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After Action Report Operation Fort Higuely

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22 May 67

1. This report will cover civil affairs activities and operations within the Brigade TAOR during the period 20 Feb thru 14 May 67.

2. All civic action programs and projects conducted during Operation Fort Higuely were coordinated with the Tri Tam District Chief and Sub-Sector Advisor in order that such endeavors would not conflict with plans and priorities previously established by local QVN Officials. Further, conferences were held to insure that all planned projects and programs had the approval of the Tri Tam District Chief and that they would be meaningful and lasting contribution to the local population.

3. In that Tri Tam District, Binh Duong Province was not placed on the National Priority List for Revolutionary Development most supplies and materials were procured from unfunded accounts of various volunteer relief agencies, 25th Inf Div Helping Hand stores and 3d Bde Civic Action Fund.

4. The intent of the Bde Civic Action Program has been to promote the image of the local QVN as the rightful benefactors of the people with the US Forces taking a secondary role in the application of these programs. Some difficulty was experienced during the initial phases of this program in motivating the Vietnamese, however, this has been overcome since the successful completion of several self help projects.

5. Civic Action Projects have been limited to Dinh Thanh (Dau Tieng) and immediate environs in that the remaining hamlets of the Michelin and Ben Qui Plantations have been, for the most part, under VC domination. However, this has not precluded conducting MEDGAP within the aforementioned areas when sufficient security has been available. The above situation is the primary reason for not placing this area on the National Priority List for Revolutionary Development.

6. The attachment of a Civil Affairs Platoon from the 2d CA Co has allowed this Bde to perform a full range of civil affairs functions to include the care of refugees displaced to this area due to operational necessity.

7. A Vietnamese-American Friendship Council has been established with the purpose of allowing better communication between US and Vietnamese Officials. Problems of mutual concern have been discussed and for the most part resolved during these meetings. Further, it has been found that this council is an excellent vehicle to discuss, coordinate and approve civic action projects. The Friendship Council meets at least once each month with the Chairman being the Tri Tam District Chief.

WILLIAMS, Arthur Action Report Operation Fox Flapingly (cont)

9. The Civil Affairs Office has acted as the principal coordinating agency between the Bde and officials of the Michelin Plantation in matters of real estate, utilities, and the utilization of many facilities of the rubber processing plant, to include machine and carpentry shops. The plantation has furnished laborers for various beautification projects in the areas occupied by the Bde without cost to the US Government. Relations between 3d Bde and the French and Vietnamese officials have been excellent. However, elements of the 1st Inf Div have alienated themselves, particularly with the French management, ~~due~~ to their wanton destruction of property within the plantation proper. These actions have prompted letters of protest to be written to various American and Vietnamese Government agencies in Saigon.

9 11. A refugee center has been established in Vinh Thanh utilizing the elementary school as temporary housing. Currently Tri Tam District Officials are controlling the program with support from 3d Bde in the way of food stuffs and civic action supplies. The Bde Surgeon has held several sick calls for these refugees during report period. Presently there are 397 refugees at the center (15 men, 97 women and 237 children).

12. The 3d Bde Task Force initiated plans during the first phases of base camp development concerning worthwhile civic action projects to be started during the period covered by Operation Biscaglia. To date 17 civic action projects have been completed with 9 more underway or in the planning stages. These projects are inclusive of continuing programs which include milk distribution to various schools and English Classes for students and interested Vietnamese adults. Completed projects primarily involved construction of new latrines, school playground equipment, information bulletin boards, fences, repair of existing roads and school facilities. One building was completely refurbished and is being used as a nursery school for PF dependent children. Current major projects are construction of 4 additional classrooms for the Binh Thanh Elementary

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complete repair of the local high school and a brick making project for construction of housing for refugee families not connected with the refugee group that is currently occupying the elementary school. The major portion of civic action projects have been or are being conducted on a self help basis using PF troops and local civilian labor with supplies and materials plus technical assistance being furnished by the Ede as well as the Sub-Sector Advisory team with additional commodities from Binh Duong province Office of Civilian Operations. Another noteworthy project currently being conducted is a public works program concerning itself with renovation of the entire drainage system of Binh Thanh as well as repair of the village road network and ultimately construction of garbage disposal system. All labor for this project comes from long time resident refugees and indigenous families of this village. Payment is made in the form of food stuff equal to the prevailing labor wage rate. The food stuffs comes from captured rice stores and other commodities procured from volunteer relief agencies.

9 13. Village Council elections have been held and new members were installed in office during this report period. Elections were held without VC inspired incident and 71% of eligible voters cast ballots during this election.

14. Three abductions by the Viet Cong of prominent persons have taken place during Apr and May. The Chief of Plantation Security Guards and an out-hailet Chief were taken during the month of Apr, both have since been returned. The Personnel Director, Michelin Plantation, was abducted during the current month and indications are that he will not be returned by the Viet Cong in the near future.

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