

VIET-NAM

DOCUMENTS AND RESEARCH NOTES

something of a predecessor of my study

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THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM

by Albert E. Palmerlee

Background

The key to the success of an insurgent movement is organization. The insurgent state is a "full fledged anti-state existing within a legal state and competing with it for the loyalty and support of the entire population." 1/ The insurgent state, however, by the very nature of its opposition to the legally constituted government, is a clandestine organization, and in all areas not fully under its control it must operate through a covert structure: the infrastructure.

~~The infrastructure, as the term is used here in application to South Viet-Nam, embodies the political and administrative organization through which North Viet-Nam and the Viet Cong control or seek to control the South Vietnamese people. It should be noted, however, that Conley has used the term in a broader sense meaning that portion of the total movement not directly embodied within the main-line and regional combat forces.~~ 2/

* This infrastructure is a composite of many organizations and committees, each with responsibility for specific functions and often for distinct territorial divisions. It includes the Viet-Nam People's Revolutionary Party (Dang Nhan Dan Cach Mang Viet-Nam), the South Viet-Nam National Liberation Front (Mat Tran Dan Toc Giai Phong Mien Nam), and numerous affiliated mass associations and specialized agencies. For the most part, these organizations are established hierarchically, ascending from hamlet to village, district, province and region, and finally coming to a focus at the level of various headquarters which are national in name.

* At the apex of this structure, above its various parts, stands a higher headquarters. This is called the Central Office of South Viet-Nam, or Trung Uong Cuc Mien Nam in Vietnamese. In English, the abbreviation COSVN is most commonly used, but COSVIN can be found occasionally. The most commonly used cover designations for COSVN are "R", "Nam (5) Truong" and "Chin (9) Nam". 3/

X COSVN is officially set up as the top command post for all communist activities in South Viet-Nam. It is responsible for both control of political affairs and direction of Viet Cong military activities (although, as explained below, it exercises full authority over VC Regions 1, 2, 3, 6 and 10 only. 4/

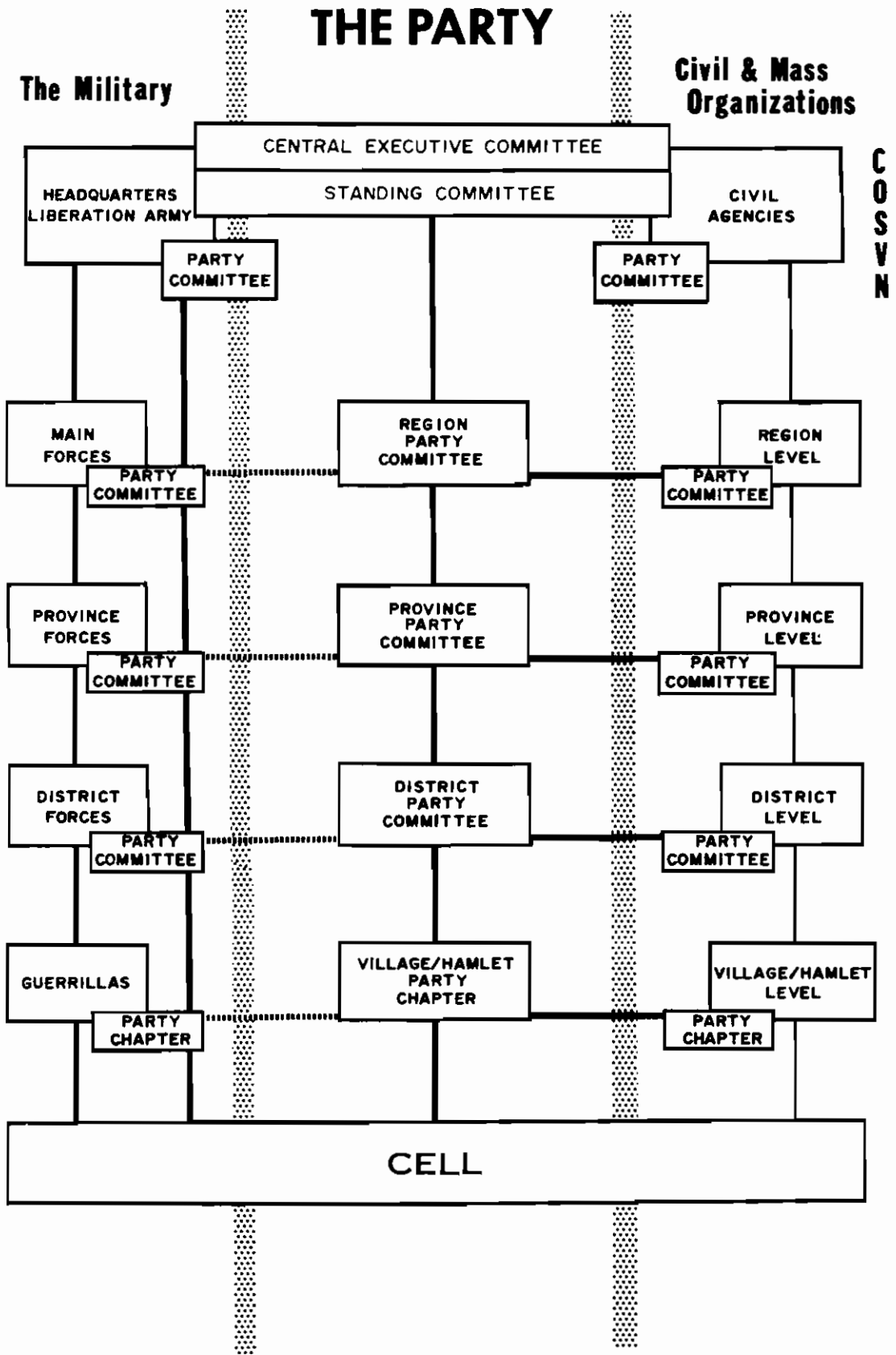
X Through interlocking organization and concurrent assignments, COSVN members guide the People's Revolutionary Party (PRP), the National Liberation Front (NLF), all other elements of the infrastructure and the South Viet-Nam Liberation Army (Quân Giải Phóng Miền Nam).

Mr. Palmerlee is a Systems Analyst with FMA, Inc., and has been working in Viet-Nam since August 1966. A former naval officer, he has B.A. and M.A. degrees from the University of Kansas, and has published a number of specialized works in the field of cartography.

COSVN itself is subordinate to Hanoi and reports directly to officials there. It is a forward headquarters for the supreme command, the Viet-Nam Workers' Party (Đảng Lao-Động) 5/ of the North. The key leaders of COSVN at present are members of the Central Executive Committee or Politburo of the Northern Party. Originally, COSVN reported to the Reunification Department of the Party, but the Southern office now appears to have fairly direct access to the Hanoi Politburo.

COSVN has been a mobile and dispersed headquarters. Located in "War Zone D" north-east of Saigon in the early 1960's, it has more recently moved about in heavily forested Tây Ninh province near the Cambodian border. Late in 1956, according to a former cadre, the location was about 15 kilometers north of Katum village in Tây Ninh. The headquarters and the trails leading to it were camouflaged, according to this source, and the top COSVN leaders had separate houses with underground shelters and escape tunnels. 6/ Other sources have reported that NLF headquarters was maintained separate from COSVN's and that the functional sections of COSVN were scattered in the area. One said, for example that it took four days to travel by foot from the site of the Organization Section to that of the Finance and Economy Section.

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EVOLUTION OF COSVN

During the Việt Minh period, the whole of Việt-Nam was divided by the Communists into six inter-regions. The area of South Viet-Nam was covered by two of these, Inter-region V (Southern Trung Bộ) and Inter-region VI (Nam Bộ), except for the two northernmost provinces of Quảng Trị and Thừa Thiên which were part of Inter-region IV. These inter-regions represented the basic structure for both military and political control of the revolutionary movement, and each was jointly commanded by a senior military officer who reported directly to Lao Động Party headquarters.

In 1951 the Nam Bộ Regional Committee (Xứ Ủy Nam Bộ) 7/ was dissolved and replaced by the Central Office of South Viet-Nam, Lao Động Party (see Appendix A). This change occurred just after the creation of the Lao Động Party as a continuation of the former Indochinese Communist Party (founded in 1930).

The new Central Office was directed by a Party Committee composed of six members: Hà Huy Giáp, Lê Duẩn, Lê Đức Thọ, Phạm Hùng, Thương Vu and Ung Văn Khiêm. Lê Duẩn was designated as the secretary of COSVN, with Lê Đức Thọ as deputy secretary.

All of these men were Northerners except Lê Duẩn, who was from Central Viet-Nam (Quảng Trị), and Ung Văn Khiêm, a Southerner. All but Thương Vu, who has never been adequately identified, 8/ are still active in the Lao Động Party. Lê Duẩn left South Viet-Nam in 1957 and later became first secretary of the Lao Động Party, a position he continues to hold. Lê Đức Thọ, recently an adviser to the Democratic Republic of Viet-Nam (DRV) delegation at the Paris talks, is a member of the Party Politburo. Phạm Hùng, also a Politburo member, is a deputy premier of the DRV and, according to recent reports, is now in the South again as the senior member of COSVN. Ung Văn Khiêm is DRV Minister of Interior and a member of the Party Central Committee. Hà Huy Giáp is also a Central Committee member.

The 1951 announcement of COSVN's formation under these leaders specifically stated that the new organization would be located in Cambodia. But later it moved to the Cà Mau Peninsula in the southernmost part of Viet-Nam.

After the Geneva Accords were signed in 1954, COSVN was dissolved. Control of communist activities was again divided between the Trung Bộ Inter-region Committee and the Nam Bộ Regional Committee. Some of the cadre of the South were regrouped to the North, but the Trung Bộ and Nam Bộ staffs were retained on a reduced scale. Later they were gradually reinforced by the return of regrouped through infiltration.

The Nam Bộ Committee had jurisdiction over the Eastern, Central and Western Nam Bộ Regions, which were then numbered Regions 7, 8 and 9. 9/ The regional committee included a standing committee, a secretariat and seven staff sections (ban):

Finance and Economy Section (Ban Kinh Tài)
Organization Section (Ban Tổ Chức)
Training Section (Ban Tuyên Huấn)
Farmers' Proselyting Section (Ban Nông Văn) 10/
Religious Proselyting Section (Ban Tôn Giáo Văn)
Military Proselyting Section (Ban Binh Văn)
Enemy Situation Section (Ban Dịch Tình) 11/

Lê Duẩn remained as head of the apparatus in the southern region after the dissolution of COSVN. In 1956, according to one document, he was serving as secretary of the Nam Bộ Committee, with Phạm Hùng as his deputy. Duẩn was also political commissar of the regional armed forces, commanded by Văn Tiên Dũng, who is now chief-of-staff of the armed forces in North Viet-Nam. Nguyễn Văn Vĩnh, now head of the Lao Động Party Reunification Department, served as secretary of the Trung Bộ Committee and as political commissar of the regional forces commanded by Nguyễn Đàng. 12/

Party activities in the South at this time were mainly in the form of covert "political struggle". Lê Duẩn pressed for the parallel development of "armed struggle". By 1958, according to a high-level cadre, "the majority of the Party members and cadres felt it was necessary to launch immediately an armed struggle..." In May 1959 the Politburo of the Lao Động Party announced a decision for war against the South. 13/

At the Third Party Congress in the fall of 1960, the way was paved for founding of the NLF and the reactivation of COSVN. A resolution adopted by the Congress on September 10 stated the intent "to liberate South Viet-Nam" and said, "our people there must strive to establish a united bloc of workers, peasants and soldiers and to bring into being a broad national united front directed against the U.S.-Diem clique and based on the worker-peasant alliance." 14/

At the same time, the Congress elected about 12 Southern and Central Vietnamese as secret members of the Party Central Committee. These members were subsequently assigned to the South or confirmed in positions of leadership already held there. 15/

On December 20, 1960, the NLF was brought into being as a federation of separate associations for farmers, workers, women, youth and many other groups. On February 15, 1961, a unification of insurgent forces gave birth to what is now called the South Viet-Nam Liberation Army. 16/ Later in 1961 COSVN was re-established.

Although a notebook kept by a military cadre (see Appendix B) states that COSVN reappeared by a merger of the Nam Bộ and Trung Bộ Party Committees (and this was probably the case officially), there are no other indications of participation of the Trung Bộ Committee in the actual reorganization. The notebook indicates that, at least for the military part of the change, a conference was held at the Nam Bộ headquarters in September 1961 under the direction of Bả Tiên and Hải Hậu and that the official re-designation took place the following month.

Hải Hậu, whose real name is Trần Lương, still remains as a leader of COSVN. Bả Tiên a pseudonym for Trần Văn Quang, served as executive officer of the People's Liberation Army as well as a member of COSVN. He reportedly returned to North Viet-Nam between 1964 and 1967, after developing a nervous condition, and later assumed command of the North's Military Region IV.

Although the notebook described these two men as instrumental in the re-emergence of COSVN, other sources indicate that Nguyễn Văn Cúc (see below) was the senior member of COSVN at the time of its re-establishment or became the senior member shortly thereafter.

RESPONSIBILITY

At the time COSVN was re-created in 1961, it became the central organ for the Southern Branch of the Lao Động Party. When the People's Revolutionary Party was established on January 1, 1962, COSVN then became the Central Committee of the new party for the South, with its highest leaders making up the Standing Committee of the PRP. 17/

Establishment of the PRP was a tactical maneuver appropriate to Hanoi's strategy of depicting the revolution in South Viet-Nam as a movement strictly indigenous to the South. There is ample evidence that the PRP continued the functions of a branch of the Lao Động Party. Shortly before the founding of the PRP was announced, for example, instructions from the VC committee in Ba Xuyên province stated: "The People's Revolutionary Party has only the appearance of an independent existence; actually, our party is nothing but the Lao Động Party of Viet-Nam, unified from North to South, under the direction of the Central Committee of the Party, the chief of which is President Hồ." 18/

Most recently, Colonel Trần Văn Bắc, former political officer of COSVN's Sub-region 1 and a veteran of 22 years of VC experience before he rallied to the GVN in April this year, has stated that "there is no such organization as a PRP with a Central Committee, a Standing Committee, etc; this organization only exists in name." 19/

A similar opinion was voiced by Lt.Col. Lê Xuân Chuyên when he rallied to the GVN side in August 1966. A North Vietnamese and former operations officer of the VC Fifth Division, Chuyên told interrogators: "All Vietnamese Communists acknowledge only one Communist Party. The Vietnamese Communists in the Republic of Viet-Nam do not consider the People's Revolutionary Party and the Vietnamese Labor /Lao Động/ Party as two separate entities. In the Republic of Viet-Nam, the People's Revolutionary Party is not a separate Communist Party." 20/

Although it cannot be denied that an organization has been maintained in the name of the PRP, the opinion of these officers illustrates how many old-line Communists have viewed the relationship between the PRP (or COSVN) and the Lao Động Party of the North.

Unity of the two systems is readily seen in policy statements and directives. Southern propaganda and training documents continually refer to resolutions of the Lao Dong Party as the ultimate authority for all actions. COSVN's own Fourth Resolution, adopted in March 1966, acknowledged the link to Hanoi in passages such as these: "...the morale of our partisans remained unshaken and united...They clung to the masses to counter the enemy, displayed complete confidence in the leadership of Central Lao Dong Party Central Committee", enthusiastically carried out the resolutions of Central and of the Central Office of South Viet-Nam...We have the correct domestic and foreign policies of a Marxist-Leninist party. We possess a Central Committee which is clear-sighted and which is headed by Chairman HO." 21/

For the issuance of major resolutions, Hanoi's Central Committee or Politburo members gather in the last quarter of each year to assess the current situation and establish the Party line for the year ahead. Resolutions for both North and South are adopted. The resolution on the South is then transmitted to COSVN and adapted to form another resolution, issued by COSVN in its own name during the first quarter of the new year. Hanoi's present policy for the South is stated in the 14th Resolution which the Lao Dong Party passed late in 1967. This has been remolded in the South and is reflected in the Sixth Resolution which COSVN adopted in March 1968. 22/

One writer has described the relationship between COSVN and the Lao Dong Party as follows: "The major policy decisions, such as the negotiations issue, bloc relations, diplomatic and international affairs, general war policy and important party and front policies, are handled by the Northern-based Central Committee and Politburo. COSVN's role is more tactically oriented and it might possess a veto opinion on military decisions. The NLF, whose leadership includes COSVN personalities, provides the ideologically necessary united-front facade and a channel for communications with the outside." 23/

The interchangeability of COSVN and the Central Committee of the PRP is illustrated by the case of two printed leaflets recently directed to all Party and Youth Group members. One leaflet was addressed from COSVN and included internal references to Nam Truong ("Nam Truong firmly believes...the Sixth Conference of Nam Truong..."). The second leaflet was identical in content except for identification of the sender as the Central Executive Committee of the People's Revolutionary Party and the substitution of Central Executive Committee for Nam Truong in the text ("The Central Executive Committee firmly believes...the Sixth Conference of the Central Executive Committee...").

LEADERSHIP

Unity of COSVN, the PRP and the Lao Dong Party also quickly shows in personnel assignments. All members of the COSVN (or PRP) Standing Committee are also members of the Central Committee of the Lao Dong Party in Hanoi, and this has been true since COSVN was re-established in 1961. 24/ In addition, most senior military officers at COSVN and the headquarters of the Liberation Army are also members of the North Vietnamese army's high command.

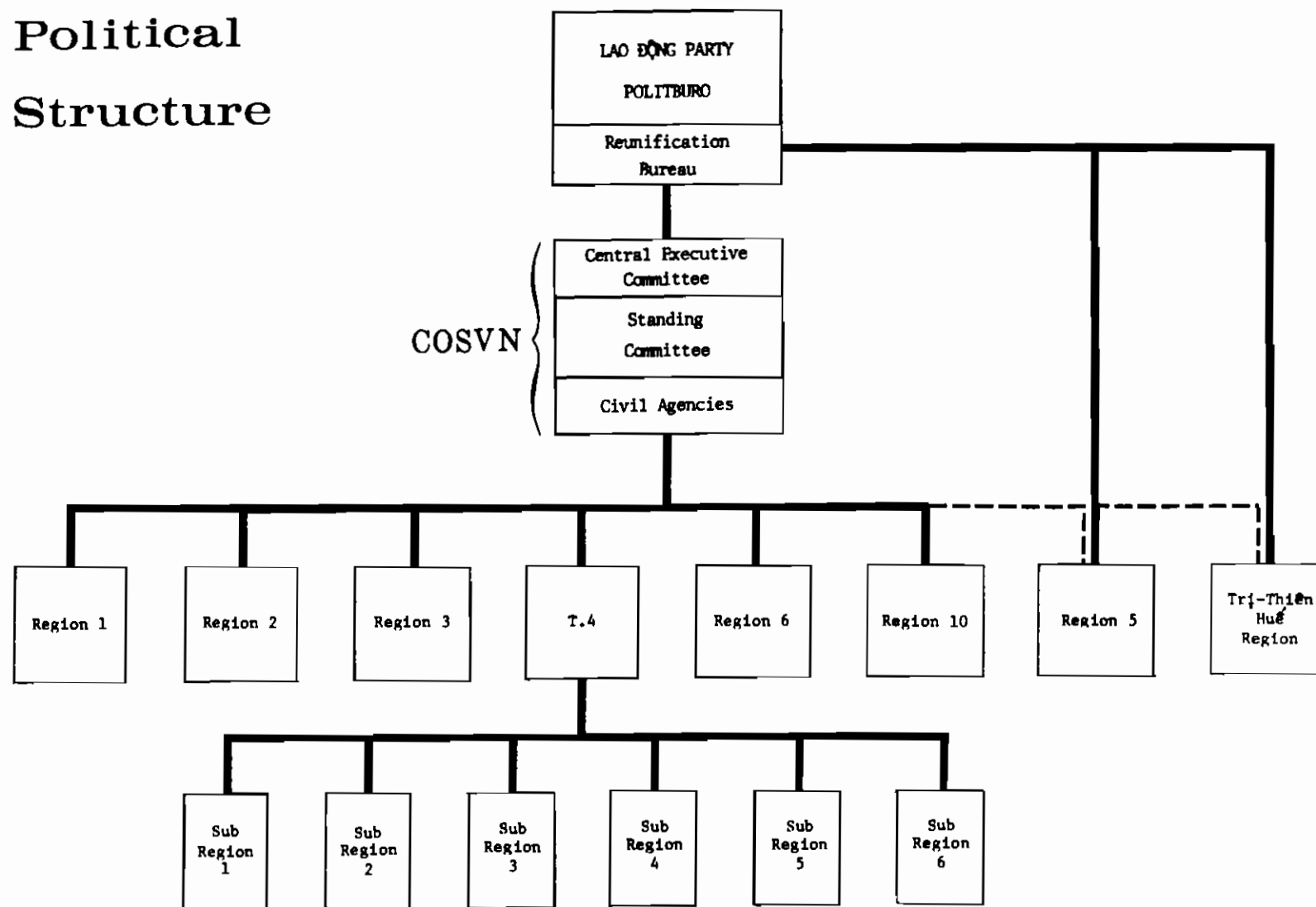
Leadership at all levels within the VC infrastructure is provided by the Party, through Party Committees set up at each echelon. This is a dual system, with separate structures for military and civil affairs. The final merger of the two lines occurs in the PRP Central Committee (or COSVN), which includes both military and civil Party members.

According to the statutes of the PRP, the Central Committee (Ban Trung Uong) -- or more formally, the Central Executive Committee (Ban Chấp Hành Trung Uong) -- is the highest decision-making body of the PRP between Party Congresses. 25/ A congress is supposed to convene every four years to elect a new Central Committee. The Central Committee in turn elects the Party secretary and deputy secretaries, the Standing Committee.

Although the composition of the Central Committee has never been publicly announced, various sources report that 30 to 40 persons make up its membership. Aside from the secretary and deputy secretaries, they probably include heads of the functional sections under COSVN, regional secretaries and the top military officers. In addition to full members of the Central Committee, there are a number of alternate or candidate members.

Meetings of the Central Committee are supposed to be held at least once every six months. In the interim, the daily business of the Party center is conducted by the

Political Structure



Standing Committee (Ban Thường Vụ), 26/ the equivalent of a Politburo or Secretariat in the system of other Communist Parties. Ten men or so reportedly comprise this committee. As the highest ranking leaders of COSVN and concurrent members of Hanoi's Central Committee, they are the most powerful communist representatives in South Viet-Nam. The chief among them is said by some sources to have served concurrently in recent years as secretary of the PRP, commander of the People's Liberation Army and chief political officer of the armed forces.

Although the Standing Committee members must follow the overall guidelines established by the Lao Động Party and the PRP Central Committee, they enjoy considerable operational independence in the day-to-day execution of policy. Their authority extends to the lowest levels of the PRP. Directives in the name of the Standing Committee are generally broad and confined to the most important issues. 27/ On the other hand, very detailed directives may be issued through the functional sections of COSVN for transmittal to the lower echelons.

With COSVN's efforts to conceal the North Vietnamese representation, its attempts to maintain secrecy for security reasons and its penchant for the use of code names, identification of individual leaders is difficult. However, from captured documents and interrogation reports, a partial roster of the leadership can be constructed for recent years.

From 1962 to 1964 the chief member of COSVN and secretary of the PRP was apparently Nguyễn Văn Cúc (aka Mười Cúc and Mười Ut). A man now in his fifties, Cúc is a native of North Viet-Nam, but his revolutionary career has been spent almost entirely in the South. In 1956 he was reported to be a member of the Nam Bộ Regional Committee of the Lao Động Party and secretary of the Party branch for the Saigon-Cholon area. He was among those secretly elected to the Lao Động Party Central Committee in 1960 and, according to one source, was secretly elevated to the Lao Động Politburo in February 1967. 28/

During 1964, the evidence indicates, Nguyễn Chí Thanh, a four-star general, arrived from Hanoi to assume command of COSVN. He was a member of Hanoi's National Defense Council, Politburo and Secretariat. Nguyễn Văn Cúc stepped down to the position of PRP deputy secretary at this time, according to some sources. 29/

When Nguyễn Chí Thanh died on July 6, 1967, at the age of 53, Cúc probably resumed charge of COSVN. But recent reports indicate that Cúc soon stepped down again when Phạm Hùng, first deputy premier of the DRV, arrived in the South to head the organization.

One of the founders of the original COSVN in 1951, Phạm Hùng had remained in the South until 1955. After returning North, he was elected to the Lao Động Politburo in 1957, appointed a deputy premier in 1958, and elected to the Party Secretariat in 1960. Hanoi news media are not known to have reported any public appearance by Phạm Hùng in North Viet-Nam since September 29, 1967. Although Hùng's relationship to the VC armed forces remains obscure, according to Colonel Trần Văn Đắc, he now holds the three top positions in the South -- as secretary of the PRP, commander of the Liberation Army and chief political officer of those forces. 29/

If Phạm Hùng serves as COSVN chief with Nguyễn Văn Cúc as his main deputy for Party affairs, his main deputy for military affairs is probably Lt. Gen. Trần Văn Trà, an alternate member of the Lao Động Central Committee and a deputy chief of staff of the North Vietnamese Army. Born in 1918 in Quảng Ngãi Province, Trà was participating in revolutionary activities by the mid-1930's, was twice arrested before 1945, and held various military commands in Inter-region VI before regrouping to the North in 1954. He was transferred South again about 1963 and has used the pseudonyms of Tư Chi and Trần Nam Trung, the latter in the capacity of the chairman of the COSVN Military Affairs Committee and the NLF Military Affairs Committee. During Nguyễn Chí Thanh's era, he was reported variously as commander and one of the deputy commanders of the Liberation Army.

Two other high ranking officials of COSVN are Hai Văn and Hai Hậu. Hai Văn (aka Nguyễn Văn Bang and Phạm Xuân Thái) 30/ has been identified as a deputy secretary of the PRP since its founding in 1962. He is a Southerner who remained in the South at the time of the 1954 regrouping. Party organization, security and propaganda affairs are said to be under his general supervision. He is also reported to be a member of the Lao Động Central Committee and to serve as chairman of the NLF's Liberation Trade Union Association, using the name Phạm Xuân Thái in the latter capacity.

Maj. Gen. Hai Hậu, whose real name is Trần Lương, is a native of Central Việt-Nam. Once a member of the Lao Động Party's Inter-region V Committee, he regrouped to North Viet-Nam in 1954. But he was back in the South by 1961 and had a prominent role in the reactivation of COSVN that year. From about 1962 through 1963 he headed the COSVN and NLF Military Affairs Committees and was the first to use the alias Trần Nam Trung which goes with the job. Some sources state that financial and economic affairs have been his major concern since 1963.

Other names connected with COSVN in recent years include:

-- Võ Chí Công (real name, Võ Toản), a former deputy secretary of the PRP, a specialist in proselyting activities, PRP representative on the Central Committee of the PRP and Party Secretary of Region 5 until August 1966 when he reportedly returned to Hanoi for medical treatment.

-- Hoàng Văn Thái (aka Mũi Khang), a Lieutenant General of the North Vietnamese Army who has been identified as a member of the COSVN Standing Committee, commander of Military Region 5 and Party Secretary of Region 5.

-- Trần Độ, a Major General, a North Vietnamese and deputy political officer of the Liberation Army who was killed in action on February 11, 1968, during the VC Tet attack on Saigon.

-- Lê Chấn, former political officer of the Ninth Division, recently identified in a captured document as the new deputy political officer of the Liberation Army.

-- Nguyễn Văn Xe (aka Hai, Hai Xe Ngựa or "Two Horse-carts", Chủ Tịch Xe Ngựa or "Chairman of the Horse-carts"), a finance and economics specialist but reported to be in North Viet-Nam for medical treatment in 1967.

-- Nguyễn Văn Bường (aka Ba, Ba Bường), 31/ former Party secretary of Region 3 who was heading COSVN rear services (logistics) in 1967.

-- Lê Văn Kiệt (aka Sáu Dân, Chín Dũng), reported chief of the Party's Saigon-Gia Dinh Region Committee.

THE FUNCTIONAL SECTIONS

Subordinate to the Standing Committee are the various functional sections of COSVN. Each of these is a specialized office which fulfills a dual role. First, each section is responsible for advising the Standing Committee and for developing Party policies within its own area of competence. Second, each section oversees the execution of specific policies by lower levels of the VC infrastructure. The main functional sections are as follows:

Organization Section

The Organization Section (Ban Tổ Chức) is the office with primary responsibility for all affairs pertaining to civilian political cadres of the VC and NLF. It handles problems of Party recruitment and development and the assignment of personnel at higher levels of the PRP. The Organization Section is divided into six sub-sections:

Correspondence Sub-section (Bộ Phận Hành Chính). Responsible for all incoming and outgoing correspondence, including the censorship of private correspondence handled by the VC postal system.

Personal Affairs Sub-section (Bộ Phận Quản Trị). Responsible for food supply, pay and allowances and clothing for all personnel of the Organization Section.

Planning and Policies Sub-section (Bộ Phận Chính Sách). Responsible for 1) policies concerning civilian political cadres, including assignments, training, promotions and awards, and 2) policies to counter the effects of GVN rural pacification and other programs.

Movement Sub-section (Bộ Phận Công Tác Phong Trào). Concerned with investigation of cadre activities at regional and provincial levels to determine problem areas and find solutions.

Cadre Administration Sub-section (Bộ Phân Quản Lý Cán Bộ). Responsible for maintaining statistical records on cadre strength throughout South Viet-Nam; assignment, training and indoctrination of cadres; promotions, awards and disciplinary action. It also maintains personnel records on all South Vietnamese cadres who have gone to North Viet-Nam.

Party Construction Sub-section (Bộ Phân Công Tác Xây Dựng Đảng). Responsible for the management of Party branches, Party organizational structure and the recruitment of new Party members.

Propaganda and Training Section

The Propaganda and Training Section (Ban Tuyên Huấn) is also known as the Propaganda, Culture and Indoctrination Section (Ban Tuyên Văn Giáo). According to a captured document, 32/ the section has the following mission:

1. The Propaganda-Indoctrination Section is a technical section of the Party, in charge of following, consolidating, and submitting recommendations to Party committees on propaganda and indoctrination activity.
2. The Propaganda-Indoctrination Section is responsible for propaganda, political and ideological indoctrination within the Party and for the masses, especially in these fields: propaganda, motivation, political indoctrination, arts and culture, press, news and broadcasting dissemination of propaganda and culture abroad.
3. Based on its Party Committee policy, the Propaganda-Indoctrination Section higher echelon provides technical guidance to its subordinate Propaganda-Indoctrination sections, agencies and people's associations.
4. Form and guide the training of Propaganda-Indoctrination cadre.
5. Command its subordinate elements.
6. In charge of various popular organizations such as: Cultural Association, Teachers' Association, Newsmen's Association.

In the area of domestic propaganda, the section publishes three Vietnamese language newspapers, Tiền Phong (Vanguard) the theoretical journal of the PRP, Cờ Giải Phóng (Liberation Flag) and Văn Nghệ Giải Phóng (Liberation Arts and Culture). It also operates the Nguyen Ai Quốc Southern School, with the mission of training middle level cadres of COSVN.

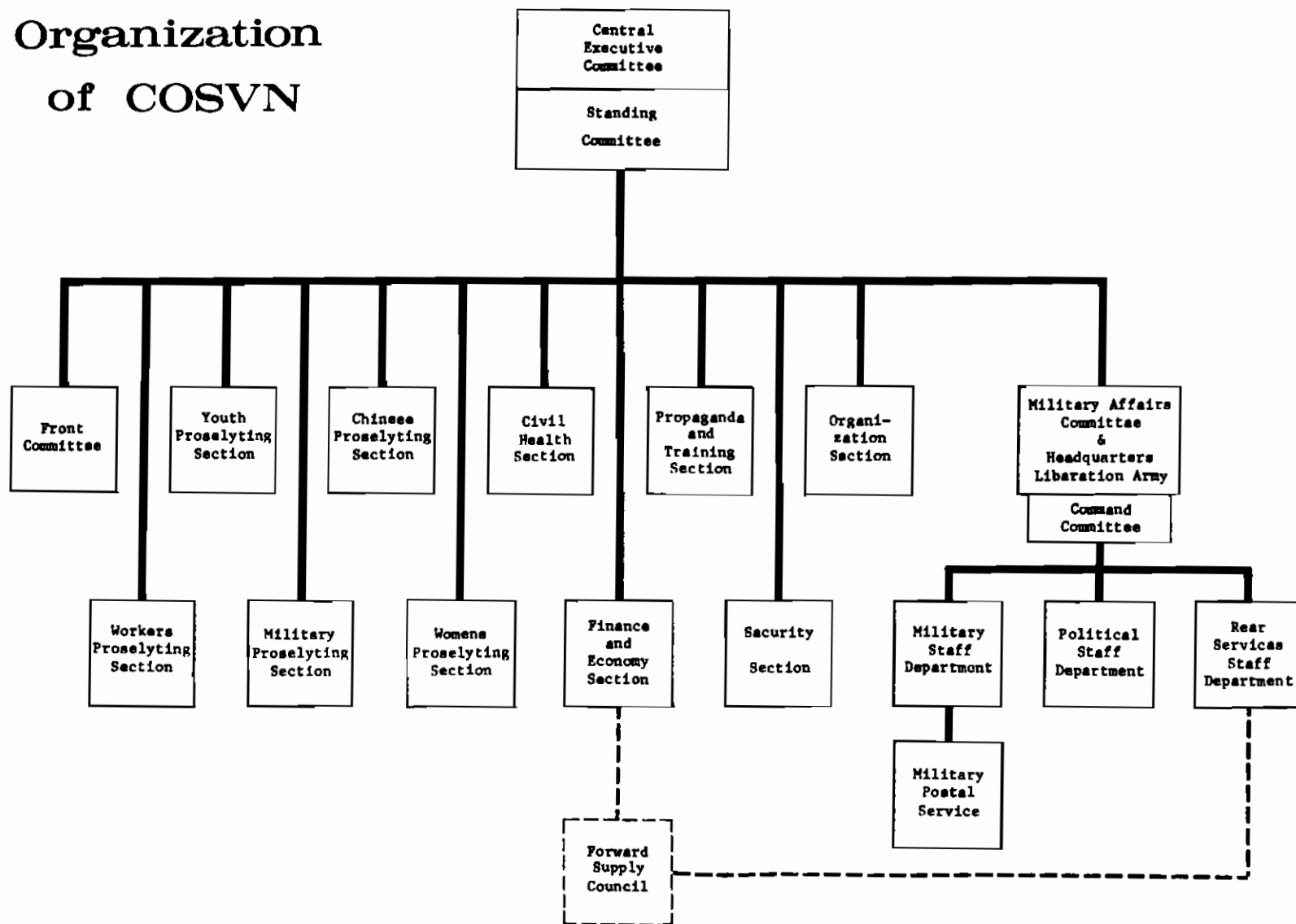
The Propaganda and Training Section handles virtually all of the international propaganda, in the name of the MLF. Its primary media are the Liberation Press Agency and Liberation Radio, the clandestine station serving as the voice of the MLF. The section also publishes The Fighting South (Miền Nam Trong Chiến Đấu) in both English and French editions.

Finance and Economy Section

The Finance and Economy Section (Ban Kinh Tài) is responsible for the overall finances and budgeting of COSVN, and for guidance and supervision of financial activities of the lower echelons, in support of the entire infrastructure, the Liberation Army and all guerrilla elements. Captured documents have revealed the section is concerned with each of the following specific jobs:

- * Preparing the COSVN budget, including prediction of income and support of areas that will operate at a deficit.
- * Establishing tax rates and quotas for use in each region.
- * Detailing to subordinate echelons those tax collection procedures that have had the most success, while pointing out those methods of collection which have failed.

Organization of COSVN



- * Prescribing to subordinate units the accounting methods and procedures that will be used at all echelons within the Party structure down through district level.
- * Establishing rules and regulations governing the expenditures of funds, both at COSVN and at lower levels.

In order to perform these tasks, the system is dependent on experienced, intelligent and extremely well trained cadre. This expertise has been built up through many years of development as the VC infrastructure has increased in complexity.

The Forward Supply Council (Hội Đồng Cung Cấp Tiên Tuyến) 33/ was a special organization maintained until recently at all levels within the infrastructure. It was designed to aid front line troops during the Liberation Army campaigns. Its functions were to provide supplies, civilian laborers and recruits to regular units during a combat situation. It was headed by the chief of the Finance and Economy Section and the chief of the Rear Services Staff of the Liberation Army. It could issue directives to both the civil and military sides of the VC structure. It was recently deactivated, however, at least in the Nam Bo area, with its Provisions Supply Subsection being merged directly into the Finance and Economy Section, while the recruiting and civilian labor functions were taken over by the Party Committee of the People's Revolutionary Youth Group. 34/

Security Section

The Security Section (Ban An Ninh) is responsible for Party security and counter-intelligence; physical security of the COSVN area (Tây Ninh Province); physical security for visitors to COSVN; reconnaissance and intelligence for the headquarters; maintenance of public order through criminal prosecution.

The section also maintains a school for the training of personnel in these functions and operates a detention camp. The majority of the section's own cadre is trained in North Viet-Nam, and their selection is controlled by the DRV Ministry of Public Security.

Civil Health Section.

The Civil Health Section (Ban Dân Y) provides medical care to the personnel of COSVN and provides guidance and supervision for subordinate civil health sections, hospitals and dispensaries at lower echelons. It also has some responsibility for the supply of medical equipment and drugs to lower echelons, and for the processing of bulk pharmaceuticals into usable drugs. A facility is maintained for the training of medical technicians, first-aid personnel and pharmacists.

Front Committee

The Front Committee (Ủy Ban Mặt Trận) is responsible for the control of the National Liberation Front and its affiliated mass organizations. The PRP constitutes the "Vanguard" of the NLF, or, more accurately, the NLF is the facade which the PRP presents to the public.

The Proselyting Sections

One of the principal functions of all levels within the infrastructure is the recruiting of personnel for both the military and civilian organizations of the VC. COSVN has different sections devoted exclusively to the function of proselyting. Although each is often listed as a separate entity, it is possible that all sections except the Military Proselyting Section are grouped into an overall Civilian Proselyting Section. The following five sections have been specifically identified:

Youth Proselyting Section (Ban Thanh Vân)
Workers' Proselyting Section (Ban Công Vân)
Women's Proselyting Section (Ban Phụ Vân)
Chinese Proselyting Section (Ban Hoa Vân)
Military Proselyting Section (Ban Binh Vân)

The first four of these sections are all directed at different segments of the civilian population, and handle the địch vận (enemy) aspect of the đấu tranh (struggle movement), aimed at the population of GVN controlled areas.

The Military Proselyting Section is responsible for the binh vận (military) part of đấu tranh, aimed at the Republic of Viet-Nam Armed Forces' (RVNAF) officers and men. Its goal is to motivate personnel of the RVNAF to desert to the VC, or stay within the RVNAF ranks as fifth columnists or agents. It should be noted that the Military Proselyting Section is a civil agency of COSVN, although up through 1964 it had been one of the four sub-sections of the Headquarters of the Liberation Army. However there is still a small military proselyting section under the Political Staff Department of the Headquarters.

The proselyting organizations within staffs subordinate to COSVN may also have additional, specialized proselyting sections directed against specific groups from the general population. For example, there was an Intellectuals' Proselyting Section within the Military Region 4 organization which was responsible for the Saigon area, where the majority of the Vietnamese intelligentsia concentrated.

THE MILITARY ORGANIZATION

The COSVN Military Affairs Committee (Ban Quân Sự) was originally a special committee of the Party that met on a regular basis (said to be monthly) to resolve major problems of military policy, distinct from operational details. 35/ About 1965, as the tempo of military operations increased, a separate military headquarters was required, and the Headquarters of the Liberation Army was established as a working organization. The committee continues to exist in name but is virtually synonymous with the headquarters. Colonel Trần Văn Đắc has given the following description of this evolution:

"The Military Affairs Committee is actually the high command of COSVN, but the reason it was called Military Affairs Committee is that at the time it was formed the military character of the movement was not as accentuated as it is now. At that time the emphasis was on the political side; that is why there was a Military Affairs Committee. Now as the war is intensified, it has the name of Bộ Chỉ Huy / Miền /, meaning command headquarters, so it has a more military character, but they / the committee and headquarters / are the same. 36/

The Headquarters of the South Viet-Nam Liberation Armed Forces (Bộ Tư Lệnh Các Lực Lượng Giải Phóng Miền Nam Việt-Nam) exercises command of main forces, local forces and guerrilla units. It is the central command organization through which the military policy of the Liberation Army is executed. It is subordinate to the PRP Central Committee but can also communicate directly with the NVA High Command (Bộ Tổng Tư Lệnh) in Hanoi.

Three staff departments are included in the headquarters, the Military, Political and Rear Services Staff Departments (sometimes translated as General Staff, Political Department and Supply Department). When COSVN was reactivated in 1961, these divisions were designated as sections (ban). They were later changed to offices (phòng). By 1964 they had been upgraded to departments (cục). Under the present military structure, the term cục is used in the South only at COSVN and in Military Region 5; all other military regions use the term phòng for the corresponding sections of their staffs.

The Military Staff Department (Cục Tham Mưu) is responsible for the organization, administration and development of military activities. Like the two other staff departments, it has a Party Committee with the function of providing leadership for the Party members of the various sub-sections. The department is composed of various sections which, according to a listing by Lt. Col. Lê Xuân Chuyền, 37/ include the following:

1. Operations Section
2. Military Intelligence Section
3. Signal Section
4. Military Personnel Section
5. Engineer Section
6. Military Training Section
7. Administration and Correspondence Section
8. Chemical Section
9. Political Section
10. Militia Section

Other reports add an Artillery Section and a Cryptographic Section.

Subordinate to the Military Staff Department is the Military Postal Service (Phòng Quan Buu), responsible for the maintenance of courier service and other communications.

This responsibility originally belonged to the Postal, Transportation and Communications Section (Ban Giao Buu Van) of COSVN, but on August 25, 1966, COSVN issued a directive transferring the section to military control and changing the name to Military Postal Service. However, the directive has never been fully carried out throughout the South, and many lower echelons still retain the system as a civil function.

The courier system not only handles written communications and mail but also moves certain goods and furnishes guides for visitors to the COSVN area. Although it operates directly only in the COSVN area, it also supervises the system throughout South Viet-Nam. No limitation is placed on the number of private letters that can be sent through the system, and no stamps are required. The Party District Committee where the addressee is located is responsible for final delivery of letters, to the addressee. All letters are censored by the Correspondence Sub-section of COSVN's Organization Section.

The Political Staff Department (Cuc Chinh Tri), headed by the deputy political officer of the Liberation Army, is designed to help the "armed forces acquire uniformity of activities, particularly in thought and ideology, while accomplishing their tasks."38/ It is responsible for providing guidance on all Party policies, maintaining records of Party members in the military; supervising education, indoctrination and self-criticism; and handling problems of discipline, morale, Party membership, promotions and demotions. Although subordinate to the Liberation Army Headquarters, the department also receives direction straight from the PRP Central Committee.

There is an Enemy Proselyting Section of the Political Staff Department, in addition to the Military Proselyting Section of the Party proper. Other sections of the department are:

- Cadre Section
- / Internal / Security Section
- (Also called the Protective Section)
- Organization Section
- Propaganda and Training Section
- Correspondence Section
- (Also called the Administrative Section)
- Entertainment Unit

The Rear Services Staff Department (Cuc Hau Can) is responsible for providing logistical support to the armed forces. To assure greater coordination of this support during combat operations, the chief of the Department was also a member of the Forward Supply Council before the council was deactivated.

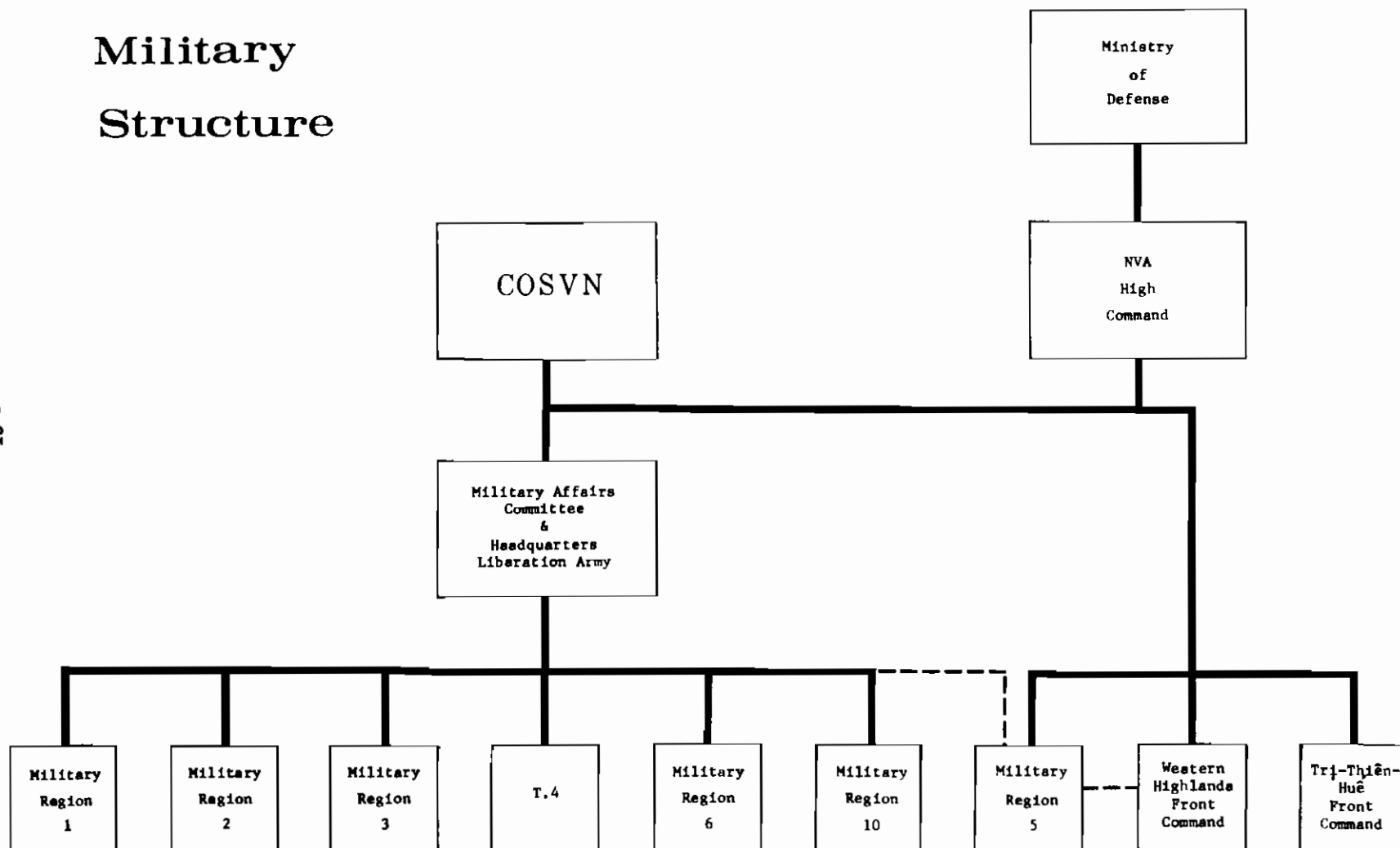
RELATIONSHIPS WITH THE TRUNG BỘ AREA

Although the name Central Office, South Viet-Nam implies jurisdiction over all of the South, the exact extent of the responsibility afforded COSVN at the time of its creation remains in doubt. Some of the early documents issued by COSVN were addressed only to the regions of the Nam Bo area. Officially, however, COSVN was formed from the Nam Bộ and Trung Bộ committees and would logically have control over the Trung Bộ area as well.

It is probable that COSVN developed a nominal control over the inter-region V area, but with the inter-region committee remaining largely independent. This independence would be natural considering the difficulties of transportation inherent in clandestine communications between COSVN, located in Tây Ninh Province, and Trung Bộ.

When the inter-region level of command was dissolved completely in May 1963, Region 6 came fully under the control of COSVN. But Region 5 appears to have remained in a semi-autonomous status. In July 1967 the staff sections of the Military Region 5 headquarters were designated phòng, as they were in all other military regions. However, in late 1967 these were upgraded to cục, making them the same level of command under the NVA High Command as COSVN and the military regions of North Viet-Nam. Another indication of the special status of Region 5 is the fact that it is the only region to publish its own version of Tiến Phong (Vanguard), the PRP theoretical journal. 39/

Military Structure



However, COSVN still maintains some liaison with this area, at least in political matters. Recent documents have been captured directed by COSVN to all of the Regions of South Viet-Nam, and a recent directive from Military Region 5 Headquarters was prefaced "policy...as prescribed by the Central Political Staff Department / of the NVA High Command / and R / COSVN /; attached to the document was a dissemination copy of a COSVN directive on the same subject, being sent to all subordinate units. Colonel Đắc summarized the Military Region 5 position by stating that "it reports directly to North Viet-Nam and maintains relations with COSVN." These relations are limited to awards and commendations and emulation campaigns and are a facade that masks the direct contact of the area by North Viet-Nam.

In June 1966 the northern two provinces, Quảng Trị and Thừa Thiên, were formed into a new region, the Trị-Thiên-Huế Region. This area historically was a part of Inter-region IV of the Việt-Minh, now Military Region IV of North Viet-Nam, and with Quảng Bình province of the North, made up the great Bình Trị-Thiên battlefield. Military control of the new region is practically completely in the hands of a North Vietnamese Army front command. COSVN appears to have only very nominal liaison with this region, but again maintains the facade of unity in the VC effort. A directive by COSVN dated April 2, 1968, dealing in generalities with the implications of President Johnson's decision not to seek re-election, was addressed to all of the regions of South Viet-Nam, but COSVN considered it necessary to specifically include the Trị-Thiên-Huế Region by name:

FROM NAM TRƯỞNG / COSVN /

To all Regions (including T9, Trị-Thiên), Sub-Regions, and Provinces subordinate to SVNLA Military Affairs Committee, and Sections and Branches of Nam Truong. 40/

The political relationships of the Trị-Thiên-Huế Region remain in doubt. In some documents it is called a region, whereas others call it a sub-region. The latter references could reflect its earlier status as a sub-region of Military Region 5 or possibly its subordination to Military Region IV of North Viet-Nam.

Military control of all but local forces in the Western Highlands (Pleiku, Kontum and Darlac Provinces) is also under a North Vietnamese Army front command directly subordinate to Hanoi.

NOTES

1. R. W. McColl, "Insurgent State: The Political Geography of Revolutionary Movement," 1968 (unpublished).
2. Michael Charles Conley, The Communist Insurgent Infrastructure in South Viet-Nam: A Study of Organization and Strategy, Washington, Center for Research in Social Systems, 1967, vol. I, p. 27.
3. Cover designations and cover names (in Vietnamese Mật Danh, literally "secret names") are used extensively throughout the VC infrastructure to conceal identities of both organizations and persons. Often one agency or one man has several designations, as is the case for COSVN. For example, Nguyễn Chí Thanh was known as Sáu Rí, Sáu Di, Anh Sáu and Trường Sơn. In some cases the cover name for an individual in a high position will remain constant even when the person in the position is changed. The abbreviation "aka" is used herein to identify a cover name, and it means "also known as." Many Vietnamese also have changed their names, discarding old ones and assuming new ones; the best known case is Hồ Chí Minh. These alternate names are also prefixed with "aka". The designations "Nam Trường" and "Chín Nam" are said to have been the cover names for early cadres of COSVN (probably Nguyễn Chí Thanh and Hai Hậu), which were later applied to the organization as a whole.
4. For location of these regions, see map in Albert E. Palmerlee, "Viet Cong Political Geography", Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 23, March 1968, p. 6.
5. The Viet-Nam Workers' Party is referred to hereafter as the Lao Động Party, more commonly used in English.
6. See description given in Item 63, attachments to "Working Paper on the North Vietnamese Role in the War in South Viet-Nam," released by the U.S. Department of State, May 1968 (hereafter referred to as Working Paper). Text of the Working Paper (without attachments) was reprinted as Document No. 37 in Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes, June 1968.
7. The term xứ is used to refer to a large area that forms a major political entity, in this case Nam Bộ, the former Cochinchina. Southern Trung Bộ was exclusively referred to as an inter-region (liên khu), a term that was also used for Nam Bộ.
8. Thường Vu, aka Trung Nam, may be identical with the "Tử Kinh, alias Nguyễn Thường Vu, Central Commissar" referred to in a 1956 Party document. See Item 204, attachments to Working Paper.
9. See Palmerlee, "Viet Cong Political Geography," loc. cit.
10. Also known as the People's Proselyting Section (Ban Dân Vận).
11. The Enemy Situation Section was responsible not only for the gathering of intelligence on the Government of Viet-Nam (GVN), but also for guiding terrorist operations against GVN officials through assassinations, kidnapping and intimidation. It was also called the Enemy Proselyting Section (Ban Bịch Vận). For more details on the organization at this time see intelligence summary, "The Nam Bộ (South Viet-Nam) Regional Committee," Item 210, attachments to Working Paper.
12. See Items 19 and 204, attachments to Working Paper.
13. For more detail on the developments of this period see Working Paper and especially its attachment, Item 301, entitled "The CRIMP Document."
14. As cited in Working Paper.
15. P. J. Honey, "North Viet-Nam's Workers' Party and South Viet-Nam's People's Revolutionary Party," Pacific Affairs Quarterly, Winter 1962-1963, p. 383. Honey identifies four of the members to the Central Committee as Phạm Thái Bường, Nguyễn Văn Cúc, Phạm Văn Đăng and Lê Toàn Thu.
16. The "seventh anniversary of the unification of the South Viet-Nam People's Liberation Armed Forces" was celebrated February 15 this year. Hanoi, Viet-Nam News Agency, International Service in English, 1459 GMT, February 15, 1968; 0546 GMT, February 20; and 1200 GMT, February 21.
17. For a resume on formation of the PRP and its relationships with the Lao Dong Party, see The Communist Party of South Viet-Nam, U.S. Mission in Viet-Nam, March 1966, or "Communist-Directed Forces in South Viet-Nam," Viet-Nam Information Notes No. 3 (revised), Office of Media Services, U.S. Department of State, May 1967.
18. Quoted in Working Paper and other sources.
19. "Interview with Colonel Trần Văn Đắc," mimeo., JUSPAO Planning Office, Saigon, May 31, 1968.

20. Item 46, Working Paper.
21. "Resolution of the Central Office for South Viet-Nam," U.S. Mission Press Release, Saigon, August 18, 1967.
22. See "The Sixth Resolution, Central Office of South Viet-Nam," Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 38, July 1968.
23. Joseph H. Weiss, "How Hanoi Controls the VC," Saigon Post, January 23, 1968.
24. See Note 19.
25. One edition of the statutes is a booklet, Bảng Nhân Dân Cách Mạng Việt-Nam, Điều Lệ, published by the PRP Central Executive Committee in 1964.
26. Ban Thường Vụ is often literally translated into English as "Current Affairs Committee". "Standing Committee" has been used here, however, since it is more in line with normal communist organizational terminology. The translation which the DRV officially uses for the same term also parallels the Chinese Communist translation of ch'ang-wu wei-yuan hui (常務委員會), the ch'ang-wu or "regular affairs" being the equivalent of the Vietnamese thường vụ.
27. Document No. 6 in this series of Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes is a good example of a policy statement issued by the Standing Committee.
28. Item 208, Working Paper.
29. See Note 19.
30. Item 208, Working Paper.
31. May be the same as "Phạm Thái Bường" listed by Honey as among those elected to the Lao Động Party Central Committee in 1960. See Note 15.
32. This document is reproduced in M.C. Conley's The Communist Insurgent Infrastructure in South Viet-Nam, volume II, Appendix E-1. p. 125. This document gives an excellent description of the propaganda and training sections at all levels of the infrastructure.
33. In units subordinate to Region 5 the equivalent organization is called the Forward Reinforcing Council (Hội Đồng Chi Viện Tiến Phóng).
34. A document explaining the deactivation of the Forward Supply Council was captured by the U.S. 199th Light Infantry Brigade on April 8, 1968. A communique from a VC provincial committee to subordinate district committees reminded addressees of "the deactivation of all Forward Supply Councils in compliance with a directive from NT / COSVN 7."
35. See "Regulations for the Party Committee System in the SVN Liberation Army," Item 39, Working Paper. Also Item 54.
36. See Note 19.
37. Item 36, Working Paper.
38. See "'The Party in Command': Political Organization and the Viet Cong Armed Forces," Viet-Nam Documents and Research Notes No. 34, May, 1968.
39. The COSVN edition is entitled Tiến Phong: Tạp Chí Chính Trị và Lý Luận của Đảng Nhân Dân Cách Mạng Việt-Nam (Vanguard: A Journal of Politics and Reasoning of the PRP). The subtitle of the MR5 edition is different: Tiến Phong: Nội San của Đảng Bộ Khu 5 Đảng Nhân Dân Cách Mạng Việt-Nam (Vanguard: An Internal Review of the PRP Headquarters of Region 5). The content of the two journals is different.
40. See U.S. Mission Press Release # 102-68, May 25, 1968.

APPENDIX A

Worker's Party of Viet-Nam

DEMOCRATIC REPUBLIC OF VIET-NAM

Central Office of South Viet-Nam
(TRUNG ƯƠNG CỤC MIỀN NAM)

Independence - Liberty - Happiness

No. I /TC -T.U.C.M.N.

N O T I C E

Subject: Creation of the "Central Office of South Viet-Nam* and abolishment of the "Party Regional Committee of Nam-Bô".

In execution of the Central Executive Committee's decision /taken/ during its first meeting concerning the abolishment of the "Party Regional Committee of Nam-Bô" (Xu-Ủy Nam Bô) and the creation of the "Central Office of South Viet-Nam" (TRUNG ƯƠNG CỤC MIỀN NAM).

THE CENTRAL OFFICE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM informs all Party echelons of Nam-Bô that:

1. The Party Regional Committee of Nam-Bô is abolished as of the publication of this notice.
2. The Central Office of South Viet-Nam (Trung Ương Cục Miền Nam) is created and is composed of six comrades, commissioners of the Central Office:
 - Comrade HÀ HUY GIÁP
 - Comrade LÊ DUẬN, special secretary /sic/**
 - Comrade LÊ ĐỨC THO, assistant special secretary
 - Comrade PHẠM HÙNG
 - Comrade THƯỜNG VU
 - Comrade UNG VĂN KHIÊM
3. Comrade THƯỜNG VU, assistant special secretary of the Party Regional Committee of Nam Bô, will represent the Central Office of South Viet-Nam and sign Party documents under the name Trung Nam.
4. As of the publication of this notice, the Central Office of South Viet-Nam will be in Cambodia. Various Party echelons will correspond directly with the Central Office of South Viet-Nam.
5. The Central Office of South Viet-Nam will assign work to the comrade commissioners of the Xu' Ủy (Party Regional Committee) on the basis of their individual abilities and the requirements of our task.

6. The letter-headings and seals of the various Party echelon's committees are fixed as follows:

a. The Central Office

Heading: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIET-NAM)

CENTRAL OFFICE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM (TRUNG ƯƠNG CỤC MIỀN NAM)

Seal:

Size: No change.

Replace the words in the circle, "Executive Committee of the Regional Party" (BAN CHẤP HÀNH XU' ỦY ĐẢNG BỘ), with the words "Worker's Party of Viet-Nam" (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIET-NAM).

* Literally: Central Office of the Southern Region

** French: Secrétaire particulier, possibly from Vietnamese term Bí Thư

Replace the words "NAM-BỘ" in the seal's center with the words "Central Office of Viet-Nam" (TRUNG ƯƠNG CỤC MIỀN NAM).

b. Provincial Committee

Heading: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE OF MỸ THO (TỈNH ỦY MỸ THO) (Each province uses its own name.)

Seal:

- In circle: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)
- Center: PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE OF MỸ THO (TỈNH ỦY MỸ THO)

c. District Committee

Heading: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE OF VINH-TRÀ (TỈNH ỦY VINH-TRÀ)

District Committee of TAM BÌNH (Huyện Ủy Tam Bình)

Seal:

- In circle: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)
- Center: DISTRICT OF CHỢ GAO in capital letters, MỸ THO (in parentheses)

d. Chi Bộ Committee (village cell)

Heading: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)

PROVINCIAL COMMITTEE OF MỸ THO (TỈNH ỦY MỸ THO)
XÃ OF NHỊ MỸ (HUYỆN OF CHỢ GAO)

Seal:

- In circle: Worker's Party of Viet-Nam-Mỹ Tho (Đảng Lao Động Việt-Nam-Mỹ Tho)
- Center: XÃ OF NHỊ MỸ (in capitals)
CHỢ GAO (in italics, small letters and in parentheses)

e. Inter-Group of Chi-Bộ in Nam-Bộ (Liên Chi-Bộ Nam-Bộ)
(There is no seal for Province and zone echelons)

Heading: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM)

INTER-GROUP OF CHI-BỘ OF THE COMMAND HEADQUARTERS (LIÊN CHI-BỘ TƯ LÍNH)

Seal:

- In circle: WORKER'S PARTY OF VIET-NAM (CENTRAL OFFICE OF SOUTH VIET-NAM) (ĐẢNG LAO ĐỘNG VIỆT-NAM - TRUNG ƯƠNG CỤC MIỀN NAM)
- Center: COMMITTEE OF CHI BỘ INTER-GROUP OF THE COMMAND HEADQUARTERS (in capital letters) (LIÊN-CHI-ỦY BỘ TƯ LÍNH)

NOTE: The sickle and hammer should not appear in the seals.

June 7, 1951

For the Central Office,
(TRUNG NAM: signature and seal)

VINH LONG, July 25, 1951

For the Provincial Party Committee Standing Committee

Bureau Chief

BUI SON (Signature and Seal)

Confirmed Copy No. 125/SY

Copies sent to:

- 22 villages
- 3 district chief towns
- 3 Party branches (Chi Bo) of organizations, for information. As for the seals, the District Party Committee will have them made and sent to you later.

TAM BINH, August 11, 1951

For the Standing Committee of
the District Party Committee,
The special secretary,
VAN CHAT

APPENDIX B

EXTRACTS FROM THE NOTEBOOK OF MƯỜI KHAN
CHIEF OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE STAFF
MILITARY AFFAIRS COMMITTEE, COSVN

In March, 1961, I was appointed Chief of the Administrative Staff, Military Affairs Committee, replacing Tu Vo. At that time the agency was still new and the various organizations not all activated.

Military Affairs: Tư Chung
Political: 3 Nghiêm
Administrative Staff: Myself.

At that time all duties were handled by the /Nam Bộ/ Regional Party Committee and the Military Affairs Committee. Rear Services were still part of the Administrative Staff.

The Administrative Staff assisted the Military Affairs Committee in keeping track of the general situation and providing guidance to the various T's /regions/ and its organic key agencies:

- Commo-liaison line: 3 Cao
- C200: Tư Nguyễn
- Base C50: Quốc Đang
- Quartermaster element C51: 5 Ninh and Sáu Minh
- C40, Area B: 5 Thanh
- C300: 7 Tấn
- b5, Permanent /station/ of the /Nam Bộ/ Regional Party Committee (for "C" visitors)
- Dispensary 156: 3 Liêm
- Security, Military Proselyting, Intelligence.

All of these organizations fell under one single agency responsible to the Military Affairs Committee and the /Nam Bộ/ Regional Party Committee.

Party-wise, the Military Bloc had one Inter-Party Chapter consisting of eight Party chapters. I was the Inter-Party Chapter Secretary.

There were three Inter-Party Chapters for all of "R":

- Military Affairs
- Base
- Bloc of "R" Agencies

Higher above was the General Inter-Party Chapter of which I was a Committee Member.

In September 1961, a7 /Brother Bảy, i.e. Bảy Tiến/ and a2 /Brother Hai, i.e. Hai Hấu/ came here for a conference. In October 1961 Nam Bộ and Trung Bộ were unified into TWC /COSVN/.

3 Dinh's opinion: Not to set up an Administrative Staff for the "R" Military Affairs, but let the respective branches handle their own duties. In reality, the agency was not strong enough to handle all of its duties. I was scheduled to be Comrade 3B's Secretary but "R" did not approve. Finally Brother 2 Hấu was appointed field-grade Political Officer for "R" Military Affairs; a7 was in charge of Military Affairs and Brother 2 Già took over Rear Services. I remained Chief of the Administrative Staff (1962).

At that time, the agency had gradually developed but the key agencies remained directly

This document was captured by the Fourth U.S. Infantry Division on March 30, 1967, during Operation Junction City II.

Names have been transcribed as they appear in the notebook. Vietnamese are often referred to familiarly by the term anh, brother, and the number of the child in his family. The first child is numbered 1 in North Viet-Nam, but in the South the first born is numbered two. This family name may be abbreviated with the letter a followed by a numeral, as a7 for Anh Bảy, Brother Seven. The written forms of the numbers are:

1 = một	3 = ba	5 = năm	7 = bảy	9 = chín
2 = hai	4 = bốn	6 = sáu	8 = tám	10 = mười

responsible to the Military Affairs Committee and TWC. As a result, the workload grew in quality and quantity.

- The Military Proselyting Agency was separated from the Security-Intelligence-Military Proselyting Bloc, but remained under Military Affairs.

- The Postal Communication Agency was set up and placed under Military Affairs.

- The Rear Service /Agency/ was set up but could not provide guidance to the various areas such as: B, A and 200, which remained under immediate control of the Military Affairs Committee.

- And two separate regiments.

At that time, there was one other key agency: the base. It was neither under Security nor under the Staff but under the Current Affairs /Committee/ which had in turn placed it under immediate control of the Military Affairs /Committee/.

As a result, the Administrative Staff's workload grew heavier and more complex. At that time, there were no standard operational or organizational procedures at the various T's /regions/; all the work was concentrated at TWC, and the TWC Administrative Staff in turn set them all aside for the Administrative Staff of the Military Affairs Committee. It was not until 1964 that the operational procedures began to fall into set patterns.

This is the reason my name NQ became known everywhere. For example, I was responsible for processing out cadre assigned to the various regions.

When T^u Chi took over, the agency began to perform as such, and the work relationship between TWC and HQ was clarified. The Administrative Staff's workload was relieved. It merely had to keep track of the general situation and report to higher HQ for disposition.

In March 1965 the HQ intended to merge the HQ Administrative Staff with the Military Staff Department. Although it was not done I realized I was not qualified for the job. Brother T^u Chi personally told me that a Secretariat for the HQ would be set up and I would be appointed Secretary in charge of Rear Services, Personnel and Strategic Transportation.

In April 1961 I accepted the assignment of Chief of the Administrative Staff, Military Affairs Committee, Nam B^o Regional Party Committee, replacing T^u V^o.

As directed by the Military Affairs Committee, /I was/ to consolidate all reports every three days and submit them to the Military Affairs Committee. This did not apply to emergency matters which had to be settled immediately.

During the resistance I was familiar with the Miền Tây /Western Nam B^o Region/ (Region 9) theater of operations; /now/ it was very difficult /for me/, when reading reports from Regions 1, 2 and 4, to visualize the situation, let alone assess the contents. In addition, /I/ had to settle administrative matters and assist the Military Affairs Committee in providing guidance to subordinate organic agencies.

At that time, the Military Affairs Committee had many /subordinate/ key agencies. In addition to the various regions they were:

- C31, the commo-liaison line running from Region 1 to Region 3 (3 Cao)
- C300, the commo-liaison line running from Nam B^o to Region 6 (7 Tân)
- C90, the Northwestern Sub-Section (5 Thành) (Today's Area B)
- C50, the Northeastern Base - Quốc Đảng (Today's Area H)
- C51, the Northwestern quartermaster /element/ (there was no Rear Service Agency at the time) - 5 Ninh (killed in action)
- C200, the Base Area (Lâm Đồng) - T^u Nguyễn
- C156, the Medical /element/ of /Nam B^o/ Regional Party Committee - 3 Liêm
- C6, the Reconnaissance /element/
- C93, the Military Proselyting and Security /agency/ (7 D^u, 6 Hưng)

The Administrative Staff itself consisted of many elements:

- Crypto
- Financial Affairs
- Reception (this element was in charge of meeting, processing and quartering "Mùa Thu" /literally "autumn"/ cadre who have returned /i.e., cadre who have returned to South Viet-Nam from regroupment in the North/)
- Duty Office (today's station 66)
- Security Guard
- Management
- Administration

The workload was heavy and quite complex as compared to my qualifications, but I did my best with a high sense of responsibility.

In October 1961 7 Tiên and 2 Hậu came to establish TWC /COSVN/. The Nam Bộ Regional Party Committee no longer existed.

Agencies: Brother 3 Dinh, Staff
2 Châu, Political
Brother 2 Già, Rear Services

Brother 3 Bung (Chief of the Nam Bộ Military Affairs Committee) left for T3 /region 3/.

In early 1962 the agencies (staff and political) took shape, except for the Rear Services of which there was only a research element which assisted the Military Affairs Committee in providing guidance for these matters.

3 Dinh intended to deactivate the Administrative Staff and turn all of its duties over to the Staff, which would establish an overall administrative agency. I was to become Brother 3 Bung's Secretary in T3 /Region 3/. However, the Military Affairs Committee decided to maintain the Administrative Staff and Brother Hai Hậu appointed me Chief of the Administrative Staff, "R" Military Affairs Committee.

- C200, C51 and C50 were unified into Area A, with Brother Quốc Đẳng directly responsible to the Military Affairs Committee. The Rear Services Research Element was responsible for follow-up.

- C156 and C90 were directly responsible to the Rear Services Research Element.

- C31 and C300 were unified into the Postal, Communication and Transportation /Agency/ directly responsible to TWC but maintaining relations with the Military Affairs Committee for guidance, transportation of goods, and safe /escort/ of "C" recruits.

- Security was turned over to TWC.

- Military Proselyting Section was turned over to TWC but, since Brother 2 Hậu was in charge of this Section, its duties ended up at the Administrative Staff of the Military Affairs Committee.

The Administrative Staff was revamped:

- Financial Affairs was turned over to the Rear Services Research Section.
- Crypto was turned over to Staff.
- The Management Section was turned over to Staff.
- The Reception Section was split between Political and Staff.
- The Duty Office was turned over to Staff (today's Station 66).
- C6 Reconnaissance was turned over to b2, Staff.

Duties of the Administrative Staff:

- Participate in conferences between the Military Affairs Committee and the Staff, Political, Rear Services, and subordinate organic units of the Military Affairs Committee.

- Keep track of the operations of the various agencies and units.
- Assist the Military Affairs Committee in follow-up and guidance.

Reports were made to TWC /COSVN/ following the various conferences. I reported directly in writing to TWC or Brother Bảy /or/ 2 Hậu did so during conferences held at TWC. Reports were also sent to TW /Trung Ương, the Central Executive Committee of the Lao Động Party in North Viet-Nam/ by Brother Bảy, Brother 2, Brother Tư. Sometimes these reports were made by me to Staff and signed by Brother 7 or Brother 2.

I had to report daily to the Military Affairs Committee on matters concerning friendly and enemy war situation.

In 1964 Brother Tù came here and raised the question of organizing the HQ Agency. He thought of merging the HQ Office with the Military Staff Department. The HQ Agency would have a Secretariat. I was to be Secretary in charge of Rear Services, Troops' Equipment and Transportation of Strategic Goods from North / Viet-Nam /.

Agency Administration:

Mission of the Inter-Party Chapter: In 1961 the military agencies were within one bloc of which there was an Inter-Party Chapter (13 Party Chapters). I was the Secretary.

In 1962 the Staff Agency was separated from this organization, leaving an Inter-Party Chapter grouping the Political, Rear Services, Administrative Staff and Military Proselyting / Agencies /. Later, the Military Proselyting / Agency / also left.

In March 1964 the Political / Agency / established an Inter-Party Chapter of its own; the Rear Services also left because a Rear Services Party Committee had been established. The Administrative Staff remained by itself and later joined the Staff / Agency /. Internal duties: All cadre and specialists of the agency had been carefully selected but, through various periods of hardships, ideological evolutions were quite complex. I, along with the Party Chapter and Party Chapter Committee, provided leadership and indoctrination through various periods of reorientation.

Administrative duties: The former Administrator was Sáu Hiên, now Chief of the Correspondence Section of TWC Administrative Staff. He had previously been a TWC cadre but had temporarily been appointed because of a shortage of cadre and was returned to TWC Administrative Staff in 1963.

The Administrator of the old agency was comrade 10 Chê, a former security cadre. He was returned to Security in October 1962.

Comrade Hiệp, Chief of the Agency's Security Guard Tm, was appointed Administrator.