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MARINE COMBINED ACTION CAPABILITIES:

THE VIETNAM EXPERIENCE

Bruce C. Allnutt

December 1969

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13 ABSTRACT

This is an interim report in a study of the Marine Corps Combined Action Program with the objectives of improving the performance of combined action units in Vietnam and of developing a capability to upgrade local indigenous security forces engaged in counterinsurgency in other areas of possible commitment. The first phase of this study involved a detailed analysis of the program is it presently operates in Vietnam--placing Marine squads in the villages of I Corps to work with the Vietnamese Popular Forces to provide village security, upgrade the PFs, gather intelligence, and perform civic action and psyops--and investigates the objectives, techniques, potentialities, and limitations of the concept. Recommendations are made for improvement in the present program and for further development of the concept, which is seen as a highly effective and efficient counterinsurgency method deserving of wider application.

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ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Research is a collaborative effort. In the case of a field team in a situation as complex as the Republic of South Vietnam in the spring and summer of 1969, this is more true than it would be in other, more peaceful, settings. Thus, Dr. E. F. Bairdain, Project Director, Mr. Neil Jamieson, and I, as the HSR team conducting this study of the USMC Combined Action Program, want especially to express our appreciation to particular groups and individuals who made our work not just possible, but productive, in the midst of extremely trying field circumstances.

The project was sponsored by the Office of Naval Research, Dr. John A. Nagay, Head, Group Psycnology Branch, while direct and continual supervision was provided by Lt. Col. Donald L. Evans, Jr., Head of the Counterinsurgency Branch, G-3 Division, HQMC. Colonel Evans and others in his office--particularly Maj. G. L. Gardner, Capt. M. B. Darling, Capt. R. J. Agro, and 1st Lt. C. D. Brown--provided invaluable assistance with their insightful comments and smooth handling of the elaborate arrangements necessary to the field work upon which this report is based. Capt. J. J. O'Connor (CHC USN) helped us to arrive at many of the fundamental issues addressed by the study through a series of especially fruitful conversations, and other members of the CAP Study Committee, particularly Lt. Col. T. B. White and Maj. J. R. Caton, reviewed the next to final draft of the report and made useful suggestions.

In Vietnam, Col. C. R. Burroughs, AC/S, CAPs, offered his time and facilities without reservation, as did his staff and the officers, whose names are listed in page F-2, at the CAG and CACO levels. The friendship and knowledge that these men extended are immensely appreciated, as they insured that the project would be both enjoyable and productive.

But our strongest appreciation and deepest indebtedness are to the hundreds of men, American and Vietnamese, patrolling the villages of I Corps, and to the villagers themselves. Without the warmth of their hospitality and the frankness of their conversation, we would have accomplished nothing at all. Their names may go unrecorded, but we will not soon forget their faces, their words, or their deeds.

And finally, we thank Mrs. Audrey Reniere, whose typing could make proofreading an obsolete profession.

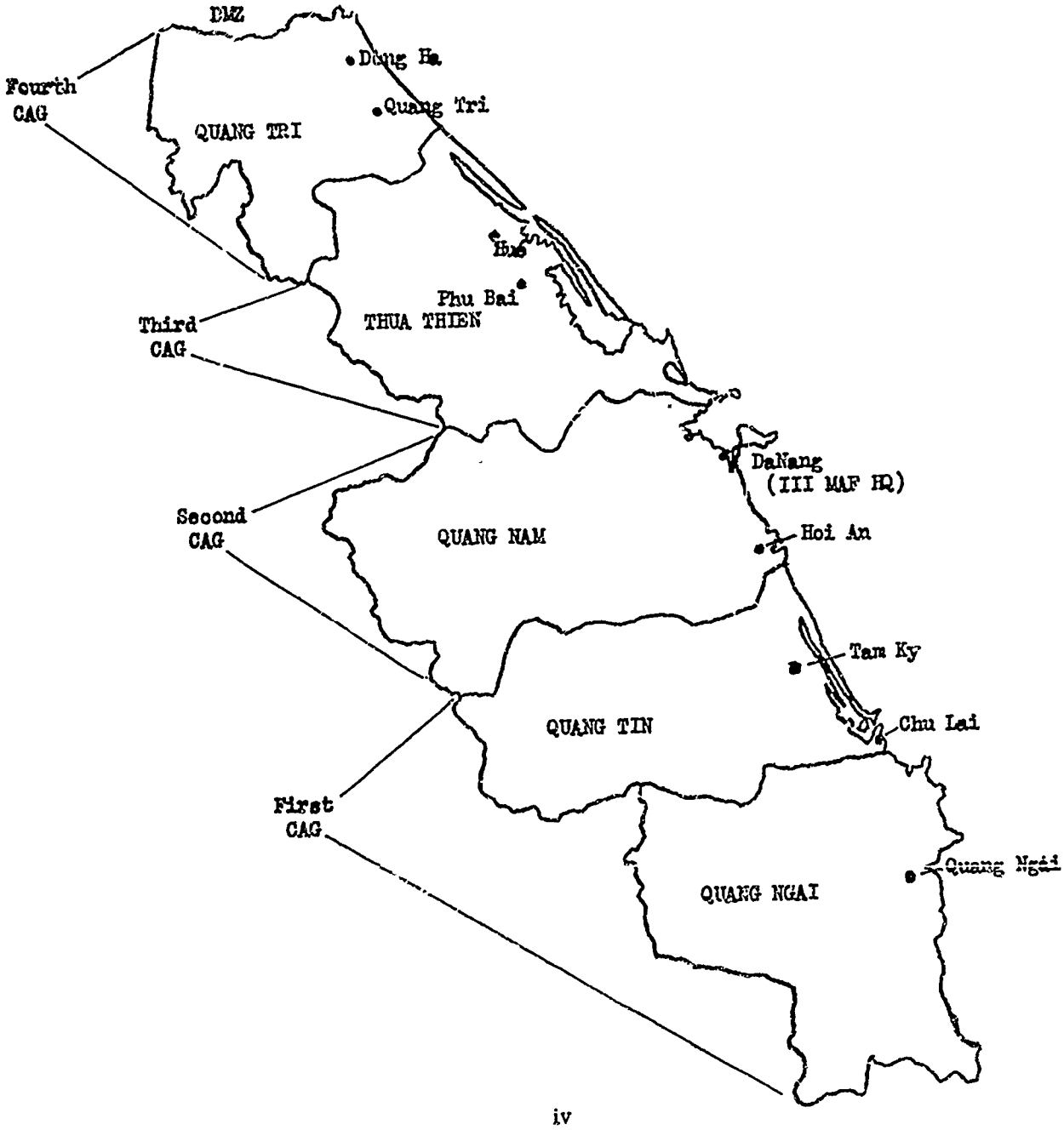
SYNOPSIS

This volume reports a study of the Marine Combined Action Program (CAP), which unites a Marine rifle squad with a Vietnamese Popular Force (PF) platoon to provide village security and pacification, in Vietnam.

The purpose of the study is to synthesize the knowledge gained in the nearly five years of CAP operations there. The study gathered information about the program from a variety of sources--observations of daily activities, interviews with knowledgeable Americans and Vietnamese, and surveys of records, reports, and other literature.

The data from these investigations have been used to paint a detailed portrait of how the combined action concept was actually utilized in I Corps in mid-1969, in the belief that such a presentation will prove useful both to the men in the field and those at conceptual and planning levels. Certain findings and interim recommendations can be made on the basis of these data (see pp. 49-75), but more substantive and more broadly applicable recommendations are deferred to other studies currently underway.

I CORPS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DaNang
(III MAF HQ)
Second CAG
QUANG NAM
Hoi An
Tam Ky
QUANG TIN
Chu Lai
First CAG
Quang Ngai
QUANG NGAI

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MARINE COMBINED ACTION CAPABILITIES:
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I. INTRODUCTION

A. General Background

Since its inception in the summer of 1965, the Marine Corps' Combined Action Program in Vietnam has attracted a great deal of attention. In a war that has been perhaps the most controversial and frustrating in American history, this relatively small and inexpensive effort in the northernmost five provinces of South Vietnam has resulted in a degree of success that is surprising when compared to the number of men and amount of equipment committed to it. The program's supporters have been so enthusiastic as to imply that perhaps this is the solution to this complex struggle; some traditionalists, on the other hand, have decried the effort as being outside the Marine Corps' historical mission.[1]

At any rate, sufficient interest in and support of the program has been generated to cause it to grow steadily during the past four years, and to cause Marine Corps Headquarters to award a contract, under the auspices of the Office of Naval Research, to Human Sciences Research, Inc., with the title "Developing Combined Action Capabilities for Vietnam and Future Contingencies." The study directive outlined the mission for this research project as twofold:

a. To improve the capabilities and performance of combined action units in Vietnam through development of successful techniques and improved training.

b. To develop techniques, procedures and training systems affording a capability to upgrade local indigenous security forces engaged in counterinsurgency struggle in other areas of possible Marine Corp commitment.

The research effort was divided into several phases, the first of which was the "collection, development and classification of data on CAP missions, objectives and successful techniques used by, or of potential value to, combined action units."

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[1] Which is not really true. Cf. Havron (1966), pp. 146-8.

This report summarizes the findings of a nine-month research effort by the HSR study team, and signals the completion of the first phase of the project. The methodology of this and subsequent phases will be discussed later in this report.

In order to present the findings within a meaningful framework, a short discussion of the background, both historical and environmental, within which the Combined Action Platoons (CAPs) function, will be useful.

B. The Vietnam Theatre

Much (perhaps too much) contemporary history has been written on the situation in Vietnam. A fairly comprehensive selection of relevant texts on the subject is listed in the bibliography to this report, and a perusal of some of them is a prerequisite to a full understanding of even the day-to-day events of the war. The Vietnamese, who take great pride in their traditions, are quite conscious of the historical roots of the present struggle, which wind back, almost without interruption, over two thousand years to the absorption of the Nam Viet by the Han emperor Wu Ti in 111 B.C. Throughout a score of centuries, the Vietnamese people have shown an unflagging determination to free themselves from oppression[2]-a determination evidenced by their unique situation among Asian peoples as the only race dominated by the various Chinese dynasties for over a thousand years (the Chinese were finally driven out in 939 A.D.) who managed to retain their identity as a nation despite extreme efforts by the Chinese to Sinicize them.[3]

The geography of Vietnam, two extremely fertile delta areas at the northern and southern tips, connected by a thin line of farmland bounded by the South China Sea and the nearly impenetrable jungle mountains of Southeast Asia, combined with the demographic realities of that part of the world--steady pressure from the Chinese and Mongol hoards to the north--caused continual wars as the

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[2]Vo Nguyen Giap, People's War, People's Army, p. 11.

[3]See Buttinger, The Smaller Dragon, pp. 92-110, 156-158; also Hickey, Village in Vietnam, pp. 3-5.

southward migration of peoples confronted the entrenched inhabitants. Two fairly advanced indigenous civilizations, the Khmer and the Cham, fell to the Vietnamese in their long march south.

The picture was further complicated by the arrival of European colonialists in the sixteenth century. More centuries of struggle, both internal and against the foreign exploiters, were capped by the French conquest of Indochina, which was completed by 1883. Revolt followed revolt, however, and disturbances were quelled only by fierce suppression by the French. The Vietnamese were not to taste independence again, however, until Japanese capitulation in 1945 left a vacuum of power which was quickly filled by the well-organized Viet Minh, especially in the Northern third of the country. The taste was short-lived, however, as the French, supported by the British in the Southern half of Vietnam and, to a lesser extent, the Chinese in the Northern half (though not, at that time, by the United States), returned quickly to reclaim their colony.[4] Revolt now began in earnest, and was climaxed by the sound defeat of the French (supported by the U. S. since 1950) at Dien Bien Phu, and the Geneva Accords of 20 July 1954, which partitioned the country into what were to become the People's Republic of (North) Vietnam, under Ho Chi Minh, and the Republic of (South) Vietnam (RVN), under Ngo Dinh Diem, and which called for general elections on the question of reunification by July of 1956.

Though the election date passed without incident, by 1957 the communist-backed insurgency against the Diem government had reached the level of 15 to 20 assassinations a month, and was growing steadily. Despite a series of pacification programs (based at first on Magsaysay's Philippine experience and later on Malayan programs), the struggle continued to intensify, as did U. S. involvement. The U. S. Military Assistance Advisory Group, Vietnam (MAAGV), which had been formed in 1954, sponsored the training of some 25,000 Civilian Irregular Defense Group (CIDG) personnel in 1961, and in 1962, the U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam (MACV) was formed. By October, 1963, 85 % of the South

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[4]See McCallister, The Origins of Revolution, for a detailed treatment of this period

Vietnamese population was claimed "safe" in Strategic Hamlets, the then-current pacification tactic. But when the Diem government fell in early November, a number of illusions fell with it. The Strategic Hamlets were overrun by the hundred and the stability of the Government of South Vietnam was shaken by a series of disasters. In the following year, government replaced government, pacification programs proliferated and collapsed, revolts by Buddhists and Montagnards added to the confusion, The Viet Cong (VC) began rearming with modern automatic weapons (primarily the AK-47), and the Tonkin Bay Incident provoked the U. S. government to still deeper commitment. By February of 1965, the VC were in control of most of rural South Vietnam, and the GVN uttered what General Wallace M. Greene, then Commandant of the Marine Corps, has called "a desperate cry for help." (Annapolis Address.)[5]

C. Marine Involvement in Vietnam[6]

It was in response to this plea that Lt. Col. McPartlin and the Marines of the Third Battalion, Ninth Marines (3/9) were landed over Red Beach near DaNang on 8 March 1965. This unit, quickly reinforced by 1/3 and under the

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[5] See Bibliography

[6] This historical section is drawn from numerous sources. Of particular usefulness were:

Col. Don H. Blanchard, Pacification: Marine Corps Style (Newport, R.I.: School of Naval Warfare Thesis, 15 May 1968).
Col. E. B. Wheeler, "Viet Nam," Marine Corps Gazette, November 1968.
Marine Combined Action Program, Vietnam, Annex A. FMFPAC, 1967.
Col. Wm. R. Corson, The Betrayal (New York: N. W. Norton, 1968).
Lt. Col. C. Zimmerman, "Review of The Betrayal," Marine Corps Gazette, Sept. 1968.
Capt. J. W. Davis, personal interview, 21 June 1969.
Gen. W. M. Greene, Jr., CMC, "Commandant's Report," Marine Corps Gazette, May 1966.
Gen. L. W. Walt, Address at Cherry Hill, N. J., 22 July 1967.
Gen. L. W. Walt, Address at Newport, R. I., 2 November 1967.
Sgt. F. Beardsley, "Combined Action," Leatherneck, April 1966.

The writers wish to thank these observers and makers of history. To spare the reader, the numerous footnotes necessary to give full credit to each source have been suppressed.

command of Brig. Gen. Karch, Commanding General of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Force, secured the DaNang airfield and hill 327, which overlooks the area. About a month later, Col. Edwin B. Wheeler's Regimental Landing Team was sent north to protect Phu Bai, the strategic airstrip near the traditional capital of Hue. On 7 May, Brig. Gen. Carl landed his 3rd Marine Amphibious Brigade some 65 miles south of DaNang to seize and defend the site for an airfield which came to be called Chu Lai, after the Mandarin characters for Krulak (General Krulak was then the CG of the Fleet Marine Force, Pacific). The day before, Maj. Gen. Collins had established III MEF Headquarters at DaNang, which, in conjunction with Brig. Gen. Nguyen Chanh Thi, then I Corps Commander, had responsibility for the I Corps Tactical Zone (ICTZ), which comprises the five northernmost provinces of South Vietnam.

So, by the time Maj. Gen. Lewis W. Walt relieved Maj. Gen. Collins as CG, III MAF (Third Marine Amphibious Force, renamed from III MEF), on 4 June 1965, the Marines had established three enclaves along the northern coast of South Vietnam. Though the landings had been successful, little contact with the enemy had been made in the initial period--the VC were following the insurgent's axiom of "attack when the enemy is weak, withdraw when he is strong." Since the 20th of April, however, when authorization had been given to begin aggressive patrolling in expanded Tactical Areas of Responsibility (TAORs), encounters with armed VC units had become more frequent, and the Marines could begin to fulfill the traditional military objective of "destroy the enemy."

Also by this time, however, Marine commanders had made a number of observations which called for a careful reevaluation of the situation.

D. Unique Aspects of the Vietnam War

Foremost among these was the realization of the complexity of this war. To an extent far greater than in any other recent war, the enemy was indistinguishable from the civilian population. Secondly, as General Collins had pointed out (Blanchard, p. 48), there was not one enemy but three--the VC "hard core," operating in battalion strength; the VC guerrilla, who lived off the people; and

the VC infrastructure (VCI), who lived among the people. The destruction of enemy main force units, though necessary, was not in itself sufficient, as experience showed that such a unit could be remanned, refitted, retrained, and redeployed within months, so long as the countryside remained open for recruitment and resupply. Third was the political/psychological foundation of the enemy operation. The VC retained its sway over the largely uncommitted population through propaganda and terrorism designed to reinforce three hard-to-dispute and fundamentally frightening myths: the VC are everywhere, the VC own the mountains, and only the VC can move at night. They made capital on the failures of the GVN to expedite land reform and on its inability to deliver any of its promises or even to provide security for the villagers. The VC did not act unless the action was productive of good propaganda, and its policy of harassment and subtle cleverness by small units kept the more massive GVN units on the defensive, proving them to be blundering and incompetent. Nor was the enemy the only source of complexity. The nature of U.S. involvement necessitated continual coordination with all levels of the GVN politico-military command structure, much of it uncoordinated with itself. Further, the geography itself was ideal for insurgency--throughout I Corps, the unpopulated mountains, with their solid cover of jungle canopy, were always close at hand, forming an immense and all but impenetrable area for VC bases; and in the thickly populated flatlands, where over 80% of the population lived in countless tiny hamlets, themselves tiny "jungle islands" surrounded by open rice paddies, the insurgents were able to move with relative freedom in their peasant garb. As Marine units moved on, the VC remained or slipped back in behind them.

To counter this, General Walt, backed by General Krulak's call for "clear and hold" operations (Blanchard, p. 51), devised a three-pronged strategy: to seek out and destroy the NVA and VC main force units; to conduct aggressive small unit operations to root out the local VC, and to provide a continual security shield behind which the GVN could rebuild (Walt, Newport Address). But this last element was the critical factor--"As the relatively secure areas kept growing, we needed more and more troops, naturally, to keep the areas secure." (Walt, Cherry Hill Address.)

But as the problem was being posed, the solution to it was developing naturally in the hamlets around Phu Bai.

E. Birth of the CAPs

The origin of the combined action concept is obscure, but it is likely that it evolved naturally through a series of individual innovations. In the Phu Bai area, Marines from Lt. Col. Taylor's 3rd Battalion, 4th Marines, while conducting patrols around the airbase, discovered that they had a ready-made ally in the surrounding hamlets, the soldiers of the "Popular Forces," the lowest echelon of the Vietnamese armed forces. The PF was (and is) at the bottom of the scale. Minimally trained, armed, and paid, he is a part-time soldier organized and commanded at the district level, generally living with his family in his native hamlet. With support and supervision almost totally nonexistent, he could do little towards his basic mission of providing hamlet and village-level security, and so had been used up to that time primarily as supplementary manpower for larger operations. Militarily the weakest South Vietnamese soldier, he had borne the brunt of the war statistically.

Resourceful Marines recognized in the PF an important source of assistance. The PF, being a local militiaman, knew the area and its people. From very early, Marines on patrol had taken PFs along as guides and interpreters. As Marines expanded their TAOR around the Phu Bai airstrip, and the vulnerability of the base to mortar attack from hamlets lying as close as a few hundred meters away became apparent, the Commanding General of the 1st ARVN Division gave Lt. Col. Taylor military operational control of four Vietnamese villages lying within the TAOR. Within these four villages ("village" in Vietnam designates an administrative area roughly comparable to a "township" or small county in the United States) lay 16 hamlets with a combined population of some 14,000. Despite frequent patrols and the presence in each village of a 20- to 40-man PF platoon, the VC managed to maintain effective control over this area, conducting nightly propaganda meetings and regularly collecting taxes and supplies from the inhabitants. The solution to the situation clearly lay in the provision of 24-hour security in these villages. Lt. Col. Taylor, with the assistance of Maj. C. B. Zimmerman and Lts. J. J. Mullin and J. W. Davis, worked out the plan for formal integration of Marine and PF elements to provide permanent, round-the-clock defense of the

villages. The arrival of 1st Lt. Paul Ek, who had served previously as a Marine advisor with the U.S. Army Special Forces in Vietnam, and who had attended the FMF short course Vietnamese language school on Okinawa, provided a qualified leader. Aware of the sensitive nature of the assignment, Lt. Col. Taylor carefully supervised the selection of four Marine rifle squads, four Navy Corpsmen, and a three-man headquarters. Lt Ek then gave the selectces a two-week orientation course on the unique aspects of the mission and on Vietnamese customs. Classes were also given to the PFs who were to work with the Marines.

And so, on 3 August 1965, the first Combined Action Company[7] was deployed.

F. Growth of the CAPs

Perhaps the best quick indicator of the successfulness of an organization is its growth record, for an unproductive enterprise will not expand for very long. By this criterion, the Combined Action Program scores well, for its growth over the past four years has been rapid and sustained.

This is largely due to the perspicacity of Generals Walt and Krulak, who, in 1965, were the Commanding Generals of III MAF and FMFPAC respectively. From their higher vantage points, they were more attuned to the overall picture of the Vietnam War, and were keenly aware of the new types of challenges facing the American Forces there. In addition to the problems outlined in the preceding section, it was clear to the commanders that the key to victory lay in the winning of the primarily uncommitted Vietnamese peasant, who, as yet had been relatively unaffected by the various pacification programs which had filtered inefficiently down from Saigon. As Che Guevara has pointed out, the insurgent can thrive even in an indifferent peasantry--his defeat can come only if the people regurgitate him.

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[7]Originally called "joint action," the name was formally designated as Combined Action Company (CAC). CAC was later changed to CACO when it was discovered that "cac," if pronounced with a broad "a", has a rather unfortunate meaning in Vietnamese, the same, incidentally, as it has in English. The VC have not been so cautious--their special action teams are called "cac cum."

With these thoughts in mind, and with awareness of the role Marine reinforcement of indigenous militia had played in earlier wars (cf: Constabulary Capabilities for Low-Level Conflict. HSR-RR-69/1-Se, April 1969), General Walt watched the birth of the first combined action units with great interest. Seeing their initial successes, he briefed General Krulak and began to spread the concept to other areas in the ICTZ. Under their guidance and sponsorship, and that of subsequent commanders, the program grew rapidly, as can be seen in Table I-1.

TABLE I-1
Growth of the CAPs

Date	No. of CAPs
Aug 65	4
Nov 65	7
Sep 66	40
Dec 66	49
Jan 67	57
Sep 67	75
Mar 68	79
Jan 69	109
July 69	111

Though casualty statistics do not give the complete picture by any means, and despite the fact that "killing VC" is not a major part of the CAP mission, a brief look at these figures for 1968 will illustrate one reason for the amount of interest in this program. In that year, Marine Corps strength in Vietnam was about 80,000, and the number of CAPs ranged around 100, meaning that less than 1.5% of the Marines in Vietnam were in the Combined Action Program. According to General Leonard F. Chapman, Jr., CMC, the USMC accounted for 31,264 enemy dead, while 4,618 Marines were killed in action, and 29,320 were wounded in action. Using these figures as a base, comparison with CAP casualty statistics

for that year[8] show that CAPs accounted for 7.6% of the enemy kills (2,376 enemy KIA) while suffering only about 3.2% of Marine casualties. These figures, though showing only one facet of the program, should dispel doubts of the effectiveness of the CAP as a fighting unit, and destroy the myth, current in some quarters, that CAP is a "soft duty."

With such a record, and with the great contribution the CAPs have made toward the pacification of rural I Corps, the effects of which are highly visible to any visitor to that part of the country, far-sighted Marines have recognized that here is a capability, unique among the services, which might have far wider applicability than presently utilized, both in Vietnam and future contingencies. In order to investigate the validity of this feeling and to study means of refining, codifying, and documenting this capability, HSR was chartered to analyze the program in depth.

G. Methodology of the Study

The first phase of this study, as quoted above in section IA, was essentially to take the detailed "snapshot" which must form the basis for an analysis of any organization and its operation. With this purpose in mind, the research team began with a review of relevant literature, ranging in scope from historical accounts of the Vietnam situation and of counterinsurgency in general to official and semiofficial Marine Corps documents, including doctrine, field manuals, SOPs, and press releases. Concurrent with this review, in-depth interviews were conducted with some fifty Marine veterans of Vietnam who were associated with or knowledgeable of the Combined Action Program at one or another stages of its development, and who ranged in rank from PFC to Colonel.

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[8] See Appendix F. Of course such statistics ignore the PF contribution, noncombatant Marines, and the fact that kills do not yield the best kind of pacification.

At the conclusion of this preliminary work, three researchers [9] went to Vietnam from May to August of 1969 for a more detailed analysis. The basic method of analysis was to triangulate the CAP operation between three points of view: that of the Marines in the program itself, that of the Vietnamese in the program, and that of the surrounding environment, consisting of both American and Vietnamese observers of (but not participators in) the program. In the course of the study, interviews were conducted with personnel classified in Table I-2. Table I-3 indicates the extent of coverage given the program. One member of the team spent the night at five CAPs and two CACOs, accompanying the men on their night activities (patrols and ambushes) at the CAPs, and monitoring the radio network at the CACOs.

The interview formats varied widely, both because of the constraints of the environment (which in many cases precluded reference to standard questionnaires or note-taking on the spot) and the necessity for an informal atmosphere, and because the emphases and directions of the questions varied with the situation and particular respondent. In some cases, interviews were brief or in the form of group discussions (as with Vietnamese villagers and many CAP personnel); in others, there were far-reaching discussions of several hours (as with squad leaders and CACO commanders) or repeated conversations over a period of several weeks (as with higher-level officers in the program).

All interviews attempted to touch on all the basic issues--the perception of the CAP mission, the value of the CAP, techniques which seem to be most or least effective, general problem areas, and recommendations for improvements. From there, the interviewers steered the conversation to more specific points, such as the respondent's duties and tasks and his familiarity, experience, and opinions regarding the various aspects of the CAP mission--security operations, PF training, intelligence, civic action, and psychological operations. The interviewers were able to balance responses to questions with considerable observation of Marine behavior vis-a-vis the Vietnamese and methods of performing CAP duties.

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[9] Dr. E. F. Bairdain, B. C. Allnutt, N. L. Jamieson.

TABLE I-2

Persons Interviewed in Vietnam

Americans	Vietnamese
4 General Officers (US)	1 General Officer (VN)
5 Staff members at CAP Directorate	1 RF/PF Director
36 Other Senior Officers (non-CAP)	3 Other Senior Officers (non-CAP)
4 CAG Commanders	4 Province Chiefs
16 CACO Commanders	8 District Chiefs
67 Other Officers	5 Other GVN/ARVN Officials
32 CAP Squad Leaders	19 PF Platoon Leaders
	6 Village Chiefs
	2 Hamlet Chiefs
160 CAP personnel	119 PF CAP personnel
85 Other Enlisted Men	280 Villagers
6 MACV Advisors	4 Non-I Corps GVN Officials
30 US Agency Civilians	8 ARVN Enlisted men
25 Other US Civilians	30 Vietnamese civilians (non-I Corps)

TABLE I-3

Coverage of the Program

Organization	Number	Number visited/ Interviewed
Directorate	1	1
CAGs	4	4
CACOs	20	13
CAPs	111	38

Basic to the data collection effort were reassurances of the confidential nature of all responses, and a commitment that no names, units, or locations would be reported. For this reason, the actual field notes cannot be published. Before visiting any particular CAP, reports and records from that CAP for the preceding three months were surveyed so that particular activities of unusual interest could be investigated, such as civic action projects, significant enemy contact, ceremonies, intelligence tips, and identification of suspected VCI, as well as negative incidents, such as casualties from friendly fire, accidental destruction of Vietnamese property, personality clashes, disputes with the PFs, and so on. After the visit, items of particular interest or questionable veracity were discussed with CACO or CAG officers.

Upon the return of the field team to Washington, the field notes and other data gathered were assimilated and cross-referenced into categories reflective of mission objectives and problem areas, so that the frequency of notable types of incidents could be determined, and observations and conclusions were discussed with officers at HQMC and compared with the findings of prior research.

In addition, a survey was conducted of available CAP documents and reports, including (but not limited to) the following:

- Spot reports (at CACO, CAG, and Directorate levels)
- Ground Safety reports
- Patrol/Ambush Record reports
- Casualties from Friendly Fire reports
- Critical Incident reports
- Courts Martial and Non-judicial Punishment Records
- Special Drug Incidents Reports
- Popular Forces Training Records
- Kit Carson reports
- Popular Force platoon evaluation reports
- Civic Action reports
- Command Chronologies
- Standard Operating Procedures
- CAG Frags (Command Directives)
- Intelligence reports
- Reports on Inspections of Former CAP Villages.

Special data collection efforts were conducted to obtain samples of:

- Age and experience of CAP Squad leaders
- GCT scores of CAP personnel
- Extension/renewal rates
- CAP effectiveness statistics
- PF effectiveness statistics

And the training program was studied by analysis of:

- CAP School syllabus and lesson plans
- Student critique sheets filed on completion of CAP School
- Critique sheets filed at rotation
- Observance of classes
- Interviews with instructors and students

And related or similar efforts were studied by:

- Interviews with Phoenix personnel and survey of their records
- Interviews with RD personnel and survey of their records
- Interviews with 29th Civil Affairs Company and records survey
- Interviews with 7th Psyops Battalion and records survey
- Interviews with 4th Special Forces Group
- Interviews with CORDS personnel
- Attendance at three Province-level briefings
- Interview with III MAF Psyops officer
- Interviews with III MAF Personal Response Program personnel
- Review of the HES program
- Review of the TFES program
- Review of III MAF R and D activities
- Survey of III MAF Operational Hardware unit
- Testing of night vision devices and other sensors
- Survey of ARPA/MACTHAI Village Security Systems
- Survey of JUSPAO awareness of CAP program.

II. THE CAP OPERATION

A. Definition of the Program

Since its inception in 1965, the Combined Action Program has undergone a process of evolution which has been evidenced by fundamental changes in both the command structure and the mission of the CAPs. This history of change and adaptation is in itself significant, and is therefore covered in some detail in the Appendices to this report, most notably Appendices A and B.

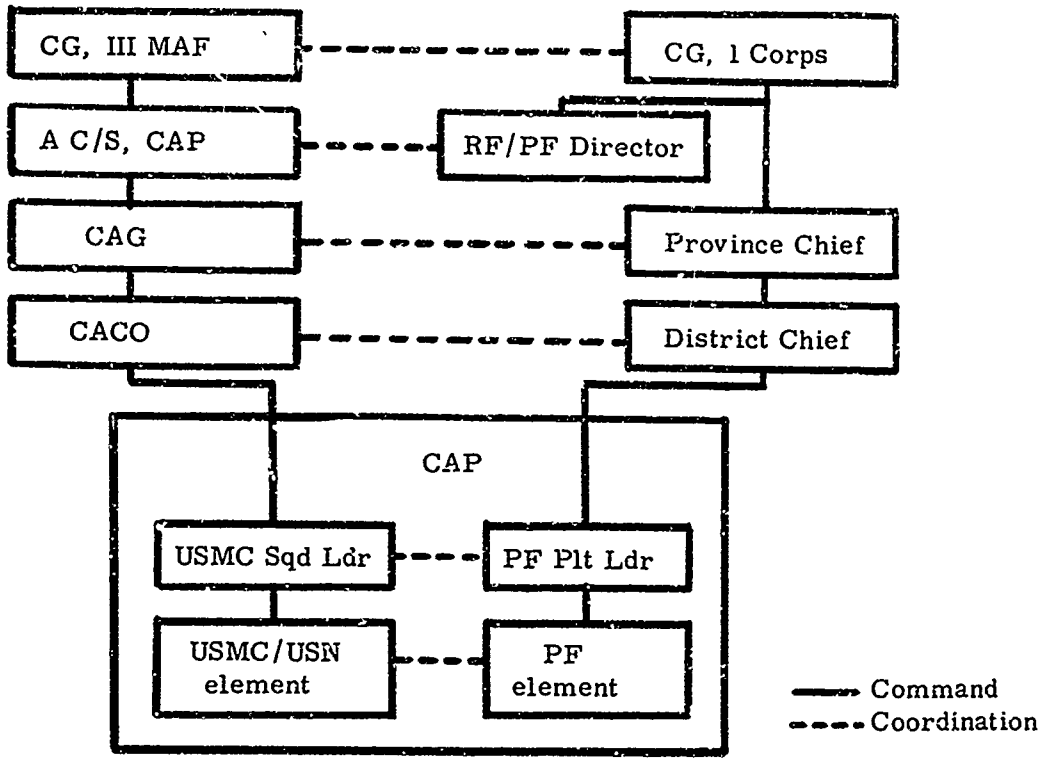
However, for the purpose of clarity, in the body of this report we shall concentrate on the program as it was conceived and functioned during the period studied, that is the Summer of 1969. It should be recognized that the program continues to grow, to learn from past experience, and to adapt to changing conditions or priorities, and so the definitions here delineated are subject to change in the future. Indeed, one of the foremost advantages of the CAP concept lies in just that fact--that it is loosely enough defined to retain the flexibility necessary for accommodation to differing situations. For this reason, the presentation given here is not offered as a recommended, formal definition applicable to all contingencies. It is rather a snapshot of the operation as observed in mid-1969.

1. Structure

The basic principle underlying the command structure of the CAP system is that of parallelism of chains of command. In this philosophy, unity of command is sacrificed in favor of sharing responsibility between concerned elements of both the American and Vietnamese hierarchies. This is, of course, only theory, and, as any military analyst will be quick to note, "command by committee" works far better on the drawing board than it does in the field. And, in fact, the command structure sketched in Table II-1, while it is that formally presented in documents and agreed upon by all concerned, is subject to interpretation and variation in application. In the field, the operating command structure varies with the personalities involved and with the (informal) agreements which they have reached.

TABLE II-1

CAP Command Structure

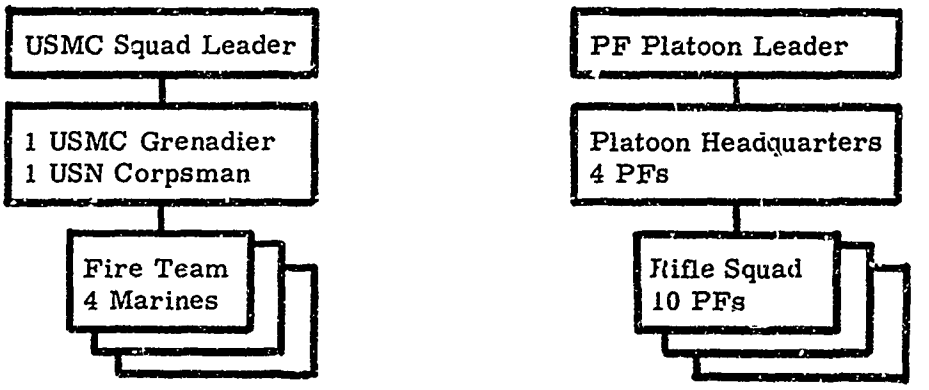


Explanations of the evolution of this structure and of the various ways in which it is interpreted or adjusted to fit local conditions are given in Appendix A.

The composition of the individual CAP is more standard, having remained relatively unchanged since the program's inception. Though there is usually considerable difference between T/O and "on board" strength, the theoretical constitution of the CAP (as shown in Table II-2) gives a clear picture of the unit's interrelationships.

TABLE II-2

Composition of the Combined Action Platoon



Further elaboration of this structure and those of the CACO and CAG is to be found in Appendix A, as are discussions of the extent and types of integration of the Marine and PF elements, and of the variation between the actual and theoretical compositions.

2. The CAP Mission

It is more difficult than might be imagined to state the mission of the Combined Action Program with sufficient precision to satisfy both the formal expositions of the program and its reality as evidenced in the field. There are three basic reasons for this difficulty:

a. First, there is a lack of consensus on the meanings of certain words used in military documents. For example, such words as "mission," "task," and "objective" are used almost interchangeably from one source to another. As explained in Appendix B, we shall follow the lead of the JCS Dictionary and use "mission" to indicate a comprehensive statement of "objectives" together with the "tasks" by which the objectives are to be attained. Further semantic problems arise by the use of such words as "security," "civic action," and "psyops," which have come to be used so loosely that common understandings of these terms are now much broader than those given in the JCS Dictionary.

b. Secondly, official and semiofficial statements of the CAP mission have varied considerably, both through evolution of the CAP concept over the years and because of differences of emphasis given to portions of the CAP role by different writers.

c. Thirdly, different tactical environments and local conditions within the program have given rise to differences in priority of the various aspects of the mission from one CAP to another.

These questions are covered in some detail in Appendix B. In the interests of comprehensiveness and consistency, we shall present a statement of the CAP mission with sufficient generality to include all the versions encountered, and leave the question of priorities for the detailed description of the operation which follows.

The GOAL, or overall objective of the Combined Action Program is the pacification of rural Vietnam. The goal of the individual CAP is to create an atmosphere of security within its area of operation within which constructive development may take place, and to increase the inhabitants' ability and willingness to maintain that atmosphere. The rationale behind the wording used here will become apparent in subsequent pages.

The MISSION of the CAP is therefore two-fold: (1) to enhance village and hamlet-level security by the active performance of integrated military operations with the Popular Forces, and (2) to increase the ability of the villagers to sustain and defend themselves by encouraging and participating in projects contributing to the well-being of the people and their identification with the national government.

The OBJECTIVES of the CAP mission are numerous, but may be grouped under six headings:

1. To provide village security.

2. To consolidate intelligence activities at the village level.

3. To improve the standard of living of the villagers.

4. To strengthen local institutions.

5. To promote identification with and support of the national government and its programs.

6. "To work ourselves out of a job."

The TASKS which have been assigned to individual CAPs in furtherance of these objectives may be subsumed under the following categories:

1. Conducting integrated military operations with the PFs.

2. Training the Popular Forces.

3. Gathering, evaluating, disseminating and reacting to local intelligence.

4. Participation in Civic Action and Psyops programs.

Subsidiary tasks include those common to any military organization, such as those related to planning, coordination with other units, provision of supplies, personnel management, administrative duties, and so on.

Details of these objectives and tasks are covered in Appendix B and in subsequent sections of this report.

B. The CAP in the Village

In order to give the reader a better feel for the CAP operation as it is actually conducted in Vietnam, it will be useful to present a short, narrative description of the life of a typical CAP. Even though conditions vary widely from one area to another, many factors occur with sufficient frequency that a composite portrait may be drawn which warrants the description of a "typical" CAP. The composite was drawn carefully using the data gathered during the study, with care being taken to incorporate those factors which were discovered to occur <u>most frequently</u> (though not, of course, universally) throughout the program. An attempt has been made to keep the portrait as realistic as possible, with no effort being made to idealize it.

1. Deployment

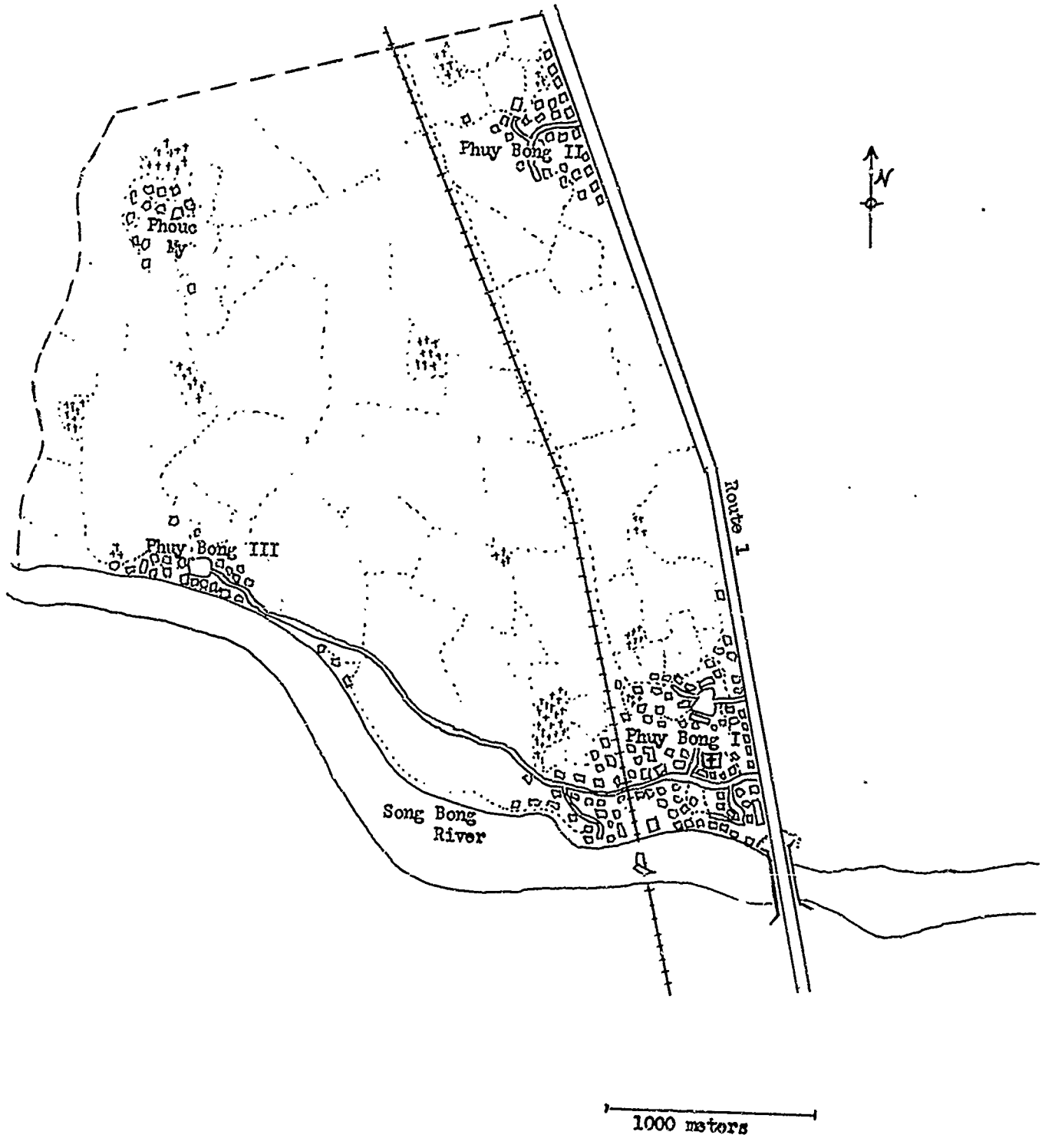
The decision to deploy a CAP in the village of Phuy Bong was reached by the 5th CAG[10] commander and the Province Chief upon consideration of recommendations by the Province Senior Advisor and the concerned District Chiefs and CACO commanders. The primary reasons for the selection of Phuy Bong were that the village included two hamlets specifically targeted in the current phase of the Provincial Pacification Plan--both sharply contested, as evidenced by their both being rated "D" in the Hamlet Evaluation System (HES)--and the fact that Phuy Bong lies along the strategically important Route 1 at the foot of a valley commonly used as an infiltration route from the mountains toward the Provincial capital. The decision was made to transfer CAP 5-3-2 from its previous location, since that area seemed relatively pacified, having suffered no reported enemy intrusions in over three months, and having reached a HES rating of "B". The Marine element of 5-3-2 was to be shifted, leaving the PF element behind in its native village, and combined with a PF Platoon formed by consolidating two understrength PF platoons, one of them native to Phuy Bong, and the other from a nearby, less strategically important village. Approval was granted within a month by the commanding generals of III MAF and I Corps through the offices of the Assistant Chief of Staff, CAPs.

2. The Environment

Phuy Bong Village comprises an administrative area, roughly triangular in shape, bounded by Route 1 to the East, the Song Bong River to the South, mountains to the West, and abandoned farmland to the North (see map). It consists primarily of open rice paddie, about one-third cultivated, containing four hamlets, each nestled in a thick clump of trees and undergrowth which makes them nearly undistinguishable from the air. The largest of these, Phuy Bong I, contains the village headquarters and area market, and sits by the bridge over the river. It is a relatively wealthy hamlet, containing a number of small family enterprises and a Catholic church, and was rated C. Two others, Phuy Bong II and III,

[10]This is a hypothetical situation--there is no 5th CAG; no Phuy Bong Village.

PHUY BONG VILLAGE



located along the highway and river respectively, are strictly farming and fishing communities, and were both rated D, though Phuy Bong III was considered locally to be completely VC controlled. The fourth, Phuoc My, had been abandoned for several years and was almost completely destroyed in an operation in 1966. The area is bisected by an unused railroad track.

3. Entrance into Phuy Bong

The insertion of CAP 5-3-2, early in January, was signaled by a ceremony at the Phuy Bong I marketplace which included speeches by the District Chief and Village Chief, and was attended by most of the 800 inhabitants of Phuy Bong I and a number of curious people from Phuy Bong II. Most of those at the ceremony seemed in high spirits and extremely friendly, encouraging the Americans, who included the CAG and CACO commanders, to sample various dishes and drink copious quantities of tea and weak beer.

4. Personnel

The American contingent of 5-3-2 had an on-board strength of eleven men at the beginning. The CAP leader, Sgt. Bost, was on his second tour in Vietnam. On his first, he had spent nine months in the "grunts" before being assigned to CAP duty. On his return, he had requested CAP duty and had attended the CAP language school, where he had picked up a Vietnamese vocabulary of about 200 words. He was 22 years old and considered a good "actual." The Corpsman, known as Doc, had also picked up a little Vietnamese during his seven months in country. The other nine men, all of whom had come directly to CAPs from Camp Pendleton, and who had been in country for periods ranging from two to ten months, spoke no more than a score or two Vietnamese words, though one of them had been making an effort to learn with a PF friend at their previous location. Their ages ranged from 18 to 21.

The PF assigned strength was 25, though four of these were inactive due to age or infirmity. Seven of them were twenty years old or younger; eleven were in their thirties or early forties. The platoon leader (Trungsi) was a thirty-five year-old ARVN veteran who spoke a humorous but surprisingly understandable brand of pidgin English, the young medic also knew a few English words.

About two-thirds of them lived with their families in Phuy Bong I, of the rest, two were from Phuy Bong II and the others came from a village about four miles South down Route 1.

5. Other Units

An RF detachment was assigned to the defense of the bridge at the Southwest corner of Phuy Bong I, and an RD Team consisting of thirty men and three girls were stationed in that same hamlet shortly before the CAP arrived. North of the village was the TAOR of a U.S. Army Battalion with whom fire support and reaction force agreements had been reached, and to the South, across the river, was CAP 5-3-1, also newly deployed. To the West were the rapidly rising foothills commonly referred to as Apache territory, the gateway to a known NVA base area in the mountains.

6. The First Month

At first, the primary concern of the CAP was the defense of Phuy Bong I, since this hamlet had suffered two recent assassinations and frequent visits by VC tax collectors, and since the PFs were extremely reluctant to cross the railroad tracks for fear of encountering "beaucoup VC." Nightly ambushes were set up along the edge of that hamlet overlooking the open fields or river, and, after the first week had passed without incident, coverage was extended up to include two or three visits a week to Phuy Bong II. The first few weeks were spent familiarizing themselves with the area east of the railroad. The village chief was not seen again, but relationships were established with a family who ran a coke shop on the highway, an old lady who agreed to do the CAP laundry and store whatever gear they did not want to carry around, and several children who followed the Marines wherever they went. The first contact came after three weeks, when an ambush consisting of two Marines and three PFs spotted an unidentified figure approaching Phuy Bong II across the fields and opened fire on it. Though there were no results of this activity, the spirits of the group increased significantly. Doc, who had persisted in holding a daily MEDCAP despite little interest shown by villagers, suddenly found himself flooded with patients after MEDEVACing a

farmer who had tripped over a dud M-79 round in the fields. Several hundred people showed up every week, though most wanted no more than a bandaid or a couple of aspirin. It was noticed that two more coke shops had opened up, one in Phuy Bong II, though the price remained at 50 piastres a bottle. In the course of day patrols through the two hamlets, the designated Civic Action NCO had noticed several poten .al projects, but had been unable to discuss them with the Village Chief, who, it was discovered, lived in the District town five miles away.

7. The Spring

The CAP became considerably more active in the ensuing months. Sgt. Bost, seeing that the people and the CAP had become fairly well acclimated to one another, and that spirits were high, suggested that they begin sending day patrols to Phuy Bong III. The PFs made no objection to this now. The Marines were shocked at the difference in atmosphere on their first visit to that hamlet--though not openly hostile, the villagers avoided all contact with ıe CAP, ducking off the path or into houses as the patrol approached. Children who called out to them were quickly shushed, and what faces they did see were stony and noncommittal. The next night, the CAP CP was hit by a force of unknown ?ize with satchel charges, grenades, and small arms fire. A request for illumination was denied, due to the proximity of Phuy Bong I, but the ambush element reacted, catching the enemy in its cross fire, and in the furious but brief battle that ensued, one PF and one Marine suffered serious, but not critical, wounds. A sweep at . first light revealed two enemy bodies, one of them a well-known village character, and several drag marks and blood trails. The villagers watched as the bodies were dragged to the highway, but made no comment, but the CAP morale was very high--they had met the enemy and outfought him.

Despite the villagers' lack of comment, they had been impressed also--within the nextweek, the CAP received three intelligence tips, two of them through the PFs and one via one of the children hangers-on. One tip netted them two highly probable VC suspects, and another, which concerned activity outside the CAP TAOC, was relayed to District HQ. CAP patrols were now covering the area around all three inhabited hamlets regularly, though the PFs still would no:

venture into the Phuoc My area, and the Civic Action NCO had agreed to try to get cement for shoring up wells in two hamlets.

Several negative incidents marred the picture during this period, however. First, a passing American truck killed a girl from Phuy Bong II. The CAP responded quickly by obtaining a solatium payment to cover her burial and by scrounging two tank treads to be installed along the highway in an effort to slow down the traffic, both of which improved their image considerably. The other incidents were not so easily countered. One night, while the CAP was set up around Phuy Bong III, a VC assassination team slipped into Phuy Bong II and killed the old couple who ran the coke shop. The flow of intelligence stopped abruptly after this. And shortly afterwards, during a skirmish along the river during which artillery had been called, a short round fell into Phuy Bong III, wounding three civilians and setting back the friendships which had begun to develop in that hamlet. Perhaps even more damaging, theft had become a real problem, with cameras, radios, and watches disappearing regularly. Though nothing could be proven, two PFs were suspected, and relations were strained. Finally, a violent argument broke out, in which one PF cocked and aimed his weapon at a Marine. The Marine was sent to the rear, and finally to another CAP, but, despite appeals to the District Chief, nothing could be done about the PF, and bad feelings persisted.

Matters improved somewhat with the arrival of a replacement who had attended the Monterey Language School and was fluent in Vietnamese. The Sergeant's Vietnamese had not been sufficient to handle heated disputes or complicated negotiations, and with the aid of the new man, a number of long-standing disagreements were ironed out, and arrangements were made with the hamlet chiefs to begin several small projects, including a dispensary and a footbridge, as soon as supplies could be procured.

By the end of May, the CAP had encountered the enemy ten times, killing nine of them (by body count) and losing one PF and one Marine. When the Marine had been killed by a mine near Phuy Bong III, the residents of all three hamlets had joined in a memorial ceremony for him, erecting a plaque

on the new dispensary in his honor. Though the dispensary was destroyed by the VC several weeks later, the incident was indicative of improving relations. With the approach of the rainy season, the CAP noted with pride that villagers were preparing fields west of the railroad which had been abandoned for years. The residents of Phuy Bong III had relaxed their hard facade and were becoming more friendly toward the CAP. Villagers had constructed platforms around two wells using cement scrounged from a nearby SeaBee depot after requests for supplies to the GVN had gone unanswered for three months. A plan to rebuild a half-destroyed schoolhouse, which had begun and faltered several times was finally dropped altogether when villagers demanded wages for their labor. Patrols to the vicinity of Phuoc My had located a number of old mines in the area, and a request for a bulldozer had been made to clear the ground. Various giveaway programs, in which soap, tools, clothing, school supplies, and so on were distributed had lost impetus when CAPs noticed these articles subsequently being sold at the market.

8. The Summer

During the summer, a number of changes took place. Most significant was that enemy contact dropped off until for two months no contact was made at all. The CAP leader, Doc, and the Civic Action NCO were all rotated, with the result that a number of friendships and projects died away. Their replacements, fresh from the States, spoke no Vietnamese despite the short familiarity lectures given at the CAP school, and, arriving in an area that seemed to hold no threat from the enemy, they could see little reason behind the requirements for continual military efforts. As a result, some relaxation of discipline occurred, and, most significantly, the new Sergeant began to bow to PF requests to bring in the night ambushes at about 0100 hours so that the men could get some rest. The CACO commander, sensing a change in attitude, spent several nights at the CAP trying to boost morale and stiffen up the unit, but on those nights, all went according to the book, and so nothing could be pinned down. After two near clashes with the RDs and their newly-trained and armed PSDF unit, CACO and District arranged a division of the TAOC, leaving the defense of Phuy Bong I

and its immediate surround to the RD team, thereby allowing the CAP to concentrate on the less secure outer hamlets.

The weeks passed quietly, and boredom became the major problem for all but the new Corpsman, who, having once delivered a baby in an emergency, found himself performing midwifery duties with increasing regularity. He attempted to train a local girl as an assistant, but she lost interest after several weeks.

The blow came in late July, when, as part of a province-wide offensive, a large NVA unit caught the CAP at 0230 with all personnel grouped in the CP at the edge of Phuy Bong III. Artillery was refused, the Claymore mines were unresponsive, and the CAP was kept pinned down for two hours while an enemy contingent moved into Phuy Bong I, killing four PSDF and setting up a mortar position in the marketplace from which they shelled the bridge. Despite airstrikes in the early morning on logical escape routes, the enemy retired with no known casualties. The one bright spot in the picture was that an attempt to recruit young men at Phuy Bong III had failed when the people simply refused to go with the enemy, an unprecedented response which showed the change in attitude of that village. But a further complication arose in the morning when the Marines discovered that the Claymore wires had been cut near the hell boxes, and suspicion grew that it had been an "inside job," suspicions which were supported by stories from other CAPs in which certain PFs had been discovered to be VC. An altercation broke out the next day, after which a PF complained to District that he had been beaten by a Marine. An investigation of the entire incident resulted in the Sergeant and another Marine being relieved, but both the District Chief and the Trungsi heatedly denied the possibility of disloyalty among the PFs. Doubts and suspicions were not salved.

The new Sergeant, however, had a more forceful personality. Rather than attacking the problems directly, his plan was to keep everyone busy. Military requirements were complied with strictly, the long-vacant posts of Civic Action and Intelligence NCOs were filled and given a push which resulted in such projects as general village cleanups (which the children enjoyed) and the opening

of a dressmaker's shop (which had far more applicants than could be accommodated on the three sewing machines procured), and a formal intelligence net began to function, with rewards being given for tips which proved useful. General PF efficiency began to improve with a nightly inspection of the entire CAP, in which the Sergeant and the Trungsi checked all weapons before beginning the night's activities. A subsidiary result of these efforts, though never thoroughly explained, was that thefts dropped off noticeably, though they never ceased entirely. Though no more enemy contacts occurred within the village, morale was generally boosted by CAP participation in a joint operation which dispersed an enemy buildup around the nearby SeaBee camp, since the buildup had been reported to the CAP by a local fisherman.

By the end of August, CAP 5-3-2 was considered to be a "model CAP" and was visited by several VIPs, who were shown, among other things, the gradual rebuilding of Phuoc My hamlet, which the villagers had begun spontaneously after the area had been cleared of ordnance and the CAPs had extended their night ambush sites out beyond that area. The HES ratings for that month gave Phuy Bong II a score of "B" and Phuy Bong III had come up to "C", and local elections had been scheduled for October. A rumor that the CAP might be moved was reacted to by the circulation of a petition to "keep the Americans in Phuy Bong," which was sent to the Province Chief with over four hundred signatures affixed.

C. Detailed Analysis of the CAP Operation

Hopefully, the preceding section has given the reader some feeling for the environment and activities of the CAP in Vietnam. Such a typified narrative, of course, does not pretend to be comprehensive in its coverage of types of situations confronted by the CAP nor of the ways in which such situations are handled. But the reader will note the large role played by chance in the history of a CAP, and the presence of numerous variables inherent in events, a variation in any one of which could have changed the results significantly. Life cannot be codified, and humanity has not been notably successful in formulating a doctrine capable of providing solutions to all the problems the whims of fate may present.

And the CAP operation, because of its place within an ongoing society, is a larger slice of life than most military undertakings.

However, a number of variables are easily isolated, and certain patterns of activity take only a few forms, and those with repeatedly observed frequency. Such variables are controllable, and must be considered in any effort to improve performance. The findings of our study in this respect will be presented in this section under the framework of the tasks assigned to the CAPs. Once again, what is presented is a "snapshot" of how these tasks are carried out in the field--judgments as to the relative efficacy of these methods are left for later discussion.

1. Military Operations

By far the largest proportion of the time and energy of the CAP Marine is consumed in the planning, conduct, and reporting of strictly military operations--the patrols and ambushes commonly stated as the first priority of the CAP operation. Even though the level of security, as measured by the frequency of contact with the enemy, varies widely from CAP to CAP--for example, in the three months of March through May of 1969, roughly 53% of the CAPs averaged no more than one contact per month, while three CAPs made twenty or more contacts each[11]--the requirement for continual, aggressive patrolling and ambushing is the same everywhere. It remains characteristic of this war that the enemy may strike anywhere at any time, and the unit which relaxes during a slack period may eventually pay heavily for it (cf: Appendix E). There is a standing requirement[12] throughout the program for a minimum of one day and two night "activities" (which, in CAP lingo, means military operations). Each must be planned three days in advance, to allow for coordination with nearby units for the purposes of providing fire support, reaction forces, and arrangements to prevent clashes with other friendly units in the area. Subsequently, each activity must be reported as a matter of course, and any significant incidents must be reported in great detail.[13]

[11] Cf. Appendix F.

[12] Since late 1968.

[13] Planning and reporting requirements are similar in all CAG SOPs.

a. Planning. Though it is not a formal requirement, it is generally assumed that activities will be planned jointly by the Marine squad leader and his PF counterpart, since this daily session is thought to contribute to a general upgrading of the PF leader's abilities as a commander. In actuality, this was observed to take place in less than half the CAPs studied--in most, the Marines plot their overlays, submit them to CACO, and inform the PFs of the evening's activities only moments before they begin. The reasons for this are numerous, but foremost is the fear of a security leak. Too often, enemy responses indicate[14] that he had foreknowledge of the CAP's location for the night, and with such foreknowledge, the CAP's activities are all but useless. Further reasons include the language barrier, the PF's not infrequent inability to read a map, and the avoidance of disputes. In all CAPs, however, the PFs may exercise their planning ability by suggesting alternative plans, as the plan may be changed (with the approval of the CACO) at any time. And the CAP is always ready to respond to likely intelligence tips at any time. Disputes do often arise with regard to plans (seven such were observed) without apparent reason, however, and often seem to stem from nothing more than a desire on the part of the PF to exercise and demonstrate his authority, which is valid enough reason in such a unit. Such disputes had occurred so frequently in one company visited, that the CACO commander was plotting all activities, and simply directing the CAPs--this did not seem to work very well, since the CAP is obviously better informed of local conditions and needs. But any source of dispute is a trouble nexus, since disputes may become serious quickly when complicated by a language barrier. Unless there are compelling reasons to stick to the prearranged plan, the Marine leader, wisely, usually acquiesces to the PF's suggestion, or at least compromises. This is important, as a balance of power between the two leaders is critical to the morale of the CAP as a whole. Since discussions customarily take place out in the open.in full view of all, any loss of face can be critical.

b. Day Activities. The day activity almost universally consists of a patrol. The purposes of this patrol are general surveillance of the area, reconnaissance of projected patrol routes and ambush sites, observance of unusual

[14]All CAPs questioned had stories of such leaks.

village activities or strangers, increased visibility of the CAP to the villagers (giving them the opportunity to make requests or relay information), as a PF training exercise, and, on occasion, the day patrol sweeps an area of contact made the previous night, or investigates some incident which has been reported. It almost always is conducted early in the morning, right after the return from the evening's activities, in order to insure the presence of at least some PFs, who generally disperse during the better part of the day, and is generally of no more than an hour or two in duration and covers no more than a few hundred meters around the daytime haven.[15] Obviously, more extensive coverage of the TAOC would be desirable, but all personnel are tired at that time and anxious to get some rest, and the rationale behind the day patrol is too subtle for its worth to be easily perceived. For the remainder of the day, the PFs, for the most part, go home, and the Marines remain in the general vicinity of a day haven,[16] either an abandoned building or a home which has been "borrowed" for that purpose by negotiations between the PFs and the villagers. Surprisingly, there seems to be little animosity generated by this habit of "borrowing" houses--the residents simply move next door and go about their chores quite ordinarily. The day haven is changed regularly, usually every day, though there is an observable tendency to reuse the same site whenever revisiting the area. Care is taken to police the area in and around the day haven after use, and frequently friendships form between the Marines and the residents of preferred sites.

c. Night Activities. Along about dusk, the PFs begin to arrive at the day haven to prepare for the night's activities. The evening's plans are discussed, final arrangements are made with regard to personnel distribution, and weapons are cleaned and readied. As visibility begins to decrease, the CAP moves out in the direction of the night's CP (command post). The pattern of night

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[15] The longest reported was two hours; no day patrols were observed, though unannounced visits were made at all times of day.

[16] So-called "compound CAPs" are not covered in this report, since there were only ten of them left by July 1969, and plans were underway to dismantle several of them. The switch from "compound" to "mobile" CAPs has been so obviously advantageous in terms of safety, interaction with the people, area coverage, and freedom from maintenance duties as to render debate of the two methods superfluous.

activities has become fairly standard, though there are variations within the pattern. The usual plan is for a CP, usually at or near the edge of a hamlet overlooking the surrounding fields and consisting of a perimeter manned by the main body of the CAP, and two ambushes a few hundred meters away along likely lines of approach to the hamlet or CP. The distribution of troops is variable, but usually the squad leader, Corpsman, and a radioman at the minimum remain in the CP all night, while two to four Marines accompany each ambush along with four to eight PFs. The ambushes may be manned concurrently all night, or they may run consecutively, one coming in to the CP at around midnight and the other going out. Other variations include the "roving ambush," in which an element sets up at a prespecified location for a couple of hours and then moves to another. In this way, much more area can be covered in a given night and the movement makes it less likely that the enemy will know the CAP's locations at any given moment, but, of course, the inherent dangers of movement at night (from booby-traps, enemy ambush, or encountering another friendly unit) are increased. Movement at night is extremely difficult in the darkness (a darkness surprising to the city-bred American and made still blacker by the blindness caused by periodic illumination flares) over crumbling rice-paddie dikes or down tunnel-like paths in the bamboo--even local PFs get lost occasionally. Requirements for these night activities vary among the four CAGs--in one, the details are left almost entirely to the discretion of the CAP leaders, while in another CAG the orders were specific and called for 100% alert all night, a minimum of a 2:1 ratio of PF to Marine, and the constant employment of flack jackets and helmets Such orders were of course unenforceable and were ignored in every CAP observed or inquired about. More serious deviations from orders are discussed in Appendix E. Other variations from the normal include the use of a two- or three-man "killer team,"[17] good for reconnaissance but dangerous because its position is usually unknown, and the fact that the CP is often swollen by the inclusion of the local RD team, village officials, or other villagers. Such a use of the CP may have desirable psychological benefits, but a large CP (one was

[17]At one CAP, the squad leader himself went out alone from midnight to 0400.

observed to include six Marines, eighteen PFs, about thirty RD cadre, and a hamlet chief), which by necessity can be no more than minimally fortified (fighting holes and Claymores), combines the worst attributes of the compound and mobile CAP concepts, presenting a very attractive target to the enemy. It is impossible to keep the location of such a large grouping secret in a village environment with the amazingly efficient and rapid "grapevine" characteristic to small towns, nor is it possible to keep that many people from talking, smoking cigarettes, etc., for very long.

In short, military operations, which are most often stated as the primary CAP task, and which are the most direct (if not the most effective) contribution to the primary CAP objective, provision of security, are conducted professionally and effectively, as might be expected of men who have undergone the traditional USMC training program, which has been producing good fighting men for many years.

The major variable affecting the performance of military operations is the leadership ability of the Marine squad leader. This man is the key to the entire operation, and on his capabilities all else hinges.[18] He must lead in a vacuum, with no higher officers behind him to reinforce his authority, nowhere to pass the buck, and nowhere to hide (such as an NCO club) if things go wrong. He must have the strength of character to enforce his decisions against argument or complaint, and the endurance to live with his mistakes. And above all, in his isolated position, he must be an excellent tactician. Rarely is such responsibility placed in the hands of a 22 year-old (that is the average--some are 19) sergeant in other units. If he is strong, smart, and earns the respect of his men, the CAP is a superb fighting machine; but if he weakens (because "after all, I have to live with these guys"), loses control, or makes mistakes that destroy his men's respect for him, the CAP goes slack and becomes not only ineffectual or a liability, but also quite vulnerable to the enemy.

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[18]This is the nearly unanimous opinion of officers in the program.

A secondary CAP task which must be included under this heading, is the participation of the CAP in joint operations w .. other U.S., ARVN, or Free World Forces. This is always[19] stated as part of the CAP mission and is a duty CAPs are frequently called upon to perform. However necessary such participation may be in certain instances, it is difficult to see how it contributes in any way to the objectives of the CAP. Perhaps this task was included in the CAP charter as a result of considering large operations within or including the CAP TAOC, to which the CAP could contribute his knowledge of the area and its inhabitants. In practice, however, CAPs are frequently included in all-day operations in other areas altogether, a mission in which none of the special capabilities or knowledge of the CAP play any part, and participation in which can severely compromise the basic CAP mission. In effect, the CAP is temporarily pulled out of its village (leaving it undefended and reminding the villagers that the CAP may be pulled out at any time--an important psychological aspect) and made to work strenuously all day. The damaging question is obvious--how effective will the CAP be that night (the crucial time in village defense), after having hiked through the hills all day? They have to rest sometime. It is clear that the CAP should be taken away on extraneous operations only under dire necessity, and even then, the psychological effect on the villagers must be considered. Villagers still remember that some CAPs were pulled into the battle of Hue during Tet of 1968, and what this action communicated to the people was that perhaps we can't count on the CAP when the chips are down.

2. Training the Popular Forces

The second most commonly stated task of the CAP Marine is to train his PF counterparts. In pursuance of this, directives have been issued and even detailed lesson plans are occasionally given to the CAPs along with instructions to hold formal classes on specific topics ranging from weapons safety to government, and reports are even on file which state the number of class hours given

[19] Cf. Appendix B.

and PF attendance figures.[20] While it may be that PF classes are held in some CAPs, neither observation or questioning at the CAP level could uncover much evidence of the existence of formal PF training. Before this finding is thought of as a negative evaluation of CAP performance, however, two very important questions must be answered. First is <u>why</u> the Marines don't hold classes for the PF, and second, and far more important, is why <u>should</u> they?

The first is simple, though it necessitates some awareness of who the PFs are. The PF is essentially a part-time soldier. He is poorly paid (about twenty dollars a month) and expects to be left free during the day to maintain his family by some other occupation. After a hard night's work in performance of his military duties as a CAP member, he is anxious to go home, first to rest, and then to go about his daily chores as family member or breadwinner. In general, the PFs are scattered all about the village during the day, and it is very difficult to get a significant number of them together for any purpose. A further consideration is that the PF has lived in a war for most or all of his life and most are thirty years old or more and have been soldiering (however effectively) for a much longer period than their young Marine counterparts. It is unrealistic to expect a thirty-four year old father of six to sit down and listen to lectures on any topic from a nineteen year old teacher. This is not to say that the PF is basically well-trained. Indeed, many PFs initially do not know such basics as how to disassemble their rifles for cleaning.

The more relevant question, however, is that of what objective is supposedly served by PF training, and whether that objective is being met. Here the answer is clear, and tends to obviate the problem. The <u>objective</u> of PF training is to upgrade the PF--to make him a more aggressive and effective fighting man. And on this, the CAP's record is superlative. Perhaps the best indicator of this is provided by the following statistics:[21]

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[20] Cf. Appendix F, "PF Training Reported."

[21] Gathered by the CAP Directorate at our request.

During the first six months of 1969, the Combined Action Program, working with 111 of the 780 PF platoons in ICTZ (14.3% of the total) suffered 30.1% of the casualties, accounted for 54.8% of the enemy killed, and for 55.7% of the weapons captured:

	669 Independent PF Platoons[22]	111 CAPs
Friendly KIA	369(69%)	164(31%)
Enemy KIA	1,079(45%)	1,306(55%)
Weapons Captured	427(44%)	536(56%)
Kill Ratio	2.7:1	8.0:1

These figures represent a really significant upgrading. Further, anyone who has compared the PFs working with CAPs to the average PF on his own cannot but be amazed at the difference. The independent PF, except when combined with larger units for major operations, is hardly recognizable as a soldier, and, on his own, does little to provide village security. Indeed, he cannot do much, as he is not effectively supported except in rare instances. On the other hand, many CAP PFs have demonstrated their ability time and again, and are as effective a fighting force as may be found anywhere.

How, then, do the PFs improve, if not by formal training? The answer is subtle, but must be comprehended if an understanding of the Combined Action Program's success is to be reached.

First, it must be remembered who the PFs are. A factor which is often overlooked in this respect is that, in general, the PFs are simply villagers themselves. For the most part, they are farmers and fishermen who have spent their lives within a few kilometers of their native hamlet, insulated from the outside world by the firm structure of the family and community life, and only minimally effected by the larger courses of history. What they do know is that, for as long as they can remember, there has been war. On the one side, for all

[22] Vietnamese data, unknown base--but certainly not underestimated.

this time, has been the Vietminh/Viet Cong, a force with a doctrine which is rather confusing but which promises many good things to the peasant, and which has fought, until recently, with an army composed to a large extent of local people--acquaintances, relatives, and even old friends. On the other side has been the French and later the Americans, vast international powers, in support of the distant Saigon Government and aided by various other foreigners, all of whom have fielded gigantic and seemingly powerful armies (composed mostly of strangers), but none of whom has been able to eradicate the communists. The PF who has had some experience is likely to have fought on both sides at one time or another, and the motivation for his present association with the GVN side is likely to be more personal than political--because they allow him to stay home, because they pay him, because the work is easier, or because the VC have angered him by some action (frequently an accidental or even trivial one). He is poorly trained, until recently poorly armed, nearly unsupervised and unsupported. In simple fact, the PF is weaker than the VC, both physically and psychologically. More than anything else, the average PF wants to stay alive, under any government, and in more cases than it is polite to recount, when the VC come, the PF hides.[23]

When the American squad is added to this picture, a number of factors are added. First, there is the factor that the PF is strengthened by the simple addition of ten or a dozen fighting men of unquestionable loyalty, a major addition to such a small and ineffectual force. But these Marines bring many things with them. First is added firepower--the men carry M-16 automatic weapons (many PFs still carry carbines or BARs) and usually one or two M-79s and M-60s, as well as Claymore mines, hand grenades, and so on.[24] The increase in immediately available firepower is immense. In addition, the Americans can rely on rapid fire support from artillery, air strikes, naval guns, and whatever else is available, and they can call on powerful reaction forces should the necessity arise. Furthermore, they know that, if they are wounded, they can be evacuated to a

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[23]Cf: Popkin (1967) for full documentation of these observations.

[24]Cf: Appendix F, "Weapons Assigned."

modern hospital within minutes, under ordinary conditions. And a very significant factor is that, for the first time, the PF can see and work with the previously somewhat foreign Saigon/American clique towards an immediately relevant and important end--the defense of his own village. All of these factors add up to an almost immeasurable boost in morale and self-confidence.[25] And it is solidified the first time the new team meets the enemy and gets a kill or two, or calls for support and gets it, or needs medical help and gets it. These are immensely significant events for the PF/villager, and the myth of VC invulnerability begins to crumble before his eyes.

But improvement in morale and self-confidence is not the only benefit, significant as it is. Real training does occur, though it is not of the classroom type. By accompanying the Marines on their daily activities, the PF picks up basic military knowledge by observation, repetition, and something like osmosis. Patrol orders and good ambush tactics become habitual, without ever having been taught. The more mechanical aspects of military training, like care of weapons, weapons safety, use of equipment, etc., is taught to the PF on an individual, informal basis by the Marines, not because the Marines are ordered to train the PF, but because they recognize that it is in their own interest--a PF with a jammed weapon is no help in a fire fight.

So the objective is achieved, with or without the pursuance of the task specified for its accomplishment--the PF is immensely and predictably upgraded in many ways and by many methods, the least contributive one of which is formal training.

3. Gathering of Intelligence

Another commonly stated task of the CAP, and one which is of primary importance in the minds of many commanders in the field, is that of intelligence collection. Once again, the formal statement of the task--"Organize local intelligence nets"--is somewhat at odds with actual performance. Although some

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[25] Cf: Appendix G for assessments by Vietnamese officers.

CAPs have taken the time to carefully recruit and organize villagers in this role, such formal networks are rare. But also once again, the satisfaction of the objective is not dependent entirely on the strict accomplishment of the task. Intelligence, much of it relevant and useful, is gathered by nearly all CAPs, but this benefit seems to be an almost automatic by-product of other, more basic, CAP tasks.

How does this work? As stated above, from the mere presence of the USMC/USN element of the CAP and from the continual performance of their military, security-oriented functions, the immensely significant benefits of psychological security, increased self-confidence, and improved morale fall to the PF. And the PF, along with his family and friends, is the villager, and so these benefits are communicated and shared throughout the community. The villager begins to see that the VC can be beaten and, as his financial welfare improves (by the reduction of VC taxation and the added money brought by the Americans, to mention two immediate sources), he recognizes that he has something to defend. And the simple interaction of added confidence coupled with a shift in attitudes makes him more willing to aid the defensive effort. Add to this the fact that the Americans provide ears willing to listen and a network capable of digesting and reacting to information, and you have a working intelligence system. The villager (and the PF himself) begins to relay information, which he has had all along (from the rural gossip line, for example) but which he has been either too afraid or too apathetic to relay previously. To be sure, he is hesitant at first, and generally relays it via a child or a PF rather than directly to a Marine, but when he sees his tip acted upon successfully, and sometimes immediately, his confidence increases and the flow of information follows suit. Indeed, some CAPs are virtually flooded with information, much of it useless ("VC come here sometime next month"), but there are always immediately relevant tips ("Two tax collectors come to Huy's house tonight at ten") to which the CAP itself can react, and knowledge which, passed back to District, is of great value in plotting larger operations. And all of this is information which might otherwise be unavailable, for the average villager will say nothing to the passing "foreign" U.S or ARVN troops. The fact that this is not just another indication

of the Vietnamese "bending with the bamboo" and cooperating with whichever side is currently the stronger is indicated by such incidents as one noted in Quang Ngai when a VC patrol questioned a village couple about the location of the CAP one night--even when the VC went to the extent of shooting their baby in the foot, the couple refused to tell.

The proof of the effectiveness of CAP-gathered intelligence lies not only in the personal observations of the research team, but in carefully gathered records collected by the I Corps officers of the Phoenix Program, the national intelligence network (which extends down only to the District level), which indicate the frequency and value of inputs from the CAPs in all the relevant districts throughout the area. Of the twelve District Intelligence Operations Coordinating Centers (DIOCCs) reporting, eight were able to give specific examples of the value of the CAPs, both as eyes and hands for the DIOCC, and used such superlatives as "highly effective," "outstanding," "of extreme value," and "excellent source." The reports document the fact that "activities are conducted more frequently..., and far more aggressively than they would be without the CAP," providing "constant and rapid information" on occasions "too numerous to mention," keeping "well abreast of all enemy activity within their area." In general, then, despite local variations, the CAPs are used both as an intelligence gathering and reaction arm of the DIOCC to such an extent that some commanders consider this to be their prime contribution to the war effort.

4. The CAPs as Nationbuilders

The fourth most frequently stated and perceived task of the CAPs centers around two concepts, Civic Action and Psyops, which enjoy great currency in military thinking, so much so in fact that there is serious difficulty in understanding just what these words mean when used in different contexts. Military civic action is defined by the JCS and SEATO dictionaries as:

> The use of preponderantly indigenous military forces on projects useful to the local population at all levels in such fields as education, training, public works, agriculture, transportation, communications, health, sanitation, and others contributing to eco-

> nomic and social development, which would also serve to improve the standing of the military forces with the population. (United States forces may at times advise or engage in military civic actions in overseas areas.)

But what "civic action" comes down to in practice is all-too-often simply American soldiers handing out bars of soap to Vietnamese children, or building an elaborate schoolhouse, whether or not one is wanted and whether or not it will ever be used.

Similarly, psychological operations carries the following definition:

> These operations include psychological warfare and, in addition, encompass those political, military, economic, and ideological actions planned and conducted to create in neutral or friendly foreign groups the emotions, attitudes, or behavior to support the achievement of national objectives.

But to the average man in the field, psyops means little more than handing out leaflets.

Once again, it will be useful to look at the objectives supposedly served by the task of "conducting civic action and psyops." For what purpose are these duties relegated to the CAPs? Responses to this question by CAP personnel fall basically into two categories, often thought to be interchangeable, but which are in fact widely different. The first, and that most often expressed by commanders and other officers in the program, has to do with "nationbuilding," another commonly-used but vaguely-defined term which includes, depending on the user, such concepts as strengthening the socio-cultural units which together make a nation, increasing the identification of the people with the national government, improving the social, political, and economic welfare of the people, and improving the ability of the governmental structures to function efficiently. This is a noble and broad objective, however defined, and one over which there is currently great debate among social scientists and others interested in national development as to a more precise definition of the goals and the means by which such goals may be achieved.

The other response, which is that most often submitted by the men in the CAPs, has to do with "winning the hearts and minds" of the people, or helping the people "so they'll like us." A moment's reflection will show that these two goals are not only utterly unrelated, but may in certain instances actually work against one another.

Again, it will clarify the matter to look at what actually happens in the field--what do the CAP Marines do when instructed "to conduct vigorous civic action and psyops," and are introduced to these two complex fields by one hour and fifty minutes of lectures (cf: Appendix D)?

a. Civic action. Civic action projects in the CAPs may be meaningfully divided into three categories--giveaways, major projects, and small projects. The first of these, the "giveaway," consists of distributing, free of charge, articles thought to be useful or necessary to the villagers. Among these are food, clothing, soap, school supplies, CARE packages, seed, building materials, recreational equipment, and tools of all kinds (not to mention candy). There are several reasons for such giveaways. The CAPs are encouraged to give such articles away and are supplied with them by various groups, they are in most cases required to fill out a weekly civic action report which has blank spaces for enumerating the pounds of clothing and bars of soap (for example) distributed last week, they are encouraged by the villagers, who, over the years, have come to expect such dividends, and they are even instructed in SOP's as to the proper methods of such distribution (which is to give it all to the village chief or some other official and let him distribute it, so that the GVN reaps the benefit. In fact, few CAPs do this, at least after having seen such officials keep most of the goods for themselves, and the people are not so naive as to think that the goods come from the GVN, anyway). The surprising aspect of the giveaway is that, although the counterproductive or at least useless aspects of it are so patent that both the commanding officers and the men in the field are generally against such handouts--the former because they feel they are creating a "welfare state," and the latter because they have to observe the greed of the receivers and, later, the sale of the objects at a nearby market--despite these negative feelings, giveaways continue at a high rate. Somehow, efforts on the part of commanders to dis-

courage giveaways have not been communicated to the troops, who feel it is one of their duties.

The second type of civic action, the major project, reveals another area undergoing reevaluation currently, and one in which a similar communication failure is evident. "Major projects" we define to include the construction of schools, dispensaries, dwellings, pagodas, bridges, dams, marketplaces, fences, wells, latrines, and so on. Until recently, such projects have been the major focus of attention in the civic action portion of the program. However, a sufficient number of problems have been generated by participation in such efforts to cause many to reconsider the CAP role in this respect. The primary source of these problems lies in the divergence between the manner in which such projects are supposed to be carried out and the way in which they generally are carried out. Let us look at a typical[26] example, that of a schoolhouse.

According to the book, which in this case is a booklet entitled "Civic Action Handbook," which is distributed at the CAP school, and which generally reflects current military thinking on the subject, "Marines should not choose a project. This should be done by the local people and/or Vietnamese officials." In practice, however, Vietnamese officials are only rarely encountered and the people are generally reluctant to make any requests of the Marines. The Marine, under pressure to "do some civic action," is often frustrated in his attempts to get the villagers to initiate or recommend anything, and eventually simply decides on a project by himself, for example, because it is so common, a schoolhouse. This is acceptable, since the book goes on to say that "Marines can initiate projects by tactfully convincing the people that they desire and need such action. How this 'suggestion' is tactfully introduced to the people is left to the individual Marine's ingenuity." This seems rather subtle, but actually promotion of the project, at least on a superficial level, is not difficult, given the extreme politeness of the typical Vietnamese.

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[26]Scores of such stories were uncovered in a review of three months of weekly civic action reports from each CAP in the largest CAG.

After approval by proper authorities, the next problem is the procurement of supplies, in this case building supplies such as cement and tin roofing, which, as Public Law 480 material, must be requisitioned through GVN channels--a requirement designed to stimulate the GVN supply channels, not notably efficient, into functioning with greater reliability. Unfortunately, this GVN supply system seldom works without persistent bulldogging, and there is no one available, usually, to monitor the requests for supplies and ensure their satisfaction. As a result, the typical request goes unanswered for weeks or even months, which, far from increasing the villager's respect for the GVN, diminishes it still further. Finally, the Marine's impatience reaches its limit, and he goes ahead and (most typically) "scrounges" the necessary material from some other source.

Next comes the actual construction. Since the emphasis is on "self help," the villagers are expected to provide the actual labor force, with Marines supplying "supervisory and technical assistance." A work force may be organized formally without much difficulty (though there have been incidents wherein the villagers demanded wages for their work, a demand which says something about their attitude to the project), but as for technical assistance, how many young Americans have ever constructed a building? It is clear that, generally, the villagers know more about it than the Marines. If all goes well, the construction begins, but it continues slowly, at the Vietnamese rather than the American pace. Days or weeks can go by with no visible progress, a rate acceptable and traditional to the villager, but frustrating to the American anxious to see his plan realized and goaded by questions from above as to how the schoolhouse is progressing. Very frequently, impatience takes charge again, and the Marines pitch in and complete the structure by themselves. By now, it has become entirely "an American project."

A factor that is curiously but often overlooked until this point is the teacher--a schoolhouse alone does not comprise a school--and there is a severe shortage of teachers throughout Vietnam. The writers observed a large number

of shiny schoolhouses standing idle for want of a teacher. The Marines who have worked so hard on the project are understandably embittered to see their work prove useless, and the final blow may come when, after the enemy slips in one night and blows the building away (as he often does), the villagers evidence neither remorse nor desire to start the work anew--after all, it was an American project, and, as more than one Vietnamese observer told us, "The Americans have many fine projects and programs, but none of them ever amount to much."

Problems such as these combined with more basic questions of worth have caused commanders in the program to de-emphasize such major projects in favor of the third category, the "small projects" discussed below. However, despite changes in the presentation of civic action materials at the CAP school and issuance of a number of directives, this shift of emphasis has not been fully communicated to the troops. Indeed, one may find Marines in the field who think that the primary purpose of the CAPs is "to build schools and houses and things."

The third civic action category we call the "small project." Such efforts are described most often as "short term, high impact, low cost" projects, and include such efforts as village cleanups, teaching the kids to swim (and take a bath), encouraging athletics, forming "boy scouts," and convincing the people to raise rabbits or plant an extra vegetable crop out of the traditional season. We shall also include in this category the "civic action" which is at once most universally accomplished and appreciated, the provision of medical care. While any overall evaluation of such projects would be open to debate, they are at least too small to cause any major upsets or waste of supplies and effort, they are generally enjoyed by all concerned (which aids in community relations), they help satisfy the common American desire to "do good" or help in some way, and they not uncommonly yield real benefit to the people. In particular, the daily MEDCAP (performed almost everywhere) and the occasional MEDEVAC (which service is used more frequently for ill or injured Vietnamese than for Americans[27]) are

[27] 57 Vietnamese to 4 Americans during one period studied.

appreciated by the villagers more than any other function of the CAP save the more basic provision of security, and do more to cement CAP/village relations than any other effort. In fact, the benefits are so great that it is sad that such projects cannot be turned over to the Vietnamese (after the Marines have capitalized on the initial improvement in relations with the villagers) so that the GVN can reap the rewards. As it is, CAP corpsmen have seldom been able to attract a Vietnamese trainee for any length of time, MEDEVACs are handled exclusively by Americans, and the difference between American and Vietnamese hospitals are so pronounced that even seriously ill villagers were observed to demand American treatment before consenting to a MEDEVAC.

As to the extent of effort involved in CAP civic action, it must be pointed out that, with th exception of medical services rendered by the corpsman daily, civic action is more easily found in reports and records than in the field. In searching for specific projects discovered previously in civic action reports, we found CAP members frequently vague as to the location and current status of the project. In visits to 38 CAPs, many of them unannounced, Marines were found to be actively conducting civic action (other than handouts) in only one case. Similarly, it is significant that a search of records at G-5, III MAF for a one-month period revealed no requests for materials from three of the four CAGs, and little evidence of interaction between this office, which has overall responsibility for civic action in ICTZ, and the CAPs, which are among the units charged with performing it. And an almost total lack of communication was observed between CAP officers and various CORDS representatives.

b. Psychological Operations. This area of the CAP mission seems to be less understood and exploited than any other. Psyops, to the average CAP member, means leaflets, since the distribution of these (along with occasional magazines or newspapers) is the only recognized task subsumed under that heading. Though there are sporadic visits by American or Vietnamese Psyops teams, with speakers, movies, and/or dramatic presentations (all of which are enjoyed by the villagers), there is little awareness among CAPs that these teams may be utilized in specific situations for a specific end. Discussions with Psyops officers at Corps and Province levels failed to reveal any concrete examples of incidents wherein CAPs either requested or were tasked with a psychological operation.

Nevertheless, CAPs do participate in various community ceremonies, do encourage (and effectively) ralliers under the Chieu Hoi program, do arrange for solatium payments and rewards for information or ordnance submitted, and do engage in countless, daily, face-to-face communications without recognizing that these are in fact psychological operations. Nor is it recognized that the Combined Action Program is itself in essence a psyop, and perhaps one of the more effective psyops currently implemented in Vietnam.

In recapitulation, it may be said that the CAPs' role as Nationbuilders as it is variously conceived and implemented, is deserving of careful analysis and reevaluation. It must be remembered by theorists that the men who must carry out these tasks are young, inexperienced, and only moderately educated in general. To task them with a job as inherently complex, subtle, and difficult as national development may be fundamentally an error. On the other hand, writers on pacification and development all agree that the most basic prerequisite for success along these lines is the establishment of an umbrella of security sufficiently effective to allow for development to progress in an orderly fashion. At this task, the CAP performance is indisputably superlative. It may well be that the CAP concept could be better utilized by restricting its emphasis to this basic objective--the provision and maintenance of security--and by leaving the direction and force of subsequent development within this protective shield to others better qualified for such tasks. This feeling was expressed by numerous commanders in the field, and is nowhere better summarized than in a letter from Capt. H. L. Preston in the Marine Corps Gazette of August 1968.

D. Summary of Findings

In order to organize the main findings of the study in a coherent and usable fashion, it will be useful to condense the CAP operation into a systematic portrait of how it works. A description of "how it works" is in fact the basic purpose of this phase of the study, and cannot be given until we have first determined what "it" is, and indeed what "works" means.

1. Systems Approach to the CAP Operation

The achievements of the Combined Action Program and the way in which they are accomplished in practice can best be summarized by a simple, step-by-step listing of significant activities of the average CAP and the benefits which accrue from these activities. These steps, not all-inclusive but yet generally applicable and most meaningful, will then be seen to fit into systems flow-chart illuminating the mutually supportive relationships between these basic activities and the manner in which they combine to yield a finished product. There is much criticism of the misuse of systems analysis, with some of which the writer agrees. However, much of it is on the grounds that such analysis tends to over-complicate otherwise simple activities, obfuscating issues and ignoring ancillary functions and attributes. These methods are used in the present case for the reverse reason--to demonstrate the inherent simplicity of the CAP concept and its implementation, a simplicity often missed by those working in the program. Our thesis is that the operation is <u>less</u> complex than is ordinarily conceived, and not dependent on many factors commonly thought to be crucial to success. This systematization will help to demonstrate this thesis. Here, then, is a brief listing of "how it works."

a. The <u>mere presence</u> in the village of a CAP is the greatest contribution to security (defined here as a state of mind) that can be economically conceived for a large number of villages.

b. The <u>continuing</u> presence of the CAP reinforces and validates this feeling of security.

c. The conducting of patrols, ambushes, and other military operations <u>in defense of the village</u> again reinforces this feeling of security and reassures the villagers as to the intentions of the CAP. In addition, the participation of the PFs in these operations provides them with much-needed on the job training and improves their knowledge and capabilities as fighting men.

d. The <u>success</u> of these operations (by defeating the enemy or otherwise disrupting his activities) solidifies these feelings into the reality of the observed provision of security and demonstrates to the people that the enemy <u>can</u> be defeated. Further, the enemy is denied access to much needed supplies and recruits and to an audience for his propaganda. Also, such success greatly enhances the CAP's self-esteem and morale.

e. The provision of support by other units (military, medical, and other) for the CAP and, by extension, the village reassures the people of the intentions of those other units (both American and indigenous) with regard to the village.

f. The basically decent and humane behavior of the American personnel improves the people's regard for American troops and dispels myths about the brutal American aggressors. These last two factors may provide the villager with his first evidence that the Americans or even his own government are concerned about <u>his</u> welfare.

g. Association with the "militarily rich and powerful" Americans elevates the PF's status in his own and other eyes.

h. The <u>passing on of intelligence</u> by the villager who feels sufficiently secure to do so gives him an opportunity to participate in the defense of his village, and tends to commit him to the government side of the struggle.

i. The successful <u>use</u> of such intelligence demonstrates that the villager may contribute effectively to the defensive effort, and may provide a source of financial or social reward to him.

j. The presence of the Americans improves the economic welfare to the village through both added income and reduction of enemy taxation.

k. The presence of the CAP provides entrance to the nation-wide network to which requests may be made and from which assistance may be provided for local projects or needs.

l. The continual provision of security takes immediate pressures off the villager and allows him to plan and work for the future by rebuilding, starting businesses, planting outlying fields, and so on.

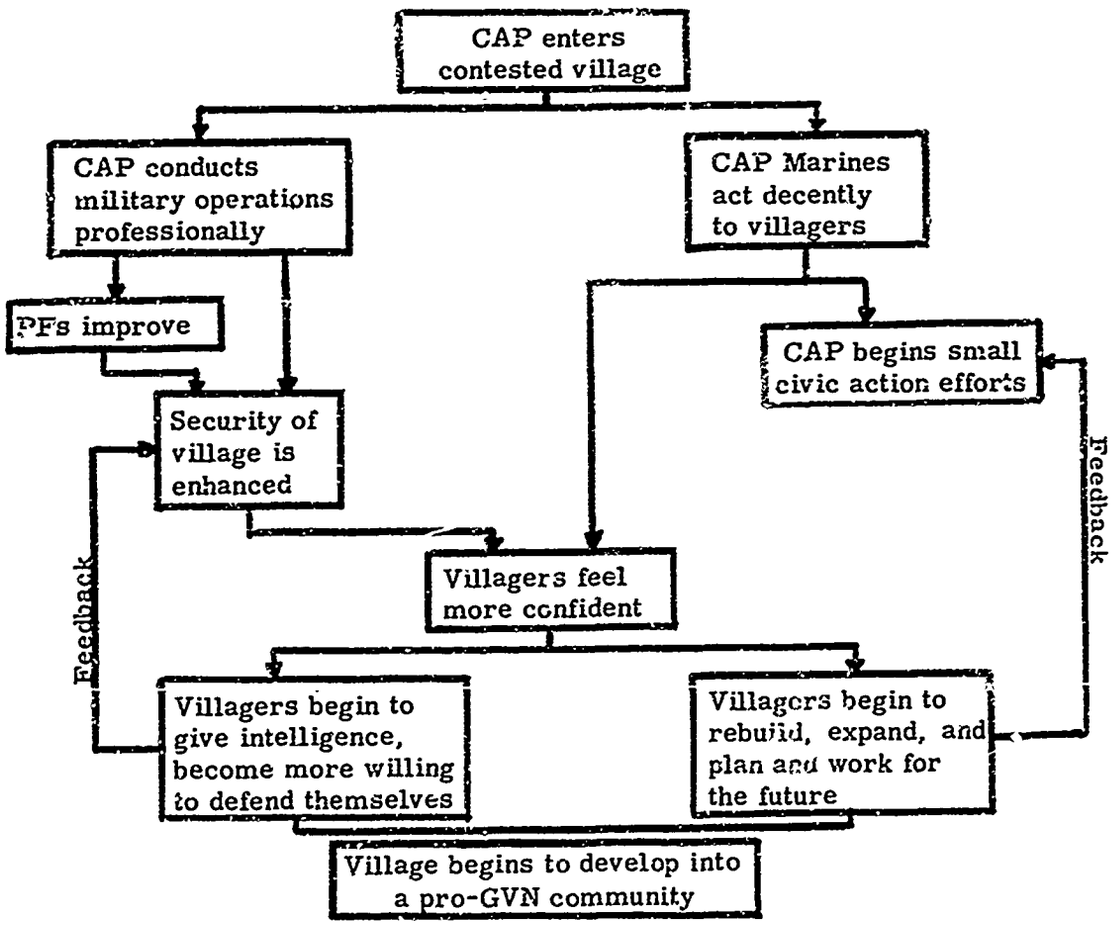
Though ancillary benefits and related problems are ignored in this summary, this is basically how the CAP--<u>any</u> CAP--does its job. It is most significant to note some things that are <u>not</u> included in this list. In particular, it should be noted that nowhere in this list is the requirement for sophisticated knowledge of intercultural relations. Though such talents might be useful, the CAP Marine does <u>not</u> need to be the linguist, sociologist, psychologist, expert on economic development, and saint that many observers have thought was required. In fact, the most basic aspects of his mission could be conducted (and often are) with only a

minimum of interaction between Marine and villager. The prime benefits of the operation are derived simply from the villagers' observation of the Marines working with the PF in his defense. What is needed, rather than a genius and jack-of-all-trades, is a good Marine as evaluated by the same standards that have been applied throughout Marine Corps history--that is, a superior fighting man and a gentleman. While there is no surplus of such men, they are easier to find than DaVinci types.

The manner in which these activities and benefits combine to form a steadily expanding process resulting in pacification may best be demonstrated by the chart given in Table II-3.

TABLE II-3

Schematic of the CAP Operation



Though this is again an oversimplification, it demonstrates how the dual roles of the CAPs--as defenders and builders--tie in to one another, and how the processes, once started, reinforce themselves through feedback and become continuing growth cycles. Once visible progress has been made, the CAP becomes more willing to help, and the people, having a larger stake in the future, become more willing to defend it against aggression from any quarter.

2. The Contribution of Tasks to Objectives

In order more thoroughly to relate the tasks described in the preceding section to the objectives of the Combined Action Program, let us take the objectives one by one and consider how the CAP tasks contribute to the achievement of each.

a. To provide village security. "Security" probably means something different to every individual. In the CAP context, however, the broadest possible definition is the most useful, since CAPs provide security in many forms. The tasks relevant to the provision of security are the conduct of military operations, the upgrading of the PF element, intelligence activities, and the personal behavior of the CAP members. In order to clarify these relationships, we shall break this objective down into its component parts:

(1) Protection of the CAP itself. This is obviously a first requirement, and is accomplished by all of the above four tasks. Success is indicated by the survival of the CAPs over the years, in itself surprising when the small size of the unit is compared to the potential hostility of its environment. Specifically, casualty rates have dropped significantly since the CAPs started "going mobile" (i.e., abandoning the compounds once maintained, which presented fixed targets) late last year, and during the first seven months of 1969, only one of the 111 CAPs had been totally incapacitated by enemy action. Frequent changes of location and refusal to establish predictable patterns of behavior are the most significant factors contributing to survival. Casualty rates and kill ratios go further to demonstrate the CAP's ability to survive.

(2) Protection of targets within the TAOC. Such targets include village leaders, RD Cadre, potential recruits, village resources, meetings, structures, bases, and lines of communication. It is clear that such a small unit as the CAP cannot personally defend all of these all the time, especially when they are spread through as many as twenty-five hamlets over an area as large as twenty-seven square kilometers. However, by providing area coverage through frequent and randomly situated patrols and ambushes, the CAPs manage to hinder enemy penetration into any part of the TAOC, since it is difficult for the enemy to locate the CAP (and thus avoid it) on any given night. Penetration does occasionally occur, of course, though much less frequently than it would without the CAP Statistical proof of this assertion is impossible to find, since the typical penetration, unless it results in widespread death or destruction, does not get reported in villages lacking American presence, so no comparison can be made. In addition, sporadic and clandestine visits for taxation and resupply may go unreported even in CAP villages for some time. The proof lies in evaluations of the CAP presence by villagers, who are universal in stating that the village is more secure since the Americans came. Thus, the often-stated fear that the CAP presence may in fact increase the threat to the village (by increasing the probability of battle within the TAOC) seems unjustified.

(3) Protection of the general public. Once again, the CAP cannot be expected to act as personal bodyguards to all the inhabitants of the village. In addition, fire fights, short rounds of artillery, poorly directed air strikes, and so on, may actually increase the danger to the average villager. On balance, however, the villagers seem generally willing to accept these added risks for the benefits derived from the reduction of enemy taxation, impressment, and general harassment. In addition, a factor not ordinarily considered (except by the villagers, who are vocal in their appreciation) is that the CAP presence substantially reduces the threat to the villager from other friendly forces, American, Vietnamese, and FWMAF, who have been known to terrorize and even destroy villages on operations and even in casual passage through the area. CAP Marines tend to become extremely protective of "their" village and do much to halt the ugly incidents that always occur between indigenous populations and occupying forces.

(4) Protection of targets outside the TAOC. Though not specifically part of the CAP mission, CAPs, by their location, often give substantial protection to bases, cities, and other strategic points outside their TAOC by hindering enemy infiltration toward these targets. Perhaps the best example of this occurred in Tet of 1968, when DaNang, the largest city in I Corps, was the only one of 38 targeted cities in Vietnam which was spared heavy fighting. The major reason for this was that the local CAPs, which happened at that time to be deployed in a ring around the city, provided early warning of enemy movement in that direction, and in fact two CAPs south of the city engaged the NVA battalion committed to the attack on DaNang and stopped them in their tracks.[28]

(5) Maintenance of law and order. This commonly-stated objective of the CAPs leaves room for varying interpretation. If this were thought to be a charter for the CAPs to perform civil police duties it could be the source of much trouble--studies have shown that a frequent cause of difficulties in previous Marine constabulary operations (Havron, 1969) has been the over-extension of judicial or police authority. While there may be no "police force" in the villages of Vietnam,[29] the country has an ancient and workable system for handling civil disorder and crime (through the family and council of elders structure). Fortunately, no CAPs were observed to have taken on such tasks to any large extent. The exception to this has been the occasional, individual attempt at population and resources control measures, most notably through checking identification cards and market surveillance. While such tasks hold great theoretical potential, PFs and other villagers complain that American attempts at such control cause more trouble than they cure. Many loyal citizens have no I.D. cards (the enemy destroys or captures them at every opportunity, and they are difficult if not impossible to replace), and language difficulties and lack of understanding of local customs make attempted American control of the village market a source of dispute. Such measures are best left in the hands of the Vietnamese, though the Americans could encourage them.

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[28] Cf: Blanchard, p. 77--at least the CAPs slowed the NVA, despite heavy losses, until heavy fire could be brought to bear.

[29] The National Police were, in 1969, largely concentrated in or near cities and major towns, though a program was underway to place an NP in each village.

(6) Destruction of the enemy infrastructure. Of all security-oriented objectives, this is the least successfully accomplished by the CAPs. As the next paragraph will show, CAPs perform excellently when confronted by armed fighting men. The enemy infrastructure, however, is a different matter. There seems to be little understanding among the troops in the field as to just what the infrastructure is, and questions on the topic nearly always evoke no more than remembrance of having killed some local figure on the battlefield (that is, a local guerrilla). This points up a deficiency in training, which the addition this Spring of three 50-minute lectures on the VC infrastructure may correct. At any rate, handling the infrastructure is primarily an intelligence function, since members are neutralized easily after being pointed out. CAPs do detain numerous "suspected VC," but the eventual results of this are rarely reported.

(7) Destruction of enemy units (both local and mainforce). Here, the objective is accomplished by purely military activities, and the CAP record is exemplary. During the three-month period studied in detail, CAPs killed 628 of the enemy, took 38 prisoners, and accepted 32 Hoi Chanhs (ralliers under the Chieu Hoi program), with an overall enemy/friendly kill ratio of 6.6.1. The enemy/American kill ratio was an even more impressive 17.9:1. It should be recalled that many CAPs make contact with the enemy only very rarely in fact, during the same period, over 43% of the CAPs made no kills at all (this is, of course, not an indication that such CAPs are not doing their job--it may in fact indicate just the opposite). CAPs which made contact 12 or more times during that period had an enemy/friendly kill ratio of 11.2:1. During 1968, CAPs accounted for over two thousand enemy dead, by actual body count, and over 1,300 kills were counted during the first six months of 1969.

b. To consolidate intelligence activities at the village level. As described above, the CAPs provide an extremely effective extension of the nationwide intelligence network down to the village, providing receptor and reaction arms to the DIOCC. CAPs pick up intelligence more from the professional performance of their military operations (to the extent to which these reassure the villager and boost his self-confidence) than from the pursuance of formally intelligence-related tasks such as the establishment of networks of informants.

Tips come from the villagers (usually via PFs, children, or village officials) or from personal observations of clues which become meaningful with increasing experience of the local scene--for example, unusual behavior can frequently warn of impending attack. If the tip is of an immediate and local nature, the CAP is right there to respond immediately, and some of their most effective actions are predicated on local information. Otherwise, an intelligence report is filed through the CACO to the DIOCC. An added service in this respect is that the CAPs, having extensive local knowledge, are able more accurately to evaluate the probable validity of a piece of information than would be a stranger. In addition to such collection, evaluation and dissemination, CAPs are available to respond to intelligence gathered from other sources, and are not infrequently tasked with special missions by the DIOCC. Most CAPs are now supplied with one or more blacklists, which, though of variable accuracy, help a great deal in the identification of local enemy sympathizers and collaborators.

c. To improve the standard of living of the villagers. First, it should be pointed out that this is not as purely altruistic an objective as it might seem. While recent events have demonstrated that insurgency is not limited exclusively to underdeveloped nations (Tinker, 1969), it is a general rule that the more visible social and economic progress becomes, the less likely it becomes that insurgent propaganda will cause much impact. While success in the achievement of this objective is difficult to measure without continued observation over a long period of time, it seems that CAPs do have some valuable effect on the prosperity and health of the village, though once again, this success is not necessarily related to direct attempts along these lines.

The initial economic benefit derived from the CAP presence is simply the input of the Marines' money, which is more significant than is generally realized, since the Marine private's monthly pay is approximately equivalent to the average annual wage in the I Corps area. Coke-and-beer shops spring up overnight, and people vie for the CAP laundry concession and other services. Additional income is provided by the various giveaway programs that Americans always sponsor (since in most cases the "useful" articles given away are bartered immediately at the local market) and by other programs, such as the

current Volunteer Informant Program, which rewards people who give useful information or turn in unexpended ordnance. Though numerous attempts are made under the heading of civic action towards economic development, results in this area are difficult to assess. It seems likely that there is great room for improvement in economic development programs aimed at the village level--a level at which significant advances could conceivably be made by promoting and assisting the establishment or expansion of small, family-sized businesses and trades. Some successes along these lines which were observed were the establishment of a sewing shop (CAPs provided the sewing machines), procurement of tools for carpenters and smiths, a bridge which allowed fishermen to take their hauls to the district town, and so on. But in general, the largest push towards economic development comes (and this is easily observable) once again simply as a by-product of the provision of a security umbrella about the village, under which the people feel sufficiently confident of the future to open shops, build new homes, and farm previously abandoned land. Some really remarkable progress has been noted in this respect in a number of CAP villages, but in most cases the CAP civic action has been only minimally contributive to it.

It is in the realms of health and sanitation that CAP efforts make the most direct impact on the life-style of the villagers. By South Asian standards, the Vietnamese are not a particular unsanitary or even unhealthy people. Nonetheless, the average young American without foreign experience is deeply shocked on his first encounter with a people who lack such conveniences as sewers, toilets, and clean water, and who seem to the newcomer to be "dirty, hungry, and covered with sores." Many Americans are disgusted by such sights, but many more are motivated to help. The most common and best appreciated form this help takes is that of MEDCAP, a sick call held daily by the CAP corpsman. After initial suspicions wear off, people tend to flock to these MEDCAPs--sometimes as many as several hundred at once, though most come merely out of curiosity or hypochondria, and are satisfied with an aspirin or a bandaid. Corpsmen, though they are not doctors, frequently treat extremely serious cases in emergencies, and they are backed up by the ability to MEDEVAC cases requiring expertise beyond their training. Such treatment, plus the sound preventive medicine education

corpsmen teach (the use of soap and bandages, for example, has saved countless lives throughout Vietnam, and is always mentioned by the villagers as one of the foremost benefits of the CAP. The need for such service is demonstrated by the fact that for the two and a half million inhabitants of the ICTZ, there are only 36 doctors and three dentists. (PRP Viewpoint D-10)

Other efforts by CAPs along these lines have varying effects, some of them humorous examples of differing cultural values--for example, one CAP, in an attempt to spruce up its village, procured oil drums to be used as public trash cans. When the purpose was explained to them, the people complied completely, throwing all their rubbish into the cans, which pleased the Marines immensely. However, it was soon noticed that, when the cans got full the people merely emptied them into the street to make room for more. Similar absurdities occur when CAPs try to promote the use of latrines (among a people who consider human fertilizer an essential part of farming). After living in the village for awhile, the American's initial shock wears off by the realization that Vietnamese cleanliness standards are more different than they are low--for example, who knows an American housewife who sweeps her front yard every morning?

The field of education is another attacked by many CAPs, with efforts ranging from building schoolhouses and procuring school supplies to trying to locate a teacher for the village (there are only 488 trained teachers in I Corps)[30] and even, on occasion, having Marines teach classes themselves (this latter effort usually fails because of the language barrier). All such attempts are appreciated by the Vietnamese, who traditionally place great value on scholarly enterprise, but results are variable. Some educational benefits are almost automatic, such as the training of the PFs, described above, and the general spread of English as a second language. The problems resulting from more direct attempts may be exemplified by the common attempt to train a medic or nurse to assist and eventually replace the corpsman at the MEDCAP. While some CAPs have been successful at this (which is a real achievement under the "self-help" philosophy), most are dismayed to see their trainees gradually lose interest, probably simply because the MEDCAP, being a free service, eventually becomes

[30]According to PRP Viewpoint D-10; GVN estimates range up to 7000.

hard work for no pay. Charging a token fee for medical service might change the picture considerably.

d. To strengthen local institutions. In this area and the next (that of strengthening the national government) there are basic questions deserving serious consideration with regard to both the objectives and the manner in which Americans in general attempt to strengthen societies around the world. Even the terminology of "social change" belies unfounded assumptions as to the "best systems" which too often result in the mere imposition of American values, methods, and systems of organization upon cultures which may find them foreign, unworkable, or even ludicrous. Not only may American ideals clash with highly prized traditional values of the local culture, but, in many cases, the replacement of indigenous systems by poorly understood imitations of western social structures results in a lessening of efficiency and even of basic (though not necessarily western) democratic principles. Though a discussion of these overriding considerations is beyond the scope of this paper, it cannot be said too often that the mere fact that certain methods (after decades of evolution and adjustment) have proven more or less workable in America does not prove them to be the best of all possible methods even in America, and it says nothing at all about their applicability under differing environmental and social conditions. Americans are not the exclusive holders of the keys to truth, and it is evident that we don't have all the answers even to our own social problems. It should not be forgotten that many other cultures have survived the outrages of fate far longer than ours, and that we may have something to learn from them. And it must always be remembered that true social progress means an increasing attainment of one's own cultural values, and those values are not necessarily the same as ours.

Although these problems are of a general and all-pervasive nature, the CAPs, as instruments of social change, exemplify many of them at the practical level. For example, nearly all of the literature on civic action presented to the CAPs emphasizes "convincing," "suggesting," "explaining," and the feeling that "the people have to be taught to accept improvements." All of this, however unintentionally, promotes the naive and perhaps unconscious assumption that only we know the right way to do things and it is our duty to teach these poor, ignorant

peasants our Great American Truths. Such an approach demeans Vietnamese intelligence and blinds us to the wisdom of which they have as great a share as we. The Vietnamese peasant, however lacking in formal education and material possessions, is quite as capable of observing and appraising the world about him as anyone, and in fact is perhaps more able to evaluate attitudes and motivations than is the average nineteen year old American. And, most significantly, he is easily insulted by condescension. If a Marine, in his attempt to "convince" villagers of the value of using a latrine, even very subtly evidences his feeling that "these people are pigs," it would have been far better for him not to have tried at all. And if his insistence on holding American-style local elections weakens the traditional, time-tested system of local government through the family and council of elders structure (in itself extremely "democratic"), his work has been counterproductive to an extent that may some day prove disastrous.

As it happens, CAP efforts toward strengthening local institutions, which is basically an admirable goal (if we accept such premises as that people working together can effect greater change than can individuals and that autonomy of the village society is desirable), are only minimally effective and are therefore not likely to cause serious harm. By individual initiative, some few CAPs have sponsored the formation of athletic clubs, chess clubs, boy scouts, and (rarely) even functioning PTAs and farmers' or fishermen's cooperatives, all of which are worthwhile achievements. But the local institutions already existent in Vietnamese village society, since they are not particularly visible to the untrained American eye, are not usually affected at all by CAP efforts.

In one case, that of the PFs, the CAP presence does solidly and beneficially strengthen a local institution, by improving both the PFs' capabilities and image in their own and other eyes. For the PF, however recruited and armed, is an essentially local force, and the creation of an effective local militia is invaluable to the current war effort. What it means in terms of the future of the national government remains to be seen.

e. To promote identification with and support of the national government and its programs. The CAP efforts toward this objective, though repeatedly referenced in all discussions of the program, are scattered and of dubious effectiveness. Despite occasional ceremonies (such as flagraisings), requests for pro-GVN propaganda teams, and the provision of security for government projects (such as for the RD cadre teams), the overall effect of the CAP concept as presently implemented may actually be in the opposite direction. The problem lies in how the CAPs are supported. However they may be explained or labeled, CAP fire support, medical services, and supplies of all kinds come from recognizably American sources. This, and the characteristic failure of the frequent attempts to get support from GVN sources, if anything only emphasizes the national government's inability to cope. This is, of course, not a failing of the CAPs themselves, but of the GVN and of our higher level efforts to strengthen its systems and make them work. This objective is of central and crucial concern if the overall pacification program is to have the desired effect, and, even though the CAPs are but one arm of this effort, certain changes in the constitution of the CAP supportive systems could aid in this respect a great deal. These will be discussed in the section on recommendations.

f. "To work ourselves out of a job." Though of a different nature than the other objectives, this final goal is so often stated that it has taken on the aura of a basic attitude which underlies all CAP efforts. Essentially, as originally conceived, CAPs were supposed to come into a village and secure and strengthen it to the point where the CAP could leave, confident that the progress initiated during and because of their presence would continue. How has this worked out in practice?

By the end of 1968, only 32 CAPs had been relocated, which is not a very impressive record for three and a half years. Significantly, the first CAPs to be deployed (those in the Phu Bai area) are still in the same villages (though the TAOC boundaries have changed) after more than four years. Though corrective actions have been taken this year and many more CAPs have been relocated to date, the question remains as to why this basic objective has been so poorly met--does it demonstrate a failure of the CAP to accomplish its mission, are

there other factors beyond the control of the CAP, or is this objective itself unrealistic?

While time did not allow us systematically to investigate this question in depth, discussions and surveys of twenty reports on former CAP villages did reveal some of the basic problems in meeting this goal. First, let us consider the CAPs which have been moved. Discussions with commanders indicated that a number of them were moved for reasons other than "the completion of the CAP mission," reasons which included the insertion into the area of some larger friendly unit, the fact that the area was too insecure (the CAP is not designed to do battle with major enemy units), and political considerations. So it is difficult to ascertain just how many CAPs have been redeployed for the "proper" reasons. Furthermore, reports on inspections of former CAP villages were even less reassuring. None of the twenty reports indicated that the remaining PF elements were performing their duties. No civic action was being undertaken, only one had made contact with the enemy during the reporting period (though all claimed to be running night patrols), and all reported severe supply shortages. But the reports also give a key as to a reason for these problems--only seven of the villages retained the same PF platoon that had served with the CAP. Certainly the CAP can't expect to leave much behind if the PF element is also pulled out.

But there is one even more basic reason that the CAP cannot fulfill its goal of creating a self-sustaining village defense system. As pointed out throughout this report, the key element in the success of the program is the continual conduct of aggressive patrols and ambushes throughout the TAOC, and the CAP's ability to perform this function is dependent on the provision of fire support and reaction forces. Without these essential factors, it would be foolhardy for so small a unit to travel in insecure areas at night. And when the Americans leave, there is seldom any way for the PFs to obtain this support. Most fire bases are manned by Americans, who are reluctant to respond to a Vietnamese request for support, because the radio networks are not secure, and the caller may in fact be the enemy. In effect, no matter how well the CAP does its job, it cannot complete it until firm arrangements have been made for the continued support of the PFs by Vietnamese artillery and reaction forces. And as long as these are nonexistent

or unreliable, the PFs cannot perform their basic mission. Since this factor is not the responsibility of the CAPs, it is out of their control, and as long as the problem remains unresolved, the goal of "working ourselves out of a job" is unrealistic.

There are other facets to the problem as well. In particular, the villagers and local leaders are extremely reluctant to give up a CAP, which is in itself a testimonial to the CAP's worth as perceived by the Vietnamese. Numerous petitions by villagers have been submitted from ex-CAP villages asking that the Americans be brought back, and District Chiefs interviewed were quite vocal about their appreciation of the CAPs, several of them saying that they would rather have a CAP than a Company of any other troops, and one going so far as to state, "Give me more CAPs and we will win the war in this district; take them away and we'll lose."

Another aspect is that by focusing attention on the eventual withdrawal of the CAP, we emphasize the idea that the security being provided is only temporary, and villagers have seen too many temporary measures by both sides in recent years to derive much confidence from them. This seriously jeopardizes the primary dividend of the CAP presence--the development of a feeling of security and confidence in the future. As General Walt stated in 1967, "If we could convince the people that we meant to stay and that we were going to protect them from the VC, then we felt their confidence in their government and in themselves would return." (Blanchard, p. 67, emphasis added.)

In view of these factors, it would seem that a reappraisal of the end product of the CAP presence is called for. Phase II of the present study will focus on this central problem.

3. Summary of Evaluation

In recapitulation, our findings may be briefly summarized as shown in Table II-4.

TABLE II-4

Evaluation of CAP Performance

Provision of security	Excellent
Collection/use of intelligence	Good
Upgrading the PFs	Good
Uproot the VCI	Variable
Win the hearts and minds	Variable
Civic Action	Room for improvement
Psyops	Room for improvement

In explanation, the lack of notable success in the lower entries in the table are indicative not so much of failures of the CAPs themselves, but of factors outside their control or not considered when the mission was assigned. Basically, there is question as to the type of involvement or role played by the CAP in these areas. If institution- and nation-building are to remain part of the CAP mission, then the program must be adjusted to allow for their accomplishment. But there is serious question whether the CAPs should play such roles as they are presently conceived.

Table II-5 is intended to show the relative contribution of the generic CAP tasks to the program objectives. Entries give the relative effectiveness of the associated task to the corresponding objective (so that no entry indicates that the task does not contribute to the objective). Column totals, then, indicate generally the proportion of effective time and effort expended on the various tasks, while row columns indicate the degree to which the objectives are being met by the entire operation (on a scale by which an entry of 10 would indicate optimal success and zero would indicate no success at all). Actual entries are of course subjective, but summarize the observations of the writers.

TABLE II-5

Tasks Versus Objectives

OBJECTIVES \ TASKS	Military Operations within TAOC	Training Popular Forces	Intelligence Operations	Civic Action	Psychological Operations	Combined Operations	TOTALS: Satisfaction of the Objectives
To provide village security	6	1	1			1	9
To consolidate intelligence	5		1		1		7
To upgrade the Popular Forces	4	1		1			6
To improve the standard of living	2			1			3
To strengthen local institutions	1			1			2
To promote GVN and programs					1		1
TOTALS: Effort expended on the tasks	18	2	2	3	2	1	

III. RECOMMENDATIONS

As should be evident from the preceding sections, the Combined Action Program is doing an excellent job in Vietnam, far more excellent, in fact, than we were led to expect by what reports are available in the United States. In the Combined Action concept, the Marine Corps has developed a tool with capabilities that are unique among the services and with a potential far wider than its present application. However, it is not in line with Marine traditions to rest on one's laurels--and it is especially important in today's rapidly changing world to re-assess and perfect our instruments continually in order to meet the demands both of today and the future with maximum effectiveness. Such assessment and refinement are the goals of this and subsequent phases of the HSR study of the CAPs.

Our investigation of the current use of the CAPs has indicated several areas in which improvements could be effected in the program. Some of these are too complex to allow for immediately applicable recommendations, and will form the targets for later phases of the study, others might be helped by immediate and rather minor changes in the program. In this section, these areas will be delineated and recommendations will be made both for immediate implementation and further study.

A. Selection and Training

As noted in Appendices C and D, the CAP selection and training systems have evolved gradually over the past four years, undergoing numerous changes on an ad hoc basis as requirements changed or became apparent. Because of the delicate nature of the operation, in which results are to some degree contingent on many personal characteristics other than ability as a fighting man, these functions are of central importance to the program as a whole, and the efficiency with which these functions are performed, by determining the calibre of CAP personnel, determines to a large extent the value of the program as a whole. It is time to formalize and standardize these systems in such a way as to insure the

provision of the highest possible calibre of CAP Marine. A great deal of data relevant to this task has already been collected in Phase I of this study--data which answers some of the questions as to just what is a good CAP Marine. It will be an objective of Phase II to turn these figures into criteria and methods of achieving this goal.

In the field of selection, criteria must be standardized and objective indicators must be developed and tested. Possible correlations between indices already existing in Marine records and measurements of CAP effectiveness should be investigated, as may be the use of such instruments as the Minnesota Multiphasic, which delineates what is called a "personality profile," and other tests measuring attitudes.[31] Such application of social science tools has been strongly urged by several commanders in the field. It is expected that such instruments would provide an effective and objective means of "screening out" undesirable candidates, and that the best of the remaining candidates could be "screened in" by personal but formalized interviews conducted by an officer with CAP experience, for example by a highly recommended ex-CACO commander.

The analysis of the CAP school training program given in Appendix D indicates a number of inadequacies, imbalances in the usage of available classroom time, and questions as to the value of certain courses. A more systematic approach to the training system would make better use of the lessons learned in four years of CAP operation and of the training time available. The criterion for the inclusion or expansion of classes should be the applicability of the subject matter to actual CAP experience, and the measurable worth of the training as observed in the field. In addition, the lack of any special training regime for CAP squad leaders, surprising in view of the importance of his position and his relative youth and inexperience, should be corrected.

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[31]Correlations between such tests and subsequent behavior are not reassuring, however their potential usefulness in such an application is worthy of study.

B. Civic Action and Psychological Operations

In the "softer" areas of civic action, psychological operations, and general institution- and nation-building, CAPs do not appear to perform as well as at their more basic missions. It is felt that a major reason for this is the lack of clarity with which both the objectives of such operations and the specific tasks involved are set forth in the literature and in training. At the planning level, the issue seems clouded by a certain amount of ivory tower thinking, with a lack of understanding of both the limitations of the environment and of the abilities of the young Marines involved. And the vagueness which this unreality provokes carries through down to the working level, where "civic action" means giving away things or building things "to help the people," and psyops means nothing more than leaflets. It is strongly suggested that the CAP mission be redefined in this area, not so much by changing objectives as by shifting the emphasis from meeting statistical quotas (number of items distributed, number of schools built, etc.) to serving as a liaison between the villagers and those larger and more professional units which are tasked with such responsibilities. In other words, the CAPs could serve more effectively by observing and listening to the needs of the villagers and simply requesting assistance from the proper organization, thus serving as much-needed "eyes and hands" for the GVN, CORDS, Civil Affairs, and Psyops units in a manner corresponding to the CAP's present relation to the Phoenix intelligence system. With this revision of tasks, the CAP Marines would be trained to look for ideas for projects and to listen to requests, but would <u>not</u> be compelled to promise anything to the villagers or to undertake any projects on their own--rather, they would be familiar with the various agencies already in the business and would know how to make requests of them. It must be pointed out, however, that the CAPs should not be <u>ordered</u> not to undertake projects, for, as one commander wisely observed, "Americans <u>have</u> to do some civic action--it's in their blood." Also, the above does not apply to the MEDCAPs which are so much appreciated by the people, though even here the emphasis should not be on "number of civilians treated" (a deceptive figure, since the majority come out of curiosity or just for a bandaid or an aspirin), but rather on turning this function over to a trained Vietnamese medic or nurse as soon as

possible. The advisability of charging a nominal fee for medical services should be tested as a means of reducing the flow of the merely curious and of attracting villagers to the medical profession as a source of income.

But in general the CAP's lack of effectiveness and occasional counter-productivity in these areas strongly suggests the need for a change of role from that of innovators and implementers to one of observers and liaison functionaries.

C. Flexibility

The disappointing results which have been observed after the Marine element has been pulled out of a village constitute a problem which strikes at the very heart of the CAP mission. But it is quite possible that the only reason that the PFs do not continue (in general) to perform their mission after the Marines leave is that in fact they cannot perform it without the support (both military and logistic) which the American presence insured. Though this problem is out of the realm of the program, being a more general failure of the country-wide effort, its reality necessitates some response by the CAPs, lest their good works amount to nothing in the long run. The best solution might be to increase the flexibility of the CAP concept by varying the size of the unit to fit the circumstances. "Double CAPs" are already used in extremely insecure areas; the converse of this would be to reduce the size of a CAP, once its basic mission has been accomplished (as measured by the infrequency of enemy penetration), leaving only a token American presence of three to five men as a means of (1) continuing to enhance the feeling of security which American presence promotes, and (2) ensuring the continued provision of support to the unit. This would free the main body of the CAP for duty in areas where they are more badly needed without abandoning the PFs altogether to their former position as forgotten and nonfunctional soldiers. Hopefully, the conditions which necessitate this innovation will eventually be changed, but until then, it is unwise to relocate CAPs if it is at all doubtful whether the PFs will be able to continue to operate without American support.

D. Discipline

A large percentage of the problems that consume most of the time of CAP personnel, as well as the one largest non-enemy threat to the survivability of the CAP, is related to problems of discipline and failure to adhere to standard procedures or observe the caution which the CAP environment warrants. In the course of the study (cf: Appendix E), a large number of seemingly unrelated problems were traced back to inadequate supervision and/or the growth of feelings of complacency or lack of respect for authority. In the CAP situation, higher-level commanding officers cannot in reason be expected to supervise the individual units any more than they do at present, thus the burden of responsibility, for the most part, falls to the CAP squad leader. His importance has been pointed out in other sections of this report, and the second phase of this study will focus on methods of more adequately preparing these men for this critical role. In addition, however, a number of immediate innovations could help the situation significantly:

- Provisions must be made for the immediate removal from the program of any misfits, American or Vietnamese, before their actions have time to generate major problems.

- A Vietnamese officer should be assigned specifically to each CACO to accompany the CACO commander on all inspections to provide disciplinary authority over the PFs.

- Emphasis in the CAP training program should be placed on how complacency and the resulting carelessness can kill and has killed CAP Marines.

- Marines should be warned in training that the VC have been known to infiltrate the PFs and be taught to watch for this--however, they should also be reassured that not all PFs are VC.

- Firm orders should be given and adhered to with regard to theft, which continues to be a major source of irritation. Thieves, when apprehended, should be treated as VC suspects, and the PFs should be warned that they will be treated as such.

- The Marine squad leader and the PF platoon leader should jointly and formally inspect the entire CAP each evening before setting out for the night's activities. This innovation has been tried at several CAPs and seems to yield such benefits as improving the image of the leaders, increasing the concentration on weapons safety and cleanliness, and improving the military bearing of the unit as a whole.

- In addition, every effort should be made to clear the air of what is referred to as "bull" by the average Marine. Petty regulations irrelevant to the mission, "shows" set up for VIPs, and romanticized descriptions of CAP activities are a serious cause of irritation.

E. Tables of Organization and Equipment

The command structure of the program needs reinforcing at several points. Most often requested was an additional officer at the CACO level (at least for large companies), and an extra vehicle, both to aid in the critical supervisory function performed by that unit. Also, the importance of those aspects of the mission points out the necessity for an S-2/S-5 officer in the CAG. Among his other duties, the man could monitor CAP requests to other units and agencies in order to ensure that they are satisfied appropriately and expeditiously, and perform other functions crucial to proper civic action but which require a level of training and a freedom from other duties that cannot be expected of the individual CAP Marine.

Continued emphasis should be placed on the development and testing of hardware useful to the CAPs. Night vision devices and seismic intrusion detectors have proven to be of great value to the CAPs, but unfortunately research was apparently halted too early, leaving too wide a gap between the size and complexity of the units and the use to which they must be put. Present models are simply too heavy and too delicate (and expensive) to warrant their use by the CAPs.

F. Command Continuity

Too much useful information is lost because of personnel rotation. More informative records should be kept at all levels (they need not be more extensive, merely more meaningful to subsequent users). At the level of the CAP, records should be kept of important incidents (complete with names and locations) at the CACO in a file available to later squad leaders. At present, few CAP Marines know of anything that happened in the village more than a few months ago--though the CAP may have been there for years. Useful contacts are lost and beneficial ideas get forgotten because of this. And the Vietnamese, who remain, are disturbed by the lack of continuity.

At higher levels, the format of the command chronology could be changed from the present dry list of statistics to brief elaborations on what was done, why, and what effect it had. A number of officers complained of the length of time they had to spend familiarizing themselves with the job requirements before they could begin to operate effectively. It is not a truism that Marines don't like to (or can't) write narratives--the few narrative footnotes and memoranda found buried in the voluminous statistics provided us with more insights than all the pages of numbers that hid them from the general view.

It is difficult to assess the extent to which the program suffers from this loss, but attempts to follow developments over the years indicate that the waste, duplication of effort, and repetition of mistakes is significant.

Another innovation which might be useful in this respect would be the periodical publication of a bilingual CAP newsletter containing news from all the CAPs, new ideas, lessons learned, and lighter material. If such a paper could be kept factual and interesting (with no phony romanticism or hearts and flowers), it would be a real morale booster--since CAP Marines suffer to some extent from feeling cut off, and PFs, though surprisingly well-informed nationally and locally, know little of what is going on at the intermediate regional and provincial levels. It would do much to solidify the CAP self-image as a Corps-wide unit, and, kept on open file, would contribute to institutional memory.

G. Language Capability

Though it is well-known and often stated, the need for improved language capability among the CAPs is sufficiently important to warrant its reiteration here. Despite the fact that CAP Marines often perform their more basic missions without much knowledge of the local language, the frequency with which major problems grow out of trivial disputes which an interpreter could solve in minutes emphasizes the importance of communication as a basic skill. The writers are not unaware of the problems involved in this area, but it is clear that present efforts should be given top priority and expanded if possible to obtain a high quota of Monterey graduates for Combined Action duty. It should be a basic requirement that at least one language-qualified Marine be present in each CAP at all times (which means that at least two must be assigned to each CAP). Though the maintenance of this requirement is difficult, we do not feel that it is impossible. Without looking for them, we found several Vietnamese-speaking Marines assigned to duties which offered them no chance at all to use their training--and they were themselves disappointed at this waste.

However, it must also be pointed out that the mere ability to speak Vietnamese does not make a good CAP Marine, and that language-qualified applicants for the program must be screened as carefully as others--perhaps more so, since their training will force them into daily interactions with the Vietnamese, whether they want to or not, and if the CAP's interpreter has negative feelings about the people or the mission, it would be better not to have one.

H. Operations

The objectives of the day patrol are apparently too subtle to be easily appreciated. As a result, this activity tends to be brief and relatively unproductive. Requirements regarding the length and coverage of this important activity should be formulated and enforced (enforcement should prove no problem here, since inspections can be made at any time during the day).

The benefits of the construction of a combined COC bunker at the district headquarters, in which representatives of district, CACO, and main units in the area sit side by side each night, are so obviously productive that this sort of arrangement should be strongly recommended for each district. For example, such a set-up has been known to reduce the time required to clear a request for fire support from over a half-hour to a matter of seconds.

I. Recognition

In recognition of CAP service, a secondary MOS should be given to each Marine with six months or more of CAP duty. This would have the dual benefit of making the program more attractive to career-minded Marines and of making this wealth of unique experience available for future use.

Promotions and awards are rare among the PFs. CAP officers should not miss an opportunity to recommend such to the Vietnamese hierarchy whenever appropriate. Also, certain U.S. awards may be made to deserving allies and should be whenever the occasion warrants.

There is a disturbing lack of knowledge of the Combined Action Program, both among the general public and among officials who, from their positions (e.g., at Marine Headquarters, in JUSPAO, or in psyops or civil affairs units), should be well aware of this effort. The CAPs are doing a remarkable job in Vietnam, and they deserve better credit for it. It is a not altogether fallacious business adage that a product is only as good as its advertising, and, despite the Marine reluctance to brag about its accomplishments and the distasteful connotations surrounding advertising, it would be better not only for the CAPs but for the entire U.S. effort if the Combined Action Program were better known.

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APPENDIX A

THE CAP ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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1. General

As it is with nearly every other effort in Vietnam, the organizational structure and formal chains of command in the Combined Action Program are complicated and somewhat difficult to understand on a theoretical level. Despite the well-known military adages on the necessity for unity of command, the nature of U.S. participation in the Vietnam War and the delicacy of the relationships between the governments and armed forces involved have made the keynote "co-ordination" rather than "command." Even though many of the more frustrating problems in the country-wide effort may be traced to just this source, there seems to be no alternative at present to the convoluted interrelationships that characterize the command structures of nearly all programs and operations in South Vietnam.

Fortunately, despite the confusion that seems apparent from theoretical analysis, in practice, operational agreements and congruency of purpose have in many cases allowed efforts to progress smoothly despite the seeming maze of bureaucratic superstructure, and the Combined Action Program is illustrative of this sort of ad hoc solution to the management problem. In explanation, it may be illustrative to trace the evolution of the CAP organizational structure.

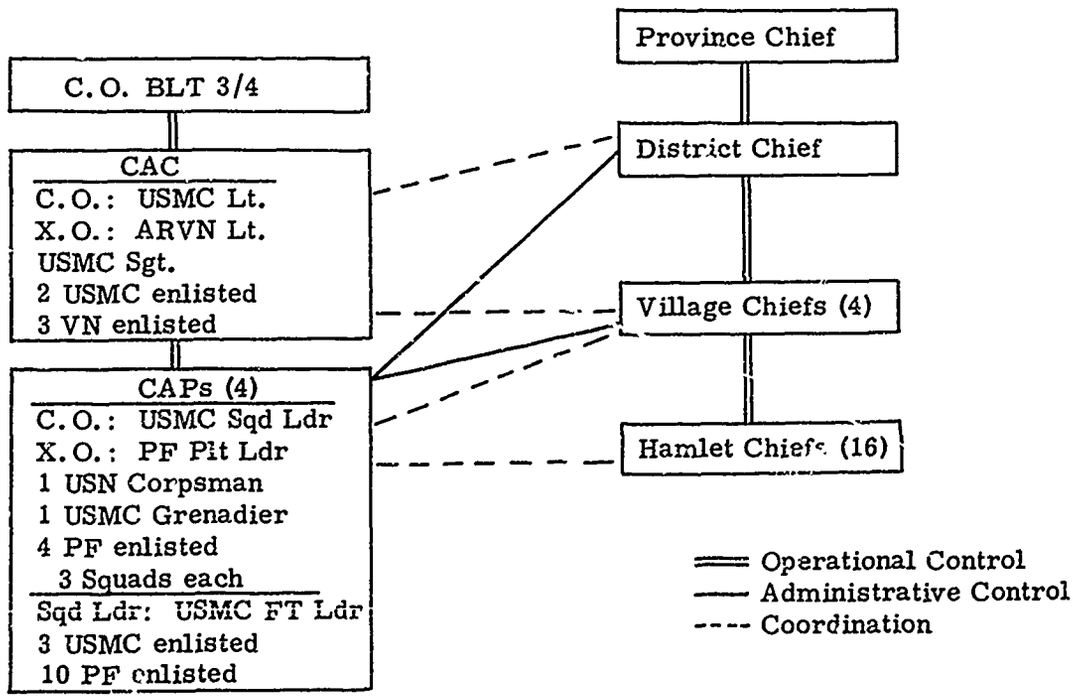
2. Evolution

As noted in the body of the report, in its earliest forms, combined action consisted of nothing more formal than voluntary participation by individual PFs in Marine patrols. When the usefulness and potential promise of such cooperative effort were recognized, it was decided to formally integrate these forces on a basis of parallelism of command structure, a concept which has continued to the present in varying forms. Another constant in the shifting picture has been the size of the individual CAP, which was fixed originally as the usual 14-man Marine rifle squad, augmented by a U. S. Navy Corpsman, these 15 Americans to be integrated with the standard Popular Force Platoon, which has a T/O strength of 35.

The first combined action unit had a significantly different command structure from that used today. The PF, on their own, are theoretically recruited from the hamlet or village in which they serve, and are under the operational command of the hamlet or village chief. In actual practice, however, because of the variability of available manpower from hamlet to hamlet, and of the ability or the desire of the village chief to assume military responsibilities, the PFs are generally considered to be a district-level force, recruited, supplied, trained, and commanded by the District Chief and his staff. During joint operations, this command may be taken by whatever main force unit is in the area.

When Lt. Ek's CAC was welded to this structure, the ideal of parallelism was compromised to some extent in the interests of providing unity of command. The actual chain of command, as reported,[1] was rather like a meshing of the teeth of two gears. This is shown in Table A-1.

Table A-1

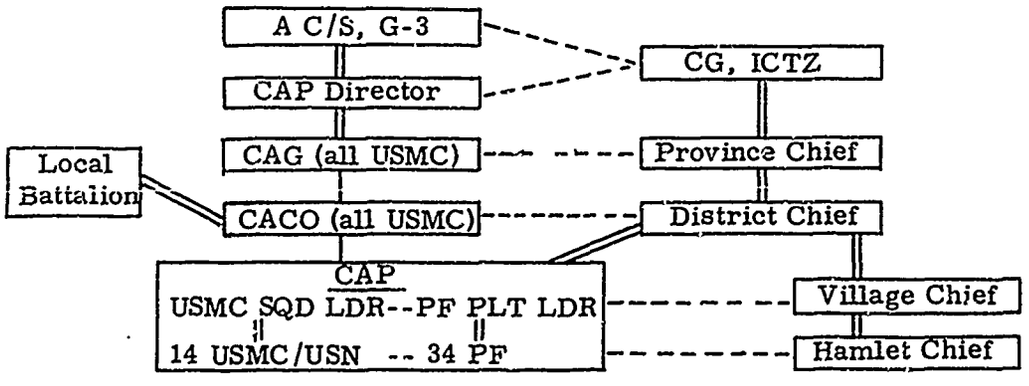


[1] Blanchard, p. 62; Beardsley.

Under this system, in the CAC and CAPs, the Vietnamese were second in command, thus preserving integration in the fullest extent and the generally desirable attributes of command unity, but at the sacrifice of equality of status and responsibility and the ideal of parallel structure. Further up the chain, relations were on an individual basis--as Lt. Ek has reported, the District Chief considered Lt. Ek his equal, while Lt. Ek regarded the District Chief as his superior; and his relationship with the village chiefs was the reverse of this.

As the program expanded, the supervisory structure both grew and changed in several ways. With the proliferation of CACOs up and down the ICTZ, the first addition was the establishment of a CAP Director at the III MAF level, who operated under the general staff cognizance of the Assistant Chief of Staff, G-3, and who discharged administrative control over the program but without operational command. Later, the number of CAPs necessitated an intermediate level of supervision, and so the Combined Action Group was formulated at the Province level. But mere size was not the only consideration--a reevaluation of the profound impact CAPs were having on Vietnamese self-perceptions indicated that there might be greater value in giving the Vietnamese a greater portion of command responsibilities. By 1967, operational command had shifted from the CACO to the District Chief, and the policy of having the Vietnamese play "second fiddle" was abolished at all levels in favor of the greater parallelism to be afforded by "command through bilateral agreement."[2] Thus, the command structure evolved to something like that shown in Table A-2 (never formally presented in this fashion).

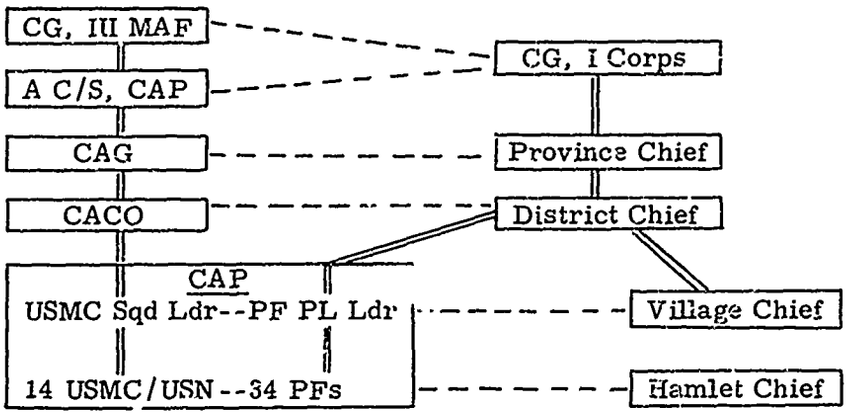
Table A-2



[2] T/O P-4910

Under this relationship, the Marine Squad leader does not command or have disciplinary rights over the CAP PFs, nor does the PF Platoon leader have such command over the Marines in the CAP. This dual command concept proved sufficiently workable to recommend its application al all levels, and so the command structure went through several more alterations until it reached the form shown in Table A-3.

Table A-3



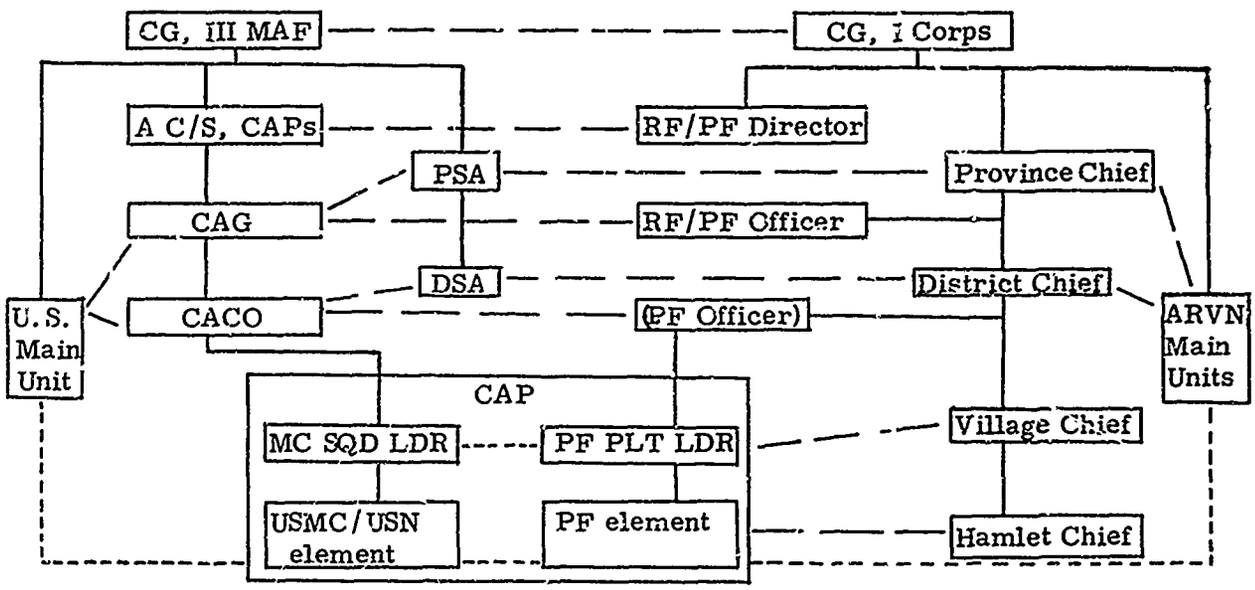
This system, which is currently (July 1969) proscribed, provides for a totally parallel set of chains of command, sacrificing unity for equality. Of course, actuality is never quite as perfect as theory, and in reality there are shortcomings in the system and in its application--for example, it is not realistic to consider the CACO commander and the District Chief as having equal responsibilities (CAPs are only one of the many concerns of a District Chief), and the status gap between a CAG Commander and a Province Chief is even broader. In addition, the numerous changes in structure--the sorts of "growing pains" one may expect in any expanding organization--have resulted in some confusions as to who commands what. One still hears CACOs described, for example, as "nontactical headquarters," and one finds great variation, some of it ingenius. in the actual management of individual units. But "command through bilateral agreement" by definition leaves just enough freedom of action for individual innovation to vary the specific command structure to meet varying conditions. Such deviations between theory and practice are not

necessarily failings of the program but may in individual cases show the value of flexibility by solving specific problems.

3. Current Systems of Command

In particular, it is an oversimplification to look at the CAP command structure in isolation from other integral parts of the military/political environment. Table A-4 expands the previous table to include the most relevant parts of the surround, the MACV Advisory Teams, the GVN local staffs, and the nearby, friendly main force units. That even this is an oversimplification is shown in Table A-5, which pictures some of the individuals and organizations with whom the CAP is commonly in contact and with whom the CAP operation must cooperate.

Table A-4



—— Command/Supervision
— — Coordination
----- Emergency Command

Table A-5

As these charts are somewhat complicated, and since there are variations in the degree to which they actually reflect reality, it will be illuminating to discuss the various levels of the hierarchy individually.

a. Commanding General level. The Commanding Generals of III MAF and of I Corps (positions held in 1969 by Lt. Gen. Herman Nickerson, Jr., and Lt. Gen. Hoang Xuan Lam, respectively) have shared the responsibility for the ICTZ since the early days of 1965.

b. Directorate level. Col. R. Burroughs is presently the Assistant Chief of Staff for CAPs, with responsibility for the entire Combined Action Program.[3]

[3] A more complete list of CAP personnel as of July 1969, may be found in Appendix F.

c. Provincial level. There are five provinces in the ICTZ; from south to north, they are Quang Ngai, Quang Tin, Quang Nam, Thua Thien, and Quang Tri, which borders on the DMZ (see map on page iv). Each province is under the command of a Vietnamese Province Chief, who coordinates all activities, both civil and military, within his area. He is advised by a MACV Province Senior Advisor (PSA), and is in communication with the Division commander(s) operating within the province. In most formal expositions of the Combined Action Program, the Combined Action Group (CAG) commander is shown as assuming a position parallel to the Province Chief. In actuality, such a view is unrealistic, since the scope of the Province Chief's responsibility is far broader than that of the CAG. The existant working relationships vary from one province to another. In one province for example, due largely to the organizational abilities of an exceptional PSA,[4] the CAG and CACO commanders coordinated with the GVN chain only through the medium of the MACV Advisory Structure, a relationship which, in that isolated case, worked admirably and assured unity of purpose at the province level. In another province, the relationship was through the Officer in Charge of the Regional and Popular Forces on the staff of the Province Chief, since this is a position roughly parallel to that of the CAG commander. In other provinces, the relationship was direct, though not parallel. The form of the optimal interaction is dependent on the personalities of everyone involved and the amount of coordination required. Liaison at this level is not ordinarily necessary (though it may be desirable) on a day-to-day basis, but becomes crucial only upon consideration of changes of location of CAPs (which should reflect the overall pacification program for the province), and in those incidents when pressure must be brought to bear on lower-ranking individuals or units. Since the principle of parallel structure allows

[4] Lt. Col. Mooney (USA)

for no command power between the American and Vietnamese sides, it is occasionally necessary to go up one level of a chain and over to the other to iron out disagreements and insure cooperation or compliance.

d. District level. The situation at the district level is similar to that at province, except that the difference in status between the CACO commander and the district chief is not ordinarily so great as that between CAG and province. It does exist, however; so much so that General Lam has ordered that an officer be appointed in each district with solely CAP duties. The necessity for this will be described later in reference to discipline problems. Due to manpower shortages, this order had not been fully implemented[5] as of July 1969. The situation at this level is further complicated by the fact that a number of CACOs, through geographic necessity, spill over into two districts and that some districts, because of size, contain as many as three CACOs. In this latter case, one of the CACO commanders is tasked specifically with liaison responsibilities for all CACOs in the district. Again, the relationship is extremely variable--in some cases, especially when CACO and District HQ are co-located (which is desirable but not always possible), close bonds of friendship have formed between CACO commanders and their District Chiefs; in others, there is communication between them only when necessary. Much closer coordination is required at this level than at province, since such basic needs as the provision of fire support, the maintenance of troop discipline, and the coordination between contiguous friendly forces are mandatory and necessitate daily cooperation at this, and at no other, level. The most useful innovation for these purposes is the construction and maintaining of a combined COC bunker at District HQ, from which all military

[5] In fact, none of the 13 CACOs visited had a full-time Vietnamese officer present.

operations in the district are commanded. Such a facility exists in several,[6] but far too few, locations.

e. Village/Hamlet level. In the individual CAP, the command structure becomes at once more simple and more variable. Theoretically, the CAP is under the joint command of the Marine squad leader and the PF platoon leader, the former of which commands only the American contingent, and the latter of which commands only his PFs. Below this level, there is no particular structure specified,[8] save that replacements in case of casualties must be appointed. Once again, any military theorist can see that such a system is not likely to be workable, especially in a small unit, where unity of command may be essential under fire. And in practice, the system holds only in the matter of discipline, and even there, in one extraordinary case, a District Chief had given disciplinary power over the PFs to the Marine Sergeant. In by far the majority of the CAPs studied, the Marine squad leader had assumed effective operational command of the CAP, with the PF platoon leader functioning approximately as an advisor,[8] occasionally exerting his authority by disputing the plans for the night's activities, which, in these cases, are frequently not revealed to him until moments before implementation. In other cases, where the CAP is blessed with an exceptionally professional PF "honcho," he was observed to make most command decisions himself, but even then, it was the Marine who gave the orders. Still more variability exists in the CAPs relationship with the village power structure. In almost a third of the CAPs visited, the village chief lived outside his domain, in some nearby city (this does not necessarily indicate a lack of security, but may merely denote a taste for metropolitan living), and in at

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[6] E.g., CACOs 2-1 and 1-4.

[7] Though titles are assigned; e.g., Intelligence NCO, Civic Action NCO, etc.

[8] Note that this is a reversal of the roles specified in some write-ups of the program, which call the Marine sergeant an "advisor" to the PF.

least six CAPs, the Marines had never met him. Hamlet Chiefs are even less frequently well known, and village elders are still more obscure, as their dignity does not often dispose them to easy communication with young soldiers, and since the current wave of local elections of village councils (which most elders shun) has obscured their role. Since the primary necessity for liaison with village officials is for the purposes of the secondary CAP mission of civic action, this will be discussed separately under that heading. Theoretically, accomplishment of the basic mission of the CAP could occur without any liaison between Marines and civilian villagers, and, in reality, it was observed on occasion to have occurred with only minimal social intercourse.

What is important at this level is the presence of a good leader; in particular of a good Marine sergeant. Because of the rather unique situation of the CAP, the Marine squad leader must essentially command his men "in a vacuum," since the presence of higher-ranking officers is necessarily sporadic. There is no other one variable so central to CAP effectiveness than the leadership abilities of the Marine sergeant--with a good sergeant, there is a good CAP; with a poor one, there is in effect no CAP at all. This is discussed more thoroughly in the sections on "operations" and "selection."

4. Strength

An extremely false picture is painted of the size of the CAP and other units by reference to the Tables of Organization. T/O Number P-4910 gives the CAP strength as 14 Marines and one Corpsman, and the T/O for the PF platoon implies a strength of 35. Commanders are, of course, aware that numerous factors tend to reduce T/O strengths, and are accustomed to considering an "on board" strength as being somewhat lower than the ideal. In fact, this practice is formalized in ICCI 5401.2, which states that a 15 percent reduction in T/O strength is acceptable or to be expected on any given day. By this calculation, one would expect to find (.85)(15) = 13 Americans and (.85)(35) = 30 PFs in the average CAP, giving a total effective strength of 43.

Actual observation, however, indicates that the average USMC/USN strength is about 9.2, with a range extending upward from only seven men, and there are usually about 22 PFs effective on a given night. This gives a total of 31 men, or only 62 percent of the T/O strength. There are a number of reasons for this, among them casualties, R&R, special leave, attendance at special schools, and general manpower shortages, and such reduction does not necessarily constitute a hardship (though there are exceptions to this statement). The T/O size of a CAP was apparently derived simply from the size of the individual units, without regard to the requirements of the tactical environment. There is no "magic" in the number 50--some CAPs could probably retain their effectiveness with less than seven Americans; others, in less secure environments, could use more than 15.

On the other hand, CACOs and CAGs were observed to be generally larger than their T/O allotments, the former from a need for more men to function effectively, and the latter having its ranks swollen by a number of "sick, lame, and lazy" and those brought to the rear for counterproductive behavior. The CACO T/O (number P-4911) specifies one officer, one Gunney Sergeant, and four men. Nearly all CACO commanders interviewed stated that this was simply not enough men to handle the crucial tasks of supervision (each CAP should minimally be visited every day by either the C.O. or the Gunnery): resupply (since the CAPs have no storage facilities, each must be resupplied daily); coordination with other units (another daily necessity), command (nightly monitoring of the radio nets), consolidation of civic action activities; and administrative duties. The smallest CACO observed had seven men on board, and the most frequent request was for an executive officer.

A further problem arises when the CACO has a large number of CAPs. The T/O specifies a maximum of 12 CAPs per CACO, and the largest CACO presently has ten CAPs. The consensus, however, among CACO commanders is that there should be no more than seven for the system to operate effectively, and an even lower figure obtains if the CACO can handle only one radio network--for if five or more CAPs are hit simultaneously (a tactic which the enemy has used on several occasions), the radio net is saturated, and the command and fire support system collapses, leaving the CAPs to fight on their own, which they are not designed to do (though many have proven themselves capable of doing so).

T/O Number P-4912, for the Combined Action Group, specifies five officers, 39 enlisted men, and two corpsmen, but one CAG was observed to have as many as 80 men on board. The surplus comes from transients, disciplinary cases, and those brought in for what is called "In-CAG R&R," an extremely useful innovation which gives each CAP member a day out of the village every few weeks to rest, socialize with other Americans, sleep in a real bed, and so on. This is not a mere bonus--CAP duty, to an extent far greater than the typical military assignment, involves the isolation of a small group in a hostile, or at least foreign, environment; isolation which is similar in some respects to Antarctic duty, and more severe than the better-publicized submarine duty. If this group isolation continues without break for month after month, severe problems in interpersonal relations or just simple boredom can arise. The brief and sporadic visits by outsiders do little to break the tension, but even one day in the "rear" has an observable positive effect on morale. In-CAG R&R has become standard at all CAGs now, and has significantly reduced personality clashes and other problems.[9]

However, the addition of so many extra personnel puts a strain on the CAG, if only logistically, which, since it is not recognized officially, must be handled informally--frequently by the time-honored custom of "scrounging." Forty-six men seems sufficient to handle the CAG mission, though requests are frequently made for an S-2 officer (justified by the substantial flow of valuable intelligence generated by CAPs, as documented in this report), and the addition of a trained S-5 officer to coordinate, monitor, encourage, and supervise civic action activities and psyops could do much to turn these functions into an effective attribute of the CAP.

The CAP Directorate operates effectively with six officers and about five enlisted men, though, once again, there is no specific S-2, S-5, or PRO, all of which would prove useful. Under the direct supervision of the Director is the CAP training program, consisting of the CAP school and the CAP language school. Since the training program is so obviously critical to the program, it is covered elsewhere in this report (Appendix C).

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[9]We were unable to obtain the actual CAP psychoneurotic rate, but it seems low.

APPENDIX B
THE CAP MISSION

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THE CAP MISSION

1. General

In reading both official and unofficial literature on the Combined Action Program, and in talking to people associated with it, a considerable amount of confusion and even dispute was noted with regard to the basic mission of the CAP. In fact, responses to questions on the subject varied so widely that it was decided to investigate this lack of consensus in some depth.

2. Semantic Considerations

One underlying cause of this problem seems to be the lack of agreement by military writers of such words as "mission," "objective," "goal," "task," "function," "duty," and so on. From document to document, these words are used arbitrarily in such a manner as to make them appear synonymous. In discussing an operation as complex as that of the CAPs, the use of words so broadly defined as to be vague can obscure fine distinctions and shades of meaning which may be crucial to an understanding of the subject. The confusion is alleviated only partially by reference to the JCS Dictionary of United States Military Terms for Joint Usage, which defines mission as

> ...the task, together with the purpose which clearly indicates the action to be taken and the reason therefor. 2. In common usage, especially when applied to lower military units, a duty assigned to an individual or unit; a task.

but which leaves "task," "purpose," "action," "reason," "duty" undefined.

The distinctions between these terms become more apparent by reference to Webster's New World Dictionary, which defines mission simply as "the special duty or function on which someone is sent," noting that "function is the broad, general term for the natural, required, or expected activity of a person...; duty is

applied to a task necessary in or appropriate to one's occupation, rank, status, etc., and carries a strong connotation of obligation."

Similarly, objective is defined as "Something aimed at or striven for," as opposed to the JCS definition which limits objectives to "physical" objectives. Webster further makes the note that "objective refers to a specific end that is capable of being reached," whereas "goal suggests laborious effort in striving to attain something." Webster's Task is simply "a piece of work assigned to or required of a person."

In order to promote maximal clarity, we will follow the above guidelines in an attempt to use these words with some precision, preserving their differences in connotation and level of abstraction. Basically, our usage will be in accordance with the following system:

GOAL, or overall objective will be used to indicate that final end, realistic or ideal, towards which all efforts strive; e.g., the goal of a police force is an orderly and peaceful environment.

MISSION will indicate a broad statement of the objectives and tasks with which a unit or individual is charged; e.g., the mission of a police force is to perform those functions necessary to the maintenance of law and order.

OBJECTIVE will indicate specific, attainable ends towards which the efforts strive; e.g., an objective of a police force is to provide protection to persons threatened by assault.

TASK will mean a specific action required for or helpful in attaining one or more objectives; e.g., a task of a police force is to patrol continually within its assigned area.

DUTY will mean an action or behavior which is required of a unit or individual because of his occupation or position, and which carries the weight of moral obligation stemming from his responsibility; e.g., a duty of a police force is to be responsive to calls for assistance.

3. Variation in Statements of the Mission

A second reason for the disagreement over the basic CAP mission is the fact that, as the concept of CAP employment developed over the years, expanded notions of the applicability and value of the CAPs gave rise to varying official and semiofficial statements of the CAP mission.

As pointed out above, the original purpose of the CAP was simply to enhance the security of the Phu Bai airstrip and base. Commanders in the area, in particular General Walt, were quick to recognize both the historical precedents for such an operation and the wide potential it had in the overall pacification effort. As CAPs proliferated, the original purpose was submerged (though never entirely overlooked) in favor of the more meaningful goal of village-level pacification. The vast majority of the population of the ICTZ is rural and uncommitted to either side of the struggle. Up until 1965, few if any of the numerous GVN/US pacification programs had had much of a significant effect on the average resident of the small farming or fishing hamlets. These efforts, well-documented by Nighswonger, all attacked the problem "from the top down," and their impact tended to dwindle as it flowed down the bureaucratic and often corrupt chain of command from Saigon. Also, such programs faced the barrier presented by a firm and ancient Vietnamese tradition which states that the emperor's power (and, by extension, that of the national government) ends at the village gate. Consideration of this principle and of the more basic observation that a nation is built of people led many to realize that the construction should begin at the other end--from the hamlet up rather than from Saigon down. Such thinking contributed to the expansion of the CAP mission and, later, to the Revolutionary Development Program. As early as December 1965, at a time when there were only the original four CAPs at Phu Bai commanded by (then) 1st Lt. J.J. Mullin and three more at Chu Lai under 1/4 (Lt. Col. R.J. Perrich), a note in the Marine Corps Gazette defined the CAP effort as "protecting the populace, training local forces, civic actions of all types, and effecting population controls in coordination with local governments."

In a briefing given at the Third Marine Command Post in March 1966, the mission was given as to assist in providing security for the villages and hamlets,

and it was stated that the Marines would live with the PFs and conduct training in weapons, tactics, field sanitation, and language orientation (Blanchard, p. 67).

In February 1967, Force Order 3121.4 formally defined the CAP mission in some detail:

> The Combined Action Company has been organized to provide a sufficient force to occupy and control areas uncovered by the forward movement of U. S. Marines and ARVN units and to assist in revolutionary development efforts within these areas....
>
> The combined action units are to be used in cleared and semi-cleared areas to provide security in villages and hamlets and to provide training for popular forces...Secondary missions are to conduct civic action and gather intelligence for CAC and other friendly forces operating in the area, and to provide other appropriate assistance to Vietnamese and U.S. officials in furtherance of revolutionary development activities.
>
> Appropriate tasks for the Combined Action Companies are as follows:
>
> . a. Motivate, instill pride, patriotism and aggressiveness in the popular forces.
>
> b. Conduct day and night patrols and ambushes in assigned areas.
>
> c. Conduct training in general military subjects, leadership and language for all personnel of the Combined Action Platoon to increase the proficiency of PF elements so that Marine elements may ultimately be withdrawn and PF elements will continue to perform in a proficient manner.
>
> d. Conduct combined operations. .
>
> e. Marine Squad leaders in individual CAC platoons will function as U.S. revolutionary development representatives for the hamlet which they serve.
>
> f. Establish an intelligence apparatus in and about the hamlet in which located, in conjunction with local indigenous, ARVN, and civilian representatives. Insure that information gathered is made available promptly and on a regular basis to the intelligence center at District level as well as to the headquarters to which responsible.

On 10 November 1967, Second CAG's GruO P3000.1 defined the CAP mission as follows:

a. Provide security within the platoon area of responsibility. This mission includes, but is not limited to, the following tasks:

(1) Destroy the Viet Cong infrastructure.

(2) Protect the friendly political/social infrastructure.

(3) Conduct patrols and ambushes in their assigned areas to protect bases and lines of communications.

(4) Conduct vigorous civic action and Psy-Ops programs in order to obtain the trust and confidence of the local populace and to benefit from any military intelligence which may result.

(5) Participate in combined operations with the ARVN and/or the FWMAF within assigned areas as requested.

b. Support the RD campaign program. The success of the RD activities make this program a prize target for the Viet Cong. CAPs having RD teams in their operating areas will furnish support by:

(1) Providing security for RD teams by means of the tasks listed...above.

(2) When requested, supplement the security elements of the RD team to permit their more effective use in purely RD tasks.

(3) Providing material and/or technical assistance as available and as requested.

...The primary function of the USMC element of a CAP is to train PFs.

Marine Corps Institute publication Civic Action (MCI 03.30; 8 January 1968) includes the following section on CAPs:

a. General. The objectives of the CACO are to motivate and train popular force personnel, to instill pride in the units at the village and hamlet level, to enhance psychological operations and civic action activities, and, hopefully, if the above is accomplished, to eventually withdraw the Marine elements and have the popular force continue to perform and assume full responsibility for the defense of the village. The mission of combined action platoons is to provide hamlet and village security in cleared and semicleared areas. CAP's accomplish their mission by:

(1) Conducting patrols and ambushes in order to enhance the security of the area.

(2) Training and reinforcing the popular forces platoon.

(3) Gathering intelligence.

(4) Conducting civic action within the hamlet and village.

(5) Maintaining law and order where no other law enforcement agency exists.

b. Destroying the Communist infrastructure within the village or area of responsibility...

c. Organize people's intelligence nets...

d. Conduct of civic action and psychological operations.

Table of Organization number P-4910, 10 July 1968, states the CAP Mission simply as "To provide hamlet and village security in cleared and semi-cleared areas."

The currently used, program-wide SOP, ForO 3121.4B (22 June 1968) uses the stated missions of the Popular Forces as the basis for the CAP mission:

(1) Destroy the VC infrastructure within the village or hamlet area of responsibility.

(2) Provide public security and help maintain law and order.

(3) Protect the friendly political structure.

(4) Protect bases and communication axis within the villages and hamlets.

(5) Organize local intelligence nets.

(6) Participate in civic action and conduct propaganda against the VC.

and adds that "The mission of the Marine element of the Combined Action Program is to support Popular Force Platoons, through integrated operations, in carrying out the Popular Force missions and to train the Popular Force soldiers so that they can carry out their missions unaided."

This partial list of assessments of the CAP mission by Marine writers shows not so much an historical development (most basic elements are present in the quote from December 1965) as it does the effect of shifts of emphasis and fluctuations of priorities by various commanders. The problem stems from the fact that all mission statements, even despite subsequent cancellation, remain in circulation, and no one formal statement has taken precedence over the others. As a result, responses to the question "What is the basic mission of the CAP?" included

such differences of opinion as "To protect the people," "To train the PFs," "To gather intelligence," "To help the people," and, less frequently, "To build schools and houses," "To look for rockets," or "To block a VC infiltration route." Also, the perception of the mission differs significantly between officers and enlisted men in the program--in the course of a number of interviews with CAP personnel recently returned from Vietnam in early 1969, it was noted that, whereas 80 percent of the enlisted men questioned gave the prime mission as "to help, get to know, or protect the villagers," some 40 percent of the officers submitted that it was "to train the PFs," and 30 percent said "to provide security." And it was observed that this split was about the same among CAP personnel presently in the program in Vietnam.

4. Toward a Standardized Program Definition

Drawing on these various statements and perceptions of the CAP mission, we will follow the guidelines for terminology usage outlined above to draw up a list of the CAP goal, mission, objectives, and tasks to be used for the purposes of this study as a standard referent. As this list will include all stated objectives (regardless of feasibility) and all tasks which have at one time or another been assigned (regardless of whether they have been or can be implemented), it is not suggested that this list be used in formal definitions of the program which may be written in the future. Though there is need for one formal statement of the CAP mission to supersede all others, recommendations with regard to its content will be made later, after a more thorough discussion of actual field performance and an evaluation of its effectiveness.

The GOAL, or overall objective, of the Combined Action Program may be said to be the pacification of rural Vietnam. The GOAL of the individual CAP is to create an atmosphere of security within its TAOC in which constructive development may take place, and to increase the inhabitants' ability and willingness to maintain that atmosphere. The word "atmosphere" is used to emphasize the CAPs provision of psychological security, which observations indicate to be the major provision of the CAPs towards the pacification effort.

The MISSION of the CAP is two-fold: To enhance village and hamlet-level security by the active performance of integrated military operations with the Popular Forces, and to increase the ability of the villagers to sustain and defend themselves by encouraging and participating in projects contributing to the elevation of the standard of living and identification with the national government.

The OBJECTIVES of the CAP are numerous, but may be grouped under six headings:

1. To provide village security.
   a. To protect the CAP itself.
      This basic requirement includes protection of both U.S. and Vietnamese personnel as well as CAP equipment and source of supply.
   b. To protect targets within the CACO.
      Enemy targets in the village include village and hamlet leaders, RD cadre, potential recruits, village resources, meetings, structures, local bases, and lines of communication.
   c. To protect the general public.
      It is the people, after all, at which the CAP operation is aimed. This objective includes protection of the villagers from both enemy and friendly action, and may be accomplished by the provision of a "feeling" of security as well as by actual physical protection.
   d. To protect targets outside the TAOC.
      Though this has not been stated as an objective since the program's inception, it is obviously considered both in the locating of CAPs along infiltration routes and in CAP participation in combined operations.
   e. To maintain law and order.
      This is commonly stated but seldom defined.
   f. To destroy the enemy infrastructure.
      This is primarily an intelligence function, since the identification of collaborators is all that is necessary for their neutralization.
   g. To destroy enemy units.
      This includes both the local guerrilla and the main-force VC or NVA, and does not so much imply the active seeking out and militarily destroying them (though the CAPs do this quite well) as it does crippling these units by denying them access to village supply and recruitment and encouraging enemy defection.

2. To consolidate intelligence activities at the village level.
   a. To extend the national intelligence-gathering network to the village level.
   b. To provide a reaction arm to the national intelligence network.

3. To improve the standard of living of the villagers.
   a. To improve the financial welfare of the villagers.
   b. To improve the local health and sanitation standards.
   c. To raise the level of education of the villagers.

4. To strengthen local institutions.
   a. To reenforce existing organizations (e.g., the PFs, the village council, etc.).
   b. To promote and assist in the formation of new local institutions.

5. To promote identification with and support of the national government and its programs.
   a. To reenforce the villagers' sense of nationhood.
   b. To promote, assist, and publicize the government efforts to help the villagers.
   c. To encourage the villagers to work with the government.

6. "To work ourselves out of a job."
   The end-product is frequently stated to be a self-sustaining, pro-government village capable of continuing to progress smoothly without the assistance of the Marines.

The TASKS which have been assigned to the individual CAPs in furtherance of these objectives may be subsumed under the following categories:

1. Conducting integrated military operations with the PFs.
   This has included, in addition to the basic CAP operations of patrols, ambushes, etc., within the TAOC, the participation in combined operations with other units and, occasionally, tasks designed to effect population and resources control.

2. Training the Popular Forces.
   Though this has generally been conceived as the conducting of formal classes for the PF, CAP efforts to upgrade the PF are at once more subtle and more effective than this.

3. Gathering, evaluating, disseminating, and reacting to local intelligence.
   This has generally been stated as "Organizing a local intelligence net," but actually CAP tasks in this area are considerably broader than this.

4. Participation in Civic Action and Psyops programs.
   The range of activities under this category is extremely broad--from taking the kids swimming to building hospitals, and from handing out leaflets to proselytizing families of known VC.

Subsidiary tasks include those common to any military unit; for example those related to planning, reporting, coordinating with other efforts, logistics, personnel management, and administrative tasks. The individual CAP is not concerned with most of these, aside from planning its daily activities and submitting reports of these activities. Supporting functions are the responsibility of the CACOs and CAGs, and are covered elsewhere in this report.

APPENDIX C
THE CAP SELECTION SYSTEM

APPENDIX C
THE CAP SELECTION SYSTEM

1. General

The rather unusual and delicate nature of the Combined Action Program has made it clear from the beginning that the selection of CAP personnel is of central importance, and that, in particular, the personalities of the men involved would be a major factor in the success or failure of the CAP mission. What has not been so clear is just what personal characteristics are necessary or desirable--that is, the criteria for the selection or rejection of potential CAP personnel. Both selection methods and criteria have changed several times during the brief history of the program. It will be useful to recount some of this history, as important lessons have been learned from it.

2. Evolution

Members of the first four CAPs (then called "CAC squads") were selected from volunteers from the four companies of the Third Battalion, Fourth Marines during July of 1965. "Every man was hand-picked," Lt. Ek, the first CAC commander, has reported. "Because of the magnitude of the job, I picked men who were mature, intelligent, who possessed leadership capabilities and tact. Tact was the most important qualification" (Beardsley). According to another source, he picked men "who were highly motivated with some experience in working with the Vietnamese and who he felt would be responsive to the people's needs. He wanted Marines who could react quickly and properly, not only to the military situation, but to the people situation as well" (Blanchard, pp. 62-3).

As the program grew, the same source for CAP Marines was used--units within Vietnam--but such descriptions of the calibre of men required were not published. Commanding officers were instructed only to select men who were "mature and highly motivated," characteristics that vary in individual definition and which must be judged subjectively. By mid-1968, the requirements had been formalized in ForO 3121.4B:

Because of the isolated positions and the high degree of individual responsibility required of each member of a CAP, it is mandatory that personnel assigned to CAPs meet the following criteria:

a. Lance Corporals and below:

(1) Have been in country for at least two months if on first tour or have served a previous tour.

(2) Have a minimum of six months remaining on current tour or agree to extend to meet this requirement.

(3) Be a volunteer and motivated to live and work with the Vietnamese people.

(4) Be a mature, motivated Marine and recommended by his commanding officer.

(5) Had no non-judicial punishment within the past three months, not more than one non-judicial punishment and no courts-martial within the past year.

(6) Have an average 4.0 mark in conduct and proficiency with last marks at least 4.0.

(7) Have not received more than one purple heart award on current tour.

(8) Preferably be a high-school graduate.

(9) Be from 03 occupational field for assignment to a CAP. Other occupational fields may apply on AA Form with agreement to extend their tour for six months and receive approval or disapproval on an individual basis from CG FMFPAC.

(10) Be from occupational fields listed in (relevant T/Os) for assignment to CACOs and CAGs.

(11) Waivers may be requested for personnel who do not meet the above criteria provided they are highly motivated and recommended with enthusiasm by their commanding officer. Personnel nominated who require a waiver will appear before the Combined Action Program screening board for interview.

b. Noncommissioned officers assigned to the program will, in addition to the above:

(1) Have combat experience in their MOS.

(2) Have demonstrated a high quality of leadership.

(3) Be considered highly qualified for promotion.

Though this appears to be a detailed and well-conceived selection system, several years of use proved it to be inadequate. There were two reasons for this failure, neither of them apparent at face value. The first was the frequency with which these elaborate guidelines were ignored by commanding officers in filling their quotas. While this may seem a serious charge, it must be realized that it is

not realistic to expect an officer in the field to recommend his best men for transfer to any other duty, whatever its nature, and this is precisely what the above criteria call for. In practice, it became apparent that many a commanding officer used the CAP quota as a means of getting rid of his misfits--and a CAP is precisely where such a man can cause the maximum of trouble. As many as one-third of the men sent to the program under this system have admitted to the writers that they "were volunteered" by their COs. Others volunteered simply because "anything is better than the grunts," or because they "heard that CAPs was a soft duty," or for other inappropriate reasons. Such men could frequently slip through any screening interview, which under present conditions must necessarily be brief, because they had been clued in on how to answer the questions--for example, by saying "I want to help the people."

The second reason for the failure of this method was more subtle. The typical "grunt" in the ICTZ can go for many months, or indeed for his whole tour, with almost no contact with friendly Vietnamese--the only "people" he sees are the enemy, and so he becomes conditioned to regarding Vietnamese in that light. To suddenly shift from such a point of view, in which any Oriental face is a source of danger or even a target, to the point of view necessary for CAP duty, in which these are people to be protected and helped, requires a fundamental shift of conditioned attitudes too profound for many to manage. The men would confess this problem freely--"We've been up in the mountains for months where it's been kill, kill, kill; now we come down here and are told we're supposed to love them all. It's too much to ask."

A third reason was that the requirement for combat experience shortened the average length of stay in the CAPs, a shortness of which the Vietnamese frequently complain--"They are only here a short time; by the time we understand each other and begin to make friends, the Marine goes home." The frequency of overseas extensions (reported to have been as high as 60 percent or more by some sources) did not alleviate this problem, since some Marines, it is well-known, extend for inappropriate reasons (e.g., to ensure that they don't get a second tour), and in fact problems with extenders became so common in some areas that commanders have been known to (informally) discourage extension.

3. The Present System

On recommendations by Colonels Danowitz and Burroughs, the entire selection system was changed in May 1969, to one in which CAP Marines are selected from the Staging Battalion at Camp Pendleton prior to Vietnam deployment. Though the same guidelines are in effect with regard to the type of man desired, the selection is essentially random, though a briefing on the program is followed by a call for volunteers. All selectees have their records screened by the CAP Director's staff (grounds for rejection include low GCTs, disciplinary problems, incidence of venereal disease, etc.), and all selectees with the rank of Corporal or above are interviewed personally, frequently by the CAP Director himself. They are then monitored carefully during training at the CAP school. Some 20 percent of the CAP selectees are rejected before being sent to a CAP.[1]

It is as yet too early for a definitive evaluation of the advantages of this new system, but preliminary investigations indicated it to be a decided improvement over the old method. The only possibly relevant objections raised were that "boots" (Marines without combat experience) might be more likely to "freeze up" in a fire fight, which can be disasterous in such a small unit, and that the added months in the village might give rise to problems of morale and/or discipline. Experienced Marines tend to discount the first objection, pointing out that each battle is a new and unique experience for everyone. The second objection is based on the observation that behavioral problems become more frequent near the end of a tour, but it has not been determined whether this means that there is a natural limit to the duration of a CAP Marine's effectiveness, or whether this is simply the result of increased attention on the rotation date as it draws nearer. No evidence has as yet (July 1969) validated either of these fears, but only time will determine their relevance. It is, however, evident that the new arrivals are less likely to have serious dislikes for the Vietnamese, and that even a random selection is superior to the one which produced an inflated percentage of "bad apples."

On the other hand, it is also clear that merely random selection can be improved by the systematization and application of criteria for selection. The problem is in determining just what the criteria are. The consensus of opinion

[1] From interviews and observation at the CAP Directorate.

among officers and men in the program is essentially that CAP members must be "nice guys" as well as superior fighting men, but this quality is not so easily evaluated as, say, the GCT score (which is not generally thought to be as important). Though most people instinctively feel that they can tell whether a man is "nice" or not, by talking to him, experience proves that such a method alone is not very reliable, and reflection will show that we have all erred from time to time in judging character. A number of devices providing more objective indices to predict behavior and personality profile have been developed in recent years, and the use of these and other methods are discussed in depth under the "recommendations" section of the body of this report.

4. The CAP Squad Leader

It is impossible to put too much emphasis on the importance of the CAP squad leader to the entire operation. Because of the CAP's isolated position, there is essentially a gap in the supervisory structure of the program, and, to an extent far greater than in most military units, the Marine squad leader runs his own show in the CAP. In the final analysis, regardless of efforts by higher-level officers, the morale, discipline, amount of activity, and overall effectiveness of the CAP depends almost entirely on this man's motivation and ability to lead his men. And each one of these facets presents special problems in the CAP--morale is threatened by the isolation of the small group in a (theoretically or potentially) hostile environment; discipline can waiver because of the impossibility of frequent observation and supervision from the officers; the amount of activity can drop from repetition, frustration, inability to see results, and sheer boredom; and overall effectiveness can be undermined by any or all of these factors. The Marine squad leader must be able to command his men "in a vacuum." He has no officer behind him to reenforce his authority, and if he is too harsh, he must live with his mistakes, without even the camaraderie of fellow NCOs to console him. Under these circumstances, it is not surprising to hear a CAP leader shrug off direct disobedience with the comment, "after all, I have to live with these guys every day."[2] Its reasonableness, however, does not make it any more acceptable from a military point of view, where minor breaches of discipline can quickly snowball. If the CAP leader does not

[2]This precise justification was offered to the writer by two squad leaders.

command, there is no command. This is a far larger responsibility than is ordinarily placed in the hands of a corporal or sergeant.[3]

Because of his importance data were collected on all 111 CAP Marine squad leaders to determine his characteristics. Some of the findings are a little surprising. In the first place, the average CAP leader is young--53.2 percent in July 1969, were 21 years old or younger, and three were only 18. Though the average length of service in the Marine Corps was about 42 months, over a quarter of them had been in the Corps less than two years. The rank of sergeant was held by 61.3 percent and the rest were corporals and lance corporals. The average time in grade was about nine and one-half months, though the corporal CAP leaders averaged less than four months in grade before assuming leadership, and about one-third of the CAP leaders achieved their present grade within one month of assuming leadership. About one-half of them were promoted to CAP leadership from within the program, the other half being brought in directly as CAP leaders. Over 40 percent have at least one overseas extension to their credit, and 92 percent have an 03 MOS. The average GCT is about 107, with about one-third having GCTs of 100 or less, and in this respect it might be noted that the most active CAP in terms of combat during the period studied (with 109 enemy kills in three months) was led by a 21-year old sergeant with a GCT of 76. (See Appendix F.)

In general, then, it may be said that the CAP squad leader is relatively young and inexperienced. Though there is no hard, factual evidence to support the theory that this hinders his capabilities, this finding has implications both for selection and training. Though the writers are aware of the present Corps-wide shortage of qualified NCOs, it is surprising that no special effort is made to obtain some of the finest for CAP duty. Experience has shown that even a mediocre squad can accomplish the CAP mission successfully if placed under the leadership of a superior sergeant (some CACOs, in fact, use their best squad leader in just this fashion, sending him to whichever CAP is having trouble), so it is clear that any selection system should emphasize the obtaining of top-notch NCOs at any cost. Efforts along these lines are proposed in the section on recommendations.

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[3]Though Marine history is filled with documented examples of brilliant NCO leadership, squad leaders have seldom been left in such isolation for such an extended period of time.

APPENDIX D
THE CAP TRAINING SYSTEM

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THE CAP TRAINING SYSTEM

1. General

There is nothing more essential to any military endeavor and yet less noticed by the general public than the quality of its training system. The Marine Corps is not unaware of the critical nature of training, and in fact recognizes that the fine reputation of the United States Marines is to a large extent based on a system of recruit training which, though shocking to some civilians, has evolved over the years into a precision machine for turning out superior fighting men. However, this is precisely what it is geared to do--produce soldiers--and so when Marines take other jobs, they go to other schools for further training more relevant to the duty at hand. It has been clear from the beginning of the Combined Action Program that special training is necessary for the men to be placed in the villages, for, despite a long tradition of Marine involvement in constabulary type operations, knowledge gained from this experience has had no effect on basic recruit indoctrination and conditioning, which is still aimed at the more classic Marine role of conventional aggressive operations. What has not been so clear is just what the content of the training program should be. As a result, the "CAP School" has grown on an empirical basis through the years, with subject matter varying depending on the ideas or opinions of the various commanders.

2. Evolution

Prior to the deployment of the first CAP in August 1965, Lt. Ek gave the selected Marines "a two week training program, orienting the team on the customs of the Vietnamese...the intelligence and counterintelligence aspects, and the objective that their actions must support the view that the people should view the Marines, not as an occupation force, but as members of the community, concerned above all else with providing security." (Blanchard, p. 63). In addition, they "attended classes in spoken Vietnamese, Vietnamese government organization, and village relations. In the afternoons and evenings, the individual squads made recon patrols of their village areas." (Beardsley,.

As the program grew, such orientation became institutionalized in a CAP school, which was eventually placed under the command of the 2nd CAG at China Beach, near DaNang, but the emphasis shifted from an attempt to acclimatize the Marines to the environment to a more standard military training program stressing the small unit tactics which CAPs use almost exclusively. Courses were added or dropped, expanded or shortened as experience seemed to dictate.

When Col. E. F. Danowitz took charge of the program late in 1968, this rather randomly constructed system was one of his first focuses of interest. Shifting direct command of the CAP school to his own hands, he restructured the syllabus back towards a better balance between cultural and military training and instituted the use of student critique sheets to provide some feedback. His replacement, Col. Burroughs, contributed further innovations. But there remains a clear awareness at the command level that the training program is still essentially ad hoc, a conglomeration of various ideas and methods of approach to problems that have never been fully analyzed or systematically evaluated. In short, we have been too busy fighting fires to go too deeply into the methodology of fire-fighting. The exigencies of time and manpower utilization cut into the training system enough as it is, and there is a real need, clearly recognized, for a more carefully designed, experimentally validated, well-balanced system to provide CAP Marines with knowledge and skills that will serve them best in the performance of their somewhat unique duties.

3. Present Status

As of July, 1969, standard CAP training consisted of two weeks of intensive training, with an average of over seven hours a day of classes or exercises. In addition, the CAP language school provides a month of Vietnamese language instruction for as many of the brighter students as can be spared to attend it.

A closer analysis[1] of the CAP school reveals limitations on the training system that are not apparent from the simple statement that CAP Marines "undergo two weeks of training." On the first day, for example, two hours are taken up by administrative tasks, and there are two and a half hours of orientation and welcome speeches, leaving only four hours for actual classes. The last two days are

[1] See Appendix F.

similarly filled with various administrative, testing, and graduation periods, leaving only 4 1/2 hours of lectures in these two days. In addition, one day is absorbed in issuing, explaining, and zeroing the M-16 rifle, another day is lost by a visit to a firebase to demonstrate and explain artillery and its usage, and one Sunday holiday is observed. All of these things are important and necessary, but the net effect is the reduction of the time actually spent in class to about seven days

Furthermore, since no provision is made for the CAP school in the existing TOEs, the school's staff and equipment have had to be scrounged from other units, necessitating classes that are too large and a real shortage of teaching aids such as charts and field equipment.

Basically, the syllabus may be divided into two categories corresponding to the dual aspect of the CAP mission--38% of the effective training time is spent acclimatizing the students to the environment (Vietnamese language, history, customs, politics, and so on), and the rest is spent refreshing and broadening the students' knowledge of military subjects. We will cover some of these areas in detail in this appendix, discussing both the subjects as they were taught in July 1969, and the relevance or effect these subjects had on CAP performance in the field.

a. Vietnamese Language. A total of nearly 13 hours is spent in an attempt to teach the Marines to speak a few words of, or at least to be familiar with, the Vietnamese language. There is nothing that is more frequently recognized as needed in the CAPs than language ability, and, though it is a finding of this study that in actuality, the major part of the CAP mission can be successfully accomplished with only a minimum language ability, it is true that the inability to communicate is an extremely frequent source of difficulty in the CAPs, both in the realm of personal relationships and in that of the secondary missions of civic action and psyops. The casual visitor to a CAP may be misled by what appears to be a certain level of fluency exhibited by about half of the CAP Marines, who seem to joke and exchange comments with Vietnamese quite naturally. An observer who speaks Vietnamese himself, however, will soon begin to notice that

the vocabulary used in such interchanges is extremely limited, and that the content of such communications is restricted to very ordinary phrases common to the environment that are used repetitively. Most Marines who appear to "get along" in Vietnamese in fact only know about 50 words. Such minimal language ability is put to the test, and fails, just when it is most needed--in times of crisis, when feelings run high and people begin to speak more rapidly and less carefully--shattering the communication bridge between American and Vietnamese. This is recognized in the field, and any CAP which lacks a good interpreter (Vietnamese or American) bemoans the lack, while any CAP which is fortunate enough to have one wonders what they'd do without him.

In assessment, it does not appear that the language classes presently given in the CAP school have much effect on the average student. There are certain built-in limitations, however, that make improvement difficult. First are the limitations of time and facilities. Only two weeks are available for training, and it is hard to conceive of any course that could teach much of a language as inherently foreign and difficult as Vietnamese in that short time span, especially to young Americans who, in general, see no reason to learn it. They are grouped in classes of up to 138 students in a hot room in which the instructor must shout to be heard--in short, a situation that is too reminiscent of the high schools that many of them recently dropped out of. Second is the variation in dialect between one area and another--there are significant differences between pronunciation and phraseology even within I Corps, and the idiom of the entire area is quite distinct from that of Saigon, which is that usually taught in schools.

One factor which is readily accessible to change, however, is the teaching method. At present, the attempt is apparently to simply present as much material as possible on the theory that, while the student may not be able to speak on graduation day, he will at least have absorbed a basic familiarity with the nuances of the language--the tones, spelling peculiarities, pronunciation, and syntax--which will serve him well as a foundation for learning more in the field. A great deal of time is spent on spelling (no phonetics are used) and the structure of sentences and various ways of saying things, while vocabulary is taught by having the class

repeat phrases after the instructor. While the usefulness of this approach is clear in theory, the observed fact that few Marines later ever bother to learn more than such phrases as "chop-chop," "boom-boom," and "number mooey" throws doubt on the viability of this philosophy. There are, of course, exceptions, some of them astounding, including a few individuals who pick up enough in a few months to be able to translate for Monterey graduates; but these are rare.

Since the reality is that few Marines can be expected to take the trouble to pursue further language ability on their own, it might be wise to restructure the course on more practical, "phrasebook" lines, leaving the structure of the language for those brighter or more motivated few who will take further courses in the CAP (or other) language schools.

b. Personal Response. The personal response program, initiated some years ago by Lt. Gen. Victor H. Krulak, has provided a wealth of data on Vietnamese customs, religions, and general perceptions, some of which is presented in some five hours of lectures by chaplains in the CAP school. Responses from Marines on graduation from the CAP school give a resounding approval for these lectures--most Marines[2] say that these were the most enjoyable and useful classes given. However, mere popularity is no justification for the construction of a training program on which the students' lives may depend, and a deeper analysis of the effects of the personal response lectures uncovers some disturbing factors.

The personal response studies have generated a number of little-known facts about Vietnamese life and facets of the American/Vietnamese interface which are of great value to researchers and planners. But when this wealth of material is boiled down into a series of lectures designed to effect the attitude of young newcomers to the country, the result is too often a list of "do's and don'ts" that may or may not be meaningful or even valid on an individual basis. Students are instructed, for example, not to pat children on the head (because the head is sacred) or to point their foot at anyone (because this is considered insulting). While these may be a part of what might be thought of as "good manners" in Vietnam, they are not by any means universally observed. When the student

[2]As many as 75%, as determined from responses on the student critique sheet (Appendix F).

subsequently observes Vietnamese breaking these "rules" themselves, he is disenchanted, and tends to reject the entire content of the lectures (most of which is valid) as a bunch of bull. Even more fundamental is the fact that nonobservance of "good manners" (on the trivial level) is not frequently the cause of much discord in Vietnam--the Vietnamese are quite accustomed to foreign barbarians and expect them to act differently. Real problems arise from the breach of more basic and more universal standards of conduct. The Vietnamese is angered by the same actions that would anger an American--he doesn't want his mother insulted or ridiculed, he doesn't want you to throw apple cores at his father, and so on. In addition, the Vietnamese are perhaps more attuned to "feelings" than are most Americans, and if, in conversation, the American is preoccupied with which way his feet are pointing and trying to look shorter than his counterpart or keep his hands off his hips, that counterpart is going to notice merely that the American is distracted for some unknown reason and is acting somewhat less than naturally--and he will wonder why.

More subtly damaging is the fact that the recitation of long lists of local peculiarities (and some of them seem very peculiar to a young American) has the overall effect of giving the American the impression that Vietnamese are "silly" and "childish," an extremely poor attitude to have toward one's future associates. This feeling that the local people are somehow "dumb" is reinforced by the content of other lectures (e.g., on civic action) and by implicit attitudes or tones of voice used by instructors, giving birth to feelings that are basically racist, difficult to eradicate (because they are not directly expressed), and most counterproductive in the field. No one likes to be regarded disparagingly or treated superciliously, but this is a subtle result of many attempts to familiarize Americans with the local scene.

Since most interpersonal problems that arise are of a more general nature, essentially being the display of attitudes which would upset anyone anywhere, it is suggested that the lists of "taboos" could be well replaced by talks or exercises on the basics of good manners and gentlemanly behavior. The CAP's very survival is largely dependent on the impression the Marines make on the Vietnamese, and anything that can be done to make relations smoother and easier is well worthwhile.

c. Other Vietnamese Orientation. Over eight hours of classroom time are devoted to other lectures on Vietnamese history, politics, government, revolutionary development, and the VC infrastructure. It is difficult to assess the value of these lectures, but it was noted that few CAP members seemed to have much knowledge in these areas. In particular, there seemed almost no knowledge of the role of the RD cadre (much of which has no visible effect on the hamlets, which leads the Marines to believe that "they don't do anything at all but hang around") and little understanding of how the VCI operates. Both of these inadequacies hinder the performance of the mission quite directly, but on the other hand, these lectures have only recently been included in the syllabus and so might not have had time yet to yield benefits. The workings of the Vietnamese government have little effect on ordinary village life, and most CAP Marines learn little respect for a government which appears at their level most vividly only when it is most inefficient or corrupt. But it is questionable whether Americans should be used as GVN boosters anyway, since such efforts only tend to make Saigon look more foreign than it already does.

d. Weapons. Over ten hours are devoted to such American weapons as the M-16, M-79, M-72, M-60, BAR, Claymore, mortars, and so on. These are, of course, basic to the CAP, and excellence in weapons usage is required for all CAP members. The extent to which such training duplicates prior training remains to be investigated.

f. Patrol and Ambush Techniques. As is pointed out in the body of this report, patrols and ambushes comprise the major task of the CAP and yield the most benefits, so it is obvious that CAP members must perform superlatively at small unit operations. But it is questionable whether the seven hours of classroom lectures devoted to these topics (which are derived straight from field manuals, with little reference to specific CAP requirements) could not be better spent in field exercises reinforcing such crucial points as the maintenance of intervals and selecting good positions. Time spent on such topics as prepatrol reconnaissance (when the CAP patrol is itself generally for the purpose of reconnaissance) and patrol debriefing (which is informal and natural in such a small unit) could be employed to drive home the purposes of these activities that are

unique in the CAP environment--such as visibility to the people on the day patrol and keeping the enemy unaware of the CAP position at night.

g. Maps and Compass Usage. Nearly an entire day is devoted to the various aspects of locating oneself or other points in reference to a map. Though this is obviously important, in the field, the only map available to most CAPs shows the entire TAOC as a four or five square inch area. Formal map reading is a complex subject which is incomprehensible to many when presented in one five-hour lump. It would be better covered in a series of lectures spread over several days which emphasized improving and updating the local map (which characteristically shows nonexistent hamlets and has inaccurate coordinates on the small scale needed by the CAPs). One of the functions of the RD Teams is to draw up a map of their areas--if these are in fact in existence (the authors never saw one) they could be of great value to the local CAP.

As pointed out in Appendix E, there are serious problems which arise from units being out of position. Though it is only one factor in this problem, the inadequacy of both available maps and map-reading skills is no doubt contributive.

h. Support. The CAP, as a small and extremely isolated unit, relies heavily on the ability to call for fire and medical support. Altogether twelve hours are devoted the radio and its application in requesting air strikes, artillery support, and MEDEVACs. The importance of these topics cannot be overemphasized, but once again the method of presentation could be improved. An entire day spent visiting an artillery installation is a questionable usage of valuable time, and the maintenance and operation of the radio itself is given in three straight hours with inadequate training aids.

i. Miscellaneous. Ancillary functions are covered in four hours which demonstrate the greatest imbalance in the current training system. Intelligence, considered by many to be the prime benefit of the CAPs, is covered in a mere 50 minutes, as are civic action and psyops, both supposedly part of the CAP mission. It is clear that such complicated and delicate topics cannot be explained in an hour to young recruits with no prior knowledge of them at all. If CAPs are

to stay in business as civic action and psyops initiators and implementers (which we do not recommend) they need far more training than this, and if they are to change their type of involvement in these fields to the more useful job of looking for opportunities along these lines on which "professional" civic action and psychological operations units could capitalize, then the content of instruction must be changed.

4. Overall Evaluation

In general, the CAP school provides a very necessary supplement to the Marine recruit's training which, though operating under very real constraints of time, equipment, and personnel, is well appreciated by the students. As a whole, however, it could be greatly improved by systematization and stronger emphasis on the realities of the CAP environment and mission. Such will be a part of the effort of Phase II of the present study.

5. CAP Leaders' Training

At present, the CAP leader receives no special training whatever. Squad leaders who arrive in country as such attend the ordinary CAP school (as they should), while those who are promoted in the field simply take command overnight. Considering the nearly unique level of responsibility placed upon these men and the criticality to the whole program of their excellence, this is felt to be a real shortcoming. As is well known in all fields, a man does not become a leader simply by being called one, and the shift, in a small unit like the CAPs, from being "just one of the boys" to being "the actual" requires a great deal of adjustment in attitude and viewpoint. The good CAP leader must be a superlative tactician (as he does most planning alone), a strict disciplinarian (over those with whom he must live in close daily contact), and sufficiently personable and "decent" to earn the respect both of his men and of the Vietnamese with whom he must (or should) interact constantly. It is clear to the writers that a week or two spent with fellow NCOs in intensive training for his role would make significant improvements in the capabilities of the CAP squad leader and, subsequently, in the effectiveness of the program as a whole.

APPENDIX E
DISCIPLINE

APPENDIX E

DISCIPLINE

1. General

Perhaps the most unique aspect of the Combined Action Platoon, from the purely military point of view, is its relative isolation from higher levels of the command structure. Though it is in constant radio contact with the CACO, and though every effort is made by commanding officers from both the CACO and CAG to visit each unit as frequently as possible, in general, the CAP sits alone in its village. The daily resupply vehicle drops by for fifteen minutes or so, and usually the CACO commander or his gunnery sergeant drop in for about the same amount of time each day, but to the Marine who lives in the village twenty-four hours a day for months on end, these sporadic events become but brief flickers in the long panorama of rural life. Women sweep and cook, children play, the farmers work the fields or sit and talk, the sun beats down, the bugs bite, the heat rash itches--such are the timeless and placid events of the day in Vietnam, war or peace, and the sudden appearance and disappearance of an outsider causes hardly a ripple in the steady flow of life. At night, the war begins again, and the isolation intensifies--hour follows countless hour as the men sit silent in the impenetrable and threatening darkness, and the mind, incapable of confronting what might come out of the night, busies itself with thoughts of "the world" or complaints against the insects, the heat, the rain, the cumbersome flack jacket. The occasional crackles and whispers of the radio are more reassuring reminders that others share the endless night than they are the authoritative voice of command. The radio voice is disembodied, a little unreal, and it is easy to answer it with a snappy "yessir" while grinning at one's comrades.

All of these aspects, including both the submergence in an environment conducive to an easy-going way of life and the gap in command and supervision at the lowest and most crucial level, are inherent and unavoidable facts of life in the Combined Action Program, and can no more be influenced than can be the temperature of Southeast Asia. To separate the Marines from village life would destroy

the most basic benefit of the CAP operation, and to significantly increase the presence of officers in the CAPs would destroy its feasibility. The other factor contributing to the problem is that many CAPs go for weeks or even months without any enemy contact--during this study, some 53 percent of the CAPs averaged no more than one contact per month. These are the independent variables; the factors within which the system must find its optimal operational balance.

Under such conditions, one would expect to find at least occasional examples of relaxed discipline, failure to follow proscribed regulations to the letter, and a general discrepancy between the viewpoints of the officers and men in the program, and the observations of the writers confirmed our predictions in this respect. Because of the relationship between discipline and survival, however, and because of the surprise evidenced by commanding officers at hearing of certain examples of reduced standards of discipline, it was decided to go into the matter in some depth, to find the extent and causes of the problem.

2. Examples

The most obvious and therefore the most commonly known examples of lowered standards of discipline are the failure to follow certain regulations which are traditional to the Marine Corps but which have no obvious relation to the effectiveness of a military unit, such as those regarding haircuts, altering of uniforms, wearing of unauthorized embellishments to the uniform, use of hand signs such as the presently common "V" or "raised fist" symbols, and so on. Such deviations from regulations are easily noticed and were observed to be a focus of interest of some commanding officers, who issued firm reprimands when they encountered them.

While these may seem minor problems, both to the men and the officers, it is well known that such minor breaches may indicate deeper and less obvious divergence between the supposed and the actual behavior of the troops. Our first indication of this came from noticing discrepancies between the content of certain reports submitted by the CAPs to higher levels and what was actually observable in the field, most notably in the areas of civic action and PF training. Officers

were also aware of this, and frequently warned us not to take the reports too literally. Since there is a general disgust throughout Vietnam over the amount and content of required reports (this is often referred to as "The Statistical War"), this was also not taken to be, in itself, a serious problem of the CAP program.

Where it does become relevant is where lack of discipline poses a threat to the performance of the mission or even to the survival of the CAP itself. And the most specific example of this was the frequency with which units were observed to be out of their reported position during their night activities. In no less than half of the CAPs visited, incidents of being out of position were observed or admitted; and in all of the CAPs at which the researchers spent the night, one or more CAP elements was out of position for one reason or another. There are several ways in which this happens. The first stems from faulty map reading, unfamiliarity with the terrain, or the difficulty of accurate movement in the darkness, and several examples of "getting lost" or of not knowing precisely where an ambush element was located were encountered. The second is the result of PF reluctance to go into certain areas and the frequency with which the PFs demand a change in the evening's plans for any of a number of reasons. Such last-minute changes in plans could of course be reported to the CACO, but the exigencies of time and the maintenance of "face" sometimes preclude this. The third, and perhaps the most serious, reason is simple boredom, which occasionally causes a CAP to bring its ambush elements into the CP early so the men can sleep "because Charlie never bothers us late at night." The falsity of such a reassuring statement is easily demonstrated by the records, and the seriousness of the problem is demonstrated by the fact that in both of the only two CAPs which were hit hard by enemy attacks while the HSR team was in country, and from which survivors were interviewed, the Marines admitted that they had had no ambushes out at the time of the attack, despite the fact that they had both reported having two ambushes out all night.

3. Reasons

As is well-known in such matters, problems of discipline and strict adherence to orders start small and grow big, and the experience of the Combined Action Program provides no exception to this rule. The underlying requisite for such

problems developing to a point where they endanger the life of the soldier--the complacency which stems from the attitude of invulnerability, superiority at arms, and reliance on one's fellows--is so basic to Marine training as to be unavoidable. Paradoxically, complacency also results preci from the successful accomplishment of the CAP mission--as security is effectively provided, contacts with the enemy become less and less frequent. It is of course unrealistic not to expect some relaxation among the troops as the threat appears to ease. But that complacency can kill is perhaps evidenced by the fact that, during the period studied, of the only eight CAPs having a kill ratio of less than 1:1, only one had made more than four contacts with the enemy in three months. This has been a problem in all wars and all armies, of course, and no amount of regulations or punishments has ever entirely eradicated it.

But the lack of respect for authority which leads to breaches of discipline, first in minor matters and subsequently in more important ones, though it may be endemic in contemporary American society, is exacerbated seriously by a number of policies which widen the gap between officers and men. Indeed, it is interesting that the problem in the military is not so different from that in the society as a whole, and that the existence of a "credibility gap" is a real and damaging factor which must be dealt with.

This "credibility gap" is evidenced on the one hand by a certain lack of understanding at the command level of the realities of the situation with the CAP and of the limitations inherent in CAP duty, and on the other hand by a lack of respect in the men for "the lifers," in whom they seem to see a certain phoniness and blindness to reality. While a certain amount of this obtains in any management structure, it can be aggravated to the point of serious dischord by the imposition of irrelevant or unenforceable rules or by less than honest assessment and reporting of the true situation. And both factors are evident in the CAPs, as they are in our nation as a whole.

Regulations that are regarded as irrelevant to a combat environment include those mentioned above--those regarding haircuts, handsigns, uniforms, and so on, as well as the petty enforcement of more important regulations. Being

severely reprimanded for having muddy shoes (during the monsoon) or dust on the outside of one's rifle (when the inside is spotless) does little to increase the trooper's regard for his officers. More aggravating are orders which reflect a lack of understanding of the CAP's situation--rules which will not be followed and cannot be enforced. Examples of this vary from orders to wear flack jackets all night (they are heavy, hot, uncomfortable, and make too much noise when walking down a bamboo-lined path) or that all personnel will remain alert all night (it is extremely difficult to sleep in the day with the heat, insects, and village noises--all units observed set watches, regardless of the order) to the more general requirement to hold classes for the PFs (who refuse to attend them). Such orders cannot be enforced by the officers, since the officers cannot be there to enforce them, so they are disobeyed, and the successful disobedience of such minor regulations awakens the men to an awareness that they can "get away with it." And this, of course, increases the possibility of their disregarding more important instructions.

The inherent dishonesty of the reporting and inspection system is the other major cause of dissatisfaction among the men. The Marine who has to fill out a report every week telling how many bars of soap he gave away (when he knows that it has no relation to the performance of his mission, but yet that somebody up the line believes it does and will reprimand him if he doesn't give away enough); the Marine who is issued fresh utilities and ordered to weed some farmer's field in order to "put on a show" for a visiting VIP; the Marine who reads a press account which patently lies about a battle he saw himself--this Marine is disgusted by such phoniness, and, if he is at all thoughtful, he is worried, justifiably, by the fear that the generals, the policymakers, and the people back home are getting a false picture of the war. And thus he knows that decisions important to him are being made on the basis of false data. No one other request made to the writers was more frequent or more poignant than that to "tell it like it is." It is just those Marines who are doing the best job who are most affected by these things; the Marine who is proud to have defended "his" village against terrorism does not want praise for the number of Bandaids distributed.

All of these factors widen the gap between the men and their commanders. If the men do not feel that their commanders understand or appreciate their efforts,

they are not likely to follow orders which cannot be enforced. The result is a slow eroding of discipline, and, as General Walt so aptly put it in an interview recently published in Life magazine, "When discipline goes, men die needlessly."

4. The Solution

There are several solutions to this problem. The most important is in regard to training, and has nowhere been better summed up than by Major H. A. Christy (see bibliography):

> - Complacency, with its resulting carelessness, is a major cause of casualties in the Viet-Nam war.
> - Young troops are overconfident to a fault; they must be carefully supervised until they become convinced that their lives are constantly imperiled.
> - The small unit leader (fire team, section, squad) is the key leadership factor in eliminating avoidable losses due to complacency.
> - There must be rigid indoctrination and training of every Marine, from his first day of basic training on, to instill the high degree of never flagging awareness and alertness required to stay alive in combat in Viet-Nam today.

The first means of implementing these concepts would be to point out repeatedly during the CAP training program how complacency and failure to follow the proscribed rules results almost invariably in loss of life. Many examples can be drawn from existing records--casualties from accidental discharges, clashes with other friendly units (from being out of position), CAPs that have been overrun because they had no activities out, incidents in which numerous casualties resulted from the detonation of one mine, and so on. The second is once again in emphasizing the selection and training of CAP Marine squad leaders. With the supervisory gap between CACO and CAP, full responsibility for maintaining the discipline of the CAP rests on this man's shoulders. As Christy states elsewhere in the same article, "Small unit leaders...must first understand, be convinced, and then, with aggressive zeal, forcibly require consistent application of battle (and casualty) tested rules of individual and unit movement and security....At no time in history has the need for strong small unit leadership been greater."

In addition, every effort must be made to clear the air of sources of aggravation. Regulations which are petty or unenforceable should be dropped--the directive by the Commandant (3 September 1969) allowing "Afro" haircuts and the use of hand signs showing unity is a step in this direction which should help somewhat. Also, the amount of "bull" that is published about the CAP Marine's role in the village should be minimized. If the CAPs are doing as good a job as this research indicates, they should be given credit for what they are doing rather than for what some ivory-tower theorist might imagine that they should be doing. It is neither "South Pacific" out there, nor a John Wayne movie, and it should not be presented as such.

5. Rejection of Misfits

While it is not directly related to the above, the problem of the Marine who because of his attitudes, habits, or personal behavior proves troublesome or counterproductive in a CAP is sufficiently common to warrant some discussion. No selection system is ever so accurate as to eliminate the occasional choice of a "bad apple," and the "one bad apple spoils the barrel" theory is so widely accepted in the program as to have become axiomatic. While the idea that the actions of one bad Marine can ordinarily destroy all the successes won by a CAP after months of hard labor may be something of an overstatement, it is true that the inclusion of a miscreant in a CAP can and often does seriously jeopardize the mission. The Marine who actually commits assault or some other court-martialable offense on the villagers is not so much of a problem--the Vietnamese recognize that there is a criminal element in any group, and such a man can be removed from the program quickly under existing regulations. The more serious problem is the CAP member who is consistently rude to the Vietnamese or who generally spreads negative feelings or encourages slackness. At present, there are no provisions for handling such a man, and the disorder he can spread can compromise the CAP effectiveness extensively. At present, the best that can be done is to shuffle such a man from CAP to CAP (and he is likely to be a disruptive factor wherever he goes), or to bring him back to the rear (where he can infect all who pass through with his negative attitudes). There should be a formal provision made for getting counterproductive

Marines out of a CAP immediately and out of the entire program as soon as possible. The excuse that "other units don't want our problems" is not adequate, since merely negative feelings are not such a problem in units without sustained contact with the Vietnamese people, and since a larger unit can more effectively handle a troublesome source.

Similar problems arise not infrequently with PFs, and there is no formal provision for getting rid of uncooperative PFs regardless of the extent of trouble that they cause. When the necessity for such action arises, complicated negotiations ranging from discussions and requests to ultimatums and threats at several levels of the Vietnamese hierarchy must be undertaken, and even then results are uncertain. This is a real problem nexus--a situation which if not handled with extreme delicacy may cause ill feelings and a subsequent lessening of accord and mutual respect. It is also, of course, quite time-consuming in an environment where more important matters are usually pressing. Provisions for rejecting troublesome personnel, whether Vietnamese or American, should be written into the basic CAP charter.

6. PF Discipline

Discipline of recalcitrant PFs is an almost daily problem, and one that is frequently left unresolved. Under the present arrangements, the USMC has no authority over the PF. On the Vietnamese side of the picture, the authority structure is nebulous and frequently ineffectual. Given a good PF leader (trung si) and a concerned and responsive District Chief to back him up, the problem is obviated, but such a situation is rare. Although rank is not nonexistent in the PF, it is only vaguely conceived, and what power the PF leader has is only that which he is capable, as an individual, of demanding from his troops. If they have sufficient personal respect for him to follow his command, all is well, but if they choose to ignore him, there is usually not a strong enough command and supervisory structure behind him to reenforce his authority. This structural weakness combined with the Vietnamese reluctance to make requests of superiors leaves trouble-making PFs considerable freedom of action. The usual sequence of events is that the situation goes unnoticed by the command structure until the Marine elements of the CAP are driven to

complain to their CACO commander. He then visits the PF leader to discuss the situation, but this usually has little effect, since the PF leader is already aware of the trouble and has talked about it with the CAP Marines, but he has not handled it. From there, the CACO commander must go to the District Chief or his staff, which has been oblivious to the problem. If the matter is not settled there, it must continue on up the chains of command, through the CAG to the Province staff. Not only is this a time-consuming and distasteful exercise,[1] exasperating tempers and causing a good deal of discouragement, but the final result is often no more than a visit to the PF by some Vietnamese official who gives him a good tongue-lashing, but who never returns to see whether his reprimand has had any effect. Some of the ad hoc solutions to this problem which have evolved in the field include authorizing the CACO commander to threaten to pull out his Marine contingent if he does not get cooperation, and, in at least one case, a CAP leader was given direct command over the PFs in his CAP (with the approval of the District Chief). Both solutions work, but both are against stated policy.

Another problem that is more common than is generally recognized at higher levels is the amount of VC/NVA infiltration into the PF ranks. This danger is common knowledge among Marines in the CAPs (in fact it may be over-emphasized at that level), but suspicions are only occasionally provable, and so only occasionally get reported. Incidents such as finding two CAP PF leaders in a tunnel plotting an attack on their own CAPs or discovering a PF counterpart among the enemy slain or observing a PF cut the wire on a compound to let the enemy in do occur. But far more frequent are such indefinite incidents as finding one's Claymore wires disconnected, one's radio frequencies changed, or seeing a PF fire into the air as soon as the enemy is spotted, thus giving them a chance to escape. At such a time (and all these incidents occurred during the course of our study), it is difficult to lay the blame directly or accurately, but of course it is also difficult to respect or trust one's counterparts afterwards. Marines should be warned beforehand of the possible existence of a fifth column (and also reminded that not all PFs are VC), and encouraged to maintain surveillance of their counterparts. Keeping a record of

[1]Such vignettes were observed on several occasions.

which PFs go on which patrols (and thereby noting which are consistently absent during contact) can be of great value in this respect.

An almost universal complaint which may, in some cases, be related to the above is that of PF thievery. Hardly a week goes by in any CAP without a Marine losing a watch, a radio, a camera, or something of value. Though the culprit is only rarely apprehended, the PF are usually blamed, and not without some justification. There is some evidence to support the theory that VC infiltrators are encouraged to steal from Marines, since it is such an effective way of sowing discord in the ranks (though quite obviously most such thefts are unrelated to political affiliation). Since this connection is a possibility, it might prove very effective to tell the PF that theft is a VC tactic and that thieves, when apprehended, will be treated as VC suspects. This is a serious and widespread problem, extremely damaging to morale and cooperative spirit, and needs to be dealt with directly and firmly. Telling the Marine that the poor PF can't afford a radio and thinks the Americans are all rich does little to salve his resentment at having three of them stolen in as many months.

APPENDIX F
TABLES OF DATA

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In this appendix are presented some of the more relevant tables of data collected in Vietnam during the field trip from May to August, 1969, and from which a number of the conclusions in this study are drawn. Though this is by no means the total focus or result of the investigation, these statistics are of general interest and are presented for the reader's benefit if he wishes to delve deeper into the facts and figures. In an operation such as that of the Combined Action Program, where the major objectives are in terms of human response, it is a real mistake to evaluate the impact of all efforts by the usual stochastic analyses that have become standard referents in the Vietnam war (such as enemy kills). However, certain otherwise invisible facets of the operation do come to light when the numbers are juggled, and it would be an equal mistake to ignore them altogether.

PERSONNEL--1 June 1969

OFFICES OF A C/S, CAPS

A C/S, CAPs--Col. Burroughs, R.
Deputy A C/S--LTC Whitesell, R.
S-1--CWO Faust, W.
S-3--Maj. Click, J.
Ass't S-3--Lt. Maloney, J.
S-4--Capt. Jarocz, M.
Training Officer--Lt. Bracken

FIRST CAG		CACO	CO
CO	LTC Henegan, J. E.	1-1	Capt. Ross, L. H.
XO	Maj. Lawson	1-2	Capt. Welport
S1	2nd Lt. Smith, B. W.	1-3	Capt. Mitchell, R. G.
S3	Maj. Endert	1-4	Capt. Sears, K. M.
S4	Capt. Garbowski		

SECOND CAG			
CO	LTC Lewis, E. L.	2-1	Capt. Seitz, J. E.
XO	Maj. Broad, R. O.	2-2	Capt. Borhman, J. W.
S1	1st Lt. Nagai, H.	2-3	Capt. Moore, A. H.
S3	Maj. Dube, M. J.	2-4	Capt. Vogelsang, D. A.
S4	Capt Burr, C. A.	2-5	Capt. Niotis, J.
		2-7	Capt. Brown, G. E.
		2-8	Capt. Tokarz, A. P.
		2-9	Capt. Dean, D. C.

THIRD CAG			
CO	LTC Andrews	3-1	Capt. Goedde, E. R.
XO	Maj. Christlieb	3-2	Capt. Kiesal, G. A.
S1	1st Lt. Switzer, W. E.	3-3	Capt. Ward, J. P.
S3	Maj. Sirotniak	3-4	Capt. Davis, J. F.
S4	Capt. Willingham, D.	3-5	1st Lt. Drake, F. L.

FOURTH CAG			
CO	LTC Ford, D. J.	4-1	Capt. Bradley, F.
XO	Maj. Cooper, R. M.	4-2	Capt. Hill, A. H.
S1	2nd Lt. Brooks, C. C.	4-3	Capt. Sommers, A. E.
S3	Maj. Wilson, J. E.		
S4	WO Greer, R. A.		

The writers wish to express their appreciation for the invaluable assistance rendered us by these men, who donated their time, efforts, and friendship to us without reservation.

CAP STATISTICS

	1966	1967	1968	Jan-Apr 30 1969	May-June 30 1969
Patrols	14,693	41,247	55,809	32,172	15,649
Ambushes	8,500	16,626	35,541	21,096	12,153
NVA VC KIA	154	451	2,376	937	368
POW	193	201	665	218	24
WPNs Captured	unk	282	734	376	160
# CAPs	57	79	103	111	111
# CACOs	6	14	19	20	20
# CAGs	0	3	4	4	4

CASUALTIES

1 Jan-30 Apr, 1969

	Enemy				USMC		USN		PF	
	KIA	POW	VCS	WPNS	KIA	WIA	KIA	WIA	KIA	WIA
1st CAG	523	115	256	138	18	110	-	7	32	110
2nd CAG	318	69	246	144	11	131	-	6	25	81
3rd CAG	55	17	143	64	3	40	-	3	7	19
4th CAG	41	17	71	30	10	23	1	1	15	33
Totals	937	218	716	376	42	304	1	17	29	243

FIRST CAG STATISTICS--30 Feb-30 May, 1969

UNIT	HES*	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
1-1											
1-1-1	D	4	6			2	1			1	inf
1-1-2	E	6	17		1		2		2		17.0
1-1-3	E	5	19		1		2				19.0
1-1-4	D	16	70		1	5	4				70.0
1-1-6	D	22	78		3	6	8	3		2	26.0
1-1-7	E	20	109		11	7	15	2	4	2	9.9
total		73	299		17	20	32	5	6	5	17.6
apc		12	50		3	3	5	1	1	1	
1-2											
1-2-1	C	3	2				3			1	inf
1-2-2	D	2									1.0
1-2-3	D										1.0
1-2-4	D	4	4			1				3	inf
1-2-5C	C	5	2								inf
1-2-7	D										1.0
total		14	8			1	3			4	inf
apc		2	1			0	1			1	
1-3											
1-3-1	C	6			1		4				1.0
1-3-2	D	7	5	1	1		3	1			2.5
1-3-3	C	14	3			1		2	1		inf
1-3-4	C	21	14		3	2	9		5	2	4.7
1-3-5C	X	8	11		1		3			1	11.0
1-3-6C	D	7									1.0
1-3-7	C	9	7	1		1	1				7.0
1-3-8	D	17	9	2	5	3	2				1.3
1-3-9	C	10	22		1	2	1	2		2	22.0
1-3-10	B	8	11			1	1		3		5.1
total		107	82	4	12	10	24	5	9	5	5.1
apc		11	8	0	1	1	2	1	1	1	
1-4											
1-4-1	D	10	17	3	1	2	1				4.3
1-4-2	X	9	20	2	3	14	4	8	2	4	4.0
1-4-3	D	10	14	1	1	8	2	5	1	3	7.0
1-4-4	X	4		1	1	1	1			1	0.0
total		33	51	7	6	25	8	13	3	8	3.9
apc		8	12	2	2	6	2	3	1	2	
MTT 1											
MTT 2		1				1					
Total		228	440	11	33	57	67	23	16	22	10.0
APC		9	17	0	1	2	3	1	1	1	

*See Glossary, p. F 11

SECOND CAG STATISTICS--30 Feb-30 May, 1969

UNIT	HES	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	RATIO
2-1											
2-1-1	C		1						1		inf
2-1-2	C	10	4	2	2	4	3		1		1.0
2-1-3	C	4	1		1						1.0
2-1-4	C	2									1.0
2-1-5	C	17	16			5	4		1	1	inf
2-1-6	C	1	1						1		inf
total		34	23	2	3	9	7		4	1	4.6
apc		6	4	0	1	2	1		1	0	
2-2						1					
2-2-1	D	3	1		1				1	3	1.0
2-2-2	C	6					2			1	1.0
2-2-3C	C							1			1.0
2-2-4	D	4			1		3	2			0.0
total		13	1		2	1	5	3	1	4	0.5
apc		3	0		1	0	1	1	0	1	
2-3						1					
2-3-1	C	5	1			2	3			2	inf
2-3-2	E	16	9			4	1		1	7	inf
2-3-3C	D	6	6				1	1		1	inf
2-3-4	D	4			1					1	0.0
2-3-5	D	8	3	2		4				1	1.5
2-3-6	D	10	3		1	3	3			1	3.0
total		49	22	2	2	14	8	1	1	13	5.5
apc		8	4	2	0	2	1			2	
2-4											
2-4-1	C	12	3	1		3	3			10	3.0
2-4-2	D	9	20	2		10	2	4		9	10.0
2-4-3	D	12	2	2	1	9	7			16	0.7
2-4-4	C	2				1					1.0
2-4-5	C	4			1	1	1			1	0.0
total		39	25	5	2	24	13	4		36	3.6
apc		8	5	1	0	5	3	1		7	
2-5											
2-5-1	C	1						1			1.0
2-5-2	D	1	2		2						1.0
total		2	2		2			1			1.0
apc		1	1		1			1			

Continued, next page

Second CAG Statistics (Continued)

UNIT	HES	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
2-7											
2-7-1	X	1	1								inf
2-7-2	C	4									1.0
2-7-3	D	5									1.0
2-7-4	X	1	1								inf.
2-7-5	X	4	3		4		7		1		0.8
2-7-6	E	3	4		1		4			5	4.0
total		18	9		5		11		1	5	1.8
apc		3	2		1		2		0	1	
2-8											
2-8-1	C	1	6	1							6.0
2-8-2C	D	2									1.0
2-8-3	D	6	25	1		2	4		1	1	25.0
2-8-4	C	1									1.0
2-8-5	C	3	1								inf
total		14	32	2		2	4		1	1	16.0
apc		3	6	0		0	1		0	0	
2-9											
2-9-1C	D	5	21			2	1		3		inf
2-9-2	B	6	7		2		1				3.5
total		11	28		2	2	2		3		14.0
apc		6	14		1	1	1		2		
MTT-2		2	2								
Total		182	144	11	18	55	50	9	11	70	4.6
APC		5	4	0	1	2	1	0	0	2	

THIRD CAG STATISTICS--30 Feb-30 May, 1969

UNIT	HES	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
3-1											
3-1-1	B										1.0
3-1-2	C	2								1	1.0
3-1-3	D	2	4						4		inf
3-1-4C	B	3	1				1				inf
3-1-5	C	4	1			2					inf
3-1-6	C	1									1.0
3-1-7	C	1									1.0
3-1-8	C	4			1	3					0.0
3-1-9	C	5	3			1	1				inf
total		22	9		1	6	2		4	1	9.0
apc		2	1		0	1	0		0	0	
3-2											
3-2-1	D	5	1								inf
3-2-2	D	5	3								inf
3-2-3	D	3	1								inf
3-2-4	C	1									1.0
3-2-5	D	5	3			1	2	1	1		inf
3-2-6	C	2				1					1.0
total		21	8			2	2	1	1		inf
apc		4	1			0	0	0	0		
3-3											
3-3-1	C	1									1.0
3-3-2	X	1									1.0
3-3-3	C	1									1.0
3-3-4	B	1									1.0
3-3-5	B	1									1.0
3-3-6	X	3									1.0
total		8									1.0
apc		1									
3-4											
3-4-1	B										1.0
3-4-2	C										1.0
3-4-3	C	3	3	1	2	5					1.0
3-4-4	B	1									1.0
3-4-5	X	2									1.0
total		6	3	1	2	5					1.0
apc		1	1	0	0	1					

Continued, next page

Third CAG Statistics (Continued)

UNIT	HES	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
3-5											
3-5-1	D	6									1.0
3-5-2	X	2	1			1			1	2	inf
3-5-3	D	2									1.0
3-5-4	D	2	2								inf
3-5-5C	D			1		4					0.0
total		12	3	1		5			1	2	3.0
apc		2	1	0		1			0	0	
MTT-3											
Total		29	23	2	3	18	4		6	3	4.6
APC		2	1	0	0	1	0		0	0	

FOURTH CAG STATISTICS--30 Feb-30 May, 1969

UNIT	HES	SAF	VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
4-1											
4-1-4	C	2		7	5	4	6				0.0
4-1-5	C	1	2		1	3	1				2.0
4-1-6	C										1.0
4-1-8	C										1.0
4-1-9	C	1					2				1.0
4-1-10	C	3	6	1		2	1				6.0
total		7	8	3	6	9	10				0.6
apc		1	1	1	1	2	2				
4-2											
4-2-1	C	5							1		1.0
4-2-6	C	1	2								inf
4-2-7	E										1.0
4-2-8	C										1.0
4-2-10	X	2	1	2		3			1		0.5
total		8	3	2		3			2		1.5
apc		2	1	0		1			0		
4-3											
4-3-2	B	3	2						1		inf
4-3-3	C	2	4				1		2		inf
4-3-4	D	1	1								inf
4-3-5	D	2									1.0
4-3-6	B										1.0
4-3-7	V	4	3	1		1	2				3.0
4-3-9	X					1				2	1.0
total		12	10	1		2	3		3	2	10.0
apc		2	1	0		0	0		0	0	
MTT-4		1									
Total		28	21	11	6	14	13		5	2	1.2
APC		2	1	1	0	1	1		0	0	
GRAND TOTAL		507	628	35	60	144	134	32	38	97	6.6
OVERALL AVERAGE PER CAP		5	6	0	1	1	1	0	0	1	

GLOSSARY

HES	Rating on Hamlet Evaluation System
SAF	Incidents involving small arms fire
VC KIA	Enemy killed in action (body count)
US KIA	US CAP personnel killed in action
PF KIA	Popular Force in CAP killed in action
US WIAE	Wounded seriously--evacuated
Hoi Chanh	Ralliers under Chieu Hoi program
Mine, BT	Mine or boobytrap incident
POW	Confirmed enemy prisoners taken
APC	Average per CAP
inf	Infinite
KILL RATIO	(VC KIA)/(US KIA + PF KIA)

"C" denotes a CAP which operates out of a fixed location, or compound

FIRST CAG SQUAD LEADERS' DATA

CAP	Rank	Mos. in Rank	Age	Mos. in Marines	Mos. in RVN	Mos. in CAG	Mos. as a CAP Ldr.	# OSEs*	GCT	MOS
1-1-1	E5	4	20	34	26	19	15	2	95	1371
1-1-2	E4	1	19	17	11	7	1	0	103	0311
1-1-3	E4	2	20	18	12	8	2	0	113	0311
1-1-4	E5	22	22	60	2	2	2	0	117	0311
1-1-6	E5	22	22	68	2	2	2	0	110	0311
1-1-7	E5	4	21	40	15	12	6	1	76	0341
1-2-1	E4	8	21	25	19	17	5	-	116	0311
1-2-2	E5	5	23	59	2	2	2	0	106	0311
1-2-3	E5	28	26	76	2	2	2	0	101	0311
1-2-4	E5	4	24	40	11	6	6	0	90	0311
1-2-5	E5	34	25	77	7	5	5	0	105	0351-8311
1-2-7	E4	6	21	22	7	6	5	0	115	0311
1-3-1	E4	8	20	22	16	12	4	1	99	0311
1-3-2	E4	24	22	36	11	10	2	0	103	0311-8511
1-3-3	E5	8	22	35	1	1	1	0	127	0341
1-3-4	E4	6	21	21	13	4	3	1	121	0311
1-3-5	E4	8	21	26	17	16	0	1	115	0311
1-3-6	E4	2	21	15	9	3	2	0	135	0311
1-3-7	E4	7	20	23	17	12	2	1	110	0311
1-3-8	E4	1	23	16	11	8	1	0	121	0311
1-3-9	E4	8	20	24	19	14	4	1	119	0311
1-3-10	E5	0	24	22	1	1	1	0	117	0311
1-4-1	E5	3	21	37	1	1	1	0	106	0331
1-4-2	E5	1	19	22	17	3	1	1	121	0331
1-4-3	E5	1	19	26	17	10	1	1	101	0331
1-4-4	E5	13	22	42	4	4	4	0	89	0311
MTT11	E5	15	23	45	11	7	7	0	95	0311
MTT12	E4	2	20	23	17	2	0	1	103	3051

*Overseas Extensions

SECOND CAG SQUAD LEADERS' DATA

CAP	Rank	Mos. in Rank	Age	Mos. in Marines	Mos. in RVN	Mos. in CAG	Mos. as a CAP Ldr.	# OSEs	GCT	MOS
2-1-1	4	7	20	28	19	14	2	1	100	0311
2-1-2	5	1	20	46	3	3	2	0	100	0311
2-1-3	5	1	26	35	17	6	2	2	118	3042
2-1-4	5	4	22	47	10	3	3	0	105	0311
2-1-5	3	8	18	18	11	7	3	0	88	0311
2-1-6	5	19	25	68	2	2	2	0	?	0331
2-2-1	5	4	21	40	11	3	3	0	111	0341
2-2-2	5	25	21	55	8	3	3	0	104	0311
2-2-3	5	5	23	72	17	7	6	1	100	0311
2-2-4	5	13	26	15	7	4	4	0	94	0351
2-3-1	5	1	21	36	12	7	6	0	118	0311
2-3-2	5	17	22	65	1	1	0	0	94	0311
2-3-3	5	22	22	48	3	2	2	0	113	0311
2-3-4	5	21	24	76	9	4	4	0	122	0311
2-3-5	5	4	21	52	8	4	4	0	123	0311
2-3-6	5	3	22	39	4	3	3	0	110	0331
2-4-1	5	13	23	44	6	3	3	0	113	0311
2-4-2	5	3	21	40	26	21	3	2	100	3041
2-4-3	5	9	21	?	4	3	3	0	94	0311
2-4-4	5	8	27	101	6	4	4	0	102	0331
2-4-5	5	13	21	47	7	4	4	0	94	0351
2-5-1	5	25	23	59	2	2	2	0	115	0311-8531
2-5-2	5	19	26	44	1	1	1	0	93	0331
2-7-1	4	2	20	23	17	10	0	1	127	0353
2-7-2	5	22	23	63	1	1	1	0	112	0311
2-7-3	5	1	22	37	26	21	6	2	105	3516
2-7-4	5	1	21	34	16	4	2	1	112	0341
2-7-5	5	3	22	39	17	3	3	1	86	0351
2-7-6	4	1	21	16	9	4	0	0	125	0351
2-8-1	4	10	20	26	19	13	1	1	114	0331
2-8-2	5	31	26	101	8	3	3	0	86	0331
2-8-3	4	9	19	30	21	18	6	1	83	0811
2-8-4	5	1	22	35	14	9	3	0	136	0311
2-8-5	5	12	22	50	19	6	6	1	120	0311-3531
2-9-1	5	21	24	68	1	1	1	0	90	0311
2-9-2	5	4	21	36	1	1	1	0	115	0331

THIRD CAG SQUAD LEADERS' DATA

CAP	Rank	Mos. in Rank	Age	Mos. in Marines	Mos. in RVN	Mos. in CAG	Mos. as a CAP Ldr.	# OSEs	GCT	MOS
3-1-1	5	43	30	149	7	3	1	0	87	0311
3-1-2	4	8	21	40	11	4	0	0	113	0311
3-1-3	5	19	25	92	23	17	0	2	84	0311-1391
3-1-4	4	9	24	26	20	18	2	1	86	0341
3-1-5	3	7	19	16	10	4	0	0	77	0311
3-1-6	5	9	22	42	34	8	1	2	?	0311
3-1-7	4	1	18	18	9	4	0	0	99	0311
3-1-8	5	28	23	75	2	2	1	0	86	0311
3-1-9	4	1	20	25	19	14	0	1	117	0341
3-2-1	4	2	21	26	19	14	0	1	91	0311
3-2-2	4	6	20	18	12	10	2	0	116	0311
3-2-3	5	3	23	55	19	11	0	1	106	0311
3-2-4	4	6	20	29	19	15	4	1	83	0311
3-2-5	5	31	27	64	10	8	6	0	93	0311
3-2-6	4	15	21	27	18	10	0	1	141	0311
3-3-1	5	28	27	121	1	1	0	0	104	0311
3-3-2	5	16	24	68	8	4	4	0	110	0311
3-3-3	5	31	24	-	15	4	4	1	?	0311-3531
3-3-4	5	17	26	114	7	3	3	0	?	0353-2143
3-3-5	5	15	24	48	4	4	4	0	138	1316-0311
3-3-6	4	6	21	12	4	4	3	0	94	0311
3-4-1	4	6	23	52	5	3	3	0	110	3516
3-4-2	5	4	22	61	9	8	6	0	?	0351
3-4-3	4	2	20	17	12	6	1	0	118	0311
3-4-4	5	31	24	85	18	7	5	1	119	0341
3-4-5	4	6	19	22	17	4	0	0	97	0311
3-5-1	5	4	22	34	17	3	3	0	121	0311-8651
3-5-2	4	2	21	22	12	7	2	0	126	0311
3-5-3	5	3	21	34	7	6	5	0	107	0311-8651
3-5-4	5	4	?	42	16	13	0	2	91	0311
3-5-5	4	7	20	26	19	8	6	1	106	0311-8662

FOURTH CAG SQUAD LEADERS' DATA

CAP	Rank	Mos. in Rank	Age	Mos. in Marines	Mos. RVN	Mos. in CAG	Mos. as a CAP Ldr.	# OSEs	GCT	MOS
4-1-4	5	4	21	36	7	6	4	0	114	0331
4-1-5	4	2	20	24	19	7	0	1	100	0311
4-1-6	5	4	21	38	25	20	?	2	113	2131
4-1-8	5	28	26	57	8	4	?	0	114	0353
4-1-9	4	3	18	20	11	6	?	1	108	0351
4-1-10	5	4	21	35	17	6	3	1	109	1371
4-2-1	5	22	23	64	6	1	1	0	134	2531
4-2-6	5	4	24	42	11	6	4	0	108	0311
4-2-7	4	1	20	28	18	7	1	1	117	0311
4-2-8	4	8	19	23	18	14	8	1	104	0311
4-2-10	4	6	20	27	19	6	2	1	123	0311
4-3-2	4	1	19	20	11	6	?	0	103	0311
4-3-3	4	?	?	?	?	?	?	2	?	0141
4-3-4	5	4	22	57	8	3	3	1	112	0331-8651
4-3-5	4	2	20	18	12	6	1	0	108	0311
4-3-6	4	1	20	24	19	12	?	1	110	0311
4-3-7	5	4	20	26	18	11	4	1	91	0311
4-3-9	4	2	20	19	12	6	?	0	72	0351
MTT41	6	64	36	198	12	6	1	0	90	0369
Averages		9.6	21.9	42.1	11.6	6.8	3.8	-	106.8	

NOTES:

68 Sergeants (61.3%)
41 Corporals
2 Lance Corporals

36 have one overseas extension.
9 have two overseas extensions.
40.5% have extended at least once.

92% have an 03 MOS
71 0311s
9 0331s
8 0341s

About 1/3 got their rank within a month of becoming CAP leaders.

For Corporals, average time in rank before leadership is less than four months.

53.2% are no more than 21 years old.

One-third have a GCT of 100 or less.

At least one-half of the CAP leaders were promoted to CAP leader from the ranks of the CAP.

One-quarter of the CAP Leaders have been in the Corps less than two years.

FREQUENCY OF CONTACT/RELATION TO KILL RATIO

Mar-May, 1969

Number of Contacts	Number of CAPs	Cumulative Percent
0	14	12.6
1	20	30.6
2	15	44.1
3	10	53.2
4	12	64.0
5	10	73.0
6	7	79.3
7	2	81.1
8	3	83.8
9	3	86.5
10	5	91.0
11	0	
12	2	92.8
13	0	
14	1	93.8
15	0	
16	2	95.5
17	2	97.3
18	0	
19	0	
20	1	98.2
21	1	99.1
22	1	100.0

Thus,

53.2% average one contact per month or less.

8.2% average four contacts per month or more.

CAPs with 3 or less contacts killed 51 VC and lost 25 CAP members: Kill Ratio 2.04

CAPs with 12 or more contacts killed 335 VC and lost 30 CAP members: Kill Ratio 11.17

FREQUENCY OF INCIDENTS INVOLVING
THE DETONATION OF ENEMY
MINES OR BOOBYTRAPS
March-May 1969

Number of Incidents	Number of CAPs	Cumulative Percent
1	13	44.8
2	7	69.0
3	3	79.3
4	1	82.8
5	1	86.2
6	0	
7	1	89.7
8	0	
9	1	93.1
10	1	96.0
16	1	100.0
	29	

82 CAPs had no such incidents (73.9%)

CAPs with no incidents killed 374 VC and lost 42: Kill Ratio: 8.9

CAPs with such incidents killed 230 VC and lost 51: Kill Ratio: (4.5)*

*It should be noted that a variable, but unknown, number of friendly casualties are from the incidents themselves, in which the enemy is not ordinarily sighted. However, there is some evidence that substantial attrition from such incidents lowers combat effectiveness in subsequent contacts.

ENEMY KILL DISTRIBUTION
March-May 1969

Enemy KIA	Number of CAPs	Cumulative Percent
0	48	43.2
1	15	56.8
2	8	64.0
3	10	73.0
4	5	77.5
5	1	78.4
6	4	82.0
7	2	83.8
8		
9	2	85.6
10		
11	2	87.4
12		
13		
14	2	89.2
15		
16	1	90.1
17	2	91.9
18		
19	1	92.8
20	2	94.6
21	1	95.5
22	1	96.4
25	1	97.3
70	1	98.2
78	1	99.1
109	1	100.0
	111	

STATISTICAL BREAKDOWN BY HES RATINGS
March-May 1969

HES Rating	No. of CAPs	SAF	Averages per CAP								
			VC KIA	US KIA	PF KIA	US WIAE	PF WIAE	HOI CHANH	POW	MINE BT	KILL RATIO
B	10	2.3	2.1	0.0	0.2	0.1	0.3	0.0	0.4	0.0	10.5
C	46	3.9	2.3	0.3	0.4	0.9	1.0	0.1	0.3	0.5	3.3
D	36	5.5	8.4	0.4	0.5	1.7	1.2	0.5	0.3	1.2	8.9
E/V	7	8.0	23.0	0.1	2.0	1.7	3.7	0.3	1.0	2.0	10.7

These figures tend to justify the HES ratings as a management tool--in other words, general trends and problem areas can be identified from HES ratings. However, experience has shown that it is not always valid to base decisions on any one rating for one particular hamlet--there are too many possible sources of error in the reporting system for individual inputs to have much validity.

The high kill ratio for "B" hamlets is not too significant--60% of such CAPs neither inflicted nor sustained any kills, and one killed 52.4% of the enemy with no losses.

WEAPONS ASSIGNED AT THIRD CAG--July 1969

(Numbers in Parentheses are PF Weapons)

UNIT	45	M-16	M-79	M-1 Carbine	BAR	M-60	Mortar	50 Cal.
3-1	3	8	1			1		
3-1-1	1	8(14)	1	(7)		1		
3-1-2	2(3)	11(27)	1			1		
3-1-3	2	11(30)	1			1		
3-1-4	1(1)	11(30)	1(1)	(7)	(2)	3		
3-1-5	2	10(23)	1(1)	(8)	(2)	1	1*	
3-1 6	2	10(9)	1(1)	(15)	(6)	1		
3-1-7	2(2)	11(29)	1(1)			1		
3-1-8		13	1	(45)	(4)	1		
3-1-9	2(3)	9	1		(6)		1	
3-2	2	7	1			1		
3-2-1	4(3)	10(20)	2			2		
3-2-2	3(2)	13(21)	1			1		
3-2-3	4	10(25)	2			2		
3-2-4	2	12(1)	1	(22)		1		
3-2-5	2	10(13)	1			2		
3-3	1	7	1			1		
3-3-1	2(2)	10(30)	1(1)			1		
3-3-2	2(1)	9(19)	1			1		
3-3-3	2(1)	10(3)	1(1)	(27)		1		
3-3-4	1(1)	8(22)	1	(12)		1		
3-3-5	2(1)	9(10)	1	(23)		1		
3-3-6	2(9)	9(19)	1	(1)		1		
3-4	2	6	2			2		
3-4-1	2(1)	7(16)	1	(12)	(3)	1		
3-4-2	1(1)	11(14)	1	(9)	(3)	1		
3-4-3	1(0)	9(33)	1	(5)	(1)	1		
3-4-4	1	8(26)	2			2		
3-4-5	1	7(35)	3			1		
3-5	3	4						
3-5-1	2(1)	9(23)	2	(1)		2		
3-5-2	5(1)	9(29)	2			2		
3-5-3	4(1)	9(29)	2			2		
3-5-4	4(1)	9(20)	2			2		
3-5-5	1	17(1)	2	(30)		3	1	1

*81 mm mortar; others are 60 mm.

PF TRAINING REPORTED AT 3rd CAG DURING ONE WEEK

CACO	Course	Hours	ATTENDANCE USMC	ATTENDANCE PF	ASSIGNED STRENGTH USMC	ASSIGNED STRENGTH PF
3-1	SH	.4	54	32	111	218
	IA	11	44	26		
	Arty	9	44	26		
	WS	6	32	25		
	CW	5	27	18		
	P/A	6	6	12		
3-2	SH	9	24	48	86	141
	Arty	6	24	45		
	WS	6	24	55		
3-3	SH	2	20	31	73	180
	IA	1	26	49		
	Arty	1	21	32		
	WS	1	30	44		
	CW	1	10	25		
3-4	SH	10	38	47	69	144
	Arty	5	37	57		
	WS	5	29	33		
	IA	10	31	26		
	CW	5	36	39		
	Ambush	2	3	7		
	Demolition	3	9	7		
	Map/Compass	1	6	7		
3-5	SH	10	20	50	73	134
	IA	10	26	43		
	Arty	3	16	60		
	WS	5	18	45		
	CW	5	20	37		

GLOSSARY:
SH - Sanitation and Hygiene
IA - Instant Action Drills
WS - Weapons Safety
CW - Chemical Warfare
P/A - Patrol/Ambush Techniques
Arty - Procedure for calling in Artillery

NOTE: Visits to three of the above companies produced no evidence that any of the above courses had actually been taught--see pp. 33 ff in the body of this report for explanation of this.

ANALYSIS OF CAP TRAINING PROGRAM--July 14-26, 1969

Subjects	Total	Minutes per day											
		14	15	16	17	18	19	21	22	23	24	25	26
1. Eating	1680	150	150	150	150	120	120	150	150	150	150	150	90
2. Time between classes	500	60	40	60	60	10	20	60	50	40	60	30	10
3. Orientation, welcome, graduation, etc.	510	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	220	140
4. Administrative time	180	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	30	-	-	30
5. Road Travel	210	-	-	-	-	120	90	-	-	-	-	-	-
6. Vietnamese language	770	60	80	50	50	-	60	50	80	80	60	200	-
7. Personal Response	310	50	50	60	50	-	-	-	50	-	50	-	-
8. Viet Cong Infrastructure	150	50	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	50	-	-
9. Viet background, history, politics	150	50	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	50	-	-	-
10. RD Teams/RD Culture Drama teams	140	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	140	-	-	-	-
11. "Working with Vietnamese"	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	-
12. Viet Cong Weapons	90	-	-	-	-	-	-	90	-	-	-	-	-
13. Viet Cong mines, boobytraps	80	-	80	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
14. Demolitions	60	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
15. M-16 training, zeroing, practice	310	-	-	-	-		310	-		-	-	-	-
16. Weapons Safety	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-	-	-
17. Claymore mines	50	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
18. M-79, M-72 (LAAW)	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-	-
19. Mortar, BAR, M-60, etc.	100	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	100	-	-
20. Maps, compass usage, overlays, thrust	310	-	-	310	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
21. Patrol preparation, orders, execution	160	-	-	-	-	-	-	160	-	-	-	-	-
22. Ambush types, prep, execution, debrief	280	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	280	-	-	-
23. Radio maint., procedure, security	150	-	-	-	150	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
24. Elements of Air req. and Cap	50	-	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
25. Artillery procedure, applications	410	-	-	-	-	410	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
26. Medical advice and procedures	160	-	-	-	60	-	-	-	50	-	50	-	-
27. Helo support. Medevac	120	-	120	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
28. Intelligence: DIOCC	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-	-	-
29. Civic Action	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	60	-	-
30. Psyops	50	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	50	-	-
31. Drugs	30	30	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
32. Reports	60	-	-	-	60	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Total minutes per day	7380	720	630	630	630	660	600	660	630	630	630	690	270

CAP SCHOOL ANALYSIS
July 1969

Activity	Number of Hours	Percent Total Hours	Training Hours	Percent Training Hours
Administration/Formalities. (eating, class intervals, travel, orientation, graduation, administration)	51.5	42%	-	-
Vietnam backgrounds. language, personal response, history, politics, RD, "Working with Vietnamese"	26.5	23	26.5	38%
Enemy weapons/ordnance. Mines, boobytraps, demolition	4	3	4	6
U. S. weapons/ordnance. M-16, M-79, M-72, M-60, BAR, Claymore, mortar, safety, etc.	9.5	7	9.6	13
Tactical operations/procedures. Maps, compass, patrols, ambush, radio, air, artillery support	22.5	18	22.5	32
Medical. Medical aid and procedures, Medevac	4.5	4	4.5	6
Miscellaneous.	4	3	4	6
- Intelligence	(.8)	(.6)	(.8)	(1.2)
- Civic Action	(1.0)	(.8)	(1.0)	(1.4)
- Psyops	(.8)	(.6)	(.8)	(1.2)
- Drugs	(.4)	(.3)	(.4)	(0.7)
- Reports	(1.0)	(.7)	(1.0)	(1.4)
Totals	122.5	100%	71	100%

RESULTS OF ANONYMOUS CRITIQUES

BY CAP SCHOOL GRADUATES

June 1969

(Questionnaire constructed by CAP Directorate)

1. Which classes did you find most beneficial? Why?

75 - Personal Response, culture
37 - Language
8 - Infrastructure
5 - Psywar
4 - Mines, boobytraps
3 - Artillery, fire missions
3 - Map reading, compass
3 - Radio procedure

2. What classes should be added to the syllabus or lengthened? Why?

28 - Personal Response, culture
30 - Language
5 - Infrastructure
5 - Map, compass reading
3 - Weapons (including enemy weapons)

3. What classes should be dropped from the syllabus? Why?

19 - Instant Action Drills
13 - First Aid (dull instructor)
5 - Patrol orders
5 - Rifle inspections
4 - Weapons
4 - Radio procedure
1 - Language

4. Comments? Recommendations.

22 - Too much petty bullshit--bad sergeants, haircuts, rifle inspections, etc.
17 - Dr. Humphrey is a good teacher (a guest lecturer, unfortunately)
10 - Need more charts (especially in radio class)
9 - Bad instructors
9 - Classes too long
9 - Classes too hot
9 - We need more schooling like this
7 - Poor selection of Marines for CAP program
4 - Too many haircuts
4 - Boring
4 - Classes too big (130 students in some)
3 - Should visit a CAP before starting school
2 - Keep the gooks off the beach--they make us nervous
1 - Give CAPs to the Army and give Vietnam to the VC

Responses to CAP Overall Critique

Submitted by Terminating CAP Personnel

(Questionnaire constructed by CAP Directorate)

1. In my opinion, the CAP effort in RVN is:

37* - 59**	Excellent, should be expanded.
15 - 29	Good, should be continued as is.
4 - 10	Fair, should be cut down.
2 - 2	Worthless, should be dropped.

2. As far as I am concerned, the people of my hamlet/village were:

18-31	Very anxious to have the CAP there.
29-52	Pleased to have the CAP there
11-16	Didn't care if the CAP stayed or not.
0-3	Unhappy that the CAP was there and wanted it out

3. My opinion of the VN people is that I think they are

7-10	Wonderful people
9-32	Very good
32-48	Pretty good
10-11	Not the kind of people I like

4. I think that the VN civilian population is

10-26	Doing as much as he can in this war
30-42	Doing only as much as they have to
15-28	Doing very little, getting out of it all they can
3-4	Doing nothing worthwhile

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*Jan.-Mar. 1969, n = 58

**Apr-May, 1969, n = 102

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5. I think that the VN military forces are

21-29	Doing all they can to end the war
26-45	Doing only as much as they have to
10-23	Doing very little, getting out of it all they can
1-5	Doing nothing worthwhile

6. I believe that PFs and Marines in the CAP

14-24	Get along very well
30-52	Get along o. k.
13-23	Just tolerate each other
1-1	Don't get along al all

7. My feeling toward the PF as a person is:

20-24	I respect him highly
21-58	I think he is o. k.
16-15	I don't think too much of him
1-4	I don't care for him at all

8. I would classify the military capability of the PF as

5-14	Excellent-good
34-54	Good-fair
15-30	Fair-poor
4-4	Poor-worthless

9. I feel the PF understands the mission of the CAP

7-17	Completely
22-49	Very well
28-29	Not too well
1-5	Not at all

10. In my opinion, the PF leader

6-11	Has too much authority in the CAP
36-72	Has enough authority to do the job
15-16	Has too little authority
1-1	Has no authority at all

11. I think that PFs in general

13-34	Like the Marines in the CAP a great deal
29-43	Think that the Marines are o. k.
14-20	Tolerate them
2-4	Don't like Marines at all

12. I feel that duty in the CAP is

5-6	More difficult than a Marine should be required to perform
40-74	Tough, but acceptable
7-11	About the same as in an Infantry unit
6-12	Easier than in an infantry unit

13. I think that the Marine in the CAP is

15-35	Excellently trained for all tasks
25-42	Sufficiently trained for most tasks
6-13	Trained just well enough to get by
12-13	Not as well trained as he should be

14. I think that morale of Marines in the CAP is

15-24	Very high--far above that found in other Marine units
27-45	High--better than that found in other Marine units
7-26	Average--about the same as that found in other Marine units
9-8	Poor--below that found in other Marine units

15. What I liked most about my tour in the CAP was

2-12	The pay
41-58	The duty
4-5	The R & R
11-20	The people

16. What I disliked most about the CAP was

16-31	The way I had to live
12-16	The VN people
20-28	The continuous threat against my life
10-15	Military ops

17. Attending CAP school was of

20-42	Great help in preparing me for CAP duty
13-30	Helped me as much as I expected
21-19	Helped me very little
4-6	Didn't help me at all

18. I think that the weapons that the CAP is provided with are

21-33	More than adequate to perform the mission required
28-51	Sufficiently adequate to perform the mission required
8-14	Less than adequate to perform the mission required
1-1	Unacceptable to perform the mission required

19. I think that a CAP should be commanded by

3-9	A Lt.
10-16	A Staff NCO
40-57	A Sgt.
5-17	A Cpl.

20. In my opinion, CAP activities--patrols and ambushes--were

23-42	Very well carried out
27-42	Well carried out
8-8	Poorly carried out
0-5	Very poorly carried out

21. The number of CAP activities--patrols and ambushes--were

15-26	Scheduled too frequently and should be cut down
38-57	Scheduled properly and contributed to the mission
5-15	Not scheduled often enough, should be increased
0-0	Of little contribution to the program; should be dropped

22. From the point of view of accomplishing the mission, I think that the Mobile CP concept is

38-63	Much better than working out of a fixed compound
6-17	About the same as working from a fixed compound
13-13	Not as effective as working out of a fixed compound
1-5	(Have not had enough experience to make a comparison)

23. As far as I know, the most intelligence my CAP received came from

23-33	Other U. S. units (Marine and Army)
5-10	GVN Military Units (not to include PFs in your CAP)
10-19	The PFs in your CAP
20-36	The people in your hamlet/village

24. As far as I know, CAPs receive

7-21	All intelligence available from the people in the hamlet/village
30-46	Quite a bit of intelligence from the people
20-29	Very little intelligence from the people
1-5	No intelligence at all from the people

25. In making use of intelligence received, the CAP used this intelligence

33-52	To a maximum, to support its activities
23-37	Adequately, to support some activities
2-11	Very poorly, lost many opportunities for better activities
0-1	Didn't use intelligence at all in its operations

26. I think that the ability of the Marine in the CAP to speak VN

30-50	Is essential--all men should learn
26-33	Is pretty important--most men should learn a little
2-18	Is nice to know--helps a little
0-0	Is unimportant and should not be bothered with

27. The attention which my CAP received from CACO HQS was

25-50	Excellent
20-33	Good
13-17	Fair
0-2	Poor

28. In my opinion, supply support to the CAP was

15-37	Excellent. Everything needed provided instantly
25-37	Good. Gear needed to carry out the missions was provided
15-23	Fair. Took too long, but finally we got what was needed
3-4	Poor. Very seldom got all we needed, when we needed it

29. I think that my medical needs were looked after

45-63	Very well, better than in a normal unit
8-28	Pretty well
5-8	Fairly well
0-2	Poorly

30. While in the CAP, I feel that the chow was

18-25 Very good. Better than expected

32-54 Good. Just about what I expected

6-15 Not very good. Less than what I expected

2-3 Unacceptably poor

31. I think that my mail was handled

28-53 Very well. Got to me quickly

22-31 Pretty well. Got to me fairly regularly

5-10 Not as well as I expected

3-4 Very poorly

32. I found that religious services were provided

12-27 More often than I could get to

20-35 About as often as I could get to them

15-25 Not as often as I feel they should have been

11-11 Not provided at all

33. The greatest problems that Marines in the CAP have are with

15-23 Women

15-20 Whiskey

6-15 Pot

22-33 Each other

34. The greatest personal hardship to me, was

14-19 Getting along with the VN people

27-40 Getting along with the PFs

1-11 Going on patrols and ambushes

16-25 Doing without the normal comforts I was used to

35. If I had it to do all over again

35-54	I would apply for the CAP with enthusiasm
15-33	I would accept it over duty with an infantry battalion
3-6	I would accept it only if I had to
5-6	I would not want any part of CAP

NOTE: 1st Figure is responses from Jan-Mar 69: n = 58

2nd Figure is responses from Apr-May 69: n = 102

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APPENDIX G

THE VIETNAMESE VIEW OF THE COMBINED ACTION PROGRAM

APPENDIX G

THE VIETNAMESE VIEW OF THE COMBINED ACTION PROGRAM

The Combined Action Program symbolizes American Support to the Popular Force troops and villagers in areas where CAP teams are assigned. It is the consensus of opinion of all Vietnamese officials interviewed that the psychological impact of American troops working side by side at the village level with the local Popular Force platoon is the greatest asset of the program, and that because of this the program is making a unique and invaluable contribution to the pacification effort in I Corps.

A few quotes from these Vietnamese officials state the case quite clearly. Major Day, Sector RF/PF officer in Quang Tri Province opened an interview on CAPs by saying:

"I would emphasize that in thinking about CAP teams, we must view them from both a military and political point of view. The important thing politically is that the CAP team symbolizes the American presence in Vietnam. By their behavior, the CAP's refute VC propaganda. They show the people that the U. S. presence is different than that of the French."

Col. Ngvyen Am, the province chief of Quang Tri province, summed up his elings in much the same way:

"The introduction of CAP teams produces a rise in PF morale. Seeing strong friends at their side increases the confidence of both the PF and the villagers. This is the main contribution of CAPs."

Col. Thien, the province chief of Quang Ngai province, when pressed to suggest a way in which CAPs could be made more effective, also singled out this area as a crucial one.

"The image of the CAP team is important. People get to know them and like them. There may be things that could be done to increase this, such as giving CAP team leaders Vietnamese names, so the villagers could identify with them as individuals more easily."

Col. Vinh, who is in charge of all Popular Force troops in I Corps, reiterated the above feelings, and made them even more explicit:

"CAPs demonstrate to lower echelon people, both military and civilian, the close support of our Allies. The PF are very proud. Working with Allies makes them feel important. The spirit of the people in the village, and especially of the PF platoon, becomes very strong. They don't feel alone as they did before. The symbolism of a CAP team means something to the people. The Marines in a CAP unit feel they represent their country, and they are forced to behave better.

"What can one company of regular troops do, operating in an area? Compare this with ten CAPs--going on patrols, setting ambushes, doing some civic action--they're really having an impact on 30,000 people. I'd pick one CACO over a battalion of infantry, if I had the choice. We need some big units, yes, but in general this is a war for the people.

"There should be a two or three hour briefing to explain to all NCOs and young officers what the CAP program is and why it is so important. All military men should have this input into their thinking.

"Now you take a good squad of ARVN. We could certainly select soldiers from ARVN units and get some excellent rifle squads. But this would not be the same thing as CAPs, and could not have the same impact as CAPs, no matter how good the men were, because they would not symbolize the presence and support of our Allies.

"The Revolutionary Development Cadre are selected more carefully and receive more training than our PF do. Yet, one CAP platoon is better than two platoons of RD. Because to those PF in a CAP platoon the honor of their country is involved. And they feel they have support, not just air and artillery support, but moral support."

At district and village levels, the comments were less analytical, but completely supported the perceptions of the higher-ranking Vietnamese officials. CAP teams are valued highly because security obviously increases in areas

where CAP teams operate. An official at Binh Son District in Quang Ngai province stated the case most strongly:

"With some more CAP teams, I know we could pacify this district. Without CAPs, I don't know whether we can or not, no matter how many battalions of infantry operate here."

Without exception, Vietnamese district officials welcomed the presence of CAP teams in their district, and considered them to be an invaluable aid to pacification. At the village level, too, the response to CAPs was uniformly favorable, but the view of their role narrowed considerably. Physical security was what village officials wanted, and felt they received, from CAPs. Typical comments were:

"Yes, this team is great. Last week they killed two VC over by that line of bamboo to your right."

"I'm so glad the CAP team is here. The performance of the PF is much better than it was before the Marines came."

Security, in a military sense, was all that was expected, and sometimes all that was wanted from the CAP team. One village chief (Ky Nghia Village, CAP 1 - 1 - 4), more outspoken than most, made this explicit:

"They [CAP Marines] are soldiers, and their job is to help the PF defend this village. They do that job extremely well, and I am delighted. But their contribution is only military, as it should be. Other matters are my responsibility, along with provincial officials and advisors. The PF and the Marines provide security so we have a chance to improve in other areas."

"Can't you think of any other ways the CAP Marines and PF assist you now, or things they might be able to do to help you in other areas?"

"No, only good military operations to provide security. That's a big job, and that's all they should do."

The Hamlet chiefs who were interviewed could talk of nothing but how glad they were the CAP Marines were in their hamlet, because security was so

much better, and how bad things would be if the CAP team were to be moved from their hamlet. One hamlet chief (CAP 4 - 3 - 2), upset by rumors that the CAP team was being transferred, pleaded with the researchers to stress to the Americans and Vietnamese in the provincial capital how desperately the CAP team was needed where it was. He told of how hard the people were working to reclaim the land to which they had just been able to return after an absence of several years. "It is only because of the CAP team that the people dare stake everything on planting their crops on this land. If the CAP team leaves, it will probably all be in vain, and maybe the people will leave, too. If the CAP team isn't here, we are too weak, and there is nothing I can do."

With few exceptions, the relationship between CAP team members and villagers was excellent. In addition to the stock responses that they thought the CAP teams were "good" when asked, inobtrusive "eavesdropping" in several villages showed that CAP team members were spoken of with affection and respect.

The greatest amount of friction in the program is between the Marines and individual PF in the village platoons. Some PF, highly sensitive to the possibility of a "racist" or "colonial" attitude by Americans, felt that some Marines "looked down on them" or "did not trust them." No PF indicated that he wished the Marines would leave, but several indicated a desire for more "understanding."

We should not, of course, find it surprising that the Popular Force soldiers appear to feel and express more resentment and hostility than any other group. The PF are dependent upon the Marines in many basic ways, and this dependency is manifest throughout the daily interaction of the two groups. Both sides are extremely aware of it. This may account in large part for the improved performance of the PF (We'll show them!), for the alleged increased tendency of the PF to theft from Marines (They're so rich they'll never miss it!; why should they always have these things?), for the Marines over-reaction to suspected petty theft (After all we've done for them!) and other minor grievances.

Efforts to sensitize Marines in the CAP program to this aspect of their relationship with PF should be increased, but it seems likely that in spite of redoubled efforts, this will remain a problem area. In any case, the basic sense of resentment arising from the dependency relationship has both positive and negative aspects, and it may not be possible to have one without the other.