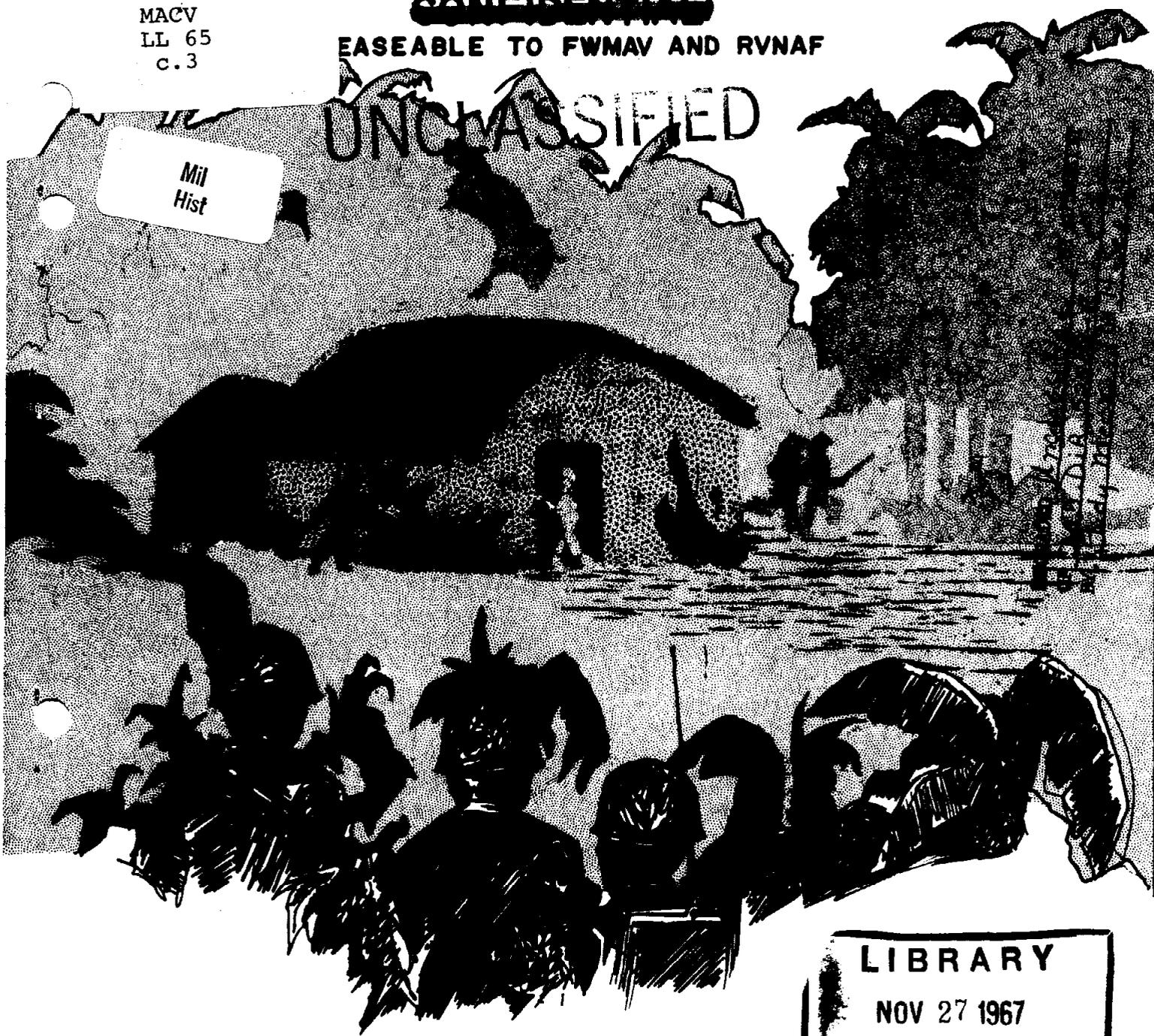


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# COUNTERINSURGENCY

## LESSONS LEARNED NO.65

### POPULATION AND RESOURCES CONTROL(U)

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2. The information contained in this "Lessons Learned" may be of value for direct application to training, or to reinforce existing doctrine, based on combat experience in South Vietnam.
3. Comments or questions concerning the document, or requests for changes or additions in the distribution of Lessons Learned, should be addressed to this headquarters, Attention: MACJ343.

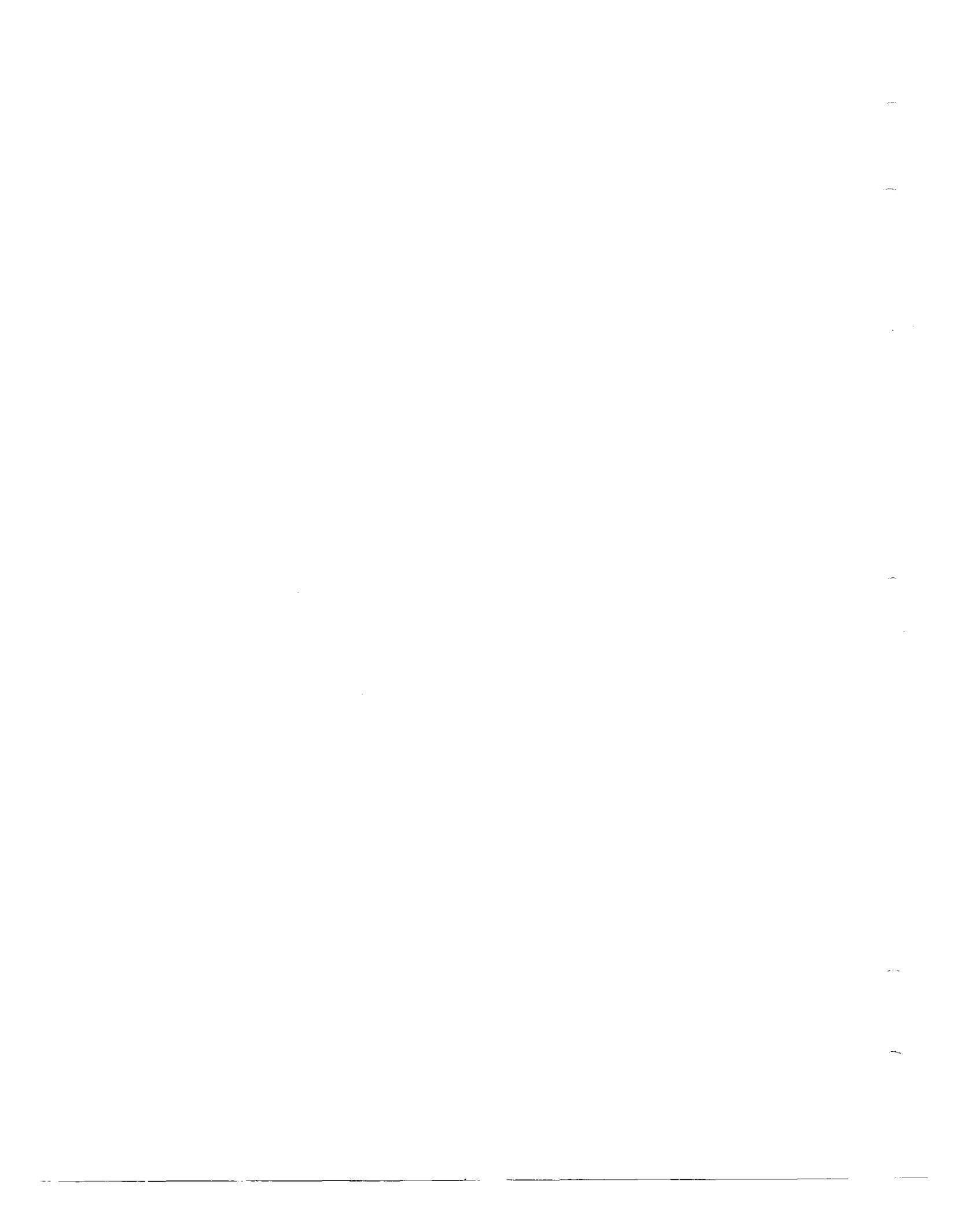
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COUNTERINSURGENCY LESSONS LEARNED NO. 65

POPULATION AND RESOURCES CONTROL (U)

1. (CMHA) INTRODUCTION:

a. This lessons learned is devoted to population and resources control conducted by two separate forces - The US 1st Cavalry Division, Air Mobile (AM) and the Republic of Korea Forces, Vietnam (ROKFBV). The lessons learned covers the combined cordon and search operations conducted by the 1st Cavalry Division (AM) with a supporting National Police Field Force (NPF) Battalion. These operations are designed for attack and destruction of the Viet Cong (VC) and his infrastructure in hamlets/villages with minimal impact on the friendly civilian populace. The portion of the lessons learned pertaining to ROKFBV presents their system of evacuating civilians from combat areas and the procedures and techniques used for this type operation.

b. Population and resources control is a major and inherent part of the military effort in the Republic of Vietnam (RVN). The final objectives of population and resources control are destruction and elimination of the underground Viet Cong and his infrastructure and return of the population and resources to positive RVN control.

c. Since these operations directly involve the civilian population, they present unique problems to commanders at all levels. From a military operations stand point their success is measured in two ways. First, they are measured by the capture, destruction or elimination of the VC and his infrastructure. Second, by executing the operation in such a manner that casualties among the civilians and other actions which may alienate the civilian population are reduced to the absolute minimum.

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2. (CMHA) 1ST CAVALRY DIVISION (AM) COMBINED CORDON AND SEARCH OPERATIONS.

a. BACKGROUND:

(1) The 1st Cavalry Division (AM) has been conducting cordon and search operations of hamlets/villages as a part of their overall operations against the VC and his infrastructure. Initially, both the cordon and search of a hamlet/village were conducted by US division units. While these operations were successful, it was believed that their efficiency could be improved by using a Republic of Vietnam (RVN) unit as the search element. The initial combined cordon and search operations were tried using either Regional Forces/Popular Forces (RF/PF), Army Republic of Vietnam (ARVN) or local national police as the search element. It was found that, because of the training in search techniques and interrogation methods, the local national police were better suited for search operations than other type ARVN units. From this experience, the concept of combined cordon and search operations with a supporting NPF unit was developed.

(2) Another factor which lead to the concept of the combined cordon and search operations was the change in the enemy's pattern of operations. Initially, the division was opposed by and encountered organized enemy units during their daily operations. As the division defeated these organized forces or forced their withdrawal into the western portion of the Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR), the frequency of contact with organized company size or larger units decreased. This permitted the division to reorient more of its effort toward population and resources control.

b. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS.

(1) INITIAL PLANNING: The concept of combined cordon and search elements with US Forces as the cordon element and NPF units as the search element was coordinated with district and province GVN officials, and the then office of Civil Operations (OCO) advisors in the field prior to requesting the NPF units. Coordination was essential for several reasons. First, all agencies had to know what was planned. Second, other agencies had to plan any required actions on their part needed to support operations. Third, the impact of combined cordon and search operations on other programs, especially those in support of pacification and revolutionary development, had to be estimated. If these combined operations were successful and the VC Infrastructure destroyed, then pacification could be achieved at a much more rapid rate. This would mean that related plans or

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20 October 1967

programs would have to be adjusted accordingly. The NPFf forces were initially requested through OCO. Present request for NPFf units should be sent to ACofS, CORDS, Attention: Public Safety Division.

(2) STAFF RESPONSIBILITIES:

(a) The G5 and the Provost Marshal developed the concept and initial plans for combined cordon and search operations with NPFf. The Provost Marshal, his staff and the division Military Police Company became directly involved in the cordon and search operations. The Provost Marshal coordinated NPFf activities under G5 staff supervision. The Provost Marshal performed the day to day overall coordination with cordon and search operations and was the principal point of coordination between GVN agencies, office of Public Safety, CORDS and the 1st Cavalry Division. In addition, he functioned as the senior advisor to the NPFf Battalion. Once operations started the G5 had overall staff monitorship at division level. With the exception of the G2, the remainder of the principal staff officers performed their normal roles and functions in relationship to the cordon and search operations. The G2 supervised, through his agencies, the coordination of the various local GVN intelligence sources.

(b) At brigade level the Military Police platoon leader of the MP platoon attached to the brigade coordinated and monitored NPFf operations. Special responsibilities of brigade staff officers in connection with the cordon and search operations were:

1. S1: None.

2. S2:

a. Operated the Brigade Police Operations Center (BPOC).

b. At brigade level was responsible for coordination of local GVN intelligence agencies.

c. From intelligence developed at brigade level and information furnished by division developed and maintained the target list of hamlets/villages for cordon and search operations.

3. S3: Based operational orders upon the above intelligence and attached units.

3

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4. S4: Provided the required logistic support for attached NPPF units.

5. S5: Provided MEDCAP and Armed Propaganda teams for each cordon and search operation.

6. MP Platoon Leader: The MP platoon leader attached to brigade performed similar functions at this level as the Provost Marshal at division, with the exception that he was not responsible for the daily operations of the BPOC. From his platoon he provided a squad or element that worked with the NPPF unit during the search phase of each of the cordon and search operations.

7. Brigade MI Team: Their purpose was to look for intelligence material that had immediate value, advise and work with the National Police Special Branch in interrogations, use and update Counterintelligence "Blacklists", examine and exploit all captured documents and gather and record all information on the hamlet that would aid NPPF in a possible second cordon and search of that hamlet.

c. OPERATIONAL PLANNING:

(1) Coordination and monitoring of the cordon and search operations were accomplished at the DPOC and BPOCs. These facilities provided an unrestricted focal point where the necessary coordination for cordon and search operations could be effected between the US and NPPF units and local GVN agencies. At both division and brigades if housing was not available, a squad tent was used for this purpose. To a certain extent general planning for the operations was conducted at these centers. These also served as the headquarters for the NPPF units. Personnel operating in the DPOC and BPOC were:

(a) DPOC:

1. Division Provost Marshal.
2. G5 representative.
3. National Police Special Branch Representative and his US Advisor.
4. Representative of 191st MI.

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5. Binh Dinh Province National Police representative.
6. GVN Military Security Service (MSS) representative.
7. NPPF Battalion Commander, Staff and US Advisor.

(b) BPOC:

1. Brigade S2.
2. NPPF Company S2 and US Advisor.
3. Brigade MI Representative.
4. Brigade MP Platoon leader.
5. MSS and/or National Police special representative and US Advisor.

(2) Planning for the actual cordon and search operation was accomplished similarly to any other combat type operation. However, there were certain requirements in these operations that required special consideration during the planning stages. These were: reconnaissance of the target hamlet/village; plan of search for the hamlet/village; and coordination between the cordon elements and search elements.

(3) Targeting of a hamlet/village was based primarily on the intelligence gathered from American and Vietnamese agent reports and an extensive blacklist compiled and maintained by the DPOC. This blacklist was compiled from lists submitted by 191st MI, 22d ARVN Division, National Police at each district, National Police Special Branch, interrogation reports from Binh Dinh Chieu Hoi Center, and Special Forces.

d. CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS:

(1) The composition of the forces for the cordon and search operations was relatively standardized. US forces were used for the cordon. The size of the cordon force was dependent on the size of the hamlet/village and the local terrain. The distance from the cordon element to the huts in the hamlet/village depended on local conditions. The usual rule was that the cordon element should be able to observe the huts of the hamlet/village. NPPF units with an NPPF Advisor and US Military Police element; MEDCAP and Armed Propaganda teams; and a US MI element constituted the search

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force. The size of the search force was generally based on the size of the cordon element. If a rifle company was required to cordon a hamlet/village, an NPPF platoon was used as the search force.

(2) The cordon element was moved into position either by helicopter or on foot. The method used was based on the distance of the target hamlet/village from the battalion's base location. If movement by helicopter was to be used, the cordon element was lifted to a landing zone within two to five kilometers of the target hamlet/village depending on the situation. The cardinal rules for establishing the cordon required it to be established by stealth, and to be in position prior to dawn. Normal division practice was to have the cordon in place by 0400 hours. Once the cordon was in place, no civilians were permitted to leave the hamlet/village. At first light a psychological broadcast was made telling the civilians what was happening, and directing them to stay in their homes until further instructions. Prior to inserting the NPPF search units into the hamlet/village, a US element with the cordon force was used to conduct a superficial sweep through the hamlet/village. This initial sweep was a critical part of the operation, and it had a twofold purpose. The first was to make certain that no organized VC/NVA units were occupying the hamlet/village. If the sweep force discovered an organized defense, then the cordon and search operation would be temporarily canceled until the organized VC unit was defeated. The second reason for this sweep was to protect the NPPF element from engagement with an organized force. While NPPF units are trained in infantry tactics, their employment in this role was only to be made as a last resort.

(3) After the US element had completed its sweep, the NPPF search element was introduced into the hamlet/village to start the search. The search was preplanned within the limits of the available intelligence on a hamlet/village, and was conducted in a methodical manner. Squads conducted the search and initial screening on a house by house basis. Their organization for the search was each house as follows:

(a) TEAM CHIEF: This was the NPPF squad leader. He was responsible for all facets of the search and screen and supervised the squad members in the conduct of their functions. He paid special attention to the interviewing process and was responsible for the compilation of information gathered.

(b) INTERVIEWERS (2 each): The interviewers were responsible for the initial interview of all members of the household, giving particular attention to families and relatives of the VC. The

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purpose of this was to extract, as soon as possible, information concerning location, movement and identity of the VC in the area. Each person interviewed was tagged as tentatively suspect or innocent, and moved to a central holding area for further interrogation.

(c) SEARCH TEAM (3 each): The three man search team conducted a thorough search of the house and premises to detect hidden personnel, documents, weapons or explosives. The inner measurements of each room in the house were taken and a rough sketch made for future reference in an attempt to discover any structural modifications. Each piece of furniture was minutely examined to discover any hidden compartments. The floor and the entire premises were examined to insure that there were no hidden entrances to underground shelters, escape routes, etc.

(d) SECURITY AND ESCORT PERSONNEL: These are formed at NPPF platoon or company level and their purpose was to move civilians who had been through the initial screening to a central holding area.

(4) A central holding area inside the cordon for civilians was established during the planning phase of the operation. Once the civilians homes had been searched, the security and escort personnel moved the civilians to this area. Here the detailed interrogation and screening was conducted by the National Police Special Branch. Also the MEDCAP and Armed Propaganda Teams set up their operations in the central holding area. The MEDCAP team consisted of one US Medic and an interpreter. Minor cases are treated on the spot. If the team discovered serious illness and the civilian agreed to hospitalization, he was evacuated. The Armed Propaganda team was composed of five men, one team leader and four propagandists who were all Hoi Chanh. A medic from the Armed Propaganda team did not always accompany a cordon and search operation since the division had five teams and only two medics. The propagandists talked to the people in small groups explaining the aims of the GVN and told their story as to why they returned to the GVN.

(5) The division always had one or more reaction forces on a standby basis, to back up the cordon and search operations. As a general rule cordon and search operations have been completed in one day and conducted during daylight hours. However, there were exceptions to this. On one occasion a US Battalion was air assaulted into cordon positions prior to dawn and an NPPF company was used as the search force. This operation lasted for two days with the cordon being maintained overnight. On this operation thirty-two VC were killed or captured with no loss to either US or NPPF elements.

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(6) The cordon and search operations were terminated by the cordon commander after the search is completed. If the search was not completed in sufficient time to extract cordon and search elements and civilian suspects during daylight hours, it was terminated to permit this to be accomplished. Civilian suspects were taken to the Brigade PW Collecting Point where they were further interrogated and screened. Those identified as Civil Defendants were transferred to the Division PW Collecting Point. From there they were turned over to GVN district officials for final disposition.

3. (CMHA) ROKFV POPULATION AND RESOURCE CONTROL

a. BACKGROUND:

(1) The ROKFV system of handling civilians during their field operations was developed by the Commander, ROKFV. Principal point of the ROKFV policy concerning handling civilians during operations was that every effort is made to protect the Vietnamese civilian and his property.

(2) From this basic precept the ROKFV units have developed a very simple, but highly effective, means of handling civilians during combat operations. The system was used successfully during their recent Operation HONG KIL DONG in southern Binh Dinh and northern Phu Yen Provinces.

b. CONCEPT OF OPERATIONS:

(1) An inherent part of the initial preparation for any ROKFV operation involves the planning for control of population and resources within the proposed area of operations. The major aspect of this planning centers around population control.

(2) The ROKFV concept for population control was based on cordoning hamlet/village and evacuating the civilian populace either prior to or during the initial phase of an operation. The civilians were initially moved to ROKFV unit central collection points and then to established refugee camps under GVN control.

c. OPERATIONAL PLANNING:

(1) The initial aspect of the ROKFV planning was to determine the approximate number of civilians who will have to be evacuated from the operational area. This information was developed by ROKFV units in two ways. One method was to observe the hamlet/village by means of long range

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reconnaissance patrols. The other was to obtain the local GVN district and province officials estimates as to the population of the target hamlets/villages.

(2) From the estimated number of civilians who would require evacuation from the operation area, ROKFV units initiated two standard actions. First, local GVN officials at district and province were contacted and plans made for establishment of a refugee camp under GVN control. The units then assisted in the construction of the camp. Second, the ROKFV units established a local centralized refugee collection point. This was the initial place to which civilians were evacuated.

d. CONDUCT OF OPERATIONS:

(1) Standard ROKFV practice is to cordon the hamlet/village from which the civilians are evacuated. The cordon is established as covertly as possible, preferably during the hours of darkness. This assures a dual benefit. First, the civilians are all present in the target hamlet/village and second, any VC in the hamlet/village may be captured. Once the cordon is established, an intensive psychological warfare program is initiated with all available means. This program stresses the following:

(a) ROKFV units are conducting an attack against the enemy. Civilians have a specified time in which to evacuate the hamlet/village.

(b) Civilians remaining in the hamlet/village after the specified hour and date may be killed or wounded due to artillery fire and air strikes.

(c) ROKFV units will take good care of the civilians and help them move (when tactical situation permits) to a refugee camp away from the fighting.

(2) Instructions as to what the civilians are to do and take with them when evacuating their hamlet/village are disseminated during the psychological warfare broadcasts or by leaflets. Where possible, ROKFV units have RF/PF forces if available, or their own personnel guide civilians from their hamlet/village to the ROKFV central collection point. Whenever possible, civilians are moved from the central collection point to the refugee camp within twenty-four hours, and turned over to the control of local GVN officials. At this collection point, ROKFV

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units make it a practice to have simple and useful presents for the civilians. These presents, consisting of food and clothing, are normally given directly to the head of the family unit or to the individual. Gifts are never distributed on a random basis. The ROKFV units provide full support for the civilians in their initial collection point. After the civilians are moved to the refugee camps, the ROKFV units continue to provide limited support where necessary. ROK soldiers, on occasion have shared their rice rations with the civilians. When the operational situation permits, the ROKFV units encourage civilians to return to their hamlet/village for food or additional personnel belongings. The civilians are not escorted, and they may make the trip more than once. Prior to their departure, they are instructed that they are to return by a specified time.

(3) In Operation HONG KIL DONG, six hundred civilians were released at one time to go back for personal effects. All but one returned to the refugee camp. The one that failed to return was captured by the VC. ROKFV experience has shown that once a hamlet/village was evacuated, the VC often moved in and utilized the stored rice, shelters or other facilities. By permitting the civilians to return to their hamlet/village for personal items, they often provided intelligence information on the Viet Cong. If, for some reason, the civilians did not report information, then the ROKFV units suspected that the VC still had a strong control over this particular group of civilians. These were then watched more closely, since they were marked as potential VC collaborators or part of the VC Infrastructure.

(4) During the period 9 July 1967 to 13 August 1967, on Operation HONG KIL DONG, two thousand eight hundred and seventy-seven civilians were evacuated to refugee camps by the Capital ROK Division. These civilians were evacuated from their hamlet/village without harm or loss of personal possessions. Their hamlets/villages, were neither damaged or destroyed.

4. (CMHA) SUMMARY:

a. The combined cordon and search operations conducted by the 1st Cavalry Division (AM) were successful military operations. This success can be attributed to several factors. Utilization of NPFF units, sound combined planning, detailed preparation and efficient execution of the operations. The inherent mobility of this division and its ability to support attached units and react over large areas in a short period of time was also a contributing factor.

b. The ROKFV method of population control during combat operations was also successful. It precluded the development of a difficult

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and unmanageable refugee problem during operations, and permitted commanders complete tactical freedom in the operational area. The system provided for protection and security not only to the civilian, but also to his property. The success of these operations was due in part to the inherent humanitarian instincts that are constantly demonstrated by ROKFV units.

c. Lastly, the high standard of leadership and professional ability demonstrated by both the members of the 1st Cavalry Division (AM) and ROKFV during these operations has been the catalyst for their demonstrated success.

5. (CMHA) LESSONS LEARNED:

a. There is a requirement for an advanced planning period before initiating combined cordon and search operations with supporting NPFV units. It is estimated that this period should be approximately forty-five days in length, and the following should be accomplished during this time:

(1) G2 should:

(a) Develop a completed intelligence plan to support the operations.

(b) Develop a system for integrating and coordinating the efforts of all US and GVN intelligence agencies that are supporting the cordon and search operations.

(c) Establish an intelligence file on each target hamlet/village. This file should contain layouts of the hamlet/village showing the location of suspected VC or VC collaborators' houses. Where possible, aerial photos should be taken of each target hamlet/village.

(d) Establish a coordinated plan for interrogation and screening of civilians during and after, operations.

(2) G3 should develop an overall plan for attack on the VC Infrastructure that closely coordinates the combined cordon and search operations with other supporting division operations.

b. Conduct of combined cordon and search operations requires the establishment of a simple police operation center at division and brigade level. These centers function as planning and coordination centers, as well as, command centers for NPFV units.

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c. The basic plan for conducting combined cordon and search operations in an area must be fully coordinated with all US and GVN agencies who will participate or be effected by these operations.

d. Detailed planning and coordination between the cordon and search elements is essential for each operation.

e. US elements must sweep the hamlet/village prior to inserting the NFFF search units.

f. The cordon element must be in position at least one hour before beginning morning nautical twilight (BMNT), and the time of establishing the cordon must never become standardized.

g. Cordon and search operations must be repeated on the same hamlet/village to preclude resurgence of the VC Infrastructure. An illustration of this is the results in operations in the hamlet of Phu Tu over a forty day period:

24 Apr 67	29 Apr 67	30 Apr 67	3 May 67	4 May 67
4 PW	29 PW	4 PW	6 PW	23 PW
0 CD	39 CD	0 CD	4 CD	24 CD
13 May 67	24 May 67	10 Jun 67	27 Jun 67	30 Jul 67
0 PW	8 PW	1 PW	0 PW	4 PW
0 CD	4 CD	3 CD	0 CD	4 CD

h. A detailed psychological warfare program should be developed in support of the combined cordon and search operation. It is important that the results of the attack against the local VC Infrastructure receive wide dissemination.

i. The search operation either in fact, or by appearance, must impress the civilians in the hamlet/village that this is a Vietnamese operation. Therefore, only limited numbers of essential US Personnel should participate in the search phase of the operation. It is vital from a propaganda standpoint that the NFFF not appear to be subordinate to the US Force.

12

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j. Initial screening and interrogation must take place during the search. The interrogation should be done only by either NPPF or National Police Special Branch personnel accompanying the NPPF search element.

k. Coordinated plans for handling civilian detainees must be completed prior to operations. If facilities are required, they should be constructed prior to the operations.

l. Any civic action programs in support of combined cordon and search operations must be fully coordinated with local GVN officials.

m. Combined training on cordon and search operations should be conducted prior to actual operations.

n. Combined cordon and search operations must never become standardized. Each operation should be varied either from a time standpoint or method of establishing the cordon. Standardizing these operations will quickly result in a total loss of effectiveness.

o. Every US Division and separate Brigade with the intention of operating against the VC Infrastructure should have an NPPF company, or similar unit, attached, and should establish a Combined Police Intelligence Operations Center.

p. Greater use should be made of POW, CDs and especially Hoi Chanh in the identification of the VC Infrastructure.

q. If possible, ROKFV never destroy a village that civilians have evacuated. They purposely leave the village standing so that civilians can return once the area is secured. This eliminates the need to completely rebuild the hamlet/village or construct a new one once active operations have terminated.

r. At the ROKFV civilian collection point, small simple gifts are given to the civilians. These are given to the heads of families or to individuals, usually at a small ceremony.

s. Whenever possible the ROKFVs work through the GVN officials in the presence of civilian refugees to give the GVN officials respect and prestige.

t. ROKFVs do not attempt to make abrupt changes in civilian refugees habits or way of life.

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u. The ROKFVs make an occasion over the return of a VC to GVN control. If he brings in a weapon he is presented his money and a bag of rice in front of the civilian refugees at a ceremony.

v. The ROKFVs make an extra effort to win the support of refugees that are identified as VC sympathizers or collaborators, or who have VC relatives.

w. ROKFVs recognize that the civilians often maintain contact with the VC, possibly because of family relationships. Because of this all VC that are captured are given good treatment in front of the civilians. The ROKFVs have found that the civilians are impressed with this and subsequently pass the word to relatives who are still under VC control. In some instances the ROKFVs will release civilians to go tell their VC relatives of the good treatment they have received.

14

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1 - DODSPECREP  
1 - USAHAC  
100 - Cdr, 7th AF  
6 - MATTJO  
150 - CG, III MAF  
360 - CG, USARV (150 each to  
I FFORCEV and II FFORCEV)  
5 - Each Chief, AF Adv Gp;  
Chief, US Naval Adv Gp;  
Railway Security Adv Det

100 - Each SA, I, II, III & IV  
Corps (1 to each Sr Adv  
down to and including Bn  
and sub-sector level)  
10 - Each SA, CMR, Abn Div,  
RF/PF, Marine Adv Gp (1 to  
each Sr Adv Down to and  
including Bn and Sub-sector  
level)  
1 - Each SA I, II, III, IV & V ALC  
5 - COMNAVFORV  
15 - CO, 5th SFG (Abn)  
5 - JGS, J3  
2 - JGS, Central Training Agency  
10 - Chairman, JCS  
10 - CofSA  
5 - CSAF  
10 - CNO  
10 - CMC  
10 - ACSI  
5 - DCSOPS  
25 - SACSA  
20 - ACTIV Ln Off, ACSFOR  
5 - CINCPAC  
14 - CINCAL  
5 - CINCLANT  
1 - USCINCEUR  
2 - CINCSTRIKE  
2 - CINCSOUTH  
5 - CINCLANT FLT  
10 - CINCUSAREUR  
5 - CINCUSARPAC  
2 - HQ USAFSTRIKE  
2 - HQ USARSTRIKE  
5 - US Army Forces Southern Command  
14 - CG, USARL  
2 - CG, 1st US Army  
2 - CG, 3rd US Army  
2 - CG, 4th US Army  
2 - CG, 5th US Army  
2 - CG, 6th US Army

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