

American Early Involvement in Vietnam a Short Review

Except for a small cadre of advisors and other special personnel in Vietnam during January of 1965 there were no Marine units present. In fact there were few Marines who had never heard of Vietnam and only slightly more *may* have been able find it on a map. By the end of 1965 there were 38,000 Marines in Vietnam.

Early in 1964, the U. S. government examined the possibility of sending U.S. combat troops to South Vietnam for the defense of critical U.S. installations within the country. At that time General Taylor, then the U. S. Ambassador to South Vietnam, warned Washington against overstressing static security and observed that aggressive field operations by the Vietnamese Armed Forces were the best means for restoring law, order, and public safety in the Republic of Vietnam.(GB65)

The American command's mission in Vietnam was to assist the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) in its war against the Communist insurgents, the Viet Cong, who were being provided with leadership, reinforcements, and supplies from the north by the Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRVN). With this political instability and growing enemy strength, the U.S. increased its military support to the South Vietnamese regime. By the end of 1964, the United States Military Assistance Command, now commanded by General Westmoreland, had grown to over 20,000 men. The Marine contingents in Vietnam showed a corresponding increase in 1964. Of the over 800 Marines in Vietnam, the bulk were in South Vietnam's I Corps Tactical Zone (ICTZ) consisting of the five northern provinces. Sixty Marine advisors were attached to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) units in ICTZ. The SHUFLY unit, reinforced by a Marine rifle company for airfield security, was at the Da Nang Airbase just south of the city of Da Nang in Quang Nam Province. The remaining Marines served as advisors to the Vietnamese Marine Corps (20 Marines served in this capacity), as members of the Marine guard detachment at the U.S. Embassy in Saigon, and with the MACV staff in Saigon. In May 1964, a Marine radio detachment supported by a reinforced Marine infantry platoon deployed to Tiger Tooth Mountain, north of Khe Sanh in northwestern South Vietnam. This composite force, designated Advisory Team One, later redeployed to Dong Bach Ma, a 3,500-foot mountain 25 miles west-northwest of Da Nang, Advisory Team One returned to Da Nang in September 1964 and then was disbanded. During its short existence, Advisory Team One became the first Marine ground unit to conduct independent operations in South Vietnam. (Taken from GB65)

As 1965 began the Viet Cong had entered a new phase of their insurgency against the South Vietnamese government. The Communists departed from their usual hit and run guerrilla tactics and engaged the armed forces of the Republic of Vietnam (RVNAF) near the village of Binh Gia, 40 miles east of Saigon, in a pitched battle which lasted from 28 December 1964 until 1 January 1965. During the struggle for Binh Gia, two regiments from the 9th VC Division ambushed and virtually destroyed two battalions of South Vietnamese troops, including the 4th Battalion, Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC), and inflicted heavy casualties on relieving armored and mechanized forces. According to General Westmoreland, Binh Gia marked the start of the final Communist offensive, "it meant the beginning of an intensive military challenge which the Vietnamese government could not meet with its own resources."

As the central government of south Vietnam ran through a roster of leadership ("musical chairs" (GB65) the 9th MEB with float BLT's 1/9 and 3/9 embarked and stood up and then stood down from various levels of alert and readiness as they plied the waters off the South

Vietnamese coast. The MEB stood by to land near Saigon, then again near Da Nang, then not at all. But events in Vietnam continued to gain the attention of all the Pacific commands. Attacks by VC in the Central Highlands against the U.S. compound at Pleiku was unexpected and deadly. And, the continued VC attacks on other U.S. posts, the most recent at Qui Nhon, called for pre-planned air attacks in North Vietnam. This US retaliatory response included bombing strikes against North Vietnam called Operation named "Flaming Dart". Additionally, the deployment of the Marines' 1st LAAM Battalion to the DaNang-area of Monkey Mountain and the locating of the Air Force Control and Reporting System (CRP) called for ground force security. Westmoreland believed that this would require at least a division declaring: "These are numbers of a new order of magnitude, but we must face the stark fact that the war has escalated." The Joint Chiefs of Staff chiefs observed that the retaliatory air raids against North Vietnam had not achieved the intended effect. They recommended in its place a "sustained pressure" campaign to include continuing air strikes against selected targets in North Vietnam, naval bombardment, covert operations, intelligence patrols cross-border operations in Laos, and the landing of American troops in South Vietnam. Confronted with both a deteriorating political and military situation, General Westmoreland directed his deputy, Lieutenant General John L. Throckmorton, USA, to determine what American ground forces were needed for base security. After completing his survey, Throckmorton recommended the deployment of a three-battalion Marine expeditionary brigade* to Da Nang because of the vital importance of the base for any air campaign against the north and "the questionable capability of the Vietnamese to protect the base." (GB65)

By the end of February, 1965 President Johnson had made the decision to commit a two-battalion Marine expeditionary brigade to Da Nang with the mission of protecting the base from enemy incursion. (Brigadier) General Karch and members of his staff once more visited General Westmoreland (USA) on 25 February to discuss plans for a Marine landing at Da Nang. The top two Vietnamese officers posed no objections to the proposed commitment of American combat troops. They did, however, express concern about the reaction of the Vietnamese population and requested that the American forces be brought into Da Nang "in the most inconspicuous way feasible".

From March 1965, with the initial landing of the nearly 5,000-Marine 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade and its transformation into the III Marine Amphibious Force, under the command of Major General Lewis W. Walt. III MAF, which was part of the United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (USMACV), commanded by General Army William C. Westmoreland, activities escalated as major American combat units and their supporting units were committed to meet the increased VC activity. By the end of the year (1965) 38,000 Marines and multiple units of Army, Air Force, Navy, and civilian contractors had poured into South Vietnam.

During this period, the Marines established three enclaves in South Vietnam's northernmost corps area, I Corps, and their mission expanded from defense of the Da Nang Airbase to a balanced strategy involving base defense, offensive operations, and pacification.

**The Army's 173d Airborne Brigade was the first choice but since they were not self-sustaining and the Marine 9th MEB was, the Marines got the call. As far as being as inconspicuous as possible the 9th MEB was anything but. Someone at the decision-making level failed to realize that Marine BLT's are task organized to include supporting arms – for example 52 ton tanks – hardly "inconspicuous" – and the introduction of the 9th MEB to Vietnam was greeted by hundreds of "Vietnamese children (who) lined both sides of the road, waving and shyly smiling at the Marines. Banners in both Vietnamese and English were strung along the route of march welcoming the troops." (GB65)*

January 1965

First Tanks Units:

You will note that, while First Tanks units were embarked on the Special Landing Force (SLF) in 1965 and participated in major amphibious operations ashore in 1965 (Starlite and Piranha) and "B" Company Headquarters First Tanks came ashore in September of 1965, the First Tanks flag was not ashore until March of 1966 when the earlier-ashore units became detached from AdCon and OpCon of Third Tanks. The activities of First Tanks' units ashore were reported on by the Third Tanks and that reporting included the command chronologies.

January 1966

First Tanks:

The 1st Tanks headquarters came ashore in the spring. At that time it re-joined its subordinate units (except those embarked with the SLF's) and commenced reporting their newly-joined units' activities.

As stated in *Semper Fi Vietnam* "As the second year of the war in South Vietnam began, the III MAF faced a multifaceted and confusing situation." (SF-EM) In the Da Nang TAOR resided III MAF Headquarters, the 3d Marine Division Headquarters, 3d Tank Battalion CP (with Ontos, Amtracs, and Motors), the 3d, 9th, and 12th Marines, an air base, and a sprawling logistics support command.

Just 70 kilometers to the south was the Chu Lai TAOR, home of the 4th and 7th Marines supported by artillery and tanks – "B" Company 1st Tanks and "A" and "C" Company 3d Tanks. In addition, the Special Landing Force (SLF) with its Battalion Landing Teams (BLT) had tank platoons attached.

Also, a smaller enclave at Phu Bai just a dozen miles south of the former capital of Vietnam – the ancient city of Hue – was established with an airstrip and supported infantry to protect it.

Marine General Walt commanded III MAF. His philosophy in winning the Vietnam conflict was winning the loyalty of the locals – "Hearts and Minds" – we called it. His boss in Saigon, Army General Westmorland's philosophy – in short – called for herding the locals off their land into pre-built secure camps and killing all those who were not "friendly" and measuring success by "body count". The Marines walked a narrow line to satisfy – at least in part - the two opposing strategies. The lion's share of the assets to wage a kinetic war was applied to "search and destroy" (eg., Operation Double Eagle) directed from Saigon, while from those same assets was carved out the Civic Action Programs undertaken by each of the infantry and supporting arms (i.e., Tanks, etc.) battalions.

January 1967

First Tanks:

Commanding Officer: LtCol J.W. Clayborne

Executive Officer: Maj R.D. McKee

Operations Officer: Capt F.U. Salas

Logistics Officers: Capt G.E. Hooker & Maj D.P. Crudup

Location & Operations Summary: Battalion CP Da Nang (AT 998722)

The month of January found the 1st Tank Battalion in basically the same position as the preceding month. H&S Company, in addition to providing the logistical and maintenance support for two gun

companies, spent considerable time and effort improving the Battalion cantonment area and defensive posture.

Company B remained in direct support of the 9th Marines.

Company C remained in direct support of the 1st Marines.

During the month of January, elements of Company B participated in "Operation Cleveland."

H&S C.O.: Capt J.C. Winther

Location & Operations Summary: Same as Bn CP

CP security with squad (rein) foot patrols and ambushes.

C.O. Company "A": Capt C.R. Brabec

Location & Operations Summary: Chu Lai (BT 515040)

Company "A" (Rein), 1st Tank Battalion is within the Chu Lai Tactical Area of Responsibility. This Company has a strength of five Marine Officers, 121 Marine Enlisted, and two Navy Enlisted. The 1st Tank Battalion retains administrative control of Company "A".

C.O. Company "B": Capt L.E. Cherico

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 945763)

At 071800H the 3rd Platoon, Company "B", moving to Hill 22 (AT 953667) with infantry from Company "L", 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines, received approximately 50 rounds SA fire from vicinity (AT 950667) resulting in four infantry personnel WIA. Tanks fired 11 rounds HE, one round WP, and 200 rounds caliber .30 MG. On Viet Cong was observed hit by fire.

At 171145H the 1st Platoon, Company "B", on Hill 41 (AT 934664) observed three Viet Cong, armed with rifles, moving in an easterly direction in vicinity (AT 949653). Tanks fired several rounds HE. No search was conducted due to lack of infantry in the area.

At 171145H the 1st Platoon, Company "B", on Hill 41 (AT 934664) observed two Viet Cong armed with rifles moving westward in vicinity (AT 925656). Tanks fired one round HE resulting in two Viet Cong KIA.

The 3rd Platoon, Company "B", participated in "Operation Cleveland" during the period 24-25 January in support of elements of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines and 2nd Battalion, 26th Marines, in Grid Squares (AT 8870, 8970, 9070, and 9271).

Note: Operation Cleveland is not cited in the GB67 and no further details are provided in the January Command Chronology. This is what Wikipedia states.

Jan 24 – 25	Operation Cleveland ^[1]	2nd Battalion, 4th Marines search and destroy operation	Quảng Nam Province
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C.O. Company "C": Capt P.S. Wiegand

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (BT 066715) & (BT 075678)

At 101755H a tank of the 2nd Platoon, Company "C" detonated a mine at (BT 109647), resulting in moderate damage to the tank and injury to one tank crewman. The crewman was not evacuated. The mine was buried in a sandy area and was estimated to weigh 100 lbs. The crater was 5 feet deep and 12 feet wide. Immediately afterward, the tank and infantry received fire from vicinity (BT 111651). Tank returned fire resulting in five Viet Cong KIA Confirmed and three Viet Cong KIA Probable. The damaged tank was retrieved to the Company Command Post.

At 121215H the 2nd Platoon, Company "C", in support of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, as a blocking force in position at (BT 091671), observed three Viet Cong running across a rice paddy in vicinity (BT 085674). Tanks fired five rounds HE. One Viet Cong was KIA Confirmed and one Viet Cong was wounded and detained by infantry.

In the early morning of 15 January 1967, the heavy section of the 2nd Platoon, Company "C", was instrumental in repelling a Viet Cong attack of approximately 100 Viet Cong against the perimeter (BT 054687) of the 2nd Platoon, Company "K", 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines. Tanks moved into the overrun position, located the Viet Cong and destroyed them with machine gun fire. The tanks were credited with 20 Viet Cong KIA Confirmed and 10 Viet Cong KIA Probable.



BARTUSEVICS, JOHN

Synopsis:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to John Bartusevics (1897519), Sergeant, U.S. Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Company C, 1st Tank Battalion, 1st Marine Division (Rein.), FMF, in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on **January 15, 1967**. By his courage, aggressive fighting spirit and steadfast devotion to duty in the face of extreme personal danger, Sergeant Bartusevics upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.
Home Town: Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

At 161300H a section of two tanks of the 2nd Platoon, Company "C" supporting a 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines reconnaissance group at (BT 072608) observed a group of Viet Cong fleeing into a rice paddy in vicinity (BT 072609). Tanks fired eight rounds HE, resulting in five Viet Cong KIA Confirmed.

At 201410H the 2nd Platoon, Company "C", in support of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines conducting a sweep at (BT 111627), observed six Viet Cong running across a rice paddy in vicinity (BT 106629). Tanks fired HE and caliber .50 MG, resulting in two Viet Cong KIA. Rounds were observed to strike Viet Cong.

At 211230H a section of tanks of the 2nd Platoon, Company "C", enroute from Company "C" CP (BT 066715) to Company "K", 3rd

Battalion, 1st Marines positions at (BT 0566) observed one Viet Cong running across sand flat at (BT 058650). Tanks fired two rounds HE. One Viet Cong KIA Confirmed.

At 271300H a section of three tanks of the 2nd Platoon, Company "C", at (BT 074600), in support of elements of 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines, received enemy fire from the treeline vicinity (BT 078678). Tanks fired eight rounds HE and two rounds canister. Infantry conducted search of area and found indications where four bodies had been pulled away. Four Viet Cong KIA Probable.

The Marine Tank Battalion - Vietnam 1968

Normally part of force troops, in Vietnam the two tank battalions were assigned to the divisions. The standard table of organization (T/O M-4238, Revision 1, 25 September 1967) for tank battalions called for a headquarters and service company, a heavy tank company, and three medium tank companies, with the proviso that only three tank companies would be activated except by order of the commandant. Both the 1st Tank Battalion and 3d Tank Battalion omitted the heavy tank company in this period (which would have been equipped with 17 M103A2 120mm gun tanks).

The headquarters and service company (H&S Co) contained nine M67A2 flamethrower tanks (organized into a platoon with three sections of three tanks each), two M48A3 90mm gun tanks for the command section, and one M51 tank recovery vehicle. Each medium tank company rated 17 M48A3 90mm gun tanks and one M51 tank recovery vehicle, with two gun tanks and the recovery vehicle in the company headquarters and three platoons of five gun tanks each.

In December 1967 the 1st and 3d Antitank battalions were cadred, both being reduced to one reinforced anti-tank company. These companies were then attached to the like-numbered tank battalion, adding approximately 100 Marines, one corpsmen, and 20 M50A1 Ontos, a small tracked vehicle mounting six 106mm recoilless rifles.

Tank Battalion *

USMC# USN
Off Enl Off Enl
40 617 1 14

H&S Co

USMC USN
Off Enl Off Enl
24 287 1 14

Medium Tank Co

USMC
Off Enl
5 105

Antitank Co (Reinforced) task organized

Co Hq@

2 M48A3 tanks**
1 M51 tank Retriever

Antitank Platoon

5 M50A1 Ontos

Tank Platoon

5 M48A3 tanks

* Does not include attached antitank company.

** One of these tanks was fitted with an M8 bulldozer blade.

Does not include additional personnel to support attached antitank company.

@ The standard T/O for an antitank company called for five officers and 76 enlisted Marines (T/O M—1248) Revision 2, 1 June 1967). Normally a company was divided into three platoons and equipped with 15 M50A Ontos. The reinforced companies attached to the tank battalions in December 1967 contained approximately six officers, 90—95 enlisted Marines, and one corpsman, and contained four platoons and a total of 20 M50A1 Ontos. Roughly one officer and six enlisted Marines were attached to the H&S Co to provide administrative support. (GB68)

As 1968 opened, the years-long planned TET Offensive – directed by North Vietnam’s senior military leader, Gen. Vo Nguyen Giap – was moving to its opening rounds to be fired on 31 January. Capturing the ancient imperial capital of Hue as just one – but the most important one - of the dozens of cities targeted to capture the length and width of South Vietnam with an expected general uprising by the locals.

During the same period elements of the 1st Marine Division were moving north (Operation Checkers) following the 3d Marine Division’s move closer to the DMZ. Basically the entire in-country Marine presence was on the move. Many of the units were in a semi-administrative posture to pack, move, un-pack, and re-occupy the positions left by their previous owners. “(S)huffling of units played right into Gen Giap’s hand”.(SF-EM)

January 1968

First Tanks:

Commanding Officer: LtCol V.J. Gentile

Executive Officer: Maj P.G. Radtke

Operations Officers: Maj's R.M. Croll & D.R. Dickey

Logistics Officer: Maj J.A. Schuyler

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 977723)

During the month of January the 1st Tank Battalion (Rein) participated in one major operation. ON 5 January nine tanks from Company C and one tank from battalion headquarters participated in **Operation Horseshoe** in the vicinity of (BT 1164), resulting in no enemy contact.

The locations of the companies and their supported units are as follows:

Company A (Rein): G/S 1st MarDiv (DaNang)

Company B (Rein): D/S 7th Marines (DaNang, Dai Loc, An Hoa)

Company C (-) (Rein): D/S 2nd Bn, 3rd Marines, 3rd Bn, 5th
Marines ROKMC (DaNang, Hoi An)

Company A (-), 1st Antitank Bn, 1st Tank Bn: 1-30Jan68,
attached 1st Marines (Quang Tri, Camp Evans)

31Jan68, D/S Task Force X-Ray (X-Ray AOR)

3rd Platoon (Rein), Company A (-): Attached 5th Marines
(Phu Loc)

31Jan68, D/S Task Force X-Ray (X-Ray AOR)

H&S C.O.: Maj L.A. Gildersleeve

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 997723) Same as Bn CP.

Bn CP security with Op's and LP's. Squad size patrols and ambushes.

C.O. Company "A" (Rein): Capt C.R. Casey

Location and Operations Summary: Da Nang (977723)

Company A (Rein)'s mission continues as security for the two priority bridges in the Southern Sector Defense Command AOR; the Song Cau Do Bridge and the Song Tuy Loan Bridge. Company A, also has continues to supply tow tanks for the security of the Ha Dong Bridge at (AT 990641). Due to the increased enemy activity in the DaNang area at the end of the month, Company A supplies two tanks for the security of the Cam Le Bridge at (BT 015716). This commitment is expected to last until the threat of enemy attack on this bridge has been reduced.

C.O. Company "B" (Rein): Capt R.E. Roemer

Location and Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 962621)

Company B (Rein)'s mission continues to be direct support of the 7th Marines, primarily as security for road sweeps and reaction forces.

C.O. Company "C" (Rein): Capt R.D. Gunselman

Location and Operations Summary: Da Nang (BT072644)

Company C (-) (Rein), is now in direct support of 2nd Battalion, 3rd Marines, in the Marble Mountain area. Also, they are supplying a platoon in direct support of the 2nd ROK Brigade in the Hoi An area. The 3rd Platoon, to Company B, is in direct support of 3rd Battalion, 7th Marines at An Hoa.

C.O. Company "A" (Rein) 1st AT Bn: 1stLt V.C. Davis

Location and Operations Summary: (YD 825165)

Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion, 1st Tank Battalion (Rein), was attached to the 1st Marines in the Quang Tri area until 22 January. From there they moved to Camp Evans. The company is now located at Gia Le, Thua Thren, in the Phu Bai TAOR. The 3rd Platoon (Rein), Company A (-), is attached to the 5th Marines in the Fhu Loc area. They are operating principally as security for road sweeps.

All movement by Ontos of Company A (Rein) has been restricted to Route #1 and other major all weather roads. Rainfall, however, has been light in the AOR, and it is felt that trafficability will improve in the next month.

Communication with the AT company has remained a problem. Due to the geographical location of the 3rd Platoon and increased enemy interdiction along Route #1, communications with this platoon has been by landline. It is expected that this problem will be solved upon return of the platoon to the company CP.

January 1969

First Tanks:

Commanding Officer: LtCol M.C. Ashley, Jr

Executive Officer: Maj R.H. Graham

Operations Officer: Maj J.B. Terpak

Logistics Officer: Maj D.R. Sparks

Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 997723)

During the month of January, tanks and Ontos of the 1st Tank Battalion continued to support the infantry regiments of the 1st Marine Division and the 2nd Brigade, ROK Marine Corps. Tanks participated in three major operations and numerous small unit operations, provided convoy and road sweep security, bridge security, counter rocket and mortar fire, and strengthened the defensive positions of infantry units throughout the Division Area of Responsibility. The increased employment of mines and surprise firing devices by the enemy to interdict lines of communication took a heavy toll of tanks and caused several casualties among tank crewmen. Despite this increase in enemy mining incidents, tanks continued to provide infantry units in the field with highly accurate direct fire support which accounted for more than 40 NVA/VC KIA and the destruction of numerous living areas and fortified positions.

2. Task Organization

The task organization of the 1st Tank Battalion as of 31 January was:

Company A (-) (Rein):	D/S 26th Marine Regiment
Company B (Rein):	2 platoons D/S 5th Marine Regiment
	2 platoons D/S 7th Marine Regiment
Company C (Rein):	2 platoons D/S 1st Marine Regiment
	1 platoon D/S 2nd Brigade, ROKMC
Company A (Rein): 1st Antitank Bn: Co. A (-) GS 1st Mar Div	
	1 platoon D/S Task Force Kilo
	Heavy Section D/S 3/1
	Light Section D/S 3/7

Southern Sector activities continued to be initiated, coordinated, and controlled by the Commanding Officer, 1st Tank Battalion. During January, activities conducted by SSDC tenant units included patrols, ambushes, LP's, OP's and COP's. On 1 January 1969, Company H, 2/7, relieved Company K, 3/1 and I Corps Quick Reaction Mobile Task Force, Task Force Kilo. With elements of Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion, Company H, 2/7, continued to carry out nightly patrols in the Hoa Vang District as well as company size sweeps in the 3rd Battalion, 1st Marines Area of Responsibility. During the month, Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion assumed operational control of OP Thumb (Hill 70 (AT 952728) from the 3rd Military Police Battalion. Extensive effort was put forth in strengthening the defensive fortifications of OP Thumb by the construction of new bunkers and fighting holes, the installation of German barbed concertina, air craft flares and the E-8, CS dispensers. In the early morning hours of 2 and 22 January counter

rocket and mortar sites, OP's Panther and Hawk, again proved their value by providing direct fire against suspected enemy rocket sites.

Employing the assets of Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion and the provisional SSDC infantry platoons as a potential delaying force, the SSDC continued to be capable of delaying or denying an enemy penetration from the west, which may arise during the TET Holidays, into the vital installations within the Southern Sector as well as within the DaNang vital area.

H&S Company C.O. : Maj F.OP. Briseno

Location & Operations Summary: CP (AT 997723)

Provided HQ CP defense by manning nightly perimeter bunkers, providing forward LP's, and active patrolling outside the wire.

C.O. Company "A" (-)(Rein): Capt B.R. Montgomery

Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 936782)

Company (-)(Rein) remained in direct support of the 26th Marines with the Company command post co-located with that of the 1st Battalion, 26th Marines. Elements of the 2nd and 3rd Platoons as well as the Headquarters Platoon continued to be employed on Hill 190 and Namu Bridge where they provided counter-rocket and mortar fire and bridge security, respectively. Tanks from the 2nd platoon participated in several small unit operations in the area to the northwest of Namu Bridge frequently used by the enemy as an infiltration route. On 28 January, 1st Tank Battalion assumed OPCON of the 1st Platoon, Company A, 5th Tank Battalion and the 2nd Platoon, Company A, 5th Antitank Battalion and passed OPCON to Company A which in turn placed them in direct support of the 26th Marine Regiment.

C.O. Company "B" (Rein): Capt M.P. Sams

Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 962621)

Company B (Rein) remained in direct support of the 5th and 7th Marine Regiments with three platoons in support of the 5th Marines and two in support of the 7th Marines. The Company Command Post remained co-located with that of the 7th Marine Regiment with a forward command post co-located with that of the 5th Marine Regiment. The 1st and 3rd Platoons were extensively employed on Hills 10, 41, 65, 37, and 55 to bring direct fire to bear on sighted enemy movement as well as known enemy infiltration routes. On 27 January 1969, tanks from the 1st Platoon and Headquarters Platoon moved out in support of 1/7 and 2/26 on **Operation Linn River**.



Marine Corps Historical Collection

As elements of the 7th Marines look on, a South Vietnamese Air Force "Skyraider" drops its ordnance on an enemy position during Operation Linn River. Supported by three 105mm artillery batteries, 5-inch guns of the heavy cruiser *Newport News* (CA148), and two platoons of tanks from the 5th Tank Battalion, the 7th and 26th Marines successively cordoned and then searched the objective area . Engagements during the remainder of the 12-day operation were light, consisting of Marines intercepting enemy troops attempting to flee the cordon . These small groups of enemy troops were sighted and then engaged by air, (tanks) and artillery.

Operating in an area which was once believed to be inaccessible to tracked vehicles, tanks displayed their versatility and capabilities by being able to move with the infantry as the operation progressed in the classic tank-infantry attack. In the An Hoa Basin tanks from Company B continued to support Operation **Taylor Common** by providing road sweep and convoy security between Phu Loc (6) and the An Hoa airfield as well as participating in numerous searches and clear and search and destroy operations.



Marine Corps Historical Collection

A tank of the 1st Tank Battalion conducts a sweep of Liberty Road, the main thoroughfare between Da Nang and An Hoa, in preparation for the build-up at the combat base .

C.O. Company "C" (Rein): 1stLt T.G. Roberts
Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 997723)

Company C (Rein) continued to be tasked with the support of the 1st Marine Regiment and the 2nd Brigade, ROK Marine Corps. The Company command post remained co-located with that of the 2nd Battalion 1st Marines. Tanks from the 2nd Platoon and Headquarters Platoon confronted with the task of supporting both the 1st and 2nd Battalions of the 1st Marine Regiment were continuously operating in support of battalion and company sized operations in the vicinity of Phong Ho (I), Man Quan and Cam Sa (I). With the increased number of mining incidents involving tanks in these areas, the 1st Platoon Company C, which had been placed under the OPCON of Company B for support of the 5th Marines on **Operation Taylor Common**, was withdrawn and on 31 January was returned to the command and control of Company C to bolster the tank assets of the 1st Marine Regiment. The 3rd Platoon continued to support the 2nd Brigade ROK Marine Corps, providing valuable direct fire support for **operation Victory Dragon 7** and numerous operations in the vicinity of Dien Ban.

Operation Taylor Common

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Taylor_Common

C.O. Company "A" (Rein), 1st AT Bn: 1stLt J.J. Banning
Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT997723)

Company A (Rein), 1st Antitank Battalion remained within the Southern Sector Defense command providing security for the Song Cau Do and Cobb Bridges together with elements of the 1st and 7th Marines, respectively. One heavy section of Ontos remained in support of the 1st Marines at the Song Cau Do Bridge and a light section of Ontos supported elements of the 7th Marines on the Cobb Bridge. In addition to command responsibility for the OP's Panther, Bear, and the Three Fingers Combat Outpost, Company A, 1st Antitank Battalion was assigned command of OP Thumb (Hill 70). One platoon of Ontos remained in support of the I Corps Quick Reaction Mobile Task Force, Task Force Kilo.

C.O. Company "A", 3dAtBn: Capt J.O. Lea
Location & Operations Summary: Khe Sanh

USMCVTHF Comment: No Report. Throughout this reporting period each company expended an enormous amount of rounds - 100s of 90mm and a commensurate amount of small arms .30/.50cal. In nearly every case it was reported "Results unknown".

As 1969 ended a new decade opened, seeing operations considerably different than just a few months prior. The drawdown underway – the 3d Marine Division was designated to be part of the initial redeployment - changed the prosecution of the war. With fewer men and even fewer anticipated with the troop and equipment drawdown - the tactics necessarily were re-adjusted as well. Most of the 1st Tank Battalion was slated to pack its kit and move to the embarkation staging areas. And here's where things got shaky in the reporting arena. Crews

were separated from their tanks and Ontos to fly back to CONUS. The tanks and Ontos (but only a few "Pigs") were loaded on amphibious shipping to move east – some to CONUS, some to Okinawa, and, in the case of the Ontos – anyone's guess.

January 1970

First Tanks:

Commanding Officer: Maj J.J. Louder

Executive Officer: Maj R.D. Becker

Operations Officer: Capt A.E. Burns III

Logistics Officer: Maj J.P. Senik

Location and Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 997723)

Operations. During the month of January the 1st Tank Battalion continued to support the 1st Marine Division and the 2nd ROK Marine Brigade throughout Quang Nam Province providing direct fire support to infantry Search and Clear, and Search and Destroy Operations, as well as Road Sweeps and Convoy Security, Counter-rocket and Counter-mortar fire, Perimeter defense and Armored Mobile Reaction Operations.

Task Organization. The task organization of the 1st Tank Battalion as of 31 January 1970 was: Company A (-): Cadre

Company B (Rein):	2 platoons and Company Headquarters D/S 1st Marine Regiment 2 platoons and forward Command Post D/S 5th Marine Regiment
Company C (Rein):	2 platoons and Company Headquarters D/S 7th Marine Regiment 1 platoon, D/S 2nd Brigade ROKMC
Company A, 5th Tank Bn:	2 platoons D/S 26th Marine Regiment 1 platoon G/S 1st Marine Division

During the month of January the Commanding Officer, 1st Tank Battalion, in his capacity as Commander, Southern Sector Defense Command, coordinated and controlled 1348 activities in support of the defense of Southern Sector of the DaNang Vital Area.

On the night of 3-4 January, Southern Sector OP Piranha (AT 950727) received a mortar /RPG and sapper attack resulting in 4 USMC WIA (Evac), 5 USMC WIA (Non-Evac) and 1 VC KIA. At the same time Hoa Cam Training Center received a mortar attack resulting in 1 friendly KIA and 5 friendly WIA (Evac).

On 6 January another attack-by-fire occurred as the 1st Tank Battalion CP received 2 140mm rockets. No casualties resulted and there was only minor damage to structures.

Southern Sector OP's Barracuda (AT 944719) and Manta (AT 944722) were abandoned effective 11 January and returned to their natural state. OP Piranha (AT 950727) was closed on 20 January and returned to its natural state. On that date 26th Marines assumed responsibility for the western most portion of the Southern Sector and the 1st Tank Battalion augmentation personnel who formerly manned the OP's commenced mobile security operations within the new

smaller TAOR. In conjunction with the boundary change the CP of Company C, 7th Engineer Battalion was re-located from its former location near Cobb Bridge (AT 948708) to the Hill 34 complex (AT 989713).

H&S C.O.: Maj H.G. Duncan

Location and Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 997723) Same as Bn CP.

Provided HQ CP security to include patrols, bunker OP's, LP's and ambushes.

The tanks of H&S Company were employed in general support of the 1st Marine Division as a tank reserve and to provide counter-rocket fire. One section was transferred to Company C leaving the Headquarters platoon with two tanks. During January the two flame sections in support of the 5th and 7th Marines returned to the Battalion Command Post. One section has been used in SSDC to burn possible ingress routes to cantonments. Two of the three flame tank sections were administratively deadlined during January due to personnel shortages.

C.O.s Company "A": 1stLt's P.H. McMath & F./P. Sherer

Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 997723)

Company A remained in a Cadre status. One M-51 VTR remained as a table of equipment deficiency. The Company Command Post continued to be co-located with that of the 1st Tank Battalion.

C.O. Company "B": 1st Lt J.M. Lidyard

Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 962621)

Company B (Rein) continued in direct support of the 1st Marines and 5th Marines. The Company Command Post is co-located with the 1st Marines Command Post on Hill 55 (AT 970621) with a forward Command Post co-located with the 5th Marine Command Post at the An Hoa Combat Base (AT 874475). The two platoons supporting the 1st Marines were employed on Hill 55 (AT 970621), Hill 37 (AT 915581) and at the Riviera (BT 103665). The two platoons supporting the 5th Marines provided security and reaction forces at Phu Loc (6) (AT 928527) and the An Hoa Combat Base (AT 874475).

C.O.s Company "C": Capt T.W. Kelly

Location and Operations Summary: CP (BT 135454)

Company C (Rein) remained in direct support of the 7th Marines and 2nd ROK Marine Brigade. Company C provided support to the 7th Marines and with one platoon and the Company Headquarters at LP Baldy (BT 133453) and one platoon at Fire Support Base Ross (BT 025342). One platoon from Company C supported the 2nd ROK Marine Brigade in Operation Victory Dragon during the period of 1 January through 31 January. One section continued operations with the 2nd ROK Marine Brigade on Barrier Island (BT 2054). ON 6 January the tank platoon at Fire Support Base Ross fired 7 canister, 23 beehive and 3100 rounds of .30 caliber in support of the 7th Marines during

a ground attack on Fire Support Base Ross. During this engagement one tank sustained minor damage when hit by an RPG.

C.O. Company "A" 5th Tank Bn: Capt M.F. Shisler
Location and Operations Summary: CP (AT 950758)

Company A (-), 5th Tank Battalion continued in direct support of the 26th Marines with the Company Command Post co-located with the Regimental Command Post (AT 950758) and one section of tanks each at: Nam O Bridge (AT 929838), Hill 190 (AT 888802), Hill 10 (AT 923695) and Hill 41 (AT 929663). One platoon, located at the 1st Tank Battalion Command Post remained in general support of the 1st Marine Division. Since 8 January a section from this platoon has been employed on Southern Sector OP Marlin (AT 974705) in support of Hoa Cam Training Center personnel manning the OP and to provide counter-rocket fire capability. Two tanks from the general support platoon were administratively deadlined during the month due to personnel shortages.

January 1966

First Antitanks:

Commanding Officer: LtCol W. Moore

Executive Officer: Maj R.E. Harris

Operations Officer: Maj A.J. Eagan

Logistics Officer: Maj J.J. Keefe

Location & Operations Summary: Camp Pendleton, CA

As the present reporting period began the 1st Antitank Battalion (-) was preparing to deploy to Okinawa with other units of the 1st Marine Division (Rein)(Rear). The Battalion at that time was comprised of H&S Company and Company B (-). Prior to the beginning of the reporting period 2nd Platoon, Company B and 3rd Platoon, Company B were attached to BLT's 2/5 and 3/5 respectively. 1st Platoon, Company B had deployed to Kaneohe with BLT 1/5 in July, 1965.

H&S Company C.O.: Capt J.W. Schroeder

Location: Camp Pendleton, CA

C.O. Company "A", 1st AT Bn: Capt G.R. Van Horn

Location: Okinawa

C.O. Company "B", 1st AT Bn: Capt J.E. Felker

Location: Camp Pendleton, CA

C.O. Company "C" 1st AT Bn (-): 1stLt W.F. Snyder

Location & Operations Summary: RVN

11 Jan 1966

a. The first platoon in support of 1/7 has been manning positions on the MLR from (BT 578033) to (BT 570027). Twice each day, one (1) fire team and one (1) ontos patrol behind 1/7's MLR.

b. The second platoon in support of 2/7 has a heavy section manning the MLR at (BT 496035) and a light section at the Company CP (BT 560048).

c. The third platoon in support of 3/7 has been manning positions on the MLR at (BT 525024) and (BT 549016). Each position is manned by a light section. Each night prior to sunset two ontos along with a fire team, patrol around the dump and up and down route #1 to insure that all the local people are out of the area.

21 Jan 1966

a. The first platoon in support of 1/7 has been manning positions on the MLR at (BT 578033) to (BT 570027). Twice each day, one (1) fire team and one (1) Ontos patrol behind 1/7's MLR.

Negative results.

b. The 2nd platoon in support of 2/7 has had a light section of Ontos manning the MLR at (BT 495037). On the morning of 15 January the heavy section escorted a convoy consisting of four (4) M-109's, eight (8) M-35's and two (2) MRC-36's from the Chu Lai enclave to a position southwest of Bin Son (BS 562894). The heavy section provided security in conjunction with E 2/7 for ("Mike" Battery 3/12. The three Ontos were positioned at the following locations (BS 553881) (BS 563897) and (BS 567878). On the morning of 16Jan66 the section escorted a resupply convoy to the Chu Lai enclave and returned to the artillery position the following afternoon. On 17 January the section remained in their security positions around the artillery battery. On 18 January they escorted another convoy to Chu Lai and returned to the artillery position. Upon their return to the artillery position information had been received ordering the battery back to Chu Lai. At 1700 the entire convoy returned to Chu Lai completing our mission.

c. The 3d Platoon in support of 3/7 has been manning positions on the MLR at (BT 525024) and (BT 549016). A light section is positioned at each location. Each night, prior to sunset two Ontos along with a fire team, patrol around the dump and up and down route #1 to insure that all the local people are out of the area.

1 Feb 1966

a. The first platoon in support of 1/7 has been manning positions on the MLR from (BT 578033) to (BT 570027) during the period 21 Jan to 23 Jan 1966. During this same period two (2) one Ontos patrols with one fire team was conducted behind the MLR. On 24 Jan 1966 the MLR was moved forward and during the period 24 Jan to 31 Jan 1966 one section has been manning the MLR in support of D-1/7 at (BS 568997). The other section has been manning the MLR in support of B-1/7 at (BS 605995). No patrols were conducted during the period 24 Jan to 31 Jan 1966.

b. The 2nd platoon in support of 2/7 has had a heavy section in support of E-2/7 manning positions on the MLR at (BT 495036) and (BT 490037). No Contact.

c. The 3rd platoon in support of 3/7 has been manning positions on the MLR at (BT 525024) and (BT 549016) during the period 21 Jan to 23 Jan 1966. During this same period two Ontos were used to patrol the dump and Route #1 each day prior to sunset. On 24 Jan 1966 the MLR was moved forward and now the platoon has a section at (BS 549996) in support of L-3/7 and a section at (BT 523001) in support of M-3/7. On 24 Jan 1966 two Ontos from the 3rd platoon escorted a convoy from the Chu Lai enclave to the military compound at Quang Ngai (BS 650730). The convoy left at 0900 and returned at 1500 the same day. The convoy consisted of two (2) Ontos, six (6) fuel trucks, one (1) M-49 and three (3) radio jeeps.

January 1967

First Antitanks:

Commanding Officer: Maj J.J. Keefe

Executive Officer: Maj J.L. Saul

Operations Officer: Maj J.J. Burke, Jr.

Logistics Officer: Capt C.R. Van Horn

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 991675)

Throughout the reporting period, subordinate units of this Command were assigned missions as follows:

Company A, Direct Support First Marines.

Company B (-), Second Platoon, OPCON Second Battalion, Fifth Marines

Third Platoon	1-7 January 1967 Direct Support Third Battalion, Ninth Marines
	8-14 January 1967 Direct Support Third Battalion, Seventh Marines
	15-31 January 1967 General Support First Marine Division

Company C (Rein) Direct support Seventh Marines

H&S Company C.O.: Capt M.H. Collier

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 991675)

C.O. Company "A": Capt G.J. Forbes

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 991

Commander's Narrative Summary of Significant Events.

a. During the current reporting period, Company A has had operational and administrative control of its three organic gun platoons. The mission of the Company continues to be DS of 1st Marines.

b. Throughout the reporting period, the 1st Platoon has been in DS of 3/1, and 2nd Platoon has been in DS of 2/1, the 3rd Platoon in DS of 1/1.

c. Due to Company "A"'s CP being located with the 1st Marine's Regimental Command Post, Company "A" also has the mission of manning a portion of the Regimental CP's defensive perimeter.

d. During the reporting period Company A has been involved in no major operations. The missions of the company's platoons has been limited to convoying, mechanized patrols, conducting H&I fires and supporting search and destroy missions of the supported infantry.

e. During the reporting period, the company has had two mining incidents resulting in two (2) Ontos being destroyed and 6 attendant WIAs. A-35 hit an unknown type land mine located at (AT 038578) at approximately 130930H and A-31 exploded an unknown type land mine at (AT 007566) at 260845H. A third incident was reported at 051200H at 995633 where A-24 hit an unknown type explosive device which exploded resulting in a 4"x12" crater, no damage to vehicle, and no casualties.

f. Due to 3rd Platoon being down to two operational vehicles after mining incidents, they were pulled back to 1st ATBn CP to regroup and reequip. They were replaced by a heavy section of Bravo Company which was made op-con to Company A on 26 Jan 1967.

C.O. Company "B": Capt T.F. Dempsey
Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. At the commencement of the reporting period, Company "B" was in support of 3/9. On 8 January 1967, 3/7 assumed 3/9 mission and Company "B" went into support of 3/7. The second platoon remains in direct support of 2/5. On 15 January the third platoon moved to the 1st Antitank Battalion Command Post and Company "B" assumed mission as Division Reserve.

2. On 18 January, a detail enroute to the second platoon position for administrative purposes received four WIA when the amtrac upon which they were riding hit a mine at coord (939581).

3. On 18 January, a patrol from second platoon, returning from MY LOC (2) to Phu LOC (6) at coord (923518) was taken under sniper fire from coord (927515). They returned fire with negative results. Three USMC WIA.

4. On 21 January, a section from second platoon supported G, 2/5 on patrol from coord (AT 925528) to (AT 951541). At 0930 sniper fire was received from coord (AT 948536). 8 106mm rounds and 50 caliber .30 rounds were returned. Sniper fire ceased. At 1330 at coord (AT 951529) sniper fire was received from coord (AT 957528). 8 106mm rounds and 80 caliber .30 rounds were returned. Sniper fire ceased.

5. At 1530 on 24 January Company "B" displaced command post to 1st Antitank Battalion Command Post.

6. On 27 January at 1300, Company "A", 1st Antitank Battalion assumed operational control of the third platoon.

C.O. Company "C": Capt R.J. Esposito

Location & Operations Summary: Chu Lai

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The month of January found the Ontos remaining primarily in position at their respective Combat Bases with little or no participation in either operations or sweeps. Company activity due to heavy rain was limited to convoy escorts for the most part. The Second Platoon was released from support of D/1/7 and was repositioned on Hill 35 (BT 468068) on 30 January and the 1st Platoon, "B" Company was relocated in support of CAC-I4 Company (BT 331177) on 31 January 1967.

On 15 December 1967 Company "A" (Rein), 3d Anti-Tank Battalion was attached to the 3d Tank Battalion.

January 1966

Third Tanks

USMCVTHT Comment: This CC has an S-1 Personnel Annex. Most CC's do not. The MarCorHistDiv cannot explain why the S-1 Annexes are routinely omitted lest it be privacy concerns at that period of time.

Commanding Officer: LtCol M.L. Raphael

Executive Officer: Maj J.G. Doss, Jr.

Operations Officer: Maj H.L. Maxwell

Logistics Officer: Maj F.W. Coates

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 989708)

The increase in strength over the last reporting period may be explained partially through the joining of programmed replacements to this organization, but more important to this increase was the joining of "A" Company, 1st Tank Battalion heretofore attached to RLT-1. The joining of "A" Company established this organization with five gun companies. A Flame Section did not arrive with "A" Company nor did any of the company's gun platoons. Only the "A" Company Headquarters element of 2 Officers and 39 enlisted Marines and 1 Navy Corpsman were joined. Since "A" Company, 1st Tank Battalion was directed to assume the tactical obligations previously assigned to "C" Company, 3d Tank Battalion, two platoons from "C" Company, 3d Tank Battalion were transferred to "A" Company, 1st Tank Battalion.

On 3 January elements of Company B, Company A, and Tank Battalion Headquarters participated in **Operation War Bonnet** in support of ***1st Battalion, 9th Marines**. This search and destroy operation involved the largest number of tracked vehicles used by the Marine Corps thus far in Vietnam. The Commanding Officer of 3d Tank Battalion was coordinator and tracked vehicle advisor to the infantry battalion commander. The tanks were used as the point and rear guard for the armor column, reconnaissance, destruction of fortified positions, and perimeter security. On 28 January **War Bonnet II** was conducted. With the exception of there being less tracked vehicles, this operation was the same as the operation held on 3 January. The same problems of tracked vehicle control and coordination existed in the conduct of this operation and again the

Commanding Officer of 3d Tank Battalion was tracked vehicle coordinator and advisor for the infantry battalion commander. The tanks had the same mission as in the first operation.

*This is an error. The operation was conducted with 2/9

USMCVTHF Comment: There is no mention of "Operation War Bonnet" in GB6 or to be found in an on-line search. However, in searching the 1/9 Command Chronology for War Bonnet we found this:

5. Principal Subordinate Units

H&S Company	(1-27 Jan) Capt CLAWSON
	(28-31 Jan) Capt KNOUSE
Company "A"	Capt LLOYD
Company "B"	Capt HENRY
Company "C"	Capt FOWLES
Company "D"	Capt HART
Company "L", 3d Bn, 9th Marines	Capt COLCOMBE
1st Plat, Co "C", 3d AT Bn	1stLt WOOD
Company "B" (-), 3d Tank Bn	(1-26 Jan) Capt LEE
	(27-31 Jan) Capt COOMBS
3rd Plat, Co "B", 1st AmTrac Bn	1stLt TYRIAN
Btry "D", 2d Bn, 12th Marines	Capt BAILEY
2d Plat (-), Co "A", 3d MT Bn	Sgt MATTINGLY
1st Plat (-), Co "C", 3d Engr Bn	(1-21 Jan) 1stLt RODRIGUEZ
	(22-31 Jan) 1stLt CHUMER

Note that Capt's Lee and Coombs are the C.O.'s of "B" Company, 3d Tanks Company with Capt Lee in command at the time of Operation War Bonnet and Capt Coombs during WB II. However, a thorough review of 1/9's CC reveals no mention of the operation. Although there is citation of tank participation in support of limited engagements by 1/9 companies and platoons of those companies.

This was found in one document but note that entry references participation of 2/9 while the Tank CC states the operation(s) was with 1/9.

Operation War Bonnet	3 - 4 Jan 66	2nd Battalion, 9th Marines and 3rd Tank Battalion search and destroy operation in Quang Nam Province
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In the search of 2/9's Command Chronology for January 1966 this was found:

Operational Summary. During the reporting period, the battalion continued to defend its sector of the 9th Marines TAOR. Offensive operations against the enemy were conducted frequently. On 3 - 4 January, the battalion reinforced with tank, ontos, LVT's, artillery and close air support conducted Operation "WAR BONNET" in the south-eastern portion of the 9th Marines TAOR.

And this:

f. Co B (-), 3d Tank Bn.

- (1) At H-1 Hour and on order be prepared to occupy positions on Objective A (Hill-55).
- (2) Be prepared to support task elements as required in Objective area.

As usual, the Infantry CC's are published in great detail, often down to individual Marine's details, and there's no mention of tank support – at all – in the context of "Operation War Bonnet". And to worsen matters, the 3d Tanks CC cited tank support to the wrong supported infantry unit.

So, if our readers are familiar with - or were involved in - this operation, please let us know and we'll get on-record what tank support was actually provided in this operation. In short the operation was a mass movement of the first occupiers of Hill 55 south west of Da Nang.

On 20 January 1966, Company A (-) (Rein), 1st Tank Battalion came under administrative control of 3d Tank Battalion while remaining attached 1st Marines. The 1st and 2d platoons of Company C (-) (Rein), 3d Tank Battalion were assigned to Company A (-) (Rein), 1st Tank Battalion. Company C remains attached to 4th Marines. Company B (Rein), 1st Tank Battalion remains attached to 7th Marines. All are supporting operations in the Chu Lai Enclave. Operational control is exercised by the supported units. Administrative control and logistical support is exercised and provided by Commanding Officer, 3d Tank Battalion.

Companies A and B, 3d Tank Battalion remain in direct support of 3d Marines and 9th Marines respectively. Operations are in support of the Da Nang Enclave with one platoon supporting operations in the Hue Phu Bai Enclave.

Command and control of tank units operating in the three enclaves is exercised through: frequent command and staff visits; a monthly command and staff conference; daily communication between battalion and each company; and, submission of periodic reports of activities by each company.

And here's another "You made history. Your Foundation is making it known." Ever hear of "Operation Eagle Flight 49er"? We could not find it mentioned in any of our regular research documents but here it is – written by Randy Conrad and pictures from Gunner Embesi's war chest.

Operation Eagle Flight 49er

Written by Randy Conrad

Photos by Robert Embesi

Randy Conrad made these notes in his diary on 24 January 1966. Conrad was driver on T.J. Siva's tank.

24 Jan.66 Went on a raid called Operation Eagle Flight 49er (Same place as 5 Jan., Hill 163, this was the 4th or 5th time to the same place.) A25 was always lead tank, but today A24 was lead. Because Lt. on board her (ORA25)?

While going across very narrow saddle between tow hills, A24 ran over a 100 pound Mine (TNT) with the outside edge of the left track. A25 was about 50 yards behind A24 when she hit it. The blast broke the track, ripped off two road wheels, and slammed them up into the support roller shearing it off. All this debris slammed up into the top portion of the track forcing it into the fender above. As the fender peeled upwards, three grunts were flung up into the air. Two were not hurt, too badly, but the third came down on his back on top the 90mm Gun Tube and messed up his back. The tank crew was very lucky, Burrell (the Driver) banged his mouth on the hatch rim and cut his lip. Robbie, Pop Kelly, and the loader were all OK.

A25 was sent around A24 to protect her blind side. This made the grass too slippery for any other tank to pass. A retriever came to pull A24 back to Battalion, but ran out of gas before reaching us. Battalion sent out a tanker truck and refilled the retriever. While waiting for all of this, the tanks and Ontos fired down the hill and across the river into a VC Village. Civilian newspapers claimed 660 VC Dead. The grunts did a body count, said 440. During the firing, A25 had a white Phosphorus (Willy Peter) round misfire. Three times we manually cocked the 90mm; every time it failed to fire. Finally, Sgt. Siva said, to pull it out of the breech. Larry Roalson eased the live Willy Peter out and handed it up to me (I was standing on top of the tank.) I took it from Larry, gently laid it on the fender, jumped down. Again picked it up, carried it about 30 yards away, and laid it on the ground. I climbed back on the tank and we begin firing again.

When we were ready to return to camp, the process had to be repeated in reverse, pick up the Willy Peter, lay it on the fender, climb on board, pick it up, and hand it to Larry. Then I got busy getting the task started while the rest of the crew took care of the round. Since the retriever was busy pulling A24, we hooked up to A24's track. For some reason, we were able to go back down the slope we had come up, so we went straight down the hill. It took both feet on the brakes to maintain any form of control. We got back to Highway 1 and to keep from tearing up the road or the track, I drove on the shoulder of the road. I saw a Vietnamese in front of me riding a bicycle. As I got close to him I pulled out to pass. When I knew I was past, I pulled back in. Just as I pulled in, I realized (and Sgt. Siva yelled at the same time) that, in fact, I wasn't completely passed. I had 15 feet of tow cable and nearly 50 feet of track stretched out behind me, so I flipped the steering wheel to left. This caused the towed track to whip to the right and toward the Vietnamese. He saw this 2-1/2 ton chunk of steel and rubber coming to wards him and nowhere to go, he just jumped from his bike. Fortunately, the track didn't whip that far, just far enough to trash the bike. THAT WAS ONE PISSED VIETNAMESE .



H&S Company C.O.: Capt A.E. Lee

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 989708)

During the month of January H&S Company conducted 22 daylight patrols and 9 night ambushes in areas adjacent to the Battalion CP. The battalion continued to provide one infantry platoon on standby for immediate employment in the 3d Marine Division TAOR.

C.O. Company "A": Capt F.W. Jarrot

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 946762)

Company A remains in direct support of the 3d Marines, occupying strong points along the MLR and providing a mobile reserve force for the regiment. Tanks in the company were also used for indirect long-range fire. The 3d platoon, Company A, attached to the 2d Battalion, 1st Marines, occupies strong points on Highway 1 and provided the battalion with mobile reserve force. This platoon had three contacts while in support of Marine and ARVN operations. The tanks are credited with an estimated 48 VC KIA (40 of these according to ARVN count)

C.O. Company "B": Capt W.A. Coomes

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 067719)

Company B remains in direct support of the 9th Marines. One platoon is in support of the 2d Battalion and the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines, while the remainder support the 1st Battalion. The 1st platoon, Company C is also in support of the 2d Battalion and the 3d Battalion, 3d Marines. As in the past four months, this company continues to have the majority of tank offensive actions.

During January, elements of Company B participated in 28 search and clear or search and destroy operations, 5 armored patrols, and were used 3 times in a mobile reserve capacity. The company had 37 VC contacts and killed an estimated 34 VC and wounded an estimated 13 VC. The company has 6 tanks on hill #55 (AT 970620). These tanks are being used extensively to fire deep H and I's south of the hill.

C.O. Company "C": Capt E.L. Erickson

Location & Operations Summary: Chu Lai (BT 531094)

Company C, attached to the 4th Marines, occupied strong points along the MLR and provided a mobile reserve force in the Chu Lai enclave. The Headquarters tanks were used to support Company G while the 2d platoon is in direct support of the 2d Battalion and the 3d platoon supports the 1st Battalion. On 20 January the two platoons of Company C were placed under OPCON of Company A, 1st Tank Battalion just recently arrived in RVN. The Company C Headquarters remains attached to the 4th Marines. Company A, 1st Tank Battalion is attached to the 1st Marines.

C.O. Company "A", 1st Tanks: 1stLt J.D. Sparks

Location & Operations Summary: Chu Lai (BT 533080)

USMCVTHF Comment: Company "A" is only the HQ Personnel who came ashore at Chu Lai w/no tanks. Rather reminds one of the many time the infantry Bn. C.O.s came ashore leaving their Tanks and Ontos sitting in the well decks of their respective amphibious shipping.

Company "A" (-), 1st Tank Battalion landed in Chu Lai. 3d Tank Battalion was directed to transfer the 1st and 2nd Platoons of "C" Company, 3d Tanks to "A" Company. The transfer of supplies and equipment; the sorting of the outstanding requisitions pertaining to the transferred platoons; and the transfer of personnel is a problem which will require close supervision and coordination.

C.O. Company "B", 1st Tanks: Capt H.A. Bertrand, Jr.
Location & Operations Summary: Chu Lai (BT 548060)

Company B, 1st Tank Battalion, attached to the 7th Marines, supported operations within the TAOR, participating in search and clear and search and destroy operation and support of patrols. The company conducted beach patrols in the TAOR and provided one section for the defense of the Chu Lai Airfield.

January 1967

Third Tanks

Commanding Officer: LtCol W.R. Corson

Executive Officer: Maj E.R. Larson

Operations Officer: Maj E.L. Tunget

Logistics Officer: Maj J.P. Schultz

Location & Operations Summary: DaNang (AT 989708)

During the month of January 1967, the Third Tank Battalion remained in support of the First and Third Marine Divisions. In the DaNang TAOR, the Battalion Headquarters, Headquarters and Service Company (-), and Company "B" (Rein), were under the operational control of the Commanding General, First Marine Division. In the Dong Ha TAOR, Company "A" (Rein), Company "C" (Rein), and the Forward Operating Group (Det., H&S Company) were under the operational control of the Commanding General, Third Marine Division. The Forward Operating Group continued to provide logistical and maintenance support for "A" and "C" Companies. Administrative control for the entire Battalion remained with the Third Marine Division.

On 6 January 1967, the First Platoon of Company "B" was transferred to BLT 3/9 for rotation to Okinawa. On 7 January 1967, the tank platoon attached to BLT 2/4 was joined and assigned to Company "B" in DaNang.

Tank combat operations improved somewhat during the month of January. Cross-country mobility, especially in low areas, was still hampered by wet rice paddies and continued high water levels in the streams. Tanks continued to be utilized in a defensive posture and for direct fire H&I's both day and night.

The following support assignments were effective during the month:

Company "A" D/S Third Marine Regiment (Dong Ha)
Company "B" D/S Ninth Marine Regiment (DaNang)
Company "C" D/S Fourth Marine Regiment (Dong Ha)

Tank combat operations for the month accounted for 11 VC/NVA KIA (confirmed), six VC/NVA KIA (probable), and two boats destroyed. Ammunition expenditure for the month was: 953 90mm rounds; 7,400 caliber .30 rounds; and 300 caliber .50 rounds.

During January, the Commanding Officer, Third Tank Battalion continued to serve as the Commander, Southern Sector, First Marine Division Rear Area Defense, with the mission of coordinating and directing as required the active defensive measures for the tenant units of the Southern Sector. During the month, a number of provisional squad and platoon sized reaction forces were committed within the sector either in response to VC initiated incidents or intelligence gained from local officials and ARVN sources. Third Tank Battalion operations in the Southern Sector resulted in 11 VCS/detainees. Operations in this area have had the effect of disrupting the local VC infrastructure and keeping the operating elements off balance.

H&S Company C.O.: 2ndLt A.W. Hauser
Location & Operations Summary: DaNang (AT 989708)

At 022320H a Third Battalion patrol member became disoriented in the dark, was given an order to halt, and he continued to move. Another patrol member bringing up the rear fired approximately five 7.62mm rounds. The disoriented patrol member was hit in the chest, resulting in one friendly KIA.

16 January 1967: At 160900H a Third Tank Battalion patrol apprehended one VN male in Phong Bac Hamlet (AT 99710). His ID papers showed his name as Ngo Nguyen. This name appears on our blacklist as a cover name for Ngo Phum a VC battalion commander. The detainee was turned over to Hoa Cam Training Center for initial interrogation.

Tiger Doctor
By Steve Patton

My Introduction to Vietnam

I arrived in country in January of 1967 aboard the World War II troopship, the USS General Walker. When we landed at Da Nang, it was like an old movie. With all my gear I joined 2,500 other Marines going over the side of the ship on rope ladders into landing craft and making a beach assault at a Da Nang schoolyard. With sea bag, deuce gear, flak jacket, helmet, rifle and of course no ammo, we arrived on the beach.

My orders were to proceed to a palm tree with the number 12 on it. Now picture a large treed area with 2,499 Marines standing around the trees and me, by myself, watching everyone being loaded up on trucks and all of us going off in all directions. Standing tall and proud, I waited. After an hour, I sat down and leaned back against my tree. I thought that after 23 days at sea and a beach landing, I "occupied" my tree in the Da Nang school yard,

not knowing what type of unit I would be going to and not knowing that my stay in Vietnam would be composed of mostly working by myself.

About that time, I was thinking of finding a chow hall when a small group in a rust colored Jeep came by and asked where I was going. I pointed to the number on the tree and in unison, they said, "Tanks." So I got in this Jeep with three young Marines who were wearing the same rust colored uniforms. My Marine Corps green gear looked too good as we headed for the tank park on a hill called "55."

When the Jeep arrived, Two Marines in those funny, rust colored uniforms greeted me and the big question was: What was my MOS? When I told them, "2171 Optics," it was as though I was a visiting officer. And by the way, during our trip to Hill 55, my bright green uniform had mysteriously changed to that rust color like the rest of the troops.

A larger-than-life corporal took me in tow. His name was "Ollie" Olson. He'd proceed to explain the large shortage of optics and 2151 mechanics in Vietnam. To care for the fiftyplus M-48 tanks in a perfect world, a crew of twenty or so, plus staff and officers, were needed to do the job. In 3rd Tank Battalion there were two peons and a mustang warrant officer named WO Herring. The two men were composed of a short-timer who was leaving in two days and Ollie, who had less than two weeks in-country... and now me.

Ollie grabbed some of my gear and we headed in to camp. We stopped by his maintenance shack (office) and he grabbed a big manual. Then we dropped my gear in a hardback tent and had a late lunch at the mess hall. For the next couple hours, I was introduced to the workings of the hydraulics and electronics of the M-48 Patton tank. At this time, a new "tiger doctor" was born. Ollie named me "The Little General."

Taking Care of Business

One of the most important lessons I learned from an old timer was when you hear incoming rockets or mortars, they are already past you. He said, "You will never hear the one that hits you. So why worry? You just needed to get as close to Mother Earth as you can, then carry on Marine."

My routine of sorts was to visit as many tank companies a week as possible, do an inspection of the systems and record the condition of each tank. After I got to 3rd Tank Battalion (forward) at the Dong Ha Combat Base, I made a 4/ 8 billboard that showed every tank, its location and its status. After each day I would update the board myself or by calling the maintenance chief. Then I could order parts and many times go get them.



Dong Ha Tank Park

In the thick of the action after Tet, I took a trip by LCT from Dong Ha to Da Nang to recycle a couple of tanks. I went to the Dong Ha boat ramp (which was not much of a harbor). The two tank retrievers had brought down the deadlined tanks and the LCT backed up to the muddy landing with his boarding ramp down. The LST revved its engines high to keep in position as the retriever crew with their Confederate flag flying, pushed the first tank onboard. The operation went quite well. Then the number two tank started to get pushed on board the LCT behind number one. The boat crew had not had time to winch the first tank out of the way and even though we all speak English, the retriever crew did not understand the boat crew yelling for them to wait.

The retriever was at full power pushing number two tank against number one and sliding both on deck. All was going well when the LCT lost power and in a flash the LCT was pushed out in the channel. The retriever, unable to stop and still hooked to number two tank, dropped unceremoniously into the river. Being still hooked by the push bar, it languished for a second and then dropped down into ten feet of water. All that was showing above the water line was the antenna and that Confederate flag.

One by one, the crew popped up from the muddy water, spitting and cussing. The LCT crew ran to secure the tanks and to keep them on deck. Once all was ok, the comedy of it brought raucous laughter from all. The retriever crew climbed up on to the bank and they were joined by a few rats that had made the retriever their home. My sides hurt from all that

laughing. With the help of six-by trucks, tow trucks, and a bunch of cables, the retriever was pulled up the bank and onto the loading ramp area. Water poured out of every hole and the engine was sending up a plume of steam. The retriever door handle was pulled and a gush of water helped drain the crew compartment. Along with the water, several large carp-like fish that had been sucked in also shot out, and many of the local civilians dove in to the muddy mess trying to catch the fish.

I often wondered if someone of the 40 or 50 people who had gathered to gawk at the spectacle had ever got pictures. The LST returned to the beach and a few other busted trucks and some supplies were loaded up. Then I got on board for the ride to Da Nang. I was standing on the port side as we headed down the river toward the ocean when a crewman called to me to come in and have lunch. He told me that snipers shot at the boats as they went up and down the river so I should stay inside.

I love the Marine Corps, don't get me wrong. But when I entered the boat's galley, I was weak in the knees. Baskets of fresh fruit were lying on the tables and everything was spotless. Such quality I hadn't seen since my grocery store produce management days back in the US of A. As I sat down, I was asked if I wanted a steak. And what a steak it was! With all the trimmings!

After months of C-rations and maybe a trip to the mess hall once a week, I was wondering if I had joined the right branch of the service. After lunch, I crawled into a small bunk along the passageway and laid my head on my pack. I was out like a light. I stayed asleep until we arrived in Da Nang Harbor. I soon embarked the boat and turned in my paperwork when I found out that my new tanks would be loaded the next afternoon. For the overnight I went to the in-country R&R center and spent the evening at the outdoor theater, drinking warm San Miguel beer in a tropical down pour. The movie was "Cool Hand Luke." The next afternoon, I boarded the LCT with two brand-new tanks and spent a beautiful night sailing to Dong Ha. This was just a couple days as a "tiger doctor" in Vietnam.

Steve Patton
Tuolumne, CA

No reprints of this story are permitted without the consent of Steve Patton.

C.O. Company "A": Capt A.W. Facklam Jr.

Location & Operations Summary: Dong Ha (YD 061545)

11 January 1967: At 111615H, Company "A" tanks in support of elements of 3/3 at (XD 975573), received a heavy volume of small arms fire and mortars. Tanks returned 90mm fire at possible FO sites. Results were inconclusive.

At 132025H a Company "A" tank in support of 2/3 at (XD 063543) while engaged in an H&I fire mission, had a 90mm HE round explode prematurely in the turret. PFC Edwards was killed immediately and Corporal Parker died of wounds at a later time. Lance Corporal Hicks, Corporal Wright, and Corporal Parker were med-evac for wounds.

C.O. Company "B": 1stLt D.B. Garner

Location & Operations Summary: Da Nang (AT 962611)

6 January 1967: At 061030H Company "B" tanks in support of 3/7 at (AT 876574) observed a friendly jet aircraft crash, and observed approximately six VC/NVA at (At 863558) approaching the crash site.

Tanks fired 90mm rounds, resulting in three VC/NVA KBGF confirmed and two VC/NVA KBGF probable.

At 021045H a Company "B" tank in support of 3/7 at (AT 376574) observed two boats containing six VC. The tank fired 90mm rounds, resulting in six VC KBGF confirmed and two boats sunk.

8 January 1967: At 080845H, Company "B" tanks in support of elements of 3/7 at (AT 981624) fired 90mm rounds at VC movement at (AT 982620) picked up on AN/TPS-21. Results of fire were inconclusive.

9 January 1967: At 090845H a Company "B" tank at (AT 968589) detonated an anti-tank mine causing one friendly WIA and moderate damage to the tank suspension system.

At 161045H a Company "B" tank in support of 1/26 at (AT 968595) while on a road sweep detonated an anti-tank mine. Results were moderate damage to the tank suspension system and one tank crewman WIA med-evac.

20 January 1967: At 201400H Company "B" tanks in support of 1/26 at (AT 938527) conducted a search and destroy mission in the following areas: (AT 951526), (AT 946528), (AT 962526). Tanks conducted reconnaissance by fire with 90mm rounds with negative results.

C.O. Company "C": 1stLt R.C. Kinhead

Location & Operations Summary: Dong Ha (YD 234582)

At 142250H, Company "C" tanks in support of elements of 3/4 at (YD 143617) received 10-15 rounds of 82mm mortar fire. Tanks did not return fire as the enemy location was unknown.

17 January 1967: From 170230H to 170250H, Company "C" tanks while in support of elements of 2/3 at (YD 145616) received 50 to 70 rounds of 82mm mortars, causing light damage to one tank.

On 26 January 1967 the Third Tank Battalion S-1 reported Lance Corporal Richard G. Langley of Company "C" was a casualty due to an accidental discharge and self-inflicted wound.

These terrain and political considerations largely determined the enemy's avenues of approach and the 3d Marine Division dispositions in the DMZ sector. The North Vietnamese made their base areas in the Demilitarized Zone (DMZ) and Laos and tried to infiltrate their forces into the river valleys and coastal plain to cut the allied lines of communications. Route 1, the main north and south highway, connected the Marine bases of Dong Ha http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90%C3%B4ng_H%C3%A0 and Quang Tri in the north to Phu Bai and Da Nang further south. The Cua Viet River provided the division its chief logistic artery, running from the Cua Viet Facility at its mouth to Dong Ha. http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/%C4%90%C3%B4ng_H%C3%A0 Little more than a mountain path in its western reaches, Route 9 linked Dong Ha with Khe Sanh. Since August 1967, however the North Vietnamese had successfully severed Route 9 west of the Marine outpost at Ca Lu, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ca_Lu_Combat_Base isolating the Marines at Khe Sanh and permitting resupply only by air. East of Khe Sanh, the 3d Division was strung out in a series of outposts and bases that allowed protection for Route 9, the important Cam Lo River Valley which extended to Dong Ha, and the coastal plain. The most significant of these were: Ca Lu, 10 miles east of Khe Sanh; the Rockpile, a sheer 700-foot

out-cropping, eight miles further north; followed by Camp Carroll, 10 miles to the east; and then the heralded "Leatherneck Square" the quadrilateral outlined by Cam Lo, Con Thien, Gio Linh, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Firebase_Gio_Linh and Dong Ha. For purposes of delineation and control, the division divided this extensive area into a series of regimental and battalion operational areas with designated code names. For example, the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion in Operation Napoleon was responsible for keeping open the Cua Viet waterway. Further north, the 9th Marines, in Operation Kentucky, manned the defenses in the Leatherneck Square sector. In Operation Lancaster, the 3d Marines screened the area from Cam Lo to Ca Lu. Scotland was the codename for the 26th Marines operations at Khe Sanh. To the south, the 1st Marines in Operation Osceola guarded the approaches to the provincial capital and the secondary Marine base near Quang Tri City.

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Qu%E1%BA%A3ng_Tr%E1%BB%8B_Province

[http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Quang_Tri_\(1968\)](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Battle_of_Quang_Tri_(1968))





<http://www.historynet.com/attack-on-quang-tri-city-during-the-vietnam-war.htm>

The 1st ARVN Division was responsible for the sector east of Route 1 and south of Dong Ha. With its command post at Dong Ha, the 12th Marines, the artillery regiment, supported all of these operations from firing positions at Dong Ha, Camp Carroll, http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Camp_Carroll, Gio Linh, Khe Sanh, and Quang Tri. (GB68)



January 1968

Third Tanks

Commanding Officers: LtCol's F.D. Chapman & K.J. Fontenot, Jr.

Executive Officer: Maj B.M. MacLaren

Operations Officer: Maj C.J. Samuelson

Logistics Officer: Maj R.E. Finney

Location & Operations Summary: Phu Bai

The battalion sustained 22 casualties during January. Two were KIA, and twenty sustained wounds as a result of enemy action. Three

personnel are listed as MIA since 8 January. There were three non-hostile casualties.

Activity during January continued at the same pace as in the past few months until the arrival of TET when action increased significantly.

During the 1-25 January tanks of this Battalion participated in 5 operations.

Operation Kentucky. Tanks of Company "A" and one platoon of Company "A", 3d Anti-Tank Battalion supported the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment and the 12th Provisional Artillery Battalion. Tanks fired 90mm HE and WP, H&I fires and fired 90mm direct and indirect at known and suspected enemy positions resulting in one KIA (confirmed). On 5 January a platoon from the Special Landing Force was chopped to this Battalion and was redesignated the 3d Platoon, Company "C". This platoon was in support of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment and the 1st and 3d Battalion, 3d Marine Regiment at A-3.

[OP FILE, OPERATION LANCASTER PHASE I, 5-21 APR 1967 - dated 31-Oct-67 Document No. 1201064094](#)

[OP FILE, OPERATION NEOSHO PHASE 1, 6-10 APR 1967 6-7 APR - dated 31-Oct-67 Document No. 1201064095](#)

[OP FILE, OPERATION SCOTLAND, 1967 20 APR-31 MAY - dated 31-Oct-67 Document No. 1201064096](#)

Operation Kentucky

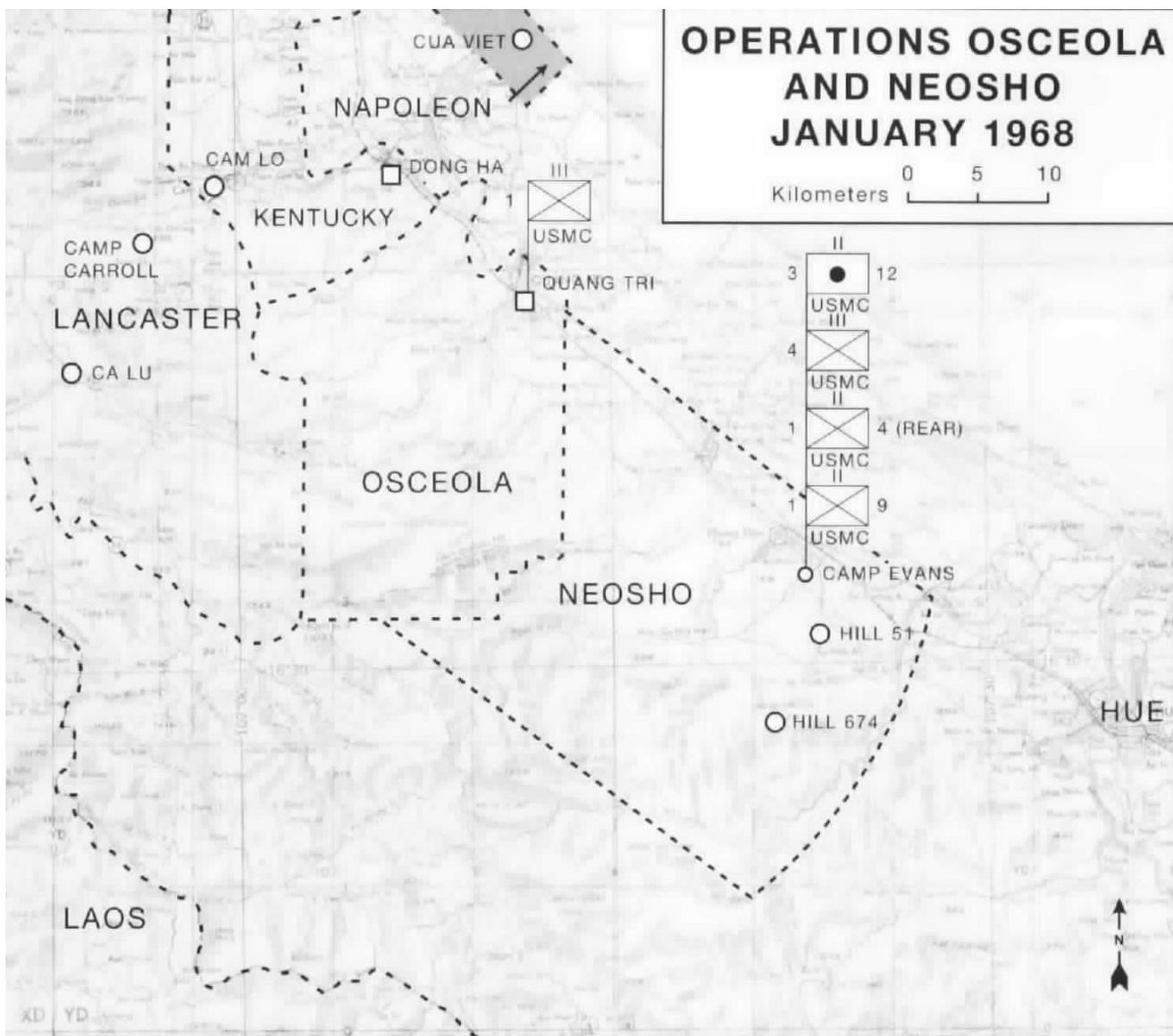
http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_Kentucky

Operation Lancaster. Tanks of "B" Company participated in this operation in the Camp Carroll-Rockpile areas in support of the 2d and 3d Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment. Support included firing 90mm HE H&I fires and providing escorts for seven convoys from Them Son Lam to Cau Lu. On 13 January the convoy was ambushed by an estimated reinforced NVA Company. The tanks fired 90mm HE and cannister and 30 and 50 caliber machine guns at ambush positions with unknown results. On 24 January two tanks from Camp Carroll went out as part of a reaction force to assist a company which had been ambushed on Route #9. The reaction force was also ambushed and the tanks suffered one KIA and one WIA. Tank B42 was hit by an RPG and evacuated to Dong Ha where it was repaired and returned to service.

Operation Scotland. Company "A", 3d Anti-Tank Battalion and the 3d Platoon of Company "B" supported the 26th Marine Regiment in this operation in the Khe Sanh area. Tank 90mm fire at enemy mortar positions resulted in one secondary explosion.

<http://warandtactics.com/smf/vietnam-war/operation-scotland-vietnam-1967-1968/>

Operation Neosho. Tanks of Company "C" fired 90mm H&I fires in support of the 1st Battalion, 9th Marine Regiment during the operation in the Phong Dion Area.



Operation Napoleon. Two tanks of Company "C" participated in this operation in support of the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion. The tanks fired machine guns at observed enemy movement and on 19 January participated as part of a reaction force to engage an enemy unit. The tanks fired 90mm HE, cannister and WP as well as 30 and 50 caliber machine guns accounting for 17 KIA (confirmed).

On 25 January Company "C" less two tanks at Cua Viet and one platoon at A-3, displaced from Camp Evans. The Company was to move to Quang Tri. While enroute down the Cua Viet River on LCU's the tanks came under small arms and recoilless rifle fire. The tanks returned fire with 50 caliber machine guns with unknown results. Upon arrival in Dong Ha these tanks were diverted to the "A" Company Command Post and are now operating out of that position.

During the period 26 to 31 January tank actions were varied and wide spread.

On 26 January tanks of Company "A" went on a sweep with elements of the 2d Battalion, 1st Marine Regiment. The sweep made no contact.

On 27 January tanks of the 2d and 3d Platoons of "A" Company fired 90mm HE H&I fires and 90mm HE at suspected enemy positions. The 1st Platoon of "C" Company participated in a cordon and search operation with elements of the 1st Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. The search covered a previous NVA ambush site and yielded documents and blood stained clothing.

On 28 January C11 hit a mine while operating in the Cam Lo area. The crew suffered one WIA (non med-evac) and the tank suffered suspension system damage. Tanks of the 2d platoon, Company "C" fired 90mm HE at suspected enemy positions.

On 29 January a Company "C" tank fired at enemy positions near the Washout and destroyed one bunker.

On 30 January Company "C" tanks fired at enemy positions around the Washout and destroyed one bunker and one enemy flag and caused one secondary explosion. "A" Company tanks fired at suspected enemy positions with unknown results. A composite platoon from "B" and "C" Companies commanded by the "A" Company Executive Officer conducted a sweep on Route #9 from Dong Ha with elements of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. The tanks fired at suspected positions with unknown results.

On 31 January tanks of "A" Company at the Gio Linh and Washout positions fired 90mm HE at suspected enemy locations with unknown results. The Composite Platoon from "B" and "C" Companies went on a road sweep with elements of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marine Regiment. The tanks received 60mm mortar, recoilless rifle and small arms fire. C31 and B24 fired a total of 28 90mm HE at enemy positions resulting in two KIA (confirmed).

Several weapons were also captured. At 0800 on 31 January the gun tanks from Battalion Headquarters and two flame tanks departed the Battalion Command Post enroute to Dong Ha via Hue. On Route #1 the unit was advised of heavy enemy activity toward Hue. The unit continued on and linked up with an infantry company also moving toward the city. In the vicinity of (YD 7821) the tanks and infantry encounter another infantry unit which was engaged with the enemy. The combined force fought its way into the southern portion of the city in an effort to reach the LCU ramp. While enroute the unit was ordered to relieve the MACV Compound in Hue which was under siege. After eight hours of house to house street fighting the unit entered the MACV Compound and joined in its defense.

The locations of the gun companies on 31 January was as follows:

- Company "A" (Rein) Dong Ha
- Company "B" (-) (Rein) Camp Carroll
- Company "C" Dong Ha (Company rear at Quang Tri)
- Company "A", 3d AT Bn. Khe Sanh

The Battalion Reconnaissance Squad continued its activity around the Battalion Command Post until 30 January. There were no contacts.

On 30 January 130 men from Headquarters and Service Company were joined into a Provisional Rifle Company and assigned to Quang Tri for defense of the cantonment which is under construction.

At 0400 on 31 January the Battalion Command Post underwent a mortar and rocket attack. No casualties were taken.

On 31 January the Battalion Commander displaced and established a tactical Command Post at Dong Ha.

H&S Company C.O.: 2ndLt J.E. Georgaklis

Location & Operations Summary: Phu Bai

HQ CP security, active patrolling, ambushes, and Reaction Force.

C.O.s Company "A": Capt's G.W. Baker & O.L. Sale

Location & Operations Summary: Dong Ha

2 January 1968 Tanks of the 3d platoon "A" company fired 3 HE direct at observed enemy movement resulting in 1 (confirmed NVA) KIA.

C.O.s Company "B": Capt's D.W. Kent & C.W. Reinke

Location & Operations Summary: Camp J.J. Carroll

24 Jan 1968 Two tanks of Bravo Company sent out on reaction force to assist ambushed USMC convoy. Reaction force ambushed. B42 took RPG round hit .50 cal machine gun resulting in one crewman KIA and one WIA (evac).



CHRISTENSEN, HARRY C.

Synopsis:

The President of the United States takes pleasure in presenting the Silver Star Medal to Harry C. Christensen, Corporal, U.S. Marine Corps, for conspicuous gallantry and intrepidity in action while serving with Company B, 3d Tank Battalion, 3d Marine Division (Rein.), FMF, in connection with combat operations against the enemy in the Republic of Vietnam on **January 24, 1968**. By his courage, aggressive fighting spirit and steadfast devotion to duty in the face of extreme personal danger, Corporal Christensen upheld the highest traditions of the Marine Corps and the United States Naval Service.

Home Town: Marblehead, Massachusetts

C.O. Company "C": Capt W.J. O'Buch

Location & Operations Summary: Camp Evans & Quang Tri

The tank platoon for BLT 3/1, 9th MAB, was "chopped" to this battalion and redesignated as the 3d Platoon, Company "C". This platoon contained the following items: five M48A2 tanks, one M54 truck, one M39A1 utility truck, one M105A2 trailer and one M100 trailer. This platoon had no Xenon search lights or FM radio and only two modified commander's cupolas.

1 Jan 1968 On 31 Dec 1967, between 1730 and 1755, tanks of "C" Company fired 20 HE indirect H&I fire, with unknown results.

5 Jan 1968 Five M48A3 tanks joined from 9th MAB SLF 1/3. This platoon has been redesignated as the 3d Platoon, Company "C".

8 Jan 1968 Tanks of Company "C" fired 45 HE, H&I fire indirect, w/unknown results.

Note:

25 Jan 1968 Five M48A3's and one M51 VTR embarked aboard LCU's at Hue Ramp for movement to Dong Ha. Tanks of the 2d Platoon Company "B" fired 40 canister, 12 HE, 1250 cal .30, 20 cal.50 and a 40 second rod of flames recon by fire for security for convoy. Tanks of the 3d Platoon Company "A" fired 37 HE H&I fire indirect, w/unknown results. Tanks of Company "C" on LCU's received small arms and recoilless rifle fire on Cua Viet River. Tanks returned 25 rounds .50 cal w/negative results. Two tanks from Company "B" on reaction force from Camp Carroll. Reaction force ambushed B42 took RPG hit. Friendly casualties 1 KIA and 1 WIA.

January 1969

Third Tanks

Commanding Officer: LtCol G.E. Hayward

Executive Officer: Maj J.P. Souders

Operations Officer: Maj W.A. Grubbs

Logistics Officer: Maj W.A. Grubbs

Location & Operations Summary: Quang Tri

During the month of January the Battalion participated in operations in the Kentucky, Mai Loc, and Scotland II Operational Areas.

During the month the Battalion continued with its support of 3d Marine Division by providing armored patrols, road security, manning static positions and employed both direct and indirect fire in support of infantry operation. On 1 January 1969, the 1st Platoon (Rein), Co. A, 5th Tank Bn and the 2nd Platoon (Rein), Co. A, 5th AT Bn command, less OPCON, was passed from 3d Tank Battalion to CG 9th MAB. On 29 January 1969, OPCON was passed from 3d Tank Battalion to BLT 2.26 and the units physically departed.

The tank Battalion (Rein) at the present time is in direct support of Task Force Bravo. Subordinate units are as follows:

Company A	G/S Task Force Hotel
Company B	D/S 2nd Bn 3d Marines
Company C	D/S Task Force Bravo
1 Platoon Co. C	D/S Task Force Hotel

2 Platoons Ontos D/S Task Force Hotel
1 Platoon Ontos G/S Task Force Bravo

H&S Company C.O.: Capt J.A. Rumbley
Location & Operations Summary: Quang Tri

C.O. Company "A" (Rein): Capt R.J. Patterson
Location & Operations Summary:

Company A (Rein) continued in direct support of 2/3 for the first three weeks of January. On 27 January, Company A was placed in general support of Task Force Hotel. Company A, operating out of Con Thien, conducted daily road sweeps, armored sweeps of the area around Con Thien and manned counter ambush sites along the MSR between Con Thien and C2. In addition, Company A continued its indirect fire role from the vicinity of Con Thien and C2 areas.

C.O. Company "B": Capt J.T. Miller
Location & Operations Summary:

Company B (Rein) remaining in direct support of 2/3 and operating out of Camp Vinh Dai, participated in numerous combat sweeps in the Cua Valley and Cam Lo areas. The company also continued to provide daily armored patrols, road sweeps, and road security patrols in addition to manning defensive positions.

C.O. Company "C": Capt L.C. Kutchma
Location & Operations Summary:

Company C (Rein) remains in general support of the Task Force Bravo and continues to operate out of Quang Tri Combat Base. Company C has taken part in recon insertions and extractions in the Quang Tri Combat Base AO. Other activities include manning counter ambush sites and defensive positions along the MSR between C2 and C2B. During the month Company C also assumed the responsibility for providing armored road security at night between Quang Tri and Dong Ha Combat Bases on route #1. The Company also maintained an armored reaction force at the Quang Tri Combat Base.

The 3d Platoon was placed in direct support of Task Force Hotel and conducted daily road sweeps as well manning static positions in the Ca Lu area.

C.O. Company "A, 3rd AT's": 1stLts S.B. Hunt, Jr.
Location & Operations Summary:

Company A 3d Anti-Tank Battalion. The company CP remains at Quang Tri Combat Base. One Platoon remains in general support of Task Force Bravo at Dong Ha and two Platoons in direct support of Task Force Hotel at Vandegrift Combat Base and Ca Lu.

January 1966
Third Antitanks

Note: The 112 page Command Chronology for this period is in disarray - missing is the chain of command and staff officer assignments. Repeated here is the same as November's personnel.

Commanding Officer: LtCol B.H. Heflin

Executive Officer: Maj O.R. Edmondson

Operations Officer: Capt R.F. Lanphier

Logistics Officer: Capt S.R Stewart

Location & Operations Summary: (Da Nang TAOR)

(1) 3d Antitank Bn (-) (Rein) is in general support of the 3d Marine Division.

- (a) H&S (-) (Bn CP) located DaNang TAOR (AT 987711)
- (b) Company "A" (-) (Rein) in direct support of the 3d Marine Regiment
 - 1st Platoon Co "A" in direct support of the 1st Battalion, 1st Marines
 - 1st Platoon Co "A" 1st ATBn in direct support of the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines
 - 2nd Platoon Co "A" 1st ATBn attached to the 2nd Battalion, 1st Marines
- (c) Company "B" (-) (Rein) attached to the 4th Marine Regiment.
 - 1st Platoon Co. "B" in direct support of the 1st Battalion, 4th Marines
 - 2nd Platoon Co. "B" in direct support of the 2nd Battalion, 4th Marines
- (d) Company "C" (Rein) in direct support of the 9th Marine Regiment
 - 1st Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 2nd Bn., 9th Marines
 - 2nd Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 1st Bn., 9th Marines
 - 3d Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 9th Marines
 - 3d Platoon Co. "B" in direct support of the 3d Bn., 3d Marines
- (e) Company "C" (Rein) 1st Antitank Bn. attached to the 7th Marines.
 - 1st Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines
 - 2nd Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 2nd Battalion, 7th Marines
 - 3d Platoon Co. "C" in direct support of the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines

C.O. H&S Company: 1stLt J.T Mathews

Location & Operations Summary: (Da Nang TAOR)

H&S Co (-) During the reporting period the rebuilding program security was accelerated. Two bunkers were completely rebuilt and the communications bunker was completed. A Command Bunker was started and over 2/3 completed. A vigorous program of patrolling our assigned patrol area was conducted. In the month of January, two reinforced squad, ten squad, and 12 fire team sized patrols

worked the area. Three fire team sized night ambushes were conducted in selected sites within out patrol area of responsibility. All patrols resulted in negative reports, except on 2 Jan66 when one Vietnamese female was detained due to lack of adequate identification. She was subsequently released when identified at the Hoa Cam Training Center. On 21 Jan66 special security patrol was employed when the Bn. Civic Action Team visited all homes within the Bn. area to give individual gifts for TET. On 29Jan66 the Bn's. reaction platoon was committed in defense of Marble Mountain complex. Key members of the Bn. reaction platoon attended the 3d Engineers Bn's. course "C" class on "Land Mine Warfare, VC Mine and Booby Traps and Demolition Training". A FIREX utilizing the M-72 LAAW was conducted by the reaction platoon at the Hoa Cam Training Center. On 7 Jan66 the Bn. was visited by Gen. W.M. GREENE Jr., MajGen. L.W. WALT and party. On 20 Jan66 Mr. Charlton HESTON visited the Bn. CP area. On 7 and 21 Jan66 two Red Cross girls visited the Bn. Enlisted Men's club and conducted audience participation games.

C.O. Company "A"(-)(Rein): Capt K.E. Sharff

Location & Operations Summary: (Phu Bai TAOR)

Company "A" (-)(Rein) Continued in direct support of the 3d Marine Regiment. The 1st Plt in direct support of the 1st Bn. 1st Marines, maintained their defensive posture providing one ONTOS to Co "B" CP (AT 921692) and one ONTOS to the Bn. CP for security. The heavy section maintained its state of readiness as part of the reaction force. The 1st Plt Co "A" 1st AT Bn. in direct support of the 1st Bn. 3d Marines, with a light section positioned at Co "D" CP and the heavy section at the 1st Bn. 3d Marines CP. On 9 Jan66 a light section escorted an engineer road reconnaissance patrol west along highway #14 to (AT 803846) with no major problems encountered. On the 29th and 30th of January a reconnaissance was conducted in the western areas of responsibility to determine suitable firing positions for long range direct fire support.

C.O. Company "B"(-)(Rein): 1stLt M.H. Chang

Location & Operations Summary: (Phu Bai TAOR)

Company "B" (-)(Rein) Attached to the 4th Marine Regiment until the 20th of January, when the 1st Marine Regiment assumed control. With the 2nd Bn. 4th Marines participating in **Operation DOUBLE EAGLE** the company realigned the platoons' defensive positions to insure maximum coverage, by fire, of probable avenues of approach and key terrain features. The 1st Plt in direct support of the 1st Bn 4th Marines maintained defensive positions along the MLR. On 18 Jan66, the platoon conducted a direct fire H&I mission on an island at GS (BT 5214) expending 90 rounds of 106mm. The 2nd Plt in direct support of the 2nd Bn 4th Marines maintained defensive positions along the MLR. On 2 Jan66 the platoon provided escort for Co "G" and "E" and a light section provided escort for Co "G" on 11 Jan66.

The platoon participated in direct fire H&I mission on 11 Jan66 expending 83 rounds of 106mm. On 16 Jan66 a heavy section supported Co "G" at (BT 513059) in an attack of VC. On the 26th of Jan66 the platoon came under the control of the 1st Bn 4th Marines.

C.O. Company "C"(Rein): 1stLt A.J. Anderson & Capt F. Firing

Location & Operations Summary: (Phu Bai TAOR)

Company "C" (Rein) continued in direct support of the 9th Marine Regiment. The 1st Plt remained in direct support of the 2nd Bn. 9th Marines. On 4 Jan66 one section was dispatched to reinforce a patrol receiving heavy small arms fire. A total of 250 .30 Cal machine gun rounds were fired resulting in one VC KIA (Possible). The platoon moved to hill 55 (AT 971620) on 15 Jan66 where they emplaced and fired for registration. Escort was provided on 17 Jan66 for a sweep of Chau Son (3) (AT 950606) and Chau Son (2) (AT 945605). The platoon supported a sweep of Bo Mung (BT 027649) directing 250 rounds of .30 Cal machine gun fire at suspected VC positions with unconfirmed results. ON 29 Jan66 the platoon reinforced by the 3d platoon supported **operation WAR BONNET II**.

C.O. Company "C"(Rein) 1st ATBn: Capt C.F. Snyder

Location & Operations Summary: (Phu Bai TAOR)

Company "C" (Rein) 1st ATBn. remained attached to the 7th Marine Regiment. The 1st Plt in direct support of the 1st Bn. 7th Marines continued to man defensive positions along the MLR. ONTOS/Infantry patrols were conducted almost daily behind the MLR. The 2nd Plt in direct support of the 2nd Bn 7th Marines continued to man defensive positions along the MLR. On 15 Jan66 the heavy section escorted a convoy to (BS 562894) southwest of BUNH SON, where they assumed a defensive posture until the 18th of Jan66 when they escorted the convoy's return to Chu Lai. The 3d Plt in direct support of the 3d Bn 7th Marines continued to man defensive positions along the MLR. On 24 Jan66 a light section escorted a convoy from Chu Lai to the military compound at QUANG NGAI and returned the same day.

January 1967

Third Antitanks

Commanding Officer: LtCol C.R. Casey

Executive Officer: Maj C.R. Stiffler

Operations Officer: 1stLt A.W. Hoof & Capt J.S. Sucha

Logistics Officers: Capt D.C. Satcher

Location: (Da Nang TAOR)

C.O. H&S Company: 2dLt C.P. Wager

Location & Operations Summary: (Da Nang TAOR)

H&S Company. The company remained in the Battalion command post (AT 989711) throughout the month and provided personnel for the command post security and reaction force; a commitment which utilized an average of 35% of the available personnel each day.

During the month of January, the reaction platoon conducted thirty-seven (37) night patrol/ambushes. These patrols netted four (4) detainees who were interrogated and subsequently escorted to the III MAF PW Compound for classification. An additional row of single apron tactical wire, coupled with three (3) strands of concertina was placed around the Battalion perimeter outside the present tactical wire. Construction of tanglefoot wire between the two (2) rows of tactical wire is in process and approximately 50% completed. Bunker four (4) and five (5) were reinforced and water proofed. The entire perimeter was sprayed with a mixture of defoliator/diesel fuel after an extensive brush/weed cutting project was completed.

C.O. Company "A": Capt R. Hastings

Location & Operations Summary: (Da Nang TAOR)

Company "A". The Company remained in direct support of the 3d Marine Regiment throughout the month. The Company CP was located at Camp J.J. Carroll (YD 063543). A total of 6 direct fire missions were fired expending 31 rounds of 106mm HEP-T and an additional 447 rounds of HEP-T were fired as H&I fire. Results of all fire missions were undetermined. The 1st Platoon remained with the Company CP at Camp J.J. Carroll as a reaction force. The Platoon commenced preparation for rotation out of the country with BLT 1/3. The heavy section of the 2nd platoon provided direct support for the L/3/3 (XD 975567). The light section of the second platoon remained in the Company CP until 25 January performing preventative maintenance and providing security for Camp J.J. Carroll. On 25 January the light section moved to (XD 982544) to provide perimeter security for 3/3's CP. The heavy section of the 3d platoon provided direct support for E/2/3 (YD 096518) from 1-10 January. During this period they participated as part of a blocking force for a County Fair held at (YD 098525) on 7 January. The heavy section returned to the Company CP on 10 January to provide direct support for the 3d Marines. On the 18th, 19th, and 20th of January this section conducted resupply runs and route reconnaissance from KHE GIO bridge (YD 026561) along route #9 to L/3/3's position (XD 975567). On 24 January the heavy section moved to B/1/12's position (YD 061572) for a period of 3 days returning to the Company CP on 27 January. The light section of the 3d platoon provided security of the KHE GIO Bridge in direct support of E/2/3 during the month. Daily route reconnaissance patrols were made along route #9 to Cam Lo (YD 116582). Negative contact was made.

C.O. Company "B": Capt S.L. Canby

Location & Operations Summary: (Phu Bai TAOR)

Company "B". The Company (-) remained in direct support of the 4th Marines on **Operation Chinook** throughout the month. The Company CP (fwd) was located with the 4th Marines at (YD 530315). The rear CP remained at Phu Bai (YD 894143). A total of 11 direct fire missions utilizing 327 rounds of 106mm HEP-T and a total of 29 H&I

missions utilizing 272 rounds of 106mm HEP-T were fired during the month. The 1st platoon (YD 509349) provided direct support for 2/26 from 1-15 January. From 15-20 January they were in support of 3/26 (YD 515317). From 20-31 January the 1st platoon supported M/3/26 (YD 500307). Missions assigned over this period included CP security, resupply, and mechanized patrols. H&I and direct fire missions were undertaken resulting in numerous huts and structures destroyed. The second platoon maintained a heavy section in the Phu Loc area supporting G/2/26 (ZD 129011); and the light section remained with the Company CP (fwd) at (YD 531315). The heavy section conducted patrols and provided security for G/2/26. They fired H&I missions with unknown results. On 7 January this section participated in a Vietnamese Anniversary Parade for RVN units at Hue. On 19 January the heavy section returned to the Phu Bai Vital area in support of 2/9 (YD 894143). The light section, on **Operation Chinook**, conducted sweeps and patrols, provided CP security and fired direct and H&I missions in support of the operation. The third platoon provided CP security for 3/26 throughout the month. They also conducted motorized patrols and sweeps. Both direct and H&I missions were fired. Direct fire missions resulted in 5 structures destroyed; results of H&I missions were unknown.
<http://1stbn4thmarines.net/operations/history-folder/chinook.htm>

C.O. Company "C"(Rein): Capt S.T. Flynn
Location & Operations Summary: (Da Nang TAOR)
No report

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