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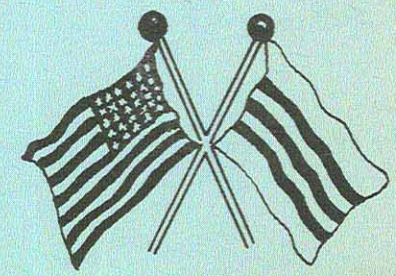

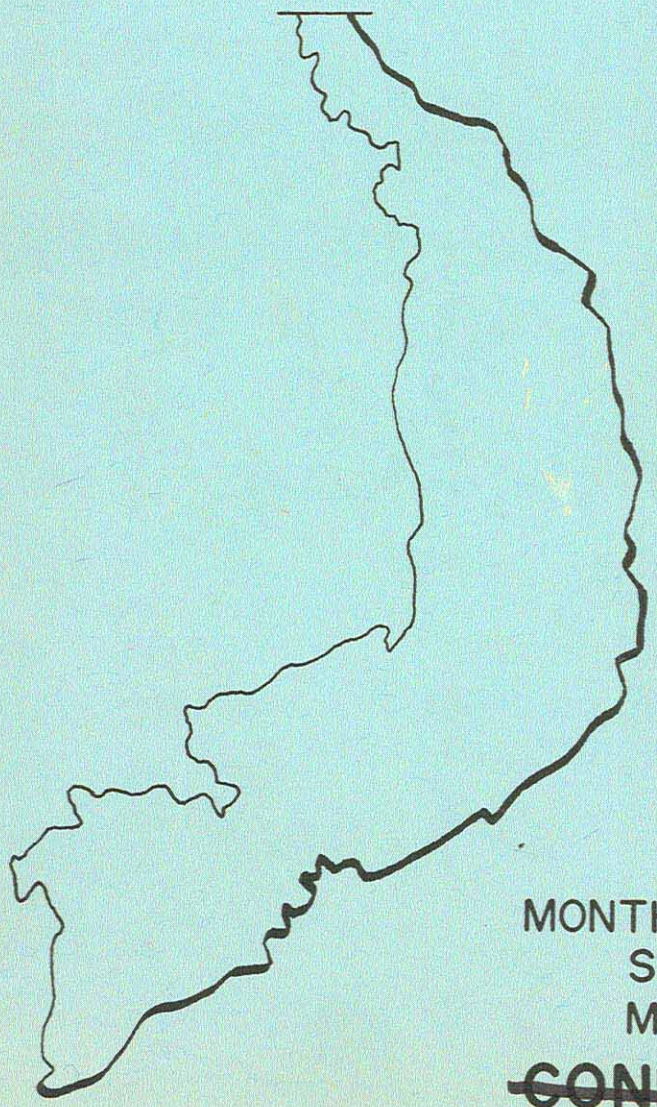

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FOREWORD

In March, Operation MARKET TIME units intercepted a steel-hulled trawler attempting to infiltrate supplies into the First Coastal Zone. The trawler opened fire, was driven aground 60 miles southeast of Danang, and erupted in a disintegrating explosion.

In the Mekong Delta, units of Operation GAME WARDEN engaged in numerous fire fights along the Ham Luong River, as patrols challenged Viet Cong domination in certain areas. Throughout the Delta, patrols were faced with a new threat--improved accuracy in Viet Cong sniper fire--amid indications that the enemy had begun receiving high-powered, Russian-type sniper rifles.

In the Rung Sat Special Zone, units of the Riverine Assault Force supported the U.S. Army's 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, in two operations--RIVER RAIDER I and SPEARHEAD I. Contact with the enemy was light and sporadic.

Meanwhile, in Danang and Saigon, the respective Naval Support Activities continued to extend previous levels in processing cargo. Throughout the country, Seabee units commemorated their organization's silver anniversary in a business-as-usual manner, completing almost two million dollars worth of diverse construction.

Among the month's military civic action projects was a pacification mission conducted south of Saigon by the 5th Battalion of the Vietnamese Marine Corps. During the two-week mission, the battalion built a number of bridges and improved existing structures as requested by local inhabitants. In addition, battalion medical



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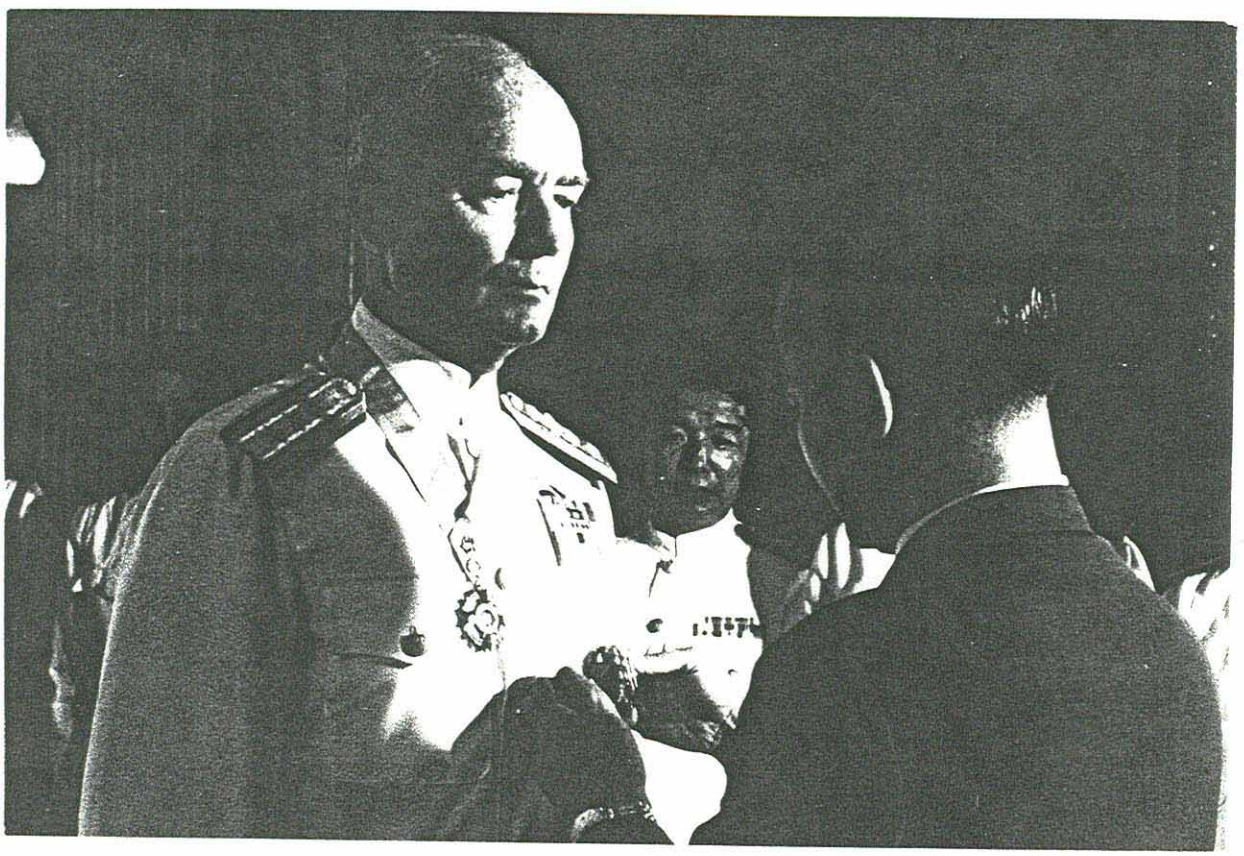

Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, receives the Republic of Korea's second highest military award, the Order of Military Merit Ul Chi. Korea's Ambassador to South Vietnam, Ambassador Shin Sang CHUL, makes the presentation 14 March at the Korean Embassy in Saigon.

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teams treated almost 1,500 Vietnamese villagers.

Two major command changes occurred during the month. On 4 March, Captain Ralph Di CORI, USN, relieved Captain Clifford L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115). On 31 March, Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, relieved Captain Burton B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116).

On 14 March, Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, received the Republic of Korea's second highest military award, the Order of Military Merit Ul Chi. The presentation was made by Korea's Ambassador to South Vietnam, Ambassador Shin Sang CHUL, during ceremonies at the Korean Embassy in Saigon. The award was presented in recognition of Rear Admiral WARD's role in assisting the Korean Navy Transportation Group fulfill its mission in South Vietnam.




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## CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1 Mar - PBRs kill four Viet Cong and destroy a water-taxi and two sampans in the Ham Luong River. p. 9.

2 - PBRs, Vietnamese junks and U.S. Navy helicopters kill ten Viet Cong during an engagement in the Ham Luong River; an estimated 20 more Viet Cong are wounded. p. 9.

- A PBR crewman is wounded by unusually accurate sniper fire in the first of three similar incidents during the month in which two U.S. personnel are killed and three are wounded. p. 16.

4 - CAPT R. Di CORI, USN, relieves CAPT C. L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115). p. 21.

5 - Seabees commemorate silver anniversary. p. 57.

6 - Seaman D. G. OUELLET sacrifices his life to shield fellow PBR crewmen from the blast of a Viet Cong grenade. p. 6.

- RAG units land troops and provide blocking support during Operation OVERLORD II. p. 79.

9 - Viet Cong employ a "claymore" mine for the first time against a U.S. minesweeper. p. 3.

10 - A NAVSUPPACT Saigon C-47 aircraft crashes near Phan Rang, 18 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay, killing all 28 persons aboard. p. 54.

11 - A SWIFT boat sailor is killed and another crewman is seriously wounded when the 81-mm. mortar on board PCF 39 explodes. p. 30.

- SEALs break up a Viet Cong crossing attempt in the Bassac River; four Viet Cong are killed. p. 13.

12 - The salvaged dredge, JAMAICA BAY, under tow to Vung Tau, sinks in heavy seas and high winds. p. 61.

14 - MARKET TIME units in the First Coastal Zone frustrate an infiltration attempt by a steel-hulled trawler. p. 21.

- RADM N. G. WARD, COMNAVFORV, receives Republic of Korea's second highest military award. p. iii.



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15 Mar - Newly-constructed LST ramps become operational at Dong Ha, 80 miles northwest of Danang. p. 45.

16 - VNMC 5th Battalion conducts extensive pacification mission in the Nha Be district, south of Saigon. p. 67.

- A U.S. merchant ship, CONQUEROR, is struck by Viet Cong recoilless rifle fire in the Saigon channel; three personnel are wounded. p. 5.

18 - Vietnamese Marines conduct Operation SONG THANH 9, a search and destroy operation west and northwest of Bong Son in the An Lao Valley. p. 85.

19 - Three Viet Cong are killed and their sampan is captured by PCF 94. p. 34.

20 - Riverine Assault Force craft land U.S. Army elements as Operation SPEARHEAD I begins in the Rung Sat Special Zone. p. 43.

21 - GAME WARDEN units and Vietnamese Regional Force troops disrupt major Viet Cong crossing attempt and subsequent outpost attack in the Co Chien River. p. 12.

22 - The "Blue Sampan of the Bassac" is captured by PBRs as four Viet Cong are killed during a crossing attempt. p. 15.

23 - Vietnamese LSSL 231 suffers 29 casualties (nine killed and 20 wounded) during a heavy Viet Cong recoilless rifle attack in the Ham Luong River. p. 75.

24 - The entrance channel to the new Riverine Assault Force support base at Dong Tam is completed. p. 52.

25 - Mortar fire from USCGC POINT COMFORT and PCF 89 triggers three secondary explosions during a gunfire support mission. p. 29.

31 - CAPT P. N. GRAY, USN, relieves CAPT B. B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116). p. 2.





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## RIVER PATROL FORCE (TF 116)

In March, units of the River Patrol Force engaged in numerous fire fights along the Ham Luong River, as Operation GAME WARDEN patrols pushed into certain areas which had long been under strong Viet Cong domination. Responding to the interdiction of movement and a resulting drop in river traffic "taxation," the Viet Cong launched a series of ambushes against the patrol boats. All together, there were 36 hostile fire incidents in the Ham Luong during the month.

Meanwhile, throughout the Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone, GAME WARDEN patrols were faced with a new threat--improved accuracy in Viet Cong sniper fire--amid indications that the enemy had begun receiving high-powered, Russian-type rifles. During the month, two PBR personnel were killed and three others wounded by such fire. In one instance, the estimated sniper range was 500 yards.

Along the Bassac River, the scene of increased activity during the latter part of the month, squads of the Delta's newly-arrived SEAL detachment ambushed enemy units on two occasions. In addition, the SEALs carried out numerous intelligence-gathering reconnaissance missions.

On 6 March, in the Mekong River, a PBR crewman sacrificed his life while protecting his shipmates and his boat from the explosion of a grenade fired by the Viet Cong.

During the month, the final two of four GAME WARDEN LST support ships arrived--USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786) and USS HUNTERDON



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COUNTY (LST 838). On 27 March, GARRETT COUNTY was assigned to support River Section 543 in the Rung Sat Special Zone. On 31 March, HUNTERDON COUNTY relieved USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) at the mouth of the Co Chien River.

That day, in ceremonies held at Binh Thuy, Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, relieved Captain Burton B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116). For his role in leading Operation GAME WARDEN through its successful formative stages, Captain WITHAM was awarded the Legion of Merit.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

Throughout the month of March, river patrols, SEAL teams, and aerial reconnaissance units in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) engaged the enemy on numerous occasions. Most of the incidents occurred along Viet Cong lines of communications and in enemy staging and ambush areas.

On the night of 1 March, a PBR patrol intercepted a Viet Cong sampan attempting to cross the Long Tau River from the southwest bank, eight miles downstream from Nha Be. When the sampan was illuminated, its four occupants opened fire on the PBRs with small arms weapons. The PBRs quickly suppressed the fire, killing the four Viet Cong. The sampan, two individual weapons, and a quantity of documents were captured and taken to Nha Be.

On the night of 3 March, a helicopter team conducting a





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"firefly" mission* destroyed one sampan and damaged three others near a Viet Cong ambush site in the Long Tau. The helicopter received light small arms fire. There were no U.S. casualties. The extent of Viet Cong personnel casualties was undetermined.

In the main channel to Saigon, the Viet Cong continued their attempts to harass and interdict patrols and merchant shipping. On 9 March the enemy exploded a "claymore" mine for the first time at a U.S. minesweeper, seven miles southeast of Nha Be. The mine showered the MSB with shrapnel, but failed to inflict any damage. A second unsuccessful attack with a "claymore" mine was directed against MSB 31 on 24 March, in the lower Long Tau.

On 15 March, in the same general area, Viet Cong exploded a water mine between two PBRs 200 feet apart while the boats were conducting a high-speed reconnaissance run approximately 100 feet from the river bank. The explosion jarred the PBRs and spewed water, mud and dead fish 150 feet into the air, but neither craft was damaged.

That evening, a three-man SEAL ambush team made contact with a sampan containing three Viet Cong. The incident occurred near the east bank of the Soirap River, opposite the mouth of the Kinh Lo Canal. The SEALs engaged the sampan and probably killed all

*A night reconnaissance patrol flown by a three-helicopter team. One helicopter is equipped with image intensifiers (see page III-2 for a discussion of these devices) and a 1.5 million candlepower searchlight; a second helicopter, equipped with a .50 caliber machine gun, flies above the first helicopter; the third helicopter, equipped with 7.62-mm. machine guns, maintains low altitude surveillance.



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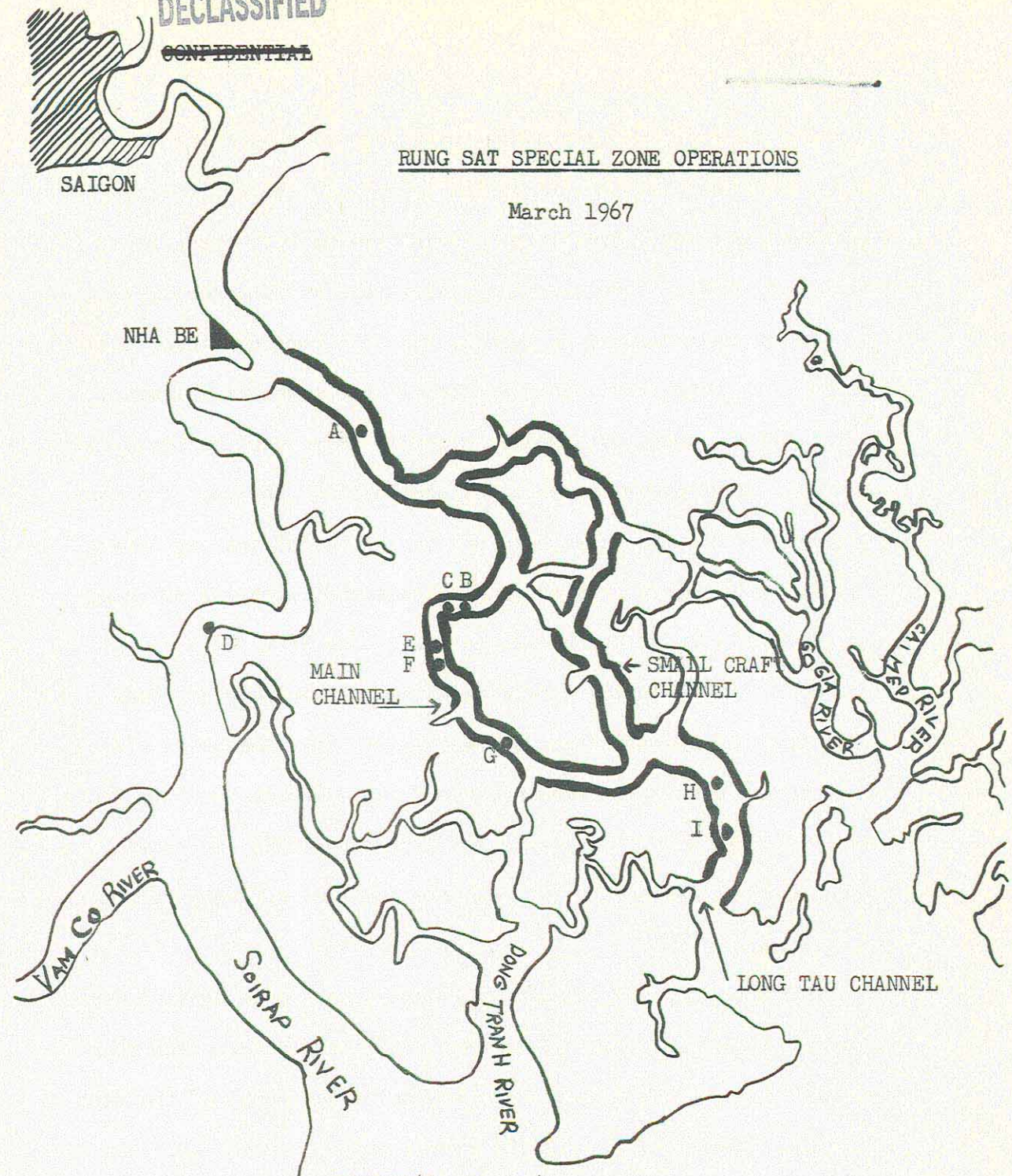
# RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATIONS

March 1967




LEGEND (Incidents):
A - CONQUEROR - 16 Mar
B - MSB - 9 Mar
C - MSB - 28 Mar
D - SEALs - 15 Mar
E - PBRs - 16 Mar
F - PBRs - 1 Mar
G - Helos - 3 Mar
H - PBRs - 15 Mar
I - MSB - 24 Mar

SCALE:

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Nautical Miles



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three of its occupants. One Chinese Communist carbine and a quantity of personal equipment--canteens, a machete and a blanket--were recovered from the sampan.

On the morning of 16 March, a PBR patrol in the Long Tau was ambushed by an unknown number of Viet Cong near the mouth of Don Creek. The enemy illuminated the patrol with a white flare and then opened fire with automatic weapons, B-40 rocket launchers and at least one 75-mm. recoilless rifle. The PBRs turned clear of the kill zone and were joined by a second PBR patrol from an adjacent area. The two patrols then suppressed the enemy fire. During the action, the leading boat of the first patrol received a hit aft which destroyed the PBR's electric battery. One crewman was wounded slightly by shell fragments. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

On the afternoon of 16 March a U.S. merchant ship, CONQUEROR, was struck by recoilless rifle fire from Viet Cong positions on the east bank of the Long Tau, three miles downstream from Nha Be. A PBR patrol came to the ship's assistance and was taken under fire. The PBRs returned the fire and were joined by a spotter aircraft which attacked the enemy with 2.75-inch rockets.

The combined fire flushed three Viet Cong from their bunkers and forced them to seek refuge in a clump of trees nearby. Then a U.S. Army helicopter fire team arrived on the scene and engaged the three Viet Cong, as well as nine others who were sighted hiding in the thick grass near the ambush site. Shortly thereafter,



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all enemy fire ceased. The extent of the Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

CONQUEROR sustained six hits during the engagement. One crewmember and one embarked U.S. Army military policeman suffered serious wounds; a second military policeman was wounded slightly.

On 28 March MSB 18 snagged her drag chain near the west bank of the Long Tau, eight miles southeast of Nha Be. Upon recovering the sweeping gear, 12 feet of heavy electrical wire was found fouled in the chain. The following day, two miles farther downstream, a unit of River Assault Squadron NINE discovered a top-shaped water mine floating near the bank. The mine was picked up and taken to Nha Be.

* * *

DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On the evening of 6 March a member of the crew of PBR 124 gave his life to shield his shipmates from the effects of a grenade fired by the Viet Cong. The incident occurred in the Cua Dai channel of the Mekong River, 18 miles east of My Tho.

At the time, PBR 124 was making a high-speed run to check suspicious activity on a small island in the channel. As the PBR approached, the enemy launched a grenade from a position on the island. The forward gunner, Seaman David G. OUELLET, USN, spotted the grenade arching toward the PBR's stern. Shouting a warning to the other crewmembers, Seaman OUELLET bounded into the after section of the boat, pushed the boat captain to safety, and placed



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his body in front of the grenade just as it struck the main deck and exploded. Seaman OUELLET's body absorbed most of the impact of the blast and he was mortally wounded. As a result of Seaman OUELLET's selfless act, the boat captain was only slightly wounded and the other crewmen escaped injury. The PBR sustained relatively minor damage.

On 15 March, a My Tho-based PBR patrol interdicted an attempt by three Viet Cong to cross the river in the crossing corridor near the eastern tip of Ngu Hiep Island. River Patrol Boat 98, in company with PBR 105, sighted a twin-engined sampan moving at high speed from the south bank of the river and closed to investigate. The sampan ignored hails and warning shots and continued at high speed toward the north bank, with PBR 98 in pursuit. The Viet Cong opened fire on the PBRs from several automatic weapons and small arms positions in the tree line on the north bank. At this time two more PBRs arrived and the combined PBR fire suppressed the intense enemy fire. During the action, PBRs 98 and 105 each received five hits and PBR 106 received one hit; there were no U.S. personnel casualties. The extent of Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

After the enemy fire was suppressed an attempt was made to recover the abandoned sampan; however it sank while being towed away from the bank by a PBR.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

In March, river patrols in the Ham Luong River were in almost



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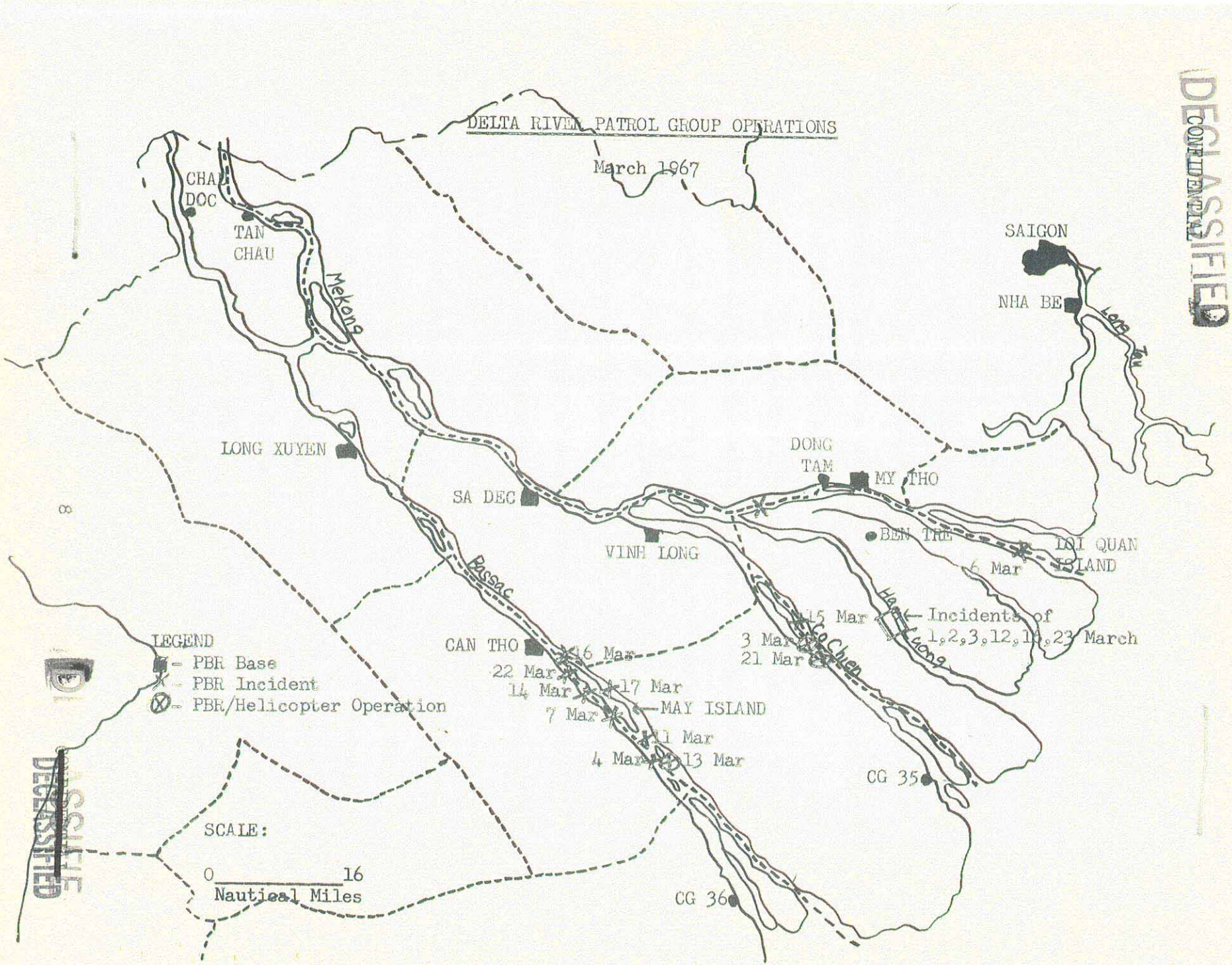
DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP OPERATIONS

March 1967



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daily contact with the enemy. Intelligence reports indicated that at least two Viet Cong main force companies and one local force company were deployed against the Ham Luong patrols. All together, there were 36 fire fights during the month, most of them along a stretch of the river five to eight miles downstream from the Ben Tre Canal. Generally, the Viet Cong used heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire from well-prepared, concealed positions. On several occasions, however, the enemy employed rocket launchers and recoilless rifles against the river patrols.

On the night of 1 March, seven miles southeast of the canal, PBR 136 detected and intercepted a large, camouflaged water-taxi with two sampans in tow, after the patrol's leading boat, PBR 138, had already passed the area. Both PBRs then made a high-speed run against the water-taxi from opposite directions. As the PBRs approached, 12 uniformed Viet Cong concealed in the sampans took to the water. The PBRs opened fire, killing four of the enemy; four more were seen to fall on the river bank. The water-taxi and the two sampans were subsequently destroyed by fire from the PBRs.

The next night, in the same area, PBRs 49 and 145 intercepted a large, heavily-laden enemy junk moving eastward along the river. The leading PBR illuminated the contact at a range of 200 feet, and was taken under fire by Viet Cong in the junk. The fire was returned and the junk began evasive maneuvers. Although severely damaged, the junk made good its escape to an island in the river.

Four Vietnamese Navy junks then joined the PBR patrol in



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searching for the junk and were taken under heavy automatic weapons fire from enemy positions on the bank. The surface units turned clear of the area and called in an air strike. A Navy helicopter fire team arrived and conducted three firing runs under heavy ground fire. The final run succeeded in suppressing all enemy fire. During the four-hour engagement ten Viet Cong were killed and an estimated 20 more were wounded. There were no friendly casualties.

On the morning of 3 March, in the same general area, a Navy helicopter fire team on a reconnaissance mission spotted a sampan with five or six men aboard beached on a small island. The men fled to a nearby cane brake and the fire team relayed the sampan's position to a PBR patrol in the area. The patrol took the sampan in tow and came under fire from enemy positions on both banks. The PBRs suppressed the fire and proceeded to Ben Tre. The sampan's contents included Viet Cong uniforms, medical supplies and a large number of documents; among the documents were lists of officers of the main force 261st Battalion, muster lists, financial statements, and training and indoctrination materials.

On two occasions during the month, PBRs discovered and destroyed large caches of material in known Viet Cong crossing areas. On 12 March, seven miles downstream from the Ben Tre Canal, three to four tons of Viet Cong materials were destroyed by fire from PBRs 136 and 138; on 16 March, in the same area, the same two boats destroyed 25 boxes and several bags of supplies on



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the south bank of the river. In the first incident, the Viet Cong attempted to remove the supplies from the bank under the cover of automatic weapons and small arms fire. No fire was received by the PBRs during the second incident.

On 23 March, in the same general area, PBRs and a Navy helicopter fire team came to the assistance of a Vietnamese landing ship (LSSL 231) under recoilless rifle attack by the Viet Cong. The enemy fire was suppressed. Nine Vietnamese were killed during the action and a U.S. advisor and 19 Vietnamese were wounded. Later in the day, the Viet Cong attacked Vietnamese craft escorting the damaged LSSL. GAME WARDEN patrol boats again rendered assistance and helped suppress the enemy fire.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 3 March, PBRs 82 and 102 were taken under small arms and automatic weapons fire while the PBRs were conducting routine search operations in the Co Chien River, 22 miles downstream from Vinh Long.

The PBRs returned the fire with .50 caliber, M-60 and high-volume grenade fire, and units of River Assault Group 23 delivered 20-mm. cannon and 81-mm. mortar fire on targets marked by PBR tracers. Then a helicopter fire team delivered three strikes on the Viet Cong positions, suppressing all enemy fire. Two Viet Cong were killed in the action, seven structures were destroyed and five structures were damaged. The helicopter strikes triggered one secondary explosion and two POL fires. There were





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no friendly casualties.

On the night of 15 March, two members of a Viet Cong communications-liaison team were killed when PBRs 82 and 102 surprised two sampans standing out of a canal entrance near Giai Island. The PBRs illuminated the sampans and were immediately taken under fire by Viet Cong security forces on the bank. The patrol returned the fire and also opened up on the leading sampan. Two Viet Cong in the sampan were killed and a third occupant was seen to fall overboard. The second sampan successfully evaded up the canal. There were no U.S. casualties.

On 21 March, GAME WARDEN units and Regional Force troops combined to break up a major crossing attempt by at least 100 Viet Cong trying to cross from Vinh Binh province into Kien Hoa province. The troops made initial contact with the enemy as the Viet Cong started to cross the Co Chien from the mouth of the Lang The River. Forced to withdraw, the Viet Cong redeployed to conduct a three-pronged attack on the Regional Force outpost. Answering a signal for assistance, a PBR patrol from River Section 513 at Vinh Long arrived on the scene at 2320 and engaged the enemy. Meanwhile, a second patrol was stationed to the west to cover crossing areas, and a third patrol and a Navy helicopter fire team approached the Viet Cong positions from downstream.

The helicopters and PBRs continued to exchange fire with the enemy until 0155, when the Viet Cong broke off the engagement and fled to the west, leaving behind three of their dead as well as a





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number of rounds of 57-mm. recoilless rifle ammunition. A sweep of the area by Regional Force troops at daylight disclosed evidence that additional Viet Cong had been either killed or wounded.

Operations in the Bassac River

During the early part of the month, patrols in the Bassac River clashed several times with Viet Cong ambush units and evading enemy sampans in known crossing routes. In one encounter, on 4 March, a PBR patrol engaged an evading sampan near Nai Island; in the ensuing fire fight four Viet Cong were hit and possibly killed.

On 7 March, fire from PBRs supporting a Vietnamese outpost on the south bank of the river, near May Island, killed two Viet Cong and effectively broke up an enemy attack on the outpost. Two Vietnamese children who were wounded during the attack were evacuated by PBRs to Can Tho.

The newly-arrived Delta SEAL detachment made its initial contact with the enemy on 11 March. That night, one of the detachment's ambush squads killed four Viet Cong and broke up a crossing attempt in a canal mouth on the north bank of the river, 17 miles downstream from Tra On. The SEALs were taken under fire by small arms and automatic weapons during their withdrawal. Nearby PBRs suppressed the enemy fire and picked up the SEALs.

On the night of 13 March, two Viet Cong were killed by SEALs in an ambush on Tan Dinh Island, a frequently-used Viet Cong line of communications. The SEALs had reached the island in a SEAL




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Team Assault Boat (STAB).* At 2300, the ambush team made contact with three Viet Cong in a sampan. The SEALs destroyed the sampan and killed two and possibly all three of the enemy.

Other Viet Cong on the island then opened fire on the SEALs and the SEALs' armored LCM and the Vietnamese LSSL 228 supported the ambush team's withdrawal. During the withdrawal, Navy helicopters struck targets marked by the LCM.

While proceeding around May Island the LCM and the STAB came upon a Vietnamese outpost under attack. The LCM drove the Viet Cong back from the outpost with .50 caliber machine gun fire and then struck the enemy with 81-mm. mortar fire, which effectively broke up the attack.

On 16 March, four PBRs teamed up with units of River Assault Group (RAG) 25 and an AC-47 "Dragonship" to break up a Viet Cong ambush and outpost attack on the north bank of the river, three miles from Can Tho.

The enemy's automatic weapons fire was initially directed at a PBR towing an out-of-commission companion boat back to Binh Thuy for repairs. A second patrol joined the action as well as an AC-47 which had been supporting a nearby Vietnamese outpost. Thirty minutes after the action commenced, RAG boats arrived on the scene and relieved the PBRs. One of the PBR patrols then shifted downstream to cover crossing corridors in the event that the enemy attack was a diversion for a major crossing. No crossing

*An armed runabout powered by two 50-horsepower engines; also called a trimaran because its hull has three planing surfaces.




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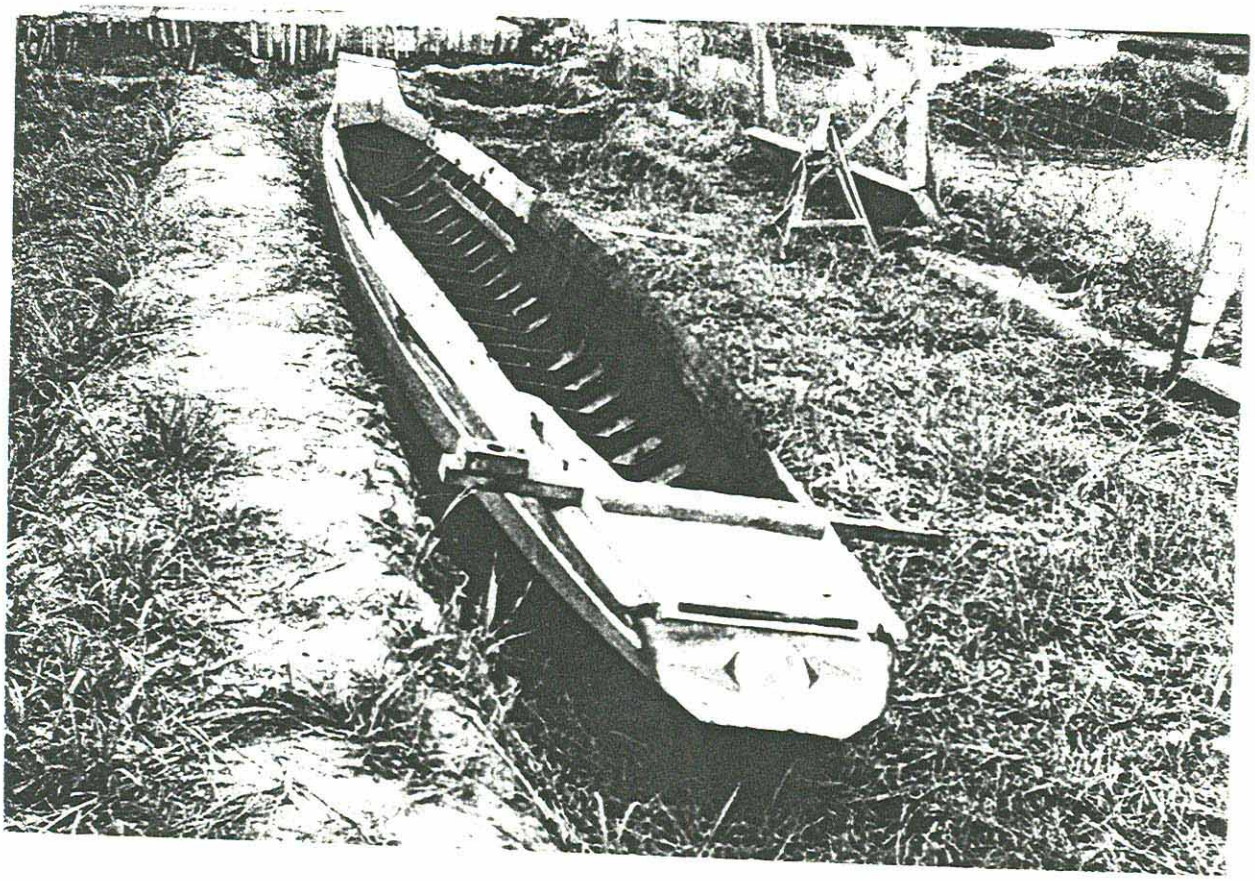

The "Blue Sampan of the Bassac," captured by PBRs 31 and 32 on 22 March.

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materialized, and the enemy fire was suppressed after one hour of heavy fighting in which two U.S. sailors were wounded. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

On 17 March, a PBR patrol came to the assistance of a Vietnamese outpost on the north side of May Island under attack by approximately 200 Viet Cong. The PBRs delivered supporting fire with their .50 caliber machine guns and M-18 grenade launchers, and then spotted for 105-mm. howitzer fire from the artillery battery at Tra On. Upon completion of the artillery fire, the PBRs made two additional firing runs, initiating two large secondary explosions and disrupting the enemy attack. A subsequent sweep by Popular Force troops revealed that sixteen Viet Cong had been killed during the engagement.

In the early afternoon of 22 March, four members of a Viet Cong political indoctrination team were killed when the sampan in which they were attempting to cross the river was intercepted by PBRs 31 and 32. The sampan ignored warning shots, attempted to evade and finally beached on the south bank of the river. Four of the occupants were killed as they attempted to escape across a mud flat. The sampan's fifth occupant was probably killed.

The sampan, which contained a number of grenades, assorted ammunition, uniform items, binoculars and a quantity of propaganda documents, was salvaged from the bank and taken to Can Tho. The 20-foot, blue-painted sampan, equipped with two nine-horsepower engines, had evaded river patrols on several previous occasions





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and had acquired the nickname, "Blue Sampan of the Bassac."

* * *

VIET CONG SNIPER ACTIVITY

During the month, two PBR personnel were killed and three were wounded by unusually accurate Viet Cong sniper fire. On 2 March, a crewman was hit in the leg by a round of sniper fire fired from the north bank of the Bassac River near Tra On. The estimated range was 200 yards. On 11 March, a patrol officer, LTJG D.G. KEARNEY, USN, was killed and a crewman was wounded by sniper fire while they were checking sampans near Cai Be in the Mekong River. The sniper fired from an estimated range of 150 yards. On the night of 18 March, a crewman was killed and another was wounded by a single round of sniper fire in the Long Tau channel, near the mouth of the Loi Giang River. The shot was fired from an estimated range of 500 yards on a dark night and struck the mortally wounded sailor, Seaman Apprentice W.R. DENNIS, III, USN, in the head; a bullet fragment wounded the second crewman.

An enemy document captured on 21 February in the Rung Sat Special Zone had indicated that T-10, the Viet Cong's RSSZ command, had received five sniper rifles the previous week. On 25 March, in the northeastern portion of the RSSZ, Vietnamese Marines captured an M1891/30 sniper rifle* with a 3.5-power telescopic sight. On

*The MACV-JGS handbook, War Material Used by the Viet Cong in South Vietnam or Presumably Available to North Vietnam (February 1966) terms this weapon "...very reliable in operation as well as being a very accurate weapon. The telescopic sight...is calibrated for distances up to 1,400 meters (1,530 yards)." The handbook notes that while the basic M1891/30 rifle is no longer standard in the Russian Army, the sniper version is still in use. The weapon's effective range is 880 yards.





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27 March, two more rifles, one with mounts for a telescopic sight, were captured in the same area.

* * *

GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
March 1967

1. PBR Statistics:

   a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 649 Night 757

   b. Total Contacts: Day 52,370 Night 10,037

   c. Total Inspected: Day 15,039 Night 3,702

   d. Total Boarded: Day 18,426 Night 3,303

   e. People Detained: 504

   f. Sampans/Junks Detained: 58

   g. Total Patrol Hours: 36,047

2. Helicopter Fire Team Statistics:

   a. Total Flight Hours: 326.4

   b. Helo Missions:
      (1) Pre-planned strikes: 16
      (2) Reaction: 27
      (3) Targets of Opportunity: 17
      (4) Support: 74

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

   a. Fire Fights:
      (1) PBR 59
      (2) Helo 12
      (3) MSB 1
      (4) LCM 1
      (5) LCPL 3
      (6) STAB 2

   b. Sampans: Destroyed: 45 Damaged: 11 Captured: 12

   c. Structures: Destroyed: 65 Damaged: 15





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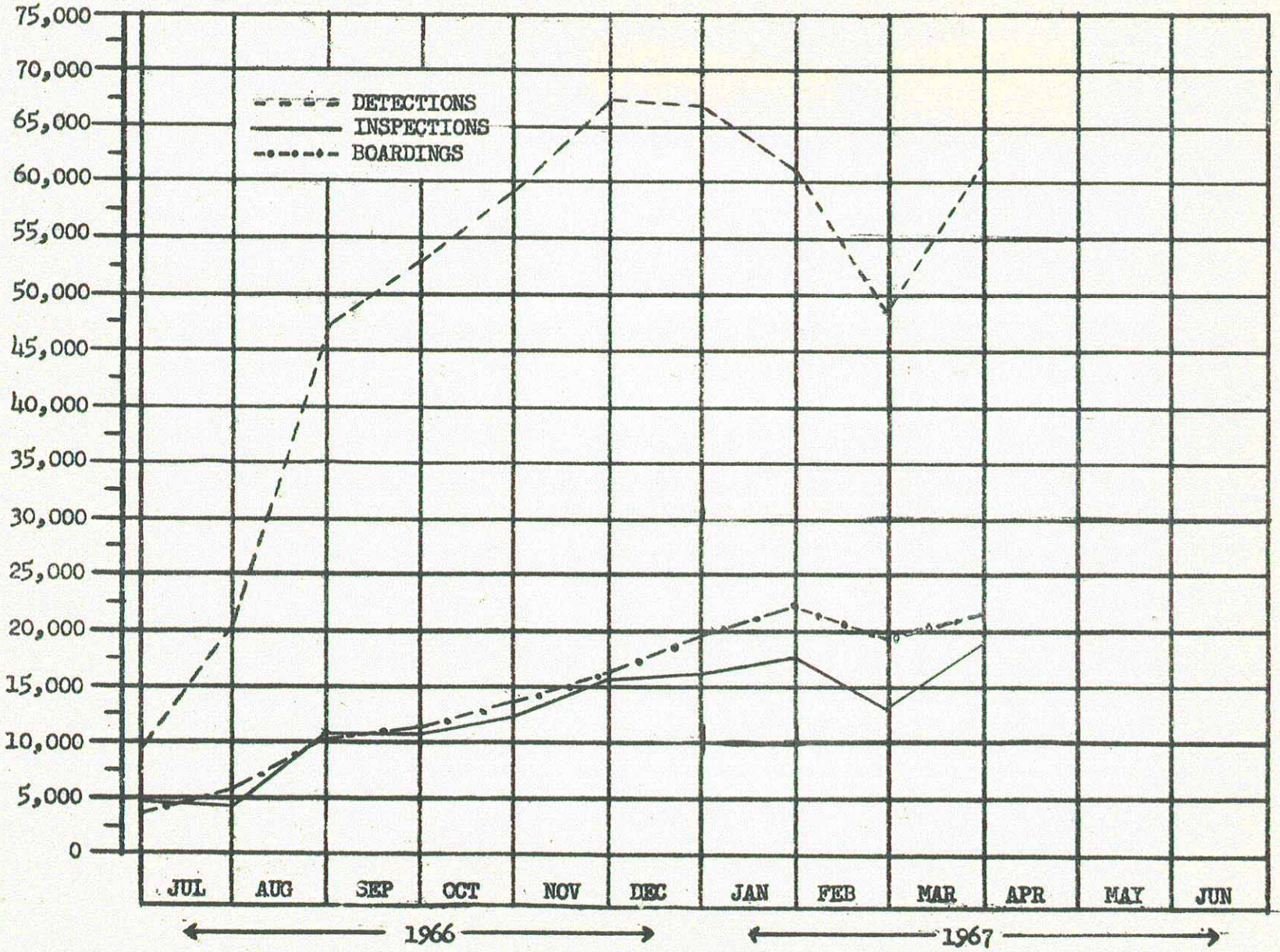
DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY GAME WARDEN UNITS



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d. Huts: Destroyed: 10

e. Enemy: KIA: 84 KIA(Poss.): 29 WIA: 25 Captured: 6

f. Friendly: KIA: 4 WIA: 14

g. Friendly Battle Damage:
(1) PBR 17
(2) Helo 2
(3) MSB 2
(4) LCVP 1
(5) STAB 1

h. PBR MEDEVAC: 34

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## COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TF 115)

On 14 March, units of Operation MARKET TIME frustrated a major infiltration attempt in the First Coastal Zone when they intercepted a steel-hulled trawler and drove the craft aground 60 miles southeast of Danang. (See Appendix II for a resume of trawler incidents since February 1965.)

During the month, the number of detections of junks and sampans by MARKET TIME units reached its highest level since September 1966. The number of inspections and boardings also rose as the Northeast Monsoon abated and improved weather conditions prevailed along much of the coastline. There were over 75,000 detections during March, including over 1,500 steel-hulled contacts. Almost one-third of the craft detected were boarded.

STABLE DOOR activity increased to a new high with the detection of over 27,000 junks and sampans; nearly one-fourth of these were boarded.

On 10 March, two members of the Coastal Surveillance Force staff were killed in an aircraft accident. LCDR D.G. BROWN, USN, Plans Officer, and LT J.C. CRAWFORD, USN, Harbor Defense/Assistant Operations Officer, died when the Air Cofat (NAVSUPPACT, Saigon) C-47, enroute to Saigon, crashed 18 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay. Twenty-six other persons aboard the aircraft were killed also.

At 0900 on 4 March Captain Ralph Di CORI, USN, relieved Captain Clifford L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) in a brief ceremony on board PCF 70 in Saigon harbor.





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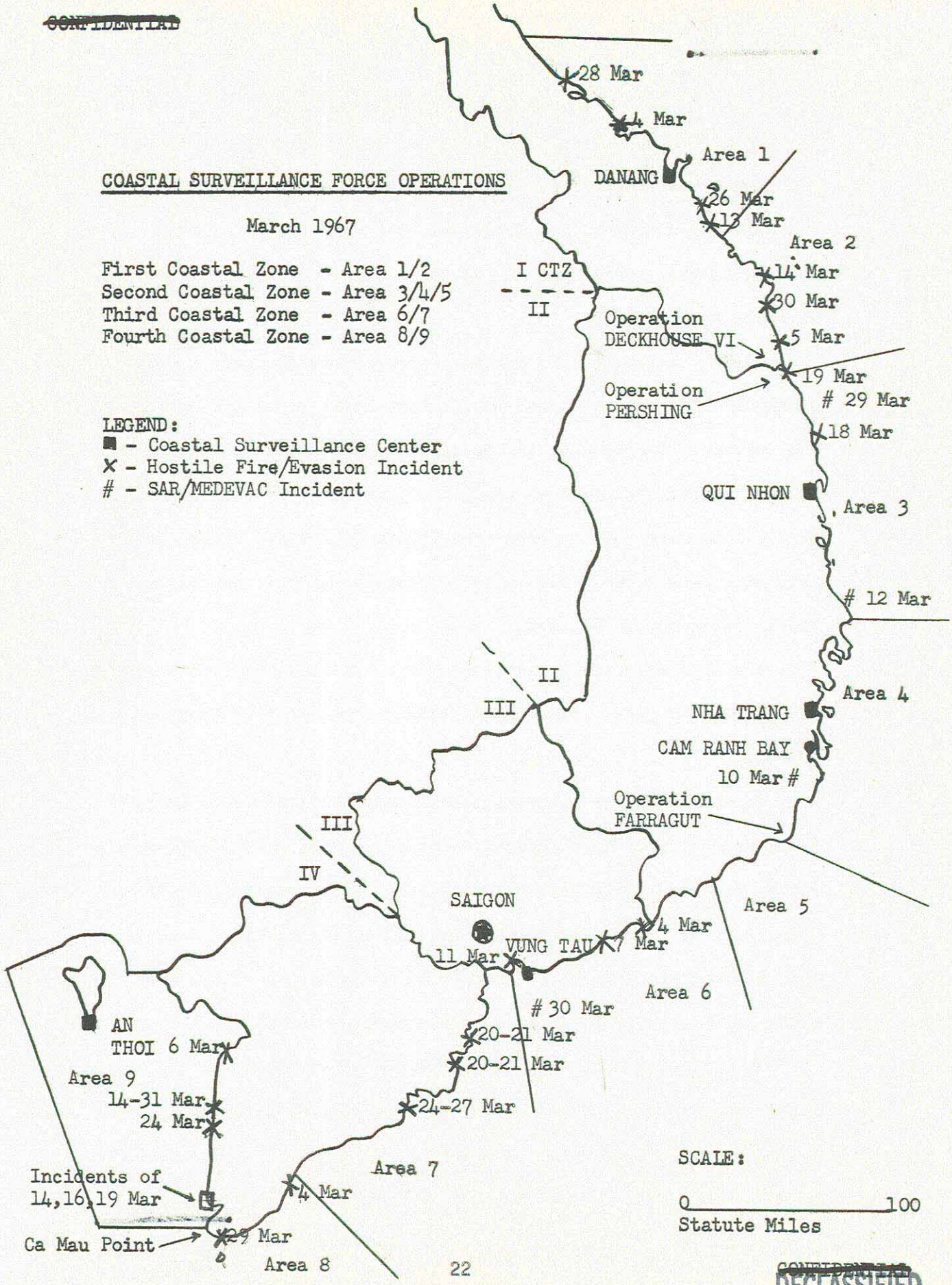




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During the ceremony, Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, presented Captain STEWART with the Legion of Merit for his role in developing the concepts, tactics and strategy of coastal inshore warfare.

## OPERATION MARKET TIME

### Trawler Incident

At 0014 on 14 March, an aircraft from Patrol Squadron 46 on the MARKET TIME northern surveillance track reported an unlighted, steel-hulled contact 40 miles east-northeast of Re Island, proceeding in a northwesterly direction. Re Island lies 67 miles southeast of Danang and 14 miles from the mainland. MARKET TIME units in the general area at the time of the sighting were USS BRISTER (DER 327), USCGC POINT ELLIS and PCFs 16 and 78. The night was clear and dark; the sea was calm.

At 0403, ten miles southeast of Re Island, BRISTER gained radar contact; the unidentified craft was now steering course 230°. About 0420 the contact changed course to 285° and appeared to be making for the mainland. At about 0430, a Patrol Squadron 4 aircraft illuminated the contact and identified it to be a steel-hulled trawler. Minutes later BRISTER, in pursuit, challenged the trawler by flashing light. Receiving no response, BRISTER fired several warning shots and directed PCF 78 and POINT ELLIS to intercept.

About 0540 PCF 78 swept close aboard the trawler and came under heavy automatic weapons fire, forcing the SWIFT boat to retire to the northeast.





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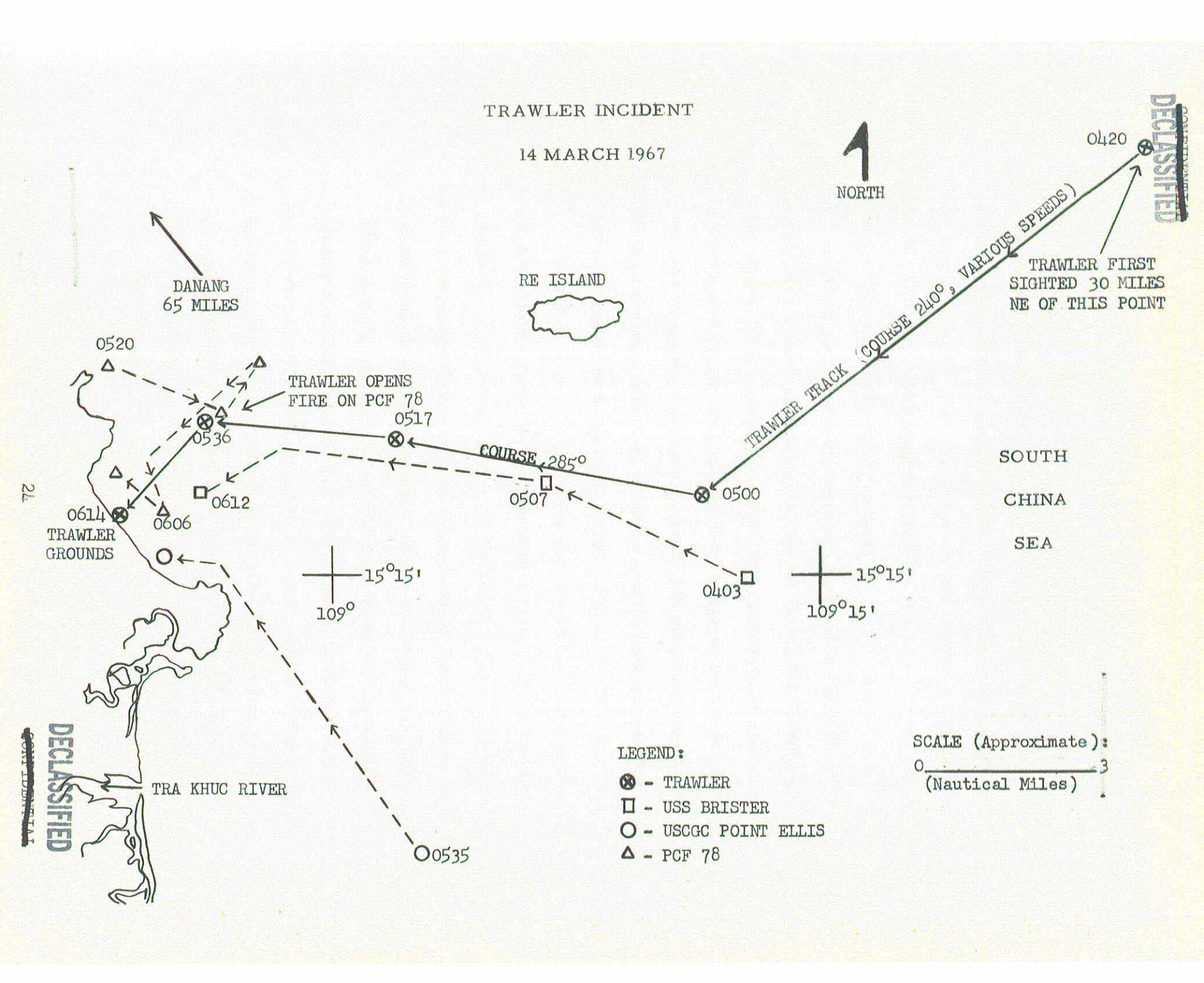
TRAWLER INCIDENT
14 MARCH 1967
NORTH
DANANG
65 MILES
RE ISLAND
0420
TRAWLER FIRST
SIGHTED 30 MILES
NE OF THIS POINT
TRAWLER TRACK (COURSE 240°, VARIOUS SPEEDS)
0520
TRAWLER OPENS
FIRE ON PCF 78
0517
0536
COURSE 285°
0612
0507
0500
0614
TRAWLER
GROUNDS
0606
SOUTH
CHINA
SEA
15°15'
109°
0403
15°15'
109°15'
TRA KHUC RIVER
0535
LEGEND:
⊗ - TRAWLER
□ - USS BRISTER
○ - USCGC POINT ELLIS
△ - PCF 78
SCALE (Approximate):
0 3
(Nautical Miles)
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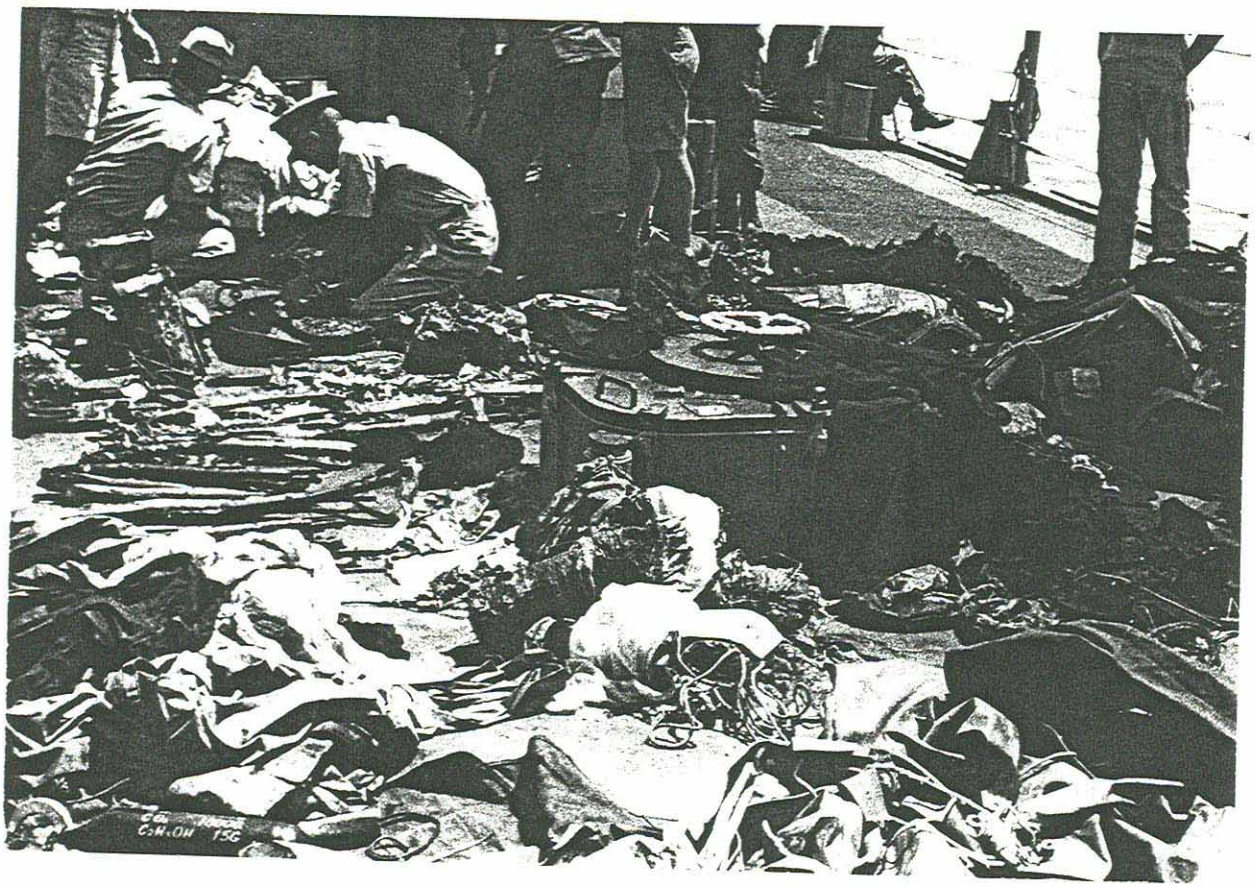

Debris from the steel-hulled trawler intercepted 14 March is examined on the fantail of USS BRISTER (DER 327).

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At 0612 the trawler opened fire on BRISTER and the latter returned the fire with her .50 caliber machine guns and 3"/50 battery. Five minutes later the trawler grounded approximately one mile south of Phuoc Thien village and 60 miles southeast of Danang.

The MARKET TIME units continued to return the trawler's fire until first light when the source of the enemy fire shifted to a wooded area behind the beach. By the light of sunrise the trawler's bluish-grey hull was seen to be 80-100 feet long, with a deckhouse aft, a slightly raised bow and a light mast and boom one-third of the way aft from the bow. Two minutes after sunrise, at 0655, the trawler virtually disintegrated in a single explosion, evidently caused by charges set by her crew. A U.S. Air Force AC-47 on the scene observed personnel running across the wooded area behind the beach, and took them under fire with unknown results.

Boarding parties found little of the trawler's remains except charred flotsam. The largest single piece discovered was part of the stem, measuring seven by 15 feet.

The contraband removed during subsequent salvage operations included one 12.7-mm. heavy machine gun, one 57-mm. recoilless rifle, 1,200 7.62-mm. Type-53 carbines, 30 7.62-mm. Type-43 sub-machine guns, a case of "claymore" mines, 5,000 hand grenade detonation devices, and assorted ammunition for small arms, recoilless rifles and 60-mm. mortars. Also found was personal gear, shipboard life-saving equipment, and medical supplies such as





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vitamins, plasma and two surgical kits. The surgical kits appeared to be designed for issue to a field hospital. Each kit contained 195 instruments of high quality, with Chinese lettering on the diagrammatic packing list. The quality of the instruments suggested Japanese origin.

## First Coastal Zone

During the month the First Coastal Zone--the seaward area of the I Corps Tactical Zone--was the scene of over 20,000 detections by MARKET TIME units, as well as exfiltration patrols and a number of evasion and detention incidents.

Operation DECKHOUSE VI, conducted by the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet Amphibious Ready Group, 90 miles southeast of Danang, ended at 1800 on the 3rd. MARKET TIME PCFs and WPBs provided exfiltration patrols during the entire operation, which began on 16 February.

On 4 March PCF 79 sighted a junk with two occupants just off the coast, 35 miles northwest of Danang. The occupants ignored warning signals, evaded into the surfline and successfully fled ashore. The junk was then destroyed by gunfire from the PCF.

Before daylight on the fifth, PCFs 20 and 56, U.S. Air Force helicopters and a C-47 "Flareship" joined in a search and rescue effort at the entrance to Danang harbor for seven Vietnamese citizens. Their junk had collided with the Vietnamese Navy's PGM 613 and sunk. Four survivors and two bodies were recovered. When the mission was terminated at 1100 one person was still missing.

At 0820 that day PCF 101, patrolling 94 miles southeast of



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Danang, turned to investigate a group of approximately 50 fishing junks. Six of the junks left the group and evaded toward shore; four were abandoned at the surfline and two successfully evaded. Two of the four abandoned craft were subsequently damaged by fire from the PCF.

At mid-morning on the 13th, PCF 21 detected two fishing junks near the shore, 30 miles southeast of Danang. The two junks were beached and their five occupants fled to a nearby wooded area. As PCF 21 continued to approach the beach it received 40 rounds of small arms fire from the tree line. PCF 75, operating in an adjacent patrol area, joined PCF 21 and assisted in suppressing the enemy fire and damaging the junks. There were no U.S. casualties; the extent of the enemy casualties was undetermined.

During the evening of the 16th, 24 miles northwest of Danang, PCF 56 detained a junk with six occupants transporting 500 pounds of unmanifested rice. At 1430 on the 19th, PCF 82 detained two persons as suspected Viet Cong tax collectors at the boundary line between the First and Second coastal zones, 100 miles southeast of Danang. On the morning of the 23rd PCF 75, conducting a surfline patrol 85 miles southeast of Danang, detained two suspects after they had abandoned their junk and attempted to evade ashore.

At 1100 on 26 March, 20 miles southeast of Danang, PCF 15 destroyed two basket boats after the occupants had beached the craft and fled. At 2200 on the 28th, USCGC POINT DUME attempted to intercept a junk 68 miles northwest of Danang. The occupants,




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ignoring hails and warning shots, evaded to the beach.

At noon on 30 March, 70 miles southeast of Danang, USCGC POINT BANKS observed a motorized sampan proceeding from boat to boat among a group of fishing sampans. The sampan was boarded and, when 1,300 piasters was found, the three occupants were detained as possible Viet Cong tax collectors and delivered to the Vietnamese authorities.

## Second Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME units in the Second Coastal Zone--the longest of the four coastal zones with 285 miles of coastline--detected over 33,000 junks and sampans, provided blocking forces and gunfire support for major ground operations, and participated in a search and rescue mission.

On 9 March, MARKET TIME units participated in one phase of Operation FARRAGUT, a U.S. Army search and destroy operation in Khanh Hoa province. At 0800, a blocking force comprised of PCFs 3, 12 and 63, two junks from Coastal Group 27 and the Vietnamese Navy's PCE 12 was stationed to seaward of Son Hai village, 52 miles south of Nha Trang. However, weather conditions deteriorated rapidly and effectively precluded any exfiltration attempts by sea. At 1030 all units were released except PCE 12, which remained to provide gunfire support, and PCF 63, which was re-positioned in the lee of Mui Dinh, ten miles south of Son Hai. By evening the coastline area.



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At 2158 on the 12th, a U.S. Air Force F-100 aircraft crashed just after taking off from Tuy Hoa, 50 miles south of Qui Nhon. PCF 59, a helicopter and a C-47 "Flareship" were the first units at the scene. Additional units arrived throughout the night to assist in the search. When the search was terminated at 1800 the next day only a helmet and two nose cones had been recovered.

At 1820 on 18 March, PCF 87 detained two small passenger junks 27 miles north of Qui Nhon. The occupants were carrying unmanifested medicines and were turned over to personnel of Coastal Group 22.

On 25 March, USCGC POINT COMFORT and PCF 89 provided gunfire support to an element of the FIRST Cavalry Division participating in Operation PERSHING, 50 miles north of Qui Nhon. The MARKET TIME units fired 58 rounds of 81-mm. mortars into caves sheltering Viet Cong firing on the ground forces. The mortar fire triggered three secondary explosions.

MARKET TIME participation in Operation PERSHING ended on 26 March. During the operation, PCFs, WPBs and Vietnamese Navy Coastal Group junks conducting exfiltration patrols detained 157 suspects in March; 40 others had been detained in February. Of the 197, 44 were subsequently determined to be Viet Cong.

On 29 March a SWIFT boat crewman, Seaman D. R. PUCKETT, USN, was fatally injured when he fell overboard and was struck by the screws of PCF 63 while the SWIFT boat was relieving PCF 60 on station, 50 miles northeast of Qui Nhon. After he was pulled from the water, with deep lacerations about the head and chest, PCF 63





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rushed him to USS McCAFFERY (DD 860) for aid. From McCAFFERY Seaman PUCKETT was evacuated to the First Cavalry Aid Station at Bon Son by helicopter. He died enroute.

Third Coastal Zone

During the month, in addition to surveillance patrols, MARKET TIME units in the Third Coastal Zone exchanged fire on numerous occasions with enemy positions ashore.

At 1900 on 3 March, PCF 71 and USCGC POINT WHITE provided mortar fire against Viet Cong positions which had been firing on spotter aircraft, 62 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. The gunfire effectively suppressed the hostile fire and destroyed three enemy structures.

On the morning of 4 March, USCGC POINT GAMMON received automatic weapons fire from a nearby tree line while attempting to tow a suspicious junk off the beach, 65 miles northeast of Vung Tau. POINT GAMMON returned the fire with unknown results.

On the 7th, USS KOINER (DER 331), operating 33 miles northeast of Vung Tau, answered a gunfire request from a ground spotter. The target--a Viet Cong troop concentration area--was saturated by the ship's fire. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

Late in the afternoon of 11 March, the 81-mm. mortar aboard PCF 39 exploded, killing one crewman and seriously injuring another. At the time, the PCF was conducting a gunfire exercise in Ganh Ria Bay, eight miles north of Vung Tau. The boat's gunner, Seaman G. W. FRIEDMAN, USN, was blown over the side by the explosion. When his body was recovered two days later it was determined that Seaman





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FRIEDMAN had died from multiple shrapnel wounds in the face and chest. Until the cause of the explosion could be determined, MARKET TIME forces were directed to fire 81-mm. mortars only in the drop-fire mode.

On 20 March, USCGC POINT LEAGUE fired 56 rounds of 81-mm. mortars against a Viet Cong position 56 miles southwest of Vung Tau. Although the extent of the enemy's casualties was unknown, two structures were damaged and two secondary explosions were observed.

PCFs 38 and 68 were fired upon from Viet Cong positions on two occasions 45 miles southwest of Vung Tau. In the first incident, on the afternoon of 20 March, small arms and automatic weapons fire was received by PCF 68. The SWIFT boat returned the fire and was joined by PCF 38. The combined gunfire subsequently resulted in one enemy structure and four bunkers destroyed and two secondary explosions. In the second incident, on the morning of the 21st, PCF 68 was fired upon by small arms and automatic weapons from Viet Cong bunker positions. PCF 38 again joined to assist and both PCFs suppressed the hostile fire and also destroyed a nearby enemy sampan. There were no friendly casualties in either engagement. The extent of Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

At 0945 on 21 March USCGC POINT WHITE, operating 54 miles southwest of Vung Tau, fired 32 rounds of 81-mm. mortars against Viet Cong positions ashore. The mortar fire destroyed two bunkers and two structures, damaged four structures, and resulted in one




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secondary explosion.

On the morning of 23 March, PCF 38 destroyed three of five camouflaged sampans in a known Viet Cong operating area, 22 miles east-northeast of Vung Tau.

Toward the end of the month two gunfire missions were conducted by Coast Guard cutters against camouflaged Viet Cong positions along the shore of the Delta, southwest of Vung Tau. On the afternoon of 24 March, 80 miles from Vung Tau, POINT PARTRIDGE destroyed three enemy structures and observed one secondary explosion. On the afternoon of 27 March, POINT CYPRESS destroyed eight structures, and damaged five structures, two bunkers and two sampans.

On 30 March, PCF 36 rendezvoused with USS MADDOX (DD 731) ten miles south of Vung Tau and evacuated an injured sailor to the 36th Evacuation Hospital at Vung Tau.

Fourth Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME units in the Fourth Coastal Zone (which includes Phu Quoc Island and extends from the boundary between Ba Xuyen and An Xuyen provinces around the Ca Mau Peninsula to the Cambodian border) detected over 14,000 junks and sampans during the month. In addition, the SWIFT boats and Coast Guard cutters conducted several gunfire missions.

At noon on 4 March, PCF 71 and USCGC POINT KENNEDY conducted a gunfire mission against Viet Cong troops and structures 48 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. Spotter aircraft reported the naval fire destroyed four structures and four bunkers and damaged two




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PCF 94 on patrol in the Fourth Coastal Zone

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structures. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

On 6 March, PCFs 3 and 92 conducted a gunfire mission against Viet Cong sampans and a rice cache, 91 miles north of Ca Mau Point. The mission suppressed the ground fire being directed at a spotter aircraft, destroyed one sampan, and damaged a cache containing between three and five tons of rice.

USCGC POINT CLEAR detained a sampan and a suspected Viet Cong tax collector during the early morning hours of 14 March. The sampan, intercepted 62 miles north of Ca Mau Point, carried a large quantity of fish but no fishing equipment. The boat and the suspect were turned over to the national police at Rach Gia.

At 0710 that morning, PCF 94 became involved in the first of a series of incidents along an eight mile stretch of the west coast of the peninsula, 14 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. When several suspicious junks observed near the beach did not respond to warning shots, the PCF opened fire on them and received small arms fire from the shore. The fire was suppressed and one of the junks was severely damaged. Ten hours later, PCF 94 fired on an evading sampan. The sampan reached shore successfully and the occupants fled.

At 1040 on the 16th, in the same area, PCF 94 attempted to investigate two sampans. The sampans ignored warning shots and commenced evading toward the shore. One of the sampans successfully evaded into a canal; the second one was abandoned on the beach. The PCF then damaged the abandoned craft with direct fire. An hour



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later, in a similar incident, an enemy sampan was destroyed after it had evaded to the beach and its occupants had fled.

On the night of 19 March PCF 94, patrolling 19 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point, spotted a sampan with five occupants and fired warning shots while closing to investigate. When the occupants opened fire on the PCF the SWIFT boat returned direct fire, forcing the Viet Cong to abandon the sampan. During the engagement, three of the Viet Cong were killed and the sampan was captured. There were no U.S. casualties.

On the afternoon of 24 March PCF 9, assisted by a local Vietnamese junk, captured two 20-foot sampans and one 25-foot sampan, 50 miles north of Ca Mau Point. The sampans' occupants had evaded to the beach and fled. A local junk then pulled the sampans off the beach and delivered them to the PCF; they were subsequently towed to the MARKET TIME base at An Thoi.

Four days later PCF 9, operating approximately 14 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point, detected a 40-foot junk and three 25-foot motorized sampans close to shore. When the PCF closed to investigate, the junk and the sampans began to evade and were taken under fire. However, because of the shallow water, the SWIFT boat could not continue the pursuit and the enemy craft made good their escape.

During the morning of 29 March, USCGC POINT MAST provided gunfire support for Coastal Group 41 junks which had detected seven evading sampans two miles east of Ca Mau Point. POINT MAST's mortar fire destroyed two junks and suppressed hostile fire from the beach




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directed at the Coastal Group junks. In addition, three sampans were captured.

On the last day of the month, USCGC POINT GARNET came to the assistance of a U.S. Air Force L-19 spotter plane under attack by enemy ground fire. POINT GARNET's mortar fire, directed at a position 57 miles north of Ca Mau Point, suppressed the hostile fire, destroyed one enemy structure and damaged seven others.

* * *

MARKET TIME UNITS

Aircraft from six patrol squadrons provided air surveillance during March for Operation MARKET TIME. On the 31st, a detachment of Patrol Squadron 42, flying SP-2A Neptunes from Tan Son Nhut Air Base, relieved a similar detachment from Patrol Squadron 17. A detachment of Patrol Squadron 4 flew P-3A Orion aircraft from the Naval Air Station, Sangley Point, and detachments from Patrol Squadrons 16 and 46 flew Orions from Sangley Point and U Tapao, Thailand.

On 19 March, the seaplane tender USS CURRITUCK (AV 7) and the P5Ms of Patrol Squadron 40 returned to Cam Ranh Bay to augment MARKET TIME air patrols, and remained through the end of the month.

On 31 March, the number of minesweepers in Operation MARKET TIME was reduced from seven to six with the permanent return of an MSC to the U.S. SEVENTH Fleet. The reduction did not affect MARKET TIME operations because additional radar surveillance in the Fourth Coastal Zone is provided by the LSTs supporting Operation GAME WARDEN.





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In March the following SEVENTH Fleet ships operated as MARKET TIME units during the indicated inclusive dates:

| | | | |
|---|---|---|---|
| DER 327 | USS BRISTER | 1-21 | 30-31 |
| AV 7 | USS CURRITUCK | 19-31 | |
| MSO 434 | USS EMBATTLE | 27-31 | |
| MSO 437 | USS ENHANCE | 1-27 | |
| MSO 439 | USS EXCEL | 1-27 | |
| DER 324 | USS FALGOUT | 1-19 | 26-31 |
| MSO 444 | USS FIRM | 1 | 27-31 |
| MSO 445 | USS FORCE | 1 | 27-31 |
| DER 334 | USS FORSTER | 21-31 | |
| MSO 447 | USS GUIDE | 1-27 | |
| DER 400 | USS HISSEM | 8-31 | |
| DER 331 | USS KOINER | 1-10 | 19-31 |
| DER 329 | USS KRETCHMER | 1-26 | |
| MSO 490 | USS LEADER | 1-27 | |
| DER 325 | USS LOWE | 1-8 | |
| MSO 458 | USS LUCID | 1-27 | |
| LST 1077 | USS PARK COUNTY | 1-5 | |
| MSC 198 | USS PEACOCK | 6-31 | |
| MSC 199 | USS PHOEBE | 1-6 | |
| LST 1082 | USS PITKIN COUNTY | 4-31 | |
| MSO 446 | USS PRIME | 1 | 27-31 |
| MSO 467 | USS REAPER | 1 | 27-31 |
| DER 387 | USS VANCE | 11-30 | |
| MSC 206 | USS WARBLER | 12-31 | |
| MSC 207 | USS WHIPPOORWILL | 1-12 | |

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MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY
March 1967

1. U.S. Ships/Craft:

| | DER | MSO | MSC | WPB | PCF | LST |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Total days craft on patrol | 155 | 155 | 62 | 448 | 1120 | 32 |
| Daily average of craft on patrol | 5 | 5 | 2 | 14.9 | 37.4 | 1 |

2. U.S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED WOOD - DAY 45,230 NIGHT 30,200

STEEL - DAY 836 NIGHT 850

77,116





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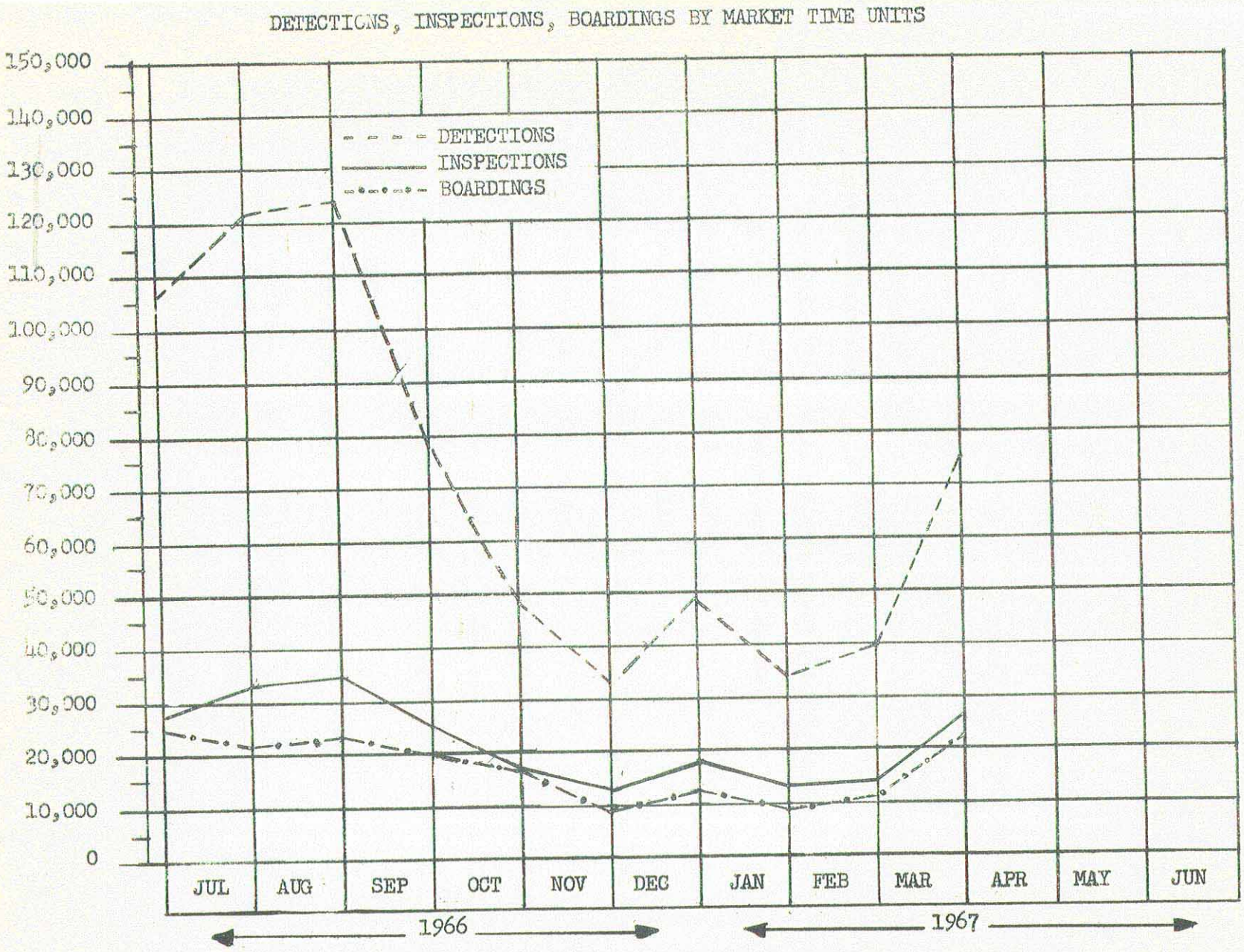


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TOTAL INSPECTED WOOD - DAY 15,706 NIGHT 11,165 27,778
STEEL - DAY 465 NIGHT 442

TOTAL BOARDED WOOD - DAY 16,077 NIGHT 7,019 23,137
STEEL - DAY 32 NIGHT 9

TOTAL DETAINED JUNKS 32 PEOPLE 582

3. Naval Gunfire Support Missions:

TOTAL MISSIONS 14

Structures: 21 destroyed 22 damaged

Bunkers: 6 destroyed 2 damaged

Craft: 4 destroyed 2 damaged 1 captured

4. Hostile Fire Reaction Missions:

TOTAL MISSIONS 10

Structures: 1 destroyed

Bunkers: 4 destroyed

Craft: 1 destroyed 3 damaged

Personnel: 3 Viet Cong killed, 2 probables

5. Evasion Incidents:

TOTAL INCIDENTS 11

Junks: 1 destroyed 4 damaged

Sampans: 1 destroyed 1 damaged 4 captured

Basket boats: 2 destroyed

6. Support of Ground Operations:

TOTAL OPERATIONS 3

Persons Detained: 284



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7. Search and Rescue Missions:

TOTAL MISSIONS 4

Successful: 2

8. Medical Evacuation Missions:

TOTAL MISSIONS 1

Successful: 1

* * *

OPERATION STABLE DOOR

In March STABLE DOOR units detected 27,018 junks and sampans, inspected 7,547, boarded 4,048 and detained 22 junks and 254 persons.

The firepower of the harbor defense SKIMMER boats was increased by the addition of an M-60 machine gun on each boat. The machine gun is mounted on a swivel in the bow of the craft.

At 1050 on 18 March LCPL 47, patrolling in Nha Trang harbor, detained one Viet Cong suspect after he was observed firing a rifle at a barge moored in the inner harbor. The detainee had two sets of identification papers and five rounds of .30 caliber ammunition in his possession. He was turned over to the Vietnamese Navy at the Coastal Surveillance Center in Nha Trang.

During the morning of 20 March LCPL 40, patrolling in Qui Nhon harbor, collided with and sank a Vietnamese fishing junk. The three occupants and their equipment were rescued immediately after the accident. Later in the morning the junk was raised and returned to the Vietnamese. There was little damage to the junk, none to the





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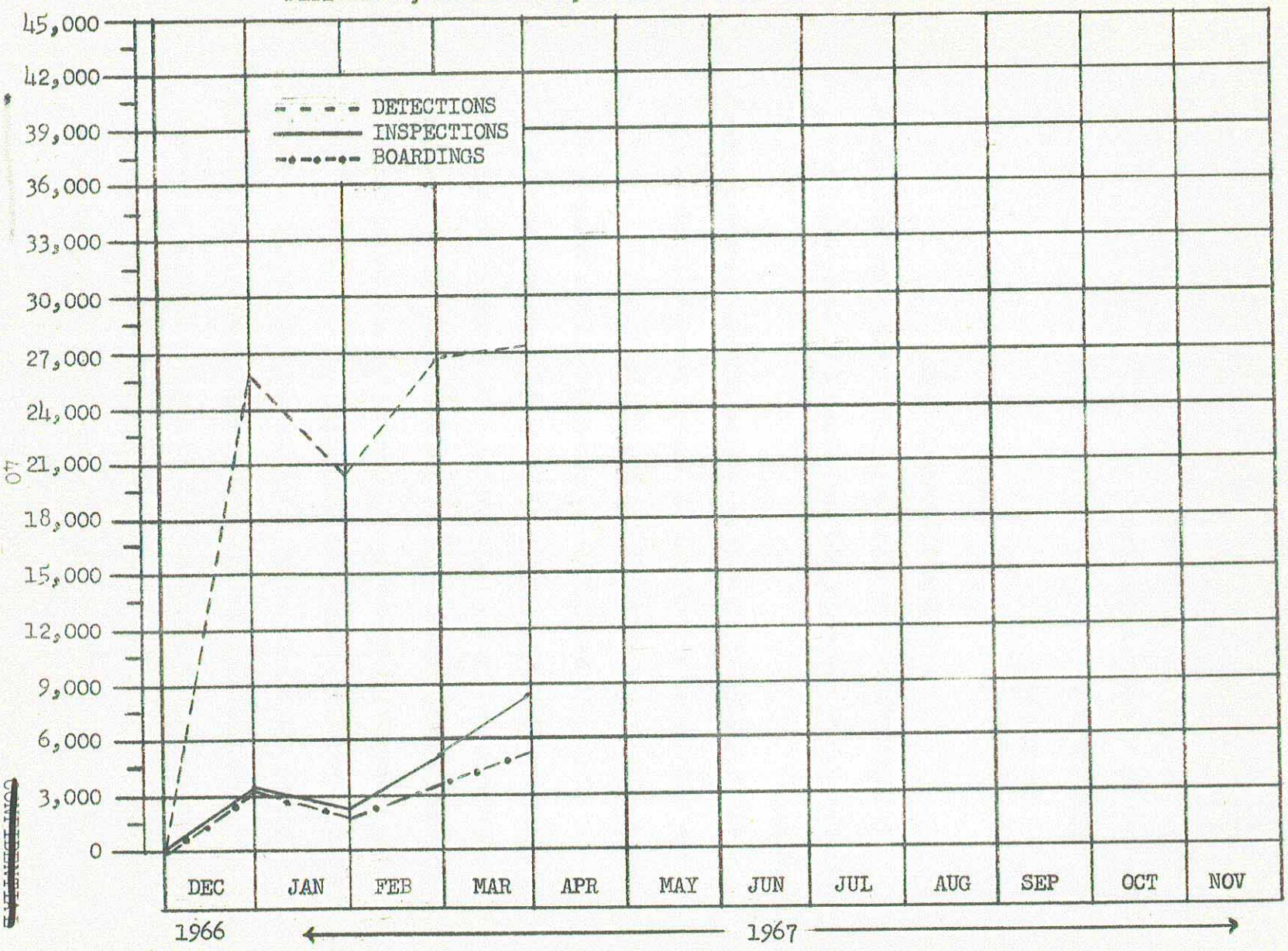
DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY STABLE DOOR UNITS

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LCPL and there were no personnel casualties.

During the month Inshore Underwater Warfare Unit (IUWU) 1 at Vung Tau detained six junks and 58 persons; IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay detained one junk and eight persons; IUWU 3 at Qui Nhon detained seven junks and 32 persons; and IUWU 4 at Nha Trang detained eight junks and 156 persons.

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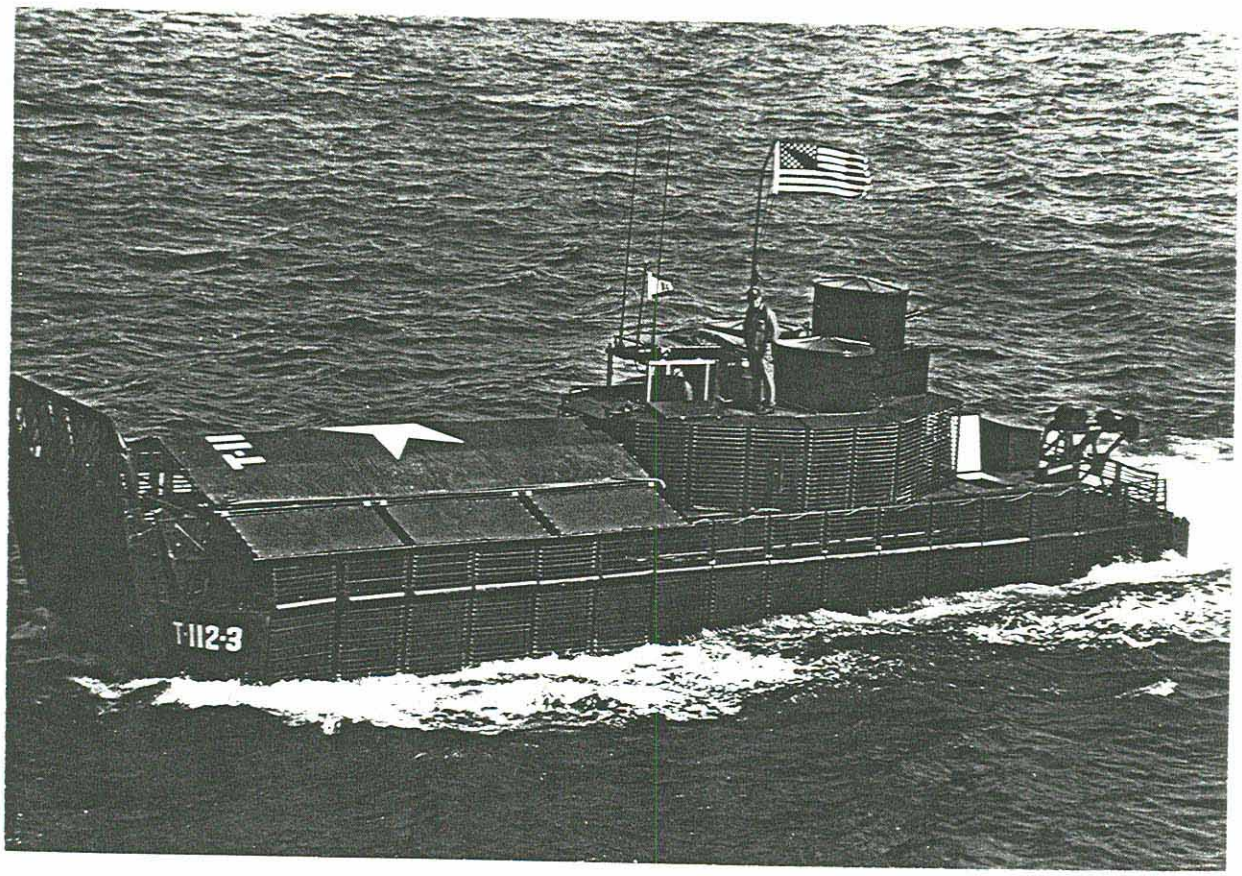


An Armored Troop Carrier (ATC) of the Riverine Assault Force underway off Vung Tau.

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## RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE (TF 117)

In the Rung Sat Special Zone, River Assault Squadron NINE continued to support the U.S. Army's 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, in Operation RIVER RAIDER I. There was no contact with large enemy units, but in several brief skirmishes ground forces killed 12 Viet Cong; 17 more were probably killed. Eight U.S. soldiers were wounded during the operation, which was terminated on 18 March.

In addition to the casualties inflicted on the Viet Cong, numerous enemy camps, bunker complexes, and weapons and supply caches were discovered and destroyed. On 7 March, C Company, 3/47 Infantry, found a large supply of mines, mortar rounds, ammunition and rice in a camp area in Ly Nhon village, in the lower RSSZ. On 10 March, in the same general area, C Company found a camp containing several sampans, 75 TNT blocks, two water mines, and a quantity of documents.

On the last day of Operation RIVER RAIDER I, two Armored Troop Carriers (LCMs especially configured for TF 117 operations) of River Assault Division 91 participated in combat operations for the first time. Previously, all operations had been conducted with River Assault Group boats on loan from the Vietnamese Navy. All together, 12 ATCs arrived during the month.

On 20 March, RAS NINE craft landed a platoon of the 4th Battalion, 47th Infantry, at Quang Xuyen to provide security for artillery units, and then landed elements of the 4/47 Infantry to commence Operation SPEARHEAD I. By the end of the month, SPEARHEAD



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I units had killed five Viet Cong and destroyed a number of enemy camp, bunker and supply sites.

During the month, an advance detachment of the River Flotilla ONE staff was sent to Dong Tam to prepare for the deployment of River Assault Squadron NINE to the Mekong Delta in April. River Assault Squadron ELEVEN, which is scheduled to relieve RAS NINE in support of operations in the RSSZ, arrived in country during the month and commenced training operations.

On 23 March, USS MONTROSE (APA 212) arrived at Vung Tau and relieved USS HENRICO (APA 45) as support ship for riverine operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone.

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## U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

During March, cargo handling operations in I Corps were again highlighted by new tonnage records. At Danang, records were set for cargo backloaded in short (54,773) and measurement (89,256) tons*. The new totals surpassed the previous records, set in February, by 7,577 short tons and 5,992 measurement tons. A new monthly throughput record--157,091 short tons--exceeded the previous high, set in August 1966, by 2,931 short tons.

Thirty-six ships arrived at the port of Danang in March, and 42 ships completed offloading, decreasing the port's backlog by 5,086 measurement tons. During a three-hour period on 28 March the backlog reached the zero mark.

The coastal resupply situation improved considerably. On the 15th, USS CAROLINE COUNTY (LST 525) and USS SNOHOMISH COUNTY (LST 1126) transited the Cua Viet Channel and beached at the newly-constructed LST ramps on the south bank of the Thach Han River. The opening of the Cua Viet to LSTs initiated a new LST supply route and provided Dong Ha with a significant resupply capability.

To facilitate the shuttle of cargo between the LST ramps and the Dong Ha Bridge ramp, nine LCM-8s were transferred to Dong Ha. In addition, a 17-man detachment was assigned to the Cua Viet facility; at month's end, a survey incident to the construction of a permanent cantonment had begun.

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* Short ton: 2,000 pounds; measurement ton: 40 cubic feet of cargo.



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LSTs made 12 trips from Danang to the Cua Viet during March. In addition, smaller landing craft completed 135 round trips to Dong Ha with cargo backloaded from Danang. The tonnage transshipped to Dong Ha from Danang totaled 27,532 measurement tons. The total tonnage delivered to all outlying I Corps sites from Danang was 65,919 measurement tons.

New throughput records of 20,118 short tons and 32,558 measurement tons were established for the port of Dong Ha, exceeding the previous records, set in October 1966, by 8,317 short tons and 7,003 measurement tons.

Continued good weather during March facilitated POL replenishment at all coastal sites. Chu Lai was replenished by T-2 tankers through the 12-inch seaload line throughout the month. At Danang, replenishment was effected by T-1 tankers at Red Beach and T-2 tankers at China Beach. Phu Bai was replenished through the 4-inch bottom-lay line to Tan My. Supplementary POL deliveries by commercial trucks from Danang were suspended on 29 March because of the suspected mining of Highway 1.

Replenishment at Dong Ha was accomplished by using LCM-8s with fuel bladders to shuttle fuel from an AOG. On 17 March, a new 4-inch bottom-lay line was positioned by Amphibious Construction Battalion 1.

Class II and Class IV* supply support continued to improve.

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* Class I: rations, supplies for post exchanges; Class II: clothing, organizational equipment, vehicles; Class III: fuels, lubricants; Class IV: construction materials, special machinery; Class V: ammunition.





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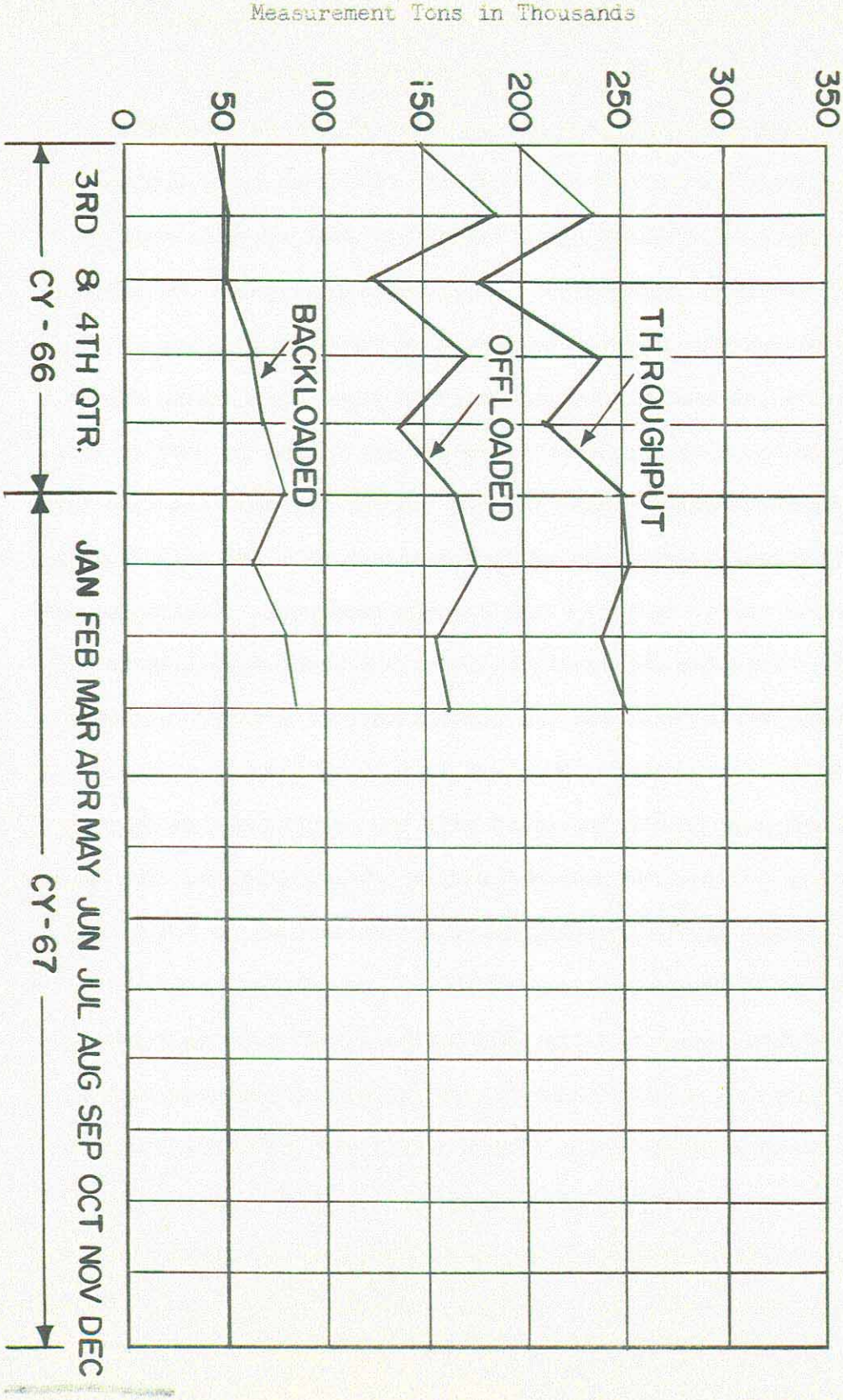




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Net supply requisition effectiveness rose to 90 per cent, a six per cent increase over the February performance figure.

In Danang, significant progress was also made in covered storage construction. A new warehouse (the 17th to be constructed) was occupied on 23 March, increasing the total covered storage area of the base supply depot to 554,000 square feet. An 18th warehouse was 95 per cent complete at month's end.

Among the new facilities placed in service in Danang during the month was a milk plant which began operations on 2 March with an initial production rate of 8,000 gallons per day. At Camp Tien Sha, 12 barracks were readied for occupancy with the installation of interim septic tanks by Public Works personnel. Other projects completed included the installation of a 4-inch water-line to the Vietnamese naval base, and the installation of a new 8-inch water-line from a dam on Monkey Mountain to Camp Tien Sha.

Lighterage assets increased with the arrival of ten Navy LARC-Vs on 5 March and an LCM-8 and an LCU on 23 March. In addition, service craft assets were augmented by the arrival of YOG 76 and YTM 762 on 13 March.

The Naval Support Activity's C-47 aircraft flew 54.2 hours and transported 6,000 pounds of cargo and 185 passengers during the first 11 days of March. The aircraft was grounded from 11 to 24 March for a safety inspection after the crash of the C-47 assigned to NAVSUPPACT Saigon. The Danang aircraft departed on the 24th for the naval air station at Sangley Point for a maintenance inspection.




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The port of Danang was visited 85 times by U.S. SEVENTH Fleet ships. The ships were provided with 566,460 gallons of diesel fuel and 1,063,478 gallons of potable water, in addition to mail, freight, courier, transient billeting and disbursing services.

During the month, the NAVSUPPACT small craft repair facility completed its first regular overhaul of an LCM-8. Overhaul of the craft's four main engines, ramp equipment, air compressors and all electrical components was completed in 37 days, thereby reducing by more than 50 per cent the usual off-station time incident to an overhaul. In addition, AFDL-23 drydocked 71 craft, and YR-70 overhauled 20 diesel engines and three 80-horsepower gasoline engines during March.

In the Dong Ha area a small repair shop, equipped with spare parts for LCM-6s and LCM-8s, was established at the mouth of the Cua Viet River to provide a maintenance capability for craft operating in that area. A five-man detachment was assigned to operate the new facility.

In March the SEVENTH Fleet tank landing ship KEMPER COUNTY (LST 854) offloaded eight tanks on the beach at Phuoc Dien, a Viet Cong-dominated area 50 miles south of Chu Lai. Protective fire was provided by helicopters and jet aircraft during the beaching. A detachment from Underwater Demolition Team 11 at Chu Lai had made a preliminary survey of the beach prior to the landing.

On the 14th the Viet Cong sabotaged a track section of the Vietnamese National Railway System by exploding what was believed





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to be a controlled mine. The incident occurred outside the Esso Terminal at Lien Chieu, nine miles north of Danang. The explosion destroyed two tank cars used to transport aviation gasoline and damaged four others.

The next day the Viet Cong shelled the Danang Air Base with approximately 10 rounds of 140-mm. Russian-type rockets. Naval facilities received minor damage. There were no NAVSUPPACT personnel casualties.

Danang River wreck clearance operations were resumed during March by Team 5 of Harbor Clearance Unit 1. Several sections of the wreck (a Dutch freighter sunk during World War II) were lifted clear of the mud, and a 55-foot boom section and 45 feet of the boom drive shaft were located and recovered. In addition, two other sections of the wreck were readied for lift.

On 31 March, Naval Support Activity personnel strength (including APLs) totaled 8,221, an increase of 143 from the February on board count. At month's end, the total strength of United States and Free World Military Assistance Forces supported by NAVSUPPACT Danang was 110,000.

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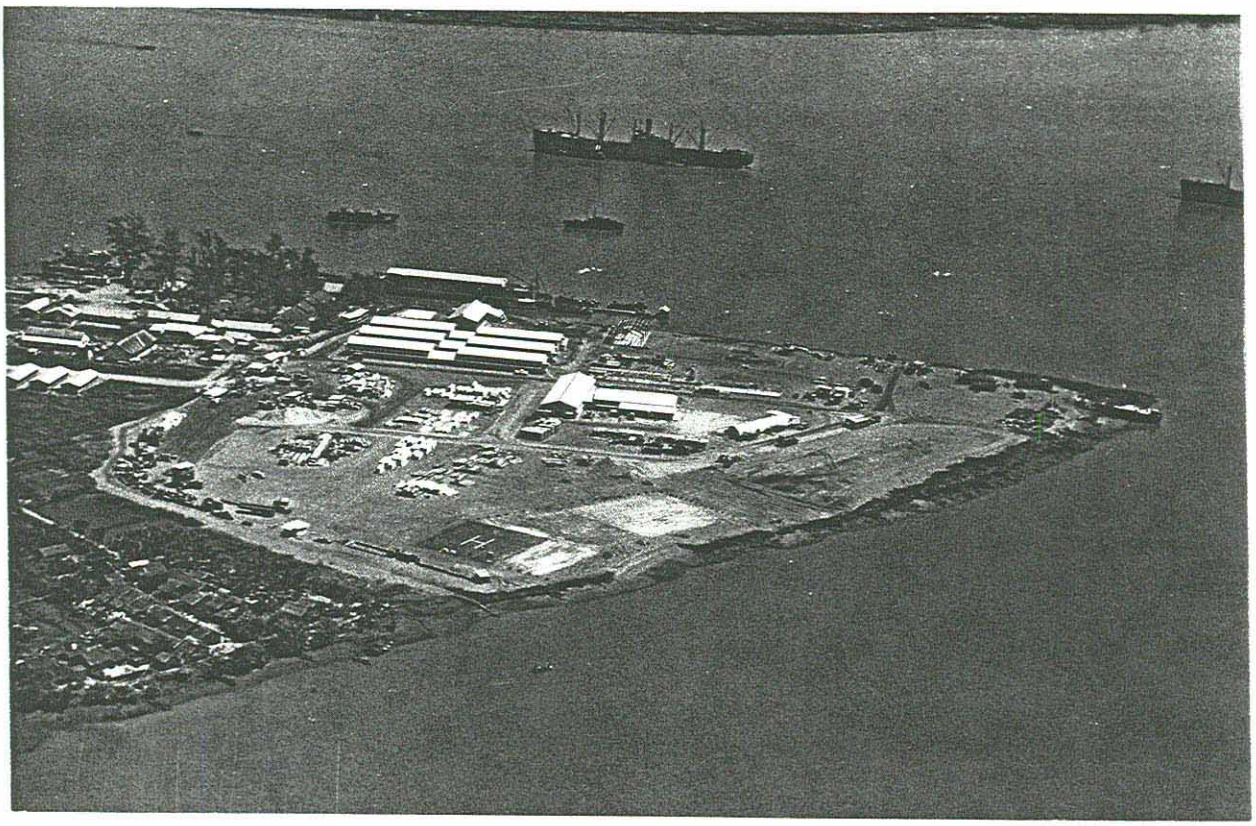

New facilities under construction at Nha Be

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## U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

During March, construction of interim and permanent facilities resulted in a number of important improvements at certain GAME WARDEN and MARKET TIME bases.

At Nha Be, construction of a 150 by 375-foot helicopter pad and runway was essentially complete at month's end. Begun on 14 March, the project entailed the laying of 30,000 square feet of matting and membrane. The material was installed after repeated attempts to achieve soil stabilization at the site had proved unsuccessful. Construction of a post office was also begun, and work on the 1,000-man messhall neared completion.

At Cam Ranh Bay, action was initiated to provide temporary lighting at the pier pending the arrival of the explosive-proof fixtures required for permanent shore power installation. Meanwhile, a new parts warehouse and a garage for automatic repairs were completed. At Qui Nhon, the installation of lighting and temporary shore power outlets at the PCF pier were completed. Erection of a quonset hut to be used as an explosive ordnance demolition (EOD) facility was begun, and the construction of a barbed-wire perimeter fence continued.

At My Tho (which became a permanent base in March), a four-pontoon-deep extension to the original pier was completed. In addition, the power plant and the supply and repair buildings were placed in operation, and work on a POL tank neared completion.

New base construction at Can Tho continued to progress



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satisfactorily. The outer shells were completed on a number of major structures, including the administration building, the hull and machinery repair shops, and the dispensary. Exterior work on the supply building, the laundry, one BOQ and two BEQs also was finished, and interior work was begun in all buildings. Additional new construction completed included the laying of a foundation slab for two POL tanks, and the installation of pilings and a pier section.

NAVSUPPACT detachment personnel at Long Xuyen continued with their preparations for base disestablishment. By 31 March operations had ceased, the inventory and reallocation of Long Xuyen assets had been completed, and the redistribution of equipment to other sites had started. In addition, action was begun to terminate property leases by 1 May.

On 28 March, a U.S. Naval Support Activity detachment was established at Tan Chau, located on the Mekong River ten miles east of the Cambodian border. The detachment became operational with the arrival of YFNB 21. The support craft is capable of providing repairs, supply support, and berthing and messing facilities for a river patrol boat section composed of ten PBRs and 225 personnel.

At Dong Tam, construction of the new Riverine Assault Force support base proceeded at an active pace. Work continued on living quarters and messing facilities, and the installation of a camp drainage system was begun. On 24 March, work on the




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entrance channel was completed. In addition, by the end of the month, a Seabee construction team had commenced pile driving operations incident to the installation of Ammi pontoons*.

Overall support capability increased at Dong Tam with the receipt of additional advance base functional components material. Four additional LSMs were received, bringing the total assigned up to the allowance of eight. Also, a fuel barge was towed to Dong Tam to provide a fuel-storage and LCM-replenishment capability.

Supply gross requisition effectiveness increased to 50 per cent, and net requisition effectiveness rose to 65 per cent. The number of line items stocked by NAVSUPPACT at the end of March numbered 23,772.

Efforts to expedite receipt of certain repair parts critically required for the boat engine overhaul program progressed satisfactorily. By month's end, 91 per cent of the programmed repair parts for scheduled engine overhauls were in the process of distribution to overhaul sites.

During the month the availability of boats continued to be generally excellent, ranging from 92 per cent for LCMs to 96 per cent for PBRs. The availability of PCFs averaged 89 per cent.

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* Simple, lightweight (55-ton) barges; each one measures 90x28x5 feet, has two ramped ends, six spud wells and a flat, open deck. Named for their designer, Dr. Arsham Amerikian, a structural design engineer for the U.S. Naval Facilities Engineering Command.




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The lack of an adequate organic water production capability remained a major problem at some sites. At Cat Lo, failure of the foot-valve in the shallow-well system continued to impede attempts to produce fresh water. The requirements for potable water were met by shuttling water from Vung Tau. In Sa Dec, the repeated difficulties with the shallow well led to preparations for a deep well and the construction of a 600-barrel capacity storage tank.

At Nha Be, potable water storage continued to be critical. Resupply was accomplished by hauling water from Saigon. On 31 March, two newly-arrived 5,000-gallon tank trailers were being readied for use. Meanwhile, fresh water distilling units had been ordered.

On 1 March general messes were established at all NAVSUPPACT detachment sites with the exception of Nha Trang, which was to continue with a field ration mess, and Long Xuyen, where preparations for the disestablishment of the base were in progress. In addition, general mess branches were authorized at Cam Ranh Bay, Cat Lo and Qui Nhon.

On 10 March, a NAVSUPPACT C-47 aircraft crashed near Phan Rang, 18 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay, killing all 28 persons aboard. A preliminary investigation indicated that the aircraft suffered in-flight separation of the port wind due to extreme wing structural overload. Subsequently, all C-47s assigned to NAVSUPPACT's aviation branch (Air Cofat) were grounded pending completion of safety inspections.



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In the meantime, U.S. Air Force aircraft and Navy C-54 and US-2C aircraft were used to meet transportation requirements, delivering a total of 367.5 short tons of cargo during the month. In addition, the ships and craft of NAVSUPPACT transported over 1,120 short tons of cargo in March, the highest monthly total to date.

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## THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

During March--the Seabees' silver anniversary--the eight Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (MCBs) of the 30th Naval Construction Regiment completed almost two million dollars worth of construction in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

A major project completed by MCB-4 was the upgrading of the An Hoa Airfield. A 450-foot parking apron was constructed, and the runway was extended by approximately 1,500 feet to accommodate C-130 aircraft. Additional projects completed by MCB-4 included repairs to the Khe Sanh Airfield and the construction of 19 strongbacks (each one 16 by 32 feet) for the THIRD Marine Division at Khe Sanh.

At Dong Ha, a 149-man detachment from MCB-5 completed the installation of matting for the tank landing ship staging area at the mouth of the Cua Viet River. At the Dong Ha Airfield, 1,460 feet of the runway and turnaround areas were repaired.

Mobile Construction Battalion 8, located at Chu Lai, repaired approximately 50,000 square feet of the Marine Air Group 13 helicopter pad at Ky Ha. Work on the Chu Lai dairy plant also progressed satisfactorily. By month's end, the structural steel work had been completed and concrete decks had been poured for the five 40 by 40-foot Butler buildings comprising the complex.

Projects completed by detachments of MCB-9 included the construction of a 100-foot bridge and five 50-foot towers for U.S. Marine units at Dai Loc. In addition, an airstrip was built for



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U. S. Special Forces at Minh Long, and a complex of 12 Butler buildings was constructed for the FIRST Marine Division.

Mobile Construction Battalion 40, stationed at Chu Lai, completed the construction of five 16 by 64-foot galleys, a 24-foot water tower, and a 40 by 100-foot rigid frame building at the Republic of Korea cantonment at Camp Bi Bong. The battalion also finished work on a large infantry cantonment complex.

In Danang, MCB-58 completed construction of a 23,000 square-yard addition to the southwest parking apron at the air base. A 48 by 144-foot office building for the FIRST Marine Division also was built during the month.

In the Hue/Phu Bai area, a 500-man galley and 6,000 square yards of open storage for the Force Logistics Support Unit were completed by MCB-62. The battalion also constructed 24 buildings, a 500 by 1,350-foot helicopter parking apron and a 100-man galley for a U.S. Marine cantonment.

Newly-arrived MCB-133 continued work on the Vietnamese cantonment at Black Rock Bay. Projects under construction included living structures, a headquarters building, laundry facilities, fuel storage, and sewage, electrical and water distribution systems.

On 7 March, three Seabees from MCB-4 were killed when their jeep, the lead vehicle for a truck convoy traveling from An Hoa to Camp Hoover, struck and detonated a pressure-type mine. As a result of the incident, steel-plating was installed on several trucks as a protective measure. Ten days later one of these trucks



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A member of Seabee Team 0307 helps prepare ground for a new school and church at the Chau Son Monastery in Tuyen Duc province.

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struck a mine; although the vehicle was severely damaged, the two persons in the cab received only minor injuries.

During the month, the six Seabee Teams deployed in Vietnam continued to support the United States Agency for International Development in civic action projects undertaken in support of the Vietnamese Government's Revolutionary Development program. The projects included development of village facilities, medical assistance, and the training of Vietnamese in basic construction skills.

Two of the Seabee Teams were relieved in March. At Bao Trai, in the province of Hau Nghia, Seabee Team 0805 was relieved by Team 0406. In the Delta area, Seabee Team 1009 relieved Seabee Team 1107.

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## SALVAGE OPERATIONS

On 11 March the dredge JAMAICA BAY, sunk at Dong Tam by Viet Cong mines in January, was successfully refloated, culminating two months of intensive effort by the personnel of Harbor Clearance Unit 1.

However, on 12 March, while being towed from Dong Tam to Vung Tau, JAMAICA BAY suddenly encountered rapidly deteriorating weather. Twenty-five knot winds and eight-foot seas subjected the dredge to a series of lashing waves which cracked seams, submersed pumps, and loosened a door patch on the port side amidships. JAMAICA BAY began flooding and taking progressively greater rolls to port in the heavy seas. Eventually she capsized and sank in 36 feet of water, ten miles southwest of Vung Tau. There were no personnel casualties.

Because of the damage incurred by the dredge prior to sinking and the additional damage likely to result from efforts to right and lift the sunken craft, further salvage efforts were deemed to be impractical. At month's end, the final disposition of JAMAICA BAY was under consideration by a marine survey board.

Another salvage operation which occurred during the month involved a U.S. Army aircraft. On 9 March, a UH-1B helicopter crashed into the Long Tau River while taking off from Nha Be. The aircraft burst into flames upon impact with the water, killing five persons.

Salvage operations began immediately, with NAVSUPPACT detachment



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Nha Be and Navy Explosive Ordnance Disposal personnel participating in the search and recovery efforts. The wreckage of the helicopter's fuselage section was subsequently recovered by Light Lift Craft 1 and delivered to the Nha Be helicopter pad. Salvage operations were terminated on 12 March.

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## COMMUNICATIONS

During the month, the COMNAVFORV communications center processed 87,446 messages. Since the beginning of the year the center has processed a message approximately every 30 seconds. The number of messages handled in March by the Naval Support Activity in Danang was 37,680.

The new communications center in Danang was 67 per cent complete by the end of the month, and the receiver and transmitter sites were 63 and 54 per cent complete, respectively. The power supply installation was 75 per cent complete in the communications center, 82 per cent at the receiver site, and 50 per cent at the transmitter site. In addition, the installation of electronic equipment had begun.

The reliability of Danang's data circuit with the major relay station at Phu Lam improved significantly during the month, increasing from 50 per cent in February to 77 per cent in March.

At Cam Ranh Bay, the installation of electronic equipment at the new receiver site was 80 per cent complete; at the communications center and the transmitter site the electronic installation was 35 and 40 per cent complete, respectively. At all three sites the power supply installation was about 50 per cent complete.

On 15 March, Cam Ranh Bay's naval communications station instituted a local area broadcast, similar to the one operated by USS ANNAPOLIS (AGMR 1). The broadcast was intended to improve area coverage and to relieve the burden on the fleet broadcast



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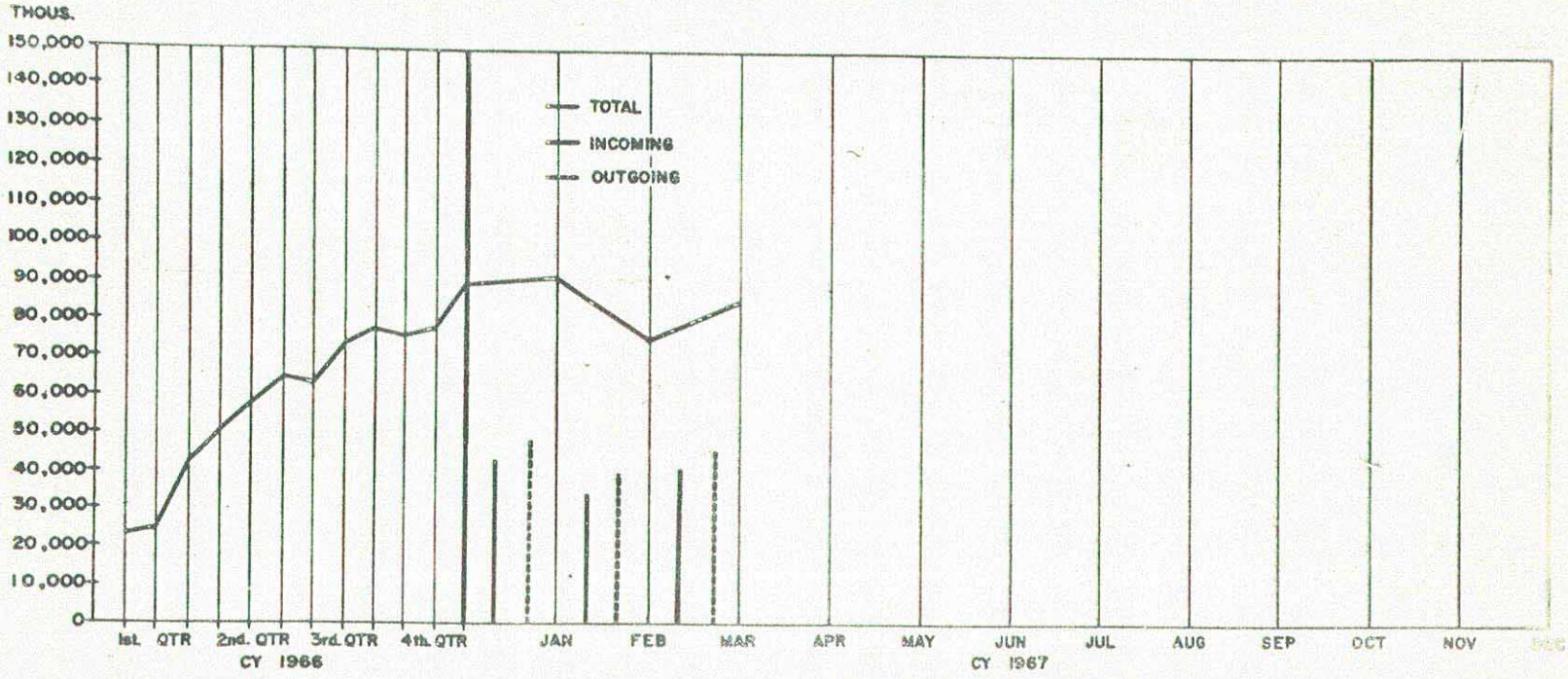
# MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC




PERCENT OF TOTAL

| | | | | | | | | | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| FLASH | 1 | 1 | 1 | | | | | | | | | |
| IMMEDIATE | 21 | 20 | 19 | | | | | | | | | |
| PRIORITY | 60 | 61 | 63 | | | | | | | | | |
| ROUTINE | 18 | 18 | 17 | | | | | | | | | |

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and fleet broadcast overload circuits.

An Air Transportable Communications Unit was deployed to Cam Ranh Bay on 21 March from the naval communications station in the Phillippines, to help satisfy the communications requirements of the Naval Air Facility, Cam Ranh Bay.

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## MILITARY CIVIC ACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

In March, there was a notable increase in the tempo and scope of military civic action projects conducted by the Vietnamese Navy and the Vietnamese Marine Corps.

In the First Coastal Zone, Coastal Group 16 assisted approximately 600 men, women and children who had fled from the seaport town of Sa Huynh when the Viet Cong overran the area on 18 March. The refugees were given food, medical care and other assistance. Later, after the town had been regained and secured by government forces, the refugees were addressed by psychological warfare personnel, and furnished health pamphlets and Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) leaflets and posters prior to their return to Sa Huynh.

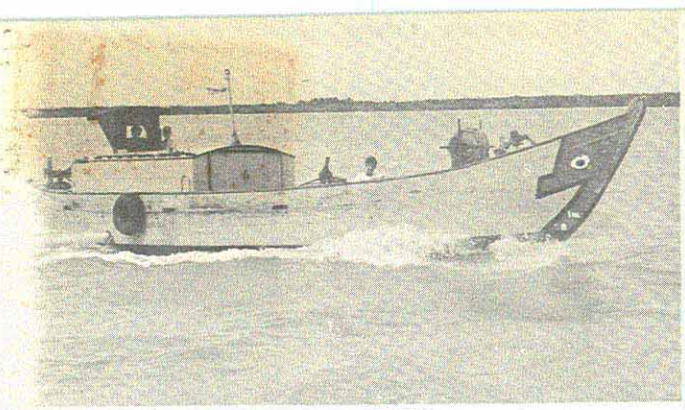
In the Third Coastal Zone, Coastal Group 32 conducted two medical civic action projects (MEDCAPs) during the month, which were planned and executed entirely by Vietnamese naval personnel. Meanwhile, personnel of Coastal Group 36 collected 4,000 piasters to assist in the rebuilding of three houses which had burned down in the village adjacent to their base.

In the Nha Be district, south of Saigon, the Vietnamese Marine Corps' 5th Battalion actively engaged in a pacification mission during the second half of March. Battalion medical teams treated almost 1,500 people. In addition, the battalion built a number of bridges, improved existing structures as requested by local inhabitants, and trucked fresh water daily to as many hamlets as possible.

On 4 March, a second WHAMO (Winning Hearts and Minds Operation) was conducted by Coastal Groups 34 and 37 in the village of Ap An Loi in Kien Hoa province. The operation was announced by leaflets and loudspeaker broadcasts, and some people came from as far away as five miles. One man, in gratitude for the care given his wife, led government personnel to three Viet Cong bunkers and also pointed out the village Viet Cong tax collector.

In Danang, U.S. Navy medical personnel of the Naval Support Activity continued to conduct diverse MEDCAP missions. Doctors and corpsmen from the dispensary held weekly sick call at the Stella Maris Convent, examining and treating over 2,100 patients during the month. In addition, a voluntary medical team of two corpsmen treated 7,803 civilians in hamlets south of Danang, and members of the preventive medicine section of the Danang Hospital performed laboratory work and conducted rodent and pest control operations in villages near Danang, Chu Lai, Phu Bai and Dong Ha. Meanwhile, Seabees of Mobile Construction Battalion 58 (based at Danang's Camp Hoskins) completed the rebuilding of 160 private homes and a five-room maternity clinic. The structures, situated in Phuoc Quang hamlet, had been destroyed by fire.

During the second week of March, a widespread Chieu Hoi campaign was inaugurated by U.S. and Vietnamese naval personnel to inform the Viet Cong that they could rally to ships and craft of both navies. In addition to loudspeaker broadcasts, leaflets were distributed showing pictures of U.S. and Vietnamese craft and



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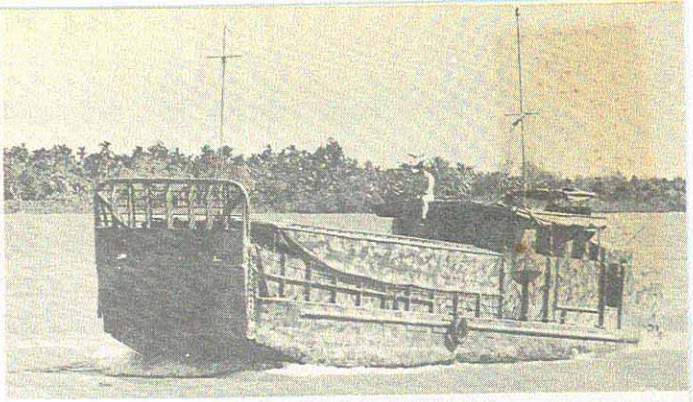

RAG TROOP CARRIER

PBR

PCF

Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Leaflet

**Hỡi các bạn ở vùng bến nước sông bê!**

**Các bạn muốn trở về với Chánh nghĩa Quốc gia thì nên theo đúng những lời chỉ dẫn dưới đây:**

1. GIẤU KỸ SÚNG ĐẠN CỦA CÁC BẠN, NHỚ NƠI CẤT GIẤU ĐỂ SAU ĐẾN LẤY, ĐEM NẠP, LĨNH THƯỞNG.

2. ĐẾN GẦN TÀU THUYỀN HẢI-QUÂN VIỆT-NAM HAY ĐỒNG MINH, CÓ IN ẢNH TRÊN ĐÂY. HAI TAY DƠ LÊN CAO ĐỂ TỎ THIỆN CHÍ CỦA CÁC BẠN.

3. THỦY THỦ ĐÃ ĐƯỢC CHỈ THỊ NIỀM NỞ TIẾP ĐÓN CÁC BẠN VÀ ĐƯA CÁC BẠN ĐẾN MỘT TRUNG-TÂM CHIÊU HỒI.

**Hãy trở về ngay bây giờ với Chính nghĩa Quốc gia để cùng toàn dân xây dựng nước Việt-Nam độc lập, phú cường.**

**Giấy này cũng là giấy thông hành của các bạn.** 494-67

LITERAL TRANSLATION OF CHIEU HOI LEAFLET

You who are living in the water zones, along the rivers and the coast!

If you want to return to the national cause, you should follow exactly the following advice:

1. Hide carefully your weapons and ammunition, and remember the place where you hide them, so that you may come to get them later and deliver them to the RVN authorities for a reward.

2. Approach the VNN or Allied forces' ships or boats (their pictures are seen above) raising your hands to show your good will.

3. The sailors have been instructed to welcome you warmly and take you to an open-arms center.

Return to the national cause right now to build up, together with all our people, an independent, wealthy and powerful Vietnam.

This paper is also your pass.

containing rallying instructions. By the end of the month, the new leaflets had accounted for two ralliers, one to a PBR, and one to a River Assault Group craft.

The following is a tabulation of certain military civic action projects conducted by naval forces during March. Construction projects involving renovation or repair are so indicated with an R.

| | | USN | VNN | TOTAL |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Construction: | | | |
| | a. Bridges | 0 | 1R | 1R |
| | b. Dwellings/number of families | 167/167 | 0 | 167/167 |
| | c. Hospitals | 1R | 0 | 1R |
| | d. Leveling and grading projects | 3 | 0 | 3 |
| | e. Libraries | 1 | 0 | 1 |
| | f. Playgrounds | 1R | 0 | 1R |
| | g. Schools/classrooms | 2R/2 | 0 | 2R/2 |
| | h. Wells | 1R | 0 | 1R |
| 2. | Medical treatments: | | | |
| | a. General medicine | 12,140 | 450 | 12,590 |
| | b. Dental | 510 | 0 | 510 |
| | c. Surgery | 5 | 0 | 5 |
| | d. Emergency evacuations | 49 | 3 | 52 |
| 3. | Health and sanitation: | | | |
| | a. Classes on personal hygiene/ attendance | 13/982 | 0 | 13/982 |
| | b. Immunizations | 390 | 0 | 390 |
| | c. Medical aides or nurses trained | 4 | 0 | 4 |
| | d. Physical examinations | 17 | 0 | 17 |
| 4. | Distribution of commodities (pounds unless otherwise specified): | | | |
| | a. Cement | 13,200 | 0 | 13,200 |
| | b. Clothing | 1,700 | 0 | 1,700 |
| | c. Food | 11,800 | 11,000 | 22,800 |
| | d. Lumber (board feet) | 80,000 | 0 | 80,000 |
| | e. Medical, non-prescription | 2,060 | 15 | 2,075 |
| | f. Physical education kit (number) | 250 | 0 | 250 |
| | g. School kits (number) | 225 | 0 | 225 |
| | h. Tin sheets (number) | 930 | 0 | 930 |
| | i. Woodworking kits | 12 | 0 | 12 |
| | j. Books and newspapers (number) | 18,000 | 6,000 | 24,000 |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| k. | Baby food (cases) | 15 | 0 | 15 |
| l. | Cooking oil (gals.) | 100 | 0 | 100 |
| m. | Milk (dehydrated) (gals.) | 312 | 0 | 312 |
| n. | Toothpaste (cases) | 2 | 0 | 2 |
| o. | Sewing kits | 35 | 0 | 35 |
| p. | Textile kits | 0 | 150 | 150 |
| q. | Nails | 25 | 0 | 25 |
| r. | Plastic envelopes | 1,200 | 0 | 1,200 |
| s. | Used boots (pairs) | 115 | 0 | 115 |
| t. | Games (sets) | 114 | 0 | 114 |
| u. | Paint (gals.) | 58 | 0 | 58 |
| v. | School supplies | 10 | 0 | 10 |
| w. | 55-gallon drums | 31 | 0 | 31 |
| 5. | Educational efforts: | | | |
| | a. English classes/attendance | 15/1710 | 2/50 | 117/1760 |
| 6. | Voluntary piaster contributions in support of: | | | |
| | a. Hospitals | 10,000 | 0 | 10,000 |
| | b. Religious needs | 30,000 | 0 | 30,000 |
| | c. Schools | 24,000 | 0 | 24,000 |
| | d. Fire victims | 8,000 | 8,000 | 16,000 |

* * *

## Military Provincial Health Assistance Program

The efforts of the six U.S. Navy medical teams assigned to the Military Provincial Health Assistance Program (MILPHAP) continued to display evidence of gradual progress.

In Quang Duc province, the assistance of a section of Navy Team 4 helped spur a more active malaria-control program during the month. A regular schedule of visits to outlying hamlets was begun; during the visits, DDT spraying, health education and medical prophylaxis were provided. In the districts of Kien Duc and Kiem Duc, attempts were being made to provide all citizens with malaria tablets at two-week intervals.

In Lam Dong province, where Navy Team 4 is located, recent

increases in the supply of blood have made a significant difference in the ability of the provincial hospital to treat military and civilian casualties.

On 2 March, in Kien Phong province (the locale of Navy Team 5), South Vietnam's Minister of Health went to Cao Lanh and laid the cornerstone for a new surgical suite. The suite will be constructed in the present hospital compound area, at a cost of four million piasters.

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## NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

### VIETNAMESE NAVY

At the end of March the personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) stood at 16,156 officers and men, a decrease of 135 men from February but still 80 men over the authorized allowance of 16,076. The monthly number of unauthorized absentees decreased from 451 to 391, but the number of deserters increased from 43 to 117. Of the 117 deserters discharged, 81 were enlisted men in the E1 to E3 ratings and two were non-commissioned officers; the remainder were recruits in training or awaiting training.

#### Fleet Command

The Fleet Command maintained eleven ships on station off the coast of South Vietnam, four ships on river patrol and one ship on convoy escort duty between Vung Tau and Tan Chau. The availability of Fleet Command patrol ships dropped from 27 in February to 24 in March. Thirty-one gunfire support missions were fired during the month and 197 junks were searched.

Patrol Craft (PCs and PCEs) patrolled the coasts of the First, Second and Fourth naval zones and fired eleven gunfire support missions. Two missions fired by PCE 12 in the Second Naval Zone on 1 and 5 March accounted for the destruction of one bridge and numerous structures in the village of Ninh Phouc, in Khanh Hoa province. On 27 March PCE 7, in company with USCGC POINT ARDEN and USS FECHTELER (DD 870), suppressed Viet Cong recoilless rifle





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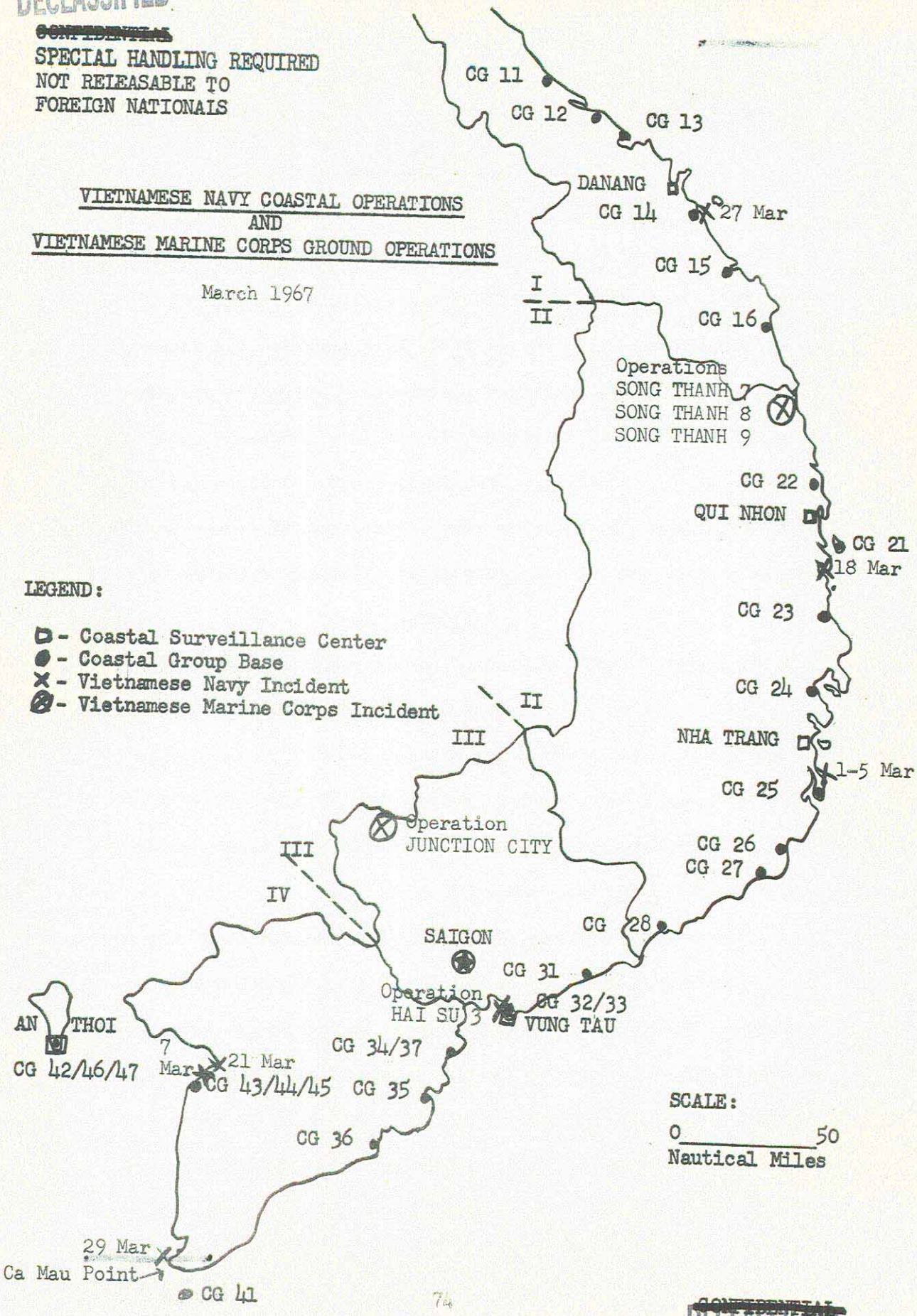
# VIETNAMESE NAVY COASTAL OPERATIONS AND VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS GROUND OPERATIONS

March 1967



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fire in the vicinity of Quang Ngai, in Quang Ngai province.

Gunboats (PGMs) conducted coastal and river patrols in the four naval zones and the Rung Sat Special Zone, firing four gunfire support missions with unknown results. On 5 March, PGM 613 collided with a civilian junk at the entrance to Danang harbor, killing three people and sinking the junk. Four other persons were rescued.

Support landing ships (LSSLs and LSILs) provided patrol, gunfire support and convoy escort services in the Third Naval Zone, the RSSZ and the Fourth Riverine Area. On 4 March LSIL 331 conducted a gunfire support mission on the Bassac River, 53 miles downstream from Can Tho, destroying two bunkers and four structures. On 16 March LSIL 328 supported Go Cong sector forces, LSMH (Landing Ship, Medium, Hospital) 401 and units of Coastal Groups 32 and 33 in Operation HAI SU 3 at Ganh Rai Point, in Phuoc Tuy province.

At 0850 on the 23rd, while patrolling on the Ham Luong River near Heo Island, LSSL 231 came under a heavy recoilless rifle attack. The ship sustained numerous hits and suffered 29 casualties; nine were killed, including the Executive Officer, and 20 were wounded, including the Commanding Officer and the U.S. advisor. The ship proceeded to Ben Tre under her own power and then to Saigon for repairs.

Minesweepers (MSCs) were deployed on coastal patrol in the




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First Naval Zone and MSMSs continued their daily sweep operations on the Saigon, Long Tau and Nha Be rivers.

A total of 3,763 tons of cargo and 4,168 personnel were lifted in 21 logistical missions. Medium landing ships (LSMs) lifted 1,754 tons of cargo and 2,712 personnel. Utility landing craft (LCUs) lifted 292 tons of cargo and 427 personnel, and LST 502 lifted 1,717 tons of cargo and 969 personnel. LST 500 remained in port for a pre-overhaul availability and LST 501 remained in port for upkeep. A yard oiler, YOG 470, transported fuel to An Thoi, on Phu Quoc Island.

During the month, the VNN Underwater Demolition Team (LDNN) had six of its men assigned to the U.S. Navy SEAL Team, Detachment "G", based at Nha Be. The six men underwent special training prior to joining the SEALs for patrol and ambush missions. From 3 to 7 March, fifteen LDNN personnel surveyed beaches on Hon Island, south of Phan Thiet, in response to a request by Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. On 5 March, 11 miles from Saigon, three LDNN personnel searched the Long Tau River unsuccessfully for a downed U.S. helicopter. From 14 to 20 March, 17 LDNN personnel assisted in the recovery of weapons from the enemy trawler intercepted by MARKET TIME units off Quang Ngai province.

## Coastal Force

In March an average of 249 Coastal Force junks was available each day for operations and 119 were utilized. The number of





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junks searched was 17,998, an increase of 3,410 over February's effort. Coastal units searched an average of 4.9 craft per unit per day.

On 13 March, in the First Naval Zone, the Viet Cong bombarded the Coastal Group 14 base at Cua Dai with six rounds of 60-mm. mortar ammunition. Fire was returned with unknown results. On 27 March, Coastal Group 14 again was attacked, but this time by 81-mm. mortar and small arms fire. The Coastal Group losses were one killed and five wounded. Intelligence reports placed Viet Cong losses at 24 killed and seven wounded.

On the morning of 14 March, following the destruction of the trawler off Quang Ngai, PCE 7, MSC 114 and units of Coastal Groups 15 and 16 helped provide security for the area and support for the subsequent salvage operations.

On 18 March, 25 miles south of Qui Nhon, Coastal Group 23 conducted a search and destroy operation on the south shore of the Xuan Dai Peninsula in the Second Naval Zone. Seven Viet Cong were killed during the operation and two others rallied as defectors. One Mauser rifle and eight grenades were captured.

On 2 March the Third Naval Zone's Coastal Group 36, together with Vinh Binh sector forces, conducted an operation 20 miles south of Phu Vinh, on the north bank of the Bassac River. Three Viet Cong were killed and two were captured. In the early morning hours of 13 March, the same units and LSIL 329 returned in




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Operation TRAN TRUNG TIEN 12/67. One Viet Cong was killed in this operation and eleven suspects were detained. On 24 March, Coastal Group 35 conducted a search and destroy operation 11 miles southeast of Phu Vinh. Several structures, 12 tons of rice, and numerous bunkers were destroyed.

Most of the activity in the Fourth Naval Zone was centered in the vicinity of the Cai Lon River, the passage used by junks proceeding from Kien An to the sea. On 7 March Coastal Groups 43, 44 and 45, a raider company from Kien Giang sector and Regional Force Company 595 conducted an operation 10 miles southwest of Rach Gia. The results included one Viet Cong killed and four suspects detained. On 21 March, the same Coastal Groups conducted an operation at the mouth of the Cai Lon River, five miles southwest of Rach Gia. One Viet Cong was killed and a Russian-type rifle, a locally-made grenade and a quantity of ammunition were captured.

On the morning of the 29th, units of Coastal Group 41, based on Poulo Island, and the USCGC POINT MAST engaged in a fire fight with seven Viet Cong junks west of Ca Mau Point. Two junks were destroyed, three were captured and two escaped. Two Viet Cong were killed.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

During the month, there were 22 River Assault Group (RAG) operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone and 11 in the Fourth



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U.S. and Vietnamese troops go ashore from a landing craft on Loc Thanh Ha Island during Operation OVERLORD II.

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Riverine Area. The RAG units also conducted river patrols, escort duty and psychological warfare missions, and assisted in base defense. An average of 109 craft of an available 146 was used daily. All together, the craft searched 3,543 junks, and 8,759 suspects. Ten persons and 64 junks were detained.

From 6 to 19 March, in the RSSZ, ten craft of RAGs 24 and 28 provided support for units of the U.S. Army's 199th Infantry Brigade, NINTH Division, and the 25th Vietnamese Army Division participating in Operation OVERLORD II. The mission of the operation was to secure the area around an old French fort on Loc Thanh Ha Island. The fort, located at the junction of the Rach Cat, Vam Co and Soirap rivers, 15 miles south of Saigon, was earmarked for permanent use by U.S. troops.

On Tuesday, 7 March, during the early morning hours, the troops were embarked at Nha Be and transported to the landing site near the fort. At 0805 all troops were ashore and RAG units, together with six PBRs and two SEAL boats, commenced blocking operations on the Rach Cat River from the fort to the Nuoc Mang Canal. During the days to follow, RAG units were called upon to ferry troops to various landing zones on the island, provide security, transport water and supplies to the troops, and carry suspects to Nha Be for interrogation. During the successful operation, 15 Viet Cong were killed, 16 were captured, and 101 suspects were detained. A total of 19 Viet Cong defected under



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the amnesty program.

In the Fourth Riverine Area, seven river craft of RAG 21 participated in Operation CUU LONG 77/GC/67 on 9 March. The operation was conducted by Go Cong sector forces in an area three and a half miles southeast of Go Cong. The participating units included three Regional Force companies, one 105-mm. howitzer platoon and one 4.2-inch mortar platoon. One Viet Cong was killed in the operation, six were captured, and seven suspects were detained.

In Operation CUU LONG 78/GC/67, RAGs 21 and 33 supported units of the SEVENTH ARVN Infantry Division. The operation was conducted on 12 March near the mouth of the Soirap River and resulted in 30 Viet Cong killed, and the seizure of 21 weapons and over 200 rounds of ammunition.

Operation CUU LONG 57/SD was conducted 24-26 March ten miles south of My Tho by the SEVENTH ARVN Infantry Division, LCU 537 and 29 river craft from RAGs 21, 23, 27, 31 and 33. Fifteen Viet Cong were killed during the operation, and 171 were captured. In addition, 72 suspects were detained and 24 mines and 350 hand grenades were seized. There were no friendly casualties.

Maintenance and Supply

The shortage of skilled personnel continued to be the most serious problem at the naval shipyard in Saigon. During March, 17 skilled workers were lost to better-paying employment elsewhere.



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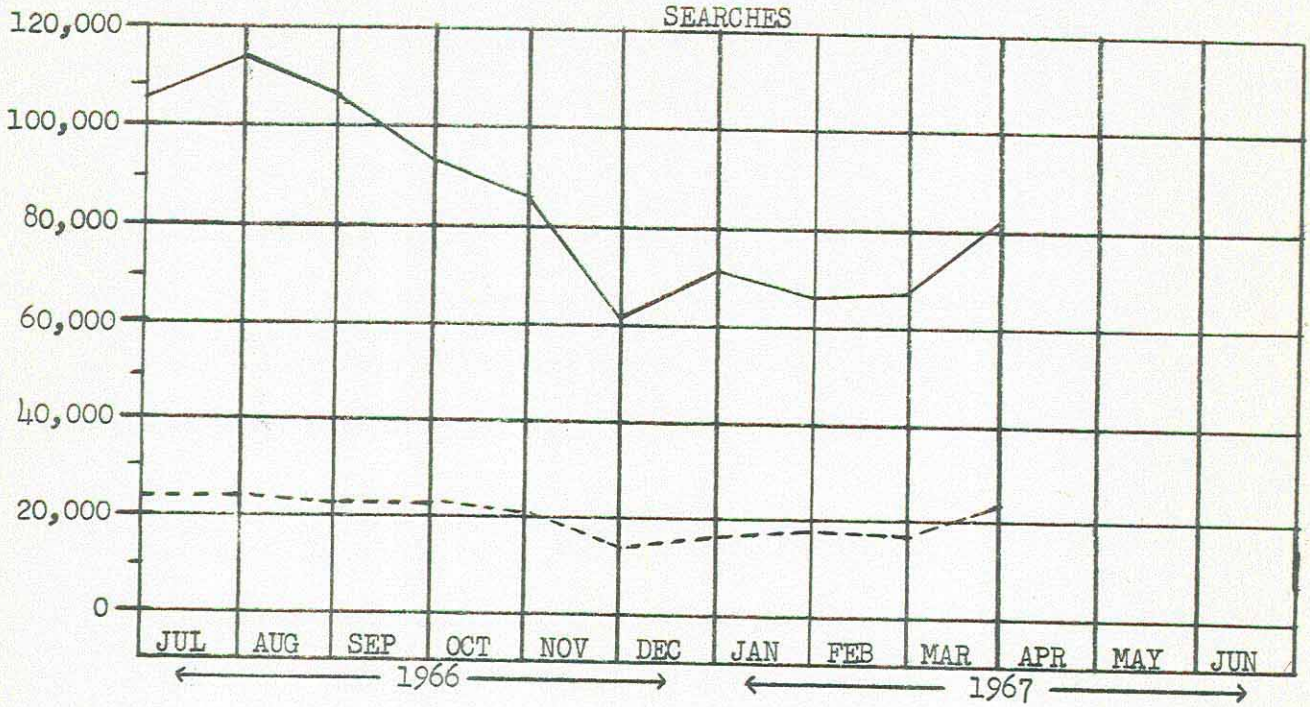
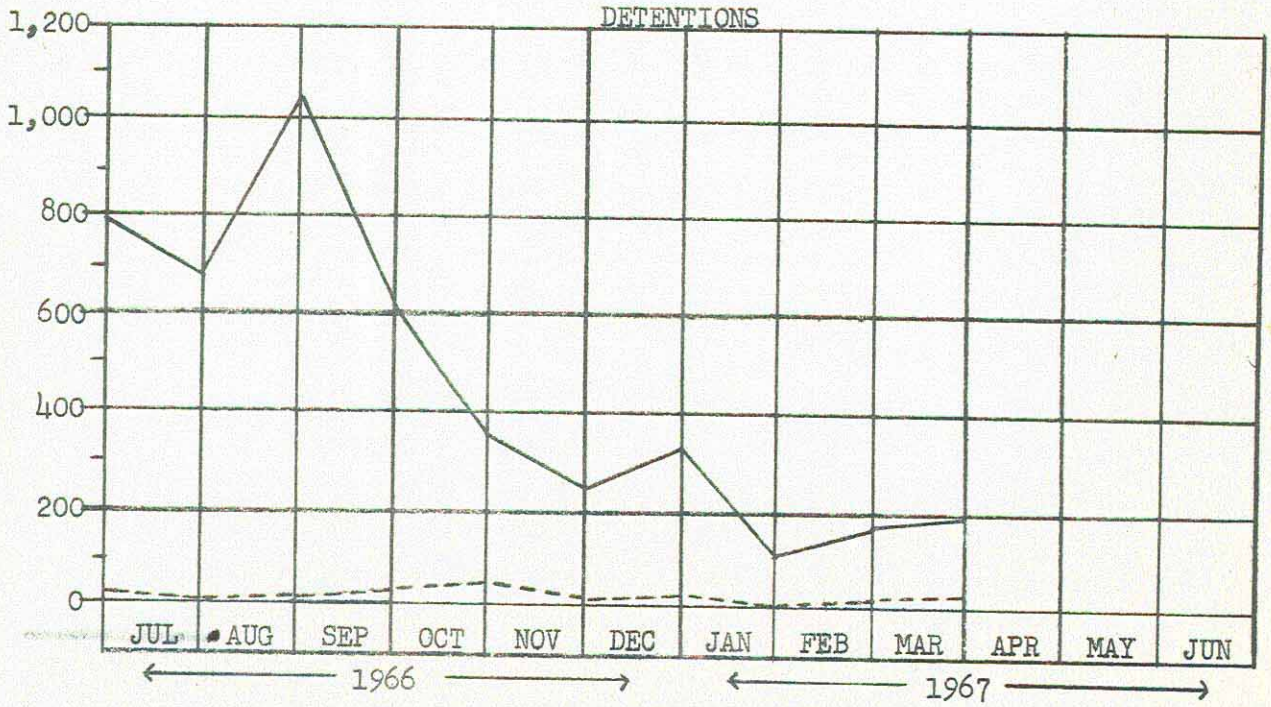
SEARCHES AND DETENTIONS BY VIETNAMESE NAVY
SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES



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The shortage has resulted in delays in completing overhauls for RAG craft. Thirty-five craft are now delayed, an increase of four over February's figure.

At the naval supply center in Saigon, a training program was conducted for storekeepers. The course of instruction covered the new procedures required for the operation of the naval zone command supply depots now being established. On 24 March, the first class of storekeepers was graduated.

Vietnamese Navy Statistical Summary
March 1967

| | Searched | | Detained | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Coastal Force | Junks | People | Junks | People |
| I NZ | 5,304 | 23,012 | 0 | 55 |
| II NZ | 3,382 | 12,268 | 0 | 51 |
| III NZ | 6,629 | 27,050 | 2 | 4 |
| IV NZ | 2,683 | 7,959 | 0 | 1 |
| Sub-Totals | 17,998 | 70,289 | 2 | 111 |
| Fleet Command | | | | |
| Patrol Ships | 197 | 983 | 1 | 24 |
| Riverine Area | | | | |
| Craft | 3,543 | 8,759 | 10 | 64 |
| Totals | 21,738 | 80,031 | 13 | 199 |

* * *

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

In March Brigade Force A, composed of a headquarters and the 1st and 5th Marine battalions, continued participation with the U.S. Army's FIRST and 25th infantry divisions in Operation JUNCTION CITY in Tay Ninh province.



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On the first day of the month, the 5th Battalion discovered an extensive Viet Cong base camp consisting of 15 structures and one tunnel. Twelve hundred pounds of rice were seized and destroyed. During the same period, the battalion engaged a small Viet Cong force of three or four men in the area, killing one Viet Cong.

On 2 March, the brigade force was lifted to Trai Bi in helicopters provided by the 145th Aviation Battalion. On the following two days, the force assisted in the defense of the division artillery forward base in the vicinity of Trai Bi and acted as the 25th Division's ready reaction force.

The brigade force was moved by helicopter into an area of operations west of Trai Bi on 5 March where the 1st Battalion, reinforced by the 5th Mechanized Infantry, conducted search and destroy operations. On 8 March, the 1st Battalion destroyed 216 Viet Cong underground fortifications and 23 enemy structures; in addition, 2,600 pounds of rice were seized. On the following two days, a number of additional Viet Cong structures were destroyed, and quantities of weapons, documents, medical supplies and rice were captured. On 11 March, the brigade force's participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY was terminated and the force was returned to Saigon.

Brigade Force B, consisting of a headquarters, the 3rd and 4th Marine battalions, and Battery C of the artillery battalion,



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Vietnamese Marines engage in hand-to-hand combat training at their base camp in Thu Duc.

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continued to operate in the Bong Son/Duong Lieu areas of the II Corps Tactical Zone under the operational control of the 22nd ARVN Division. On 3 March the force began a search and destroy mission, Operation SONG THANH 7, three miles west of Tam Quan. The operation was terminated on 8 March with the following results: 17 Marines wounded: seven Viet Cong killed, six captured and eight suspects detained. Also captured were two K-50 submachine guns, one Thompson submachine gun, one French 7.5-mm. rifle, one M-2 carbine, three hand grenades, one "claymore" mine and 200 rounds of assorted ammunition.

Operation SONG THANH 8, a one-day search and destroy mission, was conducted on 12 March near the Bong Son River and resulted in light contact with the enemy. Two Viet Cong were captured and 44 suspects were detained. One Vietnamese Marine was wounded by misdirected fire from an armed helicopter.

On 18 March the brigade force began Operation SONG THANH 9, a search and destroy operation west and northwest of Bong Son in the An Lao Valley. With the 2nd Battalion on the eastern side of the An Lao River and the 3rd Battalion on the western side, the brigade force began searching an area three miles wide astride the river. At 1400 on 18 March, the 3rd Battalion made contact with a Viet Cong squad. Two Viet Cong were killed and two AR-50 submachine guns, eight magazines and two hand grenades were captured. At 1700, the battalion captured two Viet Cong and detained two




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suspects. One Vietnamese Marine was wounded in the action. That night the Viet Cong threw two hand grenades into the 3rd Battalion's night defensive perimeter, wounding seven Marines. During the same night, a 2nd Battalion ambush captured two Viet Cong and detained five suspects.

At 1000 on 19 March, the 3rd Battalion killed one Viet Cong and captured one North Vietnamese soldier. The battalion was then stopped by a Viet Cong platoon which was firing from caves located above the battalion's position. Two Marines were killed and 13 were wounded in the encounter. After artillery fire failed to suppress the enemy fire, napalm strikes were called in. When the caves were subsequently searched, there was no trace of the Viet Cong.

Meanwhile, on the eastern side of the river, the 2nd Battalion captured 19 Viet Cong and detained 16 suspects. The Viet Cong were wearing uniforms but were not carrying weapons when they were captured.

On 20 March a U.S. L-19 aircraft was shot down near the brigade force positions. Security was established around the downed aircraft as the pilot was rescued by a U.S. Marine advisor and evacuated by force personnel. During the rescue, the 3rd Battalion sustained one Marine killed and three wounded when the enemy fired from caves above the battalion's position. The fire was suppressed but the extent of Viet Cong casualties was




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undetermined. That same day, the 2nd Battalion captured nine Viet Cong and detained six suspects. On 21 March the brigade force, while providing perimeter security around a downed, damaged L-19, captured three Viet Cong and detained 18 suspects.

From 22 to 30 March the force continued search and destroy operations, moving northward and killing 13 enemy troops, capturing four, and detaining 11 suspects. Two Vietnamese Marines were killed and 12 were wounded during the period. On 30 March the brigade force reversed its direction of movement and headed south, evacuating the local population from the valley. Habitations were destroyed during the movement, marking the area as a free strike zone. The operation continued through the end of March as over 4,000 refugees were being evacuated from the valley for resettlement.

The 1st Marine Battalion, which had participated in Operation JUNCTION CITY, assisted the national police in the Saigon/Cholon area on 15 and 16 March by searching for and apprehending draft dodgers and deserters. From 17 to 30 March, general training and M-16 rifle familiarization were conducted at the Marine base camp near Thu Duc. On 31 March, the battalion was deployed in the An Phu area of the Capital Military District to suppress possible Viet Cong activity during the promulgation, on 1 April, of South Vietnam's newly-written constitution.

The 4th Battalion continued training at its base camp in Vung



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Tau until 11 March when the battalion was moved into the Rung Sat Special Zone. River Assault Group 22 supported the battalion as search and destroy operations were begun on 12 March and were continued through the end of the month. As of 31 March, the Marines had suffered no casualties while killing eight Viet Cong and detaining 14 suspects. A number of weapons had been seized and eight sampans had been destroyed.

The 6th Battalion was moved from its Thu Duc base camp to the national training center at Van Kiep on 6 March, beginning a formal cycle of training designed to augment and refine individual and team skills developed during the formative training period in the base camp. The battalion remained in a training status throughout March.

Vietnamese Marine Corps Statistical Summary
March 1967

VC/NVA: 39 KIA, 49 VC Captured, 124 VC Suspects detained.

VNMC: 6 KIA, 68 WIA.

Weapons and Ordnance Captured:

| | |
|---|---|
| AR-50 SMGs | 2 |
| K-50 SMGs | 2 |
| MAS-36 rifles | 1 |
| U.S. carbines | 2 |
| Thompson SMGs | 3 |
| MAS carbines | 1 |
| MAS-49 rifles | 1 |
| Browning Automatic Rifles | 1 |
| M-1 rifles | 4 |
| Soviet light machine guns, (w/100 rds. ammo.) | 1 |
| Czech. rifles | 1 |



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| | |
|---|---|
| Rifles (.22 cal.) | 1 |
| French rifles | 2 |
| Ithaca shotguns | 2 |
| Springfield (1903) rifles | 2 |
| K-40 SMGs | 1 |
| B-40 rocket launchers | 1 |
| Claymore mines (Chinese, 10-kilogram) | 2 |
| Claymore mines (20-kilogram) | 2 |
| AT mines | 5 |
| Mines (two-kilogram) | 1 |
| Rifle grenades | 25 |
| Hand grenades | 40 |
| K-50 magazines | 1 |
| Assorted ammunition (rds.) | 662 |
| AR-50 magazines | 8 |
| Accessory kits (75-mm. recc. rifle) | 1 |

Seized and/or Destroyed Material:

| | |
|---|---|
| Rice (kilograms) | 13,600 |
| Medicine (bottles) | 1,000 |
| Sewing machines | 1 |
| Shirts | 20 |
| Paper (reams) | 2 |
| Printing ink (cans) | 15 |
| Bicycles | 6 |
| Tool heads | 25 |
| Sampans | 8 |

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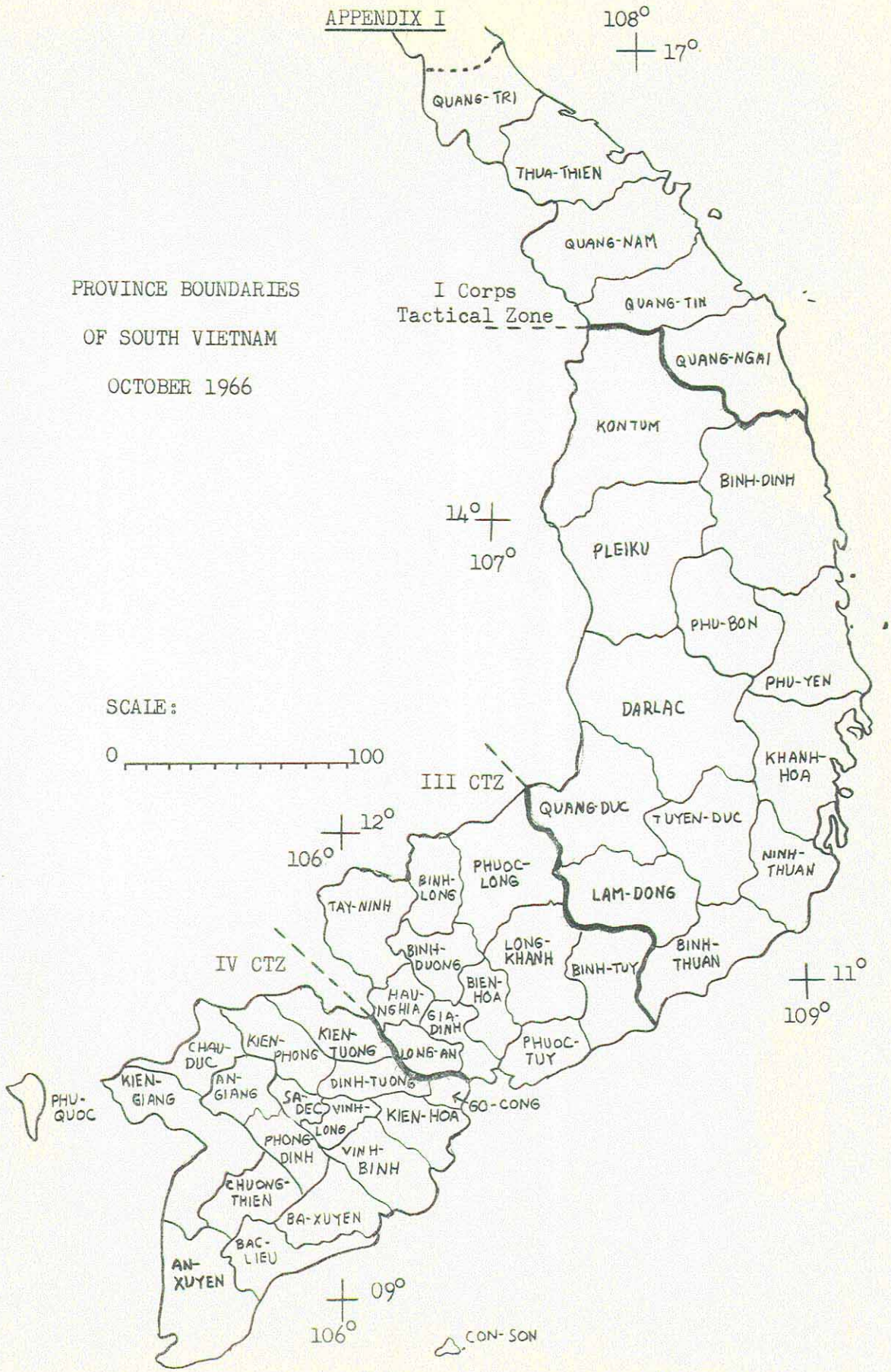
APPENDIX I




PROVINCE BOUNDARIES

OF SOUTH VIETNAM

OCTOBER 1966

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# APPENDIX II

## RESUME OF MAJOR INFILTRATION ATTEMPTS BY SEA SINCE FEBRUARY 1965

Since February of 1965, there have been seven recorded attempts to resupply Viet Cong units in South Vietnam by major efforts from the sea. The infiltration attempts produced the following results:

16 Feb. 1965 - 80-foot ship detected and destroyed in Vung Ro.

31 Dec. - 80-foot ship detected off Cau Mau Peninsula, tracked to Communist Chinese waters.

10 May 1966 - 100-foot ship intercepted and destroyed, 30 miles east of Ca Mau Point.

20 June - 110-foot ship intercepted and captured, 55 miles southwest of Vung Tau.

23 Dec. - 100-foot ship detected northeast of Qui Nhon, tracked to Communist Chinese waters.

2 Jan. 1967 - 100-foot ship detected and attacked, 20 miles east of Ca Mau Point.

14 March - 100-foot ship intercepted, then destroyed (probably by its crew) 60 miles southeast of Danang.

In four of the incidents, subsequent salvage operations confirmed the presence of contraband weapons, ammunition and other material on board; in one of the incidents the ship fired on pursuing MARKET TIME units, several heavy explosions were heard after fires had started on board the ship, and the location and track indicated clandestine operations; in the remaining two incidents the ships' failure to show lights or acknowledge signals, their reversal of course after detection, their track into Communist Chinese waters, and their physical similarity to the



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other ships caused them to be suspect.

All of the infiltration attempts have been made by small, ocean-going, steel-hulled, diesel-powered, cargo ships. The ships have been of 275 to 300 tons gross tonnage with approximately 100-ton cargo capacities. Five of the ships were 100 to 110 feet in length with a beam of 19 to 22 feet and a draft of six and one-half to eight feet. Two ships were 80 feet in length and similar in configuration to the other five. Three of the ships had false masts and booms and four carried nets or other cordage to simulate a trawler appearance and to camouflage their defensive armament. The estimated cruising speed of the ships was seven or eight knots, with a flank speed of ten to 12 knots.

The February and December 1965 trawlers (which were the smaller ships) had a superstructure amidships with one hold forward; the other trawlers had two holds forward and the superstructure aft. Each of the seven ships had a slightly raised bow and a poop deck. The larger ships had semi-circular cutouts where the plating for the main deck bulwark rose to the level of the pilothouse.

The trawlers had gray, blue-gray or blue-green hulls and white or cream-colored superstructures. None of the ships flew colors and no colors were found aboard those captured or salvaged after destruction. The December 1965 trawler, with the flag of Nationalist China painted on both sides of the pilothouse, was the only ship to make any attempt to reveal a national identity.

The trawlers' provisions for self-protection included 12.7-mm.



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machine guns and possibly 7.62-mm. or other light machine guns. The armament of the ships increased progressively. The first trawler had one machine gun on the port bow and one on the starboard quarter. On the fourth trawler two additional machine guns were mounted on the port and starboard sides, amidships. The sixth and seventh trawlers had several machine guns as well as heavier weapons, possibly 57-mm. recoilless rifles.

In general, the timing of the infiltration attempts would have placed the trawlers in sheltered waters at first light, thereby providing adequate light during final maneuvering. That the time of moonset figured in the planning appears likely. On five occasions moonset occurred between 1900 and 0200. Although moonset was not a factor in two of the attempts, in one of those instances the night was cloudy and rainy; the other instance occurred 1 January 1967, the final night of the New Year truce period. Three of the seven attempts were made during holiday truce periods.

Intelligence reports indicate that Viet Cong shore parties were on hand to provide pilots and to meet the infiltrating trawlers. Reportedly, the Viet Cong maintained signalling stations near the would-be unloading sites; on one occasion they tended bonfires. In addition, the shore parties fired on MARKET TIME units attacking the trawlers and on the salvage operations after the trawlers were grounded or destroyed.

Almost all of the contraband weapons recovered from the ships





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were manufactured in Communist China. A few exceptions were light automatic weapons manufactured in Russia or Communist bloc countries. Each ship carried large numbers of 7.62-mm. weapons, a few side arms, varying numbers of light machine guns, submachine guns and rifles, and as many as 1,200 carbines. Also carried were several 12.7-mm. heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft guns, 57-mm. and 75-mm. recoilless rifles, 40-mm. rocket launchers and 81 and 82-mm. mortars.

Large amounts of ammunition for the weapons were discovered. The June 1966 trawler carried 222,000 rounds of 7.62-mm. ammunition and 122,000 rounds of 12.7-mm. ammunition. Among the other items on board the ships were various fragmentation grenades, hundreds of pounds of TNT and, on one occasion, 120-mm. mortar ammunition. In addition, captured supplies included medicines, plasma and surgical instruments.

The diesel engines of the captured trawlers were of East German manufacture as was most of the auxiliary equipment in the propulsion plant. All of the equipment name-plates recovered from the engineering spaces indicated that the items were manufactured in 1963, 1964, or early 1965.

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## APPENDIX III

### U.S. NAVY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT, VIETNAM

The U.S. Navy Research and Development Unit, Vietnam (NRDU-V) was established in 1965 and was placed under the operational control of Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam in November of 1966. Management control of the unit was and continues to be exercised by the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Development).

The unit's staff consists of five officers and four enlisted men. In addition, the unit has temporary duty billets for six scientific advisors; the billets are currently filled by technical representatives from various naval weapons and electronics laboratories.

The principal mission of the unit--testing and evaluating new equipment and techniques--has included experiments with contraband locators, mine-hunting sonar, body armor, air cushion vehicles and image intensifiers.

The locators are powered, wand-like devices three feet in length, designed to detect magnetic material by means of tonal differences monitored through a headset. In this manner, contraband may be discovered while probing, for example, through a fish catch in the hold of a junk. The devices have proven effective and are in use by MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN forces.

The sonar (AN/SQS-19) and body armor tests, conducted in 1966, proved less successful. The former failed to detect mines with any degree of certainty. The latter, although reasonably effective,



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was not buoyant and posed a drowning hazard. A buoyant model is presently undergoing tests.

Perhaps the major project completed by NRDU-V during 1966 was the evaluation of three Personnel Air Cushion Vehicles (PACVs). During a comprehensive, three-month study the zero-draft vehicles--which hover above the surface on a cushion of air--enjoyed limited success except in areas especially suited to their capabilities, i.e., the marshy, submerged terrain of the Plain of Reeds in Kien Phuong and Kien Tuong provinces.

The study concluded that the PACVs, as configured, were not suitable for the majority of coastal and riverine operations, and needed numerous modifications if future employments were to be meaningful. The proposed changes were aimed at a reduction in noise, and improvements in habitability, armor, armament, communications equipment, and range and endurance.

It was submitted that the recommended improvements, together with the PACVs' inherent speed and mobility, would make the vehicles useful additions to naval operations in areas inaccessible to MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN craft, particularly over inundated regions, estuaries, mud flats and grasslands.

In March of this year NRDU-V completed an evaluation of several image intensifiers. The battery-powered instruments (equipped with viewers) are designed to detect distant, concealed objects at night by amplifying ambient moonlight and starlight. The devices tested included a Starlight Scope, which may be hand-held or mounted on an




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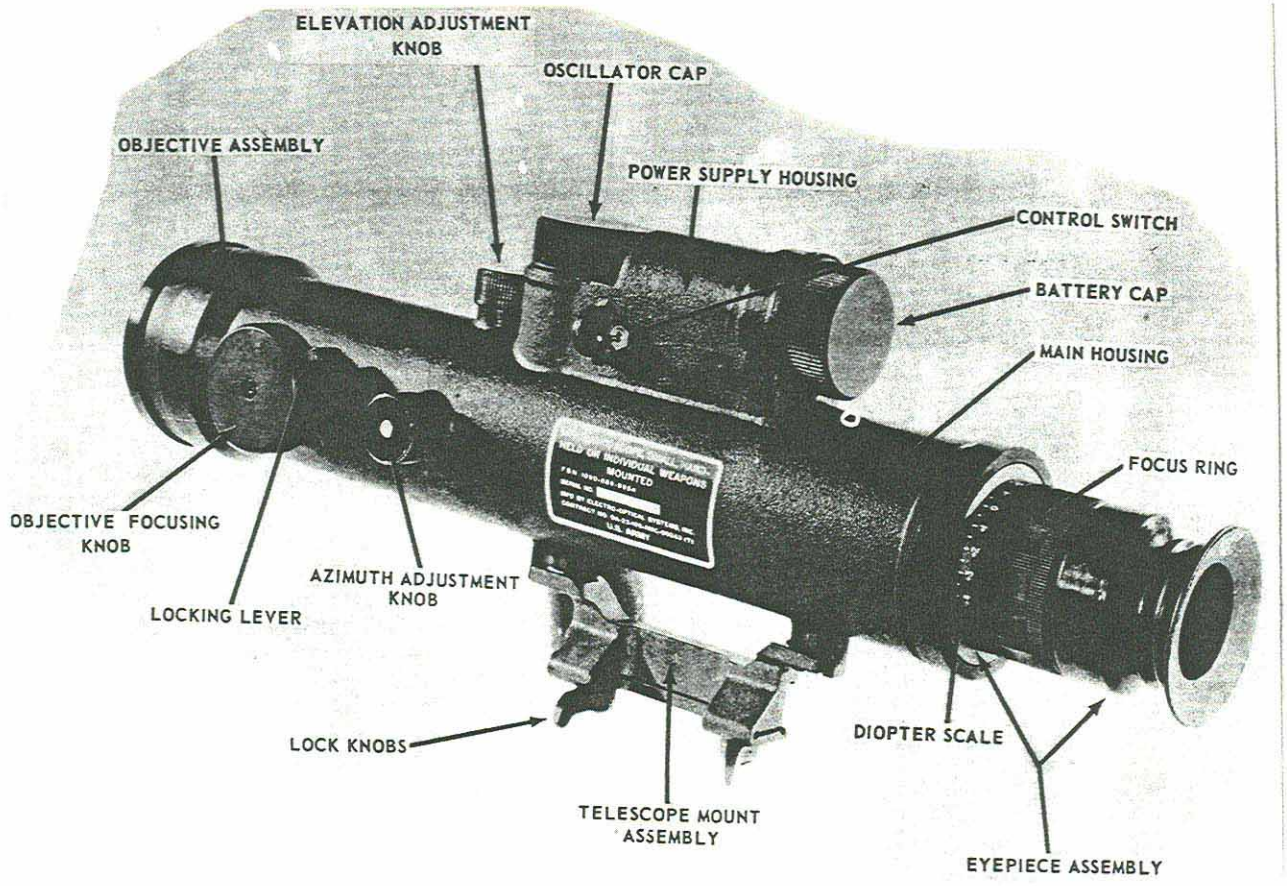


Starlight Scope

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individual weapon; a Crew-Served Weapons Sight, for use with larger weapons; and a tripod-mounted Night Observation Device, for use against more distant objects or during indirect fire.

The intensifiers produced excellent results. In some cases, under optimum conditions, objects could be seen at a distance of 2,000 yards. The devices were found to be especially effective when used in conjunction with radar for target identification.

The models tested were initially designed for use by combat troops. The evaluation concluded that the addition of certain modifications would significantly enhance the effectiveness of the devices in naval operations. Accordingly, a recommendation was made to develop a lighter, waterproof, more rugged model specifically for naval use.

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# APPENDIX IV

## RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

In March there were 20 chaplains assigned to U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. In addition to conducting religious services, the chaplains held religious instruction classes, counseled individuals, delivered lectures and conducted retreats and conferences. They also continued to participate actively in civic action projects and performed a variety of collateral duties.

During the month, the chaplains travelled extensively in aircraft and boats to conduct religious services in outlying areas. As a group the chaplains logged nearly 50 hours of flying time in diverse transits. Also, the chaplains often accompanied crews on boat patrols. In one instance, a chaplain accompanied the crew of an MSB on a 14-hour minesweeping patrol in the Long Tau River.

The following tabulation is a statistical summary of religious services conducted during March.

1. Religious Services:

   a. Divine Services:

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

| | Sunday | Weekday | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Services | 137 | 143 | 280 |
| Attendance | 4,972 | 1,476 | 6,448 |
| Communed | 1,662 | 749 | 2,411 |

(2) Other Military Installations

| | Sunday | Weekday | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Services | 58 | 26 | 84 |
| Attendance | 2,079 | 413 | 2,492 |
| Communed | 1,173 | 200 | 1,373 |

(3) Civilian Churches

| | Sunday | Weekday | Total |
|---|---|---|---|
| Number of Services | 3 | 10 | 13 |
| Attendance | 865 | 133 | 998 |
| Communed | 375 | 27 | 402 |

b. Religious services conducted by other than chaplains attached to NAVFORV:

| Denomination | Chaplain | | Civilian Clergy | | Lay Leader | |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| | No. | Attend. | No. | Attend. | No. | Attend. |
| Catholic | 50 | 2,243 | 1 | 46 | 1 | 8 |
| Protestant | 15 | 462 | 1 | 25 | 27 | 184 |
| Jewish | 4 | 23 | | | | |

c. Other religious services in which chaplains participated:

| Type of Service | Attendance |
|---|---|
| Easter Sunrise Service | 40 |
| Morning Prayer (4) | 1,960 |
| Lenton Liturgist (2) | 18 |
| Church of Christ (4) | 23 |
| Maundy Thursday Communion | 10 |
| Memorial Service (7) | 950 |

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