screen the LZ, controlled by USAF Birdog TAC(A). One UH-34D from HMM-363 was hit in the fuel cell on climb out from Quang Ngai in the vicinity of BS 570 750, and returned safely to KY HA after lifting the embarked troops into the zone. Upon completion of the ARVN lift the flight augmented by eight additional aircraft returned to LZ Robin (BT 533 038) and lifted 809 Marines of the 3rd B n., 7th Marines into the same LZ. Light fire was received from the vicinity of BS 411 873

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but none of the aircraft were hit. One UH-34D was forced to shut down in the LZ due to engine malfunction. A maintenance crew was lifted to the downed aircraft in 32 minutes and the aircraft was disassembled and lifted back to KY HA by two CH-46's from HMM-164 at 201500H. Later in the day at 201540H sixteen UH-34D's of HMM-261 and HMM-363 escorted by four armed UH-1E's lifted one company (-) of 3rd Bn., 7th Marines from BS 432 867 into an unsecure LZ at BS 471 861 in three waves. Intense small arms fire was encountered. Two of the first four aircraft into the zone were hit. The gunner of the lead aircraft received a fatal wound while the aircraft was lifting from the pick up zone. Continual fire was encountered in both the pick up and drop zones throughout the lift. Escorting gunships claimed one confirmed VC KBA and two possible KBA. Seventeen Vietnamese civilians were also lifted from the pick up zone to Binh Son (BS 608 929). Two UH-34D's from HMM-363 lifted eight Vietnamese civilian WIA's from BS 466 270 to Quang Ngai Hospital.

21 March. Two major troops lifts were conducted during the day as well as numerous resupply, med evac, and TAC(A) missions. At 210815H twenty two UH-34D's of HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by six armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted two companies, plus a command group (512 troops) of the 2nd Bn., 4th Marines from Hill 69 (BT 468 057) and KY HA Air Facility into an unsecure zone at BS 495 825. The aircraft encountered heavy small arms, automatic weapons and .50 caliber fire in the vicinity of the LZ. Three aircraft were hit, but returned safely to KY HA. Armed UH-1E aircraft remained on station supporting 2/4 in the vicinity of Phuong Dinh (2) (BS 502 827) throughout the remainder of the day, controlling fixed wing strikes and delivering suppressive fire, sustaining eleven .30 caliber hits, and three .50 caliber hits. One UH-1E made a precautionary landing at BS 495 825 as a result of enemy fire. The aircraft was subsequently repaired and flown back to KY HA. At 211208H ten UH-34D's of HMM-363 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 departed KY HA to lift 100 Montagnard troops from Son Ha (BS 395 700) to an LZ at BS 473 862. The lift was delayed one hour and twenty minutes as the troops were not prepared to leave. 83 troops and 300 pounds of cargo were eventually lifted into the LZ without incident. At 211610H thirty UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted two companies plus a command group (405 troops) of 3rd Bn., 1st Marines from KY HA Air Facility to an unsecure LZ at BS 494 806. Automatic weapons and .50 caliber fire was received from numerous areas in close proximity to the LZ. One HMM-363 aircraft was hit by a severe burst of fire as it approached the LZ, and rolled inverted and crashed at BS 495 815. Three crew members and seven troops were killed upon impact. The aircraft exploded and burned upon impact with the ground. The pilot was thrown clear, and was lifted to Bravo Med at Chu Lai, but subsequently died. The lift continued and a 102 man ARVN Strike Force Company was lifted from Quang Ngai into the same LZ. The armed UH-1E's remained on station in support of 3/1 controlling fixed wing strikes and delivering suppressive fires. During

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the day VMO-6 fired 677 rockets and 75,900 rounds of 7.62 in support of 2/4 and 3/1 resulting in 32 VC KBA; 67 structures destroyed and 22 damaged. Numerous med evac missions were accomplished. VMO-6 lifted 11 WIA's, HMM-261 lifted 83 US WIA's, 17 US KIA's, 14 ARVN WIA's, 2 ARVN KIA's, and 12 Vietnamese civilian WIA's. Three HMM-261 aircraft were hit and three crew members were wounded. HMM-363 aircraft lifted 13 ARVN KIA's and four US WIA's. At 212000H four UH-34D's from HMM-363 launched on an emergency resupply of 105MM howitzer ammunition from LZ Quail (BT 558 048) to the artillery positions at BS 555 888. The lift continued throughout the night.

22 March. The early part of the day was spent mainly on resupply and med evac missions for all units of the task force, lifting 21 tons of cargo and 104 battle evacs. At 221615H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364, augmented by two CH-46's of HMM-164, and escorted by four armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted two companies and a command group (520 troops) of 3rd Bn., 7th Marines from BS 519 833 and BS 498 844 into an unsecure LZ at BS 563 776. LZ prep was provided by Oxwood A-1 aircraft, which were controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A), destroyed 15 structures and caved in 15 yards of trench line, and three possible KBA. Light fire was received on the first wave and one aircraft was hit. The escorting armed UH-1E's attacked eight uniformed VC killing two. The other six took refuge in a small cane field which was saturated with rockets and machine gun fire, burning the field with no survivors emerging. VMO-6 pilots acted as TAC(A) controlling fixed wing throughout the day in support of all units, and provided suppressive fires expending 104 rockets and 7100 rounds of 7.62 resulting in five possible KBA's and seven structures destroyed. VMO-6 also lifted one med evac to Bravo Med. The crew chief, Sgt. John WATSON was credited with saving the life of the wounded Marine by administering mouth to mouth resuscitation when the man stopped breathing enroute.

23 March. At 230840H eight UH-34D's of HMM-261 lifted 167 troops of Mike Company 3/1 from BS 555 888 to BS 564 776 without incident. At 231250H sixteen UH-34D's from HMM-261 and HMM-363 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted 357 Marines of 2nd Bn., 4th Marines from BS 495 835 to BS 565 780. Fire was received in both the pick up and drop zones. One UH-34D was forced down in the pick up zone due to battle damage. One company of 2/4 was left in the pick up zone as a security force for the downed aircraft. A maintenance crew effected repairs and the aircraft was flown back to KY HA. The company remained in the pick up zone area. Numerous aircraft performed direct support missions throughout the day lifting 39 tons of cargo and 105 battle evacs for all units of the task force. VMO-6 TAC(A) aircraft were kept on station in the vicinity of Phuoc Loc (1) (BS 561 767) controlling fixed wing aircraft in support of 3/7. The VMO-6 pilots also controlled artillery fire and provided observation and suppressive fires in support of a 3/7 search and destroy operation. They also supported 2/4 search and destroy

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efforts in the vicinity of BS 547 764. The UH-1E expended 377 rockets and 17,600 rounds of 7.62 and claimed six possible VC KBA, 77 structures destroyed and eleven more damaged.

24 March. Throughout the night of 23-24 March two UH-34D's from HMM-363 and HMM-364 with aerial observers aboard relieved on station along the Song Tra Khuc River from BS 580 755 to BS 470 775. The HMM-36 C-117D provided continuous flare drop illumination from 231900H until 240500H. Three boats were sighted at BS 527 761. Artillery fire was adjusted on the boats and direct hits were reported. Two UH-34D's received small arms fire from the vicinity of BS 638 773, but were not hit. At 240642H sixteen UH-34D's from HMM-261 and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted 60 engineers and EOD personnel plus 5600 pounds of demolitions from KY HA to BS 498 827. Eight aircraft then lifted 157 troops of 2/4 from BS 565 777 back to KY HA while the other eight aircraft lifted 334 troops of 2/4 from the same pick up zone to BS 498 827 to provide protection for the demolition personnel while destroying caves and fortifications. Mission accomplished without incident. At 241042H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E of VMO-6 retracted 356 troops of 3/1 from BS 538 768 to KY HA. 105 troops of the 2nd ARVN Division Strike Company were lifted from the same LZ back to Quang Ngai. The entire retraction was completed without incident. At 1644H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363 and HMM-364 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 retracted 560 troops of 2/4 plus engineer and EOD personnel from BS 498 827 to Hill 69 (BT 468 057). Hostile fire was received from BS 485 813 and BS 519 833 but none of the aircraft were hit and the mission was accomplished without incident. Throughout the day VMO-6 pilots acted TAC(A) controlling strikes by Oxwood A-4 and Condole F-4 aircraft on a village at BS 492 755 which reportedly harbored a communications facility. One large secondary explosion was observed along with several small secondary explosions. The UH-1E also utilized their rockets and machine guns on the same village and along the Song Tra Khuc destroying 39 structures, damaging three more and 12 sampans. At 241800H two armed UH-1E's provided convoy escort between BS 565 999 and BS 600 760. One vehicle in the convoy was damaged by a mine and one jeep broke down. They were capped by the UH-1E until repairs were completed and the vehicles returned to a safe haven.

25 March. Again throughout the night two UH-34D's with aerial observers aboard provided observation for 3/7 in the vicinity of BS 586 756 and observation along the Song Tra Khuc. HMM-36 C-117D provided continuous illumination over the Song Tra Khuc area. At 250630H two armed UH-1E's provided reconnaissance and observation for Mike Co. 3/7 on a search and clear operation in the BS 5672 area. The aircraft relieved on station until 251040H when the sweep was concluded. At 251440H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364

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escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 retracted the final unit in the field on operation TEXAS. 598 troops of 3/7 were retracted from BS 562 764 to LZ Robin (BT 533 038). Sniper fire was received from BS 648 767 and was rapidly suppressed by the armed UH-1E's. The final lift was completed at 251715H without incident.

26 March. At 251444H two UH-34D's on SAR duty at Chu Lai, launched to the site of a crashed F-8U at BS 279 088. At the crash site, a large amount of wreckage was sighted but no survivors were seen. Small arms fire was received from BS 277 085. At 260722H two UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E gunships and two Oxwood aircraft inserted a six man Recon team from the 7th Marines at BS 444 967, and retracted a twelve man team from the same zone. The mission was accomplished without incident. At 251300H six UH-34D's, escorted by Oxwood aircraft transported eight tons of cargo and 24 troops from Quang Ngai to Nui Dau (BS 875 325). One UH-34D was hit by small arms fire at BS 875 332 resulting in minor damage.

27 March. At 270747H eight UH-34D's escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft departed for Hoi An (BT 152 570) and lifted 26,750 lbs of cargo, 50 VN civilians, and 24 pax to Thung Duc (ZC 139 395). The flight then lifted 1100 lbs of cargo, 42 VN civilians and 14 ARVN pax from Hoi An to Que Son (BT 045 350). At 271725H four UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's from VMO-6 and Oxwood A-4 aircraft lifted a 15 man Recon team from LZ Quail (BT 553 048) to an unsecure zone at BT 385 030. The flight then retracted a 19 man Recon team from BT 423 009 and returned them to LZ Quail. Mission accomplished without incident. At 271240H eight UH-34D's departed early for an I Corps resupply mission at Quang Ngai and lifted 54 troops of 3/7 from LZ Robin to an unsecure zone at BT 549 956. Fire was received from BT 545 968. VC observed. Fire returned. Six KBA claimed. No aircraft hit. Flight then proceeded to Quang Ngai and lifted 63 pax and 10,200 lbs of cargo to Minh Long (BS 542 525) and Nui Tho (BS 764 471). Flight escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft.

28 March. At 280715H two UH-34D's from HMM-364 and two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 were launched to support the 5th ARVN Airborne Bn. at BS 588 766. The UH-34D's lifted 25 Med Evacs to Quang Ngai hospital. One UH-34D received two hits from vicinity of pick-up zone. The armed UH-1E expended 28 2.75" rockets and 2500 rounds of machine gun fire suppressing fire from BS 597 795 and BS 584 768. Seven buildings destroyed. A second flight of UH-1E's relieved on-station and expended 68 rockets and 3000 rounds of 7.62 along the north banks of Song Tra Khuc River in Grid square BS 5376. Four sampans sunk and four huts destroyed. At 281410H thirty UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted 608 troops and supplies of 1/7 from LZ Lion (BT 604 995), Lynx (BS 578 989), Tomcat (BT 583 017), and Leopard (BS 624 991) into an unsecure zone at BS 563 777.

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Light sniper fire was received on the first lift. No hits. Fourteen UH-34D's then lifted 99 ARVN troops from Quang Ngai to the same zone. Two of the armed UH-1E's were diverted to work with USAF Birdog on search and destroy mission at BS 540 770 and claimed eight possible KBA and seven structures destroyed. As the lift was in progress two UH-34D provided escort for an artillery convoy along highway one from Chu Lai to Quang Ngai Airfield without incident. A second convoy escort mission was flown by UH-34D protecting a logistic convoy over the same route. At 281830H two CH-46's of HMM-164 commenced lift of 500 rounds of artillery ammunition from Ky Ha to Quang Ngai Airfield. Four UH-34D's commenced emergency resupply for 1/7. At 281910H four UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by two armed UH-1E retracted 26 WIA from 1/7 from BS 557 776 to 1st Med Bn. Heavy small arms fire received in pick-up zone. One aircraft received four hits, but continued on mission. At 280815H eight UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by Oxwood aircraft departed for Quang Tin for I Corps resupply mission. No gear staged and U.S. Advisors unaware of mission. Aircraft returned to Ky Ha.

29 March. Throughout the night two armed UH-1E from VMO-6 provided recon/observation for 1/7 and along the Son Tra Khuc. Just after dawn the flight sighted a Sampan with 18-20 VN males in black pajamas and green uniforms attempting to cross the river North to South. Sampan taken under fire and ten KBA claimed. At 290845H, thirty UH-34D's from HMM-361, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by four armed UH-1E's from VMO-6 lifted 650 troops of 2/7 from LZ Goose (BT 503 038) to an unsecure zone at BS 553 795. VMO-6 TAC(A) controlled Oxwood A-4 aircraft on LZ prep at BS 543 813, BS 545 820, BS 543, and BS 535 805. The UH-34D's received light small arms fire on the first lift into the zone. Fire was also received from vicinity BS 545 789. The UH-1E's took the target under fire and destroyed eight huts and damaged four more. At 291228H ten UH-34D's from HMM-261 escorted by Oxwood A-4 aircraft departed for Quang Ngai and lifted 15 U.S. Advisors, 197 ARVN troops, 188 VN civilians and 71,340 lbs of cargo to An Hoa (BS 838 875), Tra Bong (BS 341 880), Song Ha (BS 393 205) and Minh Long (BS 542 525). At 291802H three UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by two UH-1E's from VMO-6 retracted a six man Recon team of C Co. 1st Recon Bn. from BS 469 973 and returned them to LZ Quail (BT 558 048).

30 March. MAG-36 completed support of the seventh Marines on Operation INDIANA, provided support to the 1st Marine Division throughout the Chu Lai Enclave, and completed one I Corps resupply mission. The group flew 518 sorties, lifting 787 troops and pax, and 35.3 tons of cargo. Six battle evacs were also lifted. Throughout the hours of darkness, H&MS-36 C-117D provided illumination to 7th Marine units along the Song Tra Khuc.

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At 300645H two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 commenced providing Recon/observation for 1/7 on their sweep to highway one from the BS 5777 area. Flight remained on station until 301110H reporting no incidents. At 300830H twenty four UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 and Oxwood A-4 aircraft retracted 590 troops of 2/7 from BS 545 801 to LZ Goose (BT 503 038) without incident. At 301157H three UH-34D's from HMM-261 escorted by one armed UH-1E of VMO-6 executed a Sparrow Hawk mission. A squad rein of 3/1 was lifted into an unsecure zone at BT 445 075 in search of a reported 15 VC in the vicinity of BT 451 074. Flight launched 14 minutes after notification. UH-1E provided suppressive fire in support of squad and destroyed one structure. Troops were retracted from Hill 69 BT 468 068 at 301545H and resumed Sparrow Hawk standby. At 301230H nine UH-34D's from HMM-364 escorted by Oxwood A-4's departed for Quang Ngai on I Corps resupply mission lifting 35,000 lbs of cargo to Sa Hywn (BS 935 230), Duc Pho (BS 805 382), and Nui Tho (BS 758 471). Aircraft were fired upon on lift out from Sa Hywn and one aircraft was hit but continued on mission. At 301750H two UH-34D's from HMM-261 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 and Condole aircraft retracted a 17 man Recon team of 1st Recon Bn. from BS 449 901 and returned them to LZ Quail (BT 558 048).

31 March. At 310800H twelve UH-34D's from HMM-261, escorted by Condole F-4 and F-8 aircraft lifted 71 ARVN troops, 124 VN civilians and 73,000 lbs of cargo from Quang Tin to Tien Phuoc (BT 113137) and Hau Duc (BT 070 060). Mission completed without incident. At 311205H three UH-34D's from HMM-261 escorted by two armed UH-1E from VMO-6 and Oxwood A-4 aircraft departed on emergency troop lift and resupply mission. 64 ARVN troops and 6400 lbs of cargo were lifted from Quang Ngai to An Hoa (BS 478 886) and Binh Son (BS 605 918). Mission accomplished without incident. At 311810H four UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by two armed UH-1E's of VMO-6 and a flight of Oxwood A-4 aircraft inserted a 23 man Recon team of 1st Recon Bn. at BT 558 048 and extracted a 14 man Recon team of the same unit from BT 410 020. One WIA retracted and lifted to 1st Med Bn.

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PART III

1. Camp Construction.

During this period, ten structures have been completed, among them are the new Chapel, a Communications Center, a Post Office, and several new officer's quarters. A new mess hall and additional enlisted quarters are presently under construction.

2. Flare Drop Operations.

The MAG-36 C-117 has been fitted with the equipment necessary to conduct night flare drops in support of tactical operations. This capability was utilized during Operation TEXAS and Operation INDIANA. On the night of 29-30 March, continuous illumination was provided for 1st Bn. 7th Marines for 10.3 hours while the Marines were heavily engaged with the enemy. During Operation INDIANA, two helicopters with A/O's aboard operated in conjunction with the C-117 flareship in monitoring enemy attempts to flee the battle area.

HEADQUARTERS
Marine Aircraft Group 36
1st Marine Aircraft Wing FMFPac
FPO San Francisco 96602

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Ser: 003A07966
20 March 1966

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commanding General, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing
Subj: Combat After Action Report • Operation DOUBLE EAGLE, Phases I and II
Ref: (a) 1st MAW Operation Order 310-66
(b) Task Force Delta Operation Order 1-66
(c) Task Force Delta Frag Order 109-66
(d) MAG-36 Operation Order 2-66
Encl: ✓(1) Chronological Summary
✓(2) Statistical Summary
✓(3) Problem Areas and Recommendations

1. In accordance with reference (a), the Combat After Action Report for Operation DOUBLE EAGLE Phases I and II conducted during the period 28 January to 28 February 1966 is hereby submitted. The report covers the activities of all assigned squadrons, as well as those of HMM-362 attached to the SLF, augmentation aircraft from MAG-16, Army UH-1B platoons assigned, and the 20th Helicopter Squadron USAF. References (a) through (d) initiated the operation.

William G. Johnson
WILLIAM G. JOHNSON

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MAG-16
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MAG-36

Open DOUBLE EAGLE

*38 Jan - 28 Feb 66
(1st MAW)*

CHRONOLOGICAL SUMMARY

1. Mission. Marine Aircraft Group 36 assigned in direct support of Task Force Delta assisted in operations in both Southern and Northern Quang Ngai Province to locate and destroy enemy forces therein. The Group provided helicopters for troop lift, resupply, Med Evac, psy-war, TAC(A), HC(A), reconnaissance, fire suppression, command and liaison, arty/NGF spot, and escort. MAG-36 also coordinated the selection of HLZ's in the areas of operation with CG, Task Force Delta, and controlled and coordinated all helicopter operations in the areas of responsibility.

2. Chronological. Operation DOUBLE EAGLE was conducted in a series of consecutive phases, designed to position Task Force Delta in the objective area for the ultimate purpose of finding and destroying major enemy forces. On D Day 28 January 1966 Phase I of the operation commenced with every effort made to create the impression that forces were ashore to conduct DAGGER THRUST type search and clear operations within a zone extending 6,000 meters to the west and north of the landing beaches at BS 8342. The build up of forces was accomplished in such manner as to conceal the task force's ultimate objective. The deep ranging flexibility inherent in heliborne operations was sacrificed during the period with the exception of emergency resupply and Med Evac. On 30 January 1966 MAG-36 equipment and supplies for the command and control facilities, TAFDS, aircraft maintenance, and air field control facilities were landed over the beach and rapidly set up and operating by 1200 on 30 January 1966. From that time until 16 February MAG-36 provided complete support to the Task Force from its advance base known as JOHNSON CITY I. The forward CP consisted of a combat operations center with the Commanding Officer, S-3 and S-2 occupying adjacent tents with the necessary communications links with CG 1st MAW (TADC), MAG-36 Rear at KY HA, DASC, Task Force Delta, and USS Valley Forge. The forward CP was set up 100 yards from the Task Force Delta CP and the DASC which made close liaison possible. A maintenance Section of H&MS-36 landed over the beach with one R-1820 QEC and one QTC as well as a supply of high usage spare parts and required tools. A TAFDS with a 30,000 gallon 115/145 capacity and a 10,000 gallon JP 4 capacity were set up along side the forward air facility, and once fuel analysis had been accomplished provided fuel to the aircraft for the remainder of Phase I. Forty eight rocket pods plus 7.62 ammunition were landed over the beach, and replenished as required from KY HA. An expeditionary air facility was established complete with tower, runway lights, VIP pad and resupply pad. This forward CP and airfield was operated from 30 January until 16 February when Phase I secured, and all equipment and supplies were backloaded to KY HA via helicopter and ship. The 17th and 18th of February were spent planning and preparing for Phase II of Operation DOUBLE EAGLE at KY HA Air Facility at Chu Lai. On 19 February 1966 the initial heliborne assault landings of Phase II were made ten miles Southwest of Quang Tin Province Headquarters. Command and Control facilities, TAFDS, aircraft maintenance, and airfield control facilities were emplaced via convoy at Quang Tin Province Headquarters 100 yards from Task Force Delta CP on the 19th of January. Again the Commanding Officer, S-3, and S-2 sections were set up in the field with the required communications links to Wing Headquarters MAG-36 Rear at KY HA, DASC, and Task Force Delta. Tower and runway lights were set in,

as was the 30,000 gallon 115/145 gasoline and 10,000 gallon jet fuel TAFDS. Aircraft maintenance facilities including an 1820 QEC and QTC, as well as rocket pods and 7.62 ammunition were established at the forward facility. Full operations were conducted from this advanced base known as JOHNSON CITY II, until termination of operations on 28 February 1966. During both Phases of the operation MAG-36 operated essentially from advanced expeditionary bases. All aircraft operated from these forward areas during daylight hours, and returned to KY HA at night, except for those required at the advanced area for emergency Med Evac and resupply. This co-location with Task Force Delta Headquarters proved highly satisfactory, for it allowed close liaison and rapid reaction to ever changing situations. Joint briefings were held on strike missions, and problem areas were easily worked out by this close contact. Co-operation should be considered for succeeding operations.

a. Pre D-Day Operations 1 January to 27 January 1966. Preliminary planning and liaison was conducted with Task Force Delta during this period. In addition, numerous lifts of personnel, supplies and equipment and artillery pieces were positioned at Ba To (BS 565330) in order to preposition artillery and Force Reconnaissance Company personnel for subsequent operations. On 130700H January 1966 twenty-two UH-34D's from HMM-261 and HMM-364 lifted 196 troops of Golf 2/4 and 118 troops of the 2nd ARVN Division from Quang Ngai Airfield into an unsecure zone at BS 834422. VMO-6 UH-1E aircraft controlled the LZ prep by Oxwood A-4 aircraft and Naval Gunfire prep. The operation was intended to look like a normal search and clear type operation, however its primary purpose was to analyze the area, for its subsequent use as a Beach Support Area for the operation. The troops were retracted at 131400H to Quang Ngai and Chu Lai. On 22 January 1966 two UH-34D's and two UH-1E's proceeded to Ba To (BS 565330) and retracted 12 recon troops from a patrol five miles northeast of Ba To. The patrol had encountered a VC force. In addition a search was conducted for four missing patrol members, three of which were subsequently located. At 261250H January 1966 nine UH-34D's from HMM-261 lifted 197 troops from Echo 2/4 from KY HA to Nui Dau (BS 874325) in such manner as to make it appear to be a routine resupply mission to the outpost. The companies actual mission was to seize Hill 163 (BS 850391) in conjunction with an ARVN unit to gain the commanding terrain overlooking the D-Day beach. At 270552H eleven UH-34D's from HMM-261 lifted 184 troops from Golf 2/7 from KY HA to Quang Ngai Airfield to standby for possible reinforcement of the Echo 2/4 assault on Hill 163, but the company was not required and they were returned to the Chu Lai enclave.

b. D-Day 28 January 1966. In keeping with the planned operations minimum use of helicopters was made on D-Day. VMO-6 provided two UH-1E's on station during the day for TAC(A) purposes, and two UH-1E's were provided to the Commanding General, Task Force Delta for Command and Control purposes, as they were for the remainder of the operation. HMM-362, the SLF squadron, shuttled personnel and cargo from the USS Valley Forge to the Beach Support Area (BSA) and surrounding areas. Med Evacs were lifted from the BSA to the USS Valley Forge, USS Paul Revere and Bravo Med. A recon patrol which was being pursued by a larger VC force was

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retracted from BS 598375 to the BSA. Late in the day 12 HMM-364 aircraft lifted 245 troops of BLT 2/3 from the USS Valley Forge to an unsecure LZ at BS 754412. Automatic weapons fire was received from the vicinity of BS 765420 and one aircraft was hit. One HMM-362 aircraft experienced engine failure in the BSA and subsequently was repaired and returned to operation. The entire tenor of D-Day operations was to make it look as though another DAGGER THRUST type operation was being conducted.

c. 29 January 1966. At 290630H six UH-34D's departed KY HA for the BSA and during the day performed resupply and Med Evac missions between the BSA and various ships of the task force. At 290635H eighteen UH-34D's departed for Quang Ngai Airfield to standby for contingency purposes. At 290830H these aircraft were utilized to lift 192 ARVN troops from Quang Ngai to Tra Bong (BS 341880) for reinforcement of the outpost. The aircraft then returned to Quang Ngai and resumed the contingency standby until 291830H when they returned to KY HA. UH-1E aircraft of VMO-6 were employed in convoy escort between Chu Lai and Quang Ngai, TAC(A)/TAO missions in the objective area, and Psy War flights in the vicinity of the BSA. At 291845H two UH-34D's from HMM-362 and two UH-1E's inserted a recon team at BS 754421. To complete the day eight UH-34D's from HMM-261 departed KY HA at 292045H with 12,000 pounds of rations for the BSA.

d. 30 January 1966. In addition to resupply, Med Evac, and administrative passenger lifts during the day, one major strike was accomplished. At 301400H twenty-eight UH-34D's from HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-364 augmented by 12 UH-34D's from HMM-362 and escorted by four UH-1B's of the 118th Aviation Company lifted BLT 2/3 (-) from the USS Valley Forge into an unsecure LZ at BS 717429. LZ prep was controlled by VMO-6 aircraft acting as TAC(A). Mission was accomplished without incident. Eight UH-34D's and two UH-1E's remained overnight in the BSA and performed emergency resupply and Med Evac missions throughout the night.

e. 31 January 1966. At 310700H four UH-34D's from HMM-261 accompanied by one CH-37 from MAC-16 and two CH-3A's of the 20th Helicopter Squadron USAF lifted six 105MM howitzers, 79 troops and 70,000 pounds of cargo of Hotel 3/11 from BS 843419 to BS 718426. Lift was completed without incident. At 310945H sixteen UH-34D's from HMM-363 and ten UH-34D's from HMM-362 escorted by four UH-1B's from the 118th Aviation Company lifted 179 troops and radio relay equipment of 2/4 from BS 812475 to Hill 508 (BS 618369). VMO-6 aircraft controlled the LZ prep on the zone. At 311430H thirty six UH-34D's of HMM-261, HMM-363, and HMM-362 escorted by two UH-1B's of the 118th Army Aviation Company and UH-1E's of VMO-6 lifted 596 troops and equipment of 2/4 (-) from BS 812475 to an unsecure LZ at BS 602392. L-Hour was 311500H and LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). Throughout the day aircraft from HMM-364 provided resupply and Med Evac aircraft in support of the task force, and VMO-6 aircraft provided TAC(A) for airstrikes throughout the objective area. Eight UH-34D's from HMM-261 and two UH-1E's of VMO-6 remained overnight in the BSA for contingency and Med Evac missions.

f. 1 February 1966. At 011000H twenty-eight UH-34D's lifted 380

troops of BLT 2/9(-) from Quang Ngai Airfield into an unsecure zone at BS 665475. The flight was escorted by armed UH-1E and UH-1B aircraft, and LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft. Upon completion of the lift the aircraft lifted another 172 troops of 2/9(-) from the vicinity of BS 4275 into the same LZ. Mission was accomplished without incident. Normal resupply and Med Evac missions were accomplished throughout the day and night. At 011400H four UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's departed on a recon insert and retraction mission at BS 422595. The mission was to search for the grave of a US KIA. While awaiting the ground troops to accomplish their mission the aircraft were diverted to pick up another five man recon team from BS 625297 and returned them to Ba To. The aircraft then returned to pick up the 28 recon troops at BS 422595 plus the remains of the US KIA.

g. 2 February 1966. Major activity this date was the lift of 2/4(-) by 28 UH-34D's from BS 652455 into three LZ's at BS 795312, BS 796327, and BS 785327. Two UH-34D's were assigned to direct support of each infantry battalion during the day, and eight UH-34D's and two UH-1E's remained overnight in the BSA for contingency purposes.

h. 3 February 1966. At 030630H two UH-34D's from HMM-363 escorted by two VMO-6 UH-1E's inserted a recon team at BS 808272. At 030950H one UH-34D from HMM-364 escorted by two Army UH-1B's inserted a five man recon team at BS 635408 and retracted a four man team from the same zone. At 031230H twenty seven UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's lifted 499 troops of 2/4(-) from BS 795325 to BS 838277. VMO-6 acted as TAC(A) mission controlling A-4 and F-4 aircraft on LZ prep. At 031530H forty UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted 500 troops of BLT 2/3(-) from BS 719425 to BS 921267. Again VMO-6 acted as TAC(A) for LZ prep. At 031730H twenty UH-34D's with two UH-1E's as escort lifted an additional 225 troops from BS 636449 to the BSA at BS 834420.

i. 4 February 1966. At 041540 eight UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted 150 troops of Golf 2/4 from marginally secure zone at BS 796328 back to the BSA. One UH-1E had a tail rotor shot away and crash landed in the vicinity of the pick up zone. Security was provided for the downed bird throughout the night and it was lifted back to the BSA the following morning. Rainy weather hampered flight operations throughout the majority of the day.

j. 5 February 1966. Resupply Med Evac and TAC(A) missions were accomplished through out the day. At 051706H six UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted a 41 man reaction force to BS 753433. The same force was retracted at 051850H.

k. 6 February 1966. Commencing 061100H 35 UH-34D's and 12 UH-1E's of MAG-36 augmented by 24 UH-34D's of MAG-16 and Four Army UH-1B's and three USAF CH-3A's stood by for lift of 2/9 rein plus three 105MM howitzers and six howtars from BS 719425 into an unsecured zone at BS 728176. Weather in the objective area caused the lift to be cancelled. At 060835H two UH-1E's launched on a recon of the BS 7948 area. Armed VC were observed moving into a cave. After clearance from Landshark Bravo

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was received the flight delivered rocket and machine gun fire into the target. No damage assessment made. Additional UH-1E flight acted as TAC(A) throughout the TACOR during the period. Four UH-34D's remained over night at the BSA for Med Evac and four UH-34D's and two UH-1E's remained on Condition III standby on the USS Valley Forge. Keeping UH-1E aircraft on Condition III aboard the Valley Forge at night became a standard routine there after during Phase I.

1. 7 February 1966. At 070830H four UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's lifted 28 recon troops from the BSA into two unsecure LZ's at BS 765277 and BS 787274. A second lift was made with 28 additional recon troops into an LZ at BS 798274. At 071025H fifty UH-34D's escorted by four UH-1B's, lifted 653 troops of 2/9(-) from a marginally secure zone at BS 715429 to an unsecure zone at BS 726175. Sniper fire was encountered in the vicinity of the pick up zone and six aircraft were hit, none seriously. H-Hour was 071100H. LZ prep was provided by A-1 and F-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). On completion of this lift 56 troops and 22 external lifts of Mortar Battery 3/12 were lifted from BS 715429 to BS 726175. Both lifts were completed without incident. Aircraft for resupply missions were assigned to Shore Party Group for direct support to the deployed units. VMO-6 provided TAC(A) and TAO missions throughout the day and came to assist an Army O-1 which was fired upon by VC in a trench line. The trench line was plastered with rockets and machine gun fire, but no damage assessment could be made. At 071800H four UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's retracted the 56 man recon team previously inserted this date. The pick up was made in two lifts and on each pick up heavy sniper fire was received, and returned by all aircraft on the flight.

m. 8 February 1966. At 081100H 26 UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's lifted 301 troops of Lima 3/1 plus a Battalion Command Group from BS 834424 to an unsecure zone at BS 744207. The flight then returned to the BSA and lifted 205 troops of India 3/1 into the same zone. Four UH-1E's of VMO-6 acted as TAC(A) throughout the lift controlling A-1 and F-4 aircraft prepping and capping the LZ. During the lift one UH-34D was forced down by mechanical troubles in an unsecure zone at BS 756235. The crew was immediately retrieved without injury and five UH-34D were diverted from the scheduled lift with their troops to secure the downed aircraft. A reaction force from the BSA was subsequently lifted into the zone to relieve this force. The relieved troops were lifted to their originally intended zone. The downed aircraft was lifted out of the zone by an Army CH-47 and the reaction force was returned to the BSA. At 081745H two UH-34D's escorted by two Army UH-1B's lifted a four man recon team from the BSA and attempted to insert them at BS 727327. The mission was aborted when VC and punji stakes were observed in the LZ. A second four man recon team was retracted from BS 780320 back to the BSA.

n. 9 February 1966. At 090725H four UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's aircraft lifted 56 recon troops from the BSA into three unsecure zones at BS 748305, BS 765340, and BS 791340. On approach to the zone at BS 748305 one UH-34D received a broken strut and lifted back out of the zone with the troops aboard, returned to the BS., discharged the troops

and departed for KY HA where it was recovered without incident. Two UH-34D's immediately picked up the troops from the BSA and inserted them at BS 748305. All members of the recon team plus one VC prisoner were retracted at 091710H. At 090955H four UH-34D's escorted by two armed Army UH-1B's lifted a reinforced squad previously lifted into the area for a search and clear mission. Intense small arms fire was encountered from the vicinity of the zone and two aircraft were hit, one receiving five holes. The Army UH-1B's returned suppressive fire and also received one hit from vicinity BS 822399 in the horizontal stabilizer. Mission was aborted and all aircraft returned safely to the BSA. The stranded squad was then reinforced by a company size unit moving overland, while overhead VMO-6 TAC(A)'s controlled A-4 and F-4 aircraft strikes and performed artillery missions in the area for the balance of the day.

o. 10 February 1966. At 100900H ten UH-34D's lifted 200 troops of Mike 3/1 from BS 860145 to BS 747153. Mission completed without incident. At 101100H eight UH-34D's and three USAF OH-3A's lifted 56 troops, six howitzers and 16 other external lifts of Mortar Battery 3/12 from BS 733164 to BS 838424 without incident. UH-1E aircraft acting as TAC(A) controlled air strikes by A-4 and F-4 aircraft and adjusted artillery on a trench complex at BS 890330. Portions of the trench were destroyed by the combined strikes.

p. 11 February 1966. At 111030H twelve UH-34D's lifted 65 troops of 2/9 plus radio relay personnel from BS 733163 to an unsecure area at BS 618369. The landing was preceded by LZ prep A-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). At the completion of the LZ prep two UH-34D's landed a five man recon team to clear the zone of any remaining helo stakes. Mission accomplished without incident. At 111530H forty UH-34D's from MAG-36 and MAG-16 escorted by armed UH-1E's and UH-1B's lifted 615 troops of BLT 2/9 from BS 733163 to an unsecure LZ at BS 562383. LZ received 15 minute artillery prep from Ba To (BS 568338) followed by 45 minutes of air prep by A-4 and F-4 aircraft. Mission accomplished without incident. At 111730H two UH-34D's escorted by two Army armed UH-1B's retracted two four man recon teams from BS 588277 and BS 640250 and returned them to Ba To (BS 568338). At 111830H sixteen UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted 186 troops of Mike 3/1 from BS 740145 to BS 799170. As the lift progressed cloud cover descended on the drop zone and the last 50 troops were dropped at a zone 300 meters west and 500 meters lower. Missions completed without incident.

q. 12 February 1966. At 120730H two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1B's retracted a five man recon team from BS 780320 and returned them to the BSA. At 120900H eight UH-34D's lifted 150 troops of Hotel 2/4 from BS 856173 to BS 922188 without incident. At 121500H eight UH-34D's lifted 56 troops and 23 lifts, including 12 externals of Mortar Battery 3/12 from BS 839420 back to the USS Valley Forge. At 121730H two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's, retracted two recon teams, one at BS 509415 and the second at BS 560430. A third team was retracted from BS 661312 and returned to the BSA. Shortly after the recon team was inserted at BS 560430 the team reported sighting 100 VC and a

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decision was made to retract the team. Two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's launched immediately for the area and under conditions of reduced visibility successfully retracted the team without incident.

r. 13 February 1966. At 131500H thirty-seven UH-34D's of MAG-36 and MAG-16 escorted by four armed UH-1B's lifted 285 troops of 2/3 from BS 930141 to Ba To (BS 567339). The aircraft then returned to the BSA and lifted 185 troops from Echo 2/3 into an unsecure zone at BS 564447. The flight then returned to Ba To and lifted the remaining elements of 2/3 into the same zone. LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). Later the same day an emergency retraction of a compromised recon team was accomplished by VMO-6 aircraft from a steep mountain slope. One slick sneaked into the zone and with only one skid touching the ground lifted the four man team out, while three gunships provided suppressive fire against the VC.

s. 14 February 1966. At 141315H sixteen UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1E's retracted 290 troops of 2/4 from BS 822303 to the BSA. Near the end of the lift three V. C. snipers were sighted in a trench at BS 820310. The UH-1E's returned fire on the snipers killing two and wounding one. One UH-1E touched down and captured the wounded V. C. and the weapons, resulting in MAG-36's first CBA (Captured by Air). At 141310H two UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1B's retracted a four man recon team from a marginally secure zone at BS 619369 and returned them to the BSA without incident. Two additional recon teams were retracted from BS 524396 and BS 849391 and returned to the BSA.

t. 15 February 1966. At 150810H twenty-five UH-34D's accompanied by four UH-1E's providing helo escort and TAC(A) lifted 140 troops of Golf 2/3 from BS 540419 to the BSA. Moderate sniper fire was received from the vicinity of the pick up zone, but none of the aircraft were hit. One UH-34D went down with mechanical problems at BS 572353. A reaction platoon of 49 troops from Echo 2/4 was rapidly lifted into the area to provide security for the downed aircraft while an engine change was accomplished. Repairs were completed and the security force was retracted. At 150930 forty UH-34D's escorted by four armed UH-1E's and two UH-1B's lifted 500 troops of 2/9 from BS 540419 to Quang Ngai Airfield without incident. Commencing at 151115H these same aircraft lifted 470 troops of 2/3 from BS 540419 to the USS Valley Forge. At 151330H ten UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted 60 troops and radio relay equipment of Golf 2/3(-) from Hill 508 (BS 618368) to the BSA. At 151400H twelve UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1B's lifted 200 troops from Mike 3/1 from BS 9226 to the BSA. At 151430H ten UH-34D's lifted 60 troops from Quang Ngai Airfield to Hill 163 (BS 849391). At 151500H fourteen UH-34D's commenced lifts of 68,000 lbs. of artillery ammunition from Ba To to Thach Tru (BS 758469), and one USAF CH-3A commenced lifting four 105 MM howitzer from Ba To to Chu Lai. To complete the day at 151715H six UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's lifted 130 ARVN troops and 1400 lbs. of cargo from Hill 163 (BS 849391) to Nui Dau (BS 872322). This was by far the busiest day for helicopter operations by MAG-36 in RVN to date.

140
49
49
500
470
60
200
60
130 ARVN
1658

u. 16 February 1966. This was the final day of Phase I of DOUBLE EAGLE, and was spent retracting small elements of various units to the BSA for back loading. At the same time MAG-36's equipment, supplies and facilities were lifted back to KY HA and back loaded aboard ship with the last elements of MAG-36 departing the BSA at 161430H. The final statistics for Phase I are as follows:

Flight Hours	4529.8
Missions	1060
Sorties	12,919
Troops/Pax	15,788
Cargo Tons	895.8
Aircraft Hit	43
Aircraft Down/Recovered	3/3
Casualties	7 WIA's

v. 17 and 18 February 1966. This period was spent planning and preparing for Phase II of Operation DOUBLE EAGLE. Supplies and equipment were loaded aboard trucks for lifts to Quang Tin via convoy. Final details of the initial lifts for Phase II were worked out with Task Force Delta staff and supported units.

w. 12 February 1966.¹⁶⁷ Phase II commenced with forty-eight IH-34D's of MAG-36 and MAG-36 escorted by nine UH-1E's of VMO-6 and four UH-1B's of Co. A 501st Aviation Battalion lifting 548 troops of 2/7 from both KY HA and Quang Tin Province Headquarters (BT 308224) into two unsecure zones LZ Swan (BT 160169) and LZ Duck (BT 170164). L-Hour was at 190930H and air prep was provided by A-4 and F-4 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). One UH-34D experienced engine malfunction in LZ Duck. A reaction company of 164 troops of Golf 2/7 was lifted into the zone in mid afternoon to provide security for the helo, after the battalion moved out. At 191900H a USAF CH-3A lifted the hull back to Quang Tin, after a CH-37 had lifted the engine, blades, tail pylon etc. back to the LSA. At 191115H 65 UH-34D's from MAG-36 and MAG-16, and HMM-362 of the SLF lifted 470 troops of BLT 2/3 from the USS Valley Forge to two unsecure zones at BT 191149 and BT 198145. UH-1E and UH-1B aircraft escorted the mission and VMO-6 controlled A-4 and F-4 aircraft on LZ prep. Seven UH-34D's received small arms hits during the lift, none serious. On completion of the tactical lift 450 additional troops of BLT 2/3 were lifted administratively from the USS Valley Forge to Quang Tin Province Headquarters without incident. At 191230H 480 troops of 2/9 were lifted from Hill 29 (BT 2330) into two LZ's at BT 262125 and BT 235122. Again A-4 and F-4 aircraft provided the LZ prep controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). As these major

lifts were in progress, MAG-36's command and control facilities, maintenance, TAFDS, and airfield control facilities arrived at Quang Tin Province Headquarters and were rapidly set up and operating by 191800H.

x. 20 February 1966. At 201000H thirty-seven UH-34D's escorted by four armed UH-1E's and four armed Army UH-1B's lifted 1235 troops of the 1st and 8th Battalions of the 1st RVN Marine Brigade into two LZ's at BT 103087 and BT 098104 without incident. At 201530H ten UH-34D's escorted by two armed UH-1B's and two armed UH-1E's lifted 61 troops of Echo 2/3 into an unsecure zone at BT 132206 to reinforce a beleaguered recon team. Mission accomplished without incident. At 202120H four UH-34D's on Med Evac standby at Quang Tin were launched and lifted 27 WLA's from 3/1 to Delta Med. The mission was accomplished despite heavy small arms and mortar fire in the pick up zones. Additional aircraft were recalled from KY HA and lifted the WLA's from Delta Med in the LSA, to C Med in DaNang, USS Repose, and Bravo Med.

y. 21 February 1966. At 211030H thirty-four UH-34D's escorted by four UH-1B's lifted 193 troops of Golf 2/3 from Quang Tin into an unsecure zone at BT 051250. L-Hour was 211000H and LZ prep was provided by A-4 and F-8 aircraft controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). One Army UH-1B was shot down in the LZ with holes in the engine and fuel cell. The aircraft was lifted out the following day by an Air Force CH-34. On completion of the Golf 2/3 lift, 56 troops, ten internal loads and 20 externals of Mortar Battery 3/12 were lifted from Quang Tin into the same zone. One UH-34D from HMM-362 experienced engine failure on take-off after dropping an external load in the zone and crashed and burned. The crew was retracted by the wingman and returned to Delta Med in the LSA. At 211400H thirty-one UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's and two Army UH-1B's lifted 600 troops of 2/7 from BT 193193 into an unsecure zone at BT 000230. Small arms fire was received in the pickup zone and one UH-34D received a hit in the center fuel cell but returned to Quang Tin safely. Again A-4 and F-4 aircraft provided the LZ prep controlled by VMO-6 TAC(A). At 211600H thirty-one UH-34D's escorted by four Army UH-1B's lifted 461 troops of 2/3 from BT 218168 to an unsecure zone at BT 039262. Small arms fire was received in the pickup zone, but none of the aircraft were hit.

z. 22 February 1966. No major tactical lifts were accomplished this date, however two aircraft on direct support received enemy small arms fire while on a resupply mission at BT 168255. Both crew chief and gunner were wounded and rapidly evacuated to Delta Med in the LSA. Another UH-34D on a resupply mission was hit by small arms and mortar fire. Shell fragments ruptured the right front strut draining the hydraulic fluid. The aircraft was flown back to the LSA and recovered without incident. VMO-6 TAC(A) subsequently directed strikes by F-8 aircraft on the suspected enemy positions.

aa. 23 February 1966. Marginal weather kept operations this date to a minimum, however two UH-1E from VMO-6 launched to provide observation for a company size search and clear operation by Foxtrot 2/7 in the vicinity of BT 2425. As the company commenced its sweep, VC attempted to flee the

area. Armed UH-1E's under positive control of the ground unit fired rockets and machine guns at the fleeing V. C.. Four Army UH-1B gunbirds were also scrambled to assist. Relieving on station throughout the day the UH-1E and UH-1B accounted for 19 KBA plus six possible KBA. At 231530H two UH-34D launched on a Med Evac mission of one critical USMC WIA at BT 028211. Weather at the time was 600 feet altitude and one half mile visibility. Enroute one aircraft was hit by small arms fire which started an electrical fire which was quickly extinguished. The co-pilot and both crew members were slightly wounded in the action and the aircraft returned to Quang Tin. Two UH-1E's were launched at 231610H on the same mission. Weather had deteriorated to a 400 foot ceiling, but despite the marginal weather they managed to get into the zone and lift the WIA to Delta Med. The accompanying armed UH-1E received two hits, one in the cockpit and one in the tail rotor, but no injuries were incurred.

bb. 24 February 1966. Twenty UH-34D's escorted by four Army UH-1B's lifted 1186 ARVN Marines from Tam Ky Airfield to an unsecure zone at BT 143305 without incident.

cc. 25 February 1966. At 250730H eight UH-34D's escorted by two Armed UH-1E's inserted 104 recon troops of Recon Group Bravo into six unsecure zones. The insertion was completed in two lifts without incident and the troops were retracted at 251800H from two zones. At 250800H ten UH-34D's lifted 82 VN refugees from BT 055251 to the LSA at Quang Tin. 35,000 lbs of 105 MM Howitzer ammunition was lifted from Quang Tin to Tien Phouc (BT 115137) by ten UH-34D's at 251030H. Seven UH-34D escorted by two UH-1E shuttled 120 troops of Golf 2/3 from BT 055250 to the LSA. Two aircraft were hit enroute and one co-pilot was wounded in the leg. At 251400H two UH-1E's launched on a recon with a VC POW and interpreter to locate a suspected VC hospital and to select a LZ for a possible lift into the area. The hospital was located in the AT 9722 area and a LZ was selected at AT 977225. At 251515H twenty-four UH-34D's escorted by two UH-1E's and two UH-1B's commenced lifting Golf 2/3 from the LSA to the LZ at AT 977225. VMO-6 and Army gunbirds damaged and destroyed several permanent type buildings in the vicinity of AT 9623, observing several secondary explosions. One UH-34D made a precautionary landing in the zone, a mine exploded close by and the aircraft lifted back out of the zone and returned to the LSA safely. The remainder of the flight launched to BT 003-261 where they picked up 97 refugees and lifted them to the LSA. At 251800H Golf 2/3 was lifted back out of the zone at AT 977225 and returned to the LSA. 471 troops of 2/3 were lifted from the LSA to the USS Valley Forge.

dd. 26 February 1966. At 261515H eighteen UH-34D's retracted 153 troops, 4.2 mortars and ammunition from BT 055250 to the LSA and USS Valley Forge. The flight encountered light small arms fire from BT 060-252. One UH-34D experienced engine failure in the pick-up zone and an engine change was made during the hours of darkness and the aircraft was flown out at 270800H. The engines were lifted in and out by USAF CH-3A. At 261700H a Provisional Defense Company of 2/7 was lifted in to provide security for the downed aircraft and the remaining elements of 2/3 were lifted to the USS Valley Forge. This Provisional Company was retracted by 12 UH-34D's at 270930H.

ee. 27 February 1966. At 270730H six UH-34D's lifted 100 ARVN troops from BT 021289 to BT 232315 without incident. At 270900H a USAF CH-3A escorted by Army UH-1B lifted 32 troops, two 105MM howitzers and 17,000 pounds of ammunition from BT 300235 to BT 107142. Two Army UH-1B gunships provided fire suppression in support of elements of 3/1 and 2/7 in a search and clear operation in vicinity BT 2421. The flight was relieved on station throughout the day. Two UH-1E's on a command ship flight with BGen PLATT aboard flushed several VC in the open. Elements of 3/1 were directed to the area where contact was made with good results. The UH-1E's killed three VC and made the second CBA (Captured by Air) for MAG-36 lifting a VC POW to the LSA for interrogation.

ff. 28 February 1966. This was wrap-up day for Phase II of Operation DOUBLE EAGLE. Armed UH-1E's provided convoy escort for convoys moving from Quang Tin to Chu Lai throughout the day. The UH-34D's lifted elements of the task force back to Chu Lai. MAG-36 closed out its advanced CP and returned to KY HA. Final statistics for Phase II are as follows:

Flight hours	1974.3
Missions	559
Sorties	5978
Troop/Pax	10,407
Cargo tons	327.4
Aircraft hit	50
Aircraft down/Recovered	4/3
Casualties	20 WIA's

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STATISTICAL SUMMARY

OPERATION DOUBLE EAGLE

28 January - 28 February 1966

Total Flight Hours.....6504.1
Total Missions.....1619
Total Sorties.....18,897
Total Troops and Passengers.....26,195
Total Cargo Tons.....1023.2
Total Aircraft Hit.....93
Aircraft Down/Recovered.....7/6
Casualties.....27 WIA's
Company Size Lifts.....13
4.2 Mortar Battery Lifts.....5
Battalion Size Lifts.....20

PROBLEM AREAS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. ITEM: Troop Retraction

COMMENT: During all phases of Operation DOUBLE EAGLE the most hazardous missions flown were those involved in the retraction of friendly troops from marginally secure areas deep in Viet Cong controlled territory. As the troops moved down into the pick up point, the VC would move down into positions where the pick up point could be covered by heavy sniper and automatic weapons fire. As the transport helicopters made their pick up they were subjected to enemy fire. This VC tactic was particularly noticeable during the mid and late afternoon, when it appeared that the enemy was well rested from his previous nights endeavors and more ready to do battle. As the operation progressed, the ground units became more aware of this problem and put out additional security forces surrounding the pick up zones. In addition, UH-1E gunbirds and fixed wing aircraft were assigned to cover the retraction, and attack known target areas and suspected positions to keep the enemy fire down. This tactic was particularly effective on the retraction of the last elements of a unit.

RECOMMENDATION: That infantry units be reindoctrinated in providing security and screening forces during helicopter retraction operations, and that UH-1E gunbirds and fixed wing aircraft be assigned on all troop retractions from unsecure or marginal secure areas.

2. ITEM: Search and Clear Missions

COMMENT: On 23 February during Operation DOUBLE EAGLE a company size search and clear operation was initiated through a hamlet complex. Two UH-1E gunbirds were assigned to provide observation and TAC(A) as required. As the operation commenced heavy cloud cover descended on the area, making it impossible to utilize fixed wing aircraft on the mission. As the infantry commenced its sweep VC started to flee the area. The UH-1E's seized this opportunity and patrolled the observed routes of egress from the area, and under positive control of the ground unit, delivered rocket and machine gun fire at the fleeing VC. Additional VMO-6 gunships and Army gunships assigned were scrambled into the area, and in coordination with the ground unit sweep accounted for 26 KBA during the operation. The mobility and fire power of the UH-1E aircraft proved invaluable in this type operation, because it was able to not only continually observe from low level the routes of egress, but rapidly deliver fire at observed enemy targets.

RECOMMENDATION: That the UH-1E be utilized on future search and clear operations, for observation purposes as well as a block and kill force.

3. ITEM: Accurate Personnel/Cargo Statistics

COMMENT: Throughout all phases of Operation DOUBLE EAGLE inaccurate statistics on the number of personnel or pounds of cargo to be lifted

were received from various units involved. When the flight leaders were briefed on a specific number of troops to be carried out of marginally secure zones, they would compute the number of lifts required by the number of assigned helicopters, in order to insure that a unit of sufficient strength to repel known VC elements in the area would be all lifted on the last lift. Several instances occurred where more troops were left in a zone ~~than were~~ capable of being lifted by the helicopters available. Were it not for some quick headwork on the part of flight leaders, who waited for additional helicopters to arrive, small numbers of troops incapable of defending themselves against an enemy force superior in numbers would have been left in a pick up zone. On other occasions numbers of troops to be lifted from a secure and marginally secure to unsecure zones were understated by as much as 12 plane loads. On another specific occasion a howtar battery was briefed to have external loads of not more than 1200 pounds. When the helicopters arrived the loads were at least 1500 pounds. The helicopters were not capable of lifting the prepared loads into the high altitude drop zone. This required the time consuming process of reshuffling the loads and a delay in accomplishment of the mission. On administrative type lifts from a secure to a secure zone, troop units often refused to load helicopters to capacity, thereby creating additional sorties which were unnecessary.

RECOMMENDATION: That the ground units be reminded that complete and accurate statistics must be made available to the helicopter unit, in order that a properly planned and executed mission may be accomplished. Secondly, consideration should be given to establishing procedures whereby troop units would be pre-briefed on the exact number of troops or total pounds that each aircraft could carry, taking into consideration density altitude and other factors. It would then be the troop units responsibility to break itself down into heliteams based on numbers of troops and pounds of cargo to be carried, and report the total number of heliteams to be lifted vice number of troops and pounds of cargo. Third, on administrative type lifts from secure zone to secure zone, it must be made clear to the troop unit that assigned helicopters must be loaded to maximum capacity in order that full utilization is made of each helicopter assigned thereby making sorties with partial loads unnecessary. Tactical integrity should be sacrificed to helicopter utilization on administrative type lifts.

4. ITEM: Loading Zones/Heliteam Staging

COMMENT: Throughout Operation DOUBLE EAGLE numerous cases were experienced where poor choice of loading/pickup zones and poor organization of troops in the staging area contributed to slowing down troop movements. Two and four plane pickup zones for large numbers of troops were chosen by the ground units, when a pick up zone that could handle eight or ten planes at one time were within 500 to 1000 meters. Troops also tended to bunch up in large formations awaiting pickup instead of spreading out the length of the pick up zone for ease of loading. This results in heliteams moving 100 to 200 yards to enplane, again slowing down the lift. There were also instances when troops staged on the

SECRET

wrong side of pick up zones. When helicopters approached the scene into the wind with troops on the port side, troop commanders did not move the heliteams to the starboard side to facilitate rapid loading.

RECOMMENDATION: That unit commanders be reindoctrinated in the importance of selecting loading/pick up zones of sufficient size to facilitate rapid loading of troops, and that troop formations be staggered on the starboard side of the helicopter to facilitate loading.

5. ITEM: Helicopter to Ground Communications

COMMENT: The difficulties inherent in helicopter to ground communications are two fold:

a. Incompatibility of PRC-10 FM radio gear to that installed in the helicopter. PRC-10's are manually fine tuned to frequency while aircraft installations are pre-set crystals. While all stations on a ground net of 47.2 (Manually tuned by means of interminable short and long counts) may be in loud and clear contact with each other, they may very well be on 47.23 and therefore unable to communicate clearly, if at all, with aircraft.

b. Helicopters are briefed to come up on Battalion or Company FM nets, thereby intermingling or interfering with ground to ground communications.

RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. That greater use be made of the PRC-41 (UHF) capabilities in ground-helicopter communications and that ground radios periodically be fine tuned to a crystalized FM frequency to ensure accurate frequency definition.

b. That specific FM and UHF frequencies, already designated for helicopter use, be utilized.

6. ITEM: Positive Landing Zone Identification

COMMENT: With radio communications problems possible, it is necessary to develop additional means of signalling approaching helicopters. The call for smoke will sometimes be answered by the obliging VC. The color of smoke used by the friendlies is often not that required for identification (as briefed).

RECOMMENDATION: That mirrors be utilized in addition to radios and smoke to assist in identification. Pilots who have witnessed mirrors used, agree that this is an immediate means of spotting personnel on the ground. Smoke will be seen for miles on the ground, while the mirror flash can be directed only at the aircraft. This is particularly valid in the case of reconnaissance retraction. The most effective means of identification then would seem to be a combination radio, mirror and finally color smoke (if required). With some training, reconnaissance teams and other ground units can learn to flash code for identification.



The survival mirror with aiming cross-hairs and sight is a standard stock item.

7. ITEM: Landing Zone Preparation

COMMENT: During several landings on Operation DOUBLE EAGLE a different type of zone preparation was utilized. It is believed that prolonged air preps in excess of one half hour provide a form of warning to the enemy and allow them sufficient time to escape from the area around the landing zone. The new method tried consisted of prepping the commanding terrain with heavy ordnance, an inner perimeter with anti-personnel bombs and napalm, and generally using 20mm strafe for the landing zone proper. Following this relatively short prep, fixed wing air was continuously called in on the outer perimeters during the actual landing. It is believed that this provides excellent helicopter protection and serves as effective blocking fire for escaping enemy troops. During several helicopter landings, napalm strikes were run in close proximity to the landing zone and the landing helicopters were on converging courses, yet both groups had no difficulty, attributing to a high state of training and complete confidence in each other's ability. General purpose bombs having a large cratering effect should not be employed in the landing zone proper because the craters present a natural hazard to the landing helicopters. In the same vane, napalm must not be used on landing zones containing dry grass. The resultant fires are hazardous to the helicopters, and the soot from the burning vegetation can produce near IFR conditions. During the actual landing phase helicopter "gunships", can best provide continuous landing zone suppression force. Demonstrated ability and accuracy, coupled with the confidence shown by the transport helicopter pilots in the "gunships", has proved that fire can be delivered while the landing is in progress.

8. ITEM: Direct Support

COMMENT: During the early part of the operation two UH-34D's were assigned to each battalion for direct support missions, such as resupply, Med Evac, liaison etc. It was soon realized that this resulted in poor utilization of helicopter resources, and the transport helicopters were then assigned on, an as required basis; usually six, more during peak periods, to the Shore Party Group to provide direct resupply support to all units of the task force. These aircraft were not fragged for each mission through the DASC, but were fragged by the Shore Party Group to deliver supplies as requested via the chain of command. A liaison officer from MAG-36 was assigned to work with the Shore Party Group to assist in scheduling and loading the aircraft. This method proved to be satisfactory but had a few shortcomings. Numerous instances occurred where loads were carried to a unit when they were on the move and could not accept rations and water at that particular time, causing the load to be returned to the BSA/LSA only to be lifted out again at a later time. Aircraft would deliver a load to a unit, and return to the BSA/LSA, only to return to the unit a short time later to pick up water cans, or POW's, etc which were ready for pick up on the first trip. As the operation progressed, bugs were worked out of the system so that by the end of the operation direct support helicopters were properly and fully utilized.



RECOMMENDATION: That use of direct support helicopters be fully tested on succeeding operations.

9. ITEM: Hospital Ship USS REPOSE

COMMENT: Utilization of the USS REPOSE during the operation proved to be highly satisfactory. Critical patients were lifted from the collecting and clearing companies to the REPOSE in large numbers. One problem developed concerning the REPOSE. The ship continually steamed 15 20 miles at sea, causing delay in critical patients arriving for much needed treatment and excessive amount of rotor hours expended in arriving at the REPOSE.

RECOMMENDATION: That on future operations the REPOSE be situated in close proximity to the area of operations for more rapid casualty evacuation.

Documentation

Part IV

SECRET

SECRET

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SECRET



UNITED STATES MARINE CORPS
HEADQUARTERS 1ST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING
FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC
FPO. SAN FRANCISCO. 96601

7:DAC:jcg
1650
27 MAR 1966

From: Commanding General
To: Secretary of the Navy (Navy Department Board of Decorations and Medals)
Via: (1) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
(2) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
(3) Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet
(4) Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code DL)
(5) Chief of Naval Operations (Op-09B2E)
Subj: Award of a Navy Unit Commendation; recommendation for
Ref: (a) SECNAVINST P1650.1C
(b) FMFPacO P1650.1A
Encl: ✓(1) Roster of Marine Aircraft Group 36 and supporting units
✓(2) Proposed citation

1. In accordance with the provisions of references (a) and (b), it is recommended that Marine Aircraft Group 36 be awarded a Navy Unit Commendation for heroism.

2. On 3 March 1966 intelligence reported that a 2,000 man Main Force Viet Cong Regiment was located in Chau-Nhai village, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam. Acting on this information, the Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force ordered Task Force Delta, with Marine Aircraft Group 36 supporting, to assault the enemy force within twenty four hours. In this short period of time, Marine Aircraft Group 36 completed the planning required to solve the complex problem of conducting a vertical assault operation utilizing one Marine Battalion and one Company of Army of the Republic of Vietnam Battalion from widely separated areas into a heavily defended area. This operation to be conducted only two days after completion of Operation "Double Eagle" which was a two Regiment sized, "Search and Destroy" operation in the Quang Tin Province area. Utilizing twenty four helicopters to conduct a vertical envelopment of the enemy in the beginning phase of the operation, all but four of these aircraft were damaged so severely that they could not continue in the lift. All available helicopters were im-

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1650

mediately assigned to the operation to continue the lift and land an additional two Marine Battalions and elements of an additional Army of the Republic of Vietnam Battalion. Extremely efficient flight operations were conducted around the clock for the remainder of the period, repositioning units to more effective fighting and blocking positions. Emergency resupply of ammunition, medicine, food and water were accomplished under the most trying conditions of darkness and hostile enemy automatic weapons and mortar fire. Many aircraft crews were assigned flight operations for a period in excess of twenty four hours. All requests for medical evacuations were accomplished on an emergency basis both day and night under conditions of hostile enemy fire, unlighted landing zones and a fluid battle situation. Continuing their support of the assault during the ensuing days, Marine Aircraft Group 36 contributed to the destruction of more than 583 of the enemy and capture of large quantities of supplies and equipment. In so doing the attack thwarted an enemy attack, freed the civilian population from the terror of the Viet Cong, and set an inspiring example for our own and allied forces. By their effective teamwork, aggressive fighting spirit and individual acts of heroism and daring, the men of Marine Aircraft Group 36 and supporting units not only achieved significant results but, in so doing, exemplified qualities of courage and skill which are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service.

3. The facts contained in the proposed citation are personally known to me and are a permanent record of this command.

KEITH B. MC CUTCHEON

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4-1-2

ROSTER OF MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 36
AND SUPPORTING UNITS

1. Marine Aircraft Group 36
 - Headquarters & Maintenance Squadron 36
 - Marine Air Base Squadron 36
 - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 261
 - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 363
 - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 364
 - Marine Observation Squadron 6
2. Supporting units
 - Marine
 - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 263
 - Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron 361
 - Army
 - 117th Aviation Company
 - 119th Aviation Company
 - 161st Aviation Company
 - Air Force
 - 20th Helicopter Squadron

ENCLOSURE (1)

4-1-3

The secretary of the Navy takes pleasure in Commending

MARINE AIRCRAFT GROUP 36

for service as set forth in the following

PROPOSED CITATION:

"For outstanding heroism in action against enemy Viet Cong forces during the assault of the Chau-Nhai village complex, Quang Ngai Province, Republic of Vietnam, from 4 March to 7 March 1966. Acting on the basis of intelligence information that a 2,000 man Main Force Viet Cong Regiment was located in Chau-Nhai village, the Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force ordered Task Force Delta, with Marine Aircraft Group 36 supporting, to assault the enemy force within twenty four hours. In this short period of time, Marine Aircraft Group 36 completed the planning required to solve the complex problem of conducting a vertical assault operation utilizing one Marine Battalion and one Company of Army of the Republic of Vietnam Battalion from widely separated areas into a heavily defended area. This operation to be conducted only two days after completion of Operation "Double Eagle" which was a two Regiment sized, "Search and Destroy" operation in the Quang Tin Province area. Utilizing twenty four helicopters to conduct a vertical envelopment of the enemy in the beginning phase of the operation, all but four of these aircraft were damaged so severely that they could not continue in the lift. All available helicopters were immediately assigned to the operation to continue the lift and land an additional two Marine Battalions and elements of an additional Army of the Republic of Vietnam Battalion. Extremely efficient flight operations were conducted around the clock for the remainder of the period, repositioning units to more effective fighting and blocking positions. Emergency resupply of ammunition, medicine, food and water were accomplished under the most trying conditions of darkness and hostile enemy automatic weapons and mortar fire. Many aircraft crews were assigned flight operations for a period in excess of twenty four hours. All requests for medical evacuations were accomplished on an emergency basis both day and night under conditions of hostile enemy fire, unlighted landing zones and a fluid battle situation. Continuing their support of the assault during the ensuing days, Marine Aircraft Group 36 contributed to the destruction of more than 583 of the enemy and capture of large quantities of supplies and equipment. In so doing, the attack thwarted an enemy attack, freed the civilian population from the terror of the Viet Cong, and set an inspiring example for our own and allied forces. By their effective teamwork, aggressive fighting spirit and individual

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4-1-4

ENCLOSURE (2)

acts of heroism and daring, the men of Marine Aircraft Group 36 and supporting units not only achieved significant results but, in so doing, exemplified qualities of courage and skill which are in keeping with the highest traditions of the United States Naval Service. The following units of Marine Aircraft Group 36 participated in the Chau-Nhai, Operation "Utah", from 4 to 7 March 1966:

Marine Aircraft Group 36 composed of Headquarters and Maintenance Squadron 36; Marine Air Base Squadron 36; Marine Medium Helicopter Squadrons 261, 363, and 364; Marine Observation Squadron 6.

Supporting units consisting of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadrons 263 and 361; 117th, 119th, and 161st Aviation Companies, U. S. Army; 20th Helicopter Squadron, U. S. Air Force.

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY

FORCE INFORMATION OFFICE
III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE AND NAVAL COMPONENT COMMAND
MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
C/O FPO, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA 96602

Release No: 394-66
First Marine Aircraft Wing Release No: X-116-66
By: Sgt. S. R. Driver

Da Nang Press Center
Da Nang, Vietnam
Tel: Da Nang 6259

salvaged 'chopper

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHU LAI, Vietnam, March 5 -- Two Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-36 choppers were called to take a maintenance crew to a downed "Huey".

A platoon of riflemen from the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines had set up a perimeter around the helo and were under enemy small arms fire.

A short distance away, Marine F4B Phantoms, F8E Crusaders, and A1E Skyhawks were attacking a large force of Viet Cong.

While in the Landing Zone (LZ) the decision was made to strip the UH1E and lift it back to Ky Ha.

As the maintenance crew stripped the aircraft the UH34's lifted out the salvaged parts.

A U.S. Air Force CH3A 'copter was called and brought back the fueselage of the downed 'chopper.

The two UH34's returned to pick up the engine and maintenance crew.

Back in the zone, they came under intense enemy automatic and small arms fire. They waved off and requested suppressive fire from the Marine riflemen.

First lieutenant William F. Lane (Mountain View, Calif.) went down through the hail of enemy fire. He felt his helo lurch as he came close to the pick-up zone. His helicopter was hit and he was forced to land.

The VC fire increased with the helo sitting in the open.

A quick check for damage revealed they had taken a small arms round through the rotor blade. It was making the aircraft fly jerkily and off balance

-more-
4-1-A-1

salvaged 'chopper -2-2-2-2

They landed close to a high tree on the terrace of a rice paddy. This prevented them from taking off again.

The crew chief jumped from the 'chopper, pulled his machete out, climbed the tree and began to slash the tree top.

Three times he had to jump back to the ground to avoid Viet Cong bullets snapping around him. After five minutes of hacking at the top of the high tree, he had leveled it to where they could take off.

Still determined to complete the mission, Lt. Lane flew around the hill to pick up the engine.

A quick external hook-up was made and they began to lift out of the zone. They lowered down once more, setting the expensive engine gently to the ground, then hovered over it until maintenance from VMO-6 could climb aboard.

Taking off again with his damaged aircraft, Lt. Lane, with the engine slung below, climbed in tight circles through the curtain of VC fire until they were at 3,000 feet and out of range.

-USMC-

4-1-4-2

FORCE INFORMATION OFFICE
III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE AND NAVAL COMBAT COMMAND
MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
C/O FPO, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA 96602

Release No: 392-66
First Marine Aircraft Wing Release No: X-113-66
By: Sgt. Stanley Driver

Da Nang Press Center
Da Nang, Vietnam
Tel: Da Nang 6259

med-evac

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

DA NANG, Vietnam, March 5 -- As a blanket of darkness settled over the coastal plains 12 miles south of Chu Lai, Maj. Robert P. Guay (Brooklyn, N.Y.) guided his Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-261 chopper toward a flashing light. The light designated a landing zone (LZ) where wounded Marines waited to be evacuated.

The helo settled and the first man was put aboard. "It seemed like an eternity, but it was only 10 seconds," commented 1stLt. James R. Miers (Port Arthur, Texas), co-pilot.

A Viet Cong automatic weapon on a hill above them opened up on the helicopter. Everyone in the LZ hit the ground. Then, VC mortar rounds exploded about 30-feet away from the 'copter.

The major lifted off, then turned the choppers' tail toward the enemy, making a smaller target.

The VC opened up with a 50-caliber machine-gun in a steady stream of tracers parallel to the left of the aircraft.

Maj. Guay applied power and pulled the helo up and to the right in a steep climb.

He inched away from the tracers. Lt. Miers commented, "They looked as big as a cigar and I was just waiting for one of them to hit."

Finally, at 1,000-feet, the major lost the VC machine-gunners in the darkness.

-more-

14-1-B-1

med-evac - 2-2-2-2-2-2

He orbited at 3,000 feet and radioed the ground Marines that he would orbit until the mortar attack was over.

The ground Marines replied, "No, this zone is too hot, come back at first light with more helo's."

Maj. Guay proceeded to "B" Med. and dropped off a wounded Marine. As they left, four additional HMM-261 aircraft were alerted and scrambled for med-evac's.

The major was designated flight leader.

Approaching the same area he informed ground Marines to identify themselves by blinking flash lights straight up into the sky.

Following positive identification of the LZ, Maj. Guay double-checked with each pilot to ensure that they knew where the LZ was.

A miss would mean certain danger because the ground Marines were covered on three sides by the VC.

Hostile fire varied as the helo's individually descended into the zone.

Maj. Guay led the flight into the hot zone and to "B" Med. six times.

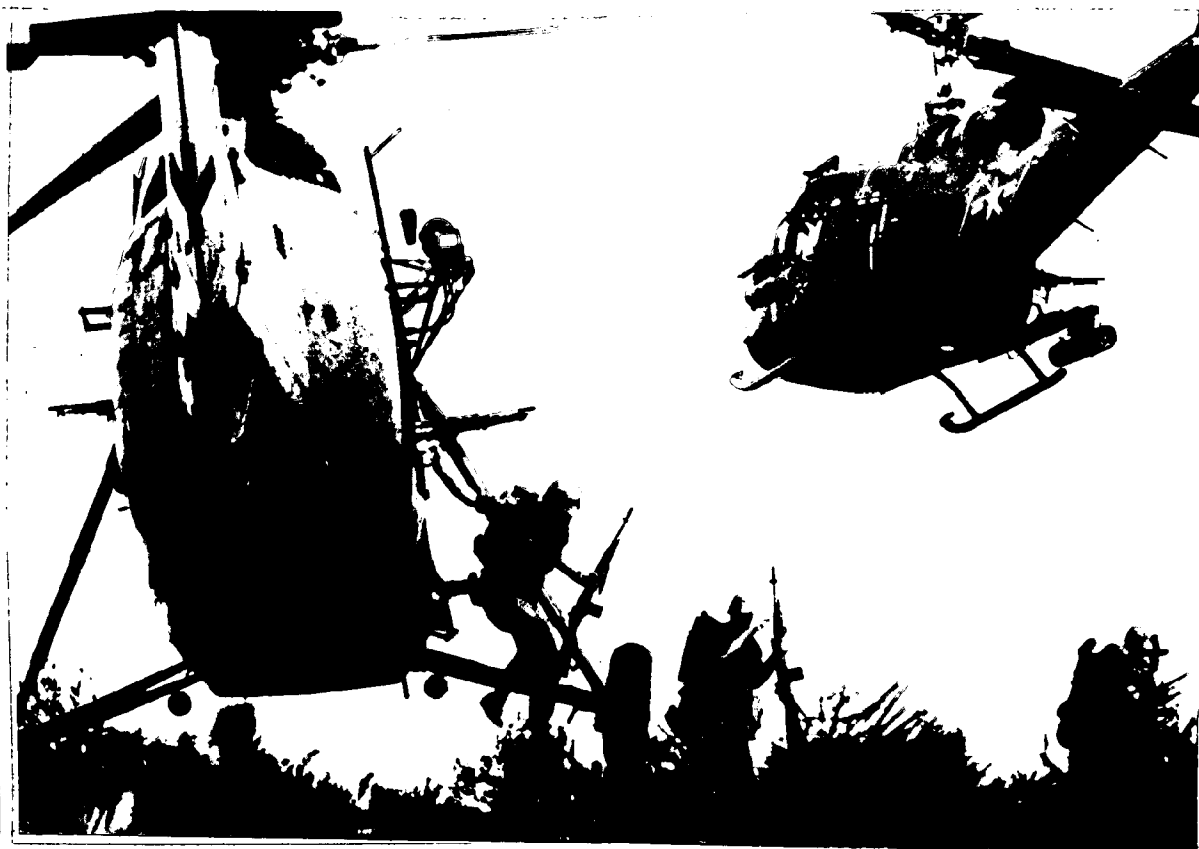
The final trip concluded six hours of flight for Guay, and over 10 hours for Lt. Miers for the day.

Their flights had been through the hottest landing zone HMM-261 has flown in and out of during their 9 months of combat operations in Vietnam.

-USMC-

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DECLASSIFIED

FORCE INFORMATION OFFICE
III MARINE AMPHIBIOUS FORCE AND NAVAL COMPONENT COMMAND
MILITARY ASSISTANCE COMMAND, VIETNAM
C/O FPO, SAN FRANCISCO,
CALIFORNIA 96602

Release No: 519-66

First Marine Aircraft Wing Release No: X-141-66

By: GySgt. Bob Russell

Da Nang Press Center

Da Nang, Vietnam

Tel: Da Nang 6259

trap

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

CHU LAI, Vietnam, March 19 -- Eight helicopters of Marine Medium Helicopter Squadron (HMM)-261 were hit by VC small arms fire at Ann Hoa outpost today when they made an emergency lift ferrying 120 Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) soldiers from Quang Ngai to the besieged outpost.

Five of the crew members were wounded in the action, but are reported in good condition.

A flight of 10 'copters lead by Maj. Robert P. Guay (Bronx, N.Y.), along with two gunships from Marine Observation Squadron (VMO)-6, was told the outpost was still under friendly control (although all communications were lost at that time).

Upon arrival at the landing zone (LZ), ARVN soldiers, women and children (some wounded) were waving at them.

Maj. Guay began his approach into the LZ, and as he set down .50 caliber machine-guns opened up on him and the other choppers in the zone.

The second chopper was immediately damaged and took a wave-off. Two other aircraft managed to sneak past the Viet Cong and landed in the zone.

The three 'copters that were able to get in, dropped off 30 ARVN troops. All other choppers were waved off.

-more-

4-2-1

trap - 2-2-2-2-2-2

Five out of six choppers that attempted to land were hit by intense enemy fire.

The lift was aborted and the pilots headed back for Quang Ngai.

After an evaluation of the situation at Quang Ngai, it was decided to retract the 30 ARVN troops they had just inserted.

But first there was to be a one-hour LZ preparation by U.S. Marine and U.S. Air Force fixed-wing aircraft.

"I decided to send four aircraft in at a time, instead of all of us trying it at the same time," stated Maj. Guay. "I would go in by myself, while the remaining five choppers stayed aloft to pick up any craft that might be shot down."

As the 'copters started down, the fixed-wing aircraft covered the southwest side of the zone, while the Hueys suppressed the enemy's fire in the outpost itself.

The choppers went in under heavy enemy fire. The lift was accomplished and the 30 ARVN's were ferried back to Quang Ngai.

During the retraction three of the four choppers which landed received hits.

Though all reached Quang Ngai safely, two of the helicopters were incapable of flight back to their home base at Ky Ha.

As Maj. Guay said:

"When it was all over and all were safe, everyone stood at least 15 feet tall."

-USMC-

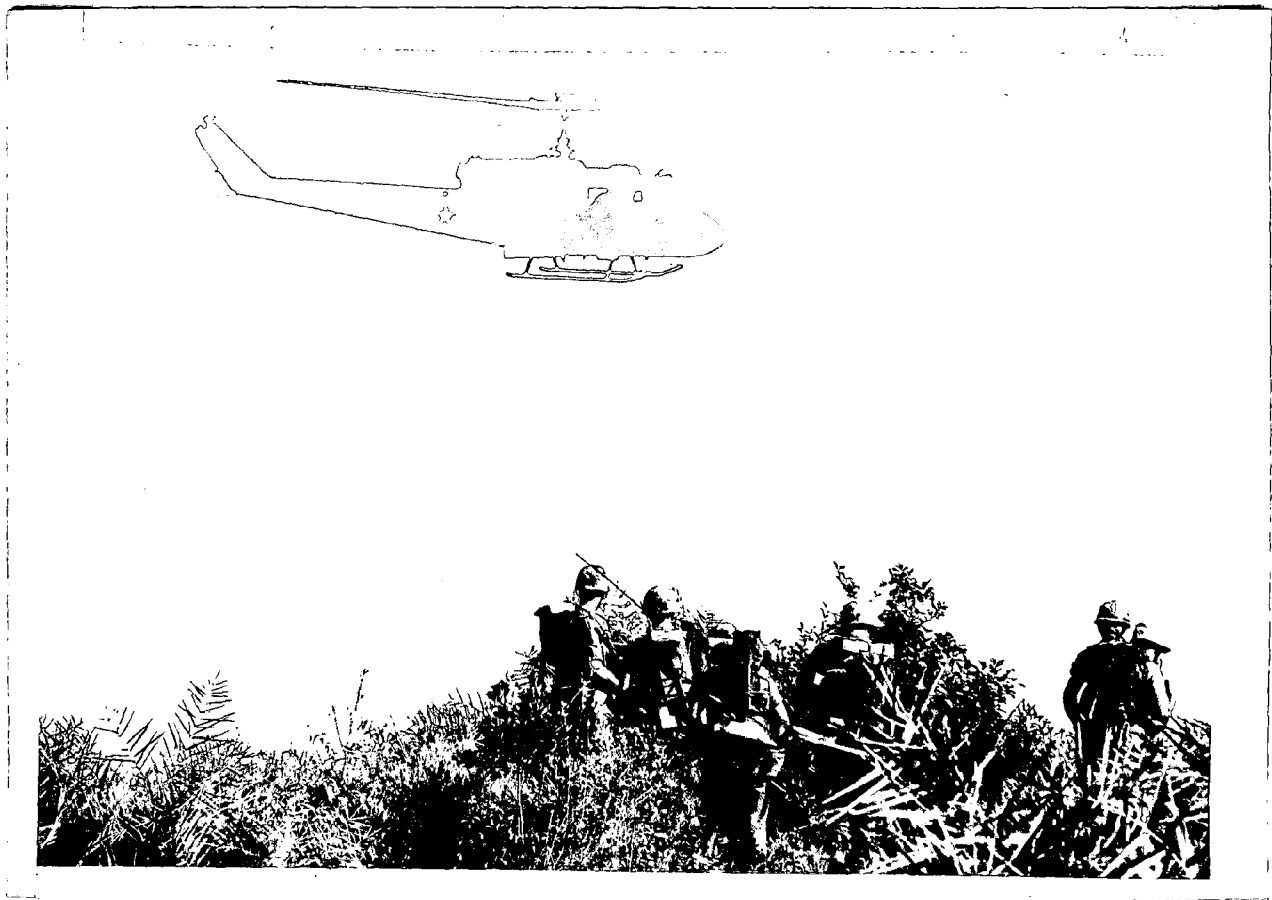
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4-2-A-1



4-3-1



4-3-2