

Intelligence Information Report

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GROUP 1
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REPORT NO. [redacted] (b)(3)

DATE DISTR. 2/ APRIL 1971

COUNTRY - SOUTH VIETNAM (b)(1)

(b)(3)

DOI - FEBRUARY 1971

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SUBJECT - 1. [redacted]

[redacted] THE STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES (b)(3)

OF THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM (b)(3)

2. VIET CONG METHODS FOR COUNTERING THE PROGRAM *Phoenix*

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(b)(3)

ACQ - VIETNAM, [redacted] /27 MARCH 1971/ FIELD NO. [redacted] (b)(3)

SOURCE

[Large redacted area]

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STATE	DIA	ARMY	NAVY	AIR	NSA	CRS	(For Field Distribution see final paragraph)
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SUMMARY.

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THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM AS A BASICALLY EFFECTIVE WEAPON AGAINST THE VC BUT WITH SOME DEFICIENCIES WHICH DETRACT FROM ITS VALUE TO THE GOVERNMENT OF VIETNAM /GVN/. THE DEFICIENCIES INCLUDE THE FACT THAT A DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE NUMBER OF VC CAPTURED THROUGH THE PROGRAM ARE LOW LEVEL AND, [Redacted] THIS IS THE RESULT OF A CONTRIBUTING FACTOR, I.E., THAT NEARLY ALL PHUNG HOANG OPERATIONS ARE CONDUCTED DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS AND THE REAL VC CADRES AVOID CAPTURE MERELY BY STAYING IN SECURE AREAS DURING THE DAY AND OPERATING IN THE VILLAGES AT NIGHT. THE MOST SERIOUS PROBLEM IS THE ANTI-GVN BACKLASH AMONG THE PEOPLE RESULTING FROM THE ARREST AND CONVICTION OF PEOPLE IN CONTESTED AREAS WHO HAVE BEEN COERCED INTO VC MEMBERSHIP BECAUSE THE GVN FAILED TO PROVIDE THEM WITH ADEQUATE PROTECTION SO THEY COULD SAFELY REJECT VC RECRUITMENT. END SUMMARY.

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1. [Redacted]

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PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM IS A BASICALLY EFFECTIVE WEAPON AGAINST THE VC BUT HAS SOME SERIOUS DEFICIENCIES UPON WHICH THE VC CAPITALIZE. ON THE GVN CREDIT SIDE, THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM HAS SUCCEEDED IN CAPTURING A LARGE NUMBER OF VC CADRES AND RESTRICTING, THROUGH FEAR OF CAPTURE, THE ACTIVITIES OF MANY OTHERS. FURTHERMORE, THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM HAS MADE IT MORE DIFFICULT FOR THE VC TO SECURE THE SUPPORT OF THE RURAL POPULATION. MANY VILLAGERS REFUSE TO

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SUPPORT THE VC THROUGH EITHER FINANCIAL OR MATERIEL CONTRIBUTIONS (b)(3)
OR SERVICE IN FRONT OR MASS ORGANIZATIONS BECAUSE OF FEAR OF
ARREST BY THE GVN. THIS DOUBLE EFFECT, ON THE ONE HAND
INHIBITING VC CADRES AND ON THE OTHER, DISCOURAGING THE PEOPLE
FROM SUPPORTING THE VC, HAS SUBSTANTIALLY INCREASED THE VC'S
PROBLEMS IN GVN-CONTROLLED AND CONTESTED AREAS.

2. ON THE DEBIT SIDE FOR THE GVN, THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM HAS
AT LEAST TWO SERIOUS FAULTS--

A. IT CAPTURES A DISPROPORTIONATELY LARGE NUMBER OF LOW-
LEVEL VC, MANY OF THEM MERE SYMPATHIZERS OR TAXPAYERS, AND RELATIVELY
FEW HIGH-LEVEL MEMBERS OF THE VC INFRASTRUCTURE. ONE REASON FOR
THIS IS THAT NEARLY ALL PHUNG HOANG OPERATIONS ARE CONDUCTED
DURING DAYLIGHT HOURS AND THE SENIOR-LEVEL VC AVOID CAPTURE BY
HIDING IN SECURE AREAS DURING THE DAY AND ENTERING THE VILLAGES
ONLY AT NIGHT. [REDACTED] IN MOST DISPUTED AREAS GVN VILLAGE (b)(1)
AND HAMLET OFFICIALS AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE PEOPLE'S SELF- (b)(3)
DEFENSE FORCE /PSDF/ ALMOST ALWAYS MOVE INTO OUTPOSTS AND STRONGPOINTS
DURING THE NIGHT, LEAVING THE VILLAGE VIRTUALLY UNPROTECTED AND OPE (b)(1)
TO PENETRATION BY SMALL NUMBERS OF VC. [REDACTED] THE OCCASIONAL (b)(3)
PSDF AMBUSH OPERATIONS [REDACTED] WERE HALF-HEARTED, POORLY ORGANI (b)(1)
AND USUALLY EASILY AVOIDED. [REDACTED] THE PSDF ALWAYS FIRED TOO (b)(3)
SOON, WARNING OFF THE INFILTRATORS. IN EIGHT MONTHS OF NIGHTLY
INFILTRATION INTO [REDACTED] THE VC SUFFERED
ONLY ONE MAN WOUNDED. / [REDACTED] (b)(1)
[REDACTED] (b)(3)

B. THE MOST SERIOUS DEFECT IN THE PHUNG HOANG (b)(1)
PROGRAM IS THAT IT ALIENATES THE PEOPLE BY ARRESTING AND CONVICTING (b)(3)
LARGE NUMBERS OF REALLY INNOCENT PEOPLE. THIS IS BECAUSE AT
LEAST HALF OF THE STRUCTURE OF A TYPICAL VILLAGE OR HAMLET IN MOST
CONTESTED AREAS CONSISTS OF "PAPER CADRES" WHO NEVER DO ANY
ACTUAL WORK FOR THE VC AND WHO HAVE BEEN RECRUITED BY PURE COERCION.
THE VILLAGE PARTY SECRETARY AND THE VILLAGE PARTY COMMITTEE MUST
SHOW RESULTS TO THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE. ACCORDING TO THE SIZE
OF THE VILLAGE, THESE COMMITTEES MUST RECRUIT A CERTAIN NUMBER

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OF FARMERS' AND WOMEN'S ASSOCIATION CELLS, A CERTAIN NUMBER OF MILITARY AND CIVILIAN PROSELYTING CADRES, ET CETERA, SELDOM, IF EVER, IN CONTESTED AREAS CAN ALL OF THESE POSITIONS BE FILLED BY VOLUNTEERS, SO THE VILLAGE PARTY SECRETARY SELECTS VILLAGERS TO FILL THE SLOTS. THE VILLAGERS HAVE NO CHOICE BUT TO AGREE BECAUSE THEY KNOW THE GVN PROTECTS THEM AND THEIR FAMILIES FROM THE VC ONLY DURING THE DAYTIME. ALL OF THESE NAMES ARE RECORDED AS FILLING VC POSITIONS AND THE NAMES ARE FORWARDED TO VC DISTRICT HEADQUARTERS. HOWEVER,  IT IS ONE THING TO FORM AN ASSOCIATION ON PAPER AND ANOTHER TO PUT IT TO WORK. THE VARIOUS CELLS AND ASSOCIATIONS FORMED IN THIS MANNER USUALLY NEVER HOLD A MEETING, THE PROSELYTING CADRES MAY NEVER ATTEMPT TO PERSUADE ANYONE TO WORK FOR THE VC AND THE FINANCE ECONOMY CELLS WILL CONTRIBUTE ONLY WHAT THEY ARE FORCED TO PAY. IF PRESSED TO OPERATE, THEY WILL OFFER EXCUSES, AND, IF PRESSED TOO HARD, THEY MAY RALLY, MAKING THE VILLAGE COMMITTEE APPEAR INCOMPETENT TO THE DISTRICT COMMITTEE AND ENDANGERING THE WHOLE PAPER STRUCTURE. THE ANTI-GVN BACKLASH OCCURS WHEN PHUNG HOANG DAYTIME OPERATIONS, BASED ON CAPTURED DOCUMENTS OR PRISONER OR RALLIER INFORMATION, RESULT IN THE ARRESTS OF THESE "PAPER CADRES" WHO LIVE IN THE VILLAGES WITH THEIR FAMILIES. THE VILLAGE PARTY COMMITTEE MEMBERS ARE SELDOM APPREHENDED BECAUSE THEY ARE PHYSICALLY PRESENT IN THE VILLAGE ONLY AT NIGHT. THE ARRESTED PERSONS ARE OFTEN INTIMIDATED AND SOMETIMES BEATEN UNTIL THEY SIGN A CONFESSION. THEIR DISCLAIMERS OF INNOCENCE OF VC INVOLVEMENT ARE DISREGARDED BY THEIR CAPTORS AND THEY ARE USUALLY CONVICTED AND SENTENCED TO JAIL. MANY OF THESE PEOPLE HAVE RELATIVES WORKING FOR THE GVN WHO DEEPLY RESENT THIS INJUSTICE.

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3. BECAUSE THE GVN DOES NOT PROVIDE ADEQUATE PROTECTION FOR THE PEOPLE IN THE CONTESTED AREAS, BUT STILL PUNISHES THEM FOR INVOLUNTARY COOPERATION WITH THE VC, THE POPULATION IN DISPUTED AREAS FEARS AND RESENTS THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM. THE VC TRY TO CAPITALIZE ON THIS ATTITUDE BY STIRRING UP THE PEOPLE AGAINST THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM WHENEVER SOMEONE IS ARRESTED. IF A LARGE

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NUMBER OF ARRESTS OCCUR IN A PARTICULAR AREA, THE VC TRY TO ORGANIZE AN ANTI-PHUNG HOANG CAMPAIGN AMONG THE PEOPLE TO PRESSURE LOCAL GVN LEADERS TO WITHDRAW SUPPORT FROM THE PHUNG HOANG PROGRAM. ORGANIZING SUCH A CAMPAIGN IS FACILITATED BY THE FACT THAT NEARLY EVERY FAMILY IN A CONTESTED AREA HAS HAD A RELATIVE ARRESTED AND POSSIBLY MISTREATED OR FALSELY CONVICTED BY THE GVN AT ONE TIME OR ANOTHER. /FIELD COMMENT: [Redacted] THE VC CADRES ARE NOT GIVEN ANY GUIDANCE ON HOW TO CONDUCT THEMSELVES IF ARRESTED, AND THEY ARE NOT INSTRUCTED TO ACCUSE INNOCENT PERSONS OF BEING VC. [Redacted]

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4. FIELD DISSEM: STATE, USMACV, USAID, CORDS, DIR/JUSPAO /MR. NICKEL ONLY/, 7TH AIR FORCE, USARV, NAVFORV, 1021 FAS, OSI, 525TH MI GP, CINCPAC, PACFLT, PACAF, ARPAC /ALSO SENT [Redacted]

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