

HEADQUARTERS
 Battalion Landing Team 3/26
 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade
 FPO San Francisco 96602

3/JW/djh
 3100
 4 March 1969

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From: Commanding Officer
 To: Commanding General, 9th Marine Amphibious Brigade

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-31 JANUARY 1969

Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
 (b) FMF PACO 5750.8A
 (c) BrigO 5750.10

Encls (1) Command Chronology for JANUARY 1969

1. In accordance with the provision of references (a), (b) and (c), enclosure (1) is submitted.
2. This letter may be downgraded to unclassified upon removal of enclosure (1).

/s/E.W. SNELLING
 E.W. SNELLING

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PAGE 1 OF 16 PAGES

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4 March 1969PART I
ORGANIZATIONAL DATADESIGNATION

BLT 3/26

COMMANDERLtCol J.W.P. ROBERTSON
(1-31 Jan 69)SUBORDINATE UNITS

H&S Company

1st Lt G.B. MEEGAN
(1-31 Jan 69)

Company I

1st Lt R.E. HOOVER
(1-31 Jan 69)

Company K

Capt F.L. FOX
(1-31 Jan 69)

Company L

1st Lt C. ALLEN Jr.
(1-31 Jan 69)

Company M

1st Lt D.E. CRAWFORD
(1-31 JAN 69)ATTACHED UNITS

3d Plt (Rein), A Co, 5th SP Bn
 3d Plt (Rein), A Co, 5th MT Bn
 3d Plt, A Co, 5th Recon Bn
 3d Plt, C Co, 5th Tank Bn
 3d Plt, (Rein), B Co, 5th Amtrac Bn
 3d Plt, A Co, 5th Engineers
 DET, HqBn, 5th MarDiv
 DET, HqBn, 26th MarReg
 DET, EOD Team, 9th MAB
 DET, BMU
 DET, CIT/ITT
 DET, Scout Sniper Teams
 DET, Scout Dog Teams
 Plt. UPFF

(1-31 Jan 69)
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3100
4 March 1969

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STAFF OFFICERS

ExO	Maj W.T. MACY (1-31 Jan 69)
S-1 Adjutant	1stLt P.D. VISNICK (1-31 Jan 69)
Personnel Officer	1stLt P.D. VISNICK (1-31 Jan 69)
S-2	1stLt B.M. EVERETT (1-31 Jan 69)
S-3	Maj J.D. BENNETT Jr. (1-31 Jan 69)
S-3A	2ndLt J.H. WEST (1-31 Jan 69)
S-4	Capt J. TURRIETTA (1-31 Jan 69)
Comm O	Capt D.C. HON (1-31 Jan 69)
Sup O	Capt J.S. CONDRY (1-31 Jan 69)
Med O	Lt J.A. MARTINEZ (1-31 Jan 69)
Chaplain	Lt R.L. HENSLEY (1-31 Jan 69)

AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

USMC		USN		ARMY
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u> <u>ENL</u>
62	1813	7	86	1 1

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4 March 1969~~SECRET~~PART II
NARRATIVE SUMMARY

A. General (S) The first thirteen days of January were utilized to put BLT 3/26 in a high state of readiness for upcoming operations. All companies set up training schedules so that their new troops would be well prepared. The various ships held indoctrination lectures to familiarize the troops with Navy life. An Amphibious training exercise was planned so that all troops could see how a BLT functions. Bad weather caused cancellation of the amtrac part of the exercise, but the helicopter-borne phase was very successfully run on the 9th of January.

On the thirteenth of January BLT 3/26 began operation "Bold Mariner/Russell Beach" by landing three companies in a cordon line. The battalion tied in with elements of BLT 2/26 to the north and elements of the Americal Division to the south. The first eight days of the operation were spent in a static cordon line. During this time 667 Vietnamese were detained. All the detainees were transported to an Army collection point for classification and interrogation. Enemy contact was mostly in the form of probes of the cordon line at night. A total of eight VC/NVA were killed during the first eight days.

On the 21st of January all elements started to move and tighten the cordon. By the 23rd of January BLT 2/26 was squeezed out of the cordon line. At 1200 on the 24th of January BLT 3/26 was chopped OPCON to Task Force Cooksey. The battalion discovered numerous tunnel complexes and food caches while they were moving to tighten up the cordon. In the period between the 21st and 26th of January the battalion collected 1521 more detainees. They were all transported to the Army collection point. Three enemy were killed in the same period. Since the cordon line was getting smaller one company was dropped back to thoroughly search out the tunnel complexes found. The rest of the companies continued to move until they reached the end of the peninsula. The company left behind to search the tunnel complexes found 39 VN personnel hiding in a tunnel. They also found 02 SKS rifles and 01 M-1 carbine. The battalion ran into a number of booby traps in the period between the 26th and 31st resulting in heavy casualties. A total of 69 VC were killed between the 26th and 31st.

Page 5 of 16 Pages~~SECRET~~

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1300

4 March 1969

B. Administration (C) During the period 1-31 January 1969, the S-1 administration was set up aboard the USS Tripoli (LPH-10). This included the battalion S-1, sick bay, administration and the company offices. The following number of officer and enlisted personnel were joined/tranferred during the month of January:

Number of USMC officers joined	11
Number of USMC enlisted joined	347
Number of USMC officer transferred	4
Number of USMC enlisted transferred	113
Number of USN enlisted joined	15
Number of USN enlisted transferred	9

C. INTELLIGENCE (S)

1. Enemy Situation: From 13-31 January, during operation "Bold Mariner/Russell Beach", enemy forces were estimated between 230-290 main force V.C. and 45 local force V.C. The strength figure was one battalion operating in the A.O. consisting of suspected elements of the following units: 30th Regiment, 48th LF Battalion, P31 LF Company and 95th Sapper Company.

2. Enemy Mission: The enemy mission was to attack U.S. units in and around the Batangan Peninsula, and also to support rocket attacks on Quang Ngai City and support village and hamlet infrastructures, but the enemy mission seemed to be of a passive nature. The enemy avoided major contact and relied upon minor harassment tactics with a few isolated perimeter probes. Though the enemy had attack capabilities he did not use it to any great extent. The entire area, especially the eastern half of the Batangan Peninsula, was fully covered with mines and booby traps which caused many friendly casualties.

3. Weather: The maximum temperature for this period was 87 degrees. The low was 69 degrees and the mean temperature was 77 degrees. Relative humidity averaged 81% and precipitation totaled 02 inches. The winds were variable at an average of 14 knots with rain showere which lasted 3-5 days.

Page 6 of 16 Pages

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UNCLASSIFIED

13 00
4 March 1969

4. Terrain: From the 13-24 January in the "Bold Mariner" A.O. the terrain encountered was mostly lowlands with rolling hills. The rice fields were generally double-cropped causing them to be inundated the majority of the year. Soils consisted of light to heavy clay and sand. There were 3 prominent terrain features; Hill 42 in the southern most portion of the A.O., Hill 100 in the northwestern part of the A.O. and the bridge located at (vic) BS 740862. There was also a road that went from the southwestern portion of the A.O. at (vic) BS 721841 to the middle of the A.O. at (vic) BS 750856. From 24-31 January the Battalion was in operation "Russell Beach", the terrain in the area consisted of an irregular ground with an average elevation of about 15 meters. Soil consisted mostly of sand. Vegetation in the northeastern portion of the A.O. consisted of occasional heavy brush. In the southeastern portion of the A.O. Vegetation was dense and often cultivated. There are 3 prominent terrain features in this A.O. consisting of Hill 38, various small outlets for the Song Cho Noi River and a bridge located at BS 773849. Water was plentiful. The whole Batangan Peninsula in the southeastern portion of the A.O. is bordered by the South China Sea.

5. Avenues of Approach. From 13-24 January, in the "Bold Mariner" A.O., Avenues of approach consisted of the valley at (vic) BS 720854 in the northwestern portion of the A.O., and the valley located at (vic) BS 755849 in the southern portion of the A.O. From 25-31 January during Operation "Russell Beach" the avenues of approach afforded the enemy were the valley at (vic) BS 745967 in the northern portion of the A.O. and the Song Cho Noi River Valley located in the southwestern portion of the A.O. There were limited avenues of approach afforded by the South China Sea.

6. Totals: From 13-31 January

VC/NVA.....32
 POW's.....12
 Detainees.....2654
 Chieu Hoi's.....1
 INC.....12
 CSWC.....1(one) .50 Cal barrel
 Rice.....2575 lbs
 Corn.....1035 lbs

Page 7 of 16 Pages

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1300

4 March 1969

D. Civil Affairs (U) Civil Affairs were conducted by coordinating units at the predesignated collection point. CHIC (Combined Holding and Interrogation Center).

E. Psychological Operations (S) Pre-planned leaflet drops were made throughout both A.O.'s. Psyops were conducted by armed propaganda teams when needed and by helicopters equipped with loud-speakers. BLT 3/26 was accompanied by a U.S. Navy BJU which has a ground broadcast capability.

F. Fire Support (S) During this period supporting arms were used extensively in all aspects of the operation. Special emphasis was given to day and night H&I fires. Alpha Battery 1/4, USA, was used in direct support while 1st Battalion, 14th Artillery, USA, was in general support.

1. Total ammo expenditure for January:
 - a. 105mm 8949
 - b. 155/8" 2187
 - c. 4.2" 9856
 - d. 81mm 6722
 - e. NGF 3950
 - f. Swift boat (81mm) 1282
 - g. TPQ's II

Air Support(S)

- (1) Air support was requested by the Battalion FAC/ALO through Fairmont "B" and Ice Pack "B".
- (2) During the month of January:
 - a. 52 medevacs were called
 - b. 1758 troops were heli-lifted for tactical deployment.
 - c. 1869 detainees were heli-lifted to CHIC
 - d. II TPQ's were run on enemy positions.
 - e. 9 air strikes were run on enemy positions.
 - f. 27 over-flights of the A.O. were utilized.

G. Logistics (S)

1. General. Logistical support was satisfactory except that shortages of class II items existed.
 - a. The transportation provided by squadron HMM-164 was satisfactory. The squadron transported troops and resupply from the ships, Chu Lai and the field.
 - b. Maintenance support was provided by the Army. It was exceptionally responsive.
 - c. Ordnance support was provided by ASP-1 Danang via LSU at Chu Lai.
 - d. The battalion subsisted primarily on "C" rations during the month of January. Food service was satisfactory.

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4 March 1969H. Communications(C)

1. Message Center. A courier carried message traffic to the field daily for the battalion message center aboard ship.
2. Radio. During the period 13-31 January, on operation "Bold Marine/Russell Beach", battalion nets terminated at the CP ashore. During the initial phase of the operation a MRC-110 provided the power to communicate with ships and distant Army units. In the later phase, at the White Beach CP, an amtrac command vehicle was used in coordination with 292 antennas to provide continuous covered communication with both the Army and SLF Bravo.
3. Wire/Radio Relay. An internal telephone system with switchboard was established in the White Beach CP. No radio relay was used.
4. General. The fact that numerous radio nets were guarded was a burden, but proved equally to be an asset when conditions forced traffic to be relayed.

I. Medical-Dental (C)

1. Personnel. The Battalion Aid Station had a total of 55 personnel, consisting of 52 hospital corpsmen, and two medical Officers. In addition during the deployment the Battalion Aid Station also had a total of 18 hospital corpsmen attached to supporting units.
2. Capabilities. This Battalion Aid Station is capable of treating all minor medical and surgical cases. With the help of the medical doctors and hospital corpsmen aboard the USS Tripoli (LPH-10), the BAS was capable of handling all medevac patients, with the exception of head and face patients, who were evacuated to the USS Sanctuary, where there was a Special Neurologist who handled these cases. BAS utilized spaces aboard Tripoli for sickcall, administration, and berthing. Supplies were drawn from mount-out blocks and from ashore, whenever necessary.
3. Training. Under supervision of the Battalion surgeon and his senior petty officers, the hospital corpsmen received classroom training and on-the-job training, involving field medical techniques, treatment of medical and surgical patients and diagnostic procedure.

Page 9 of 16Pages

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~~UNCLASSIFIED~~~~CONFIDENTIAL~~1300
4 March 1969

4. Dental. The dental facilities aboard the USS Tripoli (LPH-10) were utilized. One Dental Corps Officer and one dental technician are assigned to the BLT.

5. Malaria Prophylarity. Chloroquine-primaquine tablet were taken by the troops, one a week.

6. Sanitation. While the BLT was aboard the USS Tripoli (LPH-10) the ship's sickbay provided daily and weekly sanitation reports with recommendations for improvement.

7. Statistics. The statistics for the month are as follows:

DIAGNOSIS	H&S	INDIA	KILO	LIMA	MIKE	OTHER	TOTAL	PREV REPORTS
Concussion	00	00	00	00	00-	00	00	00
Stomach problems	04	06	00	04	00	04	18	09
Lacerations	08	02	01	02	04	06	23	29
Diarrhea	02	04	02	05	01	02	16	21
Ear Problems	02	02	02	01	01	02	11	16
Eye Problems	08	03	01	01	00	03	16	15
Dental	09	07	04	06	03	01	30	39
Upper Resp Infec.	04	04	01	08	04	00	21	23
Fever Unknown Org.	03	05	00	01	00	05	14	05
Leg Problems	09	07	01	14	01	01	29	13
Foot Problems	10	25	06	02	05	01	70	58
Arm Problems	09	13	30	08	01	03	37	22
Infections	07	15	01	02	01	04	31	47
Immunizations	25	60	30	40	20	14	289	594
Venereal Disease	14	04	02	06	02	02	34	17
Shrapnel Wounds	00	01	00	00	00	00	02	04
Malaria	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Blisters	01	00	02	00	00	01	04	08
Immersion Foot	00	01	00	00	00	00	01	10
Heat Exhaustion	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Heat Stroke	00	00	00	00	00	00	00	00
Return Visits	00	15	04	12	05	06	50	59
Other	63	41	20	30	11	24	195	47

Page 10 of 16 Pages

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4 March 1969

J. Training(U) The following training was conducted during the month of January.

1. Replacements received by the battalion were thoroughly indoctrinated, in accordance with existing directives and battalion SOP for troop indoctrination. In addition, they all fired their weapons for familiarization.

2. Formal and informal classes were conducted on general military subjects on a company level.

3. Hospital Corpsmen received classroom and on-the-job training under the supervision of the Battalion Surgeon and the Chief Hospital Corpsmen on medical techniques and diagnostic procedures.

K. Casualties.(S)

1. KIA-----21
2. WIA-----101

L. Battalion Chaplain(U)

During the month of January, Chaplain Hensley shared in the worship services aboard the Tripoli, Monticello, Ogden and Seminole.

a. Catholic coverage for the BLT was supplied by Chaplain O'Donell.

b. Worship services were conducted by Protestant and Catholic chaplains in the field during Operation "Bold Mariner".

c. Much of the ship-board time was used in bible studies and counselling sessions.

d. Four boxes of clothing were taken to the Danang Orphanage.

e. During the month, approximately 100 men were received into the Christian faith through Profession of Faith.

Page 11 of 16 Pages

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1300
4 March 1969~~UNCLASSIFIED~~PART III
Sequential Listing of Significant Events

01-12 January 1969

During this period, all members of BLT under-went extensive training and indoctrination to acquaint them with shipboard policies and functioning of the BLT and SLF. A great deal of effort was directed at insuring harmonious working relations between members of the Navy and Marine Corps. A joint amphibious/vertical envelopment assault type exercise was planned for the 9th of January to accustom the BLT with its new role. Bad weather conditions forced a cancellation of the amphibious half of the exercise but the vertical envelopment was carried out as planned. This exercise provided a valuable rehearsal for a similar assault carried out a few days later during Operation "Bold Mariner/Russell Beach".

13 Jan69

At 0830H first elements helilifted into cordon position.
At 1542H BL Mike collected 70 detainees.
At 1930H BL Mike 3A spotted 4 VC while moving into their KI position. Results 4 VC KIA.

14 Jan69

Remained in cordon position with no significant action taking place.

15 Jan69

At 0250H while sweeping from ^{BS} AT 736855 to ^{BS} AT 749856 BL India got 173 detainees. A detainee tripped a booby trap resulting in 07 detainees wounded.

16 Jan69

At 0250H BL CP received 04 mortar rounds. Returned counter mortar fire.

At 0715H BL Mike listening post heard movement, 03 M-79 and 02 M-26 grenades were fired. Results 01 VC POW.

At 1740H BL Lima observed 12 VC carrying 82mm mortar tube. Artillery was called in resulting in 03 VC KIA.

17 Jan69

At 1225H BL Mike observed approximately 30 VC moving into tree line. 4.2 mortars were called in resulting in 01 VC KIA.

18 Jan69

Psyops bird talked 140 civilians out of village in vic 735858.

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4 March 1969

19 JAN69

At 0830H BL Kilo found 01 VC in bunker. Attempted to talk him out but he made a sudden move and was shot. He had 01 M-26 grenade with him and no papers.

At 0930H BL Mike received 60 rds AK-47 and 5rds M-79 from enemy in vic AT 750835 resulting in 02 USMC WIA.

20 Jan69

At 1200H BL Kilo discovered 01 VC killed by multiple shrapnel wounds in vic AT 738858.

At 1900H BL Kilo found 284 civilians in vic ~~AT~~ 755856. They were turned over to S-1.

21 Jan69

BL Mike observed 04 civilians in vic ~~AT~~ 768856. They were picked up by chopper and taken to CHIC.

AT 1300 BL Kilo apprehended 97 Vietnamese civilians. 02 of which were VC.

AT 1839H BL Mike opened fire with small arms resulting in 02 VC KIA and 01 POW.

22 Jan69

AT 2000H BL Kilo observed 02 persons approaching their lines. Persons were challenged, but began to run and were taken under small arms fire resulting in 01 VC KIA and numerous VC documents captured.

AT 1600H BL Kilo apprehended 78 VN detainees in vic AT 753854.

At 2145H BL Lima apprehended 456 VN in vic 761865. VN were evacuated to collection point, found 181 detainees in vic 765857; detainees were at 2145H BL Kilo observed 03 VC approaching their lines.

23 Jan69

At 0715H BL Lima detained 99 VN civilians in vic 767862. Detainees were taken to collection point.

At 1200 BLT 3/26 was chopped OPCON to Task Force Cooksey.

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4 March 1969

25 Jan 69

At 0800H BL Kilo detained 420 VN. 06 VN were found to be VC; all were taken to collection point.

At 0830H 2 BL Mike personnel stepped on mine, resulting in 05 USMC WIA.

26 Jan 69

At 0950H BL Lima detained 70 VN civilians in vic AT 767857. Civilians were taken to collection point.

27 Jan 69

At 1345H BL Lima found tunnel complex in vic AT 778859. Tunnel estimated to be over 500 meters long.

At 1730H BL Lima personnel tripped mine in vic 778859 resulting in 02 USMC WIA.

28 Jan 69

At 1400H BL Lima while searching tunnel complex in vic AT 778859 discovered 05 Bar magazines, 02 SKS rifles and 01 M-2 carbine.

29 Jan 69

BL Kilo found 02 fresh graves. They dug them up and found 04 VC WIA.

At 1304H BL Kilo personnel tripped booby trap at entrance to tunnel, resulting in 01 USMC WIA.

At 1316 BL Kilo personnel tripped booby trap resulting in 04 USMC KIA and 02 WIA.

At 1400 BL Kilo while searching tunnel found 01 VC crawling in tunnel resulting in 01 VC KIA.

30 Jan 69

At 1043H Third Squad Charlie observed 03 VC. They were taken under fire by small arms resulting in 02 VC KIA.

At 1030H BL Kilo tripped 82mm booby trap resulting in 01 USMC WIA.

31 Jan 69

BL India observed 02 VC moving outside village in vic AT 774852. Enemy was taken under fire by 60mm and gun ships with negative results.

At 1530H BL Kilo personnel tripped enemy mine in vic AT 788857 resulting in 01 USMC KIA and 20 USMC WIA.

At 1735H BL Mike found 1 pair black PJ's with body parts in vic AT 787848.

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4 March 1969

21 Jan 69

At 1500H BL Lima while searching tunnel discovered 39 VM personnel; interpreter said all were VC.

At 2100H BL Lima observed 02 VC in vic AT 778859; engaged enemy with small arms resulting in 01 VC KIA.

Page 15 of 10 Pages

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Enclosure (2) to CTG 79.5 ltr 3/DGM/dlb over 5750
of 2 May 1969.

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Replacement appendix for appendix 2 to enclosure
(1) of CTG ltr 3/RCS/mjd over 5750 ser.
00306169 of 28 February 1969.

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Battalion Landing Team 3/26
9th Marine Amphibious Brigade

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4 March 1969

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 January to 31 January 1969

- PART I ----- ORGANIZATION DATA
- PART II ----- NARRATIVE SUMMARY
- PART III ----- SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS
- PART IV ----- SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

PAGE 2 OF 16 PAGES

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3100
4 March 1969PART IV
C/F - SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

CTF MSG PLAN 2-69
CTF MSG FRAG 1-69
CTU 76.2.5 MSG 230404Z Jan 69
CTF 79 MSG 231124Z Jan 69
CTF 79 MSG 231126Z Jan 69
CTG 79.5 COI
CTG 79.5 OPLAN 120
BLT 3/26 OP PLAN 1-69
OP C 1-69 (OPERATION "RUSSELL BEACH")

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