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No. 22-64

RURAL AFFAIRS MEMORANDUM

TO: SEE DISTRIBUTION

FROM: Leonard Maynard, Acting Assistant Director for Rural Affairs

SUBJECT: Concept, Principle, and Program of New Rural Life Hamlets  
"Ap Tan-Sinh"

Attached for your information is an unofficial translation of a communique signed by Prime Minister Nguyen-Ngoc-Tho (Enclosure 1) and the Basic Briefing Document (Enclosure 2) which may be of interest to you.

2 Enclosures

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All USOM Provincial and Regional Representatives and Members of the RA Staff

UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION

Republic of Vietnam  
Prime Minister Office

Saigon January 23rd, 1964

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No. 12 TTP/TSNT

COMMUNIQUE

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VERY URGENT

FROM: - The Prime Minister of Republic of Vietnam

TO: - The Major General prefect of Saigon  
- All Province Chiefs (except Con-Son)  
- Mayors  
- Commanders of Corps I, II, III and IV  
- Commander of Saigon Special Sector  
- Commanders of Tactical Sectors  
11, 12, 21, 22, 23, 31, 32, 41 and 42.  
- Commanders of Binh-Lam and Phuoc-Binh-Thanh Special Sectors.

SUBJECT: Concept, Principle and Program of New-Rural Life Hamlets.

REFERENCE: Official telegram No. 1040 TTP/2/M dated Dec. 6, 1963 of the Prime Minister Office.

Following to the referenced telegram, we would like to submit to you the basic briefing document on the program of New Rural Life Hamlets.

You are requested to promote this document to cadres at all levels to carry out the construction and consolidation of New Rural Life Hamlets.

To complete the organization of Hamlet Militia and Administrative Committees for New Rural Life Hamlets, there will be a decree of the Ministry of Interior.

Prime Minister

Nguyen-Ngoc-Tho  
(signed and sealed)

Copies to: Major General, Chairman of the  
MRC for information.

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BASIC BRIEFING DOCUMENT  
OF THE NEW RURAL LIFE HAMLET PROGRAM

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I. NAME

The name "New Rural Life Hamlet" will replace the name "Strategic Hamlet" to be in consonance with the Revolutionary Policy. (In Vietnamese it is called: Ap Tan-sinh, i. e.: "ATS")

II. OPINIONS ON NEW RURAL LIFE HAMLET

- An ATS is a limited-boundary community.

- An ATS has material and social characteristics such as: houses, gardens, schools, dispensaries, defensive organs etc. However, a spiritual characteristic is needed: the entire NRLH (ATS) residents should be active in the fight against Communists so as to protect common properties and security.

To have this spiritual characteristics, the hamlet life's activities should aim at raising the people's standard of living and avoiding any excessive contributions or troubles.

Whenever this spiritual characteristic becomes firm, the material and social characteristics will be effective and the NRLH will have a real value.

- The ATS program is one of many means to contribute to the pacification of the country.

This program aims at helping farmers to have the following:

- Means to organize the defensive system; to form rural armed-cadre and provide food for them in order to keep hamlet security and order.
- Means to form hamlet executive committees and provide food for them in order to operate regularly any hamlet task.
- Facilities for formation and providing food for farmers' cadres for socio-economics, culture and facilities for equal development.

### III. Principles

- 31) ~~Emphasize~~ quality more than quantity
- 32) Respect local customs.
- 33) Avoid excessive contributions
- 34) Apply the authentic democracy (allow people to shape opinions in each plan and program of the hamlet)
- 35) Avoid relocation--the more the better--and when in dire need of relocation, the problems of land, farming, communication system and water supply for the people should be studied.
- 36) Annul the Strategic Block (khom) Ward (Phuong) and Quarters (khu)

### IV. Objectives:

#### 41) Phase I: Construction

##### 411. Objectives: "Security"

- a) Defense system
- b) Classification and census
- c) Organization of people groups
- d) Organization of combat youth (selection, training, and arming)
- e) Set responsibility for keeping security and order
- f) Radio communication installation (guarantee the communication for reinforcement for New Rural Life Hamlet. (ATS))
- g) Organization of intelligence inside and outside of the hamlet.

##### 412. Objective 2. "Civil Affairs"

- a) Elect Hamlet Executive Committee
- b) Expedite the establishment of health, educational and social organizations.

(Whenever the two objectives "security" and "civil affairs" are attained in the New Rural Life Hamlet, it will be considered completed.)

Objective 3 "Production"

- a) Take a census of resources, draw plans for increasing yields and developing more production (agriculture, fishery, animal husbandry, and handicraft programs)
- b) Establish a plan for development action (roads, bridges, canals, dams, sewage, wells, etc.)
- c) Create suitable trading facilities (Farmers Association, Cooperatives) for tractors, water pumps, brick making, oil pressing, manioc production, etc.)
- d) Reconstruct hamlets

V. Realization:

51. Strengthen the existing "New Rural Life" hamlets progressively from secure to less secure areas, and from the populous to the sparsely-populated regions.

This strengthening should aim at:

- 511) Consolidating militia structure
- 512) Accomplishing a militia self-support program
- 513) Providing facilities for maintaining defense systems
- 514) Consolidating New Rural Life Hamlet Councils
- 515) Helping to train rural cadres for Agriculture, Health, Education
- 516) Furnishing the farmers full facilities for economic, cultural, and social development.

52. Complete hamlets under construction.

As soon as the hamlet-building phase is finished, economic, cultural, and social development must be promoted.

53. Build a number of new hamlets:

As may be required to complete the perimeter of hamlet complexes.

54. Consider abandoning certain hamlets which are isolated and are unlikely to develop into viable communities.