

# SPECIAL REPORT

## SOUTH CHINA SEA HOMESTEADING

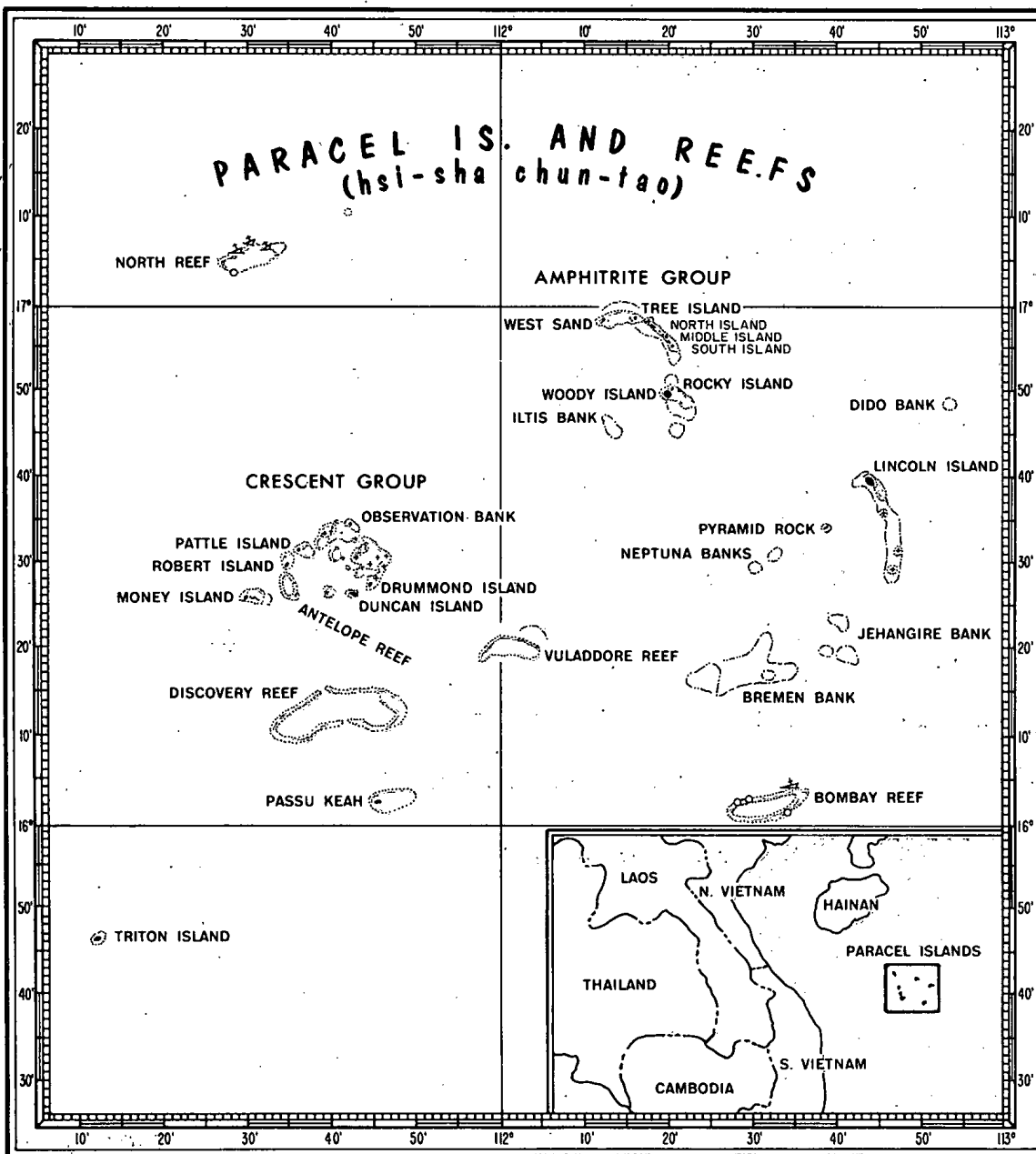
*Paracels 1965* 25X1

To civilian passengers on a Bangkok to Hong Kong flight, the minute islets 30,000 feet below probably pass unnoticed. To the PAN AM crew they are simply navigational landmarks. But to the military observer aboard the plane, these scattered islands hold considerable significance for they represent an additional link in the chain of Communist expansion. These are the controversial Paracel Islands<sup>1</sup>—for years considered of limited military worth and by various countries exploited primarily for economic reasons.

The Paracel Island Archipelago, strung out for some 90 nm, boasts roughly 20 islands and reefs and is divided into two major groups: the Crescent Group, and the Amphitrite. The islands have changed hands several times down through the centuries. Active claimants have now narrowed to three:

1. The Chinese name for the Paracel Islands is Hsi-Sha Chuan-Tao.

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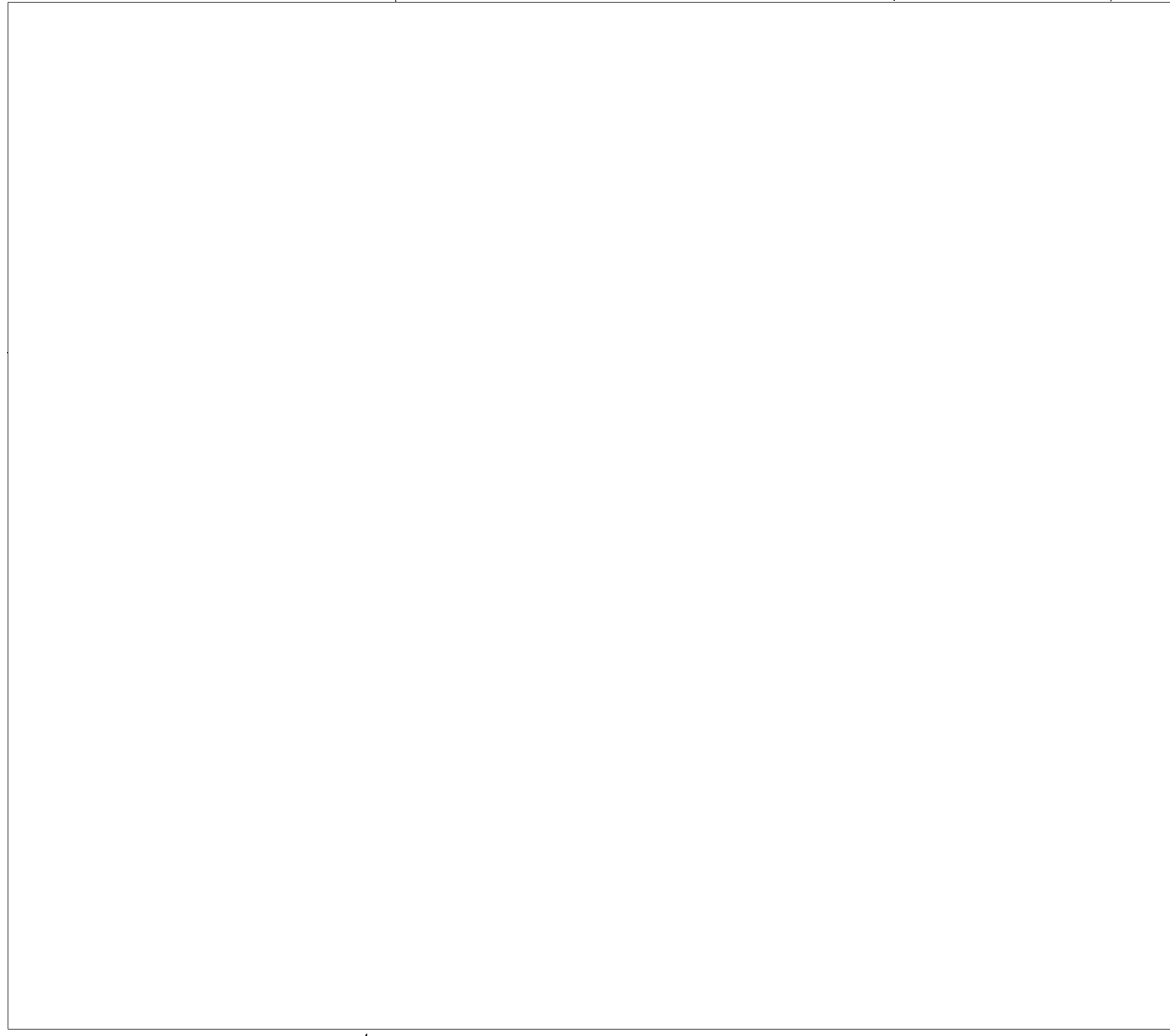
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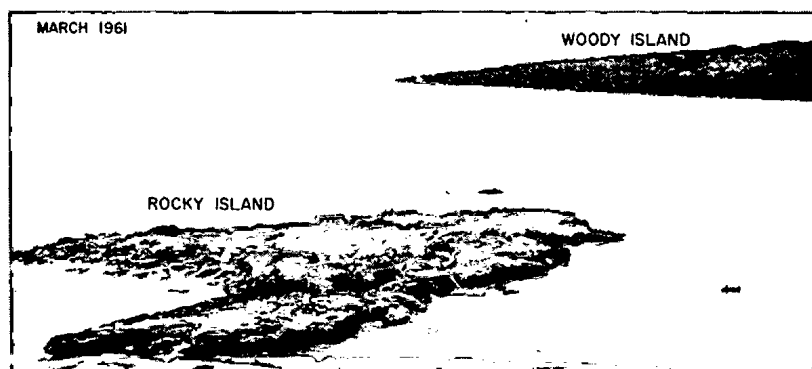
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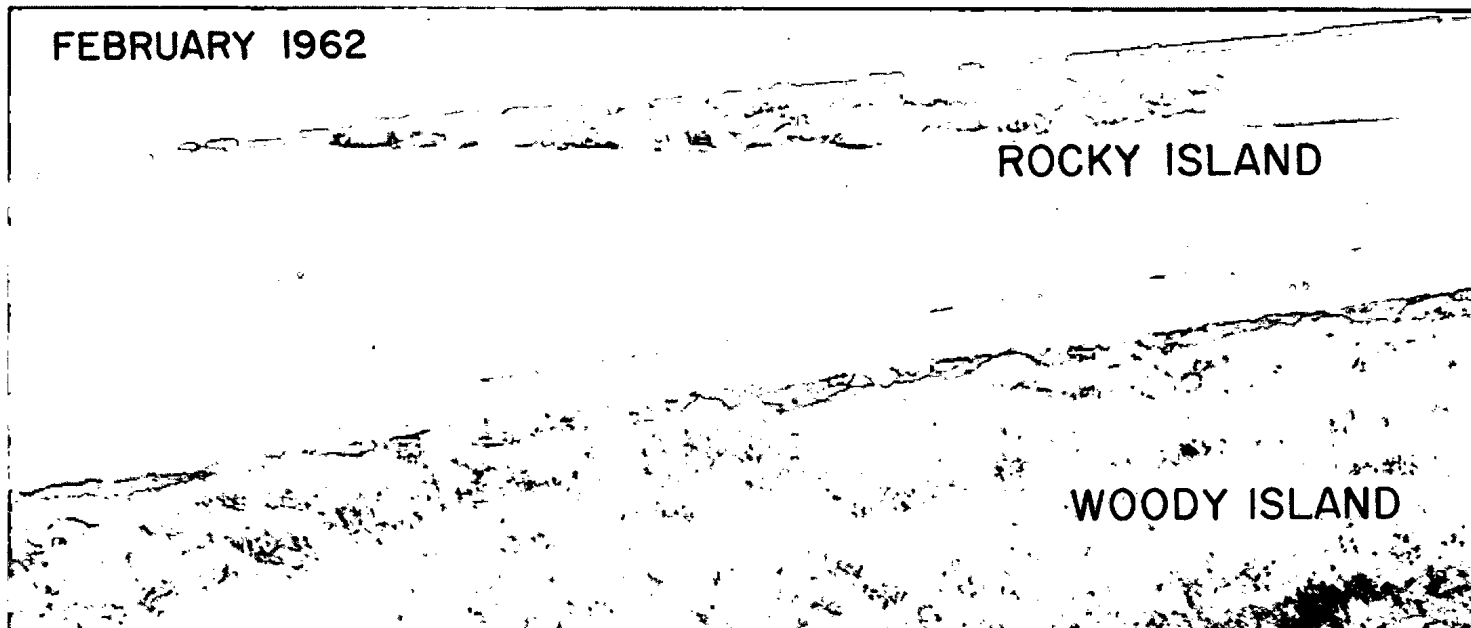
Republic of China Chinese fishermen, operating from Hainan, have used various islands of the Paracels for several centuries. China officially claimed the Paracels in 1909 on the grounds that they had always been a part of China and had never been alienated. In 1938 the Chinese Ambassador to Paris protested a French assertion of sovereignty. China sent an expedition to Woody Island in December 1946 and again proclaimed sovereignty over the Paracels in January 1947. A minor brush with a French expedition in May 1947 led to an informal agreement to settle the conflicting claims by negotiation or arbitration. This never took place. In May 1950, following the loss of Hainan to the Chinese Communists, the Nationalists withdrew from Woody Island, but have continued to assert their right of sovereignty.

Communist China Red China issued its first formal claim to the Paracels in 1951—apparently as heir presumptive to previous Nationalist claims. In 1955 they settled about 250 civilians on Woody to exploit guano deposits and followed in 1958 with a fishing fleet. Red China is currently the most active claimant to these islands; however, to date it has homesteaded only the Amphitrite Group plus Lincoln Island.

South Vietnam The Vietnamese officially claimed the Paracels as early as 1950 when the Emperor declared them part of Vietnamese national territory. South Vietnam progressively took over the garrison on Pattle Island from the French and to this day asserts its claim to sovereignty of all the Paracels; however, SVN occupational holdings so far have



September 1961 Breakwater between Woody Island and Rocky Island ↓



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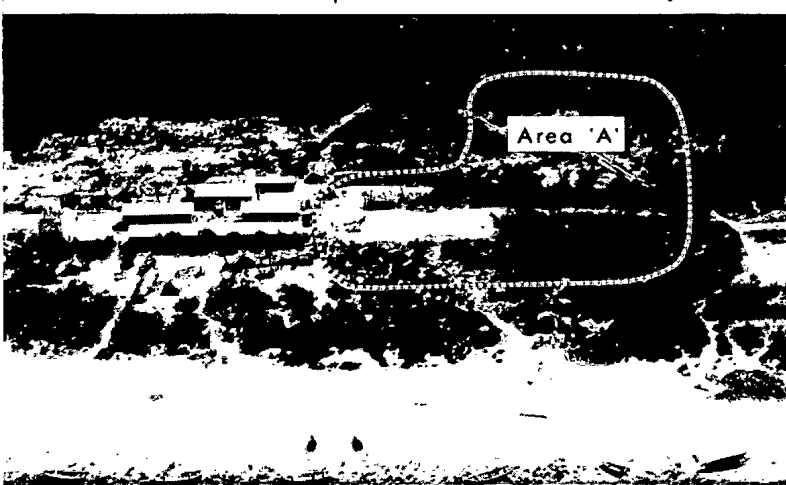
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↓ May 1961 Woody Island



↓ March 1958 Woody Island



dition of Indochina. After World War II the French occupied the islands, but since have deferred their claim to South Vietnam.

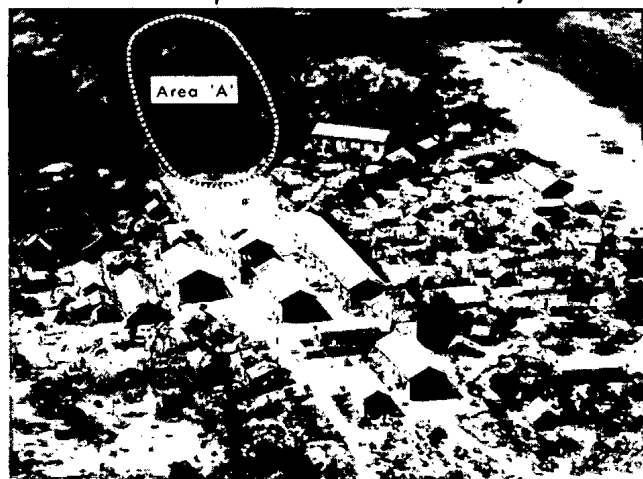
The Japanese claimed the Paracels in 1938 by right of discovery and exploited them during World War II. However, Japan's claims were extinguished by the 1946 San Francisco Peace Treaty.

North Vietnam undoubtedly has a strong interest in these islands; but, is apparently deferring to Communist China's claims.

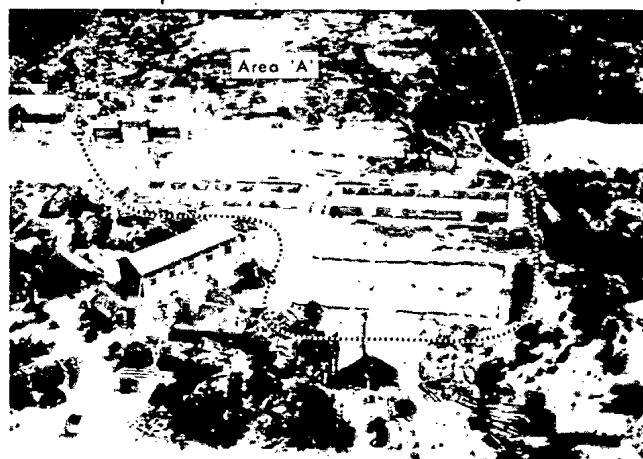
The Philippines have not advanced any official claim to the Paracels, but they consider their status unsettled and open to anyone.

The United Kingdom has made no

↓ June 1959 Woody Island



↓ October 1959 Woody Island



been confined to the Crescent Group.

The South Vietnamese have made no effort to expand their facilities in the Crescent Group. They continue to maintain a token garrison of one marine platoon on Pattle and Robert Islands, and one platoon of Civil Guard on Duncan and Drummond Islands.

Other Parties There are other interested parties. France in 1938 proclaimed possession and announced that the Paracels had been occupied and placed under the juris-

↓ January 1960 Woody Island



↓ February 1962 Woody Island



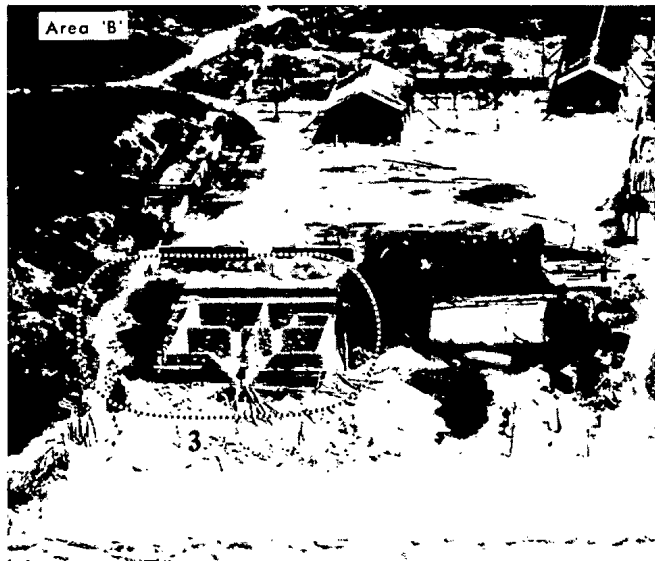
claim to the Paracels, although the British surveyed the islands in 1925. As late as 1936 the British apparently considered the islands part of China, for the UK sought rights to establish commercial aviation bases from China. UK current interests are not clear.

The United States has made no claim to the islands nor any determination as to sovereignty, other than that they are not Japanese. Nevertheless, the US does recognize the Paracels as an area

↓ April 1959 Woody Island



↓ March 1961 Woody Island



where both the GVN and GRC have conflicting claims. We have ignored Red China's claim and her "serious warnings" program by continued aerial reconnaissance over-flights of the islands.

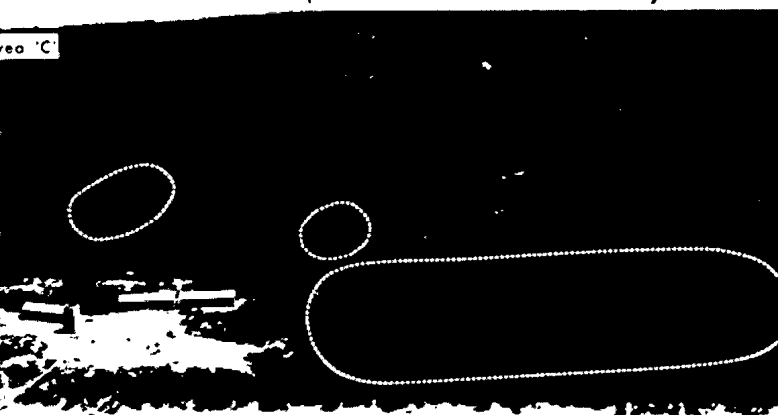
**Red Chinese Activities** The Chinese Communists have kept to the eastern half of the Paracels (Woody, North, and Lincoln Islands) and the South Vietnamese to the western half (Duncan, Pattle, and Drummond<sup>2</sup>). Since their occupation of Woody Island, the Chinese Communists have increased dwelling

2. In 1959 there was one incident wherein South Vietnamese Marines seized Red Chinese fishermen who had put ashore on Duncan Island.

February 1962 Woody Island



March 1958 Woody Island



and storage construction which could have military application. They are extremely sensitive to incursions of their "territorial waters" as evidenced by their "serious warnings" campaign. Analysis of the 190 serious warnings issued to date, reveals that 46 claims of military provocation have been directed at US overflights of the Paracels. This probably is a political machination designed to underscore their claims to the islands. On the other hand it could well be a security effort to screen secret activity. Recent photography revealed the location of a communications station on both North and

August 1959 Woody Island



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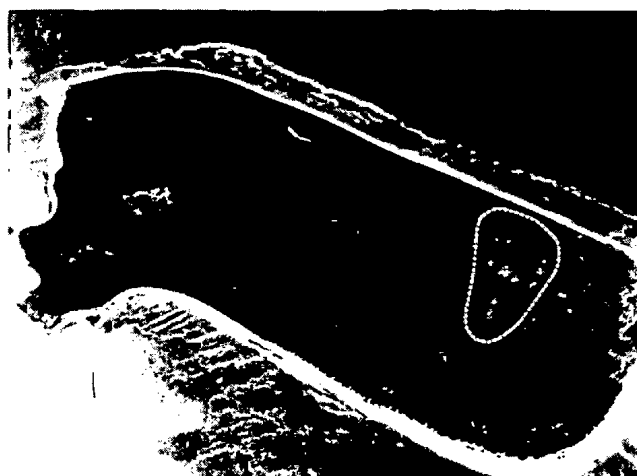
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↓ January 1961 Woody Island

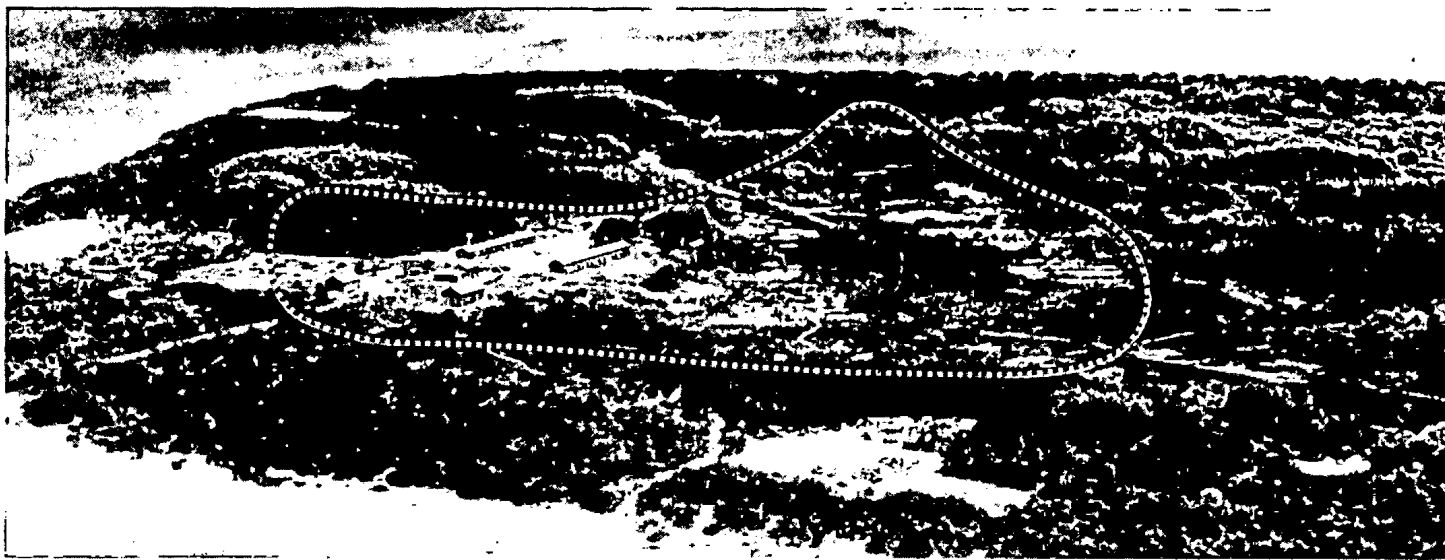


↓ August 1961 Woody Island

↓ January 1959 Lincoln Island



↓ March 1960 Lincoln Island



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Rocky Islands, and what appeared to be a communications line strung between Rocky and Woody Island. There was no evidence of radar facilities on any of the islands.

Red China has continued to build-up and expand her activities in the Paracels and is by far the most active and vociferous claimant of these islands. However, across the imaginary boundary separating the Crescent and Amphitrite groups, South Vietnam, equally struggling for prestige, has expressed determination to resist encroachment on her present holdings and claims. For one reason or another, the international status of these geographically strategic islands has never been settled. The US has neither advanced a claim of its own in the area, nor made any official determination of the merits of the respective claims of others—except to ignore Red China. Despite their small size, with two on-the-spot contending claimants jockeying for position, armed clashes are highly possible. Further, when it is felt that the political-military atmosphere is ripe, Red China will not hesitate to create and use an incident in the Paracels to further her efforts at international recognition. [REDACTED]

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## PACIFIC PERSPECTIVES

SOUTH VIETNAM: MADAME NHU'S MINUTE MAIDS—PHASE TWO [REDACTED]

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The second phase of Madame Nhu's program to draw representatives of her sex into her nation's fight for survival is underway. Beautiful, petite, and vigorous, Madame Ngo Dinh Nhu, official hostess for brother-in-law President Diem and an ardent feminist, was responsible for founding the Women's Paramilitary Training Center and giving it legal government support as a result of a National Assembly resolution last October.

The first phase began late in November 1961, when 1,500 women began two months of intensive military training at Thi Nghe in the Saigon area and at the Army training camp at Quang Trang—15 kilometers from Saigon. These first members of the Women's Self Defense Corps, by now 1,450, concluded their training on 26 January with graduation ceremonies attended by President Diem. The top 900 of those graduated are now being utilized in the second phase—in programs to give part time training to women in every province. Teams of four graduates will train classes of 40 women two hours per week for a period of 18 months under the nominal supervision of the Directorate of Youth. At the conclusion of training the Corps presumably will be able to perform guard duty and other functions now carried out by the Self Defense Corps.



Diem's official hostess—Madame Nhu.

Response to the call for volunteers for the 29 November class was excellent—500 volunteers from the Saigon area responded to fill 152 vacancies.

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