WAR DIARY

25 September 1954 (Contd)

On this date 207 military, 254 civilians, 214 vehicles, and 600 tons of cargo were loaded on LSTs; again no large ship loaded because of lack of refugees. PEMBINA at Tourane is having the difficulty in discharging cargo; five gangs worked 6\frac{1}{2} hours and unloaded only 80 tons. At such a rate 25 days will be necessary for the 2000 ton load. Moreover, PEMBINA was on loading station at Haiphong for 13 days. Counting on 6 day turn-around, 3 or 6 weeks would be required to work a payload of 2000 tons, which CTF 90 said was obviously unacceptable.

26 September 1954

At SAIGON, Indo China.

CTF 90 informed his subordinate commanders that the logistic support group, TG 92.3, leaving soon for deployment at Haiphong, will consist initially of 1 AO, 1 AF, 1 AK, 1 T-AOG, 1 YN, 1 YO, and 1 ABS, augmented by AKL shuttle runs weekly from Sagic.

CTG 90.8 reported to CTF 90 that only cargo loading took place today, but that prospects are good for dispatching passengers on 1 TAF and 1 LST tomorrow. RADM STORRS, Chief of Staff to CINC PACFLT, CTG 90.8, and MAJ. Haiphong, lunched with the American consul at Hanoi and afterward visited the refugee reception center and depots and camps. Apparently, CTG 90.8 stated, the Vietminh have halted the refugee movement in and out of Hanoi; for example, on 18 September only 517 registered, on 20th only 58, and on 23rd only 86. Conensus of opinion in Tonkin area is that no influx of refugees will result from the 10 October deadline for withdrawal from Hanoi; this turn of events has caused a downward revision of the weekly evacuee rate to 4,000 people until end of the year. Cargo loading and discharging remains unsatisfactory. PEMBINA at Tourane unloaded a mere 80 tons again. HENNEPIN at Haiphong has been on anchor 19 days awaiting berth assignment. CTF 90 urged CHMAG to exert all possible efforts to break this bottleneck.

27 September 1954

At SAIGON, Indo China.

CTG 90.8 reported that RADM STORRS was thoroughly briefed at Haiphong and attended conferences with French and Vietnamese authorities. The Admiral according to CTG 90.8, considered additional pressure at a governmental level essential to improve evacuation situation and obtain maximum use of port facilities at Haiphong.

Today 153 military, 2,764 civilians, 120 vehicles, 801 tons of cargo were loaded, most passengers in MARINE ADDER which sailed for Tourane. One LST is enroute for Nha Trang, another for Haiphong.
28 September 1954

At SAIGON, Indo China.

CTG 92.3 reported to CTG 92.3 closed out business at Tourane and departed for Haiphong. The Mayor of Tourane, in a call upon CTG 92.3, expressed his regret at the American departure and extended his highest respects to CTG 92 and his staff.

Both CULCUNDIS and GEN BRENSTER departed for Saigon today, loaded with cargo and passengers respectively. After loading today, evacuation totals were: 6,003 military, 100,339 civilians, 2,400 vehicles, and 11,427 tons of cargo.

Lack of pier space, lighterage, and stevedores preclude a large increase in offloading rates at Tourane for PEBINA and probably for the MOSKINGUM later on. CTG 90.8 will provide 1 LSD for shipment of seven French lighters from Haiphong to Tourane in an attempt to bolster unloading rates. After MOSKINGUM no more heavy cargo ships will load for Tourane because of poor unloading conditions due exposed anchorage during westerly monsoon season.

29 September 1954

At SAIGON, Indo China.

Only 176 tons of cargo were loaded at Haiphong today. The grand total of passengers now stands at 106,342. PEBINA reported 132 tons offloaded at Tourane, which means 72% increase over that offloaded during previous days.

CTG 90.8 reported that a priest who escaped from Thai Benh in a sampan believes 20,000 people in that district still wish to leave; other refugees estimate 50,000 people desire evacuation from other towns and districts dominated and terrorized by Vietminh. The Vietnamese propaganda officer at Hanoi states he does not have sufficient funds or personnel to work up an effective anti-communist campaign.

CTF 90 passed to CNO a statement made at a press conference by the new Vietnamese Minister of Information, Thai, who declared that General Minh is very capable, dynamic and popular, making him so indispensable that a more important post may be handed him soon. Thai then criticised the government for bringing too many useless people from the North and allowing the Vietminh to retain the really productive elements of the Tonkin population.

To illustrate the enormity of problems in this operation - errors pyramiding into costly delays - CTF 90.9 reported the following sequence of events occurred during recent offloading at Saigon. LST 901 first delayed beaching because no site was made available by the French. The cargo breakdown report did not indicate that equipment aboard belonged to STEM, and the
fact that STEM vehicles were aboard was not reported by the MSTS representative on the scene. Keys to STEM vehicles were misplaced so trucks had to be winched off the ship. Stevedores took three hour siesta and then left at 1800 without release, leaving the Commanding Officer without workers to make up for the delays. Last minute inclusion of Legonnaire weasels with the STEM cargo and vehicles and Vietnamese medical equipment added to unloading confusion. In view of all this the LST was unable to complete offloading before the French wanted the site. Therefore, the LST sailed for H ai phong still carrying 15 tons of STEM equipment.

Senior Shore Patrol Officer at Saigon reported arrest by French of 12 civilians who possessed concussion type hand grenades. They were discovered in a downtown area most frequented by Americans.

At SAIGON, Indo China.

CTF 90 informed CINCPACFLT of anticipated use of LSTs during October. Two LST sail for Japan on 6 October, being replaced by two LST from FEDOM on 19 and 22 October; two LST return to CONUS on 19 October, their replacements enroute from CONUS to Japan were diverted and are due to arrive at Haiphong about 26 October; one LST in Subic until 16 October for emergency repairs. The summary of LST availability is therefore as follows: 9 LST through 6 October; 7 LST through 22 October; 8 LST through 26 October; 10 LST thereafter, subject of course to further reduction of Phib Forces in FIC.

Thus far 1,217 tons have been loaded on MUSKINGUM at Haiphong; HENNEPIN began loading today. FENTRESS will load when MUSKINGUM sails for Tourane on 4 October.

CTG 90.8 visited Hanoi for final equipment and refugee check before 10 October deadline. No additional refugees have arrived in last twenty four hours. Tents at debarkation line were struck yesterday for transportation to Haiphong. French are removing air strip matting, asphalt, jerry cans and empty drums from their air fields. French have relieved Vietnamese police in Hanoi. Hanoi itself has taken on abandoned look except for white cars of Truce Commission and armed troops at every intersection.
Task Force, Group and Unit Composition of Task Force NUC14
1 September 1954

90 amphibious Group Western Pacific

90.0 Special Task Group

90.0.1 Flagship Unit
ESTES (AGC 12) (PPF)

90.0.2 Tactical Air Control Unit
TaCRON 1 (Note 1)

90.0.3 Administrative Command, amphibious Group Western Pacific

90.0.4 LCU Unit

90.0.4.1 LCU Element \( \text{\textit{ABLE}} \)
LCU 539
LCU 877
LCU 1236
LCU 1421
LCU 1446
LCU 1451

90.0.4.2 LCU Element \( \text{\textit{BAKER}} \)
LCU 533
LCU 810
LCU 1273
LCU 1374
LCU 1387
LCU 1396

CONFIDENTIAL
90.1 Reconnaissance and Control Group

90.1.1 Control Unit

KNUDSON (APD 101) (CTG 90.8 amb)
LYNCK (APD 125) (Note 2)
HESSOR (APD 127) (CTG 90.9 amb)
CAVALLARO (APD 128) (F)
BAUSH (APD 132) (Note 3)

90.1.2 Reconnaissance Unit

APD as assigned
UTD as assigned

90.2 Transport Group

90.2.1 Transport Unit BLS

CALVERT (APA 32) (F)
GOFFIN (APA 199)
TUSEF.1R (APA 210)
MONTROSE (APA 212)
INDIVIDUAL (AKA 15)
SKAGIT (AKA 105)

90.2.2 Transport Unit BAKK

BAYFIELD (APA 33) (Note 1)
MIGHTY.1L (APA 213) (Note 1)
OKINOLLA (APA 220) (Note 4)
HEN.1LD (APA 201) (Note 1)
LIGOL (AKA 54) (Note 1)
ONT.1GLES (AKA 98) (Note 1)

90.2.3 Landing Ship Dock Unit

EPPING FOREST (LSD 4)
CONSTOCK (LSD 19)
TORTUGA (LSD 26)
WHETSTONE (LSD 27) (F)

CONFIDENTIAL

2
90.3 Landing Ship Group

90.3.1 Landing Ship Unit ABLE

LST 516 (F)
LST 758
LST 772
LST 803 (Note 4)
LST 854 (Note 4)
LST 855

6 LST

90.3.2 Landing Ship Unit BAKER

LST 692 (F)
LST 822
LST 825
LST 845
LST 846
LST 1123 (Note 4)

6 LST

90.3.3 Landing Ship Unit CHARLIE

LST 887
LST 901
LST 902 (Note 4)
LST 1080
LST 1096
LST 1148 (F)

6 LST

90.3.4 LSR Unit

LSMR 412 (F) (Note 6)
LSMR 527 (Note 6)
LSMR 536 (Note 6)

3 LSMR

90.3.5 Repair Unit

ATLAS (aRL 7)
SPHINX (aRL 24)

2 aRL
90.4 Naval Beach Group

Beach Master Unit 1
Boat Unit 1
Amphibious Construction Battalion 1
Underwater Demolition Team 12 (Note 1)

90.5 Troop Training Team, Amphibious Group
Western Pacific

Troop Training Team, PHIBG/UNITA

90.6 Amphibious Task Group "BIO"
Unassigned

90.7 Amphibious Task Group B.KX
Unassigned

90.8 Embarkation Group (Note 7)
Ships assigned

90.9 Debarkation Group (Note 7)
Ships assigned

93.6 Amphibious Troops assigned
Unassigned

93.7 Amphibious Troops assigned
Unassigned

93.8 Amphibious Troops assigned
Unassigned

Note 1 - Depart WESTPAC 24 September
Note 2 - Depart WESTPAC 1L September
Note 3 - Arrive WESTPAC 29 September
Note 4 - Under Operational Control CHAsLVPF
Note 5 - Relieves CTG 90.3 upon departure CO/LSTRON 3 WESTPAC
Note 6 - Under operational control OFF 95
Note 7 - Activated for operations in accordance CTF 90 OpOrd 2-54