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# Technical Report

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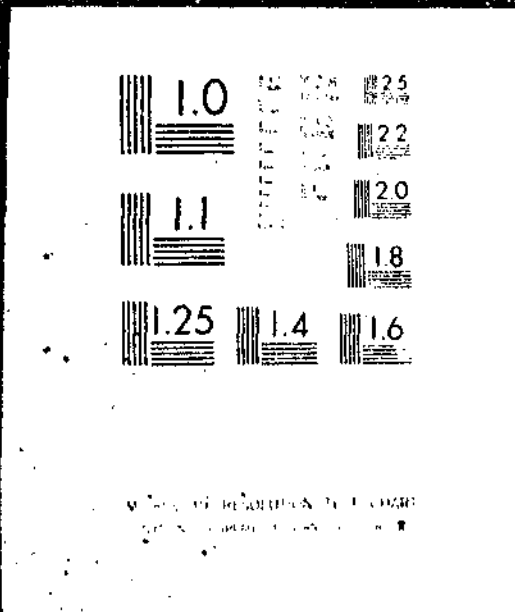


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**SOME FINDINGS OF THE VIET CONG  
MOTIVATION AND MORALE STUDY:  
JUNE-DECEMBER 1965**

L. Goure, A. J. Russo and D. Scott

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THE OFFICE OF THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY  
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**Rand**  
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FOREWORD

This report is one of a series of Rand studies that examine the organization, operations, motivation, and morale of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces that fought in South Vietnam.

Between August 1964 and December 1968 The Rand Corporation conducted approximately 2400 interviews with Vietnamese who were familiar with the activities of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army. Reports of those interviews, totaling some 62,000 pages, were reviewed and released to the public in June 1972. They can be obtained from the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce.

The release of the interviews has made possible the declassification and release of some of the classified Rand reports derived from them. To remain consistent with the policy followed in reviewing the interviews, information that could lead to the identification of individual interviewees was deleted, along with a few specific references to sources that remain classified. In most cases, it was necessary to drop or to change only a word or two, and in some cases, a footnote. The meaning of a sentence or the intent of the author was not altered.

The reports contain information and interpretations relating to issues that are still being debated. It should be pointed out that there was substantive disagreement among the Rand researchers involved in Vietnam research at the time, and contrary points of view with totally different implications for U.S. operations can be found in the reports. This internal debate mirrored the debate that was then current throughout the nation.

A complete list of the Rand reports that have been released to the public is contained in the bibliography that follows.

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For a description of the Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Project and interviewing process, the reader should first consult W. Phillips Davison, *User's Guide to the Rand Interviews in Vietnam*, R-1024-ARPA, March 1972.

These reports can be obtained from The Rand Corporation.

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- RM-5487-1 The Viet Cong Style of Politics, N. Leites, May 1969.
- RM-5522-1 Inducements and Deterrents to Defection: An Analysis of the Motives of 125 Defectors, L. Coure, August 1968.
- RM-5533-1 The Insurgent Environment, R. M. Pearce, May 1969.
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- RM-6131-1 Conversations with Enemy Soldiers in Late 1968/Early 1969: A Study of Motivation and Morale, K. Kellen, September 1970.
- RM-6375-1 Rallying Potential Among the North Vietnamese Armed Forces, A Sweetland, December 1970.

PREFACE

Since December 1964, The RAND Corporation's field office in Saigon has been conducting a study of Viet Cong motivation and morale, based mainly on interrogations of prisoners and defectors, and to a lesser degree on interviews with refugees and captured documents. The study is now jointly sponsored by the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs and the Advanced Research Projects Agency.

The present Memorandum provides an overview of results of some 450 extended interviews conducted during 1965. A preliminary analysis for the period January to June has already been reported in RM-4699-ISA/ARPA, Some Impressions of Viet Cong Vulnerabilities: An Interim Report, by Leon Goure and C.A.H. Thomson, August 1965. This new study offers a first analysis of interviews completed during the period June-December, and points out comparisons and contrasts between the views and feelings recently expressed and those expressed during the first five months of 1965.

This Memorandum supplants the briefings given by Leon Goure in Saigon and Washington in December 1965 and January 1966, and a preliminary informal report dated December 9, 1965, which was given limited distribution in Vietnam and Washington.

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SUMMARY

This Memorandum draws upon the record of some 450 interviews with Viet Cong captives and defectors, civilian refugees, and North Vietnamese cadres and regulars. It emphasizes the testimony of about 160 VC captives and defectors who came into government hands between June 1 and late December, 1965. The data do not provide information on the war as a whole or allow us to assess how the war is going. The interviews are offered, not as a statistical sample, but as a body of evidence yielding some more or less reliable impressions, and leading to certain suggestions concerning the exploitation of the Viet Cong's current vulnerabilities.

Throughout the year, the VC continued to lose the sympathy of the rural population as a result of their heavy taxation, introduction of a military draft, stricter control measures, and the growing physical insecurity of life in the villages.

The intensification of military activities by the GVN and U.S. forces has had an adverse effect on VC morale and combat effectiveness. The devastation caused by the B-52's has made a profound impression. Nevertheless the interviews indicate no widespread or deep-seated popular hatred for the GVN or the Americans as a result of air and artillery attacks. The villagers seem grateful for advance warning of attacks and sometimes seize the opportunity it offers to move to GVN-controlled areas. As long as warning is received, the villagers tend to blame the presence or actions of VC troops for provoking GVN/U.S. attacks, rather than to find fault with the attackers themselves.

The interviews indicated that U.S. efforts to explain the air raids on North Vietnam had failed to eradicate the impression among the people of the North that the raids were unprovoked acts of U.S. aggression. Some PAVN soldiers expressed great concern over the fate of their families and over damage to the North Vietnamese economy.

Interviews with 39 North Vietnamese soldiers indicated that most were well-indoctrinated and loyal. Some complained of great hardships on their way to the South and after arrival there. But most PAVN soldiers saw no option but to go on fighting. Few had heard of the government's Chieu Hoi program; those who had heard of it did not think it applied to

the PAVN. They believed that defection would bring reprisals on their families.

The interviews suggest a number of Viet Cong vulnerabilities that might be exploited by appropriate programs, especially in the realm of psychological warfare. These vulnerabilities are listed at random below:

- o Failure of the VC to make major gains, and declining faith in VC victory.
- o The effect of the increased U.S. military effort.
- o V.C. recruiting and force-composition problems.
- o Poor performance and morale among lower-ranking VC cadres.
- o Continuing VC defections and desertions.
- o Growing alienation of the population from the VC.

The vulnerabilities of the VC suggest certain lines of action:

1. Still greater use should be made of day and night air surveillance and interdiction.
2. U.S. troops should be well indoctrinated against allowing themselves to be provoked into conduct that could be turned to propaganda use by the VC or North Vietnamese.
3. The level of effort, content, and responsiveness of GVN/U.S. psychological warfare could be improved, so as to exploit:
  - (a) declining faith in a VC victory,
  - (b) declining popular support for the VC,
  - (c) abandonment of VC dead and wounded,
  - (d) GVN/U.S. successes,
  - (e) the hollowness of VC promises,
  - (f) conflicts and tensions among VC cadres.
4. There is an urgent need for a credible explanation of U.S. aims in Vietnam and the role of American forces there.
5. PAVN soldiers should be encouraged to surrender.
6. The appeal of the Chieu Hoi program could be improved.
7. The GVN should reassure potential defectors and refugees about the future return of their lands and property.

8. The GVN must demonstrate that it is winning the war by an early demonstration of its ability to recover and pacify territory now under VC control, to go on recovering territory, and to hold it.

According to many of the interviewees, the VC's situation has deteriorated and its prospects have dimmed. It must be emphasized, however, that the Viet Cong organization is still largely intact and capable of controlling and directing large numbers of soldiers and civilians.

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## I. INTRODUCTION

This Memorandum draws upon material from 450 interviews with Viet Cong captives and defectors, refugees, and North Vietnamese cadres and regulars.\* The interviews were conducted by a RAND team in Vietnam from January to December 1965. This group includes approximately 150 Viet Cong military and civilian cadres, 47 refugees, and 39 North Vietnamese, 7 of the latter from the 325th PAVN (North Vietnamese) Division. The Viet Cong Main and Local Force military personnel in the total group, insofar as their unit affiliation could be determined, were drawn from 52 different Viet Cong battalions and 72 other separate units, as well as from three PAVN regiments. Special emphasis is placed in this survey of information drawn from 160 interviews with Viet Cong captives and defectors and with 35 refugees who came into government hands since June 1, 1965. These interviews came too late to be discussed in the last report on this program.\*\*

The reader should keep in mind that the data do not provide information on the war as a whole or allow us to assess how the war is going. The information collected is primarily of value in studying the effects of Vietnamese government and American actions, and of Viet Cong policies, on VC morale. Morale, of course, is but one among many factors that can determine the course and outcome of the war. The present Memorandum seeks especially to draw attention to some Viet Cong vulnerabilities that appear to provide opportunities for exploitation. In the discussion of select Viet Cong vulnerabilities the reader should keep in mind that there are also factors making for Viet Cong strength and that the VC still constitute a resourceful and effective fighting force.

The survey of interviews completed in the spring of 1965 (RM-4699) noted that the intensification of Vietnamese government (GVN) and U.S. military activities had had a significant adverse effect on Viet Cong

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\* Appendix A deals with the attitudes of the refugees; Appendix B provides detailed breakdowns on the characteristics of 313 persons interviewed up to November 20, 1965 (see Table of Contents).

\*\* L. Goure and C.A.H. Thomson, Some Impressions of Viet Cong Vulnerabilities: An Interim Report, RM-4699-ISA/ARPA, August 1965.

morale, operations, and expectations of victory. The interviews also indicated that the Viet Cong were losing the sympathy of the rural population as a result of their heavy taxation, introduction of a forced draft of villagers for military service, stricter population control measures, and growing insecurity in the villages. These trends have continued, and some have intensified. The interviews of June-December—1965 indicate that the Viet Cong are facing greater military, political, and economic problems, that in the experience of those questioned VC morale has become more brittle, and that the combat effectiveness of some units seems to have declined. The tendency of the rural population to try to disassociate themselves from the Viet Cong has become more pronounced. In the same period, however, the VC forces, thanks to intensive drafting, have expanded and the southward infiltration of North Vietnamese regular units has increased.



## II. EFFECTS OF GVN/U.S. MILITARY OPERATIONS

Since March 1965 military pressure on the Viet Cong has grown, especially in Central Vietnam, and so has the number of Viet Cong casualties. The great majority of the interviewees noted that, as a consequence of increased GVN/U.S. air and ground activities, the Viet Cong soldiers must fight more often, move more frequently, and take greater precautions against surprise attacks and ambushes. There are indications that harassment of the Viet Cong by air, artillery, and ground forces has become more intense and tends increasingly to disrupt VC activities, to force the VC to move, and to generate fear of being detected. The VC soldiers indicate that they feel more insecure whether on the move or in camp, suffer more frequent disruptions of their rest and cooking, and become discouraged and exhausted. The general impression given by the interviews is that life in the Viet Cong has become more dangerous and that hardships are greater than in 1964. VC cadres reported that in recent months the soldiers have spoken more often of their probable death in the next battle, of never seeing their families again. Their expectation of surviving the war appears to have greatly declined as a result of the increasing intensity of combat.

### AIR POWER

The interviews collected since June 1, 1965, continue to indicate that the Viet Cong are especially sensitive to GVN/U.S. heavy weapons that they cannot match and that they believe give their opponents a significant advantage. The two weapon systems most frequently cited by the interviewees were, first, air power (fixed-wing aircraft and helicopters) and then artillery. Both were described by the majority of the interviewees as the most frightening weapons used against the VC and as most effective in smashing VC attacks, pursuing VC forces, and harassing them while on the march or in camp.

Fear of air power and the need to guard especially against air attacks are not limited to units or VC personnel that have experienced such attacks. Most VC soldiers appear to realize that air power plays an important role in detecting and attacking them, can be rapidly brought

in to counter VC attacks, can be used against VC sanctuaries, and cannot be effectively defeated by present VC antiaircraft capability. For example, a regrouped\* Main Force platoon leader and Party member said:

I would say that the GVN is winning and the factor that contributed to this victory is the presence of airplanes in the South. Nothing is more effective in destroying the morale of the men than bombs.

Even though, according to many interviewees, air attacks on VC camps often fail to inflict large numbers of casualties, VC fear of detection forces them to move more frequently and to invest a great deal of effort in the construction of shelters and trenches. The interviews indicate, however, that air intervention in a battle often causes large VC casualties, forces the VC at times to abandon many dead and wounded, and may prevent VC units leaving their entrenchments for an assault.

In the opinion of many interviewees, the increased number of aircraft, especially jet aircraft, has noticeably boosted the offensive power of the GVN and has "shaken" the self-confidence of the VC soldiers. Jet aircraft were said by many subjects to be more effective than A-1s because they more often succeeded in surprising the VC and because the noise of their passage added to the fear felt by the VC soldiers. For example, a captive North Vietnamese soldier said:

Jet aircraft are more frightening because of their loud sound and high speed. We were already scared when we heard its sound. When we heard the sound of the ordinary aircraft we could make out where they were, but we were unable to detect jet aircraft.

A captive veteran Main Force soldier said: "Jet aircraft can more easily attack by surprise because they fly more rapidly." A number of interviewees also appeared to be under the impression that jet aircraft usually carried more and larger bombs than the A-1s.

The most noticeable addition to the air threat was the introduction of B-52s into Vietnam. While their main impact has been felt especially in the VC-designated war zones, rumors and stories about them have been circulated among Viet Cong soldiers in other areas as well. Although only a small number of Viet Cong interviewees and refugees reported having actually seen B-52 attacks or having been exposed to them, many

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\*The regrouped are ex-Viet Minh from the South who went to North Vietnam in 1954 and were infiltrated into South Vietnam later.

more expressed anxiety about the possibility of being attacked by them. PAVN captives reported that they were especially warned against them. Although the available interviews indicate B-52s caused damage and casualties in some areas, they also include reports of failure to hit VC targets. In spite of some uncertainty about the damage they cause, these aircraft appear to frighten the VC, force some units to move from their base camps in the sanctuary areas, and lower the soldiers' confidence in their ability to counter the air threat with shelters and trenches. For example, a VC liaison agent from Zone D reported that VC troops had stated their opinion that:

The B-52s were the most dangerous (of weapons) and their destructive power was frightening, more devastating than any other weapons used so far. They (the troops) seemed to be very worried about the B-52s.

A Local Force soldier from the same area stated: "Since the appearance of B-52s in the province the soldiers' morale has been deeply affected."

The devastation caused by B-52 attacks to VC underground structures and to vegetation was reported by interviewees to have made a profound impression on both the VC and the civilian population. Refugees and VC soldiers from areas attacked by B-52s were unanimous in stating that the depth of the bomb craters and the size of the uprooted trees led them to conclude that their shelters and tunnels could not protect them against such attacks. For example, a Main Force squad leader from Zone D reported that the raids had destroyed tunnels 3 to 6 meters underground and that this had adversely affected his unit's morale. Villagers in attacked areas tended to leave in large numbers for GVN-controlled towns. In general the interviewees stated that large-caliber bombs were especially feared by VC soldiers, who had less confidence in surviving air attacks in their shelters when such bombs were used. For example, a Front (VC) cadre noted:

Formerly the Front units relied heavily on the efficiency of the trenches. But now the trenches cannot give them enough security during bombings.

As we noted above, the impact of the B-52s was further heightened by the surprise effect of the attacks. A number of interviewees mentioned that the aircraft flew so high that their approach was inaudible and one became aware of them only when "the ground erupted." Several

refugees said they thought the attacks were by "missiles" rather than aircraft because there was no noise of aircraft engines. Generally, however, the VC knew that the attacks were by B-52s. Pictures of B-52s have been disseminated by GVN leaflets.

The recent interviewees, like earlier ones, mentioned the effectiveness of strafing by helicopters, especially against VC troops in trenches. They also reported that the Viet Cong have tried to cover their trenches and foxholes to make them more difficult to detect by such attackers. They also expressed concern over the ability of the GVN and Americans to move troops rapidly by helicopter and to encircle VC units.

Light reconnaissance aircraft (L-19, O-1, etc.) were said to cause the VC major concern and to play a significant role in disrupting VC activities. Most interviewees stated that their units, when not stationed in villages, generally put out all fires at the approach of an aircraft, frequently even when cooking food in special underground ovens. Many mentioned that Main and Local Force troops avoid firing at passing aircraft unless they believe themselves to be detected and under attack. Only guerrillas were said to fire at low-flying, unarmed aircraft, such as loudspeaker aircraft, and they have been criticized by Main Force soldiers and villagers for doing so.

#### ARTILLERY

Artillery was frequently said to harass VC troops, to disrupt their attacks, and to inflict casualties. The interviewees' attitude toward artillery, however, varied with their experience. Some expressed great fear of it while others appeared to view it as a nuisance against which existing shelters provided adequate protection. Although opinions varied on the accuracy of its fire, artillery was described as one of the weapons that gave a notable advantage to the GVN and U.S. forces. Where possible, VC units appear to try to camp either in villages or in areas outside the artillery fan.

### GROUND FORCES

The interviews give the impression that ARVN morale and aggressiveness have improved. A number of interviewees made specific comments to that effect. ARVN sweeps, patrols, and ambushes, according to some interviewees, appear to be on the rise. However, the interviews indicate that ARVN forces attack Main Force units less frequently than Local Force units and guerrillas. This seems due largely to good VC intelligence, as well as to the fact that the Main Forces often operate behind a screen of Local and guerrilla forces and between operations usually camp in relatively secure areas. Generally, Main Force soldiers expressed the belief that they were as well equipped and better motivated than ARVN ground force units and that they did not fear ARVN forces when unsupported by air or artillery. The interviewees pointed out that the VC frequently have the advantage of surprise, of superior numbers, and of being dug in, while the ARVN must fight in the open.

### DEFOLIATION

Fear of chemical spray continued to be widespread, according to the interviews. This fear was reinforced by Viet Cong propaganda, which stressed the alleged toxic nature of the spray, and by instructions to the troops on protective measures and the treatment of persons exposed to the spray. Generally, VC propaganda continued to give the impression that the Americans were making extensive use of chemical warfare.

The Viet Cong appear to avoid defoliated areas from fear of detection from the air. The interviews indicate that defoliation hampers VC operations. Few interviewees had seen crop spraying although many had heard about it and indicated that they believed sprayed food to be inedible and dangerous to health. The effects of crop spraying on VC operations could not be ascertained from the interviews. Many units seem to have purchased their food in the villages. It is possible, therefore, that units operating in sprayed areas may have become short of food and may have been forced to obtain it from other sources. The spraying of crops grown by VC forces was reported by some interviewees to force the VC to abandon their fields and paddies and move to a new location.

### IMPACT UPON VIET CONG OPERATIONS

The interviewees continued to report that their units moved very frequently to avoid detection and that some camps were more dispersed than before. Though this seems to depend largely on the degree of available concealment, even units in the Highlands were said to move frequently.

Apparently, VC units still try to stay in villages, when possible, so as to reduce the chances of being attacked and to conceal their cooking activities. Several interviewees noted, however, that the protection offered by mingling with the population was declining owing to the tendency of the villagers to leave when a VC unit entered their village.

A number of North Vietnamese personnel reported that their units avoided staying in villages so as not to expose the inhabitants to GVN attacks. Several North Vietnamese said that air attacks had prevented their units from carrying off dead and wounded. So seriously was one unit's morale affected by this that some of the soldiers defected.

Concern over possible detection has also increased fear of GVN agents, since VC units often blame air and artillery attacks on the presence of such agents in their midst. One consequence of this is that units do not feel safe in villages regarded as less than fully under VC control. Another effect is the suspicion with which the cadres view their men and the villagers. Sometimes the clothing and personal belongings of individual soldiers have been periodically searched when the unit came under frequent air or artillery attacks. GVN spies are said to have been arrested and executed in some units.

### REACTION OF THE POPULATION\*

The intensified military activities have exposed the Vietnamese villagers to more frequent air, artillery, and ground attacks and have greatly increased insecurity in the rural areas. Although the frequency of attacks varies greatly from hamlet to hamlet, and though air and artillery fire are often directed against open areas so as to cause few casualties, if any, and little damage, the villagers generally believe that

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\*For further discussion of civilian reaction, see Appendix A. "Attitudes of Some Vietnamese Refugees."

their lives are in greater danger than in previous years. Fear of attacks is a major reason why the farmers have overcome a natural reluctance to leave their lands and ancestral tombs and, no longer deterred by fear of VC reprisals, have taken refuge by the hundreds of thousands in GVN controlled areas.

According to the interviews, neither air strikes nor the more frequent artillery bombardments were of major importance in inducing the villagers to join or give more active support to the Viet Cong. No interviewee so far has claimed to have joined the VC for this reason. Many attributed their decision to participate in the National Liberation Front to GVN policies, the misbehavior of GVN soldiers, or mistreatment by local officials or the police. Only a few claimed to have known other persons who had been influenced to join by the attacks. The interviewed refugees also denied that any villagers had joined the VC even after intensive attacks on their villages.

The villagers' reactions to attacks, which often cause more damage and losses to civilians than to the VC, vary with their experiences. Generally, conditions of village life and protracted insecurity appear to have made death a commonplace and to have led the villager to a fatalistic attitude. He sees himself as "a fly caught between two fighting buffaloes." He expects to suffer from the acts of both sides and he recognizes that he cannot avoid becoming involved in military actions while the war is going on. As the war has intensified, the villager seems to have acquired the feeling that he cannot afford to choose sides on the basis of programs or promises for the future but that his actions must be guided first of all by considerations of survival and security, regardless of his sympathies. Military activities and fear of attacks tend to disrupt farm work and reduce the villager's economic interest in continuing to work his fields, since he is less able to earn a living from his labors.

The immediate attitude of the villagers to GVN/U.S. attacks appears to depend largely on whether or not they believe the attacks to have been provoked by VC activities. If, as is often true, attacks occur because of the presence of Viet Cong forces in a village, or as a reaction to VC firing on GVN posts or at passing aircraft, the villagers

tend to blame the VC. If such VC activities are absent the villagers seem to consider the attacks to be unjustified and to blame the GVN or the Americans for the resulting damage and casualties. The majority of the recent interviewees as well as of the earlier ones claimed that the villagers most often blamed the VC for the attacks. This was said not only by refugees, VC civilian cadres, and guerrillas who are closely associated with the villagers, but also by captured military and party cadres. Some typical reactions of the villagers are described in the following recent statements:

The people in Trung Thuan village didn't like the VC to open fire on the post (GVN), because every time they did, the post called for artillery support from the district. But the more they begged the guerrillas not to fire on the post, the more the latter would carry on this type of activity. At the present time the people hate the guerrillas a lot, but they don't know what to do, because they are living in their grip.

Most of the time, no VC units camped in my hamlet, therefore the villagers could not understand why their hamlet was shelled. Sometimes, however, a handful of guerrillas sniped at my hamlet and fired at the post, which immediately reacted by shelling. In such cases nobody complained; everyone understood that the VC's presence motivated the shelling.

When the shelling caused death and casualties, the Front cadre accused the GVN of murdering innocent people, but the villagers considered the Front Forces' presence as the direct cause of the shelling.

The people hated the (VC) troops. Whenever the troops came in, mortars and airplanes caused much damage and death among the people. So they hated to see the Front troops come and camp in the village.

They (the villagers) told the VC: "If you are courageous fellows, why don't you go out and live in the rice fields? Why do you come to our hamlet and cause the GVN to bomb and destroy our property?"

The interviews give the impression that air and artillery attacks, being impersonal, often cause less intense resentment than misbehavior or apparent wanton killing of civilians by GVN ground forces. The resentment over seemingly pointless cruelties on the part of ground forces was cited as one factor motivating farmers to join the VC.

The interviews do not indicate that air and artillery attacks have resulted in any widespread or deepseated hatred for the GVN or the



Americans. Although VC propagandists usually try to blame the Americans for the air attacks, many interviewees said they believed the attacks were directed by the GVN, since they thought the Americans unable to select the right villages or to find their way around Vietnam without GVN guidance.

When the attacks are preceded by warnings, through leaflets or broadcasts from aircraft, any adverse effects on the attitude of the villagers caused by the attacks appear to be greatly diminished. The villagers seem grateful for warning and sometimes seize the opportunity if offers to move to GVN-controlled areas. At such times the VC find themselves unable to stop the farmers from leaving their villages. The warnings, of course, may also reduce the damage suffered by the VC. But they also lessen the usefulness of the villages as shelters for the VC, reduce the number of civilian casualties during operations, and prevent the VC from using the population as a shield against attacks.

There are some indications in the interviews that various elements of the urban population in the GVN-controlled areas tend to be critical of air and artillery attacks on villages and insist on the importance of safeguarding civilians from them. These people are often unaware of the villagers' true attitudes, having little contact with them, and they lack information on the tactics employed by the Viet Cong. A number of interviewees from provinces under strong VC pressure took the view that the critics, who were often Saigon intellectuals, were unfamiliar with the realities of the war and that the Americans exercised more restraint and caution than the ARVN would have done had they been in possession of all the air power employed in South Vietnam. As a rule, however, the concern of the urban critics is less over the effects of military operations than over the inadequacies of the GVN's refugee program.

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### III. SOME VIET CONG VULNERABILITIES

Apart from the direct impact of military operations, the interviews suggest that a number of Viet Cong vulnerabilities and reactions to GVN/U.S. activities have operational implications and could be exploited by appropriate programs. These vulnerabilities are listed below, but not in order of importance:

- o The failure of the VC to make major gains, and declining faith in a VC victory.
- o The effect of the increased U.S. participation in military operations.
- o VC problems in recruiting and force composition.
- o Problems of performance and morale among lower ranking VC cadres.
- o Problems arising from continued VC defection and desertion.
- o Growing cleavage between the VC and the population.

Below is a fuller discussion of these points.

#### THE FAILURE OF THE VC TO MAKE MAJOR GAINS AND DECLINING FAITH IN A VC VICTORY

Many interviewees referred to the failure of the VC to make major military gains during the widely publicized offensive during the rainy season of 1965. According to interviewees and captured documents, Communist Party instructions issued in mid-1965 stated that major successes, especially in the Highlands, were a necessary precondition for a "general offensive and uprising" in 1966. Otherwise, the Party warned, the war would be a very long one. A number of VC cadres suggested that the prospect of a very protracted war could entail considerable political, economic, and psychological costs for the VC, especially after the leadership had taken the risk, in 1964, of sacrificing some of its political appeal and popular support in order to try to gain a quick military success.

Although, in the past, the Viet Cong had emphasized the protracted character of the struggle and had used the example of the defeat of the French to show that it could defeat even a strong enemy, it had also been forced to boost the morale of its troops and civilians by repeatedly

claiming the end of the war was in sight. The interviews indicate that many VC soldiers have become war weary and demoralized by the prospect of fighting a protracted war. This may have forced the Viet Cong leadership to hold out hopes for an early victory by repeatedly declaring the war to be at a "decisive" stage that would soon lead to the VC's "General Offensive and Uprising." The latter theme implied that the Viet Cong would and could win a complete military victory and gain control over the entire country, and that those who had served them faithfully would be rewarded by a "glorious return" to their villages. The interviews indicate that the need to gain an early victory may be all the greater in view of the difficulty for the VC of maintaining control of the population in its areas over a long period full of hardships.

The VC failure to achieve victory or to gain much ground during the 1965 rainy season appears to have considerably weakened the credence given to VC promises and to have given rise to growing doubts about its ability to win the war. For example, a Local Force platoon leader said, "The Front is deteriorating every day but each year the Front still maintains that 'this year is the decisive year.' But in reality they cannot decide anything." Many interviewees questioned the ability of the VC to make gains during the dry season, after their failure to do so during the rainy season. They seemed generally aware that the resistance to the Viet Cong was increasing and that successes entailed greater sacrifices.

A majority of the recent interviewees, including captives, followed the earlier ones in stating their belief that the power gap between the VC and the GVN had grown in favor of the latter, and that the GVN would eventually win the war as a result of its military superiority. Earlier opinions, once frequently expressed, that the VC would overcome the GVN's superiority in weapons through growing popular support were rare in the more recent interviews. It is noteworthy that many captives and defectors with a "hard-core" attitude no longer predicted an inevitable VC victory but saw the war as in a stalemate stage, with both sides building up their forces. A minority claimed to believe that the VC would win, either because they expected intervention by North Vietnam and other Communist nations or because they hoped that the United States would eventually be worn down in a protracted struggle.

The adverse effect on VC expectations of growing GVN/U.S. power was counteracted to some extent by VC propaganda, which continued to stress the political instability of the GVN, the improvements in VC weapons, and the arrival of PAVN troops. The VC were generally aware that they had retained control over areas previously seized by them. VC propaganda sought to conceal defeats and publicize only real or fictitious victories. The interviewees generally asserted their belief that VC tactics were superior to those of their enemies. Though the majority stated that they expected the VC to lose the war, they also thought that the GVN and the United States, in spite of their superiority in numbers and weapons, would find it difficult to defeat the VC and that the war would continue for a long time.

In general, there seems to have been a further decline in the VC's belief that they can win the war by their own efforts and a growing feeling that victory depends increasingly on outside support.

#### THE EFFECT OF THE INCREASED U.S. PARTICIPATION IN MILITARY OPERATIONS

The deployment of U.S. combat forces to Vietnam has radically altered the balance of military power there. It has had an adverse effect on VC morale and expectations of victory. It has strengthened the popular conviction that the VC will eventually be defeated.

Although VC propaganda had reported the deployment, awareness of it varied with the individual's area of operation. All of the interviewees, however, were very much aware of the increase in American air activity. The general feeling among the VC seemed to be that the introduction of American forces would prolong the war and make VC operations more difficult and costly.

The American troop build-up has raised questions among VC soldiers concerning the failure of the other Communist powers to intervene openly in the war. In an attempt to deal with this question the Party last summer explained that, since the Americans had not openly taken over South Vietnam, the conflict remained in the category of "special" rather than "limited war." The statements seemed to imply that "limited war" would call for intervention. Some VC propagandists told the troops that Chinese intervention could lead to a further intensification of the conflict,

which could become nuclear and might result in the destruction of South Vietnam. According to them, the VC leadership wished to avoid such a calamity and refrained therefore from asking Communist China and the Soviet Union for troops. It was said, however, that the U.S. build-up and attacks on North Vietnam justified more open use of PAVN forces in the South, and that if American pressure became too great the National Liberation Front would ask for Chinese and Soviet assistance. Many interviewees indicated that they were not satisfied with these explanations and some cadres said they doubted that either Peking or Moscow would actually help the VC against the Americans.

While the VC appear to have recognized that the U.S. forces have created new and difficult problems for them, their propaganda has sought to play down the significance of the American intervention. This propaganda has stressed all indications of opposition to the war in and outside the United States. For example, a district cadre gave the following description of instructions issued at a Party training course in mid-1965:

One of the main weaknesses (of the Americans) lies in the ever-growing international movement for self-determination in many countries. Taking Cuba and Korea as examples, the instructors showed us that the Americans had failed to vanquish these countries.... The instructors also stressed the "anti-war" movement which is spreading throughout the United States. We were told that all the American students tore up their draft cards to manifest their resentment toward the U.S. government and refused to fight in Vietnam. The instructors told us that one German woman, named Heiga, had burned herself to protest against the American invasion of Vietnam. And, following this example, most American mothers refused to let their sons go to Vietnam to fight.

VC troop indoctrination has tended to describe the American soldiers as soft, unfamiliar with the terrain, and unable to wage effective jungle warfare. However, VC soldiers who had been in contact with U.S. troops noted that, contrary to what they had been told, the U.S. soldiers were more aggressive than ARVN, less likely to pull out when caught in a tight place, and in possession of great fire power. Unlike ARVN, U.S. patrols did not repeatedly follow the same routes and were therefore more difficult to ambush. The interviewees noted, however, that the American soldiers presented larger targets and were so easily

recognizable that the VC did not have to fear infiltration by Americans into VC ranks or the population under their control.

VC propaganda also sought to portray the Americans as oppressors, indifferent to Vietnamese lives and brutal in their treatment of captives, defectors, and civilians. VC soldiers who were interviewed after their capture by American forces and their transfer to ARVN custody, reported that contrary to VC propaganda they were usually well treated by the Americans. Captives and civilians who had observed Americans reported that they behaved well towards the population. The VC leadership may have recognized the importance of giving substance to their propaganda portrait of the Americans. Recent VC killings of American captives and deliberate mutilations of bodies left behind for U.S. soldiers to find, as well as other terroristic activities, may be designed to goad U.S. troops into actions that could be exploited by VC propaganda to deter potential defectors and to discourage fraternization between Americans and Vietnamese civilians.

There is considerable evidence in the interviews that the majority of the VC and a major portion of the population still have no clear understanding of U.S. aims in Vietnam or the reasons for the presence of U.S. combat forces in Vietnam. Most interviewees either repeated VC propaganda, gave their own (often distorted) explanations, or stated that they were at a loss to understand U.S. aims. A number of subjects professed to believe that the United States, as a leader of the free world, was merely defending the Vietnamese people from the threat of Communist take-over; others gave credence to rumors that the United States planned an economic take-over of Vietnam, or that Vietnam would eventually have to pay for U.S. assistance. Misunderstanding extended to local GVN officials, some of whom were charged with the indoctrination of the population and of defectors.

Interviews with civilians in the GVN areas indicated general approval of the presence of American combat forces and the hope that they would bring about a speedy victory. One consequence of the increased American participation in the war seems to be a growing tendency on the part of the population to rely primarily on the United States to solve Vietnam's security, political, economic, and administrative problems.

Even though the GVN forces still carry the brunt of the fighting and suffer the greater share of casualties, there appears to be an increasing tendency among the civilians to view the war as an "American war" and to rely on the United States to defeat the Viet Cong.

The refugees, eager to return to their villages, were reported to welcome pacification by U.S. forces. In the pacified areas, it was said, people seemed generally ready to accept U.S. "control" as part of the price for peace. For example, one former GVN official from a contested hamlet said:

I can assure you that at least 80 per cent of the villagers had confidence only in the Americans for the restoration of peace.

He added that the reason why the villagers did not have the same confidence in the GVN was because the latter "has never talked about peace."

At the same time, the interviews indicated declining confidence in the ability of the GVN to deal effectively with the problems confronting the country.

Not everyone, of course, shared these views. Among the interviewees were some persons who expressed mistrust of the "foreigners," and others who blamed some of the shortages and rising prices on Americans. Several newspapers have published articles accusing American soldiers of various acts of violence and misbehavior towards civilians, and have asked whether American assistance is worth such a price. Some nationalist elements seem concerned that the large U.S. investments in new bases indicate that U.S. forces will remain indefinitely in Vietnam. Others blame the government for its failure to deal with corruption, profiteering, and rising prices. These people welcome a protracted U.S. presence in Vietnam as an insurance against renewed Communist aggression, which they believe to be likely as long as Vietnam remains partitioned. Many of the villagers in areas where American forces have not yet appeared show relatively little awareness of the American presence in the country.

On the whole, the interviews suggest that the morale of the population is closely tied to U.S. actions and policies. It seems evident that the U.S. presence has become critical for ARVN and civilian morale, especially in GVN-controlled areas, and that doubts concerning continued U.S. support while the VC have not yet been defeated could result in a severe and possibly fatal loss of confidence in an eventual GVN victory.

PROBLEMS OF VC RECRUITING AND FORCE COMPOSITION

Recent interviews indicate that the VC have continued their practice of drafting villagers into their forces. The draft (as reported in RM-4699) has had an adverse effect on the morale and combat effectiveness of many VC units and has contributed to the alienation of the villagers from the VC. It has had the further effect of weakening the VC's economic base by withdrawing many able-bodied men from farm work, reducing productivity, and diminishing the yield of taxes collected by the VC.

During the spring of 1965 there seems to have been a tendency to incorporate the draftees directly into the units. The majority of the interviewees reported that the draftees were predominantly cowardly, uninterested in VC aims and indoctrination, and eager to desert. Draftee behavior was said to lower the morale and combat effectiveness of the units. More recently an effort appears to have been made to deal with these adverse effects, at least in Main Force units. Prospective draftees are usually taken for a five-day political pre-induction course before they are called up, so as to build up their morale and explain the reasons for the draft. To maintain the quality of the Main Forces, draftees are frequently first sent to special training centers for extensive training; the best are then selected for service with the Main Forces. The latter also try to use as many volunteers as possible as well as persons with prior service in Local Forces. Even so, the proportion of draftees in the Main Forces is increasing. Guerrillas and Local Forces tend to become training units for the Main Forces. There have been instances of desertion or defection from these units when elements of their personnel were being transferred to the Main Forces, through fear of more intensive combat and a reluctance to leave home areas. Desertion rates in Local Force units that frequently absorb draftees directly were said to continue high and to have seriously affected the combat effectiveness even of veteran battalions.

Interviewed draftees stated that they had wanted to avoid military service with either side, but that if they had to serve they preferred to do so in the ARVN where they were paid and their families received death benefits. The earlier attractions of service in the VC -- that



soldiers remained near their homes; that the probability of survival in the VC was better than in the government forces; that service in the VC brought educational benefits -- were no longer mentioned by recent interviewees.

There has been a tightening of control and discipline in VC units to discourage desertions and to improve control over poorly motivated soldiers. The interviewees report a growing tendency to abuse and punish the soldiers, even for trivial reasons. That such practices have an adverse effect on troop morale is indicated by the fact that criticism is more and more frequently cited even by veteran VC soldiers as a motive for their desertion or defection. It is evident, however, that the VC control methods are effective in keeping a majority of the draftees in the units, although many interviewees claimed that they were predisposed to desert and were seeking a safe way to do so.

Some interviewed Local and Main Force cadres also noted that the VC had increasing difficulties in recruiting new soldiers and in replacing losses. Among the defectors who have surrendered to the GVN in the past six months, a large proportion have been youths 15 to 18 years of age, indicating that the VC have been forced to draft persons below the official minimum draft age. Priority appears to be given to the replacement of losses in Main Force units, so that Local Force units are said to be frequently under strength. Instances were mentioned where companies did not exceed platoon size. There are also reports that the VC have been drafting increasing numbers of women to replace men in various military occupations, such as "technical services," transportation, and administration, and that female armed platoons have been formed in some areas. Some interviewed cadres stated that the sources of VC manpower were drying up; they saw in this the cause of an eventual VC defeat.

#### PROBLEMS OF PERFORMANCE AND MORALE AMONG LOWER RANKING VC CADRES

On the whole, the VC cadre structure appears to be intact. The cadres remain dedicated, well-disciplined, and able to preserve good morale. They are aware that they have a stake in VC victory since they cannot expect to gain similar positions, benefits, or prestige under the GVN. There are indications, however, of changes in the way the lower

cadres are selected and of some deterioration in the quality and performance of lower ranking military and civilian cadres. The interviewees also indicated that the cadres have found it increasingly difficult to implement VC policies at the village level.

In combat units, the lower ranking cadres are no longer always sent to special cadre schools prior to their promotion. In our interviews we now come across squad and even platoon leaders who were drafted, and who were promoted without special training and after serving only a short time. In some cases these cadres, who served in veteran Local Force battalions, had a record of earlier attempts to desert from the VC. Battlefield promotions appear to be more frequent, as the VC are under increasing pressure to find replacements and to provide cadres for newly formed units.

During the summer the VC introduced a "Reduction of Administrative Personnel" program designed to transfer large numbers of civilian cadres to military units. According to the interviews this program has tended to hurt the morale of the civilian cadres, caused a number of them to defect or to refuse to comply with the transfer order, and given rise to factionalism and tensions within the local organization.

The interviewees report some deterioration in the discipline and behavior of local civilian cadres. They mention, more often than before, corruption, favoritism, and mismanagement among the village cadres. The interviews indicate that the Party is not always able to replace unsatisfactory cadres quickly and that their behavior tends further to disillusion the villagers in VC provinces. Corruption and favoritism also have an adverse effect on the attitudes of hamlet guerrillas and VC soldiers, who are asked to defend these cadres and who feel that they and their families deserve more favorable treatment.

The interviews show some evidence of existing and possibly growing tensions and conflicts in civilian cadre organizations in some villages, districts, and even provinces. The available data do not allow us to judge how widespread such conflicts are, but an intensive interview program focused on Dinh Tuong Province revealed a considerable number of instances in various parts of the province, while other interviews indicated the existence of similar conflicts elsewhere in the country. Such

conflicts appear with the formation of cliques that take different positions on policy issues or implementation. There are conflicts between local civilian and military cadre organizations. Some may be due to personality clashes; others appear to result from ideological disagreements. The intensification of military activities and the increasing difficulties that civilian cadres have in carrying out their missions appear to encourage some military cadres to try to dominate the civilian organization. Another source of conflict between the military and civilian cadres is the frequent failure of the latter to provide assistance to the soldiers' families while demanding high taxes and additional labor for the VC. This question is a major source of discontent among VC soldiers and is frequently cited as a motive for their defection. Main and Local Force soldiers are often critical of guerrillas for engaging in terroristic action, provoking air and artillery attacks on the villages, and preventing the families of VC soldiers from leaving for safer areas.

The interviews indicate that local administrative cadres may be becoming increasingly resentful and discouraged by the difficulties they face in carrying out the growing and frequently unrealistic demands of higher administrative organs, and by the criticism they are subjected to when they fail to carry out their assignments. One consequence of this may be a tendency among lower cadres to misinform higher echelons about local conditions and to send them inflated reports of successes. The cadres were also reported to become discouraged at times by the insistence of the VC leadership on policies that alienated the population. There appear to be instances of bad management in some village cadre organizations. In extreme cases, reported in the interviews, the VC authorities went so far as to dissolve a village Party chapter and require every one to reapply for Party membership. It is evident that the strength and effectiveness of local VC organizations vary a great deal from place to place and that some find it very difficult to deal with the problems facing them. Areas where cadre organization is weak present opportunities for pacification.

PROBLEMS ARISING FROM CONTINUING VC DEFECTION AND DESERTION

The number of defections of VC soldiers to the GVN continues to be fairly high and has increased since the spring of 1965. The interviews strongly suggest that the number of VC desertions has continued to exceed that of defections to the government. Those who were questioned stated that the soldiers preferred to desert home even though in most cases their homes were in the VC-controlled areas. They wanted to return to their families and they usually knew that if caught by the VC their punishment would be less severe if they were deserters rather than defectors. Furthermore, most of them seemed uncertain about what treatment to expect from the GVN, and they feared that defection would separate them from their families and expose the latter to VC reprisals.

Many interviewees reported that large numbers of draftees had returned to their villages. Others said that their units, usually Local Force, had a constant turnover of personnel as a result of numerous desertions. A Local Force squad leader said, "the GVN is growing stronger and stronger and the VC is weakening day by day because of the ever increasing number of deserters." Desertions appear to be highest among new recruits, guerrillas, and Local Forces. They are lowest in the Main Forces, possibly because the latter are better indoctrinated, have served longer in the VC, are better disciplined, and often serve further away from their homes. Interviewed VC cadres from various types of units reported that desertions increased after defeats or after units were attacked and mauled by GVN or U.S. ground forces. The VC try to counter this tendency by more intensive political indoctrination after battles, by tighter discipline, and sometimes by moving units further away from their home areas. Most desertions, it seems, occur when the soldiers are in camp, on home leave, or operating in small units on propaganda or food gathering missions. Surrender in combat seems to be very difficult, and is further discouraged by the absence of any GVN promises to those who may be thinking of giving themselves up. VC cadres say they believe their men, even those with poor morale, are most reliable while in combat, when they have no choice but to fight to survive. In general, VC cadres were said increasingly to view their men as potential deserters and to treat them with growing suspicion and severity. This in turn has had an adverse influence on morale.

The major motives for defection and desertion are the hardships of VC life, fear of combat, and deterioration in the economic conditions of the soldiers' families. The last motive appears to be on the rise. The major deterrents to defection are fear of mistreatment by the GVN, the difficulty of escaping from the VC units, fear of VC reprisal against the defector or his family, and inability to return to homes in VC-controlled areas. The prospective defector also fears the confiscation of his land. He is further deterred from breaking away by the possibility that he may be immediately drafted by ARVN.

Information about the GVN defector (Chieu Hoi) program appears to be spreading, especially in the Delta. The interviews indicate, however, that the program is considerably less well known in the I and II Corps areas. PAVN soldiers were usually unaware of its existence.

According to the interviews, Viet Cong soldiers are most inclined to heed appeals that come to them through their families or from defected VC cadres. Leaflets generally seem more effective media of communication than broadcasts from aircraft, which according to interviewees are often inaudible.

#### CLEAVAGE BETWEEN THE VC AND THE POPULATION

The effects on VC morale and operations of the growing cleavage between the Viet Cong and the population are increasingly noticeable. Popular disillusionment tends to follow protracted association with VC fiscal, recruiting, and control policies. Moreover, the VC have failed to keep their promises, to maintain expectations of a VC victory, or to establish security in VC-controlled areas. According to a VC cadre:

The bad thing about the Front is that it cannot keep its promises. It is because of the Front that people die in bombings and fighting, that their families are scattered, their property is damaged, and they cannot till their land. Because of the fact that they cannot till their land, the economic situation (in the rural areas) is deteriorating day by day. In spite of this, the (VC) troop-support tax has become much heavier than before.

The Viet Cong now appear increasingly as ruthless exploiters of the people and as a constant source of danger to them. Control over the villagers is coming more and more to depend on intimidation and terror

rather than on persuasion and voluntary cooperation. Nevertheless, the sporadic appearances of the GVN troops in contested and VC-controlled areas are not enough to give the villagers a sense of security. They tend to be more afraid of VC punishment than of the GVN. Despite their dislike of VC taxes and policies, most of the farmers are reluctant to leave their lands unless their lives are immediately threatened by military activities.

Earlier Viet Cong gains resulting from their land reform and distribution program appear to have been largely wiped out by the additional taxation that the beneficiaries of the land program have had to pay. Interviewees reported that the program often failed to satisfy the poor villagers, and that it aroused resentment among those who lost land or got no benefit from the program. Uncertainties about the outcome of the war and the departure of numerous villagers for GVN-controlled areas appear to have further contributed to reducing the political and psychological impact of VC land reform. According to one district cadre, the Viet Cong seem to have recognized that "the land distribution was a bad policy because it had created turmoil inside each village and had generated discontent." Instances of corruption and favoritism among village and Party cadres in carrying out land distribution have further weakened the program's effects.

There are indications that the villagers tend increasingly to disbelieve VC claims of victories and promises of an early triumph over the GVN. For example, a Local Force platoon leader stated:

Prior to 1964, about 80 per cent of the people believed the news about Front victories. Since the beginning of 1965, the people have been losing confidence in the news, because they can see the Front defeats with their own eyes, and they can see the Front could never defeat the GVN because of all the bombs, ammunition, and equipment the GVN has.

In a statement typical of many other interviewees, the same source said:

The Front has promised a great deal and it has promised great things to the people. But it has failed for a long time now to realize its promises. The Front is deteriorating every day, but each year the Front still maintains "this year is the decisive year." But in reality it cannot decide anything."

Although VC victory claims are often disbelieved, the interviews indicate, the VC are frequently able to keep GVN news from the villagers. Many interviewees indicated that the villagers gave greater credence to "eye-witness" accounts or to reports and rumors from popular sources than to official VC or GVN news. There is evidence that the villager tends to prefer news stories and rumors gathered in the market place, since many of them are allegedly based on impartial, eye-witness reports. Such stories are often brought back to VC-controlled villages by women who are permitted to trade in the markets. Exhibits of captured weapons and photographs of VC dead and captives, it was said, were taken as proof of VC defeats.

Dislike of VC policies and especially growing insecurity in the rural areas have increasingly led the villagers to avoid contact with the VC when possible. The villagers are less inclined than formerly to welcome VC troops; instead they frequently leave the villages when VC soldiers camp in them, or they take temporary or permanent refuge in GVN-controlled areas. Villagers were reported to have dismantled their houses and dispersed to live in shacks built on their paddies. VC cadres said this practice interfered with their control of the population. The VC have threatened the villagers with the loss of their lands if they leave, and this has deterred many from doing so. But the fear engendered by local military activities has often brought the villagers to disregard such threats and to move in a body (sometimes an entire hamlet) to GVN-controlled areas.

The enormous number of refugees embarrasses the Viet Cong, who had insisted that they would win the war because of growing popular support. The VC are finding that the popular "sea" in which they said they must "swim" in order to win is receding. The effects of the departure of large numbers of villagers for GVN areas are beginning to be felt. It is becoming more difficult for them to use the population as a shield against attacks. There are indications that there has been a reduction in the manpower available to the VC for corvee labor, transportation, intelligence, and food production. Most noteworthy is the concern expressed by some cadres that the exodus of the villagers threatens the VC with a major deterioration of their economic base. The interviewed cadres have

reported considerable declines in taxes and rice collected by the VC, and a growing concern among the Viet Cong that later in 1965 their troops would be short of food. An Assistant Local Force squad leader said, "Each person who moves out (of a VC area) will cause one VC to die of hunger." This is obviously an extreme view, but several interviewees reported their units sometimes went hungry when they were unable to buy food because villages were abandoned.

Having ignored the VC's prohibition against leaving, and having risked punishment and the loss of the lands, the refugees tend to expect the GVN to help them. After all, the government encouraged or drove them to leave their homes. When the GVN fails to give the refugees adequate assistance and leaves them with the alternative of starving or returning home to VC vengeance, it embitters them and persuades them that the government is indifferent to their plight. Many refugees find it difficult to understand why the GVN, which they now believe to be stronger than the VC, does not simply re-establish its control over their villages instead of attacking them, whenever it believes the VC to be present, and then withdrawing.



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#### IV. THE BOMBING OF NORTH VIETNAM

The bombing of North Vietnam continues to produce mixed reactions among the VC. Some elements, especially cadres, have come to doubt the strength of North Vietnam and the solidarity of the Communist nations. A number of interviewees expressed concern that the raids would interrupt North Vietnamese support of the Viet Cong and several even claimed to have seen evidence of a decline in the flow of supplies, which they attributed to the raids. A veteran political officer of a Local Force unit said that "the rank and file no longer had faith" in the arrival of supplies from the North.

Most interviewees said that the VC could not fight without the support of North Vietnam, but most also showed relatively little concern over the bombing since it had led neither to the collapse of North Vietnam nor to a crippling loss of supplies. Some believed that the raids had benefited the VC by provoking North Vietnam into openly sending troops to the South. Similar views were also expressed by some civilians who were questioned in urban areas. In general, the VC cadres played down the significance of the raids. The interviews indicated that most VC and civilians in VC-controlled areas obtain information on the raids from Radio Hanoi. Although many VC and civilians believed Hanoi's claim to have shot down a large number of U.S. aircraft, they also noted the ability of the United States to continue the attacks despite the losses and that the U.S. air capability in the South had increased. Many discounted Hanoi's assertions that the raids caused little damage, since their own experience of air attacks led them to the opposite conclusion. To most VC soldiers, however, the attacks on North Vietnam seem very remote. As long as Hanoi claims to be able to hold its own, the raids generate relatively little anxiety.

Interviews with PAVN captives and defectors who had been in North Vietnam after the start of air bombing indicated that the raids had disrupted but not destroyed communications in North Vietnam and that they had severely hampered industrial and agricultural production in some areas. Several sources noted that the prices of some commodities were rising and that in some areas the population tended to spend many

daylight hours in shelters.

The interviews indicated that up to December 1965 at least, U.S. efforts to explain the reasons for the raids to the North Vietnamese population had been largely unsuccessful. Questioned PAVN captives and defectors generally stated that the North Vietnamese population have viewed the raids as acts of unprovoked American aggression and that few have connected them with the presence of PAVN forces in the South or other forms of assistance given to the VC. Some PAVN soldiers expressed great concern over the fate of their families and fear that the population would not be able to enjoy the fruits of ten years of costly economic development.

## V. THE NORTH VIETNAMESE SOLDIER

Interviews with 39 North Vietnamese soldiers indicated that most of them were well indoctrinated and loyal. Most took the view that as North Vietnamese citizens and soldiers they must obey the orders of their government. Many also believed it to be their duty to help liberate the South Vietnamese from American imperialism and capitalist oppression and to unify the country. The great majority of the interviewed PAVN soldiers expressed no important grievances against their government or its policies and seemed generally to be satisfied with living conditions in the North. Only a few said that they had been afraid of going South and did not want to leave their families. There were two reported desertions by PAVN soldiers, one in the North, the other in transit through Laos. It appears that the infiltrators were frequently not told in advance that they were being sent South.

Some of the interviewees voiced various complaints that appear to have had some effect on their morale and that of other PAVN soldiers. They claimed to have suffered great hardships on their way South, saying that they had been short of food and forced to abandon sick comrades. Many had malaria. Other sources mentioned cases of beri-beri among the PAVN soldiers. One defector reported that his unit was attacked by aircraft in Laos. The interviewees said that they found the hardships in the South greater than they had expected and that this tended to demoralize the troops. Many appeared to have been worried that they received no news from home and did not know how their families were faring. Some feared that their families would never find their graves should they be killed. Others noted that, while they had been told that most of the South, except for the cities, was "liberated" by the VC, they were actually operating mostly in the jungle. They did not feel that the situation was as favorable as it had been described to them.

Among those who had seen Vietnamese villages, several mentioned that the villagers' standard of living exceeded their own in the North and consequently felt that DVR propaganda had lied to them. A number of interviewees indicated that the PAVN was inadequately trained for jungle warfare and that the morale of the troops was badly shaken by

high losses and the abandonment of many dead and wounded on the battlefields. Their experiences also suggested that an individual PAVN soldier, when separated from his unit, was more likely than a VC to lose his way and to be unable to fend for himself.

Despite these complaints, most PAVN soldiers appeared to see no option but to go on fighting. Few had heard about the GVN's Chieu Hoi program. Those who had heard of it did not think it applied to the PAVN. Furthermore, they believed that defection would preclude their ever returning to their families and that it could result in reprisals against families.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSIONS

The VC vulnerabilities described above offer opportunities for exploitation that could have a noticeable effect on VC morale and combat effectiveness. In this connection, the following suggestions are offered:

1. The data indicate that air and ground harassment of VC forces is having a considerable effect on VC morale and operations. It seems to us that, where possible, harassment should be further intensified and that even greater use should be made of day and night aerial surveillance and interdiction.

2. Additional indoctrination of U.S. combat forces appears desirable to counter possible VC efforts to provoke the troops into actions that would lend credibility to VC propaganda about American atrocities. Our soldiers should also be better informed about VC psy/war techniques and about the motivations and behavior of the Vietnamese villagers.

3. Further improvements are needed in the content, responsiveness, and levels of effort of psychological warfare. In particular, it seems important to exploit indications of declining VC faith in victory, and the declining support given the VC by the population. Wider publicity should be given to CVN/U.S. successes and the abandonment by the VC of their dead and wounded. Propaganda should place more emphasis on the differences between VC promises and practice, on contrasts between conditions and policies in VC- and CVN-controlled areas, and on the failure of the VC to aid the increasingly impoverished families of VC soldiers. Indications of conflicts and tensions among the VC cadres should be exploited to weaken and disrupt the VC organization and its control.

4. There is an urgent need to provide a credible explanation of U.S. aims in Vietnam and of the role of our combat forces there. More emphasis should be placed on the restoration of peace and security as a primary CVN/U.S. objective in Vietnam.

5. Greater efforts are needed to explain, both to North and to South Vietnam, the reasons for the air attacks on the North. Special psychological warfare programs should be developed, specifically aimed at PAVN soldiers, to exploit vulnerabilities peculiar to those troops and to encourage them to surrender.

6. Chieu Hoi appeals should be designed to overcome the fears of potential defectors. The interviewees themselves have often suggested ways to increase the appeal of the Chieu Hoi program. They have indicated the need for a multiplicity of communication channels and techniques, for timely local exploitation of local developments and of new defectors from the same localities, and for tailoring the appeals to the vulnerabilities of different types of VC personnel. It should be noted that many defectors and captives did not know of the term "Chieu Hoi" or the program it stands for, even though they had heard or read appeals to rally to the GVN. The data indicate the need for a more specific description of the Chieu Hoi program, more intensive exploitation of villagers and refugees as channels for appeals, greater dissemination of Chieu Hoi propaganda in the market places of contested areas, an intensive use of personal appeals by defectors (especially cadres), and more frequent design of leaflets as safe-conduct passes signed by local GVN or ARVN officials. To encourage potential defectors to leave VC ranks it may be desirable to depict defection as a courageous and patriotic act that will benefit the country. More systematic efforts are needed to encourage VC soldiers to desert home and to surrender in battle.

7. In view of the deterrent effect on potential VC defectors and refugees of VC threats to seize and redistribute their lands, consideration should be given to an appropriate policy declaration by the GVN that would reassure such people concerning the future ownership of their property.

8. As part of a program to deny food to the VC, and also to control the movement of refugees, it may be desirable to spray, at least selectively, the crops of villages that have been largely or completely abandoned by the inhabitants.

9. The interviews indicated that the extent of the population controlled by either side is still the principal measure of success or failure in the war. It was by the expansion of their area of control that the Viet Cong gained the manpower and economic base necessary for their operations. Their continuing control of large populated areas counteracts the effect of GVN/U.S. military successes and allows the VC to maintain a hold on large elements of the population and on their own

soldiers. Control of territory and people keeps the VC organization and administrative apparatus largely intact and lends credibility to VC claims of eventual victory.

In the absence of evidence of an effective GVN pacification effort through recovery of territory, the villagers may come to doubt that the GVN is concerned about their fate and that there are other prospects for them besides being bombed and shelled or becoming refugees. The interviews strongly indicate the need for the earliest possible launching of a major pacification campaign, which would not only demonstrate that the GVN is indeed winning the war, but would also hold out the promise of a return of security to the countryside. Every success in recovering territory should be widely publicized to create the image of a GVN moving ahead to re-establish its control and thus offering hope of a return to peace and security in other areas. The GVN refugee program should be geared to the pacification program so as to allow better planning of how to deal with various refugees. It must also be clearly recognized that the existence of a large number of refugees presents a major opportunity to pacify an important segment of the population and this should be taken into account in designing the program.

The interviews indicate that the Viet Cong are facing growing difficulties and that their vulnerabilities may have increased since the spring of 1965. These weaknesses have been offset to some extent by the expansion of the VC forces and the increased infiltration of PAVN units into the South. Although the effectiveness and morale of some civilian cadres, guerrillas, and Local Forces appear to have declined, the Main Forces, despite some deterioration, seem generally to retain good morale and combat effectiveness. The VC organization is still largely intact and capable of controlling and directing large numbers of soldiers and civilians.

In the opinion of a great many interviewees the VC's situation has deteriorated and its prospects have dimmed. Many characterized the present phase as one in which the "VC are losing but the government is not yet winning." It is evident that greater and more effective military, psychological, and civic efforts will be needed to increase pressure on the VC, exploit their vulnerabilities, and expand the area under GVN control so as to make it evident that the GVN is winning the war.

Appendix A

ATTITUDES OF SOME VIETNAMESE REFUGEES:

MAY-OCTOBER 1965

In the course of the interview program, 47 refugees were extensively questioned in various parts of Vietnam. In addition, a dozen other refugees were informally and briefly interviewed in various camps. It is recognized that the refugee problem is very complex and that attitudes and conditions vary from place to place. It is not known to what extent the collected interviews represent the views of major elements among the refugees.

The interviews suggest that the Vietnamese villager sees himself being crushed between two forces. One force, the VC, seems increasingly unable to fulfill his needs and hopes, and oppresses him with ever-growing demands. The other, the government in Saigon, for all its power to attack and sweep through the countryside, has yet to realize his dearest wish -- permanent physical security.

In 1965 the growing insecurity in the rural areas frightened the villager to such an extent that even life in the strategic hamlets became appealing because of the safety they provided from air and artillery attacks and ground sweeps. In retrospect, the refugees see these hamlets as having had only one overriding fault. They too often failed to protect the villager against the Viet Cong. In fact the main charge leveled against the GVN by the interviewees is that after all the trouble and sacrifice caused by Diem's hamlets the government abandoned the villagers to the VC and to the subsequent sweeps and bombardments. The VC's counterpart program of "combat hamlets" evokes little but contempt, hatred, and memories of force labor with no gain in security:

Those obstacles only slowed down the GVN infantry; once GVN aircraft had bombed the place, the GVN forces could move in easily, as if nothing had happened. So the VC only caused the people more hardship (by drawing down air attacks upon them).

On the whole, the central government's image seems to have improved since the fall of Diem. Lacking a charismatic personality, however, it



remains somewhat anonymous. (For example, only 20 per cent of those asked knew Premier Ky's name.) The ARVN forces, like the government itself, seem to have improved their relations with the local population. They have begun to appear a formidable, even overwhelming opponent for the VC. But the local, district, or province leader is still criticized for being distant, inefficient, and even corrupt.

They never let the population know what they were doing. In money matters, they weren't responsible. They spent the village money as they saw fit. When the people asked where the money had gone, they didn't say.... For "the villager's neck is short and his voice cannot carry up to the skies."

Despite the VC's efforts to isolate the population under its control, the interviews indicate that GVN propaganda and psy/war programs reach many villagers. The villager's sources of information include radios, several of which are usually to be found in a hamlet, leaflets, broadcasts from aircraft, VC wall newspapers, less frequently GVN newspapers, and marketplace rumors. The Viet Cong forbid listening to Radio Saigon. Violators are threatened with confiscation of their radios and banishment to political re-education centers. Nevertheless, this prohibition seems to be often ignored by the villagers, who are addicted to Saigon's "folk" and "reformed" opera:

- Q. Did you listen to Radio Saigon?  
A. They tuned in to Saigon and listened to "Cai Luong" (reformed opera).  
Q. Did the VC prohibit listening to Radio Saigon?  
A. They did, but people still listened to it.... Everybody wanted to listen. Who would have the heart to report it to the VC?

Far more important than such petty restrictions, the VC has become for most refugees an oppressor and a source of personal danger. While most interviewees acknowledged that VC troops behaved well in the villages, they did not say this of VC civilian cadres. The recent development of an undisguised, systematic, compulsory draft has tarnished the VC's claims of voluntary popular support, has alienated hitherto uncommitted families, and has disillusioned those who had been led by VC propaganda to seek refuge from GVN military service in VC areas. The increase in taxes, even for poor farmers, to levels far above that of the GVN has undermined the villager's confidence in VC

promises and led him to view the VC as another and more ruthless oppressor:

I was excused from paying taxes to the GVN. But the VC forced me to pay them contributions that were too heavy for me.

People in neighboring hamlets had to contribute to the VC in increasing amounts. Formerly, they contributed from 20 to 25 per cent of their earnings but lately they have contributed as much as 60 per cent. This was too much.

The tax increase has also undercut the VC's attempt to win the farmers' support by instituting land distributions. The gift of a ricefield is becoming merely a step toward crippling taxes and indebtedness. Consequently the villager is finding the VC slogans much less inspiring than before. In fact, a general loss of confidence in VC propaganda can be detected. The monotonous claims of complete victories have gone on too long, so that market-place gossip and peasant commonsense have had time to act as a counterbalance and corrective:

I don't think the people believed all that the VC told them. In every battle...there are bound to be some dead on both sides. It was impossible that no VC soldier was killed.

While the villager, as one would expect, has little understanding of the military situation, he judges the progress of the war largely by observable events in his immediate area. In the past the Viet Cong appeared to him the superior force and the probable victor in the war because it not only seized control of his hamlet but also seemed able to expand its forces and defeat and drive back the ARVN. In 1965, however, this situation has changed. The villager now sees more air and ground activities by the GVN and the U.S. forces, less evidence of VC gains, and some indications of growing VC losses. Most villagers, though aware of greater U.S. participation in the war, appear not to have seen American troops before taking refuge in GVN-controlled areas. Their first-hand knowledge of American combat participation appears so far to have been limited to air attacks. As one would expect, the effects of these attacks have been pronounced. Almost all the more recent interviews indicate that the attacks have disrupted the VC's military action and many of its social programs, including group propaganda sessions. Since combat hamlets and ten-foot-deep tunnels

afford no protection against B-52s, the villager sees no choice but to leave for the greater security of GVN-controlled areas.

Those who have had contact with Americans usually see the U.S. presence in Vietnam as supplementary to the role of the GVN and ARVN. Most of the refugees interviewed seemed to distinguish clearly between the Americans and the former French colonialists. Frequently mentioned as American characteristics were: assistance to the Vietnamese people and government, kindness to children, and great wealth that eliminated the need to resort to colonialism. Nevertheless, the refugees showed no clear understanding of American aims in Vietnam. They seemed vulnerable to VC or nationalist rumors that have blamed the Americans for shortages, rising prices, and other economic problems.

The bombing of North Vietnam, while reinforcing the villager's image of growing GVN/U.S. power, does not appear to have had a major effect on his attitude. Among those who seemed strongly opposed to the Viet Cong, the bombing produced some satisfaction that the "enemy" too was suffering damage:

Before the bombings, each side stayed home in peace. I couldn't tell who was going to win. But now the people of the North can no longer stay home in peace.

The interviews suggest that resentment over air and artillery bombardment of villages is predominantly directed at the Viet Cong, whose actions or presence are regarded as having provoked the attacks:

The guerrillas always fired one or two shots to provoke the GVN, which brought bombers or artillery on the village, and then ran away letting the people bear the consequences.

Where resentment is directed against the GVN-American air forces, one of two complaints constantly recurs. The first is that an attack was launched on an area vacated by VC units:

I believe the GVN wanted to kill the VC in the village. But as I've told you, these bombardments didn't kill the VC because they were already gone. Only the people were killed.

The second complaint is that insufficient warning was given to the population. Leaflets and aerial broadcasts customarily warn the villagers of an impending attack and advise them to move to nearby GVN-controlled areas. Where such warnings were given, they have been

accepted gratefully, the more so as they were frequently accompanied by promises of government assistance to those who left their homes:

Under the French regime there were also ferocious air strikes but the government didn't call on the people to evacuate. Now people dare to come here because the government has called to them.

Others were less fortunate:

The GVN has never warned us of its bombardments. If we'd known in advance that our village was going to be bombed, we all would have gone to take refuge in the fields, which would have saved us from being killed or wounded.

Where advance warning was given, casualties were regarded as the fault of the loiterers:

Planes had dropped leaflets...asking the people to leave their hamlets. It was because they hadn't left the hamlets that they had to suffer damage. It was their fault.

Most interviewees gave more than one motive for taking refuge. Most frequently mentioned was the fear of being killed in military operations. As a typical refugee put it: "We were afraid of death. We came to the GVN side because we wanted to live." It is notable that so many refugees identify the government with the hope of survival. After years of territorial expansion and promises, the VC seem less able now than ever to offer physical security to villagers within their control. Less frequently mentioned than fear of bombs and guns, but quite common, were two other motives -- the GVN's evacuation orders promising aid to refugees, and a desire to escape VC policies and control.

Far and away the most commonly mentioned deterrents to flight were the fear of starvation and the expected loss of land and property, which the VC threaten to seize as a punishment for leaving the village. Many of the interviewees who left their villages earlier in 1965 mentioned fear of VC reprisals, such as imprisonment, forced labor, and even death. Some refugees try to retain possession of their land and to earn a living by periodically returning to their villages to plant or harvest crops. When confronted by a VC demand to choose between staying in the village and going to the GVN-controlled area, many choose the latter because they refuse to endure life under the threat of attacks.

The movement of villagers back and forth between their homes and refugee camps serves to inform those who have remained in the villages concerning conditions in the camps and the GVN's record in carrying out its promises to assist the refugees. When cases of the failure of assistance are reported, potential refugees are discouraged from coming out. They may even feel that they have no alternative but to endure the attacks.

While VC attempts to prevent villagers from leaving were partly effective when only individual families sought to take refuge in the GVN-controlled area, their control over the villagers has tended to break down when the farmers decided to leave in a body. As one refugee put it: "The VC forbade everybody to leave. But when people moved noisily in a body, how could the VC prevent them from leaving?" Though the VC's threats of physical punishment have abated as the refugee flow has grown, their declared policy of permanent land confiscation has continued. Several of the more recent interviewees, however, have stated that even this threat was not made by the local VC authorities of their areas: "They (the VC) said the people could go or stay -- it didn't make any difference to them."

This change may indeed reflect a shift in VC policies. An interviewed VC district cadre reported that he and other cadres had protested to higher echelons against the policy of forcing the villagers to choose between staying or permanently leaving for GVN-controlled areas. Aside from the humiliation of not being able to prevent the departure of large numbers of villagers, these cadres felt that by their intransigent attitude the VC were losing good will as well as revenue, since the villagers were precluded from returning to their land once they had left it.

The interviews give no indication that the Viet Cong have deliberately sought to burden the GVN with large numbers of refugees so as to create insoluble social and economic problems and to ensure the eventual return of a disappointed population into the VC fold.

The refugee problem is far from solved. Only a small minority of the interviewees admit having regularly received even the subsistence aid promised by the government. Many say they have received no aid whatsoever since their arrival, up to seven months before being interviewed. Many local GVN administrators have refused to assist those whom

they labeled as "VC families." Even so, most of the interviewees displayed confidence in the government's eventual fulfillment of its promises: "I think, if we haven't received anything so far, it is because the circumstances haven't allowed them to keep their word yet."

Other common complaints concern a shortage or absence of housing, medical services, and sanitation facilities. Most refugees have no idea what the GVN proposes to do with them or how they will be integrated into the economy so as to earn their living.

There was near-unanimity among the interviewees concerning their hopes for the future. Almost every one expressed an urgent wish that his village be pacified as quickly as possible. Yet no matter how strong the yearning for home and land, well over 90 per cent refused even to consider returning until they could be secure from bombs, shells, and sweeps:

I don't dare go back to the village now. I'll wait until the government has pacified the area and there is complete security before I go back to the village.

Our most ardent wish is to be able to go back to the village. We will continue to work and then we won't need government assistance.... But first, we have to settle the question of security, and in this matter the people rely on the government to defend them.

A few stated that if subsistence aid continued to be denied them, they would have to return home, VC or no.

A small number of refugees were willing to speculate about how long the war will last. Their estimates ranged from "a few months" to "forever," with the majority guessing "a long time." The apparent optimists explained their predictions by saying the country could not endure much more war. Most expected an eventual GVN victory, usually because of the government's vastly superior weapons and supplies. But a few confessed to having believed otherwise as recently as early 1965. Reasons mentioned for doubting a GVN victory included the VC's territorial expansion, its clever guerrilla tactics, and its disciplined ruthlessness: "They will cut your throat at once!"

Some refugees phrased their predictions cautiously:

I don't think the Americans and the GVN will be defeated by the VC.

Others, like one 62-year-old farmer, displayed fatalistic resignation:

I just want peace, so I can move back to my village....  
The people want peace, but since that can't be, they have to make do with the way things are.

Still others, like one 54-year-old woman, displayed an apolitical impatience that probably typifies a great number of refugees:

Q. Who do you hope will win?

A. Anyone -- just so we can live and work in peace.

On the basis of a small number of interviews, it seems that the government has an opportunity to win the gratitude and support of large numbers of refugees if it can give them physical security and an opportunity to make a decent living. The sooner the GVN can fulfill the refugees' hope of returning to secure homes, or at least can demonstrate a capability of pacifying the rural areas, the greater will be the refugees' faith in, and support of, the government, and the greater their readiness to endure present hardships.

Appendix B

Table 1

CLASSIFICATION OF 113 INTERVIEWS BASED ON THE GENERAL QUESTIONNAIRE COMPLETED BY NOVEMBER 30, 1965

	General Distribution								
	Prisoners			Defectors			Total Sample		
	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total
Cadres	47	10	42	47	13	55	64	32	116
Rank and File	50	70	86	81	13	94	140	33	182
Suspected	3	9	12	--	--	--	1	9	12
Other*	3	--	3	--	--	--	3	--	3
Total	116	60	104	123	26	149	239	74	313

\* Three North Vietnamese shipwrecked in South Vietnam during a supply mission to a North Vietnamese island.

NOTE: The Viet Cong use the term "cadre" to designate persons holding ranks of assistant squad leader or above. Cell leaders have been included in the rank and file.

Table 2

RECRUITS

(Included in totals in Table 1 above)

	Military	Civilian	Total
Cadres	23	3	26
Rank and File	3	1	6
Total	26	4	34

Table 3

NORTH VIETNAMESE

(Included in totals in Table 1 above)

	Prisoners			Defectors			Combined Totals
	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total	
Cadres	10	0	10	3	0	3	12
Rank and File	17	0	17	9	1	10	27
Total	27	0	27	12	1	12	39

NOTE: Seven of the interviewees are from the PAVN 125th Division: four prisoners and three defectors. Of these seven, only one prisoner was a cadre; the remainder were rank and file. Four of the nine rank and file military defectors deserted in South Vietnam while en route to their unit.

Table 4

DISTRIBUTION BY CORPS OPERATIONAL AREAS OF THE INTERVIEWEES

	I Corps			II Corps			III Corps			IV Corps		
	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total
Cadres	20	5	24	21	9	30	16	5	21	22	22	33
Rank and File	20	1	21	41	10	51	32	9	41	44	11	55
Total	37	6	43	62	19	81	48	14	62	66	33	88

NOTE: In addition 3 suspects were interviewed in I Corps area, 0 in II Corps area, and 1 in IV Corps area; and 2 new recruits and 1 shipwrecked North Vietnamese were interviewed.



Table 3  
DISTRIBUTION BY DATE OF CAPTURE OR RALLY FOR THE MONTHS OF JUNE TO OCTOBER 1965

Month of Capture/Rally	Prisoners					Defectors			Combined Totals
	New Recruit	Suspect	Military	Civilian	Total	Military	Civilian	Total	
June	1	1	3	1	6	3	1	4	10
July	1	2	6	3	10	6	1	7	17
August	0	0	6	0	6	3	2	5	11
September	0	0	3	0	3	6	3	9	12
October	0	0	2	3	5	6	0	6	11
Total	2	3	22	7	34	30	7	37	71

NOTE: (1) The June suspect interviewed was captured in IV Corps area, the 2 July suspects in I Corps area. (2) Four of the 3 October military ralliers were infiltrators from North Vietnam who rallied before joining their unit in the South.

Table 4  
DISTRIBUTION BY MILITARY ASSIGNMENTS AND DATE OF CAPTURE OR DEFECTION<sup>a</sup>

	Main Force <sup>b</sup>				Local Force				Guerrillas			
	Captured or Defected				Captured or Defected				Captured or Defected			
	(1) On or before 1/30/65	(2) Between 1/30 to 5/31/65	(3) After 5/31/65	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)	(1)	(2)	(3)	(4)
Cadres	21	8	11	64	9	12	5	26	6	7	0	13
Rank and File	24	19	11	64	14	18	3	35	12	25	8	45
Total	45	27	22	128	23	30	8	61	18	32	8	58

<sup>a</sup>Not included are 6 new recruits who had not yet been assigned to specific units.

<sup>b</sup>Main Force does not include Provincial Mobile Main Force Units that were classified as Local Force.

Table 5  
BREAKDOWN OF INTERVIEWEES CAPTURED OR DEFECTED  
BETWEEN 1/30 AND 5/31 AND AFTER 5/31/65

	Prisoners						Defectors						Combined Totals	
	Military		Civilian		Total		Military		Civilian		Total			
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Cadres	12	11	8	3	20	14	15	9	3	2	18	11	38	25
Rank and File	27	11	6	4	33	15	30	21	8	5	41	26	79	41
Suspects	---	---	3	3	5	3	---	---	---	---	---	---	5	3
Total	39	22	17	10	56	32	53	30	11	7	64	37	122	69

(1) Between 1/30 and 5/31/65.  
(2) After 5/31/65.

Table 6  
REGROUPING AND PARTY NUMBERS CONTAINED  
IN ABOVE COMBINED TOTAL

	Pages/pers					
	Military		Civilian		Total	
	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)	(1)	(2)
Cadres	5	5	1	2	6	7
Rank and File	1	0	1	0	2	0
Total	6	5	2	2	8	7

(1) Between 1/30 and 5/31/65.  
(2) After 5/31/65.

END

DATE  
FILMED

1-77