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MACCORDS-RE

27 March 1968

Status of Pacification - Quang Nam (3) Province
(Tet Offensive)

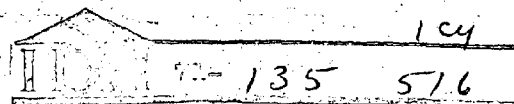
1. Security:

The enemy's Tet offensive (30 January to 9 February) resulted in drastic, although perhaps only temporary, deterioration of security in Quang Nam Province. ARVN, US and FMAP units, normally providing security to rural areas, were committed to the defense of Danang, Hoi An and their own bases. The pacified areas of Hoa Vang, Hien Duc and northern Dien Ban Districts became major battlefields as the enemy moved on Danang and was blocked. Many civilian lives were lost and much property damaged. VC/EVA forces occupied a portion of Hoi An, Cam Nam Island, and a suburban area of Danang; many structures were demolished by friendly fire in efforts to eject the enemy. Day Xuyen District Headquarters was abandoned to the enemy; the District Chief and staff moved to the town of Tra Kieu; the District Headquarters destroyed by friendly artillery. Lines of communication were blocked and routine activities of the population disrupted. By 10 February, the attack had been blunted, and enemy forces began their withdrawal to base areas. The GVN, which conducted itself well throughout the attack period, reasserted control. A semblance of normalcy returned. Curfew and other restrictions continued in force, however, as a further enemy offensive was threatened.

2. Administrative Control and Damage Assessment:

a. In organizing resources and personnel to meet Tet offensive emergencies, Province Chief LTC Le Tri Tin fully justified the longstanding confidence of US advisors in Quang Nam. Despite the absence of the Deputy Province Chief for Security, LTC Tin employed the forces under his command to

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maximum advantage; his preoccupation with military matters placed additional responsibility for civil needs on the Deputy Province Chief for Administration, Mr. Nguyen Tao. Mr. Tao coordinated the emergency civil committee which maintained GVN responsiveness in the face of an overwhelming refugee influx. Also singled out for commendation by the PSA was the Education Service Chief, the National Police Chief, the Chief of the Internal Security Service, and five of the province's nine District Chiefs.

b. Public Utilities: No reported problems.

c. Building Damage: Several blocks of eastern and northeastern Hoi An were severely damaged or destroyed. In addition, severe damage was inflicted on at least four or five of the 1967 RD hamlets in the province.

d. Public Safety: No reported problems.

e. Refugees: Tenuous security conditions have created an extraordinary refugee influx (23,000) following the Tet offensive. Only basic care for these temporary refugees has been possible.

3. Popular Attitudes:

Fear, insecurity, anti-VC sentiments, and discouragement over the Hme situation are popular attitudes in this province.

4. Economic Conditions:

The movement of traffic by road into Quang Nam Province was 20% of normal volume and until official restrictions on travel are modified, the volume will not increase substantially. Movement of emergency food supplies to the districts has been accomplished principally by air. Demand for construction materials is being met from stocks on hand and through irregular convey and commercial truck shipments from Da nang. Government rationing procedures and price controls were implemented immediately in Hoi An and all districts.

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5. Impact of Tet Offensive on RD Areas:

a. Measurable implementation of the 1968 RD program in Quang Nam Province has yet to begin. Hampered by a continuing lack of security and the absence, dislocation and loss of personnel following the VC Tet offensive, GVN officials and US advisors have been unable to draw specific revisions to the original campaign plan. If a modified program emerges by mid-March, work in the 1968 hamlets should begin by 1 April. (A field trip subsequent to the February provincial report found that this was exactly what was happening.)

b. Extensive damage in previously secure hamlets of Hoa Vang, Dien Ban and Hien Nhon Districts will make necessary the return of RD groups to salvage projects completed under last year's programs. GVN and US personnel recognize that enemy activity in these areas has both disrupted and retarded the overall pacification effort. At the same time, responsible province officials have displayed resourcefulness and resilience in the wake of recent attacks, and share with their American advisors the belief that progress will be possible in 1968 once the pacification initiative is regained.

c. The Chairman of the RD Council has taken a first step toward restoring prestige to government efforts in the countryside. On 25 February a survey was begun of all 1966 and 1967 Ap Doi Moi to determine what specific assistance must be rendered hamlets whose material and psychological gains have been dissipated as a result of the Tet attacks. On 2 March the District Chiefs of Hoa Vang, Dien Ban and Hien Nhon also presented their recommendations to the province chief and CO, 51st Infantry Regiment (ARVN). Within two weeks, selected cadre groups will receive three month, six month or one year assignments for the revitalization of such hamlets, making necessary a redeployment of remaining RD groups in 1968 areas.

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6. Status of Pacification Assets:

	<u>NUMBER</u>	<u>AVERAGE STRENGTH</u>	<u>NUMBER IN NORMAL MISSION</u>
RD Bns	4	612	
RF Cos	41	113	
PF Plts	162	32	
RDC Groups	34		22
TSED Teams	8		
NPFV Cos	6	184	
NV		1212	

7. Infrastructure:

Operations against the infrastructure were neglected as resources were committed to the collection of tactical intelligence. In any case, 150 VCS have been detained by the police.

8. PSA's Views on Recovery:

See paragraph 5.

9. Sources of Information:

February 1968 PSA Report to CORDS

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