support missions, transporting 3,763 tons of cargo and 4,168 personnel. LSMs carried 66 per cent of the personnel and 46 per cent of the cargo; LSTs carried 23 per cent of the personnel and 45 per cent of the cargo; LCU's and other small craft carried the remaining personnel and cargo.

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS

In March, Brigade Force Alpha, composed of a headquarters and the First and Fifth Marine Battalions, continued participation with the U.S. FIRST and 25th Infantry Divisions in Operation JUNCTION CITY in Tay Ninh province.

On 8 March, the First Battalion discovered and destroyed 216 Viet Cong underground fortifications and 23 enemy structures; in addition, 2,600 pounds of rice were seized. On the following two days, a number of additional Viet Cong structures were destroyed, and quantities of weapons, documents, medical supplies and rice were captured. On 11 March, the brigade force's participation in Operation JUNCTION CITY was terminated and the force returned to Saigon.

Brigade Force Bravo, consisting of a headquarters, the Third and Fourth Marine Battalions, and Battery "C" of the artillery battalion, continued to operate in the Bong Son/Duong Lieu areas of the II Corps Tactical Zone under the operational control of the 22nd Vietnamese Army Division. On 3 March, the force began a
search and destroy operation, Operation SONG THANH 7, three miles west of Tam Quan. During the operation seven Viet Cong were killed, six were captured and eight suspects were detained. Seventeen Vietnamese marines were wounded.

Operation SONG THANH 8 on 12 March and SONG THANH 9 on 18 March, both search and destroy operations, ultimately resulted in relatively large-scale contact with the Viet Cong. On the 19th, a Viet Cong platoon firing from caves above the An Lao valley killed two marines of the Third Battalion and wounded 13. During the same day, the Second Battalion captured 19 Viet Cong and detained 16 suspects.

On 15 and 16 March, the First Battalion supported the National Police in the Saigon/Cholon area searching for and apprehending draft dodgers and deserters. On 31 March, the battalion was deployed in the Capital Military District to prevent Viet Cong activity during the promulgation, on 1 April, of the country's newly-written constitution.

The Fourth Battalion, with "A" Battery of the artillery battalion, was moved into the Rung Sat Special Zone on 11 March. HAG 22 supported the battalion as search and destroy operations were begun on 12 March and were continued through the end of the month. As of 31 March, the marines had suffered no casualties while killing eight Viet Cong and detaining 14 suspects. Also, a
number of weapons had been seized and eight sampans had been
destroyed.

The morale in the Vietnamese Marine Corps remained at a high
level and leadership in all units was considered to be excellent
throughout March. During the month, the Corps accounted for 39
eremy killed, 49 captured and 124 suspects detained. Six marines
were killed and 68 were wounded.

* * * * *
APPENDIX I

USN/VNN/VNAC STATISTICS FOR MARCH 1967

U. S. NAVY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>MARKET TIME</th>
<th>GAME WARDEN</th>
<th>STABLE DOOR</th>
<th>TOTALS</th>
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<tr>
<td>DETECTIONS</td>
<td>75,430</td>
<td>82,407</td>
<td>27,018</td>
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<td>INSPECTIONS</td>
<td>26,871</td>
<td>18,711</td>
<td>7,547</td>
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<tr>
<td>BOARDINGS</td>
<td>23,096</td>
<td>21,729</td>
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<tr>
<td>PERSONS DETAINED</td>
<td>582</td>
<td>504</td>
<td>254</td>
<td>1,340</td>
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<tr>
<td>JUNKS DETAINED</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>112</td>
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MARKET TIME Detections of Steel Hulls 1,686
Total Steel Hulls Transiting MARKET TIME Areas 787

Disposition of the 787 Steel Hulls:
- Inspected or boarded 330
- Identified as not suspicious 133
- Arrived/departed RVN ports 267
- Unknown, not suspicious 11

VIETNAMESE NAVY:

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<th>DETAINED</th>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>JUNKS</td>
<td>PEOPLE</td>
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<td>COASTAL FORCE</td>
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<tr>
<td>I CNZ</td>
<td>5,304</td>
<td>23,012</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>II CNZ</td>
<td>5,382</td>
<td>12,688</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>III CNZ</td>
<td>6,629</td>
<td>27,050</td>
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<tr>
<td>IV CNZ</td>
<td>2,683</td>
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<td>Sub-Totals</td>
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<td>PATROL SHIPS</td>
<td>197</td>
<td>983</td>
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<tr>
<td>RIVERINE ALFA</td>
<td>3,543</td>
<td>8,759</td>
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<tr>
<td>TOTALS</td>
<td>21,738</td>
<td>80,031</td>
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VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS:

VC/NVA: 39 KIA, 49 VC CAPTURED, 124 VC SUSPECTS DETAINED.

VNMC: 6 KIA, 68 WIA.
From: Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam
To: Distribution

Subject: U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam Monthly Historical Supplement; forwarding of

Enclosure (1) is forwarded.

W. H. Croom, Jr.
Flag Secretary
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<tr>
<td>APPENDIX IV Religious Activities</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In March, Operation MARKET TIME units intercepted a steel-hulled trawler attempting to infiltrate supplies into the First Coastal Zone. The trawler opened fire, was driven aground 60 miles southeast of Danang, and erupted in a disintegrating explosion.

In the Mekong Delta, units of Operation GAME WARDEN engaged in numerous fire fights along the Ham Luong River, as patrols challenged Viet Cong domination in certain areas. Throughout the Delta, patrols were faced with a new threat—improved accuracy in Viet Cong sniper fire—amid indications that the enemy had begun receiving high-powered, Russian-type sniper rifles.

In the Hau Nghia Special Zone, units of the Riverine Assault Force supported the U.S. Army's 3rd Battalion, 47th Infantry, in two operations—RIVER RAID 1 and SPEARHEAD 1. Contact with the enemy was light and sporadic.

Meanwhile, in Danang and Saigon, the respective Naval Support Activities continued to extend previous levels in processing cargo. Throughout the country, Seabee units commemorated their organization's silver anniversary in a business-as-usual manner, completing almost two million dollars worth of diverse construction.

Among the month's military civic action projects was a pacification mission conducted south of Saigon by the 5th Battalion of the Vietnamese Marine Corps. During the two-week mission, the battalion built a number of bridges and improved existing structures as requested by local inhabitants. In addition, battalion medical
APPENDIX III

U.S. NAVY RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT UNIT, VIETNAM

The U.S. Navy Research and Development Unit, Vietnam (NRDU-V) was established in 1965 and was placed under the operational control of Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam in November of 1966. Management control of the unit was and continues to be exercised by the Deputy Chief of Naval Operations (Development).

The unit's staff consists of five officers and four enlisted men. In addition, the unit has temporary duty billets for six scientific advisors; the billets are currently filled by technical representatives from various naval weapons and electronics laboratories.

The principal mission of the unit--testing and evaluating new equipment and techniques--has included experiments with contraband locators, mine-hunting sonar, body armor, air cushion vehicles and image intensifiers.

The locators are powered, wand-like devices three feet in length, designed to detect magnetic material by means of tonal differences monitored through a headset. In this manner, contraband may be discovered while probing, for example, through a fish catch in the hold of a junk. The devices have proven effective and are in use by MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN forces.

The sonar (AN/SQS-19) and body armor tests, conducted in 1966, proved less successful. The former failed to detect mines with any degree of certainty. The latter, although reasonably effective,
was not buoyant and posed a drowning hazard. A buoyant model is presently undergoing tests.

Perhaps the major project completed by NRDU-V during 1966 was the evaluation of three Personnel Air Cushion Vehicles (PACVs). During a comprehensive, three-month study, the zero-draft vehicles— which hover above the surface on a cushion of air—enjoyed limited success except in areas especially suited to their capabilities, i.e., the marshy, submerged terrain of the Plain of Reeds in Kien Phuon and Kien Tuong provinces.

The study concluded that the PACVs, as configured, were not suitable for the majority of coastal and riverine operations, and needed numerous modifications if future employments were to be meaningful. The proposed changes were aimed at a reduction in noise, and improvements in habitability, armor, armament, communications equipment, and range and endurance.

It was submitted that the recommended improvements, together with the PACVs' inherent speed and mobility, would make the vehicles useful additions to naval operations in areas inaccessible to MARKET TIME and GAME WARDEN craft, particularly over inundated regions, estuaries, mud flats and grasslands.

In March of this year NRDU-V completed an evaluation of several image intensifiers. The battery-powered instruments (equipped with viewers) are designed to detect distant, concealed objects at night by amplifying ambient moonlight and starlight. The devices tested included a Starlight Scope, which may be hand-held or mounted on an
individual weapon; a Crew-Served Weapons Sight, for use with larger
weapons; and a tripod-mounted Night Observation Device, for use
against more distant objects or during indirect fire.

The intensifiers produced excellent results. In some cases,
under optimum conditions, objects could be seen at a distance of
2,000 yards. The devices were found to be especially effective
when used in conjunction with radar for target identification.

The models tested were initially designed for use by combat
troops. The evaluation concluded that the addition of certain
modifications would significantly enhance the effectiveness of
the devices in naval operations. Accordingly, a recommendation
was made to develop a lighter, waterproof, more rugged model
specifically for naval use.
APPENDIX IV

RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

In March there were 20 chaplains assigned to U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam. In addition to conducting religious services, the chaplains held religious instruction classes, counseled individuals, delivered lectures and conducted retreats and conferences. They also continued to participate actively in civic action projects and performed a variety of collateral duties.

During the month, the chaplains travelled extensively in aircraft and boats to conduct religious services in outlying areas. As a group the chaplains logged nearly 50 hours of flying time in diverse transits. Also, the chaplains often accompanied crews on boat patrols. In one instance, a chaplain accompanied the crew of an MSB on a 14-hour minesweeping patrol in the Long Tau River.

The following tabulation is a statistical summary of religious services conducted during March.

1. Religious Services:
   a. Divine Services:
      (i) U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam Installations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Services</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>143</td>
<td>280</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>4,972</td>
<td>1,476</td>
<td>6,448</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Confirmed</td>
<td>1,662</td>
<td>749</td>
<td>2,411</td>
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</table>
(2) Other Military Installations

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Number of Services</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>2,079</td>
<td>413</td>
<td>2,492</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communed</td>
<td>1,173</td>
<td>200</td>
<td>1,373</td>
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</table>

(3) Civilian Churches

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Sunday</th>
<th>Weekday</th>
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<tr>
<td>Number of Services</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attendance</td>
<td>865</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>998</td>
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<tr>
<td>Communed</td>
<td>375</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>402</td>
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b. Religious services conducted by other than chaplains attached to NAVFORY:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Denomination</th>
<th>Chaplain</th>
<th>Civilian Clergy</th>
<th>Lay Leader</th>
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<tr>
<td>Catholic</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>2,243</td>
<td>1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Protestant</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>462</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jewish</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>23</td>
<td></td>
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c. Other religious services in which chaplains participated:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Type of Service</th>
<th>Attendance</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Easter Sunrise Service</td>
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<tr>
<td>Morning Prayer (4)</td>
<td>1,960</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lenten Liturgist (2)</td>
<td>18</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church of Christ (4)</td>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>Maundy Thursday Communion</td>
<td>10</td>
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<tr>
<td>Memorial Service (7)</td>
<td>950</td>
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* * * * *
APPENDIX II
RESUME OF MAJOR INFILTRATION ATTEMPTS BY SEA SINCE FEBRUARY 1965

Since February of 1965, there have been seven recorded attempts to resupply Viet Cong units in South Vietnam by major efforts from the sea. The infiltration attempts produced the following results:

16 Feb. 1965 - 80-foot ship detected and destroyed in Vung Ro.
31 Dec. - 80-foot ship detected off Cau Mau Peninsula, tracked to Communist Chinese waters.
10 May 1966 - 100-foot ship intercepted and destroyed, 30 miles east of Ca Mau Point.
20 June - 110-foot ship intercepted and captured, 55 miles southwest of Vung Tau.
23 Dec. - 100-foot ship detected northeast of Qui Nhon, tracked to Communist Chinese waters.
2 Jan. 1967 - 100-foot ship detected and attacked, 20 miles east of Ca Mau Point.
14 March - 100-foot ship intercepted, then destroyed (probably by its crew) 60 miles southeast of Danang.

In four of the incidents, subsequent salvage operations confirmed the presence of contraband weapons, ammunition and other material on board; in one of the incidents the ship fired on pursuing MARKET TIME units, several heavy explosions were heard after fires had started on board the ship, and the location and track indicated clandestine operations; in the remaining two incidents the ships' failure to show lights or acknowledge signals, their reversal of course after detection, their track into Communist Chinese waters, and their physical similarity to the
other ships caused them to be suspect.

All of the infiltration attempts have been made by small, ocean-going, steel-hulled, diesel-powered, cargo ships. The ships have been of 275 to 300 tons gross tonnage with approximately 100-ton cargo capacities. Five of the ships were 100 to 110 feet in length with a beam of 19 to 22 feet and a draft of six and one-half to eight feet. Two ships were 80 feet in length and similar in configuration to the other five. Three of the ships had false masts and booms and four carried nets or other cordage to simulate a trawler appearance and to camouflage their defensive armament. The estimated cruising speed of the ships was seven or eight knots, with a flank speed of ten to 12 knots.

The February and December 1965 trawlers (which were the smaller ships) had a superstructure amidships with one hold forward; the other trawlers had two holds forward and the superstructure aft. Each of the seven ships had a slightly raised bow and a poop deck. The larger ships had semi-circular cutouts where the plating for the main deck bulwark rose to the level of the pilothouse.

The trawlers had gray, blue-gray or blue-green hulls and white or cream-colored superstructures. None of the ships flew colors and no colors were found aboard those captured or salvaged after destruction. The December 1965 trawler, with the flag of Nationalist China painted on both sides of the pilothouse, was the only ship to make any attempt to reveal a national identity.

The trawlers' provisions for self-protection included 12.7-mm.
machine guns and possibly 7.62-mm. or other light machine guns.
The armament of the ships increased progressively. The first trawler had one machine gun on the port bow and one on the starboard quarter. On the fourth trawler two additional machine guns were mounted on the port and starboard sides, amidships. The sixth and seventh trawlers had several machine guns as well as heavier weapons, possibly 57-mm. recoilless rifles.

In general, the timing of the infiltration attempts would have placed the trawlers in sheltered waters at first light, thereby providing adequate light during final maneuvering. That the time of moonset figured in the planning appears likely. On five occasions moonset occurred between 1900 and 0200. Although moonset was not a factor in two of the attempts, in one of those instances the night was cloudy and rainy; the other instance occurred 1 January 1967, the final night of the New Year truce period. Three of the seven attempts were made during holiday truce periods.

Intelligence reports indicate that Viet Cong shore parties were on hand to provide pilots and to meet the infiltrating trawlers. Reportedly, the Viet Cong maintained signalling stations near the would-be unloading sites; on one occasion they tended bonfires. In addition, the shore parties fired on MARKET TIME units attacking the trawlers and on the salvage operations after the trawlers were grounded or destroyed.

Almost all of the contraband weapons recovered from the ships
were manufactured in Communist China. A few exceptions were light automatic weapons manufactured in Russia or Communist bloc countries. Each ship carried large numbers of 7.62-mm. weapons, a few side arms, varying numbers of light machine guns, submachine guns and rifles, and as many as 1,200 carbines. Also carried were several 12.7-mm. heavy machine guns and anti-aircraft guns, 57-mm. and 75-mm. recoilless rifles, 40-mm. rocket launchers and 81 and 82-mm. mortars.

Large amounts of ammunition for the weapons were discovered. The June 1966 trawler carried 222,000 rounds of 7.62-mm. ammunition and 122,000 rounds of 12.7-mm. ammunition. Among the other items on board the ships were various fragmentation grenades, hundreds of pounds of TNT and, on one occasion, 120-mm. mortar ammunition. In addition, captured supplies included medicines, plasma and surgical instruments.

The diesel engines of the captured trawlers were of East German manufacture as was most of the auxiliary equipment in the propulsion plant. All of the equipment name-plates recovered from the engineering spaces indicated that the items were manufactured in 1963, 1964, or early 1965.
Hear Admiral Norvell G. Ward, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, receives the Republic of Korea's second highest military award, the Order of Military Merit Ul Chi. Korea's Ambassador to South Vietnam, Ambassador Shin Sang Chun, makes the presentation in March at the Korean Embassy in Saigon.
Starlight Scope
teams treated almost 1,500 Vietnamese villagers.

Two major command changes occurred during the month. On 4 March, Captain Ralph Di CORI, USN, relieved Captain Clifford L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115). On 31 March, Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, relieved Captain Burton B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116).

On 14 March, Rear Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, received the Republic of Korea's second highest military award, the Order of Military Merit Ul Chi. The presentation was made by Korea's Ambassador to South Vietnam, Ambassador Shin Sang CHUL, during ceremonies at the Korean Embassy in Saigon. The award was presented in recognition of Rear Admiral WARD's role in assisting the Korean Navy Transportation Group fulfill its mission in South Vietnam.
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<td>2. The &quot;Blue Campan of the Bassac&quot;</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Trawler debris is examined</td>
<td>24A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. PCF 94 on patrol</td>
<td>32A</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Armored Troop Carrier underway off Vung Tau</td>
<td>42A</td>
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<td>6. New construction at Mha Be</td>
<td>50A</td>
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<td>7. Seabees prepare ground for a new school and church</td>
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<tr>
<td>8. Chieu Hoi leaflet</td>
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<td>9. Troops go ashore in Operation OVERLORD II</td>
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<td>11. Starlight Scope</td>
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CONFIDENTIAL
CHRONOLOGY OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS

1 Mar - PBRs kill four Viet Cong and destroy a water-taxi and two sampan in the Ham Luong River. p. 9.

2 - PBRs, Vietnamese junks and U.S. Navy helicopters kill ten Viet Cong during an engagement in the Ham Luong River; an estimated 20 more Viet Cong are wounded. p. 9.

- A PBR crewman is wounded by unusually accurate sniper fire in the first of three similar incidents during the month in which two U.S. personnel are killed and three are wounded. p. 16.

4 - CAPT E. Di CORI, USN, relieves CAPT C. L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CFP 115). p. 21.

5 - Seabees commemorate silver anniversary. p. 57.

6 - Gunnery D. G. GUELLET sacrifices his life to shield fellow PBR crewmen from the blast of a Viet Cong grenade. p. 6.

- RAG units land troops and provide blocking support during Operation OVERLOAD II. p. 79.

9 - Viet Cong employ a "claymore" mine for the first time against a U.S. minesweeper. p. 3.

10 - A C-130A1 Saigon C-47 aircraft crashes near Phan Hang, 20 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay, killing all 28 persons aboard. p. 34.

11 - A CH-46A1 gunnery is killed and another crewman is seriously wounded when the 81-mm. mortar on board PBF 39 explodes. p. 30.

- SEALs break up a Viet Cong crossing attempt in the Bassac River; four Viet Cong are killed. p. 13.

12 - The salvaged dredge, JAMAICA EAY, under tow to Vung Tai, sinks in heavy seas and high winds. p. 61.

12 - CH-46A1s units in the First Coastal Zone frustrate an infiltration attempt by a steel-hulled trawler. p. 21.

- LIEUT R. C. KNOX, CO/NAVFORV, receives Republic of Korea's second highest military award. p. iii.
15 Mar - Newly-constructed LST ramps become operational at Dong Ha, 80 miles northwest of Danang. p. 45.

16 - VNMC 5th Battalion conducts extensive pacification mission in the Nha Be district, south of Saigon. p. 67.

- A U.S. merchant ship, CONQUEROR, is struck by Viet Cong recoilless rifle fire in the Saigon channel; three personnel are wounded. p. 5.

18 - Vietnamese Marines conduct Operation SONG THANH 9, a search and destroy operation: west and northwest of Bong Son in the An Lao Valley. p. 85.

19 - Three Viet Cong are killed and their sampan is captured by PCF 94. p. 34.

20 - Riverine Assault Force craft land U.S. Army elements as Operation SPEAHHEAD I begins in the Kung Sat Special Zone. p. 43.

21 - GAME WARRIOR units and Vietnamese Regional Force troops disrupt major Viet Cong crossing attempt and subsequent outpost attack in the Co Chien River. p. 12.

22 - The "Blue U.S. Riverine" (the Bassac II) is captured by PBRs as four Viet Cong are killed during a crossing attempt. p. 15.

23 - Vietnamese LSSL 231 suffers 29 casualties (nine killed and 20 wounded) during a heavy Viet Cong recoilless rifle attack in the Ham Luong River. p. 75.

24 - The entrance channel to the new Riverine Assault Force support base at Dong Tam is completed. p. 52.

25 - Mortar fire from U.S. CGC POINT COMFORT and PCF 89 triggers three secondary explosions during a gunfire support mission. p. 29.

31 - CAPT P. K. GRAY, USN, relieves CAPT B. B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116). p. 2.
In March, units of the River Patrol Force engaged in numerous fire fights along the Ham Luong River, as Operation GAME WARDEN patrols pushed into certain areas which had long been under strong Viet Cong domination. Responding to the interdiction of movement and a resulting drop in river traffic "taxation," the Viet Cong launched a series of ambushes against the patrol boats. All together, there were 36 hostile fire incidents in the Ham Luong during the month.

Meanwhile, throughout the Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone, GAME WARDEN patrols were faced with a new threat—improved accuracy in Viet Cong sniper fire—amid indications that the enemy had begun receiving high-powered, Russian-type rifles. During the month, two FRh personnel were killed and three others wounded by such fire. In one instance, the estimated sniper range was 500 yards.

Along the Bassac River, the scene of increased activity during the latter part of the month, squads of the Delta's newly-arrived SEAL detachment ambushed enemy units on two occasions. In addition, the SEALs carried out numerous intelligence-gathering reconnaissance missions.

On 6 March, in the Mekong River, a PBR crewman sacrificed his life while protecting his shipmates and his boat from the explosion of a grenade fired by the Viet Cong.

During the month, the final two of four GAME WARDEN LST support ships arrived—USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786) and USS HUNTERDON
COUNTY (LST 838). On 27 March, GARRETT COUNTY was assigned to support River Section 543 in the Rung Sat Special Zone. On 31 March, HUNTERDON COUNTY relieved USS HARRNETT COUNTY (LST 821) at the mouth of the Co Chien River.

That day, in ceremonies held at Binh Thuy, Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, relieved Captain Burton B. WITHAM, Jr., USN, as Commander River Patrol Force (CTF 116). For his role in leading Operation CAME WARDEN through its successful formative stages, Captain WITHAM was awarded the Legion of Merit.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

Throughout the month of March, river patrols, SEAL teams, and aerial reconnaissance units in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ) engaged the enemy on numerous occasions. Most of the incidents occurred along Viet Cong lines of communications and in enemy staging and ambush areas.

On the night of 1 March, a PBR patrol intercepted a Viet Cong sampan attempting to cross the Long Tau River from the southwest bank, eight miles downstream from Nha Be. When the sampan was illuminated, its four occupants opened fire on the PBRs with small arms weapons. The PBRs quickly suppressed the fire, killing the four Viet Cong. The sampan, two individual weapons, and a quantity of documents were captured and taken to Nha Be.

On the night of 3 March, a helicopter team conducting a
"Firefly" mission destroyed one sampan and damaged three others near a Viet Cong ambush site in the Long Tau. The helicopter received light small arms fire. There were no U.S. casualties. The extent of Viet Cong personnel casualties was undetermined.

In the main channel to Saigon, the Viet Cong continued their attempts to harass and interdict patrols and merchant shipping.

On 9 March the enemy exploded a "claymore" mine for the first time at a U.S. minesweeper, seven miles southeast of Nha Be. The mine showered the MGB with shrapnel, but failed to inflict any damage.

A second unsuccessful attack with a "claymore" mine was directed against MGB 31 on 24 March, in the lower Long Tau.

On 15 March, in the same general area, Viet Cong exploded a water mine between two PBRs 200 feet apart while the boats were conducting a high-speed reconnaissance run approximately 100 feet from the river bank. The explosion jarred the PBRs and spewed water, mud, and dead fish 150 feet into the air, but neither craft was damaged.

That evening, a three-man SEAL ambush team made contact with a sampan containing three Viet Cong. The incident occurred near the east bank of the Goiap River, opposite the mouth of the Kinh to Denal. The SEALs engaged the sampan and probably killed all
three of its occupants. One Chinese Communist, carbine and a quantity of personal equipment—canteens, a machete and a blanket—were recovered from the sampan.

On the morning of 16 March, a PBR patrol in the Long Tau was ambushed by an unknown number of Viet Cong near the mouth of Don Creek. The enemy illuminated the patrol with a white flare and then opened fire with automatic weapons, B-40 rocket launchers and at least one 75-mm, recoilless rifle. The PBRs turned clear of the kill zone and were joined by a second PBR patrol from an adjacent area. The two patrols then suppressed the enemy fire. During the action, the leading boat of the first patrol received a hit which destroyed the PBR's electric battery. One crewman was wounded slightly by shell fragments. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

On the afternoon of 16 March a U.S. merchant ship, CONQUEROR, was struck by recoilless rifle fire from Viet Cong positions on the east bank of the Long Tau, three miles downstream from Nha Be. A PBR patrol came to the ship's assistance and was taken under fire. The PBR returned the fire and were joined by a spotter aircraft which attacked the enemy with 7.75-inch rockets.

The combined fire flushed three Viet Cong from their bunkers and forced them to seek refuge in a clump of trees nearby. Then a U.S. Army helicopter fire team arrived on the scene and engaged the three Viet Cong, as well as nine others who were sighted hiding in the thick grass near the ambush site. Shortly thereafter,
all enemy fire ceased. The extent of the Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

CONQUEROR sustained six hits during the engagement. One crewmember and one embarked U.S. Army military policeman suffered serious wounds; a second military policeman was wounded slightly.

On 28 March MSB 18 snagged her drag chain near the west bank of the Long Tau, eight miles southeast of Nha Be. Upon recovering the sweeping gear, 12 feet of heavy electrical wire was found fouled in the chain. The following day, two miles farther downstream, a unit of River Assault Squadron NINE discovered a top-shaped water mine floating near the bank. The mine was picked up and taken to Nha Be.

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DEITA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On the evening of 6 March a member of the crew of PBR 124 gave his life to shield his shipmates from the effects of a grenade fired by the Viet Cong. The incident occurred in the Cua Dai Channel of the Mekong River, 18 miles east of My Tho.

At the time, PBR 124 was making a high-speed run to check suspicious activity on a small island in the channel. As the PBR approached, the enemy launched a grenade from a position on the island. The forward gunner, Seaman David G. OUELLET, USN, spotted the grenade arching toward the PBR's stern. Shouting a warning to the other crewmembers, Seaman OUELLET bounded into the after section of the boat, pushed the boat captain to safety, and placed
his body in front of the grenade just as it struck the main deck and exploded. Seaman OUELLET's body absorbed most of the impact of the blast and he was mortally wounded. As a result of Seaman OUELLET's selfless act, the boat captain was only slightly wounded and the other crewmen escaped injury. The PBR sustained relatively minor damage.

On 15 March, a My Tho-based PBR patrol interdicted an attempt by three Viet Cong to cross the river in the crossing corridor near the eastern tip of Ngue Hiep Island. River Patrol Boat 98, in company with PBR 105, sighted a twin-engined sampan moving at high speed from the south bank of the river and closed to investigate. The sampan ignored hails and warning shots and continued at high speed toward the north bank, with PBR 98 in pursuit. The Viet Cong opened fire on the PBRs from several automatic weapons and small arms positions in the tree line on the north bank. At this time two more PBRs arrived and the combined PBR fire suppressed the intense enemy fire. During the action, PBRs 98 and 105 each received five hits and PBR 106 received one hit; there were no U.S. personnel casualties. The extent of Viet Cong casualties was undetermined.

After the enemy fire was suppressed an attempt was made to recover the abandoned sampan; however it sank while being towed away from the bank by a PBR.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

In March, river patrols in the Ham Luong River were in almost
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daily contact with the enemy. Intelligence reports indicated that at least two Viet Cong main force companies and one local force company were deployed against the Ham Luong patrols. All together, there were 36 fire fights during the month, most of them along a stretch of the river five to eight miles downstream from the Ben Tre Canal. Generally, the Viet Cong used heavy automatic weapons and small arms fire from well-prepared, concealed positions. On several occasions, however, the enemy employed rocket launchers and recoilless rifles against the river patrols.

On the night of 1 March, seven miles southeast of the canal, PBR 136 detected and intercepted a large, camouflaged water-taxi with two sampans in tow, after the patrol's leading boat, PBR 138, had already passed the area. Both PBRs then made a high-speed run against the water-taxi from opposite directions. As the PBRs approached, 12 uniformed Viet Cong concealed in the sampans took to the water. The PBRs opened fire, killing four of the enemy; four more were seen to fall on the river bank. The water-taxi and the two sampans were subsequently destroyed by fire from the PBRs.

The next night, in the same area, PBRs 49 and 145 intercepted a large, heavily-laden enemy junk moving eastward along the river. The leading PBR illuminated the contact at a range of 200 feet, and was taken under fire by Viet Cong in the junk. The fire was returned and the junk began evasive maneuvers. Although severely damaged, the junk made good its escape to an island in the river.

Four Vietnamese Navy junk then joined the PBR patrol in
searching for the junk and were taken under heavy automatic
weapons fire from enemy positions on the bank. The surface units
turned clear of the area and called in an air strike. A Navy
helicopter fire team arrived and conducted three firing runs under
heavy ground fire. The final run succeeded in suppressing all
enemy fire. During the four-hour engagement ten Viet Cong were
killed and an estimated 20 more were wounded. There were no
friendly casualties.

On the morning of 3 March, in the same general area, a Navy
helicopter fire team on a reconnaissance mission spotted a sampan
with five or six men aboard beached on a small island. The men
fled to a nearby cane brake and the fire team relayed the sampan's
position to a PBR patrol in the area. The patrol took the sampan
in tow and came under fire from enemy positions on both banks.
The PBRs suppressed the fire and proceeded to Ben Tre. The
sampan's contents included Viet Cong uniforms, medical supplies
and a large number of documents; among the documents were lists of
officers of the main force 261st Battalion, muster lists, financial
statements, and training and indoctrination materials.

On two occasions during the month, PBRs discovered and
destroyed large caches of material in known Viet Cong crossing
areas. On 12 March, seven miles downstream from the Ben Tre
Canal, three to four tons of Viet Cong materials were destroyed by
fire from PBRs 136 and 138; on 16 March, in the same area, the
same two boats destroyed 25 boxes and several bags of supplies on
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the south bank of the river. In the first incident, the Viet Cong attempted to remove the supplies from the bank under the cover of automatic weapons and small arms fire. No fire was received by the PBRs during the second incident.

On 23 March, in the same general area, PBRs and a Navy helicopter fire team came to the assistance of a Vietnamese landing ship (LSSL 231) under recoilless rifle attack by the Viet Cong. The enemy fire was suppressed. Nine Vietnamese were killed during the action and a U.S. advisor and 19 Vietnamese were wounded. Later in the day, the Viet Cong attacked Vietnamese craft escorting the damaged LSSL. G.W.E. VARDEN patrol boats again rendered assistance and helped suppress the enemy fire.

Operations in the Co Chien River

On 3 March, PBRs 82 and 102 were taken under small arms and automatic weapons fire while the PBRs were conducting routine search operations in the Co Chien River, 22 miles downstream from Vinh Long.

The PBRs returned the fire with .50 caliber, M-60 and high-volume grenade fire, and units of River Assault Group 23 delivered 20-mm. cannon and 81-mm. mortar fire on targets marked by PBR tracers. Then a helicopter fire team delivered three strikes on the Viet Cong positions, suppressing all enemy fire. Two Viet Cong were killed in the action, seven structures were destroyed and five structures were damaged. The helicopter strikes triggered one secondary explosion and two POL fires. There were
no friendly casualties.

On the night of 15 March, two members of a Viet Cong communications-liaison team were killed when PBRs 82 and 102 surprised two sampans standing out of a canal entrance near Gia Island. The PBRs illuminated the sampans and were immediately taken under fire by Viet Cong security forces on the bank. The patrol returned the fire and also opened up on the leading sampan. Two Viet Cong in the sampan were killed and a third occupant was seen to fall overboard. The second sampan successfully evaded up the canal. There were no U.S. casualties.

On 21 March, GAMSE WAADEN units and Regional Force troops combined to break up a major crossing attempt by at least 100 Viet Cong trying to cross from Vinh Binh province into Kien Hoa province. The troops made initial contact with the enemy as the Viet Cong started to cross the Co Chien from the mouth of the Lang River. Forced to withdraw, the Viet Cong redeployed to conduct a three-pronged attack on the Regional Force outpost. Answering a signal for assistance, a PBR patrol from River Section 513 at Vinh Long arrived on the scene at 2320 and engaged the enemy. Meanwhile, a second patrol was stationed to the west to cover crossing areas, and a third patrol and a Navy helicopter fire team approached the Viet Cong positions from downstream.

The helicopters and PBRs continued to exchange fire with the enemy until 0155, when the Viet Cong broke off the engagement and fled to the west, leaving behind three of their dead as well as a
number of rounds of 57-mm. recoilless rifle ammunition. A sweep of the area by Regional Force troops at daylight disclosed evidence that additional Viet Cong had been either killed or wounded.

Operations in the Bassac River

During the early part of the month, patrols in the Bassac River clashed several times with Viet Cong ambush units and evading enemy sampans in known crossing routes. In one encounter, on 4 March, a PFF patrol engaged an evading sampan near Hai Island; in the ensuing fire fight four Viet Cong were hit and possibly killed.

On 7 March, fire from PFFs supporting a Vietnamese outpost on the south bank of the river, near May Island, killed two Viet Cong and effectively broke up an enemy attack on the outpost. Two Vietnamese children who were wounded during the attack were evacuated by PFFs to Can Tho.

The newly-arrived Delta SEAL detachment made its initial contact with the enemy on 11 March. That night, one of the detachment's ambush squads killed four Viet Cong and broke up a crossing attempt in a canal mouth on the north bank of the river, 17 miles downstream from Tra On. The SEALs were taken under fire by small arms and automatic weapons during their withdrawal. Nearby PFFs suppressed the enemy fire and picked up the SEALs.

On the night of 13 March, two Viet Cong were killed by SEALs in an ambush on Tan Sinh Island, a frequently-used Viet Cong line of communications. The SEALs had reached the island in a SEAL
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Team Assault Boat (STAB).* At 2300, the ambush team made contact with three Viet Cong in a sampan. The SEALs destroyed the sampan and killed two and possibly all three of the enemy.

Other Viet Cong on the island then opened fire on the SEALs and the SEALs' armored LCM and the Vietnamese LSSL 228 supported the ambush team's withdrawal. During the withdrawal, Navy helicopters struck targets marked by the LCM.

While proceeding around May Island the LCM and the STAB came upon a Vietnamese outpost under attack. The LCM drove the Viet Cong back from the outpost with .50 caliber machine gun fire and then struck the enemy with 81-mm. mortar fire, which effectively broke up the attack.

On 16 March, four PBRs teamed up with units of River Assault Group (RAG) 25 and an AC-47 "Dragonship" to break up a Viet Cong ambush and outpost attack on the north bank of the river, three miles from Can Tho.

The enemy's automatic weapons fire was initially directed at a PBR towing an out-of-commission companion boat back to Binh Thuy for repairs. A second patrol joined the action as well as an AC-47 which had been supporting a nearby Vietnamese outpost. Thirty minutes after the action commenced, RAG boats arrived on the scene and relieved the PBRs. One of the PBR patrols then shifted downstream to cover crossing corridors in the event that the enemy attack was a diversion for a major crossing. No crossing

*An armed runabout powered by two 50-horsepower engines; also called a trimaran because its hull has three planing surfaces.
The "Blue Sampan of the Bassac," captured by PBRs 31 and 32 on 25 March.
materialized, and the enemy fire was suppressed after one hour of heavy fighting in which two U.S. sailors were wounded. The extent of enemy casualties was undetermined.

On 17 March, a PBR patrol came to the assistance of a Vietnamese outpost on the north side of May Island under attack by approximately 200 Viet Cong. The PBRs delivered supporting fire with their .50 caliber machine guns and M-13 grenade launchers, and then spotted for 105-mm. howitzer fire from the artillery battery at Tra On. Upon completion of the artillery fire, the PBRs made two additional firing runs, initiating two large secondary explosions and disrupting the enemy attack. A subsequent sweep by Popular Force troops revealed that sixteen Viet Cong had been killed during the engagement.

In the early afternoon of 22 March, four members of a Viet Cong political indoctrination team were killed when the sampan in which they were attempting to cross the river was intercepted by PBRs 31 and 32. The sampan ignored warning shots, attempted to evade and finally beached on the south bank of the river. Four of the occupants were killed as they attempted to escape across a mud flat. The sampan's fifth occupant was probably killed.

The sampan, which contained a number of grenades, assorted ammunition, uniform items, binoculars and a quantity of propaganda documents, was salvaged from the bank and taken to Can Tho. The 20-foot, blue-painted sampan, equipped with two nine-horsepower engines, had evaded river patrols on several previous occasions.
and had acquired the nickname, "Blue Sampan of the Bassac."

**VIET CONG SNIPER ACTIVITY**

During the month, two PBR personnel were killed and three were wounded by unusually accurate Viet Cong sniper fire. On 2 March, a crewman was hit in the leg by a round of sniper fire fired from the north bank of the Bassac River near Tra On. The estimated range was 200 yards. On 11 March, a patrol officer, LTJG D.G. KEARNEY, USN, was killed and a crewman was wounded by sniper fire while they were checking sampans near Cai Be in the Mekong River. The sniper fired from an estimated range of 150 yards. On the night of 18 March, a crewman was killed and another was wounded by a single round of sniper fire in the Long Tau channel, near the mouth of the Loi Giang River. The shot was fired from an estimated range of 500 yards on a dark night and struck the mortally wounded sailor, Seaman Apprentice W.H. DENNIS, III, USN, in the head; a bullet fragment wounded the second crewman.

An enemy document captured on 21 February in the Eung Sat Special Zone had indicated that T-10, the Viet Cong's RSSZ command, had received five sniper rifles the previous week. On 25 March, in the northeastern portion of the RSSZ, Vietnamese Marines captured an M1891/30 sniper rifle* with a 3.5-power telescopic sight. On

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*The MACV-JGS handbook, War Material Used by the Viet Cong in South Vietnam or Presumably Available to North Vietnam (February 1966) terms this weapon "...very reliable in operation as well as being a very accurate weapon. The telescopic sight...is calibrated for distances up to 1,400 meters (1,530 yds)." The handbook notes that while the basic M1891/30 rifle is no longer standard in the Russian Army, the sniper version is still in use. The weapon's effective range is 880 yards.
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27 March, two more rifles, one with mounts for a telescopic sight, were captured in the same area.

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GAME WARDEN STATISTICAL SUMMARY
March 1967

1. PBR Statistics:
   a. Total Patrols (two boats): Day 649 Night 757
   b. Total Contacts: Day 52,270 Night 10,937
   c. Total Inspected: Day 15,939 Night 2,702
   d. Total Boarded: Day 18,426 Night 3,303
   e. People Detained: 504
   f. Sampans/Junks Detained: 58
   g. Total Patrol Hours: 36,047

2. Helicopter Fire Team Statistics:
   a. Total Flight Hours: 326.4
   b. Helo Missions:
      (1) Pre-planned strikes: 16
      (2) Reaction: 27
      (3) Targets of Opportunity: 17
      (4) Support: 74

3. GAME WARDEN Totals:
   a. Fire Fights:
      (1) PBR 22
      (2) Helo 12
      (3) MSB 1
      (4) LCM 1
      (5) LCPL 2
      (6) STAB 2
   b. Sampans: Destroyed: 45 Damaged: 11 Captured: 12
   c. Structures: Destroyed: 65 Damaged: 15

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DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY GAME WARDEN UNITS

- - - - DETECTIONS
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1966   1967
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d. Huts: Destroyed: 10


f. Friendly: KIA: 4 WIA: 14

g. Friendly Battle Damage:
(1) PBR 17
(2) Helo 2
(3) MEB 2
(4) LCVP 1
(5) STAB 1

h. PBR MEDEVAC: 24

* * * * * *
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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TF 115)

On 14 March, units of Operation MARKET TIME frustrated a major infiltration attempt in the First Coastal Zone when they intercepted a steel-hulled trawler and drove the craft aground 610 miles southeast of Danang. (See Appendix II for a resume of trawler incidents since February 1965.)

During the month, the number of detections of junks and sampans by MARKET TIME units reached its highest level since September 1966. The number of inspections and boardings also rose as the Northeast Monsoon abated and improved weather conditions prevailed along much of the coastline. There were over 75,000 detections during March, including over 1,500 steel-hulled contacts. Almost one-third of the craft detected were boarded.

STABLE DOOR activity increased to a new high with the detection of over 27,000 junks and sampans; nearly one-fourth of these were boarded.

On 10 March, two members of the Coastal Surveillance Force staff were killed in an aircraft accident. LCDR D.G. BROWN, USN, Plans Officer, and LTJG C. CRAWFORD, USN, Harbor Defense/Assistant Operations Officer, died when the Air Cofac (NAVSUPPACT, Saigon) C-17, enroute to Saigon, crashed 18 miles southwest of Cam Ranh Bay. Twenty-six other persons aboard the aircraft were killed also.

At 0900 on 4 March Captain Ralph Di CORI, USN, relieved Captain Clifford L. STEWART, USN, as Commander Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 115) in a brief ceremony on board PCF 70 in Saigon harbor.
COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE OPERATIONS

March 1967

First Coastal Zone - Area 1/2
Second Coastal Zone - Area 3/4/5
Third Coastal Zone - Area 6/7
Fourth Coastal Zone - Area 8/9

LEGEND:
■ Coastal Surveillance Center
X Hostile Fire/Evasion Incident
# SAR/MEDEVAC Incident

SCALE:
0 Statute Miles 100

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During the ceremony, Admiral Norvell G. WARD, USN, Commander U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, presented Captain STEWART with the Legion of Merit for his role in developing the concepts, tactics and strategy of coastal inshore warfare.

OPERATION MARKET TIME

Trawler Incident

At 0014 on 14 March, an aircraft from Patrol Squadron 46 on the MARKET TIME northern surveillance track reported an unlighted, steel-hulled contact 40 miles east-northeast of Re Island, proceeding in a northwesterly direction. Re Island lies 67 miles southeast of Danang and 14 miles from the mainland. MARKET TIME units in the general area at the time of the sighting were USS BRISTER (DER 327), USCGC POINT ELLIS and PCFs 16 and 78. The night was clear and dark; the sea was calm.

At 0403, ten miles southeast of Re Island, BRISTER gained radar contact; the unidentified craft was now steering course 230°. About 0420 the contact changed course to 285° and appeared to be making for the mainland. At about 0430, a Patrol Squadron 4 aircraft illuminated the contact and identified it to be a steel-hulled trawler. Minutes later BRISTER, in pursuit, challenged the trawler by flashing light. Receiving no response, BRISTER fired several warning shots and directed PCF 78 and POINT ELLIS to intercept.

About 0540 PCF 78 swept close aboard the trawler and came under heavy automatic weapons fire, forcing the SWIFT boat to retire to the northeast.
TRAFFIC INCIDENT
14 MARCH 1967

LEGEND:
- TRAWLER
- USS ERISTER
- USCG POINT ELLIS
- PCF 78

SCALE (Approximate):
0 - 200 nautical miles
(Nautical Miles)

TRAFFIC TRACK (COUSE 205°, VARIOUS SPEEDS)
TRAFFIC FIRST SIGHTED 30 MILES NE OF THIS POINT

TRAFFIC OPENS FIRE ON PCF 78

NORTH