

**LAND REFORM IN VIETNAM
WORKING PAPERS**

Volume III

The Viet Cong

Prepared for:

**THE REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM AND THE
UNITED STATES AGENCY FOR
INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**STANFORD RESEARCH INSTITUTE
MENLO PARK, CALIFORNIA, USA**



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LAND REFORM IN VIETNAM WORKING PAPERS

Volume III

The Viet Cong

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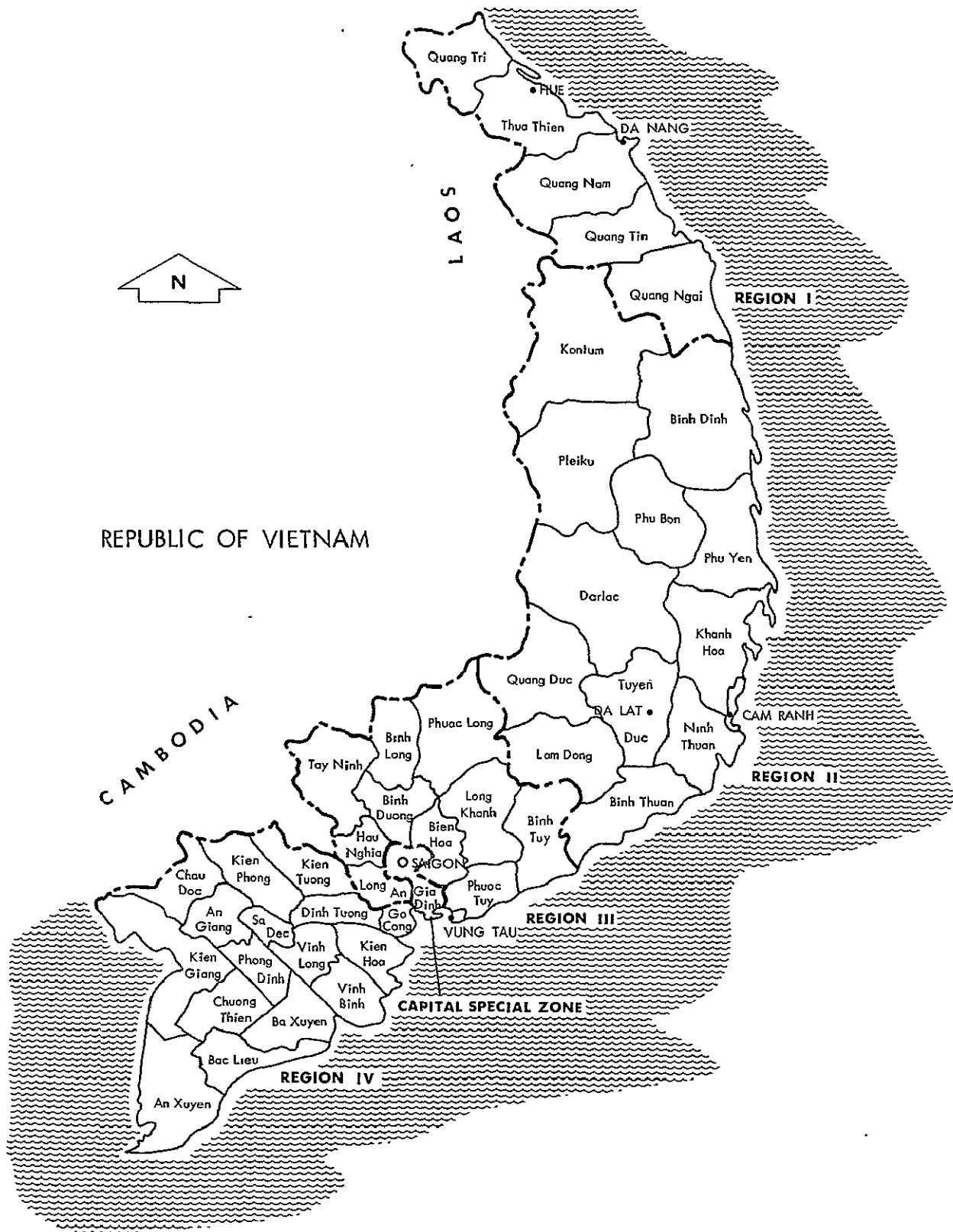


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Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

The use of land reform for the purpose of mitigating inequalities of land ownership and tenancy in a rural society under insurgency conditions requires control of both the land and the population. This fact is a key to understanding the problem of the Government of the Republic of Vietnam (GVN) in providing security for the individual peasant who must occupy the land if he is to cultivate it. The rural population of Vietnam as in the other agricultural economies of Southeast Asia, is found on small plots of land scattered over the remote countryside. The fundamental unit of the rural society consists of the household and its rice field and garden. These family units form the fabric of the remote hamlet and village communities. Because they are remote and scattered, they are highly vulnerable to the persuasions of the Viet Cong.*

As long as the rural population remains attached to its land, GVN authorities are confronted with the substantial task of providing security for each of the 2 million households that line the rice fields, trails, and canals crisscrossing the country.

Almost as vulnerable to the Viet Cong are the hamlet and village officials who, in the administration of land affairs, must identify the land with its rightful owner; settle disputes about boundaries; and maintain records of ownership, rental agreements, land taxes, and so on. The performance of these duties requires free access to the land, the tenant occupants, and the landowners.

* The term Viet Cong was chosen to describe the insurgent movement in South Vietnam because of its generally accepted inclusiveness. Considered within this term are the National Liberation Front (NLF) and subsidiary front organizations; the Peoples Revolutionary Party and associated communist control agencies; the National Liberation Army; and the host of covert intelligence networks, sapper units, and penetration agents who operate in support of Communism in South Vietnam.

The residential area of the rural hamlet often consists simply of two rows of houses on either side of a canal or buffalo cart trail extending a kilometer or more in each direction. Every house is easily accessible to those who desire to intimidate or even execute its occupants. Those who, like the local administrator, have become the target of the Viet Cong have no alternative but to seek shelter at night in a province or district capital some distance away from their villages and hamlets. It follows that their ability to communicate with the populace and to perform their duties in the administration of land is inhibited thereby.

Complicating this picture of vulnerability are inequalities in the rural society with regard to the ownership and control of land. The Viet Cong focuses on the latent dissatisfaction of the peasant with these inequalities and builds on this dissatisfaction a foundation for revolution. Fed by material and political support from the dissident elements of the rural population, the Viet Cong has created a military force capable of challenging the GVN and all of its allies, including the United States.

What transpired in Saigon, Hue, Dalat, My Tho, and many other province capitals during the 1968 Tet and subsequent Viet Cong offensives is only a sample--although more dramatic--of what has been happening in the countryside for many years. At this point, it must be accepted that the Viet Cong either controls or contests a major portion of the rural area. Only 35 percent (4,632) of the more than 12,731 hamlets in Vietnam are officially regarded as secure. The area contested in which neither side is in full control, is estimated to comprise 2940 hamlets or 23 percent of the total.* While the "secure" hamlets contain 60 percent of the population, the remaining hamlets contain much more than half of the cultivated land of the Republic of Vietnam.†

* Hamlet Evaluation System, Information, Report, April 30, 1968.

† Hamlet Evaluation System Hamlet Plot for May 31, 1968, a publication of the Military Assistance Command Civil Office for Revolutionary Development Support (MACCORDS), Saigon.

Purpose and Scope

Clearly, any land reform policy or program that does not take into account insecurity in the rural areas is likely to fail or, at the very least, be seriously diluted in its impact on the rural population. This volume, therefore, is intended to provide basic background information needed for evaluating the impact of the Viet Cong on land reform policies and programs.

Data Sources

The supporting data for this document were derived from the SRI Hamlet Resident, Village Administrative Chief, and Landlord Surveys;* publications of the MACCORDS Hamlet Evaluation System; reports of Viet Cong initiated incidents from the data base maintained for the Commander in Chief Pacific; the extensive collection of interviews of Viet Cong defectors developed by the RAND Corporation under contract with the Advanced Research Projects Agency of the Department of Defense; captured Viet Cong documents from the files of Douglas Pike maintained by the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office, Saigon and from the Captured Document Exploitation Center (CDEC), U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV); and the extensive open and classified literature on the Viet Cong. While the sources used are comprehensive, data on the Viet Cong are characteristically fragmentary. Hence the analysis and documentation are largely qualitative.

Acknowledgments

Many GVN and USAID staff members (too numerous to mention individually) made substantial contributions to this report. Officials in both Saigon and the field contributed many hours to in-depth interviews and to the surveys. Special mention must be made of the contributions of Mr. John L. Cooper, formerly Special Assistant to the Director (USAID) for Land Reform, Mr. Leland J. Fallon, his successor (as Land Reform Adviser), and Mr. Keith W. Sherper, Assistant Land Reform Adviser. Mr. Nguyen Xuan Kuong and Mr. Cao Thanh Chuong of the USAID Land Reform Adviser's Office were invaluable sources of information.

* See Working Papers, Vol. IV, Part 1 and Vol. II, Appendix C for a detailed description and analysis of these surveys.

Valuable assistance was also provided by other elements of the U.S. official community in Vietnam. Specifically, appreciation is expressed for the contributions of the Public Safety, and the Research and Analysis divisions of MACCORDS; the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence (J-2) of the Military Assistance Command, Vietnam; and the Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO). Special thanks are also due to the RAND Corporation for use of the extensive collection of interviews of Viet Cong defectors, and the Scientific Advisory Group of CINCPAC for data on Viet Cong incidents.

Although the research could not have been performed without the valuable contributions of these organizations and individuals, the interpretation of the data and the presentation of the results remain the sole responsibility of the Institute.

The Land Tenure Project, of which this volume is a part, was under the technical and administrative leadership and management of Dr. William Bredo, Project Director, and Robert O. Shreve, Project Field Director.

The principal analyst and author of this document was Donn E. Seeley of SRI, who is solely responsible for both its format and content. Significant contributions to the research and documentation were made by Dr. Paul S. Taylor, Professor Emeritus of the University of California, Berkeley, and Dr. R. Michael Pearce of Pacific Technical Analysts, Inc., Honolulu, Hawaii.

Chapter 2

IMPACT OF THE VIET CONG ON GVN LAND REFORM

The nature of land reform is such that it places the Government of Vietnam (GVN) in direct competition for the same elements of the rural society and the same land that the Viet Cong require for the conduct of the insurgency. It is not surprising, therefore, that the GVN has encountered forceful opposition to its land reform programs from the Viet Cong. In addition to efforts to destroy the effectiveness of specific GVN programs, the Viet Cong has conducted a parallel land reform program of its own. Included in the two programs are many common elements and concepts, but the basic philosophies differ significantly. In contrast to the GVN, whose main goal is to alleviate inequities in land tenure conditions, the Viet Cong utilize land reform as a basis for restructuring the rural society in the mold of communism. While the interim objectives of both are to attract the loyalties of the rural population, the methods used to achieve land reform are distinctly different. In implementing its land reform, the Viet Cong has succeeded in disrupting the traditional patterns of land tenure, thereby creating serious administrative problems for the GVN in the implementation of its land reform policies.

Landlord-Tenant Relationships

Although the objectives of the GVN to alleviate inequities existing between the landlord and the tenant are clearly competitive with those of the Viet Cong, the efforts of the Viet Cong to attract the loyalties of tenants have tended to obstruct the application of the GVN program, and in some cases, to make it unattractive and even inapplicable.

The policy objectives of the GVN with regard to landlord-tenant relationships are to place limits on the rents paid by tenants for the use of the land, to provide tenure security for the tenants, to provide relief in cases of crop failure, and to give the tenant the first right to buy the land should the landlord choose to sell. For each of these objectives, the Viet Cong had a competitive program of their own. Whereas the GVN rental limits ranged from 15 to 25 percent, the Viet Cong ranged from 0 to 30 percent; whereas the GVN sought to prevent unjust eviction of the tenant by the landlord, the Viet Cong effectively discouraged the landlord from

selling his land, and later took the land from him. The Viet Cong also provided protection against crop failure, by intervening with the landlord on behalf of the peasant. The transfer of ownership to the tenant was accomplished through uncompensated expropriation of the land and its distribution to the tenant.

Thus, wherever the Viet Cong were able to apply their land reform program, the GVN was effectively prevented from implementing its own policy. As will be brought out in more detail in succeeding chapters, the landlord was subject to the influence of the Viet Cong even in hamlet lands rated as GVN-controlled. Of the 54 hamlets visited in the SRI Hamlet Resident Survey, all but six of which were rated as secure, 33 (61 percent) indicated the presence of Viet Cong intimidation, and in the 37 villages visited in the SRI Village Chief Survey, 29 (75 percent) had experienced kidnapping or intimidation of some kind.*

Although the impact of the Viet Cong is by no means uniform, it would appear that in Viet Cong-controlled areas most of the land has been redistributed--which is interpreted to mean that in these areas, landlordism has been abolished by the Viet Cong. In the areas where Viet Cong redistribution is not yet complete, it may reasonably be assumed that the landlord has been rendered politically ineffective as a force in the society and that tenure security is guaranteed by the Viet Cong.

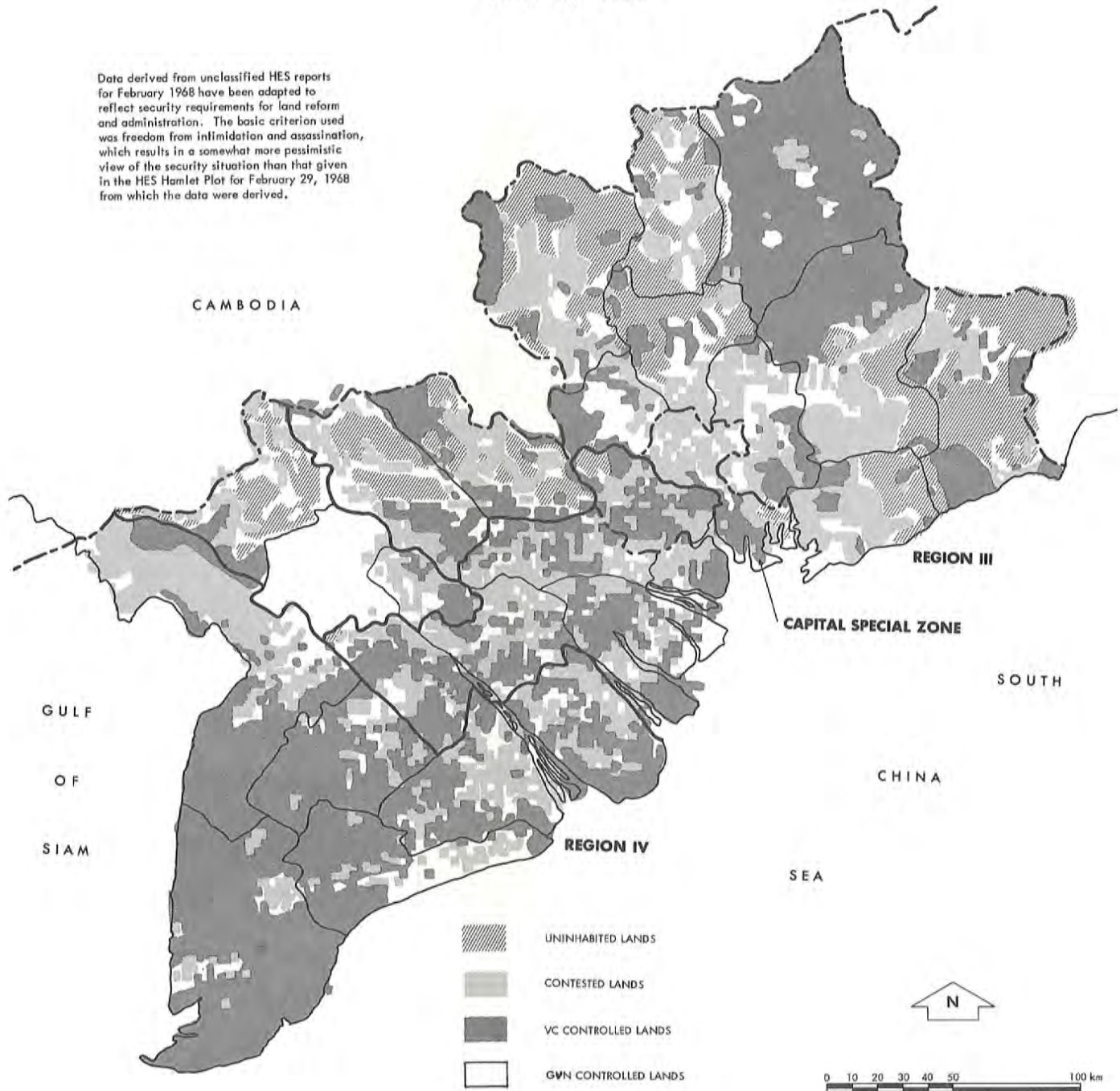
Some concept of the extent of Viet Cong interference in the GVN program may be obtained from the interpretation of the security situation in the Mekong Delta presented in Figure 1.† The situation described above for Viet Cong-controlled lands applies to the area in black, which occupies the major portion of Regions III and IV. The shaded portion (solid grey),

* Eliminating the villages in An Giang from the sample, which are not typical of security conditions in the Mekong Delta, the other 31 show 26 (84 percent) affected.

† The security conditions presented in Figure 1 constitute an interpretation of data obtained from the Hamlet Evaluation System Hamlet Plot for 29 February 1968 (publication of the Research and Analysis Division, US Military Assistance Command, Civil Office of Revolutionary Development Support, Vietnam), which is believed to most nearly satisfy the intimidation criteria derived from the SRI Hamlet Resident and Village Administrative Chief Surveys. This interpretation was made strictly for the purpose of portraying Viet Cong interference in GVN land reform and does not constitute--nor should it be used or interpreted as representing--the official U.S. or GVN views on security conditions in the Mekong Delta.

Figure 1
**SECURITY CONDITIONS OF
 LANDS IN THE MEKONG DELTA**
 Republic of Vietnam
 February 1968

Data derived from unclassified HES reports for February 1968 have been adapted to reflect security requirements for land reform and administration. The basic criterion used was freedom from intimidation and assassination, which results in a somewhat more pessimistic view of the security situation than that given in the HES Hamlet Plot for February 29, 1968 from which the data were derived.



designated as contested lands, represents an approximation of the area in which Viet Cong intimidation may be expected to apply. For the unshaded portions, the lands in which the GVN program of improving landlord-tenant relationships (and conducting land redistribution) is applicable, it may be assumed that the program can be carried on without major competition or interference from the Viet Cong.

The lack of evidence in the rather extensive data available on many aspects of Viet Cong land reform suggests that the Viet Cong probably do not view the GVN program to improve landlord-tenant relationships as a serious threat. Viet Cong practice of countering other GVN land reform measures leads one to believe that, if this been considered a threat the Viet Cong would have devised appropriate countermeasures to thwart GVN application of the program. The evident lack of countermeasures may be explained in part by the results of the SRI Hamlet Resident Survey which showed that tenants were paying an average rent of 34 percent of rice production--9 percent above the maximum stipulated under the law--and that 61 percent of the tenants surveyed paid rents in excess of the maximum. The SRI Village Administrative Chief Survey indicated that two-thirds of the villages sampled either had no record at all of lease (rental) contracts, or had a record that was virtually useless. These and other conclusions reached with regard to problems of interpretation of Ordinances 2 and 20, and in the administrative implementation of these provisions, indicate that the GVN had not yet reached the effectiveness required to achieve the stated objectives of the program.

While the desirability of reforms in landlord-tenant relationships has been established, questions have been raised as to its administrative feasibility even in secure areas.* It is clear that Viet Cong intimidation of the landlord is a common and effective practice in contested areas as well as in many areas defined by the GVN as secure. It appears likely that the Viet Cong have achieved a greater impact on the landlord-tenant relationship than has the GVN. Certainly this is true in Viet Cong-controlled areas.

By creating an environment of insecurity in the contested areas, and by redistributing the landlord's land under its control, the Viet Cong place the GVN in the position of having to protect the landlord from Viet Cong terrorism, help him to recover his land, and otherwise defend his right to collect rents. Efforts of the GVN to extract itself from this

* See Working Papers, Vol. II, Administration of Land Affairs.

dilemma have resulted in laws that would recognize certain rights of the Viet Cong-appointed recipient of the redistributed lands.* While the GVN seeks, through these measures, to relieve the Viet Cong-appointed occupant of his fear of eviction, the landlord may proceed with the establishment of lease contracts and with the collection of rents. The reinstatement of the landlord, coupled with the apparent ineffectiveness of rent control, would seem to detract seriously from the psychological appeal for a return of Viet Cong-held areas to GVN control. The Viet Cong have utilized this theme repeatedly in their propanganda, and, in spite of the heavy burdens of taxation and labor placed upon the occupants of Viet Cong-controlled lands, the GVN reinstatement of the landlord may well have contributed to the maintenance of their continued loyalty to the cause of the Viet Cong. It would appear that anything less than full rights of ownership, or at least the option to purchase the land occupied, would fall short of the desired effect of drawing the tenant to the side of the GVN.

Land Redistribution

The basic concept of "Land to the Tillers" underlies both GVN and Viet Cong policies in the area of land redistribution. Under the GVN Ordinance 57 policy, all privately held riceland in excess of 100 hectares (subject to certain exceptions) was expropriated. A total of 452,000 hectares of land were obtained under this program, of which nearly 267,000 hectares have been distributed in plots ranging from one to four hectares to approximately 117,000 households. An additional 230,000 hectares of land was purchased for the same purpose from landowners of French citizenship. Of these lands, roughly 20,000 hectares had been distributed as of mid-1968. The geographical distribution of these lands is shown in Figures 2 and 3. In Figure 2, the lands acquired under Ordinance 57 are the sum of the areas in grey and black. The lands already distributed are shown in black. Figure 3 shows the former French lands.†

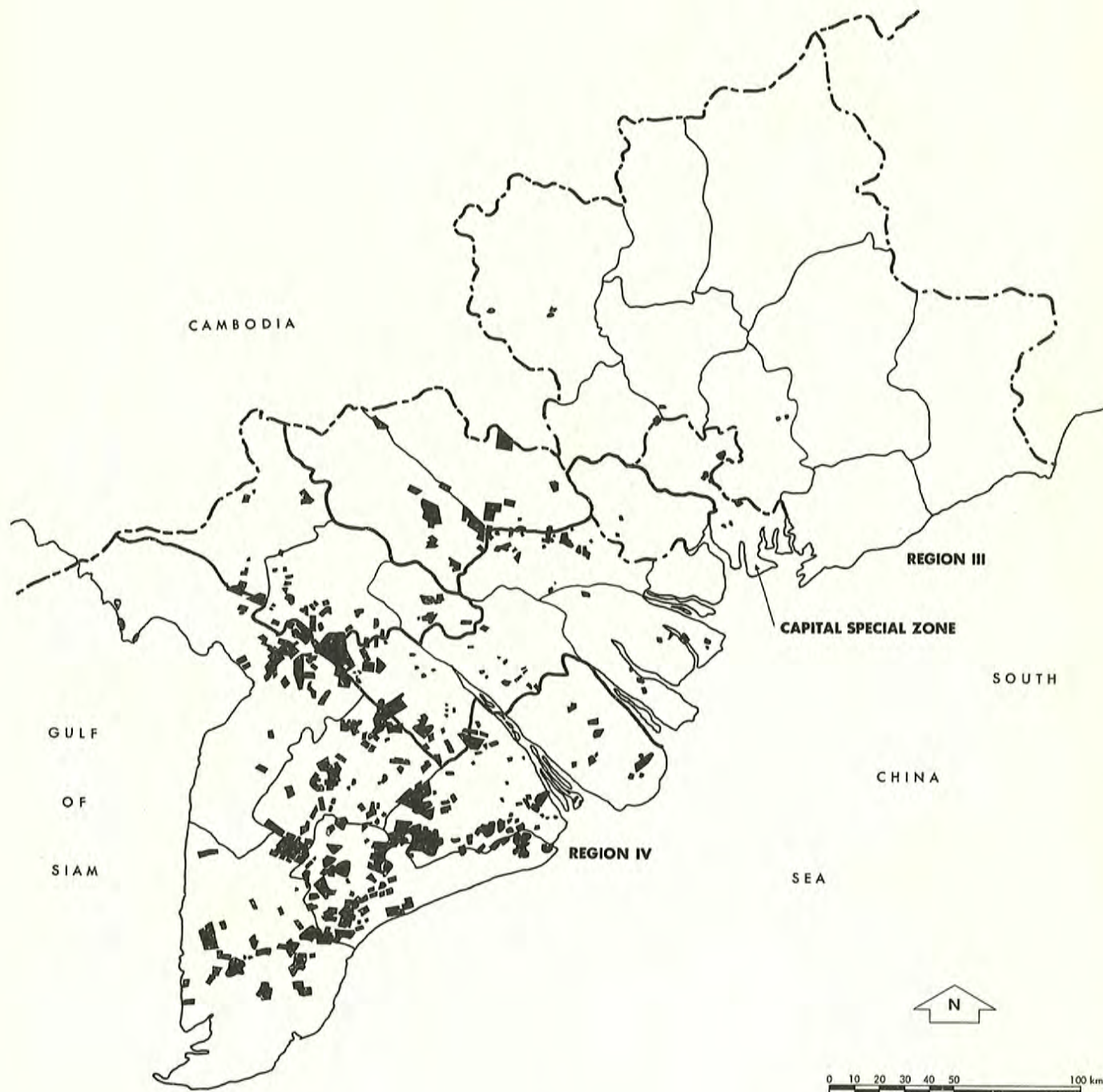
It will be noted that the land made available under these programs--having been limited to private holdings--was fragmented in the same manner as the original holdings and dispersed geographically. Large areas

* The problem of recovery of land that has been redistributed by the Viet Cong is treated in more detail under Confused Lands later in this chapter.

† Geographical data on the redistribution of former French lands were not available. Since only 10 percent of these lands have been distributed, the area shown is a rough approximation of that remaining to be distributed.

Figure 3

FORMER FRENCH LANDS IN REGIONS III AND IV
Republic of Vietnam



of the Republic of Vietnam, including all of Regions I and II, were not affected significantly by either program. Even within Regions III and IV, where almost all of the expropriation and distribution has taken place, the acquisition and subsequent distribution affected some districts, villages, and hamlets, while others immediately adjacent to them were benefited not at all. Figures 4 to 10 present the land situations for seven out of the 18 provinces comprising Region IV; the unequal amounts of distributed as well as undistributed land are immediately apparent. Although most provinces in Regions III and IV had land qualifying for expropriation, in many cases (e.g., Figures 8 and 10) the amounts were so small as to be of little value in terms of satisfying the needs of the large number of landless tenants and laborers present.

A comparison of the lands distributed under Ordinance 57 with the security conditions depicted in Figure 1 reveals that a substantial proportion of these lands are currently either under Viet Cong control or in contested areas. In no case except An Giang and Parts of Chau Doc and Sa Dec Provinces is there any apparent correlation between land distributed under Ordinance 57 and security conditions. Since the favorable security conditions in these provinces can also be attributed to the high proportion of Hoa Hao in the population, and since the other provinces of the Delta show no significant correlation of security conditions with Ordinance 57 land redistribution, it was concluded that any psychological value that may have been derived from the Ordinance 57 program was not in itself adequate to deal with the threat presented by the Viet Cong. Certainly for those Ordinance 57 lands now under Viet Cong control, any favorable effect obviously has been neutralized by the acquisition of control over these lands by the Viet Cong.

This lack of correlation between security and past GVN land redistribution is supported by the sample of provinces shown in Figure 4 (An Giang), Figure 6 (Dinh Tuong), Figure 7 (Go Cong), and Figure 9 (Vinh Binh).^{*} The lands distributed under Ordinance 57 in An Giang Province (light grey)

* The maps of An Giang, An Xuyen, Dinh Tuong, Go Cong, Kien Hoa, Vinh Binh and Vinh Long provinces in Figures 4 through 10 were selected for the purpose of presenting a cross section of GVN land distribution in the Mekong Delta. Corresponding security conditions presented in pink (contested) and red (Viet Cong-controlled) were derived from the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES) 1-250000 Hamlet Plot for March 31, 1968, using criteria based on intimidation of landlords and GVN administrators. On this basis, categories A and B of the HES constitute GVN-controlled lands; categories C, D, and E, contested lands; and category V, Viet Cong-controlled lands. Neither the geographic data available through

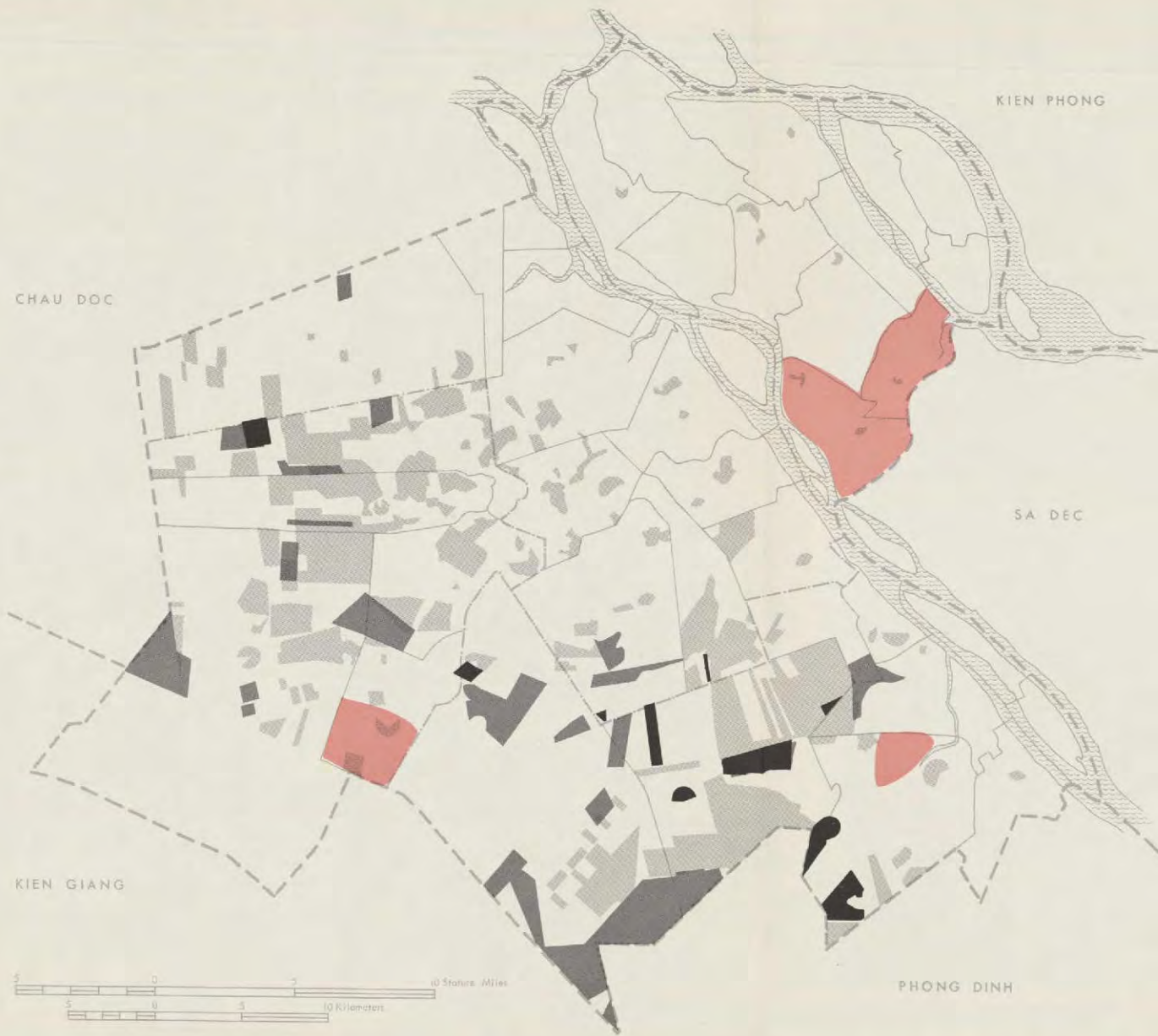
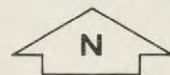




Figure 4
 DISTRIBUTED AND UNDISTRICTED
 ORDINANCE 57 LANDS AND ALL
 FORMER FRENCH LANDS IN
 AN GIANG PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
 (Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
 (Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968




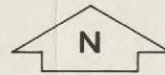



-  Distributed Lands
-  Undistributed Lands
-  Former French Lands



Figure 5
 UNDISTRIBUTED ORDINANCE 57 LANDS
 AND ALL FORMER FRENCH LANDS
 IN AN XUYEN PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
(Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
(Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)
-  Viet Cong-Controlled Lands
(Based on HES V ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968



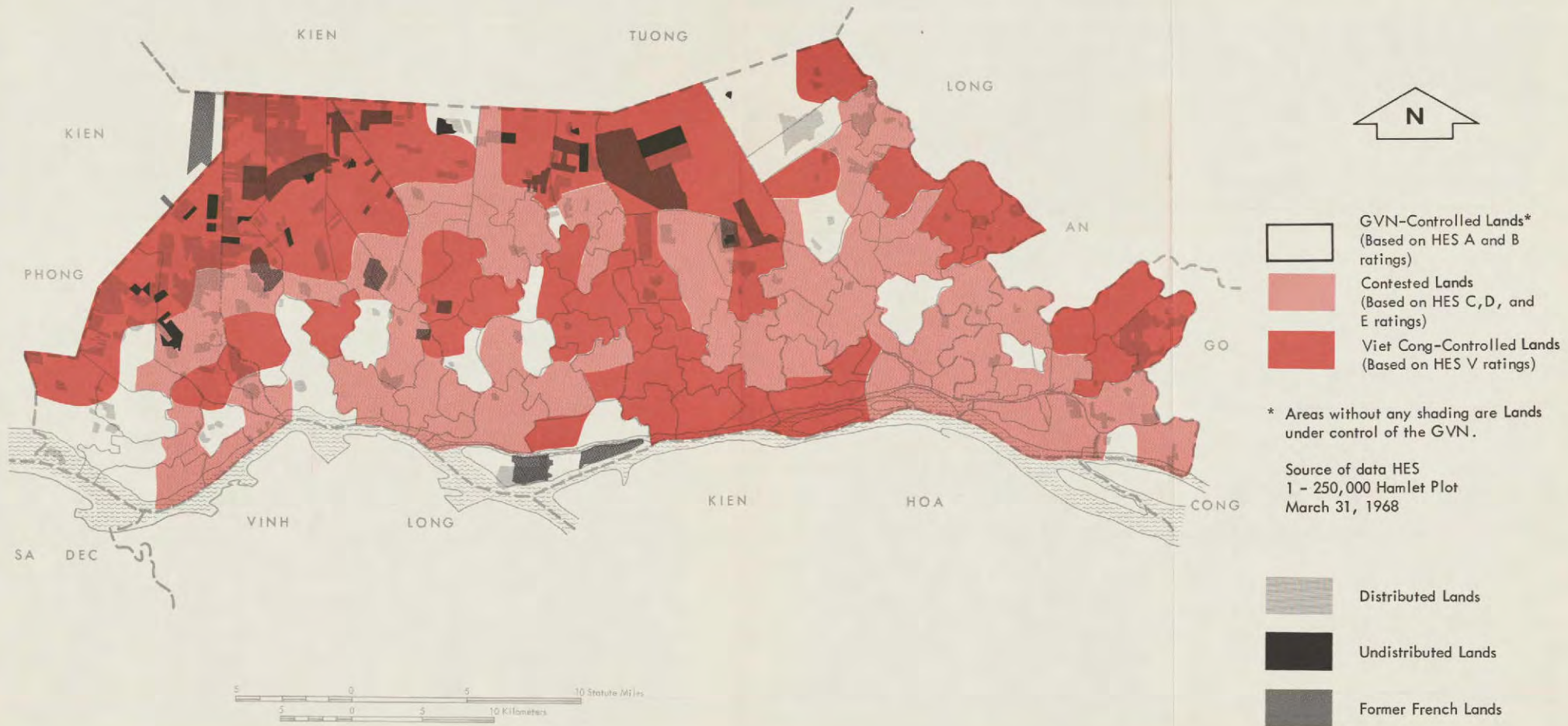
-  Undistributed Lands
-  Former French Lands

Figure 6
 DISTRIBUTED AND UNDISTRIBUTED
 ORDINANCE 57 LANDS AND ALL
 FORMER FRENCH LANDS IN
 DINH TUONG PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



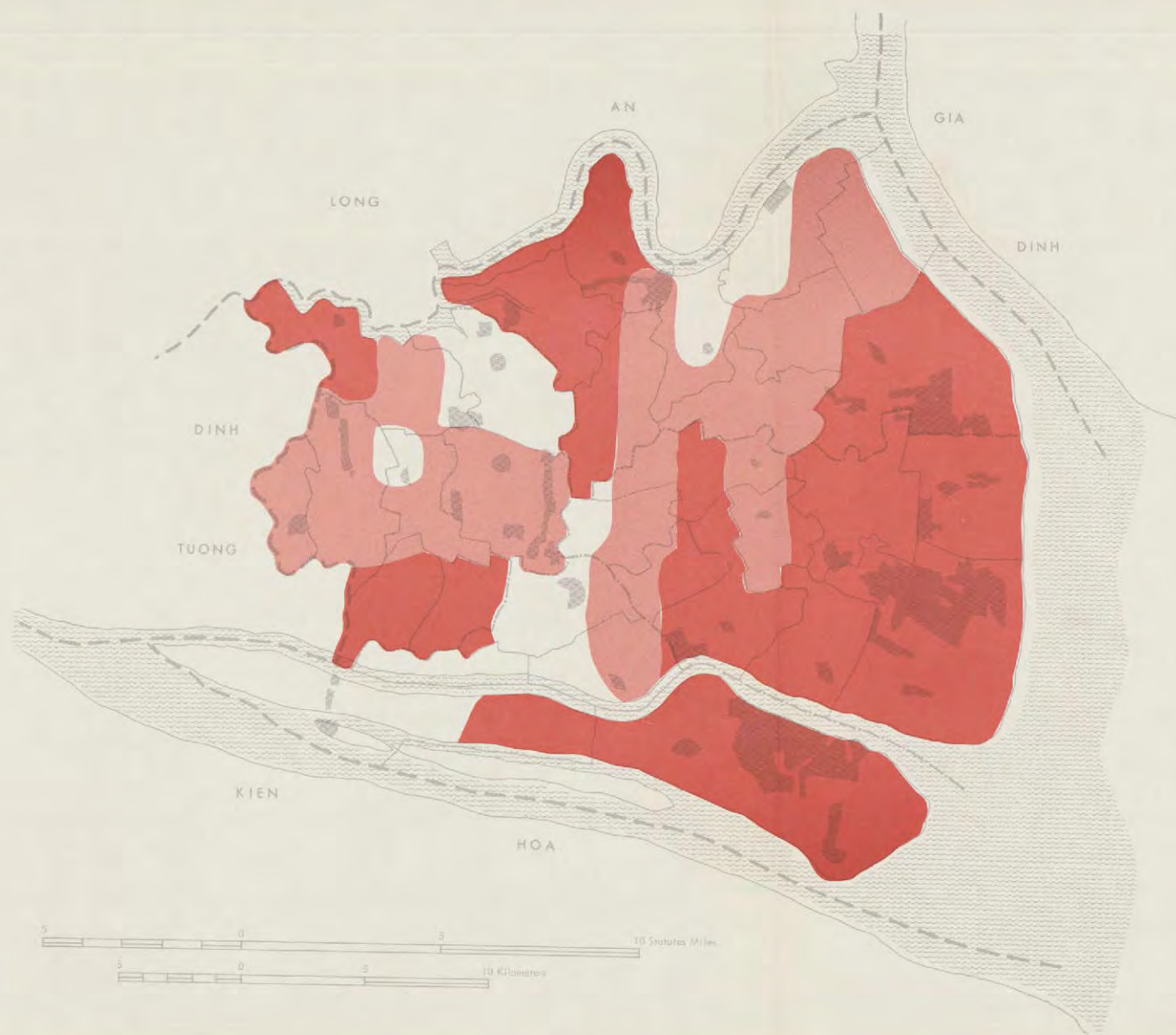
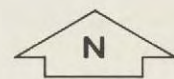





Figure 7
 DISTRIBUTED ORDINANCE 57 LANDS
 IN GO CONG PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
 (Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
 (Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)
-  Viet Cong-Controlled Lands
 (Based on HES V ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968


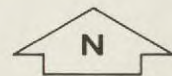



 Distributed Lands





Figure 8
 UNDISTRIBUTED ORDINANCE 57 LANDS
 AND ALL FORMER FRENCH LANDS
 IN KIEN HOA PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
(Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
(Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)
-  Viet Cong-Controlled Lands
(Based on HES V ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968

-  Undistributed Lands
-  Former French Lands

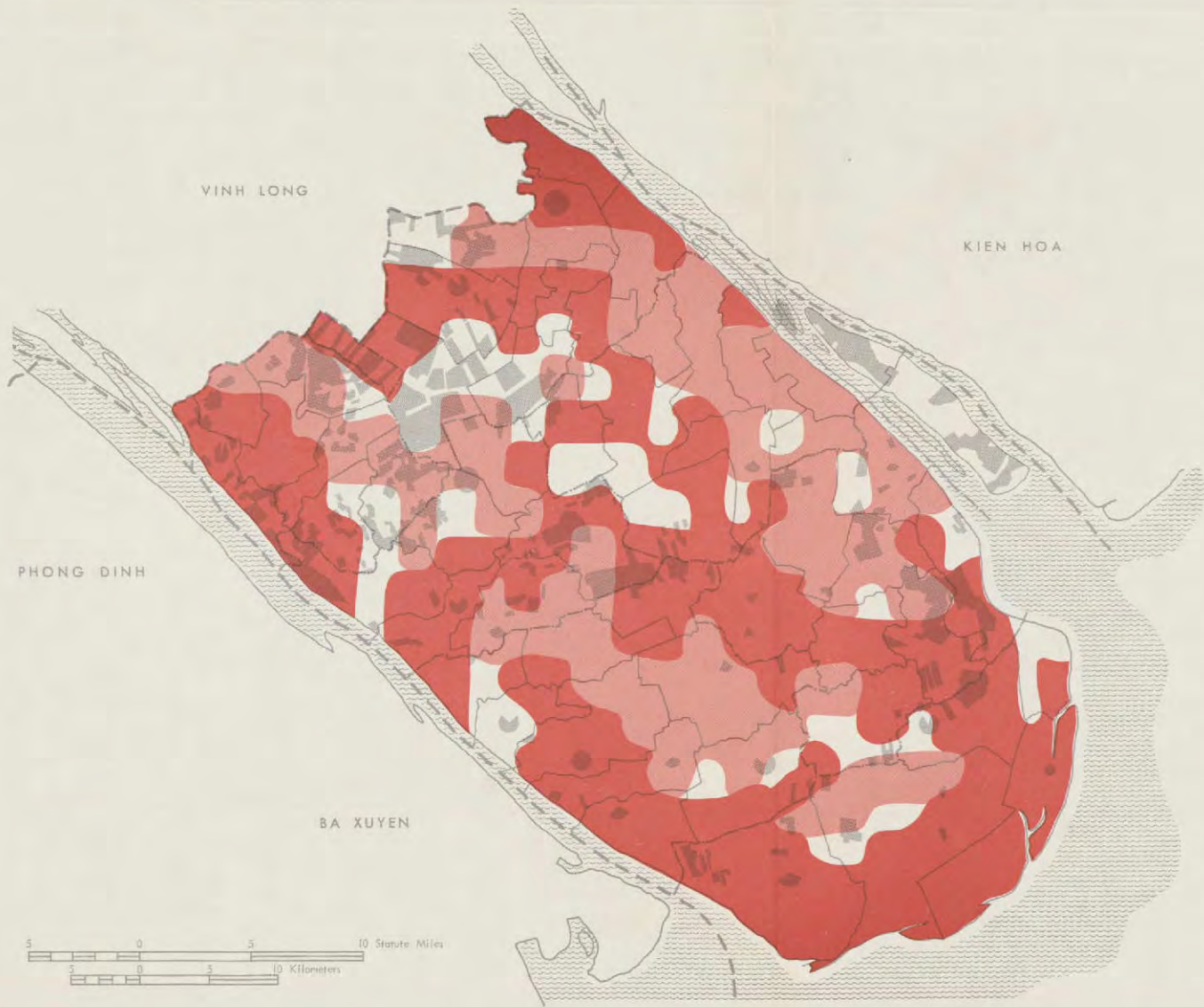






Figure 9
 DISTRIBUTED ORDINANCE 57 LANDS
 IN VINH BINH PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS

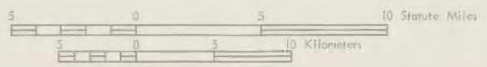


-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
(Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
(Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)
-  Viet Cong-Controlled Lands
(Based on HES V ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968

 Distributed Lands



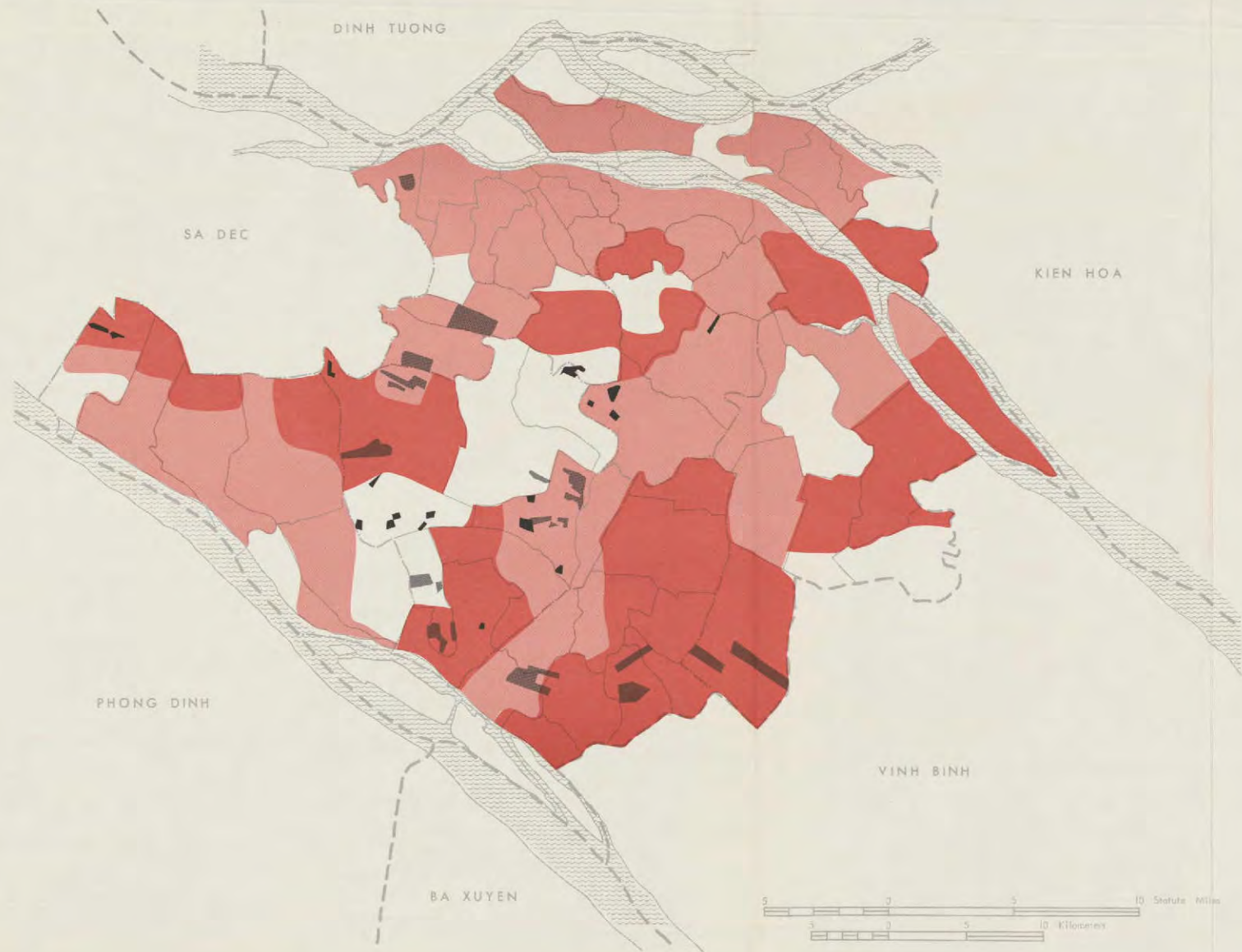
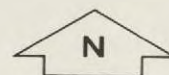







Figure 10
 UNDISTRIBUTED ORDINANCE 57 LANDS
 AND ALL FORMER FRENCH LANDS IN
 VINH LONG PROVINCE
 AND SECURITY STATUS OF THESE LANDS



-  GVN-Controlled Lands*
(Based on HES A and B ratings)
-  Contested Lands
(Based on HES C, D, and E ratings)
-  Viet Cong-Controlled Lands
(Based on HES V ratings)

* Areas without any shading are Lands under control of the GVN.

Source of data HES
 1 - 250,000 Hamlet Plot
 March 31, 1968

-  Undistributed Lands
-  Former French Lands

constituted a substantial proportion of province lands southwest of the Song Hau Giang distributary of the Mekong River. The portions of the province designated as "contested" cover a minor portion of the almost 26,000 hectares distributed under the Ordinance 57 program. In Dinh Tuong (Figure 6), particularly in the western and northern portions of the province, the Viet Cong either control or contest by far the major portion of the lands distributed under Ordinance 57. The same is true of Go Cong. In this case, only about 10 percent of the redistributed land remains under GVN control. Almost half of Vinh Binh is under Viet Cong control, while less than 20 percent of the province is under GVN control. A substantial proportion of lands redistributed under Ordinance 57 lie either in GVN-controlled or "contested" areas, but the proportion under Viet Cong control is sufficient to question any thesis that the conditions of security are at all related to past redistribution of land in the province.

Planned redistribution of remaining Ordinance 57 lands in Regions III and IV is depicted in grey in Figure 2. Former French lands available for redistribution are depicted in black in Figure 3. The land available for redistribution is scattered in the same pattern as was the land already distributed under Ordinance 57, but the individual units of former French land are much larger. The combination of lands available for redistribution totals nearly 400,000 hectares, which, if distributed in the same average plot size, would serve about 180,000 landless households. The distribution of these lands is, however, uneven; only 11 provinces possess 10,000 or more hectares.

Other estimates--for example, Table 33 in Working Papers, Vol. IV, Part 1--are considerably less than the above numbers because they apply criteria of cultivability rather than of insecurity, the main criterion of this volume. However, even when it is recognized that the remaining lands are not currently distributable because a significant portion (over 100,000 hectares in the case of Ordinance 57 lands) is not immediately cultivable, nevertheless a greater obstacle to distribution is that most of these lands are in either contested or Viet Cong-controlled areas. It will be noted by comparing Figures 2 and 3 with the area security map in Figure 1, that in spite of this, significant amounts of land in several provinces fall in secure areas. Because of the high degree of security, the situation in An Giang (Figure 4) is ideal compared with that in most

this interpretation nor the data on either Ordinance 57 or former French lands were sufficiently accurate to support the development of statistics. The maps must therefore be interpreted as representing only a rough approximation of security conditions existing at the time.

other provinces in the Delta. In this case, more than 14,000 hectares remain to be distributed. In contrast, in An Xuyen (Figure 5), less than 10 percent of the land is under GVN control. The threat of incursions by large Viet Cong guerrilla units, combined with the small amount of land available for redistribution remaining in the hands of the GVN, makes any extensive program of land reform in this province out of the question at least for the time being. Dinh Tuong (Figure 6) is in a very similar situation. In Kien Hoa (Figure 8), two fairly large blocks of land and several small ones appear to be secure and immediately available. Vinh Long (Figure 10), in contrast, has only a very small fraction of the relatively modest amount of the land available for distribution in a secure status.

Both distributed and undistributed lands are shown in the maps of An Giang and Dinh Tuong (Figures 4 and 6). In both cases, the total amount of land for redistribution is significant. In An Giang, the past continuity of security conditions allows for a cumulative effect to be achieved by the addition of the undistributed Ordinance 57 and former French lands to the rather substantial amounts of land already distributed. In this case, the process of land reform can proceed to its logical conclusion and beneficial effects can be expected. However, in Dinh Tuong, which is much more representative both of land distribution and the generally insecure conditions in the Delta, there is little likelihood that any favorable effect of past redistribution remains.

At this point in the conflict, it is clear that the efforts of the GVN in the area of land distribution have not in themselves been adequate to prevent the Viet Cong from acquiring control of a major portion of the Mekong Delta.—It does not follow from this that the concept was a poor one, but it does indicate that the number of people affected may have been too few or the coverage insufficient to have achieved the objectives of the program. It also indicates that without effective and continuous protection from the Viet Cong, these efforts are likely to be wasted. This underscores the need for conducting land distribution in concert with military and other GVN efforts to secure the land. The security status of lands in the Mekong Delta is such that land redistribution under present GVN programs cannot effectively reach a major portion of the rural population until the Viet Cong are relieved of their extensive control of the available lands. There are, however, enough of these lands remaining under the control of the GVN that a significant beginning can be made.

The land redistribution program of the Viet Cong is competitive with that of the GVN. Its application has created conditions which tend to

complicate the GVN administration of land affairs and to reduce the effectiveness of the appeals associated with its GVN counterpart. The SRI Village Administrative Chief Survey, while it was conducted in areas that were relatively more secure than most of the Mekong Delta, revealed that Viet Cong land redistribution had been implemented in some of the areas designated as under the control of the Viet Cong. Table 1 contains the estimate of the 37 Village Chiefs contacted during the course of the SRI survey with regard to the land area in their villages that was under the control of the Viet Cong and that had been redistributed. These data, which are confirmed by captured Viet Cong documents, indicate that the Viet Cong tend to delay any attempt at redistributing land until such time as it comes under their full control. The data also reveal that not all lands under the control of the Viet Cong--roughly half in the sample--have been distributed. This has been interpreted to mean that the Viet Cong further delay land redistribution until such time as continuity of control is assured and the residents have been psychologically prepared for expropriation.

The extent of Viet Cong land redistribution in the Mekong Delta can be roughly estimated by comparing the proportion indicated by the sample with the black area in Figure 1 depicting security status of land in this region. It will be noted by comparing Figures 1 and 2 that the land area subject to Viet Cong redistribution is more extensive than the land area distributed under GVN Ordinance 57. The number of families that would benefit from the Viet Cong land reform appears to be several times the 116,845 households that received land under the Ordinance 57 program.

The significance of Viet Cong land redistribution lies in the fact that it is designed to benefit the same landless elements of the population that are the target of the GVN program. As long as the recipients and the land remain under Viet Cong control, the further redistribution of the same land by the GVN would seem somewhat academic, particularly since the recipients have already achieved benefits that are apparently equivalent to those offered by the GVN. However, recent GVN experience with the distribution of former French lands in Chuong Thien province during July and August, 1968, indicates that the recipients of Viet Cong land reform are not altogether convinced either of the sincerity of the Viet Cong or the permanence of the arrangement. Significant numbers of peasants now occupying former French land in Viet Cong-controlled areas have applied to purchase this land from the GVN. While this act gives the appearance of fence-sitting, it means that the recipients of Viet Cong land redistribution are not invulnerable to the appeals of the GVN program, and that the current expansion of this program may be expected to have a favorable psychological impact considerably beyond the areas now under GVN control. Past experience with other GVN programs indicates,

Table 1

VIET CONG LAND REDISTRIBUTION ESTIMATED IN
VILLAGE ADMINISTRATIVE CHIEF SURVEY

Region	Province	Village	Q-61				Q-62			
			Land Under VC Control				Land Redistributed by VC			
			1/4	1/2	3/4	All	1/4	1/2	3/4	All
III	Long An	Truong Binh	—							
		Phuoc Tuy	—							
		Phuoc Tinh								
	Tay Ninh	Thai-Binh								
		Thai-Hiep-Thanh Thanh Phuoc								
Capital Special Zone										
	Gia Dinh	Thong Tay Hoi								
		Hiep Binh								
		An Lac								
		Dong Hung Tan								
IV	An Giang	Vinh Trach	—							
		Hoa Binh Thanh								
		Long Dien								
		My Hoi Dong								
		Tan My								
		Tan Loc Dong								
		Bac Lieu	An Trach	—						
		Chan Doc	Phuoc Hung							
			Da Phuoc							
			Hoa Hao							
			Chau Phu							
		Chuong Thien	Vi Thuy	—				—		
		Dinh Tuong	An Huu	—				—		
			Hoi Cu	—				—		
			Trung An	—				—		
			Dien Hoa	—				—		
		Go Cong	Tan Nien Tay	—				—		
		Kien Giang	Thanh Hoa	—				—		
			Thanh Dong	—				—		
	Kien Tuong	Tuyen Thanh	—							
	Phong Dinh	Thuong Thanh	—				—			
		Thoi Long	—				—			
	Sa Dec	Tan Vinh Hoa								
		An Tich								
		Long Thang								
	Vinh Binh	Phuoc Hao	—				—			
		My Cam	—				—			

however, that this optimistic view may be short lived should the Viet Cong succeed in preventing the participation of people under their control, or in interfering militarily with the administration of the GVN program.

Land Development Centers

During the period immediately after the Geneva Accords, the massive influx of refugees from North Vietnam brought about a need for the Government to assimilate these people into the rural economy. In response to this need, the GVN began a program of settling the refugees in Land Development Centers. The concept was later expanded to include landless people from the densely populated Central Lowlands.

The centers were, as their name implies, primarily a form of land development rather than land reform, the concept being one of ordered agrarian development utilizing a community of settlers as a focal point. The GVN provided the settlers with land by outright grant, and also provided basic community services such as roads and marketing facilities for the agricultural output of the center.

Many of the centers were deliberately set up in remote and isolated areas to take advantage of the availability of land and to provide intelligence on the infiltration of North Vietnamese into the Republic of Vietnam. This characteristic isolation, coupled with whatever success the centers achieved in terms of increased loyalty of the resident to the government, led to their becoming targets for the Viet Cong. Initially, 210 land development centers were established by the GVN beginning in 1957, and this number was increased to 225 by 1963; of these centers, 171 were still reported to be "active." However, the latest comprehensive data on security conditions in these centers (1964) indicates that probably less than 30 percent remain in anything approaching a secure state.* Nevertheless, even in the obvious failure of the majority of the land development centers, there appear to be some valuable lessons to be learned. One such lesson is the massive investment of both material and human resources incurred in the establishment of these centers that may be lost without a concomitant ability to defend them.

* Working Papers, Vol. I, Appendix C, The Current Situation of the Land Development Program in Vietnam.

Apparently, some of the land development Centers were successful--at least for a time:*

The inhabitants of the three land development areas are all natives of Quang Nam and Quang Ngai. Poor and landless while in the lowland area, they were brought over here by the Nationalist Government to help develop these Land Development Centers. Now they were all well off.†

The dissolution of the Land Development Centers began with the infiltration of cadre from the Viet Cong district-level organization. Evidence is presented by the respondents that agents of the Viet Cong already existed among the ranks of the pioneer families that originally came to the centers. Viet Cong propaganda cadre came to the centers to muster support, at first occasionally, and later, every night. The Land Development Centers were rather abruptly abandoned by the GVN as the Viet Cong extended their control to the vicinity of the centers, whereupon the Viet Cong immediately moved in and took over their administration. One of the first moves of the Viet Cong was to form a "Self Administration Committee" from the residents of the center to serve as a front for the Viet Cong cadre. One RAND respondent interpreted the difficulties presented to the Viet Cong in the implementation of their standard rural administration (land reform and associated peasant classification) policy as follows:

The Viet Cong set up their steering organizations according to each region so that their policies fitted the regional situation. In the Delta, they were able to carry out the rural administration policy because, here, all the villages and hamlets were left with land registration documents, and the property owned by the people was duly certified and registered. The Front thus had all the essential factors to carry out its land distribution policy.

* Data on the character of the problems associated with Viet Cong take-over of GVN Land Development Centers are extremely limited. Three testimonials on the process are contained in RAND interviews. Two of the three residents interviewed had been elected by the Viet Cong to hold high offices in the village autonomous committee, which was formed by the Viet Cong as a front for the party administration. Each of these interviews contains a fascinating story of the rise and collapse of their respective Land Development Centers. The two testimonials corroborate each other entirely.

† AG interview 535, p. 19. The AG interviews are a series of interviews of Viet Cong defectors and refugees conducted by the RAND Corporation. See Appendix C.

In contrast, in the highlands, especially in the Land Development areas, they set up the Self Administration Committee because the people here were all poor immigrants. The properties they owned were the result of their toil and sweat; they were the newly created properties, and not the inherited ones, such as those in the Delta. Since the people living in these Land Development sites were all poor farmers, the Front couldn't carry out its land reform or create class struggles. The only thing they could do was to classify the people into the good or the bad, this being manifested by the degree of favor bestowed.*

The Viet Cong made no pretense of applying land reform to the Land Development Centers. Although there were apparently some efforts made at later stages in the deterioration of the centers to get the remaining residents to accept land abandoned by escaping families, these efforts had little success.

A review of the Viet Cong process of takeover and the ultimate total abandonment of the centers by their occupants reveals other related and important problems presented to the Viet Cong by the Land Development Centers. There was no "spontaneous" uprising of the people on the appearance of the Viet Cong. Although agents had been working among the residents from the start and propaganda efforts were as vigorous there as in other areas, the Viet Cong were unable to create anything approaching the favorable response they seem to have received elsewhere. Corrupt GVN officials were mentioned by the respondents, but in spite of the use of this propaganda theme to discredit the GVN, the residents remained unimpressed. The apparent satisfaction of the residents with the GVN sponsored Land Development Center, coupled with an absence of internal divisions within the essentially classless society, created a situation whereby the Viet Cong had to resort to force to take over the centers.

After takeover, the process of deterioration led inevitably to the abandonment of the centers by the inhabitants. Initially mildly receptive to Viet Cong propaganda, the residents soon found themselves living in a totally controlled community. Taxes became unbearably high, and the centers gradually dissolved as residents departed family by family. In the end, Viet Cong food production workers (agricultural laborers associated with military units operating in the area) had to be brought in to perform the support functions that the Viet Cong obviously had hoped would be provided by the residents.

* AG interview 542, p. 6, RAND Corporation. See Appendix C.

Although it would appear that few residents may have willingly assisted the Viet Cong after the centers were taken over, the abrupt departure of security forces and the subsequent loss by abandonment of the considerable investment in time and labor made in the centers by the residents must have neutralized much of the positive psychological benefits of the earlier successes. The vital need for integration of the land development program with security operations is apparent.

While the economic democracy of small owners that were created in the Land Development Centers was unable to prevent a Viet Cong takeover, in at least some cases the Viet Cong were placed in the undesirable position of having to apply oppressive measures to gain and hold control. Because of the already existing even distribution of land ownership, the Viet Cong were unable to apply their own version of land reform. Without the appeal of land reform, the Viet Cong had considerable difficulty in persuading the residents that the cause of the Viet Cong should be preferred over that of the GVN.

The Land Development Center concept does not compare directly with other GVN land reform efforts, but it does contain certain inherent advantages over them. The other land reform measures seem to have been either ineffectively applied or--as in the case of Ordinance 57--not sufficiently concentrated to benefit a significant proportion of the community. In contrast, the Land Development Center provided a more coherent framework and directed focus for meeting the peasants' economic requirements. Providing community services tended to augment and reinforce the psychological benefits achieved through the granting of land ownership. It is clear that if the Land Development Center concept had been integrated with effective security and intelligence activities, the benefits would have assured the continued support of the residents.

Under normal conditions, the Land Development Center seems more appropriate as a method of developing sparsely populated areas, since it requires large blocks of land, extensive planning, and relocation of residents. However, in large areas of the Mekong Delta under Viet Cong control, land registers have been destroyed or are outdated, and massive changes in occupancy patterns have created such a confused condition that the problems involved in attempting to reconstruct the old relatively incoherent ownership patterns are likely to equal or exceed the problems involved in starting afresh with a concept similar to the Land Development Center. Certainly the concept is deserving of consideration for some of the large blocks of former French lands remaining to be distributed. It should also be noted that a nucleated community such as could be established under this concept is much easier to protect from the Viet Cong than the scattered pattern of habitation currently existing in the Delta.

GVN Owned Lands

Through various means, and for various purposes, the GVN has acquired control over substantial lands in the Mekong Delta which are administered (rented) through Provincial and Village authorities on its behalf. Among these are uncultivated lands, land expropriated under Ordinance 57 or purchased from French owners which remain undistributed, and so-called communal land which may be owned and/or managed by the village. Together, these lands make the GVN the largest single landowner and hence the largest landlord in many villages and hamlets.

While the available data did not permit an estimate of malpractice in the administration of these lands, SRI surveys indicate that existing controls are inadequate to prevent it. Malpractice has, in any case, been the subject of extensive Viet Cong propaganda which has been used to discredit the GVN in the eyes of the rural population. These lands have generally been highest on the list for Viet Cong expropriation and redistribution. Because they are owned by the GVN, the Viet Cong have no problem of rationalizing their expropriation.

The continued retention of these lands has the effect of maintaining the GVN in the role of the landlord. Even with effective GVN rent controls, the granting of the land to the tenant by the Viet Cong is clearly more attractive to him than rental payments and the apparent lack of tenure security under the GVN administration. To date, the Viet Cong have found these lands convenient sources of land for their own land reform program. Until the GVN succeeds in divesting itself of them, opportunities for corruption are likely to remain, and little benefit will be derived in terms of attracting the population to the side of the GVN.

Squatters and Refugees

Through the disorientation of the rural society that has occurred as a result of almost 30 years of conflict, and migration from the remote areas to the more highly populated areas, the growth of a large squatter population has created the need to regularize illegal occupancy of GVN lands. Squatters or refugees have not affected the Viet Cong except insofar as their migration may have depleted the number of persons available for food production and other tasks in Viet Cong controlled areas. To escape the violence of the war, the refugee frequently had to break ancestral ties with his land, family, and community. To this problem must be added uncertainties associated with making a living in his new environment, poor living conditions, and a lack of tenure security. Each of these problems has been exploited by the Viet Cong in an effort to

subvert the refugee and get him to return to his home in Viet Cong controlled areas. Thus, while the refugee or squatter may reside in GVN controlled areas, he is distinctly vulnerable to penetration and subversion by the Viet Cong. Where this has proven unsuccessful, the Viet Cong has used mass terrorism in the form of raids, assassination, and rocket attacks to demoralize entire refugee centers to the point that on occasion they have been evacuated en masse.

The susceptibility of squatters and refugees to manipulation by the Viet Cong creates an opportunity for their use as sources of intelligence on the GVN, and of other types of covert support in GVN rear areas. Although land is by no means the only appeal that could be used to attract the loyalties of these people, and certainly is no substitute for security, it would seem that the granting of ownership or tenancy rights as contemplated under the law should reduce the uncertainties associated with squatter and refugee existence. Unfortunately, the provisions apply only to the land currently farmed--which may be inadequate--and only to those in residence as squatters prior to November 1964. Those peasant farmers who are in refugee centers or otherwise unable to farm are not eligible.

Although the land granted under the law has no doubt been appreciated by the recipients, it fixes squatter occupancy patterns which, having been unplanned, may not contribute as effectively as they might to the long term development of the area. The advantages noted earlier for the Land Development Centers would seem to offer more coherent community planning, greater assurance of equality in distribution of land, and opportunities to offer essential services such as security, education, health, and agricultural extension on a more economical basis.

Confused Lands

In an effort to neutralize the effect of Viet Cong propaganda, the GVN promulgated the confused lands law. This law establishes certain rights of occupancy for the Viet Cong-appointed occupant of lands that have been returned to GVN control, but, as indicated in Volume I,* the law is ambiguous on several important points. In addition, its application has been so limited that it cannot have achieved its objective of relieving the beneficiaries of Viet Cong land redistribution of their fears of eviction by the GVN. With no effective alternative to eviction, it may be assumed that the effects of the Viet Cong redistribution still hold and that the recipient continues to be motivated to support the Viet Cong in order to protect his interest in the land.

* Working Papers, Volume I, Part 1.

In addition to attracting the peasantry away from the GVN, Viet Cong land redistribution presents a number of serious administrative problems that arise upon the resumption of GVN control. Former owners and tenants must be found, which may be no mean task in itself, since many may have left the land as refugees or as members of the Viet Cong. Land records and boundary markers may have been destroyed or may be grossly out of date. Disputes with regard to occupancy rights must be reconciled, and rental contracts and registers must be reconstructed. Compared with the administrative method of the GVN, the method used by the Viet Cong in redistributing land and in correcting "confused" situations is relatively simple. Priorities and procedures for carrying out land redistribution are clearly enunciated in Viet Cong policy directives. Almost total reliance is placed upon local knowledge of the land situation. The determination of who should receive land is made at the hamlet level where differences in such factors as the availability and productivity of land and relative need can be expeditiously resolved.

Two basic problems remain to be resolved in the area of confused lands--eviction, and administration of rights. To attract the recipient of Viet Cong land distribution or at least to neutralize its effect, he must be offered some alternative to eviction. The present law retains provision for the resumption of control over the land by the original owner and tenant. If the rights of the latter are to be honored, as it seems the GVN is obligated to do in some fashion, one alternative may be to offer the Viet Cong recipient equivalent or better land elsewhere, possibly in conjunction with a land development center. This concept was used successfully by Magsaysay in the Philippines in conjunction with the suppression of the Hukbalahap insurrection. Another possibly more expedient solution is to confirm the ownership of the Viet Cong established occupant. The former owner could then be compensated by the GVN on a fair basis or given land of equivalent value and acceptability elsewhere. In the interest of equity, the Viet Cong established occupant could be required to pay for the land on the same terms as others who acquire land under Ordinance 57.

As for the second problem, the present law does little to clarify occupancy rights, and it is likely to be exceedingly difficult to administer, particularly in the face of the poor condition of most land records, and the complex time-consuming process necessary to reconstruct the records. Simplification in administration could do much to improve the image that the GVN presents to those who are freed of Viet Cong control.

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Chapter 3

COMMUNIST LAND REFORM IN VIETNAM

Land as a Basis for Revolution

In considering the relationship of the peasant to the land, it is important to note that land constitutes a major source of power and status in the predominantly agricultural economy of the Republic of Vietnam. Possession provides both tenants and landlords with whatever stability remains in the society. Lack of socially acceptable and secure investments with equivalent income, such as in industry or commerce, virtually guarantees that those who have land will wish to keep it. The need for continuity of income together with the status associated with ownership virtually guarantees that those who have no land will want it.* This almost exclusive concentration on land as the source of status and power inevitably culminates in a sensitivity within the peasantry to inequality in the distribution and control of land. Should the inequality be substantial as it appears to have been in Vietnam, the society becomes vulnerable to political division and exploitation by communists who seek to overthrow the existing government authority.

The peculiarities of Asian agricultural economics do not lend themselves to the concept of the urban proletariat versus capitalist class struggle utilized so effectively in the Russian Communist revolution. The adaptation of the Communist revolutionary concept to the Asian scene by Mao Tse-Tung involved the rural peasant society, since it included the majority of the population. Only with the support of the peasants was revolution feasible, and it followed that the attention of the communists was drawn to existing inequalities in the rural society as a source of revolutionary appeals. Within the rural society, the inequities of greatest significance and utility were those associated with land. The landless peasants and poor peasants were at one pole of the unequal structure in the distribution of land, and the landlords and the rich peasants were at the other. Thus, in the search for a basis of revolution, the Viet Cong, like their predecessors in China and Russia, came naturally to land and to the inequalities associated with the traditional pattern of land tenure.

* Confirmed by results of the Hamlet Resident Survey, Working Papers, Vol. IV, Part 1.

Viet Minh Land Reform

The utilization of land reform as a means to power was specifically devised for China and was adapted more or less to Chinese social conditions and mentality, but it was also carried out under the Viet Minh reportedly under the supervision of Chinese agents.

To conceal their leadership role in the Resistance War against the French, the Communists worked within the Viet Minh, which combined several nationalist as well as Communist groups. The role of land reform in Viet Minh strategy against the French was embodied in the slogan "Land to the Tillers." Inherent in the idea of "Land to the Tillers" was the existence of peasant discontent.

Initial Targets for Expropriation

In the early stages of the Resistance War, French landholdings in Vietnam were the initial targets of confiscation and redistribution. The general Viet Minh practice for redistribution of French-owned riceland was merely to inform the peasants that they owned the land they had worked on before as tenants and that they no longer had to pay rent to the owner. Since most of the French owners did not live on their land and preferred to leave the management of their holdings in the hands of Vietnamese overseers, the redistribution process was fairly simple. Moreover, the armed strength of the Viet Minh guerrillas in the rural areas of Vietnam dissuaded most French owners from resisting the redistribution.

The actual redistribution of French-owned riceland in Vietnamese villages did not follow any set pattern. Rather, the amount given each peasant family usually depended on the amount of land available. In some areas of the Mekong Delta, the average amount redistributed was from one to three hectares per family. Elsewhere in Vietnam, the allotment per individual peasant family was as small as half a hectare or less. Although some individual rice plantations were as large as 5,000 hectares, the redistribution of French-owned land did not begin to satisfy the needs of the peasants. Excluding rubber, coffee, and tea plantations, French riceland holdings in all of Indochina (which included present day Vietnam, Cambodia, and Laos) were only about 300,000 hectares, and 80 percent of this was concentrated in the Mekong Delta.

To provide more land for redistribution to the peasants, the Viet Minh confiscated land belonging to large Vietnamese landlords whose total holdings in Vietnam were much more extensive than those of the French. Nationalism was used by the Viet Minh against Vietnamese landlords who were identified with the French as enemies who had to be liquidated.

Viet Minh land reform was far more than the mere redistribution of land and the attraction of peasant support thereon. It was used to destroy the traditional social organization in the villages by emphasizing the existing class distinctions between villagers--distinctions that were sharpened by the Viet Minh through the Communist method of the "class struggle."

The "class struggle" initiated by the Viet Minh followed the general pattern originated earlier in China by Mao Tse-Tung. This entailed the classification of the village population into four main groups, according to the amount of land and property a villager owned: (1) "dia-chu" (landlords), who owned over 50 hectares of land; (2) "phu-nong" (rich peasants), who owned less than 50 hectares; (3) "trung-nong" (middle peasants), who owned less than 5 hectares; and (4) "ban co nong" (poor peasants), who were landless or tenant farmers, the landlords were called reactionary and exploiters of the poor, and the confiscation and redistribution of their land was said to be necessary to bring about social justices for the peasants.

To achieve its goal of gaining peasant support against the landlords, the Viet Minh employed terror against those who did not support the Viet Minh or whose land was to be confiscated and redistributed. The primary purpose of the Viet Minh terrorism was the elimination of one social group (the landlords) to gain the support of and eventual control over a larger social group (the peasants). The land-owning class, if not eliminated entirely, was reduced in socioeconomic position through the application of "binh sang luong" (leveling of income), through which the Viet Minh sought to equalize the economic position of the rural population.

When faced with threats to themselves and their families, many landowners living in the villages took the only alternative open to them and fled. Their lands and property were immediately confiscated and redistributed. Since the amount of land available for redistribution in each village varied, a standard procedure for redistribution was to determine the number of members in a family and to give the individual peasant enough land to provide for his family's subsistence and a small surplus. Supplemental redistribution of usually less than one hectare was often made to those peasants who owned small amounts of land. This measure was intended to bring their total holdings up to the minimum requirements for subsistence. Rarely more than two or three hectares were redistributed to an individual family, and usually the amount of land given was less than one hectare.

If a landowner was not forced by the Viet Minh to give up all or part of his land for redistribution, he was coerced to reduce by as much as

80 percent the rent he received from his tenants. Before the rent reduction, an average land rent was between 25 and 50 percent of the annual harvest, depending on the quality of the land and the crop. By either land redistribution or rent reduction, the Viet Minh was able to gain the support of the majority of the peasants for the successful pursuit of revolutionary war against the French.

An important point is that throughout the Resistance War, the Viet Minh efforts at expropriation and redistribution were aimed almost entirely at the French and the larger Vietnamese landowners. The middle peasants, who also owned small parcels of land in the villages in which they lived and worked, were virtually unaffected by the Viet Minh land reform. This middle peasant group, according to Hoang Van Chi, formed the bulk of the land-owning class in Vietnam, and yet were considered by the Communists as part of the population exploited by the landowners.*

The Contradiction of the Middle Peasant As a Source of Land

By 1953, the Viet Minh, under Communist leadership, had reduced French control to the cities and a few important lines of communication. The rural areas of North Vietnam, especially, were under insurgent control. When power was within their grasp on the eve of the Geneva Convention of 1954, which led to the eventual evacuation of the French, the Communist leaders of North Vietnam proceeded with a full scale land reform program.

Following the Chinese example, Ho Chi Minh had proclaimed at the time that the land reform policy "Land to the Tillers" was to be put into effect. This entailed a division of classes, wherein those landowners who had supported the Resistance and had previously been accepted were liquidated.

This was not the end, however; about a year later a "second wave of terror" was launched. The population was reclassified once again and in this process, the definition of landlord was broadened and the number of "landlords" was increased. This time the rich peasants and strong middle-level peasants became "landlords" while average middle peasants were upgraded to "rich peasants" and so on. Thus, the total number of newly found "landlords" was about five times the number of landlords found by the previous classification.

* Hoang Van Chi, From Colonialism to Communism, Frederick Praeger, New York, 1961.

The program encountered resistance, especially in 1956, in the form of peasant uprisings that were put down with military force. Three years earlier, the North Vietnamese organ Nhan-Dan (People) had noted a reluctance of peasants to collectivize; a reluctance that previously had been met with in both Russia and China: "Haste was made in grouping the farmers into collectives without giving them the time to adjust their consciences so as to become volunteers. The farmers, feeling forced to join the collectives, have shown no enthusiasm in the service of production."*

The peasants' rebellion in 1956 is summarized by a U.S. source as follows:

On November 10, 1956, a rebellion broke out in Quynh Luu district, some 75 miles south of Hanoi in Ngho An Province. Farmers, some 20,000 in all, armed with swords and farm tools surprised Communist guards, took their weapons and seized several district government installations. Local military units joined the rebels. Hanoi ordered General Hoang Sam and his crack 304th Division into Quynh Luu. Some 2,000 insurgents were driven into the hills where they attempted, unsuccessfully, to set up a guerrilla resistance. Eventually most of the insurgents were killed or captured although several hundred of them managed to escape to South Vietnam.†

Price Gittinger has described the resumption of moves toward collectivization after the rebellion of 1956 had receded into the past:

The first stage is "manpower exchange teams" in which peasants, while retaining their private property, help each other with production tasks. These teams are then gradually shifted over to "cooperatives" where all resources are owned by the collective and peasants are paid on the basis of days worked. In adopting this procedure, the North Vietnamese have again chosen to pattern themselves closely after the Chinese, but there is no indication at present that their leaders are contemplating the extreme step of establishing communes. Indeed, Ho Chi Minh himself told a correspondent in January of this year (1959) that "we have no intention of organizing 'people's communes' in the immediate future."‡

* Land Reform Failures in Communist North Vietnam, Review Horizon, Saigon, 1957, p. 13.

† The Quynh Luu North Vietnam Uprising, November 13, 1956, JUSPAO Field Memorandum No. 30, October 28, 1966.

‡ J. Price Gittinger, Communist Land Policy in North Viet Nam, Far Eastern Survey, Vol. XXVII, 1959, p. 123.

The long familiar problem of reconciling the peasants' deep-rooted urge to produce under individual incentive on one hand with socialization of agriculture on the other hand appeared in North Vietnam as socialization advanced. The attempt by the North Vietnamese government to keep a balance between peasant plots and collectivization was described by Thanh:

"We are opposed to all stifling of the subsidiary economy through not giving or giving less than 5% land to the cooperative member and not allowing him to do things that the cooperative is as yet unable or deems unnecessary to do. To be unaware how important the 5% plot is to the livelihood of the member is to be estranged from the reality of the situation in Vietnam."*

Thus, it would appear that North Vietnam has not yet reached the ultimate form of Communist land reform represented in the commune of Communist China. For the moment at least, they seem to have settled for the collective-cooperative concept within which the incentives of private ownership remain in the form of the 5 percent plot.

Viet Cong Land Reform

At the same time that the North Vietnamese government was recovering from its almost disastrous rush to collectivization of peasants, the Viet Cong organization was developing in the South. Employing essentially the same tactics used by the Viet Minh, the Viet Cong recognized the value of land reform in its revolutionary strategy.

Classification of the Rural Society

Inequality in the distribution of land and in the rewards obtained from its exploitation provided a convenient basis for dividing the society into contending elements. The landless and land poor peasants, who constituted a major segment of the population, were at one pole of this inequality and the landlords and rich peasants, who were relatively few in

* Nguyen Chi Thanh, Major Experiences in Cooperativization of Agriculture, Nov. 11, 1964, U.S. Dept. of Commerce Clearinghouse for Federal Scientific and Technical Information, Joint Publications Research Service, Translations on North Vietnam's Economy, No. 139, pp. 2-3. The 5 percent plot is garden land set aside from the collectivized land for the purpose of private exploitation.

number, were at the other. To construct a basis for revolution from these inequities, however, it was necessary for the Communists to exacerbate the existing rural class distinctions and bring them to the attention of the masses. The exploitation of these latent sources of discontent was based upon the classification of the rural society into four or five primary groups. The pattern of classification used by the Viet Cong differed little from the Viet Minh or from the Communist Chinese:

<u>Class</u>	<u>Approximate Proportion of Rural Farm Population^{*†}</u>
Landless peasant (sharecropper, farm laborer)	17%
Poor peasant (tenant farmer)	45
Middle peasant (small landholder)	27
Rich peasant (large landholder)	11
Landlord	<1%

The five classifications are defined as follows. The landless are those who neither own nor rent land for cultivation. These are the sharecroppers who work the land on shares--i.e., in the Central Lowlands under the metayage system, and the landless farm laborer of the Southern Region where metayage is not practiced to any great extent. The next class, the poor peasants, may rent or own small amounts of land that provide little more than subsistence for their families. These two lowest classes--landless farmers (sharecroppers and farm laborers) and poor peasants--together constitute the foundation for the revolution. They are the least committed to the continuation of the existing society and, having no property or vested interests in the present order, they have the least resistance to change and the most reason to desire change. Lacking social acceptance or influence, they are the most susceptible and vulnerable to subversion. They are, therefore, the primary target of the Communist movement and they become its leadership as well as the basis for its support.

The middle peasant is something of a contradiction. He has land, but only enough to support himself and his family. He may own or rent up to about 5 hectares. While he has little surplus, he is at least self-sufficient.

* Based on the primary occupations given by 554 respondents in the Hamlet Resident Survey: owners, tenants, laborers. There were also 300 non-farm respondents, so that the term "rural farm population" excludes commercial, industrial, and professional ("urban") elements.

His commitment to the existing society is therefore greater than that of the poor peasant, yet he is not so affluent that he is invulnerable to the appeals of Communism. The number of middle peasants is large--amounting to roughly 30 percent of the total rural society. With the landless peasants and poor peasants together making up 60 percent of the total, the recruitment of the middle peasants would turn the balance of the rural society dramatically in favor of the Viet Cong.

The rich peasant may own or rent up to 50 hectares, but his major distinguishing characteristic is that he personally must operate at least part of his land. Generally speaking, he is a negative element from the Communist viewpoint. His commitment to the existing society is substantial since his income and status are based upon the continuity of the Government. It is reasonable to assume that he is better educated and more influential than poorer peasants, and he is therefore considerably less vulnerable to nonviolent methods of persuasion. Thus, while the Viet Cong may need his financial support, they are less concerned with his interests than with those of the poor and middle peasants.

The landlord is to the Viet Cong a convenient and vulnerable target. Defined as owning in excess of 50 hectares of land and personally operating none, the landlord is portrayed by the Viet Cong as an exploiter of the poor and an unnecessary, unproductive element of society. He is usually absent from the land he owns and thus vulnerable to the unilateral reduction of his rents by the Viet Cong, and the uncompensated expropriation of his lands and their distribution to "more deserving" landless or poor peasants. His numbers are small, but his powers, position, and commitment to the existing society are large. Because of this commitment, he cannot accept Communism, nor, conversely, can he be accepted by Communism because to do so would remove the "justification" for the class struggle and for the division of the target society.

Although unclassified in the social structure of the Viet Cong, the GVN as a landholder ranks with the landlord as a symbol of exploitation. The Government of Vietnam is not infrequently the largest single landowner in the village, holding communal, undistributed Ordinance 57, and former French lands. Hence, the local government administration in the hamlets and villages provided a convenient basis for Viet Cong land reform propaganda. In Viet Cong controlled areas, land once held by the government has been expropriated by the Viet Cong and distributed among their supporters.

Viet Cong Land Reform Practice

With the exception of a greater emphasis upon rewarding those with more pronounced Communist political leanings, and adaptations to changes

in the pattern of land tenure, there is little to distinguish Viet Cong land reform practice from that of the Viet Minh. The primary utilization of land reform by the Viet Cong has been to attract the allegiance of the rural peasantry to the cause of the insurgency. The processes of gaining this commitment derive from existing inequities in the landlord-tenant relationship and in the distribution of land ownership.

Landlord-Tenant Relationships. The overall pattern of Viet Cong land reform may begin with the private suggestion by letter or word of mouth to the landlord that in light of the poor economic condition of his tenants, he should reduce his rents. If he is unresponsive, the suggestion changes progressively to a threat. Since the landlord is unable to predict the timing of the Viet Cong visitations, he is forced to severely restrict his movements in the remote rural areas where his land is located. Abductions, beatings, and assassinations of the landlord or his family are used as threats by the Viet Cong. A few examples near enough to be heard of or seen by the landlord are usually adequate to serve the Viet Cong purpose.

The next stage entails contact with the tenant to encourage him to refuse to pay exorbitant rents. This is initially focused on the tenants of the landlords who have exceeded what the Viet Cong consider to be an appropriate level of rent. At the earliest stages, an acceptable level may be as high as 30 percent of the production of the land. As control increases, the approved rate drops to the vicinity of 10 percent. With full control in Viet Cong-controlled areas, rent disappears altogether with the redistribution of the landlord's land. The Viet Cong rich peasant class includes some who rent out land, and a similar although somewhat more subdued pattern of action is applied to them.

By way of comparison, both the GVN and the Viet Cong state their objectives as being to reduce rental rates and other existing inequities in landlord-tenant relationships. The GVN goes on to elaborate provisions regarding security of tenure, reduction or elimination of rent for crop failure, and guarantee of the tenant's first right to purchase the land should the landlord choose to sell, the underlying assumption being that the institution of the landlord-tenant will survive. The Viet Cong voice almost identical objectives, but their concern with the institution is fundamentally temporary. With the assumption of full Viet Cong control, it is effectively eliminated.

For the GVN, the preservation of the landlord-tenant relationship results in a requirement to establish and maintain administrative control over the relationship, the type of control having been stipulated in the law. Formalities such as lease contracts and rental registers, which are

characteristic of the GVN control apparatus, are apparently neither feasible nor really necessary in the case of the Viet Cong.

Other related differences appear in the methods used to persuade the landlord that it is in his interest to cooperate in Viet Cong land reform. The GVN is presented with the problem of compensation of the landlord, while this concerns the Viet Cong hardly at all. Their repertory of methods ranges from suggestion to assassination, most of which are outside the law and hence not utilized by the GVN.

Land Redistribution. Expropriation and redistribution of land by the Viet Cong were by any measure a flagrant disregard of the law and of the society represented by the Government. Redistribution was therefore of considerable significance as a landmark in the progress of the revolution. As an example of the expansion of Viet Cong control and the corresponding deterioration of GVN control, the psychological impact of redistribution on the affected population was substantial, since it was interpreted as a positive indication that the Viet Cong were winning.

In contrast to the GVN under Ordinance 57, the Viet Cong did not restrict their expropriation of lands to private holdings. All GVN-owned and village communal lands that came under their control as well as all private holdings were subject to expropriation. In the case of private ownership, all lands in excess of that required for subsistence were acquired and distributed. Lands of the GVN, uncultivated lands, village communal lands, and the lands of absentee landlords were expropriated in their entirety, as was the land of any resident that took refuge in GVN-controlled areas.

Second in rank as a target for expropriation was the landlord class. First on this list were those landlords who had the most land, who did not cultivate their land, and who were conveniently absent. However, a substantial proportion, if not most, of the large private landowners had already disappeared from the rural scene, having been driven out by the Viet Minh and by Ordinance 57 GVN distributions.* The focus of Viet Cong attention was thus shifted to those relatively few rich peasants and the mass of middle peasants who remained. Those rich peasants who did not have their land expropriated directly either abandoned their land because of exorbitant Viet Cong taxation or simply gave up the land to the Viet Cong voluntarily to avoid conflict. In effect, they became middle peasants. For Viet Cong land redistribution, the middle peasant represented the last

* Absentee Landlord Survey, Working Papers, Vol. IV, Part 2.

resource. From these middle peasants, the land was available only in small parcels, at most a few hectares in size. This compounded the problem of administration and tended to reduce the effectiveness of redistribution as a psychological tool of the Viet Cong.

The ultimate condition reached in the Viet Cong-controlled areas of the Republic of Vietnam appears to be a relatively even distribution of land. Individual allocations have ranged from fractions of a hectare to as much as 20 hectares depending on the availability of land for distribution, fertility, crop yield, and other such factors. Although some care is exercised in the process of expropriation, the forces of excessive taxation, social pressure, and the threat of terrorism are brought to bear on those with more land than they need to subsist. The result is that as many landless peasants are provided land as the existing population pressure permits. One is drawn to the inevitable conclusion that Viet Cong land redistribution has been designed to reap the maximum possible commitment from the peasant to the cause of the Viet Cong, and to prepare for the communization to follow Viet Cong takeover of the national government.

The beneficiaries of the Viet Cong land redistribution are those who have demonstrated their loyalty. The families of Viet Cong cadre and warriors are, logically, the first to receive land; widows of deceased heroes of the revolution are second; and so on, with the more politically neutral resident last in the order of priority. The available data are not explicit on this point, but it would appear that the existing occupant (for example, tenant) would have first right to the land assuming that he occupied a plot not excessive in size and that he was not expressly opposed to the Viet Cong. As one might expect, this is a mirror image of the pattern of priorities used by the GVN in selecting recipients under the Ordinance 57 distribution.

According to a number of RAND respondents, recipients of Viet Cong land redistribution were concerned that the redistribution was precariously dependent on continued Viet Cong control and that as soon as the GVN returned and its control was re-established, they would lose their land. Such concern was exploited by the Viet Cong for the obvious purpose of reminding the recipient that his continued occupancy of the land could be guaranteed only by his continued support. The data indicate, however, that the recipients are much more interested in the present than they are in the future status of the land. One possible explanation offered by a RAND respondent is that since the landless or land poor classes have little experience with the benefits or formalities of ownership, an opportunity to "own" or even control land for any period, however short, has appeal.

In order for the Viet Cong to achieve the beneficial psychological effects of redistribution, some continuity of occupancy on the part of the recipient is required. Viet Cong redistribution that occurs prematurely--i.e., which is subject to reversal by the landlord in concert with the GVN--would detract considerably from the psychological impact desired. This hypothesis is confirmed in a gross way by the data. Table 1 in Chapter 2 contains results of the Village Administrative Chief Survey on this point. The data reflect what appears to be a distinct lag between the acquisition of control by the Viet Cong and the redistribution of the land. Only half of those lands indicated as under Viet Cong control had been redistributed.

Collectivization. The Viet Cong land reform process in the Republic of Vietnam falls short of Communist tradition by two of the most significant stages: (1) the elimination and purging of the landlords and rich peasants* and (2) the collectivization of agriculture. The purges conducted against the remnants of the old society in both North Vietnam and Communist China bear every sign of being deliberate, barbarous acts designed to eliminate the last vestiges of land ownership and tenancy that may remain from the former society. The collectivization of agriculture approaches the theoretical culmination of Communist land reform. Collectivization lies just short of the ultimate goal of the Communist leadership--the commune, which is the final step in the reorientation of the society to Communism.

The problems related to replacing ownership with Communist social incentives are exemplified in the violent peasant reactions in both China and North Vietnam. A JUSPAO Field Memorandum refers to one such occasion: "The riots, said Radio Hanoi, broke out when a gang of reactionaries, taking advantage of mistakes made during the political implementation of land reform, molested soldiers and cadres of the people's regime, ... Many dead and wounded were reported..."†

Captured documents indicate that the Viet Cong in their turn have experimented with purges and collectivization in areas that have been continuously under their control for a long period of time. The data do not support an estimate of the extent of such efforts, but it is apparent that severe problems of acceptance have been encountered. A recent directive

* Recall that this stage was tried in North Vietnam and caused a bloody uprising of peasants. Apparently, the Viet Cong, in withholding this stage, fear the same consequences.

† "The Quyuh Luu North Vietnamese Uprising," November 13, 1956, JUSPAO Field Memorandum Number 30, October 28, 1966 (emphasis added).

to cadre in the Mekong Delta implies that disastrous results were achieved in one such experiment, and specifically directs that such land reform activity be set aside. It calls for "a return to reliance on poor farmers, lower middle farmers (old and new) and solidarity with middle farmers...",* and emphasizes the need for reconciliation with landlords and rich peasants to achieve unity of the people under Viet Cong control. The implication given throughout is that earlier directives went too far too soon, and that the people were not yet psychologically prepared for the final stages of Communist land reform.

It will be noted that the initiation of the collective reveals the ultimate goal of Viet Cong land reform at a time when there still remains some room for choice or at least protest on the part of the peasant. His own preferences apparently lean toward the retention of land ownership, and he is not fully prepared psychologically to accept its elimination. While it would seem that there is little the peasant in Viet Cong-controlled areas could do to prevent the imposition of collectivization, the Viet Cong demonstrate a sensitivity to any action that serves to alienate him-- particularly during the present critical phases of the conflict. Indications are, however, that once the insurgency is brought to a successful conclusion, the processes of land reform will be concluded along the lines of the pattern exhibited by the Communists in North Vietnam.

The process of eliminating the attractions and incentives of private ownership from the rural society is clearly both long and difficult, so difficult it would appear that the terminal stages of Communist land reform must be reserved to the time when Communist control is complete. The absence of these final stages from the Viet Cong land reform process must therefore be interpreted as a temporary expedient. Until the Viet Cong have succeeded in overthrowing the government, and the population has been fully conditioned to accept these radical concepts, the beneficiaries must be deluded into thinking that some form of private ownership or control of land will be provided for in any future Viet Cong governed society.

Variations in Viet Cong Land Reform

The preceding description of Viet Cong land reform applies to those areas of Vietnam that are under continuous cultivation, and hence the

* Quoted in "The South Vietnamese Communists and Rural Vietnam," Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office (JUSPAO), Saigon, August 1966, pp. 7-11. It will be noted that the directive implies that they will be taken up at some later date.

description is most typical of the Mekong Delta. Land tenure conditions differ significantly between the Mekong Delta, Central Lowlands, and Central Highlands, and these differences are reflected in Viet Cong land reform practice.

Since the performance of the SRI Hamlet Resident Survey and associated research on the Central Lowlands was interrupted by the Viet Cong Tet Offensive in February 1968, no original data were available on land tenure conditions in this area. Compounding the problems created by lack of data on land tenure conditions, there were few specific references in the Viet Cong literature to their land reform practices in the Central Lowlands. It may be expected, however, that in those Viet Cong-controlled areas that have not been affected by mass abandonment of the land due to the ravages of the conflict, population pressure will not allow the Viet Cong to expand the number of individual holdings appreciably. The segment of the population most vulnerable to Viet Cong land reform appeals appears to be the sharecropper operating under the metayage system. Viet Cong concepts of rent reduction and land redistribution should apply in this case, as should redistribution of communal lands. Little more can be said with regard to Viet Cong land reform in the Central Lowlands until more specific data on land tenure conditions are available.

In the remote areas of the Central Highlands, it is obvious that Viet Cong land reform has little application in the form that is practiced elsewhere in Vietnam. Although altogether different in character, a land problem exists in the Highlands that has been exploited by the Viet Cong in gaining the support of some Montagnards.* In short, the practice of land rotation† by Montagnard tribes conflicts with concepts of sedentary land tenure and land utilization in common use in other parts of Vietnam. The

* The character of this problem is discussed in some detail in "The Highland People of South Vietnam: Social and Economic Development," Gerald C. Hickey, RAND Corporation Research Memorandum RM-5281/1, September 1967, pp. 76-93.

† This system of land rotation, also called "swidden agriculture" and "slash and burn" agriculture, is not unique with the Montagnards or hill tribes in remote areas of Southeast Asia but is common elsewhere--Central America, South America, Africa--wherever land is plentiful. The system was also practiced historically by Indians of North America. The principle is to use a field for one to three years and then let it "rest," by moving on to another field and not return to reuse the original field for 7 to 20 years. Thus, the system is seminomadic, and for a given tribe includes a rather large area reserved for reuse in the future.

practice is generally viewed by ethnic Vietnamese as inefficient and destructive of national resources, although this view may not be altogether justified. The independent nature of the Montagnards coupled with significant cultural differences between the Montagnards and lowland Vietnamese have compounded the problem of reconciling the land tenure concepts of these two major ethnic groups, and to date no mutually satisfactory arrangement has been arrived at. Various government attempts to get the Montagnards to abandon rotation agriculture, to resettle them, and to relieve population pressure in the Central Lowlands by moving Vietnamese into areas claimed by the Montagnards, have tended to create some alienation of the latter from the GVN, and to provide a distinct vulnerability to Viet Cong exploitation. Present land reform programs concerned with inequities in landlord-tenant relationships and the redistribution of land clearly have little meaning in the Central Highlands where the land issues are different. Thus, the Viet Cong have a land issue which provides a basis for their propaganda.

Administrative Control of Viet Cong Land Reform

Despite the apparent rigidity in the ultimate objective of land reform, the Viet Cong have displayed a characteristic flexibility and adaptability not present in the GVN program. This may be partially attributable to communication problems between Viet Cong command echelons; until recently, communication was carried on entirely by courier. Beyond this, however, the Viet Cong have deliberately decentralized decision making to village and hamlet levels in order to adapt their policy to differences or changes in local land tenure conditions.

Higher echelons in the Viet Cong call for the gathering and evaluation of vast amounts of detailed demographic information at the village and hamlet levels. As a result, Viet Cong estimates of the situation are exceedingly thorough and display an insight into the problems encountered at these levels that can only be attributed to excellent intelligence and extensive experience. Thus, while the lower echelons are given the flexibility they require to adapt their resources to the Viet Cong land reform policy and to the local situation, they are monitored continuously. If a serious problem arises at the local level, there is an immediate response to define its nature and extent and to apply the leadership and resources required to correct the situation. For example, it is not unusual for Viet Cong Provincial and Interprovincial Headquarters to assign high level personnel to take over the leadership of Village and District organizations temporarily, as a means of repairing the damage caused by GVN intelligence penetration and military or political successes.

This characteristic flexibility in the application of land reform extends to the testing of more advanced concepts of Communist land reform in selected areas. Cases are noted in captured documents of Viet Cong experimentation with the purging of landlords and other undesirables, and with concepts of collectivization. This experimentation is significant because it demonstrates a Viet Cong sensitivity and adaptability to the mood and level of indoctrination of the society, an aspect which has not been equalled in present GVN administrative approaches.

The concept of maximizing the utility of land reform as a means of attracting the support of the rural population pervades Viet Cong literature. The local cadre are apparently never allowed to forget that this is the fundamental purpose of land reform and that the mechanics of expropriation must therefore be performed with absolute regard to the impact made upon the attitude of the majority of the peasantry. As a result, the local Viet Cong cadre exhibit a considerable sensitivity to differences in the local situation that call for minor changes in the mechanics of implementation as well as for integrity and competence in administration of the policy. While it is evident that mistakes are made, it is equally clear that the Viet Cong do their utmost to minimize them and to learn from them how to improve the implementation process.

The Viet Cong decentralized administrative control of land reform contrasts with the centralized control apparatus exercised by the GVN in several other significant ways. For example, there is no Viet Cong equivalent to the time consuming application, title search and registration procedures, cadastral surveys, lease contracts, registers, and most of the other administrative formalities associated with GVN administration of land affairs.* In the case of land titles, the Viet Cong have apparently not been very consistent. Documents purporting to be Viet Cong titles have been captured, but in many Viet Cong-controlled areas, the most common arrangement seems to consist only of an oral agreement. As long as the Viet Cong remain in control and the recipient remains loyal, his rights seem to be honored--which is after all the real test of the Viet Cong land redistribution in the eyes of the recipient. There is, however, a fundamental difference in the character of the administrative arrangement. The GVN formalizes the ownership arrangement, and while the recipient is obligated to pay the government for the land, the rights granted

* It should be noted that while this seems to be true of Viet Cong land reform, taxation is another matter. In the latter case Viet Cong administration is both detailed and comprehensive. See Chapter 4.

are otherwise permanent.* The Viet Cong grant the land to the recipient rather than sell it to him, but the ultimate status of the land remains deliberately unclear, the implication being that at some future date the land may have to be returned to the Viet Cong. Although the Viet Cong depreciate this aspect of the redistribution, the distinction is significant in that it demonstrates the basic insincerity of Viet Cong land redistribution, and thereby provides the GVN with material that could, if properly exploited, reduce the psychological impact of Viet Cong land redistribution significantly.

Timing of Viet Cong Land Reform

It is significant that at no time in the implementation of land reform have the Viet Cong informed the general population of what lies ahead. The word "ownership" and other artifacts of the old society are carefully inserted in Viet Cong propaganda to lend credence to the assumption that the Viet Cong respects individual rights with regard to land. There is, however, evidence to support the contention that the reduction of rent and the distribution of land are temporary expedients in the process of destroying the traditional concepts of ownership and tenancy in the existing society. Landlords are led to believe that reduction of their rents is all that will be required to satisfy the Viet Cong. Later, they are assured that if they give up their land voluntarily, they will earn a permanent place in the forthcoming Communist society. Still later, they are executed. Viet Cong taxes begin with "contributions," and are carefully separated from the land to prevent the loss of incentives derived from redistribution. To the maximum extent possible, the landlords and other relatively prosperous elements are preserved as long as they are essential to financing the revolution. Taxation of the poor is avoided until the final phases, when the commitment to the Viet Cong is essentially irreversible.

* Subject to the payment schedule, taxes, and performance of other responsibilities to the society. The original GVN titles were temporary, becoming permanent only after the payments were completed. The effect was to dilute the psychological impact of the distribution. Permanent titles are now being issued to replace the original temporary titles. The difference in procedure is primarily technical, but it does require that the government initiate legal action to recover in cases of non-payment, the owner's rights to the land being primary and those of the GVN secondary.

Perhaps of most significance in the timing of Communist land reform is the postponement of the elimination of the supporters of the existing society until after the final takeover. The concept of collectivization is conspicuous by its absence from the Viet Cong propaganda, yet there are occasional references in captured documents to the "temporary" nature of the redistribution of land--i.e., the land is to be held more or less in trust by the recipient, pending the apparently inevitable collectivization. At no point in the process to the present has this ultimate objective been made clear to the general public. The reason seems obvious. The purging of the ingrained traditions of land ownership and tenure from the rural society takes time. The process of purging these traditions requires an understanding of the final steps of the process to appreciate fully the significance of the earlier. This degree of insight is not granted to the victim until it is too late.

Problems in the Application of Viet Cong Land Reform Policy

While the objectives and policy framework for Viet Cong land reform are relatively fixed, their interpretation and application are left to the ingenuity of the lower echelon cadre that are in immediate contact with the subject population. This decentralization of authority results in a remarkable sensitivity and responsiveness to local conditions and opportunities, but problems of communication frequently result in misunderstanding and excesses, as well as in unforeseen reactions from the population. They generate seemingly endless reams of dialogue between the implementing agencies and the leadership of the Viet Cong. Certain of these problems are instructive.

Viet Cong land reform runs into difficulties where the rural society is evenly structured; where there is an absence of the essential Viet Cong symbols of oppression--the landlord and the indifferent government official; and where the people have experienced truly representative local democracy. In some cases, the Viet Cong have themselves been forced to use oppressive tactics to surmount such obstacles. It is imperative to the Viet Cong that obstacles of this nature be overcome quickly and effectively, before the subject population has an opportunity to benefit from them and to appreciate the role of the GVN in bringing them about.

Of specific interest from the standpoint of Viet Cong land reform are those conditions that tend to reduce the effectiveness of the technique. Such conditions seem to be present whenever for reasons beyond the control of the Viet Cong the land is already relatively evenly distributed. The earlier Viet Minh and GVN land reform activities, for example, had the effect of preempting the Viet Cong, and forced them to either repudiate

the earlier GVN land distribution or to look to other incentives to attract support. To this must be added other problems arising from the shortage of land for redistribution; from the incongruities associated with preserving non-Communist features of existing society; and from the mass abandonment of land as a result of the recent large scale military actions.

Lack of Landed Class Structure in the Rural Society. A Viet Cong document, in reviewing conditions in contested villages surrounding Viet Cong base areas, states: "Half of the inhabitants in XX Village are Middle Farmers, the remaining are Poor Farmers. This village has no landless farmers." With reference to another village in the same area, the document goes on: "Half of the inhabitants are poor farmers, one quarter are middle farmers and the remainder are business men and traders."*

This lack of polarization in land tenure conditions apparently has been a relatively frequent experience for the Viet Cong. A RAND respondent states the problem facing the Viet Cong Hamlet and Village cadre in such cases as follows:

The class struggle is already out of date now. This struggle was correct for the past, when the colonialists were here to exploit the poor people, and the landowners exploited the landless farmers. At that time, the majority of the people were landless and poor, but the Government has expropriated land from landowners for them. Most villagers now have land to farm. The aim for the (class) struggle is meaningless now. The motivation for the struggle is no longer justified because that hatred between the landowners and tenants doesn't exist any more. What the Communists are doing now is aimed at digging up the resentment which died out in the past.†

Although this source credits the GVN land reform program with having created an even distribution of land, it is clear that whatever the cause, absence of extremes in land tenure conditions can conceivably obviate Viet Cong land reform. At the minimum, it confronts the Viet Cong with serious problems in rationalizing any further redistribution of land.

* RAND Interview AG 599, p. 28. See Appendix C.

† The reader is cautioned not to interpret either of the above quotations as a general statement of existing conditions throughout Vietnam. The available data are fragmentary and reflect isolated experiences that cannot be generalized upon in the absence of supporting statistical data.

Further insight into the fundamental Viet Cong need for inequity in the distribution of land was obtained from an analysis of the results of the SRI Hamlet Resident Survey. The responses were broken down and examined using the class definitions of the Viet Cong, the objective being to determine if significant differences in attitude toward land existed between classes, and to identify possible sources of discontent. This analysis, which involved considerable cross checking and validation of results, revealed a rather remarkable absence of class antagonism between the poor peasants and the landlords. This may be explained by the fact that the Ordinance 57 and earlier Viet Minh land redistribution programs did eliminate the very large landlords who had caused so much discontent during the anti-colonial struggle. In some areas, it is clear that the difference in status between the landlord and the poor peasant is now so small as to be of little consequence. It follows that the Viet Cong must employ proportionately more effort to exploit such a small difference.

Availability of Land for Redistribution. The same forces that reduced the gulf between the landless and the landlord during the Viet Minh and GVN land reforms also reduced the number and size of large private holdings. Many landlords and rich peasants had already left the villages as a byproduct of the Viet Minh conflict. Others were bought out by the French, or had their property expropriated as part of the Ordinance 57 GVN land distribution program. The result was a pronounced trend toward larger numbers of smaller holdings. Where relatively small private holdings predominated in the pattern of land ownership, the Viet Cong were left without a convenient source of land for distribution.

In probing the limits of utility for land reform, the Viet Cong shifted their attention to the middle peasants, who were frequently the only landowners left of any significance. The land of the middle peasant--the least vulnerable of the lower classes to Viet Cong appeals, and the pivotal element in Viet Cong strategy--then became the target of confiscation. The consequent alienation of the middle peasant created in the ranks of the Viet Cong an ideological controversy that still continues. Judgment of the extent of such alienation must, unfortunately, be based on fragmentary data. However, the frequency of mention and seriousness of tone in both captured documents and RAND interviews support the contention that the problem is of serious concern to the Viet Cong leadership.

Perhaps the most significant problem relating to the availability of land for redistribution by the Viet Cong is a characteristic lack of coherence in its acquisition and distribution. The rules established by the Viet Cong in their attempt to minimize the conflict resulting from Viet Cong expropriation create a condition of piecemeal acquisition and distribution. Incentives in the form of land have had to await a fairly advanced

stage in the insurgency. In addition, the large blocks of GVN land and remaining large private holdings, while considerable in total hectareage, were not so uniformly located that each province had its proportionate share. Even where large blocks of land were available, not all hamlets had an equal share. In many instances, one hamlet would have large amounts available, while adjacent hamlets and villages had none.

Repeated references in captured documents indicate that the Viet Cong need the financial support of the middle and upper segments of the old rural society and are reluctant to alienate them through the direct expropriation of their land. Even when Viet Cong control was complete, the Viet Cong did not confiscate land indiscriminately. Instead, the Viet Cong let the natural processes of the conflict operate to provide land for distribution. As taxation of well-to-do peasants by the Viet Cong became unbearable, these peasants turned land over to the Viet Cong voluntarily. Even the land of those who fled the bombing and shelling for the more protected GVN areas was held "in trust" as an incentive for them to return when conditions allowed. Those who left permanently or had dealings with the GVN did not qualify for this concession, and their land was immediately expropriated and redistributed.

The net result of all these factors was to make land available on a piecemeal basis. Redistribution took place over a considerable period of time, which tended to dilute its impact. Not unlike the GVN Ordinance 57 program, the Viet Cong distribution was therefore uneven in its effect.*

Reconciliation with Non-Communist Elements of the Rural Society.

While the capitalist elements of the Vietnamese society would seem to be a natural target for elimination by the Viet Cong, it is important to note that in the period prior to the attainment of full control, they constitute an important resource for the revolution.

It has been estimated that upward of 90 percent of the funds needed by the Viet Cong to support the revolution are derived from sources within the Republic of Vietnam. Evidence is presented in Chapter 4 that roughly two-thirds of Viet Cong cash income is obtained from sources other than

* See Volume IV for a discussion of land distribution under Ordinance 57. Of the 24 provinces out of 44 in which expropriated Ordinance 57 land was distributed, only ten had more than 10,000 hectares distributed; five of the remainder had 750 hectares or less. Total acreage distributed amounted to 250,562 hectares, all of which were in Regions III and IV.

the peasant. Anomalous as this may seem, the capitalist elements of the society--landlords, rich peasants, upper middle peasants, and business interests related to the agricultural economy of Vietnam--constitute a primary source of financial support for the Viet Cong. Coupled with their status and influence in rural communities, they provide convenient, if unwilling, access to resources that are not immediately available from the political supporters of the revolution--the poor peasants and sharecroppers.

The impact of this phenomenon upon the pattern of Viet Cong land reform is illustrated in the case of the large rubber plantations north of Saigon which continue to operate in spite of extensive Viet Cong activity in the vicinity. Rather than expropriate and redistribute the land occupied by the plantation, as might be expected from Viet Cong land reform practices elsewhere, the Viet Cong allow the management to continue operations. This anomaly may be explained in part by the character of the product. In contrast to rice and other basic foods, unprocessed rubber has little utility to the Viet Cong. It is of monetary value only if it reaches the international market, and to do so it must pass through GVN-controlled ports. The assumption of direct Viet Cong control over the plantation and the institution of land reform would have the effect of cutting the plantation off from its market, and thereby putting a substantial number of rubber tappers and other usefully occupied plantation laborers out of work. Since no alternative employment exists, the act of closing the plantation would bring hardship to the very people the Viet Cong wish to attract.

In addition, since the Viet Cong are able to prevent rubber from reaching the market, they are in a position to extort funds and otherwise neutralize any role that the plantation management might have in assisting the government to suppress Viet Cong activities. In some provinces north of Saigon where rubber is a significant element in the local economy, the Viet Cong have derived as much as 25 percent of their total income from the taxation of rubber plantations.* While concepts of rent reduction and land redistribution may be inappropriate in this case, it seems clear that at least until other outlets are found for the rubber or some of the present outlets come under the control of the Viet Cong, the capitalist institution of the rubber plantation is more useful to the Viet Cong if it remains in operation. It follows that the existing land ownership pattern must also be preserved.†

* See Chapter 4.

† This same paradox existed in Malaya during the Malayan Emergency and in South Thailand where the primary rural occupations are associated with the rubber and tin industries. It is of considerable significance

In addition to financial support, a need exists to obtain as broad a popular base in the society as possible, and to recruit or at least neutralize all elements of the society committed to the cause of the government. Front organizations are used to depreciate the role of Communism in the Viet Cong and thereby to attract those who would otherwise be reluctant to participate. While the mobilization of non-Communist elements into the service of the Viet Cong would seem contradictory, it is clear that the Viet Cong are fully appreciative of their value in the revolutionary process of gaining control over the population.

The accommodation of non-Communist elements places a requirement upon the Viet Cong to keep their ultimate objectives hidden from the rural society. If, for example, the landlords are made fully aware of their ultimate fate; it is highly unlikely that their financial contributions would continue--especially if it were obvious that in the process the landlords were contributing to their own demise. It is also apparent that such disclosure of intent could bring about an international image of Communist imperialism, which, while probably of little consequence in terms of the support received from Communist nations, could prove detrimental to Communist activities in other non-Communist countries. Furthermore, a danger exists that if these elements are given sufficient warning and motivation, an effective counterrevolutionary force may be organized to threaten the Viet Cong during its period of greatest vulnerability. This accounts to a very large extent for the fundamentally clandestine nature of the Viet Cong organization, and for the extreme care that is exercised in assuring that the non-Communist elements are not alienated prematurely. The effect of this requirement is in fact so pervasive that few aspects of Viet Cong activity are not touched by it. The techniques used give the appearance of being the product of a fine art. It would appear that the problems associated with the exploitation of non-Communist sources of support have been anticipated and fully rationalized by the Viet Cong.*

The Problem of Refugees. Although the strategy of the Viet Cong is to minimize the exodus of people from the rural areas, the escalation of the conflict has made life untenable in many remote hamlets. Because of the overwhelming violence of the war as well as Viet Cong oppression,

that land reform, with its concomitant redistribution of land, is not even referred to in the literature of the Communist terrorists in these areas. (From documentation in the SRI Southeast Asia Counterinsurgency Research Project, sponsored by the Advanced Research Project Agency, 1964 to present.)

* See Chapter 4.

large numbers of people have departed. It hardly needs arguing that the possession of land under such circumstances has little meaning or advantage to the peasant.

As long as the number of full-time Viet Cong is small in proportion to the total population, the number of people required to support them remains small. However, the escalation of the conflict and the resulting massive exodus of refugees from Viet Cong-controlled areas have raised the question of whether a sufficient number of residents remain to support the large Viet Cong and North Vietnamese military units in current operation.

Since the refugee problem has varied widely in magnitude over time and by area, statistical data are not sufficiently reliable or inclusive to estimate the impact of refugee movement on the Viet Cong. Thus, it is difficult to determine other than qualitatively when the loss of people begins to hurt the Viet Cong effort. Certainly at some point as the exodus continues, the Viet Cong are gradually--and sometimes abruptly--deprived of a place to hide and persons to perform the essential functions of food production and transportation.

It is probable that by the time this condition develops, the landlords and rich peasants have gone. The bulk of the population remaining includes those who have benefited from Viet Cong land policy. While it seems reasonable to assume that those who have so benefited or are otherwise committed to the cause of the Viet Cong are the last to leave, it is difficult on the basis of the limited data available to prove it. Certainly the Viet Cong have used every method they can to prevent the people from departing. Captured Viet Cong documents emphasize the need to "cling to the people; stick to the masses"--terms eloquent in the insight they provide into the Viet Cong problem. Although the impact of the mass exodus of refugees may be difficult to measure, there is little question that it has frequently been so serious as to leave the Viet Cong exposed to GVN and allied forces.

Chapter 4

INSECURITY AND THE RURAL SOCIETY

Definition of Security

The term security has a variety of meanings and significance depending on the interests or requirements of the user. The accepted connotation of the word is protection of the citizenry from acts of violence. In the case of land reform and the administration of land affairs, the threat of violence is as important as the act, since it may be effective in preventing the exercise of rights to the land or its administration. Land is essential to the performance of land reform and land administration, since neither have much meaning if the landowners, tenants, and farm laborers are unable to profit from their land, however well protected they may be otherwise.

The effectiveness of land reform and land administration depends on the ability of the government to guarantee the rights of ownership and tenancy. Security in this sense is unrestricted access to the land, freedom from threat and intimidation, and freedom from interference in the cultivation, harvesting, and marketing of the products of the land under conditions prescribed by law. Implicit in the granting of the privileges of ownership and tenancy is the obligation of government to assure freedom from any influence that infringes on these rights. Thus, the proper functioning of government is not only to administer the land in accordance with the law but also to ensure that owners, tenants, and laborer are not deprived of their rights. When these rights are interfered with by the Viet Cong, this must be considered to be a breach of security insofar as the performance of land reform and the land affairs administration are concerned.

Viet Cong Tactics

The discussion in preceding chapters suggests the extent to which Viet Cong land policy affects the landowner and tenant. However, it presents only part of the general picture of disruption experienced by the rural resident during the Viet Cong insurgency. Within the rural society, the Viet Cong leaves few resources untouched and few relationships unaltered. Land reform provides one basic motivation for the population to support the Viet Cong, and, as practiced by the Viet Cong,

land reform entails a virtually complete negation of the traditional rights of land ownership and tenure. These are, however, by no means the only rights violated in the course of the insurgency, nor do the tactics used for land reform exhaust the resources of the Viet Cong. This chapter describes the tactics used by the Viet Cong to gain and maintain control over the population, and to mobilize it in the service of the revolution.

The Viet Cong tactics of interest fall into three classes: (1) organization of the society, (2) population controls, and (3) support requirements (tactics designed to provide specific materials or services).

Viet Cong Organization of the Society

The importance of organization to the Viet Cong can hardly be exaggerated. As Douglas Pike puts it: "If the essence of the Chinese revolution was strategy and the essence of the Viet Minh was spirit, the essence of the third-generation revolutionary guerrilla warfare in South Vietnam was organization."^{*}

All that is done by the Viet Cong in the name of land reform is achieved through organization. Because the Viet Cong need the resources held by the rural society and seek to prepare the society for revolution, the key organizational activity is concentrated at the hamlet and village levels. During the time that Viet Cong organization is being strengthened and expanded, the local GVN authorities are intimidated or assassinated, leaving an organizational and administrative vacuum. In Viet Cong theory, the local GVN officials become progressively less and less capable of handling even their day-to-day responsibilities such as land administration, much less the extraordinary demands of land reform.

The Peoples Revolutionary Party

The key control agency of the Viet Cong is the Communist Peoples Revolutionary Party (PRP).[†] Control of all front and military organizations emanates from it. Through these various subsidiary organizations,

^{*} Douglas Pike, "Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam," The MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1966, p. ix.

[†] M.C. Conley; "The Communist Insurgent Infrastructure in South Vietnam, a Study of Organization and Strategy," Department of the Army Pamphlet No. 550-106, Headquarters, Department of the Army, March 1967.

the Viet Cong reach into all aspects of Vietnamese rural society and into much of the open GVN-controlled society. The PRP is, in turn, a branch of the Dang Lao Dong (Communist) Party of North Vietnam and is controlled by it through the Central Office for South Vietnam (COSVN), an agency of the North Vietnamese Central Committee located in Hanoi.* COSVN controls all operations of the Viet Cong insurgency. The PRP is therefore by no means an ordinary political party, but rather a control apparatus directed by the North Vietnamese, which is represented in, and in fact leads, every operational organization at every organizational level down to and including the hamlet. The operational agencies of interest here are largely civil in nature, although it should be noted that both military and covert intelligence agencies play important roles in the Viet Cong.

Two characteristics of the Peoples Revolutionary Party stand out: (1) the effectiveness of its control over satellite organizations such as the NLF and military forces, and (2) the reproductive capacity of the elements making up this complex structure. By conducting its affairs in an entirely clandestine manner even within its own operating elements, the PRP is able to ensure that no one element assumes power out of proportion to its prescribed responsibilities and that all are continually monitored with regard to their performance and internal political integrity. This same shield of secrecy provides security from penetration by agents of the government. When front elements such as units of the NLF are attacked and destroyed, the secret element is left behind, unknown outside the PRP even to those who work intimately for it. Thus, the seed of Communism--the infrastructure--is protected.

Front Organizations

Between this Communist Party core and the general population are built elaborate front organizations completely equipped with beneficent objectives and Party members in control. By avoiding the limelight, the Communist leadership can bring into its fold prominent members of the community who might be reluctant to contribute if they knew the real cause they serve. This facade of legitimate nationalism diffuses the view of both local and international observers, and relieves international Communism of the stigma of imperialism.

Given the PRP control apparatus, the process of organizing the society for insurgency is focussed upon the hamlets and villages where the bulk of the rural population is located. The process begins with the

* Ibid., p. 25.

infiltration of an agent (preferably a resident educated in Communism) into the village. An assessment is made of the situation, which includes a census of the political leanings and latent or existing divisions in the local society. Target personalities and themes are selected for exploitation, and the development of innocent-appearing, community assistance organizations begins. Local themes are exchanged for regional and national themes as organizational development proceeds. Anti-government themes and activities are entered into only after extensive popular support and control are available. Great care is taken not to exceed the threshold of government sensitivity to these subversive acts, and all have some basis in the legitimate aspirations of the people. There must also be legitimate appearing leadership recruited from the masses. This phase of organizational development is likely not to display any external evidence of Communist leadership.

Organizational development requires time. In some areas, it may take as many as 30 years from the initial infiltration to an overt act of defiance. Alternative approaches to creating divisiveness in the society are thoroughly tested. Penetration and manipulation of labor unions and other legitimate organizations for the purpose of capturing, destroying, or absorbing them begins during this period.

Although the phase of infiltration and organizational development is long past for most of the Republic of Vietnam, there remain some areas in which covert activity of this type still goes on. These include the densely populated areas, where massive GVN presence prevents overt activity, and the areas inhabited with anti-Communist religious factions, such as Hoa Hao or Catholics. For much of the remainder of Vietnam, this process has reached its logical end in the form of total Viet Cong control.

The early years of experimentation with various forms of front organizations are essentially over. Activities of a truly covert nature are limited to GVN-controlled areas and GVN-supported organizations. They tend to be highly specialized elements such as rear area sapper (sabotage) units or intelligence penetration agents and informers. The village and hamlet front organizational format is now largely set. At the apex of this structure is the National Liberation Front, under which come the National Liberation Army and the various functional liberation associations. Compared with those in earlier phases and other Communist insurgencies in Southeast Asia, the list is remarkably short:

1. Farmers' Liberation Association
2. Women's Liberation Association
3. Workers' Liberation Association
4. Youth Liberation Association
5. Student Liberation Association
6. Cultural Liberation Association

Of the various Liberation Associations, only the Youth Liberation Association has a counterpart organization between it and the PRP. This is the Peoples' Revolutionary Youth Association, which like the Malayan Communist Youth League of the Malayan Emergency, is the major preparatory training ground for future members of the PRP. Members of the PRYA are carefully screened and hold positions of secondary but still significant responsibility for spearheading various community activities using the concept of emulation. The Youth Liberation Association like the others is a front, led by PRYA members and so insulated from the secret party apparatus. The cream of the Youth Liberation Association is recruited into the PRYA and then further distilled until only the elite of the PRYA are accepted into the PRP itself.

The impression given in the data for 1962 onward is that the patterns of activity and the contributions expected of each association have been fairly well established. Organizational formats, procedures, recruiting targets, and functions performed vary little between hamlets or villages. Viet Cong organizational activities in areas controlled by them seem to permeate every household and every mind. And as one RAND respondent complained: "They never stop talking."

Of greatest interest among the front groups is the Farmers' Liberation Association since it is the backbone of the NLF. Its importance may be appreciated when one observes that in the deep Viet Cong-controlled areas, when the facades of the fronts are finally lifted, the structure of the Farmers' Liberation Association is found to be the local administration. This organization has the fundamental responsibility for recruiting and organizing the peasantry. It handles, among other important matters, Viet Cong land reform. Its leadership is restricted to sharecroppers, poor peasants, and a limited number of middle peasants.

The involvement of the rural society in Viet Cong activities ranges from 50 to 75 percent for Viet Cong-controlled areas and about 20 percent for contested areas. Every household and every individual in Viet Cong controlled areas has an assigned role in the revolution. Only those whose past associations with the GVN cause them to be suspect are left out of the structure, but even they are called on to contribute taxes, labor, and food.

The refinements of organizational technique seem to have led to standardization of form for the various civil organizations. The nature of the conflict, particularly in the contested areas, creates a need for rapid change (reversal) in hamlet and village administration. The data would seem to support the proposition that this need for rapid change creates something approaching preconceived organizational development for village and hamlets that come under Viet Cong total control rather abruptly as the result of a major Viet Cong military offensive. The detailed knowledge of the population held by penetration agents inside the captured hamlets is combined with that of leaders previously in exile to reconstitute rapidly and efficiently the form and substance of Viet Cong organization. Any one who in the interim period of GVN control has aided the GVN is immediately eliminated, and the inevitable Viet Cong front organizations emerge to take over.

Proselytizing

Of all the functions of the various front organizations, proselytizing--the process of recruiting adherents for the Viet Cong and neutralizing alien elements--is viewed by the Viet Cong as next in importance to organizational performance.* This focus on the organizational reproduction function is typical of the PRP and all associated front organizations. The function has two basic orientations: (1) civilian proselytizing, which is directed at recruiting for the various functional organizations including the Viet Cong guerrilla units, and (2) military proselytizing, which is aimed at GVN military units for the purpose of creating agents and informants, deserters, and even mass defections. In the first case, the target is as broad as the uncommitted or marginally committed civilian population, and in the second, the target includes all GVN and even allied forces.

* Pike, op. cit., Chapter 14, p. 253.

The extended family† is a favorite communication mechanism for all proselytizing. The methods used range from reserving land to be distributed for absent family members in ARVN to virtually holding families in ransom for their lives. Tricks are common, such as getting a person to participate in a semilegal demonstration, and then calling it to his attention that the GVN now know him to be a Viet Cong collaborator. The purpose is to create the impression of commitment to the Viet Cong cause. The target is led carefully from minor to more significant acts of betrayal until he believes himself to be completely and irrevocably alienated from the GVN.

Pike notes nine other major proselytizing techniques:

1. Enunciation and constant restatement by all possible means of a liberal NLF policy toward recanting (GVN) military and civil servants, including prisoners.
2. Wide and intensive use of selective terror and intimidation, chiefly of a psychological nature against key (GVN) functionaries and military units.
3. Use of penetration agents to develop support within the (GVN) military and civil service.
4. Use of family ties and friendships to induce or coerce (GVN) military personnel and civil servants to desert, defect, or covertly serve the (Viet Cong) cause.
5. General "struggle" movements among civilians in the name of Binh Van (proselytizing), either defensively for use when troops come to the village, or offensively, such as a demonstration at a (GVN) military base (e.g., against indiscriminate bombing or shelling).
6. Various types of appeals to the (GVN) military and civil servants aimed to maximize damage to the GVN's military and administrative machine (low salaries, danger, lack of leadership, etc.).
7. Tangible and intangible rewards for those who deserted or defected (cash, commendations, citations, etc.).

† Similar to a clan, the term extended family may include three generations as well as the families of brothers and sisters of the head of the household.

8. Use of deserters, defectors and prisoners (as living testimony to oppression, traitorous conduct, etc., as well as recanting previous misdeeds).
9. Various efforts among potential draftees to oppose the military draft (dodge draft by joining the NLF)."*

While the data were insufficient to support an estimate of the total impact of Viet Cong proselytizing on the conflict, any lack of success is certainly not attributable to lack of effort. Past successes of the Chieu Hoi program on the GVN side give some hint as to the vulnerability of the Viet Cong in its turn. Since GVN controls are considerably looser than those of the Viet Cong, the vulnerability of the GVN-controlled populace would seem to be correspondingly greater. It appears probable, therefore, that the effect of Viet Cong proselytizing has been substantial and detrimental to the cause of the GVN.

Proselytizing is the main recruiting technique of the Viet Cong. Among the array of Viet Cong appeals, the promise of land is one of the most important. Proselytizing is the mechanism through which these appeals are made to the masses to gain support. Thus, while it has seemingly little direct bearing on Viet Cong land reform activities, it is indirectly the foundation for their existence, since without people to support it, revolution has no meaning.

Viet Cong Population Controls

The isolation of the rural society from the government is approached in two ways: (1) the population is prevented from mixing with and thereby becoming contaminated by the GVN-influenced populace in the secure areas, and (2) the lower levels of government are intimidated, neutralized, or eliminated.† This section will deal with those controls used to create a subject population as nearly free from "reactionary" and "antirevolutionary" elements as possible.

* Pike, op cit. Explanatory commentary in parentheses have been added.

† The second of these methods is taken up in Chapter 5.

Counterintelligence Requirements

Generally speaking, the more elaborate and restrictive controls over the movements of the rural citizenry are not imposed until the population has passed into the fully Viet Cong-controlled state. Up to this point, the Viet Cong are forced to exercise their control on an individual rather than a group basis. This imposes a considerable burden on counterintelligence activities and requires an intimate knowledge of the population. It also imposes a requirement for the identification, isolation, and constant surveillance of all individuals and families having any connection with or commitment to the existing society. The cultural and economic patterns of the hamlet and village must be thoroughly known and understood, and correct behavior patterns for each person and household must be established and held within the limits required for the particular stage of the conflict.

The vulnerability of the Viet Cong to penetration and apprehension is greatest in the earlier phases of infiltration and organizational development, when the population has not as yet been intimidated nor made fully aware of its future predicament. The Viet Cong emphasis during this period is therefore on the elimination of GVN spies. Those who for economic or other reasons travel frequently to the GVN-controlled towns and cities are prime suspects. Other elements of the population with either a significant commitment to the GVN or with simply the opportunity for contact with government officials also come under surveillance. This surveillance extends beyond the village to the cities and towns where the actions of suspected individuals are closely watched for contacts with GVN intelligence agents. The Viet Cong are particularly concerned about dependents or other relatives of GVN officials or military personnel. Enemies of the revolution, such as landlords, rich peasants, and their dependents, are also likely candidates for surveillance. Religious organizations, particularly the Hoa Hao and Catholics, are often referred to in captured documents as having harbored GVN spies. Students living in town or commuting to and from town, bus and Lambretta drivers, traders taking produce to and from the market, and finally any one who frequents the central market may be suspect. Thus, even the housewife comes under surveillance.

Population Control Techniques

As the influence of the Viet Cong expands, alternatives open up to it for relief from some of the severe problems of surveillance required as long as the population movement patterns remain uncontrolled. At the point where the Viet Cong challenge the GVN to oppose its authority,

several types of controls make their appearance. The most important and effective of these controls is the interfamily cell, which utilizes existing interfamily relationships, and therefore does not unduly interfere with the normal and necessary activities of the population. Not unlike the classical three-man cell used by the Peoples' Revolutionary Party, the interfamily cell includes families or households in groups of five or seven. Its outward purpose is to draw the member families together in a common bond of brotherhood and service to the revolution. This it probably does in some degree, but its less publicized and more important purpose is to create a powerful surveillance method, which is largely self-administering. Although the head of one family is usually assigned the task of leading the interfamily group, each family is held responsible for the actions of the others. Thus, each family constitutes a separate channel of information on suspicious movements of any and all members of the other families in the group. This simple device needs only occasional testing to determine if it is operating effectively. If it is not, appropriate warnings are made and "re-education" sessions are held to ensure that the errors are not repeated.*

Some of the more basic population control devices used include restricting all those suspected of collaboration (or even potential collaboration) with the GVN to the confines of the hamlet residential area. These persons are publicly denounced, and the other residents and Viet Cong cadres are required to report on their activities. In some cases, written permission is required to leave the hamlet. Only the female members of trusted families are allowed to go to markets in the GVN area. All communication routes are under constant surveillance to intercept unauthorized movement of any kind. Hamlet militia assigned to this task are also used to prevent essential foodstuffs from leaving the hamlet and to collect taxes from traders and commercial transportation. GVN-issued ID cards are confiscated, with the effect that whatever his true affiliation, anyone reaching GVN-controlled areas is suspected by the GVN of being a member of the Viet Cong.

Within this formidable set of controls, the Viet Cong are much more secure from GVN intelligence agents. Taxes are easier to collect, and labor is easier to recruit.

* "Re-education" usually consists of one or more short (several days) educational sessions in which the Viet Cong reiterates the basis for its need. In the earlier stages, re-education sessions are held in relatively quiet Viet Cong-controlled areas or in the jungle. Later on, offenders are taken to areas experiencing heavy military operations, where the "student" is exposed to the more persuasive hazards of frequent bombing and shelling.

Terror

Terror is not often conceived of as a technique of population control, but in the hands of the Viet Cong, it is responsible for much of the demonstrated capability of the Viet Cong to manipulate the rural society to suit its purposes. It is described separately because of its significance in the creation of conditions of insecurity in the rural society.

The use of terror in the control of the rural society is rationalized by the Viet Cong in the following manner:

The warlike and terrorist policies of the enemy forced them (the people of South Vietnam) to take up rifles and begin an armed struggle Thus it is necessary to destroy collaborators; villains, secret agents and spies.*

Violence is required:

- (1) because the enemy's political weaknesses have forced him to resort to force of arms to impose his will, and this must be countered
- (2) because it will enhance the political struggle
- (3) and because it prevents the enemy from mingling freely among the village masses helps isolate him and thin out his ranks†

In the early phases of the Viet Cong insurgency, the use of terror was restricted, reflecting Viet Cong appreciation of the reaction of the average rural citizen to violence. There is no sign that the leadership shares this repugnance; however, until the major portion of the population is irrevocably committed to the cause and fully motivated to its successful conclusion, the use of terror is closely controlled.

During the period of Viet Cong organizational development, terror is applied almost entirely on an individual basis: execution, murder, mysterious disappearance. These reflect the vulnerability of the

* The reader is referred to the document, "A Study of Viet Cong use of Terror," revised and updated in March 1965, produced by the USAID Mission in Vietnam, for a much more detailed treatment.

† Ibid., p. 5.

individual in an open society and the ease with which terror can be applied. Terror tactics are applied with discrimination in the process of dividing the society. The general public is rarely involved during this period except those members who are GVN intelligence agents and informers. Extensive discussion in captured documents on the subject of who is most likely to be an informer is indicative of the vital concern of the Viet Cong with regard to the need for secrecy, as well as a highly developed sensitivity regarding the types of people most susceptible to aiding the GVN. Being identified by the Viet Cong as a GVN spy is tantamount to immediate execution, since the Viet Cong are serious about their internal security.

The Viet Cong attempt to get as much psychological impact out of the elimination process as possible. In the rural areas, opponents of the revolution are sometimes given a pseudo-public trial wherein the sins of the victim are clearly enunciated for the benefit of others in the community who might harbor similar "traitorous" thoughts. Under these circumstances, execution usually took place in front of the assembled population. A more common simplified method consists of pinning on the shirt of the departed a note listing his misdeeds. Mysterious disappearance under circumstances arranged by the Viet Cong to make clear to its audience the reasons for the disappearance is also used to obtain the desired effect.

Group or mass terrorism is a phenomenon of the more advanced phases of the conflict. It is also used with discrimination, but in this case, it is applied to those who have managed to escape the influence of the Viet Cong. Since the residents of GVN controlled areas are at this late stage made up almost entirely of those who actively oppose the Viet Cong, the latter have little concern for the incidental loss of life. The purpose is to impress on the bulk of those remaining under the control of the GVN that their cause is lost.

The use of mass terrorism usually requires greater resources than the individual assassination, but the targets are no less thoroughly selected. Their execution requires meticulous planning and excellent coordination because large units must be assembled and the process must be protected from premature disclosure of intent either through informers or from observation during preparation. The classical example of this type of terror occurred during the 1968 Tet offensive, but the tactic has been common in the rural hamlets and villages for several years. Its effect has been demonstrated in the mass abandonment

of new life hamlets, strategic hamlets, and refugee and Chieu Hoi centers. These demonstrations have an impact on many more people than those immediately involved. The way is thereby prepared for the "peaceful" (nonviolent) takeover of entire hamlets and towns.

The Hamlet Resident Survey eloquently demonstrates the startling and massive extent of Viet Cong terrorism. Of the 54 ostensibly secure hamlets surveyed, only 16 indicated that their hamlet was secure enough for their officials to sleep there at night.* Of these, only seven were reported as having no incidents and virtually no evidence of Viet Cong activity in them. The arm of the Viet Cong is clearly a long one, and the effect of fear extends far beyond those hamlets under Viet Cong control. Since the Tet offensive, it must have penetrated the last remaining sanctuaries of the GVN, including Saigon.

Role of the Viet Cong Guerrilla

To achieve the desired degree of control, there must be a concomitant expansion of guerrilla activity that follows the development and expansion of counterintelligence and civil controls. In the earliest stages, there is no military requirement in any conventional sense; requirements can be satisfied by assassination teams and small security units at the hamlet and village levels. These units provide security for meetings and serve as tax collectors, assassins, and intimidators. For these functions, the size of the local unit appears to remain small even in the more advanced stages of the conflict. Recruits from among the more skillful in the hamlet and village units are then brought together to form platoons, companies, and battalions of paramilitary units at the village, district, and provincial levels. In the final stages, these units are further aggregated into so-called main force elements of regiment and sometimes division size that operate against larger targets over a number of provinces.

Rarely do the larger forces travel as a unit. They are brought together only at the target itself and move about in elements of platoon and company size to provide a maximum amount of flexibility in targeting with a minimum of vulnerability. All but the largest units are housed and fed by the hamlet residents in Viet Cong-controlled areas. The basic military philosophy includes base areas with "stepping stones"--controlled hamlets--strung out from these base areas to facilitate the movement of Viet Cong units for some considerable distance without disclosing their presence or intent. Although used to a

* Appendix A.

much greater extent for attacking GVN and allied forces and installations, the larger Viet Cong and North Vietnamese units are also used to capture entire hamlets and towns. They are also the instruments of mass terror tactics used against the larger towns, cities, and refugee, and Chieu Hoi centers to attempt to compel those who have escaped Viet Cong influence to give up the fight and return to their farms and villages.

This impressive set of controls is enforced by counterintelligence, civil, and military functions to provide an appropriate environment for such activities as land reform. As indicated earlier, Viet Cong land distribution must await a time when these controls can assure some continuity of possession on the part of recipients. Rent reduction, on the other hand, can be accomplished in the earlier stages of control through selective abduction and assassination. In the ultimate condition of total control--the Viet Cong-controlled area--Viet Cong land reform reaches its most refined state; the equal distribution of land and a total absence of landlords.

Viet Cong Requirements for Support

The massive resources currently employed by the Viet Cong give some hint of the character and extent of support they require from the rural society. In the present advanced phase of the insurgency, which entails the use of large military units, certain requirements, such as leadership and standardized modern weapons, are better met through outside sources (e.g., North Vietnam). Captured documents and interrogations indicate, however, that most other needs of the Viet Cong are supplied by the rural society indigenous to South Vietnam. For a conflict approaching the proportions of conventional war against a government externally supported at a level of \$2.5 billion per month and 600,000 fighting men, one can only conclude that the burden placed on the rural population supporting the Viet Cong in Vietnam must be substantial.

The Viet Cong requirements for recruits and intelligence have been described earlier. This section deals with the extensive requirements of the Viet Cong for funds and labor.

Viet Cong Taxation

It has been estimated that 90 percent of the funds required to support the revolution have, in the recent past at least, been derived from the indigenous population. The negative psychology of taxation has given rise to questions as to how the Viet Cong is able to support the expanded

scale of conflict without at the same time alienating large segments of the population. It is clear from the data that such alienation has occurred and, if anything, is getting worse. Unfortunately, the character of Viet Cong taxation prohibits even remotely accurate estimates of the Viet Cong's financial requirement. The reason for this may be found in the Viet Cong process of accumulating funds, the complexity of which equals that of other aspects of Viet Cong organization.

In the first instance, money is by no means the only or even the most important contribution demanded of the Viet Cong subject population. Food, labor, medical supplies, arms and ammunition, fighting men, leadership, and spiritual support are requirements of an equivalent order. Money gains its real perspective when one considers the rather obvious, but somewhat deceiving, fact that it is money that gives the Viet Cong access to these other resources required for revolution. Money alone, particularly in the early stages of the conflict, is not the only avenue for obtaining and controlling extensive resources. As a medium of exchange, however, it allows the Viet Cong to convert one resource into another, and what may be of at least equal importance, it relieves the Viet Cong from having to commandeer their requirements. By appearing to pay their own way, the Viet Cong create the desired image of legitimacy and avoid the likely negative psychological impact that could be expected from stealing or acquisition by force of arms. In addition, money allows the Viet Cong considerably more freedom in the selection and manipulation of sources. For example, medical supplies are sometimes procured in bulk, with truck transportation conveniently provided by the commercial concern with whom the transaction is made.

There are several requirements of the Viet Cong that can be satisfied without the use of cash or the movement of goods. Labor to produce and transport food is probably the most prominent example of this type of requirement. Funds and materials are also obtained in limited amounts from contributions. Local Viet Cong units at the hamlet and village operate under a concept of self-sufficiency and thus may be entirely supported in such a manner. The revolutionary method used by the Viet Cong to obtain arms and ammunition through capture is well known historically. Economic controls also tend to complicate the view of Viet Cong taxation. In the liberated areas, the Viet Cong fixes prices for staples at substantially below the market value for the same items in the GVN areas, with the result that they make their piasters go considerably further without having to increase taxes. All these factors taken together give some idea of the problems presented in attempting to determine the psychological impact of Viet Cong taxation on the subject population. There is little doubt that a negative effect is present, but it is clear that the significant role played by Viet Cong

taxation in the insurgency cannot be represented adequately with a simple set of statistics. The discussion that follows emphasizes the Viet Cong taxation philosophy. Sources of income and types of taxes, assessment, collection, controls, and penalties are covered only to the extent that they are needed to provide insight into the methods used.

Viet Cong Tax Structure. It appears that every effort is made to lessen the burden placed on the poor, which is the main target of Viet Cong subversion. The tax structure takes into account the ability of the individual to pay in much the same way as income tax structures in the more sophisticated societies. At or below subsistence level, for example, no tax is required of the farmer. However, ". . . any farmer in a Viet Cong-controlled area with a larger than two hectare holding found that the marginal net return to his effort on any land greater than that necessary to provide subsistence to his family was almost zero."* Where the individual farmer and his family were of questionable utility or loyalty, the tax was set to exceed his ability to pay. The tax therefore had the effect of encouraging the farmer--particularly the upper middle peasant, rich peasant, and landlord--to give up his land. The farmer had the choice of paying the exorbitant tax, giving up his land "voluntarily", or leaving the area. Whatever choice he made, it served the purpose of the Viet Cong.

It was further observed that other types of taxes and other sources were apparently designed to bear a major portion of the burden. The Viet Cong take advantage of the vulnerability of local commercial and industrial activities whose source materials are located in remote areas. Most prominent among these activities are large scale agricultural industries producing rubber, forest products, copra, sugar, and other crops for export. Other commercial activities of this general type concerned with the processing (milling) or marketing of rice are also prominent targets. Access to these targets is gained primarily through the interdiction of vehicular and shipping traffic on the roads and canals, which also brings the Viet Cong into a position to tax all public and commercial transportation. Chinese bus and trucking companies operating out of and between secure areas thus become major contributors. Such capitalistic activities are allowed the privilege of continuing operations until such time as the area is completely under Viet Cong domination, when--if they are allowed to continue operations at all--they are reorganized along Communist lines and reoriented to serve the revolution more directly.

* "Viet Cong Economics," R. L. Sansom, April 1967, working paper produced for USAID, Saigon.

As indicated earlier, the data little more than hint at the extent to which these nonfarm activities support the revolution, but there is every reason to believe that the support is substantial. A captured document covering one Viet Cong district's finances gives the breakdown shown in Table 2.

Table 2

SOURCES OF VIET CONG INCOME FOR ONE QUARTER OF 1967*

Source	Percent of Receipts
Agricultural production tax	18.1%
Industrial tax	1.1
Commercial tax	0.1
Trading tax	46.4
Town entrance and exit taxes	0.1
Rubber plantation tax	26.0
Communication and transportation	0.1
Financial support for the resistance (contributions)	7.0
Sale of forest products	1.0

* In the data, a substantial variation was observed in the proportions of income by source and by season, as one would expect from the absence or uneven distribution (particularly in the Delta) of certain taxable endeavors such as forest products and rubber plantations. However, other types of commercial activities indigenous to the Delta seem to create a similar set of opportunities.

The agricultural production tax provides a substantial proportion of income, but is eclipsed considerably by the trading tax and to a lesser extent by the rubber plantation tax. This fact partially supports a hypothesis that other sources of income constitute a larger proportion of total Viet Cong income than the agricultural production tax. The implication is perhaps self-evident that the Viet Cong exploit all sources to the maximum, but probably make a special effort to ease the burden on the poor peasant. While it remains to be proved that the non-Communist segments of the population and the economy actually pay the major portion of the cost of insurgency, it is clear that the Viet Cong make every effort to see that they do.

The Viet Cong do not tax land per se. Having used the claim of oppressive GVN land taxes extensively, the Viet Cong could not be expected to institute a land tax of its own when there clearly is no necessity to do so, since collections from sources other than land taxes may be even more effective.

Tax Assessment. Tax assessment is a particularly remarkable process in that the Viet Cong force the subject population to participate in it. To begin with, Viet Cong finance and economic cadres, together with their front counterparts, using whatever records of ownership and tenancy that they may have conveniently inherited from their GVN predecessors, make a private estimate of the productive capacity of each household. From this point on, the assessment process is public. A meeting of all villagers is held. The people are given appropriate propaganda regarding the importance of taxation to the Viet Cong, and the meeting proceeds somewhat as follows:

" . . . it used the (Farmers) Association to make a census of the members' land so that the "common decision" policy and the tax rates would work out properly; the people couldn't make false statements about their property because everyone in the Association knows the exact amount of land everyone else had. Common decision policy is like this: cadres would hold a debate with the people (to appear democratic) in order to arrive at a common decision on certain issues, then pledge to carry it out together. For example, to decide on the amount of soldier-salary tax, economic cadres would choose the highest yield from each acre of land in the village as a representative yield for the whole village."*

* RAND Interview AG 542, p. 7. See Appendix C.

Each family was assessed on the basis of the most productive land in the village, and allowed a deduction (apparently liberal) for each member of the family. The net result was: "Apart from the family's ration, the peasant would have no other rice paddy left."*

Tax Rates. The actual rates applied to the peasants "surplus" ranged from 6 percent for those families with only a subsistence productive capacity to 35 percent for those families with the highest productive capacity.† Thus, while virtually everyone paid something, the real targets were those families who were above the subsistence level. It is perhaps surprising that the percentages are this low. As illustrated in the quotations just given, the Viet Cong made these percentages largely meaningless and certainly a radical understatement of the actual tax obligation. While on the surface, the rates have the appearance of being light, in fact the tax had the effect of confiscating virtually all production except that necessary for survival.

Of the small surplus left, the family found itself confronted with still other taxes that compounded its already impoverished situation. Taxes were collected on the way to and from the market. Animals such as water buffaloes and pigs taken to the market were assessed as high as 50 percent of the market price.‡ Luxury items such as cigarettes originating in GVN-held territories were taxed at 100 percent of the purchase price.

Tax Collection. The collection, as has been indicated, while easiest in the tightly controlled Viet Cong base areas, was still performed with remarkable effectiveness in the contested areas and even in GVN controlled areas.

The technique of gaining access to those living in secure areas by interdicting them in transit has been mentioned, as has the vulnerability of the individual in a free society to intimidation and assassination. Both of these methods of getting to, and extorting from, individuals in apparently secure GVN areas are used apparently with great effectiveness. The areas undergoing pacification are treated in a similar way. Residents

* Ibid.

† An explanation of the complexities of deductions and calculations is too detailed to be appropriate here. Among the deductions, for example, is a fairly complicated calculation to account for various types of crop losses.

‡ Rice was on the forbidden list and had to be sold to the Viet Cong (if sold at all) at reduced prices.

of hamlets theoretically protected by RD Cadre or Regional and Popular Forces are contacted in, or in transit to, their rice fields. The collection contacts are also made by the secret Viet Cong infrastructure at night in these same hamlets. In the contested case, armed attacks are used as a primary vehicle. Tax collection cadres take advantage of even momentary interruptions in GVN control to collect "back" taxes and accompany most if not all armed units on missions that bring them into contact with the population in the secure areas.

Contributions. Several interesting aspects of the mechanics of taxation reveal the exceptional level of sophistication reached by the Viet Cong in the taxation process. These occur in the design of the tax itself; in the appeals used; and in the assessment, accounting, and collection phases. Voluntary contributions, for example, constitute an important element in the tax structure, but are never fully represented in the accounting of income that appears in captured documents. They are by no means an insignificant source of income, even though they are rarely in the form of cash. They take many forms, ranging from a meal and overnight housing for transient militia or main force guerrilla units to the confiscation of the belongings left behind by families of landlords and rich peasants that have defected to the GVN-controlled areas. Of greatest significance in this category of contributions is the so-called self-sufficiency concept. All households are called on to set aside a little rice each day to provide for troops operating in the area. In addition, all part-time contributors to the cause support themselves--including the civilian labor used in transporting supplies. Local cadre and other full-time Viet Cong members at the hamlet level must be almost entirely self-supporting. The concept of self-sufficiency is mentioned frequently in captured documents. It is estimated that contributions in "kind" (food and housing) may constitute as much as 20 percent of the gross income of the Viet Cong.

Practically any excuse is acceptable as an appeal for contributions. Disaster relief for unfortunate citizens of neighboring areas who have lost their homes, belongings, or source of income as a result of bombing, shelling, or defoliation is frequently mentioned. Significantly, the funds obtained are rarely, if ever, spent in the district in which they are collected.

Bonds and loans are another form of contribution significant in the commitment they imply to the success of the revolution.* Since 1963, the

* An interesting sidelight is contained in a reference to GVN counterfeiting of Viet Cong bonds and circulating them in large numbers.

Viet Cong have sold various types of certificates redeemable for cash with interest (2 percent) after five years. The certificates are negotiable, and can be used in a limited way as a medium of exchange. The face value of the note is in terms of a rice equivalent, and hence, the bond serves as a hedge against inflation since it is paid on the basis of the price of rice at maturity.

Economic Controls. Viet Cong economic controls have an effect equivalent to taxes, since they act to increase income, but conveniently lack the stigma of taxation. This phenomenon is succinctly described by a RAND respondent:

"Confiscating buying" means confiscating the goods illegally brought to the GVN-controlled zone, then rebuying them at lower prices. The confiscating-buying cadres would wait at the crossroads leading to the GVN-controlled zone for those who carried agricultural products away to sell. Let me give you an example: One guy was caught carrying some chickens with a view to selling them in the GVN-controlled area; the chickens were then confiscated by the arresting cadres, who then told him that they would buy these chickens, but only at a price equivalent to the labor cost spent on raising them. They would explain: "This is the liberated zone; so all its resources, whether animals or money, belong to the Front. Consequently, these resources are confiscated and returned to the Front; but the Front is not exploiting the people as the colonialists have been doing, so the Front is prepared to pay you for the labor you have spent in raising these fowls."*

The Viet Cong self-righteously deplore the inflation of the piaster that they themselves have helped to create.† Prices of products produced in Viet Cong-controlled areas are fixed substantially below prices of the

* Rand Interview AG 444, p. 10.

† The economic isolation of the GVN is openly mentioned in Viet Cong literature as an important element of Viet Cong strategy. Hence, the creation of inflationary pressures must be considered a deliberate act on their part to reduce the value of GVN resources and to create hardships for residents in GVN controlled areas.

same products in the GVN areas, thus motivating the residents to market their surpluses in GVN-controlled areas. This motivation is so strong that no doubt some farmers succeed in the endeavor but as illustrated above, many, if not most, are required to sell their produce to the Viet Cong at prices ranging from 20 to 50 percent below the GVN market price.

Food Production and Transportation

At this stage of the conflict with its intensified requirements for logistical support, forced labor has emerged as a substantial factor in the life of the rural society of the Viet Cong-controlled and, to a somewhat lesser degree, the contested areas. In the early phases of the conflict, there is obviously little need for the production or the movement of large quantities of ammunition and food. Thus, forced labor is not introduced until the terminal stages of the conflict. The requirement is generated as the widespread military units are gradually aggregated into even larger forces to take on targets of increasing significance. So-called rear area operations are still conducted by clandestine sapper units such as those employed so effectively in Saigon during the 1968 Tet offensive. These remain largely self-sufficient. It is the large main force units that require the massive application of civilian labor.

In more conventional types of conflict, military logistical functions are carried on much as they are now in the Republic of Vietnam by the United States and the GVN, using highly trained military support organizations. The resources available to the Viet Cong for this purpose, as with any indigenous revolutionary movement, are limited. It becomes necessary to involve the population more extensively and more directly in the conflict.

Labor is required for the production of food and for the transportation of supplies. In the current phases of the conflict, virtually all except the aged, infirm, infants, and suspected traitors are involved in one way or another in the support of the revolution. Of those who are not occupied with military duties, most are employed in one or the other of these two occupations. Captured documents indicate that from 50 to 75 percent of the population remaining in the liberated areas are involved in these activities.

The production of food, especially rice, becomes as vital as firing a rifle. Each family and each individual is assessed as to its production capacity. Overoptimistic production goals are established, and the performance of each person and family is closely watched. Emulation, led by

the youth, becomes the basic theme and incentive. All other interests, including that of land ownership, are subordinated to the one primary goal of bringing the insurgency to its conclusion. The commitment of the Viet Cong to this final phase is substantial, since the burdens of a conventional war cannot be sustained indefinitely, and a great sense of urgency pervades all recent documents of the Viet Cong, indicating its apparent appreciation of this fact.

The transport labor force is organized primarily by the military unit being served, although recruitment for both activities is performed by the civilian (administrative) cadre remaining in the hamlet. Each able-bodied hamlet resident must allocate a certain share of his time to assisting in the transport function. Usually it consists of from three to five months and is adjusted to seasonal requirements for his presence in the rice fields and the requirements of the Viet Cong. The transport labor force is classified into three main groups.

Tremendous effort and organization lie behind the often dramatic success of the Viet Cong military units. Behind the more visible transport laborers are an equally massive effort and organization to produce the food and other supplies needed by the military forces.

Chapter 5

INSECURITY AND THE ADMINISTRATION OF LAND AFFAIRS

Insecurity, together with other factors discussed in Working Paper Volume II, Administration of Land Affairs, brought the GVN land reform program to a near standstill in 1961. With the major portion of the land area of Vietnam either contested or under Viet Cong control, the net effect of the insurgency on the administration of land affairs is to restrict severely the type and extent of land reform measures that can be effectively applied and administered.

A primary requirement of any revolutionary movement is for the existing government to have an image of corruption, oppression, or indifference in the eyes of the governed. Contributing to this image must be an inability, particularly at the local level, to perform normal administrative functions. The strategy of the Viet Cong in this area is to foster this image, and through the selective application of terror to prevent, or at least inhibit, local officials from physically carrying out their responsibilities.

The Viet Cong strategy is focused on the local hamlet and village leadership. This reasoning is based upon the fact that the hamlet and village chiefs are closest to the target rural society and thus constitute the image of government to the people. Conveniently, they are also the most vulnerable to intimidation and assassination. Almost as vital to the Viet Cong is any threat to their internal security that may arise from the local police in the form of agents and informers. Other secondary targets include any activity that demonstrates a real understanding by the GVN of the rural situation. Such activities automatically become the targets of concerted efforts by the Viet Cong to eliminate them. In this category of activity are elections of all types, pacification, rural development activities (including credit, agricultural extension services, educational facilities), and land reform.

Since the GVN land reform threatens one of the primary means used by the Viet Cong to create division in the rural society and to gain its support, the Viet Cong have made every effort to prevent its successful

implementation. Land administration, for the reason that land reform must be based on it, thus takes on a greater significance to the Viet Cong than most other routine administrative functions of government.

The Image of Government

The image of GVN oppression used by the Viet Cong in its propaganda appears to be derived from the performance of hamlet and village officials during the Diem period. In 1956, apparently because of dissidence and Viet Cong subversion in the rural population, Diem replaced the elected village council with appointed officials. This move placed in a position of local authority officials who were responsive to the interests of the central government rather than the interests of the people. Combined with the distance from the seat of power and the lack of adequate administrative controls, this seems to have created opportunities for corruption, oppression, and indifference on the part of hamlet and village officials. The RAND interviews which were conducted among former Viet Cong are replete with examples of the image given to the people by the GVN officials of the time:

"The officials in the hamlet under Diem were cruel towards the people. They liked to threaten them and they accepted bribes from the people, they falsely accused them as Viet Cong--they did so deliberately to force the accused person to pay them; and they rented the public rice fields which they should have distributed to the people; and pocketed the rent. When the strategic hamlet was set up, they forced each villager, young and old, to cut down trees to get wood for the fence and to build a certain length of the fence. Some very old people were forced to do this hard labor."*

"They were corrupt. They accepted bribes, threatened the villagers and exploited them. The villagers are simple. They judge and evaluate the GVN through the actions of the GVN local officials."†

* RAND Interview AG-1, p. 12. See Appendix C.

† RAND Interview, AG-54, p. 4.

"The villagers hated them because they accepted bribes from the people. But they couldn't do anything to these Village Council members. When the Front gained control of the village, the Viet Cong killed a number of the Village Council. The rest fled to the GVN outposts."*

"The government made loans to the villagers and gave them peanuts and fertilizers. For every one hundred bags of fertilizer the Village Council took about 30 bags. They helped their relatives to get loans from the government, and they loaned the money obtained in that way to other villagers. For every one hundred piasters loaned they got ten piasters every month as interest."†

"The GVN helped people with fertilizer, money (loans), hogs, and cement. I didn't benefit by them because when my turn came everything was gone. The officials had priority to get them. The people came after. There were people who got help but they didn't get much. People complained, "The officials took advantage of their position and took all for themselves." I didn't see any aid from the Americans. I didn't see the Americans come to my village."‡

"The GVN officials didn't do anything to help the poor farmers. Another thing that made the people dissatisfied with the local officials was that the villagers knew that the GVN had put aside a very large sum of money to pay the people for their labor and to compensate those whose rice-fields or orchards were lost because the agrovillage was built on them. But the villagers never got a cent of this money."‡

Perhaps more damning even than the evident corruption was a lack of appreciation for the role of government at the local level.

"Whereas (in contrast to the Viet Cong) the GVN local officials didn't mix with the villagers, and so they didn't know what the wishes, aspirations, and thoughts of the villagers were. This is why they offended the people and weren't respected by them."§

* RAND Interview AG-80, p. 5, See Appendix C.

† RAND Interview AG-444, p. 2.

‡ RAND Interview DT-109, p. 19.

§ RAND Interview DT-109, p. 19, Explanatory comment added.

What remains now in the form of corruption and indifference in government at the local level is not evident from the available data, but the timing of the corruption and indifference in the local administrations under Diem was most advantageous for the Viet Cong, for it apparently provided a convenient focal point for the Viet Cong strategy of isolating the government from the people during the critical Viet Cong developmental period from 1955 to 1963.

The Role of Terror in Isolating the GVN

The elected hamlet and village governments that have come into being since the fall of Diem appear to have a much closer rapport with and a better reputation among the people. The effect has been to threaten the GVN image of oppression which is fostered by the Viet Cong. The importance of eliminating this contradiction is reflected in the response of the Viet Cong, which has been to upgrade GVN representatives as targets for assassination. Table 3 provides a breakdown of casualties incurred within the GVN administration. While the data did not permit the identification of GVN land affairs personnel, they did indicate the heavy concentration of the Viet Cong on the GVN administrative leadership. In this category are RD cadre, Chieu Hoi, and candidates for hamlet and village elections, as well as hamlet and village leaders. Next to the representations of the central government--many of whom (police, RD cadre, refugees) are located at the hamlet level--the hamlets were the hardest hit, followed by the villages, with the province officials the most secure. It may also be seen that the casualty figures took a big jump in December. No doubt this trend continued in 1968 with the Tet and subsequent offensives.

Casualty figures do not, however, reveal the extent of the effect that these acts of terror have on the willingness and ability of the GVN official to carry out his responsibilities. Of the 54 relatively secure hamlets in which the Hamlet Resident Survey was conducted, only sixteen indicated that the hamlet was sufficiently secure that the hamlet officials could sleep there at night. During 1967, Viet Cong acts of terror were reported in nine of these 16 hamlets, leaving only seven apparently free of overt Viet Cong activity. Only eight of the 37 villages included in the Village Chief Survey reported that their officials were free from Viet Cong intimidation. Seventy percent of the villages reported that Viet Cong terrorism of some kind had occurred in the confines of the village during the year 1967. The hazards of administering the rural society are apparently further compounded by the presence of extensive enemy military activity, which was reported in almost half of the villages surveyed. Over 70 percent of the village chiefs considered insecurity as their number one

Table 3
 REPORTED GVN AND CIVILIAN CASUALTIES OF THE VIET CONG
 1967

	<u>Jan</u>	<u>Feb</u>	<u>Mar</u>	<u>Apr</u>	<u>May</u>	<u>Jun</u>	<u>Jul</u>	<u>Aug</u>	<u>Sep</u>	<u>Oct</u>	<u>Nov</u>	<u>Dec</u>	<u>Total</u>
National level													
GVN officials and representatives	4	7	10	13	8	4	5	2	9	11	11	7	91
Police	14	29	34	55	35	51	56	44	40	58	103	62	581
Dependents, U.S. civilians, managers, and others	9	3	0	7	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	23
RD cadre	1	3	98	60	33	114	33	30	77	24	183	92	748
Chieu Hoi (returnees)	1	4	17	15	12	26	3	67	14	2	7	19	187
Refugees	0	0	10	13	32	0	1	23	9	31	162	516	797
Religious leaders	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>16</u>
Subtotal	29	47	173	165	123	196	98	168	151	128	468	697	2,443
Province													
Provincial officials	0	5	1	0	3	1	0	2	0	1	0	2	15
RF/PF	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	3
Other	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>
Subtotal	0	6	1	0	3	1	0	4	0	1	0	2	18
District	1	0	6	0	0	3	2	0	0	4	1	0	17
Village													
Village chief or deputy	1	1	1	0	5	10	3	9	3	10	14	2	59
Village councilmen	0	0	0	4	13	3	1	1	1	3	2	4	32
Village officials	3	0	2	7	7	0	0	3	3	2	6	7	40
Candidates	0	0	1	35	5	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	41
Dependents and staff	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>8</u>
Subtotal	4	1	4	46	33	13	5	13	7	15	26	13	180
Hamlet													
Hamlet chief or deputy	12	21	15	15	19	15	15	20	25	24	34	17	232
Hamlet officials	3	5	15	5	2	4	2	5	7	14	7	14	83
Combat youth	3	1	23	16	2	6	9	15	23	5	0	6	109
Candidates	0	0	0	0	6	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	7
Dependents and staff	<u>1</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>7</u>	<u>5</u>	<u>0</u>	<u>15</u>
Subtotal	19	29	53	36	29	26	26	40	55	50	46	37	446
Civilians	67	16	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	83
TOTAL	120	99	237	247	188	239	131	225	213	198	541	749	3,187

Source: Records of the Public Safety Division of CORDS, Saigon. Casualty figures include those assassinated, wounded, or abducted. Figures are uncorrected and contain a small number of duplicate and erroneous reports of numbers and types. Some individuals may be listed as abducted and later as wounded or assassinated; hence they may appear twice.

problem. This is even more striking when one considers that SRI's surveys were limited to those that were considered to be relatively secure.

These stark statistics give some indication of the burden of terror borne by the local government officials. What effect this has on their ability to perform their functions is, however, difficult to establish with the data available. They are restricted in their ability to communicate with the people, and it can be expected that any function requiring contact with the people in those areas influenced by the Viet Cong exposes the official to intimidation and possibly assassination. Land reform and its associated administrative requirements imply virtually complete freedom of movement to attend to the identification of land with owners and tenants and to assure compliance with the law. Any threat of violence in this case has the effect of severely restricting the ability of the local administration to respond to any land reform measure that requires its presence in the countryside.

The present scale of the conflict, in which the Viet Cong conducts deep penetration raids to eliminate or force the evacuation of entire pacification teams and to apply tactics of mass terrorism to the population, imposes a substantially increased vulnerability for all GVN representatives and records. Viet Cong counterpacification doctrine promulgated during 1967 and applied before and after Tet calls for the execution of all those individuals who have been identified by covert Viet Cong agents as having assisted the GVN. Lists of those to be assassinated, at least in some instances (e.g., Hué), are prepared before the attack, and the offenders are sought out during the momentary period when the population in the cities and towns come under Viet Cong control. In such cases, the targets include the RD cadre and other pacification personnel as well as GVN officials and their families at every level. Thus, the problems of insecurity that have affected the hamlet, village, and district administrations for many years have been brought to the province capitals and the large cities.

As indicated, the ability to move freely in the remote areas is necessary for most functions of land reform and land administration. The effect of being unable to perform these functions has tended to create an administrative stagnation that permeates all levels of government. To be useful, statistics and records must represent the true land situation to some major degree. Without adequate data on which to base national and provincial level planning, it is not surprising that these functions operate under serious handicaps.

Destruction of Records

Extensive Viet Cong land reform and the concomitant disruption in the continuity of occupancy of GVN-recognized owners and tenants creates a fundamental problem for the local administration since it means that where land is reclaimed from the Viet Cong, all records must be renewed or reconstituted. This entails a search for the parties to the contracts, many of whom may have either left the area as refugees or as Viet Cong or have been killed in the course of the conflict. Where records have been lost or destroyed, the administrative problem is further compounded in that boundaries must be re-established and agreed on by the parties and complete new records generated. The effect of both insecurity and Viet Cong distribution of land on the record keeping function is revealed in the Provincial Land Office Survey. No records of land ownership exist for one-third of the villages, either at the village office or the province office. Only one-half of the village offices have land register books.

A study of the behavior patterns of the Viet Cong relative to the GVN records indicates that some value may be derived by the Viet Cong from the destruction of records of virtually any type. Of special interest to the Viet Cong apparently are census data and police records, which allow the government to identify individuals and their association with the Viet Cong and thus provide access to them through relatives and friends. The administrative task of reconstituting land records is substantial and the Viet Cong can and frequently do destroy or take them when the opportunity arises.* There is no indication, however, that the Viet Cong conducts attacks on village, district, or province headquarters with record destruction as its primary goal. In fact, the village Administrative Chief Survey indicates that in many cases, records were destroyed as long ago as 1945.

Several RAND respondents noted in passing that the Viet Cong were inclined to preserve GVN rental and ownership registers for their own use in classifying the populace and in estimating the productivity of

*

For example, during the Tet offensive all of the land records were destroyed in two province cities (in Hué for Thua Thien, and in Dalat for Tuyen Duc), and heavily damaged in two others (Kien Phuong and Chau Doc). (Memorandum from C. T. Chuong to Mr. Leland E. Fallon, "Losses Suffered by Provincial Land Offices During the Tet Aggression," dated March 13, 1968.)

the individual household for tax purposes. Although the Viet Cong use the so-called common decision policy, which calls on the taxpayer to declare his holdings in public, the Viet Cong need for backup data appears to be conveniently satisfied by the GVN rental and land ownership registers. The tentative conclusion drawn here is that the destruction of records may be accounted for by those cases in which the Viet Cong is pressed for time, and cannot, for one reason or another, take them away with them.

Administrative Information Requirements

A sharp contrast was noted between the GVN and the Viet Cong in the emphasis given to the development of administrative capabilities at the hamlet and village levels. The extensive base of Viet Cong popular support and control over the population is derived almost entirely from the organization of the peasantry. The degree of involvement of the rural populace in the Viet Cong-controlled areas in these functions is indicative of extensive Viet Cong organizational efforts at these levels. Although one of the primary objectives of the RD cadre is to develop effective political institutions in the hamlet,* and there seems to be an increasing emphasis at the national level on strengthening the administrative capacities in the village, there was little evidence in the Hamlet Resident Survey or other surveys that these efforts have as yet had much impact.

Perhaps the most important difference between Viet Cong and GVN organizational efforts (at least earlier ones) is in the generation of information on the target population. Almost every captured Viet Cong document reviewed in the course of the analysis makes reference to the need for information on every member of the target population, ranging from his political background, status of land holdings, and production capacity to the names and political leanings of each relative. Such detailed knowledge is clearly deemed to be essential by the Viet Cong. In contrast, the amount and quality of data apparently available to the GVN on this same population were meager and some of the data were of questionable reliability. The Ferguson-Owens proposal,† which is

* None of the SRI surveys effectively addressed this point. A survey that was planned for Regions I and II was tested at the National Training Center at Vung Tau and in Region II. Preliminary results indicated that democratic political institutions are probably quite primitive and not very effective as yet. Further research seems indicated.

† Ben R. Ferguson and Edgar Owens, "Revolutionary Development in South Vietnam: the Next Step" (unpublished), Saigon, January 2, 1967.

designed to bring about an awareness in the local administration of the great need for such information for planning purposes, is encouraging, as are the census functions of the RD Cadre and Census Grievance Programs. Unfortunately, in all three cases, the programs are of recent origin, and benefits of the latter two have been largely restricted to hamlets undergoing pacification, and, in the case of the first, to a small number of villages in which the Ferguson-Owens concept is under test.

The realities of rural insecurity seem to call for recognition of the vulnerability of the records and the need for their reconstitution where they have been lost or destroyed. Alternatives to overcome record deficiencies are presented in Working Papers, Vol. II.

Appendix A

SECURITY STATUS OF LAND IN THE MEKONG DELTA JANUARY 1968

Appendix A

SECURITY STATUS OF LAND IN THE MEKONG DELTA JANUARY 1968

The sources of data on security conditions in Vietnam included, in addition to the Hamlet Resident and Village Chief surveys conducted in direct support of the project, (1) reports generated by the Hamlet Evaluation System, a responsibility of the Research and Analysis Division of the Civil Office for Revolutionary Development Support (CORDS), U.S. Embassy, Saigon, and (2) the records of incidents initiated by the Viet Cong, held by the Office of the Chief Scientific Adviser, Headquarters, Commander in Chief, Pacific, Hawaii. While essential to the development of an understanding of the impact of the Viet Cong on the rights and responsibilities of the landowner, tenant, and administrator of land affairs, the various Project surveys left many questions unanswered as to whether the data could be generalized to the larger universe of the Mekong Delta. The Hamlet Evaluation System and the CINCPAC incident files provided the essential vehicles without which such generalizations would not have been possible.

Three basic types of data were used in the analysis, each with its own limitations. None was by itself completely adaptable to the requirements set forth above. They include data on existing and past security conditions obtained in the Hamlet Resident and Village Chief surveys, the Hamlet Evaluation System, and reports of incidents involving the Viet Cong. For the reason that the only comprehensive source of data on security conditions at the hamlet level was the Hamlet Evaluation System, all area and provincial data presented on maps are derived from this source. The data presented constitute an interpretation of the original data, designed to the extent possible to reflect the requirements of land reform and land affairs administration. In no case should they be interpreted as a reflection of official GVN or U.S. government opinion or position.

Project Survey Results

The Hamlet Resident and Village Chief surveys provided the basis for estimating the character and, to some degree, the extent of insecurity as it may interfere with the rights and responsibilities of the landowner, tenant, or administrator. Although limited time and competing

requirements for other data did not allow obtaining as much detail on security conditions in the hamlets and villages as wished, the data that were obtained provide significant insight into the types of Viet Cong activities that occur as well as some crude measures of their significance to land reform and land affairs administration.

Table A-1 contains the answers to selected questions from the section on security conditions in the Hamlet Resident Survey. On the first page are given the questions, and a summary of responses by hamlet, as well as for the total of all respondents. Table A-1 was constructed by breaking out and totaling the responses of all respondents in each hamlet surveyed to form 54 separate respondent groups. Each group consisted of an average of 20 respondents. This was done to determine what variation existed in responses to questions on matters of fact concerning Viet Cong activity in the individual hamlet.* As expected, on each such question there was a significant difference of opinion as to whether a specific type of event had occurred. Since only one answer could be correct, the question arose as to which subgroup of respondents was right. This anomaly was resolved by comparing the answers given by the hamlet respondent groups with data on the hamlet available from the Hamlet Evaluation System and from the CINCPAC incident record. The results of this comparison indicated that if three or more respondents in a given hamlet had seen or heard of an event, the event had occurred. Table A-1 was developed using this criterion.† In the latter part of Table A-1, the 54 hamlet respondent groups' collective answers to selected questions on security are compared with the answers to the same questions using a straight tabulation of all respondents. The comparison shows a somewhat less favorable security condition existing in the hamlets than would be interpreted from the straight tabulation, but while the proportions differed, the overall distribution remained roughly the same.

Over 60 percent of the hamlet respondent groups indicated that some fighting had occurred in the village of which their hamlet was a part. Hamlet respondent groups, as well as the total respondent sample, confirmed

* Except questions 165 and 166, which are matters of opinion rather than fact.

† The rationale for the three-respondent criterion is based on the proposition that for reasons of personal bias favoring the Viet Cong, fear of Viet Cong reaction to providing information on their activities, or ignorance of the event, many residents will respond in the negative. "No" in this interpretation is roughly comparable to "not to my knowledge," or "it's none of your business."

Table A-1

HAMLET RESIDENT SURVEY - SELECTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Selected Questions

161. To your knowledge was there any fighting in this village between government forces and the enemy last year (1967)?

Hamlet		Respondent		Response
Number*	Percent	Number	Percent	
34	63	264	31	Yes
		536	63	No
		50	6	Don't know
		850		Total respondents answering

162. Is it safe for a stranger to come to and stay in this hamlet in the daytime?

Hamlet		Respondent		Response
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
8	15	771	90	Yes
		71	8	No
		10	1	Don't know
		850		Total respondents answering

166. Is it safe for a stranger to come to and stay in this hamlet in the nighttime?

Hamlet		Respondent		Response
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
30	56	613	72	Yes
		202	24	No
		36	4	Don't Know
		851		Total respondents answering

167. Are there any members of the hamlet office who leave the hamlet to go and sleep in other places at night?

Hamlet		Respondent		Response
Number	Percent	Number	Percent	
33	61	258	30	Yes
		365	43	No
		228	27	Don't know
		851		Total respondents answering

170. During the last five years, did you hear of any of the following enemy activities?

	Number and Percent of Respondents			
	Yes	No	Don't know	Answering
a. Help the people in the hamlet	(1-2%) [†] 13-2%	718-84%	121-14%	852
b. Stage a demonstration, meeting	(5-9%) 54-6%	708-83%	90-11%	852
c. Conduct propaganda	(24-45%) 191-22%	559-65%	102-12%	852
d. Buy, sell, transport materials and provisions	(1-2%) 23-3%	673-79%	154-18%	850
e. Collect tax and support money	(11-20%) 103-12%	632-74%	116-14%	851
f. Recruit laborers and soldiers	(8-15%) 45-5%	674-79%	132-15%	851

* (U) Number of hamlets in which three or more respondents answered Yes or No.

† (U) Hamlet group responses.

Table A-1 (continued)

Province and Hamlet	Q 161		Stranger Safe		Q167	Q170 Viet Cong				
	Fighting in Village	Q165 Day	Q166 Night	Officials Sleep out	Assist Residents	Organize Demonstrations	Administer Propaganda	Transport Supplies	Collect Taxes	Recruit
	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region IV										
An Giang	Tay Binh			.						
	Hoa Thanh			.						
	Long Dinh					.	.			
	My Thuan									
	Tan Hoa									
	Tan My		.	.						
An Xuyen	Tan Phong B	.			.					.
Ba Xuyen	Hoa My									
	Can Gio									
Bac Lieu	Khuc Treo	.		.	.					.
Chau Doc	Phuoc Thanh	.	.	.	.	
	Phuoc Quan									
	Trung 1									
	Chau Long 2	.		.	.					
Chuong Thien	Vi Thanh	.		.						
Dinh Tuong	An Tri A	.		.	.					
	An Thien 2			.						
	Luong Tri	.	.	.	.	
Go Cong	Giong Ong Ng	.		.	.		.	.	.	.
Kien Giang	Cay Duong	.	.	.	.		.	.	.	.
	So Tai	.		.	.		.	.	.	.
	Dong Phuoc	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.	.
	Xeo Ro 1	.		.	.		.	.	.	.
Kien Hoa	Ap 2 Chau Thanh									
	Binh An	.	.	.	.		.	.		*

Table A-1 (continued)

Province	and	Hamlet	Q161		Stranger Safe		Q167	Q170 Viet Cong				
			Fighting in Village		Q165 Day	Q166 Night	Officials Sleep Out	Assist Residents	Organize Demonstrations	Administer Propaganda	Transport Supplies	Collect Taxes	Recruit
			Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Kien Phong		Dong Thanh	.		.	.				.
		An Phu	.	.	.	.			.	.	.
		Long Thanh B	.			.				.		
Kien Tuong		Ba Ken	.		.	.				.
Phong Dinh		Th. Th. Cai Rang	.							.		
		Thoi My			.	.						
Sa Dec		Vinh Thoi								.		
		An Thanh I				.						
		Long Dinh	.			.						
Vinh Long		Tan Hung	.		.	.					.
		Dinh Binh	.		.	.						
		An Thanh										

Table A-1 (concluded)
 Significant Responses to Selected Questions†

Province	and	Hamlet	Q 161		Stranger Safe		Q167	Q170 Viet Cong					
			Fighting in Village	Yes	No	Q165 Day	Q166 Night	Officials sleep out	Assist Residents	Organize Demonstrations	Administer Propaganda	Transport Supplies	Collect Taxes	Recruit
			Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Region III													
Bien Hoa		Thien Tan	.		.	.				.
		Tan Lai			.	.							
		Tam Hoa			.	.							
Hau Nghia		Ap Dong	.										
Long An		Hoa Thuan 1	.		.	.				.		.
Long Khanh		Nguyen-Hue	.			.				.			
		Bao-Thi	.										
Phuoc Tuy		Phuoc-Thoi	.		.	.				.		.	.
		Phuoc-Lam	.			.				.			
Tay Ninh		Binh-Phong	.		.	.				.			.
		Thai-Ninh	.							.			
		Phuoc Thanh	.		.	.				.			.
Special Capital Zone													
Gia Dinh		Dong Tam 3											
		Dong Tam 7	.	.	.								
		Binh Thieu	.			.							
		An Lac 1	.			.							
		Cho Cau			.	.				.			

NOTE: * indicates three or more respondents answering as indicated.

† Significant response is defined as one in which three or more respondents answered Yes or No, depending on the question.

Source: SRI Hamlet Resident Survey.

that nighttime was significantly less secure than daytime. Whether or not the hamlet officials sleep in their own hamlets appears to be a particularly sensitive indicator of Viet Cong intimidation and threats to local GVN administrators. Slightly more than 60 percent of the hamlet respondent groups and 30 percent of the total respondents claimed that hamlet officials were forced to reside elsewhere than their hamlets at night.

The type of Viet Cong activity that may be expected in the more secure hamlets of the Mekong Delta is listed below in order of frequency of mention.

QUESTION 170

	Yes Answers	
	<u>by Hamlets</u>	<u>by Respondents</u>
Conduct propaganda	45%	22%
Collect taxes and contributions	20%	12%
Stage demonstrations	9%	6%
Recruit laborers and soldiers	15%	5%
Buy, sell, and transport materials	2%	3%
Help the people in the hamlet	2%	2%

The responses to Question 170, when compared with those to Question 161, show characteristic Viet Cong operations typical of the more advanced phases of insurgency, during which the secure hamlets are being subjected to the nonviolent features of the earlier phases, such as infiltration, subversion, and recruitment, to the accompaniment of features of the advanced phases, such as armed attacks. Had the sample been representative of Viet Cong-controlled areas, emphasis could be expected to shift to propaganda, organization, taxes, recruitment, food production, and the transportation of supplies.

The responses to security questions addressed to the Village Chief correspond much more closely to the hamlet respondent groups than to the total respondents, being generally more pessimistic than the latter. From an inspection of Table A-2, it will be obvious that of the hamlets and villages surveyed, most hamlets either had experienced Viet Cong activity in the recent past or were in villages in which the Viet Cong were active. Of the 37 villages, 26 (over 70 percent) reported Viet Cong

Table A-2

VILLAGE ADMINISTRATIVE CHIEF SURVEY - SELECTED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Selected Questions

54. What type of this (fighting in your village between the Viet Cong and Government Military Forces; from Question 53) activity, if any, has taken place in your village during this year? N = 37
- | | | |
|----|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| 0. | Accidental bombing, strafing or shelling of village | <u>13-35%</u> |
| 1. | Accidental defoliation of village land | <u>14-38%</u> |
| 2. | Large battles in village | <u>6-16%</u> |
| 3. | Village or hamlet shot at by Viet Cong | <u>23-62%</u> |
| 4. | Destruction of roads, bridges, or public buildings | <u>18-49%</u> |
| 5. | Kidnapping or intimidation | <u>24-65%</u> |
| 6. | Other | <u>0</u> |
58. Do any of the Village or Hamlet officials sleep somewhere other than their homes for security reasons? N = 37 Yes 29-78% No 8-22%
61. Approximately what proportion of farmland do you consider to be currently under some Viet Cong control? N = 37
- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| None | <u>21-57%</u> |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ | <u>5-13%</u> |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | <u>5-13%</u> |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ | <u>4-11%</u> |
| All | <u>1-3%</u> |
| N/A | <u>1-3%</u> |
62. Approximately what proportion of farmland in your village has the Viet Cong redistributed to the Residents? N = 37
- | | |
|---------------|---------------|
| None | <u>28-76%</u> |
| $\frac{1}{4}$ | <u>2-5%</u> |
| $\frac{1}{2}$ | <u>2-5%</u> |
| $\frac{3}{4}$ | <u>1-3%</u> |
| All | <u>1-3%</u> |
| N/A | <u>3-8%</u> |

Table A-2 (Concluded)

Answers to Selected Questions

Region	Province	Village	Bomb, Shell or Defoliate (0 + 1)	Question 54				Q-58 Officials Sleep Out	Q-61 Land Under VC Control				Q-62 Land Redistributed by VC			
				Major Battles (2)	Harass (3)	Sabotage (4)	Kidnap, Intimidate (5)		1/4	1/2	3/4	All	1/4	1/2	3/4	All
III	Long An	Truong Binh			.		.	.	_____							
		Phuoc Tuy	Phuoc-Tho	_____							
		Phuoc-Tinh	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
	Toy Ninh	Thai-Binh	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
		Thai-Hiep-Thanh Thanh Phuoc	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
	Gia Dinh	Thong Toy Hoi	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
		Hiep Binh	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
		An Loc Dong Hung Tan	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
	IV	An Giang	Vinh Trach					.	_____							
			Hoa Binh Thanh					.	_____							
Long Dien							.	_____								
Myttoi Dong							.	_____								
Tan My Tan Loc Dong							.	_____								
Bac Lieu		An Trach	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
Chan Doc		Phuoc Hung					.	_____								
		Da Phuoc					.	_____								
		Hoa Hao Chau Phu	.	.	.	.	.	_____			
Chuong Thien		Vi Thuy	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
Dinh Thong		An Hun	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
		Hoi Cu	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
		Trung An	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
		Dien Hoa	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
Go Cong		Tan Nien Toy	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
Kien Giang		Thanh Hoa	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
		Thanh Dong	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
Kien Tuong		Tuyen Thanh			.	.	.	_____								
Phong Dinh		Thuong Thanh			.	.	.	_____				_____				
		Thoi Long	.	.	.	.	.	_____				_____
Sa Dec	Tan Vinh Hoa	_____				_____					
	An Tich			.	.	.	_____				_____					
	Long Thang			.	.	.	_____				_____					
Vinh Binh	Phuoc Hao	_____				_____					
	My Cam	_____				_____					

activity of some kind, 24 (65 percent) reported kidnapping and intimidation, and 29 (78 percent) reported that at least some village or hamlet officials were unable to sleep in their homes at night for reasons of insecurity.

The Viet Cong controlled at least 25 percent of the land in 15 of the villages, at least 50 percent in 10 villages, and at least 75 percent in four villages. While one respondent indicated that all of the village lands were under Viet Cong control, he also indicated that only 4 out of 11 hamlets were controlled by the Viet Cong. If he did not misinterpret the question, his answer indicates that the surrounding land is less secure than the residential areas. Also of note is the relatively smaller proportions of land that has been redistributed by the Viet Cong compared with the proportion supposedly under Viet Cong Control. Out of the 15 villages indicating that at least 25 percent of the village lands were under Viet Cong control, only six also indicated that land had been redistributed by the Viet Cong. In five out of the six cases, the amount of land redistributed was equal to or less than the amount under Viet Cong control. In one case, the area redistributed by the Viet Cong exceeds the amount under Viet Cong control, apparently indicating that land had been reclaimed from the Viet Cong after the redistribution and that this land was still held by persons other than the true owner or tenant.

For many of the secure hamlets and villages surveyed, military activities were frequent, indicating that "contested" was a much more descriptive term of actual security conditions. Harassment, sabotage, and aerial bombardment were noted in more than one-third of the 37 villages in the survey. Most important perhaps from the standpoint of those who may be attempting to exercise their rights to land under the law or to administer land affairs, 65 percent of the villages had experienced kidnapping and other evidence indicating that the Viet Cong possessed the capacity to intimidate the populace.

Administrators were even less fortunate than residents. Not only were they more popular targets of the Viet Cong, but in almost half of the villages surveyed, the Viet Cong prevented them from administering some significant part of the village. It is notable, however, that the Viet Cong had not redistributed all the land under Viet Cong control, which supports the thesis that such redistribution probably requires long term continuity of Viet Cong control to be effective.

Security Bias in the Survey Sample

The sample of hamlets and villages surveyed differed from the average security status in the Mekong Delta for the reason that the survey included only those hamlets and villages sufficiently secure that the survey teams could gain access to the hamlet and conduct their work without interference. The problem of Viet Cong interference was anticipated in the design of the sample, and the original number of hamlets (132) was chosen on the assumption that a number of them would be dropped in the course of the survey either for security reasons or because they were urban and therefore not representative of the rural society that is the target of land reform.

The 54 hamlets actually visited during the survey are significantly more secure than most hamlets in the Mekong Delta. A measure of this bias can be obtained from a comparison of these hamlets with those of the villages and provinces surveyed and with all hamlets in the Mekong Delta using data from the Hamlet Evaluation System* for the same time period. The Hamlet Resident (hamlets), Village Chief (hamlets in villages), and Provincial Land Office (hamlets in villages in provinces) surveys are compared with the total hamlets of Regions III and IV in Figure A-1.

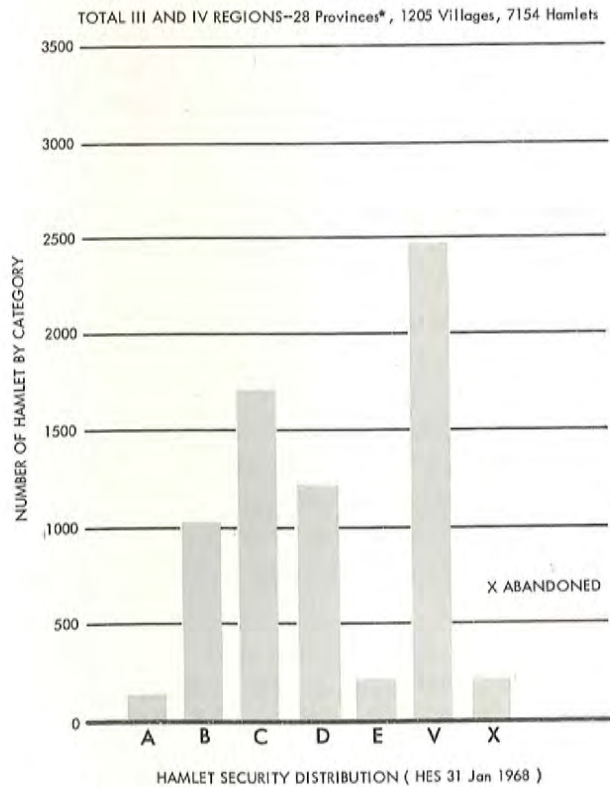
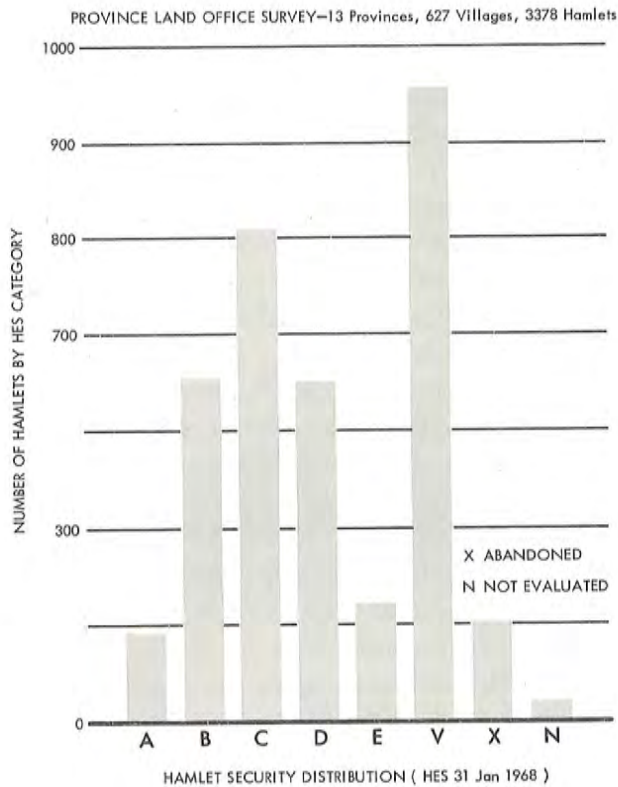
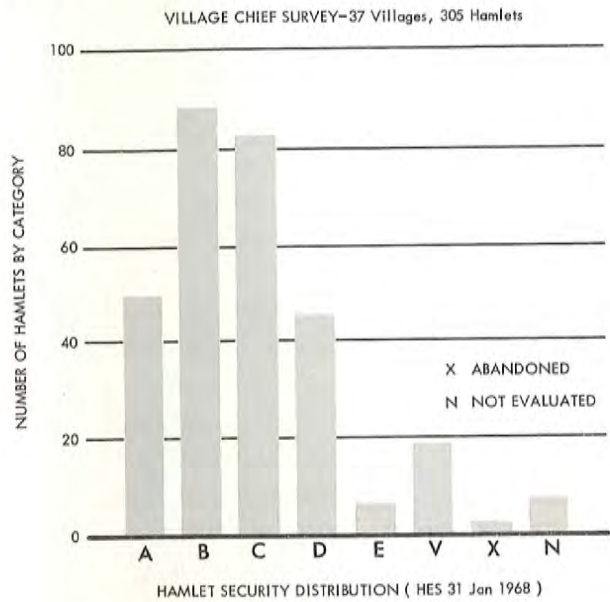
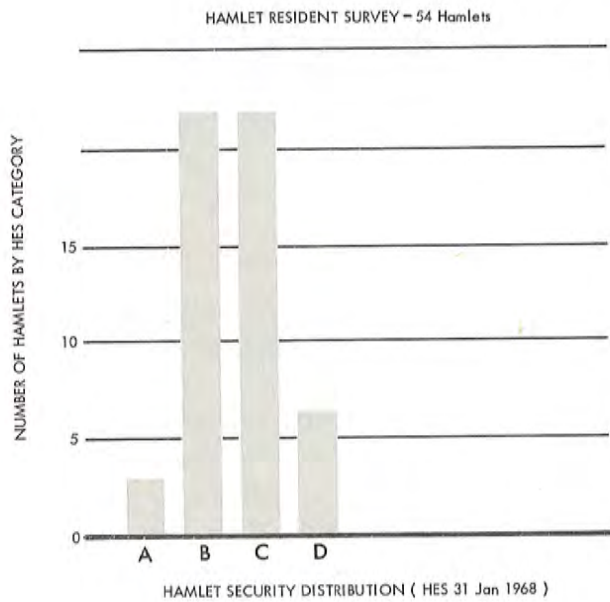
It will be noted that no E, V (Viet Cong-controlled), or N (not evaluated) hamlets are represented in the Hamlet Resident Survey. However, as the sample of hamlets increases with the inclusiveness of the surveys to village and province, the distribution approaches the proportions of Regions III and IV as a whole. The bias is most severe in the Hamlet Resident Survey where no E category or Viet Cong-controlled hamlets were visited. It is also notable that the Hamlet Evaluation System hamlet categorization results in a decided hump in the B-C-D region with few A and E category hamlets. A gradual shift downward occurs through the range of security as the sample enlarges, with Viet Cong-controlled hamlets making up almost a third of the total hamlets of Regions III and IV. Within the A, B, and C categories, the Hamlet Resident Survey sample appears to be reasonably representative. Beyond this level (D, E, and Viet Cong-controlled), however, little can be derived from the survey data that would allow projection into the larger samples.†

* Graduations in security status generally follow those of HES, A being the most secure and E being the least. V hamlets are controlled by the Viet Cong and represent the extreme of no security at all.

† Based on a comparison of HES with CINCPAC incident data for the sample hamlets. Below the C category, the data are too sparse to allow any reliability of projection.

Figure A-1

HAMLET SECURITY DISTRIBUTION --
HAMLET EVALUATION SYSTEM
31 January 1968



* EXCLUDES SAIGON

Variation in Security With Population and Religion

In an effort to determine if a relationship existed between security and population distribution and security and religious influence, the hamlet sample was divided into three groups. Group I included provinces with a high population density (approximately 270 persons per square kilometer) that had a low proportion of Hoa Hao in their population. Group II included provinces with a high population density (approximately 260 persons per square kilometer) with a high proportion of Hoa Hao. Group III included provinces with a low population density (approximately 100 persons per square kilometer) and a low proportion of Hoa Hao.

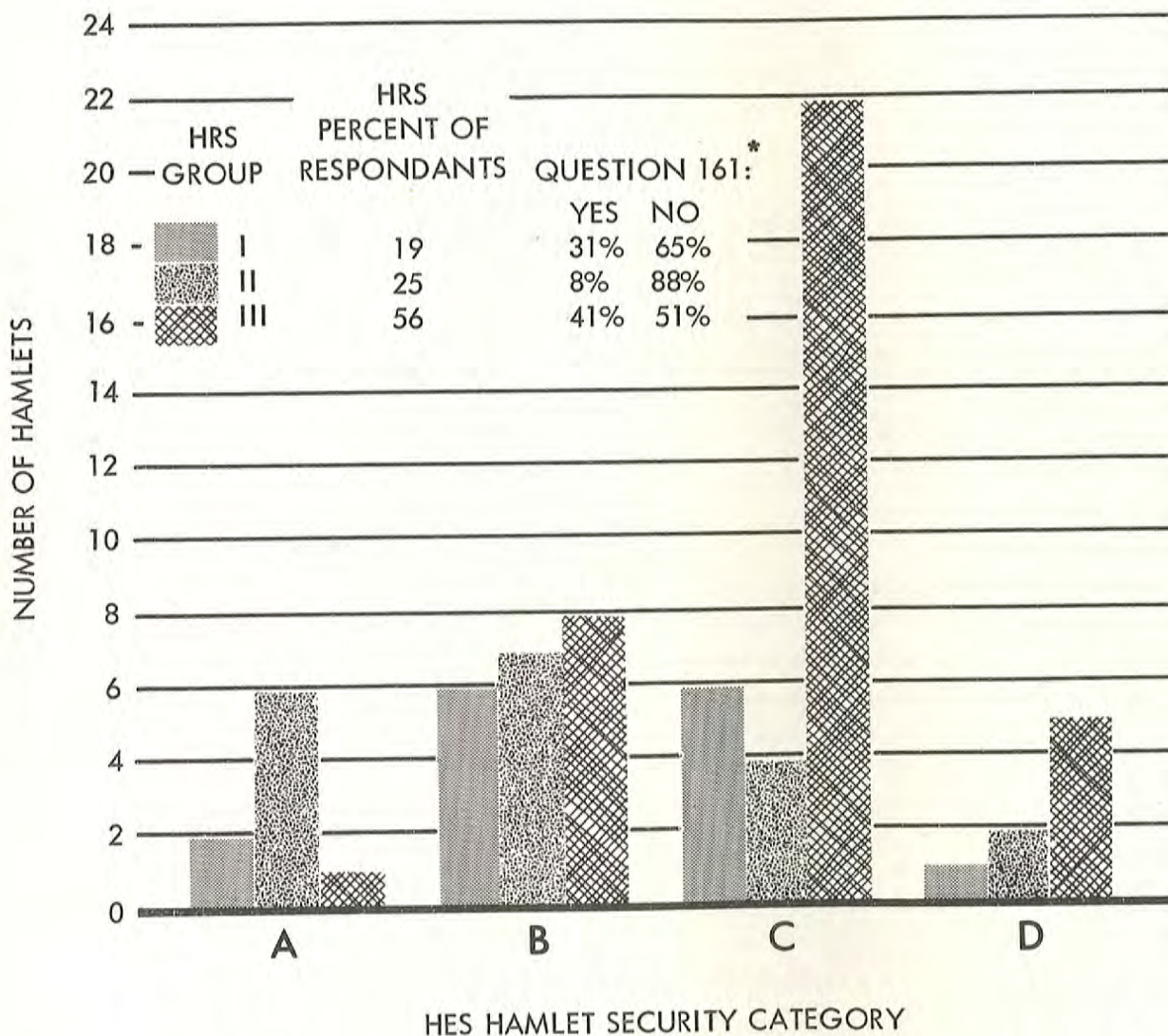
<u>Group I</u>	<u>Group II</u>	<u>Group III</u>	
Phong Dinh	An Giang	Au Xuyen	Vinh Binh
Vinh Long	Chau Duc	Ba Xuyen	Bien Hoa
Dinh Tuong	Sa Dec	Bac Lieu	Hau Nghia
Kien Hoa		Chuong Thien	Long Khanh
Go Cong		Kien Giang	Phuoc Tuy
Long An		Kien Phong	Tay Ninh
		Kien Tuong	Gia Dinh

The responses of hamlet residents to Question 161 of the Hamlet Resident Survey: "To your knowledge was there any fighting in your village between the Government forces and the enemy last year (1967)?" were compiled and compared with the distribution of the HES hamlet ratings for all hamlets in each of the groups. The results are shown in Figure A-2 on the following page. On the basis of HES, Group II is clearly the most secure of the three groups of provinces, the proportion of hamlets peaking roughly in the high-B region. Group I distribution falls in the low-B/high-C region, and Group III in the C region. The tabulated responses to Question 161 generally follow these distributions. In this case, however, the difference between the Hoa Hao provinces of Group II, and Groups I and III seems significantly greater.

The results support the thesis that the more highly populated areas are somewhat less vulnerable than those that are more thinly populated, and that religion, at least in the case of the Hoa Hao, may have a significant salutary effect on security conditions. The effect of the Hoa Hao appears to be significantly greater than that of population density.

Figure A-2

RESPONSES TO QUESTION 161 OF THE HAMLET
RESIDENT SURVEY



* HRS } To your knowledge was there fighting in your village between the
 QUESTION 161 } Government forces and the enemy last year (1967)? Answers expressed
 as a percent of total respondents which includes those giving no answer.
 Hence total of Yeses and Nos is less than 100%.

SOURCE: Hamlet Evaluation System Information Report, 31 January 1968.

Appendix B

NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT LAND POLICIES

Appendix B

NATIONAL LIBERATION FRONT LAND POLICIES*

(Long An Province, May 1963)

Verbatim Copy of a Translated Viet Cong Document

National Liberation Front Land Policies

Land Practices of the U.S.-Diem Clique

The United States-Diemists confiscate rice fields, raise land taxes, and force people in the South into misery. The Government of South Vietnam, led by the Ngo Dinh Diem gang of lackeys, is a fascist dictatorial government. It only represents Diem's nepotism, the interests of U.S. imperialism, land-owners, pro-Americans and the reactionary elements in the Republic of Vietnam. Since peace was re-established, they have combined with reactionary landowners to carry out shrewd tricks in order to take back the rice fields given by the resistance to peasants. They exploit the peasants in order to push them into misery, to pave the way for recruitments, the construction of agrovilles, land development centers and military bases for U.S. imperialism. They have instituted a false "agrarian reform" in order to steal rice fields from peasants. These rice fields include the confiscated land of traitors and land cleared by peasants during the resistance. They give back these lands to landowners condemned by us. They also rob community land and thousands of hectares of land from highlanders to establish land development centers and plantations. They use their armed forces to rob gardens and rice fields, destroy crops and fruit trees in order to build up the so-called "national program for strategic hamlets, land development centers and military bases." The U.S.-Diemists have taken back the peasants' ownership over their land by forcing them to sign contracts accepting land rents fixed by landowners. They plan to steal land from peasants and create confusion and disunity among them.

The U.S.-Diemist decrees, numbered 7 and 20, have permitted landowners to get maximum rent. It is based upon the crops of main harvests and auxiliary harvests, but it ignores the capital the peasants used for

* Source: Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office; VCD 1.

their toil. Compared with the reduced land rent during the resistance, present land rent is much higher. In weak zones, regions of refugees and religious people, landowners, with the help of U.S.-Diemist authorities, can oblige peasants to pay land rents which vary from 40 to 70 percent of production, irrespective of their capital for agrarian tools, seeds, the preservation of crops against insects, drought and flood. In short, under the U.S.-Diem regime peasants lose all their rights, but landowners are protected by laws that exploit peasants by every means.

Peasants' Life Under the U.S.-Diemist Regime

During the resistance, despite the daily destruction of the war, the life of peasants in areas under the control of the popular government was effectively ameliorated. Land rents were reduced; peasants owned their land; public land was shared with peasants; land development was encouraged and the Peasants Association formed the hard-core for the guidance of peasants in their daily activities; peasants led an easy life and enjoyed all rights on their land as well as all democratic rights. Thus, peasants were encouraged and participated actively in the resistance. Their contributions of money and manpower were very important, but their life was still well supplied.

Under the U.S.-Diemist regime peasants have become slaves. Under cruel pressure their life is very miserable. Their houses are destroyed, unemployment and illness are widespread because their lands are stolen and they have to pay high land rents to landowners. Besides, they have to contribute to various fund drives and they are concentrated into strategic hamlets and land development centers, and are forced to build military bases and strategic roads. But struggle will answer oppression; peasants cannot wait for death, bearing a deep grudge toward the U.S.-Diemist regime. Peasants in the South have risen up and are determined to fight against oppression and exploitation in order to win back their right to exist. Since 1959, the peasants' movement has smashed U.S.-Diemist control in rural areas and controlled large areas from the South to the central part of the country. In these regions, peasants have seized back almost all the rice fields and fish ponds. They have restricted U.S.-Diemist robberies and exploitations. They are taking care of ameliorating their life in rural areas. Many minority groups in mountainous regions have fought against U.S.-Diemist robberies. They have confiscated land given by the U.S.-Diemists to their devoted lackeys and shared these lands with peasants. They isolate land development centers and struggles against the concentration of the population. In liberated regions, our compatriots are increasing production in order to build a national culture and maintain a firm standard of life, despite

the fact that they are encircled daily and pursued by U.S.-Diemists. This fact has proved that the strength of united peasants is invincible even in the face of a cruel enemy. The country is not entirely liberated, but with determined spirit and unity, the peasants will seize and preserve their rights. This fact also affirms that the revolutionary movement cannot be separated from the land problem because it is their legitimate aspiration.

Land Policy of the National Front for the Liberation of the Republic of Vietnam

The Revolution in the South is a national and democratic Revolution. The Revolution aims at fighting against imperialism and feudalism in order to liberate the country and give back land to peasants. That is one of the important goals of the lasting struggle of the Front. At present, people in the South (the majority of them are peasants) are dominated by U.S.-imperialism and Ngo Dinh Diem's gang of lackeys. First, one has to unite all national forces in the Front against the U.S.-Diemists, then one must combine present interests with lasting interests, class interests with national interests. In this way one can strengthen the peasants and at the same time broaden national unity in order to further the popular movement toward final victory. Thus, the present important task of the land policy is to reduce land rents.

1. Carry out the reducing of land rents and ensure the ownership of peasants over their land. Give back to peasants land that they had received under the resistance which were stolen from them by U.S.-Diemists or reactionary landowners. Solve logically the problems of ownership over lands which are newly exploited or whose owners are absent. Share with peasants community lands and confiscated lands of U.S.-Diemist lackeys who had been punished by the people. Find out the appropriate solution for lands in mountainous areas which have been confiscated for the construction of land development centers and agrovilles. The Front recognizes the ownership of all landowners who are not U.S.-Diemist lackeys. The Front does not consider rich peasants as landowners, but encourages rich peasants to increase production. The Front maintains a coalition policy toward rich peasants but they must reduce land rents for peasants who cultivate their lands. Respect absolutely lands of middle-class peasants to maintain the unity of poor peasants and middle-class peasants. Respect lands of convents,

pagodas and temples. People who have their lands in rural areas can collect land rents, and their ownership is recognized. Reactionary landowners, who served as U.S.-Diemist lackeys, will receive amnesty if they really mend their ways.

2. Struggle against the false agrarian reform and all U.S.-Diemist tricks to steal the peasant's land. Struggle against the stealing and the destruction of rice fields and gardens to prepare for the construction of strategic hamlets, land development centers, military bases and strategic roads. On this basis, further the agricultural production and the development of craftsmanship. Improve working techniques in order to preserve crops and ameliorate the life of the peasant. If all these points are carried out, the National Liberation Front in the Republic of Vietnam will achieve the goal of strengthening peasants and consolidating the internal structure of peasants. On this basis the Front will unite all classes in order to isolate the reactionary U.S.-Diemist government and to overthrow it.

Concrete Problems About Lands

Reduce Land Rents. In principle, those who rent rice fields must reduce land rents; but there are people who are unable to cultivate their own land because they are old, are widows, or their family members have joined the liberation troops. Their rice fields are for rent so this problem must be solved through mutual help and free negotiation. Rice fields of landowners who were absent during the resistance and which had been given to peasants should be returned to the owners if they are not reactionary elements. They can collect land rents but they have to pay taxes fixed by local committees.

Land taxes and land rents must depend upon the situation of rice fields in each region. In general, they must be based on the right principles acquired by peasants under the resistance. They can change a little to coincide with present conditions. When the harvest is bad, land rents must be re-examined to avoid hurting the peasants. If the harvest gets worse, peasants are exempt from taxation.

Ban all auxiliary taxes; agrarian taxes should be based only on the principle crops. Destroy the contracts of U.S.-Diemists which aim at controlling the peasants. Destroy the scheme of giving a sum of money to owners before renting rice fields. Rich peasants, who have rice fields for rent, must obey articles concerning land rents. From now on, do not maintain that landowners have to refuse land rents.

Ensure Peasants' Rights

The peasant's right to cultivate the rice fields, which he rents, must be absolutely observed. When a landowner wants to sell rice fields, he must give priority to peasants who are cultivating these lands to continue their cultivation. Cases in which landowners take back rice fields from tenant farmers to give them to others can be solved as follows:

1. There are cases in which landowners take back rice fields and rent them to other poor peasants. Now, if both of them have rice fields to cultivate, the present situation should be maintained. If one side has no land to cultivate, one should not take land from the other, because unity among peasants will be harmed. One should share confiscated lands or community lands with the one who has no land. Also, one should help him to clear new land.
2. If a landowner sells land to people who already have their own rice fields, they must be persuaded to rent these rice fields to the tenant farmers who had cultivated them. These cases must be prevented in order to respect the peasant's right to continuously cultivate lands that he has worked.

Defend the Legitimate Ownership of Peasants to Rice Fields

Land that they received temporarily. Now peasants have full ownership over land confiscated from French colonialists and traitors that had been given to them temporarily by the resistance. If U.S.-Diemists, their lackeys, or landowners, have seized back these lands, peasants have the right to struggle for their legitimate ownership even though other people have owned the lands. If poor peasants get the lands, this matter should be solved appropriately through mutual understanding. If rich peasants receive the land, persuade them to give it back to the peasants; they cannot claim ownership over rice lands that they have sold.

Land newly developed. Land that was cleared under the resistance or during the last years must be given legally to those who have exploited it. If this land has been stolen by U.S.-Diemists, their lackeys, or by anyone else we must struggle to recover ownership for former owners who had cleared the land.

Land from which owners are absent. These lands were given by the resistance to peasants and they can continue their cultivation. If the

landowners return, tenant farmers must pay land rent to them. If owners have been absent since peace was re-established, the Front and the Revolutionary Peasants Association will supervise them and give them temporarily to peasants.

Divide Community Property Logically

Seize all community land and fish ponds distributed by the resistance to peasants which have been stolen by U.S.-Diemist authorities and village bullies. Divide them equally, logically, and democratically among all citizens, with priority for poor peasants, families of liberation troops, Self-Defense members, and guerrillas. Rich peasants can receive community lands but they must be persuaded to refuse and give the land to people who have no land to cultivate. Enemy soldiers from the peasant class also have their plots of land. But this land will be given to another person to exploit and returned when such leave enemy ranks. Their families will also receive their plots of land. When dividing public lands, one must carefully examine the ownership given by U.S.-Diem to peasants to preserve unity among peasants.

Confiscated Lands

Confiscated lands of U.S.-Diemist authorities or their tyrannical lackeys who have been punished by the people will be divided among poor peasants who have no land to cultivate. All the land of U.S.-Diemist authorities and their local lackeys are to be confiscated and will be divided temporarily among peasants, with priority for poor peasants who have no land or not enough land to cultivate. Relatives of these people will also receive their plots of land, just as other peasants do. If their attitude toward the Revolution is good, they should be treated appropriately.

The land of people who are now with the U.S.-Diem government is considered as land from which owners are absent and, if they do not collect land rents, the land will be temporarily given to peasants for exploitation.

Confiscated plantations will be given to workers or peasants for exploitation, and must be well preserved.

The campaign of giving land temporarily to peasants must be carried out democratically, without any distinction for race and religion. It is guided by the Front committee for autonomous minority groups or the Peasants Association.

Appendix C

RAND INTERVIEW DATA

Appendix C

RAND INTERVIEW DATA

Under the sponsorship of the Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), the RAND Corporation has been conducting interviews of former Viet Cong and refugees since mid-1964. As of January 1968, approximately 1,200 interviews had been conducted. The volumes of data contained in the interviews, which now approach 40,000 pages, provide remarkable insight into the relationship of the Viet Cong insurgents with the rural populace, particularly with regard to the Viet Cong concept of land reform.

The interviews are basically open-ended, the interviewer being free to pursue any particular inquiry, limited only by time and the general areas of interest concerning motivation and morale of the Viet Cong and the causes of defection.*

Three series of RAND interviews were utilized in this research; the AG, DT and AGR. The AG and DT series emphasize data requirements to satisfy military needs, such as subjects' military experience, if any; strategy and tactics of the Viet Cong; Viet Cong organization; methods of control; and attitudes. The AG series is based on a sample evenly distributed between provinces and types of interviewers. The DT series is restricted to Dinh Tuong province and is aimed primarily at Viet Cong civilian cadre. The AGR series focuses on the problem of the refugee and his reactions to his changed situation. Table C-1 contains the questions answered most frequently by AG and DT interviewees that are considered most pertinent to the research.†

* A more detailed description of the procedures used in the interviewing is given in RAND Memorandum RM-5338-ISA/ARPA; "Two Analytical Aids for use with the RAND Interviews"; Frank Denton; May 1967 (For Official Use Only)..

† The entire list of questions is contained in the referenced RAND Memorandum RM-5338-ISA/ARPA.

The AGR series, which has been discontinued, deals with refugees from Viet Cong-controlled areas. The purpose of this series of interviews was to explore non-Viet Cong attitudes toward the Viet Cong, the effects of the war on the rural people, and the reasons why some villagers support the Viet Cong and others do not. There are about 100 interviews in the AGR series. The answers to selected questions in the AGR series are given in Table C-2.

Table C-1

SELECTED QUESTIONS IN RAND INTERVIEWS, AG AND DT SERIES

	AG		DT	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
29. Subject's Parents Landowners	201	263	55	52
40. Subject Rallier	297	310	154	19
41. Subject POW	292	314	20	148
67. Function in VC:				
Fighter	345		93	
Production Worker	22		1	
Messenger or Liaison	21		5	
Political Officer	14		7	
Propagandists	40		16	
Secretary, Typist	4		4	
Hamlet or Village Administrator	21		22	
Tax Collector	5		1	
Transport Laborer	11		4	
Saboteur	4		1	
Medic or Doctor	17		5	
Arms Maker	1			
Cook	12			
Other	56		4	
District or Province Official	7		4	
73. Interviewee Occupation Before Joining				
Farm with family	222		108	
Farm on own	40		13	
Student	29		8	
Barber, Tailor	8		4	
Small merchant	18		7	
Laborer in city or town	40		6	
Rural laborer	83		11	
Other	31		9	

Table C-1 (continued)

	AG		DT	
	Yes	No	Yes	No
1.12 Reasons Interviewee Gave for Villagers Supporting or Joining in VC				
<u>Home Village Any Time</u>				
a. Attacks on Village (include spray)	32	87	1	7
b. VC Land Reform	49	74	25	2
c. Behavior of RVN troops	54	65	3	13
d. Corrupt Local Officials	35	76	2	11
e. Anti-imperialist Theme	63	35	4	1
f. General VC Propaganda	134	20	39	1
1.13 Villager Aspirations Mentioned by Subject				
<u>Home Village</u>				
a. Land	33	6	21	0
b. Peace (physical security)	82	3	30	0
c. Education for Children	7	8	2	0
1.15 Villagers Complain about VC				
<u>Home</u>				
a. High taxes and required contributions, forced labor	131	34	123	1
b. Strict controls on people	47	27	17	1
c. Lack of protection from attacks	104	24	77	1
d. Unfulfilled promises	50	26	34	1
2.10 Behavior of Local RVN Officials				
<u>Home before join</u>				
a. Indication of corruption	53	147	5	39
b. Indication of being discourteous, brutal, overbearing	64	147	8	41
2.11 VC Local Officials' Behavior				
<u>Home before join</u>				
a. Indication of corruption	17	46	5	7
b. Indication of being discourteous, brutal, overbearing	39	38	11	7
c. Indicate officials favoritism toward "VC" families	12	8	11	0

Table C-1 (continued)

	AG			DT		
	Yes	No		Yes	No	
2.12 VC Aid or Reform in Village						
a. Land reform	60	74		65	40	
b. Assist farming or other labor	12	25		3	5	
2.14 RVN Land Reform Conducted in Village	30	47		13	4	
2.17 VC Use Physical Force or Threat of Physical Force to Insure Villagers Follow their Wishes		Little or None	Mod. sid.			
	56	74	78	6	40	52
2.19 VC Kill Village Officials	No	One	More than 1			
	51	25	44	11	14	22
2.21 VC taxes considered onerous by villagers	No	Some	Most			
	34	52	41	1	39	64
2.23 Reasons for Villagers leaving village	No	Some	Consid.			
a. Intensity of war	11	26	87	0	26	65
c. VC taxes & mandatory contributions, forced to labor	23	27	30	1	32	24
d. Food shortage	32	12	4	2	9	0
2.24 Villagers' attitude toward RVN strategic hamlet or agrovillage	Favor	Indiff.	Against			
	48	11	34	77	4	8
3.03 Interviewee's stated reasons for joining VC	Yes	No				
a. VC political aims	137	203		52	87	
b. Dislike of RVN or French (troops, officials, policies)	95	233		18	106	
c. Promised land by VC	32	283		21	99	
d. Drafted or coerced by VC	246	160		96	61	
e. Attacks on his village	13	314		2	125	
f. Drive out foreigners or nationalism	141	206		35	98	
g. Avoid service in ARVN	49	279		13	114	
h. Join because VC winning or for personal benefit	130	174		68	59	
5.01 Interviewee "likes" in the Front <u>at leaving</u>						
f. Nationalism in Front (unify Vietnam, throw out foreigners)	153	124		22	29	
5.02 Dislikes in Front (at leaving)						
e. Hard life or homesickness	342	47		115	9	

Table C-1 (concluded)

	AG			DT		
	<u>Little or None</u>	<u>Mod.</u>	<u>Consid.</u>			
5.08 Interviewee's stated reasons for desertion or defection (degree of importance) coded for defectors and deserters only.						
g. Drafted and defected at first opportunity	232	25	17	112	10	23
h. Hard life in VC	48	129	88	20	40	61
5.16 Interviewee detention status						
0 = Defector		286			144	
1 = Deserter		17			4	
2 = Voluntary prisoner, allowed himself to be captured		20			0	
3 = Prisoner expressing specific desire to defect or desert		102			2	
4 = Prisoner not expressing specific desire to defect or desert		162			12	

Table C-2

SELECTED QUESTIONS IN RAND INTERVIEWS, AGR SERIES

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
26. Occupation - farmer	0	20
32. Landowner	0	33
1.01 Villagers' political allegiance		
d. Poor especially favor VC	9	0
e. A major support for VC come from those w/relatives in VC	17	1
f. Groups disliking Front=Catholics	5	0
g. Groups disliking Front=rich	2	0
1.02 Why did VC receive support from some of villagers		
d. Land reform or promise of land reform	7	3
1.03 Government presence in village		
a. Were troops present in village at time of refuge	23	26
b. Were there any villager complaints about government troops	17	27
c. Were there any villager complaints about government officials	9	36
e. Did many villagers complain about strategic hamlet (if no strategic hamlet, leave blank)	10	15
f. Was there any govt-land reform	8	11
g. Was there any govt-assistance other than f, h, i	39	5
1.04 Villager complaints about the VC		
a. Bring on attacks	40	1
b. Heavy taxes and/or labor duties	35	0
c. Impolite, brutal, nepotic officials	14	0
d. Restrictive control of life	14	0
f. Front's systematic use of terror	16	0
1.07 Was there land reform in village by VC	23	29
1.09 Did the villagers generally like the idea of the strategic hamlet	13	2

Table C-2 (concluded)

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>Most Imp.</u>
2.07 Did the villagers dislike the Front cadres on the whole	16	3	
3.01 Why did you take refuge			
a. Dislike of VC	14	1	19
b. Actual attacks on village	9	5	41
d. VC taxes or labor duty	7	12	6
3.02 Life as a refugee			
a. Better than before refuge.	17	26	
b. Good life	11	31	
g. Working to earn money	14	47	
3.12 Subject's attitudes about the attacks on his village			
c. Blame VC	45	3	

Appendix D

CAPTURED DOCUMENTS

Appendix D

CAPTURED DOCUMENTS

Through the courtesy of the JUSPAO (Joint Public Affairs Office), and the Office of the Assistant Chief of Staff for Intelligence, MACV J-2, U.S. Embassy, Saigon, the project gained access to extensive collections of Viet Cong-captured documents that have been compiled over the years of the insurgency in Vietnam. More than 800 documents obtained by Douglas Pike in his research on the Viet Cong* were made available by JUSPAO. The CDEC (Captured Document Exploitation Center) of J-2, MACV, whose holdings number in excess of a million pages, contributed all documents and interrogations making reference to Viet Cong agrarian reform, counterpacification strategy and tactics, and taxation.

Since Pike's objectives were broader than those of the SRI project, not all of his documents were directly pertinent. Those used in this research are listed in Table D-1 by the reference numbers given them by Pike. Readers who are interested can obtain the entire collection on microfilm or in print for a nominal fee by writing for information to the Center for International Studies, Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Cambridge, Massachusetts. The collection cuts off roughly at the end of 1966, and the Viet Cong Counterpacification strategy and tactics promulgated and implemented during 1967 and 1968 are not covered except as they were applied by the Viet Cong during the Strategic Hamlet Program and other earlier pacification efforts.

The captured documents provided by CDEC contain much current material on changes and additions to Viet Cong strategy and tactics that have been applied to the threat presented by pacification. Using Pike's collection, which covered the period of the Strategic Hamlet Program, in conjunction with CDEC documents, it was possible to trace the development of Viet Cong strategy from about 1961 onward. Similarly, it was possible to trace the development of Viet Cong taxation from the early stages, when voluntary contributions provided a main source of income, to the current highly

* See "Viet Cong: The Organization and Techniques of the National Liberation Front of South Vietnam," by Douglas C. Pike, the MIT Press, Cambridge, Mass., 1966.

Table D-1

VIET CONG CAPTURED DOCUMENTS*
FROM COLLECTION OF DOUGLAS PIKE

VCD- 3	VCD- 93	VCD-248
14	108	284
15	131	296
34	131A	298
35	136	302
48	138	346
75	161	737
75A	164	848
90	180	

* Courtesy JUSPAO, U.S. Embassy,
Saigon.

sophisticated tax structure with its attendant stringent controls and severe penalties and forced (uncompensated) labor.

Documents pertaining to Viet Cong land reform reached a maximum during the period 1961-65, and since then, the subject has apparently received considerably less attention by the Viet Cong. There is, however, no indication that the basic Viet Cong land policy has changed in any significant way. Thus, documents from Pike's collection dated as early as 1961, which were much more detailed than those that come later, proved both valid and extremely useful.

Perhaps the most remarkable aspect of Viet Cong documentation is its almost unbelievable volume. Considering that only a small fraction of the documentation captured is considered significant enough to file, one can begin to appreciate the huge amount of paper work apparently required to keep the insurgency in motion. At least as impressive as the sheer volume generated is the detailed data available to Viet Cong planners and decision-makers on the population. This contrast between Viet Cong and GVN sources for the same population is little short of remarkable and is indicative of the value that the Viet Cong places on such information and the demands placed on the organization for it.

Appendix E

NAMES AND LOCATIONS OF PROVINCES, VILLAGES,
AND HAMLETS INCLUDED IN SRI SURVEYS

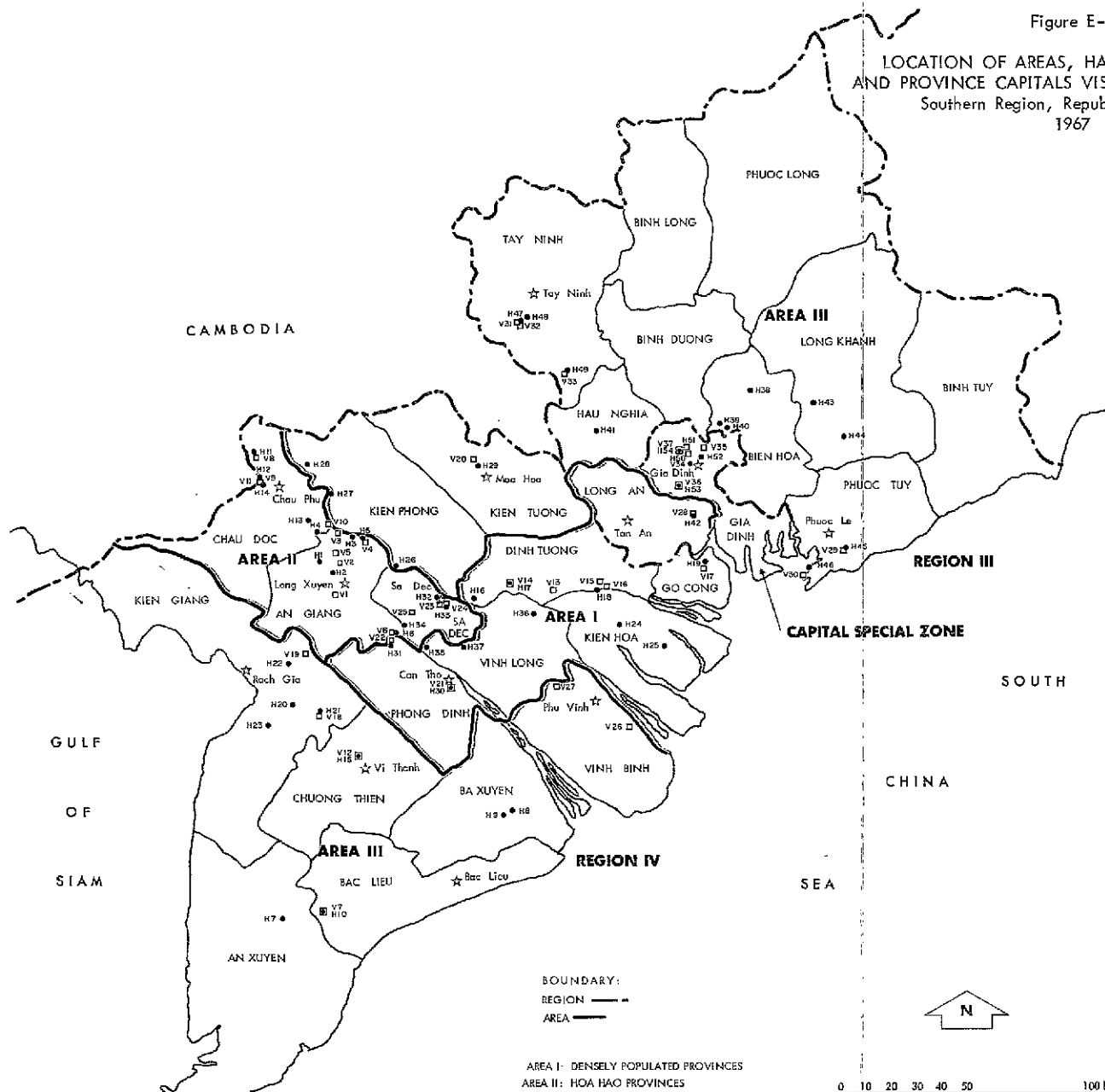
Appendix E

NAMES AND LOCATIONS OF PROVINCES, VILLAGES, AND HAMLETS INCLUDED IN SRI SURVEYS

The locations of all hamlets, villages, and province capitals that were visited in the course of the Hamlet Resident, Village Chief, and Provincial Land Office surveys are depicted in the map of Regions III and IV (Figure E-1). For reference purposes, the provinces and province capitals, villages and village headquarters, and hamlets that were visited in the surveys are given in Table E-1.

Figure E-1

LOCATION OF AREAS, HAMLETS, VILLAGES,
AND PROVINCE CAPITALS VISITED IN THE SURVEYS
Southern Region, Republic of Vietnam
1967



AREA I - DENSELY POPULATED PROVINCES
AREA II - HOA HAO PROVINCES

0 10 20 30 40 50 100 km

Table E-1

LOCATION OF AREAS, HAMLETS, VILLAGES, AND PROVINCE CAPITALS
VISITED IN THE SURVEYS*
SOUTHERN REGION, REPUBLIC OF VIETNAM
1967

<u>Provincial Land Office Survey</u>		<u>Village Admin. Chief</u>	<u>Hamlet Resident Survey</u>
<u>13 Provinces</u>	<u>Province</u> <u>Capital</u>	<u>Survey</u> <u>37 Villages</u>	<u>54 Hamlets</u>
IV Region			
P1 An Giang	Long Xuyen	V1 Vinh Trach V2 Hoa Binh Thanh V3 Long Dien V4 My Hoi Dong V5 Tan My V6 Tan Loc Dong	H1 Tay Binh H2 Hoa Thanh H3 Long Dinh H4 My Thuan H5 Tan Hoa H6 Tan My
(An Xuyen)	(Quan Long)	(Hoa Thanh)	H7 Tan Phong B
(Ba Xuyen)	(Thanh Hung)	(My Xuyen)	H8 Hoa My H9 Can Gio
P2 Bac Lieu	Bac Lieu	V7 An Trach	H10 Khuc Treo
P3 Chau Doc	Chau Phu	V8 Phuoc Hung V9 Da Phuoc V10 Hoa Hao V11 Chau Phu	H11 Phuoc Thanh H12 Phuoc Quan H13 Trung 1 H14 Chau Long 2
P4 Chuong Thien	Vi Thanh	V12 Vi Thuy	H15 Vi Thanh
(Dinh Thong)	(My Tho)	V13 An Huu V14 Hoi Cu V15 Trung An V16 Dieu Hoa	H16 An Tri A H17 An Thien 2 H18 Luong Tri
(Go Cong)	(Go Cong)	V17 Tan Nien Tay	H19 Giong Ong Ng
P5 Kien Giang	Rach Gia	(Ban Tan Dinh)	H20 Cay Duong
		V18 Thanh Hoa V19 Thanh Dong (Dong Yen)	H21 So Tai H22 Dong Phuoc H23 Xeo Ro 1
(Kien Hoa)	(Truc Giang)	(An Hoi) (Binh Hoa)	H24 Ap 2 Chau Thanh H25 Binh An
(Kien Phong)	(Cao Lanh)	(Tan Thuan Dong) (An Long) (Long Khanh)	H26 Dong Thanh H27 An Phu H28 Long Thanh B

* Provinces, Province Capitals and Villages in parentheses are provided for geographical reference purposes only. Only those numbered were actually included in the surveys. No Province, Villages or Hamlets were visited in either I or II regions as a result of the Viet Cong 1968 Tet offensive, which prevented all survey work planned for these regions.

Table E-1 (concluded)

Provincial Land Office Survey		Village Admin. Chief Survey		
13 Provinces	Province Capital	37 Villages	Hamlet Resident Survey 54 Hamlets	
P6	Kien Tuong	Moc Hoa	V20 Tuyen Thanh	H29 Ba Ken
P7	Phong Dinh	Can Tho	V21 Thuong Thanh V22 Thoi Long	H30 Thuong Thanh Cai-Rang H31 Thoi My
P8	Sa Dec	Sa Dec	V23 Tan Vinh Hoa V24 An Tich V25 Long Thang	H32 Vinh Thoi H33 An Thanh 1 H34 Long Dinh
P9	Vinh Binh	Phu Vinh	V26 Phuoc Hao V27 My Cam	
	(Vinh Long)	(Vinh Long)	(Tan Luoc) (Son Dinh) (Thanh My Hung)	H35 Tan Hung H36 Dinh Binh H37 An Thanh
III Region				
	(Bien Hoa)	(Bien Hoa)	(Thien Tan) (Tan Thanh) (Hiep Hoa)	H38 Thien Tan H39 Tan Lai H40 Tam Hoa
	(Hau Nghia)	(Khiem Cuong)	(Tan An Hoi)	H41 Ap Dong
P10	Long An	Tan An	V28 Truong Binh	H42 Hoa Thuan 1
	(Long Khanh)	(Xuan Loc)	(Dau-Glay) (Hieu-Kinh)	H43 Nguyen-Hue H44 Bao-Thi
P11	Phuoc Tuy	Phuoc Le	V29 Phuoc-Tho V30 Phuoc-Tinh	H45 Phuoc-Thoi H46 Phuoc-Lam
P12	Tay Ninh	Tay Ninh	V31 Thai-Binh V32 Thai-Hiep-Thanh V33 Thanh-Phuoc	H47 Binh-Phong H48 Thai-Ninh H49 Phuoc Thanh
Capital Special Zone				
P13	Gia Dinh	Gia Dinh	V34 Thong Tay Hoi V35 Hiep Binh V36 An Lac V37 Dong Hung Tan	H50 Dong Tam 3 H51 Dong Tam 7 H52 Binh Trieu H53 An Lac 1 H54 Cho Cau

GLOSSARY

General

Land Affairs. This term covers all matters pertaining to the administration of land, including both routine land administration and land reform. The term may be used in a specific sense, as the "Director General of Land Affairs," or in a generic sense, such as "the administration of land affairs." In the latter sense, the term land tenure administration is considered synonymous.

Land Administration. As used here, the term "land administration" has a restricted meaning, embodying the routine tasks for identifying and measuring land and for recording, transferring, and storing title documents showing ownership of land.

Land Reform. As used here, the term "land reform" includes the dictionary definition, "the more equitable distribution of agricultural land, especially by governmental action," as well as the more equitable regulation of landlord-tenant relationships. Land reform is generally policy-oriented and includes policy, laws, administration of land affairs and programs concerned with improving conditions of land tenure and creating a more equitable distribution of land.

Agrarian Reform. Often used synonymously with land reform (and used somewhat interchangeably in translations from VN documents), the term "agrarian reform" is usually used here in a broader sense to embrace all of the related actions beyond mere distribution of land to assure its comprehensive, beneficial use by the farmer, i.e., including such matters as seed, fertilizer, credit, and markets, and indeed rural development in the broader sense.

Land Registration System

Dia Bo. "Dia Bo" refers to land registers kept originally under the Vietnamese kings and improved by the French administration. The system was established by the French before the turn of the century.

So Dien Tho. "So Dien Tho" refers to land registers kept under the 1925 full Torrens system.

New Dia Bo. "New Dia Bo" refers to land registers kept under the 1962 modified Torrens system.

Kien Dien. "Kien Dien" refers to the 1962 land identification system.

Torrens System. The "Torrens System" refers to a very complete system of land registration entailing an adjudication or detailed determination of title to land. The system has been used in the Southern Region since 1925, and a simplified system was introduced in 1962.

Civil Service

Cadre. "Cadre" refers to positions for recruiting and employment. Under the Vietnamese civil service system all civil servants are grouped by skills into cadres.

Doc Su. "Doc Su" refers to administrative cadres or civil service officials, Class A (office and field administrators).

Tham Su. "Tham Su" refers to administrative cadres or civil service officials, Class B (senior clerks).

Local Administration

The legal administrative divisions are the provinces, the autonomous cities, and the villages. However, the regions, districts, cantons, and hamlets also are important and so all of the various territorial subdivisions are listed here in order of decreasing size.

Region. Prior to January 1, 1956, "Region" refers to the three regional governments, one in the North, one in the Central, and one in the South. Since that date, when these were abolished, it refers to the groupings of provinces, corresponding presently to the I, II, III, and IV Army Corps Tactical Zones. In each case the Corps Commander is also the Government Delegate and is charged with inspectorate authority for the provinces in his region.

Province. "Province" is the basic territorial and administrative subdivision of the central government (currently 44). It is a legal entity possessing an autonomous budget and public property and is governed by a province chief appointed by the president.

City. "City" (sometimes called "autonomous city") is a legal entity (currently six) having an autonomous budget and public property, each one governed by an appointed prefect or mayor and a city council.

District. "District" is an extension of the provincial administration embracing a group of cantons or villages.

Canton. "Canton" is a territorial unit (currently 177) that exists in some provinces (sometimes in name only, since the canton chief functions more as an advisor to the district chief); it is a group of villages within a district.

Village. "Village" (commune or Xa) is the lowest legal administrative entity possessing an autonomous budget and property.

Hamlet. "Hamlet" (or Ap) is an extension or subdivision of the village made up of a grouping of inhabitants united by a rapid and easy means of communication. It is the smallest territorial unit.

Laws

- Ordinance (in Vietnamese, Du; in French, Ordonnance) is a law issued by the former King of Vietnam, between 1949 and 1956. Many are still in effect.
- Law (in Vietnamese, Luat; in French, Loi) is a law issued by the former National Assembly of Vietnam between October 10, 1956 and November 1, 1963, and by the new National Assembly inaugurated November 1, 1967.
- Decree (in Vietnamese, Sac Luat; in French, Decret-Loi) was and instrument issued by the Chairman of the National Leadership Committee (the Prime Minister) to appoint judges, to announce rewards or medals, to grant reductions of punishments, to pardon, to effect an amnesty, and for such matters requiring high authority to decide but being administratively uncomplicated. Since November 1, 1967 decrees are issued by the President.
- Arreté (in Vietnamese, Nghi Dinh; in French Arreté. The closest equivalent in English is Departmental Order, but it is not used) was an instrument issued by:
---the Chairman of the Central Executive Committee (the Prime Minister) to effect routine matters,

---Commissioners (Ministers) to implement matters within their organizations or to implement ordinances, laws, decree-laws, their provinces.

Violations of an arrete may be brought to prosecution by the Police before Justices of the Peace.

Sources: The General Commission for Justice of Vietnam as reported in the USAID Public Administration Bulletin, No. 35, Vietnam, Feb. 1, 1967

Political Terms

Chieu Hoi	Vietnamese term applied to those (Hoi Chan) who have been associated with the Viet Cong but who rally to the cause of the GVN. The term is also applied to the GVN "open arms" program, designed to encourage defection in the ranks of the Viet Cong, and to provide for the assimilation of the ralliers into the society represented by the GVN.
Class struggle	Term used by the Communists (Viet Cong) to describe the basis for revolution. Involves the classification of the peasantry into landlord, rich, middle, and poor peasant classes, and the exacerbation of the distinctions between these classes to motivate the poorer classes to reject the rich.
Collective	A rural farm cooperative form of organization in which the participants work for the state. The collective represents a late stage of Communist organization of rural society and implies the virtual elimination of concepts of land ownership and tenure inherited from the former society.
Commune	A rural community organized on a communal basis. Used here to describe the ultimate form of Communist organization of rural society which involves the complete abrogation of private ownership and the mobilization of the community in the service of the state.
Confused lands	Lands whose ownership or tenancy (occupancy) rights have been expropriated by the Viet Cong and reassigned.

Contested lands	Lands in which control by either the GVN or the Viet Cong is incomplete or of limited duration. As used here, contested includes any condition of security short of full Viet Cong control, in which the landowner, tenant, or GVN administrator may be intimidated or otherwise interfered with in the exercise of his rights or responsibilities.
GVN-Controlled lands	Lands generally free from Viet Cong activity. Defined here as sufficiently secure that land owners, tenants, and GVN administrators may exercise their rights and responsibilities without interference from the Viet Cong.
Hamlet Evaluation System	An information system developed to evaluate the progress of pacification. The System includes all hamlets identified (over 12,000) in the Republic of Vietnam and presents judgments as to the status of military and civil efforts to improve security, administrative, and economic conditions for each hamlet. The System is operated by the Military Assistance Command Civil Office of Revolutionary Development Support (MACCORDS), Saigon.
Landlord	A landowner who rents out land to tenants. Used by the Viet Cong as an image of exploitation and oppression of the peasantry. In Viet Cong terminology and policy, a landlord owns in excess of 50 hectares and operates none. This definition coincides with the large absentee landlord but does not include those who rent out small amounts of land and who operate some land themselves.
Middle Peasant	Term used by the Viet Cong in classifying the peasantry to emphasize existing class distinctions. The middle peasant may own or rent up to 5 hectares of land. He derives from this land sufficient income to support his family comfortably, but has little surplus.
National Liberation Front (NLF)	Full Vietnamese name Mat Tran Dan Toc Giai Phong Mien Nam Viet Nam. The NLF was formed 20 December 1960 in an effort to assemble the various antigovernment elements in South Vietnam under a single (Communist) leadership. The NLF is controlled by the Communist Peoples Revolutionary Party which is in turn controlled by the Central Office for Vietnam (COSVN), an office

under the Central Committee of the Communist Dang Lao Dong (Labor) Party of North Vietnam. The NLF is used by the Communists to present a facade of legitimate nationalism, and ostensibly controls all civil and military activities of the Viet Cong.

Peoples Revolutionary Party (PRP)

The Communist Party in the Republic of Vietnam. Controlled by the Central Committee of the Communist Dang Lao Dong (Labor) Party of North Vietnam. The PRP controls all Viet Cong operations in the Republic of Vietnam including the National Liberation Front and National Liberation Army as well as all covert intelligence and sabotage activities.

Poor Peasant

Term used by the Viet Cong in classifying the peasantry to emphasize existing class distinctions. The poor peasant may own or rent up to a hectare or may be a farm laborer, but is usually landless and at a bare subsistence level of income. He constitutes the primary source of recruits for the Viet Cong.

Proselytizing

Term used to describe the Viet Cong process of recruiting adherents and neutralizing alien elements such as GVN military and civil authorities.

Resistance War

Term used to describe the conflict between the Viet Minh and the French which ended in 1954 with the partition of Indo China as a result of the Geneva Accords.

Revolutionary Development (RD) Cadre

Teams of 59 men and women assigned to assist hamlets in the elimination of the Viet Cong infrastructure and in social reform and economic development activities.

Rich Peasant

Term used by the Viet Cong in classifying the peasantry to emphasize existing class distinctions. The rich peasant may own or rent up to 50 hectares of land. He may rent out some of this land, but in Viet Cong terms, he differs from the landlord in that he operates some of his land himself.

Viet Cong Literally "Vietnamese Communist." The term is used here in its popular generic sense to include the National Liberation Front (NLF) and all subsidiary front organizations, the National Liberation Army, the Communist Peoples Revolutionary Party, and associated Communist control agencies, as well as covert intelligence and sabotage units, all of which operate in support of Communism in South Vietnam.

Viet Cong Controlled Lands Lands over which the Viet Cong maintain full administrative control.

Viet Minh Contraction of Viet Nam Doc Lap Dang Minh Hoi. A front organization formed in 1941 by the Indochinese Communist Party (ICP) and used by the Communists to acquire control over the nationalist movement in Indochina. The term Viet Minh is used here in its popular connotation to include all Communist, front, and military organizations that were instrumental in defeating the French.

ABBREVIATIONS

- ADPA - Associate Director, Public Administration
- ADDP/LR - Land Reform Adviser to the Associated Director, Domestic Production (USAID)
- CINCPAC - Commander in Chief Pacific; Headquarters Joint U.S. Military Command, located in Hawaii, is charged with support of U.S. military operations in Vietnam and the Far East
- CORDS (MACCORDS) - Military Assistance Command Civil Operations and Revolutionary Development Support (the overall organization for administering the pacification program under MACV)
- DGLA - Director General of Land Affairs
- DRV - Democratic Republic of Vietnam (North Vietnam)
- EARI - Engineer Agency for Resources Inventory (a U.S. Army agency working on a contract in An Giang province)
- GVN - Government of Vietnam (South Vietnam)
- JCRR - The Sino-American Joint Commission on Rural Reconstruction (Taiwan)
- JUSPAO - Joint U.S. Public Affairs Office. Includes U.S. Information Service, USAID Communications Media Division and MACV psychological warfare elements
- MACV - U.S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam. Includes all operational U.S. military units as well as all U.S. civil, police, and military advisory staff associated with the day-to-day counter-insurgency operations
- NIA - National Institute for Administration (under the Office of the Prime Minister)
- NLF - National Liberation Front of South Vietnam
- NTC - National Training Center at Vung Tau

RD - Revolutionary Development

RVN - Republic of Vietnam

USAID - United States Agency for International Development

VC (Viet Cong) - Vietnamese Communist (pejorative of the term Viet
Cong-San)

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