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UNITED STATES

NAVAL FORCES, VIETNAM

MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUPPLEMENT

MARCH 1968

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FOREWORD

In March the enemy appeared to be deliberately avoiding contact in so far as possible. All indications pointed to probable withdrawal to regroup, re-train and resupply after their Tet Offensive. Again it became necessary to seek out the enemy and attempt to engage him before he could abandon known positions. On 22 March COMNAVFORV sent the following message to the four coastal zones intelligence officers and the Third and Fourth Riverine Area Intelligence Officers, with information copies to the three Task Force Commanders - 115, 116, and 117:

INTELLIGENCE TO OPERATIONS

IN GENERAL THE QUALITY OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION COMING FROM OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE FIELD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT AND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE. IT IS ALSO INTERESTING AND USEFUL. HOWEVER, THE PRIMARY VALUE OF INTELLIGENCE IS TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMBAT OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE ENEMY. WHENEVER PRACTICABLE, THIS HEADQUARTERS ATTEMPTS TO CONVERT INTELLIGENCE INTO OPERATIONAL ACTION. IT IS DESIRED THAT YOU DO THE SAME. WHENEVER YOU HAVE GOOD HARD INFORMATION ON ENEMY INTENTIONS OR LOCATIONS GET IT TO THE NEAREST OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS IN YOUR AREA ASAP. USE YOUR INITIATIVE AND INGENUITY, PROSELYTING AS NECESSARY, TO STIMULATE TIMELY ACTION. YOU WILL THEN BE APPLYING INTELLIGENCE IN ITS MOST EFFECTIVE ROLE INSTEAD OF AS INTERESTING REPORTS FOR SUBSEQUENT EVALUATION AND FILING. KEEP THE INFORMATION FLOWING TO US BUT CONVERT IT TO ACTION LOCALLY WHENEVER POSSIBLE. KEEP IN MIND THAT, WHILE IT REMAINS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE COMMANDER TO EXPLOIT INTELLIGENCE, THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER IS OFTEN IN BEST POSITION TO STIMULATE ENTHUSIASM AND PROD THE OPERATIONAL PLANNERS INTO ACTION. THE EXTENT TO WHICH FIELD INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS CAN PROVIDE BASIS FOR COMBAT OPERATIONS, WILL REFLECT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LIAISON AND RAPPORT WITH COMMANDERS IN YOUR AREA. REPORT INSTANCES WHERE IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO TRANSLATE INTELLIGENCE TO OPERATIONS. RADM VETH SENDS.

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CHRONOLOGY

1 March - The combined efforts of U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, Army, Air Force, and Vietnamese Navy units destroyed three of the four enemy trawlers attempting to infiltrate supplies into South Vietnam. Appendix I

- A Vietnamese Navy commandament was struck by a B-40 rocket and sank within 5 minutes; two VNN sailors were killed and five others wounded. p. 137

2 - Commander Coastal Division 17 changed to the operational control of CTF 117. p. 49

- Salvage Operations were conducted by patrol craft from IUWU 4 and EOD personnel from IUWUs 2 and 4 on an enemy trawler that was destroyed on 1 March. p. 22

3 - Based on a report from the U.S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division of a concentration of a North Vietnamese Army battalion northeast of Danang, USCGC POINT CAUTION joined with USS HOLLISTER (DD788) and USS CARRONADE (IFS1) in an harassment and interdiction fire on the enemy. A ground sweep of the area revealed 84 enemy troops killed. p. 4

5 - Lieutenant Barry W. HOOPER, USN, was killed while serving as a convoy commander assigned to Task Force CLEARWATER. p. 25

6 - 15 - Coastal Group 12 units conducted Operation LAM SON 189 in conjunction with USN/USMC units, one ARVN Ranger unit an infantry regiment and Popular Force (PF) troops. Forty Viet Cong were killed, eight were captured and numerous weapons seized. p. 123

7 - After 10 days evaluation of the PACV for GAME WARDEN operations, CTF 116 reported to COMNAVFORV that the craft and the limitations imposed on it by terrain, rendered it unsuitable for GAME WARDEN operations. PACVs were returned to operational control of CTF 117. p. 23

8 - Viet Cong tax collectors were reported 7 miles southeast of Tra On, on the southern bank of the Bassac River. PBRs landed PF troops to conduct a sweep of the area while

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8 March - "Seawolves" patrolled overhead. PF troops made contact and and drove the Viet Cong into a field and the "Seawolves" reacted immediately with an air strike in the area. The ground troops later found seven dead Viet Cong. p. 42

10 - An enemy artillery attack on the NSAD Cua Viet LST ramp on the Cua Viet River resulted in the ignition of 150 short-tons of staged ammunition. p. 5, 83-85

- A platoon of SEALs landed on the south bank of the My Tho River 1½ miles southwest of My Tho. A local civilian informed the SEALs concerning a local communist insurgent. As the SEALs approached the house, the enemy was alerted when a dog barked, and three Viet Cong attempted to escape. They were killed by the SEALs and later identified as the hamlet security chief and two hamlet cadre. p. 30

11 - An explosion and fire at the Shell Oil Company My Khe Tank Farm in Danang destroyed a 32,000-barrel JP-4 tank. p. 23

- A QT-2PC, a new surveillance aircraft designed for silent operations and utilizing very sensitive detection devices, proved its effectiveness during an evaluation flight in providing intelligence to GAME WARDEN units. p. 23

- Two PBR patrols from RIVSEC 511 on the Bassac River detected a sampan crossing from the mainland to May Island. PBRs closed in to investigate and came under fire from an AK-47. The boats returned the fire and destroyed the sampan. When the PBRs attempted to recover the remains of the sampan they came under automatic and small-arms fire from enemy positions on both the mainland and May Island. Unable to suppress the fire the GAME WARDEN units cleared the area and a second PBR patrol arrived on the scene along with a Vietnamese Navy LSIL. After three firing runs by the PBRs and the LSIL the enemy fire was silenced. Three Navymen were wounded during the engagement while Viet Cong casualties totaled three known killed. p. 43

13 - 17 - Coastal Groups 12 and 13 conduct Operation LAM SON 194 in cooperation with two ARVN infantry battalions, the VNMC's Task Force "B" and an ARVN Ranger brigade. The combined force killed 49 Viet Cong, captured 58 others and detained 101 suspects. Numerous weapons were seized and 120 South Vietnamese civilians were liberated from Viet Cong imprisonment. p. 123

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14 March - RADM K. L. VETH, USN, COMNAVFORV, presented the Presidential Unit Citation to MINERON ELEVEN Detachment ALFA. p. 109

17 - PCFs 24 and 28 conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong staging area 40 miles south of Saigon destroying 4 structures and heavily damaging 11 others. p. 10

24 - Vietnamese Navy (VNN) undertook the permanent responsibility for two additional MARKET TIME stations bringing the total of coastal surveillance stations manned by VNN ships to six. p. 3

25 - River Section 514 was activated at Nha Be. p. 49

- NSAD Tan My received 30-50 mortar rounds in the vicinity of the boat cove, fuel farm and cantonment area. The mortar attack resulted in three LCM-8 boats being damaged, several holes in the POL pipelines and minor damage to a JP-4 tank. p. 85

25 - 27 - Operation QUYET THANG 82 was conducted with RAG 28 and two ARVN infantry battalions. The force killed 103 Viet Cong and captured 7 others, along with numerous weapons. p. 135

26 - The Phu Bai Base was attacked with 174 rounds of rocket and mortar fire. As a result of the attack 5 structures were destroyed and 10 were severely damaged. The runway and adjoining taxiway sustained 11 hits during the attack. Three direct hits on the runway caused crucial holes, which were repaired in 4 hours. p. 85

- CTF 116 conducted a combined GAME WARDEN/RAG operation known as BOLD DRAGON III against Tan Dinh Island. Viet Cong losses consisted of 1 killed(body count), 3 killed(probable), and 20 bunkers, 3 buildings, 4 sampans, 3 motors, and 1 small ammunition dump destroyed. p. 44-46

26 - 27 - Operation TRUONG CONG DINH 7/SD/4 conducted by RAGs 21/33 and 23/31, ARVN infantry, Rangers and RF troops resulted in 68 enemy killed, 10 captured and numerous weapons and equipment seized. One U.S. Army officer and 9 ARVN soldiers were killed; 62 were wounded. p. 142

29 March - A Hoi Chanh led a SEAL platoon from Task Unit 116.3.0 to an enemy weapons cache and factory in Kien Hoa Province, about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. The cache was found in two concrete rooms, hidden beneath two houses, measuring 6 feet by 6 feet by 10 feet. This was the first known time that a concrete structure of this type had been found in the Delta. p. 35

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31 March - The total strength of U. S. Naval personnel under the operational control of NAVFORV was 31,789. In addition, U. S. Navy personnel assigned to III Marine Amphibious Force was 3,865, while U. S. Coast Guard strenth was 471.

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TASK FORCE 115)

During March units of Operation MARKET TIME and Operation STABLE DOOR detected 108,720 junks and sampans along South Vietnam's coastline and harbors; 30,848 of them were inspected and 26,262 were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 45 craft and 771 persons.

The sharp increase in Coastal Surveillance Force activity during March was attributed to the subsidence of the heavy fighting that followed the Tet Offensive and the partial relaxation of the strict curfew restrictions that were imposed in all harbors during the weeks subsequent to the Tet holidays. Unseasonably fair weather throughout the four coastal zones also contributed to the increase in routine coastal surveillance activity.

OPERATION MARKET TIME

During March MARKET TIME units detected 68,885 junks and sampans, an increase of over 40,000 from February's figures. Approximately 41 percent of the detected craft were inspected and almost 19 percent were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 38 craft and 538 suspicious persons. In addition, 1,283 steel-hulled craft were detected transiting MARKET TIME areas; 44 of the steel-hulled craft were boarded.

Other MARKET TIME activity during the month included support for several ground operations; 258 naval gunfire support missions

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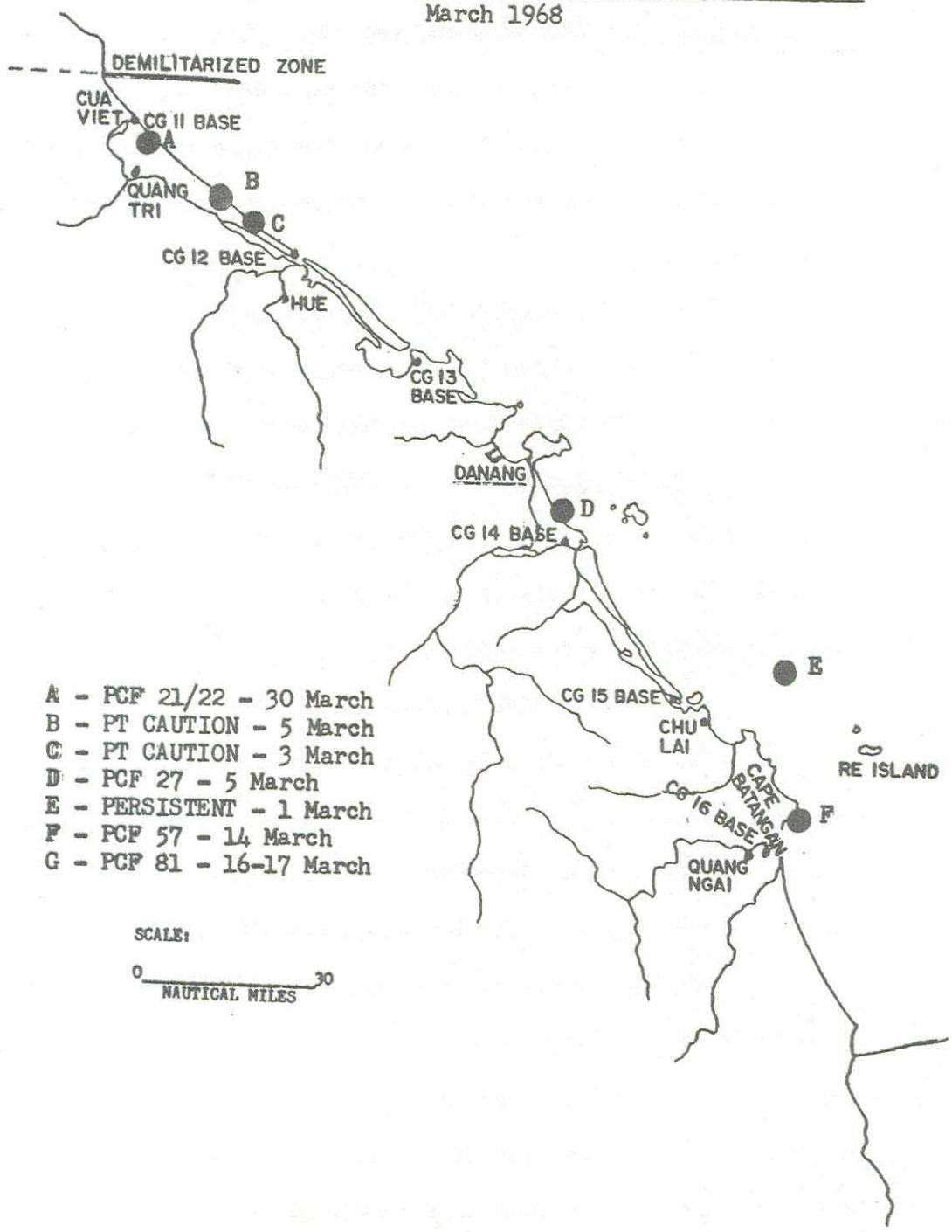
OPERATIONS IN THE FIRST COASTAL ZONE

March 1968



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and 39 hostile fire incidents. As a result of these operations 50 enemy structures and 21 junks were destroyed. In addition, 100 Viet Cong were killed (+ 5 probable).

As of 24 March the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) had assumed full responsibility for the manning of two additional MARKET TIME patrol areas; one in the Second Coastal Zone and the other one in the Third Coastal Zone. This assumption of responsibility gave the VNN the sole responsibility for manning a total of six MARKET TIME patrol areas.

Salvage and exploitation of the infiltration trawlers destroyed during the early morning hours of 1 March continued during the month with much valuable information concerning the construction of the vessels and the composition of the cargo being gained. For additional details concerning the trawlers see Appendix I.

First Coastal Zone

During March there was a sharp increase in Operation MARKET TIME activity in the First Coastal Zone as over 26,000 junks and sampans were detected, an increase of approximately 20,000 from February's total. Over 7,300 of the detected craft were inspected and nearly 5,000 were boarded.

The weather remained good throughout the First Coastal Zone during most of the month and as a result, fishing activity and routine coastal traffic approached the level recorded prior to

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the northeast monsoon season.

On the 3rd of March USCGC POINT CAUTION joined the U.S. Seventh Fleet's USS HOLLISTER (DD788) and USS CARRONADE (IFS1) to provide harassment and interdiction fire on an area approximately 55 miles northeast of Danang where U.S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division reported the concentration of a North Vietnamese Army battalion. A later sweep of the area by ground units revealed 84 enemy troops had been killed by the naval gunfire support ships.

On 1 March USS PERSISTENT (MSO491) discovered an abandoned junk at anchor 52 miles southeast of Danang. A thorough search of the area for personnel produced negative results. After a through inspection and complete inventory was conducted, the junk was hoisted aboard PERSISTENT for delivery to Danang for further exploitation. Items found aboard the junk included a Chinese Communist flag, a "Red Guard" arm band and numerous small items bearing Chinese characters.

During the early morning hours of 5 March, POINT CAUTION conducted a harassment and interdiction gunfire mission on an enemy area approximately 10 miles northwest of Hue. Three secondary explosions resulted from the cutter's firing but the full extent of enemy casualties was unknown.

During the evening of the same day, a Marine Combined Action Group requested that PCF 27 conduct a naval gunfire mission against

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a Viet Cong propaganda team broadcasting from a position 14 miles southeast of Danang. Two directed hits by the "Swift" boats' 81-mm mortar silenced the loud-speaker but the number of enemy casualties were unknown.

On the 7th the Vietnamese Navy's PGM 619 requested the assistance of PCF 20 in conducting a naval gunfire mission against a large enemy troop concentration which was attacking the VNN's Coastal Group 16 base located approximately 5 miles east of Quang Ngai. Coastal Group 16 personnel spotted for the mission and observed many of the enemy fall but they were unable to give an accurate report of enemy casualties.

On the morning of 10 March the ammunition ramp at Cua Viet came under an enemy artillery attack. The incoming artillery rounds detonated the ammunition on the ramp and a large fire ensued. The 1st Marine AMTRAC Battalion requested assistance in coordinating the afloat effort from the Coast Guard's POINT ARDEN. PCF 81 also arrived on the scene and assisted in fighting the fire. Three of POINT ARDEN's crewmembers were wounded and the cutter sustained shrapnel and blast damage as a result of a large explosion on the ramp. The ammunition fire was subsequently brought under control with no additional casualties.

On 14 March PCF 57 detected three sampans near the coast of Cape Batangan. The "Swift" boat was unsuccessful in her attempt to

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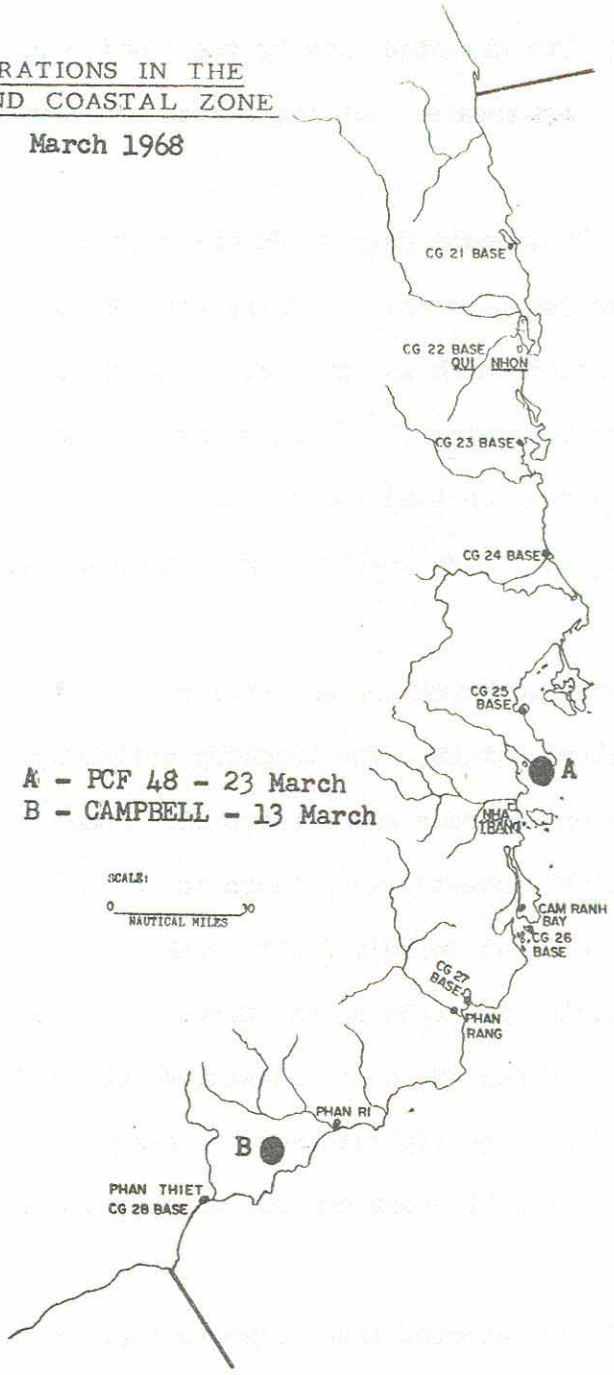
OPERATIONS IN THE
SECOND COASTAL ZONE

March 1968



A - PCF 48 - 23 March
B - CAMPBELL - 13 March

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hail the sampans with loud-speakers, siren and warning shots. Task Force BARKER authorities were contacted for clearance to fire upon the evading sampans and for the location of friendly units. As permission to fire was granted the sampans beached and the occupants fled to the nearby treeline. The beached sampans were then partially destroyed by the PCF's 81-mm mortars and .50 caliber machine-gun.

Also during the month, First Coastal Zone units supported two ground operations. On 16 and 17 March, PCF 81 provided a blocking patrol for a coastal sweep by Task Force BARKER units. On the 30th PCFs 21 and 22 provided blocking patrols for a sweep by units of the U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division near the mouth of the Cua Viet River. Both "Swift" boats received intense automatic-weapons fire from the beach and one PCF 22 crewmember suffered a minor wound.

Second Coastal Zone

Routine MARKET TIME activity also increased sharply in the Second Coastal Zone during March. The zone's units detected over 34,000 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of nearly 20,000 from February's figure. Approximately 16,000 of the detected craft were inspected and over 4,500 were boarded. The resumption of near-normal fishing activity and coastal cargo traffic resulted in the sharp increase in routine MARKET TIME detection.

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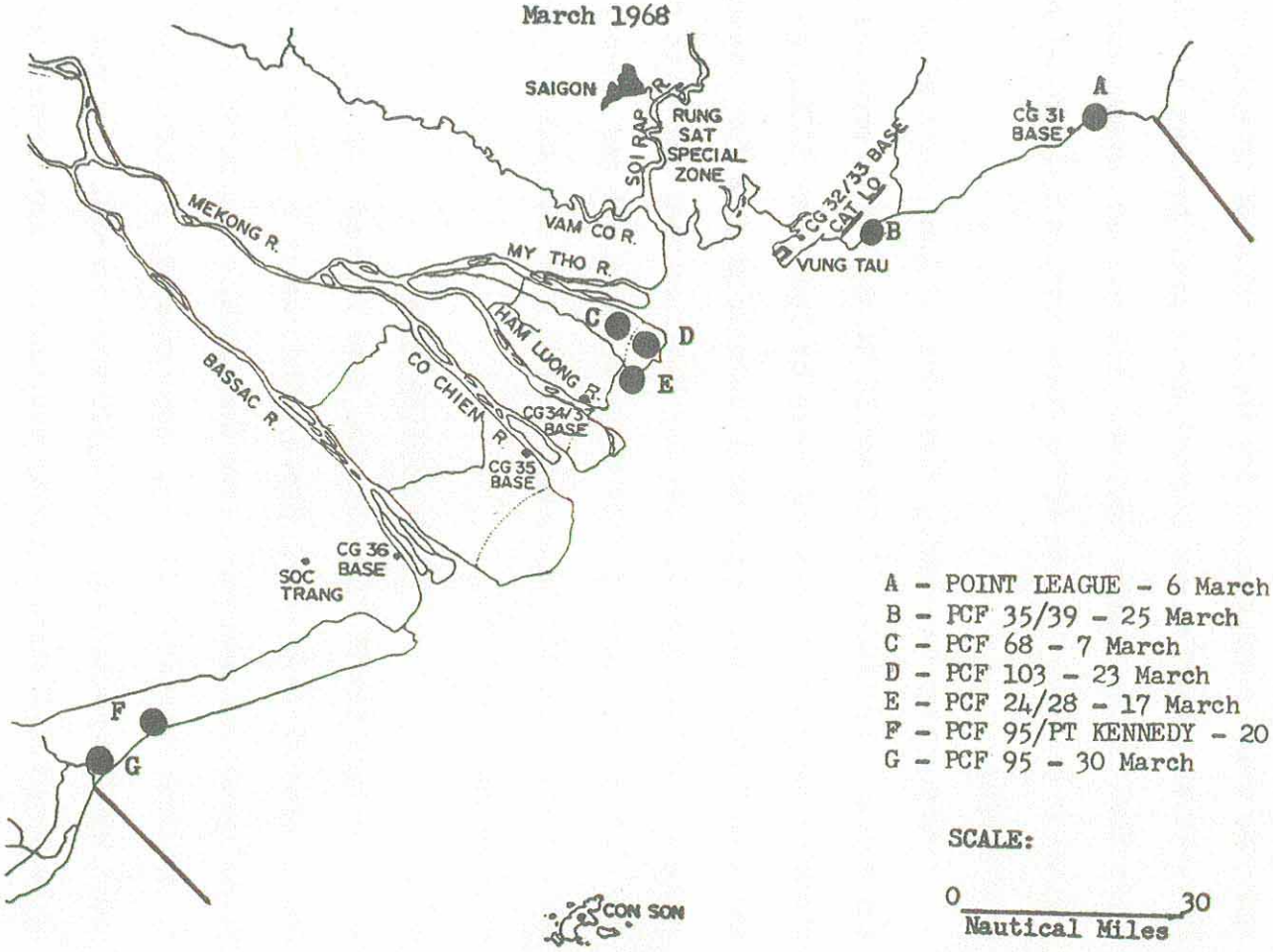
OPERATIONS IN THE THIRD COASTAL ZONE

March 1968



A - POINT LEAGUE - 6 March
B - PCF 35/39 - 25 March
C - PCF 68 - 7 March
D - PCF 103 - 23 March
E - PCF 24/28 - 17 March
F - PCF 95/PT KENNEDY - 20 March
G - PCF 95 - 30 March

SCALE:

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On 4 March, in action that indicated that the Viet Cong intended to continue hit-and-run harassment tactics against Qui Nhon, the MARKET TIME base received approximately 50 rounds of automatic-weapons fire. Enemy troops were observed on the hill behind the base and their positions were saturated with 60-mm mortar fire. A later ground patrol of the area discovered eleven 82-mm mortar rounds and several mortar fuse caps, but the extent of enemy personnel casualties was unknown.

On 13 March USCGC CAMPBELL (WHEC32) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong staging area 22 miles northeast of Phan Thiet. The mission, requested by the Naval Gunfire Liaison Officer at Phan Thiet, resulted in one structure destroyed and four structures damaged.

While on a routine MARKET TIME patrol on the 23rd, PCF 48 closed the beach approximately 13 miles north-northeast of Nha Trang in search of contacts. As the PCF neared the beach it received two rounds of what appeared to be recoilless-rifle fire. The "Swift" boat immediately opened the beach to a safe distance and suppressed the hostile fire with mortar and .50 caliber machine-gun fire. There were no friendly casualties as a result of the hostile fire.

Third Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME activity also increased in the Third Coastal Zone during March, as 6,170 junks and sampans were detected, an increase of over 4,600 from February's total. Forty-eight percent of the

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detected craft were inspected and nearly 23 percent were boarded. As in the past several months, MARKET TIME units in the Third Coastal Zone engaged in many hostile fire incidents and conducted numerous naval gunfire support missions.

On the 6th of March the Coast Guard's POINT LEAGUE was providing security and logistic support for a beach survey approximately 50 miles northeast of Vung Tau when the participating Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) received hostile fire from the beach. The cutter returned and suppressed the fire, killing two Viet Cong and then evacuated the UDT personnel.

PCF 68 conducted a naval gunfire mission against an enemy position 34 miles south of Saigon on 7 March. The mission, requested by Binh Dai sub-sector authorities, utilized an airborne spotter and resulted in two Viet Cong killed and one wounded, plus one structure destroyed and four damaged.

On the 17th, PCFs 24 and 68 conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong staging area 40 miles south of Saigon. Utilizing .50 caliber machine-gun and 81-mm mortars, the PCFs destroyed 4 structures and heavily damaged 11 others.

On the 20th, in response to a request from Bac Lieu sector authorities, PCF 95 and USCGC POINT KENNEDY conducted a naval gunfire mission against a reported 2 enemy platoons 57 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the two MARKET TIME

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units left three houses and two haystacks burning and an unknown number of trenches destroyed. The extent of enemy personnel casualties were unknown.

On 23 March in response to a request from sector authorities, PCF 103 took an area 33 miles south of Saigon under fire with her 81-mm mortar. A subsequent report from sector intelligence personnel indicated that three Viet Cong were killed and four were wounded as a result of the "Swift" boat's firing. One structure was also destroyed during the mission.

While on patrol on the 30th, PCF 95 observed six Viet Cong on the beach 60 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. With an airborne spotter transmitting adjustments and PCF 70 assisting, PCF 95 commenced fire with 81-mm mortar and .50 caliber machine guns. The "Swift" boats scored several direct hits on the bunker complex and burned four houses. The number of enemy killed was unknown.

In support of ground operations, PCFs 35 and 39 provided a seaward blocking force for an Australian Army sweep 13 miles northeast of Vung Tau on 25 March. The PCFs detained four suspicious persons from junks in the area.

Fourth Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME units in the Fourth Coastal Zone were very active during March. In addition to detecting over 6,700 junks and sampans, over 2,200 of which were inspected and 1,944 boarded, the zone's units

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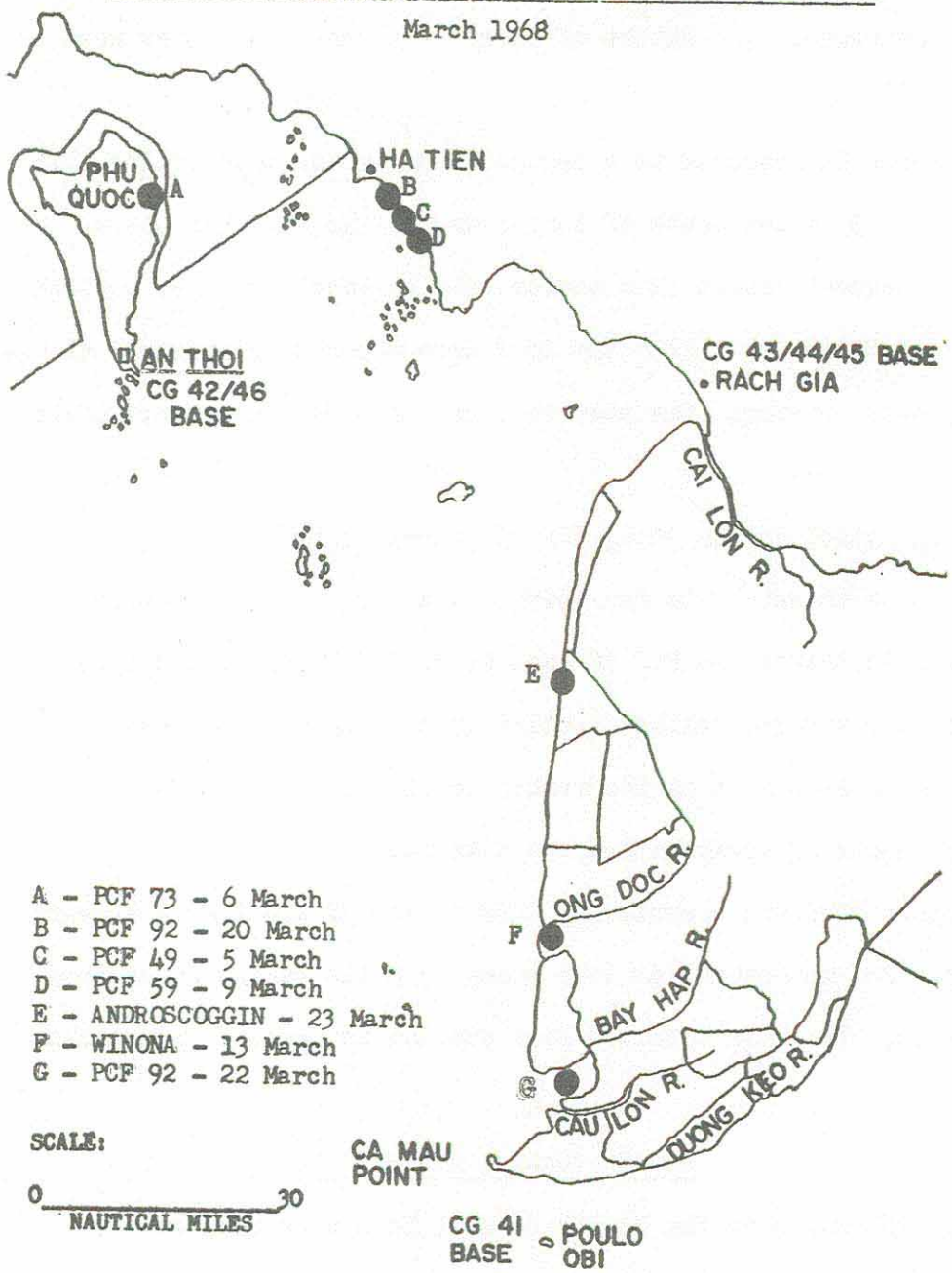
OPERATIONS IN THE FOURTH COASTAL ZONE

March 1968



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were involved in numerous hostile fire incidents and gunfire support missions during the month.

On the 5th, PCF 49 received a request for urgent naval gunfire support from an ARVN outpost, 41 miles northwest of Rach Gia, that was under attack. The PCF received intermittent and sporadic small-arms fire during the mission with no resulting material or personnel casualties. With an airborne spotter transmitting adjustments, the PCF suppressed the enemy fire and initiated three secondary explosions.

During the afternoon of 6 March PCF 73 was directed to an area on the north central coast of Phu Quoc Island where an Army visual reconnaissance plane had observed three camouflaged sampans. The PCF took the sampans under fire with 81-mm mortars and .50 caliber machine-gun fire and destroyed the three craft. Area fire was conducted in the immediate vicinity of the sampans and one large secondary explosion with heavy black smoke and several large fires was observed.

On 9 March PCF 59 was requested to conduct a naval gunfire mission against an enemy position 40 miles northwest of Rach Gia. The airborne spotter, who had requested the mission, reported excellent area coverage by the "Swift" boat's 81-mm mortar which destroyed 10 hootches and 2 military structures.

On the 13th, in response to a request from Army authorities at Song Ong Doc, USCGC WINONA (WHEC65) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a suspected Viet Cong battalion staging area 29 miles north-

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northeast of Ca Mau Point. As a result of the cutter's firing, three structures were destroyed and seven were damaged.

While attempting to close the beach to inspect sampans on the 20th, PCF 92 received hostile fire from an area 38 miles northwest of Rach Gia. A bunker complex was sighted in the area and taken under fire with .50 caliber machine-gun and 81-mm mortars but the hostile semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire could not be suppressed.

On 22nd, PCF 92 took five evading sampans under fire, 14 miles northeast of Cu Mau Point, after they ignored warning shots. The "Swift" boat destroyed two of the sampans, damaged two and captured one other. The captured sampan was turned over to U.S. Army authorities at Song Ong Doc.

On 23 March USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC68) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong ammunition storage area 48 miles north-northeast of Ca Mau Point. A spotter aircraft reported that 90 percent of the cutter's 5"/38 rounds were on target and assessed the gun damage at 28 structures and 2 sampans damaged, 3 Viet Cong killed and 4 wounded.

***

MARKET TIME UNITS

During the month of March the Vietnamese Navy had an average of eight PGMs and two PCEs assigned daily to MARKET TIME operations. In addition, VNN forces assigned to MARKET TIME utilized an MSC and an LSSL during portions of the month. A Royal Thai Navy PGM was also

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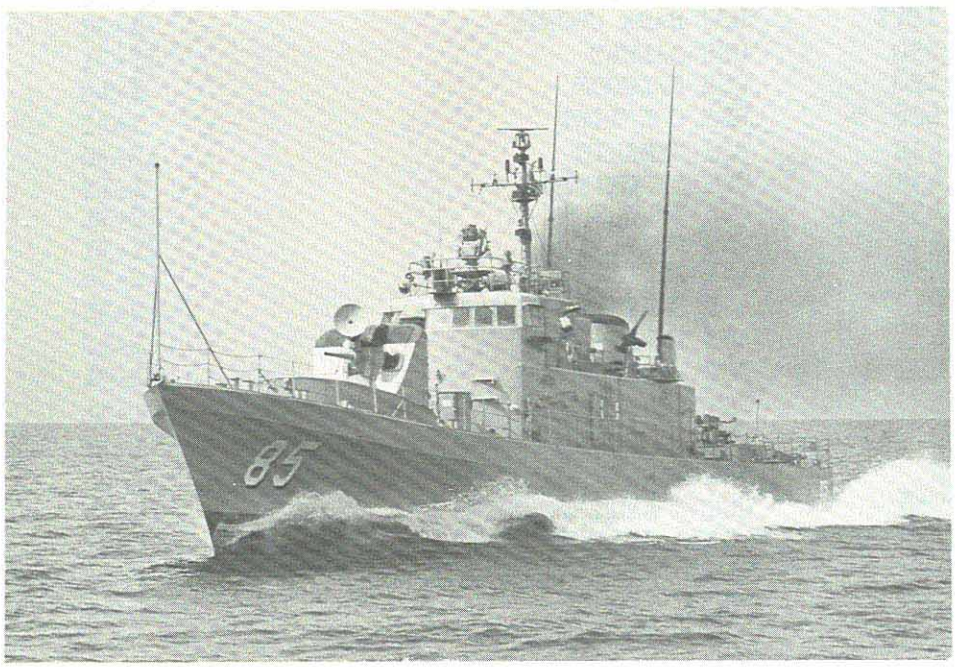
assigned to MARKET TIME forces in the Fourth Coastal Zone throughout the month.



USS GALLUP (PG85) cuts through water of the South China Sea while on MARKET TIME patrol.

During March, aircraft from four patrol squadrons provided air surveillance for Operation MARKET TIME. A detachment of patrol Squadron TWENTY-SIX (VP26) flew P3B Orions from U Tapao, Thailand. Meanwhile, detachments from VP 2, VP 17 and VP 42 flew SP-2H Neptunes from Cam Ranh Bay.

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

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		Dates
DER 324	USS FALGOUT	16-31
DER 334	USS FORSTER	1-13
DER 400	USS HISSEM	6-31
DER 331	USS KOINER	1-7
DER 387	USS VANCE	13-31
LST 1077	USS PARK COUNTY	1-31
MSC 290	USS GANNET	19-31
MSC 198	USS PEACOCK	1-18
MSO 426	USS CONFLICT	1-12
MSO 432	USS DYMANIC	12-30
MSO 435	USS ENDURANCE	1-12
MSO 433	USS ENGAGE	12-31
MSO 446	USS FORTIFY	21-31
MSO 456	USS INFLICT	12-30
MSO 449	USS IMPERVIOUS	12-31
MSO 455	USS IMPLICIT	1-12
MSO 491	USS PERSISTENT	1-31
PG 84	USS ASHEVILLE	1-31
PG 88	USS CROCKETT	1-31
PG 85	USS GALLUP	1-31
WHEC 68	USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN	14-31
WHEC 32	USCGC CAMPBELL	7-27
WHEC 67	USCGC MINNETONKA	1-16
WHEC 65	USCGC WINONA	1-14

***

MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY
March 1968

1. U. S. Ships/Craft:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF	LST	PG	WHEC
Daily average number of craft on patrol	2	4	1	14	37	1	1	3

2. U. S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY	41,645	NIGHT	27,240	70,168
	STEEL - DAY	683	NIGHT	600	

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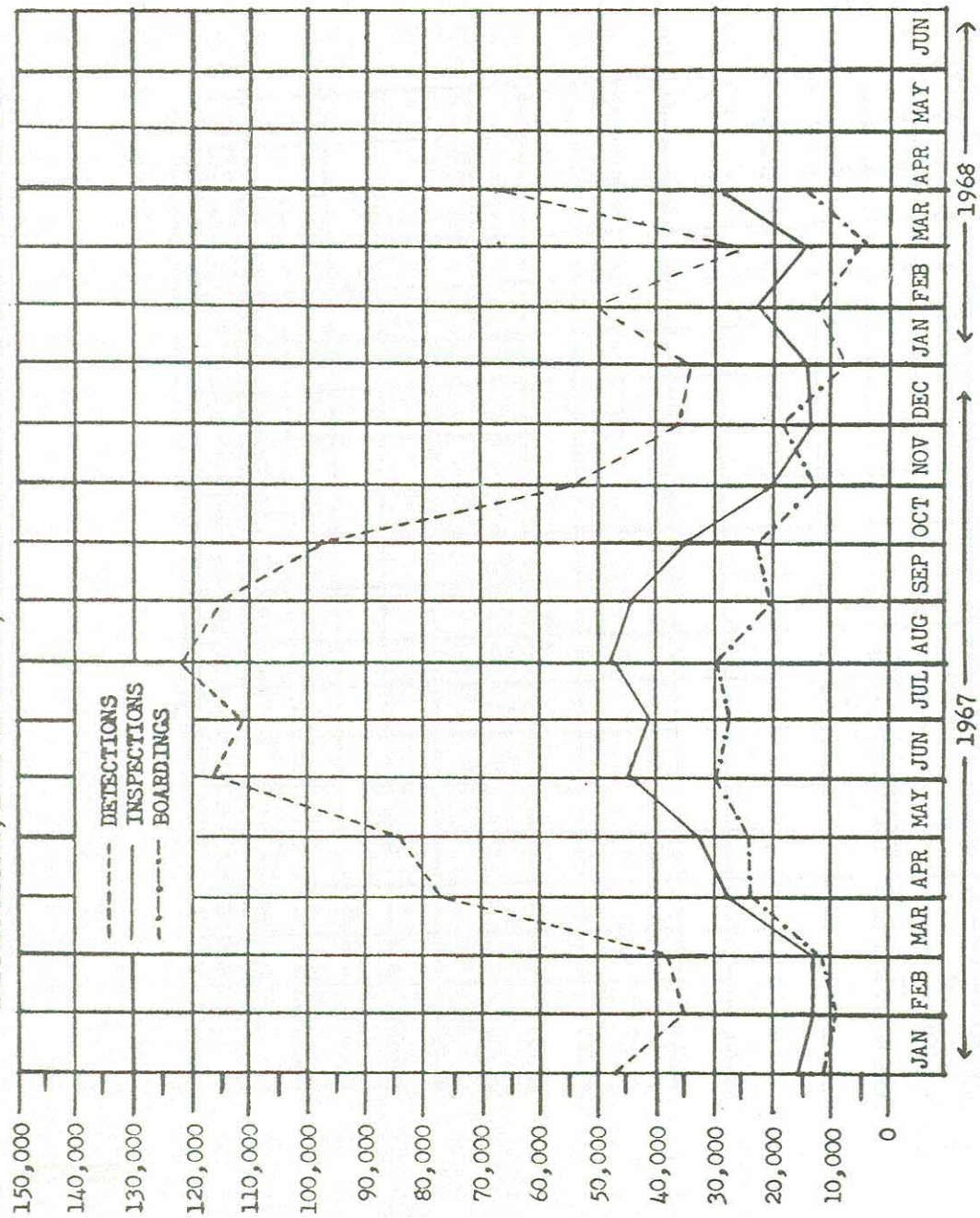
DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY MARKET TIME UNITS



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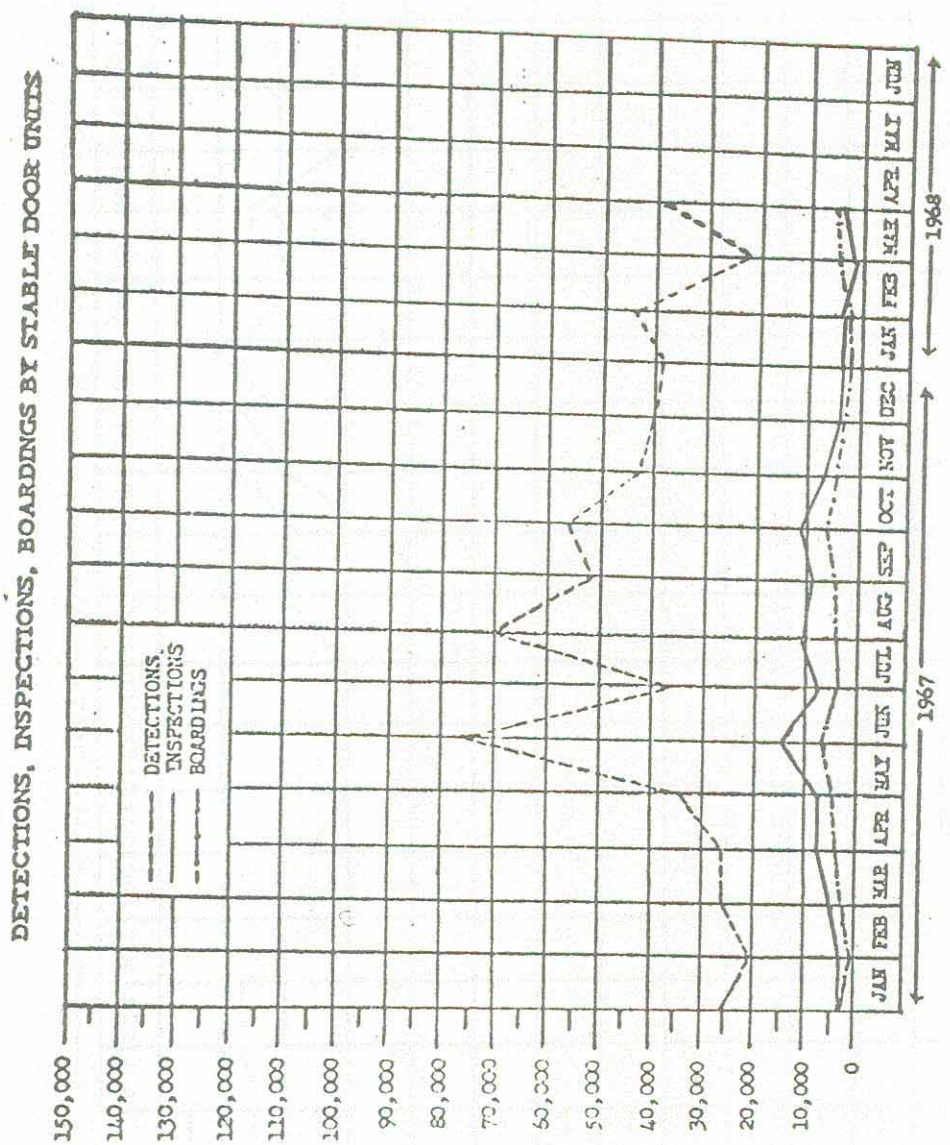

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TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD -	DAY	16,758	NIGHT	10,664		
	STEEL -	DAY	507	NIGHT	453		28,382
TOTAL BOARDED	WOOD -	DAY	9,591	NIGHT	2,938		
	STEEL -	DAY	38	NIGHT	6		12,573
TOTAL DETAINED	JUNKS -		38		PEOPLE	538	

3. Naval Gunfire Support Missions:

   Total Missions: 258

4. Hostile Fire Incidents:

   Total Incidents: 39

***

OPERATION STABLE DOOR

All STABLE DOOR units maintained normal patrols and surface surveillance posture during the month of March. Strict curfew restrictions remained in effect throughout the harbors of Vietnam during the month, thus reducing the aggregate of junks and suspicious persons detained.

During March, Operation STABLE DOOR patrols detected 39,835 junks and sampans; 3,426 of these were inspected. Of the 3,733 craft boarded, 7 were detained along with 233 persons.

Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit One (IUWU 1) at Vung Tau detained a total of 3 junks and 36 persons during the month. The suspects were detained for improper identification, curfew violations and suspicious actions.

On 29 March patrol craft assigned to IUWU 1 were called upon to

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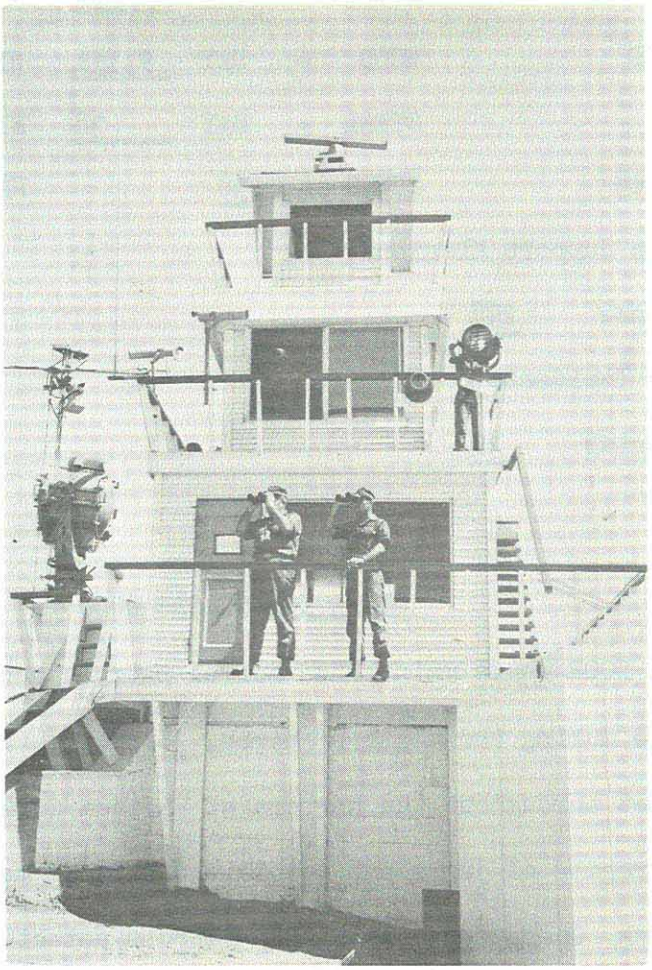

From the Harbor Entrance Command Post (HECP) tower, U.S. Navymen watch over the ships at anchor in Cam Ranh Bay. A 24-hour-a-day surveillance of all ships in the bay is maintained using radar as well as visual lookouts.

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render assistance in the rescue of two personnel involved in the crash of an Army Mohawk aircraft in Vung Tau Bay. LCPL-33 rescued one Army aviator, the co-pilot. Unfortunately, the pilot lost his life in the accident and his body was recovered by IUWU 1's small craft the following day.

A sampan moves alongside a U.S. Navy Personnel Landing Craft (LCPL) of Operation STABLE DOOR to be inspected before entering Cam Ranh Bay. These harbor defense craft guard against possible infiltration of enemy men and supplies into the harbors of South Vietnam.

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During March IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay detained a total of 20 persons and 4 junks.

On 11 March the EOD team assigned to IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay was directed to proceed to Chu Lai to conduct special salvage operations on an enemy trawler which had been sunk by MARKET TIME forces. During the period 11-15 March, the team conducted search and salvage operations and recovered small amounts of enemy ordnance. The detonation resulting from the trawler's attempted self-destruction effectively destroyed the bulk of the ordnance carried.

IUWU 3 continued operations at Qui Nhon during the month and detained only one person.

On 7 March, IUWU 3 was advised by the SS AFRICAN GLADE of an explosion approximately 20 feet from her stern. Patrol craft and EOD personnel commenced a search of the immediate area with negative results.

IUWU 4 continued operations in the Nha Trang area during March. The units detained a total of 176 persons during the month.

On 2 March patrol craft from IUWU 4 and EOD personnel from IUWUs 4 and 2 were directed to proceed to an area approximately 13 miles north-northeast of the Harbor Entrance Control Point site at Nha Trang to conduct salvage operations on an enemy trawler that had been sunk by MARKET TIME forces on 1 March. During the daylight hours of 2-4 March and 6-8 March, the EOD team conducted diving operations and recovered a large amount of enemy ordnance, both within the sunken trawler and in the bottom area.

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RIVER PATROL FORCE (Task Force 116)

The communist insurgents continued to employ rockets and automatic weapons in their attacks against PBR patrols with increased effectiveness during the month; however, the river patrol boats were not deterred from their role of interdiction of the enemy. In one 2-day period (23-25 March) in five separate incidents, scattered throughout the Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone, 3 PBR sailors were killed and 20 were wounded when their patrols were ambushed by the Viet Cong employing RPG-2 and RPG-7 rockets. GAME WARDEN units resolutely pursued the Viet Cong to exert a mounting pressure on the enemy. During 3 encounters with the communist, SEALs seized significant ordnance cache about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. Later the same morning SEALs teamed with armed Navy helicopters in the execution of an "Operation QUICK-KILL" (the employment of a quick reaction force), after a PBR patrol was fired on, netted 27 Viet Cong killed in a 3-hour engagement.

On 7 March, after a 10-day evaluation of the Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle (PACV) for GAME WARDEN operations, Commander Task Force 116 reported to Commander Naval Forces Vietnam that the mechanical unreliability of the craft and the limitations imposed on it by terrain rendered it unsuitable for employment by Task Force 116. On 2 March the three in-country PACVs were returned to the operational control of CTF 117.

On 13 March a QT-2PC, a new surveillance aircraft, designed to operate almost silently and utilizing very sensitive detection devices,

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proved its effectiveness during an evaluation flight in providing intelligence to GAME WARDEN units by detecting eight large junks transiting at night on a canal in the Dung Island complex near the mouth of the Bassac River. Two PBRs from Task Unit 116.1.2 and a helicopter fire team from Task Unit 116.1.8 responded as a reaction force. The combined helicopter and PBR attack destroyed or heavily damaged all the junks.

In an enemy vulnerability study submitted to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, Commander Task Force 116 (CTF 116) stated that the enemy continued to demonstrate an increased capability to employ small groups armed with automatic weapons, rockets and recoilless rifles in ambushes and as security forces across line of communications crossing corridors. The enemy firing bunkers provided relative security from PBR suppressive fire, and continual ground sweeps in the enemy areas rarely returned significant results. In view thereof, CTF 116 recommended that urgent consideration be given to the establishment of a 10 to 20 man well-trained, experienced quick-reaction force under the operational control of CTF 116.

During the month GAME WARDEN units were involved in 151 fire fights and killed 168 of the enemy while sustaining losses of 4 Navymen killed and 64 wounded in action. Since the commencement of GAME WARDEN operations a kill ratio of 40 to 1 has been attained.

I CORPS RIVER PATROL GROUP

PBRs of River Section 521 continued to patrol the Perfume River between Tan My and Hue, inspecting indigenous craft, as well as providing escorts

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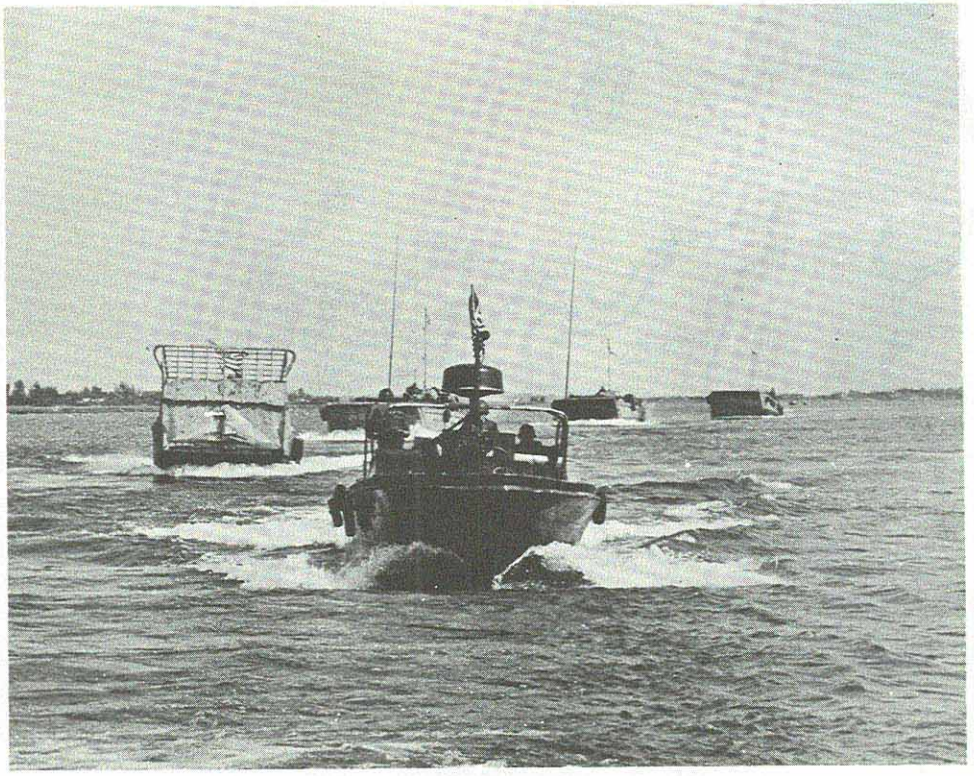
for the river convoys. In addition the patrol boats provided a waterway blocking force for U.S. Marines and U.S. Army ground operations in the Phu Vang and Phu Tu districts near Hue, bringing their guns to bear on enemy positions.



Heavily armed river patrol boats (PBRs) provide escort for a Navy supply convoy along the 9-mile stretch of the Perfume River between Tan My and Hue in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

On 5 March, Lieutenant Barry W. HOOPER, USN, of River Division 55 was killed in action while serving as a convoy commander assigned to Task Force CLEARWATER. LT HOOPER's convoy, composed of 5 LCUs and 3 LCM-8 logistical craft, 2 LCM-6 minesweepers, 2 armed LCPL patrol craft and

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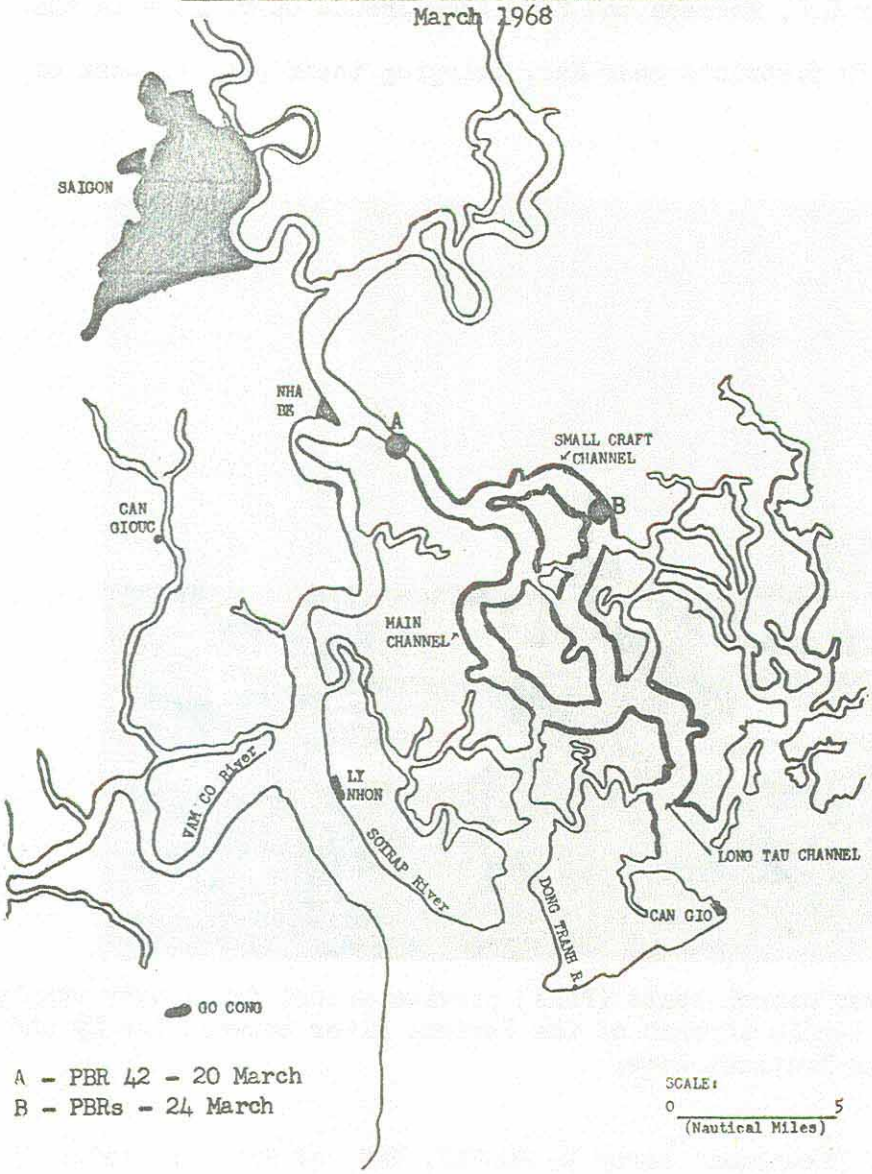
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE OPERATION
March 1968



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2 U.S. Marine Corps armed helicopters, departed Cua Viet bound for Dong Ha to deliver vital cargo to beleagured free world forces. As the convoy approached the mouth of the Hien Giang River, it was ambushed by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces who were entrenched in heavily fortified bunkers along both banks of the river. The enemy rained a deadly hail of crossfire from heavy automatic weapons, small arms and recoilless rifles on the convoy. LT HOOPER reacted to the ambush in a swift, bold and decisive manner as he climbed to the conning area of the YFU64, on which he was embarked, and from an exposed position he effectively directed the convoy units in evading the enemy fire and returning accurate and suppressive fire at the enemy positions. For 30 minutes the battle raged and as the last unit had cleared the ambush zone, YFU64 received a direct hit in the conning area that mortally wounded LT HOOPER. As a result of his superb leadership, the convoy fought its way through to its destination with the vital supplies it carried.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

On 20 March, when returning from a routine Long Tau River patrol, PBR 42, from River Section 543, was lifted 2 to 3 feet out of the water by a possible watermine detonation 2 miles southeast of Nha Be. The boat proceeded to Nha Be after the boat began taking on water from a 6-foot split in the keel aft of the coxswains' flat. A helicopter light fire team, airborne at the time, reconnoitered both banks of the river in the vicinity of the incident with negative results. A regional force

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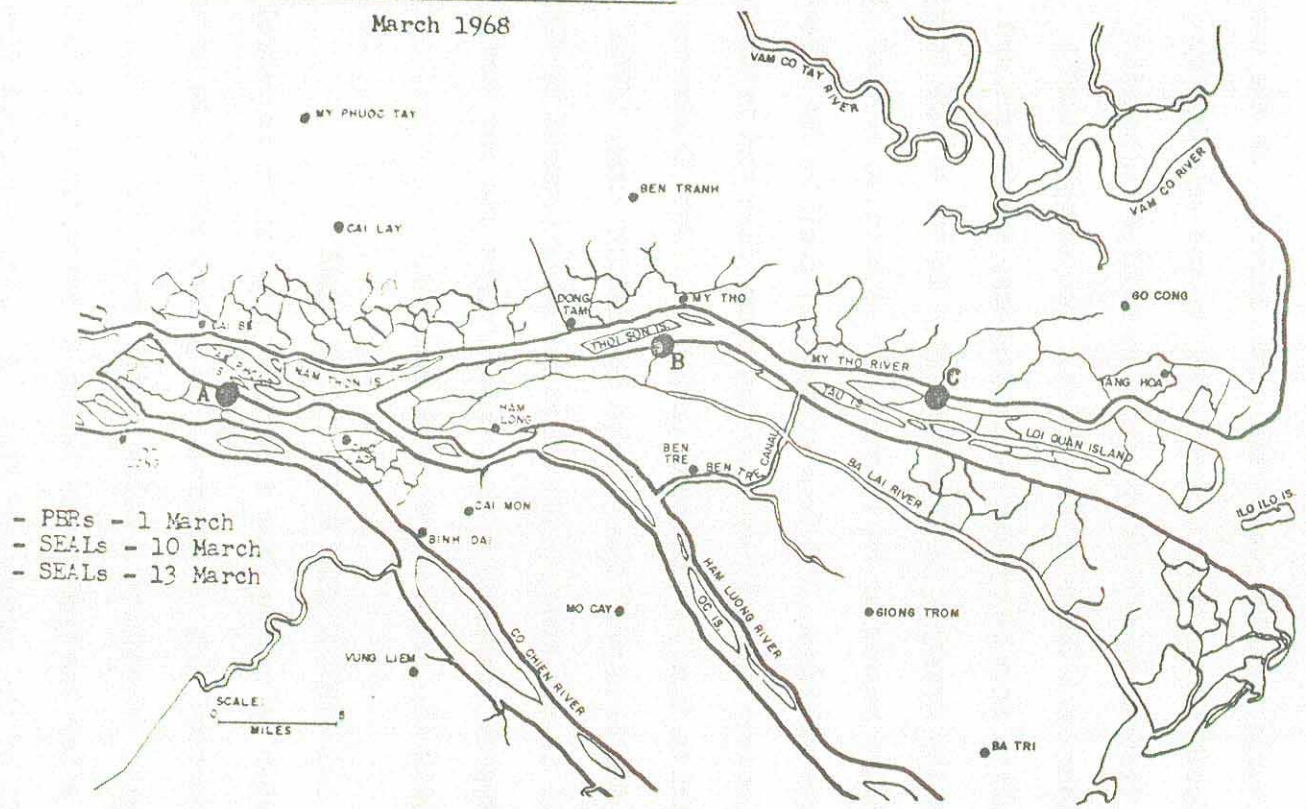
OPERATIONS IN THE MY THO RIVER

March 1968



- PBRs - 1 March
- SEALs - 10 March
- SEALs - 13 March

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ambush team also landed on the scene of the incident with negative results. There were no personnel casualties sustained.

On 24 March two PBRs came under an RPG-7 rocket attack while conducting a special patrol on the Dong Tranh River 9 miles southeast of Nha Be. This was the reported area of the Viet Cong T-10 Battalion. One rocket impacted against one of the PBRs and another rocket was a near miss, exploding close astern. The PBRs commenced firing runs against the enemy firing position and on the third run the second PBR was hit by two RPG-7 rounds (one was a dud) inflicting minor wounds on the crew, while two more rounds landed close astern. With the firing position now pin-pointed the boats directed their .50 caliber fire at the enemy suppressing any further fire. As the PBRs marked the target area with .50 caliber tracers, U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Forward Air Controllers (FAC) overhead directed 150-mm Royal Thai artillery and USAF fixed wing airstrikes onto the enemy positions. Two secondary explosions were observed. Enemy casualties were undetermined; however, seven PBR sailors, and one Vietnamese navyman received minor wounds.

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DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On 1 March, a PBR patrol operating about 7 miles northeast of Vinh Long observed two sampans that had taken evasive action. When the sampans failed to heed the patrols' warning shots to halt for inspection the PBRs opened fire. Sniper fire was received from undetermined positions; however,

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no friendly casualties were sustained. The sampans were destroyed and at least three Viet Cong were killed as another river crossing was thwarted.

On 6 March, a Navy helicopter light fire team on a routine patrol in the Sa Dec area was called by the Kien Van sub-sector advisor to aid his element in contact with enemy troops 6 miles northwest of Sa Dec. The "Seawolves" received ground fire as they approached the target area and in coordination with the Vietnamese ground elements put in an air-strike. The strike routed a number of Viet Cong in trenches; however, additional enemy troops remained in a tree line north of the initial strike area. The "Seawolves" attacked the tree line, followed by a front-line attack by the ARVN troops. The Navy helicopters killed seven of the enemy and were instrumental in aiding the ground units in the capture of eight enemy troopers. There were no U.S. casualties, but one ARVN soldier was killed in the 1½ hour engagement. It was determined that the enemy had established an ambush to attack PBRs; however, the Viet Cong scheme of manuevers was thwarted by the arrival of the ARVN.

On the evening of 10 March, a platoon of SEALs landed on the southern bank of the My Tho River 1½ miles southwest of My Tho and shortly thereafter made contact with a local Vietnamese civilian whose father had been killed by the Viet Cong. Because of his hatred for the Viet Cong, the civilian had agreed to provide information concerning the local communist insurgents. The SEALs were led to a house where there were three Viet Cong; however, as the Navymen approached, the enemy were

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alerted when a dog barked. As the three communists attempted to escape the SEALs killed them. They were identified as the hamlet security chief and two hamlet cadre. The SEALs were led to another house where they captured a female identified as a Viet Cong communication liaison cadre. The female provided information relative to the location of a Viet Cong tax collector; however, a search of the area failed to produce positive results. The SEALs withdrew from the area the following morning. The identity of the civilian was not disclosed to protect this valuable source of information on which future SEAL operations could be predicated.

On 13 March, under the cover of darkness, the 7th platoon of SEAL Detachment ALFA landed about 13 miles east of My Tho, off the Cua Tien River. After the SEALs were put ashore they patrolled inland about a mile where the platoon split. Squad 7B moved to the northwest, as Squad 7A patrolled in a northeasterly direction. At 0200, 7A engaged and killed two Viet Cong. Upon hearing many voices to the east of their position, the squad evaded to the north followed by approximately 50 Viet Cong. The squad set up a perimeter defense and called for a helicopter fire team to provide overhead cover and a helicopter withdrawal. Before the helicopters arrived the squad encountered and engaged about 20 enemy troops moving in from the east. "Seawolves" put in airstrikes and the SEALs were able to withdraw by a troop lift helicopter. Meanwhile, Squad 7B also encountered about 20 Viet Cong in barrack-type structures to the west of Squad 7A. Squad 7B evaded to the south where they established

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a perimeter defense to await a "Seawolf" strike and a helicopter airlift. By 0330 all SEALs were helicopter lifted from the area leaving 16 Viet Cong known dead behind. Four of the Navy raiders from Squad 7B and a Vietnamese interpreter were wounded by grenade fragments during the engagement.

On the afternoon of 24 March, units of River Section 513 were engaged in a savage action with the enemy that claimed the lives of three PBR crewmen and wounded five more. The boats, PBRs 33 and 99, had just completed a medical evacuation of nine wounded and two dead Vietnamese soldiers from an outpost on the Nha Mau Canal, about 7 miles southeast of Sa Dec. As the boats entered a curve in the canal, leading to the Mekong River, the Viet Cong opened up with a deadly fusillade of rocket and recoilless-rifle fire. The first rounds hit PBR 99, the cover boat, which immediately capsized dumping the crew and wounded Vietnamese into the canal. The boat sank; however, the installed flotation material kept the bow above the water. The crew swam to the opposite bank with several of the wounded Vietnamese and proceeded to a nearby outpost where they were subsequently recovered. Meanwhile, PBR 33, the lead boat, still under attack was the target of numerous RPG-7 rockets. Direct hits killed the patrol officer, Boatswain's Mate First Class George F. PROFFER, USN, and the after gunner, Gunner's Mate Third Class Ronald R. LAKE, USN, instantly. The boat captain, Boatswain First Class Arthur O. PRENDERGAST, USN, though mortally wounded and intermittently losing consciousness stayed at the wheel of the boat,

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to clear the attack area, until he fell. PRENDGERGAST died while en route to Dong Tam for medical treatment. Four additional PBR's and a light helicopter fire team were soon on the scene and commenced providing suppressing fire against the enemy positions and aid to the wounded crewmen and stricken craft. The crippled PBR 33 was escorted to Sa Dec and later that night the sunken PBR 99 was towed from the area and subsequently refloated. Four additional PBR sailors were wounded in the battle. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

Late on the evening of 6 March a PBR patrol intercepted a sampan with nine occupants crossing the river from the north bank about 6 miles northwest of Ben Tre. When the sampan ignored warning shots to stop for inspection the patrol boats opened fire. The occupants were seen leaping over the side as the firing continued. Five Viet Cong bodies were found later. In view of the intensity of the PBR fire it was highly suspected that the remaining four were either killed or seriously wounded. Thirty rounds of 7.62 Russian ammunition, one footlocker, six Viet Cong uniforms, documents and the engine were taken from the sampan before it was destroyed.

The next morning, about ½ mile west of Ben Tre, a PBR patrol encountered heavy automatic-weapon, small-arms and rocket fire. As the PBR sailors commenced a return fire, a B-40 rocket slammed into the after .50 caliber machine-gun of PBR 715 mortally wounding the after gunner, Enginerman Third Class Daniel D. WEBB, USN, and wounding three other crewmen. The

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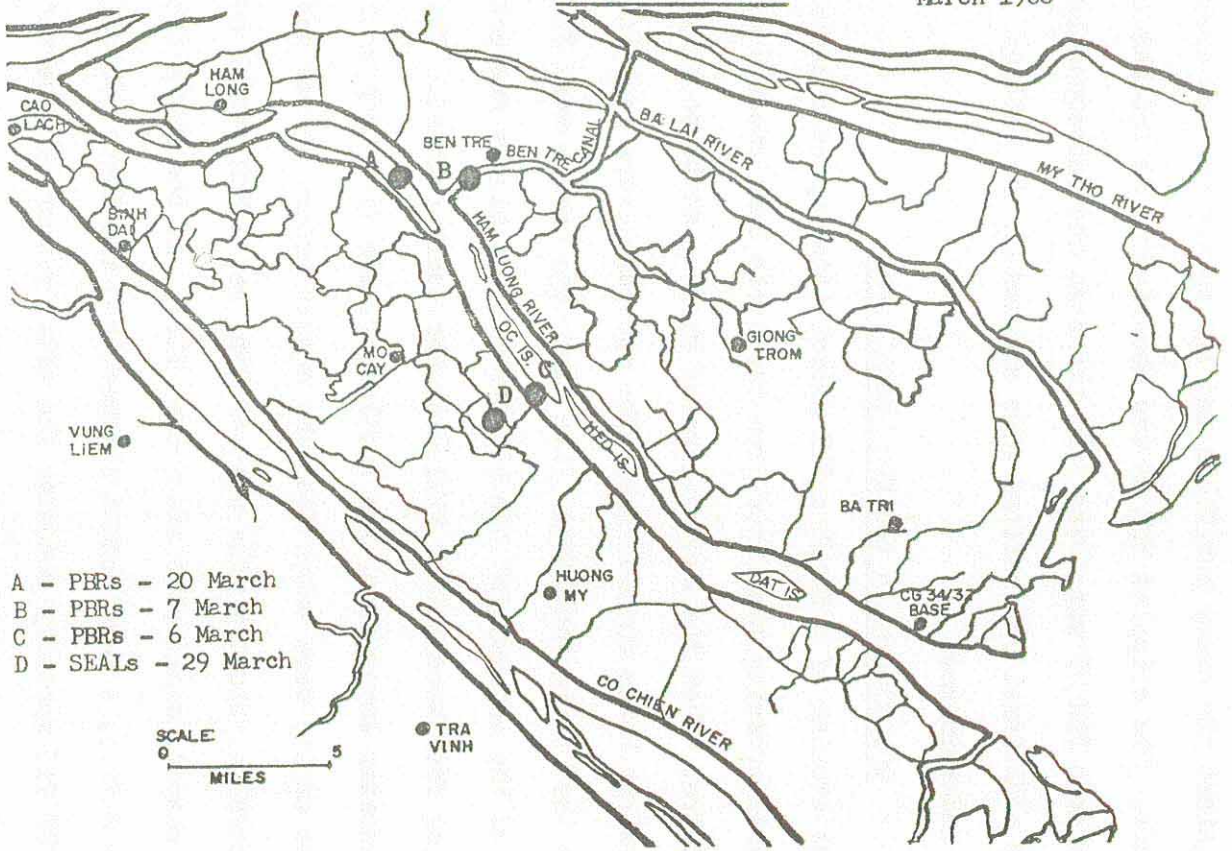
OPERATIONS IN THE HAM LUONG RIVER

March 1968



A - PBRs - 20 March
B - PBRs - 7 March
C - PBRs - 6 March
D - SEALs - 29 March

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boat cleared the area as additional rockets exploded in the water. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

On the morning of 20 March a PBR patrol from River Section 534 detected and pursued a 28-foot sampan crossing the Ham Luong River, about 7 miles west of Ben Tre, in a known Viet Cong crossing corridor and in violation of the established curfew. Upon sighting the PBR's the sampan evaded to the south bank ignoring all warning shots. The sampan elected to exchange fire with the patrol boats rather than heed the order to stop. The PBRs opened up with their machine-guns setting the enemy craft on fire. The patrol boats closed the burning sampan and counted five dead Viet Cong. In addition six males and four female insurgents were detained. Captured was one U.S. carbine, various amounts of ammunition, approximately one pound of documents, including Viet Cong movement and personnel orders. Also seized were a number of non-descript uniforms. The sampan was destroyed and the detainees were turned over to Vietnamese authorities at Ben Tre.

In the early morning hours of 29 March a Hoi Chanh led a SEAL platoon from Task Unit 116.3.0 to a large enemy weapons cache and arms factory in Kien Hoa Province, about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. PBRs proceeded 2½ miles up a small canal off the Ham Luong River and at 0600 landed the SEALs within 100 yards of the cache. As the SEALs moved into the village they killed four Viet Cong. Sporadic small-arms fire was received throughout the operation as Navy "Seawolves," six PBRS and

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USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST838) covered the operation. The "Seawolves" killed one additonal Viet Cong and the LST provided harassment and interdiction fire. The cache was found in two concrete rooms, hidden beneath two houses, measuring 6 feet by 6 feet by 10 feet, being used as a weapons factory and storage area. Captured or destroyed were the following items:

Captured		
Claymore mine, 10 lb.	21	
Claymore mine, 2 lb.	7	
Water mine, 8 lb.	5	
Water mine, 5 lb.	25	
Grenade fuse	50	
Blasting cap, electric	50	
Mortar increments	10	
120-mm locally produced rockets(of high quality)	5	
Launching tube for 120-mm rocket	1	
Tools, dies and taps for producing grenades	4	boxes
Ordnance documents	20	lbs.
Medical supplies	1	box
7.62 CHICOM long ammunition	6	cases
Assorted CHICOM ammunition	2	cases
German Schmeisser machine gun	3	
C/S grenades	19	
Rifle grenade launchers	3	
CHICOM frag grenades	25	
Locally produced frag grenades	7	boxes
Grenade pins and rings	1	box
Grenade spoons and strikers	2	boxes
Assorted machine tools (rocket molds)	1	box
Machine gun receiver group	1	
M-1 carbine rifle	2	
75-mm recoilless rifle w/mounts and tripods	2	
Small arms primers	2	cases
Fuse lighters and caps	1	case
60-mm mortar primers	1	case
82-mm mortar fuses	3	
7.62 crimped cartridges	1	box
CHICOM 7.62 carbine rifle	1	

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Destroyed	
75-mm recoilless rounds	8
Fragmentation grenades	11 cases
Tools	5 boxes
Wire	1 coil

As many of the captured items as possible were loaded into the PBRs; however, low tide conditions forced the boats to withdraw before the loading was completed. The weapons factory and storage area was blown up as the SEALs withdrew at 0930.

Although there had been reports of cement being used in the Delta by the Viet Cong, this was the first time such a structure had been found.

The former enemy soldier who led the GAME WARDEN units to the enemy sits rallied to the PBRs on 27 March. He related that he had been forced to go without food for 2 to 3 days at a time because PBRs had prevented the Viet Cong from moving food supplies on the river. He also stated that the river patrols had made it impossible for the Viet Cong to cross the river for the past 2 weeks.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 6 March PBRs 138 and 119 of River Section 523, while supporting a Vietnamese troop lift to an outpost 3 miles southeast of their base at Vinh Long, came under sniper fire. The fire was returned and suppressed by the patrol which then withdrew to the Co Chien River. The boats were standing by in mid-river when suddenly from positions on a nearby island the Viet Cong commenced a fierce barrage of automatic-weapons and rocket fire. The first RPG type rocket hit the forward

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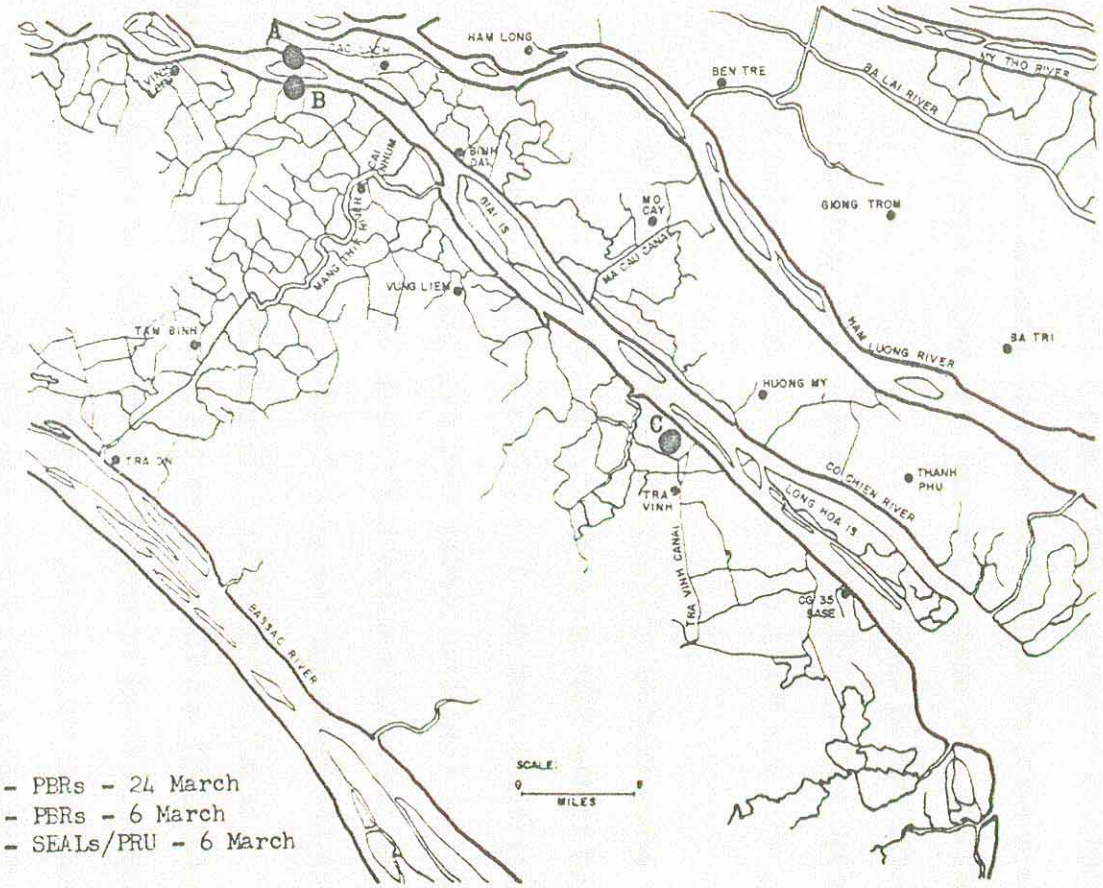

A - PBRs - 24 March
B - PBRs - 6 March
C - SEALs/PRU - 6 March

OPERATIONS IN THE CO CHIEN RIVER

March 1968

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.50 caliber mount on PBR 138. Even though the explosion was a low order detonation the force was sufficent enough to blow the forward gunner overboard. PBR 119 manuevered between the enemy firing positions and the lead boat to provide a cover while the lead boat picked up the wounded sailor. Four more rounds were fired, but missed the boats, before the PBRs could suppress the enemy fire. The patrol headed back to Vinh Long with the wounded consisting of three PBR crewmen (one serious) and one Vietnamese Maritime policeman. After arriving at the PBR base, PBR 119 was joined by PBR 141.

The patrol headed back to the ambush area now armed with a 60-mm mortar and immediately drew small-arms fire on arrival. The fire was quickly suppressed at which time the patrol mortared the tree line behind the initial ambush site. The patrol, upon learning that the outpost was now under attack, proceeded up the canal to aid the Vietnamese units. When the patrol started receiving fire from houses south of the outpost the boats moved in close to the houses and destroyed them with .50 caliber machine-gun fire. All enemy fire ceased. Casualties inflicted on the enemy were undetermined.

On the morning of 6 March the maximum use of a Navy team was employed resulting in a substantial enemy casualty toll. The action began when the SEAL 7th platoon and an element of a Vietnamese Provincial Reconnaissance Unit engaged the Viet Cong 531st Company and elements of the 509th at 0700 about 3 miles north of Phu Vinh. Throughout the day PBRs provided

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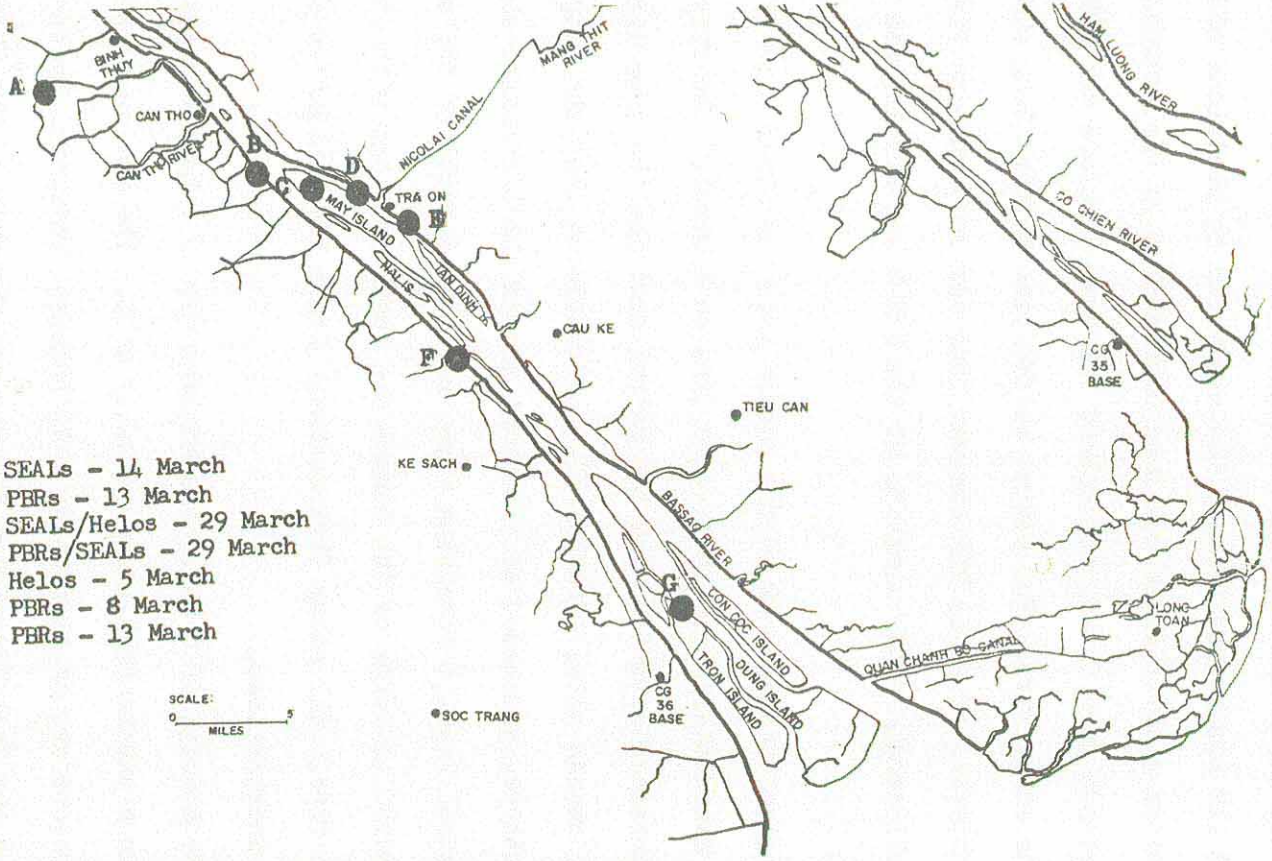

OPERATIONS IN THE BASSAC RIVER
March 1968

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neutralizing fire as needed while the Navy "Seawolves" maintained constant air support. The ground units reported that many lives were saved by the coordinated fire by the patrol craft and armed helicopters during the 7-hour operation. There were 6 known Viet Cong killed and 20 wounded. There were at least 15 other that were probably killed; however, their bodies were not found. One of the dead was identified as the commander of the 531st Viet Cong Company. The ground units also captured 1 AK-47 rifle, 1 BAR, one .45 caliber pistol, 12 grenades and 700 rounds of assorted ammunition. There were no friendly casualties.

On 24 March, 5 miles east of Vinh Long, PBRs 134 and 85 of River Section 522, came under rocket and automatic-weapons fire while on a routine patrol. The enemy attacked from several positions and fired at least seven RPG-7 rockets at the boats. PBR 134 took two hits - one in the starboard bow which exited through the port midship; the second hit starboard midship, destroyed the radio and radar equipment and wounded two crewmen. PBR 134 cleared the area while PBR 85 continued to return fire on the enemy positions; however, it was not until the "Seawolves" arrived, shortly thereafter, with their 2.75 inch rocket and machine-gun fire that the Viet Cong fire was suppressed. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

Operations in the Bassac River

On 5 March, following Viet Cong attacks on three outposts just east of Tra On, Navy "Seawolves" conducted air strikes along a tree

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line from which enemy fire had previously originated that day. The Navy helicopters opened their attack with a level bombing run dropping 20-pound bombs directly on target. The initial attack was followed by rocket and machine-gun passes, as the Viet Cong returned fire with heavy automatic weapons. The enemy ground fire hit the lead aircraft twice, wounding one crewman. The "Seawolves" continued their attack until all rockets were expended, leaving six Viet Cong dead, five wounded, one structure destroyed, three structures damaged and three tons of rice destroyed.

On 8 March, acting on intelligence that 5 to 10 Viet Cong tax collectors were operating 7 miles southeast of Tra On, on the southern bank of the river, PBRs landed Popular Force troops to conduct a ground sweep while "Seawolves" patrolled overhead. The Vietnamese troops soon gained contact and drove the Viet Cong into a field. The "Seawolves" reacted immediately with an airstrike in the area where a Viet Cong was seen running. The Popular Force troops later found seven dead Viet Cong. There were no friendly casualties.

On 12 March a PBR blockade established about 20 miles up river from the Binh Thuy base successfully engaged the enemy. The boats from River Section 511 had been on station all night and had encountered sporadic automatic weapons fire during the long wait. At first light ARVN troops resumed a ground sweep in the area, that had started the day before, and began flushing out the enemy. A 40-foot junk with about 30 Viet Cong

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aboard attempted to run the blockade. The PBRs opened fire on the junk, destroying it and then directed their weapons' fire along the bank. The patrol craft killed 2, by body count, wounded 7 and in view of the voluminous barrage directed against the enemy junk it was highly probable that 18 others were killed. (It is not unusual, due to the swift river currents, to lose sight of a body once it enters the water). The PBRs concluded their action by also destroying four sampans.

On 13 March, two PBR patrols from River Section 511, while transiting the Bassac River, 7 miles southeast of Can Tho, detected a sampan crossing from the mainland to May Island. When the patrol closed the sampan, a Viet Cong in the sampan opened fire on the lead boat of the patrol with an AK-47 automatic rifle. The patrol immediately returned the fire destroying the sampan and killing three communist insurgents. As the PBRs attempted to recover the remains of the sampan they received intense automatic-weapons and small-arms fire from enemy positions on both the mainland and May Island. The patrol once again retaliated with all their weaponry and set off a secondary explosion on May Island. A red fireball followed by smoke and flames rose 30-40 meters in the air and the fire continued to burn for over an hour. The patrol made another firing pass at the island but was unsuccessful in suppressing the enemy guns. In the action, the forward gunner on the lead boat sustained a serious wound. The PBRs cleared the area and called for a helicopter medical evacuation.

A second PBR patrol arrived on the scene shortly and continued the

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engagement along with a Vietnamese Navy LSIL that had also joined in the river battle. Meanwhile, the air rescue of the wounded PBR sailor was aborted when the rescue helicopter and the covering Navy armed helicopters received intense ground fire. The wounded sailor was sped up the river by boat to Can Tho, where an ambulance rushed him to the hospital. Action at the scene of the ambush continued and after three firing runs by the two PBRs and the LSIL the enemy fire was silenced. Three Navymen were wounded in the fierce engagement. Viet Cong casualties totaled three known killed. Casualties ashore were undetermined.

SEALs of the 8th Platoon waiting in ambush on the night of 14 March, 9 miles west of Can Tho observed a man in a sampan approaching close to the bank where the ambush was posted. Two of the Navymen sprung into the sampan and captured the lone occupant who was armed with a U.S. M-1 rifle. Upon questioning, the captive identified himself as a member of the Viet Cong Tay Do Battalion. The Viet Cong was gagged and bound and the SEALs once again silently waited at their ambush site. One hour later another sampan with six occupants approached. The SEALs spewed forth a hail of bullets killing all six enemy. Found in the sinking sampan were documents, assorted ammunition, communications equipment, grenades and medical supplies. There were no friendly casualties.

On 26 March Commander Task Force 116 conducted a combined GAME WARDEN/ River Assault Group operation against Tan Dinh Island, a Viet Cong strong-

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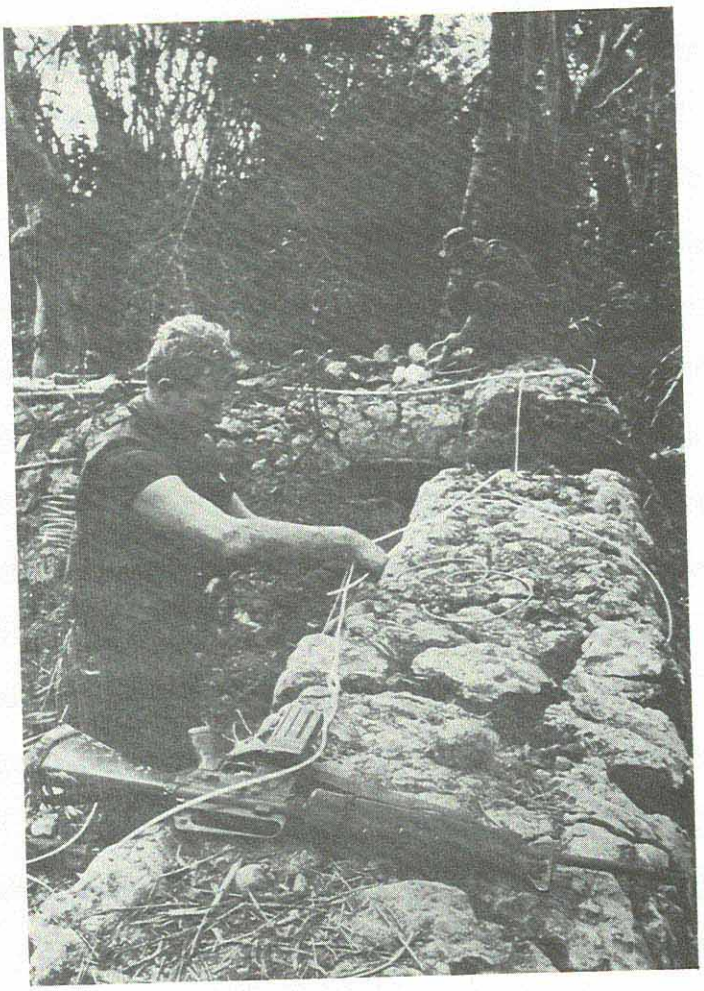

U.S. Navy SEALs set charges on a Viet Cong bunker in the Mekong Delta. The assault, conducted by U.S. - Vietnamese Navy task force units, took place on Tan Dinh Island on the Bassac River and was part of Operation BOLD DRAGON III.

hold in the lower Bassac River. Known as BOLD DRAGON III, the operation employed 14 PBRs, USS JENNINGS COUNTY (LST846), 2 light helicopter fire teams, a rocket-equipped LCM-6, an armored LCPL and LCM-6, and a SEAL

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platoon, all from Task Group 116.1 and RAG 25/29 riverine craft with Regional Force/Popular Force (RF/PF) troops from Tra On sub-sector embarked.

The attack began at 0900 with harassing and interdicting fire from the LST, LCM, PRBs, Monitors, and FOMs (V-bottomed river craft about the size of an LCVP), and air strikes by the helicopters. At 1000 the SEALs and PFs landed to destroy bunkers and buildings. After making contact with a small enemy force, they withdrew. The entire force then transited the narrow channel between the island and the mainland, putting in destructive fire on enemy fortifications along the banks. The armored LCM-6 employed a 106-mm recoilless rifle mounted on a wooden deck above the well deck. Helicopters concluded the operation at 1300 by dropping on the island 6 CS gas canisters, which release gas over a 30-day period, and 93 anti-disturbance mechanisms. There were no friendly casualties. Viet Cong losses consisted of 1 killed (body count), 3 killed (probable), and 20 bunkers, 3 buildings, 4 sampans, 3 motors, and 1 small ammunition dump destroyed.

On 20 March four PBRs from River Section 535, two helicopter light fire teams from Detachment 7 and SEAL Platoon Delta Two combined for an "Operation QUICK-KILL", 7½ miles southeast of Can Tho. The action began when two PBRs on a routine patrol were fired upon from three enemy positions on May Island. Within an hour SEALs

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were landed by PBR while the Navy "Seawolves" patrolled overhead. The SEALs commenced sweeping inland, following an initial airstrike by the Navy helicopters, and made contact with one man believed to be a Viet Cong lookout. The man fled; however, bunkers, numerous trenches, an old base camp and two expended rocket boosters were found. The SEALs, shortly after sighting the fleeing Viet Cong, commenced receiving automatic and small-arms fire from the right front. The Navymen returned fire while two scouts moved out to look for a flanking position from the right flank. "Seawolves" attacked the source of enemy fire with negative results. About five minutes later the two SEAL scouts came upon the source of the enemy fire; four Viet Cong were firing from a hootch. The scouts opened fire and the Viet Cong dropped from sight. The scouts returned to the main group to report their sighting when whistles were heard in the front and rear of the squad. The SEALs withdrew to the river as the Viet Cong manuevered using whistle signals. When the PBRs picked up the SEALs, the "Seawolves swung in and raked over the area where the Viet Cong were manuevering. The Tra On sector advisor later reported that 27 Viet Cong were killed in the attack. There were no friendly casualties.

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GAME WARDEN UNITS

On 2 March Commander River Squadron FIVE and his staff relocated from Saigon to Binh Thuy.

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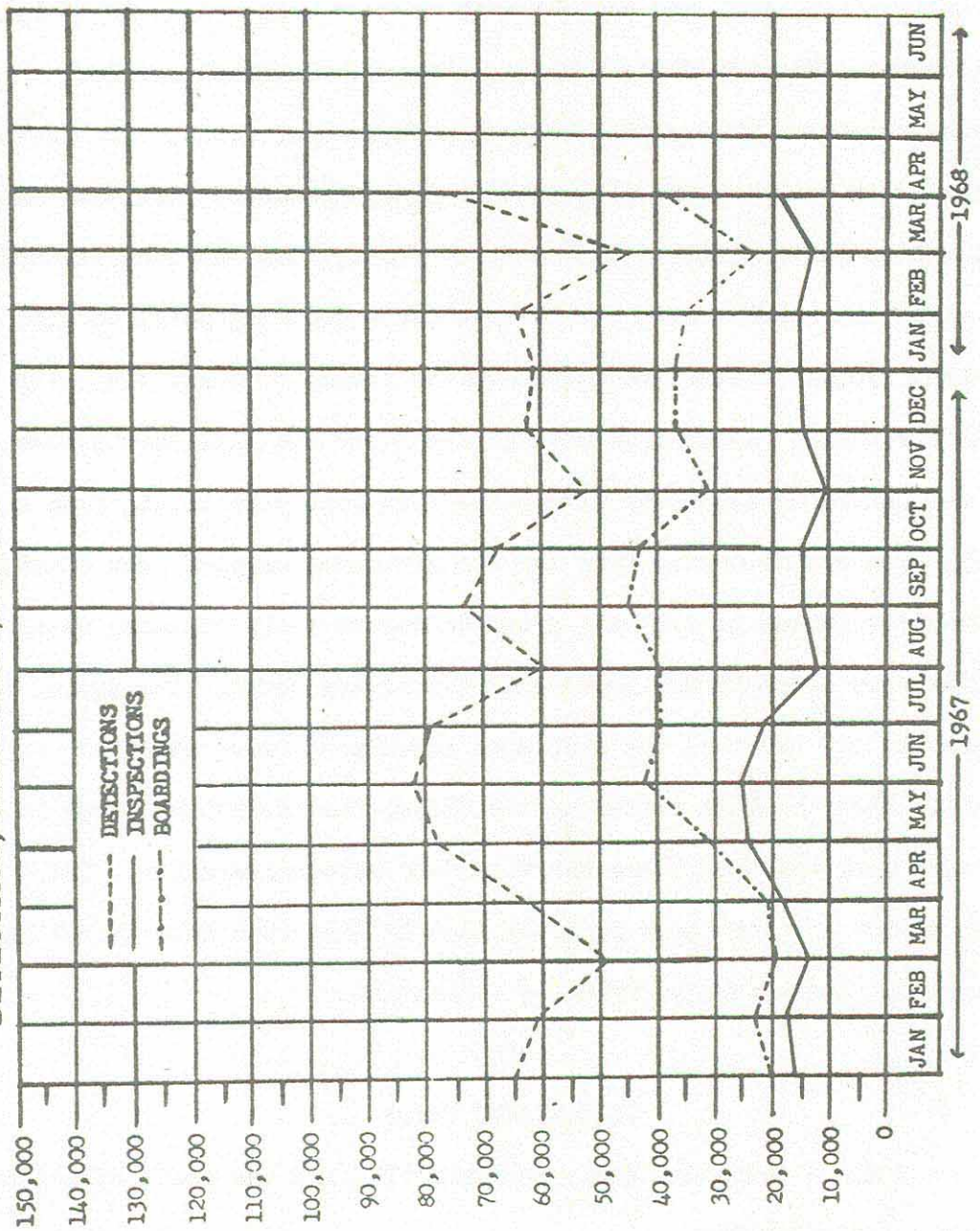

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On 2 March Commander Coastal Division 17 changed to the operational control of CTF 117 ending a ten day-evaluation of the PACVs by CTF 116.

On 14 March Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, COMNAVFORV, presented the Presidential Unit Citation to MINERON ELEVEN Detachment ALFA at Nha Be. (See Organization and Command)

On 22 March USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST786) arrived at Vinh Long and embarked River Section 523 which vacated task unit designator 116.2.3 and assumed 116.2.4. River Section 522, previously embarked in GARRETT COUNTY, remained at Vinh Long and changed its task unit designator from 116.3.7 to 116.2.1. River Section 513 shifted its location from Sa Dec to Binh Thuy and changed its task unit designator from 116.2.1 to 116.1.4.

On 25 March River Section 514 was activated at Nha Be.

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GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
March 1968

1. PBR Statistics:

a. Total Patrols (two boats):	Day 1261	Night 919
b. Total Contacts:	Day 71,604	Night 4,942
c. Total Inspected:	Day 17,257	Night 1,960
d. Total Boarded:	Day 37,775	Night 1,274
e. People Detained:	580	
f. Total Patrol Hours:	44,653	

2. Helicopter Fire Team Statistics:

a. Total Flight Hours:	1,317.9

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b. Helo Missions:
(1) Pre-planned strikes: 242
(2) Reaction: 127
(3) Targets of opportunity: 234
(4) Support: 348

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:

a. Fire Fights:
(1) PBR 57
(2) Helo 105

b. Sampans: Destroyed: 106 Damaged: 160 Captured: 0

c. Structures: Destroyed: 199 Damaged: 132

d. Bunkers: Destroyed: 60 Damaged: 0

e. Enemy: KIA: 168 KIA (poss.): 9 WIA: 46 Captured 6

f. Friendly: KIA: 4 WIA: 64

g. Friendly Battle Damage:
(1) PBR 34
(2) Helo 20
(3) LCM 0

h. PBR MEDEVAC: 130

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE (TASK FORCE 117)

With the advent of March, the major ships of the Mobile Riverine Base (MRB) lost any delusions of immunity or invulnerability from Viet Cong attacks. During the month four units of the MRB were attacked in three separate incidents by recoilless-rifles and mortar fire while anchored in the vicinity of the Dong Tam support base, 5 miles west of My Tho in Dinh Tuong Province.

On 3 March COMUSMACV directed that one river assault division of the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) deploy to I Corps to provide gunfire support and escort services for logistics convoys on the Cua Viet and Perfume rivers.

On 14 March two riverine assault craft were destroyed in widely separated incidents when ASPB-92 was either mined or hit by a large caliber round and sank far up the Sam Giang River in Dinh Tuong Province where it could not be salvaged, and T-112-7 was mined and overturned in the Cua Viet River in Quang Tri Province. The incident in I Corps caused the death of six sailors of the Mobile Riverine Force.

Operations in Phong Dinh Province

Throughout the night of 1 March, assault craft of TG 117.2 continued their security patrols in the vicinity of the salvage operations for ASPB-112-4, which was sunk on 27 February, 6 miles southwest of Can Tho on the Can Tho River.

At 0355 ASPB-112-8 and a monitor, M-112-1, on security patrol,

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received several B-40 rocket hits from the south bank of the Can Tho River, 6 miles southwest of Can Tho from a squad of Viet Cong. The monitor suffered only minor damage and there were no casualties; however, the ASPB sustained heavy damage to the engine cooling system for both engines. There was minor flooding in the ASPB which was brought rapidly under control. The disabled boat was towed back to the MRB. One crewmember, Boatswains' Mate Second Class Leslie E. MURRAY, USN, was killed during the ambush, and another Navyman was slightly wounded.

Meanwhile, ground operations continued in the Can Tho area as RADs 92 and 111 lifted their battalions to beaches on the Can Tho River 4 miles southwest of Can Tho. The first landing at 0700 was unopposed and no contact was made until 1100, when the 3/60th Infantry Battalion ran into sporadic enemy fire. At 1400 heavy contact was developed and continued until about 1900, when the elusive enemy withdrew under the cover of darkness.

Twice during the night the dug-in infantrymen were victimized by mortar barrages but, with the advent of dawn, the ground troops pressed the attack and made intermittent contact with the guerrillas. Thirty-two Viet Cong were killed and 1 prisoner was captured during the 1½ day operation, while Army personnel suffered 5 fatalities and had 39 men wounded. As a result of this action there was one Navyman killed and one sailor wounded. The MRF units also captured 14 individual

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weapons, 300 B-40 rocket charges, 77 RPG-2/RPG-7 rocket rounds, 14 grenades and 947 rounds of small-arms ammunition.

At 1930 on 2 March it was reported that ASPB-91 had been swamped by two ASPB's passing at high speed, and had sunk in less than 1 minute near the junction of the Can Tho River and Ba Long Stream 4 miles southwest of Can Tho. One Navyman, trapped in the berthing compartment drowned as a result of the rapid sinking.

The sinking of ASPB-91-1 was the fifth such incident in less than 30 days, only one of which was caused by enemy action. In the three cases investigated, there was some evidence that personnel error partially contributed to the sinkings. However, the primary faults were found to be the lack of seaworthiness caused by inadequate compartmentation, and marginal bouyancy coupled with excessive weight and a low freeboard. Every operating procedure had been repeatedly stressed; however, additional design and safety engineering was urgently required. Technical guidance was requested from the Naval Ships Command; however, in the interim, ASPB operations were temporarily curtailed to the minimum consonant with combat requirements.

Basically, the ASPB assault employment was limited to minesweeping due to their speed and demonstrated resistance to mining. Patrol and interdiction tasks while on strike operations were assumed by ATC's and monitors. The resultant increase in requirements for these LCM conversions was met by substituting ASPB's for ATC/monitors on base defense

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patrols. The ASPB ordnance loadout and supplies were also curtailed and their storage rearranged to allow the optimum trim. Additional ammunition and supplies, if required, were to be carried in an ATC resupply boat, which would be located in the area of operations.

On 2 March in response to a request from the Senior Advisor, IV Corps, Major General George S. ECKHARDT, USA, a riverine armored reconnaissance element (RARE) was formed to transit the Mang Thit/ Nicholai Canal between the Bassac and Co Chien rivers. The RARE was composed of the following units of TG 117.1: three ASPBs, one ATC(F) flamethrower, two monitor gunboats, three ATC troop carriers and a spare ATC, and also a second flamethrower ATC(F), and a CCB (command and communication boat) from TG 117.2. In order to cope with any waterborne obstructions that may have been encountered along the route, a detachment from Underwater Demolition Team TWELVE, with their diving equipment and explosives, was positioned in the lead of the riverine column.

At 0500 on 2 March, Vietnamese Rangers of the 42nd and 44th ARVN Rangers were embarked in the troop carriers at Can Tho, and the operation commenced. The RARE proceeded down the Bassac River to the city of Tra On, 11 miles southeast of Can Tho, and entered the Mang Thit/ Nicholai Canal.

During the 25-mile transit to the Co Chien River, the RARE and its supporting helicopter light fire team flushed out and killed 10

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fleeing Viet Cong. There were no friendly casualties during the transit. Upon reaching the Co Chien River at 1130, the riverine group continued on to Vinh Long, where the Vietnamese Rangers were off-loaded for air movement back to Can Tho. The RARE and the embarked UDT Detachment proceeded to Dong Tam to await the arrival of the MRF.

The return of the MRF to the Mekong River system on 3 March terminated Operation CORONADO XI. The Force had arrived at Can Tho on 13 February and Operation CORONADO XI began in the Cai Rang District of Phong Dinh Province on the following day. The next 16 days were marked by an unprecedented tempo of operations and contact with the enemy. The river assault craft and infantry battalions operated against the foe on all except two days, when the boats were patrolling the Can Tho River and moving a RARE through the Mang Thit/Nicholai Canal.

The known cumulative destruction inflicted on the enemy during CORONADO XI amounted to 245 Viet Cong killed. There were also 15 guerrillas captured along with 2 weapons and ammunition caches, which contained large quantities of B-40 rocket and mortar rounds. During this operation U.S. casualties amounted to 4 sailors and 40 Armymen killed, and 22 Navymen and 197 soldiers wounded.

Operations in Dinh Tuong Province

At 0240 on 5 March, the MRB, at anchor near Dong Tam, went to general quarters as several incoming rocket or recoilless-rifle/mortar rounds were heard whistling overhead by the boats of the defense patrol. Shortly

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Mud-encrusted infantrymen of the MRF wash off mud before going aboard a MRB barracks ship for a warm shower, hot food and a clean bed after an arduous and muddy combat operation in the Mekong Delta.

afterwards, USS SEDGEWICH COUNTY (LST1123), the MRF resupply ship, which was heavily laden with aviation fuel and ammunition, received a direct hit from a recoilless-rifle round; however, the damage was

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minimal and there were no personnel casualties. This marked the first direct mortar/rocket/recoilless-rifle attack launched against the MRB since it was formed and began operating in the Mekong Delta. About 0515 the Dong Tam support base came under sporadic mortar attack which continued until 0600.

On 7 March the MRF commenced Operation CORONADO XII by conducting a two-battalion riverine and airmobile operation in the Cho Gao District. The primary objective of this operation was to locate, engage and destroy the Viet Cong 261st Main Force Battalion and other enemy elements operating in the area.

Contact with the enemy was very light until 1720 on 8 March, when Bravo Company of the 4/47th Infantry Battalion established heavy contact 5 miles northeast of My Tho. The initial fire fight was fast and furious with four airmobile helicopters and one helicopter gunship shot down. Sporadic action continued until 0250 the next morning when FSPB HALLORAN, located 5 miles east of My Tho, began receiving a mortar barrage. One of the mortars made a direct hit on the artillery barge ammunition stowage area and caused a raging fire which was not brought under control until 0600. Several assault craft from RAD 111, with fire fighting teams from USS ASKARI (ARL30) and USS BENEWAH (APB35), rushed to the scene and assisted in evacuating the wounded and extinguishing the blazing fire. There were two U.S. Army barges and four 105-mm howitzers severely damaged in the inferno. Later that day the damaged howitzers were removed, and the

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irreparable barges were destroyed by EOD personnel. There were 14 Army-men wounded in the mortar attack, and 1 Navyman, Seaman Eugene E. SWIFT, USN, was mortally injured by exploding ammunition while fighting the blaze.

Later that afternoon the infantrymen were backloaded by RADs 91 and 92, and in company with the MRB returned to the Dong Tam anchorage. The cumulative results for this three-day operation amounted to 44 Viet Cong killed and 190 bunkers and 70 punji pit booby traps destroyed. The MRF units also captured a small cache of 12 weapons and over 400 rounds of assorted ammunition. Friendly casualties consisted of 12 Infantrymen killed, 1 Armyman missing and 98 soldiers wounded in action.

At 0430 the next morning, after a very brief rest at the MRB, RAS 9 and RAD 111 commenced another phase of Operation CORONADO XII (10-11 March). This operation was conducted in the Ban Long/Cam Son Secret Zones with the riverine units supporting elements of the 4/47th and 3/60th Infantry Battalions. Although heavy contact with the elusive enemy was not firmly established, the MRF assault forces killed 31 Viet Cong, captured 10 prisoners-of-war, and destroyed 15 bunkers and 1 sam-pan. U.S. casualties were relatively light with one soldier killed, and two sailors and four Armymen wounded. One of the captured Viet Cong had VN$ 270,295 ($2,290) in his possession.

Intelligence reports received on 12 March indicated that the Viet Cong were salvaging unexploded artillery rounds from the water at FSPB

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HALLORAN, where two of the TF SIX GUN artillery barges were destroyed on 9 March. The next day the MRF EOD investigated the report and uncovered 151 rounds of 105-mm ammunition which had been salvaged and partially disassembled by the Viet Cong. If the ammunition had not been discovered by the EOD team, the main explosive could have been used by enemy sapper teams with devastating effects. The EOD team also discovered the body of a soldier who had been missing since the mortar attack on the FSPB on 9 March. After destroying the projectiles, the team and supporting assault boats returned to the MRB at 1345 on 13 March.

Early on the morning of 14 March, USS WASHTENAW COUNTY (LST1166), anchored near Dong Tam, received a hit on the portside amidships, about 6 feet below the weather deck. The round, believed to be from a 57-mm recoilless-rifle, did not penetrate the hull, and failed to cause any damage. Retaliatory fire could not be returned, because MRB defense patrols were in the area from which the attack was delivered. The ground troops later swept the area with negative results.

At 0820 on the same day, a RARE, reconnoitering on the Sam Giang River 7 miles northwest of Dong Tam was taken under fire from the south bank of the river. At about the same time, ASPB-92-7 received a direct hit in the stern causing a one-foot hole below the warterline. The boat commenced flooding rapidly, and in a futile attempt to save the craft, it was beached on the nearest bank to keep it from total submergence. However,

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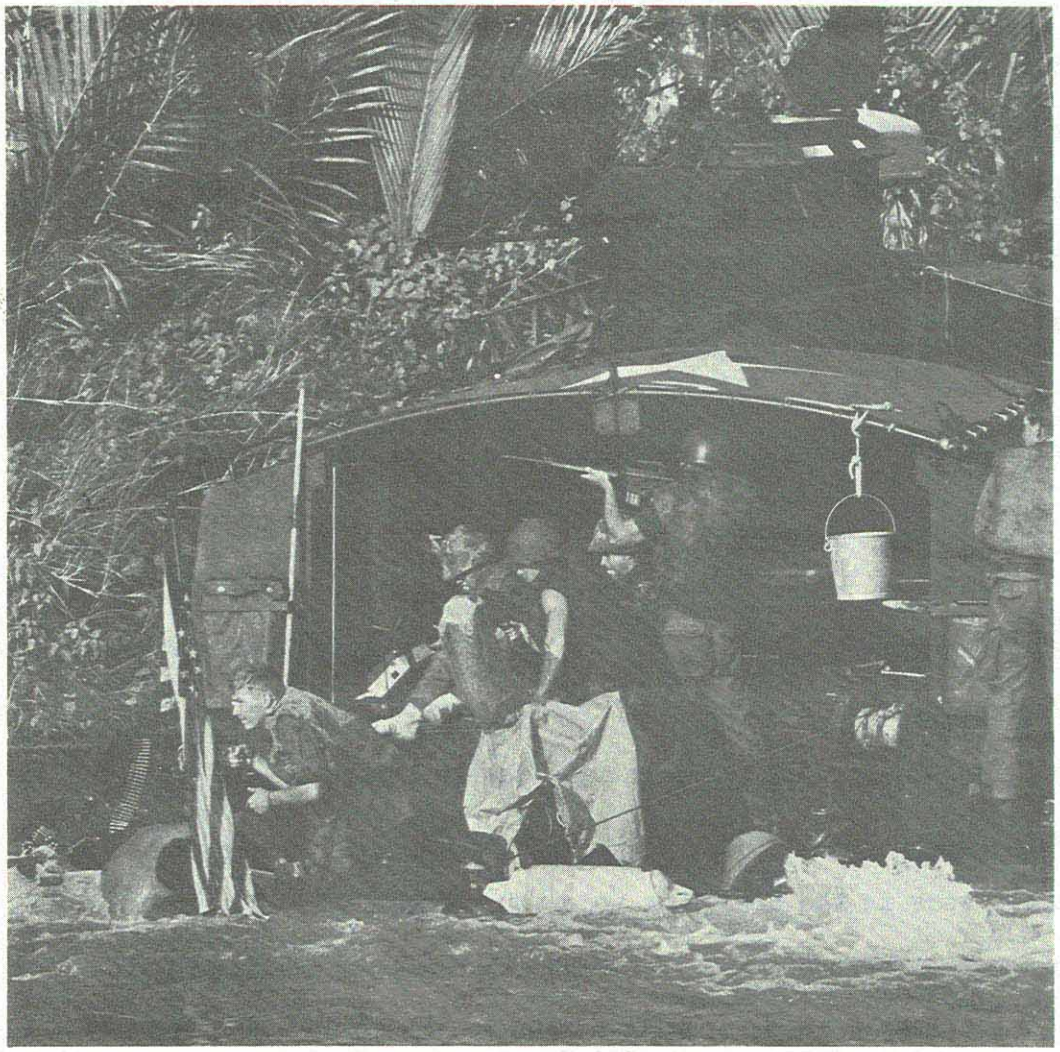

Down by the stern but still fighting, a crewmen of an ASPB return enemy fire after a Viet Cong recoilless-rifle or rocket round holed their boat. When the craft started sinking, the coxswain beached the boat and kept it afloat by revving the engines. A sailor at the base of the flag attempts to stop the flooding by stuffing his flak jacket into the jagged hole.

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the gradient was too steep, and the minesweeping boat rolled over on its side. Initially the forward part of the boat was above water, but as the tide rose the disabled craft gradually disappearred from view. The damage was believed to have been caused by either a mine caught in the boat's sweep gear or by a large HEAT round.

Salvage efforts continued throughout the day; however, they proved to be infeasible without the assistance of the light lift craft, which could not transit the narrow waterway. Consequently, the ASPB was stripped of all removable weapons and equipment and was destroyed by EOD personnel.

On 15 March the MRF commenced a two-battalion search and clear operation in the Ven Tranh District to engage elements of the 261st and 263rd Main Force Battalions. At 1620 the 3/60th Infantry Battalion established solid contact with a heavily bunkered enemy 7 miles northeast of My Tho. The contact was broken about 2030, when the enemy main force withdrew; however, sporadic contact continued throughout the night.

As a result of the two-day operation the MRF killed 26 Viet Cong and destroyed 261 bunkers, while also capturing 3 weapons, 34 hand grenades and 33 rocket rounds. U.S. Army losses amounted to 7 Armymen killed and 28 soldiers wounded.

After one day of preventive maintenance and local operations on 17 March, the MRF continued Operation TROUNG CONG DINH, a riverine operation, in the Cai Be and Cai Lay districts. The MRB relocated to an anchorage near Vinh Long after RAS 9 and RAD 111 lifted their battalions and

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escorted Task Force SIX GUN (the artillery barges) into the area of operation.

Bone-tired and pensive, a U.S. Navy boat captain of the Mobile Riverine Force takes advantage of a peaceful moment to reflect on his private thoughts after an exhausting day of combat operations in the Mekong Delta.

Intelligence reports indicated that the Viet Cong 263rd Main Force Battalion had established a base camp on the Ba Rai Stream about 5 miles

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north of the Mekong River. The concept of the operation called for the 3/60th Infantry Battalion to be landed south of the suspected base camp, and then move to the north with the assault craft providing waterborne blocking support from the river. The 4/47th Infantry Battalion was to land on the Luu River to the west and move eastward. The operation went according to plan, but the base camp failed to materialize. Contact was very light during the morning hours, but the afternoon was filled with action for the riverine craft which were patrolling the waterways.

On 18 March at 1610, two ASPB's, one monitor, and an ATC(F) flame-thrower of RAD 92, transiting the Ba Rai Stream 3 miles southwest of Cai Lay, were ambushed by rockets, recoilless-rifle and automatic-weapons fire from both banks of the narrow canal. During the action Lieutenant David H. WYRICK, USN, the commander of Task Unit 117.1.2 was killed instantly when a B-40 rocket impacted against the monitor that he was using as a command boat. The 4 boats were all damaged, but withdrew under their own power from the withering fire, carrying 16 wounded Navy-men. The rugged riverine craft were unable to suppress the intense enemy fire and called in supporting fire power to neutralize the area.

The battle continued to rage as the enemy guns refused to be silenced, and the deeply entrenched guerrillas continued their well-coordinate hit and run ambush tactics for the next 3 hours. The Luu River, the Cai Be and the Ba Rai streams all became hotbeds of enemy activity. At 1730 and 1830, units of RAD 91, transiting the Luu River

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to beach Army elements into their night positions, received recoilless-rifle and automatic-weapons fire from the shore at three different locations. Two sailors were slightly wounded in the encounters, while enemy casualties were unknown.

The Viet Cong struck again between 1915 and 1930 when units of RAD 111 at Fire Support Base WHITNEY on the Mekong River, 4 miles southeast of Cai Be, were attacked with rocket and small-arms fire by an unknown size enemy force. The fire was suppressed, but only after two Army LCM-8s were damaged and two soldiers were wounded. There were no Navy personnel or material casualties.

Due to the intensity of the attacks against the riverine craft, it was evaluated that the Viet Cong force were massing for an attack on Cai Lay. Therefore, the infantrymen resumed ground operations at dawn on 19 March, sweeping the area of the previous night's heavy firefight; however, contact with the enemy was not renewed.

The communist escaped from this two-day operation practically unscathed with only two known fatalities and four prisoners captured. The combined assault forces of the MRF destroyed 126 bunkers, while losing one U.S. Navy officer, and having 18 sailors and 9 soldiers wounded.

The vital importance of having a helicopter available for airborne tactical control and coordination of the river assault craft in the narrow Viet Cong-dominated waterways was tragically manifested in a Ba Rai Stream ambush on 18 March.

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The 1610 attack on elements of TU 117.1.2 hit the three lead boats with a devastating hail of B-40, RPG-7 and automatic-weapons fire, killing the unit commander and disabling all three craft. The radios were useless for several minutes, so that neither the squadron nor the task force commander could find out what was happening. The crews fought gallantly on their own against an enemy totally concealed from their view by the dense foliage.

While the effectiveness of a command and control helicopter on this particular occasion must remain conjectural, Commander Task Force 117 cogently emphasized the inherent advantage of an aloft observer to be as follows:

1. Facilitates detecting bunkered ambush positions not visible at ground level.

2. Maintains the riverine craft in mutually supporting positions.

3. Can order units to withdraw when communications are confused.

4. Can order and provide aloft spotter services for supporting artillery fire or airstrikes.

5. Can distract the enemy attack by machine-gun fire from aloft.

At 1100 the next day, the ships of the MRB relocated from the vicinity of Vinh Long to Dong Tam arriving at 1435. The ground operation was secured at noon in order to return to the Dong Tam anchorage and prepare for the planned airmobile operation the next day against insurgent forces reportedly massing northeast of My Tho.

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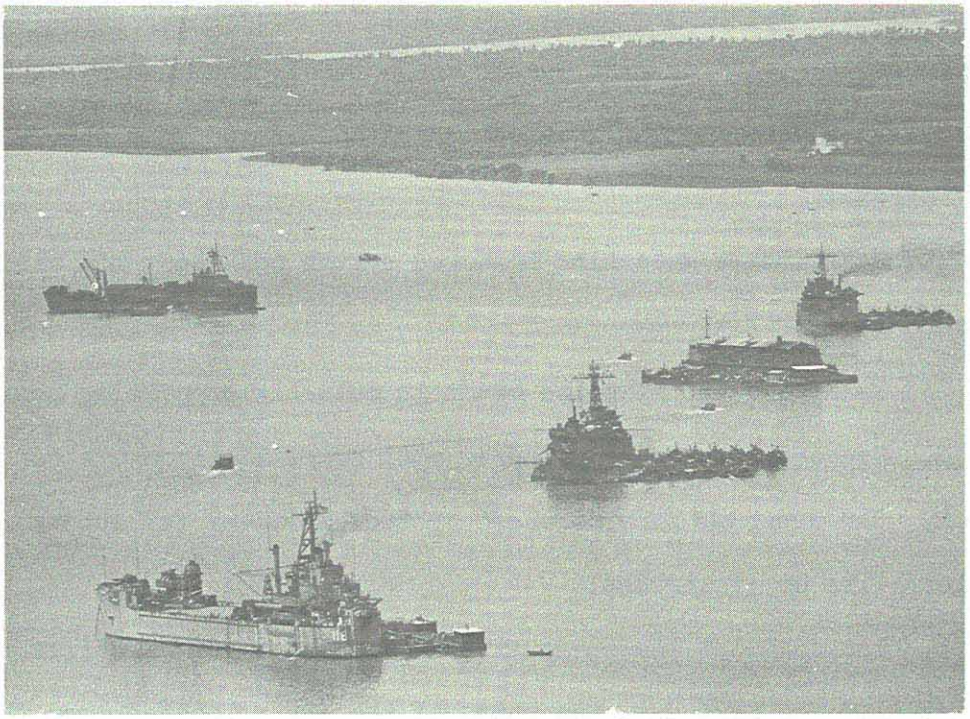
On 20 March the MRF commenced a two-day airmobile reconnaissance-in-force operation in the Binh Tranh District to locate and destroy the 1st Viet Cong Battle Group. Even though contact with a sizeable enemy unit was not established, the ground troops killed 2 Viet Cong and captured 1 prisoner while destroying 175 bunkers. There was one soldier wounded in the operation.



Major ships of the Mobile Riverine Base were at an anchorage similar to the above when the Viet Cong attacked them with mortars and recoilless rifles on 22 March 1968.

During the early morning hours of 22 March the Viet Cong "declared war" on the major ships of the MRB, when nine rounds of mortar and

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recoilless-rifle fire were directed against BENEWAH and WASHTENNAW COUNTY. The ships were anchored near Dong Tam in the middle of the Mekong River, 6 miles southwest of My Tho. The LST, heavily laden with highly volatile aviation gasoline and ammunition, was bracketed by four mortar/recoilless-rifle rounds, which landed close aboard.

BENEWAH, anchored nearby, was struck by two 75-mm recoilless-rifle rounds, one of which hit 1 foot below the waterline. The other round impacted on the fourth deck, portside forward, penetrated the outer hull, and sent deadly shrapnel plunging through four additional bulkheads, spraying hot metal into the mess hall. Miraculously, the normally crowded messhall was empty at the time and no one was injured. Neither ship suffered any personnel casualties during the attack.

On 24 March the MRF commenced another phase of Operation TRUONG CONG DINH with RADs 91, 92 and 111 supporting the 3/47th and 3/60th Infantry Battalions and Task Force SIX GUN. The 1½-day sweep and clear operation, which was conducted in Cai Be District, resulted in the death of 13 Viet Cong and the capture of 3 enemy prisoners and 4 weapons. U.S. Army forces suffered one fatality and five men were wounded during the sporadic action.

Following a brief respite during the afternoon and night of 25 March, the MRF conducted a two-battalion search and clear operation in the Cho Gao District of Dinh Tuong Province and in the Hoa Dong District of Co Cong Province. The area to the south of Vinh Binh in

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the Hoa Dong District, which was commonly referred to as "Coconut Grove", had been labeled by the intelligence community as a Viet Cong assembly and rest area and gave every indication of being a lucrative traget.

After formulating a comprehensive operational battle plan, the assault forces of the MRF, in conjunction with elements of the ARVN 7th Division, moved into the "Coconut Grove" area. Despite the glowing intelligence indicators, major contact was not effected. Enemy casualties amounted to 8 combatants killed, and 1 wounded, while 1 Viet Cong was captured and 220 bunkers were destroyed. There were three soldiers wounded by a booby trap in the one-day engagement.

On 28-29 March the MRF, in coordination with the ARVN 7th Division, moved back into Dinh Tuong Province and conducted riverine operations in the Long Dinh and Cai Lay Districts in search of the elusive Viet Cong 514th Main Force Battalion and local force units. Contact during the two-day operation was again sporadic, resulting in 10 enemy guerrillas killed, 1 prisoner, 7 weapons and 38 detainees captured and 4 sampans destroyed. U.S. casualties amounted to two Armymen killed and five soldiers wounded.

Meanwhile, the ground troops of the ARVN 7th Division uncovered several large caches of enemy weapons and ammunition. Responding to a request from ARVN 7th Headquarters, RAD 92 lifted the captured arms and ammunition out of the area and turned them over to ARVN representatives at the Long Dinh Bridge. The caches were so large that RAD 111

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provided further lift facilities on 30 and 31 March to move the remainder of the ammunition to the ARVN 11th Regiment Headquarters at Long Dinh. The caches included 753 rocket/recoilless-rifle rounds, 770 assorted mortar rounds, 150 "bangalore" torpedoes, 143 mines of assorted sizes, 10,000 rounds of AK-47 ammunition, 240 hand grenades, 44 crew-served weapons and 49 AK-47 weapons.

On 30-31 March the MRF continued search and destroy operations in the Cai Lay District. During the first morning 10 Viet Cong were killed in 2 separate but sharp contacts. Intelligence obtained from one of the guerrillas before he died indicated that the enemy unit in the area was the Cai Be Local Force Company, which was in the vicinity to rendezvous with the 263rd Main Force Battalion. There were no friendly casualties as a result of the two-day action, while the enemy forces suffered a total of 10 killed. The MRF units also captured 1,000 mines and 11 weapons and destroyed 12 bunkers and 1 booby trap.

MRF Operations in I Corps

On 3 March COMUSMACV directed that elements of one river assault division be deployed for a period of about 30 days to provide heavy escort services for waterborne logistic convoys on the Cua Viet and Perfume rivers. The deployment of these 14 riverine craft from RAD 112 decreased the MRF troop lift capability by about 25 percent. For the period of the deployment to I Corps, RAS 9 was tasked to support both infantry battalions while RAD 111 augmented by the RAD 112 boats which

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were left behind, provided base defense and close support for Task Force SIX GUN.

The riverine unit, under command of CTG 117.2 and comprised of 1 CCB, 3 monitors and 10 ATC's, arrived in I Corps on 9 March and commenced operations under the operational control of Commander Task Force CLEAR-WATER.

On 10 March, TG 117.2 commenced its first sweep and clear transit of the Cua Viet River from Cua Viet to Dong Ha. Four ATC's, one monitor and a CCB escorted two Landing Craft Utility (LCU) boats, and six LCM-8s up the eight-mile stretch of river and returned escorting a similar group of resupply boats without incident.

About 1345 the next day, a command-detonated mine was exploded astern of an LCM minesweeper in an area which had been swept four or five times. The command wire and part of the detonator were recovered by ATC-112-2 on the south bank of the river near a resettlement village.

The following day the riverine assault craft detachment was subjected to an enemy artillery attack which completely destroyed the maintenance, messing and berthing facilities at the Cua Viet Naval Support Activity Detachment loading ramp. There were no casualties to either the personnel or craft of TG 117.2; however, as a result of the attack, the assault boat crewmembers were required to berth on their craft.

On 14 March at 0719, ATC-112-7 was sweeping close to the west bank of the Cua Viet River 2 miles southeast of Dong Ha in Quang Tri

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Province when the boat hit an estimated 900-pound watermine. The force of the explosion was so tremendous that it flipped the 72-ton troop carrier upside down causing extensive damage to the bow and starboard side of the craft. There were six crewmembers killed and one seriously wounded in the mining. Due to the extensive hull damage, the boat was deemed unsalvageable.

Task Group 117.2 assault craft continued to keep the Cua Viet River supply route to Dong Ha open and, on 18 March, commenced enforcing a 1630-0830 curfew against sampan traffic on the waterway. Sporadic enemy harassment continued throughout the following week as evidenced by one 60-mm mortar attack on the assault boats, which failed to cause any personnel or material damage. These continuous patrols were most instrumental in enabling the logistic craft from Naval Support Activity, Danang to maintain their independent transits of the Cua Viet River.

On 28 March a monitor, M-112-1, on a routine sweep patrol operation on the Cua Viet River, experienced a near miss when an estimated 200-pound watermine was command-detonated about 10 feet astern of the craft. The monitor lost steering control but did not suffer any personnel casualties.

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE UNITS

On 4-5 March at Dong Tam, the 4/47th Infantry Battalion replaced the 3/47th Infantry Battalion as one of the two afloat battalions. The 4/47th Infantry Battalion embarked in USS COLLETON (APB36) and USS WASHTENAW

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COUNTY (LST1166).

The ASPB salvage operations for A-112-4 and A-91-1, sunk in the Can Tho River on 27 February and 2 March respectively, were completed when the two boats were towed into the basin at Dong Tam at 2200 on 8 March. (Salvage operations will be covered in more detail in the salvage section of the supplement)

On 25 March USS TOM GREEN COUNTY (LST1159) relieved WASHTENAW COUNTY as the MRF supply ship.

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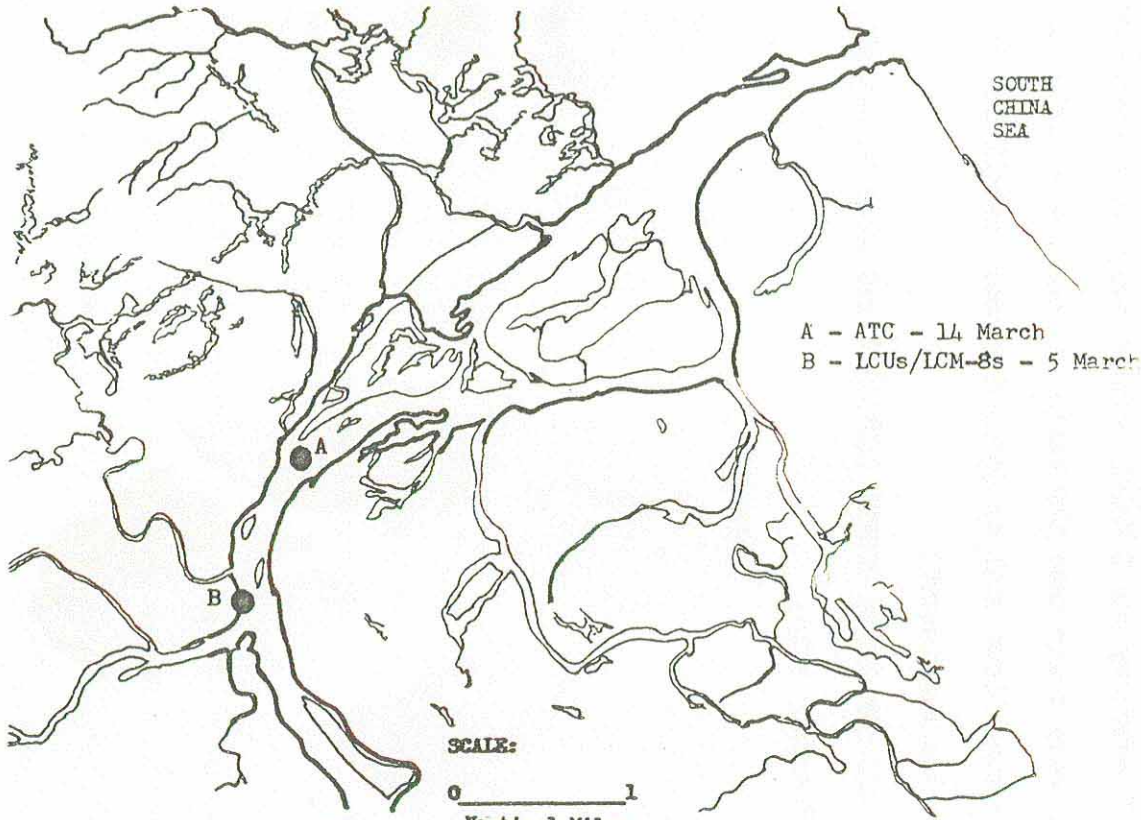

OPERATIONS IN THE CUA VIET RIVER
March 1968

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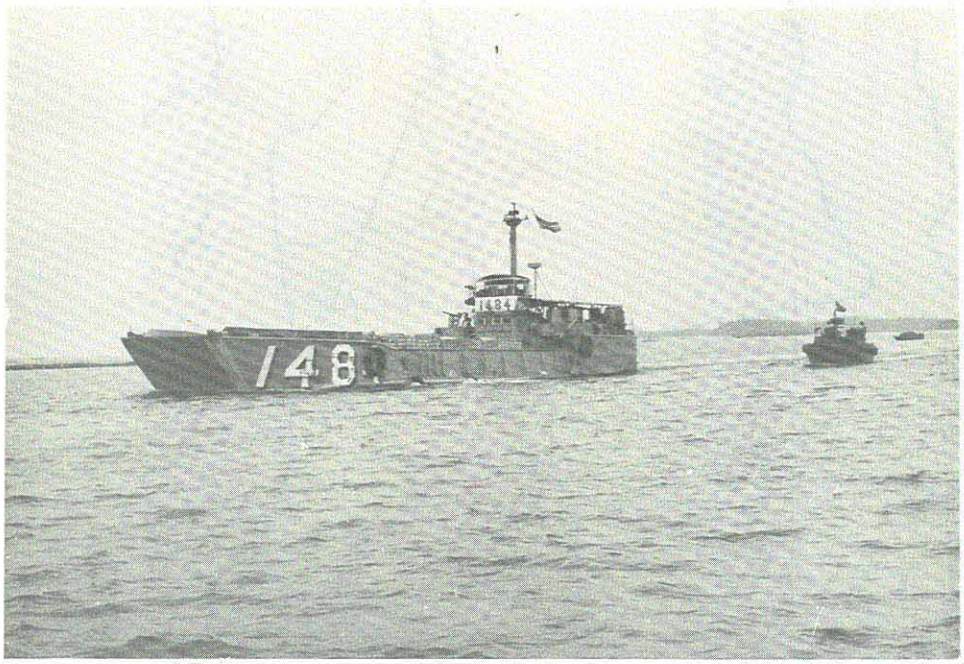
COMMANDER TASK FORCE CLEARWATER



PBR escort YFU transporting vital cargo to U.S. and Free World troops in Northern I Corps Tactical Zone.

During March the forces assigned Task Force CLEARWATER continued to provide protection for the vitally important logistics craft which traveled the Perfume and Cua Viet rivers. By exercising overall control and coordination of the logistics craft while in transit, CTF CLEARWATER improved and expedited naval supply support to combat forces in Northern I CTZ. CTF CLEARWATER employs two River Security Groups to coordinate the logistic movements and to protect the craft and personnel.

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OPERATIONS IN THE PERFUME RIVER

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The Hue River Security Group receives and instructs convoys which are formed at Tan My, and the Dong Ha River Security Group performs the same function for convoys which are formed at Cua Viet. When formed, the convoys consists of an escort unit and a movement unit, both under the command of a designated convoy commander. The function of the escort unit is to provide for the uninterrupted transit of the movement unit by employing mine countermeasures, direct fire support, and by coordinating aircraft, artillery and naval gunfire support. The function of the movement unit is to deliver cargo to its ultimate destination without delay.

Extensive efforts to disrupt and interdict logistic convoy transits on the Cua Viet River continued throughout March. Enemy initiated incidents ranging from small arms harassment to an extensive mining campaign occurred throughout the month.

On 5 March a convoy consisting of five LCU's and three LCM-8s, escorted by two LCM-6 minesweeping boats, two LCPL patrol boats and two USMC helicopter gunships, departed Cua Viet enroute to Dong Ha. At 1215 the convoy came under an intense small arms and recoilless-rifle attack approximately 2 miles east of Dong Ha at the mouth of the Hien Giang River. Although material damage to the convoy craft was slight, the convoy commander, Lieutenant Barry W. HOOPER, USN, was killed and four other Navymen were wounded.

The convoy continued on to Dong Ha and river operations were

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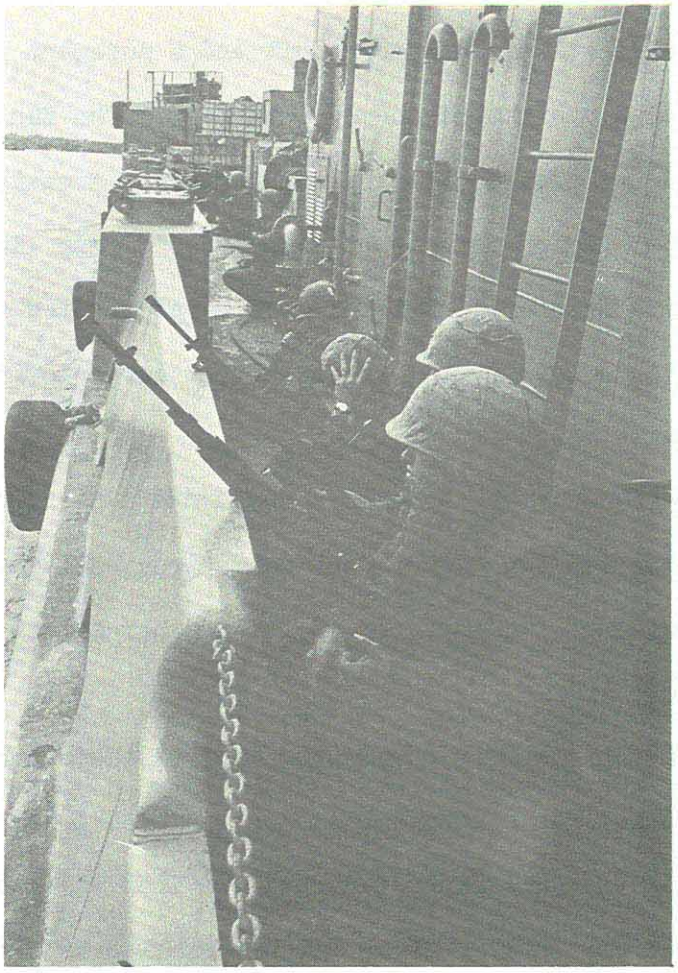

YFU-72 crewmen line sides with small arms as the craft head up Perfume River. The crewmen responded to orders for a sharp lookout for Viet Cong attackers.

terminated until USMC ground troops swept and secured the area from which the attack originated. At 1630, after the Marines had completed their sweep operation, the convoy commenced the return trip to Cua Viet.

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At 1723 two mines detonated near an LCM-8 but no personnel casualties resulted and damage to the craft was slight.

On 14 March an ATC minesweeping craft, sweeping close to the west bank of the Cua Viet River channel, approximately 2½ miles northeast of Dong Ha, hit an estimated 900-pound mine. The craft, which was flipped upside down by the force of the explosion, suffered extensive damage to its bow and starboard side, and was later designated a total loss. Six crewmembers were killed and one was severely wounded as a result of the incident.

Enemy initiated incidents on the Perfume River were nonexistent during early March, primarily because of control of the river banks by friendly forces, and on the 3rd of the month CTF CLEARWATER discontinued the convoy mode of operation. Logistic craft were allowed to make individual or group transits of the river which was continually patrolled and swept for mines. Individual transits of the river continued without incident until 25 March when LCU 877 received a rocket and .50 caliber machine gun attack approximately 4 miles north of Hue. Normal convoy operations were reinstated following this incident and during the remainder of the month convoys transited without incident.

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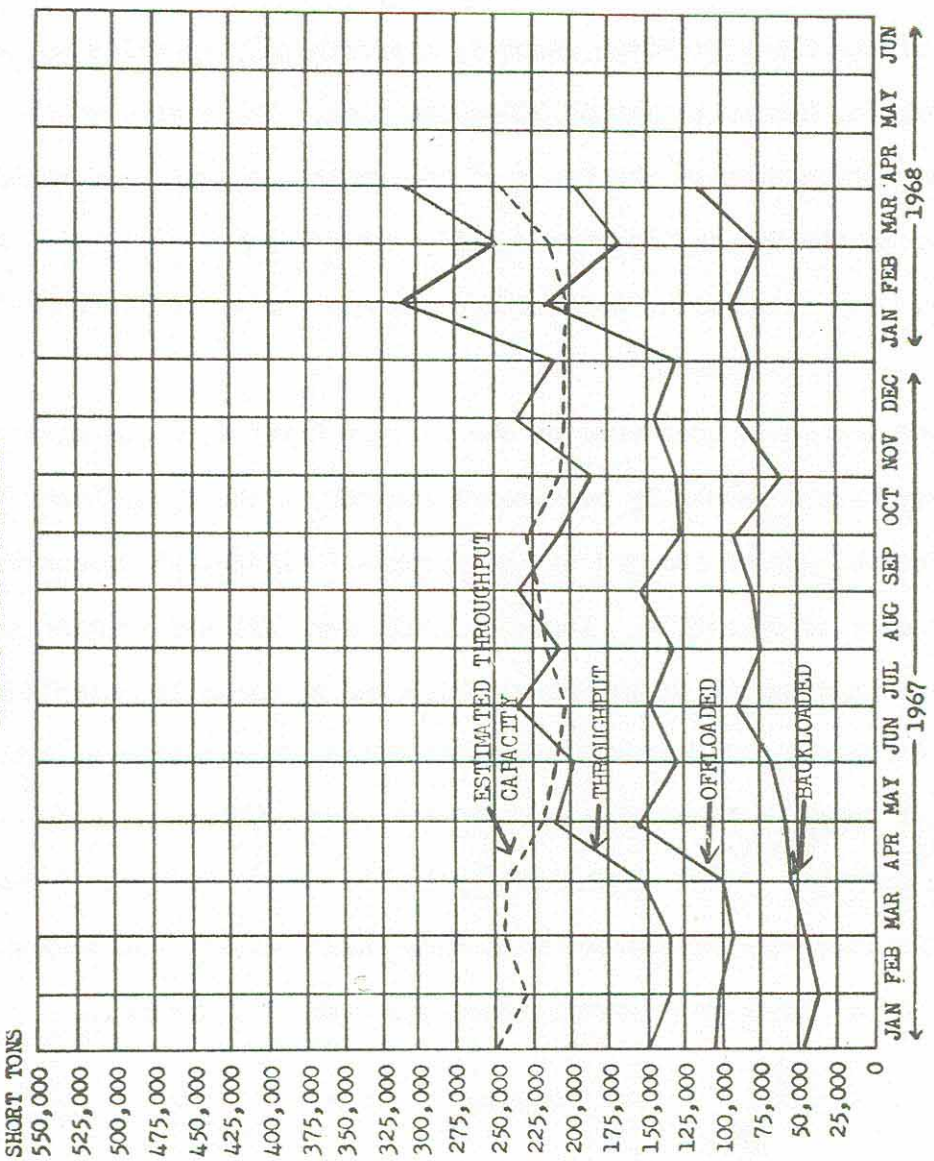

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

Despite numerous enemy attacks, Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT) Danang, and its detachments continued to offload and clear expeditiously during March. A total of 28 tonnage records were established by NAVSUPPACT activities during the month; 22 monthly records and 6 daily records. Among the new monthly tonnage records were: 308,233 short-ton throughput at Danang; 46,602 short-ton throughput at Dong Ha; and 25,592 short-ton throughput at the Hue/Tan My complex. March's 440.737 short-ton monthly throughput for the combined I CTZ ports also exceeded the previous high set in January 1968 by almost 21,000 short-tons.

Despite the continuing population build-up in I CTZ, overall net supply effectiveness for Danang and Chu Lai rose from 89.0 precent in February to 91.0 percent in March; overall gross effectiveness also increased slightly from 88.0 percent to 88.4 percent. Demands for the month totalled 176,811, a 50 percent increase in the last two months.

Weather and sea conditions permitted normal fuel transfer operations at all sites. Fuel issues in I CTZ increased from 1,150,000-gallons daily average during February to 1,400,000 in March. A large portion of this increase was in Northern I CTZ where throughput increased from a 348,000-gallon daily average at the end of February to 498,000 at the end of March. River transit capability was increased during the month with the addition of an AMMI barge at Cua Viet, bringing the total capability to 340,000 gallons per day. An explosion and fire at the

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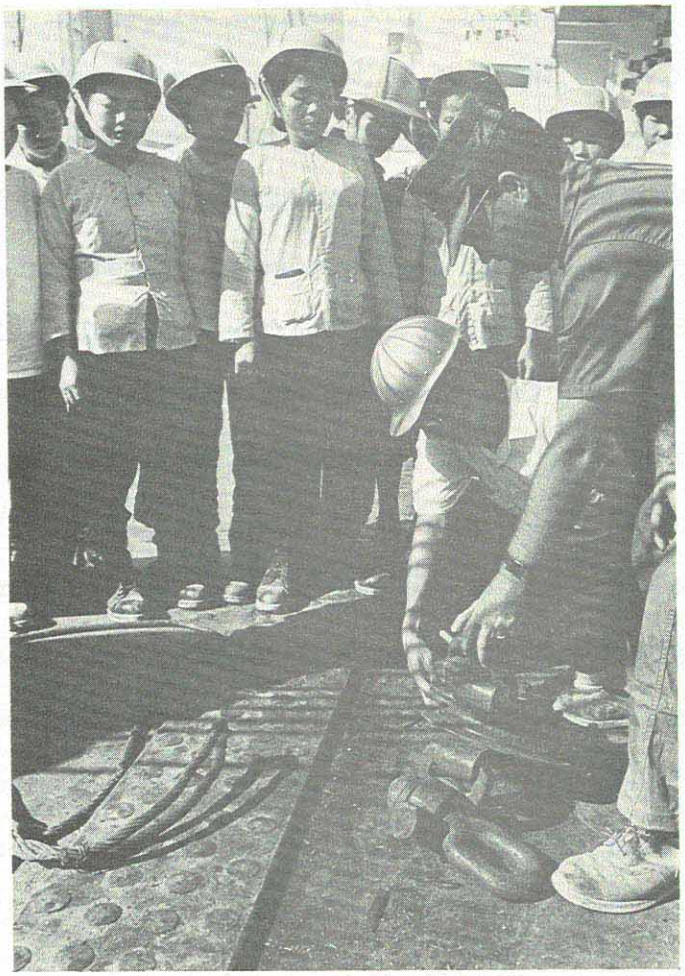

Members of the first class of women stevedores at Danang look on as Boatswains' Mate First Class Eugene WEST, USN, and Vietnamese instructor Phan Tan THIEU explain handling of block and tackle gear. The women will operate forklifts, winches and direct cargo operation in I Corps seaports.

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Shell My Khe Tank Farm in Danang destroyed a 32,000-barrel JP-4 tank on 11 March; at month's end, the construction arrangements for a new tank were being made by Shell representatives.

One Army terminal service company provided eight hatch teams for cargo operations at NAVSUPPACT's piers during the month. Their services helped offset the loss of local national labor and the cargo volume build-up. One terminal transfer platoon manned the new LCU ramps at Dong Ha and also provided the necessary equipment. The strict 1900 to 0700 curfew imposed in the Danang area also hampered efficient cargo operations. Most noticeable was the absence of local nationals from hatch teams and pier-ramp cleanup operations. Included in a group of new employees hired during the month was one female hatch team; at month's end their work appeared to be satisfactory.

NAVSUPPACT Danang and its detachments continued to be harassed by enemy attacks during March. Casualties to NAVSUPPACT personnel resulting from the attacks included 5 Navymen killed and 60 wounded. Forty-six of the wounded personnel were treated and returned to duty.

On the morning of 10 March an enemy artillery attack on Cua Viet resulted in the ignition of 150 short-tons of staged ammunition. The subsequent fires and secondary explosions caused the most widespread destruction of any NAVSUPPACT Danang facility to date. Although total personnel casualties were relatively light (1 killed and 22 wounded), material destruction was quite extensive. Living quarters, the messhall,

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Sailors clear debris and begin to rebuild at the Naval Support Activity Detachment in Cua Viet. A Communist-rocket attack hit supplies and ammunition staged on the ramp causing the destruction. Fire, shrapnel and the force of the blast reduced much of the detachment to a mass of rubble, twisted steel, broken sandbags and splintered and charred-wood littered areas where living and working quarters once stood.

communications van, a 30-ton crane, a rough-terrain forklift, plus a large quantity of staged cargo were all destroyed. As a direct result of the rapid response of the personnel involved, there was a minimal interruption of cargo operations at the port. Within 30 hours, communications were restored and building material were on the scene to commence

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reconstruction. At month's end 60 percent of the construction/repair work was completed.

The Phu Bai Base was attacked on 26 March with 174 rounds of rocket and mortar fire. As a result of the attack, 5 structures were destroyed and 10 were severely damaged. The runway and adjoining taxiways sustained 11 hits during the attack. Three direct hits on the runway caused crucial holes which were repaired within 4 hours. The runway was reopened to C-130 aircraft traffic within 10 hours after the attack, and the remaining runway damage was repaired within 2 days.

Security for NAVSUPPACT's logistic craft which ply the Cua Viet River improved during the month, but the boats continued to be subject to small arms, rocket/artillery and mining attacks. The monthly totals for operations on the Cua Viet River included six logistic craft mined, four hit by recoilless-rifle/small-arms fire and one patrol boat and one minesweeping craft sunk. A sharp decrease in enemy activity against logistic craft on the Perfume River was apparent during the period 2-24 March. On 25 March Tan My received 30-50 mortar rounds in the vicinity of the boat cove, fuel farm and cantonment area. The mortar attack resulted in three LCM-8 boats being damaged, several holes in POL pipelines and minor damage to a JP-4 tank.

The arrival of six new 45-foot picket boats during the month enabled NAVSUPPACT Danang's harbor security forces to maintain boat patrols in Danang Harbor. The patrolling units apprehended 45 junks/sampans and

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141 persons for curfew and restricted area violations.

The number of patients admitted to the NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital during March totalled 1,783. Of the total number received at the 567-bed hospital, 796 were admitted for combat injuries, 729 for various diseases and 258 for non-combat injuries. A total of 577 persons were treated and returned to duty and 672 were evacuated to hospitals outside of South Vietnam.

At month's end, NAVSUPPACT Danang's personnel status showed an onboard count of 9,470, with support being provided to 190,334 U.S. and free world military forces in the I Corps area.

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U. S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

During the month of March the enemy continued to harass and attack Naval Support Activity (NAVSUPPACT), Saigon, detachments and logistics craft. On 3 March the Nha Be detachment received an estimated 35 rounds of mortar and recoilless-rifle fire. Approximately 15 rounds landed within the perimeter of the base and another 20 rounds landed in the water near the base. Results of the attack included four Navymen injured and the Public Works compound damaged extensively.

On the 4th, the Qui Nhon detachment received approximately 50 rounds of automatic-weapons harassment fire. No casualties resulted from the hostile fire.

On the morning of 11 March, YFR 890 received heavy enemy automatic-weapons and B-40 rocket fire while transiting the Mekong River 23 miles west of My Tho. The Delta resupply craft sustained eight rocket hits which caused extensive hull damage above the waterline and considerable machinery damage. Three Navymen were wounded during the attack.

On the evening of the 20th, an enemy mortar attack on My Tho City resulted in moderate damage to NAVSUPPACT detachment's generator installation and a jeep. There were no USN personnel casualties.

On the 27th, the Dong Tam base received nine rounds of harassing 120-mm mortar fire. There were no personnel casualties as a result of the attack and only slight damage to a 5-ton truck belonging to the Navy detachment.

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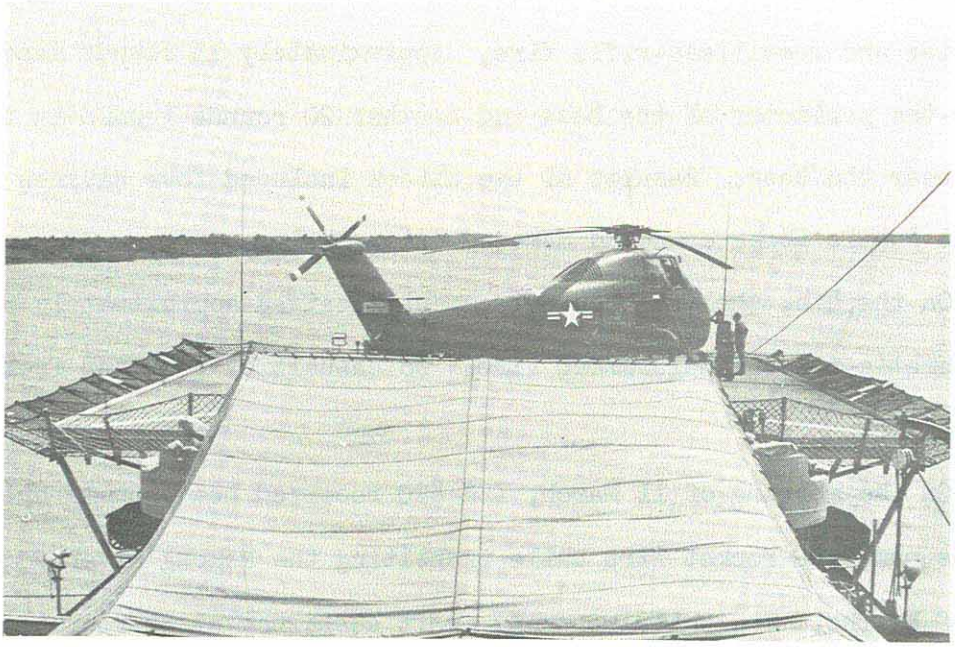

A UH34-D helicopter lands on the flight deck of an APL on a resupply mission.

The progress of general base construction returned to a near normal level during the month, but some hindrance still remained as some problems arose concerning the revalidation of the security passes of Vietnamese nationals.

The number of line items stocked by NAVSUPPACT Saigon totaled 63,603 in March. The overall supply effectiveness decreased during March; net effectiveness was 74 percent and gross effectiveness was

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59 percent. The decrease in effectiveness was due in part to the reduced number of receipts acquired because of the Tet Offensive. In addition, a sharp increase in demands contributed to the reduction.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's warehouse space was rapidly being depleted during the month, as additional material continued to arrive. A trade-off of facilities with the U.S. Army temporarily provided relief but at month's end a critical shortage of space still existed.

NAVSUPPACT Saigon's March aircraft inventory included three C-117s, three UH-34 helicopters and two US-2Bs.

A total of 3,440 passengers and 510,418 pounds of cargo were air transported by NAVSUPPACT Saigon assets during March. During the same period, assigned surface craft transported a total of 3,595 short tons of cargo.

At the end of March, NAVSUPPACT Saigon had a total on board count of 2,765 personnel, an increase of 275 over February's total.

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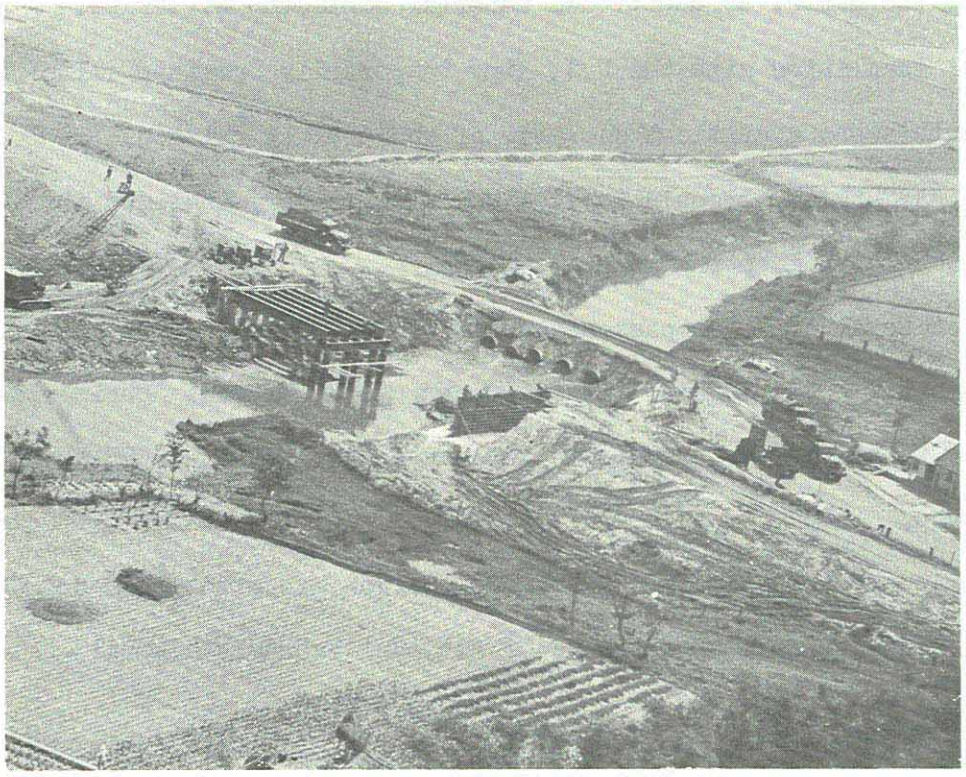

Aerial view shows one of the two new steel bridges being constructed by the men of U.S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion 10 on Vietnam's National Route 1. The original structions were blown up in Viet Cong night raids.

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THIRD NAVAL CONSTRUCTION BRIGADE

The overall level of enemy activity decreased during the month of March, but artillery and mortar attacks continued. All Seabee base camps north of the Hai Van Pass received incoming fire sometime during the month. Mortar and artillery attacks, mining incidents and sabotage initiated by the enemy during March resulted in 440 lineal feet of bridging destroyed or damaged, 29 pieces of automotive and construction equipment damage, 8 structures in Seabee camps damaged or destroyed, 37 Seabees wounded and 9 killed in action.

As the level of enemy initiated incidents and the threat of enemy attack decreased during the month of March, Seabee efforts increased on road and bridge upgrading as well as on construction in outlying areas.

Availability of shipping to northern I CTZ ports improved over the previous month; however, lack of shipping remained a major restriction in the accomplishment of vertical work during March. The expeditious repair of national Route 1 allowed movement of cargo truck convoys throughout the month which improved the vertical construction outlook for the future.

Seabee work on POL facilities was also greatly accelerated during the month. Improvements of the overall POL system in northern I CTZ progressed rapidly with the completion of a 10.5-mile six-inch POL pipeline from Hue to Phu Bai and 8 miles of similar pipeline from Dong Ha to the Quang Tri combat base. A 4 inch line was installed from the Dong Ha

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ramp to the bladder fuel farm. In addition to these projects, the Seabees repaired damage to POL lines which resulted from the Tet Offensive and constructed two 3,000-barrel tanks at Phu Bai and one 3,000-barrel tank at Dong Ha.

The first AMMI pontoon bridge to be installed in Vietnam was opened for traffic on 30 March. Spanning a 140-foot river on Route 1 south of Danang, the bridge, constructed by Naval Mobile Construction Battalion FIFTY-THREE (MCB-53), was being used to evaluate the AMMI bridge concept under actual conditions.

During the month, Seabees of MCB 10 completed the construction of a pioneer road eastward from National Route 1 near Quang Tri City to the terminal facilities area at Wunder Beach. On 1 March only 2.6 miles of the 8-mile road could accommodate two-way traffic, but by 23 March, 18,000 cubic yards of fill and 11 culverts had been placed and two-way traffic was possible for the entire length of the road.

Construction on Ammunition Supply Points (ASPs) continued at an accelerated rate during the month. All earth-work at ASP 2 in Danang was completed by MCB 62 and all modules were made available for use. At ASP 1 in Danang, MCB 128 continued construction of roads, ammunition pads, security fencing, perimeter lighting and general site preparation. At month's end 18 pads had been completed and were in use. At Chu Lai MCB 6 completed an ASP for the Army's Americal Division.

During the month MCB 58 completed a 90,000 square-foot helicopter

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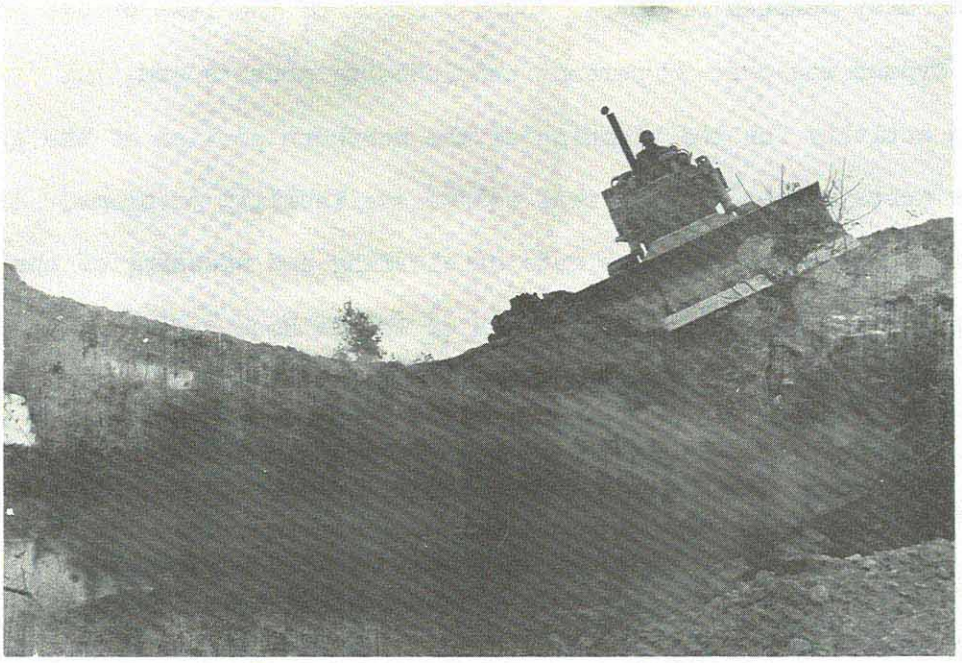
pad for the Force Logistics Command at Danang. This pad was urgently required in order to expedite the loading of cargo for lifts by helicopter to Northern I CTZ.



A Seabee razes an obsolete bridge on Vietnam's Route 9 as upgrading of the highway system continues.

Other significant projects completed during March included the construction of concrete pads for the GCA vans at Phu Bai and Quang Tri by MCBs 121 and 10 respectively. These much needed facilities improved aviation safety during periods of marginal weather.

Road upgrading projects continued to receive special emphasis

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during the month. By the end of March, five of the seven bridges on Route 9 west of Dong Ha had been upgraded to MACV standards. One of the bridges on Route 1 between Dong Ha and Quang Tri was completed and work was underway on three additional bridges with a total span of 470 feet. A 3-mile segment of Route 1 south of Dong Ha was straightened and widened by Seabees of MCB 5. Construction of the last bridge on the Hue bypass was over 33 percent completed by month's end, but clearing activity for the widening of the northern portion of the bypass was curtailed because of real estate availability problems. However, significant progress was made on clearing and widening of the southern portion of the Hue bypass and of Col Co Road. Five of the 10 bridges in this section of the road have been completed. A 1.5-mile segment of the southern bypass has been widened and four turnarounds were completed on Co Co Road.

Development of the Phu Loc quarry and crusher site continued during March. The primary section of the crusher was installed and at month's end was producing rock which was used for site improvement and various other construction projects. Security considerations prevented operating more than one shift daily during most of the month; however, further development of the site and receipt of additional required equipment should allow full crusher operations during April. The quarry/crusher site at Nam Hoa continued operations although only minimal production was permitted because of enemy interdiction of the

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haul road. Logistics problems caused by lack of shipping, security problems and road conditions continued to restrict both hauling supplies into the site and hauling rock out. Quarry sites near Camp Carroll and Khe Sanh could not be established because of the high level of enemy activity in those areas. Despite the progress made during March to commence crusher and quarry operations, the rock production schedule in Northern I CTZ was not being met at month's end.

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The children of Saigon's Hoi Duc Anh Orphanage surround Captain Clifford R. DUNNING (USMC), Marine Advisory Team 43, at Nha Be, as he prepares to distribute shoes donated by the Baltimore Chapter of the American Legion. The chapter donated 594 pairs of shoes, in response to a request by Captain DUNNING.

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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS

Psychological operation efforts continued to be directed to the exploitation of the Viet Cong Tet Offensive via increased loud-speaker broadcasts and leaflet distribution. One fertile field exploited was the recruitment of juvenile males and females by the Viet Cong. Among captured Viet Cong were youths as young as 11 years of age who were used in combat. Capitalizing on this action, broadcasts were directed to parents in contested, insecure and secure areas stating that although the Viet Cong promised not to use their sons and daughters in the front lines they failed to honor their pledge.

The capability of naval units to engage in surface broadcasts increased substantially as new equipment continued to be provided to the task force commanders. The effectiveness of the surface broadcasts was best evidenced by the increased Viet Cong attacks on the broadcasting vehicles. Boats from each task force (115, 116 and 117) received enemy fire during psychological operation missions. During one incident on 23 March, a PBR patrol conducting a broadcast mission on the Bassac River received withering automatic-weapons and B-40 rocket fire just south of Tra On. Two Navymen were seriously wounded and another received minor wounds in the firefight.

The results of a broadcast conducted on the Ham Luong River were somewhat more fruitful. On 27 March a Viet Cong rallied to a PBR patrol after hearing PBRs conduct a broadcast the night before. The Hoi Chanh

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provided information that prompted a SEAL operation on 29 March culminating in the seizure of a significant ordnance cache and destruction of a Viet Cong weapons factory. (See GAME WARDEN Operations - Ham Luong River). The Hoi Chanh stated that his reason for rallying was because of the lack of food and the failure of the Viet Cong to allow him to visit his parents.

Naval units dropped 511,000 leaflets, hand-delivered 37,600 leaflets and conducted 138.5 hours of surface and aerial broadcasts.

During March, civic action activity increased as naval units gradually returned to a pre-Tet posture of readiness allowing an opportunity to perform these functions. Freedom of movement, however, throughout the countryside continued to be restricted by the threat of enemy activity and reprisals by the Viet Cong against the villagers. In most cases the major civic action effort was assisting the refugees to resettle and repair their damaged dwellings.

The number of Seabee teams, engaged in civic action work increased to 13 during the month. The construction emphasis of the work began to return to pre-Tet programs with the return of security in rural areas. About 25 to 35 percent of the team efforts was directed to the repair of damaged civilian facilities. The return of team members to areas where pre-Tet construction was underway revealed that no action had been directed toward team efforts. Detailed reports from all teams showed that although the teams were located in priority Viet Cong target areas, no Seabee team received attacks directed specifically against them. There

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were no personnel casualties or compound damages sustained.

Voluntary contributions were made by naval personnel throughout Vietnam to assist in the Tet Aggression Relief Project (TARP). In one instance MARKET TIME sailors located at Vung Tau contributed $160.00 to enable a student nurse at the Long Xuyen Hospital to continue her education. The student nurse was one of several who were unable to continue their studies due to family loses incurred during the Viet Cong attack.

The MEDCAPs conducted, although not as numerous as previous months due to the prevailing conditions, nevertheless paid dividends. In the Second Coastal Zone there was an increased awareness of the GVN and grater cooperation shown by the people. In Hon Mien Hamlet, the hamlet chief turned in a Viet Cong suspect during a MEDCAP at that location.

In the Delta, a MEDCAP conducted by units of PBR River Division 53 on the Cua Dai River resulted in valuable intelligence concerning Viet Cong tax collectors and recruiters.

As United States troops waged a running battle in Hue with the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces, members of the Naval Support Activity, Danang's Preventive Medicine Unit (PMU) carried on their own offensive in the city against another and just as deadly enemy - disease. As an estimated 29,000 refugees from Communist-held sectors of the city poured into reoccupied areas of Hue, camps sprung up in school yards, on the hospital grounds or wherever people could find room. The PMU's assistance was needed in preventing an epidemic in view of the miserable sanitary conditions. The 36-man PMU team, one of five such Navy teams and

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the only one in Vietnam, swung into action and in less than 3 weeks about 70,000 cholera and typhoid inoculations were given. To prevent rats and insects from spreading disease, members of the unit sprayed and dusted insecticide. The team followed close behind the fighting and as an area became relatively secure, they moved in to perform their duties while sniper fire harassed the unit, making their work both difficult and dangerous. When the Citadel area in northwest Hue was retaken, about 40,000 refugees jammed into five new camps, increasing the threat of disease and the team's work load. The measure of success by PMU is achieved in negative terms. "If nothing happens after we've done our job," Commander Charles E. ALEXANDER, MC, USN, officer-in-charge of the team said, "we're successful." At Hue - nothing happened.

The Vietnamese Navy was also active in providing assistance to their fellow countrymen. To assist the refugees in I Corps and II Corps Tactical Zones the Vietnamese hospital ships, HQ 400 and HQ 401, called at Hue, Nha Trang and Phan Thiet. The coastal groups performed MEDCAPs and other humanitarian actions to the extent of their resources. In the Saigon area the Vietnamese Navy in cooperation with the Naval Advisory Group obtained and distributed food, clothes, cloth, building supplies, soap, blankets and other large quantities of relief items. The Vietnamese Navy also assumed the primary responsibility for three relief centers in the Saigon area.

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USN Civic Action Statistical Summary

March 1968

PROGRAMS:

	Man Days	Expenditures (VN$)
Economic Development	42.5	136,246
Education	132.0	256,487
Social Walefare	1169.5	3,744,130
Transportation	32.0	123,178
Refugee Assistance Support	446.0	590,461
TOTALS	1822.0	4,850,502

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS: 55,900

INSTITUTES ASSISTED:

	Number
Schools	29
Hospitals/dispensaries	32
Orphanges	17
Others	12

PERCENT OF U.S. CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS CONDUCTED JOINTLY WITH:

	Percent
Other FWMAP	21
RVNAF	55
U.S. civilian voluntary agencies	28
Average percent of self-help by VN civilians	31

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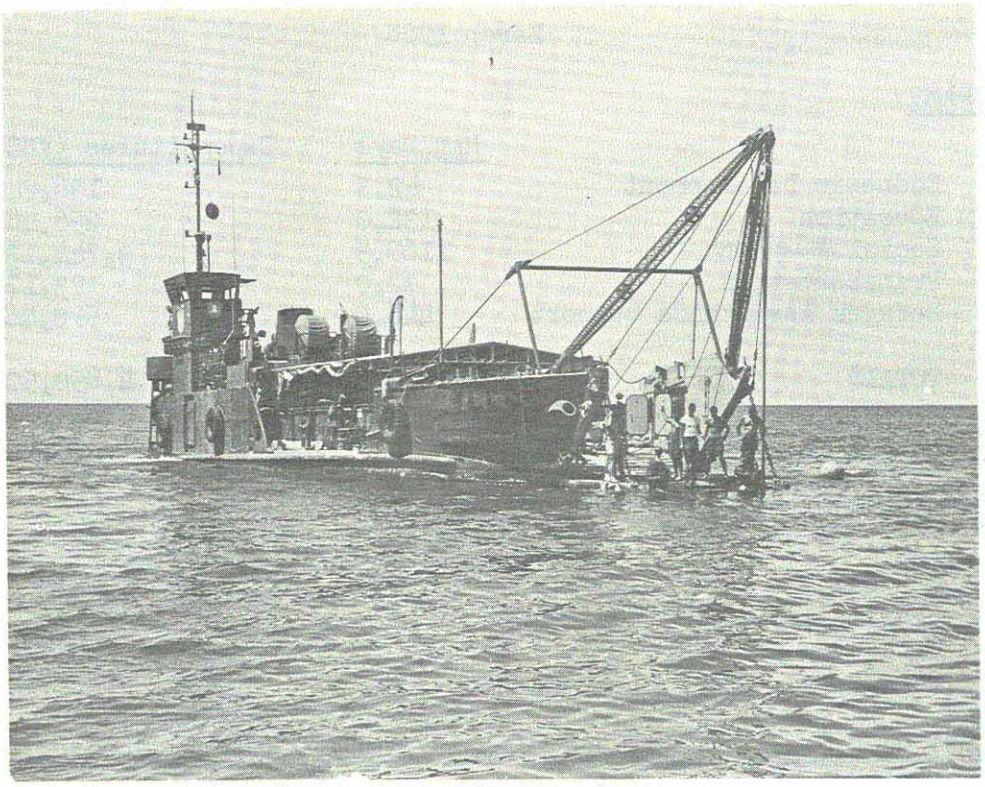

YLLC conducting salvage operations.

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SALVAGE OPERATIONS

Salvage operations for ASPB-112-4 which was sunk by enemy B-40 rockets on 27 February on the Can Tho River approximately 6 miles southwest of Can Tho were hindered on 1 March by adverse tidal conditions and equipment problems. The stricken ASPB was raised sufficiently to be beached and emergency repairs were commenced on 2 March.

Salvage operations continued on 3 March with two salvage craft, YLLC 3 and YLLC 4, on station. ASPB-112-4 was raised and successfully moved to the Can Tho Vietnamese River Assault Group pier on 4 March. YLLC-3 lifted ASPB-91-1, which had sunk on 2 March, and moved the boat to the same location on 6 March. Emergency repairs were accomplished at the RAG facilities and the boats were made ready for the arduous 110-mile transit from Can Tho to Dong Tam.

At 1655 on 7 March, the two Light Lift Craft and the two salvaged ASPB's, towed and escorted by units of RAD 111, went up the Bassac River, stopping at the Vam Co Crossover for the night because of heavy fog. The convoy arrived at the Dong Tam basin at 2200 on 8 March, and completed the frustrating, long and tedious salvage operation.

On 14 March YLLC-4, with divers from Teams Three and Five embarked, sailed to My Tho to commence operations on the Kien Hoa ferry landing which was sunk during the Tet Offensive. Due to higher priority salvage operations for the recovery of the sunken ferry landing was not commenced until 16 March, when a salvage survey indicated that the pontoon had a

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large hole approximately five feet by six feet wide blown in it.

Additional inspections revealed several smaller holes in the bottom of the pontoon, which were not detected initially, due to the barge being imbedded in the mud. On 19 March seven of the nine compartments were pumped free of water and the sunken ferry landing came to the surface. After patching the remaining small holes and pumping out the last two compartments, the salvage job was successfully completed, and the ferry pontoon was delivered to the owner on 21 March.

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COMMUNICATIONS

During the month of March, the COMNAVFORV Message Center processed a total of 110,470 messages. This new monthly high in message handling was a marked increase of 16,071 messages over the February totals.

Project CLARINET RAMROD (Improve communications at NAVCOMMSTA Cam Ranh Bay) continued to show favorable progress as the no-break power capability at the communications center became 98 percent complete. The transmitter permanent power plant was approximately 80 percent completed, with the remainder of the task consisting primarily of testing and electrical work.

Meanwhile Project CLARINET TACK (the use of air-transportable communication vans) suffered a setback when one complete set of CLARINET TACK contingency vans was destroyed by enemy action on 10 March at the Naval Support Activity Cua Viet Task Force CLEARWATER base. As a result of this loss, the Chief of Naval Operations authorized the procurement of one AN/TRC-153 and one AN/TRC-154 to be used as an interim measure to meet in-country contingency requirements which could arise in the immediate future. Of the two remaining sets of CLARINET TACK HF/VHF/UHF vans, one complete set was employed at Tan My in I Corps, and the other was sent to Cua Viet, replacing the set which was destroyed. The Naval Electronics System Command was directed by the Commander Naval Communications Command to obtain one AN/TRC-97A from USAF assets in the Philippine Islands for shipment to the Naval Support Activity, Danang. The

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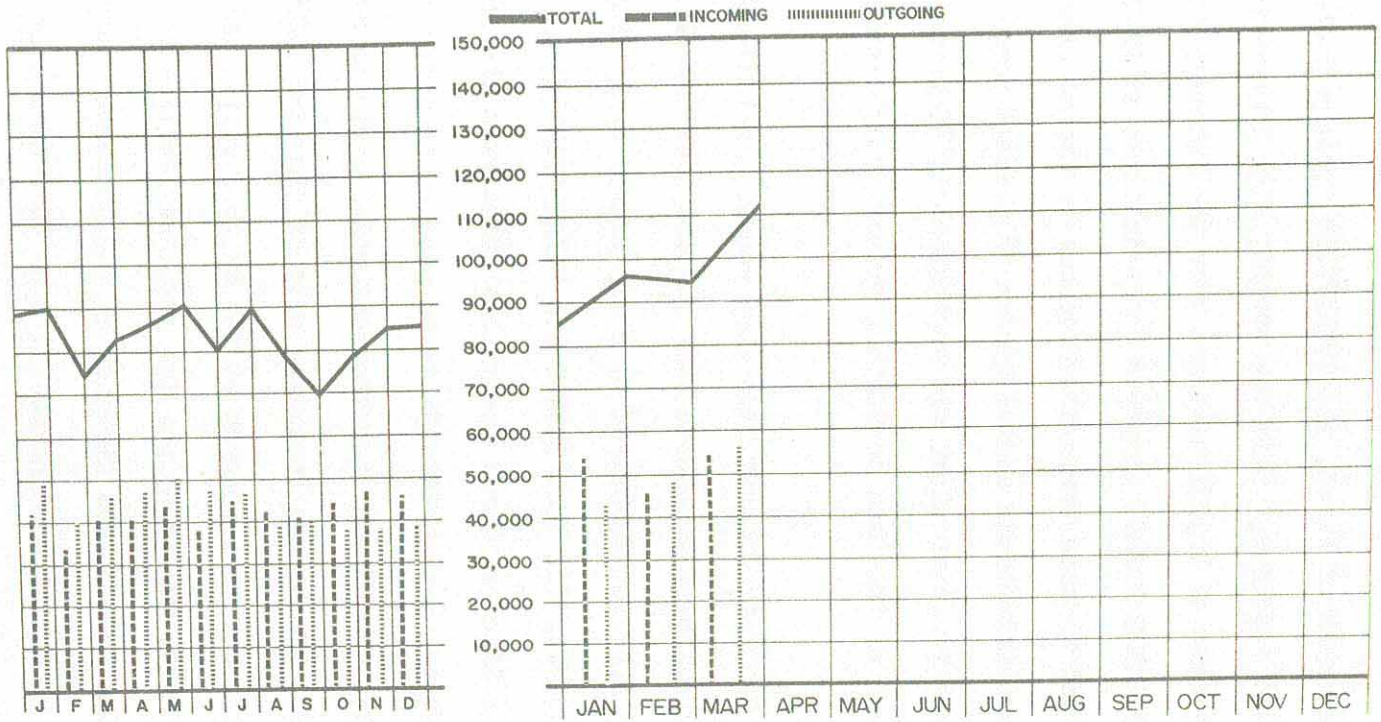
MONTHLY MESSAGE TRAFFIC



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estimated date of delivery of the Lenkurt microwave vans (DCA standards) remained at 6 September 1968.

Project CLARINET SEAWARD (upgrading communications facilities at COMNAVFORV, the Coastal Surveillance Centers and GAME WARDEN bases) also evidenced considerable progress as the sites at COMNAVFORV, Qui Nhon, Sa Dec, Cat Lo and Vinh Long were deemed ready for the electronics installation team which was due to arrive in-country early in April. The installations at My Tho and An Thoi were expected to be ready for the team during the month of May. At month's end, the remaining two uncompleted sites at Vung Tau and Nha Trang still had an indefinite beneficial occupancy date; however, strong efforts were being made to expedite their construction.

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ORGANIZATION AND COMMAND

On 9 March at the Binh Thuy GAME WARDEN base, Commander Sayre A. SWARZTRAUBER, USN, relieved Commander Paul E. KANE, USN, as Commander River Squadron FIVE.

Rear Admiral K. L. VETH, COMNAVFORV, presents Presidential Unit Citation to Lieutenant Jarves MACE, USN, officer-in-charge of MINERON 11 Detachment ALFA, at Nha Be on 14 March 1968.

On 14 March at the Nha Be Navy base in Gia Dinh Province, Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, on behalf of the President of the United States of America, presented the Presidential Unit Citation (PUC) to Mine Squadron ELEVEN, Detachment ALFA. The PUC, accepted for the

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detachment by its officer-in-charge, Lieutenant James A. MACE, USN, was the first award of this type presented to a U.S. Navy unit engaged in combat operations in South Vietnam. The citation was awarded for exceptionally meritorious and heroic service from 1 June 1966 to 18 February 1967 while conducting minesweeping operations in the Rung Sat Special Zone of the Republic of Vietnam. During the period, the minesweeper detachment was responsible for keeping the Long Tau/Saigon shipping channel open to friendly merchant ships delivering large quantities of vital supplies to the Saigon port complex.

On the same day, Commander Service Force, U.S. Pacific Fleet, Rear Admiral Walter V. COMBS, Jr., USN, accompanied by Captain Burns W. SPORE, USN, Commander Naval Support Activities, Saigon, commenced an extensive nine-day indoctrination and orientation tour of various naval activities in South Vietnam. Read Admiral COMBS' itinerary included visits to the Naval Support Activity detachments at An Thoi, Cat Lo, Dong Tam, Vinh Long, Sa Dec, Binh Thuy and Qui Nhon; the Coastal Surveillance Center at Nha Trang; the Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) headquarters and the Naval Support Facility at Cam Ranh Bay; the River Patrol Force (CTF 116) headquarters at Binh Thuy; the Mobile Riverine Force (CTF 117) at Dong Tam, and the Naval Support Activity at Danang.

On 27-28 March, Rear Admiral Chester R. BENDER, USCG, Commander Western Area/Commander TWELFTH Coast Guard District, and Rear Admiral Benjamin F. ENGEL, USCG, Commander FOURTEENTH Coast Guard District,

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visited U.S. Coast Guard installation at An Thoi, Con Son Island, and Cam Ranh Bay. While at Cam Ranh Bay, the two admirals were also briefed on MARKET TIME concepts and operations at the Coastal Surveillance Force headquarters.

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RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

Religious programs, conducted by chaplains serving with commands and units under the control of Commander Naval Forces, Vietnam, were administered under more favorable conditions during the month of March. Having more freedom to travel between units and less dangers to cope with, the chaplains extended their coverage of units and detachments as before the Tet Offensive. Nevertheless, intermittent mortar/rocket and small arms attacks occurred which served as constant reminders that danger was always imminent. Capitalizing on many opportunities, the chaplains encouraged attendance at worship services while visiting their men in offices, shops and barracks, on piers, aboard boats, in the field and at hospitals. The chaplains found that they must seize whatever time was available between operations and jobs in order to hold divine services.

As in former months, it was not uncommon for the chaplains to average one or more services of some type a day. Weddings, funerals, baptisms, memorial services, devotional services, and instructional classes on religion, marriage, family, psychology and sociology packed the chaplains' days. Special Lenten services and daily Catholic Masses held in March also contributed to the demands upon our chaplains. The addition of such services as individual counselling, hospital ministry, guest speaker at Vietnamese churches, and conducting civic action projects, topped off with normal Sunday divine worship services caused Chaplain Max A. ELLER, Assistant Force Chaplain, to remark, "It is

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unending work, but most rewarding."

Although the threat in travel was probably less than in the previous months, several incidents experienced by the chaplains emphasized the reality of war. Chaplain Carl W. ERICKSON, travelling from Red Beach to Phu Bai, about 50 miles northwest of Danang, relates: "...once over Hai Van Pass it was a bone chilling, damp, dusty rough ride...huddled on sandbags on the flat bed of the truck, shielding each other from the rain, whipped by the truck's motion, C-rats was the luncheon fare for the chaplain and crew...thanks to a bone bruising ride, the first night in Phu Bai was spent in sleep except for one flight to the mortar holes. The previous night one hundred rounds of rocket and mortar fire exploded in the Phu Bai combat base. What churches, pagodas, and imperial palace buildings and stores on street and province headquarters have in common is mute, jagged holes of conflict and busy, grimly smiling residents of their city in search of day to day living."

In the Delta at Can Tho, intelligence indicated that attack was considered imminent on two consecutive nights. Chaplain Charles J. McCOY responded to a request from an Army doctor at the Army air field infirmary and remained with the patients both nights. The next night when the chaplain had returned to Binh Thuy, the Can Tho Air Field was mortared, however, no casualties were incurred. Although Chaplain McCOY was not present during the actual attack, his visits just prior to the attack afforded an opportunity to provide encouragement and spiritual strength to the

personnel. Another example of the dangers confronted is intrinsic in the following story of Chaplain F. P. BURCHELL: "While waiting in a jeep at An Thoi airport (7 March) for a plane to take me to Saigon a bullet came through the canvas top and struck the chapel offering which was in my hip pocket. The bullet hit three gifts and bounced off. The only injury I received was a red welt."

The danger, hardship and frustration these dedicated chaplains face is awesome, indeed. Yet they seek a common goal and are not dismayed by bad fortunes; rather they exploit good fortune. Chaplain J. J. KILLEN, NAVFORV Chaplain, enthused by a highly successful civic action project, stated, "The result was joy in many hearts. What a happy place this world could be!"

The following is a statistical summary of religious services/ activities - January - March 1968:

1. Religious Services:

a. Divine Services

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

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of Services	272	161	433
Attendance	9,935	1,725	11,660
Communed	2,655	746	3,401

(2) Other military installations

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of services	88	69	155
Attendance	5,130	851	5,981
Communed	1,407	1,927	3,334

(3) Civilian churches

	Sunday	Weekly	Total
Number of Services	2	5	7
Attendance	170	211	381
Communed	0	27	27

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

Denomination	Chaplains		Lay Leaders	
	No.	Attend.	No.	Attend.
Catholic	193	8,354	13	83
Protestant	70	1,230	20	314
Jewish	9	65	0	0
Al-Islam	0	0	315	938

c. Other services in which chaplains participated:

Type of Service	Number	Attendance
Memorial service	31	2,832
Baptism	14	0
Weddings	3	0
Funerals	8	0
Bible classes	156	635
Sunday School	14	124
Choir rehearsal	20	120
Religious instruction	156	161
Counselling	1,914	0
Moral Leadership Lectures	15	355
Film Shown	41	3,863

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

During the month of March the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) demonstrated excellent progress by assuming additional tasks and successful prosecution of responsibilities. The participation of the Fleet Command ships and Coastal Group junks in the destruction of a North Vietnames infiltration trawler on 1 March prompted Rear Admiral Kenneth L. VETH, USN, COMNAVFORV/CHNAVADVGRP MACV, to remark, "The outstanding performance of the Vietnamese Navy in the successful action against the NVA trawler attempting to infiltrate arms and ammunition at Hon Heo Peninsula on the 1st of March has once again demonstrated the fighting spirit and professionalism that is becoming its hallmark." Regarding the VNN ships and junks he continued, "Their courage, their splendid fighting ability and their determination has helped to add another bright page in the illustrious history of the VNN."

Minesweeping craft of the VNN continued to perform the essential task of mine detection in the rivers of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ). On 17 March, a plan was promulgated that provided for the eventual assumption of total responsibility by the VNN for mine countermeasures on the Long Tau and Dong Nai rivers. Landing Craft Medium Minesweepers (LCMMs) were introduced into the VNN to accomplish the detection sweeps.

Taking an additional step forward, on 24 March, permanent responsibility for two more MARKET TIME stations was undertaken by the VNN;

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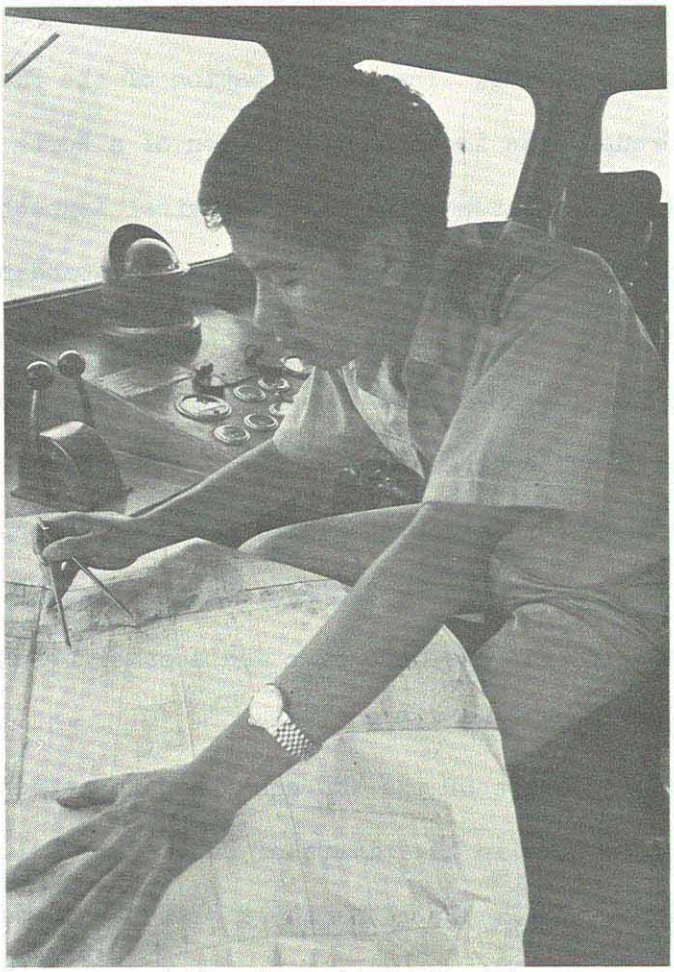

A Vietnamese Navyman plots a course aboard a U.S. Navy "Swift" boat in the Gulf of Thailand. Vietnamese Navymen are training aboard U.S. Navy "Swifts" before being assigned PCFs of their own to patrol the South Vietnamese coastline.

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the total number of MARKET TIME stations manned by VNN ships is now six. The gradual assumption of MARKET TIME responsibility was no longer in the ideological stage. The increasing scope of responsibility assumed and operations conducted was indicative of the continuing growth of the VNN, increasing sophistication of personnel training and the continuing improvements of its maintenance capability.

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the VNN on 31 March was 16,919 officers and enlisted men; of this number 1,327 were officers, 3,234 were NCOs and 12,358 were enlisted men. The number of unauthorized absentees stood at 368, and 36 men were discharged as deserters in March.

On 11 March, 16 members of the Coastal Zone Mobile Training Teams commenced a 5-week instructor training course at the Vietnamese Naval Training Center, Saigon. On 13 March, the Vietnamese Naval Training Center, Nha Trang, graduated men from Electronic Technician "A" School and 25 men from Radioman "A" School. At Cam Ranh Bay, the Vietnamese Naval Recruit Center completed training for 500 recruits on 16 March and on 25 March another 500-man recruit training class commenced a 12-week course.

Formal training in PCFs and PBRs was conducted in conjunction with plans for the VNN's future employment of these craft. Eight crews each were engaged in PCF training at An Thoi and PBR training at Nha Be.

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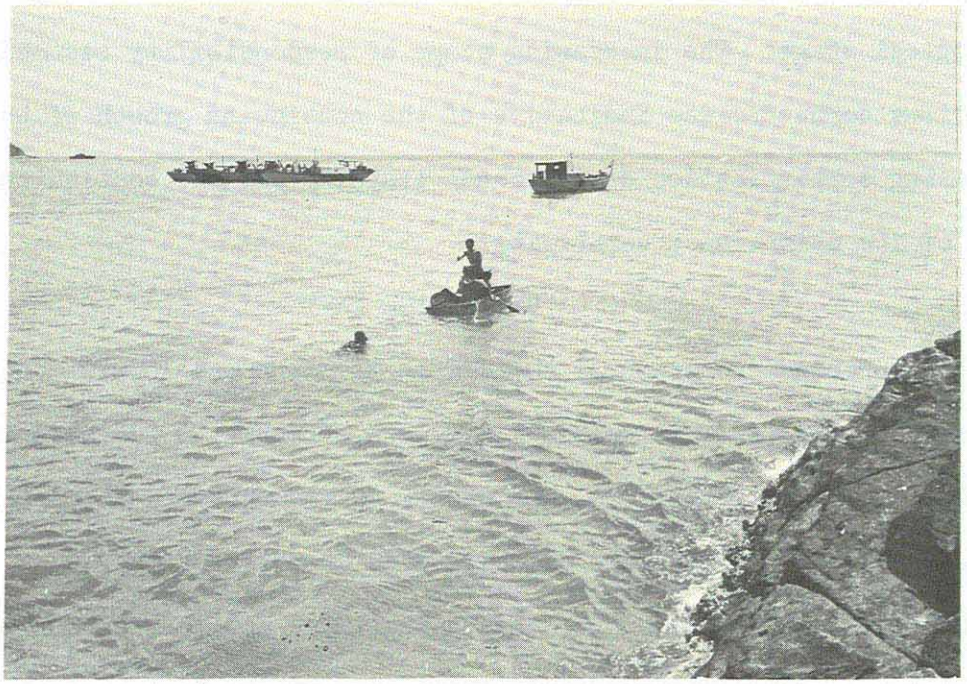

LDNN (VNN UDT) personnel conduct diving operations. During March LDNN teams operated with U. S. Navy SEAL detachments of TF 116.

Fleet Command

During March the Fleet Command had a daily average of 22.1 ships available and maintained 13 ships on station off the coast of South Vietnam, 6 ships on river patrol and 3 ships for static defense and naval gunfire support duty. One hundred and thirty-one gunfire support missions were fired, 1,136 junks and 5,252 persons were searched and 3 junks and 45 persons were detained.

Patrol Craft (PCs and PCEs) in the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Naval Zones,

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Patrol Motor Gunboats (PGMs) in all four naval zones and the RSSZ, Landing Support Ships (LSSLs and LSILs) in the RSSZ, 3rd Naval Zone and the Fourth Riverine Area, and Minesweeping Craft (MSCs in the Fourth Naval Zone and MLMs in the Saigon, Long Tau, Nha Be and Dong Nai rivers) met all of their commitments.

LDNN (VNN UDT) operated with Navy SEAL detachments of TF 116 in the RSSZ and Delta areas and continued nightly hull inspection of ships in the port of Saigon. Twenty-six combined operations with SEALs accounted for 34 Viet Cong killed, 2 Viet Cong captured and 28 enemy suspects detained. Additionally, LDNN were employed in hydrographic reconnaissance and salvage operations.

Coastal Force

During the month, the Coastal Force searched 33,203 junks and sampans and 109,867 persons, detaining 7 junks and 349 persons. On a daily average 90 percent of the force's 191 available junks were on patrol.

On 1 and 2 March three junks from Coastal Group 15 were involved in mop-up operations 25 miles south of Cape Batangan on the coast of Quang Ngai Province where the North Vietnamese infiltration trawler was beached. Through self-destructive methods, the trawler had succeeded in damaging beyond use all weapons and ammunition that the coastal group recovered. (See APPENDIX I)

During the early morning hours of 7 March, the Coastal Group 16 base east of Quang Ngai was subjected to a series of attacks with heavy small

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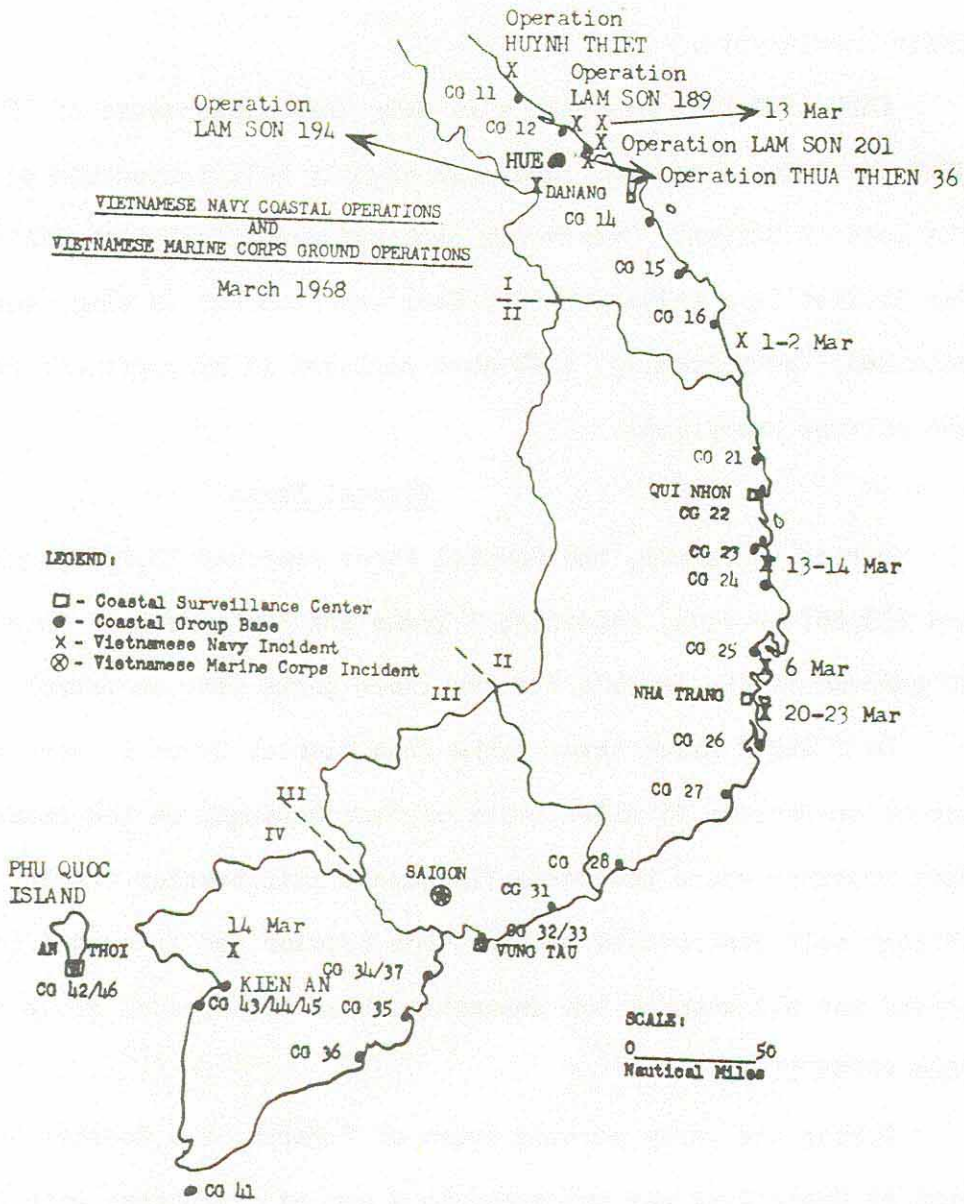

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arms, mortar and automatic-weapons fire. The VNN PGM 619 and U. S. MARKET TIME units in the area provided gunfire support and the Viet Cong force, estimated to be 200 men, was dispersed. Three VNN sailors were wounded during this attack. The following morning the base again received harassing mortar fire. One coastal group junk was slightly damaged and four more VNN sailors were wounded as VNN PCE 07 and the "Swift" boats returned fire on suspected enemy positions.

On 13 March, two PF platoons and one Coastal Group 13 platoon conducted a sweep operation in the land area north of Cau Hai Bay, near Hue/Phu Bai. Contact was made with an estimated 50 Viet Cong and artillery was called in. The land sweep resulted in 15 Viet Cong killed, 2 of the enemy wounded, 2 captured, and 8 suspects detained. Two Chinese Communist mines were captured; one of the mines exploded, killing one VNN sailor and wounding three others. Based on information provided by one of the prisoners, a Coastal Group 13 platoon returned to the area on 17 March and uncovered a cache of several weapons, a typewriter and rice.

Coastal Group 12 and a PF platoon, on 14 March, conducted Operation HUYNH THIET near the mouth of the Perfume River. Six Viet Cong were captured, 22 suspects were detained and 12 grenades were seized. Meanwhile, Operation LAM SON 189 was being conducted by Coastal Group 12 units, USN and USMC units, an ARVN Ranger unit, an infantry regiment and PF troops off Cau Hai Bay, 10 miles southeast of Phu Bai. The combined force conducted daily operations from 5 through 15 March in this vicinity

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and netted 40 Viet Cong killed, 4 female Viet Cong and 4 defectors captured and numerous weapons seized. Other units of Coastal Group 12 and 13, Vietnamese Marine Corps Task Force "B", two ARVN infantry battalions and an ARVN Ranger brigade conducted LAM SON 194 (13-17 March) in an area north and west of Hue. The forces efforts were reflected in the 49 Viet Cong killed, at least 15 others killed or wounded but carried away, 58 of the enemy captured and 101 suspects detained. Numerous weapons and ammunition were seized. One-hundred and twenty government officials and civilians, who had been captured by the Viet Cong, were liberated in this action.

On 19 March, five Coastal Group 12 units, two PF platoons, and one USA infantry company combined for Operation HUYNH THIET 3 miles north of Hue. This joint operation accounted for 7 Viet Cong killed, 7 captured and 40 enemy suspects detained. Coastal Group 12 units conducted two separate actions on 23 March in the Phu Vang sub-sector, the land mass across the Thanh Lam Bay east of Hue. In one, coastal group junks provided troop-lift and blocking support to two PF platoons and sub-sector police units as a sweep of the area yielded 4 Viet Cong killed, 7 captured, 18 suspects detained and numerous weapons seized. Meanwhile, 6 Coastal Group 12 units, 1 coastal group ambush-team, TF 116 PBRs and approximately 170 RF/PF troops operating just to the north, evacuated over 400 Catholic civilians from the Phu Vang sub-sector across the bay to the mainland. During the 10-hour operation, three NVA and eight Viet Cong suspects were captured, one Viet Cong was killed and one wounded.

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Early on 25 March, while conducting an ambush based on information provided by a Hoi Chanh, three junks from Coastal Group 13 observed an unlighted junk in northwest Cau Hai Bay. As the coastal group junks attempted to search the boat, a number of Viet Cong escaped to the shore. The coastal group junks opened fire and the enemy junk was sunk, killing one Viet Cong. At this time Coastal Group 12 base came under mortar attack. There was negligible damage to the base; one VNN sailor was wounded slightly. At first light, a 30-man team from Coastal Group 12 conducted a sweep of a small island to the south of the base suspected to be the Viet Cong gun position. Ten Viet Cong suspects were detained, several mortar rounds, Chinese Communist grenades and aiming stakes were uncovered.

Two Coastal Group 12 units, supported by TF 116 PBRs and PF troops, engaged an estimated 100 NVA in a counterattack after a river ambush on 27 March. For the next 30 hours the friendly troops directed their fire-power toward a village north of Hue in which the enemy was entrenched. Fifty Viet Cong were killed during this battle and numerous weapons and ammunition were seized. To the east, a Coastal Group 12 reconnaissance squad and a PF unit engaged an unknown number of the enemy in a two-hour firefight. Six Viet Cong were killed, one other was killed or wounded but carried away, while there were four VNN sailors wounded in the action. On the 28th, a Coastal Group 12 ambush team made contact with an estimated company of Viet Cong in the Phu Vang sub-sector. PF troops swept a village with the ambush team reconnoitering. Seven Viet Cong suspects were captured, three VNN

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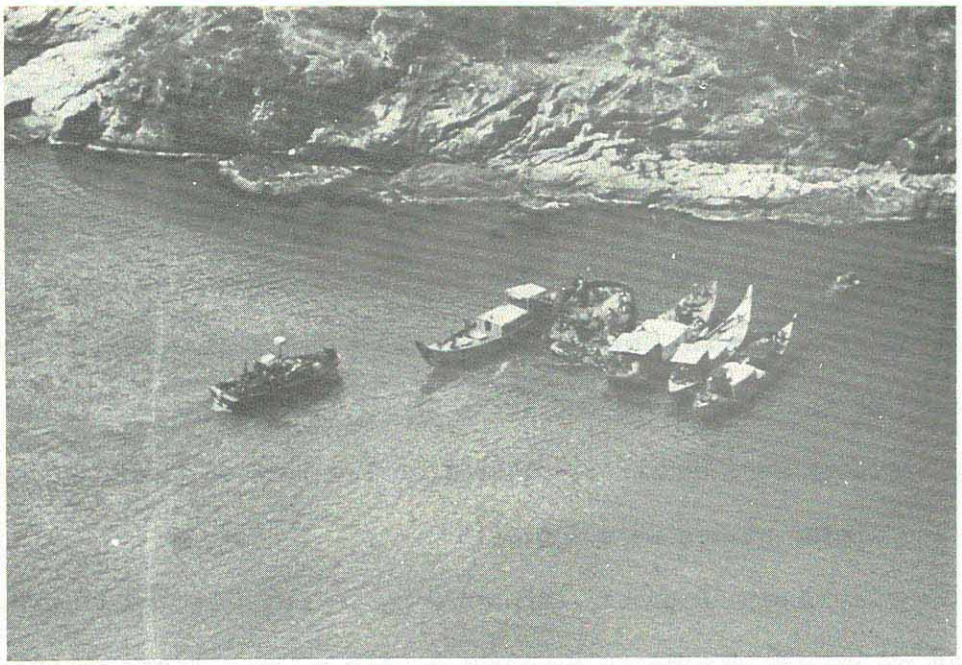

Junks of Coastal Group 25 conduct a salvage operation aboard the wrecked trawler in the Second Naval Zone.

sailors were wounded and one was declared missing in this attack.

LAM SON 201 combined Coastal Group 12 and 13, ARVN Ranger and ARVN infantry companies in a four-day operation (27-30 March) north of Phu Bai. Eight Viet Cong were killed, 70 of the enemy were captured and numerous weapons and ammunition were seized. Twelve ARVN soldiers were wounded. At the same time, 28-30 March, other Coastal Group 12 units, three RF companies and one ARVN infantry battalion conducted Operation THUA THIEN 36, ten miles northwest of Phu Bai. Eight Viet Cong were killed and a number were killed or wounded but carried away. A quantity of war

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materials was captured in this encounter.

On 1 March in the 2nd Naval Zone, junks and a landing party from Coastal Group 25 were engaged in securing the area of the wrecked trawler at Hon Heo (See APPENDIX I).

In a combined operation on 5 March, Coastal Group 22 units and 5 RF companies, supported by U. S. Army artillery battalions, killed 34 Viet Cong and captured 4 of the enemy. Numerous weapons and documents plus ammunition were seized after this engagement, 7 miles north of Qui Nhon. The next day 20 miles south of Qui Nhon, one platoon from Coastal Group 23 engaged the enemy in a firefight and accounted for 10 Viet Cong killed.

Having been subjected to harassing small-arms fire for several days, Coastal Group 23 conducted a cordon and search operation north of the base at Song Cau on 11 March. Four junks and 2 RF companies swept a 10-mile area, detaining 80 Viet Cong suspects that day. Further south, near Tuy Hoa, on the night of 13-14 March, a Coastal Group 24 junk, a Provincial Reconnaissance Unit (PRU) platoon, an Army platoon, reconnaissance aircraft and TF 115 PBRs conducted a reconnaissance-in-force operation which netted 4 Viet Cong and a quantity of goods captured and 20 enemy suspects detained. That morning, 14 March, 52 draft dodgers were captured in a police action conducted by Coastal Group 22, two RF companies and one Republic of Korea platoon. Five Viet Cong suspects were also captured and turned over to authorities in Qui Nhon in this successful operation east of Qui Nhon.

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Four junks from Coastal Group 23 supported a ROK battalion in a four-day search operation (20-23 March) 10 miles north of Song Cau. One coastal group platoon and VNN PCE 10 also participated in this action which routed 15 Viet Cong. Meanwhile, on the 22nd, two junks from Coastal Group 23, RF companies and two ARVN infantry companies came to the defense of two RF outposts southwest of Song Cau. After the attack, two Viet Cong were reported killed while three VNN sailors were wounded. Combined forces of the 2nd Naval Zone coastal groups and ROK units continued operations throughout the month; on 31 March, Coastal Group 25 and two ROK battalions were engaged in cordon and search operations in Khanh Hoa Province, 15 miles north of Nha Trang.

In the 3rd Naval Zone, operations were characterized by combined unit area sweeps, predominantly conducted close to the coastal group bases and composed of ambush parties from the bases and RF/PF and ARVN troops.

Coastal Group 34/37 units inserted two ARVN battalions and one coastal group company in Kien Hoa Province north of their base on the Ham Luong River on 1 March. The cordon and search operation resulted in eight Viet Cong suspects captured and numerous bunkers destroyed. On 2 March, Coastal Group 36 conducted operations in Ba Xuyen Province, inserting one RF company, one PF platoon, plus one coastal group reconnaissance platoon, from the Bassac River on the north and from the Saintard Canal from the west. Six Viet Cong and numerous documents were captured while several punji stake booby traps in the area were destroyed. Two other Coastal

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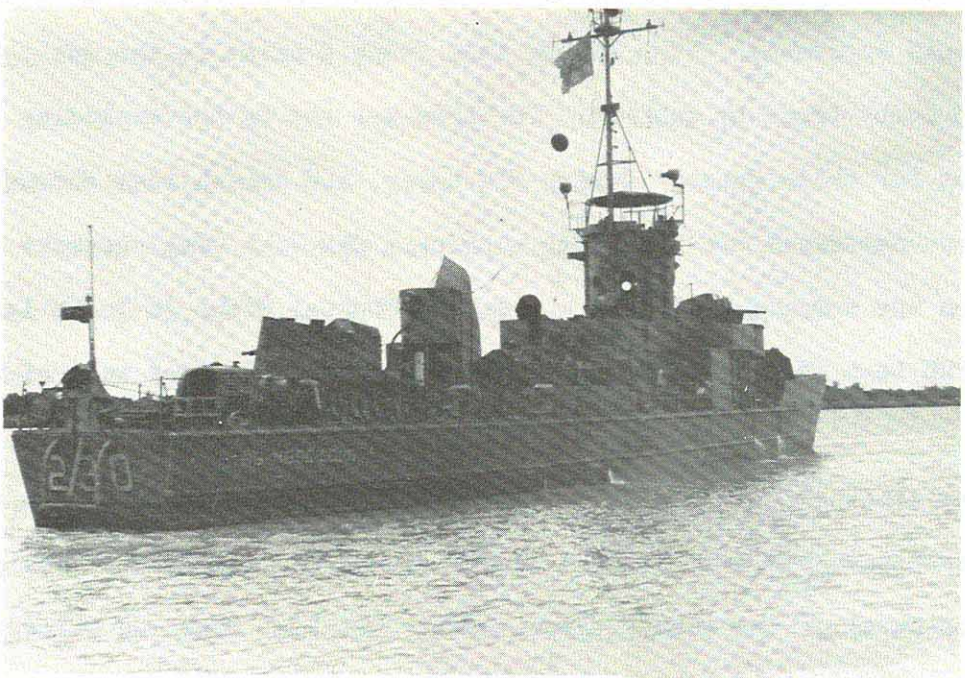
Group 36 junks inserted a PRU team in the area from the Saintard Canal. This team made contact and captured seven more Viet Cong.



LSSL 230 cruises off coast of Ba Xuyen Province for gunfire support mission. The mission was in support of a Coastal Group 36 ambush team which landed inland while TF 116 "Seawolves" hovered overhead.

On the night of the 7th, two Coastal Group 36 units transported a 50-man PRU team from the base on the lower Bassac River, south of the mouth of the river. Landing the team on the west bank, the junks maintained a blocking force. The PRUs were extracted the next day after having killed five Viet Cong and capturing five more. Two miles down the Bassac River from the Coastal Group 36 base, VNN LSSL 230 fired on

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the west bank of the river in Ba Xuyen Province on 10 March. A secondary explosion occurred and a Coastal Group 36 ambush team proceeded inland with TF 116 "Seawolves" overhead. Rice straw was ablaze from the heat of the LSSLs fire and numerous booby traps set by the Viet Cong were "cooking off" in rapid succession. The ambush team swept 2 miles to the west, destroying 15 booby traps by gunfire. The fire was fed by the exploding booby traps for three hours. During the sweep, the ambush team encountered no enemy but destroyed two Viet Cong bunkers. Six Viet Cong suspects were captured on the morning of 14 March when two Coastal Group 36 junks landed a 50-man PRU team for a sweep from the Saintard Canal 7 miles west of the base.

On the afternoon of 14 March, four Coastal Group 34/37 junks and three RF companies conducted a cordon and search operation in Kien Hoa Province, 8 miles northwest of the coastal group base. One Viet Cong was killed, 3 of the enemy were captured, 18 suspects were detained, 6 locally made grenades were seized and two base camps were destroyed as a result of this sweep. The next day, one company from Coastal Group 34/37, a PF company, and units of the 10th ARVN Infantry Regiment were inserted to the north of the coastal group base. Enemy contact resulted in three Viet Cong killed, four suspects captured and four grenades and numerous documents seized. One VNN sailor was killed in the firefight. On the 17th, a Coastal Group 34/37 company, a PF platoon, three RF companies and two ARVN infantry battalions returned to the area north of the

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coastal group base. This sweep netted one Viet Cong killed and one captured. The force destroyed three structures, including the house of a Viet Cong hamlet chief and two bunkers in the five-mile sweep inland. Later that night, a Coastal Group 35 patrol intercepted and fired upon a Viet Cong sampan in the Co Chien River, near the coastal group base. Carrying 21 recruits, the sampan was sunk and 19 of the enemy were killed by the coastal group junk's gunfire.

Coastal Group 36 units participated in an area sweep on Dung Island in the Bassac River from 21-23 March. Two 15-man ambush teams were inserted on the island by coastal group junks on the evening of 21 March. The junks remained as a blocking force as the teams conducted reconnaissance operations. One team was extracted as a ruse while the other team remained on the island throughout the night. The procedure was repeated on the 22nd. The operation was terminated on the 23rd; four Viet Cong had been captured and one had been killed.

One of the last sweeps for the month of March in the vicinity of the Coastal Group 34/37 base was conducted on 24 March. Three more of the enemy were killed in this effort by a coastal group company, one PF company and two RF companies. A Coastal Group 35 ambush team captured the Viet Cong liaison chief of a Vinh Binh Province village on 26 March.

Despite daily search and ambush operations conducted in their area of responsibility, coastal groups of the 4th Naval Zone experienced light contact with the enemy. Nevertheless, Kien An-based coastal

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groups were again plagued by harassing Viet Cong attacks as was the case last month. The base took three 82-mm mortar rounds and one B-40 rocket on 2 March, which destroyed 2 buildings and damaged another; 10 people were wounded, 6 VNN sailors and 4 civilians, including 1 child. Five rounds of 82-mm mortar on 21 March were received but no significant damage was reported.

Between 12 and 16 March, An Thoi-based Coastal Group 42 units, PRUs, U. S. and ARVN Special Forces and VNN PGM 607 conducted policing and patrolling operations on the north and west coast of Phu Quoc Island. Viet Cong fishing nets were destroyed, enemy flags, banners and leaflets were seized and a total of five Viet Cong were killed during this effort. On 14 March, Coastal Group 43/44/45 junks and ARVN troops conducted an area sweep of the northern bank of the Cai Lon River which netted a weapons cache of considerable size containing B-40 rockets, 81-mm mortar rounds, grenades, mines and rifle cartridges. Maps, charts and other documents were seized when three Viet Cong were captured nearby; one Viet Cong was killed in the action.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

Supporting amphibious operations, on river patrols, in static defense or on other province assignments, 93.5 percent of the available 155 craft of the River Assault Groups (RAGs) and River Transport and Escort Group (RTEG) were utilized daily. In March the RAG craft searched 3,543 people (detaining 2 suspects) and 9,798 junks while on river patrols.

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VIETNAMESE NAVY DELTA OPERATIONS

March 1968

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In an effort to prohibit the Viet Cong from escaping the city of Saigon as the Tet Offensive waned, Third Riverine RAG craft operated in close coordination with U. S. and ARVN units on the fringe of the city. RAG 30 craft supported ARVN Ranger units in the Cholon District, southwest Saigon, at the first of the month. Transporting and landing troops, providing blocking support and removing elements ashore, the riverine assault group was instrumental in policing the areas in which the VC/NVA were entrenched. During daily operations the combined forces detained suspects and engaged insurgents occasionally encountered; otherwise, contact with the enemy was light. Moving south and west of Saigon on the Can Giuoc and Ben Luc rivers, and on to canals leading therefrom, the RAG 30 craft, with troops embarked, continued landing and blocking operations, more often locating ammunition caches and shelters than contacting the enemy.

Meanwhile RAG 27, operating with ARVN troops on the Vam Co Dong River, north and south of Ben Luc, was seeking out the enemy evading south to that area. On 13 March, providing blocking and gunfire support to ARVN units ashore, the riverine assault group was responsible for 40 bunkers destroyed and 20 detainees interrogated. On the 21st, five Viet Cong were captured and five more of the enemy were detained by an ARVN infantry battalion as RAG 27 provided mobility, blocking and gunfire support from the Vam Co River.

RAG 30, on 19 and 20 March, transported ARVN soldiers to their reconnaissance area east of the Can Giuoc River, 2½ miles south of

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Saigon. The forces ashore made contact with an estimated platoon-size enemy force as the riverine assault group craft provided blocking and gunfire support. Artillery and VNAF air strikes were called in. Twenty Viet Cong were killed on 19 March and the force seized numerous weapons and ammunition. The troops embarked on the western bank of the river the next day and met with the enemy again. That day 11 more Viet Cong were killed and 8 were captured along with a quantity of war materials including weapons, ammunition, medical supplies and documents.

RAG 28, operating in the Saigon River north of Saigon, conducted Operation QUYET THANG 82 with two ARVN infantry battalions on 25-27 March. The riverine assault group craft provided mobility, blocking and gunfire support to the elements placed ashore in Binh Duong Province, mid-way between Saigon and Phu Cuong cities. One hundred and three Viet Cong were killed by the friendly forces while 7 were captured, along with 10 sub-machine guns and 39 individual weapons.

In the RSSZ, VNN Commandos intercepted a sampan and four Viet Cong in a mangrove swamp, 12 miles southeast of Saigon on 9 March. Receiving fire from the sampan, the Commandos returned fire, felling one Viet Cong. TF 116 PBRs and "Seawolves" provided firepower as the sampan was recovered containing a B-40 rocket round and launcher, an AK-47, a Chinese Communist claymore mine and 100-meters of command detonation wire. Three Viet Cong were confirmed killed in this action. Two miles to the southeast, Commandos, PBRs and "Seawolves" again made contact with the enemy on 14 March.

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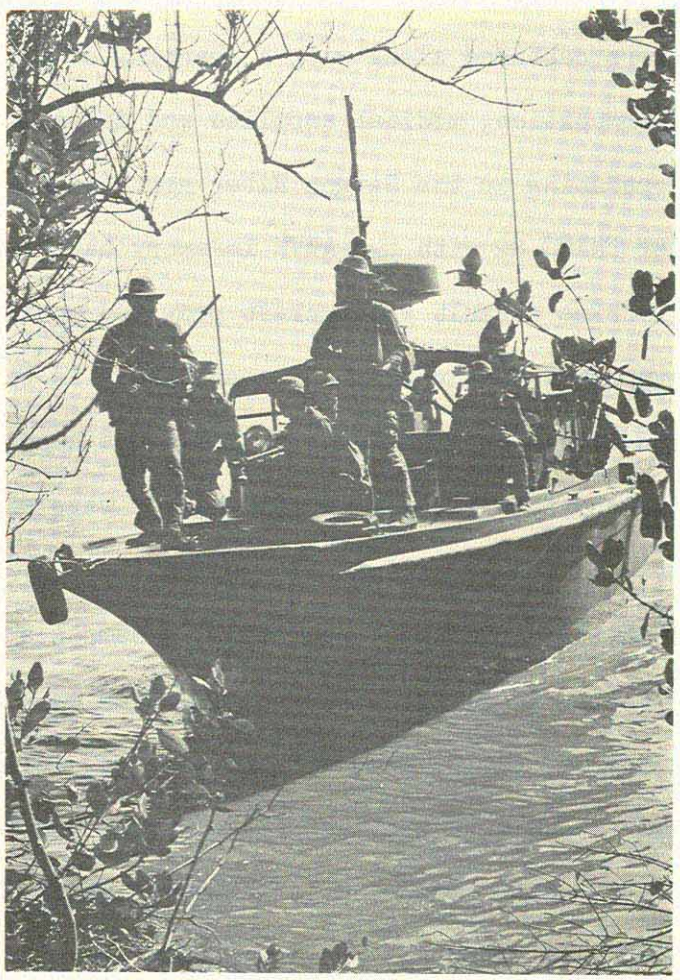
Combined with the firepower of the Royal Thai Artillery, the PBRs successfully extracted the Commandos who had been ambushed by an unknown size enemy force. Sweeps of the area yielded three Viet Cong bodies, while the Commandos suffered four wounded.

On 21 March during Operation STARDUST "2", two vacated base camps



Vietnamese Navy Commandos, on RAG 22 craft, take blocking and ambush position during Operation STARDUST "2".

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with numerous bunkers and equipment were destroyed in the RSSZ. CS-1, contained in drums, was dropped from Chinook aircraft on targets to the east and west of the Dong Tranh River, near the mouth of the Soi Rap River. VNN Commandos on RAG 22 craft, and U. S. Navy SEALs on PBRs, took blocking and ambush positions. Despite negative contact with the enemy, the operation demonstrated solid procedures upon which to base future operations utilizing this agent. One mile to the northeast of the Dong Tranh River another base camp was located and destroyed on 23 March. RF troops, inserted by RAG 28 craft, reported destroying several bunkers and various items of equipment at the camp.

Operations in the Fourth Riverine Area were not only reflected in the extent of Viet Cong activity, but also in the stepped-up offensive endeavors by the riverine assault groups. On 1 March, in response to a call from 7th ARVN Division units for support, three river craft of RAG 33 delivered naval gunfire and received counter fire in Dinh Tuong Province, west of My Tho. One of the commandaments was struck by a B-40 rocket in its 81-mm mortar stowage locker; a major explosion resulted, followed by secondary explosions in the craft's magazines. The craft sank within 5 minutes in 15 feet of water having sustained major hull damage. Two VNN sailors lost their lives and five more were wounded. RAG 21 craft and LSSL 228 responded immediately and delivered 40-mm, 81-mm, .50 and .30 caliber fire which suppressed the enemy fire. RAG 21/33 craft provided security as VNN LCU 537 conducted salvage operations

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throughout the month of March.

RAG 25/29 based craft, escorting a convoy on the Can Tho River and Xa No Canal between Can Tho and Vi Thanh, were ambushed on 2 March. Fire was returned on the ambush site by the riverine craft. Overhead protection by U. S. Army helicopters enabled the convoy to continue without further incident. One FOM (a V-bottomed river craft about the size of an LCVP) and an LCM had minor damage and one VNN sailor was slightly wounded during the ambush.

On the night of 4-5 March, the southern Mekong Delta city of Ca Mau was subjected to a massive Viet Cong attack. Mortar rounds were walked into an area toward the POL yards. Thatched and wooden structures near the house of the province chief were consumed by fire, and a chain reaction was set off when a 2.75 rocket storage area was hit by an incoming mortar round. While the RAG 25/29 detachment rallied to the city's defense, a RAG 25/29 river team hastened to provide security from its beaching site outside the city. The Viet Cong attacked this convoy, flooding one LCM and inactivating the 40-mm mount on a monitor, killing 2 VNN sailors, wounding 10 others; 1 sailor was declared missing in action. Upon cessation of the attack on the city, RAG 25/29 had accounted for 40 Viet Cong killed while having 3 men killed, 1 missing in action and 5 others wounded.

Five RAG craft from RAGs 26/32 supported two RF companies in Kien Phong Province during Operation DAN THANG 30 on 6 March. Providing the

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blocking force from the My Tho River, 5 miles northwest of Sa Dec, the river craft received B-40 and automatic-weapons fire from the beach. Return fire from the boats resulted in a secondary explosion and cessation of the harassing fire from the insurgents. Area sweeps in the vicinity resulted in a total of 30 Viet Cong killed, 41 captured and 21 suspects detained for interrogation. Operation HAI LONG 2/68 on the night of 8-9 March was conducted by PRUs and RAG 25/29 in Phong Dinh Province. The riverine craft provided transport, river blocking and gunfire support as the PRUs accounted for six of the enemy killed and eight Viet Cong and several weapons captured.

The Operation TRUONG CONG DINH series, commencing in March, were ARVN-controlled offensive attempts to seek out the enemy in the Delta. Riverine assault craft of the Fourth Riverine Area were utilized for mobility, security and gunfire support. TRUONG CONG DINH 7/10/1 (11-13 March), an amphibious assault on Oc Island in the Ham Luong River with RAG 21/33 providing the blocking support, resulted in five Viet Cong captured and one of the enemy killed. From 14-16 March, TRUONG CONG DINH SD/1 netted 33 Viet Cong suspects. RAG 23/31 boats transported Sa Dec Province troops 8 miles east of the city of Sa Dec and served as a blocking force for the operation. RAG 26 craft transported four RF companies up the My Tho River, near Cao Lanh during Operation TRUONG CONG DINH 44 where 26 enemy suspects were captured on 16 March. Thirty more Viet Cong suspects were detained after Operation

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TRUONG CONG DINH 7/10. RAG 21/33 river craft carried ARVN troops along the Ma Cau Canal connecting the Co Chien and Ham Luong rivers, providing gunfire support to the troops they had landed there.

On the 25th, RAG 23/31 participated in Operation TRUONG CONG DINH 9/2 with two ARVN infantry battalions, one ARVN Ranger battalion and one ARVN reconnaissance company in Vinh Long Province. Traversing the Nha Man Canal west from Vinh Long City, the convoy of 11 river craft was ambushed from both sides. The well-entrenched enemy fired B-40 and B-41 rockets and automatic-weapons at the friendly troops. The ambushed craft were soon joined by Army gunships. The combined counter fire silenced the enemy, but upon re-entering the area, the river craft were again taken under fire. The convoy manuevered out of the kill zone as the helicopters overhead attacked the enemy gun positions. It was reported that the Viet Cong were so well dug-in that the heavily bunkered area resisted the numerous helicopter strikes. During the ambush, 13 ARVN soldiers were killed and 25 were wounded as 2 river craft were damaged by the enemy rockets.

Sixty-eight of the enemy were killed during Operation TRUONG CONG DINH 7/SD/4 on 26 and 27 March. Conducted 12 miles east of My Tho on the Cau Tieu River, craft from RAGs 21/33 and 23/31 troop lifted ARVN infantry, Ranger and RF troops for the combined operation. Land sweeps were made and artillery support was called in throughout the two days; ten Viet Cong were captured with numerous weapons and equipment. One

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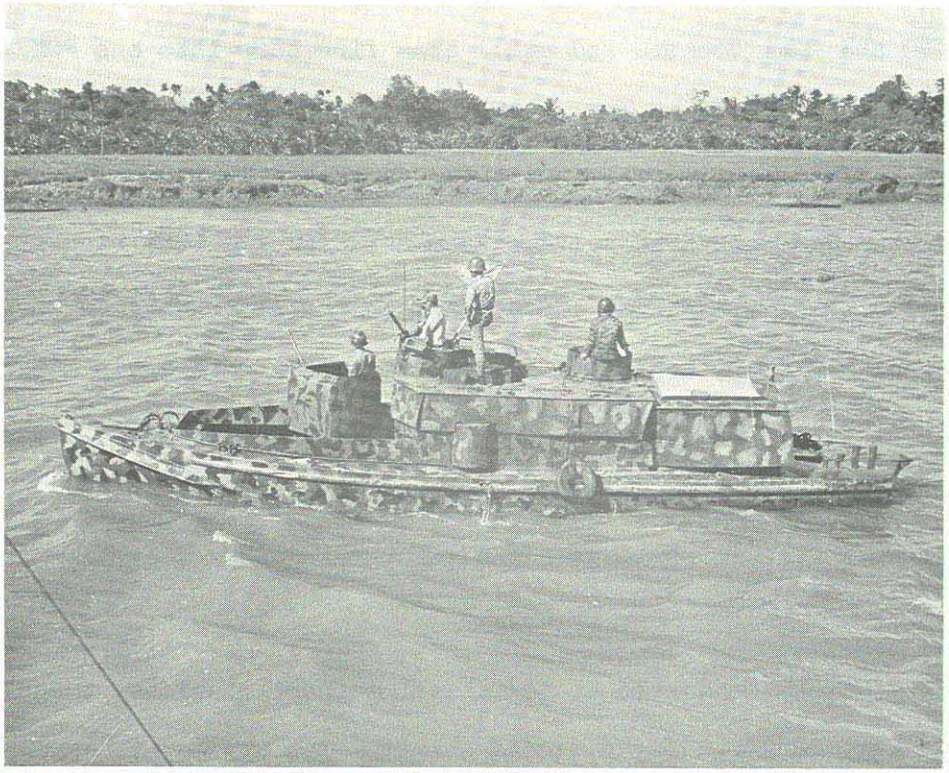
U. S. Army officer and 9 ARVN soldiers were killed and 62 others were wounded.



Vietnamese river assault group personnel transit a river in South Vietnam aboard a FOM. One of these boats was sunk on 29 March as a result of a Viet Cong rocket and small arms attack, which occurred 7 miles southwest of Can Tho.

While on a logistics mission, river craft of RAG 23/31 were mined in Vinh Binh Province, north of Phu Vinh on 27 March. One LCM was 80 percent damaged and another was 20 percent damaged; two VNN sailors were wounded. Both craft remained afloat and were towed to Vinh Long the next day. Subsequent evaluation of 12-meters of wire uncovered leading to a bunker ashore disclosed that the mine was command detonated.

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On the 29th, RAG 25/29 craft, returning from an escort mission to Vi Thanh, were attacked on the Can Tho River, 7 miles southwest of Can Tho. B-40 and B-41 rockets and small arms fire tore into one FOM which sunk immediately. Three VNN sailors were wounded. Return fire silenced the attack and the convoy continued on to Can Tho. On 31 March, the Fourth Riverine Area salvage team utilized two LCMs rigged with chain falls to lift the FOM. Proceeding up the river with an ARVN platoon and RAG 25/29 craft for security, the two were again attacked by B-40 and B-41 fire. The FOM sunk again and a monitor received damage in its engineering spaces. The convoy returned to Can Tho and salvage operations for the striken FOM were scheduled to resume on 1 April.

Logistics

In March, the VNN conducted 41 logistical support missions, transporting 5,646 tons of cargo and 8,338 personnel. The VNN supply center had a gross effectiveness of 70.5 percent of a total of 8,654 requests for items, and a net effectiveness of 86.6 percent on 7,048 requests for items normally carried in the supply system.

Vietnamese Navy Statistical Summary
March 1968

	Searched		Detained	
Coastal Force	Junks	People	Junks	People
I NZ	12,268	39,575	4	149
II NZ	10,410	33,319	3	185
III NZ	7,331	27,621	0	13
IV NZ	3,194	9,352	0	2
Sub-totals	33,203	109,867	7	349

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	Searched		Detained	
Fleet Command	Junks	People	Junks	People
Patrol ships	1,136	5,252	3	45
Riverine Area Craft	3,543	9,798	0	2
Totals	37,882	124,917	10	396

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VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

During the month of March the six infantry battalions of the Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) operated in I, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones and the Capital Military District (CMD). The battalions were committed to operations 100 percent of the time during the month.

Task Force A, composed of the 1st, 4th and 5th infantry battalions and Battery C, VNMC Artillery Battalion, performed clearing and civic action operations in and around Hue in I Corps Tactical Zone. Under the operation control of the ARVN 1st Infantry Division, the Marines provided security and medical relief to the inhabitants of the area stricken by the effects of the battle of Hue. Three offensive operations conducted, LAM SON 189-68, LAM SON 194-68 and LAM SON 198-68, met with light to moderate contact; the MEDCAPs (Medical Civic Action Programs) pursued by the VNMC highlighted the task force's endeavors. The three battalions treated over 2,700 civilians during their MEDCAP visits and administered more than 900 cholera immunizations. In addition, the Marines played a vital role in the reconstruction of roads, homes and villages subjected to the ravages of war.

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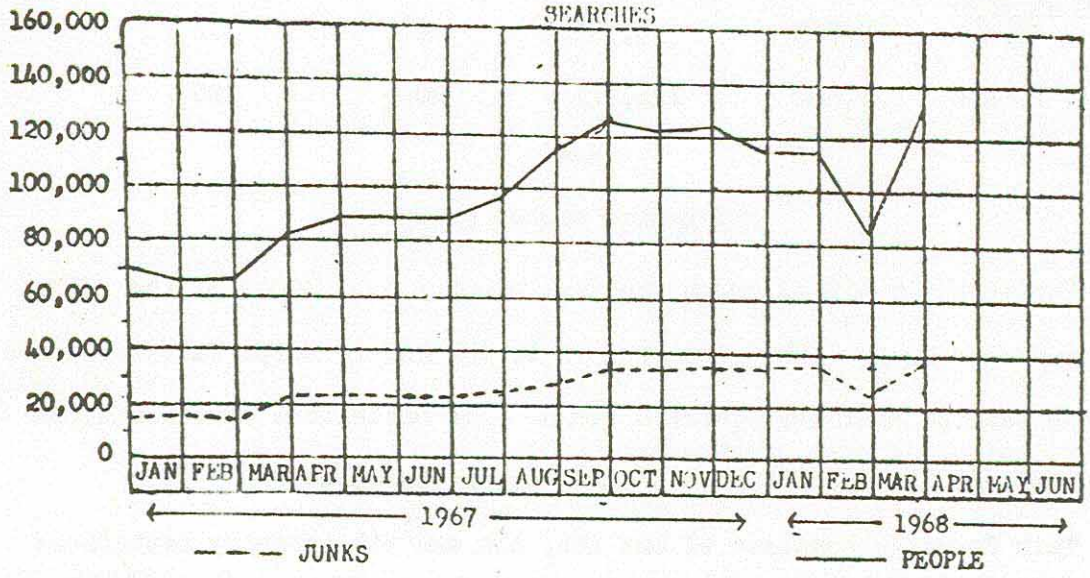
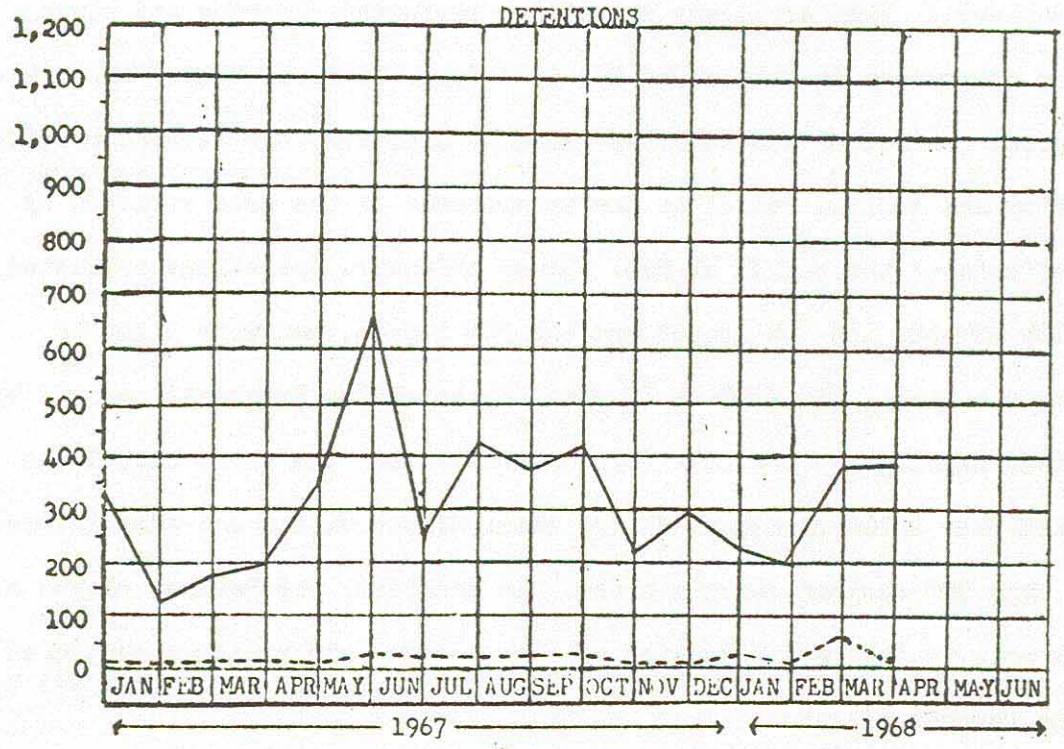
SEARCHES AND DETENTIONS
BY VIETNAMESE NAVY SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES





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On 27 March, the task force returned to Saigon where the 1st Battalion was assigned as III Corps Tactical Zone ready-reaction force while retraining at their base camp at Thu Duc. The 4th and 5th battalions relieved Task Force B in the Saigon TAOR. Area searches, Operation QUYET THANG, for the remainder of the month resulted in negligible contact.

Meanwhile, Task Force B, the 2nd, 3rd and 6th battalions and Batteries A and B, VNMC Artillery Battalion, continued Operation TRAN HUNG DAO, a search and clear operation in and around the city of Saigon under the operational control of the CMD. Daily operations until the 17th resulted in light enemy contact although numerous suspects were detained. On 17 March, the task force, less the 3rd Battalion which remained in the Capital Military District, joined the U. S. Army 199th Light Infantry Brigade at Tan Uyen, 17 miles north-northeast of Saigon. The operation, SONG THAN 818/BOX SPRINGS, sought out the Viet Cong North Vietnamese Army which were encamped north of the city of Saigon. Moderate contact was made by the combined forces until 21 March when the task force returned to the CMD to join Operation QUYET THANG in northeast Saigon. Small unit patrols characterized the operation until 28 March when Task Force A relieved Task Force B. Task Force B, the 2nd and 3rd infantry battalions and Battery C, VNMC Artillery Battalion, then deployed to Can Tho in IV Corps Tactical Zone under the operational control of the ARVN 21st Infantry Division. The task force began missions west of Can Tho in connection with Operation TRUONG CONG DINH, Delta-wide offensive operations conducted by the ARVN.

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Vietnamese Marines display an assortment of enemy weapons captured during sweep operations in March 1968.

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Vietnamese Marine Corps Statistical Summary
March 1968

VC/NVA	58 KIA	2 VC CAPTURED	289 VC SUSPECTS DETAINED
VNMC	32 KIA*	98 WIA*	(1 KIA and 1 WIA due to non-hostile action)

Weapons Captured

Rifle, assault, Soviet, 7.62-mm, AK-47	12
Carbine, Soviet, 7.62-mm, SKS	2
Light machine gun CHICOM, 7.62-mm, Type 56	2
Carbine, U.S., .30 caliber, M-1	2
Rocket launcher, CHICOM, RPG-2 (B-40)	2
Rifle, Soviet, bolt action	1
BAR, U.S., .30 caliber	1
Rifle, French, MAS-36	17
Rifle, U.S., .30 caliber, M-1	1
Rocket launcher, Soviet, RPG-7 (B-41)	1

Captured or Destroyed Materials or Facilities:

Hand grenades	2
Claymore mine	1
20 kilogram mines	2
1½ lb. block of TNT	8
Kilograms of TNT	75
Kilogram of C-3	1
Rounds, 7.62-mm	200
Rounds, B-40	10
Meters of fuze	6
Meters of detonating cord	20
Anti-tank rockets, RPG-7 (B-41)	6
Anti-personnel mines, U.S., M18A1	3
Meters of communications wire	1200
Batteries	36
Rubber raft	1
Gas masks	2
Sampan	1
Base camp houses	55

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APPENDIX I

TRAWLER INCIDENTS

During the early morning hours of 1 March 1968, USN, USCG, USA, USAF and Vietnamese Navy (VNN) units combined their efforts to destroy three of four trawlers attempting to infiltrate supplies into South Vietnam. The fourth trawler turned back prior to entering the 12-mile contiguous zone. The following are brief accounts of the four incidents:

Quang Ngai Province Trawler

At 1541 on 29 February 1968, an infiltrating trawler was detected by MARKET TIME land-based patrol (VP) aircraft 103 miles east of Cape Batangan. The trawler was on a course of 270° at a speed of 12 knots. At 0122 on 1 March, the trawler crossed into the 12-mile contiguous zone, 22 miles southeast of Cape Batangan. The trawler, refusing to acknowledge the challenges, attempted to evade and was taken under fire by PCFs 18 and 20, USCGCs ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC 68), POINT WELCOME and POINT GREY, and U. S. Army helicopter gunships. A firefight ensued as the trawler returned fire, and at 0214 the ship was driven aground 25 miles south of Cape Batangan on the coast of the South China Sea. At 0220 the trawler attempted self-destruction with limited success, but at 0235 another self-induced explosion occurred, resulting in the complete destruction of the trawler and her cargo.

Binh Dinh Province Trawler

At 291000H February 1968, MARKET TIME VP aircraft sighted another

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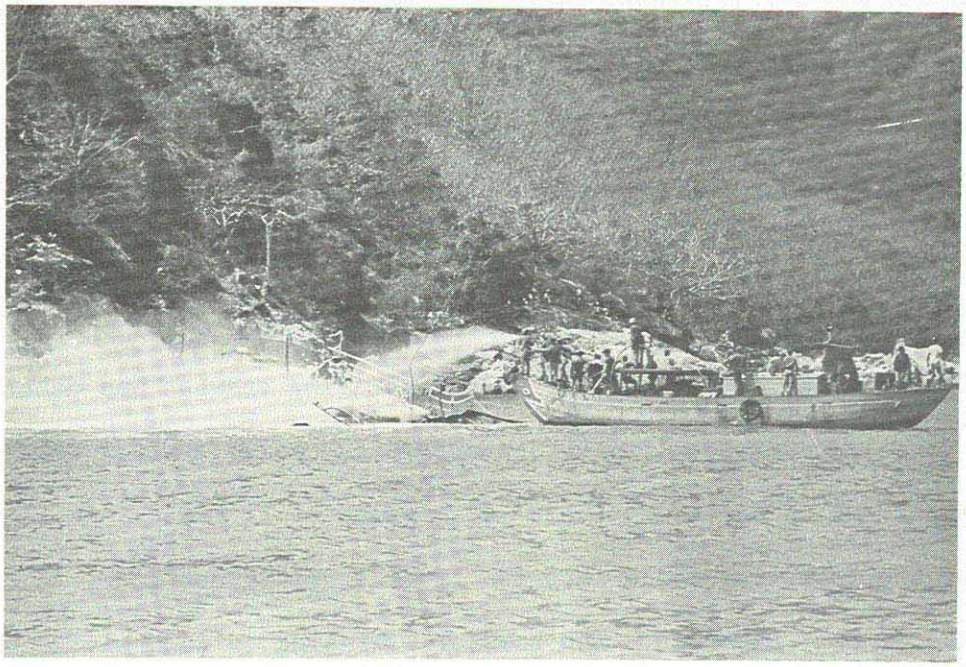

Vietnamese Navy fire-fighters extinquish fires on infiltrating trawler. The enemy craft was taken under fire by combined junk/"Swift"/USAF AC-47 aircraft about 11 miles northeast of Nha Trang.

100-foot trawler, approximately 120 miles northeast of Qui Nhon, on a course of 220° at eight knots. The trawler continued to close the coast during the next several hours and was apparently heading for the Lo Dien beach area approximately 42 miles north of Qui Nhon. At 0015 on the morning of 1 March, while under surveillance by USN and USCG MARKET TIME units, the trawler reversed course and commenced opening the coast. The trawler's position when she reversed course, which was also her closest point of approach (30 miles from the coast), was 32 miles northeast of Qui Nhon. Surveillance

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of the trawler was maintained until she neared the coast of the mainland of Communist China.

Khanh Hoa Province Trawler

At 1714 on 29 February, another enemy trawler was initially sighted by MARKET TIME VP aircraft 91 miles east-northeast of Nha Trang. The trawler, whose original course and speed were 210° and 12 knots, was kept under surveillance by USN, USCG and VNN MARKET TIME units until she crossed into the 12-mile contiguous zone approximately 28 miles northeast of Nha Trang. As the trawler attempted her final approach to the beach, she was taken under fire by the MARKET TIME units and AC-47 aircraft. At 0200 on 1 March, the trawler beached in the Hon Heo Secret Zone 11 miles northeast of Nha Trang. The closing MARKET TIME units received fire from the trawler in addition to shore fire. VNN Fleet Command ships, PCE 12 and PGM 617 provided gunfire support directed against the beach area adjacent to the trawler. The combined junk/"Swift"/AC-47 aircraft attack created fires aboard the trawler and at approximately 0230 a 2,000-foot fireball erupted as the trawler exploded. The trawler's forward and midship sections were found destroyed as VNN and USN fire-fighting teams extinguished the fires. U. S. diving teams and LDNN units conducted salvage operations of the cargo for the next 12 days as VNN coastal group landing parties, ROK and USA forces swept the area in the vicinity and maintained security perimeters.

The inventory of salvaged material was as follows:

Nav radar antenna and waveguide section	1
Dual 14.5-mm AA mounts believed to be ships armament	1

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U. S. diving team and LDNN personnel conduct salvage operations of cargo from an infiltrating trawler. The trawler was one of four detected 29 February-1 March, attempting to infiltrate supplies in South Vietnam. The inventory of material salvaged from this trawler included 745 rounds of 82-mm mortar ammunition; 70 AK-47 rifles; 1 dual 14.5-mm AA mount, believed to be ships armament; and 68 cases of 14.5-mm ammunition.

14.5-mm barrels with housing	2
Spare 14.5-mm barrels	4
Cases, 14.5-mm ammo	68
Rifles, AK-47	70
SMG, (Type 43)	72
7.62-mm ammo, cases	28
RPG-2 launchers	39
RPG-2 ammo (6 rounds each) 12 of which were Rumanian, cases	81
Mortar ammo, 82-mm rounds	745
Mortar tripods, 82-mm	13
Mortar tubes, 82-mm	7

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Mortar (82-mm) cleaning kits	6
82-mm mortar base plate	1
Mortar sights	8
Mortar carrying cases, box	1
Mortar (82-mm) auxiliary packs	2
Ammo carrying cases	4
57-mm RR barrel (with fired but unexploded round in chamber)	1
C-4 plastique, cases	20
Electrical blasting caps, type 4	200
Electrical blasting caps, type 3	200
Soviet blasting caps, type C	400
Non-electrical blasting caps (Russian)	1,400
Safety fuze, 100 feet each (Chinese), rolls	9
Quick-match type grenade fuzes, box	1
Fragmentation grenades	5
Anti-tank mine, 50 K	1
Mines, 10 K	2
Battery pack (for night sight 82-mm mortar/75-mm RR)	1
Hand crank generator with stand and wire	1
Radio tubes, package	1
Multimeter	1
Misc. signal electronic equipment, boxes	2
Electronics chassis (CHICOM)	2
Field telephone set	1
Storage battery packs, box	1
One/eighth H. P. electrical motor (CHICOM)	1
Fire extinguishers	4
Life buoys	4
Inflatable life jacket	1
Binocular (ships)	1
Compass binnacle (ships)	1
Life jackets (with Chinese labels)	2
Box clothing	1
Plasma, 10 units of 300CC plus type I. V. Kits - Poland, case	1
Medical supplies - CHICOM, Japan, France, East Germany, Poland, Hungary, and either U. S. or unknown, cases	6
Gasoline can (full), 20 liter	1

An Xuyen Province Trawler

An unidentified trawler, with non-secured plates bearing the number 498 on her bow and with visible cargo on deck, was sighted at 1830 on

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28 February approximately 150 miles east-southeast of Vung Tau. Air surveillance of the trawler was maintained as the ship proceeded on a southeasterly course at approximately 10 knots. At 2100 on the 29th, the trawler changed course to 310° and speed to 13 knots as the USCGC WINONA (WHEC 65) commenced covert surveillance. At 0120 on 1 March, the trawler crossed into the 12-mile contiguous zone on a course of 340° at seven knots. At 0200 the trawler commenced a run for the beach, ignoring all challenging and warning fire. A firefight ensued and a large fireball erupted on the trawler after direct hits by 5"/38 and .50 caliber fire from WINONA. After the explosion, the trawler sank approximately seven miles off the beach, 43 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. A small amount of debris in the area was recovered.

Previous Trawler Incidents

The four infiltrators thwarted on 1 March brought the total number of such incidents since February 1965 to 13. Four basic classes of trawlers have been employed by the enemy in these attempts to resupply his forces by sea. Each is capable of transporting approximately 100 tons of munitions. They have been designated as the CA MAU, LO DIEU, SA KY, and HON HEO class infiltration trawlers. The Quang Ngai Province trawler was of the SA KY class and the Khanh Hoa Province trawler was of the HON HEO class. The trawler destroyed in An Xuyen Province and the trawler which turned back before entering South Vietnamese waters off Binh Dinh Province were both of the LO DIEU class.

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Since the beginning of Operation MARKET TIME there have been no confirmed reports of successful trawler infiltrations. The nine incidents prior to 1 March 1968 are summarized as follows:

1. A trawler, probably of the LO DIEU class, was discovered concealed near the shore off Point La approximately 12 miles southeast of Tuy Hoa in Phu Yen Province on 16 February 1965 and was destroyed.

2. A trawler of the CA MAU class probably bound for An Xuyen Province was placed under surveillance on 31 December 1965 and turned back.

3. A CA MAU class trawler was detected and tracked until it grounded near the mouth of the Rach Gia River in An Xuyen Province about 40 miles northeast of Ca Mau Peninsula on 10 May 1966 where it was destroyed.

4. A trawler of the LO DIEU class was captured after it grounded in Vinh Binh Province about 55 miles southwest of Vung Tau on 20 June 1966.

5. A trawler of the LO DIEU class apparently bound for Quang Ngai Province was detected approximately 80 miles east of Qui Nhon on 23 December 1966 and kept under surveillance until it returned to Chinese Communist waters.

6. A LO DIEU class trawler attempting to land on Ca Mau Peninsula in An Xuyen Province was attacked and destroyed on 1 January 1967.

7. A LO DIEU class trawler was destroyed while attempting to infiltrate near Cape Batangan in Quang Ngai Province on 14 March 1967.

8. A trawler of the LO DIEU class was detected at sea on 11 July 1967 and tracked until it was captured on 15 July after grounding on Cape Batangan

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in Quang Ngai Province.

9. A CA MAU class trawler detected off Quang Ngai Province on 21 February 1968 and was tracked until it returned to Chinese Communist waters.

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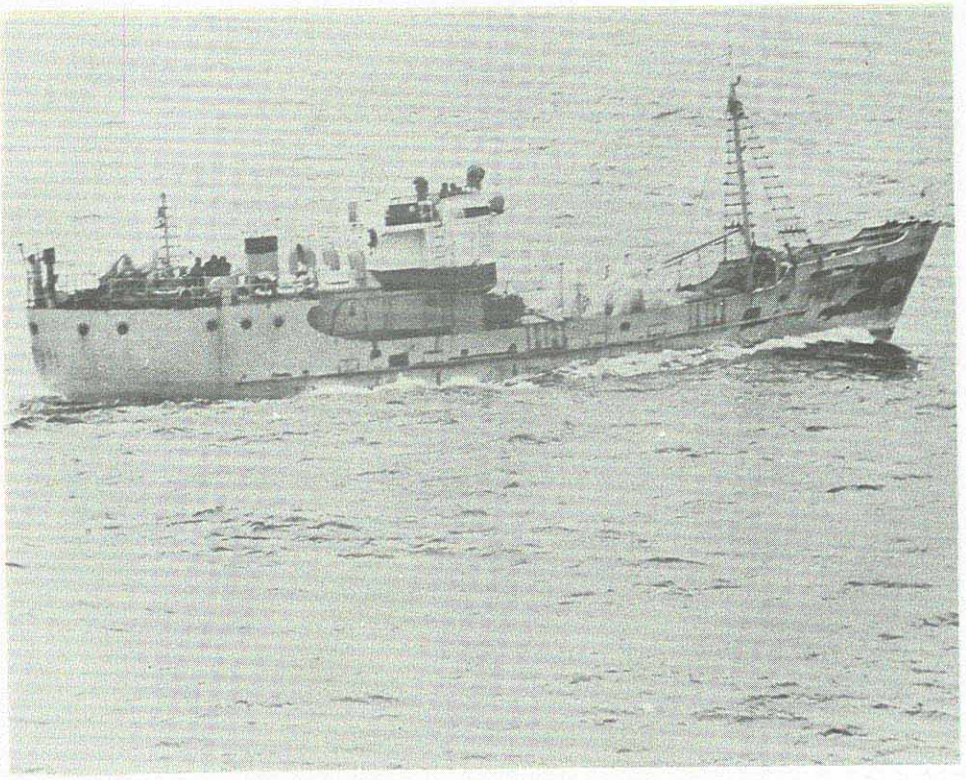

CA MAU Class Infiltration Trawler

Vessels of this class were turned back on 31 December 1965; destroyed on 10 May 1966; and turned back on 21 February 1968.

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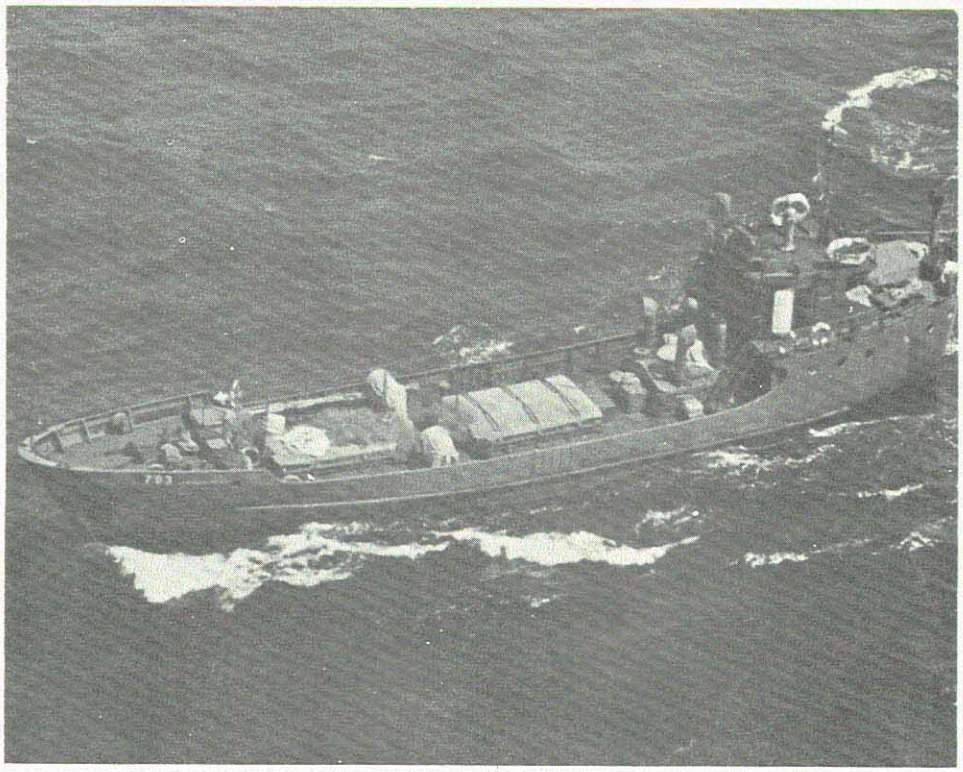

LO DIEU Class Infiltration Trawler

Vessels of this class were destroyed on 16 February 1965; captured on 20 June 1966; turned back on 23 December 1966; destroyed on 1 January 1967; destroyed on 14 March 1967; captured on 15 July 1967; destroyed on 1 March 1968; and turned back on 1 March 1968.

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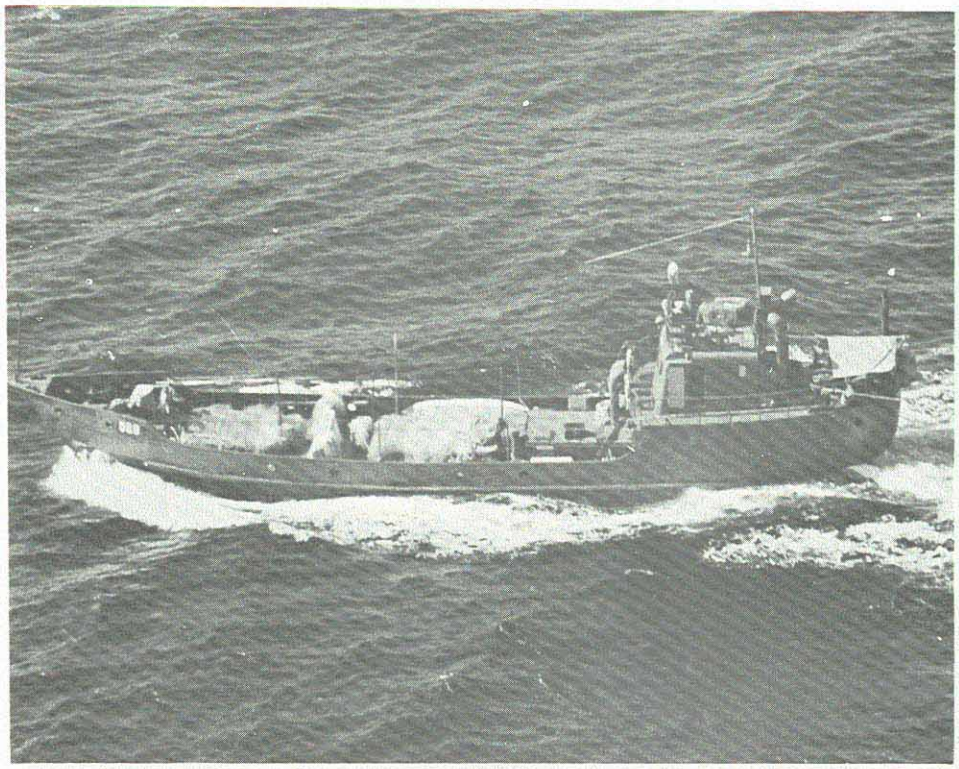

SA KY Class Infiltration Trawler

A vessel of this class was destroyed on 1 March 1968.

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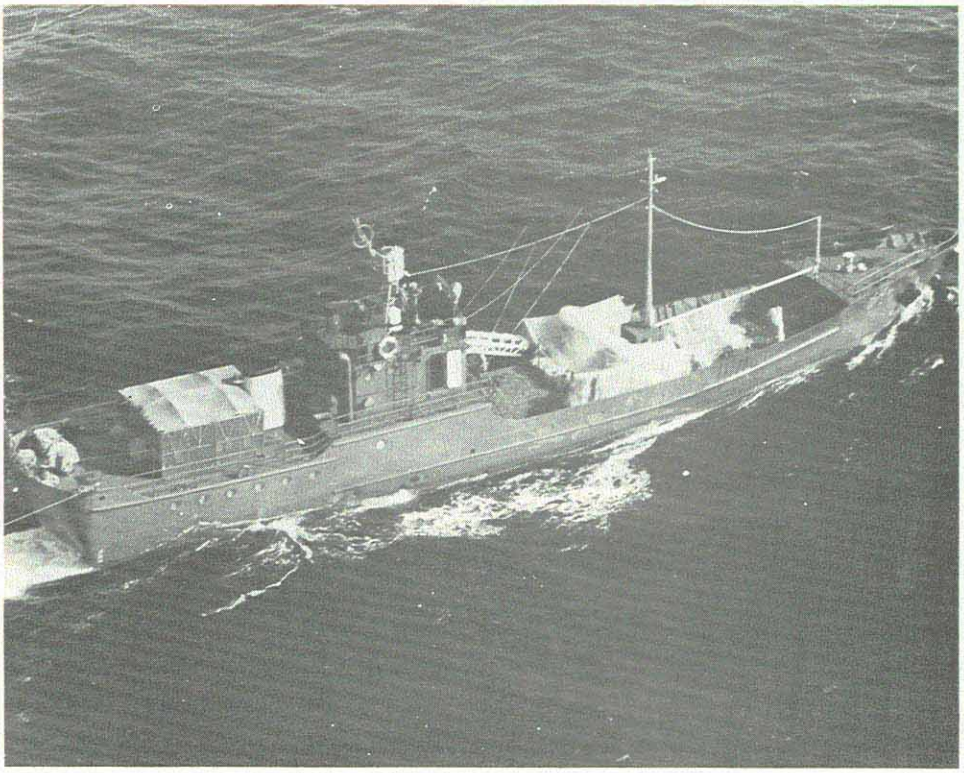

HON HEO Class Infiltration Trawler

A vessel of this class was destroyed on 1 March 1968.

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APPENDIX II
SECTION I

GLOSSARY

ANGLICO	Air-Naval Gunfire Liaison Company (U. S.).
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
CG	Coastal Group (VNN) - A coastal patrol command consisting of six to 10 junks with the responsibility of patrolling from 30-60 miles of coastline.
CIDG	Civilian Irregular Defense Group (VN) - Para-military troops used in their local area for limited area operations.
CHIEU HOI	"Open Arms" (VN) - The Republic of Vietnam's amnesty program of rehabilitation and re-location of Viet Cong who voluntarily return to government control.
CLEARWATER	Task Force CLEARWATER was activated in February 1968 with the mission of expediting and improving naval supply to combat forces in the northern I CTZ by exercising overall coordination of activities concerning movement and protection of logistic craft on the Perfume River and Cua Viet River lines of communication. This special task force was created in response to heavy enemy pressure directed at these LOC at a time of increasing combat operation and logistic requirements by the built-up Northern I CTZ forces.

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CLEARWATER (Con't.)	Two river security groups were formed from River Patrol Force and River Assault Force craft. Supporting forces available on request included artillery and naval gunfire units, helicopter gunships, logistic craft, and ground reaction forces.
CORDS	Civil Operations for Revolutionary Development Support.
COSURVFOR	Coastal Surveillance Force (USN) TF-115 - The U. S. forces participating in Operations MARKET TIME and STABLE DOOR.
COSVN	Central Office for South Vietnam - The highest Viet Cong headquarters in South Vietnam.
CTZ	Corps Tactical Zone - The major divisions of South Vietnam into military regions.
DAI DOAN KET	National Reconciliation Program - Program which is aimed at helping qualified returnees find employment commensurate with their previous training and experience.
FWMAF	Free World Military Assistance Forces (all engaged in South Vietnam.)
GAME WARDEN	The operation performed by U. S. Navy forces to interdict Viet Cong movement on the major waterways

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GAME WARDEN (Con't.)	of the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ. The force is composed of River Patrol Boats, Minesweepers, helicopter fire teams and SEAL teams.
HEAT	High Explosive Anti-Tank - A shaped-charge projectile with high armor penetration capability normally used in 57-mm or 75-mm recoilless rifles.
HHFT	Heavy Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team with three or more gunships used in support of ground and waterborne units. The use of three helicopters allows continuous firing on the target.
HOI CHANH	"Returnee to the Just Cause" (VN) - An individual (Viet Cong) who returns under the Chieu Hoi program.
IUWU	Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit (U. S.) - The U. S. forces conducting Operation STABLE DOOR.
IWCS	Integrated Wideband Communication System.
LCMM	Landing Craft Medium Minesweeper.
LDNN	Lien Doc Nguoi Nhia (VNN) - Literally "soldiers who fight under the sea." UDT force of the VNN.
LHFT	Light Helicopter Fire Team (U. S.) - A helicopter fire team composed of two gunships used in support of ground and waterborne units.
LRRP	Long Range Reconnaissance Patrol.

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MARKET TIME	The operation conducted by U. S. and Vietnamese naval forces to interdict Viet Cong infiltration of men and supplies from the sea.
MAF	Marine Amphibious Force
MEDCAP	Medical Civic Action Program.
MG	Machine Gun- An automatic, crew-served weapon adaptable to many mountings. The four types of machine guns currently used by USN and VNN forces are the M-60, the .30 caliber light machine, the .50 caliber heavy machine gun, and the 7.62-mm mini gun.
MILPHAP	Military Provincial Health Assistance Program - MILPHAP teams, normally staffed by three doctors, a Medical Service Corps officer and 12 corpsmen, work with Vietnam's Ministry of Health at the province hospital level to improve health services available to Vietnamese civilians.
MRF	Mobile Riverine Force (U. S.) - A force made up of Navy craft and Army units designed and trained for amphibious assaults in the Mekong Delta and the RSSZ.
NGFS	Naval Gunfire Support (USN-VNN) - Naval gunfire used to assist operations ashore; often spotted and corrected by spotter aircraft or forward observers.
NILO	Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer

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

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

NVA — North Vietnamese Army.

PF — Popular Forces - Military forces recruited and employed within a district; organized in platoons and squads.

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

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

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

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

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RF	Regional Force (VN) - Forces under ARVN control which operate within their home province.
RIVPATFOR	River Patrol Force (USN) TF-116 - The forces used in conducting Operation GAME WARDEN.
ROK	Republic of Korea.
RPG	Rocket Propelled Grenade - A Soviet or Chinese Communist-manufactured, fin-stabilized, anti-tank grenade. RPG-2 (B-40). RPG-7 (B-41).
RSSZ	Rung Sat Special Zone - Literally "forest of assassins." A special military area located about 21 miles southeast of Saigon in Gia Dinh Province and composed of Can Gio and Quang Xuyen districts.
RTEG	River Transport and Escort Group.
RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces - Consists of the Army, Navy, Air Force, Marine Corps and RF/PF.
SEAL	Sea, Air, Land. (USN) - Special duty personnel qualified as underwater demolition, paratroop and jungle warfare specialists.
SECRET ZONE	A Viet Cong-dominated area utilized as a base, training camp and logistic resupply area.
SLAR	Side Looking Airborne Radar (U. S.) - An accurate airborne radar for detecting small, moving objects.
STABLE DOOR	The U. S. Navy operation conducted to provide harbor defense.

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

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APPENDIX II

SECTION 2

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

AFDL -Auxiliary Floating Dry Dock, Light - A non-self-propelled, open-ended dry dock with a 1,000- ton capacity. It measures 64 by 200 feet and has two 3-ton derricks and a machine shop. The craft mounts no armament.

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

AMMI (Pontoon) -A multi-purpose barge. It is 5 by 28 by 90 feet and is sectioned into 12 interior spaces. Each barge contains six fittings for columns to raise or lower the barge on spuds, fittings to connect several barges end-to-end for causeway use, and fittings to allow side-mounting on LSTs and LSDs.

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AMMI (Cont.) (Pontoon) -In addition to causeway use, the barges can be positioned to embark and debark troops and to serve as platforms for patrol craft hull maintenance.

APB -Personnel Barracks Ship - An LST converted to provide berthing for an Army battalion and a River Assault Squadron. The ship is 328 feet long with berthing spaces for 122 officers a 1,180 enlisted men, and mounts four 4.2-inch mortars, two 40-mm quad gun mounts, two 20-mm twin gun mounts, and ten 7.62-mm machine guns. It has a speed of 12 knots and carries a crew of 11 officers and 161 enlisted men.

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

ARG -Repair Ship, Internal Combustion Engine - A repair ship converted from a C-2 freighter and capable of repairing ships and craft with gasoline or diesel propulsion plants. This ship is 442 feet long and

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ARG (Con't.) -mounts three 3"/50 caliber guns. It has a speed of 11.5 knots and a crew of 19 officers and 493 enlisted men.

ARL -Repair Ship, Landing Craft - An LST converted to repair landing craft and support amphibious ships. The ship is 328 feet long and mounts two 40-mm quad gun mounts. It has a speed of 10.6 knots and a crew of 12 officers and 178 enlisted men.

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

ATC -Armored Troop Carrier - A modified, armored LCM-6 designed principally for use by the Riverine Assault Force. The boat is 56 feet long with an extended deckhouse mounting two 20-mm guns, two .50 caliber machine guns, and four M-60 machine guns. The craft can carry approximately 40 combat troops

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ATC (Con't.) -or two and a half to three tons of cargo. It has a speed of eight and a half knots and carries a crew of seven enlisted men. Special bar-and-plate armor has been added to provide protection for the hull and deckhouse against projectiles up and including 57-mm HEAT rounds.

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

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

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

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

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

LCU -Landing Craft Utility - Used to deliver cargo throughout the Republic of Vietnam. The primary source of delivering cargo to Dong Ha and Hue in I Corps. The

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LCU (Con't.) -boat is 118 feet long and has a maximum speed of 8 knots. The boat captain is usually a Chief Petty Officer, who commands an enlisted crew of 13 enlisted men.

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

LST (GAME WARDEN Support Ship) -A 548-Class tank landing ship specially configured for GAME WARDEN Operations. The cargo hatch has been enlarged to 13- by 32-feet to permit lowering PBRs and helicopters to the tank deck for repairs and maintenance. The main deck forward of the cargo hatch has been strengthened and life-saving nets have been added port and starboard to support helicopter operations. A 10-ton boat lifting boom has been added on the starboard side just forward of the deckhouse. In addition, the transient berthing facilities on board have been increased to accommodate eight officers and 112 enlisted men. An ancillary role performed by the LST is radar surveillance in support of MARKET TIME units in the area.

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LST (Con't.) -The ship's speed is 12 knots, and the crew consists of 17 officers and 123 enlisted men.

MONITOR -Monitor - A modified LCM-6 designed primarily for use as a fire support ship by the RAF. The craft has bar-and-plate armor along the hull and deckhouse similar to that of ATCs and CCBs. The boat is 60.5 feet long, is equipped with radar, and mounts one 40-mm and one .50 caliber machine gun in a forward turret, one 81-mm mortar and two M-60 machine guns amidships, and one 20-mm gun, two .50 caliber machine guns and four M-60 machine guns in the deckhouse. It has a speed of eight and one-quarter knots and a crew of 11 enlisted men.

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

PACV -Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle - The new craft is an all-metal peripheral jet-type hovercraft powered by a single marine gas turbine engine, enabling

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PACV (Con't) -the craft to reach approximately 50 knots under optimum conditions. With a crew of one officer and four enlisted men, the craft is equipped with radar and mounts one twin .50 caliber machine gun, three MK21 7.62-mm machine guns and one MK18 40-mm grenade launcher. The PACV, with a lenght of 38.7 feet, a width of 23 feet and a height of 16.5 feet (cushion-borne), is to be used primarily as a rapid reaction craft, a high-speed, logistic re-supply craft for small quantities of high priority material, and for SAR missions with the MRF.

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

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

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

PG -Patrol Gunboat - A patrol boat for use in offshore waters. It is a new design with an all-aluminum hull and a combination diesel/gas turbine propulsion plant. The boat is equipped with radar, is 165 feet long, mounts one 3"/50 caliber gun, one 81-mm mortar and two .50 caliber machine guns. The craft's speed is 37 knots under turbine power and 16 under diesel power. The crew consists of three officers and 21 enlisted men.

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

P-3A -Orion - A long-range patrol aircraft used extensively in Operation MARKET TIME. The plane is powered by four turbo-prop engines, carries 11,000 pounds of

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UH-1B (Con't.) -capable of firing 14 2.75-inch rockets. The helicopter has a range of 250 miles, a speed of 125 knots, and carries a crew of two officers and two enlisted men.

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

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

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

YDT -Diving Tender - A non-self-propelled lighter equipped with a deckhouse containing accomodations and working

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YDT (Con't.) -spaces for a salvage team. The tender is 54 by 260 feet, has a 12-ton crane, and mounts six .50 caliber machine guns for self-defense. The craft carries a crew of 15 officers and 76 enlisted men.

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

YFU -Utility Yard Craft - The newest version of this craft is called the SKILAK and is capable of carrying 330 short tons of dry cargo or 86,000 gallons of liquid cargo at a speed of 10 knots.

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

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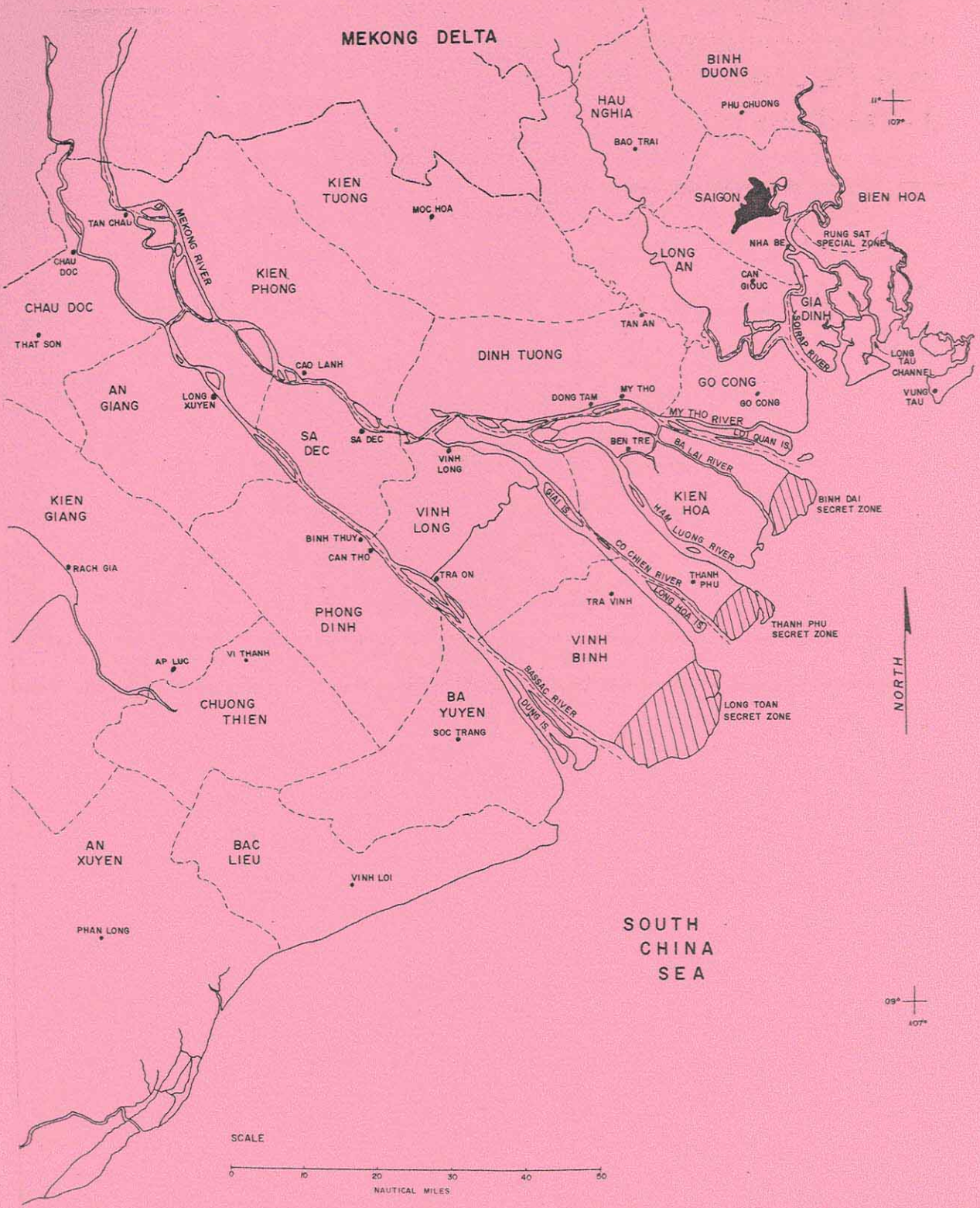

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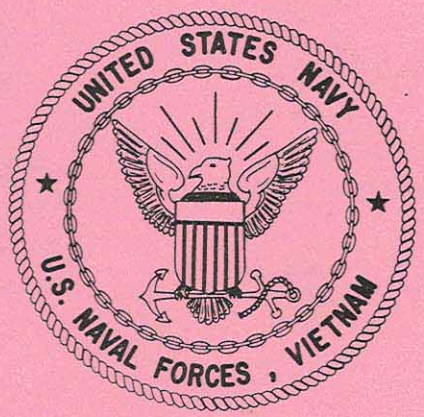

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