

Naval Historical Summary (No.4) January 1966 *Highlights*

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Highlights and Introduction

The commencement of another year was regarded by responsible Americans with a mixture of hope and concern -- hope that the lull in the bombing of North Vietnam that had started on Christmas Eve would evoke some reciprocal action on the part of Hanoi to end the war, and concern for what might happen otherwise.

In his State of the Union message, the President said that in 1965 there were 300 "private talks for peace in Vietnam with friends and adversaries throughout the world," and that spokesmen for the United States visited "more than 40 countries." He said that our government talked to more than a hundred other governments -- "all 113 that we have relations with, and some that we don't" -- and to the United Nations. He said that we seek neither territory nor bases, economic domination or military alliance, but fight only for the "principle of self-determination--that the people of South Vietnam should be able to choose their own course, choose it in free elections without violence, without terror, and without fear." And then, finally on this subject he continued: "We will meet at any conference table, we will discuss any proposals -- four points or 14 or 40-- and we will consider the views of any group."

Reaction at home and abroad was generally favorable. Cassandras didn't stop wringing their hands altogether, but there was less pressing for fresh actions and more willingness to accept "marking time." Almost all Far East papers joined in approving with enthusiasm those sections of the message that dealt with Vietnam. This included segments of the powerful Japanese press which in past months had been hyper-critical. Specifically selected for praise were the President's promises to persevere for peace, his decision to continue for the present the pause in the bombing, and his firm resolve to protect the independence of South Vietnam.

Tet, a religious holiday based on the lunar New Year, was a period -- 21 to 23 January this year - - in which, by custom, hostilities ceased. It was riot without violations, however, in which six Americans, seven Koreans, and six South Vietnamese were killed; and three score more were wounded. Included in these incidents was the bombing of a BEQ in Saigon housing 85 American soldiers. Tet did provide a "psywar" opportunity, however, to drop ten million "Happy New Year" leaflets along a hundred mile coast of North Vietnam, plus gifts and cards.

Nevertheless, there was nothing in the peace message nor the holiday cease-fire to slow the thrust of the build-up of forces in South Vietnam. By month's end there were 200,000 Army, Navy, Marines, Air Force, and Coast Guard in the country and more to come. Of these the Navy had over 9,000 ashore and the Marines more than 38,000, which together exceeded one fifth of the total.

Another 50,000 Bluejackets and Marines were offshore in 100 Seventh Fleet ships. The Navy, to man new river forces, harbor defense units, and other activities it was planning for, already had asked for 4,000 more officers and men to fill new jobs.

It appeared that if it had to be a long drawn out war, there would be no shortage of necessary forces. The President said in his message to the Congress: "...Let me be absolutely clear: the days may become months, and the months may become years, but we will stay as long as aggression commands us to do battle."

Air Operations

During January there were five attack carriers in WESTPAC with three of them continuously "on the line." They were *Ranger*, *Ticonderoga*, *Enterprise*, *Hancock*, and *Kitty Hawk*.

In spite of the month-long stand-down of air operations in NVN terminating on 26 January, the tempo of operations was high with Navy and Marine sorties amounting to nearly 9,000 as follows:

	North Vietnam	South Vietnam	Laos
USN	75	3,416	2,669
USMC	0	1,672	1,026
USAF	57	4,541	4,305
VNAF	0	2,473	0

Of the total strikes flown from all three CVA's in January, approximately fifty percent were flown in Laos in STEEL TIGER and TIGER HOUND operations, and approximately forty percent were flown in South Vietnam. BARREL ROLL operations early in the month and ROLLING THUNDER operations in the last days accounted for the remaining ten percent.

During Tet, the CVA once again proved its ability to circumvent political problems when land bases in South Vietnam were restricted from launching planes for strikes in Laos,. With no restrictions on the "floating airfields," *Hancock*, *Kitty Hawk* and *Ranger* combined to take up the slack during this period and fly strikes from their positions off the northern coast of South Vietnam.

Damage to the enemy included sunken ferries and junks, damaged bridges and trucks, and over 100 secondary explosions of ammunition or POL dumps.

Losses, however, occurred as follows:

Date	Plane CV	Lost	Reason	Pilot
2 Jan	A4C <i>Enterprise</i>	RVN	unknown	KIA
3 Jan	A1H <i>Ticonderoga</i>	RVN	AW	rescued
14 Jan	A4C <i>Enterprise</i>	RVN	controlled ejection	
22 Jan	S2D <i>Hornet</i>	At sea	investigating radar contact	2 & 2 Crew MIA
31 Jan	A4E <i>Ranger</i>	NVN		rescued
	F4B <i>Kitty Hawk</i>	NVN		rescued

EA-3B's of TF 77 detected two possible lock-ons by MIG radars during the month. The first occurred 30 miles southeast of Haiphong and the second 40 miles southeast of Thanh Hoa. On the second occasion the EA-3B escorts attempted to intercept the bogeys, but without success. This action, plus indications of more MIG's being shipped to North Vietnam from the Soviet Union, augured more activity of this kind in the future.

COD aircraft from VR-21, staging through Cubi Point, provided high priority logistic support for the ship. off Vietnam during January. In this period over 800 passengers, 190,000 pounds of cargo, and 70,000 pounds of mail were delivered. Among the passengers were Senator Jacob Javits, Congressman Ogden Reid, and the well-known professional football players: Johnny Unitas, Frank Gifford, Sam Huff, and Willie Davis. COD pilots flew 1200 transport hours and made 160 landings during this period.

On 15 January a seadrome was established at Cam Ranh Bay, and aircraft from TG 72.5 commenced operations from USS *Pine Island* (AV-12). Consisting of eight SP-5 aircraft, TG 72.5 was scheduled to provide continuous coverage of the southern coastal track from 16 January to 13 February. Assumption of this duty permitted the P-3's operating from Sangley Point and the P-2's from Tan Son Nhut to alternately share the responsibility of providing daily flights along the northern coastal reconnaissance route.

Marines

Marine operations in the field showed a marked increase over December. This was due in part to a slackening of the rains of the northeast monsoon. The increase however, did not alter the balanced approach of previous operations which combined large amphibious and search and destroy operations with widespread smaller thrusts aimed at the heart of the counter-insurgency problem: assisting the ARVN in pacification of the countryside.

Because of Tet celebrations which actually covered more than the official 3 days between 21 and 23 January, specific civic actions were less than December. This was because Vietnamese custom dictated the general cessation of all business activity during this period and even raised taboos against receiving medical attention. Nevertheless, in spite of the stand-down, there continued to be signs of progress in that the month of January saw the highest total of incidents -- 40-- in which Vietnamese nationals supplied hard quality information about the VC to Marines.

During Tet the Marines exercised their psychological warfare plans by emphasizing to the people the burdens being placed on them by the VC. Also, reminders were made to the VC themselves,

of their own hardships, with particular emphasis on ties with their families from which they were separated.

In combat activity, the Marines initiated the largest amphibious operation since Inchon in the southern part of the I Corps. On 28 January assault units of operation DOUBLE EAGLE came ashore about 20 miles south of Quang Ngai city in an area controlled by Viet Cong. As the month ended, Marine forces had moved well inland and were working in conjunction with a US Army/ARVN operation to the south, aimed at disrupting VC control over the rice producing lowlands of southern Quang Ngai and northern Binh Dinh provinces. Small unit operations were designed to comb guerrillas out of the popular fabric. Counter tactics by the VC were to employ propaganda and terror as they deemed necessary and appropriate.

After the operation commenced, casualties ranged from minor shrapnel wounds to abdominal, chest, extremity, and head wounds. To meet requirements, 232 fresh whole blood units were provided by *Valley Forge*. The average time of the wounded on the *Valley Forge* after being flown aboard was 18 hours, after which, as feasible, they were flown to Chu Lai. The surgical evacuation teams were credited with saving many lives due to quick reaction time from battlefield to operating table.

Navy units involved in the operation were CTG 76.6 and 78.5 embarked in *Paul Revere* (APA-248), *Skagit* (AKA-105), *Catamount* (LSD-17), *Navarro* (APA-215), *Tom Green County* (LST-1159), *Westchester County* (LST-1167), *Windham County* (LST-1170), *Fort Marion* (LSD-22), *Valley Forge* (LPH-5), *Montrose* (APA-212), *Safeguard* (ARS-25), *Elkhorn* (AOG-7), *Oklahoma City* (CLG-5), and *Berry* (DD-858).

USMC units were BLT 2/4 and 2/9, BLT 2/3 (SLF) and 3/1, HMM-362 (SLF), and H Battery 3/11.

Logistics

The large-scale military operations being conducted in a relatively underdeveloped country, with limited modern port facilities, have resulted in the past few months as an extensive build-up of cargo awaiting discharge in the RVN. This resulted in lengthy turn-around time for the ships and contributed to a world-wide US flag shipping shortage.

The following actions were taken to decrease the port congestion in the RVN:

- a. A private transportation company was contracted with to provide for port clearance and coastal shuttle of about 175,000 short tons per month when fully implemented.
- b. Negotiations were completed for exclusive use of the M and M commercial port facility in Saigon which will improve throughput there by about 30,000 measurement tons per month.
- c. LST's have been diverted to RVN from all resources to improve the shipping situation, and negotiations were undertaken with the Chinese Nationalist government to obtain six LST's from them for the same purpose. These six would provide a total of 42 LST's available or enroute to

RVN by the end of February.

d. Maximum effort has been made to palletize and otherwise handle cargo at the loading port to provide the most efficient handling at the destination.

e. Since the middle of November military shipments have been loaded to the maximum extent for single port discharge in RVN. The benefit of this effort is beginning to show.

f. Presently, holding areas in the Philippines, Taiwan, Okinawa, Japan, and Guam are being used for MSTC controlled shipping with the exception of some urgent items including POL. This serves to decrease war-risk costs and reduces vulnerability as well as shorten the turnaround time of the ships concerned.

g. Construction projects at the ports that are planned or in progress will result in significant unloading improvements by the middle of the year.

h. New methods of shipping control in RVN and WESTPAC are expected to result in improved use of shipping and port facilities.

i. Likewise, new methods for determining what to ship and what to hold back would hopefully lessen the problems in the discharge ports. A 12-man board was established at Oakland the last day of December to oversee the control of the outbound cargo.

Even during January, port congestion problems seemed to lessen. From MSTC ships making 298 port calls in 12 ports, over 555,000 M/T of cargo were off-loaded with approximately 45% being moved through the port of Saigon. Off-loading at Danang, however, was still critical due to a shortage of LCU and LCM-8 engines (which delayed overhaul and repair at Subic) and the need for more pier construction and dredging. In spite of this, however, a record 127,547 M/T were off-loaded at Danang compared with 77,661 M/T in the preceding month.

MARKET TIME

As before, MARKET TIME forces continued to be used to form barriers at the Seventeenth Parallel and at the Cambodian border, and to conduct offshore patrols along the coastline, supported by overflights of VP aircraft.

The forces assigned were the same as reported in December *Highlights*, except for an increase of ten new Swifts which arrived at Danang, bringing the total of these high speed, 50 foot, aluminum-hulled PCF's to 18. Also, nine WPB's arrived in Subic to be prepared for sailing to Vung Tau in February. This gain in Coast Guard cutters would bring that force to 26.

The Coast Guard in January relocated its headquarters from on board USS *Krishna* at An Thoi off the southern tip of Phu Quoc Island to Saigon. The WPB's of Squadron ONE continued to operate in the Gulf of Thailand as before, but were now maintaining patrols from 120 to 210 nautical miles from their support base in Saigon. WPB's operating out of Danang coordinated their training and operations with the newly arrived Swifts in that area.

To obtain operational information on the Swift, Operation ANDANG was undertaken on 14 January which directed two PCF's to sail from An Thoi to the 17th parallel and then to Danang, a distance of about 1,000 miles. The transit, however, terminated early due to material failure of heat exchange brackets on one of the two boats and was canceled altogether when the same failure occurred on three other PCF's operating separately. Nevertheless, it was concluded that long distance deployment of PCF's along the coast of Vietnam was feasible; and that in operations with the DER, each complemented the other for overall better surveillance. One tactic worthy of note in naval gunfire missions was developed where the PCF moves close inshore to fire illumination rounds and acts as spotter for the DER's heavier guns during periods of darkness. One weak point in Swift capability, however, was discovered to be operations in seas greater than six feet. This knowledge, however, and other data learned from early experimentation has been funneled back for improved design.

Intelligence reports forewarned CTF 115 in December that a large transfer of arms from Phu Quoc Island to the mainland might be expected in January. This turned out to be true, but MARKET TIME forces were able to intercept the junks attempting the infiltration. Captured cargos included hundreds of rifles, mines, grenades, and thousands of rounds of ammunition.

On 31 December a Chinese Communist trawler, disguised as a Chinese Nationalist vessel, penetrated MARKET TIME waters, but was kept under close surveillance by *Hissem* (DER-400) and *Ingraham* (DD-694) for eight days, when she finally turned northward and into CHICOM waters. No offloading of supplies or people was detected, even though at one time the trawler penetrated to within 10 nautical miles of the coast. This incident, however, prompted CINCPAC to observe that existing rules of engagement contain adequate authority for boarding and search procedures within the prescribed patrol areas. A request to stop and search the ship while she was outside these patrol areas had to be disapproved by CINCPAC as not justified by the "Rules" which had been approved by the RVN and the United States government.

Naval Gunfire Support

During January, Seventh Fleet ships exhibited again their abilities to fire on a variety of shore targets in any kind of weather and do it rapidly and accurately. Answering the call were CAG's, CLG's, DD's, DDG's, DE's, DER's, AV's, APD's, and WPB's, which together fired more than 13,000 rounds at the enemy at an average rate of 441 rounds per day.

Ellison fired the first gun of the new year in support of forces ashore and was joined by *Turner Joy*, self-proclaimed "fastest gun in the East," who was concluding her NGFS missions which commenced on 23 September. *Turner Joy* reported that the superior range with accuracy of the 5"/54 system permitted coverage of targets not always available to other DD's.

Cunningham fired a mission while surrounded by friendly fishermen in their junks. Reported *Cunningham*:

In curious contrast to the intense alertness of *Cunningham's* crew at battle stations, was the impassive equanimity of hundreds of nearby fishermen and women making their age-old living

from the sea...

Bache reported destroying or severely damaging six caves that harbored VC troops who had previously been unscathed by three days of air strikes. Eleven 5" rounds were fired directly into the mouths of the caves from 500 to 600 yards off the beach. Likewise, *Chandler* routed a VC company which had ambushed a US infantry unit in the I Corps area. She did this on the anniversary of the death of RADM Theodore S. Chandler, for whom the ship was named. The ground spotter reported that surrounded US troops were enabled to break free because of *Chandler's* action and continue their pursuit of the VC.

During a mission fired by *Hubbard*, the cameras of ABC-TV recorded the action for a Navy-At-War documentary. *Sperry* fired a night illumination mission against a target that had over and over again been used as an emplacement for mortars, machine guns, and automatic weapons. *Eversole*, commenting on one of her missions noted that "while the firing was going on...Vietnamese children could be seen running and playing on the beach...oblivious to the drama...around them." *Rupertus* once had to close to less than a mile from her target and fire in waters as shallow as 24 feet, in order to deliver the accuracy required. *Shelton*, supporting an amphibious marine assault in the Rung Sat Special Zone (RSSZ), fired 175 rounds in close support from a range as great as 17,000 yards. And the oldest active destroyer in the Navy, *Nicholas*, just six months short of her 24th birthday, effectively demonstrated to the VC that age was no bar to pinpoint fire as she destroyed staging areas and supplies.

The action described above is only a sample of the NGFS effort which has performed daily since May. In tribute CINCPAC said:

Naval gunfire has provided a...worthwhile effort in support of forces ashore... The illumination, harassment, and destructive fire have become essential in our continued actions against the VC.

The RVN Navy and Marines

A daily average of 14 patrol ships, deployed from Saigon, was maintained during the month for coastal surveillance. The state of their training and readiness for patrol was satisfactory, but their effectiveness when on patrol was not. Advisors report that some commanding officers are still lax in their patrol procedures, waste time in port and at anchor, and feel it is unnecessary to search junks diligently and continuously.

RVN junk readiness is considered by Navy advisors to be unsatisfactory. The combination of personnel shortages, austere facilities, lack of trained enginemen, lack of understanding of the rationale for routine maintenance, and indifference of some commanding officers to materiel condition, contribute to the poor state of readiness. Lack of sensors on the junks and slow speed also limit the effectiveness of the coastal forces.

In naval gunfire support the readiness of 18 ships capable of firing is considered outstanding. Utilization is poor, however, as few requests for this support have been made in areas other than the Rung Sat Special Zone. An education program on the merits of NGFS is continually in progress.

An average of two Ships and 35 boats were used on river patrol during the month, as well as 29 River Assault Group (RAG) joint operations. The effectiveness of the RAG's was considered excellent, but the utilization of the river patrols only marginal.

Elements of the Marine Brigade conducted ground operations in I and II CTZ, conducted a three day amphibious operation in the Rung Sat Special Zone, and were maintained on search and clear and static security missions within the Capital Military Region. Except for the amphibious operation, contact with the VC was negative.

GAME WARDEN

GAME WARDEN was planned in December for operations in river mouths and estuaries of the Mekong Delta and the Rung Sat Special Zone. Objectives will be to prevent VC infiltration, interdict traffic and supplies at river crossings, and isolate the enemy in areas that are bounded by rivers and canals. By this effort substantial Navy support would be given to the Vietnamese Navy River Assault Groups.

Forces will be composed of 100 31-foot fiberglass River Patrol Boats (PBR) , 20 landing craft (LCPL) based at eight locations in the Delta, and three LST's anchored in principal river mouths. Operations are planned to be similar to MARKET TIME, but with the added hazard of continuous operations within weapon range of river banks. In-country logistic support will come from two major maintenance facilities at Nha Be and Can Tho, with minor maintenance available at the six other bases plus support from the three LST's.

Medical and Dental Care

On 10 January, the Danang station hospital was opened at the Naval Support Activity, operating with 175 of its potential 400 bed capacity. On 31 January *Repose* arrived off the coast of Danang with another 755 beds and completely modern equipment. In the rear, hospitals at Yokosuka and Guam were expanded and an additional 1,087 bed unit planned for the Philippines. Another hospital was approved for Guam and a second hospital ship requested. Nevertheless, in spite of this expanded protection for the wounded, CINCPAC was able to announce that the casualty rate in Vietnam was lower than expected.

The construction of a dental facility at the Danang hospital was expected to be completed in February. Another was planned for Chu Lai, and a request made for dental trailers to serve the Mobile Construction Battalions deployed in various areas of South Vietnam.

Civic Action

Medical and dental care of the Vietnamese people have opened doors of understanding and contributed measurably to the war effort. One striking example of Navy civic action is the participation with the other services in the Military Provincial Hospital Program. The Navy team consists of three doctors, one Medical Service Corps officer, and 12 enlisted technicians.

Children with cleft lips have received surgery by these teams going into private hospitals, and children sick with illnesses that normally might have killed them have been saved. Orthopedic and neurosurgery have been provided on top of general surgery along with the more routine dispensing of shots and pills.

Reaching the people through dental service has been another natural civic action by Navy doctors and corpsmen, and doing it "after hours" has been the norm rather than the exception. In one case, an oral surgeon was spending twenty-five percent of his time treating local inhabitants. Another, regularly provided care for school children, an orphanage, and a refugee center. Still another dentist regularly lectured to Vietnamese dental students in Hue.

All of these actions added up to considerable involvement by Navy men in ways that make this war different from others fought before it. The best of it, however, is that most of the civic actions cannot be documented. These are the ones that spring from the heart and are performed quietly and unnoticed by modest young men who are grateful for their blessings and wish to share them.

General

On New Year's night, numerous single page leaflets protesting Us involvement in Vietnam were dropped on the Naval Base at Long Beach by an unidentified aircraft. On one side were pictured the charred bodies of a woman and a child. On the other was a strongly worded message criticizing our involvement.

On 2 January an A4C from *Enterprise* was lost in South Vietnam on an in-country strike. The pilot's body was reported by an A1 RESCAP to have been placed in an open area about 3/4 of a mile away from the wrecked plane. Since it had the appearance of being "booby-trapped," it was not recovered. Later information revealed that the pilot had been badly wounded in the legs prior to the crash and had lost his instruments. It has been recommended therefore, that all possible means be taken to hurry up the incorporation of appropriate armor plating on the A4.

The Soviets demonstrated their continued interest in the operations of our Navy off Vietnam by increasing their specially equipped trawlers in the South China Sea to two -- one each at Yankee and Dixie Stations respectively, where they maintained a close watch on US carrier operations. This activity was much in line with the Soviet trawler activity off Guam where Polaris submarine departures and B-52 takeoffs have been observed for a long time. Also, a Russian out-of-area group with two "W" class submarines, completed a deployment period in the Philippine Sea.

A survey of about 400 captured VC soldiers and defectors who were interrogated the latter part of 1965, revealed a decline in morale and a belief that Communist forces have lost the war. Puzzlement, however, was also expressed by some villagers from contested areas as to why friendly troops who seemed so powerful, did not remain in the area that they had cleared of VC to keep them from coming back.

A Rand Corporation study believes Communist China is pressing the VC to abandon large-scale military action and repair their political ties with the South Vietnamese people. Defense Minister

Lin Piao's speech of 2 September 1965 is interpreted by Rand experts as a lecture to Hanoi and the VC on the nature and conduct of a "people's war." Representatives of our government have equated this speech with Hitler's *Mein Kampf*. A Columbia University expert on China, however, has called it a rehash of what Chinese Communist leaders have been saying since 1949 with the cardinal point of the message being that the VC and other communist revolutionaries throughout the world must make their revolutions "on their own" and not count on Chinese or other outside assistance.

Pilots report that the VC have returned to one of their old deception tactics of lighting fires after dark several hundred meters from actual encampments to entice our aviators to expend their ordnance on these dummy positions. Similarly, lights have been placed on roads to simulate trucks, but have in reality been flak traps.

COMUSMACV has described the VC as having a limited frogman capability. A camp for 500 to 600 trainees with Chinese instructors has been reported to exist near the Cambodian border. Also, swimmers in other areas have been observed practicing diving techniques. It is also claimed that frogmen, disguised as fishermen, may attempt to destroy shipping by floating baskets filled with explosives to their targets at night.

A member of the Indonesian Air Force Staff College reported a CHICOM aircraft plant at Shenyang which produces 30 to 35 MIG-19 aircraft a month plus all spare parts. Presumably this MIG-19 is an improved model and approaches the performance of the MIG-21.

During the first week of 1966, seven communist bloc ships were tracked in MARKET TIME patrol areas or lanes adjacent to them. This is half the number that were observed in the previous four week period. Also, eight Soviet merchant ships were either in port at Haiphong or near to it. Four Soviet and three East European ships were reported enroute to North Vietnam, and six Soviet and four Polish merchantmen were scheduled for future voyages. A typical cargo for North Vietnam -- aboard the Soviet ship *Dmitriy Gulia* (11,287 GRT) -- was as follows: two 60' craft described as tow boats, plus 7,250 tons of declared general cargo that included 92 tons of pontoons for two 27 ton bridges, two of 16 tons, and two of 3 tons. Also, there were steel, tires, tubes, 15 five-ton and 17 four and one half-ton trucks, 25 tractors, 4 bulldozers, 15 eight-ton oil tanks, electrodes, and condensed milk.

According to USDAO in Moscow, the Military Attaché from Yugoslavia stated his opinion that Ho Chi Minh is a leader of the pro-Soviet group desiring to end the war on the basis of neutralization of Vietnam. This is opposite, of course, to the pro-Chinese group who desire to continue the war.

Evidence from prisoners, defectors, and captured documents has led to the confirmation of 13,953 communists infiltrating into South Vietnam in 1965 and at least another 5,165 as probably having done so. Most of the infiltrators traveled over the traditional routes through Laos, but some claimed to have continued through Cambodia. The majority were associated with regular North Vietnam army units, but some replacements for VC units also came down from the North. New infiltration strengths by the year follow but with the understanding that 1965 totals will probably increase as more evidence is uncovered:

Category	1959-60	1961	1962	1963	1964	1965
Confirmed	1,800	4,118	5,362	4,726	9,316	13,953
Probable	2,782	2,117	7,495	3,180	3,108	5,165
TOTALS	4,582	6,235	12,857	7,906	12,424	19,118

A defector in November reported that the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP) in North Vietnam planned to bring about the overthrow of the South Vietnamese Government. This would be accomplished according to a plan that would include intensified recruitment for the VC plus an attempt to gain support from the poor people, the various religious ethnic minorities, and the students. The effort would be made to appear that all the South Vietnamese people oppose the United States and the "puppet" government.

Lessons Learned

From *Independence* Command debrief of WESTPAC Deployment from 10 May 1965 to 13 December 1965:

1. Problems in coordinating Navy and Air Force strike activity within the relatively small airspace of North Vietnam became acute at times when Seventh Fleet and Second Air Division strike forces had to share the airspace on the basis of a time arrangement. This resulted in a narrow range of flexibility, less than the best employment of forces on strikes, and inefficient peaks and valleys in carrier deck activity. Finally, a geographic subdivision of the airspace was agreed to which permitted continuous Navy strike activity around the clock. In future joint operations, such as in Vietnam, geographic subdivisions of an area would be a better arrangement than trying to share the time.
2. In the complex electronic environment over North Vietnam, close coordination between strike, CAP, and ELINT aircraft has become a matter of survival. New procedures and equipment, now provide SAM identification and warning, the defensive capability around it, early warning of MIG activity, and degradation of enemy radar control of AAA batteries. Continued development and training in this area is urgently needed.
3. In spite of the growing SAM capability, the enemy's most potent weapon against our strikes is his intense and accurate AAA, which must be anticipated around every target of importance. His mobility of AAA was demonstrated in shifts of concentration whenever we developed a pattern of strike activity. He also showed his versatility and discipline, even though his actions were sometimes puzzling. For example, on one day in a heavily defended area, the sky was black with flak, and the next day in the same location, there was no reaction at all. Possibly, there were operational or logistic reasons for these nulls, but as one pilot put it, there was also the possibility "that the enemy just wanted us to think that he had gone somewhere else, and hoped we would pass over tomorrow with a larger force.
4. Ordnance and pyrotechnic design is needed to enable carriage at 600 KIAS instead of 450-475 KIAS.

5. Reliability and operating improvements are required of both mechanical and electrical fuses because of use on high performance aircraft. The mechanical fuses used were of World War II vintage, causing duds and extra hazardous conditions when any malfunction took place due to "less than ample separation between the weapon and aircraft before the weapon was fully armed."

Electrical fusing reliability and arming and delay times must be improved to provide, for example, reasonable delay times which do not risk casing ruptures before explosion.

6. One reason Shrike did not perform well was the enemy's excellent electronic emission discipline and the use of two or more antennae. Another is that missile ranges are so short that prospective targets are obvious. The enemy ceased emitting when the attacker pointed in his direction and radiated when he turned away. Shrike should be modified to enable homing on a FAN SONG radar radiating into a dummy load, and a 25 to 50 percent increase in range would be desirable in both Bullpup models.

7. For night operations, greater quantities and improved reliability of the MK-24 flare are necessary. A near 50 percent dud rate was experienced with this flare. However, it is an excellent pyrotechnic when it works; and the only one that should be used in an AAA environment, because of the delay feature and the enemy's habit of shooting out flares as well as leading the flares in an attempt to hit the aircraft.

8. Over heavily defended areas, it is not prudent to send low or medium altitude reconnaissance forces; and, therefore, strategic high altitude aircraft or missiles must be tasked to do this job.

9. Camouflage paint, recently authorized for USAF aircraft in Southeast Asia, would be beneficial for Navy aircraft in light of increasing MIG activity.

10. As long as we continue to operate in a SAM or AAA environment backed with excellent radar coverage, APR-23 or APR-23B and ALQ-51 are desired ECM equipment in each aircraft.

From VA 42 pilots of the A-6A Intruder airplane who were members of Squadron VA 75 aboard *Independence* when she was deployed off Vietnam:

1. The capability of the A-6A in bad weather consisting of total darkness, fog, or heavy rain is outstanding. At no time when operating in combat over Vietnam, were radar-significant targets totally obscured. Although it is possible for heavy rain to obscure U target, this did not happen to VA 75 in the monsoonal rains that they experienced.

2. The aircraft's computer proved very reliable, and success in navigating to targets using computer-derived, inertial, and Doppler dampened information coupled with excellent search radar is enough to substantiate the need for this system.

3. AMTI (automatic moving target indicator) in its present form is considered to be unsuitable for the terrain in Vietnam. Here, the roads are usually covered with heavy foliage and are very

winding, providing a combination that is difficult for radar pickup and terminal tracking. More R&D work is needed in this field.

4. The track-radar used for terminal tracking and precise feedback of information to the computer has proved unreliable. Even when it was "up" on launch, the target was more often than not reached with the track radar in a "down" condition. This is important, because the A-6A, with its track-radar system operating properly, has a CEP that few pilots can match visually.

5. Although not recognized as an "ECM bird," the ECM capability of the Intruder is excellent, providing the pilot with useful information on radar emitting sectors that he can analyze according to the characteristics of the signal received. This capability alone has saved more than one airplane that was able to take evasive action because of the electronic information warning.

6. The A-6A, if it is to perform as advertised, requires considerable system maintenance and should not routinely be scheduled for both day and night operations. To succeed in its night role, the system must be "peaked" during the day. More aircraft are entering the Navy's inventory requiring mission priority analysis, and this is true of the Intruder.

7. The war in Vietnam has proved the A-6A to be the best "Iron-Sight" bomber in Navy inventory. It is aerodynamically stable, carries a large payload and can range further than any other fighter-bomber in the Navy or Air Force. For example, on missions deep in North Vietnam (north of Hanoi) each A-6A carried 5 MK-84 (10,000 pounds) over 300 miles to its target, returning to its ship over two hours later. Then, it dogged in the pattern overhead while aircraft that had already tanked once, landed due to a lower fuel state. As a pathfinder, no major strike led by an A-6 failed to locate the target on the first pass. In route-recce flights, an A-6 carrying 12 MK-81 bombs (3,000 pounds) and a four-shot ZUNI pod can double cycle and provide a prolonged threat to VC activity, causing them to "keep their heads down."

8. Finally, one squadron member warned against too much faith in statistics alone. For example, "Sorties," he said, "don't tell the truth about the A-6 as they might for some other planes, because we double cycle and stay out twice as long. Talk about the whole plane," he said, "the job it is being asked to do; and talk down statistics which don't have proper comparisons or reveal the whole truth."

Glossary of Terms

BARREL ROLL - US air operations to interdict infiltration routes in northeastern Laos.

CTZ - Corps Tactical Zone, of which there are four in South Vietnam.

RSSZ - Rung Sat Special Zone, a mangrove area southeast of Saigon encompassing the main ship channels. Many VC inhabit this area.

SIGINT - An inclusive term for communications intelligence and electronic intelligence.

SLF - Special (Marine) Landing Force.

STEEL TIGER - US air operations to interdict infiltration routes in the eastern panhandle of Laos.

TIGER HOUND - A full-time combined US project team at the Second Air Division TACC to oversee air interdiction operations in the SE Laos Panhandle.

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