

Appendix B

Chronology of Significant Events

January–December 1968

- 1 January Allied and Communist forces in Vietnam begin the new year with a cease-fire. The allies report 63 violations of the truce.
- 1 January The Marine Corps troop level in Vietnam reaches 81,249. The III Marine Amphibious Force, which is responsible for I CTZ, begins the year with a total strength of 114,158 troops, composed of 76,616 Marines divided among the 1st Marine Division, the 3d Marine Division, the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing, and Force Logistic Command; 3,538 Navy personnel; and 36,816 Army personnel, including the Americal Division and one brigade of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, and 88 Air Force personnel.
- 3 January The 5th Marines concludes Operation Auburn south of Da Nang (28Dec67–3Jan68). The operation results in 37 reported enemy casualties with 24 Marines killed and 62 wounded.
- 11 January As part of Operation Checkers, in an effort to rotate units of the 1st Marine Division north to relieve the 3d Marine Division, Task Force X-Ray headquarters is activated at Phu Bai. Task Force X-Ray subsequently relieved the 3d Marine Division headquarters at Phu Bai, which moved to Dong Ha in Quang Tri Province.
- 16 January The 2d Battalion, 26th Marines reinforces the Marine base at Khe Sanh.
- 16 January A North Vietnamese representative states that North Vietnam will not begin peace talks until the United States halts bombing of the North.
- 20 January Operation Lancaster I (1Nov67–20Jan68), a 3d Marines operation to safeguard Route 9 between Cam Lo and Ca Lu, ends with a reported 46 enemy casualties and 27 Marines killed and 141 wounded.
- 20 January The 1st Marines concludes Operation Osceola I (20Oct67–20Jan68) in the Quang Tri City region. The operation resulted in a reported 76 enemy casualties with 17 Marines killed and 199 wounded.
- 20 January The 4th Marines concludes Operation Neosho I (1Nov67–20Jan68) northwest of Hue. The operation resulted in 77 reported enemy casualties with 12 Marines killed and 100 wounded.
- 20 January A Marine patrol participating in Operation Scotland makes contact with a heavy concentration of North Vietnamese troops around Hill 881 South near Khe Sanh. The ensuing battle signaled the beginning of the siege of Khe Sanh.
- 21 January The 1st Air Cavalry Division, USA, is placed under the operational control of III MAF commander, Marine Lieutenant General Robert E. Cushman, Jr.
- 21 January The 4th Marines begin Operation Lancaster II in the same area as Operation Lancaster I.
- 21 January The 3d Marines begin Operation Osceola II in the same area as Osceola I.
- 21 January General Westmoreland, Commander USMACV, orders a temporary halt to work on the “McNamara Line,” the barrier and antiinfiltration system south of the DMZ.
- 21 January The NVA begins the bombardment of the base at Khe Sanh and the Marine outposts in the surrounding hills. This rocket, mortar, and artillery barrage will continue for the next 77 days.

- 22 January The 1st Battalion, 9th Marines reinforces the garrison at Khe Sanh.
- 22 January The 1st Air Cavalry Division begins Operation Jeb Stuart in the northern part of I CTZ.
- 23 January The USS *Pueblo* (AGER 2), an American intelligence ship, is seized off the coast of Korea by the North Koreans.
- 23 January Special Landing Force Bravo consisting of BLT 3/1 and HMM-165 begins Operation Badger Catch near the Cua Viet River.
- 26 January Operation Badger Catch is renamed Operation Saline. The Marines in Badger Catch continue to work in conjunction with Operation Napoleon, a similar effort by the 1st Amphibian Tractor Battalion to keep the Cua Viet River supply line open.
- 27 January The seven-day Communist ceasefire for the Tet holiday begins.
- 29 January The allied ceasefire for the Tet holiday begins in all of South Vietnam except I CTZ.
- 30 January Enemy troops launch the beginning of their Tet offensive in I Corps, attacking Da Nang and several cities south of the base.
- 31 January The NVA opens its Tet offensive throughout South Vietnam with attacks against 39 provincial capitals and major cities including Saigon and Hue.
- 31 January VC troops fail in an attempt to seize the U.S. Embassy in Saigon after breaching the compound.
- 31 January Gen Leonard F. Chapman becomes the 24th Commandant of the Marine Corps, upon the retirement of the former Commandant, Gen Wallace M. Greene, Jr.
- 31 January 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division launches a counter-offensive air assault into the city of Quang Tri.
- January Operation Kentucky in "Leatherneck Square," south of the DMZ, resulted in 353 reported enemy casualties.
- January The Americal Division continues Operation Wheeler/ Wallowa south of Da Nang.
- 1 February The 1st Brigade, 1st Air Cavalry Division together with ARVN forces successfully defend the city of Quang Tri. The enemy sustained 900 reported casualties and 100 captured.
- 1 February Richard M. Nixon announces his candidacy for president.
- 1 February Units of the 1st and 5th Marines begin Operation Hue City to drive the NVA out of the city.
- 5 February Marines from the 26th Marines at Khe Sanh repel a battalion-sized attack killing a reported 109 NVA soldiers with 7 Marines killed and 15 wounded.
- 7 February NVA units overrun the Special Forces base at Lang Vei, west of Khe Sanh.
- 7 February Elements of the 3d Marines, 5th Marines, and the Americal Division engage the *2d NVA Division* in fighting around Da Nang.
- 9 February III MAF units succeed in throwing back the *2d NVA Division* offensive at Da Nang.
- 9 February MACV Forward, under General Creighton B. Abrams, Deputy Commander USMACV, is established in I CTZ at Phu Bai.
- 13 February The headquarters and combat elements of the 101st Airborne Division arrive in I CTZ.
- 16 February Operation Osceola II ends. This operation resulted in 21 reported enemy casualties with 2 Marines killed and 74 wounded.
- 23 February NVA troops fire more than 1,300 shells into the Marine garrison at Khe Sanh. This barrage marks the heaviest shelling of the entire siege.

- 24 February American and South Vietnamese troops capture the Citadel in Hue.
- 25 February American forces declare the city of Hue secure.
- 29 February Operation Saline is combined with Operation Napoleon.
- February The 27th Marines arrives in Da Nang from the U.S. as part of the reinforcements approved by President Lyndon B. Johnson. The President made extensive reductions to original recommendations of MACV and the JCS.
- February Operation Kentucky results in 398 reported enemy casualties with 90 Marines killed and 277 wounded.
- 1 March Clark Clifford replaces Robert S. McNamara as Secretary of Defense.
- 2 March Operation Hue City ends successfully as the 1st and 5th Marines defeat the NVA assault in Hue. The operation resulted in 1,943 enemy casualties with 142 Marines killed and 1,005 wounded.
- 10 March MACV Forward is deactivated.
- 10 March Provisional Corps Vietnam is created. This command, led by Lieutenant General William B. Rosson, USA, controls the 3rd Marine Division, the 1st Air Cavalry Division, and the 101st Airborne Division and is subordinate to Lieutenant General Cushman, commander of III MAF.
- 12 March Senator Eugene McCarthy makes a substantial showing in the New Hampshire primary, winning 40 percent of the vote, with President Johnson winning 49 percent.
- 16 March Troops from the Americal Division massacre more than 100 civilians, mostly women and children, in the village of My Lai.
- 21 March As part of the Single Management System, the Seventh Air Force assumes responsibility for coordinating and controlling all fixed-wing aircraft missions, including those of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing.
- 31 March Operation Scotland (1Nov67–31Mar68) near Khe Sanh ends. The operation, which included the defense of the besieged garrison of Khe Sanh, resulted in a reported 1,631 enemy casualties with 204 Marines killed and 1,622 wounded in action.
- 31 March The 1st Cavalry Division concludes Operation Jeb Stuart. This operation resulted in a reported 3,268 enemy casualties with 284 Army personnel killed and 1,717 wounded.
- 31 March President Johnson announces a partial halt in the bombing of North Vietnam and that he will send an additional 13,500 troops to South Vietnam. In a surprise move, the President declares that he will not run for re-election due to the war in Vietnam and public unrest at home.
- March Operation Kentucky results in a reported 413 enemy casualties with 38 Marines killed and 217 wounded.
- 1 April The 1st Air Cavalry Division together with units from the 1st Marines and the ARVN, begins Operation Pegasus from the Marine base of Ca Lu to relieve the Marine garrison at Khe Sanh.
- 9 April U. S. troops retake the Special Forces Camp at Lang Vei, southwest of Khe Sanh.
- 15 April Operation Pegasus ends with the relief and resupply of Khe Sanh. The operation resulted in 1,044 reported enemy casualties, with 51 Marines killed and 459 wounded. The 1st Air Cavalry Division suffered 41 personnel killed and 208 wounded.
- 15 April With the relief of Khe Sanh and the end of Operation Pegasus, Operation Scotland II, a continuation of Marine Corps action around the base at Khe Sanh begins.

- 19 April Elements of the 1st Air Cavalry Division, the 101st Airborne Division, and several ARVN units begin Operation Delaware/Lam Son 216. This operation takes place in the A Shau Valley and is designed as a spoiling assault to disrupt enemy preparations for another attack on Hue.
- 30 April NVA units are engaged in the village of Dai Do by BLT 2/4. Heavy fighting in this area continues until 3 May.
- 4 May The 7th Marines begin Operation Allen Brook, an operation designed to disrupt the growing enemy presence South of Da Nang.
- 30 April–17May Marine, Army, and ARVN units succeed in thwarting a possible enemy assault on Dong Ha. The NVA suffered a reported 1,547 casualties while the allies sustained casualties of nearly 300 dead and 1,000 wounded.
- 4 May The 7th Marines begin Operation Allen Brook, an operation designed to disrupt the growing enemy presence south of Da Nang.
- 5 May Signalling the second major offensive of the year, enemy troops launch 119 rocket and mortar attacks on towns and cities throughout South Vietnam.
- 13 May Peace talks among North Vietnam, South Vietnam, and the United States begin in Paris.
- 17 May Operation Delaware/Lam Son 216 ends with a reported 735 enemy casualties with 142 Army personnel killed and 731 wounded.
- 17 May 1st Air Cavalry Division begins Operation Jeb Stuart III along the border of Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces.
- 18 May Battalions from the 1st Marine Division begin Operation Mameluke Thrust in the central regions of Quang Nam Province.
- 20 May Major General Raymond G. Davis replaces Major General Rathvon McC. Tompkins as Commanding General, 3d Marine Division.
- 22 May The Marine Corps makes its first use of the North American OV-10A Bronco as an observation and counter-insurgency aircraft.
- 26 May Major General Rathvon McC. Tompkins becomes Deputy Commander of III MAF, replacing Major General William J. Van Ryzin.
- 27 May Peace talks between the United States and North Vietnam break down in Paris.
- May Operation Kentucky results in a reported 817 enemy casualties with 134 Marines killed and 611 wounded.
- May Marine Corps force levels in Vietnam reach 89,000.
- 1 June Lieutenant General Henry W. Buse, Jr., replaces Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak as the Commanding General, Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.
- 5 June Robert F. Kennedy is assassinated.
- 26 June Major General Carl A. Youngdale relieves Major General Donn J. Robertson as Commander of the 1st Marine Division.
- 27 June Marine troops begin to dismantle and withdraw from their static defense base at Khe Sanh.
- 1 July General Creighton Abrams relieves General William Westmoreland as Commander USMACV.
- 1 July Operation Thor begins in the eastern part of the DMZ. Planes from the Air Force, the Navy, and the Marine Corps, as well as artillery from Army and Marine artillery batteries in the DMZ sector and naval gunfire from cruisers and destroyers off the coast pound enemy artillery installations in the DMZ.
- 7 July Operation Thor ends.
- 25 July The 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized), USA, arrives in I CTZ and is placed under the operational control of III MAF.

- 15 August Provisional Corps Vietnam is deactivated and replaced by XXIV Corps.
- 23 August Operation Allen Brook ends. This operation resulted in 1,017 reported enemy casualties with 172 Marines killed and 1,124 wounded.
- 23 August Enemy troops mount their third major offensive by firing on 27 different allied installations and cities including Hue, Da Nang Air Base, and Quang Tri City. The major thrust of this effort is the city of Da Nang. The Communists fall far short of their objective due to resistance of U.S. Army, Marine Corps, and South Vietnamese troops.
- 24 August The Democratic Party Convention begins in Chicago. Vietnam War protesters clash violently with police for the next four days.
- 29 September The USS *New Jersey* (BB 62) arrives off the coast of the DMZ. The arrival of this battleship greatly increases the Navy's firepower and power projection in the eastern DMZ.
- September Engagements from Operation Kentucky result in 305 reported enemy casualties with 1 Marine killed and 8 wounded.
- 6 October 7th Marines begin Operation Maui Peak, an effort to relieve the Special Forces base at Thuong Duc in Quang Nam Province.
- 19 October Operation Maui Peak ends, resulting in 202 reported enemy casualties with 28 Marines killed and 143 wounded.
- 23 October Operation Mameluke Thrust ends, resulting in 2,728 reported enemy casualties with 269 Marines killed and 1,730 wounded.
- 23 October The 5th Marines begins Operation Henderson Hill in Quang Nam Province as a continuation of Operation Mameluke Thrust.
- 28 October The 1st Air Cavalry Division begins to move from I CTZ to III CTZ.
- 31 October President Johnson announces a complete halt in the bombing and naval bombardment of North Vietnam.
- 1 November North Vietnamese officials announce that they will meet in Paris with representatives from the United States, South Vietnam, and the National Liberation Front to begin peace talks.
- 1 November South Vietnamese units, aided by squads and platoons of American troops, begin the Accelerated Pacification (*Le Loi*) Campaign in order to regain the trust and control of South Vietnamese villages lost due to the major enemy offensives of the year.
- 2 November South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van Thieu states that his nation will not negotiate in Paris if the Communist National Liberation Front is given equal status with the other participants.
- 3 November Operation Jeb Stuart III ends. This operation resulted in 2,016 reported enemy casualties with 212 Army personnel killed and 1,512 wounded.
- 5 November Richard Nixon wins the presidential election by narrowly defeating Hubert Humphrey.
- 11 November The Americal Division ends Operation Wheeler/Wallowa after 14 months in the Nui Loc Son Valley. This operation resulted in a reported 10,020 enemy casualties with 683 Army personnel killed and 3,597 wounded.
- 20 November The 1st Marines begin Operation Meade River, nine miles south of Da Nang, in support of the South Vietnamese Accelerated Pacification Campaign.
- 23 November Operation Lancaster II ends. This operation resulted in a reported 1,800 enemy casualties with 359 Marines killed and 2,101 wounded.
- 26 November President Johnson states that the peace talks will include the United States, South Vietnam, and a Communist delegation which consists of representatives from North Vietnam and the National Liberation Front.

- 6 December Operation Henderson Hill ends. This action resulted in a reported 700 enemy casualties and 35 Marines killed and 273 wounded.
- 9 December Operation Napoleon/Saline ends, resulting in a reported 3,495 enemy casualties with 353 Marines killed and 1,959 wounded.
- 9 December Operation Meade River ends with 841 reported enemy casualties with 107 Marines killed and 522 wounded.
- 21 December Major General Carl A. Youngdale relieves Major General Rathvon McC. Tompkins as Deputy Commanding General, III MAF. Major General Ormond R. Simpson relieves Major General Youngdale as Commanding General, 1st Marine Division.
- 29 December Camp Carroll, the artillery base that supported the garrison at Khe Sanh, is deactivated.
- 29 December Allied troops in Vietnam announce that they will not honor any holiday truces.
- December III MAF ends the year with operational control of the 1st Marine Division, the 3d Marine Division, the 1st Marine Air Wing, the Marine Force Logistic Command, the 101st Airborne Division, the Americal Division, and the 1st Brigade, 5th Infantry Division (Mechanized).
- December The year closes with 31,691 reported enemy casualties at the hands of Marine units in III MAF. The cost of the year's fighting to the Marine Corps was 4,618 Marines killed and 29,320 wounded.