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15 February 1971

From: Officer in Charge, SEAL Detachment ALFA, 8th Platoon  
 To: Commander, Naval Forces, Vietnam  
 Via: (1) Officer in Charge, SEAL Team TWO Detachment ALFA  
 (2) CTF 116

Subj: End of Tour Report; submission of (U)

Ref: (a) COMNAVFORV msg 180755Z JUN 1970

1. (C) SEAL Team TWO Detachment ALFA, EIGHTH Platoon arrived in-country on 16 August 1970 and moved immediately to Dong Tam where they have remained and operated until 14 February 1971. The assigned mission of this Platoon was the interdiction of mortar attacks against Dong Tam as described in reference (a). Although no mortar tubes, rounds or crews were actually engaged/captured, the frequency of mortar attacks against the Dong Tam base was coincidentally reduced. A secondary objective was the targeting and neutralizing of VCI in the Dinh Tuong Province area. This endeavor was much more successful. Of forty-eight SEAL OPS by this platoon, contact was made on twenty operations for a total of sixty-eight VC killed, ten VC captured and one rallier. Operations were not as frequent nor as fruitful as believed possible due to competition for intelligence and operations area clearance. There are numerous VN units such as Police, Special Branch (National Police), PRU's and Sector Strike forces in the area with similar objectives to the SEALS. As the VN's assume more control of the war effort, they are obviously receiving and utilizing the bulk of the better intelligence. It was found that combined operations with VN units provided the better intelligence.

2. (C) The following is a review of intelligence sources utilized by this platoon and a brief statement of their capabilities and effectiveness:

a. NILO, My Tho - Demonstrated exceptional talent, effort and cooperation. His photographic talents proved especially valuable in evaluating intelligence reports and planning operations. The advantages of the availability of a "professional" intelligence officer in this billet was readily apparent soon after he reported aboard. His maximum potential to obtain and pass information was severely handicapped by a lack of reliable transportation.

b. Chieu Hoi Advisor - Excellent cooperation was provided by the Dinh Tuong Province Chieu Hoi Advisor. His timely and logical suggestions were frequently helpful. His present efforts for SEALS included an efforts to screen and obtain two reliable Hoi Chunks to act as agents and maintain contact with other Hoi Chunks who have returned to their homes throughout the province. The advisor was always eager to point out prospective intelligence prospects thereby providing timely and accurate information.

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Downgraded at 3-year intervals;  
 Declassified after 12 years.

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c. 525 Military Intelligence Group - Provided accurate and timely information but was of little value as they were reluctant to commit agents/guides for further exploitation. This left the impression that providing intelligence is far more important than reacting on it.

d. Military Secret Service (MSS) - This VM source is evaluated the same as 525 M I.

e. Office of Special Assistance (OSA) - This office provided excellent general and background information; however, little of it was specific enough to react on. Future plans of OSA included greater utilization of SEAL assets and should therefore be placed high on the list of intelligence sources in this area.

f. Police, Special Branch (PSB) - This branch of National Police in My Tho and Sam Giang provided most of the intelligence reacted on by this platoon. Rapport with this unit was enhanced by combined operations. The utilization of National or Special Police (VN) also proved desirable in case of arrests, confrontations with civilians, etc. They are an excellent source of immediate legal assistance, reducing the possibility of false charges, incidents, etc. They also provided excellent interrogation and detention services.

g. PIOCC, DIOCC and Sector Sources - These U.S. sources provided excellent intelligence, both specific and general. Their cooperation was outstanding, especially in obtaining area clearances and artillery and air support. Sam Giang and Cai Lay District sources were the most frequently used.

h. PRU's - The Provincial Reconnaissance Units of PRU's are excellent intelligence sources who are also very eager to cooperate with SEALs. They have expressed an appreciation for SEAL capabilities and show a strong desire to resume operations with SEALs. They are willing to allow the SEALs to utilize their intelligence and run independent operations; however, combined operations of SEALs/PRU's would provide a maximum capability to target VCI. The SEALs have the physical assets and support to neutralize virtually any VCI target and the PRU's have exceptionally good intelligence. Theirs apparently has been and could still be one of the most lucrative operational concept for SEALs in Vietnam.

i. PHOENIX or Phoung-Huong - This organization has access to excellent intelligence concerning VCI. However, of about fifteen prospective agents/guides screened and utilized by this platoon, none provided worthwhile information. It is known, however, that VN units utilizing this intelligence source frequently have excellent results. These conflicting facts lead to the opinion that the VN channel and retain any worthwhile information with their own reaction forces and tend to allow only the poorer quality intelligence get to U.S. units. Perhaps this is a normal situation as Vietnamization of this war progresses.

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3. (C) SUPPORT. Generally, most support for this platoon was excellent. Specifics one are as follows:

a. AIR SUPPORT

(1) SEAWOLVES. HAL 3, Detachment 7, provided primary gunship support for this platoon. Their positive attitude and effectiveness was outstanding. Their availability was consistent, their response always rapid and their accuracy and desire to fight were exemplary. No better support could ever be expected from any unit. Not only did they provide excellent fire support, but in addition, they repeatedly provided visual reconnaissance services. These services were effectively combined with their primary role as gunships.

(2) SEALORDS. Although utilized only twice, SEALORDS were made available on short notice several times for high priority operations which were later cancelled. They were eager to cooperate, very proficient and very easy to coordinate and operate with. SEAL/SEAWOLF/SEALORD operations proved extremely desirable due to the ability to communicate thoughts, actions, etc., as is usually the case with operations run solely with the U.S. Navy community. It is strongly recommended that consideration be given to an all-Navy unit such as this for SEAL airborne operations.

(3) ARMY/SEAL SLICK PACKS. This source of SLICK support proved to be less than desirable as SEAL operations were hampered by a general lack of flexibility of Army regulations (too restrictive, overly cautious). Liaison with these units proved cumbersome due to the requirement of going through "channels" to obtain support. The response was slow and too early a lead time was required. Most SEAL operations were planned and executed within two days. However, at least two or three days is required to even get confirmation of Army SLICK availability for a given operation.

(4) EMU's and TAIPANS. These Australian/U.S. mixed crews of EMU SLICKS and TAIPAN gunships were extremely eager to support SEAL operations but were difficult to obtain due to being under the operational control of Seventh ARVN Division. When utilized, they were excellent.

b. BOAT SUPPORT

(1) MST. Having MST detachments under SEAL platoon operational control appears to be efficient and effective. Support provided this platoon was very good. Particularly, the capabilities and performance of the MSSC was very impressive. It is the opinion of the originator however, that the HSSC is of a very poor design and is not suited for SEAL operational requirements in this area. It is too noisy, too slow, handles poorly, and has excessive draft. The primary assets, i.e. firepower, space available, helo pad and ability to remain on station for extended periods, were not required nor utilized. These assets are believed to be generally inconsistent with the concept of SEAL operations in this area. For example, the method of mounting and utilizing the 106MM recoilless rifle is

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an atrocious waste of armament in that it is impossible to effectively aim, load and fire this weapon under combat conditions. The idea of mounting a 7.62MM mini-gun on this craft is also believed to be ineffeicient use of one of the two mini-guns allotted this MST Detachment. It is believed that this weapon could be better utilized by placing it on the MSSC, providing one on each side of the boat. This allows coverage on both shorelines from the most frequently used boat.

(2) STABS. Support provided this platoon by STABDIV 201 from August to October 1970 was very good. They were always ready and willing to insert and extract SEALS in addition to their primary operations. They were frequently requested and responded positively on short notice. They were of particular value during September 1970 when the MST craft assigned this platoon were drydocked for maintenance and repairs.

c. VEHICLE SUPPORT. The vehicle support provided this platoon was totally unsatisfactory and inadequate. As intelligence sources were located in My Tho, Cai Lay, Cai Be and other areas far removed from the platoon's base at Dong Tam, reliable transportation was required in order to operate. Vehicle transportation for logistical purposes and operations was also required. No alternate means of transportation was available. LSB Dong Tam was tasked to support this platoon but only able to provide a single International Harvester Scout. This Scout remained out of commission about 50% of the time, was unsafe to drive and was too unreliable to drive off the base, lest it break down, leaving the occupants stranded in a remote area. The non-availability of vehicles for U.S. Navy requirements is not understood in view of the fact that ARVN, VNN and other VN services/agencies in the area have a more than adequate supply of vehicles which are grossly misused and mishandled. It is highly recommended that the Vehicle requirements of U.S. Naval forces in this area be reviewed and support provided before giving total support to foreign forces.

d. ADMINISTRATIVE SUPPORT. Most administrative support provided this platoon was very good. Exceptions were with the Disbursing Office in Nha Be and with the handling of combat interpreters.

(1) Of fourteen men assigned this platoon, an average of at least four had pay errors every payday. These errors included no pay for men due to inaccurate calculations, parachute/demolition pay not included when due even though DD-122's turned in on 1st of each month, misplacing of paychecks and difficulty in obtaining special pay when required. Services have improved somewhat in the past couple of months. It should be noted that most Disbursing Office personnel are willing to assist and have positive attitude. Apparatently the problem lies in procedural errors.

(2) A lack of communications is believed to be the primary cause of trouble in the hiring and termination of combat interpreters. A good understanding should be had by the platoon Commander and the interpreter concerning pay, work assignments, and status concerning transfers, who has authority to hire and terminate, etc.

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4. (C) LDNN Programs. A platoon of LDNN's (11 men) was placed under the operational control of this platoon commander from August to early December 1970. They are evaluated as being ineffective and of negative value to the U.S./GVN efforts. This is believed to be due primarily to a lack of discipline and control. No orders were ever received placing this unit under the operational control of this command. The LDNN's were seldom available to operate even though all assets, intelligence and coordination efforts available to the SEAL platoon were available to them. When they did operate, they were apparently more concerned with obtaining goods for their personal gain (poultry, eggs, fruit, etc.) rather than a bonafide objective. Repeated efforts to discipline them had no effect. They continued to come and go at their leisure. Utilization of false/forged leave papers and orders was common. There was an obvious lack of leadership within their ranks. The SEAL Platoon Commander had insufficient authority or means of recourse to discipline them. Transfer of the LDNN platoon was effected in December 1970. The exact date is unknown as the platoon was seldom available to pass/receive word and no official orders were even received by this command concerning LDNN movements. It is therefore recommended that a more direct and expeditious means of administering discipline and control be provided. More authority on a local basis is needed. It is also recommended that the SEAL Platoon Commanders be kept better informed of intended LDNN movements, leave, personal problems, etc. This should be accomplished through more direct and authorized channels supported by official letters/messages rather than informed speculations, opinion, etc.

5. (U) MISCELLANEOUS RECOMMENDATIONS

a. INTELLIGENCE CARD FOR SEAL OFFICERS. It is highly recommended that the Naval Field Intelligence Organization VN Identification Card or a similar instrument be issued SEAL Officers in-country. Also, a vehicle pass card negating requirements for trip tickets, licenses, requisitions, etc., should be issued to SEAL Officers for emergency use as is done for other intelligence officers in-country. A primary mission of SEAL units is the gathering of intelligence and much of this is done on the same manner that other intelligence officers operate.

b. LANGUAGE TRAINING: It is believed that more emphasis should be placed on language training for all SEALS. This is based on the need for "monitoring" interpreters who sometimes through design or error interpret incorrectly. Also, monitoring conversations between other indigenous people during confrontations on operations or intelligence gathering missions often is feasible. Intelligence gathering opportunities and operations have been hampered, delayed or missed for lack of an immediately available interpreter. Communications with agents/guides on operations could be expedited and minimized by eliminating the requirement to use an interpreter every time the point man or Officer in Charge has to communicate with them.


6. (U) The above statements are strictly personal opinion of this platoon Commander and are based on personal observation. Amplification of any sub-

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ject will be expeditiously provided.

" Aubrey DAVIS, Jr.  
LT USN

 Copy to:  
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MST-2

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