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 List III, A, B(5), C(5) (Case II)
 List IV, A, B(5), C(1), P(1), (Case II)
 List V, (Case II)
 List VI, A., B(1), R.2, (Case II), B.3, B.10(1), B.11(1)
CONTENTS

Foreword
List of Charts/Graphs/Photographs
Chronology
Coastal Surveillance Force
Operation MARKET TIME
MARKET TIME Units
MARKET TIME Statistical Summary
Operation STABLE DOOR
River Patrol Force
I CORPS River Patrol Group
Hung Sat Special Zone River Patrol Group
Delta River Patrol Group
GAME WARDEN Units
GAME WARDEN Statistical Summary
Riverine Assault Force
Riverine Assault Force Units
Task Force CLEARWATER
U. S. Naval Support Activity, Danang
U. S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon
Third Naval Construction Brigade
Military Psychological and Civic Action Operations
Salvage Operations
Communications
Organization and Command
Religious Activities
Naval Advisory Group
Vietnamese Navy
Vietnamese Marine Corps

APPENDIX I Trawler Incidents
APPENDIX II Glossary
FOREWORD

In March the enemy appeared to be deliberately avoiding contact in so far as possible. All indications pointed to probable withdrawal to regroup, re-train and resupply after their Tet Offensive. Again it became necessary to seek out the enemy and attempt to engage him before he could abandon known positions. On 22 March COMNAVFORV sent the following message to the four coastal zones intelligence officers and the Third and Fourth Riverine Area Intelligence Officers, with information copies to the three Task Force Commanders - 115, 116, and 117:

INTELLIGENCE TO OPERATIONS

IN GENERAL THE QUALITY OF INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION COMING FROM OUR REPRESENTATIVES IN THE FIELD HAS BEEN EXCELLENT AND CONTINUES TO IMPROVE. IT IS ALSO INTERESTING AND USEFUL. HOWEVER, THE PRIMARY VALUE OF INTELLIGENCE IS TO ENHANCE EFFECTIVENESS OF COMBAT OPERATIONS IN ORDER TO DEFEAT THE ENEMY. WHENEVER PRACTICABLE, THIS HEADQUARTERS ATTEMPTS TO CONVERT INTELLIGENCE INTO OPERATIONAL ACTION. IT IS DESIRED THAT YOU DO THE SAME. WHENEVER YOU HAVE GOOD HARD INFORMATION ON ENEMY INTENTIONS OR LOCATIONS GET IT TO THE NEAREST OPERATIONAL COMMANDERS IN YOUR AREA ASAP. USE YOUR INITIATIVE AND INGENUITY, PROSELYTIZING AS NECESSARY, TO STIMULATE TIMELY ACTION. YOU WILL THEN BE APPLYING INTELLIGENCE IN ITS MOST EFFECTIVE ROLE INSTEAD OF AS INTERESTING REPORTS FOR SUBSEQUENT EVALUATION AND FILING. KEEP THE INFORMATION FLOWING TO US BUT CONVERT IT TO ACTION Locally whenever possible. KEEP IN MIND THAT, WHILE IT REMAINS THE PREROGATIVE OF THE COMMANDER TO EXPLOIT INTELLIGENCE, THE INTELLIGENCE OFFICER IS OFTEN THE BEST POSITION TO STIMULATE ENTHUSIASM AND PROD THE OPERATIONAL PLANNERS INTO ACTION. THE EXTENT TO WHICH FIELD INTELLIGENCE OFFICERS CAN PROVIDE BASIS FOR COMBAT OPERATIONS, WILL REFLECT THE EFFECTIVENESS OF LIAISON AND RAPPORT WITH COMMANDERS IN YOUR AREA. REPORT INSTANCES WHERE IT HAS BEEN POSSIBLE TO TRANSLATE INTELLIGENCE TO OPERATIONS. RADM VETH SENDS.
## LIST OF CHARTS/GRAPHS/PHOTOGRAPHS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>First Coastal Zone Operations</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Second Coastal Zone Operations</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Third Coastal Zone Operations</td>
<td>8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Fourth Coastal Zone Operations</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5.</td>
<td>USS GALLOW (PGS5) on MARKET TIME patrol</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6.</td>
<td>MARKET TIME Detections, Inspections, Boardings</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7.</td>
<td>STABLE DOOR Detections, Inspections, Boardings</td>
<td>18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8.</td>
<td>Harbor Entrance Command Post (HECP) tower</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9.</td>
<td>LCPL on routine patrol</td>
<td>21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10.</td>
<td>PHRs provide escort for a Navy supply convoy</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11.</td>
<td>Rung Sat Special Zone Operations</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12.</td>
<td>My Tho River Operations</td>
<td>28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13.</td>
<td>Ham Luong River Operations</td>
<td>34</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14.</td>
<td>Co Chien River Operations</td>
<td>38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15.</td>
<td>Bassac River Operations</td>
<td>40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16.</td>
<td>SEALs set charges in the Mekong Delta</td>
<td>45</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17.</td>
<td>GAME WARDEN Detections, Inspections, Boardings</td>
<td>48</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18.</td>
<td>Infantrymen wash off mud before boarding MRB ship</td>
<td>56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19.</td>
<td>Crewmen of an ASPB return enemy fire</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20.</td>
<td>A moment of peace for a Navy boat captain</td>
<td>62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21.</td>
<td>Major ships of the Mobile Riverine Base at anchorage</td>
<td>66</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22.</td>
<td>YFU-72 crewmen line sides with small arms as the craft heads up Perfume River</td>
<td>68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23.</td>
<td>YFU with PBR escort</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24.</td>
<td>Cargo Processed at Danang</td>
<td>80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25.</td>
<td>Members of the first class of women stevedores</td>
<td>82</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26.</td>
<td>Sailors clear debris at NSA Detachment in Cua Viet</td>
<td>84</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27.</td>
<td>A UH34-D helicopter lands on flight deck of an APL</td>
<td>88</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28.</td>
<td>Aerial view of new steel bridge being constructed by NHCS 10 on Vietnam's National Route 1</td>
<td>90</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29.</td>
<td>A Seabee razes an obsolete bridge on Vietnam's Rt 9</td>
<td>93</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30.</td>
<td>Children of Sagon's Hoi Duc Anh Orphanage receive shoes donated by the Baltimore chapter of the American Legion</td>
<td>96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>31.</td>
<td>YLLC conducting salvage operations</td>
<td>102</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>32.</td>
<td>Communications Messages Processed</td>
<td>106</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>33.</td>
<td>RADM VETH, COMNAVFORV presents PUC to MINERON 11</td>
<td>109</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34.</td>
<td>Vietnamese Navyman plots course aboard USN Swift boat</td>
<td>118</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>35.</td>
<td>LDMN (VNN UDT) personnel conduct diving operations</td>
<td>120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>36.</td>
<td>Vietnamese Navy and Marine Corps Operations</td>
<td>122</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>37.</td>
<td>Junk of Coastal Group 25 conduct salvage operation</td>
<td>126</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>38.</td>
<td>LSSL 230 cruises off coast of Ba Xuyen Province for gunfire support mission</td>
<td>129</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>39.</td>
<td>Vietnamese Navy Delta Operations</td>
<td>133</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Page</td>
<td>Description</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>------</td>
<td>-------------</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40.</td>
<td>(P) Vietnamese Navy commandos take blocking and ambush positions during Operation STARDUST &quot;2&quot;.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>(P) Vietnamese river assault group personnel transit a river in South Vietnam aboard a FOM.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>42.</td>
<td>(G) Vietnamese Navy Searches and Detections.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>43.</td>
<td>(P) Enemy weapons captured during sweep operations.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>44.</td>
<td>(P) Vietnamese Navy fire-fighters extinguish fires on infiltrating enemy trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>45.</td>
<td>(P) U.S. diving team and LDNN personnel conduct salvage operations of cargo from an enemy infiltrating trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>46.</td>
<td>(P) CA MAU Class infiltration trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>47.</td>
<td>(P) LL DIEU Class infiltration trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>48.</td>
<td>(P) SA KY Class infiltration trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>49.</td>
<td>(P) HCN HEO Class infiltration trawler.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The combined efforts of U.S. Navy, Coast Guard, Army, Air Force, and Vietnamese Navy units destroyed three of the four enemy trawlers attempting to infiltrate supplies into South Vietnam. Appendix I

A Vietnamese Navy commandment was struck by a B-40 rocket and sank within 5 minutes; two VNN sailors were killed and five others wounded. p. 137

Commander Coastal Division 17 changed to the operational control of CTF 117. p. 49

Salvage Operations were conducted by patrol craft from IUWU 4 and EOD personnel from IUWUs 2 and 4 of an enemy trawler that was destroyed on 1 March. p. 22

Based on a report from the U.S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division of a concentration of a North Vietnamese Army battalion northeast of Danang, USCGC POINT CAUTION joined with USS HOLLISSER (DD788) and USS CARRONADE (FFS1) in an harassment and interdiction fire on the enemy. A ground sweep of the area revealed 84 enemy troops killed. p. 4

Lieutenant Barry W. HOOPER, USN, was killed while serving as a convoy commander assigned to Task Force CLEARWATER. p. 25

Coastal Group 12 units conducted Operation I AM SOM 189 in conjunction with USN/USMC units, one ARVN Ranger unit an infantry regiment and Popular Force (PF) troops. Forty Viet Cong were killed, eight were captured and numerous weapons seized. p. 123

After 10 days evaluation of the PACV for GAME WARDEN operations, CTF 116 reported to COMNAVFORV that the craft and the limitations imposed on it by terrain, rendered it unsuitable for GAME WARDEN operations. PACVs were returned to operational control of CTF 117, p. 25

Viet Cong tax collectors were reported 7 miles southeast of Tra On, on the southern bank of the Bassac River. PBRs landed PF troops to conduct a sweep of the area while
8 March - "Seawolves" patrolled overhead. PF troops made contact and drove the Viet Cong into a field and the "Seawolves" reacted immediately with an air strike in the area. The ground troops later found seven dead Viet Cong. p. 42

10 - An enemy artillery attack on the NSAD Cua Viet LST ramp on the Cua Viet River resulted in the ignition of 150 short-tons of staged ammunition. p. 5, 83-85

- A platoon of SEALs landed on the south bank of the My Tho River ½ miles southwest of My Tho. A local civilian informed the SEALs concerning a local communist insurgent. As the SEALs approached the house, the enemy was alerted when a dog barked, and three Viet Cong attempted to escape. They were killed by the SEALs and later identified as the hamlet security chief and two hamlet cadre. p. 30

11 - An explosion and fire at the Shell Oil Company My Khe Tank Farm in Danang destroyed a 32,000-barrel JP-4 tank. p. 23

- A QT-2PC, a new surveillance aircraft designed for silent operations and utilizing very sensitive detection devices, proved its effectiveness during an evaluation flight in providing intelligence to GAME WARDEN units. p. 23

- Two PBR patrols from RIVSEC 511 on the Bassac River detected a sampan crossing from the mainland to May Island. PBRs closed in to investigate and came under fire from an AK-47. The boats returned the fire and destroyed the sampan. When the PBRs attempted to recover the remains of the sampan they came under automatic and small-arms fire from enemy positions on both the mainland and May Island. Unable to suppress the fire the GAME WARDEN units cleared the area and a second PBR patrol arrived on the scene along with a Vietnamese Navy LSIL. After three firing runs by the PBRs and the LSIL the enemy fire was silenced. Three Navymen were wounded during the engagement while Viet Cong casualties totaled three known killed. p. 43

13 - 17 - Coastal Groups 12 and 13 conduct Operation LAM SON 194 in cooperation with two ARVN infantry battalions, the VNMC's Task Force "B" and an ARVN Ranger brigade. The combined force killed 49 Viet Cong, captured 58 others and detained 101 suspects. Numerous weapons were seized and 120 South Vietnamese civilians were liberated from Viet Cong imprisonment. p. 123
14 March - RADM K. L. VETH, USN, COMNAVFORV, presented the Presidential Unit Citation to MINERON ELEVEN Detachment ALFA. p. 109

17 - PCFs 24 and 28 conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong staging area 40 miles south of Saigon destroying 4 structures and heavily damaging 11 others. p. 10

24 - Vietnamese Navy (VNN) undertook the permanent responsibility for two additional MARKET TIME stations bringing the total of coastal surveillance stations manned by VNN ships to six. p. 3

25 - River Section 514 was activated at Nha Be. p. 49

- NSAD Tan My received 30-50 mortar rounds in the vicinity of the boat cove, fuel farm and cantonment area. The mortar attack resulted in three LCM-8 boats being damaged, several holes in the POL pipelines and minor damage to a JP-4 tank. p. 85

23 - 27 - Operation QUIET THANG 82 was conducted with RAG 28 and two ARVN infantry battalions. The force killed 103 Viet Cong and captured 7 others, along with numerous weapons. p. 135

26 - The Phu Bai Base was attacked with 174 rounds of rocket and mortar fire. As a result of the attack 5 structures were destroyed and 10 were severely damaged. The runway and adjoining taxiway sustained 11 hits during the attack. Three direct hits on the runway caused crucial holes, which were repaired in 4 hours. p. 85

- CTF 116 conducted a combined GAME WARDEN/RAG operation known as SULO DRAGON III against Tan Dinh Island. Viet Cong losses consisted of 1 killed (body count), 3 killed (probable), and 20 bunkers, 3 buildings, 4 sampans, 3 mortars, and 1 small ammunition dump destroyed. p. 14-46

26 - 27 - Operation TRUONG CONG DINH 7/SD/4 conducted by RAGs 21/33 and 23/31, ARVN infantry, Rangers and RF troops resulted in 58 enemy killed, 10 captured and numerous weapons and equipment seized. One U.S. Army officer and 9 ARVN soldiers were killed; 52 were wounded. p. 142

29 March - A Hel Chari led a SEAL platoon from Task Unit 116.3.0 to an enemy weapons cache and factory in Kien Hoa Province, about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. The cache was found in two concrete rooms, hidden beneath two houses, measuring 5 feet by 5 feet by 10 feet. This was the first known time that a concrete structure of this type had been found in the Delta. p. 35
31 March - The total strength of U. S. Naval personnel under the operational control of NAVFORV was 31,789. In addition, U. S. Navy personnel assigned to III Marine Amphibious Force was 3,865, while U. S. Coast Guard strength was 471.

*****
COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE (TASK FORCE 115)

During March units of Operation MARKET TIME and Operation STABLE DOOR detected 108,720 junks and sampans along South Vietnam's coastline and harbors; 23,848 of them were inspected and 26,262 were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 45 craft and 771 persons.

The sharp increase in Coastal Surveillance Force activity during March was attributed to the subsidence of the heavy fighting that followed the Tet Offensive and the partial relaxation of the strict curfew restrictions that were imposed in all harbors during the weeks subsequent to the Tet holidays. Unseasonably fair weather throughout the four coastal zones also contributed to the increase in routine coastal surveillance activity.

OPERATION MARKET TIME

During March MARKET TIME units detected 68,885 junks and sampans, an increase of over 40,000 from February's figures. Approximately 44 percent of the detected craft were inspected and almost 19 percent were boarded. The boardings resulted in the detention of 38 craft and 538 suspicious persons. In addition, 1,283 steel-hulled craft were detected transiting MARKET TIME areas; 44 of the steel-hulled craft were boarded.

Other MARKET TIME activity during the month included support for several ground operations; 258 naval gunfire support missions
OPERATIONS IN THE FIRST COASTAL ZONE

March 1968

A - PCF 22/22 - 30 March
B - PT CAUTION - 5 March
C - PT CAUTION - 3 March
D - PCF 27 - 5 March
E - PERSISTENT - 1 March
F - PCF 57 - 14 March
G - PCF 81 - 16-17 March

SCALE:
0
Nautical Miles
and 39 hostile fire incidents. As a result of these operations 50 enemy structures and 21 junks were destroyed. In addition, 100 Viet Cong were killed (+ 5 probable).

As of 24 March the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) had assumed full responsibility for the manning of two additional MARKET TIME patrol areas; one in the Second Coastal Zone and the other one in the Third Coastal Zone. This assumption of responsibility gave the VNN the sole responsibility for manning a total of six MARKET TIME patrol areas.

Salvage and exploitation of the infiltration trawlers destroyed during the early morning hours of 1 March continued during the month with much valuable information concerning the construction of the vessels and the composition of the cargo being gained. For additional details concerning the trawlers see Appendix I.

First Coastal Zone

During March there was a sharp increase in Operation MARKET TIME activity in the First Coastal Zone as over 26,000 junks and sampans were detected, an increase of approximately 20,000 from February's total. Over 7,300 of the detected craft were inspected and nearly 5,000 were boarded.

The weather remained good throughout the First Coastal Zone during most of the month and as a result, fishing activity and routine coastal traffic approached the level recorded prior to
the northeast monsoon season.

On the 3rd of March USCGC POINT CAUTION joined the U.S. Seventh Fleet's USS HOLLISTER (DD788) and USS CAPRONADE (IFS1) to provide harassment and interdiction fire on an area approximately 55 miles northeast of Danang where U.S. Army 1st Air Cavalry Division reported the concentration of a North Vietnamese Army battalion. A later sweep of the area by ground units revealed 84 enemy troops had been killed by the naval gunfire support ships.

On 1 March USS PERSISTENT (MSO491) discovered an abandoned junk at anchor 52 miles southeast of Danang. A thorough search of the area for personnel produced negative results. After a through inspection and complete inventory was conducted, the junk was hoisted aboard PERSISTENT for delivery to Danang for further exploitation. Items found aboard the junk included a Chinese Communist flag, a "Red Guard" arm band and numerous small items bearing Chinese characters.

During the early morning hours of 5 March, POINT CAUTION conducted a harassment and interdiction gunfire mission on an enemy area approximately 10 miles northwest of Hue. Three secondary explosions resulted from the cutter's firing but the full extent of enemy casualties was unknown.

During the evening of the same day, a Marine Combined Action Group requested that PCF 27 conduct a naval gunfire mission against
a Viet Cong propaganda team broadcasting from a position 14 miles southeast of Danang. Two directed hits by the "Swift" boats' 81-mm mortar silenced the loud-speaker but the number of enemy casualties were unknown.

On the 7th the Vietnamese Navy's PGM 619 requested the assistance of PCF 20 in conducting a naval gunfire mission against a large enemy troop concentration which was attacking the VNN's Coastal Group 16 base located approximately 5 miles east of Quang Ngai. Coastal Group 16 personnel spotted for the mission and observed many of the enemy fall but they were unable to give an accurate report of enemy casualties.

On the morning of 10 March the ammunition ramp at Cua Viet came under an enemy artillery attack. The incoming artillery rounds detonated the ammunition on the ramp and a large fire ensued. The 1st Marine AMTRAC Battalion requested assistance in coordinating the afloat effort from the Coast Guard's POINT ARDEN. PCF 81 also arrived on the scene and assisted in fighting the fire. Three of POINT ARDEN's crewmembers were wounded and the cutter sustained shrapnel and blast damage as a result of a large explosion on the ramp. The ammunition fire was subsequently brought under control with no additional casualties.

On 14 March PCF 57 detected three sampans near the coast of Cape Batangan. The "Swift" boat was unsuccessful in her attempt to
OPERATIONS IN THE SECOND COASTAL ZONE
March 1968

A - JCF 48 - 23 March
B - CAMPBELL - 13 March

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hail the sampans with loud-speakers, siren and warning shots.

Task Force BARKER authorities were contacted for clearance to fire upon the evading sampans and for the location of friendly units. As permission to fire was granted the sampans beached and the occupants fled to the nearby treeline. The beached sampans were then partially destroyed by the PCF's 61-mm mortars and .50 caliber machine-gun.

Also during the month, First Coastal Zone units supported two ground operations. On 16 and 17 March, PCF 81 provided a blocking patrol for a coastal sweep by Task Force BARKER units. On the 30th PCFs 21 and 22 provided blocking patrols for a sweep by units of the U.S. Army 1st Cavalry Division near the mouth of the Cua Viet River. Both "Swift" boats received intense automatic-weapons fire from the beach and one PCF 22 crewmember suffered a minor wound.

Second Coastal Zone

Routine MARKET TIME activity also increased sharply in the Second Coastal Zone during March. The zone's units detected over 34,000 junks and sampans during the month, an increase of nearly 20,000 from February's figure. Approximately 16,000 of the detected craft were inspected and over 4,500 were boarded. The resumption of near-normal fishing activity and coastal cargo traffic resulted in the sharp increase in routine MARKET TIME detection.
OPERATIONS IN THE THIRD COASTAL ZONE
March 1968

A - POINT LEAGUE - 6 March
B - PCF 35/39 - 25 March
C - PCF 68 - 7 March
D - PCF 103 - 23 March
E - PCF 24/28 - 17 March
F - PCF 95/PT KENNEDY - 20 March
G - PCF 95 - 30 March

SCALE:

0 = 30 Nautical Miles
On 4 March, in action that indicated that the Viet Cong intended
to continue hit-and-run harassment tactics against Qui Nhon, the MARKET
TIME base received approximately 50 rounds of automatic-weapons fire.
Enemy troops were observed on the hill behind the base and their posi-
tions were saturated with 60-mm mortar fire. A later ground patrol of
the area discovered eleven 82-mm mortar rounds and several mortar fuse
caps, but the extent of enemy personnel casualties was unknown.

On 13 March USCGC CAMPBELL (WHEC32) conducted a naval gunfire
mission against a Viet Cong staging area 22 miles northeast of Phan
Thiet. The mission, requested by the Naval Gunfire Liaison Officer
at Phan Thiet, resulted in one structure destroyed and four structures
damaged.

While on a routine MARKET TIME patrol on the 23rd, PCF 148 closed
the beach approximately 13 miles north-northeast of Nha Trang in search
of contacts. As the PCF neared the beach it received two rounds of
what appeared to be recoilless-rifle fire. The "Swift" boat immedi-
ately opened the beach to a safe distance and suppressed the hostile
fire with mortar and .50 caliber machine-gun fire. There were no
friendly casualties as a result of the hostile fire.

Third Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME activity also increased in the Third Coastal Zone
during March, as 6,170 junks and sampans were detected, an increase
of over 5,600 from February's total. Forty-eight percent of the
detected craft were inspected and nearly 23 percent were boarded. As in the past several months, MARKET TIME units in the Third Coastal Zone engaged in many hostile fire incidents and conducted numerous naval gunfire support missions.

On the 6th of March the Coast Guard's POINT LEAGUE was providing security and logistic support for a beach survey approximately 50 miles northeast of Vung Tau when the participating Underwater Demolition Team (UDT) received hostile fire from the beach. The cutter returned and suppressed the fire, killing two Viet Cong and then evacuated the UDT personnel.

PCF 68 conducted a naval gunfire mission against an enemy position 34 miles south of Saigon on 7 March. The mission, requested by Bình Dài sub-sector authorities, utilized an airborne spotter and resulted in two Viet Cong killed and one wounded, plus one structure destroyed and four damaged.

On the 17th, PCFs 24 and 68 conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong staging area 60 miles south of Saigon. Utilizing .50 caliber machine-guns and 81-mm mortars, the PCFs destroyed 4 structures and heavily damaged 11 others.

On the 20th, in response to a request from Bac Lieu sector authorities, PCF 95 and USCGC POINT KENNEDY conducted a naval gunfire mission against a reported 2 enemy platoons 57 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. Responding to corrections transmitted by an airborne spotter, the two MARKET TIME

CONFIDENTIAL 10
units left three houses and two haystacks burning and an unknown number of trenches destroyed. The extent of enemy personnel casualties were unknown.

On 23 March in response to a request from sector authorities, PCF 103 took an area 33 miles south of Saigon under fire with her 81-mm mortar. A subsequent report from sector intelligence personnel indicated that three Viet Cong were killed and four were wounded as a result of the "Swift" boat's firing. One structure was also destroyed during the mission.

While on patrol on the 30th, PCF 95 observed six Viet Cong on the beach 60 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point. With an airborne spotter transmitting adjustments and PCF 70 assisting, PCF 95 commenced fire with 81-mm mortar and .50 caliber machine guns. The "Swift" boats scored several direct hits on the bunker complex and burned four houses. The number of enemy killed was unknown.

In support of ground operations, PCFs 35 and 39 provided a seaward blocking force for an Australian Army sweep 13 miles northeast of Vung Tau on 25 March. The PCFs detained four suspicious persons from junks in the area.

Fourth Coastal Zone

MARKET TIME units in the Fourth Coastal Zone were very active during March. In addition to detecting over 6,700 junks and sampans, over 2,200 of which were inspected and 1,914 boarded, the zone's units
OPERATIONS IN THE FOURTH COASTAL ZONE
March 1968

A - PCF 73 - 6 March
B - PCF 92 - 20 March
C - PCF 49 - 5 March
D - PCF 59 - 9 March
E - ANDROSCOGGIN - 23 March
P - WINONA - 13 March
G - PCF 92 - 22 March

SCALE:

0 - 30 NAUTICAL MILES

CONFIDENTIAL

12
were involved in numerous hostile fire incidents and gunfire support missions during the month.

On the 5th, PCF 49 received a request for urgent naval gunfire support from an ARVN outpost, 41 miles northwest of Rach Gia, that was under attack. The PCF received intermittent and sporadic small-arms fire during the mission with no resulting material or personnel casualties. With an airborne spotter transmitting adjustments, the PCF suppressed the enemy fire and initiated three secondary explosions.

During the afternoon of 6 March PCF 73 was directed to an area on the north central coast of Phu Quoc Island where an Army visual reconnaissance plane had observed three camouflaged sampans. The PCF took the sampans under fire with 81-mm mortars and .50 caliber machine-gun fire and destroyed the three craft. Area fire was conducted in the immediate vicinity of the sampans and one large secondary explosion with heavy black smoke and several large fires was observed.

On 9 March PCF 59 was requested to conduct a naval gunfire mission against an enemy position 40 miles northwest of Rach Gia. The airborne spotter, who had requested the mission, reported excellent area coverage by the "Swift" boat's 81-mm mortar which destroyed 10 hootches and 2 military structures.

On the 13th, in response to a request from Army authorities at Song Ong Doc, USCOC WINONA (WHEC65) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a suspected Viet Cong battalion staging area 29 miles north-
CONFIDENTIAL

northeast of Ca Mau Point. As a result of the cutter's firing, three structures were destroyed and seven were damaged.

While attempting to close the beach to inspect sampans on the 20th, PCF 92 received hostile fire from an area 38 miles northwest of Rach Gia. A bunker complex was sighted in the area and taken under fire with .50 caliber machine-guns and 81-mm mortars but the hostile semi-automatic and automatic-weapons fire could not be suppressed.

On 21st, PCF 92 took five evading sampans under fire, 14 miles northeast of Ca Mau Point, after they ignored warning shots. The "Swift" boat destroyed two of the sampans, damaged two and captured one other. The captured sampan was turned over to U.S. Army authorities at Song Dong Dock.

On 23 March USCGC ANDROSCOGGIN (WHEC68) conducted a naval gunfire mission against a Viet Cong ammunition storage area 48 miles north-northeast of Ca Mau Point. A spotter aircraft reported that 90 percent of the cutter's 51/35 rounds were on target and assessed the gun damage at 28 structures and 2 sampans damaged, 3 Viet Cong killed and 4 wounded.

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MARKET TIME UNITS

During the month of March the Vietnamese Navy had an average of eight PCEs and two PCFs assigned daily to MARKET TIME operations. In addition, VNQN forces assigned to MARKET TIME utilized an MSC and an LCSS during portions of the month. A Royal Thai Navy PCM was also
assigned to MARKET TIME forces in the Fourth Coastal Zone throughout the
month.

C.H. BALLUF (PG85) cuts through water of the South China Sea while on MARKET
TIME patrol.

During March, aircraft from four patrol squadrons provided air sur-
veillance for Operation MARKET TIME. A detachment of patrol Squadron
TORPEDO-BOMBER (VP26) flew P3B Orions from U Tapao, Thailand. Meanwhile,
detachments from VP 2, VP 17 and VP 42 flew SP-2H Neptunes from Cam Ranh
Bay.

Throughout the month the following U.S. SEVENTH Fleet ships operated
as MARKET TIME units during the indicated inclusive dates:
**MARKET TIME STATISTICAL SUMMARY**  
March 1968

1. **U. S. Ships/Craft:**

   Daily average number of craft on patrol

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>DER</th>
<th>MSO</th>
<th>MSC</th>
<th>WPB</th>
<th>PCF</th>
<th>LST</th>
<th>PG</th>
<th>WHEC</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>14</td>
<td>37</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
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2. **U. S. Activity:**

   **TOTAL DETECTED**

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>WOOD - DAY</th>
<th>STEEL - DAY</th>
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<tr>
<td>11,645</td>
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<table>
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<tr>
<th>WOOD - NIGHT</th>
<th>STEEL - NIGHT</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>27,240</td>
<td>600</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

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DETECTIONS, INSPECTIONS, BOARDINGS BY MARKET TIME UNITS

- DETECTIONS
- INSPECTIONS
- BOARDINGS

JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN JUL AUG SEP OCT NOV DEC JAN FEB MAR APR MAY JUN

1967 1968
All STABLE DOOR units maintained normal patrols and surface surveillance posture during the month of March. Strict curfew restrictions remained in effect throughout the harbors of Vietnam during the month, thus reducing the aggregate of junks and suspicious persons detained.

During March, Operation STABLE DOOR patrols detected 39,835 junks and sampans; 3,426 of these were inspected. Of the 3,733 craft boarded, 233 persons were detained along with 36 persons.

Inshore Undersea Warfare Unit One (IUWU 1) at Vung Tau detained a total of 5 junks and 36 persons during the month. The suspects were detained for improper identification, curfew violations and suspicious actions.

On 29 March patrol craft assigned to IUWU 1 were called upon to
From the Harbor Entrance Command Post (HECP) tower, U.S. Navymen watch over the ships at anchor in Cam Ranh Bay. A 24-hour-a-day surveillance of all ships in the bay is maintained using radar as well as visual lockouts.
render assistance in the rescue of two personnel involved in the crash of an Army Mohawk aircraft in Vung Tau Bay. LCPL-33 rescued one Army aviator, the co-pilot. Unfortunately, the pilot lost his life in the accident and his body was recovered by IUMU 1's small craft the following day.

A sampan moves alongside a U.S. Navy Personnel Landing Craft (LCPL) of Operation STABLE DOOR to be inspected before entering Cam Ranh Bay. These harbor defense craft guard against possible infiltration of enemy men and supplies into the harbors of South Vietnam.
During March IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay detained a total of 20 persons and 4 junks.

On 11 March the EOD team assigned to IUWU 2 at Cam Ranh Bay was directed to proceed to Chu Lai to conduct special salvage operations on an enemy trawler which had been sunk by MARKET TIME forces. During the period 11-15 March, the team conducted search and salvage operations and recovered small amounts of enemy ordnance. The detonation resulting from the trawler's attempted self-destruction effectively destroyed the bulk of the ordnance carried.

IUWU 3 continued operations at Qui Nhon during the month and detained only one person.

On 7 March, IUWU 3 was advised by the SS AFRICAN GLADE of an explosion approximately 20 feet from her stern. Patrol craft and EOD personnel commenced a search of the immediate area with negative results.

IUWU 4 continued operations in the Nha Trang area during March. The units detained a total of 176 persons during the month.

On 2 March patrol craft from IUWU 4 and EOD personnel from IUWUs 4 and 2 were directed to proceed to an area approximately 13 miles north-northeast of the Harbor Entrance Control Point site at Nha Trang to conduct salvage operations on an enemy trawler that had been sunk by MARKET TIME forces on 1 March. During the daylight hours of 2-4 March and 6-8 March, the EOD team conducted diving operations and recovered a large amount of enemy ordnance, both within the sunken trawler and in the bottom area.

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CONFIDENTIAL 22
RIVER PATROL FORCE (Task Force 116)

The communist insurgents continued to employ rockets and automatic weapons in their attacks against PBR patrols with increased effectiveness during the month; however, the river patrol boats were not deterred from their role of interdiction of the enemy. In one 2-day period (23-25 March) in five separate incidents, scattered throughout the Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone, 3 PBR sailors were killed and 20 were wounded when their patrols were ambushed by the Viet Cong employing RPG-2 and RPG-7 rockets. GAME WARDEN units resolutely pursued the Viet Cong to exert a mounting pressure on the enemy. During 3 encounters with the communist, SEALs seized significant ordnance cache about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. Later the same morning SEALs teamed with armed Navy helicopters in the execution of an "Operation QUICK-KILL" (the employment of a quick reaction force), after a PBR patrol was fired on, netted 27 Viet Cong killed in a 3-hour engagement.

On 7 March, after a 10-day evaluation of the Patrol Air Cushion Vehicle (PACV) for GAME WARDEN operations, Commander Task Force 116 reported to Commander Naval Forces Vietnam that the mechanical unreliability of the craft and the limitations imposed on it by terrain rendered it unsuitable for employment by Task Force 116. On 2 March the three in-country PACVs were returned to the operational control of CTF 117.

On 13 March a QT-2PC, a new surveillance aircraft, designed to operate almost silently and utilizing very sensitive detection devices,
proven its effectiveness during an evaluation flight in providing intelligence to GAME WARDEN units by detecting eight large junks transiting at night on a canal in the Dung Island complex near the mouth of the Bassac River. Two PBRs from Task Unit 116.1.2 and a helicopter fire team from Task Unit 116.1.2 responded as a reaction force. The combined helicopter and PBR attack destroyed or heavily damaged all the junks.

In an enemy vulnerability study submitted to Commander, U.S. Naval Forces, Vietnam, Commander Task Force 116 (CTF 116) stated that the enemy continued to demonstrate an increased capability to employ small groups armed with automatic weapons, rockets and recoilless rifles in ambushes and as security forces across line of communications crossing corridors. The enemy firing bunkers provided relative security from PBR suppressive fire, and continual ground sweeps in the enemy areas rarely returned significant results. In view thereof, CTF 116 recommended that urgent consideration be given to the establishment of a 10 to 20 man well-trained, experienced quick-reaction force under the operational control of CTF 116.

During the month, GAME WARDEN units were involved in 151 fire fights and killed 158 of the enemy while sustaining losses of 6 Navy men killed and 61 wounded in action. Since the commencement of GAME WARDEN operations a kill ratio of 30 to 1 has been attained.

I CORPS RIVER PATROL GROUP

PBRs of River Section 521 continued to patrol the Perfume River between Tan My and Hue, inspecting indigenous craft, as well as providing escorts.
for the river convoys. In addition the patrol boats provided a waterway blocking force for U.S. Marines and U.S. Army ground operations in the Phu Vang and Phu Tu districts near Hue, bringing their guns to bear on enemy positions.

Heavily armed river patrol boats (PBRs) provide escort for a Navy supply convoy along the 9-mile stretch of the Perfume River between Tan My and Hue in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

On 5 March, Lieutenant Barry W. HOOPER, USN, of River Division 55 was killed in action while serving as a convoy commander assigned to Task Force CLEARWATER. LT HOOPER's convoy, composed of 5 LCUs and 3 LCM-8 logistical craft, 2 LCM-6 minesweepers, 2 armed LCPL patrol craft and
2 U.S. Marine Corps armed helicopters, departed Cua Viet bound for Dong Ha to deliver vital cargo to beleagured free world forces. As the convoy approached the mouth of the Hien Giang River, it was ambushed by Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces who were entrenched in heavily fortified bunkers along both banks of the river. The enemy rained a deadly hail of crossfire from heavy automatic weapons, small arms and recoilless rifles on the convoy. LT HOOPER reacted to the ambush in a swift, bold and decisive manner as he climbed to the conning area of the YFU64, on which he was embarked, and from an exposed position he effectively directed the convoy units in evading the enemy fire and returning accurate and suppressive fire at the enemy positions. For 30 minutes the battle raged and as the last unit had cleared the ambush zone, YFU64 received a direct hit in the conning area that mortally wounded LT HOOPER. As a result of his superb leadership, the convoy fought its way through to its destination with the vital supplies it carried.

RUNG SAT SPECIAL ZONE RIVER PATROL GROUP

On 20 March, when returning from a routine Long Tau River patrol, PER 42, from River Section 543, was lifted 2 to 3 feet out of the water by a possible watermine detonation 2 miles southeast of Nha Be. The boat proceeded to Nha Be after the boat began taking on water from a 6-foot split in the keel aft of the coxswains' flat. A helicopter light fire team, airborne at the time, reconnoitered both banks of the river in the vicinity of the incident with negative results. A regional force
OPERATIONS IN THE MY THO RIVER
March 1968

- PERs - 1 March
- SEALS - 10 March
- SEALS - 13 March
ambush team also landed on the scene of the incident with negative results. There were no personnel casualties sustained.

On 24 March two PBRs came under an RPG-7 rocket attack while conducting a special patrol on the Dong Tranh River 9 miles southeast of Nha Be. This was the reported area of the Viet Cong T-10 Battalion. One rocket impacted against one of the PBRs and another rocket was a near miss, exploding close astern. The PBRs commenced firing runs against the enemy firing position and on the third run the second PBR was hit by two RPG-7 rounds (one was a dud) inflicting minor wounds on the crew, while two more rounds landed close astern. With the firing position now pin-pointed the boats directed their .50 caliber fire at the enemy suppressing any further fire. As the PBRs marked the target area with .50 caliber tracers, U.S. Army and U.S. Air Force Forward Air Controllers (FAC) overhead directed 150-mm Royal Thai artillery and USAF fixed wing airstrikes onto the enemy positions. Two secondary explosions were observed. Enemy casualties were undetermined; however, seven PBR sailors, and one Vietnamese navyman received minor wounds.

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DELTA RIVER PATROL GROUP

Operations in the Mekong (My Tho) River

On 1 March, a PBR patrol operating about 7 miles northeast of Vinh Long observed two sampans that had taken evasive action. When the sampans failed to heed the patrol's warning shots to halt for inspection the PBRs opened fire. Sniper fire was received from undetermined positions; however,
no friendly casualties were sustained. The sampans were destroyed and at least three Viet Cong were killed as another river crossing was thwarted.

On 6 March, a Navy helicopter light fire team on a routine patrol in the Sa Dec area was called by the Kien Van sub-sector advisor to aid his element in contact with enemy troops 6 miles northwest of Sa Dec. The "Seawolves" received ground fire as they approached the target area and in coordination with the Vietnamese ground elements put in an air-strike. The strike routed a number of Viet Cong in trenches; however, additional enemy troops remained in a tree line north of the initial strike area. The "Seawolves" attacked the tree line, followed by a front-line attack by the ARVN troops. The Navy helicopters killed seven of the enemy and were instrumental in aiding the ground units in the capture of eight enemy troopers. There were no U.S. casualties, but one ARVN soldier was killed in the 1½ hour engagement. It was determined that the enemy had established an ambush to attack PBRs; however, the Viet Cong scheme of maneuvers was thwarted by the arrival of the ARVN.

On the evening of 10 March, a platoon of SEALs landed on the southern bank of the My Tho River 1½ miles southwest of My Tho and shortly thereafter made contact with a local Vietnamese civilian whose father had been killed by the Viet Cong. Because of his hatred for the Viet Cong, the civilian had agreed to provide information concerning the local communist insurgents. The SEALs were led to a house where there were three Viet Cong; however, as the Navymen approached, the enemy were
alerted when a dog barked. As the three communists attempted to escape the SEALs killed them. They were identified as the hamlet security chief and two hamlet cadre. The SEALs were led to another house where they captured a female identified as a Viet Cong communication liaison cadre. The female provided information relative to the location of a Viet Cong tax collector; however, a search of the area failed to produce positive results. The SEALs withdrew from the area the following morning. The identity of the civilian was not disclosed to protect this valuable source of information on which future SEAL operations could be predicated.

On 13 March, under the cover of darkness, the 7th platoon of SEAL Detachment ALFA landed about 13 miles east of My Tho, off the Cua Tien River. After the SEALs were put ashore they patrolled inland about a mile where the platoon split. Squad 7B moved to the northwest, as Squad 7A patrolled in a northeasterly direction. At 0200, 7A engaged and killed two Viet Cong. Upon hearing many voices to the east of their position, the squad evaded to the north followed by approximately 50 Viet Cong. The squad set up a perimeter defense and called for a helicopter fire team to provide overhead cover and a helicopter withdrawal. Before the helicopters arrived the squad encountered and engaged about 20 enemy troops moving in from the east. "Seawolves" put in airstrikes and the SEALs were able to withdraw by a troop lift helicopter. Meanwhile, Squad 7B also encountered about 20 Viet Cong in barrack-type structures to the west of Squad 7A. Squad 7B evaded to the south where they established
a perimeter defense to await a "Seawolf" strike and a helicopter airlift.

By 0330 all SEALs were helicopter lifted from the area leaving 16 Viet
Cong known dead behind. Four of the Navy raiders from Squad 7B and a
Vietnamese interpreter were wounded by grenade fragments during the
engagement.

On the afternoon of 24 March, units of River Section 513 were engaged
in a savage action with the enemy that claimed the lives of three PBR crew-
men and wounded five more. The boats, PBRs 33 and 99, had just completed
a medical evacuation of nine wounded and two dead Vietnamese soldiers
from an outpost on the Nha Mau Canal, about 7 miles southeast of Sa Dec.

As the boats entered a curve in the canal, leading to the Mekong River,
the Viet Cong opened up with a deadly fusillade of rocket and recoilless-
rifle fire. The first rounds hit PBR 99, the cover boat, which immediately
capsized dumping the crew and wounded Vietnamese into the canal. The boat
sank; however, the installed flotation material kept the bow above the
water. The crew swam to the opposite bank with several of the wounded
Vietnamese and proceeded to a nearby outpost where they were subsequently
recovered. Meanwhile, PBR 33, the lead boat, still under attack was the
target of numerous RPG-7 rockets. Direct hits killed the patrol officer,
Boatswain's Mate First Class George F. PROFFER, USN, and the after gunner,
Gunner's Mate Third Class Ronald R. LAKE, USN, instantly. The boat captain,
Boatswain First Class Arthur O. PRENDERGAST, USN, though mortally wounded
and intermittently losing consciousness stayed at the wheel of the boat,
to clear the attack area, until he fell. PRENDEGAST died while en route to Dong Tam for medical treatment. Four additional PBR's and a light helicopter fire team were soon on the scene and commenced providing suppressing fire against the enemy positions and aid to the wounded crewmen and stricken craft. The crippled PBR 33 was escorted to Sa Dec and later that night the sunken PBR 99 was towed from the area and subsequently refloated. Four additional PBR sailors were wounded in the battle. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

Operations in the Ham Luong River

Late on the evening of 6 March a PBR patrol intercepted a sampan with nine occupants crossing the river from the north bank about 6 miles northwest of Ben Tre. When the sampan ignored warning shots to stop for inspection the patrol boats opened fire. The occupants were seen leaping over the side as the firing continued. Five Viet Cong bodies were found later. In view of the intensity of the PBR fire it was highly suspected that the remaining four were either killed or seriously wounded. Thirty rounds of 7.62 Russian ammunition, one footlocker, six Viet Cong uniforms, documents and the engine were taken from the sampan before it was destroyed.

The next morning, about ½ mile west of Ben Tre, a PBR patrol encountered heavy automatic-weapon, small-arms and rocket fire. As the PBR sailors commenced a return fire, a B-40 rocket slammed into the after .50 caliber machine-gun of PBR 715 mortally wounding the after gunner, Engineman Third Class Daniel D. WEBB, USN, and wounding three other crewmen. The
OPERATIONS IN THE HAM LUONG RIVER

March 1968

A - PBs - 20 March
B - PBs - 7 March
C - PBs - 6 March
D - SEALs - 29 March
boat cleared the area as additional rockets exploded in the water. Enemy casualties were undetermined.

On the morning of 20 March a PBR patrol from River Section 534 detected and pursued a 28-foot sampan crossing the Ham Luong River, about 7 miles west of Ben Tre, in a known Viet Cong crossing corridor and in violation of the established curfew. Upon sighting the PBR's the sampan evaded to the south bank ignoring all warning shots. The sampan elected to exchange fire with the patrol boats rather than heed the order to stop. The PBRs opened up with their machine-guns setting the enemy craft on fire. The patrol boats closed the burning sampan and counted five dead Viet Cong. In addition six males and four female insurgents were detained. Captured was one U.S. carbine, various amounts of ammunition, approximately one pound of documents, including Viet Cong movement and personnel orders. Also seized were a number of non-descript uniforms. The sampan was destroyed and the detainees were turned over to Vietnamese authorities at Ben Tre.

In the early morning hours of 29 March a Hoi Chanh led a SEAL platoon from Task Unit 116.3.0 to a large enemy weapons cache and arms factory in Kien Hoa Province, about 10 miles south of Ben Tre. PBRs proceeded 2½ miles up a small canal off the Ham Luong River and at 0600 landed the SEALs within 100 yards of the cache. As the SEALs moved into the village they killed four Viet Cong. Sporadic small-arms fire was received throughout the operation as Navy "Seawolves," six PBRS and
The "Seawolves" killed one additional Viet Cong and the LST provided harassment and interdiction fire. The cache was found in two concrete rooms, hidden beneath two houses, measuring 6 feet by 6 feet by 10 feet, being used as a weapons factory and storage area. Captured or destroyed were the following items:

Captured
Claymore mine, 10 lb.  21
Claymore mine, 2 lb.  7
Water mine, 8 lb.  5
Water mine, 5 lb.  25
Grenade fuse  50
Blasting cap, electric  50
Mortar increments  10
120-mm locally produced rockets (of high quality)  5
Launching tube for 120-mm rocket  1
Tools, dies and taps for producing grenades  4 boxes
Ordnance documents  20 lbs.
Medical supplies  1 box
7.62 CHICOM long ammunition  6 cases
Assorted CHICOM ammunition  2 cases
German Schmeisser machine gun  3
C/S grenades  19
Rifle grenade launchers  3
CHICOM frag grenades  25
Locally produced frag grenades  7 boxes
Grenade pins and rings  1 box
Grenade spoons and strikers  2 boxes
Assorted machine tools (rocket molds)  1 box
Machine gun receiver group  1
M-1 carbine rifle  2
7.62-mm recoilless rifle w/mounts and tripods  2
Small arms primers  2 cases
Fuse lighters and caps  1 case
81-mm mortar primers  1 case
82-mm mortar fuses  3
7.62 crimped cartridges  1 box
CHICOM 7.62 carbine rifle  1
As many of the captured items as possible were loaded into the PBRs; however, low tide conditions forced the boats to withdraw before the loading was completed. The weapons factory and storage area was blown up as the SEALs withdrew at 0930.

Although there had been reports of cement being used in the Delta by the Viet Cong, this was the first time such a structure had been found.

The former enemy soldier who led the GAME WARDEN units to the enemy sits rallied to the PBRs on 27 March. He related that he had been forced to go without food for 2 to 3 days at a time because PBRs had prevented the Viet Cong from moving food supplies on the river.

He also stated that the river patrols had made it impossible for the Viet Cong to cross the river for the past 2 weeks.

**Operations in the Co Chien River**

On 6 March PBRs 138 and 119 of River Section 523, while supporting a Vietnamese troop lift to an outpost 3 miles southeast of their base at Vinh Long, came under sniper fire. The fire was returned and suppressed by the patrol which then withdrew to the Co Chien River. The boats were standing by in mid-river when suddenly from positions on a nearby island the Viet Cong commenced a fierce barrage of automatic-weapons and rocket fire. The first RPG type rocket hit the forward