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COMMANDER U. S. NAVAL FORCES VIETNAM
~~BOX 1, PAG~~ ~~PO SAN FRANCISCO 96626~~
NAVY NEWS RELEASE

117 PHAN DINH PHUNG, SAIGON
PHONE: TIGER 3341

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DAILY SUMMARY

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Cleared by MACOI

SECRETARY OF THE NAVY AWARDS PRESIDENTIAL UNIT CITATION

Secretary of the Navy John H. Chafee presented the Presidential Unit Citation to the officers and men of the Navy's Delta River Patrol Group during ceremonies May 22 at Binh Thuy, South Vietnam. Captain Arthur W. Price, Commander, U. S. Navy River Patrol Group, accepted the award.

The unit was cited for: "Exceptionally meritorious and heroic service from January 31 to April 9, 1968 while...engaged in armed conflict with Viet Cong forces during the Tet (Lunar New Year) offensive and counter-offensive campaigns in the Mekong Delta region of the Republic of Vietnam."

The citation accompanying the award cited numerous heroic actions by the River Patrol Boat (PBR) crewmen in saving the Delta city of Chau Doc and the decisiveness of PBR and Navy Seawolf Helicopter Gunship fire support in the defense of Ben Tre and Vinh Long.

The river patrol boats and Seawolf gunships are assigned to Operation Game Warden patrols in the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone.

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Their mission is to interdict the movement of enemy troops and supplies along and across the major waterways of these areas. In the Rung Sat these units also provide security for merchant ships on the Long Tau River, the main shipping channel to Saigon.

There are more than 200 PBRs and over 20 Seawolves based throughout the Delta assigned to Operation Game Warden.

TWO ENEMY SWIMMER/SAPPERS DETAINED NEAR VUNG TAU PIERS

Two enemy swimmers were detained early this morning when a U. S. Navy sentry on board the USS Hickman County (LST-825) spotted several of them about 75 yards from the ship's stern at Vung Tau, 40 miles southeast of Saigon.

The swimmers were carrying packages wrapped in wire and after ignoring warning shots were taken under fire by the sentry as harbor patrol units were called into the area.

U. S. Army Military Police and harbor patrol boats arrived on the scene and intercepted one evading swimmer and found another swimmer hiding under the piers. Explosive Ordnance Disposal (EOD) personnel later found one explosive charge attached to the piers which had only partially detonated due to a malfunction. The charge caused no damage.

Crewmen aboard the Hickman County reported seeing one of the swimmers evade to the beach and escape.

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In other light, scattered actions throughout the Republic, naval units destroyed or damaged 29 bunkers, 20 enemy structures and five watercraft, while observing four sustained fires and one secondary explosion. Two sailors were slightly wounded in the action.

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