

PS 39
14-5

PCF-74 with LT James J. WILLMOTT, USN and Crew "C" aboard sank
evading junk in Cua Song Bay Hap. All occupants escaped to the beach.

19th PCF-9 with LTJG Stuart M. NOVAK, USN and Crew "N" and PCF-93 with LTJG Robert S. BELL, USN and Crew "T" aboard provided urgent NGFS for a Spotter Aircraft in the "Three Sisters" area. The units fired 51 rounds of 81MM mortar ammunition while suppressing all ground fire. The spotter evaluated target coverage as excellent. Damage unknown due to heavy foliage. PCF-90 with LTJG Bruce S. RUSSELL, USNR and Crew "V" aboard took an evading, motorized sampan under fire in Cua Song Bay Hap destroying the sampan and killing its 2 occupants. During the action, PCF-90 received small arms and automatic weapons fire from the beach which was suppressed with returned .50 caliber machinegun fire.

23rd PCF-9 with LTJG Stuart M. NOVAK, USN and Crew "N" aboard provided NGFS for a Spotter Aircraft in the Hon Chong area against a suspected VC stronghold. PCF-9 fired 18 rounds of 81MM mortar ammunition. The spotter evaluated target coverage as outstanding. Damage unknown due to heavy foliage.

24th PCF-90 with LTJG James O. CARTER, USN and Crew "X" aboard made a visit to Song Ong Doc with a HMC from USS CAMP (DER-251). Three hours were spent rendering medical aid and assistance to the villagers and its garrison.

25th PCF-5 with LTJG Tom B. HANEY, USN and Crew "W" aboard and LT James POOLE, DC, USNR, embarked, conducted a Christmas MEDCAP Operation on Hon Doi. Christmas gifts were provided and a dental clinic was held.

27th PCF-92 with LTJG Robert W. SCHULTZ, USN, and Crew "S" aboard provided NGFS for a Spotter Aircraft which was receiving small arms fire from the "Three Sisters" area. PCF-92 fired 19 rounds of 81MM mortar ammunition while suppressing all ground fire. Target damage was unknown due to heavy foliage.

28th PCF-73 with LTJG John H. MORGAN, USN and Crew "Z" aboard and PCF-91 with LTJG Robert P. FREIBERG, USNR and Crew "O" aboard fired a pre-planned NGFS mission in the "Three Sisters" area. The units fired 31 rounds of 81MM mortar ammunition. The spotter was unable to evaluate target damage due to heavy foliage.

PCFs from PCF Division 101 also detained many Vietnamese civilians, sampan and junks during the period 1 October - 31 December 1966 as suspected Communist insurgents, draft dodgers or Vietnamese Armed Forces deserters. Detained personnel, sampans and junks were turned over to Vietnamese authorities. These incidents have not been reported in the Division Diary because usually no report is received concerning final action by Vietnamese authorities.

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COMMANDER
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APO San Francisco 96214

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Master stated that he had made the trip "a dozen times," using the same route and had seen junks but never had stopped.

The Master further informed the inspecting party that the ship was enroute from Sihanoukville, Cambodia to Hong Kong. However, a COMNAVFORV Intelligence check of the ship's agent's Saigon office indicated that TATIANA's port calls were changed prior to her arrival at Sihanoukville, from Hong Kong to Kobe, Japan. This contradiction of the Master's statement, plus the fact that the vessel did not show navigational lights and stopped in a large concentration of junks off a Viet Cong-controlled coastal area, added significance to this incident.¹

TATIANA was released by Vietnamese authorities at 2130 on 7 September. Intelligence records indicated that TATIANA did continue to Kobe, Japan vice Hong Kong.

At 2000 on 24 September, USCOC POINT GREY detected several sampans close to the beach 63 miles southeast of An Thoi moving south along the coastal area of the U Minh Forest. POINT GREY's Boston whaler, which was sent in to investigate the contacts, reported that several sampans were on the beach and that a flashlight signal was received from the beach. The whaler illuminated the closest moving target and three men jumped overboard and swam for the beach. When they did not heed warning shots, they were taken under fire. The sampan was destroyed by a large secondary explosion when it was taken under fire by the whaler. POINT GREY later received small arms fire from the beach. There were no friendly casualties; VC casualties were unknown.

¹ COMNAVFORV msg 081040Z Sep 66 - Intelligence Summary 136-66

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

An average of 67 U.S. units were on continuous MARKET TIME patrols during the month.¹ Two aircraft were continuously air-borne on MARKET TIME patrols. Additionally, a daylight patrol of the South China Sea was flown during the dark phases of the moon. Forces were augmented by three additional PCFs.

EVASION INCIDENTS

At 0335 on 7 September, USCGC POINT GREY detected a steel hull contact dead in the water off the southwest coast of Ca Mau Peninsula 77 miles south of An Thoi. Fifteen junks surrounded the ship, but POINT GREY was unable to determine if any junks were alongside. When challenged, the vessel, which showed no running or range lights, got underway on course 130, at 17 knots. The junks dispersed.

The contact was visually identified as the French flag merchant ship TATIANA (7,026 gross tons). POINT GREY continued to shadow TATIANA but could not match her speed. USS NEWELL (DER 322) was dispatched to assist, intercepted TATIANA and delivered the message, "Your stopping in contiguous waters in junk concentration indicates possible violation GVN regulations. Request you follow me to Vung Tau."

TATIANA complied and upon arrival in Vung Tau was inspected by the Vietnamese Navy Third Coastal Zone Commander. Nothing suspicious was found. The Master and crew of 36 were French Nationals. The ship carried 2,800 tons of general cargo. The

¹ See Appendix I for MARKET TIME Statistical Summary

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The following evasion incidents also were recorded during September:

14 - At 0100 PCF 66 detected a contact 19 miles south of Qui Nhon proceeding in a southerly direction along the coast. When PCF 66 closed and illuminated the junk, it evaded and ignored warning shots. The junk was destroyed by direct fire. Enemy casualties were unknown.

17 - At 1235 PCF 21 hailed and fired warning shots at two sampans attempting to evade to the beach 30 miles south of DaNang. When the sampans continued evasive tactics, they were taken under direct fire and damaged. Small arms fire was received from the beach during this action, but was not returned because of the proximity of a village. There were no friendly casualties.

21 - At 1650 USCGC POINT ARDEN hailed four junks 86 miles northwest of DaNang off the DMZ coast. The junks were not fired on as they evaded across the 17th parallel.

28 - USCGC POINT CLEAR fired on an evading junk 66 miles southeast of An Thoi when it failed to heed hailings and warning shots. Results were unknown.

OPERATIONS

Land operations supported by MARKET TIME forces during September were as follows:

14 - PCFs on routine patrol in areas 7E and 8C, approximately 100 miles southwest of Vung Tau, provided blocking forces for ARVN Operation DAN CHI 261.

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15-25 - PCFs and WPBs in area 1A1, adjacent to the DMZ coast, participated in Operation DECK HOUSE IV by providing coastal patrols and anchorage security for the amphibious force.

19 - At 1930 PCF 73 provided urgent evacuation for two United States Special Forces and 35 Regional Forces troops surrounded by Viet Cong 12 miles north of An Thoi.

23 - PCFs, patrolling just north of Qui Nhon in area 3E, provided a blocking force for the Operations WILD CAMILLA and THAYER.

Eight ROUNDUPS were conducted in September by MARKET TIME PCFs and PACVs. In all cases, nothing suspicious was uncovered. The ROUNDUP operations were conducted in three areas. Between 13 and 15 September two ROUNDUPS were conducted in Vung Tau Harbor. Five ROUNDUPS were carried out in an area off the coast of Go Cong Province near the mouths of the Cua Tieu and Cua Dai Rivers between the 19th and 24th of the month. One ROUNDUP was effected off the coast of Phuoc Tuy Province, ten miles north of Vung Tau, on the 27th and 28th.

MARKET TIME units conducted two Search and Rescue operations during the month. On 17 September at 2130, two PCFs provided illumination in support of a SAR effort after two F4Cs collided 20 miles south of Nha Trang. One survivor was recovered. On 26 September at 1225, USCGC POINT KENNEDY assisted in the recovery of survivors of a downed U.S. Army helicopter 70 miles south-southwest of Vung Tau. Four survivors were recovered by

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POINT KENNEDY's small boat. U.S. personnel casualties were one killed, one wounded and two missing.

HOSTILE FIRE INCIDENTS

MARKET TIME units on patrol came under attack on only a few occasions during September. In no case was there personnel or material damage.

4 - At 2120 PCF 74 received automatic weapons fire from the north shore of Phu Quoc Island 22 miles north of An Thoi. Fire was returned resulting in a secondary explosion.

14 - At 1110 PCF 55 received approximately 50 rounds of machine gun fire 80 miles southeast of DaNang. The fire was suppressed.

17 - At 1840 PCF 87 received machine gun fire 15 miles north of Qui Nhon while closing a small junk moving along the surf line. Fire was returned, but the junk successfully evaded.

19 - At 1022 PCF 63 received small arms fire from the beach 45 miles north of Qui Nhon while closing to investigate a junk. Fire was returned. An observation aircraft reported that enemy casualties were one killed and one probable wounded.

NAVAL GUNFIRE SUPPORT

MARKET TIME units contributed naval gunfire support on ten occasions during the month. Friendly forces suffered no casualties and enemy casualties were unconfirmed or unknown.

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- 1 - At 1415 USCGC POINT JEFFERSON and PCF 57 conducted an unscheduled gunfire support mission 100 miles southwest of Vung Tau against an enemy troop concentration spotted by a FAC aircraft. Fifty-four rounds of 81mm mortar were expended.
- At 1500 USCGC POINT SLOCUM fired 44 rounds of 81mm mortar in support of a reconnaissance aircraft receiving small arms fire 86 miles northeast of Vung Tau.
- 2 - At 2050 PCF 51 expended 24 rounds of 81mm HE mortar in support of friendly forces 30 miles northeast of Nha Trang.
- 5 - At 1030 USCGC POINT WHITE and PCF 37 supported a reconnaissance aircraft receiving ground fire 185 miles southwest of Vung Tau on the Ca Mau Peninsula by expending 67 rounds of 81mm mortar.
- 9 - At 2205 PCF 50 provided urgent gunfire support for friendly forces under attack 35 miles north of Nha Trang. Twenty-five rounds of 81mm HE mortar were expended. At 0136 and 0615 the following day, the units provided additional fire support against enemy positions in the same area by expending 50 rounds of 81mm mortar.
- 12 - At 1825 USCGC POINT DUME provided urgent gunfire support 80 miles northeast of Vung Tau for a reconnaissance aircraft receiving ground fire. The aircraft reported that three of the enemy possibly were killed.

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14 - At 1145 PCF 10 provided gunfire support for a reconnaissance aircraft under fire 50 miles east of An Thoi. The aircraft took two sampans in the area under fire. The PCF later provided first aid and evacuation for two civilians who were wounded by the aircraft fire.

18 - At 0730 PCF 57 observed ground fire being directed against a reconnaissance aircraft 15 miles north of Qui Nhon. PCF 57 suppressed the enemy fire with .50 caliber machine gun and 81mm mortar fire.

26 - At 1315 PCF 77 teamed up with USS SAINT FRANCIS RIVER (LSMR 525) in suppressing enemy fire directed against Coastal Group 16 units 60 miles north of Qui Nhon.

30 - At 1430 USCGC POINT BANKS conducted a scheduled gunfire support mission against enemy positions on the west coast of Phu Quoc Island six miles north of An Thoi. Twenty-nine rounds of 81mm mortar were expended.

MARKET TIME UNITS

Three additional PCFs arrived in country this month, boosting the total number in country to 73. The new PCFs, numbered 87, 88 and 89, arrived in Qui Nhon aboard USS COMSTOCK (LSD 19) on 9 September.

The three PCFs were assigned to inshore patrols in area three which was realigned to provide seven vice six sub-areas. High hostile fire and junk activity in the area and the newly assigned boats were the factors that dictated the realignment. In another realignment, offshore barrier lines in areas eight

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and nine were moved to positions closer to the Ca Mau Peninsula and shipping lanes to better intercept and identify merchant ships.

USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST 1167) relieved USS FLOYD COUNTY (LST 762) at Vung Tau on the first of the month. FLOYD COUNTY had spent 84 days on station servicing WPBs and PCFs in areas seven and eight.

On 10 September MIUWS (Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance) Unit 13 relieved MIUWS Unit 12 at Vung Tau.

On 20 September PACV (Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle) Division 107 chopped to CTF 115 for a one-month period of evaluation of three PACVs operating as MARKET TIME units.

USCGC POINT ORIENT was drydocked at DaNang for one day of emergency repairs. USCGCs POINT BANKS and POINT GANNET were drydocked in Bangkok for a 12-day routine maintenance check.

USS CURRITUCK (AV 7) established a seadrome on 3 September at Cam Ranh Bay. Patrol Squadron 50 flew SP5B aircraft on MARKET TIME patrols both north to the 17th parallel and south to Phu Quoc Island. CURRITUCK's aircraft completed patrols scheduled by CTF 72 in conjunction with P3As based at Sangley Point, P.I. and SP2Hs flying out of Tan Son Nhut, Saigon. The SP2Hs are a task group under CTF 115, but the other aircraft are provided by CTF 72 for MARKET TIME operations on a periodic basis. The seadrome was disestablished on 27 September.

The following units were under OPCON of CTF 115 for patrol duties during September:

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