NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, DANANG

The tempo of routine operations remained particularly high at Naval Support Activity (NAVSEFFACT), Danang, during April despite harassment and interdiction attempts by the enemy. A total of 92 tonnage records were established during April; 21 monthly records and 11 daily records. Most noteworthy of these records were: 519,687 short-ton monthly throughput for the combined I Corps Tactical Zone (CITZ) ports; 270,618 short-ton monthly throughput at Danang; 51,464 short-ton monthly throughput at Hué; and 49,614 short-ton monthly throughput at Long Binh.

Despite the continued population buildup in I CITZ, the overall gross supply effectiveness for Danang and Chu Lai combined increased slightly during the month to 88.5 percent as compared with 88.4 percent for March while overall net supply effectiveness remained steady at 91 percent. Supply demands during the month of April totaled 263,541, reflecting a 17.9 percent increase over the March level of 176,511 and a 33 percent increase over the February level of 192,826. The Army was the largest customer with 112,276 or 53.8 percent of the demands.

During the month, fuel transfer operations continued in both the Cua Viet and Perfume rivers despite enemy interdiction. The fuel transfer capability between Tan My and Hué was augmented in April by the addition of another AMMI barge, increasing the fuel transfer capability from Tan My to Hué to 200,000 gallons per day. A second MSTS T-4 tanker, the USNS PETULAMA (AO(T)79), arrived on station for shuttle duty on 26 April.
Fleet Air support Unit Tactical Airfield Dispensing System installation at Danang Air Base was completed and became operational on 23 April. The system has a capacity of 30,000 gallons.

At Danang's Freight Terminal, the Vietnamese labor personnel were 90 percent female at month's end as a result of attrition and the use of available males in stevedore and carpenter positions. A second female hatch team was scheduled to be hired and commence training during the first week in May.

The implementation of the Philco-Ford contracts for third country national skilled laborers for maintenance work was seriously impeded during the month by the Government of Vietnam's visa process. At month's end, a request for intervention to eliminate the long processing time had been submitted to COMNAVFORV. The desired level of effort was unattainable due to the delays in obtaining visas for the third country nationals.

Enemy harassment of NAVSUPPACT Danang's facilities continued during the month. Sniper fire incidents against exposed perimeter increased sharply during the month. Danang's transmitter site received sniper fire on 10 different occasions during April. The China Beach Public Works Center and the Cap Tien Sha ramp also received sniper fire during the month. On 30 April an explosion from an unknown source occurred close aboard the Camp Tien Sha perimeter wire. The possible enemy use of a riot control agent occurred at the transmitter site on 15 and 17 April. Before donning their gas masks, the sentries suffered watering eyes.
coughing and a burning sensation of the skin. This was Danang's first recorded incident of the possible use of riot control agent by the enemy. Harbor security craft received hostile fire on five occasions during the month. Only minor material damage resulted from the attacks and there were no personnel casualties. The harbor security forces apprehended 13 junks and nine personnel for curfew violations, sailing in restricted waters or identification discrepancies. This sharp decrease in number of apprehensions from previous months was attributed to the recent relaxation of harbor curfew hours.

NAVSUPPACT, Danang's detachment at Dong Ha received a total of three rocket/artillery attacks during April. The attacks resulted in minor damage to both river ramps and ramp equipment. The Caa Viet detachment received six rocket/artillery attacks during the month, resulting in minor damage to equipment and several huts.

At the Danang hospital, the rehabilitation of the old ward was completed, and at month's end the capacity of the hospital was 700 beds. The number of patients admitted to the Danang hospital during April totalled 1,817. Of this number received, 656 were admitted for combat injuries, 857 for various diseases, and 324 for non-combat injuries. A total of 639 persons were treated and returned to duty during the month and 655 were evacuated out of Vietnam.

At month's end the NAVSUPPACT Danang personnel level was 9,631 and the number of United States and other Free World forces supported by NAVSUPPACT was 198,634.
NAVAL SUPPORT ACTIVITY, SAIGON

On 1 April, during change of command ceremonies, conducted at the COFAT Compound, Cholon, Captain Max C. DUNCAN, USN, relieved Captain Burns W. SPORE, USN, as Commander, Naval Support Activity (COMNAVSUPPACT), Saigon. Also during the month, the Secretary of the Navy approved the Navy Unit Commendation for NAVSUPPACT, Saigon. The award was presented for exceptionally meritorious service from 16 March 1966 to 1 January 1968, in providing logistic support to U. S. Navy, U. S. Coast Guard, and Free World Naval Forces in the II, III and IV Corps areas in the Republic of Vietnam.

Although the number of enemy initiated attacks on NAVSUPPACT, Saigon facilities decreased during April, the enemy continued to make its presence known through several harassing incidents. The Dong Tam Base received harassing mortar and recoilless rifle fire on 6 and 7 April. There were no personnel or material casualties as a result of the incidents. Also on the 6th, APL-55 and an LCM-8, in company with an LCM-6 belonging to the Binh Thuy NAVSUPPACT Detachment, received several rounds of sniper fire from the north bank of the My Tho River three miles northeast of Vinh Long while escorting PBR's to Sa Dec. On the 12th a NAVSUPPACT, Saigon UH-34 helicopter was struck by ground fire while climbing out from the USS HARNEY COUNTY (LST821) approximately 13 miles southeast of Can Tho. The bullet punctured a fuel cell, penetrated the deck plating of the cabin and lodged in cargo which was being carried by the
helicopter. The helicopter landed at Tra Vinh, made emergency repairs and returned to Saigon without further incident. On the 16th a NAVSUPPACT, Saigon C-117 was struck by ground fire while climbing out of the Soc Trang Airfield. The bullet punctured the port inboard wheel well door and exited through the aft bulkhead of the wheel well. The aircraft continued on to Saigon without further incident.

The number of line items stocked by NAVSUPPACT, Saigon during April totalled 62,275. The overall net and gross supply effectiveness for the month of April were 73 percent and 62 percent respectively.

On 18 April COMUSMACV approved a IV CTZ transportation contingency plan which was designated to provide essential transport for U.S. and Vietnamese military forces, as well as the civilian population, in the event land lines of communications are severed. The plan envisions marshalling the total water lift capability, including MSTS, NAVSUPPACT, Saigon organic craft, USARV craft and Vietnamese commercial craft. It further includes transport of vital commerce from the IV CTZ to Saigon on return trips. The plan is premised on the use of barge ramps being constructed to discharge gravel in the highway construction program. Barge ramps are constructed or planned for Dong Lam, Tan An, Can Tho, Vinh Long, My Tho, Soc Trang and Sa Dec.

NAVSUPPACT, Saigon approved the final base development plan for the helicopter maintenance facility at Binh Thuy during the month. Construction has commenced and is scheduled for completion in December 1968.
completed, this facility will provide a maintenance capability for a projected total of 57 helicopters.

A cargo net of supplies goes over the side from a Navy YFR, a refrigerated harbor craft operated by NAVSUPPACT, Saigon. Alongside to receive the load is an LCM which will transfer the supplies to an Operation GAME WARDEN support ship.

Warehouse space continued to be a problem during April as the number of line items carried by NAVSUPPACT, Saigon steadily increased. The acquisition of one new warehouse during the month provided temporary relief but 40,000 square feet of additional space has been requested from the Army real estate office. Sixteen Vietnamese warehouse guards were recently
awarded the Department of the Navy meritorious Civilian Service Award for their exemplary actions during the Tet aggression.

NAVSUPPACT, Saigon's aircraft inventory at the end of April included three C-117 transports, three UH-34 helicopters and two US-2B's. The daily pre-positioning of cargo, transported to Vinh Long by C-117's for further distribution throughout the Delta via helicopters, greatly increased delivery effectiveness during the month. A total of 3,218 passengers and 475,453 pounds of cargo were airlifted by NAVSUPPACT, Saigon during April. In addition to normally scheduled operations, 113,000 pounds of construction material for the new radar site at Con Son Island and 2,500 pounds of materials and five men for the LORAC station at Buc Lieu were airlifted during the month.

NAVSUPPACT, Saigon surface craft transported 2,013 short-tons of cargo during April.

At month's end, NAVSUPPACT, Saigon's total on board personnel count was 2,873, an increase of 128 from March's figure.

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In an action that has become typical of the "fighter/builders" of the Naval Mobile Construction Battalions (MCB's) deployed in Vietnam, five Seabees of MCB 9's Detail Echo gave their lives on 31 March in a valiant effort which saved the lives of many fellow Seabees and USMC personnel. When their camp, located near Phu Bai, came under a heavy enemy mortar and recoilless rifle attack, the Seabees immediately manned an 81-mm mortar position and commenced and sustained counterfire despite the barrage of enemy shells falling near their position. The effective return fire destroyed at least two enemy gun positions and broke their attack. During a second attack, five hours later, the Seabees again manned their mortar position and even though they realized the enemy had bracketed their position with mortars, they stood their ground and, acting with concern for the welfare of the entire camp, continued to return fire until the enemy scored two direct hits on their position. The Seabees, who gave their lives in defense of the camp, were instrumental in repelling the attack, the results of which would have been much more severe had the mortar crew abandoned their position, an action they would have been justified in taking. The Seabees were determined to defend and hold the camp that they had worked so hard to build.

During the month of April overall enemy activity remained at a relatively low level, thus allowing increased progress on upgrading of the national highway system, general construction and improved shipping of
construction materials to northern I Corps Tactical Zone (CTZ). A massive logistics shipping effort was conducted throughout the month. Twenty-four hours-a-day trucking operations between Red Beach and the Danang East yard accounted for average daily receipts of 2135 short-tons of cargo and issues of 2885 short-tons of cargo. One hundred and seventy-six LCU's were loaded during the month resulting in shipment of 21,193 measurement-tons of cargo to MCB's and Marine units outside the Danang area. During the same period, three barges were also loaded resulting in the shipment of an additional 232 short-tons of piles and heavy equipment. Maximum productivity was reached on 22 April when III Marine Amphibious Force (MAF) assigned 17 LCU's to Third Naval Construction Brigade shipping. Within one and one-half days, a total of 23 LCU's were loaded and sent north from the Danang East yard. On the receiving end, Seabees of Northern I CTZ battalions expeditiously cleared the ramps allowing for immediate distribution of materials. This high pace of shipping activity continued throughout the month without curtailing normal supply and logistic support.

Among the more significant projects completed by the Seabees during the month was the C-123 airstrip at Ca Lu, which was completed on 7 April by MCB 5. Situated approximately 9 miles east of Khe Sanh on Route #9, the airfield, as a logistics staging site, was a crucial factor in the drive to relieve Khe Sanh. Construction of the airstrip, because of its location, had to progress rapidly under the ever present threat of hostile fire.

The important Phu Loc quarry/crusher facility was also completed
during the month and went into full operation. Named Camp Deshurley, it was officially dedicated on 6 April.

This is Bridge No. 5 on the Hue bypass. The bridge was completed during April by Seabee personnel of MCB-8.

Many road upgrading projects were also completed during April. Route #9 was partially widened between Dong Ha and Cam Lo, a distance of 7½ miles. On Route #1 between Dong Ha and Quang Tri, two-steel stringer bridges with a total span of 160-feet were completed and a 220-feet timber bridge was 96 percent completed by the end of the month. Seven miles of Route #1 between Dong Ha and Quang Tri were widened and were ready for rock subgrade. Construction of a 300-foot timber bridge 1 mile north of
Hue was also underway. All bridges on the Hue bypass had been completed by month's end. However, road widening could not begin until necessary real estate had been obtained. One of the five completed bridges on Col Co Road was sabotaged on 2 April but at month's end, had been replaced. Dredge sand was being utilized for filling and widening Col Co Road; work was progressing steadily and by the end of April was approximately 15 percent complete. Approximately 85 percent of Route #1 between Phu Bai and Phu Loc had also been widened by the end of the month.

The level of enemy activity and attacks involving Seabee units was lower in April than in any of the previous months of calendar-year 1968. However, harassment in the form of mortar attacks on base camps, mining incidents and sniper fire continued sporadically during the month. Six Seabees were wounded and five major pieces of equipment were damaged as a result of these attacks.

Rear Admiral William M. Heaman, CEC, USN, Commander, Construction Battalions, Pacific, visited Seabee construction sites in I CTZ during the period 24-26 April. The extensive air and road tour conducted by the admiral gave him the opportunity to observe the extensive construction effort being expended by the Seabees in I CTZ.

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MILITARY PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION OPERATIONS

With the emphasis on offensive operations by tactical units, psychological operations personnel aped these efforts with a vigorous loudspeaker broadcasting program. With the majority of programmed equipment now installed, naval units were able to reach a greater number of listeners.

Ultimately each PCF in Task Force 115 (Operation MARKET TIME) will be equipped with a 250-watt speaker and cartridge tape recorder; each PBR river section in Task Force 116 (Operation GAME WARDEN) will have one 250-watt and five 25-watt units plus a cartridge tape recorder for each unit; and in Task Force 117 (Mobile Riverine Force) there will be a total of three 250-watt units with cartridge tape recorders. In Task Force 117, tactical psychological operations, i.e., directed against enemy troops, showed a marked increased as a result of the assignment of Navy psychological operations personnel to the staff. Previously all support was provided by the U.S. Army.

In consonance with President Johnson's speech on 31 March and in keeping with policy established in Washington concerning the President's initiative and possible peace talks, a program was developed to keep the people of South Vietnam currently informed on the factual developments of the peace talk negotiations. Surface and aerial speaker broadcasts and leaflet distribution was the selected media for the dissemination of information. Targeted in the program were the VC/NVA in South Vietnam and the population living in contested areas.
During the month 1500 hours of surface and 2.5 hours of aerial broadcasts were conducted.

Since 1 January 1967, 191 Hoi Chanhs have rallied to U. S. Navy units. Many of these returnees to the side of the government willingly cooperated in the exploitation of their return by preparing tapes for broadcast and writing letters addressed to their former units for leaflet drops.

In the area of civic action naval units continued to assist the people of South Vietnam in the recovery from the destruction wrought by the Tet Offensive. Naval units voluntarily contributed $1,359,000 to the Tet Aggression Relief Project (TARP). As part of the TARP effort, NAVSUPPACT, Danang planned to assist in the construction of homes for refugees in Hue. The Medical Civic Action Program continued to become more evident as naval units resumed their pre-Tet visits to neighboring villages and hamlets.

The number of Seabee Teams in South Vietnam was increased from 13 to 14. Major emphasis was given to support of the Revolutionary Development program, with secondary emphasis on major reconstruction projects. Included were 10 projects involving the repair of 5 miles of roads. During the month the number of Vietnamese national trainees enrolled in construction skills training programs increased to 144 and over, 6,500 patients received medical treatment from Seabee corpsmen under the MEDCAP program. There was a significant increase in the help/cooperation given Seabee Teams by local GVN officials since the Tet Offensive. In the refugee hamlet of Binh Hoa repairs were made to a schoolhouse and various homes damaged by a severe
windstorm. It was most gratifying to note that Teams deployed to new
sites received excellent reception from the local authorities and that
during this reporting period there was no enemy action directed specifi-
cally against the Seabee Teams.

The men of Mobile Construction Battalion 28, located at Danang East,
completed a building at the Soa Bieu school providing facilities for an
additional 400 students. The Battalion then built a baseball diamond and
taught the boys at the school how to play the favorite American pastime.
The Seabees then organized a sanctioned Little League in the area. While
MCB-28 was actively engaged in its civic action, other Seabee battalions
likewise employed their talents and displayed their concern for the civi-
lian population by constructing schools, digging wells and improving san-
itation facilities while still performing their primary mission.

Naval Support Activity Danang completed 66 self-help projects during
the month with a gratifying 94 percent self-help labor force. In one
village near Danang the villagers established a special 24-hour guard force
to protect the village Assistance Team (VAT). This unsolicited gesture is
indicative of the high esteem that the people hold for the NAVSUPPACT civic
action personnel that compose the VAT's and who live in the villages where
they are conducting their civic action programs.

In the Saigon area, U. S. Naval advisors have expanded the tradition
that the Navy looks after its own to include their Vietnamese counterparts.
One area that was heavily damaged during the Tet Offensive was the Vietnamese
This Vietnamese child was one of many aided by a combined Vietnamese Navy/U.S. Naval Advisory Group CIVACT program after the Tet Offensive. The joint operation provided basic foodstuffs to hungry refugees.
Navy's Third Riverine Area Command Headquarters and adjacent Cua Long Naval Base, located on the Saigon River near downtown Saigon. Realizing the need, U.S. Navy advisors assigned to these units wrote their families asking for donations to aid the victims, particularly the children. Soon, packages bearing postmarks from throughout the United States began arriving containing clothing and canned foods. It was like Christmas as the children filed past the package-laden tables.

In the Can Tho area in the Delta, men of the River Patrol Force constructed a school and purchased classroom equipment and school supplies for the refugee children.

On 26 April a Vietnamese Riverine Assault Group (RAG) and PBR River Section 522 conducted the first joint RAG/PBR psychological and medical civic action operation in Vinh Long Province. Included in the operation, that visited several hamlets located about 15 miles southeast of Vinh Long, were U.S. and Vietnamese corpsmen and the Vau Tac Vu entertainment team. While the corpsmen treated the villagers, the Vietnamese entertainment team performed. Although it was reported that Viet Cong were in the area the mission was carried out despite the Viet Cong presence without incident. The GVN presence in these hamlets, which had been subjected to recent Viet Cong harassment and attack was considered to be a strong psychological victory for the GVN.

The following is a tabulation of certain civic action projects conducted during April by U.S. and Vietnamese naval forces:
**UNCLASSIFIED**

**PROGRAMS**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Program</th>
<th>Man Days</th>
<th>Expenditures (VN$)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Economic Development</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>84,396</td>
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<tr>
<td>Education</td>
<td>415</td>
<td>606,455</td>
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<tr>
<td>Social Welfare</td>
<td>1,323</td>
<td>3,728,922</td>
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<tr>
<td>Transportation</td>
<td>88</td>
<td>1,058,794</td>
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<tr>
<td>Refugee Assistance Support</td>
<td>292</td>
<td>718,134</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>TOTAL</strong></td>
<td>2,143</td>
<td><strong>6,196,701</strong></td>
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</table>

**VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS**:

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Institutes Assisted</th>
<th>Number</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hospitals/Dispensaries</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Schools</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Orphanages</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Others</td>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**INSTITUTES ASSISTED**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Number</th>
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<tr>
<td>35</td>
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<tr>
<td>39</td>
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<tr>
<td>23</td>
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<tr>
<td>59</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**PERCENT OF U. S. CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS CONDUCTED JOINTLY WITH**:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Percent</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other FWMAF</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>RVNAP</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>U. S. civilian voluntary agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average percent of self-help by VN civilians</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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SALVAGE OPERATIONS

On 1 April a Vietnamese Navy Yabuta junk attached to Coastal Group 36, carrying a cargo of cement and ammunition, flooded and sunk 3 miles west of Vung Tau. YLLC 3 (light lift craft) of Harbor Clearance Unit ONE detachment at Vung Tau with its embarked salvage team proceeded to the salvage site on 6 April and commenced salvage operations that morning.

The initial salvage survey revealed that the sunken craft was resting on its starboard side with the hull intact and its cargo of cement washed away. After recovering the junk's ammunition, divers passed lifting straps under the wreck, and the YLLC lifted the disabled boat to the water's edge. The salvage boat with the junk hogged in to the bow ramp in a capsized condition, then proceeded to Front Beach at Vung Tau where they grounded the VNN junk. After plugging the seeping seams and scuppers the craft was righted and turned over to the Vietnamese Navy.

On 29 March a U.S. Army Mohawk OV-1 aircraft of the 73rd Aviation Company crashed in Vung Tau harbor, less than one mile from the Vung Tau Airfield. A combined U.S./Australian/Vietnamese search effort immediately searched the crash area for survivors from the sunken aircraft. The co-pilot was rapidly rescued; however, the pilot's body was not found until 31 March, at which time search operations for the sunken airplane were commenced. After three days of searching, the wreckage was discovered on 3 April by units of HCU ONE near Vung Tau channel buoy number 10.

Salvage operations commenced the next day when the salvage survey
disclosed that the aircraft was lying upside down, and partially submerged in the soft-mud bottom. EOD personnel from the Royal Australian Navy Clearance Team checked the ejection seats and disarmed the one remaining seat. The salvors aboard YDB-2 rigged wire straps to the skid ring on the tail and a lift was successfully accomplished. The Mohawk aircraft came to the surface intact; however, because of severe damage to the fuselage just forward of the stabilizer a five-inch nylon safety line was rigged around the wings and fuselage.

YLLC-3 got underway and proceeded to the Delong Pier, however, during the transit the fuselage parted and the forward section of the plane sank to the bottom. The forward section was easily lifted off of the bottom and the YLLC continued to Vung Tau where the wreckage was turned over to the U. S. Army 73rd Aviation Company completing another successful salvage operation.

On 8 April a CTP 76 command helicopter from USS ESTES (AGC12) ditched at sea 6 miles west of Vung Tau Airfield. All occupants of the UH-2A aircraft were recovered unharmed. The next day salvage units from HCU-ONE at Vung Tau conducted dragging operations in the area with negative results. On 11 April local fisherman reported that the wreckage was visible near the mouth of the Soirap River.

Upon arriving at the scene the wreckage was found lying upside down in six feet of water. A survey by HCU ONE divers revealed that the aircraft was intact with one propeller blade and the tail section heavily
damaged. Wire straps were rigged for the lift, but the two initial lift attempts by an Army Chinook helicopter proved unsuccessful. A heavier U.S. Army Skycrane helicopter with greater lift capacity was brought to the site; lifted the wreckage to the surface; and then transported it to the Vung Tau Airfield.

On 25 March divers from HCU ONE Detachment from Vung Tau, working in conjunction with U.S. Navy crane YD-220 from Naval Support Activity Dong Tam attempted to raise a sunken Vietnamese Navy commandament from the bottom of the My Tho River. The VNN assault boat from RAG 21 was sunk by enemy fire on 1 February in the vicinity of My Tho, and had a 15- by 1\frac{1}{2} foot hole on the portside. The major hull damage was a result of exploding mortar rounds from the boat's magazine, where the rocket round impacted.

Due to the extensive weakening of the hull, two lifting legs pulled out; one was due to bulkhead/deck failure and the other parted because of an overloaded lifting ring. The commandament resettled in 10 feet of water, and the continuation of the salvage operation was deemed economically unfeasible by the U.S. Navy salvage chief on the scene.

On 2 April the Senior Naval Advisor, Vietnamese Navy requested that a U.S. Navy crane YD-220 be made available for a Vietnamese Navy salvage effort on the critically needed VNN commandament. After extensive planning and rigging by VNN shipyard personnel from Saigon, the second salvage effort commenced on 22 April. Utilizing a tri-sling
Vietnamese Navy salvage personnel lifted this Vietnamese commandant from the depths of the My Tho River on 22 April. The successful salvage operation followed an initial attempt to retrieve the craft on 25 March. The operation was fouled then due to an overloaded lifting ring. The commandant was sunk by enemy fire on 1 February near the city of My Tho.
device designed and fabricated at the VNN shipyard, and U. S. Navy crane YD-220, the hoisting operation was successfully culminated within two hours. The severely-damaged assault boat was taken to Dong Tam aboard the floating crane pending ultimate shipment to the VNN shipyard for a major reconstruction job.

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Communications

During the month of April, the COMNAVFORV Message Center established a new monthly high for message handling by processing a total of 118,721 messages, an increase of 8,251 messages over the March totals. This marked increase in total messages over the past two months was attributable to increased offensive operations, and additional communication guardship responsibilities coupled with the removal of MINIMIZE restrictions.

The status of Project CLARINET TACK (the use of airt-transportable contingency communication vans) remained unchanged. The AN/TRC-97A micro-wave vans, which were to be received from USAF assets in the Philippine Islands, had not yet arrived-in-country.

Project CLARINET SEAWARD (upgrading communications facilities at COMNAVFORV headquarters, the Coastal Surveillance Centers and GAME WARDEN bases) continued to show favorable progress, as the electronics inventory team completed their inventory of equipment at all sites except Nha Trang and Vung Tau. The electronics installation work at COMNAVFORV headquarters, and at month's end was making final system checks to ensure optimum operation. The installation team was scheduled to commence work at Qui Nhon on 7 May. Upon completion at Qui Nhon, the team was to complete the electronics installations at Vinh Long, Sa Dec, My Tho and Cat Lo in that order.

The beneficial occupancy date (BOD) for Nha Trang was established as 30 July, while An Thoi was expected to be ready by 31 May. The real
estate problems at Vung Tau, which evolved around the fact that Vietnamese personnel were residing in the lighthouse building that was to be used for the CLARINET SEAWARD installation, were resolved, when new living accommodations were programmed for the people to be displaced. However, a firm BOD could not be estimated until the new quarters were completed, and access to the lighthouse had been gained.

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On 1 April Captain Max C. DUNCAN, USN, assumed command of the U. S. Naval Support Activity, Saigon, in an impressive change of command ceremony in Saigon. Captain DUNCAN relieved Captain Burns A. SPORE, USN, after completing a comprehensive indoctrination tour of various naval activities and detachments in the II, III and IV Corps Tactical Zone of South Vietnam.

Two days later at the Binh Thuy GAME WARDEN base, Captain Arthur W. PRICE, USN, relieved Captain Paul N. GRAY, USN, as Commander River Patrol Force/Task Force 116. Prior to assuming command, Captain PRICE visited the Saigon headquarters of COMNAVFORV and COMNAVSUPPACT, Saigon, for a series of indoctrination briefings on U. S. Navy and Vietnamese Navy/Marine Corps operations in South Vietnam. He also visited the Coastal Surveillance Force (CTF 116) headquarters at Cam Ranh Bay; the Mobile Riverine Force (CTF 117) at Dong Tam; the Naval Support Activity, Danang, and a majority of the far-flung PBR, SEAL, minesweeper and helicopter sections and detachments of his newly acquired command.

On 1 April Major General John H. HAY, Jr., USA, Deputy Commanding General II Field Force Vietnam, Major General Nguyen Duc THANG, ARVN, Commanding General IV Corps, and Major General George S. ECKHART, USA, Senior Advisor IV Corps, visited the Mobile Riverine Base and received a briefing on the MRF concept of operations.

In colorful change of command ceremonies on 10 April at Phu Quoc
Island in the Gulf of Thailand, Commander Adrian L. LONSDALE, USCG, assumed command of the Gulf of Thailand Surveillance Group, and the duties of the Fourth Coastal Zone Naval Advisor from Commander Norman J. VENZKE, USCG.

Vice Admiral Charles K. DUNCAN, USN, Chief of Naval Personnel (center) is flanked by Captain Arthur W. PRICE, USN, COMRIVPATFOR/CTF 116 (left) and Rear Admiral Kenneth L. YOST, USN, COMNAVFORV, on his arrival at the CAMBODIAN base at Phnom Penh.

Vice Admiral Charles K. DUNCAN, USN, Chief of Naval Personnel conducted a three-day tour of the major U. S. Navy commands in South Vietnam on 17-19 April. The primary purpose of his visit to the Republic of Vietnam was to receive a general orientation and to review the naval personnel
situation in-country. Vice Admiral DUNCAN's itinerary included visits to the Coastal Surveillance Force (Operation MARKET TIME) headquarters; the River Patrol Force (Operation GAME WARDEN) and River Squadron FIVE headquarters at Binh Thuy; the Mobile Riverine Force at Dong Tam and the Naval Support Activity, Danang.

On 16 April General Harold K. JOHNSON, USA, Chief of Staff, U. S. Army, made a short visit to the MRF, where he was given an up-date briefing on current riverine operations.

On 25 April Lieutenant General Lewis W. WALT, USMC, Assistant Commandant, U. S. Marine Corps, commenced a six-day tour of various U. S. Navy and Marine Corps activities in South Vietnam. Later that day Lieutenant General WALT visited the River Patrol Force headquarters for a briefing on GAME WARDEN operations; and the Mobile Riverine Force, where he was briefed on MRF operations. The remainder of his tour was spent with U. S. Marine Corps units in the I Corps Tactical Zone.

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RELIGIOUS ACTIVITIES

"The month of April has been highlighted by the observance of our Lord's Death and Resurrection. It has indeed been sobering to realize again the extent of His work on our behalf and the fact that because He lives we too shall also live."

Within the context of war, the above message expressed by Chaplain J. Robert FIOLA (NMCB-53) was proclaimed with enthusiasm by Naval Forces, Vietnam chaplains, giving men hope, assurance and strength in the face of danger.

There were 510 religious services conducted during April. The total included 249 Sunday Services and 261 Weekday Services. Special mention must be made of the variety of divine services conducted, particularly with the advent of Easter. Chaplain James J. KILLEEN, NAVFORV Force Chaplain, celebrated Good Friday and Easter Sunday liturgies utilizing laymen. The text of the Passion of Christ was read by three men taking the role of narrator, Christ, and other individuals at each of his services held at Nha Be, NAVFORV headquarters and Saigon Cathedral. Chaplain KILLEEN said, "In each place the reading was done with great dignity, yet the personality and national background of those who spoke the words of Christ came through loud and clear. These men really lived their roles. It was drama at its best."

Sunrise service at Vung Tau, in the Delta, and Red Beach, in I Corps, were in marked contrast. Regarding the former, Chaplain Francis P. BURCHELL, Jr., (NSAS) related, "...the trumpet sounded at sunrise to usher in this
great Easter Day... As the sun rose so did the voices of 500 men in praise of the Risen Christ." At the latter, however, "Easter Sunday and sunrise services without a sunrise in a windless drizzle brought some warmth into the hearts of Christians gathered at Red Beach," stated Chaplain Carl W. ERICKSON, (NMCB-62).

Folk Masses were another highlight of the month. At NMCB-53 on Easter Day, a Folk Mass with guitar accompaniment was celebrated. The response was so great that Folk Masses were repeated the following Sunday. NAVSUPPACT Danang hospital also conducted a Folk Mass on 28 April. Chaplain Edwin V. BOHLIA explained, "The hymns used were 'Here We Are' as a processional, 'We Offer You, O'Lord' to the melody of KUMBAYA as Offertory hymn, 'Come My Brothers Praise the Lord' to the melody of 'Michael Row Your Boat Ashore' as a Communion Hymn, and 'Let Us Thank the Lord' to the melody of 'Where Have All The Flowers Gone' as a recessional."

In the course of their administering to the servicemen, the chaplains were busily involved in conducting special services, i.e., baptisms, weddings, and memorials, and civic action programs. Activities included giving money to orphanages, refugees, scholarships funds, and schools; providing building materials, medical supplies, clothing, soap, food, and school supplies; teaching English classes, giving parties for children in school and orphanages, assisting in emergency evacuations, medical aid training, showing movies, and repairing and erecting school buildings.

The time spent, expanse travelled and danger encountered in ministering
to the sick, wounded and dying can not be over-emphasized. Whether in
the field, aboard ships or boats in the rivers, or at hospitals, the
chaplains were acutely aware of the spiritual needs of the servicemen.
Typifying the demands placed on the chaplains to fulfill these needs,
Chaplain Nathan O. LOESCHA (CTF 117) reported, "The 4th of April was
the first day of an operation southeast of My Tho, a place called the
'crossroads.' I was riding a (monitor) when all the boats came
under heavy fire about 0830. Two ASPB's nosed into the monitor to
receive medical aid. The Navy corpsman and I boarded the ASPB's to
treat the wounded. The next hours were spent applying battle dressings,
giving morphine shots, carrying Army and Navy wounded to the ATCH (MEDEVAC
boat), lifting stretchers onto the dustoff helos. Many prayers were
spoken with the men; the 23rd Psalm was said many times."

Counseling included even the most casual conversations in which
the chaplains' words tended to reinforce the troubled and doubting
service men. Chaplain LOESCH summed it up when he said, "One man finds
it tough to welcome a child into his family from 12,000 miles away,
another is threatened with divorce; others have wives and families who
don't write; a few are depressed; some complain about lack of liberty;
some question our nation's involvement in Vietnam. For some, drinking
is a problem. The Chaplain lives the same life, takes the same risks,
has the same hang-ups with homesickness and fear. He learns with his
men that fear is neutral, i.e., if fear leads to distrust in God, it's
demonic; but if it leads to dependence upon God, it's redemptive."
SEARCHES AND DETentions
BY VIETNAMESE NAVY SEA, COASTAL AND RIVERINE FORCES

SEARCHES

160,000
140,000
120,000
100,000
80,000
60,000
40,000
20,000
0

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

1967 1968

--- JUNKS

--- PEOPLE

DETentions

1,200
1,100
1,000
900
800
700
600
500
400
300
200
100
0

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

1967 1968

--- PEOPLE

--- JUNKS

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP

VIETNAMESE NAVY

The personnel strength of the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) on 30 April was 17,585 officers and enlisted men; of this number 1,330 were officers, 3,284 were NCO's and 12,971 were enlisted men. The number of unauthorized absentees stood at 504, and 87 men were discharged as deserters during April.

At the Vietnamese Naval Training Center, Nha Trang, 25 men graduated from RD "A" School on 1 April, and on 27 April an additional 170 men successfully completed various class "A" schools. On 13 April, 16 members of Coastal Zone Mobile Training Teams completed 4 weeks of instructor training at the Vietnamese Naval Advanced Training Center, Saigon.

The continued high tempo of operations by Fleet Command patrol and logistic lift ships during April resulted in the non-availability of the craft for underway training. On 20 April the VNN minesweeper MSC 116 completed one week of import training at Saigon. Similarly, a patrol motor gunboat (PGM) 606 completed one week of import training on 27 April; on the 29th, a landing ship infantry large (LSIL) 330 commenced import training.

The LDNN (Vietnamese UDT) Replacement Training Class III at Vung Tau included 36 men at month's end. On 8 April, LDNN trainees captured 5 suspects carrying no identification papers in a junk and delivered them to the Vung Tau Naval Base for interrogation.
Additional formal training conducted by the VNN included the inauguration of Fleet Command Engineering Officers School on 1 April. The five week curriculum stresses plant operating procedures, preventive maintenance, and duties and responsibilities of watch standers.

In conjunction with plans for acceptance of PCF's, PBR's and LCM's (landing craft mechanized minesweepers) by the VNN, significant in-country training was conducted in April. Training of VNN crews for 6 PCF's and 8 PBR's were completed at An Thoi and Nha Be, respectively. On 3 April on-the-job training commenced for prospective LCM crews at Nha Be. On the morning of the 26th, 2 U.S. LCM's, with VNN crew embarked, and TF 116 PBR's were attacked by rocket, automatic-weapons and small arms fire while operating on the Long Tau River in the RSSZ. Return fire suppressed the enemy fire; however, one trainee was killed and 3 others were wounded in the ambush.

Fleet Command

During April the Fleet Command had a daily average of 22 ships available and maintained 15 ships on station off the coast of South Vietnam, 5 ships on river patrol, 1 ship on static defense and naval gunfire support duty, and 1 ship on the Mekong River for commercial convoy escort duty between Vung Tau and Tan Chau. Ninety-three naval gunfire support missions were fired; 2,320 junks and 9,353 persons were searched and 1 junk and 18 persons were detained in April.

Patrol craft (PC's and PCE's) were utilized in the 1st, 2nd and
3rd Naval Zones for coastal patrol and gunfire support, and PGH's provided coastal and river patrol and naval gunfire support in all four naval zones and the RSSZ. In support of a Coastal Group 23 operation near the coastal group base at Song Cau, PCE 08 delivered its 3"/50 fire, destroyed an enemy sampan, killing 2 of its occupants and wounding the third.

Landing support ships (LSSL's and LSIL's) provided patrol, gunfire support, static defense and convoy escort services in the 3rd Naval Zone, the RSSZ and the 4th Riverine area. These ships provided vital gunfire support to ground forces during the combined amphibious TRUONG CONG DINH campaign conducted in April. On many of these operations the LSSL's/LSIL's functioned as flagships and command posts. Gunfire from LSIL 328 on 26 April resulted in 2 Viet Cong killed and 1 of the enemy wounded in Vinh Long Province 5 miles east of Can Tho.

Coastal minesweepers (MSC's) in the 2nd Naval Zone on MARKET TIME station, and motor launch minesweepers (MINS's) in the Long Tau, Nha Be, Dong Nai and Saigon rivers continued to conduct their vital operations, meeting all commitments during the month.

Logistic support ships, LCM's, IST's and LCU's, conducted 42 missions this month, lifting a total of 7,020 tons of cargo and 4,385 personnel.

The VNN Supply Center, Saigon recorded a gross effectiveness of 72 percent on a total of 10,973 requests for items and a net effectiveness of 90.1 percent on 8,748 requests for items normally carried in the supply system.
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LDNN operated with U. S. Navy SEAL's in the RSSZ and Delta areas, and conducted nightly hull inspections of the ships berthed at the Port of Saigon. Twenty-five combined operations with the SEAL's accounted for 22 Viet Cong killed, 3 of the enemy wounded and 1 Viet Cong captured. On 5 April a SEAL team and LDNN conducted an ambush on 6 enemy sampans on the Van Sat River 20 miles south-southeast of Saigon. Of the 10 known occupants, 6 were killed and 2 were wounded and captured along with a quantity of ammunition, flash lights and rice.

Coastal Force

Throughout April Vietnamese coastal force employment stressed participation in offensive operations, both land and waterborne, as part of a major effort to increase allied pressure on the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army infiltrators. The coastal groups participated in 176 such operations including 20 combined operations and 45 joint operations. These operations accounted for 241 Viet Cong killed, 27 wounded, 177 captured and 346 enemy suspects detained. In the 14th Naval Zone shallow water areas of known Viet Cong operation, inaccessible to coastal group junks, were struck by personnel embarked in shallow draft skimmer boats. Kien An based personnel conducted nine operations during the month utilizing "Boston Whaler" type skimmers (16½ foot fiberglass boats).

The coastal force continued counter-infiltration sea patrols. An average of 181 junks were available each day for operations, an average of 166 were employed; coastal force units searched 43,085 junks and 142,731
persons, and detained 22 junks and 398 persons. In the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd Naval Zones, fishing junk escort and control programs were initiated. These programs have opened previously restricted fishing zones and have improved the image of the GVN to the general populace.

In the 1st Naval Zone a land sweep was conducted by Regional Force (RF) troops east of Quang Ngai, supported by 4 Coastal Group 16 units and USCGC POINT GAMMON on 2 April. One Viet Cong was killed and three others were captured as an enemy ambush on the blocking force met with the coastal group's return fire. Meanwhile, Operation QUIET THANG 3/3 combined 4 Coastal Group 16 junks and RF troops in a land sweep/river blocking operation south of the Tra Khuc River east of Quang Ngai that day. The coastal group was credited with killing 1 Viet Cong and capturing 9 of the aggressors.

At 1655 on 7 April, a command junks and a Yabuta junk of Coastal Group 15 were mined while anchored near their base at Hoi An. The blast split the Yabuta and blew one-third of the command junk away; both craft sank immediately. One VNN sailor was killed and three others were wounded in the explosion. Subsequent investigation indicated that a time detonated mine consisting of plastic explosives had been placed on the river bottom between the bows of the junks.

On the 7th and 8th of April, Coastal Group 12 junks, 3 PF Platoons and 2 USMC Platoons conducted Operation LE QUANG THANH 1 in the Phu Vang sub-sector, across the bay from Hue. As the blocking force, the coastal
group craft killed 4 Viet Cong and captured 23 suspects evading the area.

The next day, LE QUANG THANH 2, a Coastal Group 12 area sweep of the northern Phy Vang sub-sector, yielded 4 Viet Cong captured and 10 more suspects detained. Later that day the ambush team rounded up 5 of the enemy in the same area and took 7 Viet Cong suspects. Operation LE QUANG THANH 3 on 12 April consisted of 2 Coastal Group 12 junks; 2 Viet Cong suspects and 2 draft dodgers were detained in the same area as the 2 previous operations.

Coastal Group 11 and the U. S. 1st Marine AMTRAC Battalion units participated in a cordon and search operation 10 miles north of Quang Tri on 14 April. As the coastal group craft provided a blocking force, a landing party sweep, conducted by 45 coastal group personnel and Marine elements, netted 5 Viet Cong killed, 5 of the enemy captured and 19 suspects detained.

On 15 April, Coastal Group 16 personnel observed an explosion east of the Co Luy base, near the junction of the Ve and Phu Tho rivers in Quang Ngai Province. A coastal group reaction force embarked in 3 junks and proceeded to the vicinity of the incident. The reaction force conducted reconnaissance by fire and subsequently conducted a sweep in a nearby hamlet. At the scene of the incident, the reaction force recovered the body of a VNN seaman attached to CO 16. An intelligence specialist, this man had been conducting a mission in the hamlet under the guise of a released Viet Cong suspect. His mission was compromised and he was captured by 5 armed Viet Cong. Before he could be disarmed, he heroically
pulled the pin of a hand grenade, killing himself and 3 Viet Cong and wounding 2 others. One of the wounded escaped, the second was caught and subsequently died of his wounds. Additionally, the reaction force captured one .38 caliber pistol, 3 grenades and several documents and detained 8 enemy suspects.

From 16 through 18 April Operation QUYET THANG 37/G and 38/G renewed the offensive east of Quang Ngai and consisted of Coastal Group 16 units, ARVN and RF troops. The two operations resulted in 9 Viet Cong guerrillas captured and 3 additional suspects detained; ARVN forces suffered 6 killed and 16 wounded during the attempt to route the Viet Cong from the area. Similarly, Operation LE QUAN THANH 4, 5 and 6 with units of Coastal Group 12 continued to seek out the enemy in the Phu Vang sub-sector on 17, 18 and 20 April, respectively. Six draft dodgers were apprehended on the 17th, while on the 18th, 6 enemy suspects were brought in for interrogation, and 13 more suspects were captured on the 20th.

An ambush team, responding to an intelligence report, set out on 19 April in search of two Viet Cong companies which were believed to have grouped for a strike against the Coastal Group 13 base. The search, Operation VINH HIEN 5, was conducted by a combined PF and Coastal Group 13 platoon in Vinh Loc sub-sector, northwest of the coastal group base. The platoon made contact with an estimated Viet Cong company. Gunfire support was provided by 3 TF 115 "Swift" boats, a 155-mm artillery battery and the coastal group base. After contact had been broken, the sweeping force
uncovered 15 Viet Cong bodies and captured one of the insurgents and a quantity of weapons and ammunition.

Combined Operation LAM SON 214 was conducted from 19 through 22 April; an area search south of Phy Vang and Huong Thuy sub-sectors by 3 junks of Coastal Group 12, an ARVN reconnaissance company, an ARVN special forces company and a USMC company. Forty Viet Cong were killed in the action while 10 others were captured and 8 suspects were detained. Friendly forces suffered 9 ARVN killed and 21 wounded.

On 21 April, two patrol junks of Coastal Group 13 discovered a Viet Cong tax collection team in Cau Hai Bay, 8 miles southeast of Phy Bai. The Viet Cong were engaged, their junk sunk, and 2 members of the tax collection team were killed. One Viet Cong, a French sub-machine gun, a Russian sub-machine gun, a carbine, several grenades and ammunition, and a tax record book were captured.

A Viet Cong sapper unit was foiled in its attempt to set up booby trapped fishing stakes in Thanh Lam Bay, east of Hue on 24 April. Two Viet Cong sampans were tying plastic explosives to fishing stakes with trip wires between them. A Coastal Group 13 unit surprised the Viet Cong and took them under fire. Two Viet Cong were killed, two were wounded and the two sampans were sunk by the explosion of plastics. Found nearby was another sampan laden with explosives.

Returning to the area east of Quang Ngai and south of the Tra Khuc River on 27 April, a Coastal Group 16 reconnaissance team captured 15
enemy suspects in Operation THONG MINH 4. On 30 April, three Coastal Group 16 units detected and opened fire on 10 Viet Cong sampans near the mouth of the Tra Khuc River. Before the outnumbered VNN sailors were forced to flee the area, three of the enemy sampans were sunk and at least 10 Viet Cong were either killed or wounded.

Coastal groups of the 2nd Naval Zone conducted daily operations with RF/FF and Republic of Korea Army (ROKA) forces. Large scale confrontations were negligible as in the past month but the combined force of the allies served as a deterrent factor and policing operations continued. Five junks and a platoon from Coastal Group 25 performed an area sweep of the Van Minh sub-sector, 36 miles northeast of Nha Trang on 1 April. The early morning operation routed nine Viet Cong suspects and one deserter. During a twilight sweep the next day 22 miles to the north, just east of Tuy Hoa, two Coastal Group 24 platoons gathered together 20 more enemy suspects for interrogation. Similarly on 3 April, Coastal Group 27, RF troops and sub-sector police swept the seacoast east of Phan Rang resulting in three Viet Cong suspects and one draft dodger captured.

At noon on 3 April, Coastal Group 25 completed a 12-day joint operation with ROKA forces east of the coastal group base in Khan Hoa Province. Two coastal group junks and a 15-man ambush party supporting the ROKA troops accounted for six Viet Cong killed while numerous ammunition, medicines, clothing items and equipment were captured and several
Vietnamese sailors assault the beach on Hon Hau Peninsula 10 miles north of Nha Trang on South Vietnam's central coast. The navymen were landed by VNA junks and secured the beach for Vietnamese midshipmen training and a beach survey.
shelters were destroyed. Five miles to the north, a night ambush platoon from Coastal Group 25 captured three enemy suspects on 4-5 April. The next day, 6 April, the coastal group participated in an additional joint area search in the Van Minh sub-sector with ROKA forces and PF troops which resulted in 53 Viet Cong suspects and 1 deserter detained.

A Coastal Group 23 team engaged the enemy in Phu Yen Province, 5 miles northeast of their coastal group base on 9 April. Two Viet Cong were killed, 2 others were wounded and 8 grenades, 2 Mauser rifles and numerous items of clothing and equipment were captured. The U.S. advisor was slightly wounded in the action. Again on 18 and 19 April, a Coastal Group 23 ambush team sought out the ensconced enemy in Phu Yen Province, across the bay from their base, detained 4 suspects.

Coastal groups of the 2nd Naval Zone conducted three additional operations on 19 April. Coastal Group 24, in southern Phu Yen Province, east of Tuy Hoa, conducted an 11 hour cordon and search operation with RF/PF troops. The combined forces rounded up 9 Viet Cong suspects as well as 41 draft dodgers from the area. In the Van Minh sub-sector, a Coastal Group 25 thirty-man landing party captured 4 Viet Cong, while further south in the Cam Ranh Special Zone, units of the Coastal Groups 26 and 27 commenced Operation TU CUONG 20/68. The joint efforts of the coastal groups, a platoon of the Cam Ranh Special Zone, two TF 115 "Swift" boats and an L-19, accounted for the destruction of 3,000 punji stakes, five 50-kilogram salt bags, three wells, a punji stake trap and two 55-
A coastal group landing party storms a beach in the Van Ninh sub-sector during a cordon and search operation.
gallon drums. Enemy casualties were unknown; there were no friendly casualties.

From the 20th to the 25th of April, Coastal Group 22 operated with ROKA troops and TF 116 units north of Qui Nhon City. The seven-square-mile cordon and search operation just east of Binh Dinh left over 200 enemy dead while friendly forces suffered 2 killed and 10 wounded. During the 6-day operation, 90 enemy suspects, 1 defector, and 13 draft dodgers were brought in and 76 of the enemy were captured along with a quantity of war materials, weapons and ammunition. Near a village, 15 miles to the north, ROKA forces and Coastal Group 21 engaged a small Viet Cong force on 26 April. The coastal group units provided gunfire support with Navy "Swift" boats as the ROKA and PF ground troops halted the enemy's advance into the village. Four Viet Cong were killed while a PF soldier also lost his life and three others were wounded in the fracas.

The next day, 27 April, Coastal Group 23 units engaged the enemy in Phu Yen Province, east of the coast group base at Song Cau. The three Platoons from the base were credited with killing one Viet Cong and capturing 16 guerrillas, 6 grenades and a quantity of clothing and documents.

Unlike previous months, April proved to be relatively uneventful for the coastal groups of the 3rd Naval Zone. Participating in the Delta-wide offensive pressure on the enemy, the coastal groups experienced light enemy contact. The insurgents, it would seem, sensed the stepped-up operations and chose to remain under cover. Incidents, minor in nature, occurred
regularly, characterizing the terrorizing and harassing techniques of the Viet Cong. Despite the aggressive efforts to route the enemy on the part of the VNN coastal group personnel and their U.S. advisors, the results for the month were less than gratifying. Throughout the month nightly ambushes were set up by all coastal groups of the 3rd Naval Zone; in most cases negative contact was made, in others, one, two, or three suspects were detained. Combined operations with TF 116 units and ARVN troops were as numerous this month, but they too yielded minimal results.

During the first of the month Coastal Groups 32/33 were actively engaged in seeking out the enemy on Long Son Island, north of Vung Tau. On 1 April four men from the coastal group on a training mission located a base camp on the island. Two Viet Cong were killed and a tunnel complex was destroyed. The team received sniper fire but the elusive enemy fled the area. The pursuing landing party discovered a 2nd base camp, killing one Viet Cong and capturing another enemy insurgent. Returning on 6 April, the coastal group discovered an additional base camp and destroyed the bunkers/tunnel complex. Despite continuous enemy fire, the landing party escaped casualties. Booby-trapped food and entrance route, set by the coastal group personnel at one base camp on 1 April, were discovered detonated upon arrival of the team. Although no bodies were located, the team noted approximately 40 unmarked graves in the area. The coastal groups' actions during those days were felt to be a
definite threat to the Viet Cong infrastructure on Long Son Island.

While transiting the Ben Tre Canal from Kien Hoa City to their coastal group base, units of Coastal Group 34/37 came under heavy 57-mm recoilless rocket fire. One junk received six rounds, caught fire, and sunk. Although there were no casualties and all weapons were recovered, the junk was unsalvageable being 80 percent destroyed. Escorting by TF 116 "Seavolves" and PBR's, the convoy proceeded to their base, a second junk having sustained slight damage from three rounds.

TROUING CONG DINH VB/02, another operation of the series, included Coastal Group 35, three RF companies and two PF platoons, sweeping north-west of the coastal group base on the Co Chien River. This sweep on the 10th of April resulted in two Viet Cong being captured while two of the Vietnamese soldiers were wounded.

The night of 26-27 April provided the mask for a Coastal Group 36 cordon and search operation with two PRU platoons in Ba Xuyen Province, northwest of their coastal group base on the Bassac River. An ammunition cache was discovered; three Viet Cong were captured along with numerous documents hidden nearby. Meanwhile, across the river on Dung Island, a similar operation was conducted that night by Coastal Group 31 and a 60-man PRU team which yielded three Viet Cong killed and eight Viet Cong and a quantity of documents captured.

In the 4th Naval Zone, enemy activity also remained at a low level. The coastal groups' operations were characterized by routine daily
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patrolling and searching the junks traversing the waterways. Psychological operations and civic action missions were carried on by An Thoi, Kien An and Poulo Obi Island based coastal groups. Whether distributing medical supplies, soap, food or clothing to the residents, or making "psyops" broadcasts to the enemy in hiding, the coastal groups made their presence and importance known. Use of the shallow draft skimmer boats gave access to the inland waters of Kien Giang Province and the beaches of Phu Quoc Island theretofore untouched by the VNN due to the shallow water. Small unit land patrols and cordon and search operations were conducted by the coastal group personnel and their junks afforded gunfire support to ground troops. Despite these conscientious efforts, in general, the enemy was not to be aroused.

An Thoi based Coastal Group 42 units discovered two small camp sites while on routine patrol on the northwest tip of Phu Quoc Island on 17 April. Although no enemy contact was made, the landing troops destroyed both sites. The next day this same patrol provided naval gunfire support to Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) spotting Viet Cong positions mid-island on the western shore. The coastal group was credited with killing six Viet Cong and wounding two others.

Three Poulo Obi Island Coastal Group 41 junks engaged the enemy while supporting U. S. Special Forces conducting a raid at the mouth of the Bay Hoa River on 22 April. After 30 minutes of fire the estimated Viet Cong platoon was silenced. The ground troops took two Viet Cong
prisoners and confirmed that two Viet Cong were killed by the junk's gunfire.

On the night of 24-25 April, Coastal Group 42 units conducted a combined cordon and search/ambush/"psyops" mission 10 miles north of An Thoi. Setting up a 25-man ambush team, the coastal group junks landed another ground force to trap the fleeing Viet Cong. The ambush team killed two Viet Cong and three more of the enemy were suspected wounded in the fray. The landing party then commenced a "psyops" program with speakers and leaflets. The team received occasional fire which the junks off shore returned. Upon completion of the broadcast, the VNN sailors came upon a camp where they destroyed three structures, four bunkers and numerous fox holes.

Riverine Area Naval Commands

At the end of April, 23 4 craft were assigned to the THIRD Riverine Area, FOURTH Riverine Area and the River Transport and Escort Group (RTED). A daily average of 157 craft were available for operations and 147 were employed. Six additional units, 4 LCVP's and 2 LCM's, continued to be assigned to I CTZ as an augmentation force to perform river patrol duties. River Assault Groups (RAG's) participated in 36 offensive operations, including 16 combined operations and 19 joint operations, in the THIRD and FOURTH Riverine Areas and the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ).

In the THIRD Riverine Area, RAG 30 craft operated south of Saigon to deny the enemy access to the rivers and canals interlacing the area.