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3340

Ser: N6- 1621

From: Commander SEVENTH Fleet
To: Commander Amphibious Force, U.S. SEVENTH Fleet

13 JUL 1967

Subj: Operation BEAVER CAGE Post Operation Report; comments on

Ref: (a) Commander Amphibious Force SEVENTH Fleet ltr N312:RRW:br 3500
ser 056 of 27 June 1967
(b) Commander Amphibious Ready Group ALFA, U.S. SEVENTH Fleet ltr
CARGA:N3:jl 3500 ser 030 of 6 June 1967

1. References (a) and (b) have been reviewed. Commander SEVENTH Fleet concurs with contents of reference (a).
2. Subject report is approved for distribution recommended by reference (b) plus additions contained reference (a).

W. Sell

W. SELL
Chief of Staff

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HEADQUARTERS
1ST MARINE DIVISION, FMF

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COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS FORCE
UNITED STATES SEVENTH FLEET
FPO, SAN FRANCISCO 96601

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N312:RRW:br

3500

Ser 056

27 JUN 1967

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From: Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet
To: Commander SEVENTH Fleet

Subj: Operation BEAVER CAGE Post Operation Report; forwarding of (U)

Encl: (1) Commander Amphibious Ready Group ALFA, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet
ltr ser 030 of 6 June 1967

1. (U) Subject report is forwarded.
2. (U) Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet concurs with the contents of enclosure (1), subject to the following:
 - a. (U) Recommended Distribution. Recommend approval except: Amend "TACGRU ONE" to read "COMTACGRU ONE"; before "NAVBEACHGRU ONE WESTPAC DET" and "NOSGWESTPACDET" insert "OINC"; add "COMNAVBEACHGRU ONE" and "COMNAVFORV".
 - b. (C) Enclosure (2)
 - (1) Paragraph 4a. The decision as to whether to preload beach-master equipment in landing craft should be made on a case by case basis.
 - (2) Paragraph 4c. Landing craft have undergone heavy usage and needed repairs, following the northeast monsoon, have lagged. Progress is being made in correcting this condition.
 - c. (C) Enclosure (3)
 - (1) Paragraph 3e. Comment: The operation referred to in subject paragraph is BEACON STAR vice BEACON HILL. During the planning stage of BEAVER CAGE, BEACON STAR was already in progress. At this time the frequency in question (NGF control net) was not being used by anyone. This frequency was then cleared with the FIRST MARDIV NGFO, who is the "owner" of this frequency. On D-Day morning, upon activation of the NGF nets, it was discovered that the other ARG was then using this frequency.

GROUP-4
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(2) Paragraph 4d(2). Experience has substantiated the requirement for providing a heavy lift and utility helicopter (TAO/Gunship) capability to the ARG/SLF. As stated, the "helicopter package" should include CH-46 and CH-53 helicopters.

(3) Paragraph 4d(3). The desirability of this type radio has been indicated by experience in several operations. It would appear, however, that instead of a short range PRC-25, a requirement exists for the longer range VRC-46 radio. Sufficient VRC-46 radios have been made available to the LPH to provide the TACC (allbat) with a minimum of two FM sets to enable the TACC to man the ARC and HD FM nets.

d. (U) Enclosure (5), paragraph 3a. Concur. CTF 76 is working in cooperation with CTF 73 to improve the quantity of UNREP support available to the Amphibious Ready Groups.

e. (C) Enclosure (6)

(1) General. In operation BEAVER CAGE, the AH was used as the Primary Casualty Receiving Ship rather than the LPH because of the lack of a surgical team on the LPH. The AH was not on station at the beginning of the operation but did arrive two days after the operation began. A surgical team is now attached to both ARG/SLFs and in the future the LPH will be designated the Primary Casualty Receiving Ship.

The total casualties received on the AH and the LPH for operation BEAVER CAGE are as follows:

Total Casualties - 481

KIA	47
WIA	171
Non Combat	263

(2) Paragraph 6a. Concur. A wet table is a definite necessity and has subsequently been provided.

F. W. Vannoy
F. W. VANNOY

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COMMANDER AMPHIBIOUS READY GROUP ALFA
U.S. SEVENTH FLEET
FPO San Francisco 96601

CARGA:N3:j1
3500
Ser 030
6 June 1967

From: Commander Amphibious Ready Group ALFA, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet
To: Commander Amphibious Force, U. S. SEVENTH Fleet

Subj: Operation BEAVER CAGE Post Operation Report; forwarding of (U)

Ref: (a) COMSEVENTHFLT 262342Z APR 67
(b) COMSEVENTHFLT 301028Z APR 67
(c) CG III MAF 101202Z MAY 67
(d) COMSEVENTHFLT 122300Z MAY 67
(e) CTG 76.4 130820Z MAY 67
(f) CINCPACFLT - COMUSMACV Agreement for U. S. Naval Support Operations in RVN

Encl: (1) Task Organization
(2) Ship-to-Shore Movement
(3) Supporting Arms
(4) Communications
(5) Logistics
(6) Medical
(7) Public Affairs

1. Background. During the period 28 April through 13 May 1967, Commander Amphibious Ready Group ALFA/Commander Amphibious Squadron NINE (CTG 76.4) was Commander Amphibious Task Force (CATF) for the conduct of Operation BEAVER CAGE in accordance with reference (a).

2. Mission. The Amphibious Task Force was charged with the responsibility for conducting a search and destroy amphibious operation against Viet Cong forces in the Que Son - Thang Binh District, Southern Quang Tin Province of the Central I Corps Tactical Zone, Republic of Vietnam, utilizing the ARG/SLF and assigned augmenting SEVENTH Fleet and in-country forces, in order to clear the area of Viet Cong forces and destroy VC installations.

3. General

a. BEAVER CAGE was a unilateral amphibious operation and conducted in conjunction with Operation UNION, a multi-force U. S. Marine/Vietnamese Army operation. This was the initial introduction and employment of Amphibious Ready Group/Special Landing Force ALFA (ARG/SLF) which was constituted effective 1 April 1967. Naval Forces were USS OKINAWA (LPH-3), USS BAYFIELD (APA-33), USS POINT DEFIANCE (LSD-31), USS WHITFIELD COUNTY (LST-1169), TACRON 13 DET A, UDT ELEVEN DET, BJU DET F, BMU ONE DET C-1 and ACDIV TWELVE DET DELTA.

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b. Southern Quang Tin Province has been under strict control of the Viet Cong for a number of years. Intelligence estimates indicated a minimum of 1300 enemy personnel contained in two local force battalions; one (1) North Vietnamese Army Battalion and one (1) unidentified Battalion. Due to a maze in I Corps. Additionally, tunnel complexes, caves and fortifications were numerous throughout the province.

c. The SLF helicopters of HMM 263 provided the major tactical lift throughout for the Battalion Landing Team (BLT 1/3). In doing so, the squadron maintained an average availability of 14 aircraft out of 23 total. One UH-34D helicopter was lost during the pre-H-Hour transfers making a total of 23 helicopters available for H-Hour. Average flight distance from the LPH to the various points in the AOA was about 15 miles.

d. Planning for BEAVER CAGE commenced on 23 April 1967 when key members of CTF 76, CTF 79, CTG 76.4 and CTG 79.4 arrived at III MAF Headquarters in Dahang where the initial briefings for the operation were conducted. In comparison to previous Special Operations, the planning phase was short in duration and the initiating directive was published 27 April with D-Day set for 28 April 1967, or within five days thereafter.

4. Amphibious Operation Area. The AOA of the operation was defined as the land area within a ten (10) nautical mile arc centered on grid coordinate BT 299379. The seaward extension of the AOA was that area contained within a twenty-five (25) nautical mile arc drawn seaward from the same coordinate. These arcs were terminated by and were connected by the coastline, with air space above the land and sea AOA from surface to 25,000 feet MSL. The AOA was adequate for the operation.

5. Execution. The initial assault was made by a helicopterborne landing of BLT 1/3 troops at L-Hour, 0700H, into LZ Oriole (BT 186294) and LZ Thrush (BT 198265) on D-Day, 28 April. A waterborne landing of D Company, BLT 1/3 and supporting artillery was conducted one hour later over Red Beach (BT 299379). Sporadic sniper fire was encountered in LZ Thrush and moderate small arms fire was received throughout the landing. Company B was held in reserve afloat. Bravo Company was committed and placed in LZ Oriole in reserve on D+1 Day; and later moved to LZ Wren (BT 175270). No significant contact was made with large size VC units throughout D and D+1 Days. The Special Landing Force was reoriented toward the Northwest Quadrant of the AOA on 30 April, with Company B into LZ Cardinal (BT 128388) and Company D to LZ Buzzard (BT 132299). The supporting artillery was backloaded from Red Beach and re-inserted at LZ Cardinal on 2 May 1967. The amphibious phase of operation BEAVER CAGE was terminated at 0242H, 1 May 1967 in accordance with reference (b). Termination date of the operation was approved by references (c) and (d) and the tactical withdrawal of ARG/SLF ALFA was the beginning of Phase III of BEAVER CAGE, commencing with the backloading of the artillery units on 12 May 1967. BLT 1/3 backload was completed at 1900, 13 May 1967 and was accomplished by helicopters from HMM 263 and Heavy Lift Helicopters supplied by in-country sources. Operation BEAVER CAGE was terminated in accordance with reference (d). Reconstitution of the ARG/SLF in OKINAWA. BAYFIELD, POINT DEFIANCE and WHITFIELD COUNTY was completed 13 May 1967. (Reference (e) refers).

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6. Additional Forces Assigned

a. In addition to OKINAWA (LPH-3), POINT DEFIANCE (LSD-31), BAYFIELD (APA-33) and WHITFIELD COUNTY (LST-1167), the normal shipping assigned to the Amphibious Ready Group, the following ships were assigned:

WPB/PCF	In/Exfiltration (As assigned by CTG 115.1)
FORREST ROYAL (DD-872)	NGFS - 28 April
ST PAUL (CA-73)	NGFS - 29 April
SANCTUARY (AH-17)	Casualty Evacuation
HENDERSON (DD-785)	NGFS - 30 April and 1 May
ELDORADO (AGC-11)	Communication Support

b. In addition to BLT 1/3 and HMM 263, the normal composition of the Special Landing Force, the following units were assigned:

Det VMO 6	2 UH-1E (Armed)
Det MAG 16/36	2 CH-46A - As required
Det HMH 462	1 CH-53 - As required

7. Chronological Summary of Events27 and 28 April

Commenced Operation BEAVER CAGE. ARG consisting of CTG 76.4, OKINAWA, BAYFIELD, POINT DEFIANCE, WHITFIELD COUNTY, FORREST ROYAL, TACRON 13 DET A, UDT ELEVEN DET E, BMU ONE DET C-1, and BJU ONE DET F. SLF consisting of CTG 79.4, BLT 1/3, and HMM 263.

BJU DET chopped to CTG 79.4 at 270200Z to assist in PSYOPS and population control.

ELDORADO rendezvoused with CTG 76.4 to provide communication support.

FORREST ROYAL chopped to CTG 76.4 and made rendezvous with TG at 272300Z.

Commenced approach to assigned OPAREAS at 272050Z.

L-Hour and H-Hour confirmed to be 280700H and 280800H respectively.

First helo touched down LZ Oriole (BT 186294) on time and encountered no enemy opposition.

First boat wave touched down Red Beach (BT 299379) on time and received SA fire. Armed UH-1Es attacked approximately 50 VC in tree line with rockets.

CAS support was called.

Tanks and ontos landed at 280100Z.

Helos were refueled from USS OKINAWA and at Tam Ky.

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ST PAUL reported for NGFS at 280815Z.

FORREST ROYAL departed at 280111Z.

ELDORADO departed for Danang at 281000Z.

PT DEFIANCE replaced engine in port bank of LCM 864.

Three fixed wing and two helo CAS missions flown by FIRST MAW.

Requested CTF 76 provide surgical team to LPH-3 or assign AH for casualty evacuation to support operations ashore.

29 April

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

ARG continued landing and support of BEAVER CAGE.

ST PAUL fired 42 rounds 8"/55 HC at seven targets.

ST PAUL departed for Northern I Corps area at 282247Z.

WPB PT HUDSON and PCF 22 arrived at 281650Z to provide infiltration/exfiltration and AOA security patrols.

BAYFIELD and PT DEFIANCE refueled from GUADALUPE.

SANCTUARY arrived to support operations ashore.

Two tanks deadlined well deck of PT DEFIANCE due to lack of spare parts.

PT DEFIANCE received medical casualty from Red Beach and transferred same to SANCTUARY.

BAYFIELD directed and supported patrol craft in AOA.

Two fixed wing and one helo CAS mission flown by FIRST MAW.

Fifty-nine heat exhaustion cases received on board OKINAWA between 290000Z and 291200Z.

30 April

Night steamed AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

HENDERSON reported for NGFS at 291750Z. Departed at 292300Z.

One helo from HMM 263 sustained slight damage SA fire when departing LZ Thrush.

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UDT Detachment received SA fire from vicinity BT 298378 at 292330.
WHITFIELD CTY arrived assault area at 292215Z.
LVT received SA fire from vicinity BT 298378 at 300000Z.
Commenced backloading ontos, tanks and LVTs at 292330Z. Completed loading at 300200Z.
Recommended amphibious phase of Operation BEAVER CAGE terminate at 301600.
Leaflet drop conducted between 300200Z and 300500Z.
PT ORIENT relieved PT HUDSON.
Offloaded four 105mm Howitzers by CH-53 from PT DEFIANCE to artillery position.
BAYFIELD heavy salvage boat received one hole at water line from SA fire. No injuries occurred.
OKINAWA, BAYFIELD, and PT DEFIANCE received personnel and mail from WHITFIELD CTY. Also received personnel left in Subic due sudden departure of ARG.
Two heat exhaustion cases evacuated to USS OKINAWA.

1 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.
Amphibious phase of Operation BEAVER CAGE terminated at 301842Z APR vice requested time 301600Z due to receipt of COMSEVENTHFLT 301028Z APR authorizing SLF ohop to III MAF.
Returned 67 of 70 heat cases to duty.
HENDERSON arrived at 011110Z to provide NGFS support.
CH-53 lifted two UH-34s from in-country to USS OKINAWA.
CH-46 belonging to HMM 165 crashed approaching SANCTUARY at 011955H with 18 persons aboard. OKINAWA and BAYFIELD assisted in SAR mission.

2 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.
OKINAWA, BAYFIELD and SANCTUARY continued search for survivors of CH-46 crash. Nine survivors recovered to date.

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OPCON SLF passed from CG III MAF to CG FIRST MARDIV.

OKINAWA refueled AVGAS/NSFO from KAWISHIWI.

Transferred one MEDEVAC to SANCTUARY for bone specialist consultation.

3 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

BAYFIELD replenished from CASTOR and received requirements for TG 76.4 and SANCTUARY.

UDT ELEVEN attempted salvage operations on CH-46 that was lost off SANCTUARY.

Marines aboard PT DEFIANCE attempted to repair deadlined tank.

KW-26 keying material obtained from PRINCETON by OKINAWA helo, for use in a communication link with USS ANNAPOLIS.

4 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

PT DEFIANCE and UDT continued search for downed helo.

BJU ONE Detachment returned to USS OKINAWA after one day of operations with BLT 1/3. Rapid movement of troops prevented effective use of psychological warfare.

Five medical evacuations removed to SANCTUARY.

OKINAWA helo vertreped OKINAWA and SANCTUARY with supplies received from CASTOR that were aboard PT DEFIANCE.

Repairs completed on tank aboard PT DEFIANCE.

PT DEFIANCE boat haven completed overhaul of port engine bank LCM 864. One frozen engine in bank and gear train replaced.

5 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

BAYFIELD transferred personnel from SANCTUARY TO Danang.

PT DEFIANCE boats conducting search for downed helo reported heavy load on chain drag. Unable to determine cause due to disturbed bottom. Later evaluated as boulder.

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6 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

CH-53 externally lifted UH-34 from LZ Cardinal to USS OKINAWA for repairs.

BAYFIELD and PT DEFIANCE refueled from MISPILLION.

PT DEFIANCE and UDT ELEVEN Detachment continued search for downed CH-46 without success.

7 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

UH-34D from HMM 263 made a rough landing in LZ Magpie and suffered a broken tail pylon. Helo was taken to Ky Ha for repairs.

Search for downed CH-46 terminated with negative results.

8 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

PT DEFIANCE provided logistic support for WPB.

9 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

TG 76.4 completed unrep/vertrep from MARS.

PT DEFIANCE completed repairs on tank generator. Embarked Marines on PT DEFIANCE changed tread on LVT.

BAYFIELD discovered body floating in water. Body was recovered and transferred to OKINAWA. Body identified as USMC victim of CH-46 crash of 1 May.

10 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

Early morning air ops hampered by ground and sea fog.

PT DEFIANCE completed repairs on tanks. All tanks now combat ready.

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11 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

WHITFIELD CTY departed for Danang with 100 personnel who were released from SANCTUARY and 100 empty oxygen bottles.

Personnel from PRINCETON on board OKINAWA to arrange exchange of CH-46 and UH-34 spare parts.

HOWTAR Battery commenced backloading to OKINAWA by CH-53A from LZ Cardinal.

12 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to support operations ashore.

WHITFIELD CTY embarked COMPHIBRON FIVE and nucleus staff and departed Danang for AOA.

BAYFIELD completed unrep with GUADALUPE.

PT DEFIANCE saw a CH-46 crash into water at BT 226593. PT DEFIANCE and assigned WPB went to the scene of the accident immediately and conducted search with negative results except for some debris. Helo identified as belonging to MAG 36.

SLF commenced backloading operations with first wave of helicopters into LZ Quail. CH-53 augmented SLF for lifting 105 Howitzer and remaining 107mm HOWTAR. UH-34s were used for troop and supply lifts and were augmented by CH-46s. Backloading completed except for LSA personnel at Tam Ky and 2 M-109 radio vehicles from FIFTH MARDIV CP.

13 May

Night steamed in AOA and returned to assigned OPAREAs at first light to complete backload of BLT 1/3.

Completed backloading BLT 1/3.

Operation BEAVER CAGE terminated at 130600Z May 67.

Assumed 24 hour readiness posture.

8. Summary of Operations

a. Assault Boat and Amphibious Vehicle Landings. The initial D-Day (28 April) landing over Red Beach (BT 299379) was made by USMC troops of Company D of BLT 1/3 in two waves. Each wave consisted of 5 LVTP splashed from PT DEFIANCE while underway at 10 knots. Two LCM-8s, two LCM-6s and one LCU provided the on-call waves and tank platoon. All ships remained underway

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in assigned OPAREAs of the AOA.

b. Boat Convoys. Throughout the amphibious operation the LCU, LCM-8s and LCM-6s made daily transit between the PT DEFIANCE and BAYFIELD in the AOA transporting ammunition, rations and water for support of the troops ashore.

c. Helicopterborne Assaults. The initial D-Day helicopterborne assault was made by BLT 1/3 Company A in LZ Thrush (BT 198265) and Company C in LZ Oriole (BT 186294) at L-Hour (280700H). On D-Day plus one, Company B was committed and placed into LZ Wren which was slightly west of AOA, and completed the helo lift of troops ashore. Throughout the operation helicopter lifts were the major means of resupply and movement by troops ashore.

d. Helicopter Ship-to-Shore Statistics

(1) HMM 263 flew 4922 sorties lifting over 4800 troops and 246 tons of cargo.

(2) OKINAWA's assigned helicopter flew 21 flights for a total of 84.1 hours in the sixteen day period of operations. These flights included personnel transfers, liaison, mail runs, medevacs and logistics flights.

(3) There were 285 medevacs returned to OKINAWA for treatment. Of this number, 3 were further transferred to SANCTUARY for required medical treatment. Forty-seven KIAs were returned to OKINAWA for processing.

(4) Landings, fuel and lube oil expenditures:

	OKINAWA	PT DEFIANCE	TOTAL
Landings	1,059	92*	1,151
AVGAS	55,230 gals.	0	55,230 gals.
JP-5	15,307 gals.	0	15,307 gals.
Lube oil	1,049 gals.	0	1,049 gals.

*Plus 43 sling pickups/drops

e. Operations Ashore. BLT 1/3 consisting of approximately 1400 troops conducted their search and destroy operations throughout BEAVER CAGE in the AOA east of the National Highway One and in conjunction with the FIFTH Marines west of National Highway One.

f. All naval operations in support of CTG 79.4 were coordinated by CTG 76.4 OPLAN 120A-67, and a basic message OPORD CTG 76.4 OPORD 307-67. Close adherence was maintained throughout the operation to procedures set forth in reference (f).

g. Enemy Casualties. The known enemy casualties inflicted during Operation BEAVER CAGE were as follows:

<u>KIA</u>	<u>KIA (Poss)</u>	<u>VCS (Detainees)</u>	<u>POW</u>
62	80	22	3

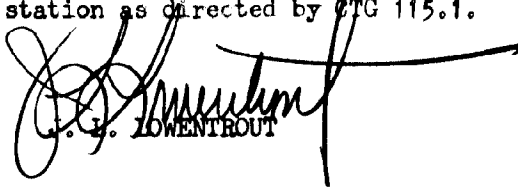
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There were no accurate figures determined to verify the number of VC KIA or WIA by air or naval gunfire.

9. In-Country Forces and Advisors

a. Summary of support provided by CTG 115. Throughout the operation CTG 115.1 assigned forces to the operational control of the CATF. These forces were highly necessary to the success of the operation and provided infiltration/exfiltration and AOA security patrols. A Coast Guard Patrol Boat (WPB) and one PCF were continually on station for Operation BEAVER CAGE. WPB and PCF units were relieved on station as directed by CTG 115.1.



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CTG 79.5
CTF 79
CG FMFPAC
CINCPACFLT
COMNAVBEACHMASTER ONE
UDT ELEVEN
TACRON THIRTEEN
COMLSTDIV 92
CO USS OKINAWA (LPH-3)
CO USS BAYFIELD (APA-33)
CO USS POINT DEFIANCE (LSD-31)
CO USS WHITFIELD COUNTY (LST-1169)
CO USS ST PAUL (CA-73)
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TASK ORGANIZATION

TG 76.4	Amphibious Ready Group ALFA	COMPHIBRON NINE
TU 76.4.0	Special Ops and Command Unit	CTG 76.4
TE 76.4.0.1	Flagship Element	CO OKINAWA
TE 76.4.0.2	Tactical Air Control Element	OINC TACRON 13 DET A
TE 76.4.0.3	UDT Element	OINC UDT ELEVEN DET E
TE 76.4.0.4	Special Ops Element	OINC BJU ONE DET F
TE 76.4.0.5	Transport Area Defense Element	CO BAYFIELD
TE 76.4.0.6	Advance Reconnaissance Element	CO TUNNY
TU 76.4.1	Gunfire Support Unit	CO Assigned GFS Ship
TU 76.4.2	Transport Unit	COMPHIBRON NINE
	OKINAWA, BAYFIELD, PT DEFIANCE, WHITFIELD CTY	
TE 76.4.2.1	Beach Party Element	OINC HBU ONE DET C-1
TE 76.4.2.2	Control Element	CO PT DEFIANCE
TE 76.4.2.3	Transport Area Element	CO BAYFIELD
	BAYFIELD, PT DEFIANCE	
TE 76.4.2.4	Helicopter Transport Assault Element	CO OKINAWA
TE 76.4.2.5	LST Support Element	CO WHITFIELD COUNTY
TG 79.4	Special Landing Force	CTG 79.4
	BLT 1/3, HMM 263	

Enclosure (1)

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SHIP TO SHORE MOVEMENT

1. General. Waterborne ship-to-shore operations were conducted over Red Beach which was centered at BT 299379. Beach width was 500 yards with a boat lane extending 4000 yards to seaward at 060 degrees.

2. Execution

a. The ship-to-shore movement was conducted with all ships remaining underway at all times. Pre-D-Day transfer of Company D from BAYFIELD to PT DEFIANCE was conducted on 27 April. The waterborne landing commenced at 0715H on D-Day with PT DEFIANCE transiting the LOD at 10 knots while splashing two LVT waves. Although the LVT drivers had been thoroughly briefed on their movements, the Wave Guides had not. Wave One Guide circled his wave to seaward prior to crossing the LOD and proceeding to the beach. This caused a loss of time but was overcome during the boat lane transit. Touchdown of the first wave was H-Hour, 0800H.

b. Other D-Day operations included transport of three tanks and five ontos to Red Beach utilizing LCM-6 from BAYFIELD and two LCM-8s of ACDIV 12 in PT DEFIANCE.

c. Beach operations were concluded on 30 April with the backloading of the tanks and ontos. All subsequent backloading was accomplished by helicopter.

d. UDT Detachment conducted morning and afternoon beach and boat lane surveys 28, 29 and 30 April. The boat lane was marked and remarked to conform to the defense perimeter positioned by the Marines. From 3 through 6 May UDT conducted diving operations in an unsuccessful attempt to locate a CH-46 helo that crashed during landing approach to USS SANCTUARY.

3. Communications

a. The AN/VRC-46 installation has again proved its value to the Amphibious Forces. Performance of this system throughout the operation was outstanding with only minimum problems. When coupled with the use of the AN/PRC-25 as a boat radio ship-to-shore communications become extremely reliable. It is unfortunate that at the present time equipment availability does not allow use of the above mentioned radios by all units concerned with the ship-to-shore movement.

4. Problems encountered

a. The Beachmaster Detachment and their equipment were pre-loaded in LCU-1495 as an on-call serial as desired by the BLT, but the serial assigned this unit was not called. It became necessary to backload the Beachmaster equipment into the LSD in order to utilize the LCU for beach operations. This situation created a time consuming bottleneck in the LSD well deck. It is recommended that Beachmaster equipment remain aboard the LSD until the serial is called.

Enclosure (2)

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b. With the PCS underway, minor difficulties were encountered in controlling on-call and non-scheduled waves. It is recommended that once scheduled waves are landed and the element of surprise is no longer a factor, the UDT Detachment place a radar reflector buoy in the water at the LOD and marking beach center. This would provide a reference point to aid PCS in controlling waves to the beach.

c. LCU-1495, LCM-864, LCM-867 and LCM-821 were embarked as a detachment of ACDIV 12. The boats in general were not in deployment condition when received as LCU-1495 required an engine change by Boat Haven personnel shortly after departure from Okinawa (enroute via Kaohsiung to Subic) and LCM-821 flooded while alongside its mooring in Subic as a result of a split skeg during Subic operations. This boat was replaced with LCM-867 at Subic. After 20 hours of engine operation an engine in the port bank of LCM-867 froze. Boat Haven personnel removed the port engine bank, completely overhauled the gear trains, replaced the frozen engine with an on board spare and replaced the engine bank in the Mike boat. In summary, the Boat Haven during this operation made nineteen separate repairs to boats of ACDIV 12 assigned this ship including the two major engine changes and overhauls. These repairs consisted of welding cracks, replacing pumps and replacing oil and water lines. In addition the Boat Haven repaired one tank generator making possible the restoration to full service one dead-lined tank.

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SUPPORTING ARMS

1. General. VMO-6 Detachment and FIRST Marine Air Wing provided air support in the form of close air support aircraft and armed helicopters. ST PAUL, HENDERSON and FORREST ROYAL were assigned for naval gunfire support. The naval gunfire section of SACC was manned by CTG 76.4 Staff personnel. No FSCC liaison officer was assigned. Naval gunfire/air support and coordination was passed ashore at 0330H D plus 3 days.

2. Problems Encountered. There were no major problems encountered, however, at times some confusion existed as to the location of the Heavy Lift Helicopters during close air support missions (see para 4c(1) and (2)).

3. Naval Gunfire Support

a. Units. USS ST PAUL (CA-73), USS HENDERSON (DD-785), USS FORREST ROYAL (DD-872).

b. Organization. Ships assigned naval gunfire support missions by COMSEVENTHFLT, CTG 70.8, and CTU 70.8.9 reported to CATF, embarked in USS OKINAWA (LPH-3), for duty upon entering the AOA. The SACC on the flagship controlled the movements and coordinated naval gunfire with the other supporting arms available.

c. Execution. No Pre-D-Day or D-Day fires were planned due to the proximity and unknown exact location of ARVN and FIFTH Marine troops in the area participating in Operation UNION. All gunfire missions were on call. The ST PAUL was the planned support ship but the FORREST ROYAL replaced her initially for D-Day support. At 1635H, 28 April 1967, the ST PAUL reported for duty and joined the FORREST ROYAL. There were no calls for fire on D-Day from either BLT 1/3 or in-country forces. On the night of 28 April, the ST PAUL fired 42 rounds of 8" HC ammo at 7 targets for harassment and interdiction fires. This was the only naval gunfire which was called for or fired during the operation.

d. Coordination. A peculiar supporting arms coordination problem existed during BEAVER CAGE. Highway One was just a few miles inland from the beach and all supporting arms to the west of it had to be coordinated by the FIFTH Marine FSCC. The only BLT 1/3 company east of Highway One was Company D, which was landed across Red Beach and this was the only area where supporting arms coordination was done exclusively by SACC on the OKINAWA. On D+3 May all coordination of supporting arms was passed to the FIFTH Marines FSCC.

e. Communication. The naval gunfire section of SACC had two nets up and manned, the Primary Naval Gunfire Control net and Spot net #1. In the planning stage of the operation it was coordinated with the FIFTH Marines to use their frequency for the Primary Gunfire Control net. However, during the operation communication was very poor on this net and SACC was monitoring all the traffic from BEACON HILL which was concurrently in progress in the northern I Corps area. To avoid interference with BEACON HILL all gunfire traffic was passed over the spot net. Communications on the spot net were excellent.

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h. Close Air Supporta. Planning

(1) Planning was initiated at IIX MAF Headquarters on 23 April, 1967. Liaison visits to Headquarters, FIRST Marine Air Wing and Headquarters, FIRST Marine Division to determine close air support requirements on a priority basis for Operation BEAVER CAGE using FIRST Marine Air Wing assets. An additional liaison trip to DASC, DaNang (LANDSHARK) and Field Command Post, FIFTH Marine Regiment was most beneficial in providing desired information including radio frequencies, call signs, and local tactical air control procedures. It was determined at this time that province chief representation would not be required in the SACC. The SECOND ARVN Division Headquarters co-located with the FIFTH Marine Regimental Command Post provided necessary representation.

b. Execution

(1) FIRST MAF provided adequate air support for Operation BEAVER CAGE. Pre-planned missions were punctual with proper ordnance loads. Reaction times on immediate air requests were considered excessive in several cases. On these occasions, strike aircraft were not employed due to lengthy delays after the initial request that allowed lucrative targets time to disperse and evade engagement. Although the BEAVER CAGE operating area was 25 miles south of DaNang, the average reaction time to immediate requests was in excess of 30 minutes.

(2) A Fire Coordination Line (FCL) was established along the trace of National Highway One within the AOA. The TACC (afloat) controlled all air strikes east of the FCL and coordinated with the FIFTH Marines Liaison Officer on all strikes west of the FCL.

(3) Neither Red Beach nor HLZs Thrush and Oriole were prepared by air strikes prior to L and H-Hours. Close air support aircraft were airborne, on station, to react to tactical requirements. One air strike on Red Beach and two strikes on LZ Thrush were required to suppress enemy activity shortly after the assault was commenced.

(4) Control and coordination of air support for the ARG/SLF remained afloat until 0330H, D plus 3 days. At this time control and coordination of all supporting arms was phased into the FIFTH Marine Regiment Fire Support Coordination Center, ashore.

c. Commerce

(1) On two occasions unidentified close air support was being delivered in the near proximity of ARG/SLF helicopter operations without the knowledge of TACC/HDC (afloat). In one situation, an air strike was dangerously close to a HLZ and resulted in a 25 minute delay of a planned helicopter lift. The air control agency ashore had no knowledge of this particular strike.

(2) Difficulties were encountered in coordinating tactical ground movements with heavy lift helicopters. This was due to the uncertain avail-

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ability of CH-46 or CH-53 helicopters and usually they arrived on station later than time requested causing delays and changes in the ground commander's tactical plans.

(3) The UH-1E aircraft were outstanding in the performance of their tasks as TAC(A); reporting intelligence and delivering timely, discrete suppressive fires. The control and coordination of ARG/SLF air support would be nearly impossible without these hard working crews.

d. Lessons Learned

(1) Close, continuous coordination of all supporting arms between forces operating in proximity of one another is mandatory in order to assign a priority of fires and carry out planned unit tactics.

(2) The attachment of a "Helicopter Package", (UH-1E and CH-46 aircraft), to the embarked HMM provides the CATF/CLF with the capability of economically executing a ship to shore movement without relying on unpredictable in-country resources. Without this package embarked the CATF/CLF does not possess the flexibility to alter landing plans nor the means to react rapidly to tactical situations as they occur ashore. The need for heavy lifts is imperative to the scheme of maneuver ashore, as well as the proper utilization of UH-34D assets.

(3) A "borrowed" PRC-25 (VHF/FM) radio improved the capability of SACC during BEAVER CAGE. This permitted communications with ground units and all aircraft except VMF/VMA types. This capability reduced coordination time to a minimum and the radio was not noticeably affected by atmospheric conditions during hours of darkness.

e. Communications

(1) Communications were excellent. All assigned equipment functioned satisfactorily throughout the entire operation. Several temporary casualties were experienced, but were expeditiously repaired with no detrimental effects to the functions of the TACC.

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COMMUNICATIONS

1. A ROMULUS termination between OKINAWA and ANNAPOLIS was extremely successful. ANNAPOLIS' termination provided a service equivalent to a land line and at times included additional channels for transmission of backlogged traffic. During the period 1-23 May over 7,000 messages were passed between OKINAWA and ANNAPOLIS.
2. The MAF Command Number Two circuit, 60 WPM ORESTES Covered RATT, was guarded continuously during the operation. Communication with at least one other station on the net was usually possible, but due to numerous users and the sometimes unreliable equipment in the field, the reliability of this circuit was very poor. There was no operational traffic passed between the flagship and the beach on this circuit.
3. The full duplex ORESTES covered Task Group Common circuit continues to play a heavy part in all operations with the flagship using its Send side as a Task Group Broadcast.
4. ELDORADO, while in company, provided the following services for the Task Group:
 - a. Ship/Shore relay for TG less flagship
 - b. Fleet BCST reruns on request
 - c. COMM electronic repair on request
 - d. Assumed Distress Guard
 - e. Provided CATF with PFN entry
5. On the flagship, in-station message handling times were improved by establishing additional tape cutting positions and utilizing the most experienced operators at these positions. Backlogging of outgoing traffic still occurs because of the heavy volume of long, high precedence messages which are received in the COMMCEN during certain critical phases of the operation. As many as 20 Immediates were received at one time, for transmission, during this operation.
6. Late receipt of the initiating directive caused last minute backlogging and necessitated using Flash precedence for the promulgation of the OPORD to action addressees, and Immediate precedence to all others.

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LOGISTICS

1. Due to the time span of the operation, it was necessary to schedule UNREPS, particularly for NSFO. Established PIMs for TG 73.5 replenishment ships were available and provided support for the task group. Some problems hampered or complicated replenishments as follows:

a. The nature of the operation required that the LPH remain within a designated area in close proximity to the landing sites to reduce flight time, particularly for resupply. This situation did not permit LPH to leave station for AKS UNREP. USS PT DEFIANCE picked up requirements for USS OKINAWA and used OKINAWA's assigned UH-34D to VERTREP the next day to OKINAWA.

b. The fresh produce and fruit requirements from AFS could not be filled as desired due to the depleted stock of AFS after departure from YANKEE Station.

2. The following logistics support was utilized from TG 73.5 resources:

AO - 29 April, 2, 6, 12 May

AF - None

AKS - 2 May

AFS - 8 May

3. Recommendations

a. That replenishment ships be made available during SPECOPS periods with adequate stocks of fresh fruit and produce.

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MEDICAL

1. Discussion. The USS OKINAWA (LPH-3) and USS SANCTUARY (AH-17) were the only ships involved in medevac support during Operation BEAVER CAGE. The USS SANCTUARY functioned as the Primary Casualty Receiving Ship while the USS OKINAWA acted as Casualty Control Ship and Secondary Casualty Receiving Ship. The Casualty Handling Plan of USS OKINAWA followed that of other LPHs and worked well. A surgical team was not on board the OKINAWA for Operation BEAVER CAGE.

2. Planning. Coordination of the LPH and AH was based on the proven fact that elimination of intermediate delays in evacuation of critically injured casualties to definitive surgical care has been a significant factor in reducing deaths due to wounds. All serious, or possibly serious, casualties went directly to USS SANCTUARY. This policy was established in advance. The BAS Hospital Corpsmen and the helicopter pilots were carefully briefed in this respect, since the delivery of casualties from the field to the ships virtually eliminated the triage phase on shore. Many modifications and additions were accomplished in USS OKINAWA sick bay prior to this operation. These included the follow:

a. One (1) new automatic sem-flush autoclave and one (1) automatic autoclave in addition to present autoclave.

b. An electric defibrillator was obtained.

c. Sick bay lobby was converted into a shock and resuscitation room with the necessary equipment installed.

d. By the addition of more cabinets, the sterilizer room was converted into a Central Surgical Supply, and the examining room became the treatment room with additional lights added so this room could be used as an auxiliary operating room.

e. Fluotech inhalers were obtained for both anesthesia machines.

f. A blood bank reefer with capacity of 200 units was obtained from the decommissioned hospital ship USS HAVEN.

g. Monorail air hoist was modified so it would raise a platform large enough for two litter patients and two corpsmen, if necessary. The platform has vertical guides to prevent swaying.

3. Medical Personnel. The ship's company personnel of 1 medical officer and 10 hospital corpsmen were supplemented by embarked medical personnel as follows:

	<u>Hospital Corpsmen</u>	<u>Medical Officers</u>
a. Collecting and Clearing Platoon	23	3
b. Battalion Aid Station	21	2
c. Helicopter Squadron	3	1

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Except for five BAS Corpsmen who were utilized by the SIF for casualty reporting at NSA Danang, Chu Lai and aboard the USS SANCTUARY, most of the above personnel remained on board during the operation. Fifty-six personnel in addition to the personnel listed above were regularly involved in the casualty handling evolutions.

4. Table of Casualties

a. Blood. A list of numbers of each Blood Type on each ship of the Task Group was on hand. On the night prior to the beginning of the operation, thirty units were drawn as a contingency supply.

b. Casualties.

(1) Total received 342

(a) Non combat 263

Heat exhaustion	126
Gastroenteritis	55
Sprains	23
Psychiatric	3
Lacerations	7
Skin problems	6
Cellulitis	3
VD	4
Malaria	1

(b) Combat (WIA) (LPH-3 received a total of 69, AH-17 received a total of 102)

1. Minor

Shrapnel	14
Gunshot	4
punji stick	2

2. Major

Gunshot	2
KIA	47

(c) Disposition

1. KIA	47
2. Preoperative evacuation	3
3. Returned to duty	269

5. Comments

a. The overall casualty receiving aspect of the operation went well. Three cases with injuries requiring general anesthesia, nerve, vascular or

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orthopedic repair were brought to USS OKINAWA and re-evacuated to the USS SANCTURARY immediately. These cases came to the USS OKINAWA initially due to battle damaged helo or fuel state too low to reach the AH.

6. Lessons Learned

a. A wet table is a definite necessity for the preparation of KIAs. Construction of a wet table by a tender had not been completed in time for this operation.

b. It was necessary to supplement the flight deck crew with Marine litter bearers. Twenty Marine litter bearers were available and utilized from the various personnel left on board.

c. The ventilation problem for the preparation of the KIA space was solved by the use of a "Red Devil" exhaust fan and exhausting over the side.

d. The installation of a reliable elevator from the hangar deck to the shock and resuscitation area was a most valuable addition, making the handling of litter patients safer and more efficient. The authorized SHIPALT monorail hoist is a poor and inadequate substitute for an elevator which permits one or two patients to be accompanied by medical personnel, who are then able to reassure, restrain or resuscitate patients if necessary.

e. Although the BLT surgeons were on shore at times, no purpose would have been served by establishing a Battalion Aid Station. All medevacs were flown more or less from the place of injury directly to the medical facilities.

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PUBLIC AFFAIRS

1. The press was not invited for BEAVER CAGE due to the short period between initiation and execution. Both CTF 76 PAOs were on board the flagship periodically during the operation. Three releases were submitted to CTE 70.2.1.1; an initial release and an amplifying release occasioned by the crash of a helo during pre-H-Hour transfers and a final wrap up upon conclusion of the operation. All were subsequently cleared and released. 650 feet of Kodachrome II 16 mm movie film was submitted to NPC depicting LPH operations and the return of the BLT upon withdrawal. The external delivery of an UH-34 by a CH-53 on board USS OKINAWA (LPH-3) was also photographed. Complete still photo coverage of the BLT being welcomed back aboard the LPH and the ensuing processing plus still coverage of the previously mentioned helo transfer was obtained. This was done in cooperation with CTG 79.4 PAO who is doing features on the BLT and the helo lift. No other TG 76.4 units submitted press releases concerning Operation BEAVER CAGE.

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