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ACCESSION NO

REGISTR

on CG TF XRAY ltr 9/FCL/ewh 3480 Ser 00115-68 of 14 Apr 1968

O source
From: Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
To: Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (Attn: MACJ 343), APO, U. S. Forces 96222
Via: Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
Subj: Combat After Action Report, Operation HUE CITY.

Encl: (4) DA, Hq, 101st Airborne Division, APO San Francisco, 96383 comments on Combat After Action Report, Operation HUE CITY and Operation MINGO dated 18 May 68

1. Forwarded.
2. Enclosure (4) is appended here to clarify certain portions of enclosure (3).
3. The following information is submitted relative to the intelligence problems cited in enclosure (1) to the 1st Brigade 101st Airborne Division, After Action Report:
 - a. Paragraph 1a(1): Infra-red and SLAR runs were flown on a daily basis under III MAF cognizance. All reports received from these flights were disseminated to the 1st Brigade by radio, phone or teletype as received. One SLAR and two IR requests were submitted for the 1st brigade but were cancelled by III MAF.
 - b. Paragraph 1a(2): APD missions were not flown due to unavailability of equipment in country.
 - c. Paragraph 1a(3): Bad weather during February made air observation difficult to impossible. Only 84 hours of observation were flown for Task Force XRAY during the month of February, therefore AO's were allocated strictly on a priority basis.
 - d. Paragraph 1a(4): Two photo requests were submitted for the 1st Brigade. One was cancelled by III MAF and the other, delayed by bad weather, was not flown until after the operation terminated.

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HEADQUARTERS
Task Force XRay
1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
FPO San Francisco, California 96602

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Copy 10 of 11 copies

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From: Commanding General
To: Commander, United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
(Attn: MACJ 343), APO, U. S. Forces 96222
Via: (1) Commanding General, 1st Marine Division (Rein), FMF
(2) Commanding General, III Marine Amphibious Force
Subj: Combat After Action Report, Operation HUE CITY
Ref: (a) MACV Dir 335-8 of 1Sep67
(b) 1st MarDiv O 3480.1A
Encl: (1) Task Force XRay After Action Report
(2) 1st Marines After Action Report
(3) 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division After Action Report

*DN SWC#
68-1545
Q/PJ#2*

1. Enclosure (1) contains the subject report of Commanding General, Task Force X-Ray for Operation HUE CITY. Enclosures (2) and (3) amplify enclosure (1).

2. Operation Hue City commenced at 0830H on 31 January 1968 with Commanding General, Task Force X-Ray commanding. The 1st Marines assumed tactical control of committed forces as of 1230H on 1 February 1968. On 21 February 1968 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division came under Operational Control of Task Force X-Ray and on 22 February was employed as tactical unit south of Hue City. Task Force X-Ray assumed tactical control of both 1st Marines and 101st Airborne Division units as of 1200H on 22 February 1968.

3. It should be noted that the task organization for 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division as written in enclosure (3) lists all units under the operational control of the Brigade during Operation HUE CITY. 2d Battalion, 505th Infantry was located at the Phu Bai Combat Base providing a portion of the security for that installation and did not actively participate in the operations to the south of the city. The same is true of the 101st Airborne Division's Long Range Reconnaissance Company, which provided security for engineer upgrading of Landing Zone EL PASO during the same period.

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4. Paragraph 11 of enclosure (1), reflects only those actions taking place after 22 February 1968 and Task Force X-Ray's assumption of tactical control of the 1st Marines and 101st Airborne Division units. Enclosure (2) reflects those actions taking place prior to 22 February 1968.

Foster C. LaHue
FOSTER C. LAHUE

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TASK FORCE X-RAY AFTER ACTION REPORT

1. NAME AND TYPE OF OPERATION: Operation HUE CITY (Search and Destroy).
2. DATES OF OPERATION: 310830H Jan 68 to 022400H Mar 68.
3. LOCATION: City of HUE and surrounding area in THUA THIEN Province.
4. CONTROL OR COMMAND HEADQUARTERS: Task Force X-Ray.
5. REPORTING OFFICER: BGen Foster C. LAHUE.
6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

Task Force X-Ray

TF Hq and HqCo
Det, HqBn, 1st MarDiv
1st CIT, FMF
Sec, 2d SSCT, SI, FMF
Det, 1st Dental Co
7th IT, FMF
13th ITT, FMF
Det, 3d ITT, FMF
7th AA Plat, 29th CA Co (USA)
Co B(-), 3d Sp Bn (22-29 Feb 68)

Co C (Rein), 1st Med Bn

Comm Co(-) (Rein), 7th Comm Bn, FMF

1st Force Recon Co (Rein)
1st Force Recon Co
Co C, 1st Recon Bn
Plat, Co D, 1st Recon Bn

Btry D, 1st Bn, 44th Arty (USA)

1st Marines(-) (Rein)
Det, HqCo
Det, 3d ITT

1st Bn(-), 1st Mar
Det, HqCo, 1st Mar
Co A
Co B(-)

1st Bn, 5th Mar
Det, H&S Co
Co A

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Co C
Co D
Co L, 3d Bn, 5th Mar

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2d Bn(-), 5th Mar
Det H&S Co
Co F
Co G
Co H

Co A(-), 1st Tank Bn

AT Co (-), 1st Tank Bn

Co B, 1st SP Bn

Co A(-) (Rein), 1st Engr Bn
Co A(-)
1st Plat, Co B, 1st Engr Bn

Co B, 1st MT Bn

1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division (22Feb-2Mar)

Co A(-), 326th Engr
Scty Plat(-)
Avn Sec
MF Plat(-)
Det(-), 181st MI
406th RRD
TACP(-)
Det, 20th Cml

2d Bn, 327th Inf
2d Plat, Co A, 326th Engr
Co A
Co B
Co C
Recon Plat

Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Mar (26Feb-2Mar68)

7. SUPPORTING FORCES.

a. Artillery. Artillery support for Operation HUE CITY was provided by 1st Field Arty Group with 1st Bn(-) (Rein), 11th Mar in direct support of 1st Marines and 2d Bn (Airborne), 320th Arty in direct support of 1st Marines and 2d Bn (Airborne), 320th Arty in direct support of 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div. 1st FAG provided general support to 1st Mar, 1st Bde and ARVN units with 1st 155 Gm Btry and 2d Plat, 3d

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8 inch Howitzer Btry. Additionally Btry C, 3d Bn (8 inch), 18th Arty provided general support to 1st Bde although this battery did not come under the operational control of 1st FAG. See enclosures (2) and (3) for battery locations and displacements during the operation. A total of 18,091 rounds were expended including HE, smoke, WP, illumination and CS gas. Mission surveillance was difficult due to the nature of the built up areas encountered in Hue and low ceilings which severely restricted aerial observation. However supporting fires by artillery were effective and instrumental to the success of the operation. Special PSOC arrangements included direct communications with the Thua Thien Sector TOC which provided a rapid means of obtaining necessary Province clearance and clearance with Province Forces operating in or near Hue. 1st FAG established a liaison section with the 1st ARVN Div and also furnished FO teams in order to provide rapid coordination and clearance of fires with ARVN units participating in the operation.

b. Naval Gunfire. Naval gunfire was used extensively during Operation HUE CITY, particularly in the seizure of the Hue Citadel. During the operation a total of 5191 rounds of 8"/55, 6"/47, 5"/54 and 5"/38 were fired.

c. Air. Both helicopter and fixed wing air support played an essential role in Operation HUE CITY, however the use of air support was greatly limited by poor weather conditions which prevailed throughout the operation. Medical evacuation by helicopter was carried out in spite of this on a timely basis. One helicopter was shot down during operations in the Hue Citadel and numerous hits were sustained by many helicopters while operating in that area. Although weather precluded the effective use of fixed wing air support during the majority of Operation HUE CITY, on 22 February air strikes were conducted on the southeastern corner of the Citadel with devastating effect utilizing 250 pound snake eye and 500 pound napalm bombs. Advancing directly behind the air strikes, the infantry was able to attack and secure their objectives ending offensive operations in the Citadel. Close air support played a major role in the seizure of Hill 42 south of Hue on 27 February, destroying enemy bunkers and weapons emplacements located on or near the hill. A total of 113 sorties of fixed wing air support were flown during the operation. 293,202 pounds of ordnance were delivered.

d. Engineer. Company A(-) (Rein), 1st Engineer Bn and Co A(-), 326th Engineer Bn supported 1st Marines and 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division respectively during Operation HUE CITY. Company A, 1st Engineer Bn established a water point in Hue during the operation which alleviated the requirement for purification of well and river water by the individual Marine. 1st Bridge Company, FMF was employed during the operation to repair a vital bridge on the MSR between Hue and Phu Bai which had been destroyed by the enemy on 4 February at YD 781209.

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A floating bridge was completed at the site on 12 February after extensive efforts to secure the bridgehead by infantry units. With the completion of this bridge resupply and reinforcement convoys could once again proceed to Hue. 104 convoys made the round trip from Phu Bai to Hue during the operation.

e. Shore Party. Company B, 1st SP Bn gave HST support to 1st Marines during Operation HUE CITY. (See Par 13, Encl (2))

f. NSA Detachment (Hue LCU Ramp and Col Co/Tan My NSA). With the destruction of the vital bridge on the MSR at YD 781209 on 4 February it became necessary to resupply forces in Hue by LCU from Danang. The U. S. Navy units at the Hue LCU Ramp and the Col Co/Tan My NSA were instrumental in effecting resupply of 1st Marines during the critical period while the bridge was out. During the later phases of the operation the LCU's transported troops, tracked vehicles, and supplies to the Hue Citadel in support of operations to seize that portion of the city from the enemy.

g. Tanks. The built up areas encountered in Hue, both south of the Song Huong and in the Hue Citadel, made tanks an absolute necessity in the clearing of the enemy from the city by 1st Marines. Initially, a provisional platoon from the 3d Tank Bn, 3d Marine Division was employed in support of the 1st Marines. Later two platoons of tanks from Co A, 1st Tank Bn were brought to HUE by LCU from Danang, one platoon on 11 February and one on 17 February, and placed in direct support of the 1st Marines. It should be noted that the successful tactics employed required that the tank be well screened by infantry units in order to protect it from enemy antitank fire. Only one tank was lost to enemy fire.

h. Ontos. AT Co(-), 1st Tank Bn supported 1st Marines in Operation HUE CITY. The Ontos proved to be extremely valuable during the conduct of operations in built up areas. Firing the 106 mm recoilless rifles in salvos of mixed ammunition; BEEHIVE, HEPT, and HEAT; resulted in rapid reduction of enemy positions. The vulnerability of the lightly armored Ontos to enemy antitank weapons was balanced by employing the same type infantry protection for the Ontos that was necessary for the tank, as in the preceding paragraph. The maneuverability of the Ontos allowed it to move into a firing position, fire its salvo, and quickly return to a covered area. Extensive use of B-40 and RPG anti tank weapons during the battle against both tanks and Ontos made the use of an infantry screen mandatory. Additionally the Ontos, being smaller than the tank, could often go places, such as narrow alleyways, that the tanks were too wide to enter. No Ontos were lost to enemy fire.

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8. INTELLIGENCE:

a. Enemy. The units listed below were confirmed as participating in HUE CITY:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>CONFIRMED BY</u>	<u>ENTRY DATE</u>
(1) 6th NVA Regt	POWs from subordinates, usually reliable sources	31Jan68
(a) 800 Bn	POW	30Jan68
(b) 802 Bn	POW	30Jan68 (Est)
(c) 806 Bn	2 POWs and usually reliable sources	30Jan68

(2) 4th NVA Regt. No documents or POWs confirm the presence of the 4th Regiment Hqs in Hue City. The 1st ARVN Div reports that elements of the 4th Regt were involved in the attack in the area south of the river. This is true, as will be shown below. It is highly probable that at least a portion of the 4th Regt Hqs was present in order to control subordinates. Because of this, this unit is listed as confirmed.

(a) 804 Bn	2 POWs	31Jan68
(b) K-4B	See (1) below	31Jan68

(1) The K-4B was reported to have captured the Hue City Jail. POWs from the 804th Regt reported this to IIT. It also was reported that the 160 bodies found in the hospital area after its recapture were from the K-4B.

(a) 416 Bn (5th Regt)	1 POW	20Feb68
(b) 7th Bn (90th Regt)	1 POW	21Feb68
(c) 8th Bn (90th Regt)	1 POW	21Feb68
(d) 7th Bn (9th Regt)	1 POW believed to be	27Feb68
(e) HL/Hue City Sapper Bn/HMV	1st ARVN Div and usually reliable sources (11Feb)	31Jan68
(f) 810 Bn	1st ARVN Div reports this unit seized Tu Dam Pagoda and was on the southern wall, later. Also, captured document.	31Jan68
(g) 7th Bn (29th Regt)	Captured documents and 1 Chieu Hoi from 9 Bn/29th	1to10Feb68
(h) 9th Bn (29th Regt)	Captured documents and 1 Chieu Hoi	1to10Feb68
(i) K200 Transportation Bn (Provided support outside City)	Captured documents	Unk

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The following units probably participated in Hue City:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>IDENTIFIED BY</u>	<u>ENTRY DATE</u>
(a) 12th Sapper Bn	POWs from 6th Regt stated sappers were attached to their units. The 12th Bn normally operates in the same area as the 6th Regt. Consensus among intelligence officers is that this unit participated.	31Jan68

The following units possibly participated in Hue City:

<u>UNIT</u>	<u>IDENTIFIED BY</u>	<u>ENTRY DATE</u>
(a) 4th Bn (24th Regt)	1 POW	13Feb68
(b) 6th Bn (24th Regt)	1 POW	13Feb68

These battalions are considered possible because the 24th Regiment is considered only as a possible unit. At one time, the 24th Regiment was a training regiment in the 350th Division in NVN. It no longer is carried as a confirmed unit.

b. Weather and Terrain. During the majority of Operation HUE CITY the weather was characterized by low ceilings, poor visibility, light rains and morning fog. Air operations were sharply curtailed by these weather conditions. The city of Hue was characterized by built up areas that consisted mainly of concrete, stone and masonry buildings. The terrain outside the city was mostly low hills with scrub brush growth to the south of the city and native structures interspersed among rice paddies to the north and east of the city. The maximum and minimum temperatures averaged 69 and 60.2 degrees respectively with an average humidity of 84.7%. Approximately 2.68 inches of rain fell during the operation.

9. MISSION. (22Feb-2Mar) Task Force X-Ray conduct operations in AO to destroy enemy forces in city of Hue, provide security and support to upgrade and ensure continuity of use of National Route #1, protect designated vital installations in AO; clear banks of Song Huong north and east of Hue, and support 1st ARVN Division in Hue as requested and directed.

10. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS. (22Feb-2Mar) Task Force X-Ray with assigned forces search out and destroy enemy forces located in the City of Hue and in the area to the north and east of the city; interdict or sever enemy infiltration and resupply routes into the Hue area from the south

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and continue to provide security for LOCS' and vital installations within the assigned AO.

11. EXECUTION

a. 22 February. 1st Marines (-) (Rein) continued operations in the Hue area. The southern wall of the citadel and final regimental objective north of the Song Huong was seized at 1500H. Contact south of the city in vicinity of YD 7620 remained moderate to heavy. 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division commenced their search operations against negligible resistance. A resupply LCU was damaged on the Song Huong and an escort FBR was sunk by B-40 rocket fire near YD 774247.

b. 23 February. 1st Marines(-) (Rein) policed the battlefield within their zone in the Citadel against light resistance. Contact south of the city continued moderate and some modest advances were accomplished. In the area to the south of the 1st Marines, the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div encountered very light resistance.

c. 24 February. Advance of both the left (south) flank of the 1st Marines(-) (Rein) and the right (north) flank of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div was slowed by strong enemy positions in the vicinity of Hill 42 (YD 751194) and the village complex (grid square YD 7618). Air and artillery fires were employed against well prepared enemy positions. Co B, 1st Bn, 5th Mar was chopped to 1st Bde at 0930H and shortly thereafter discovered a significant enemy weapons cache which included some 59 weapons.

d. 25 February. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) continued to encounter heavy resistance in the vicinity of Hill 42. Other areas were relatively quiet. The 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div swung units to the south and continued their advance to the south and west.

e. 26 February. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) withdrew its units from the Hue Citadel and located them in the vicinity of the railroad bridge over the Song Huong (YD 750210). Late in the afternoon after heavy air strikes and artillery support, key enemy positions of Hill 42 were captured. The 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div continued operations to the south and west against light and sporadic fire.

f. 27 February. Mopping up of Hill 42 continued during the day with light to moderate contact. Elsewhere there was only light contact.

g. 28 February. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) attacked north and east of the Song Van Duong (grid square YD 7722). Moderate resistance was encountered in the vicinity of an enemy strong point in the vicinity YD 775240. Contact elsewhere was light to moderate. 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div continued to sweep to the west against occasional light resistance.

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h. 29 February. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) continued operations north and east of Hue against a series of enemy strong points. Moderate contact continued in their area. At 1435H one company of the 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div came under heavy enemy attack at YD 746167. The contact was broken by the enemy following fixed wing air strikes.

i. 1 March. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) established heavy contact in the early afternoon in the vicinity of YD 801251 and 805248. Air strikes and artillery were employed and at dark the enemy broke contact and withdrew. 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div continued operations in their zone against light resistance.

j. 2 March. 1st Mar(-) (Rein) continued operations north of the city. Contact was light and on two occasions moderate in the vicinity of two enemy strong points (YD 788230, 802246). 1st Bde, 101st Abn Div has light to negligible contact throughout the day.

12. RESULTS

<u>FRIENDLY</u>	<u>USMC</u>	<u>ENEMY</u>
KIA	142	KIA 1959
WIA MEDEVAC	857	POW 12
WIA MINOR	228	DETAINEES 197
		IWC 647
		CSWC 69

<u>FRIENDLY</u>	<u>USA</u>	<u>ENEMY</u>
KIA	6	KIA 56
WIA MEDEVAC	54	POW 1
WIA MINOR	2	DETAINEES 43
		IWC 4
		CSWC 0

13. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS

a. Supply. At the start of Operation HUE CITY the 1st Marines established a LSA at the Hue City LCU ramp. On 22 February FLSG-A established a LSA at the soccer stadium in Hue at YD 778222. The 1st Marines received all classes of supply from this LSA throughout the latter portion of the operation. 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division was also given external supply support by FLSG-A. however no LSA was established for this unit due to the close proximity of the 1st Brigade command post to FLSG-A and shortage of HST personnel available to operate another LSA. Resupply of the 1st Marines was conducted by truck convoy and helicopter during the initial phases of the operation, however with the destruction of the bridge on the MSR at YD 781209 on 4 February it became necessary to resupply that unit by LCU from

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Danang. With the marginal weather conditions that existed throughout the operation, which restricted air operations, the primary means of resupply to 1st Marines during the period 5-12Feb was by LCU until the destroyed bridge was replaced, after which shuttle convoys from Phu Bai commenced on a daily basis. LCU resupply continued on a smaller scale after the convoys started to run. Helicopter logistic support was outstanding with 823 sorties flown delivering 1672 personnel and 1,052,459 pounds of cargo. Resupply of 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division tactical units was carried out exclusively by helicopter. For a detailed recap of classes of supply see enclosures (2) and (3). 1st Brigade experienced a shortage of Class II supplies, however this did not materially effect the accomplishment of their mission.

b. Maintenance. No significant problems occurred in maintenance during Operation HUE CITY. FLSG-A provided maintenance support for 1st Marines and 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division. Additionally, 1st Brigade received some support from the 27th Maintenance Battalion, 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile) which was located at Phu Bai during the operation.

c. Evacuation and Hospitalization. Casualties were evacuated to Company C (Rein), 1st Medical Battalion and Company A 3d Medical Battalion which were located in Phu Bai. 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division experienced no difficulties in evacuation, using standard procedures throughout the operation. 1st Marines experienced minor difficulties initially due to the tactical situation and the marginal weather conditions. Marine helicopter Medevac support was superb with 270 sorties evacuating 977 casualties in spite of marginal weather throughout. No problems were encountered in obtaining necessary medical supplies in the battle area.

d. Transportation. See enclosures (2) and (3).

e. Communications. 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division experienced no unusual problems in communications during Operation HUE CITY. See enclosure (2) for details of 1st Marines communications during the operation.

14. SPECIAL EQUIPMENT AND TECHNIQUES. See enclosure (2).

15. COMMANDERS ANALYSIS. Early intelligence of enemy activity in Hue did not reveal the number of enemy units that were subsequently discovered as having been committed to the battle. Initial deployment of forces was made with limited information. Clarification of mission came on D+1 when a boundary between ARVN and Marine units was drawn down the middle of the Song Huong. Although Marine units committed to Hue were assigned the mission of clearing that portion of the city south of the Song Huong, requests were received to accomplish a multiplicity of tasks that included locating and rescuing isolated Americans of the

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intelligence community, going to the relief of specific ARVN units, recapturing the ARVN arsenal and recapturing the provincial prison before prisoners could be released. As to the latter task, it was discovered that NVA units had already taken the prison and released the prisoners during their initial infiltration of the city on the early morning of 31 January.

Essentially there were four phases of the Marine commitment:

Phase I: Initial commitment of reaction forces.

Phase II: The build up of forces south of the Song Huong and clearing that portion of the city of enemy forces.

Phase III: Operations within the Citadel.

Phase IV: Operations in urban and rural area south of the Phu Cam canal, north of the Song Van Huong and east of the city.

The dominating factors faced during the operation were poor weather, all Task Force X-Ray forces committed to other operations at the time Hue was occupied by the enemy, readjustment of AO's, and the need for additional forces to relieve Task Force X-Ray units for commitment to Hue.

During Phase I, Co A, 1st Bn, 1st Marines was committed in response to information that the MACV compound in Hue was under attack on 31 Jan 68 and receipt of an order to go to their assistance. Subsequently a report was received that the 1st ARVN Division Headquarters was under attack. This led to the commitment of the 1/1 battalion command group and Co G, 2d Bn, 5th Marines also on 31 January. A/1/1 had to fight its way into the city. Essentially Co A relieved pressure on the Army Advisor's compound as it passed, and crossed the Song Huong into the Citadel on the evening of the first day. It continued its attack for about a block, but stopped cold, the reason being that, at this early stage, there was still a prohibition against the use of supporting arms within the Citadel. G/2/5 and 1/1 command group closed on A/1/1 and during that first evening they held positions on the north bank of the river which divides the city until 2000 when the Marine mission was modified to clear that portion of the city south of the Song Huong. 1/1 pulled back and concentrated its position in the vicinity of the Army Advisor's Compound.

By D+4 the initial Marine buildup of forces was completed and Phase II began. Units in south Hue included 1st Marines command group, 1/1 (-) with companies A and B (-) and 2/5 (-) with companies F, G and H. Starting in the vicinity of the Advisor's compound, on D+1, their perimeter was slowly expanded to the southwest. As progress was made to the southwest, effort was also made towards the north and east limits of the city.

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By D+10 approximately two square kilometers had been cleared of enemy forces. For five of the critical 11 days, the main Route One bridge into the city was out.

On 10 February Phase III began with Task Force X-Ray receiving the mission of clearing the southeast corner of the Hue Citadel. This area included about 1 square kilometer of heavily built up area. 1st Battalion, 5th Marines was relieved in Phu Loc by 1/327, 1st Brigade, 101st Abn Div, which was OPCON to Task Force X-Ray, and displaced to the city. On 11 February, reinforced with 5 tanks and 4 ortos, 1/5 entered the northeast portion of the Citadel by LCU. The displacement was completed on the 12th and 1/5 commenced its attack at 0750 on the morning of the 13th. On 22 February the designated area was clear.

From 11 February, the start of Phase IV, to the end of the operation all three battalions of the 1st Marines (1/1 (-), 2/5 (-), and 1/5) operated increasingly in both tempo and area covered out from the southern portion of Hue. Operations were initially conducted to the south, then to the north and east.

Based on this background, the following remarks regard accomplishment, lesson learned, weaknesses and problems encountered. Casualties were moderate with a total of 142 friendly KIA. The strength of units became somewhat of a problem primarily because, with the exception of 1/1, and especially in the case of 1/5, units had been in the field in combat for varying prolonged periods of up to five weeks prior to Hue City. The foxhole strength of some companies was some 10% below normal. Another important factor, was that in some cases, because of prolonged periods of combat both before and during Hue City, small unit leaders had been lost and replacement had not arrived. However, the 1st Division gave priority of replacements to units in Hue City and provided a total of 825 personnel during the operation.

Intelligence prior to Hue City was, on the whole less than adequate. Although it was not surprising that the enemy undertook his TET offensive, it was surprising that so much strength was committed to it. Marine forces in Hue during the initial fighting did not have a clear picture of the number of enemy involved.

Initially there were restrictions which were observed regarding the use of supporting weapons in the city. In the Citadel indirect fire artillery and air strikes were not allowed initially, although this was soon lifted in some regards. In south Hue there were no restrictions regarding organic Division support weapons, but initially bombs and napalm were prohibited. On 14 February the use of napalm, CS and 2.35 rockets was authorized. On the 15th 500 pound bombs were included and later all restrictions were removed. The Tank and Ortos proved to be valuable weapons in the battle for Hue. The firepower and mobility of these vehicles was a necessity in the house to house fighting encountered during the battle.

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No malfunction reports of the M-16 rifle were reported at any time during the operation. Although conditions during the fighting were not the best it seemed that Marines had overcome the problems initially encountered with the weapon.

Mechanical mules were invaluable for both the evacuation of casualties and the bringing up of supplies.

Problems were encountered in the Citadel which did not exist in south Hue. In the latter houses were not as closely spaced and the walls were made of softer material than was encountered in the Citadel. Thus the walls in the south were easier to breach. Streets were wider and there were large areas with few buildings which permitted maneuvering in the southern portion of the city. In the Citadel houses were close together and built of masonry and stone. Streets were narrow and stone and masonry walls or hedgerows separated the houses. The hedgerows were interlaced with barbed wire or other obstacles making them extremely difficult to breach. Additionally each residence had its own foxholes and bunkers constructed by the residents for their own protection. Thus each house became a separate defensive position and each block a formidable bastion.

CS was used in all its forms. Fixed wing aircraft delivered CS in crystalline form in napalm tanks and it was sprayed delivered by helicopters. Success of air delivered CS was limited in the Citadel because many enemy troops had gas masks. Initially problems were encountered in adjusting 4.2 inch mortar CS rounds due to inexperience. CS shells were fired into open areas or set at too great a height of burst, minimizing their effect. Errors were quickly discovered and corrected and CS rounds were skillfully employed. CS grenades were used extensively throughout the operation. A large number of grenades had to be used in an area to obtain the desired concentration of gas. The E-8 CS launcher allowed CS to be projected further than the grenades could be thrown and delivered a sufficient concentration of gas to be effective.

Logistics was one of the two biggest problems encountered, the other being a lack of fixed wing air support. Both of these stemmed from continuous inclement weather which was almost constant between 31 January to 2 March. Logistics problems never became a deficiency. Not once during the 32 day battle did Marine units run out of ammunition. The only critical items on several occasion were 90 mm tank and 81 mm mortar ammunition. The logistics effort in support of the operation came from all areas and units including the Division staff, FLC, FLSG-A, NSA, Navy LCU's, and 1st MAW, just to name a few. Supplies not only came from Phu Bai, but Danang and Saigon as well. During the critical days, 5-10 February, when the bridge to Hue was out, total reliance for resupply was placed on helicopters and landing craft. The helicopters delivered over one million, fifty thousand pounds of supplies during the operation. The LCU's and LCM's contributed materially to the support of forces in Hue. River convoys from Tan My down the Song Huong battled through

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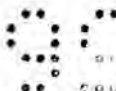
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ambushes and harassing fire. These craft were escorted by PBR's and UH-1E gunships. Artillery prep fire preceded the river convoys and 106mm recoilless rifles were placed on the landing craft. Five LCU's supported Task Force X-Ray with some 400 tons of supplies. The craft received numerous hits from enemy fire while transiting the river. One LCU blew up while carrying ammo and two LCM bladder refueler boats were hit, caught fire and were sunk or stranded. The banks of the Song Huong were cleared later in the operation as forces became available. Priority in LCU loads was for ammo and class II items critically needed. Although there were no specific logistic innovations, there were some practices which were necessary and effective. Most of these involved force feeding and preplanning. The Battalions and Regiment, because of the nature of the fighting, had difficulty in anticipating their needs and in ordering items sufficiently in advance. As a result, requests escalated quickly from routine, to priority, to emergency. To overcome this initial problem, and based on the experience of the first four days, Task Force X-Ray began to prestage a balanced package of usually needed supplies. As soon as higher priority cargo was delivered, these would then be delivered without a request. In this manner after the first few days, supplies were maintained at a good level.

Another problem encountered was ammo resupply. The helicopter pilots on more than one occasion were forced by enemy action to jettison their loads. When a complete sling of one type ammo was lost, the use of that type weapon was critically effected. Mixed ammo loads were instituted to prevent the loss of a certain type weapon caused by the loss of a sling of one specific type of ammunition. Except for the few days when the bridge was out, routine and priority resupply was adequately completed by Rough Rider from Phu Bai to Hue. Over 100 convoys proceeded from Phu Bai to Hue during the 32 days of the operation. Helicopters handled many emergency resupply missions. An ISA was initially located at the Hue LCU Ramp, but was subsequently moved to the Hue stadium where a safer LZ was available. A great deal of hard and sometimes dangerous work went into the logistic support of operation HUE CITY and the success of the operation in large part was dependent on the fine support provided. The ARVN forces participating in the battle for Hue were instrumental to the success of the operation. General Truong, the 1st ARVN Division Commander, had been advised of a possible offensive and had placed his staff and subordinate units on 100% alert. As a result they were not caught unaware during the initial phases of the TET offensive. By 1 February over six ARVN battalions had been brought into the Hue Citadel for its defense and two more arrived in the next two days. By the 10th these battalions had fought hard, had taken many casualties and were at the end of their capabilities. Realizing this, General Thuong asked for Marine assistance in the Citadel, as well as help from the Vietnamese Marines from Saigon. Three battalions of Vietnamese Marine were committed by the 16th replacing the airborne battalions, and later two Ranger Battalions were committed to the defense

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of Hue. All told the ARVN suffered 357 killed, 1830 wounded and 42 missing and killed 2642 enemy, captured 33 POW's, 681 individual weapons, and 129 crew served weapons.

16. RECOMMENDATIONS. None.

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