

ILLUSTRATIVE JOBS BEING PERFORMED BY USOM/VIETNAM PROVINCIAL REPRESENTATIVES

General

A three-man committee, consisting of the Province Chief, the MAAG Sector Advisor and the USOM Provincial Representative, plans and controls most of the operations and commodity input into counter-insurgency within their respective provinces.

These USOM Provincial Representatives are called on to perform a whole gamut of activities, often unpredictable. These involve directly assisting in the following, among other things: outright counter-insurgency of a direct combat support nature, disaster relief, refugee relocation, medical care, simple construction, improvement of agricultural practices, the introduction of improved crops, establishment of hamlet schools, rehabilitation of Viet Cong defectors, emergency shipments of commodities, planning and demonstration of self-help projects, advising Province Chiefs on provincial pacification planning and operations, drafting of surrender appeals and other psychological warfare documents and advising on improving hamlet elections. He also makes direct disbursement of funds for a variety of functions (such as living expenses for hamlet militia in training, civic action cadre, health workers and local employees), evaluates and reports on counter-insurgency progress; and, above all, acts as a friend and informal staff assistant to the Province Chief for all counter-insurgency problems.

There are no comparable positions known in AID or, for that matter, in any other government agency with the possible exception of Army Civil Affairs officers who act as military governors in occupied areas during wartime - but even these have quite a different character.

In many of these undertakings, the Provincial Representatives have had the advice and/or short-term direct support of certain USOM technicians and administrative personnel. However, it is primarily the Provincial Representatives who have managed most of these, oftentimes working with their own hands.

Also, some of the activities mentioned below have been pioneered by personnel of the International Voluntary Services about 70 of whom are also living in the provinces, and a number of whom have been hired as USOM Provincial Representatives after their IVS contracts expired. They are particularly well acquainted with the area, its people, and its problems, and they speak Vietnamese.

We are helping the South Vietnamese Government in a war against an enemy whose strength lays in intimate contact with and appeal to the grassroots peasants, and in the employment of guerrilla tactics. It is essential that the Vietnamese Government and our advisors take counter action at this grassroots level by oftentimes living and dealing with literally aboriginal people.

Some measure of our enemy in this regard may be gained from the fact that years ago, at the time of the 1954 partition of Vietnam, numerous communist cadre were left in the South to go underground, to integrate themselves into and to live in the villages and hamlets, to marry into the local families and in a variety of ways ingratiate themselves with the peasantry. For some of those who remained behind with the Montagnard tribal peoples, this involved going so far as to file their teeth in becoming accepted members of the tribal groups.

Despite a great deal of terrorism, the Viet Cong are often much more considerate and understanding of the peasants than are GVN officials.

Specific Illustrations

Some random specific illustrations of jobs performed by USOM Provincial Representatives in a variety of provinces follow:

1. Arranging for the emergency distribution of foodstuffs, both locally procured and imported, to feed large numbers of Montagnard tribal refugees who have voluntarily left Viet Cong territory, often burning their homes and food stocks and killing their livestock behind them to deny their use to the Viet Cong.
2. Providing emergency housing for relocated Vietnamese peasants evacuated by the Vietnamese Army from indefensible positions, and for personnel who have voluntarily defected Viet Cong areas.
3. Providing for replacement of housing, for medical care, food, clothing, blankets, etc., for the survivors of strategic hamlets that have been attacked and overrun - often burned - by the Viet Cong.
4. Visiting strategic hamlets almost continuously to check on their condition, the progress being made along the new constructive lines that need to be followed, and the efficacy with which the U.S.-supplied commodities are being used.
5. Plan and develop courses of instruction for hamlet militia, elected hamlet officials and provincial Civic Action Cadre.
6. Planning and execution of aerial resupply of food and medicines to isolated and beleaguered groups of refugees in remote areas surrounded by the Viet Cong.
7. Assisting in the planning and arranging for the resupply of combat hamlets in the Delta by water transportation. In one particular instance of such an operation to resupply Father Hoa's isolated and beleaguered "Hai Yen" enclave in An Kuyen Province, about 1/3 of the sampans and barges were lost to the Viet Cong and a number of accompanying personnel were killed.
8. Support of the Viet Cong Defector (Chieu Hoi) Program ranging from drafting surrender appeals to assistance in printing leaflets as well as assisting in the planning, building, and administration

of centers for the screening and rehabilitation of Viet Cong who wish to return to useful life. Also, plan and help establish resettlement centers for ex-Viet Cong.

9. Plan, develop, and advise in the execution of provincial information and psywar efforts aimed at publicizing the achievements of the GVN and winning the loyalty and support of the population. This has included in at least one province, assistance in the installation of a small local radio transmitter, assembled from military excess parts, and advice on programming.

10. Using the best crystal ball available, project future commodity requirements for USOM planning of supply and logistical support from Saigon and the U. S.

11. Introduction of improved varieties of pigs and construction of improved pig-pens, together with advice on improved hog feeding and on using their excrement to make compost for fertilizer for fields.

12. Teaching the primitive Montagnard tribal people how to use water buffalo as beasts of burden rather than as sacrificial animals.

13. Experimentation, oftentimes the actual building and introduction of a variety of simple, economical, and practical devices which will improve the life of the rural people, such as simple water wheels made of bamboo and logs for lifting water from canals or creeks for irrigation, in lieu of having to do this by the time-honored hand method.

14. Introduction of wooden windmills made locally for lifting irrigation water from creeks and canals to enable second-cropping during the dry season when land otherwise lies idle for lack of more expensive and sophisticated irrigation systems.

15. Experimentation with and introduction of cheap hydro-jet well-drilling rigs for rapid and economic provision of wells for hamlets.

16. Advise local inhabitants in the construction of simple and inexpensive hamlet school buildings, and assist in establishing local PTA's to select the best educated available hamlet inhabitant as teacher, locally paid, in order to provide at least basic literacy for children otherwise denied any education.

17. Assist in the local election of hamlet officials, an unprecedented and unique experience for hamlets in Vietnam.

18. Encourage and assist newly elected hamlet leaders in their planning, selection, and mobilization of support for self-help

projects which will benefit the hamlets concerned and give them a feeling of progress and a stake in their own future, in contrast to life under the Viet Cong. Illustrative self-help projects have been wells, small irrigation systems, schools, hamlet market places, simple access roads, repair of bridges to hamlets, etc. The USOM Province Rep sees to it that the essential commodities not available locally, such as cement, reinforcing steel, corrugated roofing, lumber (where necessary), and transportation to get these commodities to the hamlet, are provided. Technical assistance of a wide variety is often called for on the part of Province Reps supporting these self-help projects.

19. Assist in the training of local personnel by short, practical courses carried out at local experimental farms in the demonstration and teaching of improved agricultural methods to the peasants. Then these teaching and demonstration teams are sent out to work among their own people. This has been a particularly effective innovation among the Montagnard tribal peoples when their own people have been sent back into their villages and hamlets to demonstrate better ways of growing more food.

20. By reports or personal trips, maintain frequent liaison with both USOM and GVN agencies in Saigon in order to circumvent the slow communications and procedural bottlenecks that persist between Saigon and the critical rural areas.

21. Constantly evaluate the counter-insurgency effort in each province and submit a variety of reports required by superior echelons all the way from USOM/Saigon to the Country Team, and to policy levels in Washington, usually written in long-hand or typed laboriously by the officer himself in the absence of clerical support.

22. In the more advanced provinces, where security has been established over a considerable area, participate with the VN Provincial staff and supporting USOM staff from Saigon in developing provincial economic development plans of a coordinated nature, in order to speed up the move from the emergency and relief stage to sound economic development leading to self-sufficiency.