

MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 163  
 Marine Aircraft Group 36  
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
 PO San Francisco 96602

3:RSC:jid  
 5750  
 SerNo:003A31267  
 8 November 1967

SECRET - NOFORN

From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commander, Task Group Seventy Nine Point Four

Subj: Command Chronology; submission of

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2  
 (b) CTG 79.4 ltr 3:RJM:djm over 5750 dtd 5 Apr 67

Encl: (1) Command Chronology for the Period 1-30 October 1967

*N/A, BASTION WILL/MEDINA/FREMONT/GRANITE, 10-30 Oct 67*

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), enclosure (1) is submitted.

2. This letter is downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1).

*F. A. RUECKEL*  
 F. A. RUECKEL

AMM-163

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## CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

10 October 1967

At 0730 H fifteen (15) UH-34D helicopters commenced an administrative troop lift (Operation BASTION HILL) of HLT 1/3 (-) from the LPH-3 to LZ YD 395450. The lift was completed at 1800H.

During the troop lift, one (1) aircraft, YP-23, made a forced landing aboard the USS DULUTH (LPD-6) due to a severed hydraulic line resulting from a weapon accidentally discharged by passenger.

11 October 1967

At 0800H thirteen (13) UH-34D helicopters commenced a D-DAY strike (Operation MEDINA) lifting HLT 1/3 (-) plus Battalions 1/2 and 2/1 from LZ YD 315543 to LZ DOVE (YD 309378). Upon completion of lifting us troops, the squadron undertook a lift of two (2) RVN battalions from PK-17 (YD 640275) to LZ BUZZARD (YD 266394).

In addition to the strikes, HMM 163 also flew medevac and resupply missions throughout the day.

The D-Day lift was completed at 1800H. Two (2) aircraft took fire but received no hits.

12 October 1967

HMM 163 continued in support of Operation MEDINA by flying troop lifts, medevacs and resupplies. Two (2) fire incidents were reported, but no aircraft were hit.

13 October 1967

A normal day of administrative medevac and resupply was flown by the squadron. No fire incidents were recorded.

14 October 1967

Squadron aircraft flew emergency resupply, medevac and administrative missions in support of Operation MEDINA. One (1) aircraft, YP-7, took one (1) hit through its cabin as a result of enemy automatic weapons fire. No injuries were reported.

15 October 1967

Flight operations continued in support of Operation MEDINA. Missions flown were medevac, resupply and administrative flights. No fire incidents were reported.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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SECRET L NOFORN16 October 1967

HMM 163 was utilized in flying medevac, resupply and general administrative missions in support of Operation MEDINA. There were no fire incidents on this day.

17 October 1967

The squadron continued supporting Operation MEDINA by flying medevac, resupply and administrative missions. Two (2) aircraft reported taking fire but no hits were taken.

18 October 1967

Squadron aircraft flew medevac and resupply missions together with Recon Inserts and Extracts in support of III MAF and the SLF. One (1) aircraft sustained damage to its left landing gear strut as a result of a hard landing. There were four (4) fire incidents reported with one (1) aircraft, YP-16, taking a hit through its cabin while engaged in a medevac mission. No member of the crew was injured as a result of the incident.

19 October 1967

HMM 163 sent two (2) aircraft to Dong Ha for medevac duty while the USS Okinawa steamed out of the Squadrons' operating area in order to avoid an approaching typhoon.

20 October 1967

Flight operations resumed in support of III MAF and the SLF. One (1) aircraft reported taking enemy fire but no hits were reported.

21 October 1967

The squadron continued in support of III MAF and the SLF by flying medevac, resupply and general administrative type missions. No reports of hostile fire were recorded.

22 October 1967

HMM 163 flew normal resupply medevac and administrative missions in support of III MAF and the SLF. One (1) fire incident was reported with the aircraft involved taking no hits.

23 October 1967

Squadron aircraft were utilized in flying medevac, resupply, and administrative missions supporting III MAF and the SLF. There were no incidents of enemy fire.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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Medevac and resupply missions in addition to Recon Inserts and Extracts were flown in support of III MAF and the SLF. There was one (1) report of hostile fire but no hits were taken.

25 October 1967

The squadron continued in support of III MAF and the SLF by flying medevac resupply and administrative missions. No fire incidents were reported.

26 October 1967

At 0755H fourteen (14) UH-34D helicopters commenced a D-Day (Operation FRONT/GRANITE) lift of ELT 1/3 from Camp Evans (YD 548230) to LZ MALLARD (YD 468232). After completion of this first phase of the operation, Phase II (RVN troop lift) was undertaken. The second phase consisted of lifting two (2) RVN Battalions from PK-17 (YD 638275) to LZ EAGLE (YD 537184). Both phases of the combined lift were completed by 1800H.

At 1538H YP-13 experienced complete engine failure without warning. The pilot autorotated to landing without further difficulty. Two (2) aircraft reported taking fire, but neither one was hit.

27 October 1967

HMM 163 flew O+I support of Operation GRANITE by lifting one (1) RVN Battalion from PK-17 (YD 638275) to LZ ROBIN (YD 595243). In addition to the troop lift, squadron aircraft supported SLF and III MAF operations by flying emergency medevac, resupply, administrative and recon insert and extract missions. Three (3) fire incidents were reported but no squadron aircraft received hits.

28 October 1967

Medevac, resupply and administrative missions were flown in support of III MAF and the SLF. Two (2) fire incidents took place with one (1) aircraft, YP-22, suffering three (3) hits from enemy automatic weapons. Damage received was classified as Echo. Another aircraft, YP-3, also received Echo damage as it settled into trees while on a hoist emergency medevac. No crew members were injured in either of these incidents.

29 October 1967

HMM 163 flew medevac, resupply and administrative missions in support of III MAF and the SLF. One (1) aircraft reporting taking fire but received no hits.

30 October 1967

HMM 163 offloaded from the USS Okinawa to Quang Tri and reported OpCon CG, 1st MAW 301400H 67.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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## ANALYSIS OF HELICOPTER OPERATIONS

1. General

Helicopter operations were conducted from the USS Okinawa (LPH-3) during operation BASTION HILL/MEDINA/FREMONT/GRANITE. After the initial first day lift of HLT 1/3 ashore, the USS Okinawa was used primarily for casualty handling and refueling. Weather, in the way of low clouds and rain squalls delayed one of the major lifts and hampered resupply and medevacs to some degree. Communications with helicopter varied from adequate to good.

2. Analysis

a. The selection of landing zones for Operation MEDINA and GRANITE were poor. Uneven terrain, high elephant grass, bomb craters, and tree stumps limited the landing area and presented a hazard to all aircraft involved. Medevacs during the operations were also hampered due to heavy canopy in the area of operation.

b. Communications and Coordination

There were no major communications problems on during any of the operations. Coordination between the SLF, Squadron and Battalions involved went smoothly.

c. Operations of Logistic Support Area

Most of all logistic support missions were flown from the 1st Marines LSA just south of Quang Tri. The LSA was well organized and no delays were encountered in loading the helicopters. The LSA was large enough to accomodate four (4) UH-34D's and dust presented no real problem. There were few obstructions in the area of the LSA and in general was an excellent choice from an Aviation point of view.

d. Resupply of Companies

Resupply missions to the individual companies seemed to be well planned and coordinated. Emergency night type resupply missions were held to a minimum by prior planning. Most emergency missions were caused by either poor weather or enemy action. Some marginal zones were encountered on Operation MEDINA while supporting 1/2 and 2/1. 1/3's zones were excellent on this operation, probably due to fact that they were on more favorable terrain.

3. Conclusions

In view of the steep terrain, dense jungle and sometimes marginal weather condition that existed during these operations, in particular Operations MEDINA and GRANITE, they were conducted smoothly and without any major problems. The fact that no aircraft or crewmembers were lost and the job was accomplished under these trying conditions was due partially to good planning and a minute coordination between the Aviation and ground units involved.

ENCLOSURE (2)  
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<u>DATE</u>	<u>SORTIES</u>	<u>PAX</u>	<u>CARGO</u>	<u>MEDEVACS</u>	<u>HOURS</u>
10oct67	341	928	2.4	0	136.6
11oct67	238	473	3.1	15	87.1
12oct67	107	204	1.6	39	51.8
13oct67	87	82	3.2	12	47.4
14oct67	158	119	16.3	4	46.5
15oct67	115	126	6.3	4	36.6
16oct67	144	158	11.3	3	51.6
17oct67	118	120	3.2	4	41.1
18oct67	232	228	8.2	76	77.7
19oct67	0	0	0	0	6.7
20oct67	94	185	6.5	39	55.4
21oct67	83	130	6.2	26	42.9
22oct67	70	132	4.2	12	38.8
23oct67	140	151	6.1	3	68.5
24oct67	129	202	8.2	6	63.7
25oct67	141	159	9.1	3	50.7
26oct67	167	406	0.4	1	73.4
27oct67	152	375	3.3	41	61.6
28oct67	109	140	2.8	9	43.4
29oct67	23	0	0	0	33.4
30oct67	0	0	0	0	46.1
-----					
TOTAL	2648	4261	87.4	297	1156.2

Number aircraft hit by enemy fire	3
Number Fire Incidents	22
Number aircraft damaged or destroyed operationally	3
Number of personnel Wounded In Action	0
Number of Killed In Action	0

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NOFORNPART IINARRATIVE SUMMARY

During this period, HMM-163, located aboard the USS Okinawa, was under operational control of the CTG 79.4. The primary activities during this period were administrative and logistic flights in support of Task Group 79.4 and in direct support of Operations BASTION HILL/MEDINA and LIBERTY II/GRANITE.

PART IIISIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 7.2  
Sorties 25  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: HMM 163 flew general administrative missions in support of the SLF.

2 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 12.5  
Sorties 22  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative type missions in support of the SLF.

3 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 13.1  
Sorties 3  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative and maintenance flights.

4 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 16.1  
Sorties 2  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative and maintenance flights.

5 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 19.2  
Sorties 48  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative type flights in support of the SLF.

6 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 10.2  
Sorties 44  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative missions in support of SLF operations were flown together with maintenance test hops.

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7 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 12.0  
Sorties 14  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative missions and test flights.

8 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 7.9  
Sorties 24  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative and maintenance flights.

9 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 19.4  
Sorties 14  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Administrative and maintenance flights.

10 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 136.6  
Sorties 341  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: HMM 163 flew an administrative troop lift in preparation for Operation BASTION HILL/MEDINA.

11 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 87.1  
Sorties 238  
Fire Incidents 2  
Comments: Squadron launched initial strike in support of Operation BASTION HILL/MEDINA. Following the strike, medevac, resupply and administrative missions were flown.

12 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 51.8  
Sorties 107  
Fire Incidents 2  
Comments: Continued in support of Operation BASTION HILL/MEDINA.

13 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 47.4  
Sorties 87  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Flights consisted of medevac, resupply and administrative missions in support of the SLF and Operation MEDINA.

October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 46.5  
Sorties 158  
Fire Incidents 1  
Comments: Emergency resupply, medevac and general administrative type missions were flown in support of Operation MEDINA. One (1) aircraft, YP-7, received one (1) hit through its cabin as a result of enemy automatic weapons fire. No injuries were reported.

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15 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 36.6  
 Sorties 115  
 Fire Incidents 0  
 Comments: Continued in support of Operation MEDINA.

16 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 51.6  
 Sorties 144  
 Fire Incidents 0  
 Comments: Continued in support of Operation MEDINA.

17 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 41.1  
 Sorties 118  
 Fire Incidents 2  
 Comments: Continued in support of Operation MEDINA.

18 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 77.7  
 Sorties 232  
 Fire Incidents 4  
 Comments: HMM 163 flew medevac, resupply, recon inserts and extracts in support of III MAF and the SLF. One (1) aircraft, YP-5, received damage to its left landing gear strut as a result of a hard landing. No one was injured in the mishap. Another aircraft, YP-16, took a hit through its cabin while on a medevac mission.

19 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 6.7  
 Sorties 0  
 Fire Incidents 0  
 Comments: Squadron sent two (2) aircraft to Dong Ha for medevac duty while ship steamed out of area to avoid approaching typhoon.

20 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 55.4  
 Sorties 94  
 Fire Incidents 1  
 Comments: Flight operations in support of the SLF, III MAF and I Corps.

21 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 42.9  
 Sorties 83  
 Fire Incidents 0  
 Comments: Medevac, resupply and general administrative type flights in support of the SLF and III MAF.

22 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 38.8  
 Sorties 70  
 Fire Incidents 1  
 Comments: Continued in support of the SLF and III MAF.

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23 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 68.5  
Sorties 140  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Continued in support of the SLF and III MAF.

24 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 63.7  
Sorties 129  
Fire Incidents 1  
Comments: Squadron flew normal medevac, resupply and administrative missions in addition to recon inserts and extracts in support of the SLF and III MAF.

25 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 50.7  
Sorties 141  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: Continued in support of SLF and III MAF operations.

26 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 73.4  
Sorties 167  
Fire Incidents 2  
Comments: HMM-163 launched a D-Day strike in support of Operation LIBERTY II/GRANITE. One (1) aircraft, YP-13, suffered an in-flight engine failure. Pilot executed a safe autorative landing. No damage (other than the engine) was reported.

27 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 61.6  
Sorties 152  
Fire Incidents 3  
Comments: Missions flown in support of the SLF and III MAF.

28 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 43.4  
Sorties 109  
Fire Incidents 2  
Comments: Continued supporting SLF and III MAF operations. Two (2) aircraft received echo damage from direct enemy action. YP-22 took three (3) hits from enemy automatic weapons fire while YP-3 settled into trees on a hoist emergency medevac pickup. There were no squadron personnel injured.

October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 33.4  
Sorties 23  
Fire Incidents 1  
Comments: Flew missions in support of the SLF and III MAF.

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30 October 1967 - (S) Flight Time 46.1  
Sorties 0  
Fire Incidents 0  
Comments: HMM 163 offloaded from the USS Okinawa to  
Quang Tri Air Field.

PART IV

## 1. Flight Data 1-30 October 1967

Flight Hours- - - - - 1273.8

Sorties - - - - - 2897

Pax/Troops - - - - - 4716

Tons of Cargo - - - - - 91.2

Casualties - - - - - 0

2. Awards

During this period the Squadron presented 37 Air Medals.

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COMMAND CHRONOLOGY  
MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 163  
1 - 30 OCTOBER 1967

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ENCLOSURE (1)

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PART IORGANIZATIONAL DATA

## (C) 1. Organizational Data:

(a) Reporting Unit	HMM-163
(b) Location	SLF, USS Okinawa
(c) Reporting	1-30 October 1967
(d) Commanding Officer	F. A. RUECKEL, MAJOR, USMC
(e) Executive Officer	W. T. LUNSFORD, MAJOR, USMC
(f) Operations Officer	R. S. CHARLES, MAJOR, USMC
(g) Administration Officer	D. A. DAVIS, 1/Lt., USMC
(h) Intelligence Officer	H. L. EISENBERG, CAPT., USMC
(i) Logistics Officer	L. S. UNDERHILL, CAPT., USMC
(j) A/C Maintenance Officer	J. L. HIGGS, CAPT., USMC
(k) Aviation Safety Officer	B. M. GORDAN, 1/Lt., USMC
(l) Flight Surgeon	J. W. O'CHLAN, LT., USN

## 2. Task Organization and Unit Location

MAF-15 (Rein), 9th MAB, SLF, USS Okinawa  
1-30 October 1967

## 3. Average Monthly Strength

	USMC	USN	TOTAL
OFFICERS:	43	1	44
ENLISTED:	180	3	183

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MARINE MEDIUM HELICOPTER SQUADRON 163  
 Marine Aircraft Group 36  
 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, FMFPac  
 FPO San Francisco 96602

3:REI:jd  
 CN: 003A32267  
 18 November 1967

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From: Commanding Officer  
 To: Commander, Task Group Seven Nine Point Four  
 Subj: After Action Report, Operations BASTION HILL/MEDINA/FREMONT/GRANITE:  
 submission of  
 Ref: Annex J to CTG 79.4 Operation Plan 120-67  
 Encl: (1) Chronology of Significant Events  
 (2) Analysis of Helicopter Operations  
 (3) Statistical Summary

1. In accordance with Reference (a), enclosures (1), (2) and (3) are submitted.
2. This letter may be downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosures (1), (2) and (3).

R. E. ILZ HOEFER  
 By direction

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MMN-163

a/a BASTION HILL/MEDINA/FREMONT/GRANITE

10-30 Dec 67