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MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY

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INDEX

PAGE

Chronology of Significant Events ii

River Patrol Force 1

Flood Operations in the Plain of Reeds 3
Delta River Patrol Group 12
Rung Sat Special Zone Patrol Group 30

Coastal Surveillance Force 37

Beached Junk Incident 37
PACV/PBR Collision 38
Mortar Explosion Aboard PCF 9 39
Evasion and Hostile Fire Incidents 40
Gunfire Support Missions. 42
Operations 45
MARKET TIME Unit Changes 47

U.S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon 49

Salvage 52

3rd Naval Construction Brigade 54

U.S. Naval Support Activity, DaNang 55

Civic Action and Psychological Operations 57

Naval Advisory Group 61

Vietnamese Navy 61
Operations 62
Maintenance and Supply 67
Vietnamese Marine Corps 67

APPENDIX I MARKET TIME Statistical Summary, October 1966

APPENDIX II GAME WARDEN Statistical Summary, October 1966

APPENDIX III Revised Rules of Engagement - GAME WARDEN

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CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT INCIDENTS

27 Sep - 17 Oct - Flood operations in the Plain of Reeds resulted in a large number of enemy killed; junks, sampans and structures destroyed; and quantities of Viet Cong supplies captured. p. 3.

2 Oct - Vietnamese Navy LSSL mined near My Tho. p. 13.

3 Oct - SEALs killed two or three Viet Cong and captured one CHICOM carbine. One SEAL wounded. p. 31.

4 Oct - Sampan, three CHICOM rifles, two bandoleers, ten grenades and a grenade launcher attachment for a rifle captured and three Viet Cong killed by PBRs. p. 13.

- Vietnamese Navy FOM mined and destroyed. p. 66.

- PCF 21, while conducting NGFS, killed three Viet Cong and destroyed three bunkers. p. 42.

5 Oct - PBR and PACV collided. Three U.S. Navymen injured. Both boats damaged. p. 38.

6 Oct - Attempted mining of Vietnamese Navy MLMS and attack on U.S. MSBs in the area. p. 32.

- Viet Cong fired mortars at PBRs on Long Tau River. Minor material damage; no personnel casualties. p. 33.

7 Oct - Viet Cong ambushed SEAL LCM-3. Fifteen U.S. personnel wounded when mortar round hit the LCM. p. 33.

12 Oct - PCF 72 and USCGC POINT COMFORT conduct NGFS mission. Spotter aircraft reported one bunker and three structures destroyed and five other structures damaged. p. 43.

- SS CLARKSBURG VICTORY struck a submerged wreck. p. 52.

16 Oct - 26 Oct - MARKET TIME units provide NGFS for Operation PEPPER BUSH on Phu Quoc Island. p. 44.

18 Oct - Mortar exploded aboard PCF 9. Three crewmen killed and two wounded. Boat damaged extensively. p. 39.

19 Oct - Viet Cong commandeered grounded cargo junk "HAI KHOM". U.S. Marine reaction force killed one Viet Cong and captured six suspects. p. 37.

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19 Oct - GAME WARDEN helo fire team destroyed or damaged seven sampans. p. 16.

21 Oct - Viet Cong exploded claymore in Tra On market place. Numerous Vietnamese casualties; no U.S. casualties. p. 17.

22 Oct - PBRs detained three Viet Cong suspects. p. 18.

- GAME WARDEN helos destroyed 20 sampans and eight huts and killed two Viet Cong. p. 19.

26 Oct - PBRs and helos thwarted Viet Cong crossing. One U.S. Navyman killed. Four Viet Cong confirmed killed and one sampan burned. p. 22.

27 Oct - PCF 68 and USCGC POINT GAMMON destroyed two junks and damaged seven. p. 41.

28 Oct - PCF 68 fired on junk which was destroyed by a secondary explosion. p. 41.

31 Oct - Captain Tran Van CHON appointed Commander-in-Chief of the Vietnamese Navy. p. 61.

- PBRs and helos interrupted major Viet Cong crossing. Fifty-seven junks and sampans destroyed and six junks and sampans captured. Two Viet Cong confirmed killed. No U.S. personnel casualties. p. 25.

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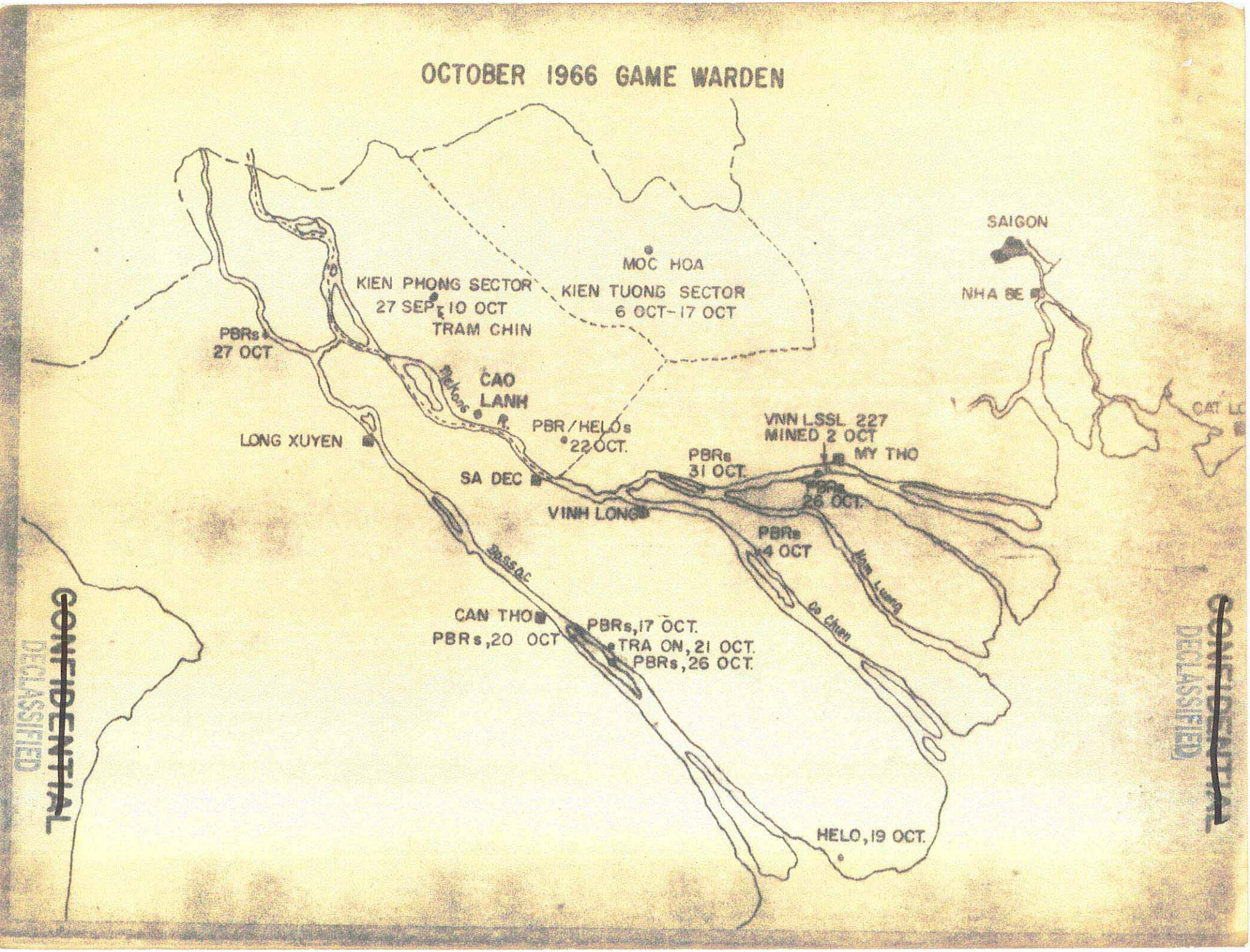
OCTOBER 1966 GAME WARDEN
SAIGON
NHA BE
MOC HOA
KIEN TUONG SECTOR
6 OCT-17 OCT
KIEN PHONG SECTOR
27 SEP-10 OCT
TRAM CHIN
PBRs
27 OCT
CAO
LANH
Mekong R.
PBR/HELOs
22 OCT.
LONG XUYEN
VNN LSSL 227
MINED 2 OCT
MY THO
PBRs
31 OCT.
SA DEC
PBRs
26 OCT.
VINH LONG
PBRs
4 OCT
Bassac
Ham Luong
Co Chien
CAN THO
PBRs,20 OCT
PBRs,17 OCT.
TRA ON, 21 OCT.
PBRs,26 OCT.
HELO,19 OCT.
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RIVER PATROL FORCE

During the month of October, the River Patrol Force continued to carry out its mission of denying the waterways of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone to the Viet Cong, and, in a novel operation in the flooded Plain of Reeds, extended its operations into areas long under Viet Cong domination.

On two occasions, Task Force 116 units broke up estimated battalion size Viet Cong river crossings. On 26 October, Binh Thuy based PBRs of TE 116.1.1.1 stopped a crossing in the Bassac downstream from Can Tho, and on 31 October GAME WARDEN forces captured six enemy craft, destroyed 50 Viet Cong sampans and junks, and damaged seven sampans in the Mekong near My Tho.

The development of helo fire team/PBR tactics continued. In all the actions mentioned above, Navy helicopters were used as rapid reaction forces and/or for armed reconnaissance in support of the River Patrol boats.

On 21 October, Can Tho PBRs evacuated 49 victims of a Viet Cong claymore mine from the town of Tra On. Navymen from the GAME WARDEN base at Binh Thuy also gave blood to aid the victims of the terrorist blast. GAME WARDEN helos evacuated wounded Regional Force troops from their outpost near Can Tho on 15 October, and PBRs MEDEVACED wounded Vietnamese troops on 19 and 23 October.

On 19 and 23 October, PBRs came to the assistance of Vietnamese outposts under attack by the Viet Cong. PBRs provided blocking forces and fire support for Vietnamese ground operations on 22 and

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31 October in the Mekong Delta.

During the support of the ground operations on 31 October, Binh Thuy PBRs, with an Army airborne observer spotting for them, delivered the Navy's first recorded indirect fire with an M-79 grenade launcher.

SEAL teams operating in the Rung Sat Special Zone killed two Viet Cong in an ambush on 3 October; then suffered 15 wounded when their LCM-3 was ambushed by the Viet Cong on 7 October.

The Viet Cong attempted to mine a Vietnamese Navy minesweeping launch on the morning of 6 October during an ambush in the Rung Sat Special Zone. On 8 October and again on 24 October, Viet Cong mines were found in the RSSZ.

In the Delta, the Vietnamese Navy LSSL 227 was the victim of a mining near My Tho when two charges blew holes in the hull in the early morning of 2 October.

During the month of October, GAME WARDEN forces detained a total of 494 persons. Among the detainees were a suspected Viet Cong "tax collector", three persons detained during the Vietnamese ground operation on 22 October, and a woman who was found with Viet Cong papers and 1,000 pounds of unmanifested rice aboard a ferry on 28 October. A suspected deserter was detained when he attempted to escape from the same ferry in which the woman suspect was found on 28 October.

Revised rules of engagement for River Patrol forces went into

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effect on 21 October.[1] Basically, these revised rules allow PBRs to direct fire against an evading junk or sampan, after all other methods have failed to stop it.

FLOOD OPERATIONS IN THE PLAIN OF REEDS

By the latter part of September, it had become apparent that the Mekong Delta would be flooded to a greater extent than usual, providing an excellent opportunity to use PBRs in areas where they could not normally operate. At the same time, the floods would serve to hamper enemy operations by restricting his movements and by denying him cover along the river banks.

CTG 116.1, in concert with the Senior Advisor, IV Corps, and the Regional Director, United States Agency for International Development (USAID), set up a plan designed to exploit the advantages mentioned above. PBRs, Army and Navy helicopters, and local troops (Civilian Irregular Defense Group and Regional Force/Popular Force) operating from swimmer boats were used to reach the Viet Cong in areas where he had normally operated with impunity, and to carry out flood relief programs under the auspices of USAID.

The objectives of the operation were as follows:

1. To separate the Viet Cong from the civilian population in the Plain of Reeds, an area where the Viet Cong had long held control.
2. To reconnoiter actively in order to locate and destroy enemy forces and arms caches.

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[1] See Appendix III for the Revised Rules of Engagement

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3. To utilize the mobility and security of seaborne forces to destroy the enemy, and to maintain contact with him while directing supporting arms.
4. To provide blocking forces for the Republic of Vietnam Army search and destroy and reaction forces.
5. To gather intelligence and historical information on Viet Cong activities, and to gather topographical and hydrographic data on the area for future operations.
6. To provide forces and material for psychological operations, and to provide flood relief for the populace.

In addition, the flood operations would provide an opportunity to test the capability of the PBR to operate in a novel environment, away from their normal bases, and with a minimum of support. What support was available was what could be carried on the boats themselves or brought in by helicopter. Personnel from NSAS Detachment My Tho accompanied the boats during their deployment at Moc Hoa in the Plain of Reeds.

While most of the two sectors, Kien Phong and Kien Tuong, were flooded to sufficient depth to float a PBR, rice stalks, grass and debris frequently plugged the PBR pumps and hampered the boats' speed and maneuverability.

Kien Phong Sector

Flood operations in Kien Phong Sector commenced on 27 September, when two PBRs from TU 116.1.2 (Sa Dec) formed a night reaction force to defend against Viet Cong attacks on Agroville hamlets, and to

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provide day flood relief operations, such as transporting a Korean Innoculation Team. The two PBRs were based at Tram Chin hamlet, and operated in conjunction with units of RAG 23, providing blocking forces for a Kien Phong Sector operation which was conducted in phases on 3, 4, 5, 7-8, 10-11, 13 and 16 October. The PBRs were fueled by a Vietnamese Navy LSIL anchored near Cao Lanh on the Mekong. Helo fire teams operating from Vinh Long (TE 116.1.9.3) and Binh Thuy (TE 116.1.4.2) provided air support on 10-11, 13 and 16 October.

The PBRs accounted for three Viet Cong killed and 12 sampans destroyed; the helo fire team for 29 Viet Cong killed, six Viet Cong wounded, 37 structures damaged or destroyed and 39 sampans sunk. The Regional Force/Popular Force troops, operating from swimmer support boats, and supported by the Navy PBR/helo fire team, accounted for another 97 Viet Cong killed, 130 Viet Cong captured, numerous small arms and ammunition (including 1,559 grenades in a weapons factory), mines and documents captured.

Kien Tuong Sector

The Kien Tuong Sector campaign began on 5 October, when eight PBRs from TU 116.1.3 (My Tho), with support elements from NSAS Detachment My Tho, got underway for Moc Hoa as TE 116.1.3.5. In transit, the PBRs got some taste of the difficulties which would lie ahead; e.g. plugged pumps and low bridges which, because of flood conditions, had to be bypassed.

The task element arrived in Sa Dec, topped off fuel, and

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departed for the Tram Chin outpost, three hours behind time and proceeding against the current. After spending the night anchored off Tram Chin, the element was underway at 0800, heading east on the Kinh Dong Kien Canal, then turned into the Kin Cung Canal, arriving at Kinh Quan at 1100.

At this point, a footbridge crosses the canal with insufficient clearance for a PBR to pass under. One PBR managed to struggle through mud and grass and get around the bridge. The rest of the boats were towed around the bridge, and an hour later were headed fair up the canal for Moc Hoa where they commenced both independent reconnaissance operations as well as acting in support of U.S. Special Forces and subsector Civilian Irregular Defense Group troops.

On 7 October two PBRs supported subsector operations, while the remaining six boats conducted independent reconnaissance. On 8 October six boats supported subsector Operation BISMARCK I, a Civilian Irregular Defense Group operation, while two boats remained in Moc Hoa for maintenance. The next day, two of the BISMARCK PBRs returned with wounded while four remained in Binh Than Thong sub-sector in support of BISMARCK II. On 10 October six PBRs conducted armed reconnaissance while two remained at Moc Hoa.

Reconnaissance and search and destroy operations, which covered approximately 80% of Kien Tuong Sector, were conducted on 11 and 12 October. As of 12 October, results were as follows:

2 USN wounded (neither seriously)
1 Viet Cong killed

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38 Viet Cong huts destroyed
4 Viet Cong bunkers destroyed
10 Viet Cong bunkers discovered, beyond capability of PBRs to destroy
1 Viet Cong sampan destroyed
3,880 lbs rice, 120 lbs salt, 300 lbs manioc and 10 gallons nuoc mam captured or destroyed
1 booby trap destroyed
1 sewing machine plus miscellaneous equipment, vases, clothing, utensils, etc. captured or destroyed

As of 13 October, Moc Hoa units had made no contact with the enemy in force. Likewise, logistic difficulties had plagued the helo fire team and severely limited their operations so that there had been no real test of PBR/helo coordinated operations.

On 14 October at 1145, PBRs 110, 111 and 113 spotted two large sampans crossing north in the Vam Co Tay River about 20 miles ESE of Moc Hoa. Approximately 12 men in a nearby rice paddy opened fire on the PBRs who promptly returned the fire, killing two Viet Cong (confirmed) and an estimated additional ten Viet Cong. PBR 111 captured one sampan.

At 1214, a USAF Forward Air Controller and an Army helo fire team arrived on the scene. The fire team estimated that an enemy company was in the area, and an immediate air strike was launched. The PBRs moved east in the river to block a possible escape route in a canal. One of the PBRs spotted many sampans moving north on a stream, apparently heading for the III Corps Tactical Zone. CIDG troops in swimmer support boats, with PBRs providing covering fire, moved in to search huts in the area while a helo fire team furnished air support. One Viet Cong was killed and two wounded were found in a hut. The wounded were transferred to PBR 111.

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PBRs 101, 106 and 117 joined at 1607, and the six boats formed a mobile blocking force. At 1610 the Navy helo fire team arrived on the scene to provide support. When the helos retired at 1830, the CIDG troops began extracting under the guns of the PBRs. Four PBRs remained in the area overnight to provide a blocking force.

In addition to the Viet Cong killed by the PBRs, the helo fire team accounted for three Viet Cong killed, two Viet Cong wounded, 30 sampans destroyed and a Viet Cong plastic assault boat, five kilos of documents, one rifle and two sampans captured.

No further contact was made with the Viet Cong company whose attempt to cross from IV Corps Tactical Zone into III Corps Tactical Zone was broken up by the quick reaction of the PBRs, Air Force spotters, Army and Navy helo fire teams, and Vietnamese ground troops.

Operations continued through the 17th when all units got underway for their normal operating area. There was no further major contact with the enemy.

The sectors in which the flood operations were conducted had long been regarded as Viet Cong territory. Yet, the PBRs were able to move with impunity over the 80% of the territory which was navigable. The same flood waters which allowed the afloat forces to move freely denied the enemy cover, and often made survival his primary concern.

The psychological effect of the PBRs on the Vietnamese troops is perhaps best expressed by a quote from one of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group men who participated in the subsector

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operations supported by the PBRs, "We feel much braver with those big .50 caliber machine guns to help us."

In all, the PBRs supported six sector or subsector operations, which resulted in the following:

139 Viet Cong killed
38 Viet Cong captured
94 weapons captured (including 1 AA machine gun, 2 BARs, 2 Thompsons and an assortment of U.S., CHICOM and Russian rifles)
90 mines captured or destroyed
102 grenades, 200 rounds small arms ammo, 30 kilos documents, 30 kilos of rice, 3 motor boats and 1 sampan captured
70 sampans, 1,000 kilos of rice, 5,000 kilos of flour and 182 structures destroyed

Support rendered sector and subsector operations included gunfire support, blocking forces, flank security and providing a ready reserve.

In addition, both PBRs and helos provided flood relief and civic action programs for the civilian population. One hundred PsyOps buckets (a small plastic bucket containing soap, cloth, needles and thread and Government literature), ten cases of soup, nine cases of canned milk, 50 lbs of salt and hundreds of pro-government leaflets were distributed to the local populace. The U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) provided an additional 250,000 dong for flood relief as the waters receded.

Lessons Learned

1. While the operations were largely successful in attaining their goals, they probably would have been much more effective had the boats been positioned before the floods reached their maximum stage.

It became apparent that the Viet Cong may have abandoned the area to seek higher ground, either in Cambodia or in Dinh Tuong

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Province to the south where lack of water depth hampered PBR mobility. Had the PBRs been operating in the area before the Viet Cong movement started, much more dramatic results might have been gained.

2. Airborne spotters, both fixed wing and helo, were helpful in assisting boats to find clear water areas where PBRs could utilize their speed and maneuverability. In areas where grass and rice broke the surface, the mobility of the PBR was severely restricted.

3. Swimmers should be employed to clean bottoms and intakes for the PBRs. Intakes continually become clogged and divers must be used to clear the rice, grass and snakes from the pumps.

4. When operating in shallow water, PBRs should maintain speed and keep going as long as possible. This may result in a strung-out formation, but it is the only way to effect rapid movement in this type of environment.

5. Initial problems involving helo/PBR operations included too little fuel, poor communications, diversion of helos for MEDEVAC and too few helicopters to perform all the missions desired. However, toward the end of the period, helicopters were being utilized in support of PBRs and their effectiveness is illustrated by the results of the major engagement on the 14th.

6. During the engagement on the 14th, the Viet Cong moved in open country in squad-sized groups which stayed close together. The men remained hunched over in their "black pajama" uniforms which, to the naked eye, gave the appearance of a group of water buffalo

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moving through the paddies. Binoculars were necessary to make positive identification.

7. The Viet Cong had well-developed facilities in the area. Many of the huts destroyed were well hidden; made of rice stalk material and hardly distinguishable from the surrounding terrain. Nearly every hut had a mud bunker nearby where the Viet Cong could seek shelter from air attack and direct fire at ground troops during the dry season. Viet Cong strongholds were composed of separate, spread-out buildings generally well-concealed from the air, the surface and even each other.

8. Many platforms were noted in the trees along waterways from which the enemy could direct plunging fire at passing watercraft. The PBRs were not engaged by any of these prepared positions. It was believed however, that the platforms were too flimsy for heavy machine guns or recoilless rifles, and that with the water level being what it was, that there would have been no particular trouble in dealing with them.

9. Of historical interest is the "War of 1812 Lesson Learned"[2] that the ancient practice of kedging was found to be the only effective method of moving through some of the old canals which had been grown over by an "indescribable mossy quagmire."[3]

It was apparent from this operation that the combination of

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[2] CTE 116.1.3.5 msg 161445Z OCT 66

[3] CTU 116.1.3 msg 231406Z OCT 66

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imagination, initiative, careful planning and close co-operation between services had overcome obstacles ranging from enemy fire to improbable operating conditions, in order to make a major contribution to the allied effort in the Delta. This can be summed up in the following message sent by COMNAVFORV to all hands participating in the operation:

181102Z OCT 66
UNCLAS
DELTA FLOOD OPS
1. EXTEND TO ALL UNITS CONCERNED MY PROFOUND APPRECIATION FOR THEIR IMAGINATIVE AND RESOURCEFUL CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE IMMENSELY SUCCESSFUL DELTA FLOOD OPERATIONS.
2. IT APPEARS ALL HANDS TIED DOWN THE SAFETY VALVES IN ORIGINALITY, FLEXIBILITY AND INDIVIDUALISM FOR ALL PHASES OF THIS EXCELLENTLY COORDINATED VENTURE. THE PERFECT TEAMWORK, AGGRESSIVE FORAYS AND YANKEE INGENUITY DEALT THE VIET CONG A SURPRISING AND STUNNING BLOW AND YET PROVIDED IMMENSE MORALE AND MATERIAL SUCCOR TO OUR ALLIES.
3. THE SIGNIFICANT DAMAGE YOU CAUSED THE ENEMY IN PERSONNEL AND MATERIAL HAS EMPHATICALLY ASSISTED IN ATTAINING THE FREE WORLD FORCES GOALS IN THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM.
4. TO ALL THOSE WHO PARTICIPATED IN THIS UNIQUE ENDEAVOR I EXTEND A SINCERE WELL DONE. RADM WARD SENDS.

DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

While some of the forces assigned the Delta River Patrol Group were diverted to the flood operations during the first half of October, regular river patrols were maintained at their normal level by increasing the load on units not directly involved.

The following is a summary of the month's operations by the Delta River Patrol Group:

1-6 October

On 1 October PBRs 32 and 99, patrolling on the Bassac River 46 miles southeast of Can Tho, hailed a sampan. When the sampan

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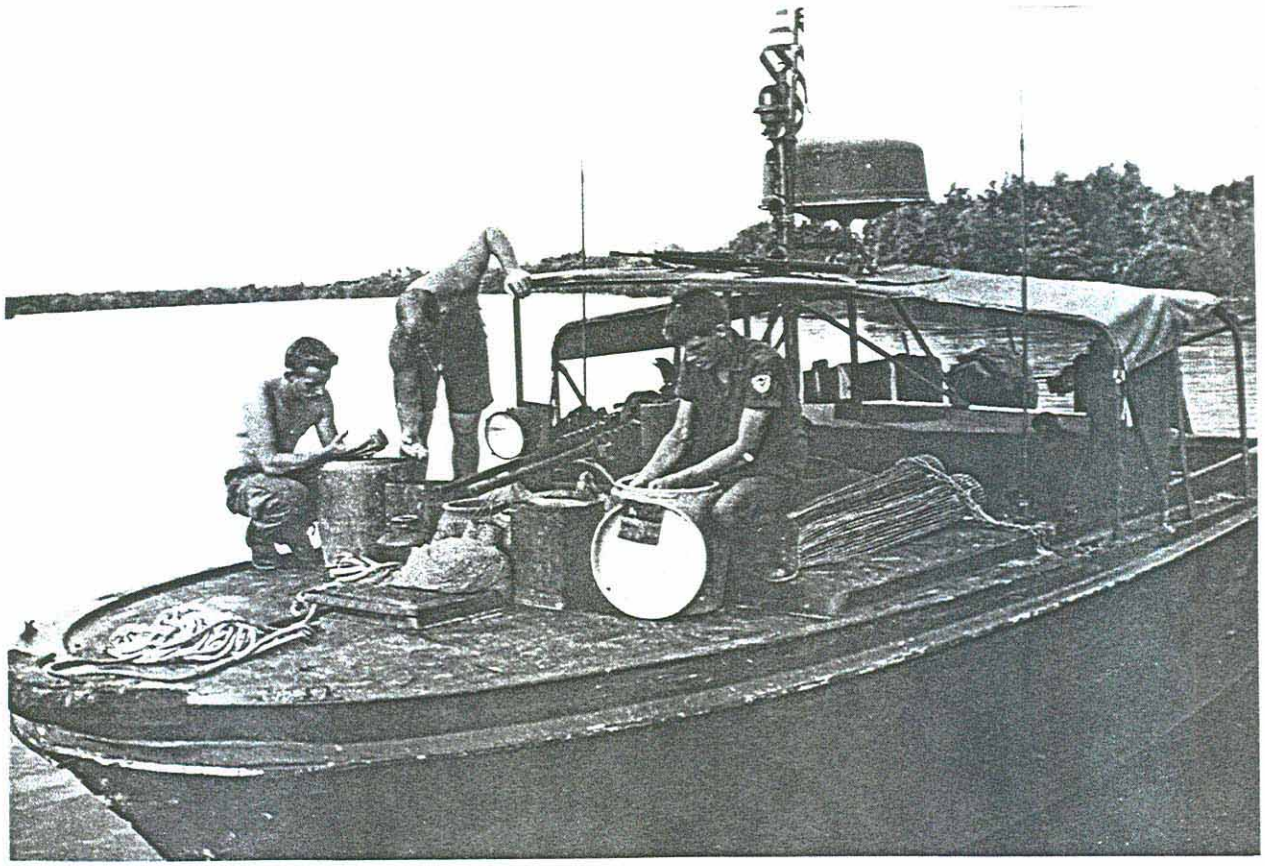
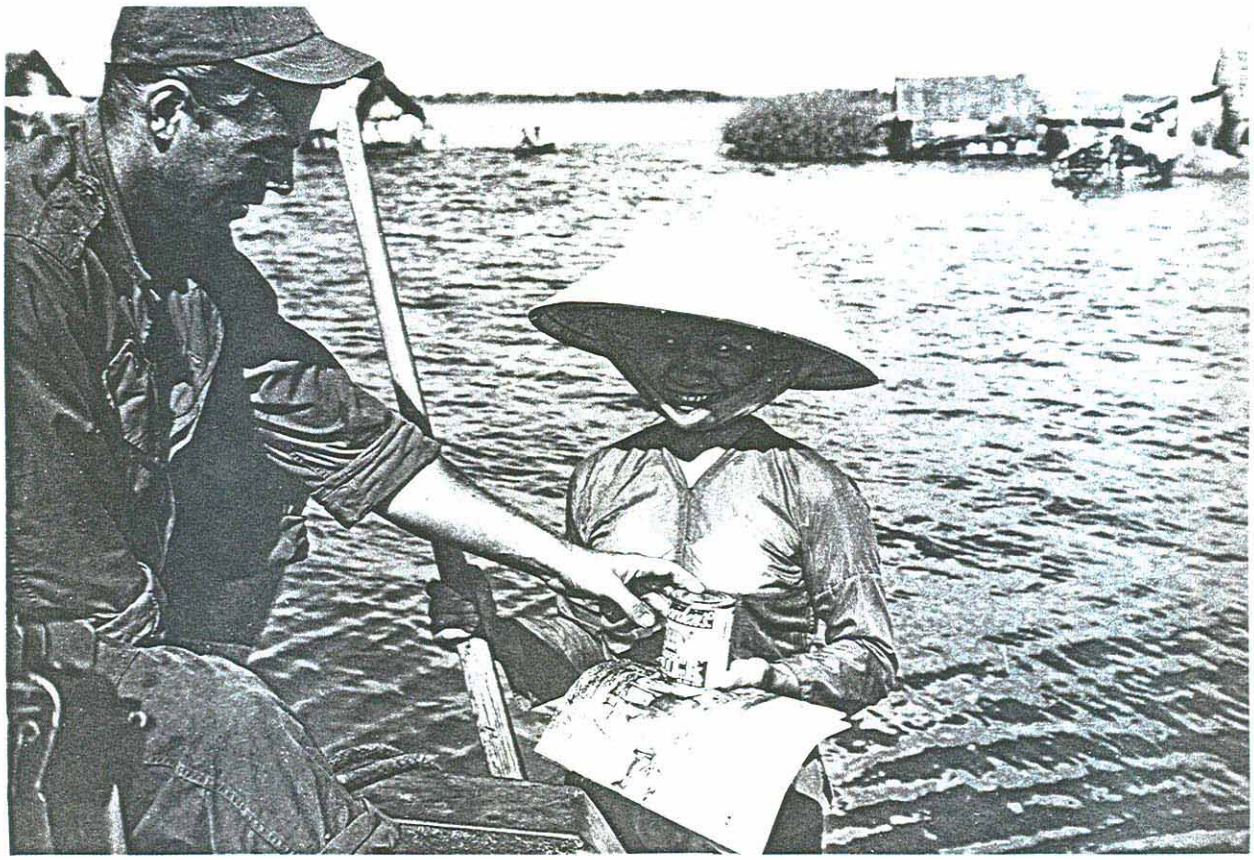


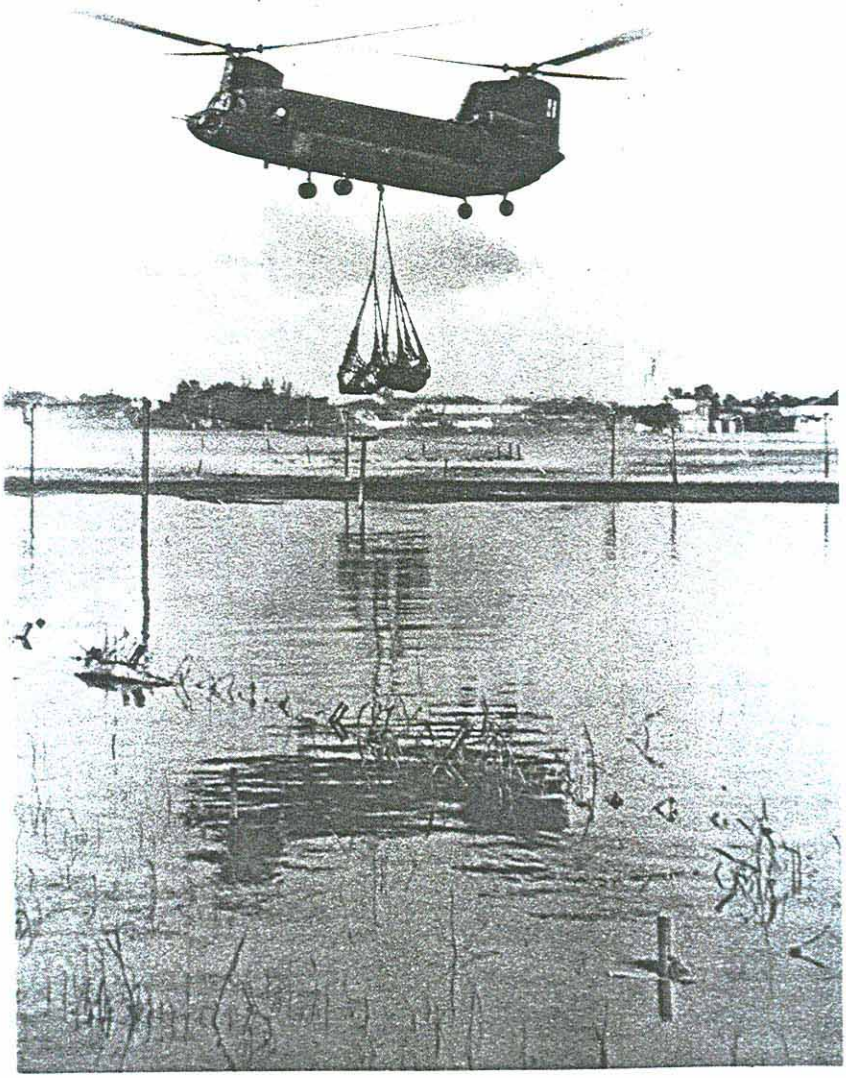
A River Patrol Boat's crew examines rice captured at one of six Viet Cong base camps destroyed by the special PBR force.

Over one-and-a-half tons of captured Viet Cong rice was turned over to Vietnamese flood victims.



A U.S. Navy River Patrol Boat sailor passes out canned milk to a Vietnamese woman who is a victim of the worst flood to hit her province since records have been kept.

The PBRs based at Noc Noa distributed over 1500 pounds of milk, soap and food to flood victims in addition to hunting out the Viet Cong.



A U.S. Army "Chinook" helicopter drops a day's fuel supply in the form of a net of 55-gallon fuel drums for the PBRs based at Moc Hoa.

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failed to respond, the PBRs fired warning shots, whereupon the sampan directed fire on the patrol craft. The PBRs made several firing runs on the fleeing sampan which ceased fire. Despite a careful search the sampan was not located and it was believed to have been destroyed. (CTU 116.1.4 msg 301830Z SEP 66)

The next morning at 0231, the Vietnamese Navy LSSL 227, with members of the Vietnamese Asian Games swimming team aboard, was mined at anchor about 800 yards west of the PBR base at My Tho and settled quickly with about one foot freeboard aft and fifteen feet forward.

Her crew was able to keep her afloat with two pumps, and VNN River Assault Group LCM-8s took her under tow to the RAG base at My Tho. Flooding was stopped, and two six-foot holes, one on each side were patched by the ship's company. Close investigation revealed a charge had been placed on each side of the ship. The ship was later towed to Saigon, and, after a survey of the damage, the Vietnamese Navy decommissioned it.[4]

On 4 October at about 2030, PBRs 97 and 102, while patrolling the Co Chien River about 17 miles east-southeast of Vinh Long, picked up a radar contact at about 600 yards crossing from the south bank to the north. When the contact had closed to 100 yards it was illuminated.

The sampan's five occupants immediately jumped over the side and swam toward the north bank. After hailing the swimmers and firing warning shots which were ignored, the PBRs took the dispersing

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[4] Senior Advisor, Vietnamese Navy Headquarters Historical Summary for October

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swimmers under fire with M-16s. One swimmer was hit in the head and was last seen floating face down into the bushes along the bank. Another swimmer was hit and sank out of sight.

Two of the swimmers were taken under fire by .50 caliber machine guns and an M-79 grenade launcher. One was hit by a burst of .50 caliber in the back which lifted him out of the water and onto the bank. The sampan's other two occupants apparently escaped.

The sampan was recovered and was found to contain three CHICOM rifles, two bandoleers, ten grenades, a grenade launcher attachment for a rifle, a diary or notebook, a propaganda bulletin in comic book format and two ducks. (CTE 116.1.3.4 msg 041414Z OCT 66)

6-16 October

On 6 October PBRs 34 and 39, operating from Can Tho, received one round of mortar fire on the Bassac River about five miles downstream from Can Tho in an area where the Viet Cong had threatened to "Get a PBR." No damage was done and the boats did not return the fire. (CTE 116.1.1.1 msg 061645Z OCT 66)

The GAME WARDEN helo fire team of Detachment 29, Helicopter Combat Support Squadron One evacuated six RF/PF wounded from their outpost 11 miles southeast of Can Tho to the Can Tho Airport on the morning of the 15th.

In the evening of the same day, HC-1 (Det 29) helos conducted a planned air strike on structures designated by the subsector commander at Tra On. Three structures were destroyed and eight others damaged. (HC-1 Det 29 msg 151725Z OCT 66)

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17-31 October

On the 17th a PBR patrol, with an embarked hospital corpsman, visited the hamlet of Phong Nam 16 miles southeast of Can Tho for a Medical Civic Action mission. The corpsman treated 65 villagers, and four serious cases were taken to Can Tho for further treatment.

At 1715 on the 17th, PBRs 37 and 38 received approximately 150 rounds of small arms fire from an island in the Bassac River. The fire was suppressed by the PBRs and an artillery strike from the Tra On subsector, Vinh Binh Province was requested. The request was refused because the island was secured by the Government. (CTE 116.1.1.1 msg 171050Z OCT 66)

At 2315 on 18 October, Navy helicopters based at Ving Long came to the assistance of PCF 39 which was under attack by .50 caliber machine gun and 57mm recoilless rifle fire at the mouth of the Co Chien River off the coast of the Thanh Phong Secret Zone. The helos illuminated the area and provided low level air support for the PCF until 0055 on 19 October when contact was broken. (CTE 116.1.9.3 msg 181818Z OCT 66)

At 1000 on 19 October, RIVPATSEC 512 PBRs, which had been temporarily based at Can Tho away from their normal base on USS COMSTOCK (LSD-19), MEDEVACED four wounded Vietnamese troops from an ARVN operation in progress about 45 miles southeast of Can Tho on the Bassac River for treatment at Can Tho. Four additional RIVPATSEC 512 PBRs and a helo fire team were dispatched to assist in the operation. (CTU 116.1.1 msg 190510Z OCT 66)

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At 1520 a GAME WARDEN helo fire team from Det 29, HC-1 sighted five 30-foot camouflaged sampans about 42 miles downstream from Can Tho, with two additional 30-foot camouflaged sampans about two miles away. All were taken under fire at the request of the Long Toan District Chief and either damaged or destroyed. (OINC DET 29 msg 191445Z OCT 66)

While this action was in progress, a Vietnamese outpost upstream on the Bassac River was being harassed by approximately 40 Viet Cong. PBRs 34 and 40 came to the aid of the outpost located about 17 miles downstream from Can Tho, and at 1301 provided M-79 grenade, M-60 machine gun and rifle fire until 1315 when firing ceased on both sides. (CTE 116.1.1.1 msg 190643Z OCT 66)

On the Co Chien 18 miles southeast of Vinh Long, PBRs 29 and 86 took 50 rounds of automatic and 15 rounds of small arms fire from the north bank at 1926 on the 19th. The boats returned the fire with their .50 caliber machine guns and grenade launchers. A helo fire team supported the PBRs with rockets and M-60 machine guns.

Eight minutes later the boats were again fired upon from the north bank about three miles downstream, with possibly one 57mm recoilless rifle being used as well as automatic weapons and small arms. The PBRs returned with .50 caliber and grenades, but the helos were unable to assist because of a friendly outpost in the area. PBR 29 sustained some minor hits during the actions, but there were no personnel casualties and the boats were able to continue their patrol. (CTE 116.1.1.4 msg 191237Z OCT 66)

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On 20 October My Tho based PBRs, with English speaking Vietnamese embarked, began random patrols on the Ham Luong River, last of the major branches of the Mekong River not regularly patrolled by GAME WARDEN forces.

Prior to commencing patrols, the Kien Hoa Province Chief was briefed, all friendly outposts on the river were visited, a helicopter reconnoitered the river and the operations were cleared by the ARVN Seventh Division.

The Viet Cong in the area 11 miles downstream from Can Tho fired between 25 and 50 rounds of small arms at PBRs 34 and 40 at 1850 on 20 October. The PBRs returned fire with 400 rounds of M-60, 40 M-79 grenades and 100 rounds of M-16. The enemy still claims they will "Get a PBR" in this location. (CTE 116.1.1.1 msg 201158Z OCT 66)

Terrorism at Tra On

Since refrigeration is limited in Vietnam, the custom is for the farmers to bring their wares to market early in the morning so that fresh produce can be purchased and cooked before the heat of the day. By eight o'clock on the morning of 21 October, the market place of Tra On was crowded with Vietnamese intent on their daily marketing.

At 0810 a Viet Cong claymore detonated in the Tra On Market.

At 0830 six PBRs from Can Tho arrived on the scene to provide MEDEVAC services. A total of 49 people, all Vietnamese, were taken to Can Tho. One small boy with both legs blown off died en route.

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At 0940 PBR 30 sighted a sampan with two Buddhist monks and an injured young girl heading for Can Tho. The PBR took the girl on board. At 1005 the same boat took two wounded on board from a ferry. At 1025 one military wounded died in PBR 41 enroute to the Can Tho hospital.

PBR crews and base support personnel not actually engaged in the MEDEVAC efforts proceeded to the Can Tho hospital to give blood for the victims of the blast. Three entire PBR crews and 20 support personnel donated blood.

The known casualties of the terrorist mining are: four military killed, 15 military wounded; five civilians killed, 33 civilians wounded. Many of the wounded were not expected to live. No Americans were involved in this incident. (CTE 116.1.1.1 msg 211030Z OCT 66)

While the victims of Viet Cong terrorism were being evacuated to the hospital, Can Tho PBRs responded to another call for help. A Civilian Irregular Defense Group airboat capsized about three miles west of Can Tho. An airborne spotter requested assistance, and PBR 36 took the craft in tow at 1040. It was towed to Binh Tuy where the YFNB's crane righted the airboat. None of the three persons aboard the airboat was injured.

On 22 October, four PBRs from TE 116.1.1.1 provided a blocking force in support of a Regional Force operation on the northeast and southwest sides of Cu Lao May Island in Tra On District. One of the PBRs picked up and detained a Viet Cong attempting to escape.

Shortly after the first detainee was taken, the PBRs received

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word that two more Viet Cong were hiding along the bank. The PBRs proceeded to the area, took two more detainees and resumed station. All three detainees were turned over to the Regional Forces at the completion of the operation.

In another Regional Force operation in Kien Phong Province, six PBRs from TE 116.1.9.3 provided fire support and a blocking force for the Kien Van Regional Force Company. The GAME WARDEN helo fire team was called when contact was made at about 0815 and sank eight sampans, destroyed five huts and killed two Viet Cong.

At 1130 the helo fire team returned to the area and struck 12 sampans and three huts, destroying them all and inflicting unknown Viet Cong casualties.

The Regional Force company, supported by U.S. Naval forces, killed three Viet Cong and detained 13 suspects. In addition, five grenades, two kilos of documents and one sampan were captured.

TE 116.1.9.3 PBRs detained one Viet Cong suspect, who was taken with his sampan and two CHICOM grenades.

At 0755 on 22 October, PBRs 54 and 65, patrolling three miles east of Sa Dec, hailed three sampans to come alongside. When the sampans ignored the hail and beached, their occupants were taken under fire as they fled to the rice paddies. The sampans were destroyed with small arms fire.

On the Bassac, about thirty miles downstream from Can Tho, PBRs sighted a sampan proceeding close to the bank at about 1300. As the PBRs closed to investigate, the enemy opened fire from the

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banks with small arms. The boats suppressed the small arms fire, but were unable to get the sampan. Another PBR, not involved in the engagement, was hit by a stray round near the bow, causing minor damage. Neither the 32 boat nor the 99 boat, who were directly involved, was hit.

At 1937 on 23 October, PBRs 29, 111, 113 and 116 sighted a prearranged distress signal from an outpost 30 miles down the Co Chien River from Vinh Long. The boats hurried to the area and made firing runs on the Viet Cong, quickly suppressing his fire. After each boat had made one firing run, two of the boats resumed their normal patrol while two remained in the area to support the outpost in the event that fire was resumed.

The next day, PBRs 63 and 143, with a Seventh ARVN Division PsyWar Team embarked, were broadcasting a Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) appeal in a known Viet Cong area about six miles southwest of My Tho on the Mekong. At 1921 the Viet Cong opened up with Browning Automatic Rifles and small arms, expending about 30 rounds of the former and ten of the latter before .50 caliber and small arms fire from the PBRs suppressed the hostile fire. Friendly forces suffered no casualties and continued their operations.

Tax Collection Interrupted

PBRs 63 and 143, patrolling 21 miles northwest of Long Xuyen on the Bassac River, sighted a large motorized sampan with five persons aboard and five smaller boats alongside at 1023 on the morning of 25 October. As the two PBRs closed the group of sampans,

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the motorized sampan moved toward the mouth of a nearby stream.

The fleeing sampan ignored the PBRs' hails and made good its escape into the stream. The PBRs refrained from firing warning shots in order to protect innocent sampans in the area.

The patrol proceeded up the stream a short distance, hoping to locate the sampan and draw him into the open. The sampan did make an attempt to escape into the river, but spotted the patrol and again evaded. This time the patrol was able to fire warning shots, but the sampan continued his efforts to get away, ignoring the shots.

At 1106 another sampan started out of the creek with two women and one man aboard. The man was dressed in a green shirt identical to that worn by one of the occupants of the motorized sampan in question. This time the patrol was able to stop the craft and the man in the green shirt was detained for having no I.D. card.

At 1123 the motorized sampan was again sighted, hailed and warning shots were fired. Again the sampan ducked back into the safety of the stream. The patrol officer requested permission from CTF 116 to take the sampan under direct fire the next time it was sighted, provided there was no danger to innocent shipping. Permission was granted, but the motorized sampan did not make another attempt to get back into the river, and the patrol departed the area about 1200 to deliver their detainee to U.S. Army Special Forces intelligence at Chau Phu. The detainee is believed to be a Viet Cong "tax collector" who was caught in the act of extorting

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"taxes" from river traffic.

Viet Cong Crossing Thwarted - Death of RM2 FREUND

At about 1450 on 26 October, PBRs 34 and 40, on normal patrol 42 miles downstream from Can Tho on the Bassac River, sighted three armed men in a sampan emerging from a stream on the southwest bank of the river, in an area known to be heavily infested with Viet Cong.

The patrol gave chase and fired two warning shots at the evading sampan before opening fire with 70 rounds of .50 caliber which set fire to the sampan. The boat reached the beach and its occupants took cover in the tree line. One M-79 round was fired into the area.

A Vietnamese National Policeman embarked in one of the PBRs directed a civilian sampan to attempt to recover the Viet Cong craft, but heavy fire broke out from the shore and the salvage efforts were abandoned. The patrol raked the brush along the river bank and quickly suppressed the fire coming from the area near the beached sampan.

When fire from the immediate area ceased, the enemy opened fire from farther downstream with a .30 caliber machine gun. The forward gunner in PBR 40, Radioman Second Class Terrence Jay FREUND, 540 65 07, U.S. Navy, was hit in the chest by the first burst and knocked to the deck. He struggled to his feet, told the patrol officer he was "okay" and resumed fire, then slumped again.

Once again Petty Officer FREUND returned to his post and continued to fire at the Viet Cong positions. He slumped to the deck for a third and final time. Petty Officer FREUND had fired over 200 rounds of .50

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caliber at the enemy between the time he was hit and the time he died.

At 1630 the GAME WARDEN helo fire team arrived on scene and began to take the enemy under fire. At 1640 PBRs 37 and 38 arrived in the area and were taken under fire by rockets and grenades from the beach.

At 1645 U.S. Army helicopters joined the battle, and at 1710 Vietnamese Navy RAG boats joined PBRs 37 and 38 in making firing runs on the beach for 40 minutes when they cleared the area for a U.S. Air Force F-100 strike which was later cancelled.

At 1752 the Army helos, freshly rearmed, delivered more fire at the ambush positions. The Navy helos also returned to the area after rearming and carried on the attack.

River Assault Group 25 of the Vietnamese Navy, supported by the PBRs, entered a canal in the area and set up a blocking force behind the ambush. At 1904 a RAG monitor entered the stream with two LCVPs and two FOMs and delivered 40mm fire. Shortly after the monitor raked the area the Viet Cong broke contact.

The engagement claimed one American life. There were four confirmed Viet Cong killed, one sampan burned and an estimated battalion-size crossing thwarted by the combined efforts of U.S. and Vietnamese Navy units, and Army and Navy aircraft.

Two River Patrol seamen were wounded in another engagement four miles southwest of My Tho at 1845 the same day when PBRs 96 and 110 were hit by automatic weapons fire from the bank of the

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Mekong. The patrol returned fire with .50 caliber and M-79 grenades. PBR 96 took two hits in the awning and four in the hull with two of her crew receiving superficial wounds.

PBR 96 took one additional hit less than an hour later in an area two and one-half miles downstream from the first incident when the enemy opened up with small arms fire. The patrol suppressed this quickly with the .50 caliber and M-79 and suffered no further casualties.

While inspecting a ferry boat in the Co Chien River 35 miles downstream from Vinh Long on 28 October, PBRs 22 and 55 apprehended a deserter who abandoned the boat as the PBRs came alongside.

The PBRs then searched the ferry and found a Vietnamese girl with 12 bags of unmanifested rice, improper papers and Viet Cong documents on her person. The two detainees and 1,000 pounds of rice were turned over to Coastal Group 35.

On 29 October Can Tho PBRs evacuated four wounded ARVN troops from an outpost in Ba Xuyen Sector from Dai Ngai to Can Tho, 29 miles downstream.

At 1450 the same day, PBR 109, while on a patrol with PBR 107, took three automatic weapons hits in the after hull section when a Viet Cong opened fire 16 miles west-southwest of My Tho. The boats returned fire with .50 caliber and small arms. There were no personnel casualties. The Viet Cong fire was more accurate than usual with all rounds landing within a 50-yard radius of the lead boat.

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Indirect fire by M-79

On 31 October PBRs 39 and 41 provided a blocking force for a Vietnamese Army/Regional Force operation on Cu Lao May Island eight miles downstream from Can Tho. At 0930 the boats were fired on from the beach, but were unable to return fire because of the proximity of friendly forces.

Two hours later, faced with almost the same situation, the PBRs were able to return fire on an estimated ten Viet Cong who were observed firing on the boats from well fortified bunkers along the bank. An overhead L-19 "Shotgun" (spotter aircraft) spotted indirect fire from the patrol crafts' M-79 grenade launchers. A total of 36 grenades were fired at the bunkers in this manner with excellent results reported by the spotter aircraft.

Viet Cong Battalion Crossing Stopped

Commander, River Division 53 (LCDR M. E. TOOLE, USN), believing that the Viet Cong would be forced out of their operating areas in the Plain of Reeds by high water in late October, set up a special 24 hour patrol in the vicinity of Ngo Hiep Island in the Mekong where the Viet Cong were known to have a well established route into Kien Hoa Province to the south.

At 1758 on 31 October, PBRs 105 and 107, with Boatswain's Mate First Class J. E. WILLIAMS as patrol officer, were conducting the special patrol in the area, when a sampan with one occupant was sighted heading out of the Nam Thon River on the northern edge of the island. As PBR 105, covered by PBR 107, closed the sampan, it

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darted into the flooded paddies and its occupant fired two rounds of small arms at the patrol boat.

A second sampan, with two occupants aboard, opened fire on the PBRs who took it under fire with .50 caliber. The occupants jettisoned their rifles and abandoned their sampan. Both Viet Cong were killed by PBR 105's guns before they could reach shore.

During the short fire fight, a junk and several sampans were sighted. Because of the high tide and flood conditions, the PBRs had an unobstructed view over the island and could see the first sampan proceeding through the paddies as well as the other craft.

The patrol entered the Nam Thon River and immediately came under heavy fire from the north bank and from two large junks in an inlet. Eight small sampans, with eight to ten green-uniformed men in each boat, were seen astern of the junks. Fire from the PBRs sank two of the sampans and their survivors took to the brush. The remaining sampans took cover in the dense woods along the bank.

As the PBRs withdrew along the southern edge of a small island in the Nam Thon, they spotted an additional 75 sampans and seven junks, all abandoned or in the process of being abandoned by troops who were retreating to the north. The PBRs fired on the fleeing Viet Cong with .50 caliber and small arms fire and called for the Vinh Long helo fire team which was scrambled to join the fight.

The PBRs withdrew to the eastern end of Ngo Hiep to await the arrival of the helicopters which were on the scene within 15 minutes. Upon arrival of the fire team, the PBRs deliberately drew fire to

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locate the enemy's positions for the helos.

The fire team made its first pass as the boats withdrew under heavy fire from about ten positions on the bank. PBR 105 took a hit forward and one aft, with no serious damage or personnel casualty. As the PBRs withdrew to give the helos a clear field of fire, they continued to pour .50 caliber into the junks, causing one secondary explosion.

On their second pass on the junks, the helos observed a secondary explosion which reached an estimated height of 300 feet. Enemy troops, retreating through knee-deep water to the north, were taken under fire by the PBRs who were joined by two additional two-boat patrols.

Enemy fire had slacked to a few sporadic bursts of small arms fire, and PBRs 105 and 107 moved in to commence salvage operations on the sampans in order to gather intelligence. Fire had ceased completely by 2045. By the end of the engagement, eight PBRs, one LCM-6 from NAVSUPPACT DET My Tho and two U.S. Navy helos were on the scene.

No material of intelligence value was recovered from the sampans which could be reached by PBRs. Many sampans had drifted into brush and were inaccessible. Debris, clothing and seven large pools of blood were floating in the area of the battle.

Fire from the PBRs claimed the only two confirmed kills, 28 sampans and seven junks sunk, and three junks and three sampans captured. The captured craft were towed to My Tho by the LCM-6.

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The helo fire team claimed 15 sampans sunk, and at least seven damaged in addition to the ammunition junk which had been blown to bits. Helicopter reconnaissance reported the area covered with burning sampans.

There were no U.S. personnel casualties and only one superficial hit in addition to the two previously mentioned. PBR 107 took a bullet forward on the starboard side. During the engagement 3,000 rounds of .50 caliber, 100 rounds of M-16, 430 rounds of M-60 MG and 18 M-79 grenades were expended by the PBRs.

The engagement, in which an estimated battalion sized troop crossing was thwarted, illustrates the value of the coordinated PBR/helo fire team in providing rapid response when the enemy accepts an engagement.

The helicopters took less than 15 minutes to get from their base at Vinh Long to the scene of the action 22 miles away. Communications were excellent, and coordination and cooperation between the airborne and waterborne units was outstanding.

The engagement illustrates the value of well-planned, aggressive patrolling based on good intelligence and knowledge of the area and the enemy's habits. No specific items of intelligence pointed to the exact night that the Viet Cong would cross the river at this point; however, LCDR TOOLE believed that at this point and about at this time, the enemy would have to attempt a crossing.

While the Viet Cong excel at taking advantage of the knowledge of his enemy's habits in setting up ambushes, he too is a creature

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of habit who tends to use the same routes. The combination of this knowledge, and an excellent appreciation of the enemy's problems in the floods, enabled COMRIVDIV 53 to position his forces to stop this crossing whenever the Viet Cong attempted it, as he was almost bound to do.

LCDR TOOLE feels that had the trap been sprung a few minutes later, the results might have been much more spectacular in terms of personnel casualties inflicted on the enemy. By waiting until it was obvious that a major crossing was in progress, Petty Officer WILLIAMS probably could have trapped more troops in midstream and avoided warning those in the assembly area until it was too late to make good an escape.

However, COMRIVDIV 53 also feels that, with no knowledge that this was a major crossing, Petty Officer WILLIAMS was correct in closing the sampan. As can be seen by numerous incidents during the month, such as the one on 1 October on the Bassac, sampans and/or their occupants can quickly elude a PBR into the brush or shallow water if the patrol does not intercept immediately.

Viet Cong sampans seldom venture far from cover unless they are reasonably certain that no patrols are in the area. At the time of the initial sighting the water was high, and the sampans could travel very close to the dense underbrush along the banks.[5]

Since the engagement, Viet Cong harassment of My Tho PBRs has

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[5] CTE 116.1.3.1 msg 311855Z OCT 66 and interview with LCDR M. E. TOOLE, USN at My Tho, 2 NOV 66

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been intensified, and the patrols are often taken under fire almost as soon as they are under way.

The Viet Cong attempted to sink the ammunition junks before they were blown up, which indicates that they prized these highly. While their personnel losses, other than the two confirmed kills, are only a matter of conjecture, it seems reasonable to term them "heavy", especially in view of the large pools of blood observed during the salvage operation that followed the engagement.

Evaluation of the operation by COMUSMACV was expressed to the forces involved as follows:

"WESTMORELAND SENDS
SUBJ: CONGRATULATORY MESSAGE
AGGRESSIVE ACTION BY PBR'S OF RIVER SECTION 531 AND HELICOPTERS OF DETACHMENT 25 PAID HANDSOME DIVIDENDS ON NIGHT OF 31 OCTOBER NEAR MY THO IN DINH TUONG. IN COMPLETELY DISRUPTING LARGE SCALE RIVER CROSSING BY VC AND SINKING MANY SAMPANS AND JUNKS, GAME WARDEN HAS HURT THE ENEMY AGAIN.
HEARTY CONGRATULATIONS."[6]

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone during the month of October were characterized by ambushes by both sides and indications of increased enemy activity in the area.

Evidence of even more intensive enemy activities in the months to come is shown by discovery of Viet Cong documents indicating a reorganization of its forces in the RSSZ on 20 October, with emphasis on river mining and ambush.

Three Viet Cong platoons, which had operated separately in the

6 COMUSMACV msg 031347Z NOV 66

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RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE
OCTOBER 1966
SEALs - 28 Oct
SEALs 7 Oct
VNN MLMS - 6 Oct
MSB - 24 Oct
PBRs - 6 Oct
SEALs - 3 Oct
PBRs - 8 Oct
SAIGON (SAIGON)
CAN GIUOC
GO CONG
TAN NIEN TAY
KIENG PHUOC
TANG HOA
VINH GANH RAI
Can Giờ
NÚI NHO
Fishing stakes
Mangrove
Rubber
Lookout tower
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CONFIDENTIAL

Rung Sat, plus a recoilless rifle element were reformed as a company size element to be known as "Unit Three", consisting of a Command Committee, Administrative Staff, a reconnaissance platoon, 75mm recoilless rifle and 81mm mortar platoons and a River Mining Squad.

The mission of Unit Three, established by a conference held after the mining of a U.S. LCM-3 on 7 October, is to conduct "Quick and Clean" offensive operations against shipping along the Long Tau, Nha Be and Song Dua Rivers.[7]

The first action of the month of October involved six SEALs from Nha Be who were inserted in an ambush site 17 miles southeast of Nha Be at the junction of three streams running between the Go Gia River and the Nga Bay River at 1845 on 3 October.

The SEALs were subdivided into three two-man teams, sited about 15 yards apart in a manner which would provide effective fields of fire on all three streams.

At 1935 a heavily-laden sampan, with two or three occupants, was sighted heading northwest in the Bach San. One man was in the bow, rifle at the ready. The boat approached the ambush site cautiously and silently as if searching for something or someone.

As the sampan reached a position within six to eight yards of two of the SEAL teams, they opened fire on the boat. The occupants were knocked from the sampan and their bodies sank immediately. There were two, and possibly three, persons in the boat.

The sampan was allowed to drift from the area since the SEALs

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[7] COMUSMACV msg 160930Z NOV 66 - Data taken from 50 Viet Cong documents captured by elements of 3d Bde, 4th Inf on 15 Nov 66

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noted a flame sputtering in the boat and thought that this might be the fuse on a demolition charge. It was later evaluated as a burning tracer bullet.

One SEAL was slightly wounded in the foray, either by hostile fire or by fire from the party of the northwest bank of the Rach San. The SEALs extracted from the area, to return the next morning.

At 0900 the next day, the SEAL team returned in an LCM-3 and found a CHICOM carbine sticking muzzle down in the mud. Despite an intensive search of the area, the sampan was not located. Results of the incident were: two(possibly three) Viet Cong killed, one SEAL wounded and one carbine captured. (CTG 116.1 msg 041425Z OCT 66)

On 6 October at 0930, the U.S. advisor aboard a Vietnamese mine-sweeping motor launch reported that Viet Cong had attempted to mine the MLMS, and then had taken it under fire six miles ESE of Nha Be in the Long Tau River.

Two U.S. Navy MSBs in the vicinity were also taken under small arms and automatic weapons fire from the bank. The SEALs were dispatched from Nha Be to provide additional fire support, as the RSSZ Senior Advisor ordered the Long Tau helo fire team into the area.

The SEAL team arrived on the scene at 0945 and conducted reconnaissance by fire as a fixed wing air strike was called in and U.S. Army artillery fire from a battery at Than Tom Hiet was directed into the area of the enemy fire.

Through the combined efforts of air, sea and ground forces, the

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Viet Cong fire was quickly suppressed and the minesweepers resumed operations. (CTG 116.2 msg 060830Z OCT 66)

At 2045 the same day, PBRs 45 and 67, enroute from Nha Be to Cat Lo, took five mortar rounds from an undetermined location ashore, about 15 miles southeast of Nha Be. The first round landed ahead of the first boat, PBR 67, and the second close aboard, while the third landed close aboard the 45 boat. As the patrol gained speed, the last two rounds hit well astern.

PBR 67 sustained a radio casualty from the second round, while PBR 45 was hit by shrapnel which did no significant damage. There were no personnel casualties and the boats continued their transit. (CTG 116.2 msg 061425Z OCT 66)

On the night of 7 October, the SEAL LCM-3, on the way to set up an ambush, was taken under fire by mortars, automatic weapons and small arms fire in the mangrove swamp about six miles southeast of Nha Be.

The first indication of the attack came when a mortar round landed about 150 yards ahead of the LCM. This was followed by unusually accurate automatic weapons and small arms fire from the beach.

The LCM was hit by one mortar round near the starboard .30 caliber mount, about 3/4 of the boat's length from the bow. The boat returned the fire and turned to clear the area despite engineering and steering difficulty, and a helo fire team and a flare aircraft were called in.

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The LCM proceeded to a Regional Force outpost where five critically wounded personnel were evacuated to Nha Be by helicopter. The LCM, with ten less seriously wounded aboard, was escorted by a PBR patrol and two MSBs and returned to Nha Be under its own power.

Because of the heavy casualties suffered by the SEALs, the ambush mission was abandoned. Had it been carried on, it probably would have resulted in heavy contact with the enemy, because at 0240 the next day, a PBR patrol was taken under heavy and accurate automatic weapons and small arms fire from a position less than 100 yards from the proposed SEAL ambush site on the west bank of the Song Dua.

The PBRs cleared the area and returned the enemy fire, which, unlike previous night firing incidents, was accurate and well directed. In the past PBRs noted that the Viet Cong generally fired high and well astern of the moving boats.

One of the boats, PBR 74, sustained some minor hits which did not affect her ability to carry out her mission. (CTG 116.2 msg 071815Z, 071932Z and 080051Z OCT 66)

At 1110 on the same day, a PBR patrol in the Long Tau River, about 14 miles southeast of Nha Be, sighted a quarter-inch wire leading into the brush from the river's edge just downstream from an RF/PF outpost.

Vietnamese authorities dispatched a platoon from RF Company 999 to investigate the discovery. This company had earlier found a ten kilo mine and food and fresh water in this same general area. The

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Vietnamese troops traced the wire into the river and found a large mine which was recovered by the Explosive Ordnance Disposal team from Nha Be.

The RF platoon also found a well-laid ambush site with three foxholes, aiming stakes, a claymore mine facing the river and two spools of wire.

Regional Force Company 908, acting on an intelligence report, later found three more large water mines in the vicinity.

On 23 October MSB-52 reported striking a submerged object with one or her screws. The next day an MSB patrol, on the Long Tau six miles southeast of Nha Be, sighted a mine on the east bank of the river within a short distance from the previous day's incident.

After the boats of River Assault Group 22 reconnoitered the area by fire, EOD personnel, embarked in PBRs with the MSB element OINC, recovered a 24-inch command detonated mine with command wires attached.

The 60-pound mine had two dents in its spherical surface and several bronze scrapings, indicating that this was probably the object struck by the minesweeper the previous date. Evidence (wire length and the reported position of the object struck by MSB-52) indicated that the mine had been planted about 70 yards from the bank, an excellent position to mine an MSB conducting a chain drag sweep.

At 1730 MSB 49 sighted a green wire attached to a nylon line leading into a small inlet about a mile and a half downstream from

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the mine found earlier in the day.

Once again the EOD team was dispatched in PBRs as RAG 22 conducted reconnaissance by fire. This time the EOD team found a wire leading up a small stream to a clump of bushes, where it was secured with sticks and mud. The wire was cut at the river end, and the end appeared to match the wire found on the mine in the morning.

While standing out of Nha Be Harbor on the night of 28 October, the SEAL team LCM-3 received sporadic small arms fire from the east bank of the harbor, and then from two sampans attempting to cross the harbor from the east bank.

Two PBRs and a helo fire team were dispatched to the scene. The LCM and the PBRs took the sampans under fire and destroyed one. The second sampan ran up the Rach Ong Thuoc and was lost.

On 29 October at 2030, PBRs 73 and 94, while patrolling 11 miles south of Nha Be on the Soirap, received automatic weapons and small arms fire from both banks of the river.

At 2044 the GAME WARDEN helo fire team conducted reconnaissance by fire along both banks, and at 2055 a C-47 flare aircraft illuminated the area as the helicopters again reconnoitered with fire. The fire team reported fire from several locations, and the C-47 saturated the area with her mini-guns.

During the engagement, which was possibly a Viet Cong river crossing attempt, one helicopter took a bullet in a rotor blade, but returned safely to its base.

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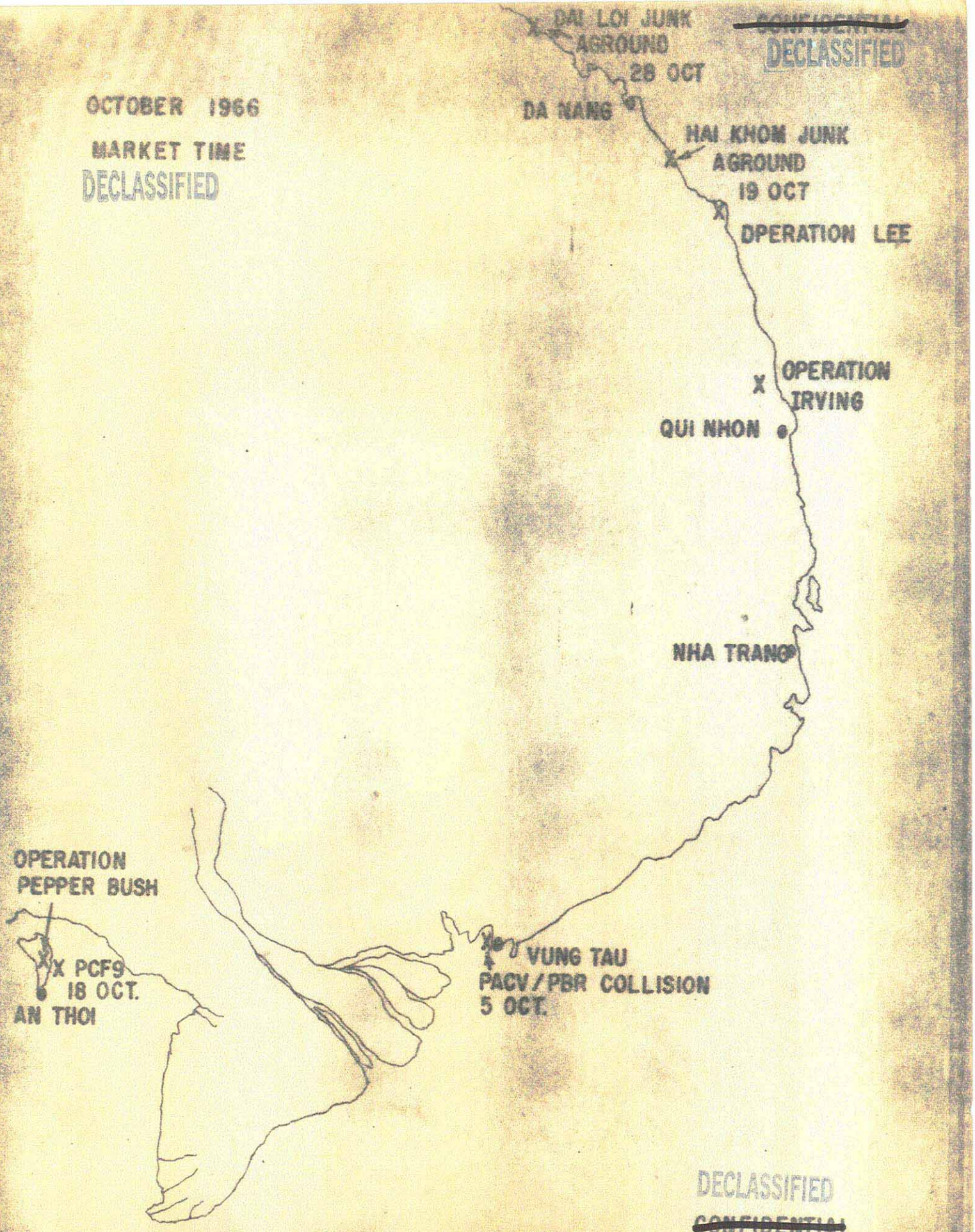

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

BEACHED JUNK INCIDENT

On 19 October at 1200, PCF 15 observed a large junk aground 40 miles southeast of DaNang. Its cargo was being offloaded by approximately 300 persons who dispersed when PCF 15 approached. Almost immediately, small arms fire was directed against PCF 15. As PCF 15 returned the fire, other MARKET TIME units proceeded into the area to assist.

At 1315 an airstrike set the junk afire. At about 1700, helicopters from Chu Lai landed U.S. Marines who swept the area, killing one Viet Cong and capturing six Viet Cong suspects. The Marines reported that the junk was 60% destroyed by fire and that its cargo, consisting of coffee, beer, furniture, auto tires, bales of cotton rags, bulk cardboard boxes, etc., valued at 10,000,000$VN (about $85,000 U.S.), was littered about the beach. The Marines withdrew about 2000.

Three of the junk's crew were picked up in the Marine sweep; the others made their way to DaNang during the fighting. Interrogation of the crewmen revealed that the junk and its crew had been captured by 40 Viet Cong.

The junk "HAI KHOM" had been hauling legitimate cargo from Saigon to DaNang when it was run aground deliberately on the night of 18-19 October because of engine trouble. At dawn of the 19th, the Viet Cong commandeered the junk and crew and set about offloading

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the cargo. The arrival of MARKET TIME forces foiled the Viet Cong's plans and allowed the crew to escape.

Intensive investigation revealed that the beached junk incident was not an infiltration attempt and that the junk's crew was innocent.[8]

PACV/PBR COLLISION

On 5 October at about 2020, PBR 44 and PACV 2 collided about three miles west of Cat Lo.[9] Two crewmen on the PBR and one on the PACV sustained minor injuries. Both boats sustained heavy damage; however, both returned to Cat Lo under their own power.

At 1950 PBRs 43 and 44 were returning to Cat Lo after PBR 43 had experienced radar failure while enroute to their Long Tau River patrol area. PBR 44 was the forward boat with masthead, recognition and running lights showing. The patrol was moving at a speed of 20 knots.

PACV 2 departed Cat Lo at 1955 proceeding at an estimated 20 knots on the starboard side of the channel, running darkened in accordance with operating instructions. A moving contact was detected on radar and visually bearing 345° (relative) approximately 500 yards away. PACV 2 went into a starboard turn, evaluating the situation as a port to port passing. When the contact, PBR 44, was 100 to 200 yards away, the PACV began ditching (setting the craft down into the

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8 COMNAVFORV msg 220030Z OCT 66

9 Investigation to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the collision of PACV 2 and PBR 44 at about 2020 hours on 5 October 1966, near Vung Tau, Republic of Vietnam by Lieutenant Commander Joseph E. WALL, USN, 305412/1100 with NAVFORV FIRST ENDORSEMENT FF5-16/07.1:alp 5830 ser 2698 dated 14 Nov 66

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water) which is the fastest method of bringing the craft to a stop. Just prior to the collision PBR 44 appeared to be turning hard left.

The PACV's port bow section struck the PBR amidships on the starboard side. The impact threw one PACV crewman into the water. He was immediately recovered. Personnel on PBR 44 did not see PACV 2 until it was 10 to 20 yards off the starboard side. The PBR coxswain had turned his boat to port an estimated ten degrees just before impact.

After the collision the two boats separated with PBR 43 coming alongside PBR 44 to assist and take on the injured crewmen. PBR 44 returned to Cat Lo using the port engine. PACV 1 stood by to assist PACV 2, but eventually the damaged craft successfully lighted off her engines and returned to Cat Lo.

MORTAR EXPLOSION ABOARD PCF 9

Three crewmen of PCF 9 were killed and two were wounded when the boat's 81mm mortar exploded on board at 0936 on 18 October. PCF 9, in a position one-half mile off the east coast of Phu Quoc Island, was firing mortar rounds in support of U.S. Special Forces operations when the fatal accident occurred. Minutes before the explosion a white phosphorous mortar round had been fired successfully. At the command to fire a high explosive round, PCF 9 suffered an explosion which was observed by personnel on board PCF 6 and PCF 73 stationed some two and four miles away respectively. The mortar was totally destroyed. The after .50 caliber machine gun was blown over the side and the after deck section of the craft was damaged

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extensively.

An investigating board found no evidence of malpractice, negligence or misconduct on the part of the crew. All cartridges and fuzes aboard PCF 9 were removed and regarded as "suspicious" until checked out by the Naval Ordnance Systems Command.

EVASION AND HOSTILE FIRE INCIDENTS

The following is a chronology of significant evasion or hostile fire incidents that occurred during October:

10 - At 1000 PCF 10 fired on an evading sampan which had ignored warning signals 45 miles east of An Thoi off the Kien Giang Sector coast. Upon receiving direct fire the sampan ceased to evade and subsequently was boarded and searched. The occupants stated that they had evaded because of fear. Nothing suspicious was found although there was some evidence that one person may have swum ashore during the evasion attempt. The sampan was released.

- At 1715 USCGC POINT ELLIS closed several junks 50 yards off the beach 75 miles northwest of DaNang. POINT ELLIS had closed to 1,000 yards when the junks beached and the occupants disembarked. No further action was taken since POINT ELLIS was unable to determine the character of the personnel.

- At 2045 PCF 17 picked up a Viet Cong suspect who had attempted to evade by swimming ashore from his basket boat 78 miles north of Qui Nhon. Subsequently, the suspect

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jumped overboard from the PCF and again attempted to swim ashore. Despite repeated calls to stop, and warning shots, the man continued swimming into shallow water. Finally, he was taken under direct fire and disappeared into the water.

18 - At 2315 PCF 39 received automatic weapons and recoilless rifle fire near the mouth of the Co Chien River 60 miles southwest of Vung Tau. At 2350 PCF 39 reentered the area and again received fire. PCF 39 responded with .50 caliber and 81mm mortar fire. USCGC POINT LEAGUE supported PCF 39 with mortar fire and a GAME WARDEN helo provided illumination. Three fires were observed as a result of the HE and WP mortar fire. Enemy casualties were unknown.

27 - At 1630 PCF 68 received hostile fire off the east coast of the Cau Mau Peninsula while investigating junks in the mouth of a river 165 miles southwest of Vung Tau. PCF 68, supported by USCGC POINT GAMMON, returned the fire destroying two junks and damaging seven. Enemy casualties were unknown.

28 - At 0152 PCF 68, in the above area, closed to investigate a suspicious radar contact heading north along the beach. When the junk was illuminated, it was abandoned by its single occupant who ignored warning shots. Direct fire on the junk produced a secondary explosion which destroyed it. The fate of the Viet Cong suspect was unknown.

31 - At 0835 PCF 75 fired on an evading basket boat 20 miles

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south of DaNang after signals to stop were ignored. The boat was beached and its single occupant fled. The boat was destroyed.

GUNFIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS

MARKET TIME forces conducted eight gunfire support missions during the first ten days of October in support of Operation LEE in an area 80 miles southeast of DaNang.

3 - From 1240 to 1300 PCF 55 expended 22 rounds of 81mm high explosive mortar on Viet Cong elements engaging units of the 2nd ARVN Division. This was in response to an urgent request of a U.S. Marine spotter who reported that target coverage was excellent.

- From 1610 until 1730 PCF 21 conducted an urgent gunfire support mission for 2nd ARVN units by expending 21 rounds of 81mm mortar fire as PCF 11 acted as an exfiltration patrol.

4 - At 0821 PCF 77 expended 27 rounds of mortar in support of Republic of Korea Marines. Results were unknown.

- At 1730 PCF 21 scored two direct hits on Viet Cong resistance points while expending five rounds of 81mm mortar in support of ARVN 2nd Division operations. Three Viet Cong were killed and three bunkers were destroyed.

7 - At 1500 PCF 21 neutralized three targets with 24 rounds of 81mm mortar fired in support of ARVN operations. Viet Cong casualties were unknown.

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8 - At 1200 PCF 14 delivered 22 rounds of 81mm mortar fire in response to a U.S. Marine spotter's request. Results were unknown.

10 - At 1345 PCF 77 responded to an ARVN urgent request for gunfire support by firing 12 rounds of 81mm mortar on Viet Cong ambush elements. The target was neutralized but enemy casualties were unknown.

- At 1425 PCF 77 again supported ARVN forces by expending 650 rounds of .50 caliber fire. Results were unknown.

Other MARKET TIME naval gunfire support missions during October were as follows:

3 - At 2030 USCGC POINT JEFFERSON expended 26 rounds of 81mm mortar in defense of a coastal village 68 miles northeast of Vung Tau which came under a Viet Cong mortar attack. The Viet Cong terminated the attack at 2230. Enemy casualties were unknown.

7 - At 0420 PCF 80 assisted ARVN forces under attack 28 miles north of Nha Trang by firing six 81mm mortar illumination rounds. The Viet Cong attack was broken. Enemy casualties were unknown.

12 - From 1420 to 1525 PCF 72 and USCGC POINT COMFORT expended 109 rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong machine gun and mortar emplacements 55 miles east of An Thoi on the coast of Kien Giang Province. An L-19 spotter reported one bunker and three structures were destroyed and five

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other structures were damaged. Enemy casualties were unknown.

13 - From 0000 to 0315 PCF 80 supported a Popular Force unit under attack 30 miles north of Nha Trang by firing 57 mortar rounds. Ten Viet Cong were killed and three Popular Force troops were wounded.

14 - At 1120 PCF 6 began providing gunfire support for a Regional Force/Popular Force unit under repeated Viet Cong attacks 35 miles northeast of An Thoi. The MARKET TIME unit expended 42 rounds of 81mm HE mortar and then stood by until relieved by PCF 12. However, no further support was needed and the incident was terminated at 1800. Enemy casualties were unknown.

- At 1230 USCGC POINT KENNEDY expended 58 rounds of 81mm mortar and 1,200 rounds of .50 caliber in support of Coastal Group 34 units under automatic weapons attack 35 miles southwest of Vung Tau. Enemy casualties were unknown.

MARKET TIME units provided naval gunfire support for U.S. Special Forces on Operation PEPPER BUSH in three actions occurring on the east coast of Phu Quoc Island 18 miles north of An Thoi.

16 - At 2115 PCF 9 expended 31 rounds of 81mm mortar in support of U.S. Special Forces under attack. Viet Cong casualties were one killed and two wounded. Four or five huts were destroyed.

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17 - At 1215 PCF 6 fired on Viet Cong troops and foxholes at the request of U.S. Special Forces. The aerial spotter reported 95% target coverage but enemy casualties were unknown.

18 - At 0356 PCF 9 expended nine rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong troop areas and structures with unknown results.

26 - At 1136 PCFs 5 and 6 and USCGC POINT YOUNG provided cover for Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) and U.S. Special Forces (USSF) personnel who were engaging an unknown number of Viet Cong. After contact was broken the MARKET TIME units extracted the friendly forces and provided transportation to An Thoi for one CIDG and one USSF wounded. Three of the Viet Cong were killed; one CIDG troop was killed.

The final gunfire support mission of October was conducted at 1430 on the 26th when USCGC POINT JEFFERSON and USCGC POINT LOMAS fired 97 rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong bunkers and huts 68 miles southwest of Vung Tau. One bunker and two huts were damaged while enemy personnel casualties were unknown.

OPERATIONS

On 28 October at 1720, PCF 21 discovered the cargo junk DAI LOI aground 60 miles northwest of DaNang and requested that U.S. Marine forces investigate the junk. A Marine landing party went ashore at 2115 and reported that the junk was empty of cargo with the entire crew standing by the vessel. No contact with the Viet Cong was made.

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The DAI LOI had been chartered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to haul fertilizer from DaNang to Cau Viet. The junk was returning to DaNang after having delivered its cargo when the engine failed, causing the vessel to run aground.

Subsequent attempts to salvage the junk were unsuccessful and finally it was abandoned.

Surfline operations were conducted off the coast of Phuoc Tuy Province throughout the month. These operations consisted of anchoring one WPB and two PCFs in areas of high infiltration probability during periods of high tide at night. With a DER assisting, all contacts were boarded whenever sea conditions permitted. In all cases contacts were closely inspected. Surfline operations in October failed to uncover any infiltration attempts.

MARKET TIME units supported Operations WILD CAMELIA and THAYER throughout the month in addition to Operations IRVING (2-24 Oct), LEE (2-10 Oct), 1st Battalion 7th Marines (11-15 and 18-20 Oct), and Operation PEPPER BUSH, a continuing operation by U.S. Special Forces on Phu Quoc Island. The most notable success of the month was Operation IRVING in Binh Dinh Province in which 324 Viet Cong suspects were detained. Thirty-three of these detainees are confirmed Viet Cong to date. MARKET TIME support consists primarily of infiltration/exfiltration patrols.

Two search and rescue operations were conducted. On 25 October at 1200, PCF 87 lost a crewman overboard 50 miles southwest of Qui Nhon. The man apparently suffered a seizure, fell over the side

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and sank ten seconds after hitting the water. An intensive air/sea search failed to locate the body.

On 29 October at 1340, PCF 56 lost a crewman over the side while transiting the Hue River mouth in heavy surf conditions. An intensive search by aircraft and two PCFs failed to locate the body. At 0730 on 31 October, Regional Force/Popular Force troops discovered the body on the beach.

MARKET TIME UNIT CHANGES

Nine PCFs arrived in-country during the month to bring the total number to 82. The two remaining PCFs are expected to arrive during November.

USS VERNON COUNTY (LST-1161) relieved USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST-1167) on 4 October as the support unit off the Ca Mau Peninsula. USS SALISBURY SOUND (AV-13) established the Cam Ranh Bay seadrome on 8 October and disestablished it on the 27th.

On 20 October PACVs 1, 2, and 3 completed a 30-day MARKET TIME evaluation and were chopped to CTF 116 for GAME WARDEN evaluation. Generally, the evaluation showed that the PACVs, as presently configured, have a very limited application in MARKET TIME operations.

STABLE DOOR harbor defense forces consisted of 24 officers and 430 enlisted men at the end of the month. Construction of semi-permanent facilities to receive SEA SHARP personnel and Advanced Base Functional Components is now 85% complete. The new units eventually will replace the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance (MIUWS) units. Four additional LCPL MK XI patrol boats

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arrived in-country bringing the total to 14. One was sent to Vung Tau and three were sent to Nha Trang. LCPL boat patrols were initiated at Nha Trang on 24 October. The Officer-in-Charge of the Inshore Undersea Warfare Group One, WESTPAC Detachment, arrived in-country on 30 October. The detachment will become operational on 15 November.

The following Seventh Fleet units operated as a part of Operation MARKET TIME during the following inclusive dates in October 1966:

		DATES
DER 397	USS WILHOITE	(1-27)
DER 322	USS NEWELL	(1-10)(27-31)
DER 386	USS SAVAGE	(1-19)(29-31)
DER 393	USS HAVERFIELD	(19-31)
DER 251	USS CAMP	(1-9)(17-31)
DER 400	USS HISSEM	(1-18)
DER 328	USS FINCH	(9-31)
DER 325	USS LOWE	(10-28)
MCS 7	USS EPPING FOREST	(1-6)
MSC 198	USS PEACOCK	(1-31)
MSC 289	USS ALBATROSS	(1-31)
MSC 209	USS WOODPECKER	(26-31)
MSC 206	USS WARBLER	(1-26)
MSO 510	USS ADVANCE	(1-8)
MSO 427	USS CONSTANT	(1-8)
MSO 436	USS ENERGY	(1-8)(21-31)
MSO 463	USS PIVOT	(18-31)
MSO 464	USS PLUCK	(6-31)
MSO 446	USS FORTIFY	(8-21)
MSO 449	USS IMPERVIOUS	(8-31)
MSO 456	USS INFLICT	(8-31)
MSO 457	USS LOYALTY	(1-8)
LST 1161	USS VERNON COUNTY	(4-31)
LST 1167	USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY	(1-3)

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

The posture of logistical support throughout the command improved steadily, but NAVSUPPACT detachments were plagued by a lack of spare parts for vehicles. This situation was caused by a lack of parts kits which usually accompany vehicles, difficulty in obtaining parts manuals and the fact that Advanced Base Functional Component (ABFC) parts do not always match on-hand vehicles. To correct this situation, all ABFC parts have been recalled to be centrally located. Standard items are being reissued from these stocks to all detachments and higher echelon parts are available on request. A representative was sent to Hawaii/Port Hueneme to investigate the possibility of better coordination of parts procurement procedures.

Other command-wide problems include: shortages of maintenance personnel; deficiencies in range and depth of spares applicable to WPB/PCF/PBR load lists; and the lack of lift capability at Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon and Cat Lo. Every effort is being expended to resolve these shortfalls as expeditiously as possible.

Progress was being made during October in logistical support of STABLE DOOR (harbor defense operations). Initial outfitting of spares for the craft have been received, identified, binned and stock recorded. The three MARKET TIME detachments, Cam Ranh, Qui Nhon and Cat Lo, have been tasked to support STABLE DOOR units located within their perimeters. The site at Nha Trang is being constructed with the assistance of Naval Construction Regiment

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personnel. Pending arrival of permanent STABLE DOOR personnel, Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance (MIUWS) units are handling the operational functions.

Supply support at the bases was highlighted by a number of significant improvements. Aids for storing spares in bins aboard YFNB 9 at Can Tho were installed. The new messing facility at the Can Tho villa is now operating. Long Xuyen received tailored mess and galley equipment to provide a feeding capability that was lost when existing facilities were washed out during the recent flood season. The MARKET TIME South Support Project was completed at An Thoi. All PCF/WPB material was identified, binned and stock recorded. Deficiencies were determined and requisitions prepared.

Mine counter-measures improved at Nha Be as repair parts and maintenance facilities moved aboard YFNB 16. Construction of permanent facilities there was begun during the month. However, well drilling at Nha Be continued to present a challenge. Digging to 138 meters produced first salt water, then dust. The contractor is drilling again in a final attempt to find water. At Cat Lo a well 120 meters deep produced no water and drilling at a new site was begun.

Other items of construction progress for the month include: a small boat pier at Nha Trang; a T-17 membrane for helicopter landing at Nha Be; an access road to the communications station on Con Son Island; construction of an interim communications

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facility at Cam Ranh Bay. Some measure of progress is indicated by the fact that over 96,000 pounds of construction materials were delivered to Nha Be alone by the Public Works Department.

Expansion of NAVSUPPACT Saigon responsibilities continued as support was initiated for the U.S. Naval Branch Oceanographic Office. Support for the helo fire team at Vinh Long is now operational. Flights to provide lift for personnel and cargo to Con Son Island were added to the regular MARKET TIME/GAME WARDEN flight schedule. An Thoi and Qui Nhon were assigned one chaplain each.

At headquarters, the NSAS Public Affairs Officer readied copy for production of The Jackstaff, a newspaper to be issued the first week of November. The bi-weekly newspaper is intended for distribution to all Navy and Coast Guard personnel in II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones.

Approximately 700 personnel in NAVSUPPACT Saigon and supported units advanced in rate as a result of August service-wide examinations.

Work progressed on the Headquarters' Civic Action program as wardroom officers whitewashed almost the entire school for blind girls in a single weekend.

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SALVAGE

Salvage efforts on SS BATON ROUGE VICTORY, mined in August in the Long Tau River, were delayed during the month, pending the arrival of the patch being manufactured at Ship Repair Facility, Subic Bay. The patch is expected to arrive in Vung Tau about 21 November.

Harbor clearance efforts continued in DaNang, on a "not to interfere" basis. The objective of these efforts is to remove an ancient, rusty hulk in the main channel. Chains are used to cut away badly rusted sections, while strength members are cut by torches.

Salvage of SS CLARKSBURG VICTORY

On 12 October, SS CLARKSBURG VICTORY, proceeding south from the mouth of the Long Tau River, struck a submerged wreck, charted location one and one-half miles west of the shore at Vung Tau in the immediate vicinity of buoy "2".

CLARKSBURG VICTORY suffered a 45-foot gash in the shell plating at the turn of the bilge on the starboard side, extending from frame 85 to the forward end of number four hold, which caused flooding in the engine room to throttle platform level and flooded the shaft alley through an open watertight door. In addition, all four propeller blades were bent and nicked.

Harbor Clearance Unit One installed an external patch over the hole with strongbacks inside, dewatered the flooded spaces with a salvage pump and the ship's steam bilge pump (powered by compressed

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air), poured a cement cofferdam patch over the inside of the damaged area and shored the area.

With a towing bridle rigged and a Marine Administration riding crew aboard, CLARKSBURG VICTORY was ready for tow to Cam Ranh Bay for offloading, after which she will be towed to Singapore for drydocking and repair.

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

SeaBee construction efforts concentrated mainly on building air fields at Khe Sanh, Dong Ha and Chu Lai, all in I Corps.

Initial setbacks were encountered on the airfield upgrading projects both at Khe Sanh and Dong Ha because of defective M8A1 matting which cut aircraft tires. AM-2 matting was substituted and both airfield projects were completed, with the Khe Sanh airfield being finished three days ahead of schedule.

At Chu Lai the crosswind runway was completed and dedicated during the month.

Construction of Air Force Tiger Hound facilities at Khe Sanh were delayed by late material delivery. SeaBee forces have been on site for the work since early September, but the lack of material has delayed construction of bunkers at this project.

As the monsoon season approached I Corps, a major effort was expended to ensure adequate warehousing of supplies. Additionally, Line of Communications work and construction support of tactical operations received more emphasis as the wet season began.

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

Port throughput for DaNang during the month of October totaled 240,255 measurement tons, almost 4,000 tons over the previous record. Throughput for I Corps was a record 333,156 measurement tons, an increase of almost 34,000 tons over the previous record. The overall supply situation is progressing satisfactorily. Construction of reefer facilities has reached 98% of planned construction; there are no critical shortages, and general overall Class I situation is excellent. Construction of main supply depots is progressing satisfactorily, with about 85% covered storage and 83% of open storage facilities completed. There are no critical shortages; there were, however, some shortages in lumber and timber, but through substitution all demands were filled. The general situation is satisfactory. Construction of the package POL site has continued and is approximately 80% complete. The package POL situation is satisfactory. Bulk POL situation is satisfactory in DaNang but there is some shortage of JP4 in Chu Lai. The monsoon season and the increased consumption of JP4 in Chu Lai have made regular resupply very difficult. The situation should improve when a 12" sea load line and additional tankage are available on approximately 15 November 1966.

Maintenance of facilities in NAVSUPPACT DaNang is a growing problem. Not only are more facilities being acquired daily, but the present facilities are not centralized. They are spread throughout the city of DaNang and surrounding countryside. In the

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main these consist of warehouses, barracks, office spaces, mess decks and galleys, and POL storage. Construction varies from Vietnamese built masonry private dwellings (used as billeting and office space), Butler buildings, French built army barracks, "hooches" (wood frame, louvered, tropical barracks), quonset huts and strong back tents. The same lack of standardization is evident in electrical and mechanical fixtures and systems serving these facilities. The actual backlog of work, however, has stabilized or been slightly reduced to 42.1 shop days. Materials, or the lack of specific materials such as ½" conduit fittings, 2" x 4" lumber, aggregate for concrete, latex paint, etc., continue to be the major problem connected with facility maintenance. Action has been taken to provide the Supply Department with a weekly list of previously ordered critical material for follow-up. Another major problem is lack of shop and space for the required work. Presently 628 men of the 818-man division work out of one Butler building and a few small masonry offices in downtown DaNang. Upon completion of the maintenance compound at China Beach, this problem will be corrected.

There has been a significant increase in CONUS shipping during this period and projected arrivals appear moderately heavy through the early part of November. Official opening of the Deep Water Piers appears to have offset to some degree, the monsoon's adverse effect on ship turn-around time in DaNang.

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CIVIC ACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

In DaNang two teams of eight men each are working in the two city hospitals. Their tasks of renovating wards, cleaning and teaching janitorship to Vietnamese custodians have involved many hundreds of man-hours and have fostered many Vietnamese-American friendships. Three village assistance teams (VAT) presently are living in villages in the DaNang area. The three teams, composed of 12 enlisted men, are constructing 19 homes, in addition to teaching English and hygiene, and holding sick call twice daily to treat minor wounds and infections.

In the Nha Trang area, movies were shown by MARKET TIME forces to young children. Lesson plans for the PsyOps curriculum for the Naval Training Center, Nha Trang are 45% complete. Loud speaker operations were conducted in Van Ninh and Ninh Hoa Districts of Khanh Hoa Province.

In Qui Nhon, MARKET TIME units supported Operation IRVING with 38 hours of tactical loud speaker operations. Sixteen English classes were held and two classes on personal hygiene were held in the Qui Nhon grade school.

In the Vung Tau area, 22 English classes were held with a total of 450 persons attending and 14 dwellings were constructed with 14 families moving in.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone, 2,000,000 leaflets and five loudspeaker missions resulted in four ralliers coming over to the GVN side in October. One cultural drama was staged this month.

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VNN Hospital Ship HQ 400 was the backbone of the flood relief program in the Mekong Delta during October. Thousands of flood victims were treated and almost 7,000 shots were given. An example of this ship's growing reputation was illustrated in the village of Phong My. Because of Viet Cong pressure, few villagers turned out when the ship anchored in the morning. Later in the day, however, the population came out in force. It was learned that a village elder had told the people to go to the Hospital Ship for medical help in spite of Viet Cong threats. On a prior visit the ship's doctors had saved the life of the elder's grandson.

In conjunction with a change in the rules of engagement for PBRs, 791,000 leaflets were distributed on the Cua Tieu and Cua Dai Rivers, east of My Tho. Ninety thousand introductory-type leaflets for support of PBRs conducting special flood relief operations in Kien Tuong were delivered to Moc Hoa for hand distribution by PBRs, National Police, Special Forces and Regional Force/Popular Force units.

Construction projects completed during report period. Those only repaired or renovated are marked with an R.

		USN	VNN	TOTAL
a.	Bridges	3/1R	0	3/1R
b.	Churches/Temples/Pagodas	1R	0	1R
c.	Culverts	1	0	1
d.	Dwellings/number of families	24/34	1/10	25/44
e.	Dispensaries	1/1R	0	1/1R
f.	Leveling/grading projects	1	0	1
g.	Roads (tenth of km)	1-2/10	0	1-2/10
h.	Schools/classrooms	1/2	0	1/2
i.	Showers, public	1	0	1
j.	Toilets, public	4	0	4

	USN	VNN	TOTAL
Medical treatments:			
a. General medicine	13,642	7,610	21,252
b. Dental	632	776	1,408
c. Surgery	31	79	110
d. Emergency evacuations	122	3	125
e. Harelip operations	1	3	4
f. Laboratory cultures	485	0	485
g. Routine lab procedures	205	0	205
Health and sanitation:			
a. Classes on personal hygiene/attendance	5/110	0	5/110
b. Immunizations	0	6,964	6,964
c. Medical aides or nurses trained	2	0	2
d. Physical examinations	0	71	71
e. Spray insecticide operations	8	0	8
Distribution of commodities (pounds unless otherwise specified):			
a. Cement	1,566	0	1,566
b. Clothing	1,255	2,005	3,260
c. Food	55,397	1,298,450	1,353,847
d. Lumber (board feet)	161,980	0	161,980
e. Medical, non-prescription	115	502	617
f. School kits (number)	2,060	500	2,560
g. Soap	2,931	580	3,511
h. Tin Sheets (number)	541	0	541
i. Textile kits (number)	0	179	179
j. Paint (gallons)	190	0	190
k. PsyOps buckets (number)	1,105	0	1,105
l. Salad oil (gallons)	304	0	304
m. Scrap firewood (truckloads)	19	0	19
n. Rebar (pieces)	130	0	130
o. Nails	195	0	195
p. Oxygen/Acetylene (bottles)	9	9	9
q. "C" ration "leftovers" (cases)	41	0	41
r. Tooth brushes (number)	220	0	220
s. Personal kits (number)	0	300	300
Recovered goods redistributed to the people, Kien Tuong Province Flood Operation:			
a. Rice (pounds)	500	0	500
b. Salt (pounds)	50	0	50

	USN	VNN	TOTAL
Educational efforts:			
a. English clases	76/1,249	1/24	77/1,273

Voluntary contributions in support of (Dong - 118 Dong to one U.S. dollar):

a. Religious	840	0	840
b. Schools	89,340	0	89,340
c. Widowed officer's wife	2,500	0	2,500
d. Two (2) enlisted homes destroyed by fire	3,880	0	3,880
e. Families in Phuoc Tien involved in PACV incident	6,800	0	6,800

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

Captain Tran Van CHON was designated Commander-in-Chief of the Vietnamese Navy on 31 October. Captain CHON previously has served as CinC with the rank of Commander from 25 October 1957 to 1 August 1959. He attended the U.S. Naval War College in 1959-60. Since his return to Vietnam in 1960 he has not been associated with the Vietnamese Navy. His most recent assignment was that of Commanding Officer, Regional Force Boat Group which is not under the operational control of the Navy. Captain CHON has stated that the first order of business will be to take measures to improve the morale and discipline of the Vietnamese Navy.

The strength of the Navy at month's end stands at 15,557. This increase of 147 men over last month's figure represents an increase in the number of enlisted men assigned. Also, the number of desertions has declined for the fourth consecutive month, with 59 for October as opposed to 80 for September and 107 for August.

The contract for construction of a Headquarters Surveillance Center in Saigon has been let as well as one for the installation of electric power on four piers at the Saigon Naval Base. No progress has been made on the erection of pre-fabricated buildings at Coastal Naval Zone bases. Preliminary funds amounting 40,000,000$VN have been allotted to the Navy for the CY 1967 construction program. The

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construction program for 1967 was submitted to the Joint General Staff last month and is scheduled for review in November.

Five Yabuta junks have been completed to date under the junk construction program. All have completed sea trials. Four Yabuta junks have been assigned to the Fourth Coastal Naval Zone and one to the Third Coastal Naval Zone. An additional 55 Yabuta junks are authorized under this program.

On 15 October the Regional Force Boat Companies were integrated into the Vietnamese Navy. The Regional Force Boat Companies' organization is comprised of a headquarters, a training center, three maintenance platoons and 24 boat companies, with eight LCVPs each, stationed in 20 provinces in the Third and Fourth Riverine Areas. Vietnamese Navy control over the Regional Force Boat Companies is limited to the administration of headquarters and the training units, and responsibility for the maintenance of all craft. The Regional Force/Popular Force Directorate maintains operational and logistic control with the exception of 112 Navy-peculiar supply items.

OPERATIONS

Fleet Command PC/PCEs were utilized for coastal and river patrol, gunfire support, escort and medical/civic action operations in all four Coastal Naval Zones and in the Rung Sat Special Zone. These units fired 14 gunfire support missions resulting in 21 Viet Cong killed, two wounded and destruction of one enemy junk, 11 Viet Cong structures and two bunkers.

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On 4 October, PCE 11 was sent to Tekere Island in the Fourth Coastal Naval Zone to provide medical treatment for 60 islanders who were suffering from intestinal disorders. PGMs were utilized for coastal and river patrol, gunfire support, logistic and psychological operations in all four Coastal Naval Zones and in the Rung Sat Special Zone. PGM 615, which arrived in-country on 27 September, has been turned over to the Vietnamese Navy and, on 24 October, began a two-week in-port and underway training period.

On 2 October, while anchored at My Tho, LSSL 227 was heavily damaged by two mines detonated below the waterline on the port and starboard sides (see page 13). The ship was towed to Saigon, and, after a survey of the damage, was decommissioned. MSCs were deployed on coastal patrol in the 2nd and 3rd Coastal Naval Zones. MLMSs continued their daily sweep operations on the Saigon, Nha Be and Long Tau Rivers. On 6 October at 1400 on the Long Tau River, a mine was detonated near MLMSs 155 and 157. There were no personnel casualties and damage to the craft was minor.

On 13 October LSM(H) 400 began extensive medical and psychological operations at Cao Lanh, Tan Chau, Hong Ngu and Chau Doc in the Fourth Riverine Area. LSM(H) 401 is still being converted to a Hospital Ship in Guam and will return to Saigon in November.

The overall availability of logistics ships for October was 97% for LSTs, 43% for LSMs and 68% for LCUs. The low percentage of LSM availability was caused by a bad generator on LSM 404 and the loss of the bow door on LSM 406 while underway. Of the 17 VNN

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logistics ships, an average of nine were in operation each day of October. Each of the three LSTs conducted two logistical missions carrying a total of 1,965 tons of cargo and 5,665 troops. Of the two operational LSMs, one conducted seven logistical missions, and the second carried out three missions. Their combined total for the month was 922 tons of cargo and 5,080 troops. Three LCUs carried 679 tons of cargo and 2,160 troops in 12 missions during October. Total cargo lifted was 3,576 tons and total personnel lifted was 12,905. This was an increase of 1,410 tons of cargo and 7,202 troops over September's totals. The mass personnel lift was the result of moving troops to Saigon for National Day, 1 November. Logistics loading facilities in Saigon Harbor were again significantly diminished because Tu Do pier was utilized by the West German Hospital Ship, HELGOLAND, during the entire month.

The LDNN(UDT) continued to carry out its primary mission of hydrographic reconnaissance and its secondary mission of hull inspections in the Saigon Port area and on special salvage operations. On 29 September, the assistant LDNN U.S. advisor and two LDNNs participated in a weapons recovery operation near Lai Khe with the 16th Regiment of the 1st U.S. Infantry Division. Two M-79 grenade launchers, two M-16 rifles and other miscellaneous equipment were recovered. From 11 to 15 October, the assistant LDNN advisor and 16 LDNN personnel conducted beach surveys at Vung Ro (250 yards) and at Tuy Hoa (400 yards).

Fleet Command patrol ships continued to patrol in the vicinity

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of those coastal groups most likely to be harassed by the Viet Cong so that immediate gunfire support would be available to them.

Activities in the 1st Coastal Naval Zone were highlighted by Coastal Group 15 units' participation in an operation relating to the beached junk, "HAI KHOM". The action occurred ten kilometers northwest of Coastal Group 15.

In the 2nd Coastal Naval Zone on 18-19 October, Coastal Group 23 took part in an operation five kilometers north of its base at Song Cau. One Viet Cong was killed and ten were detained. Ammunition, two Mauser rifles and five grenades were captured.

Coastal Groups 34 and 37 of the 3rd Naval Zone conducted a search operation ten kilometers southwest of their base at Tiem Ton on 12 October. The junkmen destroyed three defensive works and 50 punji traps. They placed a grenade booby trap in a small tunnel and, after withdrawing from the area, heard an explosion. They then bombarded the position. Viet Cong casualties were unknown. On 19 October Coastal Group 36 and a raider platoon of Vinh Binh conducted an operation on Cu Lao Dung Island at the mouth of the Bassac River. Friendly casualties were one junkman slightly wounded with one raider killed and three wounded. Five Viet Cong were killed(confirmed by body count) and five wounded were carried away by their comrades. Four motorized junks, one East German rifle and a quantity of documents were captured.

Junks of Coastal Groups 42, 46 and 47 in the 4th Coastal Naval Zone teamed with a U.S. Special Forces unit from 5 to 11 October to

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conduct an operation on the coast of Phu Quoc Island near the village of Cua Con. Coastal Group forces captured one homemade gun and three anti-personnel mines and assisted in the destruction of a cache of rice and 15 houses.

During October, two major operations were conducted within the Third Riverine Area and seven operations within the Rung Sat Special Zone. On 27 October the 46th ARVN Regiment, with the support of 11 craft of River Assault Groups 34 and 28, began Operation AN DAN 239/66 five kilometers west of Thanh Phu. The ARVN unit suffered 23 killed and three wounded while the RAG units incurred no casualties. Fifty Viet Cong were killed (body count). Four tons of ammunition, 400 grenades, and a number of documents were captured.

Third Riverine Area craft were subjected to several mine and recoilless rifle attacks. On 4 October a French Overseas Marine (FOM) craft of RAG 22 was mined approximately 15 miles southeast of Nha Be in the Long Tau channel. The explosion lifted the craft 20 feet into the air, breaking it into five pieces. The three Vietnamese Navymen aboard were killed. A reaction force sweeping the riverbanks discovered a bunker with wires leading from it to the river.

On 25 October at 0900, a VNN convoy of 20 boats, escorted by seven RAG units, was ambushed from both banks of a canal in Bac Lieu Province. LCVP 2050 was sunk after being hit by a 57mm recoilless rifle round. One Vietnamese sailor was wounded.

Twenty-one major operations were conducted in the Fourth Riverine

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Area during the month, six of which were supported by Fleet Command units. On 24-25 October, 11 craft of RAGs 23 and 31 took part in Operation LONG PHI 990/SD organized by the 9th ARVN Division north of Cau Long. LSSL 228 and LSM 538 provided gunfire and troop support. Two Vietnamese Navymen were wounded. One ARVN soldier was killed and 14 were wounded. Twelve Viet Cong were killed and eight suspects were detained. A quantity of ammunition was captured while one liaison station and ten tons of rice were destroyed.

MAINTENANCE AND SUPPLY

Routine maintenance practices in VNN do not meet the minimal standards required for effective operation of equipment. However, progress is expected in this area as a result of increased attendance at courses at the Naval Advanced Training Center. Also, U.S. advisors continued to emphasize training in the area of maintenance. The project to establish supply depots at the major repair facilities is at a standstill. The removal of scrap metal from the Supply Center/Shipyard complex continues to progress satisfactorily. The Supply Center advisor has informed the Commanding Officer of the Vietnamese supply system that sheet metal, angle iron and pipe will no longer be procured for the VNN until storage areas are cleaned and on hand material is properly stored. No action has been taken by the Vietnamese supply officers.

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

Brigade Force Alpha, comprised of a headquarters, the 2nd and 5th Vietnamese Marine Battalions, and Artillery Battery C, was

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committed to Operation LAM SON 318 from 3 to 15 October in the I Corps Tactical Zone. Opposition was not encountered until 1400 on 6 October when contact was made with an entrenched North Vietnamese Army force in a heavily vegetated area eight kilometers west of Highway 1. The ensuing battle resulted in three Vietnamese Marines killed and four wounded. On 8 October the 2nd Battalion killed four Viet Cong, captured two and seized three individual weapons with a mixture of ammunition. Approximately 60 shallow graves were found which contained Viet Cong dead, possibly a result of air strikes on the 6th. On the night of the 8th, the brigade force received light mortar and small arms fire. On 13 October Brigade Force Alpha became the reserve for LAM SON 318, occupying positions astride Highway 1 about three kilometers south of Gio Linh.

On 14 October Brigade Force Bravo's command group relieved that of Brigade Force Alpha. The Commander, staff members and advisors of Brigade Force Alpha returned to Saigon on 15 October. Task Force Alpha results for LAM SON 318 were seven Viet Cong killed, four captured and three individual weapons captured. Friendly casualties were five Vietnamese Marines killed and 12 wounded.

From 25 through 29 October, Brigade Force Alpha, consisting of a headquarters, the 3rd and 4th Vietnamese Marine Battalions and Battery B of the Artillery Battalion, conducted Operation CUU LONG 18 six to eight kilometers south of Saigon. Search and destroy operations were conducted with the support of Regional Force/Popular Force units, Vietnamese Navy units and a battery of U.S. artillery.

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The only hostile action occurred on 29 October when a Viet Cong squad delivered long range small arms and automatic weapons fire on elements of the 3rd Battalion without inflicting casualties. Total results for Operation CUU LONG were five Viet Cong suspects detained, one friendly killed and two wounded. All Vietnamese casualties resulted from friendly artillery fire from Binh Chanh.

Brigade Force Bravo commenced Operation LAM SON 325 on 20 October. This was a search and destroy operation in a mountainous jungle area south and west of Cam Lo which produced no enemy contact. The lone casualty was one Marine wounded by a mine at the start of the operation. About 40 other Marines were evacuated for medical reasons; i.e. malaria, immersion foot, etc.

The 1st Vietnamese Marine Battalion occupied positions in and around Ba Hom from 1 to 12 October with no enemy contact being made. On 12 October the battalion returned to its base camp at Thu Duc to prepare for participation in the National Day Parade held in Saigon on 1 November.

The 4th Vietnamese Marine Battalion killed six Viet Cong and captured 13 in DONG PHONG 2/66, a search and destroy operation west of Vinh Loc, on 14 October. On 15 October the battalion assisted the 30th Ranger Battalion to recover bodies of Rangers killed during a 14 October raid west of Cho Dem.

The 6th Battalion continued to equip and train at the base camp at Thu Duc. The 3rd Rifle Company was formed on 22 October, bringing battalion strength to 582 - 22 officers, 76 NCOs and

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484 other ranks.

Vietnamese Marine Corps morale remained high and leadership was evaluated as excellent during the month.

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APPENDIX I

MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY, OCTOBER 1966

1. U.S. ships/craft:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF	LST
Total craft days on patrol	155	155	93	508	1184	31
Daily Average of craft on patrol	5	5	3	16.4	38.2	1

2. VNN ships/junks:

	SEA FORCE	RIVER FORCE	COASTAL FORCE
Total craft days on patrol	220	3456	4089
Daily average of craft on patrol	7.3	111.5	139

3. U.S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY	32,480	NIGHT	16,117		51,248
	STEEL - DAY	879	NIGHT	1,772		
TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD - DAY	10,043	NIGHT	5,461		16,639
	STEEL - DAY	571	NIGHT	564		
TOTAL BOARDED	WOOD - DAY	10,661	NIGHT	4,539		15,299
	STEEL - DAY	64	NIGHT	35		
TOTAL DETAINED	Junks	15	People	667		

4. VNN Activity:

SEARCHED 20,319 junks

DETAINED 48 junks 357 people

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APPENDIX II

GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY, OCTOBER 1966

1. PBR Statistics:

   a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 439 Night 762

   b. Total Contacts: Day 44,171 Night 15,379

   c. Total Inspected: Day 9,772 Night 2,486

   d. Total Boarded: Day 10,353 Night 2,179

   e. People Detained: 494

   f. Total Patrols Hours: 29,591
      Total Boats on Patrol: 3,080
      Average Daily Patrol Hours per Boat: 9.6

2. Helo Fire Team Statistics:

   a. Total Flight Hours: 563.2

   b. Helo Missions Supported:
      (1) Pre-planned strikes: 32
      (2) Reaction: 9
      (3) Targets of opportunity: 24
      (4) Support: 95
      (5) MEDEVAC: 2

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

   a. Firefights:
      (1) PBR: 46
      (2) Helo: 10
      (3) MSB: 2
      (4) PACV: 0

   b. Sampans:
      Destroyed: 170 Damaged: 7 Captured: 7

   c. Junks:
      Destroyed: 7 Damaged: 0 Captured: 3

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APPENDIX III

REVISED RULES OF ENGAGEMENT - GAME WARDEN

OLD	
Subpara 2a(5) of Annex B to CTF 116 OpOrd	
"(PBRs Shall). . .Utilize only such force as is required to defend against hostile attack as defined herein up to and including destruction if required."	"The minimum force necessary to accomplish patrol operation shall be exercised, up to and including destruction, if required." "(a) Violators of curfew and prohibited zones (who may or may not be subjected to gunfire by the VNN) shall not be fired upon by river patrol force units unless the violator qualifies as a hostile vessel IAW subparagraph 1.1 of the appendix or attempts to evade and ignores warnings to stop." "(b) Every peaceful method at hand shall first be exhausted when attempting to stop a junk or sampan for boarding and search. This failing, warning shots may be used as the next step. If it is obvious the junk or sampan is deliberately trying to evade, direct fire may be used as a last resort. Firing shall be ceased if the junk or sampan appears to be stopping." "(c) It is permissible to continue direct fire against an evading junk or sampan that beaches and against its fleeing occupants provided the firing is not in the vicinity of a hamlet or village. Any fire in the vicinity of a hamlet or village must be conducted strictly IAW appendix IV to annex B."
Subpara 2b(3)	
"River Patrol Force units will not initiate any attack on ground forces without the specific authority of CTG 116.1 or CTG 116.2 as appropriate, and the cognizant TOC. This does not limit firing in self-defense, firing in support of other friendly units requiring immediate assistance, or firing of warning shots to stop watercraft for visit and search."	"...(First sentence is the same). This does not limit firing in self defense, firing in support of other friendly units requiring immediate assistance, firing of warning shots to stop watercraft for visit and search or taking under direct fire junks and sampans that ignore warnings to stop and deliberately attempt to evade."

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