

HEADQUARTERS
3d Battalion, 9th Marines
3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF
APO San Francisco 96602

19 April 1969

From: Commanding Officer
To: The Officers and Men of:
H&S Company
"I" Company
"K" Company
"L" Company
"M" Company

Subj: OPERATION DEWEY CANYON

1. One month ago today we completed OPERATION DEWEY CANYON. This was a bold operation into an NVA sanctuary heavily defended by anti-aircraft weapons, far from our support base at Vandegrift, and undertaken during the worst part of the monsoon. We were the first U.S. troops ever to enter this area. We were also the first troops ever to pursue the enemy into Laos. The fire support base we constructed and defended at Cunningham, was the biggest ever established by the 3d Marine Division. We captured for the first time in this war Russian-made 122mm field guns with a range of over 13 miles.
2. This operation was originally planned to last only 3 weeks. We were delayed many times due to bad weather, once for a period of 9 days. During these cold, wet periods of limited resupply and short rations, your spirits never failed and you continued to aggressively accomplish your mission despite the trials of weather and a fanatic enemy.
3. Enemy losses during the operation were staggering. Over 500 tons of enemy ordnance transported down the Ho Chi Minh Trail was seized before the enemy had an opportunity to use it against us, or against Quang Tri, Hue or Danang. This was the largest arms capture so far in this war! In addition, the enemy lost over 1500 troops making this operation the largest and most important undertaken by the regiment during the past year. NVA Route 548 was occupied and cut thus denying the enemy his main supply route into the Ashau Valley. His radio and telephone communications were tapped and exploited to an extent that greatly damaged his ability to hit us.
4. Our success on DEWEY CANYON was not at small cost to us. Our Battalion had 48 men who paid the supreme sacrifice. We will always honor their deeds and cherish their memory. Also, over 240 Marines and Corpsmen from 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, were wounded in action; some for the second or third time. We wish them a speedy recovery.
5. Your outstanding results have not gone unnoticed. The Corps Commander, Lieutenant General STILLWELL, has recommended the regiment for the Army Presidential Unit Citation for this action. Recently, Major General DAVIS received, for the 3d Marine Division, the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm (a unit citation) that covers the period of DEWEY CANYON.
6. I wish to commend each member of the Battalion for his unselfish devotion to duty and his untiring efforts. Congratulations on a job well done, best wishes for success in the future!

E. R. Laine, Jr.

E. R. LAINE JR.

Lieutenant Colonel, U.S. Marine Corps
Commanding