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* THE KIT CARSON SCOUT PROGRAM *
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* 1966 - 1968 *
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Prepared by:

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MACCORDS - SAIGON
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- (c) Assist in search operations for Viet Cong equipment and supplies.
- (d) Assist in population control and concurrent psychological operations.
- (e) Assist in interrogation of captives, suspects or other returnees.
- (f) Assist tactical and intelligence units and GVN police forces by identifying members of the Viet Cong through visual recognition.
- (g) Assist in identification of dead or wounded Viet Cong.

B. PHASE II - EXTENSION TO ALL US FORCES IN VIETNAM

1. In September 1966, Mr. Williams directed Lt Col Pat K. Elliot, MACV J-2 liaison officer who was attached to the USAID (Later OCO-finally CORDS) Chieu Hoi Program, to locate a military funding source and to draft the first MACV guidelines for the administration of the Kit Carson Scout Program and its extension countrywide. Lt Col Elliot arranged for J-2 Intelligence Contingency Funds to pick up funding from USAID and drafted the guidelines. As a result, on the 29 April 1967, COMUSMACV extended this program to all US units in Vietnam by issuing Letter, MACJ264, Subject: Chieu Hoi Returnees in Support of Counter-insurgency Operations.

2. As a result of Operation Take-off on 19 July 1967, the staff responsibility for the program was transferred from J-2 to MACCORDS/Chieu Hoi but continued to be funded by J-2 Intelligence Contingency Funds until 31 December 1967.

3. On 29 December 1967, the Chief of Staff, MACV, approved a recommendation of MACCORDS to use Assistance in Kind (AIK) funds to pay Kit Carson Scouts. The Kit Carson Scout Program was formally endorsed by COMUSMACV on January 1968, by Message Cite Number 00832, DTC 081210Z January 1968, when he suggested each Division consider a minimum of 100 scouts as a reasonable goal, thus the goal for the program for CY 68 became 1,500 scouts.

C. PHASE III - ASSIGNMENT OF COMPONENT RESPONSIBILITY

1. On 30 April 1968, COMUSMACV tasked the DCG of USARV and CG III MAF with the administration and operation of the Kit Carson Scout Program. Message Cite Number 12242, DTG 300745Z April 1968, directed that action be initiated through component channels to establish appropriate local national civilian hire spaces and funding.

2. On 23 September 1968, USMACV issued Directive 525-6, and formalized the Kit Carson Scout Program. This directive established policy, procedures and reporting policy for the country-wide Kit Carson Scout Program. The Kit Carson Scout at this time became a local national hire civilian. Change 3 to the Personnel Policy Manual for US forces in Vietnam was published on 30 September 1968, and provided the personnel management guidance for the program.

D. (C) PHASE IV - CY 1969: By Message Cite Number 29643, DTG 061125Z October 1968, COMUSMACV announced the Kit Carson Scout Program for CY 69. This program provides for 200 scouts per Division (9), 100 per separate Brigade (4) and 100 each for II, III and IV CTZ, for utilization by advisory and naval units. This goal of 2,500 scouts country-wide was designed to be sufficiently high to permit the units to make profitable use of the Kit Carson Scouts but at the same time deliberately not so high as to encourage the use of scouts as mere augmentation forces.

II. GROWTH OF THE PROGRAM

A. During Phase I and II, the Pilot Phase and the final extension to all US Forces in Vietnam, growth was moderate but steady, as indicated by the CTZ statistics below:

Phase I and II						
CTZ	:	Dec 67	:	End of Jan 68	:	End of Feb 68
I	:	171	:	190	:	179
II	:	0	:	2	:	22
III	:	50	:	90	:	90
IV	:	23	:	20	:	24
TOTALS	:	244	:	302	:	315
						332
						438

B. During Phase III, a considerable increase and deployment of Kit Carson Scouts took place.

Phase III						
CTZ	:	End of May 68	:	End of Jun 68	:	End of Jul 68
I	:	251	:	273	:	289
II	:	118	:	158	:	158
III	:	263	:	304	:	403
IV	:	52	:	54	:	45
TOTALS	:	624	:	749	:	899
						942
						1058
						1350
						1495
						1517

C. The Following shows the breakdown by unit, with killed in action, wounded in action, missing in action and desertions for the last quarter of Phase III. Prior to this quarter, a total of 41 Kit Carson Scouts were killed, and 150 wounded. The first Kit Carson Scout was killed on 16 February 1967. A 1st Marine Division monthly Kit Carson Scout Report dated 28 February 1967 reported these details. "On 16 February 1967, during Operation Stone, a Kit Carson Scout (Not further identified) accompanying a Marine patrol discovered a cave. The scout attempted to search the cave when a concealed VC threw a hand grenade from inside. In the resulting explosion the first Kit Carson Scout was killed in action".

UNIT
STATISTICS
4 QTR. CY 68

	SEPT				OCT					
	# SCOUTS	KIA	WIA	MIA	DESERTED	# SCOUTS	KIA	WIA	MIA	DESERTED
1st Cav Div	61	2		4		64				
1st Inf Div	129		4		1	265		7		6
4th Inf Div	72				2	83		2		
9th Inf Div	216	2	6			252		6		
25th Inf Div	59					76				
101st Air Cav	66		1			106				
Americal Div	104	2	2			110	2	1		
173d Abn Bde	74		1			75				
199 Lt Inf Bde	26		2			28				
1/5 Mec Bde	12					12				
8/82nd Abn Div	0					8		1		
11 ACR	4				4	16				
II FFV Hqs	0					13				
1st Mar Div	85	1	3			93	1	2		
3rd Mar Div	95		1			86				
1st CAG	4					9				
IV CTZ	51		1			54				
	<u>1058</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>22</u>		<u>11</u>	<u>1350</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>19</u>		<u>6</u>

	NOV				DEC					
	# SCOUTS	KIA	WIA	MIA	DESERTED	# SCOUTS	KIA	WIA	MIA	DESERTED
1st Cav Div	63		1			54		1		
1st Inf Div	285	1			3	263	3	6		3
4th Inf Div	75					68		1		
9th Inf Div	312	1	4			308	8	10		
25th Inf Div	94		2		3	115	2	3	1	
101st Air Cav	145		2			153		2		
Americal Div	109	1	1			115	1	2		
173d Abn Bde	74	1				95		1		
199 Lt Inf Bde	28		1			39				
1/5 Mec Bde	12					0				
3/82nd Abn Div	10					10				
11 ACR	22					22				
II FFV Hqs	12					6		1		
1st Mar Div	90	1	1			115		1		
3rd Mar Div	99					98				
1st CAG	13					13				
IV CTZ	52					41	1	1		
	<u>1495</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>12</u>		<u>6</u>	<u>1,517</u>	<u>16</u>	<u>36</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>3</u>

RECAP : Casualties

PERIOD:	Killed in Action	Wounded in Action
August 1966 to 1 September 1968	30	89
1 Sept 1968 to 31 December 1968	41	150
	<u>71</u>	<u>239</u>

D. PHASE IV: During this phase it is planned that the structure of Kit Carson Scout Program will be increased at a rate of 290 per quarter during CY 69.

III ACCOMPLISHMENTS AND CONTRIBUTIONS

The U. S. Mission Council policy does not provide for presentation of US Awards and/or decorations to Kit Carson Scouts. The GVN Ministry of Defense Awards and Decoration System allows Kit Carson Scouts to receive GVN decorations. The Kit Carson Scouts are authorized to receive the following awards and decorations:

- (a) Certificate of Achievement.
- (b) Letter of Commendation.
- (c) Gallantry Cross, with Palm (Highest Award); Gold Star; Silver Star; and Bronze Star.
- (d) Hazardous Service Medal
- (e) Wound Medal

Though no centralized effort has been undertaken to record the events, efforts, and accomplishments of the Kit Carson Scouts in support of the Vietnam War, the following reports (from various sources) provide a limited insight into the contributions of this program:

III MAF

In November 1967, an eight man Marine patrol from D Co., 3rd Recon Bn., 3rd Marine Div., under the Command of Lt James Glenn, was moving along a dried-out river bottom in the vicinity of Phu Bai when the patrol came under heavy automatic weapons fire. Some 30 to 40 NVA were firing from concealed positions within the secondary undergrowth that flanked the trail. In the initial bursts four of the Marines were wounded including Kit Carson Scout Nguyen Chau,

within seconds after the ambush had started, Chau had been wounded in both hands, his stomach and his right foot. Despite this, when a youthful marine went down, his leg shattered by an AK-47 round, Chau shielded the American with his own body, then raked the surrounding enemy brush with devastating automatic fire. Seconds later, while blood flowed from his stomach, Chau took over the point, and led the Marines up a steep incline to a sheltering plateau while maintaining covering fire. Later, when a radio call for help brought a helicopter overhead, it was Chau who secured the landing zone when he killed a half dozen enemy as they attempted to charge the incoming chopper. It was only after the enemy had been driven off and the wounded taken aboard, that Chau collapsed from his own wounds. When flown to an emergency field hospital with the other wounded, the medics found that Chau had stuffed one of his patrol maps into his open stomach wound to help slow down the bleeding.

One technique in employing Kit Carson Scouts is the "Buddy" system, whereby a scout is teamed up with a US Soldier or Marine. This often establishes an intense mutual loyalty. An example is Ngoc Lan, who was teamed up with L/Cpl Everett Mullinix of 4th Regiment, 3rd Marine Division. The pair made an excellent team, and in June 1967, during a pursuit operation, one VC crawled into a cave complex. Mullinix started to go in after him, but Lan pulled him back. Lan entered the cave, the hidden VC tossed a grenade. As it bounced past Lan, in the direction of Mullinix who was just behind, Lan whirled and smothered the sputtering explosive with his body. Wounded by grenade fragments, Lan died while enroute to the hospital at Phu Bai.

During the initial phase of Operation Union II, Kit Carson Scout Truong Kinh, serving with Company F, 2nd Battalion, Fifth Marines, is credited with killing fifty-five VC/NVA in a single day's fighting. The Marine Commander stated after the battle... "even more important (than the number killed)

is that Kinh has the admiration and respect of every Marine in the company. In fact, many of these men wouldn't be alive today if it weren't for Kinh. And this is a debt a fighting Marine never forgets".

In August of 1968, a squad size patrol from Company A, 1/7, 3rd Marine Division, with a Kit Carson Scout, were crossing a creek when the scout spotted a roll of communication wire partially camouflaged in the water. The patrol started searching the area when they were pinned down by enemy fire from a spider hole, 30 meters away. One Marine was wounded and lying in the open when the Kit Carson Scout ran across the creek through the enemy's field of fire and threw two hand grenades into the VC's position. A search of the area afterwards produced military equipment and documents plus one dead VC.

On 6 December 1968, while on a squad size patrol northwest of Danang, Dinh Van Minh, Kit Carson Scout, serving with 1st Bn, 26th Marines, was instrumental in ambushing an estimated twenty NVA soldiers, accounting for fifteen confirmed kills. Minh had recommended to the Patrol Leader an ambush site based on his observation of signs of enemy movement. In the ambush site, MINH fired the first claymore, killing 5 NVA only a few feet from his position. He then began throwing grenades into the enemy position exposing himself to enemy fire in return. MINH was wounded, but continued the fight, even returning an enemy grenade which landed in his position. MINH was recommended for the Vietnamese Cross Of Gallantry (Gold Star). Shortly after this, the VC announced a 100,000\$VN price on MINH's capture. On 15 December 1968, MINH was kidnapped from his home by eight armed enemy. On 22 December 1968, he escaped from his captors and returned to control of 1st Marine Div. on 28 December 1968. While in captivity the VC cut the soles of his feet to make escape more difficult.

Kit Carson Scout, Nguyen Dinh Loc, 24, was a part of an eight man team from the 3rd Recon Bn, 3rd Marine Division, operating between the Rockpile and the Demilitarized Zone. The team was attacked by a 200 man North Vietnamese force. During the attack five Marines were killed, two escaped and were rescued. As Dinh exchanged fire with the enemy on a ridge above him, he was overpowered from the rear and bound with a rope. His captors took all his papers and money. They beat him, questioned him about Marine units, and left him, hands tied with a guard watching. Seven hours after his capture he worked loose and strangled the guard with the same rope. After he unsuccessfully tried to locate other members of his patrol, Dinh began to make his way back to Marine positions near the Rockpile. For three nights and two days, Dinh trudged back without food and only the water available from streams or occasional paddies. Eventually he located a Marine position and walked in waving a white flag.

On 26 December 1967, KCS Nguyen Van Loi, 056, was walking point and participating in a sweep with A Company, 1st Bn, 9th Marines, near YD 511436. Earlier in the sweep, Loi had located a 105mm round rigged as a mine and had stepped on a M-26 grenade mine. As the spoon flew off, Loi coolly picked up the grenade and threw it away from the Marines. At 1630H, the company was ambushed and Loi was shot through the heart.

KCS Doan Kien, 084, was wounded while on patrol with CAC-P South of Dong Ha on 23 December 1967. The Marine walking point found an M26 grenade rigged as a mine and Kien instructed the marines to step back as he inspected the mine. The mine exploded and Kien suffered a broken arm and shrapnel wounds of both legs. He was medically evacuated to NSA Danang.

In March 1968, Tieu Viet Ba, a Kit Carson Scout with the Combined Action Platoon (CAP) L-5 led the men of this unit into VC territory where they killed ten enemy. The unit moved from Phuoc Thien to Ba's old Viet Cong rest and retraining center at An Cuong village. An ambush was established and in the resulting action five VC were captured, ten were killed and considerable explosives were destroyed.

In October 1967, Hoang Phieu, became a Kit Carson Scout. What makes him unique is his age. He is 56 years old, father of four. In 1966, when the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese moved into the Gio Linh area immediately South of the demilitarized zone, Hoang, who had become a hamlet chief, was a prime target for the communist political machine, and in March of that year, he became a Viet Cong. After six months of Viet Cong service he fled South with his family and surrendered to government forces under the Chieu Hoi Program. He has been assigned as a scout with the 3rd Marine Division.

1st AIR CAVALRY DIVISION

In July 1968, the first Platoon, D Company, 1st Bn, 9th Cavalry was inserted into a suspected enemy position on the Bong Son plain. The platoon leader was killed instantly; two other members of the platoon were seriously wounded. Heavy automatic weapons fire pinned the rest of the platoon behind a rice paddy dike. Without cover, in the face of hostile fire, a Kit Carson Scout (not further identified) raced forward to carry the wounded to safety and to administer first aid. When a grenade landed in the midst of the platoon the scout was the only one to see it. Reacting instantly, he threw it back before it exploded. By then he was wounded himself, but it didn't prevent him from laying down a base of fire until an armored personnel carrier broke through to reinforce the platoon. Ignoring his severe wounds, he then assisted in the evacuation of his buddies.

Kit Carson Scout Canh, Company A, 2nd Battalion, 5th Cavalry, has been with the unit over a year. He is a former Viet Cong Hamlet Chief. In July, when the unit had surrounded 30 NVA soldiers ensconced in caves, Scout Canh only stopped making loudspeaker appeals for them to defect when he became so hoarse his voice had nearly withered away. On several occasions during this operation, he walked down inside of caves and pulled out wounded who wanted to come out and surrender but could not walk. Captain Clayton A. Pratt, Company Commander at the time, called Scout Canh, "a fearless little man".

At Dak To, a Kit Carson Scout working with C Company, 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, came to the aid of the battalions B Company when it was pinned down under intense enemy fire. He charged an NVA firing position on top of a hill, exposed himself, killed two of the North Vietnamese and was wounded by a grenade.

In Hieu Duc district, Quang Nam province early 1968, elements of the 2nd Battalion, 8th Cavalry, were pinned down for four hours. A Kit Carson Scout and four US soldiers broke away from the engagement and circled the enemy. Several NVA charged the group, inflicting casualties. The Kit Carson Scout armed only with a 45 caliber pistol, exposed himself and emptied it into the enemy. He was wounded five times -- three times in the leg and twice in the forearm. In spite of his wound he grabbed a wounded soldier's M-16 and drove off the enemy, killing several of them. Without assistance, he helped his comrades back to a hill where the battalion had regrouped.

4th INFANTRY DIVISION

Kit Carson Scout Hiep, a 23 year old North Vietnamese, is assigned to Co C, 1st Bn., 14th Infantry. While C Company was conducting a reconnaissance sweep of a village near Landing Zone Brillo Pad, the Company Commander,

1st Lt John Fuller, was approached by a villager who gestured wildly, obviously trying to tell Fuller something. Scout Hiep questioned the villager who told of an NVA sniper who had terrorized the village for more than a month. The unit deployed along a seldom used trail Scout Hiep said the sniper traveled. The enemy sniper appeared at his usual time and was shot before he could do any more terrorizing.

9th INFANTRY DIVISION

The Kit Carson Scouts serving in the US 9th Division are called "Tiger Scouts".

The Tiger Scouts from Company C, 3rd Bn, 39th Infantry, had a close call with an unknown size enemy force on 25 July 1968. The scouts were 400 yards northeast of Highway 4 patrol base (Patrol Base Mohawk) when they came in contact with the Viet Cong. The scouts were so close they could see the enemy faces. One Scout was wounded, and others, armed only with pistols, immediately broke contact and returned to the company for reinforcements. Company C made a sweep where the VC had been and took four detainees. One later confessed to being a VC and another stated he had set booby traps. The face to face contact proved the downfall of two more detainees the next day. They were recognized by the Tiger Scouts for their participation in the previous day's contact.

On 7 March 1968, 1st Lt Jerome C. Zemora was leading his men on a patrol when the VC opened fire. A fierce firefight ensued. The US forces proved superior and the remnants of the battered VC unit pulled back. One of the VC on this engagement is now Tiger Scout Lem, who is now serving with the 2nd Bn, 60th Inf. Scout Lem now serves with Lt Zemora who states: "Booby traps never escape his eye. He has the ability to determine how many VC are operating in an area and his directional navigation is unbelievable.

You can drop him anywhere and by the position of the sun he can tell you the direction to all major cities in the Delta".

Le Van Lam, Scout with the 3rd Bn, 39th Infantry, was working on a road clearing and escort mission with 18 men in five vehicles when a VC company opened fire on the small column. Lam was in the lead vehicle which received a direct hit with a B-40 rocket. The blast severed his left arm. Ignoring the pain, he picked up one of the few intact M-16 rifles and killed three Viet Cong in the first burst, firing one handed. The 3rd Brigade troopers and the Scout continued to return a heavy volume of fire until the enemy withdrew. After evacuation to Saigon, and intensive care in the 24th Evacuation Hospital in Long Binh, this one-armed Kit Carson Scout is back with his original US unit.

On 31 August 1968, Company C, 5th Bn (M), 60th Infantry, was conducting a reconnaissance in force mission in the vicinity of coordinates XS 561541. As the company was passing through this area one of the Tiger Scouts assigned to Company C, Nguyen Van Bo, suddenly walked over to the paddy dike and lifted a well-camouflaged cover from a spider hole. From the spider hole Company C extracted the following enemy equipment:

158 B 40 rockets	1 large Claymore mine
42 B 41 rockets	53 hand grenades
107 B 40 charges	75 boxes of blasting caps
31 B 41 charges	4 cases of AK 47 ammunition
4 bundles of fuses	

If it had not been for Scout Bo, this large cache would have remained in the hands of the enemy, resulting in the loss of many US lives and much equipment.

On 11 October 68, Tiger Scout Doan Van Luan, Company C, 2/47th, 9th Inf, was wounded while his platoon was in contact with an unknown size VC force. Van Luan refused medical attention and assisted the wounded during the action. When contact was broken he helped evacuate the wounded men and equipment. Only then did he allow medics to attend his wounds. He has since been released by medics and is present for duty with this unit. Doan Van Luan was recommended for an appropriate award.

25th INFANTRY DIVISION

Kit Carson Scout, Tran Van Duc, proved a key man in the 25th Infantry Division effort to stop enemy infiltration into the Saigon area. In June 1968, during a airmobile assault and reconnaissance in force four miles Southwest of Tan Son Nhut air base, he proved his worth. Members of the 4th Battalion (Mechanized), 23rd Infantry, had moved out only 100 meters when Scout Duc pointed out there were Viet Cong in the canal. The company deployed on line, advanced into the canal, and Duc was the first to fire a burst from his M-16 as he noticed a NVA soldier poke his head out of the water. About a minute later the enemy floated to the top of the canal with three rounds in his head. His efforts with the unit that day yielded six NVA soldiers killed, one AK 47, one AK 50, and two 9mm pistols.

In February 1968, Vo Van Nam, joined Company C, 2nd Battalion, 14 th Infantry, as a Kit Carson Scout. As a Scout, 18 year old Nam had the ability to locate various signs and symbols used by the Viet Cong in marking booby trapped areas, enemy base camps, and tunnel entrances. He advised the unit of danger areas, enemy areas, and possible enemy sniper positions. He was killed in June 1968, in action against a Viet Cong force.

A 17 year old Kit Carson Scout, serving with A Company of the 3rd Brigade, played a key role in discovering a significant cache of 122mm rockets and other weapons. These weapons were found about ten miles North of Saigon, and were possibly intended for an enemy push against the Capital. This weapons cache which was found in leech-infested waters by the Scout, included 18 complete 122mm rocket motors with an additional 18 warheads, 64-82mm mortar rounds, 105-60mm mortar rounds and 35 rounds of 75mm recoilless rifle ammunition. Also found was 465 pounds of TNT explosive of the type used to make satchel charges, more than 8,000 rounds of small arms ammunition, 14 cans of mortar fuses, and 20 mortar charges, and several RPG rocket grenades.

101st AIRBORNE DIVISION

During September 1968, nine Kit Carson Scouts in successful operations with 3/506 Inf, 101 Airborne Division, were credited with killing five and capturing two VC, as well as confiscating five AK, one SK and one SKS, one M-16, four masks and miscellaneous military equipment and medical supplies. During the month of September they assisted 3/506 Inf in locating and destroying some 130 bunkers, as well as three large base camps. Also during this period they assisted in discovering over one ton of rice and one half ton of wheat.

199 LIGHT INFANTRY BRIGADE

Nguyen Van Ba, Kit Carson Scout with 2nd Battalion, 3rd Infantry, 199th Brigade led elements of his unit through dense nipa palm towards a hidden Viet Cong weapons cache site. He pointed to a portion of a canal bank in which US soldiers quickly uncovered AK 47 rifles, mortar rounds and ammunition. He knew of the exact location because he had hid them when he was a squad leader of the local Viet Cong main force unit. This was just one example of his invaluable assistance to the Brigade. He had also pointed out known

Viet Cong in the area Southwest of Saigon, and as a Scout has uncovered many infiltration routes, other cache sites and staging areas for the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army.

173rd AIRBORNE BRIGADE

Nguyen Thanh, Kit Carson Scout paratrooper with the 173rd, a former NVA Lieutenant has been cited by his platoon leader, 1st Lt Ian MacPherson. MacPherson stated "Thanh is greatly respected by the men of his platoon. His knowledge of enemy tactics has gotten us out of a lot of scrapes, and saved several of the men from serious injury".

A Kit Carson Scout, serving with 1st Bn, 50th Inf, during an operation north of Qui Nhon, led US elements to a Viet Cong Hospital. Finding a tunnel entrance, the Kit Carson Scout talked to those hiding in the tunnel. Four VC came out, one was identified as a Viet Cong doctor and three others as VC political cadremen. Large quantities of medical supplies and instruments were taken. Nguyen Thanh, a former VC officer, now a Kit Carson Scout with the 173rd Airborne Brigade, was credited with saving the life of Sp4 Charles W. Scudder, Co A, 2nd Bn, 503 Inf, when Scudder became entangled in the wires of a deadly booby trap. The 38 year old Thanh, at a great risk to himself, cut the booby trap wires from the feet of Scudder, and disarmed the butterfly bomb. Shortly after this, Thanh found four more booby traps in the area.

The program also has two excellent if less obvious side effects:

(1) First, the integration of KCS into US units and the experienced shared together creates a close and personal understanding of ex-Hoi Chanh by US soldiers, which greatly enhances their understanding of the principles of the Chieu Hoi Program and acceptance of this program.

(2) Second, reports have been received, particularly from the 2nd Brigade, 1st Division, underlining the unparalleled advantages of ex-Hoi Chanh as scouts and stating that their ability to make on the spot identifications of VC suspects has prevented many incidents and accidental deaths.