

W
file subj.
date sub-cat.
9/10

59

U.S. Boats Swelling Viet Navy

9/15/70

WASHINGTON (UPI) — By the end of the year, according to Pentagon figures, ~~the United States will have turned over 648 river patrol boats to South Vietnam, which now has the world's 14th largest navy.~~

The Pentagon's latest report from Saigon shows that ~~600 of the inland craft, nearly all of them combat types, have been delivered already.~~

At the end of the year, the Pentagon said, only 37 U.S. noncombat river boats will remain in Vietnam, and these, too, will be handed over eventually.

The value of all the river boats is placed at \$200 million.

Since its birth in 1952, the South Vietnamese navy has reached a strength of about 34,000 men and 1,500 vessels. Its manpower is double what it was in 1966. More than a third of the vessels have come from the United States since June 1968. One step that has helped speed the program in recent months has been the training of complete Vietnamese crews for each vessel before a delivery was made.

HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR ON MICROFILM