

2068

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HEADQUARTERS
1st Searchlight Battery
3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco 96602

1ST SLT SEC
Control No. 61-67

JMC:rhb
5750
Ser: 0023-67
31 Dec 1967

From: Commanding Officer
To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code A03D)
Via: (1) Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein), FMF
(2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
(3) Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific
Subj: Command Chronology
Ref: (a) MCO 5750.2A
(b) FMFPacO 5750.8

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1ST SEARCHLIGHT BTRY

EMD CHRON

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b), the following report is submitted.

2. Reporting Period: 1-31 December 1967.

3. Organizational Data:

a. Designation of Unit. Reporting Unit 21503, 1st Searchlight Battery, 3rd Marine Division (Rein), FMF, FPO San Francisco 96602.

b. Commanding Officer. Captain Victor B. SNIDER, 31 January 1967 - present.

c. Location of Unit. Dong Ha Combat Base, Republic of Vietnam, 29 June 1967 - present.

d. Battery Officers: *

(1) Captain Joseph HANCHARICK, Jr. - Executive Officer.

(2) 1stLt Robert E. NEITHAMMER - Liaison Officer.

(3) 2ndLt John M. CONYERS - Platoon Commander, 2nd Platoon.

* The billet of Platoon Commander for the 1st and 3rd Searchlight Platoons is presently being filled by their respective Platoon Sergeants in the absence of officers.

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e. Battery Strength:

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OFF	ENL	OFF	ENL
4	101	0	2

4. Negative Summary. During this reporting period the battery has continued in its role of perimeter defense with very light enemy activity prevailing. The only exception to this being an enemy artillery attack launched 18 December 1967 against the position located at Cua Viet (Quang Tri Province), resulting in the Battery's first KIAS (see paragraph 5.d. below). A new technique of employment involving the use of searchlights to direct MACOVAC Helicopters at the LA of Gio Linh (Quang Tri Province), was practiced with positive results (see paragraph 5.e.). The maintenance problems that have vexed the battery, and threatened constantly its capabilities, have now, with the onset of the monsoon season, become even more intensified. This situation, which has been the thesis of numerous discussions, reports, and command interest type messages has become critical. The complete lack of spare parts, and technically qualified personnel to perform third, fourth, and fifth echelon maintenance locally has reduced the operational status of this unit to C-4. Although this condition exists, with no foreseeable relief, all possible efforts are being made to prevent further failure. Step-up first and second echelon maintenance, a constant alertness for warning signs of impending failure, and an ever increasing battle to combat the effects of moisture (which has proven to be more detrimental to the searchlights, in some aspects at least, than the NVA) are some of the steps being taken to keep our remaining searchlights operational.

5. Sequential Listing of Significant Events:a. Combat Missions Assigned:

(1) 1st Platoon

(a) 1st section - perimeter defense at Khe Sanh (Quang Tri Province) in support of "A" Btry, 1stBn, 15th Marines.

(b) 2nd section - perimeter defense at Long Ha Combat Base (Quang Tri Province) in support of 12th Marines.

(c) 3rd section - perimeter defense at ONAMI-2 (Quang Tri Province) in support of 2ndBn, 12th Marines.

(2) 2nd Platoon

(a) 1st section - perimeter defense at Gio Linh (Quang Tri Province) in support of Composite Artillery Battalion.

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(b) 2nd Section - perimeter defense at Camp J. J. Carroll (Quang Tri Province) in support of 1stBn, 12th Marines.

(c) 3rd Section - being utilized at Dong Ha Combat Base (Quang Tri Province) for guard and patrol activities due to deadlined equipment.

(3) 3rd Platoon

(a) 1st Section - perimeter defense at Con Thien (Quang Tri Province) in support of 2ndBn, 12th Marines.

(b) 2nd Section - perimeter defense at Cam Lo (Quang Tri Province) in support of 2ndBn, 12th Marines.

(c) 3rd Section - perimeter defense at Phu Bai (Thua Thien Province) in support of 4th Bn, 12th Marines.

b. Significant Operations Conducted. The Searchlight Platoons/Sections of the Battery were used to support the following operations:

(1) Operation SCOTLAND (Thua Thien Province).

(2) Operation KENTUCKY (Quang Tri Province).

(3) Operation NEOSHO (Quang Tri Province).

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c. Casualties inflicted on the enemy: None.

d. Casualties sustained: Sergeant Ronald "T" STOKES, 2105698/0811 USMC and Lance Corporal Louis N. COOLEY, Jr., 2258078/1141 USMC killed in action 16 December 1967 as a result of enemy artillery attack.

e. New techniques employed: At the Landing Zone located at the Composite Artillery Battalion, Gio Linh (Quang Tri Province) RVN, a searchlight was used to direct a MEDEVAC Helicopter. Although the LZ is on a reverse slope, the use of smoke to mark it often alerts the enemy that a helicopter is going to land and results in artillery fire. The searchlight (visual light), although easily seen from the air in daylight, is not visible to the enemy to the North. At the time this method of direction was used, the MEDEVAC was accomplished without enemy fire.

f. Command relations: Command relations continue to be very good.

g. Equipment: Equipment of the Battery, with the exception of the searchlights themselves, remains at less than 10 percent deadlined. The searchlights are 60 percent deadlined. M-18 binoculars, a component of the searchlight, are 36 percent deadlined.

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- h. Logistics: The overall logistics situation within the Battery is - considered satisfactory.
- i. Civic action: Nothing to report.
- j. Administration: No problem areas.
- k. Personnel: No problem areas.
- l. Intelligence: Nothing to report.
- m. Communications: Nothing to report.
- n. Weather: The effects of weather have been adverse (see paragraph 4. above).
- o. Fire support: Nothing to report.
- p. Air support: Nothing to report.
- q. Activations/deactivations/redesignations: Not applicable.

V. B. Snider

V. B. SNIDER

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CO, 12th Marines**UNCLASSIFIED**