

HEADQUARTERS  
3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF  
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

3/RFF/jjm  
13130  
7 June 1968

From: Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps ( Code A03D )  
Via: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (rein) FMF  
Commanding General, III MAF  
Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1 May 68 - 31 May 68

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A  
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8  
(c) DivO 5750.1A

Encl: ✓(1) May 1968 Command Chronology.

1. In accordance with reference (a), (b), and (c) enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. Group IV: Downgrade at three year intervals with declassification after twelve years. Declassified upon removal of enclosure.

  
DONALD C. MARCHETTE  
By direction

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3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (rein) FMF  
APO San Francisco, California 96602

COMBINED CHRONOLOGY

1 May 1968 to 31 May 1968

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## PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA1. DESIGNATIONCOMMANDER

3d Battalion, 3d Marines

LtCol J. W. MARSH 1 - 31 May

Subordinate Units

H&S Company	1st Lt. P. B. CLOFT	1 - 31 May
India Company	Capt. O. J. LERACK	1 - 11 May
	Capt. M. G. MCTIERNAN	11 - 31 May
Kilo Company	Capt. D. R. FRANK	1 - 31 May
Lima Company	Capt. F. R. MATTHEWS	1 - 31 May
Mike Company	Capt. W. H. MCADAMS	1 - 31 May

ATTACHED UNITS

Whiskey Btry, 1st Bn, 12th Marines	Capt. J. H. STRANK	1 - 25 May
3d Plt, Company "A", 3d Tank Bn	1st Lt. J. E. MCCOLLUM	1 - 25 May
Section, 2nd Plt. Btry "A" ADA AVSP 44th Artillery USA		
	1st Lt. H. C. NELSON	1 - 25 May
Detachment, Company "C" 3d, Engineer Bn.		1 - 25 May

2. Location.

1 - 25 May Quang Tri Province, YD 175723, A-3 RVN  
 26 - 31 May Quang Tri Province, Vicinity of YD 249669 and YD 282668

3. Staff Officers:

Executive Officer	Major G. P. SLADE	1-31 May
S-1	1st Lt. D. C. MARCHETTE	1-31 May
S-2	1st Lt. A. L. ASHBURN	1-20 May
	Capt. R. ZENSEN	20-31 May
S-3	Major R. F. FINDLAY Jr	1-31 May
S-4	1st Lt. E.H. LAURENCE	1-10 May
	1st Lt. G. ESCHENFELDER	10-31 May

4. Average Monthly Strength.

USMC		USN	
OFF	ENL	OFF	ENL
35	1053	2	53

may

## PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

During this reporting period enemy contact was gained with the greatest frequency yet experienced by the Battalion during Operation Kentucky. This was attributable to the proportional increase in emphasis on major operations which saw the Battalion relieved of the A-3 security responsibilities in order that it might participate in ground maneuvers in both the Kentucky and Napoleon-Saline AOs.

On 6 May Companies "L", "M", and "I" deployed with a Command Group from A-3 to conduct an extended sweep and destroy operation while Company "K" which remained OPCON to the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines was assigned as the 9th Marines Helicopter-borne Reserve. Light contact was gained on the 6th and 7th and the fighting intensified on the 8th when the Battalion encountered a dug in and determined company size element which later proved to be the security element for a regimental command post and harboring/storage site to accommodate not less than two NVA battalions. The Battalion was subjected to a heavy volume of machine gun and mortar fire as well as adjusted artillery. The major activity during the remainder of the Operation was devoted to destroying enemy emplacements and supplies, as well as collecting weapons, documents and assorted items of intelligence value. It is worthy of note that 215 individual weapons and 47 crew served weapons including 11 AA weapons were captured as well as over 1300 mortar rounds and 200 RPG rounds. A total of 470 bunkers were also destroyed. The overall list of materials captured and destroyed was a most impressive collection and is contained in the After Action Report for 6-18 May.

On 22 May Company "I" while conducting a two day operation designed to covertly insert ambush patrols in the vicinity of the trace, came upon a company size harbor site at first light. Many of the NVA were asleep or setting about their normal morning tasks. As the scope of the engagement increased, Company "L" and a small Command Group deployed from A-3 to reinforce and exploit. Simultaneously the 9th Marines committed elements of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, 3rd Battalion, 9th Marines and 1st Battalion, 4th Marines to seal off the area of contact. Once again the Battalion elements were subjected to heavy incoming artillery and mortars, but succeeded in driving the NVA from their defensive positions and consolidated night positions in the vicinity of Lac Son. Incoming mortars and artillery as well as sniper fire and light probes were encountered during the night. Ambushes deployed from the defensive positions engaged the enemy with positive results on two occasions. The following day Company "I" continued the attack to the west and during the late afternoon broke the enemy strongpoint of resistance at YD 156695. The ground was consolidated prior to last light and a search conducted the following day once again revealed a significant amount of gear left behind by the withdrawing enemy force.

At 1330H a verbal warning from the Commanding Officer of the 9th Marines was received to be prepared to deploy from A-3 with Companies "I" and "M" under the OPCON of the 3d Marines in the Napoleon-Saline AO. (east of route #1 in the vicinity of YD 267649) At 1430H the Battalion commenced the heli-lift of the initial waves and the lift was completed at 1645H.

The Battalion was chopped to the OPCON of the 3d Marines at 1645H and immediately started to maneuver to the west. Instructions were received from the Commanding Officer, 3d Marines to continue to push forward with the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines on the north flank under cover of darkness until contact was gained with NVA forces. Company "M" engaged what was believed to be the forward security elements for a NVA Battalion dug in near YD 257658, as a result of the contact the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines were unable to establish contact with Company "M" and the units held in position and delivered heavy fires on the enemy. On the following morning Company "M" pushed forward and secured the ground capturing several weapons and causing the enemy to fall back to the area of Ky Truc. At 1100H the Battalion was chopped to OPCON of the 9th Marines and a new concept of operations was initiated by the 9th Marines. The Battalion was directed to seize the ground at YD 257647, YD 259671 and YD 259659 which was already secured by Company "M". Company "I" was assigned to seize the village area at YD 257647 and commenced its attack after delivery of heavy artillery and fixed wing preparation. At 1400H on 26 May 68 the attack met with stiff resistance and moderate friendly casualties were incurred. Five POWs were captured and indicated that the remnants of a NVA Battalion remaining from Company "M's" attack had displaced to the area. Company "I" was withdrawn in favor of heavier preparation fires which were delivered throughout the night and early morning hours. After heavy air strikes were called on the objective area, including 2,000 pound bombs, Company "I" once again attacked the village area and secured same without resistance. On the afternoon of 27 May Companies "B" and "D" of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marines were chopped to the OPCON of 3/3. The Battalion with Companies of 1/9 was to establish the western sector of a cordon with the 3d Battalion 3d Marines on the east and a Battalion of the 2nd ARVN Regiment to the south. The area of resistance to be cordoned included Ky Truc and Ky Lam. Company "D" 1/9 while moving to their assigned sector met stiff resistance at YD 251659 and was pulled back at last light to YD 265656 while Companies "L" and "M" skirted the area of enemy resistance under the cover of darkness to establish blocks at YD 250670 and YD 254665 respectively. On 28 May Company "L" moved to close the cordon by establishing physical contact with Company "K", 3/9 on the northern end at YD 245674. Once this was accomplished Company "I" commenced the attack on Ky Lam. A critical problem was experienced when a combination of rain and sand had reduced the majority of M-16 rifles to

an inoperative state. Under the cover of a M-48 tank furnished by the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines, Lima Company pulled back with their casualties, extremely heavy supporting fires pounded the objective through the night and continued until first light on 30 May when Company "B", 1st Battalion, 9th Marines attacked with seven tanks and with Company "I" in trace. The objective was seized with only light sniper resistance and no friendly casualties. Over 30 NVA were killed and 25 captured.

Fire support was considered to be effective and responsive. On occasions when reaction or effect was less than desirable, rapid corrections were effected by the supporting units.

50 KIA and 319 WIA med evac encountered during the month resulted in a serious personnel shortage as well as a loss of experience which will require reorganization and training effort over the next few weeks to offset the combat loss. Weapons and equipment will also require a maximum replacement effort in order to retain an acceptable degree of combat effectiveness. In spite of heavy and continuous contact and extended periods of field operation, all indications point to an appreciation in troop morale and aggressiveness. This is closely linked to the offensive nature of the operation and visible successes gained during the reporting period.

The ability to exploit ground contacts, mobility achieved through the use of helicopters and extraordinary fire support available highlighted the month's activities.

All indications pointed to a badly beaten, demoralized and ill-organized and prepared enemy force.

The Battalion was chopped to the OPCON of the 3d Marines on 30 May and is presently engaged in heavy patrol activities as well as a concentrated effort to improve existing defenses and fortifications at the strong point patrol bases.

PART III  
SEQUENTIAL LISTINGS OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1. Combat Missions Assigned.

a. Basic Mission. To conduct missions in assigned area of operations in accordance with 3d MarDiv Operations Order 59-67.

b. To conduct anti-filtration operations in AO with special emphasis on interdicting north/south infiltration routes. Assume responsibility for enlarged AO to include outpost of Hill #28. Defend and provide protection for construction effort on Route 566. Reference 9th Marines Operation Plan 2-58, 9th Marines Frag Order # 14 (Operation Kentucky).

c. Conduct offensive operations to locate, kill or capture enemy personnel, locate and destroy enemy installations and capture enemy equipment and/or munitions. (Reference 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68).

d. In a combined/coordinated movement with 1/4 continue assigned mission to locate the enemy within assigned AO by proceeding from present location to the south vicinity of Hill #26. Be prepared to conduct additional operations as directed by this Headquarters. (Reference 9th Marines Frag Order 28-68.)

2. Significant Operations Conducted.

a. The Battalion (-) conducted a search and destroy operation in accordance with 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68 during the period 6-18 May 1968. A After Action Report of the operation is included in Part IV with the supporting documents.

b. On 22 May Company "I" while conducting a search and destroy mission in the vicinity of Lao Son encountered an NVA Company harbored in the vicinity of YD 157703. As the contact developed it became apparent that a reinforcing element was required, and Company "L" with a small Battalion Command Group deployed from the A-3 Position. 1/4 was simultaneously deployed to destroy a sizable NVA force south of the trace in the vicinity of An Dinh while elements of 3/9 and 1/9 were committed to blocking positions to the west and south of the 3/3 contact. Contact was scattered and accompanied by enemy mortar and artillery fire. The main resistance was overcome by mid-afternoon as the enemy fell back to the south and Companies "I" and "L" established night defensive positions at YD 155702 and YD 157703 respectively. The following morning Company "I" continued the attack to seize a defended NVA position at YD 155694. Heavy enemy resistance

was initially encountered and Company "I" was directed to pull back in favor of heavier preparation fires. During the afternoon the attack was renewed and the position was seized and consolidated. Company "L" was displaced forward to establish a two company position with Company "I". The operation was terminated on 24 May and both Companies returned to A-3 prior to last light on 24 May.

Friendly losses totalled 9 KIA and 59 WIA while 32 NVA KIA were confirmed and 3 POW's captured. 13 individual weapons and one 12.7mm anti-aircraft weapon was captured. Additionally over 20 bunkers and 200 mortar rounds were destroyed.

c. On the afternoon of 25 May the Battalion received a verbal Frag Order to deploy three Companies by helicopter to YD 278663 to relieve 2/4 and assume their previously assigned AO under the OPCON of the 3d Marines. Companies "I" and "M" landed initially and were to establish defensive positions in the vicinity of YD 267649 in preparation for the relief which was to occur on 26 May. While moving to establish the defensive positions the Battalion was directed to continue movement in deployed formation until contact was gained or the area in proximity to the 24 grid line was consolidated. 1/3 was directed to attack on a westerly axis north of the 66 grid line in coordination with 3/3. The Battalion (-) moved westward until contact was gained with an estimated NVA Company at YD 257658 at last light. 1/3 had not yet moved a sufficient distance to physically tie in on the Battalion's right because of the heavy contact in this area. Heavy preparation fires were delivered throughout the night and Company "M" attacked the following morning. At the time of the attack the Battalion had reverted to the OPCON of the 9th Marines and the area was identified as Objective "B" which was seized prior to noon and consolidation was accomplished at YD 260658.

Company "I" attacked a determined force on the afternoon of the 25th at YD 267649 and met with a determined NVA Company supported by artillery and several automatic weapons, the Company was pulled back to YD 265654 under cover of darkness while Company "L" was moved to a blocking position in the vicinity of YD 260672.

On the morning of 27 May Company "I" renewed the attack on the same position which was identified as Objective "A" and after extensive preparation the objective was seized with only light resistance. On the evening of 27 May Companies "B" and "D" 1/9 were chopped OPCON to 3/3 and a cordon around the area of Ky Truc was established in coordination with one Battalion of the 2nd ARVN Regiment and 3/9. The following afternoon heavy fires were delivered into the center of the cordon and the circle was closed. Company "L" commenced an attack on the Ky Lam area from the north on the afternoon of the 28th and was forced to withdraw to YD 244673 as a result of extremely heavy resistance. On the 29th of May preparation

artillery and fixed wing were delivered into the area of Ky Lam and Ky Truc and at first light on 30 May Company "B" 1/9 still OPCON to 3/3 commenced the attack with Company "I" on Ky Lam approaching from the south under the cover of heavy supporting fires and carried the attack to Ky Lam, only light resistance was encountered and the cordon forces were diverted to other missions once the area had been thoroughly swept. In the course of the operation 3/3 suffered 34 KIA and 50 WIA. Enemy losses include 133 KIA confirmed, 25 POW captured as well as 81 individual and 27 crew served weapons.

Although friendly losses were considered heavy it is felt that a large force had been denied the ability to mass its forces and its actual losses were far in excess of those able to be confirmed by the Battalion.

On 31 May the Battalion moved to relieve 2/4 elements in position who were to be redeployed. The 3/3 Command Group established a command post at YD 278663.

#### 3. Casualties Inflicted on the Enemy.

a. During the month of May, the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines inflicted the following casualties on the enemy; 206 NVA KIA (confirmed) and 31 POW's.

#### 4. Casualties Sustained.

a. Name of Surgeon: Lt. Emilio Jimenez, MC, USNR, 1-21 May  
Lt. Henry D. Jordan, MC, USNR, 21-24 May  
Lt. Joseph W. Wolfe, MC, USNR, 24-31 May

#### b. Significant Events:

(1) On 3 May, one member of Lima Company was WIA from an enemy mine, 2 members of Lima DOW due to enemy mine.

(2) On 4 May, one member of India Company was killed by accidental discharge of M-16 rifle.

(3) On 6 May, 2 members of H&S Company were wounded in action due to enemy artillery, one member of H&S Company was wounded by a enemy Chi Com grenade, 2 members of Kilo Company were wounded by enemy rockets.

(4) On 7 May, 2 members of Mike Company and one member of H&S Company were wounded from enemy Chi Com grenade, one member of Lima Company was wounded by enemy mortars.

(5) On 8 May, 8 members of H&S Company, 23 members of India Company, 5 members of Lima Company and 17 members of Mike Company were wounded due to enemy artillery. 2 members of H&S Company, 2 members of

Lima Co. and one member of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy mortars. One member H&S Co. and one member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy rockets. Six members of Lima Co. and one member of Mike Co WIA due to enemy small arms fire. One member of H&S Co. and one member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Two members of H&S Co. and one member of Lima Co wounded due to friendly airstrike. One member of H&S Co, nine members of India Co. and 6 members of Lima Co. NBC due to heat exhaustion. One member of H&S Co. and 2 members of Lima Co. Med Evaced due to battle fatigue. Three members of Lima Co. Med Evac due to anxiety reaction. One member of Mike Co. NBC due to sprained ankle. Four members of Lima Co. KIA due to enemy small arms fire. One member of Lima Co. and two members of India Co. KIA due to shrapnel wounds.

6. On 9 May 68, 2 members of India Co. were wounded due to enemy artillery. One member of Lima Co WIA due to enemy mortars. One member of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Five members of H&S Co., one member of India Co., one member of Mike Co., and six members of Lima Co NBC due to heat exhaustion. One member of India Co. NBC due to self inflicted M-16 rifle wound. One member of Mike Co. WIA due to friendly grenade.

7. On 10 May 68, 2 members of H&S Co., 1 member of India Co., and 5 members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. Three members of Mike Co., WIA due to small arms fire. One member of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. One member of India Co. NBC due to self inflicted gunshot wound.

8. On 11 May 68, 4 members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Two members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy mortars. Two members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. One member of Mike Co. wounded due to friendly artillery.

9. On 12 May 68, one member of H&S Co. NBC due to snake bite. One member of Mike Co. NBC due to heat exhaustion.

10. On 13 May 68, one member of H&S Co. WIA due to enemy mortars; 1 member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire.

11. On 15 May 68, one member of H&S Co. WIA due to enemy rocket; one member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy rocket.

12. On 16 May 68, 3 members of H&S Co., 1 member of Lima Co., and 2 members of Mike Co., WIA due to enemy mortars; 1 member of Mike Co. NBC due to heat exhaustion; one member of Lima Co. NBC due to self inflicted gunshot wound.

13. On 17 May 68, one member of Lima Co. NBC due to self inflicted gunshot wound.

14. On 22 May 68, 2 members of India Co., and 2 members of Lima Co. WIA due to shell shock; 13 members of India Co., 1 member of H&S Co., and 4 members of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy artillery; 4 members of India Co., 2 members of H&S Co. and 2 members of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire. One member of H&S Co., 1 member of India Co., 3 members of Lima Co., WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Five members of H&S Co., 19 members of India Co., and 13 members of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy mortars. One member of H&S Co., 2 members of Lima Co., and 4 members of India Co. Med Evaced due to anxiety reaction. Two members of India Co. KIA due to enemy small arms fire.

15. On 23 May 68, one member of H&S Co. and 5 members of India Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. One member of India Co. and one member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Two members of H&S Co., 1 member of India Co., WIA due to enemy mortars. One member of H&S Co., 3 members of India Co., and one member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire. Two members of Lima Co. NBC due to heat exhaustion. One member on India Co. KIA due to enemy mortars. Two members of India Co., 2 members of Lima Co., and one member of H&S Co., KIA due to enemy small arms fire. One member of India Co DOW due to enemy small arms fire.

16. On 25 May 68, one member of H&S Co., 8 members of Mike Co., WIA due to enemy small arms fire. Five members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. One member of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy artillery.

17. On 26 May 68, 9 members of India Co., 15 members of Kilo Co., 15 members of Mike Co., and 3 members of H&S Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire. Five members of Mike Co., one member of India Co. and 2 members of H&S Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. One member of Mike Co. NBC due to heat exhaustion. One member of Mike Co. NBC due to derangement of Rt. knee. One member of Mike Co. NBC due to possible hernia. One member of India Co. NBC due to sprained Lt. ankle. One member of India Co. NBC due to flash blindness from friendly LAAG. One member of India Co. WIA due to enemy mortars. Eight members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. One member of India Co., and 2 members of Lima Co NBC due to heat exhaustion. Four members of Kilo Co., 6 members of Mike Co., 5 members of India Co., 4 members of H&S Co., KIA due to enemy small arms fire.

18. On 27 May 68, 2 members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. One member of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire. Three members of India Co., 1 member of H&S Co. KIA due to enemy small arms fire.

19. On 28 May 68, one member of Lima Co and 2 members of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy artillery. Eight members of Lima Co. WIA due to enemy Chi Com. Six members of Lima Co. and 1 member of Mike Co. WIA due to enemy small arms fire. One member of Lima Co. NBC due to anxiety reaction. Eight members of Lima Co. and two members of H&S Co KIA due to enemy small arms fire.

20. On 29 May 68, one member of H&S Co. NBC due to anxiety reaction. Two members of Mike Co. KIA due to shrapnel wounds.

21. There was a total of 355 inoculations given during the month of May.

22. Outpatient Visits:

a. Common Complaints;

(1)	FUO	05
(2)	Venereal Disease	10
(3)	Heat Casualties	42
(4)	Malaria	04
(5)	Dental	50
(6)	Cellulitis	30
(7)	Diarrhea	04
(8)	Miscellaneous	79
		<u>224</u> TOTAL

23. Number of Battle Casualties:

TOTALS	KIA	WIA	DOW	MIA	NBC	NBC KILLED
USMC 3/3	48	290	03	0	51	01
USN 3/3	02	24	00	0	05	00
USMC OTHER	00	05	00	0	00	00

c. Medical Trends. There was a slight increase on the number of Malaria cases during the month of May due to the on-coming mosquito season. Increased emphasis on prophylaxis measures in this area may help to alleviate this problem.

d. Problem Area. Venereal disease increase indicates a need to observe more closely the number of cases seen and take action quickly if the situation worsens.

5. New Techniques Employed. None

6. Command Relations.

- a. OPCON - 9th Marines, ADCON - 3rd MarDiv
- b. On 25 May 68 the Battalion was chopped to OPCON 3rd Marine Regiment.
- c. On 26 May 68 the Battalion was chopped to OPCON 9th Marine Regiment.
- d. On 27 May 68 the Battalion assumed OPCON of Companies "B" and "D", 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.
- e. On 30 May 68 the Battalion assumed OPCON of Company "K", 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines and chopped OPCON of Companies "B" and "D", 1st Battalion, 9th Marines.

f. On 30 May 68, the Battalion was chepped to OPCON 3rd Marine Regiment.

7. Equipment. None

8. Logistics.

a. Supply.

(1) General. During the reporting period the battalion continued to build up the A-3 Position. Daily resupply by helicopter is the principle means of transportation to A-3.

(2) Class I. A daily resupply maintains the regular supply of Class I at a three to five day level. Water buffalos are lifted in and out primarily by helicopter.

(3) Class II. There still remains a critical shortage on:

Bayonets	Magazines - 45
Magazines - M-16	Binoculars
Utility trousers, all small and medium regular sizes.	
Utility shirts, all small sizes	
Compasses	

(4) Class III. No problems encountered in keeping an adequate supply of POL on hand.

(5) Class IV. There were shortages of the following items;

Air strip matting  
Engineer stakes

(6) Class V. The Battalion supply of Class V is maintained at a BA + 5 DOA. There has been shortages in the following items:

LAAW's  
Time Fuse  
C-4  
Grenade, Frag M-26A2

b. Motor Transport.

(1) On 22 May 68 the battalion received twenty (20) new M151A1's.

(2) The present status is considered adequate for current operations on the M274A2's (mules) and M37B1 (PC).

(a) Breakdown of M274A2 (mules).

(1) T/E	30
(2) O/H	29
(3) 2nd echelon Maint.	10
(4) 3rd echelon Maint.	1
(5) Code "X"ed	1
(6) Operational	18

(3) A shortage of magnetos, rear cables, cable leads and starters still exists in our motor transport section.

(4) Ninth Motor Transport Battalion provided trucks to pick up

and deliver supplies to the ISA for helicopter resupply. On several occasions truck support has been inadequate.

c. Engineer Assistance.

(1) In addition to normal support the 3rd Engineers provided assistance by building bunks in the living bunkers at the A-3 Position from prefabricated material provided from Dye Marker stocks.

d. Ordnance.

(1) At the end of the month the Battalion maintained the following

ITEM	T/E	O/H	OPERATIONAL	2nd ECH.	3RD ECH. (FISU)
M-14 Rifles	52	52	52	0	0
45 Pistols	329	354	354	0	0
Shotguns	13	19	15	4	0
M-60 MG	35	35	33	2	0
106 RR	8	8	7	1	0
M-79	36	37	37	0	0
81mm Mortars	8	8	8	0	0
60mm Mortars	12	12	12	0	0
3.5 Rockets	32	32	28	0	0
M-16 Rifles	919	969	966	3	0
106RR Mounts	8	8	7	0	0
Flamethrowers	9	9	5	2	0

9. Civic Action. None

10. Administration.

a. No awards ceremony was held during the month of May.

b. A total of 5 Court Martials were held during May; 3 SPCM and 2 SCM. Five Battalion Commanders Office Hours were completed and 4 are pending. There were 6 Company Commanders Office Hours completed and 8 are pending.

c. Special Services provided the below during the month of May:

- (1) Tooth brushes
- (2) Free soda (twice)
- (3) Free beer
- (4) Stationary kits
- (5) Nightly motion picture films

d. Post exchange services were not available to the Battalion due to it being located at A-3, however, Sundries Packages were distributed.

e. Liberty was not authorized during this period.

f. During the month 1 Officer and 50 Enlisted Marines rotated to CONUS. Nineteen enlisted Marines were transferred within the Regiment or Division. Thirty seven enlisted Marines were transferred as a result of medical evacuation.

11. Personnel.

- a. Gains: 2 USMC OFF; 146 USMC ENL; 1 USN OFF; 9 USN ENL.
- b. Losses 4 USMC OFF; 165 USMC ENL; 1 USN OFF; 2 USN ENL.
- c. Monthly Strength (Average):

<u>MC OFF</u>	<u>MC ENL</u>	<u>USN OFF</u>	<u>USN ENL</u>
35	1053	2	53

- d. Net loss/gain.

<u>MC OFF</u>	<u>MC ENL</u>	<u>USN OFF</u>	<u>USN ENL</u>
2/0	19/0	0/0	0/7

e. Emergency leave for the month of May: 7 USMC Enlisted. There were no humanitarian transfers during the month of May. Twice/thrice wounded or reassigned outside of RVN due to father/brother in country: 8 USMC enlisted.

f. There were two Hardship Discharges applied for during the past month and one is pending.

g. Two Administrative Discharges are pending.

h. The R&R Program continues to be a major morale factor within this command. There were 88 out of country quotas used during this reporting period.

i. Morale is considered to be excellent to outstanding.

j. Postal Services during the month has been good. Mail was delivered to the forward position by air as available.

12. Intelligence.

During the month of May there were three major engagements with the enemy. The Battalion conducted a search and destroy operation in Leatherneck Square 6 thru 18 May. The intelligence gained, weapons captured and terrain analysis is outlined in detail in Combat Operations After Action Report dated 25 May 68, (See Part IV for report).

On 22 May 68 Company "I" made contact with a very aggressive enemy force in the vicinity of YD 164704. The enemy force was estimated to be of company size and engaged the point units of Company "I". Company "L" and a Command Group were dispatched to reinforce Company "I". Enemy contact continued throughout the day and the Battalion (-) remained in the field until 24 May 68 to exploit the enemy.

The enemy were well equipped, aggressive and was supported with both mortars and adjusted artillery. On 22 May 68 approximately 350-400 rounds of 105mm artillery and 100-150 rounds of 60 and 82mm mortar was delivered on friendly units. Three POW's were captured on the 23rd of May and identified units of the 64th Regiment and 52nd Regiment, 320th Division as operating in the area. At least two or three companies were estimated to be in the area with the mission of securing the flanks of

the infiltration route and countering any Marine operations in the area. It is assumed that infiltration of one and quite likely two Battalions was pre-empted by this engagement.

The weapons and equipment captured are listed below in the cumulative totals for the month. The significant gear captured included 12.7mm Machine Guns, numerous individual weapons, assorted radio parts, binoculars and large amounts of all caliber ammunition.

On 25 May two companies and a command group were heli-lifted into the Cau Viet River area in the vicinity of YD 280655. The remainder of the Battalion was lifted in on the 26th of May and the Battalion operated for the remainder of the month in the vicinity of Ky Lam and KY Truc in grid YD 2466 and the village in the YD 2564 grid. Remnants of the 52nd Regiment, 320th Division were encountered during the operation. The 4th and 6th Infantry Battalions were identified along with the 1st Company, 14th Battalion which is a supply and transport unit.

Extensive use of artillery and air was used to prep all objectives and contributed to demoralizing the enemy which had not eaten in five days. They got water from bomb craters and sustained many casualties. PsyOps plan was utilized over the objective area and the POW's stated they wanted to surrender but feared the artillery fire.

On 30 May a tank infantry attack on the Ky Truc, Ky Lam objective area netted 18 POW's that offered very light resistance before surrendering.

It is estimated that at least two enemy Battalions are rendered non-effective as a result of the casualties inflicted and the weapons captured included 81 individual and 27 crew served weapons of which six were 12.7mm AA Machine Guns.

#### ENEMY WEAPONS AND EQUIPMENT CAPTURED 1-31 MAY 1968

48 AK-47's	86 SKS's
1 Sniper Rifle w/case	11 30 Cal. Carbines (US)
18 M-16 Rifles	6 M-1 Rifles
4 M-60 Machine Guns	1 M-14
2 TSMG	5 BAR's
1 Grease Gun	22 MAT -49's French
8 Chinese Auto. Rifles	7 Chi Com Burp Guns
1 Soviet, 7.62 Sub-MG, PPS	1 M-79
8 RPG-2 Launchers	1 RPG-7 Launcher
19 RPD, Light MG	8 12.7mm Soviet HMG
2 50 Cal. HMG	3 60mm Mortars, w/bipods, baseplate/sights
3 60mm Sights	2 60mm Mortar cleaning rods
1 50 Cal. MG Ring sight	3 82mm Aiming stakes
3 82mm Mortar base plates	2 82mm Mortar bipods
1 82mm Mortar sight	5 Aiming sets f/12.7mm HMG
5 Tripods f/ 12.7mm HMG	3 75mm Recoiless Rifles

2	7.62mm HMG	1	50 Cal. MG sight
6	Tripods f/12.7mm MG	6	Shoulder harness f/12.7mm MG
7595	50 Cal rounds	180	5.56 rounds
7555	7.62 rounds	1525	7.62 rounds, linked
670	30 Cal. rounds, linked	500	9mm rounds
500	SKS rounds	1	Magazine, crimped cartridges
39	DH-10 Claymore Mines	22	AT Mines
39	7-10 AP Mines	50	Cans, increments
42	RPG-2 charges	105	RPG-2 rounds
9	RPG-7 charges	47	RPG-7 rounds
31	RPG propellant charges	287	60mm mortar rounds
1160	82mm mortar rounds	1	60mm mortar round (US)
5	LAAW's	25	75mm RR rounds
8	Rifle grenades	4	82mm Illumination rounds
1	57mm RR round	7	Smoke grenade
11	Bangalore Torpedoes (homemade)	7	Frag. rifle grenade
24	Shape charge, rifle grenades	7	Cans propellant f/60mm mortars
433	Chi Com grenades	3	Cans propellant f/82mm mortars
380	Fuses	89	lbs TNT
123	Blasting caps	50	feet time fuse
500	feet detonating cord	353	Primers
8	Batteries	2	Coils Comm. Wire
1	Ohmmeter	2	Wire Cutters
1	Siren	2	Bags electrical equipment & radio parts
4	Unit #1 type medical bags	6	First Aid Packs
10	Machettes	11	Picks
23	Shovels	4	Saws
24	Intrenching tools		Assorted clothing
18	Helmets	96	Packs
6	Sets misc. cooking equip.	124	Gas masks
2	Recoil Pads, rubber f/rifle	3	Pair NVA sneakers
29	Ponchos	1	Wrist watch
5	Packages chewing tobacco	1	Leather belt
3	Rice Bags	5	Mosquito Nets
20	Hammocks	1	RPG Pack
10	Chi Com grenade pouches	2	Cartridge belts
2	Binocular Cases	6	Canteens
12	Shelter halves	81	RPD drum w/ammo
73	AK-47 magazines	74	Assorted magazines
16	M-16 magazines	1	30 Cal. Carbine magazines
1	30 Cal. Carbine magazine	2	Rifle grenade attachments
6755	Lbs of rice	3	Oil cans
1	Typewriter	2	NVA Flags
1	Chinese Flag	15	Feet of rope
2	Cases Protein Blocks		
Various documents, daries, pamphlets and personnel correspondence.			

### 13. Communications.

a. The Communications Platoon ran normal wire and radio operations at A-3 until relieved on position by Company "F", 2nd Bn, 26th Marines. At this time all installed communications equipment was removed and returned to Dong Ha.

b. Training. A contact team made up of two (2) wireman was organized to give instruction to the 106mm Recoiless Rifle Platoon in trouble shooting and 1st echelon maintenance of wire equipment.

c. Equipment Status. The Battalion received two (2) TS 297 multimeters and one remote unit AN/GRA - 39. Essential equipment down is as follows;

- 1 AN/PRC-41
- 1 AN/MRC-83
- 4 AN/PRC-25

d. Problem Areas. A critical shortage of a KY-8 Technician will arise with the rotation of the one 2847 on board.

Tape antennas and bases are still in very short supply.

14. Weather. The weather during the month of May was hot and humid with a few electrical storms and heavy rains during the latter part of the month.

Average High - 95 degrees

Humidity - 66%

Average Low - 77 degrees

Precipitation - 1.19 inches

Average Visibility - 5 miles

Wind 5 to 7 knots from the north/west.

15. Fire Support. During the month of May artillery fire support increased considerably over the previous month due to the increased time spent in the field, the total rounds expended increases from 5,000 in April to over 10,000 in May. Generally speaking this command was well satisfied with the fire support received.

During the first five days of the month, forward observers concentrated most of their fires on suspected enemy positions, possible enemy infiltration routes and other missions in support of patrolling units. Beginning on the 6th of May, the Battalion started a sweep south toward Phu Tho and other southern locations. During this sweep many of the preparatory and suppressive fires were controlled by Regiment so their record of total rounds expended will definitely exceed that which we will report. Fire support during this operation included massive preparatory fires, suppressive fires and lucrative live missions. Initially we had problems with clearances due to other units operating to our south. Once these problems were solved fire support became more responsive. (See After Action Report for further amplification in Part IV).

Upon return to A-3 we again resumed fire support designed to deny the enemy access to infiltration routes. On the 26th of May, one of our units made contact and again our volume of artillery support increased. Initial volumes of fire were responsive and accurate but the evening missions were very slow due to a clearance problem with other units.

Soon after that short operation we were moved to the Can Viet area where the Battalion was OPCON'ed to the 3d Marines for approximately 18 hours. When contact was made the first night, the 3rd Battalion 12th Marines fired in support of the Battalion, they too seemed slow and bit reluctant to fire a large volume of rounds, but finally furnished the Battalion with required support. The remainder of the month, the Battalion was OPCON'ed to the 9th Marines and received direct support from the 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines. They cooperated fully to make sure the Battalion received the fire support needed and at the appropriate time. They had several lucrative live targets and extensive preparatory fires that lighted the burden for the infantry, as a result, this command was extremely satisfied with the artillery support for the month of May.

a. Units Providing Direct and General Support.

- (1) Btry "D", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines
- (2) Btry "E", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines
- (3) Btry "F", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines
- (4) Btry "A", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA
- (5) Btry "B", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA
- (6) Btry "C", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA
- (7) Btry "H", 3rd Bn, 12th Marines
- (8) Btry "I", 3rd Bn, 12th Marines
- (9) Btry "C", 1st Bn, 11th Marines
- (10) Btry "A", LVT, How 6
- (11) Btry "C", LVT, How 6
- (12) Btry "J", 1st Bn, 12th Marines
- (13) Btry "W", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines
- (14) Btry "W", 3rd Bn, 12th Marines
- (15) Btry "K", 1st Bn, 12th Marines (General Support)
- (16) Btry "L", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines (General Support)
- (17) Btry "M", 3rd Bn, 12th Marines (General Support)
- (18) 175mm Btry, 8th Bn, 4th Artillery, USA

b. Missions Fired.

- (1) Artillery.
  - (a) Preparatory Fires 113
  - (b) Suspected enemy positions 125
  - (c) Live missions 86
  - (d) Night defensive fires 80
  - (e) Illumination 6
  - (f) Marking rounds 15
  - (g) Smoke Screens 2
  - (h) Blocking fires 8
  - (i) Final protective fires 3
  - (j) Counter battery fires 16
  - (k) H&I's 300

(2)	<u>81mm Mortars.</u>	
(a)	Suspected enemy positions	24
(b)	Preparatory Fires	40
(c)	Live Missions	57
(d)	Illumination	3
(e)	H&I's	347
(f)	TOT's	12
(g)	Night Defensive Fires	11
(h)	Counter mortar fires	19
(i)	Spotter rounds	21

c. Ammunition Expended.

(1)	<u>Artillery.</u>	
(a)	105mm	7935
(b)	4.2 mortar	915
(c)	155mm	902
(d)	8 inch	398
(e)	175mm	14

(2)	<u>81mm Mortars.</u>	
(a)	HE medium	6721
(b)	HE medium	664
(c)	WP (new)	255
(d)	WP (old)	39

16. Air Support.

During the month of May a total of 13 air strikes were run by the ALO/FAC Team. Eight (8) of these air strikes were controlled by using the AN/PRC-93 radio. Seven (7) of these strikes were run when the AN/PRC 41 was not available. It was found that once aircraft were within 3 to 5 miles of the controlling team no problems were encountered in communicating with the aircraft, beyond this range communications could not be guaranteed. No final determination can be made as to the merits of the AN/PRC-93 radio until further field evaluation has been completed.

a. During the month 69 individual flights of air were run in the Battalion AO. BDA of particular interest as reported by observers was 91 bunkers destroyed, 36 killed by air and 17 secondary explosions.

b. There were 67 TPQ's requested by this Battalion and 24 were hit.

c. AO support consisted of 62 sorties totaling 82 hours.

d. During the month of May 168 personnel were Med Evac'ed by air.

e. Nine C&C flights were requested and nine received.

f. Helicopters lifted 457,200 pounds of cargo and 84 passengers for the Battalion.

g. Two troop lifts were executed transporting the Battalion (-) over a two day period.

17. Activities/Deactivations/Redesignations. None

18. Training Report. Little training was accomplished during the month of May due to operational commitments.

a. During the period 1 thru 6 May classes were held at the company level on the following subjects:

- (1) Techniques of Fire. M-60 Machine Gun 2 hours
- (2) LAAW and M-79 Grenade Launcher 2 hours

b. An NCO School has been organized and will commence as soon as operational commitments permit.

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

✓ 1.	JOURNAL SUMMARY	PAGE	23
✓ 2.	BATTALION FRAG ORDER 9-68	PAGE	39
✓ 3.	3/3 AFTER ACTION REPORT	PAGE	48

JOURNAL SUMMARY MAY 1968

1 May 68. At 0815H a message was received from the 9th Marines S-2 concerning a report that the enemy would continue offensive between Deng Ha and Cam Lo, with artillery support. The message was rated B-3. At 1115H, Company "I", on patrol at YD 174698 sighted three (3) NVA moving east along a trail, Company "I" elements engaged with small arms, the enemy fled to the west. At 1255H Company "I" moved approximately 500 meters north as a safety precaution due to a scheduled air strike (Arc Light). Company "I"'s ambush sites were also changed.

2 May 68. At 0145H while in a ambush site at YD 203712 elements of Company "I" received 19 rounds of incoming mortars from an unknown origin counter mortar fire was requested on a suspected mortar position at YD 205727. A check fire was called by Division due to Popular Forces in the vicinity. Division reported that the Popular Forces were not equipped with mortars.

At 1140H six (6) rounds of estimated 60mm mortar impacted outside the wire at YD 176734. OP Silver reported tubes firing from an azimuth of 0600 mils at approximately YD 178748. An 81mm mortar mission was fired with unknown results.

3 May 68. At 1055H the A-3 Position received fifteen (15) rounds of enemy artillery fire, estimated 85mm, the fire was received from an azimuth of 6000 mils, distance unknown. The rounds impacted outside the wire at YD 170722. A 155mm artillery mission was fired with unknown results.

At 1230H while on patrol at YD 155720 Company "L" sustained three (3) casualties from a booby trap, a Med Evac was requested and completed at 1330H.

At 1235H Company "L" observed three (3) NVA at YD 146724, the NVA were dressed in Khaki and black uniforms. Company "L" engaged with artillery and machine guns with good target coverage. Results were unknown.

At 1338H the A-3 Position received five (5) artillery rounds of estimated 105mm. The rounds impacted at YD 170722. At approximately the same time Hill #28 received two (2) 60mm mortar rounds, the rounds impacted at YD 171734. The artillery rounds were believed to have been fired from an azimuth of 6000 mils. A counter battery mission was fired with unknown results.

At 1510H Company "L" discovered two (2) bunkers, wood constructed at YD 161714, the bunkers were destroyed by demolitions.

At 1549H Company "L" Med Evaced two (2) non battle casualties, one (1) heat casualty and a man with a sprained ankle.

At 1820H Company "L" at YD 147707 sighted 15 to 20 NVA at YD 147699, the enemy were moving south to north west. Company "L" engaged with automatic weapons and artillery. At 1900H Company "L" sighted five (5) small groups of NVA. The enemy were dressed in khaki and black pajamas. One group of five (5) personnel were engaged with heavy small arms

fire at YD 152703, three (3) NVA were observed to fall. One NVA was sighted at YD 152715 and one (1) at YD 148713, artillery missions were fired. The area will be searched at first light.

4 May 68. At 0125H Company "L" reported sighting three (3) NVA moving from east to north west at YD 148707.

At 0500H a Company "L" OP observed two (2) NVA moving west approximately 45 meters from their position. Company "L" engaged with machine gun fire with negative results.

At 0650H Company "I" at YD 175713 reported a accidental discharge of a M-16 rifle resulting in one (1) non battle casualty. A Med Evac was called and completed at 0725H. An Investigating Officer was appointed.

At 1215H Company "I" elements at YD 172698 sprung a daylight ambush on three (3) NVA moving west on a trail. Company "I" elements engaged with small arms killing two (2) NVA, the third NVA fled into the brush. The NVA were dressed in light gray uniforms. The following weapons and equipment were captured.

1 AK-47	1 M-16 (US)
1 Poncho	1 Cartridge belt
1 Cigarette lighter	Money

At 1430H Company "I" sighted approximately a squad of NVA moving east to west on a trail at YD 174704, the NVA were dressed in khaki. Company "I" engaged with small arms and received return fire from an unknown enemy position to the east. Company "I" received 20 rounds of 60mm mortar fire, 3 to 4 Chi Com grenades and sporadic small arms fire for approximately one (1) hour, at least one (1) NVA was seen to fall but a search of the area failed to reveal any bodies. An AO on station reported a large number of civilians and children in the area. One (1) civilian was observed carrying a weapon. An artillery mission was called on a suspected mortar position. Company "I" swept the area and withdrew to continue mission.

At 1700H OP Silver observed an individual at YD 175743, a 106mm Recoilless Rifle mission (5 rounds) was fired with good target coverage.

5 May 68. At 0730H the 81mm mortar platoon commander notified the S-3 that one of the tubes had a hang fire, an EOD Team was requested.

At 0914H IP3 departed the A-3 Position to meet and guide the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines into the area. IP3 made physical contact with 3/9 at 1430H.

At 1535H the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines set in for the night at YD 163713, IP3 returned to the A-3 Position at 1555H.

6 May 68. At 0735H all Companies and the Command Groups departed the A-3 position in accordance with Battalion Frag Order 9-68.

At 0800H the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines assumed responsibility for the A-3 Position.

At 0930H Company "M" at YD 173704 discovered a bunker complex of ten (10) bunkers, two (2) AT Mines and two (2) boxes of 82mm mortar fuses were also found. The bunkers and fuses were destroyed.

At 1440H Company "I" surprised two (2) NVA/VC who were sleeping and killed them with small arms fire. An unknown size enemy unit engaged Company "I" from all sides causing the lead elements of Company "I" to withdraw to Objective #1, the attack is to be continued as soon as possible.

At 1600H the A-3 Position received 16 rounds of enemy artillery of unknown caliber, a counter battery mission was fired.

At 1700H the positions of the Battalions Companies were as follows;

Company "I" YD 189699

Company "L" YD 180687

Company "M" Objective #1

Between the hours of 062000H and 070200H Company "M" received several probes by approximately thirty (30) NVA, all enemy probes were repulsed by local security. A search of the area will be made at first light.

7 May 68. At 0650H a Company "M" element searched the area of last nights probes at YD 179698. While searching the area Company "M" elements captured one (1) NVA, POW, armed with an AK-47. Company "M" was engaged by approximately five (5) NVA. Fire was returned by Company "M" elements with small arms. A mortar and artillery mission was called. The enemy withdrew leaving one (1) NVA, KIA. The following weapons and equipment were captured:

1 AK-47	1 SKS Carbine
2 AK-47 magazines	5 Chi Com grenades
Documents and food	2 Packs
1 Cartridge belt w/ammo.	1 Poncho
2 Intrenching Tool	Misc. clothing

At 0830H Company "L" made contact with a enemy element at YD 179687. Company "L" received small arms and 60mm mortar fire. Fire was returned with small arms and artillery fire.

At 0930H Company "L" sighted 3 to 7 NVA at YD 180688 and engaged with small arms and artillery, three (3) WIA's were sustained by Company "L", two (2) of which were Med Evaced.

At 1100H Company "L" at YD 183687 discovered two (2) bunkers, eighteen (18) fighting holes, 1 Intrenching tool (US), and one (1) roll of communication wire. The equipment was destroyed by demolition. At 1112H Company "L" made contact with an estimated 10-15 NVA and engaged with small arms, 60mm mortars, and artillery. The enemy utilized small arms and 60mm mortar fire.

At 1310H while moving through an open area at YD 142692, Company "I" was engaged by an estimated NVA squad. Company "I" returned fire and moved through the area. No casualties were taken.

8 May 68. At 0900H Company "L"'s point element observed twenty (20) NVA at YD 174665. A hasty ambush was set but it soon became apparent that the NVA were not advancing. The 1st Platoon of Company "L" deployed on line and advanced. Contact was initiated by a machine gun team. The 1st Platoon was taken under fire by an enemy 50 Caliber machine gun. Artillery and fixed wing missions were called. The 1st Platoon continued

the attack capturing the machine gun. Company "L" then withdrew to Objective #4. Heavy adjusted enemy artillery fire was received throughout the day, blocking the approaches to Objective "D".

At approximately 0950H the Battalion received incoming enemy artillery fire from an azimuth of 5400 mils. The fires continued until approximately 1830H.

At 1535H Battalion elements at YD 173671 received twenty (20) rounds of estimated 152mm artillery fire. Counter battery missions were fired. Friendly casualties were three (3) KIA's and nine (9) WIA's.

At 1630H Companies "M" and "I" commenced a coordinated attack towards YD 180668. The enemy position was defended by an estimated NVA Company. Company "M" assaulted the position with two (2) platoons driving the enemy from the position towards Objective "D". Heavy adjusted enemy artillery and mortar fire was received. Fixed wing and artillery were called on the withdrawing enemy. Companies "M" and "I" with Command Group "A" consolidated a night position at YD 177677. Company "L" and the Bravo Command Group remained in position at Objective #4. Friendly casualties were seven (7) WIA's. There were (11) NVA, KIA's confirmed. Two (2) AK-47s were captured.

At 1700H at YD 177677 the Battalion received twenty rounds of enemy 105mm artillery and twenty five (25) rounds of 60mm mortar fire.

At 1720H at YD 177667 Companies "M" and "L" received fifty (50) rounds of enemy 60mm mortar fire.

9 May 68. At 0700H Company "M" discovered a bunker complex at YD 181666. At 0710H Company "M" elements at YD 186665 engaged one (1) NVA with small arms, the NVA sought cover in a bunker. A grenade was thrown in the bunker which resulted in a large secondary explosion. During the search one (1) booby trap was detonated. A total of fourteen (14) overhauled bunkers were discovered and ten (10) NVA bodies found. The following equipment were captured:

11 M-16 rifles (US)	2 AK-47's
3 SKS Carbines	3 LAAW's
1 M-79	

At 1200H Company "I" reported discovering a large number of bunkers with extensive facilities for cooking and sleeping. The bunkers were reinforced well camouflaged and showed signs of having been occupied for a long period of time. Six (6) NVA, KIA's confirmed were counted. The following weapons were captured:

1 7.62 Machine Gun	1 Sniper Rifle w/scope
1 30 Caliber Carbine (US)	

The following equipment was captured and destroyed:

4 AT Mines	3 Claymore Mines
8 Chi Com grenades	1000 rounds, AK-47 ammunition
150 lbs of rice	200 Cal. 50 rounds
6 Drum magazines	10 AK-47 banana clips
4 RPG-2, rounds	15 Cooking pots
20 Gas masks	36 Vials of Pencillin

100 Battle Dressings                      1000 B-1 Vitamin tablets

Assorted clothing and NVA 782 gear.

At 1230H Company "M" discovered and searched a large NVA base camp at YD 179666.

At 1400H the Battalion at YD 179655 received four (4) rounds of 105mm artillery fire.

At 1412H Company "L" elements sighted two (2) NVA at YD 166649. The enemy was engaged at a range of 400 meters with small arms and 60mm mortar fire resulting in one (1) NVA, KIA confirmed.

At 1445H Company "I" sighted approximately forty (40) NVA in the open at YD 181645. An AO was requested. The NVA were engaged with small arms and mortar fire. Two (2) NVA were killed by sniper fire.

At 1531H Company "L" discovered four (4) bunkers at YD 168645, two (2) RPG type carrying containers were also found.

At 1645H Company "M" discovered at YD 175651 the following weapons and equipment:

1 SKS Carbine

Misc. 782 gear (destroyed)

At 1732H Company "L" at YD 168645 made contact with an NVA unit which had set an ambush. The enemy was engaged with small arms and 60mm mortar fire. Six (6) NVA were sighted before contact was broken. The area was swept by Company "L" with negative results.

10 May 68. At 0830H at YD 172642 Company "L" discovered the following items

1 Ammunition belt w/ 30 rounds of ammunition (AK-47)

2 Chi Com grenades

1 Drum magazine w/50 rounds of ammunition.

At 1437H Company "I" at YD 167646, (site of a contact on 8 May 68), found evidence of two (2) NVA, KIA's confirmed and the following equipment:

1 AK-47

1 M-16

1 Banana Clip

4 Chi Com grenades

1 Bag of rice

At 2045H at YD 173646 a Company "M" LP engaged an estimated five (5) NVA with small arms with unknown results. The area will be checked at first light. Two friendly WIA's (Med Evacs) were sustained.

11 May 68. A search of Company "M"'s IP area of contact of 092045H revealed one (1) NVΔ ponoho.

At 1100H at YD 164654 Company "L" discovered 23 bunkers, 20 fighting holes and the following items:

10 lbs of rice

1 60mm mortar round

1 82mm mortar round

The above items were destroyed.

12 May 68. At YD 178655 at 0915H Company "L" discovered and searched a bunker complex of 50 bunkers. The bunkers were 5'X6'X5' with 4 foot thick roofs, also three (3) mortar pits were found. The below listed ordnance was discovered and destroyed:

198 82mm mortar rounds	86 60mm mortar rounds
35 Boxes of fuses	750 rounds of AK-47 ammunition
10 Chi Com grenades	1 RPG round, type 2

The following weapons and equipment were captured:

1 Soviet Light Machine Gun	3 Drum Magazines
1 60mm mortar sight	

At 1500H at YD 169657 Company "I" found two (2) bunkers, 12, 81mm mortar rounds and 300 AK-47 rounds. The bunkers and ordnance were destroyed.

At 1900H while moving to an ambush site a Company "I" element discovered at YD 169659 four (4) bunkers containing the following;

2 RPG rounds	2 60mm mortar rounds
1 AT Mine	1 Electric Megaphone
1 60mm mortar sight	1 Box Composition B
1 60mm mortar base plate	1 7.62 Rifle w/bayonet

13 May 68. At 0730H at YD 175657 Company "L" found one (1) dead NVA wrapped in a poncho. The NVA body had been there approximately 3-4 weeks.

Between the hours of 0630H and 1300H Company "M" discovered a bunker complex at YD 160669 and a smaller complex at YD 159667 containing thirty (30) fresh graves. The bunkers were searched and the following equipment captured:

- 1 9mm French SubMachine Gun
- 1 60mm mortar base plate w/bipod
- 1 30 Cal Chinese Carbine
- 115 60mm mortar rounds
- 95 82mm mortar rounds
- 13 60mm mortar fuses
- 350 rounds, 7.62mm linked (US)
- 6 Chi Com grenades
- 12 RPG-7 rounds
- 250 rounds 7.62mm (Chi Com)
- 230 AK-47 rounds
- 7 AK-47 magazines
- Misc. Radio Parts
- 21 DH-10 Mines
- 58 60mm mortar fuses
- 12 60mm mortar primers
- 350 rounds 30 Cal.
- 12 batteries
- 12 82mm mortar primers
- 1 battery storage box

At 1500 elements of Company "M" at YD 160669 and YD 159669 discovered bunker complexes and captured the following items of equipment and ordnance:

- 11 DH-10 Mines
- 4 MH-46 Mines
- 1 AT Mine
- 35 Chi Com grenades

11 Bangalore Torpedos	5 Light Machine Guns
10 lbs TNT	1 Heavy Machine Gun
500 feet, detonating cord	3 AK-47
50 primers	21 (MAT) Submachine Guns
73 Electric blasting caps	4 SKS (old type)
12 RPG-2 rounds	2 Thompson Submachine guns
43 60mm mortar rounds	4 Browning Automatic rifles
74 Assorted magazines	5 Carbines (US)
21 Drums of Machine Gun ammo.	1 M-3 Submachine guns
200 lbs of rice	7 Chi Com Burp Guns
1 Typewriter	3 SKS (new type)
2 NVA Flags	8 Chi Com Automatic rifles
7 Smoke grenades	3 60mm mortar tubes
1 Red Flag w/gold hammer & sickle	1 M-1
300 rounds 5.56 ammunition	2 M-14's (One w/grenade launcher)
40 rounds 45 Cal ammunition	1 M-16
2 RPG-2 Rocket Launchers	

Between the hours of 0500H and 1200H Company "I" elements continued to uncover what was believed to be a portion of the perimeter security for a Regimental size CP site and large enough in size to accomodate an estimated NVA Battalion. The below listed equipment was captured:

2 SKS rifles	1 AK-47
1 AK-47 w/folding stock	1 50 Cal. machine gun
1 Light MG (RPD type 56)	1 M-16
29 82mm mortar rounds	19 IH-10 Mines
5 AT Mines	2 TM-46 AT Mines
28 Chi Com grenades	41 60mm mortar rounds
345 rounds AK-47 ammo.	2 60mm mortar sights
52 RPG-2 rounds	2 RPG-7 rounds
2 60mm mortar bipods	2 60mm mortar base plates
300 Blasting caps, electric	1 Wrist watch
13 Shape charge rifle grenades	3 Drum magazines
42 RPG charges	150 communication wire
39 2-10 Mines	240 lbs of rice
1 Pint of oil	30 5.56 rounds (US)
15 7.62 crimped cartridges	2 rifle grenades Attachments f/AK-47
8 Gas masks	2 60mm mortar cleaning rods
1 Tripod for 50 Cal. MG	2 Recoil Pads
1 Sholder Harness for 50 Cal. MG	1 Galvometer
23 82mm mortar fuses	1 50 Cal. tool kit
5 Picks	3 Shovels
3 NVA helmets	3 T&E sections for 50 Cal. MG
2 Tripods for 50 Cal MG	5 Machettes
8 Packs	1 Bag assorted electrical gear
5 lbs of TNT	50 feet, time fuse
11 Cans, mortar increments	

14 May 68. At 1100H at YD 160671 elements of Company "M" discovered a bunker which had been partially destroyed by a bomb. The bunker contained the following weapons and equipment:

3 30 Cal. Carbines (US)	1 Light Machine Gun
1 Chi Com Automatic rifle	4 Chi Com Burp Guns
2 AK-47's	1 Thompson Submachine Gun
14 Drums for light machine gun	15 French submachine guns
62 Assorted magazines	1 DH-10 Mine
300 rounds 7.62mm ammo.	

15 May 68. At 0745H Company "I" elements while searching the area in the vicinity of YD 182665 captured one (1) POW, (NVA).

At 0800H Company "I" elements at YD 184656 and YD 181664 discovered the following weapons;

5 M-1 Rifles	4 Carbines
1 Chi Com Submachine gun	1 Browning Automatic rifle
1 SKS	

At 1030H at YD 159669 elements of Company "M" discovered 15, 82mm mortar rounds. The rounds were destroyed in place.

At 1115H Company "I" elements found four (4) NVA bodies at YD 177671.

At 1230H at YD 159669 Company "M" elements found an NVA map and misc. papers.

16 May 68. No significant events.

17 May 68. At 0945H a Marine from Company "L" accidentally shot himself in the lower left leg while cleaning his rifle. The Marine was Med Evaced and an investigation will be held.

At 1330H Company "I" reported finding the below listed items at YD 193698:

1 Chi Com grenade	30 82mm mortar fuses
1 Poncho	1 NVA belt
30 7.62, AK-47 rounds	

At 1535H the Bravo Command Group and Company "M" returned to A-3. The positions of the other Companies and Command Group Alpha were as follows:

Company "M" YD 176722  
 Company "I" YD 197717  
 Company "L" YD 201701  
 Battalion CP YD 197717

18 May 68. At 0430H the Battalion assumed operational control of the A-3 Position.

At 0515H Company "I" and the Alpha Command Group returned to the A-3 Position.

At 0704H Company "L" returned to the A-3 Position.

At 1030H OP Gold received 2 sniper rounds from a ridge north of the position, the OP Gold Position also received 10 rounds of 60mm mortar fire. The rounds impacted outside of the perimeter, the fire was received

from an azimuth of 5200 mils at distance of approximately 1200 meters. No casualties were sustained.

19 May 68. No significant events.

20 May 68. No significant events.

21 May 68. At 1130H at YD 207177 elements of Company "I" discovered two (2) DH-10 Mines. The mines were not emplaced for use. The mines were destroyed in place.

At 1520H the A-3 Position received 8 rounds of estimated 105mm enemy artillery fire. A crater analysis disclosed the artillery was fired from an azimuth of 6200 mils and from a distance of 9000 meters. A counter battery mission was fired.

At 1700H the Battalion Commander held a meeting of all Company Commanders and section leaders.

22 May 68. At 0630H Company "I"'s point element at YD 164704 sighted a small group of NVA approximately 100 meters to their front. The enemy was engaged by snipers. Movement was heard by Company "I" flank element the area was reconned by fire. A 81mm mortar mission was fired. Company "I"'s point element was pinned down by small arms fire and Chi Coms. A Company "I" element while reinforcing the point received incoming enemy 60mm mortar fire.

At 0805H Company "L" departed the A-3 Position to reinforce Company "I". While leaving the position the Company received 6 rounds of enemy artillery, estimated as 85mm or 105mm. A Med Evac was requested by Company "L" for one emergency and five priorities.

At 0810H Company "I" disengaged, the enemy counterattacked. At 0820H gunships were requested.

At 0831 a resupply was inbound to Company "I". At 0850H Company "I" marked lines for gunships. Gunships were on station at 0850H.

At 0900H Company "L" had two platoons at YD 169714 and one platoon at YD 171710.

At 0915H OP Silver received 4 sniper rounds, a 106 recoilless rifle mission was fired with unknown results.

At 0930H the S-3 reported enemy artillery at a azimuth of 5500 mils from YD 1771.

At 0935H resupply helicopters received ground fire in the LZ. Resupply was completed at 0940H.

At 0945H Company "I" reported the enemy unit was wearing camouflaged helmets and were believed to have withdrawn to the An Phu area at YD 150702. An unknown station was received on the Battalion net using call signs "Lima Regime Alpha" and Fighting Mad 2/6 Charlie", the Communication Officer planned to authenticate but the station did not try to recontact the Battalion. The 9th Marines Communications Officer was notified by message.

At 1125H Company "L" sighted 9-10 NVA at YD 165705 and engaged with

small arms. Company "I" started to sweep area of contact.

At 1300H Company "I" sweeping area at YD 162700 discovered one (1) NVA KIA confirmed and captured one AK-47. An AO sighted a small group of NVA at YD 161697. Fixed wing aircraft received 50 caliber fire while making strikes.

At 1330H elements of Company "L" made contact with a unknown size enemy NVA unit at YD 163700 and engaged with small arms resulting in one (1) NVA, KIA and one (1) AK-47 captured. Artillery and air strikes were utilized during the contact.

From 1313H to 1320H Company "I" received a heavy volume of adjusted artillery fire from YD 142806. An emergency TPQ was requested and artillery missions were called.

At 1400H elements of Company "L" overran two anti aircraft positions at YD 158702. The enemy withdrew with a anti aircraft weapon. Company "L" captured ammunition for the AA weapon. One (1) AA position was empty.

At 1520H Company "L" received incoming enemy artillery.

At 1625H the A-3 Position received 10 rounds of 105mm enemy artillery from YD 156789 (azimuth 6100 mils, distance 7-8,000 meters).

At 1805H Company "L" received enemy artillery from the north.

At 1830H Company "L" was positioned at YD 158702, Company "I" was at YD 156703.

At 1835H Company "L" was receiving enemy mortar fire and small arms.

At 1910H the Alpha Command Group received enemy incoming artillery.

At 1940H Company "I" received approximately 80 rounds of enemy artillery fire. Company "L" reported several NVA within grenade range.

At 2020H a flare ship and dragon ship was requested.

At 2035H IP3 reported movement 75 to 100 meters to their front, approximately 4 persons.

By 2300H Companies "I" and "L" had set in for the night and received two minor light probes. Total enemy artillery and mortar fire received during the day was estimated at 350-400 rounds of artillery (105mm) and 100-150 rounds of 82mm and 60mm mortar. Total friendly casualties for the day were as follows;

2 KIA's

33 WIA's Evacs

16 WIA's ( to be evacuated at first light).

Enemy casualties:

8 KIA's confirmed (NVA)

4 Individual weapons captured

23 May 68. At 0108H received 9th Marine Frag Order 28-68.

At 0235H Company "L" received an estimated 30 rounds of enemy artillery. From 1100H to 1700H the 1st Platoon, Company "I" attacked approximately two platoons of NVA dug in at YD 156695 after delivering heavy preparation fires. Four NVA were observed and engaged. India One received heavy automatic weapons fire and Chi Coms. India One was withdrawn, preparation fires and air strikes were again delivered. India 3 reinforced India One and resumed the attack employing LAAW's and small arms fire.

At 1412H the Battalion Commander and Command Group departed A-3 to join Company "I" at YD 157703.

At 1530H India One again withdrew and additional air strikes and supporting fires were delivered. India One and Three attacked and the enemy withdrew south at 1700H. Eight NVA, KIA's confirmed were counted 3 NVA, POW's, one crew served weapon and 4 individual weapons were captured. Company "I" sustained 2 KIA's and 7 WIA's.

24 May 68. From 0800H to 1100H Company "I" secured Hill # 28 and conducted patrols 300-500 meters to the south and east. Company "I" swept the area of contact on 22 May 68 and discovered a bunker complex, the bunkers were destroyed. There was a negative sighting of NVA units. One NVA body was found and one (1) AK-47 captured.

At 1530H Company "I" commenced their return to A-3.

At 1630H General Davis, CG 3d MarDiv arrived at the A-3 Position.

At 1700H Company "I" while sweeping area at YD 171704 discovered eight bunkers, a observation post located in a tree complete with platform and ladder. The following ammunition was also discovered:

157 rounds 82mm mortar	42 rounds, 60mm mortar
------------------------	------------------------

The bunkers and ammunition were destroyed.

At 1755H Company "I" returned to the A-3 Position. Cumulative total of enemy equipment captured during operations 22-24 May 68.

10 SKS's	3 AK-47's
1 12.7mm Heavy machine gun	158 82mm mortar rounds
52 60mm mortar rounds	1600 rounds, 50 Cal. MG ammunition
25 Chi Com grenades	7 AK-47 Magazines
560 rounds AK-47 ammo.	30 Packs
9 Intr trenching Tools	3 Small picks
12 Cartridge belts	4 Cooking pots
1 Compass	1 Pair binoculars
10 Gas Masks	21 Ponchos
11 Hammocks	2 First aid kits
26 Mess kits	50 lbs of rice
1 Parachute	1 50 Cal. sight
Assorted Radio Parts	1 battery
2 Coils of communication wire	2 Cases protein blocks
20 feet detonating cord	
Various documents, diaries, pamphlets, personnel correspondence and maps.	

25 May 68. At 0130H during a TPQ drop a bomb impacted in the mine field, no casualties.

At 1330H a verbal warning order was received from the 9th Marines to prepare to depart the A-3 Position.

At 1430H Company "M" departed A-3, Company "I" departed at 1445H.

At 1530H the Battalion commenced a heli lift from YD 185717.

At 1640H elements of the Battalion received 30 rounds of enemy mortar fire from YD 162803. An artillery mission was fired with unknown results.

The remaining lifts were run from the A-3 Position.

At 1530H Company "L", 3d Battalion, 9th Marines arrived at A-3.

At 1645H the Battalion was OPCON to the 3d Marine Regiment.

At 2200H OP Silver reported movement in front of their position, then received two (2) Chi Com grenades and 5 to 7 rounds of small arms fire. OP Silver returned fire with small arms.

At 1930H Company "M" made contact with an unknown size enemy unit at YD 257658. The enemy returned fire with at least three (3) automatic weapons, Company "M" withdrew, the enemy was still believed to be in position. Artillery missions were fired on the enemy position. The Battalion will continue the attack at first light.

26 May 68. At 0845H a Marine from Company "A", 1/9 tripped a booby trap. A Med Evac was requested.

At 1015H a heli lift of Company "L" to the Battalion position was completed.

At 1045H Company "A", 1st Bn, 9th Marines was chipped from OPCON.

At 1058H the Battalion received approximately 42 rounds of 105-130mm enemy artillery fire. Counter battery missions were fired.

At 1100H the helicopter lift of the 106mm Recoilless Rifle Platoon was completed. The Battalion was chipped to OPCON 9th Marines.

At 1140H Company "M" while pursuing withdrawing enemy at YD 260656 captured the following weapons:

1 57mm Recoilless Rifle

1 SKS

1 RPD Light Machine Gun Type 56

At 1315H the Battalion received approximately 22 rounds of enemy artillery fire, estimated as 105mm to 130mm. Fire was received from a azimuth of 40 degrees.

From 1400H to 2100H Company "I" while moving to seize Objective "A" encountered several NVA in the rice paddies on the northeastern approaches to the Objective area. The majority of the NVA were dead, five (5) NVA were killed by small arms as they attempted to withdraw to Objective "A". Five NVA, POW's were captured. As Company "I" closed on Objective "A" resistance increased, fires in the support of the attack were poor to non existent as a result of a continuous check fire. POW's captured indicated that the NVA unit on Objective "A" was the remainder of the Battalion engaged earlier. Company "I" was unable to penetrate the bunker area on Objective "A" and was ordered to withdraw to YD 265653 and resume the attack in the morning.

At 1710H Company "L" consolidated Objective "C" (YD 259671).

At 1815H Company "M" while securing Objective "B" made contact with four (4) NVA and engaged with small arms, resulting in four (4) NVA, KIA's confirmed. Heavy preparation fires and fixed wing strikes were conducted on Objective "B".

At 2000H Company "M" seized and consolidated Objective "B". During the attack thirty (30) NVA KIA's were found on the Objective. Six (6) NVA were killed by Company "M" elements pursuing by fire as the enemy withdrew. The NVA, KIA's were attributed to fixed wing, artillery preparation fires

and ground assault fire. The objective was believed to have been defended by not less than one (1) NVA Company. The following weapons and ammunition was captured.

- 1 57mm Recoiless Rifle
- 11 SKS's
- 6 AK-47's
- 2 RPD Light MG's
- 1 7.62mm Heavy MG w/ tripod
- 2 RPG-2 launchers
- 1 M-16 (US recovered)
- 2 57mm Recoiless rifle rounds
- 2 RPG-2 rounds
- 7 RPG Fuses

At 2130H Company "L" engaged three (3) NVA who were moving across the perimeter with M-79's and small arms. The area will be searched at first light.

27 May 58. At 0600H Company "L" reported that a search of the area of last nights probe disclosed one (1) NVA, KIA.

At 0700H Company "M" reported a further search of Objective "B" (YD 249660) disclosed the following weapons and equipment:

- 1 AK-47
- 1 82mm mortar sight w/case

At 1200H Company "I" attacked and seized Objective "A", light resistance was encountered. The following weapons and equipment were captured:

- 1 AK-47
- 1 Barrel for 7.62mm HMG
- 15 RPG-2 rounds
- 1 Handset
- 1 Accessory pack & whip antenna (US, AN/PRC 25)
- 1/2 lbs TNT
- 2 Packs
- 4 Gas masks
- 3 Rifle grenades
- 1 Chi Com grenade
- Misc. documents

At 1230H Battalion elements made sporadic contact with fleeing enemy while sweeping area of Objective #1.

At 1250H Company "M" observed three (3) NVA in the open at YD 250654 and engaged with small arms resulting in three (3) NVA, KIA's confirmed.

At 1500H Company "L" reported discovering one (1) NVA body at YD 260662. One NVA, KIA confirmed and the following equipment captured:

- 1 Cartridge belt
- 3 Chi Com grenades
- 1 Helmet

At 1700H the Battalion assumed OPCON of Companies "B" and "D", 1st Bn, 9th Marines.

At 1800H Company "L" at YD 255654 discovered 1 RPG-2 rocket launcher.

At 2300H the positions of the Companies were as follows:

Company "L" YD 253670	Company "D" YD 261657
Company "M" YD 258665	CP YD 238647
Company "I" YD 254645	Company "B" YD 260648

28 May 68. At 1630H Company "L" at YD 255652 sighted one (1) NVA approximately 50 meters from friendly positions. The NVA was taken under fire by small arms resulting in one (1) NVA, KIA confirmed.

At 1400H at YD 245670 after heavy preparation fires Company "L" attacked and encountered heavy resistance from a unknown size enemy unit fighting from a well prepared position, tanks and gunships were used to break contact. Contact "L" at YD 247673 broke contact at 1815H.

At 2300H the positions of the companies were as follows:

Company "I" YD 254653

Company "K" YD 238647

Company "D" YD 258666

Company "B" & "CP" YD 263655

Company "M" YD 258665

23 May 68. At 0045H Company "M" engaged with small arms and artillery 3 to 4 NVA moving in front of the lines resulting in one (1) NVA, POW.

At 0130H an estimated group of twenty (20) NVA broke through Company "M"'s lines, Company "M" engaged with small arms. The company sustained two (2) KIA's and one RPD Machine Gun was captured. The area was searched at first light and the following equipment was found:

2 Packs

1 AK-47 magazine

200 rounds, AK-47 ammo.

Misc. 782 gear

At 1325H Company "B", 1st Bn, 9th Marines discovered two (2) NVA, KIA's, One (1) AK-47, 4 Chi Com grenades, 4 AK-47 magazines, 1 gas mask and one first aid kit.

At 1600H Company "D", 1st Bn, 9th Marines while sweeping through the area of contact at YD 253662 captured the following equipment:

5 SKS's

2 AK-47's

3 12.75 Machine Guns

3 Mounts MG

2 Sights

1 Microphone

1 Set earphones

1 57mm Recoiless Rifle round

50 Chi Com grenades

5 RPG-7 rounds

At 1645H a Company "M" S-2 scout observed an NVA hiding in the brush. The scout engaged the NVA with an intrenching tool. The NVA threw a Chi Com and was killed by small arms.

At 1655H Company "L" elements discovered one (1) NVA, KIA at YD 243699, the NVA was unarmed.

At 2100H Company "D", 1/9 sighted 4 to 5 persons moving toward their lines at a distance of 50-100 meters. Company "D" engaged with small arms and M-79's. Ten (10) NVA were sighted at 2135H. Surveillance was maintained of the area with a starlight scope.

Company "L" YD 245674

Company "M" YD 251669

Company "I" YD 250658

Company "D" 1/9 YD 253662

Company "B" 1/9 YD 248657

CP YD 261657

30 May 68. At 0200H Company "L" reported numerous sightings of NVA trying to break thru the lines. The enemy were engaged with small arms. A search at first light revealed one (1) NVA, KIA.

Company "D", 1/9 at 0930H observed four (4) NVA moving east toward their lines at YD 256665. The NVA were engaged with small arms. A

search at first light disclosed one NVA, KIA confirmed.

At 0745H Company "B", 1/9 captured three (3) NVA, POW's and three AK-47's at YD 251660.

At 0830H Company "B", 1/9 captured seven (7) POW's at YD 248660.

At 1100H the Battalion assumed OPCON of Company "K", 3/3.

At 1550H Company "D", 1/9 was chopped from OPCON.

At 1600H Company "B", 1/9 was chopped from OPCON.

At 1630H a search of the battle area (YD 253658 to 245672) revealed 47 NVA KIA confirmed. The KIA's were a result of air, artillery and small arms. A total of 18 prisoners were captured on 30 May 1968, the prisoners were dazed, demoralized and exhausted, only light resistance was encountered.

The following weapons and equipment were captured.

4 RPD Machine guns	7 AK-47s
8 SKS	2 12.7 Heavy Machine guns
1 75mm Recoiless rifle	1 RPG-2 Rocket launcher
2 82mm Mortar base plates	3 RPD Drums of ammunition
15 AK-47 Magazines w/ ammunition	600 Cal. 50 rounds
2 Batteries	71 82mm Mortar rounds
2 60mm Mortar rounds	4 Cans 82mm mortar fuzes
1 82mm Mortar bipod	7 Cans propellant charges for 60mm mortar rounds
2 Tripods (long legs) for 12.7 Machine gun	25 RPG-7 rounds
2 Tripods (short legs for 12.7 Machine Gun	11 RPG-2 rounds
32 Chi Com grenades	23 RPG propellant charges
1 DH-10 Mine	2 75mm Recoiless rifle rounds
3 Cans 82mm propellant charges	1 AT Mine
20 Shovels	17 Helmets
Misc. NVA 782 gear	150 lbs Rice

At 1800H the Battalion was chopped from OPCON 9th Marines to the 3d Marines.

31 May 68. At 1010H Company "L" elements at YD 242672 discovered the following weapons and equipment:

1 12.7 Heavy Machine Gun w/mount and shoulder harness	2 RPG- Rocket Launchers
2 SKS	2 AK-47s
1 57mm Recoiless rifle round	4 82mm Mortar rounds
2 Helmets	7 AK-47 Magazines

U.S. Weapons recovered

1 M-16	1 M-14
4 M-60 Machine guns	

At 1142H at YD 246668 Company "L" uncovered four (4) NVA bodies, and the following ordnance:

2 75mm Recoiless rifle rounds	1 57mm Recoiless rifle round
-------------------------------	------------------------------

At 1142H the Battalion assumed command of Mai Xa Thi (YD 282668) and was establishing a combat operations base. The location of the Companies were as follows:

C.P.	YD 278663	Company "I" YD 261632
Company "K"	YD 265648	Company "L" YD 282668
Company "M"	YD 258658	

At 1430H at YD 268657 Company "M" discovered 29 bunkers, the bunkers were destroyed.

At 1845H Company "K" while firing on calls received six (6) short rounds, no casualties were sustained, a check fire was called

HEADQUARTERS  
3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF  
FPO San Francisco California 96602

Copy \_\_\_ of \_\_\_ Copies  
A-3 Position, RVN  
5 May 68

Battalion Operation Order 9-68

Time Zone H

References: (a) Map 1:50,000 AMS Sheet 6442 IV, Series L 7014.  
(b) 9th Marines msg 052200Z May 68.  
(c) 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68 (Operation Kentucky)  
dtd 050525Z May 68.

Task Organization.

3d Battalion, 3d Marines

Lt Col. J. W. MARSH

Company "M" (Rein)

Capt. McADAM

Detachment, Btry "C", 1/12 (FO Team)  
Detachment, H&S Company  
Detachment, 81mm Mortar Platoon (FO Team)  
Detachment, Medical Platoon  
FAC/TACP Team  
Detachment, Headquarters Co., 9th Marines, (Sniper Team)  
Detachment, 3rd MP Bn, (Dog Team)  
Interpreter, III MAF  
Detachment, 3d Engineer Bn.

Company "K" (Rein)

Capt. FRANK

Detachment, Btry "C", 1/12 (FO Team)  
Detachment, H&S Company  
Detachment, 81mm Mortar Platoon (FO Team)  
Detachment, Medical Platoon  
Detachment, Communications Platoon  
FAC/TACP Team  
Detachment, 3d Engineer Bn.  
Detachment, Headquarters Co., 9th Marines (Sniper Team)

Company "L" (Rein)

Capt. MATTHEWS

Detachment, Btry "C", 1/12 (FO Team)  
Detachment, H&S Company  
Detachment, 81mm Mortar Platoon, (FO Team)  
Detachment, Medical Platoon  
Detachment, Communications Platoon  
FAC/TACP Team

Interpreter, III MAF  
 Detachment, 3d Engineer Bn.  
 Detachment, Headquarters Co., 9th Marines (Sniper Team)

Company "I" (Rein)

Capt. LEHRACK

Detachment, Btry "C", 1/12 (FO Team)  
 Detachment, H&S Co.  
 Detachment, 81mm Mortar Platoon (FO Team)  
 Detachment, Medical Platoon  
 Detachment, Communications Platoon  
 FAC/TACP Team  
 Detachment, Headquarters Co., 9th Marines (Sniper Team)  
 Detachment, 3d MP Bn., (Dog Team)  
 Kit Carson Scout  
 Interpreter, III MAF  
 Detachment, 3d Engineer Bn.

1. Situation.

a. Enemy Forces.

(1) See current intelligence summaries.

b. Friendly Forces.

- (1) The 9th Marines commencing at H-Hour on D-Day conducts offensive operations to locate and kill or capture enemy personnel, locate and destroy enemy installations, capture enemy equipment and or supplies.  
 (2) The 3d Battalion, 9th Marines moves to A-3 to uncover position and conduct operations in accordance with reference (c).  
 (3) The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines and the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines will resume normal AO's except as amended by reference (b) and (c) and conduct screening operations west of the 17 grid lines.  
 (4) The 2nd ARVN Battalion will conduct normal operations east of the 20th grid line.  
 (5) The 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines will be in direct support and deliver heavy preparation fires prior to D-Day.

c. Attachments and Detachments.

(1) See task organization.

2. Mission.

- a. Seize Regimental Objective "A" at YD 188698 and Battalion Objective One at YD 175698 on D-Day and be prepared to continue the attack on order.

3. Execution.

a. Concept of Operations.

- (1) Commencing at H-Hour seize Regimental Objective "A" with one (1) company (rein).  
 (2) At H+ $\frac{1}{2}$  hour seize Objective 1 with one (1) company (rein).  
 (3) Upon seizure of Regimental Objective "A" reinforce with one (1) company (rein) and Battalion Command Group and establish a two (2) company defensive perimeter.  
 (4) Upon seizure of Battalion Objective 1 consolidate a company

defensive perimeter.

(5) Conduct ambush patrols at last light on D-Day and continue the attack to seize Battalion Objective 2 at first light on D+1.

(6) See Annex "A" (Operation Overlay)

b. Company "I" (Rein).

(1) Commencing at H-2½ hours move to the attack position at YD 198703, commence the attack at H-Hour to seize and consolidate Objective "A". Be prepared to support or reinforce movement of Company "L" in trace. Be prepared to defend the eastern sector of Objective "A" and establish ambushes in the vicinity of YD 195698 and YD 192692, continue the attack on order (D+1) to seize Battalion Objective 2 in coordination with Company "L". See Annex "A" (Operation Overlay).

c. Company "M" (Rein).

(1) Commence movement at H-1½ hours to an attack position at YD 168713, attack at H-Hour to seize and consolidate Battalion Objective 1, on seizure conduct aggressive platoon patrols 500 meters to the south covering the stream. Be prepared to furnish a night ambush patrol in the vicinity of Hill #38 prior to last light on D-Day. Be prepared to support by fire or reinforce the main attack on Objective 2 at first light on D+1 and continue the attack on order to seize Battalion Objective #3.

d. Company "L" (Rein).

(1) At H-½ hour on order follow in trace of Company "I" on assigned axis of advance to consolidate the western half of Regimental Objective "A". Be prepared to support or reinforce Company "I" in seizure of Regimental Objective "A". Deploy an ambush patrol at last light at YD 183702 on D-Day, continue the attack on D+1 on northern axis of advance to seize Battalion Objective 2 in coordination with Company "I".

e. Company "K" (rein) Reserve.

(1) Be prepared to deploy from the C-2 Position as Reserve Helicopter Borne Reaction Force. Monitor the Battalion tactical net on a 24 hour basis remaining on a constant 15 minute alert. Ensure preparations are made to depart C-2 on a permanent basis. Update the Helicopter wave and serial assignment tables based on availability of 2 CH-46's per wave. Ensure key billet holders, crew served weapons and other critical equipment is spread loaded. Select a secure Loading zone outside the wire at the C-2 Position.

f. 106mm Recoilless Rifle Platoon.

(1) Ensure one T/O Section with 22 rounds of HEP, 2 rounds AP, are staged with 2 mechanical mules for immediate deployment on a 15 minute alert. Organize heli-teams in accordance with Appendix 1 to Annex C.

g. 81mm Mortar Platoon.

(1) Be prepared to initially support maneuver elements by fire. Commencing on D+2 be prepared to deploy one T/O Section by helicopter from A-3. Ammunition will include 80 HE rounds (heavy), 10 WP rounds and 10 illumination rounds. Organize heli-teams in accordance with Appendix 1 of Annex C.

h. Coordinating Instructions.

- (1) D-Day 6 May 68.
- (2) H-Hour 0530H
- (3) Ensure machine guns are employed with the T&E mechanisms and tripods to the maximum extent practical.
- (4) On setting in the priority of work in defense will be as follows:
  - (a) Post local security 150 meters from friendly lines.
  - (b) Position in crew served weapons.
  - (c) Select and prepare defensive positions.
  - (d) Clear fields of fire.
  - (e) Lay communication wire.
  - (f) Man crew served weapons continuously.
  - (g) Emplace claymore mines, trip flares and other obstacles as appropriate.
  - (h) Prepare slit trenches and trash pits.
- (5) Set the lines at 1730H.
- (6) Stand to alert 1830. At 1900H commence noise and light discipline.
- (7) Reference Points.
  - (a) Gems 1764
  - (b) Girls Names 1566
  - (c) Coins 1868
  - (d) Metals 1673
  - (e) Soaps 1670
- (8) Ensure air panels are carried.
- (9) Perimeter machine guns will be fired only on order of the Company Commanders.
- (10) Ensure lines of communications and resupply are not blocked by defensive positions.
- (11) All forces required to be heli-lifted will be familiar with the helicopter wave and serial assignment tables contained in Annex C and will conduct a detailed map study of the LZ/LZ locations furnished in Annex C.
- (12) All rifle companies will prepare helicopter wave and serial assignment tables based on availability of 2 CH-46's per wave, with a lift capability of 15 combat loaded troops per CH-46.

4. Administration and Logistics.

- a. Spot reports will be submitted as per occasion. Submit initial

report with basic information as soon as possible, forward complete information by follow on report.

b. An up to date Med Evac roster will be forwarded to the S-1 via Battalion Administration on D-1. Deletions as a result of rotation, R&R and casualties will be reported as soon as possible after the individual leaves the field. The S-1 will provide the S-3 with effective field strength at 0700H each day.

c. Casualty reporting has been slow and inaccurate, casualty reports will be provided to the S-1 not later than  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour after the Med Evac is completed.

d. Normal resupply requests will be received by the S-4 by 2100H for the following day.

e. Under normal circumstances casualty evacuations will not be attempted until the enemy force at the point of contact has been neutralized.

f. Med Evac will be requested only for the most severe cases when a unit is engaged.

g. The following items will be staged on the LSA for other than routine resupply requests.

(1) Class I

- (a) 600 MCI
- (b) 10,000 salt tablets
- (c) 100 bottles halizone tablets

(2) Class II

- (a) 20 pair jungle boots (assorted sizes).
  - (b) 40 pair jungle utility trousers (small R).
  - (c) 40 pair jungle utility coats (small R).
- Emergency medical supplies for 20 casualties.
- (d) 24 bottles ringers lactate.
  - (e) 30 intra catheters
  - (f) 24 small battle dressings
  - (g) 12 medium battle dressings .
  - (h) 1 box 3 inch ace wraps.
  - (i) 2 arm splints.
  - (j) 1 box 4 inch ace wraps.
  - (k) 1 box 2 inch rolls gauze.
  - (l) 2 thomas splints.
  - (m) 12 portable stretcher
  - (n) 28 cotter sets.
  - (o) 2 AN/PRC 41 Batteries
  - (p) 2 AN/PRC-25 Radios

(3) Class III

- (a) 2-5 gallon cans gasoline

- (4) Class IV.
- (a) 12 picks
  - (b) 12 shovels
  - (c) 100 5 foot fence posts
  - (d) 1 sleeve of concertina (24 rolls)
  - (e) 1000 sand bags
- (5) Class V.
- (a) 10,000 rounds 7.62 linked
  - (b) 200 rounds 60mm mortar HE
  - (c) 25,200 rounds 5.56mm
  - (d) 4 - 3.5 WP rocket rounds
  - (e) 75 LAAW's
  - (f) 422 rounds, M-79
  - (g) 300 grenades, M-26/M-33
  - (h) 20 rounds, 106mm HEP
  - (i) 2 rounds, 106mm AP
  - (j) 100 rounds, 81mm mortar, HE heavy
  - (k) 10 rounds, 81mm mortar, illumination
  - (l) 10 rounds, 81mm mortar, WP
  - (m) 4 demolition kits, complete
  - (n) 100 feet, time fuse
  - (o) 30 blasting caps, non-electric
  - (p) 8 - E-8 Gas Launchers
  - (q) 10 trip flares
  - (r) 30 grenades, hand, smoke yellow
  - (s) 2 flame thrower units, complete

h. The following equipment will be carried by the individual as applicable:

- (1) 21 rounds, 45 Cal.
- (2) 260 rounds, 5.56mm
- (3) 4, M-26 hand grenades
- (4) 1 CS grenade
- (5) 1 WP grenade
- (6) 50 M-79 rounds per grenadier
- (7) 24 salt tablets
- (8) 1 bottle halizone
- (9) 3 filled canteens
- (10) shaving gear
- (11) 1 bottle mosquito repellent
- (12) 2 Malaria tablets
- (13) 2 pair socks
- (14) 1 can foot powder
- (15) mosquito headnet
- (16) 1 poncho
- (17) normal 782 gear

- (18) long sleeve shirt
- (19) 3 MCI

1. Each unit (appropriate level) will carry the following items in the quantities indicated below:

(1) Class II.

- (a) 2 TA-1s per company headquarters.
- (b) 1 TA-1 per platoon headquarters.
- (c) 1 TA-312 per company headquarters.
- (d) 200 meters communication wire per Plt. headquarters.
- (e) 400 meters communication wire per Co. headquarters
- (f) 800 meters communication wire per Bn. headquarters.
- (g) 1 Air Panel per fire team
- (h) 1 starlight scope, mounted and carried on M-16 per Plt.
- (i) 12 nylon stretchers per Company.

(2) Class IV.

- (a) 1 file per platoon
- (b) 1 machete per squad
- (c) 1 grappling hook per company.

(3) Class V.

- (a) 9 claymore mines per company
- (b) 1200 rounds, linked, 7.62 per M-60.
- (c) 150 rounds, 60mm mortar per company.
- (d) 1 E-8 gas launcher per platoon.
- (e) 1 trip flare per fire team.
- (f) 6 grenades, hand, smoke, yellow per TACP.
- (g) 6 grenades, hand, smoke yellow per company headquarters
- (h) 4 grenades, hand, smoke yellow per platoon headquarters.
- (i) 2 grenades, hand smoke, yellow per squad.
- (j) 2 each, illumination grenade/GSC/RSC/WSP per Plt. Company and Battalion Headquarters.
- (k) 20 pounds, C-4 per platoon.
- (l) 50 feet, time fuse per platoon.
- (m) 15 blasting caps, non-electric per platoon.
- (n) 72 LAAW's, 1-3.5 rocket launcher, 4-3.5 WP rounds per Company.

5. Command and Communications.

a. Command Group Alpha.

Commanding Officer w/Radio Operator  
 S-3 w/ Radio Operator  
 2-4 w/ Radio Operator  
 ALO w/ 2 Radio Operators  
 S-2

81mm Mortar Platoon Commander w/ Radio Operator  
 Communications Officer  
 Sergeant Major  
 2 Journal Clerks  
 Regimental Tac #1 Radio Operator  
 Regimental Tac #2 Radio Operator  
 Battalion Tac #1 Radio Operator  
 Battalion Tac #2 Radio Operator  
 One Corpsman  
 One utility Radio Operator

b. Command Group Brgvo.

Executive Officer  
 S-3 Alpha  
 S-2 Chief  
 S-1  
 S-4  
 Chaplin  
 HST Team  
 Armorer  
 Battalion Surgeon  
 Battalion Tac #1 Radio Operator.  
 Battalion Tac #2 Radio Operator  
 Regimental Tac #1 Radio Operator

c. Both Command Groups will initially move with Company "L" on  
 D-Day.

d. Signals.

- (1) Commence and Cease FPF.
  - (a) Company "I", Red Star Cluster.
  - (b) Company "L", White Star Cluster.
  - (c) Company "M", Green Star Cluster.
- (2) Yellow Smoke - Mark friendly lines and/or LZ.
- (3) Red Star Cluster - Enemy contact.
- (4) Red Smoke - Enemy Position.
- (5) WP - Enemy Position.

Emphasis use of Med Evac frequency (45.7) once Med Evac has been  
 summoned on TACP Net.

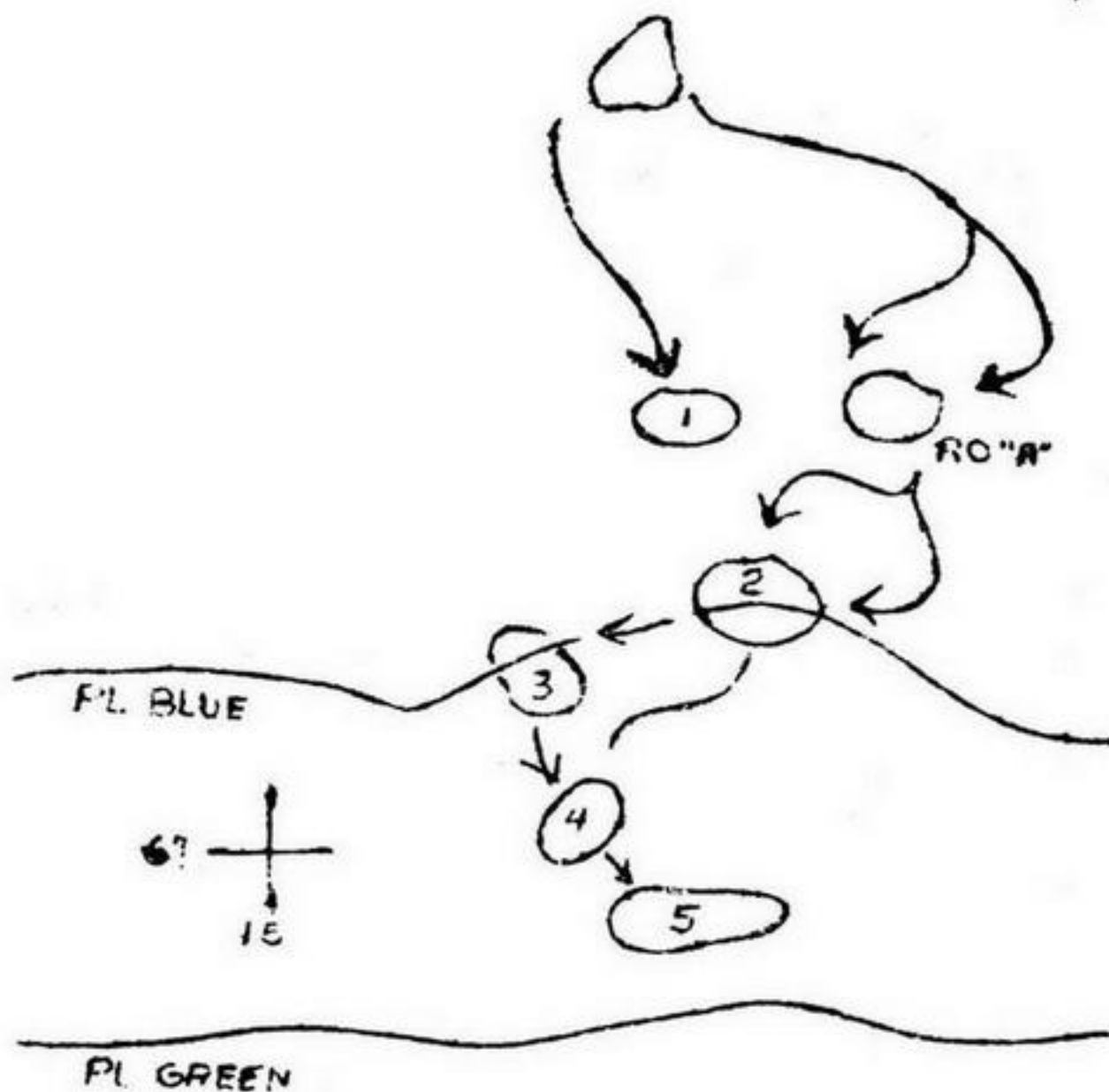
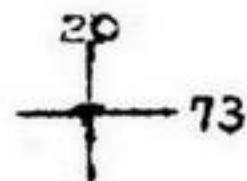
**ANNEXES:**

- A. Operation Overlay.
- B. Intelligence (not included).
- C. Heli-Borne Assault Plan (not included)
- D. Fire Support Overlay (not included).

R.F. FINDLAY JR.  
 Major, U.S. Marine Corps  
 S-3

J. W. MARSH  
 Lieutenant Colonel  
 Commanding

Map: Vietnam 1:50,000, AMS Sheet 6442 IV



OFFICIAL:

R. F. FINDLAY JR.  
Major, US Marine Corps  
S-3

J. W. MARSH  
Lieutenant Colonel  
US Marine Corps  
Commanding

HEADQUARTERS  
3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF  
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

JWM/BDA  
25 May 68

From: Commanding Officer, 3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division.  
Via: Commanding Officer, 9th Marine Regiment

Subj: Combat Operations After Action Report

Ref: (a) 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68 (Operation Kentucky).  
(b) 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, Frag Order 9-68.

Encl: (1) 3d Battalion Operation Order 9-68. (excluded)

1. Code name not assigned (Operation Kentucky).
2. Dates of Operation. 0530H 6 May 68 to 0430H 18 May 68.
3. Location. Quang Tri Province, Gio Linh Subsector, Area bounded by GL upper left GL 1572, upper right GL 2272, lower left GL 1564 and lower right GL 2264.

4. Task Organization.

3d Battalion, 3d Marines  
1 Helicopter Support Team, Company C, 3d Shore Party Battalion.  
1 Scout Dog Team, H&S Company, 3d MP Battalion.  
4 FO Teams, Battery C, 1st Battalion, 12th Marines.  
1 Interpreter, III MAF  
Detachment Engineers, Company C, 3d Engineer Battalion.  
2 Scout Sniper Teams, H&S Company, 9th Marines.

5. Supporting Forces.

a. Air Support.

1. Fixed wing combat aircraft were used in two different roles during the operation.

a. Direct Air Support. Support conducted during the second day of the operation which was not close to friendly troops. This type of support was directed by an AO against targets of opportunity in areas where friendly troops were eventually to sweep through.

b. Close Air Support. This type of support was primarily used during the rest of the operation. It was primarily AO controlled

with ALO/FAC Team providing some adjustment upon occasion which was relayed through the AO. Ordnance was dropped within such close proximity to friendly troops that careful control of the fixed wing aircraft was vital to prevent injuries to friendly forces.

c. The main problem encountered in the use of fixed wing aircraft was the reaction time required in getting aircraft on station. In most cases, from 45 minutes to an hour were required before fixed wing were on station. This is too long a time when a unit is on the move as it denies that unit some of its flexibility by causing it to hold up and wait for fixed wing to be run.

## 2. Helicopters.

a. All resupply was conducted by helicopters during the operation. One flight of helicopter gunships was used during the operation.

## 3. Combat Air Support Missions.

6 May 68: Negative Air Support

7 May 68:

Heliborne 212 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 205648. BDA, 25 meters of trench line destroyed. Two structures destroyed.

Lovebug 317 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 197648. BDA, 2 fighting holes destroyed. Two AW positions destroyed.

Lovebug 319 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 197648. BDA, 5 fighting holes destroyed. One secondary explosion.

Hellborne 522 controlled by Fingerprint 51 at YD 207643. BDA, 1 AW position destroyed, One AW position damaged.

Hellborne 557 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 213643. BDA, 1 structure, 2 fighting holes destroyed. One secondary explosion.

Hellborne 558 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 209653. BDA, 2 structures and two fighting holes destroyed.

Hellborne 561 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 197648. BDA, one AW position damaged. Two fighting holes destroyed.

8 May 68:

Hellborne 505 controlled by Catkiller 17 at YD 1866. BDA, negative.

Ring neck 509 controlled by Catkiller 15 at YD 1866. BDA, one killed by air.

Tide 03 controlled by Catkiller 46 at YD 1765. BDA, 2 bunkers and 3 fighting holes destroyed.

Hellborne 235 controlled by Catkiller 46 at YD 175655. BDA, one bunker destroyed.

Hellborne 506 controlled by Catkiller 17 at YD 1866. BDA, negative.

Hellborne 567 controlled by Southern Oscar at YD 1866. BDA, negative.

9 May 68:

Seaworthy 4-1 and 4-2 controlled by Catkiller 15 at YD 1764. BDA, negative.

Hellborne 543 controlled by Catkiller 15 at YD 1664. BDA, one killed by air.

10-11 May 68: Negative Air Support.

12 May 68:

Ringneck 511 controlled by Catkiller 44 at YD 1566. BDA, 2 bunkers damaged and 4 fighting holes destroyed.

Lovebug 308 controlled by Catkiller 10 at YD 174668. BDA, 2 bunkers destroyed and one secondary explosion and fire.

13-18 May 68: Negative Air Support.

b. Artillery Support. During this operation much emphasis was placed on saturation preparation fires. However, many of the missions were adjusted, both preparation fires and targets of opportunity.

6 May 68.

(1) Preparation fires were used extensively utilizing the fire support plan which was part of the 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68.

(2) This massive saturation preparation fire covering grids 1569, 1669, 1769, 1869, 1568, 1668, 1768 and 1868 was fired by our direct support batteries of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines, general support batteries of the 4th Battalion, 12th Marines, Army batteries of the 1st Battalion, 40th Artillery and whiskey batteries of the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 12th Marines. Total expenditure of rounds on this particular preparation fire was over 1200 rounds.

(3) Throughout the day, targets of opportunity were fired by direct support batteries.

(4) Night defensive fires were adjusted in by the direct support batteries.

7 May 68.

(1) Adjusted preparation fires were utilized in support of ground movements. Suppressive preparation fires handled by general support also were used.

(2) Direct support batteries fired on 10 and 15 NVA respectively at YD 186689 and YD 185681. Batteries "E" and "F", 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines responded with timely and accurate fire. Coverage of the target areas was excellent.

(3) Night defensive fires were fired in by the Direct Support Batteries.

8 May 68.

(1) Suppressive fires were heavily utilized to facilitate a change of patrol bases. In addition to the suppressive fires, adjusted preparation fires were used extensively.

(2) Battery "F", 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines fired on 12 NVA in the open at YD 188665 with unknown results. Later heavy contact was made at YD 171661 with Battery "E", 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines as the firing Battery. Large numbers of rounds were expended with excellent effect on the targets. While moving in this area the Battalion took between 250-300 enemy rounds of artillery and mortars. Counter battery fired by general support was not effective. An enemy mortar at YD 180657 was fired on by Battery "F", 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines with unknown results. The direct support Battalion, 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines was used to neutralize enemy contact at YD 184656.

(3) Night defensive fires were shot by direct support Battalion which were used throughout the night to suppress enemy movement. A search the next morning disclosed no NVA bodies.

9 May 68.

(1) Again, a massive preparation fire was used to saturate grids YD 1665, 1765, 1666, and 1766 in preparation for movement.

(2) Battery "E", 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines fired on 12-15 NVA in the open at YD 177641. Another group of 40 NVA were spotted at YD 179645 and consequently this mission was given to the AO. Coordination between the AO and artillery could have been better at this time.

(3) A TOT was fired on YD 160640 using the direct support Battalion. They fired a battalion 2 (2 rounds) with one repeat, target coverage was excellent.

(4) Night defensive fires were utilized and adjusted by the direct support battalion.

10 May 68.

(1) Adjusted preparation fires were utilized in support of smaller units working out of the patrol base.

(2) Targets of opportunity included bunkers, living quarters and suspected enemy positions. The Direct Support Battalion handled the fire missions on these targets.

(3) H&I fires submitted from this position.

(4) Night defensive fires were retained from the previous night. Probings at YD 180645 by 5-10 NVA were repulsed by firing several of our night defensive fires.

11 May 68.

(1) Preparation fires consisted mainly of adjusted preparatory fires and targets of opportunity. Five (5) NVA were sighted at YD 161648. They were fired upon with unknown results.

(2) The same night defensive fires were retained from the previous night.

12 May 68.

(1) Few targets of opportunity were fired this day.

(2) Night defensive fires were adjusted using Batteries "D", "E" and "F" of the 2nd Battalion, 12th Marines and Battery "C", 1st Battalion, 40th Artillery, USA.

(3) Targets of opportunity included bunkers, known enemy positions and suspected assembly areas. Later, night defensive fires were used to neutralize enemy probings.

13 May 68.

(1) Working out of their latest patrol base, all FO's utilized adjusted preparation fires and targets of opportunity during their day-time activities. The direct support batteries plus batteries from general support continued to pound known enemy positions, bunkers, and assembly areas. There was an excellent coverage of targets on all missions.

(2) Night defensive fires were retained from the previous night.

14 May 68.

(1) Preparation fires and suppression fires were used to shield friendly units as they continued to search the area and destroy bunkers.

(2) Night defensive fires were retained from the previous night.

15 May 68.

(1) A 15 minute saturation preparation fire by both direct support and general support batteries was known to have destroyed 4 bunkers.

Other adjusted preparation fires used in support of daytime activities came from general support. Due to the operation beginning to our west, direct support was not available and consequently we required many general support batteries that are slower to respond. Night defensive fires were retained from the previous night and H&I fires were submitted.

16 May 68.

(1) Saturation preparation fires were fired in advance of units moving out of the patrol base. Blocking fires were fired by the last elements leaving the night position.

(2) Night defensive fires were adjusted and H&I fires were submitted.

17 May 68.

(1) Two saturation preparation fires of 30 and 60 minutes duration preceded the movement out of the patrol base. There was an excellent coverage of target on both preparation fires from direct and general support.

(2) Direct support batteries improved their reaction time on targets of opportunity.

(3) Night defensive fires were adjusted for the remaining companies that night.

18 May 68.

(1) In order to accomplish a stealthful move back to the A-3 Position under the cover of darkness no scheduled or adjusted missions were called. Throughout the operation this command was extremely satisfied with the overall artillery support. With the exception as noted above artillery did a fine job in supporting the battalion. There were times when they could have been faster, but the volume of fire was impressive. The massive preparation fire of 6 May 68 in which 1200 rounds were expended was indicative of the volume of fire we received. Throughout the operation more than 16,000 rounds were expended.

(2) Units providing support.

105 MM - Battery "D", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "E", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "F", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "H", 3rd Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "A", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA  
 Battery "B", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA  
 Battery "C", 1st Bn, 40th Artillery, USA

4.2 MM -

Battery "J", 1st Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "K", 2nd Bn, 12th Marines

155MM Battery "K", 4th Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "L", 4th Bn, 12th Marines  
 Battery "M", 4th Bn, 12th Marines

6. Intelligence. Prior to the start of the operation, intelligence reports indicated large enemy units in Leatherneck Square. The order of battle showed the 52nd Regiment, 320th Division to be operating in the southern portion of Leatherneck Square along with the 64th Regiment, 320th Division and elements of the 27th Independent Battalion. Heavy contacts by other Marines and ARVN units in the southern part of Leatherneck Square verified the presence of large enemy units. The enemy was supported by artillery and chose to stay and fight from well dug in positions. During the operation there were light contacts and a heavy contact was gained on 8 May 68 with an estimated NVA Company. Although no larger elements were encountered, the bunker complexes, number of weapons captured, enemy equipment and supplies found confirmed the presence of large units operating in the area. One of the enemy groups encountered at YD 162671 was a security element guarding a large base camp. The unit was supported by artillery and adjusted approximately 500 rounds on our attacking forces.

Two prisoners of war stated they were from the 3rd Co., 927th Bn, 34th Regt. of the Ba Vi River Division and the 2nd Co, 37th Bn, of the Bach Dang Division respectively.

The terrain between the 71 and 66 grid lines in Leatherneck Square are characterized by extremely heavy vegetation offering excellent concealment from air and ground observation. Cross country movement is limited to several intersecting trails broken by infrequent streams and lowland marsh. The heavily vegetated draws and gradual slopes offer little ventilation or relief from heat. The rate of movement through these areas during the summer months will average between 200-300 meters per hour. Grids 1778, 1769, 1870 and 1869 offer the greatest restriction to movement. The east-west streams are readily forded by foot troops with the exception of the stream between Truc Son and Route 41.

NVA forces could easily operate in this area in strengths up to and including Division level without detection from air. Evidence points to the fact that NVA elements in this area favor the heavily wooded draws located in close to fresh water and routes of night ingress and egress. The positions were not established for coordinated, mutually supporting, defensive positions but spread out over a large area. The enemy positions were constructed as living bunkers as opposed to fighting holes offering good observation and fields of fire. Fighting holes and trenchlines are located on higher ground in position to command the approaches into the harbor sites. Living bunkers far outnumber the fighting holes. Construction and staging of supplies and arms was deliberate and appears to have been accomplished over the past 2 months. A basic sketch of the organization of one of the complexes is enclosed.

North-South infiltration appears to have been conducted via the following route: YD's 145725, 143708, 187695, 162683, 173672, 180662 and 159669. An estimated NVA Regiment was assembled in an elaborate complex of

small pockets in the vicinity of the following coordinates; YD 174664, YD 177671, 172654, 179655, 175663 and 183663.

### Terrain.

#### River Crossings;

YD 169712 Water knee high, good water point year round.  
 YD 173696 Water knee high, good water point.  
 YD 172671 Water point would dry up in hot weather.  
 YD 157659 Good water point year around.  
 YD 191702 Water Point  
 YD 172670 Stream, water point.  
 YD 188707 Good water point.  
 YD 203667 Good water point year around.  
 YD 198663 Good water point, stream good running water.

### Vegetation.

YD 1871 High vegetation, scrub brush, fast moving deployable area.  
 YD 1970, YD 1971 Vegetation moderately thick, does not hamper movement, goes into flat area with hedgerows. After crossing river at YD 191702 brush becomes very thick. Paddy areas.  
 YD 1968 Slightly thick, there are paddy areas and fields of elephant grass.  
 YD 1869 Fields of elephant grass. At YD 185695 it gets thicker with a 6 to 15 foot canopy.  
 YD 1668 Partly clear with occasional hedgerows, toward bottom of grid it gets thicker. Tall grass and sparse groups of trees.  
 YD 1664 Brush, knee to waist high, easy movement, gets thicker near bottom of grid, hard navigation.  
 YD 1760 Good movement, mostly clear area with little brush, heavier brush toward southeast corner of grid.  
 YD 1667 Light and moderately thick foliage covers most of high ground.  
 YD 1764 Terrain is moderately thick with many small slopes, western part of grid has some thick brush.  
 YD 1766 Terrain is slightly thick, many trails, movement is good.  
 YD 1765 Moderately thick, hilly, low brush, many good ambush sites, good water points, large draw.  
 YD 1866 Hilly, moderate brush, small paddy area in middle of draw.  
 YD 2066, 2165 Easy movement, flat area, light brush in most of area.  
 YD 1769 Thick, lots of underbrush and elephant grass.

### 7. Mission.

- a. At H-Hour, D-Day attack and seize Regimental Objective "A".
- b. Continue Attack on order to seize Regimental Objectives "D" and "F".
- c. Deliberately destroy all installations in zone of action.

## 8. Concept of Operation.

a. Commencing at H-Hour seize Regimental Objective "A" with one (1) reinforced company.

b. At H +  $\frac{1}{2}$  hour seize Battalion Objective #1 with one (1) reinforced company.

c. Upon seizure of Regimental Objective "A" reinforce with one (1) company (rein) and Battalion Command Group and establish a two (2) company defensive perimeter.

d. Upon seizure of Battalion Objective #1 consolidate a company defensive perimeter.

e. Conduct ambush patrols at last light on D-Day and continue the attack to seize Battalion Objective #2 at first light on D-Day + 1.

## 9. Execution.

a. Change #1 (9th Marines msg 052200H May 68) to 9th Marines Frag Order 20-68 was received directing the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines to secure Objectives "A" and "D" in the zone of action formerly assigned to the 1st Battalion, 5th Cavalry, 1st Air Cavalry Division. As the Battalion swept the zone south from A-3 to the northern ridges of the Cam Lo Valley other Marine units from A-4, C-2, C-2B and C-3 were to furnish screening and blocking activities to the west along Route # 561. Companies "I", "L" and "M" were briefed and otherwise prepared for departure from A-3 at H-Hour established at 0530H on 6 May 68.

On D-Day Regimental Objective "A" (YD 187699 and Battalion Objective #1 (YD 173698) were secured by Companies "I" and "M" respectively by 1200H at which time Company "L" preceded around Company "I"'s western flank enroute to Battalion Objective #2 at (YD 177687). By 1400H extreme heat and thick vegetation had passed a serious deterrent to continue movement. While pushing through heavy brush in the vicinity of YD 182695 enroute to Objective #2, the lead elements of Company "I" encountered two (2) NVA sleeping near a series of living bunkers.

The NVA were engaged as they attempted to withdraw from the area and killed by small arms. Simultaneously Company "I" elements were engaged from several concealed positions and were forced to withdraw behind a screen of CS gas layed down by an E-8 launcher. Several heat casualties were incurred as a result of the extreme temperature coupled with a requirement to don gas masks to counteract the effects of the CS Gas. Company "I" was directed to hold up and consolidate a night position in the vicinity of YD 184699 while Company "L" continued on to seize Objective #2 without incident prior to last light.

Company "M" remained in position at Objective #1 as planned on the night of D-Day. Company "M" received heavy probes on the lines between 062200H and 070400H. Enemy elements were engaged on three (3) occasions. A search of the area conducted by Company "M" at first light revealed one (1) prisoner of war captured while asleep not more than 100 meters from a Company "M" Listening Post. While searching the area of the probes a

second NVA was observed moving rapidly away from the position and was killed by small arms. Two (2) individual weapons were captured along with several items of NVA gear and Company "M" proceeded to Objective #2 as planned without incident.

Company "L" was directed to establish a blocking position in the vicinity of YD 188686 to cover the movement of Company "L" to Objective #2. While moving to the assigned position at 070830H the 2nd Platoon of Company "L" made contact with an estimated squad of NVA at YD 179687. The enemy withdrew rapidly as the Battalion employed close air support and artillery in support of the engaged platoon. At 0930H the NVA were once again encountered by the 2nd Platoon of Company "L" approximately 200 meters east of the first contact. The enemy withdrew immediately upon contact. Two (2) friendly WIA (med evacs) were sustained and no enemy KIA's were confirmed.

At 1310H on the afternoon of D+1 Company "I" while closing on Objective #2 was heavily engaged by a squad size element of NVA at YD 182692. The point elements returned a heavy volume of fire on the enemy position. The enemy withdrew and Company "L" employed artillery and air strikes to cover the evacuation of casualties, prepare Objective #5 and Regimental Objective D for continuation of the attack. Enemy artillery fire continued to hammer the Battalion elements on Objective #4 along with 60mm and 82mm mortars. Counter-battery measures appeared to be ineffective.

#### Summary of Battalion Frag Order 9b-68

Companies "I" and "M" were directed to continue the attack on Objective #5 and D at 1650H, with Company "I" moving on the right flank in the vicinity of Company "L" previous engagement and Company "M" moving on the left flank up the draw at YD 174670.

As the Companies assumed attack formations and moved southeast on the forward slopes of Hill #36, enemy artillery fires increased in intensity inflicting heavy casualties on Company "I". Company "M" continued the attack on the left flank with lesser resistance, Company "I" was shifted to the left flank to move in trace of Company "M" in order to avoid what appeared to be registered enemy defensive fires blocking the avenue of approach between YD 173670 and YD 172662. As Company "M" pushed forward resistance increased on the left flank, mortars, artillery and small arms fire were encountered with increasing intensity. Company "M" continued to attack toward defensible ground in the vicinity of YD 177668. The ground was defended by approximately 65 NVA. Company "M" quickly formed for the assault and the enemy were physically routed from the area and withdrew toward Objective "D". Continuous artillery and air strikes were called on the withdrawing enemy as Companies "I" and "M" consolidated a two (2) company night defensive position. Just prior to last light air strikes were called within 100 meters of the friendly lines. Company "L" and the Bravo Command Group remained on Objective #4 on the night of D+2, and were subjected to enemy mortars and artillery until dark. Although it was not possible to accurately estimate enemy mortar rounds

and artillery received, it was generally agreed that in excess of 500 artillery rounds and approximately the same number of mortars were delivered on friendly units by the NVA. Friendly losses included 9 KIA's and 34 WIA's throughout the day. Enemy casualties were not yet determined at last light.

Summary of Frag Order 9c-68.

Company "L" was directed to proceed at first light to Regimental Objective "F" at YD 162643 with the Battalion Bravo Command Group. Company "M" was directed to sweep the area of contact and seize Regimental Objective "D" with Company "I" following in trace commencing at 0530H on D + 3. Upon seizure of Objective "D" both companies were to close on Regimental Objective "F" with Company "L" prior to last light on D + 3.

Company "M" while sweeping the area of the D + 2 contact discovered eleven (11) NVA KIA's and several individual and crew served weapons as well as the most elaborately prepared positions yet encountered by the Battalion during Operation Kentucky. It was apparent that at least a Battalion size unit had opposed the movement of the Battalion on D+2. After completing the search of the area Companies "I" and "M" closed on and consolidated Regimental Objective "F". Company "L" while closing on Objective "F" discovered an NVA ambush (squad size) apparently oriented to engage Companies "I" and "M" approaching from the east, Company "L" immediately deployed and brought the NVA under fire, causing the NVA to withdraw while sustaining two (2) NVA KIA's (confirmed). In that Regimental Objective "F" was not located on defensible terrain a Battalion position was established at YD 173645.

Much difficulty was experienced in consolidating the Battalion Position and conducting resupply as a result of heavy fighting nearby at YD 178645, taking place between the 1st Battalion, 26th Marines and a well entrenched NVA force. Small arms and machine gun fire from this contact made the forward slopes of the Battalion position untenable until shortly before last light.

Search and destroy operations conducted on D+4 and D+5 confirmed earlier indications of extensive enemy harbor sites and supply caches to the immediate north of Objective "F". It was in this connection that Frag Order 9d-68 was issued directing Company "M" to secure a patrol base in the vicinity of YD 157682 while Companies "L" and "I" established a Battalion (-) strong point patrol base in the vicinity of YD 168657. The movement was completed without incidence and positions were established as intended by 1400H on D+6.

During the period D+7 thru D+8 all companies conducted extensive search and destroy operations within a 2,000 meter radius of the patrol bases. It was not until this time that the actual extent of the NVA positions was realized. Supply caches, harbor sites, weapons and fighting positions discovered clearly confirmed the recent occupation of the area by an estimated 3 to 5 NVA Battalions in a general area bound by a site located at YD 177671, 174664, 175663 172654 and 178663. Company

"M" also discovered an extensive bunker complex and supply cache at YD 160670 which was partially destroyed by recent Arc-lights evidence clearly indicated the NVA incurred heavy losses of personnel and equipment and evacuated the positions in great haste leaving behind an impressive collection of ammunition, weapons and supplies.

Evidence equally point to the fact that positions located in the vicinity of Objectives #5 and #6 were hastily evacuated during the attack by Companies "L" and "M" on 8 May 68. Although the search and destroy operations conducted between D+7 and D+9 netted an impressive collection of enemy weapons and equipment as well as evidence of heavy casualties, there was no evidence of major enemy elements remaining in the immediate area.

D+10, and D+12 were devoted to limited search and destroy missions in connection with the Battalions movement to the A-3 Position via YD 212692, 183700 and 196716.

#### 10. Results.

a. Friendly losses included 9 KIA's and 41 WIA's and 45 non battle casualties Med Evacs. Non battle casualties were primarily due to heat disorders, 32 non battle casualties were returned to the field for duty.

b. Enemy losses included 41 confirmed KIA's and 3 prisoners of war. A total of 361 bunkers (including a battalion aid station), a well and 3 ammunition dumps were discovered and destroyed. 121 individual and 19 crew served weapons were captured.

c. The following weapons and equipment were captured;

12	AK-47's	28	SKS's
01	Sniper Rifle w/scope	01	Sniper Rifle Case
11	30 Caliber Carbines US	14	M-16 Rifles
06	M-1 Rifles	02	Thompson Submachine Guns
05	Browning Auto. Rifles	01	Grease Gun
22	MAT-49s (French)	08	Chinese Auto. Rifles
07	Chinese Burp Guns	01	Soviet 7.62 Sub-Mach. Gun
01	M-79 Grenade Launcher	38	AK-47 Magazines
06	M-16 Magazines	74	Assorted Magazines
01	30 Cal. Carbine Mag.		

#### Crew Served Weapons.

09	RPD Light Machine Guns
01	12.7 Soviet Heavy Machine Gun w/sight
02	50 Cal. Heavy Machine Guns
01	7.62 Heavy Machine Gun
03	50 Cal. Tripods
03	50 Cal. T&E Mechanisms
01	7.62 ChiCom Heavy Machine Gun Type 57 w/tool kit, entire barrel and bi-pods.

01 RPG-7 Launcher  
 03 60mm Mortar bi-pods  
 03 60mm Mortar base plates  
 03 60mm Mortar Tubes  
 06 60mm Mortar Sights  
 01 50 Cal. Machine Gun ring sight  
 03 82mm Mortar aiming stakes  
 01 82mm Mortar base plate  
 01 82mm Mortar bi-pod  
 36 Drum magazines  
 02 60mm Mortar Cleaning Rods  
 02 RPG-2 Launchers

Small Arms Ammunition.

180 Rounds 5.56mm  
 01 Mag. 7.62mm crimped cartridges  
 6596 Rounds 50 Cal.  
 7555 Rounds 7.62mm  
 1525 Rounds 7.62mm (linked)  
 500 SKS Rounds  
 670 Rounds 30 Cal. (linked)  
 500 Rounds 9mm

Mines.

38 DH-10 claymore mines  
 21 TM-46 AT mines  
 39 Z-10 AP Mines

Munitions.

50 Can increments  
 42 RPG-2 Charges  
 09 RPG-7 Charges  
 76 RPG rounds  
 22 RPG -7 rounds  
 233 60mm mortar rounds (NVA)  
 771 82mm mortar rounds  
 01 60mm mortar rounds (US)  
 05 LAAW's  
 12 82mm Recoiless Rifle rounds  
 04 82mm Illumination rounds  
 01 57mm Recoiless Rifle round (cannister)  
 07 Smoke grenades  
 11 Bangalore Torpedoes (homemade)  
 218 Chi Com Grenades  
 07 Fragmentation Rifle Grenades

## 24 Shape charge Rifle Grenades

Demolitions.

380	Fuses	89	Lbs TNT
123	Blasting Caps	50	Feet Time Fuse
500	Feet Detonating Cord	353	Primers

Communication Equipment.

05 Batteries  
 350 Feet Communication wire  
 01 OHM meter  
 02 Wire Cutters  
 01 Siren  
 02 Bags electrical equipment and radio parts

Medical Equipment.

04 Unit one type medical bags  
 03 First Aid Packets

Engineer Equipment.

10 Machettes  
 11 Picks  
 03 Shovels  
 24 Intrenching Tools  
 04 Saws

Individual Equipment.

16 Steel Helmets  
 06 Sets assorted clothing  
 18 Packs  
 06 Sets miscellaneous cooking equipment  
 91 Gas Masks  
 02 Rubber Recoil Pads for Rifle  
 03 Pair NVA Sneakers  
 08 Ponchos  
 01 Wrist Watch  
 05 Packages Chewing Tobacco  
 01 Leather Belt  
 03 Rice Bags  
 05 Mosquito Nets  
 09 Hammocks  
 01 RPG Pack  
 10 Chi Com Grenade Pouches

02 Cartridge Belts  
 02 Binocular Cases  
 06 Canteens  
 12 Shelter Halfs

Miscellaneous.

6555 Lbs Rice	03 Oil Cans
02 Rifle Grenade Attachments	01 Typewriter
02 NVA Flags	
01 Chinese Flags	
15 Feet rope	
05 Assorted documents	

11. Administrative Matters.

a. Supply.

(1) The prescribed loads for the operation were significantly reduced as a result of extreme heat conditions anticipated. Certain critical items of resupply such as water and Class V were prestaged on the LSA, to compensate for the reduced individual loads. ( See paragraph 4 of enclosure (1).

(2) Resupply sources were generally responsive in meeting a wide range requirements levied during the contact of the operation. However delivery means were found on several occasions to be non-communicative, inflexible and lacking in initiative. Consistant with past experience it was noted the LSA either ignores or cannot adhere to the supply delivery priorities established by the Battalion Commander, even though the Battalion Commander had clearly established his resupply priorities with his S-4 (rear) in Dong Ha, these priorities were frequently disregarded for no apparent reason. On one occasion resupply was scheduled for 0700H in order to distribute rations and complete the major troop movement prior to the hottest hours of the day.

The helicopter schedule for this lift was not available at the time requested. Rather than diverting another air craft with a lesser priority the Battalion was required to remain in position until 1000H awaiting resupply. During the period no effective attempt was made at the LSA to appraise the Battalion as to the status on delivery. Consequently the Battalion was unable to commence its required movement until 1145H resulting in a definite decrease in effectiveness as a result of extreme heat conditions which could have been avoided. It is worthy to note several external loads were delivered to C-1 and A-3 while the Battalion remained in position awaiting resupply.

(3) Delivery helicopters made no consistant effort to advise attached HST personnel as to the composition of payloads. Consequently, during periods when rifle companies were operating from seperated patrol bases, personnel and materials were unloaded in other than the desired LZ.

Even when communications were clearly established between HST and the delivery helicopter, instructions and LZ marking were ignored, further compounding problems associated to personnel and supply distribution in the field. These difficulties and several others not mentioned above unduly affect the ability of the maneuver element command to arrive at a clear estimate of the situation. There is an obvious requirement for closer communications and coordination between the maneuver Battalion, the LSA and the DASC (HD), if the maneuver elements are to be afforded the flexibility required for success in combat. The Shore Party Battalion must either reassess its internal functioning or restate its professed capability.

(4) A final point in helicopter resupply is the periodic lack of sensitivity of the pilot to the nature of the LZ and man on the ground. On three separate occasions the helicopter external load was dragged on the ground prior to release.

Full plastic water bottles and cans were destroyed and the precious water spilled. On other occasions the pilot landed at some distance from where the HST had indicated, blowing over command post shelter, raising clouds of dust and necessitating an extensive trip for the supplies to the desired supply point.

#### b. Maintenance.

(1) No particular problems were experienced in this area considered worthy of mention. The Battalion brought a Radio Technician (2841) to the field and experienced a marked increase in radio and telephone operation and reliability.

#### c. Treatment and Evacuation of Casualties.

(1) The Battalion surgeon accompanied the Battalion (-) to the field which significantly contributed to the welfare of sick and wounded in the field.

(2) When casualties are Med Evaced it is frequently the case that 782 gear, weapons, etc., carried by Med Evacs was not able to be loaded on helicopters with the Med Evaced personnel due to space/weight limitations. This necessitates loading personnel in the maneuver element with additional gear, which reduces mobility and proportionately increases non battle casualties due to heat and exhaustion.

#### d. Communications.

(1) During the operation continuous communications was maintained by the Battalion with all subordinate units and with all stations monitoring required nets.

(2) The field expedient switchboard consisting of 5 line packs soldered in an empty SB-22 operators pack served as an adequate substitute for the heavier and unmobile SB 22 switchboard. Wire communications

was used as the primary means of communications in each of the patrol base/defensive positions occupied during the operation.

(3) Two AN/PRC-25 radios were destroyed by hostile forces, but were rapidly replaced from a resupply dump pre-staged at the Dong Ha LSA on D-1.

(4) Interference on assigned frequencies resulted in garbled communications on several occasions. As an example Hasty Foot (2nd Battalion, 26th Marines) is assigned the same frequencies as the 3d Bn., 3rd Marines. On several occasions transmissions with Battalion units in contact have been interrupted and garbled as a result of Hasty Foot transmissions. This area is of most immediate concern and should be remedied. As a result of the loss of a AN/PRC-25 radio during Company "I"'s contact of 6 May 68 the Battalion was assigned a spare frequency 59.45. This frequency was continuously interfered with by "Chipper Shark" which is apparently the call sign of a convoy control element. Med Evac frequencies also interfered with transmissions on the Battalion primary net.

#### e. Medical Evaluation.

(1) Heat casualties were in a large number of cases, personnel with less than one month in country. Several of the heat casualties evacuated were personnel previously evacuated for the same reasons. Each heat casualty experienced during the operation is being re-evaluated with an eye toward reducing similar problems in the future.

#### 12. Special Equipment and Techniques.

a. Dog teams were extremely effective in locating concealed bunkers and supply storage areas.

#### 13. Commanders Analysis.

a. The operation was generally termed to be a complete success in reference to equipment, weapons and ammunition captured or destroyed. Even though it was not possible to confirm the actual number of NVA killed during the course of the operation there is little doubt that enemy personnel losses were far in excess of the 41 NVA, KIA's confirmed by body count. This assumption was based on the unusual number of weapons and gear left behind by the NVA personnel occupying the positions attacked by Companies "L" and "M" at YD 175665 and YD 178667. A search of the area of contact uncovered in excess of 50 fresh graves and positive evidence that numerous dead or wounded personnel had been removed from the area.

b. It was generally agreed that the units encountered in the 1766, 1866, 1765 and 1865 grids were assembled for a forthcoming attack. Enemy equipment recovered clearly indicated enemy intentions to mine roads and ambush vehicular convoys. Upon completion of the search it was generally concluded that the major elements formerly in this area had withdrawn to the northwest, most likely in the vicinity of Lac Son. As

a result of the heavy vegetation which prevails in Leatherneck Square between the 71 and 64 grid lines, it would not be too difficult to conceal the movement of large enemy units through the area from ground or air observation.

Enemy forces encountered did not appear to be bent on conducting a determined defense of the area, but left security units in place to break the momentum of attacking rifle companies and inhibit the capability to conduct physical pursuit. Enemy mortars and artillery were employed to deny the attacking forces the use of particular avenues of approach and to delay the advance of friendly units. It was not until friendly units threatened to seize the ridgelines at YD 172662 that the enemy employed artillery. Once friendly units fell back artillery ceased. The procedure was repeated when a second attack was launched toward the same area.

The enemy positions were well concealed and would have been overlooked had it not been for the time allotted for a systematic and deliberate search of the area. It is not possible for a Battalion to conduct a tactical movement and simultaneously expect the area to be effectively swept by the maneuver elements, movement must be completed, enemy resistance broken and secure patrol bases established before search and destroy operations are undertaken. As an example, 2 rifle companies required 3 days to uncover the entirety of a bunker complex located within a 2,000 meter radius of the patrol base. Not only are search procedures time consuming, but the time expended in destroying captured equipment and bunkers must also be considered.

The bunker storage complex uncovered by Company "M" on 13 May 68 clearly confirmed the effectiveness of the Arc Lights. Evidence left no question as to the devastating effect of the bombing on such a position. Not less than 30 NVA were believed to have been killed and a minimum of 15 bunkers destroyed. The NVA had left behind the most impressive collection of weapons yet discovered by this unit during Operation Kentucky.

The organization of enemy positions seemed to be oriented more toward concealment than deliberate defense. Nearly all supply caches and harbor sites were located in wooded draws and fingers leading to the lowland watersheds.

The major portion of the bunkers discovered were constructed as living bunkers as opposed to fighting positions offering good observation and fields of fire. Fighting holes were primarily positioned to provide security along trails leading to the bunker complexes and supply stores. OP's offering long range observation were manned and on two occasions anti-aircraft weapons were found in or near these commanding pieces of terrain.

The positions and gear accumulated by the enemy clearly indicated the buildup occurred over a long period of time, perhaps over a one month period.

b. The weather presented special problems not before encountered with

by the Battalion while operating in the 9th Marine AO. Movement was held to a minimum during afternoon hours when temperature rose to a degree incompatible with effective troop movement. Routes were planned to take advantage of existing streams and flowing paddy areas. Heavy vegetated areas were avoided during the hottest part of the day because of the total lack of ventilation in these areas. Movement to the areas to be searched was completed prior to first light and during the early morning hours to take advantage of the cooler temperatures.

c. Artillery support was once again considered to be outstanding and contributed much to the successful attack launched on 8 May 68 (D+2).

d. Although the effects of air dropped ordnance was unrefutable, the delay experienced between the time fixed wing was requested and air arrived on station was totally unacceptable. Of more serious consequence was the fact that the DASC was unable to predict arrival time of fixed wing on station. The Battalion AIO was advised by DASC that even a rough estimate could not be provided. It is not possible for a commander to estimate the situation unless he has a basic concept of fire support agencies available and the time to be anticipated by requests for support and delivery of fires. All too often the scheme of maneuver must be based on the fire support plan which is contrary to the accepted procedure of planning fire support around the scheme of maneuver. It is only in this manner that the commander achieves the total flexibility to select the best scheme of maneuver based on the terrain and enemy situation.

#### 14. Recommendations.

a. That more operations of this nature be conducted in Leatherneck Square.

b. That Regiment assign grid coverage desired, rather than Objectives leaving maximum latitude to the Battalion Commander to select terrain and establish patrol bases based on the current tactical situation. Objectives on a search and destroy mission are best deduced based on a general guidance at the lowest possible level.

c. That the frequencies assigned to either the 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines or the 3rd Battalion, 3rd Marines be changed in order to prevent future interference of the type discussed in paragraph 11 above.

d. That messages requiring description such as URS not be sent to a unit while moving unless the intelligence contained therein is pertinent. It is difficult to break shackle groups (KAC-PAC) while moving.

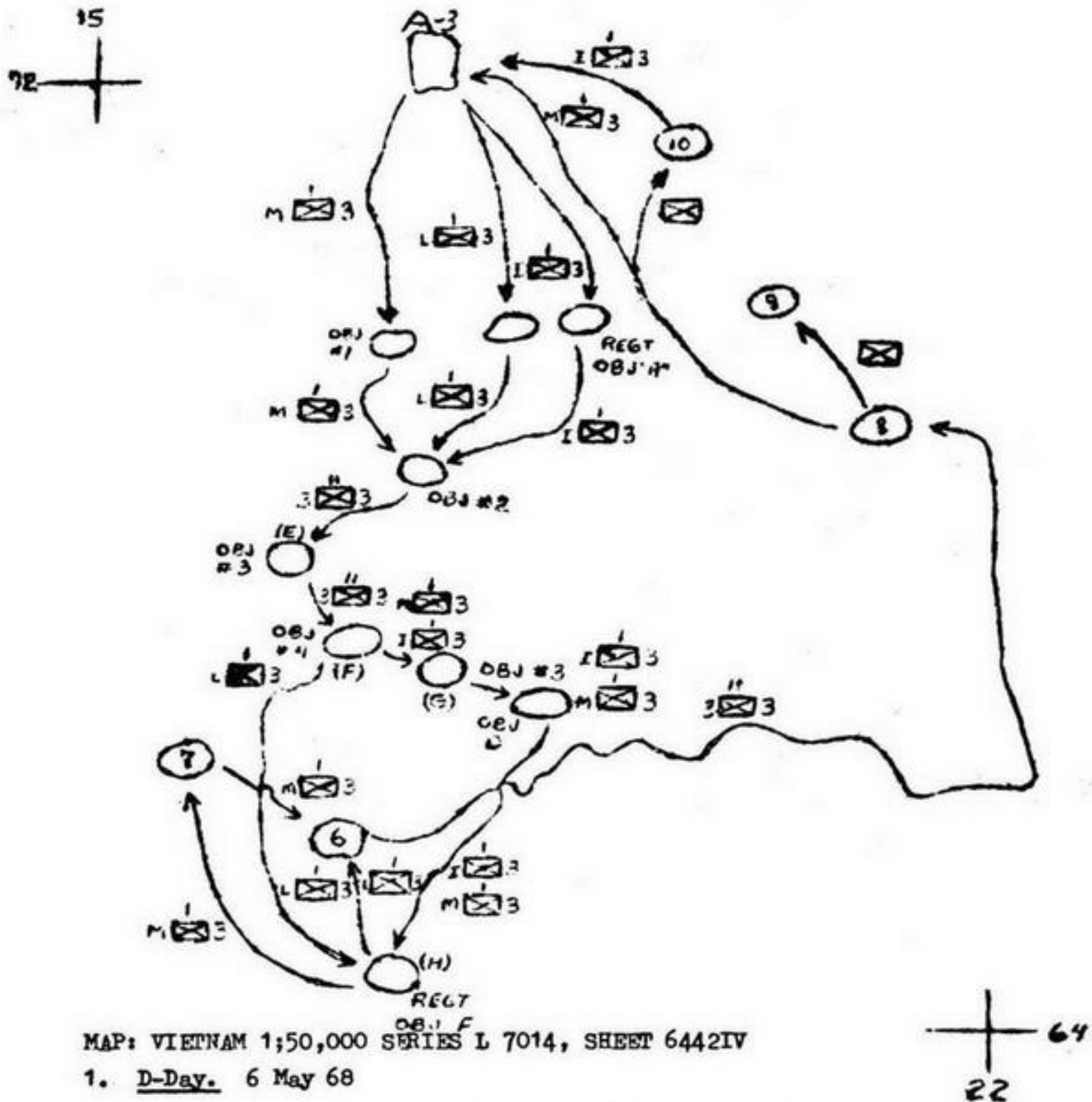
e. The effectiveness of blocking and screening forces as presently employed are of negligible value in heavy terrain such as the type commonly encountered in areas of operations. In order for a blocking force to be effective it must occupy commanding terrain near the anticipated point of contact offering good observation and access to the area of contact for immediate exploitation. When such terrain cannot be located the block must be mobile and operate in close proximity to the

maneuver element, blocking successive routes of access and egress (stream beds, defilade, and concealed trails). Blocking forces have realized marginal success at best and appear to be an uneconomical means of employing ground forces.

f. That increased effort be exerted to ensure that resupply priorities go to the maneuver element to afford commanders in the field greater latitude in selecting his course of action.

g. That an attempt be made to better keep a maneuver element informed as to the current status of air support requested.

DONALD C. MARCHETTE  
By direction



- a. Company "M" - Seized Objective #1 and established Patrol Base
- b. Company "L" - Seized Objective #2 and established Patrol Base
- c. Company "I" - Seized Regimental Objective "A" and established Patrol Base.

2. D+1

- a. Companies "I" and "M" moved to Objective #2.
- b. Company "L" seized Objective #3 and established Patrol Base.

3. D+2

- a. Company "L" seized Objective #4 and held a defensive position.
- b. Companies "I" and "M" continued the attack through Objective #4 to seize Objective #5 and establish a night defensive position.

4. D+3

- a. Companies "I" and "M" seized Regimental Objective "D".
- b. All companies closed on Regimental Objective "F".

5. D+4, D+5

- a. All companies continued patrol activity from Objective "F".

6. D+6

- a. Company "M" secured Objective #7 and established a patrol base.
- b. Companies "I" and "L" secured Objective #6 and established a Battalion (-) strong point patrol base.

7. D+7 - D+9

- a. Company "M" conducted a search and destroy operation from Objective #7.
- b. Companies "I" and "L" conducted search and destroy operations from Objective #6.

8. D+10

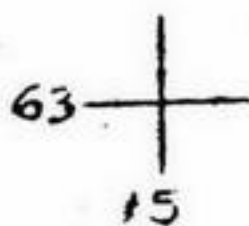
- a. All Companies conducted a tactical movement to Objective #8.

9. D+11

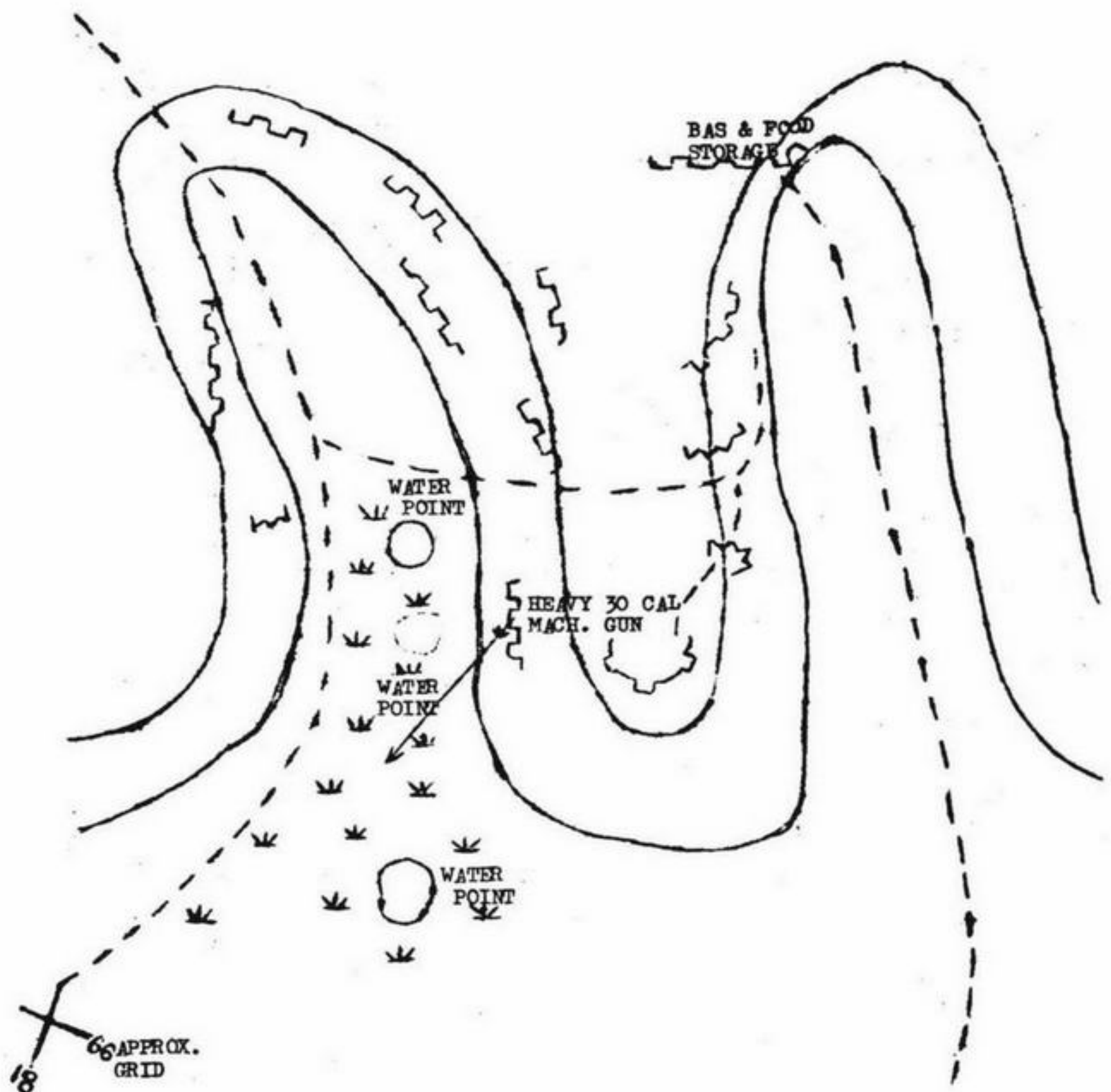
- a. Company "M" conducted a tactical movement to the A-3 Position.
- b. Company "I" secured Objective #10 and established a night defensive position.
- c. Company "L" secured Objective #9 and established a night defensive position.

10. D+12

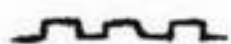

- a. Companies "I" and "L" returned to A-3 and resumed normal activities.



BUNKER COMPLEXES



SAMPLE BUNKER COMPLEX

 BUNKERS  
 FIGHTING HOLES