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17 NOV 1966

SECRET (unclassified upon removal of basic correspondence)

FIRST ENDORSEMENT of CO, Marine Medium Helicopter  
sqd 161 MAG-16 1st MAW ltr 3:LWJ;rfr over 5216 Ser: 003A30866

From: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific  
To : Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)

Subj.: Combat Chronology for month of October 1966

1. Forwarded.

*M. C. DALBY*  
M. C. DALBY  
By direction

1966-11-17  
CMDR CORPS

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 161  
 Marine Aircraft Group 16  
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMF, Pacific  
 c/o FPO San Francisco 96602

3:LWJ:rfr  
 5216  
 003 A30866

From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commandant of the Marine Corps, (Code A03D)  
 Via: Commanding General, Fleet Marine Forces, Pacific  
 Info: Commanding Officer, Marine Aircraft Group 16  
 Subj: Combat Chronology for month of October 1966  
 Ref: (a) MCO 5720.2  
 (b) WgO 5750.1B  
 Encl: ✓(1) Combat Chronology

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), the combat chronology report for the period 1 through 31 October 1966 is submitted.
2. This cover letter is downgraded to unclassified upon the removal of enclosure (1).

*C. E. Wyndham Jr.*  
 C. E. WYNDHAM Jr.

HMM-161	
SAC # 324-66	
COPY 1 OF 5 COPIES	

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1. SQUADRON HMM-161  
2. LOCATION HUE BHU BAU, RVN -2  
3. REPORTING PERIOD 1-31 OCTOBER 1966  
4. COMMAND STAFF

C.O. LTCOL. C. E. WYDNER Jr. 04227/7335

X.O.

S-1 CAPT. F. C. LEWIS 076554/7335  
S-2 CAPT. G. L. STARR 085316/7335  
S-3 MAJ. L. W. JARMAN 062139/7335  
S-4 CAPT. P. F. JANSS 075407/7335  
MAINT MAJ. P. N. SAMARUS 069223/7335

SQUADRON STRENGTH

OFFICERS: 31 NA, 3 AG, 1 MC

ENLISTED: 125

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1 October 1966. Four aircraft supporting Operation Prairie in various missions carried 16 med evacs, 75 passengers, and 11,950 pounds of cargo. At approximately 1500, YR 23 was on a med evac for Mutter "M" at coordinates XD 974612 and received 57mm recoilless rifle fire. No hits were sustained.

2 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie, 4 aircraft carried 87 passengers, 13,150 pounds of cargo, and 9 med evacs. One aircraft in the Phu Bai area had 1 med evac. Two aircraft supported I Corps and had 2 passengers and 2 med evacs.

Two aircraft in support of the 4th Marines carried 8 passengers.

3 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie 4 aircraft stood by at Dong Ha and 3 aircraft at Khe Sanh. They carried 31 passengers, 12,300 pounds of cargo, 24 med evacs, and 1 dog.

In support of I Corps, one aircraft carried 4 med evacs.

4 October 1966. Three aircraft in the Phu Bai area retracted a company of 107 men from coordinates TD 615195. They had been placed there to aid a recon team that had been surrounded.

Four aircraft supported Operation Prairie and carried 13 passengers, 8,550 pounds of cargo, and 12 med evacs.

In support of the 4th Marines, one aircraft carried 2 med evacs, 3 passengers, and 800 pounds of cargo.

One aircraft supporting I Corps carried 18 med evacs.

5 October 1966. Two aircraft supported I Corps. At 1025, YR 14 was mortared in the zone at coordinates YD 146724 and sustained no hits after delivering, 1,000 pounds of cargo and taking 7 med evacs. Later at 2020, YR 22 made 2 med evacs at coordinates YD 173732 and drew small arms fire, but received no hits.

Six aircraft supported Operation Prairie with 4 at Dong Ha and 2 at Khe Sanh. They carried 51 med evacs, 56 passengers and 5,950 pounds of cargo.

Two aircraft for Phu Bai med evac and 4th Marine support carried 27 passengers, 4 med evacs, and 8,708 pounds of cargo.

6 October 1966. Six aircraft supported Operation Prairie and carried 41 med evacs, 48 passengers, and 14,100 pounds of cargo.

One aircraft on Phu Bai med evac carried 3 med evacs, 47 passengers, and 600 pounds of cargo.

Three aircraft in support of I Corps carried 7 passengers, 12 med evacs, and 300 pounds of cargo.

7 October 1966. Five aircraft searched the area from 10 miles north of Hue to Hai Van Pass from the mountains to 10 miles at sea for EP 154 lost some time after 2050 on 6 October, presumably at sea.

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The search was conducted from 1000 until after dark. No traces were found.

Operation Prairie support consisted of 5 aircraft that carried 7,850 pounds of cargo, 123 passengers, and 9 med evacs.

One aircraft supported I Corps and carried 3 med evacs and 3 passengers.

Two aircraft carried 800 pounds of cargo, 5 med evacs, and 8 passengers, in support of the 4th Marines.

8 October 1966. Eight aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 53 med evacs, 74 passengers, and 12,650 pounds of cargo.

9 October 1966. Four aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 19 med evacs, 5 passengers, and 680 pounds of cargo.

10 October 1966. Six aircraft supported Operation Prairie. They carried 1,600 pounds of cargo, 83 passengers, and 22 med evacs. Two of the aircraft inserted a 5 man recon team at YD 9446 and the lead aircraft drew small arms fire. No hits were sustained. The team had to be retracted immediately under cover of two US Army UH-1E gunships.

One aircraft in support of I Corps carried 15 med evacs.

11 October 1966. Eight aircraft supported Operation Prairie at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh. They carried 160 passengers, 23 med evacs, and 17,150 pounds of cargo.

12 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie this day were 8 aircraft. They carried 113 passengers, 59 med evacs, and 7,350 pounds of cargo. Two aircraft, YR 1 and YR 4, were on med evacs at YD 114722 and YD 116724 and drew small arms fire each time. YR 1 sustained 2 hits at approximately 1620.

In support of I Corps, one aircraft carried 4 passengers and 4 med evacs.

13 October 1966. Eight aircraft supported Operation Prairie with two of them at Khe Sanh. They carried 80 passengers, 9,600 pounds of cargo, and 29 med evacs.

14 October 1966. At Dong Ha and Khe Sanh, 8 aircraft supported Operation Prairie. They carried 141 passengers, 37 med evacs, and 14,575 pounds of cargo. While performing a med evac at coordinates YD 113673, YR 16 received 2 hits in the main rotor blades. The time was approximately 1245.

15 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie were 8 aircraft. They carried 107 passengers, 12,100 pounds of cargo, and 11 med evacs.

In support of the 3rd MAR DIV, 2 aircraft carried 8 passengers.

16 October 1966. Eight aircraft supported Operation Prairie in various missions carrying 104 passengers, 13,388 pounds of cargo, and 2 med evacs.

Two aircraft supported I Corps. They carried 3 med evacs and 6 passengers. On returning from one med evac, YR 20 had an engine failure and landed safely at YD 086155.

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17 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh were 8 aircraft. They carried 138 passengers, 2,850 pounds of cargo, and 20 med evacs.

One aircraft in support of I Corps carried 10 med evacs and 1 passenger.

18 October 1966. Six aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 69 passengers, 2,250 pounds of cargo, and 5 med evacs.

In support of 3rd MARDIV, 2 aircraft inserted an 8 man recon team.

19 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie 6 aircraft carried 118 passengers, 4,950 pounds of cargo, and 1 med evac.

One aircraft carried 8 med evacs for I Corps.

20 October 1966. Six aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 111 passengers, 50,900 pounds of cargo, and 9 med evacs.

One aircraft carried 2 med evacs for I Corps.

One aircraft in support of 3rd MARDIV carried 11 passengers and 400 pounds of cargo.

21 October 1966. Eight aircraft in support of Operation Prairie at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh carried 108 passengers, 3,670 pounds of cargo, and 2 med evacs.

Three aircraft in support of 3rd MARDIV carried 25 passengers and 100 pounds of cargo.

One aircraft carried 4 passengers and 17 med evacs for I Corps.

22 October 1966. In support of Operation Prairie 6 aircraft carried 34 passengers, 1,500 pounds of cargo, and 9 med evacs.

23 October 1966. Two aircraft in support of 3rd MARDIV carried 47 passengers, 5,100 pounds of cargo, and 1 med evac.

Operation Prairie support was handled by 6 aircraft carrying 25 passengers and 1,700 pounds of cargo.

24 October 1966. One aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 18 passengers and 2,200 pounds of cargo in recovery operations for 2 UH-1E's that crashed during a night med evac performed by an HMM-161 aircraft on the night of 23 October.

Six aircraft in support of Operation Prairie carried 73 passengers, 9,900 pounds of cargo, and 22 med evacs.

In support of I Corps 2 aircraft carried 60 passengers, 8,000 pounds of cargo, and 4 med evacs.

One aircraft carried 34 passengers and 150 pounds of cargo for the 3rd MARDIV.

25 October 1966. Eight aircraft supported Operation Prairie and carried 45 passengers, 200 pounds of cargo and 8 med evacs.

Two aircraft carried 19 med evacs for I Corps.

In support of the 3rd MARDIV 1 aircraft carried 100 passengers, 1,800 pounds of cargo, and 2 med evacs.

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26 October 1966. Eight aircraft at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh in support of Operation Prairie carried 83 passengers, 5,800 pounds of cargo, and 12 med evacs.

27 October 1966. Eight aircraft in support of Operation Prairie at Dong Ha and Khe Sanh carried 103 passengers, 3,200 pounds of cargo, and 9 med evacs.

In support of the 3rdMARDIV, 2 aircraft carried 25 passengers, 1,400 pounds of cargo, and 9 med evacs.

28 October 1966. Eight aircraft supported Operation Prairie and carried 22 passengers.

In support of the 3rdMARDIV, 2 aircraft made an emergency retraction of a 10 man recon team at YD 720115 and received small arms fire. No hits were received.

Further in support of the 3rdMARDIV, 4 aircraft carried 41 passengers, 5,200 pounds of cargo, and 11 med evacs.

29 October 1966. Two aircraft made an admin run to the USS. Valley Forge with 7 passengers.

One aircraft in support of the 3rdMARDIV carried 4 passengers on a recon overflight and observed fire at YD 575245. No hits were sustained.

30 October 1966. Twelve aircraft were used to move 74 squadron personnel and 65,400 pounds of cargo to the USS Iwo Jima. Four additional aircraft were ferried out.

31 October 1966. The squadron officially left Phu Bai today when the Commanding Officer left.

Two aircraft flew an admin run to the 1stMAW pad and Marble Mountain with 3 passengers and 100 pounds of cargo.

Two aircraft flew an admin run to the USS Valley Forge and Phu Bai with one passenger.

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S-1

A. Personnel. LtCol. C. E. Wydner Jr. replaced LtCol. S. F. Martin as Commanding Officer on 1 October 1966. During the month of October 8 Officers were joined and 11 were dropped for a total of 35 officers on hand. During the same period, 26 enlisted were joined and 13 were dropped for a total of 125 on hand.

Officer promotions during the month of October were as follows, one O-3 to O-4, four O-2 to O-3 and three O-1 to O-2.

One man was promoted to E-7, one to E-6, one to E-4, two to E-3 and two to E-2.

B. Special Services. There were no special services activities during the month of October.

C. ISO. Home town news releases and short news articles have continued to be forwarded to appropriate home town news media and far east military news papers.

D. Awards and Decorations. There were no awards or decorations during the month of October.

E. Casualties. During the month of October there were no casualties.

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S-2

1. During the month of October, normal intelligence operations were conducted. Briefings were given to the troops as needed during morning musters and intelligence information was provided to officers during all officers meetings.
2. Enemy activity increased at the Phu Bai base of Operations along the HMM-161 perimeter. There were a total of seven probing incidents during the month resulting in the only physical damage as 1 round of unknown caliber lodging in the hanger. No casualties as a result.
3. Intelligence Operations were resumed 1 October at Phu Bai vice HMM-163 who eventually assumed operations (intelligence-wise) on 30 October 1966.
4. There were a total of five fire incidents involving seven aircraft resulting in no hits. This is a marked decrease over the previous months since HMM-161 first arrived in Vietnam this year. This is the lowest fire incident rate since July of 1965.
5. Civil Affairs were turned over to the Chaplain with little work in that field being done.
6. Increased security of indigenous personnel and increased smuggling on their part resulting in the restriction of all outgoing materials from the base. Five personnel were fired including the security matron.

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1. Flight Operational Statistics

Hours Flown	1081.5
Sorties	3,249
Pax	3,264
Med-Evacs	740
Cargo (Tons)	205.3
ARVN Support (Hrs)	83.4

2. Special Operations. The squadron participated in the Operations below, with the results shown. More detailed information is contained in the narrative section of this chronology.

<u>OPERATION NAME</u> <u>INCLUSIVE DATES</u>	<u>PASSENGERS</u>	<u>CARGO</u> <u>TONS</u>	<u>MED-EVACS</u>
PRAIRIE (1-31)	2,478	121.9	580

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**LOGISTICS** **DECLASSIFIED**

1. MARLOG flight between Marble Mountain Air Facility and Phu Bai was established during the middle of the month. The flight originates at Marble Mountain and proceeds to Dong Ha via Phu Bai. It then returns to Marble Mountain via Phu Bai. This MARLOG has greatly helped alleviate the supply problem caused by the geographical separation of the Phu Bai squadron and MAG-16 at Marble Mountain.
2. Because of the temporary delay of the squadron's rotation to Okinawa on September 30 1966, the majority of the personnel and departments operated out of packing boxes during the month.
3. Prior to the 27th of October the squadron had no official information as to when and how it would be rotated to Okinawa. On the 27th the Commanding Officer of the replacement squadron HMM-163 and his logistics officer made a liaison trip to Phu Bai. The tentative schedule for the embarkation of HMM-161 was set for the afternoon of the 31st and the morning of the 1st of November. The USS Valley Forge was to receive the squadron.
4. At 1100 on the 30th, the squadron was notified of a shipping change, and that the USS Iwo Jima would be ready to embark the early that same afternoon. The first aircraft departed Phu Bai at 1400 and the last aircraft landed aboard LPD-2 at 1815 with the exception of two persons, the squadron was completely embarked within 7 hours of initial notification. The actual embarkation took 4 hours using 12 UH-34's and 2 UH-46's.
5. At 1900 31 October the squadron was informed that it would disembark on 1 November 1966.
6. The following is the PCL consumption for the month:

AVGAS	74,795 Gal	\$11,967.20
AVOIL	1,925 Gal	\$962.50

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MAINTENANCE DEPARTMENT

1. During the month of October HMM-161 flew 1081.5 hours while maintaining an availability of 51.4%. The following were causes of nonavailability:

AOPC	17.3%
MAJOR COMPONENT CHANGE	9.3%
CALENDAR INSPECTION	3.2%
MINOR PART REPLACEMENT	2.5%
TEST & QUALITY CONTROL	2.8%
AVIONICS	4.6%
BEATS & FREQS	3.5%
METAL WORK	1.5%
MISCELLANEOUS	1.0%

2. During the month of October the following major components were either changed or failed:

TAIL GEAR BOX	2
MID GEAR BOX	1
MAIN ROTOR HEAD	9
TAIL ROTOR HEAD	30
TAIL ROTOR BLADES	6
CLUTCH	14
GENERATOR	5
HYDRAULIC PUMP	2
CARBURETOR	5
MAGNETO	8
STARTER	3
FUEL PUMPS	2
ENGINES	4
	8

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