

rcp3rd

From: "rcp3rd" <rcp3rd@cox.net>  
 To: "Tran Ngoc Chau" <tranchaung@aol.com>  
 Sent: Monday, November 14, 2005 5:37 PM  
 Subject: Another request

Dear Chau,

I trust you got my previous e-mail concerning the name for the anti-terror teams. In thinking about what happened during your first time in Kien Hoa, two other questions came into my mind.

The first question is raised by a claim by Neil Sheehan in his book, "A Bright Shining Lie" on page 312, (which he sources to a Captain J. Lapsley Smith who was the intelligence officer of the Sector Advisory Team in Kien Hoa Province in 1963), that after the battle of Ap Bac the VC recruited 2,500 guerrillas in the spring of 1963 right out of the strategic hamlets in your province. I seriously doubt this claim and wonder what you think about it? It could be possible that 2,500 guerrillas were recruited out of the areas in Kien Hoa which were still controlled by the VC but not out of the hamlets. You may wish to address this issue in your book for the obvious reason that, if true, it would mean the SH program under your leadership was not the success we all believed.

My second question is this. Kien Hoa was reported to be fairly well pacified under Pham Ngoc Thao who you replaced. Now that we know for certain that Thao was a North Vietnamese agent, it seems to me possible that he had made a kind of accommodation with the VC in the province. What is your view on this? Did you develop any suspicions after you took over the province that the situation was not nearly as pacified as Thao claimed? Did that make you suspicious of Thao himself?

Best regards,

Rufe

12/14/05  
 (Pham Ngoc Thao) for Diem  
 (functioned as rapporteur for NSC & lived  
 a year before going to Kien Hoa)  
 Influenced by his Catholic family  
 Influence by Catholicism except at  
 honorable personal behavior - dignity,  
 patriotism - Believed Catholicism good  
 for Vietnamese people - Almost all  
 serving them had learned French system -  
 stuck him - personnel not suited for  
 concept - didn't understand it.

Diem stress on character - family background  
 Kien Hoa strongly Catholic presence - Le Roy - controlling  
 small, undisciplined, not paying taxes, very so  
 heavily poor communist / French intervention - Reported  
 problem to Diem - so he had resignation didn't  
 think could do the job. Angkichep in Vinh Long -  
 Diem "stay for another year" - despite, Admin. Affairs - I will  
 keep him (Chau) - very slowly not work Kien Hoa -

12/9/2005

10 days after sending him to Hien Hao  
6 weeks to reflect on Thao - give me  
a report. Thao had close connections - very  
influential - was major in Civil Guard - but ~~was~~  
in difficult position - Report - 570,000 inhabitants  
Why Col. Thao requested Hoa Hao to Civil Guard, but  
chiefs, from Long Xuyen to Hien Hao. People like him  
good public relations - "some report gave info to  
VC" - <sup>ARVN</sup> ~~was~~ directly under Le Duc -  
undermined, genuine - some actual VN.

Nguyen Van DE (Pham Tiet Duong) - Lt.  
Col. in <sup>NV</sup> intelligence service

Almost whole personnel were former French  
system - VC are there right in the hamlet -  
Nhu - Ranking of prov. chief - ~~the least~~ - Chau among  
the least - ~~but~~ <sup>more</sup> Nhu asked why so low  
Thinking Long An - "honest I know" - Chau  
set <sup>high</sup> ~~VC~~ criticism.

Chau slowly replaced <sup>Hoang</sup> ~~to~~ of 9 Dist.  
Chiefs replaced

underground agents in hamlets - Cons. business  
work in families who call them back - did not  
put them as criminals.  
Centre - fewer teams - 3 more from <sup>average</sup> ~~last night~~  
Centre - guerrilla teams - ~~from~~ <sup>last night</sup> ~~interior~~  
- Nguyen Beech - 6th Army strategy to put  
every person -  
to the teams -  
Then VC start to move out

When he comes back had to start over.  
Later put Cons. - Guerrilla under police control

- 1) What happens in your hamlet recently
  - 2) Who VC think caused that problem
  - 3) What do you want to see
- The government to do to help you in  
small things good. The hamlet.