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PSYOPS

JUSPAO FIELD MEMORANDUM

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PSYOPS IN A REFUGEE CAMP

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APPROVED BY:  
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SAIGON, VIETNAM

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## I. GENERAL SITUATION:

Psychological operations in Binh Duong took on new dimensions in January 1967, when nearly 6000 refugees were moved from 12 hamlets in the Viet Cong sanctuary known as the "Iron Triangle" into a temporary camp created in the early days of Operation Cedar Falls in the Provincial capital.

In early January a psyop campaign was planned to support this refugee program to create an awareness of the mutual interests, shared aims and aspirations of the refugees and the Government of Vietnam as compared with the unfulfilled promises of the Viet Cong by whom they had been controlled for many years.

In initiating the PsyOps support program, we relied heavily upon the existing organizations in the province which could be brought together under a coordinated Information PsyOps plan: VIS, Vietnamese Sector Psyops staff, GVN Representative of the Commissioner for Education, RD workers, PsyOps Coordinator, Chieu Hoi Armed Propaganda Teams, MACV Sector Advisory staff for Province, G5 MACV advisory staff to the ARVN 5th Division, G5 staff of the US 23d Artillery Group, and the G5 staff of the US 1st Infantry Division.

Outside of the province, we relied heavily upon support provided unhesitatingly by the 246th PsyOps Company in Bien Hoa, by JUSPAO, and the POLWAR DEPT of ARVN.

## II. MEDIA USED:

It was our intention to use multi-media techniques to create and nurture mutual understanding among the Government and the people of this province, a prerequisite to the peace, freedom, unity and progress desired by both.

### A. PHOTOGRAPHS:

1. REFUGEES: Our aim was to photograph all hoi chanh and POWs for a photo display in the Refugee Camp which explained that these men and women, many of whom were relatives of the refugees, were safely in the hands of the GVN. The objective here was to quiet any anxieties among the refugees for the well-being of their loved ones in the combat zone.

2. POSTERS AND LEAFLETS: Photographs were made of a variety of subjects in developing photo inserts for posters and leaflets. Primary subjects included hoi chanh, VC atrocity victims, along with GVN RD projects (a comparison of social/economic progress by the GVN and overt destruction by the VC), Allied military victories, etc...

3. STATIC AND MOBILE EXHIBITS: Although all people share common interests, differences in Vietnam in political, ethnic and religious orientation and motivation tend to divide the people. An attempt was made to create an awareness of shared common interests between the Government and the people by several photo exhibits showing the progress of the refugees from their early days of displacement to their happier lives in their newly constructed and secure hamlet. These exhibits were for display by the VIS in each district capital and by VIS mobile exhibits in the outlying villages and hamlets.

4. INCENTIVES PHOTOGRAPHS: Another use of photographs was to record the efforts of individuals and groups who assisted in the PsyOps program and who were interested in having photographs for individual and group public relations purposes. For example: Two Filipino bands from the Bayanihan Center, Philippine Veterans Legion Clubhouse, in Saigon were transported by bus to the Refugee Center and the Chieu Hoi Center. A photographer covered the band's lively reception and shows at both Centers. The photos were given to the performers and the Clubhouse officials who used them for public relations purposed in Manila newspapers.

When the refugee school idea developed, technical assistance from professional teachers in Saigon was required in order to organize the effort. A group of professional teachers from the National Institute of Administration in Saigon was organized and brought to the Refugee Center to help in registering and arranging the new classes. These teachers were unprepared emotionally and by disposition for the dusty camp conditions, and the undisciplined students, and by the end of the day tempers were frayed. A photographer, however, had filmed the events of the day, and these photos and a letter of appreciation soothed the feelings of the teachers who subsequently volunteered to return to the Refugee Camp for special project work.

#### B. RADIO:

To gain a broader listening audience for Saigon VTN broadcasts, radios were placed in the Refugee Center, and connected to the loudspeaker system and in hamlets visited by Allied military units (to keep neighboring settlements informed about the treatment and progress of the refugees). The radio sets were placed by several agencies, including the VIS, G5 staff of the 1st Infantry Division and US MACV Advisors to the 5th ARVN Division.

#### C. TELEVISION:

Five sets were placed in the Refugee Center and numerous sets temporarily loaned to the G5 staff, 1st Infantry Division, and VIS (working with 5th ARVN Division) for placing in hamlets undergoing military pacification operations.

The first use of television sets in support of tactical military operations took place late in January, when elements of the US 1st Infantry Division occupied the hamlet of Chanh Luu for three days. Chanh Luu is nominally a VC controlled hamlet. Each night, and for the first time in their lives, the people of Chanh Luu viewed telecasts from Saigon, including a political speech and the Vietnamese opera, which were particularly well received. Movies were also shown but the novelty of television drew greater audiences. Again, this was not strictly part of the refugee program, but a kind of coat-tail operation to use psyops in neighboring areas.

#### D. MOTION PICTURE FILMS:

Early in January, numerous films were requested to augment the available films in the Province. The films had different themes and were selected to fit the particular needs of the situation by establishing a "Film Evaluation Group" within the Chieu Hoi Center to review and evaluate the impact of these films on people recently under VC control.

The evaluation form, copy attached, solicited the following comment:

- a. - Whether the film was overt entertainment, propaganda, or both.
- b. - Whether the theme of the film was rated good, fair or poor.
- c. - Whether the propaganda in the film was obvious or not.
- d. - Whether the film was effective in the judgement of the viewers.

From these evaluations the following USIS films were considered most appropriate for use among peoples recently liberated from VC areas:

"Waiting in the Wintertime"

"Le-Song"

"Vietnamese Mother's Heart"

"All for One"

"None of Your Business"

"Painting Slogans"

"Pacification of Long An"

"The Boat of Binh Ba"

"Song at Night"

"The Fish"

"Hope in the Highlands"

"Our Future is Here"

#### E. NEWSPAPERS:

Newspapers remain one of the most potentially important of the media in Vietnam. Most literate Vietnamese enjoy reading and in the provinces will read anything available to them. Most provincial families have some member who is literate enough to glean news of the day from a newspaper.

1. REFUGEE NEWSPAPER: A refugee newspaper can be effective if it has a purpose. Refugees need to be kept informed of what the Government aims are for their well-being in temporary shelters and for their ultimate resettlement in permanent homes. A week does not pass but that attention must be devoted to accurate, full and objective coverage of such things as the problem of water supply, food distribution, medical facilities, etc... and what the authorities are doing to rectify these problems, and what the Government plans are for housing and farmland.

An intelligence report revealed that Viet Cong agents within the Refugee Camp were going to foment demonstrations ostensibly to attract attention to refugee grievances. During the demonstrations, the Viet Cong agents would attempt to burn down canvas lodgings of the refugees and kill a number of the GVN cadre working within the camp.

The attitudes and grievances of the refugees had been collected and codified in a well defined list of assumed and actual grievances. Many of these grievances were being overcome by the Camp authorities and their American advisors. To offset possible reasons for joining a demonstration, the first issue of a mimeographed newspaper was produced and distributed to the refugees within one day after receiving the intelligence report. A copy of this newspaper is attached. Articles contained in this newspaper were read over the Camp public address system. Whether the newspaper was effective or not can be judged by the fact that no demonstrations took place in the camp.

#### F. STREET BANNERS:

Street banners are traditionally used in Vietnam to carry slogans and information advertising religious, social and Government positions. The following groups were considered the most important targets: (1) Pro-GVN sympathizers, (2) Uncommitted citizens, (3) VC and VC sympathizers, (4) Refugees, (5) Hoi Chanh.

Appropriate appeals were developed for these groups. The placement of these banners was decided jointly by the G5 staff of the 1st Infantry Division, VIS, and the (then) OCO/POD advisor.

#### G. PERSON TO PERSON COMMUNICATION:

This is possibly the most persuasive method of influencing the VC to rally.

It is difficult but profitable to develop Viet Cong relatives into propagandists who will implore their husbands, sons and kinsmen (by letters and word of mouth) to rally to the GVN and return to the peace and sanctity of the family hearth.

#### H. REFUGEE SCHOOL:

A Refugee School was started for several purposes: to project through the school an image of the GVN's interest in educating the youth; to occupy the time of students to free their parents for work on the new hamlet; to educate the youth; and to provide a forum for pro-Government propaganda.

The school was organized as follows:

1. Permission to create the school was granted by the Province Chief (although no GVN agency would assume responsibility for organizing it).
2. Teachers were obtained from among ARVN draftees in the 5th ARVN Division and from enlisted ARVN WACS. All of these soldiers had been professional

teachers before entering military service and the one with the most teaching experience was named as School Superintendent. Temporary assistance was provided by the National Institute of Administration, which supplied a team of teachers to help organize the registration of students.

3. School books were provided by the local representative of the Commissioner of Education, as was the school curriculum.

4. School was held in six large military hospital tents which housed approximately 100 students and which were obtained by USAID.

5. Desks were built of ammunition boxes by the ARVN Engineer Training Command; and blackboards and teachers' tables and chairs were fashioned by the US 23d Artillery Group.

6. Cloth banners provided by OCO/POD and hung in front of the tents identified the structure as a Refugee School.

This school was organized into classes composing the first 4 elementary grades. The students were registered and examined to determine their levels of education and assigned to appropriate classes. Thirty minutes a day the students were taught civic responsibilities, the aims of the GVN, and the differences between communism and a free society. The remainder of the time was spent in reading, writing and arithmetic.

The school began with an enrollment of 385 students and ultimately increased to 587 students.

The refugee school idea captured the interests and imagination of many people and was a favorite stop-over for visiting newsmen and dignitaries. A JUSPAO mopix team filmed the operation of the school for a documentary film on Refugees. Provincial officials were also in this film, which helped renew their interest in the enterprise. As a result of the success of the school and the attendant publicity, a school should be included in any plans for organizing a Refugee Camp.

#### I. DEVELOPING LEADERSHIP:

An early attempt was made to identify potential leadership among the refugees in order to help weld them into a cohesive political unit. We also desired to develop leadership within the camp to offset the covert Viet Cong leadership which was awaiting an opportunity to emerge.

Our attitude surveys indicated that unless leadership was introduced from the outside, the diverse elements of 12 hamlets making up the refugee population would not be able soon enough to select a leader from among their own people. Our surveys showed that over 75% of the refugees were professing Buddhists. We decided to experiment by introducing a Bonze who would be reliable in all senses of the word.

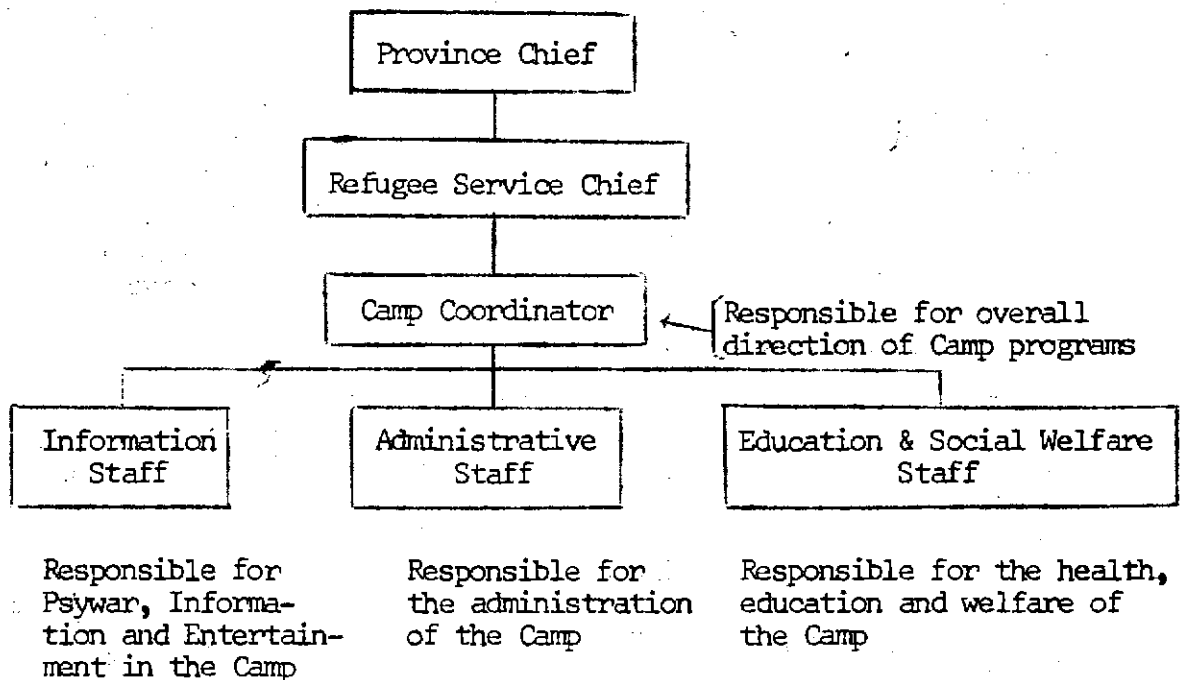
The Bonze worked among the people for over a month, and was accepted by a majority.

Despite the apparent initial success of this venture, it failed, for reasons which are not germane to this report. This example was included to highlight the need to develop leadership from outside a divergent group of people thrown together into one community.

J. COORDINATING A PROGRAM FOR A REFUGEE CENTER:

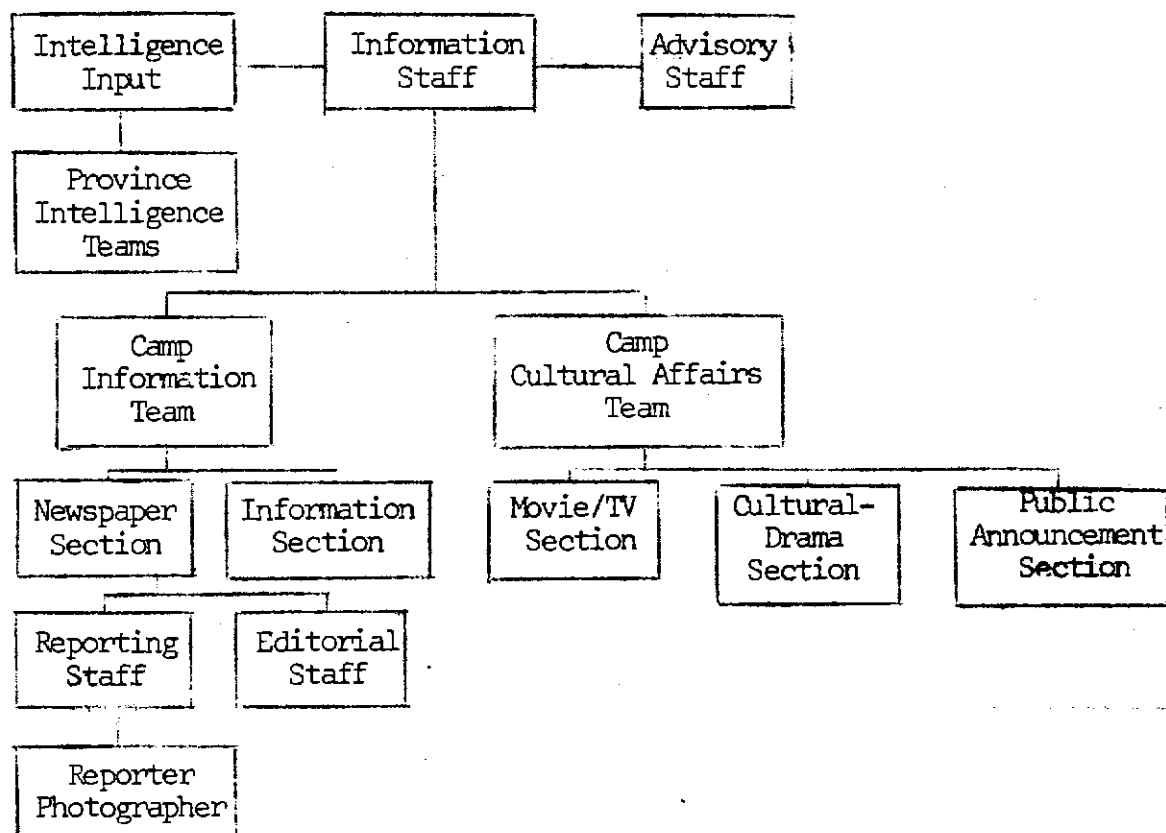
A considerable staff is required to provide for the welfare and indoctrination of the refugees. Numerous Vietnamese service agencies work in a Refugee Camp, but few lines of communication or coordination exist among them. An efficient and coordinated Camp organization is required, however, to muster the resources and personnel needed to run the diverse programs. Staffing the organization should be relatively simple, but the matter of coordination should be initially settled by whatever personal and official means are at one's disposal. Meeting this problem head-on in the beginning will solve many later difficulties.

There are numerous organizational possibilities for coordinating program content in a Refugee Center. Some may well be more appropriate than the one suggested below; however, the responsibilities will be largely the same and any organization should contain the basic elements shown in this proposed organization:



This proposed organization is further refined in the following graphs:

I. INFORMATION AND CULTURAL STAFF



PURPOSE: This staff should be responsible for news, information and psychological warfare operations within and without the camp on information dealing with the refugees.

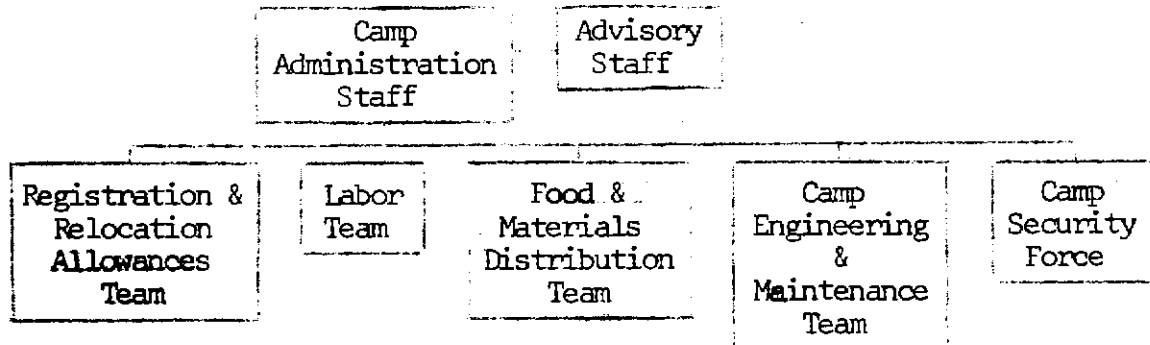
Intelligence Input: This function should provide from within the camp the attitudes and concerns of the refugees so as to keep the Information Director informed on exploitable intelligence information within the camp.

Advisory Staff: This staff can be composed of GVN and US advisors deemed necessary by the Camp Coordinator to assist the Information Director.

Camp Information Team: This team is responsible for taking the information obtained from its own intelligence input sources and preparing a bi-weekly newspaper which will keep the refugees informed on latest developments and GVN policies. The Information Section will be responsible for producing a fast information (daily or bi-daily news bulletins, etc.) and posters and leaflets to take care of psywar opportunities within and without the camp. Bulletin boards should be placed in the refugee center and used by this team for posters, bulletins, etc.

Camp Cultural Affairs Team: This team is responsible for all entertainment programs and media within the camp and for the public address system.

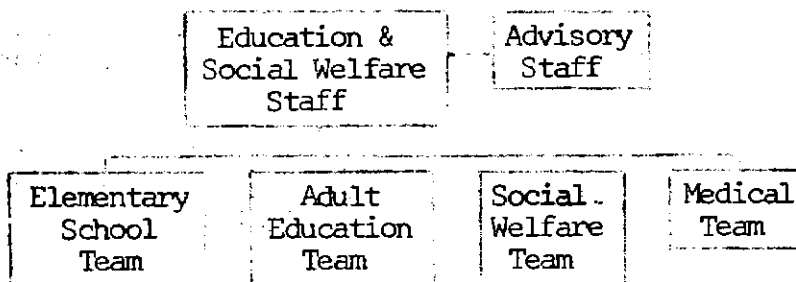
## II. CAMP ADMINISTRATION STAFF



**PURPOSE:** This directorate is responsible for the administrative, logistical and maintenance requirements of the camp.

Advisory Staff: This staff is composed of GVN and US advisors working in the camp.

## III. EDUCATION & SOCIAL WELFARE STAFF



**PURPOSE:** This directorate is responsible for the health, education and welfare of the camp. Such responsibilities include (1) the organization and programming of an elementary school for children (Elementary School Team) to teach rudiments of writing and reading with a high psywar input geared to developing among the youth a sense of dedication to the Government of Vietnam; (2) the organization and programming of an adult education program, particularly for mothers (Adult Education Team), with primary emphasis being placed on hygiene and sanitation,

the proper keeping of a home, etc., with a low geared psywar input intended to develop a sympathetic attitude towards the Government of Vietnam (3) the organization and programming for general camp morale, courtesy visits among the refugee families and the determination of grievances within the camp and coordination with the Camp Administration Directorate to remedy actions leading to the grievances (Social Welfare Team), and Medical programs for the health and safety of the refugees (Medical Team).

Medical Team is placed under this directorate (instead of perhaps the Administrative Directorate) so as to ensure proper program coordination and that medical instruction can be made available within this directorate.