

CHAPTER VII

Observations and Conclusions

The Importance of Territorial Security

In spite of their low profile and the absence of front-page press reports, activities designed to maintain territorial security proved no less important than the large-scale search-and-destroy operations conducted during the Vietnam war. These activities contributed significantly to the joint RVN-U.S. war effort.

From hindsight, to counter the kind of warfare purported by the enemy to be a "people's war", the conventional search-and-destroy approach was not enough to ensure durable success and to solve the problems of insurgency. The dual nature of the Vietnam conflict which combined subversive activities with outright aggression apparently required that territorial security be established and maintained as a primordial condition for stabilization and national viability. To achieve this, it was essential that we suppress terrorism, sabotage, and other disruptive activities that enemy guerrillas and infrastructure elements waged at the grassroots level, the village and hamlet.

The Communist approach to warfare sought first and foremost to cripple our ability to resist, by inflicting damage and losses to the people living under our control and destroying our national resources. Their method of "liberating" the rural areas, one of the major goals of Communist strategy, was to sabotage our lines of communication and wreck our bridges, interdicting our access and denying our control. Then they gained control by dissolving our social and administrative

structure, using violence and terror to reduce our people to silence and submission. They turned villages and hamlets thus subdued into fortifications and constantly strived to expand control into populated areas by the same process. To regain control, we were forced to employ military strength which further wrought havoc to civilian properties and local resources, and thus played into the enemy's scheme.

Against this putrefying process, it was obvious that South Vietnam should have had a strong organization for territorial security and control from the very beginning. Even though this organization might not have been able to eradicate insurgency, at least it could have limited its expansion and devastating effect. The sad fact was that once their houses, gardens and ricefields, most of which had been inherited through generations of hard toil, had been destroyed, there was absolutely nothing that could attract or attach the people to a new village, much less to cause them to defend it. The GVN did make significant efforts to rebuild or rehabilitate the villages ravaged by war, but somehow the lost faith was hard to restore. In the process, our country also incurred heavy expenditures, not to mention the great sacrifice in human lives and lost time.

From the onset of insurgency in 1959 until 1966-67 when the American force build-up helped regain some measure of stability, about half of South Vietnam's rural areas were severely devastated. During that time, countless prosperous villages and fertile lands were turned into guerrilla bases which nurtured and sheltered the enemy, making security and pacification difficult and sometimes almost hopeless.

A strong, effective, territorial control system, therefore, would have served a double purpose: it would have protected the population against subversion and provided support for military activities. To a significant degree, the performance of our tactical units depended on the efficiency of that support. Without local intelligence, guides, traffic security, etc., it would be difficult for combat units to

achieve success in the accomplishment of their missions. While regular units - the division, regiments, battalions - could always rest and recuperate during periods of relative lull, the territorial forces could not afford that luxury. They were perennially engaged in the small war with round-the-clock search operations, security patrols and the task of protecting urban centers and lines of communication within their areas of responsibility.

As counter-insurgency grew into total, all-out war beginning in 1968 and pacification efforts gained in momentum, our territorial security system played an even more important role. It was this system that provided the means for the effective use and coordination of national resources for the implementation of military, political, economic, and social programs designed to fight the total war. Throughout the major periods of the Vietnam conflict, therefore, the territorial system always performed a primordial role and was aptly regarded as the mainstay of the war machinery.

The RF and PF Soldier

The forces that constituted the backbone of this territorial security system were the RF and PF, both locally recruited and employed although differently organized, trained, and equipped. The men who made up these forces were, for the most part, rural peasants accustomed to hard manual labor, enduring and resilient to hardship, pragmatic, and possessing an extensive knowledge about life and work in nature.

As individuals, the RF and PF soldiers were basically good-natured, decent, kind and well-disposed toward other people. In a deterministic sense, they accepted war as their fate and were resigned to hardship and even death which they faced with unequalled impassivity. They fought the war with patience and perseverance, meeting each challenge and facing the enemy with self-control. As a result, during the

war years, they always suffered considerably more losses than the regular forces, even during the periods when ARVN conducted large-scale operations such as the cross-border campaigns of 1970 and 1971. During 1970, for example, the RF and PF incurred 15,783 losses compared to the ARVN's 5,602; during 1971, RF and PF losses reached 17,750 against 4,232 for the ARVN. For the period of most intense fighting, 1968-1972, the aggregate total of RF and PF losses was 69,291 or about twice the ARVN total of 36,932.

In spite of these terrible losses, the RF and PF still accounted for the largest number of volunteers serving in the RVNAF during the entire war. Within their ranks many were senior citizens, one, PF trooper Nguyen Van Moi of Duc Long District, in Chuong Thien Province, reaching the incredible age of 70. In 1971, Mr. Moi was awarded two medals, one was American, for gallantry in combat action. He was cited as one of MR-4's outstanding combatants for that year.

Because of their scattered deployment to remote rural areas, the RF and PF soldiers were always in a position to be poisoned by enemy propaganda. In fact, the VC proved particularly adept at proselyting South Vietnamese servicemen, which was one of their three major strategic efforts. This effort was generally directed against the RF and PF but the enemy did not succeed in subverting these forces. The single instance of unit disintegration ever reported among the RF and PF occurred in Hoai An District of Binh Dinh Province - a long-established Communist stronghold - during the 1972 Easter Invasion, but it was an unconfirmed report since this area was never retaken afterwards. However, individual cases of desertion or defection did occur, sometimes involving two or three or even five in one unit at the same time. RF and PF deserters amounted to only one-fifth of the ARVN total and most of them rejoined their families rather than enemy ranks, for obvious reasons of deep attachment or economic demands.

The enemy had only one way to subvert the RF and PF. He constantly tried to plant his own agents by infiltration through recruitment channels.

Working inside a RF or PF unit, these agents sought to destroy the organization, combining their actions with an attack from the outside. They would furnish intelligence information to the VC before the attack; they might also prepare the way by killing sentries and would often throw explosives or grenades into the command and weapons bunkers during the attack. They rarely succeeded in proselyting their fellow-troopers or making them turncoats through persuasion alone. Fifth-columnist actions worked for sometime, especially among isolated outposts of the Mekong Delta, but they became rare after a new ID card system was instituted for all citizens of South Vietnam, military and civilian alike.

In a war situation in which agents of the enemy infrastructure lived mixed with the people, identification was a difficult problem, especially for members of regular units which did not stay in the same geographical area very long. The presence of the RF and PF soldier in rural areas, therefore, became a necessity. Recruited and trained to serve in his hometown or home village, he was naturally entirely familiar with the local environment. His detailed knowledge of the local terrain and people was even better than that of a VC agent operating in the area. The RF or PF soldier knew in detail all the back alleys of the hamlet, every household living in it, even individual members of each household, and the pattern of their lives. He knew who lived in each house, who owned the ricefields, how much rice each household consumed and which household had a relative working for the VC. He also knew who among the villagers to ask for information and what kind of information to be expected from each. What would have passed unnoticed by a regular soldier could be of particular interest to the RF or PF soldier. He could even instinctively open fire on an enemy or group of enemy passing by who would otherwise not appear much different from other people. A regular soldier might have let them pass out of indifference or, if the strangers were suspicious enough to warrant an identity check, would have noticed nothing peculiar to confirm them as enemy. Such insights were the hallmark of the RF and PF soldier. Living in close proximity to nature, he was extremely sensitive to minute changes in the environment, changes that only he knew to have occurred because they upset the natural order. As a

consequence, well concealed mines, booby traps, or enemy hideouts usually could not escape the sharp eye of the RF and PF soldier.

The general evaluation of RF and PF effectiveness was usually good. This was the consensus among U.S. units which had the opportunity to associate with both regular and territorial forces. Usually, U.S. commanders much preferred to work with RF and PF units whose virtues and special abilities they also extolled. In terms of missions, command structure, training, and equipment, there was a marked disparity between the regular and territorial forces, a disparity caused by priorities. Yet, in terms of performance and achievements, the underdog RF and PF seemed to fare much better. The major advantage enjoyed by the RF and PF, an advantage that more than compensated for their inferiority in training and armament, was their undisputed knowledge of the local environment and local people. The ARVN units which were unattached to any particular area, did not have that knowledge. More importantly, motivation was what contributed most to the effectiveness of the RF and PF and accounted for their high achievements. This motivation was not artificial; it was a matter of life or death for someone who had to defend his own family and his own village.

The local character of the territorial forces made them particularly fit for the maintenance of security and pacification tasks. Their methods of operation also suited the purposes of local governments. In those villages and hamlets whose security and control needed to be restored, no local authorities would want fierce battles fought with artillery and air support. Not only were these actions generally inefficient against local enemy guerrillas, the use of firepower was also a major cause of concern for the villagers. When a conventional approach was used against bands of enemy guerrillas, it tended to multiply their numbers rather than eliminate them effectively; this of course made the pacification task even more difficult. From my experience, I believe that most province or district chiefs would rather have a few additional RF companies than an ARVN battalion for this type of operation.

To fight an insurgency war, it is essential for any government to win the people's support and to enlist their cooperation. Whether this can be achieved depends a great deal on the popular attitude toward the governmental troops who protect the population against insurgents. Therefore, rapport with the people was an important yardstick to measure not only the GVN's success but also the popularity and effectiveness of the RF and PF. If this rapport was good, cooperation would increase, local authorities would benefit from additional intelligence sources, and the villagers would also be reluctant to give the enemy support. Over the years, the attitude of the South Vietnamese people and of local spiritual and political leaders was in general favorable toward the RF and PF. For one thing, in addition to a good rapport with locals, the RF and PF, unlike some unruly ARVN units that occasionally swept through the locality, rarely committed mischievous acts against their own friends and relatives.

Terrain and the people are two decisive factors in an anti-guerrilla or counter-insurgency war. In South Vietnam, the terrain was highly diverse; it was made up of well-defined areas, each with its own geographical features. There were mountainous and jungle-covered plateau, vast alluvial plains, and inundated swamps, each inhabited by different ethnic groups with different customs and manners. All of these people were bound by the same attachment to their own habitats. The Communists took advantage of this terrain diversity to establish numerous mini-bases, dependent on the local people for survival and growth. Under such circumstances, it was not easy for any regular army unit to detect and identify the enemy. Therefore, the concept of employing a military force made up of local people who were intimately familiar with the local environment and local population proved to be a truly appropriate response to Communist insurgency.

Evolving Problems

In spite of the importance of territorial security throughout

the war, South Vietnamese and American authorities never seemed to place enough emphasis on it. Territorial security was almost neglected during the initial stage. From 1955 to 1960, all efforts and resources were devoted to the build-up of anti-invasion capabilities with only token concern about security matters. A long and valuable time was thus irretrievably lost in the effort to consolidate territorial security, especially at the infrastructure level, the village and hamlet. During this period, subversion and insurgency were yet to be recognized as a serious threat in the eyes of South Vietnam's political and military leaders and U.S. authorities.

Not until 1961 did they realize that the effective defense of South Vietnam required not only anti-aggression but also anti-insurgency capabilities. And not until then, as a result, was the military assistance program extended to the territorial forces. And even then, these forces were placed far below regular forces in the order of priorities; they were regarded as auxiliary and less expensive troops. As a matter of fact, the cost of maintaining one regular soldier was two or three times greater than one RF soldier and four times greater than a PF soldier.

By 1967, U.S. forces had made significant gains in driving VC/NVA forces deep into the remote jungles and into their sanctuaries across the border. Regular ARVN units assumed the pacification mission in the cleared areas and the territorials still were relegated to minor security and supporting roles. It was not until the U.S. interest in advising and supporting the territorials began to have an effect in late 1968 that definite improvements in RF/PF performance could be seen.

The RF and PF received more interest in 1968 and 1969 and as U.S. units began to stand down and redeploy. This was in fact dictated by the need to free ARVN forces from their static role so that they could assume the primary combat responsibility in the place of U.S. forces. As the ARVN gradually took over search-and-destroy operations, the role of the RF and PF was also upgraded to that of pacification support, a role just relinquished by the ARVN. At this time the RF and PF began to expand in force structure with a rather high priority but still second in terms of manpower and logistic support. Concurrently, more advisory

effort was devoted to improving territorial force units. Still, U.S. advisers assigned to work with the territorial system accounted for only 11% of the total advisory strength.

The development of the RF and PF was never based on any clear-cut, long range concept. Except for the PF which remained essentially platoon-based, the RF underwent several organizational changes, progressing by hesitant steps from company to company group, then to battalion, and finally tactical group. Because there was no coherent long range plan, each of these steps was a creature of the moment, of the particular phase and character of the conflict at the time. As the leadership, American and Vietnamese alike, perceived new or modified requirements for territorial forces, decisions were made to change organizations and strengths to cope with these requirements. The commanders and staffs responsible for implementing the changes did their best to repond, but the results were often disappointing because sufficient time for recruiting, equipping, and training had not been available. As a consequence, the RF appeared to be constantly in a state of organizational confusion which made command and control very difficult.

A major structural weakness, the RF and PF command and control system was a loose assemblage of unconnected parts which never functioned cohesively. Their logistic support system also suffered from the same structural problem. Even after consolidation and improvement, sector administrative and logistic support centers were cumbersome, inefficient; their responsibilities were never clearly defined. Rarely, if ever, was a RF or PF soldier or even an officer able to fully understand his own system.

To an army unit, in addition to duty and dedication to the national cause, tradition and uniforms were also significant elements of motivation. Because of their heterogeneous nature, the RF and PF never had a tradition or distinctive uniform which made them look and feel proud like the airborne, marine or infantry soldiers. Their virtues were seldom extolled and their accomplishments usually slighted. This evaluative misconception seemed to derive basically from prejudice coupled with a nearsighted tendency to measure results only by body count and weapons captured. Most Vietnamese citizens, especially the city-dwellers were unable to realize

that such achievements as hamlets pacified, the number of people living under GVN control, or the trafficability on key lines of communication were possible largely due to the unsung feats of the RF and PF.

Compared to search-and-destroy operation, territorial security activities were immensely more complex. ARVN regular units had a clear-cut mission: to destroy the enemy. The RF and PF, by contrast, were employed to perform a multitude of different tasks, depending on local requirements. These requirements were truly burdensome, and often demanded too much of the RF and PF. Routinely, the RF and PF were required to look after security for the village and hamlet, the district, the province, military installations, industrial areas, and for lines of communication. They were also sometimes tasked to conduct search-and-destroy operations, to serve as quick reaction strike forces against enemy-initiated actions, and to participate in civic-action activities. In addition to these tasks, they had to carry out countless chores related to official (and private) business at the discretion and upon orders of local authorities, civilian or military. In brief, the RF and PF were an instrument that the government used to meet every imaginable kind of requirement, from combat to incidental details. Obviously, the overworked RF and PF units became weary and less vigilant no matter how enduring they might be. And since demands always seemed to surpass the number of units available, the RF and PF rarely had the chance to rest, recuperate, or undergo refresher training.

In addition to shortcomings caused by an unsound structure and erroneous employment, the territorial forces also had inherent weaknesses. The RF and PF soldier, being locally born, possessed certain innate qualities and a knowledge of local environment that few other soldiers could duplicate. But he was less resourceful and less audacious when faced with the unexpected. Subservient by nature, he submitted himself completely to his superiors. Conditioned by local habits and the local way of life, he was oriented toward rigid "formality", or "procedures" more than expediency or results. The average RF and PF soldier had only a vague notion of emergency to which he attached neither value nor importance. To him, it hardly mattered whether a task should be performed in 12 instead of 24 hours or whether it should be done today

or tomorrow. When he was tired, rest was the only thing that mattered; what remained to be done could always wait. Three months at a training center did little to change this inherent easy-going manner.

Command and control of the RF and PF were also heavily influenced by local politics. Because of the need to enlist popular support, local governments usually showed obsequious deference to influential religious and political leaders in their areas. In certain provinces of the Mekong Delta's eastern and western zones, the GVN usually appointed province and district chiefs from among the Hoa Hao and Cao Dai followers in order to obtain the support and cooperation of these religious sects. These appointments had to be approved by their leaders. The same practice occurred in those areas of MR-1 where the Dai Viet and VNQDD were influential. It followed that many RF and PF cadres had been promoted or reassigned in this way.

Despite political expediency, this practice degraded the authority of local governments and adversely affected the discipline of RF and PF units. In several instances, it was also at the source of corruption and crimes. Such debilitating vices as "ghost", or "ornamental" soldiers, and crimes as harboring deserters or draft evaders, etc. occurred more frequently because of protection available.¹ The law required severe punishment for these vices and crimes but was rarely enforced appropriately. Local authorities found myriad ways to bypass the law, or just looked the other way, anxious not to offend the influential personalities who protected the culprits.

During the period I served as MR-4 commander (1970-1972), I found that the RF and PF were very effective and they played a primordial role in the maintenance of security and pacification within this region. To appropriately exploit the valuable potential of these forces, I was

¹"ghost" soldiers were those whose names appeared on the unit's pay ledger and were paid each month but did not really exist. In general, they were all deserters or deceased. "Ornamental" soldiers were those who did nothing useful for the unit. Most were recommended by local personalities to serve as office boys or house servants for high ranking officers in cities, to avoid combat duties. Coming mostly from wealthy families, they did not care who took their monthly pay.

determined to keep them well-disciplined in addition to providing special care, because I firmly believed that discipline made the strength of any army. As a matter of priority, therefore, I launched successive campaigns to eradicate the vices of "ghost" and "ornamental" soldiers, and to track down deserters and draft evaders. All these efforts were made with determination, without regard to frictions or fear of offending anyone. Unfortunately, while these campaigns were making excellent progress, a directive from the office of the Prime Minister told me to suspend them at once, including the tracking down of deserters. The only explanation offered to me was that, in the view of local personalities, such activities would adversely affect the next rice harvest (and possibly the next presidential election as well).

I have presented some of the typical problems that plagued the territorial system and the forces which constituted its backbone. These problems indicate that as long as there were too many exceptions and irregularities, the government could not effectively rule by law, and military discipline and control could not be maintained. This was precisely what lay at the root of the weaknesses in our territorial forces.

Conclusions

Although they were besieged by complex problems, the RF and PF did succeed in the performance of their role. Territorial security and pacification constantly improved and the RF and PF themselves, also made remarkable progress. During the last few years of the war, the territorial forces proved particularly strong despite repeated Communist military and proselyting assaults. They became, eventually, the redoubtable nemesis of enemy local guerrillas and infrastructure cadre.

To the problem of insurgency in South Vietnam, however, the RF and PF alone were not the solution. Given their organization and mission, RF and PF performance depended primarily on the effectiveness

of the regular units which provided the protective shield against invading forces. When this shield was solid, the RF and PF could easily defeat adversaries of the same size. But when enemy main force units succeeded in penetrating this shield in large numbers, there was no way the RF and PF, with their limited capabilities, could defend themselves. Unfortunately, this happened often in South Vietnam because geographical configuration and terrain were not conducive to effective defense against infiltration.

The people's organization for self-defense also had a direct bearing on RF and PF performance. In villages and hamlets where the people were well organized and para-military forces functioned effectively, the task of territorial forces was much easier. However, competent authorities at the grassroots level were few and the majority of village chiefs did not have strong leadership to coordinate the para-military forces and rally the people for the support of local security.

During the war years, MACV and the Vietnamese leadership both made constant efforts to make the RF and PF more effective and efficient. Many ideas were suggested and many approaches were tested. The consolidation and simplification of the command structure within the RVNAF, and the centralization of advisory and support activities at CORDS were both important, beneficial changes. As the war became more and more one of large regular formations opposing each other, the increases in RF/PF strength and the formation of larger RF units were called for. Unfortunately, although the many problems perennially facing the RF and PF soldier were recognized by most American and Vietnamese military authorities, little could be done to correct them.

In general, the RF and PF soldiers were excellent combatants; they were very effective in the counter-insurgency war. As individuals, they could measure up to any of their regular counterparts. But the problems and influences that surrounded the RF and PF weakened their posture and the intensity of the war often overshadowed their role. Their responsibilities were truly complex and burdensome. Too much was demanded of the RF and PF and too little was given them in return.

However, I am sure that no other force in South Vietnam, operating under the same conditions and priorities, could have contributed more than our Regional and Popular Forces to the total war effort.

APPENDIX A

INSIGNIAS OF TERRITORIAL AND PARA-MILITARY FORCES

REGIONAL FORCES



COLORS:

Black on yellow background

MEANINGS:

YELLOW BACKGROUND:

Symbol of racial complexion and basic color of the national flag.

BLACK:

Symbolizes the iron-like resolution of the RF soldier.

WARRIOR BUST;

Symbol of bravery, fearless of danger and hardship.

SWORD AND CANNON:

Symbolize the development of the RF and their determination to win the final victory.

RICE SHEAF:

Symbol of the people's prosperity and welfare, the goals for which the RF fight.

POPULAR FORCES



COLORS:

Yellow background with three-pointed, half-blue, half-white star and three red arrows pointing to the center of the star.

MEANINGS:

- YELLOW:** Symbolic of the racial complexion and the basic color of the national flag.
- THREE-POINTED STAR:** Represents the "Triangular warfare" of the PF in intelligence, psychological and guerrilla warfare.
- RED ARROWS:** Represent the enemy's "three-front attack" strategy = military, political, and psychological (proselyting) warfare.
- BLUE POINT:** Symbolizes the offensiveness of the PF.
- WHITE POINT:** Symbolizes the wholesomeness, simplicity and high spirit of service of the PF soldier.
- RICE WREATH** Symbolic of the popular base of the PF.

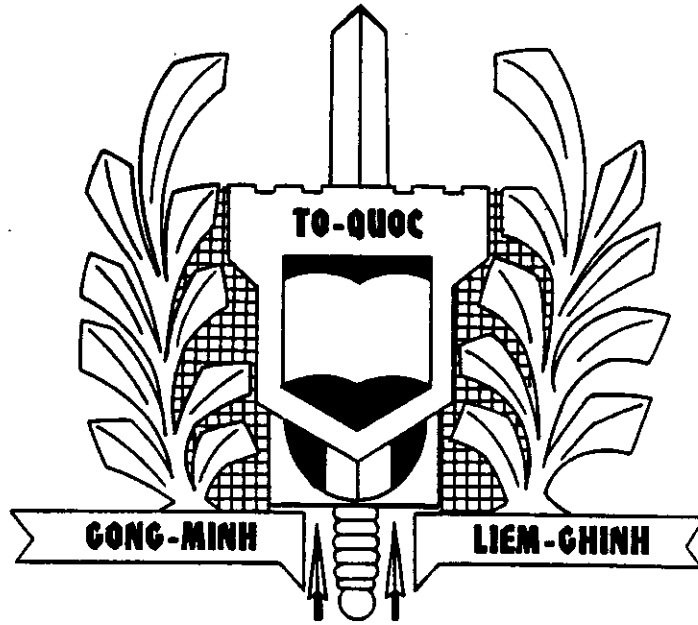
PEOPLE'S SELF-DEFENSE FORCES



RURAL DEVELOPMENT CADRE



NATIONAL POLICE



APPENDIX B

THE VIET CONG INFRASTRUCTURE

Basic Organization

"Our principle is that the Party commands the gun,
and the gun must never command the Party."

Mao Tse Tung

The above quotation from Mao typifies the prevailing doctrine for the Communist insurgency in South Vietnam. The armed forces of the Viet Cong are only the military aspect of a much broader political-insurgent effort. Unless the political force guiding and supporting the armed forces is also destroyed, the village will continue to be threatened either through internal subversion or the continuous regeneration of the VC armed forces.

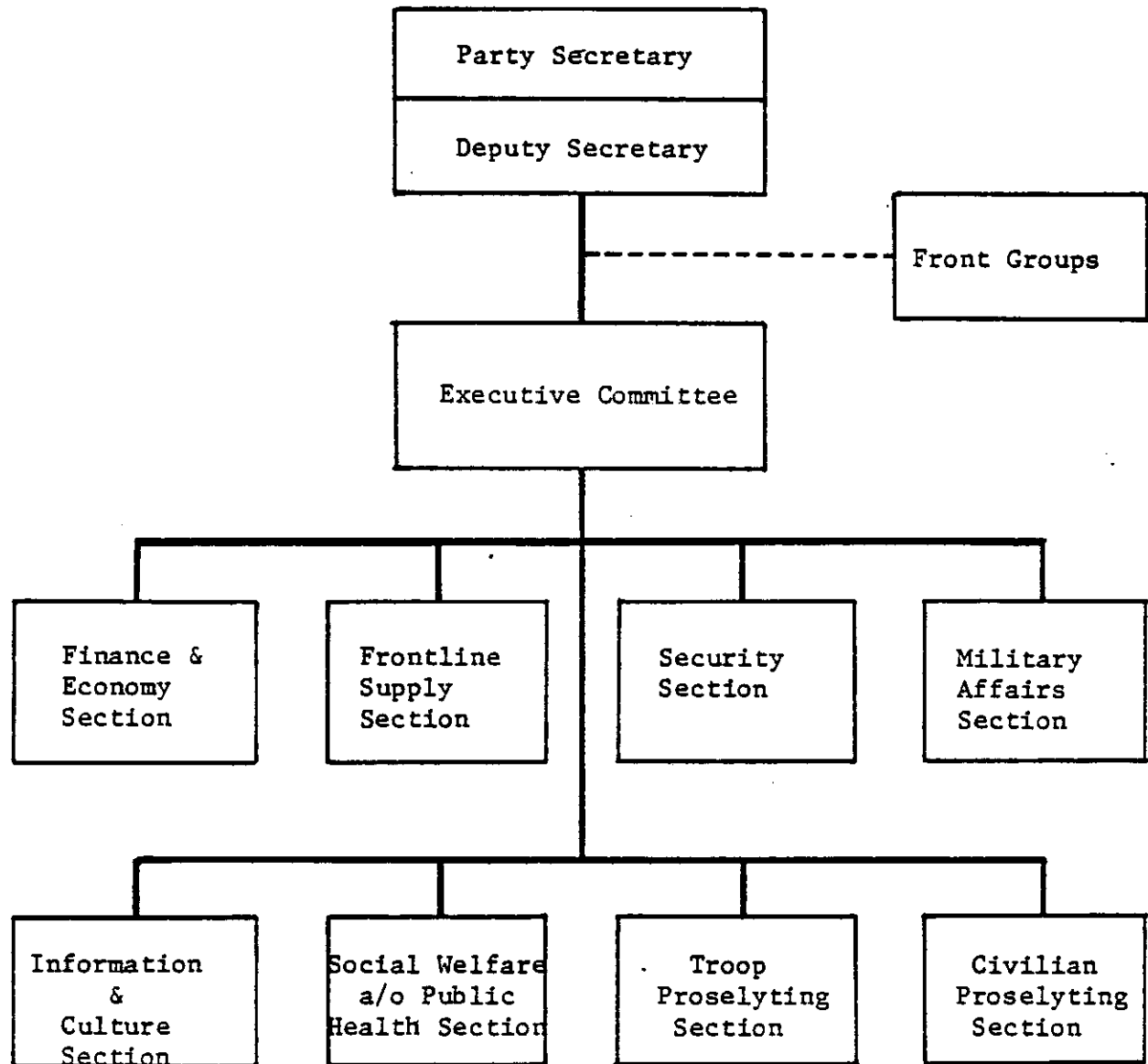
This political organization is referred to as the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI). The members of the VCI provide party guidance and direction to the overall Viet Cong insurgency, collect money and supplies and provide commo-liaison.

The basic organization of the insurgency in South Vietnam is the Peoples' Revolutionary Party (PRP), a branch of the Communist Party of North Vietnam. The PRP has joined with certain non-Communist insurgent groups to create the National Front for the Liberation of South Vietnam, but the PRP has remained the dominant force in this and other front groups such as the Liberation Committees and the Peoples' Alliance of Democratic and Peaceloving Forces.

Party directives issued in mid-1969 instructed PRP chapters to establish Peoples' Revolutionary Committees and Councils (PRCs) and to drop all reference to the PRP. This action apparently came from a desire to upgrade the PRP from merely a dissident, externally-controlled party contending for authority to that of an established, legitimate rival to the GVN. In most cases, the change merely involved a switch in titles, but sometimes non-Party members were added to present a broader base of appeal. The PRP still controls all key positions and directs the activities of the PRCs.

The current estimate is that there are about 430 PRCs at village level (out of 726 villages) and 610 at hamlet level (out of 4,212 hamlets) throughout the Delta. Just over half of the village PRCs were chosen through some form of election (closely controlled by the PRP and not generally representing popular participation) and the rest were appointed

by Party chapters at higher echelons. In VC areas, these PRCs are in effect, the local government. In GVN or contested areas they are less effective, operating either from nearby base areas or from clandestine cover within a village. In many cases, the organizations appear to exist on paper only. Village Party chapters have been retitled as PRCs and the secretary is usually called "Chairman" (equivalent to GVN village chief) but the basic outline remains the same. A village Party chapter usually takes the forms of the following diagram:



Not all village Party chapters follow this organization exactly. In larger villages with strong VC control, the Party organization is more elaborate and each of the sections has a number of cadre. In smaller villages or in GVN villages with weak PRP chapters, one person may act as the head of several of the above sections. The Executive Committee is made up of the chiefs of key sections. It usually has the chiefs of the Military Affairs, Security and Finance and Economy Sections and occasionally other sections as well. The village Party chapter is controlled by the district Party committee, but the technical sections also received district guidance and direction from technical sections at the district level.

At the hamlet level, the organization is usually more simple. Military Affairs and Frontline Supply usually are combined, as are the Information and Culture and Proselyting Sections.

There are separate front groups (usually called Liberation Associations) for farmers, women and youth. In some areas there are also front groups for ethnic minorities such as Cambodian and/or Chinese. In areas where there is a concentration of Hoa Hao residents or members of other religious groups, there may be a Religious Liberation Association designed to rally these groups to the Communist cause.

At village level and below, the working cadre of the various sections are generally categorized as VC supporters rather than significant VCI cadre. They are important as sources of intelligence, but usually can be replaced by the PRP with relative ease. The ten cadre listed below, together with some of their deputies, are the hard-core members of the group and their elimination generally will achieve the dismantling of the village Party chapter.

Functions of Specific VCI Cadre:

1. The Party Secretary - The village Party Secretary is responsible to the District Party Secretary for the implementation of higher echelon orders in his village. He is in charge of all village activities and controls all village cadre through his section chiefs and all hamlet Party Secretaries in his area. He exercises final authority on the use of village guerrillas and usually attends Military Affairs Section meetings. He is the most important PRP representative in the village and in some cases is known by all adult residents of the village. He moves about constantly, meeting with his section in the most secure (that is, VC controlled) hamlet in the village or sometimes completely outside the village. In the village, he usually has three or more houses out of which he operates for brief periods. He maintains all the village records and documents. He travels periodically to meet with the district Party Secretary and other district level cadre. He is vulnerable due to his relative notoriety and his need to be in constant contact with district and his section chiefs, but he is usually accompanied by armed bodyguards.

2. The Deputy Party Secretary - The Deputy Secretary is the number two man and must be prepared to take over if the Party Secretary is removed from the scene. He functions as the Secretary's assistant and often is assigned to oversee the activities of two or more related sections of the Committee. His activities are similar to those of the Secretary.
3. Finance and Economy Section Chief - The F&E Chief at village level collects the taxes from the villagers and hamlet level sections according to directions from district level. He may also maintain tax lists, census data and production figures. He works with the Frontline Supply Section and Rear Services Support of the Military Affairs Section to support the village guerrillas. He has usually worked out arrangements with local or roving merchants to sell foodstuffs collected as in-kind taxes. The F&E Chief at village level does not usually keep large sums of money, transmitting it at frequent intervals to district level through the Party Secretary. He is vulnerable because he is engaged in an unpopular effort and has to move about a great deal.
4. Frontline Supply Section Chief - The FLSS Chief may actually be a sub-section chief under Military Affairs. He is responsible for mobilizing material resources and manpower to support VC armed units in the area. In VC-controlled areas, he may be responsible for general production control over the villagers. He works closely with Military Affairs, Security, Finance and Economy and Proselyting Sections.
5. Security Section Chief - The Security Chief is responsible for both counter-intelligence and intelligence collection activities. In areas which the VC control, the Security Chief is also responsible for regular police and judicial operations and maintains the jail. The Security Section also controls VC reconnaissance and sapper squads. The Security Chief provides necessary bodyguards to protect other important Party officials. He may be used in an enforcement role to help the Finance Economy Chief collect taxes. He is responsible for the security of documents and records and, in the lower Delta, controls the commo-liaison system (in the upper Delta this is apparently part of the VC military postal system). He usually controls a network of secret informants within the village and hamlets to maintain surveillance over the people and a network of agents who have penetrated GVN agencies and units.
6. The Military Affairs Section Chief - The MAS Chief is usually one of the village guerrilla squad leaders who has been promoted to the job and given additional training and indoctrination. He serves as the commander and/or the political officer of the village guerrillas. He uses these guerrillas to provide sentries and protection to the VC areas, to participate in combined inter-village military operations and, when strong-arm methods are needed to enforce attendance at meetings, tax collections, etc. The village MAS Chief is often also in charge of the Frontline Supply Section and coordinates the visit to his village of forces from higher echelons for operations or for re-supply. He is always in close contact with the village Secretary and the MAS Chief of the district Committee.

7. Information and Culture Chief - This cadre is sometimes referred to as the Propaganda, Culture and Indoctrination Chief which is a more accurate description of his duties. He is responsible for disseminating VC propaganda to the villagers and for the VC cultural and entertainment teams. He is also responsible for maintaining the ideological purity and drive of PRP members in the village, leading criticism and self-criticism or re-education sessions, when necessary. He is generally regarded as a key cadre because of his role in maintaining Party morale and ideological purity. He is usually better educated and indoctrinated.
8. Social Welfare and/or Public Health Section Chief - He is normally not present except in VC areas where he is responsible for organizing the populace into social action groups. A key responsibility is to organize care for wounded veterans and the families of VC troops.
9. Troop Proselyting Chief - The Troop Proselyting Chief works usually through friends and relatives of ARVN members to turn GVN soldiers in place as sources of intelligence or possible betrayal. If this is not possible, he tries to encourage desertion. He is often the organizer of the "face-to-face" struggles of village women against GVN or allied officials and policies.
10. Civilian Proselyting Chief - The Civilian Proselyting Chief is responsible for developing the appeal of the VC and organizing support from the general populace. He works closely with the Propaganda Chief, but is really responsible for slightly different function—the organization of supporting front groups. He is responsible for most direct Party recruiting at the village level. He often is the most educated, articulate, and highly indoctrinated PRP member at the village level. He is vulnerable because of his public role and his need to move around to contact various front groups.

(Source: Village Security Planning Guide for District and Mobile Advisory Teams; Delta Military Assistance Command, 1970.)

APPENDIX C

PRINCIPLES OF TERRITORIAL SECURITY (Excerpt from Combined Campaign Plan 1972, AB 147)

1. GENERAL: The NVN Communists and the VC attempt to demonstrate that the GVN is not capable of governing the country or of providing credible security to the people. The most effective way of assuring security for the Vietnamese people is to keep enemy forces away from them and by neutralizing the VC infrastructure. Without the VCI, enemy main forces cannot obtain intelligence, manpower, and food, nor will they be able to prepare the battlefield or move. Providing security to the Vietnamese people is the major objective of RVNAF/FWMAF. The security principles and their application are based upon lessons learned in the past and provide specific techniques for providing the desired level of security.
2. CONCEPT: A national security program must include basic principles to insure effective security of individuals and groups at all levels, from the local household to an entire geographical/political subdivision, against both internal and external threats.
3. AREA SECURITY PRINCIPLES:
 - a. A sound security system requires clear-cut authority within each national force and must be fully coordinated with all other commanders and forces concerned.
 - b. A security system should include the following:
 - (1) Adequate forces
 - (2) Responsive command and control
 - (3) Internal and external intelligence, to include long range surveillance
 - (4) Effective communications
 - (5) Tactical control measures, such as boundaries, barriers, warning systems, etc.
 - (6) Coordination of military/civilian effort toward common goals
 - c. To be effective, security must be continuous. Manning outposts and patrolling during the day, but retiring to static defense positions at night will not achieve effective security and often produces undesired results. The enemy, who moves mostly under cover of darkness, will enter the village to carry out retaliation against the people, after the security forces depart.
 - d. The provision of security throughout the RVN requires the accomplishment of five interrelated tasks:

- (1) Maintaining continuous and permanent security for people living in secure areas
- (2) Extending security to people outside of the secure areas
- (3) Neutralizing local force, guerrilla and VCI units or individuals found among the people
- (4) Forcing the withdrawal of NVA forces to North Vietnam, by both military and political actions
- (5) Developing a security system that is not dependent on the continued presence of FWMAF

e. Delineation of areas for friendly forces to concentrate their efforts on:

- (1) Focus upon securing the population (Secure Areas and Consolidation Zones)
- (2) Focus against enemy main forces in Clearing Zones
- (3) Focus against enemy intrusions and infiltration in Border Surveillance Zones.

4. APPLICATION:

a. Secure Areas. The principal task is to maintain and improve existing security. Operations will concentrate on protecting the resident population.

- (1) The secure area is the hub from which expansion of security radiates. Local government is functioning and the GVN is improving services and supporting the self-help programs
- (2) National Police operations will concentrate on maintaining law and order, neutralizing the VCI and controlling terrorism
- (3) The NP assisted by the PF and PSDF and under the control of the village chief or subsector commander will maintain security, law and order in the secure areas with the support of the RF if required
- (4) As NP and PSDF increase in size and proficiency, PF elements are released until a minimum reaction level is reached. Released PF replace RF by assuming RF missions wherever possible in the more secure areas. RF are then redeployed to less secure areas. RF and PF are assigned zones of reaction responsibility to reinforce units threatened by enemy forces.
- (5) NP and PSDF will not normally be utilized beyond the boundary of their assigned village
- (6) Friendly military forces, resident in the secure area, protect their own installations. They may assist in protecting vital non-military installations, if the local police forces are not adequate. However, protection of non-military installations should be assumed by the police or civilian self-defense units, as soon as possible.
- (7) Security of areas contiguous to the secure area will be improved through saturation patrolling, ambush, and offensive operations by territorial forces
- (8) The secure area does not expand from within. Rather, as security conditions within a portion of the consolidation zone reach the required level, that portion is assimilated into and becomes part of the secure area

b. Consolidation Zones. The principal tasks to be accomplished within this zone are to provide an outer belt of protection for the secure area and to raise the level of security to that which exists within the secure area.

(1) The purpose of the outer belt of protection is to detect and engage enemy forces at a distance from the secure area. This is best accomplished by conducting continuous around-the-clock, intensive patrol and ambush operations, and maintaining strong, highly mobile reaction forces. RF, supported by PF, NP, FP and Infantry divisions, as necessary, are employed in this outer belt.

(2) Within the zone, operations are employed to raise the level of security. Police and territorial forces assisted by regular forces as required, provide hamlet and village security. They also conduct intensive small unit patrol and ambush operations to detect and engage enemy units which may have penetrated the outer belt of protection. In addition, they seek out and neutralize the VCI, uncover weapon and ammunition caches, and mortar and rocket emplacements.

(3) Resources denial and population control are conducted by the National Police assisted by territorial forces. Personnel and designated commodities are under strict control and are subjected to continuous check.

(4) Assimilation of portions of the consolidation zone into the secure area will occur when the level of security within that portion is determined by province officials to fall within the prescribed definition for designation as a secure area.

c. Clearing Zones. Operations in these zones concentrate on VC/NVA main and local forces to prevent their intruding into consolidation zones. Rules of engagement for the clearing zone must emphasize that civilians are not unnecessarily exposed to friendly fires. The objective is to separate the enemy from the population in order to facilitate establishment of effective security.

(1) RVN regular forces, assisted by FWMAF, operate within this zone to engage or drive out the enemy and to prevent enemy forces from entering the consolidation zones.

(2) Neutralization of enemy base areas will be conducted in accordance with the priorities contained in Annex J (Neutralization of VC/NVA Base-Areas) to AB-147. Isolated bases, located in areas of low population density, can best be controlled by conducting operations to prevent enemy egress or reinforcement. Continuous surveillance, patrolling and ambushes, and air and artillery strikes will be employed to keep the enemy confined in his base area.

(3) Enemy base areas located closer to major population areas constitute a different type of threat. Friendly operations will concentrate on effectively neutralizing these base areas or forcing the enemy to abandon them, and thus increase the distance between the enemy and the population.

(4) As the enemy threat is reduced or neutralized, and base areas are abandoned or isolated, the newly cleared area will be added to the consolidation zone. The province chief must have adequate

resources to insure that he can hold and govern the newly cleared zone. Refugees and original inhabitants of the area should be encouraged to return and resettle. Coordination for transfer of the newly cleared area to the consolidation zone from Infantry division responsibility to Province will be made under the authority of the RVNAF Corps and Military Region Commander.

d. Border Surveillance Zone. This zone is contiguous to the national borders of RVN. MR commanders are responsible for this zone. The primary task here is to detect, engage and deter enemy forces attempting to infiltrate the RVN. Operations conducted herein will be closely coordinated with border camp forces.

5. COMMAND AND CONTROL: The commander charged with responsibility for a specific area must be provided adequate resources and authority commensurate with that responsibility. Assignment of primary responsibility will be as follows. The RVNAF Corps and Military Region Commander is responsible for assuring that adequate resources are assigned in each case.

a. Secure Area and Consolidation Zones. Province Chief/Sector commander.

b. Clearing Zone. Infantry division commanders or special sector commander as designated by the RVNAF Corps and Military Region Commander.

c. Border Surveillance Zone. MR commander (Border Defense Force).

Glossary

ABN	Airborne
ALSC	Administrative and Logistical Support Company or Center
AO	Area of Operation
ARVN	Army of the Republic of Vietnam
BAR	Browning Automatic Rifle
CG	Civil Guard (RF)
CMD	Capital Military District
CORDS	Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support
COSVN	Central Office for South Vietnam (Politbureau)
CTZ	Corps Tactical Zone. The geographical area of responsibility of a Corps
DMZ	Demilitarized Zone
DTA	Division tactical area. The geographical area of responsibility of a division (prior to 1970)
FWMAF	Free World Military Assistance Forces
GVN	Government of South Vietnam
HES	Hamlet Evaluation System
ID	Identification
JGS	Joint General Staff (RVNAF)
LAW	Light Anti-Tank Weapon
MAAG	Military Assistance Advisory Group
MALT	Mobile Assistance Logistic Team
MAP	Military Assistance Program
MR	Military Region
NCO	Non-Commissioned Officer
NLF	National Liberation Front (Viet Cong)

NP	National Police
NVA	North Vietnamese Army
PF	Popular Forces
PFF	Police Field Forces
PRC	People's Revolutionary Committee (VC)
PRU	Provincial Reconnaissance Unit
PSDF	People's Self-Defense Forces
QL	Quoc Lo (National Route)
RD	Revolutionary (or Rural) Development
RF	Regional Forces
RVN	Republic of Vietnam
RVNAF	Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. Refers to all three services
SDC	Self-Defense Corps (PF)
SEATO	South-East Asia Treaty Organization
TAOI	Tactical Area of Interest
TAOR	Tactical Area of Responsibility
TOC	Tactical Operations Center
UMDC	Unités Mobiles pour la Défence de la Chrétienté
VC	Viet Cong
VCI	Viet Cong Infrastructure
VNQDD	Viet Nam Quoc Dan Dang (Vietnamese Nationalist Party)