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From: Commanding General
To: Commander, U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam
(Attn: Deputy for CORDS)

Subj: I Corps Revolutionary Development Overview for September 1967

Ref: (a) COMMUSMACV msg 260535ZDec 66 (Conf NOFORN 54520)
(b) COMMUSMACV msg 220935ZMar 67 (Unclass 09619)

1. In accordance with references (a) and (b) the subject report is submitted herewith.

2. General Comments

a. RD Workers and Military

(1) The Revolutionary Development Program remained behind schedule in IGTZ, except in Danang and Thua Thien. The southern three IGTZ provinces reported a noticeable slowdown of RD progress, while Danang and the northern two provinces reported satisfactory progress during September. Deterioration of security was the primary reason for the decline noted in Quang Nam, Quang Tin, and Quang Ngai. Another cause was the lack of interest by GVN officials due to concentration on the elections, uncertainties of office tenure following the elections, and tendency to become prematurely interested in 1968 planning, thereby forsaking attention to the remainder of the 1967 program.

(2) Quang Ngai's pacification effort suffered a serious setback when the Viet Cong occupied eastern Tu Nghia, the most important RD campaign area, for ten days following the 29-30 August attack upon the provincial capital. The people of the area were aloof and suspicious upon GVN reoccupation after the enemy "depacification". Recovery from this setback is expected to take several months. Quang Nam experienced a similar reversal in Hieu Nhon district around Hoi An, the provincial capital. At one point five RD teams were temporarily withdrawn from their hamlets due to a deterioration of security. In Quang Tin insecurity necessitated the permanent removal of one RD Team from its location and prevented three teams from moving to their second semester assignments. In contrast to the three southern provinces,

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Danang and Thua Thien experienced steady progress throughout September, while Quang Tri reported the most successful month yet recorded there.

(3) It is doubtful that the 1967 I Corps RD Plan will be fulfilled in its entirety by 31 December. As of 30 September, 24 out of 121 New Life Hamlets were completed and an additional 69 had completed over 70% of the required criteria. Of 102 Consolidation Hamlets, 29 were completed by the end of the third quarter, 75.3% of the criteria achieved for first semester hamlets, and 54.0% for the second semester. Hesitancy to move to second semester hamlets has not been a problem in ICTZ. In fact, American RD Advisors are concerned that some teams may be moving to their new locations slightly prematurely. Official GVN estimates for accomplishment by December 31 are as follows:

<u>PROVINCE</u>	<u>NLH</u>	<u>CONSOLIDATION</u>	<u>CONSTRUCTION</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
Quang Tri	15 (20)	6 (9)	0 (2)	21 (31)
Thua Thien	23 (24)	3 (10)	0 (0)	29 (34)
Danang	7 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	7 (7)
Quang Nam	25 (28)	5 (11)	0 (0)	30 (39)
Quang Tin	22 (22)	11 (14)	4 (11)	37 (40)
Quang Ngai	21 (20)	40 (58)	8 (12)	76 (90)
	113 (121)*	65 (102)*	12 (25)*	190 (241)*

*Figures in parenthesis indicate 1967 RD Plan for ICTZ

These figures appear unduly optimistic in the light of lack of adequate security and the forthcoming monsoon.

(4) Contacts between RD Teams and VC decreased from 72 to 42 the past two months but friendly casualties failed to decline. Team effectiveness continued to range from fair to excellent, though VC successes had a marked negative effect on morale and performance in the southern provinces. The Corps quota of RD Teams was raised to 151. At present 125 teams are employed in the field and 11 are undergoing training. New cadre are being recruited and three provinces are experimenting with utilizing recruits in the field to determine their suitability to serve as cadre prior to the heavy investment required to train the cadre at Vung Tau. New RD Cadre chiefs were appointed in Danang, Thua Thien, and Quang Tri during September. It is too early to evaluate their performances.

(5) The high level of VC activity reported in August continued the first two weeks of September but declined noticeably the remainder of the month, when a full moon returned to the sky. There were 19 incidents directed against Sector and Subsector headquarters; 6 were classified as attacks while 13 were of a harassing nature. The largest attacks, multi-

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Battal size, were against Hieu Nhon district headquarters in Quang Nam and Tam city, the Quang Tin capital. The first overran and demolished most of the government facilities, but the second on 6 September was repulsed and was a significant GVN victory. VC assassinations decreased from 198 in August to 122 in September, but the number of abductions rose substantially for the fourth straight month to an alarming 335 persons. The majority of kidnappings were in Quang Nam during the election period.

b. Political

(1) As in the previous month, the elections dominated ICTZ. 787,400 voters, or 86.3% of the total number registered, cast their ballots on 3 September. The overwhelming turn-out represented a substantial defeat for the concentrated VC campaign to sabotage the elections and coerce voter abstention.

(2) The Thieu-Ky slate received the largest number of votes, 191,405 (24.3% of the total) with the Buddhist backed Sun-Dan list polling a close second, 172,667 votes. Sun might have won except for many voters mistaking the more easily recognizable "Buffalo" symbol of Quat for that of the Sun's smaller buffalo. The Buddhists also demonstrated their strength in the Senate races, where all six of the slates they supported carried ICTZ.

(3) The Buddhists, one VNQDD faction, Tan Dai Viet followers, and student groups led the anti-GVN effort following the election. Significantly, the Revolutionary Dai Viets and other VNQDD factions have not supported opposition movements. Anti-Thieu-Ky activities consisted of meetings, student boycotts, attempted strikes, and attempted demonstrations, primarily in Hue and Danang. Thus far the opposition effort has been largely unsuccessful due to the "show of force" policy by local authorities and apparent lack of popular enthusiasm for a new "Struggle" movement.

(4) The political parties and politically-oriented religious groups began preparations for the lower house elections, which have attracted 161 candidates for the 19 ICTZ seats.

3. Psychological

a. The morale of the people did not decline unduly considering the stepped-up VC harassment the past two months except in Quang Nam and Quang Ngai. The large voter turn-out was a psychological victory of major proportions for the government. The failure, thus far, of anti-GVN demonstrations, is also working in the Government's favor. On the negative side, however, VC attacks in Quang Ngai and Quang Nam have adversely affected the morale of the people. Civil servants and Hoi Chanh, prime enemy targets, had to seek nightly refuge in places other than their normal abode. Popular enthusiasm for the GVN understandably weakened in places even temporarily re-occupied by the VC, including Tu Nghia District in Quang Ngai

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and Hieu Nhon District in Quang Nam.

b. The VIS can be credited with an outstanding performance in support of the 3 September election. Its successful efforts contrasted sharply with the general failure of VIS to support the RD campaign. With a new knowledge of the VIS's real ability to perform when motivated, psyops advisors began to concentrate on VIS efforts to assist RD. Quang Ngai initiated a three-week training program for 40 VIS cadre, and Quang Nam and Quang Tin encouraged local drama teams to hold more performances in hamlets under pacification.

4. Economic

Relatively stable economic conditions continued in September. The black market monetary exchange rates in Danang actually declined. Quang Nam noted price increases in bulgur as that commodity was phased out by USAID but found that sand and gravel prices remained level despite increased shortages in those materials. The provinces reported that it is still too early to assess the economic impact of the RD program in pacification areas.

5. Security

The three southern provinces reported a noticeable deterioration of security. Quang Tri, on the other hand, reported a significant improvement due to the security elements placed near the new airfield being constructed near Quang Tri City. The capital, the RD priority area, and Route One from Quang Tri to Dong Ha, all benefited. The fact that security is the sine qua non of pacification success was again highlighted by the decline of RD progress in the southern provinces. A few RD teams were unable to move to second semester hamlets and had to withdraw temporarily from the hamlets in which they were working because of insecurity.

6. Areas of Progress

a. Revolutionary Development

(1) Vietnamese language television, inaugurated in Hue in early September, broadcast a strong beam to Thua Thien and Quang Tri provinces. The initial two-hour per day programs during early evening hours have been greeted with popular enthusiasm.

(2) Quang Tri reported 120 self-help projects (95 unfunded; 25 funded) completed during September. This monthly figure must surely be a national record and represents Quang Tri's continuing leadership in this activity. It is also indicative of the growing interest of the Quang Tri people in RD and helping themselves.

(3) 42 of I Corps total of 51 irrigation projects in 1967 have been completed prior to the rainy season, opening or reclaiming 7,760

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hectares of land for cultivation. The remaining projects have been postponed or abandoned due to insecurity.

(4) Many ICTZ youth have been taking an active part in RD and related activities. Danang young people were instrumental in initiating and constructing a number of self-help projects in the city's major resettlement and RD areas. Quang Tri youth, joined by Saigon peers in a special summer program, constructed a three-room school at Cam Lo resettlement project which was dedicated in September. This is the first school available to the refugee families in the area.

(5) The ICEX program was successfully introduced in each province in September. The provinces selected a central repository for infrastructure information and made plans for improved coordination of information gathering and dissemination.

(6) CORDS Public Health, with the able assistance of Navy Preventive Medicine Units, successfully eliminated two potential epidemic threats in September. In immediate response to a plague outbreak in one Quang Nam village, a Navy team immunized 1,200 people, treated housing and village environs with insecticide, and introduced a rodent extermination program. In response to a growing number of cholera cases in Thua Thien, a carefully planned Cholera Prevention Week resulted in 16,175 immunizations. Basic health education classes were held for thousands, utilizing films and lectures, and Ministry of Health technicians were trained in the use of the hypo-jet inoculation injectors.

(7) The crisis noted in the ICTZ refugee situation the past few months abated somewhat in September due to relaxation of stringent GVN controls, better GVN performance by provincial SCR officials, increased commodity shipments, and a decline in the number of new refugees. Catalyst of this marked improvement was the 9 September ICTZ Commander's Conference on Refugees chaired by General Lam and attended by Dr. Que, all Province Chiefs, and province refugee officers, as well as their American counterparts. The action oriented meeting resulted in cutting considerable red tape and firm orders by the Corps Commander and Refugee Commissioner for an improvement in present performance.

(8) Increased emphasis on the Chieu Hoi program and continuing initiation of imaginative ideas at the province level marked progress in this area. The introduction of dinner, kits, and special committees to "welcome" Hoi Chanh bolstered the reception phase of the program. Nevertheless, the number of Hoi Chanh declined from 236 in August to 71 in September due to a number of factors, primarily security.

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(9) Pacification planning for 1968 significantly improved over past years. Provinces and I Corps began work on their RD Plans even before the issuance of the 1968 Guidelines. American advisors were much closer to their counterparts in the planning process than in previous years and thus in a position to affect significantly the preparation of 1968 programs.

(10) PROJECT TAKEOFF stimulated interest in and focused attention on major priorities. Specific accomplishments are presented in the PROJECT TAKEOFF Status and Required Action Report.

(11) The flow of commodities improved considerably during September. Shortages of construction materials had hampered RD accomplishment since June. CORDS/Logistics/ICTZ received and transported 97,000 roofing sheets during the month. Shortages of this commodity had previously prevented the completion of schools, refugee housing, and self-help projects throughout the Corps. Despite replenishment of provincial stocks, some provincial advisors were concerned that stocks were inadequate to meet the monsoon, when inclement weather precludes the normal flow of shipments for a four-month period.

b. Military

(1) U.S. battalion-size and larger operations decreased from 13 to 12 and small unit operations decreased from 40,011 to 38,871. A breakdown of all enemy losses in ICTZ for the month of September is listed below:

	<u>III MAP</u>	<u>KVNAP</u>	<u>ROKMC</u>	<u>USSF</u>	<u>TOTAL</u>
KIA (CONF)	2296	1331	404	26	4057
KIA (PROB)	2504	249	83	20	2856
Detainees	1606	280	80	29	1995
FW/NVA	14	0	0	0	14
FW/VC	65	133	14	0	212
Rtnes/NVA	0	0	0	0	0
Rtnes/VC	17	55	1	0	73
Weapons	347	306	28	10	691

(2) ARVN conducted 34 large-scale operations during September. Though this represented a substantial decrease from the 47 operations conducted the previous month, the effectiveness of these operations and RF/PF forces protecting installations increased because enemy losses doubled in September. All these operations and defensive measures directly or indirectly supported RD. Lam Son AB 142 (RD) continued to utilize six ARVN battalions, three each in Quang Tri and Thua Thien Provinces. Accumulated enemy casualties for this operation through the end of September were 694. Lien Ket 114 and 116 were conducted in the 12th DTA and yielded a total of 257 enemy dead and 72 weapons captured.

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(3) The Regional Forces/Popular Forces continued to support the RD program by participating with ARVN in large operations and by conducting small unit operations in RD target areas. RF/PF played a vital role in ensuring the success of the recent National Elections. They provided excellent close-in security, in conjunction with local civilian officials and National Police, for the numerous polling locations in ICTZ. Additionally they played a significant part in the success of local force units by inflicting large casualties on VC forces attacking local installations and lines of communication. During September, RF/PF units inflicted 318 casualties on the enemy versus 170 friendly casualties.

(4) There was an increase of Vietnamese military operations and small unit patrols during the first part of the month to keep the enemy off balance during the election. After the success of the elections, operations decreased from the accelerated pace but the ARVN and RF/PF forces inflicted heavy casualties on attacking enemy forces. Advisors strived to follow-up these successes by stressing training, improved defensive positions and reaction. CORBS/MAGV advisors placed increasing emphasis on advising counterparts to complete the majority of RD projects prior to the advent of the monsoon season.

(5) Twelve PF platoons and four RF companies received RD training during the month. The total number trained is now 684 platoons and 84 RF companies.

7. GVN/ARVN Performance

a. Performance of GVN officials again varied considerably. A general slowdown and lack of interest was noted in Quang Ngai and Quang Tin, while Danang, Thua Thien, and Quang Tri commended the general effectiveness of most GVN technical cadre. Many Quang Tri officials have caught the true spirit of RD, leading advisors to call for the removal of the remaining incompetent, disinterested, and probably corrupt officials, including the Province Chief, the Public Works Chief, and the Highlander Affairs Chief. There continues to be considerable turn-over of GVN officials in ICTZ. This trend is expected to continue and hopefully will result in the appointment of more competent and dedicated civil servants.

b. American advisors have noted a slow but steady improvement in the performance of Vietnamese military units in the support of Revolutionary Development. This is particularly true in the northern two provinces, where the increasing aggressiveness and interest of the ARVN 1st Division units appear to be significant factors in the progress of RD in Quang Tri and Thua Thien. In the south, however, Quang Ngai stated that one RD support battalion is not properly deployed, and Quang Tin complained that the lack of aggressive military screening and clearing operations hampered RD progress.

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c. Two demonstrations of effective Vietnamese military performance were the yeoman service on behalf of election security and the highly successful repulse of the multi-battalion attack on Tam Ky, which resulted in 219 enemy KIA and 96 weapons captured.

8. Problem Areas

a. The failure to arm hamlet self defense forces remained an impediment to RD progress. Four ICTZ provinces again expressed concern on this matter in their September Special Joint Reports. *pl ok*

b. Inadequate security, of course, continued to be the most crucial problem of ICTZ. The slowdown of RD progress in the southern three Corps provinces was primarily a manifestation of deteriorating security. In Quang Ngai, three of the five rural electrification plants of the 1966 RD program have been demolished by VC attacks the past three months following final installation in June. As long as the enemy is able to deal major setbacks to the RD effort, such as the temporary reoccupation of a campaign area or the destruction of 60% of an expensive and high impact program like rural electrification, progress in Revolutionary Development will remain slow and tenuous. Only the commitment of sizeable new troop units can begin to solve this problem. *13 ok*

c. Improper utilization of the NPFF was still a problem in most ICTZ provinces. However, some improvement was noted in September and new GVN national directives and increased pressure from PSD advisors are expected to alleviate further poor deployment of NPFF in the coming months.

d. Large fertilizer stocks in Danang failed to move to the provinces in sufficient quantities due to low demand in the face of a high set price. Only Thua Thien and Quang Nam have received adequate supplies prior to the monsoon. One thousand tons of fertilizer shipped to Quang Ngai were severely damaged because of improper handling. In Quang Tin it was discovered that Farmers Association warehouses are filled with rice at least partially sold on consignment. This placed fertilizer in a weak competitive position for it is sold only on a cash basis. Thus the fertilizer problem which has often plagued ICTZ in the past is now rearing its head in a new form.

9. Conclusions/Recommendations

a. The slowdown in RD momentum noted in August continued into September. The deterioration of security noted in Quang Ngai, Quang Tin,

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and Quang Nam was a primary concern. With the monsoons coming in October, it is felt that ICTZ RD progress will slow down the next four months.

b. It is recommended that MACCORDS persuade the appropriate GVN agency that weapons for the people's self defense groups must be promptly issued from province stocks. *ok*

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