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DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam
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From: Commander U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam
To: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet (Code 12)

Subj: U. S. Naval Forces, Vietnam Monthly Historical Summary; March 1969; submission of

Ref: (a) CINCPACFLT ltr ser 1/6925 of 2 October 1967

Encl: (1) Operation SEA LORDS Summary
(2) Operation SEA LORDS Statistical Summary by Campaign
(3) Coastal Surveillance Force Summary
(4) River Patrol Force Summary
(5) Riverine Assault Force Summary
(6) USN Statistical Summary
(7) Naval Advisory Group Summary
(8) VNN/VNMC Statistical Summary
(9) Psychological and Civic Action Summary
(10) USN Civic Action Statistical Summary

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1. In accordance with reference (a), enclosures (1) through (10) are submitted.

2. Due to a change in reporting procedures, the information for the USN Civic Action Statistical Summary is not available for the current month's Historical Summary. The Civic Action Statistical Summary will carry the figures for the previous month's work i.e., March Historical Summary contains February's Civic Action Statistical Summary.

3. The data contained in enclosures (2), (6), (8), and (10) is based on information available this date. Any adjustments to enclosures (2), (6), (8) and (10) will be reflected in March's Historical Supplement.

J. G. Rizza

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Director of Naval History

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OPERATION SEA LORDS SUMMARY
March 1969

Units of all three in-country U. S. Navy task forces continued their coordinated efforts together with other U. S. and Vietnamese armed forces in each campaign area during March. Operation SEA LORDS began as a series of special operations supporting the IV Corps dry-season campaign; it achieved such significant results that the original concept has been expanded into permanent interdiction, pacification, and river raid campaigns. Austere support facilities are being replaced with new base construction along the interdiction patrol areas. In addition to expanded logistics facilities, other support areas such as intelligence, planning, and communications have been improved or adjusted to meet the needs of an operation comparable in dimension of effort to either normal MARKET TIME or GAME WARDEN activity.

Contact with the enemy continued to be frequent especially in the GIANT SLINGSHOT campaign. The losses inflicted on the enemy in these engagements reflect the aggressiveness and professional competence of all the units involved. Less obvious, but no less significant, have been the often intangible results of long hours spent on patrol or waiting quietly in ambush positions. Each month new reports are received which tell of Viet Cong infiltration attempts which where abandoned when a patrol craft has suddenly appeared around the river bend. Indications that the Viet Cong now have a sizeable back log of war materials which they have not been able to move

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across the interdiction barriers or that certain infiltration routes have been changed reveal the importance of the Operation SEA LORDS interdiction campaigns.

Giant Slingshot Campaign

Operating from bases or support vessels at Tan An, Tuyen Nhon, and Moc Hoa along the Vam Co Tay River and Ben Luc, Tra Cu, and Go Dau Ha along the Vam Co Dong River both USN and VNN river craft of TG 194.9 represent the largest segment of the interdiction barrier. The more than 150 units committed to this operation, including two "Swift" boats employed on the Vam Co River, worked closely with U. S. and Vietnamese ground forces along their patrol routes. A measure of the high degree of coordination existant among U. S. and Vietnamese forces can be ascertained in the variety of reconnaissance operations supported by Navy river craft - troop insertions were made of Vietnamese Army, Regional Force, Popular Force, Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG), Provincial Reconnaissance Unit, National Police, Field Force, and Armed Propaganda personnel troops along with U. S. Army 1st Air Cavalry and 25th Infantry Division soldiers at various times throughout the month. During March river craft participated in nearly 100 operations with these troops ranging from the insertion of small night reconnaissance patrols to area sweeps by battalion size forces. Night ambush tactics established by river units exacted further attrition from enemy forces as patrols waiting in night positions fired on enemy personnel on at least 80 occasions. Open fire range in these encounters

was as short as 6 to 10 feet at times. Ten evading junks or sampans were fired on by river patrols. Hostile fire was encountered 126 times during the month including 13 rocket/mortar attacks on bases and support vessels. There were two river mine detonations and two possible swimmer incidents. In addition to suppressive gunfire on enemy attack positions, GIANT SLINGSHOT forces carried out another 70 naval gunfire missions or helicopter strikes on targets of opportunity or suspected enemy positions.

Results of March operations included 341 enemy killed (160 body count plus 181 probable), 44 wounded and 22 captured. There were also 50 persons detained and six Hoi Chanhs who turned themselves in to naval units. A total of 49 structures/bunkers and 13 junks/sampans were destroyed. Although large arms caches were not discovered as at the onset of GIANT SLINGSHOT, the following enemy material was recovered in small caches and craft captured during March:

35 individual weapons

25 boxes of small arms ammunition

23 boxes of small arms gun ammunition

24 107-mm rockets

5 B-40 rockets and 3 launchers

30 grenades, mines, and claymores

1975 pounds of explosive plus wire, fuzes, detonators, etc.

4320 pounds of rice

2 caches of medicine (one a Viet Cong hospital)

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6 finds of miscellaneous documents

100 sets of individual equipment

Of the 107-mm rockets discovered, 12 were found by sailors of the USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) set up and aimed at the vessel in her anchorage at Ben Luc.

Friendly losses came to 7 killed (1 USN, 2 USA, 1 VNN, and 3 ARVN); 128 wounded (67 USN, 7 USA, 25 VNN, 14 ARVN, and 15 CIDG); 21 craft damaged (including an LST and a dredge each hit twice by rockets); and one river assault patrol craft (monitor) sunk.

Incidents which are typical of combat activity in the GIANT SLINGSHOT area of operations are described below:

On 4 March Vietnamese Navy (VNN) RAID 71 units were stationed in ambush positions four miles southeast of Tra Cu (XS 522 960) when they observed five persons running into bunkers. The two VNN ASPB's opened fire at the Viet Cong squad at a range of fifteen meters killing two of them and possibly killing three more.

While in a night ambush position along the Vam Co Dong River on 6 March, 9 miles northeast of Tra Cu (XT 410 130) ATC 111-2 and HQ 5111 (VNN ASPB) observed seven Viet Cong approaching their position at 2140. The river assault craft (RAC) opened fire at the point-blank range of 6 feet. Artillery was called in and emplaced within four minutes as the units cleared the area and reset the ambush approximately three-quarters of a mile downstream (XT 410 120). At 2214 seven more Viet Cong were caught as they approached

within 20 feet before the RAC took them under fire. Return fire was not received in either instance and enemy casualties were estimated to be 11 Viet Cong killed (2 body count and 9 probable). Later, on 8 and 9 March, ATC's and PBR's on routine patrol found a total of eight Viet Cong bodies floating in the river downstream of the 6 March ambush sites.

PBR's in night waterborne ambush position five miles north of Tra Cu (XT 445 050) sighted a sampan with 12 occupants aboard shortly after midnight on 7 March. The sampan was attempting to cross the river from east to west. The PBR sailors waited until the sampan was within 50 feet of their position before opening fire. The enemy's surprise was such that he was able to get off only two short bursts from an AK-47 before he was silenced. When the firing stopped, all 12 occupants of the sampan were dead and the sampan was destroyed. One Navyman was slightly wounded.

Shortly after midnight on 15 March, USS HARNETT COUNTY (LST 821) received a 107-mm rocket which impacted on the portside main deck bulkhead. The round penetrated the bulkhead and exploded in the wardroom within. Three Navymen and one U.S. civilian were wounded by the explosion. Extensive damage to the wardroom was caused by the blast and flooding resulting from a ruptured water pipe. The attack occurred approximately two miles west of Ben Luc (XS 617 756). Subsequent questioning of the local populace revealed that the rocket had been launched from a paddy dike on the west side of the river about 30 yards inland, off the ship's port beam.

Two PBR's in waterborne ambush on the Van Co Tay on the night of 16 March sighted eight persons who appeared to be armed moving about 25 yards inland

on the north bank of the river. Receiving permission of the Tuyen Nhon subsector, they took the men under fire. All eight are listed as probably killed. The action took place about 5 miles northwest of Tuyen Nhon (XS 233 819).

Approximately five miles northwest of Tuyen Nhon (XS 230 818), PBR's in ambush positions on the night of 29 March observed five men with packs and weapons walking on a dike on the north bank of the river. As the enemy approached within 10 yards away, the PBR's opened fire killing all five. The ambush was reset 800 yards downstream. Two men were then observed sneaking toward the boats and were taken under fire and killed when 15 yards from the boat. At the same time approximately 20 Viet Cong on the south bank of the river illuminated the boats with flares. The PBR's responded by firing on the enemy position. Seven of the enemy were listed as definite kills and an additional nine were listed as probable. There were no U.S. casualties. All actions took place between 2000 and 2100.

Regional Force companies 763 and 478 were embarked on VNN RAID 70 units on 26 March and inserted six miles southeast of Tan An (XS 650 618) on the Vam Co Tay River. While the VNN river craft were proceeding to their blocking stations they came under heavy recoilless rifle, rocket, and automatic weapons fire. Two units sustained rocket hits and proceeded to Tan An for medical assistance. Return fire was limited because of the friendly forces in the area. One VNN was killed and nine were wounded, four seriously. The RF companies, who were extracted in the late afternoon, accounted for seven

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Viet Cong killed and one NVA lieutenant captured.

On 30 March the Viet Cong fired a heavy volley of B-40 and automatic weapons fire on an ATC and monitor (flame zippo) on routine patrol on the Vam Co Tay River, 4½ miles northwest of Moc Hoa (WS 950 974). At 2304, T-111-2 and M-111-1 each received four rocket hits. One rocket detonated inside the monitor's 40-mm gunmount causing a fire which spread first through the fuel compartment and then throughout the boat. Both boats cleared the area and the monitor beached to prevent sinking. Crewmembers were evacuated by PBR's and T-111-2 as ammunition began cooking off. Navy Seawolves were scrambled and placed multiple strikes in the area. U. S. artillery fire was placed in the ambush zone and Provincial Reconnaissance Unit troops were inserted by PBR to sweep the area. U. S. casualties were one sailor killed and 13 wounded (3 officers); two VNN sailors were also wounded. The monitor continued to burn for about 10 hours although at 310235 the ATC hosed down topside areas. During the night the badly damaged monitor drifted slightly downstream, and was listing to port. An attempt was being made to reposition the drifting monitor when it capsized and sank bottom-up in 25 feet of water at 310845. An EOD team was dispatched to salvage weapons from the monitor while PRU's established a perimeter defense about the area. An attempt to salvage the monitor was planned for April.

Barrier Reef Campaign

Interdiction patrol and night ambush operations continued to frustrate

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enemy efforts to use the waterways between the Vam Co Tay River and the upper Mekong. On BARRIER REEF - EAST a division of 10 PBR's operated from Tuyen Nhon covering the Kinh Lagrange and Kinh Ong Lon as far west as Phuoc Xuyen (WS 858 770). These units, under the operational control of CTG 194.9, also made occasional probes onto Kinh Muoi Hai south of Ap Bac (XS 152 728). A second PBR division operated from the YRBM-20 in the upper Mekong at An Long (WS 4283) to patrol BARRIER REEF-WEST, the remainder of the Kinh Ong Lon and the Kinh Dong Tien. This portion of the campaign was commanded by CTG 116.5 until the 14th when CTU 194.6.0 was activated with operational control of BARRIER REEF - WEST and USS GARRETT COUNTY (LST 786). Mine sweeping (employing MSD's which replaced ASTB's initially used) also continued without incident.

Increased use of night ambush tactics was noted during the month. Three contacts were generated from more than 30 listening posts or night ambush positions set at likely enemy crossing points. Patrols also took one group of personnel and one evading sampan under fire, in addition to firing 11 harassment and interdiction missions, all with unknown results. Operations with Regional Force/Popular Force (RF/PF) units were carried out 18 times with light contact gained on six of these missions. Enemy opposition was confined to BARRIER REEF-EAST where hostile fire was encountered five times. Two PBR's were damaged and four crewmen were wounded and two others killed in one of these incidents. A fifth Navyman was wounded by fragments from a secondary explosion in a bunker being

destroyed Eight PF troops were wounded during ground sweeps supported by BATCLER RELIEF craft. Enemy losses came to one wounded (and captured), one suspect detained (by National Police), and 29 bunkers destroyed.

PBR's on a night patrol of Kinh Ong Lon came under intense automatic weapons and B-40 fire, 10 miles southwest of Tuyen Nhon (XS 120 731) on 4 March. The boats immediately returned and suppressed the enemy's fire. One of the PBR's, however, was forced to beach after sustaining three B-40 hits. The boat was later salvaged. One Navyman was wounded in the firefight. Enemy casualties were unknown.

Shortly after 2030 on 23 March PBR's patrolling the Kinh Muoi Hai, 9 miles south-southwest of Tuyen Nhon (XS 170 683) came under automatic weapons and rocket fire from 10 or 12 firing positions. The units returned the fire and cleared the area. Enemy casualties were unknown and no PBR crewmen were injured. Damage was limited to numerous automatic weapon bullet holes in the hull and canopy of the PBR's.

The enemy attacked PBR's in the process of entering night observation positions, 11 miles southwest of Tuyen Nhon (XS 110 732), shortly after 2100 on 26 March. PBR 128 received a rocket hit on its radar dome resulting in four crewmembers wounded. Enemy automatic weapons fire killed one man and wounded another on PBR 148. Both boats then beached about 500 meters from the ambush site and called for dustoff. Two additional PBR's arrived on the scene and received light automatic weapons fire while covering the

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beached boats. Artillery fire was requested and the first round was on deck one minute after the request. Two more PBR's with corpsmen aboard proceeded to the scene to administer first aid while awaiting dustoff. Regional Force troops from Companies 857 and 161 immediately set out for the ambush site after hearing of the attack. Regional Force troops from Ap Bac were also enroute to the scene shortly after the attack. After sweeping the area RF Companies 857 and 161 located five automatic weapons positions on the south bank and two on the north bank of the canal. Enemy casualties were unknown. U. S. casualties were one killed, one dead of wounds and four others wounded.

TRAN HUNG DAO Campaign

Operations by U. S. Navy river craft and "Swift" boats together with VNN river and coastal units completed the interdiction line along the Cambodian border between Chau Doc and Ha Tien. The Vinh Te Canal portion of this campaign, patrolled by one PBR division and VNN junks, LCVP's, and monitors, encountered six enemy initiated firefights and no mines during March. Low water limited operations at times and the VNN units tended to remain near friendly outposts; however, the use of coastal group reaction troops continued to show improvement. Several days of special blocking patrols on the Tri Ron Canal and general support of ground forces probing enemy positions on Nui Coto (VS 9947) were also carried out by the Chau Doc based units of TG 116.5. Both U. S. Navy and VNN "Swift" boats continued daily patrols and support of SEAL operations on the Rach Giang

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Than. A new development in this segment of the interdiction barrier was the planting of mines along enemy infiltration routes and in likely enemy ambush positions on the river bank. Hostile fire was encountered twice in this operating area. The most serious incident cost U. S. Navy forces the loss of a helicopter and two crewmen. Other friendly losses in the TRAN HUNG DAO campaign totaled 10 wounded (4 USN, 2 USA, and 4 VNN) and six VNN craft damaged. Enemy casualties were placed at 67 killed, nine wounded and three captured.

On the evening of 7 March a Vietnamese junk patrol escorted 20 Vietnamese Navy landing troops in a sweep operation along the south bank of the Vinh Te Canal, southwest of Chau Doc (WS 023 780). The junks came under hostile fire from two bootches. Enemy fire was returned and suppressed resulting in two Viet Cong killed. Another five Viet Cong were probably killed as they attempted to evade in a sampan which the VNN sank with hand grenades. A second sampan was captured and it contained some personal gear, some small arms ammunition, and two U. S. canteens.

On the morning of 12 March, SEALs were inserted by truck at a point about 1½ miles northeast of Ha Tien (VS 432 505). They patrolled to a nearby waterhole and took up their positions. At noon, five Viet Cong with three weapons were observed approaching. A LHFT was called to provide cover and at 1215 the SEALs fired on the Viet Cong killing all of them. The LHFT then covered the extraction of the SEALs. In addition to five men killed, the enemy lost one AK-47, one SKS and 200 rounds of

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ammunition captured. There were no U.S. casualties.

Late on the afternoon of 23 March, Seawolves 304 and 305 flew from Ha Tien to conduct a visual reconnaissance of Nui Sa Ko (VS 435 519) for a proposed SEAL operation. While conducting the reconnaissance they received automatic weapons fire from Nui Da Dung (VS 432 524). They placed their first strike on the enemy position at 1612. Two minutes later they were starting their second strike, with Seawolf 305 flying the lead. After 305 placed his strike and started to pull out, he reported the loss of an engine. The damaged aircraft then crashed in a clearing 2 miles north of Ha Tien (VS 430 520) and started to burn. Seawolf 304 immediately touched down next to the wreckage and sent one man to assist in removing the wounded from the downed helo. At this time both aircraft were under heavy automatic weapons fire. The remaining Seawolf lifted off and continued his attack on the enemy while calling for assistance. An Army UH-1D responded but while making his approach on the site, the aircraft was hit and started to leak fuel, forcing him to return to Ha Tien. A USA advisor with 10 RF troops from a nearby outpost arrived at the wreckage at 1630. Fifteen minutes later another UH-1D arrived on the scene. This slick was also hit during the first approach and the pilot wounded, however, a second run reached the wreckage of Seawolf 305 safely. The three wounded from the downed aircraft and the man from Seawolf 304 were safely extracted. The two remaining members of the 305 crew were dead and pinned in the wreckage. After multiple fixed wing and helo strikes on the enemy positions, the

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enemy fire was suppressed to allow an insertion of SEALs to remove the two bodies and destroy the aircraft. By 2000, the SEALs and Vietnamese removed the bodies from the aircraft. The SEALs and bodies of the dead were safely flown out by UH-1D at 2030. During the entire operation all units continued to receive enemy fire from Nui Dai Dung. Charges left by the SEALs to destroy the aircraft failed to detonate but it was successfully destroyed the following day when special forces personnel fired recoilless rifle rounds directly into the wreckage. Enemy casualties were given as two probably killed.

SEARCH TURN Campaign

River patrol craft of TU 116.1.3 continued routine interdiction patrols and support of pacification efforts in the area northeast of Rach Gia. In addition, by month's end PBR's had begun patrols of the coastal area on the Rach Gia Bay where waters were too shallow for "Swift" boats of the Coastal Surveillance Force. The PBR's also joined with Vietnamese river craft in support of ARVN operations along the Cai Be River southeast of Rach Gia. Enemy contact was light in sweep operations which resulted in six Viet Cong killed, 15 prisoners, and six individual weapons plus 15,000 rounds of small arms ammunition captured. Patrol units met hostile fire on six occasions. Most of this action came on operations away from the regular patrol areas on the Rach Gia-Long Xuyen and Rach Soi canals. The losses to hostile fire were one PBR destroyed, one damaged, one Navyman and 11 Vietnamese wounded.

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PBR's of TU 116.1.4 came under heavy automatic weapons and rocket fire approximately 12 miles north of Rach Gia (WS 080 257) on the night of 5 March. The boats immediately returned the fire and cleared the area. Seawolves were scrambled to assist the engaged units. One of the boats was beached after it received a B-40 rocket hit which caused a fire on board. The Seawolves placed strikes on the enemy positions which resulted in a large secondary explosion. Enemy material casualties were 10 structures destroyed and nine damaged; two sampans were also destroyed and five were damaged. Enemy personnel casualties were unknown. There were no U. S. casualties. Subsequent attempts to salvage the damaged PBR were unsuccessful. After removing all useable parts, the remainder of the boat was destroyed.

On the morning of 15 March, a PBR patrol became involved in an enemy initiated firefight 12 miles south-southeast of Rach Gia (WR 185 885). The boats came under automatic weapons and rocket propelled grenade (RPG) fire from the south bank of Song Cai Be. After returning the fire, the units cleared the area and called for a Seawolf strike on the enemy position. The IRFT strike destroyed two structures and damaged six others. Enemy personnel casualties were unknown. One Navyman was wounded in the initial encounter.

MARKET TIME Raider Campaign

River incursions by Third and Fourth Coastal Zone "Swift" boats continued to strike at enemy base areas along rivers and canals of IV

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Corps open to the Gulf of Thailand and South China Sea. Overall, enemy opposition was gen lly light as hostile fire was encountered on only 13 of more than 50 operations carried out. Several of these raids in southern Ca Mau Peninsula were made with Mobile Strike Force (MSF) troops embarked. The areas along the Bay Hap River and adjoining canals were frequently swept by RF troops from Cai Nuoc with PCF support. Special operations were carried out by a SEAL team based at Cai Nuoc in the first step toward establishing a permanent U. S. Navy presence in this region.

Viet Cong base areas and water craft vital to enemy mobility in these areas were again hit severely by the PCF guns and supporting aircraft. Nearly 700 junks and sampans were destroyed or heavily damaged and more than 1600 structures/bunkers met a like fate. Along with infrequent contact with enemy troops the Viet Cong personnel casualties were down in March to 21 killed and eight wounded. Friendly casualties came to 19 wounded and seven craft damaged.

On the afternoon of 8 March PCF's 8, 9 and 38 with MSF embarked entered the Cua Lon River 90 miles south of Rach Gia (VQ 80 63). The craft moved up river to the mouths of the Nhung Mien and Bien Nhan rivers (VQ 93 61) where the troops were landed to investigate reports of enemy mines along the banks of these rivers. All units probed 1000 yards south along the rivers with no contact or sign of mines. "Swift" boat gunfire destroyed four structures and one bunker before the troops were re-embarked. While enroute up river to the Cai Nhap (WQ 088 710)

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the craft were taken under heavy enemy fire from both banks between WQ 020 680 to WQ 030 680. All craft received hits, however, PCF 38 was the most seriously damaged as it lost one engine and took water into the engine compartment. After clearing the area the craft stopped at WQ 042 693 and set up a defensive perimeter to wait for a medevac helicopter to pick up two USN and one MSF who were seriously wounded. Five other crewmen received minor wounds. After PCF 38 made temporary repairs the craft got underway and cleared the river late that night.

The Cua Lon River was the scene of another raid that encountered hostile fire on the 12th. PCF's 94 and 23 took MSF troops up river to WQ 110 728 where they were landed without incident and began moving to the west. At the same time PCF's 51 and 43 stood by to provide cover. As the sweep progressed PCF 51 probed north of the Cai Nhap Canal and PCF's 94 and 23 probed up the Cai Ngai River to WQ 155 750. Following these probes light small arms fire was received from WQ 085 705 and was immediately suppressed. The three Swifts then headed up the Cai Nhap Canal to WQ 082 750 where two of three watermines detonated, one throwing up a 50-foot column of mud and water. Heavy enemy fire was taken from both canal banks and could not be suppressed. The PCF's cleared to the south and picked up the MSF unit at WQ 086 732. The enemy positions were taken under mortar fire and artillery and air support was called in. A group of 20 additional MSF was brought to the mouth of the Cua Lon from the USS WASHTENAW COUNTY (LST-1166) by

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LCVP. They were taken by PCF's 94 and 43 to WQ 086 730 where a sweep lasting about one hour sighted nine Viet Cong and detained one female suspect. Other results included five structures, 14 sampans, and a large junk destroyed. Three PCF's received minor damage and one crewman was slightly wounded.

On the 13th PCF's 25, 54 and 59 entered the My Thanh River at XR 310 407. After proceeding up river to XR 110 428 the craft headed back to the South China Sea taking targets of opportunity under fire. Results of this highly successful incursion totaled 80 structures, 58 sampans, and 22 bunkers destroyed. Four suspects were detained and five Viet Cong were killed.

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OPERATION SEA LORDS STATISTICAL SUMMARY BY CAMPAIGN
March 1969

	GIANT SLINGSHOT	BARRIER REEF	TRAN HUNG DAO	SEARCH [illegible]	MARKET TIME RAIDER
Enemy casualties:					
a. Killed	160(BC)+161(EST)	0	44(BC)+23(EST)	6(BC)	12(BC)+9([illegible])
b. Wounded	44	1	9	0	8
c. Captured	22	1	3	15	0
USN casualties:					
a. Killed	1	2	2 USN & 4 VNN	0	0
b. Wounded	67	5	4 USN & 30 VNN	1 USN & 11 VNN	19
c. Captured	0	0	0	0	0
d. Missing	0	0	0	0	0
Enemy material losses:					
a. Destroyed:					
(1) Junks or sampans	13	0	1	2	622
(2) Structures	49	29	19	12	1,040
b. Captured:					
(1) Junks or sampans	1	0	3	0	0
(2) Weapons	62	0	0	6	*
(3) Ammunition (rounds)	*	0	0	15,040	*
(4) Rice (tons)	2	0	0	0	*
c. Damaged:					
(1) Junks or sampans	0	0	0	5	88
(2) Structures	0	0	0	15	627
USN material losses:					
a. Destroyed:					
(1) Surface craft	1	0	0	1	0
(2) Helicopters	0	0	1	0	0
b. Damaged:					
(1) Surface craft	19	2	6 VNN	1	7
(2) Helicopters	0	0	3	0	0
Hostile fire incidents	126	5	8	6	13

Remarks: * Information not available.

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COASTAL SURVEILLANCE FORCE SUMMARY
March 1969

Coastal activity showed a seasonal increase as the number of junks and sampans detected by MARKET TIME surveillance units rose to 43,754 in March, more than 18,000 greater than in February. Surveillance results of GAME WARDEN PCF patrols are included in the River Patrol Force summary this month for the first time (i.e. 6,798 detections, 1,744 inspections, and 3,931 boardings by TF 115 river patrols are not reported in this section). By conducting 20,302 inspections and 9,264 boardings, surveillance patrols checked over 63 percent of the craft detected to maintain an effective barrier against the infiltration of arms and ammunition by sea. A total of 881 persons, including 14 Viet Cong suspects were detained as a result of the boardings and stringent enforcement of restricted zones. Detections of steel hulled vessels fell somewhat to 896. Of these, 696 were inspected and 86 boarded with no suspicious activity disclosed.

As in prior months since "Swift" boats assumed responsibility for river patrols, routine operations were carried out on the lower Co Chien and Ham Luong rivers under the operational control of CTG 115.3, on the Soi Rap under the operational control of CTG 116.9, and on the Vam Co River under the operational control of CTG 194.9. In addition, daily patrols, night ambushes, and frequent support of special operations were carried out on the Rach Giang Thanh as part of the TRAN HUNG DAO campaign of Operation SEA LORDS (formerly FOUL DECK). Similar river operations were conducted

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almost as frequently on the Bay Hap and Cua Lon rivers as a part of Operation SEA LORDS supporting special operations (U-HAUL) and RF/PF or Mobile Strike Force (MSF) sweeps in the southern Ca Mau Peninsula. Results of these activities as well as the many SEA LORDS river raids are discussed in the sections of this report covering the various SEA LORDS campaigns. A new area of river operations by "Swift" boats became well established during March. Patrols and operations with the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) Coastal Group 14 (CG 14) on the Cua Dai River became part of the First Coastal Zone normal patrol operations.

Patrol craft on normal MARKET TIME missions continued to bring pressure on enemy positions and commo/liaison routes along the coast with 576 naval gunfire support missions executed in response to tactical intelligence or requests from forces ashore. Included in this total are nine cases of evading craft taken under fire and the suppression of hostile fire in 26 incidents. Enemy casualties and material losses totaled 37 killed (18 body count plus 19 estimated), 26 wounded, 170 junks/sampans destroyed and 21 damaged, and 209 structures/bunkers destroyed and 171 damaged. Hostile fire resulted in two men killed, three wounded, and one small boat damaged.

Also during March several SEAL operations were carried out under CTF 115 operational control. The results of these probes into Viet Cong bases included 17 killed (body count) plus four probably killed and one Viet Cong captured. Three SEALS were wounded by hostile fire. Supporting attacks by helicopters accounted for eight structures/bunkers destroyed

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and seven damaged.

A report from PCF 55 revealed the extent to which "Swift" boat employment on rivers has increased in the past six months. A command detonated mine exploded 10 to 15 feet off the starboard side as it received heavy small arms and automatic weapons fire from the north bank of the Cau Dai River. In the paragraph of the report covering the employment of the unit at the time of the incident, the "Swift" boat indicted, "NORMAL M/T RIV PATROL." Normal river patrols on the Cua Dai during March were often far from routine as hostile fire, including two mine detonations, was encountered 12 times. In addition to hostile fire suppression, evading craft were engaged twice, another 19 naval gunfire support missions were fired and a half-dozen ground probes were supported by Cua Dai river patrols., Enemy losses came to 19 killed (7 body count plus 12 estimated), 2 wounded, 3 craft and 13 structures/bunkers damaged. Friendly casualties came to seven USN and four VNN wounded and two "Swift" boats received significant damage.

On the evening of the 3rd the enemy launched a rocket attack apparently aimed at the pier area and power ships at Cam Ranh Bay. A skimmer from STABLE DOOR Unit ONE was on patrol near the Vinnel power ships moored on the eastern side of the bay (CP 043 140) when four incoming rounds hit in the vicinity. Shrapnel hit one of the two crewmen in the head killing him and also caused moderate damage to the boat. Navy units at Cam Ranh Bay remained at general quarters for over two hours as sporadic rocket fire

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continued until about 0100 on the 4th. Suspected launching sites were taken under fire by PCF 73 and picket boat 51 with unknown results.

While conducting board and search operations just north of Dung Island in the mouth of the Bassac River (XR 10 604) on 8 March, USCGC POINT GREY was approached by two sampans that had come out of a nearby canal on the island (XR 405 597). One of the sampans contained a man, a woman, and a young girl who had been wounded by harassment and interdiction fire from the cutter several hours earlier. Sector authorities had received an intelligence report of a Viet Cong platoon near the mouth of the canal and requested the mission fired by POINT GREY. Only the man was seriously wounded and all three were taken by a medevac helicopter to the 29th Evacuation Hospital, Can Tho. The man was cooperative when questioned, but could not offer any knowledge of Viet Cong activity near his home. He was unaware of the Government of South Vietnam or why a war was being fought. A medcap and psyops broadcasts were planned for the man's village, An Thanh (XR 242 705).

A SEAL operation was carried out early on the 14th in an effort to capture four Viet Cong political infrastructure members and a four man sapper team reported to be on Ham Tam Island 5 miles southeast of Nha Trang (CP 09 47). After inserting by skimmer at about 0400 on the southwest shore of the island (CP 089 465), the seven SEALs, one LDNN (Vietnamese SEAL), one interpreter, and two Hoi Chan split into two groups to approach the enemy camp (CP 094 466). The enemy became alerted just before the one group of SEALs reached position for entry into the camp from the north. As the other group waited to the south for the signal to

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move in, four men ran south from the camp and were taken under fire. At the same time the SEALS still approaching from the north came under fire. Three SEALS, including the team leader, were immediately wounded, however, the enemy fire was quickly suppressed. The team leader, although seriously wounded, retained control and was able to call on the second group to hit the enemy with a deadly crossfire. After killing seven of the enemy and collecting three bags of documents the team was extracted by skimmer. The team leader had earlier safely brought his men to a position where he and other wounded were evacuated by helicopter.

Structures and suspected enemy activity three miles north of the Gach Hao River mouth (WR 492 001) were taken under fire by USCGC WACHUSETT (WHEC44) on 18 March. With the aid of the Naval Intelligence Liaison Officer (NILO), Bac Lieu spotting from an Army O-1 aircraft the cutter fired 120 rounds of 5-inch projectiles into the target area. A total of 36 structures were destroyed and 4 others heavily damaged by the gunfire. Although no personnel casualties were observed, numerous persons had been seen entering the structures prior to the start of the mission.

At about 1730 on the 19th PCF 101 was proceeding down the Cua Dai River from Hoi An in company with PCF 58 when hit in the engine compartment by a 75-mm recoilless rifle round. A fire broke out in the engine compartment and the craft ran aground at BT 192 547. As PCF 58 closed to assist, also receiving automatic weapons fire, the damaged craft broke free of the bottom just as a second 75-mm round hit at the waterline below the starboard

pilot house door. This hit caused a fire which eventually detonated the ammunition stored in the main cabin. PCF 58 came upon 11 survivors (one USN and four VNN were wounded) in the water 500 yards up river from PCF 101 which was now aground and ablaze at BT 195 555. Artillery and air strikes were called into the enemy positions by PCF 58 before heading for CG 14 with the survivors. Two more "Swift" boats were sent into the river to assist when it was discovered that three men were still missing. Three other PCF's also joined in the search and efforts to salvage PCF 101 before the craft was freed and taken to the CG 14 base at about 0300 on the 20th. At 0730 the three missing men, all with minor wounds, were taken off a sampan while on their way to CG 14 after having spent the night on Thuan Tinh Island (BT 180 555).

Also on a Cua Dai River patrol PCF 24 was firing at evading swimmers when hit by a 75-mm round at about 1830 on the 21st. A second hit was received 30 seconds later as the PCF was speeding up to clear the area. The hostile fire was returned by PCF 24 and PCF 99 which had been patrolling with the damaged boat. The PCF ran aground on a sandbar at BT 178 550 where the fires were put out and damage evaluated. The "Swift" boat was pulled free by PCF 99 and towed to CG 14 just over an hour later. Both craft received and returned sporadic small arms fire during the salvage effort. Artillery and air strikes were placed on the enemy positions. There were no personnel casualties and the three swimmers were all hit by .50 caliber fire and killed.

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On the 22nd the small boat from USCGC POINT ORIENT was checking fishing craft close inshore 56 miles north of Qui Nhon (BS 93 12). While proceeding to board the three sampans caught in a restricted zone heavy automatic weapons fire was received from three positions to the north and west. A crewman was struck and killed instantly by the first burst of fire. In the incident three of the five sampans hailed by the small boat stopped their engines instead of evading up the river with the other two. Because restricted area violators had frequently been evading, the incident appeared to be a deliberate ambush with the sampans luring the small boat close to the shore line.

On the morning of 27 March USCGC POINT DUME was notified by a unit of the 173rd Airborne that a Viet Cong unit was located in a village 40 miles north of Qui Nhon (BR 98 90) and requested the cutter to carry out a blocking patrol while they swept the area. A naval gunfire mission was also fired on the enemy escape route at the request of the Army force killing four of the enemy. In addition, a landing party was sent ashore to destroy 41 sampans which the Army said the enemy had been using to transport Viet Cong supplies. The sweep was very successful as the ground forces killed 42, captured 8, detained 109 other persons, and captured three individual weapons.

On the evening of the 27th Combined Action Company 1-3 called on PCF 39 for urgent naval gunfire to help repel an enemy ground probe and mortar attack. Firing illumination and destructive fire from her 81-mm mortar the "Swift" boat delivered the needed support for the outpost 11 miles southeast of Chu Lai (BS 68 97). A morning sweep of the enemy positions revealed seven bodies (three credited to PCF 39), three heavy blood trails, and two AK-47's.

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RIVER PATROL FORCE SUMMARY
March 1969

GAME WARDEN forces extended their areas of operations again this month, as patrol assets were committed to the waterborne patrol and joint operations in support of the Nui Coto mountain campaign, 16 miles north-northwest of Rach Gia on the Tri Ton Canal; PBR's also assumed some patrol responsibilities in the Rach Gia Bay area to prevent enemy infiltrators from utilizing the relatively shallow waters close into the shore. The normal resource control and interdiction functions in the rivers and canals of the Delta and RSSZ. and major participation in the various interdiction campaigns of Operation SEA LORDS continued.

The PBR's logged almost 2,800 two-boat patrols and accounted for over 213,000 detections, the highest number to date. They also conducted 42,500 inspections and 65,321 boardings; both of these figures are substantially higher than the preceding month's. In addition to the efforts expended in obtaining the foregoing results the versatile PBR's accomplished numerous transportation, security, gunfire support and humanitarian missions. During this reporting period, the much called upon and quick reaction UH-1B's of HAL-3 spent 257 hours on preplanned strikes, 85 hours on reaction strikes, 235 hours prosecuting targets of opportunity and 167 hours of support type strikes for a total of 734 hours of combat.

PBR and UH-1B Game Warden Operations

While on surveillance patrol on the afternoon of 1 March, Seawolves

30 and 33 were given a target of opportunity about 6½ miles north of Sa Dec (WS 872 442). A battalion of Viet Cong in a treeline were attacked by the helos resulting in an estimated 50 Viet Cong killed and two sampans destroyed. The report of the Viet Cong deaths came from a Vietnamese civilian who reported seeing the Viet Cong bury their dead. There were no U. S. casualties.

PBR's with overhead light helicopter fire team (LHFT) cover made a canal reconnaissance about 8 miles south of Can Tho (WR 891 963) on the afternoon of 5 March. The PBR's took an evading sampan and Viet Cong lookout under fire and the Seawolves fired on a large concentration of sampans and structures in the area. There were no U. S. casualties. Enemy losses to the PBR's included one sampan destroyed and five Viet Cong probably killed; the Seawolves destroyed three structures and 18 sampans, and damaged 17 structures and 16 sampans.

PBR's enroute to a troop insertion point came under intense RPG and automatic weapons fire, 7½ miles south-southeast of Can Tho (WR 912 980) on the morning of 8 March. The PBR's returned the fire as they cleared the area. The lead boat received three RPG hits, began taking on water, and had to be beached. The crew of the beached boat transferred to the cover boat and Seawolves which had been previously scrambled provided air cover for the damaged craft. The boat was successfully salvaged approximately three hours later. One Navyman was wounded in the encounter. Enemy casualties were unknown.

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Reacting to a request for assistance shortly after noon on 8 March, six PBR's and two Seawolves were dispatched to assist friendly troops in contact with the enemy, 3½ miles north of Chau Doc (XS 109 995). Upon arriving on the scene the units came under small arms, automatic weapons and recoilless rifle fire. After making two firing runs through the contact area, the PBR's cleared the area and the Seawolves placed strikes on the enemy positions. Results of the Navy attacks on the enemy were unknown. One U. S. Navy sailor died of wounds and four others were wounded in the encounter.

Late in the morning of 10 March PBR's of TU 116.7.[illegible] observed a sampan approximately 4 ½ miles northeast of Ba Dec. After warning shots were ignored, the sampan was taken under fire. No return fire was received. Both occupants of the sampan were killed and one AK-50, two grenades and 400 rounds of ammunition were recovered from the sampan. There were no U. S. casualties.

Shortly after 1100 on 10 March, Seawolves of TU 116.3 9 flew a mission in support of ARVN troops who were in contact with the enemy approximately 13½ miles east of Vinh Long (XS 297 307). Enemy forces were estimated as battalion size. The Seawolves placed their strikes without opposition. The results of their attacks were 22 Viet Cong probably killed, eight structures destroyed and six others damaged. There were no U. S. casualties.

PBR's in a night observation position about 5 miles north of My Tho (XS 455 517), received approximately 200 rounds of automatic weapons fire

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on the night of 22 March. The boats returned the fire and cleared the area. There were no personnel casualties and material casualties were limited to about nine bullet holes on the PBR's.

In mid-afternoon on 23 March an RMK tug came under fire, 10 miles west of My Tho. PBR's near the scene responded to the emergency and suppressed the enemy fire. No hits were sustained by the PBR's but the tug suffered three rocket hits and automatic weapons fire. The PBR's medevaced three wounded Vietnamese from the tug and assisted the tug master in returning to Dong Tam.

Shortly after midnight on 26 March the Dong Tam area came under heavy mortar attack. One round hit the ammunition dump causing an explosion which resulted in numerous fires. The base was evacuated after the fires went out of control due to exploding ammunition. Three UH-1B's were destroyed as well as the helo pad, mess hall, communications shack and barracks. One Navy man was killed and six others were wounded during attempts to evacuate the helos from the scene.

PBR's from TU 116.1.1 were involved in the enemy-initiated firefight 14 miles southeast of Can Tho (YR 035 941) in mid afternoon of 26 March. The boats came under automatic weapons fire, made two firing runs through the area, and then withdrew. One Navyman was wounded in the encounter. A PBR received six automatic weapons hits which caused the main power cable to sever. Enemy casualties were one wounded, one structure destroyed and two damaged.

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The enemy attacked two PBR's near the Dong Tam Base (XS 432 422) shortly after 2200 on 27 March. The PBR's received automatic weapons and recoilless rifle fire. After returning the fire the boats cleared the area. Two Navymen were wounded in the firefight and there was some shrapnel damage to one of the PBR's. Enemy casualties were unknown.

"Swift" Boat Game Warden Operations

During March, as in prior months since Operation SEA LORDS began to expand in December, "Swift" boats of the Coastal Surveillance Force carried out routine patrols in several portions of the normal GAME WARDEN operating areas. On the lower Ham Luong and Co Chien rivers, patrols consisting of four sections of two PCF's operated under TG 115.3 operational control. During the month these units detected 6,798 junks and sampans. As a result of 1,744 inspections and 3,931 boardings one junk and 13 persons were detained, including one Viet Cong suspect. In addition to routine patrols these "Swift" boats participated in eight ground sweeps or reconnaissance probes by landing and recovering troops. They also carried out 42 naval gunfire support missions in response to tactical intelligence and requests from local authorities. On the 17th a sampan crossing the Ham Luong, 5 miles south of Dong Tam (XS 4333), evaded when challenged by PCF 102 and was taken under fire at a range of 25 yards. The two occupants were probably killed although no bodies were found in the sampan which contained one AK-47 and 210 rounds of ammunition.

Also under TF 115.3 operational control, PCF's patrolling on the

northern station of area 6F made several probes into the waters of the eastern Rung Sat Special Zone. During March four naval gunfire support missions were conducted in this area and on the afternoon of the 24th a mine was detonated under PCF 57. The "Swift" boat was closing the beach eight miles northeast of Vung Tau (YS 358 551) to investigate an abandoned sampan when the mine exploded. No damage was received and the area around the sampan was taken under fire, destroying the craft. On the opposite side of the Rung Sat two PCF's patrolled the Soi Rap and one PCF patrolled the lower Long Tau under TG 116.9 operational control until the 14th when the Long Tau patrol was terminated and the Soi Rap patrol was reduced to one PCF. The Soi Rap PCF carried out eight naval gunfire support missions and encountered one hostile fire incident while probing the Rach Vam Sat. Detections on the Soi Rap came to 1,852 with 618 of these junks or sampans inspected and 808 boarded. "Swift" boat patrols on the Vam Co River under CTG 194.9 operational control made 1,550 detections of water craft. Of these, 730 were inspected and 488 were boarded.

Naval gunfire by PCF's in normal GAME WARDEN areas accounted for 12 sampans and five structures destroyed, 8 sampans and 14 structures damaged, six Viet Cong killed (1 BC+5 EST), and 12 wounded.

SEAL Operations

A squad of SEALs with one Vietnamese LDNN were inserted by sampan, 10 miles northeast of Vinh Long (XS 220 398), on the morning of 2 March.

The Vietnamese member of the squad was dressed as a Viet Cong and armed with an AK-47. The LDNN questioned an old woman as to the whereabouts of the enemy. The squad then patrolled to a nearby house and spotted two unarmed Viet Cong outside of the house. As the SEALs approached the Viet Cong alerted those inside the building. The house was taken under fire. Seven Viet Cong ran out the front door and one went out the back door in an attempt to escape. As a result of the SEALs fire seven of the Viet Cong were killed and one was wounded. The house was then surrounded and Viet Cong in a bunker were urged to surrender. This failing, the SEALs threw a hand grenade into the bunker killing its three occupants. There were no friendly casualties. In addition to the enemy personnel casualties, three sampans were destroyed and several personal weapons and complete B-40 rocket systems were captured.

SEALs from TU 116.6.3 were inserted by sampan 12 miles southeast of My Tho (XS 687 397) about 1700 on 23 March. Patrolling east, they observed four men moving along a trail. One of the SEALs stepped from his position and hailed the men who immediately evaded. The SEALs then took the men under fire, killing them all. There were no U. S. casualties.

Late in the afternoon of 25 March, a group of SEALs were inserted by sampans on Thoi Son Island (XS 470 423) after they had observed about 20 males running across a rice field toward a treeline. The SEALs took the evading men under fire and received heavy automatic weapons fire once the

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evaders reached their objective. At this point the SEALS requested a Seawolf strike and then called in 81-mm mortar fire from the LCM that had accompanied the insertion. After the airstrike, the SEALS once again came under .50 calibre machine gun fire from the center of the island and from the treeline. The SEALS withdrew and were safely extracted by a light seal support craft (LSSC). There were no U. S. casualties and enemy casualties were estimated as eight killed (probable) and four Viet Cong wounded.

Enemy Attacks on Merchant Vessels

During the month the enemy continued to exhibit his ability to attack merchantmen on the Long Tau River, Saigon's vital lifeline to the sea. Nine separate attacks were recorded during the period 6-26 March Four of these attacks resulted in some minor damage to the ships and on two of these occasions personnel were wounded. In all instances but one there was a rapid response on the part of U. S. and Vietnamese forces in returning the enemy fire. The one exception was the result of poor communications as friendly forces were informed of the attack too long after the fact

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RIVERINE ASSAULT FORCE SUMMARY
March 1969

Operating with 160 river assault craft (RAC) since the transfer in February of 25 boats to the Vietnamese Navy, the Mobile Riverine Force (MRF) again ranged the delta in watermobile assault operations in coordination with U.S. Army and Vietnamese forces. TG 117.1 continued operations in Kien Hoa Province with the Second Brigade, U. S. NINTH Infantry Division. Last month's resurgence of enemy initiated firefights against RAC in Kien Hoa Province carried over into March; heavy contact was gained by ground units on several occasions. TF 117.2 and the Vietnamese marines conducted a successful strike into enemy base area 480 in Chuong Thien Province. Intense combat activity resulted as the RAC and troops forced heavy contact with the enemy. An additional river assault division (RAD 112) was assigned to the Operation GIANT SLINGSHOT Campaign in order to implement expanding operations there.

A plan for the collocation of both MRF task groups took effect on 4 March as the units of TG 117.2 joined with TG 117.1 at the My Tho anchorage. The common mobile riverine base allows for a more efficient utilization of assets and permits reduction of the requirements for base defense from two divisions to one, thereby allowing the extra division to be employed in a line capacity. Tactical flexibility is also maintained should a need arise for two task groups. TG 117.2 will remain a provisional designation for use in special operations on an as occurring basis.

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The following division assignments during the month reflect realignment of forces as well as operational commitment by division:

RAD 92 worked as utility division for the month primarily in escort for Army LCM-8 supply vessels between the MRF and an Army fire support base at the Crossroads at the intersection of the Song Ba Lai and Kinh Giao Hoa (XS 58 35), 7 miles southeast of My Tho. It also supported the U. S. Army 3/34th Artillery Battalion.

RAD 112 supported the 3/60th Infantry Battalion in operations in Kien Hoa Province until 17 March when the division transited to the GIANT SLINGSHOT area under the operational control of CTG 194.6.

RAD 131 supported operations of the 4/47th Infantry Battalion in Kien Hoa Province.

RAD 132 conducted the minesweeping, patrol and upkeep duties of base defense division. On 4 March, upon establishment of a common MRB, this unit became Task Force Base Defense Division.

RAD 151 acted as TG 117.2 base defense division until 4 March. On 17 March it relieved RAD 112 as support division for 3/60th Infantry Battalion.

RAD 152 operated with the Vietnamese Marine Corps in enemy base area 480.

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As tactical needs dictated, river assault craft were not aligned with the parent division.

The following table indicates the distribution and employment of river assault craft on a typical day in March:

ACTIVITY/OPERATION	MRF CRAFT ASSIGNED					
	ASPB	ATC	MCM	CCB	REFUELER	TOTALS
2nd Brigade, U.S. 9th Infantry Division TG 117.1	10	26	9	4	2	51
Vietnamese Marine Corps	4	17	5	1	1	28
GIANT SLINGSHOT/Barrier Reef	15	21	5	3		44
Task Group 115.4		1				1
Task Force Base Defense	7	14			1	22
Overhaul/Conversion/ Backfit	4	9		1		14
Totals:	40	88	19	9	4	160

Task Group 117.1 Operations

Multiple riverine and airmobile assault continued in Kien Hoa Province this month as river craft in combination with units of the 2nd Brigade U.S. NINTH Infantry Division kept constant pressure on the enemy. MRF offensive activity, including eagle float and blocking force maneuvers by naval craft, developed frequent contact, resulting in the heaviest attrition against Viet Cong to date; 928 enemy were killed during March. In addition, 182 detainees

were apprehended.

The Viet Cong continued to frequent ambush positions, especially along the Ben Tre and Ba Lai rivers. Twenty-one enemy initiated firefights resulted in 23 sailors wounded as 17 boats received hits (minor damage).

A recent innovation, utilized in MRF night operations, is the searchlight (pinkeye) boat. Since enemy forces frequently move under cover of darkness, a method to enhance the effectiveness of night operations was developed. A 23-inch XENON tank searchlight, modified with a pink filter to provide compatibility with a starlight scope, was mounted on the flight deck of ATC-131-13. The recognition range of this apparatus has been demonstrated to be up to 2000 meters. Two to four Army snipers are positioned on the flight deck as the ATC cruises 100-200 meters offshore. A 105-mm howitzer equipped monitor may operate with the "pinkeye" boat ready to fire beehive rounds on enemy troops marked by sniper tracers. During the period late February to 21 March, 24 Viet Cong have been killed by "pinkeye" snipers. Although still in the developmental stage, this equipment shows potential for application in interdiction operations. At 0017 on 15 March, "pinkeye" with 3/60 Infantry Division snipers aboard in company with M-151-1 spotted six to ten Viet Cong in a restricted area, 2 miles south-southeast of Dong Tam. Snipers marked the position with tracers and the monitor fired 105-mm beehive into the area resulting in three Viet Cong killed by snipers and three killed (probable) by beehive. Just after midnight on 21 March the "pinkeye" with two sniper teams killed eight Viet Cong in a restricted area on the south bank of the My Tho. The enemy returned mortar and

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automatic weapons fire from the position later. No hits were received. The successful employment of snipers on river assault craft has led to an arrangement for Navy personnel to be sniper trained.

At 1355 on 3 March, RAD 131 transiting west on Ba Lai River to extract Delta Company of the 4/47th received rocket and automatic weapons fire from both banks at (XS 556 363), T-131-6 received minor damage from one rocket hit in her starboard side. One USN was wounded (slightly). The fire was suppressed resulting in six Viet Cong killed by RAD return fire (30 rounds of 105-mm) and five Viet Cong were killed by USAF air cover.

On 4 March at 1515, TE 117.1.4.2 with Delta Company of the 4/47th aboard while enroute to base received automatic weapons, recoilless rifle and B-40 fire from the south bank of the Ben Tre River, 8 miles south-southeast of My Tho (XS 547 308). An ATC received a B-40 rocket hit in the well deck which resulted in one USA killed, one USN and 23 USA were wounded. Two other ATC's took hits with no casualties. Another sailor aboard a monitor was wounded as it received recoilless rifle and automatic weapons fire. Fire was returned and suppressed with unknown results.

This month another resupply LST (LUZERNE COUNTY LST 902) came under enemy fire (WESTCHESTER COUNTY and TOM GREEN COUNTY were attacked in previous months). At 1537 on 2 March, while enroute from Dong Tam to the My Tho anchorage, LUZERNE COUNTY received automatic weapons fire and B-40 rockets. One life raft was destroyed as one B-40 hit the starboard side frame of the LST. Fire was returned and suppressed at 1540. No personnel

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casualties resulted. LUZERNE COUNTY came under attack again at 2225 on 22 March while anchored with the Mobile Riverine Base at Long Tam (XS 411 416). Six B-40 rocket rounds were fired from the south banks of the My Tho and automatic weapons fire was received from the western tip of Thoi Son Island. The LST returned fire for 10 minutes and an LMFT placed a strike on enemy firing positions. No casualties resulted although shrapnel was later found on LUZERNE COUNTY.

Enroute to beaching sites along the Ba Lai (XS 63 32) in mid-afternoon on the 29th, units of RAD 151 took 3 sampans and 10 Viet Cong under fire. The sampans were sunk and enemy casualties were unknown as the Viet Cong broke and ran into the jungle.

Task Group 117.2 Operations

On 1 March, the flag of CTF 117 shifted to USS COLLETON (APB 36) as USS BENEMAH (APB 35) departed for restricted availability at Sasebo, Japan.

The combined TG 117/9th ARVN Infantry Division operation in the Mang Thit and My Loc areas of Vinh Long Province, begun 23 February, continued in March. The first phase of this operation, designed to eventually neutralize enemy base area 478 and to provide free access along the vital Mang Thit River - Nicola Canal watery, concluded on 6 March. An unusual incident occurred on the night of 28 February, while assault craft were established in remain over night (RON) positions at the Mang Thit bridge (XS 186 170 - 6 miles northeast of Tam Binh). With an ARVN reconnaissance company providing perimeter

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defense. at 2200 an enemy sniper breached the defense and sprayed the flight of [illegible]-152-3 with AK-47 fire from about 10 feet resulting in one sailor being killed and two others wounded. The sniper was not located nor was fire returned because of many families in the area. Following an abbreviated stand down, RAC and three ARVN reconnaissance companies resumed operations on 4 March, landing at beach site 7½ miles north of Tan Binh (XS 131 148). While the assault craft occupied blocking stations the troops swept northeast with negative results. Similar operations continued through 6 March with no contact and no EWIFF's. In contrast to the stiff enemy resistance encountered in this area during the last week in February, the Viet Cong have apparently chosen to avoid contact. Total significant results of the operation in March included 16 bunkers destroyed by TG 117.2 UDT personnel, 90 junks and sampans checked and 8 detainees taken.

Similar strike and blocking operations were conducted in the Ving Lien District in Vinh Binh Province on 7 March. Enroute on the Rach Vung Lien, RAC searched sampan and collected 43 detainees who were interrogated by the TG 117.2 Intelligence officer (Vung Lien District authorities later reported that of the 43 detainees, 7 were confirmed Viet Cong; 29 were draft dodgers and 7 were innocent civilians). Troop lift, sweep, and water blocking operations continued until 10 March. Ground units reported light contact. The operation netted 15 Viet Cong KIA; 1 prisoner of war; 3 machine guns; 1 B-40 rocket launcher, and 1 AK-47 captured, 67 bunkers, 6 hootches and 400 pounds of rice destroyed, and 78 sampans searched.

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The assault craft of TG 117.2 conducted boat maintenance and prepared for future operations during the period 11-16 March.

After an interval of almost a month, the TG 117.2/VNMC riverine assault team combined forces again for operations in enemy base area 480 in the Twin Rivers area of Choung Thien Province. The USS HAMPSHIRE COUNTY (LST-819) was stationed at Binh Thuy to act as a forward command post and resupply vessel for the operation. Twenty-nine river assault craft of RIVRON 15 departed the Mobile Riverine Base on the 17th. The units were underway again at 182330H from Can Tho to embark units of the 4th and 6th Battalion Vietnamese Marine Corps already in the operation area. Enemy forces consisting of the Viet Cong 303 Main Force Battalion, a heavy weapons company, the U Minh 10th Company and local guerrillas were reported to be in the area. Operations were planned to search out and destroy the Viet Cong. Activity began as the RAC embarked units of the 4th and 6th battalions on the 19th and landed them on beaches along the Song Cai Tu in an area 6½ miles southwest of Nha Than (XS 405815). No enemy contact was established the first day. Enroute the next day to landing beaches on the Rach Nuoc Trong, at 0505, Z 131-1 was rolled 30 degree to port as the result of the explosion of an enemy command detonated mine; although no personnel casualties nor underwater hull damages were received, the zippo incurred a misaligned starboard engine and loss of electrical power. At 0655 the assault craft received the first enemy initiated firefight. Intense and continous fighting then commenced and lasted through the morning. During that time RAC came under attack from B-40

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rockets on nine occasions. Vietnamese ground units established and maintained heavy and continuous contact all morning on the 20th and the 21st. RAC provided almost continuous fire while under constant small arms and automatic weapons fire in support of the Marines. Although fighting was not nearly so intense on succeeding days, the assault craft came under ENIFF's six more times until the operation ended on the 30th. On the 25th, at 1900, during a transit of the Rach Nuoc Trang, a large mine explosion occurred between two boats but caused no damage. Twenty Viet Cong sighted on the banks were taken under fire with unknown results. Translation of a Hoi Chanh's documents captured during the third day of fighting provided the information that the opposing enemy force was the Viet Cong 309 Main Force Battalion which had been sent from the Can Tho area to destroy U.S. river assault craft. At the conclusion of the operation, results indicated that the enemy had been dealt a severe blow deep in territory which he once considered a sanctuary. Ninety-Seven Viet Cong were killed (body count) and 14 additional were probably killed; 13 Viet Cong were captured and 24 detainees were taken, two of whom were women. The following is a partial list of vital enemy material captured - one 82-mm mortar and 10 rounds, one 61-mm mortar, one B-40 launcher and 10 rounds, 19 AK-47 rifles and 2000 rounds, 8 other rifles and 1000 small arms rounds, one automatic weapon, and 5 mines. Vietnamese Marines reported 15 personnel killed and 34 wounded. Fifty-nine USN sailors were wounded (mostly minor) in the campaign.

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USN STATISTICAL SUMMARY (1)
March 1969

	MARKET TIME (2)	GAME WARDEN	Mobile Riverine Force
Detections	44,650	220,684	(3)
Inspections	20,998	44,300	168
Boardings	9,264	69,252	(3)
Craft Detained			
Persons Detained	881	1,029	255
Viet Cong Suspects	14	(3)	(3)
Hostile Fire Incidents	38	60	33
Enemy Casualties:			
a. Killed	42(BC)35(EST)	49(BC)5(EST)	1017(BC) 8(EST)
b. Wounded	28	19+33(EST)	
c. Captured	1	8	18
USN Casualties:			
a. Killed	2	2 (1 DOW)	2 USN/5 USA
b. Wounded	13	25	78 USN/146 USA
c. Captured	(3)	(3)	(3)
d. Missing	(3)	(3)	(3)
Enemy Material Losses:			
a. Destroyed:	(3)	(3)	
(1) Junks or Sampans	17	103	73
(2) Structures	220	124	130
b. Captured:			
(1) Junks or Sampans	(3)	3	(3)
(2) Weapons	(3)	28	53
(3) Ammunition (rounds)		510	2,500
(4) Rice	(3)	(3)	(3)
c. Damaged:			
(1) Junks or Sampans	21	73	(3)
(2) Structures	188	199	(3)
USN Material Losses:			
a. Destroyed:			
(1) Surface Craft	(3)	(3)	(3)
(2) Helicopters	(3)	3	(3)
b. Damaged:			
(1) Surface Craft	3	1	27
(2) Helicopters	(3)	7	(3)
SAR Missions			

Remarks: (1) Statistics include only "Standard" Task Force operations. Operation SEA LORDS statistics not included, see SEA LORDS Statistical Summary.
(2) PCF operations in GAME WARDEN area included in GAME WARDEN data.
(3) Information not available or not applicable.

GROUP 4

Enclosure (6)

Downgraded at 3 year intervals
Declassified after 12 years

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NAVAL ADVISORY GROUP
March 1969

Vietnamese Navy

Included in the objectives of the Accelerated Turnover Program (ACTOV) is the transfer of 210 USN PBR's to the Vietnamese Navy (VNN) by June 1970. The initial turnover of 40 PBR's is scheduled to take place on 1 October 1969. In preparation for the arrival of the PBR's the VNN are being integrated into USN crews and staffs for on-the-job training. This will be followed by relief of USN personnel when the VNN crews are considered qualified. Prior to reporting to the PBR bases the VN sailors will have completed five weeks of weapons training at ARVN facilities and twelve weeks of PBR orientation at the U.S. Navy Orientation School in Saigon. Near the end of March the first group of VN sailors, numbering approximately 183, began arriving at fourteen different PBR bases in the Delta.

Enemy activity within the tactical areas of the Fleet Command, Coastal, and Riverine Forces remained at a relatively low level throughout the month of March. The Fleet Command maintained fourteen units on MARKET TIME patrols during the month. In comparison to February Fleet Command statistics, there was a 122% and a 134% increase, respectively, in the number of junks and persons searched. The number of junks and persons detained dropped to zero. PCM 600 was patrolling her MARKET TIME station on the early morning of 14 March when she received an urgent request for gunfire support. The

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RF base at Cua Can (US 815 375) on Phu Quoc Island was under attack from the northwest by an estimated two squads of Viet Cong. Approximately thirty minutes after the initial attack the RF company was being probed by another estimated two squads of Viet Cong for the south. Both attacks were broken when the PGM fired on the Viet Cong positions. A total of 1180 rounds of 40-mm, 20-mm, and .50 caliber were expended by the ship during the fight. At first light the RF forces searched the area but found only fresh trails and a small camp. A similar incident occured on 20 March and PGM 600 was again called upon to provide gunfire support.

LSIL's and PGM's conducted daily patrols on the Long Tao, Co Chien, and My Tho rivers. Most of the 74 gunfire support missions recorded by the Fleet Command during March were fired by the LSIL's as harrassment and interdiction missions in the Rung Sat Special Zone. An average of 15 VNN PBR's of River Patrol Group 51 (RPG-51) carried out three day and five night patrols on the Long Tao and Soirap rivers. While dragging the Long Tau and Dong Nai rivers, VNN minesweepers and LCM's recovered electrical wire used in water mines on four separate occassions.

VNN Coastal Groups in all four coastal zones searched a total of 67,079 junks and 198,340 persons, and detained 80 junks and 646 persons. This represented a 25%, 27%, 10%, and 22% increase, respectively, in relation to February statistics. Junks in the First and Second coastal zones accounted for 96% of the junks detained and 94% of the people detained.

In the First Coastal Zone the newly initiated incursions on the Cua

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Dai River (BT 210 575) by TF 115 PCF's and Coastal Group 14 units (CG 14) met with enemy resistance. On 1 March a CG 14 junk was the apparent target of a command detonated mine (BT 191 579). This was the first mining attempt reported in the Cua Dai area in many months. Early on the evening of 9 March CG 14 personnel spotted seven Viet Cong on the south bank of the Cua Dai River (BT 203 559), possibly in the process of laying water mines. U.S. Advisors and base personnel fired 81-mm, .50 caliber, and M-60 at the Viet Cong. An investigation of the area revealed that six Viet Cong had been killed. On 12 March the CG 36 ambush team was inserted on Dung Island at the mouth of the Bassac River (XR 252 724) and made enemy contact in the first half hour. Two Viet Cong were reported killed during the sweep.

Operation TRAN HUNG DAO, which was expanded in February to include VNN PCF's and Fourth Coastal Zone junks, has yielded satisfactory results. Infiltration from Cambodia has been retarded because of the high risk factor of interception by friendly forces. The government presence has increased along the Vinh Te Canal and the Viet Cong extortion practices have declined. Two U.S. PCF's of TG 115.4 and two VNN PCF's conducted daily patrols of the Rach Giang Thanh, covering the area from Ha Tien twelve miles up stream. (from VS 438 467 to VS 565 639). Thirty men at a time from the ninety man VNN Coastal Group Reaction Team participating in Tran Hung Dao are to be relieved from the operation to receive two weeks of training in ambush and sweep tactics. Equipment problems that were originally found in the reaction team are under control and additional items

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that are needed are being procured by the U.S. advisors. VNN junks carried out daily patrols on the Vinh Te Canal with the number of junks that were utilized varying from seven to sixteen. The water level in the canal continued to present problems to the junks; patrols were restricted to areas where the water was sufficiently deep.

Riverine Assault Groups (RAG's) participated in amphibious assault and river patrols, acted as blocking forces, and provided escort services in the Third and Fourth riverine areas. Sixteen river assault craft from RAG's 21, 23, 29, and 31 embarked ARVN forces at My Tho on 15 March and inserted them 13 miles west of My Tho (from XS 310 400 to XS 200 400). Late in the afternoon the troops were extracted and returned to My Tho. Results of the ARVN sweep were 17 Viet Cong killed, 23 Viet Cong and 3 Viet Cong suspects captured, and an assortment of arms, ammunition, and supplies confiscated.

The two River Assault and Interdiction Divisions (RAID 70 and RAID 71) that were turned over to the Vietnamese Navy on 1 February encountered moderate enemy activity while participating in coordinated GIANT SLINGSHOT operations on the Vam Co Dong and Vam Co Tay rivers. There were no less than fourteen friendly initiated firefights and an equal number of enemy initiated firefights that involved RAID units as enemy personnel and logistics infiltration movements along the two rivers were interrupted. The area just southeast of Tra Cu on the Vam Co Dong River (XS 515 960) was the scene of eighteen incidents. Operations including RAID craft accounted for 56 Viet Cong killed and another 37 probably killed, and 17 Viet Cong suspects

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captured. The VNN reported two VN sailors killed and 21 wounded in GIANT SLINGSHOT operations.

Vietnamese Marine Corps

The Vietnamese Marine Corps (VNMC) and their U.S. Advisors operated in III and IV CTZ in March. Enemy contact varied from negligible to heavy with the majority of contact termed as light by the U.S. Advisors.

Throughout March, Brigade "A", comprised of the Brigade Headquarters, the 1st Battalion, and Battery "C", VNMC Artillary Battalion, performed reconnaissance in force operations under the operational control of the 5th ARVN Division in Binh Duong Province north of Saigon (XT 710 148). From 21 - 25 March the 1st Battalion, while in night defense positions, received 82-mm mortar and/or B-40 rocket fire; on 26 March the battalion was in moderate contact with an enemy company.

During March Brigade "B" which includes the Brigade Headquarters, the 4th and 6th Battalions, and Battery "B", VNMC Artillery Battalion participated in reconnaissance/riverine operations and combat air assault in Chuong Thien and Kien Giang Provinces in IV CTZ under the control of the 21st ARVN Division. On 19 March the Brigade moved south from the Vi Thanh area (WR 53 82) to the Twin Rivers Region (WR 30 70) and commenced operations with U. S. Navy River Assault Squadron 15 and RAG 33. Contact with enemy forces was moderate to heavy on 21 and 22 March with waterborne forces being ambushed on five separate occasions. During the two day period

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landing assaults made against the enemy forces by 4th Battalion Marines accounted for 53 Viet Cong killed. From 28 - 30 March another combined waterborne and heliborne operation was conducted in the area yielding 34 more Viet Cong killed.

Under the operational control of the Long Bien Special Zone the 2nd Battalion continued security patrols in the area approximately five kilometers east of Bien Hoa (XT 075 125), experiencing light and scattered contact. The battalion commenced reconnaissance in force missions on the 17th of March in the western section of Binh Hoa Province under the control of the 18th ARVN Division. These continued until 23 March when the 2nd Battalion moved to Long Bien (XT 010 005) and became the III CTZ reserve force. On 26 March the battalion returned to the control of the 18th ARVN Division and were again retained in a reserve status at Long Bien.

From 1 - 7 March the 3rd Battalion under the operational control of the 1st U.S. Cavalry carried out reconnaissance in force operations in the Binh Long and An Loc areas (XT 765 885, 880 933) of Binh Long Province. On 3 March the battalion's rear base camp at Quan Loi (XT 810 920) was shelled with approximately thirty 82-mm mortar rounds. Six Vietnamese Marines were wounded. Following a helolift into a new tactical area on 8 March northeast of Tay Ninh (XT 40 60) the battalion experienced light contact. The marines were again moved by helo on 12 March to a new area southeast of Tay Ninh and placed under the control of the ARVN Airborne Division. Enemy contact was negligible through 18 March when the battalion returned to the base

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camp at Thu Duc to stand down and to assume a one hour standby status under Joint General Staff (JGS) control for the remainder of the month.

The 5th Battalion was initially standing down at the Thu Duc base camp and in a reserve status for JGS. On 16 March the battalion chopped to the 2nd Airborne Division ARVN and commenced security and reconnaissance in force operations in an area about two kilometers north of Saigon. They experienced only light enemy contact for the remainder of the month.

Battery "A", VNMC Artillery Battalion remained in a ready status the entire month at the Thu Duc base camp. Battery "D" was assigned to the Capital Military Command in Saigon.

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VNN/VNMC STATISTICAL SUMMARY

VIETNAMESE NAVY:

	Daily Average		Searched		Detained	
	Oper	Empl	Junks	People	Junks	People
COASTAL FORCE						
I	42.8	38.8	19,334	66,129	32	280
II	44.3	43.4	30,973	83,915	47	326
III	52.6	52.5	8,571	27,425	0	29
IV	53.8	53.8	8,201	20,871	1	11
	Sub-totals:		67,079	198,340	80	646
*FLEET COMMAND PATROL SHIPS	37.7	27.0	4,418	16,260	0	0
RIVERINE AREA CRAFT	128.1	126.1	6,591	24,093	0	1
#GEN RESERVE FORCE	87.0	69.3	5,141	14,821	0	0
	Totals:		83,229	253,514	80	647

VIETNAMESE MARINE CORPS:

VC/NVA: KIA 172 Captured 32 Suspects Detained 9

VNMC: KIA 35 WIA 155 MIA 0

* Provided 74 gunfire support missions.

\# Includes RAG 27, RTEB and RPG 51.

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Downgraded at 3 year intervals
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PSYCHOLOGICAL AND CIVIC ACTION SUMMARY

Naval forces throughout the country continued to make good use of loudspeaker broadcasts, using either taped or live messages. Themes used were Hoi Chanh, Voluntary Informant Program, support of the Government of Vietnam and appeals to VC/NVN soldiers. The value of the loudspeaker program was demonstrated again this month when a Hoi Chan from the Danang area stated he had heard the waterborne broadcasts and was able to recite from memory, three of the Naval Advisory Group Danang Broadcasts. During the month, 57 Hoi Chanh rallied to the Government of Vietnam, utilizing Naval Forces as rallying points. The majority of these ralliers came from the IV Corps Tactical Zone. The Psyops program was an integral part of the USN/VNN operations in all regions in which they operated.

Reconstruction continues on the Civic Action Lumberyard at Danang which was destroyed last month during an enemy attack. One hundred self-help projects are currently underway in the Danang area and 185 children are receiving $5.00 per month scholarships as provided by the NAVSUPPACT Danang Scholarship fund. The vocational training school at No Thuan Compound started an auto mechanic training course on 10 March with 20 students, and a typing course with 18 students on 17 March. NAVSUPPACT Detachments at Tan My and Hue conducted significant Civic Action activity. These detachments have undertaken self-help community projects and have assisted in the

construction of schools, a community beach pavilion, and an arts and crafts center which has recently produced marketable products. Coordination has been initiated for NAVSUPPACT Danang's participation in the annual Vietnamese Sports Festival scheduled for 4-6 April. The games, part of a country-wide athletic competition for the Vietnamese, will be held at Chi Long Stadium in Danang and will host neighboring commands including Marine, Air Force and ROK Marine Teams.

The Seabee teams throughout the country, working with the Revolutionary Development Program, reported that a total of 276 Vietnamese nationals received training with the Seabees. These teams also assisted various churches, schools and orphanages in repairing and renovating their facilities. The Seabee team in Gia Dinh Province is providing English classes three nights a week to interested Vietnamese.

During the month over 30,000 people received medical treatment through the Navy Medical Civic Action Program.

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USN CIVIC ACTION STATISTICAL SUMMARY (1)
February 1969

TOTAL NUMBER OF MAN-DAYS PERSONNEL OF UNITS ENGAGED IN CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS: 2,884

COST OF SUPPLIES CONTRIBUTED BY MILITARY RESOURCES FOR CIVIC ACTION PROJECTS: VN$ 2,609,000

VOLUNTARY CONTRIBUTIONS: VN$ 96,000

PERCENTAGE OF U. S. MILITARY CIVIC ACTION ACTIVITIES CONDUCTED JOINTLY WITH:

	Percent
Other FWMAF	10
RVNAF	37
U. S. civilian voluntary agencies	10
Average percent of self-help by VN civilians	20

PROGRAMS

	Man Days	Expenditures (VN$)
Economic Development	334	595,000
Education	717	673,000
Social Welfare	1,491	2,795,000
Transportation	285	35,090
Refugee	57	595,000

INSTITUTES ASSISTED:

	Number
Schools	45
Hospitals/Dispensaries	12
Orphanages	19
Others	82

NOTE: (1) Statistics shown are those for February; see paragraph two of transmittal letter.

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