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Hm Robinette

H. M. ROBINETTE
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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE

The Northeast Monsoon seriously hampered the operations of MARKET TIME forces during November. Heavy seas and high winds during MARKET TIME operations caused a sharp drop in detections, inspections and boardings for the month.

In October, a total of 51,248 vessels were detected, 16,639 inspected and 15,229 boarded; the figures for November were 31,461, 12,336 and 9,440 respectively.

On 15 November, PCF 77 capsized and broke up at the entrance to Hue Harbor as it moved in to assist PCF 22 in rescuing a man overboard. Three members of the crew of PCF 77 were lost. Five survivors of PCF 77 and the man overboard from PCF 22 were rescued.

On 15 November, Inshore Undersea Warfare Group One WESTPAC Detachment was activated as the immediate administrative commander of Harbor Defense Units in II, III and IV Corps, under the operational command of CTF 115.

On 22 November, SEA SHARP (Southeast Asia Semi-permanent Harbor Protection) Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit Three (IUW 3) replaced the Mobile IUW Unit 23 at Qui Nhon. On 30 November, IUW 2 arrived at Cam Ranh Bay.

MARKET TIME forces were involved in six hostile fire incidents during the month and four incidents of evading junks were reported. Task Force 115 units provided Naval Gunfire Support for both Vietnamese and U.S. forces on 12 occasions. On seven occasions, MARKET TIME units provided U.S. Marine, U.S. Army, Vietnamese Army

NOVEMBER 1966

Northern Surveillance Group - Area 1/2
Central Surveillance Group - Area 3/4/5
Southern Surveillance Group - Area 6/7
Gulf of Thailand Surveillance
Group - Area 8/9

DA NANG

Area 1

Area 2

Area 3

Operation
BINH HAI 804
14 Nov

QUI NHON

PCF 65
12 Nov

Area 4

NHA TRANG

Area 5

VUNG TAU

Area 6

AN THOI

POINT BANKS
18 Nov

Area 9

Area 7

Area 8

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and Royal Australian Army operations with blocking forces or exfiltration patrols.

In addition to the Search and Rescue operations in connection with the loss of PCF 77, MARKET TIME units conducted Search and Rescue (SAR) missions for a downed U.S. Marine helicopter and a capsized junk of Vietnamese Navy Coastal Group 37, and assisted in extinguishing a fire in S.S. RUTGERS VICTORY.

On 5 November, two additional PCFs arrived in country to bring the total to 84. One SWIFT was assigned to Qui Nhon and one to DaNang.

On 12 November, two WPBs were transferred from Cat Lo to DaNang.

NORTHERN SURVEILLANCE GROUP

Loss of PCF 77

On 15 November, while attempting to cross the bar and enter Hue Harbor, PCF 22 lost one man overboard. PCF 77, also in the area, maneuvered to assist in rescue operations, broached and upended in the heavy seas, promptly sinking in 13 feet of water.

Helicopters in the area picked up seven people in the water, two of whom, Chief Machinery Repairman W. S. BAKER, U.S. Navy and Boatswain's Mate Third Class HARRY B. BROCK, U.S. Navy, were dead. The man overboard from PCF 22 was picked up by his own craft. Radioman Third Class B. A. TIMMONS, U.S. Navy, who was believed to be below decks at the time the boat capsized, was not recovered, and was listed as missing, presumed dead.

At the time of the incident, PCF 77 was outside the surfline,

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standing by to assist PCF 22 as required. The Officer-in-Charge of PCF 77, LTJG David G. WILBOURNE, U.S. Navy, had previously ordered all hands into lifejackets, and was at the helm. About 20 seconds after the man was reported safely aboard PCF 22, a wave, estimated to be 25 to 30 feet high, lifted the stern of PCF 77 and drove its bow into the trough. The SWIFT boat flipped end over end. The pilot house almost immediately filled with water, although all doors and windows had been secured on the orders of the OinC. The survivors exited through the port pilot house door, which had sprung.

As the boat rapidly filled, LTJG WILBOURNE was responsible for rescuing one man from the stricken craft, and Chief Petty Officer BAKER, a qualified diver, was last seen entering the after compartment where Petty Officer TIMMONS was believed to be trapped. One and one-half minutes after upending, PCF 77 sank, keel up.

Security elements were provided by the Marine Corps, and the Salvagemaster of Harbor Clearance Unit One was dispatched to the scene. The bow section of PCF 77 was washed ashore 2500 yards north of the Hue River mouth. The rest of the boat broke up, and HCU-1 Salvagemaster reported that a salvage attempt could not be effected.

Hostile Fire and Exfiltration Patrols

From 0600 3 November to 0600 4 November, PCFs provided a blocking force and exfiltration patrol in support of operations of the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, along the coast 32 miles south-

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southeast of DaNang.

While conducting a routine search of junks 55 miles north of Qui Nhon at 1010 on 8 November, PCF 76 received automatic weapons fire from the beach, taking two superficial hits. PCF 76 suppressed the fire with her .50 caliber machine gun with no friendly casualties.

At 0825 on 11 November, PCF 56 received small arms fire while searching a junk 100 yards off shore, 58 miles north of Qui Nhon. The SWIFT cleared the area, and expended 250 rounds of .50 caliber on the target. There were no friendly casualties. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

On 12 November, PCF exfiltration patrols supported an operation of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, 56 miles southeast of DaNang. No significant results were noted. PCFs supported the same unit in the same area on 29-30 November.

CENTRAL SURVEILLANCE GROUP

On 2 November, at the request of the Commanding Officer of Coastal Group 25, PCF 51 fired illumination rounds from her 81mm mortar in support of a Popular Force outpost which was under attack by the Viet Cong 20 miles north of Nha Trang. Support was requested at 0130, and the enemy broke contact at 0200. There were no friendly casualties. Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

Between 0600, 9 November and 0600, 10 November, Qui Nhon-based PCF patrols furnished exfiltration patrols for operations of the First Cavalry Division 28 miles north of Qui Nhon. No significant results were noted.

At 0830 on 12 November while on routine patrol in area 3, PCF 65 sighted five beached junks 17 miles south of Qui Nhon. As the SWIFT closed to investigate the junks, it was taken under small arms fire from the tree line. Return fire by the patrol produced one secondary explosion in the tree line.

The Vietnamese Navy Coastal Group 23 investigated the area on the beach, and reported fire from the SWIFT had destroyed three sampans and damaged two. The five 15-foot junks were carrying a cargo of fish and nuoc mam (fish sauce) which was confiscated by the CG 23 personnel.

A total of 20 persons were detained by MARKET TIME units supporting the Vietnamese Army Operation BINH HAI 804 which commenced at 0800 on 14 November 30 miles north of Qui Nhon. The cumulative results of the operation, which was terminated on 18 November, were five Viet Cong killed, 29 suspected Viet Cong detained and seven known Viet Cong captured.

At 2230 on 25 November, PCF 47 detected several lights and two small radar contacts close inshore in a known hostile area 16 miles north of Nha Trang. The SWIFT closed and illuminated the area, revealing 20-25 persons in the area. Artillery fire from a nearby Republic of Korea battery was called in with unknown results.

At 1000 on 30 November, PCF 43 received heavy automatic weapons fire from the beach 15 miles north of Nha Trang. The SWIFT returned fire and cleared the area. An air strike which had been requested destroyed the enemy position. There were no hits on PCF 43.

SOUTHERN SURVEILLANCE GROUP

From 1915, 2 November until 1900, 3 November, PCF 67, USCGC POINT GAMMON, units of Coastal Group 37 and Vietnamese Sea Force ships, assisted by helicopters and a C-47 flareship, conducted Search and Rescue operations 18 miles southwest of Vung Tau for a Coastal Group 37 junk which had capsized in heavy seas enroute to its base at Tiem Ton.

All but three of the junk's crew were rescued by an accompanying junk. Despite extensive searches of the area, one Vietnamese officer and two Vietnamese enlisted men were not recovered and were presumed to have been lost in the heavy seas.

On 6 November, PCF 36 answered a call for urgent gunfire support from a reconnaissance aircraft 130 miles southwest of Vung Tau on the Cau Ma Peninsula; the aircraft was under fire from the beach in the vicinity of a sampan the aircraft was investigating. The PCF bombarded the area with 81mm mortar fire, damaging the sampan and suppressing the hostile fire.

On 7 November at 1300 while operating in an area 103 miles southwest of Vung Tau near the Ca Mau Peninsula, PCF 67 sighted two junks and closed to investigate. The junks ignored the SWIFT's siren and warning shots and continued to evade. PCF 67 took the fleeing junks under direct fire and sank both of them. Viet Cong casualties were unknown; PCF 67 suffered no casualties.

During the period 8-12 November, MARKET TIME units provided continuous exfiltration patrols in support of Operation HAYMAN, a

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sweep of Long Son Island, three and one-half miles north of Vung Tau, by the 5th Battalion, Royal Australian Regiment. One Viet Cong suspect was detained by MARKET TIME forces during the operation, while forces ashore killed eight Viet Cong, wounded four and detained 20 suspects.

At 1500 on 23 November, five PCFs conducted corral operations off Vung Tau. There were 26 detections, 22 boardings and four inspections. No suspects were detained.

At 0415 on 26 November, three PCFs and five junks from Coastal Group 32 conducted corral operations in Vung Tau Harbor. One hundred and sixteen junks were detected, 34 inspected and 82 boarded. Twenty-seven persons were detained because they had no identification cards or were suspected draft dodgers.

GULF OF THAILAND SURVEILLANCE GROUP

At 1110 on 10 November, a Coastal Group 42 patrol, operating ashore 30 miles northwest of Rach Gia, discovered a 30-foot abandoned junk covered with anti-American slogans. When the patrol was taken under fire, PCF 92, operating in the area, was called in and expended 200 rounds of .50 caliber and 100 rounds of small arms fire in support of the patrol. Fire was suppressed by the SWIFT with no casualties to friendly forces. The junk was destroyed by direct fire.

At 1820 on 13 November 94 miles south-southeast of An Thoi, USCGC POINT BANKS detected and challenged a sampan which ignored warning shots and evaded to the beach. The sampan's occupants

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fled as POINT BANKS opened fire. Small arms fire from the beach was returned with unknown effect. The cutter sustained no material or personnel casualties. The sampan was destroyed.

On 14 November at 1820, USCGC POINT GARNET detected a sampan off the tip of the Ca Mau Peninsula. When the sampan ignored all signals to halt and attempted to evade, POINT GARNET took the sampan under direct fire and destroyed it.

At 1820 on 17 November, PCF 6 answered a support request from an observation aircraft which was receiving ground fire from the mainland 57 miles southeast of An Thoi. The SWIFT answered the request with ten rounds of 81mm mortar fire, which destroyed three structures and a sampan.

At 1645 on 18 November, USCGC POINT BANKS sighted a sampan at the mouth of the Cai Lon River, south of Rach Gia. The sampan ignored hails and warning shots and evaded toward the river. An airborne spotter reported that six additional sampans and two junks were in the vicinity of the evading sampan. POINT BANKS opened fire on the boats, damaging two sampans and causing two secondary explosions. POINT BANKS received automatic weapons fire from the beach in the vicinity of the river mouth. POINT BANKS, assisted by USCGC POINT WHITE and USS WILHOITE (DER-397), returned fire, destroying one junk and triggering five secondary explosions. There were no U.S. casualties; Viet Cong casualties were undetermined.

Between 1015 and 1145 on 19 November, USCGCs POINT BANKS and POINT YOUNG and USS NEWELL (DER-322) conducted a gunfire mission

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on the Ca Mau Peninsula 68 miles southeast of An Thoi. Targets were camouflaged sampans and suspected Viet Cong positions. Two sampans and a structure were destroyed.

USCGC POINT COMFORT supported U.S. Special Forces search and destroy operations on Phu Quoc Island seven miles north of An Thoi on 26 November. Upon completion of the operation, POINT COMFORT embarked 14 refugees for transportation to Duong Dong.

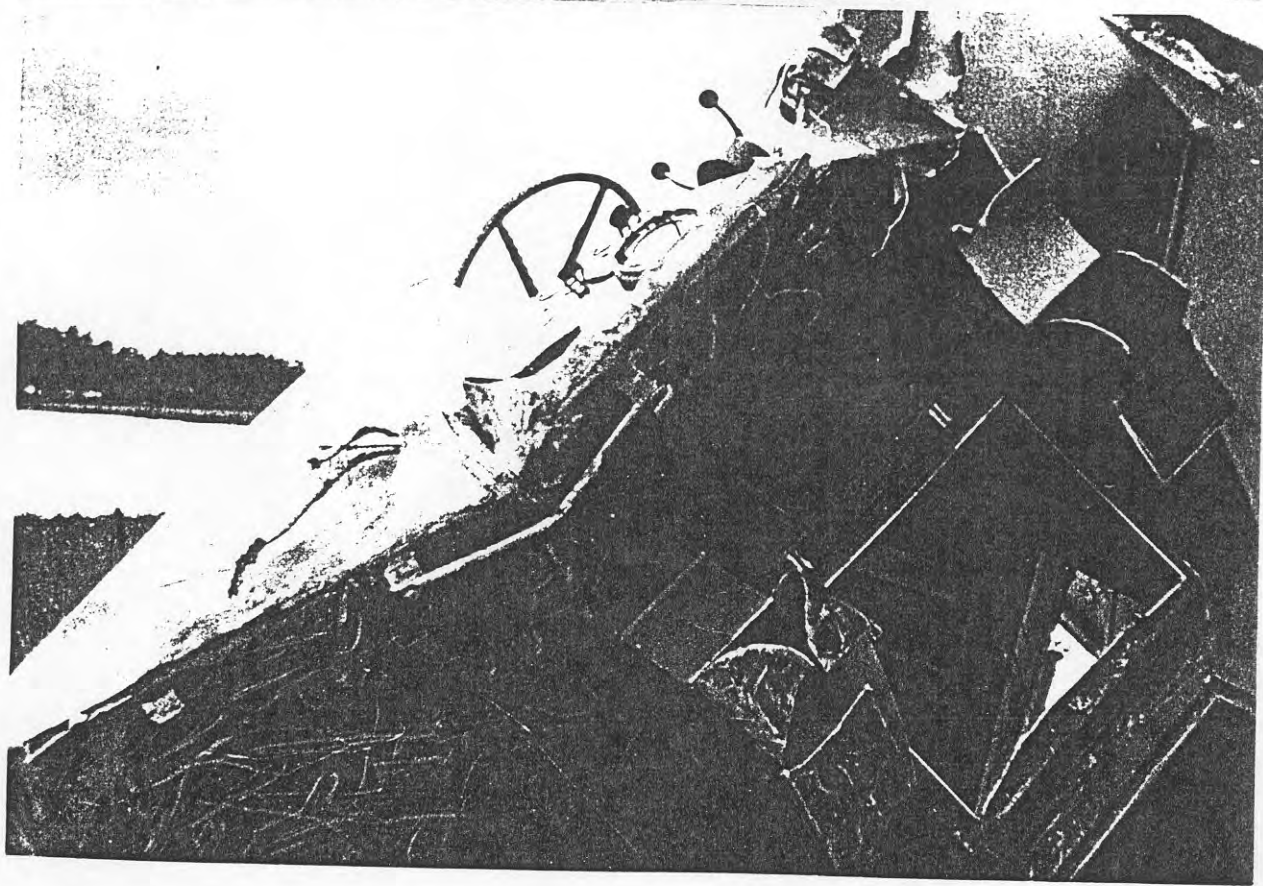
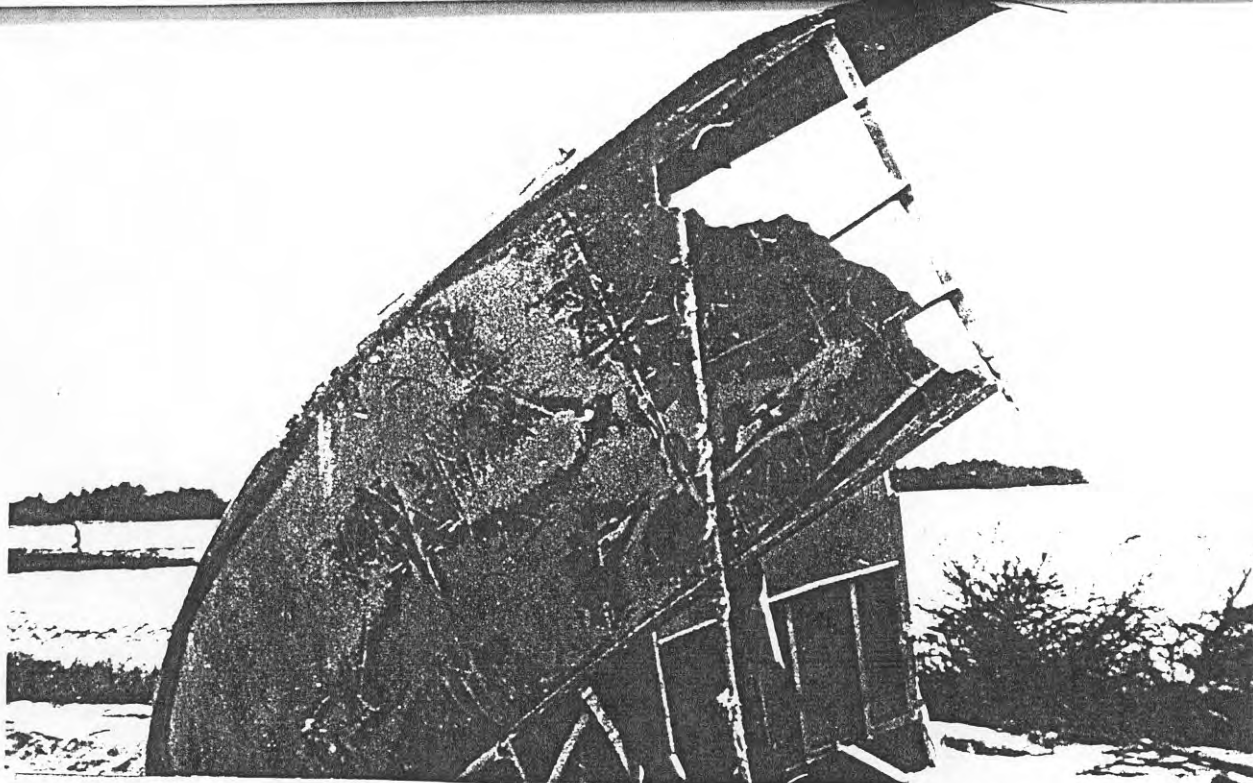
On 27 November, PCFs 92 and 93 answered a request for support from a spotter aircraft receiving hostile fire from the coast of Kien Giang 39 miles east of An Thoi. The SWIFTS delivered 59 rounds of 81mm mortar fire and 1,400 rounds of .50 caliber machine gun fire. Four structures and two large sampans were destroyed.

HARBOR DEFENSE

At 1230 on 15 November, a Mobile Inshore Undersea Warfare Surveillance (MIUWS) 23 LCPL detained a civilian junk with 17 persons aboard in Qui Nhon Harbor. The junk was carrying an unmanifested cargo of rice, soap, medicine and tobacco, as well as \$320.00 in piasters. The junk, its occupants, cargo and money were turned over to the National Police in Qui Nhon.

On 19 November, a MIUWS 23 LCPL detained two suspected draft dodgers. Subsequent interrogation by the National Police disclosed that both men were Viet Cong tax collectors.

A MIUWS 22 patrol craft at Nha Trang intercepted a junk with four males suspected of looting a barge alongside SS RUTGERS VICTORY at 0830 on 23 November. One of the men had been wounded by a sentry



PCF 77 on the beach after broaching and sinking during heavy seas