

INFORMATION

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Tuesday, November 14, 1967
7:35 p.m.

Mr. President:

You will wish to read Gen. Westmoreland's assessment for the month of October before you see him.

As usual, we have summarized it in general and by Corps areas, with the key passages marked.

W. W. Rostow

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E.O. 12356, Sec. 3.4(b)

White House Guidelines, Feb. 24, 1983

By rg, NARA, Date 11-21-91

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Tuesday, November 14, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: General Westmoreland's Assessment for the Month of October.

S U M M A R Y

A general shift in the pattern of enemy activity during October reflects the onset of the northeast monsoon period, heavy rains and flooding conditions in the northern coastal areas, and the beginning of the fall/winter rice harvest. The pace of activity in the western highlands has increased, with the probability of more intense enemy actions in Kontum, Pleiku and Dar Lac provinces. Our forces are being adjusted to meet this threat.

The most significant developments of the month occurred in Third Corps with the enemy committing a number of VC/NVA Main Force regiments in large scale actions. He may be expected to continue an aggressive posture in northwest Third Corps during the winter campaign despite his heavy casualties in SHENANDOAH II at Loc Ninh and Song Be and massive weapons losses in Phuoc Tuy provinces.

Activity elsewhere in the country has been marked by enemy avoidance of contact and a step-up in the frequency of attacks by fire on the populace, particularly in Fourth Corps. South Vietnamese Armed Forces aggressiveness and effectiveness continues to improve with several very favorable actions during October.

Reports continue to indicate serious food shortages and morale problems in the enemy ranks. There is a credible link between his military actions and his attempts to obtain rice during the harvest season. Allied activities in all Corps are coordinated to deny rice to the enemy.

The successful Vietnamese Lower House elections and Presidential inauguration illustrated a further decline in the ability of the VC to influence the people or the constitutional government processes. The enemy's capability to intimidate or impress has been seriously eroded.

Although the pacification effort remains behind schedule, there are indications that the programs, slowed in previous months by Vietnamese preoccupation with the national elections, are beginning to gain momentum. The basic infrastructure Intelligence Coordination and Exploitation structure is now established in all Corps and in most provinces. Although the Government of Vietnam has not as yet

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accepted ICEX at the national level, an increase in US/GVN province pacification planning for 1968 has been accepted by the Government of Vietnam. This should give the U. S. a firmer control of pacification resources and, properly utilized, will provide the Province Senior Advisor with another source of control.

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FIRST CORPS AREA

The primary objectives in the First Corps during October were to destroy enemy forces, minimize disruption of the elections, deny access to areas from which vital installations could be subjected to rocket, artillery, and mortar fire, deny enemy access to rice crops, and construct the Strong Point/Obstacle System and a C-131 capable airfield at Quang Tri City.

Enemy activity was at a low level in the First Corps during October. In early October, intelligence indicated enemy forces in the DMZ area had suffered substantial losses from our concentrated air, naval gunfire, and artillery attacks. At the same time, there was a corresponding reduction in the amount of heavy weapons attacks in this sector. During the last week of October, however, increased enemy ground activity was noted at Con Thien.

In the remainder of the Corps Area, principal actions were generated by friendly operations. Our forces retained the initiative throughout the month in military, psychological, and pacification efforts. Eleven battalion size or larger operations were conducted which resulted in 1,364 enemy killed and 292 weapons captured. U. S. losses were 248 killed in action.

The priority construction projects continued to move ahead with some revision of schedules required due to heavy rains.

Pacification activity in Quang Nam, Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces regained momentum lost in August and September. However, all provinces remained behind schedule in 1967 pacification programs except Thua Thien, which is on schedule. Danang City also has virtually completed its program.

In summary, the enemy suffered from several significant military setbacks in the First Corps during October, from a second major psychological defeat in the successful Lower House election, and from the continued denial of food during local harvest.

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E.O. 12356, Sec 3.3
DA Memo, Jan. 5, 1938
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SECOND CORPS AREA

The objectives in the Second Corps for October were to destroy enemy forces in the zone, deny him access to the rice harvest, and prevent disruption of the Lower House elections.

Friendly operations consisted primarily of small unit actions in which overwhelming force was swiftly applied to the enemy wherever he could be found. Long-range patrols and stay-behind forces continued to scour the hinterland, inflicting casualties intermittently and uncovering food and weapon caches.

Army of the Republic of Vietnam operations were devoted largely to security missions in connection with the Lower House elections and protection of the rice harvest. A dearth of overt enemy activity within Army of the Republic of Vietnam areas contributed to a reduced tempo of operational activity. A two-day running battle on October 6 and 7 between an estimated Viet Cong company and elements of an Army of the Republic of Vietnam regiment was characterized by friendly aggressiveness, good use of air mobility, and a willingness to fight at night. Regular and Popular Force contacts with enemy forces continue to increase, particularly on night operations, demonstrating an improving active defense capability.

There were no significant changes in the status of lines of communication in the Second Corps during October. Major emphasis was placed upon 1968 pacification planning which for the first time will integrate both military and civilian aspects of the program. Government of Vietnam refugee officials are becoming increasingly responsive as evidenced by their rapid reaction in providing rice, cement, and roofing to refugees generated by the battle of Ninh Hoa.

Enemy preparation for attack was noted throughout the Corps Area during the latter part of the month, especially in the highlands and Kontum Province.

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THIRD CORPS AREA

Two recent trends have resulted in significant progress toward the successful conclusion of the counterinsurgency effort in the Third Corps. First, the National Priority Area has been secured to the extent that additional U. S. units can be employed against enemy main force elements operating outside the area. Second, the enemy has once again committed the main force units in strength against U. S. /Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces. This combination can only hasten the destruction of the main force units and facilitate the expansion of our pacification effort.

The increased tempo of jungle clearing operations contributed to the destruction of several base camp areas and tunnel complexes, as well as uncovering the largest weapons cache ever found in the Third Corps. This cache, discovered by the 9th Infantry Division, was concealed in a tunnel complex and contained in excess of 1,100 weapons, 200,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 3,200 rounds of ammunition for crew-served weapons, and 3,600 grenades.

During the month, the number of enemy-initiated incidents against pacification was up 80 percent over August and 25 percent over September. From 29-31 October, a series of determined mortar and ground attacks were directed against Loc Ninh. Outnumbered Army of the Republic of Vietnam and local Civilian Irregular Defense Group troops made a heroic stand, literally throwing the enemy out of the defense perimeter and subsector headquarters. Regular U. S. and Army of the Republic of Vietnam units reacted with additional forces. Heavy contact resulted on several occasions and severe losses were inflicted on the enemy.

The Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment completed its in-country training and began independent operations in the Nhon Trach District of Bien Hoa Province.

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E.O. 12056, Sec. 3.3

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FOURTH CORPS AREA

The overall tactical situation in the Fourth Corps remained favorable. Tactical operations were conducted with about the same frequency as during September. The overall morale, fighting spirit and combat effectiveness of Government of Vietnam units has been steadily increasing. They have maintained, and in some cases increased, their rate of attrition of Viet Cong forces despite the enemy's continuing practice of avoiding contact.

South Vietnamese units conducted a total of 158 major unit operations of battalion size or larger, of which contact with the Viet Cong was realized on 81. The percentage of contacts versus total operations has increased significantly during 1967, in spite of Viet Cong attempts to avoid contact. This is indicative of an improvement in intelligence and better Vietnamese responsiveness to this intelligence. The most significant tactical accomplishment of the month was the sustained field operation conducted by the 7th Infantry Division and Dinh Tuong Sector Regional Force Units. This operation began on October 27 and continued day and night through the end of the month. Results through October 31 were 113 Viet Cong killed, 31 Viet Cong captured, and 186 weapons captured. There were 21 operations which penetrated five other enemy base areas resulting in 163 Viet Cong killed, 18 captured, and 40 weapons of various caliber captured.

The effectiveness of Regional and Popular Forces continues to improve slowly. Efforts to accelerate the program have been undertaken and all Popular Force training centers have been placed under direct control of the Fourth Corps Headquarters. The Regional and Popular Force desertion rate which continues to remain lower than in the past indicates that confidence in the Government of Vietnam is higher than last year.

The morale of the Viet Cong has continued to decline, as has the morale of the people living in Viet Cong-controlled and contested areas.

Losses sustained by the Viet Cong totaled 1,258 killed in action, 524 captured, and 582 weapons captured, compared to September losses of 944 killed in action, 300 captured, and 377 weapons lost.

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Sunday, November 12, 1967

TEXT OF CABLE FROM GENERAL WESTMORELAND (37083)

SUBJECT: Monthly Military Assessment

This is my assessment for the month of October and the fourth of a series of the situation here in Vietnam.

Last month was marked by a decrease in enemy activity, the continuing destruction of Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Forces and their base areas, and the consequent enemy loss of large quantities of weapons and equipment.

Again, the enemy has failed to achieve a single significant psychological or military victory. He lost politically with the successful completion of the Lower House elections and militarily in a series of clashes resulting from our search and destroy operations.

Although another major step has been taken to afford the people of South Vietnam political stability, pacification and the development of civil and military leaders continue to be major problem areas.

First Corps

In the First Corps during October, our primary objectives were to destroy enemy forces, minimize disruption of the elections, deny access to areas from which vital installations could be subjected to rocket, artillery, and mortar fire, deny enemy access to rice crops, install a dy marker, and construct a C-131 capable air field at Quang Tri City.

In accomplishing these objectives, the Third Marine Forces conducted eleven battalion size or larger operations which resulted in 1,364 enemy killed and 292 weapons captured. U. S. losses were 248 killed in action.

Significant operations in the First Corps last month include:

1. Kingfisher, a multi-battalion search and destroy operation in northern Quang Tri Province.
2. Wheeler, a multi-battalion Americal Division search and destroy operation in Quang Tin Province, continued throughout October inflicting heavy casualties on the 2nd North Vietnamese Army Division and denying the enemy access to rice from the Que Son Valley harvest.

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AF Guide, SEA Records, 4/1/88

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3. Wallowa, a multi-battalion search and destroy operation in northeastern Quang Tin and southeastern Quang Ngai Provinces by the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division, which deployed to the First Corps during October. Wallowa, like Wheeler, was against elements of the 2nd North Vietnamese Army Division. This operation accounted for 675 enemy killed against friendly losses of 48 killed in action. Deployment of the 3rd Brigade, 1st Cavalry Division to the First Corps in early October permitted redeployment of additional Marine maneuver forces to northern First Corps.

Sixty-six arc light strikes were conducted in the vicinity of the DMZ.

Allied Forces retained the initiative throughout the First Corps during October in military, psychological and pacification efforts. The psychological operations rewards program has shown increased success by designating special geographical locations to receive weapons and make rewards. Women and children have surrendered significant quantities of munitions. This procedure will be further exploited. Hoi Chanh support of psychological operations is excellent. Armed propaganda teams are being brought up to strength, trained and armed during October. Kit Carson scouts strength rose from 67 to 98. These scouts are used extensively with combat units.

Morale of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam combat forces in the First Corps remains good. Desertions dropped substantially in October to 428 from 514 in September. Operational successes and improved unit facilities are major contributing factors to the Army of the Republic of Vietnam morale. Army of the Republic of Vietnam operations in conjunction with Allied operations in support of the October elections were successful as evidenced by a 78 percent turnout of eligible personnel. Forty-five large operations were conducted in October but enemy casualties from these operations were approximately one-half the September count. Significant operations included Lam Son, northeast of Hai Lang, where elements of the 1st Army of the Republic of Vietnam Regiment captured 47 weapons and inflicted 197 killed on the North Vietnamese battalion. The Viet Cong infrastructure in Hoi An was dealt a serious blow during a raid in which Revolutionary Development elements and the Army of the Republic of Vietnam identified or eliminated 38 Viet Cong. Another sweep northwest of Hai Lang netted 12 killed in action and 15 prisoners, all on the village infrastructure black list. The 1st Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division continued to operate in a highly effective manner and the 2nd Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division has shown a general trend of improved combat effectiveness. Specific areas noted include coordination of combat elements, employment of supporting fires, aggressiveness on the part of battalion and lower unit commanders, and increased night operations.

Regional and Popular Force support for pacification in the First Corps is progressing and has proven effective. Twenty-nine Regional Force companies and 192 platoons are now providing direct support. The Regional and Popular Force basic unit training and refresher training is progressing according to schedule.

Dragon Fire, a multi-battalion search and destroy operation by the Republic of Korea Brigade on Batangan Peninsula in Quang Tin Province, continued throughout the month with 63 enemy killed.

Although extensive engineering effort was required to restore lines of communication, the priority construction projects (dye marker and Quang Tri airfield) continued to move ahead with some revision of construction schedules required due to heavy rains.

Enemy damage to 13 bridges and 18 culverts during October was overshadowed by effects of tropical storm 34 which from October 6-9 washed out 23 bridges, 13 culverts, and numerous small sections of roads. The most significant bridges lost were 600 feet of new Liberty Bridge on Route 5 and 50 percent of the Class 60 floating naval bridge on Route 1 north of Danang. The last two and a half weeks of October permitted accelerated repair and construction efforts to restore most losses and make appreciable progress in the highway upgrading program.

Dye marker construction continued during October subject to limitations imposed by weather and enemy actions. Site C-2 was completed and significant construction was accomplished at four other sites. Sites A-1, A-2, A-4, C-1, C-2, C-3, and C-4 are currently occupied.

Pacification activity in Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai Provinces regained momentum lost in August and September. Reasons for improvement were a marked decline in Viet Cong incidents and attacks and increased security following deployment of new American Division units in Quang Tin and southern Quang Nam Provinces. Steady progress continued in Thua Thien Province and in Danang City. Quang Tri reported an interruption in pacification momentum caused by difficulties in the transition to a new logistics system and movement of Revolutionary Development teams to second semester hamlets.

All provinces remained behind schedule in completion of 1967 pacification programs except Thua Thien, which is on schedule, and Danang City, which has essentially completed its program.

The flood in early October temporarily displaced 12,000 persons and halted most corps road transportation. Despite a five-fold increase in logistics airlift, normal tonnage of goods for civilian operations transported to provinces decreased by two-thirds from last month due to flood conditions on Highway 1 and monsoon prohibition of intra-corps junk transportation.

The Lower House election campaign was noteworthy for its active participation by all political groups in the First Corps except Communists, and because of minimal Viet Cong harassment. Voter turnout, though lower than the September election, still reached approximately 78 percent. Radical Buddhist opposition movement continued its efforts against the Thieu-Ky Government, including one self-immolation in Quang Ngai City. However, Buddhists have thus far failed to elicit a meaningful response from the First Corps populace due to lack of issues and apparent overall weariness and disillusionment with Buddhist leadership and tactics.

Civic action included distribution of food (606,767 pounds), cement, lumber, clothing and school supplies. There were 121,284 treatments by medical and dental teams. Assistance was rendered for construction and repair of bridges, family dwellings, schools, wells, libraries, etc.

The number of Hoi Chanh rose from a yearly low of 75 in September to 160 for October following increased friendly military pressure throughout the First Corps.

Enemy activity was at a low level in the First Corps during October. In early October, Intelligence indicated enemy forces in the DMZ area had suffered substantial losses from our concentrated air, naval gunfire, and artillery attacks, and to some extent had withdrawn northward across the DMZ. At the same time, there was a corresponding reduction in the amount of heavy weapons attacks in this sector, decreasing from over 7,800 rounds in September to less than 4,000 in October. During the last week of October, increased ground activity was noted at Con Thien. It appeared the enemy had repositioned his forces in a more offensive posture. His employment of heavy weapons, particularly mortars, increased substantially during the same period.

In the remainder of the First Corps, principal actions were generated by friendly operations.

Interrogation reports of ralliers and prisoners continued to reflect the bleak picture presented in my September assessment. The enemy situation in the First Corps is considered to have further deteriorated.

In summary, the enemy suffered from several significant military setbacks in the First Corps during October, from a second major psychological defeat in the successful Lower House election, and from the continued denial of food during local harvest.

Second Corps

Our objectives in the Second Corps for the month of October were to destroy enemy forces in the zone, deny him access to the rice harvest, and prevent disruption of the Lower House elections.

Despite the shadow of major enemy forces stirring in the Western Highlands, a spirit of guarded optimism pervaded the Second Corps at the end of October. The success of the three recent, broadly based national elections can only be interpreted by a realistic enemy as a disaster to his fortunes. More than ever, he needs a dramatic tactical victory to buoy the morale of his troops and to convince the man in the village of Communist invincibility. The destruction of a Civilian Irregular Defense Group camp or major Allied force would meet his needs admirably.

Among the fighting forces, a decrease of activity in October was evidenced by fewer friendly casualties across the board. The protection of the rice harvest and the Lower House elections were the principle preoccupations. Aggressive patrolling of the hinterlands continued with attention being devoted to political and tactical boundaries.

Operations in October were characterized for the most part by small unit actions in which overwhelming force was swiftly applied to the enemy wherever he could be found. Were the enemy looking for a war of attrition this month, he picked the wrong time and the wrong place. Some typical kill ratios in the Second Corps for October were: Bolling (12:1); Pershing (16:1); and Francis Marion (65:1). The latter operation was combined with Operation Greeley and renamed Operation MacArthur on the 12th of October with no further contact of significance reported. Long-range patrols and stay-behind forces continued to scour the hinterland, inflicting casualties intermittently and uncovering food and weapon caches. New during the month was mobile guerrilla operation Boudinot on the Pleiku/Darlac Provincial Boundary to exploit the enemy's propensity for infiltration along political and military boundaries. Mobile strike force 27 already has reported surprising and scattering one North Vietnamese company and has captured a sizeable amount of weapons and munitions.

Army of the Republic of Vietnam operations were devoted largely to security missions in connection with the Lower House elections and protection of the rice harvest. Dearth of covert enemy activity within the Army of the Republic of Vietnam area operations contributed to a reduced tempo of operational activity. Most active was the 22nd Division in Binh Dinh where a significant battle was fought on October 3 by the Army of the Republic of Vietnam and Popular Force troops in which 40 enemy were killed (favorable kill ratio of 6.7 to 1). Near Ban Me Thout, a two-day running battle on October 6 and 7 between an estimated Viet Cong company and elements of the 45th Army of the Republic of Vietnam Regiment was characterized by friendly aggressiveness, good use of air mobility and a willingness to fight at night. Overall results, however, were disappointing, with an unfavorable kill ratio of 2.4 to 1.

Regional and Popular Force contacts with enemy forces continue to increase, particularly on night operations, demonstrating an improved active defense capability. There were two significant contacts during the months. Five Regional Force companies engaged an unknown size Viet Cong unit on October 20, southeast of Phu Cat and were supported by U. S. artillery, gunships and tactical air strikes. A supply dump believed to be North Vietnamese Army was captured and ten enemy were killed. The other action was at Ninh Hoa in which Regional and Popular Forces were the first units into action, supported later by Republic of Korea forces. The overall favorable kill ratio for October was 2.3 to 1 (versus an average of 2.5 to 1).

Korean forces provided protection for the rice harvest and the Lower House elections in the coastal provinces. In addition to the several skirmishes near Tuy Hoa, a major fight erupted mid-month around Ninh Hoa in which elements of the 188th North Vietnamese Army regiment attempted to reassert their influence over the population and to gain badly-needed food supplies. The area was cleared by October 28 with remarkably few civilian casualties in view of the North Vietnamese Army use of innocent civilians as human shields throughout the action. The restraint offered by the Korean Army, however, was paid for by a greater than normal casualty rate and a lower kill ratio than in September 4.5 to 1 versus 5.4 to 1).

There were no significant changes in the status of our lines of communication in the II Corps during October.

Major emphasis was placed upon 1968 pacification planning which, for the first time, will integrate both military and civilian aspects of the program.

The Government of Vietnam refugee officials are becoming increasingly responsive as evidenced by their rapid reaction in providing rice, cement, and roofing to refugees generated by the battle of Ninh Hoa.

At the direction of the Commanding General of 1st Forces, intensified emphasis has been placed upon rice control with plans consisting of both protection of the harvesters and immediate removal of harvested rice to secure areas. In addition, plans have been prepared to collect or destroy rice in Viet Cong-controlled areas.

As a result of increased emphasis upon attacks on the Viet Cong infrastructure, 67 Viet Cong cadre were killed and 392 captured during October.

The voter turnout for the Lower House elections was 81.2 percent. It was anticipated that there would be a dramatic drop from the 88.4 percent experienced

in the Presidential elections. The Government of Vietnam and allied forces again provided an effective shield for the voters, with only scattered incidents reported.

Enemy preparation is evident throughout the II Corps. In the western highlands and Kontum Province, ominous signs persist of an offensive build-up by elements of the B-3 front. Targeted for attack may be the Civilian Irregular Defense Group camps and other installations from Dak Seang South to Duc Co, especially those considered to be lightly defended. On October 26 some 46 rounds of 122mm rocket fell on the II Corps headquarters and the MACV and adjacent unit compounds.

The first indication of the presence in Pleiku of the attacking unit, believed to be the 200th artillery battalion, is evidence of this build-up. The recent reinforcement of the 95th regiment, considered to be a "low priority" unit, in Eastern Pleiku Province is also significant. Further south the enemy continued to infiltrate and to develop supply corridors through Dar Lac Province enroute to the Coast.

In Binh Dinh Province, the 3rd North Vietnamese Army division was dispersed to threaten the central Regional Development areas and to forage for rice. Enemy objectives may require development of strategic hamlets to protect Viet Cong-controlled areas and to "liberate" the people from New Life hamlets. In Khanh Hoa Province enemy sapper units, aided by troops from the 18B regiment, were active in the Nha Trang area where they mined two trains and mortared the 5th Special Forces Logistical Support Center and the 281st aviation airfield.

In late October, troops from the Regiment, joined by local force companies and guerrillas, entered the outlying hamlets surrounding Ninh Hoa without being detected. At the same time these forces mortared the 9th Korean Army Division Headquarters. While no new tactics were noted in the Ninh Hoa incident, this was the first major enemy-initiated ground attack in Khanh Hoa Province since the arrival of the 18B Regiment in late 1966. This action served not only to demonstrate the combat effectiveness of the 18B Regiment following a long period of inactivity, but to trigger a review of friendly surveillance and intelligence operations.

In the southern provinces, enemy activity increased in an effort to disrupt the Lower House elections and to replenish depleted food stocks from the coastal rice harvests. Local force and district units gave propaganda lectures in villages to discourage voter participation, destroyed ballot boxes, and confiscated voting cards.

The enemy's short-term economic objective was the harvesting of outlying rice fields.

Third Corps

Objectives in the III Corps during the month of October were to destroy enemy main force units, his base areas and equipment, to disrupt his lines of communication, and to provide a secure environment for the Lower House elections.

Two recent trends have resulted in significant progress toward the successful conclusion of the counterinsurgency effort in the III Corps. First, the national priority area has been secured to the extent that additional U. S. units can be employed against enemy main force elements operating outside the area. Second, the enemy has once again committed his main force units in strength against allied forces. This combination can only hasten the destruction of the main force units and facilitate the expansion of our pacification effort.

The increased tempo of jungle clearing operations contributed to the destruction of several base camp areas and tunnel complexes, as well as uncovering the largest weapons cache ever found in the III Corps. This cache, discovered by the 9th Infantry Division, was concealed in a tunnel complex and contained in excess of 1100 weapons, 200,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 3,200 rounds of ammunition for crew-served weapons, and 3,600 grenades. From October 29-31, a series of determined mortar and ground attacks were directed against Loc Ninh. Outnumbered South Vietnam and Civilian Irregular Defense Group made a heroic stand, literally throwing the enemy out of the Civilian Irregular Defense Group perimeter and subsector headquarters. The 1st Infantry Division (U. S.) and 5th Vietnamese (South) Division reacted with additional forces. Heavy contact resulted on several occasions and severe losses were inflicted on the enemy. 369 enemy had been killed as of October 31. The engagement continued into November.

On October 27 the 88th North Vietnamese Army Regiment attacked the 3rd Battalion, 9th Army of the Republic of Vietnam Regiment, south of Song Be and was repulsed with heavy personnel and equipment losses (the kill ratio exceeded 20:1).

Two other Civilian Irregular Defense Group Forces had extremely successful operations in October. On October 20, Civilian Irregular Defense Group units from Tra Cu engaged 40 Viet Cong and killed 15 with no friendly losses. On October 21, two Civilian Irregular Defense Group Companies engaged an enemy force of unknown strength in a strike and killed 94 Viet Cong with light friendly losses.

The Army of the Republic of Vietnam Third Corps units have continued to enthusiastically utilize helicopters furnished by the Second Forces. A total of 126 air mobile assaults were made by the Army of the Republic of Vietnam during October, a significant increase over the 36 operations in the previous month.

The Royal Thai Army Volunteer Regiment completed its in-country training and began independent operations this month in the Nhon Trach District of Bien Hoa Province.

The construction and maintenance of roads and bridges so vitally important to both military operations and civilian commerce continues. During October, 254 kilometers of road was improved and/or maintained and 314 feet of tactical bridging was installed.

Our pacification effort continued with six new District Operations Intelligence Coordinating Centers established and staffed by Intelligence Advisory Officers during October. There are now 32 operational District Operations Intelligence Coordinating Centers in the Third Corps contributing to the identification and destruction of the Viet Cong infrastructure.

Forty of 46 Army of the Republic of Vietnam Battalions have undergone the Revolutionary Development Direct Support training cycle. Seven battalions have completed the combined battalion refresher training program conducted by U. S. brigades and ten are presently in training.

The construction of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam housing under the approved \$2.8 million program will be an important contribution to the morale, retention and overall effectiveness of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam soldier. The model units of this dependent housing are now nearing completion in each of the Third Corps Army of the Republic of Vietnam Divisional areas.

In October, 216 refugee families were resettled in Duc Thanh of Phuoc Tuy Province. The resettlement of 3,000 additional persons is planned over the next 90 days.

Operation Doi Moi, a carefully controlled and intensive psychological operations campaign, resulted in 91 "quick reaction" leaflet drops exploiting information provided by Hoi Chanh. An example of "quick reaction" psychological operations was the use of airborne loudspeakers to broadcast Allied successes at Loc Ninh while action was still in progress. Rallies increased from 369 in September to 424 in October.

The total number of incidents initiated by the Viet Cong against pacification is up 80 percent over August and 25 percent over September.

During the month, the enemy conducted attacks with Main Force and North Vietnamese Army units. He appeared to be striving for a victory in Binh Long and Phuoc Long Provinces. Both are important to the security of his routes of infiltration and logistical support. These efforts resulted in heavy enemy losses.

On October 27, the 88th North Vietnamese Army Regiment was identified for the first time in the Third Corps area in an attack against Song Be. Three diversionary attacks were conducted in conjunction with the main attack in a probable attempt to prevent timely reinforcements. The assault was repulsed with heavy enemy losses (130 killed in action).

The Loc Ninh attack, October 29-31, was the first known attempt in the Third Corps to employ multi-regimental forces from two divisions against a single objective. In this engagement, the enemy employed 122MM rockets for the first time since July.

The enemy suffered severe losses in the seven main force regiments contacted during the month. Each regiment lost at least 100 killed. Over 2,000 small arms and crew-served weapons were captured, the largest number ever captured in a single month in the Third Corps.

Agent and POW reports continue to indicate shortages of food and medicine. Over 200 tons of rice and significant quantities of medical supplies and hospital facilities were either captured or destroyed in October.

Fourth Corps

Our objectives in the Fourth Corps during this past month were to prevent Viet Cong interference in the Congressional elections, further the pacification effort, upgrade security, prevent interdiction of the major lines of communication, and destroy enemy main forces, provincial units, and their bases.

The overall tactical situation in the Fourth Corps remained favorable. Tactical operations were conducted with about the same frequency as during September. The overall morale, fighting spirit and combat effectiveness of Government of Vietnam units has been steadily increasing. They have maintained, and in some cases increased, their Viet Cong killed and captured count despite the enemy's continuing practice of avoiding contact.

Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces units conducted a total of 158 major unit operations of battalion size or larger, of which contact with the Viet Cong was realized on 81. Major unit operations are continuing with less frequency when compared to like periods during 1966. This can be largely attributed to 15 infantry battalions being designated to support pacification in early 1967. The percentage of contacts versus total operations has increased significantly during 1967, in spite of Viet Cong attempts to avoid contact. This is indicative of an improvement in intelligence and better Government of Vietnam responsiveness to this intelligence. The most significant tactical accomplishment of the month was the sustained field operation conducted by the 7th Infantry Division and Dinh Tuong Sector Regional Force units. This operation commenced on October 27 and continued day and night through the end of the month. Results thus far are 113 Viet Cong killed in action, 31 Viet Cong captured, and 186 weapons captured. There were 21 operations which penetrated five other base areas resulting in 163 Viet Cong killed in action, 18 captured and 40 weapons of various caliber captured. Small unit operations number 54,357. Major unit airmobile operations numbered 29 with a total of 50,357 Republic of Vietnam Armed Forces Troops airlifted.

The effectiveness of Regional and Popular Forces continues to improve slowly. Efforts to accelerate the program have been undertaken and all Popular Force training centers have been placed under direct control of the Fourth Corps Headquarters. The Regional and Popular Force desertion rate which continues to remain lower than in the past indicates that confidence in the Government of Vietnam is higher than last year. Beneficial results are reflected in the fact that Regional Force assigned strength is approximately 95 percent and Popular Force strength is approximately 98 percent of authorized strength.

The overall security status of major lines of communication displayed little change during the month. Surprisingly light Viet Cong interdiction was evidenced on these routes. Except for the last six days of the month, on the nights of October 25 and 26, the Viet Cong cratered Route 4 between the My Thuan Ferry and Long Dinh in 39 places, although at only one site the road was closed for longer than four hours. On the night of October 27, the Viet Cong cratered the road in eight places and constructed two roadblocks in the same general area of the preceding night. Repairs were again accomplished on the same day and the road was reopened to at least one lane of traffic. Constant damage and repairs

makes the condition of Route 4 poor, at best. The security status of all land and waterway lines of communication in the Fourth Corps remained unchanged except for the regression of Route 24 from My Tho to Cho Gao which reverted from green to amber, and Route 26 from Ben Tre to Ba Tri which reverted from amber to red. Overall maintenance of most major roads in the Fourth Corps is poor. All airfields in the corps are operational.

The pacification programs regained momentum after a slowdown due to preparation for and conduct of elections. All Revolutionary Development cadre teams which were scheduled to work in second semester hamlets are now working in them; however, some teams are returning to their former areas during the hours of darkness. The recent allocation of 36 Regional Force companies and 166 Popular Force platoons to the Fourth Corps, when recruited and trained, will enhance the security posture of the Revolutionary Development areas and permits greater flexibility in the employment of the Revolutionary Development teams. The Viet Cong initiated a total of nine incidents against the Revolutionary Development cadre resulting in 22 cadre killed, 52 Revolutionary Development cadre wounded, and 13 Revolutionary Development cadre missing. Greater command emphasis is being placed on the pacification effort.

During the first three and one-half weeks of October, Viet Cong activity of the Fourth Corps was relatively light despite the Lower House elections which took place on October 22. In the week prior to the House of Representatives elections, there were only 85 Viet Cong initiated incidents. Although the Viet Cong warned people not to vote, intelligence reports did not indicate any large scale anti-election campaigns, such as occurred before the Presidential elections. On the night of October 24, there was a sudden upsurge in Viet Cong activity in Viet Cong Military Region II. The towns of Phan Phu, Mo Cay, and Ba Tri of Kien Hoa Province were shelled with 60MM mortars and Ben Tre, the capital of Kien Hoa Province, was shelled with 75MM recoilless rifle and 82MM mortar fire. During the daylight hours of October 25, Ben Tre Airfield was mortared and two personnel carriers were destroyed by recoilless rifle fire near Ben Tre.

There were 597 Viet Cong initiated incidents reported for October as compared to 728 for the month of September. No major ground attacks occurred during October, although Phu Hung Op, located eight kilometers northeast of Ba Cang Subsector, Binh Long Province, was overrun and its defenders suffered heavy casualties. Except for this one incident, the pattern of enemy initiated activity continued to consist of harassments to outposts and watchtowers and occasional shelling of district towns.

Most of the Viet Cong increased activity occurred in Dinh Tuong and Kien Hoa Provinces where the 7th Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division has recently conducted more successful operations than at any time during the past two years.

In Dinh Tuong Province, combined 7th Army of the Republic of Vietnam Division and 2nd Brigade, 9th U. S. Division Operations have caused the Viet Cong severe losses and have forced them to concentrate units in the area in order to retain their hold and to interdict Highway 4. The overall situation in these areas is more favorable than it has been in the last two years. This is caused by an increase in sustained Government of Vietnam operations.

The morale of the Viet Cong has continued to decline, as has the morale of the people living in Viet Cong-controlled and contested areas. Although the morale and devotion of the Viet Cong cadre remains high, intelligence reports indicate that increased effort is required from these cadre to politically indoctrinate and motivate both the armed forces and populace in order to offset their lowering morale. Losses sustained by the Viet Cong totaled 1,258 killed in action, 524 captured, and 582 weapons captured, compared to September losses of 944 killed in action, 300 captured, and 377 weapons lost. Returnees under the Chieu Hoi Program totaled 531. In addition to the Chieu Hoi, there were 72 Hoa Hao soldiers who returned to Government of Vietnam control.

The primary objectives of our naval forces in Vietnam last month were to destroy the enemy by offensive action, interdict his waterborne logistic efforts, and promote the Government of Vietnam by conducting psychological operations.

The onset of the northeast monsoon has required redeployment of Market Time Forces. The larger, more seaworthy ships have been concentrated on the northern-east coast in anticipation of trawler infiltration attempts during the seasonally inclement weather.

Game Warden Forces continued to provide effective patrols in the riverine areas. Many small raids were conducted against Viet Cong Communications-Liaison Way Stations, ambush positions, and the enemy infrastructure. In one unusual operation, ten Viet Cong (including a hamlet chief and the head of the Viet Cong assassination security platoon) were abducted while attending the funeral of a Viet Cong village chief killed the night before by a seal team. Information concerning the funeral was obtained from a Hoi Chanh. The actual abduction was conducted by 40 Vietnamese inserted by helicopter obtained through the Fourth Corps, supported and extracted by Vietnamese Regional Advisory Groups and Game Warden Forces, and coordinated by the Regional Advisory Group Advisor.

Coronado operations of the Mobile Riverine Force continued in Dinh Tuong and Long An Provinces. Significant contact was made in Coronado V in the Bac Long and Cam Son Secret Zones in Dinh Tuong Province, resulting in 173 killed in action and 12 U. S. and Army of the Republic of Vietnamese killed.

Two Vietnamese ships, converted into medical/psychological warfare ships, treated 10,800 medical and dental patients and dispensed food and clothing to approximately 20,000 needy people, while psychological warfare teams, cultural teams, and social workers provided entertainment and propaganda in the form of movies, plays and speeches. During October, these ships operated a total of 32 days in the Bassac and Mekong Rivers.

7th Air Force

The objectives of the 7th Air Force during October were to provide Allied direct support, tactical air and logistical support for ground operations, locate the enemy and his resources, and limit enemy movement.

In support of these objectives, there were a total of 11,029 tactical air sorties flown in-country during the month of October; 7,999 of these were flown as close air support missions for ground operations. Ordnance was expended primarily against enemy troop concentrations, base areas, fortifications and installations. There were 232 secondary explosions, 4,382 military structures destroyed, another 2,591 damaged, and 280 sampans destroyed.

Included in the overall effort were 758 combat skyspot sorties flown to deny the enemy the use of night time as a sanctuary. An additional 336 combat skyspot sorties were flown during daylight hours in inclement weather. Two hundred sixty-four immediate support requests were honored by Allied flareships illuminating battlefields, depriving the enemy the concealment of darkness, and flaring for tactical air strikes in all corps. Airlift figures were equally impressive with approximately 292,000 passengers and 60,000 tons of cargo being airlifted throughout South Vietnam.

More than 2,500 Vietnamese Air Force strike sorties were flown against enemy targets, resulting in 1,098 military structures destroyed, 714 damaged, 85 sampans destroyed and 18 secondary explosions.

Herbicide operations increased more than 10 percent this month as compared to September. Five hundred of the 684 sorties scheduled during the month were flown. The majority of these were defoliation missions scheduled into War Zone D. A limited number of sorties were scheduled against Viet Cong crops in southern Second Corps and the eastern and northern portions of the Third Corps. Missions were also flown over the U Minh forest in the Fourth Corps.

Constant pressure was placed on Viet Cong/North Vietnamese Army movement by the more than 7,200 visual reconnaissance sorties flown in O1/02 type aircraft. This extensive surveillance program produced 1,631 significant sightings and resulted in 341 immediate airstrike sorties being flown to destroy fleeting enemy targets.