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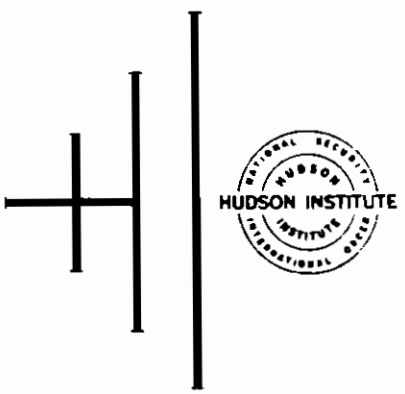
A MILITARY AND POLICE SECURITY PROGRAM FOR SOUTH VIETNAM

Frank Armbruster



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By

Frank E. Armbruster

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Some of those who have been kind enough to review and contribute to the document disagreed considerably with the author over the concepts contained in this report, but the criticisms were almost invariably constructive, and in general are reflected in the document, even where substantial disagreement still remains.

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INTRODUCTION

The problems facing counterinsurgents are some of the most difficult found in warfare; they become even more manifold when guerrilla units and assassination teams make the progovernment educative and administrative sectors of the population one of their prime targets. But despite the spectrum of problems encountered, solutions to them usually consist in large part of offensive military operations and police activity.

In order for counterinsurgents to develop effective tactics for guerrilla conflicts, they must normally examine the conflicts for their peculiar tactical requirements. Of course, the more intense and professional the research, the more likely there will be a discovery of the peculiar vulnerabilities of the guerrillas and the development of unique tactics to take advantage of them. Yet even a less-than-exhaustive examination might occasionally uncover a capability that can be productively exploited.

One should not be surprised, therefore, if in a confrontation like the Vietnamese war, this capability appears to be simply one of tactics. In fact, the argument can be made that tactics may be the key issue in Vietnam today, in somewhat the same sense they were in World War I. There is a strange similarity between these issues in both wars. In World War I, the tactics developed around the heavy machine gun and barbed wire reduced to utter futility the political and strategic machinations that the Great Powers indulged in before and during World War I. The powers became mired in trench warfare in Europe; and not only were the carefully laid plans of the Triple Entente and Triple Alliance undermined, but, in effect, it seemed that all the careful diplomatic maneuvering the Germans had engaged in since Bismarck's time had been made inappropriate by a new weapon and tactics. It really didn't matter now whether Germany fought a one-front or two-front war. It could fight on both fronts. Nor did it change matters for the French when one of those fronts collapsed: the Germans could move their armies from the Russian to the Western front. Because the tactical problem had not been solved (despite the introduction of the tank, which was the key to the solution), there was still no movement of the lines on the Western front, merely a constant and grinding attrition.

Despite the talk of Vietnam being a political problem requiring a political solution, and despite all the maneuvering to get the Russians, or the Poles or the French to induce the contestants to come to the conference table, the immediate factor that dominates the entire South Vietnamese situation--and for that matter, the whole of the Southeast Asian problem today--is the Communist guerrilla and cadre tactics in fighting the "small war." This is also true regardless of changes in the political milieu of South Vietnam, and despite the apparent lack of popular support for the Viet Cong. Also, although our outstanding, conventional battle successes have undoubtedly produced a grave effect on VC morale, they have not caused the guerrillas to capitulate.

It is the contention of this paper that Communist local guerrilla operations and cadre operations create essentially a police problem for the victim nation. But before police operations in Vietnam can be implemented, the violence in the countryside must first be reduced to an acceptable level, probably by military action. Some of this action may have to be unique to provide the required level of security; the ambush and patrol "belt" tactic, described in detail later in this paper, may be central to success in this effort.

In Vietnam, police activity may not be able to root out the VC infrastructure unless military tactics and an overall military plan are designed specifically to support this police operation. In effect, the police work may have to become the tail that wags the dog. In this respect, this situation may be analogous to that of the marine amphibious force that went ashore on a tiny Pacific island in World War II. The actual marine landing was carried out by many fewer men than were used on the entire invasion fleet and the landing force might have cost less than 10% of the entire fleet supporting the operation. Nevertheless, the expensive fleet was there for precisely that reason--to support the marine operation. At the moment of landing, no valid argument could have been made that adequate manpower of the right quality was not available for the landing force; nor did it matter if the commander of the marine landing was outranked by the admiral in charge of the fleet. While the operation was in progress, every effort of the task force was directed toward making it successful. And the tactics used by the fleet were designed to support the landing. Similarly, the military tactics of many of the forces in Vietnam may have to be tailored to implement police action for us to succeed in the small war. Many military operations may have to be specifically designed around providing an environment in which policemen and professional administrators can carry out their jobs.

The particular geographic environment of Vietnam and an insurgent disadvantage associated with guerrilla deployment--at least that applying to places other than the thickest jungle areas of the country--may lend themselves to a militarily assisted solution to many of Vietnam's internal security problems. If we were to utilize these two factors, a level of security might be provided for successive regions that would allow them a return to normalcy. Normalcy is defined here as the traditional quasi-autonomous existence of the rural areas under the village and hamlet leaders, the ability to get to market hamlets, visit relatives and friends unmolested, be protected from high levels of violence and repeated large military operations, etc. The emphasis in this paper is on military, constabulary and urban police activity to provide the security to sustain this time-tested <u>modus operandi</u> rather than on indoctrinating the population with possibly unnatural feelings of profound loyalty to a central government or an ideology, in order to inspire opposition to the Viet Cong.

From all evidence, it seems likely that the top requirement of rural populations (at least in Vietnam) is <u>security</u> from outside

destructive forces[1] and that the government that provides it will be acceptable to the people.[2] If that government is just, and free from undue corruption, and if it can also assist the villagers in their self-generated improvement programs, they may endorse it strongly. Without the security, however, very little can be done; for social improvement programs presently are not the prime requirement of the peasant and cannot substitute for security.

The objectives and many of the general military and police activities described in this paper are by no means thought of as new in themselves. But some concepts (in particular, the always-encroaching, continuous ambush and patrol "frontier" maintained away from built-up areas) are rather unique; and the selective, systematic and thorough application of the older techniques in one area at a time, in a program specifically designed for the geographic configuration of Vietnam, may represent a significantly different use of resources.

Since the introduction of U.S. forces into Vietnam, the environment of the war has changed, causing a change in the effectiveness of certain tactics to resolve the war. This point, sometimes overlooked, has many precedents in history. Not long ago, critics of Giulio Douhet's theory of defeat of a nation through massive air strikes felt they had been proven right because of the inconclusive effects of the air attacks of the Spanish Civil War and the relatively light German raids on Britain early in World War II. Douhet was perhaps wrong in assuming that a nation so attacked would be forced to surrender without a ground invasion (he could not foresee the atom bomb). But the effects of air warfare from 1936 to 1942 did not conclusively prove him wrong. Later in the war, massive U.S. attacks on Japan showed that greater and more systematic use of air power--although not necessarily causing a country to surrender, and though at least as morally reprehensible as the German raids on Britain--could, as far as offensive military operations were concerned, reduce certain enemies to utter helplessness. Some similar power alteration may now be taking place in Vietnam. The colonialist French Army could not even consider using certain ground force tactics in what today is North and South Vietnam together that the regular South Vietnamese and allied forces might today be able to use in South Vietnam alone.

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[1]Raymond D. Gastil, The Problem of Counterinsurgency in South Viet-Nam, HI-707-RR, June 1966, Section II, contains a wide discussion of the village structure and requirements.

[2]According to one account, even the Japanese puppet government of Manchukuo in Manchuria in the 1930's was accepted by the peasant when it seemed capable of bringing some semblance of order to that harried land. Nor could the local Communist insurgent forces ("bandits") gain sufficient popular support to thwart this government. In fact the Chinese-manned Manchukuo puppet army supplemented the Japanese Kwantung army against Communist insurgents and other anti-Japanese forces in a relatively successful counterinsurgency campaign; see Chong-Sik Lee, Counter-insurgency in Manchuria: The Japanese Experience, 1931-1940, The RAND Corporation, RM-5012-ARPA, January, 1967, pp. 74-78.

Part I of this paper, including the "war plan" outlined in Section 3, primarily addresses the military portion of the security operation. Part II outlines the constabulary and police requirements--requirements that are perhaps an even more vital part of the operation than the military portion, but that cannot be carried out unless the military operations outlined in Part I are successful. Here, however, the Vietnamese operation may be able to borrow from earlier experience; for constabulary and police techniques may be more common to all guerrilla wars than military tactics. Conversely, some techniques developed in this plan may be applicable in another area; Thailand may be an example of this.

PART I

A. Guerrilla Force Deployment Methods

One of the greatest difficulties facing guerrilla commanders is the assembly and deployment of their forces operating in unit sizes of a platoon upward. The mobility of guerrilla forces in the daytime depends upon and varies with the amount of surveillance that antiguerrilla forces can maintain. Since there is usually much more intensive surveillance in the daylight than at night--except possibly in the deep jungle areas--the guerrilla forces normally assemble and deploy in the dark. This point is particularly noteworthy in places in which United States forces are involved, as in South Vietnam. There the U.S. deploys large numbers of aircraft and helicopters to maintain surveillance during daylight hours; yet after dark, opposition to guerrilla control of most trails, forests and rice paddies is left mainly to indigenous militia-type forces.

Almost universally, these militia forces patrol only in areas that are relatively close to their home hamlets. This means, then, that except in places where the villages or hamlets are so close and numerous that the patrolled areas overlap, a region a few hours' march from the hamlet may be a relatively safe assembly area for the Viet Cong.[1] In no way is this statement intended to detract from the value of the militia night patrols, for it is this type of patrol that warns the village that a Communist unit is approaching. The difficulty is that these patrols may be unable to prevent (or even report) the assembly of large guerrilla units beyond their range of surveillance. Being able to do so would help significantly in preventing the Communists from striking where and when they will.

Offensive patrolling by U.S. forces--including night patrols--has been on the increase, but this patrol and ambush work is often carried out deep in the mountains far from the populated areas and probably still does not equal the activity of the PF night guards. The U.S. forces in the highlands do, however, provide an initial "frontier" of large units and do discourage large, hard-core VC and NVA detachments from operating against the densely populated lowlands. They also provide reaction forces to aid attacked hamlets. The spoiling strikes by large U.S. and allied units appear to be, on the whole, an effective defensive tactic against attacks by large NVA and VC units from the highlands.

The assembly of a guerrilla force (as compared to VC or NVA "regulars") is not a simple or rapid procedure, even when the force is operating against primarily militia-type opposition. In regions contiguous to non-Viet Cong, populated areas, the guerrillas can generally move only at night. The assembling sub-units have to receive information ahead of time about where they must gather: since no unit of any size can assemble before it gets to the appropriate general assembly area, a difficult administrative and communication process must be undertaken by the guerrilla commanders. These insurgent units often depend heavily on local

[1]Even now, U.S. officers indicate that, by and large, the night belongs to the Viet Cong; see "U.S. Study Calls a Night Army Essential for Victory in Vietnam," The New York Times, August 6, 1967, p. 6L.

messengers and guides, without whom they may simply get lost or stumble into government units. They also lack motorized equipment in sufficient numbers to move their troops, though they can and do use sampans for this purpose on the waterways. In any event, they normally cannot use the roads in daylight and even find it difficult to do so in the dark. In fact, the units usually must walk, and the walking may have to be confined to trails rather than the more easily traversed roads. Nevertheless, these operations are being carried out at night by at least small guerrilla units that make up the insurgent strike forces in the frustrating "small war" (compared to the large, regular-unit warfare) in Vietnam.

B. A Strategy Based on a Specific Tactical Characteristic of the Vietnamese Conflict

In order to control the countryside at night, insurgents must have military units that are at least large enough to overawe competent anti-guerrilla government constabulary and police detachments (the development of such government forces and effective techniques for their use is vital to this program).[1] But in order to survive as military formations, the guerrillas must assemble and give battle only where and when they choose. This requires an ability not only to conceal the dispersed segments of their units, but also to assemble and deploy these units at will. Police and constabulary operations cannot be supported unless this night military capability is denied the guerrillas.

As we noted earlier in this paper, night patrolling is now going on in Vietnam. The type of night ambushing we will discuss from now on, however, is different from that generally practiced in Vietnam today. It is based on another set of requirements and uses entirely different tactics. It is a key part of an over-all coordinated "war plan" and is carried out in a pattern, on a scale, and with a thoroughness, persistency and intensity that, to our knowledge, has never been attempted in South Vietnam before. It provides a theory of victory; it is designed to move combat operations away from the populated areas.

It need hardly be pointed out that the development of a theory of victory might have a significant effect on the outcome of the small war. The Viet Cong have a story, and they can tell you about how they are going to win the war, even though they may talk about taking twenty years of fighting to do it. Probably one of the greatest weaknesses of the American cause, both in Vietnam and at home, is the lack of a plausible story about how we are going to win the war, and of clearly demonstrable progress as the war goes forward. There must be such a theory and plan if one is to mitigate the somewhat unusual hostility of the press and dispel the profound misgivings about the war among some Americans, even those in the employ of the government. Americans here and in Saigon all have a different opinion as to how the war can be won and what the role they are playing has to do with this victory. In my opinion, part of the reason for this ambiguity

[1] See Part II for a discussion of a Constabulary-Police program.

is that there is really no believable, feasible war plan--a plan which, if carried out, could provide the kind of security that everyone knows is essential to create an environment in which people can commit themselves to opposition to the VC. The theory of victory and the over-all plan to implement it are important if one is to know precisely where one's effort fits in with everyone else's.

This paper tries to deal with developing a heuristic plan to lead to programs meeting these needs. It tries to solve many of the police and military problems simultaneously, and puts the great emphasis on increased area security. If we were to ask for the one great difference in purely military tactics that is called for in this paper, it is probably that point defense against small VC guerrilla units, for security purposes, is not stressed. In fact, what is suggested in this paper is that military and police forces be used to provide an offensive campaign and an area defense and pacification process behind the ambush and patrol "frontier," as described below. The object is to return geographic areas to the degree of normalcy that customary economic and travel functions (e.g., between one hamlet and the next market hamlet) can be carried out amid an acceptable degree of violence. A degree of security equal to that which one experiences in Central Park at night (e.g., one or two armed police are relatively safe from attack) can, I believe, be considered adequate for this purpose. As stated earlier, the objectives are not new, but the methods used to provide this amount of security over village, district and province areas need to be different. These tactics revolve around the establishment of a constantly expanding patrol and ambush "belt" in the "wilderness" away from built-up areas, to protect the heavy constabulary and urban police forces operating throughout the area behind the "belt." This concept, if feasible, seems promising.

In short, this program calls for up to five levels of counter-guerrilla and counter-Communist cadre offensive operations to be carried out in any given geographic zone: first, a clearing action (if necessary) by conventional units to break up, capture, destroy or drive out large Viet Cong units; second, the deployment of a "belt" of platoon-sized ambush and patrol units from first-line outfits behind the conventional formations. These units will work outward from the populated areas in a continuous circular "frontier" so thick that it will be difficult for a sizable Viet Cong unit[1] (or supply party, or perhaps even couriers) to slip back through; third, the covering of the cleared area with a permanent constabulary and police net to rout out individual guerrillas and political cadre members;[2] fourth, the replacement of first-line outfits

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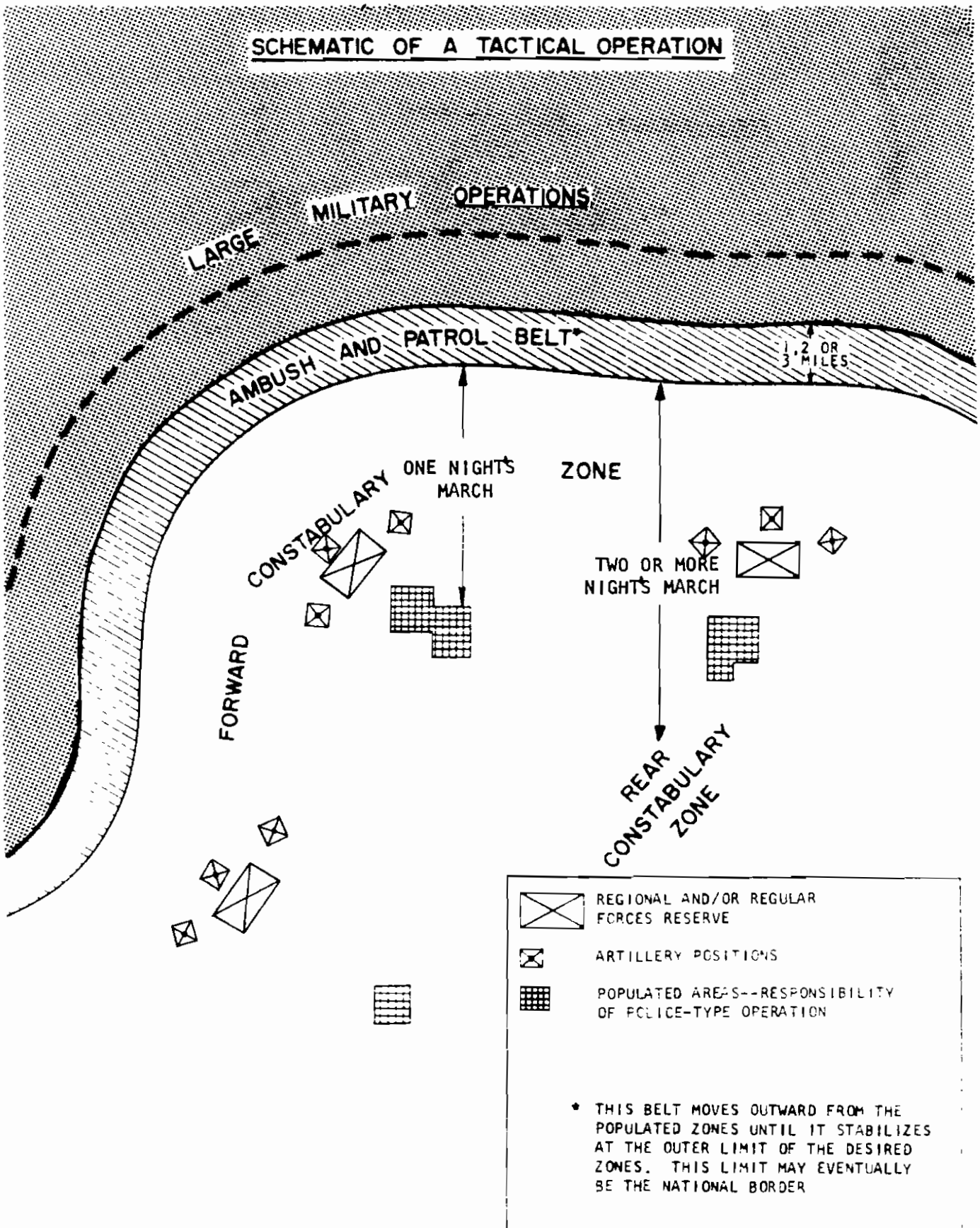
[1]See Section 3, "A Heuristic Small War Plan for South Vietnam," for a rough estimate of density and troop requirements for selected sections of Vietnam.

[2]See Part II. There should be almost immediate payoffs under this system while the Communist "infrastructure" is being eliminated. It should quickly and drastically reduce the freedom of movement of local guerrillas and cadre members and disrupt the support system of VC, thus significantly neutralizing the local Communist structure while the VC infrastructure is being picked up.


SCHEMATIC OF A TACTICAL OPERATION
LARGE MILITARY OPERATIONS
AMBUSH AND PATROL BELT*
1,2 OR 3 MILES
ONE NIGHTS MARCH
ZONE
CONSTABULARY
TWO OR MORE NIGHTS MARCH
FORWARD
REAR CONSTABULARY ZONE
REGIONAL AND/OR REGULAR FORCES RESERVE
ARTILLERY POSITIONS
POPULATED AREAS--RESPONSIBILITY OF POLICE-TYPE OPERATION
* THIS BELT MOVES OUTWARD FROM THE POPULATED ZONES UNTIL IT STABILIZES AT THE OUTER LIMIT OF THE DESIRED ZONES. THIS LIMIT MAY EVENTUALLY BE THE NATIONAL BORDER

in the ambush and patrol function by regional and popular force troops when the tempo of activity has decreased, making these first-line forces available for new "frontier" operations and mobile reserve functions; and fifth, the replacement of the regional troops in the ambush and patrol "belt" by militia forces, while regional troops provide one of three categories of mobile reserves for this continuous ambush "frontier" out in the wilderness. (In areas where opposition is light, local troops alone might be adequate to carry out the first phase of operations.)

1. General Operational Considerations

Under this program, large-scale counterinsurgent operations will normally begin as a slow encroachment on unsafe areas. Depending on the enemy forces in the region, this movement may require the deployment of relatively large units in strategic points in advance of the patrols to prevent the influx of large insurgent units from neighboring areas intending to overwhelm the patrols. These larger government units would engage the enemy in the nearby areas to destroy or disperse them and keep them off balance while the "belt" moved forward. Extensive planning and exercising will be required to perfect this operation, but once it has been successfully carried out and the night tactics are introduced, the area should change character for the guerrillas; the counterinsurgency forces should not have to repeat the large unit operation for some time, if at all.

This is basically an offensive operation that constantly gains ground and people from the enemy by the inexorable forward movement of the "belt" and the police and constabulary operations behind it. At night, however, it becomes a "front" between the VC units and the population that protects the area behind it. During the day, a few designated and well-controlled checkpoints will be available for civilian movement through the belt, when and where it is absolutely necessary to do so. With darkness, the whole belt, as well as at least the forward constabulary area, comes under a strict curfew, and any movement in the belt area automatically draws fire. Even movement through the frontier during the daylight, at areas other than the checkpoints, will be suspect, especially in jungle areas where civilian movement is not called for.

In the initial operation, coordination between the small and larger sweep units and air and artillery fire support would be quite similar to that normally employed. As each area is "invaded" by the ambush platoons in the belt, however, detailed operational plans must be drawn up. There will be a requirement for a "strategic" over-all plan for the area, with regional responsibility for the circle of patrol and ambush activity that spreads out from the populated areas. Detailed tactical sections of the plans would designate platoon sectors of operation in the ambush and patrol belt, as well as the platoons to man each sector in a "two-crew" (or three-crew) system. When "off duty," the reserve platoons of regulars would be grouped to serve double duty as heavy units in emergencies.

A form of "operations analysis" may have to be performed for each area to determine the optimum use of units on this duty; for some areas, "two-days-out-for-every-one-day-in" might possibly be a useful system for first-rate outfits. The number of days out on the frontier before relief, will vary with the unit and the area involved; it should be possible to remain on the frontier four to seven days once the system gets going. In short campaigns (i.e., up to two weeks), some platoons of regulars may be able to stay on the line constantly. If each platoon could be "checked out" on more than one sector, a great deal of flexibility would be available to the planners, both in the percentage of troops kept in the field and in the rotation process. (Militia outfits taking over from Regional Forces would work on a "two-days-back-for-every-day-up" principle.)

A battalion of U.S. light infantry normally provides nine rifle platoons, three light weapons platoons and several heavy weapons, reconnaissance and antitank platoons.[1] Each brigade is normally made up of three such infantry battalions and the equivalent of one tank battalion. A division that is given the responsibility of controlling an area and commits one of its brigades to patrol and ambush activity would therefore have upward of thirty platoons available for this work with two big brigades to back up the operation. After the initial operation, when the probability and frequency of large-scale enemy action in the area has been reduced, a second brigade might be applied to this task. A large part of sixty platoons lying in ambush every night on the frontier should reduce the chance of large-scale enemy action behind the belt even further.[2] The battalions of the remaining brigade (that would rotate with the brigades on the belt) should be enough to handle the level of violence that the guerrillas could mount in this environment. At this point, the constabulary forces mentioned earlier, using standard police methods, may be needed to rout out the "dormant" individual guerrillas and small units.

It should be noted that, under these conditions, if the local guerrilla or Communist cadre member runs from the hamlet (as he usually does) at the beginning of a government operation, the purpose of the operation is still served. Instead of his finding sanctuary in the nearest treeline, perhaps only a hundred meters from his hamlet (from which he can, at present, often return home at night after government forces have left), the guerrilla will be forced to find sanctuary further and further away from his home hamlet as the ambush and patrol belt pushes forward. Furthermore, supporting constabulary and police forces will drastically reduce the possibility of his returning home even if he penetrates the belt.

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[1]The personnel from the antitank and recon platoons, etc., can also serve as riflemen for this light combat activity, so that actually the equivalent of as many as fourteen platoons may be available.

[2]The battalions of support troops (such as combat engineers), which could also serve as riflemen for this type of warfare, were not counted in this estimate. In the Philippines and Malaya, such forces were used for similar work against the Huks and Malayan Communist guerrillas.

(The police operation described in Part II assumes that the urban police will keep the houses of the VC under surveillance, particularly in the hamlets nearest to the ambush frontier.) If a "county-fair" type maneuver is used--that is, the hamlet is surrounded with troops while the police search each house--even his ability to run may be cut down. In any event, easy access to home may be gone forever, and with the familiar, safe environment taken away, the local guerrillas and cadre hopefully will reconsider the Chieu Hoi program. (For a further discussion of this facet of the operation see Part II).

The change in environment that the patrol and ambush frontier causes behind its belt will eventually have a drastic effect on the large VC forces outside the area. It should also have an immediate secondary effect on the guerrillas' ability to carry out any significant operation inside the ambushand patrol belt even if they should get through. As the rice-producing areas in Vietnam are gradually encompassed by this frontier, it will also become increasingly more difficult for the VC to recruit or impress coolies to carry sacks of rice through the darkness to the VC base areas. It will now be a very hazardous business, and perhaps even impossible, for the guerrillas to carry out, at least in large "convoys," even if enough cadre remain behind the belt to organize them. The VC units will also lose the ability to pick up local guides who have the latest information on local GVN and allied military deployments, police operations, etc. Without these locals to "hand off" the VC units from hamlet area to hamlet area, the guerrillas' ability to mount even small operations (e.g., mortar attacks) is reduced. The VC unit could, of course, bring with them, local people who had fled before the expanding frontier and who would know the local geography well enough. But unless they had previously run the gauntlet into the area and out again--with all the hazards and uncertainties this involves--even if the VC combat unit got through the belt with the guidance of these displaced, local people, their guides would be unaware of current conditions and would find it extremely difficult, if not impossible, to contact their friends to find out. The ability to pick up and detain all suspects, particularly in the areas near the frontier and especially while military operations are going on, greatly enhances the friendly forces' combat capability but requires much effort in the police and penal establishment areas. Magsaysay found in the Philippines that the ability to "blind" the enemy's intelligence system, accomplished by swift raids and arrests made before a military action, was a key to victory. (See Part II for a discussion of police and prison requirements.)

Under normal conditions, a single platoon of a good outfit, once it is oriented in its assigned sector, should, on the average, be able to make a square mile of terrain extremely unhealthy for guerrillas, even in an area of considerable insurgent density.[1] The platoon would deter

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[1]This capability will vary with terrain; but assuming the troops use available detection devices such as magnetometers, microphones, geophones, trip wires, etc., and of course, dogs to assist in their ambushing and guerrilla search, the author feels the estimate should hold, particularly for guerrilla units larger than a squad.

It is extremely difficult to find documentation from past experience

the movement of guerrillas at night by its ambushes, carefully probe the area for a few hours in the morning under cover of its air umbrella, and then sleep until late afternoon. A single division could probably thoroughly clean out any dangerous elements from an area of 30 to 60 miles in a few days or a week at most.

Once it were absolutely certain that guerrilla forces in an area had been reduced in this manner by first-line units, second-line detachments could gradually replace them. The mission of these follow-on units would be the same as that of the first-line detachments: to continue to deny the area to the depleted guerrilla force after dark, and to support the continuing police and constabulary operations. The third-line (militia) units would do daylight probing but would ask for help from reaction forces at the first sign of any resistance. In essence, their primary job (particularly if the frontier had become semipermanent in an area) would be to lie in ambush on this continuous ambush belt with only minimum movement.

Occasionally first-line units may have to strike an area again if the second- or third-line outfit and the regional force reserves are unable to prevent a recurrence of violence (particularly where the patrol and ambush belt has temporarily or even permanently halted; see Section 3, "Heuristic War Plan for South Vietnam"). The standard operating procedure, however, must be the following: (a) the first-rate force ambush and patrol activity must not move forward until the area is thoroughly subdued; (b) the second- and third-line units must not move up behind the first-rate units unless the area they leave is so well controlled by the constabulary-police operation that organized Communist violence is almost impossible; and (c) before the outer frontier of a district is left to

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for the number of men required per mile of an ambush and patrol frontier. From the point of view of the number required simply to detect movement through their area we have experience with our own special forces camps throughout Vietnam. There is also some information on a British operation in the Malayan jungles. Brigadier M.C.A. Henniker describes "Operation Hive" in which he threw an ambush and patrol belt approximately 90 miles long around an area to keep guerrillas <u>in</u>.

Their task was to: (1) "ambush all known tracks out of the area and all ridge lines..." and
(2) to "conduct a slow systematic search of the outer ring."

The bandits would thus be contained within the Outer Ring. "The space within we divided into eight sectors, lettered A to H. Into any or all of them we could deploy the 1/7 Gurkha Rifles in whole or in part, knowing they knew the ground thoroughly..."

"We were searching for under 100 bandits in an area exceeding 600 square miles..." That is a perimeter of about 90 miles. "We deployed the whole 2/7 Gurkha Rifles [a battalion] and two squadrons of the Special Air Service Regiment [probably company-size units] on the Outer Ring [a total of about 24 platoons or 100 squads]." M.C.A. Henniker, Brigadier, <u>Red Shadow Over Malaya</u> (London: William Blackwood Sons, Ltd., 1955), pp. 137, 140, 152, 153. This amounts to about a squad per running mile of Outer Ring.

As it turned out, the main group of bandits did not appear to try to leave the area, but the ring picked up a courier on the way in, and about one-quarter of the bandits in the district were eliminated by the operation before it was called off because of requirements for the troops elsewhere.

the militia, the "strategic" plan for that district should be completed and the area should be actually functioning normally.[1]

We can hardly stress enough the importance of progressing very carefully and not too rapidly with this program. In fact, it is almost vital that a "show-piece" area first be developed so that it becomes completely obvious to even, for instance, the most hostile member of the press, that the operation has changed things drastically for the better. In Section 3 of Part I we will discuss possible areas where the program may take place. One area being considered is Phong Dinh province abutting the Hoa Hao district in An Giang province. If this province were made so secure that a person driving by jeep from Long Xuyen to Can Tho would find the countryside along the whole district as unmolested by guerrillas as it is in An Giang province, the results of the military operation in the small war would be so obvious that progress would bave to be admitted.

Obvious progress should also affect the morale of both the Viet Cong and the progovernment South Vietnamese. As in all civil wars of this type (where many people may be fence-sitting, waiting to see which way to jump), progress can breed more progress, and slow-but-steady achievement can be the quickest way to victory. As more people feel confident that they are secure under the government, increasingly more may desire this safer and more peaceful life. This could be discouraging to the VC and conceivably might adversely affect their organizational capability. The best possible result could be a "snowballing" arising from the coalescence of these occurrences and leading to a rapid weakening of the entire VC movement. Although this is not an impossibility, the more probable effect (at least initially) will likely be considerably less spectacular, and the grinding advances will have to be pressed without letup.

We have already mentioned that, in areas where there are large insurgent formations, the counterinsurgent operation may consist of a sweep to break up or drive off the large units and then fill in behind the sweep as it moves along with the platoon-size patrols of the belt ambushing the trails leading back to the hamlets in the government area. As mentioned earlier, other large units are needed to shield the platoons from heavy insurgent formations in adjoining areas. If the sweep is successful, the larger guerrilla forces of the insurgents will still have the choice of trying to slip small units through the sweeping formations. These units would be vulnerable to the ambushing patrols behind the sweep through which they must pass if they hope to regain control over the local population. In any event, the sweep would greatly reduce the possibility of a large enemy force remaining sufficiently intact in the area to jump one or more of the platoons.

In response to the first deployment of these platoons in the ambush and patrol belt, the enemy (whether or not he has been molested

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[1]Of course, there will be places where VC strength is so limited that second- or even third-line troops could take over ambush activities early in the operation.

by a large sweep) may take one or a combination of several courses of action. He may try to slip away in large or small units; he may try to group superior forces and overwhelm the platoons despite the difficulties that confront him; or he may just try to disperse, lie low and outwait the operation. He also may choose to ignore the operation in the immediate vicinity and launch a large diversionary attack with another force in a nearby area to draw off the troops. This option may well be the one most easily carried out, and traditionally it is one he has often chosen in the past. (The most recent experince of a diverting attack has been the NVA offensive in the DMZ region.)

If the operation is carried out correctly, he may have to slip away ahead of the belt, but he may have great trouble getting back through the belt, at least in units of any great size. It may also be impossible for him just to lie low.

The insurgent's second course of action, gathering a force outside the belt large enough to overwhelm any one platoon, is perhaps one of the most inviting from his point of view. This platoon-hunting is, however, not that easily done--even if he were to successfully assemble such a force--because he would not know the exact location of the platoons. The guerrillas would have to be quite certain of where the platoon is before they launched their attack or they would be liable to be discovered, before making close, quick contact with enemy forces, in an extremely dangerous area covered by heavy artillery and air-delivered firepower. Grouping in the dark for a platoon lying in ambush is an exceedingly hazardous business, even for a larger force. It may be one of the costliest ways for the VC to "take out" allied platoons. This is particularly so in the ambush frontier operation when each platoon is supported by enormous, rapid firepower. Discovering and stopping such guerrilla movements, with or without the support of quick reaction forces, is precisely what the ambush frontier is set up to do. In fact, a platoon can pull back from its position, if pressure on it gets too heavy, and leave the woods and rice paddies to the artillery and planes. (It should be noted that losing a platoon position does not have the psychological effect of losing a camp or some permanent installation, and the enemy is to some degree now located in the vicinity of the gap in the belt.)

If he chooses the third course of action--disperse and lie low until the platoons leave--the insurgent can have even greater trouble. As we discussed here earlier, the platoons will probe the area thoroughly for a time in the daylight, and second-line troops will take over the patrol and ambush function when the first troops move on. Constabulary forces will begin to search out small, "dormant" guerrilla units missed by the moving frontier as soon as the larger ambush patrols have been deployed. They will also wait behind the belt for individuals or small groups of guerrillas who try to return to their homes in the government-controlled area or who appear in search of food and water.

Launching a diversionary attack elsewhere adequate to force the withdrawal of the units involved in supporting the police operation depends

on several factors. First, the insurgents must have freedom to assemble and deploy a force large enough to cause such a withdrawal. This assumes that allied troop activity in the vicinity of the target area has been so low that such enemy deployment is possible. Second, it assumes that reaction forces in the neighboring area under attack cannot contain the enemy operation without help from the troops involved in the nearby police support activity. On the other hand, it may assume that public pressure would be so great, or the commanders would become so rattled, that troops would be diverted to the threatened area even though the reaction forces could eventually handle the situation. There is no question but that diversionary tactics would be hard to cope with; but it is essential that the forces being used for the police-support operation not be withdrawn except as a last resort to save a more valuable target from "permanent" VC occupation.

The moving patrol and ambush frontier method of clearing an area would force most heavy insurgency action out to the rim of the expanding, secured zone (which would always be maintained in a nonbuilt-up area), where our firepower could be put to a much greater use. Once the belt of military patrols, aided by the constabulary and police, had eliminated the local residue of hard-core enemy units in one province, the program could be applied to new, adjacent provinces while clearing operations were being continuously interposed between secured and unsecured zones. (See Section 3, "A Heuristic War Plan for South Vietnam.")

As we stated earlier, the creeping encroachment, linked with the normal large-unit harassment of enemy forces outside the clearing operations, should reduce the probability of large-scale insurgent action taking place behind the ambush frontier; but occasionally the enemy will either be reckless and risk destruction by gathering for an attack or be forced into desperate situations where he will stand and fight on the belt itself. In case of a large attack on, or through, the belt, the off-duty patrolling platoons may have to be gathered together to support the conventional reserve formations in pitched battles in a conventional mode. The probability is that the insurgents would have great difficulty in handling a conventional formation made up of these units. The counterinsurgents would be less likely to be confused in the "wilderness," and the regular units would still be able to outshoot, hold off or overwhelm the enemy.

Once this program were firmly established (together with an effective police and constabulary program), ten good battalions could probably clear an average of about twenty square miles a day, so that self-defense police and constabulary forces could really control the area. With the belt expanding outward at this rate, the heavily populated regions could gradually be made secure and the guerrilla units forced away from the people and food. As security returned to the villages, more forces could be transferred to the "combat rim," and intelligence and peasant cooperation should improve. It should also be possible to carry out social improvement programs in the heavily populated zones while intensified military operations are going on in the wilderness areas.[1] At the same time,

[1]But see Part II of this paper and Raymond D. Gastil, The Problem of Counterinsurgency in South Viet-Nam, HI-707-RR, June 1966, for discussions on the priority and number of social improvement programs to be undertaken; there are some signs that the Vietnamese local administrative structure is currently being inundated with such programs.

the amnesty program for individual guerrillas should be stepped up while allied firepower is concentrated on those units that refuse to disperse and "wither away."

The program may be able to rely on ARVN troops to man the belt in many areas, e.g., the southern Delta. This army is already supposedly in the process of reorganization (or at least undergoing a change of emphasis) to support the pacification program. It might be quite feasible to use these forces on an ambush and patrol frontier in nonbuilt-up areas and it could be a very productive way of providing the military security needed for the police pacification program. It might even have some attractive features for ARVN troops when the chips are down. If one has to fight, lying in ambush and fighting on one's own ground and terms, with the element of surprise on one's side, is better than being ambushed while "sweeping" unfamiliar terrain. But it means many nights away from barracks and families and much time in the "bush." It also means very few, if any, contacts with the hamlets by the men while they are on duty on the belt. Furthermore, these small-unit ambush and patrol activities will not provide the higher-level commanders with the acclaim normally associated with large actions; though their actual commands and command responsibility need not be degraded; in fact, their control may even be improved (see pp. 21, 22). For these reasons, as well as others, this process will probably be unpopular, at least at the start. A close eye will have to be kept on the platoons on the frontier, and the increased number of American advisers working with ARVN will have to participate in the continuous, random, surprise inspections that will be needed. But this could be a checkable system (as was the ARVN support of the elections last year); senior officers can tell when their units are not attending to business and the officers can be held responsible for these lapses.

On the other hand, this system does not require the kind of small-unit-commander capability that normal, moving night patrols do. Manning ambushes in a relatively limited, preassigned, "checked-out" area is not that demanding on platoon and squad leaders. The ambush units' radio men could be checked regularly all night to see if they are awake by, for example, a quiet signal from the company CP, which could be answered by flicking a switch on their set. Spot inspections during daylight could determine whether the detection devices were properly placed, etc. A good leave program for ARVN men on this duty (with provisions to assure their return) should perhaps be instituted, and a platoon that was "on the ball" should receive extra days on leave. These incentives, if instituted simultaneously with the new tactics, might do much to maintain or even raise morale among ARVN troops.

2. Detailed Operational Considerations

The detailed requirements for this "strategy" may show a need for some tactical reorientation among the participating troops. The patrolling by the host country units and the U.S. forces visualized by this plan would, of necessity, be long-range.[1] Long-range patrol work calls

[1]Long-range patrol activity in this case means patrolling a limited area that is usually located a considerable distance from the home or base of the troops, as compared to patrolling within a few hundred meters of the outskirts of the hamlet. Patrols would either walk or be lifted into designated sectors according to an over-all "battle plan" described in detail later.

for the units to be in the field more than one day. They may have to literally live in the field; and since their exact whereabouts (particularly in thick woods) cannot be publicized, the forces may not be able to depend on the help of air drops or helicopter-delivered equipment and supplies except in dire emergencies. Once in combat, they could call on their air-support and helicopter-borne units, for then, of course, the location of the unit would have become obvious to the enemy.

From the point of view of the people on long-range patrol work, the clock would be turned about. Except for regular units that would spend a short period searching their small sector for Viet Cong spider holes, etc., the patrol would generally lie low in the daytime and fight at night. This could be a deadly game, at first, with both forces playing cat and mouse with each other in the jungles. Normally, the superior firepower of the government patrols (both directly, from their own weapons, and indirectly, from supporting artillery, mortars and aircraft) should prevent them from being overwhelmed by even somewhat larger Communist forces--if the guerrillas were, in fact, able to assemble them. This is particularly so if the Communists are ambushed. But any bad planning or deployment--e.g., support that is not near at hand to assist a patrol under attack or so that a patrol can withdraw toward it--could mean disaster for the smaller counterinsurgent unit. In the beginning, this is quite likely to happen occasionally; for the effectiveness of the antiguerrilla units will depend heavily on training and experience.

The kill-rate achieved by these patrols in their ambushes will be only part of the adverse effect they would create on the insurgents' attack groups. The ability of a guerrilla commander to draw up a timetable for a large-scale unit attack would also without doubt be greatly affected. He would never really know if his forces would arrive at the spot designated, even though they were traveling in small units and at night, and certainly he could hardly trust counting on them to get there at the specified time. Reconnaissance units would have to precede even the smallest groups, for fear of their running into military and constabulary ambushes. In other words, it would be very hard for a guerrilla commander to calculate route march times, despite the risk he would be willing to take in assembling a large force in the hostile environment behind the ambush and patrol belt. Nor can this risk be underestimated; for each squad can become an unintentional "guide" to the main assembly point for the constabulary and their tracking dogs. (See Part II.) Also, and in some cases perhaps of equal importance, the guerrillas will be separated from their logistic support among the people behind the belt.

a. Offensive Operations. Intelligence reports coming in from the ambush and patrol frontier units should increase the commanders' knowledge of the location of insurgent units, making the conventional, high-firepower government forces more efficient when they are put into action. When guerrilla bases are located by the ever-encroaching ambush and patrol belt, and the guerrillas choose to defend them, air and artillery strikes and then reaction forces could be brought in. In fact, if this patrol activity were successful, the guerrillas might find that even the smallest camp or stockpile in the area was no longer "safe"; they might also learn that attempting to make one safe by increasing its perimeter

guards would only draw more fire when the patrol belt began to probe the area. In places where a sweep misses a sizable insurgent group or logistic base, the guerrillas would be forced to "defense in depth," with small units in ambush encircling any defended area. Even this "cushion" defense, however, would have to be prepared to move and abandon the area it was protecting the moment the patrol and ambush belt touched it, for the next troops to appear would usually be a large, reserve airborne or motorized force. Although this operation would now be normal, conventional ground-fighting, other patrols in the vicinity that had not been involved in the battle and had not disclosed their whereabouts would play a major role. They would immediately be put on alert to ambush the fleeing, segmenting small units of guerrillas, who ran into other parts of the belt while they were attempting to take refuge among the population.

In these operations, the patrols take on aggressive action, not only in ambushing the dispersed guerrillas, but in tracking them down in their own small sectors during the daylight hours, as described earlier. Here again the small constabulary-type units, using police methods and equipped with dogs, would have to, if necessary, supplement the platoons in mop-up operations behind the belt. This is particularly true in areas where villages are numerous and extensive police activity is required to screen the guerrillas from the population.[1]

As we have said, these aggressive patrol operations would have to be carried out cautiously and in small areas at a time. Once a large number of night ambushes were actually in the forest--on this frontier--it would be difficult for guerrillas in units large enough to be sure to overwhelm them to find the ambushers before they spotted the guerrillas. It would be doubly difficult for an insurgent force large enough to attack a government-held town to assemble or slip through; so the patrol units may be the best defense for the hamlets in the "normalized" zone, particularly those several nights' march from the ambush belt. The hamlets near the belt that would be most vulnerable to an attack by a guerrilla force breaking through the belt before it could be wiped out or driven off by the area's reaction forces, would continue to have their normal "point" defense. Only those hamlets deep back in the "normalized" zone would have their point defenses reduced.

b. The Value of Prisoners. In counterguerrilla operations, the value of prisoners taken is far out of proportion to the numbers of men imprisoned. Besides the normal humanitarian reasons for the rules of land warfare by which most troops of civilized nations try to conduct themselves, there is another strong reason to take prisoners and treat them in a humane manner. It is essential that the guerrillas know they have a choice other than "fighting to the death." The primary mission of the night patrols, as with all units involved in antiguerrilla warfare, is to

[1] The military ambush units should also have dogs. For a discussion of constabulary operations and the use of dogs see pp. 41 and 47. See Part II for a description of simultaneous police operations required to cope with guerrilla activity.

cause the guerrilla forces to "wither away." Desertions and capture, more than killing or wounding guerrillas, are normally the reasons insurgent forces are depleted. The extreme pressure put on the insurgents by the night warfare must be linked with a way out for individual guerrillas and units. The patrols must be looked on as a means to safe conduct for guerrillas who surrender, as well as efficient fighters if they are opposed. It should be made clear to the insurgents that they have a chance to surrender: it might be well for the word to be passed around, for example, that when the exploding of a flare grenade shows a guerrilla unit that it has walked into an ambush, the best chance of survival for the insurgents is to immediately throw down their weapons and raise their hands, before the hidden automatic weapons open up from the jungle. Guerrillas wishing to desert should be made to understand that they no longer have to sneak through many miles of rebel-infested jungle to some government outposts where they might be shot down. They now need only get "separated" from their units, sit tight until daylight and surrender to the patrol belt units as they fine-comb the new area they have taken over. Counterinsurgency forces operating in their area must have the capability to accept surrender; and leaflets should be dropped in VC areas describing the above procedure (or something similar) to assure the survival of those who wish to surrender.

Long-range patrols will find it difficult to carry out this assignment; but it can be done, particularly with the backing of the helicopter lift-capability we normally possess. If the patrol is near the end of its mission and is about to walk home or be picked up anyway, accepting and handling prisoners is a small chore. If, on the other hand, the patrol picks up several squads of the enemy in its first operation, it may be faced with a difficult problem. But there are several ways to solve it. The unit could discontinue its patrol work to take in the prisoners and leave its sector to be taken over by a relief platoon (this might be an incentive to take as many prisoners as quickly as possible); or it could request a helicopter-prisoner-pickup at a random point, leaving perhaps two men as guards while the rest of the platoon remains under cover not too far off; etc.

Some such method of capturing, rather than killing, guerrillas, along with a "vacuum cleaner" of helicopters to scoop them up as the patrols comb them out of the brush, is essential to the success of patrol and ambush belt offensive operations.

c. Quick Fix and Follow-On Modular Approach to Force Posture Requirements. As fas as tables of organization are concerned, the platoons and companies of the regular outfits involved in this night patrol activity would not vary greatly from the rifle platoons and companies normally found in the light infantry divisions used in counterinsurgency warfare. They would, however, eventually require some special equipment if they were to realize their full efficiency. First of all, they would have to be equipped to maintain themselves in the jungle with very little discernible activity, since their main function would be to sit and wait in the forests and rice paddies. They would also have to be able to move about relatively quickly and quietly at regular intervals and to be able to be speedily lifted into and out of an area.

The communications used by the initial patrols from the regular outfits may have to be rather sophisticated if their location is to remain unknown. It might even be that radio equipment to send messages in bursts so short they could not be triangulated upon may be required. Also much detailed planning would be needed to prevent the patrols from ambushing one another. Simple sector divisions might do much to prevent this, but these may have to vary with time, for static sector layouts might prove to be a vulnerability.

The personnel of the patrols must be able to accept and perhaps "decode" current intelligence information as it is broadcast to the night patrols from the central control points. Although the patrols would primarily listen to this message traffic, they would still need equipment to send out their bits of information in the way described earlier, and would require radio people qualified to handle the intelligence and command net traffic. The patrols would also need to have a knowledge of the detection devices with which each platoon, regular and militia, would be equipped. Ideally, the units should have specially trained junior and noncommissioned officers capable of directing small-war operations.

The patrols would also require some special personal equipment; for example, in the Delta, troops may require floatation gear to cross small water barriers; and in the jungle and mountain areas there will be special problems for men who must stay in the field for days on end.[1] These men would have to carry their own supplies and equipment and sometimes maintain themselves in the jungle without any permanent logistic connection to their base. Every pound of weight saved, every improvement in gear that reduces body irritation and improves efficiency, would add to their combat capability and improve morale. There may also be a "pay-and-trade" issue involved, i.e., if other equipment is sufficiently reduced in weight, some new essential item may be added, such as light body armor, etc.

In an operation of the size of that now going on in Vietnam, where there are many thousands of guerrillas in large jungle areas, the number of troops required to carry out this night patrol activity may be considerable. In effect, we are talking about large numbers of antiguerrilla fighters lacking the extensive training of the special forces troops in the peripheral areas, such as medical help to civilians or highly specialized single-man, guerrilla-fighting activities. The training of these units would fall somewhere between that of the special forces and the regular unit of the light infantry divisions.

The long-range patrol capability should be acquired without any important loss in conventional combat capability or changes in the tables of organization. Units should be able to spell each other off in normal point defense work or change the percentage of people as each stage of operation warrants it. Broad capabilities may be all that one can train for with any hope that they will fit the tactics of future guerrilla wars.

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[1] See the Appendix to HI-705-RR (Draft), June 20, 1966, the draft version of this report, Cresson H. Kearney, "An Integrated Assemblage of Combat-Proven Jungle Equipment and Rations to Improve Tropical Warfare Capabilities."

Standardization of counterinsurgency tactics is probably a bad policy in any case, for tactics should reflect the vulnerabilities of the specific guerrilla forces one is facing, and these vulnerabilities may be unique in each instance. (This comment on standardization is particularly true for U.S. forces.)

In the war in Vietnam, there seems to be a guerrilla "vulnerability" that calls for unconventional night operations. This may also be the case in Laos or other Southeast Asian countries and it may even be applicable to all humid, tropical areas. But it may be unwise to configure one's army to meet this requirement if it entails too great a cost. As we have said, one cannot be sure that requirements will be the same in the next tropical area or that the next requirement will even be in a tropical area. The disruption of normal unit T.O.&E. for specialized warfare to the extent that the unit loses its conventional combat capability or the troops lose identity with their parent units may be too large a price to pay.

Command-and-control functions in this type of warfare may be quite sophisticated; but, as we have mentioned earlier, intelligence inputs on which decisions are based should be significantly improved. In any event, the command-net function, including "real-time" planning, would remain a key and a delicate function of this system. Regular CPX's would be maintained for all areas, even in times of boring inactivity. Command and control planning with a continuous redefinition of the operational requirements of the system will probably be needed. The ability to reinforce, in the most expeditious way, a platoon under attack or to replace one that has been chewed up, and to do it without uncovering another area of possible threat, is a capability the command system must have at a moment's notice, 24 hours a day, 365 days a year.

Though one square mile per platoon has been assumed in this study, the exact amount of territory each platoon should cover or how many battalions, brigades, or even divisions should be deployed or moved, would of course "depend on the situation and the terrain." The friendliness of the inhabitants, the population density, the physical attributes of the area, the weather, etc., all make a difference. But of even more importance may be the capability of the police to keep the results of this operation permanent. Although the patrols and night ambushes prevent guerrillas from grouping to overwhelm constabulary forces and to some extent "fix" them, it takes good "police" activity to break up the guerrilla political and military organizations, rout out the die-hards and make the area secure.

It can be said about planning for this type of warfare--which may be close to SOP for most areas--that its key element will always be the judicious use of the first-rate forces: first-line enemy units must always be opposed with U.S. and good host-country forces. Normally these enemy forces will be met early in the battle and their ability to disperse and regroup is usually not up to that of the less formidable local "irregulars." But some fairly good units do have this capability, and when they appear, the "system" must be able to react to them. First-line units must be able to pounce on them and snuff them out before they gather momentum. Where such an enemy threat exists, the counterinsurgency system should normally never sacrifice this capability, even temporarily, for other political or military considerations.

This system should be designed so that it can function like an army front, as far as command and organizational requirements are concerned. The sector commander should be able, when much more positive information is coming in from the belt, to more easily "develop the battle" and perhaps commit his reserves more efficiently when he has to. Furthermore, under this system of centralized control, battalion, brigade, divisional and corps commanders will still command and control their forces, despite the dispersion of formations. This point could have significant political as well as military value for host-country forces.

3. A Heuristic Small War Plan for South Vietnam

It appears that without any really radical increase in numbers or change in the organization of allied forces in South Vietnam it may be feasible to work out an operation based on the idea outlined above. Those ARVN, U.S., Korean and other allied units already in these zones seem to be adequate to carry out this function. Of course, the permanent clearing operation would follow normal terrain features whenever possible, and the effectiveness of the operation, the number of troops needed, and the tactics would depend on the specific areas involved.

The idea resembles, but in its details actually varies greatly from, the "ink blot" approach. In this concept there is no timetable; only when an area has been successfully secured--including the Communist "parallel hierarchies" in the villages being imprisoned and all sympathizers identified and/or detained--would the operation move on. The area would be fine-combed for guerrillas until they were caught or driven out. Police and constabulary would have to be in complete control, the combat patrol and ambush "rim" zone several nights' march from a village, and the support and reinforcement system working like clockwork, before it would be considered secure.

The operation would constantly move forward, expanding the secured zones. It is an offensive strategy, and no "enclave" approach is contemplated. When the most densely populated sections of the country are secured, they would be linked up, and then, if the insurgency did not collapse, the process would be applied to less densely populated areas. Eventually, a frontier might even have to be established along the national borders of South Vietnam.

Obviously, in any analysis of such an operation, ARVN and other local personnel as well as U.S. sector and subsector advisers in the area would have to be involved. The following examination cannot therefore be called analytical; it is rather a cursory examination of broad areas of feasibility. A "map exercise," carried out by a close examination of 1:25,000 pictograph maps (aerial photography-based maps), was also based to some extent on a personal inspection by the author of some of the areas, over a period of several days' traveling by light plane, helicopter and jeep.

The campaigns described are primarily in the Delta and would probably have to be carried out during the dry season; and if they lasted into the wet season, they might have to be delayed until the next dry period.

In this region the ambush and patrol belt would be established across the rice paddies. Each time the belt moved it would leap-frog the strung-out hamlets and use a "county-fair" technique to install police in the hamlets. The progress in the Delta is often more likely to be determined by the rate of progress of the police operation rather than the patrolling of the ambush-belt units. The countryside, primarily rice paddies, is so open in many instances, that clearing it should be much simpler than clearing wooded terrain. With the belt out in the paddies, hundreds (or even thousands) of yards from built-up areas, it can freely call in artillery fire if it is attacked. It even has some distance to fall back, while it calls in fire down its back trail, before it and the VC enter a built-up area where its heavy supporting fire cannot be used.

If the VC units (particularly large ones) choose to hole up in the hamlets and fight, the sweeping units ahead of the belt might have to dig them out. Or possibly, if the shape of the hamlet and the terrain favor it, these units and the belt might occasionally surround the hamlet in a "county-fair" mode and carry on the operation temporarily by passing the VC and leaving them to be mopped up by government or allied reaction forces.

In some instances, certain hamlets or parts of hamlets might have to be evacuated by their inhabitants, at least temporarily, if the belt and other forces must function so close to them that they cannot assure their safety.

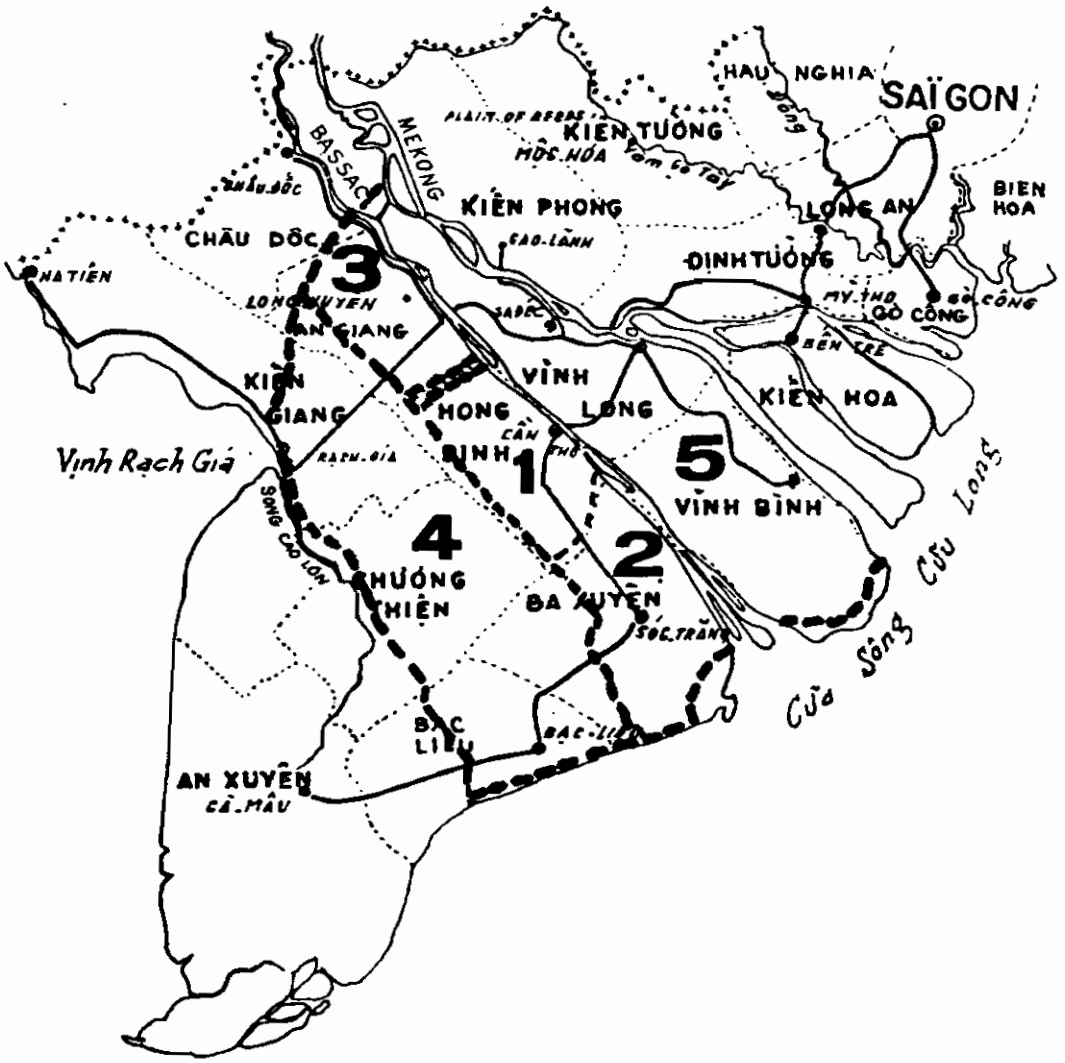
A first look at the problem in the lower Delta brings up the possibility that specific operations might proceed in the following manner:

1. Using the ARVN divisions and regional and militia-type forces in the area to man it, a line of ambush and patrol units would move outward (always ambushing at night in open rice paddies and tree lines) to clear Phong Dinh province. Eventually the ambush and patrol frontier would follow a line near the southeast border of Phong Dinh province, generally in the vicinity of the Cai Con Canal, from the Bassac River through Phung Hiep to Ap My Loi (2) on the Lie Hieu Canal; the southeast border roughly from Ap My Loi (2) northwest to a spot near the hamlet of Ap Thoi Hoa (2) on the Thot Not Canal; and roughly follow this canal and the An Giang-Phong Dinh province border to the Bassac River.

At one platoon per square mile on the line (one mile deep), this ambush belt could be manned by roughly 100 platoons of regulars (two days up for every one back), 130 platoons of regional forces (one day up for every day back) or, when violence is low, 189 platoons of militia (two days back for every day on the line).[1]

While Phong Dinh is being cleared, a blocking, ambush-belt force would have to be deployed along the An Giang-Phong Dinh border to protect the Hoa Hao area in An Giang from large VC units that might be swept in. Also a "drift fence" of ambush units would have to be established along the southeastern border of An Giang province to the swamps near the border with Chau Doc province, for the same purpose. This blocking-force operation would require approximately abother 54 platoons of regulars or 72 of regional

[1]All the numbers referring to troop requirements for the patrol and ambush frontier in this section include the off-duty units as well as those "on the line."



OPERATIONAL ZONES IN THE MEKONG DELTA

forces or 108 of militia. Constabulary forces would have to be sent into An Giang province to back up the blocking force and clear the province of whatever small units had slipped through. There would, however, probably be no heavy urban police requirements in An Giang to dig out the VC infrastructure--as there are in Phong Dinh province--because the infrastructure and local guerrillas seem practically not to exist there.

2. After Phong Dinh has been "normalized," the line on the border of Phong Dinh province could be moved southeastward, through Ba Xuyen province with its left flank on the Bassac River and extending across the province to the southeastern border of the province. As it moved through the province, a regular ambush belt would be established on its left flank and, as in all areas, the river flank would be treated as a forward constabulary area, using heavy constabulary patrols and outposts and gunboat patrols positioned on the river. The ambush belt on the left flank would eventually extend from Ap My Loi to Cho Bung Tau at the crossing of Bung Tau and Saintenoy Canals in the vicinity of the Ca Tham Canal to the Nhu Gia River at Ap My Hoa. The line, as drawn, runs southeast, parallel to this river, to its junction with the Chang Re River, then turns south to the sea in the vicinity of the border between Ba Xuyen and Bac Lieu provinces. It would need to be covered by a force of approximately 60 platoons of regulars (40 on the line and 20 back, rotating two days up for one back) or 80 platoons of regional forces (one day back for every day up, 40 on the line, 40 back) or 120 platoons of militia (40 up and 80 back, two days back for every day up).

Some of the forces on this "final" line could be the same that were used in the line that moved down through the province to the sea. The number of troops available for this duty would depend on how many were left from those that formed ambush belts around the recurring stretches of mangrove swamps bordering the sea in this province. It is assumed that these swamps would not be swept by a moving belt (at least initially), but would become a "no man's land," ringed on the landward side by the ambush belt, patrolled on the seaward side by gunboats--where anything spotted from the land, sea or air would be fair game. The swamps would also, of course, be subject to sudden strikes by normal reaction units wherever intelligence patrols indicated there was sizable VC activity.

The belts around these swamps would assume a much more "permanent" aspect than the usual sweep, as would any belt section that remained long in one spot. These belts could use many more detection devices and even more physical obstructions--such as barbed wire strung through the grass--than the moving line; undergrowth might even be cut down on the edge of the swamp to provide a field of fire with land mines planted thickly along it, etc.

3. The ambush belt extending along the southwestern borders of An Giang, Phong Dinh and Ba Xuyen provinces, from the swamps on the northwestern border of An Giang province, running parallel to the Bassac River, down to the sea near the border of Bac Lieu province, would form a continuous line and would be backed up by constabulary, police and reaction forces. When Phong Dinh has been cleared, by moving the blocking ambush line, described earlier, from the eastern section of An Giang province near the An Giang-Phong Dinh border to the edge of the swamps near Chou Doc province

on a line roughly from Ap Trung-Ap Ba The, a continuous ambush "frontier" could be established from Ap Trung on the Bassac River near the Cambodian border all the way to the South China Sea to protect the provinces of An Giang, Phong Dinh and Ba Xuyen. The troops from the moving ambush and patrol belt units, from the Phong Dinh side of the An Giang-Phong Dinh border (30 platoons of regulars, 40 of regional or 60 platoons of militia, or their equivalent), would be available for doubling the density of this line or extending it toward Chau Doc if necessary. The total forces required to man this line would be approximately 9,000 regulars or 12,000 regional forces or 18,000 to 19,000 militia-type troops. This does not include artillery and other fire-support forces; the reaction and sweep forces working ahead of the frontier; the constabulary and police operating in the rear areas; the river and sea patrol forces.

It is quite probable that the purely military forces actually used in this operation would be a combination of regulars, regional and militia forces. In the entire Delta there are presently about 150,000 Vietnamese under arms in all categories. Whether or not there are adequate forces in the three provinces alone to carry out this operation is a matter of conjecture and depends on such questions as how tough local guerrilla and hard-core units are, how efficient the government forces are, etc. The numbers required are low enough, however, compared to the overall forces for the general region, and there should be a good chance of carrying out the entire operation with forces that are presently available. Certainly, some constabulary and police-type forces will have to be recruited and trained or brought into the area; and perhaps even some military troops will also have to be brought in. In fact some U.S. or other first-line units may have to be used on the ambush belt wherever tough VC units are known to be, and certainly first-rate troops will often be needed for the sweeps ahead of the ambush and patrol line. But second-line units from the area which are unsuitable for the work could perhaps be transferred outside the area to relieve the more efficient units brought in.

4. It is interesting to note that manning the moving ambush and patrol belt in the next area of relatively heavy population density takes few troops in addition to the initial commitment. This is probably true, for example, if, in this next step, the ambush and patrol belt is moved southwest to a line beginning on the ocean east of the hamlet of Vam Cai Cung southwest of Bac Lieu and extending north through Cau Rach Xom Long on the Ca Mau to Bac Lieu Canal, and Cau Rach Xom Lung to Xam Lo Gach on the Cai Lon River and then down the north bank of the river to the vicinity of Rach Gia. With one platoon back for every two up, about 4,500 regulars or 6,000 regional troops or 9,000 militia-type forces could man this moving ambush belt up to the "permanent" line. In effect, the additional forces needed to complete the line from Rach Gia to Ap Ba The (1,100 regulars or 1,500 regional troops or 2,200 militia-types), where it would connect with the line from Ap Ba The to Cho Moi on the Bassac River, would come from the "surplus" of troops acquired by the shortening of the frontier on the south. Annexing this additional territory actually gradually reduces over-all requirements on the frontier proper, from about 8,000 regulars to 7,000, or from about 10,500 regional troops to 9,300, or from 16,000 to 17,000 militia-type forces to 14,000 (including the troops needed on the Ap Ba The-Cho Moi section of the "old frontier," which would remain in place). Furthermore, a lighter screen of ambush units could probably be used along the wide Cai Loi River from Xam Lo Gia to Rach Gia than elsewhere, although this was not considered in the calculation.

All of this does not mean, however, that there would be any substantial saving in the numbers of men needed. As in the last area cleared, there would be a need for additional troops to screen the mangrove swamp areas along the coast and for double troop densities to man the more dangerous frontier areas, like Rạch Gia-Ap Ba The. There would probably be a saving of the most efficient forces, however; for after most of the enemy had been eliminated, less efficient troops could be brought back to man the belt along the mangrove swamps, etc.

5. It appears that similar operations could be carried out between the Bassac and Mekong Rivers in Vinh Long and Vinh Binh provinces. Working outward from the city of Vinh Long in the manner described in 1 through 4 above, an ambush and patrol frontier could be extended until it reached the Bassac River. Once the belt reached the river, a corridor could be formed by splitting the elliptical frontier into two ambush and patrol belts running from the Mekong to the Bassac. These two lines would require approximately 70 platoons of regulars or 92 platoons of regional forces or 140 platoons of militia-type troops. Once this corridor were established, the two ambush and patrol belts forming its flanks could move down the peninsula toward the sea and northwest to the river connecting the Bassac and Mekong at Chu Moi. In the latter case, the belt moving northwest would form a more or less permanent ambush frontier somewhere between this area and the Cambodian border and would have the aspects of the permanent belts described earlier.

The line moving toward the sea would become the barrier ambush and patrol frontier ringing the landward side of the mangrove swamps at the southeast tip of the peninsula (e.g., from Ap Ca Coi, east, past Giang Rung to Ap Cai Suc, then northeast of Ap Cai Suc to the Ben Gia River at Ap Ben Gia, then north to the Than Ran River and the Mekong). The banks of the Mekong and Bassac Rivers would be patrolled by heavy constabulary forces in these provinces just as in those provinces mentioned in 1, 2, and 3 above, and gunboats would cover the rivers themselves. With the south bank of the Bassac cleared and "normalized," however, the danger to the north bank would decrease, and vice versa. Islands in the river (of which there are quite a few large ones) would, of course, also have to be cleared.

The decreasing distance between the Bassac and Mekong Rivers as one moves northwest would tend to decrease the length of the ambush frontier in this area and therefore reduce the number of men required for its normal coverage. But as this is a dangerous area, more than the usual number of men will be needed on the ambush and patrol belt, so that the actual requirements for manpower will probably not decrease. Furthermore, troops will be needed to clear the islands we described earlier, so that even in the northwest section, where the length of the frontier decreases, more men may well be required than is indicated to maintain the ambush and patrol belts. Also, as mentioned earlier, this does not include the reaction forces or the firepower support forces needed to support the belt, although off-duty units can provide some reaction capability in some areas.

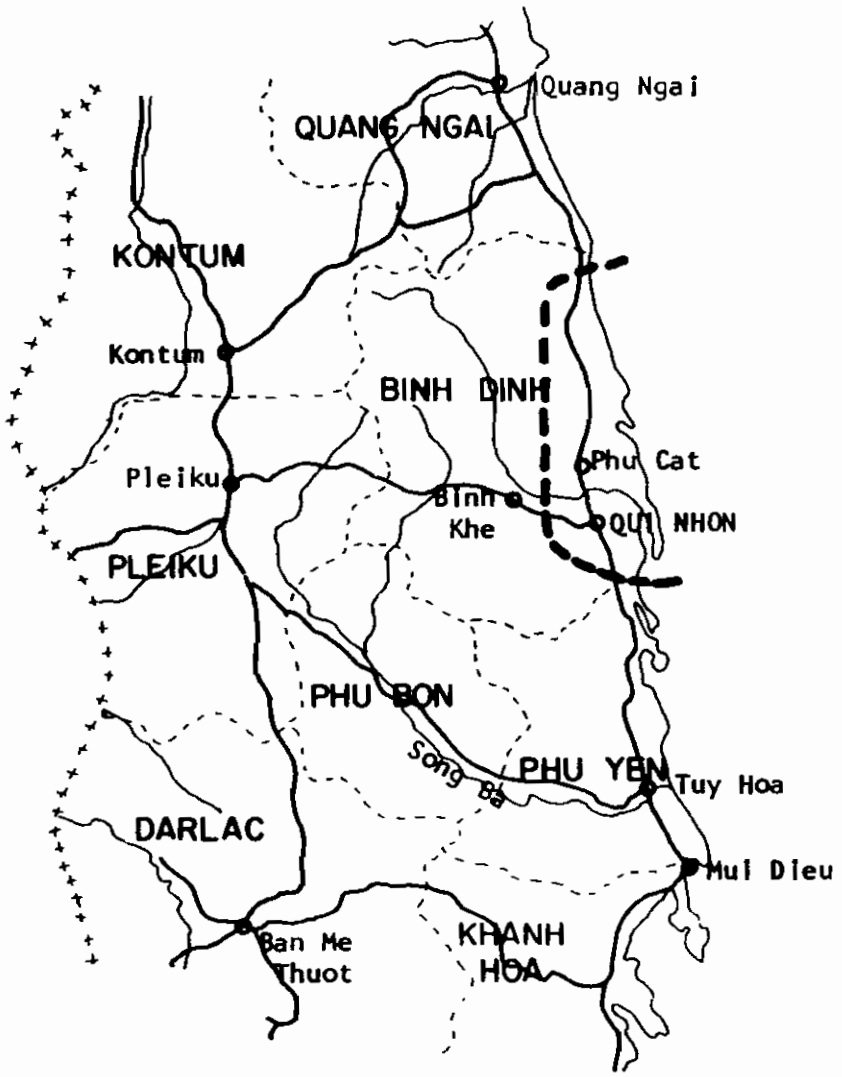
The process described in 1 through 5 above seems to be feasible for other sectors of the lowlands of Vietnam. It might also be a feasible program for Dinh Thuong provinces and even parts of Kien Phong and Kien Tuong. Parts of Kien Hoa province should also lend itself to this process if it is successful further south.

The areas to the north, with their more rugged terrain and dense forests, might prove to be much more difficult nuts to crack. Yet there are some advantages in the north: its heavily populated regions are not so vast as the areas of the lowlands and its more densely populated rice-growing regions generally are near the coast. But these factors might only help to reduce the problems; by no means do they eliminate them.

Binh Dinh province was selected as an example of such a region. An examination of 1:25,000 pictograph maps (and no personal experience other than a quick view of part of the province from the air) resulted in the following highly tentative definition of a possible general frontier area which would have to be reached and manned to "normalize" some vital sections of this province. Areas of this province have already been cleared by Korean, ARVN and U.S. troops. If a program such as the one we have described were applied to this province in particular--and this is suggested as a general example, not as a specific recommendation--Korean troops might be used on the ambush belt. For the moment, however, without concerning ourselves with what kind of regulars we are talking about, the operation might be described as the following: An ambush and patrol belt would move south and east from Qui Nhon and Binh Dinh until it reached a line beginning at Lang Mai Bay at a spot near the border of Phu Yen and Binh Dinh provinces and extending northwest up to and along the ridge lines to Route 1 in the vicinity of Cu Mong. From Cu Mong, the "final frontier" would extend westward, south of Bach Tang (2) over the ridges to the Ha Thrung River.

Another patrol and ambush frontier using the sea coast as its right flank and moving slowly north would leave a belt of ambush and patrol units along the route of its left flank along the following line: from the crossing on the Ha Trung River (mentioned above) to the vicinity of Nam Tang (3) up through the rice fields to the An Truong River south of Xom Tho Lam Ha. The western frontier would then follow a line west of the An Trung River and Cu Lam Nam (4) across Route 19 up to the Con River and Route 501 north of Nhon Nghia Dong. From the junction of the Cong and Dap Da rivers (which form the Binh Hoa River) near Dai Binh, the western belt would run northwest of Route 1 across the Lu Siem Giang River near Huu Loc, across Route 507 west of Hoi Khanh (3) on the Suoi Cai River to a point west of Loc Thai(1).

As this frontier was being established the ambush and patrol belt would have "normalized" everything between this frontier and the sea. This northward moving belt would now be settled along a northern frontier extending from a point north of Loc Thai east to the ocean. The number of men required to man this final (and longest) frontier, one unit in depth, would be somewhere between 80 and 100 platoons of regulars (about 3 to 4,000 men) or 110 to 140 platoons of regional forces (about 4,000 to 5,500 men) or 160 to 200 platoons of militia-type forces (about 6,500 to 8,000 men), as the threat of violence drops.



OPERATIONAL ZONE IN THE QUI NHON AREA

In this area again, as in the other populated sections of South Vietnam, the relatively small number of troops required to man the moving frontier, compared to the number of troops already in the area, seems to indicate that this may be a feasible program. In a good number of areas of South Vietnam, many of the troops already "in residence" are tied down in a "point defense" mode of operation. As the ambush and patrol frontier--and constabulary and police forces behind it--increases the level of security in the rear areas, many of these "points" will need less defense, so that troops will be freed for other duties on the ambush and patrol belt. There will be a continuing requirement, however, for "point defense" for important towns beyond the ambush and patrol frontier as the process of normalization goes forward. The VC must not be allowed to seize and hold important towns, such as province capitals, in the highlands or anywhere else.

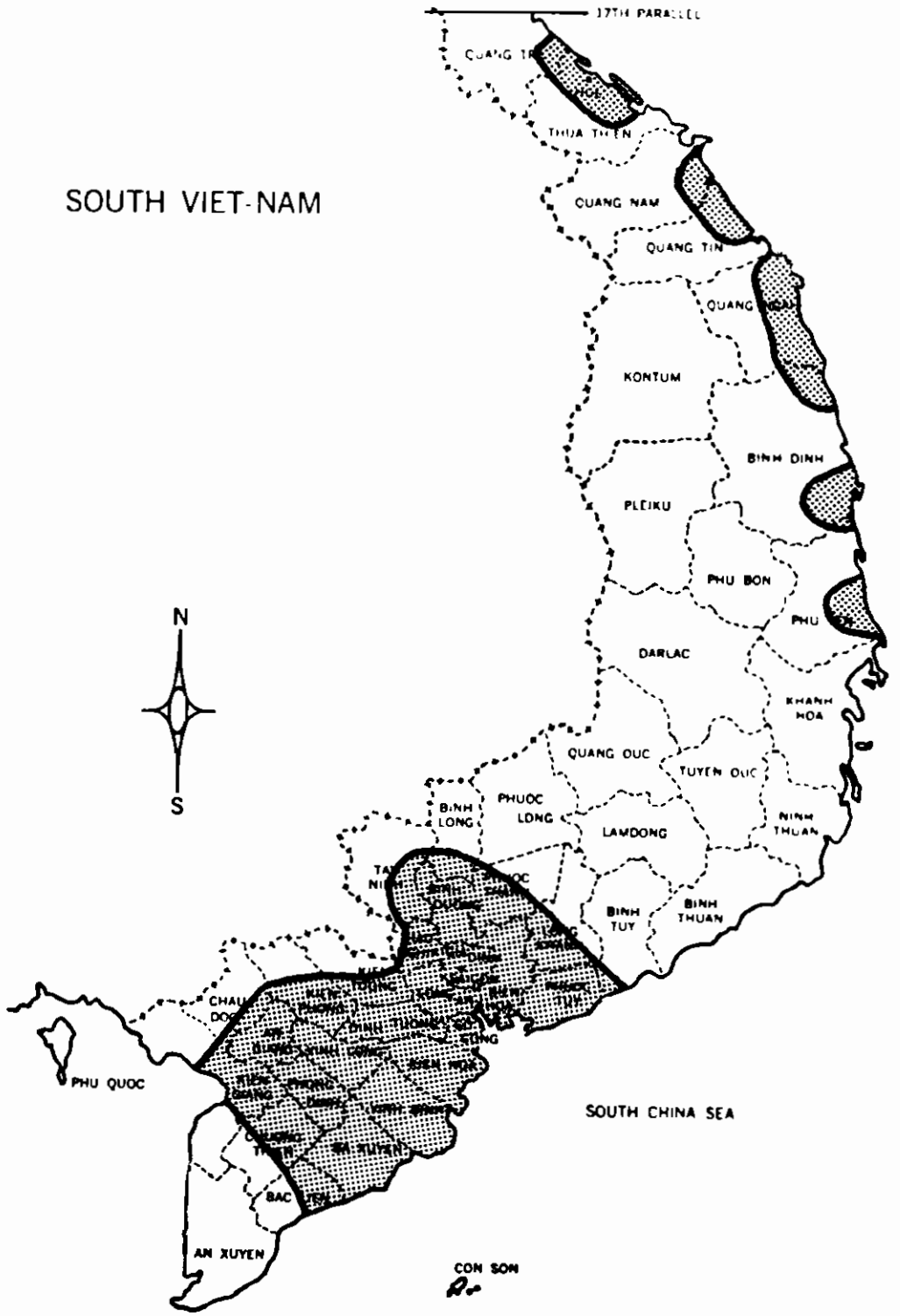
Giving up what are considered to be some necessary "search and destroy" missions in order to maintain the belt operation may be needed, but such decisions should be taken with great care. The "pay and trade" procedure here may revolve around the cost of slowing down the progress of the security program in order to decrease the risk of a disastrous attack by a large NVA or VC force, if this force has been left to assemble and deploy unmolested. Each decision will have to be made on its own merits, and the closer we get to the DMZ, the harder this decision is likely to be--though improved government intelligence and a disruption of the VC support system among the people, because of the security program, should improve the efficiency of large allied operations and reduce the flexibility and efficiency of large Communist attacks in or near "normalized" areas. This should add up to a lower requirement for allied troops to cope with a given threat.

This program should probably be initiated in the Delta and undertaken in the provinces farther north (particularly the more dangerous ones, like Quang Ngai and Quang Tri), after some degree of security has been realized in the Delta. In this way additional forces may become available for these more difficult provinces.

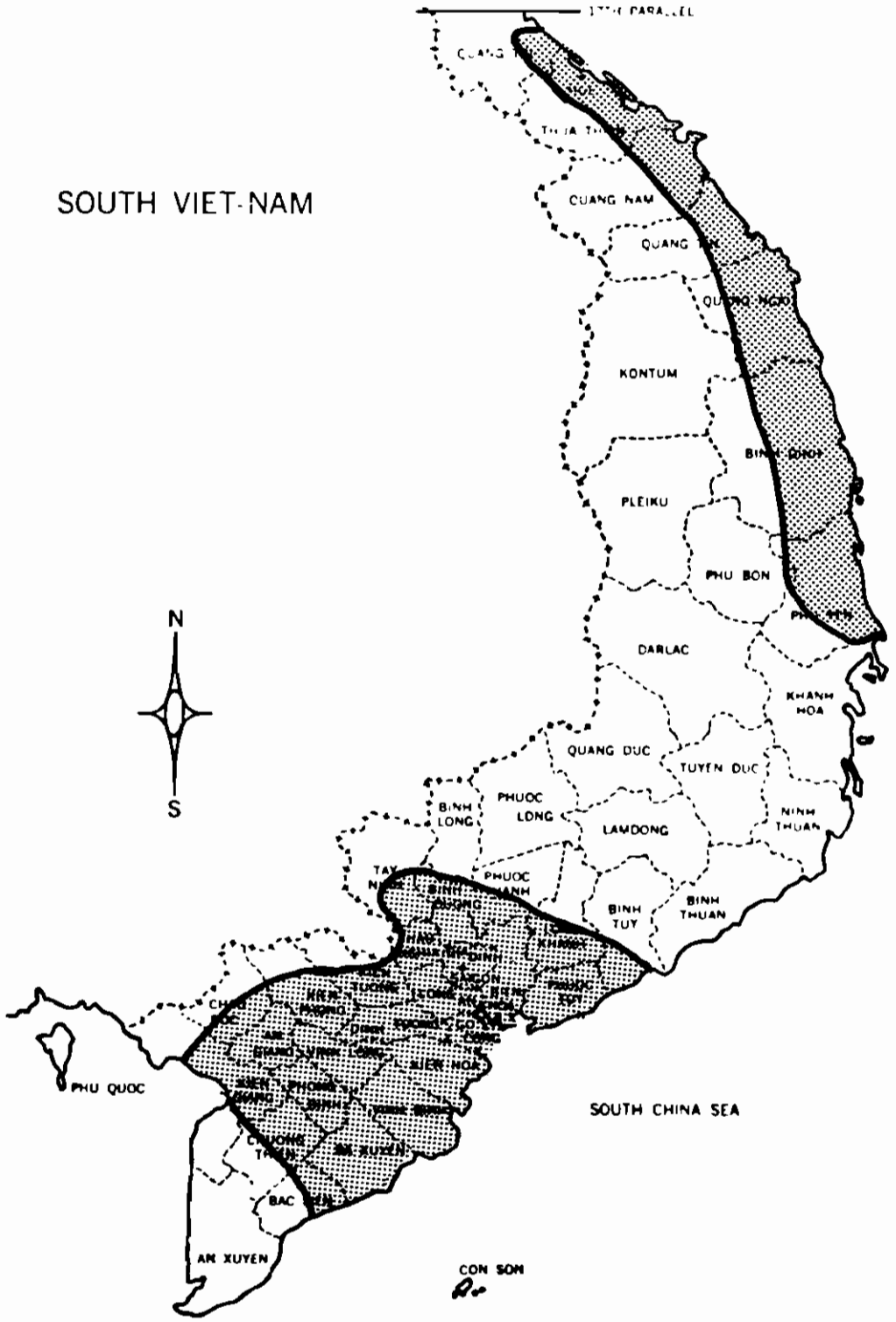
The following maps are schematics of the possible areas to be "normalized". If it were necessary for the program to be carried out to the bitter end, the final ambush belt could require as many as 1,500 miles of frontier zone and more than 120,000 troops to man it. Half that many constabulary and police might be needed to support it, while the defense of points in the highlands as well as the spoiling attacks would have to continue ahead of the line. But as more and more areas became "normalized" behind the moving ambush and patrol belt, the requirements for point defense would decrease, and the number of areas of South Vietnam where a large VC or NVA unit could assemble and deploy in secret would also decrease. As a result, there would be fewer areas to be swept, and the productivity of the sweeping units (particularly if, as a result of the program, intelligence improves) should increase.

Eventually the belt might end up near the Cambodian, Laotian and North Vietnamese borders, with small, deep patrols ahead of it, close support near at hand and heavy reaction forces near the DMZ. But even if the VC should

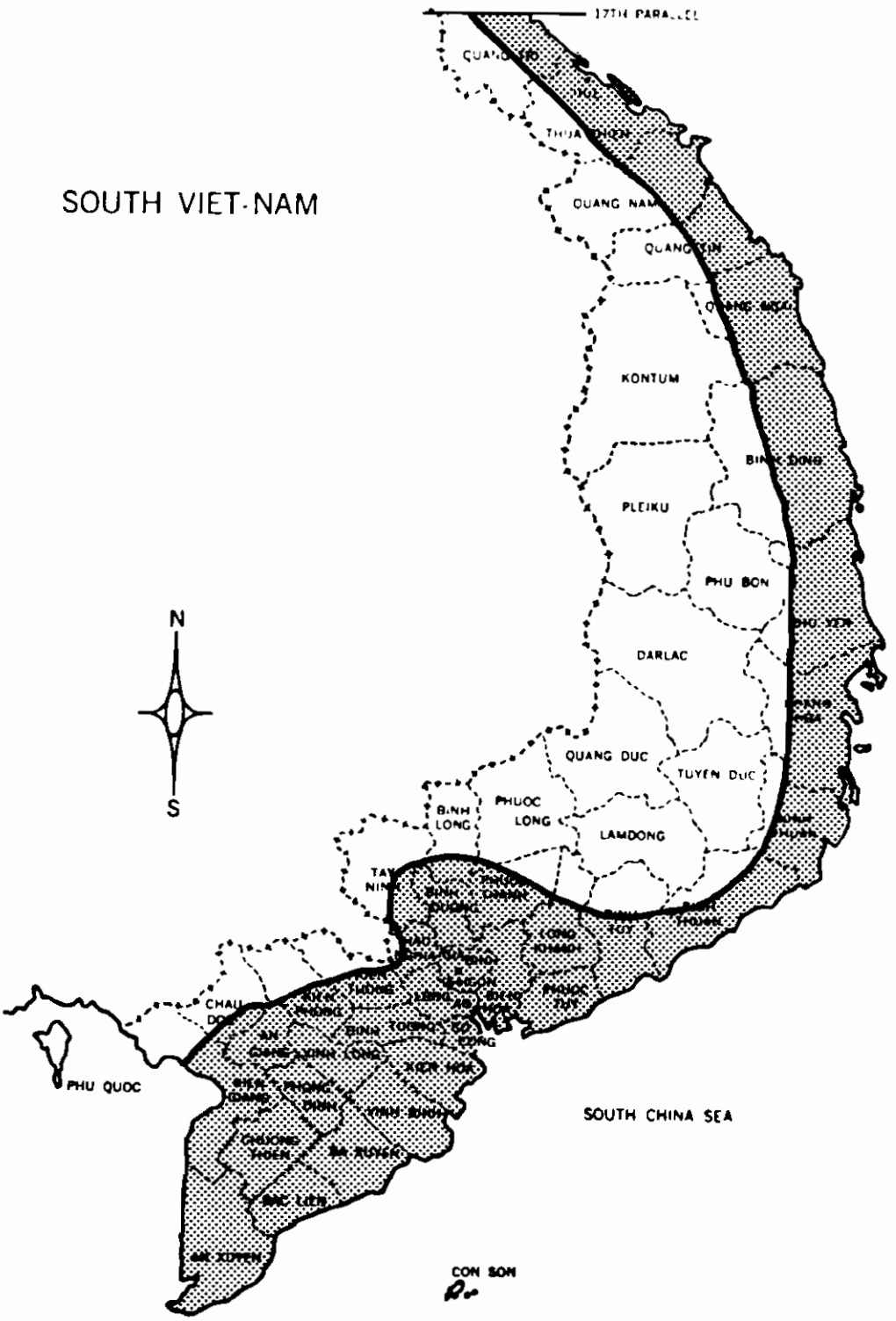
not run out of steam before this last phase (and the reasons for their doing so are many), the entire situation in South Vietnam would anyway have hopefully improved by that time. If, from a military and police point of view, the nation is now practically secure, and also if any success has been achieved by South Vietnam in its political and economic "nation-building," the ability of the VC (like the Huks currently in the Philippines) to re-establish their dominance of areas in South Vietnam should have been diminished significantly. If the nation "takes off" structurally and economically (as did Korea, for example), it might develop significant immunity to anything other than high levels of terrorist or military operations. In effect, behind the shield of a strong police and military organization, it might develop its own infrastructure. If this should take place, "border-surveillance" forces could be kept rather light (except in the more dangerous areas such as the DMZ), and there might be much dependence in the war on permanent barriers, detection devices, etc. But these defenses might have to be looked on as "earthworks" from which mobile attack forces could sally forth and tear up assembling Communist units for quite some time after the defenses were established on their "final" position.



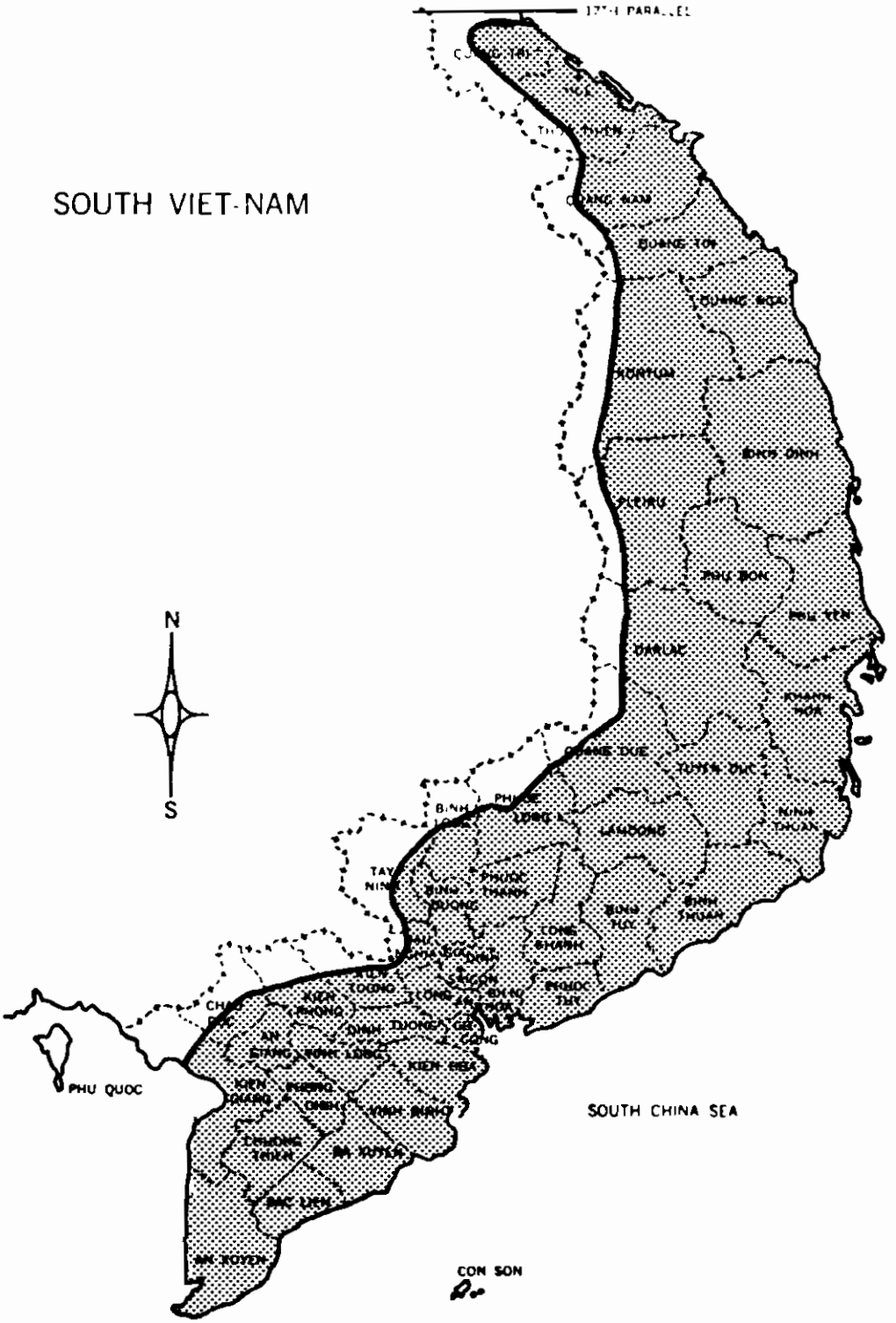
NORMALIZED AREAS-PHASE I



NORMALIZED AREAS–PHASE II



NORMALIZED AREAS—PHASE III



NORMALIZED AREAS—PHASE IV

PART II

A. Constabulary-Police Security Operations

Before guerrilla activities have moved to a level that demands almost conventional military opposition, or after the level of violence in an area has been reduced by larger military actions, the most important work that must be undertaken by, or for, the host country is a police-type operation. The author feels that this constabulary-police work is the heart of the rural--and even the urban--security program in Vietnam: it may well be the heart of any Southeast Asian security program, particularly in states contiguous to Communist or Communist-dominated countries.

There are the usual discontented classes, minorities and dissident groups in these nations (as there are in all nations of the world), and shortcuts to their "place in the sun" are tempting bait. A certain radical and irresponsible minority of these elements will often voluntarily go over to extremist movements that are home-grown or imported, without thoroughly considering the justification or the consequences of their move. If an extremist movement thrives on chaos, and its sponsors have the takeover of the country, rather than the accomplishment of justified or even unjustified reforms as their ulterior motive, they can, and do, eventually create serious difficulties for the government. They cannot be easily appeased and the crisis thwarted; reforms can seldom be carried out as quickly as trained revolutionaries can organize and frustrate the very reforms they are demanding.

Such irresponsible action is by no means difficult to foment. In India during the last famine, rioters even wrecked the very railroads that were bringing in food. In the United States, one of the demands of the protest leaders in the Watts section of Los Angeles after the disturbances was that money be spent to rebuild its commercial area (presumably as a source of employment)--the same commercial area demolished by extremist elements during the riots that were incited, in part, by this protest movement.

If such counterreform activities are well-coordinated and directed, the government finds itself in a difficult position. If, in addition, these disruptive actions include assassination of the key people in reform programs, as they do in South Vietnam, the situation can become critical for the government. Weighing heavily on the extremists' side, regardless of how irresponsible they may be, is that they are native to the region in which they operate and have friends and relatives living in the vicinity. Initially, they can often be quite persuasive, particularly when they have been given thorough indoctrination courses. And in remote areas--particularly where there is fear of the guerrillas--there is often no one to plead the government's case. In the face of insatiable and irresponsible dissident groups, the government's concessions in social reforms must usually be supplemented by stepped-up constabulary and police operations.

To all the difficulties mentioned earlier may be added the dilemmas that face law-enforcement authorities in every country when they oppose organized crime. Terror in massive doses (the required dose varies with the milieu, but almost any culture has its threshold of terror) can and often does so shatter the fabric of a society that without outside assistance it is helpless against the threat. On election day, April, 1924, a few dozen hoodlums, after having for years collected "taxes" at will in Chicago, seized control of the town of Cicero, Illinois (a suburb of Chicago that had a population of 45,000 in the 1920's). They patrolled the streets with carloads of gunmen. Installing hoods armed with machine guns as "poll watchers," they quickly dominated the election. A "reign of terror prevailed." Although a local county judge dispatched 70 patrolmen and eight automobile squads to the area and a battle took place (in which Frank Capone, Al's brother, was killed), the reinforcements were too little and too late. Torrio, the gangster leader, installed a friendly, "legitimate" government in Cicero and made the town his headquarters.[1]

This pattern of silencing opposition with terror has been repeated over and over again by a wide variety of diversely motivated groups: the Mafia in Italy (and the U.S.), the Binh Xuyen in Saigon, the Nazis in Germany in the early 'thirties and elsewhere in the late 'thirties, and the Communists in various places throughout the world. When the victim state is contiguous to a Communist or Communist-dominated state, as it is in Southeast Asia, the internal disruption can be so shattering that it may be essential for the state to get outside help. The constabulary-police operation in this instance may be required to mend the tattered garment of local society and restore the modus operandi of its familiar structure before any "solution" to the over-all problem, in terms comprehensible to the citizenry, can be looked for.

Since constabulary and police operations must normally be fitted to each situation, it is difficult to discuss general requirements. It might be possible, however, to consider who should carry out the operation without going into great detail about the specifics of the operation itself. Where details of operations are covered in this paper, they will be discussed almost exclusively in relation to the general skills that may be required to accomplish certain very broad missions. From the point of view of the United States government (the source of outside help) this may be worth considering; for all we can normally do is provide personnel and funds to train and assist indigenous policemen. Even before a plan can be set up, however, personnel to help in drawing up the plan must be made available to the host country. The same can be said for organizing the operational and administrative structure and procedures that must support the detailed function after the plan has been drawn up.

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[1]Gus Tyler, Organized Crime in America (Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 1962), pp. 156-157; also Frederick M. Thrasher, The Gang, abridged edition (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1963), p. 332, "...in certain suburbs outside Chicago...in some cases they [the gangsters] acquired almost complete political control."

B. The Objectives

The mission of the constabulary-police is the same as that of the army: the depletion of the enemy forces. The constabulary does this by capturing guerrillas, but also by other methods, e.g., by breaking down the guerrilla intelligence system and disrupting recruiting, supply and rest and rehabilitation programs. In this respect its work is not a purely police operation although it uses the same techniques. As the objectives of the constabulary are only in part to round up and arrest individual and small groups of guerrillas, its value cannot be judged only by the number of guerrillas it captures. Actually, the constabulary operation, like the night ambushing of the military forces outlined in Part I, aims at discouraging guerrillas so that they will defect. The constant hounding by the constabulary and police--under the protection of, and in conjunction with, the military operation--should in fact make life miserable for individual guerrillas and cadremen in the now hostile environment in the rear areas.

The constabulary-police job of breaking down the enemy's intelligence and counterintelligence system by causing enemy intelligence personnel to be constantly on the move and unable to go to planned areas helps the military greatly. This masking of military movements makes the guerrillas in the field more vulnerable to attack by high-firepower government forces. Also, vital information coming from intercepted messages and other indicators acquired by the constabulary's own intelligence forces can increase the frequency of contacts disadvantageous to the guerrillas.

The constabulary-police operation has another aspect, however, that differs radically from that of the military and is at least equally as important. It must break up the Communist political organization and pick up the "parallel hierarchy" of the Communists in the villages and towns. These "shadow governments" (local and national), central committees, cells, etc., are often really the heart of the insurgency movement. They form the nucleus around which new recruits for the revolution are gathered; they "finger" the persons to be assassinated; they set the policy, maintain the discipline and administrative structure, and "mastermind" the movements of the organization. For this task, the "military" function of the constabulary-police is minimal. The requirements here are those of the professional detective. At present, the VC cadre lead very normal lives and have such freedom of movement, seldom having to flee more than a few hundred meters from their homes to find sanctuary when government troops are approaching, that villagers fear to cooperate with government people; and surely the local VC have little incentive to do so.

I do not mean to say that constabulary-police activity is not going on now, nor that help in this line has never been rendered before.[1] But

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[1]Gastil, op. cit.

it may be that police-constabulary activities of the thoroughness and scale assumed here might be extremely difficult, if not impossible, to carry out in South Vietnam, unless they are coordinated with the kind of military operations outlined in Part I. Without doubt, the police can undertake more in an area that is relatively under government control than they can in places where the local policeman's name on a "death list" means he is very temporarily in his post.

C. Native and United States Personnel

Generally speaking, the actual operations of counterinsurgency constabulary and police can best be carried out by native people. Under certain circumstances, however, non-natives may be best for the job. To cite an example: in the case of the fighting against the Mau Mau, all African movements and even the native assistants to European-dominated groups had been so penetrated by the Mau Mau that informers were terrorized by the threat of reprisals. It was even extremely difficult to get them to "finger" imprisoned members of the Mau Mau. The informers covered their entire bodies with cloaks to prevent identification by the prisoners, but this was ineffective protection when the group interrogating them was itself penetrated by the Mau Mau. The informers might have felt more secure if the questioners had been whites, who were the least likely ones to find it profitable to help the Mau Mau.

Possibly a similar situation exists today in some parts of Vietnam where it might be better, at least in the beginning, for Americans to question informers: a Vietnamese informer might feel more secure dealing with Americans--who are unlikely to be members of the Viet Cong (or under their influence)--than with any individual South Vietnamese interrogator whose sympathies may not be so clear. Generally speaking, however, native police do better in counterinsurgency work.

There are often other means for the sponsor's personnel to be of great help to the personnel of the proxy country in setting up and carrying out a police operation. For one thing, the complicated administrative structure, essential to a police function, might require technical skills hard to acquire in the proxy country, particularly if it is "underdeveloped." Trained operations analysts, for example, could aid in setting up efficient filing systems; computer people might perhaps be able to automate part of the function, as we have done in the United States. This information system would concentrate on police activities dealing with apprehending VC rather than with normal crimes and misdemeanors. U.S. specialists who would normally only function in a central headquarters as supervisors of file systems and communication nets, etc., might give support for this effort. The files should contain only data on VC members and sympathizers.

The work of the police in counterinsurgency operations, as well as in any other of its functions, depends on the accessibility of many details and mountains of information that have to be accurately collected,

stored and sorted and that are easily retrievable and correlatible. It is difficult to overstress this point: the difference between an extremely efficient police operation and a dismal failure often hinges on nothing more than attention to these details. This must be made clear to the host country and cranked into the system.

Software and hardware technicians, together with experienced police personnel, both from the sponsor state and countries that have had experience in combating guerrillas, can be brought in to help in the planning and execution of this operation. The sponsor may also have a superior capability in the right kind and amount of man-hours and money needed to do exhaustive library research to unearth techniques that have already been used in counterinsurgency police work. This capability might also be required to examine closely the environments in which these techniques were used and to find some that might apply to the specific crisis in question.

D. An Indoctrination Program

With the possible exceptions mentioned above, the requirement for an intimate knowledge of terrain, customs, economy, etc., would make the constabulary-type operation depend heavily on using Vietnamese personnel and would make it a particularly difficult one for Americans. But the basic attitude of some Vietnamese may not lend itself to an efficient, indigenous COIN constabulary-police program. First of all, the local policeman may be so in fear of the Viet Cong that he will be unwilling to cooperate, even after a military operation has cleared the area. To give him the morale he needs, the local constabulary, available on call to the policeman, must be so well-armed, tough and well-trained, that it is more than a match for any similar-sized team of Viet Cong that might slip into the area. It must also include specialists who are very efficient at detecting and running down these Viet Cong teams. There need not be many of these special units, but they must be able to undertake long-range operations, so that once they "lock on" to a guerrilla team, they never stop until they have tracked it down. The impression that Viet Cong units are being hounded through the forest, and not stalking through it, is important to establish.

Efficient constabulary teams may have to be restrained in some aspects of their work. If the guerrillas had been brutal, the mood of the Vietnamese might be very unpropitious for the furtherance of amnesty programs: government forces may be more interested in revenge than in "rewarding" guerrillas with freedom and land. Yet an effective amnesty program is usually as essential to get individuals and small groups of guerrillas and political cadres to defect on a large scale as it is to get defectors from large groups during the military operations. The collection of detailed intelligence information, success in "bounty" programs, etc., depends heavily on defectors. In this business, informers, and perhaps even more important, exinsurgents who return as spies, may be critical to success.

Basic orientation and indoctrination might therefore be needed in the host country: first, the local police must be convinced by word and deed that government support has come to stay and will be effective; second, they must be convinced of the correctness of the amnesty program. If feasible, the second argument should of course be based extensively on moral reasoning, for we have a responsibility for what happens in these countries during and after the war. If this reasoning is insufficiently compelling, as may be the case in Vietnam, good, hard-headed logic based on historical evidence will be required; i.e., in guerrilla warfare it is smart to appeal to the individual guerrilla or cadre member and make it worth his while to deal with the government; it is not smart to be hard on the guerrilla who turns himself in. Lacking any way out, the individual guerrilla often clings to his organization as the only hope of salvaging anything out of the war, even though his organization may be suffering military reverses. (It might be added here that, ordinarily, if the organization is strong, it is absolutely essential for it to suffer military reverses before it can be successfully "undermined.")

E. Recruiting

Depending on the environment in which the police and constabulary operations will be carried out, the personnel and training methods may need to differ. In densely populated areas or cities they may look like a metropolitan police force; and in rural and jungle areas, like the Canadian Provincial or Mounted Police or the constabulary of the Middle East, Africa, Malaya, India, etc. Besides the obvious sources of qualified personnel referred to earlier, existing indigenous forces may also provide cadres. In Vietnam, for example, there exist today (or at least there did exist not too long ago) several organizations that might be able to support various police-constabulary operations. The Vietnamese National Security Police, sometimes called the "Vietnamese Bureau of Investigation," is a kind of undercover police organization that already has had missions in intelligence, counterintelligence and subversive activities. But its heavy emphasis is on political investigations; and, like so many of these organizations throughout the world, it may have popular connotations that negate much or all of its usefulness in counterguerrilla operations. Even if this attitude is based on a long-past reputation of political activity, the reaction to it will hardly inspire confidence. If such an organization is "clean," however, it could perhaps provide the nucleus and training cadre for the program's urban intelligence and undercover police system.

Other regular police organizations--the Municipal Police Forces of Vietnam, for one--could also provide cadres to work in urban counterinsurgency. These forces have normally had considerable experience in detective and undercover operations in general; in Vietnam they also carry out intelligence-type operations and assist the National Security Police. The great majority of Municipal Police officers, however, are experienced in the straight police-type work that would make up the bulk of the operation in the larger towns and cities.

The police forces currently in Vietnam are supposed to total 73,000 men, but some say the figure was actually nearer to 50,000 at the end of 1966, so that some doubt is cast on this present figure. The primary problem in increasing this force is said to be lack of money. General Loan, Director General of Police for the Republic of Vietnam, said that given sufficient funds, he could raise the police to 100,000 men in short order. This statement may also be somewhat controversial, as there are persistent reports of an inability to recruit people; and this seems to indicate that there is an absolute lack of qualified manpower. On the other hand, as the average pay of a policeman in Vietnam today is about sixteen dollars a month in cold cash (that is $192 a year), there could still be a correlation between the lack of money and the inability to recruit.

There must be a higher priority on this program, and heavy emphasis put on the constabulary and rural police forces. (The Police Field Forces, a constabulary-type force, which is organized and operates in the field on the basis of squad- and platoon-size units, now numbers a mere 9,000 men, and if all goes well, may reach 15,000 by the end of the year. But there seems to be too much emphasis on making soldiers of the men and military units out of the companies, and not enough emphasis on the police function of the men or the units.)

In light of what, in my judgment, may be the critical role that police forces could play in winning the small war, the cost of quadrupling the salaries and doubling the projected police force ($800 a year for 150,000 men) and equipping the additional men would hardly reach 2% of our dollar effort in Vietnam. Such a force, if efficiently trained and operated, might well overwhelm the VC infrastructure and local guerrillas. It is not the purpose of this paper, however, to suggest such a rapid increase of police forces, because the GVN probably could not train and administer them; and the rapid increase in recruiting would probably mean that the standards would drop.

What is suggested, however, is that more money, priority and U.S. effort be given to the police program so that the goals of these forces can be met and standards kept high. Why not have the average policeman earn $500 or $600 a year? This would probably solve a lot of the recruiting problems (--and cause some others: cousins and nephews like high-paying jobs, etc.), and a careful program should get the right men in the right jobs. This should be the chore of U.S. advisers--who should have an influence on the hand on the money spigot.

As stated earlier, several kinds of police will be needed; but regardless of the type, they will be first and foremost policemen, and their training should reflect this. Urban police will be made up of two groups, detectives and patrolmen. Rural police will consist of urban-type police and constabulary. As we have already mentioned, in Vietnam today the Police Field Forces are a constabulary-type force.

To the extent possible, the constabulary forces should be recruited from groups with some experience with weapons and combat, such as the ranks of mustered-out ARVN and RF and PF forces. Theoretically, with the four-year service term to be initiated, it is possible that a not insignificant number of men each year may soon fall into these categories.

Whether the manpower is available in Vietnam for this task, however, is at best a controversial issue. There simply seems to be no figures available on the numbers of young, able-bodied men currently being mustered out of the ARVN (if there are any) or other experienced manpower that could be used in the police-constabulary forces. Younger men are of course available, and if the police-constabulary operation is given priority (substitution for military service), with its other advantages, it should be able to be highly selective in its recruiting.

In any case, constabulary and police recruits should be chosen on the basis of their experience, record, intelligence and physical fitness. The constabulary (and other police organizations) can also afford to recruit older men who are not in the manpower pool used by the RD teams, the ARVN, etc., because the job calls more for skill and judgment than it does for the robustness and stamina of the young. Of course, it would be hard to use actual cripples (except perhaps as guards at gates, etc.), but a physically-fit thirty- or even forty-year-old would more than serve for the operation in the milieu behind the ambush and patrol frontier. The incentive to the veteran or specialist (dog handler, tracker, hunter, radioman, etc.) to join the constabulary--or, for that matter, the urban police force--must be prestige, probably high pay, and perhaps even bounty money, though this is controversial. These are also necessary to maintain high morale among the men after they have been recruited. Preferably, however, such service should be undertaken and performed for deeper motives, and whenever possible, police and constabulary should be recruited among people who have such motivations.

The men should be stationed close to home whenever possible, and patrols should contain at least one man from each hamlet in the village area in which they operate. Similarly, the constabulary should be native to any district they are assigned to, and the local constabulary chiefs should be under decentralized control, but governed by national standards of efficiency. Perhaps as few as an additional 3,000 squads of well-trained Police Field Forces (constabulary)--about 30,000 to 35,000 men--backing up the ambush platoons and patrolling the rear areas in the "cleared" zones could make the vital difference, but before the program is completed, the total police force required to support it could go to twice that number.

In some instances the RD program may provide a team to support the policeman in his village against small numbers of run-of-the-mill guerrillas and perhaps even supply a pool of manpower to back up constabulary operations in the nearby surrounding areas, on a "posse" basis. But the combat-trained woodsman and tracker with his dogs, the heavily armed, well-trained, deadly efficient backwoods policeman, the trained administrator to plan and coordinate the over-all operation, the communications technician, must all be other than normal RD team members.

F. Possible Constabulary-Police Techniques

Without a detailed analysis of the specific area and conflict involved, it is even more difficult to make suggestions about constabulary and police techniques than it is to speculate on military tactics in guerrilla warfare. Abundant knowledge of the area may only rest with the men in the field. At best, an outsider can discuss the problem in general terms and refer to details only in relation to other counter-insurgency operations. But hopefully a discussion of this sort will generate some ideas that might apply to the specific problem of Vietnam and the rest of Southeast Asia.

It is sometimes quite informative to look at the techniques used by successful counterinsurgency leaders. Magsaysay in his fight against the Huks in the Philippines developed some interesting twists to cope with the problem of policing very rough, sparsely populated jungle country. Some of these techniques might apply to Vietnamese villages today and to Northeastern Thailand or other tropical and subtropical areas with a relatively light population living off the forests and small farms.

One technique developed by the Philippine constabulary organizations, for example, was based primarily on the use of group photography to identify guerrillas. A constabulary officer and a few men would descend unannounced on villages chosen at random to take a group photo of everyone in the village. These photos were filed and the villages were later revisited. Occasionally these later visits would precede a military action in the area; at other times they were merely made at random. When the team returned to the village, it would again line up all the inhabitants and take a group photo: anyone appearing in the second photo who was not in the first was questioned very closely. Conversely, if someone who had appeared in the first was missing from the second, and if this visit preceded a military operation in the region, that man who had been previously identified was immediately listed as a suspect. With this simple police technique, the number of guerrilla suspects and sympathizers within that area was somewhat narrowed down. As the process was repeated under varying circumstances, the constabulary forces were able to zero in on the most likely sympathizers and insurgents. The result was that prior to an actual military operation, the constabulary would go in and arrest all those who had been put on a "very probable" listing. In this way the information system of the guerrillas became so seriously depleted that with greater and greater frequency military operations began to catch groups of guerrillas unaware. In addition, because the constabulary forces were paying strict attention to Magsaysay's amnesty program, a good number of Huks actually left the organization. When it became obvious that they could not win in the field against the government and that Magsaysay would not negotiate with them as an organization, many turned informer and worked with the government police and the army.

An important point about group photographs is that they are a way to start getting a file on guerrillas and guerrilla sympathizers in a

hostile area without actually endangering anyone in the village by asking him to inform on his neighbors. The villagers may actually be asked for information later on, when they feel safer, but in the beginning it is unreasonable to expect them to help government forces at the risk of their own lives. The photograph, however, provides a basis for the incipient constabulary police work--no one in the village can really be held responsible for what clever police officers deduct from these photographs.

This technique is mentioned here simply because it is the kind of thing that might be developed in areas where the guerrillas may have so terrorized the population that cooperation with government forces, particularly those who cannot remain and protect the village, is hard to win. The same technique might be used with fingerprints, some kind of difficult-to-remove markings, etc.[1] In any case the essential things are again careful, continuous and systematic collection of data, attention to detail and imaginative use of the material--all under a carefully thought-through and carried-out program. (The ID card and house group photo programs instituted in Vietnam are said to have failed because of improper implementation.)

There are other ways of gathering information that do not endanger the lives of the "informers"; but again, if these methods are to be tried on a large scale, the host country may need some help. The technique described above was used in the Philippines to search out guerrillas hiding among the village population. Other methods were devised to find guerrillas hiding in the less-populated, jungle areas.

It seems that in Vietnam, when the Viet Cong fade into the jungle, they flee to well-developed jungle bases. Guerrillas hiding in these small, sometimes underground bases may not be found by police activity concentrating entirely on the population. In effect, they may be living outside the population and visiting the populated areas for reasons of resupply or to make contact with their relatives; they may have to be searched for in the jungles. There are many gimmicky-type devices to locate hidden base areas, but it is doubtful whether they are as reliable or efficient as some of the old methods.

As we said earlier, when an informer can be found, he undoubtedly provides the most direct and efficient way to locate the hideouts of other guerrillas (in this case particularly those still outside the ambush and patrol frontier). Informers can also often pinpoint political and terrorist leaders, otherwise extremely difficult to find. They also serve another purpose, in that they cause the terrorist and political leaders to distrust their own organization. This drastically restricts the leaders' freedom of movement and their gathering and dispensing of information. When an informer system is linked with a bounty program, which puts prices on the heads of the political cadres and terrorist leaders, guerrilla organizations have been known to fall apart. Because

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[1] See Thomas F. Bartman, "Simple Marking and Identification Systems for Use in Vietnam (U), SECRET, HI-886, August 21, 1967.

they lack mobility and adequate technology in equipment, guerrillas are forced to depend extensively on the loyalty of the individuals of very small groups; once this loyalty comes into question, guerrilla leaders may hardly be able to count on their orders being delivered by couriers, or when delivered, on their being carried out. Eventually they cannot even depend on the orders not being doctored to suit the enemy requirements before they are delivered; and finally the very safety of the leader himself in his own environment comes highly in doubt.

Supplementary efforts, such as bounty-informer programs, might increase the breakup--at least at the lower levels--of the VC infrastructure as well as act as an incentive for police efficiency. These programs should be designed to make flight very hazardous but encourage capture of the fugitives alive. For example, a price on a fugitive's head should be much greater for him alive than dead and both prices should increase as he gets farther from home. Police and constabulary should try to take him alive, but will not let him get away even if they have to shoot him, for he is also worth something dead. When he is far from home and more likely to have to depend on strangers, the incentives for these strangers (including VC) to turn him in will be great. Checks on such systems would have to be thorough or there might be considerable traffic in apprehended fugitives (particularly dead ones) to outlying areas for greater bounties.

If random paid or friendly informers or defectors are not available, there are other ways of getting information on nonurban concentrations of guerrillas which are not subject to threats of retaliation. We have referred to the use of dogs throughout this paper. This is an old and proven method of tracking down criminals and looking for guerrillas in the forests; but--besides the drawback of needing some sort of "trail" to start with to use these "informers"--it is not so simple to develop a canine corps as might be expected. For one thing, it would be of value to see whether it is wiser to import dogs trained outside the theater or to train native dogs (if there are any). It may be easier to train dogs in the United States where, for example, many training centers and expert personnel are available; but these dogs may later be very susceptible to exotic diseases in the theater of operations. Because of this, it may be better to transport the trainers to the theater and train local dogs. In any event, a cadre to teach the indigenous population the techniques of developing their own canine corps may be extremely valuable assistance, provided it were offered early enough: it takes a while to get the dog to point where you would risk your life on his judgment.[1]

Under these general police operations, a penetration program, parallel to that established for military purposes, may have to be set up, aside from and before the program described earlier for using defectors to act as agents. This is similar to the military program set up to gain information about specific military leaders. The military program may not be useful, however, in picking up political cadres and may be located in areas that are of no benefit to the constabulary forces. A parallel, but coordinated program, aimed more at the political arm of the insurgents than at the guerrillas, may therefore have to be developed to serve the

[1] In Malaysia, the British successfully used two types of dog-man teams, one a tracking-dog team (with Labradors) and one an in-place ambush-type team (with German Shepherds). Jac Weller, Fire and Movement (New York: Thomas Y. Crowell Co., 1967, p. 58). The former team would fit the constabulary operations and the latter the military ambush unit operations in this program.

purposes of the constabulary and police. Whether this needs to be set up depends very much on the organization of the insurgents. If the political and military organizations of the guerrilla movement operate as separate entities and/or are physically separated, it might be impossible for the same antiguerrilla agent to acquire both types of information. Any comments on penetration of an insurgent movement, however, normally apply to both military and political espionage.

Penetration of a native insurgent movement, under normal circumstances, is obviously best done by natives. But the U.S. could possibly provide espionage agents from its (or allied) immigrant citizens and first-generation, native-born Americans (or allied nationals) who may be more reliable than recruited natives, identifying only vaguely with a new or shaky local government. In an unstable milieu of a guerrilla war, the steadfast, confident native agent is not only most important, but often most difficult to find.

The assurance that the man who sent out the agent will be there to cover for him while he is gone and to identify him when he returns, is also vital to a covert intelligence operation. Ideally, the host government should give this assurance to a reliable, qualified native agent (particularly a defector turned agent); if it cannot, a responsible U.S. representative may have to provide the guarantee to a native, or perhaps even a U.S. or allied agent.

It is usually simple to penetrate the outer layers of the military segment of an insurgency movement; but as one tries to work his way deeper into the organization--particularly the political branch of the movement--the task becomes more difficult. Also, as an agent increases his value (i.e. penetrates deeper into the organization), the danger of his compromising himself increases. The intelligence net is a very fragile system, almost completely dependent on the reliability and safety of its agents; but it can be the crucial element in guerrilla warfare. Because of it, insurgent political cadres hiding in the population can be constantly at the mercy of raiding police; and guerrilla armies--with their low firepower, bad logistics, and lack of air cover--can become extremely vulnerable.

G. Supporting Legal and Detention Systems

In addition to apprehending the VC guerrillas and cadre, a key factor in providing successful area security is their detention and rehabilitation. When this kind of program is undertaken in a district, adequate, short-term, "sorting" POW cages must be provided for at district and province levels and suitable long-term prisons on a national level. (The islands off the coast of Vietnam would make ideal military prisons.)

It is hardly necessary to point out that it may not be all that easy to set up these POW cages and prisons in Vietnam, although the need for these facilities is well recognized, at least among military people. There

is a reason why suspects by the thousands run loose in South Vietnam and district chiefs have no place to detain even the worst of the lot. Characteristically, the Vietnamese is reluctant to be hard on his neighbor, for any reason. The Vietnamese would usually prefer to have the suspects come back to the community rather than exclude them by imprisonment. This is an admirable quality, but one of which the VC takes full advantage. With the exception of possibly one room at district headquarters and a jail at province headquarters, there is literally no place to keep suspects. (Nor is it easy at the local level to segretate prisoners into various categories during the interrogation period.) This leads to apprehended suspects being released long before any thorough and exhaustive check has been made on them, if indeed such a check can now be made at all. There have been some reports that, in certain instances, released suspects have later turned out to be hard-core VC. There also seems to be some difficulty in detaining suspects, even when the facilities are available, because province chiefs are reluctant to do so--though this is a more controversial point.

One does get the impression, however, that the current system may be too lenient to really disrupt VC activities and make life difficult for them. Furthermore the tendency of the South Vietnamese and the government toward leniency may contribute to a greater injustice in the long run. Because there is no way to detain suspects or identify and lay one's hands on VC individuals when the crunch comes, ARVN and allied troops cannot selectively bring pressure to bear on the VC and their sympathizers when their military operation alerts a district. The result often is that the friendly or uncommitted inhabitants of the area, as well as VC sympathizers, bear the brunt of suppressive measures. The VC themselves, on the other hand, have probably fled to the bush until the operation is finished. Even in the case of the VC, however, the system is not necessarily the best in all cases; as it now stands, the choice may be to either let a highly suspect person go or to kill him. There is no guarantee that <u>all</u> government people will <u>always</u> choose the former.

Opposition to a program of POW cages would probably be strong in Vietnam (and undoubtedly would be whipped up by the VC), but opposition to it in the U.S. would undoubtedly be great, too. One can visualize photos and stories in the U.S. papers comparing the camps to Dachau and Belsen and branding South Vietnam as a police state (particularly since some of the VC are women).

But some method of selectively "leaning" on the VC, without unduly disturbing the rest of the population, is essential in solving the cadre and local guerrilla problem; in fact, it is helpful in getting the VC "back into the community," as it makes Chieu Hoi promises more enticing. It is important that the program be handled carefully and implemented gradually in sequence with the area defense program. Showpiece areas with "happy endings" are even more important to have in this category of operation than in previously mentioned ones: the South Vietnamese must be convinced of the justice of the program and that the result is worth the very selective stronger measures.

H. Categories of Prisons and Prisoners

The interrogation and sorting out of detained VC must be systematic and thorough. In addition to being categorized by age groups and sex for placement in different penal systems, the ex-VC's must be sorted out by commitment and position. Those who "rally" (voluntarily defect) must be treated fairly, but must be considered to be on "parole" until they have thoroughly committed themselves to the government. Those who cooperate fully can be accepted back into the community, e.g., if they return to VC areas and lure out more VC, assist in uncovering arms caches, apprehending VC leaders, etc. Others who will not commit themselves to this extent may have more limited acceptance for a time. They may have to restrict their movements, observe more rigid curfews, report daily to the local police chiefs, etc. Some may have to be moved to other districts or even other provinces.

Those who are involuntarily brought in would usually fall into a different set of categories than the ralliers. But the POW who willingly and eagerly turns against his fellow VC and cooperates in the same way as the eager rallier mentioned above, can possibly be treated as though he is on parole. Those who do not cooperate, however, must be segrated into several categories that are each treated differently. The POW who does not cooperate with the government through fear and who might be intimidated into further cooperation with the VC may have to be moved out of the area until it has become demonstrably well-secured. But the area to which he is moved should be a minimum hardship area.

The POW who refuses to cooperate because he is ambivalent about the government cause or still somewhat convinced that the VC are right, must be sent to a rehabilitation area with high security but as few restrictions as possible. The hard-core, ideologically committed VC, who refuse to cooperate, must be isolated from those who are not so committed and placed in an area where the first requirement is security. Uncooperative hard-core VC who were also leaders must be even more isolated. In fact, many such men (or even women) may never be allowed to return to the society of South Vietnam. Even after the war, such men may have to be detained or exiled with a price on their heads and given a severe mandatory sentence if they should try to return. As stated earlier, the areas of confinement for the categories of prisoners who require considerable security (either to detain or protect them) should be the islands off the coast. Each category should be confined on a different island. The hard-core, ideologically committed VC and anarchists should, of course, be on a maximum security prison island far from shore.

There is yet another category of VC which the system will dredge up and which may have to be considered in a different way. This is the criminal element: men (and maybe women) who have committed crimes which outrage any standards of behavior. This category may not cover those who had killed or injured people or destroyed property in what could

possibly be called a military operation. It also may not even include men following direct orders; for example, the gunners who shelled the civilian crowd in Saigon on Independence Day or any group that carried out any other attack (even a most deliberate one) on a populated area, may not fit into this category. It may not contain those working under direct orders and duress and it may not include men who unpremeditatedly killed surrendering enemy in the heat of combat. But it should fit crimes like the deliberate murder of innocent citizens--for example, children of a village chief--for purposes of intimidation. It may even cover crimes like, for instance, the murder of the three teen-aged girls whose bodies, with hands bound behind their backs and bullet holes in their heads, were left in the center of the hamlet of Soui Chan. These girls were members of a government rural development team, but the murders were so deliberate, premediated and obviously designed to terrorize and inhibit other rural development teams by the brutality of the act, that the official status of the girls is hardly adequate cause for the crime. The premise should hold true for excesses against other noncombatants whose functions have little, if anything, to do with war operations.

The perpetrators of acts that clearly fall into the category of deliberate, premediated brutality and the murder of innocent civilians cannot and should not be treated like normal POW's when apprehended. In whatever way possible, the use of this outright, naked, inhuman terror against the civilian population must be discouraged. Like the South Vietnamese government (or allied) military or civilians who commit these crimes, these VC prisoners should probably be treated as ordinary criminals and tried and sentenced as such. Some may be executed; others will serve long prison sentences. But no one on either side of this war should feel that he will go unscathed if he commits such crimes and is caught. He should have a priority of capture second only to top VC leaders and the price on his head should reflect this.

I. Rehabilitation Programs

In the course of rehabilitating the VC in the camps and on the islands, a good program of indoctrination and persuasion may be needed. Part of this training may have to be built around some counterideology to Communist commitment to have any effect on many VC.

The new constitutional government in South Vietnam may possibly provide some kind of rallying point for the transfer of loyalty; perhaps the idea of a society based on individual achievement and some degree of workable, elected governmental structure will actually take hold. Simlar things have happened before--in Korea, for example. On the other hand, certain personalities might inspire VC returnees to accept the government that these individuals represent. In the Philippines, Magsaysay's magnetic personality caused some of the Huks to transfer their loyalty to him and his government.

Without some positive propaganda pitch the only other approach has to be negative. It would have to be to convince the POW's that the VC can do no more for the people than the government and, furthermore, that the VC are bound to lose. The penalty for not being on the winning side is universally known; being on the bandwagon, and being there early, pays off. The force of this type of propaganda, of course, depends a great deal on how well the war is progressing at the time the POW's are picked up.

Putting this entire program of police and penal reform into effect requires a significant change of direction in GVN policy--and raising police operations to a priority which, in many cases, will determine military operations, represents a drastic change. Further implementation of both programs will require a significant degree of sophistication. I feel, however, that such a capability exists in Vietnam, and the pay-offs could be so worthwhile, that attempts at implementation should be pushed to the extreme.

Carrying through the police reform will mean a strengthening of that arm. The police may, however, have to be decentralized and possibly put under the control of the district or province, although a central bureau may perhaps maintain a veto power based on requirements for efficiency and skill in order to keep up the standards. Decentralization may be needed so as to avoid the fears of central government that a national police force will create "a state within a state." Such programs can be worked out by the Vietnamese, possibly with U.S. help.

The penal reform is going to be even harder to implement, but I believe it can be done without stumbling into the pitfalls that are along this road. The greatest of these is the danger of giving the impression that a regime is oppressive to its citizens across the board. Selective arrests should avoid much of this. What indications there are (and there are a few), seem to show that there is little love lost between the vast majority of the population and the VC. Unless the apprehended VC and sympathizers are treated brutally, it is quite likely that the populace as a whole will see the justice of their detention. Even so, the roundups will be large and the POW cages obvious--so much indoctrination will be needed. The rehabilitation and return of apprehended VC to their own hamlet should do much to alleviate any remaining local fears.

It is through these security, "espionage" and "counterespionage," and police and detention operations, that the Communist infrastructure is weeded out, the guerrillas separated from the people, and the enemy military units forced to fight at the discretion of the counterinsurgents, rather than at their own. Any--or none--of these undertakings may pay off in Vietnam. But the U.S. must be ready with men and equipment to support these or other forms of legitimate, police-type, counterinsurgency operations that, after a close analysis of the Vietnamese war, give indications of being productive.

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This study contains recommendations for military tactics designed to provide area security in support of a constabulary and police program, which is described. The combined program aims at eliminating the communist infrastructure and local guerrillas.

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