

UNITED STATES NAVAL
MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION
EIGHT

DEPLOYMENT COMPLETION
REPORT



HUE-PHU BAI RVN

FEBRUARY 1968 - OCTOBER 1968

4. Significant Events.

a. On 25 January 1968 a jeep carrying LCDR H. P. DAVIS, CEC, USN, LTJG W. G. GOODMAN, CEC, USNR, and BUCS L. FERRON, USN struck a mine on Route 546 near Hue resulting in total destruction of the vehicle and requiring medivac of the three passengers all of which were seriously wounded.

b. 0340, 31 January 1968 - 122mm rocket attack commenced on Gia Le Combat Base. Camp Wilkinson received four rounds, with the base receiving approximately 20-30 rounds. The alarm was sounded and NMCB THREE and NMCB EIGHT personnel went to their shelters for approximately 10 minutes. Thereafter the perimeter was fully manned. While the perimeter was manned, one rocket landed in an Alpha Company fighting trench resulting in one KIA and three WIA for NMCB THREE and four WIA for NMCB EIGHT. At approximately 0530, one round of 122mm rocket fire impacted in the Engineering/Drafting building and the Charlie Company Office, destroying both completely by fire. Seven other adjacent structures were damaged slightly.

c. 0330, 1 February 1968 Camp Wilkinson received four rounds believed to be dud rockets, later found to be friendly 105mm illumination canisters. The camp perimeter received small arms fire, returned same with negative results. At 1220 Camp Wilkinson received two rounds of 122mm rocket fire. One round landed near the messhall resulting in one NMCB THREE KIA and four NMCB EIGHT WIA. There was no damage to the camp.

d. 0830, 1 February 1968 CDR J. F. O'LEARY officially took command of Camp Wilkinson.

e. On 27 February 1968 Rear Admiral J. V. BARTLETT, Commander 3rd Naval Construction Brigade, visited Camp Wilkinson.

f. On the afternoon of 3 March 1968, NMCB EIGHT celebrated the Seabee Birthday. A small reception at the Officers Club was attended by commanders and other officers of nearby military units.

g. On 23 March 1968 CBPAC Chief of Staff, Captain Charles G. MILLER and CDR B. HACKENSON visited Camp Wilkinson.

h. On 28 March 1968 Camp Wilkinson received rocket rounds causing damages to berthing huts. One WIA required three weeks hospitalization.

i. On 6 April 1968 the Hue Stadium received mortar fire causing damage to ten vehicles, no injuries were sustained.

j. On 25 April 1968 RADM W. H. HEAMAN and RADM J. V. BARTLETT visited Camp Wilkinson and the NMCB EIGHT project sites.

k. On 21 May 1968 at 0035 Gia Le Combat Base was brought under rocket and ground attack. Camp Wilkinson received several B-40 rounds and small arms fire. There were no NMCB EIGHT casualties and only very minor damage to NMCB EIGHT equipment. Approximately 35 of the enemy were killed.

l. On 5 June 1968 a rifle grenade detonated near the cab of a NMCB EIGHT

TS-24 causing ear damage and facial wounds to the driver and damage to the hydraulic system of the TS-24. The driver was medivaced and the equipment deadlined.

m. On 8 June 1968 155mm round used as a command mine detonated on Col Co Road resulting in minor injuries to the driver and a wheel blown off the end dump he was driving.

n. On 27 June 1968 CAPT G. G. MILLER, COMCBPAC visited Camp Wilkinson, for a Management Inspection Visit.

o. 1120, 16 July 1968 Change of Command, CDR R. J. WESTBERG relieved CDR J. F. O'LEARY.

p. On 10 - 12 August 1968 various news agencies visited the NMCB EIGHT Camp interviewing BU3 Randy AGNEW, son of Governor S. AGNEW Republican Vice-Presidential candidate.

q. On 15 - 16 and 18 August 1968 a party from COMCBPAC of CDR WILSON, LCDR GILMORE, and LT HENLEY visited Camp Wilkinson to conduct a Management Inspection Visit.

r. 0100, 17 August 1968 an NMCB EIGHT crane located at a U. S. Army position along Col Co Road, received minor damage from enemy mortars during an attack on the Army position. There were no NMCB EIGHT casualties.

s. On 24 August 1968 Master Chief of the Navy MCGM D. W. BLACK visited Camp Wilkinson and NMCB EIGHT.

t. On 31 August 1968 NMCB ONE TWENTY ONE's advance party of eight officers and 92 enlisted personnel arrived at Camp Wilkinson.

u. On 4 - 6 September 1968 LT H. F. GOHKBAND, 31NCR, visited Camp Wilkinson and NMCB EIGHT to conduct the Annual Supply Inspection, (ASI).

v. On 5 September 1968 typhoon Beth passed over the Phu Bai - Gia Le area causing light damage to Camp Wilkinson.

w. On 8 September 1968 NMCB EIGHT completed the rescue of YFU-24 which was on the landlocked side of the Hue Causeway during the typhoon.

x. On 18 September 1968 Rear Admiral A. C. HUSBAND, Commander NAVFAC, visited Camp Wilkinson and toured various NMCB EIGHT construction sites.

y. On 21 September 1968 the NMCB EIGHT/NMCB ONE TWENTY ONE BEEP commenced.

z. On 2 October 1968 NMCB EIGHT participated in the ceremonial opening of Col Co Road by LTGEN R. E. CUSHMAN and LTGEN HANONG XUAN LAM/

aa. 1011, 11 October 1968 NMCB ONE TWENTY ONE relieved NMCB EIGHT at Camp Wilkinson.

bb. On 12 October 1968 NMCB EIGHT's main body completed a successful

return to CONUS.

5. Major Problems.

a. The enemies TET Offensive took place almost concurrently with the arrival of the battalion in-country. This severely deterred the construction effort during the early months. Much of the workload consisted of roadwork and associated vertical construction which was not accessible due to the tactical situation. In addition the large commitments for camp security due to the large perimeter and tactical situation reduced seriously the available manpower to pursue the work. Shortages of materials and fuel resulting from the offensive had long lasting effects on many projects. The situation was further aggravated by the total destruction of the Battalion Engineering building on 31 January with the loss of all drawings and records by fire.

b. The battalion recovered gradually from these effects, however, and was soon in full swing on the assigned workload as well as numerous repair projects in support of the recovery effort.

c. Typhoon Beth on 5 September 1968 again set back construction progress causing over two days of total lost time and inflicting considerable minor damage to construction in progress.


R. J. WESTBERG

U. S. NAVAL MOBILE CONSTRUCTION BATTALION EIGHT
FPO San Francisco, California 96601

NMCB8/JMG:mr
5213
Ser: 1059
12 December 1968

From: Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT
To: Commander, Naval Construction Battalions, U. S. Pacific Fleet

Subj: NMCB EIGHT Deployment Completion Report; forwarding of

Ref: (a) COMCBPACINST 5213.1E
(b) COMCBPAC OPORD 37-67
(c) COMCBFACDET THAI OPORD 7-67
(d) COMCBPACDET RVN OPORD 6-67
(e) COMCBPAC OPORD 24-68

Encl: (1) Administrative Summary
(2) Equipment Status Summary
(3) Training Summary
(4) Intelligence Summary
(5) Labor Distribution Summary
(6) Construction Summary
(7) Construction Item Summary
(8) Progress and Performance Chart
(9) Civic Action Summary
(10) Logistical Summary
(11) Lessons Learned Summary

1. This completion report of U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT's deployment to Phu Bai, Republic of Vietnam, during the period January 1968 through October 1968 is forwarded, as enclosures (1) through (11), in accordance with references (a) and (b).

2. Employment Status. In accordance with reference (b) U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT was deployed to Camp Wilkinson, Gia Le Combat Base, Republic of Vietnam to perform construction support of U. S. Forces from January 1968 until October 1968. The following units were employed at other locations.

a. Detachments: None

b. Details:

(1) Detail INDIA composed of one officer and 65 enlisted personnel was employed at Camp Kinser, Okinawa, constructing berthing and messing facilities in accordance with reference (b).

(2) Detail ROMEO composed of one officer and 18 enlisted personnel was employed in Hue repairing railroad bridge #3 and constructing bridge #5

3. Safety Summary.

a. Administration

(1) The battalion safety program was administered by the Safety (Operations) Officer through the Battalion Safety Chief and monitored by the Battalion's Safety Policy Committee.

(2) A continuing program was in effect throughout the deployment to impress upon all personnel the importance of safety conscious practices. This program included stand-up safety meetings by crew leaders for construction personnel as well as lectures for personnel in administrative functions. Due to the large horizontal construction program considerable time was spent indoctrinating equipment operators and drivers in safe driving techniques for transporting materials and men.

(3) "Safety Sam" notices in the Plan of the Day, along with safety posters and slogans were used constantly.

(4) Violation tickets were introduced into the Battalion and proved to be very satisfactory in helping to maintain safety awareness on the job. The tickets along with daily inspections on the job, and close liaison with the crew leaders were instrumental in obtaining suggestions for improving the safety program.

(5) Supervisor's Safety Committee meetings were held monthly in conjunction with the Safety Policy Committee to monitor the program and to make and review recommendations concerning improvements to the safety program.

b. Accident Summary

Type	On duty	Off duty	Mandays lost	\$ Damages
(1) First Aid	39	2	N/A	N/A
(2) Lost Time	14	0	12,110	N/A
(3) Vehicle	49	0	N/A	\$5,396

c. Standup safety meetings held, 505.

d. The battalion had two accidental deaths. One occurred while a construction mechanic was airing a forklift tire and the rim separated. Although there was no direct safety violation involved, the battalion policy now requires that all split rim tires, regardless of type, will be aired in tire cages only or mounted on the equipment. The second death occurred on POL tank erection involving the use of electrical impact wrenches. The impact wrench had a defective ground which was not noticeable at the time of use.

e. During the last month of the deployment emphasis was given to safe driving techniques to prepare for the return to CONUS. Battalion personnel

attended stand-up safe driving lectures, heard and saw frequent safe driving notes and tips in the Plan of the Day, and had a final safe driving lecture presented near the end of their return flight to CONUS.

f. Figure 1-b depicts the deployment safety record.

4. Discipline Summary.

a. Total cases at mast 51

b. Total awarded NJP 43

c. Total awarded court martial 7

d. Most frequent offenses

(1) Article 86 - 8

(2) Article 92 - 12

(3) Article 113 - 7

(4) Article 134 - 9

e. Figure 1-c depicts the disciplinary status from February 1968 through October 1968.

5. Morale.

a. The morale of the battalion remained high throughout the deployment. With the subsiding of enemy action after TET, the battalion was able to move into the work projects assigned. They were of significant importance and interesting enough to keep spirits up and instill a deep sense of accomplishment.

b. Good weather throughout most of the deployment and frequent and timely Special Services sponsored shows also helped keep morale on a satisfactory level. Nightly movies and an active MARS station helped morale and relieved tensions under combat conditions. The R & R program continued to be a mainstay in support of battalion morale and was extremely popular.

c. Sports also played an important part in battalion morale. Inter-battalion competition was brisk and a softball field and lighted basketball court, plus a weight room offered opportunity for all to exercise and participate in various phases of NMCB EIGHT's athletic program.

d. Throughout the deployment meals continued to be outstanding. The variety and quality of meals provided the men of EIGHT with a well balanced diet and contributed greatly to the high morale evident throughout the Hue/Phu Bai deployment.

6. Medical/Dental.

a. Medical

(1) The general health of the battalion personnel was considered to be excellent at the time of deployment to Phu Bai, RVN in February 1968. This was largely due to careful screening of all battalion personnel during the homeport deployment.

(2) During the period of 1 February 1968 through 1 September 1968, there was a very low occurrence of upper respiratory infection, all cases responding well to symptomatic treatment. There was one case of pneumonia which was admitted to the 1st Hospital Company, 1st Marine Division (Rein) in Phu Bai, and then to the Naval Hospital Ship, USS Sanctuary. The patient was returned to the battalion twelve days later for duty.

(3) The incidence of diarrhea was considered to be moderate, but not epidemic in nature. The majority of cases responded well to symptomatic and antibiotic treatment with little lost time from work. There were only a few cases of diarrhea associated with high fever; two of these were proven to be amebiasis and the rest were non-specific. These men were returned to duty after an appropriate period of hospitalization.

(4) The venereal disease rate was considered moderate. All venereal disease cases consisted of gonorrhea. There were no cases of syphilis or other venereal infection. Cases came from local sources and all R & R ports except Hawaii and Australia. In most cases penicillin and tetracycline were needed in high doses to effectively treat gonorrhea.

(5) The battalion was beset by the usual infections which occur more frequently in areas such as Vietnam. These included cellulitis, usually starting with insect bites which had been scratched, minor cuts, and abrasions which became infected, ear infections which were mostly fungal in nature, and fungus infection of the feet, groin, and remainder of the body. Treatment of these cases was difficult as the majority responded poorly to antifungal agents. Three cases were sent on consultation to the hospital at Naval Support Activity, Danang for treatment due to their severity.

(6) No major problems in sanitation occurred during the deployment. Remodeling of the galley and messhall enhanced the maintenance of sanitary standards. Cleanliness of berthing spaces steadily improved during the course of the deployment.

(7) NMCB EIGHT sustained a total of thirteen combat casualties during the deployment, none of which were fatal; five men were evacuated and did not return to duty with NMCB EIGHT. The remaining were treated and returned to duty. Two deaths occurred from non-battle type injuries.

(8) Routine sickcall and minor surgical, laboratory, and X-ray procedures were provided by the battalion Medical Department. 1st Hospital Company, 1st Marine Division, Phu Bai and the hospital at Naval Support Activity, Danang provided such services as consultations and in-

patient treatment for the battalion.

(9) Malaria prophylaxis in the battalion was considered very good. There was only one case of malaria, with both vivax and falciparum species demonstrated. The patient was hospitalized where he responded well to treatment and was returned to duty after a period of ten days.

b. Dental

(1) At the time of the battalions arrival in Phu Bai, a dental clinic was nonexistent. Approximately one and a half months were required to locate and borrow a dental chair, light, and high speed unit from local U. S. Army and Marine Corps units. During this period a room in the dispensary was remodeled to serve as an interim dental clinic.

(2) By mid-March dental care could be given the men of NMCB EIGHT. For approximately two and a half months emergency and routine treatment was administered. During the month of June the Army recalled their high speed unit from the battalion clinic. All emergencies were referred to the Third Dental Company, Third Marine Division in Phu Bai during this period. Finally, the much needed dental trailer arrived in NMCB EIGHT's camp and by mid-June the trailer was in place and operational.

(3) The battalion Dental Department maintained a routine sickcall. Prophylactic treatment was administered, as well as operative oral surgery and endodontics. Only minor prosthetic work could be done, however, and other prosthetic cases were referred to the Third Dental Company. Very few prosthetic cases were evident because most work was completed in home-port.

c. Medical/Dental Summary

(1) Total number of patients treated at sickcall	5,061
(2) Total number of patients hospitalized	85
(3) Total number of VD cases	33
(4) Total number of dental patients treated	997
(5) Total number of dental procedures	1,409

d. Figure 1-d depicts the battalion medical summary.

7. Chaplain Activities.

a. The duties of the Chaplain consisted primarily of serving the men of the battalion and performing duties as Assistant Civic Action Officer, Public Affairs Officer, and Advisor to the Cruise Book Staff. The services of the chaplain were also extended to other military units and to the Vietnamese community.

b. NMCB EIGHT Chaplain's Activities Summary.

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SERVICES</u>	<u>AVG ATTENDANCE</u>
Sunday Mass	NMCB EIGHT	30	90
	Other Military	103	34
Weekday Mass	NMCB EIGHT	213	6
	Other Military	20	20
Memorial Services	NMCB EIGHT	4	100
Counseling		165	-

c. Other Services

<u>TYPE</u>	<u>LOCATION</u>	<u>NUMBER OF SERVICES</u>	<u>AVG ATTENDANCE</u>
Protestant	NMCB EIGHT	29	55
Latter Day Saints	NMCB EIGHT	26	9
Bible Classes	NMCB EIGHT	4	5

8. Public Affairs.

a. <u>TYPE</u>	<u>NUMBER</u>
FHTNC Releases	230
Other news releases	66
Newspaper issues published	32
Familygrams	4
Hard Hat (Newsletter)	6

b. During the deployment, the Public Affairs Office utilized four methods of supplying information to both the public and the men of the command:

(1) The battalion newspaper, the EIGHTBALL, was published in mimeograph form weekly in camp and kept the men of the command informed on progress of projects, special events, and command views.

(2) The HARD HAT, which was published monthly from April through September, was printed in tabloid form in the printing offices of Stars and Stripes, Tokyo, Japan. The HARD HAT was mailed to the families of the men of EIGHT.

(3) The "Familygram" was a personal letter from the Commanding Officer to the families and friends of NMCB EIGHT. The "Familygram" was later incorporated into the HARD HAT and mailed to dependents and friends.

(4) News releases were sent to many of the Navy oriented newspapers, regional civilian newspapers and hometown newspapers.

9. Decorations and Awards.

a. Decorations

(1) Bronze Star with Combat "V"

LCDR J. F. HARRIS, CHC, USN
LT J. D. WOLL, CEC, USN
EO2 C. E. HISER, USN
CN D. SMOCK, USN

(2) Navy Commendation Medal with Combat "V"

CDR J. T. BURTON, CEC, USN
LCDR A. J. MEHRENS, SC, USN
LTJG L. C. DRAPEAU, CEC, USNR
UTC C. C. CAMPAT, USN
CEL T. S. BARBA, USN

(3) Navy Achievement Medal

LT R. B. HAMER, CEC, USN
BUCS P. M. STENGER, USN with Combat "V"
BUC J. J. NIEMEYER, USN with Combat "V"
BU2 R. J. SAMPER, USN with Combat "V"
HM2 R. T. RIDDELL, USNR with Combat "V"
YN2 R. R. PATERNOSTER, USNR with Combat "V"
EQCM J. R. MCCULLY, USN
SKCS R. E. DIXON, USN
BUC R. R. DORE, USN
EOC J. R. FORTE, USN
UTCS L. M. IRWIN, USN
CMC K. L. WEGMAN, USN
EO2 C. E. HISER, USN
PN2 J. R. KEANE, USN
SK2 D. L. OVERBAY, USN
CM2 Z. J. WEIMER, USN
DKC L. G. PASS, USN
SN J. V. HASTRITER, USNR

(4) Purple Hearts

LCDR H. P. DAVIS, CEC, USN
LTJG W. G. GOODMAN, CEC, USNR
EOCS J. F. DANIELS, USN
BUCS L. J. FERRON, USN
BU1 H. R. TENNY, USN
SW2 F. E. DRAKE, USN
EA2 R. J. FERRY, USN
CS2 J. J. FITZPATRICK, USN
EO2 R. L. SMITH, USN

CM2 A. H. MALM, USN
EO2 L. E. HANSEL, USN
CM3 N. A. GRIFFITH, USN
CM3 R. W. KAZMAIR, USN
TN M. L. AMABA, USN
CMCN B. A. AYERS, USN

(5) Vietnamese Honor Medal, First Class

LCDR J. F. HARRIS, CHC, USN

(6) Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Gold Star

CDR R. J. WESTBERG, CEC, USN

(7) Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Silver Star

LCDR J. M. GREENWALD, CEC, USN
LT R. B. HAMER, CEC, USN
LT M. A. PERO, CEC, USN
LTJG G. A. METCALF, CEC, USNR
LTJG J. A. SCHROEDER, CEC, USNR

(8) Vietnamese Gallantry Cross with Bronze Star

LTJG L. C. DRAPEAU, CEC, USNR
CM1 J. L. GOODMAN, USN
EO1 W. H. SMITH, USN
BU2 R. J. SAMPER, USN
EO2 A. S. HOLLISTER, USN
HM2 J. C. POTTER, USN
SW2 M. D. CIBAK, USN
EA2 R. R. STEPHENS, USNR
BU3 R. E. MONKS, USN
EO3 J. T. HOOKER, USN
CN A. B. AKAGI, USN

b. Awards

MACV Certificates for Achievement, 123.

Letters of Commendation, 105.

Letters of Appreciation, 129.

Good Conduct, 3.

Expert Rifle/Pistol Medal, 45.

c. Congratulatory letters to the Command.

THIRTY-SECOND Naval Construction Regiment of 1 July 1968

THIRTY-SECOND Naval Construction Regiment of 10 September 1968
THIRD Naval Construction Brigade of 9 October 1968
THIRTY-SECOND Naval Construction Regiment of 14 October 1968
Commander, Naval Construction Battalions, U. S. Pacific Fleet
of 9 October 1968
THIRTY-SECOND Naval Construction Regiment of 9 October 1968
THIRTY-SECOND Naval Construction Regiment of 7 November 1968

10. Promotions/Advancements.

a. Officer

O-3 to O-4, 1

O-1 to O-2, 7

b. Enlisted

E-7 to E-8, 2

E-6 to E-7, 3

E-5 to E-6, 8

E-4 to E-5, 82

E-3 to E-4, 109

E-2 to E-3, 51

FROM: SINGING SAND
TO: ROCKFISH

INFO: SANDY PAT

SUBJ: PACV FACILITY

1. THE EXPEDITIOUS MANNER IN WHICH YOU COMPLETED THE SUBJECT HIGH PRIORITY PROJECT IS HIGHLY COMMENDABLE.

2. CONGRATULATIONS ON A JOB WELL DONE.
BT

010900H JULY 1968

FROM: COM THIRTY-SECOND NCR
TO: CO, NMCB EIGHT (COURIER)

INFO: CG III MAF (DANANG)
CG XXIV CORPS (COURIER)
COMNAVSUPACT DANANG
COM THIRD NCB (DANANG)
OIC NSAD TAN MY (HUE)

BT

UNCLAS

L. YOUR OUTSTANDING FEAT OF RECOVERY OF YFU 24 FROM PROBABLE LOSS BEHIND THE HUE CAUSEWAY IS IN TRUE KEEPING WITH SEABEE "CAN DO" SPIRIT AND INGENUITY. MY CONGRATULATIONS TO THE MEN OF EIGHT WHO WORKED SO DILIGENTLY TO ACCOMPLISH THIS MISSION. CAPT WALTON SENDS.

BT

100045Z SEP 68

FROM: COMCBPAC
TO: NMCB EIGHT

1. TO THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF NMCB EIGHT I TAKE THIS OPPORTUNITY TO COMMEND YOU FOR A HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL DEPLOYMENT AT GIA LE'S CAMP WILKINSON. DURING THE PAST EIGHT MONTHS EACH OF YOU HAVE CONTRIBUTED TO THE WAR EFFORT BY THE CONSTRUCTION OF VARIOUS CANTONMENT FACILITIES FOR THE 22ND SURGICAL TEAM, THE 83RD ARTILLERY BATTALION AND THE 1st MARDIV HOSPITAL. I ALSO FOLLOWED WITH INTEREST AND PRIDE THE LARGE GIA LE CANTONMENT PROJECT AND YOUR CONSTRUCTION EFFORTS AT TAN MY AND COL CO ISLAND.

2. THE TRADITIONAL SEABEE "CAN DO" ATTITUDE HAS SHOWN THROUGH ON EACH OF YOUR COMPLETED PROJECTS. PLEASE ACCEPT MY PERSONAL "WELL DONE" UPON THE COMPLETION OF YOUR THIRD RVN DEPLOYMENT.

RADM W. H. HEAMAN SENDS.

090032Z OCT 68

FM: COM THREE NCB
TO: MCB EIGHT

BT
UNCLAS
END OF DEPLOYMENT

AS YOU COMPLETE YOUR THIRD DEPLOYMENT TO VIETNAM, I EXTEND TO ALL THE OFFICERS AND MEN OF NMCB-8 MY CONGRATULATIONS ON AN OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE. AS IN PAST DEPLOYMENTS YOU HAVE MET A TREMENDOUS WORK LOAD WITH UNDAUNTED "CAN DO" SPIRIT. YOUR SPEED AND SKILL IN REPAIRING THE RAILROAD BRIDGE AT HUE AIDED GREATLY IN RESCUING THAT CITY FROM THE ENEMY. YOUR SUCCESS ON THE POL LINE FROM HUE TO TAN MY, YOUR WORK ON THE COL CO ROAD AND ITS ASSOCIATED BRIDGES AND YOUR ACCOMPLISHMENTS AT TAN MY ALL DISPLAYED A HIGH STANDARD OF CONSTRUCTION SKILL. IN ADDITION YOU FOUND TIME TO CARRY OUT AN EXTENSIVE CIVIC ACTION PROGRAM WHICH ENCOMPASSED THE RELIEF OF MANY OF THE 20,000 HUE REFUGEES GATHERED AT THE VILLAGE OF PHU LUONG. AS YOU TRAVEL HOME BE ASSURED YOU HAVE ADDED MANY NEW PAGES TO THE IMPRESSIVE RECORD NMCB-8 HAS WRITTEN SINCE ITS FIRST COMMISSIONING IN 1942. TAKE WITH YOU ALSO MY SINCEREST WISHES FOR A JOYOUS REUNION WITH YOUR FAMILIES AND LOVED ONES. REAR ADMIRAL BARTLETT SENDS.

BT

091058Z OCT 68

FM: COM THIRTY SECOND NCR
TO: NMCB EIGHT

BT
UNCLAS

1. MY HARTIEST CONGRATULATIONS TO NMCB EIGHT UPON SUBSTANTIAL COMPLETION OF YOUR PORTION OF THE FIRST INCREMENT OF THE MER PROGRAM PRIOR TO DEPARTING FOR CONUS.
2. YOUR IMMEDIATE RESPONSE IN COMMENCING CONSTRUCTION OF THREE HUNDRED THIRTY-SEVEN HEADS AND SHOWERS AND SUBSEQUENT COMPLETION AND PRECUTTING OF THREE HUNDRED SEVENTY-ONE SEA HUTS IN THE SHORT TIME FRAME ASSIGNED WAS MOST NOTE WORTHY. THE NMCB EIGHT DETAIL AT QUANG TRI PROVIDED OVER ONE HUNDRED ADDITIONAL SEA HUTS IN THAT AREA.
3. THE ENTHUSIASM AND "CAN DO" SPIRIT DISPLAYED BY NMCB EIGHT PERSONNEL WAS OF THE HIGHEST SEABEE TRADITION. A WELL DONE TO ALL HANDS. CAPT WALTON SENDS.

142225Z OCT 68

FM: CG III MAF
TO: COM THREE NCB

COMPLETION OF MER

1. IN EARLY AUGUST THE DECISION WAS MADE TO IMMEDIATELY IMPROVE THE LIVING AND SANITARY CONDITIONS FOR THE TROOPS IN NICTZ.
2. OVERCOMING SEVERE MANPOWER AND MATERIAL DEFICIENCIES, A VERY AMBITIOUS PROGRAM WHICH INCLUDED MORE THAN 5,000 FACILITIES SUCH AS MESSHALLS, BILLETTS, SHOWERS AND HEADS WAS UNDERTAKEN TO GET OUR TROOPS OUT OF THE MUD BEFORE THE FULL EFFECT OF THE MONSOON SEASON WAS FELT. MAXIMUM ENGINEER EFFORT WAS DIRECTED IN ACCOMPLISHMENT OF THIS PROGRAM ALMOST ALL OF WHICH WAS SEABEE EFFORT. EVEN OFFICE PERSONNEL WERE PUT INTO THE FIELDS TO EXPEDITE COMPLETION.
3. LOOKING BACK AT THE MAGNITUDE OF THIS EFFORT IT IS WITH GREAT PLEASURE THAT I CONGRATULATE YOU ON YOUR RAPID COMPLETION OF THIS HIGHLY SUCCESSFUL PROGRAM. THE OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL CAN DO ATTITUDE OF THE NAVY SEABEES HAS INDEED MADE THE MER PROGRAM A REALIZATION. EVEN THE EFFECTS OF A TYPHOON DID NOT APPRECIABLY HOLD YOU BACK. THE RESULT OF YOUR EFFORTS WILL HAVE FAR REACHING EFFECTS ON THE COMBAT EFFECTIVENESS OF US FORCES IN ICTZ.
4. I SEND THE SINCERE GRATITUDE OF ALL THE US FORCES IN NICTZ TO YOU AND YOUR MEN. WELL DONE. LT GEN CUSHMAN SENDS.

070140Z NOV 68

FM: COM THIRTY-SECOND NCR
TO: CO NMCB EIGHT

1. YOUR DEPARTURE FROM VIETNAM AND OPCON OF THE 32ND NCR IS VIEWED AS A SIGNIFICANT LOSS TO THE CONSTRUCTION EFFORT NORTH OF THE HAI VAN PASS. YOURS WAS AN EVENTFUL DEPLOYMENT STARTING WITH THE TET OFFENSIVE, YOUR SUPERB EFFORTS TO REOPEN QL1 IN HUE, AND THE STRUGGLE AGAINST TIME TO BUILD COL CO ROAD. STANDING ABOVE ALL HOWEVER IS YOUR OUTSTANDING PERFORMANCE IN THESE FINAL WEEKS OF YOUR DEPLOYMENT TO COMPLETE YOUR ASSIGNMENTS IN THE ARMY MINIMUM ESSENTIAL REQUIREMENTS PROGRAM, CONSTRUCTION OF THE HUE LCU RAMPS, AND RECOVERY FROM TROPICAL STORM BESS. THE SENSE OF LOSS ASSOCIATED WITH YOUR DEPARTURE IS TEMPERED BY THE KNOWLEDGE THAT YOU ARE BEING REPLACED WITH A FINE BATTALION AND THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE SO WELL EARNED YOUR HOMEPORT RESPITE. CAPTAIN WALTON SENDS.

BT

090020Z OCT 68

1000
950

Intelligence Summary

1. Intelligence.

a. The battalion mission to gather intelligence had a three-fold purpose: to provide information concerning the security of the base camp against enemy action, to provide information concerning possible enemy action against LOC's needed for the movement of men and materials to the jobsite, and to provide information concerning jobsite and detail security. The battalion's construction effort was spread throughout Tua Tien Province, hence necessitating that up-to-date intelligence information be maintained for an area of over 400 square miles.

b. During the deployment, many units were assigned within the area in which NMCB EIGHT was working. For the majority of the time, three separate commands operated in this area; the 1st AIR CAV and the 101st AIR MOBILE in the Tua Tien sector north of Phu Bai, and the first ARVN Division in the Hue City area. A general analysis of the tactical situation within the Tua Tien Province called for daily visits to intelligence sources within each of these units.

c. Intelligence was gathered in a variety of ways. The NMCB EIGHT S-2 was on the automatic routing for daily intelligence summaries (INTSMUS) from each of the Divisions mentioned above. Also, individual battalion INTSUMS were collected from battalions assigned within the specific area where an active construction job was in progress or where specific LOC's were located. Daily, an S-2 representative attended formal intelligence briefings of these units. However, the most productive means of intelligence gathering was by informal meetings between the NMCB EIGHT S-2 and other units' S-2 on up-to-the-minute happenings within his area. It was found that the personal analysis of the enemy situation and potential trouble situations, from the man in the field, often proved of greater value than other sources of information.

d. A composite map/status board was kept pin pointing current enemy actions and enemy locations. Nightly briefings for all officers were held in the wardroom by the S-2 after the evening meal. When the situation warranted, more detailed briefings were held for company commanders in the battalion CP.

e. One fairly accurate barometer of enemy intentions and perhaps the most immediate source of potential or impending enemy action was found to be a casual observation of the actions of the civilian populace. This proved particularly true of the Hue-Phu Bai area where the civilian population density was particularly high. The absence of civilians from a normally well-travelled road or busy village often warned of a possible mining attempt or ambush site. When the populace seemed to spend more activity than normal building in-house shelters and filling sandbags, it was probable that the enemy was operating within the area. Also, the actions and attendance of battalion-hired laborers served to indicate the possibility of enemy attack.

2. Security.

a. Base Camp-Camp Wilkinson

(1) Personnel - E Company, the specially-formed security company, provided personnel for both security watch-standing and defensive construction. At the start of the deployment, during the TET offensive, the NMCB EIGHT perimeter was part of the Gia Le Combat Base perimeter and all eight bunkers were manned at four men per bunker. Company fighting positions reinforced the bunker line and were manned continuously for approximately twenty days during the month of February. E Company personnel also manned the gate, watch tower, mortar pits, and stood SOG and COG watches. Later in the deployment, as enemy activity diminished and as units of the 101st Air Mobile took up positions immediately in front of the Camp Wilkinson perimeter, most bunkers were left unmanned under normal conditions of readiness and security personnel were transferred to detail sites.

(2) Defenses - Mortar and rocket protection was provided within administrative and berthing areas by both above-ground covered bunkers and uncovered slit trenches. The perimeter line was made up of covered bunkers connected by zig zag slit trenches, with fire team fighting positions at the outboard apexes of the zig-zags. A secondary line of defense was established by locating two-man fighting holes in a smaller perimeter about the main berthing and administrative area. Companies were assigned sectors of the perimeter proportionate to their on-board strength and were afforded the opportunity to construct company and platoon CP's to fit their needs. A compressed air operated mortar alarm system constructed from truck horns and sheet metal megaphones and supplied by a compressed air cylinder located in the CP proved effective, even when the camp electrical system was inoperative. Dead area and critical high density buildings were also warned by utilizing a back-up electrical bell system. Immediate response to the mortar/rocket/attack warning system was stressed by holding frequent red-alert drills.

(3) Lessons Learned.

(a) The importance of the watch tower was proven over and over during the deployment. A remote switch to the alarm system was installed such that the tower could give immediate warning of incoming fire. During military action upon or near the camp, the tower watch proved to be the most valuable source of information of tactical status. The tower was equipped with an azimuth board and pointer in order to read and report bearings to a recorder in the CP.

(b) The NMCB EIGHT mortar pit provided illumination support for the entire Gia Le Combat Base. The assignment of a well-trained and capable mortar crew paid rich dividends when in May, the crew was called upon by the base defense coordinator to deliver over 100 illumination rounds in less than three hours in order to fight off a well-coordinated three-prong sapper attack. It was found that a full allowance of mortar rounds was mandatory.

(c) Knock-out panels were installed in the walls of the galley in order to provide expedient exits in case of an unexpected enemy attack.

(d) The original primary bunkers on Camp Wilkinson perimeter were two story, watch tower/bunkers constructed of sand filled asphalt barrels and a timber framework, protected by a double layer of sandbags. Evidence of the effects of enemy B-40 rockets showed that these structures not only provided a massive profile but also offered only moderate protection against a direct

hit. These bunkers were gradually replaced with single story timber bunkers, bermed at a 45° angle, with the berm covered with sandbags. Open air U-shaped watch positions were installed on top of the bunkers in order to provide the watch stander with maximum visibility and minimum sound deadening.

b. Details and Job Sites

(1) Personnel - Whenever possible, Army or Marine units were utilized for security of NMCB EIGHT details within their respective operating areas. However, in many cases, the tactical requirements of nearby units precluded their use as static security, thereby necessitating the Seabees of NMCB EIGHT to defend their own areas of responsibility. In these cases, permanent security personnel from E Company formed the primary watch-standing force, with augmentation by construction personnel as the requirement arose. This situation occurred at the Hue Stadium (Detail Sierra), the Tan My LST ramp (Detail Tango), the Hue LCU ramp and Bridge #5 of the northern Hue Bypass (Detail Romeo). In all of these detail sites close contact was maintained with nearby operating units (CAP Teams, river PBR squadrons, RF and PF forces, etc.) in order to monitor friendly force locations and planned and friendly patrol movements.

(2) Defenses - Defenses varied almost daily at each detail site as the construction at the site progressed. Temporary sandbag positions were built, and consequently moved in order to cope with changing fields of fire. In all cases, maximum use was made of concertina, fixed wire fences, and trip flares in order to provide a barrier and deterrent to enemy penetration.

(3) Lessons Learned.

(a) One constant Problem at all remote construction sites was the difficulty in maintaining the cooperation of and contact with nearby friendly operating units. In areas that were patrolled by Vietnamese National Forces, the language problem caused headaches. Often nearby units would change radio frequencies almost daily, complicating radio contact immensely. Frequent personal contact with units equipped with mortar, artillery and air support capabilities was necessary to ensure that they understood the exact location of the detachment's site and work areas. Also, fall back and contingency plans were kept up to date with nearby units in the event of massive enemy action.

(b) When possible, it was found that the careful positioning of building material stock piles and equipment not only provided additional protection for the camp itself but also eliminated obstacles within the planned fields of fire. As an example, the berthing tent area of one site was completely surrounded with a double stack of cement pallets, thereby provided both a convenient storage area for the cement and an increase in protection from small arms fire and shrapnel.

(c) Illumination at the detachment sites was accomplished by utilizing both hand flares and remotely positioned trip flares activated by pulling trip wires leading to watch positions. When additional range or height of hand flares became mandatory, a "flare tube" was constructed from a two-foot length of pipe with a capped end and a nail welded in the cap for a firing pin. This flare tube, situated on a simple tripod, acted as a

mortar into which the flare was dropped. In this manner, flares could be positioned with about triple the range and with increased directional accuracy.

(d) On all detail sites, it proved important to stress the overall responsibility of the officer or CPO in charge. While the S-2 staff and battalion Gunnery Sergeant made almost daily visits to provide guidance and direction in security matters, the cognizant detail supervisor was involved in all decisions concerning, defense, and other security matters. Hence, the officer or CPO in charge at detail sites was kept informed of all pertinent security matters. Radio capability was provided by PRC 25's and night time communications was maintained with both the parent battalion and nearby friendly units.

3. Communications.

a. General. Rapid, efficient and reliable communications are of vital importance in battalion operations. This was found to be doubly true as NMCB EIGHT also maintained communications watch for the 32nd NCR and the Nam Hoa Rock Crusher, as well as its own. In addition to the tactical net, NMCB EIGHT maintained a military affiliate radio station (MARS) that also proved of vital importance to the morale of the battalion and other military in the area.

b. Personnel. The communications crew consisted of twelve (12) men, organized into a field crew, a MARS crew, and switchboard operators. The field crew was occupied repairing downed lines or performing PM's on the equipment. Both the MARS and switchboard operators maintained a 24 hour watch throughout the deployment. Compared to the previous deployment in Chu Lai, the communications services rendered increased ten-fold. The communications crew transmitted and received more than 5,000 voice messages and placed an average of 20 telephone calls an hour, for a total of about 120,000 calls in the eight month deployment. The MARS Station placed 3,950 CONUS phone patches and transmitted 740 MARSGRAMS. MARS services were made available to nearby Army and Marine Units every second day, and five (5) MARSGRAM boxes were positioned with nearby units to provide remote message pickup.

c. Lessons Learned.

(1) Civilian Equipment - Civilian equipment was encountered in the MARS Station, Camp Public Address System, shop test equipment, and PT 300's.

(a) Two public address systems were maintained. The camp 150 watt system proved barely satisfactory in covering the large area involved. The "Lectronetts" portable system was outstanding for ceremonies and no problems were encountered during its extended use.

(b) The Motorola PT-300 proved to be a useful radio for the construction net. Because the maintenance contractor was Danang based and made only infrequent visits to Phu Bai, some units were deadlined longer than normal. The communications maintenance crew, who had PT-300 factory training courses could have made basic repairs if parts had been available. Some difficulties will always exist due to the fact that the radios are not sealed units. Dust rain, and rough roads tend to affect these radios more than military gear.

(c) The civilian test equipment provided would have been adequate for a CONUS repair shop, but the dusty atmosphere encountered in RVN caused maintenance problems. The lack of availability of spare parts precluded third and fourth echelon maintenance for which some of the test gear was intended.

(d) MARS Gear - MARS equipment is exclusively civilian amateur radio gear and is not designed to meet rigid military standards. Because of this the stations experienced problems with maintenance and upkeep and many instances of deadlined equipment. Nevertheless, the station managed to stay on the air 95% of the time. This was possible because there were three complete radio rigs available during the deployment. The main cause for deadline was the extreme high voltage of the camp power supply and the beating the equipment took from the firing of "friendly" 8 inch guns in close proximity of the camp during the beginning of the deployment. The high voltage and power surges caused power supplies to burn out and fuses to blow on a regular basis. This problem was partly resolved by changing the equipment over for 220 volt operation and installing 220 volt service in the station. After this system was installed the incident of equipment failure from high voltage was reduced considerably. The other problem was more difficult to solve. The sensitive components in the gear were not able to stand up to extreme vibrations caused by the firing of the local 8 inch guns and thus many components failed. The problem was further complicated by the nonavailability of parts through the supply system. Items such as electron tubes and fuses were not available locally because they are not common to military gear. Ordering through normal supply channels was a long process and parts usually did not arrive for months after the order was placed, and many times not at all. Most of the repair parts needed to maintain equipment were obtained by trading and borrowing from other MARS Stations and military units in the area. In consideration of this supply problem, it is recommended that a heavy stock of parts and tools, be obtained before deployment if the Battalion is to operate a MARS Station. Shortly after arrival, the station was allotted a 21 MC frequency and a Hawaii gateway. Unfortunately, the antenna system then in use was not capable of operation on that frequency. Permission was requested and granted to construct and raise a Log Periodic, which had been supplied free of charge by III MAF. The MARS crew assembled the antenna, and battalion construction crews and resources raised it into the air. The efforts were not wasted since when it was operational, MARS phonepatches to CONUS were immediately doubled and remained so through the deployment.

(e) Intercom System - The Camp Wilkinson intercom system consisted of 10 Talk-a-phone master units. When the units were taken over they already had one deployment of use. However, they proved to be one of the most dependable pieces of communication equipment available. Their presence relieved an already heavy load from the switch board. No spare parts were available but some military rectifiers and other parts were adapted as replacement parts.

(2) Military Equipment.

(a) The primary Battalion tactical net consisted of 19 PRC 25's, and 4 GRC 125 radios. These radios proved extremely easy to maintain and very reliable. The only problems were as follows:

1. Batteries for the PRC 25, obtained from "Crown Battery

Company" in Okinawa had only $\frac{1}{4}$ th the life of a Rayovac or Eveready. Purchase of American manufactured batteries is recommended.

2. Fiberglass whip antenna's for the GRC 125's crack and break easily. The shortage of replacement antennas again was overcome by using $\frac{3}{8}$ inch thin wall conduit, some scrap steel and a little ingenuity in order to fabricate a "jury rigged" antenna. PT-300 steel whips were also pressed into service on the GRC 125 when necessary.

3. Repair parts for these radios were in scant supply. It is a tribute to their dependability that not one radio was inoperable at the end of the deployment.

(b) The main inter-battalion net consisted of the PRC 47 and TRC 75 radios. No problems were encountered with either of these radios with the exception that there were a number of large hills between Danang and Camp Wilkinson that often interfered with radio reception.

(c) The PRC 6 radios were not used at all during the deployment.

(d) The PRC 10 radios were not used due to the tendency of their output frequency to drift such as to preclude reception by another PRC 10. This fact coupled with the absence of frequency assignments within the range of the PRC 10's, eliminated their use completely.

(e) Platoon tactical communications were maintained with sound powered phones.

(f) The EE-8's and TA 312's proved satisfactory for the camp telephone net. Installation of Army-installed telephone system made offbase calls easier.

CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

CONSTRUCTION SUMMARY

Construction Summary

1. General.

a. Concurrent with the arrival of the first contingents of U. S. Naval Mobile Construction Battalion EIGHT at Camp Wilkinson at the end of January 1968, the enemy launched its TET offensive. The resulting tactical situation seriously affected the battalion's construction program during those first months in-country.

b. During those early months the construction effort was limited because of the inaccessibility of most of the job sites, many of which were under enemy control, and because of the large manpower commitment necessary to provide continuous perimeter and camp security. Critical work was started immediately, however, with the deployment by helicopter of one construction detail consisting of one officer and 26 enlisted men to Col Co Island to construct POL facilities and another detail to Tan My to construct port facilities for the Naval Support Activity.

c. As local fighting began to decrease in intensity in early February the battalion increased its construction effort, first in support of MAG-36 and FLSG-A to the south in the Phu Bai military complex, and then near the end of February and early March north to the city of Hue where a major construction effort was launched to rebuild and repair numerous bridges and roads which were damaged or destroyed during the offensive and which were vital to the maintenance of our lines of communication. During this time numerous roads were surveyed, repaired and placed in service and key bridges were repaired or constructed at the southwest, northwest, and northeast corners of the city of Hue.

d. One of the last areas to be cleared of the enemy lay to the east of Hue between Hue and the Naval Support Activity, Tan My Port. Connecting the city and the port was little more than a one lane path, seven miles long, much of which was under four feet of water during the monsoon season. The major horizontal construction project for the battalion was to build a permanent all weather two lane road connecting the Tan My Port and Route #1, south of Hue and to have it complete prior to the next monsoon. While preliminary surveying, design and drawings for the 38,000 foot roadway were underway by the battalion, construction of the road, bridges and drainage structures commenced in March and proceeded concurrently.

e. Throughout the deployment the battalion maintained a good backlog of both vertical and horizontal work. A high priority hospital complex was constructed for the 1st Marine Division and a variety of administrative, operational and storage facilities were built throughout the deployment for Marine Air Group 36 in Phu Bai. Construction support for the Naval Support Activity, Tan My included a complete cantonment, POL storage facilities, LCU ramps and cargo staging areas. Under the MER program, hundreds of berthing huts, showers and heads were built for various Army units in the Northern I Corps. In addition miscellaneous other facilities including a hovercraft facility, aircraft parking aprons and revetments, jet fuel pipelines and pumping facilities, maintenance of Gia Le and Mag 36 roads, upgrade of Camp Wilkinson utilities and facilities were constructed by the battalion.

Perhaps the most unique task involved the recovery of a U. S. Navy Yard Freight Utility Ship which had become stranded behind the Hue Causeway during typhoon Beth in September.

f. In spite of the difficult start during the first month of the deployment, the battalion was able to place a total of \$5,559,288.00 worth of material during the deployment for an average of nearly \$700,000.00 per month.

2. Detail India. for the first five and one-half months of the deployment, the battalions detail India, one officer and 65 enlisted personnel, performed construction on a permanent Seabee base on the Island of Okinawa. The detail, having relieved a similar NMCB TEN group, made substantial progress toward the completion of the first of several permanent barracks complexes. Work was performed on three of the main concrete and block barracks, the Chief Petty Officer barracks, the mechanical equipment building, utilities, mechanical systems and general site preparation. NMCB EIGHT's detail India was relieved by a detail from NMCB THREE in mid-July.

3. Lessons Learned.

a. Throughout the 1968 deployment, the battalion had been assigned a number of large, complex projects. One of these, the Col Co Road construction project, was a major battalion effort requiring the full deployment to complete. It is felt that the assignment of a large project such as this, that will occupy the battalion for as much of the deployment as possible and which can be finished near or at the end of the deployment is very desirable. This type of effort was found to be a good morale builder and aid in developing unit esprit de corps since all battalion personnel, whether directly involved with the construction or not considered it "their" (NMCB EIGHT) project.

b. During the construction of Col Co Road, a number of lessons were learned by the battalion. Specifically, the more important of these were:

(1) Grade and Cross Section - the need for maintaining accurate grade and cross section, particularly on the side slopes, was found to be a critical factor in meeting material and schedule targets where so much fill material was required to be hauled, placed, and sloped. Good cross sectional control during the placing of fill material considerably reduced and controlled material quantities and the effort necessary to shape road contours and slopes.

(2) Soil Cement - soil cementing was required to stabilize a major portion of the roads sub-base. It was found that the amount of water which had to be added during the soil cementing process varied greatly depending on the depth and type of material the soil cementing was being placed on. Also, tests indicate that the use of salt water or brackish water did not significantly alter the strength of the soil cement.

(3) Culverts - the installation of corrugated metal culverts in the fine, cohesionless sand fill posed certain problems. It was determined that the culvert should be as water tight as possible. The proper fitting of

sections, the complete installation of all bolts and sealing joints with asphaltic mastic was necessary to prevent fine sand backfill from being washed out from around the culvert during heavy water flows.

c. Throughout the deployment numerous facilities were constructed at or near the water. These included the PACV or hovercraft facility, two LCU ramps and repairs to a concrete causeway. It was found that the problem of dewatering the construction site using cofferdams and pumps was critical to the successful and timely completion of this type of facility. Emphasis should be placed on the thoughtful and deliberate execution of a satisfactory dewatering scheme for each job. During the homeport training cycle, personnel should be trained in the purpose and techniques of dewatering. Keeping pumping equipment operating properly was also found to be critical during construction and the use of an EO or CM as pump operator on a project is good insurance to keep the equipment functioning.

d. A number of construction details were formed during the deployment to accomplish construction away from the main camp area. It was found that the successful operation of the detail was dependent, to a considerable extent, on the amount of planning and effort expended to establish the best possible facilities (berthing, messing, showers, equipment maintenance, drainage, etc.) consistent with the details mission and length of stay.



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FIG. 6A

Shortly after the February TET offensive, NMCB EIGHT began the most ambitious construction project of the deployment, Col Co Road (Route #551) (FIG. 6A). The road provided a vital transportation link between the Tan My Port Facility and the city of Hue. In the past, rising monsoon water made the road impassable for several months of the year. NMCB EIGHT's task was to elevate and widen the entire 7.2 mile stretch and provide proper subbase and surface for the asphalt paving. (FIGS 6B and 6C show a typical section of road before and after construction.) Materials required included dredged sand, laterite, soil cement, 6", 2 $\frac{1}{2}$ ", and 3/4" minus rock and paddy soil to confine the slopes. The road was completed in seven and one half months.



FIG. 6B



FIG. 6C

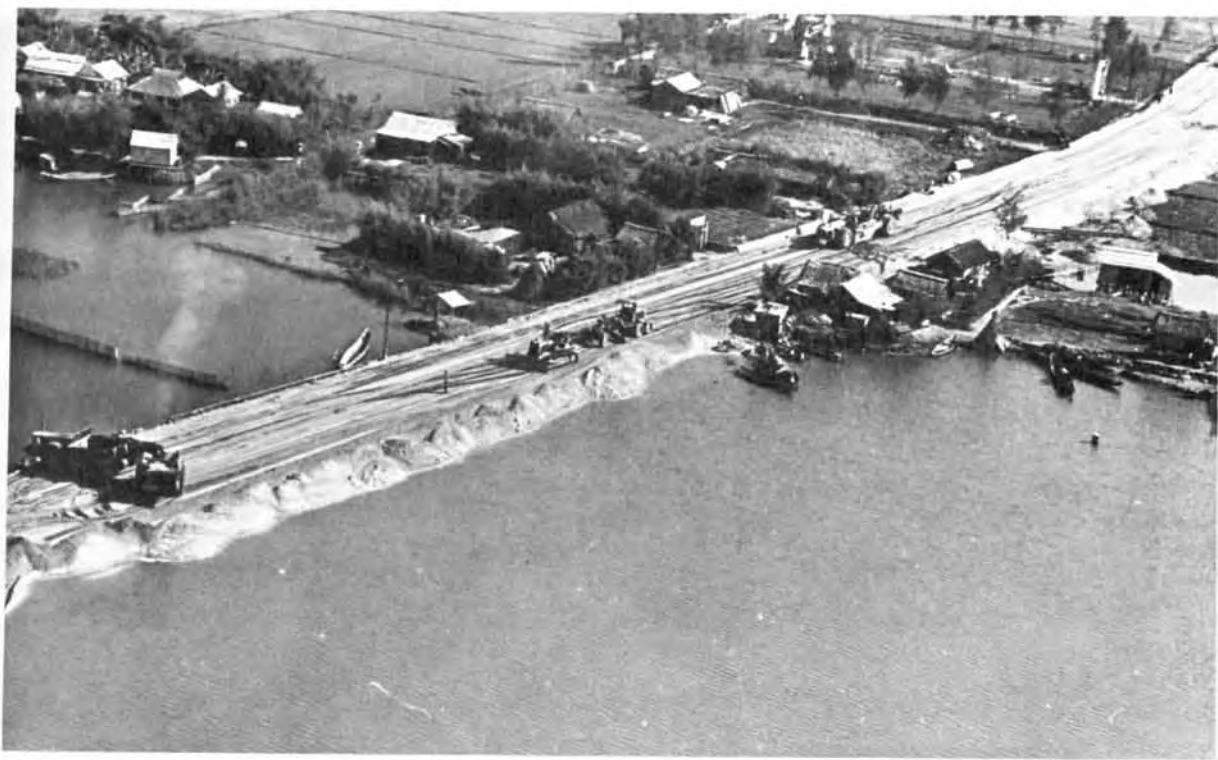


FIG 6D

Over 220,000 cubic yards of sand fill were required to raise sections of the road to a desired $8\frac{1}{2}$ feet above mean low-low water. Two primary causeways existed along the road. One of these causeways (FIG. 6D) was raised nearly six feet and widened to allow vehicular traffic during the high water of the monsoon season.



FIG. 6E

To confine the rock base course to the surface, it was necessary to first coat the sand with an 8" layer of soil cement. Cement bags were spaced by hand, broken, mixed with the water crossing (FIG. 6E), moistened and compacted.

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FIG. 6F

The construction of Col Co Road, from Tan My to Hue, required replacement of several old concrete and stone bridges. The timber water crossings built (FIG. 6F) allowed Vietnamese boat traffic as well as high water flow from the rice paddy side of the road to the canal. Several of these structures were blown or burned shortly after construction but were replaced in a matter of hours.



FIG. 6G

Col Co Road originally contained two causeways at its northern end, previously usable for water traffic only about eight months of the year. To provide proper water flow over these obstructions, an elevated 600 foot timber bridge (FIG. 6G) was constructed. The bridge contained four foot walkways on both sides and a concrete firebreak every 200 feet, composed of 20 foot pre-cast concrete sections. This structure, the longest bridge ever built by NMCB EIGHT, was ready for traffic in 29 days.

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FIG. 6H

Atop the soil cemented sub-surface was placed a six inch layer of 2"-minus road rock (FIG. 6H). The rock was hauled to the site by dump trucks and end dumps from rock off-loading facilities located at each end of the road. Much of the rock was brought to these facilities by barge.



FIG. 6I

High water tides during the monsoon floods presented an erosion threat. To combat this problem, Vietnamese laborers teamed with the SEABEES of EIGHT in laying bags filled with cement and sand along the banks of the northern causeway (FIG. 6I). Rice paddy material was used on the other areas of the open road.

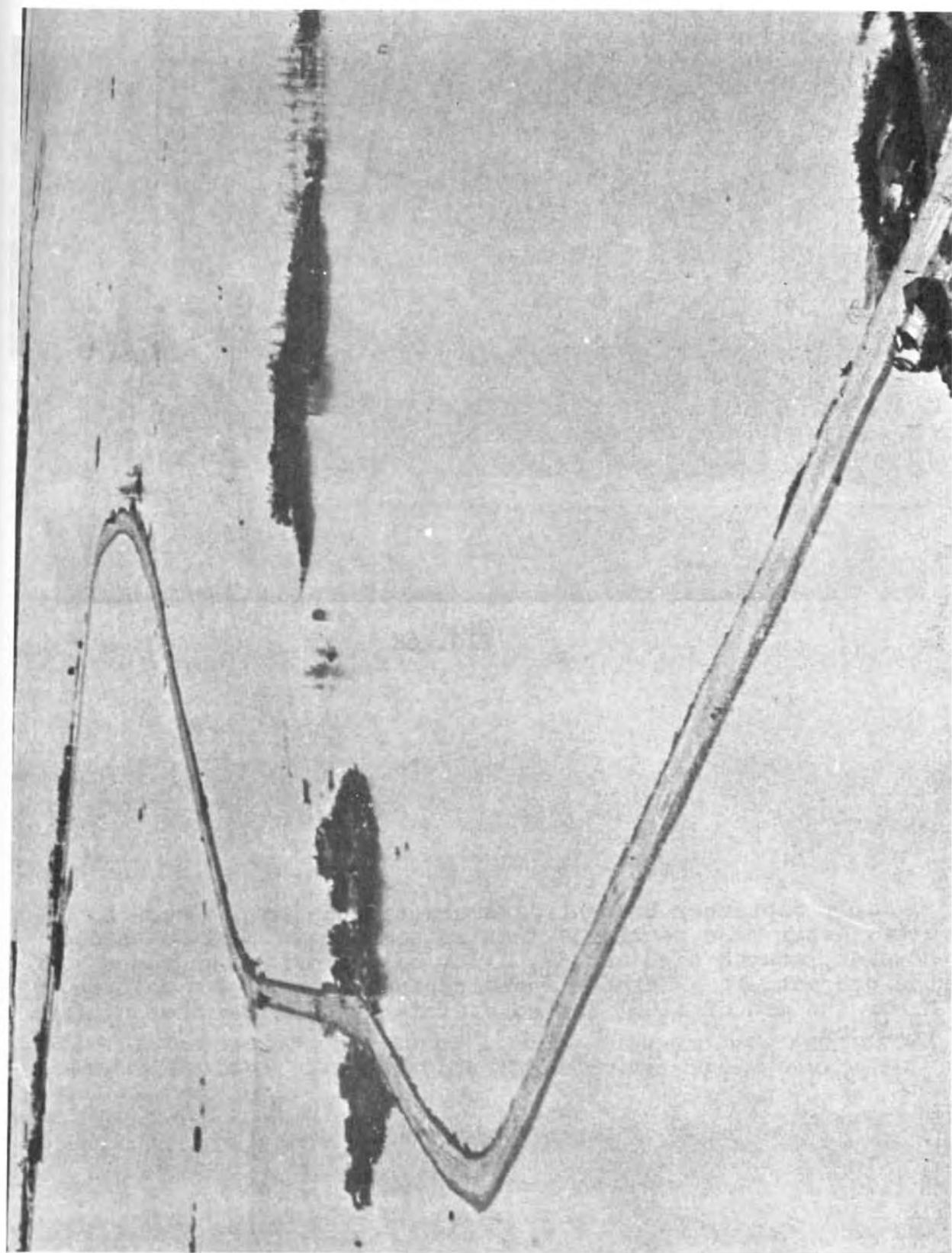


FIG 6J



FIG. 6K

Early September brought a severe typhoon to the Hue-Phu Bai area. Water rose nearly 11 feet in some areas. Col Co Road, however, stayed high and dry (FIG. 6J), proving the success of the project. On 3 October a dedication ceremony was held to honor the men of EIGHT and to officially open the thoroughfare (FIG. 6K).



FIG. 6L

One of the more ambitious vertical construction projects of the deployment was a complete cantonment (FIG. 6L) for Naval Support Activity Detachment on Col Co Island. Dubbed Tan My Spit Cantonment the complex consisted of 25 berthing huts, 500 man galley, exchange, barber shop, laundry, dispensary, firehouse, generator station, large butler building warehouse, and water pump and storage facilities.

SEABEES having to work out of their rating became commonplace at various stages of the deployment. One such necessity arose on Tan My Spit (Col Co Island). Nine of the fifteen tanks shown in FIG. 6M were built by MCB EIGHT. The crews consisted of Utilitiesmen and Construction Electricians as well as Builders and Steelworkers.



FIG. 6M

One of the higher priority projects of the deployment for NMCB EIGHT was a modern hospital facility for the First Marine Division in Phu Bai (FIG. 6N). The complex consisted of air conditioned operating rooms, treatment and receiving rooms, and helicopter pad. The buildings were completely enclosed by protective revetments.



FIG. 6N



FIG. 60

The typhoon of early September flooded a causeway adjacent to the Perfume River in Hue. A YFU (Yard Freight Utility) ship was washed over the roadway during the night. To retrieve the vessel, NMCB EIGHT was called to the scene. Working throughout the night, the Seabees successfully opened a gap in the causeway and freed the Navy ship (FIG. 60).



FIG 6P

During the February TET offensive, the primary line of communications to points north of Hue, along Route #1, was severed by enemy damage to a bridge at the northwest corner of the city. A new, 180 foot timber bridge (FIG. 6P) was expeditiously constructed by NMCB EIGHT personnel working around the clock.

Due to the necessity of allowing continuous Vietnamese water traffic to the Hue market areas, Bridge #5 (FIG. 6Q) at the northeast corner of the imperial city required special design treatment. The bridge was essentially of timber construction, but contained a 40 foot steel span. The 400 foot bridge sloped to this central water opening at a $4\frac{1}{2}\%$ grade on each end to allow a 20 foot overhead clearance for sampans and other native vessels. The bridge contained pedestrian walkways on both sides.



FIG. 6Q

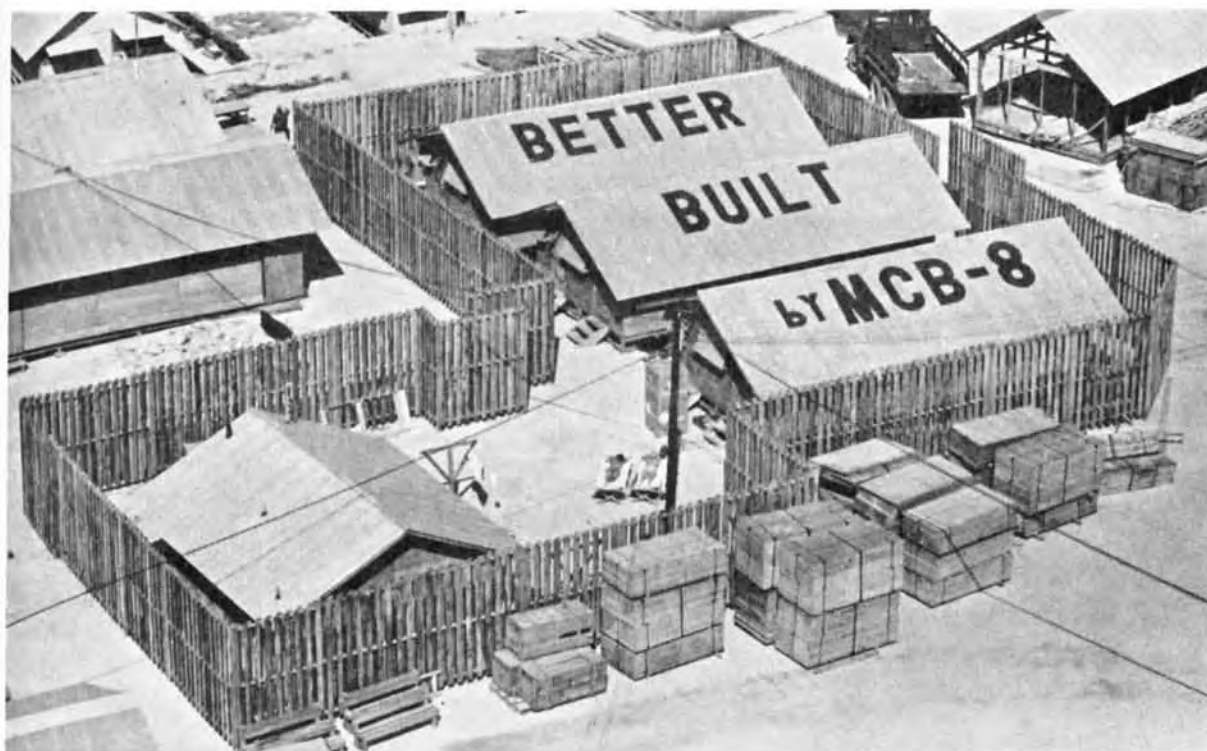


FIG. 6R

A high priority project undertaken in July was a housing complex (FIG. 6R) for nurses of the 22nd Surgical Hospital, Phu Bai. The quarters contain 12 individual sleeping units, compartmentized showers and latrines, and a sun deck. The inscription on the roofs, incidentally, refers to the buildings.

Several revetments (FIG. 6S) were constructed for the 131st Aviation Company in Phu Bai. The pre-fab units were staggered and provided much-needed protection for the unit's helicopters.



FIG. 6S



FIG. 6T

A large 100 foot x 160 foot warehouse (FIG. 6T) was built during the early weeks of the deployment for MAG 36 in Phu Bai.

Two identical Non-Commissioned Officers' Clubs (FIG. 6U) were constructed for Marine Air Group 36, one being for Senior NCO's. The clubs included indoor restrooms, cooking facilities, generous storage space, various indirect lighting effects, stage and performers' dressing rooms.



FIG 6U

A 65 man construction force was detailed to Camp Kinser, Okinawa on 1 February 1968 to relieve a similar detail from NMCB TEN and continue construction of the permanent SEABEE camp there. Figures 6V through 6X show the progress made by NMCB EIGHT's detail India on three of the Enlisted Men's barracks. Figure 6V is an overall view of Lot 1. Forms are being completed for placing the second deck slab. Figure 6W shows a building in lot 1 with all bearing walls completed. Figure 6X is a view of a building showing the first deck bearing walls complete. An NMCB THREE detail relieved detail India at Camp Kinser on 15 July 1968, and detail India rejoined NMCB EIGHT's main body in July to assist the Battalion in its urgent vertical construction program.



FIG. 6V



FIG. 6W

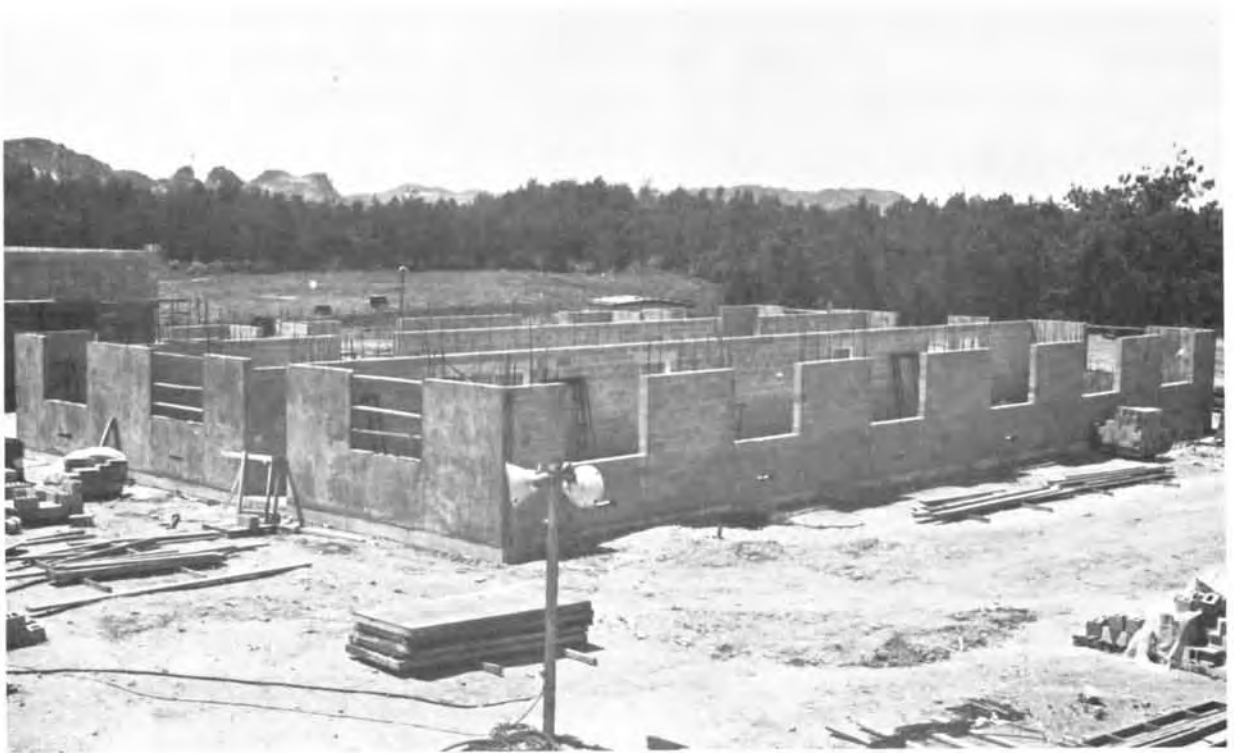


FIG. 6X

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FIG. 6Y

One of the top priority construction projects during the later part of the deployment was the pre-cutting and erection of berthing huts and portable heads and showers for the U.S. Army. A large portion of the MER project effort took place in NMCB EIGHT's pre-cut yard (FIG. 6Y) where lumber was cut to exact sizes on a production line basis. The pre-cut material was used by NMCB EIGHT to construct 181 showers, 156 heads and 164 16 x 32 Southeast Asia huts and to provide 207 bundled, pre-fab kits for "self help" construction. Figure 6Z shows several heads and showers awaiting pickup. In addition, NMCB EIGHT's Detail Whiskey pre-cut and erected 108 huts at Quang Tri, (FIG. 6AA) during the month of September.



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FIG. 6Z



FIG. 6AA

During spring and summer of 1968, MCB 53 completed a pontoon bridge elevated on piles, the longest bridge of its type in Vietnam. Due to unforeseen stresses, it became necessary for MCB EIGHT to cover the bridge with a double layer of 3 x 12 wood decking (FIG. 6BB) and fill all hollow steel piles with concrete. The bridge provides a primary crossing from the south bank to the north shore of the Perfume River, southwest of Hue.



FIG. 6BB



FIG. 6CC

Shortly after the TET offensive of January and February, MCB EIGHT was tasked with a high priority pipeline project. In record time a line was laid from the city of Hue to Tan My Port on the coast. Again in September a second fuel carrying system was stretched along Col Co Road. This line, however, was buried a major portion of its length by SEABEES and Vietnamese laborers (FIG. 6CC).

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FIG. 6CC

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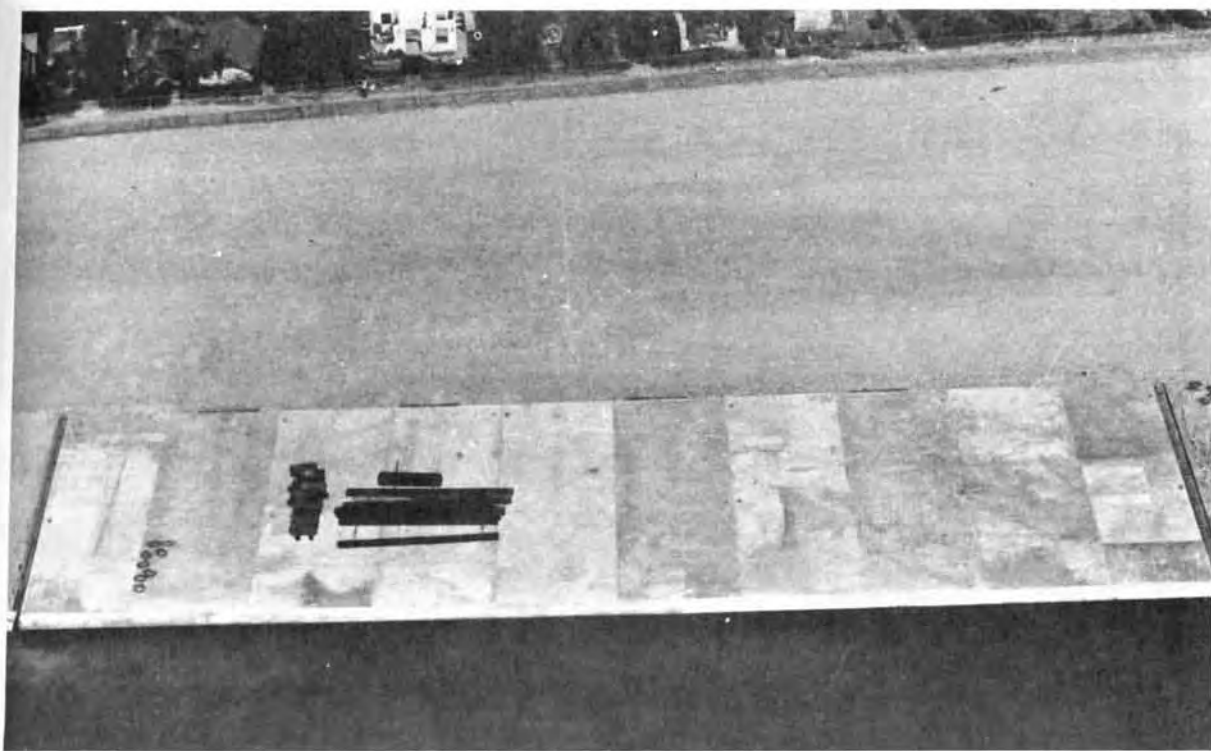


FIG. 6DD

The strategic location of Hue made it ideal for a control supply and logistics receiving point for northern forward areas. NMCB EIGHT worked on two LCU ramps near the end of the deployment. The North Ramp was intended to support forces to the north and northwest of Hue and the South Ramp (FIG. 6DD), adjacent to Col Co Road, is for the supply of southern areas. Only days before leaving for the States, NMCB EIGHT's concrete crew placed concrete for the final slab on the South LCU ramp (FIG. 6EE) while Equipment Operators finished grade work on the material storing and storage area (FIG. 6FF).



FIG. 6EE



FIG. 6FF

Civic Action Summary

1. NMCB EIGHT Civic Action dates from the subsiding of the TET offensive. G-5, Task Force X-ray, assigned Phu Luong as the area of responsibility. Phu Luong is located about two miles east of Camp Wilkinson, at the junction of Route #1 and Gia Le Road. The total population is about 50,000 people, which includes many thousands of refugees now displaced from surrounding villages and hamlets. Phu Luong was a vital area during the offensive, since it was officially designated by the GVN as a refugee center. It was with the refugee problem that Civic Action began.
2. As soon as the refugee problems were under control, interest turned to reopening schools, which had been used as dwellings during the offensive. Most of the desks had been destroyed for fire wood, and the interiors and exteriors of the building were soiled by the many refugee fires. With the use of scrap wood and old paint, the schools were completely refurbished and opened to receive over 2,500 students. Also more materials were gathered for an additional three classrooms which are now completed. In addition, a vocational school was opened for the summer months where typing and sewing were taught. The vocational school will now operate year-round.
3. The largest Civic Action undertaking of the battalion has been the construction of an 85 bed hospital in the Phu Luong area. After about five months of planning, it was decided, because of the density of the population of Phu Luong, and also due to the distance between Hue and any other real medical facility, to construct a hospital. Realizing the size of the undertaking, the NMCB EIGHT endorsed plans were submitted through all the proper channels. Since the hospital is being built in a predominately Catholic section of the village, assurance was requested that the hospital would not be considered denominational. It was decided that the hospital would be totally civilian, eventhough it might well be staffed by Catholic personnel.
4. Almost every unit in the Phu Bai area has in some way helped in this project. Through the good use of scrap materials and good planning from NMCB EIGHT Engineering Aids, an 85 bed hospital, which will cost about \$12,000.00 upon completion has been designed and is now well into construction. Through private channels NMCB EIGHT has contributed \$3,000.00 to this project as well as two men working full time in advisory capacities.
5. A "clinic" was constructed by NMCB EIGHT's line crew in Phu Luong. Five men of the crew completed the structure in four hours using construction material consisting of scrap wood, mostly obtained from shipping crates. The villagers provided a tent for an overhead. This arrangement was adequate for the time. The first MEDCAP visits were conducted bi-weekly, with an average patient load of 100 - 150 perday. Visits soon had to be extended to tri-weekly because of an increase in patients seeking treatment.
6. A GVN maternity hospital was located in the village and was found in need of structural repair and medical supplies. Mrs. VO-thi-Trung presently heads the hospital and has proven very capable. She is assisted by a three year medical trained nurse from the University of Hue. Both have worked in the hospital for approximately six years. An average of 100 births

per month is not uncommon. Basic structural deficiencies were corrected in the building and as a result NMCB EIGHT's MEDCAP activity centered around the maternity hospital which provided the MEDCAP Team the able assistance of the nurses.

7. Initial MEDCAP efforts were also combined with the Battalions DENTCAP Team. Starting with three half-day efforts a week in the village of Phu Luong the Team was soon treating 15 patients per day.

8. The DENTCAP Team then moved to the capitol city of Hue. The city was just beginning to recover from the disaster of the TET offensive, and numerous medical and dental problems were evident. At this time, the DENTCAP Team worked closely with a MEDCAP Team of American Nuns. Refugee villages, orphanages, dispensaries, schools and the Hue prison were all centers of operation. Generally, 20 - 25 patients were seen each trip with a total of over 1,000 patients treated for the deployment. During the latter parts of the deployment the requirements for the MEDCAP Team decreased as Vietnamese dispensaries were being established. The DENTCAP Team continued however, because dental care facilities were nonexistent. A schedule was arranged with each center, so that patients could be scheduled for the team on specific days.

9. Lessons Learned.

a. The use of full time personnel in a battalion civic action program greatly increased the effectiveness of the effort. Also, in accomplishing specific functions or projects which require manpower in excess of that available to the civic action group it is best to use the battalion construction organization already in existence to obtain better control and insure a well planned program.

b. Personnel used in civic action would benefit greatly from more specialized and appropriate homeport training to prepare adequately the group in all phases of Vietnamese politics and culture.

c. In the performance of any civic action undertaking it is particularly important to utilize the procedures of the Vietnamese system in obtaining approval, assistance, and agreements of division of effort prior to and during the program. At times this may seem slow and frustrating but it has for this battalion paid off in better cooperation and deeper involvement on the part of both the village hierarchy and the villagers themselves.



FIG. 9a

NMCB EIGHT's Dentist (FIG. 9a) led an active Dentcap program which was well received and successful.

Working closely with Vietnamese laborers, MCB EIGHT's EA2 R.R. Stephens, who helped design the hospital, visits the job site in the refugee city of Phu Luong (FIG. 9b). The hospital wings were staggered for improved ventilation and were designed for an 85-bed capacity.

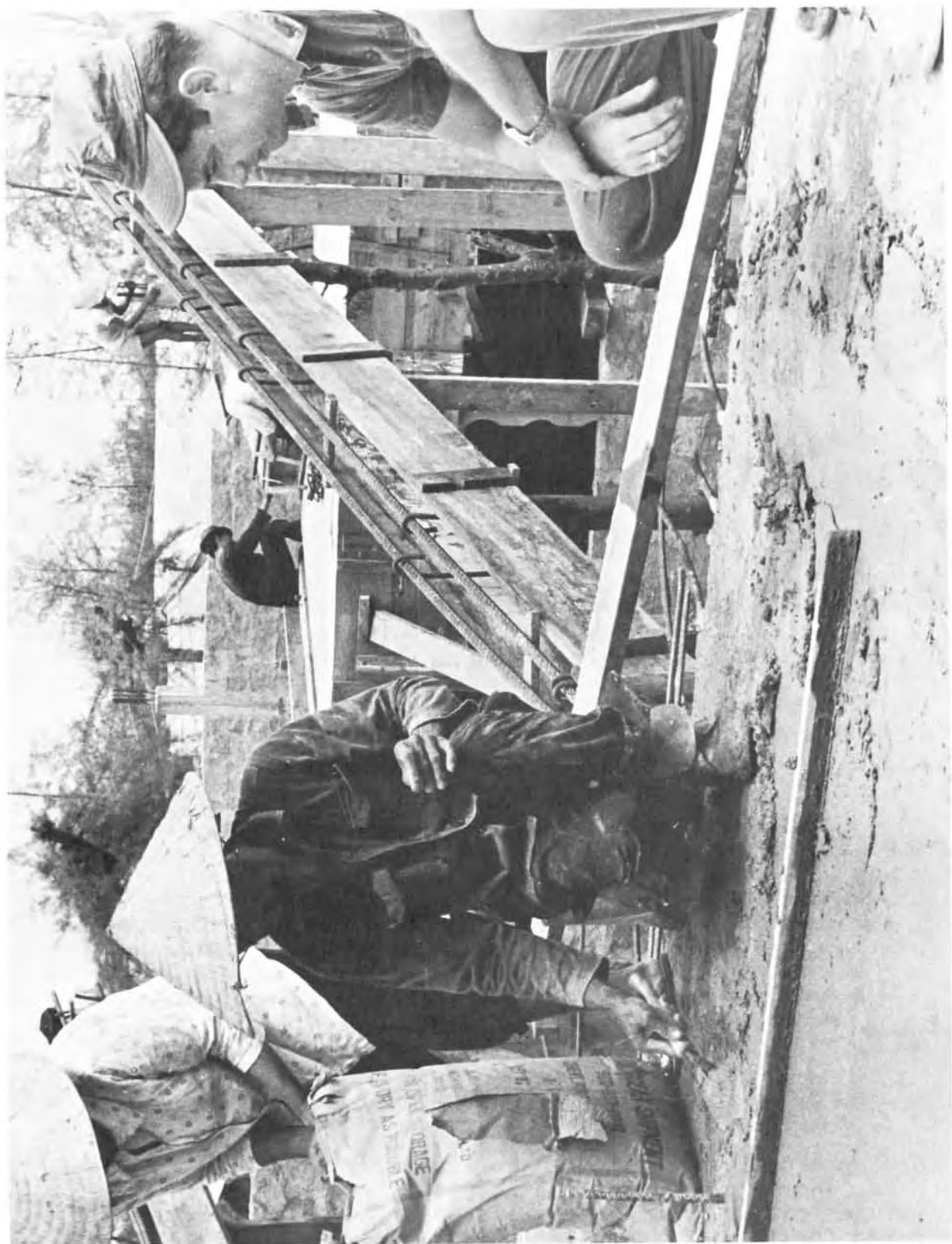


FIG. 9b

LOGISTICAL SUMMARY

1. Turnover from NMCB THREE. NMCB EIGHT received automotive parts during the BEEP with a total monetary value of \$122,465.76 and outstanding requisitions in the amount of \$106,692.88.

2. Fiscal - COMCBPAC Funding.

a. The NMCB EIGHT deployment funding picture is illustrated in Figures 10a through 10c.

b. Deployment per diem, Sub Cost Center O4, funds in the amount of \$192,000 were granted to NMCB EIGHT by OPTAR during the deployment. These funds were more than adequate and were made available by the Type Commander at \$1.00 per man per day.

c. Military construction funds in the amount of \$14,000 were obtained during the deployment from Commander, THIRD Naval Construction Brigade and were utilized to good advantage for diesel fuel to cut asphalt for road dust suppression and for project tools.

3. Requisitioning.

a. The status of requisitions submitted and resultant action taken by supplying activities is depicted on the requisition chart in subparagraph (g.) below.

b. Primary support was obtained from CB Center Port Hueneme. NSA Danang was not generally utilized as a supply source because of the poor response on those few requisitions submitted.

c. Limited supply support was obtained from the Marine FLSG-A at Phu Bai. FLSG-A support became progressively better as the deployment progressed.

d. Project material support from THIRD Naval Construction Brigade was excellent.

e. CBPAC DET Okinawa support was much appreciated and was utilized as a supply source primarily for priority O2 automotive parts open purchase requisitions.

f. Three expeditors were sent to CONUS in March 1968 for three months. These men helped improve supply effectiveness somewhat, although results were primarily achieved by expediting into the U. S. Mail system items already purchased for deadlined automotive equipment.

g. Requisition Chart.

<u>Sub Cost Center</u>	<u>Issued</u>	<u>Cancelled</u>	<u>Filled</u>	<u>Unfilled</u>
01 (Operations)				
a. Pri O2	2	1		1
b. Other	1,484	186	623	675

g. Requisition Chart continued.

<u>Sub Cost Center</u>	<u>Issued</u>	<u>Cancelled</u>	<u>Filled</u>	<u>Unfilled</u>
02 (Equipment Operation Maintenance)				
a. Pri 02	455	92	256	107
b. Other	6247	257	3,996	1,994
03 (Camp Maintenance)				
a. Pri 02	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -	- 0 -
b. Other	1,168	57	69	*1,042
GRAND TOTAL	9,356	593	4,944	3,819

* 938 Electronic "self soap" requisitions submitted 25 August 1968

4. General

a. The Supply Department was composed of nearly ninety men including messmen and Group VIII personnel who were employed in the Automotive Parts Warehouse, Central Tool Room, Project Yard, and Laundry. Storekeepers were placed in key positions in order to institute Selected Item Management (SIM) stock control procedures. The personnel situation was favorable for the entire deployment except in the Shipserviceman rating. No barber or tailor was available.

b. Shipment of material was primarily by LCU to Hue or Tan My LST Ramp. Some materials were convoyed from Danang and some other items were air shipped. However, tonnages for the land and air modes were relatively small. The Hue Ramp was closed during February for all but "beans, bullets and bandages", but other than that, there were no major transportation problems. Army and USMC transport vehicles helped move cargo from Hue and their contribution in this regard was very significant. The NMCB EIGHT Supply Department experienced very few pilferage problems.

c. Covered storage space at Camp Wilkinson was adequate and outside storage was excellent and abundant. Mezzanines were constructed in CTR, Automotive and Project Butler buildings. These Mezzanines were considered vital to an organized supply operation. Pallet racks, obtained from FLSG-A, were also employed to good advantage.

d. The Butler building for the Part II tent camp allowance at Camp Wilkinson was completed in September.

5. Greens Issue.

a. The NMCB EIGHT Greens Issue quonset also housed 782 gear, body armour and bedding. It is considered best to have body armour under Supply rather than the S-2 Officer, and bedding under Supply in lieu of the Master-At-Arms. Such items are then controlled in the same manner as other pieces of accountable personal gear.

b. Greens stock were supplemented through FLSG-A during the deployment. Issues to other battalions at the Nam Hoa Quarry site and NMCB FOUR personnel, upon their unexpected arrival in Vietnam, made supply personnel grateful for having deployed with a full special clothing allowance.

6. Central Tool Room.

a. The Central Tool Room (CTR) was the focal point for submission of battalion material requests, NAVSANDA Forms 1250. All issues except project materials, automotive parts and special clothing/infantry equipment were made from CTR. This arrangement enhanced the overall effectiveness of battalion support and facilitated the instigation of SIM inventory management procedures.

b. A self soap of electronics was accomplished subsequent to receipt of the new ERPAL. Excesses in the amount of \$1,500.00 were pulled and shipped to CBCenter Port Hueneme for Type Commander credit. COMCBPAC funded ERPAL deficiencies in the amount of \$12,000.00.

c. Some difficulty was encountered in the sharpening of saw blades and band saws. This was alleviated by assigning additional qualified personnel from both C and D Companies to the CTR.

7. Project Materials.

a. Project support was excellent throughout the deployment. Some items were received in a deteriorated condition, but the Supply Officer, THIRD Naval Construction Brigade was aware of this situation and provided additional materials as necessary to accomplish the projects. Some common items were not available, but action is being taken by the Brigade to stock more and more of these items to meet battalion requirements. The three expeditors sent TAD to Danang were the best men available and proved invaluable in supporting work in progress. Substitution of common type items was the key to fulfilling many difficult requirements.

8. Automotive.

a. Deadlined equipment repair parts were ordered on priority O2 requisitions. However, long leadtimes were experienced when open purchase became necessary. Although message traffic with CBCenter Port Hueneme was unreliable, this means of communication was utilized by air mailing a back up copy of all messages to the NMCB EIGHT "monitor girl" at the CBCenter.

b. Automotive repair parts were inventoried four times during the deployment; during both BEEP's, in March, and again in June. Excess automotive parts in the amount of \$32,000 were pulled and shipped to CBCenter Port Hueneme for L-3 stocks and Type Commander credit in August 1968.

9. Galley.

a. During the TET offensive and through the end of the deployment, NMCB EIGHT subsisted personnel from other Naval Commands and various units of the U. S. Army and Marine Corps. FLSG-A rendered full support and it

was considered to have been excellent, although during the TET offensive only B and C rations were available. Bread was obtained from the FLSG-A bake shop. Later in the deployment ice cream was issued by FLSG-A. The NMCB EIGHT Galley was improved with a lowered overhead, new scullery screening and decking, new lighting, painting and by obtaining large floor fans. In addition two new milk dispensing machines were received from COMCBPAC. Several men of the CS rating were on detached duty serving in up to three large details at one time with the result that good experience was realized in field messing. Separate E-6 and CPO messes were maintained at Camp Wilkinson. The Wardroom was subsisted from the galley. Food preparation and service were considered to be outstanding throughout the entire deployment.

b. The following is a table of the average number of rations fed (per month) and the average ration cost (per month):

(1) Average daily rations allowed	950
(2) Average daily rations cost	\$1.33

c. Various personnel from the following units were subsisted in the Camp Wilkinson NMCB EIGHT General Mess during the period February through October 1968:

32 NCR	596 Signal, U. S. Army
NMCB 58	496 Signal, U. S. Army
NMCB 53	37th Motors MAC, U. S. Army
NMCB 4	101st Airborne Div
NMCB 1	1st Engineers, U. S. Army
NMCB 9	Marine CAP Team #2 Unit
NMCB 121	1st Air Cav
15th S & S U. S. Army	3rd Anti Tanks
50th Medical, U. S. Army	50th Army Transportation, Civil Eng
Marine Infantry groups, (at rock crusher, Nam Hoa)	
1st Shore Party, USMC	

10. Service Activities.

a. Laundry service was provided to all personnel twice weekly. Laundry equipment proved to be durable and very adequate with the only problem being an adequate quantity of fresh water. Laundry service was afforded to men on details and to other Seabee units in the area including the Nam Hoa Quarry and NMCB FOUR while that battalion was engaged in camp construction further north.

b. The battalion was without a qualified barber for the entire deployment. Various personnel including Stewards were used to cut hair. During the latter part of the deployment two Vietnamese barbers were hired and paid from funds realized by the sale of garbage and trash.

c. Exchange stocks were limited to necessity items since the NMCB EIGHT PACEX Branch was classified as a Troop Store which could not sell items with a unit cost greater than \$25.00. Some support was obtained from the 1st Marine Division Exchange at Phu Bai, but most merchandise was convoyed from Danang in CONEX containers. PACEX accounting directives were considered to be sadly lacking. The fact that the Danang Control Accounting Officer frequently changed monthly reports with no prior notification, and often in error, proved to be frustrating. Time consuming trips to Danang were necessary. The NMCB EIGHT "Galloping Gedunk", a CONEX box with shelves and cash register mounted on a truck, proved to be a man hour saver by providing Exchange services once a week to detail personnel. Exchange sales averaged \$18,000 monthly.

11. Disbursing.

a. The deployment began with five disbursing clerks, but the number decreased to four during the deployment. All deployment per diem was paid prior to departure to CONUS. Provisions were made for converting MPC to U. S. Currency before personnel departed for Danang for R & R. A summary of disbursing activities for the deployment is indicated below:

	<u>CHECKS ISSUED</u>	<u>GROSS DISBURSMENTS</u>
February	\$298,330.93	\$199,919.38
March	186,854.64	222,503.95
April	155,039.19	201,073.80
May	200,250.24	228,082.39
June	326,051.45	273,236.75
July	301,709.78	304,196.59
August	189,113.00	223,631.31
September	439,203.53	405,568.40
October	171,462.50	179,294.78

b. The total number of checks used during the deployment exceeded 5,000, a 100% increase over the last deployments usage.

c. Average monthly payroll, February through September - \$229,471.

	<u>PAYROLLS</u>
February	\$197,786.00
March	218,705.00
April	195,024.00
May	213,318.00
June	201,309.00
July	215,233.00
August	213,652.00
September	382,743.00
October	89,865.00
TOTAL	\$1,925,635.00

Amount deposited in 10% Savings Plan (cash) - \$57,903.00 forty individuals participating.

Piaster Sales - \$13,828.96 (1,631,819 Piasters)

Contracts paid and Solatium Payments - \$62,400.27 (7,363,232 Piasters)

d. Perhaps the most unique aspect of the deployment, as far as disbursing goes was the large number of details paid, both from NMCB EIGHT and other Seabee battalions in the I Corps area. All modes of available transportation were employed to reach employment sites.

e. The following is a breakdown of the various details and units "paid by EIGHT".

(1) Personnel in NMCB EIGHT camp

NMCB FOUR
NMCB ONE
NMCB ONE-TWENTY-ONE
NMCB FIFTY-THREE

(2) 32 NCR

(3) Units from other battalion in the I Corps area

NMCB TWENTY-TWO Rock Crusher - Nam Hoa
NMCB FIFTY-EIGHT Rock Crusher - Nam Hoa
NMCB FIFTY-THREE Ammi-pontoon Bridge - Nam Hoa
NMCB FOUR, Camp Cambell

(4) NMCB EIGHT Details

Sierra (Hue)
Yankee (Col Co Island)
Tango (Col Co Road - Tam My)
Romeo (Hue)
Whiskey (Dong Ha)

12. Embarkation.

a. Fleet Activity Support Squadron Twenty-One service for the CONUS advance party proved to be unsatisfactory in that personnel were left in Japan to continue via MAC or space available.

13. Turnover to NMCB ONE TWENTY ONE.

a. The turnover of camp, prepositioned components, automotive repair parts and Part I (RVN exemption material to NMCB ONE TWENTY ONE was accomplished smoothly and without incident.

14. Problems.

a. Oxygen and acetylene were generally long lead time items and had

to be convoyed from NSA Danang.

b. SOAP shortages for flak jackets, and helmets were never filled and as a result these items were critical throughout the deployment. The status of some greens and 782 gear items was much the same, being very difficult to obtain. The allowance of welding electrodes proved to be entirely inadequate and low limits, developed from usage, could not be maintained.

c. The TET offensive hampered supply distribution and the setting up of CTR. With the NMCB THREE retrograde shipment in Camp Wilkinson and the NMCB EIGHT sealift under seige at the Hue Ramp, there was virtually no support available for the first few weeks of the deployment.

d. The engineering office was hit by a rocket during TET and burned to the ground. All kits and equipment inside were lost. Replacement items had long lead times and most items had to be eventually obtained from Okinawa. March rocket attacks destroyed huts, and bunks, lockers, and mattresses. These items were ordered, but replacements in full were not received by the end of the deployment.

e. The Danang Accounting Office changing PACEX exchange records, and the Danang Depot failure to accept corrected merchandise transfer vouchers for obvious price and extension ~~caused~~ ^{caused} a source of continuing irritation.

f. Boat service between Danang and Hue was good, but very much dependent on the tactical military situation. Service could not be depended upon.

g. Fire extinguishers could not be recharged, except in Danang, where every bottle had to be tagged with a reason why it had been emptied.

h. Funding of Details was a very difficult area. The only solution proved to be the granting of sub-OPTARS to Detachment Officer-in-Charge. Using a Storekeeper if possible, these officers were required to submit a weekly Transmittal Listing (TL) to the parent battalion OPTAR records Storekeeper for immediate obligation.

15. Lessons Learned.

a. Mezzanines had to be built in the Camp Wilkinson Central Tool Room, Automotive parts warehouse, and project warehouse. It is considered a necessity that every new Butler building constructed in Vietnam for storage have a mezzanine on one side at least, otherwise valuable storage space is lost.

b. The Material Liaison Officer (MLO) was located in the Project Yard office early in the deployment. This worked very well and is recommended as opposed to having the MLO located in the Supply Office.

c. In order to monitor augment repair parts carefully a Storekeeper is recommended for expediting duties in Danang. This man must be careful to obtain THIRD Naval Construction Brigade requisition numbers for requisitions passed to CONUS, monitor those requisitions closely, and keep requisition

status up to date weekly. He should also check to see that a copy of the battalion augment request, NAVSUP 1250's, are returned within 48 hours either with material or with a notation concerning the CONUS requisition number. Battalions should be careful to cancel augment vehicle requisitions when the vehicles are assigned to another battalion or surveyed because repair parts will be sent to camp sites where vehicles no longer are located.

d. The Advance Party to CONUS should be large enough to allow for a Storekeeper keeping detached OPTAR records.

e. CBCenter Port Hueneme should continue to utilize air parcel post whenever possible for small shipments. This mode of shipment proved outstanding during this deployment and greatly enhanced supply support.

f. DD forms 1149 for project materials, DD forms 1348's for requisitions and DD forms 1348's-1 for invoices should be preprinted in CONUS prior to deployment.

g. Battalions should be careful of USMC Standard Transfer Voucher billings. Many of these were found to be in error and could not be certified for payment until corrected.

h. All DD forms 1149 for projects should be cancelled at the end of the deployment for completed jobs. This action should help clear Brigade supply records.

16. Recommendations.

a. The CBCenter Port Hueneme purchase section should be manned to a point where there is no longer a backlog of priority O2 requisitions.

b. It is suggested that consideration be given to leaving the Part I Allowance in certain camps in Vietnam and doing on site SOAP. This battalion actually experienced an increase in Part I allowance supply effectiveness as the deployment progressed and in certain situations a constant upgrading may be more effective than transporting the allowance and a State side SOAP.

17. Fiscal Summary.

a. Cumulative Deployment totals

(1) Project support costs (project) funds	-NONE-
(2) Project equipment support costs O&MN	\$495,238.76
(3) Project material in place	\$5,559,288.00

Lessons Learned Summary

1. The following is a summary of lessons learned during the 1968 deployment. Complete descriptions of the lessons learned may be found in the appropriate enclosure.
 - a. The importance of a security observation or watch tower was proven repeatedly during the deployment by giving early warning of incoming fire and by providing continuous tactical information on activities on or near the camp.
 - b. The importance of an effective mortar pit staffed with well trained personnel and supplied with sufficient mortar rounds was demonstrated on numerous occasions.
 - c. The use of knock-out panels for emergency exits on messhalls and other facilities where large concentrations of personnel are likely to be found is recommended.
 - d. Perimeter bunkers should be well built with low profiles to provide maximum effectiveness.
 - e. Personal contact between the battalion's representatives and nearby friendly forces at remote construction sites was the most effective means established for ensuring cooperation and coordination with these forces.
 - f. Careful positioning of material stockpiles is essential to insure unobstructed fields of fire and, at the same time, take advantage of any additional protection which might be afforded the camp itself.
 - g. The use of a flare tube was found effective in extending the range and height of hand flares.
 - h. Officers and CPO's in charge of construction details should be kept well informed on all matters which may effect the security of their site.
 - i. Spare parts for all civilian-type communications equipment and test gear should be stocked to the maximum extent possible to minimize down time.
 - j. The use of American batteries for PRC25's is recommended in lieu of foreign manufactured batteries to reduce the requirement for frequent battery replacement.
 - k. The assignment of a single, large project, requiring the full deployment to complete is recommended as a major factor in generating high morale and esprit de corps.
 - l. Good cross sectional control during the placing of road fill material can significantly reduce and control material quantities and manpower effort required on projects requiring large quantities of fill.
 - m. In making soil cement, the amount of water necessary to achieve a

satisfactory mix was found to vary greatly depending on the type and depth of the material beneath.

n. The installation of corrugated steel culverts in fine, cohesionless material requires rigid adhearance to specifications and special construction techniques.

o. The need for good dewatering techniques and equipment when placing concrete or performing other work at or below the water level was proven repeatedly during the construction of numerous waterfront-type structures.

p. Construction at remote sites by the battalions various details was generally found to be most successful when sufficient time and planning was permitted to establish the best camp facilities consistent with the details mission and length of stay.

q. The construction and use of mezzanines in automotive and supply warehouses is considered extremely desireable to provide maximum storage space.

r. It was found to be preferable to have the Material Liaison Officer (MLO) located in the project yard as opposed to the Supply Office

s. The assignment of a storekeeper in Danang to assist in expediting, particularly augment repair parts, is recommended.

t. The advance party to CONUS should include a storekeeper, keeping detached OPTAR records.

u. The use of air parcel post by CBCenter Port Hueneme to expedite small shipments was extremely helpful.

v. Certain DD forms for materials, requisitions and invoices should be preprinted in CONUS prior to deployment.

w. It is recommended that USMC standard Transfer Vouchers be carefully checked as many were found to be in error.

x. All DD forms 1149 should be cancelled at the end of the deployment for completed jobs.