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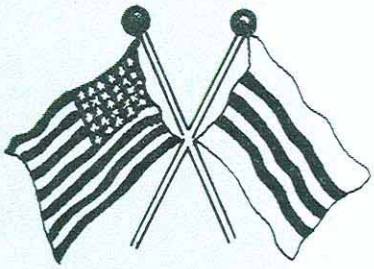

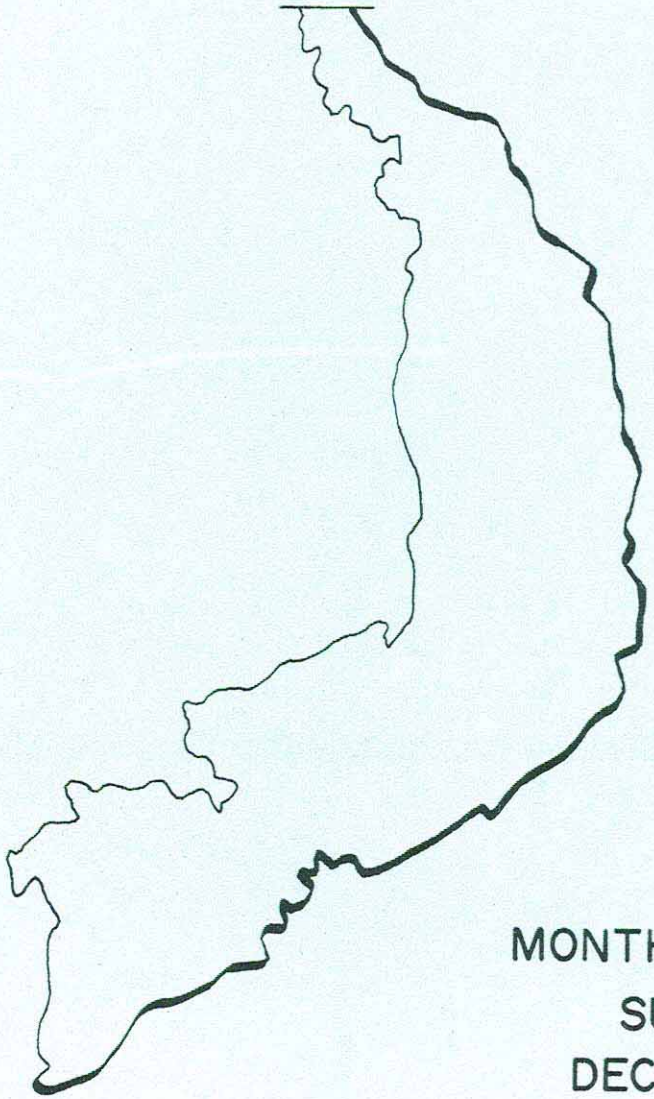

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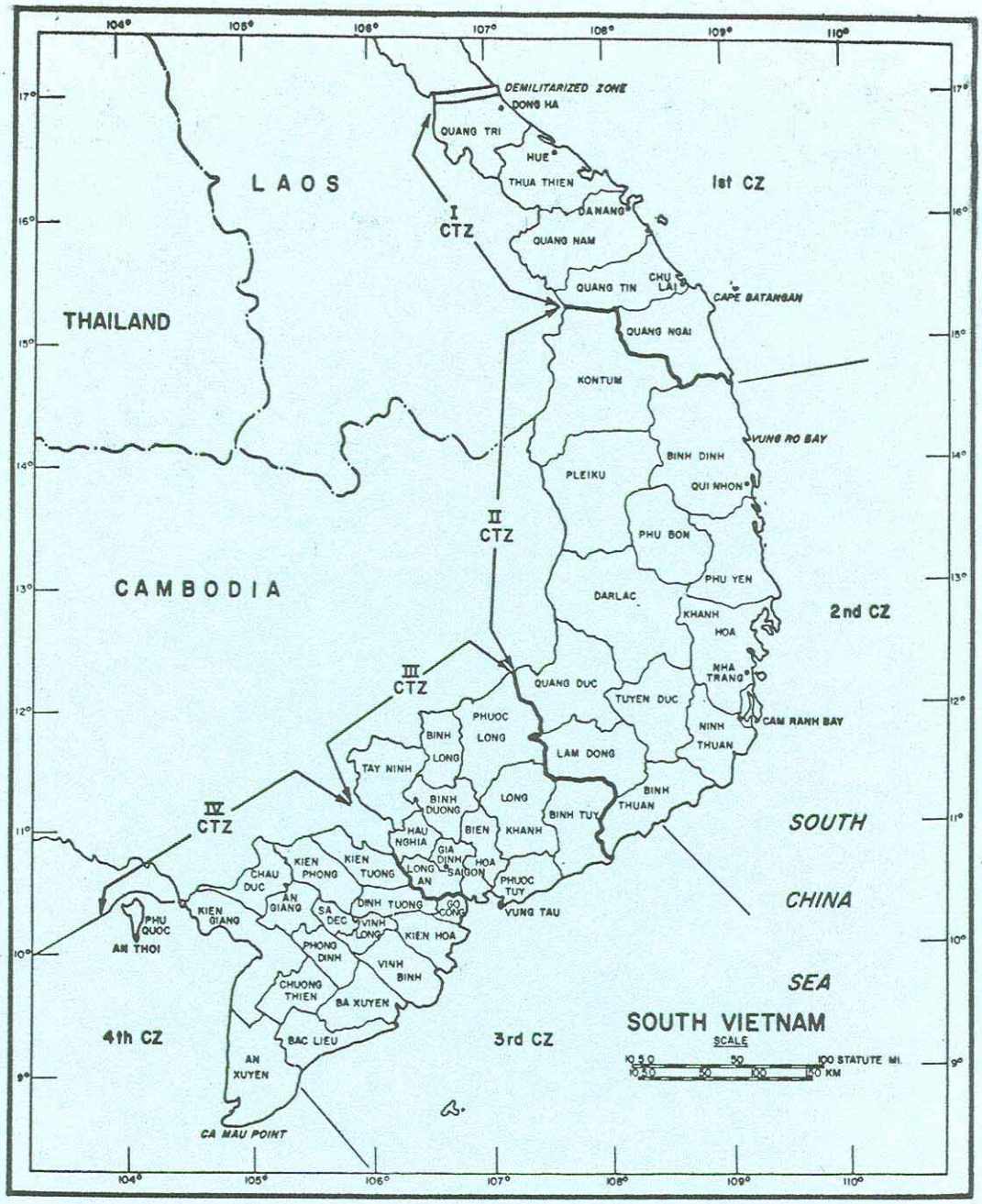

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FOREWORD

The month of December was marked by an increased number of ambush attacks on riverine boats and craft. These attacks point up the importance the enemy attaches to the activity of these units. These attacks included small-arms, automatic weapons, rockets and mines. On 6 December a PCF was attacked by automatic-weapons fire from five different positions approximately 10 miles south of Cape Batangan. One man was killed.

Also on 6 December, a PBR patrol in the Long Tau River came under heavy automatic-weapons and small-arms fire from both banks of the river. Three PBR sailors were wounded.

On 7 December, on the Saigon river 11 miles north of Saigon, river craft from RAG 28 were taken under B-40, semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire. One Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed and two were wounded.

On 21 December an ASPB, the lead minesweeper of several riverine craft transitting the Xang Canal, two miles northwest of Dong Tam, was mined. One sailor was killed and three were wounded.

On Christmas Day, the lead boat of a two-boat PBR patrol received a B-40 rocket round in its starboard side. Two PBR sailors were wounded.

It is interesting to note that although the units received damage of varying degrees, none were lost as a result of these enemy actions.

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CHRONOLOGY

2 Dec - PBR Mobile Base I arrives at Danang and is followed three days later by 10 PBRs. This is the second time PBRs have been located in the I Corps Tactical Zone. p. 20.

- Captain R. S. SALZER, USN, relieves Captain Wade C. WELLS, USN, as COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN/CTF 117 during ceremonies aboard USS BENEWAH (APB 35). p. 100.

4 - One phase of Operation CORONADO IX begins in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. Cumulative results include 266 Viet Cong killed, eight captured, 108 suspects detained, and 5,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition and 321 weapons captured. Two U. S. Navymen are killed and 68 wounded. Vietnamese Marines suffer 40 killed and 103 wounded. p. 48.

6 - PCF 79 comes under automatic-weapons fire from five positions approximately 10 miles south of Cape Batangan while conducting a "PsyOps" loudspeaker mission. One Navyman is killed. Results of the PCF's return fire are unknown. p. 3.

- Three sampans are detected crossing the Long Tau River by a PBR patrol. The PBRs fire on the sampans and are immediately taken under heavy automatic-weapons and small-arms fire from both banks of the river. Three PBR crewmen are wounded, one seriously. Three Viet Cong are killed and two sampans containing 12 one-quarter pound blocks of TNT are captured. p. 21.

7 - A "Seawolf" light helicopter fire team conducts a patrol along the Bai Lai River. The helicopters destroy or damage several structures and sampans, kill four Viet Cong and wound 16 others. There are no friendly casualties. p. 29.

- Craft from RAG 28 are ambushed by B-40 rocket, semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire while lifting ARVN troops across the Saigon river, 11 miles north of Saigon. One VNN sailor is killed and two are wounded. Three RAG 28 craft sustain minor damage. p. 114.

8 - Operation QUYET THANG commences in Gia Dinh province, five

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8 Dec - miles north of Saigon with RAG 30 supporting the Vietnamese 5th Ranger group. The units kill 32 Viet Cong and capture or destroy numerous weapons, documents and bunkers. Fifteen VNN sailors are killed and 18 are wounded. p. 114.

11 - River Section 534 arrives at My Tho and commences combat operations with the new Mark II PBRs. The new PBRs engage the enemy for the first time on the 13th. p. 27.

- LSSL 226 fires on a Viet Cong encampment on Dung Island and kills 11 Viet Cong, wounds 15 and destroys numerous weapons. p. 103.

15-31 - A series of operations begin in Quang Tri and Thua Thien sectors involving ARVN forces, Regional Force troops and U. S. Marines with Coastal Groups 11 and 12 providing blocking support. The operations result in 176 Viet Cong killed, 84 captured and numerous weapons shelters and bunkers captured or destroyed. p. 107.

16 - Admiral John J. HYLAND, USN, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, visits CTF 116 headquarters at Binh Thuy and the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam. p. 99.

17 - Rear Admiral James J. KELLY, CHC, USN, Chief of Chaplains, commences an extensive tour of U. S. Navy installations in South Vietnam. p. 99.

21 - PBRs, "Seawolves", Vietnamese Army troops, and RAG 25 units begin Operation BOLD CAROUSEL on Tan Dinh Island. During the two-day operation 12 Navymen are wounded (one seriously), four air crewmen are wounded, and 19 PBRs and two helicopters are damaged. Two Viet Cong are killed, one is captured, 35 suspects are detained and four sampans and five structures are destroyed. p. 40.

- An ASPB is mined in the Xang Canal resulting in one Navyman killed. The ASPB suffers moderate hull damage but returns to the Mobile Riverine Base under its own power. p. 54.

22 - MARKET TIME support base at Qui Nhon is attacked by a platoon of enemy sappers. Four Navymen are killed and 14 are wounded; three buildings are damaged by the attack. Viet Cong casualties are seven killed and several enemy weapons are captured. p. 2.

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23 Dec - Lyndon B. JOHNSON, President of the United States, stops briefly in Cam Ranh Bay and awards five Navymen with medals. p. 99.

25 - A PBR patrol is ambushed on the Bassac river, just south of Tan Dinh Island. The lead boat is struck by a B-40 rocket which wounds two Navymen and causes major damage to the PBR's hull. "Seawolves" are called in and artillery fire is directed onto the ambush site. Twenty Viet Cong are killed, four are wounded and several weapons are destroyed. p. 41.

27 - YRBM-16, which was mined in the Ham Luong River on 24 November, is towed to Subic Bay for repairs. p. 91.

29 - South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van THIEU visits the MRF at Dong Tam for a briefing and a tour of MRF units. p. 100.

31 - NAVFORV numerical strength stands at 27,039.

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TASK FORCE 115)

During calendar year 67, MARKET TIME forces successfully accomplished their primary mission of preventing the infiltration of enemy men and materials into the Republic of Vietnam. There were no known instances of successful large scale infiltration; three such attempts were made, and in each case the infiltrators were captured or destroyed. At year's end, the Vietnamese Navy had progressed toward a higher degree of proficiency and had commenced effective independent surveillance operations in four MARKET TIME areas.

A summary of calendar year 67 MARKET TIME activity by U. S. units includes: 913,121 wooden-hulled detections, 538,054 wooden-hulled boardings/inspections, and 8,743 steel-hulled detections.

During December units of Operation MARKET TIME and Operation STABLE DOOR detected 75,092 craft along South Vietnam's coastline and harbors; 19,954 of these were boarded or inspected. The boardings resulted in the detention of 57 craft and 502 persons.

OPERATION MARKET TIME

During December there was a continued decrease in Operation MARKET TIME activity, especially in the northern coastal zones, as the heavy seas and inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon held the aggregate of coastal junk and sampan traffic to a very low total. MARKET TIME patrol craft were also restricted

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to port on several occasions during the month because of the heavy weather and high sea states. Only 34,151 junks and sampans were detected by MARKET TIME units during December, the lowest monthly aggregate recorded since November 1966. Over 40 percent of the detected craft were inspected and approximately 20 percent were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 196 persons. In addition, 1,646 steel-hulled vessels were detected transitting MARKET TIME areas; 62 of the steel-hulled craft were boarded. Meanwhile, MARKET TIME units supported two ground operations, conducted 114 gunfire support missions, and were engaged in 14 hostile fire incidents during the month. The majority of the gunfire missions were conducted in the Fourth Coastal Zone where fair weather prevailed during most of the month. As a result of the various operations, 20 structures and six craft were destroyed; in addition, 15 Viet Cong were killed (six probable).

On 22 December the MARKET TIME support base at Qui Nhon was attacked by an estimated platoon of enemy sappers. The well co-ordinated attack was initiated at 2329 when a Coastal Group 22 command junk, located in the middle of a nest of junks, was blown up and sunk. The attack continued throughout the early morning hours of the 23rd and resulted in two Navymen killed and 16 others wounded, two of whom died later during treatment. Material damage resulting from the attack included extensive damage to the CPO

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quarters and light damage to the mess hall and enlisted barracks. Seven enemy were killed (four probable) during the attack and the following enemy ordnance was captured: 10 Chinese communist fragmentation grenades, five grenades that were improvised from 61-mm mortar heads, two Chinese communist copies of the Russian AK-47 assault rifle, and one automatic pistol. The Qui Nhon base continued to receive harassing fire through the 27th of the month.

First Coastal Zone

During December, coastal junk and sampan traffic continued to be light in the First Coastal Zone. The inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon held detections by the zone's patrol units to 8,682, approximately the same number of detections that occurred during November. More than 3,700 of the detected craft were inspected or boarded.

On 6 December PCF 79 came under automatic-weapons fire from five different positions while conducting a loudspeaker "psyops" mission along the South China Sea coast approximately 10 miles south of Cape Batangan. The Swift boat received five automatic-weapon hits, and Boatswain's Mate First Class Bobby D. CARVER, USN, the forward gunner, was killed during the action. The PCF returned the fire with unknown results, and opened the area.

On the 18th, the Coast Guard's POINT ARDEN received word from the 1st Marine AMTRACK Battalion that North Vietnamese Army forces

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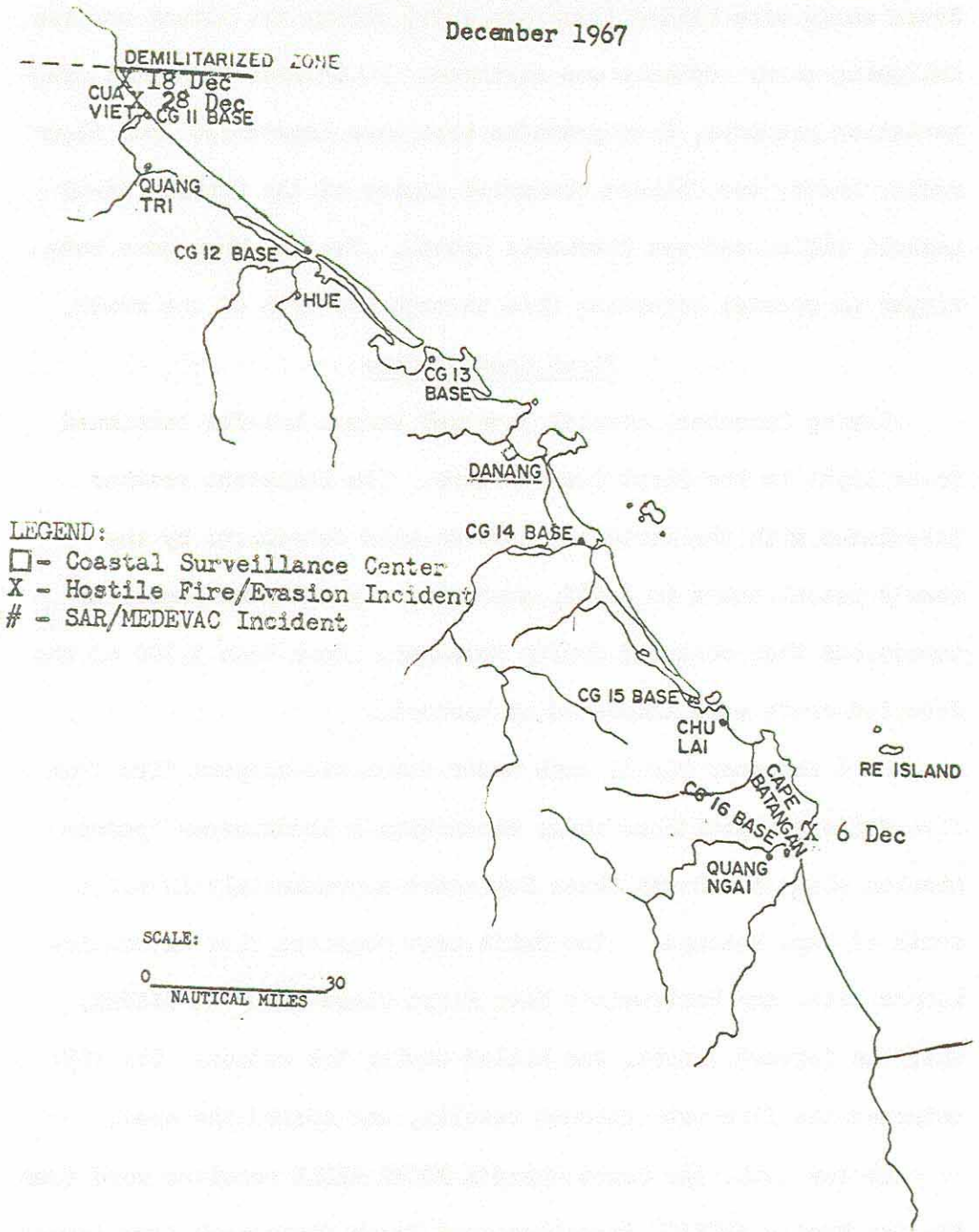
OPERATIONS IN THE FIRST COASTAL ZONE

December 1967



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were located near the coast of Quang Tri province, approximately 70 miles north of Danang. While closing the beach to investigate, the WPB received five hits from automatic weapons. PCFs 22 and 55 subsequently joined the WPB and the three craft took the area under fire. There were no friendly casualties as a result of the action, and enemy casualties were reported as one wounded and five killed (probable).

On 28 December PCF 17 received small-arms fire from an area occupied by five fishing junks approximately six miles north of Cua Viet. Permission was granted by the THIRD MARDIV Naval Gunfire Liaison Officer to return the fire and the Swift boat made two firing runs while receiving occasional hostile fire. The PCF then spotted for USS PRITCHETT (DD 561) who took the area under fire. Three enemy junks were damaged as a result of the firing and there were no friendly casualties.

First Coastal Zone units also provided blocking and exfiltration patrols for two ground operations during the month.

Second Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME activity in the Second Coastal Zone continued to decrease slightly during December as only 12,592 junks and sampans were detected. More than 6,600 of the detected craft were boarded or inspected. Heavy surf and high sea states forces the zone's MARKET TIME units to return to port or seek lee areas on several

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OPERATIONS IN THE SECOND COASTAL ZONE

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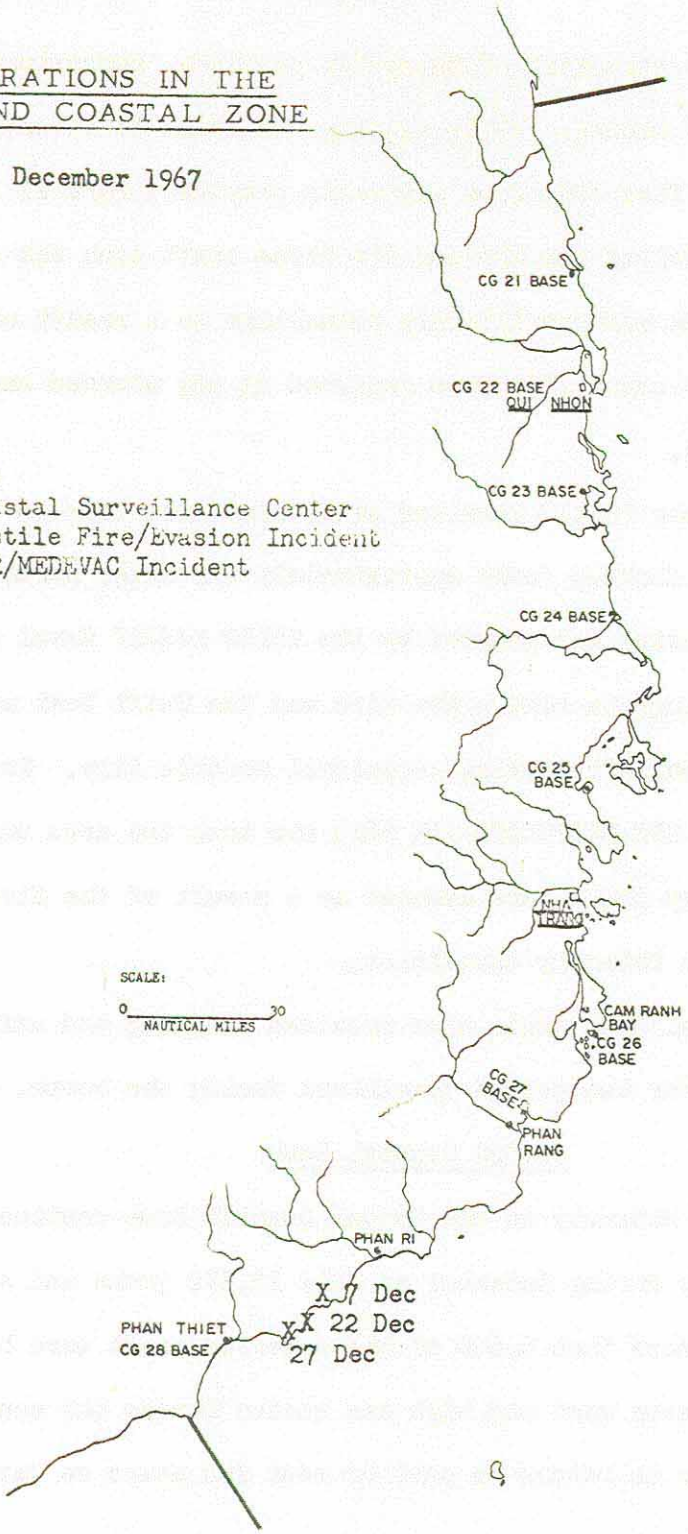

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occasions throughout the month.

In response to a request from a FIRST Cavalry NGLO, USCGC HALFMOON (WHEC 378) conducted a gunfire support mission against a suspected Viet Cong bivouac area approximately 21 miles northeast of Phan Thiet on 7 December. The mission, which was spotted by a II CTZ NGLO, resulted in three structures damaged and numerous crop caches destroyed.

On 22 December USCGC DUANE (WHEC 33) engaged in her first enemy action since World War II. Only four days after the ship commenced her first MARKET TIME patrol she received a request for gunfire support from the NGLO at Phan Thiet. With the NGLO spotting from an aircraft, the cutter took the target under fire with her five-inch gun. As a result of the firing, one command post, three bunkers and seven foxholes were destroyed. Secondary explosions from the bunkers were also observed by the spotter.

Again on the 27th, USCGC DUANE was called upon by the Phan Thiet NGLO to conduct a gunfire mission against a fortified Viet Cong area approximately 15 miles northeast of Phan Thiet. The cutter expended 119 rounds of 5"/38 ammunition and destroyed numerous foxholes and bunkers.

Third Coastal Zone

Junk and sampan traffic also decreased slightly in the Third Coastal Zone during December. Only 4,729 craft were detected, a

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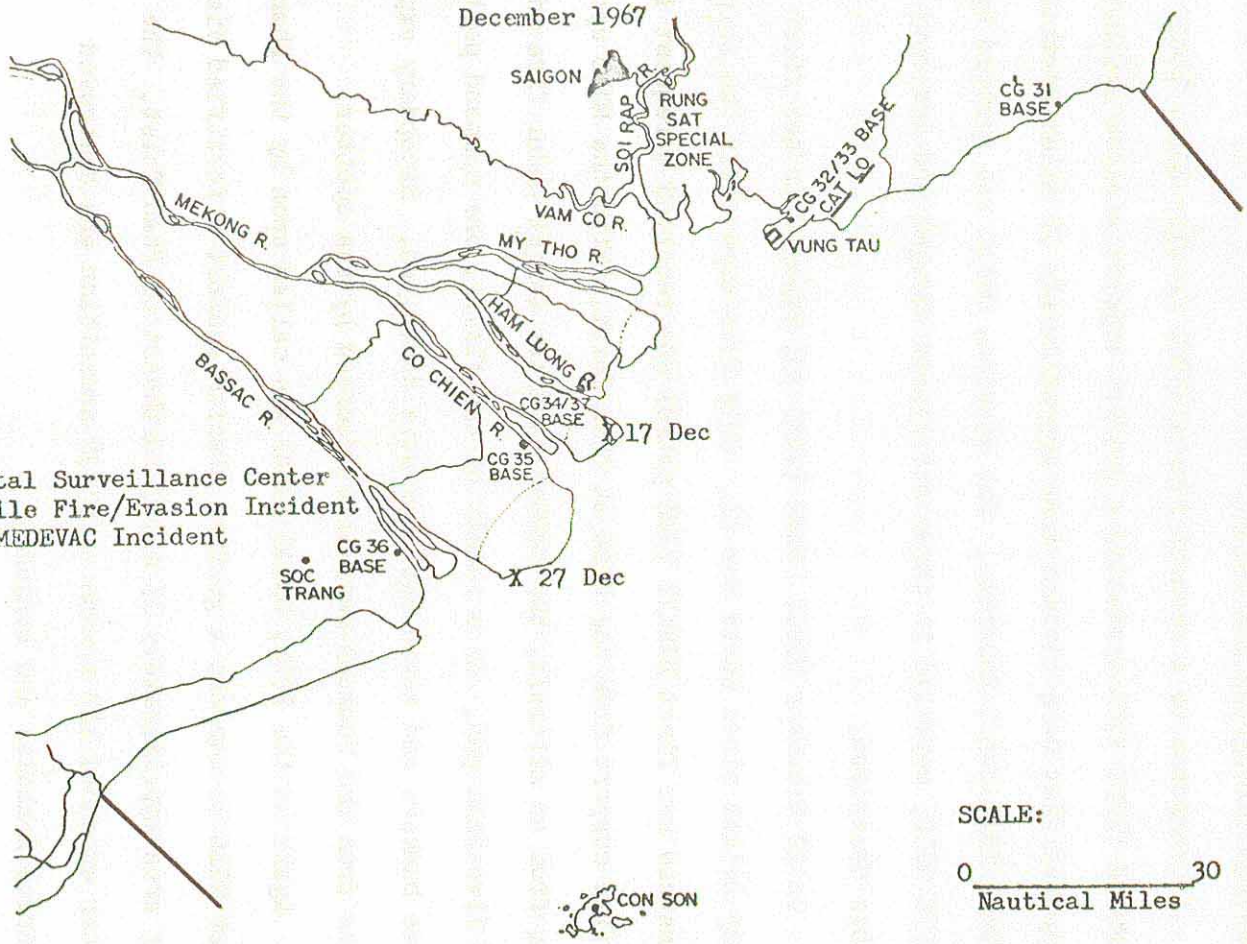
OPERATIONS IN THE THIRD COASTAL ZONE



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decrease of almost 1,000 from November's total. 2,241 of the detected craft were inspected or boarded.

The PCFs manning stations in the Third Coastal Zone were frequently forced to seek lee areas during the month because of heavy seas and high winds.

On 17 December, in response to a request from sector authorities, PCF 68 took 12 sampans under fire in the Thanh Phu Secret Zone. An airborne spotter reported several sampans damaged but the full extent of enemy damage and casualties was unknown.

On the 27th, USCGC POINT JEFFERSON took bunkers and structures in the Long Toan Secret Zone under fire in response to a request from sector authorities. The firing resulted in three bunkers destroyed and one structure damaged.

Fourth Coastal Zone

Continued fair weather in the Fourth Coastal Zone allowed MARKET TIME units to remain particularly active during December. In addition to detecting over 7,900 junks and sampans, over 3,000 of which were boarded or inspected, the zone's units were involved in numerous hostile fire incidents and gunfire support missions during the month.

On 1 December, in response to a request from sector authorities, USCGC GRESHAM (WHEC 387) conducted a gunfire mission against an enemy position approximately 26 miles north of Ca Mau Point on

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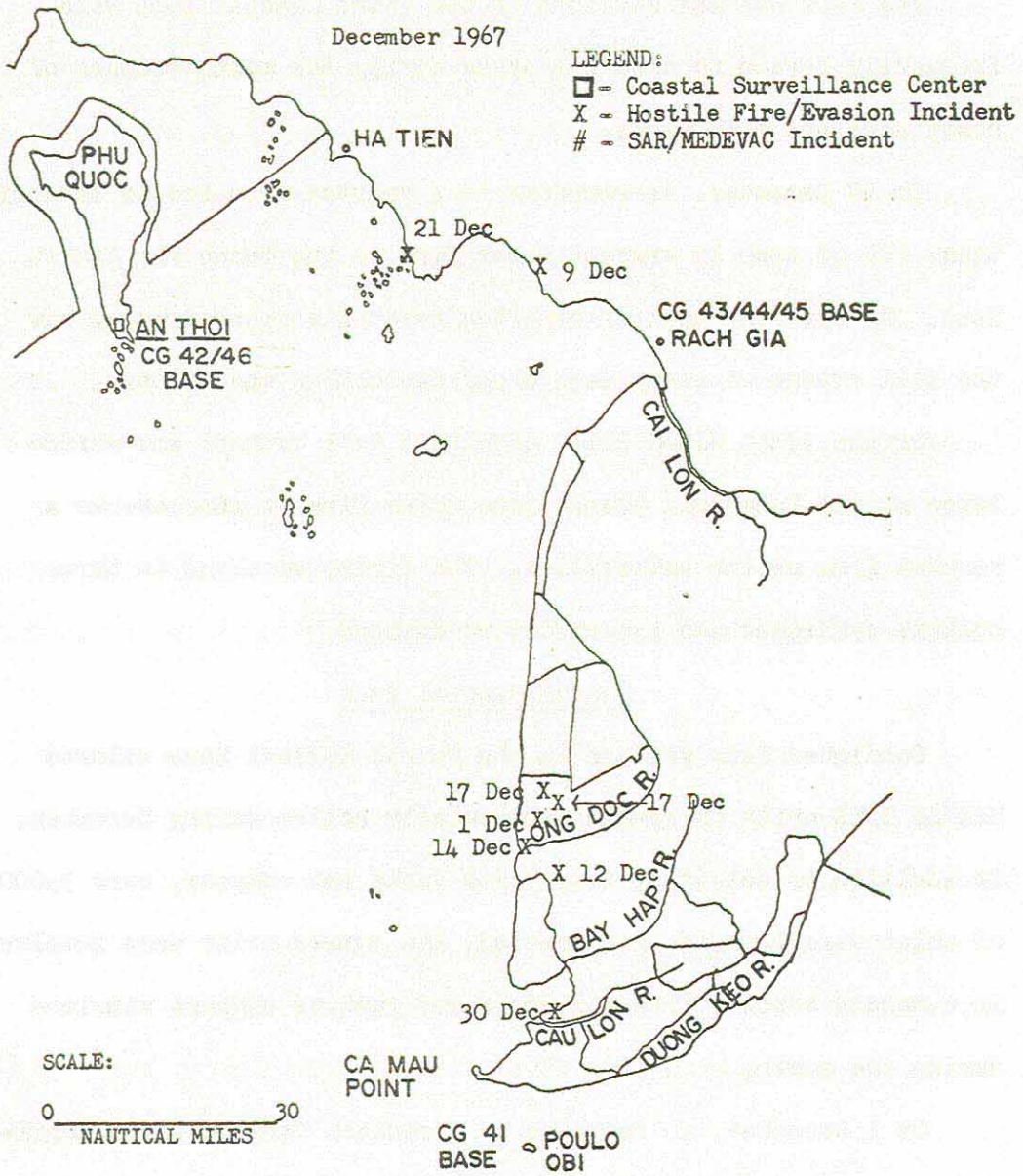
OPERATIONS IN THE FOURTH COASTAL ZONE



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the Gulf of Thailand coast. An airborne spotter reported 80 percent target coverage with one structure destroyed and 12 structures damaged.

On the 9th, PCF 74 fired on a position approximately 18 miles northwest of Rach Gia from which a spotter aircraft had received fire. As a result of the firing one sampan was destroyed and one large secondary explosion was produced.

On the 12th, USCGC YAKUTAT (WHEC 380) conducted a gunfire mission against an estimated Viet Cong company which was located approximately 25 miles north of Ca Mau Point, along the coast of the Gulf of Thailand. The mission, which was requested by the Song Ong Doc district authorities and utilized an airborne spotter, resulted in three Viet Cong killed and one wounded, plus two structures destroyed and three damaged.

On 14 December PCF 10 was requested by U. S. Army authorities at Song Ong Doc to stand by in an area 26 miles north of Ca Mau Point to apprehend fleeing sampans and help suppress possible ground fire. Several sampans were soon spotted and were stopped by the Swift boat as they attempted to evade. A total of 24 detainees were turned over to the Army authorities at Song Ong Doc by PCF 10.

On the 17th, YAKUTAT responded to a request from U. S. Army authorities at Song Ong Doc and took an enemy supply depot located

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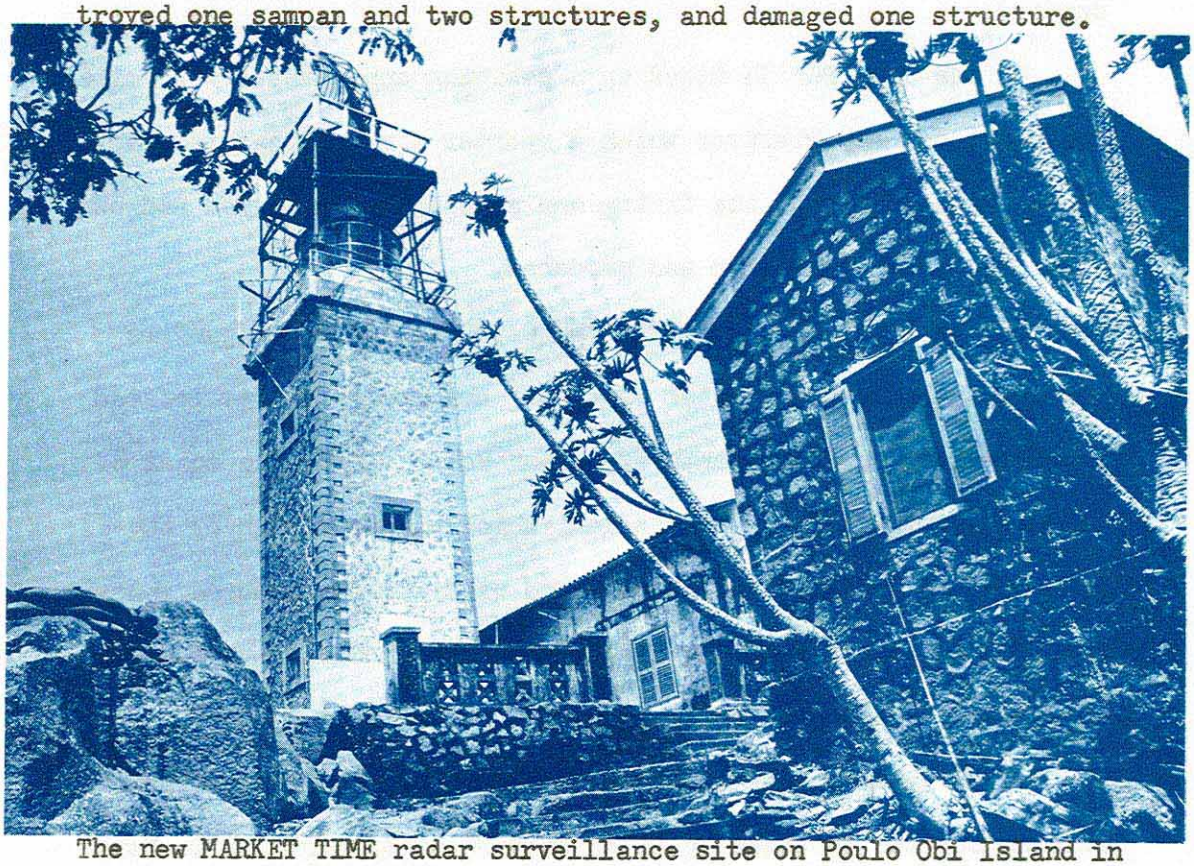
approximately 30 miles north of Ca Mau Point under fire. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the cutter destroyed one sampan and two structures, and damaged one structure.



The new MARKET TIME radar surveillance site on Poulo Obi Island in the Fourth Coastal Zone.

YAKUTAT fired a second mission on the 17th in response to another request from the same authorities. During this mission the cutter destroyed two enemy structures and damaged six at a position approximately 23 miles north of Ca Mau Point.

On 21 December PCF 73 conducted a gunfire mission against a known enemy stronghold approximately 36 miles northwest of Rach

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Gia along the Gulf of Thailand coast. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the Swift boat destroyed one bunker and killed six Viet Cong.

On the 30th, while on patrol 10 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point, PCF 12 received small-arms fire from two sampans. The Swift boat returned the fire and destroyed both sampans.

***

MARKET TIME UNITS

During the month of December the Vietnamese Navy had an average of eight PGMs and three PCEs assigned daily to MARKET TIME forces. In addition, the Royal Thai Navy had one PGM assigned to MARKET TIME forces in the Fourth Coastal Zone through the 12th of the month.

At month's end, aircraft from three patrol squadrons were providing air surveillance for Operation MARKET TIME. A detachment of Patrol Squadron TWO (VP-2) flew SP-2H Neptunes from Tan Son Nhut Air Base in Saigon and a detachment of VP-17 flew Neptunes from Cam Ranh Bay. Meanwhile, a detachment of VP-26 flew P-3B Orions from U Tapao, Thailand.

Throughout the month the following U. S. SEVENTH Fleet ships operated as MARKET TIME units during the indicated inclusive dates:

		Dates
DER 251	USS CAMP	12-30
DER 328	USS FINCH	1-10, 19-26
DER 400	USS HISSEM	26-31

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DER 325	USS LOWE	12-19, 30-31
DER 322	USS NEWELL	1-2, 10-28
LST 819	USS HAMPSHIRE COUNTY	4-31
LST 1150	USS SUTTER COUNTY	1-4
MSC 199	USS PHOEBE	1-12
MSC 209	USS WOODPECKER	12-31
MSO 428	USS CONFLICT	12-31
MSO 488	USS CONQUEST	1-6
MSO 435	USS ENDURANCE	12-31
MSO 438	USS ESTEEM	1-12
MSO 489	USS GALLANT	1-12
MSO 448	USS ILLUSIVE	2-12
MSO 455	USS IMPLICIT	12-31
MSO 491	USS PERSISTENT	12-31
MSO 492	USS PLEDGE	1-12
PG 84	USS ASHEVILLE	1-31
WHEC 68	USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN	18-31
WHEC 381	USCGC BARATARIA	1-12
WHEC 33	USCGC DUANE	18-31
WHEC 387	USCGC GRESHAM	1-2, 28-31
WHEC 378	USCGC HALF MOON	1-18
WHEC 380	USCGC YAKUTAT	2-18

***

MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY
December 1967

1. U. S. Ships/Craft:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF	LST	PG	WHEC
Daily average number of craft on patrol	2	4	1	14	29	1	1	2

2. U. S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY	24,288	NIGHT	9,863		
	STEEL - DAY	830	NIGHT	816	35,797	
TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD - DAY	10,490	NIGHT	4,212		
	STEEL - DAY	474	NIGHT	526	15,702	

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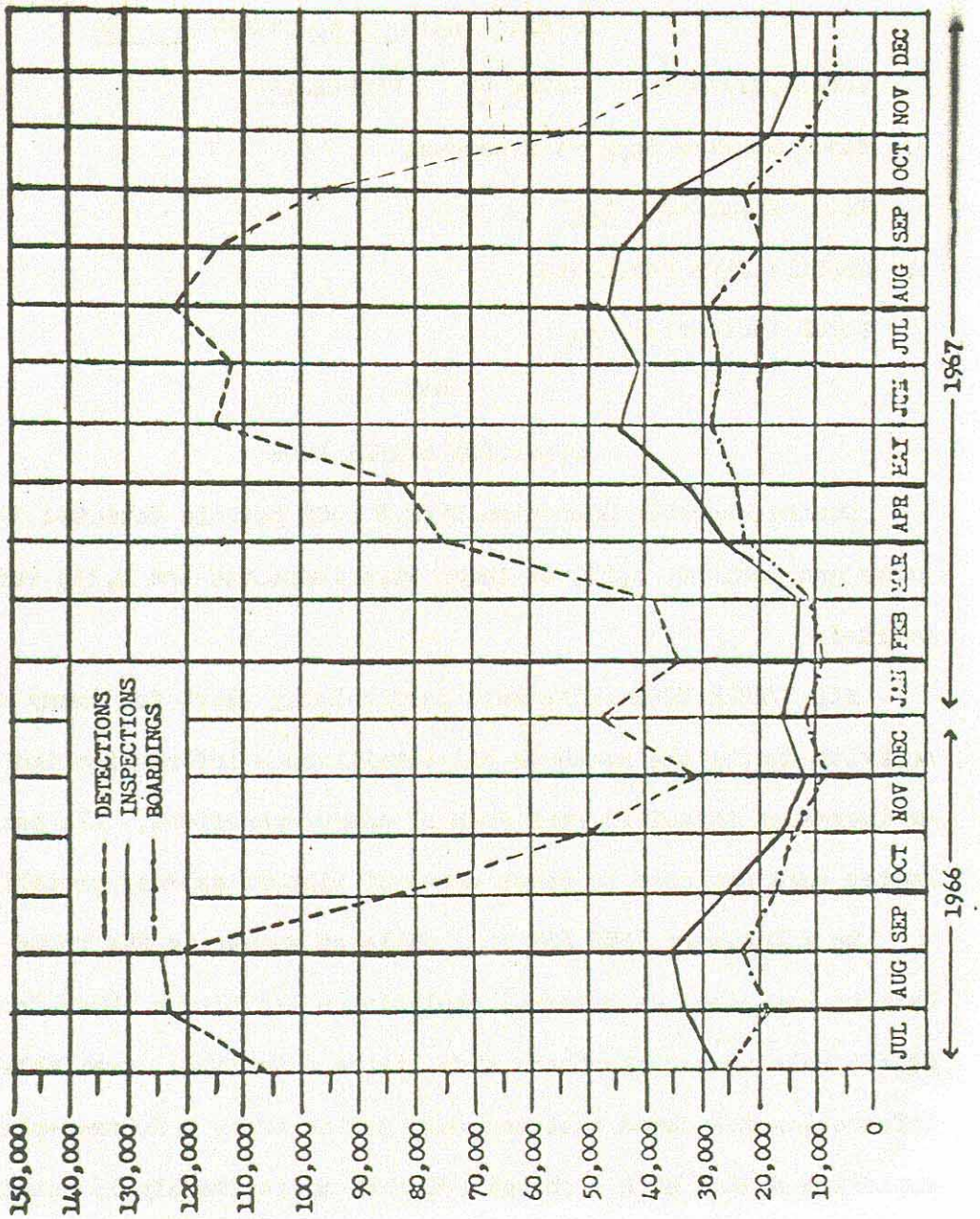

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TOTAL BOARDED WOOD - DAY 5,691 NIGHT 1,764
STEEL - DAY 53 NIGHT 9 7,517

TOTAL DETAINED JUNKS 57 PEOPLE 196

3. Naval Gunfire Support Missions:

Total Missions: 114

4. Hostile Fire Incidents:

Total Incidents: 14

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OPERATION STABLE DOOR

During December Operation STABLE DOOR patrols detected 39,295 junks and sampans; 4,252 of these were inspected and 2,333 were boarded.

All STABLE DOOR units were particularly alert for enemy swimmer activity during the month as all intelligence information indicated an increased threat in this area of enemy operations. All patrol routes were designed to cover areas of highest swimmer probability.

On 9 December USNS LST 607, while at anchor in Nha Trang Harbor, sustained an external explosion which blew a three-foot square hole in her starboard side at the waterline. Available information indicated that the ship was holed by a swimmer-placed explosive device with a charge weighing approximately 15 pounds. No personnel injuries resulted from the explosion and the ship was moved from her anchorage to the LST beach under her own power.

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Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel conducted a waterline search of all other ships in the area with negative results.

On 26 December Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit 3 (IUWU 3) at Qui Nhon sent a medical detail consisting of four guards and a corpsman into nearby Hai Minh hamlet to treat a serious pneumonia case. The team came under hostile fire from hills immediately behind the village and were evacuated, along with the patient, by STABLE DOOR skimmer craft. MARKET TIME and STABLE DOOR units then took the hill under fire with unknown results.

Also on the 26th at Cam Ranh Bay, SS EVERGREEN STATE reported sighting an unidentified swimmer 25 yards off her port side. IUWU 2's units commenced dropping grenades in the immediate vicinity of the ship and an inspection of the ship's waterline was made with negative results. Three EVERGREEN STATE personnel reported sighting the swimmer and the EOD officer stated that the probability of the sighting was good. STABLE DOOR personnel continued to drop grenades at random intervals for two hours following the sighting and all junks in the area were checked with negative results.

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RIVER PATROL FORCE (TASK FORCE 116)

Harassment of GAME WARDEN units increased during the month as the enemy was engaged in 253 fire fights. The frequent, random incursions into the canals and waterways off the major rivers by the river sections in the Delta, coupled with the increased Viet Cong activity, had resulted in an increase in the tempo of operations in the GAME WARDEN tactical area of responsibility. Also noted was the increased use of recoilless-rifles, mortars, B-40 rockets, heavy machine guns and automatic weapons by the Communist insurgents.

The PBRs and helicopter fire teams, in addition to their primary role of denying the enemy use of the rivers, provided support to the Regional Force, Popular Force and ARVN troops in their operations against the Viet Cong.

The PBRs continued to interdict Viet Cong tax collectors in their efforts to collect "Liberation" taxes to support their Winter-Spring campaign.

The Viet Cong initiated two successful and one unsuccessful mining incidents against major military and commercial targets, and on two occasions enemy swimmers were detected--one was killed.

A PBR patrol operating on the lower Bassac River was the victim of a major Christmas Truce violation when it came under heavy attack from a Viet Cong ambush site on the afternoon of Christmas Day.

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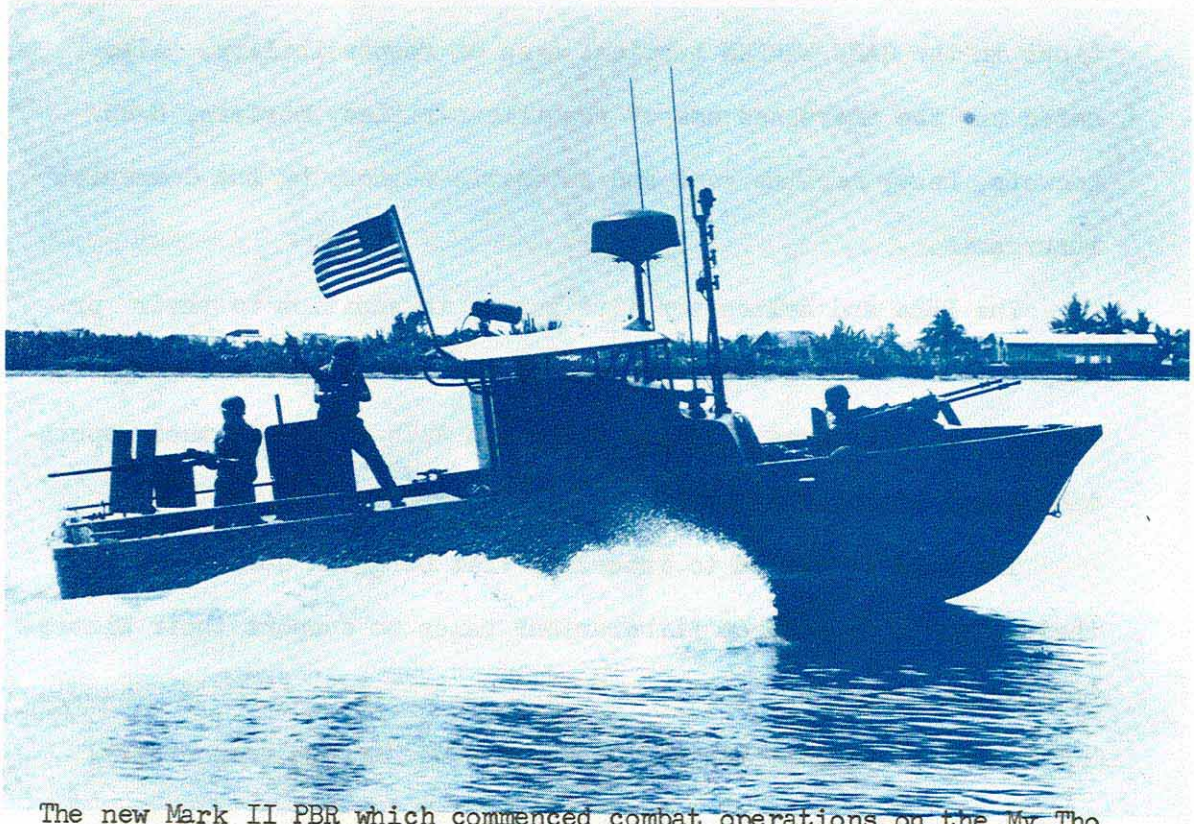
PBRs were located in the I Corps Tactical Zone for the second time when PBR Mobile Base I arrived in Danang on 2 December followed by 10 PBRs on 5 December. On 11 December River Section 534 arrived at My Tho and commenced combat patrols with the first new Mark II PBRs. Two days later the patrol boats engaged the enemy for the first time.



The new Mark II PBR which commenced combat operations on the My Tho River in December 1967.

During the year 1967, there were 38 GAME WARDEN personnel killed in action and 338 wounded. GAME WARDEN units killed 1,024 of the enemy during the same period.

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RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

On 4 December at 0930 the Viet Cong launched a recoilless-rifle and mining attack against a U. S. Army Tug and ammunition barges on the Dong Nai river in the vicinity of Cat Lai, about 13 miles northeast of Nha Be. One barge was sunk and another severely damaged by a command-detonated mine as determined by a subsequent investigation. The investigation also revealed a new technique used by the enemy to protect the electrical wires leading from the firing station to the mine. To protect the detonation wires from being cut by minesweepers, the wires were enclosed in two sections of beetlenut logs, each approximately six inches in diameter and fifteen feet long with approximately 10 feet of unprotected wire between the two beetlenut sections. The area of the mining had been swept approximately fifteen minutes prior to the mining incident. The dual chain drag, being used by the Vietnamese minesweepers, apparently passed over the beetlenut logs without disturbing the command wire. The Viet Cong made no attempt to divert the minesweepers from the area of the plant prior to the attack. A subsequent experimental sweep using the protective log coverings recovered in the Dong Nai incident demonstrated that a conventional U. S. chain drag was effective.

On the evening of 6 December, a PBR patrol operating on the Long Tau River detected three sampans crossing the river, three

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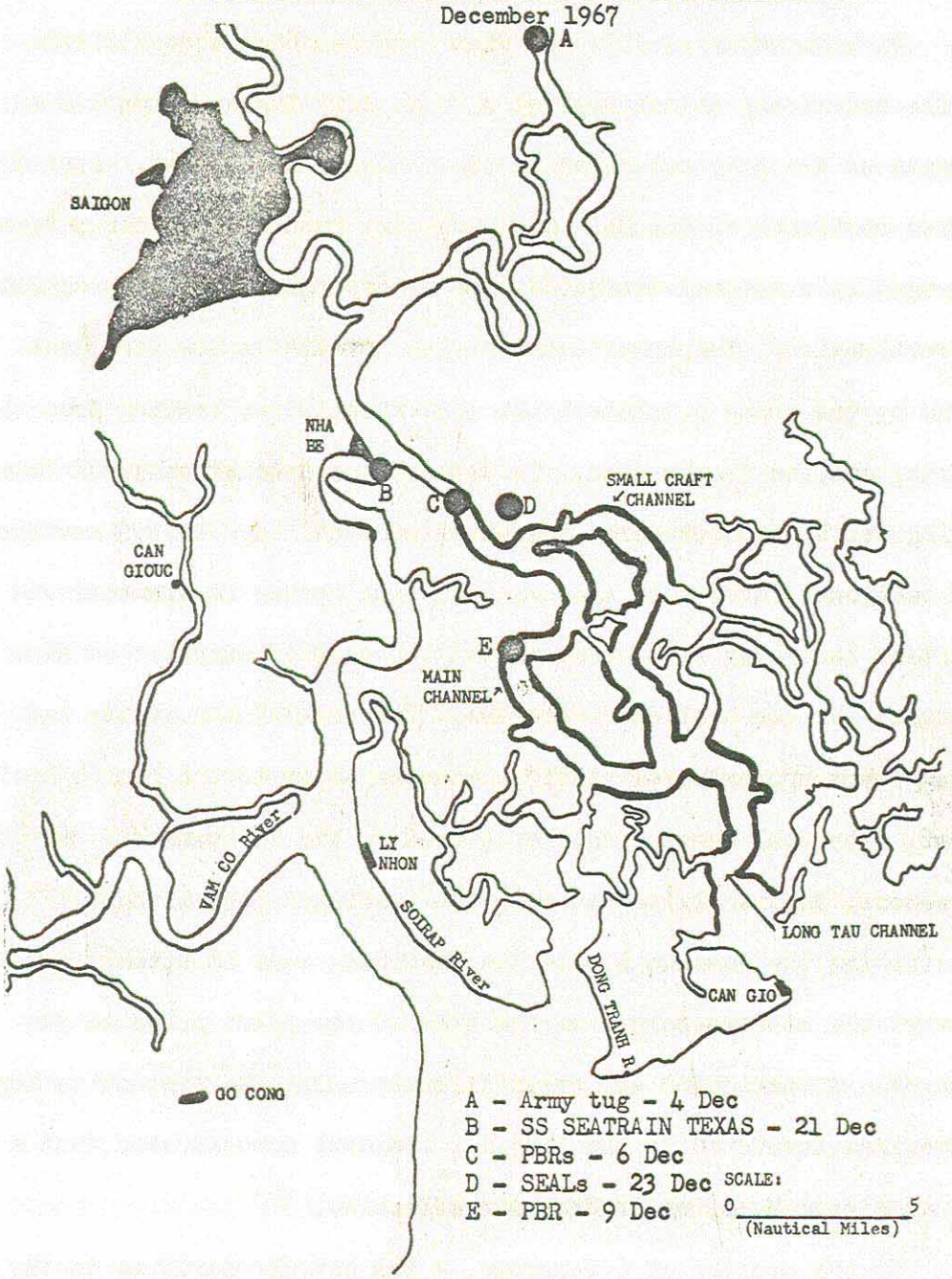
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATIONS
December 1967



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miles southeast of Nha Be. When the sampans attempted to evade, the patrol boats opened fire on them. Simultaneously, the PBRs came under heavy automatic-weapons and small-arms fire from enemy positions on both banks of the river. The PBRs cleared the area to evacuate one seriously wounded crewman by medical helicopter. In the meantime Navy "Seawolves" put in air strikes on the area of the attack. Upon completion of the air strikes, the PBRs, with air support being provided by the "Seawolves", returned and recovered two enemy sampans containing 12 one-quarter pound blocks of TNT, one blasting cap, documents and personal gear. Three Viet Cong were killed in the action. In addition to the seriously wounded PBR sailor, two others received slight wounds.

On 9 December, a Chinese Communist hand grenade landed in the lead boat of a two-boat night patrol operating on the Long Tau river about 10 miles down river from Nha Be. The grenade, thrown from concealment along the river bank, was immediately picked up by the patrol officer, Lieutenant (junior grade) C. OEHLER, USN, and thrown overboard where it exploded harmlessly in the water. The enemy ambush site was taken under fire by the PBRs and Navy helicopters with unknown results.

On 21 December, while at anchor in the Long Tau river about one mile from the U. S. Navy base at Nha Be, the U. S. merchant ship SS SEATRAIN TEXAS was damaged by a floating explosive charge.

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The explosion, which occurred at about 0210, blew a hole amidships on the starboard side, extending five feet above the waterline and two feet below. PBRs were rushed to the scene to provide security for the ship which got underway in anticipation of beaching on the bank of the river to prevent sinking in the shipping channel. The ship, however, was able to control the flooding with her pumps and anchored close to shore. Temporary hull repairs were made by the Navy harbor clearance unit and the ship proceeded to Saigon with a load of general cargo. This incident was the first swimmer/sapper attack in this area since the sinking of the SS EASTERN MARINER in May 1966.

On the afternoon of 23 December, a SEAL platoon was landed by helicopter in an area about six miles east of Nha Be, their base of operations. The platoon patrolled to the east and about three hours later came under automatic-weapons fire. The first burst of the enemy fire killed Seaman F. G. ANTONE, USN, the Navy point man, and a Vietnamese LDNN and wounded one other Navyman. The platoon quickly established a defensive position and engaged the enemy. During the ensuing fire fight two more SEALs received slight wounds. As the SEALs fell back from the heavy enemy force (it was suspected that the platoon had come upon an enemy base camp) the dead and one wounded SEAL were evacuated to Nha Be by a helicopter using a McGuire Rig. The remaining personnel were later extracted by helicopter and

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a SEAL support LCM. One Viet Cong was killed and one was wounded.

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DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On 1 December PBRs and Navy "Seawolves" supported a Vietnamese outpost, located about one and a half miles north of Sa Dec, under attack by communist forces. At the request of the Kien Van subsector advisor, a PBR was dispatched to aid in the counter-attack. The patrol boat commenced firing runs and received automatic-weapons and rifle-grenade fire from the beach in return. Two additional boats arrived shortly thereafter to assist in suppressing the Viet Cong fire. The enemy targets were then taken under attack by Navy armed helicopters and once again the enemy responded with ground fire. Artillery fire was called in to suppress the enemy. When the artillery mission was complete, Popular Force troops from the outpost reported the location of a platoon of Viet Cong. Navy "Seawolves" put in a strike against the platoon and once again encountered ground fire. For the second time artillery fire was called into the area and the PBRs landed a Regional Force unit, from Kien Van subsector, to join the Popular Forces in a sweep of the area. The determined enemy broke contact leaving 19 bodies behind. There were no U. S. casualties.

On 10 December two PBRs, in support of a SEAL operation, were

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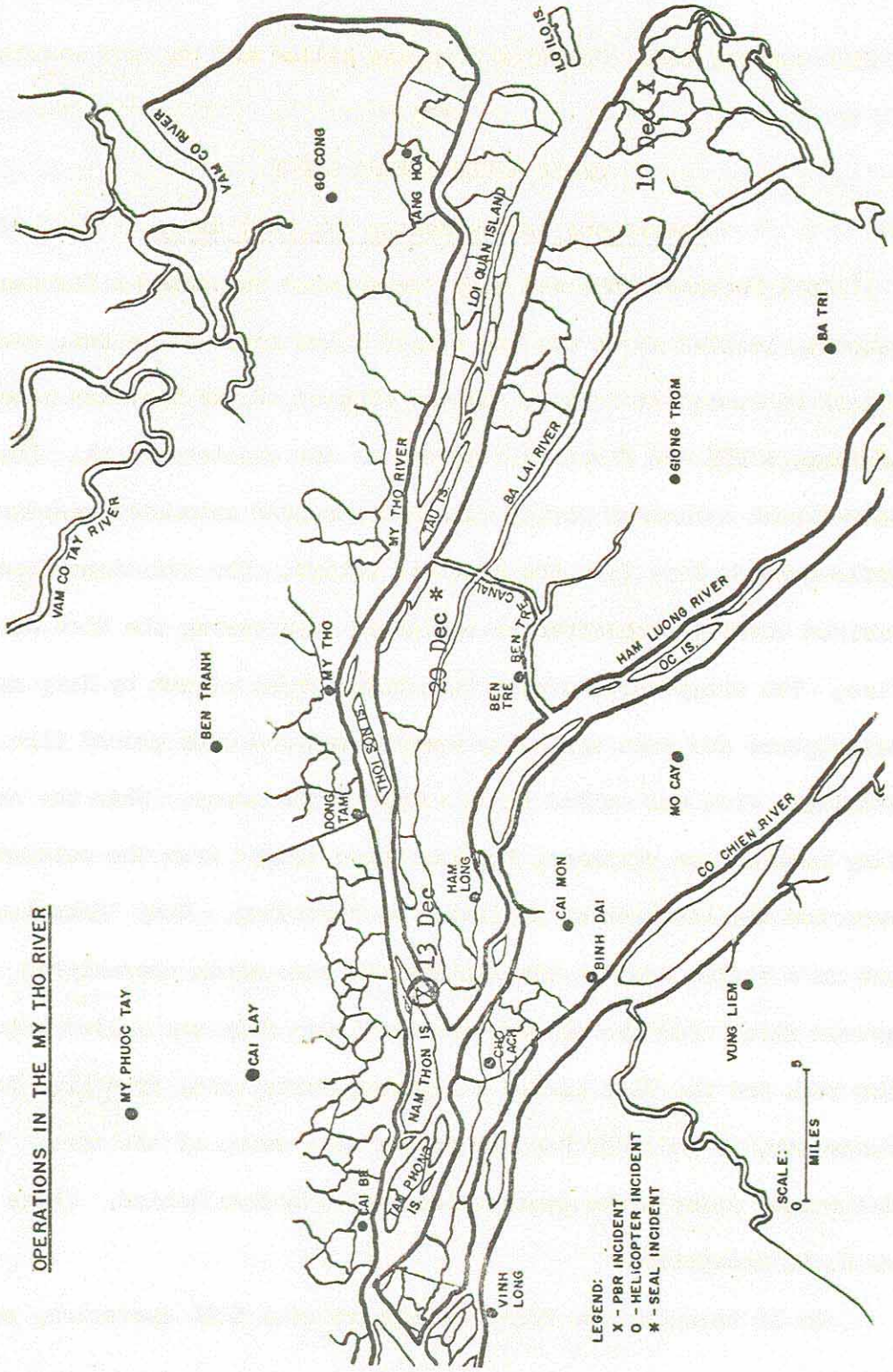

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on a blocking station 26 miles southeast from My Tho on the My Tho river. The patrol officer was advised by the SEAL team that a water taxi with Viet Cong aboard was en route up the Khem Canal. The PBRs intercepted the water taxi which had 10 men and about 30 women and children on board. As the PBR crewmen commenced a search several passengers started throwing documents into the river. Several documents were recovered from the water. One bandolier of ammunition and several additional documents were taken from the taxi. Fourteen of the passengers failed to have identification papers. The water, taxi, with all occupants, and the documents were turned over to Vietnamese authorities at Binh Dai.

Later the same day, 10 miles northwest of Sa Dec, a PBR patrol teamed up with Vietnamese Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) personnel to thwart a Viet Cong crossing of the Mekong River. The PBRs landed three three-man listening posts in the suspected Viet Cong crossing area at 2030. Contact with the enemy was made shortly thereafter when a large group of Viet Cong came upon one of the PRU positions. The PRUs attacked the enemy and withdrew under the fire cover of one PBR, while the second boat recovered the PRUs. Five of the enemy were killed in the fire fight between the PRUs and the Viet Cong. There were no U. S. casualties and only one PRU was wounded in the action.

The first hostile action between the communist insurgents and

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units of the new River Section 534 occurred on 13 December. The River Section, using the first of the new Mark II PBRs, had commenced combat patrols on 11 December. The action commenced at about 1045 when PBR 20 received about 150 rounds of small-arms fire from enemy positions on the south bank of the My Tho river, about 12 miles southwest of the PBR base at My Tho. PBRs 12 and 16 quickly rallied to assist PBR 20 and, after a short engagement, suppressed the enemy fire. A Navy "Seawolf" also put a strike into the area. Lieutenant William A. EARNER, USN, the patrol officer, resumed the patrol following its baptismal under fire. The casualties inflicted upon the enemy were unknown. There were no friendly casualties.

At 2030 on the 20th of December, a squad of SEALs was landed by SEAL team assault boat in an area about five miles southeast of My Tho. Squad 7A patrolled south where they encountered, one hour later, three males. The Navymen tried to detain the subjects, however, they were killed when they tried to escape. The squad continued south and upon hearing barking dogs and enemy warning shots the patrol conducted evasion movements and swung north. The squad came upon a house containing an unknown number of males who attempted to escape. Opening fire, the SEALs killed three more Viet Cong. At 0200 the squad was withdrawn. At 2130 squad 7B was landed in the vicinity of squad 7A and patrolled in a southern direction where

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they detected Viet Cong warning shots. The squad made a simulated withdrawal and established an ambush site. The squad detained one Viet Cong suspect and withdrew at 0115 on the 21st. Although enemy contact was made, neither squad was able to reach the planned ambush site due to Viet Cong activity in the area. One SEAL was wounded slightly during the patrol.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

On 7 December a Navy helicopter light fire team conducted a patrol along the length of the Ba Lai River, a specified strike zone. As the two helicopters flew along the river they detected river traffic in the restricted area and commenced attacks. When the "Seawolves" had completed their morning patrol, the Navy flyers had destroyed four structures and one sampan; damaged eight structures and five sampans; and killed four Viet Cong and wounded 16 others. The enemy casualty figures were confirmed by the Binh Dai sector advisor several days after the airstrikes.

On 15 December, PBRs 7-16 and 7-12, on a routine upper Ham Luong River patrol, came under heavy small-arms and automatic-weapons fire from the north bank of the Cai Cam river, located about five miles west of Ben Tre. PBR 7-16 was hit by a B-40 rocket or a rifle grenade in the bow, causing minor flooding. Both boats also received numerous small-arms hits, while returning the fire and clearing the area as a "Seawolf" put in an airstrike. In the

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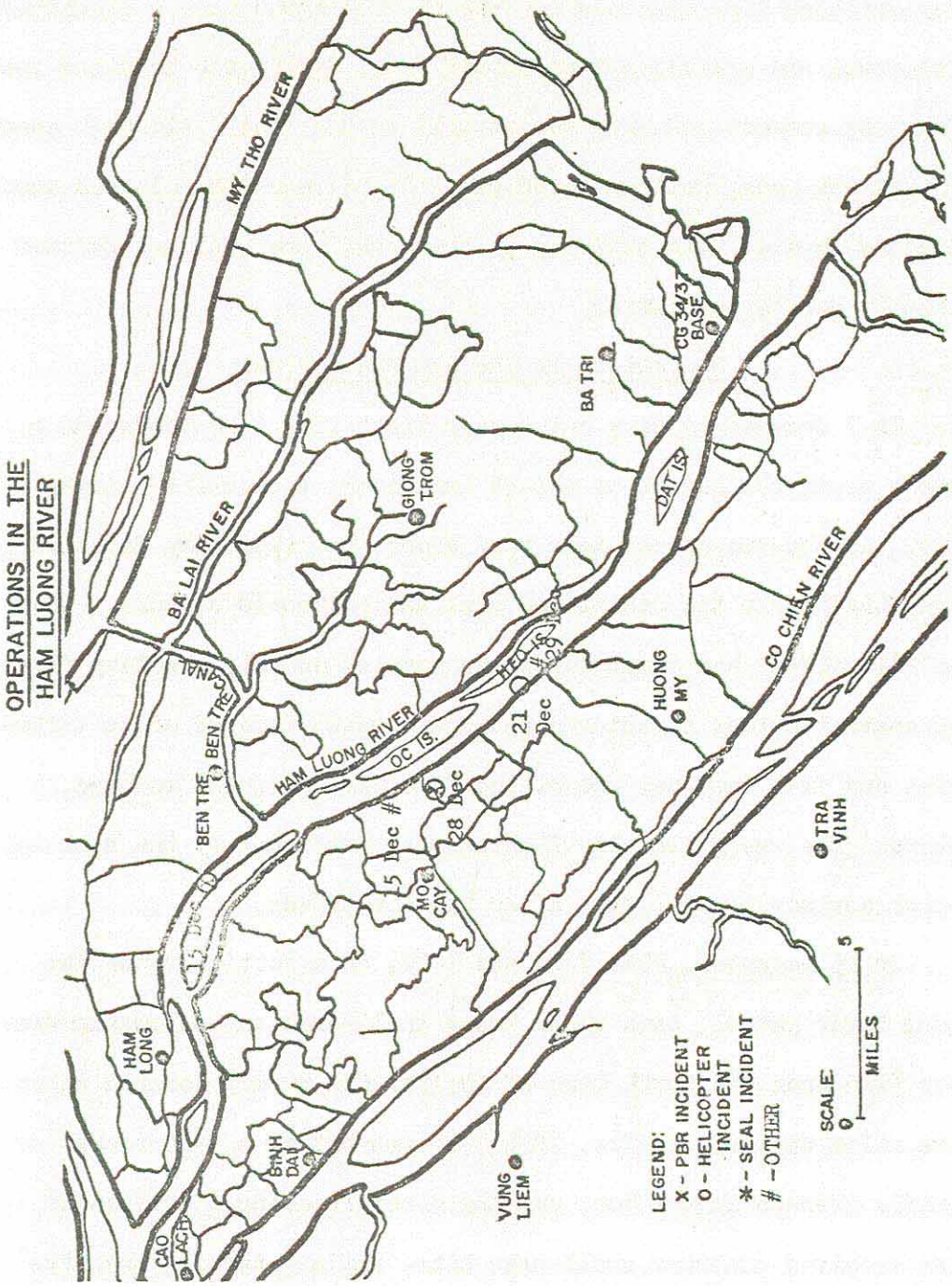

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meantime, PBR 7-19 and 7-20, on blocking stations on the Ham Luong River, also received enemy fire. These boats, however, were able to suppress the fire with their guns. Enemy casualties were unknown and there were no friendly casualties. This was the fourth fire fight in this area in three days.

On the evening of the 15th, USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) fired a harassment and interdiction mission at a target located six miles southeast of Ben Tre on the west side of the Ham Luong river. The ship saturated the Viet Cong area with 1,033 rounds of 40-mm at the request of the Mo Cay sector advisor. Twenty Viet Cong were killed and one recoilless-rifle was damaged in the shore bombardment.

On 18 December, Commander River Division 53 conducted Operation PREAKNESS II along the Ba Lai River, utilizing units from River Sections 531, 532 and 534 and helicopters from detachments Five and Six of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE. The objectives of the operation were to collect intelligence and destroy targets of opportunity along the river, a known Viet Cong supply route. The initial transit of the river was quiet, but the PBRs encountered enemy fire twice on the return transit. The fire was returned and suppressed on both occassions with no friendly casualties. The operation resulted in three Viet Cong structures and four sampans destroyed.

On 21 December a Navy helicopter light fire team on routine patrol noted heavy sampan traffic on the Ham Luong river about nine

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miles south-southeast of Ben Tre. As the helicopters arrived in the area, three sampans attempted to evade and were taken under fire. Shortly thereafter the "Seawolves" placed strikes against two loaded sea-going junks and three other loaded sampans attempting to evade. Four Viet Cong were killed; two junks and two sampans were destroyed; and two structures and two sampans were damaged.

On the morning of 28 December, a PBR patrol operating seven miles south of Ben Tre was ambushed from the west bank of the Ham Luong river. During the fire fight that ensued, PBR 110 was hit in the radar dome by a recoilless-rifle round, wounding five crewmen--two seriously. The flying shrapnel also punctured the fuel oil cooler causing a minor fire that was quickly extinguished. Four additional PBRs converged on the area of the ambush and immediately encountered enemy fire. The patrol boats made repeated passes at the enemy firing positions but were unable to suppress the fire. Navy "Seawolves" continued the attack until the enemy broke contact. Enemy losses were not known.

At 2345, 29 December an explosion was felt by the crew of USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) while at anchor in the Ham Luong river, 15 miles from the river mouth. The repercussion and sound was slightly more than that felt and heard from concussion grenades used defensively against enemy swimmers. An immediate investigation revealed an explosive device, attached to the side cleaner

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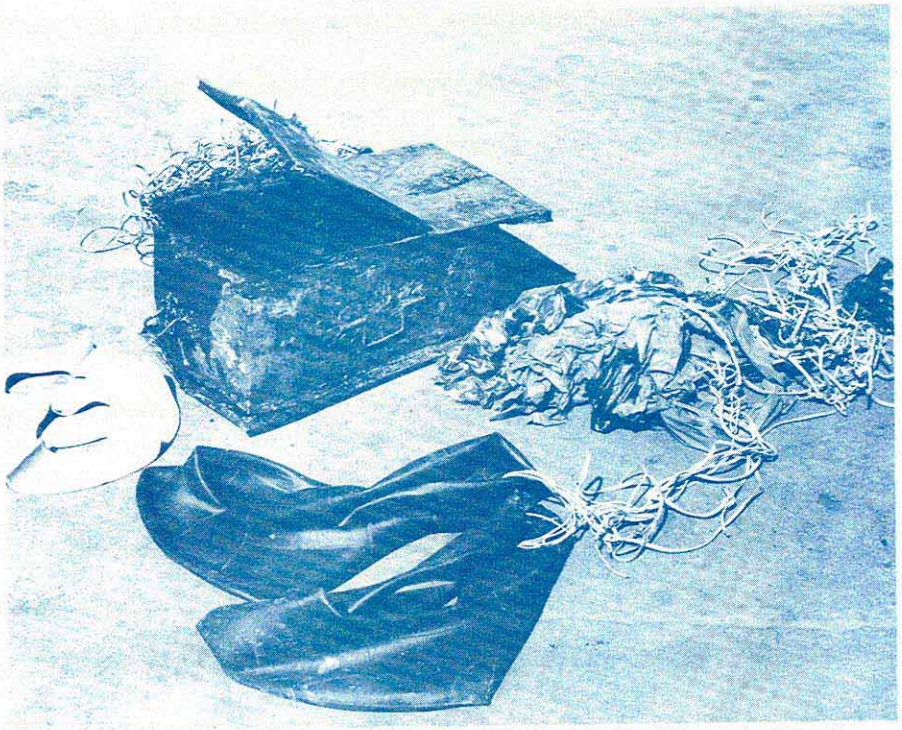

A Viet Cong mine used unsuccessfully against USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) on 29 December 1967 while the ship was anchored in the Ham Luong River.

staging with a metal hook, at frame 18 on the port side located two feet below the water line. A similar device was found at frame 25 in the same position. Wires attached to the devices led aft around the screw guard and then underwater to the beach where the Viet Cong had established a command-detonating position. Explosive ordnance disposal personnel recovered the two devices and found that the Viet Cong blasting caps used were defective, resulting in a low order detonation. Had the command-detonated charges, each containing 120 pounds of U. S. Composition C-4 and 40 pounds of Chinese communist

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TNT, exploded as designed, serious damage would have been incurred by the ship. In addition to the above explosive, several unused, new U. S. blasting caps were found in the bottoms of the explosive containers. The following morning SEALs conducted an operation in the area of the sabotage attempt to obtain intelligence relative to sapper activity in the area. Three Viet Cong were killed and five detainees were turned over to intelligence officers for questioning.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 13 December a U. S. Air Force F4C Phantom crashed in the Co Chien river about 2,700 yards ahead of USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786), located five miles north of Phu Vinh, near the river mouth. Six PBRs, a helicopter and an LCVP with a hospital corpsman aboard were immediately dispatched to the scene. The pilot was recovered from the water; however, an extensive search, augmented by four additional helicopters, failed to find the co-pilot. PBRs assisting in the search came under enemy fire, however, the patrol boats and Navy "Seawolves" returned the fire, achieving a secondary explosion. One sailor was wounded in the exchange of fire. Enemy casualties were unknown.

At 2033 on the evening of 15 December, the forecastle sentry on USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786), anchored about nine miles northwest of Phu Vinh, detected a noise near a PBR moored alongside the

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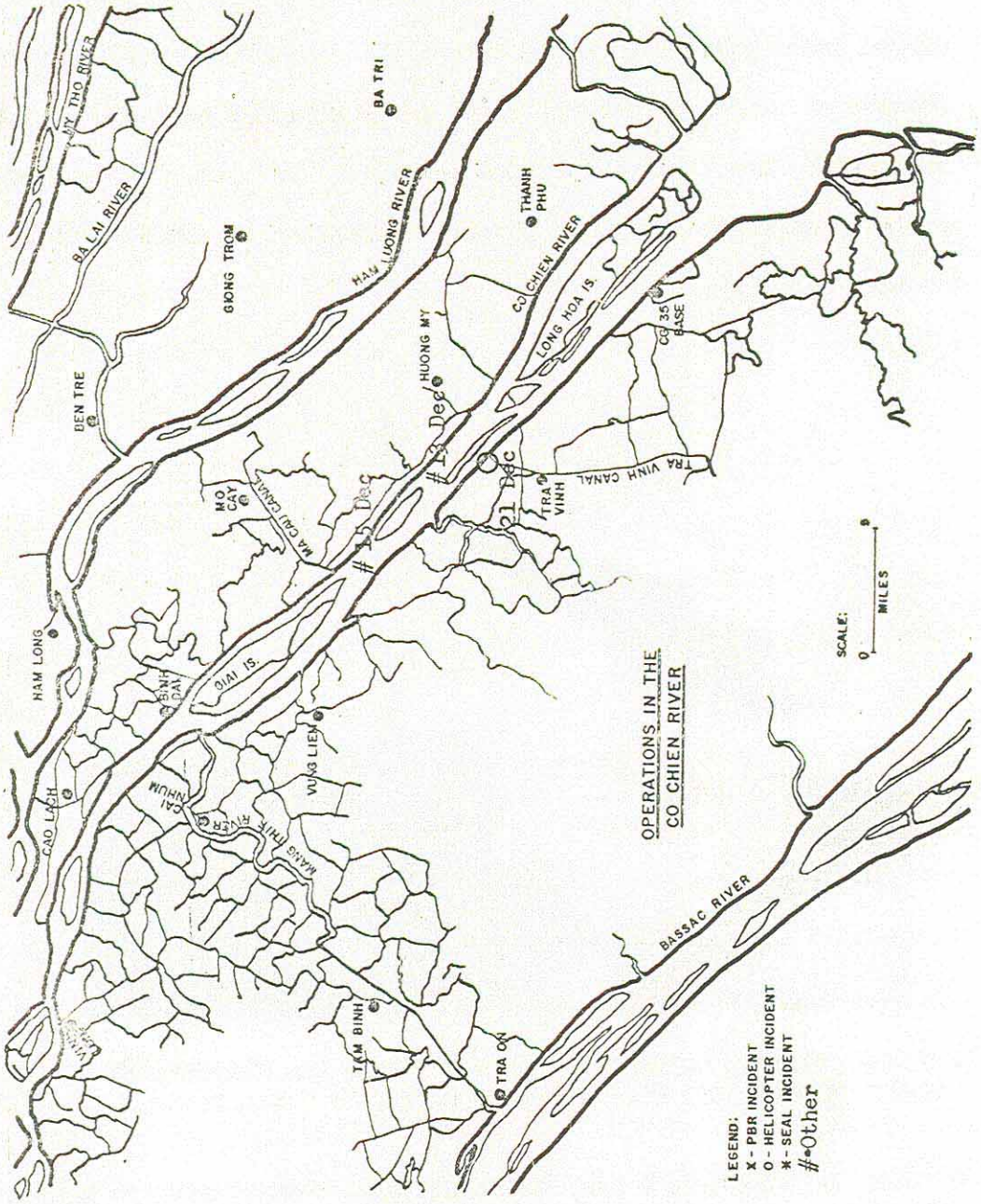

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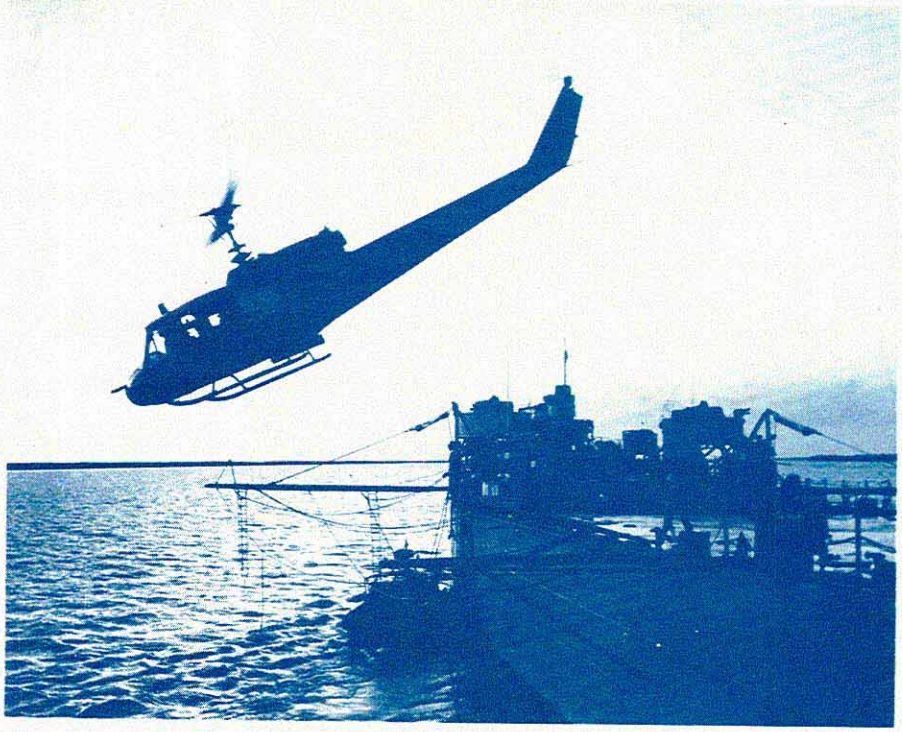
LST. When the area was illuminated a swimmer was seen with his hands on the ejector pumps of the patrol boat. The swimmer submerged immediately upon being detected. Concussion grenades were dropped at random around the ship, while a picket boat and a light helicopter fire team conducted a search of the area. The search achieved negative results. Shortly thereafter the ship shifted to another anchorage.



A UH-1B ("Huey") helicopter takes off from the flight deck of USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) anchored in the Co Chien River.

On 21 December, a Navy "Seawolf" fire team on routine patrol received enemy fire from a position about three miles northeast of

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Phu Vinh. The helicopters returned and suppressed the fire and observed a heavily-loaded motorized sampan. The "Seawolves" then launched a machine-gun and rocket attack against the sampan, killing three Viet Cong and destroying the craft. The "Seawolves" then swung up the river a short distance where they detected several more loaded sampans. Once again the helicopters opened fire, killing seven more of the enemy. The airstrike also destroyed seven sampans and damaged three others. There were no casualties sustained by the flyers in the action.

Operations in the Bassac River

On 1 and 2 December, PBRs and Navy "Seawolves" supported Popular Force troop operations about 12 miles southeast of Can Tho. On 1 December PBRs made a canal incursion off the west bank of the Bassac and landed 40 of the Vietnamese troops. The patrol boats and helicopters provided pre-landing fire and, following the landing, covered the flanks. The Vietnamese, led by Sergeant THANH, commenced a sweep of the canal and engaged the enemy. The combined fire power of the friendly forces killed three of the Viet Cong. When the operation was completed, six motorized sampans were destroyed, 28 sampans damaged and 30 structures damaged. One Viet Cong was captured and two suspects were detained. There were no friendly casualties. The next day Popular Force troops were landed, and supported by PBRs, on Nai Island. The troops, once again led by

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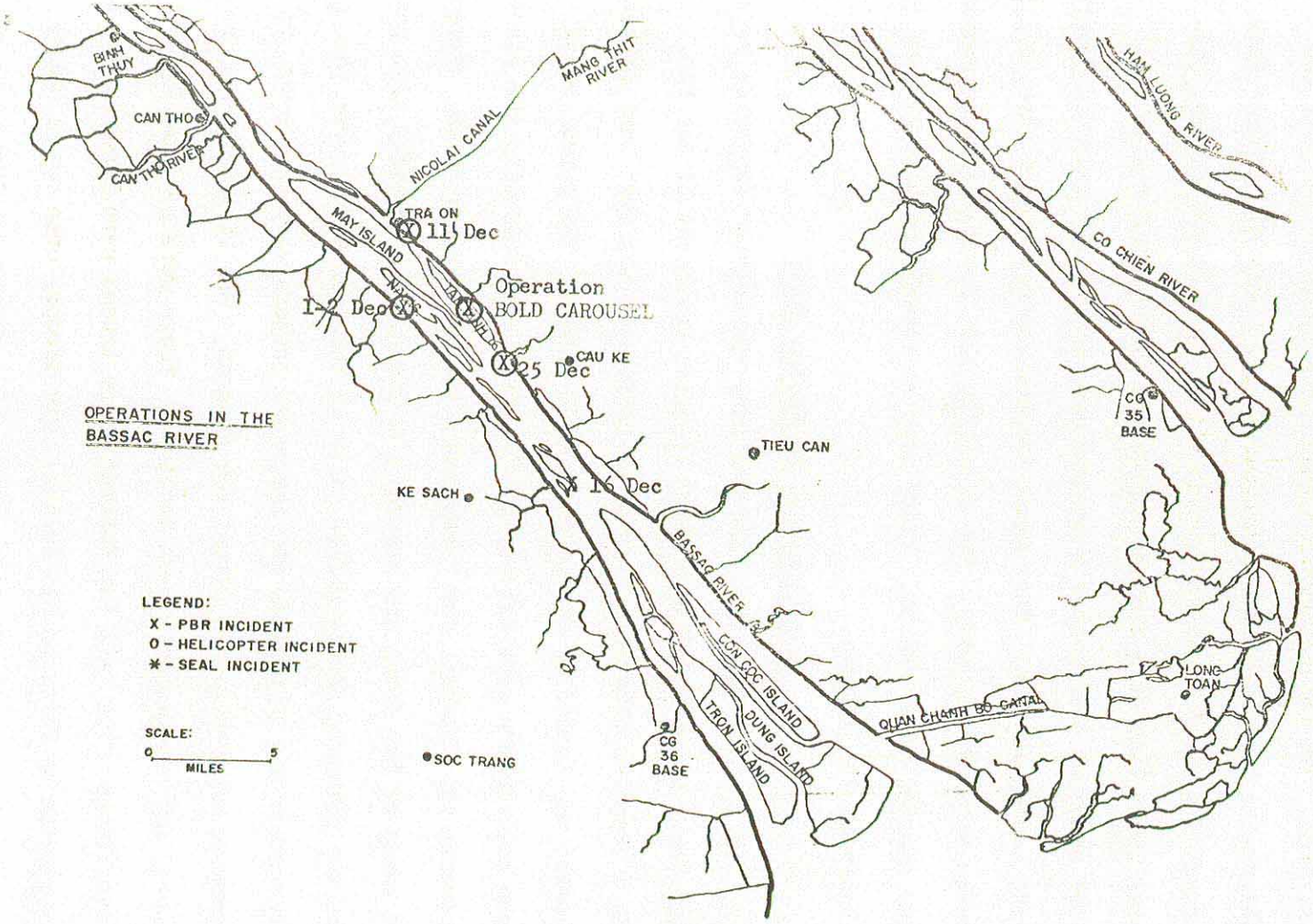

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Sergeant THANH, engaged the enemy while Navy "Seawolves" and PBRs provided fire support and established blocking positions on both sides of the island. The PBRs and helicopters came under enemy fire while conducting a medical evacuation for two wounded Popular Force troops. The Navy helicopters suppressed the fire with strikes placed on the Viet Cong positions. Six hours after the troops were landed, contact with the enemy was broken off and all friendly forces were withdrawn. Three Viet Cong were killed and three large motorized junks and one structure were destroyed. Also destroyed was a food cache of eggs and rice found in a Viet Cong storeroom. There were no U. S. casualties. This was the eighth recent Popular Force operation led by Sergeant THANH and supported by PBRs and Navy helicopters. These operations have demonstrated a notable increase in the efficiency, organization and tactics of this Popular Force unit.

On the night of 11 December, Navy helicopters from Binh Thuy and USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838) teamed up to form a three-helicopter heavy fire team in response to a request for support of Tra On, a district town that was under heavy mortar attack. The fire team made repeated firing runs against the enemy positions, killing 12 of the attacking forces. PBRs evacuated three Popular Force troops and one civilian to Can Tho for medical treatment. There were no U. S. casualties.

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On the evening of 16 December, a PBR patrol using drifting tactics was conducting a silent surveillance of the canal formed by Dong Dien Island and the southern islet on the lower Bassac River. During the patrol, with the PBRs within 30 feet of the bank, the sailors were alerted by a sudden silencing of normal activity along the bank. The alerted sailors immediately spotted s swimmer within ten feet of the boat and, when the range had closed to about seven feet, the PBR crew opened up with machine-gun and small-arms fire, killing the Viet Cong. The swimmer's body was not recovered and it was not determined what type of ordnance the swimmer carried.

During the period 21-23 December, PBRs provided a rotating exfiltration blockade around Tan Dinh Island on the lower Bassac while Navy "Seawolves" provided overhead cover in Operation BOLD CAROUSEL. The island, located 13 miles southeast from the PBR base at Binh Thuy, had been a notorious area for Viet Cong-initiated attacks against the River Patrol Boats. While the boats patrolled in a clock-wise rotation at 2,000 yards intervals, units of the ARVN NINTH Division conducted a sweep of the island. The Viet Cong were successful in avoiding ground contact; therefore, the ground sweep achieved negligible results. Throughout the two-day action, the PBRs and helicopters were engaged on 58 separate occasions by the enemy from positions on the island and mainland. Units of Vietnamese River Assault Group 25 joined with the GAME WARDEN units in a heavy

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counter-fire against the numerous Viet Cong positions. During the operation, 12 U. S. Navymen were wounded (one serious), 19 PBRs sustained multiple bullet and shrapnel damage and two helicopters received bullet hits. In addition, one helicopter supporting the operation crashed at Binh Thuy as a result of mechanical failure, injuring four crewmen. U. S. forces killed two Viet Cong, captured one and detained 35 suspects. Four sampans and five structures were destroyed during the operation that could be termed a "running gun battle".

On 25 December, during the Christmas Truce period--241800 to 251800--a PBR patrol, operating on the Bassac just south of Tan Dinh Island, was attacked by enemy forces. At 1450 the lead boat of the two-boat patrol received one B-40 rocket round in its starboard side. Eight rounds of rifle grenades plus automatic and small-arms gunfire were also directed against the boat. Two PBR sailors were wounded when the rocket hit, causing major damage to the boat's hull. The PBRs retaliated with their weapons, but were unable to suppress the enemy fire. The boats were forced to withdraw from the kill zone, but only after Navy "Seawolves" commenced an air strike on the Viet Cong positions. After the air strike, the helicopters directed 105-mm artillery fire from Cau Ke onto the enemy positions. Twenty Viet Cong were killed and four were wounded, 19 civilians were wounded, and one crew-served weapon and three

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small arms were destroyed by the friendly fire power.

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GAME WARDEN UNITS

On 1 December USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821), with River Section 531 and Detachment Five of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE embarked, shifted station from the Co Chien River to the Ham Luong River. USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838) departed from her station in the Ham Luong River en route to Danang with River Section 521 embarked.

On 5 December River Section 521 arrived in Danang in preparation for PBR operations in I Corps Tactical Zone. Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, assumed operational control of River Section 521. The operational control was exercised through the First Coastal Zone Advisor and Commander I Corps Tactical Zone River Patrol Group/ Commander River Division 55.

On 6 December River Section 522, embarked aboard USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786), changed to the operational control of Commander River Division 52, and assumed task element designator 116.1.2.4. Detachment Four of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron THREE, embarked aboard GARRETT COUNTY, changed to the operational control of Commander River Division 52, and assumed task element designator 116.1.2.8.

On 6 December Commander I Corps Tactical Zone River Patrol Group/ Commander River Division 55 changed to the operational control of Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, through the First Coastal Zone

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On 6 December USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST 838) changed to the operational control of Commander Task Force 76.

On 7 December GARRETT COUNTY arrived on station in the Co Chien River and commenced normal GAME WARDEN operations.

On 14 December River Section 535 arrived at Binh Thuy with five Mark II PBRs, changed to the operational control of Commander Task Force 116, and assumed task element designator 116.1.1.5.

On 21 December River Section 524 was activated at Nha Be.

On 22 December light helicopter fire teams based aboard GAME WARDEN support ships began making random patrols of the Binh Dai, Thanh Phu, and Long Toan Secret Zones. The primary objective of the patrols was to detect attempted Viet Cong infiltration from seaward.

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GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
December 1967

1. PBR Statistics:

a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 756 Night 753.5

b. Total Contacts: Day 56,589 Night 3,799

c. Total Inspected: Day 14,093 Night 1,069

d. Total Boarded: Day 32,312 Night 2,501

e. People Detained: 774

f. Sampans/Junks Detained: 0

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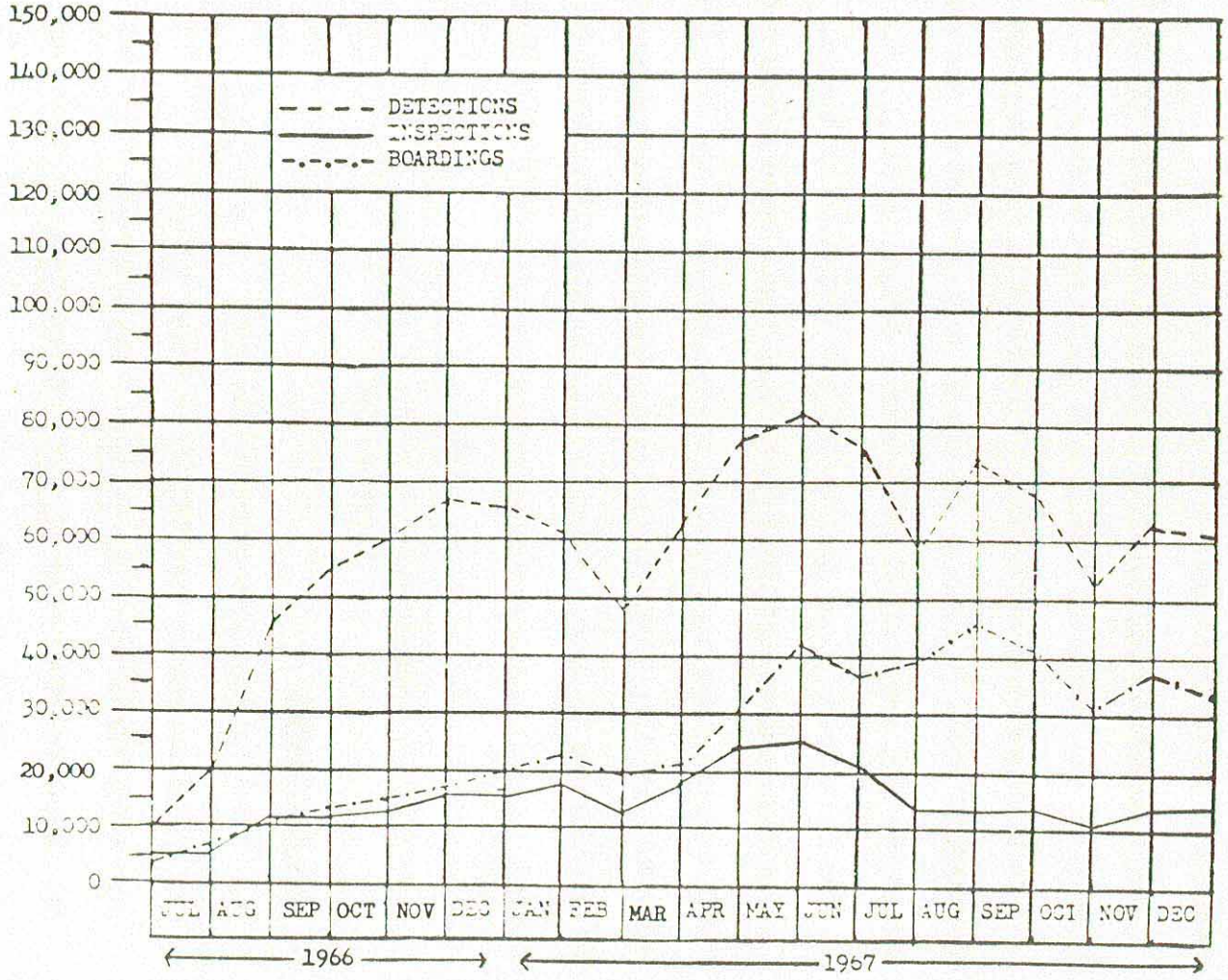
DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY GAME WARDEN UNITS



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g. Total Patrol Hours: 35,955.5

2. Helicopter Fire Team Statistics:

a. Total Flight Hours: 1,237.15

b. Helo Missions:
(1) Pre-planned strikes: 71
(2) Reaction: 157
(3) Targets of opportunity: 208
(4) Support: 336

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

a. Fire Fights:
(1) PBR 148
(2) Helo 105

b. Sampans: Destroyed 153 Damaged 195 Captured 13

c. Structures: Destroyed 150 Damaged 168

d. Bunkers: Destroyed 18 Damaged 5

e. Enemy: KIA 137 KIA (Poss.) 101 WIA 43 Captured 6

f. Friendly: KIA 1 WIA 44

g. Friendly Battle Damage:
(1) PBR 27
(2) Helo 23
(3) LCM 1

h. PBR MEDEVAC: 12

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Task Force 117 units land elements of the 2nd Brigade, U. S. NINTH Infantry Division and the VNMC 5th Infantry Battalion along the banks of the Roung Stream in the Mekong Delta during a two-day phase of Operation CORONADO IX.

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE (TASK FORCE 117)

During the month of December, the Mobile Riverine Force concentrated its efforts on locating and destroying the major Viet Cong units in a series of riverine operations in Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. Since early November, in response to operational guidance, the MRF has operated almost exclusively against nomadic Viet Cong battalions roaming throughout central and western Dinh Tuong province. The enemy response to this saturation tactic has been largely to retire to the northern areas of Dinh Tuong which were generally inaccessible by water because of the low bridge clearances and massive canal obstructions. On 4 December the 5th Battalion, Vietnamese Marine Corps and the U. S. Army/Navy elements of the MRF teamed up in a search and destroy operation, killing 234 of the enemy in a single day of operations in an area north of the My Tho River in Dinh Tuong and Kien Phong provinces.

In order to remove any confusion resulting from the unique numbering system for CORONADO operations, an explanation of the system was deemed appropriate.

(1) A CORONADO operation continued under the same number as long as the MRB remained in the same area.

(2) Therefore, when the MRF was operating from the Mekong River, striking at targets in Dinh Tuong, Go Cong and northern Kien Hoa, over a 2-3 month period, it was all aggregated as CORONADO IX.

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(3) However, if the MRF relocated to the juncture of the Vam Co and the Soirap rivers, for example, for a short series of strikes (a week, or even less), a new operation, CORONADO X would commence. If they, then, returned to the Dinh Tuong area again, they would commence Operation CORONADO XI.

OPERATIONS IN DINH TUONG AND KIEN PHONG PROVINCES

On the evening of 3 December the assault elements of the MRF began relocating its forces in preparation for Operation CORONADO IX (4-6 December) to be conducted in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces.

Movement from Dong Tam to the objective area commenced during the night when the barge-mounted artillery, accompanied by elements of River Assault Division (RAD) 92, got underway for the Fire Support Patrol Base (FSPB), 30 nautical miles up river. The artillery was followed by RAD 112 with the VNMC 5th Infantry Battalion embarked; RAD 111 carrying the 3/47th Infantry Battalion; and RAD 91 with the 4/47th Infantry Battalion on board.

Meanwhile, as a deceptive measure, the Mobile Riverine Base delayed relocation to its new anchorage, six miles east of Sa Dec, until the assault boats were in the objective area. At 0630 on 4 December, the MRB got underway from Dong Tam escorted by several ASPBs. Upon arrival in the objective area, DEFCON II was set and maintained to counter the increased threat of enemy attack against

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the MRB while in this area.

At 0735 on the same morning in the Chao Duc district of Dinh Tuong province, heavy contact with the enemy insurgents was rapidly established when the riverine craft of RAD 112, with Vietnamese Marines embarked, were immediately ambushed with automatic weapons and rockets shortly after they entered the Ruong stream from the Mekong river.

Fighting their way through the heavily bunkered ambush positions, the assault boats continued up the 30-yard wide stream about two miles. Approaching the preselected landing zone, the boats were again taken under attack with intense recoilless-rifle, automatic-weapons and B-40 rocket fire at point-blank range from both banks, with the heaviest concentration of fire coming from the west bank.

The Navy riverine craft, with all available firepower saturating the area, turned into the Viet Cong fire and disembarked the Vietnamese Marines. The elite VNMC battalion immediately launched a devastating attack against the 502nd Viet Cong Local Force Battalion and local guerrillas. This action again highlighted the tenacity, professional competence and aggressiveness of the VNMC battalion.

Meanwhile, RAD 111 with the U. S. 3/47th Infantry Battalion embarked was also taken under fire from the initial ambush position. They also fought their way through the ambush site, however, instead

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of proceeding up stream, the boats turned into the western bank just north of the Viet Cong positions. The U. S. Army troops then conducted a successful counter-attack against the fiercely-resisting insurgents.

Throughout the day-long battle, RADs 111 and 112 supported the ground maneuvers from the waterways by providing gunfire support and waterborne blocking stations to prevent the Viet Cong from exfiltrating from the objective area.

As a result of the first day of operations, the enemy casualties amounted to 234 killed with eight Viet Cong prisoners and 42 weapons captured. The Vietnamese Marines accounted for the majority of the enemy casualties and also suffered the heaviest losses with 40 killed and 103 wounded in action. Two U. S. Navy sailors, Fireman Adrian E. HOWELL, USN, and Seaman Robert J. MORAS, USN, were killed and 68 Navymen were wounded in the battle, while U. S. Army casualties consisted of nine soldiers killed and 89 wounded.

The total cumulative results for this phase of Operation CORONADO IX (4-6 December) amounted to 266 Viet Cong killed with over 5,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition and 321 assorted weapons (including grenades, mines and carbines) captured. There were also 161 bunkers and 126 sampans destroyed, 108 Viet Cong suspects detained and eight prisoners-of-war captured.

During the afternoon of 5 December, RAD 112 backloaded the VNMC

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5th Battalion and returned to Dong Tam to allow the battalion to reorganize and obtain replacements for their killed and wounded losses. Meanwhile, RADs 111 and 91 continued to support the U. S. infantry units in the objective area on 5-6 December.

On the morning of 6 December the MRF relocated to the vicinity of the junction of the Mekong and Co Chien rivers without incident. This culminated a highly successful operation which rendered yet another Viet Cong haven unsafe for the enemy and added substantially to the RVN/U. S. presence in the Mekong Delta.

Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN, on his first riverine combat operation with the MRF since assuming command on 2 December, described the action as follows: "To a newcomer in one of these actions, the battle of the boats is incredible. The crossfire between the Viet Cong and our rugged craft at 25 yards is like nothing in naval warfare since the days of the great frigates."

Intelligence obtained during and after the battle of the Ruong Stream (4 December) confirmed that the well-armed enemy force consisted of major elements of the 502nd Local Force Battalion augmented by local guerrilla units. During the battle, the riverine craft sustained 43 hits, excluding automatic-weapons and small-arms hits. These hits included 34 B-40s (RPG-2), four B-41s (RPG-7), three 57-mm's, one B-50 and one claymore mine. There were 23 boats damaged in the action, but none were forced to leave the battle area because

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of battle damage.

On 9 December, after artillery batteries from the MRF and Dong Tam were positioned about four miles west of Cai Be on the Mekong river, RADs 91 and 111 lifted the 3/47th and the 4/47th Infantry Battalions to assault positions in western Cai Be district of Dinh Tuong province. Airmobile and riverine operations failed to establish any organized enemy resistance and later in the afternoon the ground troops were returned to the MRB. Enemy losses consisted of three killed and 18 bunkers destroyed. There were five soldiers and one sailor wounded in the one-day operation.

The next morning the 3/47th and the 4/47th Infantry Battalions conducted a riverine assault in the Giao Duc district with the objective of regaining contact with the 502nd Local Force Battalion. At approximately the same time, the MRB relocated back to a position four miles east of Sa Dec to better support the operation. RADs 91 and 111 supported the infantry, and provided water blocks, troop lifts and fire support on 10 and 11 December. In a series of light skirmishes with the enemy, there were nine Viet Cong killed, two wounded, four captured and 35 bunkers destroyed.

During Operation CORONADO IX (10-11 December) the riverine craft searched 524 exfiltrating sampans and detained 47 suspects. Twelve recently acquired Vietnamese Navy interpreters provided invaluable on-the-spot assistance in questioning indigenous personnel

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concerning Viet Cong movements.

After a two-day maintenance period, during which time plans were formulated for the next operation, the MRF commenced Operation CORONADO IX (14-16 December) in the Cam Son Secret Zone.

During this operation a new tactic, developed by CTF 117, was employed. Every major contact made with the Viet Cong by the MRF had been triggered by TF 117 assault boats. To fully exploit this potential to generate contact, to provide maximum protection for the troop laden boats and to react promptly to attack, a riverine armored reconnaissance element (RARE) was established. The RARE consisted of two monitors, two ASPBs and two ATCs with APC flame-throwers embarked, which would precede the troop carriers.

The RARE was initially utilized on 14 December, when the MRF was tasked with the assignment of penetrating the Ba Rai Stream, the scene of tenacious Viet Cong resistance in the past. Although the enemy chose to avoid contact on this day, the concept of a riverine armored reconnaissance element was accepted for utilization in future riverine operations.

Operation CORONADO IX (14-16 December) yielded the following results: six Viet Cong killed, and four prisoners captured. The assault forces also destroyed 73 bunkers, 42 booby traps. three tunnels and two sampans. Friendly battle casualties consisted of 24 U. S. soldiers wounded from booby traps, and two Vietnamese

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Marines also wounded. There was one Vietnamese Marine killed and three wounded from non-hostile action.

Following relocation from the confluence of the Mekong and Co Chien rivers to Dong Tam on 17 December, TF 117 units commenced moving ashore and to the remaining ships of the MRB. The next evening, the Viet Cong mounted a mortar attack against the Dong Tam base, landing 16 rounds of 82-mm mortar rounds in the northwest section of the base. There were no personnel casualties and no material damage to any of the MRF units.

On 18-19 December the MRF conducted a two-day preventive maintenance period and made preparations for the next operation.

In the early morning hours of 21 December an ASPB, A-111-4, the lead minesweeper of several riverine craft transitting the Xang Canal in the Long Dinh district of Dinh Tuong province, two miles northwest of Dong Tam, was mined. As a result of the explosion one U. S. sailor, Radioman Seaman Frederic P. WEBB, USN, was killed and three others were wounded.

The boat's hull was dished in, but not holed, and the damaged ASPB returned to the MRB under its own power. Considering the accuracy of the 75-pound command-detonated mine, which exploded 3-4 feet to starboard of the keel, the ASPB suffered only moderate hull damage. Although the keel was bent upward, and several frames and transverse and longitudinal stringers were bent inward and

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deformed, the rugged craft could have continued the mission if the tactical situation had dictated and replacement personnel were placed aboard.

Operation CORONADO IX (20-22 December) a riverine strike operation, was scheduled to be conducted in the Cai Lay district of northern Dinh Tuong province in search of the Viet Cong 514th Provincial Mobile Battalion.

Major contact with the Viet Cong guerrillas was never established, although in a series of light skirmishes during this period, the enemy left 11 of their dead comrades on the battlefield. The MRF also captured six Viet Cong prisoners, 40 Chinese Communist grenades and four weapons, while destroying 42 bunkers, three mines, and three booby traps. During this period there was one Navyman killed and five were wounded, while the U. S. Army had seven men wounded. There were also two Vietnamese Marines wounded during these encounters.

On 24 December, after a brief one-day respite, the MRF struck at the Viet Cong again in a two-battalion saturation patrolling and surveillance operation designed to deny enemy forces their resupply routes during the Christmas truce period. This phase of CORONADO IX (24-26 December) was conducted in the Long Dinh district of Dinh Tuong province and the Giong Trom district of Kien Hoa province.

RADs 91 and 92 supported the two infantry battalions and

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established waterborne blockades throughout the truce period, however, very little enemy activity was noted. During the Christmas truce period, 10 ASPBs were committed in conjunction with PBRs from TU 116.3.1 for interdiction of Viet Cong resupply routes between Kien Hoa and Dinh Tuong provinces. Although results of the patrols were negative, plans continued for further evaluation of PBR/ASPB teams.

The Viet Cong lost 15 men to the troops of the MRF and also had over 120 bunkers and eight sampans destroyed in the two-day operation. There were two sailors wounded but both injuries were as a result of non-hostile action.

On 26 December, another mining incident occurred against an ASPB of the MRF on the Xang canal, seven miles northwest of Dong Tam. A-111-1 was transitting the narrow waterway when the mining took place. The boat was lifted out of the water far enough so that her screws were visible to accompanying units, however, the rugged minesweeping boat suffered only minimal damage. The boat's crewmembers were severely jostled, but uninjured. A subsequent out-of-the-water underbody inspection by USS ASKARI (ARL 30) revealed no apparent hull damage and, after replacing both screws which had several nicks and gouges (not associated with the mining), A-111-1 was placed in the water and returned to duty.

This incident occurred just five days after another ASPB minesweeper was mined on the Xang Canal. It proved interesting

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to note that in both incidents only the lead minesweeper was hit, and no attempt was made to allow either ASPB to pass unmolested in order to mine a troop carrier. This would indicate that the Viet Cong respect the effectiveness of the ASPB's minesweeping capability; and therefore, command-detonated the mines against the lead boats in order to assure a hit.

On 28 December a riverine strike operation was commenced in the Cam Son/Ban Long Secret Zones and included water and air interdiction and saturation patrolling in the Ham Long district of western Kien Hoa province and the Cai Be , Cai Lay and Long Dinh districts of western Dinh Tuong province. Operations during this period, which continued until the end of the month, were characterized by harassing small-arms fire and no significant contact with the enemy.

The cumulative results for this phase of Operation CORONADO IX (28-31 December) were: five Viet Cong killed, one wounded and eight prisoners captured. There were an additional 39 Viet Cong suspects detained. The units of the MRF also destroyed 87 bunkers, 10 huts, three booby traps and one sampan. Meanwhile, on the waterways the Navy riverine units searched 588 sampans. Friendly casualties consisted of 10 U. S. Army soldiers wounded.

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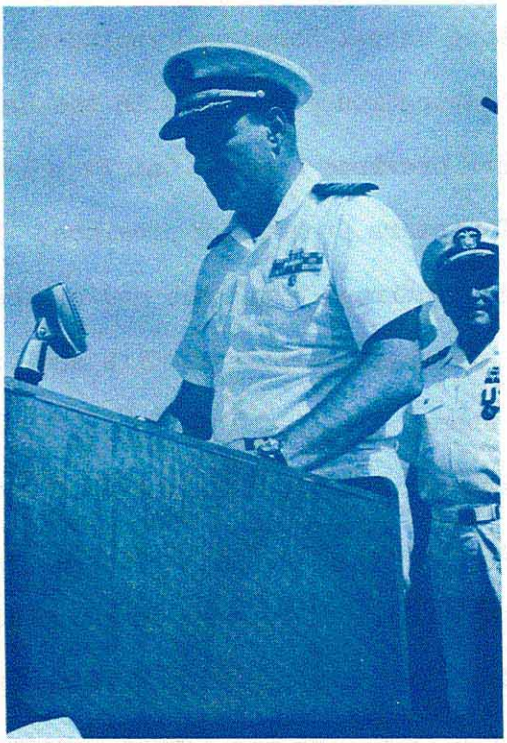
RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE UNITS

On 2 December, in change of command ceremonies aboard USS BENEWAH (APB 35), Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN, relieved Captain Wade C. WELLS, USN, as COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN/CTF 117.



Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN (left), relieves Captain Wade C. WELLS, USN (right), as COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN/CTF 117 at a change of command ceremony aboard USS BENEWAH (APB 35) on 2 December.

General William C. WESTMORELAND, USA, COMUSMACV, presented Captain

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WELLS with the Distinguished Service Medal for his outstanding services in organizing and leading the MRF. In addition, Brigadier General Nguyen Viet THANH, ARVN SEVENTH Infantry Division Commander, presented Captain WELLS with the Vietnamese Cross of Gallantry with Palm for his participation as Commander Task Force 117 during Operation CORONADO II from 29 July to 4 August.1967.

Three Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACVs) arrived at Vung Tau on 4 December, and departed the same day for Dong Tam. On 8 December the PACVs commenced a Delta orientation and shakedown training program prior to commencing riverine operations with the MRF.

A Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle (PACV) in the Mekong Delta.

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On 31 December USS PITKIN COUNTY (LST 1082) relieved USS BLANCO COUNTY (LST 344) as the MRF resupply LST.

On 16 December Admiral John J. HYLAND, USN, Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet, visited the MRF and presented two Silver Stars, one Bronze Star, one Navy Commendation Medal, and two Purple Hearts to the Navymen of the MRF. One of the Silver Star recipients was Lieutenant Raymond W. JOHNSON, CHC, USN.

During Operation CORONADO (CONCORDIA I) on 19-21 June 1967, Chaplain JOHNSON, embarked in the Medical Aid Boat, was standing by to render services needed. At 1005, "A" Company, 4/47th Infantry Battalion came under intense automatic-weapons, recoilless-rifle and small-arms fire. As hostile fire continued pouring from a fortified tree line, Chaplain JOHNSON left the relatively secure aid boat and ran onto the battlefield to render aid to wounded soldiers of the MRF. Disregarding the heavy enemy fire, he commenced carrying the wounded soldiers back to the aid boat. In so doing, he encouraged volunteers to follow his example and was instrumental in recovering a large number of helplessly wounded men. Although wounded himself by shrapnel during his second trip into the field, he continued on with his evacuation of the wounded until all of the men were on board the aid boat.

On 17 December, in anticipation of USS BENEWAH (APB 35) and USS COLLETON (APB 36) departing the MRB for generator replacement,

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TF 117 units commenced movement ashore and to the remaining ships of the MRB. The AMMI pontoons were moved to Dong Tam, to APL 26 and to USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST 1167). RAS 11 staff and the flotilla staff moved ashore, while RAD 111 moved to the WESTCHESTER COUNTY. RAD 91 remained in APL 26 and was joined by RAD 92.

The next day COLLETON departed for the Shipyard Repair Facility at Subic Bay for a restricted availability. During this availability period the MRF support ship was programmed to replace generators, and also receive a modification to provide space and facilities to support a combat surgical team. On 19 December, BENEWAH departed for Vung Tau for a restricted availability alongside USS TUTUILA (ARG 4). The major job during this period consisted of generator replacements.

CTF 117 shifted his pennant to USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST 1167) at 191200H and the staff moved ashore to the headquarters of the U. S. Army 2nd Brigade, NINTH Infantry Division at Dong Tam.

On 27 December, the VNMC 5th Battalion was pulled out of the MRF by the Vietnamese Joint General Staff (JGS), and was relocated to II Corps. This surprise move severely limited the effectiveness of the MRF to conduct sustained strike operations, and also made it more difficult to adequately encircle any exfiltrating insurgents.

In their first operational employment on 29 December, two Patrol Air Cushion Vehicles (PACVs) of TG 117.4 landed infantry

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squads into the operation area. Although the troops were successfully lifted to their destination, both PACVs experienced mechanical and/or electrical difficulties which resulted in one of the vehicles being air-lifted back to Dong Tam by a "Flying Crane" helicopter.

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT), Danang continued to off-load and clear cargo expeditiously during December despite occasional inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon and enemy harassment. The Danang port had a total throughput of 211,741 short tons during the month. A new monthly tonnage record was established at Dong Ha during December as 4,882 short tons of cargo were back-loaded, exceeding the previous record set in November 1967 by over 320 short tons. NAVSUPPACT Danang also recorded the lowest end-of-month backlog since August 1967 as 49 ships were worked and 40 were completed.

The overall net supply effectiveness for the Danang-Chu Lai support complex increased slightly during the month to 91.5 percent. Overall gross effectiveness increased from November's 85.5 percent to 87.8 percent. The increase in effectiveness was attributed to the receipt of stock in the pipeline and a decrease in demands from previous months.

Petroleum, Oil and Lubricant (POL) replenishment was made to all sites during the month despite the adverse effects of monsoon weather on seaload lines. Aviation POL products are now supplied directly to the Marine Air Group SIXTEEN complex at the Danang Air Base via pipeline from the Marble Mountain tank farm. With the completion of this system, the fuel complex at NAVSUPPACT Danang

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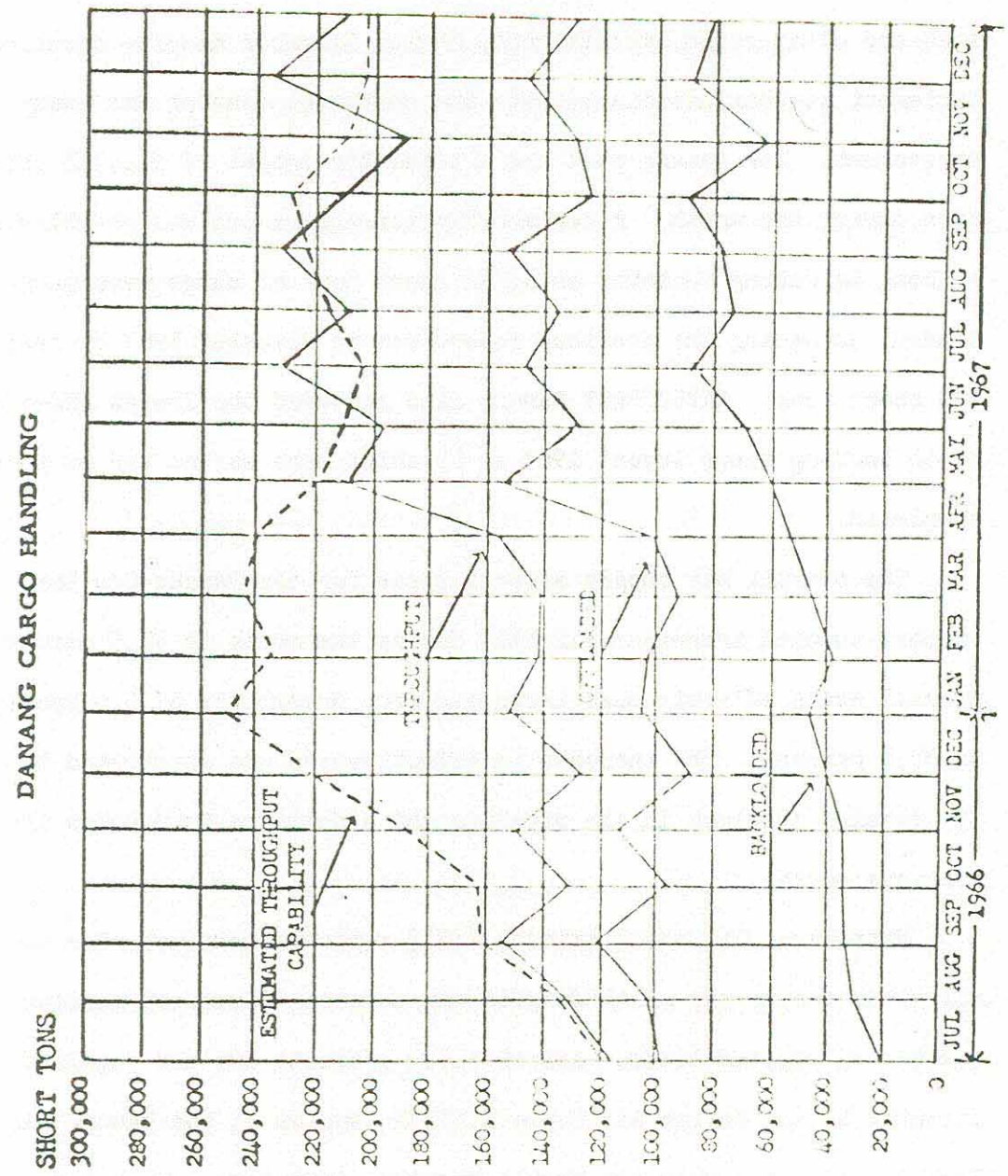

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became the largest fuel installation in the Republic of Vietnam, with a storage capacity of 515,000 barrels. On 9 December, with the seaload line at Cua Viet inoperative, and surf and channel conditions precluding bladder boat transit, the first SKILAK* to

A SKILAK (utility yard craft) in the First Coastal Zone.

carry fuel to I Corps Tactical Zone delivered 130,000 gallons of diesel fuel to Dong Ha. With the first phase of the tankerage construction nearing completion at Tan My, the NAVSUPPACT fuel section assumed operation of the fuel facility on 15 December.

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* A utility yard craft capable of carrying 330 short tons of dry cargo or 86,000 gallons of liquid cargo at a speed of 10 knots.

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During December the Danang Public Works Department personnel figure exceeded 4,000 for the first time in the history of the command. It was believed that this figure represented a record high figure for a Navy Public Works organization.

Continued silting of the Cua Viet and Tan My channels caused them to be closed to LST traffic throughout a large percentage of the month. The Cua Viet channel was closed to LSTs on 7 December when the maximum mid-channel depth decreased to 12 feet and the channel edge depth decreased to between nine and 12 feet. The Cua Viet channel was reopened to LST traffic on 29 December and on the following day USS CONCONINO COUNTY (LST 603) entered Cua Viet and offloaded at the LST ramp. The Tan My channel was closed to LSTs on 10 December when the continual silting had decreased the depth in mid-channel to six feet. At month's end, the Tan My channel was still closed to LST traffic.

The continuous effort involved in keeping the strategically important channels at Cua Viet and Tan My open by dredging suffered a serious setback on 6 December when the dredge DAVIDSON suffered major damage to her rudder posts and screws while engaged in a rescue operation near the Cua Viet channel. The normal out-of-service time occasioned by such an incident is approximately one month, with dry-docking usually being required, but through a coordinated effort, necessary repair parts were flown from Portland, Oregon, to Danang

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and installed with the dredge in the water, thus permitting the dredge to be back in service in only 11 days. At month's end, COMUSMACV had directed the procurement of a second hopper dredge for use in I CTZ.

River Patrol Boat (PBR) Mobile Base ONE with 10 PBRs arrived at Danang on 2 December for further transfer to Tan My. A deficiency existed in spare parts for the PBRs and, as of 31 December, only 53 percent of the required items had been received. At month's end, action was being taken by COMSERVPAC to expedite the procurement of necessary PBR parts for NAVSUPPACT Danang and Mobile Base ONE.

NAVSUPPACT Danang and its detachments continued to be harassed by enemy attacks during December. There were 25 hostile fire incidents involving sniper fire on exposed perimeters, vehicles, or bunkers during the month. Three of these incidents involved cease-fire truce violations during the Christmas and New Years truce periods.

On the night of 26 December the Marble Mountain transmitter site came under heavy small-arms fire and received approximately six mortar or grenade rounds within the perimeter. There were no personnel casualties resulting from the attack and material damage was limited to superficial shrapnel holes in the roofs of the transmitter and generator buildings.

On 11 December Cua Viet received 11 incoming artillery rounds.

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One of the rounds struck the southern edge of the ramp and two rounds hit in the river near the ramp. No personnel casualties or material damage resulted from the attack.

Cua Viet came under attack on two separate occasions on 16 December. One NAVSUPPACT Navyman was killed and two were injured as a result of these attacks.

At 0355 on 12 December, an explosion from an estimated 20 pounds of explosive extensively damaged several rooms of NAVSUPPACT's foreign claims office in downtown Danang. Personnel casualties caused by the explosion consisted of minor injuries to two Navymen attached to, and asleep in, the foreign claims office. Two additional explosion incidents with Vietnamese nationals as victims on the 12th and 23rd indicated an increase of terrorist activity within the city of Danang.

Santa Claus arrived at NAVSUPPACT Danang via air and sea as 1,200 Christmas trees were received for further transfer to I CTZ military units. In addition, 5,000 toys were distributed in the Danang area through military personnel who sponsored numerous Christmas parties for Vietnamese children.

The number of patients admitted to the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital during December totaled 1,077. Of this total number received at the 467-bed hospital, 329 were admitted for combat injuries, 541 for various diseases and 207 for non-combat injuries.

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A total of 446 persons were treated and returned to duty during the month and 329 were evacuated out of Vietnam.

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An overall view of the RAG/PBR support base at Vinh Long.

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

The Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT), Saigon, detachment at Qui Nhon was attacked by a Viet Cong sapper platoon during the night of 22 December. At 2329 on the 22nd, a Vietnamese Navy command junk was destroyed at the pier by an explosive charge. General Quarters was sounded immediately and a search of the area revealed a second charge in a PCF. The charge was removed by the Swift boat crew and all Swifts got underway and provided 81-mm illumination for the base perimeter. The Vietnamese Navy killed one Viet Cong and probably killed another in the water in the vicinity of the junk pier. At 0121 on the 23rd, base and boat personnel secured from General Quarters and a maximum security watch was set with the boats anchored in the inner harbor.

The attack was continued at 0213 when an explosive charge was detonated alongside the CPO quarters and Viet Cong in the vicinity of the enlisted barracks commenced automatic-weapons and small-arms fire, and threw grenades into the barracks. A second Viet Cong was killed during this phase of the attack. Once again the Swift boats provided illumination and a USAF AC-47 Dragonship and an Army UH-1B helicopter gunship furnished illumination and interdiction fire throughout the remainder of the night until all forces secured from General Quarters at 0747.

At 0815, during a sweep of the entire base perimeter by U. S.

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Navy forces, a blood trail and web gear were found inside the perimeter at the north end of the base. A wounded Viet Cong, armed with a Chinese Communist AK-47 assault rifle and grenades, was discovered and killed.

U. S. Navy or friendly casualties resulting from the attack included: CPO quarters destroyed by a 50-pound satchel charge, messhall damaged by small-arms and automatic-weapons fire, two U. S. Navymen and one Korean civilian killed in action, and 16 U. S. Navymen wounded in action, two of whom died later during treatment. Three Viet Cong were killed during the action and the following enemy material was captured: 10 Chinese Communist fragmentation grenades, five grenades improvised from 61-mm mortar heads, two Chinese Communist AK-47 assault rifles, and one automatic pistol.

On 25 December the Qui Nhon detachment again received small-arms fire but no contact was made with the enemy.

Following the attack, measures were taken to improve base defense. All vegetation in the area between the double perimeter fences and in gullies leading onto the base was cleared. In addition, barracks, key administration buildings and communications buildings were sandbagged.

The number of line items stocked by NAVSUPPACT Saigon increased to 46,781 during December. The overall supply effectiveness reached a new high in December; net effectiveness was 85 percent and gross

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effectiveness was 70 percent.

Army Common Item Listing (CIL) support remained unsatisfactory during December. Of 143 requisitions submitted to the 506th Field Depot, only one was filled. The Commanding General, First Logistical Command has directed an Inspector General inquiry into Army responsiveness in Class I and Common Item Listing support. By month's end IG contact had been made with NAVSUPPACT Saigon detachments at My Tho, Dong Tam and Binh Thuy and the U. S. Army 53rd General Support Group, Vung Tau.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's December aircraft inventory included three C-117s, one UH-34, one US-2B and one UC-47. Two additional UH-34s were expected in January. A second US-2B was damaged during a landing at An Thoi and a C-1A was requested as a replacement.

A total of 3,302 passengers and 369,983 pounds of cargo were air transported during December. During the same period, assigned surface craft transported a total of 2,148 short tons of cargo.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's Postal Clerks made a significant contribution to the morale of naval personnel during the Christmas season as they processed a total of 632,413 pounds of mail during the month of December.

At month's end, NAVSUPPACT Saigon had a total on board count of 2,170 personnel.

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Rear Admiral J. V. BARTLETT, Commander, Third Naval Construction Brigade, points out the results of destructive tests held on sections of precast concrete bunkers to General W. C. WESTMORELAND (center), Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and Lieutenant General R. E. CUSHMAN (right), Commanding General, Third Marine Amphibious Force.

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

During December the Naval Construction Battalions in Vietnam realized an extremely productive month with the beginning and completion of many significant construction projects. The unseasonably fine weather, as contrasted with the normal monsoon season, allowed the Seabees to be on the job during a high percentage of the month.

The enemy continued to attack the Seabee worksites and base camps during December. During the month, four Seabees were killed and 10 were wounded as a direct result of enemy action. On 6 December four men from Naval Mobile Construction Battalion THREE (MCB 3) were wounded when the quarry/crusher plant they were operating came under enemy fire. While assisting the 11th Engineer Battalion Marines near the DMZ on 14 December, two men from MCB 5 were killed when the enemy mortared their position. Five Seabees attached to MCB 10 were wounded during an enemy artillery attack on Cua Viet on the 16th of the month. On 23 December, two men from MCB-3 were killed when they detonated a mine with a jack-hammer while making road repairs on Route #1 north of Hue. MCB 1 also had one man wounded during the month.

Among the many projects undertaken by MCB 1 during the month was the design and fabrication of a prototype precast bunker. The bunker was completed and installed for further evaluation on the beach perimeter near the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade and 30th

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Naval Construction Regiment headquarters building at Camp Haskins, Danang. The final phase of a 500-man galley for the 1st Marine Shore Party and the security lighting of the Nam-O bridge were also completed by MCB 1 as their second eight-month deployment drew to a close. MCB 58 relieved MCB 1 in mid-December.

Construction projects completed by MCB 3, working from their base camp at Phu Bai, included the completion of the site preparation and soil cementing of a 90,000 square yard parking apron for Marine Air Group 36 (MAG 36). At the Tan My POL facility, they completed the construction of sand berms for four 10,000-barrel tanks and three 3,000-barrel tanks. Extensive hauling for abutment work on three bridges along Route #1 was also accomplished by MCB 3.

At the MAG 36 complex, the Seabees of MCB 3 also completed construction of an 8,000 square foot operations building and 11 of 15 two-story barracks. The 1 January requirement for a POL storage capacity of 42,000 barrels at Tan My was more than satisfied by MCB 3 as tanks having a combined capacity of 60,000 barrels were completed prior to the end of December.

During the month, MCB 7 continued to make excellent progress on the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital expansion project. The urology building, blood bank, two additional two-story barracks, as well as the water, sewage, storm drainage, and electrical distribution systems were completed.

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Seabee flexibility and responsiveness were demonstrated by MCB 7 during December as they answered the 1st Marine Air Wing's urgent request for the installation of centerline lighting on the west runway of the Danang Air Base. This project was started on 25 November and completed on 1 December.

In addition to keeping Route #1 open from Dong Ha to Camp Evans, which required replacement of three culverts blown up by the enemy, MCB 10 completed a project of 68 bunkers near the DMZ. This project included construction of bunkers, back filling, and grading. The Seabees of MCB 10 also completed back filling and grading of 112 bunkers at sites north of Cam Lo.

At Camp Carroll MCB 10 had completed a 500-man messhall and three 16- by 36-foot enlisted men's clubs. By month's end, a detachment of MCB 10 had also completed four 32- by 36-foot underground bunkers and five burnout heads at Khe Sanh.

During December, MCB 121's main effort was concentrated in the Phu Bai area. Along Route #1 they constructed three bridges, which totaled 510 feet of bridging, installed two culverts with concrete decks, and accomplished extensive road repairs.

A detail from MCB 121, with transportation and logistic support from MCB 5, completed construction of 42 bunkers at a site between Phu Bai and Quang Tri.

A multitude of other essential and strategically important

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projects were either begun or continued by the various battalions during December. The Hue by-pass road project was commenced by MCB 3, and at month's end a 420-foot cross-channel bridge was 20 percent complete. A 1,000-man galley under construction for MAG 36 was 70 percent complete by the end of December.

Under the overall supervision of MCB 5, 20 trucks from MCBs 3, 7, 40 and 121 were hauling rock from Camp Carroll to Routes #561 and #566, and various access roads in the Dong Ha area in support of extensive road upgrading programs. Work on Route #9 was also progressing satisfactorily with the clearing of ditches and drainage structures between Dong Ha and Camp Carroll.

At Cua Viet, MCB 10's detail had started construction on the 500-man galley for the Marine's AMTRAC cantonment when, on 16 December, they came under a heavy enemy artillery attack. The partially-completed galley was heavily damaged and 12 other small structures recently completed were demolished. At month's end, rebuilding of the damaged structures was in progress.

Phu Bai-based MCB 121 began a project for the U. S. Army that includes the construction of four warehouses, a BOQ, a tactical storage shop, a dispensary, and a 25,000 cubic foot cold storage warehouse facility. At month's end the total complex was approximately 10 percent complete.

MCB 128 completed four quonset huts for the First Logistical

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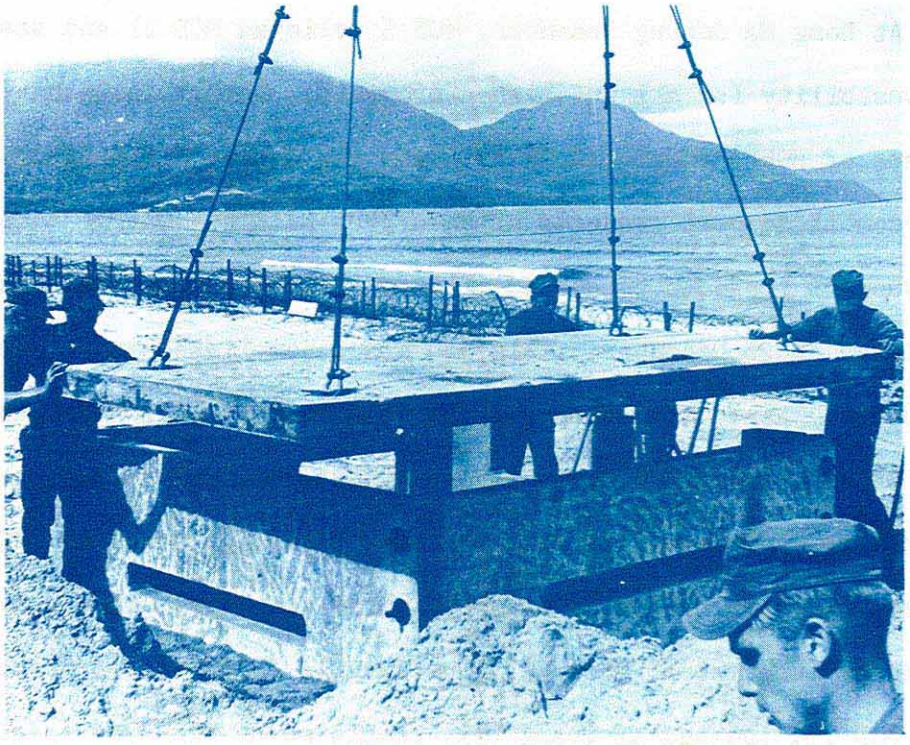
Command dispensary and dental clinic at Danang. They also completed a maintenance shop and a 50-foot observation tower for the 3rd Marine AMTRAC Battalion. In Danang East, MCB 128 completed the first three increments of the Special Forces Camp and continued work on the remaining two increments. The north overrun and 1,000 feet of the center section of the runway were paved at the Monkey Mountain Air Facility by MCB 128, and Air America, Inc., began using a parking apron at the field which was also constructed by the Seabees of MCB 128.



Seabees from MCB 1 erect a precast concrete bunker near the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade Headquarters at Red Beach.

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The Chu Lai battalions also completed many significant projects during December. First, the power distribution lines were completed by MCB 6 in preparation for connecting the power source for the flight lines of MAG 12 and MAG 13.

Both MCB 6 and MCB 40 demonstrated Seabee quick reaction to an urgent construction request by beginning work on a 400-bed evacuation hospital expansion project at Chu Lai. This project had an extremely high priority, requiring both battalions to employ a 24-hour a day construction work schedule.

At Dong Ha during December, MCB 5 relieved MCB 11 and assumed responsibility for all unfinished projects. During the month, the Seabees of MCB 5 completed 75 huts and two Butler buildings plus many combat support projects of an urgent nature. One of these combat support projects consisted of constructing 24 bunkers, and was completed on 26 December. This job was accomplished under conditions of monsoon rains, knee deep mud and intermittent logistics support.

On 7 December MCB 5 was tasked with a similar bunker building project in support of the 11th Engineer Battalion near the DMZ. On 17 December, the 42 bunker project, which was constructed under similar conditions met at Dong Ha, plus hostile fire, was completed.

MCB 10, located at Quang Tri, completed 49 bin-type revetments for the first increment of the 90,000 square yard helicopter pad. At the same site, they completed all the earth work for an additional

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helicopter pad and the airfield lighting system. Two Butler buildings, one 40- by 100-foot wood frame air terminal building, 13 small maintenance huts, one quonset hut as well as supply and administrative facilities were also completed by the Seabees of MCB 10.

On 15 December Quang Tri came under an enemy mortar attack which caused moderate damage to the 1st Marine Air Wing cantonment. All necessary repairs were completed the following day. The temporary ammunition supply point at Quang Tri was completed by MCB 10 during December and maintained continuous operation during the month, despite the heavy rains and muddy conditions which resulted.

At Phu Bai, MCB 121 continued work on the THIRD Marine Division's fifth cantonment, which includes 138 huts, one 500-man galley, six showers and head facilities. At month's end, the total project was 95 percent complete.

During December, MCB 3 dedicated their Phu Bai camp, which was christened Camp Wilkinson in honor of Construction Mechanic First Class Jack W. WILKINSON who lost his life during an enemy rocket attack in late August 1967.

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Ensign Gerald D. RABER, USN, Psychological Operations Officer of River Division 53, assists a Hoi Chanh (former Viet Cong) in the recording of a Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) appeal.

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MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS

Psychological and civic action operations continued to receive command attention as all naval units actively engaged in the distribution of psychological leaflets and the conduct of loudspeaker broadcasts. The efforts of MARKET TIME units along the northern coast of South Vietnam were hampered, however, by the monsoon weather conditions. Preparations were made by psychological operations personnel to fully exploit the Chieu Hoi/Dai Doan Ket programs during the forthcoming Lunar New Year (Tet) holiday campaign, scheduled to begin on 1 January and terminate on 21 March. During the Christmas Truce period--241800 to 251800--psychological operations continued, with the exception of ground operations in areas that would provoke hostile action by the enemy, to gain the maximum psychological exploitation of the enemy during the curtailment of military operations.

Along the coastline of South Vietnam and myriad waterways of the Delta, 186,000 leaflets were distributed and 150 hours of surface and 58 hours of aerial broadcasts were conducted by naval units. In addition 49,532 newspapers and 6,410 magazines were distributed to bring to the people the true news of the Government of South Vietnam.

Hoi Chanhs played an important role in the psychological efforts as they made tapes to be broadcast to their former Viet

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Cong comrades. One Hoi Chanh explained his reasons for helping the "psyops" officer of River Division 53 based at My Tho in the Mekong Delta. Nguyen Van MUOI, 36 years old, stated: "I was a Viet Cong mainly because I was living in a Viet Cong area. Because we were there, our people were given false propaganda about the Americans. We were told that the Americans would harm or kill us if we turned ourselves in. But as time went on our families were worked harder and harder, and we had to pay higher and higher taxes to the Viet Cong. It was then that I decided that even death was better than the tortures we were having to live with, so I hailed a PBR and gave myself up. Now that I know we Hoi Chanhs are treated well and given a new chance in life, I am doing all I can to help convince other Viet Cong that they should stop the useless fighting and join with our government to help all the people."

The undermining effect on the Viet Cong by our psychological efforts can best be typified by the repeated attacks against the Navy boats as they conduct loudspeaker broadcasts.

In testimony of the outstanding performance of the Seabees in civic action, the Joint Chiefs of Staff directed the Chief of Naval Operations to deploy seven additional Seabee Teams to support the USAID/Vietnam civic action program.

The conduct of war did not interfere with the sailor's custom of sharing his Christmas joy with children. Throughout South

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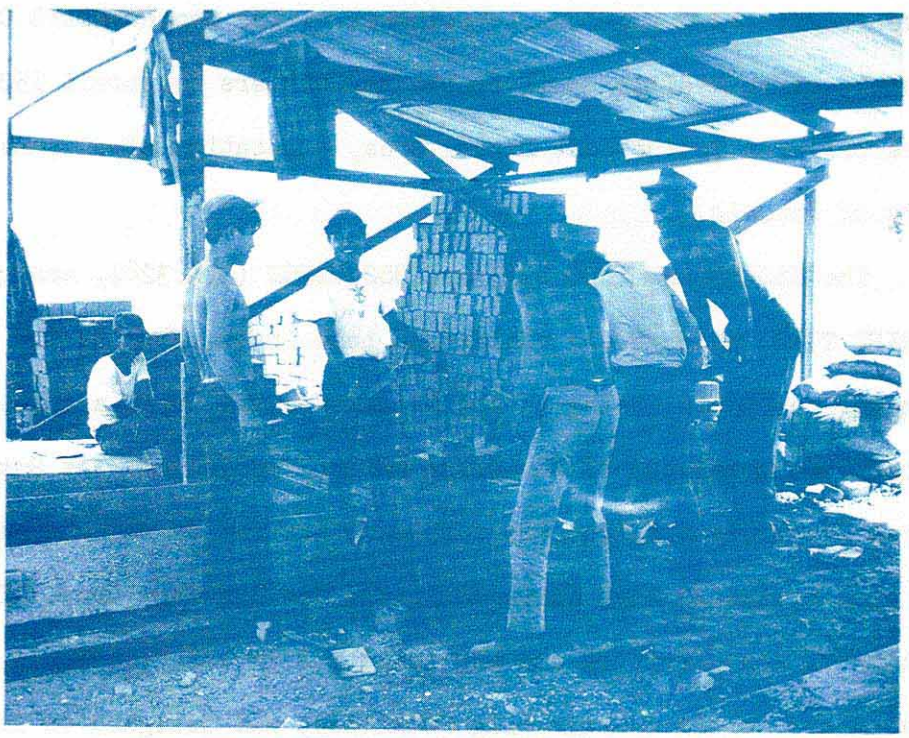
Vietnam, whereever naval units were located, Christmas parties were held. The children were treated to dinner, presented with presents, given boat rides and provided with other forms of entertainment. A number of the parties were conducted jointly with the Vietnamese Navy.



BUL2 Rex A. HARMON of Seabee Civic Action Team 0809 assists Vietnamese workmen in making cinva-ram blocks at Binh Thuy.

To bring much needed medical assistance to people living in remote villages and hamlets, 105 medical civic action programs were conducted. The "medcaps", in which Navy doctors and hospital corpsmen provide voluntary treatment to the local inhabitants, are helping to convince the people that their government is actively

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interested in their welfare. Navy boats performed 79 emergency medical evacuations of Vietnamese civilians in urgent need of medical attention.

In the East Danang area, Naval Mobile Construction Battalion Seven completed a two-room schoolhouse at the Sacred Heart Convent/ School. This addition will enable the Sisters to enroll 150-200 more children in the East Danang area, a location of extreme sparcity of schools.

The USS ESTEEM (MSO 439) and USS FINCH (DER 328), assigned to MARKET TIME, painted the childrens' home in Qui Nhon at the beginning of the month. Also in the Second Coastal Zone, a three-room school was completed at Nha Trang on Hon Tre Island. At Cam Ranh Bay a Naval Civic Action Program Committee was formed and represented by each of the 10 Navy commands in the Cam Ranh Bay area. The formation of the committee and participation in the Free World Military Assistance Forces Coordinating Committee, was designed to improve in scope and effectiveness the civic action participation in the Cam Ranh Bay area.

In the Third Coastal Zone, each Coastal Group was working on some civic action program. The most significant progress was that the Vietnamese were taking charge of the projects and carrying them out.

In the Delta, the PBR sailors of River Section 532 contributed

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3,000$VN to support the educational costs of a 12-year old crippled girl. The men of Helicopter Attack (Light) Squadron Three, Detachment 7, adopted an orphan from Can Tho to help in his future development.

The Vietnamese Navy continued their civic action program by conducting "medcaps" and distributing much needed commodities to villages in outlying districts and refugee settlements. The Vietnamese Navy hospital ships conducted psychological and civic action operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone and Third Coastal Zone. In the RSSZ, LSM(H) HQ 401 provided medical attention to 1,102 persons, attended to 200 dental patients and performed 11 minor surgeries.

The following is a tabulation of certain civic action projects conducted during December by U. S. and Vietnamese naval forces. Construction projects involving renovation or repair are so indicated with an R.

1. Construction:

	Total
a. Churches/temples/pagodas	6
b. Culverts	5
c. Dispensaries	3
d. Dwellings/number of families	4/13, 80R
e. Fences	2
f. Hospitals	2R
g. Leveling/grading projects	5
h. Marketplaces	3
i. Orphanages	1
j. Roads (tenth of Km)	1
k. Schools/classrooms	3/9, 7R
l. Toilets, public	12
m. Wells	5, 5R

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		Total
n.	Piers	1R
o.	Water storage tanks	2

2. Medical treatments:

a.	General medical	17,215
b.	Dental	1,038
c.	Surgical	20
d.	Emergency evacuations	113

3. Health and sanitation:

a.	Classes on personal hygiene/attendance	6/324
b.	Medical aides or nurses trained	11
c.	Spray insecticide operations	11
d.	Swamp areas drained	8
e.	MEDCAPs	105
f.	Immunizations	1,126

4. Distribution of commodities (pounds unless otherwise specified):

a.	Cement	64,000
b.	Clothing	4,900
c.	Food	76,370
d.	Lumber (board feet)	133,000
e.	Medical, non-prescription	970
f.	Medical kits (number)	6
g.	Physical education kits (number)	4
h.	School kits (number)	985
i.	Soap	6,900
j.	Tin sheets (number)	1,223
k.	Resettlement kits (number)	6
l.	Asbestos siding (pallets)	9
m.	Textile kits (number)	102
n.	Teacher kits (number)	42
o.	Psyops packets (number)	2,000
p.	Paper blankets (cases)	5
q.	Blackboards (number)	17
r.	Reinforcing bars (feet)	1,900
s.	GVN flags (number)	450
t.	Toys (number)	15,375

5. Educational efforts:

a.	English classes/attendance	116/1,622

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		Total
b.	Vietnamese health books distributed	220
c.	School books distributed	710

6. Voluntary piaster contributions in support of:

a.	Orphanages	18,416$VN
b.	Religious activities	2,500$VN
c.	Schools	164,960$VN
d.	Families of VNN personnel KIA	2,000$VN
e.	Families of Hoi Chanhs	2,980$VN

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SALVAGE OPERATIONS

At 0755 on 1 December after 15 days of intensive salvage operations, USS CLARK COUNTY (LST 601) was pulled off the beach at Duc Pho, 88 miles south-southeast of Danang, by USS BOLSTER (ARS 38), USS ABNAKI (ATF 96) and USS UTE (ATF 76). BOLSTER towed the disabled LST to Danang for a thorough underbody inspection and damage assessment.

Team 5 of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE was very instrumental in effecting emergency repairs to the damaged ship. On 18 December BOLSTER, with CLARK COUNTY in tow, departed Danang en route to the shipyard repair facility at Subic Bay where the LST was to receive major repair work.

YRBM 16, which had been mined on the Ham Luong river on 24 November and was later towed to Dong Tam for initial repairs, was declared seaworthy for an ocean tow on 27 December. The GAME WARDEN support ship was towed by USS ABNAKI (ATF 96) to Subic Bay for shipyard repairs.

On 5 December Team 3, embarked in YDB-1, proceeded to Cat Lai to conduct a salvage survey and recovery operation on two sunken Army ammunition barges which had been ambushed on the Dong Nai river 11 miles east of Saigon. Barges BC 6302 and BC 6482, both heavily laden with ammunition, were located approximately 50 yards from the river bank in 15 feet of water, well clear of the channel. Barge

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BC 6482 was damaged to such an extent that recovery operations were unfeasible, and the barge was demolished by U. S. Navy EOD Team 16.

BC 6302, which was 120 feet long, was resting on the bottom by the stern with the bow section still buoyant, and 55 feet of the deck clear at the low water mark. Salvage operations were interrupted at 1146 on 7 December by enemy hostile fire emanating from a tree line about 100 yards down-river. The enemy activity was rapidly silenced, and shortly thereafter a detachment of military policemen arrived at the salvage site and established a security perimeter.

On 14 December, after Team 3 offloaded over 100 tons of ammunition and refloated BC 6302, a representative of the U. S. Army Marine Maintenance Activity, Saigon, declared the barge beyond economical repair and the salvage operation was completed.

On 22 December the U. S. merchant ship SS SEATRAIN TEXAS, anchored in the Nha Be river (Long Tau shipping channel) about five miles southeast of Saigon, was damaged by an unknown explosive device. The explosion caused a gaping hole in the starboard side of the cargo ship, extending five feet above the waterline and two feet below.

The flooding was rapidly brought under control by the ship's crew and the ship was kept clear of the main shipping channel to Saigon. Later that morning, Harbor Clearance Unit ONE, embarked in

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YDB-2, surveyed the hull damage and, after performing emergency repairs, declared the SS SEATRAIN TEXAS safe for the river transit to Saigon on 23 December.

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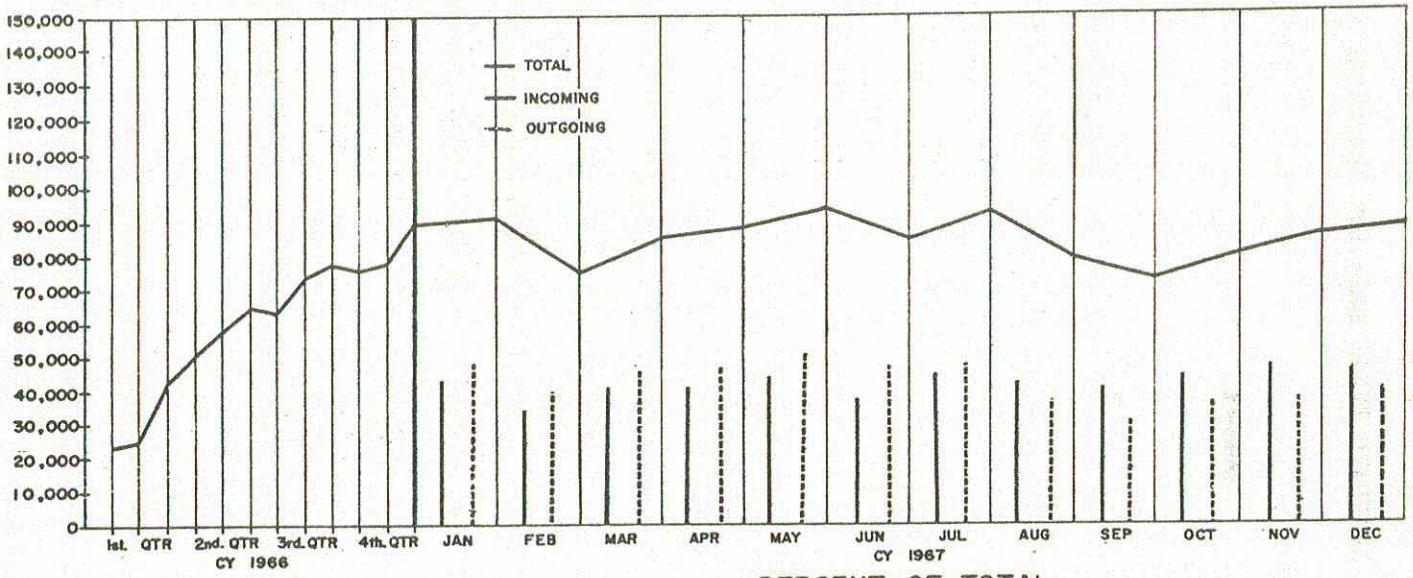
MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC



PERCENT OF TOTAL

FLASH	1	1	1	1	1	.2	.5	.9	1.4	1.3	1.3	1.4
IMMEDIATE	21	20	19	18	16	17.5	18.1	17.9	21.2	23.3	19.7	21.4
PRIORITY	60	61	63	63	66	64.6	62.9	61.6	57.3	57.4	58.9	57.3
ROUTINE	18	18	17	18	17	17.7	18.5	19.6	20.1	18.0	20.1	19.9

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COMMUNICATIONS

During the month of December, the COMNAVFORV Message Center handled a total of 86,913 messages, an increase of 711 messages over the November total.

Project SEARCHLIGHT (upgrading communications facilities at COMNAVFORV, the Coastal Surveillance Centers and GAME WARDEN bases) has been fraught with problems (real estate and logistical support) since the early months of 1967. Upon the phase-out of in-country civilian contractors (RMK-BRJ), which caused considerable delay in meeting project completion dates, Project SEARCHLIGHT construction responsibilities were reassigned to the Naval Support Activity, Saigon and the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade. On 3 December the Naval Shore Electronics Engineering Activity Pacific (NAVSEEAPAC) electronics installation team returned to the Pearl Harbor Naval Shipyard with a projected return date in early January.

A year-end summary of Project SEARCHLIGHT's status revealed that two of the 11 installations were fully operational, vice three as previously reported. Status was as follows:

1. The sites at Nha Be and Can Tho were completed and operational.

2. The installation at My Tho was 70 percent completed. The antenna tower and the power panel had not yet been installed.

3. The teletype installation at COMNAVFORV Headquarters

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Communications Center was completed and operational; however, the radio facilities were approximately 80 percent completed. The completion was further delayed due to a lack of wire for the main power feeders to the air conditioning equipment.

4. At Sa Dec, the electronics installation was approximately 10 percent completed. The installation of the antenna towers and the tile and ground system was still pending.

5. The electronics installation at Qui Nhon was 50 percent completed at the Coastal Surveillance Center and 20 percent at the remote site. Work was stopped due to a lack of power and microwave equipment.

6. At Vinh Long, after considerable delay caused by real estate problems, construction commenced in mid-December with an estimated completion date of 30 January 1968.

The status of the remaining uncompleted sites at Nha Trang, Cat Lo, Vung Tau and An Thoi was unchanged.

In order to improve reliability and to upgrade the quality of communications in Project BOWLINE, a 12-channel voice microwave system was activated between the NAVCOMMSTA and the Naval Air Facility at Cam Ranh Bay.

The NAVCOMMOPNETS between Danang and San Miguel and Saigon and San Miguel were reterminated through NAVCOMMSTA Cam Ranh Bay, resulting in circuit economy and better utilization of the NAVCOMMSTA.

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There was no significant change in Project STARBOARD TACK since the November report.

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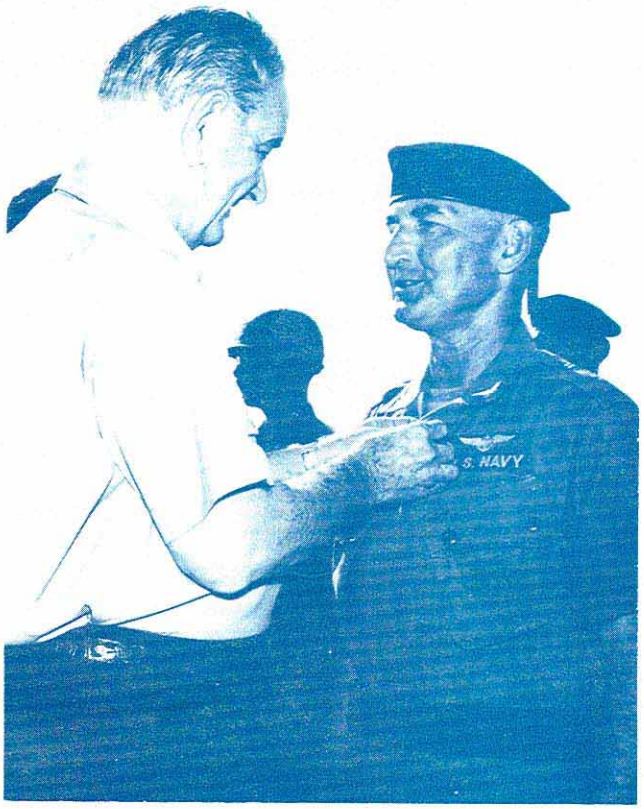

The President of the United States of America, Lyndon B. JOHNSON, presents Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116), with the Silver Star Medal during the President's visit to Cam Ranh Bay on 23 December 1967.

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ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

On 16 December Admiral John J. HYLAND, USN, Commander-in-Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet, accompanied by Rear Admiral William H. HOUSE, USN, Deputy Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, visited the River Patrol Force (CTF 116) headquarters at Binh Thuy and the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam, where he received a series of up-date briefings on GAME WARDEN and riverine operations.

On the following day, Rear Admiral James J. KELLY, CHC, USN, Chief of Chaplains, commenced an extensive tour of U. S. Naval Activities in South Vietnam. Rear Admiral KELLY's itinerary included visits to the Saigon headquarters of COMNAVFORV; the Naval Support Activity detachments at Nha Be, Sa Dec, Binh Thuy and Chu Lai; the Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) headquarters and the Naval Air Facility at Cam Ranh Bay; the Mobile Riverine Base at Dong Tam, and the Naval Support Activity at Danang.

On 23 December the President of the United States, Lyndon B. JOHNSON, during a brief stopover at Cam Ranh Bay, presented five Navymen with medals. Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, received the Navy Distinguished Service Medal; Lieutenant Commander Frank E. RHODES Jr., Commander River Assault Squadron ELEVEN, was awarded the Navy Cross; and Captain Paul N. GRAY, Commander River Patrol Force, Lieutenant (junior grade) Samuel MEISS of River Section 512 and Engineman

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Third Class Michael MEEKS, attached to River Section 511, were awarded the Silver Star.

Christmas Day, Governor George ROMNEY, Republican-Michigan, visited the U. S. Naval Support Activity, Danang Station Hospital and the THIRD Naval Construction Brigade at Danang.

On 29 December South Vietnamese President Nguyen Van THIEU, accompanied by General Creighton ABRAMS, Deputy Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, visited the MRF at Dong Tam for a briefing and a tour of River Assault Squadron craft.

Captain Robert S. SALZER, USN, relieved Captain Wade C. WELLS, USN, of COMRIVFLOT ONE/COMRIVSUPPRON SEVEN/CTF 117 on 2 December aboard the USS BENEWAH (APB 35), anchored at Dong Tam.

On 29 December Commander L. H. HAMEL, III, USN, relieved Lieutenant Commander C. L. HOROWITZ as COMRIVRON NINE at Dong Tam.

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SPECIAL HANDLING REQUIRED
NOT RELEASABLE TO
FOREIGN NATIONALS

NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy on 31 December was 16,333 officers and enlisted men; of this number, 1,238 were officers, 3,132 were NCO's and 11,963 were enlisted men. The number of personnel discharged as deserters decreased from November's total of 36 to 20 in December and the number of unauthorized absentees decreased from 327 in November to 307 in December.

The first graduating class of the Vietnamese Navy Hydrographic School, 10 Vietnamese Navy petty officers, culminated one year of training aboard USS TANNER (AGS 15). During a four-day underway period, 18 December through 21 December, these petty officers participated in survey operations in preparation for their assignment to the Vietnamese Navy fleet, coastal and riverine commands as assistants to the Vietnamese Intelligence officers on hydrographic problems. These students had three months theory and nine months field work in navigation, tides, soundings, surveying equipment and chart making.

The Vietnamese Navy Underway Training Unit continued its comprehensive program with two patrol motor gunboats (PGMs) completing 12 days of underway training on 16 December. The Vietnamese Navy Advanced Training Center, Saigon, graduated 106 men from

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the Class "A" school on 23 December.

Fleet Command

During December the Fleet Command had 25.6 ships available daily and maintained 15 ships on station off the coast of South Vietnam, five ships on river patrol and one ship on convoy escort duty between Vung Tau and Tan Chau on the Mekong River. The month's operations included MARKET TIME and river patrols, psychological warfare and civic action visits, minesweeping and escort patrols, and gunfire support missions. Fleet Command ships fired 140 gunfire support missions in December, searched 576 junks and 2,182 persons, and detained three persons.

Patrol Craft (PC and PCEs), utilized in the First, Second and Fourth Naval Zones, and gunboats (PGMs), patrolling all four Naval Zones and the RSSZ, conducted 61 naval gunfire support missions during December. PCE 11 provided gunfire support for ARVN Special Forces Operation PHU QUOC 116 in the Phu Quoc subsector through 3 December, accounting for three Viet Cong killed.

On 23 December PGM 601, conducting MARKET TIME patrols in the First Naval Zone, went aground on a coral reef in less than two fathoms of water near the Re Island group. Maneuvering clear, the PGM proceeded to Danang where an underwater inspection revealed that both screws and the port rudder were badly damaged and required replacement; in addition, the ship's underbody was

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severly dented.

Landing support ships (LSILs and LSSLs) provided river patrol services, gunfire support, and convoy escort duty in the Third Naval Zone, Fourth Riverine Area and the Rung Sat Special Zone. These ships fired 79 naval gunfire support missions during December. On 10 December, LSSL 226 fired on a Viet Cong encampment in the Long Phu sector on the southern tip of Dung Island, observing two secondary explosions. Returning to the Long Phu sector the next day, gunfire from this LSSL accounted for 11 Viet Cong killed, 15 Viet Cong wounded and numerous weapons destroyed. Acting on intelligence, LSSL 231 provided gunfire support for Coastal Group 35 on 16 December; an unknown number of Viet Cong were entrenched on the south bank of the Co Chien river, 10 miles southeast of Tra Vinh. Five Viet Cong were killed and an unknown number of Viet Cong killed or wounded were reported carried away.

While the coastal minesweepers (MSCs) concentrated on daily sweeps in the Third Naval Zone, the motor-launch minesweepers (MLMSs) were actively engaged in protecting the river traffic in the Long Tau, Nha Be, Saigon and Dong Nai Rivers against mining attempts. These rivers are the main arteries from the sea to the Port of Saigon and the transhipment point at Bien Hoa and, despite the continuous sweeping carried on by Vietnamese Navy and U. S. minesweepers, the Viet Cong pose a formidable threat to free

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navigation by their ingenious mining tactics. The Viet Cong were successful on 4 December in mining a U. S. Army ammunition convoy transitting from the explosive anchorage at Cat Lai to Bien Hoa Air Force Base just minutes after a VNN MLMS had swept the area.

In December the Vietnamese Navy's Underwater Demolition Team (LDNN) detachment at Saigon continued to conduct nightly hull inspections of the ships berthed in the Port of Saigon. Meanwhile, the other two detachments, based at Binh Thuy and Nha Be, operated with SEALs of TF 116 in search and ambush missions in the Fourth Riverine Area and the RSSZ. Two SEAL squads and LDNN members conducted an area search in the Minh Binh sector, 18 miles south-southwest of My Tho on 6 December. This mission resulted in one Viet Cong killed and five structures burned. On 23 December, the first LDNN member was killed while operating with SEALs in the RSSZ, seven miles east-southeast of Nha Be. In this action one SEAL team member was also killed, one Viet Cong was killed, one was wounded and two carbines were captured.

Coastal Force

During December, the Coastal Force searched 29,012 junks and sampans and 97,365 persons, detaining 12 junks and 176 suspects. On a daily average 83 percent of the 192 available junks were on patrol.

In the First Naval Zone, continuing monsoon weather precluded

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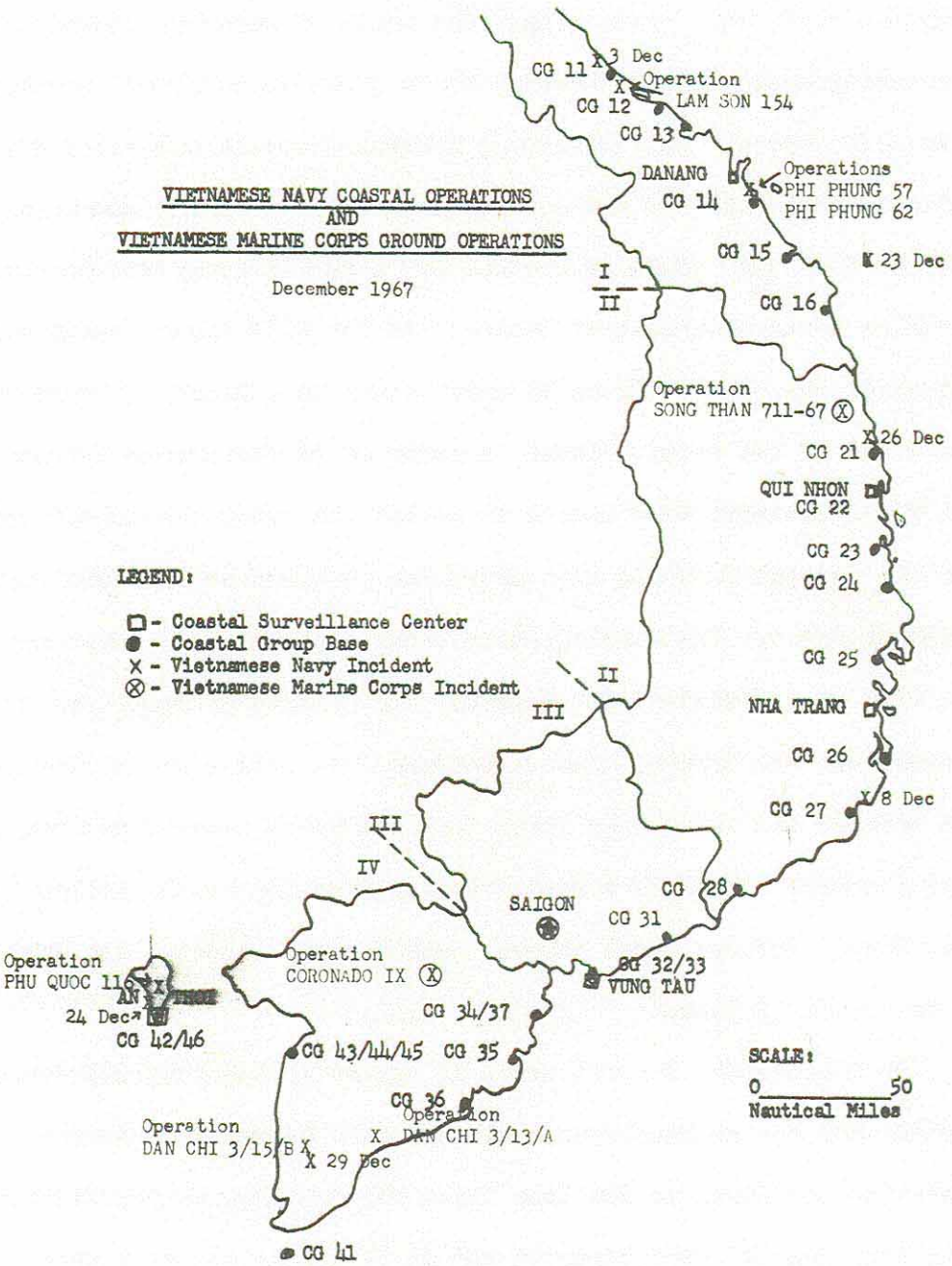

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open-sea traffic and the junks patrolled the bays and rivers where civilian craft were traversing. The month of December showed an increasing employment of Coastal Group junks in combined operations with ARVN forces. On 1 December, Coastal Group 14 supported ARVN Infantry Regiment 1/57 and one Ranger Battalion during Operation PHI PHUNG 57 just south of the Cau Cai River in Quang Nam province, 15 miles south-southeast of Danang. As the ARVN forces swept north and east, the Coastal Group 14 units acted as a blocking force in the mouth of the river. Later, a party of 30 Vietnamese Navymen and U. S. advisors went ashore to assist the sweep operations while another Coastal Group 14 unit patrolled the area as an additional blocking force. The landing party secured the river front, captured one Viet Cong, detained 21 suspects, and damaged or destroyed 40 bunkers and one bridge. One Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed and one officer was wounded as their junk was taken under fire from the nearby shore. The ARVN forces, closing from the south, killed four Viet Cong, captured three others, detained 10 suspects, and damaged or destroyed 47 junks.

On 2 December, Coastal Group 13 supported one Regional Force Company and one reconnaissance platoon in a search and destroy operation conducted in the Thua Thien sector in which two Viet Cong (one female) were captured and 11 Viet Cong suspects were detained. The next day six Viet Cong suspects were detained as a

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result of a Coastal Group 11 sweep just north of the Cua Viet entrance channel. Operation LAM SON 154, a combined Coastal Group 11, ARVN 1st Infantry Regiment and U. S. Marine operation, commenced on 4 December, 10 miles east-northeast of Quang Tri. Ending on 8 December, the operation yielded one Viet Cong killed, 32 Viet Cong suspects detained, one radio and telephone switchboard captured and four ARVN wounded. Between the 15th and the 31st of December, Coastal Groups 11 and 12 provided blocking support for ARVN forces, Regional Forces and U. S. Marines committed against the determined insurgents in the Quang Tri and Thua Thien sectors. In the series of operations conducted, 176 Viet Cong were killed, 84 of the enemy were captured and numerous weapons were captured or destroyed along with various shelters and bunkers. Coastal Group 14, with units of the Quang Nam sector, conducted Operation PHI PHUNG 62 on 20 December. The VNN junks were credited with the destruction of 20 junks, 20 shelters, 10 fortifications and 20 tunnels, and the capture of 15 Viet Cong suspects, numerous documents and a quantity of medicines in a one-mile area north-northwest of the Cau Dai river mouth.

Just as in the First Naval Zone (due to inclement weather at sea) Coastal Groups of the Second Naval Zone stressed lagoon patrols with emphasis on psychological warfare and civic action operations. On 8 December, Coastal Group 27 units, while patrolling

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the Dam Nai Lagoon, 15 miles south of Cam Ranh Bay, proceeded toward Phoung Cuu New Life Hamlet which was under Viet Cong attack. One Coastal Group unit provided 60-mm mortar fire into a logical escape route to the north and west of the hamlet while the second unit boarded a sampan to enter the hamlet and evacuate the wounded. This was the first time that these VNN units had reacted to such Viet Cong attacks in this lagoon area. Coastal Groups of the Second Naval Zone provided blocking forces for ARVN and PF units throughout the month of December. These combined operations proved to be highly successful as evidenced by the rising number of Viet Cong killed or wounded, contraband captured, and structures destroyed by ARVN forces.

On the night of 22-23 December the combined Coastal Group 22 and MARKET TIME base and Vietnamese Navy Repair Facility at Qui Nhon was attacked by Viet Cong. At 2345, the marine railway at the repair facility was damaged by a mine explosion; four junks were damaged at this time. Two Viet Cong frogmen were killed as the defenders retaliated. Then at 0215 a large explosion rocked the base as a Coastal Group junk was mined. The concerted Viet Cong attack which followed was boldly opposed by members of Coastal Group 22 and U. S. Navy units (see page 2).

In response to a ROK intelligence report of suspected Viet Cong movement on the night of 26 December, Coastal Group 21 junks

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and U. S. helicopters proceeded to the Binh Dinh sector, 23 miles north of Qui Nhon. In the darkness of night, the friendly helicopters opened fire on the Coastal Group's junks, despite the junks' attempts to be identified by illumination flares and running lights. Three VNN sailors were wounded and one junk was 90 percent damaged in this incident.

In the Third Naval Zone on 3 December, a Coastal Group 36 reconnaissance platoon conducted a search and destroy operation near the Bassac River, 40 miles south of Can Tho, resulting in one Viet Cong killed, an unknown number reported wounded and carried away, and the capture of two claymore mines, two grenades and 300 meters of electrical wire. A fire fight between a reconnaissance team of Coastal Group 35 and a Viet Cong platoon, 15 miles west of Saigon in the Vinh Binh sector, on 12 December terminated after 20 minutes when the Viet Cong withdrew. Three Viet Cong were killed and a number were wounded but carried away. One grenade, three anti-personnel mines and a Viet Cong flag were captured. That same day, Coastal Group 36, three Regional Force companies and one PRU platoon conducted Operation CUU LONG 126 in the Go Cong sector, six miles east-southeast of Go Cong. During the operation two Viet Cong were killed and one Viet Cong and one carbine were captured.

On the 13th, Coastal Groups 34 and 37, two RF companies and one PF platoon, killed one Viet Cong, detained four Viet Cong

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suspects and captured numerous documents in a sweep of the north bank of the Ham Luong river, three miles from the river's mouth. On the 17th in Kien Hoa province, at the mouth of the Ham Luong river, two platoons from Coastal Groups 34 and 37 teamed up with an ARVN infantry platoon to capture two junks and four Viet Cong during a sweep. Two days later Kien Hoa province was the scene for yet another search and destroy operation. Coastal Groups 34 and 37 joined up with two RF companies and one PF platoon and destroyed an enemy propaganda center and numerous punji stakes and accounted for two Viet Cong killed and the capture of two Viet Cong suspects, two Russian-made rifles and 1,000 cartridges. Later that same day, a Coastal Group 35 ambush team surprised seven Viet Cong in a sampan on the Co Chien river, five miles from the river's mouth. The ensuing fire fight resulted in all seven Viet Cong being killed and the capture of one M-1 rifle, one German Mauser, one cartridge magazine and a bag of propaganda leaflets and documents.

During a routine patrol near the northern tip of Dung Island on the lower Bassac River on 21 December, a Coastal Group 36 unit stopped a sampan with two adult males and a boy. A search revealed a flashlight with a red lens hidden in a loaf of bread. Under interrogation one adult was confirmed a Viet Cong cadre from Dung Island. On 24 December, Coastal Group 36 units supported a RF

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company sweep on the southern bank of the lower Bassac river from 0600 to 1515, resulting in eight Viet Cong killed and two rifles seized. At 1400 that same day, other Coastal Group 36 units interdicted two large junks crossing the lower Bassac river, two miles below the RF ambush area. A U. S. helicopter fire team was called in and the junks were destroyed.

Based on intelligence locating two Viet Cong camps, on 27 December Coastal Group 37 landed a junk along with RF troops on the northern bank of the Ham Luong river two miles from the river's mouth and a Coastal Group 34 junk beached just north of that point. This sweep yielded one Viet Cong and numerous documents captured, one Viet Cong suspect detained and the destruction of numerous tunnels.

A well-executed operation, BIET CHINH, was conducted on the south bank of the lower Bassac river on 28 December, yielding three Viet Cong killed, five Viet Cong captured, 12 grenades, two rifles, a sampan and motor and numerous documents captured. Intelligence obtained from a Hoi Chanh guided two Coastal Group 36 reconnaissance squads and two PRU platoons to a hamlet housing members of the Ba Xuyen sector Viet Cong infrastructure. The combined units surrounded the hamlet and routed the Viet Cong.

On 6 December in the Fourth Naval Zone, while providing support to a defense post eight miles south of Rach Gia in Kien Giang

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province, Coastal Groups 43, 44 and 45 and ARVN troops were engaged in a fire fight with an unestimated number of Viet Cong; five Viet Cong were killed, and one locally-made rocket launcher, two rockets, one locally-made mine and numerous grenades were captured. On the 24th, Coastal Groups 42 and 46 combined with a VNN PGM and one Raider company to capture one junk, detain one Viet Cong suspect and destroy a food cache, six miles north of An Thoi on Phu Quoc Island.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

In December the River Assault Groups (RAGs) and the River Transport and Escort Group (RTEG) had 225 craft assigned, of which a daily average of 158 were available for operations and 130 were employed. RAG craft conducted amphibious operations with Vietnamese Army, Regular Force/Popular Force and U. S. forces in the First Naval Zone and Third and Fourth Riverine Areas and performed river patrol, base defense, psychological warfare and civic action missions. RAG units searched 4,567 junks, 13,918 persons and detained 11 junks and 32 persons during the month.

In the Third Riverine Area, RAGs 24, 27, 28 and 30 provided 472 boat-days support for Vietnamese Army and U. S. operations. In the Rung Sat Special Zone, RAG 22 provided an additional 46 boat-days in support of Regular Force and Popular Force operations in conjunction with TF 116 PBRs. On 2 December, river craft from

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RAG 24 supported units of Long An province 12 miles north-northeast of My Tho during Operation AN DAN 219. The combined forces netted two Viet Cong killed, two draft dodgers detained and one bunker destroyed.

CHINH NGHIA 117, a combined RAG 24 and Vietnamese Army Infantry Regiment operation 15 miles northwest of Saigon, was conducted from 5 December to 9 December. This sweep resulted in the capture of 15 mines and the destruction of two mines, one BAR magazine and two bunkers. Friendly losses were one VNN sailor and 13 ARVN soldiers killed, and two VNN sailors and 30 ARVN troops wounded. Enemy personnel casualties were undetermined.

During a troop lift of an ARVN Infantry Regiment and the ARVN 5th Reconnaissance Company across the Saigon river, 11 miles north of Saigon on 7 December, river craft from RAG 28 were taken under B-40, semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire. One Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed and two were wounded, and 16 ARVN troops were killed and 37 were wounded; three river craft sustained minor damage. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

Operation QUYET THANG commenced on 8 December in Gia Dinh province, five miles north of Saigon, with river craft of RAG 30 providing a blocking force and troop lift for the Vietnamese 5th Ranger group. During this two-day operation, the Rangers and the RAG units with U. S. helicopter fire teams providing air strikes,

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routed the enemy, killing 32 Viet Cong. Two AK-50 sub-machine guns, one B-41 rocket launcher and five rounds, and AK-47, eight hand grenades, three mines, one sampan and numerous Viet Cong documents were captured and six bunkers were destroyed. Fifteen Vietnamese Navymen were killed, and 18 VNN sailors, one helicopter fire team member and one U. S. Ranger were wounded in this action.

An aerial view of the Vietnamese Navy Junk Repair Facility at Rach Sai in the Fourth Coastal Zone.

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On 16 December, a RAG 27 Monitor was sunk by a water mine on the Vam Co Dong river, 16 miles southwest of Saigon; nine Vietnamese Navy sailors were wounded. The Vietnamese Eastern Repair Facility salvage team was bombarded by 60-mm fire on 21 December as it was conducting salvage operations. The fire was returned and the Viet Cong withdrew. The monitor was refloated by 27 December, then towed to Ben Luc for temporary repairs before ultimate transit to Saigon.

A river convoy on the Vam Co river, escorted by five RTEG craft, was attacked by 57-mm recoilless-rifle fire on 19 December, 22 miles south of Saigon. A monitor and one oil barge were hit; the starboard engine of the monitor was damaged. A Vietnamese Navy sailor was killed, one was wounded and one civilian on the barge was also wounded in this ambush.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone in December, RAG 22 continued to employ its craft in combined operations with TF 116 PBRs and light helicopter fire teams, and Regional and Popular Forces augmented by U. S. and VNMC artillery batteries. In addition, the Royal Thai Army Artillery based just north of the Rung Sat Special Zone supplied much needed support to these operations. Throughout the month, daily search and destroy and ambush operations were conducted utilizing RAG 22 river craft as troop lift and "medevac" while the RF/PF units swept the areas within the RSSZ. Friendly defense

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outposts were supported by the combined forces against the harassing Viet Cong attacks and Viet Cong base camps were burned and weapons and equipment captured.

On 12 December, one monitor and one LCVP from RAG 22, supporting the Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment (the Queen's Cobras) were taken under fire from the north bank of the upper Dong Tranh river, 15 miles southeast of Saigon. The Viet Cong fire was suppressed by RAG 22 craft and a landing party discovered three small destroyed bunkers. Three Viet Cong were killed and numerous blood trails in the area indicated more killed or wounded; one Vietnamese Navy sailor suffered a slight wound and the LCVP was lightly damaged.

A two-day operation, DONG TAM 17, was conducted on 29 and 30 December by RAG 22 and Regional Force units. On the first day, one Regional Force Company and two LCVPs searched an area seven miles southeast of Saigon, destroying six houses and eight bunkers. That same day, eight miles to the south, one commandament, one monitor, two LCMs and two LCPLs, with two Regional Force companies and two platoons embarked, were attacked by B-41 rockets and automatic-weapons fire. The two LCMs were damaged and five Vietnamese Navy sailors and one Regional Force soldier were wounded. The next day, two LCVPs were slightly damaged by grenade-launcher fire while searching an area four miles to the north with a Regional Force

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company and two PBRs.

On the 31st of December, the veil of darkness set the scene for two Viet Cong attempts to infiltrate with supplies. At 1908 at a Vietnamese Commando squad listening post 15 miles southeast of Saigon, a heavily loaded sampan with three people approached from the west. Detecting the Commandos the Viet Cong opened fire and attempted to evade. The Commandos returned the fire, killing one Viet Cong and capturing another; the other was presumed killed and swept away by the river. The sampan was recovered and searched, revealing two B-40 rocket launchers, three B-40 rounds, two AK-47 Chinese Communist rifles, eight magazines of AK-47 ammunition, one claymore mine, 400 pounds of rice, numerous documents, various articles of clothing and cooking utensils. The documents contained information regarding the location of grenade booby traps and a planned attack on an allied oil tanker on the night of 2-3 January in a vicinity marked off on a sketched map. Heavy damage to the oil tanker was undoubtably averted due to the capture of these documents. The other infiltration attempt occurred five minutes later and five miles to the north, as another listening post was approached by two sampans. Each craft carried three persons who ignored the hails of the intelligence squad. A fierce fire fight ensued and a U. S. Navy helicopter fire team arrived in the area for air support. The sampans evaded, but one Viet Cong was killed

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and one .45 caliber grease gun was captured.

Another listening post, located 14 miles southeast of Saigon, saw action that night when the Viet Cong attacked their position. The intelligence squad returned the fire, resulting in three Viet Cong killed and one Thompson sub-machine gun and one U. S. M-1 rifle captured.

RAG craft of the Fourth Riverine Area provided 564 boat-days in support of military operations and 922 boat-days on river patrols. These boats operated in conjunction with ARVN, Regional Force/Popular Force, and Provincial Reconnaissance Unit troops, and TF 116 PBRs, providing troop lift, blocking force, "medevac", and canal/river security and clearance.

On 4 December, RAG 23 units escorted PRUs and TF 116 PBRs in a raid against the Viet Cong infrastructure of Vinh Long province. The PRUs were inserted at a point 12 miles southeast of Vinh Long and RAG 23 craft maintained the blocking force. The sweep resulted in five Viet Cong killed, three Viet Cong captured and eight Viet Cong suspects detained. In addition, various documents and two sampans were captured. That same day, other units of RAGs 23 and 31 conducted Operation NGO QUYEN 123, in an area containing a Viet Cong propaganda center, less than a mile from the PRU insertion point. The RAG units killed six Viet Cong, destroyed the propaganda center, detained 10 Viet Cong suspects, and captured two

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sampans, several weapons and various documents.

Operation DAN CHI 3/13/A, conducted 10 miles east of Vinh Loi in Ba Xuyen province, by RAGs 25 and 29 and the ARVN 21st Infantry Regiment on 4 December, resulted in three Viet Cong killed, and one carbine and six mines captured. Three ARVN soldiers were killed and 11 were wounded in this operation. On 5 December NGO QUYEN 124, an ARVN operation, supported by RAGs 23 and 31, 15 miles south of Vinh Long, was conducted resulting in one Viet Cong killed, one mine destroyed and one Russian rifle and 500 M-1 rifle cartridges captured.

Commencing on 6 December, a two-day operation, DAN CHI 3/15/B, was conducted in the vicinity of Ca Mau, 45 miles east of Vinh Loi in An Xuyen province. That day, RAG 25 units departed Ca Mau with supplies and one company of the 21st Engineer Battalion embarked, proceeding south to the district town of Cai Nuoc, a distance of 15 miles. Light sporadic fire was received from the canal banks as the convoy of one commandament, two monitors, two LCVPs, four FOMs and seven LCMs made their way into this territory little traversed by RAG craft. The canal proved to be passable to the river craft and the troops were offloaded at Cai Nuoc; however, it was reported that locations for Viet Cong ambush sites were plentiful and, at low tide, the ships were required to proceed very slowly in many areas. Meanwhile, other units of RAGs 25 and 29

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were conducting troop lifts for the 21st Infantry Division on the Ca Mau canal, east of Ca Mau toward Vinh Loi. Sweeps along this route during the two-day operation resulted in 15 Viet Cong killed, four claymore mines destroyed, and three Viet Cong, numerous weapons and one sampan captured. Friendly units suffered four soldiers killed and nine wounded.

On 11 December, the wife and two children of the Commanding Officer of RAG 29 were killed by a mine that destroyed their jeep which had been parked next to their home. The RAG Commanding Officer was not in the jeep at that time.

Giai Island, a Viet Cong sanctuary in the Co Chien river, was invaded by PRUs during four days of operations, 13 through 17 December, as RAGs 23 and 31 and TF 116 PBRs provided troop lifts and blocking force operations. The four-day operation netted two Viet Cong guerrillas killed, and the capture of 13 Viet Cong suspects, one ton of rice and 12 pounds of medicine. Two RAG boats remained near a village offering assistance and security against the terrorizing Viet Cong ensconced throughout the island. On 19 and 20 December, RAGs 23 and 31, PBRs and PRUs once again conducted raid, search and destroy operations on Giai Island. With the RAG craft and PBRs maintaining blocking stations and searching all craft in the vicinity, the island was effectively sealed off. Thirty-one Viet Cong suspects were detained and two first aid stations and a

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propaganda center were destroyed. Thirteen of the detainees were later identified as Viet Cong, including five cadre.

As a result of the successful sweep operations conducted on Giai Island, one Viet Cong, age 16, rallied to the GVN and supplied invaluable intelligence regarding the state of the Viet Cong on Giai Island. He intimated that several of his friends were eager to Chieu Hoi and that the residents of the island had "locked their doors" to the Viet Cong and will not support them. Chieu Hoi sweeps of the island will continue, implemented by RAG craft, PBRs and air drops.

Operation PHI HO 15/80 took place on Tan Dinh Island in the Bassac river on 22 December. RAGs 25, 26, 29 and 32 river craft inserted three companies of the ARVN 15th Regiment, NINTH Infantry Division and one Vinh Long Popular Force company for search and destroy operations. RAG units and PBRs provided the river blocking force. The seven-hour sweep resulted in eight U. S. and four ARVN wounded; one Viet Cong killed, one Viet Cong captured, two Viet Cong suspects detained and four grenades captured. On 26 and 27 December, units of RAGs 23 and 31 carried troops of the ARVN NINTH Infantry Division during Operation LONG PHI 9/144, a sweep of the Nha Man canal area between Vinh Long and Sa Dec. While transitting the canal, an estimated Viet Cong squad fired on the force two miles east of Sa Dec and the ARVN troops were inserted. The

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engagement resulted in two Viet Cong killed, two Viet Cong wounded, and several weapons, one mine and 100 feet of wire seized. The next day these same units searched the Cai Tau Canal, five miles to the east of the Nha Man Canal, experiencing constant Viet Cong sniper fire. The friendly forces killed one Viet Cong, detained one Viet Cong suspect, and captured one Chinese Communist rifle, four grenades and a loudspeaker; seven structures, two bunkers and one large sampan were destroyed. The ARVN units suffered 16 wounded from grenade booby traps.

On 28 December, the RAG 21 base at My Tho received three rounds of Viet Cong 82-mm mortar fire, wounding seven Vietnamese Navy sailors. On 29 December during a two-hour battle, the ARVN defenders suffered 18 killed, 19 wounded and 12 missing while repeling a savage Viet Cong attack on the city of Ca Mau in An Xuyen province. RAG 25 boats were dispatched to the city with relief forces and, after unloading, "medevaced" the wounded. Known enemy casualties consisted of 12 killed and one wounded.

Logistics

In December, the Vietnamese Navy conducted 23 logistical support missions, transporting 2,659 personnel and 2,892 tons of cargo. The tank landing ships (LSTs) lifted 1,009 tons of cargo and 170 personnel; medium landing ships (LSMs) lifted 1,042 tons of cargo and 510 personnel; and utility landing craft (LCUs) lifted

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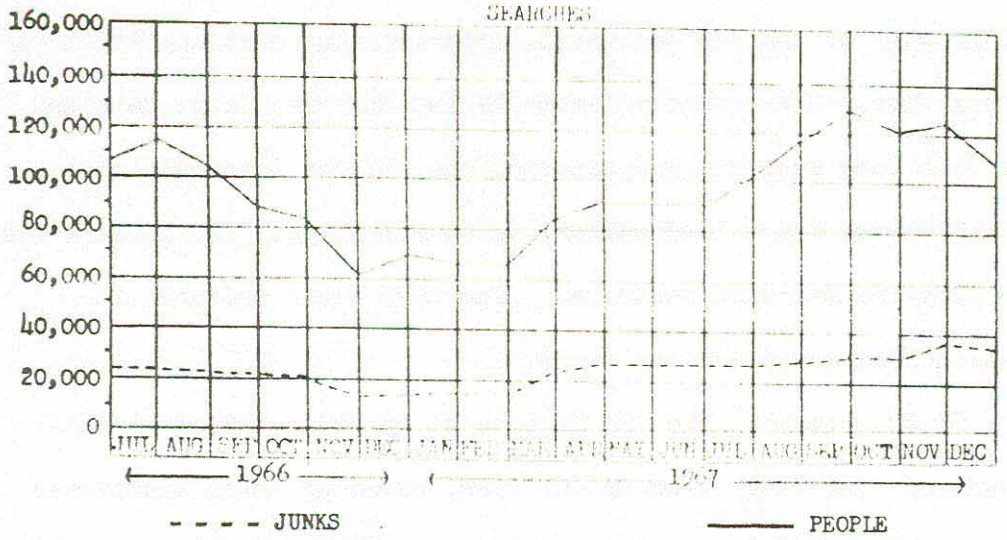
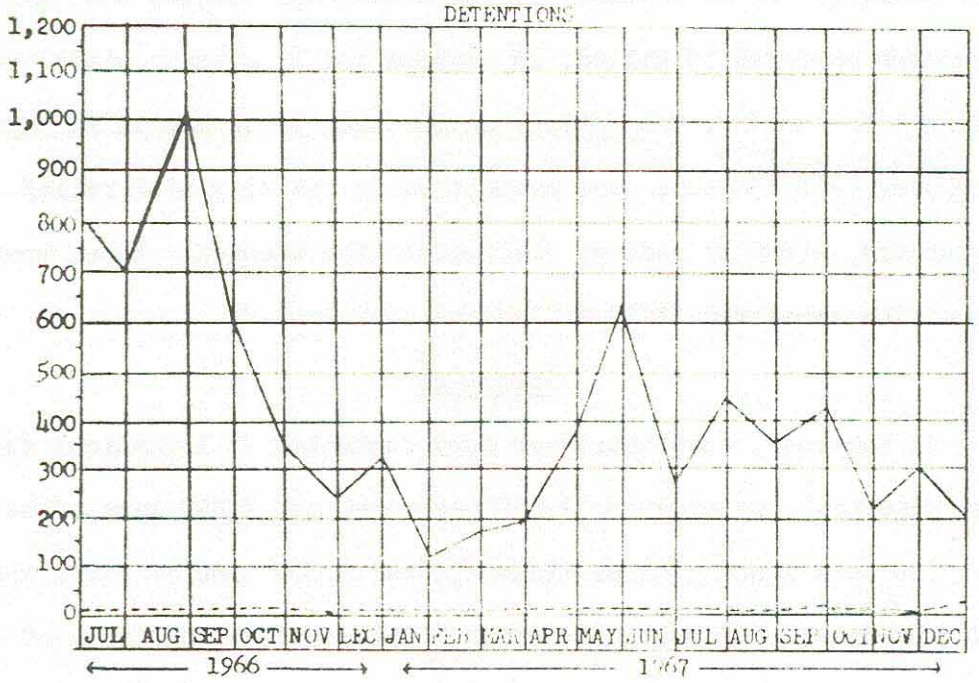
SEARCHES AND DETENTIONS
BY VIETNAMESE NAVY SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES





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841 tons of cargo and 1,979 personnel.

During December the U. S. Army initiated a program to provide the Vietnamese Navy Shipyard support in the form of repair and maintenance of various shipyard equipment, generators, engines and air conditioners on an interim basis. An inter-service support agreement is being considered by USARV; this is the first instance of such support by the U. S. Army to the Vietnamese Navy.

During the month, the Vietnamese Navy supply center had a gross effectiveness of 68 percent on a total of 10,874 requests for items, and a net effectiveness of 82.5 percent on 8,971 requests for items normally carried in the supply system.

Vietnamese Navy Statistical Summary
December 1967

	Searched		Detained	
Coastal Forces	Junks	People	Junks	People
I NZ	11,840	36,234	7	100
II NZ	6,752	20,984	2	72
III NZ	7,891	31,442	3	4
IV NZ	2,529	8,705	0	0
Sub-totals	29,012	97,365	12	176
Fleet Command Patrol Ships	576	2,182	0	3
Riverine Area Craft	4,567	13,918	11	32
TOTALS	34,155	113,465	23	211

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VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

During the month of December the six infantry battalions and one artillery battalion of the Vietnamese Marine Corps operated in the II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones and the Capital Military District. The battalions were committed to operations 93 percent of the time.

Task Force A, composed of a headquarters, 3rd and 4th Infantry Battalions and Battery C, VNMC Artillery Battalion, continued Operation SONG THAN 711-67, a search and destroy/road and bridge security mission in the Bong Son-Duong Lieu area of II Corps. Enemy contact was light and sporadic during the month. On 10 December the 4th Battalion destroyed a tunnel complex and detained 63 suspects. Meanwhile, a 3rd Battalion outpost killed 10 Viet Cong and captured two Czechoslovakian rifles and 10 grenades. One Vietnamese Marine was killed in this action. Task Force A Headquarters captured a female Viet Cong on 14 December while the 3rd Battalion killed two Viet Cong and captured two more female Viet Cong cadre. Later that same day, a 4th Battalion ambush resulted in two Viet Cong killed and the capture of two grenades. On 15 December, the 4th Battalion killed one Viet Cong and captured two more hand grenades while the Task Force Headquarters detained 51 suspects along Highway 1. After a fire fight with an estimated enemy squad on 20 December, the bodies of three dead Viet Cong,

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one M-16 rifle, three carbines and six grenades were found; two Viet Cong were captured and 56 suspects detained by the 4th Battalion. On 26 December, the 4th Battalion conducted a three-company search and destroy operation. One Viet Cong was captured and 17 suspects were detained.

Task Force B, composed of a headquarters, 1st and 2nd Infantry Battalions and Battery B, VNMC Artillery Battalion was assigned as the Ready Reaction Force for III Corps. From 1-6 December, the Task Force Headquarters, 2nd Battalion and Battery B remained near Bien Hoa in a stand-by status. The 1st Battalion, in addition to the Ready Reaction Force mission, operated in an assigned area in southern Tan Binh District of the Capital Military District. On 7 December, Task Force Headquarters and the 2nd Battalion were helo-lifted from Bien Hoa to a landing zone 10 miles to the northwest to begin a combined operation with elements of the U. S. 199th Light Infantry Brigade. The Battalion continued search and destroy operations in this area until 17 December when it returned to Bien Hoa. During this period, nine Viet Cong were killed, one suspect was detained, numerous weapons were captured and various bunkers, caches, foodstuffs and medical supplies were destroyed. In the remainder of the month, Task Force B Headquarters and two battalions remained in the Saigon-Thu Duc area and concentrated their efforts on equipment maintenance and training. The 1st Battalion, on 11

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December, made contact with an estimated enemy platoon, resulting in six Viet Cong killed and four weapons and assorted equipment captured. Friendly losses were one killed and two wounded. For the duration of the month the battalion made light contact with the enemy and a total of 20 suspects were detained.

On 4 December, while operating with TF 117, the VNMC 5th Battalion engaged the 400-man Viet Cong 502nd Local Force Battalion in the heaviest fighting in the CORONADO series of operations. Transitting up the Ruong Stream to assigned beaches for assault landings, the 4th Battalion came under heavy automatic-weapons and B-40 anti-tank grenade fire; six of the troop carriers received B-40 hits. Although 4,000 meters from his assigned area of operations and under heavy fire the Vietnamese Navy battalion commander elected to counter the fire by landing the forces. The Marines, landed in the face of an enemy ambush, surrounded the Viet Cong battalion in its prepared positions and destroyed it as a fighting force. Landing on the west bank of Ruong stream at 0815, the 1st Company engaged the enemy's northern flank, while the 2nd and 3rd Companies were shifted from their initial landing further north to the enemy's southern flank. By late morning the Viet Cong were surrounded with River Assault Division 112 on the east, and 1st, 2nd and 3rd Companies to the north, west and south. The reserve, 4th Company, was then landed to attack the major emplacements along the stream.

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Vietnamese Marines of the 5th Battalion and their USMC advisors cross a small canal in the Mekong Delta during a two-day phase of Operation CORONADO IX.

Unable to use supporting arms because of the constant, close contact with the enemy, the Marines relied on squad and fire team tactics. By 1600 the 5th Battalion had eliminated all resistance except for one bunker complex on the enemy's western flank. At 1600, after a helicopter fire team made a rocket attack on the complex, the Marines rushed the bunkers and, using hand grenades and shovels, destroyed the strong point. At 1630, the battle ended

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with 175 Viet Cong killed, 12 captured and 12 Viet Cong suspects detained. Forty Marines were killed and 103 were wounded; 34 of whom were treated in the field, while the remainder were evacuated.

Throughout the night and morning of 5 December Viet Cong continued to emerge from hiding places. Many were submerged in streams breathing by means of hollow reeds. On 5 December, the 5th Marines were extracted and returned to Dong Tam. In the remainder of the month, the 5th Battalion continued as Mobile Riverine Force Ready Reaction Force and was committed to beach assaults in conjunction with MRF units conducting search and destroy and blocking missions. During this period, 11 Viet Cong were killed, 20 were captured and 65 Viet Cong suspects were detained while the 5th Battalion suffered one Vietnamese Marine killed and 17 wounded in action.

The 6th Infantry Battalion continued its search and destroy/road security missions in the Binh Ghan District of the Capital Military District until 21 December, experiencing light and sporadic enemy contact. Remaining at its base camp at Thu Duc until 27 December, the Battalion then relieved the 1st Battalion in the Tan Binh District.

From 1-9 December, Battery A (eight 75-mm pack howitzers) of the VNMC Artillery Battalion, had four guns attached to the 1st Infantry Battalion and four guns attached to the Vietnamese naval forces in the Rung Sat Special Zone. From 10 December through the

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end of the month, Battery A had three guns attached to the Vietnamese Navy in the RSSZ, three guns in the Capital Military District and two guns in reserve at the base camp.

Throughout the month, Battery B (six 105-mm howitzers) was supporting Task Force B in III Corps Tactical Zone and Battery C (six 105-mm howitzers) was supporting Task Force A in II Corps Tactical Zone.

Vietnamese Marine Corps Statistical Summary
December 1967

VC/NVA	287 KIA	36 VC CAPTURED	249 VC SUSPECTS DETAINED
VNMC	47 KIA*	131 WIA*	(* 2 KIA, 15 WIA in non-hostile action)

Weapons Captured

Rifle, ChiCom	1
Rifle, U. S. .30 caliber, Browning automatic	2
Rifle, AK-47	7
Rifle, Soviet Sniper	1
Rifle, M-1	3
Rifle, English	1
Rifle, Czechoslovakian	3
Rifle, .30 caliber, Winchester	1
Rifle, K-50	3
Rifle, M-16	1
Rifle, Soviet carbine	1
Rifle, U. S. M-1 and M-2	21
Rifle, Soviet carbine model SKS	8
Submachine gun, U. S. Thompson	1
Submachine gun, U. S. M-3	2
Submachine gun, ChiCom	1
Pistol, U. S. .38 caliber	1
Pistol, German	1
Pistol, ChiCom	5
Pistol, U. S. .45 caliber	1
Pistol, VC home-made	1
B-40 grenade launcher	3

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Captured or Destroyed Materials or Facilities:

Rifle grenades	36
Hand grenades	230
Smoke grenades	1
Hand grenades (partially built)	200
Mines, anti-tank	1
Mines, anti-personnel	34
Grenades, B-40 anti-tank	12
Rounds, 155-mm howitzer	1
Rockets, PKA-79	3
Rounds, small arms	5,380
Radio Transmitter, U. S.	1
Radio Transmitter, NVA	1
Tape recorder	1
Field phone	1
Radio antenna, U. S.	1
Wheat, bulgar (kilos)	200
Rice (kilos)	17,850
Salt (kilos)	400
Vegetables (kilos)	250
Stethoscope	1
Medicine, assorted vials	30
Medical supplies (kilos)	100
Dental drilling sets	2
Tunnel complexes	4
Foxholes and trenches	150
Hand Grenade factories	2
Bunkers	35
Rifle Grenade adapters	2
Magazines, ammunition	66
Gas mask, ChiCom	1
Field pack	1
Khaki coats	3
Black pajamas	5
Hammocks	10
Sampans	120
Gasoline (liters)	120
Maps	11
Documents (kilos)	30
Typewriters	1
Bicycles	3
Motorbikes	1
Machine gun barrels	2

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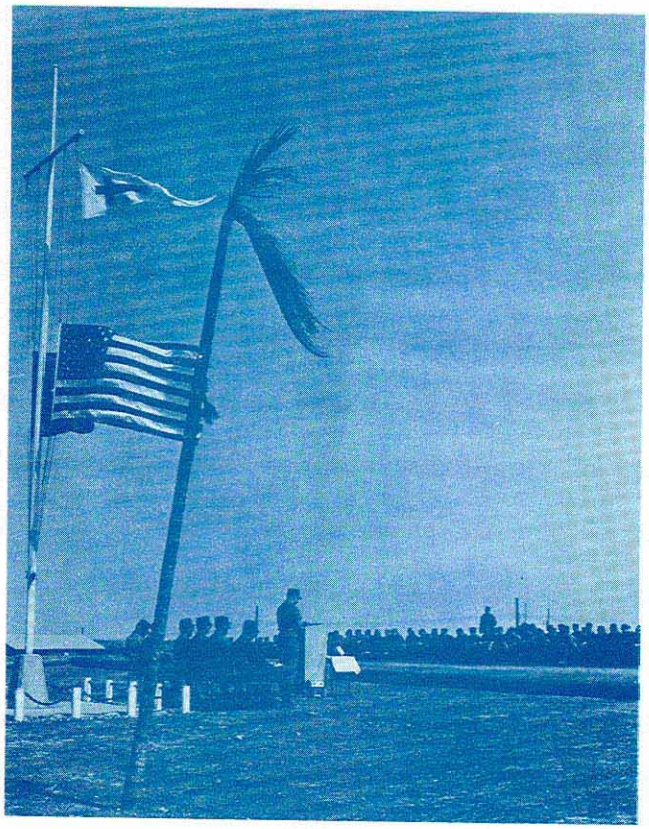
APPENDIX I

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

With the advent of the Christmas season, Navy chaplains and laymen throughout South Vietnam intensified their efforts to provide spiritual solace and moral guidance to all deployed Navymen. Naval Support Activities Saigon and Danang's "circuit riders" conducted special Christmas services and celebrated midnight masses in semi-isolated areas throughout the Delta and in I Corps, bringing the "Holy Word" to men of all faiths.

During the period 16-28 December, Rear Admiral James W. KELLY, CHC, USN, Chief of Chaplains, visited Navy and Marine Corps units in Vietnam and in the off-shore ships of the U. S. SEVENTH Fleet. On 16 December, after a brief visit at Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam headquarters at Saigon with Rt. Rev. MSGR. James J. KILLEEN, senior Navy chaplain serving with naval forces in Vietnam, Admiral KELLY met with the senior chaplains of the U. S. component commands and the Vietnamese armed forces. Chaplain KELLY's itinerary included a tour of III and IV Corps naval activities where he conducted religious services, prior to departing for I Corps on 20 December. After touring Navy and Marine Corps facilities in the Danang area for two days, Admiral KELLY culminated his Southeast Asia tour with a six-day visit to SEVENTH Fleet units operating off the coast of Vietnam.



A memorial service is held at Camp Barnes, Dong Ha for two Seabees killed by enemy mortars on 14 December, six miles north-northwest of Dong Ha, near the Demilitarized Zone.

The following tabulation is a statistical summary of the religious services conducted during December:

1. Religious Services:

   a. Divine Services

(1) U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam installations

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of Services	225	170	390
Attendance	9,192	4,098	13,290
Communed	3,300	2,040	5,340

(2) Other military installations

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of Services	44	44	88
Attendance	1,213	795	2,008
Communed	525	335	860

(3) Civilian churches

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of Services	7	11	18
Attendance	5,000	5,136	10,136
Communed	2,500	2,548	5,048

b. Religious services conducted by lay leaders and chaplains other than those attached to NAVFORV:

Denomination	Chaplains		Lay Leaders	
	No.	Attend.	No.	Attend.
Catholic	79	3,174	0	0
Protestant	28	506	16	82
Jewish	6	15	5	15
LDS	5	25	5	15
Al-Islam	0	0	155	330

c. Other services in which chaplains participated:

Type of Service	Number	Attendance
Vietnamese Christian	3	400
Protestant Evening Service	1	38
Memorials	3	227
Christmas	5	28
Lutheran H.C.	1	15

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APPENDIX II

GLOSSARY

ANGLICO	Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (U. S.).
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam.
CG	Coastal Group (VNN) - A coastal patrol command consisting of six to 10 junks with the responsibility of patrolling from 30 to 60 miles of coastline.
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group (VN) - Para-military troops used in their local area for limited area operations.
CHIEU HOI	"Open Arms" (VN) - The Republic of Vietnam's amnesty program of rehabilitation and re-location of Viet Cong who voluntarily return to government control.
CORDS	Civil Operations for Revolutionary Development Support.
COSURVFOR	Coastal Surveillance Force (USN) TF 115 - The U. S. forces participating in Operations MARKET TIME and STABLE DOOR.
COSVN	Central Office for South Vietnam - The highest Viet Cong headquarters in South Vietnam.
CTZ	Corps Tactical Zone - The major divisions of South Vietnam into military regions.
DAI DOAN KET	National Reconciliation Program - Program which is

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aimed at helping qualified returnees find employment commensurate with their previous training and experience.

GAME WARDEN — The operation performed by U. S. Navy forces to interdict Viet Cong movement on the major waterways of the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ. The force is composed of River Patrol Boats, Minesweepers, helicopter fire teams and SEAL teams.

HEAT — High Explosive Anti-Tank - A shaped-charge projectile with high armor penetration capability normally used in 57-mm or 75-mm recoilless rifles.

HHFT — Heavy Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team with three or more gunships used in support of ground and waterborne units. The use of three helicopters allows continuous firing on the target.

HOI CHANH — "Returnee to the Just Cause" (VN) - An individual (Viet Cong) who returns under the Chieu Hoi program.

IUWU — Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit (U. S.) - The U. S. forces conducting Operation STABLE DOOR.

IWCS — Integrated Wideband Communication System.

LDNN — Lien Doc Nguoi Nhia (VNN) - Literally "soldiers who fight under the sea." UDT force of the VNN.

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LHFT — Light Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team composed of two gunships used in support of ground and waterborne units.

LRRP — Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol.

MARKET TIME — The operation conducted by U. S. and Vietnamese naval forces to interdict Viet Cong infiltration of men and supplies from the sea.

MEDCAP — Medical Civic Action Program.

MG — Machine Gun - An automatic, crew-served weapon adaptable to many mountings. The four types of machine guns currently used by USN and VNN forces are the M-60, the .30 caliber light machine gun, the .50 caliber heavy machine gun, and the 7.62-mm mini gun.

MILPHAP — Military Provincial Health Assistance Program - MILPHAP teams, normally staffed by three doctors, a Medical Service Corps officer and 12 corpsmen, work with Vietnam's Ministry of Health at the province hospital level to improve health services available to Vietnamese civilians.

MRF — Mobile Riverine Force (U. S.) - A force made up of Navy craft and Army units designed and trained for amphibious assaults in the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ.

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NGFS — Naval Gunfire Support (USN-VNN) - Naval gunfire used to assist operations ashore; often spotted and corrected by spotter aircraft or forward observers.

NILO — Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer.

NLF — National Liberation Front - Actually the "National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam." A Communist political-front used to give the appearance of popular non-Communist support to their insurgency activities in South Vietnam.

NUOC MAM — (VN) - A fermented fish sauce served with almost any dish. A national delicacy.

NVA — North Vietnamese Army.

PRU — Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (VN) - Para-military personnel whose principal mission includes clandestine operations designed to destroy the Viet Cong infrastructure. Each unit consists of one or more teams of 18 to 20 civilians who have had prior military service.

RAF — Riverine Assault Force (USN) - The U. S. Navy contingent of the MRF.

RAG — River Assault Group (VN) - An amphibious warfare command with the capability to transport and support a battalion of infantry. Similar to a boat

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division in the RAF.

RED HAZE — Infrared Detector (U. S.) - Sensitive heat detectors used as an airborne locator of personnel, equipment and military sites.

RF — Regional Force (VN) - Forces under ARVN control which operate within their home province.

RIVPATFOR — River Patrol Force (USN) TF 116 - The forces used in conducting Operation GAME WARDEN.

RPG — Rocket Propelled Grenade - A Soviet or Chinese Communist-manufactured, fin-stabilized, anti-tank grenade. RPG-2 (B-40). RPG-7 (B-41).

RSSZ — Rung Sat Special Zone - Literally "forest of assassins." A special military area located about 21 miles southeast of Saigon in Gia Dinh Province and composed of Can Gio and Quang Xuyen districts.

RVNAF — Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces - Consists of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and RF/PF.

SEAL — Sea, Air, Land. (USN) - Special duty personnel qualified as underwater demolition, paratroop and jungle warfare specialists.

SECRET ZONE — A Viet Cong-dominated area utilized as a base, training camp and logistic resupply area.

SLAR — Side Looking Airborne Radar (U. S.) - An accurate

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	airborne radar for detecting small, moving objects.
STABLE DOOR	The U. S. Navy operation conducted to provide harbor defense.
STAR LIGHT	Ambient light equipment (USN) - A portable system to enhance vision under conditions of starlight or moonlight.
UDT	Underwater Demolition Team (USN) - Specially trained swimmers used for underwater work in the Navy.
USAID	United States Agency for International Development.
USSF	United States Special Forces (USA) - Army personnel specially trained for use as advisors to indigenous personnel.
VIET CONG	Vietnamese citizens under the control and leadership of North Vietnam. These persons may be local sympathizers, guerrillas, or hard-core full-time workers for the Communist domination of South Vietnam.
VNAF	Vietnamese Air Force.
VNMC	Vietnamese Marine Corps.
VNN	Vietnamese Navy.

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APPENDIX III

CHARACTERISTICS OF SOME OF THE SHIPS, SMALL CRAFT AND AIRCRAFT UNDER THE OPERATIONAL CONTROL OF COMNAVFORV

The diverse, widespread responsibilities of Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam have led to the operational control of a large number of ships and small craft, and, in addition, numerous aircraft. As of 31 December, with five subordinate commands employing 43 different types of ships and craft, COMNAVFORV exercised control of a total of 773 units. Many of the craft were new or newly-configured for the special requirements of the war in South Vietnam.

The Coastal Surveillance Force (TF 115) had 113 patrol craft, 58 harbor defense and support craft, and 12 patrol aircraft (plus 11 U. S. SEVENTH Fleet ships and a detachment of three patrol aircraft participating in Operation MARKET TIME). The River Patrol Force (TF 116) had 144 patrol craft, 23 helicopters, 17 minesweepers and nine other support craft. The Riverine Assault Force (TF 117) had 110 various craft. Meanwhile the Naval Support Activity, Danang had 221 support ships and craft, and the Naval Support Activity, Saigon had 66 similar ships and craft.

The following descriptions include certain key features of some of these units.

AFDL - Auxiliary Floating Dry Dock, Light - A non-self-propelled, open-ended dry dock with a 1,000-ton

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AFDL (Cont.) - capacity. It measures 64 by 200 feet and has two 3-ton derricks and a machine shop. The craft mounts no armament.

AKL - Cargo Ship, Light - A small cargo ship used for resupplying small bases and outposts in the Mekong Delta and along the coast. The ship is 177 feet long, can carry 340 tons of cargo, has a 4-ton boom, and mounts two to four .50 caliber and two .30 caliber machine guns and one 81-mm mortar. It has a speed of 13 knots and a crew of four officers and 33 enlisted men.

AMMI (Pontoon) - A mult-purpose barge. It is 5 by 28 by 90 feet and is sectioned into 12 interior spaces. Each barge contains six fittings for columns to raise or lower the barge on spuds, fittings to connect several barges end-to-end for causeway use, and fittings to allow side-mounting on LSTs and LSDs. In addition to causeway use, the barges can be positioned to embark and debark troops and to serve as platforms for patrol craft hull maintenance.

APB - Personnel Barracks Ship - An LST converted to provide berthing for an Army battalion and a River Assault Squadron. The ship is 328 feet long with

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APB (Cont.) - berthing spaces for 122 officers and 1,180 enlisted men, and mounts four 4.2-inch mortars, two 40-mm quad gun mounts, two 20-mm twin gun mounts, and ten 7.62-mm machine guns. It has a speed of 12 knots and carries a crew of 11 officers and 161 enlisted men.

APL - Personnel Barracks, Lighter - A non-self-propelled barge with accommodations for the crews of 20 PBRs or 10 PBRs and 10 PCFs. It is 49 by 261 feet, has transient berthing spaces for 39 officers and 290 enlisted men, and mounts six .50 caliber machine guns. The crew consists of five officers and 84 enlisted men.

ARG - Repair Ship, Internal Combustion Engine - A repair ship converted from a C-2 freighter and capable of repairing ships and craft with gasoline or diesel propulsion plants. This ship is 442 feet long and mounts three 3"/50 caliber guns. It has a speed of 11.5 knots and a crew of 19 officers and 493 enlisted men.

ARL - Repair Ship, Landing Craft - An LST converted to repair landing craft and support amphibious ships. The ship is 328 feet long and mounts two 40-mm

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ARL (Cont.) - quad gun mounts. It has a speed of 10.6 knots and a crew of 12 officers and 178 enlisted men.

ASPB - Assault Support Patrol Boat - A special configured craft designed principally for use by the Riverine Assault Force. The boat is 50 feet long and mounts one 20-mm gun mount, one 81-mm mortar, two MK-18 40-mm grenade launchers, and one twin-.50 and four .30 caliber machine guns. The ruggedly-constructed, high-speed (14.8 knots) boat, with a crew of seven enlisted men, is used as a minesweeping and escort craft for the troop carriers.

ATC - Armored Troop Carrier - A modified, armored LCM-6 designed principally for use by the Riverine Assault Force. The boat is 56 feet long with an extended deckhouse mounting two 20-mm guns, two .50 caliber machine guns, and four M-60 machine guns. The craft can carry approximately 40 combat troops or two and a half to three tons of cargo. It has a speed of eight and a half knots and carries a crew of seven enlisted men. Special bar-and-plate armor has been added to provide protection for the hull and deckhouse against projectiles up to and including 57-mm HEAT rounds.

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ATC(H) - Armored Troop Carrier (Helicopter) - An ATC with a portable helicopter landing platform mounted above the craft's well-deck. The platform provides faster handling of medical evacuees and enables the MRF to conduct certain airborne re-supply and assault missions more expeditiously.

CCB - Commandament - A modified, armored LCM-6 designed for use by the RAF as a task group flagship and afloat command post. The command center is situated in the craft's well. The boat is 60.5 feet long, is equipped with radar, and mounts one 40-mm and one .50 caliber machine gun in a forward turret, and one 20-mm gun, two .50 caliber machine guns and two M-60 machine guns in the deckhouse. It has a speed of eight and one-quarter knots and a crew of 11 enlisted men. The craft also has special armor similar to that installed on ATCs.

C-47 - Transport - A general-purpose aircraft with two reciprocating engines. The plane has a cargo capacity of 12,900 pounds, a take-off weight of 36,800 pounds, a range of 610 miles, and a cruising speed of 153 knots. The crew normally consists of two officers and two enlisted men.

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HLC - Heavy Lift Craft - A non-self-propelled hull, capable of partial submersion, used in salvage work to lift hulks. The craft is 39 by 140 feet, has two 10-ton booms as well as auxiliary equipment for pumping and can raise 300 tons in a bow lift or 750 tons in a midships lift. HLCs are normally used in pairs. Each craft mounts four .50 caliber machine guns. The crew consists of two officers and 20 enlisted men.

LCPL (Mark XI) - Landing Craft, Personnel, Large - A boat used primarily for harbor defense and to guide larger landing craft. The boat is 36 feet long, is equipped with radar, and mounts two .50 caliber machine guns. It has a speed of 19 knots and a crew of one officer and seven enlisted men.

LLC - Light Lift Craft - A converted LCU (Landing Craft, Utility) designed to perform limited salvage duty. The craft is 119 feet in length, and has a shear-leg crane capable of 30-ton lifts. Light Lift Craft have four .50 caliber machine guns, a speed of seven knots, and carry a crew of two officers and 15 enlisted men.

LST (GAME WARDEN Support Ship) - A 548-Class tank landing ship specially configured for GAME WARDEN Operations. The cargo hatch has

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LST (Cont.) - been enlarged to 13- by 32-feet to permit lowering PBRs and helicopters to the tank deck for repairs and maintenance. The main deck forward of the cargo hatch has been strengthened and life-saving nets have been added port and starboard to support helicopter operations. A 10-ton boat lifting boom has been added on the starboard side just forward of the deckhouse. In addition, the transient berthing facilities on board have been increased to accommodate eight officers and 112 enlisted men. An ancillary role performed by the LST is radar surveillance in support of MARKET TIME units in the area. The ship's speed is 12 knots, and the crew consists of 17 officers and 123 enlisted men.

MONITOR - Monitor - A modified LCM-6 designed primarily for use as a fire support ship by the RAF. The craft has bar-and-plate armor along the hull and deckhouse similar to that of ATCs and CCBs. The boat is 60.5 feet long, is equipped with radar, and mounts one 40-mm and one .50 caliber machine gun in a forward turret, one 81-mm mortar and two M-60 machine guns amidships, and one 20-mm gun, two .50 caliber machine guns and four M-60 machine guns in

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MONITOR (Cont.) - the deckhouse. It has a speed of eight and one-quarter knots and a crew of 11 enlisted men.

MSB - Minesweeper, Boat - A small minesweeper designed for clearing sheltered waters, e.g., the Long Tau River. The boat is 57 feet long, mounts one .50 caliber and one .30 caliber machine gun, two Mark 18 grenade launchers, and is equipped with radar. It has a speed of 11 knots and carries a crew of six enlisted men.

PACV - Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle - The new craft is an all-metal peripheral jet-type hovercraft powered by a single marine gas turbine engine, enabling the craft to reach approximately 50 knots under optimum conditions. With a crew of one officer and four enlisted men, the craft is equipped with radar and mounts one twin .50 caliber machine gun, three MK21 7.62-mm machine guns and one MK18 40-mm grenade launcher. The PACV, with a length of 38.7 feet, a width of 23 feet and a height of 16.5 feet (cushion-borne), is to be used primarily as a rapid reaction craft, a high-speed, logistic re-supply craft for small quantities of high priority material, and for SAR missions with the MRF.

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PBR (MK I) - Patrol Boat, River - A military adaptation of a fiberglass, civilian pleasure boat. The boat is 31 feet long, uses twin water jets as a propulsion system, and mounts one twin .50 caliber machine gun and one .50 caliber machine gun with a Mark 18 grenade launcher. The craft is equipped with radar, has a speed of 25 knots and carries a crew of five enlisted men. PBRs normally patrol in pairs and constitute the principal craft of Operation GAME WARDEN.

PBR (MK II) - Patrol Boat, River - An improved version of the PBR with the same basic design; principal changes include a lower silhouette, and modifications to the armament.

PCF - Patrol Craft, Fast (Swift) - An aluminum-hulled, offshore patrol craft, used extensively for coastal surveillance in Operation MARKET TIME. The craft is 50 feet long, mounts one twin .50 caliber machine gun and a .50 caliber machine gun with an 81-mm mortar. It has radar, a speed of 23 knots, and a crew of one officer and five enlisted men.

PG - Patrol Gunboat - A patrol boat for use in offshore waters. It is a new design with an all-aluminum

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PG (Cont.) - hull and a combination diesel/gas turbine propulsion plant. The boat is equipped with radar, is 165 feet long, mounts one 3"/50 caliber gun, one 81-mm mortar and two .50 caliber machine guns. The craft's speed is 37 knots under turbine power and 16 under diesel power. The crew consists of three officers and 21 enlisted men.

PICKET - A 45-foot, 13-knot craft designed for harbor defense and anti-swimmer patrols. The boat has radar, mounts one .50 caliber machine gun, and normally carries a crew of five enlisted men.

P-3A - Orion - A long-range patrol aircraft used extensively in Operation MARKET TIME. The plane is powered by four turbo-prop engines, carries 11,000 pounds of bombs, and has a maximum take-off weight of 127,500 pounds. Orions have a range of 3,700 miles, a cruising speed of 310 knots, and a crew of four officers and nine enlisted men.

SSB - Swimmer Support Boat (Skimmer) - The military version of the civilian, fiberglass, triple-V-hulled "Boston Whaler"; used for harbor patrols and UDT, SEAL, and EOD operations. The outboard-powered boat is 16.5 feet long, is controlled from

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SSB (Cont.) - a steering console amidships, and mounts one M-60 machine gun forward. It has a speed of 25 knots and a crew of two enlisted men.

STAB - SEAL Team Assault Boat - An armed version of the civilian runabout; used to land and recover SEAL units. The boat is 20 feet long, mounts one .50 caliber machine gun, one M-60 machine gun, one Mark 18 grenade launcher, and can also carry a 57-mm recoilless rifle. The boat is powered by two 50-horsepower outboard motors and has a speed of 40 knots.

UH-1B - Helicopter (Iroquois) - A U. S. Army helicopter on loan to the U. S. Navy in South Vietnam. Alternately referred to as a "Huey" or a "Gunship" or a "Seawolf," the aircraft mounts four 7.62-mm machine guns in pairs, two M-60 machine guns and two pods capable of firing 14 2.75-inch rockets. The helicopter has a range of 250 miles, a speed of 125 knots, and carries a crew of two officers and two enlisted men.

UH-1D - The unarmed version of the "Huey," commonly referred to as a "Slick." It can carry 10 troops, four litters, or 2,000 pounds of cargo.

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WHEC - High Endurance Cutter (USCG) - An ocean-going, Coast Guard patrol ship, earmarked as a replacement for DEs and DERs in Operation MARKET TIME. The radar-equipped ship is 311 feet long, mounts one 5"/38 gun, six .50 caliber machine guns, one Mark 10 torpedo launcher with six torpedos, and two 81-mm mortars. The ship has a speed of 19 knots and carries a crew of 13 officers and 140 enlisted men.

WPB - Cutter (USCG) - A modified version of the Coast Guard's offshore, rescue vessel; used extensively in Operation MARKET TIME. The boat is 82 feet long, mounts one .50 caliber machine gun with an 81-mm mortar, and four .50 caliber machine guns. The radar-equipped craft has a speed of 18 knots and a crew of two officers and nine enlisted men.

YDT - Diving Tender - A non-self-propelled lighter equipped with a deckhouse containing accommodations and working spaces for a salvage team. The tender is 54 by 260 feet, has a 12-ton crane, and mounts six .50 caliber machine guns for self-defense. The craft carries a crew of 15 officers and 76 enlisted men.

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YFNB - Patrol Boat Tender - A non-self-propelled barge equipped with a large deckhouse containing shops and maintenance facilities for small craft. Currently in use in the Mekong Delta supporting PBRs, the barge has six .50 caliber machine guns and four 81-mm mortars for self-defense. It carries a crew of four officers and 31 enlisted men.

YRBM - Repair, Berthing and Messing Barge - A converted YFNB equipped with a large deckhouse containing shops and maintenance areas for small craft, and berthing and messing facilities for boat crews. The craft can berth 97 boat-crew personnel. The armament and the size of the permanent crew are the same as that of a YFNB.

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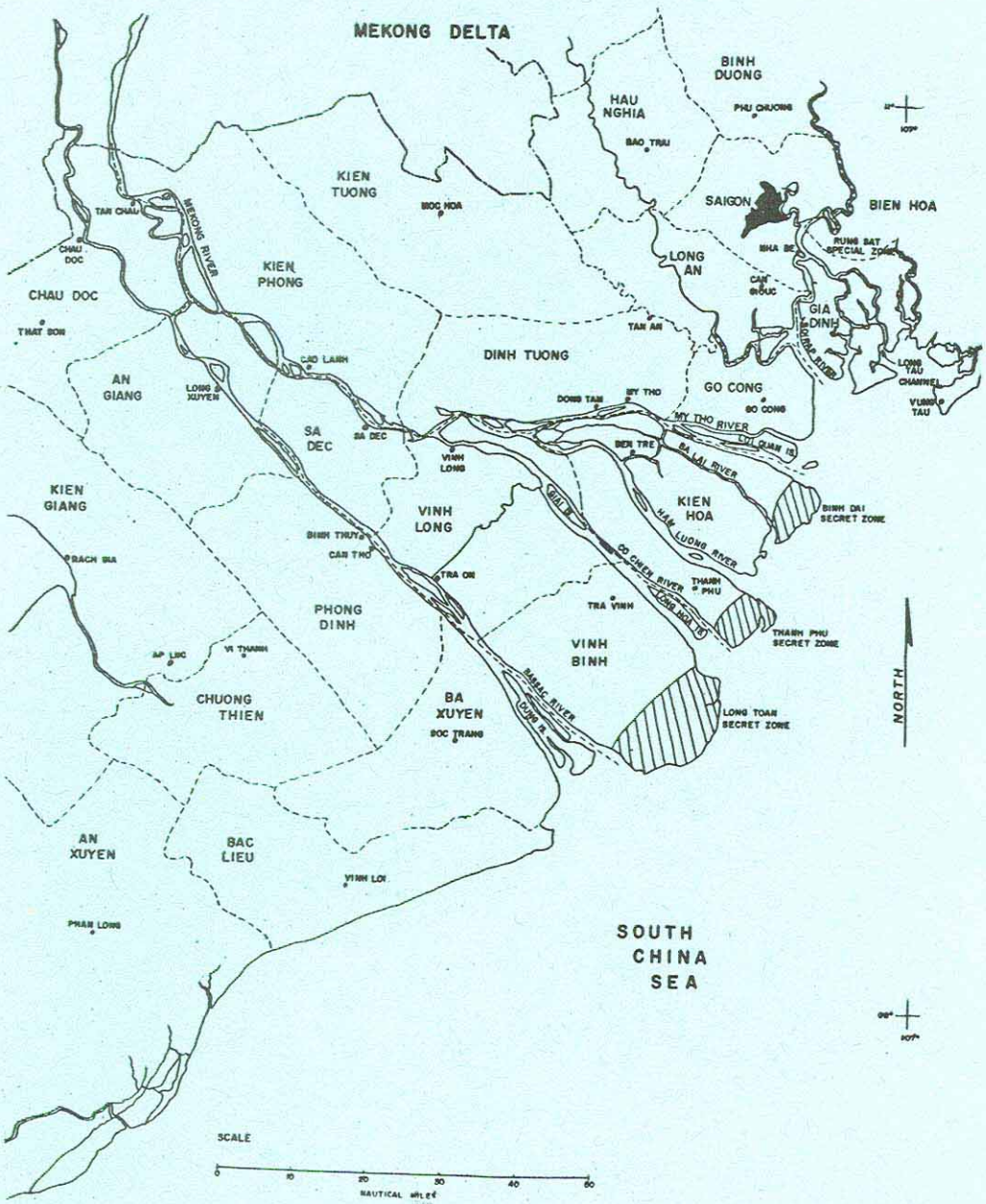

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From: Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam
To: Commander in Chief U. S. Pacific Fleet (Code 12)

Subj: U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam Monthly Historical Summary, December 1967; submission of

Ref: (a) CINCPACFLT ltr FF1-1 5750 ser 1/6925 of 2 October 1967

Encl: (1) Coastal Surveillance Force Summary
(2) River Patrol Force Summary
(3) Riverine Assault Force Summary
(4) Naval Advisory Group Summary
(5) Selected Psychological Operations
(6) USN Statistical Summary
(7) VNN/VNMC Statistical Summary

1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (7) are submitted.

2. The Psychological Operations Statistical Summary is not available at this time. The data contained in enclosures (6) and (7) is based on information available this date and is subject to revisions as later information is received. The Psychological Operations statistics and any adjustments to enclosures (6) and (7) will be reflected in December's Historical Supplement.

J.W. THOMPSON
Flag Secretary

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE SUMMARY
December 1967

During December there was a continued decrease in Operation MARKET TIME activity, especially in the northern coastal zones, as the heavy seas and inclement weather associated with the northeast monsoon held the aggregate of coastal junk and sampan traffic to a very low total. MARKET TIME patrol craft were also restricted to port on several occasions during the month because of the heavy weather and high sea states. 34,591 junks and sampans were detected by MARKET TIME units during December, the lowest monthly aggregate recorded since November 1966. Meanwhile, MARKET TIME units conducted 114 gunfire support missions and were engaged in 14 hostile fire incidents during the month. The majority of the gunfire missions were conducted in the Fourth Coastal Zone where fair weather prevailed during most of the month.

On 22 December the MARKET TIME support base at Qui Nhon was attacked by an estimated platoon of enemy sappers. The coordinated attack was initiated at 2329 when a Coastal Group 22 command junk, located in the middle of a nest of junks, was blown up and sunk. The attack continued throughout the early morning hours of the 23rd and resulted in two Navymen killed and 15 others wounded, plus extensive damage to the CPO quarters and light damage to the mess hall and enlisted barracks. Three enemy were killed during the attack and the following enemy ordnance was captured: 10 Chinese communist fragmentation

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grenades, five grenades that were improvised from 61-mm mortar heads, two Chinese communist copies of the Russian AK-47 assault rifle, and one automatic pistol.

On 6 December PCF 79 came under automatic weapons fire from five different positions while conducting a loudspeaker PSYOPS mission along the coast approximately 10 miles south of Cape Batangan. The Swift boat received five automatic weapon hits and BM1 Bobby D. CARVER, the forward gunner, was killed during the action.

On the 12th, USCGC YAKUTAT (WHEC 380) conducted a gunfire support mission against an estimated Viet Cong company which was located approximately 25 miles north of Ca Mau Point, along the coast of the Gulf of Thailand. The mission, which was requested by the Song Ong Doc District authorities, and utilized an airborne spotter, resulted in three Viet Cong killed and one wounded, plus two structures destroyed and three damaged.

On the 18th, the Coast Guard's POINT ARDEN received word from the 1st Marine's AMTRACK battalion that North Vietnamese Army forces were located near the coast of Quang Tri Province, approximately 70 miles north of Danang. While closing the beach to investigate, the WPB received five hits from automatic weapons. PCFs 55 and 22 subsequently joined the WPB and the three craft took the area under fire. There were no friendly casualties as a result of the action and enemy casualties were reported as one wounded and five killed (probable).

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RIVER PATROL FORCE SUMMARY
December 1967

Harrassment of GAME WARDEN units increased as these units continued to apply pressure on the Viet Cong. The PBRs and "Seawolves", in addition to their primary role of denying the enemy use of the rivers, provided support to the RF, PF and ARVN. PBRs continued to interdict tax collectors in their efforts to collect "Liberation" taxes to support their Winter-Spring campaign. There were two incidents where enemy swimmers were detected; one was killed. On 22 December near Nha Be an attack was made on a U. S. merchant ship, however, on 29 December an unsuccessful mining attempt was made against an LST. LSTs provided NGFS against enemy targets with significant results. On 21 December Operation BOLD CAROUSEL commenced against enemy forces on Tan Dinh Island, the scene of continued harrassment against PBR patrols. The Christmas Truce was violated when a PBR patrol was ambushed on the lower Bassac River.

On 2 December PBR Mobile Base I arrived Danang followed by ten PBRs on 5 December. This is the second time that PBRs were located in the First Corps Tactical Zone. On 11 December, in the Delta, combated patrols with new Mark II PBRs commenced out of My Tho. On 15 December USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a reported VC concentration six miles southeast of Ben Tre. Twenty VC were killed and one recoilless rifle damaged. SEALs and four LDNN

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conducted a patrol on 20 December, six miles south of Ben Tre, off the Ham Luong, and killed six VC and captured one suspect. One SEAL was wounded slightly in the action. "Seawolves" accounted for twenty Viet Cong killed after a strike on an enemy position near the mouth of the Bassac on 21 December. During the period 21-23 December PBRs provided a rotating exfiltration blockade around Tan Dinh Island on the lower Bassac, in Operation BOLD CAROUSEL. "Seawolves" provided overhead cover. While the boats patrolled in a clock-wise rotation at 2,000 yards interval, the 9th ARVN Division conducted a sweep of the Island. The boats and helicopters came under constant fire from the enemy. In addition to the suppressing fire of the PBRs and "Seawolves", RAG 25 boats provided heavy weapons fire at the enemy positions. The 9th ARVN landed on the 22nd and withdrew on the 23rd achieving negligible results. The 9th ARVN killed one VC and captured one VC and four grenades. Five ARVN were wounded by booby traps. TF 116 accounted for two Viet Cong killed, one captured and 21 detainees. Four sampans and five structures were destroyed. During the two-day operation 12 U. S. Navymen were wounded in action. Nineteen PBRs sustained multiple bullet and shrapnel damage and two helicopters received bullet damage. The PBRs and "Seawolves" were engaged on 58 separate occassions during the 67-hour operation. In addition one helicopter supporting the operation crashed at Binh Thuy as a result of a mechanical failure. The four crewmen were injured.

In the early morning hours of 22 December the U. S. merchant ship

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SEATRAIN TEXAS, anchored in the vicinity of Nha Be, received waterline damage from a floating explosive charge. The ship got underway in anticipation of beaching on the bank of the Long Tau to prevent sinking; however, the ship was able to control the flooding with her pumps. There were no casualties. During the Christmas Truce period--241800H to 251800H--a PBR patrol operating on the Bassac, just south of Tan Dinh Island, was attacked by enemy forces. At 251450H the lead boat of the patrol was hit by a B-40 rocket. The patrol also received grenade, small arms and automatic weapons fire. Two PBR sailors were wounded when the rocket hit causing major damage to the boat's hull. "Seawolves" conducted a strike against the enemy positions and accounted for 20 VC killed, four wounded, nineteen civilians wounded, one crew served weapon and three small arms destroyed. At about midnight 29 December an unsuccessful enemy mining attempt was made against the USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) while anchored in the central Ham Luong River. The two mines, placed below the waterline, failed to achieve a high order detonation thereby avoiding a serious support asset loss. There were no personnel casualties or material damage.

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE SUMMARY
December 1967

During the month of December, the Mobile Riverine Force concentrated its efforts on locating and destroying the major Viet Cong units in a series of operations in Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. On 4 December the 5th Battalion, Vietnamese Marine Corps and the U. S. Army/Navy elements of the MRF teamed up in a search and destroy operation, killing 234 Viet Cong in an area north of the My Tho River in Dinh Tuong and Kien Phong provinces. Later in the month, there were two separate mining incidents on the Xang Canal in Dinh Tuong Province involving riverine craft.

On the evening of 3 December the assault elements of the MRF began re-locating its forces in preparation for Operation CORONADO IX (4-6 December) to be conducted in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. Meanwhile, as a deceptive measure, the Mobile Riverine Base delayed relocation to its new anchorage six miles east of Sa Dec until the assault boats were in the objective area. Heavy contact with the enemy was rapidly established when boats of RAD 112, transporting elements of the VNMC 5th Battalion, were ambushed with automatic weapons as they entered the Rach Roung. The boats fought their way through the ambush site, and proceeded about two miles up the narrow stream, where they were again taken under intense fire with recoilless-rifle, automatic-weapons and B-40 rocket fire from the western bank. The boats turned into the Viet Cong fire and disembarked the Vietnamese Marines,

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who immediately launched an intensive attack against the 502 Local Force Battalion and local Viet Cong guerillas. Meanwhile, RAD 111, with the U. S. 3/47th Infantry Battalion embarked, was also taken under fire from the initial ambush position. Instead of proceeding up the Rach Roung, the boats turned into the western bank just north of the ambush site where the U. S. troops conducted a successful counter-attack on the ambushers. The cumulative destruction inflicted on the enemy during the day-long battle amounted to 234 Viet Cong killed with eight enemy suspects and 42 weapons captured. Two U. S. sailors were killed and 68 were wounded in the battle while U. S. Army casualties consisted of nine soldiers killed and 89 wounded in action. The Vietnamese Marines accounted for the majority of the enemy casualties, and also suffered the heaviest losses with 40 Marines killed and 70 wounded. Total cumulative destruction inflicted on the enemy for this phase of CORONADO IX (4-6 December) consisted of 266 killed, 161 bunkers and 126 sampans destroyed. There were also over 5,000 rounds of small-arms ammunition and 274 assorted weapons (including grenades, mines and carbines) captured. Operation CORONADO IX (10-11 December) was conducted in western Dinh Tuong and eastern Kien Phong provinces. In a series of light skirmishes with the enemy, there were nine Viet Cong killed, two wounded, four captured and 35 bunkers destroyed. Early on the morning of 21 December, an ASPB conducting minesweeping operations on the west bank of the Xang Canal in Dinh Tuong Province, two miles northwest of Dong Tam, was mined. There was one

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sailor killed and three wounded in the explosion which also caused extensive hull damage to the boat. The second mining incident occurred on 26 December, however, there were no personnel or material casualties to the unit involved. Units of the MRF continued conducting riverine strike operations (CORONADO IX 20-22 December) in Dinh Tuong Province killing 11 of the enemy, capturing four others and destroying 42 bunkers. After a one-day maintenance period, the MRF struck at the Viet Cong again in another phase of Operation CORONADO IX (24-26 December) in Dinh Tuong Province, killing 15 and destroying over 120 bunkers.

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP SUMMARY
December 1967

During the month, the Vietnamese Navy's Fleet Command had a daily average of 25.6 ships available and a daily average of 22.1 employed. At the same time the Coastal Force employed a daily average of 162 junks of a daily average of 196 available. Meanwhile, the River Assault Groups had a daily average of 136 craft employed of a daily average of 171 craft available. The Vietnamese Marine Corps' six infantry and one artillery battalions were committed to operations 93 percent of the time, and, with the exception of the 5th Battalion on 4 December, experienced light contact with the enemy. Task Force A continued operations in the Bong Son area of the II Corps Tactical Zone through the month and Task Force B was assigned as the Ready Reaction Force for the III Corps Tactical Zone while the 5th Battalion operated with the Mobile Riverine Force in Operation CORONADO IX until the 27th when it was detached for duty in the III Corps Tactical Zone.

On 4 December, the VNMC 5th Battalion engaged the 400-man Viet Cong 502 Local Force Battalion, five miles northeast of Sa Dec, in the heaviest fighting in the CORONADO series of operations. The Marines, landed in the face of an enemy ambush, surrounded the Viet Cong battalion in its prepared positions and destroyed it as a fighting force. Landing on the west bank of Ruong Stream at 0815, the 1st Company engaged the enemy's northern

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flank, while the 2nd and 3rd Companies were shifted from their initial landing, further north, to the enemy's southern flank. By late morning the Viet Cong were surrounded with River Assault Division 112 on the East, and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Companies to the North, West and South. The reserve, 4th Company, was then landed to attack the major emplacements along the stream. Unable to use supporting arms because of the constant, close contact with the enemy, the Marines relied on squad and fire team tactics. By 1600, the 5th Battalion had eliminated all resistance except for one bunker complex on the enemy's western flank. At 1600, after a helicopter fire team made a rocket attack on the complex, the Marines rushed the bunkers and, using hand grenades and shovels, destroyed the strong point. At 1630 the battle ended, with 175 Viet Cong killed, 12 captured and 12 Viet Cong suspects detained. Forty Marines were killed and 103 were wounded; 34 of whom were treated in the field, while the remainder were evacuated. On 1 December, Coastal Group 14 and the ARVN 51st Regiment conducted Operation PHI PHUNG 57, just south of the Cua Dai River, three miles east of Hoi An. Two junks and a 30-man landing party secured the riverfront and captured one Viet Cong, detained 21 suspects and damaged or destroyed 40 bunkers and one bridge. The ARVN forces, closing from the South, killed four Viet Cong, captured three others, detained 10 suspects and damaged or destroyed 47 junks. From 13 to 19 December a series of five operations was conducted by RAG 23 with PRU, National Police and Popular Force troops, and GAME WARDEN PBRs against

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the Viet Cong on Giai Island in the Co Chien River, 20 miles downstream from Vinh Long. The combination of sweeps, ambushes and river blockades, planned to destroy an enemy sanctuary and commo-liaison route, resulted in the death of two Viet Cong, the capture of three others, the detention of 51 suspects and the seizure of one ton of rice and 12 pounds of medicines. Two Popular Force soldiers were wounded. On 16 and 19 December Viet Cong units on the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Rivers successfully attacked VNN Monitors. In the first instance, a RAG 27 Monitor was mined and sunk 16 miles southwest of Saigon; nine crewmen were injured, three seriously. On the 19th a Monitor of the River Transport Escort Group and an oil barge were hit by recoilless-rifle fire, killing one sailor and wounding one sailor and one civilian on the barge. On 20 December, Coastal Group 14 conducted Operation PHI PHUNO 62 on the north bank of the Cau Dai River two miles east of Hoi An. The Coastal Group junks and landing party detained 15 Viet Cong suspects and destroyed 20 small junks, 20 shelters, 10 bunkers and 20 tunnels in the one-day operation.

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MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS SUMMARY
December 1967

Psychological and civic action operations continued to receive command attention. All units were actively engaged in the distribution of leaflets and conducting loudspeaker broadcasts. Preparations were also made for the Chieu Hoi/Dai Doan Ket programs during the forthcoming TET season. The TET campaign will begin on 1 January and terminate on 24 March. Hoi Chanhs made tapes appealing to their former comrades-in-arms saying that the Viet Cong had given false propaganda about the Americans and the Government of Vietnam. One Hoi Chanh stated "I am doing all I can to help convince other Viet Cong that they should stop the useless fighting and join with our government to help all the people." The undermining effect on the Viet Cong by our PSYOP efforts can best be typified by the repeated attacks made on the PBRs as they conduct loudspeaker operations.

In testimony of the outstanding performance of the Seabees in civic action, JCS has directed CNO to deploy seven additional Village Assistance Teams to support the USAID/Vietnam civic action program.

Christmas parties were conducted throughout Vietnam, wherever naval units were located. Children were treated to dinner and presented with presents. The USS ESTEEM (MSO 439) and USS FINCH (DER 328), assigned to MARKET TIME, presented the orphans at Qui Nhon with a pre-Christmas present when they came ashore and painted the orphanage.

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This is only one example of the many acts performed by naval units during the month as they actively pursued civic action projects while maintaining a high posture of operational readiness.

Meanwhile, the VNN also continued in their civic action program by conducting MEDCAPs and distributing much needed commodities to villagers in outlying districts and refugee settlements. The VNN hospital ships attended to the medical needs of the people as the two ships traveled the waterways of the Delta and the RSSZ.

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USN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
December 1967

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	MARKET TIME	GAME WARDEN	Mobile Riverine Force
Detections	34,591	61,566	*
Inspections	14,702	15,235	1,112
Boardings	7,255	37,276	*
Craft detained	*	1	0
Persons detained	198	802	359
Viet Cong suspects	2	36	*
Hostile fire incidents	14	104	*
Enemy casualties:			
a. Killed	15 (6 prob.)	129	315
b. Wounded	2	31	4
c. Captured	0	10	29
USN casualties:			
a. Killed	2**	1	4
b. Wounded	5**	37	78
c. Captured	0	0	0
d. Missing	0	0	0
Enemy material losses:			
a. Destroyed:			
(1) Junks or sampans	6	127	139
(2) Structures	20	170	557
b. Captured:			
(1) Junks or sampans	*	10	0
(2) Weapons	*	2	335***
(3) Ammunition (rounds)	*	50	5,017
(4) Rice (tons)	*	.4	2.5
c. Damaged:			
(1) Junks or sampans	11	165	*
(2) Structures	31	147	*
USN material losses:			
a. Destroyed:			
(1) Surface craft	0	0	0
(2) Helicopters	*	0	0
b. Damaged:			
(1) Surface craft	2	23	26
(2) Helicopters	*	10	0
SAR missions	5	1	*

Remarks:

* Information not applicable or not available this date.

** Includes one killed and five wounded during the attack on Qui Nhon.

*** Includes hand grenades.

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VNN/VNMC STATISTICAL SUMMARY
December 1967

VIETNAMESE NAVY:

COASTAL FORCE	Searched Junks	Searched People	Detained Junks	Detained People
I NZ	11,860	36,213	5	100
II NZ	6,700	20,984	2	77
III NZ	8,091	31,442	3	4
IV NZ	2,529	8,705	0	8
Sub-totals	29,180	97,344	10	189
FLEET COMMAND PATROL SHIPS*	1,576	2,184	0	0
RIVERINE AREA CRAFT	4,560	13,827	11	32
TOTALS	34,316	113,355	21	221

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS:

VC/NVA: 287 KIA** 36 CAPTURED 249 SUSPECTS DETAINED

VNMC: 45 KIA*** 116 WIA***

Remarks:

* Conducted 49 gunfire support missions during December.
** Includes 70 KIA by a B-52 strike in II CTZ.
*** Plus two killed and 15 wounded; non-hostile action.

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