

Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff, CORDS

MACCORDS-CH

19 November 1968

The Honorable James P. Grant
Assistant Administrator for Vietnam
Bureau for Vietnam
Agency for International Development
Washington, D. C. 20523

Dear Jim,

We are usually so busy with the operation of this Chieu Hoi program here that we tend to forget Washington's need for information. One unfortunate result of this forgetfulness on our part is that personnel coming out to Saigon from various training programs in Washington seem to have a very skeptical and negative attitude towards Chieu Hoi which they absorb from people who may not have been adequately informed about it. In any case, I would like to enclose some material about Chieu Hoi which may be of interest to you and other members of the community.

First are a series of photographs taken by me in Sadec. In 1966 there was no Chieu Hoi center in Sadec, no Chieu Hoi program in Sadec and no Armed Propaganda Team. One of these photographs shows a part of the Chieu Hoi center which now exists. The next shows a small portion of the Armed Propaganda Team standing at attention. Besides conducting its normal function of contacting VC families and urging them to persuade their relatives to come in, these APTs are so well thought of that they incidentally are entrusted with a portion of the perimeter defense of Sadec. The third photo shows the Chieu Hoi chief and our outstanding Chieu Hoi advisor, Mr. Rodrigo Custodio, being decorated by the Minister of Chieu Hoi on November 9 in Sadec. Behind them you will see a portion of the weapons located by one Hoi Chanh who is seen receiving his weapons reward from the Chieu Hoi chief in the next photograph. The money totaled 565,000 piastres. By the end of the same morning during which the ceremony took place, the Hoi Chanh had already purchased a house in Sadec for 300,000 piastres.

The next photo shows two of our IV Corps Chieu Hoi advisors, Tex Lee Boggs, who speaks 3+ Vietnamese and is married to a Vietnamese girl, and Derek King, a former Australian officer who is the most aggressive of

our advisors in the use of the APTs. Derek, while serving in Vinh Long last April, took his APT to a VC-controlled area and came back with 41 armed Viet Cong in a single seven-day period. Now in An Xuyen, he has taken his APT into the U Minh Forest looking for ralliers. The next photo, from I Corps, shows an NVA soldier in uniform just five minutes after he had arrived at the Hue Chieu Hoi center. A Chieu Hoi Ministry psyops man was on hand to debrief him immediately. Finally, the last photo shows a group of 51 Montagnards who rallied on November 7 in Phuoc Long Province under the Accelerated Pacification Campaign. These men were not laborers, but had been arms-bearing collaborators of the VC. An operation is now being mounted to collect their cached weapons. Also enclosed is a copy of the Chieu Hoi Pacification Assessment for October 1968 and the supporting Field Program Assessments from each of the four Corps. Anyone seriously interested in Chieu Hoi and anxious to get an impression as to its scope of activities, successes and shortcomings should examine these documents. You will note among other things that the Chieu Hoi rate is now well above last year's same period.

Since July 1966 Chieu Hoi has eliminated three armed divisions of enemy troops, not to mention more than 6,000 infrastructure cadre. Its intelligence by-product is possibly the most valuable in the war in terms of enemy intentions, capability, tactics and weapons caches. Some of the spectacular cases of 1968 are well known, particularly that involving Tran Van Duc and the VC May offensive.

Another important by-product has been the Kit Carson program. I can remember in July 1966 visiting Hill 55 outside Danang when two Marines had been killed by booby traps at the foot of the hill that very morning. A rallier in Danang who was working for USAID was most upset at this, since he came from the village at the foot of the hill, and volunteered to help find the booby traps and talk to the people who were setting them. This rallier was loaned to the Marine unit on the hill and results were so spectacular that a new program was born. People may not know that AID funded the first Kit Carson Scouts for a month and also cooperated with the Marines in getting the program going. As a result of this, our Chieu Hoi Division in Saigon still has MACV senior staff responsibility for this program. With 1,350 Kit Carson Scouts now employed by US units, the savings in US lives alone represent a substantial contribution to our effort. In addition, the work of Hoi Chanh APTs and Kit Carsons in locating enemy weapons caches has been outstanding.

It may be that some of the foregoing would be of interest to people in Washington, particularly those who are responsible for briefing personnel coming to Vietnam. As I indicated to you recently in Saigon, the overall

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costs of this program expressed in dollars (including both piastre and dollar costs) have been \$7.9 million in 1967, \$8.9 million in 1968, and a projected \$8 million in 1969. Advisory personnel now on hand total 28 US direct-hire and 37 contract employees.

With best regards.

Sincerely,

OGDEN WILLIAMS
Chief, Chieu Hoi Division

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