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*FMFPA: Operations of U.S.
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OPERATIONS OF U. S. MARINE FORCES

VIETNAM

AUGUST 1966



FLEET MARINE FORCE, PACIFIC

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This is a summary of activities of US Marine forces in Vietnam for the month of August 1966. Its purpose is to update similar historical reports covering periods from March 1965 through July 1966.

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UNCLASSIFIEDSUMMARY

During August, the Marines were heavily involved in a number of large unit actions outside the central pacification regions of I CTZ, while still maintaining the high tempo of the pacification campaign. As before, this effort was directed at driving the guerrillas out of the populated areas, destroying their supporting network, helping the local Vietnamese help themselves and generally working to bring to the coastal lowlands a better level of security and self-sufficiency.

This counter guerrilla battle included 11,004 small unit operations during August, 179 of them company size, which resulted in 324 guerrillas killed and 35 captured. In comparison, 28 Marines were killed, the lowest number in six months.

Deriving from this latter activity there is evidence of some erosion of the enemy guerrilla power in the countryside. During the first six months of 1965, when the Marine campaign against the guerrillas was just beginning, there were 96 incidents of enemy sabotage against roads and railroads in the I CTZ. In the first six months of 1966, the number of these guerrilla acts had decreased by 61%, to 37. Assassinations, comparing the same two periods, also declined 61%, from 39 to 15, while kidnappings dropped from 62 to 14, a 78% decrease. These are small, albeit credible, indications that progress is being achieved in disrupting the Viet Cong guerrilla fabric, the importance of which is eloquently portrayed in the following excerpt

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from a DIA report some months ago:

"Indian ICC Commissioner Rahman discussed his recent trip to Hanoi with U. S. Embassy officials in Saigon and had these points to make: ... The crucial matter from Hanoi's standpoint is not the volume of communist casualties, but the survival of the guerrilla infrastructure in South Vietnam...."

Some of the same Marine units that conducted the 11,004 small unit actions in and about the hamlets of the lowland countryside killed another 651 of the enemy in large unit operations which extended into all five of the northern provinces. Also, late in the month, the Marine Special Landing Force of the Seventh Fleet took part in three actions on the littoral east of Saigon, in support of US Army and Australian operations there.

Of the 975 enemy killed by Marines during August, 33% (325) were casualties to attack aircraft of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. The 5,437 fixed wing sortie total was the second highest to date. 4,262 of these were in support of Marine units, compared with 3,790 in July and 1,703 in June. Helicopter sorties declined slightly, from 41,957 for the previous month to 36,216; 90% were troop lift or troop-supply missions.

Slow gains continued to be registered in the Marine pacification program, although preoccupation with election preparations diminished GVN support. At the end of the month, 434,000 Vietnamese were living in villages considered to be at least 80% pacified, compared with 320,000 in May and 175,000 in February. 218,000 villagers were living in areas 40 percent to 80 percent pacified, versus

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116,000 in May and 58,000 in February. At month's end, a census had been completed or was being undertaken in 63 villages; by comparison, in May the figure was 34, and in February it was 12. And the number of local chiefs residing full-time in their villages continues to increase - in February only 13 villages had chiefs in residence; by May the total had risen to 29, and at the end of August the figure stood at 42. And the beginnings of local government were evident in 82 villages, an increase of 49 over February's total.

On 27 August, months of coordinated effort by Vietnamese civilians, U. S. Marines, and Navy personnel were culminated when a newly-constructed, nineteen-mile roadway joining the inland industrial complex of An Hoa with the seaport at Danang was opened for traffic - the first time in two years that An Hoa has had access to the sea by a secure overland route.

On 29 August the 2d Brigade, Republic of Korea Marine Corps assumed responsibility for a 183 square mile area of operations south of Chu Lai. At the end of the month, two of the Brigade's three battalions had arrived; the balance of the 4,200 man force was expected to arrive by end-September. The unit will operate under the operational guidance of the CG III MAF.

Significant events in the operations of the ROK Marine unit will be reported in these summaries, whenever they relate directly to those of the US Marines, and to the extent necessary to make the USMC historical record complete.

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GOALS

Each of these monthly summaries seeks to recount the history of Marine activity during the period and, by comparison with preceding months, to exhibit change and rate of change. They have said little, however, as to the reflection of those changes against our ultimate goal in Vietnam.

That goal, nevertheless, is quite clear, and the state of progress thus is reasonably perceptible. In broadest terms, the goal assigned by COMUSMACV to the Marines in Vietnam is interpreted as a requirement, in company with RVNAF, to expel, destroy or neutralize the enemy in the I Corps Tactical Zone and to bring about a peaceful condition wherein local governments can function, farmers can harvest and market their crops, and the people can live with reasonable freedom from terrorism, extortion and oppression.

Achievement of the goal is strongly influenced by the fact that something over 90% of the people and virtually all of the food in I CTZ are found in the 2,700 square miles of its coastal plain. These are the populated areas where the Viet Cong has, over the years, built the elaborate infrastructure which gave him his stranglehold over the population. But as the Viet Cong is driven from those regions or killed, captured or converted, the Vietnamese can begin to build a structure contemplated to stand firm against the return of insurgency. These vital coastal areas are highlighted on the map on the following page.

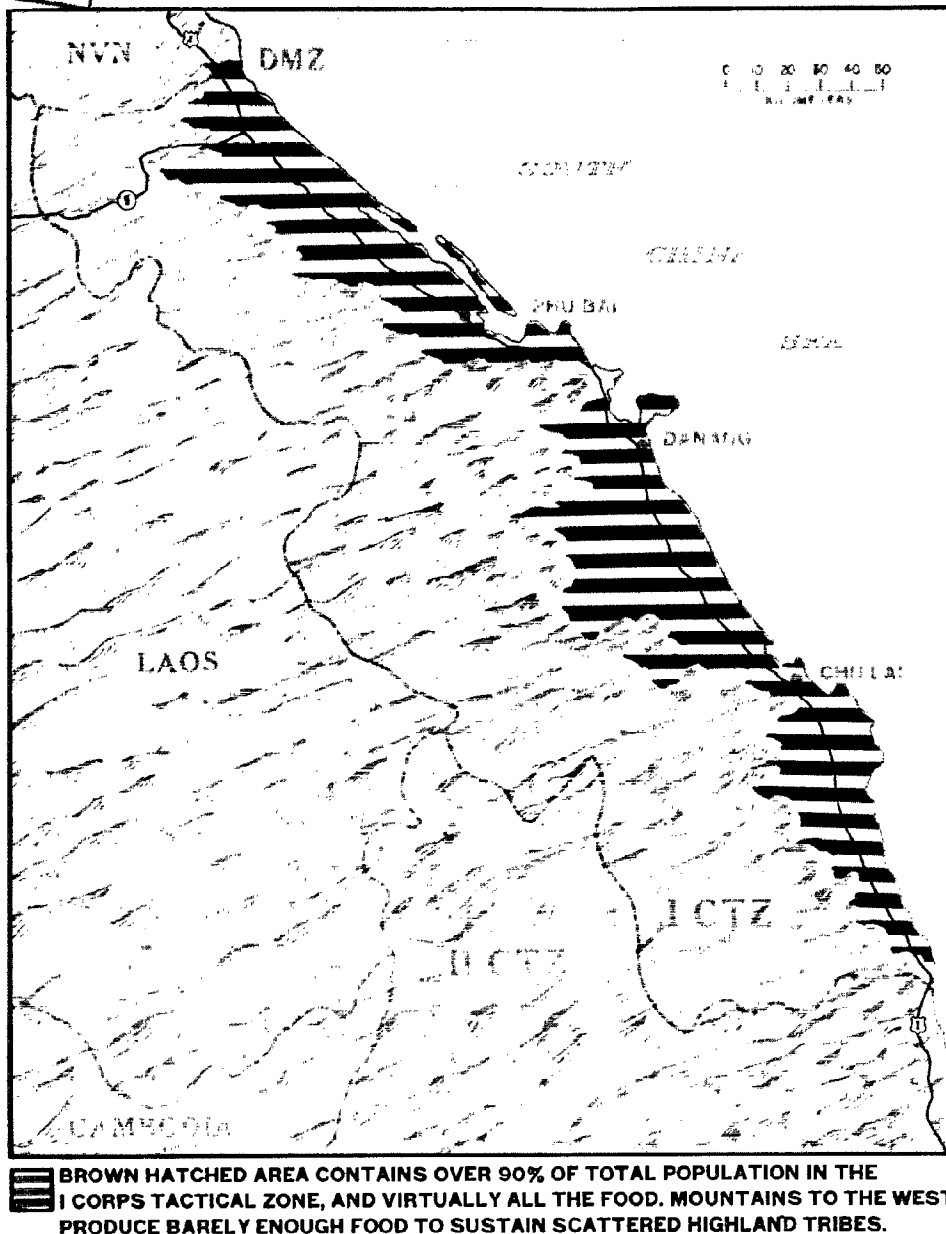
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THE STRATEGIC AREA OF I CTZ: THE COASTAL LOWLANDS



The brown hatched region on the map above marks the location of about 2.4 million of the total 2.7 million people in I CTZ. All of the usable road network and all of the railroads lie in this area. Virtually all the rice of I CTZ comes from here and, of course, all the harvest

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from the rich fishing grounds offshore. The rugged inland region, on the other hand, is sparsely populated, and produces barely enough food to support its few thousand tribal inhabitants. Enemy troops who elect to remain there must acquire what they eat from the lowlands to the east, or cause it to be delivered laboriously from out-of-country sources many miles away, over jungle trails and through the most difficult mountain terrain.

It is clear, then, when the enemy is substantially expelled from the area, and the people of the lowlands are under solid government authority, that the basic MACV goal in the area will be largely achieved. The US/RVN campaign in this area aims at doing this. The initial three Marine penetrations were made at key points in this rich lowland region. The counter guerrilla campaign of the Marines has been pressed in that region for about a year, and active US influence now radiates outward from the initial three areas, to the north and south and up the valley approaches toward the highlands.

This spreading influence acquires its momentum from a variety of sources. It is exerted through the thousands of patrols and ambushes that are being carried out weekly. It comes from the large unit operations conducted regularly throughout the I CTZ whenever there is a reasonable chance of engaging an enemy regular unit. It comes from the Sting Ray operations which observe the enemy's actions and challenge his freedom of movement by use of air and artillery fire, even in more remote areas of the highlands. It comes from the Rough Rider

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operations, where progressively greater use is being made of the highways for our logistical and administrative purposes; from the surprise amphibious operations at random locations along the coast; from the stay-behind forces which remain in battle areas after the termination of operations, waiting for evidence of the enemy's return; from the County Fair operations which organize the villagers, contribute to their health and knowledge, and methodically root out the residue of guerrillas and separate them from the populace, village by village. And it comes from the constant air and ground psychological warfare operations.

The result of all this is friendly control, solidly established and growing in some regions; friendly influence, new and indecisive in others; with all possible gradations in between. The chart on the following page describes this evolutionary program pictorially. Radiating outward from the key base areas, as portrayed on the chart in dark blue, local militia and Combined Action forces are beginning to shoulder a larger share of the security, and local government structures are beginning to appear. In the areas shown in lighter blue, where the enemy's large units are being pounded regularly and guerrilla bands are being hunted down, friendly influence is being felt on a slowly growing scale. On the chart, asterisks mark the scene of large unit operations conducted in these regions over the past six months; the stars mark the more important Sting

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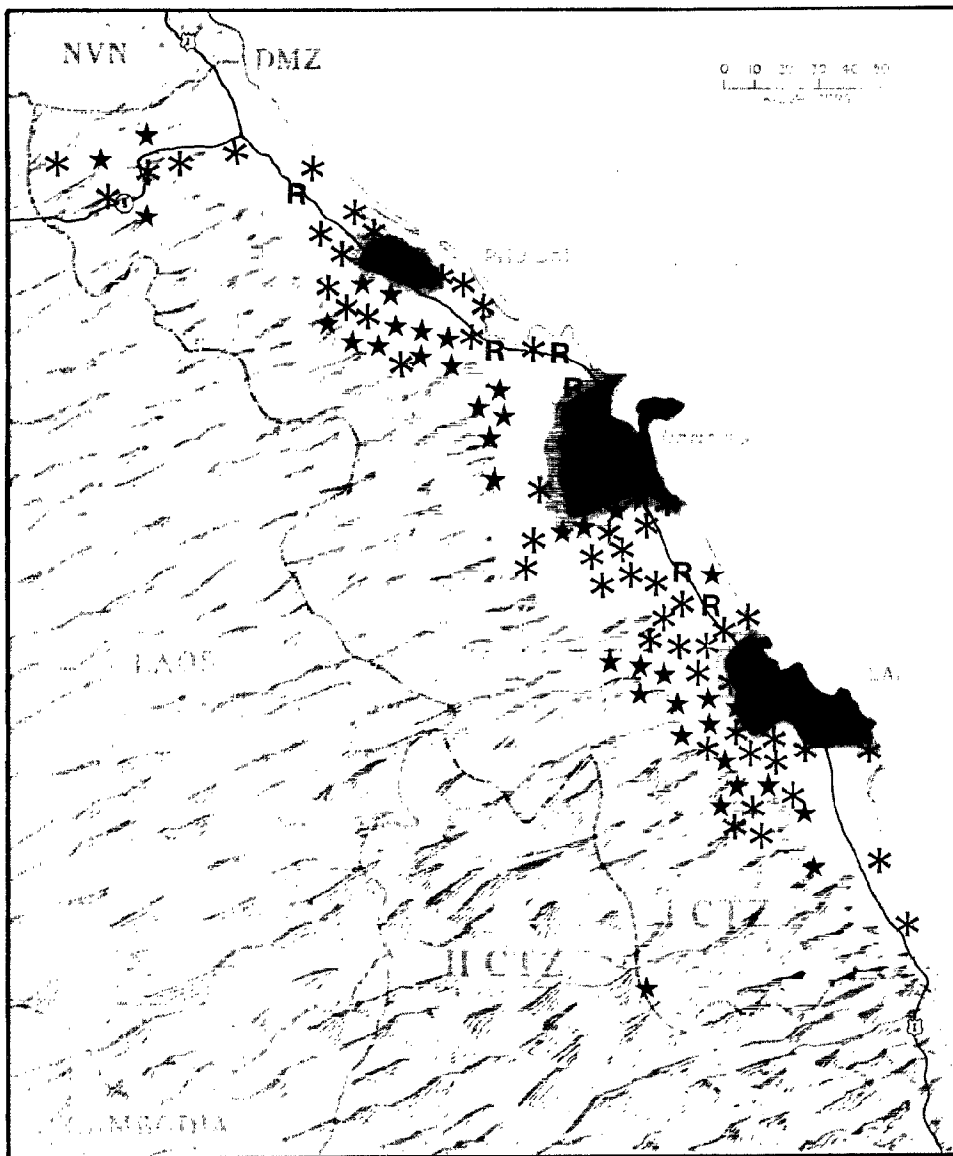
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Ray operations during that period, and the letter "R" marks the routes over which Marine vehicles traveled over 7,000,000 vehicle-miles in July and August alone.

EXPANDING FRIENDLY INFLUENCE IN I CTZ

INFLUENCE

RANGING FROM FIRM GVN/US CONTROL, UNDER ACTIVE PACIFICATION

TO

VARIABLE GVN/US INFLUENCE, ACHIEVED THROUGH THE MEDIA OF
 (*) LARGE UNIT OPERATIONS, (*) STING RAY MISSIONS,
 AND (R) ROUGH RIDER OPERATIONS.

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There are also important sub-goals implicit in the map on the preceding page. Some of them are reasonably measurable. For example, as an element of victory, it has often been made clear that we want an end to violence - an end to attacks, sabotage, murder, and kidnapping of the people. On our own side we want to see substantial GVN authority over the populace, the countryside, and the villages. A measure of the progress toward achieving these sub-goals is reflected in the following charts.

These give an indication of the erosive effect our operations have had on the Viet Cong and his guerrilla structure. They portray the effect of the counter guerrilla campaign upon the Viet Cong pattern of armed attacks, kidnappings, murders, road and railroad sabotage, assassination and terrorism of local officials, and finally they present a picture of changes in his acts of harassment and annoyance.

The graphs relating to each of these categories show the quarterly rates of occurrence in each index, through July 1966. For purposes of this analysis, the area studied is that which comprised the Marine areas at end-August 1966.

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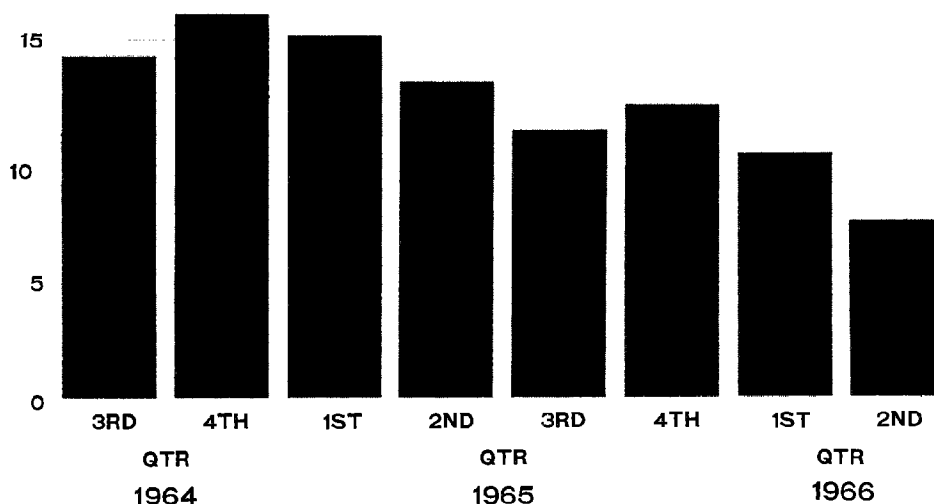
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VIET CONG ARMED ATTACKS IN MARINE AREAS 1 JULY 1964-1 JULY 1966

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In order to mount an armed attack, the Viet Cong guerrilla force must assemble, travel to the target, execute the attack, retire and hide. These steps, characteristic of Phase II of the Communist National Liberation formula, are apparently becoming more difficult to accomplish. The guerrilla must now contend with day and night saturation patrolling and ambushes, and with the slowly growing willingness of the peasants to report on Viet Cong movement and activity. Where the night once belonged to the Viet Cong, and where the ambush was his exclusive technique, he finds his monopoly challenged. The resulting decrease in incidence of attacks is apparent in this chart.

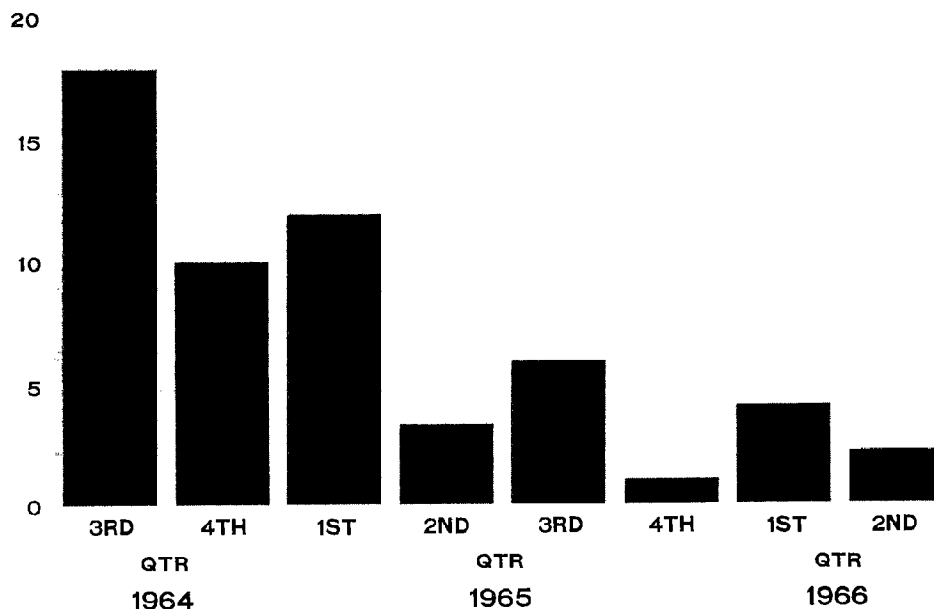
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CIVIL OFFICIALS ASSASSINATED OR KIDNAPPED
BY VIET CONG IN MARINE AREAS
1 JULY 1964-1 JULY 1966



It is against the local government official that the Viet Cong traditionally applies his leverage of violence, to ensure that the central government does not establish control. The Viet Cong attempt to do this by night-time murders of the district, village or hamlet chief or official, and by kidnapping them or subjecting them to physical violence. The above chart exhibits that a local government official living in one of the Marine areas in May-June 1966 had a substantially better chance of escaping kidnapping, assassination or a broken head than he had in the spring of 1965. This may be attributed, to a large extent, to the greater difficulty the Viet Cong now encounter in moving undetected, and thus achieving surprise. It is also identified with the growing refusal of the populace to submit to Viet Cong threats, and the gradually improving security situation in the small rural population centers.

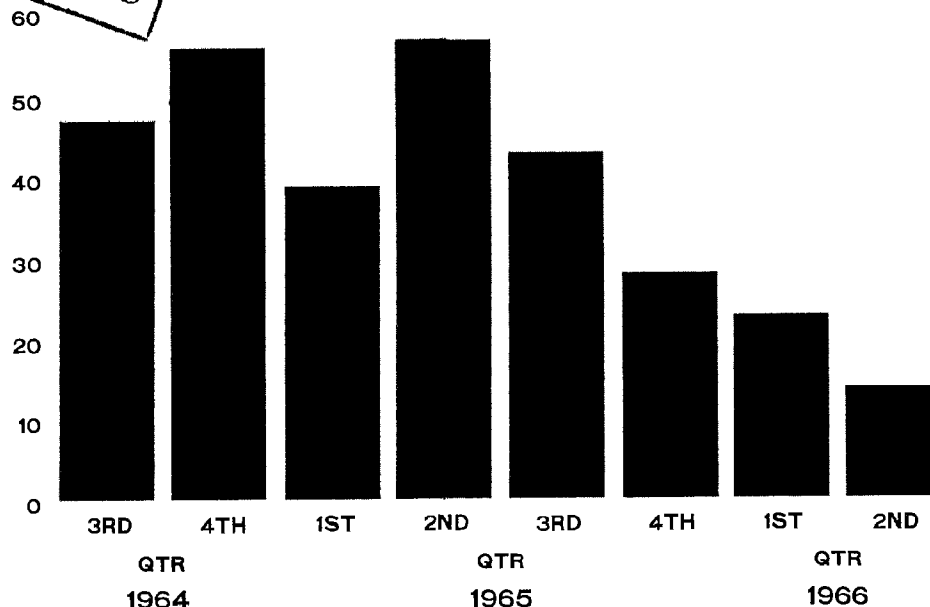
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VIET CONG ROAD AND RAILROAD SABOTAGE IN MARINE AREAS 1 JULY 1964-1 JULY 1966



Open roads and railroads, lines of communication, are essential to a healthy economic and security situation at all levels of Vietnamese life. This is especially true of the roads over which the farmer must travel to work his fields and to market his goods. Interruption of this free intercourse has been a basic enemy tactic. Now, however, it is becoming more difficult for the Viet Cong to mine roads without the knowledge of the nearby peasants, and these peasants are more and more frequently warning our forces and pointing out mines. And the Viet Cong practice of mustering nightly forced labor parties to dig road cuts is also more difficult now, as his movement and activities are impeded by the US presence. The chart above shows that those incidents of road and railroad sabotage in the Marine areas in April-June 1966 dropped to about one-fourth the level of early summer 1965.

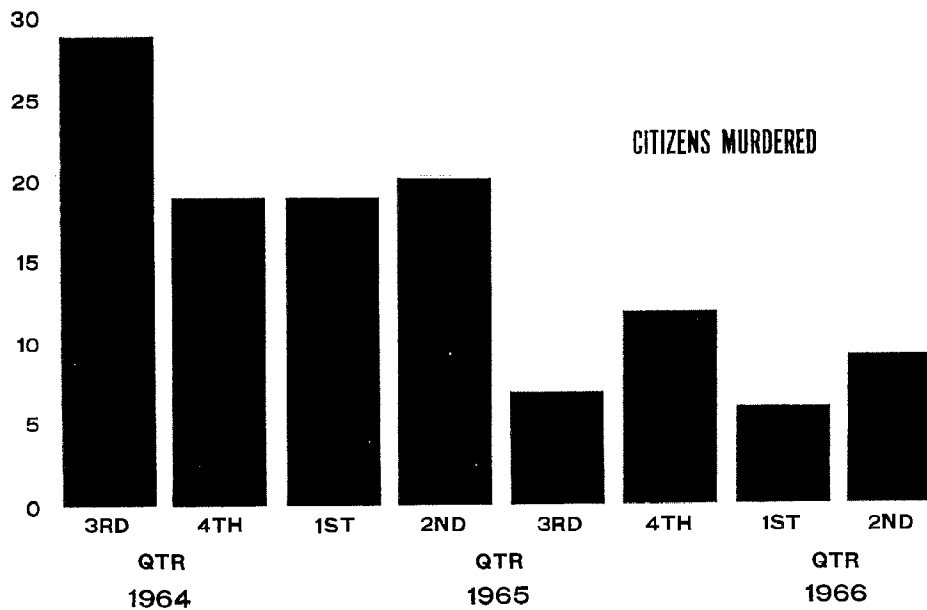
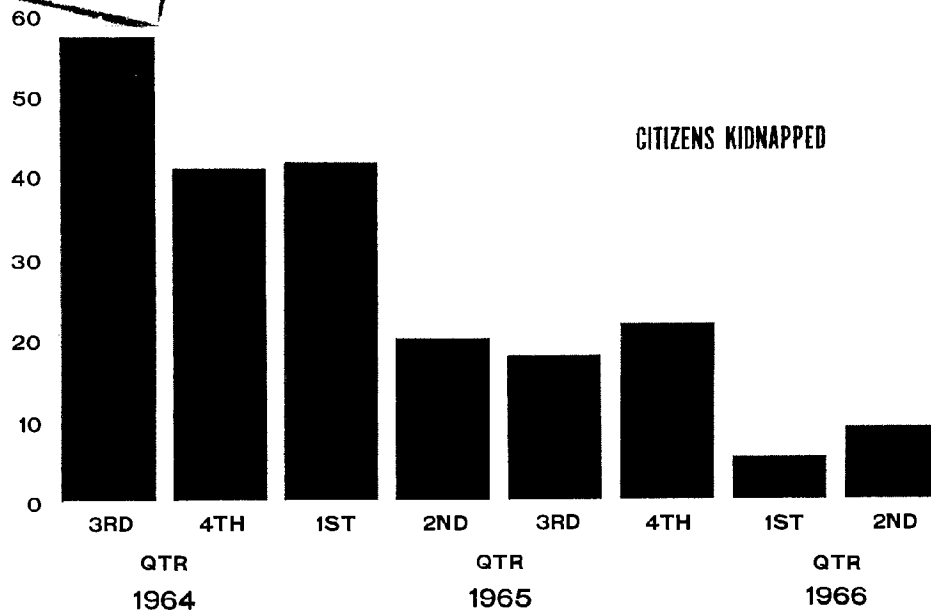
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VIET CONG TERRORISM IN MARINE AREAS 1 JULY 1964-1 JULY 1966



Kidnapping and murder of the rank and file are the basic tools of the Viet Cong terrorist. However, as security in the villages and hamlets has begun to improve, as the peasants have begun to build their own village security systems these hard acts of terrorism have slowly declined.

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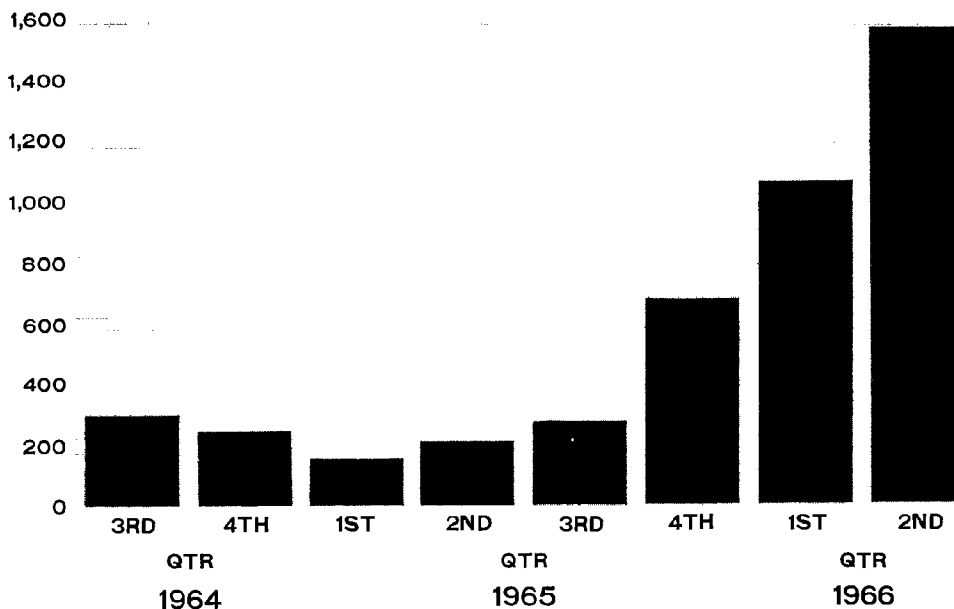
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As exhibited in the preceding charts, the US/GVN effort in the I CTZ has caused the Viet Cong to curtail their program of attack, murder, kidnapping and sabotage. There is also evidence that they are reacting in the conventional communist insurgent pattern. In the areas under discussion, they have apparently begun to retrogress, reverting to those less damaging and less expensive Phase I type acts that remain within their ability to carry out. The attacks, the violence and hard acts of terrorism have been replaced, in part, by acts of harassment and annoyance. These are the random shots in the night toward a hamlet or village, warnings not to support the local governments, instructions that the people must resist the Americans, or detention of a bus while speeches are made to the passengers. This trend is portrayed in the following chart.

**VIET CONG MINOR HARASSMENT IN MARINE AREAS
1 JULY 1964-1 JULY 1966**



This shift from the hard acts to the less troublesome ones tends to be hidden in gross rates of "Viet Cong Incidents" which, taken as total figures, have actually increased over the past year. A key point, however, in appraising progress toward achievement of our overall goals, is to perceive the change in the pattern of these incidents.

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Beyond the goals related to rooting out the guerrilla enemy, there exist also goals relating to achieving friendly control of the population - establishment of substantial GVN authority over the people, villages, and the meaningful land area. Within the Marine areas a significant measure of government authority (40% or higher on the pacification scale) has now been established over about 653,000 (24%) of the 2.7 million population in I Corps. This authority equates now to about 72 villages (12%) of the 579 in I Corps, and covers 457 square miles, about 17% of the area of the heavily populated and rich coastal lowlands. The charts on the following page depict this expanding GVN authority in terms of people, area and villages.

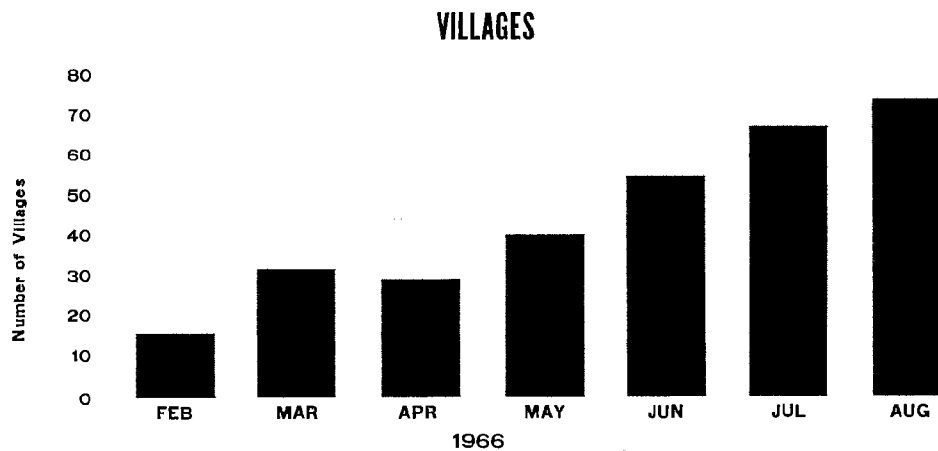
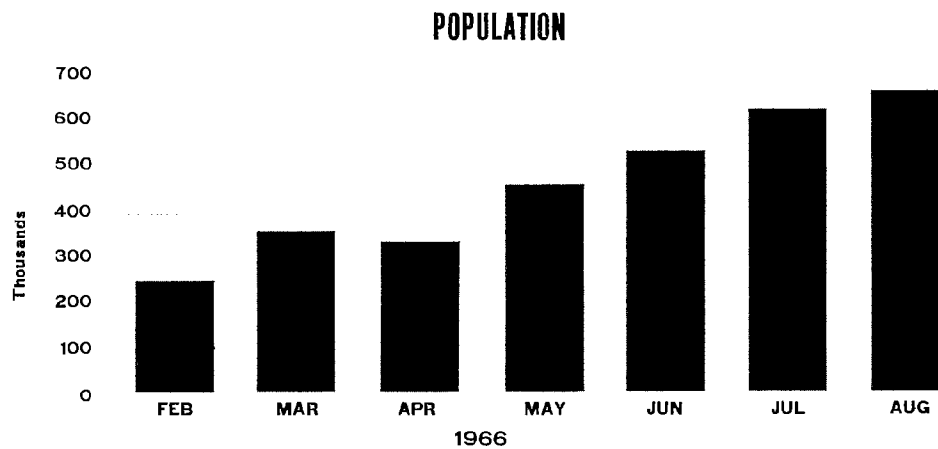
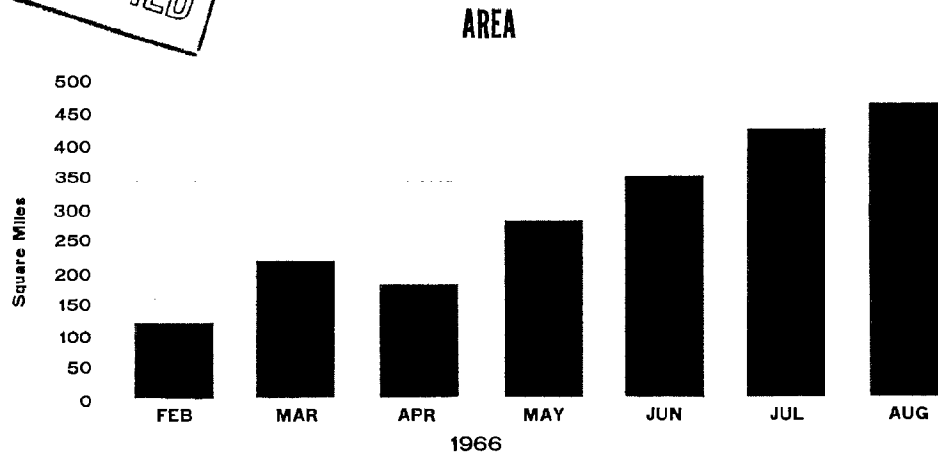
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GROWTH OF GVN AUTHORITY IN THE MARINE AREAS*



* 40% OR HIGHER ON THE PACIFICATION SCALE.

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COUNTERGUERRILLA OPERATIONS

A major factor moving us toward our goals in Vietnam is the intensive counter guerrilla campaign. In August, there were 11,004 small unit actions aimed at destroying the local guerrilla force in the countryside. Of these, 179 were company-size search and destroy operations, 6,686 were patrols which varied in size from four-man fire teams to fifty-man platoons, and 4,139 were ambushes, usually of fire team or squad size. Marines in these small unit operations killed 324 guerrillas, captured another 35, and detained 330 suspects. In contrast, 28 Marines were killed, the lowest number for any one month since February 1966.

Detailed tabular reports of patrol and ambush activity by the battalions of III MAF are shown on the pages which follow.

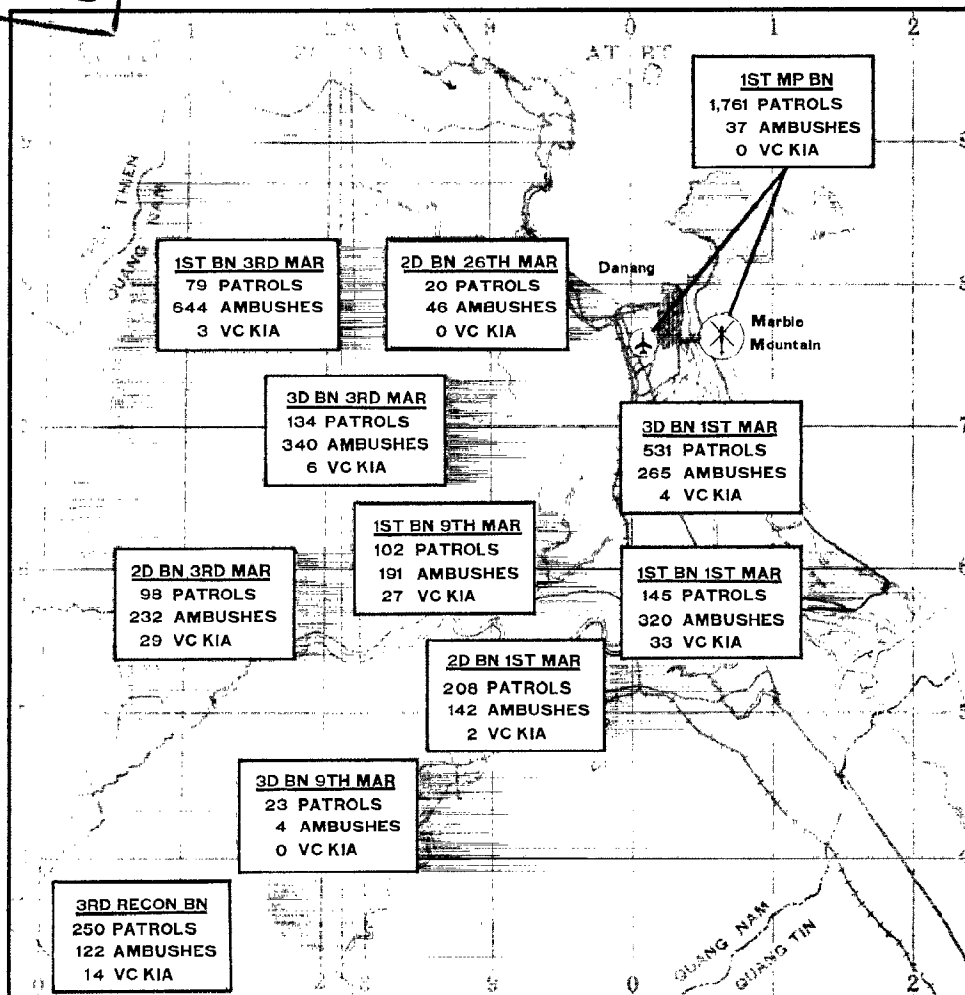
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PATROL AND AMBUSH ACTIVITY WITHIN THE DANANG TACTICAL AREA



Marine battalions in the Danang area conducted 3,351 patrols and 2,343 ambushes during August. Six of the infantry battalions also participated in large scale operations for periods of varying lengths during the month. 2d Bn, 26th Marines arrived in-country on 29 August, replacing 3d Bn, 3rd Marines which departed for Okinawa on 30 August.

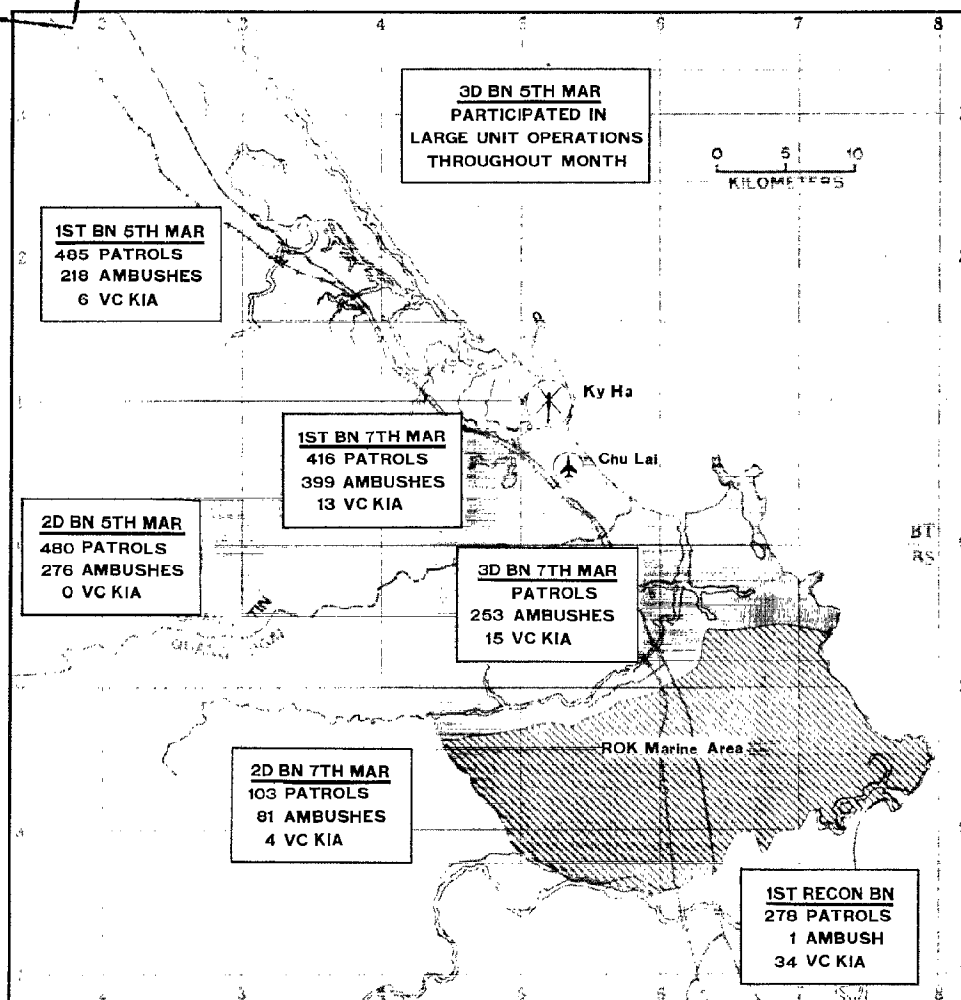
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PATROL AND AMBUSH ACTIVITY WITHIN THE CHU LAI TACTICAL AREA



Chu Lai battalions conducted 2,075 patrols and 1,228 ambushes during the month. On 29 August, the 2ND ROK Marine Brigade assumed responsibility for the green hatched area shown above. Although it is envisioned that these allies will report patrol and ambush activity in the same fashion as US Marine units, that reporting system has not yet been established.

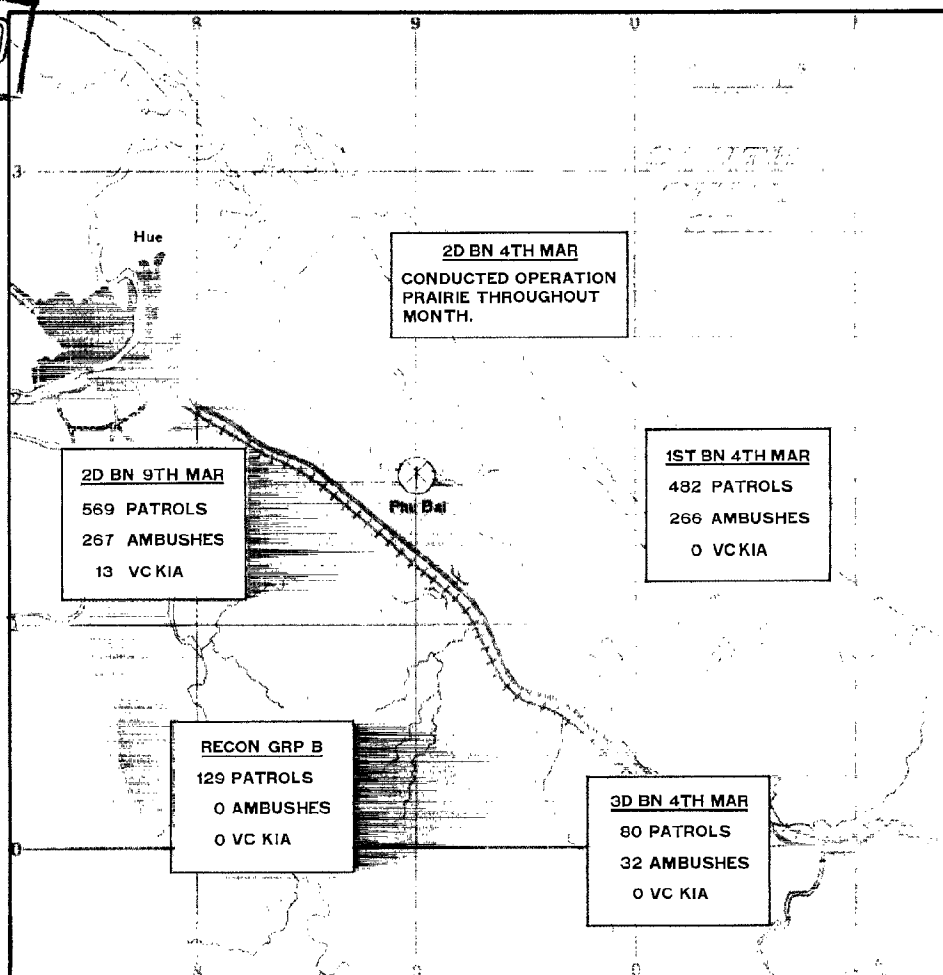
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PATROL AND AMBUSH ACTIVITY WITHIN THE PHU BAI TACTICAL AREA

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At Phu Bai, Marine units conducted 1,260 patrols and 565 ambushes in August. Three of the four infantry battalions shown here also were engaged in battalion size operations for the greater part of the month.

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In August, as before, Sting Ray operations tended to inhibit the movement of regular enemy units in remote areas of the highlands. To this extent, Sting Rays are part of the campaign against the enemy's large units. But they are also useful in interdicting the guerrilla in his traffic between the regular unit and its source of food in the lowland region; thus, they are most accurately categorized as counter guerrilla operations.

Sting Ray operations, which were described in some detail in the July report of this series, encompass the insertion of small reconnaissance teams at remote locations, carefully selected to permit observation of areas of probable enemy movement. Artillery and air are allocated specifically to the direct support of these small observation posts, with the objective of causing heavy losses to the enemy at little cost to ourselves. During August, 115 of the enemy were killed by Marines using this technique. The largest single group of casualties was inflicted on 13 August when a Sting Ray observation post in northern Quang Tri province directed artillery on 60 Viet Cong attempting to cross a river, killing 35 of them. The cumulative four month total for Sting Ray operations is 475 enemy killed, at a cost of 2 Marines killed and 11 wounded.

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PACIFICATION AND CIVIC ACTION

At the end of August the number of Vietnamese living in areas considered at least 80% pacified stood at 434,000, compared with 320,000 in May and 175,000 in February, when the statistical evaluation of progress commenced. Additionally 353,000 villagers were living in areas 20% to 80% pacified, compared, again, with 138,000 in May and 128,000 in February. Overall, one million Vietnamese now live within the Marine areas, all benefiting from a measurably improved level of security.

The system used by III MAF to evaluate its pacification progress involves the measuring and recording of a variety of individual indicators, each of which is considered essential to pacification. These indicators are weighted according to their relative importance and a number of points assigned to each. The progress of pacification in any area is then reflected by the points it has accumulated as a result of this statistical evaluation. The indicators used in the assessment are portrayed on the next page, followed by a graphic representation of progress in certain categories and map portrayals of the total progress in each tactical area.

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INDICATORS USED IN ASSESSMENT OF PACIFICATION STATUS

		POINTS
1. DESTRUCTION OF ENEMY UNITS		
a. VC units destroyed or expelled		15
b. Local defensive force established		5
TOTAL		20
2. DESTRUCTION OF ENEMY INFRASTRUCTURE		
a. Village census completed		2
b. VC infrastructure destroyed		8
c. Local intelligence net established		5
d. Census, grievance interviews completed		2
e. Action completed on grievances		3
TOTAL		20
3. VIETNAMESE ESTABLISHMENT OF SECURITY		
a. Defensive plan completed		2
b. Defensive installations completed		3
c. Security forces trained and in place		12
d. Communications net established		3
TOTAL		20
4. ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT		
a. Village chief and council in office		4
b. Village chief residing in village		3
c. Hamlet chiefs and councils in office		4
d. Hamlet chiefs residing in hamlet		4
e. Psy-ops and information program established		3
f. Minimum social and administrative organization		2
TOTAL		20
5. DEGREE OF NEW LIFE PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT		
a. Adequate public health program		4
b. Adequate education facilities		4
c. Adequate agricultural development		4
d. Adequate transportation facilities		4
e. Necessary markets established		4
TOTAL		20

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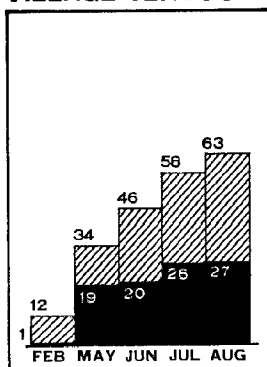
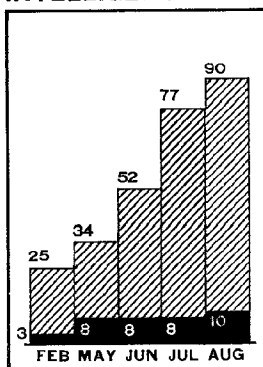
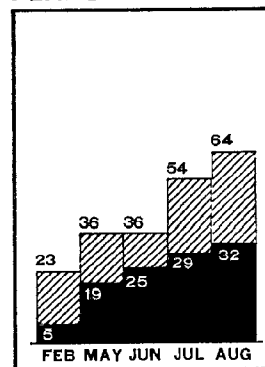
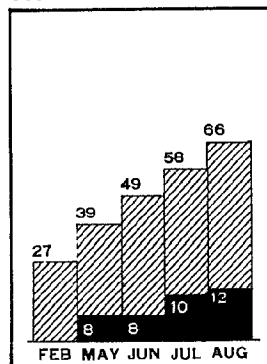
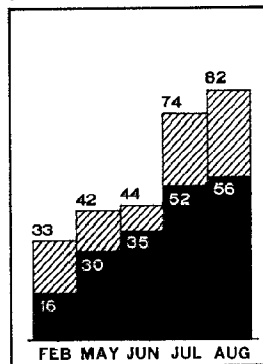
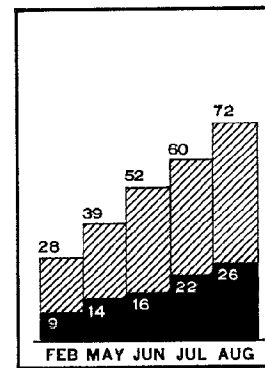
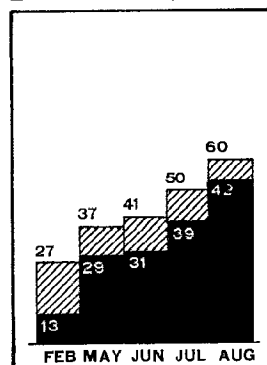
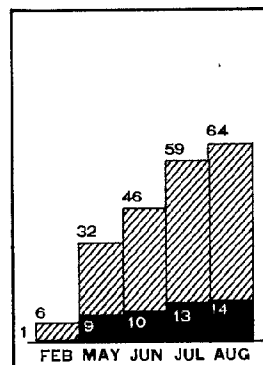
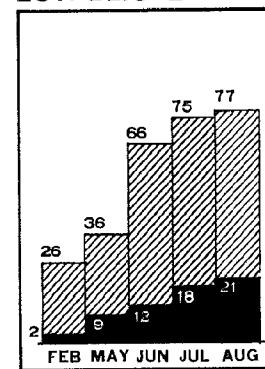
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FEBRUARY-AUGUST PACIFICATION PROGRESS
IN MARINE TACTICAL AREAS

■ COMPLETE
 ▨ PARTIALLY COMPLETE

VILLAGE CENSUS

VILLAGE GVN
INTELLIGENCE NETSVILLAGE DEFENSE
PLANSDEFENSE FORCE
TRAINED AND IN PLACEVILLAGE CHIEFS AND
COUNCILS FUNCTIONINGCOMMUNICATION
NETS ESTABLISHEDVILLAGE CHIEFS
LIVING IN VILLAGESPSYCHOLOGICAL AND
PUBLIC INFORMATIONVILLAGE MARKETS
ESTABLISHED

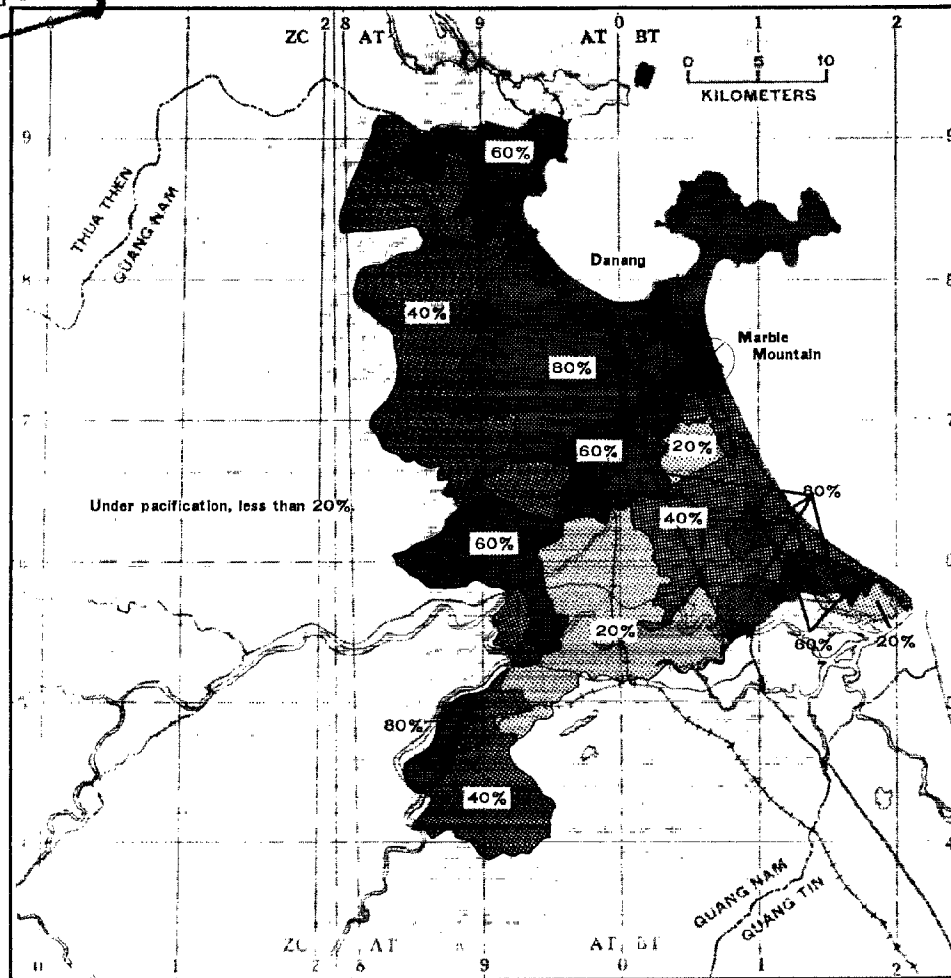
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PACIFICATION STATUS-DANANG AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES			CIVILIAN POPULATION			VILLAGES		
	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG
Under 20%	457	684	+227	94,491	115,000	+20,509	53	39	-14
20%	57	43	-14	38,258	96,552	+60,294	9	18	+9
40%	18	103	+85	18,100	95,643	+79,543	4	17	+13
60%	26	68	+42	19,036	69,679	+50,643	5	12	+7
80%	31	101	+70	175,000	359,366	+184,366	1	18	+17
100%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	589	999		340,885	736,440*		72	104	

* Revised population estimate.

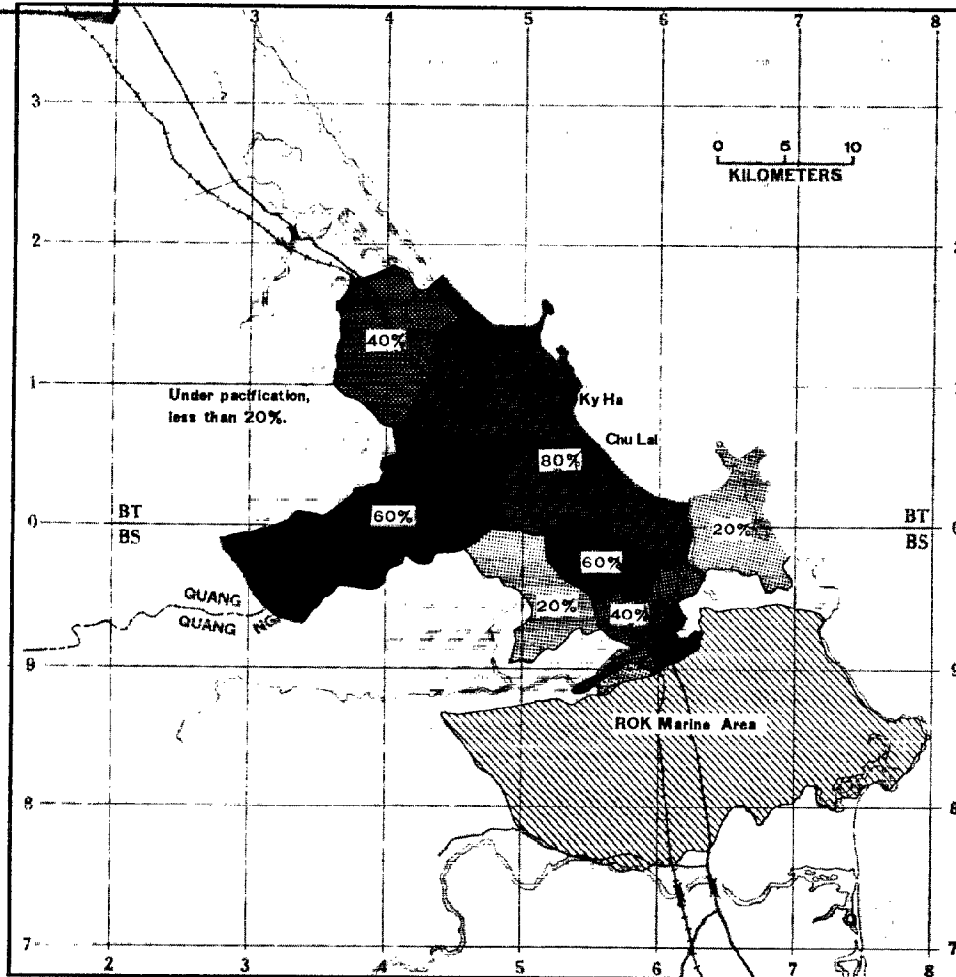
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PACIFICATION STATUS-CHU LAI AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES			CIVILIAN POPULATION			VILLAGES		
	FEB	AUG *	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG *	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG *	CHANGE FEB-AUG
Under 20%	244	376	+132	91,145	137,441	+46,296	21	29	+8
20%	30	44	+14	21,624	28,745	+7,121	5	5	—
40%	—	32	+32	—	26,139	+26,139	—	5	+5
60%	—	27	+27	—	12,455	+12,455	—	3	+3
80%	—	53	+53	—	41,033	+41,033	—	8	+8
100%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	274	532	—	112,769	245,613	—	26	50	—

* These figures include 193 square miles and 21 villages with a population of 112,804 in the newly established tactical area occupied by the Republic of Korea Marine Brigade.

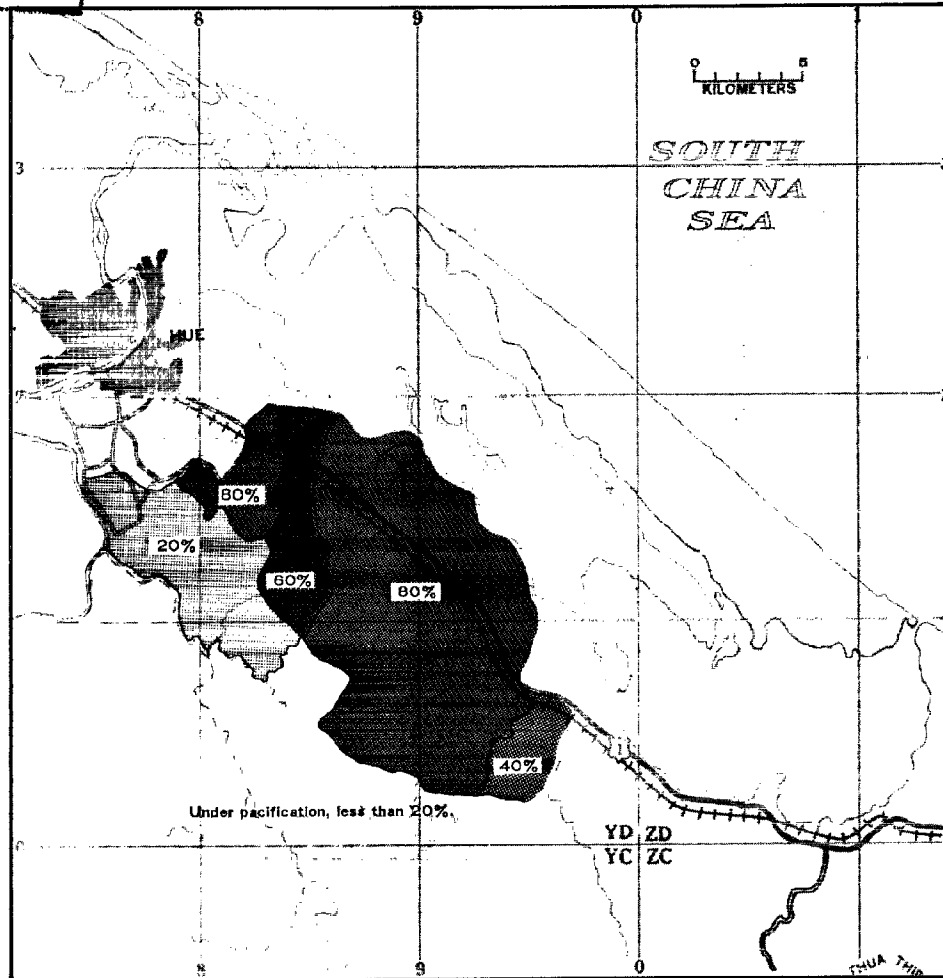
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PACIFICATION STATUS-PHU BAI AREA



PERCENT PACIFIED	SQUARE MILES			CIVILIAN POPULATION			VILLAGES		
	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG	FEB	AUG	CHANGE FEB-AUG
Under 20%	22	49	+27	17,740	10,381	-7,359	4	11	+7
20%	25	40	+15	11,852	9,524	-2,328	2	2	0
40%	—	9	+9	—	9,049	+9,049	—	1	+1
60%	38	8	-30	23,486	5,298	-18,190	5	1	-4
80%	—	56	+56	—	33,787	+33,787	—	7	+7
100%	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—
Total	85	162		53,078	68,037		11	22	

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There were 13 County Fair operations during the month. This was far fewer than the Marines desired, with the shortfall deriving largely from insufficient Vietnamese resources. The Marine forces will not enter upon a County Fair without adequate Vietnamese military, paramilitary and police participation, which is a constant lack, and one which was intensified during August by the GVN preoccupation with election preparations. Nevertheless, the County Fairs undertaken achieved good success. 4,043 villagers were screened, photographed, fingerprinted, issued personal identity cards, queried about absent family members, given psychological warfare lectures and films, and made acquainted with district and village officials. At the same time some 650 of them received medical treatment, food, and clothing. In the 13 operations, 31 guerrillas were killed, 14 confirmed VC were captured, and 11 suspects were apprehended.

In the August County Fair effort, Marines, for the first time, used ralliers - former Viet Cong who willingly have come over to the GVN side - to identify guerrillas who attempt to escape detection by mingling with the other villagers. In one County Fair, two cadre leaders and one other guerrilla were identified by ralliers.

The 31 VC killed during County Fairs in August raised to 121 the total number of hard-core guerrillas killed since these operations began in February 1966. Equally important, another 147 of the enemy have been captured. County Fair alone, however, offers no quick solution to the painstaking process of bringing peace to the populated region of I Corps. By the end of August, 51 County Fairs had screened only 25,000 villagers, which is to say about 1.5% of the rural population of the I Corps Tactical Zone.

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Previous reports in this series have discussed Marine tactical operations in the valley of the Song Thu Bong River, some 15 miles south of Danang, and the extensive road-building effort to reunite the An Hoa industrial complex there with the seaport at Danang. A significant milestone was reached on 27 August, when a newly-constructed, nineteen-mile roadway, including a ferry over the Song Thu Bong, was officially opened, joining An Hoa and Danang by a secure overland route for the first time in two years. Months of coordinated effort by Vietnamese civilians, Marines, and Navy personnel were culminated on the 27th when the initial supply convoy from Danang arrived at An Hoa with supplies for the civilians within the industrial complex as well as military supplies for the Marine battalion positioned nearby.

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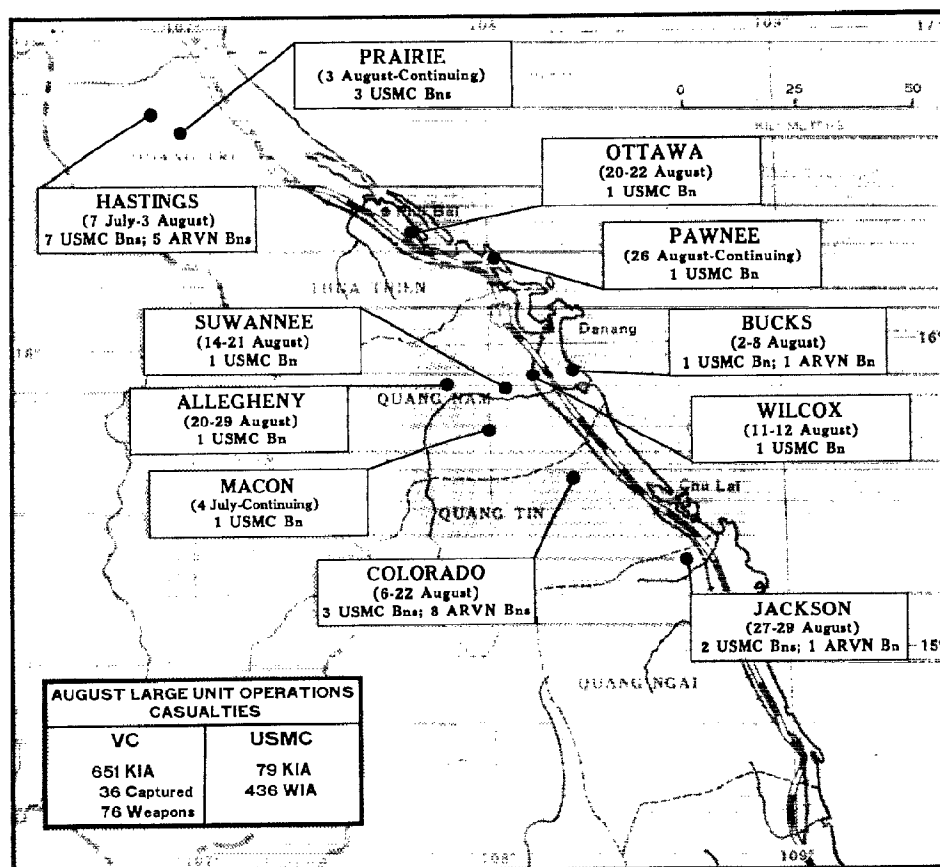
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LARGE UNIT OPERATIONS

Marines conducted fourteen operations of battalion size or larger during August. Eleven were by units of III MAF, extending into all five provinces of the I Corps Tactical Zone; the remainder were by the Marine Special Landing Force (SLF) of the Seventh Fleet, which was engaged in three separate actions some 400 miles to the south of I CTZ, on the littoral east of Saigon. These fourteen operations accounted for 651 confirmed enemy killed, 36 captured, and 76 weapons seized.

III MAF LARGE UNIT OPERATIONS-AUGUST 1966

Operations identified here as "large unit" are those whose forces include at least three infantry companies and a controlling command group.

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Four of the III MAF engagements are particularly worth noting: Operations Hastings, Prairie, Allegheny and Colorado.

Most of the action in Hastings (7 July-3 August) was previously described in the July report. Operation Hastings, it will be recalled, was a twelve battalion USMC/ARVN search and destroy operation just south of the Demilitarized Zone, characterized by sharp contacts with the regular 324B North Vietnamese Army Division, as it was in the process of infiltrating into South Vietnam. By the end of July, 769 of the enemy had been killed and contacts had become infrequent, the enemy apparently having moved north across the DMZ. Contacts continued to be light and sporadic during the first few days of August. Marines nevertheless accounted for another 55 North Vietnamese killed, principally by Marine strike aircraft and artillery fire, before the operation was terminated on 3 August. In all, the enemy casualty toll for Hastings was 824 killed (the highest number for a single Marine operation to date), 14 captured, and 214 weapons seized.

After Hastings, three Marine battalions stayed behind near the DMZ, to continue an aggressive search of the Hastings battleground for NVA units or personnel who might still be hiding there, and to detect any re-infiltration that might be attempted. This operation, called Prairie, was still continuing at month's end, with small unit patrols resulting in daily contacts. In two larger engagements with company size units, Marines killed 110 of the enemy and seized some 60 weapons. By 31 August, Prairie had accounted for 219 enemy killed, 1 captured, and 70 weapons seized.

Another 113 VC were killed in Operation Allegheny, in the rugged mountain area some 13 miles inland,

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southwest of Danang. Allegheny commenced on 20 August, when a company of the 3d Marines located the VC 402d Sapper Battalion, with a strength of about 300, in a base camp. Another infantry company and the command group of the Second Battalion, Third Marines were quickly helilifted into the objective area, where a sharp two day conflict ensued, followed by a week of operations involving destruction of entrapped remnants and demolition of the base camp. The total enemy confirmed dead in Allegheny reached 113, with another 210 listed as "probables". Marine losses for the nine day action were 7 killed and 59 wounded. In addition to his casualties and the destruction of his base camp, the enemy lost 2,300 pounds of rice and many items of equipment, notably uniforms and weapons in new or excellent condition.

Operation Colorado was launched on 6 August to sweep organized enemy units from the coastal plain west of Tam Ky, in preparation for a concentrated pacification campaign in that area. It was a large operation, in terms of both friendly forces involved and enemy casualties - eleven battalions (three Marine, eight RVN) with a total enemy casualty toll of 514.

The major encounter with the enemy during Colorado occurred on 10-11 August, after four days of relatively light resistance. Late on the 10th, the 1st Bn, 5th Marines engaged an estimated two battalions six miles west of Tam Ky. The engagement continued throughout the night and next morning, with naval gunfire, Marine attack aircraft, and artillery providing continuous and effective support. By noon on the 11th, when the enemy broke contact and fighting dwindled to scattered small-unit actions, 128 of the enemy had been confirmed killed. The remaining ten days of the operation were characterized by infrequent contacts during

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which 42 VC were killed, for a cumulative total of 170 enemy killed during the operation by Marines.

While III MAF was inflicting considerable damage on the enemy in the five northernmost provinces of the country, Marines of the Amphibious Ready Group/Special Landing Force of the Seventh Fleet found only scattered groups of VC in three operations along Viet Nam's littoral sixty miles east of Saigon. Two of these efforts were amphibious landings conducted for the purpose of blocking the escape of enemy units under attack by US Army or Australian forces engaged in other operations. After two days of negligible contact following the second landing, the SLF battalion passed to the operational control of the US 173d Airborne Brigade for a six day search of a newly-discovered enemy logistic complex (Operation Toledo). The operation resulted only in small contacts, coupled with damage to the enemy's logistic base.

On 22 August, the 1st Battalion of the 2d Republic of Korea Marine Brigade initiated Operation Pole Star to clear a base camp area just south of Chu Lai (see map on page 28). The operation was still in progress at month's end, with negligible contact.

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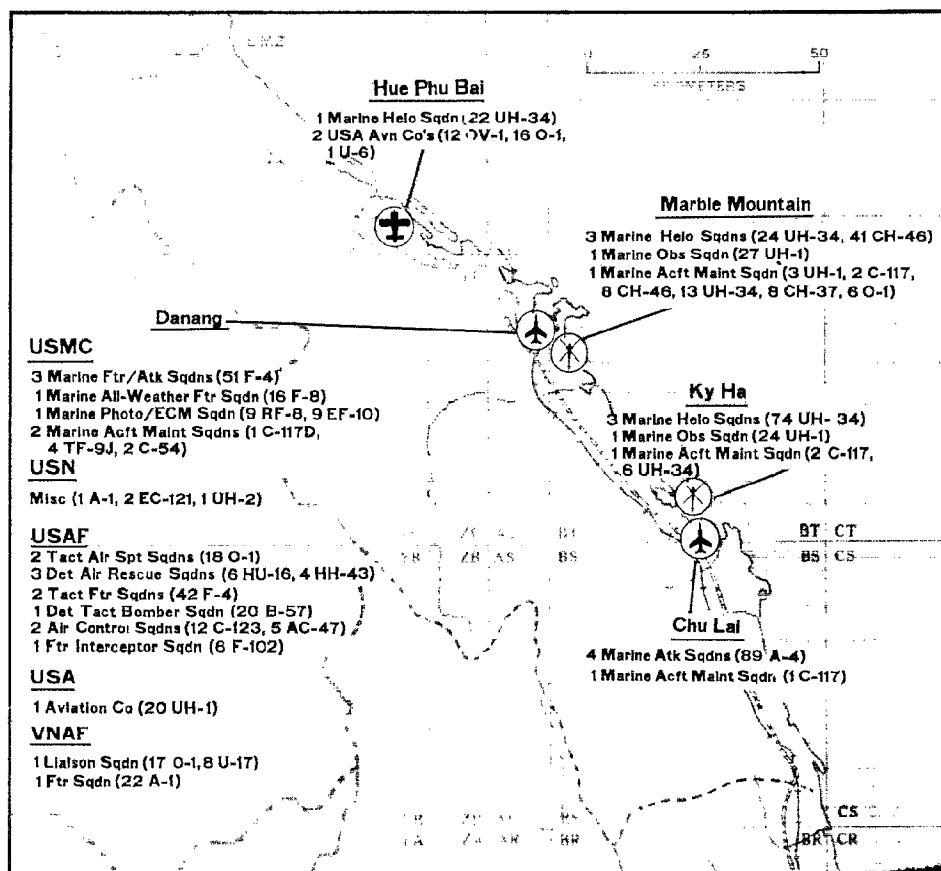
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BASE DEFENSE

There were no attacks during August on the five key bases under Marine protection. As in previous months, the security of these installations - Danang Air Base, the jet field at Chu Lai, the airfield and adjacent communications site at Phu Bai, and the two helicopter facilities at Marble Mountain and Ky Ha - continued to be provided by a combination of those offensive military actions previously described and the close-in defensive measures taken at each installation by tenant units and regular Marine battalions positioned nearby. The aircraft at these bases represent about one-half the Free World in-country fixed wing capability. Their disposition is shown below.

**AIRCRAFT POPULATION AT THE FIVE MARINE AIRFIELDS
IN ICTZ AS OF 31 AUGUST 1966**



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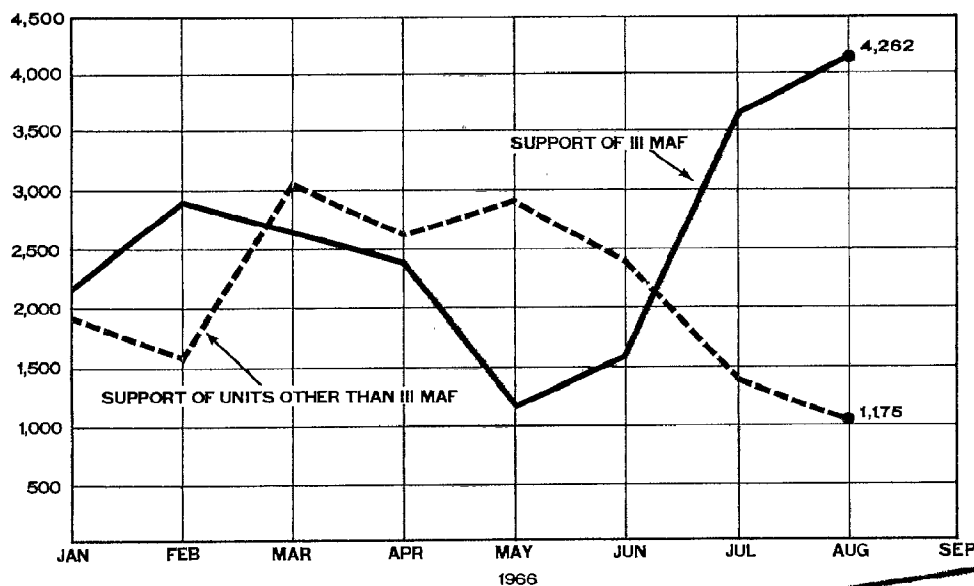
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AIR OPERATIONS

There were 5,437 fixed wing aircraft sorties in August, the highest total since March 1966. Of these, 4,262 were flown in support of Marine units, which compares with 3,790 in July and 1,703 in June. The higher sortie rate can be attributed, in part, to the increased use of attack aircraft against a number of enemy troop formations during the eleven large-scale operations conducted by III MAF in August, and to the use of attack aircraft in support of Sting Ray operations, described previously in this report. The number of confirmed enemy killed by attack aircraft was 325, roughly one-third of the total number of all enemy killed by Marines during the month.

As was the case in July, out-of-country sorties were concentrated on targets in North Vietnam, as opposed to Laos; 991 sorties, or 99% of the total out-of-country effort, were in North Vietnam.

**FIXED WING SORTIES IN SUPPORT OF III MAF
AND UNITS OTHER THAN III MAF**



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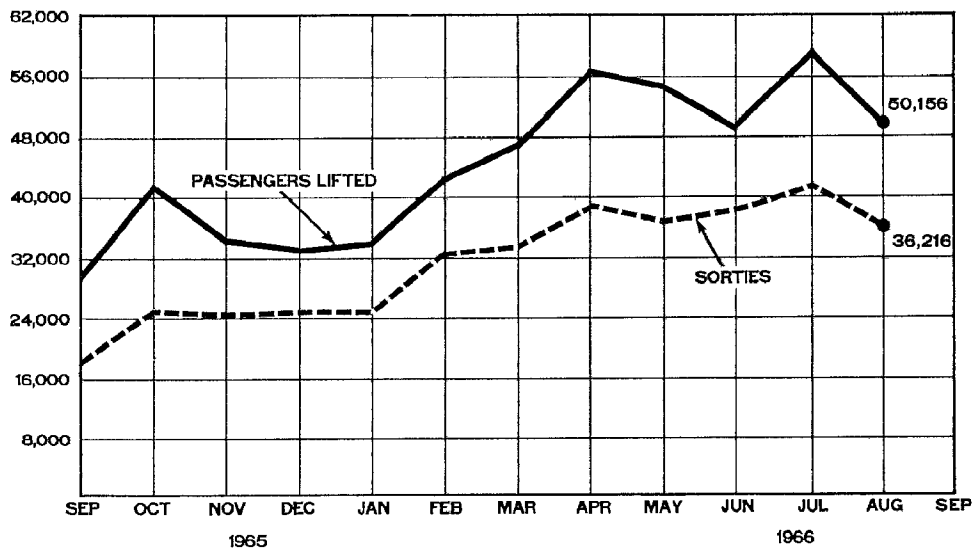
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Marine helicopter sorties flown during August declined from the July high of 41,957 to 36,216. Of this number, 3,364 were casualty evacuation sorties and 64 were for search and rescue missions.

HELICOPTER SORTIES AND PASSENGERS LIFTED



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LOGISTICS

Continued improvement was achieved in all aspects of Marine logistics operations in the Far East during August. This improvement is reflected in many ways: the construction of additional POL storage, the opening of the second runway at Danang, the official opening of the road from Danang to An Hoa, and firm progress in road maintenance, bridge building and covered storage construction - all enhanced by continued good weather. Additionally, the deployment of Marine Wing Service Group-17 to Danang provides Marine aviation with additional maintenance facilities. On Okinawa, the arrival of the Logistic Support Group with RLT-26 provides the required logistic support for Fleet Marine Force Pacific tactical units in the Far East, outside RVN.

Supply: Emphasis has been placed on providing adequate support for the 2nd Brigade, ROK Marine Corps, which joined U. S. Marines at Chu Lai in August, and on positioning required supply levels in all tactical areas prior to the arrival of the monsoon season.

Class I--Chill and freeze products remained below the desired levels, due to an insufficient quantity of refrigerated storage to satisfy all requirements. Long range patrol rations have fallen below desired stockage levels and action was initiated to provide for future requirements. Rations of all other types were maintained at approximately the established stockage objectives.

Class II--The fill rate for repair parts in all commodity groups has shown a significant improvement during August. Aggressive supply action by all concerned, plus the RED BALL and CRITIPAK programs, continues to provide tactical units with the required supplies and equipment.

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Class III/IIIA--Stock levels have been maintained at the required level to support combat operations. The POL storage capacity at Danang was increased with the construction of two additional 10,000 barrel bolted steel tanks. This brings the total of these upright tanks now available for storage at Danang to nine.

Class IV--Stock levels remain sufficient to satisfy the daily demands of tactical operations.

Class V/VA--Action has been taken to provide support for the 2nd Brigade, ROK Marine Corps, with 45 DOA of CL V in-country and a 45 DOA reserve at the base at Sasebo. Sufficient CL VA is now on hand in-country, or in the pipeline, to continue to satisfy CL VA requirements for Marine aviation.

Maintenance: The 3d Force Service Regiment project wherein the Public Works Center, Yokosuka, rebuilds vehicles and generators, gained momentum. Final negotiations were conducted with the third Japanese civilian contractor. As these contractors gain experience, the initial goal of rebuilding 20 trucks and 22 generators per month should be reached within the next three months.

On Okinawa, the 3d Force Service Regiment has completed the rebuild of eight M-36 trucks; four have been returned to RVN and four are awaiting transportation.

A contact/instruction team for multifuel vehicles was formed in order to provide instruction on 2nd through 4th echelon maintenance procedures on the multifuel family of vehicles. All units in III MAF will be visited by this team.

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Port Facilities: The 1,600 foot, floating bridge across the Tourane River at Danang has expedited the flow of traffic across the river. Construction also has commenced on the approaches to the new permanent bridge across the Tourane, and the first LST mooring on the east side of the river became fully operational on 11 August.

On 17 August, the dredge, Jamaica Bay, completed dredging the 160 meter entrance channel in Danang Bay and started clean-up dredging in the area of the Delong Pier. Construction of the Delong Pier progressed smoothly during the month, and it should be operational in September.

Engineer Operations:

Road Building: Work continued on the 201 miles of major roads being maintained or constructed within the Marine areas. The most important development was the opening of nineteen miles of Route 5, from Danang to An Hoa, on 27 August. This was previously discussed in the Pacification section of this report.

Aviation Facilities: Construction of the expeditionary crosswind runway at Chu Lai, which started on 18 July 1966, is now 18% complete. When completed, the crosswind runway will connect the existing expeditionary airfield to the permanent airfield at Chu Lai and provide for improved flight operations during marginal wind conditions. The chart following shows the overall airfield construction status at Chu Lai, as of 31 August 1966.

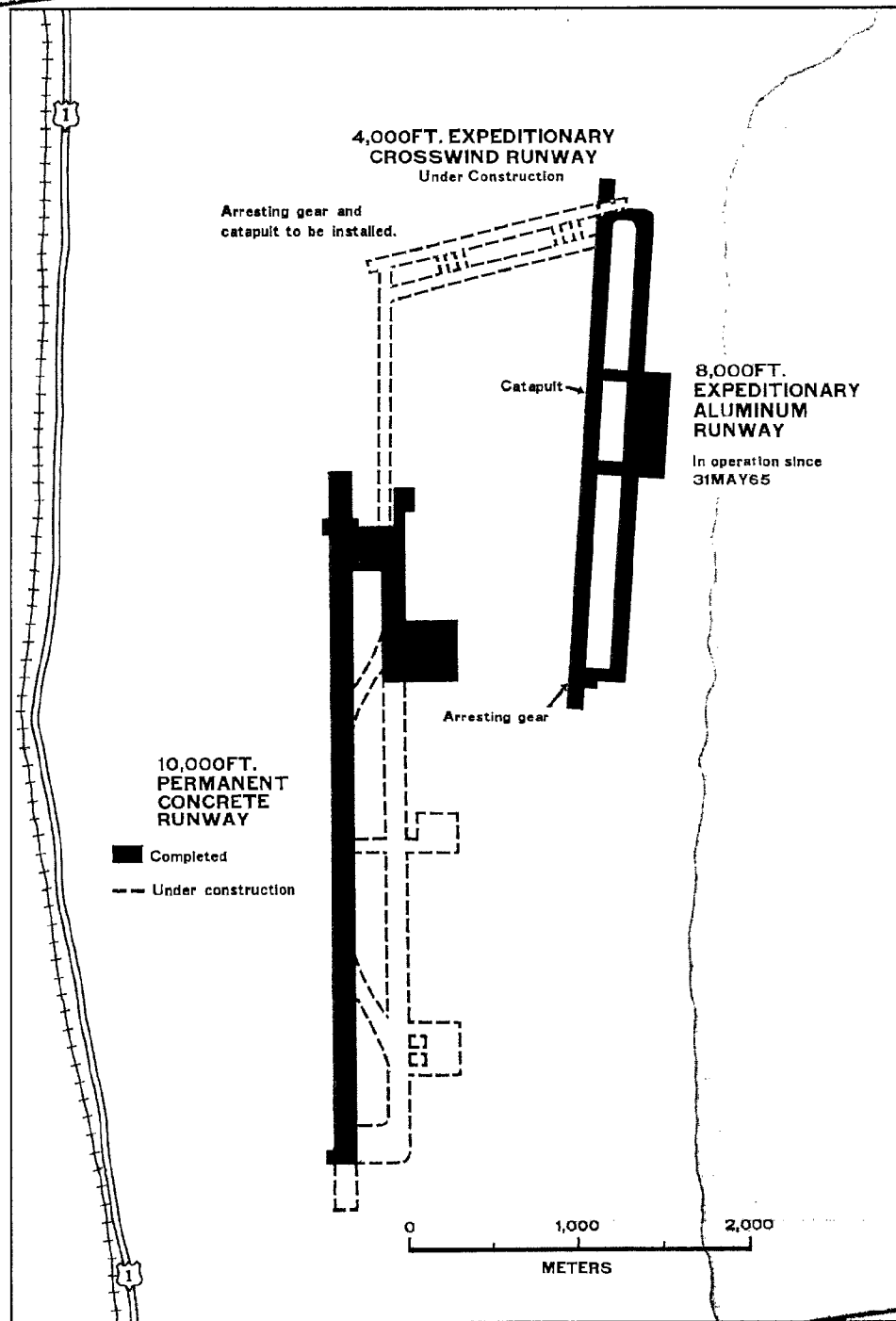
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NEW AIRFIELD CONSTRUCTION AT CHU LAI
(AS OF 31 AUGUST 1966)



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Through some 90,000 takeoffs and landings by all types of aircraft, from small attack planes to large transports, and through fifteen months of continuous operation, the Marine expeditionary airfield system at Chu Lai has proved effective. The expeditionary airfield concept, it will be recalled, was developed by Marines for use in underdeveloped countries where airfields are limited. In addition to a runway constructed of interlocking aluminum mats, the airfield employs mobile arresting gear, catapults, and JATO, as well as supporting equipment common to a regular field, such as a portable control tower, radar and fuel components, liquid oxygen plants, and communications systems. In view of its performance to date, it is planned that the expeditionary field will remain in operation after the permanent field has been completed.

Movement and Resupply: On 24 August, elements of Marine Wing Service Group-17 arrived at Danang and on 29 August, BLT 2/26 relieved BLT 3/3, also at Danang. During the month, 3,113 personnel and 2,300 tons of cargo and equipment crossed the beaches at Danang from eight amphibious ships.

At the beginning of August the cargo backlog at the Port of Danang was the highest since November, 1965. This backlog, however, decreased steadily during the early part of the month and, by 13 August, the last hold ship had been called forward and the port's peak unload capability was not approached for the remainder of the month. Total throughput was 236,046 M/T, with an average daily discharge rate of 5,913 M/T, as compared with the July rate of 4,747 M/T.

On 31 August, there were 7 deep draft ships in the Port of Danang with 21,261 M/T of backlogged cargo

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aboard, compared with 73,206 M/T on 31 July. The average backlog for August was 38,423 M/T.

FMFPac KC-130 aircraft airlifted 726 S/T of critically needed combat cargo from Okinawa to Vietnam during August, an increase of 153 S/T over July's total. Additionally, KC-130 aircraft provided inflight refueling for VMA-121 and VMF (AW)-232 on their trans-Pacific flight from CONUS to Iwakuni. The Military Airlift Command support improved, with a lift of 735 S/T from Kadena to Danang, compared with 459 S/T in July. Also, the 315th Air Division airlifted 932 S/T of Marine cargo into Vietnam. In all, a total of 2,393 S/T of Marine cargo was airlifted to III MAF from Okinawa, a considerable increase over the 1,734 S/T carried in July.

During the month the Military Sea Transportation Service lifted 5,603 measurement tons of Marine cargo from Okinawa to Vietnam, out of 12,944 measurement tons requested. This sea transport shortfall stands as probably our greatest logistic problem in the Western Pacific.

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STATISTICAL HIGHLIGHTS1. PHU BAIMAJOR CHANGES IN III MAF UNITS

None

CHANGES TO TACTICAL AREA

None

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>
<u>Within 25 miles</u>			<u>Within 25 miles</u>		
Regt Hq	0	1	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	4	7	Battalions	0	0
Companies	2	2	Companies	2	2
Total Strength	1,695	3,595	Total Strength	150	150

A comparison of the August 1966 and the July 1966 Confirmed Order of Battle shows a decrease of 1,900 enemy personnel within twenty-five miles of the Phu Bai airfield. The decrease was caused by the northwestern shift of the 6th NVA Regiment out of the twenty-five mile radius from the Phu Bai airfield and normal Order of Battle adjustments.

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2. DANANG

MAJOR CHANGES IN III MAF UNITS

<u>Unit</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Change</u>	<u>From/To</u>	<u>Remarks</u>
HMM-263	1Aug	Arrive	Futema	Rotation with HMM-163
VMFA-314	1Aug	Arrive	Iwakuni	Rotation with VMFA-542
HMM-163	2Aug	Depart	Futema	Rotation with HMM-263
VMFA-542	2Aug	Depart	Iwakuni	Rotation with VMFA-314
BLT 2/26	26Aug	Arrive	Okinawa	Rotation with BLT 3/3
BLT 3/3	30Aug	Depart	Okinawa	Rotation with BLT 2/26

CHANGES TO TACTICAL AREA

None

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>
<u>Within 25 miles</u>			<u>Within 25 miles</u>		
Regt Hq	0	0	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	2	4	Battalions	3	3
Companies	4	4	Companies	2	2
Total Strength	1,340	2,140	Total Strength	1,325	1,325

A comparison of the August 1966 and the July 1966
Confirmed Enemy Order of Battle shows a decrease of

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800 enemy personnel within twenty-five miles of the Danang airfield. The decrease was caused by the southern shift of the 70th and 72d VC Battalions.

Confirmed enemy strength within a twenty-five mile radius of the Danang airfield is 1,340; the adjusted figure based on assessed casualties is now 1,098. The principal units which suffered KIA's were considered to be the R-20th VC Battalion and the Hieu Hoa Local Force Company (242 KIA's).

3. CHU LAI

MAJOR CHANGES IN III MAF UNITS

None

CHANGES TO TACTICAL AREA

	<u>2d ROK Marine area</u>	<u>Total as of 31 August*</u>
Square miles	183	532
Civilians	112,804	245,813
Villages	21	50

*Adjusted totals.

ENEMY ORDER OF BATTLE

<u>Confirmed</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Probable</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Jul</u>
<u>Within 25 miles</u>			<u>Within 25 miles</u>		
Regt Hq	1	2	Regt Hq	0	0
Battalions	7	7	Battalions	1	1
Companies	11	11	Companies	0	0
Total Strength	4,600	5,400	Total Strength	300	300

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A comparison of the August 1966 and the July 1966 Confirmed Enemy Order of Battle shows a decrease of 800 personnel within twenty-five miles of the Chu Lai airfield. The decrease was caused by the westerly shift of the 21st NVA Regimental Headquarters and normal Order of Battle adjustments.

4. ENEMY LOSSES FOR AUGUST 1966

<u>August</u>		<u>Total to Date</u>
975	Killed	9714
71	Captured	1126
320	Suspects	7315
14	Wounded	491
161	Weapons	1634

5. CIVIC ACTION STATISTICS

<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>		<u>Total as of 31Aug66</u>
110,004	112,450	Persons Given	840,007
		Medical Treatment	
42	97	Persons Given	496
		Medical Training	
437,908*	378,228	Pounds of Food	1,337,985
		Distributed	
8,520*	6,127	Pounds of Soap	112,992
		Distributed	
8,886*	7,029	Pounds of Clothing	200,790
		Distributed	
214	205	Critically Ill Civilians	5,337
		Evacuated	
169	203	English Language Classes	863
		Conducted	
\$2,281	\$481	Cash Donations	\$30,239
91,583	74,474	Persons Fed	698,232
1,430	3,386	Students Supported	30,619
35	147	Construction Projects	694

* July totals revised by III MAF

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6. MARINE OFFENSIVE OPERATIONS

<u>July</u>	<u>August</u>		<u>Total as of 31Aug66</u>
7,770	6,686	Patrols	66,823
4,440	4,139	Ambushes	43,115
747	672	Sniper Posts	4,170
4	4	Regimental or Larger Operations	39*
4	10	Battalion Opns	94*
244	179	Company Opns	1,541
5,159	5,437	Offensive Air Sorties	54,174
41,957	36,216	Helo Sorties	427,146

* 1 operation continued from previous month not added to total.

7. III MAF STRENGTH - ON 31 AUGUST

Danang	29,934
Chu Lai	21,786
Hue Phu Bai	<u>5,831</u>
Total	57,551

8. III MAF AREA - ON 31 AUGUST

	<u>DANANG</u>	<u>CHU LAI</u>	<u>PHU BAI</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Square miles	999	532	162	1,703
Civilians	736,440	245,813	68,037	1,050,290
Villages	104	50	22	176

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9. LOGISTICSa. Supply Levels at End of Period:

DANANG CHU LAI PHU BAI

Class I (1000 of
rations/
days of
supply)

MCI (Rations)	419/13	330/13	306/44
B Rations	364/11	365/15	261/37
A Rations	70/2	93/4	14/2

Class III & IIIA (BULK)
(1000 gals/days of supply)

JP-4	*2166/13	950/10	45/8
AVGAS	364/16	228/29	87/22
MOGAS	418/20	103/4	44/6
DIESEL	309/16	272/9	37/4

*Includes only the JP-4 stored by FLSG at Danang; does not include NAVSUPPACT, Danang storage or deliveries from NAVSUPPACT direct to operating squadrons.

Class V and VA: DANANG CHU LAI PHU BAI

Ground Ammo (days of supply)	45	45	45
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250 lb LD Bombs (number of bombs)	4787	1033	---
500 lb LD Bombs (number of bombs)	4160	2728	---
Launcher w/19 2.75 in. rockets	175	114	---
Launcher w/ 4 5 in. rockets	326	225	---

b. Resupply Status:

(1) Surface Shipping Status (Danang)

Cargo unloaded (Aug)	183327 M/T
Average daily discharge rate	5913 M/T
Ships in port 31 July	11
Ships arriving during August	26
Ships unloaded during August	29
Ships in port 31 August	7
Cargo backlog 31 July	73206 M/T
Cargo backlog 31 August	21261 M/T
Average cargo backlog (Aug)	38423 M/T

(2) Air Shipping Status

Cargo lifted into RVN (Aug)	2393 S/T
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Cargo awaiting lift on Okinawa as
of 1 September

298 S/T

c. RED BALL Summary:

Items at beginning of period	1278
Items added	637
Items removed	328
Items remaining at end of period	1587

d. Maintenance (Aug):

Items evacuated from RVN to 3d FSR	1509
Items repaired at 3d FSR	1092
Items returned to MCSC Barstow or declared beyond economical repair	37

e. Construction Projects:

Roads rehabilitated - 71.8 miles being maintained
or constructed and improved. 22.2 miles
of road construction completed.

Bridges constructed - One, Class 60, two lane, 22
foot span completed. One
M4T6 installed. Three bridges
under repair. Five ferries in
operation.

Wells drilled - 3 completed, 4 in progress.

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- Covered storage, NSA Danang - 504,960 square feet now completed; 96,000 square feet under construction of the 270,000 square feet programmed.
- Covered storage, NSA Chu Lai - 96,000 square feet now completed and in use. 96,000 square feet under construction of the 270,000 square feet programmed.
- III MAF covered storage (includes maintenance facilities) - 252,000 square feet completed; 144,000 square feet under construction.
- Ammo storage - ASP #1 is 28 percent complete; no work accomplished due to higher priority work. ASP #2 is 95 percent complete.
- POL storage tanks 10,000 BBL - Fifteen 10,000 BBL tanks at Danang northwest tank farm 40 percent complete. Eight 10,000 BBL tanks at Marble MT. are 15 percent complete. Three 10,000 BBL tanks at Chu Lai are 100 percent complete. Two 1,000 BBL tanks have been completed at Phu Bai, and two are under construction.
- 400 bed hospital - 97 percent complete.
- Water supply Danang - 85 percent complete.
/Danang East/Chu
Lai/Phu Bai

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CONCLUSIONS

Operations during the month further substantiated previous conclusions regarding the essentiality of a simultaneous attack of all aspects of the civil/military problem.

The heavy personnel losses inflicted on the enemy by the operations in Quang Tri province in August doubtless deranged his offensive time table.

The steady pressure of the Marine counter guerrilla campaign, coupled with progress in the pacification effort, gave some evidence of weakening the Viet Cong grass roots structure.

The logistic posture of Marines in the Far East is excellent.

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