

## 1st Battalion 4th Marines Association

# MAYAQUEZ OPERATION – USS MAYAQUEZ RESCUE, 5-31 MAY 1975

4<sup>th</sup> Force Service Regiment Force Troop, FMF, USMCR

Naval/Marine Corps Reserve Training Center

19<sup>th</sup> and Mission Streets

San Jose , California 95112

SEP:b11

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1 Dec 1975

From: Inspector-Instructor

To: Commandant of the Marine Corps (Code PAC)

Via: Director, 12<sup>th</sup> Marine Corps District (Code 1)

Subj: Request for assistance in improving the presentation of talks concerning the MAYAGUEZ  
OPERATION

Encl: (1) Copy of current text of presentations

- General photographic coverage requested

1. I was the Officer-in-Charge of the detachment of Marines from First Battalion, Fourth Marines which boarded and recovered the SS MAYAGUEZ. Since being assigned as the Inspector-Instructor in San Jose, California I have received numerous requests to appear as the guest speaker at luncheons and dinners to present the Mayaguez Operation from my viewpoint. Every request has been honored thus far; however, each time that I speak, I receive additional requests for engagements elsewhere. To date the presentations have been for relatively small groups and I have been able to adequately handle them with hand drawn charts. (I have included enclosure (1) for perusal to ensure that I have not covered areas that are objectionable.) I am now faced with ever increasing sizes of crowds and am in need of assistance in preparing a more impressive brief. For example, on my requested schedule I currently have the San Jose Lions Club and the JAYCEES. Additionally, several High Schools have requested that I spend a day as their guest, making the presentation as a part of their history classes. The Lockheed Corporation has already received one presentation and has scheduled three more so that all of the employees will have an opportunity to hear the story etc. During January I have a management organization and two private dinner clubs which are holding dates open for the presentation. Thus, the Marine Corps is gaining considerable exposure to the public through this program.

### Current Text of Presentations

Good evening, ladies and gentlemen. Thank you for inviting me to speak to your group this evening. It's always a pleasure for me to have the opportunity to talk about the Marine Corps accomplishments as I'm proud of them and of being a Marine myself. What I would like to do this evening is present the MAYAGUEZ Operation from my viewpoint, that is, the viewpoint of the officer that was responsible for recovering the MAYAGUEZ itself. I will discuss the planning, preparation, and execution of the boarding of the container ship and, after that will point out several items of interest concerning the operation ashore. I must emphasize, however, that I WAS NOT ON THE ISLAND OF KHO TANG AT ANY TIME DURING THE OPERATION and therefore cannot give you first-hand accounts of the action that took place ashore. I will only present those facts of which I was fully cognizant I'm sure you can understand my reasons for this approach.

By way of background, let me explain the configuration of Marine forces in the Pacific at the time of the incident. As a matter policy the Marine Corps keeps two Battalion Landing Teams deployed, ready for commitment at any time, in the Far East. In May of this year the First Battalion, Fourth Marines was one of these BLT's and was deployed for training in the Philippines. I was the Executive Officer of First Battalion, Fourth Marines and consequently was available for any mission assigned to the Battalion.

As you are already aware, during April and early May, the Marine Corps and Navy had conducted several evacuation operations in the Far East as the communist forces drove people from their countries and the United States elected to rescue all American Citizens from possible harm through the employment of air lift operations. For the most part, the operations were unopposed and executed with little confusion or delay. My Battalion had executed the initial evacuation of Vietnamese refugees who had turned seaward in every form of vessel in hopes of being picked up by United States Shipping. Their hopes were answered and during a 21-day period thousands of refugees were picked up and moved to safety – but that's another story. I have only pointed this out so that you might get a feeling for the overall situation that existed and the atmosphere in the Far East at the time.

As the communist forces marched in Viet Nam, Cambodia was also being taken over by the communist backed Khymer Rouge and, during April, Cambodia was declared under the control of communists. Since the Khymer Rouge forces had not been opposed to any great extent, they were pretty confident of their power and influence and apparently that is why, **AND I WANT TO EMPHASIZE THAT THIS IS MY OWN PERSONAL OPINION, NOT BACKED BY DOCUMENTATION OR ANY OFFICIAL STATEMENT,** I feel that they decided to capture the SS MAYAGUEZ when it entered into waters that they claimed rights to.

For those of you who are not familiar with the geographical relationships of Cambodia and the island of KHO TANG, let me take a few seconds to orient you. (Sketch map of area).

For me, the operation began on the evening of 13 May when my Battalion Commander received a telephone call directing him to have a 120 man force ready to move within four hours and that they were limited to taking an M-79 (40mm) Grenade Launcher as the heaviest weapon. While my Commanding Officer, Lt/Col C.E. Hester went to the Command Center in the Philippines to get information of the specifics of the mission, I was left behind to plan a Basic Allowance of Ammunition for the operation and to assist the unit that was selected for the operation in preparing. Now, if you can put yourself in my shoes for a few seconds you can see the need for extensive training within the officer ranks of the Marine Corps. Here I was, tasked with planning's basic allowance of ammunition for a 120-man force which was to be deployed within four hours to accomplish some sort of mission somewhere in the Far East and was limited to specific weapon types. In view of the past few weeks of operations in the area, I figured that this operation would be similar – some sort of evacuation operation – perhaps one of the American citizens that had been missed in the previous evacuations. With this thought in mind, I concentrated on light weapons, tear gas, and grenades fully expecting the operation to require immediate response by the men and to be of extremely short duration. As soon as we had decided what we were going to take in the basic allowance the Naval Magazine at Subic Bay was notified and began preparing it for us. We had to have the ammunition ready and delivered to the Cubi Point Air Strip by 2301. The Navy initially said that they could not comply with the request, but when it found out what we were up against, all hands fell out and got the ammunition as required. This was no easy task and they set several records in ammunition preparation. We were grateful to them.

Selection of the unit to go on the operation was relatively simple. We had already established a policy within the Battalion to have a minimum of one full company remain available for possible commitment at all times and at least 50% of the Battalion on board for short call. This particular evening Company D was the Stand-by Company and had the men under immediate recall. Some were taken to the local theater as a group and others had gone to the gymnasium. As one Marine later wrote in a statement concerning the operation and his part of it: 'We were all over in the gym working out because that's what all Marines do to stay in shape for operations such as this.' Within twenty minutes of the alert to the company, all of the Marines were enroute back into the Battalion Area or packing for the operation. The Company Commander, Captain WALTER WOOD, who is now an instructor at the U.S. Naval Academy, selected two Platoons for the operation and these men began packing. They were fully prepared in less than one hour. It should be noted that the men did not know what the mission was or where they were going – just that they had been called upon to perform and they were ready for that.

When the Battalion Commander returned at 2130, he called the Company Commander, his Platoon Commanders, Members of the Battalion Staff, and me into his office and gave us the mission that he had received at the Command Center. 'Capture The MAYAGUEZ'. He then tasked me with taking the operation.

Within just a few hours we had prepared the men, the ammunition, and the gear that was to accompany us and, at 2300, arrived at the air strip ready for embarkation. When I arrived at the air strip, I discovered several other personnel had been assigned to the mission so, at embarkation time, I had a force of 135 personnel under my command. The force consisted of the following:

A Headquarters Group	4 Marines
Two Platoons from Company D	116 Marines
A detachment from the USS DULUTH	6
A detachment from the USAF EOD	2
A detachment from Navy Intelligence	1
Civilian volunteers from the USNS GREENVILLE VICTORY	<u>6</u>

135

We boarded the awaiting aircraft at just after midnight and began our flight to U-Tapao, Thailand. The Marines and other members with us for the most part still did not know where we were going or what the mission was.

During the flight we began planning for the operation. We really didn't have a great deal to go in at the time, knowing only that the SS MAYAGUEZ was a container ship and that we were to board it — most likely from helicopters. We decided that rather than develop new tactics, we would treat the ship as though it were a building and employ standard tactics to secure it. In this manner we felt that the men would have the least amount of learning to accomplish before we were launched into the operation. We also established several elements of information that we felt were necessary for the proper execution of the boarding and capture of the ship. At 0500, we landed in U-Tapao and were immediately rushed to the operations center for a briefing. I thought that at this briefing we would get all of the details about the ship and the total situation, but as we sat down found out that the Air Force had been awaiting our brief as to how we were going to conduct the operation. They had made numerous flights over the ship and had taken several pictures of it for us. These were provided to us and, using them and the advice of the Civilian Seaman Master who had volunteered to accompany us on the mission, developed a plan which required USAF helicopters to hover cross-deck over the containers, concentrate fire from one of the mini-guns on the superstructure, which was the only place on the ship higher than the container tops and consequently the only place which presented a major threat to the success of the initial boarding, and then for the Marines to jump to the containers and to move to predesignated fighting positions. We knew that we could jump from container to container with exception of one area and had made arrangements to have cargo nets prepared so that we could scale down over the sides of the containers to the main deck of the ship. The Air Force agreed with our plan and gave me eleven CH-53 Helicopters for employment as desired. As we worked out our plan it became obvious that we did not need all of the helicopters, in fact, the final plan only called for the use of six as troop transports and four more as support. With our plan finalized, we moved to the area where the rest of the detachment had been staged to present it to them. Enroute from the operations office to the area where our Marines awaited instructions, I began mentally rehearsing for the answer to the one question that I thought could hurt the men's morale — 'Can a force this small really be expected to capture the Mayaguez without support from the Navy?' I had several solid answers prepared and realized that a failure to instill confidence in the men at that point of the operation could have disastrous effect on morale. As I briefed them about the mission, I never saw an eye wink or an arm twitch. They listened intently and then, when I asked them if there were any questions a hand shot up in back. I knew that someone would question the size of the force and the importance of the mission and so was ready for the question.

'Yes, corporal, what is your question?'

'Sir, when do we eat?'

With that question I realized that I had absolutely nothing to worry about. These men were tasked with a mammoth mission and had absolutely no doubts about their ability to accomplish it. All they were worried about was whether or not they would get a good meal before they launched.

As soon as they were briefed on their individual and squad missions, the Platoons were broken down into Squad sized boarding teams and began rehearsing their responsibilities. To aid in the rehearsals, we sketched the decks of the SS MAYAGUEZ on the parking lot and used the gymnasium as a mock-up of the ship. From 0730 until 1030 the rehearsals continued. When one boarding team learned its mission well, it then was shifted to learn the mission of the adjacent teams in the event that one team or several members of that team may have been unable to complete the mission. After a quick box lunch, we boarded helicopters on the U-Tapao air strip and awaited the order to execute. I had figured that it would take about three hours to secure the ship once aboard and consequently it was determined that if we were not launched by 1400 that afternoon, I would not have the three hours of daylight necessary to secure the ship and to get it moving out of the area.

As we boarded the helicopters other Air Force Aircraft began landing with members of Second Battalion, Ninth Marines, from Okinawa. I had not known that they were going to be involved in the operation until I saw them landing but was happy to see that we had a good-sized back-up force ready for deployment in support of the operation. Then, at 1400, we were told that the mission had been delayed. Disheartened, my Marines returned to the gymnasium and resumed their rehearsals and got some rest. I went to the Command Center for further instruction and coordination as might be necessary.

When I arrived at the Command Center, I was apprehensive, feeling that the new Battalion would be taking my mission from me and that I and my men would have traveled and worked for nothing. At that time the actual mission of the new Battalion was not confirmed. Later, at a 1900 meeting I was to find out that the Battalion had been tasked with landing on the Island of Kho Tang in an attempt to locate and rescue the crew for the SS MAYAGUEZ. I was pleased to see that the operation was planned this way because as long as the Force was operating on the island, there would be little likelihood that the Cambodians ashore could reinforce those on the ship and my portion of the mission could be more efficiently affected. Since it was necessary to get a strong force ashore as quickly as possible, I had to reduce the size of my initial landing force from the 120 Marines to one of about 60 and to give up three helicopters. This would make 8 available for the landings ashore and would get a force of from 150 to 170 men on the island. As we were preparing to leave the meeting, I was informed that a call had been received requiring me to have my men repel from the helicopters onto the deck of a destroyer that night. I objected to this concept. I did not want to jeopardize my men by having them repel from the back of an Air Force CH-53 (which could not let the rear ramp down as much as can Marine CH-53's), carrying extra gear and trying to hit the deck of a bobbing destroyer in the middle of the night. Additionally, the civilians and sailors who were with me and were vitally important to getting the ship started and out of the area could not repel and consequently were of little value to the operation under this concept. The staff agreed with me and sent a message explaining our position. In reply we were informed that the

ship was not a destroyer, but a destroyer escort, and that rather than board it at night it was acceptable to board during the first portion of the operation. A destroyer escort has a small Helicopter Deck on it so I was pleased with this decision – it meant that my men would be able to get onto the ship without repelling and that the civilians and sailors would be immediately available to me when we got on the SS MAYAGUEZ.

I returned to the gymnasium after coordinating with the Island Landing Force and told my men about the change in operational procedure. This was one of the hardest times for us in the operation; the decision as to which of the two Platoons we would take with us because both were exceptional and had great leaders and both wanted to be the one to go. We finally selected one and had the other standing by for lift out on the second flight into the area. Here our rehearsals paid off because it was a simple feat to combine the mission of the Platoon that was remaining behind with those of the Platoon that would make the initial boarding. Within a few minutes all of the adjustments were made, and the force was ready to go.

We left the staging area at about 0300 and embarked on our respective helicopters to wait for the execution signal. My operations officer, Captain John P. FELTNER was standing out in front of his helicopter talking to several other officers at about 0413 and had just said that he doubted that we would launch, (He was convinced that the mission would be cancelled again), when the birds were given the signal to lift off. By 0415 we were airborne, headed for the Island of Kho Tang and the MAYAGUEZ.

At 0600 we, rendezvoused with the destroyer, the USS HOLT, and began boarding. The ship had to maintain a five-knot speed for security purposes. Initially the helicopters attempted to hover over the helicopter deck and let the Marines jump to the deck from the rear ramp but discovered that this was not possible because the rear ramp was over water when the helicopter hovered lengthwise over the ship. We found the same problem on a cross deck hover and finally discovered that the only way to get on the USS HOLT was to do so by jumping from the forward hatch. Because of the weight of the CH-53, it could not land on the helicopter deck and so, the pilots had to hover just above the deck and fly five knots per hour sideways while the Marines debarked. I cannot say enough for the skill that the pilots demonstrated during this portion of the operation. They managed to hover steadily above the deck so that no man had to jump more than a few feet from the hatch to the ship. Some jumped further than others because the ship was bobbing in the water, but as I have said the longest jump was only a few feet. I was concerned about the civilian master from the Greenville Victory because he had just recently gotten his leg out of a cast after having broken it and was apprehensive about having to jump very far. I informed the pilot about the problem and, when it was time for the master, to debark, the pilot had the helicopter only inches from the ship's deck. A really great job of flying.

Once aboard the USS HOLT, I deployed my four M-60 machineguns with six that the Navy had aboard and placed the Marines from two of the boarding teams in positions from which they could provide support for the initial boarding team. While they were assuming their positions, I coordinated with the

ship's Captain and explained the concept we had developed to include the time we wanted to request air delivery of tear gas on the SS MAYAGUEZ. Within five minutes of the time, we arrived aboard the ship all men were in position and the ship was closing with the SS MAYAGUEZ.

During the approach I moved to a position with the initial boarding party and, from there signaled the ship's Captain that I was ready for the air strike of tear gas. The strike itself was beautifully executed by two Air Force A-7's and, within seconds, the SS MAYAGUEZ was covered by a cloud of gas. The gas remained on the ship as a cloud for seven of the last ten minutes of our approach. In fact, as we pulled alongside the gas was just settling into the water. The MAYAGUEZ appeared to be coming out of a fog bank.

Were there Cambodians aboard the SS MAYAGUEZ? As we approached, I observed six personnel on the ship through my binoculars. I could see that one was armed with what appeared to be a rocket propelled grenade launcher and that the others were carrying smaller weapons. They were all in and around the superstructure of the ship. That was our initial objective.

During our preparations for boarding the SS MAYAGUEZ we had overlooked the fact that we would have to cross-deck and therefore should have removed the cable life lines that lined the ship's deck. (The Navy has also failed to recognize that these would cause problems). Thus, as we drew nearer the MAYAGUEZ, the Marines in the first boarding party strapped their rifles onto their backs and then balanced on the lifelines, swaying back and forth as we approached our objective. I had Corporal COKER, a Squad Leader, standing on the lifeline beside me as we drew alongside and asked him if he could jump the distance. He looked down and said, 'Man, that's a long way down there. I'm not about to miss when I jump'.

He was right. Not only did he clear the lifeline on the Mayaguez when he jumped, but he also cleared the passage and banged into the bulkhead with a loud clang! But he was across, and he was the first across. The remainder of the squad followed suit as soon as they could. In just a few minutes the initial boarding party had moved into the superstructure and searched it.

The second boarding team followed close behind the first. Its mission was to secure the engine room. We had worked out a plan for moving from deck to deck using grenades thrown down various ladders and then following the explosion as fast as possible. We had also assigned two men to get to the air vent for the engine room immediately and to drop tear gas grenades into it to ensure that the engine room was fully saturated with tear gas in case the enemy had decided to damage the power plant. As this team moved to the superstructure and found that there were no Cambodians resisting; the squad leader, Sergeant OWENS, elected to forego the established procedures and charged down through the ladders into the engine room alone, armed only with a caliber 45 pistol. Luckily for him – or for the enemy for that matter, they had left and the engine room was secured quickly. Once he had searched the room



carefully, Sergeant OWENS called for the EOD personnel and remained with them while they checked the area for booby traps or mines. None were found.

It only took us 54 minutes from the time that we boarded the SS MAYAGUEZ until we could declare it secure and raise the National Colors to signal the Marines ashore that we had the ship under our control. This means that we searched every room, rope locker, corner, container, and space on all four decks with 59 Marines in that period of time. While the search was difficult, the added problems of the absence of adequate light and the necessity to wear gas masks constantly created even more problems. The men quickly learned to circumvent these though and accomplished their individual searching missions with speed and ease.

Once we signaled that the ship was secure, the Civilian Seamen boarded and began preparing it for getting under way. They were familiar with the general configuration of the ship but found that it had a personality of its own when it came to stroking it up to get under way. The generator overheated almost instantly, and the gas and oil pumps refused to cooperate. It appeared that we would be there longer than we had planned. In order to get the ship out of the area of action, the Captain of the USS HOLT elected to tow the SS MAYAGUEZ out of the area and sent a crew of six men over to assist with the preparations. At the same time, the action on the island was increasing in intensity and I received a request to have men prepared to go ashore to assist with that action. I decided that with the six sailors to help the crew, I could provide adequate defense for the SS MAYAGUEZ with a total of 19 men, so I detached the remaining 40 for duty ashore. This detachment returned to the USS HOLT and boarded small boats a little later that morning, but never had the opportunity to go ashore because of the turn of events; for at eleven that morning, we were informed that the crew of the SS MAYAGUEZ had been recovered and would be returning to the ship shortly. By eleven-thirty they were, in fact, climbing back aboard their ship and assisting with the preparations to get underway. They, it turned out, knew all about the ship's personality and managed to get all of the mechanical devices working without delay.

The rest of the action on the SS MAYAGUEZ was simply a trip home.

As I stated earlier, the operation ashore was to be accomplished simultaneously with the operation on the MAYAGUEZ. Thus, at 0600, when we were boarding the USS HOLT for the trip to the MAYAGUEZ, the helicopters carrying Marines from Second Battalion, Ninth Marines were making their first attempts to land on the Island of Kho Tang. Before discussing the Island portion of the operation, I think that it is important to emphasize the mission that was given to that Battalion. They were directed to land on the Island of Kho Tang and to search for and recover the crew of the SS MAYAGUEZ if it was there. They had no other mission on the Island. This will take on more importance for you as I discuss the operation.

The concept of the operation ashore was to land by helicopter in landing zones located both north and south of the center inhabitable area; secure a foothold; and then search for and recover the crew if it was there.

As the first helicopters attempted to land on the northern side of the island one of them was hit by ground fire, crashed into the ocean offshore, and burst into flames. The water in this area was not too deep and the Marines and pilots got out of the helicopter as fast as they could. There were several wounded and some killed in this helicopter. I do not have the exact figures. Those who could go ashore and were still armed attempted to do just that, others swam out toward the MAYAGUEZ and the USS HOLT. Among these swimmers were the Forward Air Controller and the Artillery Liaison Officer for the Battalion. They had pulled the pilot out of the helicopter and were taking him with them. The pilot had been wounded in the back and was in severe pain. Realizing that they only had one life vest among them that was functional after the explosion in the helicopter, they put it on the pilot and pulled him seaward with them. The Forward Air Controller had kept his radio with him, began calling air strikes in on the island in support of the men ashore. This skill is difficult when standing on solid land and observing the area to be hit. Calling in the strikes while swimming on your back, as he was doing, is even more difficult. To add to the problems facing him, however, every time that he pushed his antenna skyward, the Cambodians ashore opened up on him with machinegun fire and other small arm fire. His determination to accomplish his mission under even the most adverse condition led to the destruction of several enemy positions and helped the men ashore to gain a beach head.

By about 1030, the Marines ashore had consolidated their original landing zone positions and pushed out into the island sufficiently far enough to guarantee security for the two major positions held. The next step in the plan was for them to maneuver, join up, and then clear the inhabited portion of the island as they searched for the crewmen of the USS MAYAGUEZ. At about 1100, however, the Battalion was informed that the crew had been recovered. With this fact evident, there was no longer a mission for the Marines ashore other than to hold their positions and await evacuation. The evacuation could not be accomplished quickly though because the helicopters that had brought them in originally had returned to U-Tapao for refueling and another load of Marines for reinforcement. Now the helicopters had to off-load the Marines and return to the area for the evacuation. This cost some time and the helicopters did not all return until early afternoon. This was the reason that the evacuation of the men from the island took place late in the afternoon and even into the early evening. Many people that I have talked to have asked me why the Marines didn't just continue to attack on the island and destroy all of the Cambodians on it. As I stated earlier, their mission was not to take the island, it was to recover the crew. If they had continued to attack after we had recovered the crew, then would have been branded as aggressors and several other favorite communist titles.

It should be recognized that the Marines on the Island of Kho Tang did an outstanding job. They had run into a larger force than had been anticipated would be there and held it at bay all day. Had they been asked to, I'm certain that the Marines of 2/9 could have captured the island. It took great leadership and fortitude for them to hold their position all afternoon and to wait for evacuation. They did just that though and did so with true professionalism. I personally feel that they served the Nation and the Marine Corps proudly that day as have Marines in all conflicts in the past.

As for – well, I can only say that I was fortunate to have been selected for the operation. I had some of the Nation's finest trained fighters to do the job at hand and felt that they did just that. It was a proud day for Americans as we stood up for what was right and defied communists who thought that we would give them the container ship much like the PUEBLO. More importantly to me though, it was a day that no matter what anyone said, I was exceptionally proud to be an American and even better, to be a UNITED STATES MARINE.

I thank you again for letting me tell the MAYAGUEZ story from my viewpoint. I will be happy to answer any questions that you may have but must reemphasize that I can only comment on those areas over which I had positive personal knowledge. If you asked for an opinion, please note that it is MY opinion and not that of the Marines Corps or Marine Corps Policy.

### General Photographic Coverage Requested

1 Dec 1975

1. In order to improve the quality of current presentations of the MAYAGUEZ Operation, the following slides and motion picture footage is requested:

#### 2. Slides

- (1) USS MAYAGUEZ – top and side or oblique views.
- (2) Slide reflecting the relationship of the USS Mayaguez and the Island of Kho Tang.
- (3) Slide showing swift boats tied up to the SS Mayaguez.
- (4) Slide showing the locations of the helicopters off the Island of Kho Tang after being downed by ground fire.
- (5) Good slide of Kho Tang.
- (6) A slide of the entire area of operation showing the location of the SS Mayaguez and the relationships of Kho Tang Island and the mainland of Cambodia.

#### 1. Motion picture footage.

- (1) The USS Holt coming alongside the SS Mayaguez.
- (2) Marines jumping from the Holt to the Mayaguez.
- (3) The hook up and towing operation between the Holt and the Mayaguez.
- (4) Helicopters hovering over the Holt during the debarkation of Marines prior to the operation.
- (5) The approach and maneuver of CH-53 helicopters around Kho Tang Island.
- (6) Insertion of Marines on the Island.
- (7) Footage of gun runs on the Island during the day.
- (8) Footage of bombing runs on the Island during the day.
- (9) Footage reflecting the extent of the support delivered on the Island.
- (10) Naval Gun Fire delivered by the USS Wilson.
- (11) Small boats from the USS Wilson as they went toward the Island and picked up the swimming survivors of the crashed helicopters.

It is recognized that these may still be classified and not releasable. They are not covered in the present text but could add to the presentation if available and considered in good taste by PAO.

2. Since the Marine Corps is gaining excellent press representation and community exposure from the Mayaguez incident and every presentation tends to promote the Marine Corps image. I consider it desirable to develop a more professional and representative package for examination by the public. I cannot continue to reach the increasingly larger audiences with my present charts.
3. I have been informed that the Navy has a considerable amount of photographic coverage of the Mayaguez Operation on file and that portions of this material can be made available for use with this presentation. Slides and footage from these files combined with my oral description of the situation will upgrade the presentation to the level of professionalism normally associated with the Marine Corps and will enhance the Marine Corps image within the community; therefore, I hereby request assistance in gathering approved footage and slides to cover the areas listed in enclosure (2) and in preparing these for presentation. If possible, I would like to have the opportunity to screen the material myself, but, if TAD for this purpose is not considered practical the Lockheed Corporation has offered to make its Photographic Lab available to me for the purposes of cutting and splicing and the preparation of slides from negatives selected by Headquarters Marine Corps.

4. While I would prefer to have the chance to screen the available material personally and to have the Headquarters Marine Corps Public Affairs Staff screen my final presentation for objectionable material, either method suggested for the project is satisfactory. My main concern is to get the package done and ready as soon as possible. Any assistance will be appreciated.

R.E. Porter

This page last corrected 11 September 2011