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HEADQUARTERS  
1st Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (MMA), FMF  
APO San Francisco 96602

3/DLK/dhs  
10 Sep 69  
SerNo 00188-69  
Copy of Copies

From: Commanding Officer  
To: Commandant of Marine Corps (Code 4011)  
Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division  
(2) Commanding General, III MAF

Subj: Command Chronology for period 1-31 August 1969

Ref: (a) MDO P5750.1B  
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8  
(c) DivO 5750.1C

Encl: (1) Subject Command Chronology

1. In accordance with the provisions of reference (a), (b), and (c) enclosure (1) is submitted.

2. Downgrade at 3 years intervals, declassified after 12 years, DOD Directive 5200.10.

*[Handwritten signature]*  
30 Sep 69

ESTBN/3RD MAR

CMD CHRON

1st Bn, 3d Mar S & C No. 00188-69  
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AUG 1969

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HEADQUARTERS  
1st Battalion, 3d Marines  
3d Marine Division (Rein), MFC  
APO San Francisco 96302

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

7 August to 31 August 1969

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Enclosure (1)

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## PART I

## ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

<u>1. DESIGNATION</u>	<u>COMMANDERS</u>	<u>DATES</u>
1st Battalion, 3d Marines	1st Col D. G. HERRON	(1-31 Aug 69)

SUBORDINATE UNITS

H&SCo	1st Lt J. C. SANBORN	(1-31 Aug 69)
CoA	Capt J. M. MCADAMS	(1-31 Aug 69)
CoB	Capt G. H. SAMPSON	(1-27 Aug 69)
	1st Lt A. G. CHESSON	(28-31 Aug 69)
CoC	Capt G. E. CARLSON	(1-19 Aug 69)
	1st Lt T. K. SHAW	(20-31 Aug 69)
CoD	Capt J. E. GROFF JR	(1-31 Aug 69)

ATTACHED UNITS

Plt (-) 3d Engr	Det Sniper Plt, 3d Mar
HST CoA, 3d SF	Det Interpreters, ARVIN Lys, 3d Mar
Det Dog Team, 3d MF Bn	Det KOS, KOS Ctr

2. LOCATION

1-31 August: Idaho Canyon AO Quang Tri Province, CamLo District, RVN

3. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer	Maj W. R. ETTYRE	(1-31 Aug 69)
S-1	1st Lt P. CHAVEZ	(1-31 Aug 69)
S-2	1st Lt G. D. COOK JR	(1-4 Aug 69)
	1st Lt J. W. HART	(5-28 Aug 69)
	CySgt A. O. VAILLENCOURT	(29-31 Aug 69)
S-3	Maj G. R. WELSH	(1-31 Aug 69)
S-4	Capt T. H. GUERIN JR	(1-31 Aug 69)
S-5	1st Lt J. J. ROLAND JR	(1-10 Aug 69)
	2nd Lt J. P. MYERS	(11-31 Aug 69)

4. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

USMC		USN	
OFF	ENL	OFF	ENL
34	1138	3	47

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## PART II

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## NARRATIVE SUMMARY

1. Overview of all Activities. Throughout the month of August, 1st Battalion, 3d Marines continued search and destroy operations in the Mutter's Edge/Helicopter Valley complex and provided security for that portion of Route #9 within the assigned area of operations. These primary missions and other actions assigned were accomplished in support of the 3d Marine Regiment operation "Idaho Canyon."

2. Missions Assigned

Commencing 28 July realign forces to maintain a minimum of two companies in a search and destroy role along 1/11's southern boundary with emphasis on the Cam Hung area. Continue to provide security for FSB Fuller and Khe Gio Bridge. Continue to provide security for Route #9 in AO with 100% day and night surveillance on unpaved portion. Provide security for road construction from the Khe Gio Bridge west in the AO. Provide security for road sweeps emanating from Khe Gio Bridge.

Ref: Regt OpnO 8-69 (Idaho Canyon)

Continue assigned missions in AO. Conduct S/D operations with special emphasis on Dong Ma, Dong Kio, About Cao hill complex. Be prepared about 4 Aug to send one company to Qua Viet for R&R.

Ref: Regt FragO 95-69 of 1 Aug 69

Conduct extensive, deliberate and thorough combat patrolling in assigned AO to find, fix and destroy the enemy and gather intelligence information. With one company (-), continue to search in vicinity XD 990600. Continue to provide normal security for fixed positions and Route #9 in AO.

Regt: FragO 99-69 of 18 Aug 69

Continue previously assigned missions. On 25 Aug, with one company, commence search and destroy operations in NE portion of AO in area bounded by coordinates: Upper Left XD J362 and Lower Right YD0859.

Regt: FragO 100-69 of 23 Aug 69

3. Intelligence.

The month of August evidenced a moderate buildup of enemy forces within and adjacent to the 1/3 AO. In the preceding two months, sightings of enemy were usually no larger than groups of 10-15, and

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these groups generally tended to avoid contact. During August, sightings were made; the sightings by Company B on 17-18 August of a total of approximately 300 NVA in the vicinity of YD 996601, being most noteworthy. Additionally, the enemy displayed an increasing tendency to attack, as evidenced by contacts made by 2nd Battalion in the adjacent AO, and the probe of Company G position the morning of 28 August. Intelligence information from higher headquarters continued to indicate a buildup of enemy forces north of the 6th ceasing line, beyond which friendly ground units were not permitted to penetrate. Results of all contacts indicated that enemy forces encountered were fresh troops, equipped with new weapons and equipment, and adept at cover, concealment, and night movement.

#### 4. Operations

During the first six days of the month, northernmost elements of the battalion served as highly effective mobile blocking forces in support of 2nd Battalion, 3d Marines and the 1st Battalion, 11th Regiment (Mechanized), USA, conducting search and destroy operations laterally to the north of the battalion AO. This period was characterized by a high degree of coordination by all participating organizations and culminated in a significant tactical success.

On 6 August Company A was placed on one-hour alert for possible commitment in support of 2nd Battalion, 3d Marines, operating on the left (western) flank of this battalion. The next day, the 2nd platoon, Company A was chopped to operational control of 2nd Battalion, 3d Marines and committed to reinforcement of Company F of that battalion. On 10 August, the remainder of Company A was also passed to operational control of 2nd Battalion, 3d Marines and subsequently committed to reinforcement of Company G. Until its return to its parent battalion on 13 August, Company A made a noteworthy contribution to the exploitation and reorganization phases of a significant contact initiated by 2nd Battalion, 3d Marines.

During the latter part of August, sightings and contacts were made with larger groups of NVA than had been made within the last two months. On 17 August, Company B observed approximately 200 NVA in the vicinity of YD 996601 from a distance of about 1500 meters. Artillery fire was initial rounds on target. The target area was saturated with approximately 2000 rounds of artillery, 12 flights of fixed wing, gunships, and Spooky. Many casualties were observed, but due to the extreme density of the terrain, by the time friendly forces entered the target area, only 9 bodies were found. Due to the extreme accuracy and timeliness of supporting arms, it is believed that a great number of NVA casualties were sustained, but evacuated from the area prior to the arrival of friendly forces. This belief is substantiated by the number of blood trails and the amount of bloodstained enemy equipment in the area.

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Sightings of larger groups of NVA continued throughout the remainder of the month. On 13 August, elements of Company C sprung an ambush accounting for 10 NVA KIA. On 23 August, a Company B night defensive position was probed by an estimated NVA platoon in the vicinity of YD 019629. This action netted six confirmed NVA KIA and six probable KIA, as the company perimeter was not breached and the attack was repulsed.

Throughout the month of August while aggressively conducting search and destroy operations in the northern portion of the assigned AO, the battalion continued to provide security for that portion of Route #9 within the AO, effectively preventing the interdiction of this vital line of communication. Operations throughout the month were extremely successful, with the optimum coordination of supporting arms and ground maneuver units resulting in a total of 54 NVA KIA, while sustaining five USMC KIA.

### 5. Results of Operations

#### a. Casualties inflicted on the enemy.

<u>KIA</u>	<u>POW</u>
54	0

#### b. Casualties sustained.

<u>KIA</u>	<u>MIA</u>
5	23

#### c. Equipment, ordnance and supplies captured.

<u>Equipment</u>	<u>Ordnance</u>	<u>Supplies</u>
20 AK-47 Magazines	7 M-26 Frag Grenades	15 lbs Rice
2 Pickes	24 Chi Com Grenades	1 PR-25 radio Battery
6 NVA packs	6 82 mm rds	
4 Panshos	79 50 Cal. rds.	
4 Hammocks	4 RPG (B-40) rds	
2 Helmets	9 AK-47 Assault Rifles	
1 Combination Tool	6 Chi Com Claymores	
1 Cartridge Belt	3 RPG Launchers	
1 Messcan	12 Blasting caps	
9 NVA Uniforms	4lbs C3	
1 NVA I. D. Card		
1 NVA Metal I. D. Tag		
1 Fieldglasses		
1 Corpsman's pack		

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6. Supporting Arms.a. Air.

(1) The total sorties flown for the month of August was as follows:

Aerial Observers (AO)	70
Gunships	23
Fixed Wing	32
RFQ Flights	6
Beacon Flights	2
Command and Control	353
MedEvac	44
Resupply **	447

\*\* this number includes 270 for Battery A, L/12, PSB Fuller.

(2) With 44 MedEvac sorties during the month 82 troops were extracted from the field requiring medical attention. Response to MedEvac calls were prompt under all conditions and could be depended upon for pickup within 30 minutes of original call. During Bravo Company's enemy contact during the predawn of 27 August the MedEvac Helicopters attempted several times to land on LZ, only to be forced off by enemy RPG Rounds. Later in the morning after fire had been suppressed by gunships and fixed wing flights one helicopter extracted the Company's 3 KIA and 9 MIA out of the rear wheels only LZ.

(3) There were three instances of intensive use of coordinated Air and Artillery. On 17 August Bravo Company spotted over 200 NVA moving in a valley. During the next nine hours the area was hit without let up with Air and Artillery. Aerial observers, gunships, flareships and 12 flights of fixed wing were used in the area.

(4) On 18 August 37 more NVA were spotted and another coordinated effort was commenced. Although an exact body count wasn't possible. Indications are that the NVA suffered heavy casualties on both nights.

(5) During Bravo Company's contact on 27 August aerial observers, gunships, fixed wing and the medevac birds were used in coordination with intensive artillery.

(6) Due to the investigations into Beacon incidents Beacon Hops had been discontinued and didn't resume until 28 August. This is the reason for the low number of Beacon sorties for the month of August.

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b. Artillery

(1) Different types and number of missions

RAF	387
Special Fires	577
Observed	557
Night Defensive Fires	145
Preparation	37
Patrol Route Preparation	37

(2) Number and types of ammunition.

HE	23,796
ILLUM	191
MP	1,614
BC	320
CS	21
Total	25,942

(7) Personnel and Administration

a. Personnel

(1) Administrative Gains

	USMC			USN	
OFF	ENL		OFF	ENL	
5	179		1	4	

(2) Administrative Losses

	USMC			USN	
OFF	ENL		OFF	ENL	
10	160		0	8	

b. Administration. The usual administrative problems were encountered during this time, however, overall administration was considered to be satisfactory. Administrative Chief went on emergency leave on 5 Aug 1969 and has requested humanitarian transfer. No replacement has been provided.

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**DECLASSIFIED****(1) Promotions Effected**

1 Gunnery Sergeant  
 2 Sergeant  
 44 Corporal  
 30 Lance Corporal  
 9 Private First Class

**(2) Awards Recommended**

1 Navy Cross  
 3 Silver Star  
 9 Bronze Star  
 15 Navy Achievement  
 12 Purple Heart  
 3 Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry

**(3) Awards Presented**

3 Silver Star  
 10 Bronze Star  
 9 Navy Commendation  
 10 Navy Achievement  
 16 Purple Heart

9. Postal. Considered to be satisfactory although at times the delivery rate has been very slow.

8. Training. During the month nine (9) In-country Troop Indoctrination sessions were conducted and a total of 181 men attended. The following schools were attended by members of this Battalion.

Infantry Weapons Repair	1
NCO School	3
Staff NCO School	2
Land Mine	4
Registered Publications Systems	1
Vietnamese Language	1
III MFL Form, Projectionst Course	1

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## PART III

CHRONOLOGICAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

At approx 011045H Aug, in vic YD 081614, Company C discovered 5 NVA bodies, 2 to 5 days old, killed by artillery.

In the vic of YD 068552, at approx 011330H Aug, a squad patrol from Company D found one M26 grenade, two claymore firing devices (new), and 1 fighting hole about 1 foot deep and freshly dug. Destroyed the grenade, and brought the firing devices back to Company position.

A squad from Company D, at approx 011710H Aug in vic of YD 066594 found 3 old bunkers (L-A Frame type). Bunkers dug in under rocks, supported by timbers. Bunkers were destroyed.

Company C at approx 021943H Aug in vic found one NVA body, approx two weeks old killed by Napalm.

At approx 031500H Aug in vic of YD 069614, a platoon of Company C found 12 living type A-frame bunkers, non-supporting. They were well camouflaged and recently used. One tree O.P. was in the area. Destroyed all bunkers and the tree O.P.

An ambush from Company D in vic of YD 065573, at approx 032015H Aug observed 10-15 enemy running north at vic YD 062577. Fired 81mm and 60 mm mortar with negative results.

Major General WHEELER Dep CG, XXIV Corps visited USB Fuller during the period 1030-1100 on 5 August 69.

Company C departed for R&R at Cua Viet on 5 Aug 69

At approx 061300H Aug in vic of YD 060586 a patrol of Company D found and destroyed one enemy bunker (3-4 month old) and six buried 82mm mortar rds. Recovered in area one U.S. protective mask, and one U.S. web belt. Trails in area not used recently.

At approx 072030H Aug a squad ambush of Company D, vic YD 055608, observed a string of lights moving down ridge in a southwesterly direction in vic of YD 047609. Mission fired by 4.2 mortars, extinguishing four lights.

On 7 Aug, 2nd platoon, Company A was chopped 0700H to 2nd Battalion Third Marines. Company A (-) placed on three-hour alert status for helilift to 2/3 AO.

Patrol from Company D, at approx 081515H Aug in vic of YD 057600 found four bunkers, and three rotten NVA uniforms; bunkers blown with uniforms inside.

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Company C returned to Battalion AO on 10 August 1969 from RTR at Cua Viet. Company D, at approx 091000H Aug, in vic of YD 045505, found one grave with two bodies. Searched area, negative results.

At approx 091500H Aug, in vic YD 045509, a patrol from Company D found 35 to 40 bunkers and one box of 79 rds of 50 cal ammo. Rounds were approx 7 1/2" in length with black tips and red ring just below tip. Searched area, finding cooking utensils and NVA 782 gear. All destroyed except one (1) round of ammo being kept for identification.

Company C, in vic of YD 017504, at approx 101040H Aug, found 2 NVA battle dressings on a recently used trail that ran northeast to southwest.

Company A (-) chopped 0830N to Second Battalion, Third Marines at 100821H Aug 69.

A Company D ambush located in vic of YD 062573 at approx 102130H Aug, received one explosive device outside its position believed to be grenade or TIC block. Returned S/A fire, called 60 and 01mm mortar illumination and searched area. Discovered one NVA KIA, with many M16 rounds in head, chest and right hip. Body had a fresh haircut, wearing a plain green uniform. No weapon or equipment found, during darkness. Search of area at first light resulted in one pair field binoculars, one NVA I.D. card, one COMCOM grenade, set of green utilities and bush cover. Grenade destroyed, other equipment retrograded.

Company C at approx 121430H Aug, in vic YD 004597, found one complete skeleton approx 6 months or older and one NVA sandal.

Company A chopped 0830N to First Battalion, Third Marines on 13 Aug 69, relieving Company B at Khe Gio Bridge

Ambush from Company A, at approx 162100H Aug, in vic of YD 017563, observed five enemy approaching from the northeast, vic YD 010566. Enemy trip flare and was taken under fire with M-60, 106MM and M-79. Area illuminated and search made, finding one foot in tennis shoe.

An element of Company A at approx 170915H Aug, in vic YD 010570, found three U.S. air to ground rockets (minus warheads); also found a trail going generally north which appeared recently used.

At approx 171435H Aug, an Air Observer working with Company B observed seven enemy moving from north to south in valley vic YD 993601. Then the AO observed 30-40 more enemy in same valley moving in same direction, apparently part of same unit. Enemy were heavily camouflaged. AO conducted two flights of P/W and artillery missions in area. Results were 2 NVA killed by artillery.

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At approx 171900H Aug elements of Company B observed approx 70 enemy in valley moving to east grid XD 995601, they later observed that they estimated to be 200 enemy moving east. Artillery missions were run and Company B observed enemy casualties sustained by artillery. Spooky was requested and Company B moved to via 0050 to set up blocking force.

At approx 182029H Aug, an estimated 15 enemy were ambushed by elements of Company C at grid XD 996601. Upon searching killing zone, ten NVA KIA were discovered.

At approx 191200H Aug, at grid XD 989599, elements of Company C found two enemy killed by arty. One demo bag was found and bodies were freshly killed.

At approx 191410H Aug, at grid XD 989600, elements of Company C continuing search in area found enough additional pieces of human carcase to make up two more NVA KIA. Gear items found include 4 CHICOM grenades, 4 lbs of CB in 1/2 pound blocks for RMC rds., 20 bars dehydrated food w/Russian markings one L.D. Bag with alphanumeric notation "010114," two NVA packs, one cloth cover with mineral "1" inside a diamond.

At approx 201530H Aug, via XD 998601, elements of Company C discovered two NVA packs along freshly used trail. Packs were covered with blood, with bits of flesh adhering to them. Packs contained two Chinese claymores and miscellaneous demolition equipment. Further search of area disclosed two NVA gas masks, 12 electric blasting caps, two pair undershorts, one medical kit, 20 pounds of food (mostly rice), two hammocks, two ponchos, three AK 47 magazines, one NVA newspaper and miscellaneous personal papers.

At approx 231200H Aug, via XD 997602, elements of Company D, 1st Battalion, 1st Marines, under OPCON of 1/3, found three NVA bodies, killed by artillery. Also recovered one B40 rocket launcher (operable, with shrapnel damage), and two NVA helmets.

At approx 231300H Aug, a platoon patrol from Company B discovered one B40 rocket launcher and mess can at YD 000635 and NVA gas masks and five CHICOM grenades at XD 996635.

At approx 250235H Aug, via YD 012544, a Company A ambush spotted two to four NVA on north side of Route 39. Small arms delivered, and light enemy small arms received in return. One Marine BLAME, search of area revealed one EB-19 timing device and one AK 47 magazine, complete with rounds.

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At approx 251635H Aug, vic YD 001633, a platoon of Company B discovered six NVA bodies killed by air

At 261115H Aug, vic YD 007627, elements of Company B discovered one NVA body, killed by artillery.

At approx 270415H Aug, vic YD 019629 a company B night defensive position was probed by an estimated enemy sapper platoon. A vicious grenade and small arms battle ensued, as a result of which the enemy attack was repulsed. The action resulted in the death of three Marines (including the company commander and the 2nd platoon commander), and nine Marines MIA. Enemy losses totalled 12 KIA. Company B recovered three new AK 47, one long range RPG launcher, one NVA medical kit, assorted documents and personal items.

At approx 310630H Aug, vic YD 026629, Company B observed 7-10 NVA outside company night defensive position. Taken under small arms fire, resulting in three NVA KIA, and recovery of three AK 47, five magazines, 200 AK 47 rounds, six Chicom grenades, 15 pounds of rice, two medical kits, one pound salt, six bandages, and two shirts.

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PART IV

SUPPORTING DOCUMENTS

- ✓1. Log book of Regt Frago 95-69 to 100-69 } Filed
- ✓2. Log book of Bn Frago 214-69 to 237-69 } w/
- ✓3. Log book of Day and Night Acts. August 69 } and
- ✓4. Situation Report and Spot Report Log August 69 } chion
- ✓5. Air Officer Log (TACP) August 69 } Filed
- ✓6. Artillery Officer Log (ASOC) August 69 } logs

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