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HEADQUARTERS, U.S. ARMY SECTION
MILITARY ASSISTANCE ADVISORY GROUP, VIETNAM
APO 143, San Francisco, California

MAGAR-OT (OP)

11 16 May 1962

SUBJECT: Lessons Learned No. 13 [u], 8

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1. GENERAL: Operation "NGUYEN HUE" was conducted in QUANG NAM Province 2d DTA, I CTZ, during the period 21-22 April 1962.

2. PARTICIPATING UNITS: The units participating in the operation were six SDC company-sized units with a Civil Guard company in reserve. This force was supported by one battery of 105mm howitzers from the 2d Division and 10 H-21 helicopters. VNAF supported the airmobile and attack phases with 3 T-28's, and 1 L-19 aircraft.

3. MISSION: The mission was to capture or destroy VC armed forces in a 22-square kilometer area.

4. CONCEPT: The concept of the operation was to utilize four task forces, three of which were to seize blocking positions into which the fourth (air-mobile) force would drive VC. The operation was to be in three phases: first, the occupation of the blocking positions; second, the airmobile operations; and third, destruction of the VC by forcing them into the blocking positions.

5. RESULTS: The operation was unsuccessful since there was no VC contact established at any time.

6. LESSONS LEARNED:

a. SELF DEFENSE CORPS UNITS ARE NOT ORGANIZED, TRAINED OR EQUIPPED TO UNDERTAKE MISSIONS WHICH REQUIRE LARGER THAN PLATOON FORMATIONS, A HIGH DEGREE OF COORDINATION OR THE USE OF COMPLEX EQUIPMENT. SDC units do not normally have the leadership, organization, training or equipment to conduct complex operations. Therefore, advisors should carefully consider all aspects of the operational plan to include the state of training and equipping of troops involved prior to authorizing the use of helicopters. (SEE T&T PAPER, CHAPTER VI, C 1-4 and "Lessons Learned" No. 8).

b. OPERATIONS UNDER CONTROL OF SECTOR COMMANDERS MUST BE COORDINATED WITH DIVISION HEADQUARTERS FOR MAXIMUM EFFECTIVENESS. There must be early, complete, and continuous coordination between the Sector Commander and the Division Headquarters. Without this coordination, problems of communication,

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exchange of intelligence, artillery and air support, and ground maneuver, cannot be resolved. For effective counter-insurgency operations, coordination and cooperation of all available forces, is an absolute essential. (SEE T&T PAPER, PART II, PAGE 15).

c. A TRAINED OPERATOR MUST ACCOMPANY ANY NON-ORGANIC COMMUNICATION EQUIPMENT USED BY CG OR SDC UNITS ON OPERATIONS. There are occasions when communications equipment is loaned to CG or SDC units for operations. When such equipment is provided, a trained operator should accompany the equipment to insure effective utilization. The state of training of the para-military units and the number of trained operators which they have available for utilization of equipment on a loan basis is rarely adequate.

d. TIMELY AND ACCURATE INTELLIGENCE IS CRITICAL IN PLANNED OPERATIONS. Failure to contact VC in this case was directly attributable to outdated intelligence. VC units move frequently to avoid becoming operational targets, and unless intelligence confirms their presence in the objective area up to the latest possible moment, VC may "fly the coop" and avoid engagement. (SEE T&T PAPER, CHAPTER IV, BL-4 AND "LESSONS LEARNED" NO. 5, 8, and 12).

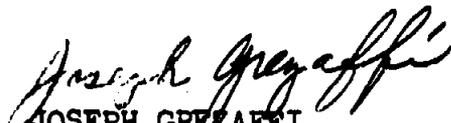
7. The foregoing is for your information and guidance.

s/t H. K. EGGLESTON
Brigadier General, USA
Acting Chief

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