NEWPORT, VIETNAM

A HISTORICAL OVERVIEW OF A U.S. ARMY PORT FACILITY OPERATED BY THE 71ST TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL SERVICE)

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PREFACE

Writing about Newport, a U.S. Army port facility on the Saigon River in Vietnam, was a way to discover through research and personal interviews the important role Newport played during the entire Vietnam conflict.

Many serviceman who served in Vietnam probably wonder whether or not if their assignments or duties in Vietnam were significant and purposeful. This project has given the writer an educational peace of mind knowing his individual assignment, however small, did have an impact. The facility of Newport has been well documented in various logistic articles, books and still photographs. The writer researched and studied over thirty articles for this research paper. The bibliography and appendix reference those materials.

The 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal Service) operated a state-of-the-art facility which even today is fully operable and used to a maximum by the Vietnamese government.

The compilation of information for this paper is the results of generosity from many individuals who, when asked, researched and mailed information to the writer. The thirty articles received were generated from eighteen contacts. The writer would like to acknowledge a few of these generous people who helped in providing research materials and information.

First, a thank you to Maj. General John E. Murray (U.S.A. Ret.) and Lt. General Jack Fuson (U.S.A. Ret.) for allowing personal phone interviews and providing information on Newport. This is no doubt the writer's most exciting highlight of the entire project. Many thanks to Adrian Traas, Department of the Army, The Center of Military History for his time, efforts and for sending pictures and articles. Also. thanks to John J. Slonaker, Chief, Historical Reference

Branch, Dept. Of the Army War College, Carlisle Barracks for materials sent. A special thank you to Mrs. Carolyn D. Wright, Museum Technician, U.S. Army Transportation Museum and Frank McGrane, Museum Curator for information received. Also to Captain Mark Wolf, 71st Transportation Battalion, Ft. Eustis. The writer would like to acknowledge Mrs. Margaret A. Bauman, Ph.D. for editing this paper. Finely, a cordial thank you to Col. Denny Edwards, (USA, ret.), Managing Editor, Defense Transportation Journal who sent the first material and set the writer's interest to keep researching.

Furthermore, the writer a 1966 graduate of the United States Army Transportation School and who also served at Newport, Vietnam from February 1967 to February 1968 wishes to submit this research paper to the archives of the United States Army Transportation Museum, Ft. Eustis, Va. as a contribution in gratitude for providing the writer the basic foundation to an interesting career in the field of transportation.

End of Preface

Thomas F. Le Moine, Sp. 5th Cl., Transportation Movement Specialist 1966-1969

PURPOSE OF PAPER

The primary purpose of writing this historical overview is three fold. One, purpose is to research, compile and consolidate previously written information pertaining specifically to the port facility of Newport. This overview will focus primarily on its logistic significance , its reason for being built, and its contribution towards improving transportation movement control in Vietnam. Hopefully, then this paper will provide the largest single source of information on Newport and can be used as a research tool for other studies in the future. Secondly, it will discuss the role of the 71st Transportation Terminal Service Battalion which provided command operations at Newport. Thirdly, it will discuss the introduction of the innovations of intermodalism in Vietnam, that is, containerization and roll- on/roll -off transportation.

BACKGROUND

The U. S Army Transportation Corp had the mission to serve every soldier in Vietnam. To accomplish this mission of providing logistical support, the Transportation Corp needed to provide effective transportation movement control and utilize innovative methods of transport. This article will examine one such undertaking; the building of a deep draft port on the Saigon River called Newport.

To understand the importance of Newport, one needs to trace the beginning of the early supply chain movement of supplies and war materials to the Vietnam theater. Newport would become part of the overall strategy to increase the military's efficiency and credibility regarding the movement of goods to correct destinations on time and with speed.

Initially though, Vietnam was served directly from vendors in the United States or through U. S. Depots. The cargo was loaded aboard ships or airplanes and moved directly to Saigon or Tan Son Nhut airport. Prior to 1965, the U. S. Army in Vietnam was supplied by the Army's Pacific Command through the small U. S. Army Support Group, Vietnam which served under the 9th Logistical Command in Okinawa (Casey,Dougan,Lipsman,Sweetman, Weiss 1987). Originally Vietnam had only two serviceable ocean-going vessel ports, Saigon and Da Nang. But by end of 1967, the U. S. Army had constructed additional ports bringing the total to ten. Ultimately sea lift would deliver 95% of the 17,200,000 tons of cargo put ashore in Vietnam. This was accomplished through a project called "Sea Express" using high speed contract ships to expedite movement of critical bulk cargo to Vietnam (King, Briggs, Criner) .

As the buildup in Vietnam increased, it would be necessary to establish a greater presence of logistical support. Therefore, the 1st logistical Command was deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, and arrived in Saigon on April 1, 1965. The 1st Log, as it was commonly known as, was the largest single unit serving in Vietnam.

By 1968 the number of men in the command had risen above 50,000 (Casey,Dougan,Lipsman,Sweetman,Weiss 1987). The 1st Log Command supervised a number of depots, support groups, ordnance ammunition, petroleum supply, maintenance, transportation battalions, separate companies and mortuaries at Saigon and Da Nang.

LOGISTIC PROBLEM - SAIGON PORT

The senior transportation management staff could see the need to relieve pressure at the Saigon dock and the backlog of ships holding off the Saigon harbor which could number up to one hundred vessels acting as floating warehouses. Some 311,400 short tons of cargo were waiting to be off loaded from ships in the port and at Vung Tau (Command History, 1967, Vol. II). There were also a great many barges loaded and waiting for handling due to mass discharge. The major problem at the Saigon port was that civilian cargo known as Agency International Development cargo and U. S. Military cargo, were all handled through this port (King, Biggs and Criner, 1994). The AID cargo included two major programs to help the Vietnamese. One program provided bulk inbound shipments of rice and fertilizer. Secondly, the Commercial Import Program was in place to help stimulate the economy providing consumer goods to importers to sell. The civilian cargo had to be removed by the consignee which in many instances remained on the docks for weeks thus cluttering staging areas. This problem stemmed from the importer ordering more then he could handle. Another major problem was the port's administrative inability to coordinate prioritized unloading schedules of vessels in the harbor.

During early 1967 ships were anchored up to 45 days or longer waiting to be assigned berths(Command History, 1967, Vol. II). Demurrage costs ranged from $3,000 to $7,000 per day. By the end of 1967 ten ports would be handling cargo thus reducing ship berth time from 20.4 days to 2.4 days (Heiser, 1974). There was also a shortage of tugboats to handle vessels, barges and miscellaneous duties. But with the building of Newport, the Saigon command port crisis would be essentially over by late spring of 1967.

NEWPORT - SITE SELECTION

Newport is located on the Saigon River three or four miles North of the Saigon port and just south of the main bridge for highway 1A which had direct route to Bien Hoa air base and Long Binh field depot and the main ammunition depot. The primary purpose of Newport was to take over the handling all U. S. military cargo that was presently being handled at the Saigon port. Newport would become part of the Saigon area port complex. The components of this complex included Saigon port, Vung Tau where ships lined up and waited for pilots to take them up the river to Newport, Camp Davis which was up river for military housing and the Cat Lai complex located seven miles South East of Saigon. The complex handled over sixty percent of ammunition entering Vietnam (Biggs, King, Criner, 1994). That included several different barge locations for the loading and unloading of ammunition from ships in stream. But of these several barge locations only two were used exclusively for ammunition and they were located at Buu Long and Cogido. Therefore, the above mentioned would all be handled and operated as a single command.

NEWPORT - CONSTRUCTION STATISTICS

Construction of Newport started in 1966 and took fifteen months to complete costing the United States at least $50 million dollars (Forken 1967). The facility was constructed by RMK-BRJ (Raymond International, Morrison-Knudson International, Brown & Root and J. A. Jones) on an area of approximately one hundred acres of land that had once been part rice-paddy and a swampy, mangrove-covered area, which at high tide was covered by water(Diary of A Contract 1967). Therefore, great quantities of rock and sand were brought in by barge and truck for fill

(Dunn 1972). According to Richard Tregaskis, author of Southeast Asia: Building the Bases, to form the shallow-draft section of the port 1,144 piles were driven . Some 500 hundred of these piles averaged 135 feet deep. Newport is constructed from two million cubic yards of fill, of which about 3,000 cubic meters of this was delivered by sampans. 18,000 cubic yards of concrete was required for the staging deck, 4,050 steel piles for a combined length of 107 miles; and 35 miles of structural steel. There would be four deep draft berths with a combined length of 2,400 feet, the eight transit sheds have a total floor space of 192,00 square feet (Tregaskis, 1975). One of these berths would be able to handle roll-on and roll-off ships. Another draft would be able to handle container ships plus facilities to include two ramps for landing LST 's, a wharf to handle up to seven barges, and a landing craft ramp. There would be warehouses and open storage behind each pier. The port also featured a 100-ton floating crane anchored on a barge. A large parking space for containers would also be available.

In April of 1967, the first deep draft vessel would be discharged at Newport. The first container ship to unload at Newport would not be until October, 1967(Fuson 1994).

NEWPORT ORGANIZATION - COMMAND OPERATIONS

Newport would be commanded by the 71st Transportation Terminal Service Battalion. According to the written history on the 71st Transportation Battalion, which was normally known as the "EXPEDITERS', arrived in Vietnam from Fort Story, Virginia during August, 1966. The battalion had attached the 154th, 368th, 551st, 561st and 5567th Terminal Service Companies; 372nd Terminal Transfer Company; and the U.S. Army Harborcraft Company (Provisional). The base headquarters and company camp was located at Long Binh known as 'CAMELOT' which

was seventeen to twenty-three miles to the North from Newport. Camelot base camp was originally built as a tent encampment., but, by 1967, aluminum prefab 20' by 60' Adam huts were built to house troops.

As a matter of note, regarding the immensity of Long Binh complex, the Long Binh post included depot facilities that provided 1,869,000 square feet of black-topped hardstand and 1,458,000 square feet of covered storage. By comparison, the depot facilities at the Fishmarket in Saigon had a total of only 670,000 square feet of covered storage space as late as March, 1967 (according to Joseph M. Heiser, Jr. who stated in his writing Logistic Support, Vietnam Studies on The Logistics Environment inVietnam).

Newport operated with two twelve hour shifts. Stevedores and administrative troop personnel were transported by truck from Camp Camelot at Long Binh to Newport.

During the second night of the Tet Offensive of 1968 the 71st engaged the Vietcong as they were trying to cross the Bien Hoa highway bridge enroute to Saigon. But with the assistance of infantry, the Vietcong were repelled and unsuccessful in their mission.

The 71st earned two Meritorious Unit Commendations while serving in Vietnam. They were for periods 1968-1969 and the year 1972(Lineage and Honors). The 71ST Transportation Battalion departed Vietnam on August 20, 1972. The 71ST supported various operations, including Operations Oregon and the retrograde program and was also involved with civic action at Hamlet An Hoa Houng.

As defined by the U.S. Army Transportation School in 1966, the mission of a terminal service battalion such as the 71ST Transportation Battalion is to provide command and administrative supervision to terminal service companies who handle the load of cargo on vessels, discharge cargo from vessels and clear it from shipside, transfer cargo from one mode of transport to another and prepare the necessary documentation to account for and record movement of this cargo. Each terminal service company, also known as stevedore companies, would numbered from 250 to 325 men. By 1967 the total strength of 71st stood as follows: 39 officers, 3 warrant officers and 1,661 enlisted men. But by October of 1969 the 71st headquarters attachment and its three terminal service companies had an authorized strength of 1,045 men but actual assignment totaled 644.

The 71st Transportation Terminal Service Battalion reported to the 4th Transportation Command, Saigon. The 4th TC arrived in South Vietnam on August 12, 1965. It was given the mission of assisting Headquarters Support Activity Saigon in U.S. port operations . In early 1966 the 4th 's new mission was to operate the Saigon Port Complex, a sub-port at Vung Tau and various ammunition distribution sites. In 1967 the command was officially assigned to the U.S. Army Support Command, Saigon which included overseeing the operation at Newport.

NEWPORT - TONNAGE STATISTICS

Tonnage figures were kept on a daily basis recapping statistical information on ships, barges, landing ship tanks, etc. Nightly these reports were driven to Saigon port and presented to the 4th Transportation Command for compilation with the rest of the Saigon Port Complex figures. Although it is difficult to know total tonnage of cargo handled by Newport involving

unloading of ships, barges, landing ship tanks, landing craft and roll on/roll off during its term of operation in Vietnam, some statistics can be offered with this writing. For instance, between October, 1968 to June, 1969; 1,034,340 tons of cargo was unloaded (Commanders Monthly Review, 4th T.C.,June 1969).

If this figure would be annualized it would come to an average of 1,379,124 tons of cargo handled for that twelve month period. According to Richard Tregaskis who wrote Southeast Asia: Building the Bases, the port had the capability to handle 150,000 tons per month which annualized would come to 1,800,000 tons for a twelve month period.

Primarily United States military cargo was unloaded and loaded at Newport which included militarily vehicles, general military cargo, repair parts, food products, etc. Except for vehicles the mentioned cargo was packed in conex containers and later ocean containers.

NEWPORT - TRANSPORTATION INNOVATION - Intermodalism

Two very important transportation innovations came evident during the Vietnam era. Proven to be successful, containerization and roll on/roll off are key components to intermodalism today. Prior to containerization much of the cargo destined for Vietnam was shipped on a break bulk basis, that is, packaged goods were received non containerized. In 1966 then Colonel Jack Fuson (now retired Lt. General) was giving a tour of the Saigon port facility to General Frank Besson Jr. at which both agreed the port was in great need of improvement. General Besson agreed to send more cargo in containers called CONEX (container express system). The CONEX container was first developed during the Korean War. These steel containers which were reusable

could hold up to 9,000 pounds of cargo and had dimensions of six foot by six foot. Also, cargo was banded to standard warehouse pallets for movement. These CONEX containers evolved into a new problem called "popularity". The soldiers developed uses for the boxes such as, rain shelters, dispensaries, portable stores of products. Initial in-country inventory of 2,500 CONEX containers eventually exceeded 150,000 throughout the Vietnam theater. A better solution needed to be presented.

Containerization was not a widely accepted method of transportation until introduced in Vietnam where it obtained major operation status. General Frank S. Besson Jr., is credited as the father of containerization and RO/RO vessels to support defense shipping requirements (King, Biggs, Criner 1994). Besson did research and development with Mr. Malcolm McLean, who later created Sea-Land Services (Fuson 1994). Notely though, the first Sealand container ship Fairland pulled in the Port of Rotterdam (Netherlands) in 1966 (T&D, April, 1999).

By definition containers can be shipped by rail, truck, air or ship. They are loaded/off loaded along ship side from trailers or rail cars specifically designed to handle containers. Containers allowed for greater efficiency of handling cargo and less pilferage.

Once sufficient containers were in the country, Sealand allowed the Army to transport these containers to inland depots. Also, American President Lines, a shipping company was bringing in twenty foot containers to Saigon by September, 1969. Three shipping lines that brought containers to Vietnam were Sealand, American President Lines and Lykes.

Cam Rahn Bay would receive Sealand container ships needed to use the Delong pier to help facilitate the unloading of its containers to shore. According to Fuson, the Delong pier was developed by Colonel L. B. ("Slim") DeLong. The pier was an off-shore barge equipped with cranes. The building of such a pier was an engineering marvel of sophistication. Once these containers were unloaded, they were than shuttled to Newport or Da Nang by C2 container ships which had their own cranes aboard. These C2 ships were also owned by Sealand. By February, 1968 six container ships had delivered more than 3,683 containers(King, Biggs, Criner1994). Newport had one container berth. The first container to unload at Newport was in October, 1967.

The second transportation innovation during the Vietnam war was the introduction of Roll-on/Roll-off intermodalism. According to King, Biggs, Criner of Spearhead of Logistics, Ro/Ro vessels embodied a new concept by which cargo is checked at the point of origin and unloaded onto a trailer-type conveyance, transported to a vessel at the port of loading, rolled into the vessel, stowed, rolled off at the point of discharge, and dispatched to forward destinations. Newport had one berth for handling Ro/Ro vessels.

Again General F. S. Besson Jr. is credited as the father of Ro/Ro for his efforts in introducing this concept and also, for pressing for construction of Ro/Ro vessels to support defense shipping requirement(King, Biggs, Criner1994).

The Ro/Ro concept operated by the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS) was combined with the U.S. Army Trailer Service Agency to facilitate the movement of general cargo from Okinawa to support operations in Vietnam. The service began March, 1966 and operated

between Okinawa; the three Vietnam ports, Cam Rahn Bay, Saigon and Qui Nhon; and Bangkok, Thialand(King, Biggs, Criner1994). The MSTS ships Comet, Transglobe and Tauras were assigned to Ro/Ro operations and were capable of transporting trailers, containers, and large or small military vehicles(King, Biggs, Criner1994). The MSTS also dedicated 2,400 trailers to this operation to ensure consistent reuse and availability. (See map in Appendix).

NEWPORT - RAILROADS

Although it is believed that no rail tracks entered into Newport and that rail was not a major mode of transportation, the 71st Transportation Battalion did have some responsibility over the railhead at Ho Nai providing rail operations (Ship N'Shore 1968). The 372ND Transportation Company was assigned operations responsibility of the HO Nai Railhead starting December, 1968.

Railroad usage/testing was evident as early as July 29, 1969 for transporting vehicles by rail. In 1967-1968, 200 U.S. produced freight cars were delivered to Vietnam.

The Vietnam National Railway was government owned and originated in Saigon. There was approximately 830 miles of track in Vietnam. Therefore, rail was not of great value for transport and distribution of U.S. militarly cargos. This railway originated at Saigon and served primarily coastal cities. (See map in Appendix).

According to readings from Spearhead of Logistics , the line included 413 bridges, 27 tunnels, controlling grades of less then 11/2 percent, steel ties, and vertical elevations well above

the waterways. In 1969, the rolling stock consisted of 59 locomotives and over 500 working freight cars.

DOCUMENTATION

By 1969 it was recognized that matching cargo manifested versus actual cargo on the ships was a continuing problem in Vietnam.

The success of a transportation operation centers on its ability to deliver the right product at the right time to the correct destination. The degree of success depends on how the inherent problems of the given operation are dealt with. An age old problem is documentation. Proper identification is always necessary for proper routing of material to destinations. For successful support operation, accompanying paperwork and manifesting is of vital importance. It has been observed in each war or conflict that insufficient paperwork contributed to lost shipments and lack of identification of critical items needed to support operations. In Vietnam the term "Gray Box" was created to distinguish unidentifiable parts boxed inside CONEX containers which had to be sent back to Okinawa for proper identification and then resent back to Vietnam.

INTRANSIT ASSET VISIBILITY

To help improve on the "Gray Box" situation, intransit asset visibility improvements were enhanced. Total accountability of shipments is described by retired General Jack Fuson in his book Transportation & Logistics: One Man's story. In his chapter on the war in Vietnam, Fuson describes the importance of the transportation control movement document (TCMD) which was necessary to accompany movement of cargo to final destinations. See appendix for illustration.

SUMMARY/CONCLUSION

We now understand the important role Newport played during the Vietnam war. Newport is still in use today by the Vietnamese and is still called Newport.

In 1997 the magazine Vietnam published an article titled "Back to Vietnam - Reflection On A Lost War" written by Major General John E. Murray, U.S. Army (ret.). General Murray states the port was full of container ships and the 100-ton floating crane still swings.

Respectfully Newport is credited in successfully eliminating the log jam of cargo ships in the Saigon port area. It also helped reduce pilferage under U.S. military management and U.S. military stevedores and personnel. Newport processed all military cargo inbound through Saigon for use in tactical zones III and IV. Newport was also vital for major embarkation for retro vehicles back to U.S. locations such as Operation Oregon.

GLOSSARY OF DEFINITIONS

Conex - container express system. Steel container with dimensions of six foot by six foot with holding capacity of up to 9,000 pounds.

Containerizaton - provides the ability to move cargo via rail, truck, air or ship and are handled by material handling equipment for loading/off loading along ship side from trailers or rail cars specifically designed to handle containers. Containers allow for greater efficiency of handling cargo and less pilferage.

Depot - warehousing and shipping facility utilizing consolidation and distribution practices for forwarding material to correct destination.

Demmurage - charges in dollars applied to detention of vessels beyond a specified time for loading and or unloading thus passing sailing schedule.

In-transist Assest Visibility - total accountability of shipments from origin to destination.

LCM - landing craft mechanized. Can carry men, equipment and or supplies.

LCU - landing craft utility. Same capabilities as LCM.

Lighter- Floating equipment. Transferring, unloading, loading cargo by means of barges that are open and usually towed by a tugboat.

Long Ton - 2,240 pounds.

LOTS - logistics over the shore. Move soldiers and supplies into the theater.

MACV - Military Assistance Command Vietnam.

Measurement ton - 40 c.f. or 2,240 lbs. On the Atlantic
42c.f. or 2,000 lbs. On the Pacific coast.

MSTS - Military Sea Transportation Service (ships Ciment, Transglobe, Taurus).

Quay, Term for wharf, usually solid construction, accommodating vessels on only one side and parallel to shore line.

Short Ton - 2,000 pounds.

TCMD - Transportaiton Control Movement Document. A document that describes amounts, weights, descriptions, sizes, freight classification, stock number or item numbers, stowage location and other pertinent details of cargo on ship for destination to customer.

Traffic Management - a commercial term referring to rules, regulations, rates, routing and other service information governing movement of freight.

Transportation Movement Control - A term used in time of war specific to the theater of operations. The term originated with the British in World War II.

RO/RO - Roll on/roll off vessels. New concept by which cargo is checked at point of orgin and unloaded onto a trailer-type conveyance, transported to a vessel at the port of loading, rolled into the vessel, stowed, rolled off at port of discharge and dispatched to forward destination.

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71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal).

SHIP'N SHORE, 4th Transportation Command, Saigon, Vn. Vol. III No. 23., Dec. 30, 1968.

368th Transportation Company (Terminal Service).

372nd Transportation Company (Terminal Transfer).

551st Transportation Company (Terminal Service).

PHONE INTERVIEWS

Fuson, LT. Gen. Jack C. USA (ret.) interviewed on March 9, 1999

Murray, Maj. Gen. John E., USA (ret.) interviewed on February 1, 1999

TRANSPORTATION CONTROL AND MOVEMENT DOCUMENT

PAGE NO.

Doc Id	Trlr—Cont	Consignor	Comm—Spec Hdlg	Air Dim	POE	POD
1.	2.	3.	4.	5.	6.	7.

Mode	Pack	Trans Control No.	Consignee	Pri	RDD	Proj	Date Shpd	ETA	Tr Acct
8.	9.	10.	11.	12.	13.	14.	15.	16.	17.

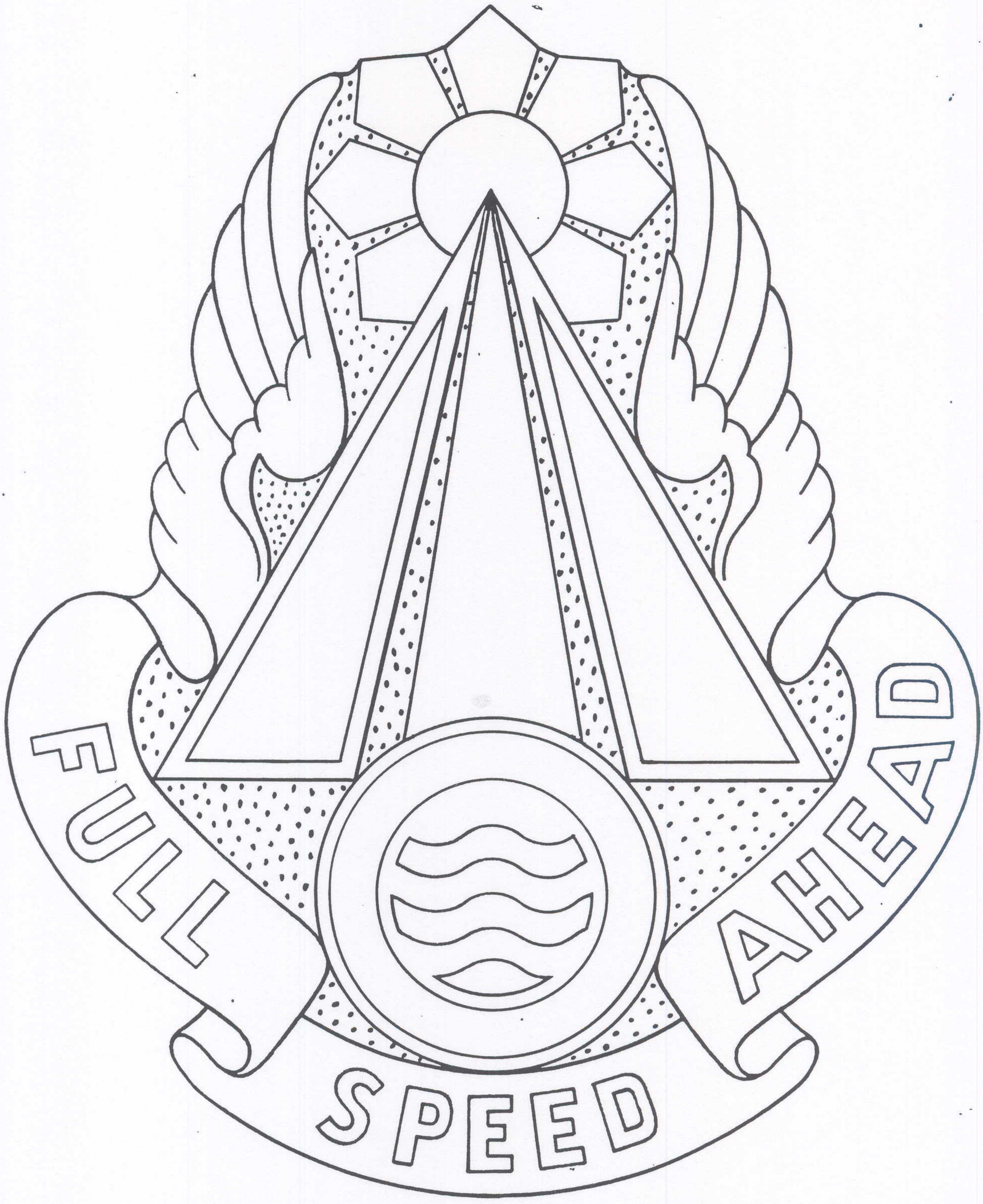
Carrier	Flight—Truck—Voy Doc—No.	Ref	Remarks	Pieces	Weight	Cube
18.	19.	20.	21.	22.	23.	24.

Transhipment Point		Date Rec	Bay Whse	Date Shpd	Mode Carrier	Flight—Truck—Voy Doc—No.	Ref.	Stow Loc	Split	Condition	Signature—Remarks
Tranship Point (1)	25a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.	h.	i.	j.	k.
Tranship Point (2)	26a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.	h.	i.	j.	k.
Tranship Point (3)	27a.	b.	c.	d.	e.	f.	g.	h.	i.	j.	k.

Consignee	Date Received—Offered (Sign)	Condition	Remarks
28.	29.	30	31.

DOC ID	TRAILER-CONTAINER	CONSIGNOR COMM ABBR OTHER	COMMODITY SPEC HDLG	STOW LOC		POD	MODE	TYPE PACK	TRANSPORTATION CONTROL NUMBER	CONSIGNEE	PRI	REMARKS AND-OR					MANUFACTURER'S SER. NO.		
				AIR DIM	POE							RDD	PROJ	SHPD	ETA	TAC	PIECES	WEIGHT	CUBE

DD FORM 1384, 1 APR 63 REPLACES EDITION OF 1 JUL 62, WHICH IS OBSOLETE.



41ST Grand Bed

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

Lineage and Honors

71st TRANSPORTATION BATTALION

Constituted 1 May 1936 in the Regular Army as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 2d Battalion, 48th Quartermaster Regiment

Activated 10 February 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia

Redesignated 14 December 1942 as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 2d Battalion, 48th Quartermaster Truck Regiment

Reorganized and redesignated 2 December 1943 as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Quartermaster Battalion, Mobile

Inactivated 15 April 1946 in Japan

Converted and redesignated 1 August 1946 as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Transportation Corps Truck Battalion

Redesignated 28 June 1954 as Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment, 71st Transportation Battalion

Activated 19 July 1954 at Fort Riley, Kansas

Inactivated 24 September 1963 in Korea

Activated 24 June 1965 at Fort Story, Virginia

Reorganized and redesignated 21 March 1973 as Headquarters and Headquarters Company, 71st Transportation Battalion

Inactivated 19 December 1976 at Fort Eustis, Virginia

Headquarters transferred 21 July 1986 to the United States Army Training and Doctrine Command and organized at Fort Eustis, Virginia

71st TRANSPORTATION BATTALION

CAMPAIGN PARTICIPATION CREDIT

World War II
East Indies
Papua
New Guinea
Leyte
Luzon (with arrowhead)

Vietnam
Counteroffensive, Phase II
Counteroffensive, Phase III
Tet Counteroffensive
Counteroffensive, Phase IV
Counteroffensive, Phase V
Counteroffensive, Phase VI
Tet 69/Counteroffensive
Summer-Fall 1969
Winter-Spring 1970
Sanctuary Counteroffensive
Counteroffensive, Phase VII
Consolidation I
Consolidation II
Cease-Fire

DECORATIONS

Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1968-1969

Meritorious Unit Commendation (Army), Streamer embroidered VIETNAM 1972

Philippine Presidential Unit Citation, Streamer embroidered 17 OCTOBER 1944 TO 4 JULY 1945

BY ORDER OF THE SECRETARY OF THE ARMY:

WILLIAM A. STOFFT
Brigadier General, USA
Chief of Military History

9 FEB 1987

71ST BATTALION HISTORY

The 71st Transportation Battalion was organized as a Regular Army unit on 10 February 1941 at Fort Benning, Georgia and was redesignated in December 1943 as the **71st Quartermaster Battalion**. World War II campaigns included the East Indies, Papaua New Guinea, Leyte, Luzon and the Philippines, where it earned the Philippine Presidential Unit Citation. Upon completion of its wartime service, the 71st was inactivated in Japan on 15 April 1946 and redesignated as the **71st Transportation Corps Truck Battalion** on 1 August 1946.

The 71st was again redesignated as the **71st Transportation Battalion (Helicopter)** and was activated at Fort Riley, Kansas on 19 July 1954. This new battalion was the first of its kind to prepare helicopter companies as combat ready units for assignment overseas. In October of 1961, the 71st arrived in Korea and provided aviation support to the 8th U.S. Army and was deactivated in September 1963. **The 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal)** served in the Republic of Vietnam from October 1966 until 25 August 1972, where it operated the U.S. Army Terminal *Newport* near Saigon earning two Meritorious Unit Commendations. After distinguished service in Vietnam, the colors returned to Fort Eustis in August 1972 until deactivation in December 1976,

In July 1986, the 71st was reactivated at Fort Eustis, Virginia, with a mission of training in support of the U.S. Army Transportation and Aviation Logistics Schools. During Operation Desert Shield in August 1990, the 71st took the additional mission as the command and control element for activated Reserve and National Guard units mobilized at Fort Eustis. On 15 August 1991, the 71st relinquished command and control of these units, and was subsequently realigned with its current organization. The 71st Transportation Battalion currently consists of AIT Companies India and Echo, Golf Company, which runs the Transportation Officer Basic and Advance Courses, HHC, 8th Transportation Brigade, and the Headquarters and Headquarters Detachment (HHD). The battalion's current operating strength varies between 550 and 800 soldiers depending on the student population.

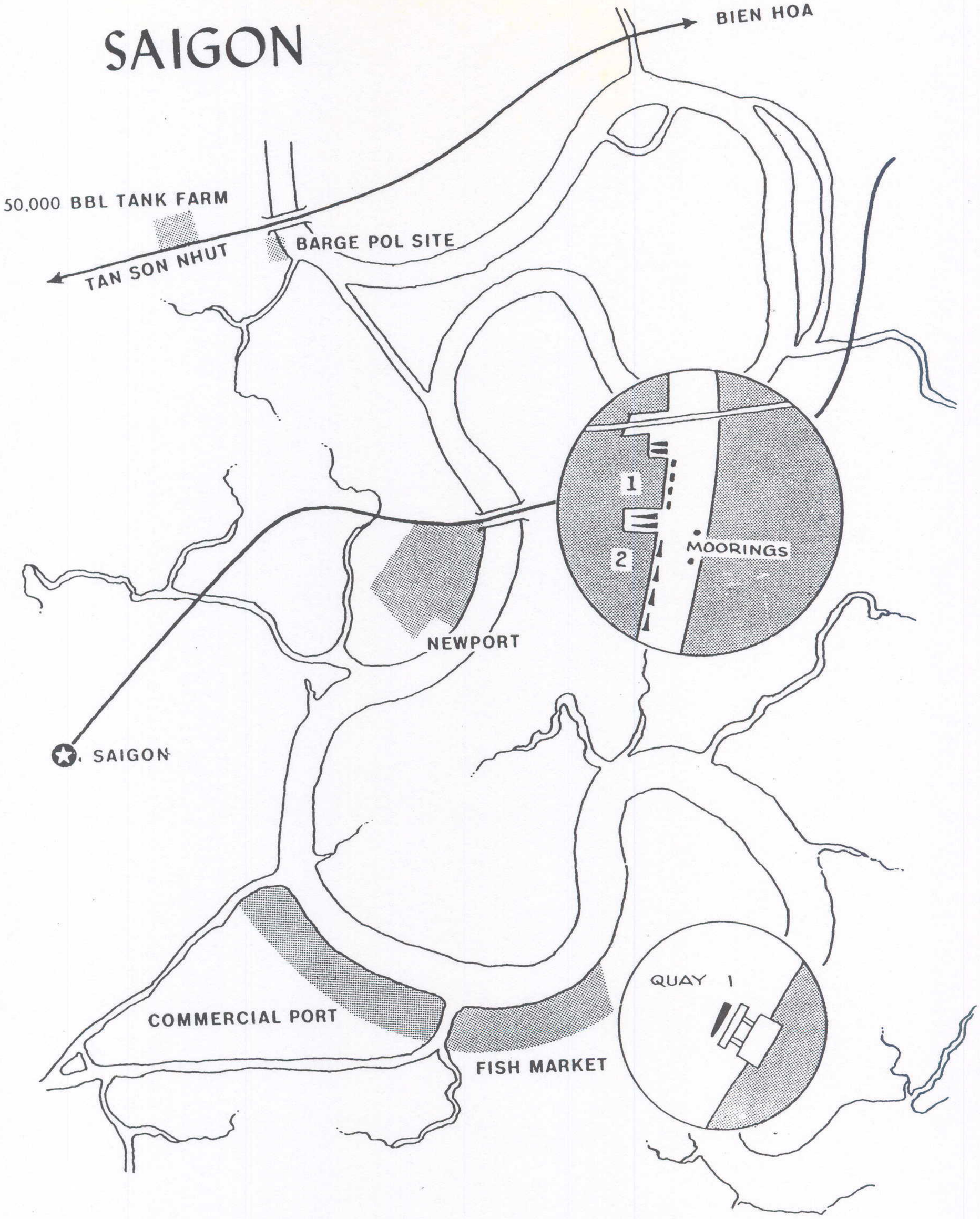


Figure VIII-11

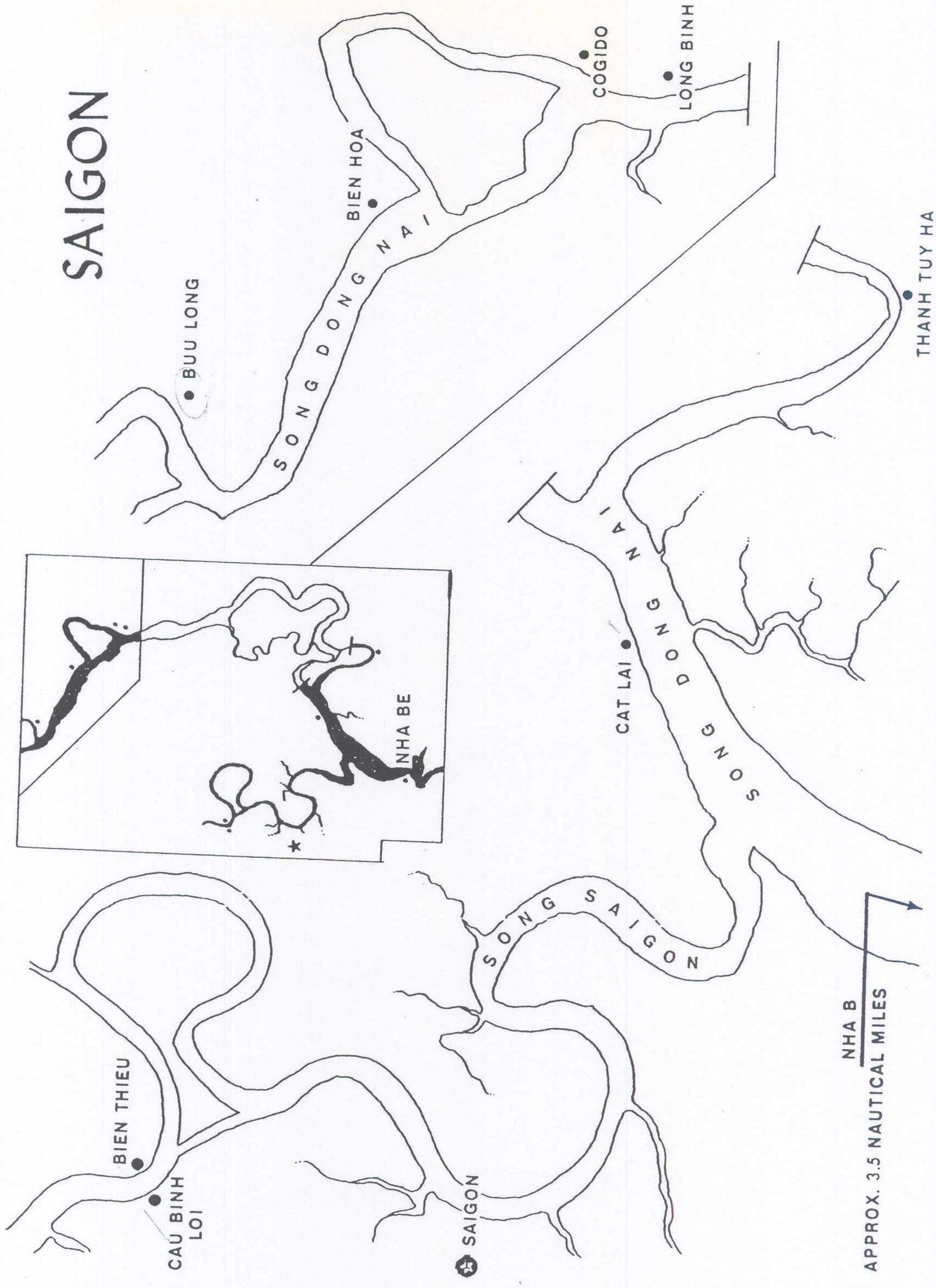
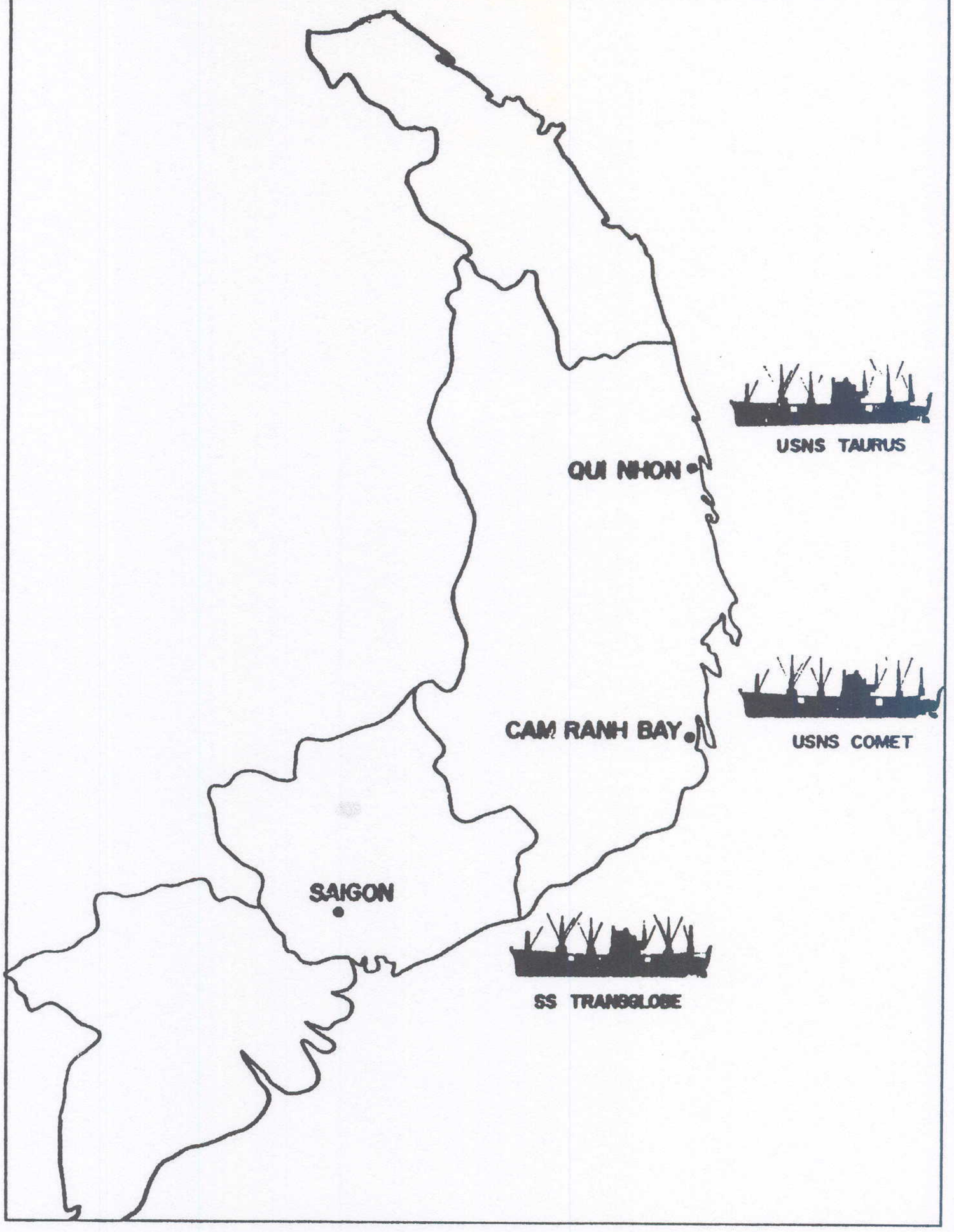


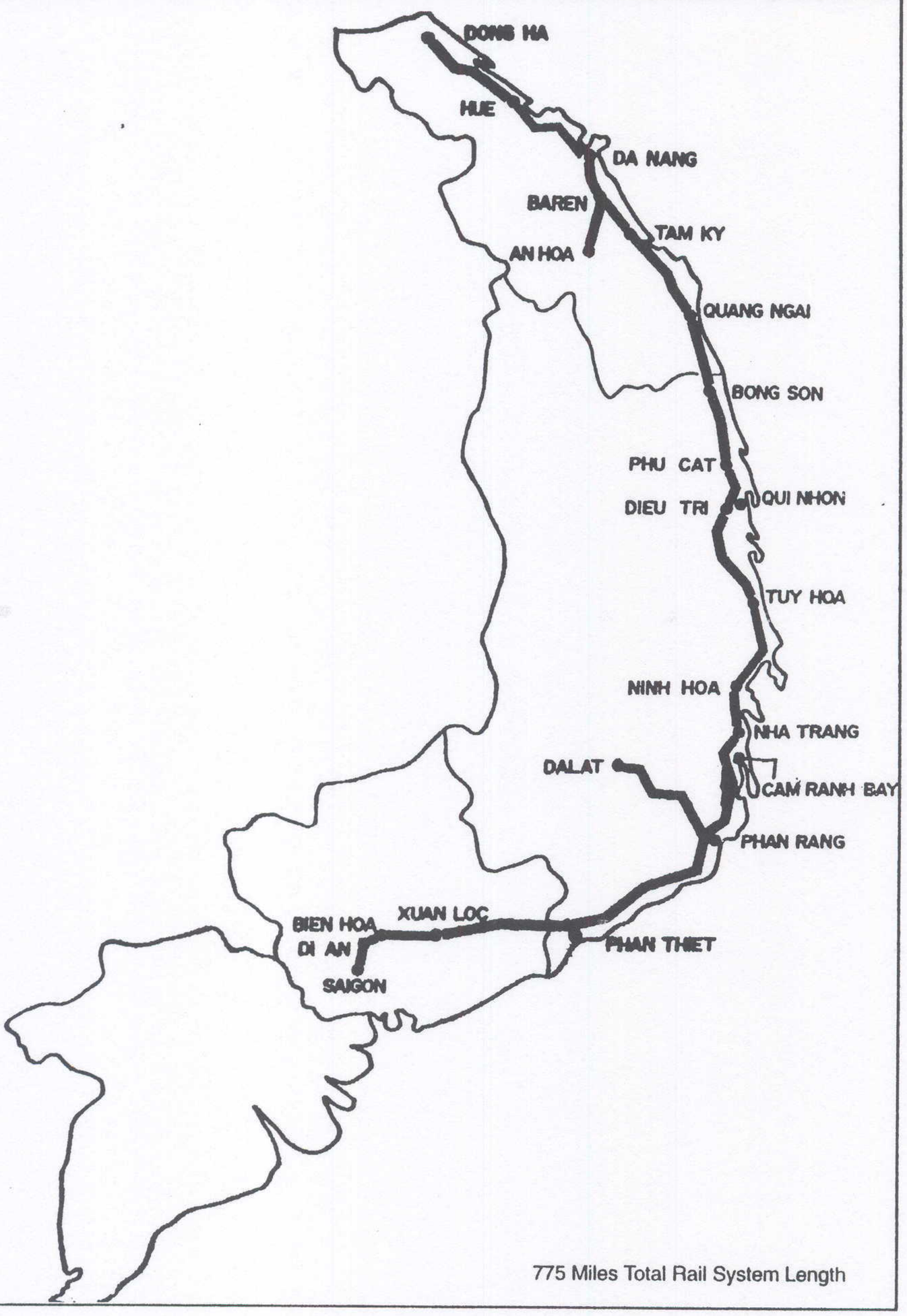
Figure VIII-10

RO/RO OPERATIONS SITES



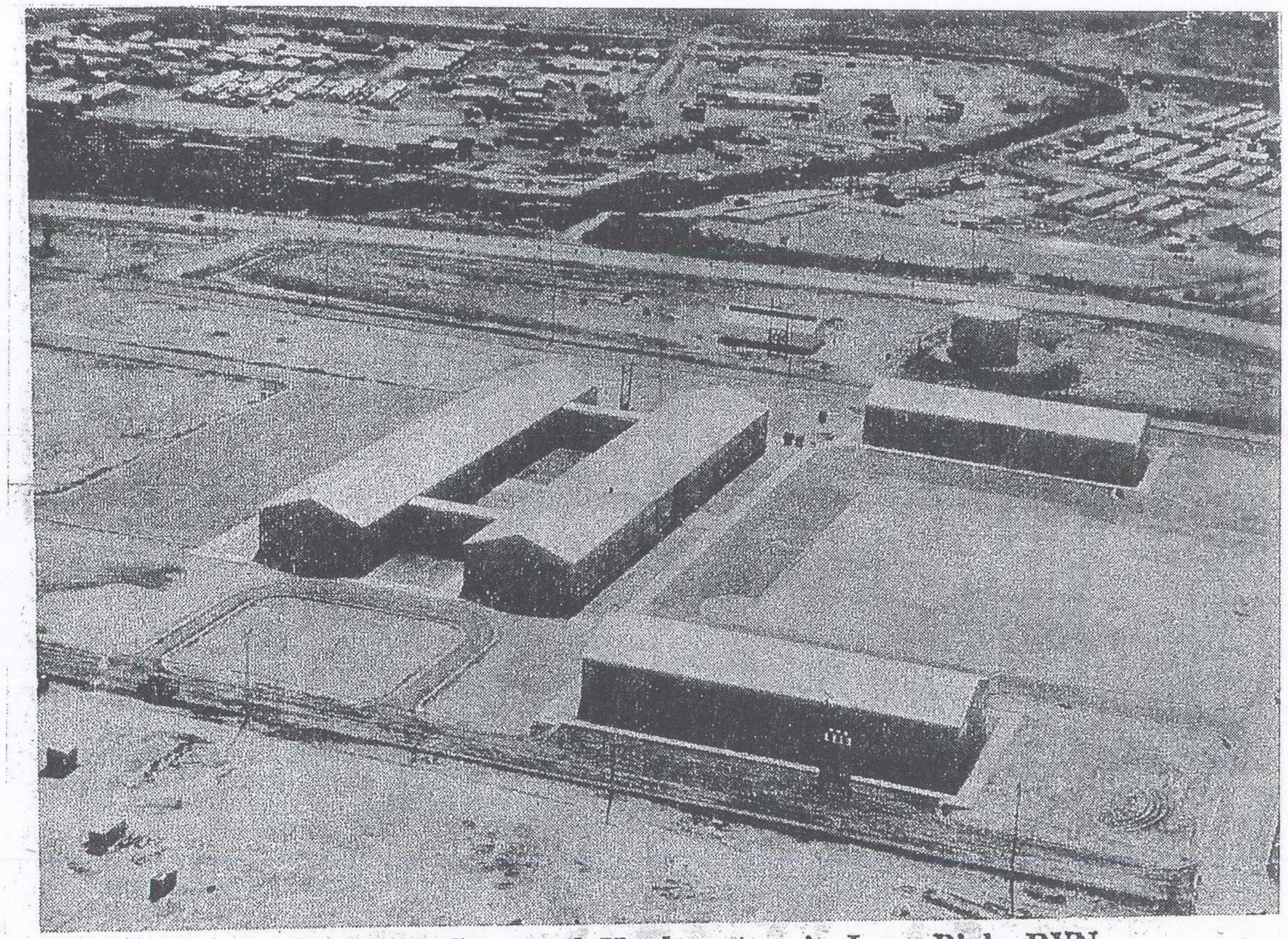
Map 33

REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM RAILWAY SYSTEM

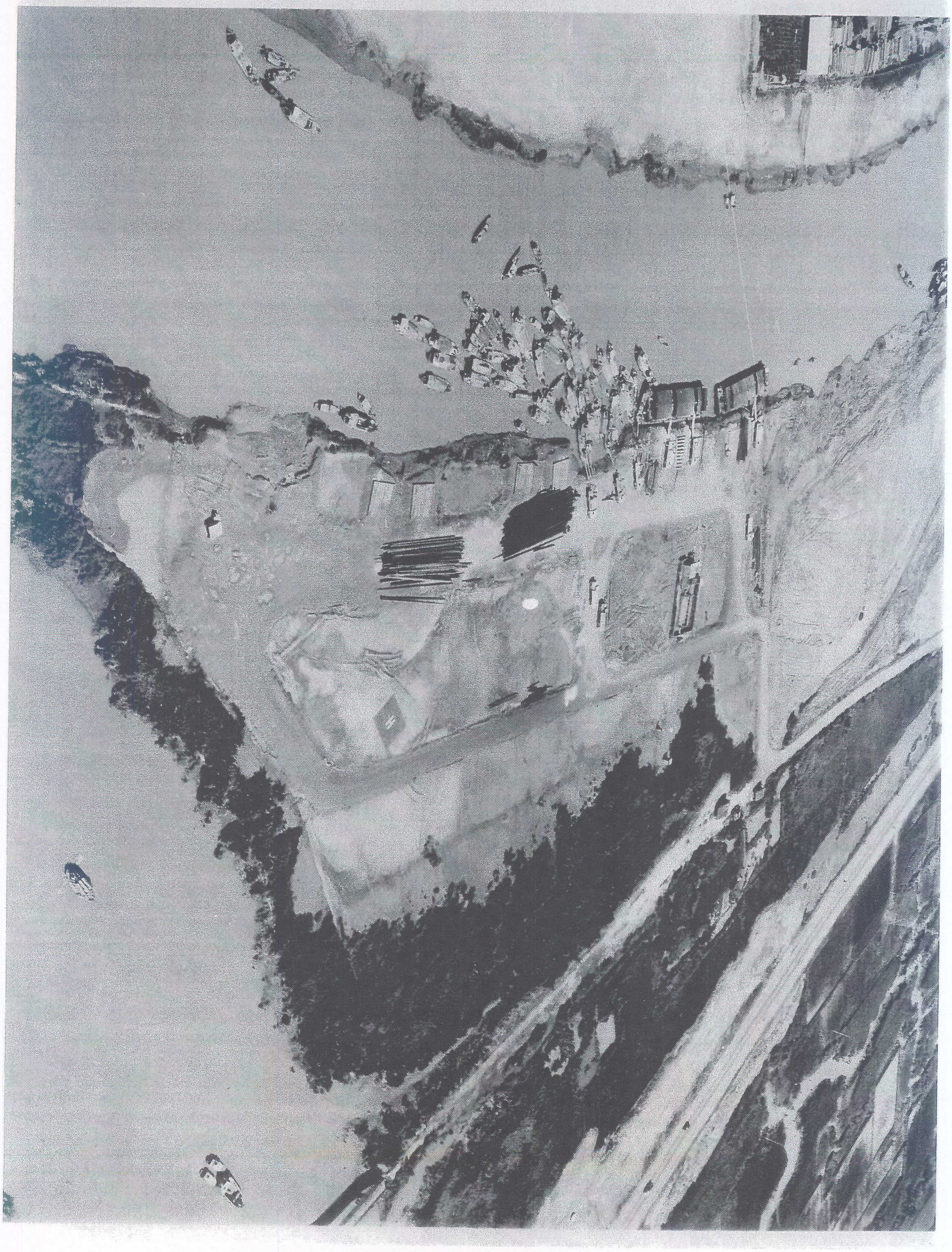


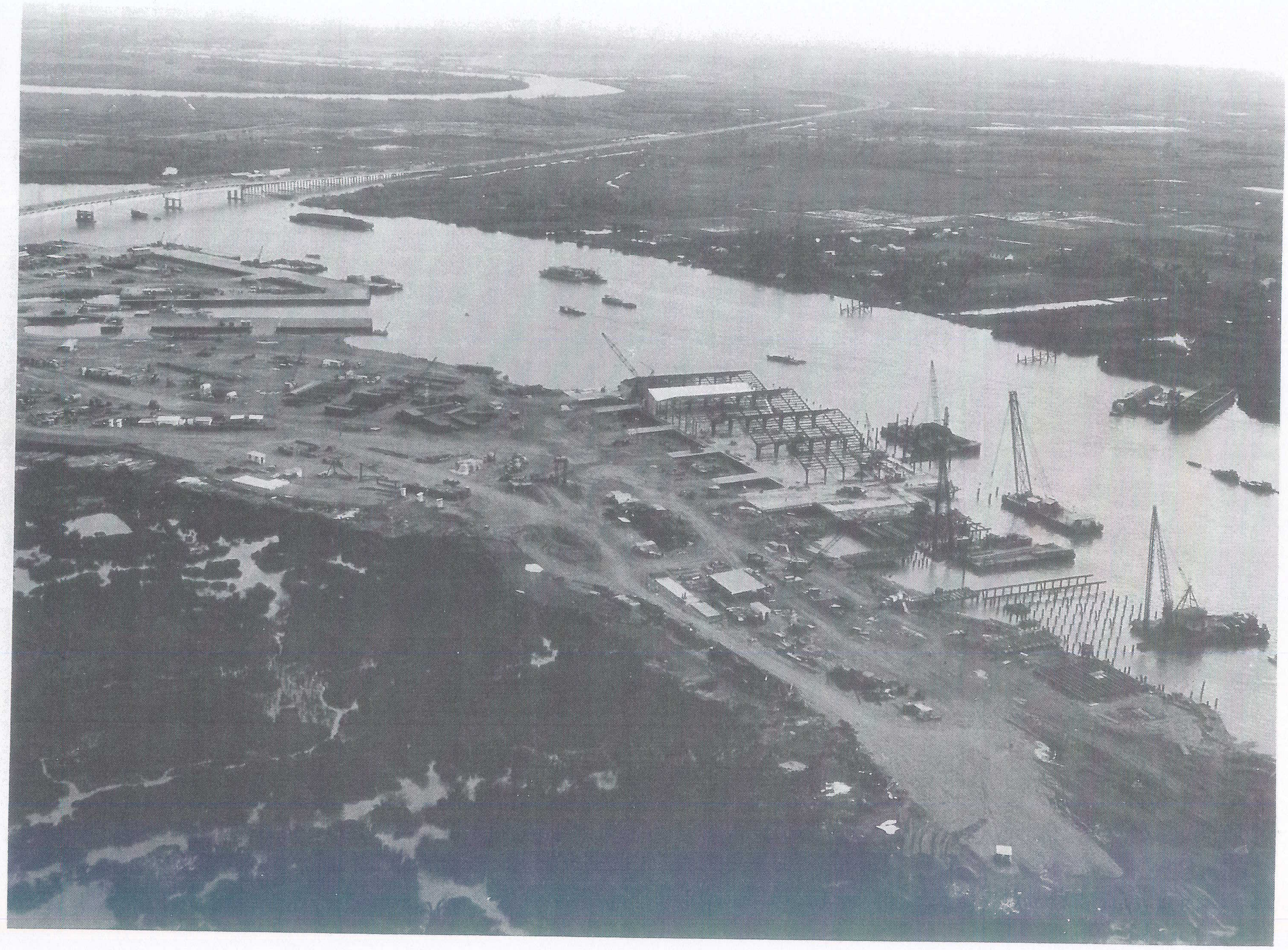
775 Miles Total Rail System Length

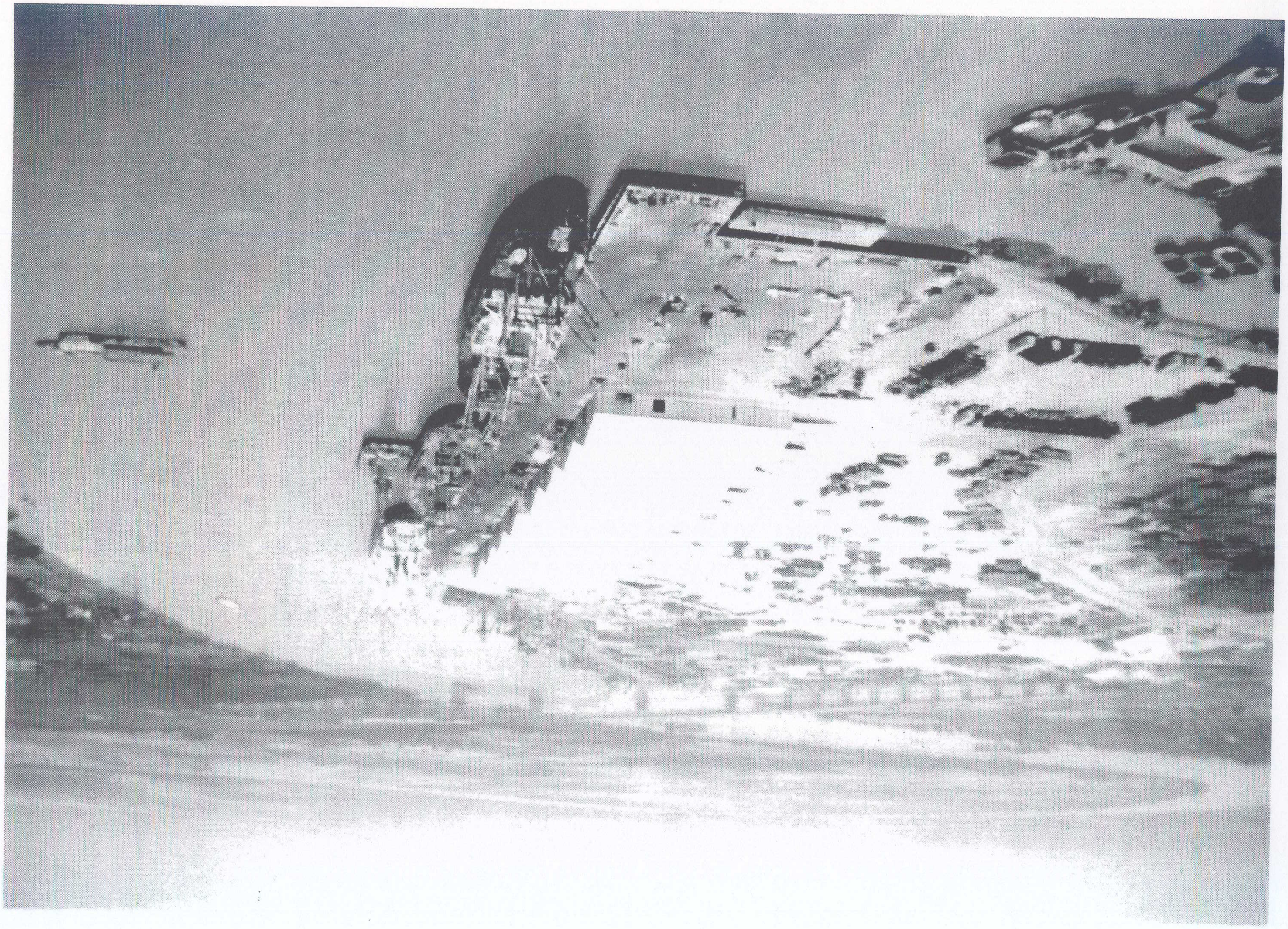
Map 35



1st Logistical Command Headquarters in Long Binh, RVN







APPENDIX - B

LIST OF ARTICLES RECEIVED & ATTACHED

U.S.A. in Vietnam: Advice & Support The Final Years, 1965-1973

The Vietnam Experience, Flags into Battle, American Units in Vietnam

Vietnam Studies: Base Development in South Vietnam 1965-1970

The Eyewitness History of the Vietnam War 1961-1975

Transportation & Logistics, One Manis Story

Logistics Support

Spearhead of Logistics, A History of the U.S. Army Transportaiton Corps

Back To Vietnam Reflections On A Lost War

Dictionary of the Vietnam War, Vietnamese Conflict, 1961-1975

United States Army Logistics 1775-1992, An Anthology Vol. III.

U.S. Army Order of Battle, Vietnam

Vietnam War Almanac

Southeast Asia: Building the Bases. The History of Construction in Southeast Asia

A Soldier Reports

Command History 1967 Volume II

Command History 1968 Volume II

Diary Of A Contract

71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal)

SHIP'SHORE, 4th Transportation Command

368th Transportaiton Company (Terminal Service)

APPENDIX -B - continued

372nd Transportation Company (Terminal Service)

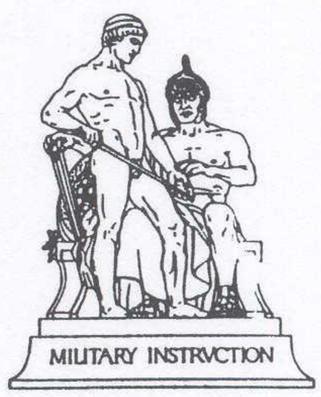
551st Transportation Company (Terminal Service)

United States Army in Vietnam

Advice and Support:
The Final Years, 1965–1973

by

Jeffrey J. Clarke



Center of Military History
United States Army
Washington, D.C., 1988

The Ports

During the latter half of 1969 MACV began a concerted effort to Vietnamize the port system in South Vietnam.[13] On 12 August 1969 General Abrams approved the creation of "local joint committees" of American and South Vietnamese port operators, local logistical commanders, and American port advisers "to promote the takeover or joint utilization by ARVN of selected US military port operations." To assist with overall coordination, he created a combined MACV–Joint General Staff committee, with participation of USARV and 1st Logistical Command staff officers, and directed that priority be given to the complete "ARVNization" of the Binh Thuy–Can Tho port area in the IV Corps Tactical Zone, the "joint utilization" of the Saigon commercial port, and the expansion of South Vietnamese military responsibilities at other ports.[14]

The Saigon Support Command, the logistical headquarters for both the III and IV Corps areas, supervised the most extensive port ARVNization. The effort depended heavily on Switchback and OJT programs, and much had already been done prior to the Abrams directive. In February 1969 the command had ordered its subordinate units, the 4th Transportation Command and the 29th General Support Group, to begin "BUDDY (OJT)" programs that expanded past assistance to South Vietnamese forces "to encompass the capability to assume functions and missions as US units are phased out."[15] Thus, even before Vietnamization became an official policy, U.S. Army port units were giving practical classes to their Vietnamese counterparts in marine maintenance; landing craft, crane, tugboat, petroleum, and convoy operations; and harbor-master procedures (at the Saigon, Newport, Cat Lai, Dong Tam, and Binh Thuy ports). But at the same time, the command warned that more was needed and recommended a "consolidated training program" and a "theatre level" language program to aid "the successful completion of T-Day Plans."[16]

The Saigon Support Command tied the port ARVNization effort closely to the transfer (Switchback) of marine cargo craft to newly activated South Vietnamese Army water transportation units. In two cases U.S. Army marine transportation and maintenance units gave extensive technical training to key Vietnamese personnel, and new Vietnamese crews trained with departing American crews for about four months before the South Vietnamese units, the 203d and 305th Transportation Groups, were allowed to operate alone. Less successful was Project Switch 1097, the transfer of boats belonging to the U.S. 1097th Transportation Company at the small delta port of Dong Tam. The American unit had left South Vietnam with the U.S. 9th Infantry Division in July 1969, and it was not until the following year that personnel from a new South Vietnamese trans-

[13] For more details, see ORLLs of the 1st Logistical Command's subordinate support commands (at Saigon, Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, and Da Nang), HRB, CMH.

[14] ORLL, 1st Logistical Command, October 1969, annex F, HRB, CMH. Later ORLLs survey the countrywide port turnover program during each reporting period. The term *ARVNization* also became commonplace and a substitute in many official documents for the term *Vietnamization*. . .

[15] Msg, Saigon Support Command to Subordinate Units, 17 Feb 69, sub: BUDDY OPS, SEAB, CMH.

[16] ORLL, Saigon Support Command, July 1969, p. 19, HRB, CMH.

portation group were ready to begin operations. With no one to perform maintenance the equipment deteriorated rapidly, and it was several weeks before the U.S. 544th Transportation Company, 4th Transportation Command, could recondition it.[17]

As these transfers occurred, American harbor commands accelerated efforts to train and expand South Vietnamese military port units, especially in the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. Here the large Saigon commercial port and the delta riverways were able to supply the Vietnamese military with experienced personnel for harbor and riverine units, easing their expansion and training. In October 1969 the Vietnamese assumed partial control of the small Binh Thuy–Can Tho port complex in the Delta with equipment lent by the U.S. 159th Transportation Battalion and, one year later, acquired complete responsibility for the entire harbor operation there. In the III Corps area Col. John E. Murray, commanding officer of the U.S. 4th Transportation Command, and the commander of the South Vietnamese Saigon Terminal Transportation Command signed a thirty-day test agreement "outlining the responsibilities for the administration, coordination, and control and movement of cargo and the joint US-RVNAF Operation of the Saigon Port."[18] Shortly thereafter, the South Vietnamese unit began operating several of the major shipping piers and by 1970 had taken responsibility for almost all harbor operations handling USAID and defense-related shipments in the Saigon Port, leaving only the Newport area just south of Bien Hoa to the U.S. 4th Transportation Command for American military shipping. Also in 1970, the Vietnamese assumed control of Dong Tam and Vung Tau, another small port nearby, and, after a long OJT period with American crews, took over five tugboat detachments that served the Saigon area.

North of Saigon, where American support units had constructed and operated the major military ports by themselves, Vietnamization proceeded at a slower pace. Cam Ranh Bay in south-central II Corps remained an American facility throughout 1970, but the U.S. Army Support Command, Cam Ranh Bay, established BUDDY and Switchback programs to enable the South Vietnamese 5th Area Logistics Command to assume harbor and depot responsibility for the small port of Nha Trang, a few miles north. After long negotiations, the 5th and the U.S. 124th Transportation Command signed a local turnover agreement on 1 August 1969. Cam Ranh Bay remained the main receiving area for overseas shipments in the II Corps Tactical Zone, and Nha Trang handled shallow-draft operations. Deep-draft Vietnamese cargo was first offloaded at Cam Ranh Bay and then forwarded to Nha Trang on lighters. American supplies arriving at Nha Trang traveled by road to Cam Ranh Bay depots. Later, on 27 October, MACV and the Joint General Staff formally approved the agreement, and the Nha Trang Port officially became a South Vietnamese activity.

[17] See ORLLs of Saigon Support Command and subordinate units for 1969–70, especially for the 4th Transportation Command and the 159th Transportation Bn, HRB, CMH.

[18] Quoted words from ORLL, 4th Transportation Command, October 1969, p. 8, HRB, CMH. See also Interv, 1st Lt David Wigdor, 15th Military History Detachment, with Maj James Piner and Col Paul A. Pencola, Advisory Team 10, 4th Area Logistics Command, Can Tho, 26 Oct 69, fldr 8, box 13, accession no. 70A6868, RG 319, WNRC.

Re Vietnam Experience | 1st Log comments

Flags into Battle

American Units in Vietnam

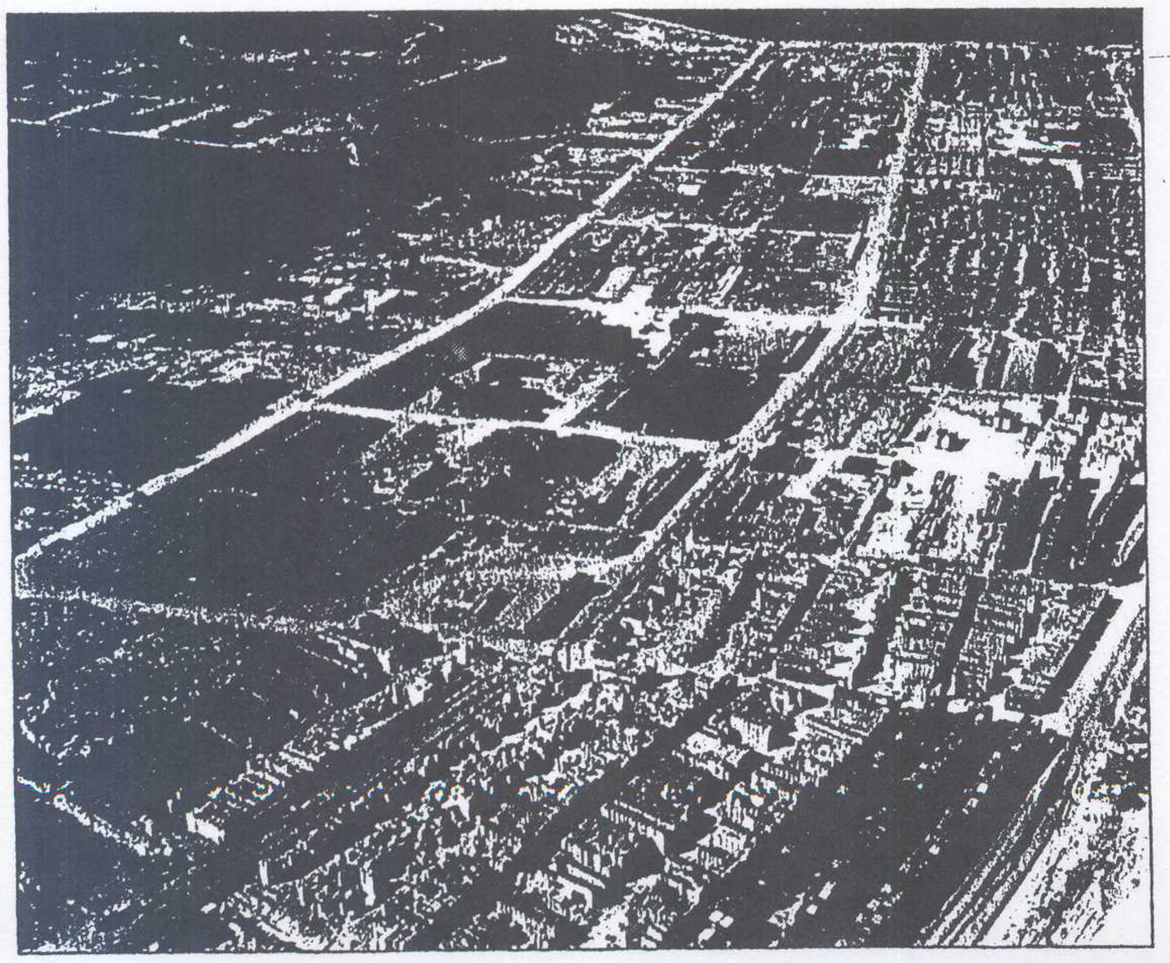
By: Michael Casey, Clark Dougan
Samuel Lipsman, Jack Shulimson,
Stephen Weiss & Editors of Boston
Publishing Co. 1987 p-16

1st Logistical Command

No unit was more critical to the buildup of American forces in Vietnam than the 1st Logistical Command. Prior to 1965, the U.S. Army in Vietnam was supplied by the Army's Pacific Command through the small U.S. Army Support Group, Vietnam, which served under the 9th Logistical Command in Okinawa. With the deployment of division-sized units it quickly became apparent that the logistical effort required greater manpower and organization. As a result, the 1st Logistical Command, which had first been activated during the Korean War, was deployed from Fort Hood, Texas, and arrived in Saigon on April 1, 1965.

At that time, Vietnam possessed only two ports capable of supporting the ocean-going vessels that brought most American materiel to Vietnam: one in Da Nang that the U.S. Navy used to provide logistical support to the Marines in I Corps, the other in Saigon. Not wanting to absorb the capacity of the port of Saigon, which was needed to provide South Vietnam with most of its imported goods, USARV made the critical decision to build a major port at Cam Ranh Bay. Utilizing the DeLong pier, which operated by hydraulic lifting devices, Army engineers succeeded in completing the port at Cam Ranh in record time. Additional ports were soon constructed at Qui Nhon and a new one at Saigon, where the facility was named Newport. The results were astonishing. In mid-1965 the 1st Log Command, as it was commonly called, could process 70,000 tons of incoming materiel per month. One year later that figure had risen tenfold, to 700,000 tons a month, not counting critical items brought in by air.

An aerial view of the 506th Field Depot storage area at the Long Binh logistical complex on November 13, 1967.



The development of the ports played a large role in determining the organization of the 1st Logistical Command. Separate U.S. Army Support Commands were established in Saigon, Cam Ranh, Qui Nhon, and, in 1968, when Army units began to serve in I Corps, in Da Nang. Each support command operated independently in maintaining a flow of needed goods to the combat zones. The 1st Log maintained overall control and supervision through the Logistical Operations Control Center located at its Saigon headquarters.

That headquarters was originally located in a single villa, but as the command grew in size its activities were dispersed throughout the city, making coordination difficult. In late 1967, 1st Log moved its headquarters to the new compound at Long Binh, thirty kilometers northeast of Saigon, which became home for USARV. Long before that date, the 1st Log had become the largest single unit serving in Vietnam. By 1968 the number of men in the command had risen above 50,000.

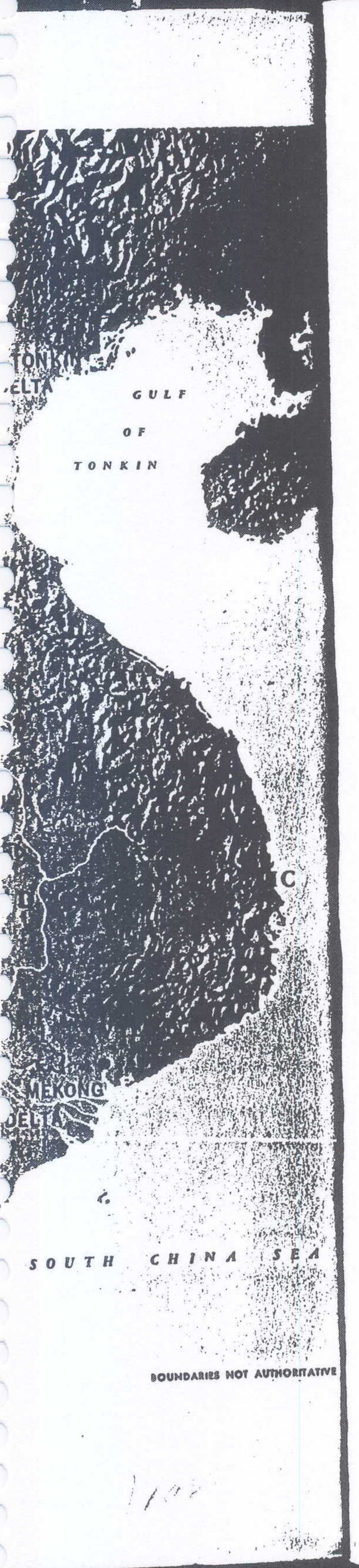
The diversity of 1st Log activities was astounding. Under its command were truck units, boat companies, railroad facilities, and airlift and airdrop capabilities. Almost every piece of Army equipment sent to Vietnam was processed, transported, issued, and maintained by the 1st Log. Not only was the 1st Log responsible for providing the Army troops with the basic weapons of war, but it also clothed and fed them and supplied them with virtually every amenity available in Post Exchanges.

Many of the administrative functions of the 1st Log were accomplished through the aid of the era's most powerful computers, which attempted to keep track of the 700,000 tons of "imports" each month. But the size of the undertaking almost inevitably led to problems and abuses.

Among the major problems confronting the 1st Log Command was the responsibility for supervising a large civilian work force made up largely of Vietnamese citizens. While great care was taken to screen out security risks, inevitably mistakes were made, the extent of which may never be known. Some supplies intended for American and South Vietnamese troops wound up in enemy hands. In other cases the lure of high profits on the black market proved to be too much for hired civilian workers and even U.S. soldiers.

Equipment was also lost simply because the extent of the logistical effort precluded careful tracking of all materiel. This problem was further exacerbated during the Vietnamization process when the South Vietnamese proved less than able at mastering American managerial techniques.

Still, when it was finally redeployed to Fort Hood on December 7, 1970, the 1st Log could look back upon more than five years of distinguished service. Two of its number had won the Medal of Honor, and thousands of others had maintained the distinction of seeing the American Army the best supplied and best equipped in the world.



VIETNAM STUDIES

BASE DEVELOPMENT IN SOUTH VIETNAM 1965-1970

by

Lieutenant General Carroll H. Dunn

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 1972

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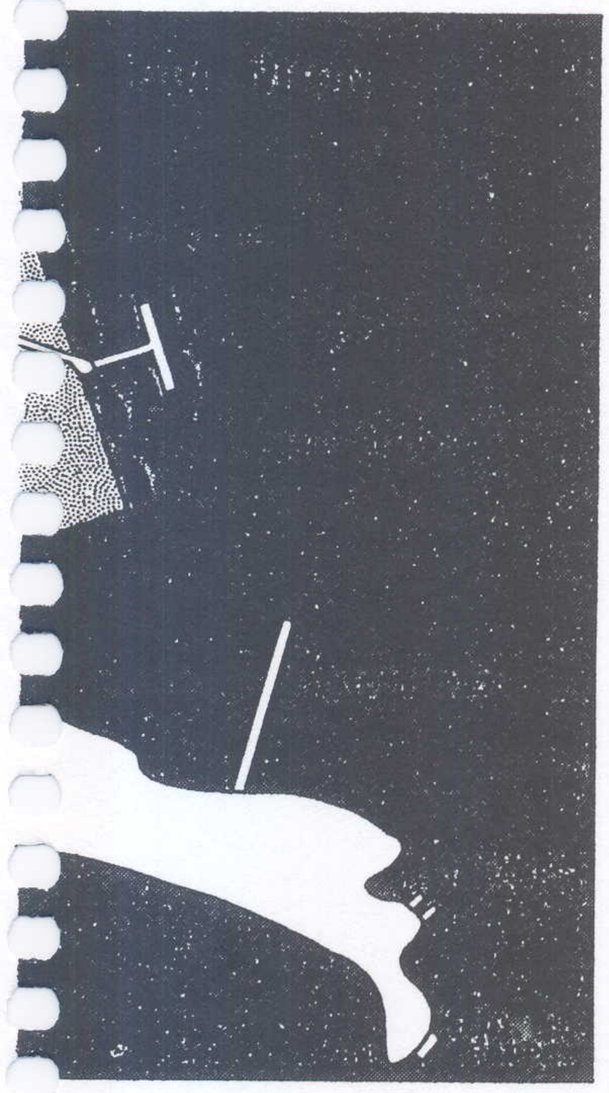


nage requirements were calculated, and the design for the port was developed. Phase I included eight barge unloading points, four deep-draft berths provided by DeLong piers, and two permanent LST ramps. In June 1966 the 937th Engineer Group began building a four-lane port access road 1.5 miles across the bay to bypass the congested city of Qui Nhon. The subbase of the access road was hydraulic fill. The approach channel, some two miles in length, and the turning basin were dredged. A total of 4,000,000 cubic yards of material was moved. A submarine pipeline for the transfer of petroleum from tankers to tank farms was installed. Two 4-inch lines near the landing craft ramps and one 4-inch line on the seaward side of Qui Nhon were also put in but were accessible only to small tankers. For stabilizing the tankers while unloading, a system of anchorage and breasting dolphins was rigged at the sea end of the pipelines.

With the increased movement of troops into the Saigon area, the deep-draft facilities there proved completely inadequate. However, a plan was already under way to construct a new port on the Saigon River upstream from the city. The location was chosen by Captain Maury Werth, U.S. Navy, who was a special assistant to the MACV J–4. This site, called Newport, was in a sparsely populated area adjacent to a main highway connecting Saigon with the newly developing Long Binh area some twenty miles from Saigon. This massive project financed by the Army was constructed by RMK–BRJ.

To meet the immediate need for additional port facilities in the Saigon area, the 18th Engineer Brigade built six cargo barge unloading points near the Long Binh Depot. The ammunition unloading points were constructed on the Dong Nai River at Cogido, and two piers were constructed for docking.

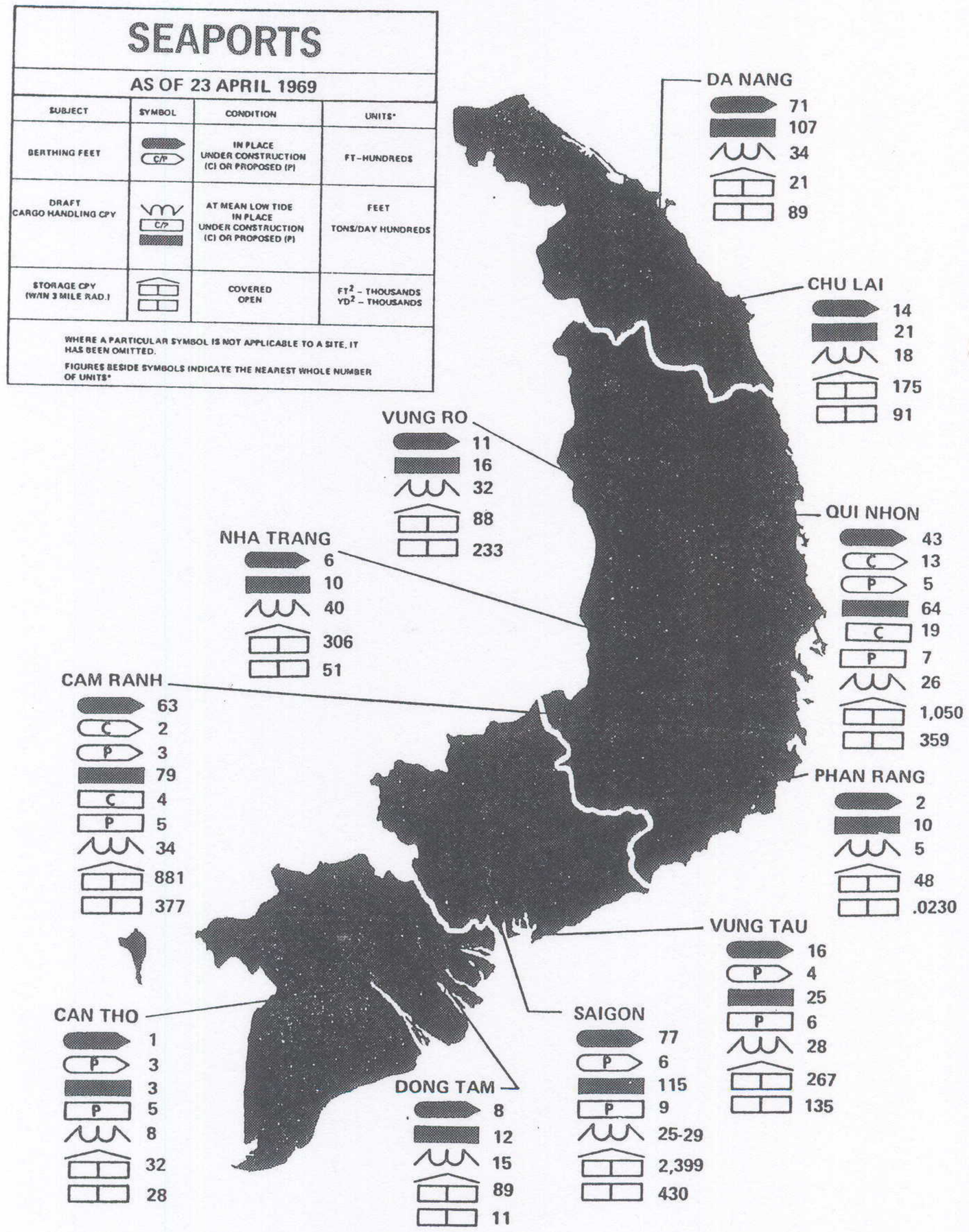
The 536th Port Construction Detachment, consisting of a construction platoon and construction support elements, operated in Vung Tau during the spring of 1966. This detachment developed temporary LST facilities, timber-pile piers, sheet-pile bulkheads, and DeLong pier abutments.

Improvements in the flow of cargo not only had a military impact but also aided the Vietnamese people, since a steady flow of consumer goods helped to combat the inflation which threatened to ruin the Vietnamese economy. To a very great extent, the success in providing logistical support to American forces in South Vietnam was a direct result of port expansion.

The capacity of permanent port facilities in South Vietnam increased many times over, with the construction of new facilities at Newport, Saigon, Vung Tau, Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, Da

Nang, and other installations. Port development throughout the coastal region of South Vietnam gave the republic permanent access to the sea, thus promoting development of a stabilized economy and the emergence of Vietnam as an Asian trading center. (*Map 7*)

As the building of improved ports and docking facilities continued, a network of air bases was under construction which further



MAP 7

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supply and sewage systems, and provisions for security. Bases may also include airfields, ports, and fuel storage and distribution facilities. We can look back now to some of the outstanding base facilities and related engineering left to our Vietnamese allies.

Initially the port of Saigon provided the only unloading facilities for oceangoing vessels. Its six deep-draft berths were altogether inadequate for handling regular commercial shipping and the hundreds of ships bringing military cargo from America. The result was an enlarging of port facilities fivefold.[4]

In the spring of 1965 Army engineer troops moved to Cam Ranh Bay, an excellent natural but a wholly undeveloped harbor. There they installed a DeLong pier and a causeway pier that enabled four ships to unload simultaneously. Six more berths were subsequently constructed in this harbor.

To handle military cargo in the Saigon area, the Newport port facilities were constructed by RMK–BRJ on what had been rice-paddy land two miles north of Saigon. (*Map 13*) As silt from the river bottom was unsuitable for fill, great quantities of rock and sand were brought in by barge and truck. Newport can accommodate simultaneously 4 oceangoing vessels, 4 shallow-draft landing craft, and 7 barges. The cost was nearly $25 million.

Deepwater berths and appurtenant coastal facilities have also been constructed at Da Nang, Qui Nhon, Vũng Tau, and Vung Ro.

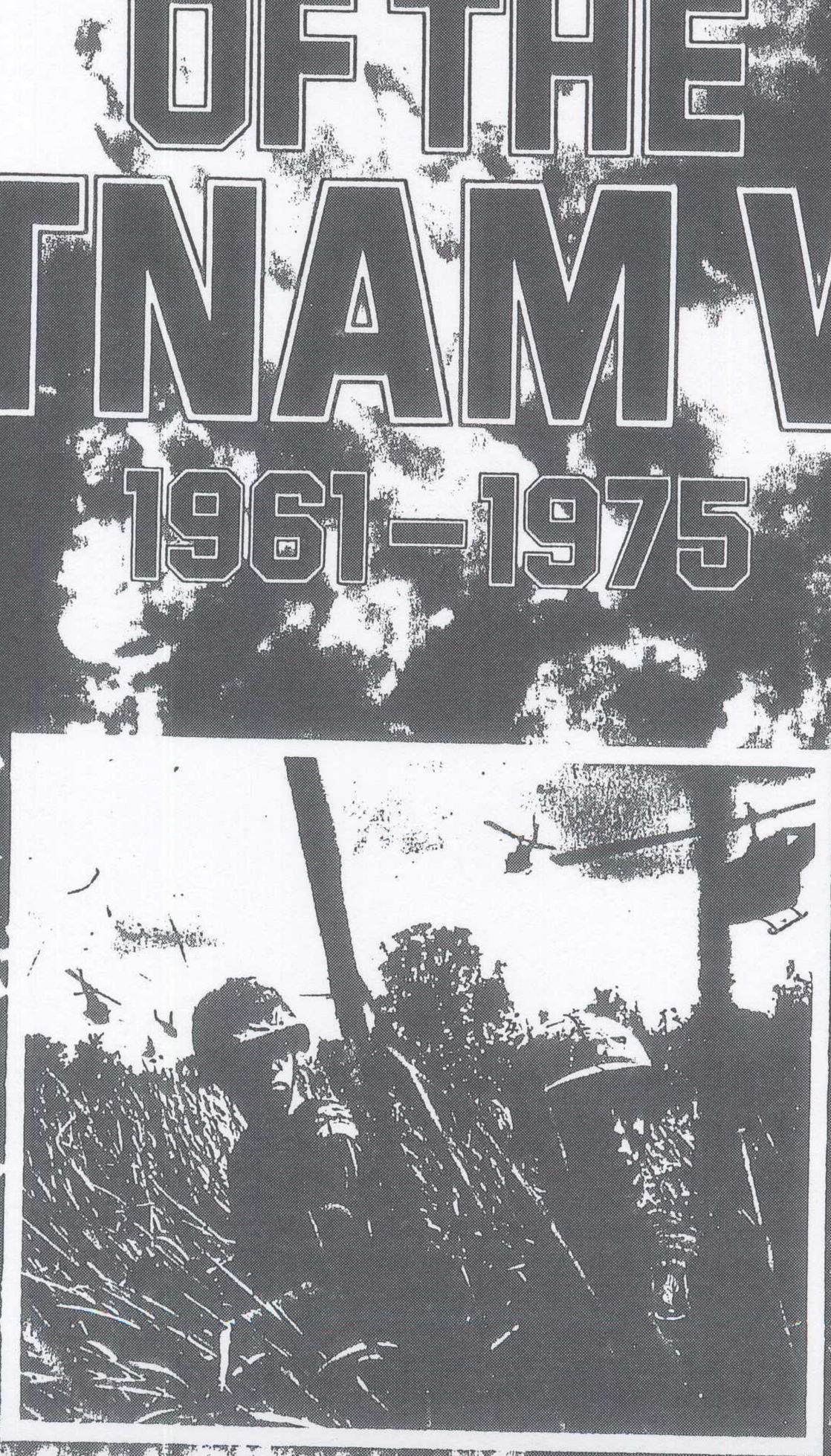
Vietnam has been the scene of one of the world's largest dredging operations. Since 1966, fourteen or more dredges have been doing harbor and land-fill work. They have cleared and deepened harbors, rivers, and canals; stockpiled sand for road and base camp construction; and reclaimed land for military, industrial, and housing sites. Without continuing dredging operations the accumulation of silt will, however, close the harbors and inland waterways to navigation.[5]

Eight airfields designed to accommodate large jet aircraft were constructed at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Phu Cat, Tuy Hoa, Cam Ranh Bay, Phan Rang, Bien Hoa, and Tan Son Nhut. These are huge installations with 10,000-foot runways and the whole range of appurtenant facilities, including administrative buildings, hospitals, hangars, repair shops, warehouses, barracks, and mess halls.[6] In November 1967, of ninety other airfields using expedient surfacing materials, eleven were operational for jets and sixty-two for C–130 medium cargo aircraft.[6]

A massive well-drilling program has accompanied the buildup of American forces in Vietnam. Although USAID had sponsored well-drilling in Vietnam since 1957, MACV had to develop its own water supply for its bases. Major work was done under contract to the Navy's OICC. Between July 1966 and September 1967, con-

THE EYEWITNESS HISTORY OF THE VIETNAM WAR

1961–1975



Ballantine/30865/$9.95 in USA • $12.95 in Canada

were pushing them back to keep the embassy from being overrun, allowing only Westerners and a few Saigon officials inside.

Vietnamese began to crawl over the barbed wire on top of the wall, like commandos. One man caught his leg and fell. He dangled upside down, hanging by a lacerated leg.

The Marines spotted us. Our group pushed nearer the wall. The crowd pressed closer. A youngster, perhaps 18, and half-American, clung desperately to my neck. "I will die if I stay," she cried out.

Mothers held their children above the mass of people for Marines to take them inside. One of my cameras disappeared. Then my watch was gone. The Marines, still kicking Vietnamese, started grabbing the Westerners by their collars and hauling them up.

[Once inside] it was easy. The embassy compound was in chaos, but a quiet man with a .45-caliber pistol in his belt led us to the inner court where Marines in combat gear guarded the walls.

He led us into the building to make our way to the roof. Waiting in the corridors, we saw men calmly destroying code machines with hammers. The place was littered. Offices now were deserted.

Telephones were ringing and no one was answering them.

We were nearing the end.

We heard the roar of the helicopter settling down on the embassy roof and we climbed the staircase. The Marine CH-46 was waiting when we emerged, its twin rotors turning great arcs in the drizzly grayness. Suddenly we were airborne and the lights of Saigon seemed like gems growing dimmer and smaller.

In a while, more lights, red gems this time: the deck lights of the USS *Okinawa*. We were down. We were safe.

All over Saigon, people sought ways to leave the country. Several South Vietnamese government officials came to the office of the Associated Press or telephoned to ask if they could be evacuated. Other Vietnamese stuck close to American reporters, thinking they would be their ticket out. One woman slept outside the apartment door of a reporter, not letting him out of her sight and wrongly assuming he would be evacuated.

At the entrance to Tan Son Nhut Air Base, abandoned American cars and

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Top left: *As a North Vietnamese mortar round explodes on Newport Bridge on the outskirts of Saigon on April 28, U.S. newsmen and South Vietnamese troops run for cover.* Top right: *With embassy staff and U.S. Marines standing guard, a helicopter sits atop the U.S. Embassy awaiting passengers to take to U.S. ships standing off the coast.* Right: *Mobs of Vietnamese attempt to scale the wall of the U.S. Embassy. AP photograph-*

Transportation and Logistics
One Man's Story

by

Jack C. Fuson
Lieutenant General
U.S. Army, Retired

Center of Military History
United States Army
Washington, D.C., 1994

CHAPTER 9

War in Vietnam

During the buildup of troops in Vietnam and the ensuing surge of weapons and supplies, the port of Saigon became a bottleneck. Most of the troops, equipment, and supplies came through the port facilities of Saigon, which also served as the major port of entry for all commercial cargo. (*See Map 3.*) The Saigon port is located on the southern coast, fifty miles up the Saigon River from Vung Tau and Cape St. Jacques. Although Saigon was a river port, it had adequate depth for deep-draft shipping. The port had several deep-draft berths and quays along the Saigon side of the river. The muddy opposite bank was almost impassible.

I had visited the commercial port of Saigon a few times on earlier trips to Vietnam, not on official business, but only to satisfy my own curiosity. During these earlier visits, when U.S. personnel were there only as advisers, the port operation appeared relatively small. We had few troops in the country, and the flow of U.S. Agency for International Development (AID) cargo had not yet begun.

Each time I visited the port, one thing impressed me: crews unloaded military cargo from the few ships being worked at a speed that permitted the crews to identify and document the cargo for movement to its destination. If the first destination backed up, ship discharge would stop until they relieved the backup. I couldn't help but recall the old days in Pusan, Korea, when we had to stuff the cargo down the customer's throat whether he could handle it or not. The process in Saigon, geared to the whole team's capabilities, impressed me very much. This was certainly an improvement over my previous experiences with overseas port operations during wartime. The key to the smooth operation was matched capabilities—both the port and the customer.

During late 1964 and into 1965, as the buildup of U.S. and other military assistance forces in South Vietnam went forward, large increases in both initial unit tonnage and resupply tonnage flowed through Vietnam's ports, especially Saigon. By December 1965, the backlog of ships waiting in South Vietnam waters, or in holding areas elsewhere, was so large that it created a buildup of cargo in U.S. ports that could not be shipped to Vietnam.

Although several factors contributed to this shipping backlog, the lack of adequate deep water port facilities in Vietnam was the major cause. In addition, the number of transportation units at Vietnam ports had not kept pace with the shipping increase. The construction of port facilities, roads, and hard stands for storage had also lagged behind requirements. MACV's 1st Logistical Command, under Col. Robert W. Duke and then Maj. Gen. Charles W. Eifler, had studied the problems and developed a plan to solve them. The steps required to correct the problems would take time. Major engineering projects included expanding Saigon's harbor facilities and building a new port at Cam Ranh Bay, half-way between Saigon and Da Nang.

Commercial, mostly AID cargo was being shipped through the same port facilities as military goods, which further congested the ports of Vietnam. Initially four deep-draft berths had been assigned to the U.S. Army for handling military cargo ships, which had reduced the capability of the commercial port. Commercial port personnel, even with some help from AID representatives, did not have the necessary know-how nor the capacity to do the job. AID cargo was generally of two types: AID-sponsored Center Procurement Agency (CPA) cargo, consisting of bulk products such as rice and fertilizer, and other materials being shipped to stimulate the Vietnamese economy under the commercial import program (CIP).

CIP cargo included items like bicycles, motorcycles, refrigerators, radios, and other consumer goods sent in at the request of the few importers. The importers were supposed to bring them into Vietnam on U.S. credit, enter them into their normal commercial supply and distribution system, and sell them to their customers for profit to generate capital for their economy. This long-range idea was noble, if it would work.

The major flaw in the plan was that little or no supply or distribution system existed in Vietnam to handle these goods. Before the CIP program, Vietnamese importers would import such items and store them at the port until they could sell them. The customer came to the port, paid for an item and its custom duties, and took it away with him. The importers lacked the capital to carry on business the way the CIP people envisioned. The port soon began to bog down with military, CPA, and CIP imports.

The Army, directed to move in an Army terminal command to control the military cargo, chose to send the 4th Transportation Command from Fort Eustis. It was a type A command, the smallest. Even with support by several terminal service companies and harbor craft units, it soon bogged down as well. The port command was soon converted to type C, which meant increased size and capability.

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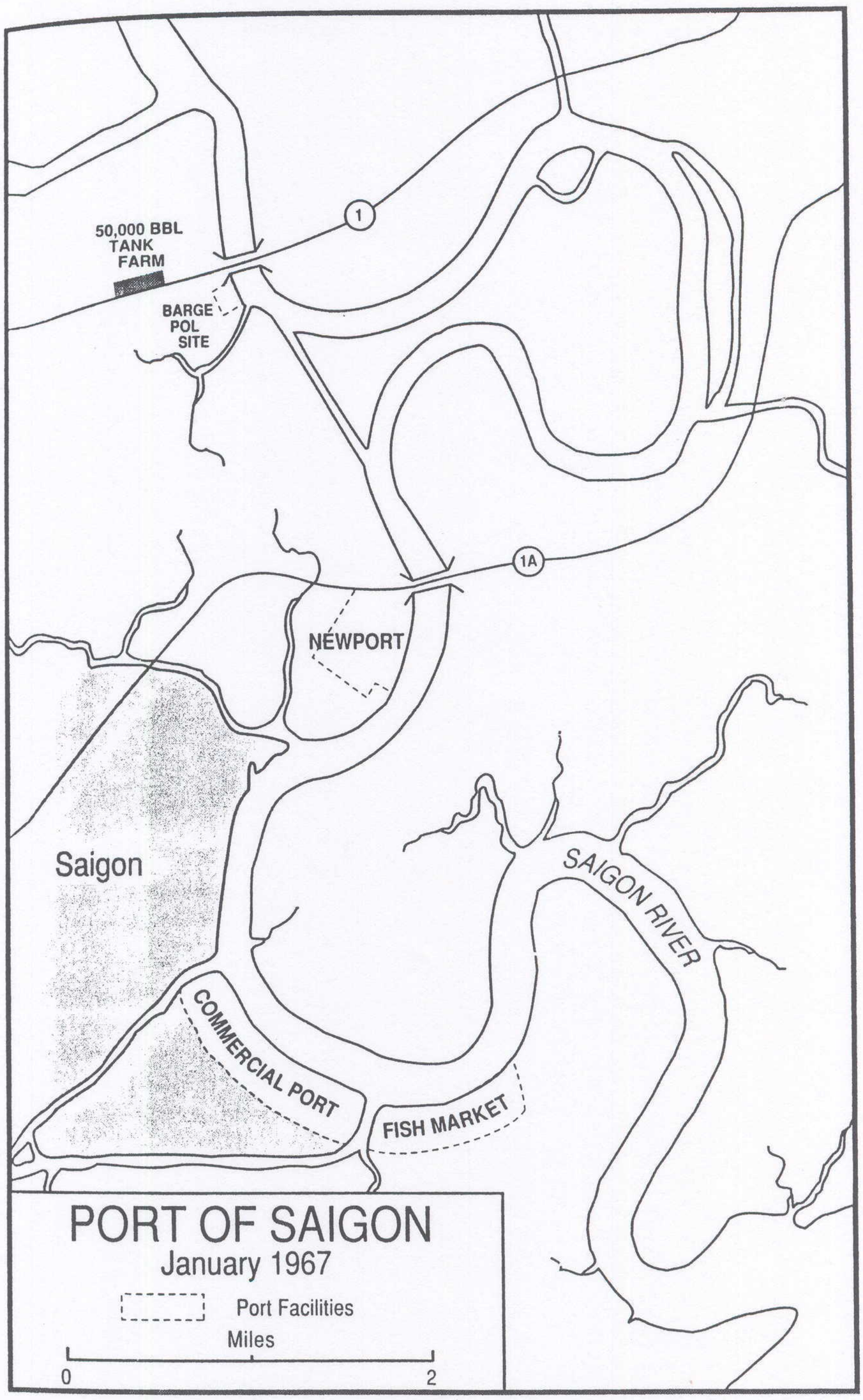

Map 3

Lt. Gen. Jean Engler, U.S. Army, Vietnam, commander, along with General Eifler, heading the 1st Logistical Command, asked that General Besson, AMC commander, provide a Transportation Corps colonel to assume command of the port. Besson responded by asking that the Department of the Army send me over to assume command. Although General Meyer had recently extended my tour with the joint staff, he permitted me to leave. I was very pleased and could not have asked for a better job. (Nearly every time I had been assigned a new job, General Besson had been in the background. He had been responsible for both the Pusan port job and my command of the 53d Truck Battalion in Europe.)

By the time I arrived in Saigon in July 1966, the buildup in Vietnam was really underway. We were moving U.S. troops in to take over the war and to show the Vietnamese how to do it. Unfortunately, the major port to receive incoming shipments was still Saigon. At that time the port areas at Cam Ranh Bay, Qui Nhon, and Da Nang were just beginning to be expanded and could not handle the loads they would be able to later.

When I arrived to take command of the 4th Transportation Command, I found a very demoralized unit. The 4th had been there less than a year but it was already being blamed for all the logistical problems that had occurred while supporting the military and the entire civilian community. The situation was appalling. I found many ships with commercial AID cargo at anchor off Vung Tau, at the mouth of the river coming up to Saigon, that had been waiting to be unloaded for months.

The warehouses at the Saigon port were absolutely full of cargo and accountability was completely out of control—asset visibility was almost nonexistent. With all of the pier space full, nothing could move. We quickly found out that the materiel handling equipment available to our dock and warehouse crews was inadequate. The port command had some 1,500 to 2,000 civilian Vietnamese barges under contract and fully loaded. The barges, with families aboard, were just floating around while their cargo was pilfered or rotting. Documentation for the cargo on these barges was missing, but we thought most of the cargo was AID material, such as rice, fertilizer, and some general cargo.

AID had first attempted to solve the problem by inviting Mr. Teddy Gleason, president of the longshoremen's union on the East Coast of the U.S., to straighten it out. Before I arrived, he had visited the port with twelve of his longshoremen to try to improve the port warehousing. All but one man did work in the warehouses, attempting to improve the situation, but this alone was not the solution. After a short period of time, they returned to the States. One man, Mr.

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Schultz, stayed on and proved invaluable in assisting us to improve the port situation.

Upon my arrival, I first attempted to sort out the problems. I found they fell into two areas: military and civilian. Sometimes they overlapped. One potentially dangerous problem existed because the port crews were working general cargo ships in the Saigon commercial port and military POL and ammunition ships at Nha Be just to the south. No one central authority was in charge.

The military and commercial cargo had been mixed throughout the port area. To make matters worse, the military and commercial customers waiting for this cargo could not receive, identify, or place their cargo in proper storage. Facilities were inadequate and trained personnel were not available. Although the military port troops were being blamed, they could do nothing about it.

Up to this period in Vietnam, the Transportation Corps' principles of movement planning and movement control did not govern shipments to or within the country. Each service requested and shipped its own equipment and supplies into Vietnam, as did the AID and other agencies. The MACV had established the Traffic Management Agency (TMA) to control movement, but it did not become effective until early 1967.

The existing procedures and organizations had four deficiencies at the outset.[1] First, a coordinated movement organization did not exist within the combat zone. Second, no agency had responsibility for providing CINCPAC with logistics information, for advising CONUS of the immediate requirements of CINCPAC and COMUSMACV and the component commanders, or projecting the cargo input to Vietnam, to CINCPAC and MACV headquarters. Third, procedures had not been established to coordinate inter- and/or intra-theater shipping with its ability to be received in Vietnam. Lastly, considerable cargo was moving to Vietnam outside of the Defense Transportation System and without the knowledge of any DOD movement control agency.

Because of the lack of port facilities, materiel handling equipment, and receiving capability, during the early days COMUSMACV's General William C. Westmoreland made it a practice to open and close hatches and unload ships as the cargo was needed. Selective off-loading and using ship's holds as warehouses was necessary because of the shortage of adequate shore facilities.

This procedure, which tied up ships indefinitely, caused the ship owners and operators to bring strong political pressure to bear on the President of the United States. The solution to the problem then became political. Before I arrived in Saigon, the civilian port operated

[1] General Frank S. Besson, Jr., Chairman, A Report by the Joint Logistics Review Board, Transportation and Movement Control.

completely separately from the military port. Although in many cases both jurisdictions used some of the same facilities, cooperation and coordination were nonexistent. The problem had been under discussion at all levels for some time and a decision had finally been reached that the 4th Transportation Command would have operational control of CPA/AID cargo. Both the United States and Vietnamese governments concurred in this decision. The decision on control of CIP cargo and the entire commercial port would be made later. We were told that President Johnson sent a message through channels to Westmoreland, ordering that all ships be unloaded within thirty days.

When I took charge of the 4th Transportation Command, it appeared to me that with few exceptions, the facilities were adequate to handle the cargo being unloaded from the ships waiting in the river. Trained civilian contract stevedores handled both military and commercial cargo. Army terminal service companies supervised the crews moving military cargo. However, although both military and civilian cargo checkers were available, their performance was marginal. Materiel handling equipment remained inadequate.

Port clearance was problematic. We had both military and civilian contract trucks to clear the port but, as generally happens when operating overseas during wartime, the recipients of the cargo were not equipped to handle the volume of cargo being directed to them. It was a replay of the port at Pusan during the Korean War.

I reviewed the situation, realizing I had three generals looking over my shoulder: General Westmoreland, the MACV commander; General Engler, his deputy; and General Eifler, the 1st Logistical Command chief. After explaining the problems to them, I told them what I thought should be done and our chances of solving the problems. They told me to start and to let them know when I needed help. The only help I requested was additional port personnel to help supervise the AID commercial stevedores under my command.

From then on, I had a completely cooperative working relationship with my three bosses. I kept them informed with periodic oral and written status reports. Any time I needed support from areas over which I had no control, I requested help through channels, and it arrived without a problem. Generals Engler and Eifler frequently visited and I always kept them aware of what was going on. General Westmoreland had too many other problems to be able to keep well informed about the port. Most of our problems could be solved without his intervention.

The one major problem continued to be handling of the AID commercial cargo. AID personnel had been quick to tell top administrative officials that all the problems lay with the military port administration. I soon realized that the principal culprit was AID itself.

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Mr. Robert W. Komer, President Johnson's chief adviser from the White House, visited Vietnam every month and always told the Army, the American ambassador, and General Westmoreland that something should be done about the port problem. On one such occasion, while I was meeting with Mr. Komer at AID headquarters, I asked him to come to the port and let me show him what the problems were and what we were doing about them. Komer told me to stop trying to confuse him with facts, but just get the port mess cleaned up. I gave up trying to be reasonable with Bob Komer, who later acquired a nickname, "the blow torch."

On the military cargo side, I immediately began looking for a new location for the ammunition ship working area. I asked one of my terminal battalion commanders, Lt. Col. Thomas H. Hoy, to find a new location for the ammunition discharge facilities. He recommended an area known as Cat Lai, a point of land that extended out into an adjacent river canal, within working distance of the port proper.

The water at Cat Lai was deep enough to handle the ammo ships. The small landing area would allow construction of a large barge-discharge facility so we could unload the ammo ships in the stream. The major setback was that the land ashore was a tidal swamp. We decided to go with Cat Lai anyway, intending to move in masses of fill material and build the barge facilities.

As soon as I explained the situation to Generals Eifler and Engler, they took the necessary actions to meet our needs. Dump trucks began to haul in fill and continued to haul it for months afterwards. It was a big job, but the swamp was finally reclaimed, the engineers built our discharge facility, and Colonel Hoy erected a tent city for his battalion. We immediately moved our entire ammunition discharge operation to Cat Lai and began unloading all the ammo for the Army, Air Force, and Vietnamese armed forces. Cat Lai became the transfer point for most of the ammunition going to the Delta.

To alleviate port congestion, we had to move general military cargo out to its destination regardless of the customer's ability to receive it. One of the principal recipients of this treatment was Col. (later Maj. Gen.) Joseph E. Pieklik, the commander of the "Fish Market" supply depot. ("Fish Market" was the Vietnamese name for this area, which in earlier days had actually been a fish market.) This depot was just south of the port proper, a very short haul by truck. (*See Map 3.*) But Pieklik had inadequate space, personnel, facilities, and materiel handling equipment to cope with the incoming cargo.

The recent change from a technical service to a functional supply system made the situation worse. Supply organizations had not had time to reorganize, to retrain, to change concepts or doctrines, or take the steps necessary to competently operate an overseas depot. Even

though we had had supply problems in Korea and during World War II, at least we knew to move boxes with red corners to the ordnance depots. Ordnance personnel, although understaffed, were trained to recognize, receive, and identify ordnance cargo. The same was true for the other Technical Services.

We now moved most of the general U.S. military cargo to the fish market depot, manned by personnel beset with myriad problems. We were about to deliver them much larger quantities than they could possibly handle. With General Eifler's approval, I sent crews and equipment to the depot to assist in unloading our trucks so we could turn them around to bring in even more cargo. Not surprisingly, cargo stacked up without proper receipt or identification. But we *were* moving cargo out of the port. The fish market depot, although not our only customer, was by far the largest. Because of the inadequate depot facilities at the fish market, the 1st Log Command established a much larger depot facility at Long Binh, approximately thirty miles north of Saigon, close to the Bien Hoa air base.

We relentlessly moved all cargo to our customers. We had to do this to meet President Johnson's demand that we unload the ships. To make matters worse, much of the cargo documentation was missing or inadequate to properly identify the items and their final destinations. This led to the creation of "gray boxes," a term coined to describe boxes with unknown contents or unknown destinations. After these unusable gray boxes sat around a depot for a certain period of time, we moved them back to Okinawa. Workers there opened the boxes, identified their contents, and put them back in operating condition or disposed of them. If possible, they returned them to Vietnam. I'm sure some boxes made more than one round trip between Vietnam and Okinawa.

To cope with the boxes in Okinawa, AMC established assembly-line type operations to process the gray boxes. It required well-trained experts, able to open a box and identify a part as well as its purpose. To recognize an item as a repair part for a 2 1/2-ton truck instead of a 5-ton truck or another vehicle is no easy job. It required that AMC send many of its CONUS depot experts to Okinawa to do this and train Okinawan labor to help. This was a very costly remedy considering that the Army had not been permitted to adequately man and equip the depots in Vietnam to do this same job. We always seem to repeat this mistake, as we did in the latest operation in Saudi Arabia.

A great deal of cargo was destined for the Vietnamese armed forces: their port clearance trucks moved it from the port under the watchful eye of the U.S. advisers, or we moved it to their depot facilities on U.S. military trucks or contractor-provided trucks. The Vietnamese seemed to have an adequate capacity to handle the cargo,

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but proper identification was another matter. Years later, as joint staff logistician (J4), MACV, I would learn that identification had been a real problem for them as well.

Much Air Force cargo was moved out of our port to Air Force facilities. The Air Force could handle the increased load better than the Army. Most of the Air Force cargo moved into the country by aircraft except for bulk cargo, such as rations and POL, which moved on land. The Navy received very little cargo.

About this same time, General Besson paid me a visit to see the port situation for himself. He wanted to learn what I had found and how I planned to solve the problem. I walked Besson over the entire port area and over to the fish market. As soon as General Besson saw the mess, he turned to me and said that he was going to change the method of sending supplies to Vietnam. From then on I would receive Army cargo in containers, not break bulk. The stevedores would unload containers, not individual boxes of parts. At the time, we had been receiving very limited quantities of cargo in CONEX containers. Once we moved the CONEX container to its destination, we never saw it again. The customer used it for storage or some other purpose. When General Besson heard this, he said, "Fine. It is well worth the cost, and we will continue to buy more CONEX containers."

He was not sure how he would containerize all general cargo, but he knew he would find a way. He admitted he should have done more on development of a standard container at the time of our test of the offshore aerial tramway in France in 1957. He also said something about working with a Mr. Malcolm McLean on the container project. By the next year, sea-land containerized services became available to Vietnam.

Very soon after General Besson left the country, we began receiving containerized cargo rather than break bulk cargo. It was not in actual overseas containers, but the cargo was lashed to standard warehouse or Marine pallets with wire bands or moved by CONEX containers.

I failed to mention our forklift problem while General Besson was there. Our materiel handling equipment was not adequate to handle our break bulk cargo and could not move the containerized cargo that we anticipated. As soon as I realized the scope of this problem, we submitted high priority requests for adequate forklifts and other materiel handling equipment. For the next six months, crews broke down the pallets in order to handle the boxes by hand or the pallets were discharged by ships' tackle directly into waiting vehicles.

Very soon we had the military cargo portion of our port operation under control. Our only continuing error was failure to document the cargo adequately. Our customers failed to notice this oversight

because the cargo was being fed to them so fast they did not have time to spot the omission. Transportation Corps doctrine has always required that each piece of cargo be identified as it enters the system, from its point of origin until it is unloaded at dockside and shipped to the user.

The port must know in advance the amounts, weights, descriptions, sizes, classifications, stock and/or part numbers, stowage locations, and all pertinent details of all the cargo on ships bound for Vietnam. This information was supposed to be mailed to the port in advance, but this did not always happen. The ship also carried a copy of its manifest that detailed the necessary information, which they submitted to the port upon arrival. The port Accounting Division then translated the mass of information on the manifest into usable data to enable the ship to be unloaded, the supplies stored or shipped to the correct consignee quickly, and the vessel released for its next trip.

The port was required to transpose the information on the manifest manually into transportation control movement documents (TCMD) that would control movement of cargo to customers in Vietnam. If these TCMDs did not accompany the cargo, the customer would not be able to identify the items or their final destination. Incoming supplies generally replenished depot stock or filled a supply requisition from a combat unit. This total accountability of shipments, called "intransit asset visibility," is absolutely essential for the supply system to operate effectively.

Visibility has always been a problem during the buildup phase of every combat support operation, from World War II, Korea, Vietnam, up to Operation DESERT SHIELD. Cargo arrives much faster and in larger quantities than can ever be imagined; the number of support personnel available to handle this avalanche is never enough. Both of these conditions existed during the buildup for DESERT SHIELD. Even though the supply operation is now completely automated, it still requires individual human intervention to make the automation work.

At Saigon, in the 4th Transportation Command, we could not maintain 100 percent asset visibility of the cargo moving through the port. Because of this inability, the customers receiving the cargo were plagued with problems. However, even if we had been able to do our job in the port, most U.S. military customers would still not have been able to maintain asset visibility. They simply lacked sufficient personnel and depot facilities to handle the large quantities of cargo being moved to them. I discussed this problem with General Eifler many times, but he knew we had no recourse other than to unload the ships.

We had many other operating problems, but most of them were solved as they occurred. One recurring problem was the fact that

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operational difficulties were not brought to the attention of the operational supervision as they occurred. They were reported at the end of the shift, if then. This same problem had occurred in the Pusan port during the Korean War before we established our radio-monitored operations.

We established a similar operational center in Saigon with control boards showing the status of each work site, whether it was a ship discharging, a truck transfer point, or a warehouse operation. We linked each of the work sites with the operations center via a radio net so that each work site could report its status each hour. We used this data to update our control boards. If, for example, a crane were to break down, the problem would be reported immediately to the operations center, where it would receive corrective action. This network also gave me and my operations people a much better, more timely overview of the entire port operation.

In addition, I walked through the entire port working area at least three times a day. I would make my first trip early in the morning, before the night shift left, to see how they had done, again sometime during the day shift, and the third trip during the night shift. Operations staff members always accompanied me. We were thus constantly aware of the status of port operations. During these tours we boarded each working ship, including those AID cargo ships being worked on the river.

It seemed like every VIP from Washington had the port on his itinerary. Visitors would usually make the port operation center their first stop. We would brief them on our capabilities and the status of our ongoing operations. When we showed them around the port, they gained a much better understanding of our organization, operation, and problems. We received many compliments for our tours and briefings.

Before I arrived in Saigon, MACV had approved construction of additional port facilities for Saigon and construction began on the port addition, named Newport. (*See Map 3.*) It was located up the river from the existing port, just south of the main bridge that crossed the Saigon River, going north from Saigon toward Bien Hoa air base. This was the route from the port to our main ammunition depot and the Long Binh depot.

Newport was planned to have four deep-draft berths, one of which could handle roll-on and roll-off ships. Other facilities would include two ramps for landing LSTs, a wharf capable of handling seven barges, and a landing craft ramp. The Newport complex would also have both warehouses and open storage spaces behind each pier, plus a large parking space for the sea-land containerized shipping operation. Most facilities were operational in October 1966, but the four deep-draft piers were not available until July of the next year.

In 1967, when I departed Vietnam, Newport became entirely operational, which considerably increased our throughput capability. Newport also allowed us to direct most of the U.S. military cargo trucks directly onto the Saigon/Bien Hoa/Long Binh highway, bypassing the congested city of Saigon with our heavy equipment. Newport was completely manned by U.S. military personnel, the 71st Transportation Terminal Service Battalion, which also reduced pilferage. With Newport available and more convenient for military cargo, most of the main port of Saigon was used to handle the primarily AID commercial cargo. Newport also allowed improvement of the military cargo documentation procedures.

Newport did not receive its first container ship until October 1967. Small C2 container ships, with their own cranes aboard, shuttled containers between Cam Ranh, Da Nang, and Saigon about every two weeks. The C2 ship picked up containers from a container berth or from a large container ship being discharged at Cam Ranh Bay, then shuttled the cargo to either Newport or Da Nang. A DeLong pier, equipped with container cranes, had been installed at Cam Ranh Bay. General Besson, Slim DeLong, and Mr. McLean had worked out this arrangement. I later learned that this sophisticated installation had not been easy to sell and the deal nearly collapsed several times, surviving only because of Besson's persistence.

Although containerization had been used in ocean shipping before, this was the first major container operation anywhere in the world. McLean and Besson were testing an entirely new concept that had always been laughed at by most ocean transport companies and most large ports worldwide. The innovative Besson stuck his neck out for something he believed in, and was proved right in the long run. Almost immediately, all U.S. shipping companies were forced to follow his lead and worldwide shipping companies were not too far behind.

In Vietnam we experienced a tremendous, instant increase in our surface transportation capabilities, but containerization completely revolutionized the method of handling and moving cargo in surface shipping. Most people today don't realize that this major shipping innovation occurred little more than twenty-five years ago. Although it finally happened in 1967, Besson and McLean had been toying with the idea for many years. DeLong had for years been promoting his novel ideas for rapid construction of offshore facilities such as deep-draft piers and oil drilling platforms. DeLong went on to oversee construction and installation of his DeLong piers up and down the coast of Vietnam and the southern part of Thailand.

Although Newport relieved the military cargo pressures on Saigon port, the handling of AID cargo remained difficult. The ware-

houses were full of commercial AID cargo. When local Vietnamese importers learned that items which AID had imported on their behalf had arrived, they customarily left them in the port warehouse until they could be sold. At the time of sale, the customer and the importer would come to the port together to pay the customer's duty to the government and to remove the imports.

When I became aware of the procedures in Saigon, I realized that the AID cargo was being handled in a manner contrary to all standard port procedures. A document called the "port tariff" set forth all of the rules and regulations governing warehouses, along with the port rules and regulations and the schedule of fees to be charged for such services as towing, berthing, and line handling. The port tariff is a critical commercial document that specifies fees for each operation and controls all that goes on in the facility. Like all such transportation operations, no port can operate without a tariff; at least I had never heard of one that did until I arrived in Saigon.

When I asked to see the Port Tariff for Saigon, my transportation people didn't know what I was talking about. Neither did the Vietnamese commercial port commander when I confronted him. A Vietnamese army brigadier general with little or no port experience, he had apparently just been shuffled off to that job.

In Saigon the only bonded warehouses were at the port, a condition I had never experienced before. The port has the most expensive and the least available warehouse space anywhere. Because of this, the customer usually takes his cargo out of the port warehouse within three to five days. If he does not, the government moves the cargo out of the port warehouse to a government-operated, bonded warehouse for storage. The longer the importer leaves his items in bonded storage, the more the warehouse and custom fees mount up. Therefore, importers everywhere but Saigon move very fast to avoid these fees. After a period of time, if an item hasn't been claimed, it is subject to sale or disposal. In no case, though, would cargo be permitted to remain in port warehouses, which are not meant to be used for storage.

When I first took over the commercial port operation, I didn't realize that the military and AID had no joint operating agreement. I was quickly made aware of this fact and I went out of my way to keep the AID advisers informed about everything we did and why. Shortly thereafter, the State Department, Defense Department, and Vietnamese government worked out an agreement. One of my first jobs was to prepare a port tariff, to obtain Vietnamese government approval for the document, then to put it into effect. I soon found out this was not to be done easily. When we confronted the various U.S. agents who worked the ships in the port, they laughed. They knew

there should be a tariff, but the lack of one saved them money. They did not want us to prepare one.

Fortunately for me, Mr. Schultz, one of the longshoremen sent over by Gleason to advise AID, was not just a warehouse man. He had a lot of experience with commercial port operations. We immediately got along. In contrast, the other port advisers and officials were often hostile at first, fearing that I was a threat to their jobs.

Schultz and I immediately obtained copies of tariffs from other ports in the area, such as Singapore and Hong Kong, to use as samples. We made the tariff as simple as we could possibly make it. (Actually, Mr. Schultz did most of the detailed tariff preparation.) We did not include many of the complicated legal clauses normally found in such documents. We laid out only the most basic rules and fees to permit ships to come in, to be worked, and to depart. It covered the rules necessary for commercial stevedore companies, importers, exporters, transship transportation, warehouse operations and the like. After we finished preparing our draft tariff, we were faced with the difficult job of finding the proper Vietnamese government authority to approve the tariff and then to enforce it.

I attempted, without success, to get the Vietnamese port commander to take over the job. AID didn't seem to be much help. Finally, I got help through General Westmoreland who enlisted the American ambassador, Mr. Ellsworth Bunker. The Vietnamese government assigned a Vietnamese major as the new port commander.

Maj. Pho-Quoc Chu, the port director of the Saigon commercial port, clearly a favorite of the government authorities, could call upon them for help. Although he lacked prior port experience, he was a very forceful young man and immediately realized the importance of his job and the steps that he had to take. He worked very closely with us from then on, which greatly improved our joint operations.

While the U.S. helped the South Vietnamese defend their country, we tried to stabilize Vietnam's economy. Our major scheme, the commercial import program noted earlier, provided credit for Vietnamese civilian importers. CIP procedures required documenting specific incoming CIP commodities and verifying payment or nonpayment of tariffs and other fees. Unfortunately, the Vietnamese government did not always agree with our methods. Neither did the large importers, who had the money and lots of political clout. We discovered that when both the government and the importers wanted to drag their feet, they were experts at it. We were beset by a wide range of problems including politics, graft, payoffs, Viet Cong activities, and laziness. Technical know-how had little to do with our actual accomplishments.

The CIP had a built-in conflict. The AID program was pushing in millions of dollars worth of goods in order to satisfy consumers, to

lower prices, and stabilize the economy. The large importers wanted to keep prices high in order to make more money. It was difficult to dictate the correct solution. Americans took the attitude that, since we were fighting their war and supporting their economy, the South Vietnamese citizens should not object to us pushing them around. This was a false assumption. The Vietnamese government and their citizens did object.

The port became the logical focal point for all of these political problems. Finding solutions was extremely frustrating. Also, because the port was so pivotal in solving these problems, it developed a high profile. Nearly all visitors to Vietnam ended up there. Briefing visitors, discussing the situation with them, and showing them how the operation worked was very time consuming, but necessary. In most cases, this investment of time worked to our advantage.

In August 1967, the Army chief of staff, General Harold K. Johnson, then my old boss, General Meyer, visited us. The commander in chief of the U.S. Army, Pacific (CINCUSARPAC), General John K. Waters, visited several times, as did his replacement, General Dwight E. Beach.

In October, Secretary of Defense McNamara, accompanied by the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Earle G. Wheeler, visited Vietnam. I attended the meeting General Westmoreland hosted for these visitors and discussed the port situation. During my detailed presentation I asked Secretary McNamara to explain our situation to Premier Nguyen Cao Ky and emphasize our need for his help and assistance. After the meeting, both McNamara and General Wheeler wanted to visit the port. At the conclusion of their two-hour visit, both were extremely complimentary on the job we were doing. As always, many times during the visit General Westmoreland emphasized to the secretary of defense his support of our efforts.

Shortly after the McNamara visit, Premier Ky visited the port with several of his ministers, including his key rival, Minister of Economy and Finance Au Truong Thanh. Minister Thanh was the main supporter of the big importers. I thought that either he would replace the prime minister or be shot. Minister Thanh was replaced instead.

Premier Ky and his party spent more than two hours with us at the port, mostly for briefings and discussions. Ky was smart and extremely conceited, and I realized one should not get in his way. He was very friendly with me, but I'm sure General Westmoreland had made sure of that.

While the port remained a hot spot, we attracted many other visitors including the secretary of the Army, Stanley R. Resor, and the under secretary of the Navy. The vice chief of staff of the Army,

General Creighton W. Abrams, also spent a great deal of time in the port during his visit, joining Westmoreland as his deputy and later replacing him.

In October 1966, Generals Eifler and Engler assigned an additional port unit to help supervise the commercial operation, in response to our earlier request. A transportation terminal command (type A), under the command of Col. Cary A. Kennedy, arrived in Vietnam from Fort Eustis, Virginia, in October 1966. Their organization, consisting of thirty-eight officers and 101 enlisted men, increased our port complement to 250 officers, 1,500 to 2,000 enlisted men, around 2,000 civilian employees, and many hundred contract workers. Our annual budget was near $60 million.

When Colonel Kennedy started working closely with Major Chu and the AID representatives, especially Mr. Schultz, commercial operations began to improve tremendously. Because of Cary's very aggressive nature, many times I would have to smooth out hurt feelings up and down the line. Many times, complaints would come from General Westmoreland or General Eifler, but I worked it out. I thought it better for Cary to err on the aggressive side rather than require that I constantly push him into action.

Although I didn't often ask for General Westmoreland's help, on some occasions I had no other recourse. During the early part of my tour, when the port problems were at their height, Westmoreland would frequently call me on Friday evenings around seven o'clock and ask me to come up to MACV headquarters and bring him up to speed. I couldn't have asked for a better and more helpful commander. Any time I had a problem with D. G. MacDonald, the AID chief, I would ask General Westmoreland to intercede. He always did, going directly to Mr. MacDonald or through Ambassador Bunker. Any time this happened, I would alert General Eifler, so that he and General Engler would not be surprised. They never objected to my reliance on General Westmoreland.

To expedite the flow of commercial goods, we had to clear the paperwork with the Vietnamese government officials and commercial interests, such as importers and ship's agents. I assigned one of my best officers, Maj. Ted Rosenberg, as liaison officer and expediter. In addition, he was responsible for berthing incoming ships alongside the piers or in the river.

The perfect liaison officer, Major Rosenberg was smart, knew how to work smoothly with all types of people, and did whatever was necessary to accomplish the job. I soon learned that I no longer had to worry about commercial traffic or many of the other AID jobs. Ted took over, kept me informed of his actions and came to me for help only if the mission was beyond his or Colonel Kennedy's capability.

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In spite of all this, we still did not move commercial cargo out of the port in the style we wanted. Apparently, an awful lot of the AID commercial items had not been ordered by importers and had not moved. After getting the okay from my bosses, I informed Mr. MacDonald at AID that I had to get the commercial cargo out of the port; if they didn't move it, I would. This was not pleasant news to AID.

I located a storage area in an abandoned stadium called Petris Key, which could be fairly well secured by AID and the Vietnamese government. It was fenced in and the field had a good hard stand. I moved all the unclaimed commercial AID items to Petris Key, stationed security guards in the area and reminded all concerned where the goods were stored. Unfortunately, those items that were still usable when we moved them didn't remain usable long when left out in the weather.

Before the war, rice had been the largest export (*not* import) item for Vietnam. In those days the rice moved from the fields to the warehouses along the canals, then by barge to the Saigon River for loading onto deep-draft ships. Rice provided a large portion of the cash flow for the Vietnamese economy. The war reversed all that. Vietnam had to import rice provided by U.S. grant aid.

A lot of grant aid cargo, such as rice and fertilizer, now filled at least half of the ships lying off Vung Tau. The Army was blamed for the failure to move these ships through the port. These bulk materials also filled most of the contract barges drifting up and down the river canals waiting to be unloaded. Most of this type cargo had been transshipped from deep-draft ships into the barges, which in turn were moved up the canals to storage warehouses for unloading and storage until the cargo was disposed of.

The size of the bag used for inbound shipments caused a problem for us in the port. Rice had traditionally been moved in twenty-kilogram sacks (about forty pounds). The Vietnamese laborers could carry these on their backs into the warehouse, then out of the warehouse onto the barge for movement to ship side. The bags were then loaded aboard ship by ship's tackle. Rice and fertilizer were moving in the opposite direction, from deep-draft shipping in the Saigon harbor into barges, then up the canals to the old rice warehouses. We planned to have Vietnamese labor unload the bags on their backs from barge to warehouse.

An energetic purchasing agent in AID found that he could purchase rice and fertilizer in 80-pound bags cheaper than in 40-pound bags. These 80-pound bags were much too heavy for the Vietnamese laborers to carry on their backs. We had to substitute cranes and forklifts for the Vietnamese laborers. Moving cranes up narrow roadways

to these warehouses was a real challenge. If there were no adequate roads, we moved the cranes by barge. If wharf space at the warehouse was not adequate for the crane to work, we had to work the crane over from our barges, which tied up a lot of our equipment.

In addition to using the contract barges to move the rice and fertilizer, we also attempted to move it to the warehouses in trucks. Often before the truck driver reached the warehouse, his truck would be surrounded by 50 to 100 little children, who prevented the truck from moving. While he was immobilized, Vietnamese men would make off with the cargo. U.S. Army guards were not the answer, because we could not shoot at little children. We solved this problem by persuading AID and the Vietnamese government to find safer destinations to which the rice could be delivered.

The Saigon port operation was clearly different from anything else we had confronted. The United States did finally get the operation under control so the commercial port eventually took over the operation. This happened some time after I left the Saigon port and had returned to the States.

On the military side, part of our mission was to support Vietnamese military forces in the Delta through the small ports of My Tho and Can Tho. We accomplished this with the help of our U.S. military advisers. The scope of these activities enlarged dramatically when the 9th U.S. Infantry Division and our newly created and trained Riverine Forces arrived in Vietnam in late 1966. Since one of the brigades and its supporting units was to be stationed in the Delta, a new campsite named Dong Tam was built on a river canal. It was built along the canal bank on what had previously been tidal land, covered by water during high tide and exposed at low tide. This was a challenge for our engineers, whom we supported by providing water transportation and port operations from Saigon.

I assigned troops down there on a permanent basis. It was a most interesting operation. The brigade commander was Brig. Gen. (later Lt. Gen.) William B. Fulton. I would helicopter down at least twice a week to check the operation and to coordinate with Bill Fulton. After they finally finished the campsite, we continued to provide water and port transportation support. I also provided Bill an LCM company, his main form of transport up and down the various canals. Bill installed artillery pieces and mortars on some of the LCMs, thus creating gunboats to assist him in attacking the enemy. The LCM company commander, Capt. William ("Gus") Pagonis, later became a lieutenant general and supervised our logistical operations for DESERT SHIELD.

One more problem, an internal one, needs to be highlighted again. As mentioned earlier, during this period the Army was changing from

the technical service system to a functional supply system. The Army had not really completed a plan to accomplish this. Consequently, we still operated the old system within the newly created organizations. It did not work well but, with a lot of hard work done by aggressive people, we ultimately got the job done.

During this time, we had some ten to fifteen transportation colonels in various key transportation staff and command jobs throughout the Saigon area. They commanded the transportation units, held transportation staff jobs on the MACV and U.S. Army, Vietnam (USARV), staffs, and had some general staff jobs. As I worked with these colonels, all of whom I knew, I became aware of one distracting trait. Each often criticized the others and they disagreed with one another about policies and procedures. All of this disagreement took place in plain view of other senior members of the various staffs. It put the whole Transportation Corps in a bad light. This was not the first time I had observed this trait in the Transportation Corps and I knew it was wrong.

In an attempt to eliminate this public bickering, I invited all the Transportation Corps colonels to join me for a dinner party at one of Saigon's local restaurants. They all accepted and it was such a success that we had dinner together every Sunday evening. Before long, we were all good friends having a great time, sharing all kinds of information and seeking advice. It worked to the advantage of each of us. Before these dinner parties, most of the group had not associated with the others at all. After, we spoke to the outside world about transportation with the same voice. We accomplished much more as a result.

At this point, I will present a brief review of the physical Saigon port and its operation from 1 June 1966 through our projections for June 1968. On 1 June 1966, the mission of the 4th Transportation Command was to receive, discharge, and clear to its first destination all military cargo that supported the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones. Data indicates that we handled 218,000 short tons in May 1966: 190,000 short tons of general cargo and 28,000 short tons of ammunition, including cargoes unloaded at Vung Tau. The 4th Transportation Command used five deep-draft berths in the Saigon port—three in the M&M area and two in the commercial end of the port. They occasionally also used river berths. Ammunition was discharged in the river at Nha Be and ship-to-shore operations were conducted at Vung Tau—several kilometers to the south.

Because of the somewhat confused operations, incoming cargo continued to build up. Ten to twelve ships with military cargo waited off Vung Tau at Cape St. Jacques for berthing space in Saigon. The materiel handling equipment could not cope with the backlog in the port and discharge vessels at a reasonably efficient rate. Trucks were

barely able to clear the port, but the depots were not geared to handle cargo at the rate it was being received.

On 1 June 1966, the commercial sector of the port consisted of two deep-draft berths, the same ones used by the Army, with three berths used to discharge barges. Twenty-two buoy berths were available in the river. The dock area was only long enough to handle five U.S. flag-type ships.

The Saigon port authority's mission, formalized in May 1966, was to assign facilities and to coordinate their use by commercial agencies and stevedore contractors. No accurate records exist to reveal the port tonnage volumes at that time; our best estimate is that they handled about 140,000 to 150,000 short tons, including AID cargo.

Operations in the commercial port were cumbersome, without a single agency or individual with the authority to direct and control the operations of the port. The docks, warehouses, and cranes were decayed and antiquated. The port faced increased commercial imports and a completely inadequate wholesale marketing system. Very little operational and management information was available.

By 1 June 1967, military operations in the Saigon port proper were carried out using the three deep-draft berths in the M&M area, one berth in the commercial port, and one in the fish market area. (*See Map 3.*) The U.S. had completed building the fish market berth in October 1966. The Army also used three buoy berths to discharge bulk AID cargo. Two berths were returned to the commercial port in May; the fish market berth was returned on 1 July.

Newport had seven barge wharves, two LST slots, and three deep-draft berths. A fourth deep-draft berth became available on 10 July. Ammunition operations had been shifted from Nha Be to Cat Lai, the base camp of the 11th Terminal Service Battalion, which was responsible for ammo operations. Cat Lai was closer to the barge discharge sites up the river at Cogido, Buu Long, Thanh Tuy Ha, and Binh Trieu. South of the Saigon complex at Vung Tau, operations expanded to meet increasing delta support requirements. The construction of a DeLong pier, which could berth two deep-draft vessels, greatly improved efficiency. This pier became operational on 1 July 1967.

Between June and December 1966, the port at Saigon underwent many changes in organization, distribution of functions and authority, and method of operation. On 5 July 1966, the mission of the 4th Transportation Command expanded with AID support requirements. Our revised mission statement gave us responsibility for the receipt, discharge, and clearance to first destination of all military cargo coming through the port of Saigon, the back-load of retrograde military cargo, and harbor security which included security of vessels at all discharge areas in Saigon, Newport, Cat Lai, Vung Tau, and the Delta.

In addition we would receive, discharge, and deliver to first destination all AID-financed commodities consigned to the Vietnamese government and advise and assist the port authority in the operation of the commercial port.

With these enlarged responsibilities and our gradually improving capabilities, the 4th Transportation Command steadily expanded its volume of operation. In May 1967 we handled approximately 393,000 short tons: 355,000 short tons of general cargo, of which 99,000 short tons were AID, and 256,000 short tons were military (38,000 short tons were ammunition). This was an increase of 175,000 short tons over the preceding May. Generally, during 1967 we had no serious problems with the military operations in Saigon port. With experience, more resources and improvements, the military operation had been rendered relatively routine. We were able to concentrate on management refinements to improve the efficiency of the operation.

By this time the commercial sector of the port required all deep-draft berths for deep-draft vessels. This included the use of all intransit sheds alongside the deep-draft berths as well. In 1966 the commercial sector had only three barge discharge berths dedicated for its sole use.

The port authority, which had received the assistance and advice of the 125th Transportation Command since October 1966, now functioned quite well. It had taken on a broader and more meaningful mission and now regulated all users of the port. Although its operators had a long way to go before they became totally efficient, they had set definite objectives and made real progress.

The port authority had become a self-sustaining element of the government, responsible for effective port management. It was well aware of its vital role in sustaining the economy of Vietnam. In May 1967, a low tonnage month, the commercial port handled 171,500 short tons of which 164,000 were imports and 7,500 were exports. The commercial import program had caused this reduction of tonnage. Although this reduction was to be replaced with Vietnam government-financed imports, AID did not expect imports to reach the previous level.

As a result of the joint efforts of the port authority and the 125th Transportation Command, commercial operations in the Saigon port greatly improved. Port inventory, including cargo in transit sheds, barges, and ships being worked or at Cape St. Jacques, showed a favorable trend downward. In the past, the Saigon port had been a storage area for the retailers. At one time the port had been covered with cargo which importers could not afford, did not want, could not find, or preferred to hold back to raise prices. This inventory had fallen from

342,000 short tons in December 1966 to 89,000 short tons in May 1967. The inventory reduction had been accompanied, or perhaps caused, by the favorable inverse relationship of the tonnage discharged to the tonnage cleared. A reduction was also apparent in the number of barges under load.

In addition to these desirable trends, several other factors led us to believe that the port authority had made good progress. First, its control had become firmly established. Although this may have seemed relatively insignificant to some, it was an outstanding accomplishment. The port rehabilitation program was well under way and modern operational and management practices had been implemented. Increased cargo clearance and market absorption indicated that the port was becoming increasingly capable of favorably influencing the Vietnamese economy. Facilities were being used with ever-increasing efficiency and effectiveness. The port authority now had established controls, standards, penalties, and an administrative system to enforce port policy and the port tariff. Finally, the port had developed a management information system that allowed assessment of its performance in meeting objectives and that served as a solid premise for planning and control.

Our plans also called for continued development of the Saigon port to work toward the development of a wholesale distribution system. To this end, we encouraged the port authority to add comptroller functions to its organization and to introduce improved financial management systems. We assisted in formulating long-range plans to modify operations to match an improving economy and for improvements to the physical plant.

We also continued to seek implementation of labor reforms to improve the lot of the port workers. These included increased pay, better working conditions, safety, health, and overall fairness of employment consistent with good business practices. We developed training programs for management personnel, which included visits to U.S. ports by Saigon port executives to observe and study modern port practices. Finally, we encouraged promotional activities to regenerate the export trade which we hoped would rebuild the reputation of the Saigon port and produce a healthy volume of shipping traffic.

During 1968, Newport became the hub of military terminal operations in the Saigon port complex. Military operations in the M&M area continued in Saigon port to support the current troop level and AID cargo. Operations and missions at Cat Lai and Vung Tau continued.

The military mission in the Saigon port did not change substantially during 1967. We continued to be responsible for terminal operations in southern Vietnam, which included support of the Mekong

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Delta. The AID mission did change. Now that the commercial port was under better control, we returned some operating responsibilities for AID-sponsored cargo to the Vietnamese. The 4th Transportation Command stopped handling fertilizer and recommended that the Vietnamese move bulk foodstuffs like rice, flour, and bulgur wheat. These commodities were relatively easy to handle and the import programs for them had been firmly established. The assistance and advisory mission continued, although by 1 July 1968 there had been a reduction in the pier-level portion of this mission.

Tonnage requirements for AID imports continued at current levels although there had been a substantial reduction in the military handling of AID-sponsored cargo. The U.S. Army was expected to handle about 275,000 short tons of military cargo and about 25,000 short tons of AID cargo per month. Ammunition was expected to total about 50,000 short tons per month, based on the current trends. About 40,000–50,000 short tons of ammunition were handled during the five-month period preceding May 1967. Vung Tau was expected to handle an additional 60,000 short tons. The reduction in net tonnage handled was obviously caused by the shift of AID bulk tonnages to the port authority along with facilities then used in the commercial port by the military.

The progressive trends initiated in the Saigon port continued in 1968. The general stability achieved in military operations continued throughout the commercial sector. Military and commercial terminal operations had not achieved perfection, but the situation had improved. There was still a long way to go to reach maximum efficiency. For example, the high volume of data created by this terminal operation was still being processed manually. An automatic data processing system had been planned for the military terminal operation by December 1967, and studies were being made to expand it to the commercial port.

As I look back on my years in Saigon, certain things stand out. The first is the importance of good organization, a clear doctrine, and good people. As we finally put together a good commercial port operation with the 125th Transportation Command, the commercial port improved greatly. Major Rosenberg, my main liaison in all of these activities, did much of the work.

An important part of port doctrine was the installation of a workable port tariff for all to follow. This helped make the Saigon port a modern, workable port, although by today's standards that technology has become obsolete. We modernized both the commercial and the military ports by using our operation center with its control boards and radio communication throughout the working areas.

Eventually, we had the most modern materiel handling and container handling equipment available at that time. Our harbor craft, landing craft, and cranes, along with the various contractor support, brought Saigon up to modern standards. However, supply personnel and depots remained below standard.

At the conclusion of my tour, as I prepared to leave the 4th Transportation Command, my greatest satisfaction came from the noticeable change in the morale of our troops. When I arrived, morale was at its lowest possible point. Everyone had told the 4th how poorly they were performing and what a mess they had made of the port, although none of it was their fault. When I left, the mood could not have been higher. They were the best, and they knew it. I truly hated to leave the 4th, as I had hated to leave the 53d Truck Battalion in Europe. But someone else had to be given a chance to learn all the extremely valuable lessons one can learn only from commanding troops in the field.

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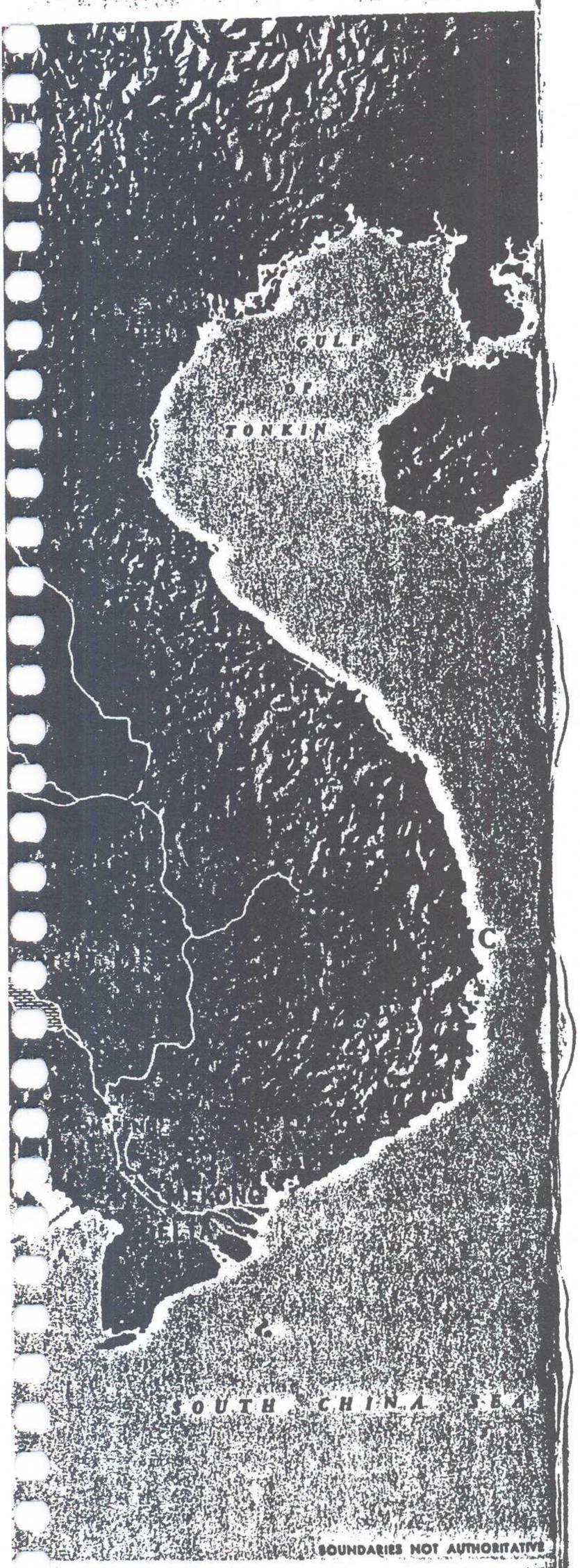


VIETNAM STUDIES

LOGISTIC SUPPORT

by

Lieutenant General Joseph M. Heiser, Jr.

DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 1974

landing craft, primarily LCMs and LCUs were used for this purpose.

The U.S. Army's 4th Transportation Command arrived in South Vietnam on 12 August 1965. It was given the mission of assisting Headquarters Support Activity Saigon in U.S. port operations and assuming that function completely as soon as possible, which it did in September 1965. In addition, it was charged with providing technical assistance to port and beach operations at Cam Ranh Bay and the support commands being established throughout South Vietnam. As U. S. Army terminal service companies were received, they were initially employed in unloading of ammunition at Na Bhe, the central ammunition receiving point just south of Saigon, and were later employed in Saigon proper. In May 1965, a request was made to the government of the Republic of South Vietnam to acquire the three Maritime Marine piers adjacent to the Saigon port facilities for the exclusive use of U. S. Forces. These facilities were owned by a French shipping firm. This request ran into financial and political difficulties, but was finally approved in December 1965 after the personal intervention of General Westmoreland and the U. S. Ambassador. With the exclusive use and control of these facilities, port operations improved in efficiency and volume. The delay in obtaining these piers plus the shortage of yard and storage space and the lack of a depot structure and accounting procedures prevented the early establishment of adequate port facilities.

Nevertheless, it was apparent that additional port facilities would be required in the Saigon area. The 1st Logistical Command made this known to Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, who directed his staff to develop plans for the facilities now known as Newport. Construction began on this fifty million dollar facility in early 1966. In April 1967, the first deep draft vessel was discharged at the Newport facility. Also, during this period, several other ports throughout Vietnam were in the construction phase.

By the end of December 1967, the ports in use by the Army numbered 10; Saigon, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay, Vung Ro, Vung Tau, Cat Lai, and Nha Trang were the deep draft ports; Dong Tam, Phan Rang and Can Tho were the shallow draft ports. These improvements in port capabilities brought about a reduction in the average time a deep draft ship waited for a berth in Vietnam ports from 20.4 days during the most critical period of 1965 to the 1970 average of less than two days.

from its mission, withdrawn to a base camp and required to prepare itself for redeployment. The logistic support of this unit redeployment was extremely complex because of the need to continue to support other units still engaged in combat operations while simultaneously inspecting, preparing, packing and shipping the redeploying unit's Table of Organization and Equipment equipment.

The problem was compounded by the fact that the majority of the personnel turning in the division's equipment were not redeploying with their parent unit, but would be reassigned in-country for completion of their twelve month tour. This personnel policy alone taxed the command and control element to the maximum.

Finally, the complexity of this initial redeployment was further compounded by the lack of procedures and matériel to process Table of Organization and Equipment equipment for overseas redeployment to meet the strict U.S. Public Health Service and U.S. Department of Agriculture sanitation and entomological requirements. To assist U.S. Army Vietnam in overcoming these problems, the Commanding General U.S. Army Materiel Command assembled a team of forty civilian personnel and deployed them to South Vietnam in early 1969. Additionally, a Composite Service Maintenance Company (604th Composite Service Company) and a Transportation Detachment (402d Transportation Corps Detachment) were organized in the Continental U.S. and deployed to South Vietnam to assist in unit redeployment. The 604th Composite Service Company was specifically organized to assist in inspection, packaging and preparing equipment for redeployment and the Transportation Detachment was organized to assist with required documentation.

Because KEYSTONE EAGLE was planned primarily as a unit redeployment, the Department of the Army logistics guidance was minimal. This situation changed drastically on 8 August 1969 when Department of the Army directed that the redeploying units of the 9th Infantry Division would be deactivated in South Vietnam. The logistics impact of this decision, almost two-thirds of the way through the redeployment was traumatic. Approximately one-third of the redeploying units' equipment was already enroute to Hawaii. Another one-third was at the Port of Newport awaiting outloading, while the remaining one-third was being staged for movement to the port. Property accountability could not be maintained because the Property Book Officers were already in Hawaii with the advance party, and two-thirds of their equipment was frustrated in South Vietnam.

The combat situation at the former division base camp (Dong Tam), as well as the scheduled transfer of this facility to South Vietnam dictated that the equipment be moved, and the equipment was diverted to a holding area at Long Binh Depot, north of Saigon. Port clearance at Newport dictated that the matériel awaiting outloading be moved, and it also was moved to the Long Binh area. Because of the lack of documentation, this matériel was ultimately capitalized in the depot account and redistributed to in-country requirements. The KEYSTONE EAGLE incremental phase–down was completed on 28 August, although redistribution of all the matériel was not completed until mid-October. The KEYSTONE EAGLE project provided an indication of what was to come, and it was recognized at Department of the Army that Department of the Army level control over the redistribution of assets generated from these phase–downs was essential.

In late September 1969 the second KEYSTONE withdrawal was announced. This was KEYSTONE CARDINAL, which was a troop space reduction of 40,500 personnel. The principal large Army unit involved was the 3rd Brigade of the 82d Airborne Division. Units involved in this withdrawal were to be brought to zero strength in South Vietnam by 15 December 1969. None were to be redeployed intact to the Continental U.S.

To provide control over the redistribution of the assets generated from these unit inactivations, Department of the Army provided logistics guidance in the form of an Annex to the Department of the Army Letter of Instruction for redeployment of U.S. Forces from South Vietnam published on 1 October 1969. This logistics guidance included instructions on property accountability, canceling of requisitions, processing of matériel, inspection and maintenance standards and, perhaps most important, it established a reporting procedure for both obtaining and tracking disposition of matériel turned in during KEYSTONE CARDINAL. This reporting procedure involved the establishment of a telephone conversation between U.S. Army Vietnam, U.S. Army Pacific, and Department of the Army on a daily basis. The intent of this telephone conversation was to provide to U.S. Army Vietnam, on a twenty-four hour basis, the disposition for selected items of equipment turned in (Department of the Army Distribution and Allocation Committee and Department of the Army High Interest Items). This telephone conversation system also provided Department of the Army with visibility of assets redistributed in and outside of South Vietnam. Although this system did provide the desired controls it was not responsive to U.S. Army Vietnam requirements.

SPEARHEAD OF LOGISTICS

A HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES ARMY TRANSPORTATION CORPS

Benjamin King
Richard C. Biggs
Eric R. Criner

U. S. Army Transportation Center
Fort Eustis, Virginia
1994

CHAPTER XI

Vietnam

"The transportation system moved goods so fast and too efficiently for the logistical system to keep up with the sophisticated job of translating boxes and measurement tons into supply items and balancing item demand in a constantly changing combat environment. . .we must have control and positive documentation of supply built into the transportation system. By the time the box arrives on the ground, it is already too late to start finding out what it is."

Honorable Dr. Robert A. Brooks, Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations and Logistics, Vietnam War

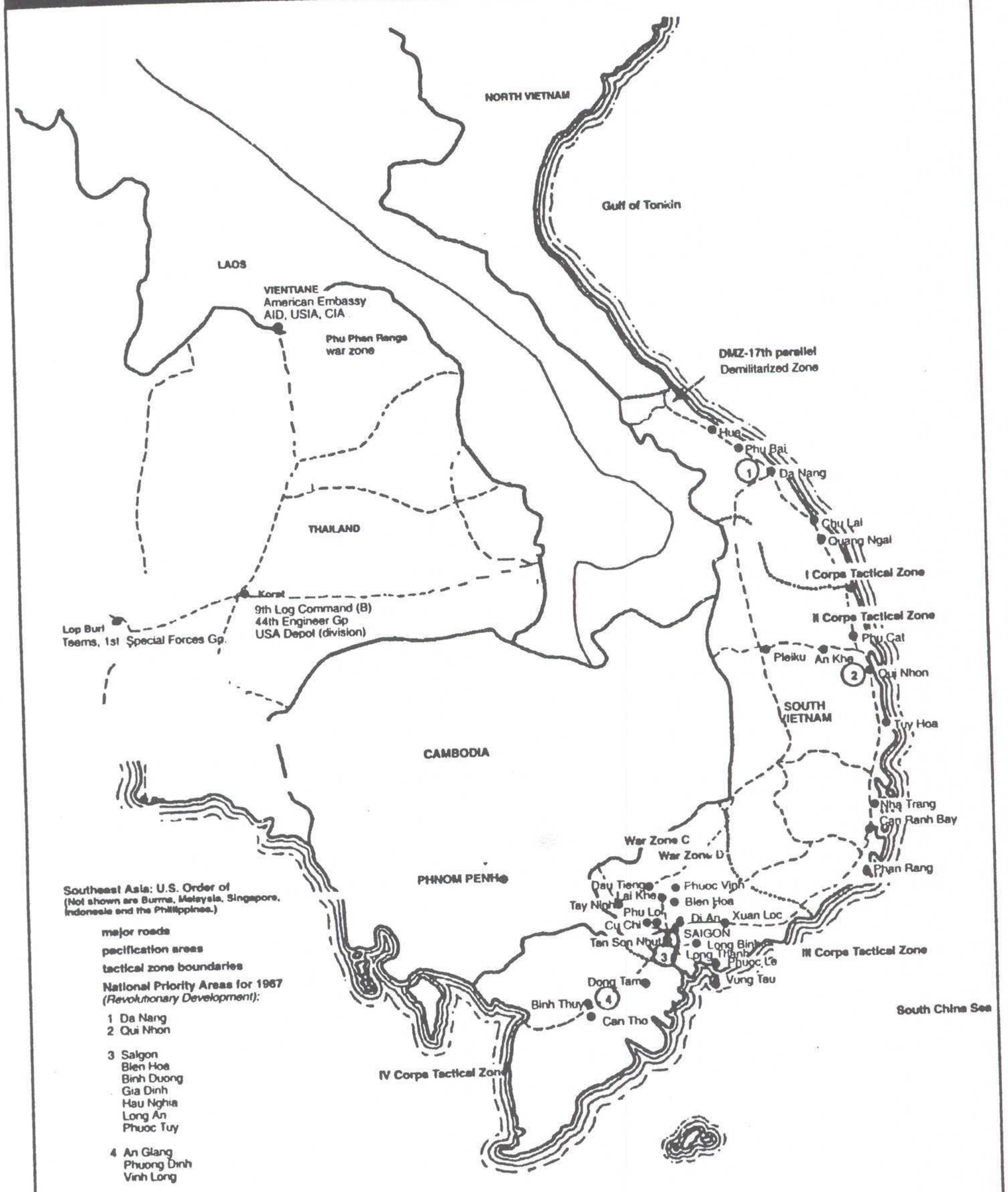
INTRODUCTION

The nation of Vietnam is a crescent-shaped land mass bordered by Cambodia and Laos to the west, China to the north, and the South China Sea to the east. The land area, formerly known as Indo-China, is dominated by the Annamite mountain chain, which extends southward from Vietnam's northern border to within sixty miles of Saigon (see Map 32). It is a country of jungles, deltas, swamps, plains, and mountains in a tropical climate subject to monsoon rains, making logistical support of military operations extremely difficult.

At the end of World War II, the French attempted to reimpose colonial rule over Indo-China which had been occupied by the Japanese during the war. They were opposed by the Viet Minh, an indigenous anti French group comprising a coalition of various groups all of which wanted independence from the French. The Viet Minh was led by Ho Chi Minh, a Soviet trained communist. The United States had no desire to help any nation reestablish colonial rule, but France was a wartime ally and prevention of the spread of communism had become a matter of national policy. Therefore, the United States underwrote up to seventy-five percent of France's expenses in the conduct of the war and provided millions of dollars worth of military equipment.[1]

By 1954, the French attempt to reestablish colonial rule was failing. That same year, the United States, France, Great Britain, and the Union of Soviet

SOUTHEAST ASIA



Map 32

Socialist Republics met in Geneva to discuss a political settlement of the Korean War and a truce in Indochina. Simultaneously, the Viet Minh, at great cost, dealt a devastating psychological blow to the French by defeating their troops at Dien Bien Phu. That victory resulted in the withdrawal of French forces from Indochina.

At Geneva, a series of accords outlined the future of Vietnam. All French forces were to withdraw. The area was partitioned near the 17th parallel, and two nations were created. Neither North nor South Vietnam was to interfere in the internal affairs of the other, and the Geneva Accords included a general ban on the introduction of new troops or weapons into the area and a restriction on establishing new bases.[2]

Over the next few years, North Vietnam watched, hoping the South Vietnamese government would fail and allow the North to unite Vietnam under a "progressive socialist" administration. Free elections called for under the 1954 Geneva Accords never materialized, and by 1960, the North decided to resort to other means to unify Vietnam under their leadership.

The instrument adopted by North Vietnam to conquer the South was the Viet Cong, a guerrilla army of South Vietnamese Communists dedicated to undermining the government. In the early 1960s, the Viet Cong conducted a campaign of terrorism by killing South Vietnamese government and village officials in cold blood and spreading confusion and discontent. These depredations severely weakened the Saigon government, and by late 1963, the overthrow and assassination of President Ngo Dinh Diem demonstrated the seriousness of the situation.[3]

Realizing they could not fight the Viet Cong without assistance, the South Vietnamese government asked President John F. Kennedy for help in December 1961. Subsequently, the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was established to bolster the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) that had been put in place by the Eisenhower administration.

During January and February 1965, the situation in South Vietnam worsened as Viet Cong terrorism increased. The South Vietnamese Army, the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN), suffered a series of defeats, and its military future looked poor. The United States was no longer able to prevent the collapse of the South by merely providing aid.

ESTABLISHING THE THEATER

General William C. Westmoreland, Commander, MACV, stated as late as March 1965 that no decision had been made on U.S. intervention with ground forces, other then a Marine detachment to secure the Da Nang Airfield.

Consequently, there was no logistic infrastructure in place, and no development of secure logistical bases. The facilities operated by the South Vietnamese forces were woefully inadequate, and ports and airfields were insufficient. In addition, the South Vietnamese Army had no logistical organization and no supply, transportation, or maintenance troops.[4]

Despite the poor logistical infrastructure, the grave tactical situation led President Lyndon B. Johnson to order the deployment of U.S. combat forces. Because of force level ceilings and the decision not to mobilize the reserves, the logistical buildup lagged behind the combat force buildup.[5]

The massive deployment of forces to Southeast Asia into an unimproved theater of operations again placed great demands on the Transportation Corps. Never before had the Army's logistic system supported large numbers of ground combat troops operating in a counterguerrilla role with a supporting pipeline from 9,000 to 11,000 miles long.[6] President Truman's decision to establish the Transportation Corps as a permanent branch in 1950 would pay significant dividends.

LOGISTICS SUPPORT CONCEPT

The previous U.S. command organization in Vietnam had become over-extended and in need of reorganization. In 1960, the Military Assistance Advisory Group (MAAG) was the only U.S. military headquarters in Vietnam, serving as a joint organization containing Army, Navy, and Air Force sections. Those sections were responsible for advising their counterparts in the Vietnamese armed forces and assisting the chief of the advisory group in administering the Military Assistance Program. Logistical and administrative support was provided through each of the different service channels.

As the theater expanded, several logistical teams were sent from the 9th Logistic Command in Okinawa to provide the required logistical support to the arriving units. Later, as that logistical infrastructure became overburdened, this group of people formed the nucleus of the newly authorized U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Authorized on 8 February 1962, MACV was established as a subordinate unified command under Lt. Gen. Paul D. Harkins, the Deputy Commander in Chief, U.S. Army, Pacific.

The U.S. Army Support Group was the Army component command within MACV with the mission of providing logistical and administrative support to the ground forces, providing an overly decentralized logistical support network with only limited coordination between services.

On 15 May 1964, the Military Assistance Advisory Group was formally dissolved and the reorganized MACV headquarters commanded by General

William C. Westmoreland was formed. Even with these changes, the logistical system had failed to keep pace with the expanding and complex support requirements. By 1964, the decentralized logistical infrastructure worsened. The U.S. Army received its support from Okinawa and the continental United States; the Marine Corps, from Japan and Okinawa; the Navy, from the Philippines and Hawaii; and the Air Force, from the Philippines. There was no single logistic agency to oversee and direct the support of U.S. forces in Vietnam.

Over the following year several different options were discussed at the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS) level to help correct the theater's logistical problems. Finally, in late April 1965, an Army logistical command was authorized, and in July, the 1st Logistical Command was formed. By the end of that year it had grown from 5,930 men to more than 22,000.[7]

The 1st Logistical Command was given the formidable mission of supporting all U.S. and free world forces south of Chu Lai. The area of South Vietnam north of Chu Lai remained the responsibility of the U.S. Navy and Air Force until 1968 when the Army also assumed that responsibility. The U.S. Navy was given responsibility to operate Da Nang port facilities because Army transportation elements were fully committed to operating ports in the south. The logistical support mission was complicated by the absence of a well-coordinated, understandable tactical plan. Unlike both World War II and Korea, Vietnam's tactical operations put U.S. soldiers a situation for which they had not been trained. Those operations were characterized largely by small, isolated actions consisting of ground and air assault operations mounted from numerous base camps around the countryside to combat counter- insurgency, guerrilla-type attacks.

With no neat, linear division between enemy and friendly forces, there were no front line or rear boundaries. Therefore, the theater did not have a recognizable combat and communications zone. In Vietnam they were one and the same. Instead, Vietnam was divided into four corps tactical zones, each conducting its own tactical operations against the Viet Cong.

The elusive and rapidly changing battlefield contested by battalion-size forces challenged the theater's logistical support infrastructure. Forces spread all over the theater required ammunition and rations at a moment's notice. Highway lines of communication to support the fight provided the Viet Cong with the maximum opportunity to interdict American logistical support. In addition to the Viet Cong ambushes of convoys, logistical bases were harassed by small arms fire, mortar bombardments, and sniper attacks. All those factors contributed to the complexity of the logistical mission that the 1st Logistical Command supported throughout the Vietnam War.

The 1st Logistical Command, commanded by Col. Robert W. Duke, developed in coordination with MACV the concept for logistics support of U.S. forces in Vietnam. The plan called for two major base depots and five support commands. The seas and rivers would serve as the main supply routes until the tactical situation permitted the use of ground transport routes. The plan was to establish the depots at Saigon and Cam Rahn Bay. The Saigon Depot would support the Vung Tau and Can Tho Support Commands, while the Cam Rahn Bay Depot supported the Nha Trang, Qui Nhon, and Da Nang Support Commands. This arrangement provided some dispersion in case of enemy attack and additional port capacity if the Port of Saigon was destroyed.

The 1st Logistical Command executed the proposal and established support depots at Saigon and Cam Rahn Bay. Staffed with only seventeen officers, the 1st Logistical Command operated the support commands. Prior to the buildup of U.S. forces, a U.S. Army major with a briefcase and a jeep was the command and control unit for Saigon.[8]

With ever increasing demands placed on the theater's transportation network and considering recent advances in transportation technology, the Commander, 1st Logistical Command recommended that an independent evaluation be conducted to determine what types of transportation organizations and resources were required to support the U.S. Army transportation mission in South Vietnam.[9] The evaluation was initiated in November 1967, when the Director of Transportation, Deputy Chief of Staff for Logistics (DCSLOG), Brig. Gen. Jack C. Fuson,[10] formerly commander, 4th Terminal Command, assembled a team of five officers under the overall guidance of the Commanding General, U.S. Army Vietnam, and the Commander, 1st Logistical Command. The evaluation included an assessment of the theater's water transport capability, including port discharge, lighterage, and SeaLand containerization.

From a port discharge standpoint, the study concluded that the Vietnam theater had the equivalent of forty-one terminal service companies, including six Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) companies, fifteen U.S. Army companies, and twenty civilian (company equivalent) organizations. This work force was capable of handling the theater's port discharge rate. Only rarely did surges at individual locations exceed the local capacity.

Lighterage according to the DCSLOG study, was in great demand throughout South Vietnam. Besides vessel discharge, medium boat companies were used for intracoastal transport and security, maintenance centers, aid stations, supply carriers, and fire control centers. The study determined that lighterage for port support was sufficient to support demand, except for a small

shortage in Saigon. Lighterage to support the intra-coastal waterways was significantly short since the monthly requirement was roughly 311,610 short tons, while the capability was 203,026 short tons. This shortfall was due to a theater wide shortage of harborcraft personnel and poor contractor maintenance. There was also a shortage of tugboats in the theater. Seventy-one were required but only sixty-four were on hand. The most significant shortage was in the Saigon Port Complex, which had six.

Containerization was still a fairly new concept in Southeast Asia, so the evaluation team analyzed the impact that containers would have on U.S. forces. One of their recommendations was for retrograde cargo to be shipped back to the United States in empty containers.

By far the most significant result of the study was the recommendation to establish a centralized transportation command in South Vietnam. Because of the geographical dispersion of forces and the lack of secure land lines in the theater, the current transportation command had three major support commands paralleling the three major port facilities. Transportation operating units were assigned to each of these support commands according to respective workloads. Each support command had its own transportation staff which coordinated and controlled activities with its subcommands. This fragmentation of transportation control created a requirement for transportation staff functions at all levels within the U.S. Army in Vietnam. The extreme decentralization and layering of commands provided a breeding ground for inefficiency and confusion for numerous functions including movement requests or even vehicle tasking.

The problems caused by the decentralization of transportation led the Commander, 1st Logistical Command to direct the Cam Rahn Bay Support Command to form a Provisional Transportation Command to consolidate transportation activities under one commander. This permitted a total system approach to the command and control of water terminal operations, local clearance, line-haul delivery from depot to consumers, and movement management.

The improved efficiency of the Provisional Transportation Command was the stimulus for the evaluation team to recommend a centralized Transportation Command (TRANSCOM) in South Vietnam. The TRANSCOM would consist of two transportation brigades controlling all U.S. Army transportation activities. Its strength was planned at 17,000 troops and 12,000 contract personnel engaged in transportation operations in South Vietnam. The TRANSCOM was to have an organic Movements Control Agency (MCA), and the subordinate brigades, Movement Control Centers. Those measures would streamline the command and control of the theater's transportation support, as well as provide an

understandable and efficient movements management system for common user transportation assets.[11]

Even though the analysis was accurate and the recommendations provided efficient solutions to the problems present, the proposal was ahead of its time. Interservice rivalry would not allow one service to control all transportation assets in the theater. The lack of command emphasis also played a part in not implementing the recommendations of the study, and it became a historical footnote instead. However, the concepts were practical and the passage of the Goldwater-Nichols Department of Defense Reorganization Act of 1986 would eliminate many of the interservice inefficiencies and force a significant increase in joint duty. That 1986 act also increased the authority of both the Secretary of Defense and the chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff over military matters.[12]

The Provisional Transportation Command remained at Cam Rahn Bay, but its concept was not adopted throughout Vietnam. Transportation commands in South Vietnam remained oriented to three major support commands, Saigon, Cam Rahn Bay, and Qui Nhon, all geographically located at the theater's primary Army ports of debarkation. (see Chart 14).

At the Saigon Support Command (SSC), the 4th Transportation Command provided transportation support to the Port of Saigon, Newport, Cat Lai, and Vung Tau. Subordinate to the 4th Transportation Command were the 125th Transportation Command and the 48th Transportation Group, which were responsible for terminal operations and port clearance. The 125th Transportation Command, with its subordinate Terminal Service Company (117th) and a Transportation Augmentation Unit, was responsible for commercial operations at the Port of Saigon. The 48th Transportation Group provided truck transport for port clearance in Long Binh which supported the III and IV Corps tactical zones.

The remaining three battalions in the SSC served under the 4th Transportation Command. The 71st Transportation Battalion operated the newly constructed Newport Terminal outside of Saigon. The 11th Transportation Battalion operated the port at Cat Lai, seven miles southeast of Saigon, handling over 60 percent of all ammunition entering Vietnam. In 1968, the 11th Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col Nathaniel R. Thompson, Jr., handled approximately 42,000 tons of ammunition each month.[13, 14]

The Cam Rahn Bay Support Command, smaller than the Saigon Support Command, originally controlled the 500th Transportation Group (Motor Transport) and the 124th Terminal Command. (see Chart 15). The 500th Transportation Group provided the majority of the truck assets to clear the Cam Rahn Bay Port and move the supplies into the theater, while the 124th Terminal

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1ST LOG COMMAND ORGANIZATION FEBRUARY 1968

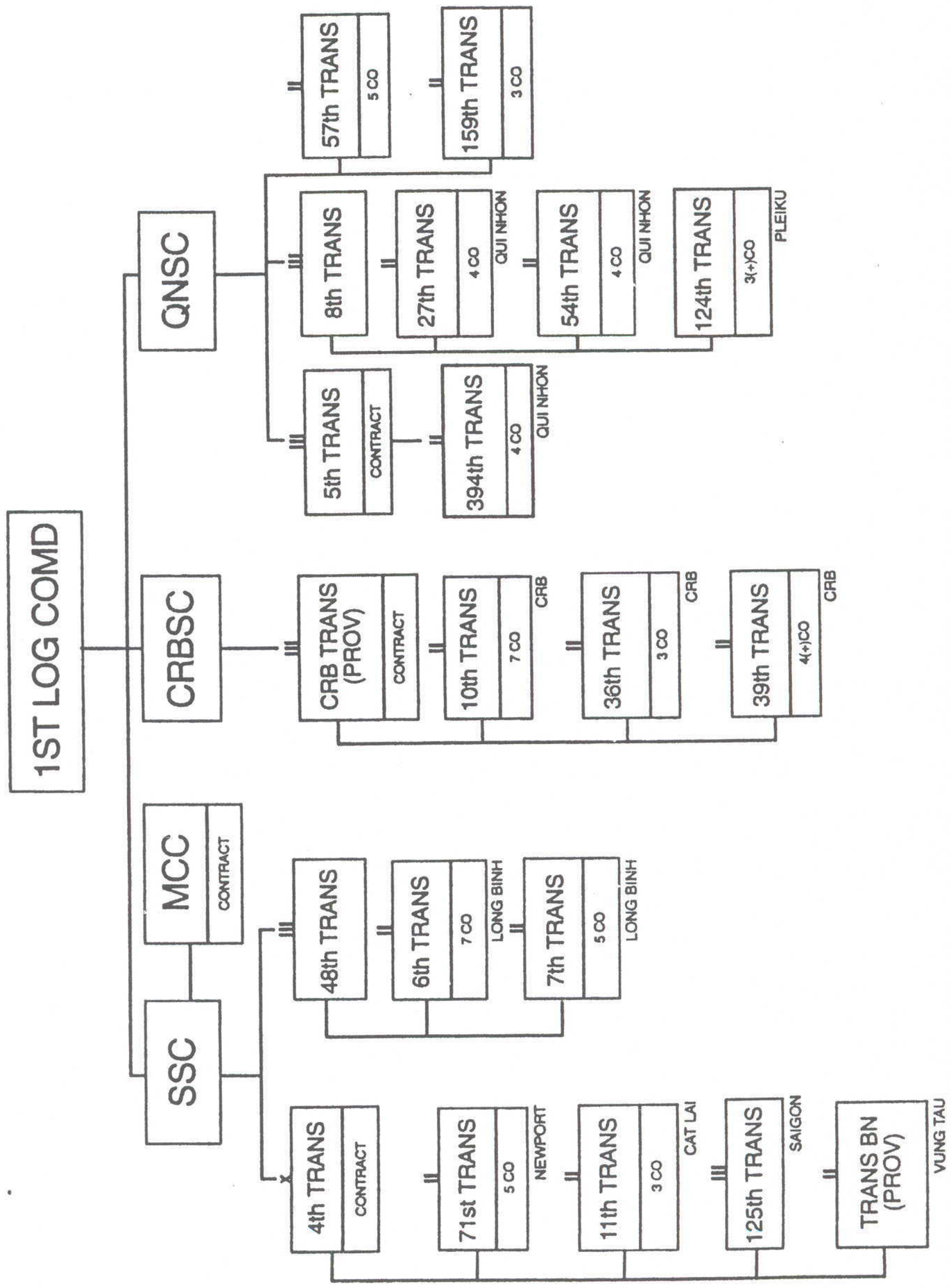

Chart 14

CAM RANH BAY TRANSPORTATION ORGANIZATION: (PRIOR TO 28 OCTOBER 1967)

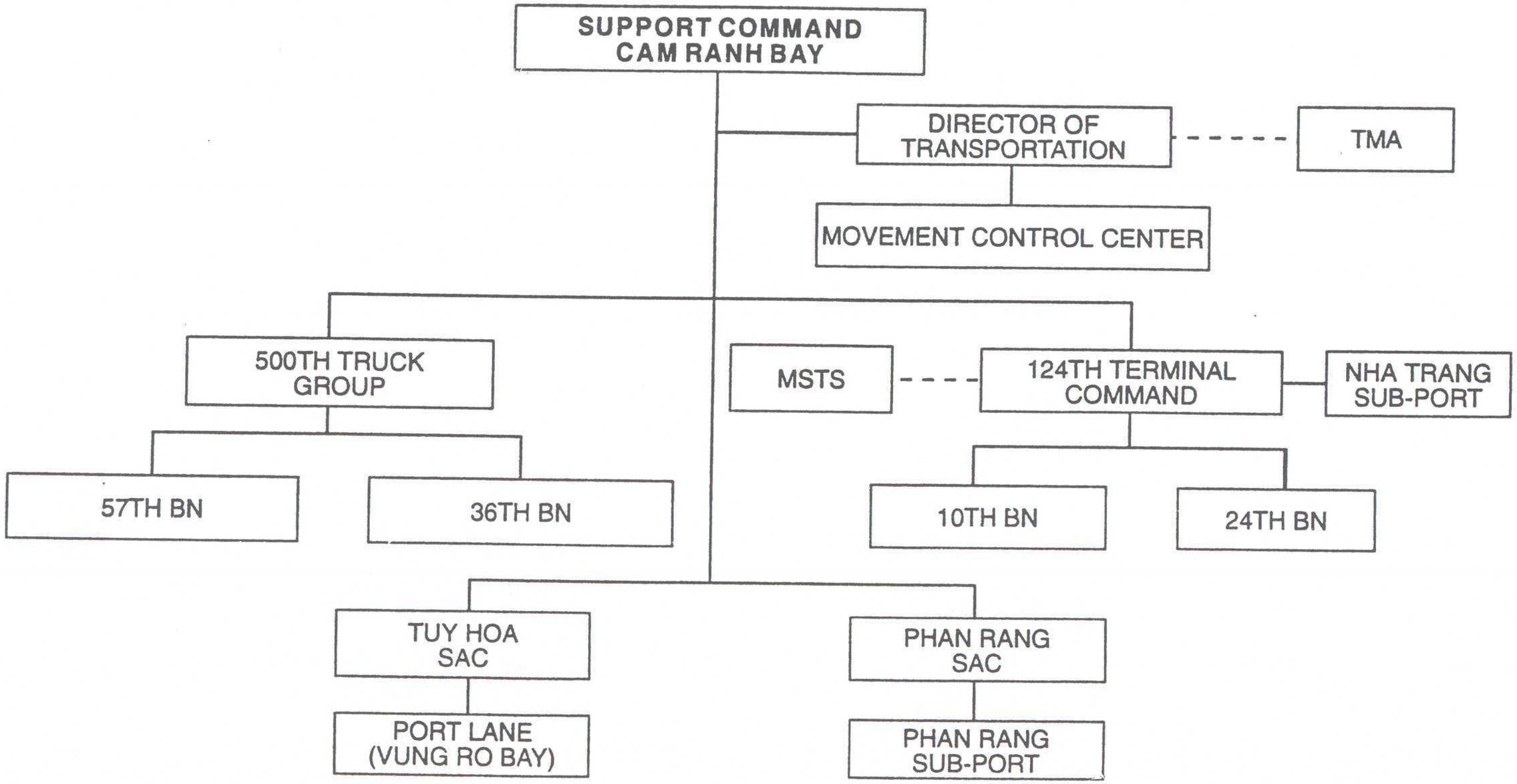

Chart 15

Command, commanded by Lt. Col. Richard E. Criner, provided the Port at Cam Rahn Bay with a majority of its terminal operations capability.[15]

By 1969, the Cam Rahn Bay Support Command was reestablished to form the Provisional Transportation Command. Designed to streamline transportation management and improve efficiency, the Command was built from assets of the 500th Transportation Group and the 124th Terminal Command. Activated in 1969, the command was established with three subordinate transportation battalions and given the primary mission of discharging and throughputing breakbulk and containerized cargos over five piers at the port of Cam Rahn Bay. It was instrumental in the discharge of both roll on/roll off (RO/RO) and containerships, both new concepts of transportation (see Chart 16).

The three subordinate units to the Provisional Command were the 10th, 36th, and 39th Transportation Battalions. The 10th Transportation Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Jimmy D. Ross, operated the port of Cam Rahn Bay while the 36th Battalion commanded by Lt. Col. Edward Honor, and 39th Transportation Battalion provided trucks for port clearance.[16]

Chart 15

The Qui Nhon Support Command (QNSC), the last of the three support commands, was the main source of supply for U.S. installations at An Khe and Pleiku and for Republic of Korea (ROK) army units. The support command had the 5th Transportation Command, consisting of the 8th Transportation Group with six battalions.

Included in the Qui Nhon mission, the 5th Transportation Terminal Command discharged and loaded deep draft and intercoastal vessels, delivered cargo to its first destination, and assisted in amphibious operations. The command also exercised operational control of the Han Jin Transportation Company, a Korean contractor responsible for a portion of the port operations. The 5th Transportation Command was originally activated at Fort Story, Virginia, in 1966 and arrived in Vietnam in October of the same year. By late 1968, the 5th Transportation Command began replacing its 500 military personnel with 700 local nationals, and by May 1970, the command was transferred to Vietnamese control, and the 5th Command redeployed to Da Nang.

The 8th Transportation Group had three subordinate truck battalions; the 27th, 54th, and 124th Transportation Battalions' primary mission was to provide motor transport support to tactical forces in the II Corps Tactical Zone. The 27th and 54th Transportation Battalions were collocated at Qui Nhon, while the 124th Transportation Battalion was located in Pleiku.[17]

The remaining two battalions that made up the Qui Nhon Support Command were the 57th and 159th Transportation Battalions. The 57th

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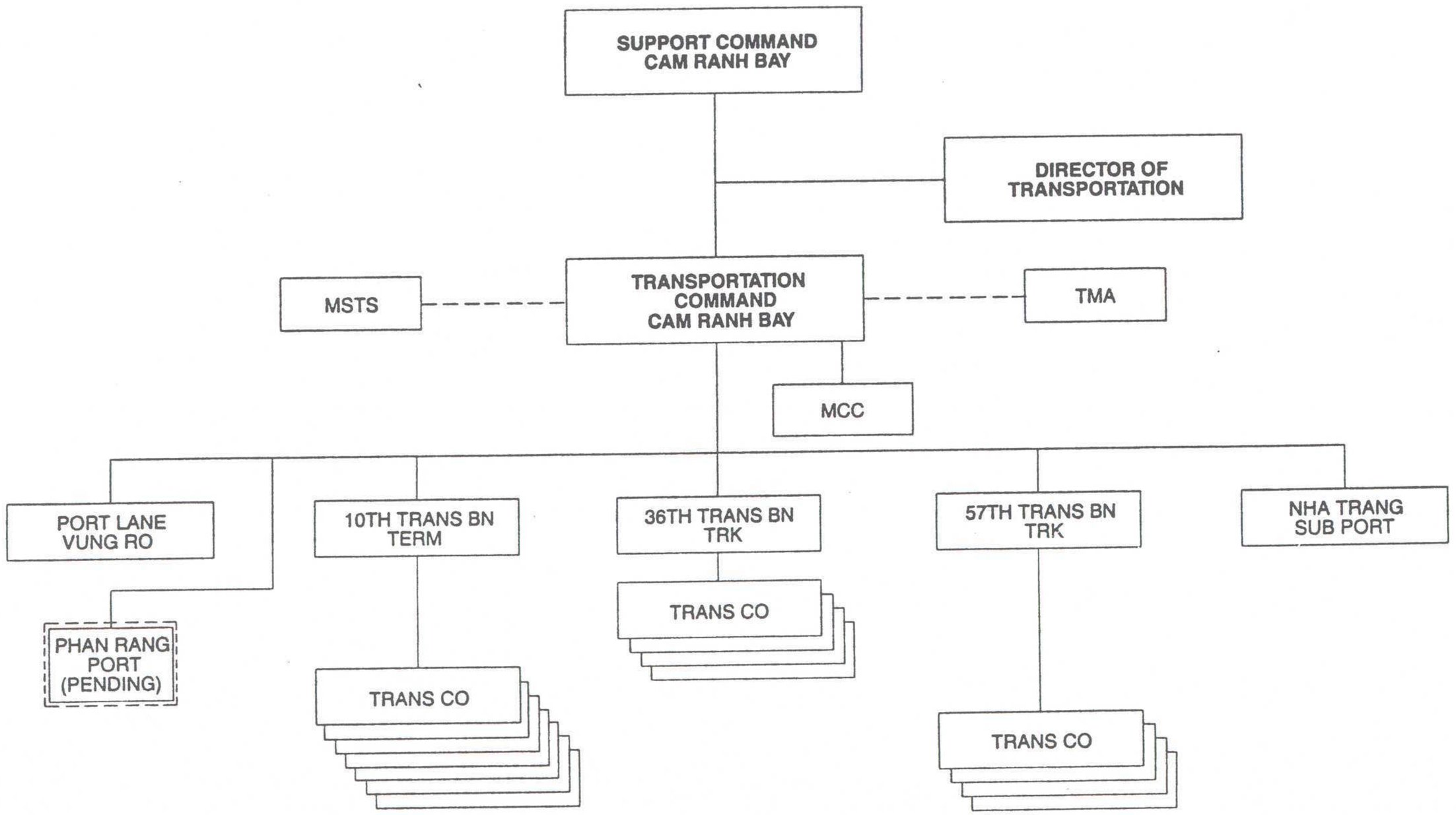


Chart 16

Transportation Battalion deployed to Vietnam in the fall of 1967, and provided a wide range of support to U.S. forces.

The only subordinate battalion of the 5th Transportation Command was the 394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal), which proved to be an invaluable port discharge asset. In January 1966, the battalion discharged over 59,000 short tons of cargo helping alleviate the theater's port discharge backlog. Even with terminal service personnel and material-handling equipment shortages, the battalion maintained a proud reputation for mission accomplishment throughout the Vietnam War.

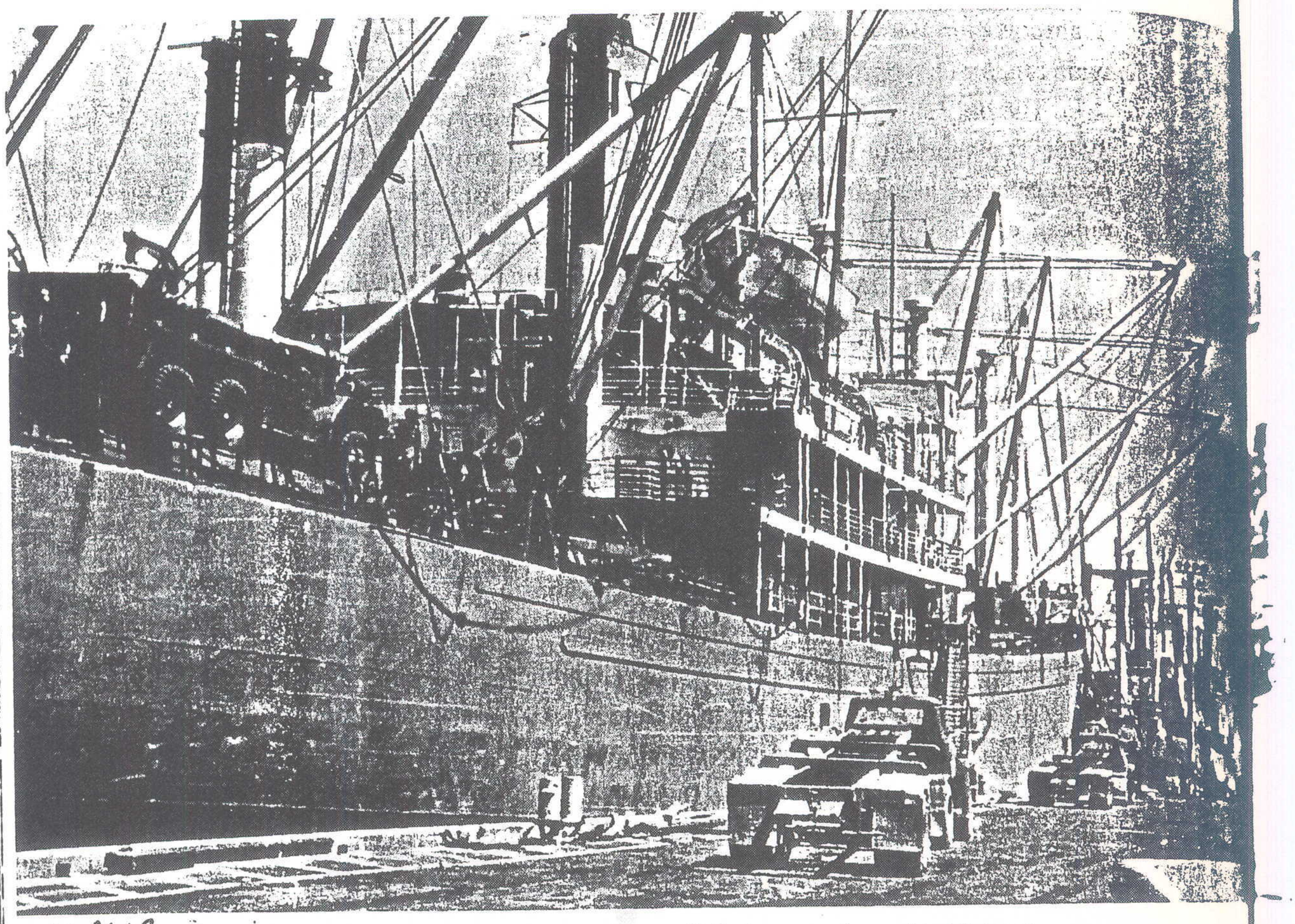
In mid-1969, the Presidents of the United States and Vietnam announced an agreement to begin replacing United States troops with Vietnamese forces. The MACV headquarters issued on 21 July 1969 the Country Logistics Improvement Plan to implement the transfer of logistic support operational responsibilities, with the goal of a sulf-sufficient Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces (RVNAF) logistics system. During the succeeding years, until the probability of a cease fire became imminent, U.S. logistics units gradually transferred in-country operations to the Vietnamese, and continued to provide advisors to RVNAF units. In mid-October 1972, the MACV commander directed that plans be developed to withdraw all U.S. forces from South Vietnam within 60 days, and to establish the Defense Attache Office (DAO), Saigon. That office would continue to administer the United States Security Assistance Program, in coordination with the U.S. Ambassador to South Vietnam.

Chart 16

The cease fire was signed on January 27, 1973, and the DAO, Saigon was activated the following day, assigned to MACV, with a Transportation Corps officer, Maj. Gen. John E. Murray as the Defense Attache. At that time, only about 13,300 U.S. Army troops remained in South Vietnam. On March 29, 1973, the United States closed down its military role in Vietnam, and the DAO, Saigon took over administration of the Security Assistance program, contracting for support of the activity and as needed for necessary operational tasks such as monitoring use of program assets, beyond the limited capability of the DAO staff. DAO continued to administer the program until the fall of the South Vietnamese government in March 1975.

SHIPPING AND TERMINAL OPERATIONS

The success of United States operations in Vietnam depended upon the ability to move a large military force to the area and sustain it in combat. The depots established "in country" were the first step, but deployment of massive amounts of supplies and equipment required an adequate number of ships.[18]



W2613 A World War II vintage ship discharges U.S. Army equipment in Vietnam.

The cargo flow into Vietnam was 140,000 measurement tons per month. The last half of 1965 saw that figure climb to 460,000 tons, then to 740,000 by the end of 1966. With few exceptions, the ships of the Navy's service force used in Vietnam to support this flow of cargo, were of World War II vintage, and over the years, many of them had been scrapped because of budget cuts. There were few replacements because the Navy preferred to buy new combat vessels. Not only were the ships outdated World War II vintage, but floating dry docks, support vessels, and small harbor tugs were all drawn largely from reserve storage.

Sea lift did achieve great productivity and effectiveness as the construction and buildup program began to produce results. A project called "Sea Express" used high speed contract ships to expedite movement of the more critical bulk cargo to Vietnam. This method obtained not only priority response to urgent needs but also helped to meet the greatest part of the cargo movement for the

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war. Available data indicated that sea lift delivered 95 percent of the 17,200,000 tons of cargo ultimately put ashore in Vietnam.[19]

Even with massive tonnages that had to be transported by ships, the movement of cargo over sea lines of communications got off to a slow start. On 15 May 1965, the first ship arrived at the newly formed port of Cam Rahn Bay. Since Army stevedores had not arrived in theater, South Vietnamese stevedores were responsible for offloading the ship. However, the South Vietnam stevedore union refused to send civilians to Cam Rahn Bay, and a Transportation Corps lieutenant with a small group of enlisted men stepped forward to unload the ship. From this inconspicuous beginning, Cam Rahn Bay became an efficiently run major port.[20]

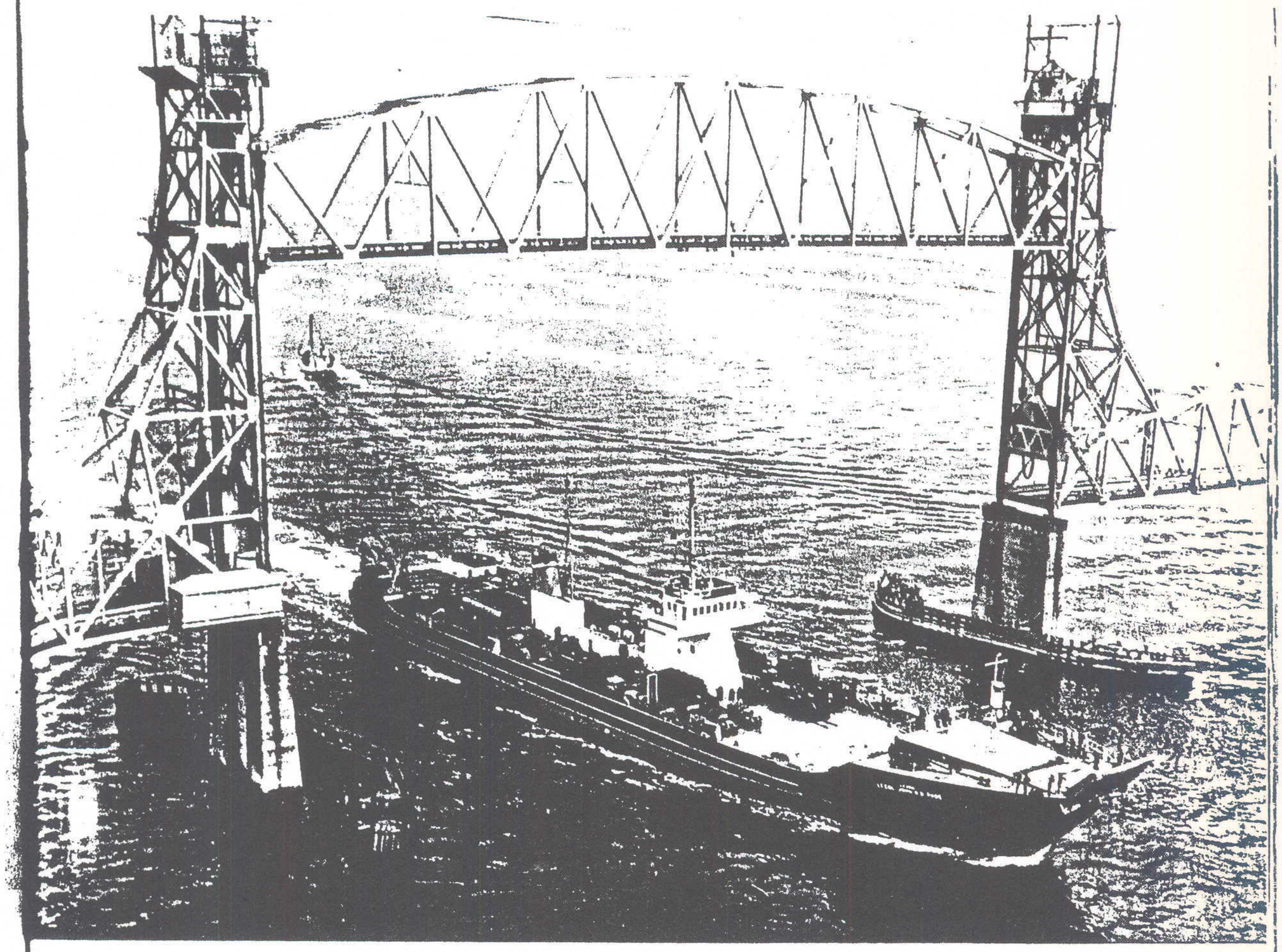
Between mid-1965 and late 1966, most cargo was transported by ship, while airlift moved the majority of troops and priority cargo. The dependence on sea lift placed a considerable strain on the limited port capacity of South

Vietnam. Most of the sea lift cargo was discharged at the Port of Saigon, which was the only port with any significant discharge capacity. Designed and built as a commercial port, it had a deep water berthing capacity for ten ships and was operated by civilian stevedores and managed by the Port Authority.

The overloaded port facilities meant that vessels were discharged by priority of cargo, resulting in numerous ships anchoring with only parts of the cargo discharged. This problem significantly increased the ships' turnaround times and caused demurrage costs to skyrocket. One ship could cost the United States between $3,000 and $7,000 a day moored for several weeks waiting complete discharge.[21]

The backup of shipping at Saigon was due in large part to slow discharge and clearance of cargo imported by the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) for civilian aid and to stimulate the Vietnamese economy under the Commercial Import Program (CIP). Cargo included fertilizer and food, particularly rice, and items such as refrigerators, bicycles, and manufacturing equipment. Relief cargo was processed slowly, and CIP cargo was habitually stored in the port areas by importers until sold, since port tariffs did not penalize long storage. Not only was the port area congested, but commercial port facilities were used jointly, and civilian and military cargo, including POL and ammunition was handled at adjacent berths, and stored side by side until cleared; a very unsafe situation.

Prior to his assignment in DCSLOG, Col. Jack C. Fuson assumed command of the 4th Terminal Command in July 1966. He immediately charged the commander of the 11th Transportation Battalion, Lt. Col. Thomas H. Hoy, to recommend a location for a new ammunition port. Lt. Col. Hoy recommended the Cat Lai area, near the port which had adequate area, isolation and depth of water to moor ships for lighter discharge, but the land was swampy. The 1st Logistical Command commander approved the site and arranged for engineer support to emplace the immense amounts of fill needed and build lighter discharge facilities. As soon as partial operations were possible, the 11th Battalion built a tent city in the area and commenced discharging all ammunition for the U.S. Army, Air Force and RVNAF in the Saigon and Mekong Delta areas. Subsequently, when the 1st Logistical Command established a general depot at Long Binh to receive, store, and distribute cargo cleared from the port, the immense port clearance load on the Fish Market general depot near the port was relieved to a considerable extent, facilitating overall clearance of cargo. Concurrently, construction progressed on a new port facility up river from the commercial port. Newport, as it was named, came on line with ramps for LST and lighterage in October 1966, and four deep draft piers, one with RO/RO



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capability in July 1967. Newport was manned entirely with U.S. troops, and its opening left the main port area in Saigon free to handle AID and commercial cargo. The 4th Terminal Command worked with the Vietnamese port authorities to obtain additional equipment, and to modernize port tariffs which helped to reduce long term storage and congestion in the port area. The number of U.S. transportation advisors to RVNAF port operators was increased and the Vietnamese operations also showed major improvements in efficiency during 1967-1968.

Discharge problems were aggravated by the shortage of shallow-draft vessels, both military landing craft, mechanized (LCMs) and landing craft, utility (LCUs), which were used to discharge vessels when adequate berthing capabilities did not exist.[22]

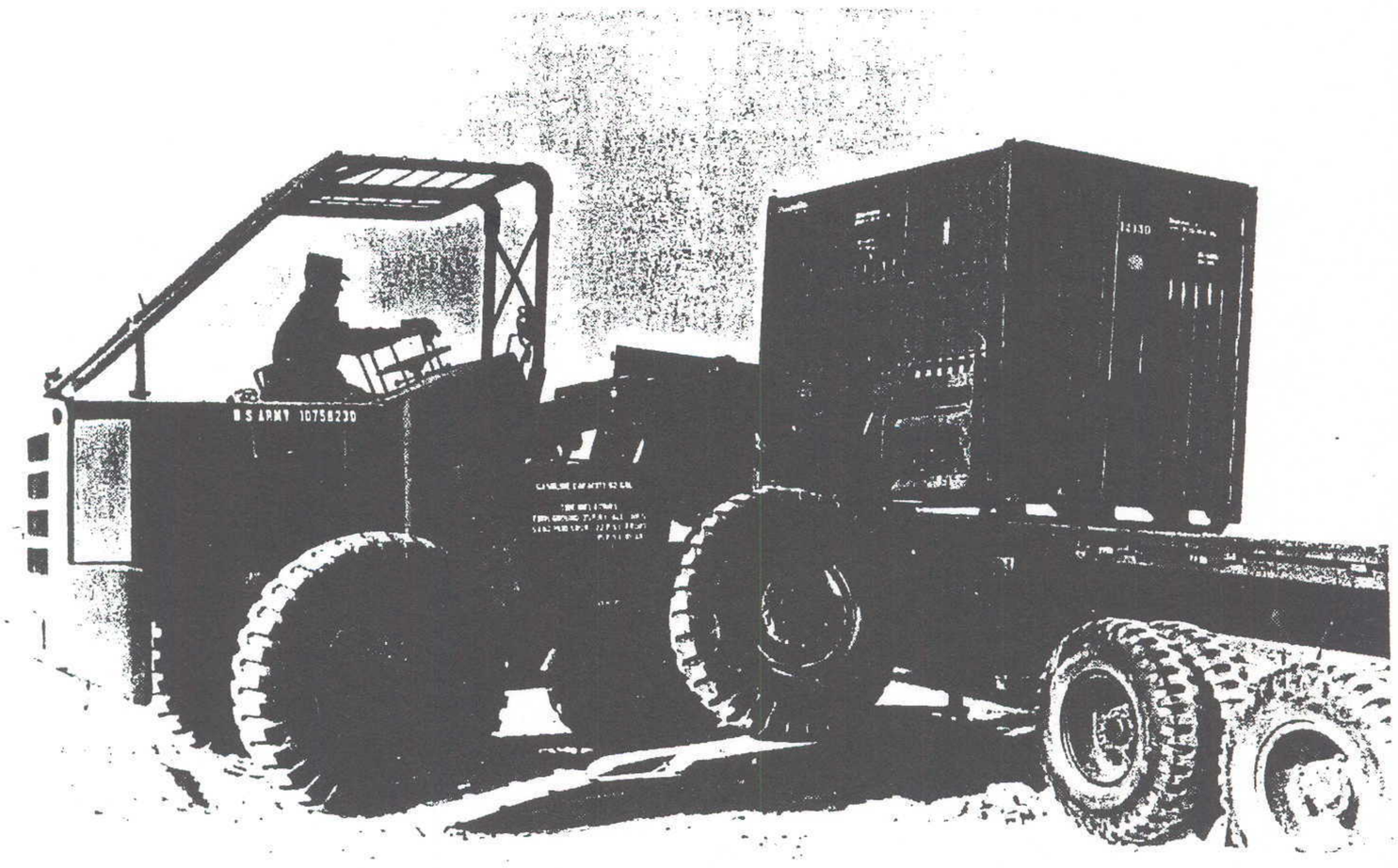
One solution to the shortage of lighterage was the assignment of the *MV John U. D. Page* to the theater. Equipped with the latest marine terminal technology, this shallow-draft vessel played a considerable role in the discharge of numerous deep draft vessels. The vessel, a one of a kind in the U.S. Army, used a vertical axis propulsion system to allow it to maneuver next to a deep-draft vessel to take on cargo (either through lift or RO/RO) in support of a logistics-over-the-shore (LOTS) operation. The vessel had the capability to take a deck load of seventy 2 1/2-ton trucks or thirty-seven large trailers. Once beached and the cargo discharged, the vessel's hydraulic ram would push the ship off the beach.[23]

In addition to modernizing equipment and expanding port facilities, Army transporters realized that command and control had to improve if they were to operate an expanding theater port operation effectively. The 4th Transportation Command arrived in South Vietnam on 12 August 1965. Initially assigned to the 1st Logistical Command, the 4th was the first senior terminal command and control unit to arrive in the theater, assuming responsibility for all land and water transportation units.

Preceding the 4th Transportation Command's arrival, the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) was the first Army transportation unit to begin port operations. Arriving in Saigon on 5 August 1965, the 11th Battalion immediately assumed responsibility of the Saigon Port complex from the Navy. On 23 September 1965, the 10th Transportation Battalion arrived in theater, augmenting the 4th Transportation Command, assuming operations at the Cam Rahn Bay Water Terminal.[24] The 6th Transportation Battalion, commanded by Lt. Col. Oren E. DeHaven, soon followed and was given responsibility for port clearance at Saigon port complex and onward movement of supplies into the 3d Military Region, South Vietnam.[25, 26]

The 4th Transportation Command, with a strength of 7,000 personnel, initially had the mission of operating the port complex at Saigon and the water terminals at Cam Ran Bay, Nha Be, Qui Nhon, Phan Rang, Nha Trang, and Vung Tau. It was also required to provide motor transport support of port and beach clearance, as well as tactical operations and the establishment of the Army Air Cargo Terminal at Tan Son Nhut Air Base.[27]

As the theater matured and additional transportation commands arrived, the 4th Transportation Command's mission was changed to operating the Saigon port complex, a subport at Vung Tau, and various ammunition distribution sites. With this change of mission, the 4th Transportation Command's truck units were reassigned to other transportation groups in the theater. The continual flow of



A Rough-terrain 10-ton Forklift loads a CONEX
during a logistics-over- the-shore operation in Vietnam.

transportation units into the theater, construction of additional ports, and establishment of command and control terminal headquarters helped increase the theater's terminal throughput capacity.

By the end of December 1967, the Army had ten ports. Saigon, Qui Nhon, Cam Ran Bay, Vung Ro, Vung Tau, Cat Lai, and Nha Trang were deep-draft ports. Dong Tam, Pan Rang, and Can Tho were shallow-draft ports. The improvements in port capabilities brought about a reduction in the average time a deep-draft ship waited for a berth in Vietnam ports. The average time had decreased from 20.4 days during the most critical period of 1965 to the 1970 average of less than two days.[28]

CONTAINERIZATION

As they did in the Korean War, port operators welcomed the use of containerization as an efficient means for moving supplies into the theater. The Transporter was a reusable steel container with a capacity of about 9,000 pounds. It played a major role in moving unit cargo and supplies to Vietnam, where it became popularly known as CONEX for its use in the Container Express System (CONEX). When the 1st Cavalry Division deployed to Vietnam in 1965, it used about 2,500 CONEXs, each prominently marked with the big yellow division patch. Army aviation units also employed CONEXs for the

prebinned stockage of rivets, cotter pins, and the myriad of small items necessary for aviation support. [29]

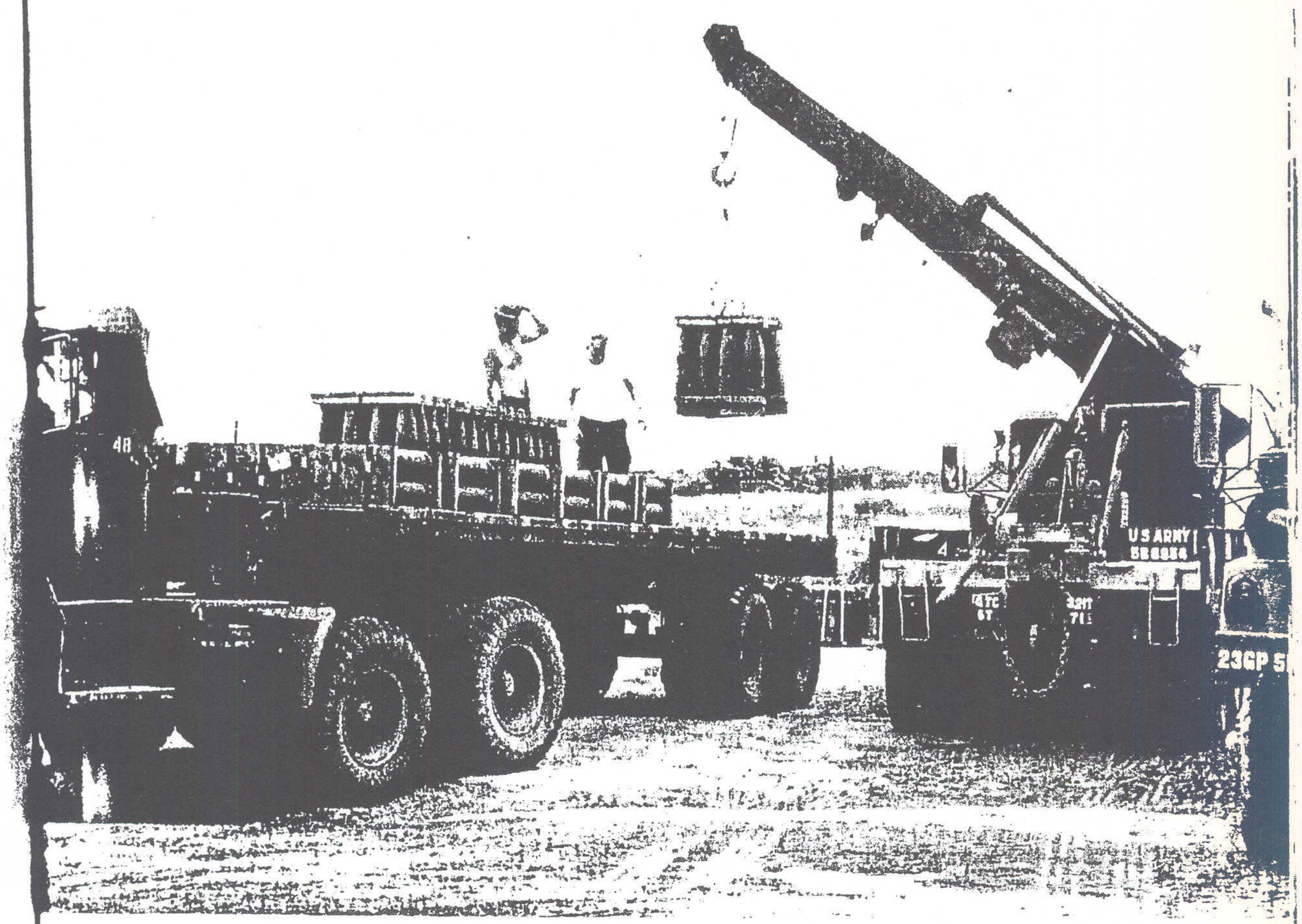
As the conflict escalated, the demand for CONEXs grew exponentially. Extremely handy, the CONEX was used for a variety of purposes from command posts to dispensaries and even portable stores. While the popularity increased the demand for CONEXs, it did not enhance the transportation network. Containers sent to forward areas disappeared and were not back hauled. More had to be sent to Vietnam until the theater inventory exceeded 150,000.

Containers played an important part in a special project to make Cam Rahn Bay a major U.S. Army supply base. With the rapid influx of supplies, major construction did not keep pace with the demand for storage. During June 1966, Cam Rahn Bay was supporting some 95,000 men and their complement of equipment. The Army Materiel Command (AMC) prepared a prepacked container depot that contained a 60-day stockage level of repair parts for all units supported by the depot at Cam Rahn Bay. When completed, the entire package of about 53,000 line items, together with a library of manuals, stock records, locator cards, and other documents, was contained in 70 military van semitrailers and 437 binned containers.[30]

Containerization reached a new plateau during the Vietnam War with the introduction of containerships from SeaLand Container Services, Incorporated. First used to support the theater during 1967, SeaLand containers were the next step in the use of intermodal containers (containers that could be shipped by rail, truck, air or ship). The SeaLand ships were specifically designed to carry the SeaLand container, which could be easily removed from a flatbed trailer or railcar and placed on the ship. This new method of containerization required a special type of crane either on the ship or at the port to discharge the vessel.

SeaLand containership service to Cam Rahn Bay began in November 1967, delivering containers for Saigon, Qui Nhon, and Cam Rahn Bay. The deliveries were made twice a month by nonself-sustaining vessels to Cam Rahn Bay and discharged over a Delong pier, upon which two large gantry cranes were installed. Containers destined for Saigon and Qui Nhon were transferred to smaller C2 self-sustaining vessels owned and operated by SeaLand, and shipped to the appropriate destination. By February 1968, six containerships had delivered more than 3,683 containers to the theater.[31]

Initially, containers were to be pushed to the port complex, unloaded, and returned. As idle containers became available, SeaLand allowed the Army to transport containers inland by military truck. This reduced the handling of cargo,



155mm rounds being discharged at a Forward Supply Base in Vietnam.

but conversely increased the demand for materials handling equipment (MHE) in forward locations.

This widespread use of commercial containers represented a new era in the movement of supplies and allowed the Transportation Corps to analyze port activities that affected throughput capacity. These activities included identifying and sorting cargo, providing adequate MHE, and determining how far forward it was feasible to ship containers.

Achieving total visibility of containerized cargo was not as simple as was planned. Throughout the Vietnam War, the problem of identification and control of supplies remained a considerable one. The Honorable Dr. Robert A. Brooks, serving as the Assistant Secretary of the Army, Installations and Logistics, during a considerable portion of the Vietnam War, identified intransit visibility as a significant problem to the armed forces. Dr. Brooks stated: "The

Transportation system moved goods so fast and too efficiently for the logistical system to keep up with the sophisticated job of translating boxes and measurement tons into supply items and balancing item supply against item demand in a constantly changing combat environment."

In 1965, during Defense Secretary McNamara's visit to Vietnam, the problem of identification was so serious that an Air Red Ball Express was established. The express service used a dedicated aircraft each day to transport high-priority repair parts to the theater. By using dedicated inventory supply points and aircraft, critical repair parts were being transported into the theater much more rapidly, increasing equipment readiness rates.

Even with the Air Red Ball Express, identification and control of supplies arriving in theater remained a problem throughout the war. Dr. Brooks' summary of the situation was very concise: "we must have control and positive documentation of supply built into the transportation system. By the time the box arrives on the ground, it is already too late to start finding out what it is ."[32]

AMMUNITION OPERATIONS

The containerization of ammunition was successfully tested during the Vietnam War. From December 1969 to January 1970, test shipments of containerized ammunition were conducted to determine the feasibility of shipping ammunition from the United States to Vietnam by that mode. A self-sustaining containership was used to move 226 containers of ammunition from the United States to Cam Rahn Bay. Some containers were unloaded at Cam Rahn Bay, while others were transshipped on lighterage to Qui Nhon and forward supply points.[33] Through the container's storage capability was not always 100 percent utilized, the use of containers significantly decreased the ports' handling requirements.

Prior to January 1970, the ability to simultaneously build the theater stockage level of ammunition while engaged in combat was severely restricted by throughput capacities of the ports. Until mid-1966, the discharge of ammunition ships was limited because ammunition was removed from pallets at U.S. outloading ports and loaded aboard ship by individual box or projectile. When a ship arrived in Vietnam, cargo nets and hooks were used to offload the ammunition piece by piece, after which ammunition was arranged by lot and repalletized.

At the request of the commanding general, 1st Logistical Command, this practice ceased and ammunition was shipped on its original pallets. This single decision increased the discharge rate of ammunition ships nearly 100 percent, allowing discharge offloading times to decrease from seven days per ship to four days.[34]

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Despite the change to palletized shipments, the sheer volume of ammunition moving through the ammunition offload facilities still had ships spending time offshore waiting for an empty berth. During December 1967, the average wait for a berth was 6.5 to 7 days, a considerable amount of time with eleven ammunition ships calling on South Vietnam during that month.[35]

To alleviate the discharge delays and improve the management of ammunition, a new management technique called "Inventory in Motion" was adopted. It allowed an overall reduction in ammunition stockage on the ground from 285,000 short tons to roughly 142,500 short tons. Inventory in Motion also allowed supply managers to reduce large stockage levels by having total visibility of the stockage on the ground and intransit to the theater.[36]

RO/RO VESSELS

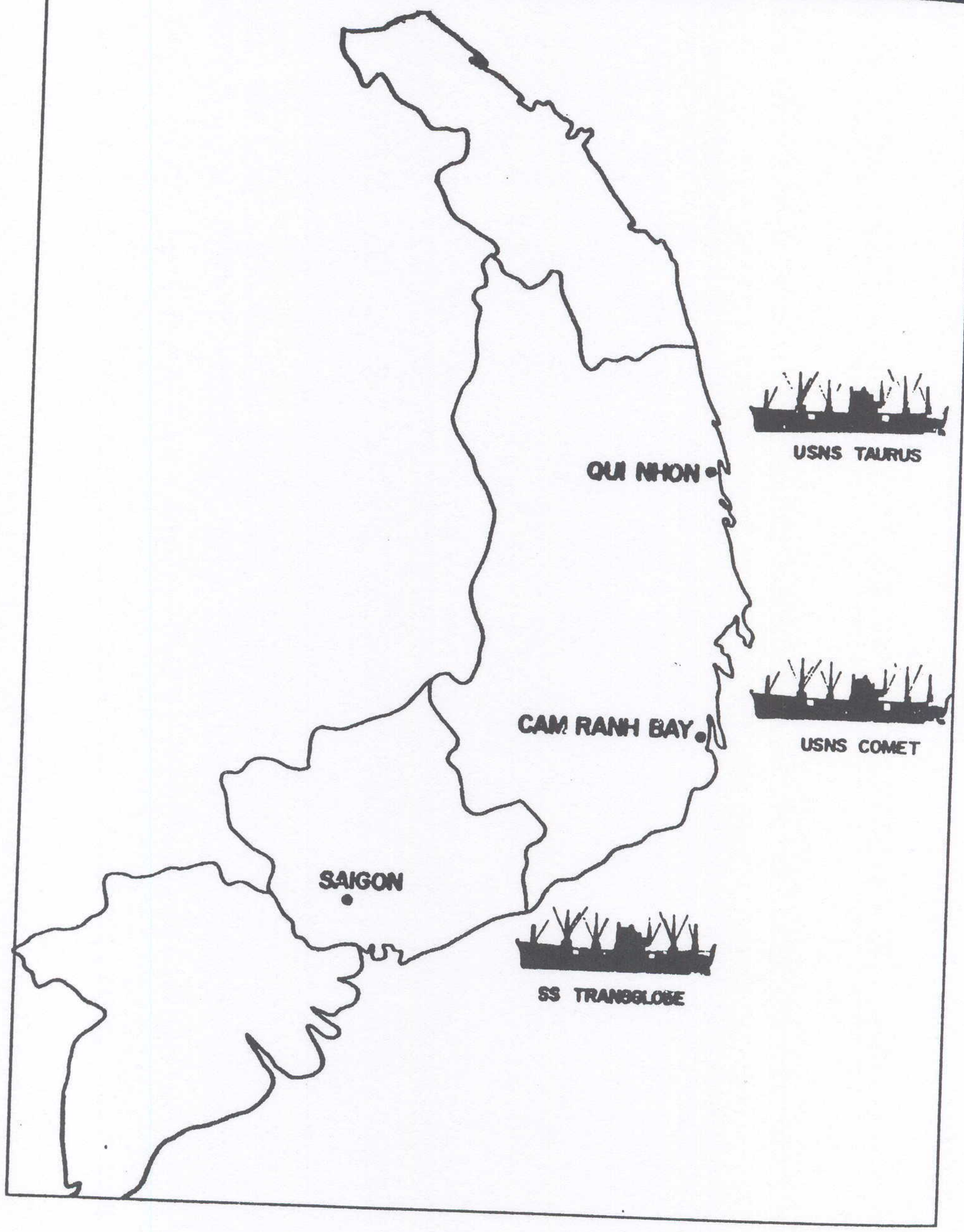
Augmenting the container service, and another first in the shipping industry, was the use of Roll On/Roll Off vessels. The RO/RO vessels embodied a new concept by which cargo is checked at the point of origin and unloaded onto a trailer-type conveyance, transported to a vessel at the port of loading, rolled into the vessel, stowed, rolled off at the port of discharge, and dispatched to forward destinations.[37]

General Frank S. Besson, Jr., is credited as father of containerization and RO/RO, for his efforts in introducing the RO/RO concept and pressing for the construction of RO/RO vessels to support defense shipping requirements. During his tenure as Commander Army Material Command from 1962 to 1969, during the buildup in Vietnam, and later in his assignment as the chairman of the Joint Logistics Review Board, General Besson had much to do with the successful logistics support of the Vietnam Theater.[38]

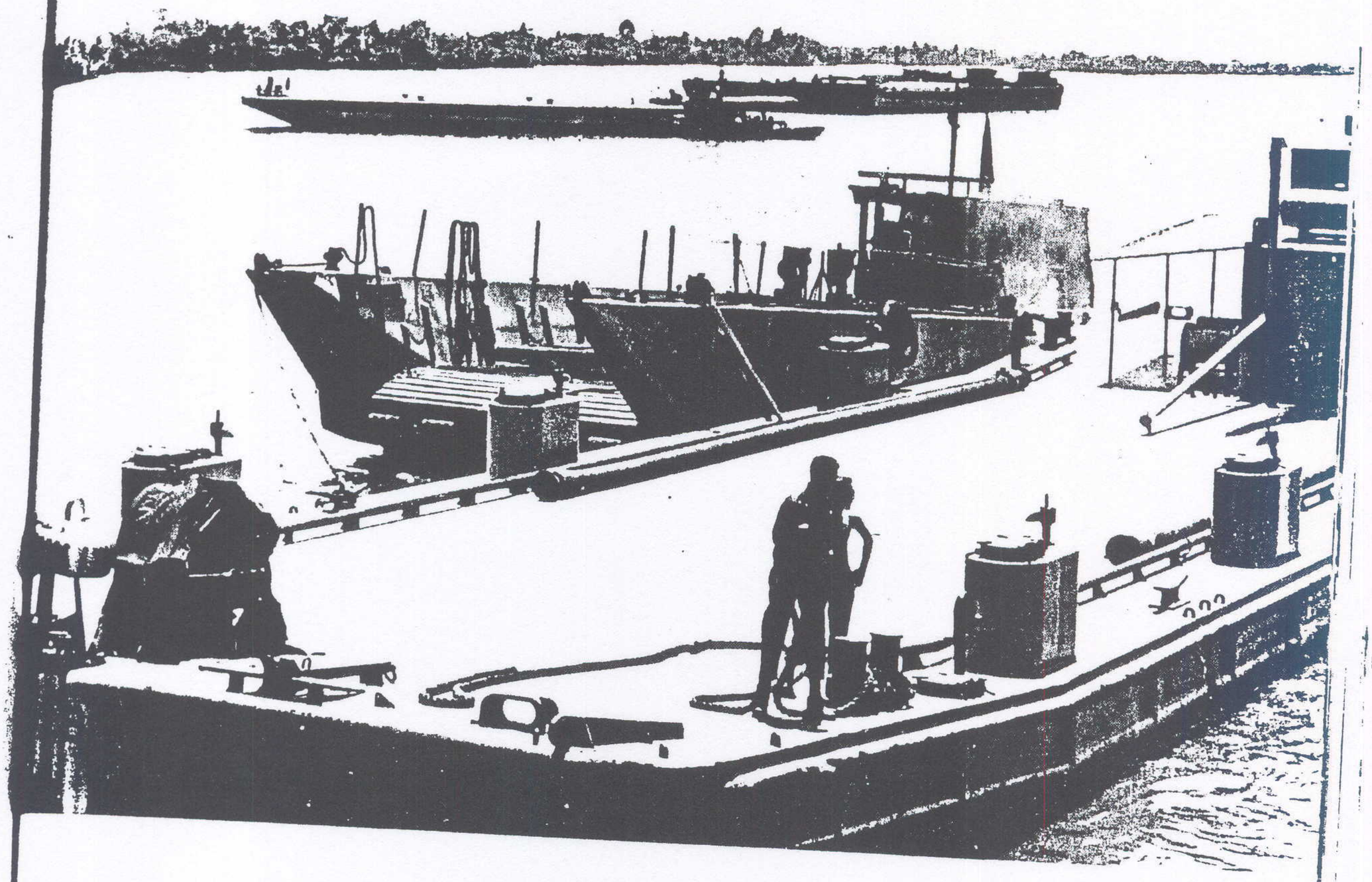
The RO/RO concept, operated by the Military Sea Transportation Service (MSTS), was combined with the U.S. Army Trailer Service Agency to facilitate the movement of general cargo from Okinawa to support operations in Vietnam.[39] The service began in March 1966 and operated between Okinawa; the three Vietnam ports, Cam Rahn Bay, Saigon, and Qui Nhon; and Bangkok, Thailand.

The MSTS ships *Comet, Transglobe,* and *Taurus* were assigned to RO/RO operations and were capable of transporting trailers, containers, and large or small military vehicles.[40] In addition to the ships, 2,400 trailers were assigned to the RO/RO operation. These trailers were meticulously tracked to ensure they were returned to the system. When the RO/RO vessels arrived in one of three South Vietnam ports, tractors from Transportation Corps units attached to local support commands

RO/RO OPERATIONS SITES



Map 33

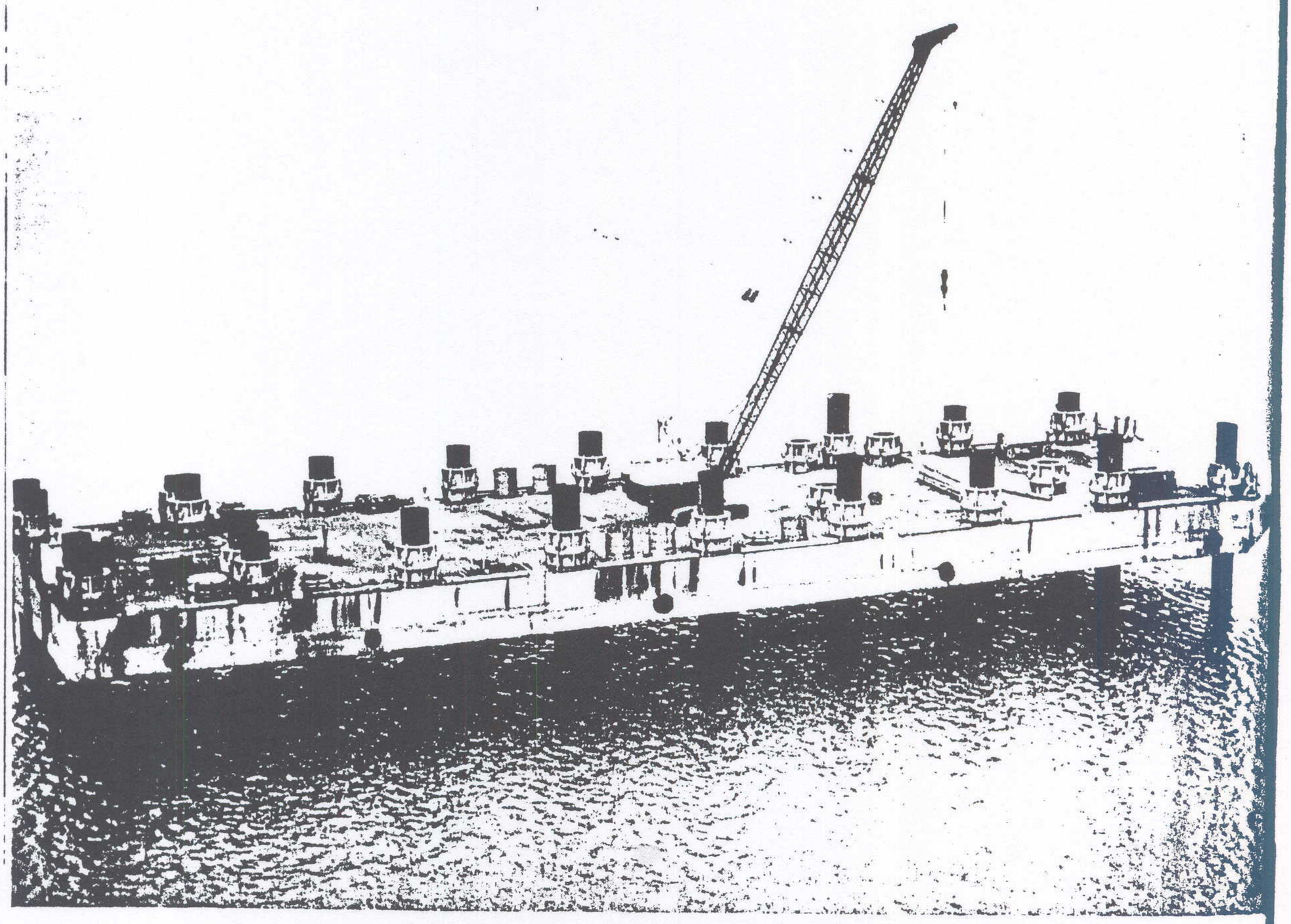


LCM-8 in support of the Vietnam intercoastal operations.

drove aboard to remove the trailers from the vessels. (see Map 33). At Qui Nhon, prime movers were furnished by the 8th Transportation Group; at Cam Rahn Bay, by the 500th Transportation Group; and in Saigon, by the 48th Transportation Group. Subordinate elements of the U.S. Army Trailer Service Agency located in South Vietnam controlled trailer disposition, making it an intertheater trailer transfer system. This eventually led to the development of trailer transfer points, which broke long main supply routes (MSRs) into manageable segments, provide driver rest stops, and provide a location to transfer loads when the responsibility for transporting that load changes.

LOTS OPERATIONS

In addition to fixed port operations, the Transportation Corps used several logistics-over-the-shore (LOTS) operations to move soldiers and supplies into



A Delong Pier in support of offshore discharge operations in Vietnam.

the theater. Two of these included the LOTS operation at Wunder Beach and Operation Highland in support of the 1st Cavalry Division.

After a brief tour in the Dominican Republic, the 159th Transportation Battalion was deployed to Vietnam to provide terminal service support. The battalion provided the Qui Nhon Support Command with the unique capability, to conduct LOTS operations. With the immense buildup of tactical forces in the I Corps Tactical Zone, another line of communication was required to alleviate the theater's overburdened fixed port operations. The members of the 159th Transportation Battalion set up and operated a LOTS operation on Wunder Beach, along the South China Sea just south of the Demilitarized Zone. Using lighter, amphibious, resupply, cargo (LARCV) from the 165th Transportation Company, and 60 ton LARC LX from the provisional LARC Company as lighterage,

Ships arrived with cargo loaded for multiple ports. Therefore, cargo had to be removed and stowed on the crowded beach. Several ships had insufficient lifting equipment, and the 60-ton floating crane was needed in several places at the same time. The open bay meant that heavy surf continually washed away the loading ramps, sand and laterite formed sand bars offshore further hampering operations of the landing craft.[43]

Landing Craft Utility loaded with troops plowed ashore at Blue Beach making more than 100 landings on the beach and unloading as many as 3,000 men a day. Once ashore, the men were immediately trucked to the helipad and flown to An Khe. Cargo was unloaded at Red Beach. Stevedores from the 71st, 117th, 119th, and 155th Terminal Service Companies operated the ships' winches and booms, loadedg the landing craft at sea and unloaded them on the beach. Once the cargo was delivered to Red Beach, massive convoys were formed. One of these convoys, the "Monsoon Express" transported the 1st Cavalry Division to its area of operations.

Operation Highland concluded on 28 September 1965, ending the first LOTS operation of its size in which troops were not staged in a debarkation area. During the operation, 38 million pounds of cargo and 16,000 soldiers were unloaded from ships and moved over the beach and into a camp 70 miles away.[44]

HIGHWAY TRANSPORT OPERATIONS

The requirement for cargo truck assets to clear the ports and move supplies to the user or a depot was immense. Trucks played a major role in providing combat support to numerous tactical operations. In addition to providing truck transport for the theater, the Transportation Corps, until late 1967, was responsible for its own second echelon-level maintenance. Transportation unit commanders had to manage the equivalent of 1990's organizational level and direct support level maintenance operations on a daily basis.

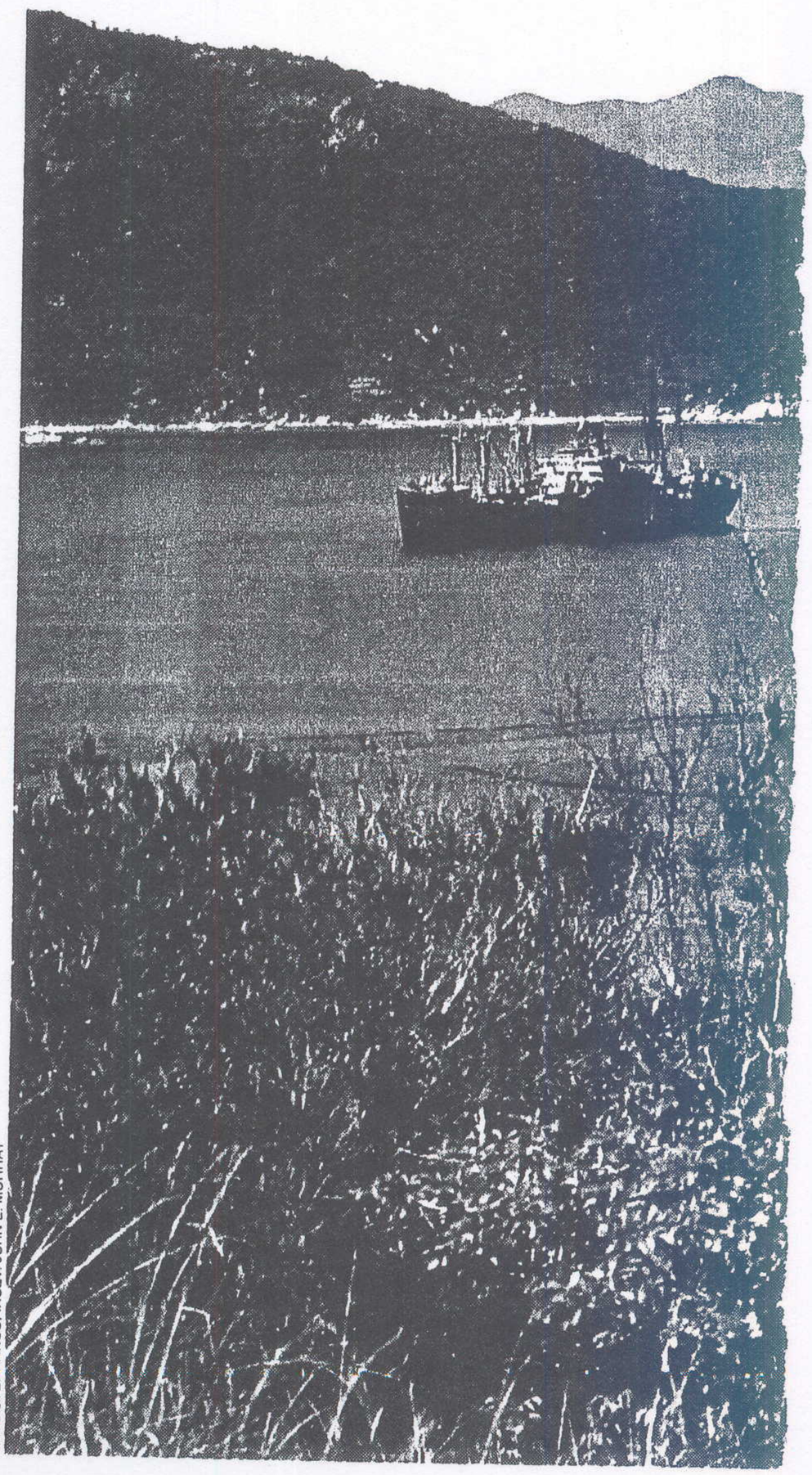
When U.S. combat troops arrived in Vietnam, there were few roads and those were merely gravel or dirt. Consequently, in mid-1965 most highway transport units were located at or near the major port areas. Until the arrival of additional transportation commands, all truck units in the theater were subordinate to the 4th Transportation Command. As the theater matured and support commands were established around the major ports of embarkation, transportation units were placed under the control of the support command in their geographical area. Initial truck transport was provided by three truck companies at Saigon and Cam Rahn Bay and a combination of medium truck companies (two cargo and one POL) at Qui Nhon. The three truck companies

Interview

BACK TO VIETNAM
REFLECTIONS ON A

'Twenty years ago I wanted a rematch,' says retired Army General John Murray. 'But now I look at America's involvement as a re-engagement in the interest of freedom.'

As told by
Maj. Gen. John E. Murray,
U.S. Army (ret.)



PAUL STEPHANUS; INSET: JOHN E. MURRAY

Major General John E. Murray served two tours in Vietnam during the war. In 1968-69, he commanded the Cam Ranh Bay port complex, and later, as deputy commander of the Saigon Support Command, he commanded the Saigon and Delta port complex of the 4th Terminal Command. He returned to Vietnam in 1972 to serve as the last chief of logistics for the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV). And until the fall of 1974, he served as the first defense attaché in Vietnam responsible for supporting the 1-million-man armed forces of South Vietnam.

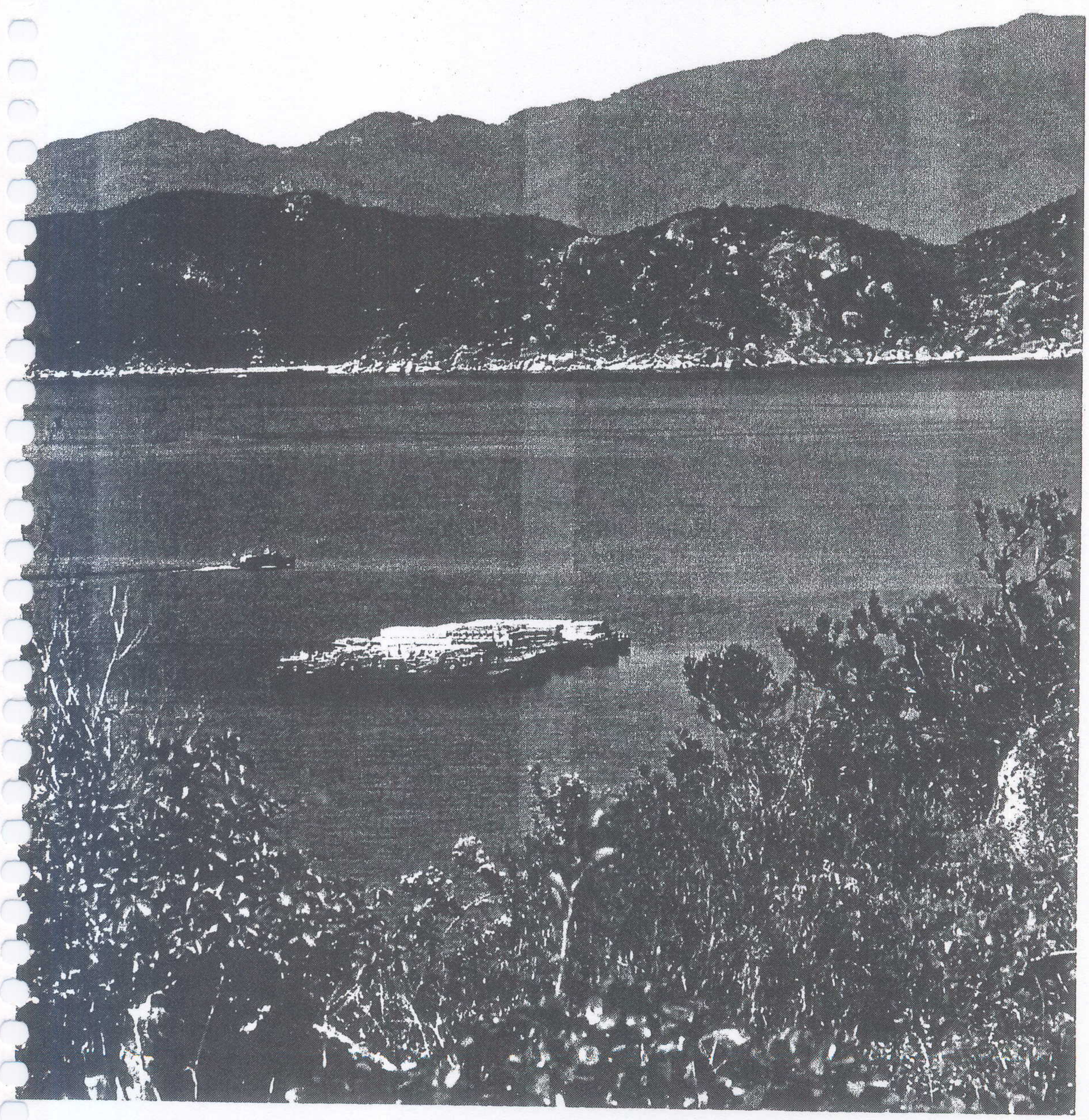
General Murray was lauded by President Richard Nixon for his prophetic forecast of America's fatal lost war. After his retirement, General Murray served as the first principal deputy assistant secretary of defense for special operations and low intensity conflict in President Ronald Reagan's administration. As an attorney authorized by the Treasury Department to negotiate executory contracts, he returned to Vietnam in 1993 and 1994. General Murray was interviewed for *Vietnam* Magazine by retired Army Colonel Robert L. Burke, who also served two tours in Vietnam.

Vietnam: Why did you go back to Vietnam?

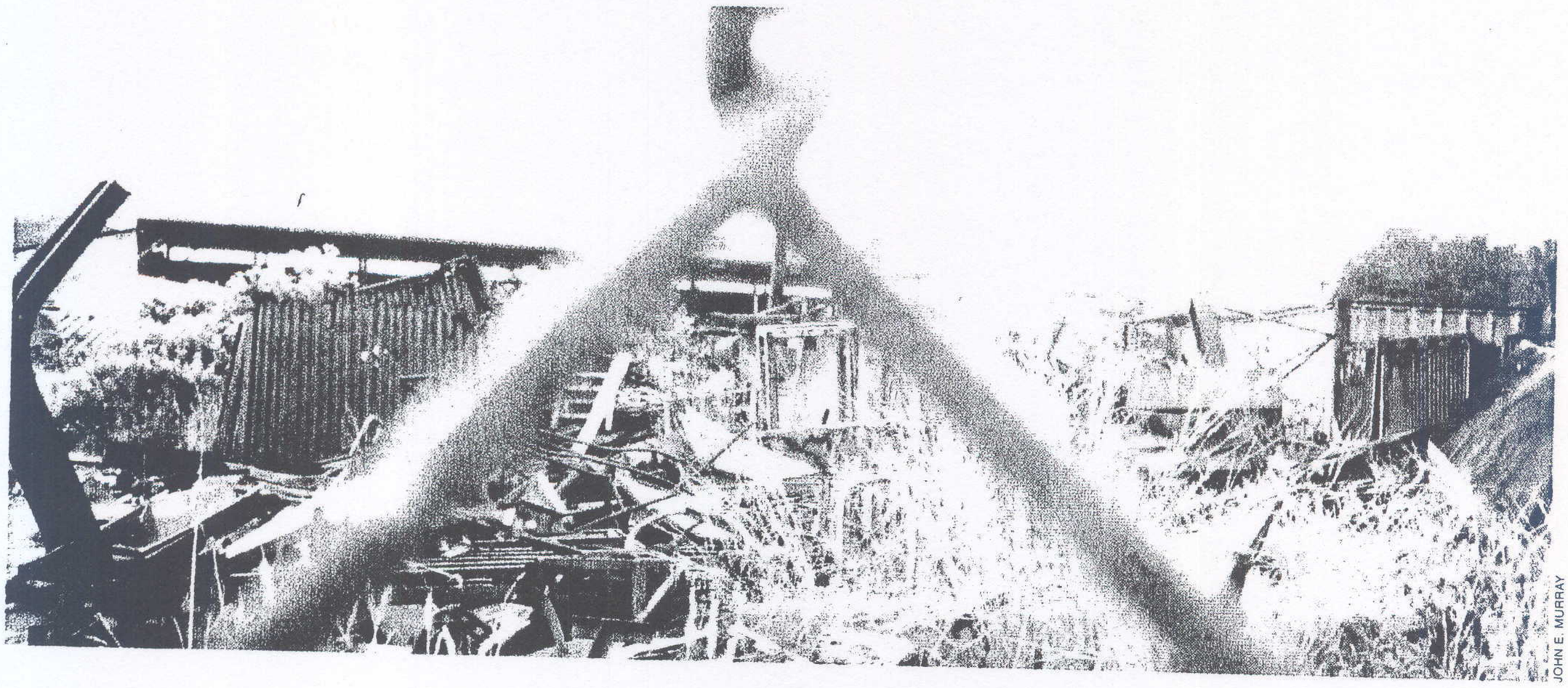
Murray: I had two reasons: a good reason and a real reason. The good reason was as an entrepreneur who knew the territory. The real reason was curiosity. Like most guys who spent their lives in the Army, I'm a masochist. Going through the pangs of a lost war is like thinking about a lost love. Nostalgia kicks in with a distillation of pleasure-pain like no other.

VN: You warned America in 1974 about what would happen if we failed, to our everlasting shame, to provide aid to the South Vietnamese, and you were right. I admire

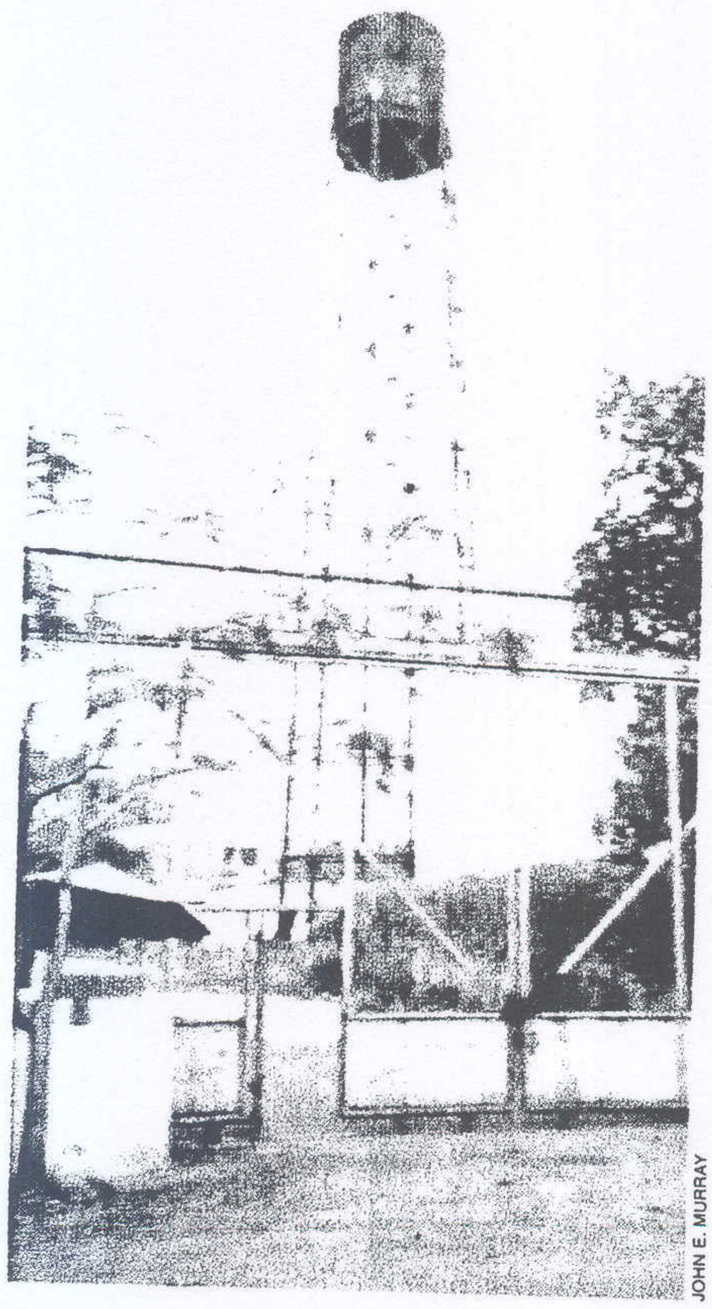
LOST WAR



A wartime photo of Cam Ranh Bay. According to U.S. Army Maj. Gen. John E. Murray (inset), who served as the commander of the Cam Ranh port complex and the last chief of logistics for the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV), "There used to be a lot of roaring and thunder about Cam Ranh. Now all is silence."



JOHN E. MURRAY



JOHN E. MURRAY

you for being able to go back and look at things with a fresh and realistic eye. What were your first impressions of modern Vietnam?

Murray: Well, the war is past, more than 20 years ago. The young soldiers don't know anything about it; they were just curious about Americans. As for the older officers, a surprising number spent their time being educated in Russia and in Eastern Europe. Only one of them was really interested in talking about it.

VN: With the Vietnamese military, I imagine you ran into some revisionist history. It must have been interesting to learn what they did that we didn't know about, and what they thought about us and the Cold War.

Murray: When I met with the active duty military and with the ex-military who were executives in state-owned enterprises, they had a well-disposed openness and good fellowship that we've all experienced in other wars. American soldiers aren't trained to hate, they're just trained to kill or, as logisticians, are part of a killing machine. Despite the propaganda we've heard through the years, most soldiers, including the Vietnamese, are the same way. In fact, we're glued to the same profession and like to talk about our interests in the business we share. Bankers like to talk with bankers, historians with historians, soldiers with soldiers.

VN: What did they say about the war?

Murray: At Cam Ranh Bay, I met the most interesting source and thoughtful character of all. As you know, Cam Ranh and its environs have a wealth of minerals, not the least of which is high-quality silica sand. A state-owned company processes, loads and exports this sand, close to 1 million metric tons a year. The director of this enterprise is engineer Tran Huy Hai. During the war he was in charge of construction and maintenance of the Ho Chi Minh Trail, or "Trails," as they more accurately call it.

VN: How did they handle the bombing?

Murray: That's the first question I asked him. And he gave me such a surprising answer that I asked him to repeat it, as I didn't believe my ears. Twice, he said (this is translated from his Vietnamese), "When the bombers came over, I looked up into that sky and was happy!" Then, as he explained: "The trail was not a trail. It was three trails. And the trail did not run, as far as possible, in one north-south direction for more than 1,000 kilometers. The three trails—one for tanks, one for trucks, one for troops—were like a snake. Each twisted and turned for more than 10,000 jungle-camouflaged kilometers. The effect of the bombings were of little consequence." He went on to point out, "The anopheles mosquito was far more disastrous than the bombing and produced far more casualties." Tran Huy Hai himself looks fragile. Malaria cost him a good part of his stomach. And he has kidney problems. Engineer Hai was well aware of the Westmoreland strategy of attrition. Even with the ample aid of the anopheles mosquito it failed, and it was not because of the reproductive capacity of Vietnamese society and their use of women as a womb factory. Hai said, "All the blasting, construction and maintenance of the Ho Chi Minh Trails was the work of women." And he emphasized the "all." He also said, "One hundred percent of the workers believed that the war was going to be won."

VN: Did you find that belief to be widespread among the military?

Murray: No, I didn't find that thought universal among the military. You get a mixed review. They speak openly, and I'd say the consensus is, as they put it, "If you Americans had kept it up (i.e., the 1972 Linebacker II bombing campaign of North Vietnam) for four more months, we would have lost." In the last U.S. air attack on the North, not a plane was lost. This was the first time that the United States did not lose a plane. Through electronic communications intercepts we learned that the North Vietnamese had run out of SAMs (surface-to-air missiles). They were virtually unarmed and unshielded from the massive aerial assault.

VN: If we knew that, why was the bombing halted?

Murray: Admiral Thomas H. Moorer, chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff (JCS), petitioned for the con-

cinuance of the bombing, but it was denied. That denial is one of the war's great what-ifs. One can only speculate what might have happened if the Joint Chiefs of Staff entreaty had been honored.

VN: I understand that General Bob Kingston and another former JCS chairman, General Jack Vessey, who returned to Vietnam six tirhes as the presidential envoy for POW-MIA (prisoner of war/missing in action) affairs, had a different view that they heard from former North Vietnamese minister of defense, General Vo Nguyen Giap.

Murray: I heard that too. According to General Kingston, Giap told them that one of the reasons they won the war and we lost it was that they "didn't have any computers." I thought of that when I recently attended an alumni meeting at the U.S. Army War College. Their new "Strategic Leadership" building has more than $25 million worth of computers.

VN: That $25 million in computers could never match the perplexing make-up of the chemistry, electronic connections and deviousness of the human mind. Add the new "information highway" to them and you still wouldn't match the intricacy of what goes on within Giap's skull. When he talked disdainfully about computers, Giap wasn't talking tongue in cheek.

Murray: I recall reading the famous February 1969 interview with Giap by Italian journalist Oriana Fallacci. "The United States...is waging war by arithmetical strategy," he said. "They ask their computers, make additions and subtractions, extract square roots, and on that they act."

VN: That certainly applied to Defense Secretary Robert S. McNamara and his "whiz kid" systems analysts.

Murray: All too true. As General Giap said in 1969, six years before the fall of Saigon, "Arithmetical strategy doesn't work here—if it did, they would have exterminated us already."

VN: Getting back to the present, what are the Vietnamese military people doing these days?

Murray: Their idea of a military-industrial complex makes our concept of it unimaginative and puny in comparison. The military is in big business. That's where the entrepreneurs are. The members of the military are the best-educated, trained, disciplined and organized. They have a collective eye on high-tech development and most anything that will turn a profit.

VN: In Asia they may talk about Confucius, but many of the people follow George Bernard Shaw's adage, "Money is the root of all virtue."

Murray: Exactly so. For example, during my first trip back to Vietnam in 1993, a courteous, correct, young and sharp lieutenant colonel in uniform introduced himself in good English. He asked me right off if I wanted to go to Long Binh.

VN: That was the site of one of our largest supply depots. He must have known you were a logistician during the war.

Murray: They knew my past. And they probably have a dossier on you, too, since you were one of the producers of the "Five O'Clock Follies" (the daily MACV press conferences).

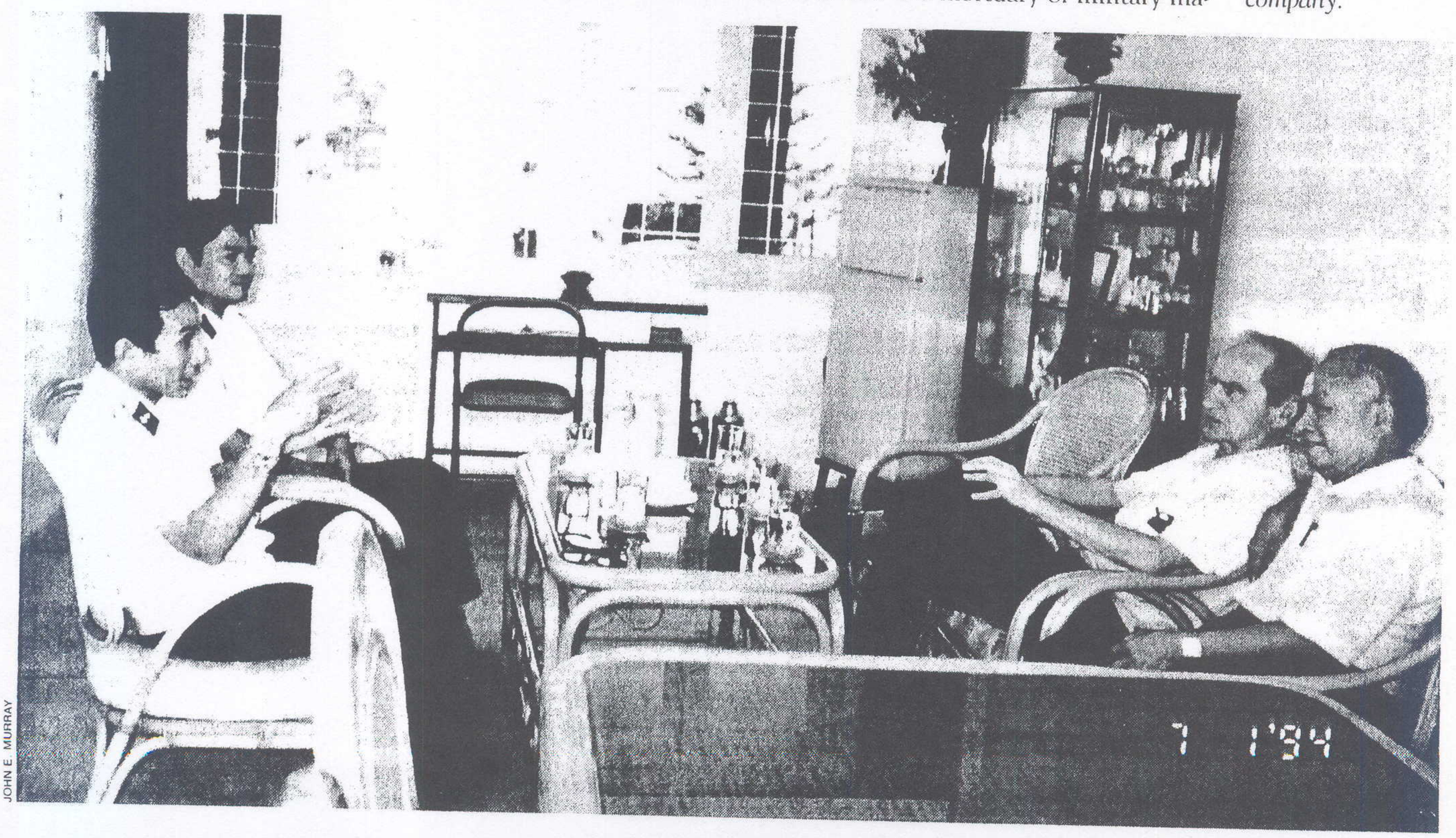
VN: Has much changed since the war?

Murray: I suspect that the highway from old Saigon (now officially Ho Chi Minh City) to Vung Tau is soon going to look like our New Jersey Turnpike on the outskirts of New York. And the same is true of the road to Long Binh and Bien Hoa. The landscape that we knew is disappearing. Our Army and Air Force logistics bastions at Bien Hoa and Long Binh are being merged into a huge industrial-zone complex with extensions for light and heavy industry.

VN: Did you recognize the old supply complex at Long Binh?

Murray: At the Long Binh gate I suddenly realized I had never seen it before. When I was MACV chief of logistics during the war, I was always choppered in and out of the complex. The silence and inactivity there was such a contrast to my memories of the fluttering helicopters, rumbling trucks, scurrying jeeps and the radio and music from PX stereos and the troop noise and bustle. I had to keep telling myself, "This is Long Binh." What it is now is a mortuary of military ma-

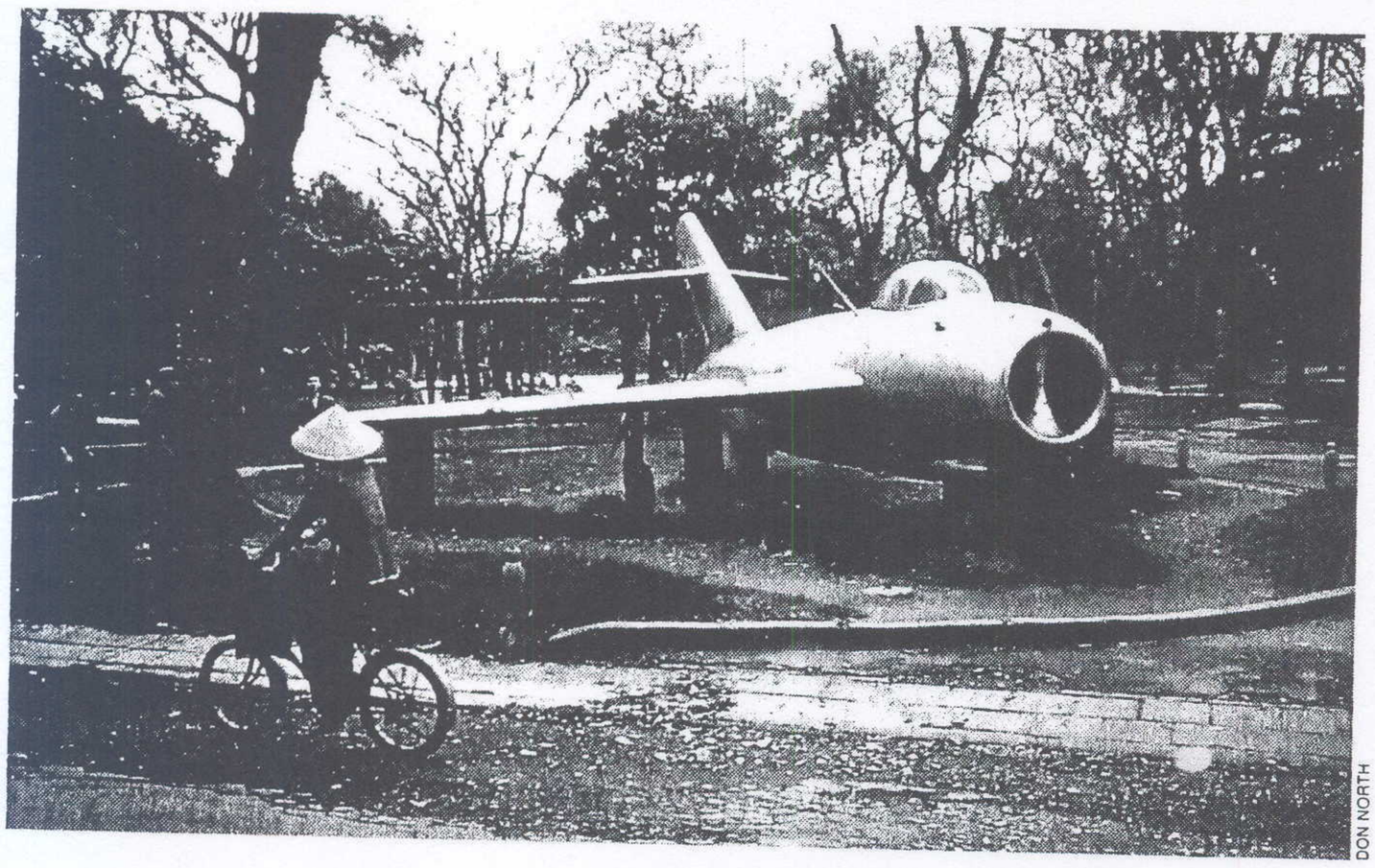
Opposite page: *Two views of the former MACV complex near Saigon (now officially Ho Chi Minh City), taken during General Murray's recent trips to Vietnam. Murray was allowed to tour Long Binh, formerly the largest in-country supply depot, but not the MACV complex.* ***Below:*** *From left, Vietnamese Navy Captain Vu Tri Vien and an unidentified officer meet with Murray and Pham Quang Khai, the president of a trading company.*



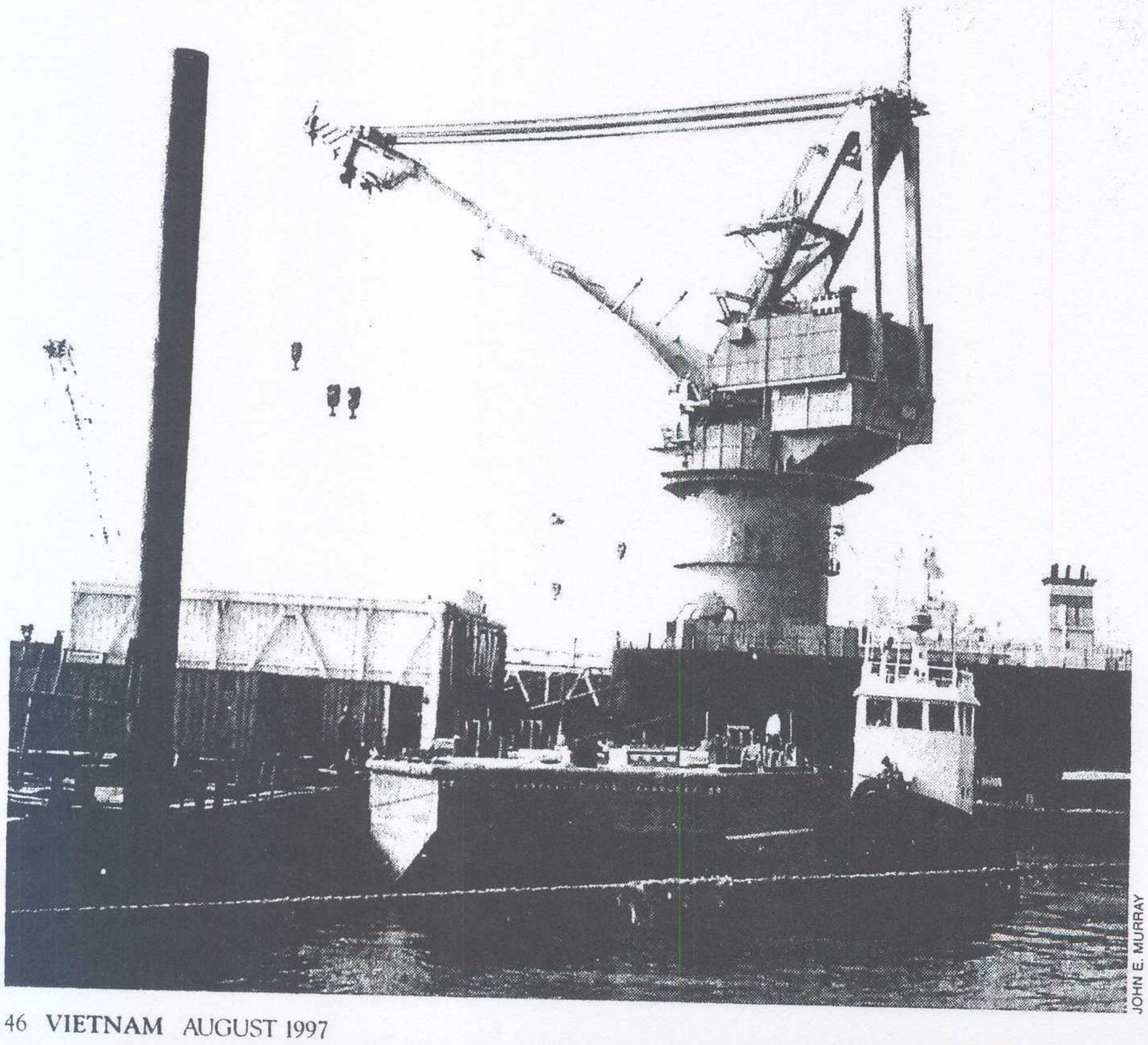
JOHN E. MURRAY

chinery and all its various body parts, strewn about, unburied—along with U.S. Army and Air Force conex boxes, all chained and padlocked. Nothing is moving. But in a ludicrous way, it still was American. All it needs to look like what we see on the outskirts of big American cities is more car carcasses and a junkyard dog. I was introduced to the commander, an army colonel who refused to give his name. I asked him why not, and he said, "You will give it to [President Bill] Clinton." It made me realize the distance in understanding between our two countries. All of their top people are military, and they just did not understand that the chances of a retired general officer in Washington meeting the president is about the same as meeting a penguin in the Gobi Desert.

VN: I guess the Vietnamese look at us as we are reflected in their own mirror, and we do the same when we look at them—even if both our mirrors are cracked.



DON NORTH



JOHN E. MURRAY

Murray: The image they get of us may also be due to the fact that Channel One in Saigon is CNN. In a country whose officials don't have to run for election, they wonder at how much the president gets around and talks to the common people. The president is a good advertisement for American enterprise.

VN: I know enough about the Vietnamese to think that they didn't drive you out to Long Binh to look at the scenery.

Murray: True. A tiny woman in black pajamas was called forth. She was custodian of a bunch of big keys that nearly weighed more than she did. She unlocked a large padlock on one of our old warehouses. I found myself doing a double take. It was nightmarish. Without the old neon lights, the warehouse was dark, and it took a moment for my eyes to adjust. Among the piles of Marine gear were about 25 familiar-looking, footlocker-type wooden boxes, with 100 M-15 rifles to a box. I was asked to select a box and weapon at random. I did, and it was cosmolined just as we had left it and in good shape.

VN: They wanted to sell our old guns back to us?

Murray: Yes, but it was more than that. The M-15s were just a teaser. They offered 50,000 M-16 rifles at $176 a copy.

VN: That's a helluva price for old M-16s. The M-16A2 model we have today has twice the range and none of the problems that plagued the original models. And that's not a competitive price. I understand the Chinese sell AK-47s for $50.

Murray: True enough. But with our restrictions on semiautomatic rifles, the sale wouldn't go through to the United States even if the price was right. There also could be some legal problems, because when the United States issued those weapons to the South Vietnamese, we kept a reversionary interest where they must be returned to us if not used for the purpose intended. But I'm sure they'd claim they were legitimate spoils of war.

VN: Isn't that ironic. And what chutzpah! Blandly offering us a chance to buy back what they took, and at exorbitant prices at that. Isn't that like a burglar making a deal with someone he's robbed?

Murray: Well, that's war. It makes a lot of actions legal, especially if you win it.

VN: What about the other wealth we left? Do they want to sell that, too? I'd love to have my old jeep back. It had a winning personality and would revolt against another driver.

Murray: Hardly. Jeeps are the floozies of vehicles. They'll take love wherever they find it. They're old and ugly and take harassment without complaint. Our old flatbeds and deuce-and-a-halfs (2½-ton trucks) are running around the streets, like the profligate jeeps, in surprisingly good shape. But you know how the Vietnamese defer and cater to ancients.

VN: As the former commander of the 4th Terminal Command, including Saigon's "Newport," did you get a chance to visit any of your old haunts during your recent visits?

Left: *Despite recent efforts to improve Vietnam's transportation system, the ox carts are still in motion. Here, rice dries on Route 1 in close proximity to ox dung.* **Opposite, above:** *In Hanoi, a woman bicycles near a reminder of Vietnam's not-so-distant militant past—a Soviet-built MiG-17F, set up in a public park.* **Opposite, below:** *The 100-ton floating crane left behind by the U.S. military at Newport still swings its big hook today near the shallow-draft quay.*

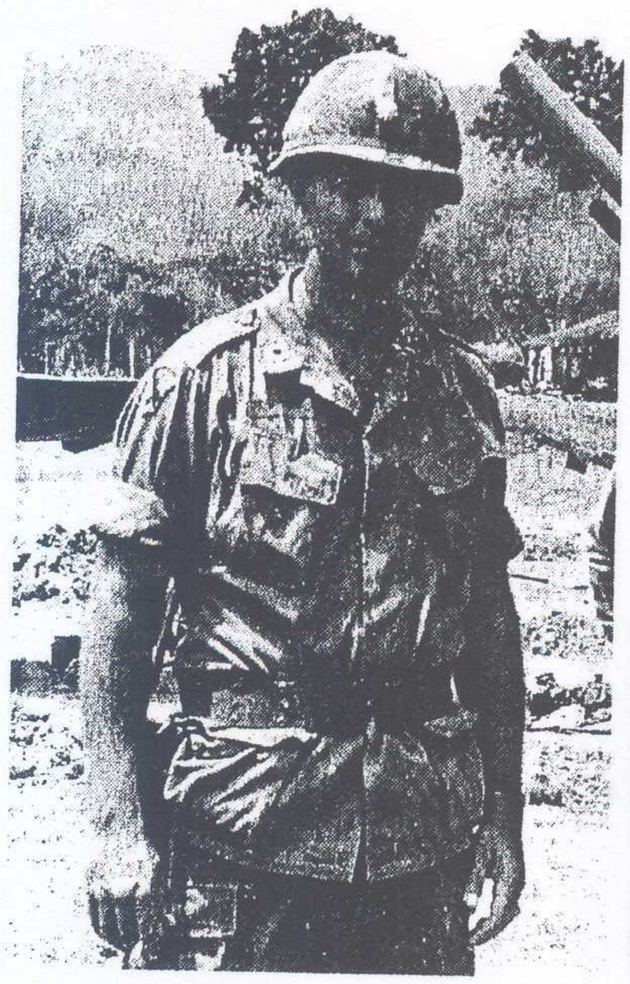
Murray: A bright navy captain, Vu Tri Vien, and his naval personnel run what we built, and it is still called Newport. It's another one of their military's commercial enterprises. And it's as busy as it was in our day, clogged with container ships. He gratefully pointed out to me, as if I had been the main donator on behalf of the U.S. Army, the 100-ton floating crane still swinging its big hook near the shallow-draft quay where we used to quickly offload the roll-on-roll-off ships carrying self-loading wheeled and track vehicles. Vien surprised me when he said, "You can help me out." I said, "How's that?" He said: "You left everything to keep a port going but the plans you used to construct it. We want to put in a 300-ton mobile crane, but we've got to know the depth of the pilings. We need to know how deep they go down." So I checked with General Jack Fuson, who was in command when Newport was built. "Oh, yeah," he said, "I was there when they sunk the pilings. The engineers couldn't reach bottom. So they put in what they called 'floating piles' that went down 150 to 170 feet." I faxed the information to Captain Vien and later returned to receive a great welcome.

VN: You also commanded the logistical complex at Cam Ranh Bay. Did you get a chance to see that facility on your trip as well?

Murray: Cam Ranh was startling for its emptiness and quiet. Nothing was moving on the water or in the sky. The placidity of the place was riveting. Here was one of the finest natural harbors in the world. At one time we had 63 oceangoing ships in the bay. It's where our tankers used to feed fuel to the Quartermaster's tank farms and pipelines. And here, in the inner harbor, with the mountains screening it from typhoons, is where our engineers built our theater pivot for the first intermodal container system. And the engineers brought in our mobile DeLong piers where Sea-Land container ships tied up. Here's where the container revolution started. There used to be a lot of roaring and thunder about Cam Ranh. Now all is silence.

VN: I had heard that the Russian navy was using the Cam Ranh Bay complex.

Murray: Cam Ranh is where the Russian fleet coaled



Above: U.S. Army Colonel Robert L. Burke, who interviewed General Murray, served as the last MACV chief of information. Right: From left, Vietnamese Navy Captain Lam Quang Thuoc, Khai and Murray pose outside the Saigon port offices. Unlike Cam Ranh Bay, where Russian warships and Vietnamese naval vessels sit largely idle, Saigon's harbor is clogged with container ships today.

JOHN E. MURRAY; LEFT: ROBERT L. BURKE

up in 1904 before it sailed off to be sunk by the Japanese fleet in the Tsushima Straits, signaling to the world that Japan was a power to be reckoned with. Now there is no movement from the Russian subs and warships or the Vietnamese navy. They are unbelievably static. At Ban Hoi, the shallow commercial part of the bay, I boarded a single Russian rustbucket under Korean charter. It was loaded with 12,000 tons of that fine silicon sand used to make glassware.

VN: Are there other signs of Russian presence?

Murray: Yes, but you have to look for them. The Russians have a joint venture to produce oil in the Vietnamese White Dragon field in the South China Sea. It's the only field that's producing. The Russians have built the dams and power plants and provide the supervision of the production of much-needed electricity and its transmission. At Vung Tau, the Russians put in a trim, hydrofoil, water-bus express, which speeds up the river to old Saigon without interference from the traffic-infested roads. I conducted a one-day review of the ships that were unloading, loading and waiting for berths at Saigon. There were 53 ships. Twenty-six percent were Russian. At the former South Vietnamese navy Bonson shipyard, 70 percent of the ships worked on are Russian or Ukrainian. So with oil, electricity, ships and ship repair, the Russians are very much in evidence in Vietnam.

VN: Speaking of economic infrastructure, how much has Vietnam improved its internal road and transportation nets?

Murray: The ox carts are still in motion. Vietnam is about the size of New Mexico. To put things in perspective, Vietnam has about 66,000 miles of road. New Mexico has 61,000. But all of New Mexico's roads are hard-surfaced, standard concrete or asphalt. Only 12 percent of the Vietnam mileage is all or partly asphalt, and much of that was laid by American civilian and military engineers.

VN: I recall that the civilian RMK-BRJ construction consortium (Raymond International, Morrison-Knudson International, Brown & Root and J.A. Jones Construction) laid enough asphalt to build a 5,000 mile roadway from Saigon to Paris.

Murray: There's a lot of unsung heroes among our logistics legacies to Vietnam. While it isn't recorded on any Vietnam Wall, RMK-BRJ had 52 civilian employees killed in action and another 248 casualties due to enemy action. The media makes a great deal about how we supposedly wrecked the country with our bombs. What is not mentioned is how much we did to improve it and how our improvements are now used as its infrastructure base.

VN: I understand that, as part of Vietnam's infrastructure improvements, there is a program underway to use the wartime Ho Chi Minh Trails for peacetime economic development.

Murray: Lenin once defined communism as "socialism plus electricity," and if the South needs anything to keep its gross domestic product rising, it's electric power. There's a new development that is putting the country together using the Ho Chi Minh Trails down the mountains of the Chaine Annamitique as the route. It is a new power grid running from the Hoa Binh dam west of Hanoi and for almost 1,500 kilometers southward. And it's up-to-date. Optic-fiber lines run jointly with the power lines to provide both electricity and telecommunications.

VN: I know you were bitter, as I was, about the way the war turned out. Did you have any qualms about going back?

Murray: Twenty years ago, I would have answered the question differently. Twenty years ago, I wanted a rematch. But now I look at America's involvement as a re-engagement in the interest of freedom. Freedom is indivisible. The freedom of the marketplace is contagious. It may be more successful than the B-52s. If I read economist John Kenneth Galbraith's 1994 *A Journey Through Economic Time* correctly, what he calls "The Uncertain Miracle" will probably happen. It will happen in Vietnam.

VN: Thanks for your insights on Vietnam. To some Americans, Vietnam was a nightmare. To some, a tropical dream world. To others, a terrible betrayal. You have given us a snapshot of current reality. □

U.S. Army Colonel Robert L. Burke (ret.) writes from Orange, Va. He served two tours in Vietnam, including a tour as the last MACV chief of information in 1972-73. Director of the Pentagon press office from 1974 to '77, Colonel Burke is now a writer and consultant.

From John Knox

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Dictionary of the Vietnar

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...eration Rolling Thunder* ...into Cambodia and Laos— ...belligerent from using its ... not obligated to respect ... phrase during the Vietnam

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...only used euphemisms used ...ted considerably before ...oader than and different ...ons to be destroyed by aerial. ...used to designate "un- ... were subject to destruc- ...ion) continuously failed, a ...elocating the inhabitants ...Hamlet,* and destroying ... the phrase "zippo war."* ...in that innocent civilians ...r erroneous information

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Samuel Freeman

...lopment Support* paci- ...Hamlets were one of a ...ng with Strategic Hamlets* ...Life Hamlets), which ...ntended to deprive the ...civilians from the coun- ...Development (RD) cadres ... teach them about the ...and build their loyalty. In ...with corruption. It ignored ... of their ancestors. To ...equate or unavailable. ...ilitary needs, and security ...present and not corrupt. ...were dependent on and ...ily constructed in Vietcong

areas, the hamlets were usually infiltrated. In sum, the program was poorly conceived and even more poorly executed.

Source: Larry E. Cable, *Conflict of Myths: The Development of American Counter-insurgency Doctrine and the Vietnam War*, 1986.

Samuel Freeman

NEWPORT

The major American troop buildup between 1965 and 1968 required enormous logistical resources. By 1968 nearly 45 percent of all American military personnel in South Vietnam were support troops, and more than five million tons of goods were shipped into the country. Because of inadequate port facilities, American merchant ships in 1965 usually had a twenty-day waiting period to be unloaded. To eliminate that backlog, the United States constructed major deep-water ports at Cam Ranh Bay,* Da Nang,* Qui Nhon,* and Newport, near Saigon.* The port at Newport just outside Saigon relieved the congestion there after its construction was completed in 1967. Newport handled more than 150,000 tons of supplies each month. It was under the direction of the army transportation corps.

Sources: Carroll H. Dunn, *Base Development in South Vietnam, 1965–1970*, 1972; Edwin B. Hooper, *Mobility, Support, Endurance: A Story of Naval Operational Logistics in the Vietnam War, 1965–1968*, 1972.

NEW YORK TIMES CO. v *UNITED STATES*, 403 U.S. 713 (1971)

In this decision, the U.S. Supreme Court upheld the First Amendment right of the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post* to publish excerpts from a U.S. Defense Department study marked Top Secret and entitled *History of U.S. Decision-Making Process on Vietnam Policy*, popularly known as the Pentagon Papers.* The *New York Times* began to publish excerpts from the Pentagon Papers on Sunday, June 13. On the evening of June 14, after White House consultation, U.S. Attorney General John Mitchell asked the *New York Times* to stop publishing excerpts from the Pentagon Papers on the ground that publication violated the Espionage Act. The *Times* refused to comply, saying "that it is in the interest of the people of this country to be informed of the material contained in this series of articles." The Department of Justice obtained a temporary restraining order against the *Times*. The newspaper appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court on June 24. While the *Times* was restrained from publishing excerpts from the Pentagon Papers, the *Washington Post* began to publish portions of the study. The *Post* distributed extracts to some 345 client publications through the *Washington Post-Los Angeles Times* News Service. The Department of Justice obtained a temporary restraining order against the *Post*, and then appealed to the U.S. Supreme Court when the U.S. Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia ruled that the *Post* had a constitutional right to publish the material. Extracts from the Pentagon Papers were also published by the *Boston Globe*, the *Los Angeles Times*, the *St. Louis Post-Dispatch*, the *Christian Science Monitor*, and a number of other newspapers during June 22–29. The Department

6 could cruise at 143 mph. The aircraft could be armed with a variety of weapons, including twin machine guns, the M–75 grenade launcher capable of firing 220 rounds per minute of 40mm shells, and the 7.62mm six-barrel machine gun capable of firing 2,000 rounds per minute.

With its relatively high speed and maneuverability, the LOH–6 made an excellent flying command center, and was widely used for convoy control and as an airborne artillery spotter. The LOH–6 was also widely used as a gunship* in support of ground operations. Overall, the LOH–6 proved a versatile addition to the helicopter war in Vietnam.

Source: *Jane's All the World's Aircraft: 1966–1967*, 1967.

Nolan J. Argyle

LONG BINH

Long Binh was a major United States Army* supply facility constructed just outside the city of Bien Hoa,* about 20 miles north of Saigon.* The headquarters of II Field Force Vietnam* and the III ARVN Corps were located at Long Binh, as was the Long Binh Jail—the "LBJ." Vietcong* attacked the Long Binh complex during the Tet Offensive* in 1968, the Post-Tet Offensive in 1969, and again, successfully, during the Final Offensive (*see* Ho Chi Minh Campaign) of 1975.

Sources: Al Santoli, *Everything We Had: An Oral History of the Vietnam War by Thirty-Three American Soldiers Who Fought It*, 1981; Shelby L. Stanton, *The Rise and Fall of an American Army: U.S. Ground Troops in Vietnam, 1965–1973*, 1985.

LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE PATROLS

Long Range Reconnaissance Patrols (LRRPs, pronounced "Lurps") were developed in response to specific combat conditions in Vietnam—a war without "lines" or "fronts" against a guerrilla army in rugged jungle terrain. The Vietcong* were found only when they wanted to be—when they initiated combat; therefore, finding Vietcong or North Vietnamese Army* (NVA) forces tended to be more difficult than defeating them. LRRPs were developed to overcome these problems. LRRPs were small units—ten to twelve men, although sometimes as large as a platoon* (about forty men)—patrolling a few days to a couple of weeks at a time. They neither occupied nor established fixed positions and usually were not resupplied. They traveled light, carried a minimum of food, and foraged off the land. To facilitate extended days in the field, lightweight freeze-dried LRRP rations were developed. They were preferred over traditional C-rations because they were lighter, less bulky, and tasted better.

Generally, LRRPs avoided enemy contact. Small in number and operating independent of larger units, LRRPs were not equipped to engage the enemy. Their missions included collecting intelligence on Vietcong-NVA base camps, supply areas, trail networks and troop movements, bomb damage assessments, fire direction, capturing soldiers for interrogation, rescuing downed flight crews, laying booby traps,* and sabotage.

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Sources: Harry G. Summ
Green Berets at War, 1985; (
Jr., *The Army and Vietnam*,

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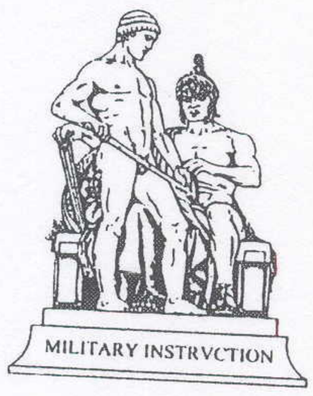

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UNITED STATES ARMY
WASHINGTON D.C., 1997

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The Logistics Environment in Vietnam

Introduction. Lt. Gen. Joseph M. Heiser, Jr., Commander of the 1st Logistical Command in Vietnam, describes the early planning and execution of logistical support for the buildup in Vietnam in 1965. He focuses on the theater level and outlines the principles on which the logistical buildup in Vietnam was based as well as the constraints which affected logistical planning.

To understand the problems and conditions that characterized the logistical effort in Vietnam, one must keep in mind the sequence of events during the early buildup period. The speed and magnitude of the escalation of U.S. combat troop deployments in response to enemy action and pressure proceeded faster than a logistic base could be developed to support these units. The Republic of Vietnam had a low level of industrialization. Modern logistic facilities were limited or nonexistent. The in-country logistic system supporting the South Vietnamese Armed Forces was incapable of supporting major U.S. forces. The small, highly fragmented system supporting the U.S. advisory effort could do no more than provide the skeleton for a later logistical system. The enemy controlled the major part of South Vietnam, either by direct occupation or through terror tactics. The principal terrain features as well as land and water arteries were either under enemy control, or subject to the constant threat of interdiction.

Logistics planning was further complicated by the fact that logistic troops and units were deployed at about the same rate as tactical forces rather than in advance of them as desired for the timely establishment of an adequate logistic base. The chronology of U.S. unit arrivals in the Republic of Vietnam shows a continuous inflow of detachment- and company-size logistical support units during practically every month of the period spring 1965 to summer 1966. In addition, logistics units were deployed on a Technical Service basis (Table of Organization and Equipment) whereas the new Combat Service to the Army doctrine had already been approved, thus causing much agony. Meanwhile, major

Reproduced from Joseph M. Heiser, Jr., *Logistic Support*, Vietnam Studies (Washington, D.C.: Department of the Army, 1974), pp. 8–27.

tactical forces, to include the bulk of the 1st Infantry Division; the 1st Cavalry Division (Airmobile); the 173d Airborne Brigade; the 1st Brigade, 101st Airborne Division; and the 3d Brigade, 25th Infantry Division (which was later to become the 3d Brigade of the 4th Infantry Division) were in-country and engaged in battle by January 1966. The major part of the 25th Infantry Division had arrived by April of that year and brigade-size elements arrived practically every month during the period August–December 1966, to include elements of the 4th, 25th, and 9th Infantry Divisions, as well as the 11th Armored Cavalry Regiment, and the separate 19th and 199th Light Infantry Brigades. The remaining brigade of the 9th Infantry Division arrived in January 1967. Meanwhile, further deployment decisions were made, and the Americal Division, the 101st Airborne Division (-) , and other units appeared in Vietnam during the period September 1967 to March 1968.

Logistic Concept (1965) and In-Country Planning

As early as 1962, the need for a centralized U.S. logistical organization in South Vietnam was foreseen by Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, Lieutenant General Paul D. Harkins. The proposal was disapproved, however by Commander in Chief U.S. Army Pacific and Commander in Chief Pacific, who felt that the requirement was not justified at that time. The idea was revived in August 1964 by the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, J–4, who believed that the current and future situation would require a logistical command to support activities in South Vietnam. Accordingly, he saw that a plan was prepared which included the prompt introduction of a logistical construction capability. On 21 December 1964, the Joint Chiefs of Staff endorsed the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, plan and recommended that 230 men be initially dispatched to South Vietnam to form a logistical command as soon as possible. Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara approved the plan in principle, but stated that additional justification was needed, particularly for the engineer construction group. However, he felt that the subject was of sufficient importance to send a special representative to South Vietnam, and on 31 January 1965, a group from the Office of the Secretary of Defense arrived in Saigon. After four days of conferences, this group recommended the establishment of a logistical command with an initial strength of 350 men. The establishment of an engineer construction group, not recommended initially, was approved in April as planning for a further buildup developed.

On 25 February 1965, the Secretary of Defense approved the introduction of a logistical planning group in the Republic of Vietnam consisting of 17 officers and 21 enlisted men. Colonel Robert W. Duke was enroute to take command of the 9th Logistical Command in Thailand. He was intercepted in Hawaii and ordered to the Republic of Vietnam to take charge of the planning group. He arrived in Saigon on 6 March 1965. The balance of the officers and enlisted men for the planning group arrived in Saigon during the last two weeks of March 1965. On 1 April 1965, the 1st Logistical Command was activated in Saigon by Commander

in Chief U.S. Army Pacific General Order, using the personnel of the logistical planning group as its initial strength.

Prior to this time, logistical support in Vietnam had been fragmented, with the Army providing only Class II and IV items which were peculiar to the Army, Class V items used by the Army aviation units, and maintenance of vehicles, armament, and instrument calibration by a small Direct Support shop in Saigon. The rest of the support was provided by the Navy through Headquarters Support Activity, Saigon because the Navy had been designated as the executive agency responsible for supporting the Military Assistance and Advisory Groups and missions in Southeast Asia.

The mission of the 1st Logistical Command as developed by Colonel Duke and the initial small planning group was, in broad terms, that the 1st Logistical Command would assume responsibility for all logistical support in Vietnam, less that which was peculiar to the Air Force or Navy. This initial mission included procurement, medical, construction, engineer, finance and accounting of all U.S. Army forces in-country, except Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, advisors; and excluded communications, aviation, and military police support which were retained by U.S. Army Vietnam (the Army component command under Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and over the 1st Logistical Command). Requirements beyond direct support and general support maintenance capability were to be retrograded to Okinawa. Subsequent add-on missions were planned to be put into effect as the capability became available. These add-on missions were to: assume support of Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, advisors from Headquarters Commandant, Military Assistance Command Vietnam, a task accomplished on 1 September 1965, phase-out the Navy supply activity in Saigon—The 1st Logistical Command started assuming Headquarters Support Activity Saigon functions in September 1965, and completed the mission in March 1966—and assume common item support for all U.S. forces in South Vietnam.

The 1st Logistical Command was authorized direct communications with U.S. Army Ryukyu Islands (Okinawa) on logistic matters. Logistic requirements were placed there. After screening, requirements were filled or passed to U.S. Army Pacific. It either filled them or passed them to Army Materiel Command. This proved to be very unsatisfactory due to inadequate electrical communications with Okinawa, lack of adequate stocks and personnel resources in Okinawa as well as U.S. Army Pacific, and the many headquarters in the logistic chain. Through this chain there was a loss in excess of 40 percent of all requisitions submitted in the initial stages of the buildup. A combat area should be able to submit requisitions directly to Continental U.S.[;] Continental U.S. could then direct shipment to the combat area from the nearest source to that area having the required items in stock.

The 1st Logistical Command, in coordination with Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, operational planning, developed its own logistic concept for South Vietnam. The plan provided for two major base depots and five support commands. The seas and rivers were initially to be the main supply routes within

Vietnam. However, a change over to road and rail would take place when the tactical situation permitted. Each support command would provide all logistic support on an area basis and have a 15 day stockage. Depots would have a 45 day stockage. The Saigon Depot would support the Vung Tau and Can Tho Support Commands. The Cam Ranh Bay Depot would support the Nha Trang, Qui Nhon and Da Nang Support Commands.

A two depot concept was considered essential due to the vulnerability of the Saigon River and port to Viet Cong action and the limited port capacity. Vung Tau was considered an alternate to the Saigon port in the event of loss of Saigon or blockage of the Saigon River. Cam Ranh Bay was selected as the other base depot and port due to its excellent deep water harbor, the existing pier, its central location, and U.S. capability to secure the area from Viet Cong attack.

This plan by the 1st Logistical Command was implemented with only two changes; the Marines were landed at Da Nang and, by Commander in Chief Pacific direction, the Navy was given the responsibility for both tactical and logistical operations in I Corps. The Da Nang Support Command was eliminated from the 1st Logistical Command plan. It was reinstated in 1968. The anticipated scale of tactical operations in the Delta area of IV Corps did not materialize, so the Can Tho Support Command was not activated. The IV Corps was supported by the Vung Tau Support Command by sea and air.

The original plan for the refinement of a logistical plan in an orderly fashion followed by a deliberate and orderly implementation never came to pass. Instead it quickly turned into a concurrent planning and implementation process. The Secretary of Defense approved at the 9–11 April 1965 Hawaiian Conference an Army Combat force of over 33,000 troops with the first combat troops (173rd Airborne Brigade from Okinawa) to arrive in South Vietnam on 21 April 1965. This was just the beginning of the accelerated buildup. After the April conference there were a series of other force level planning conferences in Hawaii, at which Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, would request forces that were required. However, the number of troops approved by the office of the Secretary of Defense was always less than the number requested by Military Assistance Command, Vietnam.

U.S. Forces were built up in an imbalanced manner. Continued enemy pressure on the beleaguered government of South Vietnam and manpower ceilings combined to cause the logistics base to be inadequate in relation to the total force level.

Each time a new ceiling was established it was announced as a final ceiling and could not be changed. Therefore, all planning for future operations had to be based on this number, including requests by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to Congress for supporting funds. This series of "final ceilings," and the decision not to call up a large number of Reserve Component units, established a pattern of "too late planning," and "too late determination of requirements" that affected every facet of the military establishment from draft quotas to administration, training, equipping, procurement by Army Materiel Command, Defense Supply Agency, and Government Services Administration. This resulted in a drawdown of reserve and project stocks to an unacceptable level.

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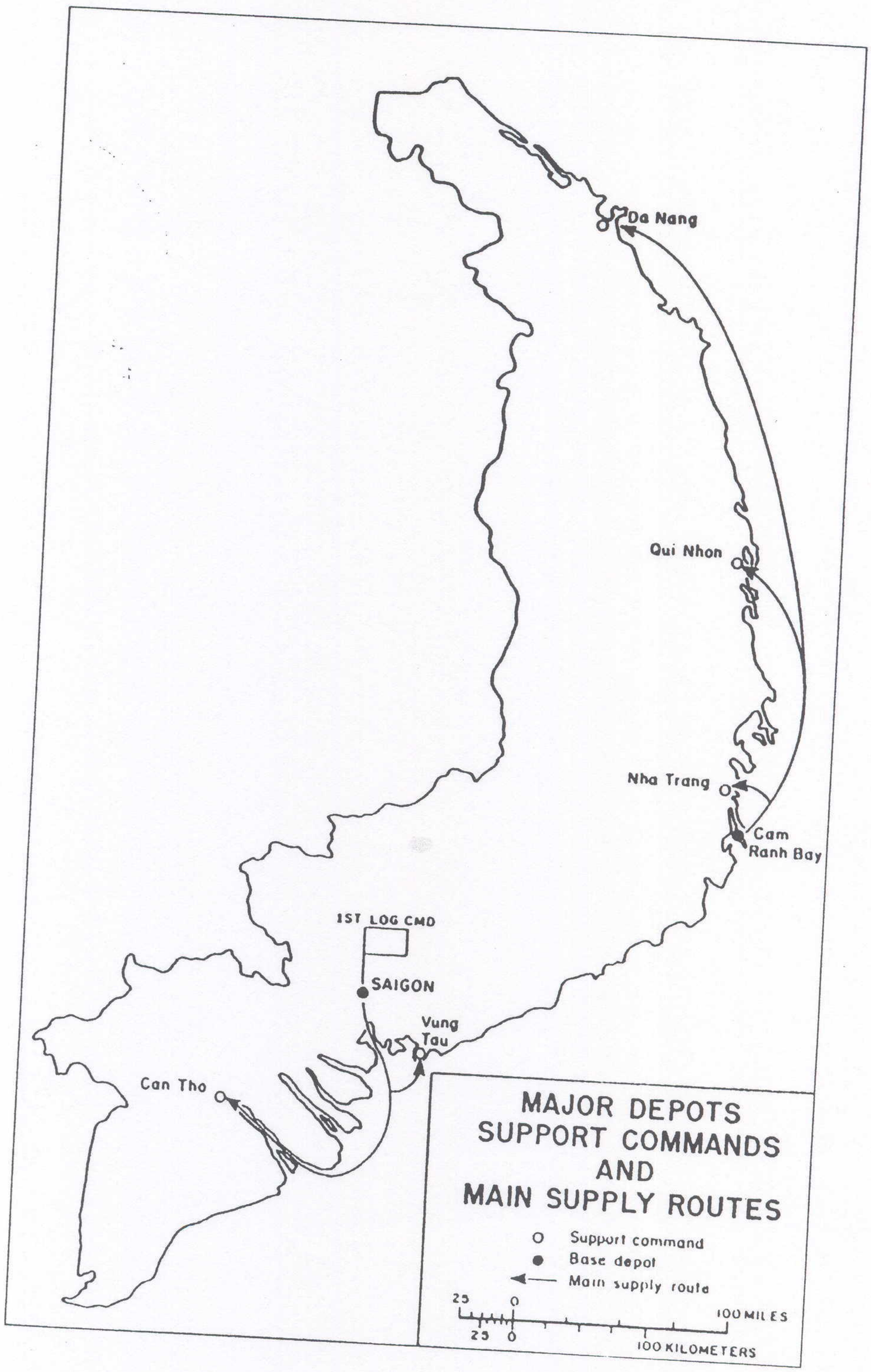

TABLE 1—U.S. ARMY AND TOTAL U.S. MILITARY PERSONNEL IN SOUTH VIETNAM

Date	U.S. Army Personnel	Total U.S. Military Personnel
31 Dec 1960	800	900
31 Dec 1961	2,100	3,200
31 Dec 1962	7,900	11,300
31 Dec 1963	10,100	16,300
31 Dec 1964	14,700	23,300
31 Mar 1965	15,600	29,100
30 Jun	27,300	59,900
30 Sep	76,200	132,300
31 Dec	116,800	184,300
31 Mar 1966	137,400	231,200
30 Jun	160,000	267,500
30 Sep	189,200	313,100
31 Dec	239,400	485,300
31 Mar 1967	264,600	420,900
30 Jun	285,700	448,800
30 Sep	296,100	459,700
31 Dec	319,500	485,600
31 Mar 1968	337,300	515,200
30 Jun	354,300	534,700
30 Sep	354,200	537,800
31 Dec	359,800	536,100
*31 Jan 1969	365,600	542,400
31 Mar	361,500	538,200
30 Jun	360,500	538,700
30 Sep	345,400	510,500
31 Dec	330,300	474,400
31 Mar 1970	321,400	448,500
30 Jun	297,800	413,900
30 Sep	295,400	394,100
31 Dec	250,700	335,800
31 Mar 1971	227,600	301,900
3 Jun	197,500	250,900

*Indicates peak strength in South Vietnam
Between 1954–1960 U.S. Military Strength averaged about 650 advisors

The first US Army combat unit to arrive in South Vietnam (173rd Airborne Brigade) was employed in the Saigon area to insure retention of Bien Hoa Airfield and to assist in securing Saigon. It was initially supported directly from Okinawa by a daily C–130 aircraft flight. Later the support was assumed by the 1st Logistical Command.

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The second combat unit to arrive was the 2d Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division. Plans called for their employment at Qui Nhon to secure that area for future use. From the meager logistic resources in South Vietnam some were deployed to Qui Nhon to support that unit. Due to the buildup of enemy pressure on Saigon, Commander, U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, made the decision two days before the arrival of the 2d Brigade of the 1st Infantry Division that the 2d Brigade would be employed in the defense of Saigon. This resulted in a scramble to relocate the few U.S. supplies and ammunition in South Vietnam from Qui Nhon south some 250 miles to Saigon. Numerous changes were made in tactical plans in the initial stages of the buildup due to Viet Cong pressure. Such changes were necessary, but had an adverse effect on orderly logistical planning and implementation.

As logistical units arrived in South Vietnam they were assigned to appropriate depots or Support Commands as the tactical situation directed. In all Support Commands small units and detachments arrived ahead of the command and control units. As a result officers from the seventeen-man officer staff of the 1st Logistical Command had to be sent to the Support Command areas to receive, organize, assign missions, coordinate efforts, and command these small units and detachments pending arrival of a command and control headquarters. As an example, a U.S. Army major with a jeep and a brief case was the complete command and control unit for the Saigon area. This included finding and securing living areas and work areas for arriving units. Prior to June 1965, the 1st Logistical Command operated on a very thin shoestring. As more staff officers and command and control units arrived in June the command and control situation improved greatly.

On 11 May 1965, the Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and his staff were briefed on the logistic plans of the 1st Logistical Command. This briefing included real estate requirements and requirements for tactical troops for depot and support command areas at Qui Nhon, Nha Trang, and Cam Ranh Bay. The plan was approved on 12 May 1965. The first ship unloading operation at Cam Ranh Bay took place on 15 May 1965. Since Army stevedores had not yet arrived in South Vietnam, and the South Vietnam stevedore union refused to send civilian stevedores to Cam Ranh Bay, the first ship was unloaded by a U.S. transportation lieutenant and a small group of enlisted men assembled through levies on units for anyone with any stevedore or small boat experience. From such a start Cam Ranh Bay was built up to a major and efficient port.

With the arrival of combat forces and the 1st Logistical Command becoming operational, its small staff could not accomplish all the planning that was required. A request was placed on U.S. Army Pacific for assistance. U.S. Army Pacific then provided five officers on a 90 day temporary duty tour. These officers reported to the 1st Logistical Command on 23 April 1965 and were given the task to make a study of the Qui Nhon enclave, Nha Trang enclave, and the Cam Ranh Bay area, to determine the tactical security requirements and the feasibility of utilizing these areas as included in 1st Logistical Command's concept, and to refine the logistics planning for each area to include base development.

These planners prepared a study which proved to be of great value in base development and the expansion of the 1st Logistical Command's capabilities. This study with appropriate recommendations and requests for tactical troops for security of desired areas was presented to the Commanding General U.S. Army Vietnam and Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, in May 1965. Approval was received and security was provided as requested at each location, except Qui Nhon. General Westmoreland approved the security plan for Qui Nhon, but due to Viet Cong pressure and a shortage of U.S. forces the implementation of the plan was delayed over a month. Even then the forces available were not able to push out and secure all of the originally planned areas. This left the ammunition depot at Qui Nhon exposed to enemy action.

Upon completion of the enclave study, a new problem faced the planning group. It was recognized that the continued influx of troops into the city of Saigon (10,000 in the next 4 months) would soon exceed its capability to absorb. It was also recognized that usable real estate and facilities were not available in the Saigon area. A threefold mission was given to the planning group: develop a short range plan to absorb the influx of troops into the Saigon area, develop a long range plan that would ultimately move the bulk of U.S. Army personnel out of the Saigon area, and develop detailed plans for the security and logistical development of the Can Tho areas.

A thorough reconnaissance was made and chosen areas were selected. In order to relieve the pressure on Saigon facilities, the Long Binh area was selected for the establishment of a major logistical and administrative base. A master base development plan was prepared which provided areas for all activities in Saigon.

General Westmoreland (who was both Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, and Commanding General U.S. Army Vietnam) was briefed on the study and approved it in principle, except he elected to move Headquarters U.S. Army Vietnam to Long Binh (Headquarters Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, remained in the Saigon area). The 1st Logistical Command immediately began implementing the study by locating the ammunition depot, hospital, engineers, plus direct support and general support supply and maintenance support at Long Binh. The movement of headquarters type activities was delayed by the requirement for $2 million to develop an adequate communication system in the area and by the time required for installation of the system.

The study on Saigon proved to be of great value. Long Binh became a major installation in the Republic of Vietnam. The study on Vung Tau and Can Tho resulted in the elimination of Can Tho as a support command. The delta area was supported from Vung Tau and Saigon. The Vung Tau portion of the study included plans for the development of Vung Tau as a deep draft port utilizing De Long piers.

Major Logistics Constraints

To the logistician, it is extremely important to have an early decision establishing theater standards of living. These standards should determine the basic

authorization for post, camp, and station property, PX stockage of merchandise, whether base camps are to be constructed, construction standards, the degree of permanency for fixed installations, and utilities and services to be provided. Obviously, such a decision has a tremendous impact on the logistic system. Construction materials alone constituted some 40 percent of total tonnage of materials coming into South Vietnam in 1965 and 1966.

Without such established standards to use as terms of reference, it was impossible to realistically determine requirements for such items as real estate, supply, storage, maintenance, construction, electricity and other utilities, as well as the resultant port unloading capability required. Without such standards, the logistic system has no grounds for challenging requirements placed upon it. Such a decision was never made in the early days of Vietnam. Therefore, every unit independently established its own standard of living, ordering from supply catalogs as if they were Sears and Roebuck catalogs. Commanders desiring to give their personnel the very highest possible levels of comfort and quality of food, requisitioned air conditioning and refrigeration equipment far in excess of that authorized by Tables of Organization and Equipment. This had a mushrooming effect. Requirements for electrical power generating equipment were in turn increased to the point that demand exceeded the capability of Tables of Organization and Equipment authorized equipment. As the requirement for this equipment increased, the numbers of makes and models proliferated (as suppliers of standard makes and models were unable to keep up with the rapidly increasing demands). As the quantities of equipment increased, so did the requirements for repair parts and qualified maintenance personnel. The repair parts were a problem because of the many varied makes and models and the resultant lack of interchangeability among their parts. It was difficult to maintain full Tables of Organization and Equipment authorized maintenance strength much less the numbers of personnel required to maintain the excess equipment. Therefore, because these personnel were not readily available in sufficient quantities, backup equipment was requisitioned (for emergency use) further burdening an already heavily taxed logistic system. Finally decisions were made on a piece-meal basis on such things as construction standards. But even with established standards, there was flexibility in interpretation. More often than not, the interpretation did not favor the most austere construction or equipment requirements. This not only put a heavy burden on the logistical system, but it also taxed the Continental U.S. troop base which was not structured in numbers or skills to support the construction or equipment installation and subsequent maintenance requirements which evolved from the Vietnam buildup.

War Reserve Stocks

The stocks available in March 1965 were totally inadequate. For example, only one DeLong pier was available while a dozen could have been used. The timely availability of these piers would have saved the government large sums of money in ship demurrage and speeded up the buildup of forces.

Logistical Management Organizations

Logistical management organizations were not available. As an example, it was a year before a supply inventory control team arrived in South Vietnam. By the time it had become operational, its equipment was found to be inadequate and had to be upgraded. This same situation was common in other areas of logistical management. In a new theater of operations under combat conditions, there is a pressing need early in the operation for management organizations to be completely mobile, automated, and self-supporting. Further, these early logistics management organizations and units were Technical Service oriented even though the Combat Service to the Army functional doctrine had been approved. Difficulties were experienced in fitting the Technical Service organizations into the new doctrine that had not been fully tested before Vietnam.

Engineer Construction

As the buildup progressed, it became apparent that the engineer construction program was becoming so large it required a special command to oversee it. In July 1965, the decision was made to deploy an engineer brigade to the Republic of Vietnam, and upon its arrival the engineer construction functions were transferred from the 1st Logistical Command to the Engineer Brigade.

With increased combat requirements, the priority for logistics construction projects declined for a period and the construction of essential port and depot facilities fell behind schedule, adversely affecting the capability to handle incoming troops, equipment, and supplies. However, in December 1965, Commander in Chief Pacific directed that the highest priority be given to port and beach clearance and depot construction. After this the capability to handle incoming cargo steadily improved.

Logistic Support Principles

The organization for supply support followed the area support, "logistical island," concept with the sea being the main supply route. Field depots were established in each support command to receive, store, and issue Classes II, IV, VII and IX items, less aviation, avionics, medical, and missile peculiar items. The depots provided area support as indicated below:

1. The 506th Field Depot, Saigon (later US Army Depot, Long Binh) was responsible for III and IV Corps.
2. The 504th Field Depot, Cam Ranh Bay (later US Army Depot, Cam Ranh Bay) was responsible for the southern part of II Corps.
3. The 58th Field Depot, Qui Nhon (later US Army Depot, Qui Nhon) was responsible for the northern part of II Corps.
4. The US Army Field Depot, DaNang was established on 25 February 1968 with the mission of supplying Army peculiar items in I Corps. This depot operated as a field depot of the Qui Nhon base depot.

Virtually all Army tactical operations received logistics support from 1st Logistical Command elements operating logistical support activities located at major base camps such as Tay Ninh, Bearcat, Phuoc Vinh, Can Tho, Pleiku, An Khe, and Chu Lai. When forces beyond the reach of these facilities required additional support, temporary forward support activities were deployed.

Initially, medical services and medical supply were organic to the 1st Logistical Command mission. As the buildup progressed, the magnitude of the medical mission became greater. A decision was made to transfer this function from the 1st Logistical Command to a medical brigade. The 44th Medical Brigade assumed this function upon arrival in South Vietnam in 1966.

Aviation logistic support was initially provided by the U.S. Army Support Command, later U.S. Army Vietnam. The 34th General Support Group (aviation supply and maintenance) was deployed to South Vietnam in mid-1965 to manage this function.

The Logistical Support Activity was a continuing provisional activity composed of 1st Logistical Command elements and generally located in a fixed base camp to provide direct and general supply, maintenance, and service support to U.S. and Free World Military Assistance Forces on an area basis. The type and number of units comprising a Logistical Support Activity was dependent upon the scope of the support mission. Many of these operations involved substantial portions of either a supply and service battalion, direct support maintenance battalion, or elements of both with the senior officer present serving as the Logistical Support Activity commander. Stockage levels of all classes at a Logistical Support Activity were determined by the densities of personnel and equipment supported, considering replenishment capabilities. Stockage objectives for the various classes of supply varied from 5 to 45 days depending upon the commodities being stocked.

A Forward Support Activity was a provisional organization, temporary in nature, and deployed in the vicinity of a supported tactical unit's forward operating base to provide direct supply, maintenance, and service support. It was deployed to support a specific tactical operation, when the tactical organic support capability was not sufficient to provide the support required. Upon completion of the operation, it was withdrawn from the area of operations, and its assets and personnel returned to their parent unit. Personnel and equipment comprising a Forward Support Activity were drawn from Tables of Organization and Equipment and Tables of Distribution and Allowances units assigned to the parent Support Command of the 1st Logistical Command. Forward Support Activities could stock Class I, III, V, and limited, fast moving Class II and IV, if the tactical unit was unable to provide their own support. Stockage levels were set at a minimum level consistent with operational requirements (based on troop and equipment densities, resupply rates, capacity and consumption experience). Throughput was used to the maximum extent possible to replace stocks consumed at Forward Support Activities. Maintenance and services were provided as required depending upon the supported unit's organic capabilities, tactical deployment, and densities.

If a Forward Support Activity became a continuing activity, it was usually redesignated as a Logistical Support Activity. Normally, a Forward Support

Activity which continued operations over six months was redesignated as a Logistical Support Activity.

The concept of using a Forward Support Activity to provide combat service support was developed due to the particular environment in South Vietnam and the manner in which tactical units operated. Brigade-size units were engaged in search and destroy operations which in many cases were conducted in areas located a considerable distance from their base camp and major support installations.

The 1st Logistical Command did not have separate authorization for the personnel and equipment required to operate Forward Support Activities, although the need for such authorization existed. Personnel and equipment were drawn from Tables of Organization and Equipment and Tables of Distribution and Allowances units assigned to the parent support command or were provided by the other support commands when the requirement exceeded the parent support command's capability. The initial Forward Support Activity concept envisioned the organization and fielding of Forward Support Activities in support of tactical operations of short duration. Experience showed, however, that some Forward Support Activities were required for extended periods of time resulting in a degradation of the capability of the units from which personnel or equipment were drawn.

Establishment of permanent brigade base camps and the deployment of nondivisional Tables of Organization and Equipment supply, service, and maintenance units to these areas reduced the requirements for Forward Support Activities. In many locations where Forward Support Activities originally provided support, it was possible later to provide logistical support by a Logistical Support Activity with composite support organizations providing tailored supply, service, and maintenance support on an area basis. Then when brigades were deployed outside of their normal area of operations, in most cases, it was possible for the tactical units to obtain support in their new area from combat service support units in that area. When required, augmentation of Tables of Organization and Equipment support units in forward areas enabled a direct support maintenance battalion, for example, to provide across-the-board logistical support to all divisional and nondivisional units in its area of responsibility. Although the requirement for operation of Forward Support Activities was significantly reduced, each Support Command maintained on-call a Forward Support Activity (by specifically designated personnel and equipment) capable of rapid deployment when a Forward Support Activity was required by tactical units. The implementation of the Forward Support Activity and Logistical Support Activity concept enabled tactical commanders to concentrate on their primary mission while ranging deep into enemy territory. These commanders knew that the required logistical support would be available whenever and wherever required.

As the buildup progressed, the technology for the management of supplies improved and new and imaginative concepts and procedures were developed. The period 1965–1966 was characterized by fifteen months of unprecedented growth and development. Inheriting a fragmented logistics structure consisting of some 16 different systems managed by separate component services, U.S. Army Vietnam and the 1st Logistical Command pulled these systems together to form a unified

structure. However, even then it was not feasible to combine all aspects of support into one command. In this period, the 1st Logistical Command managed all logistics and support functions for U.S. Army Vietnam except for aviation supply, maintenance support, and engineer construction. The logistics island concept and Logistics Support Activity and Forward Support Activity support concepts were developed, and three major support commands were established at Saigon, Cam Ranh Bay, and Qui Nhon. Major port and depot construction was undertaken in each area to support the hundreds of thousands of combat and logistics troops entering the country. In late 1965, the control of stocks in storage and on order was accomplished by a laborious manual process. Each depot was considered a separate entity and requisitioned replacement supplies directly through 2d Logistical Command in Okinawa. Under this system, there was no practical accountability of total in-country supply levels. In less than three years, this process was replaced by a complex control system involving the large-scale use of electronic computers. Coincidentally, procedures were evolved to provide continuous and up-to-date inventory accounting of all stocks within Vietnam. In late 1967, a fully automated central inventory control center was established at Long Binh (handling all type of supplies, except ammunition, aviation, medical and special forces items) , and was known as the 14th Inventory Control Center.

Modern computer equipment was installed in the 14th Inventory Control Center to attempt to bring some order to the supply chaos in the depot stock inventory. The major problem encountered was the tremendous influx of supplies which were over the beaches and through the port flooding the depots under a massive sea of materiél and equipment much of which was unneeded. Push supplies and duplicate requisitions of thousands of tons of cargo piled up in the depots, unrecorded and essentially lost to the supply system. In the latter part of 1967, control was slowly established over the requisitioning system through the use of automation and the flow of unneeded supplies abated somewhat. Through these improvements in control and accountability, in-country requirements could be tabulated, interdepot shortages and excesses balanced, and requisition priorities evaluated.

Port Situation in Vietnam

In the pre-buildup stage, most cargo destined for Vietnam was shipped directly from Continental U.S. depots and vendors to west coast military sea or aerial ports. From these ports it was loaded aboard ships or aircraft and moved either to Vietnam directly or to Okinawa which provided backup support. Cargo shipped directly to Vietnam, for the most part, was initially received at the Saigon water port or the Tan Son Nhut airport. Military cargo was treated very much as commercial or Agency for International Development cargo, with little emphasis on specialized development of surface or air distribution methods, facilities, or equipment.

Between mid-1965 and late 1966, cargo continued to move primarily by ship. Airlift was used to move the great majority of troops and priority cargo, which

accounted for only a small part of the total tonnage moved. Surface cargo, during this period, continued to flow to Okinawa, Vietnam and Thailand causing multi-port discharging, although efforts were made to direct shipments to the final destination port.

Initially, most waterborne cargo arriving in South Vietnam was received at the Saigon Port, the only port with deep draft piers except for a small two-berth pier at Cam Ranh Bay which had been constructed in 1964 under the Military Assistance Program. The Saigon Port was a civilian port under the management control of the Republic of Vietnam's governmental port authority. It consisted of ten deep draft berths. U.S. Army cargo was unloaded by Vietnamese civilian stevedores at berths assigned by the civilian port authority. Coordination of military cargo unloading and port clearance was handled by the Navy's Headquarters Support Activity Saigon.

When the buildup began, the port continued to operate in this fashion. Headquarters Support Activity Saigon never knew, from day to day how many berths or which berths would be made available to them for the unloading of U.S. cargo. In addition, customs at the Saigon port dictated that cargo discharged from ships be placed on pier aprons to await port clearance by the cargo owner. It was up to the consignee to remove the cargo from the port. Cargo not consigned to U.S. forces remained on the piers for weeks and sometimes months, creating undesirable and crowded working conditions which adversely affected port operations. Repeated efforts to get South Vietnam to clear the piers were unsuccessful. Some of the cargo being received by South Vietnam was U.S. Military Aid equipment which became South Vietnam equipment as it was unloaded. U.S. forces were accused many times of improper port clearance because this equipment was olive drab in color. But such equipment frequently proved to belong to South Vietnam and the U.S. Army had no authority to move it.

The overloaded port facilities and the operational necessity to selectively discharge cargo to get high priority cargo ashore before less urgently required items resulted in excessive ship turn-around time which increased the total number of ships required. This situation was complicated as cargo was manifested by broad categories only, for example, general cargo, making it impossible to locate specific items. Holding the ships for lengthy periods resulted in demurrage charges of from $3,000 to $7,000 per day per ship. Also the inadequate and insecure railroads and highways forced the distribution system to rely heavily on shallow draft vessels for transshipment of cargo between the Saigon Port and other locations, and intratheater airlift between Tan Son Nhut air terminal and other locations. The problem was further aggravated by a shortage of shallow draft vessels both military (LCMs and LCUs) and civilian assets, which were used for offloading cargo from deep draft vessels at ports not having adequate berthing facilities for the larger ships. Civilian lighterage as well as military landing craft, primarily LCMs and LCUs were used for this purpose.

The U.S. Army's 4th Transportation Command arrived in South Vietnam on 12 August 1965. It was given the mission of assisting Headquarters Support Activity Saigon in U.S. port operations and assuming that function completely as

soon as possible, which it did in September 1965. In addition, it was charged with providing technical assistance to port and beach operations at Cam Ranh Bay and the support commands being established throughout South Vietnam. As U.S. Army terminal service companies were received, they were initially employed in unloading of ammunition at Na Bhe, the central ammunition receiving point just south of Saigon, and were later employed in Saigon proper. In May 1965, a request was made to the government of the Republic of South Vietnam to acquire the three Maritime Marine piers adjacent to the Saigon port facilities for the exclusive use of U. S. Forces. These facilities were owned by a French shipping firm. This request ran into financial and political difficulties, but was finally approved in December 1965 after the personal intervention of General Westmoreland and the U. S. Ambassador. With the exclusive use and control of these facilities, port operations improved in efficiency and volume. The delay in obtaining these piers plus the shortage of yard and storage space and the lack of a depot structure and accounting procedures prevented the early establishment of adequate port facilities.

Nevertheless, it was apparent that additional port facilities would be required in the Saigon area. The 1st Logistical Command made this known to Commander U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam, who directed his staff to develop plans for the facilities now known as Newport. Construction began on this fifty million dollar facility in early 1966. In April 1967, the first deep draft vessel was discharged at the Newport facility. Also, during this period, several other ports throughout Vietnam were in the construction phase.

By the end of December 1967, the ports in use by the Army numbered 10; Saigon, Qui Nhon, Cam Ranh Bay, Vung Ro, Vung Tau, Cat Lai, and Nha Trang were the deep draft ports; Dong Tam, Phan Rang and Can Tho were the shallow draft ports. These improvements in port capabilities brought about a reduction in the average time a deep draft ship waited for a berth in Vietnam ports from 20.4 days during the most critical period of 1965 to the 1970 average of less than two days.

Warehousing and Storage Facilities

Prior to the buildup, warehouses and storage areas were literally nonexistent, except for limited facilities in the Saigon area. Supplies were scattered in several locations throughout Saigon, all of which were substandard and overcrowded; some were only open storage. At the time the 1st Logistical Command became operational, there was a construction backlog for the troops already incountry. Construction of logistics facilities competed with many other requirements. Since there was never more than $300 million in annual capability to apply against a total theater program of close to $2 billion, the construction effort took almost six years to accomplish.

To initially offset this shortage of facilities, negotiations were initiated with the United States Overseas Mission to obtain 13 Japanese built warehouses with dirt floors and no electrical wiring in the Fishmarket area in Saigon. Three of these buildings were obtained by the end of 1965 and the remaining 10 during 1966. A

contract was also let to construct an added 210,000 square feet of covered storage and to fill an area behind the warehouses that would serve as hardstand for open storage and a troop cantonment area. This area housed the 506th Field Depot until a new depot was constructed in Long Binh in 1968 and the move to the new facilities was completed 1 July 1969.

By way of comparison, the new depot facilities at Long Binh provided 1,869,000 square feet of black-topped hardstand and 1,458,000 square feet of covered storage, whereas the depot facilities at the Fishmarket in Saigon had a total of only 670,000 square feet of covered storage space as late as March 1967.

Additionally, agreement was reached with the United States Overseas Mission on 16 March 1965 to provide and erect some prefabricated buildings owned by the United States overseas mission for use as warehouses in the Qui Nhon, Da Nang, Cam Ranh Bay, Nha Trang, and Saigon areas. These buildings were finally available for occupancy in February 1966, almost one year after the agreement. The same basic situation prevailed at Qui Nhon where substandard and overcrowded facilities were occupied until completion of the new depot at Long My in 1968.

The United States constructed a major depot and port complex at Cam Ranh Bay costing over $145 million, $55 million of which came from Army appropriations. Cam Ranh Bay was an undeveloped area located at an excellent natural harbor which when completed had over 1.4 million square feet of covered storage, 1.2 million square feet of open ammunition storage area, and bulk storage facilities for over 775,000 barrels (42 gallons per barrel) of petroleum products. Construction of this complex was started early in the buildup period when it was envisioned that the main war effort would be along the Cam Ranh Bay–Ban Me Thuot–Pleiku axis. Since the war activity took place to the North (Qui Nhon and Da Nang) and South (Saigon), the depot was not utilized to the degree the planners originally anticipated. As a result, there are some who claim that the war passed Cam Ranh Bay by. When taken in that particular context, there is some truth to the claim.

Even though war activity took place in areas different from those expected, Cam Ranh Bay played an important role in the logistics picture. A U.S. Army Support Command was established there as a major logistical command and control element, the Korean forces were supported almost exclusively from Cam Ranh Bay throughout the time they were in the II Corps Area, transshipping supplies from ocean going vessels to coastal type shipping was accomplished there, and marine maintenance was done there. The excellent and secure ammunition storage areas permitted keeping large stocks of needed ammunition in-country relatively safe from enemy attack and the cold storage facilities permitted fresh vegetables to be brought down from Dalat and stored properly till distributed to our forces. Also having a major storage and shipping facility close to the major air base operated by the Air Force was a distinct advantage. At one time it was planned to move the Headquarters of the 1st Logistical Command there (it was later decided that the 1st Logistical Command and Headquarters U.S. Army Vietnam should remain near Headquarters U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) and until fairly late in residual force planning, Cam Ranh Bay was going to remain as a major U.S. logistic complex. This too was dropped in favor of the Saigon–Long Binh area.

Vietnam Order of Battle
By Shelby L. Stanton

From the Author

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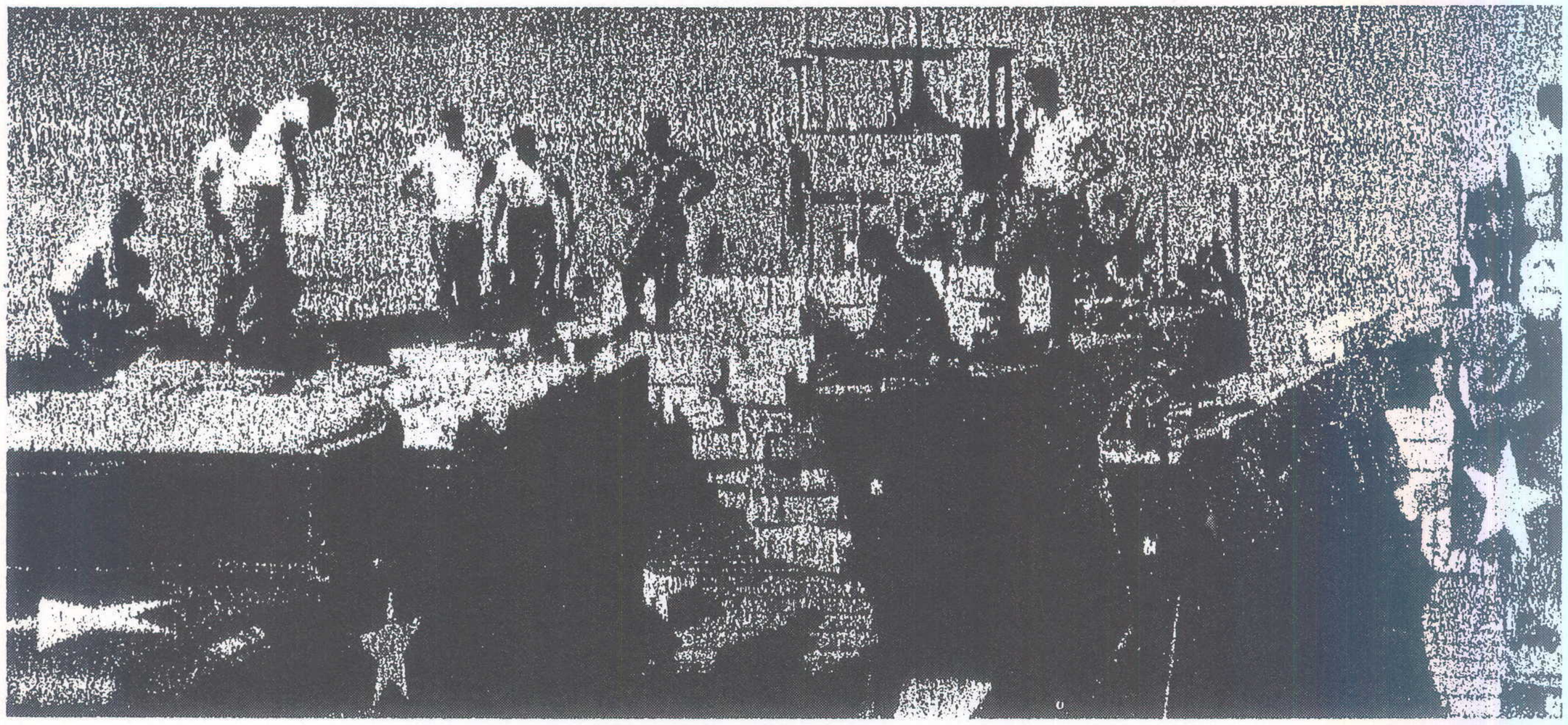
Chapter 23



Transportation

4th Transportation Command (Terminal)

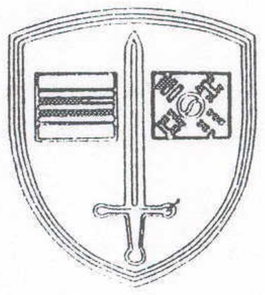
No Insignia Authorized

Arrived Vietnam: 8 August 1965
Departed Vietnam: 26 June 1972
Previous Station: Fort Eustis

Authorized Strength	1966	1968	1970
Command HQ	664	661	141*

* HQ and HQ Company only.

The 4th Transportation Command was raised to command assigned and attached units engaged in the normal terminal command responsibilities, i.e., the transfer of personnel and cargo, establishing terminal operations, logistical over-the-shore operations and supporting amphibious operations. However, since the command was the first senior terminal command-and-control unit to arrive in Vietnam, it was given technical as well as operational control of all land and water transportation units assigned to the 1st Logistical Command. Included in this mission were the operation of the port complex at Saigon and the water terminals at Cam Ranh Bay, Nha Be, Qui Nhon, Phan Rang, Nha Trang and Vung Tau. It was further assigned to provide motor transport in support of port and beach clearance and tactical operations and to establish the Army Air Cargo Terminal at Tan Son Nhut. The command had an initial strength of 7,000 personnel. Upon establishment of the support commands at Cam Ranh Bay and Qui Nhon in early 1966, the original mission was changed to operation of the Saigon Port Complex, a sub-port at Vung Tau and various ammunition distribution sites. In early 1966 the 4th Transportation Command's assigned truck units were reassigned. In July 1967 the command was officially assigned to the U.S. Army Support Command, Saigon. It took over operations at the U.S. Army Newport Terminal.



Unauthorized

5th Transportation Command (Terminal)

Arrived Vietnam: 1 October 1966
Departed Vietnam: 13 June 1972
Previous Station: Fort Story

Authorized Strength	1968	1970
HHC	139	135

The 5th Transportation Command (Terminal) had the same normal capabilities as the 4th Transportation Command. It assumed the duties of running the extensive Qui Nhon port and served under the U.S. Army Support Command, Qui Nhon. In May 1970 it was deployed to Da Nang.

124th Transportation Command (Terminal)

No Insignia Authorized

Arrived Vietnam: 1 October 1966
Departed Vietnam: 1 May 1972
Previous Station: Fort Eustis

Authorized Strength	1968	1971
HHC	139	108

The 124th Transportation Command (Terminal) had the same normal capabilities as the 4th Transportation Command. This command was responsible for operations at the port of Cam Ranh Bay under the U.S. Army Support Command, Cam Ranh Bay.

Vietnam. The division suffered 20,770 soldiers killed or wounded in action, more than the 20,659 casualties suffered in World War II and almost as many as the 22,320 casualties suffered in World War I.

The First Infantry Division maintains the Cantigny Museum at Wheaton, Illinois, which has exhibits and material on the division's Vietnam war experience. It also has its own war memorial located near the White House in Washington, D.C., which contains the names of Big Red One soldiers who fell on the battlefields of World War I, World War II and the Vietnam war. From the very beginning, the Society of the First Division kept close links with its Vietnam veterans. In addition to annual reunions, the division maintains a scholarship fund for the sons and daughters of its members who were killed in action in Vietnam. In 1985 the society's reunion will be dedicated to its Vietnam veterans. Further information can be obtained from Arthur L. Chaitt, Executive Director, Society of the First Division, 5 Montgomery Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania 19118.

See also III CORPS TACTICAL ZONE.

Suggestions for further reading: *Cedar Falls-Junction City: A Turning Point*, by Bernard W. Rogers (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974); *Vietnam Order of Battle*, by Shelby L. Stanton (Washington, D.C.: U.S. News & World Report Books, 1981). While there is no official history of the First Infantry Division in Vietnam, an account of its combat actions there is contained in *Charlie Company: What Vietnam Did to Us*, by Peter Goldman and Tony Fuller (New York: Morrow, 1983), a series of interviews with members of Company C, Second Battalion, 28th Infantry. Another source of the division's combat operations, including selected small unit actions, is Shelby L. Stanton's *The Rise and Fall of an American Army* (Novato, Calif.: Presidio Press, 1985).

FIRST LOGISTICAL COMMAND

Arriving from Fort Hood, Texas in March 1965, the First Logistical Command was responsible for all U.S. and allied support in Vietnam (except for I Corps, which was then a U.S. Navy responsibility). With subordinate U.S. Army support commands at Saigon to supply III and IV Corps at Cam Ranh Bay and to support II Corps at Qui Nhon (and after 1968 at Da Nang to support I Corps), the First Logistical Command supervised a number of depots, support groups, and ordnance ammunition, petroleum supply, maintenance and transportation battalions and separate companies, as well as mortuaries at Saigon and Da Nang. An enormous organization, the Saigon Support Command alone had an average of 33,000 personnel assigned to support some 235,000 U.S. and allied troops. Truck drivers who delivered ammunition and supplies to front-line units had a particularly hazardous task. Two medals of Honor were awarded to soldiers in First Logistical Command transportation units for conspicuous bravery in action.

Consolidated with USARV (U.S. Army Vietnam) in June 1970 as part of the U.S. force reduction, the First Logistical Command departed Vietnam in May 1972. It is currently stationed at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.

Suggestions for further reading: *Vietnam Order of Battle*, by Shelby L. Stanton (Washington, D.C.: U.S. News & World Report Books, 1981); *Logistic Support*, by Joseph M. Heiser, Jr. (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Government Printing Office, 1974).

FIRST MARINE AIRCRAFT WING

At its peak strength, the First Marine Aircraft Wing (First MAW) had six Marine Air Groups (MAG) under its command, each group containing approximately 75 aircraft, for a total of 225 helicopters and 250 fixed-wing aircraft. Three MAGs—MAG 16, 36 and 39—equipped with helicopters were based at Da Nang, Chu Lai, Quang Tri and Phu Bai. MAG 11 at Da Nang flew F-4 and A-6 fighter-bombers. MAG 12 at Chu Lai was an A-4 and A-6 attack squadron, and MAG 13 at Chu Lai flew A-4s.

Although the U.S. Marine UH-34 Helicopter Squadron had been sent to Soc Trang in IV Corps in April 1962, it was not until May 1965, when the U.S. buildup in Vietnam began in earnest, that the

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VIETNAM WAR ALMANAC

HARRY G. SUMMERS, JR.
Colonel of Infantry

For Reference

Not to be taken from this room

Facts On File Publications
New York, New York • Oxford, England

The same was true of "neutrality" in Cambodia. In the mid-1960s North Vietnamese base areas were established within Cambodia across the border from South Vietnam to rest, resupply and train North Vietnamese and Viet Cong troops. War supplies were landed at the port of Sihanoukville (later renamed Kompong Som) and trucked overland to these sanctuaries. Although limited U.S. tactical air and artillery strikes were authorized beginning in 1966 to respond to North Vietnamese fire from across the border and U.S. reconnaissance patrols were conducted to locate North Vietnamese base areas, it was not until March 1969 that (with the tacit approval of Cambodian leader Prince Norodom Sihanouk) the United States struck directly at these North Vietnamese base areas in Cambodia. Code-named Operation Menu, secret B-52 raids hit targets along the Cambodian-South Vietnamese border. With the overthrow of Prince Sihanouk in March 1970, the facade of Cambodian neutrality came to an end and Cambodian military forces began to take an active part in the war against North Vietnam. At the end of April, President Nixon announced an "incursion" into Cambodia to destroy North Vietnamese bases and a year later the United States helped to organize an operation into Laos by the South Vietnamese Armed forces.

See also AIR AMERICA, BARREL ROLL, CAMBODIA, HO CHI MINH TRAIL, LAOS, LRRP (LONG RANGE RECONNAISSANCE PATROL), MENU OPERATION, STEEL TIGER, TIGER HOUND.

Suggestions for further reading: *No More Vietnams*, by Richard Nixon (New York: Arbor House, 1985); *The Vietnam Experience: Thunder from Above* and *Rain of Fire*, by John Morrocco (Boston: Boston Publishing Co., 1984 and 1985); *Without Honor: Defeat in Vietnam and Cambodia*, by Arnold R. Isaacs (Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1983); *On Strategy: A Critical Analysis of the Vietnam War*, by Harry G. Summers, Jr. (Novato, Calif: Presidio Press, 1982).

NEWPORT

The Newport terminal facility at Saigon. (Courtesy U.S. Army.)

Newport, was the name of the U.S. Army port. The Army transportation corps was in charge of the complex. Newport and the Newport Bridge were prime Viet Cong targets during several battles in 1968 but were successfully defended. Newport handled over 150,000 tons of cargo a month.

See also FIRST LOGISTICAL COMMAND.

NEW ZEALAND

New Zealand first contributed to the defense of South Vietnam on July 20, 1964, when an engineer platoon and surgical team arrived in Vietnam for use in local civic action projects. In July 1965 these teams were replaced by the Royal New Zealand Artillery's 161st Battery, with four 105-mm howitzers. V and W Companies of the Royal New Zealand Infantry Regiment arrived in Vietnam in 1967 along with a platoon from New Zealand's commando force, the Special Air Service.

These New Zealand forces were integrated with the forces of the Australian Task Force and operated with them in Phuoc Tuy Province in III Corps. In 1971 these forces were withdrawn from Vietnam.

The Royal New Zealand Artillery f
(Courtesy U.S. Army Military History Institute.)

pation in Vietnam, by Stanley
James Lawton Collins, Jr. (W
Government Printing Office

NGO DINH DIEM

See DIEM, NGO DINH.

NGO DINH NHU

See NHU, NGO DINH.

NGO DINH NHU, M

See NHU, MADAME NGO DINH

NGUYEN CAO KY

See KY, NGUYEN CAO.

Vietnam Order of Battle

by Shelby L. Stanton

U.S.News Books
Washington, D.C.

81st Tr Co	Lt Hel	July 62 – June 63 See note
93d Tr Co	Lt Hel	July 62 – June 63 See note

*See Transportation Company listing for complete Vietnam service of above listed transportation companies. On 25 June 1963 the assets of these transportation companies became the basis for the 117th, 118th, 119th, 120th and 121st Aviation Companies and their further Vietnam service can be traced in the Aviation Company section.

54th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport)

Arrived Vietnam: 23 October 1966
Departed Vietnam: 13 August 1970
Previous Station: Fort Lewis
Authorized Strength: HHD – 41 (1968)

The 54th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport) had capabilities similar to those of the 6th Transportation Battalion. The battalion served at Qui Nhon, where it was subordinate to the 8th Transportation Group. In February 1969 it was posted by the group to Cha Rang.

57th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport)

Arrived Vietnam: 1 October 1966
Departed Vietnam: 24 October 1972
Previous Station: Fort Riley
Authorized Strength: HHD – 41

The 57th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport) had capabilities similar to those of the 6th Transportation Battalion. The battalion served with the 500th Transportation Group at Cam Ranh Bay initially but was moved north to Quang Tri under the U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang in March 1968 and later served with the 5th Transportation Command. In April 1969 it went to Chu Lai under the 80th General Support Group and to Da Nang in 1971.

58th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support)

Arrived Vietnam: 11 April 1966
Departed Vietnam: 29 April 1972
Previous Station: Fort Benning

Authorized Strength	1966	1968	1970
HHD	51	50	45

The 58th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support) was assigned as Aircraft Material Management Command (AMMC) on 15 April 1966 with the mission of providing the supply and maintenance function for all army aircraft in Vietnam. The battalion was located at Saigon until February 1968 when it was posted north to Da Nang, though it remained under the 34th General Support Group throughout its service in Vietnam. On 20 February 1968 the battalion ceased its role as AMMC and reverted to providing direct, back-up and general support maintenance for aircraft, armament and avionics equipment supply support in I Corps Tactical Zone.

71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal)

Arrived Vietnam: 7 September 1966
Departed Vietnam: 20 August 1972
Previous Station: Fort Story

Authorized Strength	1968	1971
HHD	58	37

The 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal) had general capabilities similar to those of the 10th Transportation Battalion. The battalion served under the 4th Transportation Command and the U.S. Army Support Command, Saigon at Long Binh and at the Saigon – Newport complex during its service in Vietnam.

124th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport)

Arrived Vietnam: 24 July 1967
Departed Vietnam: 16 May 1971
Previous Station: Fort Devens
Authorized Strength: HHD – 43

The 124th Transportation Battalion (Motor Transport) had capabilities generally similar to those of the 6th Transportation Battalion. The battalion was stationed in the Pleiku vicinity where it served under control of the 8th Transportation Group and the 4th Infantry Division. In August 1970 it moved to Cha Rang under the 8th Transportation Group.

159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal)

Arrived Vietnam: 10 August 1966
Departed Vietnam: 29 June 1971
Previous Station: Fort Eustis
Authorized Strength: HHD – 58

The 159th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) had responsibilities over lighterage and stevedore functions. The battalion served with the 5th Transportation Command at Qui Nhon and was assigned to the U.S. Army Support Command, Da Nang upon activation and posted to Vung Tau 1 April 1969. It transferred to Cat Lai after 7 January 1970 upon the phasedown of Vung Tau. It also served with the U.S. Army Support Command, Saigon during its service in Vietnam.

394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal)

Arrived Vietnam: 7 August 1965
Departed Vietnam: 26 November 1970
Previous Station: Fort Eustis

Authorized Strength	1966	1968
HHD	56	54

The 394th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) had the same general capabilities as the 10th Transportation Battalion. It served with the 5th Transportation Command at Qui Nhon during its service in Vietnam.

520th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support)

Arrived Vietnam: 24 March 1967
Departed Vietnam: 29 April 1972
Previous Station: Fort Benning

Authorized Strength	1968	1971
HHD	80	73

The 520th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support) was organized to provide army aircraft maintenance and supply support, aircraft recovery, aviation electronics and armament support requirements in the northern portion of III Corps Tactical Zone. The battalion was located at Phu Loi under the 34th General Support Group throughout its service in Vietnam.

765th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support)

Arrived Vietnam: 30 September 1965
Departed Vietnam: 29 April 1972
Previous Station: Vietnam

Authorized Strength	1966	1968	1971
HHD	67	81	74

The 765th Transportation Battalion (Aircraft Maintenance & Support) directed general, direct and back-up support in areas of airframe, engines, aircraft systems, armament and all navigational and communications equipment for the southern portion of III CTZ and all of IV CTZ. The battalion was stationed at Vung Tau under the 34th General Support Group for the duration of its Vietnam service.

Unauthorized

Transportation Battalion Saigon, Provisional (Terminal Service & Boat Transport)

Arrived Vietnam: 25 May 1969
Departed Vietnam: 31 January 1970
Previous Station: Vietnam
Authorized Strength: Unknown

The Transportation Battalion, Saigon (Provisional) was a boat transport battalion serving under the U.S. Army Support Command, Saigon and the 4th Transportation Command. It operated the Saigon port, replacing the 125th Transportation Command.

No Insignia Authorized

Provisional Terminal Transportation Battalion

Arrived Vietnam: 13 August 1971
Departed Vietnam: 28 November 1971
Previous Station: Vietnam
Authorized Strength: Unknown

The Provisional Terminal Transportation Battalion was formed by the U.S. Army to render assistance to the port of Da Nang during the latter half of 1971.

TRANSPORTATION COMPANIES IN VIETNAM

Company	Type	Previous Station	Vietnam Service	Typical Location	Authorized Strength 1966	1968	1970
2d TR	Composite Medium Truck (12-t)	Ord	31 Aug. 65 – 1 April 72	Phu Tai	186	183	186
5th TR	Heavy Boat	Eustis	20 Feb. 67 – 29 April 72	Vung Tau	—	171	171
8th TR	Light Helicopter (CH-21)	Bragg	11 Dec. 61 – 25 June 63	Qui Nhon	208 (Feb 63)		
9th TR	Airborne Car (Sedan)	Bragg	14 Aug. 66 – 28 April 72	Long Binh	107	107	107
10th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Eustis	6 Sept. 65 – 5 March 72	Long Binh	186	183	186
20th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Campbell	3 May 67 – 15 March 71	Cu Chi	—	244	242
24th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)/ Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Bragg	31 Aug. 66 – 27 June 72	Cam Ranh Bay	174	183	183
31st TR	Medium Boat	Vietnam	6 Nov. 68 – 1 June 69	Dong Tam	—	181	—
33d TR	Light Helicopter (CH-21)	Ord	17 Sept. 62 – 25 June 63	Bien Hoa	194 (Feb 63)		
47th TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Lee	1 Nov. 66 – 22 June 72	Long Binh	—	183	184
56th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Lewis	16 Oct. 64 – 30 April 72	Tan Son Nhut	244	244	244
57th TR	Light Helicopter (CH-21)	Lewis	11 Dec. 61 – 25 June 63	Bear Cat	174 (Feb 63)		
57th TR*	Light Truck (5-t)	Devens	31 July 67 – 26 Dec. 71	Chu Lai	—	179	179
58th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Wood	27 Aug. 65 – 4 March 69	Phu Tai	174	175	—
61st TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Eustis	31 Aug. 65 – 1 Nov. 69	Cam Ranh Bay	186	183	—
62d TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Eustis	15 Sept. 65 – 29 April 72	Long Binh	184	183	184
63d TR	Light Truck (2½ and 5-t)	Eustis	27 Aug. 65 – 30 April 71	Phu Bai	174	179	179
64th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Bragg	4 Aug. 66 – 16 June 71	Pleiku	186	183	178
71st TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	27 Aug. 65 – 3 Feb. 68	Dong Ha	329	—	—
79th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Hood	27 Aug. 65 – 30 April 72	Qui Nhon	244	244	244
81st TR	Light Helicopter (CH-21)	Hawaii	17 Sept. 62 – 25 June 63	Pleiku	200 (Feb 63)		
82d TR	Amphibious General Support	Story	3 Sept. 65 – 1 July 66	Cam Ranh Bay	185	—	—
86th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Campbell	12 Aug. 66 – 30 June 72	Long Binh	174	183	174
87th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Lewis	5 Oct. 66 – June 69	Long Binh	—	175	—
88th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)/ Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Hood	30 Aug. 66 – 1 May 72	Pleiku	174	183	178
93d TR	Light Helicopter (CH-21)	Devens	26 Jan. 62 – 25 June 63	Soc Trang	222 (Feb 63)		

97th TR	Heavy Boat	Eustis	31 May 65 – 2 March 72	Cam Ranh Bay	171	171	128
101st TR (Prov)	Motor Transport – 101st Abn Div	Vietnam	27 March 68 – Unknown	Gia Le	—	?	—
108th TR	Car (Sedan)	Vietnam	4 March 69 – 16 April 72	Phu Bai	—	—	75
110th TR	Depot	Eustis	4 Nov. 65 – 30 Sept. 72	Tan Son Nhut	116	233	195
116th TR	Terminal Service	Okinawa	16 Dec. 65 – 17 Feb. 69	Cam Ranh Bay	329	329	—
117th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	4 Sept. 65 – 3 Feb. 68	Tuy Hoa	329	—	—
119th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	31 Aug. 65 – 30 June 71	Vung Ro Bay	329	329	—
120th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Meade	25 June 65 – 16 Aug. 72	Can Tho	174	175	174
123d TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	30 May 65 – 20 Dec. 68	Cam Ranh Bay	329	329	—
124th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	29 Nov. 65 – 15 March 71	Cat Lo	329	329	—
142d TR	Aircraft Maintenance Direct Spt	Campbell	23 Oct. 68 – 13 March 73	Phu Bai	—	244	241
151st TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Campbell	2 Sept. 65 – June 69	Long Binh	174	175	—
154th TR	Terminal Service	Okinawa	1 Jan. 67 – 22 April 71	Long Binh	—	329	329
155th TR	Terminal Service	Story	4 June 65 – 27 June 72	Cam Ranh Bay	329	329	329
163d TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Sill	12 Sept. 65 – 8 Dec. 67	Chu Lai	174	—	—
165th TR	Light Amphibious/ Aircraft Direct Support	Vietnam	25 Sept. 69 – 30 April 72	Phu Loi	—	—	241
172d TR †	Medium Cargo Truck	Lewis	11 Oct. 68 – 27 Sept. 69	Cam Ranh Bay	—	183	—
231st TR †	Medium Boat	Eustis	7 Sept. 68 – 25 Aug. 69	Vung Tau	—	183	—
233d TR	Heavy Truck (12-t)	Vietnam	20 Oct. 69 – 30 April 72	Long Binh	—	—	150
241st TR	Depot	Eustis	5 Feb. 66 – 4 June 71	Qui Nhon	116	233	159
261st TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	5 Oct. 66 – 15 Aug. 72	Long Binh	—	179	181
264th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	16 Oct. 66 – 27 Nov. 72	Qui Nhon	—	329	329
285th TR	Terminal Service	Okinawa	16 Dec. 65 – 26 Nov. 70	Qui Nhon	329	329	329
297th TR	Car (Sedan)	Lewis	5 Oct. 66 – 20 March 72	Nha Trang	—	107	107
300th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	10 Oct. 66 – 3 Feb. 68	Qui Nhon	—	329	—
303d TR	Aircraft Maintenance General Support	Benning	23 Sept. 68 – 4 Feb. 70	Long Thanh	—	253	—
319th TR §	Light Truck (5-t)	Lee	27 Sept. 68 – 13 Aug. 69	Long Binh	—	133	—
321st TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Meade	26 Dec. 67 – 31 March 72	Long Binh	—	183	183
329th TR	Heavy Boat	Eustis	24 May 66 – 2 April 72	Da Nang	121	121	171
330th TR	Aircraft General Support	Travis AFB	22 April 63 – 30 April 72	Vung Tau	253	253	236
335th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Bragg	1 Nov. 65 – 25 Nov. 71	Chu Lai	247	247	247
339th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Riley	7 Feb. 62 – 1 July 68	Da Nang	244	—	—
344th TR	Light Amphibious (LARC)	Story	2 June 65 – 20 Oct. 67	Cam Ranh Bay	207	—	—
344th TR*	Aircraft Direct Support	Vietnam	31 Aug. 71 – 30 April 72	Tan Son Nhut			
347th TR	Light Amphibious (LARC)	Story	30 May 65 – 10 Aug. 67	Cam Ranh Bay	207	—	—
352d TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Carson	8 Jan. 68 – 20 Oct. 69	Long Binh	—	179	—
357th TR ‖	Aircraft Maintenance Direct Support	Benning	15 Oct. 68 – 29 Sept. 69	Bien Hoa	—	265	—
359th TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Riley	19 Oct. 66 – 1 May 72	Qui Nhon	—	183	184
360th TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Riley	20 Oct. 66 – 10 May 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	183	184
363d TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Riley	30 Aug. 67 – 17 March 72	Dong Ha	—	183	183
368th TR	Terminal Service	Meade	21 Oct. 66 – 27 June 72	Long Binh	—	329	329
372d TR	Terminal Transfer	Vietnam	20 Dec. 68 – 21 June 72	Duc Pho	—	—	266
379th TR	Medium Reefer Truck (7½-t)	Vietnam	6 Nov. 68 – 29 June 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	—	251
387th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	11 Sept. 66 – 26 Nov. 70	Qui Nhon	—	329	329
388th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Riley	9 March 67 – 13 March 73	Vung Tau	—	244	244
402d TR	Terminal Transfer	Campbell	6 Oct. 66 – 30 June 71	Long Binh	—	266	266
403d TR	Terminal Transfer	Bragg	17 Oct. 66 – 17 Feb. 72	Dong Ha	—	266	264
410th TR	Terminal Service	Benning	31 Aug. 66 – 3 Feb. 68	Cam Ranh Bay	329	—	—
435th TR (Prov)	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Vietnam	28 Sept. 69 – unknown	Unknown	—	—	—
440th TR	Terminal Transfer	Vietnam	4 March 69 – 30 April 72	Can Tho	—	—	266
442d TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Meade	23 Dec. 66 – 30 April 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	183	184
444th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)/ Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Riley	28 Oct. 65 – 28 Nov. 71	Phu Tai	174	183	178
446th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Meade	19 Nov. 66 – 30 Sept. 72	Dong Ha	—	183	184
458th TR	River Patrol Boat	Story	13 Oct. 66 – 1 Sept. 71	Vung Tau	—	197	197
512th TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	23 Oct. 66 – 10 May 72	Qui Nhon	—	179	181
515th TR	Light Truck (2½- and 5-t)	Benning	14 July 65 – 20 March 72	Phu Bai	174	179	179
523d TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	23 Oct. 66 – 20 March 72	Qui Nhon	—	179	181
529th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Eustis	2 Jan. 67 – 4 March 69	Tuy Hoa	—	175	—
534th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Campbell	11 April 66 – 22 June 72	Long Binh	186	183	186
538th TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Bragg	4 June 66 – 1 Jan. 72	Long Binh	184	183	184
539th TR	Aircraft General Maintenance Support	Cumberland	3 May 67 – 30 June 71	Phu Loi	—	254	236

540th TR	Aircraft Maintenance General Support	Atlanta	19 Sept. 65 – 30 April 71	Qui Nhon	256	289	236
541st TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Bragg	2 Sept. 65 – 15 March 71	Pleiku	174	175	170
543d TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Campbell	16 Oct. 66 – 10 Dec. 70	Long Binh	—	175	178
544th TR	Medium Boat	Okinawa	21 Jan. 66 – 20 March 72	Vung Tau	180	180	181
545th TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	18 Oct. 66 – 31 Jan. 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	179	181
551st TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	11 Sept. 66 – 30 June 71	Long Binh	—	329	329
552d TR	Car (Sedan)	Lewis	10 March 66 – 31 July 72	Long Binh	130	130	130
556th TR	Medium Petroleum Truck	Lewis	16 Oct. 65 – 8 April 70	Long Binh	184	183	171
561st TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	23 Oct. 66 – 20 Dec. 68	Quang Tri	—	329	—
563d TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Lewis	23 Oct. 66 – 30 Nov. 71	Pleiku	—	183	184
565th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	25 June 65 – 4 March 69	Can Tho	329	329	—
566th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Meade	2 Jan. 67 – 31 Jan. 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	183	184
567th TR	Terminal Service	Eustis	7 Sept. 66 – 16 April 72	Long Binh	—	329	329
572d TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Meade	19 Nov. 66 – 24 March 73	Quang Tri	—	183	184
585th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Lewis	18 Oct. 66 – 22 June 72	Phu Bai	—	183	186
588th TR	Depot	Atlanta	2 Nov. 66 – 1 Sept. 68	Cam Ranh Bay	—	115	—
592d TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	18 Oct. 66 – 1 May 72	Cam Ranh Bay	—	179	181
597th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Eustis	23 July 65 – 1 May 72	Phu Tai	186	183	186
— 604th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Campbell	7 March 66 – 13 March 73	Pleiku	247	247	247
— 605th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Riley	8 March 66 – 1 May 72	Phu Loi	247	247	247
— 608th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Bragg	23 July 67 – 30 April 72	Dong Ba Thinh	—	247	247
610th TR	Aircraft Maintenance General Support	Benning	1 Oct. 66 – 30 April 72	An Khe	—	289	306
— 611th TR	Aircraft Direct Support	Riley	5 Oct. 62 – 13 March 73	Vinh Long	244	244	244
630th TR#	Medium Cargo Truck	Meade	5 Sept. 68 – 2 Aug. 69	Phu Bai	—	183	—
666th TR	Light Truck ($2^1/_2$-t)	Benning	14 Aug. 67 – 4 Jan. 72	Cha Rang	—	175	175
669th TR	Light Truck (5-t)	Campbell	23 Oct. 66 – 15 March 71	Qui Nhon	—	179	174
670th TR	Medium Cargo Truck (12-t)	Hood	22 July 65 – 28 Oct. 71	Cam Ranh Bay	186	183	186
737th TR**	Medium Petroleum Truck	Lewis	18 Sept. 68 – 8 July 69	Quang Tri	—	183	—
805th TR	Light Truck (2½-t)/ Medium Truck (5-t)	Eustis	15 Oct. 66 – 20 March 72	Vung Tau	—	175	183
854th TR	Terminal Service	Story	12 Oct. 66 – 29 April 71	Qui Nhon	—	329	—
863d TR	Light Truck (2½-t)	Devens	12 Oct. 66 – 1 Aug. 70	Phu Bai	—	118	—
870th TR	Terminal Service	Story	18 Feb. 66 – 17 Feb. 72	Cam Ranh Bay	329	329	329
1097th TR	Medium Boat	Eustis	30 May 65 – 26 July 69	Dong Tam	181	246	—
1098th TR	Medium Boat	Eustis	30 May 65 – 17 Feb. 72	Qui Nhon	181	181	181
1099th TR	Medium Boat	Eustis	10 Nov. 65 – 28 Feb. 72	Cat Lai	181	181	181
"GOER" TR (Prov)	GOER Rough-terrain Cargo Carrier	Vietnam	1 Sept. 66 – 20 Oct. 69	Phuoc Vinh	—	?	—
Provisional Corps Transportation Company		Vietnam	3 April 68 – 4 March 69	Da Nang	—	?	—

Additionally, there were numerous provisional transportation companies formed on a temporary basis by support commands and composite service battalions.

* Second tour in Vietnam.

† Nebraska Army Reserve from Omaha via Ft. Lewis.

‡ Florida Army Reserve from St. Petersburg via Ft. Eustis.

§ Georgia Army Reserve from Augusta via Ft. Lee.

‖ Pennsylvania Army Reserve from Greencastle via Ft. Benning.

Pennsylvania Army Reserve from Washington via Ft. Meade.

** Washington Army Reserve from Yakima via Ft. Lewis.

Southeast Asia: Building the Bases

The History of Construction In Southeast Asia

By Richard Tregaskis

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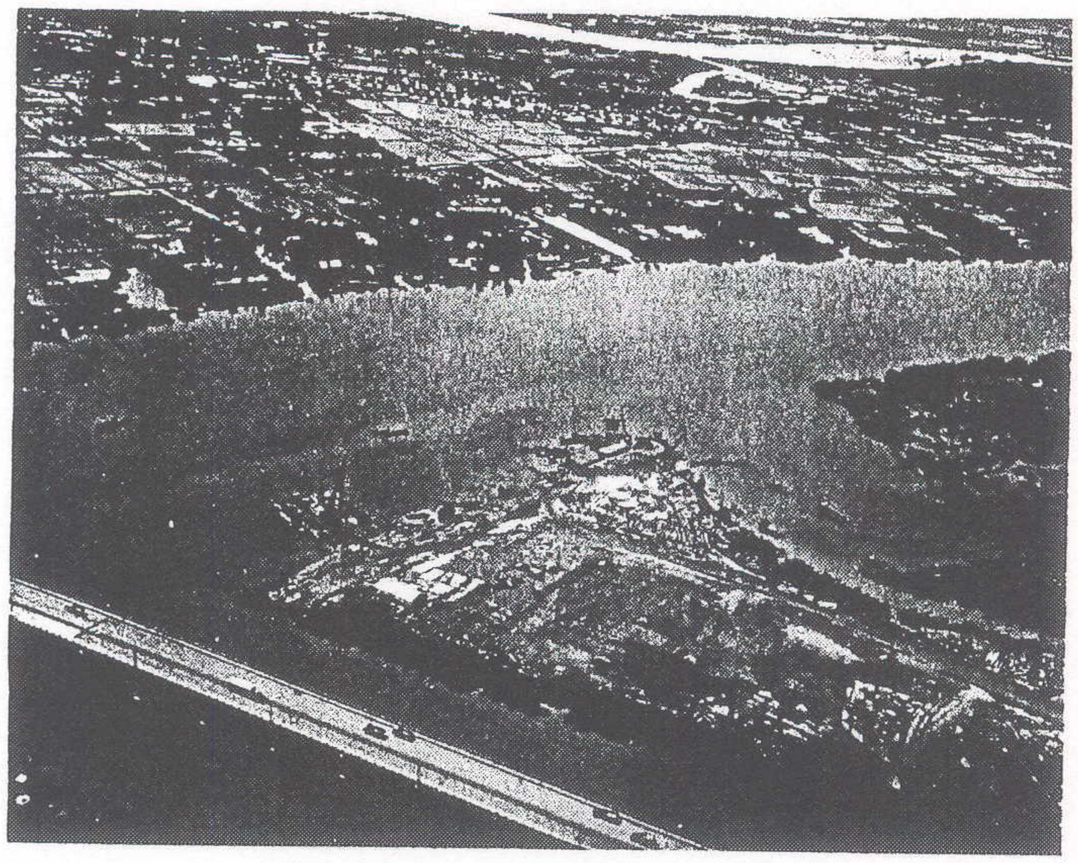
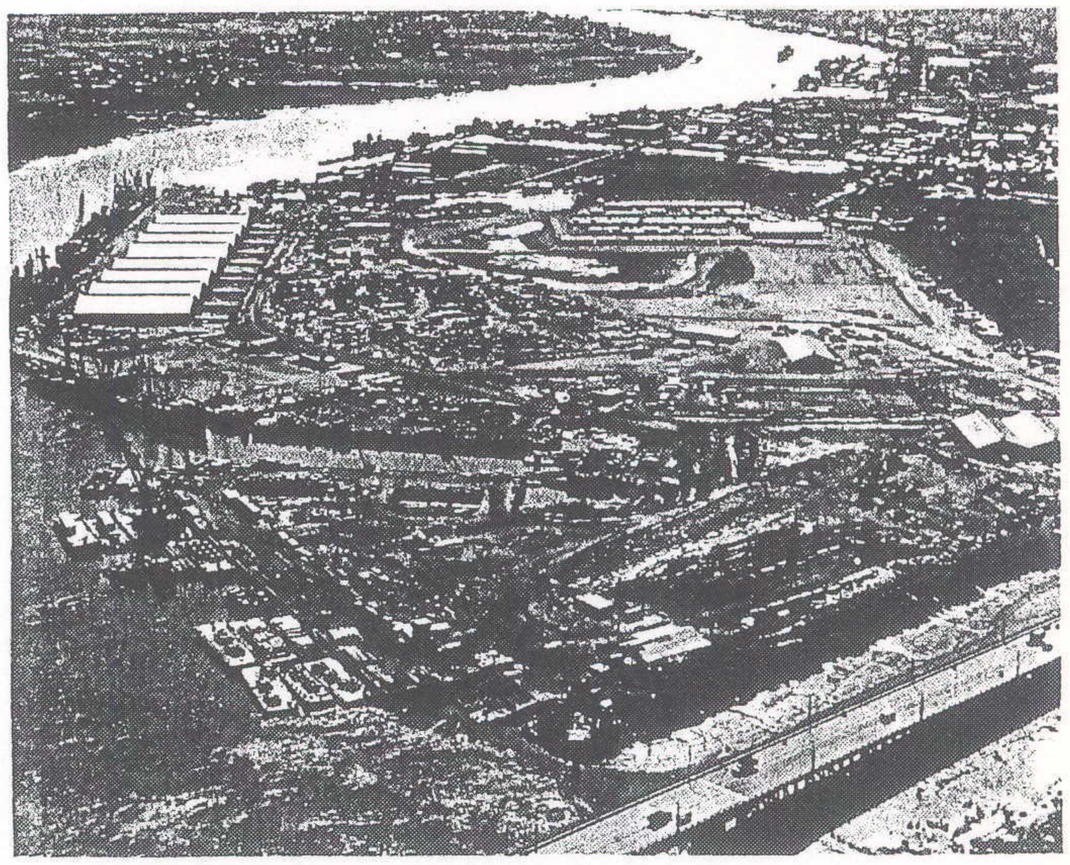
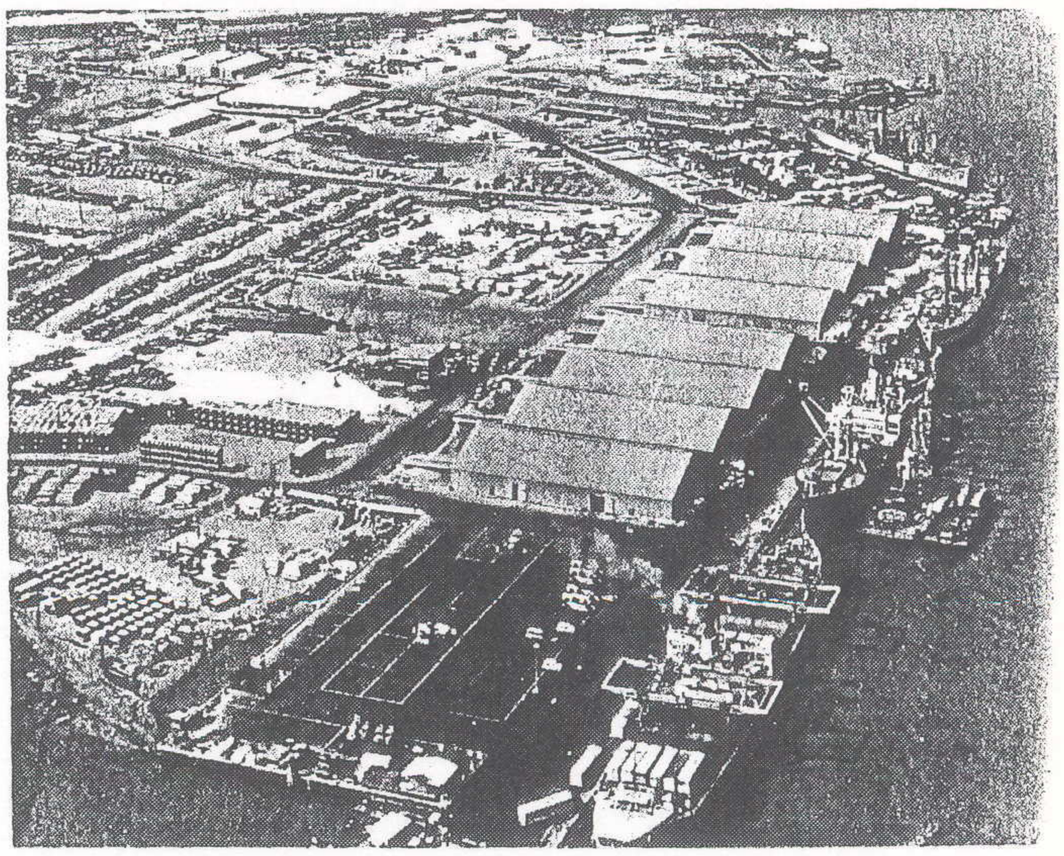


17. Newport (Saigon)—Early View. A rice paddy, two miles north of Saigon, was selected for a "new port" to alleviate the jam-up of freighters waiting to unload—some, as long as 30–40 days. The pile driver barge in the photo is in the process of driving 1,144 piles to form the shallow-draft section of the port. Some 500 of these piles had to be driven an average of 135 feet.

18. Newport (Saigon)—In Construction. Since the Saigon River bottom was silt, dredged fill from the river could not be used and fill had to be brought in from other areas. Sand was brought in at the rate of 7,000 cubic meters a day; and, unbelievably, about 3,000 cubic meters of this was delivered by sampans.



19. Newport (Saigon)—Completed. The 100-acre Newport project required 2,000,000 CY of fill. It took a total of 4,050 steel piles (a combined length of 107 miles); 35 miles of structural steel was used. The 760,000 SF staging deck required a pour of 18,000 CY of concrete. Total construction time was 15 months. Newport can accommodate, simultaneously, 4 ocean-going vessels, 2 fleet-size LSTs, 7 barges, and 2 LCMs. The estimated cargo handling capability is 150,000 tons per month. Newport was "turned over" to the Army First Logistical Command on 10 July 1967.



20. Newport (Saigon)—Close-up View. This is the deep-draft concrete wharf. The 4 berths have a combined length of 2,400 feet; the 8 transit sheds have a total floor space of 192,000 SF.

Cam Ranh Bay

"The highest priced labor in the Philippines was 91¢ an hour—Class A welder. The productivity of these people was quite good. For example, the fabrication cost of these structures initially—was $190 per ton. That was fabricated, completely welded, loaded out on the barges ready to ship to Vietnam, all sandblasted, painted, everything, ..."

"We steadily dropped our cost, so the last structures we built for Newport averaged out at about $110 per ton. We nearly halved our cost by more efficiency of the people as they learned their jobs."

After the completion of the two Reeves piers at Da Nang, the Poro Point facility worked on pier structures for Newport, a major deep draft port put up within 15 miles of Saigon, to the north on the Saigon River.

This Newport problem, too, was difficult, if not impossible—like the Da Nang job. Such jobs were getting to be routine for Bill Reeves. He remembers talking it over with CDR Neal Clements, the OICC design officer, when the Newport work began.

"Clements, when I phoned him, had this problem. Here's what it looked like. He said, 'My God, we've got to build docks on this river, because this is the only place adjoining a highway for logistical support. It's just a tidal bog. How are we going to accomplish this thing?'

"We decided that what we would do on the river was strike a straight line out there to the depth of water required for the wharf and then build back up to the bank of the river and don't dredge anything. Because anything we would dredge would slip back in just as fast as we ~~could~~ dredge it out. The tides are so tremendous, about a 15-foot tide, and that river is just like a mill race, any dredged channel wouldn't last a month. We did not disturb the natural configuration of the stream—just go out to the depth of water required and say that is your wharf line and build in. That was the idea.

"We had a meeting and it was planned to go to this type of construction. How fast could we do it? We said: 'Well, there were four major berths, we would plan to turn over a berth every 60 days to the military.' That was just the pace of the transport we had from Poro Point. If we had more barges, we could have done it faster, but it was done that way and we turned over the last one a month ahead of schedule. We did the four berths in seven months instead of the eight that was scheduled."

probably was a good thing. It kept both sides of the team effort alert and knowledgeable. There were certainly few "love-ins" which could lead to complacency.

* * * * *

It was here, in the second half of 1966, before the impact of the $200 million under-funding caught up with the OICC, that most of the outstanding building miracles which so transformed the face of South Vietnam were taking shape.

The most outstanding agglomerations of production came in the port cities, where ports, troop cantonments and airbases were all erected with the maximum speed. All three classes of building—ports, cantonments and airbases—were pushed by their respective "customers." Thus, in mid-1966, Saigon, Cam Ranh, and Da Nang in Vietnam, and U Tapao and Sattahip, Thailand, became the busiest building centers of the world.

The most ambitious (and expensive) part of the building in the Saigon vicinity in '66 was the construction of the pier and wharf complex at Newport, which we have already described in connection with H. W. "Bill" Reeves' work to provide the "Ports-a-Go-Go." The first effort of the Newport project was to provide, during the Summer and Fall months of '66, four barge wharves, 60 by 260 feet, two LST slips with ramps, and an LCM and an LSV ramp.

Work on the Reeves piers continued through the Fall and Winter months. The berths were finished in July of 1967. The pier structure included the four berths with a total length of 2,400 feet, and two transit sheds, each of which consisted of four interconnected buildings 120 by 200, with a total area of 290,000 square feet. That was almost 16 acres of floor space—about half of the covered area of the Pentagon.

One of the RMK–BRJ training schools was opened at Newport to teach English and the techniques of engineering and welding to chosen Vietnamese employees.

And at the peak of the construction effort at Newport, 1,800

Filling operations were started in early '66, with the initial fill material being hauled from an area eight miles up the Bien Hoa highway, the vicinity of the University Quarry (SUMPCO).

The fill job involved the hauling of 1.2 million cubic yards of sub-base material (sand) and 240,000 cubic yards of rock for surfacing the area.

But the flow of fill from the quarry was impeded by high priority needs of the nearby Newport project. All RMK–BRJ trucks in the Saigon area were hauling to that "Ports-a-Go-Go" project. So, as in the case of Newport and the Army depots, much of the base material for filling the island was furnished by subcontractors, the material delivered by sampans.

In the Summer months, the first four administrative buildings were under construction, and authorization for another 23 buildings came through in September of 1966.

Three huge equipment repair shops were under construction at the same time, and concurrently, three 70-foot by 170-foot prefab warehouse buildings were put up during '66, finishing in December.

Thu Duc was going to be the main trans-shipping point for the rock and sub-base material coming out of the SUMPCO quarry. So a barge anchorage, with floating piers to allow for the 15-foot tides of the river at this point, was completed.

Incidentally, the SUMPCO quarry was opened in this hot VC area at first in October of 1965, then halted because of legal action taken by Vietnamese property owners. Premier Ky finally moved in and led an effort by the Vietnamese Joint Chiefs of Staff in January of 1966 to expropriate the area.

In those early months of 1966, the area was still insecure, and had not been physically cleared by troops. On February 10th, an American employee taking part in the clearing of brush, Brian B. Foster, was killed by a group of Viet Cong. After this episode, all workers in outlying zones were accompanied by troops.

In February of 1966, the first of SUMPCO's rock-crushing plants was operating. A two-shift operation was started in April 1966. Ambitious plans to expand the crushing operation were held up in June by a strike of workers who went out in sympathy with striking workers in Saigon, for three weeks. But in October, a larger crusher with 42 inch by 48 inch jaws was installed. And a month later, an imposing 400-ton per hour crusher was installed. By year's end,

As I look back on my life, I thank God for the opportunity that was given to me to be a soldier. If given that opportunity again, I would with the same pride and even greater humility raise my hand and take once again the soldier's oath.

From the author's remarks
upon retirement, June 30, 1972.

A Soldier Reports

General William C. Westmoreland

Doubleday & Company, Inc. Garden City, New York 1976

Nixon, they shouted, was widening the war, yet the enemy had long before brought the war into Cambodia and Lon Nol's Cambodian Government welcomed American and South Vietnamese intervention. Under the rationale espoused by the dissenters, the Allies in World War II would have been prohibited from invading France to get at Germany. Denying what your adversary is doing to you and turning the other cheek may make sense in social intercourse, but it can hardly be justified as a principle of war. Had the dissenting students, editorialists, and legislators been on the receiving end of some of those Soviet rockets or other lethal hardware that came through Cambodia, as were their compatriots in uniform, their indignation might have been considerably more muted. The Johnson administration's earlier policy of secrecy and lack of candor about the enemy's use of Cambodia may have contributed to the uproar.

One of the basic reasons the enemy turned to Sihanoukville and Cambodia as his primary source of supplies for his forces in at least the southern half of South Vietnam was a project known as MARKET TIME. Begun in the spring of 1965 under an able MACV naval component commander, Rear Admiral Norvell G. Ward, and pursued by his successor, Rear Admiral Kenneth L. Veth, it was a joint project of the U.S. and South Vietnamese navies to prevent the North Vietnamese from infiltrating supplies by sea into the hundreds of isolated coves that dot South Vietnam's extensive coastline. I decided to institute MARKET TIME after South Vietnamese planes during the first two months of 1965 found two big trawlers unloading arms and ammunition along the coast, clear evidence that screening by a fleet of South Vietnamese junks was inadequate.

By late 1966 close to a hundred high-speed aluminum-hulled Swift boats were patrolling the coast, supplemented by thirty-one 82-foot U. S. Coast Guard cutters and some fifteen U. S. Navy patrol aircraft, while farther off shore American destroyer escorts and minesweepers formed a second belt. Aided by Vietnamese junks and fire support from U.S. aircraft carriers and naval gunfire support ships, these craft searched close to 4,000 junks, sampans, and fishing boats every day. Whereas before 1965 the Viet Cong had received an estimated 70 per cent of their supplies by maritime infiltration, by the end of 1966 that had been reduced to a trickle of less than 10 per cent. Even so, an element of frustration was involved, for although vessels outside South Vietnam's territorial limits might obviously be transporting war supplies, probably headed for Sihanoukville, American and South Vietnamese craft had to operate scrupulously within the territorial limits. During these operations the South Vietnamese decorated a U. S. Coast Guard crew that sank a North Vietnamese trawler inside territorial limits, an unusual foreign decoration for coast guardsmen normally accustomed to operating close to American shores.

In a related program known as GAME WARDEN, 120 U.S. patrol river boats searched some 2,000 junks and sampans each day on South Vietnam's

vast internal waterways, in the process interfering with VC tax collection and permitting freer movement of produce to the markets. That the searches troubled the VC was apparent from the number of attempted ambushes. The VC also floated signs down the rivers daring the boats to "come fight." A converted LST served as a mother craft for the patrol boats, and a fleet of U. S. Army helicopter gunships (later to be manned by U. S. Navy crews) was on call to help whenever the boats came under fire.

Powered by two water-jet engines capable of operating in shallow waters without damage from marine growth, unlike prop-propelled boats, the patrol boats were fast and maneuverable. The Navy had experimented with the Hovercraft air-cushion vehicle, but it had a plastic bubble to protect the crew from air turbulence that absorbed so much tropical sun even when air conditioned that the heat was intolerable. It was also so noisy that it telegraphed its approach to the enemy. The patrol river boats remained the workhorses of the inland waterways.

I was long concerned that the VC might sink a big vessel along the forty-mile course of the Saigon River to block the vital shipping channel between Saigon and the sea. The main channel ran through fifty square miles of mangrove swamps and thousands of tributary waterways, a region known as the Rung Sat, which was an ideal base from which the VC could operate against shipping. One of the most savage pieces of terrain in the world, the Rung Sat has almost no ground that is not subject to inundation from a six-foot tidal variation. The houses of the few villages in the region are built on stilts.

GAME WARDEN patrol boats operated frequently in the Rung Sat, as did small groups of U. S. Navy and South Vietnamese Navy commandos known as SEAL (sea, air, land) teams, which proved so effective that I asked for double the number to operate throughout the Mekong Delta. To break the VC hold on the region, I later shifted a battalion of the 1st Infantry Division to the Rung Sat where the men encountered some of the most unusual and trying conditions ever faced by the American soldier. Because the men spent hours and even days patrolling in water up to the waist, companies had to be rotated frequently to forestall foot and skin diseases. The men slept at night on air mattresses and at particularly high tides might awaken to find themselves afloat. Wooden platforms built above the high-tide mark served as helicopter pads. It was a strange war within a strange war, but it cut one of the main VC infiltration routes into the Saigon region and disrupted the enemy's organization. Even though the VC later hit an occasional ship with rocket, machine gun, or mortar fire, they never succeeded in blocking the shipping channel to Saigon.

The gamble I took in 1965 to meet the crisis threatening the ARVN by bringing in American combat troops before I had developed a logistical system to support them paid off, both because the American soldier adapts readily to exigencies and because engineer and logistical troops ac-

complished near miracles. Even though there were few support troops at first, the engineers and logisticians in less than two and a half years superimposed a modern logistical system on an underdeveloped nation capable of supporting one and a quarter million troops of various nationalities, while at the same time providing large amounts of supplies for the local population. Surely that was one of the more remarkable accomplishments of American forces in Vietnam.

Where there was but one deep-draft port at the start—Saigon, with its antiquated facilities—there were in the end seven, including Newport, built from scratch just upriver from Saigon to handle military cargoes while leaving Saigon for civilian needs. Where there were but three airfields capable of handling jet aircraft, there were in the end eight, plus eighty-four tactical airstrips that could accommodate propeller-driven planes, including transports, and hundreds of helicopter landing pads. Where there had been virtually no military storage facilities, there were in the end 11 million square feet of covered storage, over 5 million square yards of open storage, and 2.5 million cubic feet of cold storage. Where communications facilities had been limited and outmoded, a complex grid of radio and telephone facilities in the end linked every section of the country, while radio and submarine cable joined Saigon to Hawaii, Washington, and the world. Roads and bridges were built and rebuilt, canals dredged. The process was convulsive, but in a short span of time South Vietnam acquired facilities possessed by few nations other than the most highly developed.

A convulsive process like this inevitably leads to mistakes and expensive procedures that a less hurried approach would obviate. In the rush to get the first combat troops to Vietnam, for example, many units brought prepackaged equipment that turned out to be of no use in a tropical environment. For a while during 1966 ammunition stocks were low, forcing me to limit ARVN artillery to two rounds per day per gun, but no American unit ever wanted for necessary ammunition. An aerial shuttle from the United States patterned after the truck convoys of the "Red Ball Express" in Europe during World War II provided such critical items as spare parts and emergency supplies. Until dock and storage facilities could be increased, I had no choice but to hold ships for up to a month or more as floating warehouses, a costly expedient and one that American newsmen frequently criticized, but I was not going to be a party to shortchanging the American soldier.

One of the number of expedients used to expedite the construction program was a floating pier, a patented product of the DeLong Corporation. The piers were fabricated in the United States in sections and towed to South Vietnam, where they could be quickly emplaced. The DeLong piers helped turn Cam Ranh Bay into a major port in a matter of months and provided additional deep-draft facilities at Qui Nhon, Danang, and elsewhere.

Viewing the feverish construction activity throughout South Vietnam, a casual observer might have deduced that the Americans were concentrating

less on the enemy than their own creature comforts. That was hardly the case. After the first influx of combat troops, priority did pass to support units as opposed to combat troops, but the number of support troops never exceeded 45 per cent of the total and by 1968 was down below 40 per cent. That compared favorably to a ratio of 43 per cent in World War II and Korea.

Once the early crisis of supply had passed, creature comforts were nevertheless a conscious part of the supply effort. Concerned about the effect of superimposing thousands of free-spending Americans on South Vietnam's tremulous economy, I tried to provide facilities that would keep American soldiers and their dollars on their bases and out of the towns and cities. A well-stocked PX, occasionally steak for dinner and ice cream for dessert, volley ball courts, and a few swimming pools—those might make good copy for a newspaperman or a Congressman looking for something to criticize, but they served an important purpose.

Although I established an over-all directorate of construction in MACV, first headed by Major General Carroll H. Dunn, all the military services contributed to the construction program, while ARVN engineers and engineers of Allied forces handled most of the construction for their own forces. Credit belongs also to a joint civilian contractor, Raymond International and Morrison-Knudsen (known as RMK). The partnership was joined later by Brown & Root and J. A. Jones (then referred to as RMK-BRJ), which handled much of the airfield and port construction, all effectively headed by the late Bert Perkins, executive vice president of RMK. The use of these civilian contractors and others, an unusual procedure in a combat zone, freed thousands of troops for other assignments.

At peak strength the civilian contractors employed 51,000 people. South Vietnamese civilians, Koreans, and Filipinos worked both for the contractors and directly for the military services, freeing further American troops. As an ancillary benefit, the South Vietnamese learned technical and supervisory skills. It might be initially amusing to watch a tiny Vietnamese, dwarfed by his machine, operating a big American bulldozer or roadscraper, but the Vietnamese learned quickly and worked efficiently. Washing the uniforms of American troops became a major cottage industry, as evidenced by many a green uniform spread on fence or shrubbery to dry.

Another civilian organization that proved to be a critical element in the supply lifeline was Pan American World Airways. The pilots and crews of Pan Am never said no, whatever the strain or danger. From the chairman of the board, Juan Trippe, to the gracious stewardesses, Pan Am proved a close friend of the man in uniform.

Maintenance of weapons and machines under tropical conditions was a serious and continuing problem. Obtaining construction materials for use in a country lacking natural resources involved lengthy shipments from the United States or elsewhere. The long monsoon seasons turned roads into morasses and inundated runways, while high tides and heavy surf limited

over-the-beach supply. Yet for all these problems and more, the job was done and in a hurry. By late 1967 the vast construction effort was almost finished, and more than a million tons of supplies were coming through newly developed ports every month, all done in an underdeveloped corner of the world that is nineteen days by merchantman from San Francisco, thirty-four days from New York.

That a nation with no tradition of democracy could conduct a political campaign and free elections while engaged in a struggle for its existence was to me a most noteworthy achievement. That is what the South Vietnamese in 1966 and 1967 accomplished. Having promised President Johnson at Honolulu early in 1966 to begin the democratic process and having vowed at the conclusion of the Buddhist crisis in June to conduct elections for a constituent assembly, the first step toward election of a representative government, Ky and Thieu held to their commitment.

As registration for the election began, the Buddhists urged the South Vietnamese to boycott the election while the Viet Cong denounced the election procedure as a farce. The safety of those standing for election and even those who voted, said the underground VC radio, "could not be guaranteed." In some cases the VC confiscated identity cards which the people had to have to register. Yet for all the pressures, some five and a quarter million people registered, or about two thirds of the eligible electorate, and on election day, September 11, 1966, almost 81 per cent of those registered voted. Even the New York *Times,* usually quick to cavil, noted that "foreign observers who roamed freely on election day generally agreed there were few irregularities."

While the 117-man Constituent Assembly was at work drafting a constitution, another natural catastrophe tested the government's ability to provide for the people—a disastrous flood occurred in the Mekong Delta, leaving some 50,000 refugees, heavy livestock losses, and in some provinces destroying half the rice crop. Yet in contrast to the dawdling of General Khanh's government during the flood in the northern provinces in 1964, when the VC had profited, government agencies in the fall of 1966 provided emergency services with dispatch. As the waters subsided, I could detect no evidence that the VC had increased their hold on the people.

As I stood in the reviewing stand at the annual National Day parade in Saigon on November 1, 1966, I felt for the first time a genuine optimism over political developments. Much remained to be done, and the presidential election the following year was destined to produce some anxious moments, but the election of the Constituent Assembly was a solid start.

The VC fired fourteen rounds from recoilless rifles during the parade, reminder enough that a war remained to be fought, but Thieu and Ky were confident and despite rumors and press reports of conflict between them, I knew they made an effective team. An impetuous Ky recognized that he needed Thieu's restraining hand. Furthermore, the generals as a group had

come to accept that the armed forces were the primary hope for stability in the country and that they had to maintain unity among themselves. The opening on the same day of a new presidential residence, Independence Palace, three years in the building, provided an impressive symbol of national pride.

I went to bed that night feeling good, confident at last not that the end of the war was at hand but that we had a solid substance to work with. No longer were we engaged in the frustrating exercise of trying to pick up beads of mercury.

In August 1966 I flew to Hawaii for another brief rest and conferences with Admiral Sharp. Upon receiving a telephone call from Deputy Secretary of Defense Vance telling me that President Johnson was contemplating inviting me and Kitsy to the LBJ Ranch in Texas, I told Vance that I thought it best for me to stay away from the United States lest I get involved in the political turmoil surrounding the war. My demurral was in vain. A second call informed me that the President wanted me to come.

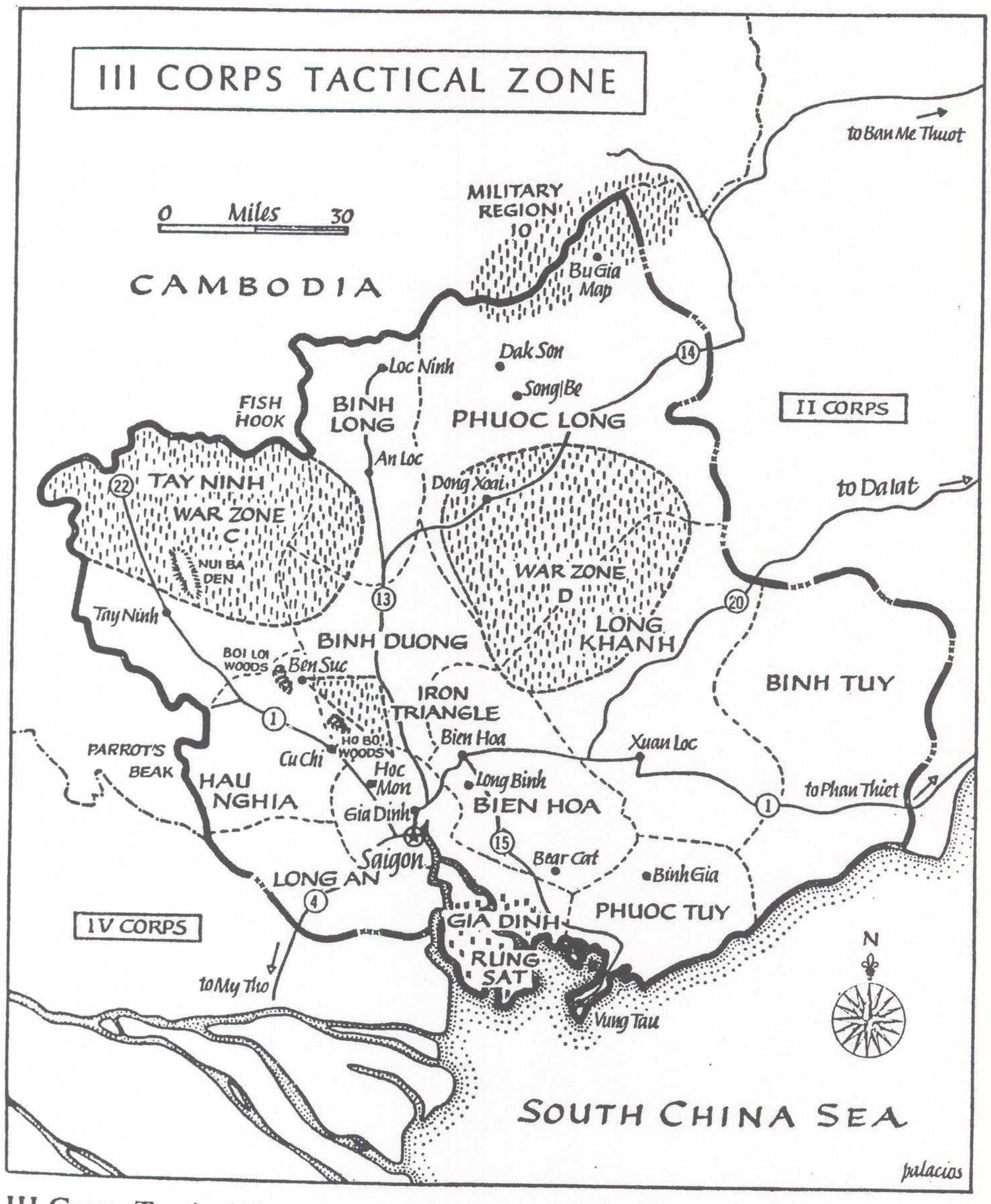
The next day, Saturday, August 13, I flew with Kitsy, Captain Carpenter, and my faithful secretarial assistant, Warrant Officer Charles Montgomery, in the CINCPAC command plane to Bergstrom Air Force Base, near Austin, Texas, thence by presidential jet to an air strip near the Johnson ranch. The President and Mrs. Johnson greeted us. It was my first meeting with the First Lady, a gracious, charming, beautiful woman with genuine warmth.

It was my first encounter, too, with a favorite exploit of the President's: chasing deer about the ranch in his Lincoln Continental convertible. As dinnertime approached, Mrs. Johnson radioed to the ranch house to put steaks on, while we stopped by the road and had a drink from a bar mounted in a car belonging to the Secret Service.

At dinner the President asked his press secretary, Bill Moyers, to say grace. Moyers began in a voice so low that it was hard to understand him. "Speak up, Bill," the President said brusquely, "I can't hear you." "I beg your pardon, Mr. President," Moyers responded, "I wasn't talking to you."

My discussions with the President were cordial but hardly substantive, so that I was left to ponder exactly why he had insisted on the visit. The only significant exchange involved the possibility of another stand-down of the air campaign against North Vietnam. I strongly urged that he order no full halt to the bombing. North Vietnamese infiltration across the DMZ and continued infiltration through Laos made it essential that at least that part of the campaign directed at military movements continue. Although the President heard me with apparent interest, he made no commitment.

The next morning we accompanied the President and Mrs. Johnson to services in an Episcopal church in Fredericksburg, Texas. The press met us at the church and again upon our return to the ranch, whereupon we departed from the ranch air strip as the Johnsons waved good-by.



III Corps Tactical Zone

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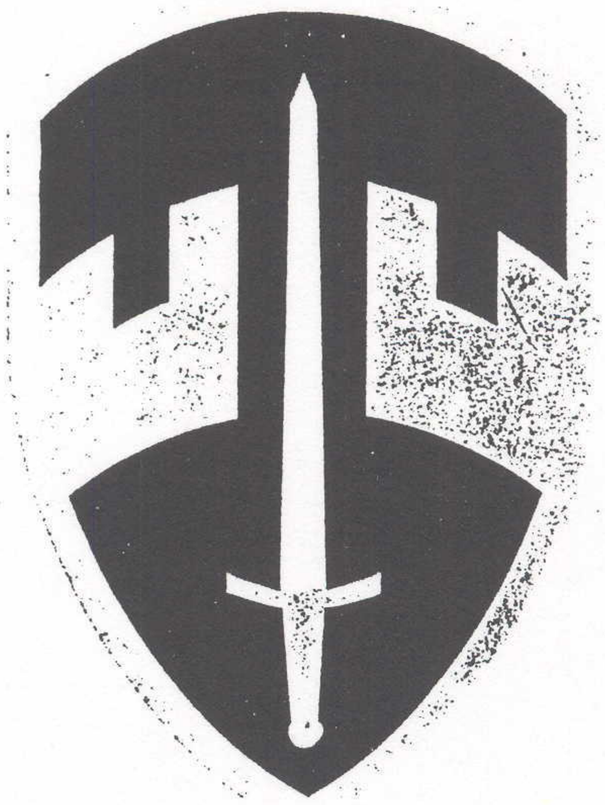

COMMAND HISTORY
1967
VOLUME II

PREPARED BY THE MILITARY HISTORY BRANCH
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The Saigon Port

(U) Saigon, with its predominantly Chinese suburb of Cholon, is the traditional economic and political center of RVN. It is situated on the west bank of the meandering Saigon River, 43 miles from the South China Sea. Shipping for Saigon proceeded from Vung Tau up the narrow, twisting, poorly marked channels of the Long Tau and Saigon Rivers. Enroute to Saigon, river traffic had to transit the VC-infested Rung Sat Special Zone.

(U) The Saigon Port complex was made up of three distinct areas--the commercial port, the Fish Market area, and the Newport (military) (see Figures VIII-10 and 11). In addition, there was the ammunition unloading and storage complex centered about Cat Lai, and numerous canals bordered by storehouses (go-downs) served by thousands of junks and barges.

(U) As the economic center of the nation, Saigon's port was the bellwether of the RVN's economic viability as well as the USG's ability to stabilize the economy and government of Vietnam. From 1965 to 1967 Saigon had been a separate and prime logistic problem area. Even though much military and limited amounts of USAID cargo moved through other ports in RVN during this time, all transoceanic commercial cargo for RVN continued to move through Saigon. Saigon bound military cargo was destined primarily for US/FW/RVN forces in the southern III CTZ and in the IV CTZ.

(U) Congestion in the port had manifested itself as soon as large numbers of US and FW forces arrived in RVN. The port in its arrangement, its physical location, its working routine and its material handling equipment was geared to support an agricultural economy, not a vast, modern war machine. What was required was a completely separate port, free from the overburdening USAID/commercial cargoes and at the same time an overhauling of the traditional port. A military port, dubbed Newport, was planned in 1965. Construction of it had started that same year. Meanwhile, modernization of the existing commercial port was undertaken. This was a contunuing process that required constant liaison with the GVN and local port agencies.

(U) Adding to the problems of the Saigon Port was the susceptibility of the Long Tau Channel to interdiction by the Viet Cong. Despite

use of one berth at the commercial port. The 4th Transport Command, however, continued to operate four other deep draft berths at the commercial port and one at the Fish Market. In April the second deep draft berth at Newport was completed, and another berth in the commercial port was released by COMUSMACV to civilian use, further easing the commercial port's backlog problem.

(U) The progress made in the commercial port operations during the early months of 1967 was due in large part to the advisory effort of the 125th Terminal Command and USAID. The GVN Port Authority by early 1967 was in fact operating the port, not just watching the port operate. A major innovation was the obtaining of cargo stowage plans by ships' agents from ships prior to their arrival and the use of these to work out discharge plans with the stevedore companies. These plans were then submitted to the Port Authority prior to the ships' being called up on berth. Then a task force made up of personnel from the Port Authority, 125th Terminal Command, and USAID called on importers and notified them exactly where and when their consignments would be unloaded. GVN Customs allowed the importer to clear his cargo using the ship manifest prior to discharge, thereby delivering the cargo directly to the importers' trucks "from the hook" and obviating any dockside storage--the biggest obstacle to raising the port's through-put capability.

(U) After initial growing pains importers saw the advantages to this system and cooperation increased. In March 1967 two ships were unloaded of virtually all their cargo (99.6% and 97.2%) in this manner. An inventory of old cargo on barges, and the new practice of accurate preparation of manifests of cargo discharged to barges allowed a similar system of pre-clearing and calling up of barges when importers were ready to receive their goods. This made possible accelerated barge discharge without further crowding of in-transit facilities. By March, after much urging, the GVN began moving long unclaimed cargo out of the port to inland holding areas and published new tariffs reflecting increased penalties and storage rates for over-age cargo. This action was a great boon in the total effort to clear the port of cargo stored over 30 days. The direct result was an increase in port discharge and throughput rates.

(U) By late spring the Saigon commercial port crisis was essentially over. On 21 May CO, 4th Transportation Command, reported that "Four commercial vessels are at Cap St. Jacques (Vung Tau) waiting for berths

Summary of Saigon Port Facilities

(C) The deep draft, shallow draft, and lighterage port of Saigon was divided into two categories: military (Newport, Cat Lai and leased commercial facilities) and commercial (the commercial port and the Fish Market area). Of the latter, in use by the military at the end of 1967 were:

1) Commercial port berths: 3

2) Fish Market berths: 1

3) Barge sites: 4

Newport, the USG built deep draft, shallow draft, and lighterage port upriver from the commercial port consisted of:

1) Four deep draft quays.

2) Two LST slips.

3) One LCU/LCM ramp.

4) Four barge sites.

At the end of 1967 no major construction of new facilities was planned for the commercial port. Repair and modernization of existing facilities would be undertaken by USAID and the GVN. Newport pier/ramp facilities were complete.

(C) The Cat Lai complex was used exclusively for ammunition unloading. Ships anchored in the stream and discharged their cargo to barges. Facilities at Cat Lai included:

1) One barge site at Buu Long.

2) Two barge sites at Cogido.

3) One barge site at Can Bien Thieu.

4) One barge site at Can Bin Loi.

5) Four barge sites at Than Tuy Ha.

6) One LCM ramp at Cat Lai.

7) Three mooring buoys at Cat Lai.

Only the Buu Long barge site (300 STON/day) and the Cogido barge sites (1,200 STON/day) were used exclusively for US ammunition. The other facilities were mainly dedicated to RVNAF. Planned expansion of US facilities, beginning in July 1968, would increase US throughput to 4,000 STON/day.

(C) As of the end of 1967 Saigon Port military facility discharge rates were:[128]

1) Commercial port:	5,383 STON/day
2) Newport:	6,060 STON/day
3) Cat Lai complex:	5,066 STON/day
TOTAL:	16,509 STON/day

Other Ports

(U) With the exception of the Da Nang logistic island in the I CTZ, which was operated by the US Naval Support Activity, Da Nang, all ports in RVN were US Army-operated. At the beginning of 1966, except for Saigon, Da Nang and Cam Ranh Bay were the only deep water ports in RVN with alongside berthing--and these two ports were of extremely limited capacities. During 1966 an additional deep water port was opened at Qui Nhon, and existing facilities at other ports were upgraded to the extent that by the end of that year military cargoes destined for all ports in RVN except Saigon were moving without undue delay.

I CTZ

(C) US/RVN/FWMA forces in I CTZ were served primarily through the deep draft, shallow draft, and lighterage port of Da Nang. Da Nang

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PORTS, LAND LOC'S AND MAJOR LOGISTIC COMMANDS

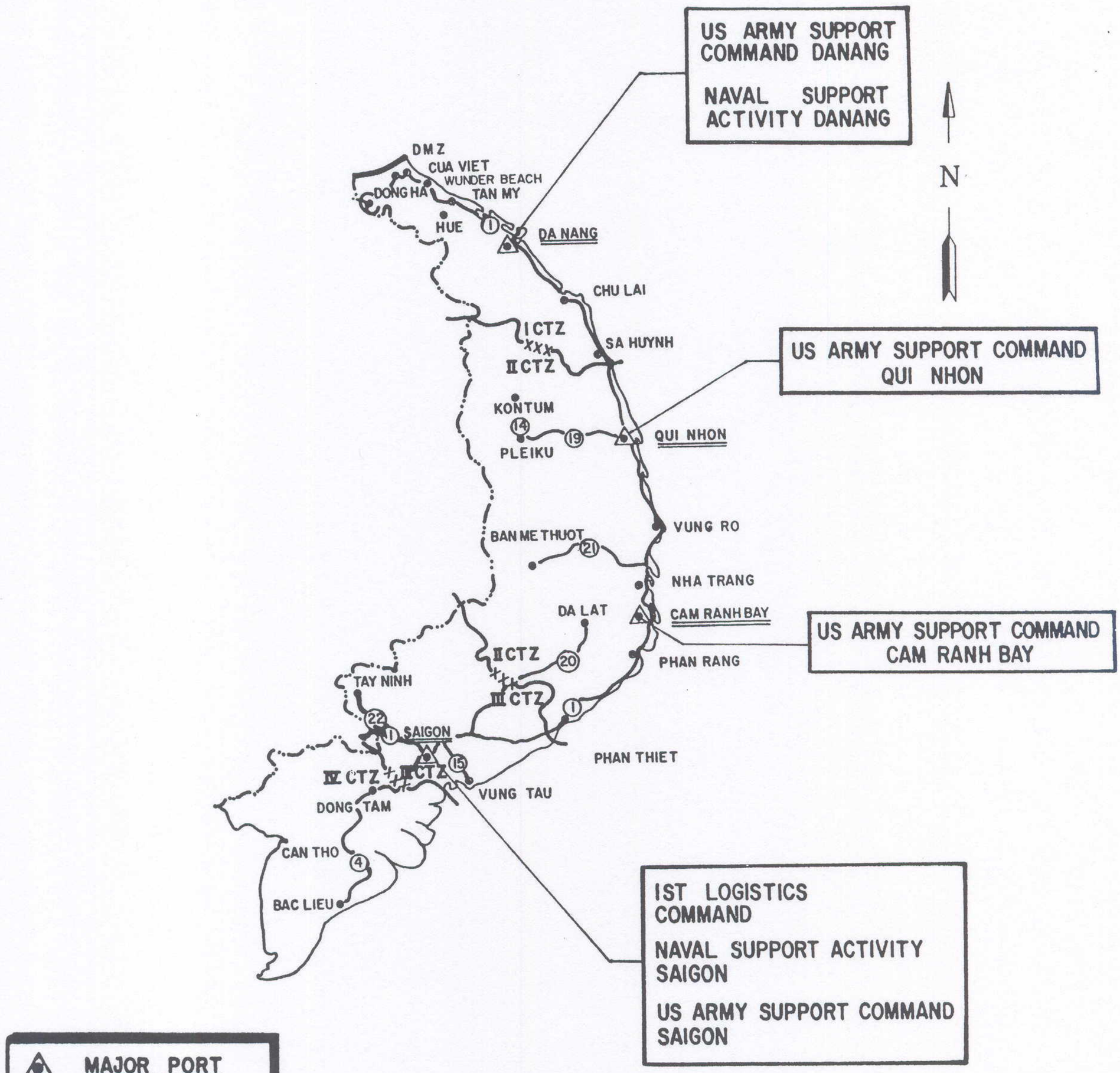

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FIGURE IX-6

(U) During 1966 and 1967, Saigon port operations steadily improved. In these two years, the Saigon Port Authority achieved a gradual self-sufficiency and MACV was able, correspondingly, to reduce the magnitude of the advisory effort. As of the end of 1967, it was planned that in the near future the advisory function to the commercial port would be returned to USAID. A joint MACV-USAID Saigon Port Advisory Plan was published on 1 December 1967. It provided for the orderly transfer of the advisory functions to the Saigon Port Authority from MACV to USAID. When directed, USAID advisory personnel would replace military advisors to the Saigon Port Authority. An effective date of implementation was purposely not specified in the plan as this was to be determined by events and jointly by COMUSMACV, Director USAID, GVN, and higher authority.

(U) While the congestion problem at Saigon was being solved, construction continued on the new military port facility designated "Newport" which was located upstream from the city on the Saigon River. Piers were put into use as they were completed, relieving congestion at the civilian port. Both efforts resulted in a steadily improved situation, and cargoes began to clear more rapidly. By May 1967, the ship backlog at Saigon and elsewhere had been virtually eliminated. Ship turnaround time had been reduced from many weeks to seven days.

(U) Although Saigon Port received the greatest attention because of its economic as well as military importance, the other deep draft ports in RVN were equally vital to the US military effort, and construction at these locations was also rapidly programmed and accomplished. The story at these ports was much the same: construction went hand-in-hand with a continuous increase in throughput. Da Nang, formerly just a lighterage port, was expanded to include six deep water berths and many shallow draft slips and ramps which, by 1968, provided a discharge capacity of 10,660 tons per day. Qui Nhon, by 1968, had four deep draft berths and could handle over 6,000 tons a day. Cam Ranh Bay was developed to the extent that it rivaled many of the world's finest ports, with eight deep draft berths and a daily discharge capacity of close to 7,000 tons as well as 30,000 barrels of POL. The more than a dozen ports and sub-ports built allowed the throughput capability in Vietnam to rise from 370,000 tons per month in late 1965 to 1,200,000 tons per month by the end of 1967, almost a fourfold increase. By January 1968, there were 32 deep draft pier berths for exclusive military use whereas just three years before there had been none for such exclusive use. [118]

RVN Port Development Status

(U) As of the beginning of 1968, the US effort to establish deep and shallow draft ports to support military operations throughout RVN was largely completed. Construction projects ongoing at the time or in the projected stage could be largely characterized as "finishing touches." Below is listed, port by port from north to south, the status of facilities at the beginning of 1968. The data presented reflects the practical port facility capacity, not actual port throughput capability. [119]

1. Hue-Phu Bai/Tan My/Dong Ha/Cua Viet Complex. Hue-Phu Bai/Tan My/Dong Ha/Cua Viet Complex was a lighterage port. Port facilities used for military cargo consisted of 10 LCU ramps and three LST ramps.

[redacted]

Total Facility Capacity:

a. Cargo	900
b. POL	40,000

9. Vung Tau. Vung Tau was a deep-draft, shallow-draft, and lighterage port. Port facilities used for military cargo consisted of a DeLong pier, an LST ramp, seven barge points, and the beach. The temporary LST ramp was to be replaced by two permanent LST ramps.

Port Facilities and Capacity:	STON/BBL PER DAY
Deep Draft:	
DeLong pier (600' x 120') (one side limited to 450')	1,200
Shallow Draft:	
a. One temporary LST ramp	200
b. Two barge points (AB&T)	300
c. Five barge points	750
POL Facilities:	
a. Barge discharge facility	7,000
b. Two 4" assault lines (ARVN concrete pier)	14,000
Total Facility Capacity:	
a. Cargo	2,450
b. POL	21,000

10. Saigon. Saigon Port Complex was a deep-draft river port including facilities at Saigon, Nha Be, Cat Lai, and Newport. Port facilities, used for military, USAID/CPO, and CIP cargo, consisted of eight deep-draft berths, two LST slips, two LST crane wharves, two LCU/LCM ramps, 10 barge sites, and several deep-draft buoys.

Port Facilities and Capacity:	STON/BBL PER DAY
Deep Draft:	
a. Three berths (M&M 1, 2, & 3 - Saigon)	3,000
b. Quay 1 (Fishmarket (K12) Saigon)	750

[redacted]

[redacted]

c. Quays 1, 2, 3, & 4 (Newport) 4,000

Shallow Draft:

a. Saigon

Four barge sites 450

b. Newport

(1) Two LST slips 400

(2) Two LST crane wharves 200

(3) LCU/LCM ramp 360

(4) Four barge sites 1,250

c. Song Dong Hai

One barge site 150

Ammunition:

a. One barge site (Buu Long) (US/RVNAF) 300

b. Two barge sites w/4 cranes (Cogido) 1,200

c. One LCM ramp (Cat Lai (RVNAF) 150

d. One barge site (Bien Thieu) (US/ RVNAF) (2 crane pads) 500

e. One barge site (Cau Bien Loi) (RVNAF) 600

f. Four barge sites (Tan Tuy Ha) (RVNAF) 600

g. Three mooring buoys (Cat Lai) 1,500

POL Facilities: (military only)

a. Two barge offloading facilities (Long Binh) 45,000

b. Two barge offloading facilities (Bien Loi) 75,000

[redacted]

[redacted]

3. Qui Nhon. A 6" POL line (commercial) and two 4" submarines lines were added, increasing POL capacity to 88,000 bbl/day. An ammunition barge wharf with a capacity of 1,800 STON/day was planned.

4. Nha Trang. The two 6" POL lines were upgraded to 8" and the daily capacity increased from 30,000 to 80,000 bbl.

5. Cam Ranh Bay. The two LST ramps under construction at the beginning of the year were completed and added 500 STON/day to the port's capacity.

6. Saigon. The four shallow-draft barge sites which had a daily capacity of 450 STON were converted to maintenance use and therefore were no longer available for barge discharge. The three mooring buoys at Cat Lai were reclassified as transfer points and no longer represented an ammunition offload facility. The port's ammunition handling capacity fell to an unacceptably low level, and the following action was taken to restore the previous ammunition handling capacity:

a. Bien Hoa. An ammunition barge offloading facility was completed in November. The facility consisted of two 100-foot barge offloading piers and storage hardstand. The Buu Long facility was closed when the new facility at Bien Hoa became operational because it had deteriorated to the extent that it was no longer safe to use.

b. Cogido. A new ammunition offloading facility was completed in October. This facility consisted of a 100-foot offloading pier, LCU ramp, and storage hardstand with a daily capacity of 1,500 STON.

c. Cat Lai. Meetings were held in August to determine means of increasing ammunition handling capacity at Cat Lai. It was determined that some of the delays were attributable to inadequate ammunition barge offloading facilities and an inadequate deep-draft ship buoy berth anchorage system. To remedy this situation it was decided to provide a stable mooring system for ships to transfer ammunition by barge. This project consisted of replacement of all existing buoys and anchor chains and the installation of heavier anchors. It was also determined that a fourth deep-draft ship buoy berth would be required to minimize interruption of ammunition transfer operations by maintaining the current three-ship discharge operation during completion of this project. At the end of 1968 all material was on order. It was expected that installation of the mooring components would begin in mid-April and be completed by 1 August 1969.

Effect of the Tet Offensive on Port Operations

(U) The Tet Offensive seriously affected port operations for a short time during the months of February and March. This was not because of any successful attacks on port facilities but the result of necessary curfews imposed on the civilian population by the GVN. This shortened work hours markedly, particularly in Saigon where long-distance commuting of stevedores and other dockside personnel was common. In all ports, nighttime curfews slowed offloading operations and transshipment of cargoes from dockside to depot areas. Ships once again began backing up in the harbors, awaiting offloading berths or were held up at dockside waiting to

[redacted]

[redacted]

unload. However, port problems, although of some concern, never reached the size of those of 1965-1967. In all, the backlog was a short term problem.

As of 7 February, after the GVN had partially lifted the 24-hour curfew in the Saigon area, the work schedule in Saigon for contract stevedores was set at 0900-1530 hours and military stevedores worked the remaining part of the day. On 8 February, COMUSMACV was able to state that Saigon Port was meeting its rated daily capability of 3,750 STON by use of both civilian and military stevedores.

There was, however, continued concern on the part of COMUSMACV as the duration of the curfew continued with no apparent end in sight because of continued fighting in the city. The situation was summed up in a memorandum to the AMAMB on 14 February:

> There are presently nine military ships on berth in Saigon port which are being only sporadically discharged; seven more are waiting at Cape St. Jacques for a berth at Saigon. Thirteen Saigon-manifested ships have been placed in hold outside RVN waters. In addition, there are eleven commercial ships on berth in Saigon which are being slowly worked, five of which are awaiting a berth. Five more commercial ships are scheduled to arrive at Cape St. Jacques today.
>
> The serious shipping backlog is directly attributable to the curfew restrictions imposed on local national employees which, essentially, curtails cargo clearance by truck and the capability of the depots to receive the cargo.
>
> Unless immediate relaxation of the curfew restrictions is granted the Saigon port congestions will approach the same proportions and will present the same problems we experienced a year ago. I solicit your assistance in securing a relaxation of curfew restrictions, as they affect Saigon port operations. [121]

By the middle of February there was little relaxation in curfew hours, despite an almost complete end to the fighting in Saigon and other port areas. The port situation improved only marginally, and at the end of the second week in February the Embassy summed up the situation in its weekly statement:

> The Saigon Port is gradually returning to normal. All ships at the quais are working at least one longshoreman gang. Ships in the stream are not being worked, as barges cannot get to either Cholon or to Thu Duc. The major restriction at this time is the curfew. The port of Da Nang is still under a 24-hour curfew, and no commercial ships are working. Foodstuffs are afloat and available when the curfew is eased. Qui Nhon is under the same restrictions as Da Nang. Nha Trang is reportedly discharging about 500 tons of rice per day. [122]

[redacted]

[redacted]

[redacted]

(U) On 17 February the 1400 curfew in Saigon was extended to 1700 hours. Until that date, all cargo cleared was accomplished by military drivers. After 17 February civilian truck drivers could be used for a one-shift operation per day. Depot receiving capability, although much improved, continued to be the limiting factor and precluded full utilization of combined military/civilian stevedores. Twenty-four hour offloading operations by civilian stevedores were resumed on 22 February when the GVN lifted the curfew in the Saigon area.[123]

(C) Between January and February the decrease in port capability and performance and the rise in discharge workload directly reflected the effects the Tet Offensive had on port operations. Capability was reduced over 16 percent; total cargo handled was reduced by 20 percent; and discharge workload increased by over 24 percent. In summary, the reasons for these reduced capabilities were that commercial stevedores and truck drivers did not report to work during the initial phases of the offensive, curfew at 1400 hours daily further hampered operations even after work resumed, 24-hour operation by civilian stevedores did not resume until 22 February, only military terminal units and military drivers were capable of operating on a 24-hour basis during this period, and no commercial river pilots were available during the Tet period (30 January to 5 February) and, therefore, no ships were berthed/unberthed during this period.

(C) The following actions were taken by MACV to relieve the imbalanced situation:

1. West Coast bookings were reduced by 40 percent.

2. Vessels were diverted for alternate port discharges where possible.

3. Non-priority vessels were diverted to hold areas.

4. Outloading was restricted to cargo already staged, to closed loop items, and to cargo that could be moved by containership service.

(C) The countrywide ship status for February, as compared to the preceding two months was:

Daily Averages

	Dec	Jan	Feb
Ships Working	35	33	38
Ships Waiting	7	9	14
Ships Holding	4	2	11
Total:	46	44	63

(C) In February, all three shipping status categories increased over January--ships working by 15 percent, ships awaiting by 55.5 percent, and ships holding by 450 percent.[124]

(U) By the beginning of April, COMUSMACV was able to summarize the Saigon port situation thusly:

[redacted]

> Saigon port performance continued to reflect an upward trend during this reporting period. The most limiting factors affecting overall performance have been depot reception capability and a general non-availability of commercial barges. Despite these restrictions, throughput has exceeded the rated port capability. The backlog which developed as a result of last month's enemy activity in Saigon has been reduced to a near normal level. On 29 February there were seven ships working, two waiting and seven in hold. As of 23 March there were eight ships working, one waiting, and one in hold. [125]

(U) The following complimentary remarks of 20 April, in a message from the Secretary of State to the Ambassador, were directed at MACV:

> All here (Washington) highly gratified by outstanding performance at all VN ports in recovering from congestion resulting from VC Tet Offensive. The quick restoration to pre-Tet discharge, clearance and ship turnaround standards is solid evidence that past USAID, GVN and MACV efforts have established practices and procedures that are a credit to all.... [126]

Turnover of Saigon Port Advisory Function to USAID

(U) SECDEF, on 29 August 1967, requested MACV/USAID to prepare a plan for USAID to assume the advisory mission to the Saigon Port Authority (SPA), which was then assigned to the US Army 125th Terminal Transportation Command (TTC). The joint MACV/USAID "Saigon Port Advisory Plan" of 1 December 1967 was published in response to this request. It provided a detailed time-phased plan for transfer of the advisory mission to USAID. Progress made by the SPA subsequent to the publication of the plan led to a reduction in military advisory personnel and direct-hire local nationals. In order to conform to these developments, manning of the proposed USAID advisory organization as outlined in the basic plan, was reduced from 156 to 56 when Change One was issued on 20 May 1968. This joint action greatly increased the eventual budgetary feasibility of transferring the advisory function from MACV to USAID. At that time, COMUSMACV noted to CINCPAC and SECDEF that responsibility for discharge of virtually all USAID-sponsored cargo had been returned to GVN and that, for practical purposes, this advisory area should be under the cognizance of USAID, with the 125th TTC phased out of this function. In view of this development and because of the continuing favorable posture of the Saigon port, COMUSMACV recommended that DOD and USAID Washington be requested by CINCPAC to establish an implementing date for the Saigon Port Advisory Plan. [127]

(U) CINCPAC, in considering the above proposal, queried various commands and agencies. USAID proposed that the turnover of advisory responsibility take place at a later (unspecified) date than that of "early in FY-69" as proposed by COMUSMACV. CINCPAC's position as stated to the JCS was:

[redacted]

The advisory services which MACV provides to Saigon Port Authority with 134 personnel can be performed by 56 USAID personnel.... These advisory functions are not connected with military activity nor with the limited amount of military support provided to the discharge of selected USAID cargo.

The advisory functions involved are more properly the responsibility of USAID than MACV. The continuing favorable posture of Saigon port supports the timeliness of transferring the functions at this time.

(The) recommendation (of USAID) to delay implementation appears to be predicated primarily upon budgetary and personnel ceiling limitations.

Recommend that OSD and AID Washington be requested to establish an implementation date for (the Saigon Port Advisory Plan)....to be effective early in FY69. [128]

[redacted] The controversy concerning transfer of advisory functions to USAID continued until mid-October. At that time, it was agreed between OSD and USAID that the Saigon Port Authority Plan would be executed on 1 November. CG, USARV was tasked to provide the necessary assistance over a six month period to assure successful assumption of advisory responsibilities by USAID. Additionally, USARV was directed to "initiate a contingency plan to assist, advise, or operate the Saigon port as may be necessary in the event of serious port congestion due to enemy action or civil distrubance." [129]

Measurement of Logistic Progress - RVN Military Port Performance

[redacted] In January, total military cargo performance in RVN for the third consecutive month exceeded one million STON and was greater than any one month in 1967. This performance continued to be repeated in every month during 1968. Individual port performances did vary slightly depending on tactical demand, weather and, in the early part of the year, the effects of the Tet Offensive. Other than in the first weeks of the Tet Offensive, and then only in Da Nang and Saigon, was there any cause for concern with respect to shipping backlogs. Port performance statistics for 1968 are tabulated below: [130]

Month	Cargo Handled (STON)	Average Nr. Ships In-Country	Average Nr. Days Ships In-Country
January	1,237,168	59	14.1
February	1,007,031	75	15.4
March	1,286,292	64	16.5
April	1,384,458	58	11.0
May	1,348,125	44	10.1
June	1,243,713	48	10.8
July	1,310,656	47	9.8
August	1,335,419	52	12.4
September	1,210,568	53	12.2

[redacted]

Newport

In the fall of 1965, it became apparent that port facilities for the logistical support of the military forces in the field, as well as the civilian economy of South Vietnam, were not being constructed at a rate that would keep pace with both needs. The problem was pointed out by the fact that many ships had to anchor for up to four months at the mouth of the Saigon River awaiting permission to dock at the heavily congested Saigon Port.

The site for Newport was chosen, just below the Bien Hoa highway bridge over the Saigon River on the northeastern outskirts of Saigon, some three miles up-river from the main port facilities. The location was extremely well situated. It is connected to the Long Binh military complex by the high-speed Route 1A. Also, it is completely isolated from the overcrowded commercial port area, and it is close to the air terminal at Tan Son Nhut.

Newport Barge Wharves

The job consisted of constructing two LST slips and ramps, an LCM and an LSV ramp, four barge offloading wharfs (60' x 260'), and 38 acres of fill with a surrounding security fence.

The site was a swampy, mangrove-covered area, which at high tide was covered by water.

Filling operations were started in January 1966, by truck and sampan. By the time the whole job is completed, 60 acres of land will have been reclaimed, consuming nearly 700,000 cubic yards of sand, aggregate and laterite fill. By the middle of May, the area of the fill extended from the highway to the river's edge at the north end of the project. Temporary offices were set up. Floating pile driving operations began in late May, with the piling being welded together at Wharf 1 downstream and barged to Newport. Later, pile fabricating racks were established at the site. Two floating rigs and one land-based driver were used in driving the equivalent of 38 miles of piling for this portion of the project. Two thousand tons of cap beams and stringers were set on the piles.

Dredging of the LST slip commenced on 26 March 1966, using the 12 inch dredge Dong Nai, a clamshell and the 16 inch dredge Huong Giang. It was completed on 21 May 1966. One hundred sixty thousand cubic yards had been removed.

A casting yard was built to make the concrete deck slabs. The casting was repeated every three days by pouring another set on top of the earlier slabs, each

layer being separated from the one beneath by polyethylene sheeting. Using this method, 40 slabs were cured in each bed at a time. The finished slabs were fastened to the beams and stringers by epoxy. The LST bow ramps were constructed from prefabricated pontoon sections and were hinge-connected to the wharf. The dredge Trident arrived in October to complete the dredging. The facilities were completed on schedule on 22 October 1966 and turned over to the U. S. Army. Immediately, barges were brought alongside, and two LST's moved into the slips.

Second Increment

The work consisted of four deep draft berths with a total length of 2,400 feet; two transit sheds with a total area of 290,000 square feet; 40 acres of fill; a 1,500 KW power plant and distribution lines; and a 29,000 square foot maintenance shop.

During the transition period between this project and the previous job, the offices, welding racks, batching units and carpenter shops were moved to new locations which were better oriented for the new work. The capacity of the batching unit was increased by improved handling of water, cement and aggregate; the refinement was necessary to handle the increased volume of concrete.

Land reclamation continued until mid-February 1967, when it was suspended to conserve the remaining funds for the fourth deep draft berth.

The wharves are structurally divided into two portions. The inner 140 feet consist of free-standing pipe or H-pile with steel caps and stringers and a poured-in-place concrete deck. The outer 140 feet consist of two rows of prefabricated steel jackets (templates) and deck sections with a poured-in-place deck slab.

The jackets were prefabricated at the RMK-BRJ Poro Point fabrication yard in the Philippines and shipped to the job site. The jackets were of two sizes: the outer row, 60 feet and the inner row, 40 feet wide. They were held in position by 24 inch diameter pipe piles driven through the 26 inch pipe legs of the jacket. The piles were then cut off and welded to the jacket. The deck trusses were prefabricated, fitting on top of the cut off 24" piles. The deck slab was then poured, concrete being supplied by transit mix trucks.

The Army loaned a whirley crane to RMK-BRJ which together with a barge-mounted 100 ton shear leg derrick were used to offload the jackets and set them in place. The shear leg had been designed and built by RMK-BRJ for erecting the Da Nang piers.

Construction was hampered by slow deliveries of material from the United States and delayed barge shipments from the Philippines because of an unusually severe monsoon season.

Four inter-connected 120' x 200' prefabricated steel buildings formed each transit shed. Including the area under the transit sheds, there was almost 16 acres of deck space in the project.

Construction of a power plant and the maintenance shop proceeded concurrently with the marine work; both have timber pile foundations.

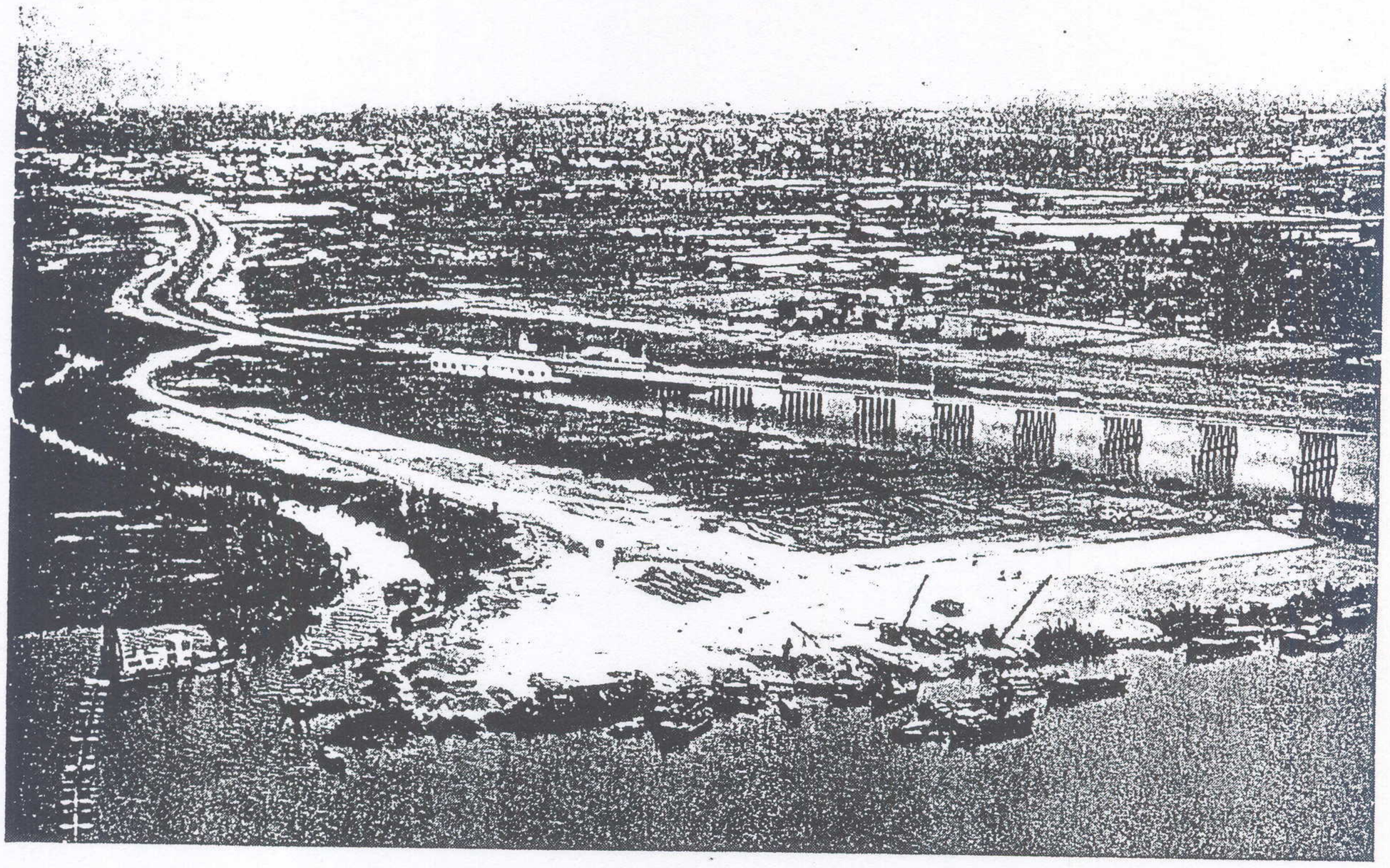
The first berth (report-wise, it was berth #2 of four) was completed and turned over to the military at a ribbon cutting ceremony on 29 January 1967, as the first ship came alongside. The second berth was completed during the week of March 18. As of June, berth #1 and berth #4 were 99% complete. The project was dedicated in July.

As a sideline to the construction, a training school was established at Newport to teach fundamental English, welding and field engineering to selected Vietnamese employees.

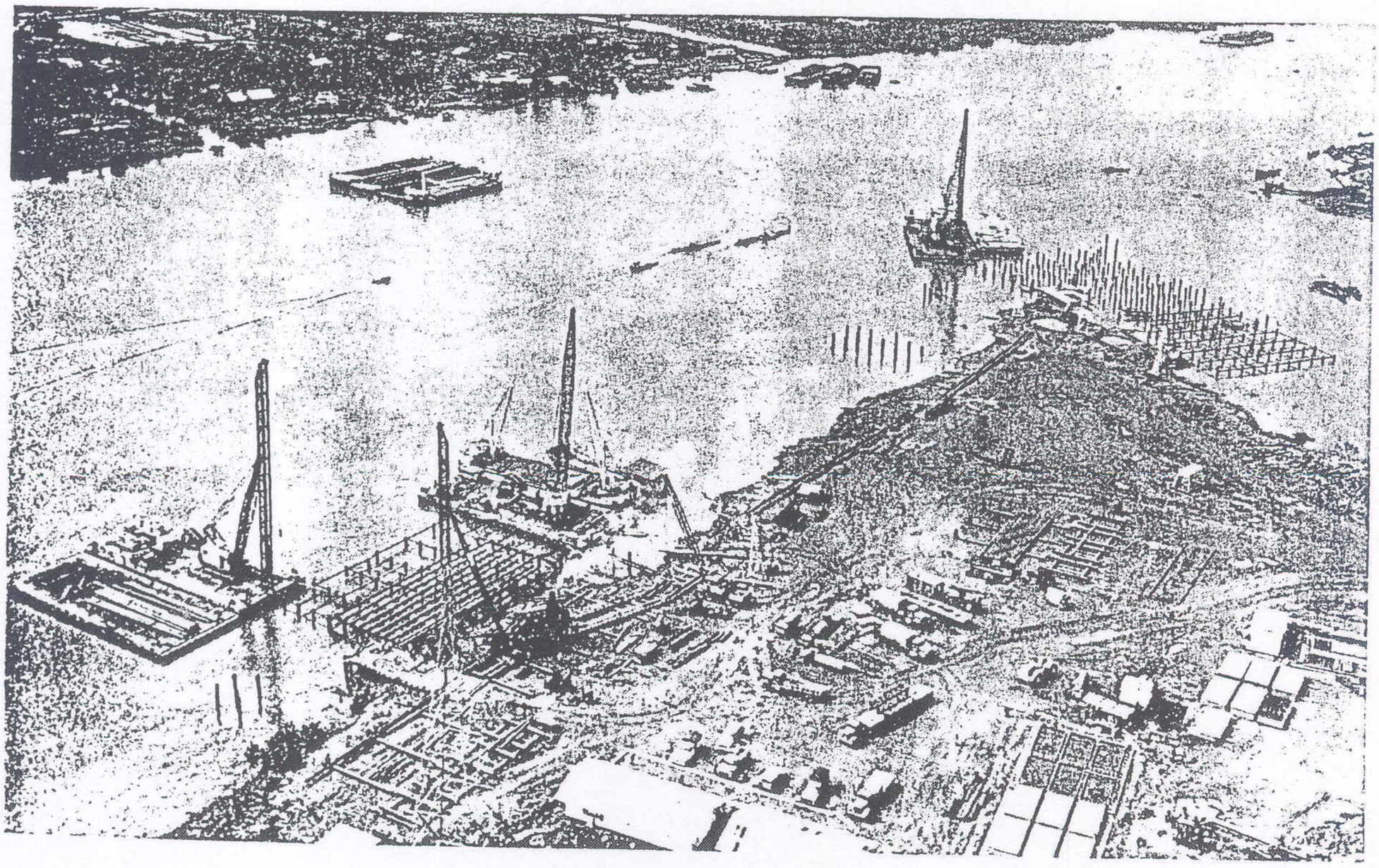
At the peak of construction, 210 Americans and third country nationals were supervising 1,800 Vietnamese employees.

The OICC stressed the importance of Newport, both logistically and politically, by directing that there be two ten-hour shifts a day, seven days a week.

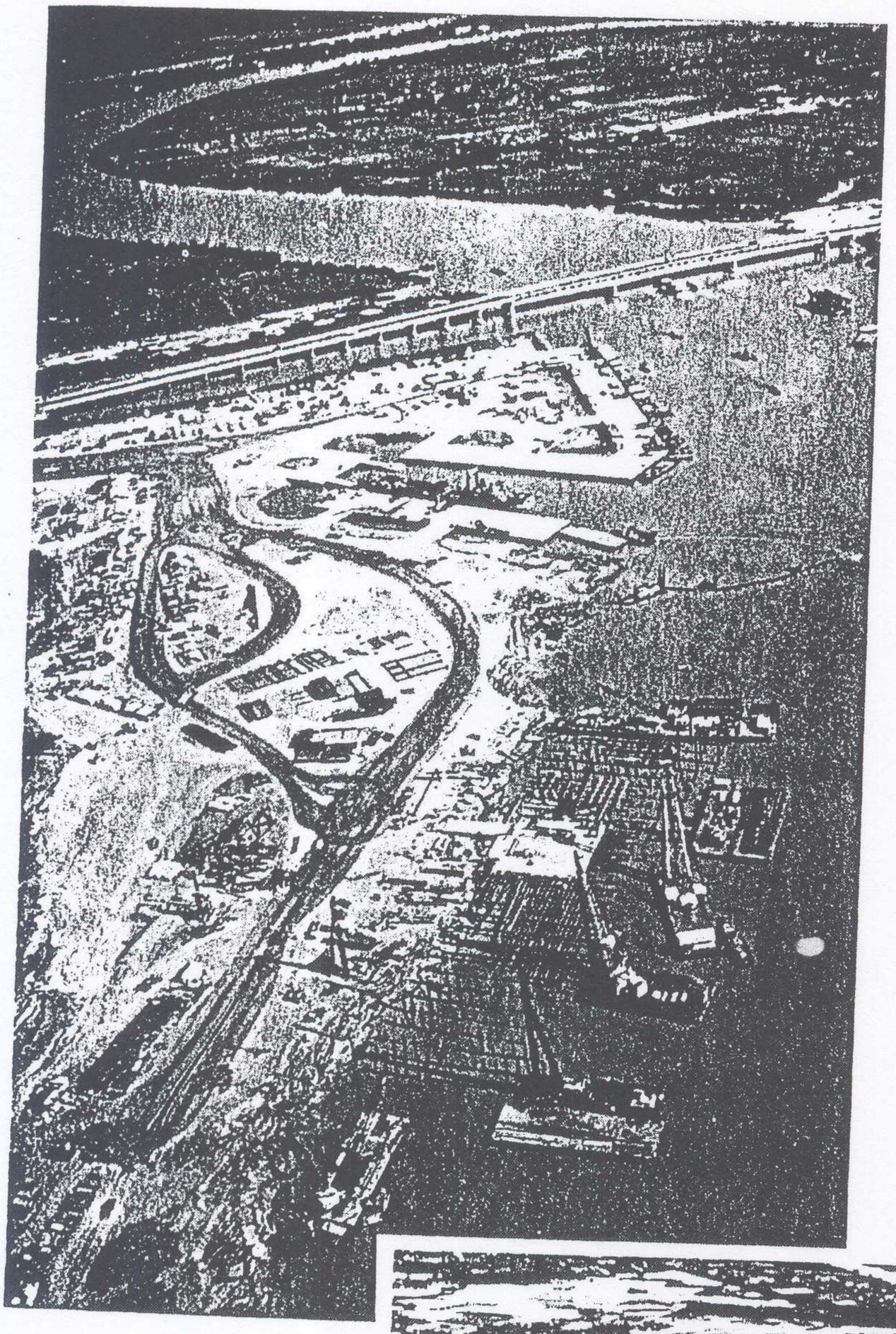
The estimated cost for the entire Newport installation was 35 million dollars.



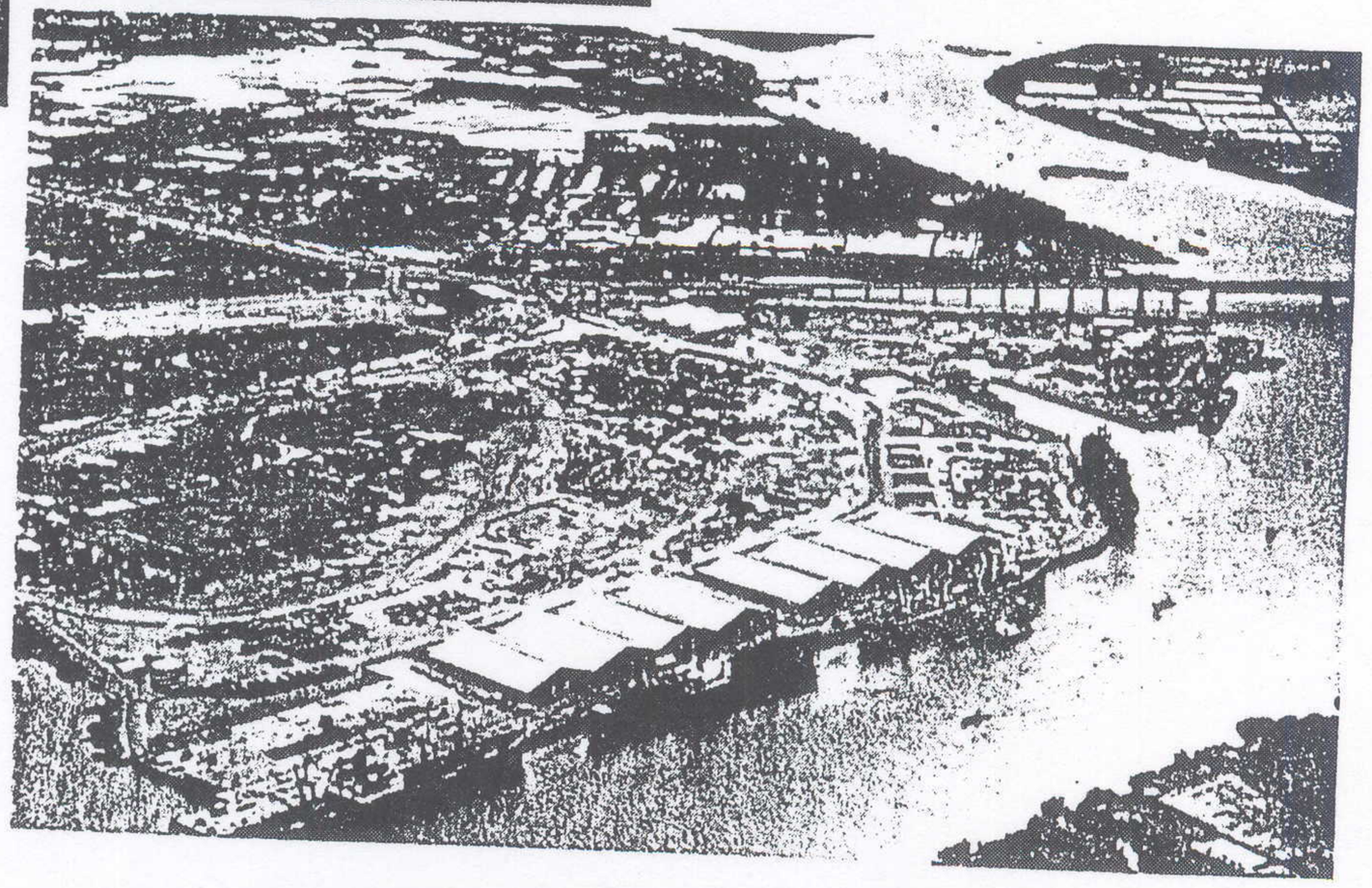
Newport, Saigon April 1966



Newport, Saigon July 1966



Newport Saigon
November 1966



Newport
Saigon
July 1967

71st TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL)

HEADQUARTERS, 71st TRANSPORTATION BATTALION, NORMALLY KNOWN AS THE "EXPEDITORS", ARRIVED IN VIETNAM DURING AUGUST 1966, WAS ASSIGNED TO THE 4th TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (TERMINAL C) AND CHARGED WITH THE MISSION OF OPERATING THE US ARMY TERMINAL NEWPORT, WHICH BEGAN OPERATION DURING OCTOBER 1966. THE PORT INITIALLY CONSISTED OF SHALLOW DRAFT PORT FACILITIES FOR THE RECEPTION, DISCHARGE AND PORT CLEARANCE OF CARGO BARGES, LCU'S, LCM'S AND LST'S. FACILITIES FOR DEEP DARFT OPERATIONS WERE OPENED DURING THE PERIOD FEBRUARY - JULY 1969. TO ACCOMPLISH THE CURRENTLY ASSIGNED MISSION OF OPERATING THE PORT FACILITIES AT NEWPORT, SAIGON AND TAY NINH; PROVISION OF THE HARBORCRAFT SERVICES FOR THE III AND IV CORPS TACTICAL ZONES; AND MANAGEMENT OF THE BATTALION CANTONMENT AT CAMP CAMELOT, THE BATTALION HAS ATTACHED THE 154th, 368th AND 551st TERMINAL SERVICE COMPANIES; 372nd TERMINAL TRANSFER COMPANY; AND THE US ARMY HARBORCRAFT COMPANY (PROVISIONAL).

"PERMANENT" "DONATION"

4TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND

SHIP 'N SHORE

VOLUME III No. 23 SAIGON, RVN 30 December 1968
BANNER YEAR

4TH TC REVIEWS 1968

THE 4TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (TERMINAL C) HAD A BANNER YEAR FOR ALL ASPECTS OF ITS MULTIPLE-MISSIONED OPERATIONS DURING 1968. NOT THE LEAST OF THE SUCCESSES REALIZED BY THE LARGEST MILITARY TERMINAL COMMAND IN THE ENTIRE FAR EAST THEATER OF OPERATIONS WAS RECORD TONNAGES FOR GENERAL CARGO AND AMMUNITION WHICH PASSED THROUGH THE COMMAND'S THREE MAIN PORT FACILITIES. GREATER, HOWEVER, WERE THE PERSONAL SACRIFICES OF THE OFFICERS AND MEN.

The ammunition discharge point at Cat Lai, operated by the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) recorded about ½ million tons of ammunition unloaded for units of the III and IV Corps Tactical Zones during the year. The ports at Saigon and U.S. Army Terminal Newport also established records in tons of general cargo unloaded.

Handling about 60 per cent of all cargo that comes into Vietnam, the 4th TC performed its mission despite many operational obstacles. The main source of trouble for the early part of the year was the Viet Cong.

Early in 1968 the VC launched attacks against Newport and Saigon Port docks. Also hit during the two TET offensives were troops' billets, then located in the Le Lai Hotel in Saigon.

Other troops areas, including those at Cat Lai, came under enemy attack.

Throughout the year, the enemy maintained sporadic attacks against tug boats, ammunition barges, ships and other craft within the 4th TC zone of operations. Military personnel and Vietnamese Nationals employed by the command sustained casualties during the year by enemy fire.

In addition to its main mission of receiving, staging and moving cargo of

(Cont'd on page 3, col 1)

TUG CREW SAVES SAMPAN COLONY

A tugboat crew from the 4th Transportation Command (Terminal C) saved the Saigon River's tinder-like sampan colony from possible destruction Christmas night with quick action in extinguishing a fire which erupted on one of the huge wooden craft.

The crew of Tugboat No. 2120, skippered by Warrant Officer Edward J. Chastang, was docked at the B-K Pier near Camp Davies when the call for help went out from the 4th TC Harbormaster at 10:33 p.m.

A fire had been discovered on one of the sampans which make up the huge sampan docking area just across the river from Saigon.

Veterans of the Saigon waterways

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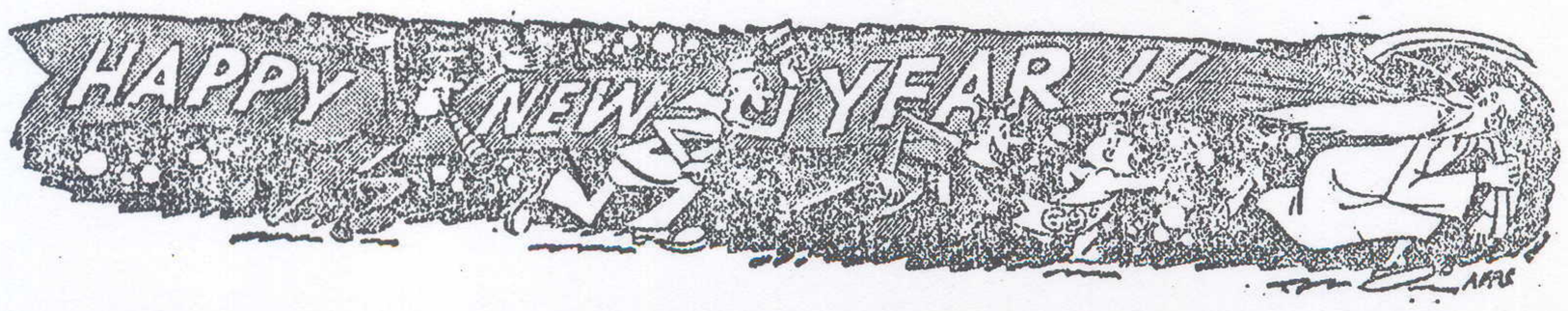


EDITORIAL

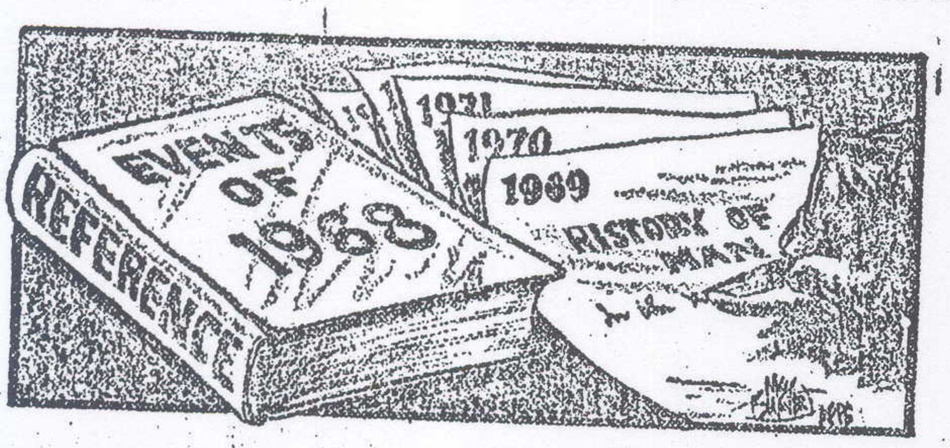
PROLOGUE OR PORTENT

"What is past is prologue"-- so goes the inscription chiseled into the granite of the National Archives in Washington, D.C. And the year 1968, fortunately or unfortunately, is now a part of the past.

Whether the events of the year will, in fact, take their place in the prologue of future history, only time will tell. Certainly 1968 was an eventful year.

In the short span of its 12 months, we saw transpire events of national and international significance.

At home, we witnessed the election of a new administration to guide this country for the next four years; we were shocked by the brutal assassinations of two prominent leaders.. We were subjected to the unusual, and sometimes violent, cross-currents of social and political demonstrations and given cause for serious thought regarding their bases.



We were heartened by the strides made in science and technology, the prowess of our athletes at the Olympics and the indominatable courage of our fighting men at Khe Sanh, Hue, Pleiku and in the Delta.

We were shocked by the blatant displays of totalitarian brutality in other areas of the world that sharply indicated we must never relax our military preparedness or become complacent in our dealings with those who seek to enslave the free peoples of the world.

The events of 1968 could, and no doubt will, fill many volumes. The importance of these events will be studied, discussed and debated by men for generations to come.

If the events of the past year are, in fact, to become a prologue--a foreshadowing of greater events to come--we must all learn from the events of the past year and put this knowledge to full use.

We must learn from our successes and our failures to help our Nation grow and prosper--fulfilling the dreams of countless past generations of Americans to make this country the bulwark of democracy and freedom, where every citizen has the opportunity to grow and succeed to the limits of his ability and a Nation from which the shining light of freedom and dignity will light the dark corners of the world. (AFPS)

ADD FIVE COURSES TO SDB TRAINING

Skill Development Base (SDB) training was expanded to 21 different courses with addition of Fire Control Computer Repairman and Blacksmith curricula in in September 1968.

Additionally Infantry Indirect Fire Crewman, Combat Engineers and Marine Hull Repairman courses were scheduled to begin last month. DA Circular 600-44 provides guidance to soldiers interested in this training.

SHIP'N SHORE is an authorized semi-monthly publication of the 4th Transportation Command, APO San Francisco 96307. Views and opinions expressed herein are not necessarily those of the Department of the Army.

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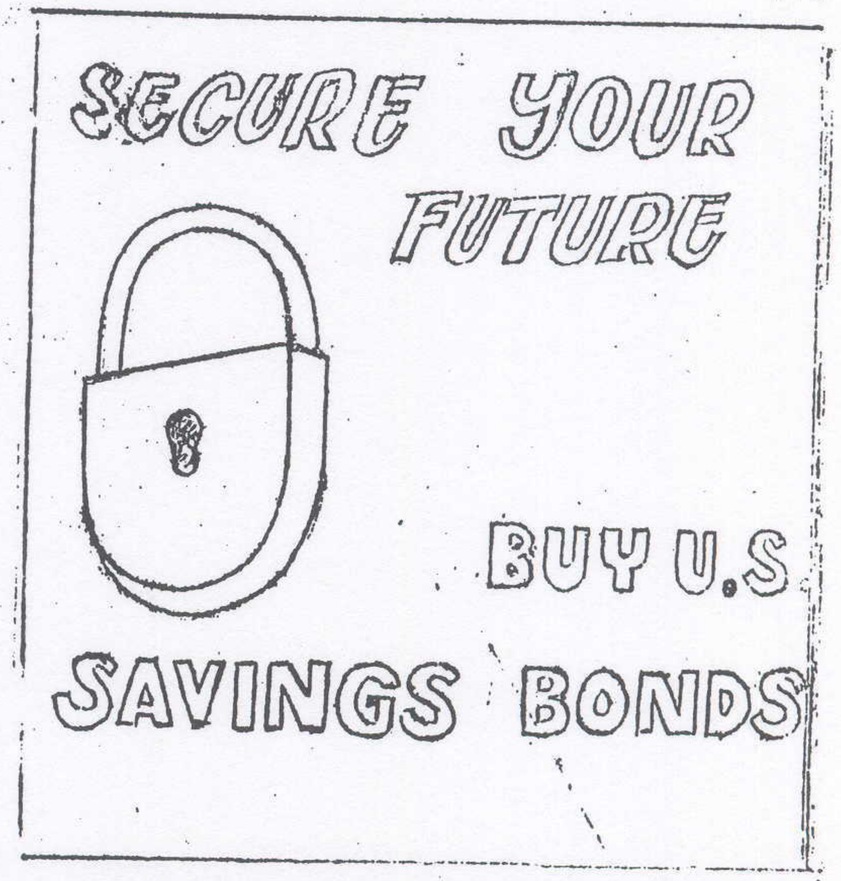

Chaplain's Corner

The following verses from the Scriptures provide some good food for thought as we anticipate the beginning of a new year:

"The Lord is at hand; have no anxiety about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your request be made known unto God. And the peace of God, which passes understanding, will keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus."

"...Do not be anxious about tomorrow, for tomorrow will be anxious for itself. Let the day's own trouble be sufficient for the day."

"...I trust in thee, O Lord; I say, 'Thou art my God.' My times are in thy hand."

"For everything there is a season, and a time for every matters under heaven:
a time to be born, and a time to die;
a time to plant, and a time to pluck up what is planted;
a time to kill, and a time to heal;
a time to break down, and a time to build up;
a time to weep, and a time to laugh;
a time to mourn and a time to dance;
a time to cast away stones, and a time to gather stones together;
a time to embrace, and a time to refrain from embracing;
a time to seek, and a time to lose;
a time to keep, and a time to cast away;
a time to reap, and a time to sew;
a time to keep silence, and a time to speak;
a time to love, and a time to hate;
a time for war, and a time for peace."

REVIEW (Cont'd from page 1)
all description to the consignee units around Saigon, the command completed an important mission vis a vis the commercial port of Saigon, an operation of the Vietnamese government.

The 125th Transportation Command (Terminal A), a subordinate unit of the 4th TC, was the chief advisor to the commercial port, an operation that had been described as "a problem of many aspects."

The 125th first assumed the advisor's mission to the Saigon Port Authority in September, 1966. By the end of a two-year period the operation of the commercial port was improved to such efficiency and production that the 125th relinquished its advisor mission, giving the role back to the USAID officials, and resumed its former position of assisting the port on a less-involved basis.

Meanwhile, USAT Newport was coming into its own as a highly efficient function of the command. During this, its second year of operation, the huge facility, built in 1966 from 100 acres of marshland, became a show place for its operation unit, the 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal Service).

During the TET offensive, the Newport commander, Colonel C.E. McCandless, earned the Bronze Star Medal with "V" device for leading the defense of the huge facility.

On August 12, COL McCandless was reassigned as commanding officer of the 4th TC, succeeding COL DeWitt C. Howell, who was reassigned to stateside duty after a year's tour in Vietnam.

COL McCandless himself was succeeded as commanding officer of the 4th TC by COL Archie B. Joyner during a change of command ceremony in Saigon on December 3. COL Joyner was formerly the deputy commanding officer of the command. He was succeeded in that position by COL Owen J. Walsh, former Director of Transportation, Saigon Support Command at Long Binh.

Perhaps one of the most harassed units during the continuing VC activities was the 11th Transportation Battalion at Cat Lai.

The Battalion, commanded at the start of the year by LTC Edgar V. Friend, Jr., was a regular target of the VC. Ammunition tows and cargo ships moving in and out of deep draft anchorages on the Dong Nai River were repeatedly attacked.

The Cat Lai compound, located on a former French sea plane base, was mortared several times during the year.

LTC Nathaniel R. Thompson, Jr. assumed command of the 11th on July 1.

The Battalion has the distinction of having more detachments than any other unit within the 4th TC. Based at Cat Lai, the 11th has an operational base at Camp Davies in Saigon staffed by officers and men of the Battalion's Detachment 3, Provisional Harborcraft Company.

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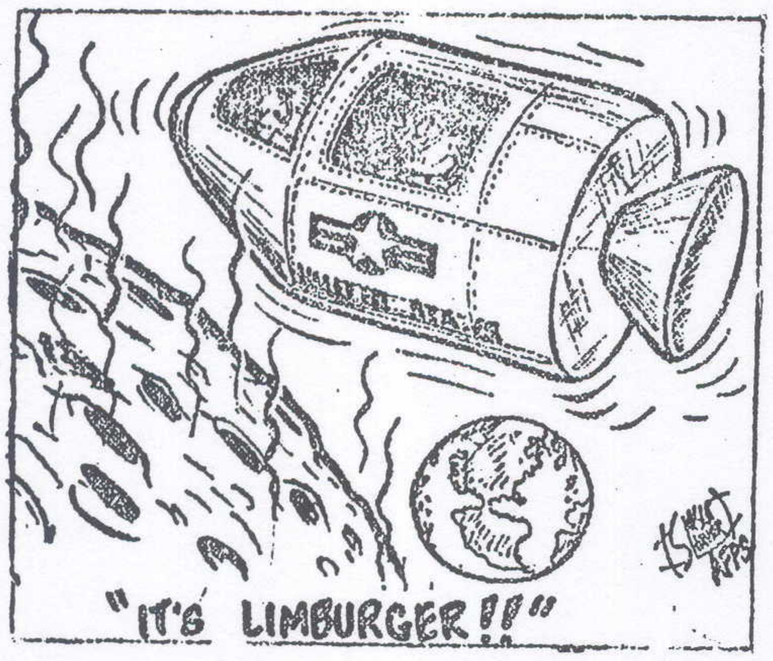


REVIEW (Cont'd from page 3)

Charged with marine services and harborcraft support for Saigon, Newport and Cat Lai, the company has many types of vessels, including huge floating cranes, tugs, barges, fuel tankers, patrol boats and J-Boats and Q-Boats. The two latter craft are used for shuttle and support services throughout the harbor complex.

The company came into being during the first quarter of 1968, after the Battalion's Port Services Division was dissolved. Other 11th Battalion units are the 124th Transportation Company (TS) with three detachments, and the 1099th Medium Boat Company.

Reorganization all along the command line was common for the 4th TC during the year. In September, the command's 5th Heavy Boat Company and other units in the Vung Tau area were detached and assigned to the operational control of the 53rd General Support Group at Vung Tau.

In the 71st Transportation Battalion (Terminal), LTC Frederick H. Hagreen III was succeeded as commanding officer on April 27 by LTC John P. Sancry. LTC Harold G. Lloyd assumed command of the battalion on October 12, 1968. Meanwhile COL Michael N. O'Sullivan assumed command of the Newport Terminal on August 12, succeeding COL McCandless. COL O'Sullivan was succeeded in that position by LTC James E. Piercy on December 3.

The 71st continued its varied mission of supporting Newport operations as well as discharge and backloading operations at the barge sites of Cogido, Bien Hoa and Dong Nai and rail operations at the Ho Nai railhead.

On October 1, the 71st terminated operations at Camp Red Ball after the U.S. Air Force assumed responsibility for operation of the Army Air Cargo activity.

Troops of the 71st continued their improvement of billeting areas at Camp Camelot, Long Binh. Early improvement included the construction of bunkers and completion of tropical troop huts under the Long Binh Base Development plan.

Improvements at Newport included the construction of bunkers and the establishment of a Command Operations Center (COC) at the terminal's Headquarters Building. A great contribution to troop morale at Newport, However, was a new 500-man mess hall replacing the temporary facility.

Colonel Lloyd A. Osborne, commanding officer of the 125th Transportation Command, also felt the reorganization change when the 117th Transportation Company (Terminal Service) was dissolved on February 3[illegible] and its personnel were reassigned to the 124th TC at Cat Lai.

In order to fill the vacuum created by the unit loss, a ship and shore platoon was detached from the 124th to the 125th's operation at Saigon.

The mission of the 125th continued to be that of an active participant in the operation of the commercial port. The commanding officer and his staff effected constant liaison with their Vietnamese counterparts in order to bring the port operation to efficient status.

An example of the close liaison and the results therof is seen in the events of early February when vessel and barge movements came to an immediate halt due to martial law being declared in Saigon as a defense against the VC offensives.

Since a majority of the workers at the commercial port are Vietnamese, travel restrictions and efforts to secure personnel safety minimized the number of stevedores present for work call.

But through liaison with the civilian authorities and military cooperation, loss of efficiency was minimized.

(Cont'd on page 6, col 1)

STOP!
THINK!

THEN TRY THE
ARMY
SUGGESTION
PROGRAM

Many Opportunities at 4th's Education Center

Want to get a college degree or complete your high school education? Or maybe you want to pad that bachelor's degree with a few more hours and credits towards a master's.

The 4th Transportation Command (Terminal C) education program offers many such opportunities.

Presently the program in the command is doing a land-office business, through programs offered by the U.S. Armed Forces Institute (USAFI) and the University of Maryland. Courses include those of high school, baccalaureate and post graduate levels.

VARIETY OF COURSES

A variety of courses from physics to history are offered at the three main education centers which support the command. The centers, located at Saigon, Cat Lai and Long Binh, serve the education needs of the command as well as offer assistance on preparation for testing in Military Occupational Specialties (MOS).

Soldiers can take advantage of the education program to accumulate credits toward future college degrees based on professional experience and schools completed in the Army.

For instance, under the program, a draftsman may request that his experience credits (and military schooling in that field) be evaluated for potential application to a degree in mechanical drawing or some other associated field. Likewise, a cook or baker could ask for evaluation of his schooling and experience for application towards a degree in hotel management or related fields.

The education center offers full assistance on all matters pertaining to present and future educational plans.

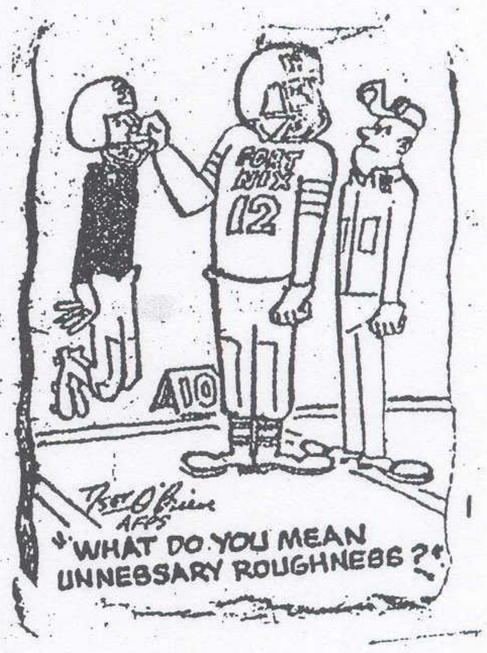
Soldiers can accumulate enough GED and USAFI credits for direct application to civilian colleges and universities toward degrees in a variety of subjects. So, no matter what your future plans are, see your education officer now.

Education centers are located conveniently throughout the command.

Troops of the Saigon based units of the 4th TC are served by the center operated by Headquarters Area Command at Camp Davies (Tel: TIGER-4143).

At Cat Lai, troops of the 11th Transportation Battalion (Terminal) may contact their battalion education officer who operates a center within the Cat Lai Terminal compound. The 11th Battalion S-1 office has additional information on the Cat Lai program.

The 71st Transportation Battalion at Long Binh's Camp Camelot, is served by the Long Binh Post Education Center. (Tel: 926-6687)



All-Time High for GED

Army participation in the General Educational Development (GED) program reached a new high in FY 1968 as 734,885 course completions were reported. This compares to 629,969 in FY 1967 and 560,575 during FY 1966.

Included in the FY 1968 totals were 272,615 completions in Military Occupational Specialty related courses, a gain of 49,538 over the previous year.

The GED program supplements military training by providing academic and vocational courses from elementary courses through college level.

SAMPAN (Cont'd from page 1)

long ago developed the idea that just one little fire" and the entire colony would go up in smoke. They also know that many Vietnamese families live on the sampans.

The tugboat immediately went to the burning sampan, which by now was covered by fire of unknown origin.

In about one hour, sweating crewmen had the fire extinguished and the colony was safe. The tugboat crew wrapped up its hoses at 11:35 p.m.

Said a spokesman at the 4th TC: "If the fire hadn't been contained right away, then put out, chances are that the whole sampan colony would have been destroyed."

REVIEW (Cont'd from page 4)

Taking over the command on August 12 was COL Paul A. Swanson. He was succeeded on December 3 by COL Ernest A. Hinojosa.

In addition to the assigned military missions of the 4th TC in respect to port and cargo operations, each command fostered laudatory projects in the all-important areas of morale and welfare for the troops and were involved in many significant civic action programs directed to securing and maintaining the friendship and respect of the Vietnamese people.

Sponsorship of orphanages, schools, MEDCAP operations and classes taught by command personnel in local schools highlighted civic action programs within the 4th.

Every effort was made to improve troop living conditions. To that end, Camp Davies, just south of Saigon, became the operational responsibility of the 4th TC in November. Already the home of the Provisional Harbor Craft Company troops, the well-equipped and modern facility became the new location for Headquarters & Headquarters Company, 4th TC in September. The troops made an orderly transfer of bag and baggage from the LeLai Hotel in Saigon with no appreciable loss of operational efficiency.

A rigorous program of spiritual guidance by the Command Chaplain and his subordinate chaplains was well supported by the men of the 4th. The recipe for success was constant liaison with Local Nationals, in this case civic and church workers.

Before departing the command on December 30 for Stateside reassignment, the command chaplain, LTC James H. Woods was cited by the chief of chaplains of the Vietnamese Armed Forces for contributions to international understanding.

Internally the command improved its awards program. In early December, HHC, 4th TC won the first monthly reenlistment plaque presented in the command.

The soldier of the month competition was emphasized. The result was keener competition among command personnel. For the record, soldiers from the 71st Battalion took the honor two months in a row for October and November.

In retrospect, the 4th TC gave an award-winning performance during 1968.

Accomplishments such as Cat Lai's record 57,229 tons discharged during October and overall cargo tonnages moved through Newport and Saigon are statistics that tell the story. The many outstanding achievements, despite the hazards and difficulties of a combat zone, illustrate the prowess of command personnel.

Colonel Joyner, the present commander of the 4th, reiterated the importance of the command's mission in an excerpt from his Christmas Message:

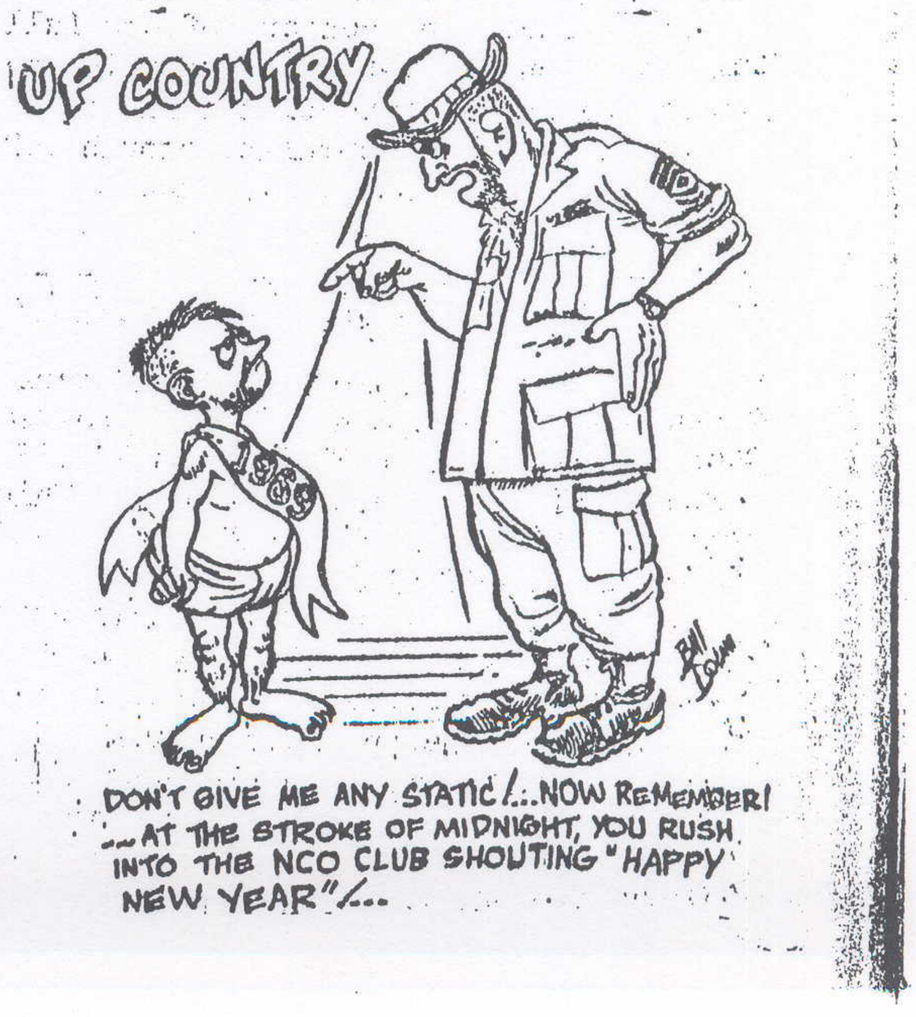
"Your presence in Vietnam gives hope to a brave people. The sacrifices you have made will obtain the greatest gift of all--PEACE."

VIETNAM VETS GET PERSONALIZED SERVICE

Vietnam veterans are receiving personalized service without precedent, reports the Veteran's Administration. Benefits orientation is now provided to men from all services at 287 regular military separation centers.

One-stop U.S. Veterans Assistance Centers have also been established in 21 major cities and are staffed by a number of federal agencies. Their mission is to contact recently discharged veterans through telephone calls, home visits and interviews conducted at the Assistance Centers.

Since the first centers were opened in February 1968, more than 37,000 former service personnel have received personalized assistance.



368TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE)

THE 368TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE), KNOWN AS THE "DECK DEVILS," WAS CONSTITUTED AND ACTIVATED AT SEATTLE, WASHINGTON ON 8 MAY 1944 AS THE 368TH HARBORCRAFT COMPANY AND SAW ACTION SUBSEQUENTLY IN NEWGUINEA, LEYTE AND LUZON. IN MAY 1966, IT WAS REACTIVATED AND REDESIGNATED THE 368TH TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE), AND DEPLOYED TO LONG BINH POST, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM, IN OCTOBER 1966. SINCE ARRIVAL IN VIETNAM, THE UNIT HAS BEEN ENGAGED PRIMARILY IN DISCHARGE AND BACKLOADING OPERATIONS OF TWO DEEP DRAFT PIERS AT US ARMY TERMINAL, NEWPORT, UNDER THE 71ST TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL). AN ADDITIONAL MISSION ASSIGNED TO THE "DECK DEVILS" IS THE OPERATION OF THE ARMY AIR CARGO TERMINAL AT TAN SON NHUT AIR BASE. IT HAS CONSISTENTLY DISCHARGED AND/OR BACKLOADED IN EXCESS OF 30,000 SHORT TONS OF CARGO MONTHLY. THE "DECK DEVILS" ESTABLISHED THE 4TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND RECORD BY DISCHARGING 6,006 SHORT TONS OF CARGO IN A 24 HOUR PERIOD DURING THE PERIOD 8-9 DECEMBER 1969 AND, FURTHER, SET A RECORD FOR A 24 HOUR PERIOD FOR DISCHARGING 789 SHORT TONS OF REFRIGERATED CARGO DURING THE PERIOD 23-24 NOVEMBER 1969.

372ND TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL TRANSFER)

THE 372ND TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL TRANSFER), NORMALLY KNOWN AS THE "TONNAGE TIGERS," WAS ACTIVATED DURING DECEMBER 1968 AND IMMEDIATELY ASSIGNED TO THE 71ST TRANSPORTATION BATTALION AT LONG BINH POST. UPON ARRIVAL IN RVN, THE UNIT WAS INITIALLY CHARGED WITH THE MISSION OF OPERATING ONE DEEP DRAFT BERTH AT US ARMY TERMINAL, NEWPORT, PLUS OPERATIONS OF THE HO NAI RAILHEAD. IN ADDITION TO PERFORMING MISSIONS OF PRIMARY MILITARY IMPORTANCE, THE UNIT HAS BEEN ACTIVE IN CIVIL AFFAIRS PROJECTS, AS EVIDENCED BY THE COMPLETION OF AN ORPHANAGE IN FEBRUARY 1969 WHICH ACCOMMODATES 65 VIETNAMESE ORPHANS AT HO NAI VILLAGE. DURING MAY 1969, THE PREVIOUSLY ASSIGNED MISSIONS WERE DELETED, AND THE UNIT IS NOW OPERATING 7 BARGE SITES, 2 LST SITES, 2 LCU SITES, A TRANSSHIPMENT YARD, DUNNAGE YARD, AND A ROLL-ON/ROLL-OFF FACILITY AT NEWPORT. AN ADDITIONAL MISSION IS OPERATING THE ARMY AIR CARGO TERMINAL AT BIEN HOA AIR BASE.

551ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE)

THE 551ST TRANSPORTATION COMPANY (TERMINAL SERVICE), COMMONLY KNOWN AS "THE PACE SETTERS," CAME TO THE 4TH TRANSPORTATION COMMAND (TML C) FROM CAM RANH BAY SUPPORT COMMAND, DURING MARCH 1967. AT THEIR PREVIOUS LOCATION, THE UNIT HAD BEEN ASSIGNED THE MISSION OF OPERATING THE DELONG AMMUNITION PIER UNDER THE 10TH TRANSPORTATION BATTALION (TERMINAL). UPON ARRIVAL IN THE SAIGON AREA, THE UNIT WAS ASSIGNED TO THE US ARMY TERMINAL, NEWPORT AND CHARGED WITH THE RESPONSIBILITY OF DISCHARGE AND BACKLOADING OF DEEP DRAFT VESSELS AT TWO BERTHS IN THE NEWPORT COMPLEX, AND OPERATION OF FOUR INTRANSIT STORAGE SHEDS. THE UNIT HAS HANDLED VIRTUALLY ALL TYPES OF CARGO IN ITS AREA OF OPERATIONS TO INCLUDE AMMUNITION AND REFRIGERATED CARGO.