

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
Headquarters, 198th Infantry Brigade, Americal Division
APO San Francisco 96219

AVDF-BCC

10 April 1968

SUBJECT: Combat Action Report

Commanding General
Americal Division
ATTN: AVDF-GC
APO 96374

1. Name of Operation: Combat Operations During the TET Offensive
2. Dates of Operation: 29001 January 1968 through 142400 February 1968.
3. Location: QUANG TIN, QUANG NGAI Provinces.
4. Command Headquarters: 198th Infantry Brigade (LT).
5. Reporting Officer: Colonel James R. Waldie, Commanding Officer, 198th Infantry Brigade (LT).
6. Organization: HHC, 198th Infantry Brigade (LT)
9th Support Battalion
1st Battalion, 46th Infantry
1st Battalion, 52d Infantry
1st Battalion, 6th Infantry - OPCON 1st MAR Div & TF
MIRACLE 071515 Feb to 120800 Feb 68.
H Troop, 17th Cavalry
7. Supporting Forces:
 - a. 20th TASS, USAF, DA NANG, 72 visual reconnaissance missions and 14 air strikes.
 - b. 1st Battalion, 14 Artillery (DS) (105mm towed). 1st Bn, 14th Arty of the 198th fired a total of 14,824 rounds in registration, anti-personnel, H&I and countermortar/counterrocket fire missions.
 - c. 3d Bn, 16th Artillery (GSR) 155/8" on call.
 - d. 176th Aviation Co (air Mobile light). Supply, C&C, visual reconnaissance.

GP4 Downgrade at 3 year intervals;
declassified after 12 years.

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8. Intelligence:

a. Terrain analysis: The terrain in the 198th LIB Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR) is chiefly coastal flatlands with mountains bordering the western portion of the AO. The chief avenues of approach into the TAOR are Highway #1, TR. BONG, BEN VAN, and AN TAN Rivers. Fields of fire are limited in some areas by dense vegetation but it is fairly good generally. Population centers are usually located on the main avenues of approach and near the large rice paddy areas.

b. Weather: The weather during the period 29 January to 14 February was generally partly cloudy and fair with visibility averaging 5 to 7 miles. Temperatures averaged in the 80's for the high and in the 60's for a low. Relative humidity was in the range of 60 to 90%. Winds averaged 5 to 10 knots from 330 degrees to 60 degrees. The weather had no ill effect on the combat operations from 29 January to 14 February.

c. Intelligence analysis: Intelligence reports indicated that the VC/NVA would launch a major offensive against American and GVN forces and installations during the Vietnamese New Year. Accordingly, the 198th LIB increased its combat activities and took active measures to increase its defenses. The 198th LIB provided support/reinforcements to GVN and American advisory forces at LY TIN and BINH SON District Headquarters, provided support/reinforcement to US Marine Corps Combined Action Platoon (CAP) posts in the TAOR should they require assistance, and it conducted operations in the Chu Lai TAOR to prevent infiltration of enemy forces. Operations were conducted against 70th Co, 409th Sapper Bn; the 95th LF Company, P-31 LF Company, 706th LF Company, and although no hard sources confirm it, against unknown elements of the 68B NVA Artillery Regiment, whom it is believed rocketed Chu Lai.

9. Mission: The mission of the 198th Infantry Brigade (Lt) was to:

a. Search and destroy enemy forces in the 198th TAOR.

b. Support/reinforce USMC and Advisory Forces in the TAOR at their request.

c. Insure that Highway #1 and other vital routes are secure and trafficable.

d. Provide a 120 minute Battalion alert force for immediate deployment to Da Nang.

e. Patrol the "rocket belt" (that area from which rockets may be effectively fired into CLDC to hit the airstrip, Americal Hq, bomb dump, etc.) to prevent rocket/mortar attacks in the TAOR and upon the Chu Lai installations.

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10 Concept of the Operations: 20 January through 07 February, the 198th conducted normal combat operations in the Chu Lai TAOR & MUSC TIME AO with three infantry battalions and one artillery battalion. The 1st Battalion, 52d Infantry and the 1st Battalion, 46th Infantry conducted normal operations and the 1st Battalion, 6th Infantry became a designated reaction force for 1st Marine Division. Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 6th Inf became the 60 minute alert force and closed to LZ GATOR, BS 575965, on 02 February 1968. The battalion minus continued normal combat missions but continually maneuvered to LZ's in the AO so that they were immediately available for pick up. 07 February, 1st Bn, 6th Inf and Delta Battery, 1st Bn, 14th Inf were ordered to deploy to LZ 410 near Da Nang to search and destroy enemy forces threatening Da Nang. The subsequent actions are recorded in Combat Action Report, "Battle for Lo Giang".

1st Bn, 52d Inf, 1st Bn, 46th Inf AO and the 198th Bde (Lt) conducted normal combat operations in the Chu Lai TAOR & MUSC TIME AO (the area immediately north of Chu Lai TAOR) with two battalions. The 198th secured Highway 1, conducted river patrols by the military police, and provided reaction forces to installations and bases as required. 1st Bn, 14th Inf provided artillery support and counter mortar/rocket fires.

On 08 February OPCON of 1st Bn, 6th Inf passed from 1st Marine Division to Task Force MIRACLE and on 12 February OPCON passed from Task Force MIRACLE to 3d Brigade, 4th Infantry Division.

11. Execution:

On 29 January the 198th continued its search and destroy (S&D) operations in the Chu Lai TAOR and Operation MUSC TIME. Task Force BARKER of the 11th LIB and 4-3 Inf were OPCON to the brigade. Both units reported light contacts with 2 VC KIA. 1st Bn, 6th Inf and 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with negative results. 1st Bn, 46th Inf had no contacts. Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued with river patrols and vehicle checks. B Co 26th Eng Bn continues road clearing operations and assigned projects. 2215H the TF ceasefire was cancelled by Americal Division and all units were immediately put on full operational status.

On 30 January the 198th continued its S&D operations in the Chu Lai TAOR and Operation MUSC TIME. TF BARKER and 4-3 Inf remained OPCON to the brigade. TF BARKER reported 1 VC KIA and 4-3 Inf reported light contact with no results. 1st Bn, 6th Inf and 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported light contacts with negative results. At 0200H Alpha Company, 1st Bn, 52d Inf, BS 700975, and 1st Bn, 46th Inf, BS 695975, received sniper fire from the south. LZ ANN, BS 655961, 1st Bn, 52d Inf Forward Fire Base received 27 mortar rounds from BS 645999 and returned with artillery and mortars. 1 US soldier from C Btry, 1st Bn, 52d Inf was wounded. The Recon Platoon of E Co, 1st Bn, 52d Inf investigated BS 691960 and located the mortar position. There was evidence of artillery and mortar fragments in the immediate area; foot prints led South from the mortar site. At the site 1x M-60 bandolier and 1 NV type first aid pouch were found. At 1140H 1-52d Inf engaged 100 VC between coord BS 682835 and BS 705091 and gunships reported 44 VC killed by air.

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31 January was an extremely active day for the Viet Cong. They launched numerous ground attacks and rocket/mortar attacks in the Chu Lai and neighboring TAOR's. At 0210H 14th Aviation Bn started receiving mortar rounds. A31/1-6 Inf searched the area, BT 583030, after artillery was fired upon the flash site. At 0406H Chu Lai Defense Command (CLDC), 3-16 Arty Bn, and the air strip were hit by rockets/mortars. Suspected mortar/rocket sites were pin pointed at BT 465032, BT 487002, BS 461990 by elements of 1st Bn, 6th Inf and 1st Bn, 46th Inf. The AN TAN River bridge received small arms fire (SAF) and 30 rounds of mortar fire. Bunker 740 and 739 were receiving SAF and mortar fire from the Rock Quarry coord BT 527045 adjacent to the CLDC fence on Highway #1. The Vietnamese Navy Junk Fleet was also receiving SAF. At this time, approximately 0500 hours, 198th elements at the TAM KY Bridge were also receiving SAF, AWF, and mortars. The USMC CAP posts were also having enemy activity. CAP K-4 spotted 120 VC at coordinates BT 444095. CAP K-1 received 13 incoming mortar rounds. CAP K-3 was under ground attack at 0530 and had 1 US WHA. CAP K-6 was under heavy ground attack shortly afterwards. 0630H, CO, 1-46 Inf reported a suspected mortar site at BS 461996. A/1-46 Inf at 0709 was engaged at HOI AN. At 0714 the elements at the AN TAN Bridge reported that the West span was destroyed. BINH SON District Headquarters notified the 198th at 0830 hours that approximately 150 VC were moving up the road at BS 609904, using civilians as shields, and at 0831 artillery was fired. 1st Bn, 52d Inf was ordered to move on the rear of the Viet Cong column and block their escape. From 0900 until 2400 hours there were numerous VC sightings and small engagements. The Viet Cong initiated many small incidents, but no major contacts were made. Where large VC units were reported, artillery fire was used to engage, and to block escape and withdrawal routes. Undoubtedly many Viet Cong were killed and wounded by artillery, but could not be confirmed because of the VC tactic of evacuating all dead and wounded. The 198th counted 137 VC KIA during this 24 hour period. Inclosure 1 shows the rocket/mortar sites that were found by the 198th and the patrol plans for the rocket belt area.

There were very few incidents on 1 February. 1st Bn, 46th Inf received 3 incoming rocket/mortar rounds on Hill 54, BT 387144, but the rounds hit the edge of the perimeter and C/1-6 Inf fired artillery on coordinates BT 429061. At 0500 hours the Americal aerial observer located a rocket site at BT 460005 with 6 firing pits. Possible rocket sites were also located at BS 45839979, BT 457000, BT 473000 and air strikes called on all of the positions. There were two secondary explosions and two rockets flew out of the area, caused by detonation of the airstrike. Numerous agent reports identified Viet Cong locations. There were several sniping incidents, and several culverts were destroyed in an effort to block trafficability of Highway #1. Other reports indicated that the Viet Cong were broadcasting propaganda to the population of AN TAN and other villages near the CLDC.

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On 2 February, the 198th continued search and destroy operations in the Chu Lai TAOR and Operation MUSCATINE. TF BARKER and 4-3 Inf remained OPCON to the brigade. 1st Bn, 52d Inf and 1st Bn, 46th Inf continued to search for rocket sites. No contact was reported. 1st Bn, 6th Inf reported no contact. TF BARKER reported light contact with negative results. 4-3 Inf reported 3 VC KIA and one individual weapon CIA. The Brigade Provost Marshall Office continued waterway security and B/26 Engr Bn continued road clearing operations and assigned projects.

On 3 February the 198th LIB continued search and destroy operations in Chu Lai TAOR and operation MUSCATINE with TF BARKER and 4-3 Inf OPCON. TF BARKER reported scattered light contact with 7 VC KIA. 4-3 Inf reported 1 VC KIA in light contact. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with negative results. 1st Bn, 46th Inf received 2 x 81 or 82mm mortar rounds on Hill 54. Nothing was damaged and there were no casualties. The 1st Bn, 6th Inf reported light contact with negative results. The military police continued with river patrols and B/26 Engr Bn continued with road clearing and assigned projects.

The 198th LIB on 4 February continued its search and destroy operations in the Chu Lai TAOR and Operation MUSCATINE. TF BARKER and 4-3 Inf became OPCON to 11th Light Infantry Brigade as of 1200 hours. 1st Bn, 46th Inf; 1st Bn, 6th Inf; and 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with negative results. A warning order was issued to the Brigade for possible movement to the Da Nang area of 1st Bn, 6th Inf. The Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued its river patrols and B/26 Engr Bn continued with road clearing operations. B Btry, 1st Bn, 14th Arty continued to be OPCON to the 196th LIB.

On 5 February the 198th LIB continued its S&D operations in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 6th Inf and 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with negative results. 1st Bn, 46th Inf also reported light contact and gunships engaged and killed one Viet Cong. The military police reported light sniper fire with negative results. The Provost Marshal Office continued to patrol both the AN TIEN and TRA BONG Rivers. 1st Bn, 6th Inf continued to prepare for deployment North with an artillery battery within 4 hours.

On 6 February at 0406 hours the Chu Lai Defense Command was mortared. Rounds hit the fuel storage area and near 40th Mobile Construction Bn (Seabees) but there was no damage. The 1st Bn, 46th Inf searched three suspected rocket sites using platoon size patrols at coordinates BT 459004, BT 450081, and BT 449033. At coordinates BT 459004, Alpha company, 1st Bn, 46th Inf located six (6) firing pits, two (2) control pits, a rocket body carrying case, a warhead carrying case, twenty (20) fuze cans, 15 fuzes, nine (9) electrical fire devices, male plugs and thirty-seven (37) assorted rocket caps. 1st Bn, 46th Inf and 1st Bn, 6th Inf continued patrolling the rocket launching areas.

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On 7 February, the 198th continued its S&D operations in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 6th Inf Battalion Commander reported to LZ BALDY, and the battalion was to follow on 8 February. The 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with 3 VC KIA. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported killing 2 VC. The Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued with their river patrols and B/26 Engr Bn continued road clearing operation and assigned projects.

On 8 February the 198th LIB continued its search and destroy operations in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 6th Inf completed movement to the vicinity of Da Nang for OPCON to the First Marine Division. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with one Viet Cong KIA. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported negative contact. The Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued its river patrols and B/26 Engr Bn continued with road clearing operations and assigned projects.

On 9 February the 198th LIB continued its search and destroy mission in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with 2 VC KIA. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported light contact resulting in 1 US killed hostile action and 2 US wounded hostile action and evacuated. The Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued its waterway patrolling. The Delta company packets arrived from CONUS and started training at the Americal Combat Center.

The 198th LIB continued S&D operations in the Chu Lai TAOR and NUSC-TIME on 10 February. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported light contact with negative results. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported negative contact. 1st Bn, 6th Inf remained OPCON to TF MIRACLE of the 196th LIB. 40 replacements were sent to 1st Bn, 6th Inf from 1st Bn 46th Inf and 1st Bn, 52d Inf. H/17th Cav reported negative contact. Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued river patrolling operations and B/26 Engr Bn continued road clearing operations and assigned tasks.

On 11 February 1968 the 198th LIB continued its S&D operations in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact with 4 VC KIA. The 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported negative contact. The Brigade Provost Marshal Office continued its river patrols and B/26 Engr Bn continued road clearing operations and work on assigned projects. 1st Bn, 46th Inf prepared to reoccupy OP on Hill 707 to look for rocket/mortar launch sites.

On 12 February the 198th LIB continued its search and destroy operations in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported light contact, with negative results. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported no contacts. 1st Bn, 6th Inf changed OPCON from the 1st Marine Division to 3d Brigade, 4th Inf Division.

On 13 February the 198th LIB continued its S&D mission in the Chu Lai TAOR. 1st Bn, 46th Inf reported light contact with one VC KIA. 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported no contacts. 1st Bn, 6th Inf remained OPCON to 3d Bde, 4th Inf Div. A Division 12 man IRMP killer team was inserted into 1st Bn, 46th Inf AO.

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On 14 February the 198th LIB continued its S&D mission and searched for rocket/mortar sites. The CLDC was mortared at approximately 2050H. Artillery was fired at suspected sites, BT 446042 & BS 457997, reported by the 1st Bn, 46th Inf and BS 476715, BT 777000, reported by 1st Bn, 52d Inf. The last of the incoming rounds was received at 2100 hours. CLDC reported a suspected rocket site BT 511034. OP#5 observed a rocket leave BS 463998. The 1st Bn, 52d Inf reported a suspected rocket site BS 624983 and fired artillery on it. The rockets (6) which hit CLDC did very little damage. Delta company, 1st Bn, 52d Inf completed their orientation at the Americal Combat Center with the planned night ambush.

The period 29 January to 14 February was characterized by numerous small Viet Cong activities. The Viet Cong succeeded in their rocket/mortar attacks on CLDC, the Chu Lai air strip, Quang Ngai, 3-16 Arty Bn, the AN TAN Bridge, and the TAM KY Bridge; however, damage was generally slight. Sappers did succeed in destroying the west span of the AN TAN Bridge and traffic was slowed but not halted. The Viet Cong did not succeed in destroying the TAM KY Bridge. Their attack was repelled by the APC reinforcements from H/17 Cav, 198th LIB. The VC attacks on Marine CAP outposts in the 198th TAO were also unsuccessful due to timely and accurate supporting fires from 1st Bn, 14th Arty of the 198th LIB. Numerous mines and boobytraps were located and destroyed by B/26 Engr Bn and road damage was quickly repaired so that trafficability was maintained. Immediate and accurate counter mortar/rocket fires hindered the VC attempts to destroy American and GVN installations. VC propaganda teams were employed on several occasions but found little support from the local populace, and the VC resorted to using civilians as shields for their movements.

12. Results:

a. Enemy losses: VC KIA -158
VC PW - 11
Innocent Civilians - 20
Civil Defendants - 6
Not Classified - 9

b. Weapons Captured: 1 x M16 36
1 x Chicom Type 53
1 x AK-47
1 x M16
2 x M1 Carbines

c. Ammo Captured:

Small Arms	-1500 rds	Handgrenades Chicom	- 4 ea
M-79 40mm	- 74 rds	Handgrenades M-26	- 2 ea
500 lb bomb	- 1 ea	Boobytraps	- 8 ea
250 lb bomb	- 2 ea	M-16 mine	- 1 ea
Flares, trip	- 4 ea	Satchel Charge	- 3 ea
155mm	- 3 rds	82mm mortar	- 32 rds

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d. Foodstuffs: Rice - 4150 lbs
Salt - 20 lbs
Tobacco - 20 lbs

e. US Casualties: 29 Jan 14 Feb

KHA -27
WHL (light) -91
WHL (serious) -05
Died of wounds -04
KNHL -05
WNHL -17

US casualties reflect whole Brigade but VC KIA and weapons captured by USMC CAP outposts, by TF BARKER and 3-4 Inf and 1st Bn, 6th Inf are not counted. For 1st Bn, 6th Inf totals see Combat Action Report, Battle for Lo Giang.

13. Commander's Analysis: 29 January through 14 February 1968.

The reporting period was characterized by a quick buildup of enemy activity on the evening of 30 January and the morning of 31 January and then a quick reduction in ground activity after 1 February. The majority of the attacks in the Chu Lai TAOR were harassing in nature with the major effort made to destroy the Chu Lai airfield complex with rocket and mortar fire, and to destroy the LN T.N Bridge by a sapper attack. Major ground attacks took place against TAM KY, north of the TAOR boundary and QUANG NGAI, south of the TAOR boundary. The morning following the start of the TET Offensive there was some effort made by the VC to gain the support of the people and to obtain mass demonstrations. Four such attempts were witnessed, with the largest group containing no more than 200-300 people. The VC were in the rear of the columns driving the crowd before them.

The missions of the enemy unit which attacked in the Chu Lai TAOR are believed to be:

a. Destroy by fire, aircraft and installations in and around the airstrip to prevent air support to friendly forces in other areas.

b. Prohibit the use of Highway #1 by reinforcing ground units and logistical elements by destroying the LN T.N Bridge.

c. Fix friendly units in place by harassing ground and fire attacks to prevent reinforcements from moving, and to destroy or reduce effectiveness of artillery elements, and to kill or wound as many friendly troops as possible.

d. To obtain mass populace support for the VC cause and to demonstrate this support through mass demonstration and a take-over of the province and district headquarters.

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No successes, with two exceptions, can be accredited to the enemy during this period. He partially slowed traffic over the AN TUN River by "dropping" one of the two spans, and by destroying several aircraft and installations. The latter was obtained by the explosion of approximately 600 tons of bombs in the Chu Lai Base. The destruction is believed to have been caused by 82mm mortar fire falling on the south end of the CLDC.

Reasons for the lack of success of the VC offensive:

- a. Early warning of possible VC activity and of characteristic initiation of operations during the dark phase of the moon.
- b. Quick response to flash reports on rockets' launch locations by available artillery.
- c. Employment of US troops at critical installations.
- d. An active day and night patrolling program.
- e. Inaccurate dispersion pattern of enemy 122mm rocket fire.
- f. Lack of support by the civilian populace for the VC cause.
- g. Diffusion of the enemy's strength through his efforts to attack many bases and installations instead of only a few.
- h. Lack of the enemy's ability to quickly communicate quick change in plans. This prevented him from exploiting a partial success at the AN TUN Bridge and at several other locations.

FOR THE COMMANDER:

1 Incl
as

KENNETH A. PRYANT
Captain, AGC
Assistant Adjutant

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