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November 1970

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FOREWARD

The level of enemy-initiated activity remained low throughout the country during the month. In the First Military Region friendly and enemy forces alike were still recovering from October's inclement weather.

November will nevertheless remain an important month in the annals of the Navy's Vietnamese effort. For the first time since the 1968 Tet Offensive, a North Vietnamese trawler was challenged and sunk. After an extended period of covert tracking, U. S. Naval and Coast Guard ships finally sank the trawler after she had entered the 12-mile limit on 22 November at 0006H.

Another significant coup occurred on 22 November when a group of SEALs accompanied by PF troops, assaulted an enemy POW camp near Nam Can in the Cau Mau Peninsula and freed 19 South Vietnamese prisoners.

U. S. Navy and Coast Guard in-country strength continued to decline in November. As of 26 November, there were 17,389 Naval and Coast Guard personnel in South Vietnam, a reduction of about 500 men over the course of the month.
## CURRENT OPERATIONS
(As of 31 November 1970)

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*Not Yet Turned Over*
OPERATION SOLID ANCHOR

Solid Anchor units scored a smashing victory against the enemy on 22 November. While newspapers around the world were telling of the unsuccessful attempt to liberate U.S. POWs in the Son Tay prison camp in North Vietnam, 10 SEALs of WHISKEY Platoon of SEAL Team One, Detachment GOLF led by LT Couch, along with 19 PF troops, were doing some liberating of their own. In an area 15 kilometers east-southeast of New Nam Can (VQ 880632), the SEALs and PFs freed 19 South Vietnamese POWs after carrying on a running fire fight with 18 VC guards. The aggressiveness of the SEALs and PFs was clearly exhibited in this team operation. Two VC were also captured along with numerous documents in the raid. Worthy of note is the fact that this was the first in-country operation for WHISKEY Platoon and its supporting unit, MST Det Charlie.

Rocket ambushes and mining attempts continued to plague the waterborne units assigned to Solid Anchor, but the frequency of the attacks dropped off sharply in November. There were three rocket ambushes which resulted in minor damage to LSSL-230 and PCF 3919 and two mining incidents which caused moderate damage to A-5164 and minor damage to A-5165 and T-1272. Nine VNN personnel and one U.S. Navy advisor were wounded in these attacks, but fortunately their wounds were minor.
Heavy weather in the South China Sea accounted for the only major losses to Solid Anchor Units during the month. Six VNN PCFs transiting from Solid Anchor to Cat Lo on 2 November were buffeted by extremely high seas caused by a tropical storm Nora. PCF 3907 swamped and sank (XR 645160) and ten hours later PCF 3904 met the same fate. Both crews were rescued without loss of life and the remaining swifts arrived at a safe haven off Coastal Group 36 at Long Phu.

A search and rescue mission for these PCFs, and also for a VNN PGM, a VNN WPB, and three USN PCFs, was coordinated by CTF 115. With the exception of two Solid Anchor PCFs, all units reached safety.

In a command shift on 1 November, CAPT E. J. Finke, USN, formerly the Senior Naval Advisor to the Vietnamese Navy, assumed the position of CTG 116.1. CAPT Vuong Huu Thieu, VNN, became his Deputy Task Group Commander and Chief Staff Officer.

The 6th VNMC Battalion departed the Solid Anchor area of operations on 4 November. This battalion was responsible for 61 enemy KIA and 10 captured as well as the capture of a large number of weapons and supplies in the two months it spent at Solid Anchor AO. The 6th VNMC Battalion was relieved by the 7th VNMC Battalion which acquitted itself well in November. The Marines killed 13 of the enemy and captured three more. They also took part in a two day operation.
in conjunction with VNN river craft, a first in the Solid Anchor VNMC operations.

The nomenclature of the two hamlets adjoining the Solid Anchor complex underwent another change in November. Although the hamlets have been referred to as Ham Rong I and II by Navy sources in the past, their names within the GVN structure are listed as Ham Rong (Ham Rong I) and Thi Tran (Ham Rong II). The GVN nomenclature will henceforth be used.

Although their nomenclature was changed, the problems of the hamlets remained basically the same in November—adequate defense against the enemy. The PF outpost under construction at Thi Tran was hit by two B-40 rockets on 4 November (no damage) and an RF outpost on the Kinh Ngang Canal eight kilometers from Solid Anchor (WQ 019743) received 20 rounds of 81mm mortar fire on 30 November, killing one RF and wounding ten others.

The distribution of the 59 M-1 carbines received by CTG 116.1 in October to PSDF personnel in Ham Rong and Thi Tran was delayed until a PSDF recruiting drive in these hamlets is completed. CTG 116.1 is retaining the carbines until the Nam Can District senior advisor requires them for the new PSDF troops.

VADM J. H. King, Jr., COMNAVFORV, RADM Tran Van Chon, CNO, VNN, and BGEN Nguyen Huu Hanh, Dep CG IV Corps were
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on hand for the dedication ceremonies of the Solid Anchor air strip

on 26 November.
At the beginning of November, CTG 116.2 was faced with reconstructing his totally destroyed Advanced Tactical Support Base at the mouth of the Song Ong Doc River. A large scale enemy attack on 22 October had driven away the allies and razed the floating base, but within a week, COMNAVFORV issued orders to rebuild it at its original location. During the reconstruction period, the Breezy Cove Naval Operations Center was located on the USS GARRETT COUNTY (AGP786), anchored off shore. The PBRs and River Assault Craft returned to the ATSB for staging.

During the first week of November, these initial plans were modified by COMNAVFORV. The new projected plan provided for relocation of the main Breezy Cove base to Ca Mau with an advanced staging base situated at Song Ong Doc, 15 kilometers from the river's mouth. Deputy COMNAVFORV delineated the following advantages of this relocation.

(a) The capability to cover Song Ong Doc from Ca Mau to the Gulf of Thailand. Advanced staging from Old Song Ong Doc would provide continued allied presence in the western portion of the AO and hence preclude adverse psychological effects on the civilian inhabitants of the Song Ong Doc District.
(b) The tactical versatility of concentrating forces in either the eastern or western portion of the AO, depending on the threat.

(c) Enhanced base defense posture at both bases.

(d) Improved communication capability from the Gulf of Thailand through Old Song Ong Doc to the new base at Ca Mau.

(e) Closer and improved liaison with the district chief of Old Song Ong Doc and the Ca Mau Province chief for combined operations.

(f) Improved overland logistics capability from LSB Binh Thuy to Ca Mau.

The advanced base at Old Song Ong Doc was to be a simple, floating complex, similar to the original one at the river's mouth. Two ammis were towed under escort from Solid Anchor as were the undamaged ammis from the original ATSB.

The entire relocation was completed by 25 November and the Breezy Cove logistics and gunfire support ships were released from duty. The construction of the new operations center at Ca Mau involved a much longer process, not scheduled for completion until March, 1971. In the meantime, the province chief offered the Navy
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temporary use of the PRU camp located three kilometers northwest of Ca Mau on the Song Tac Thu. Because of this shift, the turnover of Operation Breezy Cove to the Vietnamese Navy, originally scheduled for 1 December, was postponed. While there were a few scattered incidents, the enemy did not attack in force during this period of instability. The new NILO at Song Ong Doc reported that Communist concentration in the area remained high and seemed to be increasing. Navy OV-10 aircraft and Seawolves operating in the area reported extensive troop movement, and bunker construction near the old ATSB. At mid-month a reliable local Vietnamese informer stated that the Viet Cong planned to attack the Song Ong Doc base on 25 November with an even larger force than before.

The man claimed that one group of the enemy was going to attack from fishing junks returning from sea while a second element would move through the village to prevent the shore based allies from reaching their boats. This assault never materialized. The only direct enemy activity involving the defenders of the ATSB was sniper fire on 19 November which wounded BM3 Eugene J. Jones, who was standing a perimeter watch.

Because of the heavy enemy threat in the Song Ong Doc District, the CNO of the Vietnamese Navy ordered River Interdiction Division 43,
heretofore attached to Tran Hung Dao II to the mouth of the Song Ong Doc River to protect base reconstruction efforts. It was estimated that these boats would reinforce TG 116.2 for a period of six weeks. On 20 November, RID 43 relieved River Assault Squadron 15, which proceeded to Dong Tam for standdown and eventual turnover to the VNN.

Base security around the destroyed ATSB remained a problem pending relocation because of the paucity of ground troops. CTG 116.2, depending almost entirely on Dufflebag sensors, requested that a company of Vietnamese Marines be sent to Song Ong Doc, but was denied. On 17 November, however, a battalion of the 32nd ARVN Regiment arrived to protect the area. The unit's four 105 mm howitzers supplied vital striking power for the immediate vicinity.

The only major action involving Breezy Cove river boats in November occurred on the 20th of the month when two PBRs received B-40 rockets, five kilometers east of the Song Ong Doc ATSB (VR 846 002). The lead boat escaped without mishap, but the cover boat caught fire and exploded before sinking. The crew, including two wounded VNN sailors and a slightly injured USN advisor, ADR1 C. R. Benson, were quickly rescued by Zippo-3. Two days later, Explosive Ordnance Disposal divers recovered all serviceable weapons and blew up the sunken PBR.
While the riverine units of Operation Breezy Cove enjoyed a rather peaceful month, U. S. Navy SEALs were highly active in their efforts to neutralize members of the Viet Cong infrastructure in the Song Ong Doc area. On the evening of 5 November, seven SEALs of Detachment ALFA, 9th Platoon, led by a Kit Carson Scout and a local informer, captured two VC four kilometers south of Ca Mau (WR 182108). Upon returning to their base camp, the SEALs persuaded their captives to divulge the whereabouts of their village cadre leader. Within three hours, the commando squad had captured him as well.

LT Moran's 9th Platoon captured three more VC just two days later. A pair of Hoi Chanhs led the SEALs to a small village 15 kilometers southeast of Ca Mau (WR 238040) on the night of 7 November. They immediately entered the suspects' hootch and captured three men, two of which were hamlet level guerrillas and the other a village level VC. When the SEALs began to withdraw, they received continuous sniper fire and as they were scrambling into the extraction helicopter, EMI John S. Fallow was wounded slightly in the leg.

Another USN sailor became the victim of the swift currents of the Delta waterways in November. EN3 Bruce C. Hunt, a crewmember of ATC-2 of RIVDIV 152 drowned near the ATSB.
Song Ong Doc on the third day of the month. It was believed that he fell from the nest of RACs while carrying a seabag and was swept under one of the ATCs. Hunt had been proceeding to the helicopter pad for a flight to Binh Thuy, and his disappearance was not suspected until his body was discovered the following day.

Evidence of skillful joining of allied communications in the Ca Mau Peninsula presented itself again during November. On the afternoon of 6 November, the USS HUNTERDON COUNTY (LST-823) launched an LCVP to investigate two contacts six kilometers off shore from the north of the Song Ong Doc River (VO 743974). Both craft were sampans, one occupied by two men with fishing gear and the other by six men, resting at anchor. When the LCVP boat captain tried to contact the HUNTERDON COUNTY for instructions, his broadcast was blocked by loud Vietnamese music. The jammed frequency was the standard one used by the USS GARRETT COUNTY, the USCGC YAKUTAT, and the USS HUNTERDON COUNTY for communication with their LCVP craft. According to the Song Ong Doc NILO, the timing of the jamming indicated that the jamming station was either aboard one of these two sampans or in contact with their crews. Neither of the sampans was boarded or inspected, according to the Commanding Officer of the HUNTERDON COUNTY, because
they did not appear to be a threat and because of lack of boarding and search experience on the part of the crew.

A SEA LORDS helicopter was ditched in the Gulf of Thailand on 26 November when it ran out of gas attempting to reach the USS GARRETT COUNTY (AG-786) off the coast near Song Ong Doc. The crew was rescued and for the next three days, high winds and seas prevented salvage divers from reaching the sunken helo, and when they were able to dive, they could not find it.

On the day after the helicopter loss, LCM-6, after battering against a YFU alongside the GARRETT COUNTY, in heavy seas, sank in 24 feet of water. On 28 November, a PBR broke loose from its moorings at the GARRETT COUNTY and sank in heavy seas before it could be recovered. In both cases, the suddenness of high winds was cited as the reason for failure to take sufficient preventative action. COMNAVFORV, however, concerned with this triple loss in three days, ordered an investigation of the GARRETT COUNTY's boat and helicopter control procedures and adequacy and timeliness of weather forecasts.
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Operation BLUE SHARK

The highly successful Operation BLUE SHARK closed out its assignment on 15 November. BLUE SHARK, which was mounted following the disestablishment of the MARKET TIME Raider Program in May of this year, went out as it had come in - in style. The success of the operation is attested to by a message from COMNAVFORV to CTC II6.5 (Commander, BLUE SHARK) which stated that:

"Along the coastline from the southern border of the Rung Sat Special Zone to Vinh Chau District, and up the Bassac and Hau Giang Rivers you kept the enemy off balance and on the defensive with your board and search operations, inshore surveillance, river patrols, SEAL insertions and attacks on enemy base camps and supply points. Yours was a difficult operating area, with heavy foliage, shallow and often uncharted waterways and shifting sand bars, but you covered it well."

In one of the last BLUE SHARK missions, PCFs 45, 87, 93 and 692 lifted a KCS/SEAL team to the Thanh Phu Secret Zone (vicinity XR 802952) on 12 November. As the Swifts entered the northern mouth of the Eo Lon Canal 26 miles south-southeast of Ben Tre, they received two B-40 rockets and small arms fire. The enemy fire was suppressed, and the SEALs and KCS inserted to conduct a pincer sweep. Black Ponies provided covering strikes during the sweep. Two VC were killed and an enemy arms cache consisting of over two tons of arms and equipment was discovered during the sweep.

1. COMNAVFORV MSG of 151556Z Nov '70

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sweep. The cache, containing 15,000 AK-47 rounds, nine turtle shell land mines, 30 60 mm mortar rounds, ten 100 mm rockets, 10 claymore mines, 100 40 mm grenades, 200 cluster bombs, 4,000 rounds of Russian carbine ammo, and other assorted ordnance, was destroyed by the SEALs.

After extraction, PCF 87 was ambushed while proceeding out of the Eo Lon Canal. One B-40 hit the after conning station, killing two KCS and wounding two U.S. sailors (EN2 Richard Paul Shade and GMGSA John William Oberster), another KCS, and one VNN crew-member.
November was an extremely hectic month for the Task Fleet 21 operation in the Mekong Delta. There was evidence of further enemy infiltration into the Fourth Military Region, culminating in several attacks on the recently established Kien An base in the Tran Hung Dao VI operating area. During the month, the headquarters of Operations Breezy Cove and Tran Hung Dao I were relocated, and preparations were made for the massive combined sweep through the U Minh Forest, a long time Communist stronghold.

An agreement between the CNO, VNN and COMNAVFORV delayed a major step in the Navy's ACTOV program. Early in 1970, these two leaders had projected that the VNN Vice Chief of Naval Operations would relieve the First SEA LORDS (Deputy COMNAVFORV) in his role as Deputy Commander, Tran Hung Dao Operations in December 1970. In November, Vice Admiral King and Rear Admiral Chon agreed to defer this change until at least March of 1971.

Deputy COMNAVFORV reiterated his earlier statements on the necessity of gaining proper clearance before placing air strikes on a target. Stating that the two most difficult problems faced by the Seawolves were target identification and validation and obtaining of proper clearance to fire, he called for emphasis on accurate
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communication from pilots to NOCs to eliminate ambiguity. The efforts to closely control air strikes and to eliminate indiscriminate firing resulted from unfortunate attacks on civilian homes and personnel in previous months.

COMNAVFORVs "Quality Search" program was further developed in November. Henceforth a casual perusal of cargo and identification papers was to be referred to as a "visual inspection". An actual "search" was to conform with the following detailed procedures:

1) Structural

(a) Inspect gunwales for documents jammed between boards.
(b) Look for double transverse members and double bottoms.
(c) Check underside of all horizontal surfaces for documents and packages.
(d) Inspect mud in boat bottom and mud caulking for imbedded documents.
(e) Check underside of rubber fenders on bow and stern for documents.
(f) Check thatched roofs for new weaving which could possibly conceal documents.
(g) Drag a line under the boat, keekhaul fashion, to check for underwater appendages.

(2) Cargo

(a) Probe fish, sand, and rice for weapons, etc.

(b) Check all paper for invisible ink.

(c) Check newspapers and magazines for implanted documents.

(d) Use magnetic probe, if possible, for concealed metallic objects.

(3) Passengers

(a) Hold conical hats to sunlight to detect woven-in-messages.

(b) Inspect personal belongings and clothing.

(c) Check ID cards and manifest.

(d) Conduct personnel search if other discrepancies warrant it.

In addition, Deputy COMNAVFORV warned commanders that enemy efforts would probably be aimed at disrupting vital lines of communications and transportation to discredit government pacification efforts in the Fourth Military Region. It was recommended that maximum security be maintained against sappers on all key bridges, ferry sites, roads, and waterways.
Naval units received a newly perfected weapon, the remote firing device (RFD) during November. The RFD consists of a firing device (receiver) and a firing device control (transmitter) and is used to initiate demolition charges from a distant position by a secure radio link. The device can be used for base defense and as a quick reaction to sensor activations.
Despite reports of continued communist infiltration across the Vinh Te Canal, Vietnamese naval assets and their American advisors made only sporadic contact with the enemy during the month of November. Because of limited ground activity, CTG 212.4 reported no allied casualties for the month. Navy Seawolf pilots of HAL-3, Detachment 5, (Chau Doc) and Detachment 9 (YRBM 21) were most active as their quick reaction provided the best deterrent against covert nocturnal movement by the enemy.

The completion of the Chau Doc Operating Base was the major non-combatant accomplishment of CTG 212.4 during November. By the end of the month, River Patrol Division 55, River Interdiction Division 41, and CTG 212.4 were relocated at the new base which is scheduled to be formally commissioned in December.

Carelessness by a Vietnamese sailor resulted in the death of a young girl in Ap Con Ca village (VS 655632) near Vinh Gia on 24 November. CTG 212.4 reported that a crew member of PBR 5159 accidently fired an M-79 round or rounds into a hootch, killing one girl and wounding two others. An American advisor, Signalman Chief Young, entered the hootch, found the girls in a bed, and took them, along with their mother to Vinh Gia. The two injured girls were medevaced to Binh Thuy.
A subdued atmosphere prevailed in the Tran Hung Dao II AO, throughout November, though in spite of this, two PBRs were sunk and sporadic shellings kept the Moc Hoa Base on the alert. There were one friendly and ten enemy-initiated firefights during the month, resulting in five enemy killed and 12 of the friendly forces wounded (three USN, nine VNN), none seriously.

On 5 November at 0035H about six B-40 rounds impacted 100-300 meters east of the Moc Hoa ATSB. Soon thereafter the local RF Company reported contact at XS 033915, and Black Ponies were sent to the scene. Contact ceased at 0105H with unknown enemy casualties and one RF wounded.

The enemy assailants were more effective on 17 November when at 2309H three more rockets streaked into the base, one of which passed through the hull of PBR 6863 about four feet aft of the bow; the boat sank alongside the amm. VNN sailors riddled the opposite bank for ten minutes in response, and once again silence prevailed by 0015H. One USN and three VNN were slightly wounded in the engagement. Local attempts to salvage the PBR, the bow section of which was severed, failed, and a Harbor Clearance Unit representative was dispatched to the scene by COMNAVFORV on
22 November to assess the damage. Salvage had not been effected by the end of the month.

A third barrage occurred on 21 November at 0130 H, this time consisting of 20'-25 rounds, which landed inside the town rather than at the base. There were no naval casualties.

A second PBR was rendered inoperative when during the late night hours of the 18th, it sank to the gunwales while tied up alongside the amm at Moc Hoa. The boat had taken on water the night of 17 November, and a watch was set the next night to ensure that the boat was properly pumped out. The VNN sentry was apparently negligent. The boat was refloated at 0247H and taken under tow to Ben Luc the next morning at 0800H.

The friendly forces did not maintain an entirely defensive posture throughout the month, however. At 2036H on 1 November, PBRs 7556 and 7559 observed one sampan while in WEGP eight kilometers from Ben Luc (XS 555810). The units opened fire and sank the sampan, then called in a Black Pony strike. One of the sampan's occupants was confirmed dead, the other two assumed dead.

Four more of the enemy were killed on 12 November at 2330 by Seawolves 40 and 46 six kilometers from Bao Trai (XT 553101).

The presence of a sapper company in the Tra Cu area was indicated when on 24 November a RID 44 unit discovered a large
mine constructed from a 500 pound bomb on the bank of the Vam Co Dong at XT 415125. The NILO at Tra Cu surmised that the responsible group might be the 50-man 12th VC MF Sapper Battalion. A second instance of sapper activity occurred at 0430H on 30 November when a large floating charge was detonated by an RF sentry only four meters from the Go Dau Ha Bridge pilings.

Although overt harassment by the enemy has lessened considerably during the last few months, possibly due to supply and logistics problems, his presence continues to be felt throughout the area. On the morning of 21 November, units of RPD 53 found a string of five VC paper flags on floats made of nip palm stalks at about XS 8956 on the Vam Co Dong. The RPD crewmembers picked up the flags, but later in the morning other friendly units discovered similar creations in about the same area, leading them to suspect that the woodcutters in the area, all of whose identification papers were in order, were launching the provocative pennants as soon as GVN forces were out of sight. The NILO at Tra Cu suggested that such acts "stressed the enemy belief that clandestine tactics (in order to secure a better posture on the political front) are the most effective means of continuing the struggle against the GVN until more outright military actions become feasible." ¹ Whether the enemy is voluntarily

¹. NILO Tra Cu MSG 261950 November '70.
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decreasing his outright assaults or whether he has been pressed into such a posture by a dearth of supplies and manpower can perhaps only be judged in the months ahead.
Enemy aggressiveness in the Tran Hung Dao V AO during November seemed heavy only in comparison to Communist inactivity of the previous few months. CTG 216.1 reported only five firefight for the month, but three resulted in friendly personnel and material casualties. The Vietnamese commander claimed ten enemy casualties from these encounters.

The first significant action involved two PBRs, ambushed on the upper Saigon River, 37 kilometers northwest of Phu Cuong (XT 543349) on 9 November. The lead boat sustained minor damage when it received two B-40 rocket hits. Two additional PBRs scrambled to the area and immediately received intense machine gun fire. One Vietnamese sailor was slightly wounded by shrapnel when a B-40 rocket detonated in the water five feet from his boat. The allies returned fire, but never even caught a glimpse of the enemy.

Four more PBRs were ambushed with recoilless rifle, B-40 rocket, and automatic weapons fire in this same area (XT 537367) three days later. Two VNN sailors and a U. S. advisor sustained
Minor wounds in the brief skirmish on 12 November. One boat had its engines destroyed and had to be towed from the contact area.

A skillfully aimed B-40 rocket caused the grounding of a PBR on 24 November on the upper Saigon River (XT 544350). As four boats were proceeding south to extract an ARVN ambush team at Fire Support Base Tennessee, a B-40 rocket struck the second one. The explosion knocked the coxswain off his feet but he was not injured. Running uncontrolled, the PBR grounded at full speed on a rock and mud bank, cracking the hull. After the fire was suppressed, the damaged boat was towed to Phu Cuong.

Communications security remained a vital objective of all combined Naval forces and for good reason. The senior advisor for River Patrol Division 52 of operation Tran Hung Dao V reported extensive enemy jamming and intrusion during November. This ranged from moderate jamming in which a buzzing or keying noise was broadcast over the net to actual voice deception. This interference appeared on both VNN and USN nets of boats in waterborne guardposts along the upper Saigon River. Voice intrusions in Vietnamese have included obscenities directed at the boats' crews, anti-government propaganda and threats of immediate attack.

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When Lieutenant Commander Brown, USN, relinquished the command of Operation of Tran Hung Dao VI to Lieutenant Commander Gluu, VNN, on 6 November, the AO of CTG 212.5 was continuously threatened. Intelligence sources had been indicating an enemy buildup for the past several months, and the Viet Cong had made known their intention to overrun and destroy the newly established Advanced Tactical Support Base at Kien An. During the month there were 16 firefights, and the allies sustained 44 casualties, two of these resulting in death. CTG 212.5 claimed nine enemy kills.

The guerrillas made good their threat to attack the Kien An's operating base by lobbing 20 rounds of 81mm mortar fire in the small perimeter, on the night of 12 November. Four rounds landed directly on two Vietnamese BEQs, housing the crews of RAID 70 and 71, wounding 16 sailors. One Regional Force soldier was wounded by a round impacting outside of the base. A tower guard saw mortar flashes at an estimated 800 meters west of the base, and Seawolves from Rach Soi and Black Ponies from Bin Thuy placed air strikes on the suspected enemy position. Two PBRs of River Patrol Division 58 broke from their nearby waterborne guardposts to make firing runs on the east bank. No return fire was received and it
was not known whether the enemy sustained any casualties in the attack. Two days later, the allies received an unconfirmed report attributed to a VNN officer of RAD 70, that the Viet Cong had entered the village of Lien An and told the local population that they intended to wipe out the Navy base within the next few days. The anticipated attack did not occur until over two weeks later. In the early morning hours of 29 November, the Viet Cong fired 20 rounds from 82 and 120 mm mortars and inflicted moderate to heavy casualties. Seawolves and OV-10 aircraft struck at suspected mortar sites and reported three secondary explosions. Five Americans were medevaced with serious wounds while eight were slightly wounded. One American, VNN Robert E. Young, later died of wounds received from a direct 120 mm mortar hit. Of the ten injured Vietnamese, only four were evacuated for treatment. A Vietnamese barracks took another direct hit, as did a large outer building and a section of the pontoon pier. The base personnel, who had been sleeping in bunkers for most of the month, once again retreated underground.

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Operation TRAN HUNG DAO VIII

TRAN HUNG DAO VIII units kept up their relentless pursuit of the enemy even though most operations produced minor results. However, enemy units, not to be intimidated, continued to display their cunning tactics, ending the month by shelling the My Tho Navy Base. Activity during the second half of the month more than compensated for the lag during the first two weeks.

The My Tho Province Sapper Company was reported on 9 November to have the mission of destroying all GVN boats on the Kinh Xang Canal from Long Dinh Bridge (XS 380 495) to Ca Giam (XS 353 495). The sapper unit was reported to be armed with three U/I water mines and assorted individual weapons. This was the first report concerning an area north of the Long Dinh Bridge. Numerous enemy bunkers had been sighted along both canal banks from XS 370 520 to XS 353 553, and the area mentioned had also been the sight of three boat ambushes in the past.

On 16 November, a Seawolf of Hal-3, Det 7, in Dinh Tuong Province, Sam Giang District (XS 368 448), six kilometers west of Dong Tam crashed on takeoff while on scramble for ARVN units. AN T. L. Mize suffered bruises on his left thorax and pelvis. The aircraft was lifted out of the rice paddy by Chinook to Vinh Long on 17 November at 1430H.
On 21 November at 0520H, RPD 54 units on routine patrol received small arms fire from the west bank of the Kinh Xang Canal, (XS 399 455), three kilometers northwest of Dong Tam. PBR 7565 was sunk after receiving one B-40 rocket round. After suppressing the enemy fire, PBR 7565 was floated and towed to My Tho.

At 2050H on 26 November, two 82 mm mortar rounds were fired at the Vietnamese Navy Base at My Tho (XS 498 445). The rounds were apparently launched from the south side of the My Tho River. One round impacted on the base, inflicting minor wounds to four VNN sailors. The second round fell into the My Tho River. This is the first attack on the base in over a year, although previous to this, the provincial capital of My Tho was struck twice in November alone. On 9 November, My Tho received three rounds of 82 mm mortar fire at XS 500 450 which resulted in five civilians wounded, and again on 14 November, three rounds of 82 mm were received at XS 494 450 wounding three civilians.

An evaluation of the shelling of the My Tho Naval Base indicated a change in tactics used by the enemy. This could have been a rehearsal for future attacks as indicated by the small number of rounds received. Intelligence sources have indicated that the enemy forces must launch an offensive phase of some kind in order to put sector forces back on the defensive and get them out of the field.
where they have been most effective in producing a high rate of enemy casualties. Future enemy tactics are likely to consist of indirect fire attacks against district towns, acts of terrorism, harassment, and attempts to interdict major lines of communication.
Throughout November, naval units of Tran Hung Dao IX experienced the same low level of hostile activity which had characterized the preceding several months. As the flood levels dropped in the area of operation, southern waterborne infiltration became increasingly difficult for the guerrillas. While roads around Tuyen Nhon and Moc Hoa were open for the first time in several months, the slackening of the water deprived the Viet Cong of several routes to carry large numbers of men and supplies by sampan from Cambodia. Timely air and artillery response to Dufflebag sensor and anti-personnel radar activation frequently thwarted the guerrillas' travel plans. The allies reported only one riverine firefight for the entire month.

The last American units in this operation were turned over to the Vietnamese Navy on 15 November, when PBRs of River Division 535 became River Patrol Division 64. The first U.S. Navy craft had begun patrolling the rivers and canals of Operation Barrier Reef/Tran Hung Dao IX in January of 1969. These 20 PBRs were the last active assets of RIVPATER FIFTH.

Navy Seabees worked throughout the month to complete the shore based headquarters for CTG 212.3 at Tan Chau. During that
period, Tran Hung Dao river boats continued to stage from YRBMs 16 and 21. The completion of the Tan Chau base gave the commander of this interdiction operation his first permanent home.

The Tan Chau NILO reported the discovery of an enemy frogman unit operating on the Mekong River along the Cambodian border. This 26 man platoon, equipped with air tanks and masks, was tasked with the mining of VNN patrol boats. A reliable informant stated that the team had been living on islands across the border since October and was probably responsible for the recent sinking of three Tango boats and one Monitor.
Operation TRAN HUNG DAO XIV

TRAN HUNG DAO XIV units continued to settle the indirect-fire attacks against the district towns, acts of terrorism, swimmer-sapper attacks, and attempts to interdict major lines of communication into Long An and Kien Hoa Province throughout the month.

There were numerous incidents in November: the possible attempt to strike the USS ASKANIA (AKA 34) with 55-mm mortar shell about three miles southwest of Dong Thap (XS 376 412) while she was at anchor; the sinking of the Hoc Loc Bridge (XS 450 338), approximately three miles north of Mo Cay District Town on 1 November; and the shelling of the base at Dong Thap with 81-mm mortar and possible small arms fire from the northwest perimeter of the base which resulted in three U.S. Army wounded on 3 November.

Unfortunately, the USS ASKANIA was not struck and shifted anchorages which afforded more protection. But the Hoc Loc Bridge was 50 percent destroyed by what was thought to be a large charge rigged in a container and then floated beneath the bridge and command detonated. This was the second bridge destroyed within Kien Hoa Province in one week. As a result, Ben Tre City was isolated from her supply sources along with Mo Cay District which could only be reached by air. The destruction of both of these spans seriously endangered
the GVN pacification effort and limited its ability to counter the guerrilla activity in this area. Intelligence sources have indicated that the F105X Boat Sapper Team or the 560th Battalion Sapper Team was responsible.

On 4 November, eight VNN boats of RAID 74, while exiting the Mo Cay River four miles south of Ben Tre (XS 491 244), came under fire from the south bank of the river. The ATC which was last in line observed three rounds which were identified as possible M-79. None of the boats were hit, and heavy fire from the VNN boats suppressed the enemy.

On 7 November, another bridge was mined at Huong My (XS 538 074) in Kien Hoa Province. It was suspected that enemy sappers had placed a mine on a sampan and floated it in with the tide, then command detonated it. Destruction of the bridge was estimated to be 25% with damage extending to 60%. This was the third bridge to be destroyed this month and the second to be mined. The Ba Lai Bridge has been repaired and is again in full operation while the Hoa Loc Landing to Mo Cay District Town is estimated to require at least 10-20 days more. The mining of the Huong My Bridge was an example of the enemy's effort to cut off road transportation between Huong My and Mo Cay.
On 10 November, seven SEALs, one KCS, one guide and one interpreter were transported by MSSC into an area three miles southeast of Ben Tre (XS 562 272). The SEALs proceeded down the Rach Tai Phu, turned around after several miles and came back up the canal. While proceeding back, a grenade was thrown from the east bank, struck the MSSC canopy, rolled off aft and exploded in the water. In addition, small arms fire was received from the same position and was quickly returned without attempting to establish the results.

On 17 November, two SEALs with KCSs were inserted into an area 24 miles southeast of Ben Tre (XR 796 949) to destroy an ammunition cache which had been discovered by KCS the preceding day. Items destroyed were 12 57 mm recoilless rifle rounds, two cases of cluster bombs, five 155 mm rounds, ten 105 mm rounds, 30 60 mm rounds, four cases of 30 calibre small arms ammunition, 100 50 calibre rounds, 100 20 mm rounds, five 5-kilo land mines, two 10-kilo land mines, two claymore mines, and approximately 300 pounds of unidentifiable ordnance.

On 19 November, eight SEALs and one KCS were inserted into an area five miles southeast of Long Phu (XR 316 598) by MSSC. Three VC were encountered and were taken under fire as they
attempted to escape. The SEALs received heavy automatic weapons fire from bunkers sighted in the area by an unknown number of VC. On extraction from the area, the SEALs requested Black Pony support and air strikes were delivered into the area. Six huts, seven bunkers, and one sampan were destroyed by the air strikes. Fifteen VC were killed with four probables; there were no friendly casualties.

In summary, intelligence agencies indicate that enemy political indoctrination sessions have been taking place throughout the province emphasizing military recruiting and stressing the upcoming political struggle.
VNN Cambodian Operations

VNN craft continued to patrol the Mekong and Bassac Rivers during November between Phnom Penh and the Cambodian-Vietnamese border. There were persistent reports of enemy intentions to conduct anti-boat operations along this stretch of the Mekong which was becoming increasingly important as the enemy succeeded in cutting more and more of the land routes out of the Cambodian capital. At 2030H on 4 November, two ATCs of RAID 71 were patrolling the Mekong six miles south of Neak Luong (WT 278 353) when a floating mine detonated, sinking one of the boats and heavily damaging the other. One VNN sailor was missing, four were seriously injured, and five received minor wounds.
Rung Sat Special Zone

For the forces of the RSSZ, it was again a month of furious activity that required an enormous amount of patience and diligence. On 1 November at 0120H, personnel on a Boston Whaler assigned to pier security for the logistical base at Nha Be spotted floating vegetation and debris approximately 100 meters east of the deep water piers. The crew made a routine inspection of the debris and decided to disperse it with a concussion grenade. The result was a minor secondary explosion. No damage occurred and the incident was regarded as a possible enemy mining attempt.

On 3 November at 1920H, a reconnaissance squad from RF Company 999 was inserted by Slick 15 miles east of Nha Be (YS 191 760) and patrolled an assigned perimeter. One sampan with three persons aboard was sighted and taken under fire, probably killing three VC. The sampan was destroyed and 20 kilos of food captured. Seawolves were called and placed air strikes in the vicinity with unknown results.

Between 0900H and 1800H on 5 November, RSSZ PRUs conducted a special operation supported by Slicks, Seawolves, and Black Ponies. The PRUs were inserted by Slick aircraft into an area 11 miles northeast of Nha Be and began a sweep of the area. Two contacts were made with an unknown size VC force during the operation.
Results of the operation were no friendly casualties, eleven VC killed, and two captured. Items captured included five B-40 rocket rounds, 1000 AK-47 rounds, four claymore mines, and a large number of documents. Three hundred kilos of rice, two sampans, two anti-vehicle mines, ten kilos of TNT and five fortifications were destroyed.

From 1330H to 1815H on 6 November, RSSZ PRUs conducted a special operation in an area 11 miles northeast of Nha Be (YS 070 950). The operation was supported by Slicks and Seawolves. Immediately after insertion, the PRUs engaged a large enemy force and with effective air strikes and overhead cover suppressed the enemy fire. Seven VC were killed, and two VC were captured. Four small arms weapons, five anti-vehicle mines, and many documents were captured while three bunkers were destroyed. There were no friendly casualties.

Operation Chuong Duong 50-70 commenced at 0800H on 7 November approximately 27 kilometers northeast of the Nha Be Navy Base in the vicinity of YS 158 198. Two VNN PBRs received fire from the west bank in the vicinity of YS 182 800, but could not return the fire due to the close proximity of friendly troops. RF Company 121 made contact with an unknown number of VC which lasted intermittently
until 1300H, RSSZ Psyops Team and BJU-1 Team 13 conducted 20 minutes of taped loudspeaker broadcast with the Chieu Hoi theme. The results of Chuong Duong 50-70 were one friendly casualty, nine VC killed, and one VC captured. A large amount of documents, medical supplies, one AK-47, two wrist watches, two transistor radios, and three kilos of fish were captured.

Based upon intelligence in Nhon Trach (YS 15 75), 22 kilometers east of the Nha Be Navy Base, PF Platoon 018 and the Quang Xuyen Intelligence Squad were inserted by Slicks on 10 November to search for a possible weapons cache. At 1120H, the contingent discovered the enemy cache in the vicinity of YS 153 756 which included 14 CKC rifles, five-nine mm grease guns, one light machine gun DPM Chicom type 53, and one Mauser rifle. In addition, they destroyed 1,200 K-54 rounds, 750 AK-47 rounds, and 20 60 mm mortar rounds.

Chuong Duong 51-70 commenced on 13 November at 0855H in the vicinity of YS 075 535, 36 kilometers southeast of the Nha Be Navy Base. The district operation was secured due to no contact with the enemy. The result of the operation was six bunkers destroyed.

Chuong Duong 52-70 District Operation commenced on 17 November at 0730H in the vicinity of XS 95 68 - XS 99 68, 14 kilometers south of the Nha Be Navy Base. On 18 November at 1530H, the operation was secured due to no contact with the enemy.
Chuong Duong 53-70 Headquarters operation commenced on 19 November at 1600H in the vicinity of YS 14 80 - YS 21 77, 23 kilometers east of the Nha Be Navy Base. The results of the operation were one RF wounded, two bunkers and one sampan destroyed.

In one of the more tragic operations that started on 20 November at 0930H in the vicinity of YS 075 922, 16 kilometers northeast of the Nha Be Navy Base, a PRU tripped a booby trap, wounding seven personnel, four seriously, who were immediately medevaced by Slick to the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh. A sweep of the area brought them in contact with an unknown size VC force. USN LHFT placed air strikes on the enemy which resulted in 4 VC killed and one captured. Items captured were five individual weapons, four B-41 rockets, two claymore mines, two grenades, and four kilos of documents. Three base camps and four camouflaged hideouts were destroyed.

Chuong Duong 54-70 Headquarters Operation commenced on 25 November at 0800H in the vicinity of YS 175 801, 21 kilometers east of the Nha Be Navy Base. In one of the most relentless pursuits of the enemy by RSSZ units, results were finally established which reflected the tenacious struggle. On 28 November at 1400H, Chuong Duong 54-70 was concluded with one RF wounded, 50 VC killed,
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one VC wounded, and two captured. Five individual weapons, three
watches, two radios, three batteries, assorted electronics equipment
and codes and five kilos of documents were captured. Ninety kilos
of food and clothing, 30 kilos of rice, eight base camps, eleven
bunkers, three sampans, 14 sleeping platforms, and 15 kilos of
eating utensils were destroyed.

For the month of November, RSSZ units accounted for 87 VC
killed, four probably killed, nine VC and 31 weapons captured, while
suffering only one friendly killed and 13 wounded.

River Assault Division 153 departed Nha Be on 9 November and
marked the end of the U.S. patrol and assault boat operations in
the RSSZ. CTG 116.9 stated:

"In the 17 months that your unit was employed in the Rung
Sat as part of TG 116.9, your performance served as an outstanding
element of exemplary courage in combat for others to follow.
During this period, your units participated in more than 75
major combined air mobile - water mobile operations in addition
to the multitude of other tactical assignments to which you were
tasked. The alpha boats commonly known as the dreadnoughts
of the Rung Sat were vital to the success of the elimination
of over 500 Viet Cong."

1. CTG 116.9 MSG DTG 090750Z Nov '70

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