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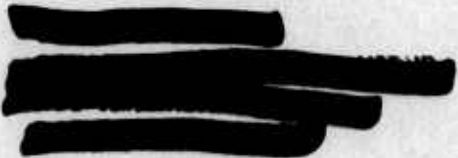


NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM

MONTHLY HISTORICAL SUMMARY

JUNE 1966

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JUNE 1966

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JUNE 1968

OPERATIONS / INCIDENTS

COASTAL GROUP 11

POINT LOMAS
USS ENGAGE

COASTAL
GROUP 23

PCF 42

RSSZ PATROL GROUP

MY THO WRECK REMOVAL

MEKONG DELTA PATROL GROUP

POINT LEAGUE TRAWLER

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

With the interception of a second infiltration trawler in as many months, June proved to be the most active and successful month since the activation of Operation MARKET TIME. A steady increase occurred in the number of incidents involving MARKET TIME units as six additional PCFs joined the operation.¹ Activities continued to be varied as patrol units participated in a number of search and rescue and gunfire support missions. Forces were also bolstered by the activation of a second MIUWS.

POINT LEAGUE TRAWLER INCIDENT

The Cau Mau Peninsula, southern-most region of Vietnam, was the scene of two known infiltration attempts in the five month period from December 1965 to May 1966. Intelligence information indicated that this region had been used on previous occasions for infiltration of supplies to the Viet Cong.² With the exception of a few government controlled population centers the entire region is under Viet Cong control. Therefore, movement of supplies once offloaded from infiltrating vessels is relatively free. To carry out this movement the Viet Cong were reported to have a well developed transportation group operating in the Mekong Delta. All these factors combined to make this general area one of the most likely locations for infiltration attempts.

In anticipation of continuing infiltration attempts augmented MARKET TIME patrols were established in Areas Seven, Eight and Nine.

¹ See Appendix I for MARKET TIME Statistical Summary.

² See Appendix III for translation of the interrogation of a Chieu Hoi rallier, former Viet Cong political officer involved in infiltration.

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BARRETT PATROLS

and

POINT LEAGUE CROWLER

VR

VR

VO

WQ

IST

W30

W32

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

BALANCE PATROLS

POINT LEAGUE TOWERS

Intended Infiltration Point

Trawler for

Trawler Intercepted

Alternate Infiltration

PURABLE CIRCLE OF TOWER

140

Grande Concord

1ST

193

VQ

YO

5 6 7 8 9 0

2 3 4

9 0 1

CHIEF OF TOWER

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USS FLOYD COUNTY (LST-762) was detached from CTF 116 operational control on 9 June and ordered to report to CTF 115 as a support ship for this operation. Task Unit 115.3.9, consisting of WPBs and PCFs operating in Area 7D/7E/8C and 8D, was formed with Commanding Officer FLOYD COUNTY as CTU 115.3.9. Spare PCF crews, PCF maintenance personnel, and spare parts for the PCFs were embarked on FLOYD COUNTY.

The patrol was established with two PCFs and one WPB in Areas 7D/E and 8C/D, and one WPB each in Area 8E, the southern half of Area 9A and the northern half of Area 9A. FLOYD COUNTY, two DERs, two MSCs and one MSO were given outer patrol tracks (see chart). In addition, MARKET TIME patrol aircraft were assigned a barrier patrol around the entire patrol area, with orders to report all trawlers and junks to task group commanders and the nearest surface ship.

On 19 June at 1545, an SP2H from VP-2 on a special barrier MARKET TIME flight, detected and photographed a trawler at a position eighty miles east of the Con Son Islands. The trawler, showing the side numbers 2135, was on a course of 210 degrees and at a speed of ten knots when first sighted; it soon altered course to 220 degrees. The aircraft remained in the area long enough to report the contact, then continued on patrol.¹

The following morning was clear and calm with one foot seas. Patrol units in Areas Six and Seven had been alerted to the possi-

¹ Narrative based on CTF 115 msg 271301Z, Trawler (contact 20D2) final report and debriefing reports, Commanding Officer USCGC POINT LEAGUE and USCGC POINT HUDSON.

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bility of a steel hull contact in their areas. At 0300, USCGC POINT LEAGUE, patrolling off the mouth of the Co Chien River, obtained a radar contact at a distance of 7.8 miles (see chart for positions). The contact was on a course of 010 degrees at a speed of ten knots, heading toward the mouth of the river. POINT LEAGUE reported the contact appeared to be a steel hull.

POINT LEAGUE closed to four miles and challenged by flashing light. There was no response. The contact soon altered course to the west and angled for the shore, stopping at a position approximately two miles offshore. POINT LEAGUE obtained a second small contact alongside the first and proceeded at maximum speed to close. At six hundred yards she illuminated them and discovered a forty foot, green-hulled junk alongside a steel hull trawler (which was later identified as the same trawler detected the previous afternoon by the MARKET TIME aircraft). Upon illumination the trawler got underway at approximately twelve knots, abandoning the junk and heading for the beach. The time was 0340.

POINT LEAGUE reacted with two warning shots across the bow but the trawler continued; simultaneously POINT LEAGUE went to general quarters. She fired a second burst across the bow which the trawler returned with intense .50 caliber machine gun fire. From the initial burst, POINT LEAGUE took two hits in the pilot house, one an incendiary round which exploded, knocking down the executive officer and temporarily blinding the commanding officer and the helmsman. POINT LEAGUE maintained heavy .50 caliber machine gun fire during the initial action; at 0350 the trawler went hard

aground. During the initial engagement, the junk which had been alongside the trawler may have been sunk by POINT LEAGUE's gunfire.

POINT LEAGUE took advantage of the trawler's inability to maneuver while beached and made a series of three firing runs, the first at 1000 yards and the next two at 1400 yards, using 81mm mortar flares to illuminate the area. On one run she fired 81mm HE mortar rounds at the vessel. She then stood off and awaited assistance. First to arrive was the helicopter fire team from Can Tho and a MARKET TIME VP-2 aircraft.

With the additional support in the area, POINT LEAGUE closed the trawler for closer investigation. At 0600 she came under automatic weapons fire from Viet Cong emplacements in sand dunes on the beach and was forced to withdraw to safer waters. Two USAF F-100s were called in to strafe and bomb the enemy positions. At 0615 an explosion from an unknown cause was observed onboard the trawler. Fire then broke out, burning intensely in the vicinity of the after hold and the pilot house.

CTF 115 directed that all possible attempts be made to salvage the trawler, and as POINT LEAGUE moved out to replenish her ammunition, USCGC POINT SLOCUM moved in to attempt an approach. She came to within about 800 yards of the trawler, then resting approximately 100 yards from the beach, and received automatic weapons fire from the shore positions. As POINT SLOCUM made several more passes, the helicopter fire teams moved in with suppression fire. POINT SLOCUM continued to fire on the beach, receiving heavy automatic weapons and recoilless rifle or mortar

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fire in return. One small caliber round struck two 81mm mortar HE rounds on her forward mount, inflicting light shrapnel wounds upon one of the gunners. POINT SLOCUM ceased her firing runs as aircraft continued to saturate the beach positions. Light fire was received from the beach until about 0745. The fires on the trawler increased in intensity and ammunition in the holds started to cook off, resulting in numerous small explosions.

At 0715 USS HAVERFIELD (DER-393) (COMCORTON FIVE embarked) arrived and assumed duties as USN on-scene commander. Also arriving on the scene during the morning hours were units from VNN Coastal Group 35; River Assault Group 23; USS JOHN A. BOLE (DD-755), then assigned as IV Corps Tactical Zone naval gunfire support ship; and USCGC POINT HUDSON. Surface and air attacks continued on the Viet Cong shore positions in an effort to eliminate enemy resistance.

At 1000, with the Viet Cong resistance apparently suppressed, a composite boarding and salvage team consisting of volunteer personnel from the WFBs, HAVERFIELD, and VNN units approached the burning trawler in two Coastal Group junks. Using portable fire fighting equipment they cooled the fire sufficiently to permit a boarding attempt. In defiance of the flames and exploding ammunition, the salvage team boarded the trawler and commenced removing cargo. While personnel continued to fight the fires on board the trawler, POINT LEAGUE made an attempt to tow the trawler free. The attempt was aborted by a broken tow line. VNN LSSL 225, the Vietnamese on-scene commander, assisted in the attempt.

USS TORTUGA (LSD-26) arrived on scene at 1020, assumed OTC

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for salvage operations, and transferred a damage control team to the trawler by LCVF and LCM. At 1115 troops from the ARVN Twenty-first Division landed in the beach area via U.S. Army helicopters and established a defensive perimeter.

Throughout the morning and into the early afternoon U.S. and Vietnamese personnel continued to offload cargo and fight the fire.

By 1315 the fires were under control, and at 1400 all fires were out and salvage personnel commenced dewatering operations. At 1500 another abortive attempt to tow the trawler free was made by the boats in the area. The decision was then made to continue to dewater the trawler and offload cargo while awaiting the arrival of Harbor Clearance Teams One and Three aboard Light Lift Craft One. At 1655 the VNN Third Coastal Zone Commander arrived and assumed VNN on-scene commander; and at 1840 the MSTC contract tug WINQUAT arrived in the area.

While preparations were continued for towing the trawler free, night security was established aboard the trawler and in the adjacent area. A heavily armed party guarded the trawler. WPBs, VNN Fleet Command ships and Coastal Group junks patrolled the waters; ARVN troops on the beach maintained the defensive perimeter ashore; and USS HAVENFIELD, USS TORTUGA, USS JOHN A. BOLE, and a flare aircraft remained in the vicinity.

On 21 June at 0400, LLC-1 and HCT personnel arrived and commenced final salvage operations. They found the trawler listing about twenty degrees to port, with at least eight holes in the deck and starboard side from 81mm mortar rounds. Numerous smaller holes

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were found in the underwater body from internal explosions. At 0615 divers inspected the underwater body and installed temporary plywood patches. A salvage pump and eductors were used to dewater the holds and the engine room and unloading of cargo was expedited. These actions proved effective. At 1110, the trawler righted itself on the flooding tide, decreasing the twenty degree list to five degrees. This list remained constant during the subsequent tow to Saigon. At 1200 the trawler was pulled free.¹

The tow was then transferred to the MSTs tug WINQUAT. Escorted by USCGC POINT JEFFERSON and LLC-1, WINQUAT towed the trawler to Vung Tau, arriving there on 22 June at 0600. All other units returned to normal patrol. The trawler was then towed to Saigon by VNN LSSL 226 via the Soirap River, arriving at the VNN shipyard the morning of 23 June. All contraband from the trawler was transferred to VNN LSIL 328 for shipment to Can Tho. These actions were in accordance with orders from the Vietnamese Joint General Staff.

The trawler was 98 feet 11 inches long with a beam of 19 feet 4 inches, an estimated full load draft of 6 feet 7 inches and a displacement of 280 tons. The steel hull was green in color with an ivory superstructure and had two cargo holds. The only hull identification was the number 2135 on the bow. As in the case of the trawlers intercepted on 31 December 1965 and 10 May 1966, the numbers were on scoreboard-type removable plates with numbers on each side. The basic hull configuration was similar to the HISSEM

¹ COMNAVFORV msg 241013Z June 66, Report of Salvage of Enemy Infiltration Vessel

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trawler of 31 December and the POINT GREY trawler of 10 May, the major difference being that the superstructure was situated further aft. The known armament consisted of single .50 caliber machine gun mounts aft of the pilot house, on the forecastle and on the port and starboard sides amidships. These guns were covered by fishing nets when the trawler was first sighted by the patrol aircraft (see photograph). In addition to the fishnets, the trawler carried fishing buoys and buoy marking poles in the waist as camouflage.¹

Non-technical equipment situated on top of the pilot house and still intact included horns, voicetube, floodlight and flashing light key. The compass was partially destroyed, and the wheel, compass, engine order telegraph and navigation equipment was missing, indicating emergency destruction procedures were at least partially carried out. Partially destroyed communications equipment, consisting of a transmitter, receiver, dynamotor and distribution box was recovered as were two antenna bases.²

The engine room was in excellent condition despite a coating of oil from the flooding. The engineering equipment was in an excellent state of repair and an ample supply of spare parts was found. The main engine was a 225 HP four cycle, solid injection, air starting diesel of East German manufacture.

Although the actual complement of the crew is not known, berthing for fourteen persons was found. The initial photograph showed a total of eleven persons visible. Following the action

¹ NAVFORV msg 241059Z June 66, COMNAVFORV INTSUM 72-66

² NAVFORV msg 211141Z June 66, COMNAVFORV INTSUM 69-66

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of 20 June five bodies were discovered behind the beach and one body was found in the engineroom. Two wounded crewmen were captured by ARVN troops on the shore, one of whom subsequently died. The second prisoner underwent initial interrogation during June but revealed no information.

Approximately 100 tons of cargo were salvaged from the trawler.^{1&2} The weapons were predominately of Communist Chinese manufacture, with some Soviet weapons and a small number of North Korean rifles. This is the first known instance of North Korean manufactured arms in the IV CTZ. Some ammunition boxes were dated 1966, indicating a relatively rapid Chinese Communist distribution system from the factory to the port of origin of the trawler. A new type of 75mm spin-stabilized HEAT projectile recovered, believed compatible with CHICOM smooth-bore weapons, would increase the Viet Cong anti-tank and anti-patrol boat capability. The large quantity of sophisticated weapons on board indicated that the material was not intended solely for use in the IV CTZ but was probably destined for large main force units in the III CTZ.³

Although some documents were destroyed in the fire or otherwise disposed of, several were recovered from the trawler and, later, from the vicinity of dead crewmen behind the beach. The engine log recovered indicated that the main machinery had been running constantly at various RPMs since 14 June, with intermittent operation prior to that date. Entries in the navigator's workbook

¹ CTF 115 msg 271301Z June 66

² See Appendix III for complete breakdown of material captured from trawler

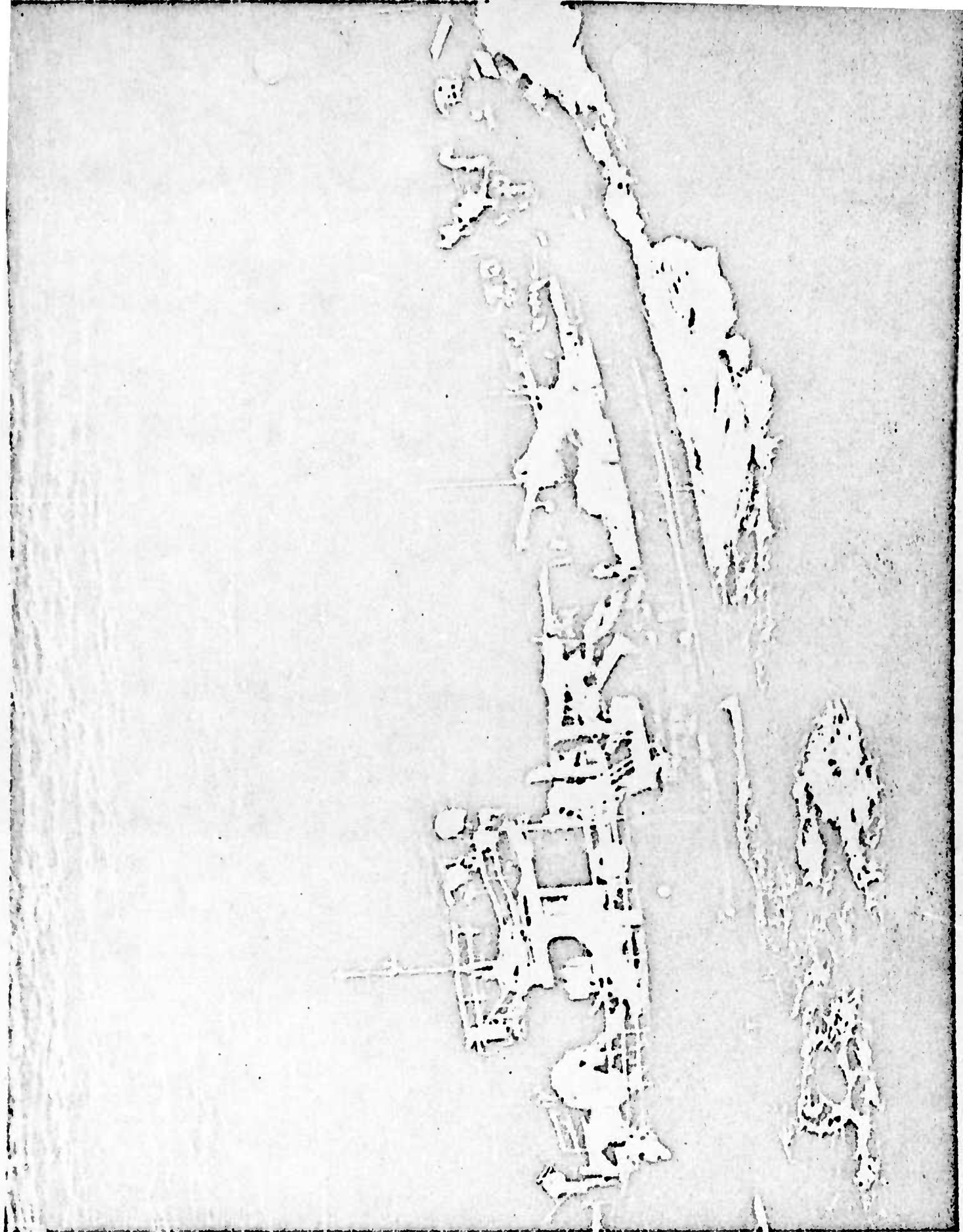
³ NAVFORV msg 241059Z June 66. NAVFORV INTSUM 72-66.

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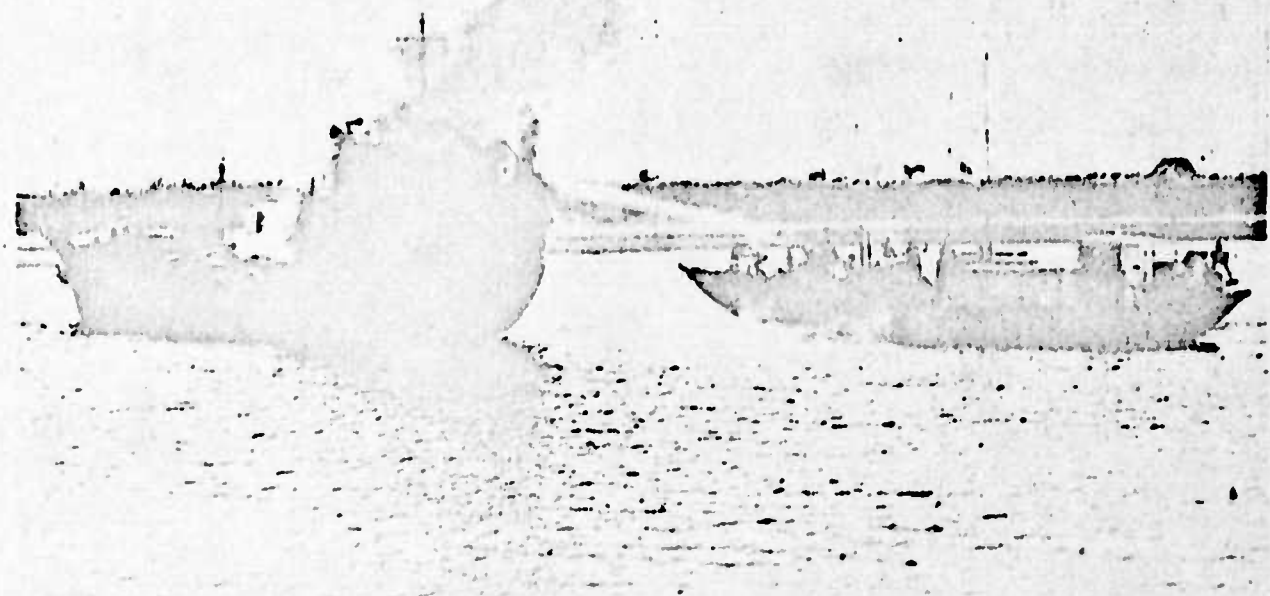
and on charts indicated a track possibly initiating 100 miles southwest of Hong Kong and directly to seaward of the same area of the Chinese mainland finally approached by the trawler discovered by USS HISSEM on 31 December off the Ca Mau Peninsula.¹ The track skirted east of the Macclesfield Bank on 16 June, then southeasterly on 17 and 18 June to 08-37 degrees north. It then proceeded westward toward the Conson Islands (Puolo Condore). A course alteration toward the northwest within an hour of the 19 June aircraft sighting would have allowed the trawler to penetrate to the point of discovery at a speed of advance of ten knots. This course would have taken it north of an M50 and south of a DER on barrier patrols, and outside the radar detection range of either unit at the probable passage time. A VP aircraft passed within ten nautical miles at 0300 on 20 June; and possibly passed the trawler at the same range at 2215 on 19 June. No contact was established on either occasion.

A captured chart suggested that the intended destination was possibly the Lang Nuoc River mouth in Vinh Binh province. An alternate course was also plotted to the mouth of the Con Chung River. A review of the two known and one suspected infiltration attempts detected by MARKET TIME units revealed that all these entries into the coast were planned for a high tide at first light. In the IV Corps Tactical Zone coastal areas, trawlers of this type can only enter the numerous small rivers and canals at high tide. The lunar high tides average ten to twelve feet.

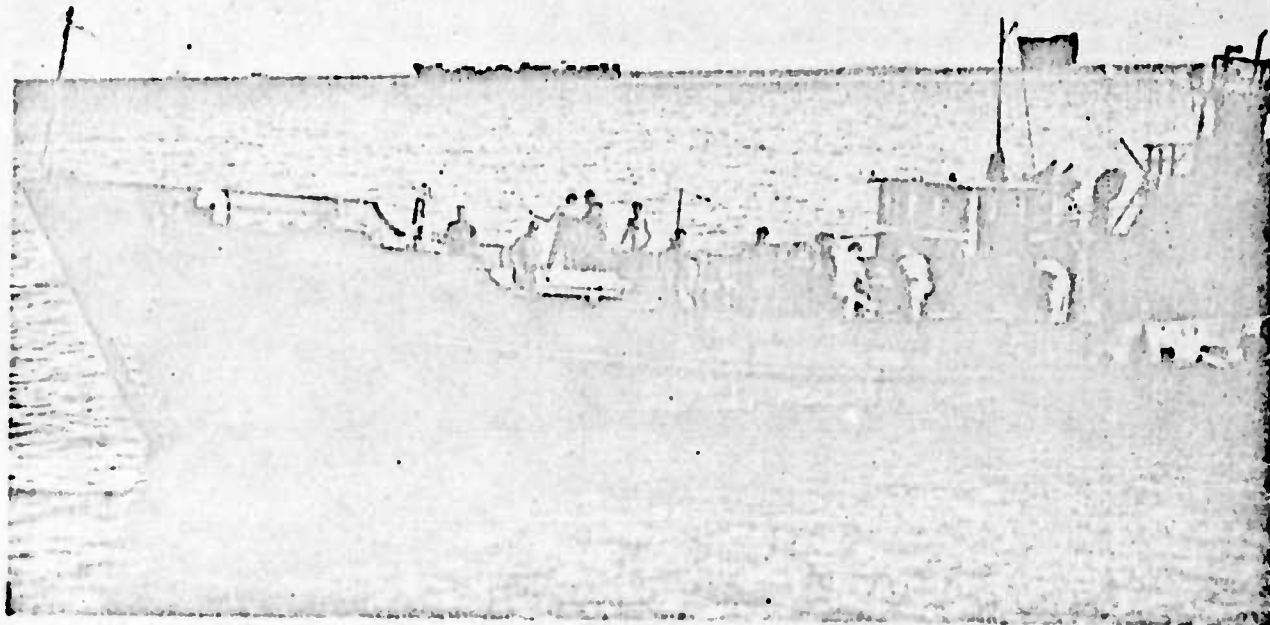
¹ NAVADVCRP Historical Review, January 1966, p. 1.



TRAWLER AS PHOTOGRAPHED BY PATROL AIRCRAFT



FIREFIGHTING AND SALVAGE OPERATIONS



TRAWLER IN TOW TO VUNG TAU

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The trawler had not made an attempt to offload the cargo prior to detection as the hatches were still covered and the holds were still full when the boarding party made its initial investigation. The loss of this trawler, combined with the loss of the trawler on 20 May, represented a serious blow to Viet Cong support. It is a loss felt not only in the IV CTZ where the ships were interdicted, but throughout other areas where the material might have been distributed.¹

PATROL ACTIVITIES

The steady increase in the number of MARKET TIME units in country and on patrol gave rise to a marked increase in incidents during June. Most of these incidents involved patrol units taking evading junks under fire after all efforts to bring the suspect junks alongside, including use of the siren, bullhorn and warning shots, had failed.

Almost all the evading junk incidents occurred in the First and Second Coastal Zones, with a suspect contact typically running close to the beach and evading as soon as the first warnings were signalled. Often the occupants managed to flee to safety on the beach or to jump overboard when the first shots were fired. In all instances the junks were either sunk, destroyed or damaged.

On several occasions enemy gunfire confirmed the suspicious junk activity. The night of 29 June, PCF 42 responded to an urgent request for gunfire support from Van Ninh subsector of Khanh Hoa Province. Upon delivering 81mm mortar fire, the PCF received

¹ COMNAVFORV msg 241059Z June 66. COMNAVFORV INTSUM 72-66.

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small arms fire from the beach. Van Ninh subsector responded to a reciprocal request from the PCF and delivered 105mm howitzer fire at the Viet Cong shore positions. During the firing a junk attempted to leave the beach. The PCF closed, illuminated and attempted to hail the contact. The junk evaded back toward the beach and was taken under fire by 81mm mortar. Two direct hits were scored, sinking the junk and killing an estimated five Viet Cong. During the action PCF 42 continued to receive fire from the beach. After sinking the junk PCF 42 silenced the fire from the beach with machine gun and mortar fire.

Also on the night of 29 June, USCGC POINT LOMAS, operating 100 miles north of Qui Nhon off Quang Nhai Province, opened fire on an evading junk. Simultaneously, automatic weapons fire was received from a second junk 600 yards north of the first. As POINT LOMAS took the junks under fire, USS ENGAGE (MSO-443), operating nearby, was called in to assist. ENGAGE took the second junk under fire with her 40mm gun and destroyed it. The first junk managed to beach and the occupants fled. It was then taken under fire and destroyed. This action took place during the execution of Plan END AROUND. (See Emergency Action Plans Section).

On the morning of 16 June, USCGC POINT CYPRESS detected a contact moving north across the mouth of the Co Chien River. POINT CYPRESS, then at a range of five miles, proceeded to intercept the contact. Upon firing illumination rounds, she observed three junks about 25 feet in length, and fired a series of warning shots. The reply came in a burst of fire from all three junks,

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returned immediately by POINT CYPRUS's .50 caliber machine guns. Within minutes one junk disintegrated in a violent explosion. The other two junks were damaged but managed to evade to small canals at the north of the Co Chien River mouth. Three Viet Cong were confirmed killed, with at least two more possibly killed.

GUNFIRE SUPPORT

MARKET TIME units conducted pre-planned gunfire support missions during June. On 24 June from 1500 to 1530, USCGC POINT GLOVER fired a gunfire support mission at Viet Cong assembly points on Phu Quoc Island. She expended forty-two rounds of 81mm mortar ammunition, damaging one Viet Cong structure. On 27 June, USCGC POINT CLEAR, USCGC POINT GLOVER, PCF 3 and PCF 20 fired the second mission, also at targets on Phu Quoc Island. 140 rounds of 81mm mortar ammunition were expended, resulting in destruction of two Viet Cong structures and damage to two others.

MARKET TIME units responded to seven requests for urgent gunfire support during the month. Most missions were fired at Viet Cong installations or troop concentrations. On 8 June, USCGC POINT GARNET and PCF 5 responded to a call for assistance from a Special Forces outpost under attack on Phu Quoc Island. Forty rounds of 81mm mortar ammunition were fired while assisting the outpost.

EMERGENCY ACTION PLANS

Three emergency action plans are available for MARKET TIME units to establish barriers or concentrated area inspections of junks and sampans to thwart the movement of contraband. They are

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designed to be rapidly executed with minimum communications.

Plan LINE PLUNGE establishes a barrier perpendicular to the shoreline to intercept traffic moving along the coast. Plan END AROUND establishes a barrier parallel to the coastline for intercepting suspect traffic moving from seaward toward the shore, or from the shore to the sea. Plan CORRAL is set to establish a specific area of search where it is indicated that closer scrutiny of traffic, such as a large concentration of junks, is required.

Plan CORRAL was executed twice during June, on both occasions in the Vung Tau area. Although nothing suspicious was detected, response was excellent in both instances. Plan END AROUND was executed once (results discussed previously).

SEARCH AND RESCUE OPERATIONS

MARKET TIME units participated in four search and rescue operations during June. On 6 June, USS FORTIFY (MSO-446), USS DYNAMIC (MSO-432), PCF 45 and PCF 51 conducted SAR operations following a collision between two Vietnamese civilian junks off Ban Than Point just north of Nha Trang. Five survivors were recovered. On 17 June FORTIFY and PCF 48 conducted SAR operations at the scene of a Navy C-130 crash north of Cam Ranh Bay. No survivors were found. On 27 June PCFs and LCPLs from ALUS 12 conducted an unsuccessful search for a man lost overboard from USS CHESTERFIELD COUNTY.

At 1800 on 26 June two junks from VNM Coastal Group 36 departed USS TORTUGA for their base at the entrance to the Bassac River. At a point approximately fifteen miles from the entrance to the

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Bassac River, one junk developed engine trouble and the second, with two U.S. advisors and six VNN sailors embarked, came alongside to assist. While alongside, the hull opened up on the second junk and it started taking on water rapidly. Weapons and other equipment were quickly transferred to the junk with engine trouble, but in the confusion it drifted away. All efforts to save the swamping junk failed. At 1900 the eight occupants were forced to take to the water, tying themselves together and using five life jackets and several crates to stay afloat. TORTUGA, who had maintained radio contact with the CG 36 advisors, immediately dispatched SAR units including an LCPL, LCVP, PACV, and fire team helos. MARKET TIME units dispatched to the scene included USS INFLICT (MSO-456), PCF 40, USCGC POINT LEAGUE and USCGC POINT HUDSON. A flare aircraft was also dispatched to assist. A creeping line search plan was executed throughout the night in spite of 25 to 40 knot winds and four to six foot swells. The disabled junk was recovered at 1940 by an LCVP from TORTUGA with seven survivors embarked. They reported that the eight men from the second junk were still in the water. The search continued until the following morning at 0700 when POINT LEAGUE recovered the eight survivors in excellent condition.

MARKET TIME FORCES

An additional six PCFs arrived in-country during June, bringing the total boats to 54. All six units were assigned to PCF Division 105 at Qui Nhon.

On 10 June two PACVs moved to USS TORTUGA for assessment in

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GAME WARDEN operations off the Mekong Delta in a continuation of their evaluation program. These operations included transits to and from the base at Cat Lo until 29 June, when the PACVs returned to Cat Lo to start undergoing modifications. In addition to night river patrols the PACVs evaluated their operational potential with an LSD type ship.

Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance Unit Eleven (MIUWS 11) became operational at Cam Ranh Bay during June, bringing to two the number of operational MIUWS units. MIUWS 12 at Vung Tau received two additional Mark XI LCPL patrol boats to bring their total to four; and MIUWS 11 received four Mark XI LCPLs. Personnel from MIUWS 23 arrived in Qui Nhon during the month and started preparation of harbor defense facilities. Also, equipment for MIUWS 22 arrived at Nha Trang.

On 20 June two WPBs from Coast Guard Squadron 11 at An Thoi underwent drydocking in Bangkok, Thailand. Lack of in-country drydocking facilities necessitated the use of the Thai shipyard facilities. Results of the docking were not completely satisfactory as both boats experienced bottom peeling. Re-docking was necessary.

In MARKET TIME air operations USS SALISBURY SOUND (AV-13) disestablished the seadrome at Cam Ranh Bay on 3 June. Patrol Squadron Two with a detachment of seven aircraft at Tan Son Nhut Airbase at Saigon continued daily surveillance flights in support of MARKET TIME operations. Patrol Squadrons Eight, Twenty-eight and forty-seven, flying P3A aircraft out of Sangley Point,

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Philippine Islands, supported MARKET TIME operations in the northern area from Cam Ranh Bay to the Seventeenth Parallel.

The following Seventh Fleet units operated as a part of Task Force 115 during all or part of June:

USS SAVAGE (DER-386)
USS BRISTER (DER-327)
USS VANCE (DER-387)
USS FAIGOUT (DER-324)
USS FORSTER (DER-334)
USS KOINER (DER-331)
USS HAVENFIELD (DER-393)
USS KRETCHMER (DER-329)
USS WARBLER (MSC-206)
USS ALBATROSS (MSC-289)
USS DYNAMIC (MSO-432)
USS CONFLICT (MSO-426)
USS FORTIFY (MSO-446)
USS ENGAGE (MSO-443)
USS IMPERVIOUS (MSO-449)
USS INFLICT (MSO-456)
USS LOYALTY (MSO-457)
USS WIDGEON (MSC-208)

* * * * *

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RIVER PATROL FORCE

The arrival of sixteen new PBRs and the movement of two additional River Patrol Sections into the Mekong Delta highlighted GAME WARDEN operations during June. Indicative of the increased patrol effort and its effect on the Viet Cong was the increased number of incidents involving GAME WARDEN units.¹ In the Rung Sat Special Zone PBRs assumed the remaining stations occupied by PCFs, releasing them for MARKET TIME duties. An initial assessment of the fledgling stages of GAME WARDEN indicated that the operation was accomplishing its mission.

DELTA PATROL GROUP

The first test of the off-shore support ship concept in the Mekong Delta was initiated on 13 June. Intelligence indicated extensive Viet Cong movement of material in the vicinity of the mouths of the Co Chien and Bassac Rivers to Viet Cong secret zones known to exist along the Delta Coast (see chart). In an attempt to counter this, COMNAVFORV directed CTF 116 to deploy mobile units to the vicinity of the mouths of the Co Chien and Bassac Rivers, and to establish anti-infiltration and interdiction patrols. This was accomplished by deploying River Section 512, with ten PBRs, two PACVs and one helicopter fire team aboard USS TORTUGA (LSD-26) for operations in the designated area. At the same time, USS FLOYD COUNTY (LST-762) was chopped to CTF 115 and its helicopter fire team shifted to the airfield at Vung Tau.

¹ See Appendix II for GAME WARDEN Statistical Summary

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REARONG DELTA/SSZ - JUNE 1966

VC Hire

VC Supply Cache

PER 19 June

PER 28/39

11 GAO

VC FSWar

Trann Phom SECRET 200

POINT CYRUS

PER 55/60

POINT LAGUE TRAIL

VC Long Toat SECRET 200

PER 57/52

YR

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For the remainder of the month TORTUGA, with her embarked components, maintained a mobile station in the vicinity of the river mouths. Although operations were at times curtailed by sea conditions, the PBRs maintained frequent and aggressive patrols. On 19 June, PBRs 55 and 60, on patrol in the northern reach of the Bassac River estuary, detected a single sampan crossing rapidly from south to north. Closing at high speed, the PBRs fired ten warning shots. The sampan failed to respond and was taken under fire by .50 caliber machine gun. After forty rounds had been fired, the sampan disintegrated from a secondary explosion. There were no survivors recovered, and no assessment of Viet Cong casualties. The sampan's movement was evaluated as a Viet Cong attempt to transport explosives across the river.

The heaviest action involving PBRs occurred the morning of 20 June at the mouth of the Bassac River near the small Cai Co River. PBRs 57 and 58 detected, then closed and illuminated a forty foot junk crossing the Bassac estuary at high tide. At a range of fifty yards the junk opened fire at PBR 57, the lead boat, using automatic weapons and an anti-tank rocket launcher. The initial round from the rocket launcher found its mark on the PBR, but heavy .50 caliber and .30 caliber machine gun fire forced the junk to flee up the shallow Cai Co River. Of the estimated ten Viet Cong on board, at least two were killed or wounded. One was seen to fall overboard and the other fell back into the boat. The PBRs suffered two casualties; one the forward gunner and the second the Vietnamese Navy liaison petty officer from Coastal Group 35.

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Both were evacuated by helicopter with shrapnel wounds. PBR 57 received a twelve inch by eight inch hole on the forward deck and a five inch hole on the starboard side above the waterline. The .50 caliber machine gun mount housing shield, the whip antenna, the radar antenna and the spotlight lens were damaged by shrapnel.

On two occasions armed helicopter fire teams from TORTUGA saw significant action on the Bassac River. On 19 June the helicopters fired on three camouflaged sampans near the mouth of the river in the same area as the PBR 57/58 incident. Automatic weapons fire was received in return. One Viet Cong was killed, one sampan destroyed and two sampans damaged. One man from the fire team was wounded when a round struck the flexible gun drive. On 21 June the fire team again came under automatic weapons attack. The fire was returned with machine gun and rocket fire. One hut was destroyed and an estimated five Viet Cong killed.

During early June, work neared completion on the interim GAME WARDEN facilities at My Tho on the northern branch of the Mekong River. On 20 June River Section 531, with Commander River Division 53, transited from Cat Lo to the mouth of the Cua Tieu River. There they were met by an escort of VNN River Assault Group craft and proceeded up the Cua Tieu River to My Tho. Area familiarization patrols were conducted and an intensive psychological warfare campaign administered, including leaflet drops and distribution of family comfort kits.

GAME WARDEN units at Can Tho completed their first full month of patrol in June. During the month stepped up harassment of

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patrol units indicated the patrols were starting to have some effect on Viet Cong movements. On the morning of 11 June, PBRs 38 and 39, patrolling ten miles northwest of Can Tho on the Bassac River, received a heavy volume of automatic weapons fire from positions on the bank. The fire was suppressed with 500 rounds of .50 caliber machine gun fire and seven M-79 grenades. The patrols observed one large secondary explosion during the action. There were no friendly casualties or damage. The PBRs maintained surveillance in the area for the remainder of the night, but no movement was detected. The action was later evaluated through ground reconnaissance as an attempted Viet Cong platoon crossing.

The same evening PBRs 36 and 37, patrolling in the Can Tho area, received .30 caliber machine gun and automatic rifle fire. Suppression fire consisting of 700 rounds of .50 caliber machine gun, five grenades and 260 rounds of small arms fire silenced the attack as the PBRs cleared the area. Again, there were no friendly casualties.

A sandbar fourteen miles southeast of Can Tho in the Bassac River provided the location for significant Viet Cong psychological warfare activity on 27 June. Here, at 2230, PBR 38 discovered a beached bamboo float. The float was a replica of a PBR, covered with haze-grey canvas and flying a Viet Cong flag. A sign on board - in Vietnamese - challenged the Americans to fight, and included the phrase "Sat My" - "Kill Americans". The float was taken under fire by .50 caliber machine guns, damaged and forced into the river. Cautious of possible booby traps, the PBR stayed

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well clear and allowed it to float away with the current.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE PATROL GROUP

Early in June, reliable intelligence sources indicated that U.S. river patrol units, fixed wing air strikes, armed helicopter reconnaissance missions and PCF mortar harassing fire along the east bank of the Soirap River north of the Vam Sat River had forced the Viet Cong to abandon this crossing point.¹ Other sources indicated that patrols on both the Long Tau and the Soirap Rivers had effectively curtailed Viet Cong night-time movement.¹ Instead, crossings were being made around sunrise and sunset, using seemingly innocent sampans stationed in mid-stream at bends in the river to notify Viet Cong sampans of the passing of patrol units. In an attempt to counter this, special daytime patrols were established by PERs on 8 June.

Lending support to this information, night-time interdiction of Viet Cong river movement in the Rung Sat Special Zone was almost nil for the first time in three months. In the one significant action, on 19 June at 2100, PERs on station near the mouth of the Vam Sat River closed a contact moving from east to west across the Soirap River. As the PERs closed to investigate, they found one swamped sampan and four to five people in the water. Two of the swimmers were floundering while the other two were swimming strongly toward the beach. The PERs closed the two strong swimmers, hailed them with no response, then fired warning shots. They still refused

¹ NAVFORV msg 131038Z June 66. COMNAVFORV INTSUM 62-66.

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to be rescued. Wary of the danger of hand grenades, the boat captain ordered the swimmers taken under fire. They were shot, and subsequently sank beneath the surface. A search was then conducted for the other two swimmers, but no trace could be found and they were presumed drowned. The sampan was recovered and found to have a satchel containing a Viet Cong school transcript, maps, documents, personal letters, money and clothes. Approximately forty-five minutes later a second deserted sampan was recovered in the same area. Both sampans and the captured material were turned over to VNN authorities at Nha Be.

The helicopter fire teams continued their effective reconnaissance of the Kung Sat Special Zone, and on several occasions came to the assistance of beleaguered outposts. In the most significant incident, on the night of 9 June, U.S. Army advisors reported that the hamlet of Binh Thanh was under attack by an undetermined number of Viet Cong, and the fire team from TORTUGA was launched to the scene while PBRs on station stood by to assist. The helicopters made strikes to the south and east of the hamlet, suppressed the fire and thwarted the attack.

On 27 June at 1145, while on a routine daytime reconnaissance flight, the fire team spotted a supply cache on the east bank of the Soirap River at a large bend six miles south of Nha Be. The fire team was ordered by CTG 116.2 not to take the cache under fire, and a reaction force of two Regional Force companies embarked on boats from RAG 22 at Nha Be immediately proceeded to the scene. Prior to their arrival two large explosions were observed at the

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cache, indicating that the Viet Cong had attempted to destroy the supplies to prevent capture. The explosions were evaluated as command detonated boxes of grenades. Upon arrival, the reaction force discovered 208 fragmentation grenades, three cans of explosives; 2000 brass casings; one tool kit for loading and fusing ammunition; four bags of sulphur, black powder and potassium nitrate; ten pounds of assorted small arms ammunition; one roll of wire and wire cutters; ten automatic weapons magazines; and one sampan. The cache was evaluated as being readied for movement out of the Rung Sat Special Zone.

The problem of civilian movement in prohibited areas was again brought to light during June.¹ On 2 June at 1215, a spotter aircraft - Long Tao ALO/FAC - observed an apparently deserted sampan on a small stream near the Long Tao River, in a region prohibited to civilian traffic. An outboard motor wrapped in plastic was in the boat. Soon afterward, a second sampan was observed approaching the first, then transferring goods from the deserted sampan. Seawolf 16, an armed helicopter on Long Tao River patrol, was authorized by Vietnamese Navy authorities at Nha Be to take the sampans under fire. The Long Tao FAC reported both sampans sunk and the three occupants killed. At 1358, the Long Tao Fire Team spotted a beached sampan in the vicinity of the earlier strike and obtained permission to destroy it. The following day Vietnamese personnel found one dead and two wounded in the vicinity of the strikes. The two survivors,

¹ See NAVFORV Historical Summary, April 1966, p. 23, for previous incident in RSSZ.

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reported to be civilians, stated they had been fired on from a helicopter. Medical evacuation of the survivors was made.

One successful SEAL team ambush took place during the month. On 14 June, an ambush was set on the Co Gia River near the eastern edge of the Rung Sat Special Zone, with the SEAL team moved in to place by units of RAG 22. At 0030 on 15 June, a sampan was detected moving along the river and was taken under fire. One Viet Cong was killed, one wounded and a third escaped. In a simultaneous action, a Regional Force 999 Company ambush team killed three Viet Cong.

In mine countermeasures activity, Nha Be based MSBs continued their daily sweeps of the Long Tao River ship channel and the Nha Be anchorage. They were assisted by VNN MLMSs. PBRs from Nha Be continued to assist U.S. Army patrol units in providing security at the Nha Be anchorage. In a significant mine discovery during the afternoon of 12 June, a friendly fisherman located one electrical wire leading from the bank down into the Long Tau River approximately five miles southeast of Nha Be. He reported the discovery to Nha Be and RAG units were dispatched to the scene. About five meters from the bank two poles, three meters apart, were found protruding about one half meter from the surface. At the bottom of the poles a mine was found. The mine was made from two oil cans fastened together by two wooden sticks.¹ It was capable of remaining beneath the surface in wet storage, then being moved into any location in the channel by a sampan after the passage of the minesweepers.

¹ This is the same type of mine found on 27 May under OUR LADY OF PEACE. See NAVFORV Monthly Historical Summary, May 66, p. 26.

PBRs

The addition of sixteen new PBRs during June bolstered GAME WARDEN forces, bringing the total boats in country to sixty-three. Eight PBRs arrived on 4 June aboard the SS CATAWBA VICTORY; three were assigned to RIVPATSECT 543, and five to RIVPATSECT 531. The second group arrived on 9 June aboard the CCNY VICTORY; five were assigned to RIVPATSECT 531, and three to RIVPATSECT 522.

In PBR movements not previously mentioned, RIVPATSECT 543 with seven PBRs shifted from USS TORTUGA to Cat Lo on 2 June. On 7 June, RIVPATSECT 531 and the remaining units of RIVPATSECT 543 shifted from USS TORTUGA to Cat Lo. On 8 June RIVPATSECT 543 completed operational checks and reported to CTF 116 for duty; and on 17 June RIVPATSECT 531 completed operational checks and reported for duty. On 10 June RIVPATSECT 512 and RIVPATSECT 542 shifted from Cat Lo to Nha Be.

During the month of June approximately 200 enlisted personnel reported to River Squadron Five. By the end of the month, all River Patrol Sections had at least fifty-five men assigned, and had extra boat crews and maintenance personnel.

The PBRs continued to experience extensive surface corrosion. Especially susceptible were the Jacuzzi pump grill inserts. Shaft casualties also continued to plague the PBRs. New type, stronger shafts had not yet been received by the end of the month. During June, RIVRONFIVE commenced issuing Squadron Maintenance Bulletins covering maintenance problems encountered in the PBRs. These were

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sent to all River Divisions, River Patrol Sections, and Naval Support Activity, Saigon detachments that support PBRs.

INITIAL GAME WARDEN ASSESSMENT

An assessment of effectiveness of Operation GAME WARDEN since the arrival of the first PBRs in-country on 20 March was promulgated on 24 June.¹ Based on intelligence reports from captive Viet Cong, Chieu Hoi ralliers and special agents as well as from evaluation of aerial surveillance, GAME WARDEN appeared to be effectively accomplishing its mission of interdicting Viet Cong movements on the major rivers of the Rung Sat Special Zone and on that portion of the Bassac River in the vicinity of Can Tho where the initial Delta patrols were being conducted.

Indications were that the Viet Cong were slowly being starved out of large areas of the Rung Sat Special Zone, a region which has traditionally been under enemy control. The employment of ground forces to strike at the heart of the Rung Sat Special Zone - Operations JACKSTAY, LEXINGTON III, and continuing VNN and Regional Force operations - destroyed large quantities of food, arms and ammunition, and numerous Viet Cong facilities. This necessitated enemy resupply, withdrawal or severe hardship. Continuous GAME WARDEN patrols in support of these operations contributed to the disruption of resupply routes from Long An and Go Cong provinces. A marked reduction in the number and scope of Viet Cong initiated incidents in the Rung Sat Special Zone since March was indicative of the enemy's loss of freedom of action. LSD/LST based UH-1B fire teams were effectively

¹ COMNAVFORV msg 240937Z June 1966, GAME WARDEN Operations

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employed in the Hung Sat Special Zone for direct PBR support, and for armed reconnaissance and preplanned strikes. These operations, conducted during the training phase off Vung Tau, substantiated predictions of similar effective support when the PBRs are deployed aboard LSTs in the ultimate GAME WARDEN stations off the Delta River mouths.

Although GAME WARDEN forces in the Delta were not yet at programmed strength, initial experience with the one section operating from the temporary base at Can Tho was noteworthy. On two known occasions attempted crossings by Viet Cong units were stopped by patrols. Reports from the IV Corps Tactical Zone indicated that Viet Cong commanders voiced concern at the presence of the U.S. craft on the river. Disruption of Viet Cong tax collectors on the Bassac River was confirmed by the Tre On Village Chief, who stated that the arrival of the PBRs enabled villagers for the first time to transport their produce to Can Tho without paying Viet Cong taxes. The VNN commander of the Fourth Riverine Area considered friendly river traffic of the Bassac to be markedly increased. In addition, the influence of PBR night patrols resulted in increased RAG 25 patrol activity during the daytime.

Based on this initial assessment, GAME WARDEN was considered to be an important deterrent to Viet Cong movements on and across the major rivers of the Delta and the Hung Sat Special Zone. Increased effectiveness was anticipated as additional boats and bases become operational, and the crews gain familiarity and confidence and evolve tactics to counter Viet Cong efforts in their areas of responsibility.

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HARBOR CLEARANCE

Since their arrival in country in April, personnel of Harbor Clearance Team One and Light Lift Craft One have made a series of important contributions to the maritime war effort. Both units participated in the salvage of cargo from the POINT GREY trawler in May (see May COMNAVFORV Historical Summary), followed by clearance operations at My Tho. Augmented by personnel from Harbor Clearance Team Three, they played a vital role in the capture of the POINT LEAGUE trawler in June.

MY THO SUBMERGED WRECK REMOVAL

The establishment of a GAME WARDEN base at My Tho in the Mekong Delta brought with it the requirement for construction of a pontoon floating pier for use by the FLEs. The base site was selected and approved, but removal of a wreck of approximately 520 tons displacement, located at the site where the pontoon floating pier facilities were to be situated, was required. Positive identification of the wreck was not possible, but local information further substantiated by name plate data indicated that it was the wreck of the French cargo vessel PAULBERT, believed sunk by bombing in early 1945.¹

Although some initial difficulties were experienced, permission to move the wreck was obtained from the Province Chief of Dinh Tuong and the local My Tho District Chief; with further approval by the Director of the Vietnamese Bureau of Navigation, the Government of Vietnam Ministry of Transportation, and the GVN

¹ COMNAVFORV spltr ser 769 of 25 June 1966 summarizes.

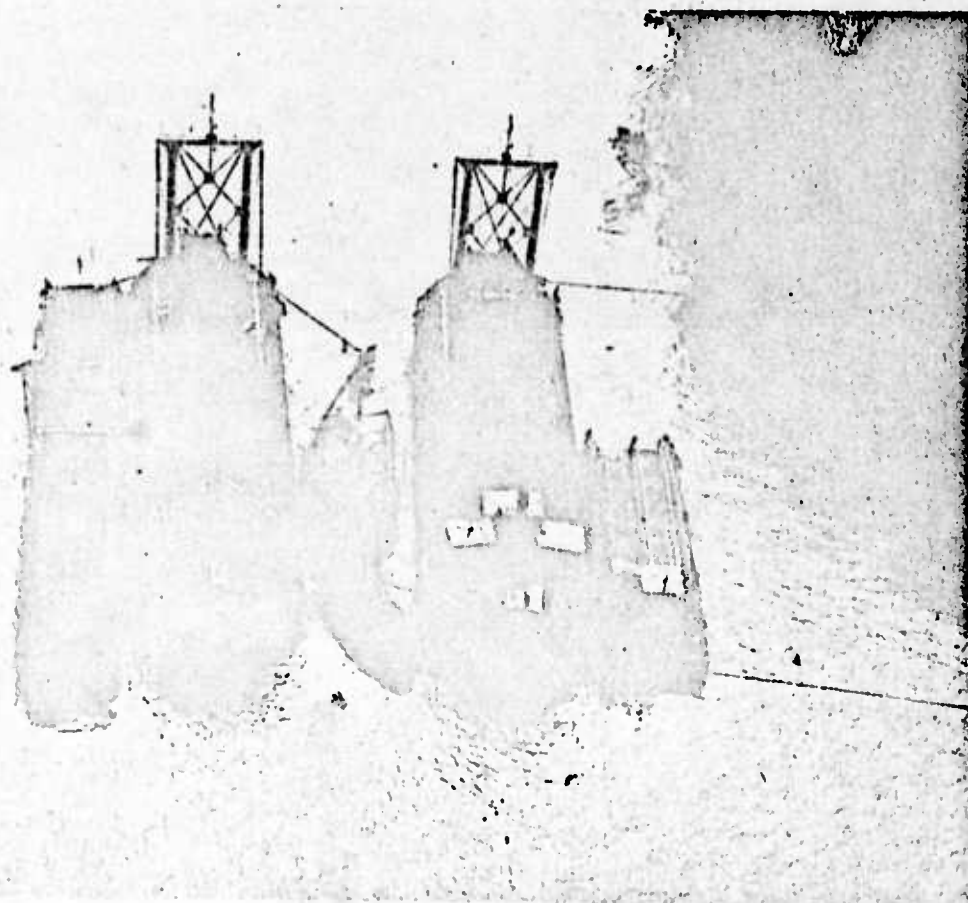
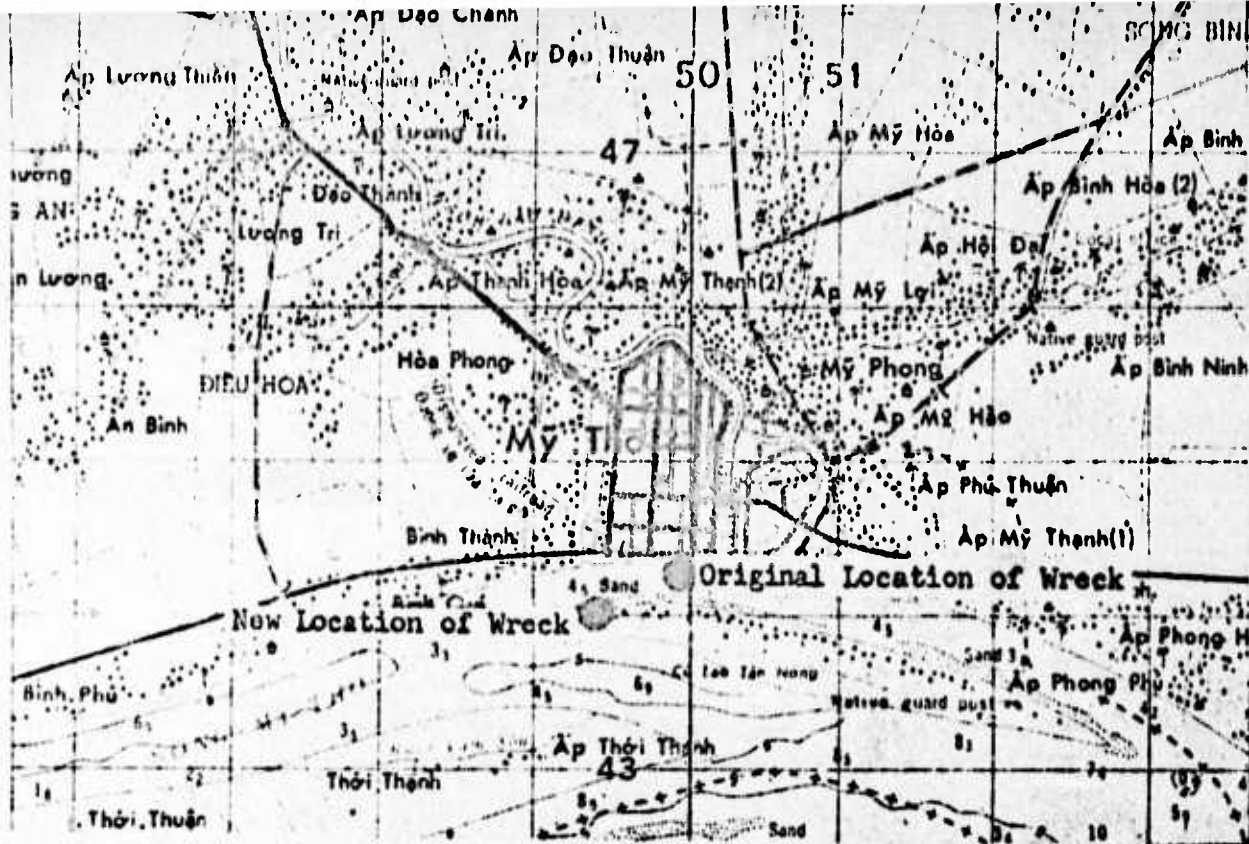
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Public Works Department. U.S. Navy salvage units were authorized to lift the wreck from its position adjacent to My Tho across the northern branch of the Mekong River to a position on the northwest tip of Cu Long Island.

On 20 May Harbor Clearance Team One arrived at My Tho embarked in Light Lift Craft One (LLC-1). The project was planned in two phases. The first, the preparatory phase, consisted of removing mud and sand from the inside of the hulk using air lifts; then tunneling under the hulk and passing messengers for subsequent reeving of heavy lift wires. The second phase was to effect the actual lift and movement of the hulk. To accomplish this, two Heavy Lift Craft (ALC-1 and ALC-2) were to be towed from Subic Bay, Philippine Islands, to My Tho.

On 20 May LLC-1 was positioned alongside the wreck and phase one commenced. Phase one was completed by 10 June despite some difficulties in tunneling caused by a hard clay bottom. ALC-1 and ALC-2 were towed by tug from Subic Bay to Vung Tau, where they were transferred to the MSTC tug WINQUAT for tow to My Tho. They arrived at My Tho on 4 June. Prior to positioning the ALCs in lifting position alongside the wreck, it was necessary to remove a small, ramshackle pier, apparently of World War II vintage, which extended from the river edge almost to the inboard end of the wreck. The pier, which was valueless except for scrap, was removed almost intact and delivered to local authorities upon completion of the job.

Twelve wires in all were passed through tunnels under the



MY THO WRECK REMOVAL

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wreck and made fast on the ALCs. At first high tide on 11 June the wreck was lifted on the initial attempt and moved approximately half way to the disposal site across the river. In sequence with tidal movements during the next three days, the hulk was lifted and moved to the final disposal site, well clear of the main ship channel. A day marker with two black spherical shapes one meter apart was installed on the exposed portion of the wreckage. The job was completed on 14 June, six days ahead of schedule.

The wreck was 130 feet in length, with a beam amidships of 14 feet and a full load draft of 8 feet. The estimated full load displacement was 520 tons. The difficult task of moving this hulk was accomplished under adverse diving conditions in strong currents and zero sub-surface visibility.

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NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY SAIGON

The activities of the U.S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon and its detachments increased in scope and intensity during June as the construction of new support bases continued. The progress at the detachments varied considerably depending on local conditions. Problems encountered in base construction continued to be numerous and varied. Typically, they included such items as negotiating for real estate; making local arrangements for joint U.S./Vietnamese utilization of interim facilities; constructing work shops, piers, and living quarters; stocking supplies and repair parts; organizing base defense; and repairing the boats. As the basic housekeeping needs of the bases became established, more attention was being directed toward such support items as engine and electronic repair.

Under the auspices of the Public Works Department, progress on base and headquarters completion continued during June. Work was started on the construction of interim GAME WARDEN base facilities at Sa Dec, Vinh Long, and Long Xuyen. All bases were to be ready to receive operational units during July. Work continued on the base at Nha Be, with drilling started on a water well at an approved location on the permanent GAME WARDEN base site. On 21 June, YNFB-16 arrived at Nha Be to provide additional interim berthing and repair facilities. A plan has been prepared for roofing over the top deck and providing a screened-in sleeping area.

In other construction work the renovation of spaces at NAVFORV headquarters progressed on schedule with some of the spaces in use

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by the end of the month. A contract was let for the leveling of the MARKET TIME P2V parking apron at Tan Son Nhut Airbase at Saigon. Daily rains, however, prevented any work by the contractor. This situation was expected to continue until September. Similar conditions delayed work on the NAVSUPPACT Air Division parking area. Arrangements were completed during the month with the Army Engineers for construction work on facilities for MIJMS units at Qui Nhon and Nha Trang.

Repair capabilities continued to improve as shops and personnel became available. The shop at the Cat Lo Support Facility was in full operation as of 30 June. Three PCF engines were replaced at Cat Lo during the month. An operational target date of 20 July was established for repair facilities at Ving Long, Sa Dec and Long Xuyen. At the NAVSUPPACT Detachment at Cam Ranh Bay, repair facilities were basically completed and equipment fifty percent installed by the end of June.

Additional steps toward achieving full operational capability were taken during the month. Equipment issue including weapons and personal gear was established from the NAVSUPPACT Armory. The assignment of one YFR was confirmed and the USS BLUEBIRD (formerly MSC-121) was assigned to NAVSUPPACT. This sea lift capability will provide an excellent resupply capability for MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN bases throughout the II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. In addition, eight LCMs were received by NAVSUPPACT during the month for use at GAME WARDEN bases.

The Supply Department was involved in numerous emergency

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expedients including such items as machine guns for the My Tho base, equipment for outfitting of fire boats, office furniture and camouflage fatigues for the SEAL teams. During the month the field support team visited the various bases and assisted as needed in messing, laundry, miscellaneous supply problems, and establishing a mess at the NAVSUPACT Detachment at Long Xuyen.

Quarterly schedules for USS MARK (AKL-12) and USS BRULE (AKL-28), assigned to COMNAVFORV for logistic support purposes, were firmed up. Also in the logistic area, action was taken to exploit air and overland lift capabilities with the objective of compressing transportation pipelines to a minimum. In the accounting area, a streamlined funding/accounting procedure was implemented at the detachment level to reduce paper work in these areas by as much as fifty percent.

The personnel strength of the NAVSUPACT Detachments increased rapidly during June, with the on-board percentage of allowance at about 75% for officer and 60% for enlisted by the end of the month. However, a serious shortfall continued to exist in the technical ratings. Also, in the personnel area, an instruction was issued to outline jurisdictional limitations and specific procedures for the administration of Article 15 Non-Judicial Punishment by Officers in Charge of NAVSUPACT Saigon Detachments.

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MILITARY CIVIC ACTION AND PSYCHOLOGICAL OPERATIONS

During June six PsyOps trained officers took on duties as PsyOps officers for MARKET TIME and GME WARDEN units in the four Coastal Zones and the two riverine Areas. With the growth of the U.S. Navy commitment, U.S. personnel became more involved in PsyOps and Civic Action programs, encouraging the Vietnamese to do the same.

One example of the effects of U.S. involvement came from PCF Division 104 at Cam Ranh Bay. On occasions PCF and Support Activity personnel have taken injured fishermen to U.S. Medical facilities for treatment, effected emergency repairs to junks at sea and sponsored movies for local children - these among other civic action projects. The effectiveness of the program was emphasized when the Division Commander was invited to dinner by the Village Chief of Binh Ba Village. The Chief stated that when the PCFs first came the people had expressed apprehension about being mistreated, but that since then they had felt more secure than before. The Chief further stated that the respectful manner of the searchers, coordination between PCFs and Coastal Group units, and permission to fish in the patrol area had resulted in the best catch of fish in many years at his village.

In the Second Coastal Zone an initial experiment using portable loudspeakers aboard a PCF was conducted in the area north of Nha Trang. Chieu Hoi broadcasts using tapes prepared by Second Coastal Zone PsyOps personnel were conducted for a period of ten hours with encouraging results: In one instance a group of fishermen put to sea from their village and reported that the Viet Cong, who

had been in the village, had departed; in a second instance, a group of fishermen applauded when they heard the tape and asked to have it played again.

A continuing advisory effort was started at the Vietnamese Naval Training Center, Nha Trang to inaugurate a program of study in psychological operations. Although there was one officer at the Center qualified to teach the course additional duties precluded his instructing the subject. Also, at the Recruit Training Center, Cam Ranh Bay, the advisor requested that recruit training in the subject be started when an instructor became available.

A unique Medical Civic Action Program (MEDCAP) was established in the Third Coastal Zone. Volunteer doctors and nurses of the U.S. Army 36th Evacuation Hospital at Vung Tau and VNA personnel and advisors of Coastal Groups 32 and 33 on their days off have boarded Coastal Group junks and transited to coastal areas north of Vung Tau and to villages in the Hung Sat Special Zone to treat the villagers. This MEDCAP action has been highly successful.

In the Fourth Coastal Zone a ten family housing unit was completed during the month for Vietnamese Navy dependents at An Thoi. This is the third such unit constructed in a program to replace those destroyed by fire on 30 April 1966.

Civic Action Summary:

1. Construction projects completed during report period. All were repaired or renovated and were joint projects with AVMAF.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| a. Bridges | 1 |
| b. Hospitals | 1 |
| c. Market places | 1 |
| d. Schools | 1 |

6. Voluntary contributions in support of: (in piasters)

- a. Orphanages 5,900\$VN
- b. Schools 13,640\$VN
- c. Religious 12,000\$VN
- d. Hairlip and miscellaneous operations 3,363\$VN

7. Efforts not otherwise mentioned above:

a. Families of Coastal Group 34 were given 2 pigs, 2 hens and 40 kilos of feed (3rd Coastal Zone).

b. VNN dependents at DaNang were given 420 pounds of rice by crew of YR-71.

c. Boats of TG 116.2 delivered 3,000 pounds of books, magazines and newspapers to district headquarters Can Gio.

d. CTF 116.2 provided transportation from Can Gio to Nha Be for one hairlip child and mother who were enroute to Saigon for child's operation.

e. VNN advisors arranged for delivery of 80,000 magazines within VNN area of responsibility.

* * * * *

NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

At Vietnamese Navy Headquarters, there was little change in the organizational structure of VNN with reorganization of the Logistics Branch remaining unaccomplished. Numerous senior officer changes of duty were effected during the month.

VNN personnel accounting came in for close scrutiny during June as U.S. advisors instituted action to improve personnel accounting procedures in the Vietnamese Navy. There were a number of areas in which improvements are indicated. Incoming reports are not always accurate; Vietnamese personnel records are maintained by hand; recruits are held in Saigon until space becomes available for their training; and personnel may depart illegally and when they are return still be carried as deserters. Advisors found that distribution of personnel could be improved.¹ There was an overabundance of men in administrative and logistic billets while some combatant units were undermanned.

In an effort to improve Vietnamese Navy personnel accounting, a new strength report will be initiated in early July, with the first report due on 15 August. The Joint General Staff agreed to provide an IBM listing of names of personnel in VNN. Once this listing and VNN lists are compared, a good accounting of personnel should be available.

Leadership within the Vietnamese Navy continued to improve

¹ Senior Advisor VNN Headquarters Monthly Evaluation, June 1966

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with greater exposure to USN units, experience and the replacement of poorer officers. There have been many encouraging starts in correcting faults with VNN, but it has taken advisory encouragement to push these beyond individual officer efforts. Counterpart relations in general were regarded as satisfactory, particularly among the more junior officers. One problem area was seen arising with the possibility that the increasing USN presence in Vietnam might begin to overawe the Vietnamese. Advisors were aware of this problem and were doing what they could to alleviate it.¹

MAINTENANCE AND LOGISTICS

Maintenance of VNN units continued to be hampered by a number of factors. Among these were a lack of trained personnel, old ships and equipment, poor personnel distribution, a backlog of work at the Naval Shipyard, and an occasional shortage of repair parts. Repairs which were effected to ships at times were of poor quality, and Coastal Zone advisers report that ships on patrol experienced frequent equipment failures. The number of River Assault Group and River Transport Escort Group boats in the yard increased, and the number completing overhaul decreased.

U.S. Navy advisers at the VNN shipyard, Saigon have been concerned for some time about the amount of scrap metal present on the shipyard grounds. During June a long term project was started to remove this scrap. Difficulties in the scrap disposal program include shortage of labor in the shipyard, responsibility of different groups for the various hulks and piles of scrap, and

¹ Ibid.

the fact that money returned from scrap disposal is credited to JGS rather than directly to VMK.

Utilization of the Vietnamese Navy logistic lift ships continued to be adversely affected by many factors. Basically, a coordinating agency is required to insure proper cargo loading and scheduling. This scheduling must include delivery of supplies to pickup points and pickup of supplies when delivered. An additional problem arose in several incidents in which Vietnamese and U.S. agencies competed for the limited LST beaching areas near strategic supply centers. In an attempt to resolve the problems which have arisen and to stop the conflict between services, an additional U.S. advisor was assigned to the logistic ships. He will accompany various logistic ships on trips to determine where logistic backups are occurring and how they can be corrected. In addition, the Fleet Command Advisor, JGS advisors and MACV J-4 representatives are working together on logistics problems.

OPERATIONS

COASTAL ZONES

During June there was a large increase in the number of amphibious operations and raids conducted by the Coastal Groups as several of the Coastal Groups demonstrated an outstanding ability to conduct landings. Coastal Groups also participated in numerous blocking actions for land operations, both U.S. and Vietnamese. Blocking operations were normally conducted in daylight in a restricted area. As the Viet Cong, draft dodgers and deserters are forced to evade in daylight to the sea, the handicaps of the junks - no sensors and low speed - are largely negated.

Recovering from the political upheavals of May, Vietnamese forces in the I Corps Tactical Zone operated at a high level of activity. The Coastal Groups participated in an increased number of operations, providing blocking forces for eleven Vietnamese and U.S. ground operations. In the most significant of these, Operation HOA TUYEN 141 conducted in Hieu Nhon subsector of Quang Nam Province from 13 June to 16 June, Coastal Group 14 patrolled the Cua Dai River in support of four ARVN battalions. Enroute to the operation area, four CG 14 units were taken under fire, with two VNN sailors and one U.S. advisor wounded. Later the same day the Coastal Group engaged a company of Viet Cong, receiving moderate damage to one junk. The following day another firefight took place with one VNN sailor killed. In all actions Viet Cong casualties were unknown. On 15 June CG 14 conducted a search operation ashore, destroying several tunnels and foxholes but meeting no enemy resistance. During the operation other friendly forces killed thirty Viet Cong and captured an additional thirty. There were thirteen ARVN troops wounded.

A reconnaissance team from Coastal Group 16 discovered a Viet Cong financial and economic organization on 20 June, capturing one member. The following day they captured the assistant chief of a Viet Cong assassination team at Duc Hai Village. In a significant land operation the night of 27 June, Coastal Group 11 contacted a Viet Cong platoon armed with small arms south of the CG 11 base. Coastal Group junks provided mortar illumination, HE mortar fire, and fifty caliber machine gun fire while the patrol engaged the enemy. An estimated three to five Viet Cong were killed. There

were no friendly casualties.

In the Second Coastal Zone the level of activity also increased during June, with a promising trend noted in a rise in the number of junks on patrol. Coastal Group 23 proved itself an outstanding unit during the month. In night action on 4 June, Coastal Group 23 conducted an amphibious operation with Regional Force Company 726 in the vicinity of the CG 23 base south of Qui Nhon. Fleeing Viet Cong engaged the Coastal Group in a firefight as the junks fired on a suspected fuel storage area. Several secondary explosions were observed. Early on 8 June, a CG 23 landing party, supported by LSIL 327 and PGH 611, landed at a point forty miles south of Qui Nhon. At 0830 they encountered a Viet Cong unit of undetermined size, armed with automatic weapons. The Viet Cong were driven off and a large rice storage building was seized and burned. Also captured was a large quantity of medicine and documents. Four civilians held by the Viet Cong were released, and ninety-four persons were removed from Viet Cong control and turned over to sector headquarters. In the firefight the commanding officer of CG 23 was wounded.

Coastal Group 23 and its advisors received high praise for their support of Operation DECK HOUSE I, conducted by Task Group 76.5 (the Seventh Fleet Amphibious Ready Group) from 17 June to 27 June.¹ CG 23 junks landed UDT personnel for pre H-hour beach reconnaissance; then for the remainder of the operation maintained at least three boats on station at all times in anti-exfiltration

¹ CTE 76.5.0.3 msg 010456Z June 66.

patrols. In addition, advisors and VN personnel from CG 23 served as interpreters and provided guidance on the characteristics of the operation area.

Coastal Group activity in the Third Coastal Zone continued at a high level throughout the month. Commanding Officer, Third Coastal Zone and units from Coastal Group 35 played an important role in the salvage of the infiltration trawler on 20 June. In other action, the evening of 6 June a Coastal Group 33 patrol detected an unlighted sampan near the mouth of the Cua Tieu River. The two men on board tried to swim away, and one, who later admitted to being a Viet Cong, was captured. The captured sampan, powered by a U.S. manufactured USAID engine, was later tested and found to be a "very fast" boat.

Two raider operations were conducted in the Third Coastal Zone during June. On 7 June, two platoons from Coastal Group 36, LSSL 221 and LSIL 328 landed on Hai Island in the mouth of the Bassac River after a one hour bombardment. One sampan was captured and numerous bunkers and spider holes along the eastern shore were destroyed. The operation was launched due to constant Viet Cong harassment of patrol units in that area. In a second operation on 7 June, a raider company from Vinh Binh sector of Phu Vinh Province was landed by Coastal Group 33 on the north bank of the Co Chien River twelve miles from the mouth. The junk and the troops were taken under fire by an unknown number of Viet Cong with automatic weapons. In the ensuing firefight, one VN sailor and nine raiders were wounded. Two Viet Cong were killed and another eleven believed

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killed but carried away. Two Viet Cong were captured along with seven rifles and two grenades.

Coastal Group activities in the Fourth Naval Zone picked up notably during the month. This increase was primarily due to completion of construction of dependents housing at An Thoi destroyed by fire in May, releasing for patrol the sailors who had been engaged in re-construction. An OPODER is being prepared to coordinate the operations of all VNN units, including ships, in the Fourth Coastal Zone. There was a steady improvement in the coordinated use of forces, both U.S. and Vietnamese, and the OPODER should solidify and improve the progress already made.¹

One ROUND-UP operation was conducted in the Mui Nai - Pirate Islands - Ha Tien area from 8 June to 9 June. Units from Coastal Groups 42 and 43 and FGN 614 were involved. 120 junks and 353 people were checked. Civic action materials were also distributed.

RIVERINE AREAS

Units attached to River Assault Groups in the Third Riverine Area were very effectively used during June.

LAG 24/26 participated in six operations. While in transit to Operation IN DAN 134/66 on 24 June, an LCM of LAG 24 was hit by an anti-tank grenade during a Viet Cong ambush, again emphasizing the dangers of narrow-river operations. Two ARVN soldiers were killed and thirty-one were injured by the blast. There was only light damage to the boat.

LAG 22 at Nha Be was the most active and the most effective of the River Assault Groups, participating in nine operations

¹ Fourth Coastal Zone Advisors Report, June 1966.

during the month. Early in June they made a significant contribution to Operation LEXINGTON III in the Hung Sat Special Zone.¹ The remainder of the actions served to keep the Viet Cong off balance in the Hung Sat Special Zone, both in search and destroy and reaction operations.

Utilization of River Assault Group units in the Fourth Riverine Zone for amphibious operations slackened off considerably during June. Approximately thirty-five percent of the boats remained idle although in operational condition. However, constant night patrols were conducted throughout the month by RAG units. During a such patrol on 26 June, one FOM from RAG 23 was sunk in a Viet Cong ambush.

The continuing productivity of small scale River Assault Group operations - and the potential for even greater success - is illustrated by an after action report from the advisor of RAG 23 at Vinh Long. On 15 June RAG 23 with ten boats embarked 80 Popular Force troops and proceeded to Lao Gai Island in the middle reach of the Co Chien River. The operation was launched in response to a report of a concentration of 100 Viet Cong on the island. Although the main body of Viet Cong managed to escape across the river to Kien Hoa province, sixteen suspects were detained, several of whom were positively identified as Viet Cong. The advisor reported that the people of the island were quick to point out Viet Cong sympathizers, stating that they were tired of the ever-

¹ See NAVFORV Historical Summary, May 1966, p. 24.

increasing Viet Cong taxes. The villagers also noted that the Viet Cong made frequent river crossings, often as close as 200 to 300 yards astern of MAG and Fleet Command patrol units. The advisor attributed this to noise and the generally ineffective manner in which some of these patrols may be conducted. The report was concluded by the statement that if the MAGs were assigned landing forces of their own, many more of these small but productive operations could be conducted.

Occasionally incidents take place which accentuate some of the difficulties faced by advisors in dealing with the Vietnamese. In an incident at Nha Be, an official VNN report stated that a River Patrol Craft (RPC) lost power, drifted into the side of a barge and sank alongside a mooring buoy. However, the MAG 22 advisor, on the scene at the time of the recovery of the crewmen from the buoy, reported the incident somewhat differently. When asking the crewmen why they were on the buoy, they replied they were standing by their boat - which was at the bottom of the river. They then stated that they had been in a sharp turn at full speed (14 knots) when the inboard engine failed, causing the boat to flip and subsequently sink. The boat was recovered three days later with minor damages.

In other VNN activity during March, minesweeping operations progressed at a satisfactory level. The LDNM (UDT) conducted four beach surveys, one demolition operation on Hon Cau in the Con Son Islands, and participated in the salvage of the Viet Cong trawler. During the month one VNN boat was lost due to Viet Cong action

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and 27 Viet Cong boats were reported as captured or sunk by VNN. In addition, 90 Viet Cong were reported killed, 63 Viet Cong and 7 Viet Cong suspects were captured, and 2 Chieu Hoi ralliers turned themselves in to VNN. Fleet Command ships conducted 29 naval gunfire support missions, normally fired as harassment or at reported Viet Cong troop concentrations.

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

In June the Vietnamese Marine Corps was heavily engaged with Viet Cong forces on a number of occasions. Task Force Bravo, activated on 11 June and consisting of the First and Second VMBC Battalions, was airlifted to Hue as a civil disorder force on 17 June. On 20 June, the Task Force mission was changed and the force participated in Operation IAN SON 263 in Quang Tri Province, a three day search and destroy operation under the control of the ARVN First Infantry Division. The Marine Battalions were in contact with the Viet Cong throughout the operation. As a result of Marine action, 173 Viet Cong were killed and 23 confirmed Viet Cong and 38 Viet Cong suspects were captured. Also seized were 27 individual weapons and five crew served weapons. VMBC losses were 32 killed and 45 wounded.

On 29 June the Second Battalion was ambushed by the 802nd VC Battalion (reinforced) while on a motorized convoy on Route One about 25 kilometers northeast of Hue. The Battalion was enroute to participate in an operation with units of the ARVN First Division north of Quang Tri city. In the ambush 42 Vietnamese Marines were killed, 96 were wounded and 35 weapons were lost.

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Fifty Viet Cong were killed. In a follow-up counterattack by ARVN and U.S. Marine Corps units, 161 Viet Cong were killed. The Battalion then returned to Hue for the remainder of the month.

The Fifth Battalion began the month at Quang Ngai city under operational control of the Second ARVN Division. On 6 and 7 June, the Battalion participated in Operation QUYET THAN 224, a search and destroy operation resulting in only light contact with the enemy. During the operation, two Vietnamese Marines were killed and four were wounded. Two Viet Cong were wounded and three were captured along with eight Viet Cong suspects. On 12 June the Battalion participated in Operation LAM SON 234, a two day search and destroy operation under control of the Fourth ARVN Regiment. The battalion was helilifted into an area approximately twenty kilometers west of Ho Duc, Quang Ngai Province, and then conducted a sweep into blocking forces just west of Highway One. The battalion was heavily engaged by a reinforced Viet Cong battalion throughout 12 June and into the morning of 13 June, when the Viet Cong withdrew. In the battle 39 Vietnamese were killed, 70 wounded and one was missing. Two U.S. Marine advisors were killed, and one was missing. Viet Cong losses were 25 killed by body count.

The Third Marine Battalion remained in Saigon from 1 June to 22 June as a security/riot control force. It was then airlifted to DaNang for the remainder of the month as a civil disorder control force. The Fourth Marine Battalion was assigned to the Capital Military District as a static security force throughout

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the month, and was deployed in static defensive positions in the vicinity of Ba Hom. It participated in numerous small unit actions throughout the month, only one of which was significant. On 22 June, while on a search and destroy operation under the control of Gia Dinh Sector approximately 10 kilometers north of Saigon, the Battalion (minus two companies) was heavily engaged for a period of seven hours. With the onset of darkness the Viet Cong broke contact; their losses are unknown. Vietnamese Marine losses were 10 killed and 32 wounded. One radio and nine weapons were lost.

During the month the Vietnamese Marine Corps experienced a heavy number of casualties. This did not adversely affect its morale or fighting capabilities. On the contrary, it revealed the tenacity and devotion to duty of the individual Marine which was extremely heartening. Heavy casualties among the officers necessitated assumption of authority by junior officers and non-commissioned officers on several occasions. In each case the junior officers and NCOs were found to be fully capable of meeting the challenge. Morale was high, and leadership was considered to be excellent.¹

¹ Senior Marine Advisor Monthly Historical Summary, June 1966.

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APPENDIX I

MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY, JUNE 1966

1. Average number of U.S. ships/craft on patrol during the month:

	DER	MSO	MSC	WPB	PCF
TOTAL	150	165	75	501	751
DAILY AVG	5	6	3	17	25

2. Average number of VNN ships/junks on patrol during the month:

	SEA FORCE	RIVER FORCE	COASTAL FORCE
TOTAL	510	3044	4642
DAILY AVG	17	101	155

3. U.S. Activity:

TOTAL DETECTED	WOOD - DAY	<u>45,803</u>	NIGHT	<u>59,105</u>
	STEEL - DAY	<u>812</u>	NIGHT	<u>659</u>
TOTAL INSPECTED	WOOD - DAY	<u>12,439</u>	NIGHT	<u>14,211</u>
	STEEL - DAY	<u>320</u>	NIGHT	<u>313</u>
TOTAL BOARDED	WOOD - DAY	<u>15,085</u>	NIGHT	<u>8,888</u>
	STEEL - DAY	<u>43</u>	NIGHT	<u>3</u>

4. VNN Activity:

SEARCHED: 23,005

DETAINED: 30

5. Remarks:

Junks detained by U.S: 145

Persons detained by U.S: 1,481

Persons detained by VNN: 797

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APPENDIX II

GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY, JUNE 1966

Junks Detected: 9,418
Junks Boarded: 3,127
Junks Inspected: 4,658

Junks Detained: 14
Persons Detained: 153

VC KIA: 21
VC WIA: 2
VC POSS KIA: 15

US KIA: 0
US WIA: 2

PER PATROL DAYS FOR MONTH: 1,586
PER PATROL DAYS UTILIZED: 1,150
USAGE: 72%

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APPENDIX III

MATERIAL SALVAGED FROM POINT LEAGUE TRAWLER

Approximately 80-100 tons of ammo, weapons and other items of intelligence interests were removed by USN/VNN units, including:

Weapons

7	82mm Mortars
316	7.62mm Automatic Rifles
100	7.62mm Side Arms
605	7.62mm Semi-Automatic Rifles
21	7.62mm Light Machine Gun (Type 56)
60	BAR Type 7.62mm Weapons
20	75mm Recoilless Rifles
25	40mm Rocket Launchers

Ammunition

1,851	82mm Mortar Rounds
222,880	7.62mm Rounds
1,500	40mm Rockets
760	75mm Recoilless Rifle Rounds
122,000	12.7mm API Rounds
2,000	40mm HEAT Rounds
100	Fragmentation Grenades, Pull Friction

Miscellaneous

9	82mm Mortar Bi-Pod Assembly
7	82mm Mortar Base Plates
13	82mm Mortar Battery Powered Range Sight with Carrying Cases
18	82mm Mortar Sighting Stakes (Sets)
91	Light Machine Gun Drum Type Magazines with Links
10	7.62mm Anti-Aircraft Machine Gun Carriages
18	75mm Recoilless Rifle Base Rings
1	75mm Recoilless Rifle Tool Kits
12	12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun Barrels
12	12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun Receiver Groups
18 pair	12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun Carriage Wheels with Axles
2	12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun Tri-Pods
58	12.7mm Ammunition Cans with Links
3	12.7mm Heavy Machine Gun Anti-Aircraft Sights
33	200 Gram TNT Blocks
20	Unidentified Small Caliber Ammunition Cans with Links
3	Battery Powered 57mm recoilless Rifle Sight Sets

* * * * *

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APPENDIX

Extracted from MACJ21, USMACV Log # 06-003-66 of 24 June 1966

This is a translation of ARVN analysis based on the report of rallier NGUYEN VAN XUAN.

SPECIAL ANNEX

4A/LA/s

Subject: NVN gunrunner supplying the VC Force in SVN at Nam Can.
(An Xuyen), from 1963 to November 1965.

(According to the statements of Rallier NGUYEN VAN XUAN, cover name TU DUNG, Political Officer of the 868th Company, NC.1231,T.3)

I. INFORMATION ON NVN GUNRUNNERS SUPPLYING WEAPONS TO SVN VC FORCE:

11. General:

Around February 1963 the 330th unit was reinforced and transformed into TN.3175 Battalion (or the present NC.1231 Battalion). About one month after this reorganization, a NVN gunrunner arrived at Nam Can District, where NC.1231 Battalion was activated, to supply the NFLSVN troops.

Up to November 1965, there were 42 trips conducted as follows:

- 20 trips in 1963
- 15 trips in 1964
- 7 trips in 1965

NOTE: Especially in 1965, the supply of weapons to SVN, VC Force was interrupted from April to October by the intensive activities of the U.S. 7th Fleet. Therefore only six or seven trips were conducted in 1965.

The rallier stated that about seven or eight different ships accomplished the above 42 trips. However those ships only have two sizes; large and small (see description at sub-paragraph 21). Source knew some skippers, assistant skippers or political officers such as: TRAM, CHAU, BAY CUA and AN (1) and some others whose names are forgotten.

12. Quantity of weapons supplied:

Since the rallier was not allowed to directly receive the weapons, his information is limited.

- (1) A correlation with the statements of Captive Duong Minh Tam, Aspirant, Medical Officer, captured on 1 June 1965 at Thanh Phong (Kien Hoa) reveals no duplication with these names.

KIN IS A VIETNAMESE CLASSIFICATION
EQUIVALENT TO CONFIDENTIAL AND WILL
BE HANDLED ACCORDINGLY.

KIN

121. Quantity of weapons supplied:

In 1963 the supplied weapons included the following types:

- RPD AR's
- BRNO AR's
- AK and K.50 SMG's
- K.44, CKC and German rifles
- Grenades and ammunition for the above weapons

122. In 1964 and 1965:

Weapons supplied in 1964 and 1965:

- 82mm and 60mm mortars
- 75mm and 57mm recoilless rifles
- 12.7mm heavy machine guns
- GORYUNOV machine guns
- B.40 and B.50 rocket launchers
- Ammunition for above weapons
- Guns with a 2 meter-long barrel and a bore diameter over 10 centimeters (possible 120mm)
- Other weapons wrapped in waterproof material, unknown to source

(Source heard from the sailors aboard the ship about the word "Hoang Tu Lung Gu" (Hunchback Prince) but he never saw this weapon, therefore he cannot recognize it on documents made available to him. Although source knows that the "Hunchback Prince" is a 75mm pack howitzer, he also states the the 75mm pack howitzer and 75mm recoilless rifle are the same weapon. As a result, the information on the supply of 75mm pack howitzers should be reservedly recorded.)

13. Date of the ship's arrival:

The expected date of arrival of the ship was not fixed because it depended on the weather and on the security of the itinerary. However, based on the dates of previous arrival, source noticed that there were two arrivals per month:

- The first arrival on the 16th, 17th or 18th.
- The second arrival on the 28th or 29th.

NOTE: The ships only arrived at about midnight, after 2300 hours and on the high tide days because if the tide is low the ships cannot enter the small creeks. In particular the ships only stayed anchored for 2 nights while unloading.

14. Place of the ship's arrival:

In three successive years (1963 through 1965) North Vietnamese gunrunners only sailed to and anchored in 2 areas of Nam Can District (An Xuyen):

- Rach Vang creek (known to the VC as Kien Vang creek), vic. WQ133574
- Rach Nang creek (known to the VC as Vam Lung), vic. WQ147560

NOTE: VC Captive DUONG MINH TAM, Aspirant, medical officer of unit A.101, captured on 1 June 1965 in Thanh Phong (Kien Hoa) stated that the main place of arrival of North Vietnamese gunrunners in South Vietnam is the Khau Bang river, Thanh Phu District (Kien Hoa). There was an exception in November 1964, when an operation was conducted by the RVNAF in Thanh Phu area and this ship (with source aboard) had to land in Nam Can area (An Xuyen).

15. Temporary shelters of the ships when discovered by RVNAF aircraft:

Upon appointment as Political Officer of the 868th Company/ NC.1231, source was authorized to go aboard the gunrunner and take a look. On one occasion, source learned from a sailor that in 1963 and 1964, the gunrunners were detected by RVN aircraft and patrol boats and could not land at pre-determined locations, therefore they had to take shelter in 2 following areas:

- The 1st time, in late 1963, in Rach Goc area vic. VQ994510, Nam Can District (An Xuyen).
- The 2nd time, in February 1964, in Bo Hu creek, vic. WQ 250670, Dam Doi District (An Xuyen)

Less than 3 nights later, the ship departed again and anchored at the fixed location. While in shelter the ship was carefully camouflaged with tree branches.

Source did not find out whether or not the weapons were unloaded from the ship when the latter took shelter. However, source does not believe that they were because the ship only took shelter during 3 nights.

Source does not know whether the shelter locations were determined in advance. But he does not think they were because upon being detected by the RVNAF the ships would head for the nearest estuary in the area. Estuaries of the Rach Goc, Vam Lung, Vam Vang and Bo De were all guarded by the troops of the NC.1231 Battalion.

(Other details unknown)

16. Details on the ship's reception:

161. Prior to the reception:

It was not known which agency the battalion contacted to find out the expected date and time of the ship's arrival. Source only knows that one or two days before the ship's arrival, the 868th Company/NC.1231 (source's) was ordered to deploy in pre-determined areas such as:

- Vam Vang, vic. WQ165578, Nam Can District
- Vam Nang, (known to the VC as Vam Lung) vic. WQ163573, Nam Can District.

In addition to its security mission on the shore each platoon had to post watchmen on tree tops on both estuaries to detect any RVN patrol boat and at the same time to identify the friendly ship.

162. Arrival of the ship:

1621. Recognition signals:

The weapons were always discharged at night, therefore the recognition signals between the ship and NC.1231 unit were made with flashlights. These signals were frequently changed. The Battalion decided on the color of the light (red, green or white) and whether the blinks added up from the challenge and the answer would make 5 or 7, etc.

For example: If the total is 5, the challenge must be 3 and the answer 2 between the shore and the ship.

It is recorded that the above signals were received at the same time with the mission order.

1622. Reception procedures:

Once receiving the signals, the ship landed. It was met by two small boats plying between Rach Goc and Bo De estuaries, and led to the landing site.

NOTE: The two above mentioned boats were issued to the Company at the end of 1963 by the Battalion. According to TU DUC, the Battalion Political Officer, these boats were captured from the RVNAF during a battle in Ca Mau. Since then they had not undergone any change and only used by the 2d Platoon, 868th Company, NC.1231 to meet NVN gunrunners. At the arrival of a ship, they would go to the estuary where one of them would go to Rach Goc estuary, WQ010495, Nam Can District, and the other to Bo De estuary, WQ.270645 to meet the gunrunner.

When unused, these boats were concealed at a small creek, 50 meters from Nang estuary, WQ.143550, Nam Can District (An Xuyen). They were

camouflaged and pushed under trees to avoid being discovered by RVN aircraft.

The fuel for these boats was supplied by the gunrunners.

1623. Defense and guard system during the anchorage:

One or two days prior to the ship's arrival, the 868th Company, NC.1231 set up sentry posts at Rach Vang and Rach Nang. At the same time the units subordinate to NC.1231 Battalion deployed guards at the following estuaries:

- Rach Goc, WQ010495
- Bo De, WQ270640

After the ship arrived, the units continued to provide guards and protection until its departure.

The 3d Platoon of the 868th Company had an observation post on top of a tall tree near the ship to warn of the approach of any aircraft, for during the unloading of weapons, the ship was alight with acetylene lamps. The 3d Platoon also helped the sailors to camouflage the ship with tree leaves and unloaded the weapons.

1624. Method of unloading:

It was known that the unloading of weapons from the boat to the shore was done entirely by human labor furnished by the 3d Platoon. No civilian laborer was used. Two wooden planks, 6m x 0.25m x 0.06m, linking the ship with the shore were used as walkway.

It was known that during the unloading of the weapons by men of the 3d Platoon, there were 4 or 5 sailors and a political officer or an assistant skipper stayed on the ship to take care of the ship, give instructions and deliver the cargoes. The rest went ashore and rested in a small hut near the place where the ship was moored.

It was known that two woman cadre from the 3d Platoon provided cooking service for the sailors while they rested in the small hut.

1625. Method of accepting weapons:

It was known that the executive officer of the 868th/NC.1231 Company acknowledged receipt of the weapons unloaded from the ship together with the political officer and the skipper. He was also responsible to the battalion on the receipt and delivery of these weapons to other units.

163. Departure of the ship:

After the unloading of weapons as completed, the ship would depart immediately. On the outgoing trip, the ship needed not be guided by a small ship. Guards and patrols continued their missions until the ship completely disappeared.

17. Weapon Depot:

Although the NC.1231 Battalion was the unit who received weapons, there were no depots at its location. After the weapons were accepted and unloaded to the shore, they were stored in arm caches located about 400 to 500 meters from the place where the ship was moored. Afterwards, on instructions from the battalion commander, the company executive officer would order the 3d platoon to transfer the weapons to predesignated areas where they would be picked up by other units (?) within 10 days.

NOTE: The delivery and receipt of weapons were done at night only. Of the units which came and received weapons from the ammo cache, the following unit names were heard: 306th, 309th, 96th and D123. The exact size of these units was not known.

During his service in the 868th Company, source was told only of Hoang Ba and not the designations D123. Later, when detained in the discipline camp, source met A, a member of D123 and learned that the commander of D123 Unit was Hoang Ba.

Location of D123 Unit: According to A, D123 took shelter at Nhung Mien Mountain (called Nhan Mien by the VC); VQ900490 (?) and Bien Nhan Mountain, VQ925500 (?) in Nam Can District, An Xuyen Province.

(Other details unknown).

II. Types of North Vietnamese gunrunners:

During three successive years source noticed that North Vietnam used 7 or 8 different ships to carry weapons to SVN. They all belong to two types only.

21. Description of gunrunners used in 1964 and 1965:

In 1964 and 1965, North Vietnam used ships bigger than those used in 1963 to transport weapons into South Vietnam.

The ship was about 30 meters in length and 4 meters in width and has a tonnage of about 60 tons and its hull is painted grey. It bears no number or designation.

The stem of the ship is frequently camouflaged with a square flag, half black, half white (called fishing boat's flag by source) and a fishing net hung from the roof of the cabin to the flag pole. This fishing net is only removed when the ship has entered the estuary. The ship consists of a cabin covering two thirds of the length the ship and used as bedroom. The remaining one third is used to store weapons. During movement, the hold of the ship is shut. In the middle of the roof, there is a high cross (?) on which the light is turned on during night movement.

According to source, the VC blink this lamp when receiving light signals from the (VC) guards on the shore. The smoke stack is placed at one side of the ship and turned downward reaching close to the water level, to prevent smoke detection.

- Weapons on the ship:

Source does not know the missions of the crew. He saw that the ship has two 12.7mm MG's emplaced at both ends. There are three loopholes on each side of the ship.

- The crew:

The crew on each ship consists of 20 to 25 men including the skipper, assistant skipper, and political officer.

22. Description of gunrunners used in 1963:

In 1963, source was a platoon cadre, he was not permitted to go aboard. He does not have a detailed knowledge of the ship as he only saw it pass by.

The ship used in 1963 is similar to that used in 1964 and 1965 but smaller. It is very easily identified by the length of its roof which covers only half of the length of the ship instead of two thirds as on the ships used on 1964 and 1965 (see sub-paragraph 21).

NOTE: Sketches provided by source bear strong resemblance to infiltration trawlers of 31 Dec 65, 10 May 66, and 20 Jun 66.

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APPENDIX

STRUCTURE OF U.S. NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG AND HISTORY THROUGH 31 DECEMBER 1965

Summary report of activities covering the period through 31 December 1965.

The youngest and one of the largest of the U.S. Navy's overseas commands is headquartered in DaNang, second largest city in the Republic of Vietnam. Its official title is Commander U.S. Naval Support Activity, DaNang. The mission of this command is the support of the more than 50,000 United States troops who operate in the I Corps Tactical Zone. It also supports various United States government agencies in Vietnam and military units from "third country" allied nations assisting Vietnam in its fight against the Viet Cong.

Drawn from various units operating under Commander Amphibious Logistic Support Group (CTG 76.4), the command was commissioned on 15 October 1965. The former Commander, Task Group 76.4, CAPT K. P. HUFF, USNR, assumed command of the U.S. Naval Support Activity.

When commissioned, U.S. Naval Support Activity, DaNang numbered 1,412 officers and enlisted men. As operations expanded to Quang Tri, Hue/Phu Bai, Chu Lai and Quang Ngai, NAVSUPACT, DANANG expanded. By 31 December 1965, there were 2,596 officers and men assigned.

SUPPLY

The Supply and Fiscal Department is responsible for:

1. Providing for the loading and unloading of vessels and craft at DaNang, Chu Lai, and Hue/Phu Bai, and at such other ports as established in the I Corps Tactical Zone.
2. Providing for the movement of incoming and outgoing cargo between in-transit and terminal storage areas and ships, craft, or air terminal.
3. Providing in-transit and terminal storage capability and port clearance of cargo.
4. Establishing and operating a base supply depot at DaNang and at such other locations as directed by CINCPACFLT.
5. Arranging as required, intra-coastal resupply shipping from DaNang to ports in the area of responsibility.
6. Providing organic supply, services and messing support.
7. Providing for the consolidation of all POL requirements; receiving, storing and issuing POL.

Prior to commissioning on 15 October 1965, Supply and Fiscal Department work was carried out by Cargo Handling Battalion ONE, Cargo Handling Battalion TWO, Nucleus Port Crew TWO and representatives from NAVPHIBASE,

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Coronado and HSA, Saigon. Organic NAVSUPPACT DANANG personnel were integrated as they became available. Loading and unloading was accomplished under direction of Commanding Officer CHB-1 and Commanding Officer CHB-2. Monthly throughput averages rose from 35,000 measurement tons in July to 90,000 measurement tons in December. Growth of NAVSUPPACT DANANG cargo handling capability was evident, and obstacles such as the following were successfully surmounted: (1) Monsoon weather conditions, primarily heavy swells, wind and rain, were a serious hindrance to off-loading from October through November, occasionally causing cargo operations to cease completely and (2) Certain cargos were poorly packed, important examples being beer and soda, drummed asphalt, and culvert sections. This situation was gradually improved by outloading activities in the United States.

Shortly after NAVSUPPACT DANANG's commissioning, CHB-1 was relieved and the NAVSUPPACT DANANG Supply Department Freight Terminal Division (FTD) formally took control of off-loading operations. The documentation section of FTD, working with the Operational Control Officer, ranged and coordinated intra-coastal cargo movement. FTD personnel also performed port clearance at DaNang West piersides.

Inherited from HSA, Saigon, were 33,000 square feet of covered storage. By 31 December, total covered storage available to NAVSUPPACT DANANG increased to about 160,000 square feet. After problems with shipping delays and acquisition of local real estate, construction of an additional 576,000 square feet commenced. Covered storage was used primarily for provisions, for which NAVSUPPACT DANANG assumed responsibility on 22 August 1965.

Also available to NAVSUPPACT DANANG were three YFRN's, totaling approximately 96,000 gross cubic feet, to be used for reefer storage pending reefer plant construction. Additional floating reefer storage was provided in the I Corps by the arrival of SS YAQUE on 7 November.

A Control Division was set up to provide requirements coordination from stateside sources pending assumption of NAVSUPPACT DANANG depot functions. Requisitions were submitted for NAVSUPPACT DANANG's I Corps support stock of Class II and IV material and delivery was requested to coincide with storage construction completion.

The Supply Department activated its first galley and messhall, at Camp Tien Sha, on Thanksgiving Day, 25 November. The galley was an N7B Advanced Base Functional Component installed in one of existing structures. Disbursing services and money exchange facilities were provided at the headquarters building in DaNang.

Responsibilities for scheduling I Corps Bulk POL deliveries and pipeline transfers, coordinating commercial source deliveries, coordinating transfers to and from MSTs floating storage tankers, and inspection of all incoming military fuel cargos were assumed on 1 November. No bulk fuel tankage came under the purview of NAVSUPPACT DANANG prior to 31 December.

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A major problem occurred when the four-inch undersea fuel line at Chu Lai parted resulting in curtailing of operations in early December. An advanced assault bulk fuel system (buoyant) provided immediate relief pending air shipment of sufficient pipe to reinstall the four-inch line.

PUBLIC WORKS

The first acting Public Works Officer immediately set to work on the most pressing Public Works problem besetting the proposed new command - Real Estate.

The only space ashore available to the command was part of the office space in the building known as the "White Elephant" in the main section of the city of DaNang. During the month, he made arrangements to assume several leased properties from the Naval Advisory Detachment including Officer Billets and a small transportation compound. He signed the first leases for officer billets and the first repair contracts for the Transportation Compound and Camp Tien Sha, an old ARVN camp at the base of Monkey Mountain.

When taken over by NAVSUPPACT DANANG, Camp Tien Sha had neither electricity, running water nor sewage system. It included 19 masonry-walled, sheet-metal roofed barracks buildings, eight similarly constructed French-style head buildings, and six French metal pre-fab buildings. All buildings were in a poor state of repair. The first repair contract provided for repairing, painting and screening and for the installation of lights and fans in two barracks. Additionally, lights and plumbing were installed and general repairs made to one head building.

The first requests were made of the CG III MAF/NCC Real Estate Officer for several tracts of land in DaNang East including the present site of the NAVSUPPACT DANANG Main Supply Depot behind the ARVN Ammunition Depot.

The first of many Advanced Base Functional Components, (ABFC) were ordered through CONSERVPAC to CNO to be released, assembled and shipped. By use of the ABFC system and prepositioned war reserve stocks, much valuable time in ordering and receiving of materials by CONUS supply depots was saved.

On 10 September, attention was immediately focused upon the requirements of military construction support needed by the new command. At NAVSUPPACT DANANG, for the first time since World War II, there was a requirement for the U.S. Navy to move ashore from ships and establish a major logistic support base at a remote location, without any prior development or planning for such a base.

An initial emergency construction program of 54 million dollars was initiated to provide those facilities most urgently needed to provide shore-side support of the major new command. These facilities included open, covered, and refrigerated storage, cantonments, POL storage and transfer facilities, port development, roads and utilities.

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On 15 October 1965, when the command was activated, certain of the trucking functions of the Provisional Naval Component Command were gradually turned over to NAVSUPPACT DANANG.

With the arrival in early November of the first ABFC 1,000 man galley, the Public Works Department converted one of the existing barracks at Camp Tien Sha into an interim galley/messhall complete with tables, serving lines, stoves, steam kettles, walk-in reefers, ice cream machine, generators and boiler. This interim facility was opened just in time for Thanksgiving Day and served well until the completion of the second 1,000 man galley/messhall.

Water for Camp Tien Sha was initially provided from a wooden caisson sunk at the foot of Monkey Mountain. At the time of the opening of the interim galley, the Public Works Department's efforts to renovate an old French water system and its distribution line to Camp Tien Sha were successful. Cleaning the tanks, providing new fill lines and repairing the leaks temporarily activated a system reportedly not used in over two years. By use of a wooden tower with a 3,000 gallon canvas tank and a regulator for filtration and chlorination, part of the water supply was made potable.

During the latter part of November the D-31A (Butler building warehouse) functional component, providing 48 buildings, arrived. Construction was started by the SEABEES after long and involved negotiations with the Mayor of DaNang and the local village chiefs. As a result of these negotiations some 4,000 graves were relocated to a new graveyard which had been prepared with the help of NAVSUPPACT DANANG.

At the close of December 1965 NAVSUPPACT DANANG had the capability to mess and berth 1,000 men in Camp Tien Sha. In DaNang, billets for approximately 200 officers and enlisted men were leased and furnished. Facilities such as the "White Elephant" offices, motor pool, commercial pier, T-pier, Museum ramp and the P.W. Maintenance Compound were also leased. However, the only real estate available for construction was Camp Tien Sha, the warehouse site behind the ARVN Ammunition Depot, and the hospital site in DaNang East. Construction proceeded on all three sites.

STATION HOSPITAL

Construction of the 400-bed Advance Base Station Hospital was begun by Mobile Construction Battalion NINE in July 1965. At various times during the period of July through December construction was halted or delayed by a variety of events. The most notable of these was the Viet Cong attack on the hospital on 28 October. Several buildings and some equipment were demolished. The buildings were replaced within 10 days from materials already on the site. Replacements for most of the equipment were also on the site.

By mid-December it became apparent that one wing of the first 120-bed ward could be opened, with ancillary services in early January.

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COMMUNICATIONS

The mission of the Communications Department is to act as the "Voice of Command" for Commander, U.S. Naval Support Activity, DaNang. This mission has in no way changed from the inception of the command to the present time. Reliable, secure and rapid communications remains the basic function of the department. Locally the department provides communications between COMNAV-SUPPACT DANANG, and MSTs ships, service craft, lighterage craft, patrol craft and other vessels operating in and around the port of DaNang. Additionally, the Communications Center maintains long-haul circuits which link NAVSUPPACT DANANG to other commands throughout the world.

Initially, messages for this command were transported by messenger to and from the station ship, a secure and reliable method somewhat lacking in speed.

By the end of the year the requirement for a long-haul circuit had been met even though communications remained dependent upon the station ship as a relay point. The few local nets activated were overburdened with traffic. The lack of equipment was the limiting factor in establishing additional circuits to satisfy the many varied requirements.

The number of messages handled increased from 8,921 in October to 15,658 in December. To handle this increased volume, the department grew from a handful of personnel in October to six officers and 48 enlisted men by the end of the year.

What basically started as a desk and filing cabinet grew, in two months, into a Communications Center capable of serving an ever-expanding command.

FIRST LIEUTENANT

As originally conceived, the First Lieutenant Department was to provide billeting, Base Camp, fire-fighting, shore patrol and security services for NAVSUPPACT DANANG.

Thus, the first task of the department was to reorganize to meet the new requirements.

On 15 October, when U.S. Naval Support Activity, DaNang was officially activated, the Physical Security Division assumed its responsibilities.

Shortly after, the department received its first large personnel input. Among these people were the nucleus for the Fire Department, Physical Security Division and the Billeting Division.

As 31 December approached the department continued to grow. It became apparent, however, that Physical Security would be the largest of its responsibilities. In order to cope with its increasing security commitments, the Physical Security Division would continue to build its Civilian Guard Force. Their mission would be to provide security to Naval Support Activity billets in DaNang.

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OPERATIONS

The Operations Department is divided into the following divisions:

1. The Harbor Security Division is charged with handling all aspects of harbor defense, from the Harbor Entrance Control Post thru the Patrol Boat branch and Port Security Branch. Teams of EOD and UDT personnel are attached on temporary additional duty to handle demolition and chart problems as they occur. During the period of the report, skimmer boats replaced chartered sampans for patrolling the river. Board and search operations are a primary function of Harbor Security. During December, 759 were apprehended.
2. Port Services was established as part of Operations Department in September 1965 to maintain charts, maps and operate a navigation library. The division also computes tide tables for the DaNang River, acts as liaison for harbor activities, and makes recommendations for improvements in port installations. Additional duties include aids to navigation, coordination and anchorage assignment. An aerology section issues daily weather forecasts and provides current weather analysis to the command.
3. Service Craft Division evolved from assets received from Mobile Support Unit THREE in November and included yard craft (tugs, pusher boats, yard tankers, berthing ships (APL's) and reefer barges). The primary mission of this division is to provide the following services to NAVSUPPACT DANANG: tug, floating crane, water, diesel, and floating refrigeration facilities. Also, the division provides jet fuel for DaNang Air Base.
4. Lighterage Division evolved from assault craft divisions who were TAD to NAVSUPPACT DANANG. The division's responsibility includes hauling cargo from the ships in the harbor to various off-loading and staging areas throughout DaNang. As of 31 December craft on hand included 12 LCU's, 16 LCM3's, 10 LCM6's, two LCM3's and eight YC's.
5. The Engineering & Repair Division and Air Operations Division were in planning stages during the latter part of 1965.

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