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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

BEACHED JUNK INCIDENT

On 19 October at 1200, PCF 15 observed a large junk aground 40 miles southeast of DaNang. Its cargo was being offloaded by approximately 300 persons who dispersed when PCF 15 approached. Almost immediately, small arms fire was directed against PCF 15. As PCF 15 returned the fire, other MARKET TIME units proceeded into the area to assist.

At 1315 an airstrike set the junk afire. At about 1700, helicopters from Chu Lai landed U.S. Marines who swept the area, killing one Viet Cong and capturing six Viet Cong suspects. The Marines reported that the junk was 60% destroyed by fire and that its cargo, consisting of coffee, beer, furniture, auto tires, bales of cotton rags, bulk cardboard boxes, etc., valued at 10,000,000\$VN (about \$85,000 U.S.), was littered about the beach. The Marines withdrew about 2000.

Three of the junk's crew were picked up in the Marine sweep; the others made their way to DaNang during the fighting. Interrogation of the crewmen revealed that the junk and its crew had been captured by 40 Viet Cong.

The junk "HAI KHOM" had been hauling legitimate cargo from Saigon to DaNang when it was run aground deliberately on the night of 18-19 October because of engine trouble. At dawn of the 19th, the Viet Cong commandeered the junk and crew and set about offloading

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the cargo. The arrival of MARKET TIME forces foiled the Viet Cong's plans and allowed the crew to escape.

Intensive investigation revealed that the beached junk incident was not an infiltration attempt and that the junk's crew was innocent.⁸

PACV/PBR COLLISION

On 5 October at about 2020, PBR 44 and PACV 2 collided about three miles west of Cat Lo.⁹ Two crewmen on the PBR and one on the PACV sustained minor injuries. Both boats sustained heavy damage; however, both returned to Cat Lo under their own power.

At 1950 PBRs 43 and 44 were returning to Cat Lo after PBR 43 had experienced radar failure while enroute to their Long Tau River patrol area. PBR 44 was the forward boat with masthead, recognition and running lights showing. The patrol was moving at a speed of 20 knots.

PACV 2 departed Cat Lo at 1955 proceeding at an estimated 20 knots on the starboard side of the channel, running darkened in accordance with operating instructions. A moving contact was detected on radar and visually bearing 345° (relative) approximately 500 yards away. PACV 2 went into a starboard turn, evaluating the situation as a port to port passing. When the contact, PBR 44, was 100 to 200 yards away, the PACV began ditching (setting the craft down into the

⁸ COMNAVFORV msg 220030Z OCT 66

⁹ Investigation to inquire into the circumstances surrounding the collision of PACV 2 and PBR 44 at about 2020 hours on 5 October 1966, near Vung Tau, Republic of Vietnam by Lieutenant Commander Joseph E. WALL, USN, 305412/1100 with NAVFORV FIRST ENDORSEMENT FF5-16/07.1:alp 5830 ser 2698 dated 14 Nov 66

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water) which is the fastest method of bringing the craft to a stop. Just prior to the collision PBR 44 appeared to be turning hard left.

The PACV's port bow section struck the PBR amidships on the starboard side. The impact threw one PACV crewman into the water. He was immediately recovered. Personnel on PBR 44 did not see PACV 2 until it was 10 to 20 yards off the starboard side. The PBR coxswain had turned his boat to port an estimated ten degrees just before impact.

After the collision the two boats separated with PBR 43 coming alongside PBR 44 to assist and take on the injured crewmen. PBR 44 returned to Cat Lo using the port engine. PACV 1 stood by to assist PACV 2, but eventually the damaged craft successfully lighted off her engines and returned to Cat Lo.

MORTAR EXPLOSION ABOARD PCF 9

Three crewmen of PCF 9 were killed and two were wounded when the boat's 81mm mortar exploded on board at 0936 on 18 October. PCF 9, in a position one-half mile off the east coast of Phu Quoc Island, was firing mortar rounds in support of U.S. Special Forces operations when the fatal accident occurred. Minutes before the explosion a white phosphorous mortar round had been fired successfully. At the command to fire a high explosive round, PCF 9 suffered an explosion which was observed by personnel on board PCF 6 and PCF 73 stationed some two and four miles away respectively. The mortar was totally destroyed. The after .50 caliber machine gun was blown over the side and the after deck section of the craft was damaged.

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extensively.

An investigating board found no evidence of malpractice, negligence or misconduct on the part of the crew. All cartridges and fuzes aboard PCF 9 were removed and regarded as "suspicious" until checked out by the Naval Ordnance Systems Command.

EVASION AND HOSTILE FIRE INCIDENTS

The following is a chronology of significant evasion or hostile fire incidents that occurred during October:

- 10 - At 1000 PCF 10 fired on an evading sampan which had ignored warning signals 45 miles east of An Thoi off the Kien Giang Sector coast. Upon receiving direct fire the sampan ceased to evade and subsequently was boarded and searched. The occupants stated that they had evaded because of fear. Nothing suspicious was found although there was some evidence that one person may have swum ashore during the evasion attempt. The sampan was released.
- At 1715 USCGC POINT ELLIS closed several junks 50 yards off the beach 75 miles northwest of DaNang. POINT ELLIS had closed to 1,000 yards when the junks beached and the occupants disembarked. No further action was taken since POINT ELLIS was unable to determine the character of the personnel.
- At 2045 PCF 17 picked up a Viet Cong suspect who had attempted to evade by swimming ashore from his basket boat 78 miles north of Qui Nhon. Subsequently, the suspect

jumped overboard from the PCF and again attempted to swim ashore. Despite repeated calls to stop, and warning shots, the man continued swimming into shallow water. Finally, he was taken under direct fire and disappeared into the water.

- 18 - At 2315 PCF 39 received automatic weapons and recoilless rifle fire near the mouth of the Co Chien River 60 miles southwest of Vung Tau. At 2350 PCF 39 reentered the area and again received fire. PCF 39 responded with .50 caliber and 81mm mortar fire. USCGC POINT LEAGUE supported PCF 39 with mortar fire and a GAME WARDEN helo provided illumination. Three fires were observed as a result of the HE and WP mortar fire. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 27 - At 1630 PCF 68 received hostile fire off the east coast of the Cau Mau Peninsula while investigating junks in the mouth of a river 165 miles southwest of Vung Tau. PCF 68, supported by USCGC POINT GAMMON, returned the fire destroying two junks and damaging seven. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 28 - At 0152 PCF 68, in the above area, closed to investigate a suspicious radar contact heading north along the beach. When the junk was illuminated, it was abandoned by its single occupant who ignored warning shots. Direct fire on the junk produced a secondary explosion which destroyed it. The fate of the Viet Cong suspect was unknown.
- 31 - At 0835 PCF 75 fired on an evading basket boat 20 miles

south of DaNang after signals to stop were ignored. The boat was beached and its single occupant fled. The boat was destroyed.

GUNFIRE SUPPORT MISSIONS

MARKET TIME forces conducted eight gunfire support missions during the first ten days of October in support of Operation LEE in an area 80 miles southeast of DaNang.

- 3 - From 1240 to 1300 PCF 55 expended 22 rounds of 81mm high explosive mortar on Viet Cong elements engaging units of the 2nd ARVN Division. This was in response to an urgent request of a U.S. Marine spotter who reported that target coverage was excellent.
- From 1610 until 1730 PCF 21 conducted an urgent gunfire support mission for 2nd ARVN units by expending 21 rounds of 81mm mortar fire as PCF 11 acted as an exfiltration patrol.
- 4 - At 0821 PCF 77 expended 27 rounds of mortar in support of Republic of Korea Marines. Results were unknown.
- At 1730 PCF 21 scored two direct hits on Viet Cong resistance points while expending five rounds of 81mm mortar in support of ARVN 2nd Division operations. Three Viet Cong were killed and three bunkers were destroyed.
- 7 - At 1500 PCF 21 neutralized three targets with 24 rounds of 81mm mortar fired in support of ARVN operations. Viet Cong casualties were unknown.

- 8 - At 1200 PCF 14 delivered 22 rounds of 81mm mortar fire in response to a U.S. Marine spotter's request. Results were unknown.
- 10 - At 1345 PCF 77 responded to an ARVN urgent request for gunfire support by firing 12 rounds of 81mm mortar on Viet Cong ambush elements. The target was neutralized but enemy casualties were unknown.
- At 1425 PCF 77 again supported ARVN forces by expending 650 rounds of .50 caliber fire. Results were unknown.

Other MARKET TIME naval gunfire support missions during October were as follows:

- 3 - At 2030 USCGC POINT JEFFERSON expended 26 rounds of 81mm mortar in defense of a coastal village 68 miles northeast of Vung Tau which came under a Viet Cong mortar attack. The Viet Cong terminated the attack at 2230. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 7 - At 0420 PCF 80 assisted ARVN forces under attack 28 miles north of Nha Trang by firing six 81mm mortar illumination rounds. The Viet Cong attack was broken. Enemy casualties were unknown.
- 12 - From 1420 to 1525 PCF 72 and USCGC POINT COMFORT expended 109 rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong machine gun and mortar emplacements 55 miles east of An Thoi on the coast of Kien Giang Province. An L-19 spotter reported one bunker and three structures were destroyed and five

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other structures were damaged. Enemy casualties were unknown.

13 - From 0000 to 0315 PCF 80 supported a Popular Force unit under attack 30 miles north of Nha Trang by firing 57 mortar rounds. Ten Viet Cong were killed and three Popular Force troops were wounded.

14 - At 1120 PCF 6 began providing gunfire support for a Regional Force/Popular Force unit under repeated Viet Cong attacks 35 miles northeast of An Thoi. The MARKET TIME unit expended 42 rounds of 81mm HE mortar and then stood by until relieved by PCF 12. However, no further support was needed and the incident was terminated at 1800. Enemy casualties were unknown.

- At 1230 USCGC POINT KENNEDY expended 58 rounds of 81mm mortar and 1,200 rounds of .50 caliber in support of Coastal Group 34 units under automatic weapons attack 35 miles southwest of Vung Tau. Enemy casualties were unknown.

MARKET TIME units provided naval gunfire support for U.S. Special Forces on Operation PEPPER BUSH in three actions occurring on the east coast of Phu Quoc Island 18 miles north of An Thoi.

16 - At 2115 PCF 9 expended 31 rounds of 81mm mortar in support of U.S. Special Forces under attack. Viet Cong casualties were one killed and two wounded. Four or five huts were destroyed.

- 17 - At 1215 PCF 6 fired on Viet Cong troops and foxholes at the request of U.S. Special Forces. The aerial spotter reported 95% target coverage but enemy casualties were unknown.
- 18 - At 0356 PCF 9 expended nine rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong troop areas and structures with unknown results.
- 26 - At 1136 PCFs 5 and 6 and USCGC POINT YOUNG provided cover for Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) and U.S. Special Forces (USSF) personnel who were engaging an unknown number of Viet Cong. After contact was broken the MARKET TIME units extracted the friendly forces and provided transportation to An Thoi for one CIDG and one USSF wounded. Three of the Viet Cong were killed; one CIDG troop was killed.

The final gunfire support mission of October was conducted at 1430 on the 26th when USCGC POINT JEFFERSON and USCGC POINT LOMAS fired 97 rounds of 81mm mortar against Viet Cong bunkers and huts 68 miles southwest of Vung Tau. One bunker and two huts were damaged while enemy personnel casualties were unknown.

OPERATIONS

On 28 October at 1720, PCF 21 discovered the cargo junk DAI LOI aground 60 miles northwest of DaNang and requested that U.S. Marine forces investigate the junk. A Marine landing party went ashore at 2115 and reported that the junk was empty of cargo with the entire crew standing by the vessel. No contact with the Viet Cong was made.

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The DAI LOI had been chartered by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) to haul fertilizer from DaNang to Cau Viet. The junk was returning to DaNang after having delivered its cargo when the engine failed, causing the vessel to run aground.

Subsequent attempts to salvage the junk were unsuccessful and finally it was abandoned.

Surflines operations were conducted off the coast of Phuoc Tuy Province throughout the month. These operations consisted of anchoring one WPB and two PCFs in areas of high infiltration probability during periods of high tide at night. With a DER assisting, all contacts were boarded whenever sea conditions permitted. In all cases contacts were closely inspected. Surflines operations in October failed to uncover any infiltration attempts.

MARKET TIME units supported Operations WILD CAMELIA and THAYER throughout the month in addition to Operations IRVING (2-24 Oct), LEE (2-10 Oct), 1st Battalion 7th Marines (11-15 and 18-20 Oct), and Operation PEPPER BUSH, a continuing operation by U.S. Special Forces on Phu Quoc Island. The most notable success of the month was Operation IRVING in Binh Dinh Province in which 324 Viet Cong suspects were detained. Thirty-three of these detainees are confirmed Viet Cong to date. MARKET TIME support consists primarily of infiltration/exfiltration patrols.

Two search and rescue operations were conducted. On 25 October at 1200, PCF 87 lost a crewman overboard 50 miles southwest of Qui Nhon. The man apparently suffered a seizure, fell over the side

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and sank ten seconds after hitting the water. An intensive air/sea search failed to locate the body.

On 29 October at 1340, PCF 56 lost a crewman over the side while transiting the Hue River mouth in heavy surf conditions. An intensive search by aircraft and two PCFs failed to locate the body. At 0730 on 31 October, Regional Force/Popular Force troops discovered the body on the beach.

MARKET TIME UNIT CHANGES

Nine PCFs arrived in-country during the month to bring the total number to 82. The two remaining PCFs are expected to arrive during November.

USS VERNON COUNTY (LST-1161) relieved USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY (LST-1167) on 4 October as the support unit off the Ca Mau Peninsula. USS SALISBURY SOUND (AV-13) established the Cam Ranh Bay seadrome on 8 October and disestablished it on the 27th.

On 20 October PACVs 1, 2, and 3 completed a 30-day MARKET TIME evaluation and were chopped to CTF 116 for GAME WARDEN evaluation. Generally, the evaluation showed that the PACVs, as presently configured, have a very limited application in MARKET TIME operations.

STABLE DOOR harbor defense forces consisted of 24 officers and 430 enlisted men at the end of the month. Construction of semi-permanent facilities to receive SEA SHARP personnel and Advanced Base Functional Components is now 85% complete. The new units eventually will replace the Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance (MIUWS) units. Four additional LCPL MK XI patrol boats

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arrived in-country bringing the total to 14. One was sent to Vung Tau and three were sent to Nha Trang. LCPL boat patrols were initiated at Nha Trang on 24 October. The Officer-in-Charge of the Inshore Undersea Warfare Group One, WESTPAC Detachment, arrived in-country on 30 October. The detachment will become operational on 15 November.

The following Seventh Fleet units operated as a part of Operation MARKET TIME during the following inclusive dates in October 1966:

		<u>DATES</u>
DER 397	USS WILHOITE	(1-27)
DER 322	USS NEWELL	(1-10)(27-31)
DER 386	USS SAVAGE	(1-19)(29-31)
DER 393	USS HAVERFIELD	(19-31)
DER 251	USS CAMP	(1-9)(17-31)
DER 400	USS HISSEM	(1-18)
DER 328	USS FINCH	(9-31)
DER 325	USS LOWE	(10-28)
MCS 7	USS EPPING FOREST	(1-6)
MSC 198	USS PEACOCK	(1-31)
MSC 289	USS ALBATROSS	(1-31)
MSC 209	USS WOODPECKER	(26-31)
MSC 206	USS WARBLER	(1-26)
MSO 510	USS ADVANCE	(1-8)
MSO 427	USS CONSTANT	(1-8)
MSO 436	USS ENERGY	(1-8)(21-31)
MSO 463	USS PIVOT	(18-31)
MSO 464	USS PLUCK	(6-31)
MSO 446	USS FORTIFY	(8-21)
MSO 449	USS IMPERVIOUS	(8-31)
MSO 456	USS INFLICT	(8-31)
MSO 457	USS LOYALTY	(1-8)
LST 1161	USS VERNON COUNTY	(4-31)
LST 1167	USS WESTCHESTER COUNTY	(1-3)

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