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HEADQUARTERS
U. S. MARINE CORPS
3000 MARINE CORPS BLDG (Code 6330), Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps,
Washington, D. C. 20380

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From: Commanding Officers
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code 6330), Headquarters, U. S. Marine Corps,
Washington, D. C.

- (1) Commanding General, I MAF
- (2) Commanding General, III MAF
- (3) Commanding General, 3d Marine Div

Subject: Command Chronology

- (1) 1330 2730.2A
- (2) 1330 2730.3
- (3) 1330 2730.4A

Encls: (1) Command Chronology for period 1-31 January, 1968 (U)

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

2. Downgraded at 3 year intervals. Declassified after 12 years IAW EOP and 1350.10
3210.10

H. L. Anderson
H. L. ANDERSON

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HEADQUARTERS
 3d Battalion, 26th Marines
 3d Marine Division (Rein), MAF
 FPO San Francisco 96602

COMMAND CHRONOLOGY

1 January to 31 January 1968

PART I - ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

PART II - NARRATIVE SUMMARY

PART III - SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

- A - Combat missions assigned and significant operations conducted
- B - Casualties
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- D - Communications - Electronics
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ENCLOSURE (1)
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PART I

ORGANIZATIONAL DATA

1. DESIGNATIONS

COMMANDER

31 Battalion, 26th Marines

LtCol H. L. ALDERMAN (1-31Jan68)

SUBORDINATE UNITS

R&S Company
Company I
Company K

Capt A. LARDIZABAL (1-31Jan68)
Capt W. H. DABNEY (1-31Jan68)
Capt N. JASPER Jr (1-22Jan68)
1st Lt J. SAUJESBURY (23-27Jan68)
Capt P. L. SNEAD (28-31Jan68)
Capt R. D. CAMP Jr (1-29Jan68)
Capt W. F. HURLEY (30-31Jan68)
Capt J. J. GILGEE Jr (1-31Jan68)

Company L

Company M

2. STAFF OFFICERS

Executive Officer
S-1/Adjutant
Personnel Officer
S-2

S-3
S-4
Comm Officer
Supply Officer
Motor Transport Officer
Medical Officer

Maj J. M. LOUGHRAN (1-31Jan68)
1st Lt E. J. PAURAZAS (1-31Jan68)
1st Lt R. POST Jr (1-31Jan68)
Capt A. LARDIZABAL Jr (1-31Jan68)
2d Lt J. MARKS (14-31Jan68)
Maj M. P. CAULFIELD (1-31Jan68)
1st Lt J. A. BRAGE (1-31Jan68)
Capt D. A. ROBERTS (1-31Jan68)
2d Lt M. K. ECKMANN (1-31Jan68)
2d Lt K. WOODS (1-31Jan68)
Lt S. J. FALKENSTEIN, USN (1-31Jan68)

3. AVERAGE MONTHLY STRENGTH

<u>USMC</u>		<u>USN</u>		<u>OTHER</u>	
<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>	<u>OFF</u>	<u>ENL</u>
42	1154	2	61	0	0

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PART II

NARRATIVE SUMMARY

The narrative summary contains only the major events for the battalion during the month of January. From 1 to 31 January, the battalion provided Company K for the defense of Hill 861 vic KD 803443 and Company I for the defense of Hill 881S vic KD 777437. For the entire month, Company L defended the Red Sector of the Khe Sanh Combat Base perimeter. These companies also conducted day and night patrols to destroy enemy forces and to detect enemy infiltration.

From 2 to 4 January, Company M conducted a sweep operation in the vic KD 862998 to KD 916403. At 1600H on 4 January, Company M assumed the mission of Regimental Reserve and provided for a "Sparrowhawk" platoon. From 2 to 4 January, the third platoon of Company M was assigned the mission of a combat outpost vic KD 823416 and from 13 to 22 January was the battalions reaction platoon. On 19 January, Company M(-), moved to reinforce Company I in the defense of Hill 881S. On 21 January, the battalion assumed operational control of the 2d platoon, Company A, 1stBn, 26th Marines. Company E, 2dBn, 26th Marines chopped opcon to this battalion on 26 January and from vic KD 806445, supported Company K in the defense of Hill 861.

2 January 1968

At 2030H, an LP from L-1 spotted approximately 6 individuals vic KD 841421, the reaction force was alerted and maneuvered into position to sweep the area. Under 60mm illumination the 6 were seen lying on the ground and were challenged, failing to answer, they were saturated with small arms fire. A sweep of the area netted one NVA LtCol KIA. Results were 5 NVA KIA(C).

19 January 1968

At 1215H, L-1(-), while on patrol in vic KD 769452, encountered accurate automatic weapons fire from approximately 25 NVA. The patrol broke contact and called in supporting arms. Results were 1 USMC KIA, 2 USMC WIA and 3 NVA KIA(C).

20 January 1968

At 0930H, while operating on a company sweep, L-3 was taken under intense fire from fixed positions vic KD 773451. In maneuvering to support L-3, L-1 and L-2 were taken under RPG and 50 Caliber fire. Upon reaching Objective Two vic KD 775455, L-3 received heavy fire from enemy bunkers vic KD 775451. L-2 consolidated with L-3 while L-1 remained at vic KD 769450 to secure a route back to Hill 881S. While attempting a medevac, a helicopter crashed and burned with all crew members escaping injury. At approximately 1600H, the Battalion Command group arrived at Hill 881S and instructed Company I to break contact and return to that position before dark. By 1800H, Company I and Company M(-) were in position to carry out their mission. Results were 4 USMC KIA, 35 USMC WIA and 107 NVA KIA(C).

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21 January 1968

At 0030H, Company K received heavy mortar, RPG, and small arms fire, 30 minutes later, approximately 300 NVA assaulted the hill. The wire was initially breached by sappers armed with bangalore torpedoes and satchel charges. Assault troops made a small penetration of the lines before the attack was repelled. Results were 4 USMC KIA, 11 USMC WIA, 45 NVA KIA(C) and 1 NVA POW.

At daybreak, Company K swept the area outside the wire. A burial detail found 4 wounded NVA, one of whom died before being medevaced. While returning to the perimeter the detail received a ChiCom grenade from another NVA who was subsequently killed. Results were 2 NVA KIA(C) and 3 NVA POW's.

At 2000H, L-2 observed approximately 25 NVA crawling outside their wire. The enemy unit was taken under fire with M-79's and LAAW's. A starlight scope observed many enemy being carried off. Results were 14 NVA KIA(C).

22 January 1968

At 1740H, during a resupply attempt, Company I received 5 120mm mortar rounds. Suspected enemy positions were pounded by artillery and 81mm mortars. Results were 1 USMC KIA and 5 USMC WIA.

At 1415H, Company I spotted approximately 10 NVA in vic KD 777451. They were suspected of being a forward observer team used to rocket the Khe Sanh Combat Base. The target was well covered by an air strike followed by an artillery mission. Results were 7 NVA KIA(C).

At 1445H, Company I while being resupplied, received 9 120mm mortar rounds. The enemy mortar site in vic KD 773452 was well covered by artillery missions. Results were 4 USMC KIA, 10 USMC WIA and 7 NVA KIA(C).

At 1730H, Company I observed enemy mortar activity at vic KD 783423 and fired M60 machine guns and 81mm mortars. Many attempts were made by the NVA to retrieve their wounded and weapons but the area was neutralized by an air strike. Results were 21 NVA KIA(C).

24 January 1968

At 1130H, an NVA surrendered to Company I on Hill 881S. He carried a Chieu Hoi leaflet and after being searched was forwarded to the Khe Sanh Combat Base. Results were 1 NVA POW.

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24 January 1968

At 1700H, the Khe Sanh Combat Base started receiving approximately 200 incoming rockets and mortar rounds. The Red Sector received a total of 93 122mm and 130mm rounds. Results were 1 USMC KIA and 4 USMC WIA.

26 January 1968

At 1200H, Company I received heavy sniper fire from vic XD 775445. M60 and 50 caliber fire was returned on the sniper position. Results were 1 USMC KIA, 4 USMC WIA and 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 1335H, a patrol from Company K encountered automatic weapons fire from vic XD 800445. The patrol broke contact and fired 81mm and 60mm mortars on the enemy position. A sweep was conducted later in the day. Results were 2 USMC KIA, 4 USMC WIA and 1 NVA KIA(C).

27 January 1968

At 1225H, an Aerial Observer spotted approximately 6 NVA in vic XD 800445. Company K fired 81mm mortars on the position, the results were confirmed by the AO. Results were 4 NVA KIA(C).

At 1415H, at the above coordinates Company K again spotted 3 NVA near a trench line. 50 caliber fire saturated the area and an enemy soldier was seen falling from a tree. Results were 1 NVA KIA(C).

At 2050H, M-2 LP heard approximately 3 enemy approaching from the northwest. The LP threw hand grenades and a sweep was conducted at daybreak. Results were 1 NVA KIA(C).

28 January 1968

At 1650H, enemy positions were spotted at vic XD 802445. Company K took the target under mortar attack with excellent coverage of the area. Results were 2 NVA KIA(C).

29 January 1968

At 1220H, during resupply, Company I received 5 120mm mortar rounds. Artillery missions covered vic XD 769440 and XD 768440. Results were 3 NVA KIA(C).

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30 January 1968

At 2245H, I-1 LP discovered approximately 8 people moving in vic XD 779435. The LP threw 3 hand grenades and a sweep was conducted of the area, which resulted in finding large pools of blood and several human bones. Results were 1 NVA KIA(C).

31 January 1968

At 0915H, Company K fired 81mm mortars at a suspected enemy position in vic XD 799444. Coverage of the target was considered excellent. Results were 2 NVA KIA(C).

At 1610H, Company I continued to receive sniper rounds during resupply. M-6 was wounded in the right leg and was medevaced. Results were 1 USMC WIA.

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PART III

SEQUENTIAL LISTING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

A. COMBAT MISSIONS ASSIGNED

1. From 1-31 January the mission of the 3d Battalion, 26th Marines was to provide defense for Hills 861 and 881S, to have one company as Regimental Reserve, and to defend the Red Sector of the Khe Sanh Combat Base perimeter.

B. CASUALTIES

Friendly Casualties

KIA	24
MIA	135
TOTAL	159

C. COMMAND RELATIONS

1. With Higher Units. From 1 to 31 January the battalion was under the operational control of the 26th Marines at Khe Sanh.

2. With Other Marine Units. For the defense of Hills 861 and 881S, and for the defense of the Red Sector of the Khe Sanh Combat Base from 1 to 31 January, the following units were under the battalion's operational control:

Det, Btry C, 1stBn, 13th Marines
 Det, Scout/Sniper Plt, HqCo, 26th Marines
 Det, Scout Dog Team, 1st MP Bn
 Det, Co A, 3d SP Bn (HST)
 Det, 1stPlt, Co A, 3d Engr Bn
 Det, 3dPlt, 3d Tank Bn
 Det, Co A, 3d Anti-Tank Bn
 2dPlt, Co A, 1stBn, 26th Marines
 Co E, 2dBn, 26th Marines

3. With ARVN/FF/RF Units. While at Khe Sanh, the battalion did not maintain direct liaison with local Vietnamese Forces.

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D. COMMUNICATIONS - ELECTRONICS

1. Message Center. Message traffic is picked up 3 times a day and delivered to the 26th Marines Communication Center. Distribution remains the same.

2. Radio. All radio nets terminate in the 3d Bn, 26th Marines COG. Regimental and battalion tactical nets are set up in an alternate COG. The radio support battalion for Khe Sanh Combat Base is located on Hills 861 and 881S. Five hot lines terminate in the 3d Bn, 26th Marines COG. These lines supply rapid auxiliary communication with 26th Marines Regimental COG, 1st Bn, 26th Marines COG, MI's COG, FOB, and Hill 881S. Four of these lines are presently in operation, while the fifth, to Hill 881S, is out due to enemy action.

3. Wire. The normal intra-battalion wire facilities were installed, consisting of trunk lines from 3d Bn, 26th Marines switchboard to 26th Marines switchboard, 1st Bn, 26th Marines and to FOB. There is also a local line to Co A, 3d Ingrs Bn. A wire team on Hill 881S and 861 support perimeter communication with a switchboard located on Hill 861.

4. General. Due to enemy action several antennas, three phones and one radio were destroyed. Communications were adequate throughout the month.

E. FIRE SUPPORT

1. From 1 to 31 January the battalion was supported by the 1st Bn, 15th Marines. A heavy volume of artillery fire was delivered in support of Company I on 20 January and in defense of Company K on 21 January. Company K's successful defense of its key position was largely attributed to effective artillery coordination.

2. During the heavy rocket and mortar attacks on the Khe Sanh Combat Base on 22 and 24 January, counter mortar fires were delivered with good target coverage. BAI fires were based on intelligence from the Regimental S-2 and S-3.

F. AIR SUPPORT

1. Air Support.

a. Fixed Wing. 56 TFQ's and 75 air strikes were conducted in support of the battalion during the month of January.

b. Helicopter

(1) A total of 159 personnel were medevaced

(2) A total of 954,728 lb of equipment was transported and 500 troops lifted for tactical deployments.

(3) AO's were used as needed.

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3. Incidents.

a. There was a marked increase in the number of incidents reported during the month of January. Many of these incidents were small-scale probes of the two hills-861 and 881S-and sightings of small groups of enemy forces. In addition, there were seven significant incidents during the month. The first of these occurred on 2Jan when an LF from L-1 observed six enemy approximately 20-30 meters in front of their position vic (XD 841421). The enemy was taken under fire and when the area was checked in the morning, five NVA bodies were found. Later a POW reported that one of these had been a LtCol in the North Vietnamese Army. The next significant incident took place on 19Jan in the vic (XD 769453). A patrol from I Company was taken under fire by an estimated enemy platoon in fixed positions. The enemy employed auto-wpns and RPG's. The patrol withdrew and called in artillery and gunships resulting in 3 enemy KIA. The next day Co I moved into the same area and again was taken under fire by an estimated battalion from KD 773451 and XD 769452. Co I withdrew and called in artillery and air strikes. Again, Co I moved into the area and was pinned down by intense auto-wpns, small arms and RPG'S. Later that afternoon, contact was finally broken with 103 enemy counted dead. That night Co K on Hill 861 was attacked by 200-300 NVA. The enemy utilized auto-wpns, small arms, 82mm mortars, bangalore torpedoes, satchel charges and RPG's. At 0530E the next morning, the enemy withdrew leaving 47 bodies lying on the battlefield along with many weapons and equipment. Early on the morning of the 21st, Khe Sanh came under a heavy rocket and mortar attack. Approximately 100 rds of 82mm mortars and 122mm rockets were received. On the night of the 21st, Co L observed 5-8 enemy crawling in towards the perimeter. They were taken under fire by M-79's and LAAM's. Utilizing a starlight scope, 14 enemy bodies were observed being dragged away. On the night of the 24th, Khe Sanh again came under an intense rocket and artillery barrage receiving approximately 250 rds of 122mm rockets and 130mm artillery. At present the enemy is continuing to harrass the combat base and Hills 861 and 881S with sporadic mortar/rocket/artillery fire.

4. Cumulative Totals

a. Enemy personnel losses:

NVA KIA(C)	188
POW (NVA)	5

b. Enemy equipment losses:

IND WPNS	6
CS WPNS	0

J. CIVIL AFFAIRS

1. On 5 January, Co K found 150 pieces of bronzeware and 2 swords in a cave vic (XD 803452). These items were given to the 26th Marines S-5, and were in turn distributed to the Brook villagers.

K. PSYCHOLOGICAL WARFARE

1. There were no PsyOps conducted by the 3dBn, 26thMar during the month.

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G. ADMINISTRATION

1. No major administrative difficulties were encountered during the period covered by this report. Battalion level personnel accounting continues to be very effective.

H. PERSONNEL

1. During the month of January, the battalion joined six officers and 124 enlisted, while three officers and 114 enlisted were transferred. In addition, 31 enlisted were reassigned out of country by service records as the result of medical evacuation.

I. INTELLIGENCE

1. Summary.

a. Weather - The average maximum temperature for the month was 76°, the average minimum was 64°. Average relative humidity was 81%, total precipitation was 97" and winds averaged 8 knots from the east and northeast.

b. Terrain - The terrain in the Khe Sanh area is very irregular with the elevation averaging around 800 meters. The vegetation consists of 6' to 8' high elephant grass on the hilltops and very dense jungle in the valleys which makes for very poor trafficability.

c. Avenues of Approach - In the Khe Sanh AO, there are two avenues of approach from the northwest. One crosses the Laos/Quang Tri border at XD 6653, continues down the valley to the Riviera De Rao Quan, then follows the river down to Route #9. The other crosses the border at XD 6646 and continues along the ridgeline to Hill 881S. Route #9 is the major east-west avenue of approach across the AO. From the southeast the approach is the Da Krong Valley which enters the AO at YD 0035 and continues northwest to Route #9 at XD 9241. An approach from the northeast enters the AO at XD 8551 and runs southwest along the Khe Na Bai River to point north of Hill 558 (YD 8245).

2. Enemy Situation

a. During the last month, the enemy has begun a massive buildup within the Khe Sanh AO which is still continuing. The enemy continues to move troops and supplies into the AO from his sanctuary in Laos. This is quite evident as shown by the numerous sightings made by aerial observers and numerous agent reports. Captured documents and the interrogation of NVA POW's lead to the belief that the enemy is planning to overrun the Khe Sanh Combat Base through the use of a devastating rocket/artillery/mortar attack, followed by a ground assault. This is to be achieved after the enemy has successfully overrun Hill 861, which he will use as a jumping off point for the attack on the combat base.

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L. LOGISTICS

1. General. Logistical support was satisfactory during January. There were no major problems obtaining supplies, transportation, or food services.

2. General Supplies. General supplies were adequate, except a short supply of batteries BA-1100/U.

3. Transportation.

a. Transportation was furnished by the 9th Helicopter Transport Battalion, through the 26th Marine Regiment (S-4).

b. Due to the overall situation of the battalion, runs were mostly administrative and made by organic vehicles.

4. Resupply. In Khe Sanh resupply was accomplished by planes and helicopters.

5. Maintenance Support. Maintenance support was furnished by LSU, Khe Sanh and FLSG-A, Phu Bai, with satisfactory results.

6. Ordnance Support. Ordnance support was furnished by LSU, Khe Sanh and FLSG-A, Phu Bai.

7. Food Services. This unit operated a field mess from 1 through 20 January. Food was more than satisfactory in quality and quantity. From 21 through 31 January, this unit has subsisted on C-Rations due to water rationing. This unit's field mess did not function for the same reason.

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M. MEDICAL - DENTAL

1. Personnel. This Battalion Aid Station has a total of 58 personnel. These consist of 56 Hospital Corpsmen, one Medical Officer and one Chaplain.
2. Capabilities. The BAS was capable of treating all minor medical and surgical problems. Patients requiring more extensive care were evacuated to the 3rd Medical Battalion at Phu Bai. One tent is being used for treatment and surgical problems and administration, one for supply, one for the Hospital Corpsmen quarters, one for the Staff and Officers quarters and two for Holding Wards.
3. Supply. Medical supplies were obtained from PLSU-2 at Phu Bai.
4. Dental. There were no facilities for dental care at the BAS. Patients requiring limited care were referred to the Regimental Dental at Kha Sanh. Patients requiring extensive dental care were evacuated to the 3rd Medical Battalion.
5. Malaria Prophylaxis. Chloroquine-Primaquine tablets were taken once a week on Sunday, preferably with meals. This battalion had three confirmed malaria cases in January.
6. Sanitation. Sanitation reports were made weekly to the Battalion Commander.
7. Statistics. The following were the statistics for the period beginning 1Jan68 and ending 31Jan68:

<u>DIAGNOSIS</u>	<u>HCS</u>	<u>I</u>	<u>E</u>	<u>L</u>	<u>M</u>	<u>TOTALS</u>
BURNS	6	0	2	0	0	8
INFECTIONS	10	9	9	12	29	69
DIARRHEA	0	0	0	1	0	1
LACERATIONS	7	0	5	0	1	11
FUO	0	0	0	0	0	0
COLDS	5	0	7	7	13	32
DENTAL	0	0	0	0	0	0
RASH	0	0	4	4	0	8
STOMACH DISORDERS	3	1	2	2	0	8
HEADACHES	2	3	3	1	1	10
EYES	1	1	1	5	0	8
FOOT DISORDERS	1	1	1	5	3	11
BACK DISORDERS	0	1	0	0	0	1
KNEE DISORDERS	1	0	1	3	0	5
OTHERS	13	8	5	5	1	40
MALARIA	2	1	0	0	0	3
SHRAPNEL WOUNDS	5	20	5	1	3	34
GUN SHOT WOUNDS	0	1	1	0	0	2
TOTALS	56	46	44	46	50	251
KIA	4	9	9	1	1	23
WIA	19	52	38	5	1	119

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N. TRAINING

The following training was conducted during January:

1. Orientation. Personnel joined as replacements during the month, received an orientation to Vietnam from the Battalion Executive Officer.
2. Familiarization and Zero Firing of Personal Weapons. All personnel joining the battalion in January fired their M-16's for familiarization, and all personnel who had not zeroed their weapons, did so. Personnel issued .45 cal pistols were also required to fam-fire their weapons.
3. Hospital Corpsmen received On-The-Job training under the supervision of the Medical Officer and the Chief Hospital Corpsman. Classes were held by the Medical Officer giving additional instructions on field medical techniques and diagnostic care.

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