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ANNEX 4

TRANSLATION OF PART IV, CHAPTER 13 "THE RIVER
FORCES" CONTAINED IN FRENCH OFFICIAL DOCUMENT
"LESSONS LEARNED IN THE INDOCHINA WAR" PUBLISHED
BY THE HIGH COMMAND SAIGON, 31 MAY 1965

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PART IV CHAPTER 13 "THE RIVER FORCES"

GENERAL

The River Forces of Cochinchina and of Tonkin were created during the period of the conquest, but lessons learned during that time were forgotten by 1945 when the 2nd Armored Division arrived at Saigon with its tanks but without any floating equipment. The first joint operation directed at the recapture of Mytho illustrated this omission because a large number of bridges had been cut and no engineer troops were available. Thus, when the tanks arrived at the approaches of the city, the city itself had already been occupied for 48 hours by troops that had come by water.

The first operation and those which were to follow on towards Vinh-Long and Cantho could not have taken place without the assistance of the Royal Navy which had made available a certain number of LCI's. This made it imperative to utilize such craft as were available locally either from native sources, or those left by the Japanese and modify these with the required armor and armament. At the same time some LCI and a small number of LCA and LCT were received from the British. The heterogeneous force thus created was manned by personnel from both the Navy and the Army and was committed in piecemeal fashion to support territorial (zone, sector, subsector) or operational (battalion, company) commands. At the same time, in order to provide bases for these various elements, there were created River Posts of the Navy which would, in time, become the military ports of the inland waterways. Following this first phase, which was essentially one of improvisation, there followed a period of deliberate organization during which were resolved the two problems which had to be faced every day during the conduct of operations. These were;

A. The necessity to have craft permanently available to provide the transport needed to satisfy the logistic requirements of forces dispersed over the delta; and,

B. The obligation to ensure freedom of movement on the principal waterways, and to conduct frequent amphibious operations.

The army gradually took over a number of transportation missions and created for this purpose a certain number of river

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flotillas manned initially by Foreign Legion troops and later by Service troops. In addition, the Army participated in patrol missions and organized river patrol units made up of personnel from army armored force units.

The Navy focused its efforts on the creation of a combat organization closely adapted to the conditions which were peculiar to the struggle. By 1946 the Navy had organized river flotillas, and these, in 1947, were designated as Naval Assault Divisions or Dinassauts. This latter original concept responded to the need of having an organization which not only reflect a proper balance between various types of craft, but also provided the means to transport relatively large landing forces while at the same time providing them with fire support. This last concern had appeared from the very first months of the campaign, when improvised craft strongly armed and protected were used to move troops on insecure waterways. These were the armored boats. The composition of the Dinassaut changed in time, and also differed somewhat depending upon the areas where it operated, but in general it conformed to the following principals;

A. The Naval Assault Division was actually a tactical grouping of river craft including: (figure 1)

- (1) a command and fire support ship, usually an LCI;
- (2) a ship or craft suitable for the transportation of troops and equipment, usually an LCT;
- (3) landing and support type craft, usually two LCM and four LCVP's--the latter grouped into two sections of two LCVP each; and,
- (4) one patrol and liaison craft, usually a harbor patrol boat type.

B. In addition, when adequate personnel were available, the Dinassaut included a small landing force (commandos from the Navy or a company of infantry).

C. Depending upon requirements, the Dinassaut could be reinforced or lightened if operations were to be conducted where waters were particularly shallow.

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D. Thus organized, the Naval Assault Division was capable of:

- (1) insuring the transportation and the landing of a force of approximately battalion strength with its equipment; and
- (2) to support by fire the operations of these forces once ashore; and at the same time ensuring the control of the waterways.

E. The transportation mission which normally fell to a Dinassaut was essential for concentrating and deploying the forces during the initial phases of an operation. However, this transportation mission was not intended to absorb all of the attention of the Dinassaut to the detriment of possible tactical missions.

F. A good deal of transportation could be provided by local craft or by craft assigned to the various sectors. In this manner, the craft of the Dinassaut remained available for assignment to tactical missions such as patrolling, raiding, and fire support, incident to the conduct of the operations themselves.

In central Vietnam a different approach was required because of the local hydrographic conditions. The concept of the Dinassaut covering a large area and moving from one river post to another was not applicable along the coastal plains of central Vietnam. There it was necessary to assign to each waterway a certain number of craft which were based upon a river post. These craft could not move from one waterway to another except by going out to sea. In addition, the shallow rivers made it necessary to utilize craft with relatively shallow draft.

Toward the end of the campaign the Dinassauts themselves appeared inadequate for the tasks involved, and it was necessary to organize for operations, particularly in North Vietnam, river task forces drawn from several Dinassauts, reinforced by additional transportation means obtained from service units and from transport forces of the Navy.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~THE EMPLOYMENT OF RIVER FORCES

River Forces were under the operational control of the Army at various echelons of command depending upon the circumstances. In the South, the River Forces Command was under the operational control of the General Commanding Ground Forces, South Vietnam in accordance with an agreement reached with the Commander French Naval Forces, Indochina. In the north the Commander, River Forces maintained close liaison with the headquarters of the General Commanding Ground Forces, North Vietnam and, to all intents and purposes the four Dinassauts in the area were under Army control. This arrangement was entirely satisfactory and the Commander of Dinassaut Number Three and of the River Port of Nam Dinh reported:

"The southern zone to which I was assigned as Commander, River Forces, Nam Dinh, was a perfect example of the excellent relations and the feeling of unity which can be obtained. Continuous coordination was maintained with both artillery in fixed positions and with aerial support means. This complete coordination assured the effectiveness of all combined operations. All river craft of the Army both from service troops and armored forces were under the orders of the Navy; there were reciprocal arrangements for use of aerial support means and communications. In addition, the territorial responsibilities were carefully defined."

These favorable circumstances had arisen because the Naval Command was able to exercise control over all River Forces regardless of their parent service, and the River Posts were the coordinating centers and the operational command posts which maintained direct liaison with the ground forces commander in the area.

On occasion, liaison and coordination was more lax, and the ground commanders did not pay sufficient attention to the security of waterways. It was thus that the Admiral Commanding French Naval Forces in the Far East could regret;

"The inadequate number of craft on certain river waterways of vital importance such as the Red River and the Canal of Bamboos. This made it necessary to escort convoys with such large numbers of supporting craft that these last could seldom be used for offensive operations".

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The Admiral also noted that there was inadequate fortification of the river bases when in fact each of these should have been organized for defense as were regular army installations. The main difficulties were of course the lack of sufficient landing craft in the Dinassauts. It had already been demonstrated in Central Vietnam incident to the operations at Faifoo and Quang Khe that a group of river craft had to have with it an infantry unit under its control. This infantry unit would be responsible for the defense of the river base and would also be trained to land under fire in the event of ambushes. In Cochinchina, and above all in Tonkin, the Dinassauts had navy commandos attached to them. But they did not have permanently assigned infantry which would have permitted them to move from place to place with complete autonomy, and would have permitted more effective control of an area in the periods between major joint operations.

This deficiency was noted more and more and this is what the Commander River forces in Cochinchina, had to say about the subject;

"It was necessary that all ambushes be immediately destroyed". This was not always possible in South Vietnam. Nevertheless at the end of the war, river forces carried out an order of the General Commanding Ground Forces in South Vietnam not to engage in offensive operations if they did not have at least two companies of infantry with them (this was on the assumption that the minimum force encountered would be a determined company of Viet Minh)".

In Tonkin a similar situation had existed for a long time. There it was the normal practice to attach to the Dinassauts infantry units which were drawn from the ground forces which were participating in the operation.

This solution was not always satisfactory because the infantry troops most often did not have adequate training and had had little or no practice in amphibious types of operations, such as assault landings and had little knowledge about organizing hasty beach defenses, conducting assault operations against an ambushing force, the breaking of contact, and reembarkation. The Navy was justified in its conclusion that there was a need to organize an amphibious force which included both Navy and ground elements. These were intended not merely to work together, but to be effectively integrated into combined dinassaut/tactical group organizations. Further, it was desirable for the Navy to exercise certain territorial commands; at a minimum the command of sub-sectors.

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This view was particularly justified since certain territorial commanders had a tendency to look upon the river shipping solely from the point of view of logistic support and underestimated the capabilities of these forces for extensive amphibious operations. Certainly as the Viet Minh combat potential increased, operations along the waterways demanded ever increasing combat support, while at the same time the heavy transportation requirements continued. Already the campaign on the Clear River in 1947, and to a lesser extent that on the Black River in 1951, illustrated the lack of balance between objectives assigned and means available.

But the River Forces were never sufficiently reinforced. Toward the end of the hostilities they were still restricted particularly in North Vietnam to defensive operations or to offensive operations of a temporary and particularly dangerous nature because of a lack of equipment. These forces more often played the role of simple auxiliaries to ground forces when in fact the geographical features of the operational areas indicated that they could have contributed decisively to the actions involved. The logical solution would have been to concentrate all floating means into a small number of powerful river flotillas, and to create under single command an amphibious corps with trained infantry and artillery, and with M29C and LVT units attached.

THE SUITABILITY OF EQUIPMENT

After the difficult initial period, when river forces utilized any and all types of equipment available, the river forces came to depend primarily on surplus British and American materiel together with some light craft designed and manufactured in France. These last were inspired by the LCV type, and were designated FOM boats and STCAN boats; in addition there were wooden Mytho boats with jeep engines which were constructed by the Ordnance Service of the Army.

The landing craft of British and American design had been designed for other than river warfare and had to be modified. This involved the addition of armor and armament and also the provision of crew accommodations. It is astonishing that these craft performed as well as they did. The sum total of this effort was that eventually there were light and medium craft in sufficient numbers and of suitable quality to perform assigned missions. The principle defects of these craft were the excessive engine noise, the slow speed particularly of the smaller craft, and their

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excessive draft. This last was important because mines quickly became the major threat to river forces and there were many evidences of the effectiveness of mines against craft of all types. Small craft with flat bottoms were particularly vulnerable to mine damage whereas the metal FOM boats when hitting a mine often lost their super structures and weapon mounts but fell back into the water without sinking. Sweeping was the best means of meeting the mine threat. Small mine sweepers were particularly effective against electrically controlled mines, but they were ineffective against regular naval mines where a positive means of destruction ahead and behind of the sweeper had to be found.

The enemy had no boats and therefore the Dinassauts found themselves meeting an adversary who attacked them from the banks of rivers utilizing the whole range of infantry weapons and sometimes even artillery. The necessity to armor all craft on the riverways was quickly evident. And during the period where any type of local craft was first used, the losses were excessive in comparison to the results obtained; this being particularly true in the smaller waterways of Cochinchina. Experience also revealed, as one critic stated, that the thickness of armor was also important. Experiments were conducted with double armor utilizing an inner layer of rubber or cement. However, experience with this was not adequate to justify any sound conclusions.

Armament on the other hand was generally satisfactory. One should particularly note the extreme efficiency of the twin forty millimeter gun mounts with their own fire control systems. Flame-throwers and rocket launchers were not used despite the fact that a few had been mounted on LCM's toward the end of the conflict. The main need as became more and more evident was for larger craft of greater power.

The experience of all river warfare in history confirms a requirement for ships with a shallow draft and armed with large caliber weapons and heavy armor. The LCM monitor type which was a useful innovation at its echelon, was really not satisfactory as the standard type combat craft. A change from LCM to LCT and from 40 millimeter weapons to those of 130 and 150 millimeter, and of armor from 12 millimeter to 100 millimeter thickness probable would have better met the needs of the river forces beginning with the 1947 campaign on the Black River. Such proposals had been made in 1952 but never achieved any positive results because it was extremely difficult to convert LCT's which were

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required for transport missions, to craft intended purely for offensive combat missions. At the other end of the scale it was evident that river forces lacked the smaller type of craft which were needed for liaison missions, for raids, for scouting, and for rapid sweeping. Ideally such craft would provide some protection, retain seaworthiness and operate at a minimum noise level. The FOM craft of 11 meters came close to meet these characteristics but did not have sufficient speed and did not handle well in any sort of chop. The Wizzard craft which arrived in Indochina after the ceasefire was extremely fast and maneuverable but actually too small and fragile for the normal missions involved. They had plastic hulls and outboard engines and only limited range.

It would be desirable to study of the development of special craft with the following characteristics: a speed in excess of twenty knots; a capability for the towing of sweeping gear; two silent engines; a strong hull with flat bottom and recessed propeller tunnels; a draft of approximately one meter, and a beaching capability. Such a craft should use diesel fuel and should have a radius of action of 100 nautical miles. Armament should include one twenty millimeter gun and two light machine guns. It should have adequate armor protection for its engines and should provide suitable accommodations for a crew of three. And finally it should be relatively cheap, easy to maintain, and capable of going to sea.

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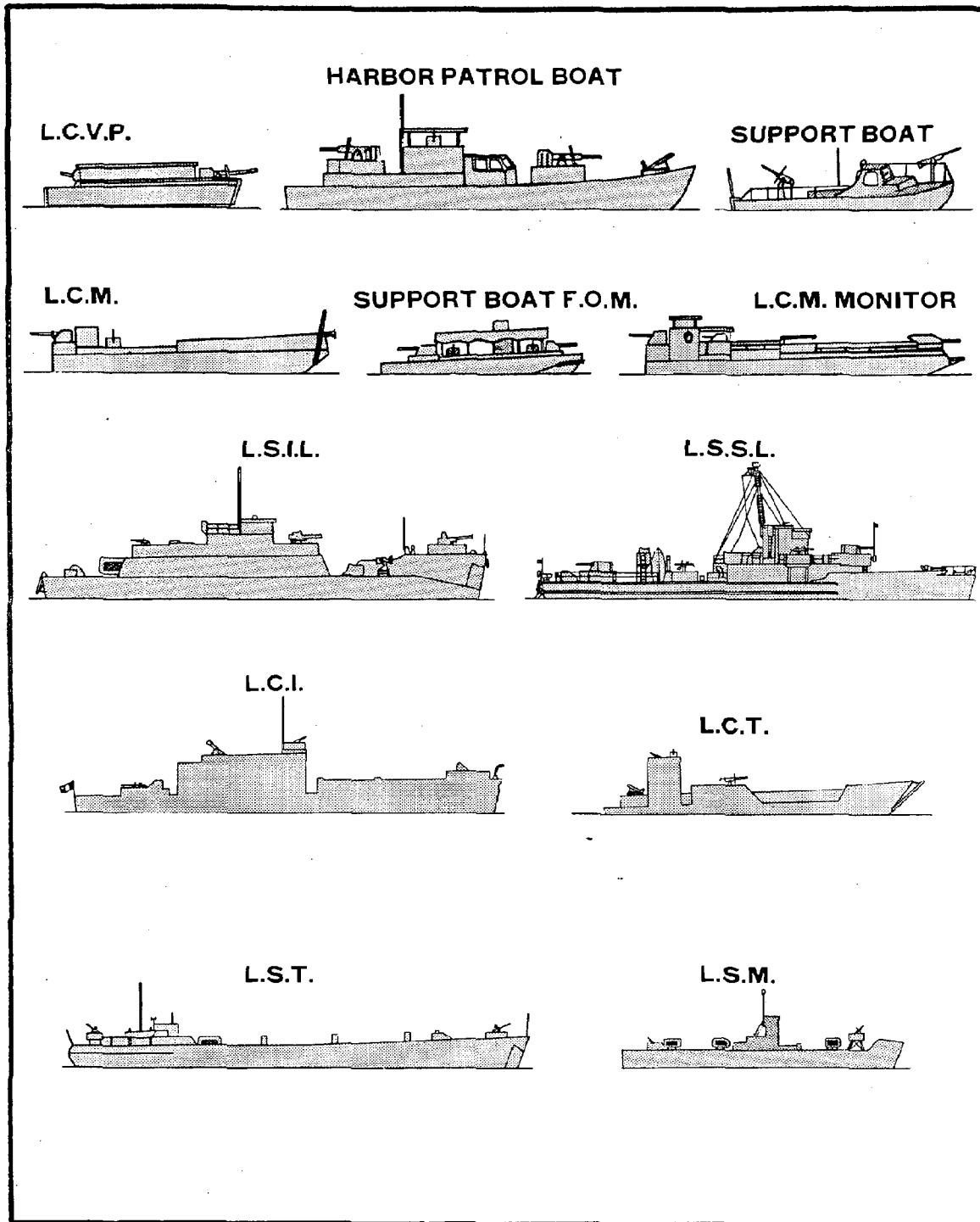


FIGURE 1

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ANNEX 5

U. S. NAVY ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS
OF VIETNAMESE NAVY SEAFORCE UNITS

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U.S.N. ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS OF VIETNAMESE
NAVY SEA FORCE UNITS

REPORT NO. 1

1. Enclosures (1) through (4) are forwarded.
2. The report covers the period 16 September to 18 October in HQ 226 (LSSL) employed in the following area: IV Naval Zone - Rivers.
3. Pertinent results are:
 - a. 22 junks searched.
 - b. 0 ships searched.
 - c. 215 persons inspected.
 - d. 2 persons arrested on suspicion.
 - e. 0 confirmed VC arrested.
 - f. 4 VC KIA*. *Kien Hoa Sector G-2 reported two VC Infantry companies and one heavy weapons company
 - g. 0 VC WIA*. "destroyed" by HQ 226 and RAG 23 in actions on 4 and 5 Oct.
 - h. 24 ARVN KIA. Not LSSL 226 personnel.
 - i. 60 ARVN WIA.
 - j. 10 NGFS missions fired.
 - (1) Ammo expended:
 - (a) 3"/50 123.
 - (b) 81mm 226.
 - (c) 40mm2006.
 - (d) 20mm3130.
 - k. 0 SAR missions.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Brief Summary of Events

1. HQ 226 was assigned to the River Patrol in Fourth Naval Zone during the period 16 September through 18 October.
2. The ship and elements of RAG 23, with ARVN 41st Ranger Battalion embarked, were ambushed in the Ham Luong River on 4 and 5 October. The ship sustained very minor material damage and no personnel casualties. Two LCMs and one Monitor of RAG 23 were moderately to heavily damaged. Twenty-one ARVN and VNN personnel were KIA and fifty-seven were WIA. U.S. advisors suffered no casualties. Initial intelligence reports to Kien Hoa Sector indicate that two VC infantry companies and one heavy weapons company, and its weapons, were destroyed by the VNN units. The performance of the ship in these actions was outstanding.
3. The ship provided protection for RAG salvage units recovering RAG boats sunken by ambush on three occasions. Nine NGFS missions were fired during these periods.
4. The ship conducted two logistics escort missions during the patrol.
5. The ship patrolled independently or in company with RAG units or Kien Hoa Sector LCVPs in the Co Chien Ham Luong and Mekong Rivers during thirteen nights of the patrol.
6. The ship and RAG 23 established an excellent working relationship with Kien Hoa Province officers and their U.S. Army counterparts. The tangible results were effective combined patrols and well-coordinated mutual support during an operation.
7. With the exception of the gyrocompass, the ship suffered no material casualties during the patrol which ship's force did not repair. This high state of material readiness enabled the ship to patrol effectively and to defeat enemy ambushes.

ENCLOSURE (1)

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ITEMS OF INTEREST TO HIGHER AUTHORITY
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The performance of the officers and crew of the ship during the actions of 4 and 5 October was outstanding. In what I believe has been the heaviest fighting engaged in by a Sea Force ship, the gun crews (which included all hands except those on the bridge and in the engineering spaces) delivered a tremendous volume of accurate fire into enemy positions destroying two enemy infantry companies and one heavy weapons company and its weapons. The two junior officers in charge of the forward and after battery, the former in particular, contributed a great deal to the ship's efforts by controlling the fire of their crews and directing the resupply of ammunition from the magazines. Ship control and communications were good, and the engineering watch answered all bells. RAG 23 Commander, LCDR HOA, has stated that the Ham Luong would have been "the River of No Return" for RAG 23 and the 41st Ranger Battalion if the ship had not been present in the actions. It is recommended that the ship be appropriately decorated by VNN for its performance in these action. (The Kien Hoa Province Chief, LCOL CHAU, has authorized seven ARVN medals to be awarded to members of the crew.)
2. Four enemy attacks upon Navy units in the rivers area since 19 September, in which the enemy has used 75mm and 57mm recoilless rifles, .50 cal machine guns and other automatic weapons, indicates to this advisor that Navy units have become high priority targets for the enemy. The Navy units are no longer immune to attack in the main rivers. In order that the RAGs can be expected to carry our troop and logistics escort missions successfully in the future, they must be provided support by LSSL/LSILs. In addition, they must be provided ARVN artillery support for reconnoitering and area fire, and whenever, possible, be provided air cover, preferably HUIES, for instantaneous reaction to enemy attack.
3. It has been this advisor's experience that the LSSL/LSIL can be an effective patrol unit in the rivers when accompanied by two or more small units such as RCPs, FOMs, or LCVPs. These small units can approach very close to the banks of the rivers to stop the boat traffic which concentrates there. The ship can effectively vector these small units using radar information, and the ship can provide fire support to protect the small units. Fourth Naval Zone Commander and the RAG Commanders must provide these units to the ships whenever possible. Also, the ships can often arrange to patrol in company with Sector LCVPs which have patrol responsibility in the same areas as those to which the ships are assigned.

ENCLOSURE (2)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~LOG OF PATROLThursday, 16 Sep

AM - All radios, propulsion machinery, radar and fathometer were tested and found to be satisfactory during the two days prior to departure upon patrol. Shipyard personnel completed work on the ship's gyro during the morning and tested it.

PM - Underway at 1700 for RSSZ and the Soi Rap River. Anchored at XS 916600 at 2230 and fired 3"/50 into ten locations (one round into each) in RSSZ. These targets were assigned by N-3. The CO allowed the Gunnery Officer to supervise and control the firing. The ship maintained the radar tracking watch throughout the night. Only one boat was detected and it signalled us with a red light. I believe it was an LCPL.

Friday, 17 Sep

AM - Proceeded to My Tho. The ship's gyro developed a constant 55° error during the night. The Chief Engineer believed the casualty to be in the amplifier. (This was later verified by Western Repair Facility.)

PM - Arrived at My Tho at 1300. I reported gyro casualty by telephone after the ship sent a message report of the casualty. The CO telephoned Fourth Naval Zone Commander and was directed to proceed to Can Tho. Underway 1800. The CO delayed departure for four hours because he didn't want to navigate the channel into the Bassac River at night on his first time. (Vom Cao). The ship stopped no boats during the transit.

Saturday, 18 Sep

AM - Arrive in Can Tho at 1000. Fourth Naval Zone Commander and LCDR SEYMORE thoroughly briefed the CO and I upon policies and procedures to be followed in the Fourth Naval Zone. They emphasized that the ship was to search boats at all times except when it has been given specific instructions to proceed to a destination in best time. At 1800 the ship was directed to proceed to the Co Chien River where two RAG 23 LCVPs had been ambushed and sunk. The ship was not underway until 2200 because the CO did not leave the address of friends he went to visit in town.

Sunday, 19 Sep

AM - Enroute to location of the sunken LCVPs in the Co Chien River.

ENCLOSURE (3)

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PM - Arrived at the sunken LCVPs (XS 292265) where elements of RAG 23 were beached on the northeast bank and two HU1ES were completing an air strike. The LCVPs were ambushed Saturday morning by VC using 75mm and 57mm recoilless rifles and .30 caliber machine guns located on the northeast bank. (Empty cartridge cases of these weapons were found among numerous fox holes along the bank.) Three VNN were KIA and one WIA. One boat sank within five seconds after being hit; the second drifted onto a small sandbar at the southern tip on the small island. The boats were alone on routine patrol while the remainder of the RAG was at Cho Lach off-loading troops. The ship fired into several VC bunkers at XS 333245 during the afternoon. I observed one destroyed. A priest from the outpost hamlet in the area gave RAG 23 Commander information on VC movements in the area throughout the time the Navy units were there. I believe that this priest was much less discriminate in pointing out targets in some areas than he was in his parish. The ship and two FOMs patrolled in the area during the night, and the remainder of the RAG beached or anchored near the LCVPs.

Monday, 20 Sep

AM - At 0800, the ship fired suppressing fire while Western Repair Facility (WRF) salvage boats anchored and started work. The RAG boats beached in the area after removing the weapons and ammunition from the grounded LCVP. At 1000, the ship fired into an area (XS 313248) where the outpost reported a VC company had moved in. The ship's mortar crew handled two miss-fires very well. (The cause of the miss-fires is unknown. No others occurred during the patrol.

PM - At 1300 two FOMs were fired upon by small arms from the bunker area. The ship fired into the area with the RAG Commander spotting from a beached position. Later in the afternoon three persons wearing camouflage were seen climbing down from trees and were taken under fire by the ship. Salvage work ceased at dark and the salvage boats moored to the ship. Three FOMs patrolled during the night and were in radio contact with the ship's radar watch. No boats were detected. (Throughout the days and nights spent in the area, RAG boats searched all passing boats.) The ship fired harrassing fire at erratic intervals throughout the night.

Tuesday, 21 Sep

AM - At 0730 elements of RAG 23 proceeded to Cho Lach to embark one

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company of Regional Force troops. The outpost reported 3 VC killed and indication of others wounded by the ship and RAG units the previous afternoon.

PM - Elements of RAG 23 and RAG 27 landed one Regional Force Company at XS 292270 to sweep through the area adjacent to the LCVP's location and to establish a perimeter on the bank. The ship fired the mortars during the night in response to requests by the Regional Force Commander. RAG 23 Commander, the ship's CO and the company commander planned this in the early evening. The company commander spotted the fall of shot. One VC was found dead the next morning. The ship searched one boat and three people during the day.

Wednesday, 22 Sep

AM - The ship fired into the bunker area with no spotter. Salvage operations continued.

PM - The ship, a Monitor and two FOMs went to Junk Division 35 to pick up the body of an LCVP crewman which was found in fishing nets. During the return trip, two men swam ashore from a boat as FOMs closed to check it. A FOM took the boat in tow and detained a woman and child found in the boat. The boat sank while being towed. The ship anchored at the location of the LCVPs and fired harrassing fire at erratic intervals throughout the night.

Thursday, 23 Sep

AM - The ship fired into the bunker area again. One WRF LCM departed for Can Tho towing the LCVP which had been raised from the channel and patched.

PM - CO and I went to Cho Lach with RAG 23 Commander to obtain demolitions to destroy the grounded LCVP. We talked to the District CHIEF and advisors about using the ship in the future. (This District Chief will give RAG 23 Commander a company of troops almost any time he requests them.) Lt ALLISON, RAG 23 advisor, destroyed the LCVP with a captured VC mine. RAG 27 elements returned the Regional Force troops to Cho Lach. The ship anchored and fired harrassing fire twice during the night.

Friday, 24 Sep

AM - The ship and RAG 23 proceeded to Vinh Long. Shortly after arriving, the CO received orders to proceed to Can Tho.

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PM - Proceeding to Can Tho. At 2035 the ship collided with an unlighted boat at WS 425692., in the Mekong River. The OOD said he did not see it on radar and the lookouts did not report it. (The lookouts, and occasionally the OODs, stand poor watches. I've discussed this situation at length with the CO and XO and made up a lesson plan for lookout training sessions during the last patrol. The OODs are very lax in their supervision of the watch.) Civilian boats picked up the three people in the water (uninjured) and brought them to the ship. While they stood shivering in the wind, the CO chewed them out unmercifully for not showing a light. Ignored were my suggestions to dry and warm the people in a "show of good will" for them and the many people in about fifteen sampans that had gathered around the ship. The CO gave the people 1500\$VN to compensate for their lost motor (the boat was broken beyond repair) and they signed a waiver.

Saturday, 25 Sep

AM - Arrived at Can Tho and replenished 40mm and 81mm ammunition. The CO requested and was granted two days liberty for the crew. A WRF ET2 inspected the gyro amplifier and located three bad tubes. The ship and I sent messages to Sea Force for the tubes. (The parts did not arrive at Can Tho during the patrol. I suspect that it was decided that gyro amplifiers aren't to be repaired by WRF. The gyro remained out of commission for the duration of the patrol.) I picked up SOIs of 7th, 9th and 21st Divisions and a PRC-10 handset to replace the ship's "bad" one. (The PRC-10 is located on the bridge and is not protected from the weather consistently). I must look after the PRC-25 myself to insure that it is protected. Throughout the patrol the CO and I had a quiet battle about his using only the PRC-10. I scored well by pointing out that RAG 23 Commander used PRC-10, exclusively, and that he could always rely upon them because his radiomen took care of them. Comparisons and exhortations to do "better than... more than..." have good effect on this CO. The CO and I talked to two ANGLOs and gave them a tour of the ship explaining its gunnery capabilities.

Sunday, 26 Sep

- Liberty. Talked to the ARVN 13th Regiment advisor about the ship. His counterpart already requests RAG 23 or 25 to support all his regiment's operations.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Monday, 27 Sep

AM - The ship was assigned to patrol in the Ham Luong River. Fourth Naval Zone Commander could give the ship little intelligence upon the area and emphasized that the ship send him any that could be obtained.

PM - Underway at 2300 and proceeding to the Ham Luong River. The ship stopped no boats during the transit.

Tuesday, 28 Sep

AM - In discussing the ship's patrol assignment, the CO and I agreed that we needed small units operating with us in order to stop all boats, the majority of which travel close to the river banks. In the past the ship has been unsuccessful in getting all these boats to come out into the river to the ship, even when the ship fires across their bows. Also the ship often can only check the boats on one side of the river in this manner. The CO sent a message to RAG 21/27 requesting two FOMs or RPCs to patrol with the ship in the Ham Luong. (No reply was ever received).

PM - The ship patrolled in the lower Ham Luong during the night. Kien Hoa LCVPs which we met during the night gave us the locations of the CIDC outposts along the river. We were unable to communicate with any of these outposts with our equipment. The ship searched five boats and eighteen people during the early evening. During the night one boat escaped to the bank and its occupants ran into a hamlet.

Wednesday, 29 Sep

AM - Anchored at Junk Division 34/37 and refueled the boats. The junk Division Commanders have no up-river intelligence. Underway up-river at 1100.

PM - Arrived at Ben Tre at 1600. The CO and I received an excellent intelligence briefing from the Sector (Kien Hoa) Operations Officer, the Regional Force Boat Company Commander and their counterparts. (Intelligence was agreed to assign a platoon of LCVPs (3) to patrol with the ship each night. The ship and 3 LCVPs patrolled in the middle and lower portions of the Ham Luong during the night. A sniper fired at the ship once from the location of a bunker we had sighted during the day (XS 515209). No boats were detected moving during the night. (Many boats moored along the banks at night. We observed none of these move on radar after passing them).

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Thursday, 30 Sep

AM - The Sector Boat Company Commander, with several of his officers and advisor, embarked in the ship and the ship gave them a "fire power demonstration" destroying the bunker sighted the previous day. They were impressed.

PM - The ship transferred the visitors to an LCVP and proceeded to My Tho to refuel from HQ 471. At 2000 the ship returned to the Ham Luong for night patrol. The ship searched three boats and three people during the day. One boat evaded the ship by going into a small canal. During the night, the LCVP crews boarded two unlighted boats along the banks and found no people or contraband.

Friday, 1 Oct

AM - The ship proceeded to Cai Be to support units recovering RAG 27 boats which had been ambushed the previous day.

PM - The ship and elements of RAG 27 and RAG 23 anchored during the afternoon and night at the entrance to the canal in which the ambush occurred. The ship searched four boats and fourteen persons during the day. RAG units stopped all other passing boats.

Saturday, 2 Oct

AM - Proceeded to Vinh Long with elements of RAG 23.

PM - Arrived at Vinh at 1000. The CO requested and was granted permission for two days of liberty.

Sunday, 3 Oct

AM - Liberty. The CO and I spent the day with RAG 23 Commander and LT ALLISON. Late in the morning, word was received from Can Tho to standby for an operation.

PM - Underway at 0200 with RAG 23 and proceeding to Ben Tre to receive further orders.

Monday, 4 Oct (See diagram at enclosure 4)

AM - The ship and RAG arrived at Ben Tre at 0700 and the CO's and advisors attended a briefing for the operation. The Navy units were directed to carry the ARVN 41st Ranger Battalion to XS 6011 in the lower Ham Luong River. The Rangers were to go inland on a search and destroy mission against VC units which attacked three outposts and two District towns in the area the previous day. (An attempt to lift the Rangers into the area the previous

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evening by helicopters was cancelled due to bad weather). The Navy units were to provide fire support for the initial landing and then provide security for waterborne logistics from Ben Tre. The troops were embarked and all units underway at 1100. An Army L-19 reconnoitered the route down the Ham Luong and reported no indications of enemy activity.

PM - At 1200 the ship commenced reconnoitering fire into the southwest bank of the river at XS 515209 and seconds later the VC opened fire from ambush. After the enemy fired, a heavy fire-fight ensued against an unknown number of the enemy armed with at least two recoilless rifles, an estimated (my estimate) five automatic weapons and one mortar or bomb-throwing device. Two LCMs were hit by 75mm recoilless rifle fire (caliber later determined from projectile fragments), and a monitor by an unknown type of projectile. One damaged LCM assisted the second LCM, which was sinking quickly, to beach on the island. The uninjured troops on both boats debarked and formed a perimeter on the boats. Then the LCM still under its own power returned up river to the Mo Cay Ferry Landing where ambulances from Ben Tre were waiting. All other RAG units returned up river. The ship remained in the ambush area until all boats had retired and then it retired. The Mo Cay ARVN artillery battery fired a few rounds into the area, but they themselves were under an attack that commenced at about the same time we were attacked. By 1220 enemy firing had ceased and shortly thereafter USN aircraft, called in by LT ALLISON through Sector, strafed north of the ambush site. (The aircraft had no other ordnance. They were apparently returning from a strike elsewhere.) Later in the afternoon USAF and VNAF aircraft conducted strikes in the ambush area. The Rangers embarked in the ship and LCVPs landed at the beached LCM to reinforce the perimeter at 1700. RAG 23 anchored up-river and the ship patrolled in the area of the beached LCM and troops during the night. It fired mortar rounds into the ambush area at erratic intervals. Casualties reported to RAG 23 Commander during the day were: VNN - 2 KIA, 8WIA; ARVN - 19 KIA, 49 WIA. The ship and embarked Rangers (about 70) suffered no personnel casualties, and no material casualties except the port screw guard partially shot away by a recoilless rifle projectile and a few holes in canvas and dents in bulkheads from small caliber bullets. The performance of the crew and officers during the engagement was exemplary. The two junior officers in charge of the forward and after battery controlled the firing of their gun crews well. **ENS LE TRIEU** controlled and directed his men in the forward battery (3"/50, 81mm 40mm) exceptionally well. (He had long before gained their respect).

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He personally aimed the 81 mm mortars. (Two U.S. Army Sgts assisting his crew to load said that they had never seen anyone direct a mortar as accurately in a combat situation). ENS TRIEU is the ship's Engineering/Gunnery/Supply Officer. The performance of the CO of HQ 226 was fair. Normally a very nervous and excitable person, he was in a very agitated condition during the first part of the engagement. I believed that he had to be firmly advised to remain in the ambush area to protect the retiring RAG units and the beached LCM and troops on the island. However, I may have misconstrued his intentions. He did exercise more command control in the latter portion of the fight. To my knowledge, this was the first time he had been under enemy fire. The HQ 226 is his first command. The embarked 41st Ranger Command Company and their advisors (under CAPT CAGLIARI, USA) contributed a good deal to the ship's effort by passing badly-needed ammunition from the magazines to the gun mounts while under fire. (The ship fired 90 rds 3"/50, 1000 rd 40mm, 1000 rds 20mm and 50 rds 81mm in twenty minutes). During this engagement and on several other occasions during the patrol, the RAG 23 Commander, LCDR HOA, proved himself to be an intelligent tactician, a fearless fighter and a leader for whom his men show respect and devotion. Two factors which I believe to have contributed most to the ship's effectiveness during this engagement were: (a) All personnel, and particularly the gun crews, were well trained and their equipment functioned properly. (b) The ship was at General Quarters and had commenced reconnoitering fire. The first factor is believed to have been the result of experience gained firing and on-station training during the patrol, and training during refresher training. The second factor must attributed to RAG 23 Commander who, from intelligence received from the Sector Boat Company Commander and from experience, ordered the ship to conduct reconnoitering fire.

Tuesday, 5 Oct

AM - At 0700 the RAG units returned to the LCM. At 0900 the enemy fired upon the Commandant LCM with what I believe to have been a recoilless rifle from the southwest bank. The projectile struck the water near the boat and wounded two crewmen. The ship and RAG units fired into the bank and silenced the enemy weapon. The boats then returned upriver while USN aircraft commenced bombing and strafing to the south of the ambush site. (LT ALLISON called in these aircraft through Sector at Ben Tre). The ship remained in the ambush area until all boats had cleared and then followed them. Relaying through Ben Tre, I spotted the aircraft onto the areas we wanted hit. The Rangers on the island reported that the

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aircraft were drawing automatic weapons fire but this ceased immediately after the aircraft began striking the ambush site. USAF and VNAF aircraft conducted strikes along the southwest bank during the late morning and early afternoon.

PM - At 1500, RAG 25 units and a salvage team from WRF arrived and all units proceeded to the beached LCM. The ship patrolled during the late afternoon and night. It failed to stop several boats which crossed the river to the northeast bank six kilometers downriver from the LCM. The ship attempted to hit these boats with 40mm fire but could not close the range sufficiently. (Present Kien Hoa Sector policy regarding river traffic in known VC areas along the Ham Luong is to detain any boats moving up or down river between 2200 and 0600, and to fire without warning upon any boats crossing the river).

Wednesday, 6 Oct

AM - During the morning, RAG boats brought 40mm ammunition to the ship from Ben Tre. RAG 23 Commander received a message from Kien Hoa Sector stating that initial reports from agents indicated that the Navy units had "destroyed" two VC infantry companies and one heavy weapons company and its weapons.

PM - During the early afternoon the ship and RAG units patrolled. At 1730 all units proceeded to the Mo Cay Ferry landing. The ARVN artillery battery at Ben Tre and all Navy units fired reconnoitering fire as the group moved up the river. No enemy fire was received. Three LCMs supported the damaged LCM and the ship maintained a position between these units and the southwest bank. The ship anchored at the Mo Cay Ferry landing for the night and all RAG units proceeded to Ben Tre where WRF personnel could complete voyage repairs upon the recovered LCM.

Thursday, 7 Oct

AM - Sector advisors debriefed the Navy advisors during the morning.

PM - The Sector Psy-War team presented a show and distributed gifts to all Navy sailors during the early afternoon while all officers and advisors were guests at a luncheon given by the Province Chief, LCOL CHAU. LCOL CHAU granted the CO's request for seven medals for members of the crew. The ship departed at 2200 to make rendezvous with elements of RAG 21 and 27 in the Mekong River.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Friday, 8 Oct

AM - Made rendezvous with RAG 21 and 27 units which were carrying sixty tons of ammunition for Ba Tri District and escorted them to a hamlet-outpost at XS 694075.

PM - The ship and RAG units departed the outpost at 1800 and proceeded to My Tho. An L-19 accompanied the group until dark. ARVN artillery at Mo Cay and the Navy units conducted reconnoitering fire in the 4-5 October ambush site. No enemy fire was received during the transit. On several occasions during this escort mission I expressed my concern to the CO about the excessive length of the column formation in which the group traveled. (RAG 21 Commander, who was not present, prescribed this formation). FOMs and the Monitor were in the van, LCUs in the center and the ship and RPCs in the rear. The ship could not have supported the van and the LCUs were at maximum 40mm range; the van units could not have supported the LCUs. The CO directed the LTJG in charge of the RAG boats to close the column on several occasions, but the units in the van never did fall back. The CO didn't press the matter. I believe that the CO didn't construe his responsibility for and authority over the RAG units in the manner in which I did.

Saturday, 9 Oct

AM - Moored at the RAG 21/27 base. The CO received permission for weekend liberty for the crew.

Sunday, 10 Oct

- Liberty.

Monday, 11 Oct

AM - The CO and I received a good briefing from RAG officers on Cua Tieu-Cua Dai (Rivers) area to which the ship was assigned to patrol. Underway at 0900.

PM - The ship investigated a "mine" sighted in Cua Tieu by an L-19. It was a drifting bouy. The ship patrolled during the night in Cua Tieu and Cua Dai. The ship searched 4 boats and 10 persons during the day. One boat and two persons were detained and turned over to RAG 21 Commander. (They had no papers and the sampan was loaded with rice).

Tuesday, 12 Oct

- The crew titivated and painted the ship throughout the day. (The ship was kept clean throughout the patrol and the equipment was maintained well. During the last days of the patrol the CO directed

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that the crew concentrate on chipping and painting.)

The ship patrolled throughout the day and night in Cau Tieu and Cua Dai. The CO made a minimum effort to stop boats during the day but required the watches at night to stop everything that moved. The ship searched four boats and one hundred-seven persons during the day. (including one ferry)

Wednesday, 13 Oct

AM - Anchored at the confluence of Cua Tieu and Cua Dai and painted sides. No boats were stopped.

PM - Underway at 1900 and patrolled throughout the night. No boats were searched or detected moving during the night.

Thursday, 14 Oct

AM - "Patrolled" during the morning but stopped no boats. The CO was marking time until return to Saigon.

PM - Anchored at the mouth of Cua Tieu to wait for HQ 400. The ship had been ordered to escort HQ 400 commencing at 1200. HQ 400 arrived at 1630 and the ship took station ahead of her to act as escort to the Bassac River. Throughout the transit the ship remained too far ahead of HQ 400 to effectively protect her in an ambush.

Friday, 15 Oct

AM - Anchored at the Hoa Hao village at Vom Cao at 0600. HQ 400 was to remain there for three days.

PM - Elements of RAG 26 arrived. They were also to protect HQ 400.

Saturday, 16 Oct

- Remained anchored throughout the day. HQ 327 arrived and anchored. The CO and I passed on patrol information. RAG 23 units arrived and departed fourteen hours later.

Sunday, 17 Oct

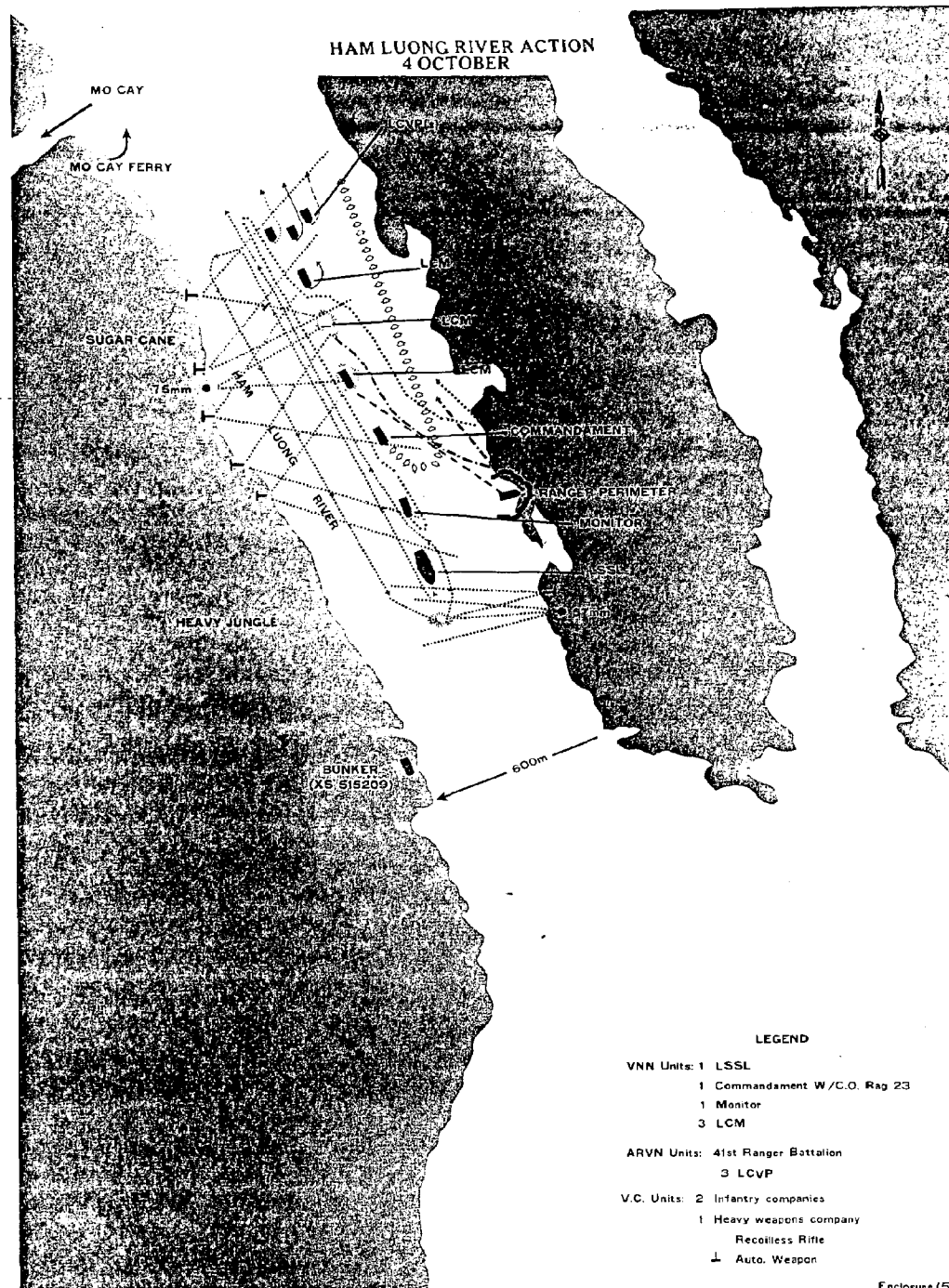
AM - Remained anchored throughout the day.

PM - Underway for Saigon at 2000 with N-5 and VNN Band embarked. Searched no boats.

Monday, 18 Oct

- Arrived at Saigon at 1400.

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Enclosure (5)

ENCLOSURE 4

5-15

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REPORT NO.2

1. The report covers the period 16 September to 23 October 1965, in HQ 114 employed in the following areas: III Coastal Zone.

2. Pertinent results are:

- a. 152 junks searched.
- b. 0 ships searched.
- c. 741 persons inspected.
- d. 3 persons arrested on suspicion.
- e. 0 confirmed VC
- f. 0 VC KIA.
- g. 0 VC WIA.
- h. 0 ARVN KIA.
- i. 0 ARVN WIA.
- j. 0 NGFS missions fired.

(1) Ammo Expended:

- (a) 3"/50 0.
- (b) 81mm 0.
- (c) 40mm 0.
- (d) 20mm 500 (Practice).

k. 0 SAR missions.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~BRIEF SUMMARY OF EVENTS

1. The patrol was routine with no serious incidents.
2. Highlights include the capture of an ARVN deserter, the radar casualty, an exchange visit with an American MSO, the one-day visit to Puolo Cecir De Mer, and the patrol extension.
3. The ship left Saigon on 16 September to patrol from Vung Tau to the northeast in the III Coastal Zone. The ship was on patrol station from 17-24 September, 27 September - 2 October, 5-10 October, 13-18 and 21-23 October. On 25-26 September, and 3-4, 11-12, and 19-20 October, the ship was in Vung Tau for rest periods. The ship returned to Saigon on 23 October, having been extended on patrol nine days.
4. On 19 September the ship took an ARVN deserter from a junk, later turning him over to Vung Tau. The ET was unable to repair the radar, despite strenuous effort and long hours on his part, because of insufficient test equipment and lack of a British-American table of equivalent electronic tubes. Our exchange visit with USS EXCEL (MSO 439) on 22 September was stimulating to the morale of the VNN officers and sailors.
5. While the patrol was extended in length for nine days, no real patrol effort was made during the extension. All patrol effort stopped as of the scheduled end of the patrol, either by design or neglect.
6. The patrol effort was passable and an improvement over the previous patrol, at Nha Trang. The patrol was no better than it was because the CO has no aggressiveness and no sense or urgency. He feels that rewards for good performance of duty are rare, while severe punishment for a mistake is sure. Accordingly, he runs a safe, sure patrol that neither exposes himself to censure nor catches VC.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST TO HIGHER AUTHORITY
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. The USOM kits for poor fishermen are very well received. It is recommended that this program be continued on the present scale under close US supervision.
2. MSC 114 had to make a special trip to Vung Tau on 6 October to pick up the challenge code, then already a week old. There is no apparent reason why the code cannot be distributed to the CSC's seven to ten days before the first of each month. It is recommended that the VNN be advised and assisted to do so.
3. Presently VNN ships submit their work request to the shipyard after their return to Saigon from a patrol. As a result, three to five days pass while the shipyard shuffles the paper work before workers appear even for urgent jobs. It is recommended that ships be able to, and be directed to, mail work requests to Saigon for processing before the ship's return, with the understanding that ships can submit additional ones as necessary upon their return.
4. US and VNN minesweepers are not permitted to stream their gear while on patrol, resulting in a low state of training. It is recommended that US and VNN minesweepers be permitted to stream their gear for training while on patrol. Should it be necessary to respond to an urgent call, they could head for the scene while retrieving their gear with a loss of little time.
5. MSC's have Decca radars from Great Britain, but US and VNN technicians have no table of American equivalents to the British electronic tubes. As a result, they are unable to test tubes, and trouble-shooting and repairs are made much more difficult. It is recommended that a list of American electronic tubes equivalent in values to those in the Decca radar be obtained and provided to the ships and technicians.
6. VNN MSC's sometimes have five or six officers, though there are billets for only four. The result is that assignments and responsibilities are diluted; the spare officers become little more than watch-standers. It is recommended that the VNN be advised to detail only four officers to MSC's: CO, XO, Minesweeping Officer, and Engineering Officer. This personnel change would result in more efficiency on the ships and would free surplus officers for new ships. Also, Sea Force advisors might be asked to determine if surplus billeting exists on other type of ships.

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7. VNN CO's are frequently unimpressed by verbal suggestions and appeals to run a more efficient patrol. It is recommended that Sea Force advisors prepare and maintain, or encourage the VNN's to maintain, a visual display to show daily and cumulative patrol results. Seeing immediately the results of their patrol should give the VNN's a positive stimulus to improve them. While the graphs used on 114 were by no means fully responsible, they did have some influence in increasing the patrol results from 44 junks and 250 people searched on the previous patrol to the 152 junks and 741 people searched on this patrol. Such a display cannot substitute for a continued personal advisory effort, but it may prove to be a worthwhile advisory tool. The contents of the display may vary widely, but some possibilities include:

- a. A day by day bar graph showing how many junks and people are searched each day. (See encl (1) and (2)).
- b. A day by day line graph showing the cumulative total of junks and people searched since the beginning of the patrol.
- c. A bar graph showing the number of junks searched versus the time of day they were searched, to stimulate searching junks at night and during siesta. (See encl (3)).
- d. A line graph showing the daily moving average of time under-way, time effectively used, time available to OTC, etc. (See encl (4)).
- e. A comparison of the present patrol with the results of previous patrols.

If the sailors get into the spirit of the patrol, then the CO and other officers will feel combined pressure from the visual display, their sailors and the advisors to patrol more aggressively, diligently, and efficiently. After the VNN's understand the display and become accustomed to it, then perhaps we can stimulate some inter-ship competition within the VNN to improve patrols even more.

8. The irresponsible maintenance policies of LT CO, CO of 116, not only keep 116 from being used efficiently, but also seriously disrupt the schedules and morale of 114 and 115. Originally due to relieve 114 at Vung Tau on 14 October, 116 is still in Saigon as of the date of this report. It is recommended that the VNN be advised tactfully and firmly that he is a worthless naval officer and that he is detrimental to the naval effort.

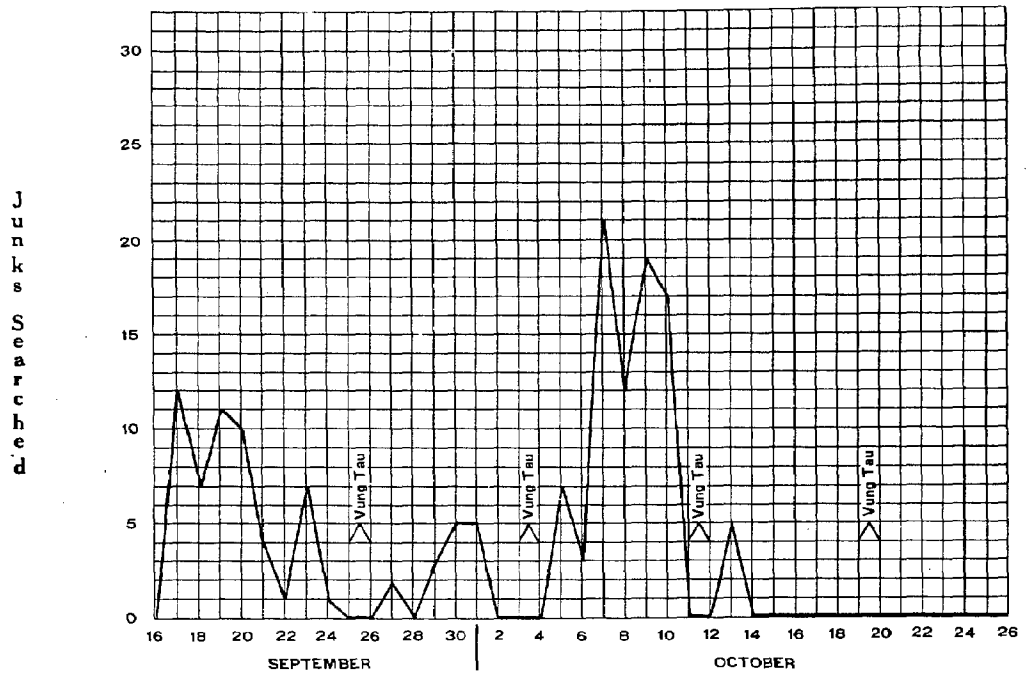
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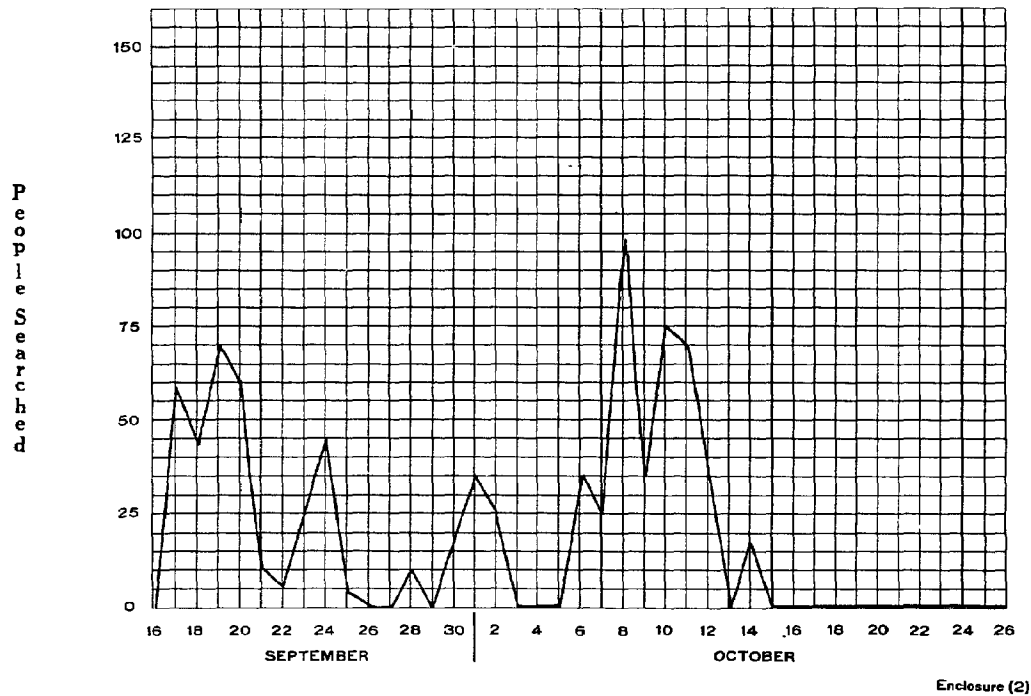
9. Neither a PRC 47 radio nor crypto pubs were available at Vung Tau because of confusion over the location of the radios and uncertainty concerning just who was to issue the pubs. It is recommended that Vung Tau's PRC 47 radios be returned to them for issue and that the policy uncertainty about the issue of crypto pubs be resolved.

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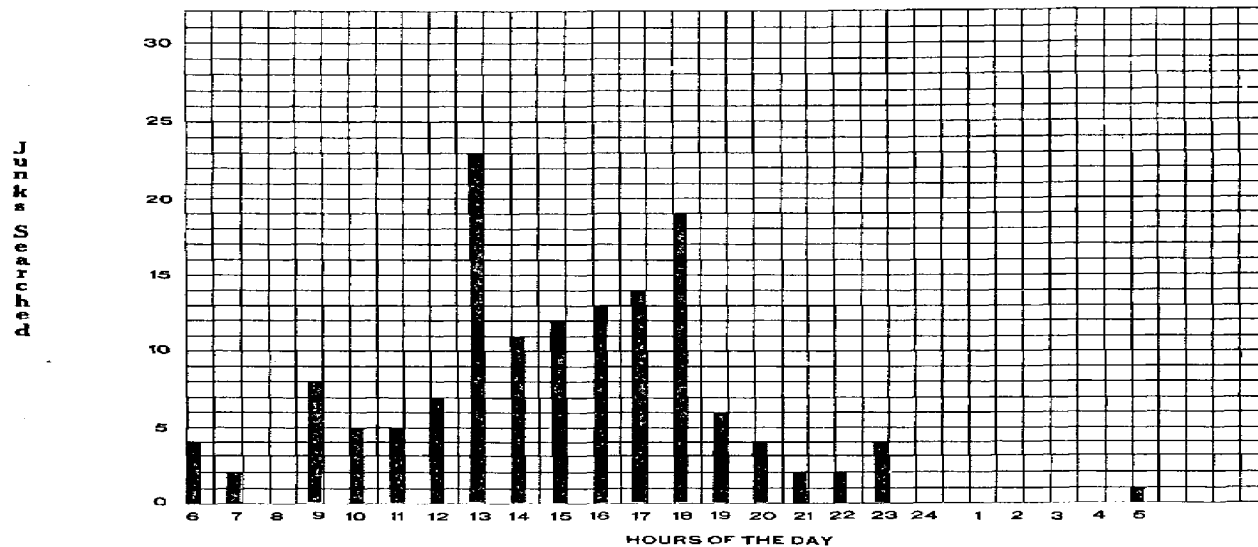
DAILY RECORD OF JUNKS SEARCHED



DAILY RECORD OF PEOPLE SEARCHED

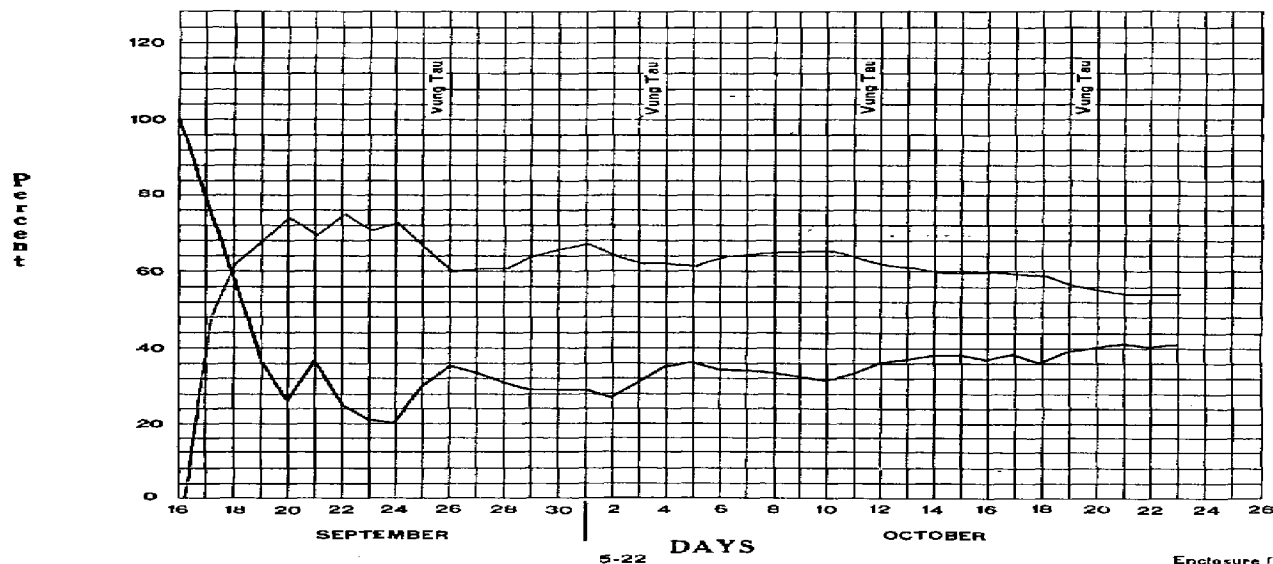


HOURLY FREQUENCY OF JUNKS SEARCHED



Enclosure (3)

[White Box] PERCENT OF TIME SHIP IS UNDERWAY
 [Hatched Box] PERCENT OF TIME SHIP IS EFFECTIVELY UTILIZED
 [Black Box] PERCENT OF TIME SHIP IS NOT AVAILABLE TO O.T.C.



Enclosure (4)

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REPORT NO. 3

1. The report covers the period 7 September 1965 to 12 October 1965 in HQ 610 employed in the following area: First Naval Zone.

2. Pertinent results are:

- a. 169 junks searched.
- b. 0 ships searched.
- c. 902 persons inspected.
- d. 49 persons arrested in suspicion.
- e. 0 Confirmed VC arrested.
- f. 0 VC KIA.
- g. 0 VC WIA.
- h. 0 ARVN KIA.
- i. 0 ARVN WIA.
- j. 0 NGFS missions fired.
(1) Ammo expended: None
- k. 1 SAR mission.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~BRIEF SUMMARY OF EVENTS

HQ 610 departed Saigon on 7 September. While enroute to Danang, it had been assigned the mission of delivering pastries (for use in the annual Vietnamese mid-autumn celebration) to all Sea Force ships in the First, Second, and Third Naval Zones. The patrol effort was hampered throughout the patrol period by an inoperative radar. However, the ship did patrol at night, except during the first two weeks when the weather was bad. The ship's TED transmitter and one reefer were also inoperative throughout the patrol, but this had a negligible effect on the patrol effort. For the greater part of the patrol period, the ship worked on a three-days-on-patrol, one-day-in-port schedule. This schedule is ideal for a PGM, especially one that has a reefer problem and does not operate its evaporator. For patrol purposes, the First Naval Zone is divided into three areas (northern central, southern), and the ships rotated in these areas. Very little contact was made with Coastal Force units. However, coordinated activities were frequently conducted with the CSC's L-19 intelligence flights. Personnel at the CSC, both USN and USCG, were extremely friendly, efficient, and cooperative. It was a pleasure to work with them. No ship's work was accomplished until the last ten days of the patrol period. This seems to be a standard procedure aboard HQ 610 -- no work is done until the time the ship can expect to be relieved and sent back to Saigon. The ship departed Danang on 11 October and arrived at Saigon the following evening.

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ITEMS OF INTEREST TO HIGHER AUTHORITY
AND RECOMMENDATIONS

1. CSC Intelligence Flights. Three officers are assigned to intelligence work at the CSC Danang. Among their other activities, they make intelligence flights twice daily over the First Naval Zone. Sea Force advisors are requested to contact these planes (on circuit 38.4 mcs) whenever they are sighted. The aircraft observer would pass to the ship the location of junk concentrations and also information about current land/sea operations in that area. This information enabled the ship to move quickly to the most probable infiltration areas and to better support operations ashore. This should be established as a standard operating procedure in all the naval zones, if practiceable.
2. Northern Coordinating/Reporting Net. The NCRN is extremely crowded with traffic. One reason for this is the large number of units that use the net. Another reason is that many units insist on using the net for administrative traffic that has nothing to do with Market Time. Another reason is the distance between units, which necessitates frequent message relays and repeats. Assigning a separate net for the Second Naval Zone, with net control at the CSC Nha Trang, would greatly increase the speed and efficiency of Market Time communications.
3. VNN Leave Policy. During the patrol period, the commanding officer of HQ 610 granted routine leave to five of the enlisted men aboard ship. Among them were the leading engineman, the leading electrician, and the leading gunner's mate. Granting leave while the ship is deployed, especially to key personnel, is highly detrimental to the ship's effectiveness. Perhaps a suggestion to the Sea Force Commander to this effect would bring about a review of and change to this policy.
4. PsyWar Gift Packages. Psywar gift packages were obtained from the CSC Danang and distributed to searched junks. The fishermen seemed surprised and genuinely pleased to receive the gifts. The sailors aboard the ship were also happy to have something to give to the people. The most welcomed items in the kits appeared to be the small towels and the plastic containers. It is believed that the containers could be improved by providing a more secure and permanent fastening device for the lids, to replace the rubber bands that presently hold the lids in place. If the gifts are not making friends for the Vietnamese Navy, they are at least making the fishermen more receptive to being searched.

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ANNEX 6

U. S. NAVY ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS
OF VIETNAMESE NAVY COASTAL GROUPS

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U. S. N. ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS
OF
VIETNAMESE NAVY COASTAL GROUPS

Monthly Evaluation Report for November 1965 for Coastal
Group 30

1. General: During the past month there has been a slight but noticeable increase in the number and effectiveness of patrols despite the adverse effect of the northeast monsoon. This is partly due to a marked improvement in discipline and military bearing among the junk division personnel.

The operational readiness of the division has not improved significantly, the major reason being the inordinately long time required to obtain spare parts. An improvement in this area is expected as the result of a program of instruction in preventive maintenance that has been established this month.

2. During the past month an increase in both the number of patrols and their effectiveness has occurred in spite of the hampering effects of the northeast monsoon with its high winds and seas during the day and evening. The patrol doctrine evolved to circumvent the weather is for the junks to get underway as soon as the wind dies down, usually between 2300 and 0100, and make as much northing as possible before the wind and seas increase to their normal velocity and size. The patrol then returns to the south.

The result of this doctrine has been to concentrate the patrol efforts in the night and early morning hours at which times, they are most effective.

3. Personnel Performance: Junk Division 30 received a new commanding officer recently--October 1965, and since that time there has been a definite improvement in discipline and military bearing among the personnel of the division. Proper uniforms are being worn and personnel are engaged in constructive work during work hours. On 27 November the first personnel inspection was held since any U.S. advisors have been assigned to the division.

This has resulted in increased pride among the junkmen and the job they are doing. There is still, however, a great deal to be accomplished in the conduct of patrols. Ahn, perhaps justifiably,

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has been reluctant to leave the base when the executive officer is not there as has been the case for most of this month. With no VN officers aboard it is sometimes difficult to conduct the patrol in an effective manner due to a greater desire on the part of the junkmen to sleep than to stop and search boats, and a reluctance to patrol close to the coast within the FSZ.

The performance of the executive officer Thieu-uy Thuan is not very satisfactory. While on patrol he spends about 75% of the time sleeping and does little to direct the efforts of the patrol. His main use is as an interpreter between the advisors and the junkmen.

4. Personnel Requirements: At the present time there are sufficient personnel, both U.S. and VN, assigned to the division. If, as has been proposed, a sub-base of operations is established at Phan Ri, the assignment of two more advisory personnel, one officer and one enlisted would be required to properly advise both the base and sub-base.

5. Junk Maintenance: Maintenance of the junks is still at a minimum level. A program has been established for the U.S. and the VN enginemmen to check all boats possible each day. During the course of these checks preventative maintenance procedures are emphasized in the hope that the enginemmen on each boat will become accustomed to performing the duties himself. In support of this PM program, schedules for both the 4-D277 and 6-71 engines have been provided for each boat.

6. During the past month base defense has been improved to a considerable degree. There is now barbed wire enclosing the land side of the base with sand bagged emplacements at the most exposed corners. The fishing junks that used to crowd the beach have been moved to provide an open field of fire with very little cover across the beach which is also illuminated at night.

Two sides of the base have no field of fire due, on one side, to the presence of civilian housing and the customs house on the other. On both sides as well as in front of the base sand bags and barbed wire have been erected with embrasures every ten meters.

An attempt is now being made to have the housing torn down to provide a limited field of fire. Also, remaining to be accomplished is to provide overhead protection for the fuel dump and sand bag the machine gun positions on the roof.

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7. Logistics still remains a major problem in that the time required to obtain spare parts for the junks is long resulting in much reduced operation time. Some expendable items have been difficult to obtain. It has also been difficult to obtain equipment for the advisors including batteries for the PRC-25's.

8. Training has been limited to the effort mentioned in paragraph 5. The major difficulty has been the lack of someone sufficiently fluent in Vietnamese and English and with the time to devote to it.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Monthly Evaluation Report for November 1965 for Coastal Group 27

1. PATROL EFFECTIVENESS:

With the addition of the Yabuta junks, we are now able to keep six (6) motorized junks on patrol, and one (1) at the base for emergency purposes. As the junk base is approximately in the middle of the patrol area, we can reach any point in about three (3) hours. The junks are assigned a portion of the area and remain on station for three (3) days. By doing this, they are able to observe the entire area between their boundaries and only return to the base to resupply and take on new crews. We are still using seven (7) sail only junks with good effectiveness by stationing them in the mouths of two (2) major fishing rivers. About eighty (80) percent of all fishing boats entering the ocean must pass the sail onlys and be checked. Although they are manned by only two (2) men, they still do an excellent job. Their effectiveness over all is good to excellent, but there is still reason to believe that the enemy can, to a limited extent, operate under the cover of darkness, as recent intelligence reports indicate.

2. PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE:

Personnel performance is excellent, although the men themselves sometimes feel that they are overworked. The Commanding Officer of the base pushes them hard and a great deal has been accomplished since his arrival. A well constructed and solid pier has been built for the motor junks, a club house and utility house has been bricked-in and they now have almost all the material for two (2) dependent housing units.

On patrol they are effective while underway and checking junks. However, it is felt by the advisors, that they spend a lot of time at anchor unnecessarily.

3. PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS:

The Coastal Group is undermanned by about fifty (50) per cent. They could operate more efficiently with larger crews and a well manned base defense. Part of the crew is still without uniforms. Uniform requirements have been placed upon Nha Trang to no avail. On 27 Nov, the Senior Enlisted Man was transferred, leaving us with no enlisted man who speaks an understandable english. At the same time, two (2) barely qualified radiomen were transferred to Nha Trang, leaving us with a grand total of no qualified radio operators.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~**4. JUNK MAINTENANCE:**

The men can make only minor repairs to the junks without spare parts. The carpenter also makes only minor repairs to the hulls.

5. BASE DEFENSE:

Base defense is excellent and all discrepancies noted by Maj. MEZO on his visit have been corrected. We still need another mortar and two (2) 50 cal. machine guns.

6. LOGISTICS:

Logistics is almost non existent. All supplies are obtained through other channels than the Vietnamese Navy. This will be amplified in report to Logistics Officer (N-4), (In-Country Requisitioning Guide).

7. TRAINING:

There is little formal training at this base. The base is too short handed and the work load is too great at this time for an extensive formal training program in addition to the patrols.

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Monthly Evaluation Report for November 1965 for Coastal Group 26

1. This report is submitted for the month of November 1965.

a. **PATROL EFFECTIVENESS:** Improving. The junkmen are performing a little better each week, particularly if there is a Vietnamese officer on board. The patrols for our southern area (Cam Ranh Bay) have had little activity this month, but a day and night patrol is maintained. The junkmen have become quite familiar with most of the fishermen in this area, as the fishermen are from the same village for the most part. Fishing itself, however, has been cut down considerably in the past several months for at least three reasons; one, the weather and seas are more severe at this time of year; two, there have been many moon bright nights which stops night fishing entirely because of the fisherman's dependence on darkness and three, a great many of the fishermen now work in some part of the Cam Ranh Bay complex as laborers. Therefore, although the patrols are maintained the fishing activity in the area has decreased sharply thus giving the junks less to do. In the northern sector 1 day and 2 night patrols are maintained. The biggest problem in this area at the present time is to insure the latest restrictions on fishing grounds are promulgated and understood by the fishermen. Many of the fishermen in this area were not carrying papers until recently and there is evidence of Black Market operations between U.S. and other foreign ships and the Vietnamese although nothing has yet been confiscated. This area will require more concentrated effort, particularly by the Vietnamese Officers, to bring it under complete control.

b. **PERSONNEL PERFORMANCE:** The junkmen, for the most part, know what to do and how to do it, however it is many times extremely difficult to get them to perform. This is particularly true if there is no Vietnamese officer present. Starting out on patrol with weapons not ready, breaking darken ship rules for no apparent reason, and failing to thoroughly search junks because one of the junkmen recognizes the fisherman are recurring deficiencies which will only be corrected by the Vietnamese Officers and Petty Officers insisting that patrols be conducted properly every time. The Commanding Officer, Lt(jg) Thu, spends far too little time on patrol. The reason given many times is that one officer must remain on the base at all times, however, the officer can always be in communication with the base while on patrol so the excuse is not valid. The problem is compounded here at CG 26 because there are two different starting points for patrols, the home base of Binh Ba Island,

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and the northern sector which operates out of Cau Da. The commanding officer is very familiar with the southern patrol area, but usually sends his executive officer to the northern sector. The executive officer, Ensign Thuong, is becoming more effective all the time. He patrols more often and is more familiar with the patrol areas and mode of proper patrolling.

c. PERSONNEL REQUIREMENTS: CG 26 now had 10 operational motor junks with a promise of 2 more Yabutas within the next two months. The junk base at present has a total of only 78 men, including radiomen, corpsmen and base personnel. The amount of personnel at present is insufficient and with the arrival of more Yabutas, the situation will be critical. The officer situation is the same primarily because of the two different operating points. If this base had another officer there could be concentration on both areas at the same time rather than having one officer going from one area to another for several days at a time. Advisory personnel have essentially the same problem because with 3 men it is necessary to have all three go to each area at the same time rather than split between home base and Cau Da.

d. JUNK MAINTENANCE: Down time because of maintenance has been kept to a minimum. Although spare parts and proper tools are at a minimum there are several excellent enginemen on the base and they manage to keep the junks operational most of the time. A program of hull preservation should be instigated at the repair facility to assure longer hull life. The junk maintenance program is far from perfect but it has been one of the lesser problem areas.

e. BASE DEFENSE: Base defense is extremely poor, primarily due to apparent lack of interest on the part of the commanding officer. Trip flares, for example, are on board, but have not been implemented. Many areas need barbed wire and apparently no effort has been made to obtain same. Sentry posts are improperly positioned and general quarters posts are obsolescent and inadequate. The executive officer is taking an interest in the problem and some improvement is expected in the coming weeks. A complete report on the problem was submitted to the commanding officer by Major MEZO, U. S. Army, and with enthusiasm provided by the XO some of the problems may soon be solved. A great deal of the disinterest stems from the fact that the base is situated on the island, and also because VC activity in this area is notably low. In summary, a great many improvements can be made in base defense in the future with the materials already at hand, and with a little initiative on the part of the CO and XO. Hopefully, progress in this area will be

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forthcoming in next month's report.

f. LOGISTICS: Some progress has been noted in this area. Spare parts still remain at a minimum but many times it is the lack of foresight of CG personnel at fault rather than the system. Two caliber .50 machine guns and a 60 mm mortars as well as badly needed ammunition have been received the past month. Some new uniforms have also been received, however, the rice shipment for October has still not arrived. The commanding officer has made arrangements for different means of procurement which will presumably rectify the situation. Additional: base stands for two of the three newly received caliber .50 machine guns have not been received; thus, in effect CG 26 has only one operational caliber .50 machine gun.

g. TRAINING: Some training is conducted in weapons, drills, boat handling, etc., by the executive officer and leading petty officers, but much more is needed. As the base defense problems are worked out, more emphasis on training should be forthcoming.

h. PSYWAR: Some progress apparent in this area. Arrangements have been made with the dental and medical officers at Cam Ranh Bay to visit the junk base and the village of Binh Ba located on the island. Six medical representatives visit on a weekly basis and have been well received. Use of the psywar kits (white plastic buckets, etc.) are considered valuable and have been distributed on patrols on which a Vietnamese officer is embarked. The psywar candy is not being well received, and seems to be considered a rather tasteless and useless gift by the Vietnamese.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Monthly Evaluation Report for November 1965 for Coastal Group 25

1. In accordance with instructions, the following report is hereby submitted.

a. Patrol Effectiveness: Patrol effectiveness was hampered somewhat during the month of November. Coastal Group 25 has a unique problem in that it is surrounded by an area with a heavy VC concentration. Nearby hamlets and villages contain a large number of people seemingly sympathetic to or sufficiently dominated by the VC. The hamlets and villages each have their individual guerilla squads, youth guerilla squads, intelligence cells, executive committees etc. Although a Coastal Group situated in such a position may not be in itself unique, what does make this one so is the fact that there are no friendly forces in the area with the exception of about 25 popular forces who regularly run to the junk base every time the VC in the area move. On the 19th of November, the VC decided apparently to kill some more PF (not the first time it's happened) and as a result 15 were killed, 4 captured, 2 missing and the remainder straggled over the hill and onto the junk base. It was a week later before forces large enough to combat the estimated VC force in the area came in. As you can readily imagine, patrols out of CG 25 virtually came to a halt during this time with, of course, the exception of patrols right around the base area for purposes of protection and defense. Further, our (VN) intelligence had informed us at intervals, other times during the month, when the VC were moving around the base and of impending attacks. Obviously, when reports of this nature (usually reliable) are received by the base CO, he keeps his junks patrolling very "close to home." Patrol effectiveness was also restricted to some extent by extremely bad weather. As a practical matter there are certain times during the monsoon season when a junk is not an adequate vessel in which to patrol. I find it hard to prod a coxswain or petty officer into staying out in a storm when I can't even see two feet ahead of me because of such heavy rain or in seas with such large sea states or large swells as to endanger the junks and people aboard them. This month CG 25 had one junk towed to Cau Da Repair Facility due to the fact that it was out in such heavy seas that the flapper valve in the engine exhaust could not close properly and sea water got into the engine when it entered the exhaust pipe as the junk was taking heavy rolls. The type junk involved was a command junk but the Repair Facility Advisor assured me that it would happen in the same manner on a Yabuta in a heavy sea. He went on to say that I was to remember that these

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junks were nothing but little wooden boats and not steel-hulled ships. There is a brighter side to patrol effectiveness. Since CG 24 is now covering Vung Ro Bay (the northern boundry of CG 25 patrol area) and CG 26 has been assigned to patrol out of Nha Trang (CG 25 old southern boundry, so to speak), CG 25 has only the Hon Heo peninsula, i. e., Hon Khoi Bay, Ben Goi Bay and Van Fong Bay to look after, in effect, and this permits patrol in an area not too far from "home"; patrolling junks can make a guide dash (2 hours) back to the base if needed. Normally CG 25 attempts to have at least 3 motorized junks patrolling their area at night, and the CO has given instructions to patrol all night without anchoring. The night patrols vary from 10 to 18 hours in duration. The base has 8 motorized junks and with an average of 2 at the repair facility and an average of 1 at Nha Trang for supplies (we transport 85%, roughly, of our own supplies, i. e., fuel, ammunition, food, etc.) and an average of 3 on night patrol, this leaves an average of 1 junk for day patrol usually with sail junks, and 1 at the base 24 hours a day for crew rest and emergency use. Compared to the effectiveness of other junk bases in terms of junks and people checked, amount of time spent on patrol and number of VC (verified by Second Naval Zone intelligence) CG 25 ranks near the top of the groups, if not at the top. I am convinced that CG 25 is perhaps 75% successful in its mission and this figure could only be elevated by eliminating some of the detriments to patrol effectiveness previously mentioned. Additional items affecting patrol effectiveness will be mentioned under the appropriate topic subsequent to this.

b. Personnel Performance: Personnel performance of the average junkman, I find, depends on what it is that the officers and petty officers demand from them. The average junkman is not the epitomy of efficiency, however, he does take a certain pride in the appearance of his junk and the appearance and good working condition of his engine and armament on board. His main shortcoming is that he has no stamina and consequently cannot "go" all day and night as an American might if necessary. Contrary to popular belief or rumor, this advisor finds that the junkman do not get seasick on rough seas and that they are not afraid of VC (at least this would apply to the junkmen at CG 25). Further, the junkmen at CG 25 seem to do an extremely good job on engine repair and preventative maintenance. The EN1 attached to the CG 25 Advisory Team is impressed. Along the same line, he states that the junkmen are anxious to learn all about the engines of the various junks; and when he makes a relatively major repair, the enginemmen from all the motorized junks at the base at the time crowd around to see what it is exactly that he's doing. The one additional aspect of personnel

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performance that might be pointed out is that this advisor has not, to this date, seen a really good coxswain. The petty officers are generally a pretty competent lot. As can be readily imagined, what they demand of the junkmen depends upon their pre-patrol orders from the XO or CO. It seems as though most of the petty officers assigned to the base have spent some time during their past in the army. Therefore, they have a good background for their job at a Coastal Group which encompasses the use of army and navy oriented abilities. These petty officers are respected by the junkmen who work under them; in turn they are extremely respectful toward the XO and the CO of the base. The XO of the base has been there for approximately the last month. The advisor has the following comments to make about him. He is extremely competent and hard-working. For the most part he regards advisors (and all the information needed for their reports) as a nuisance. He speaks excellent English. He is, I feel, overly apprehensive about CG 25 being overrun by VC (this could be due to the fact that he's just arrived). Consequently, his first concern seems to be base defense and not patrol. This advisor spent the past three weeks at the base at Hon Khoi and as a result of several minor clashes he had with the XO (the CO now trusts the XO for routine liaison because of the XO's superior proficiency in the use of English), there is now an understanding between us. The daily patrol report information is now given to the advisor every morning without having to ask for it and anything unusual is immediately reported to the advisor whether it concerns something in regard to a patrol or intelligence concerning base security. The XO is a very able VN Ensign, however, he has the idea that there is nothing he can't do or doesn't know about. He does not go on patrols. The CO of the base is a very hard-working, efficient person. He appears to be very proficient overall in the performance of his job. He accepts most of the advisor's suggestions quite readily and is willing to try just about anything at least once. His use of English is not on the same level with his new XO, however, he can speak enough to express most of his ideas and can understand it well enough to follow most of what the advisor has to say. In view of the fact that his base has been under attack quite often, he has a tendency to put this aspect of his job ahead of the patrol function at times. There seems to be a genuine affection and high regard for this officer by his men; as a result he seems to be able to get good performance out of them. He does not generally go on patrols.

c. Personnel Requirements: The personnel requirements of CG 25 are not being met to a large extent. The allowance for this base calls for 162 men and at the end of November there were 100

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men assigned. Of these 100 men, 7 were in the hospital, there were 3 deserters, 2 men were in training programs and 3 men assigned to a motorsail junk which is sitting at Cau Da waiting orders for transfer to the Third Naval Zone; there were 4 men assigned to a junk sent to CG 25 from CG 22 which "Lost" an injector on the way down and has been in Cau Da ever since awaiting repairs (both major and minor). Further, there is a Command Junk with its crew of 4 at the repair facility for minor hull repairs. Then it so happened that there were 2 additional Yabutas down at Nha Trang loading supplies which had crews of 4 men each and there was a petty officer with them (having 2 junks at the repair facility and 1 or 2 out for supplies is about average). As a result, I can say with a fair amount of accuracy that there are always about 70 personnel at the base and on routine patrols. About 40 men are needed every night for base defense and this leaves about 30 men from which we must subtract the 2 officers; 3 medics, and 5 radiomen who have their own watches. The remaining 20 men can man 4 junks (4 crewmen and 1 petty officer per junk). Theoretically, this gives us 3 for night patrol and 1 for day patrol. This of course assumes these junks patrol 7 days a week. It also, in effect, takes every last man off CG 25's less efficient but nevertheless useful Sail-Only junks. It would seem quite obvious additional men are required in order to better carry out the function of Coastal Surveillance.

d. Junk Maintenance: Junk maintenance was definitely an area where CG 25 showed marked improvement over previous months. This was triggered by the addition of an EN1 to the advisory team. Upon his arrival he began immediately to instruct the junkmen in engine maintenance as he made minor repairs. As a result of his arrival and an increased awareness of the importance of good engine maintenance, preventative and otherwise, on the part of the junkmen, engine breakdown time has been kept to a minimum during the month of November. However, greater gains could be made in this area if each advisory team, or the VN at each Coastal Group would get the proper tools and spare parts with which to work. Until this happens, the EN1 cannot be used to capacity; he is capable of making some major repairs with the proper help. Hull maintenance during the month was average, with 2 motorized junks being given new paint jobs. Generally speaking, the junkmen take a certain amount of pride in the way their respective junks look. Even the Sail-Only junks assigned, with the exception of about 3, are kept up very well.

e. Base Defense: Base defense has improved considerably

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during the month of November. This was due primarily to recent attack on the CG 25 base which in turn brought about the arrival of badly needed barbed wire and fence posts (which had been "on order" for quite some time) and about 40 men from the Second Naval Zone Headquarters. Thus, adequately stocked with men and material, the defense perimeter of the base is being improved considerably. CG 25 has two mortars which it employs to good advantage when under attack. It was illustrated to this advisor during the month that these are essential for defense of that particular base. However, due to the heavy drain on ammunition during the recent attacks, the base stockpile is dangerously low. Efforts are being made to rebuild it. Three claymore mines were set out during the recent attacks during November. However, mines are generally not used by the base. It is conceded, however, by the CO, that mine fields will be set up upon completion of the new fences around the base.

f. Logistics: Logistics was an area that improved considerably as well, the month of November. Again, this was in the realm of base defense items. No matter what the item needed, the CO now religiously follows the practice of doing all the proper paperwork necessary for requisitioning, and gives copies of everything to the advisor. However, the base badly needs and cannot get, concertina, fenceposts, stakes, sufficient 60 MM mortar illuminating rounds, barrels for diesel fuel, sandbags and tripods for two .50 cal. machineguns. Also CG 25 does the vast majority of its own logistic transportation which, of course, ties up a junk that could otherwise be used to good advantage for coastal patrol.

g. Training: Training during the month of November consisted of 1 man being in "engineman school" in Nha Trang, another being at "Camera school" in Saigon and the enginemen at CG 25 helping the EN1 advisor on repairs for three weeks out of the month of November. One very big shortcoming that CG 25 does have is men operating the 2 60 MM mortars at the base that are not as proficient at their job as they might be. An effort is being made to bring someone to the base for purposes of instruction, or in the alternative, bringing a petty officer from the base to Nha Trang for instruction. As far as routine day to day training goes, the junkmen get on the job training in both aspects of their jobs, patrol and base defense, during the month of November.

h. PsyWar: The month of November was a good month in regard to the PsyWar aspect of the advisors job. Little buckets with soap needles and thread, etc, were distributed early in November with, I think, good effects. Small packets of candy were also

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distributed but this advisor questions the merit of this; it seems that the only people who like the candy are the junkmen and I think that maybe due to the fact that they think they're getting away with something when they get a hold of a packet and eat the candy. During the latter part of November I took some pictures of a small boy from a fishing village who had a badly deformed face. The pictures have been forwarded to LCDR BAKER, PsyWar Advisor who will, I hope be able to bring the boy and his father to Saigon so the boy can have an operation. If the boy can be helped the value of the help in terms of the PsyWar program would be very great indeed.

i. Advisor's Comments: It is my opinion that the month of November has been a good month overall, in terms of things accomplished by the advisory effort, but especially in terms of base defense and junk maintenance. However, I would like to point out that more could be accomplished if the advisors could work out of the base as a 4 man team. You cannot ask a EN1 to work on engines all day and then patrol all night, for example. The point to be made is simply that the advisory effort at CG 25 may be effective, but not as effective as it could conceivably be.

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ANNEX 7

U. S. NAVY ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS
OF VIETNAMESE NAVY RIVER ASSAULT GROUPS

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U.S. N. ADVISOR REPORTS ON OPERATIONS OF VIETNAMESE
RIVER ASSAULT GROUPS

Report of Operations of Vietnamese River Assault Group 22

1. Identity of op: Resupply of Dau Tieng, XT 483 462
2. Dates of op: 5 - 7 July 1965.
3. Location: Saigon River from Saigon to Dau Tieng.
4. Control HQ: 5th Division.
5. U.S. Advisors:
 - a. At 5th Division
LCDR J. R. Goodrich
Lt M. L. Mc Guire
 - b. With RAG
Lt T. R. Thompson
GMGC J. Poirier
6. Task Organization: 3 Monitor, 7 LCM-6, 2 LCVP, 8 FOM, 8 Civil Guard LCVP & 2 Civilian motor barges.
7. Supporting Forces: L-19 aircraft at all times, UTT on call for "up" transit and airborne from about 0745 until 1100. Artillery along entire route from Thu Dau Mot to Dau Tieng except one small area at XT 585310.
8. Intelligence: Entire transit from Thu Dau Mot to Dau Tieng would be through VC controlled territory.
9. Mission:
 - a. Resupply of Dau Tieng with about 100 tons of 155 ammunition, small arms ammunition, rice, gasoline and some corrugated sheet steel.
 - b. Transport of 4 half tracks out of Dau Tieng.
 - c. An added requirement to evacuate an ARVN unit out of Ben Suc (XT 573337) including civilian officials, dependents and some light equipment. This requirement was laid on after the mission was in progress.

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10. Concept of op: As stated in 9 above.

11. Execution:

Time	Event
<u>5 July</u>	
1700	Completed loading ammunition at Ben Loi.
1800	Underway for check-point "E" (TDM).
1810	Established communications with control HQ.
1905	Passed point "M" (Lai Thieu Bridge).
2000	Arrived at Thu Dau Mot (XT 805135).
<u>6 July</u>	
0130	Loaded troops.
0215	Underway. Established communications with control HQ.
0300	Received light sniper fire at XT 768176
0315	Flares look like "Roman Candles". VC attempt to draw fire. Established communications with Aloft 16.
0427	Passed point "F" (XT 715210).
0515	Passed point "N" (XT 670250).
0615	One FOM lost steering control & taken under tow.
0625	Passed point "P" (XT 670295).
0745	Passed point "A" (XT 590334 - Ben Suc).
0800	Lead Monitor Mined at XT 586310. Boat badly shaken, but diver inspection showed bottom not holed. 3 wounded sent to Ben Suc for evacuation by helo. Two others with minor injuries. 40mm gun mount warped & cannot be trained. The electrical wire

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: from the mine recovered. UTT used against
: snipers on hill above boats (south bank of river).
:
0900 : Monitor pulled off the bank.
:
0915 : Helo took wounded on board & returned to Saigon.
:
1000 : Used UTT to strafe the following areas before boats
: pass them:
: a. From XT 532360 to XT 517364 along south
: bank of river.
: b. From XT 520384 to XT 522398 along east
: bank of river.
:
1110 : Passed point "Q" (XT 510400).
:
1230 : Arrived at point "R" (Dau Tieng). Secured communi-
: cations.
:
1330 : Established communications with "Viper 3" (L-19).
: Requested two air strikes be placed on stand-by
: as follows:
: Strike a. Along south bank of river from XT
: 586320 down river to XT 597326. HE,
: Napalm & strafing requested.
: Strike b. From XT 674296 to XT 674283 along
: east bank of river. HE, Napalm &
: strafing requested.
:
1430 : Observed unloading of boats. Ammunition badly mis-
: handled (See advisor comments).
:
1600 : Departed Dau Tieng. Half track vehicles loaded in 4-
: LCM. One LCM took a 3/4 ton truck & a trailer
: not previously planned. Two LCM loaded troops,
: some self defense & some rotating out of Dau
: Tieng back to Saigon area.
:
1700 : Passed point "Q" (XT 510400).
:
1710 : Boats subjected to light sniper fire from vicinity of
: village at XT 522374. Return fire from boats set
: houses on fire which rapidly spread to other
: houses. Command monitor hit by one bullet.
:
1725 : Air strike being made as requested on area (a) (see
: 1330 comment).

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1735 : Passed point "V" (XT 537368). From this point to
: point "P" (XT 670295) the boats maintained steady
: fire against the river banks.
:
1740 : House at XT 543362 destroyed by 40mm gun fire.
:
1800 : Arrived at Ben Suc (XT 573337) to take on passen-
: gers. Most loaded into Civil Guard boats, but
: some including dependents loaded into LCM #1504.
:
1820 : Requested air strike on area (b), but aircraft not
: available (see 1330 comment).
:
1830 : Departed Ben Suc.
:
1840 : Entered area where monitor mined. Saw evidence of
: air strike. Used UTT to strafe hill above as
: boats passed.
:
1910 : VC mining attempt at XT 596328. Just missed an LCM
:
1920 : Passed point "A" (XT 590334).
:
1925 : VC mining attempt at XT 603336. Was directly a-
: cross river from command monitor, about 30
: yards.
:
1930 : UTT directed to strike area (b) (See 1330 & 1820
: comments) with rockets.
:
2010 : Passed point "P" (XT 670295). A large fire burning
: at XT 673294 as result of UTT rockets.
:
2035 : Passed point "N" (XT 670250).
:
2040 : FOM hit by mine at XT 673235. Steering gear knock-
: ed out, no personnel casualties. A fire fight be-
: tween boats & snipers at this point lasted for
: about 5 minutes.
:
2107 : Passed point "F" (XT 715210).
:
2110 : The lead LCM, #1504, was struck by mines. It is be-
: lieved that a string of mines was planted across
: the river, see enclosure (1). A heavy fire fight
: developed.
:

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2115 : The command monitor arrived at the scene of the min-
: ing (XT 724219). It was at this time that I heard
: and observed a rocket being fired into the LCM.
: The lead FOM & LCVP were searching the water
: for survivors with their searchlights. Heavy fire
: was received from the north bank of the river &
: some light fire from the south bank. All boats
: began beaching on south bank of the river. UTT's
: were requested at this time.

2130 : Called artillery on north side of river at XT 725227 -
: 725225. This was a 40 round mission directed by
: forward observer in L-19 aircraft. Direction was
: outstanding & we could have taken artillery even
: closer.

2145 - : The boats were beached. During this period of time
2330 : there was little action. Several artillery missions
: were laid on the area and at about 2200 UTT were
: on the scene. It was during this time that I learn-
: ed that a second LCM, #1528, had also been hit by
: what we thought was 57mm recoilless rifle fire.
: Investigation of fragments later found proved this
: to be incorrect. The VC were apparently using
: 2.75" aircraft rockets. The first rocket pene-
: trated LCM #1528 in the port side of the tank deck,
: damaged the rear end of the 3/4 ton truck and
: wounded one man. The second round passed under
: the canopy of the LCM, struck a man on the op-
: posite side of the truck & killed him.

2250 : My counterpart was told to wait for a decision by the
: VNN CNO on what course of action to take.

2315 : Calls for help were heard coming from the north bank
: of the river. Two FOM were sent to investigate,
: but could see no one. This went on for about 20-
: 30 minutes. We believe that it was an attempt by
: VC to lure a boat into a trap.

2340 : Received instructions from VNN CNO to proceed to
: Thu Dau Mot.

7 July :

0005 : Underway for point "E" (Thu Dau Mot).

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0043 : Passed point "Z" (XT 750200).

0145 : Arrived Thu Dau Mot, disembarked troops and off
: loaded half-tracks.
:

12. Results: Resupply of Dau Tieng accomplished. However, only 60 tons of supplies were carried vice planned 100 tons.

13. Administrative Matters:

a. Supply - the RAG was resupplied with machine gun and mortar ammunition at Thu Dau Mot on the morning of 7 July.

b. Maintenance - none performed underway.

c. Casualties - It is estimated that there were 50 persons on LCM #1504. Of these, six were crew, eleven dependents and the remainder were troops from both Dau Tieng and Ben Suc and civilian cadre from Ben Suc. 5 of the crew were injured, but not badly - one is still missing. One family was rescued, soldier with wife and baby. All other dependents are missing. About 10 troops were rescued. Estimate 35 still missing.

d. Transportation - NA

e. Communications - Good at all times. One L-19 aircraft failed to relay two messages from RAG advisor to control HQ.

14. Special Equipment & Techniques: Two FOM equipped with mine detecting sonar were accompanying the RAG, but were not used. The C.O. of the RAG said that trained operators were not sent with these two FOM and that he did not have anybody to operate the equipment. Mine sweeping was employed during the trip using a grapnel drag. Two LCVP were equipped for sweeping. One drag was lost on the "up" trip.

15. Advisor's Comments:

a. Upon arrival at Dau Tieng I went to the local American Compound where I stayed about two hours. At about 1430 I returned to the boats to check on the loading progress. Most of the cargo that we carried up had been unloaded. One LCM still had a number of 155mm projectiles on board and they were being off-loaded by the boat sailors as the local working party hadn't started on them yet. The sailors were throwing the projectiles off of the boat into about a foot of water. Many of the projectiles were hitting on others. Some were in deeper water. I saw several that had the protective band broken

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off thus exposing the rotating ring to damage. In many ways the RAG CO's actions here are understandable: There is no security in Dau Tieng and he had to get underway. Many soldiers were available for unloading but were not used.

b. A good part of the transit was made during hours of darkness, frequent firing of tracer & flares was observed. These were VC attempts to draw fire from the boats. During these hours of darkness the boats did no firing unless directly assaulted.

c. I was particularly impressed with the manner in which the RAG reacted to ambush & mining situations as they developed. RAG-22 commanding officer has a good sound knowledge of VC tactics. He is extremely knowledgeable about the rivers and makes good use of tidal information & river characteristics when planning a transit. I believe that some of the attempted mining during this operation would have been more successful had he not applied this knowledge.

16. Attempted salvage of equipment from LCM #1504:

a. Immediately after the decision had been made to depart the area where LCM #1504 had been mined, planning operations for salvage of equipment and picking up of bodies began. The waterfront at Thu Dau Mot was the scene of much activity on the morning of 7 July. Ammunition was removed from the damaged monitor to the other two. An ammunition resupply of 40mm, 20mm, .30 cal., .50 cal. & 81mm mortar was received from Saigon. ARVN troops arrived and were embarked on two LCM. ARVN demolitions people, VNN UDT personnel and shipyard diving personnel were loaded on board one LCM to be used as a salvage barge. An air compressor was also loaded on board. One battalion of ARVN were sent by road to secure the area south of the salvage operation. Artillery had been laid into the river and surrounding area all night to prevent VC attempts to salvage equipment.

b. Execution:

Time	Event
7 July	
1215	Got underway from Thu Dau Mot enroute XT724219 to attempt to salvage weapons & ammunition from sunken LCM and to recover bodies. The damaged monitor, damaged LCM #1528 and 4 FOM (two with disabled steering) were left at Thu Dau Mot.

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1317 : At XT 755205 received light sniper fire. From this
: point on to objective the boats maintained con-
: stant fire on the banks of the river.
:
1400 : Arrived at objective area and debarked troop on north
: bank to secure the salvage area. The marker
: buoy on LCM #1504 was readily visible.
:
1430 : Salvage LCM hooked on to LCM #1504 and divers went
: into the water.
:
1530 : Recovered one body that came floating down the river.
: Divers made several trips to LCM #1504, but
: were unable to free the guns as their securing
: pins were bent. Only two 20mm magazines were
: recovered. Explosives were placed in the boat
: (estimate 300 pounds) and the area was evacuated.
:
1700 : Explosive charge set off. Oil & debris floated to
: surface.
:
1730 : Embarked troops and departed the area.
:
1915 : Arrived Thu Dau Mot.
:

Comment: While the salvage operation was in progress a scout-
ing party from the RAG, one officer & several enlisted, landed on the
north bank of the river. They found the place from which mining was
controlled and evidence of two .50 caliber machinegun emplacements.

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Senior U.S.N. Advisor, 3d Naval Zone comments on
Report of Operations of Vietnamese River Assault Group 22
(period 5-7 July 1965)

1. Planning. A total of four meetings were held to plan this operation.

a. The first occurred on 2 June 65 and was held at 5th Division Headquarters. The assistant advisor, Third Naval Zone met with the G4 advisor, 5th Division and one of his counterparts to discuss possible dates and amounts of cargo to be carried. Since the RAG was capable of hauling only 40 tons plus one company of troops, the Navy's position of not making the run for less than 60 tons was explained and it was agreed that the resupply mission would be delayed until 5th Division was able to obtain funds in order to hire civilian lift capability to bring the total amount of cargo up to the optimum of 100 tons.

b. On 22 June 1965, a second meeting was held at Phu Loi (5 Div CP) and was attended by the Senior Advisor, Third Naval Zone, his assistant, 5th Division G4 Advisor, 5th Division G3 Advisor, 5th Division Artillery Advisor and U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force liaison officers. The subjects discussed again were (a) the amount of cargo to be carried, (b) artillery support, (c) air support. Contrary to the previous agreements obtained on 2 June, the amount of cargo to be carried was again reduced to approximately 40 tons. The possibility of withdrawing U.S. Navy advisor support from the proposed operation was suggested and the meeting broke up with the agreement that 5th Division would in fact attempt to procure the additional civilian lift capability to provide a total of 100 tons lift.

c. A third meeting was held in the III Corps Chief of Staff's office on 1 July 65 and was attended by the Chief of Staff III Corps, 5th Div G4, 5th Div G3 representative, G4 III Corps, Assistant Third Naval Zone Commander, III Corps G4 Advisor, 5th Div G-4 Advisor, Senior Advisor Third Naval Zone, and the Assistant Third Naval Zone Advisor. The amount of cargo was agreed upon as 800 rounds (complete) of 155mm Howitzer ammunition and sufficient rice, POL and miscellaneous supplies to bring the total lift requirement to 100 tons. 5th Division would procure civilian barges to carry the difference between what the Navy could carry and the total lift requirement. The Navy agreed to transport four half tracks plus a 3/4 ton truck from Dau Tieng to Thu Dau Mot.

d. The fourth and final meeting was held at Phu Loi on 3 Jul 65. Those in attendance were:

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(1) Third Naval zone commander - Senior Adv Third Naval zone.

(2) Assistant Third Naval Commander - Assistant Adv Third Naval zone.

(3) CO RAG 22 Advisor RAG 22

(4) 5th Div G-3 5th Div G3 Advisor

(5) 5th Div Artillery Commander - 5th Div Artillery Advisor

(6) 5th Div G4 5th Div G4 Advisor

(7) US Army Air LNO

(8) US Air Force LNO

(9) III Corps Artillery Advisor

e. The following points were discussed and agreed upon:

(1) The RAG would load out on 5 July at the Ben Loi Bridge (Point O) and upon completion would proceed to Thu Dau Mot to join up with the Binh Duong Section RF Boat company and civilian barges.

(2) The convoy would depart Thu Dau Mot at approximately 060230H proceed to Dau Tieng, off load and return immediately in order to take advantage of the hours of darkness.

(3) 5th Division would provide artillery preplanned fires on both the trip up and back and on an on call basis. ARVN forward artillery observers were provided (one in the boats and one airborne in an L-19).

(4) A section of A-1-E or A-1-H Sky Raider aircraft would be on standby at Bien Hoa Air Base and would conduct a strike on the south bank of the Ben Suc Curve just prior to the convoy's arrival on the return trip. (letter).

(5) A heavy and a light fire team (UH 1B (Armed) would be on standby at Phu Loi throughout the operation.

(6) Continuous L-19 aircraft coverage would be provided between Thu Dau Mot and Dau Tieng (up and back).

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(7) The Chief of Staff, 5th Div was briefed on the plan and gave his approval.

2. EXECUTION. The following information concerning decisions and actions taken at the CP are provided herewith:

a. In the evening of 5 Jul, a message from 5th Division to CO RAG 22 directing him to delay departure from Thu Dau Mot until 060630H was shown to the Senior Advisor Third Naval zone. SA Third Naval zone and assistant Third Naval Zone Commander went to the Chief of Staff and explained that this change would force the convoy to travel through waters strongly suspected of being mined during daylight and that a daylight transit of this area would increase the possibility of a successful mining attempt. Also this change would delay the arrival of the boats at the Ben Suc curve four hours beyond the time the fixed wing aircraft could make their prestrike on the return run. The Chief of Staff agreed to change the order back to the originally planned schedule.

b. At approximately 060230H a second message from 5th Division to CO RAG 22 was shown to the SA Third Naval Zone, directing the RAG to evacuate ARVN troops, dependents, and civilian officials from the Ben Suc outpost (check point A). An attempt was made to obtain permission to leave the 3/4 ton truck at Dau Tieng in order to have the additional space to carry passengers. Permission was denied.

c. The heavy fire team (UH1B) was called back by III Corps to support another operation, leaving only the light fire team. This occurred during the morning of the 6th.

d. It is felt that it should be pointed out that only a ten man working party was provided by the consignee at Dau Tieng to off load cargo. CO RAG 22 requested additional help from the ARVN district chief but was refused. The actions of the sailors in off loading the boats may be better understood when it is realized that they had been at battle stations since 0200 that morning and they had the most dangerous and difficult part of the trip ahead of them (the return run) and they were quite anxious to complete off loading in order to meet the planned schedule.

e. Prior to the ambush which occurred in the vicinity of point F at 062110, Assistant advisor Third Naval zone suggested to 5th Div Artillery Commander that he again fire the preplanned concentrations in that vicinity. He was informed that artillery had just fired 40 rounds of 155mm on the north side of the river and 80 rounds of 155 mm on the south side of the river, in the preplanned area AlB. When

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the ambush was sprung, the 22 RAG advisor informed the CP that there were at least two 50 caliber machineguns in the ambush. This necessitated keeping the fire team out of the area until the 50 cal machine guns could be knocked out. A 40 round concentration was fired and the 50 cal machine guns ceased firing. Whether or not the 50's were hit is problematical since the area is know to be heavily tunneled and fortified.

f. After the sinking of the LCM the area was searched for survivors. Seven wounded personnel and eight bodies were recovered. During this activity the III Naval Zone Commander and CinC VNN were informed of the situation and of the recommendation that the convoy withdraw from the area and that H and I fire be used to prevent VC salvage of weapons. CinC VNN ordered the convoy to proceed to Thu Dau Mot. The boat convoy departed the ambush scene at 062340. About thirty minutes after this word was received from III Corps that CG III Corps directed the boats to remain at the ambush scene and to conduct salvage operations at day break. The 5th Division was neither able nor inclined to provide protection during the night and as ensuing events showed, was unable to secure the area even in daylight hours.

g. Planning was started immediately to mount a salvage operation to recover as many weapons and ammunition as possible the following morning. Continuous H and I fire was conducted in the immediate vicinity of the ambush to prevent the VC from salvaging any of the weapons. 5th Division promised to send 200 troops with the salvage party to secure the north bank of the river and to order the 3 Batt/8th Regt from Paris Tan Quy to move north to secure the south bank of the river. The actual results of these promises were as follows:

(1) Only 67 troops were provided to the boats for north bank security.

(2) The 3/8 moved to within 2 kms of the south bank and stopped.

(3) At approximately 1700, the Navy was informed by 5th Division that the 3/8 would pull back to Paris Tan Quy at 1715 and that the boats should clear the area.

3. COMMENTS.

a. Cargo. Although it was agreed that the amount of cargo would be 100 tons, approximately 60 tons was all that was sent. The civilian barges carried approximately 15 tons.

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b. Communications. The PRC-25 radio used by RAG 22 advisor greatly enhanced his communications capability. For example, direct communications between the convoy and the CP were possible at ranges exceeding 15 kms.

c. Artillery. Artillery support during this operation was very good. The preplanned fire support is considered excellent and the accuracy and timeliness is considered outstanding. It should be pointed out that approximately 1300 rounds of artillery were fired in support of this operation.

d. Air. Although the overall air support was reduced somewhat due to the recall of the heavy fire team, the remaining units (US Army, US Air Force and VNAF) provided outstanding support.

5. The subject as to whether these supply runs to Dau Tieng should be continued should be discussed.

a. The SA Third Naval Zone's position is as follows:

(1) Although trips up and down the Saigon River have been very costly in both terms of men and boats, the river cannot be abandoned to the VC. It is a natural highway into the north central area of the Corps Tactical Zone and should be controlled by the government.

(2) However, until such time as the government can control the land areas surrounding the river, control of the river is impossible.

(3) The primary mission of a supply run precludes any serious attempt to control the river and the surrounding land, ie. the boats must continue to their destination and deliver the supplies vice landing troops and attacking the VC.

(4) In the event of the loss of a boat, 5th Div has been incapable of providing the necessary security to conduct salvage operations - a process which under the best circumstances requires several days.

b. As an alternative to resupply by RAG SA Third Naval Zone has discussed the possibilities of opening the roads to Dau Tieng with the 5th Div Staff. Although 5th Div advisors agree RVN 5th Div has shown a reluctance to do this. A second alternative would be to improve the existing airstrip which is on the Michelin plantation (Dau Tieng) to the point where the plantation owner's objections to landing C-123 aircraft on the strip due to possible damage to it, can be overcome.

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c. The best alternative and as a prelude to further resupply missions, several joint combat operations with 5th Div and the Navy should be conducted on the Saigon river starting just north of Thu Dau Mot, and working on up the river.

It is realized that some of the areas that would have to be covered (ie. Iron Triangle and Boi Loi Woods) are heavily defended by the VC however, until these areas are relatively cleared, RAG supply convoys to Dau Tieng are a waste of men and boats. It is therefore recommended that until a higher degree of security can be provided to the boats by frequent and effective combat operations, no more RAG resupply missions be carried out. If this position cannot be maintained, SA Third Naval Zone will withdraw US Navy advisory support unless otherwise directed by higher authority.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Report of Operations of Vietnamese River Assault Group 23

1. Name of Operation: None.
2. Date of Operation: 8 Dec 64
3. Location: Cu Lao Giai Island, Mekong River, Vinh Binh Province
4. Control Headquarters: Four Naval Zone Commander
5. U. S. Advisors: Capt Mitchell, Artillery Advisor 13th Reg
 Capt Saint, USA, Advisor 1st Batt 13th Reg
 Capt Leedy, USA, Advisor Vung Liem dist.
 Lt Meyerkord, USNR, Advisor 23th RAG
6. Task Organization:

Control H₁ - 4th NZC
 1st Battalion 13th Regiment
 1st Battalion Vinh Long Mobile Regiment
 394th Vung Liem Regional Force Company
 River Assault Group Boats, 21st and 23th RAG
7. Supporting Forces

1 L-19
 21 River Assault boats (see list below)
 1 LCU
 1 LSIL
 List of Assault boats

23rd RAG	21st RAG
1 Commandament	1 Commandament
5 LCM	3 LCM
9 FOMs	4 FOMs
2 LCVPs	2 LCVPs
8. Intelligence: This Island is a transit point for VC movement between Kien Hoa and Vinh Binh Province. One VC company is in permanent residence on the Island.
9. Mission: To seek out and destroy the VC on the island.
10. Concept: To completely surround the Island with River Assault boats. Then land two battalions of Infantry as a moving force and one company as a blocking force. The 394th was the blocking force on the western end of the Island. The 1st of the 13th was the pushing

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force on the south side of the Island. The Vinh Long Mobile Battalion was the pushing force on the north side.

The boats were to surround the Island in the following manner; 10 boats on the north side between the Island and Kien Hoa, 1 boat and 1 LCU on the west 5 boats on the south between the Island and Vinh Binh, 1 LSIL on the east end of the Island. 2 Commandements and 2 FOMs were to carry a mobile Command Post in a Canal in the center of the Island. These boats would move behind the mobile battalion.

A change made by the 4th NZC put 10 boats and a reserve company in the canal and 2 FOMs, 1 LCU and 1 LSIL on the north side of the Island.

11. Execution:

At 0400 8 Dec the blocking force was landed on the west end of the Island by 1 LCM.

At 0230 8 Dec the 1st of the 13th and the Vinh Long Mobile Battalion were embarked on 6 LCMs at Vinh Long.

0500: All boats in positions off the Island.

0600: 1st of 13th landed on the south side of the Island.

0700: 394th made contact with one VC squad on the west end of the Island.

0715: Mobile Battalion landed on the North side of the Island. All units started moving west along the axis of the Island.

0720: L-19 reported on station and began surveillance of the Island.

0730: 10 boats carrying the C. P. and the Reserve Company moved into a Canal on the north side of the Island and proceeded west toward the center of the Island.

0805: L-19 reported several large sampans crossing from the Island to Kien Hoa. The 2 FOMs and 2 ships in that area were unable to catch them.

0830: Arrived at point designated for C. P.

1000: Departed C. P. with 10 boats to patrol the river between Island and Kien Hoa.

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1330: 1st of the 13th completed it's sweep of the southern half of the Island.

1500: Vinh Long Mobile Battalion completed its sweep of the northern half of the Island.

1530: Commenced embarking troops.

1630: Exercise terminated. 21st RAG boats and LCU took the 1st of 13th and Vinh Long Battalion. 23th RAG Boats took the 394th to Vunh Liem.

12. Results:

VC Losses

5 KIA (All by 394th)

6 captured (4 by 394th, 1 by 23 RAG)

3 weapons captured (All by 394th)

Several documents captured (23rd RAG)

Friendly Losses - None

13. Administrative Matters:

a. Supply: None was neccessary, all units carried their basic load.

b. Maintenance: None

c. Medical: None

d. Transportation: All troops and equipment were moved by River Assault boats and 1 LCU.

e. Communications: Communications were good. The L-19 acted as a relay station for advisors contact. The VN communications were limited by the range of their PRC-10.

14. Special Equipment and Techniques: No special equipment was used. One special technique was employed on the night before the operation. Six boats of the 23rd RAG and two platoons of the 394th visited a small friendly village on the southwest end of the island. They remained for approximately two hours, arriving at dusk and leaving after dark. These boats and troops made no effort to hide their presence or departure. However, when the boats departed, one platoon of the 394th remained hidden in the village. The boats withdrew to a location approximately ten minutes from the village, within radio contact with the hidden troops. Approximately one hour

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after the boats departed a VC squad entered the village to question the villagers. The hidden troops ambushed the VC. The results of this ambush were: 3 VC KIA, 9 WIA and 3 weapons captured. The boats then returned to the village and picked up the platoon.

This plan was conceived and executed by Dai Huy Hoa Commanding Officer, 23rd RAG and Dai Huy Sau, Commanding Officer 394th Regional Force.

15. Advisory Analysis:

The operation had definite indications of success at the beginning. The planning was good intelligence adequate and more boats and troops were employed than were needed. However the pivot point of the operation was the prevention of escape from the island. When the boats that had been assigned to the blockade of the river between the island and Kien Hoa, were pulled from blocking stations and put into the canal the VC were able to escape. This was later confirmed by a VC prisoner taken by the 23rd RAG. He stated that two platoons of VC crossed the river into Kien Hoa. The removal of the blockade boats was done against strong protest on my part. The 4th NZC felt ten boats were needed in the canal. I pointed out that 4 boats and one company, following a battalion was adequate. I also stressed the importance of the blockade. The 4th NZC did not agree. The blockade boats were put in the canal. Another weak point in the operation was the method of movement by the infantry. They moved in column instead of a wide front. This left many areas of the island unsearched.

16. Lessons learned:

a. On island operations adequate steps should be taken to prevent escape by the VC. When confronted with a superior force the VC will generally attempt to escape.

b. On a search operation the troops should move on a wide front. This provides better security and enables them to search a larger area.

17. Action being taken by RVNAF in view of lessons learned:
Unknown

18. Recommendations: None.

~~CONFIDENTIAL~~Report of Operations of Vietnamese River Assault Group 23

1. Operation Name: None
2. Date of Operation: 30 Nov 1964
3. Location: Vung Liem District, Vinh Binh Province
4. Control Headquarters, Vung Liem District Chief
5. U.S. Advisors

Lt. H. D. Meyerkord, USNR, Advisor 23 RAG Capt Leedy, USA, Advisor Vung Liem 1stLt Gordon, USA, Advisor Minh Duc

6. Task Organization:

394th Regional Force, Vung Liem District
 275th Regional Force, Minh Duc District
 23rd River Assault Group
 2 L-19 73rd Aviation Detachment

7. Supporting Forces: None

8. Intelligence:

One VC platoon was reported to be in the area of coordinates
 229223XS.

9. Mission:

Seek out and destroy VC in the operation area. This mission was initiated by Dai Huy Hoa, CO, 23rd RAG, Dai Huy Tranh, Vung Liem District Chief and Thieu Ta Hoa, Minh Duc District Chief.

10. Concept of Operation:

The concept of operation was to land five platoons of the combined companies along the Vung Liem bank of the Mang Thit river. These platoons were to maneuver in a southeasterly direction while the 23 RAG boats moved down Rach Duong Trom canal to provide gun-fire support. The boats also carried the Command Post which included the two District chiefs, their advisors and the 23rd RAG Executive Officer and the RAG advisors. The RAG was included in the Command Post because the canal provided the boats a means to

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accompany the entire operation.

11. Execution:

On 25 Nov. Dai Huy Hoa and I visited Vung Liem and offered to support an operation by the Vung Liem Regional Force. The Vung Liem District Chief, Capt Leedy, Dai Huy Hoa and I then drew up the operation plan. That same afternoon Dai Huy Hoa and I visited Minh Duc, which borders Vung Liem District, and requested that Minh Duc Regional Force support Vung Liem in the operation. The District Chief agreed and approved the plan.

30 Nov.

0600: Four LCVPs landed troops at four points in Vung Liem. One LCM landed the fifth platoon. The Commandment and two FOMs covered the landings.

0815: Picked up the CP at Minh Duc and proceeded southeast on the Rach Duong Trom Canal. Two FOMs and two LCVPs were used for this because the canal was too narrow to admit the Commandment or LCMs.

0915: Boats were ambushed by rifle fire from the southwest bank of the canal at coordinates XS 227225. Boats returned the fire. No friendly casualties, enemy casualties unknown.

0930: Arrived at canal block. Boats could proceed no further. We set up the CP in a Catholic church at coordinates XS 228224. The boats moored on the bank at the entrance to the church courtyard. An enemy force of approximately one platoon attacked the CP. They were driven off by the fire from the boats and the arrival of the Minh Duc company. The VC withdrew to the southeast.

0945: The VC ran into an ambush set by the Vung Liem Company. At this time the L-19 reported trenches and foxholes at a point 200 meters south of the CP.

0950: L-19 reported VC were moving into these prepared positions. At this time both friendly companies had contact with VC in this area. Friendly forces could not push the VC from their position. VC snipers began harassing the CP.

At this time the situation became static. The friendly forces had the VC pinned down and the VC were in a strong position, which prevented any movement by friendly forces. The L-19 pilot and friendly company commanders estimated one VC company involved in the

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fight.

1345: The friendly forces reported they were low on ammunition. 2 LCVPs were sent to Minh Duc, a distance of 3 kilometers, to pick up and return with ammunition.

1400: The advisors recommended an airstrike on the VC position by armed helicopters. The VN commanders agreed. A request was sent through the American pilot of the L-19.

1420: Friendly troops moved back to the CP. Lt Meyerkord established radio contact with the helicopters. He marked the friendly positions with smoke and requested the first strike be made 200 meters south of the smoke.

1425: Armed helos commenced their attack.

1500: Air strike completed. Capt Leedy and Lt Gordon advised their counterparts to attack the VC position immediately following the air strike.

1530: Friendly forces returned to the VC positions. At this time the L-19 pilot and the helos reported several people, all men, fleeing to the south. The ground forces made no further contact with VC.

1640: Operation complete. Returned to Minh Duc.

12. Results:

15 VC KIA (later this was raised to 20 by helo pilots)
6 Russian carbines captured
1 MAS 36 captured
1 US carbine captured
1 US Thompson sub M. G. captured
1 French automatic rifle captured
200 rounds of 7.63 ammunition captured
1 box of VC documents captured

Friendly losses

3 KIA (all from 394th)
5 WIA (3 from 275th, 2 from 394)
No losses to Navy

13. Administrative matters:

a. Supply - boats used to resupply ammunition

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b. Maintenance - None

c. Treatment of casualties:

The U. S. advisors requested medevac for wounded but the request was denied because the VN could not parallel the request. The location of the CP and limitations of radio gear prevented the VN commanders requesting medevac.

d. Transportation - boats were used.

e. Communications - the L-19 relayed all U.S. communications. the VN used PRC-10s.

14. Special equipment and techniques:

A smoke grenade was used to mark the friendly position during the air strike.

15. Advisory Analysis:

This was a good operation. It was conducted by small units with a minimum of written planning. This prevented any security leak. The forces involved were familiar with the area.

The air strike, which I feel was the determining factor, was timely and accurate. Without an L-19, to relay the air strike request and to provide surveillance throughout the operation, the VC would have probably escaped. The only error in the operation was the delay by ground forces in following up the air strike. If the ground forces had attacked immediately after the air strike, VC losses would have been much higher.

16. Lessons learned:

a. Armed helos are excellent for airstrikes of the type made during this operation. Their requirements are simple and easily met i.e., an American on the ground to direct the strike.

b. With the limited communications available an L-19 is imperative for radio-relay and surveillance.

c. Ground forces should attack immediately after an air strike, when possible.

d. District operations with Naval and air support occasionally give better results than large scale, elaborately planned operations.

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17. Action being taken by RVNAF in view of lessons learned: Unknown

18. Recommendations:

a. RAG's should be given as much liberty as is practical in planning and executing District operations.

b. Medevacs be made available when requested by U.S. advisors.

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ANNEX 8

OBSERVATIONS OF USMC ADVISOR TO THE
VIETNAMESE NAVY COMMANDER OF THE
RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE

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OBSERVATIONS OF USMC ADVISOR TO VIETNAMESE NAVY
COMMANDER, RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE

1. Terrain Description

a. Rung Sat Special Zone is a mangrove swamp approximately 30 kilometers wide in east-west direction and 35 kilometers long in a north-south direction. Thousands of intricate canals and waterways are scattered throughout the area, and the entire zone is subject to a tidal fluctuation of 6-12 feet twice daily. There are no roads in the area, and all communication between villages is by boat or helicopter. The rate of movement by ground troops is approximately 600 meters an hour. The vegetation is extremely dense, and is composed of tangled secondary jungle vegetation and thickly interwoven roots and branches, which in some cases necessitates cutting new trails in order to move. Surprise is very difficult to achieve due to the necessity of moving across mud flats (sucking noise), water (splashing noise), and cutting your own trail (chopping noise).

b. Military Aspects of the Terrain

(1) Observation and Fields of Fire - Dense foliage and flat ground generally restrict observation to approximately 5-25 yards. The only good observation points to be found in the zone are along the waterways and streams. Fields of fire for flat trajectory weapons is extremely poor (25-50 yards) throughout the zone, and in many cases it is impossible to employ mortars and other supporting arms until the secondary growth is cleared overhead.

(2) Cover and Concealment - Cover is excellent along the banks of streams and heavily forested areas. Concealment from ground and air visual observation is excellent throughout the mangrove. Very little effort is required to make individuals and installations virtually invisible to visual observation due to the dense foliage.

(3) Obstacles - The entire mangrove swamp is an obstacle unto itself. The many streams, mud flats, dense vegetation, and tidal fluctuation makes any overland movement extremely difficult. Vehicular movement, with the exception of boats, is impossible in the mangrove. Heavy supporting arms tend to slow movement considerably and even mortars become a logistic problem. In past operations, we have carried our automatic weapons, mortars, and recoilless rifles. Anything larger than man-packed weapons reduces the mobility of the friendly forces to a considerable degree.

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(4) Critical Terrain - The critical terrain in Rung Sat Special Zone would be control of:

- a. Streams and waterways.
- b. Villages and hamlets.
- c. Fresh water points.

As virtually all traffic in the swamp is accomplished by boat, the control of the streams and waterways would severely restrict the mobility of the enemy. It would be virtually impossible for the enemy to move in a rapid manner overland, and speed is essential to the guerrilla warfare concept. Control of the villages and hamlets would be essential to our intelligence collection efforts and in conjunction with (a) would deny the enemy the logistic support that he badly needs.

During the dry season, the resupply of fresh water becomes critical to the guerrilla forces. Since the water in the mangrove swamps is tidal salt water, the guerrilla must rely on wells located in the villages, fresh water springs in the swamp, or outside supply. Control by friendly forces of the waterways in conjunction with the fresh water points could make living in the mangrove extremely difficult for the guerrilla.

(5) Avenues of Approach - The major avenues of approach internal to the swamp are the extensive waterways and streams. Foot travel is possible, but is extremely slow and tiring to the individual. Rapid dispersion after an attack is impossible, and would necessitate the enemy staying in the general area of the attack for long periods of time after the attack. This would make the enemy vulnerable to our fastmoving reaction forces.

2. Enemy Activity - The enemy activity discussed here has been the enemy activity that has taken place in Rung Sat Special Zone, V.N., however the mangrove swamp offers the same advantages to the guerrilla, wherever it is located, in that it is a good secure base area. The Viet Cong utilize Rung Sat Special Zone as a secure area for their training bases, base camps, hospitals, rest camps, and supply distribution points. There is a tremendous amount of boat traffic internally in the zone, and between the surrounding Provinces and the zone. The Viet Cong divide Rung Sat into three separate parts. Each part supports the surrounding province or provinces adjacent to it. If any guerrilla unit is being pressed in any of the provinces, it moves by boat into the secure swamp area. In the same manner, if the enemy decides to attack a village in the zone, any number of troops can move

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by boat into the zone to reinforce the local guerrillas and make the attack. After the attack, the guerrillas can rapidly disperse by boat back to the province or deep into the swamp. In the same manner, the swamp offers a secure route of travel or supply between provinces, which gives the guerrillas a tremendous regional flexibility in that they can mass their forces against our weak points at will, and make a small unit of guerrillas look like a much larger unit. (Economy of Force) The enemy continually seeks to achieve local superiority at a critical time and place and at the same time adhere to the principle of mass by concentrating firepower and troops on a selective basis. They have followed Mao Tse Tung's philosophy to the letter thus far, which is, "When the enemy advances - withdraw; when he defends - harass; when he is tired - attack; and when he withdraws pursue." They have effectively utilized mass and tactical surprise in their attacks, with the ambush being the favorite tactic of the local Viet Cong.

3. Tactics

a. General

(1) When considering total pacification of Rung Sat Special Zone as other mangrove areas, we should take into account the guerrilla advantages and those factors, which if controlled, would eliminate the guerrilla advantages. The guerrillas in the swamp at the present time have the advantages of Security, Mobility (waterways), Economy of Force and Surprise. To offset these advantages, we must control the critical terrain in the Zone which are, (1) the streams and waterways, (2) the villages and hamlets, and (3) the fresh water points. The essential forces that would be needed to gain control of the critical terrain would be:

(a) Organic Boat Support - should include LCM's, LCVP's, fiberglass assault boats, and some swift moving patrol boats, LCPL or PBR's, with automatic weapons mounted on them, (50 cal. MG's). The LCM's and LCVP's should also be modified to include 50 cal. MG's and 20mm guns as they are now modified in Vietnam.

(b) Sufficient Ground Troops - to protect the villages and maintain a Operation/Reaction capability.

(c) Supporting Arms - to include artillery coverage of the entire zone and Armed Helicopter Reaction forces.

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(d) Sufficient Helicopters to maintain the logistic effort required by many small units located in areas that cannot be resupplied by the normal means.

The tactic utilized to gain control of the streams and waterways is a very simple one - "Saturation Patrol and Ambush". Small unit ambushes are placed on every main and secondary stream and the small patrol boats maintain a constant surveillance on the streams. Most of the ambush and patrol activity should take place at night as this is when the enemy moves in order to escape aerial observation. The Claymore mine ambush is very effective and would be extremely useful to the small units. Claymores should be placed in line along the banks of the streams and to the rear of the ambush party to provide security. After the Claymores are detonated, the ambush party usually only has to police the battle area or engage the few remaining survivors.

A strong reaction force should be placed where it can mutually support the ambush parties. When a strong contact is made by an ambush party, the reaction force is dispatched to the area immediately. In addition to the reaction force, the Armed Helicopters and supporting artillery also aid the ambush party. Upon contact with a vastly superior force, the ambush party remains undercover and coordinates the helicopter and artillery fire onto the target. If the ambush party is discovered, they will assume the role of the guerrilla - If attacked - withdraw, defend - harass, etc. The important factor here is that once contact is made, it must be maintained until the guerrilla is destroyed. All available support and forces should be utilized in destroying the enemy when contacted.

In summary, if the ambush party makes contact with a small unit of guerrillas, they will destroy them. If the ambush party makes a strong contact, they will be responsible for vectoring the reaction force to the area, and for coordinating the supporting fires until the reaction force arrives. When the guerrillas lose the capability of negotiating the waterways in their boats, they have lost almost all the advantages that a mangrove swamp offer and will become virtually immobile. In this stage, the sweep and clear operations should begin. When a guerrilla suspect area is discovered, immediate steps should be taken to encircle and seal off the area with area ambush parties and small boat patrols. When the area is sealed, the main friendly force should commence a careful search of the entire area, which will either result in the enemy being "flushed" into the ambush parties or being forced to stand and fight against our better equipped and supported troops.

One other means which personnel in Rung Sat Special Zone used to harass the enemy mobility at night was the Armed Helicopters used

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in conjunction with the Side looking airborne radar (SLAR) aircraft. The SLAR aircraft would fly over the entire zone picking up any target that was moving along the waterways faster than 2 1/2 mph. When a target was identified as Viet Cong, the Armed Helicopters were dispatched to the area. The first helicopter was equipped with a strong search light which would illuminate the target and the remaining Armed Helicopters would take the target under fire. We had varied success with the project. On one particular night we sank 16 sampans, but in the majority of the cases, the Viet Cong used camouflage very effectively to make target identification difficult for the Helicopters. The Viet Cong would pile jungle foliage on top of their junks and sampans, and upon hearing the helicopters, would bring the sampans close into the bank making identification from the air very difficult. However, we did have success and it was one more harrassing factor utilized against the Viet Cong movement at night. Prisoners that we captured later informed us that the Viet Cong had a tremendous fear of "The death from the Sky", and couldn't understand how the helicopters could find them at night.

The control of the Villages and Hamlets is very critical to the over-all pacification program. Control of the villages and hamlets would give the friendly forces excellent intelligence information and at the same time deny the enemy the logistic support, rest facilities, intelligence, and medical care that he could get in the villages.

To effectively control the villages, you must be able to guarantee the safety of the villagers. The neutral villagers will go to the side which can offer them the greatest degree of safety and comfort. The village areas should have extensive fortifications, minefields, wire, and other obstacles in order to halt or stall an attack by a major unit long enough to employ our supporting arms. In conjunction with the physical defensive positions, outposts, patrols, and ambushes should be placed outside the villages every night. The Viet Cong do not like to attack any objective without careful planning, and the flexible defense adds quite a confusion factor for them. The actions of the friendly forces staying in the villages must be above reproach! Efforts should be made to aid and work with the villages at every opportunity. The friendly force commander should keep a constant lookout for any areas of irritation between the troops and villagers, and should make every effort to minimize these areas. Some of the comforts of the villagers will be lost, but they should be psychologically prepared to accept some hardships in the interest of personal safety.

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Close liason should be made with the local police authorities, and every effort should be made to ferret out the strong enemy sympathizers in the village. The local police can be invaluable in instituting a curfew and a strong population/resources control program.

The friendly forces commander must be alert and understanding of the peoples problems. With just a little effort, he can gain the overwhelming support of the people. Don't be a swaggering conqueror! All fresh water points should be located and guarded. Those located in the interior, which would be untenable for a garrison force, should be destroyed or poisoned and the appropriate warning given to all the friendly villagers. In all operations discussed, psychological warfare plays a large part, and should be integrated closely with the military objectives. Extensive use of Psychological Concepts can save you casualties and effectively destroy the potential of an enemy unit. One such example of useage of psywar to destroy the combat effectiveness of a unit took place in one of the districts in Rung Sat Special Zone. A Viet Cong deserted his unit and returned to one of the friendly villages carrying one of the psychological warfar leaflets dropped in his zone. He stated that there were 6 other Viet Cong in his platoon who wanted to desert but were afraid to do so. A leaflet was prepared "addressed to" the six Viet Cong asking them to return to their families and describing the good treatment that the first deserter had received from our forces. The leaflet was signed by the first deserter and dropped throughout the area in which the Viet Cong platoon was operating. This placed the Viet Cong addressees in a rough position, since they would no longer have the trust of the other Viet Cong in the paltoon and would effectively split the platoon. We received word later that the Viet Cong platoon commanders had shot four of the addressees due to lack of trust.

b. Small Unit Tactics - Tactical doctrine as taught by the USMC on patrols, ambushes, counter-ambushes procedures, and small unit operations is applicable and sound for useage in the swamp areas. The following information may aid the small unit leaders in the employment of their tactics.

(1) Due to the numerous stream crossings that must be made on an over-land patrol or operation, every squad should carry a 50 foot rope to aid in the crossing.

(2) Movement of radios, mortars, etc. across the streams become a real problem. We had one man in each squad carry a deflated tire tube with the valve core removed, around his neck. Upon reaching a deep stream, the tube was inflated - radios, baseplates, etc. stacked on top - and floated across the stream. The pneumatic mattress carried

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by USMC units would serve the purpose equally well.

(3) In any operation where the unit plans to sleep in the swamp, it is recommended that hammocks be utilized. The tidal fluctuation prohibits sleeping on the ground. Net hammocks are best for this terrain in that, they can be rolled into a compact roll and fastened to the cartridge belt, plus they dry out very fast. In Vietnam, these hammocks can be obtained from the local economy for \$.30.

(4) Stay off trails that have been already cut through the jungle! It's harder work cutting your own trail, but you don't want to be mined or ambushed. In the event, you must use a trail when speed is a prime factor, utilize recon by fire, and zigzag back and forth across the trail thus minimizing the mine threat and allowing you to come in on the flank of a possible ambush.

(5) Keep your automatic weapons close to the front of the formation. Engagements in the jungle are very fast in nature and firepower is the deciding factor. If your automatic weapons are in the rear of the formation you will seldom have the time to employ them before the action is completed.

(6) Be alert for what appear to be "holes" in the foliage undergrowth. These could well be "tunnels" of fire, as there are very few good "fields" of fire in the swamp. Dead foliage is a good indication of prepared tunnels of fire or booby-traps.

(7) Navigation becomes a major problem in the mangrove swamp. The terrain is flat with heavy vegetation and there are very few recognizable terrain features. At low tide streams can be recognized, but at high tide the whole area is flooded and many new streams appear. The unit leader must rely on his compass for direction and his pace for distance. I found that 165 paces in the swamp was approximately 100 yards. Another method was the time estimation method. The average rate of travel through the swamp was 600 meters per hour, so knowing the direction you were traveling and the amount of time you had been traveling, you could get your appropriate location. Normally, for operations in the swamp, we had a L-19 observation aircraft overhead and could verify our position in the swamp by flashing him with a mirror and asking for coordinates.

(8) Never come back over the same trail that you cut going into an objective. It will be extremely tiring, but cut a new trail even if it's only twenty meters away from the old one. The Viet Cong like to

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plant mines and set up ambushes on fresh cut trails in the hopes that when the unnt has completed its mission, it will be too tired to cut a new trail back.

It is not impossible to operate in a mangrove swamp. The guerrilla operates very effectively in this type area. Good leadership with sound tactical judgement, common sense, and flexibility is the key to winning in the swamp.

ANNEX 9

U. S. MARINE CORPS ADVISOR REPORT ON
OPERATIONS OF THE THIRD VIETNAMESE
MARINE CORPS BATTALION

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USMC ADVISOR REPORT ON OPERATIONS OF 3D VIETNAMESE
MARINE CORPS BATTALION

1. NAME OF OPERATION: Blue Marlin
2. DATE OF OPERATION: 060800 to 121120 November 1965
3. LOCATION: Tam Ky Sub-sector, North of Chu Lai
4. REPORTING OFFICER: Captain P. D. SLACK USMC
5. CONTROL HEADQUARTERS: CLF Blue Marlin, Danang, RVN
6. TASK ORGANIZATION:

Major W. J. HENDERSON USMC - Staff Advisor
Captain B. D. DAUGHERTY USMC - Liaison Officer
Captain P. D. SLACK USMC - Advisor, 3rd Battalion VNMC
Colonel J. A. MACNEIL USMC - Observer
Landing Force Blue Marlin classified

7. INTELLIGENCE: Phase I of Blue Marlin was in a relatively secure area where snipers and booby traps were expected with the chance that a larger unit of VC might be encountered as they passed through the area. This intelligence was accurate (paragraph 10 execution). Phase II of Blue Marlin was not executed by this Battalion, but intelligence indicated three VC Battalions operating in and around the designated zone of action just south of the Danang TAOR. Except for poor sea conditions while embarked the weather for this operation was outstanding in every respect; cool temperature, clear skies, and a bright moon.

8. MISSION: To clear the zone of action of VC snipers and concentrations as part of the road clearing project on Route #1 from Chu Lai to Danang and to train Vietnamese Marine units in the techniques of amphibious warfare.

9. CONCEPT OF OPERATION: Original planning called for an airlift of the 3rd Battalion from Saigon to Chu Lai on 4 November 1965 for a period of amphibious indoctrination. However, the aircraft were ordered to Quang Ngai where the 3rd Battalion reported to duty with the 2nd Division ARVN and was not released for duty at Chu Lai until 6 November 1965. A brief one and one half day of amphibious training was accomplished prior to embarkation on 8 November 1965

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aboard the LST 1167 and LST 1170. The 3rd Battalion was to be landed on call in two waves of LVTP-5 vehicles and make a penetration by LVT column to Route #1 and their zone of action; and then clear the zone.

10. EXECUTION: Operation Blue Marlin commenced for the 3rd Battalion with their arrival at Chu Lai on 6 November 1965 and terminated when they were heli-lifted out of the zone of action on 12 November 1965.

060800 - Departed Quang Ngai for Chu Lai in a well formed convoy utilizing over lapping artillery fans, air cover, and two machine gun vehicles of the 3rd Battalion VNMC.

061000 - Arrived Chu Lai and established base camp on the beach with the excellent support and assistance of the 3rdBn, 3rdMar, 3rdMarDiv.

061500 - Conducted training for all troops in the LVT, covering characteristics and capabilities of the vehicle and loading drill.

070800- Conducted training for all troops in LVT operation covering ambush and immediate action drill, overland movement, and surf drill including a touchdown and assault of objectives on the beach.

071200- Prepared equipment for embarkation.

072100 - Battalion Commander briefed unit commanders on the conduct of operation Blue Marlin.

081430- Embarked the 4th and 2nd Companies and Command Group in LST 1167 and the 1st and 3rd Companies and alternate Command Group in LST 1170. Two Marines were injured when debarking from an LCM married bow to bow with the LST 1167. Sea conditions were very rough.

090900- Troops conducted loading drills in LVTs. Response
091400 was excellent and units loaded with no problems.

100930 - H-Hour

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- 101137 - 1st Wave of 3rd Battalion, on call, landed on green beach from LST 1167.
- 101600 - Remainder of 3rd Battalion closed green beach from LST 1170. The LST 1170 lost her bow anchor and off loading was impossible by LVT. LCMs were utilized until sea conditions became so rough that helicopters were required to complete the debarkation.
- 101630 - Lead elements of the 3rd Bn were lifted by helicopter into the LZ.
- 101730 - Lift completed and defensive positions were established in the vicinity of the LZ.
- 110830 - Commenced sweep to the southeast in zone of action.
- 110850 - 1st and 3rd Companies encountered 3 snipers at 267212. Negative results.
- 111800 - 1st and 3rd Companies encountered snipers and one squad of VC at 330177. Negative results. Defensive positions were established for the night.
- 111930 - Local police reported that 150 VC armed with one 81mm mortar, two 30 caliber MCs were seen at 1830 at 357168 moving northeast. This placed them approximately 3000 meters in front of our night defensive positions. Patrols were sent forward to gather information and fix the VC location. All units were alerted and prepared for a contact.
- 112015 - Flares were dropped in our zone of action by error and patrols were recalled. Situation was corrected and no more flares were dropped. However, the 3rd Bn preparations for the contact were now useless.
- 120800 - Commenced movement south in the zone of action with orders to stop at the Song Batuc.
- 121120 - Operation Blue Marlin terminated.
- 121200 - 8 VC suspects captured on Son Batuc carrying rice. one man identified as VC.

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121600 - Heli-lifted to Chu Lai TAOR, VC suspects turned over to USMC.

131000 - Convoy arrived for transportation to Quang Ngai. Only eight trucks were provided.

131600 - All units closed at Quang Ngai.

11. RESULTS: Friendly: 3 injured in training

Enemy: 1 VC captured
7 VC suspects captured

12. ADMINISTRATIVE MATTERS: Communications - Tactical communications was excellent except in the area of air ground control. ANGLICO personnel assigned are forwarding a separate report to the Senior Marine Advisor.

13. ADVISOR ANALYSIS: The exposure of an entire Vietnamese Marine Battalion to the USMC forces at Chu Lai was indeed rewarding. Every unit that we encountered welcomed us as true members of the "Marine Brotherhood" and the amphibious experience acquired will be of great benefit in future operations. Of particular note was the support provided by the 3rd Bn, 3rd Mar. Not only did they extend excellent logistical support to the Vietnamese Marines, but also welcomed the officers and staff noncommissioned officers into their respective messes. A complete exchange of ideas and thoughts was accomplished in the relative relaxation of the mess. Major LUONG, the Battalion Commander, remarked "It is like sending my entire battalion to Okinawa for on the job training."

a. The response of the individual Marine to the training provided was excellent. They were both attentive and responsive and in a few short days became "Salt water" indoctrinated. The units reaction to extreme sea conditions indicated that they could successfully operate in any type amphibious operation that the future might hold.

The Battalion staff, however, needs more training and practice in the planning and execution of complicated landing and loading plans. The staff used an excellent text on amphibious operations translated in Vietnamese, but the time was not adequate to overcome the language problem, develop smooth plans, and also dovetail the Vietnamese unit into the USMC supply system. Many

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lessons were learned by all staff sections and future operations will be executed with a higher degree of professionalism.

14. RECOMMENDATIONS:

a. Planning for Blue Marlin was accomplished under difficult conditions. The Task Force was in Korea, the Landing Force Staff in Danang, the USMC Battalion Landing Team was in Qui Nhon, and the 3rd Bn VNMC was in Saigon. A liaison officer from the advisory staff must be provided to the planning staff as soon as possible after an operation has been scheduled and remain there during the operation.

b. Additional U. S. Marine advisory personnel should be assigned to the Battalion, if there is a period of training at a base such as Chu Lai. These personnel should form an advance party to establish liaison with USMC units to determine billeting area boundaries, supply systems, and to make known any unusual requirements of the Vietnamese unit of both a logistical and training nature. Once embarkation has been accomplished these personnel can be returned to their normal duties.

c. Messing was no particular problem and future operations should provide standard U. S. meals supplemented with rice at each serving.

d. The usual "life aboard ship" lectures should be translated into Vietnamese and presented to the units before their arrival in the staging-area.

e. Operation Blue Marlin was, and still is, classified as TOP SECRET. A reasonable classification should be attached to future operations so that plans can be made available to all using and supporting units.

f. Each VNMC battalion should be rotated through a period at Chu Lai for amphibious indoctrination, general association with USMC units, and if possible a tactical landing.

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ANNEX 10

U. S. NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP SUMMARY OF
U. S. NAVY TASK FORCE 115 OPERATIONS FOR
PERIOD FROM JULY THROUGH DECEMBER 1965

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DRAFT OF U. S. NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP SUMMARY OF USN
TASK FORCE 115 OPERATIONS, JULY TO DECEMBER 1965

1. General:

MARKET TIME Operations completed its fifth month under the Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115). In December 1965 fewer junks were detected at sea than during the previous month and fewer boardings and searches were effected. The decrease in boardings and searches may be attributable to the fewer detections, but some consideration should be given to a more accurate Vietnamese reporting system and a lingering malaise of Sea Force officers for not being considered for promotion in November. Early in December, an increased number of minings portended a serious threat to river operations. Immediate measures were taken to improve our defenses in this area. This high level of mining incidents did not continue, but there is no evidence that the decrease resulted solely from our counter-efforts. SAR operations temporarily drew various patrolling units off station on several occasions in December, but effective coverage of the coast was not substantially reduced. Throughout the month the Northeast Monsoon caused rough seas along the northern coast. On two occasions Market Time units were recalled. Although effective coverage of the patrol areas was reduced on these occasions, movement of any other craft in the area was correspondingly decreased by the rough seas.

2. Surface Surveillance

Data received from Vietnamese Naval Headquarters reported 13,900 junks searched, and 55,000 people investigated during December. Although these figures compare unfavorably to November's (20,100 junk searches and 64,000 personnel investigations) they present a more accurate picture of the coastal surveillance effort.

During September, October, and most of November, the reported searches and investigations were increasing. However, the rate of increase far exceeded any improvement noted by U. S. Advisors. CHNAVADVGRP disclosed this discrepancy to CNO Vietnamese Navy at a November meeting. Ambiguities in such terms as "on patrol" and "investigated" were then discussed. Prior to this meeting, Vietnamese Naval Headquarters considered a ship "on patrol" if it was deployed from Saigon. American advisors on board sent numerous reports that ships would leave Saigon only to anchor off shore the next day. Needless to say, such "patrols" had little effectiveness. Liberal interpretation

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was applied to these terms, and this, in part, accounts for the decrease reported in December.

Two other factors must be considered as attributing to this decrease. First, the Northeast Monsoon's rough seas curtailed junk activity to approximately 65 percent of the November level. The opportunity to search and board decreased also, but not necessarily in the same proportion. The second factor to be considered is whether maximum use was made of each opportunity for search and investigation. Reports from the Sea Force were not as prompt or routine as in the past, so exact results cannot be determined. However, it is suspected that a lingering malaise from being passed over in the November promotion is causing the Sea Force officers to reduce their surveillance efforts.

3. Seacoast Operations

a. On 30 December, units from Coastal Group 32 apprehended three V. C. and one V. C. sympathizer. Interrogation revealed that they had a fairly good knowledge of V. C. organization in the area of Phuoc Hai. Of particular interest was the fact that they revealed no knowledge of sea infiltration. One captive stated that a large sampan containing weapons for his squad did come from a northerly direction. He did not know the port of origin, but felt it was in-country redistribution as the vessel was not a seagoing type.

b. The U. S. Navy Liaison Officer at Hong Kong reported early in December that an 80 ton fishing junk, LI HING 2, departed the Chinese mainland bound for South Vietnam. Its cargo reportedly contained bogus U. S. currency and bonds. Later information indicated that the junk might attempt to visit Con Son Island between 10 and 13 December. Market Time units were alerted and special P-2 flights were scheduled. USS IMPLICIT was assigned barrier patrol northeast of Con Son Island, VNN PCE 09 patrolled the vicinity of the island, and VNN LSIL 328 patrolled the RVN coast and river mouths. VNN customs officials, accompanied by an USOM advisor, flew to Con Son on 12 December and conducted a thorough search of the ports, but found no trace of the suspicious junk.

c. At 1015 on 15 December, units from Coastal Group 32 discovered floating debris of a 40 foot junk which had apparently exploded shortly before their arrival. The Coastal Group's units collected two sealed gas cans, a fifty gallon barrel of Nuoc Mam, one fifty gallon drum of gasoline and several stacks of shower shoes. At 1134 USS CONFLICT sighted the same debris. CONFLICT sunk four barrels with small arms fire, and retrieved one drum containing diesel oil, a barrel of Nuoc Mam, and

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three empty barrels. CONFLICT estimated that the material was in the water less than twenty-four hours. Search for possible survivors was discontinued at 1330. Upon opening two of the sealed Esso cans, men from Coastal Group 32 found them to contain cartons of U. S. cigarettes. It was then presumed that the junk had been involved in coastal smuggling. The incident was reported to USOM officials, who initiated an investigation.

4. Minings

Mining activity in the rivers increased noticeably early in the month. An unsuccessful VC attempt to mine the Danish merchant KINA as it transited the Long Tau River on 2 December re-emphasized the need to conduct effective and frequent sweeps of the main river channel. At present, the Vietnamese Navy has the entire responsibility to conduct effective mine countermeasures. A team composed of two MLM's escorted by interceptor vedettes proceed up-river from Can Gio each day at about 0800. Another team departs Nha Be at approximately the same time to sweep down-river. Each team sweeps one side of the channel. The lead MLMS normally streams a serrated grapnel, (a French-designed grapnel drag) and the second MLMS streams a heavy chain drag with bar cutters. On several occasions electrical wire similar to the type used on captured mines has been retrieved.

With an upsurge in attempted minings, immediate steps were taken to improve our defenses. On 11 December the VNN began a daily mid-channel sweep with "O" type gear. NAVADVGRP redoubled its efforts to hasten evaluation reports of anti-swimmer nets being evaluated in the U. S.. If judged successful, these nets would be used about anchored ships for protection against swimmer-borne or floating explosives. Additionally, inquiries were initiated into the feasibility of using hand held sonars to detect swimmers approaching a ship, and of using present sonars to detect floating mines.

The mining incidents tapered off in frequency as the month progressed. Intelligence reports indicated that the V. C. still had many mines, and they frequently reported sighted with them in areas along the rivers. That a high level of incidents did not continue, cannot, with any certainty be solely attributed to our counter-measures.

5. Employment of Market Time Units

a. On 21 December U. S. Secretary of Defense directed that one of the four PGMs planned for delivery to South Vietnam in January of 1966 be diverted to Thailand. The ship is to be manned by Thais and

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used in Market Time operations. Diversion of the ship at this time was an indication of U.S. concern for Thailand. The ship is to be credited as part of Thailand's 1966 Military Assistance Program.

b. Six PCFs arrived in-country on 24 December. They were assigned to An Thoi, and brought the total force of PCF Division 101 to eight boats. The new PCFs underwent a two week training program in the Gulf of Thailand before commencing a regular patrol schedule.

c. Four junks from Coastal Group 12, four from Coastal Group 16, and two from C.G. 14 have been directed by VNN to patrol the inland waters rivers and lagoons in the Thau Tien, Quang Nam, and Quang Ngai sectors until April 1966. These junks will not be available for patrols in the Coastal Waters. Overall effect is considered negligible on Coastal Surveillance because of the Northeast Monsoon. In April 66 three Regional Force boat companies are scheduled to assume this mission. It is considered to be an excellent weather utilization scheme.

d. On 4 December regularly scheduled nightly patrols began from the LCPL base at Nha Be. Up ~~until~~ this date, the nightly patrols were on an irregular basis. These boats will patrol the Rung Sat Special Zone.

e. Recalls during December. The WPBs in Coastal Area 1 were recalled twice due to the rough seas caused by the Northeast Monsoon. From 1100 on 17 December until 1330 on 20 December, all ships except the WPB in area 1B and the DER in area 1A returned to Danang to wait for seas to abate. The same recall was issued at 1600 on 30 December and remained in effect until 1300 the following day. Although effective coverage of the patrol area decreased when these units returned to port, movement of any other craft in the area was correspondingly decreased by the rough seas.

6. SAR Operations

a. IMPALA. At approximately 0520 on 19 December, the Panamanian merchant ship IMPALA went aground two miles south of Cape Varella. At 0700 USS SACRAMENTO discovered a swamped lifeboat with seven survivors and one dead man on board. Among the survivors was the First Mate, who reported that all twenty-nine men of the crew had cleared the ship with life jackets, but were swept to sea by the strong current. SACRAMENTO assumed duties as On-Scene Commander and commenced searching for possible survivors. At 1030 USS HENDERSON, USS FIREDRAKE, USS GALLANT, and USS MAURY were directed to close SACRAMENTO and assist in the search. P-3 aircraft and two helos were already on the scene. By 1600 on 20 December, twelve bodies had been recovered. SACRAMENTO

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and FIREDRAKE were detached to proceed to prior commitments and MAURY assumed duties as On-Scene Commander. Searching continue until nightfall, when GALLANT and HENDERSON were detached, as probability of sighting more survivors or bodies was considered minimal. MAURY remained in the area until 211300, but found no additional survivors.

b. VIGILANTE CRASHES. An RA5C based aboard USS ENTERPRISE (CVA(N)-65) crashed in the Gulf of Thailand at approximately 1700 on 15 December. The crew had ejected and were recovered. USCG PT YOUNG and PCE-5 intercepted radio traffic concerning the incident, and proceeded to the area to provide security and to attempt to locate the wreckage for possible recovery. Three days of searching proved unsuccessful, and on 18 December USS WHIPPOORWILL was directed to join in the effort. Local fishermen designated the location of the crash, and these areas were searched and dragged extensively but only flotsam of the aircraft was recovered. Search was terminated on 19 December as all efforts had proved unsuccessful.

c. L-19 MAKES EMERGENCY LANDING. At approximately 1800 on 15 December a U. S. Army L-19 attached to the 41st Signal Battalion made an emergency landing in the surf near Qui Nhon. A FAC from 22nd Infantry Division in an airborne L-19 reported the downed aircraft received small arms fire from the beach, and that it appeared that about ten people were attempting to pull the aircraft onto the beach. Occupants of the plane were not observed. USS FINCH intercepted a request for gunfire support and proceeded to the area. As FINCH and two units from Junk Division 21 approached the beach to investigate, they received automatic weapon's fire. FINCH answered with 15 rounds of 3" and 50 Caliber machine gun fire, and the VC weapons ceased. The search for possible survivors continue until 2230, when it was cancelled because of darkness. On 16 December, ground forces conducted a search of the area, and FINCH stood by to lend NGFS. Final reports were not received at this command, but it is believed that no survivors were found.

7. Air Surveillance

P-5s operating from USS PINE ISLAND at Cam Ranh Bay provided continuous coverage of the red (southern) route from 1 to 12 December. P-3s operating from Sangley Point, and P-2s stationed at Tan Son Nhut flew the BLUE (northern) route on an every other day basis during the same period. On 12 December the P-5s departed Cam Ranh for Subic Bay, where they were scheduled for upkeep and repair. The P-3s then began to fly the BLUE route, and the P-2s commenced a six day series of junk count flights. Data obtained from the junk counts substantiated the

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supposition that few junks were putting to sea while the effects of the Northeast Monsoon were being felt along the northern coast. Upon completion of the junk flights on 17 December, the P-2s began regular surveillance flights on the RED route.

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ANNEX II

U. S. NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP RECOMMENDATIONS FOR CRAFT
FOR U. S. RIVER ASSAULT GROUP OPERATIONS

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CRAFT REQUIRED FOR RIVER ASSAULT OPERATIONS
(as recommended by U. S. Naval Advisory Group, Vietnam)

River assault operations require craft for four basic functions;

- a. Armored troop and equipment lift
- b. Command
- c. Fire support
- d. Support/Patrol/Escort

The LCM6, suitably modified, can satisfactorily perform the first three of the above functions. In its standard configuration this boat has the following characteristics:

- a. Length (overall) - 56' 1 1/2"
- b. Beam (Max) - 14' 1/4"
- c. Draft (Full Load) 3' 10"
- d. Speed (Full Load) - 9 knots
- e. Fuel Capacity - 450 gallons
- f. Range (Full load, full power) - 130 NM
- g. Engine (Diesel) - Two Model 64NM9

PART 1

Recommended modification of the LCM 6 as an armored transport craft (ATC) follow:

WHEEL HOUSE

Enlarge the wheel house. The armored wheel house should extend athwartships to about 15 inches from the main deck edge, port and starboard. But the wheel house should retain the same fore and aft measurements.

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Install second wheel and platform for coxswain above existing wheel at a level to raise coxswain's eyelevel above highest armor, for use during long runs. Throttle and clutch control at second wheel are not necessary, but are desirable.

MAIN DECK AND CARGO WELL

Extend the main deck forward approximately eight (8) feet over the after cargo well and brace with stanchions under the two 20mm cannon mounts for support of the main deck and the mounts.

The cargo well must accomodate one 105mm howitzer, with one 2 1/2 ton prime mover. The ladder from the after cargo well must be removable. No athwartships bulkhead is to be installed in the cargo well forward of the engine room bulkhead. The support stanchions for the 20mm cannon mounts on the main deck must be configured to accept a 105mm howitzer between the stanchions. The 105mm howitzer must occupy a position in the after cargo well with the barrel pointing aft and extending to the engine room bulkhead.

COMMUNICATIONS

Install two VRC-46 transceivers in the wheel house. Install two RC-292 retractable antennas near the wheel house. Provide one PRC-25 transceiver. Provide the following for each of the three transceivers:

- a. Air controller head sets with leads long enough to reach from the radio operator's position in the wheel house to the coxswain's position.
- b. Speakers for each radio for use during the non-quiet periods.

ARMOR

GENERAL. Unless otherwise stated all armor shall be Dual Property Steel Armor - 2, to defeat .50 cal. AP at 20 meters.

ENGINE ROOM. Install armor on the outer skin in the engine room from 1 1/2' below the waterline to the main deck, port and starboard to protect engines and accessories.

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MAIN DECK. Install 1/4" STS armor plate on the main deck over the engine room.

ARMOR BULWARK. Above the main deck, aft of the cargo well provide an armor bulwark to a height of 45 inches. This armor bulwark is to be placed approximately 15" inboard from the main deck edge on each side. The forward bulwark to run athwartships at the forward edge of the main deck. The armor bulwark will enclose the wheel house, both 20mm cannon, and both 50 cal MG. The wheel house is to be armored all round.

SPACE ARMOR. Install 1/16 inch steel plates in front of the armor bulwark on each side, port and starboard. The spacing between the armor bulwark and the 1/16 inch plate should be approximately 15 inches. Install 1/16 inch steel plate all around the wheel house from a height above the main deck of 40 inches and extending to the top of the wheel house. The spacing should be approximately 12 inches.

GUN TURRETS. All gun turrets to be made of armor. The design may be similar to the turrets now installed on the VNN RAG boats. But the turrets now in use in the VNN RAG are constructed for the small statured Vietnamese and must be size adjusted for American use.

CARGO WELL. Install armor on the interior wing walls in the cargo well from 1 1/2 feet below the waterline to the top of the wing walls.

ARMAMENT

Two .50 cal MG with associated area fire 40mm grenade launcher, just forward of the wheel house, one on each side port and starboard, inside the armor bulwark. Provide armored turrets.

Two lightweight 20mm cannon. One each side forward of the .50 cal MG turret, behind armor bulwark. Provide armored turrets.

Provide pintle mounts for the M-60 MG, one on each outboard armored bulkhead of the wheel house, and one each side on wing wall in forward cargo well. Provide M-60 MG at each pintle mount.

The following individual weapons and mountings are required:

Two M79 grenade launchers for use by the boat captain, and the radio operator.

Seven 357 Magnum Smith and Wessen M19 pistols or equivalent.

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Five M-14 7.62 rifles with quick release stowage brackets behind armor, one near each 20mm and .50 cal MG mount, and one in the wheel house.

One 20 Gauge Mossberg M185 shotgun or equivalent.

Install armament storage locker in the cargo well below the 20mm cannon mounts for storage of individual weapons listed in paragraph 4 above. This locker to be located to one side of the support stanchions, so it will not interfere with the loading of a 105mm howitzer and 2 1/2 prime ton mover.

AMMUNITION

Provide ready service ammunition stowage behind armor bulwark and convenient to the weapons indicated:

2000 rds 20mm ammo for each cannon.

2000 rds .50 cal ammo for each .50 cal MG.

400 rds 40mm area fire grenade launcher ammo for each launcher.

2000 rds M60 MG ammo near each pintle mounted M60 MG.

Provide the following ammo for individual weapons to be stowed as desired by individuals:

600 rds for M79.

2000 rds for AR 10.

700 rds for 357 pistol.

100 rds for 20 Ga shotgun (#3 buckshot)

CREW

The crew of the ATC should be:

Boat Captain (BM1)

Coxswain (BM3)

Radio Operator (BM3)

Four Gunners (EN2, ENFN, 2 SN)

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Provide 8 folding bunks in the cargo well, with overhead canvas awning for protection. These bunks to be installed in after cargo well.

POTABLE WATER

50 gal stowage tank to be installed in after cargo area.

AWNING

Provide canvas awning over the armor bulwark area aft for grenade deflection and protection from weather. Awnings to be stretched over a centerline fore and aft support bar and must slope to port and starboard. Supporting stanchions must be placed so that stanchions and awnings do not interfere with gun mounts, but placed to provide max awning coverage of the area. The canvas should be rigged with sister hooks for quick removal. All stanchions and support bars to be removable so that non-removable structure stands above the armor.

MINE COUNTERMEASURES

Install a chain drag similar to that described in Mine Defense Lab, Panama City, Florida Pub entitled "Streaming and Recovery Instructions for the Riverine Chain Drag Mechanical Minesweeping Gear."

EQUIPAGE

Provide the following equipage:

9 Steel helmets.

9 Sets body armor.

9 Life jackets

37 X 50 binoculars

Two crew serviced weapons night vision sights, one each
20mm cannon.

Spotlight to illuminate entire length of 40' junk at 1000
yards

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Flood light in well for cargo handling.

Two hand carried electric lanterns (commercial high intensity dry cell powered).

Six life rings

Two boat hooks

Six fenders.

Two 15 pound CO2 fire extinguishers in the engine room.
Two five pound CO2 fire extinguishers near the wheel house.

One electric megaphone.

One boat compass.

Four medical kits.

Nylon mooring line.

One danforth anchor.

One flag staff.

One polaroid camera with flash attachment.

Four ensigns.

MODIFICATIONS

Modify the engine exhaust piping system as necessary to ensure that the hull exhaust outlets are above the waterline.

HEAD FACILITIES

Plate with hole extending over the side near the stern. Provide stanchions and canvas to shield.

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RECOMMENDED MODIFICATION OF THE LCM 6 AS A COMMAND BOAT FOLLOW:

WHEELHOUSE

Move the wheelhouse from its usual location to a position on the centerline over the after part of the engine room. The aft bulkhead of the wheel house to coincide with the aft engine room bulkhead.

Enlarge the wheel house, port and starboard to approximately 15 inches from the main deck edge. The fore and aft measurement of the wheelhouse is to be that of a standard LCM 6.

Install a second wheel and platform above the existing wheel for complete visibility during long runs.

COMMUNICATIONS

Provide two VRC-46 transceivers in the wheel house. Install two retractable RC-292 antennas near the wheel house. Provide one PRC-25 transceiver for use as the Boat Captain desires.

Provide air controller head sets with leads long enough to reach from the radios to the coxswain. Provide speakers for all radios for use during non-quiet periods.

In the command cabin provide three VRC-46 transceivers or equivalent for the RAG commanders use. Other details of the command cabin interior will be furnished at a future date.

COMMAND CABIN

Construct a command cabin and install in the cargo well. The cabin floor dimensions are to be 32' X 10'. The cabin is to extend about 2 1/2 feet above the top of the cargo well wing walls all around, and windows provided all around for visibility. Canvas curtains to be provided for protection from the weather. The cabin is to be constructed of mild steel plate and is to be open at the top with canvas awnings over the top.

The command cabin is to be located as far aft in the cargo well as possible.

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Auxiliary generators to provide the necessary power may be installed in the space between the forward bulkhead of the command cabin and the forward 40mm cannon.

Provide a door in the forward bulkhead of the command cabin and provide a ladder to facilitate entry to the cabin.

ARMOR

General. Unless otherwise stated all armor shall be Dual Property Steel Armor - 2, to defeat .50 cal AP at 20 meters.

Engine Room. Install armor on the outer skin in the engine room from 1 1/2' below the water line to the main deck, port and starboard to protect engines and accessories.

Main Deck. Install 1/4" STS armor plate on the main deck over the engine room.

Armor Bulwark. The armor bulwark shall enclose the wheel house, two .50 cal guns and the aft 20mm cannon. This armor bulwark to extend 45 inches above the main deck.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plates in front of the armor bulwark all around. The spacing between the armor bulwark and the 1/16 inch steel plate to be approximately 15 inches. Removable panels shall be provided for access to deck fittings.

Wheel House. The wheel house is to be armored all around.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plate all around the wheel house for a height above the main deck of 40 inches and extending to the top of the wheel house. Provide approximately 12 inches of air space.

Gun Turrets. All gun turrets to made of armor steel. The design of the turrets to be similar to the turrets now in use by the VNN RAG boats, size adjusted for American use.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plate all around the forward 40mm cannon turret, to turn with the turret. Provide approximately 10 inches of air space.

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Cargo Well. Install armor in the interior wing walls in the cargo well from 1 1/2 feet below the waterline to the top of the wing walls.

ARMAMENT

One 20mm gun on the centerline at the stern located as shown on reference (a) except moved forward 3' 6". Gun to be inside armor bulwark. Provide turret.

Two .50 Caliber machine guns, heavy barreled (or two twin heavy barrel .50 cal machine guns, if available) with associated 40mm area fire grenade launchers in armored turrets port and starboard forward of the wheel house inside the armor bulwark. Provide turrets.

One 40mm gun at the bow with associated 50 caliber heavy barreled machine gun as on the monitor for 40mm gun.

Two M60 machine guns to be mounted on pintle mounts one each side of the wheel house port and starboard.

The following individual weapons and mountings are required:

- a. Three M79 grenade launchers.
- b. Eight M14 7.62mm rifles. Provide quick release stowage brackets behind armor for two near the after 20mm cannon, one near each .50 cal MG, and three in the wheel house.
- c. Eleven 357 MAG Smith and Wesson M19 pistols or equivalent.
- d. One 20 Gauge Mossberg M185 shotgun or equivalent.

AMMUNITION

Provide ready service stowage behind armor for the following ammunition for use by the weapons indicated.

2000 rds for each of the two M60MG

1400 rds 20mm at after 20mm turret

1000 rds 40mm in forward gun turret

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1000 rds 50 cal MG in forward gun turret

300 rds of 40mm grenade launcher at each after 50 cal turret

1000 rds of .50 cal at each aft turret.

Provide armored magazine in space between the command cabin and forward 40mm cannon turret to hold the below listed ammunition:

2000 rds M50 MG ammo

2000 rds 20mm ammo

1000 rds 40mm cannon ammo

2000 rds .50 cal ammo

300 rds for 40mm area fire grenade launcher ammo.

Provide the following ammunition for individual weapons to be stored by the individual.

800 rds for AR 10 rifle

900 rds for M79

550 rds for 357 pistol

100 rds for 20 gauge shotgun (#3 buckshot)

CREW

The crew of the commandment should be:

Boat Captain (BMC)

Coxswain (BM3)

Radio Operator (BM3)

Four gunners (GM1, GM3, EN2, ENFN, 4SN)

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~BERTHING

Provide hooks and six hammocks in the after armor bulwark enclosure for the crew:

POTABLE WATER

Install two 100 gallon tanks for potable water in the space forward of the command cabin.

AWNINGS

Provide a canvas awning over the after 20mm gun wheel house, and .50 caliber guns to protect the crew and equipment against weather, and for grenade deflection. Awning to be supported by rope ridge pole and number of stanchions to be held to minimum. All stanchions and supports to be readily removable.

Awnings as above to be fitted over the command hut in the cargo well.

HEAD FACILITIES

Plate with hole extending over the side near the stern. Provide stanchions and canvas to shield.

EQUIPAGE

Provide the following equipage:

11 Steel helmets.

11 Sets body armor.

11 life jackets.

Three 7 X 50 binoculars.

Two crew served weapons night vision sights. One each on the forward 40mm cannon and one on the after 20mm cannon.

Spotlight to illuminate entire length of 40' junk at 1000 yards.

Two hand carried electric lanterns (commercial high intensity dry cell powered.)

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Six life rings

Two boat hooks

Six fenders

Two 15 pound CO2 fire extinguishers in the engine room. Two five pound CO2 fire extinguishers near the wheel house.

One electric megaphone

One boat compass

Four medical kits

Nylon mooring line

One danforth anchor

One flag staff

One polaroid camera with flash attachment

Four ensigns

MODIFICATION

Modify the engine exhaust piping system as necessary to ensure that the hull exhaust outlets are above the waterline.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~PART 3

RECOMMENDED MODIFICATION OF THE LCM 6 AS A FIRE SUPPORT BOAT (MONITOR) FOLLOW:

WHEEL HOUSE

Move the wheel house from its location just aft of the cargo well to a position over the after part of the engine room. The after bulkhead of the wheel house should be located at the after bulkhead of the engine room.

Enlarge the wheel house. The wheelhouse should extend athwartships to about 15 inches from the main deck edge, port and starboard. The wheel house should retain its original fore and aft measurements.

Install a second wheel and platform for the coxswain above existing wheel at a level to raise the coxswain's eye level above the highest armor, for use during long runs. Throttle and clutch control at second wheel are not necessary but are desirable.

MONITOR COMMUNICATIONS

Install two VRC-46 transceivers in the wheel house. Install two RC-292 retractable antennas near the wheel house. Provide one PRC-25 transceiver. Provide the following for each of the three transceivers:

Air controller head sets with leads long enough to reach from the operator's position in the wheel house to the coxswains position.

Speakers for each radio. for use during non-quiet periods.

ARMOR

General. Unless otherwise stated the armor shall be Dual Property Steel Armor -2, to defeat 50 cal AP at 20 meters.

Engine Room. Armor on the outer skin in the engine room from 1 1/2" below the water line to the main deck, port and starboard to protect engines and accessories.

Main Deck. Install 1/4" STS armor plate on the main deck over the engine room.

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Armor Bulwark. The placement of the armor bulwark which encloses the wheel house, two .50 cal gun platforms, and the 20mm cannon should be as shown previously. Construct this armor bulwark to extend 45 inches above the main deck.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plates in front of the armor bulwark all around. The spacing between the armor bulwark and the 1/16 inch steel plate to be approximately 15 inches. Removable panels shall be provided for access to deck fittings.

Wheel House. The wheel house is to be armored all around.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plate all around the wheel house from a height above the main deck of 40 inches and extending to the top of the wheel house. Provide approximately 12 inches of air space.

Gun Turrets. All gun turrets to be made of steel armor. The design of the turrets may be similar to the turrets now in use by the VNN RAG boats, size adjusted for American use.

Space Armor. Install 1/16 inch steel plate all around the forward 40mm cannon turret, to turn with the turret. Provide approximately 12 inches of air space.

Mortar Well. Construct mortar well. This will be constructed of steel armor.

ARMAMENT

One 40mm cannon and one heavy barreled 50 cal. machine gun forward in an armored turret with space armor as previously shown.

Two 50 cal. machine guns, heavy barrels (or two twin heavy barrel 50 cal. machine guns, if available), with associated 40mm area fire grenade launchers, in armored turrets port and starboard, just forward of the wheel house, inside the armor bulwark.

Four M60 machine guns, to be mounted on pintle mounts, one each side of the wheel house, port and starboard; and one each side of the mortar well port and starboard.

One 20mm cannon in armored turret.

One 81 mm mortar installed in the mortar well.

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The following individual weapons and mountings are required:

Three M79 grenade launchers.

Eight M14, 7.62mm rifles with seven quick release stowage brackets behind armor, two near the forward 40mm turret, one near the after 20mm turret, one near each .50 cal turret, and two in the pilot house.

Eleven 357 Mag Smith and Wesson M19 pistols or equivalent.

One 20 gauge Mossberg shotgun, or equivalent.

AMMUNITION

Provide ready service stowage behind armor for the following ammunition, for use by the weapons indicated.

2000 rds for each of the four M60 MG.

1400 rds 20mm at after 20mm turret.

1000 rds 40mm in forward gun turret.

1000 rds 50 cal MG in forward gun turret.

300 rds 40mm grenade launcher at each after 50 cal turret.

1000 rds .50 cal at each after turret.

90 rds 81mm mortar.

Remove existing bunks tables, lockers, etc from compartment aft of the mortar well, and provide an armored magazine in this compartment for stowage of:

4000 rds for M60 MG

2000 rds for 20mm cannon

1000 rds for 40mm cannon

600 rds for 40mm area fire grenade launcher

50 rds for 81mm mortar

2000 rds for .50 cal MG

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Provide the following ammunition or individual weapons to be stowed by the individual.

800 rds for AR 10 rifle

900 rds for M79

5550 rds for 357 pistol

100 rds for 20 guage shotgun (#3 buckshot)

CREW

The crew of the Monitor should be:

Boat Captain (BMC)

Coxswain (BM3)

Radio Operator (RD3)

Light gunners (GM1, GM3, EN2, ENFN, 45N)

BERTHING

Install the six bunks forward of the mortar well.

Provide ventilation supply and exhaust fans in the berthing compartment.

POTABLE WATER

Install two 50 gal potable water stowage tanks and two sinks in the berthing compartment. Provide topside filling connection.

AWNING

Provide canvas awnings over the armor bulwark area aft for grenade deflection and protection from weather. Awnings to be stretched over a centerline fore and aft support bar and must slope to port and starboard. Supporting stanchions must be placed so that stanchions and awnings do not interfere with gun mounts, but placed to provide max awning coverage of the area. The canvas should be rigged with sister hooks for quick removal. All stanchions and support bars to be removable so that non-removable structure stands above the armor.

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Provide a canvas awning over the mortar well for equipment protection. The awning is to be stretched over a centerline fore and aft support bar and must slope to port and starboard. The canvas should be rigged with sister hooks for quick removal. All stanchions and support bars to be removable.

EQUIPAGE

Provide the following equipage:

- 11 Steel helmets
- 11 Sets body armor
- 11 Life jackets
- 37 X 50 binoculars

Two crew served weapons night vision sights, one each on the forward 40mm cannon, and one on the after 20mm cannon.

Spotlight to illuminate entire length of 40' junk at 1000 yards.

Two hand carried electric lanterns (commercial high intensity dry cell powered).

Six life rings

Two boat hooks

Six fenders

Two 5 lb CO2 fire extinguishers in the engine room. Two five pound CO2 fire extinguishers near the wheel house.

One electric megaphone

One boat compass

Four medical kits.

Nylon mooring line

One danforth anchor

One flag staff

One polaroid camera with flash attachment

Four ensigns.

MODIFICATIONS

Modify the engine exhaust piping system as necessary to ensure that the hull exhaust outlets are above the waterline.

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~PART 4

An assault support/patrol boat (ASPB) is required for escort, fire support, and mine sweeping duties during the movement phase of a river assault operation. These tasks require a boat with relatively shallow draft (maximum 3'6"), extensive armor, versatile armament, and the ability to survive close underwater explosions. The 5/16" steel hull plating and large scantling sizes of the "I" beam framing members of the French STCAN boat developed during the Indochina War and still being used has proven highly successful in the latter regard. (See diagram at enclosure 1)

The general characteristics of an ASPB to meet the requirements of river assault operations follow.

HULL

The hull will be made of 5/16" steel from the keel to the waterline, and Dual Property Steel Armor - 2, to defeat .50 cal AP at 20 meters from the waterline to the main deck. The hull will be 36' to 39' long overall, and the beam will be 13' maximum. The French STCAN hull will be used as a prototype for the ASPB hull. A beam width in excess of 13' may be required to achieve a maximum combat loaded draft of 3'6".

COMMUNICATIONS

Install two VRC-46 transceivers at the radio operator's station behind the coxswain. Install two RC-292 retractable antennas near the radio operator's station. Provide one PRC-25 transceiver.

Provide air controller headsets with leads long enough to reach from the radios to the coxswain. Provide speakers for all three transceivers for use during non-quiet periods.

ARMOR

General. Unless otherwise stated all armor will be Dual Property Steel Armor - 2, to defeat .50 cal AP at 20 meters.

Main Deck. Install 1/4" STS armor plate on the main deck over the engine room.

Superstructure. The deck house enclosing the coxswain's position, radio operator's position and the after gunner's position will be constructed of armor.

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Turrets. The after rotating turret and forward 20mm cannon turret will be constructed of armor. The after turret should be circular. The forward turret may be modeled after the 20mm cannon turrets now in use by the VNN RAG, but sized for American use.

ARMAMENT

The armament requirements for the ASPB are:

a. One lightweight 20mm cannon (or heavy barrel .50 cal MG; or twin heavy barrel, if available) with associated 40mm area fire grenade launcher, will be mounted forward. An armored turret will be provided, and the cannon (MG) will be mounted in the forward well deck.

b. Two M60 MG will be mounted at the radio operator's position, one each to port and starboard. These MG will be pintle mounted and ports cut in the armor to allow a maximum field of fire.

c. One M60 MG with associated 40mm area fire grenade launcher will be mounted in a revolving armored turret at the after gunner's position.

d. One 60mm M19 mortar with M1 Bipod will be provided. This mortar will be fired from the bedplate on the stem.

e. One Law Rocket Launcher will be provided for use against bunkers or armor.

f. The following individual weapons and mountings are required.

Two M14 7.62mm rifles with quick release stowage brackets behind armor. One at the forward gun position and one at the coxswain's position.

Two M79 grenade launchers.

Five 357 MAG Smith & Wesson M19 pistols or equivalent.

One 20 GA Mossberg shotgun or equivalent.

ASPB AMMUNITION

Provide ready service stowage behind armor for the following ammunitions for use by the weapons indicated.

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2000 rds for each M60 MG at the radio operator's position.

2500 rds for the M60 MG at the after gunner's position.

1400 rds 20mm (or 2800 rds of .50 cal) at forward gun station.

300 rds for 40mm grenade launcher at forward gun station.

300 rds for 40mm grenade launcher at after gun station.

A below deck armored magazine will be provided forward of the engine room to store the below listed ammunition.

4000 rds for M60 MG.

2000 rds for 20mm cannon (or 4000 rds for .50 cal MG).

600 rds for 40mm area fire grenade launcher.

Provide the following ammunitions for individual weapons to be stowed by the individual:

200 rds for AR10

100 rds for 20GA shotgun (#3 buckshot)

400 rds for M79

200 rds for 357 pistol

MINE COUNTERMEASURES

Install a chain drag similar to that described in Mine Defense Lab, Panama City, Florida Pub entitled "Streaming and Recovery Instructions for the Riverine Chain Drag Mechanical Minesweeping Gear".

CREW

The crew of the ASPB should be:

Coxswain/Boat Captain (BN3).

Radio operator (SN).

Three gunners (EN3, ENFN, SN).

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~~CONFIDENTIAL~~BERTHING

Provide bunks for four men in the compartment forward of the engine room.

Provide ventilation supply and exhaust fans for this compartment.

POTABLE WATER

Install a 40 gal potable water tank in the forward well.

AWNINGS

Provide canvas awnings over the deck house for grenade deflection and protection from weather. Awnings to be stretched over a fore and aft support bar and to slope to port to starboard. All stanchions and support bars to be removable.

HEAD FACILITIES

Plate with hole extending over the side near the stern. Provide stanchions and canvas to shield.

EQUIPAGE

Provide the following equipage:

5 Body armor and steel helmets.

5 life jackets.

Binoculars - three 7 X 50

One crew served weapons night vision sight on forward mount.

One infrared weapon sight on the after centerline M60 MG station.

Spotlight to illuminate entire length of 40' junk at 1000 yards.

Two hand-carried electric lanterns (commercial high intensity dry cell powered).

One life ring.

One bucket.

Two boat hooks.

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Six fenders

Four five pound CO2 fire extinguishers.

Four ensigns.

One polaroid camera with flash attachment.

One electric megaphone (Self contained battery powered).

One medical kit.

One boat compass.

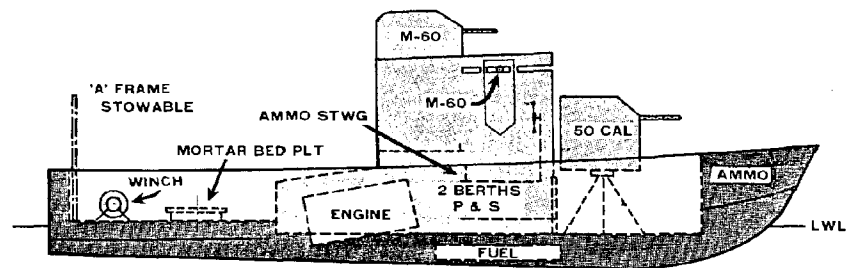
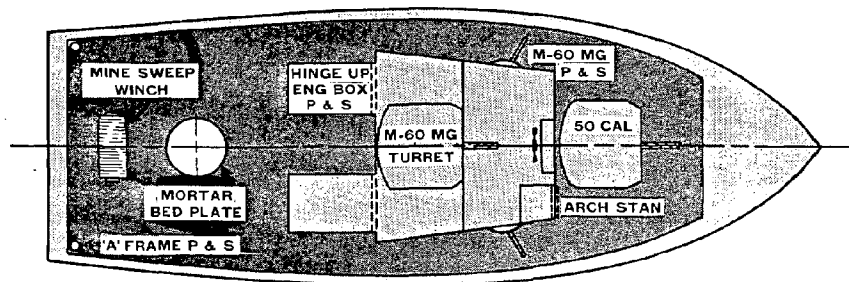
- Nylon mooring line.

One danforth anchor 50 lbs.

One flag staff.

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PROPOSED ASSAULT/SUPPORT PATROL BOAT

ENCLOSURE 1

11-23