for indoctrination improvement given by a Provincial Propaganda officer who spent twenty years in the Front.
C. Summary

These hoi chanh, the sensitive ones who had seen both sides of the war, were essentially asking for the kind of motivational training and education from the Government they found in the Front. There was a sense of nostalgia here, a sentimental yearning for the emotional ignition so many of them experienced at the hands of the Front's agitation cadres.

The Government could learn a great deal from the Communists if it was willing to listen. The respect shown for the enemy by General Thang's Ministry of Revolutionary Development has yet to be emulated throughout other GVN structures that deal directly with the Viet Cong. Possibly one of the most perceptive comments ever made about the war was by an ARVN General who felt Saigon could never win until it has assumed the war was lost. Then, like a caged animal, the GVN would take on the Viet Cong on their terms in the villages and hamlets in a total human resources contest. It was this willingness to gamble everything, because they have nothing to lose, that gave the Viet Cong such momentum. Until that spirit and desire pervades the Chieu Hoi Centers, until
an equal enthusiasm boils down to the field officials
manning and directing the camps, there will undoubtedly
be only a token response to "Open Arms."

The Viet Cong's psychological advantage witnessed
here was not new to Communist recruitment offensives.
Combining a shrewd mixture of psychology and politics,
Viet Cong recruitment, agit-prop and information
officers had probably never been equalled for pure
ability to seduce and motivate an aggrieved farm class.
What has been observed was a time-tested technique
matured through twenty years of unhurried, uninterrupted
refinement, in both the north and south of Viet Nam.
It was based on a Maoist model perfected internally by
an organizational genius—Ho Chi Minh. The Nationalists,
while at times, participants with the Communists in
mobilization efforts in Viet Nam, never had the
ground level desire or overall ability to successfully
motivate their citizens. Such a decision is long
overdue.
CHAPTER III - REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT
III. REHABILITATION AND RESETTLEMENT

The final crucial aspects of the Chieu Hoi Program concern the rehabilitation for and reabsorption of hoi chanh into national life. The analogy with convicts and trustees, broken of their abnormal activities and slowly reintroduced into productive, civilian occupations, pertains to some degree. Yet convicts traditionally spend years being rehabilitated in confinement. Hoi chanh usually spend less than two months in GVN custody. The renunciation of the Front and its beliefs had begun long before they entered the camps to which they come voluntarily. The decision to break with the old life and seek political amnesty was often a deep emotional experience for them, especially the dedicated cadres. Their re-entry into national society could be equally upsetting. This was directly a product of two factors: (1) their previous emotional and political attachment to the Front, and (2) the difficulty they met obtaining work and respect compatible to their skills and talents after release from the camps. The following account of the problems they encountered both
in the camps and on the outside will illuminate those qualities of Vietnamese society that had made it so vulnerable to conquest, occupation and fracture; suspicion and mistrust. It was precisely these ingredients of national character, while so often useful in the past for the clandestine protection of Vietnamese nationalism through the secret organization, that now inhibit the Southern Republics' growth as a unified nation. The machinations of mistrust pervaded the country from the ruling apparatus on down. Cleavages ran through the entire social fabric of the land; north-south, peasant-urban, Catholic-Buddhist, intellectual-bureaucrat, army-civilian. Scramblings and realignments within the juntas (as a sibling rival to power with the Buddhists, intellectuals and bureaucrats) reflected a fluidity, indeed a transparency, towards commitment and adjustment that by western standards seemed shockingly ephemeral—even immoral. The hoi chanh, as the most identifiable dissident resident in the national life, entered this societal cauldron less than advantageously and with little optimism.
A. Vocational Training

Vocational training in the Chieu Hoi Program was a major component of the schedule of some of the camps and nonexistent in others. This option depended upon the utility of such training to nearby employment possibilities and the desire and ability of the local chief to provide such a training capacity. The usual vocational skills taught at the camps were carpentry and woodworking, sewing (many Vietnamese men are tailors), mechanical repair, masonry and blacksmithing. Where Chieu Hoi villages were associated with the camp, farming, fishing and cooperative marketing oftentimes sprang forth. These capitalistic incentives were valuable because they gave an uprooted and confused peasant a stake in something productive and profitable. There was a danger of a great deal of boredom in these camps unless otherwise compensated for. In the poorest camps time dragged on. Men counted the days until their release to the villages and their families. It became crucial that the vacuum be filled. (This author considers job training more important than political indoctrination if a choice had to be made. The stake in the game must have some
productive end.) Three weeks of boring lectures have little value compared to an active work program, especially one with remunerative results. Seldom did Chieu Hoi Centers combine both quality indoctrination and active work programs. This was not necessarily the chief's fault. Facilities, budget considerations and lack of manpower skills often precluded the initiation of vocational training where it might otherwise have been highly beneficial. The happiest camps appeared to be those in which major construction or building projects took place, such as Tuy Hoa, Muc Hoa, Binh Dinh and Da Nang city. The activity did not have to be construction work to produce an optimistic outlook. Where the Armed Propaganda Teams were intensely mobile, such as at Go Cong or Binh Duong, the spirit would pervade a camp and influence its entire outlook.

The contract money earning schemes, such as making uniforms for the army, as in Muc Hoa, or in major road and construction projects added a real value to a camp's programs. The hoi chánh at Qui Nhon were doing a brisk cabinet and table-making business
for the headquarters of an ARVN division nearby. At Tuy Hoa the ralliers were expanding their own camp's facilities very quickly. New office and dormitory buildings were being completed in two to three weeks in late 1966. At Tan An city in Long An Province, the hoï chanh were making bricks for both their own camp sites and adjoining structures. They also had a Government-stocked fish pond as did the ralliers at Rach Gia. In Binh Long Province, the Chieu Hoi camp had an active garden and crop industry. In that area, where the soil was so rich that sugar cane grew ten feet in a few months, the defectors, many of them of Montagnard strains, were involved in the small marketing of home-grown vegetables, crops and livestock. One of the best known camps in Viet Nam, the Chieu Hoi village at Phu Bai near Da Nang, had organized itself into the cooperative farming and marketing of vegetables. They had access to large fields behind the camp and made a thriving concern of the opportunity. These projects gave the ralliers a financial incentive to produce, and many of these men were destitute after long periods in the jungle and had families existing in a state of poverty.
Sometimes, however, training was pursued for form's sake and ludicrous problems cropped up. Often one walked into a camp where sewing was being taught, but there was no demand for tailors in the adjoining town. Or a lad from Chau Doc was trained in automotive mechanics in Saigon at extra cost when the job and training availability was already in Chau Doc with the marine engine market.

Sometimes the Program promised training or employment that, in reality, could not be offered. Such was the experience of this infiltrated NVA officer in the Pleiku camp:

"There seems to be an enormous delay in vocational training and we have to stay in the Center for months waiting. Most of us are used to delays, but any kind of explanation would make it easier. But the Government doesn't even seem to try explaining. I would say that most of us in the Chieu Hoi Center are extremely confused about our situation."

Another major concern with the kind of training provided was whether the competition with other civilians or refugees was already too great. There

\[1\text{C.H. 48, p 13}\]
was enough animosity and jealousy between refugees and hoi chanh over welfare measures without the natural friction of economic competition. Often the ralliers earned money by expanding their own center and allowing the refugees to handle the home industry manufacturing in the towns nearby.

This nation-wide jealousy was a product of a number of factors. One clear cleavage was over money. Hoi chanh were paid twenty-four piasters a day (soon to be thirty), while refugees received seven to ten piasters per day. (Currently 118 piasters equals one dollar U.S.) The hoi chanh lived in decent looking camps. Refugee camps were most often ragged, open-air affairs. There are approximately four thousand hoi chanh in the camps as contrasted to over one million refugees stacked up on the coast. VIS was constantly devoting major portions of its broadcasts to wavering Viet Cong and much less attention goes to the refugees. There was jealousy over medical attention, over food, clothing and sanitation.

The task rehabilitating hoi chanh for active, productive lives once they are released met dilemmas even in the camp's leeway to train and provide for them.
B. Employment and Resettlement in South Viet Nam

South Viet Nam has had a severe unemployment problem. Many rural young men were without work because crops are a seasonal occupation. Jobs could not be found in the cities because medium skilled personnel were very scarce. The quickest legitimate way for a bright person to make a decent income in Viet Nam was to complete an English course in Saigon and procure work in the burgeoning American Government or construction complexes as an interpreter or clerk. The American overlay had caused a major crisis in the domestic economy. The need for more bilingual Vietnamese accelerated rapidly, and the semiprofessional types were flocking to the AID, JUSPAO and MACV offices. The Vietnamese civil service and development programs found it very difficult to keep local people. RMK, the largest American construction outfit in Viet Nam, was offering salaries as high as $400 per month for a bilingual, experienced Vietnamese clerk. This was almost seven times the amount a Vietnamese primary school teacher is paid. There did not seem to be any leveling off in sight. Few controls prevailed. As inflation rose urban salaries followed
close behind. Young Vietnamese flocked to the cities to take the eight-week language courses. The countryside, already strained, lost one more element of talent.

In the provinces a more critical problem arose—that of dislocated persons. How would the millions of refugees and thousands of hoi chanh make a living? Markets were small and people in these rural areas have little income. The home industries such as weaving, conical hat making and fishing net production furnished the major means of rural productivity. Many other hoi chanh found a particular outlet where both anonymity and wages are considerable—the transport industries in Saigon's choked, cyclo-infested streets. There was a great difference in opportunity in Saigon (where few questions were asked) and the provincial capitals where swarms of refugees must and did receive preference in job allocation over hoi chanh. The Ministry of Labor had few reliable statistics on this advent and probably never will.

It was an almost impossible job to keep track of Viet Nam's changing demography. Nearly twenty-five percent of the South's population lived in crammed urban
by late 1966. We were watching the uprooting of major elements of an entire population. The tensions and misery incumbent to this human traffic were very high. And so many hoi chanh drifted into Saigon, in a sense men without a country or, more critical in Viet Nam, men without a village. Possibly the greatest contact with the Viet Cong happened in Saigon rather than in the countryside. The Front's intelligence nets crossed the Capitol and its Chinese suburbs, feeding data and names into the organization, compromising, exploiting and capitalizing on loyalties and anxieties.

In most of the urban complexes it was obvious that the problems of sanitation and garbage collection needed major help. However, few Vietnamese--especially the spoiled, vagrant youth of Saigon's Tu Do area--would consider such work. The hoi chanh could not be assigned to this work for fear of allowing the Viet Cong to shout, "See what happens when you rally; they make you a garbage collector." A recent attempt at a solution to this particular problem was the utilization of convicts or POW's to perform the duty.

2 Franky Fitzgerald, Atlantic Monthly, December 1966
1. Government Jobs

One potential means of providing jobs for large quotas of refugees, hoi chánh or other unemployed groups was in major development schemes such as the draining of the Plain of Reeds alongside the Cambodian border and building roads in the swampy, inaccessible Ca Mau Peninsula. Such proposals had been on the drawing boards of local civil and military engineering agencies in Viet Nam for years but were largely sacrificed to the demands of the war.3

The American RMK construction group in Viet Nam had permitted the token hiring of hoi chánh around its mammoth coastal construction sites at Cam Ranh Bay and Phan Rang. However, this firm had experienced a number of incidents over the years in which caterpillar tractor drivers have been shot and killed. An RMK central office clerk in Saigon also estimated that they lost a quarter of all their truck cement deliveries through Viet Cong confiscation or bribery. USAID was

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3Conversation with Col. Nguyen Trach, Commanding Officer, Combat Development Test Center, Ben Bach Dang, Saigon, 12 July 1966.
hiring many of them for construction or carpentry purposes around the provincial capitals or at the Chieu Hoi Centers. JUSPAO had begun token hiring of them for their psychological warfare and leaflet efforts. The Marines and ESSO were beginning to pick them up. They had even obtained jobs as guards at the U.S. Embassy.

Hoi chánh had mentioned the difficulty of getting jobs in any Government ministry except Chieu Hoi. Until 1966 there seemed to have existed some kind of oral agreement among Government offices not to hire defectors. This had begun to change in late 1966 and examples of a new look toward the acceptance of hoi chánh into the competitive economy and government bureaucracy began cropping up. Probably the most publicized job offer was that made to NVA Lieutenant Colonel Xuan Chu Yen who rallied in June 1966. Chu Yen was appointed director of the National Chieu Hoi Center in Saigon in the spring of 1967.

—The Chieu Hoi Ministry has begun to make a concerted effort to hire hoi chánh where it can use them. This warrant officer, a regroupee who spent years in the North, was offered a job:
"I have an offer from the Chieu Hoi Ministry to work as a medical cadre. Although I am not particularly anxious to take this job, they are still processing the official papers. Since then, I have received another offer to stay here and take charge of the military company which is concerned with taking care of security for the National Center."

The salaries the Ministry could offer were low and had no chance of competing financially with the American agencies and firms.

The problem of job discrimination even appeared to exist on the teaching staff of the National Chieu Hoi Center in Saigon prior to Chu Yen's appointment. We asked a provincial level hoi chanh who had experience as a government teacher before he joined the Viet Cong if he would be interested in joining the teaching staff at the National Center.

He replied, "No, not really. There are too many 'combinations' (cliques) among the Government cadres here. They would push me down and insult me."

We could not tell whether this was a case of "sour grapes" at being refused employment for which he

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4 C.H. 13, p 46
5 C.H. 33, p 22
was not qualified, or if he felt the job did not pay enough, or whether it was evidence of a sincere belief that hoi chanh were being discriminated against even in their own ministry. Other ralliers had mentioned a haughtiness prevailing among the teachers at the Saigon Center.

With the advent of Lt. Col. Chu Yen to the directorship of the National Center, however, we can expect increased staffing by actual defectors with more immediate experience and sympathy toward the hoi chanh throughout the Program. This is a long overdue occurrence and will add an aura of authenticity and experience to a program that, in this author's judgment, has for too long enjoyed only token acceptance by the GVN. In 1966 in Saigon, Chieu Hoí was commonly referred to as the "American Program" by most Vietnamese and Americans. Hopefully, this is finally changing.

2. Private Jobs

We have talked essentially of official or contract agencies providing jobs for the hoi chanh. More often they picked up work on an itinerant basis in the fields, drifting back into areas where they have contacts who can help them. These remarks are typical:
A. I had quite a hard time when I first left the center (Go Cong). I had, then, two main problems: one, I was unable to make a living; two, I had a problem with the soldiers there. I left for Saigon. But then I had to leave Saigon again since I was unable to earn my living. Upon returning, some time later, I started working for a farm up here where you met me when you first came by.

Q. How were you able to get a job?

A. It was due to some people of my home place who introduced me to my employer. They said to the latter that I was a relative of theirs, that I knew the craft (carpentry), and they wished to see me work for him for some time.6

Often men move from job to job ekeing out a living.

"After leaving the Chieu Hoi Center, I spent the Tet holidays at home. Then I raised ducks. After that, I worked as a construction helper for the building of a school for two months. Now I am the deputy in charge of the hamlet youth. I receive eighteen hundred piasters per month. My salary is paid from the village funds. I have to post guards and send out patrols at night. During the daytime I stay around the outpost doing whatever is deemed necessary for security. Frankly speaking, I don't like much my job; however, I have to accept it since I would like to stay close home. We are only two, my brother and me. He has entered the army; therefore, I have to stay here to support my old parents and my numerous children."7

6 C.H. 57, p 40
7 C.H. 59, p 16
Because jobs were so scarce, and conditions of living and housing crowded and frustrating, many hoi chanh gave way to the despair this young man experienced:

"When I left the Center, I had only seventy piasters left and no more rice at home. My wife had been ill for a long time and her father had been providing for her and the children. When I was released, I asked him to rent a three-wheeled cart for me (for use in small business). My wife and children continued to be ill and one of the children died. Life was so miserable for me. This pair of pants was given to me by the head of the Chieu Hoi Center in the Sixth District (Saigon). Now I owe people eleven thousand piasters because of my child's medical care."\(^8\)

3. Identification Cards

To obtain work in Viet Nam, an identification card had to be obtained. Few hoi chanh carried proper identification after their release from the camps.

In early 1967 the American Chieu Hoi Coordinator reported a new procedure whereby I.D. cards would be given to the hoi chanh two months after their release from the amnesty camps instead of the former six to eight months. The problem that existed through 1966 was that the identification card had to be issued by the police

\(^8\)C.H. 67, p 18
detachment in the rallier's birthplace or place of previous registration. A job can very seldom be obtained without the card. Many ralliers complained that they had neither the courage nor the money to finance such a trip home—oftentimes over insecure roads to risky, contested villages considerable distances away. If the trip to the original village was made, the rallier had to wait while his application and background were checked in Saigon, not the provincial capital, to determine if he was a black-listed offender. (This list refers to a category of "most wanted" Viet Cong offenders who, by the enormity of their crimes, will be tried on a criminal law basis.)

The initial investigation was done locally by authorities who send the documentation to the National Police Headquarters in Saigon to have the information checked against the files. The delay involved had often been long enough to convince graduating hoi champh that they would never get normal identification.

Q. Have you applied for an I.D. card?
A. No.
Q. Why, may I ask?
A. Because my home village where all my records and documents are is now under VC control, and they tell me that I must have copies of these papers and certification from the village chief before I can get my card. Of course, this is impossible. 9

The Vietnamese had argued until recently that only in Saigon was there complete enough biographical information on the Viet Cong. It now appears that the Americans, who had been pressing for decentralization, have won the point. What is now on the verge of fruition is an adequate local police screening and processing facility in each provincial capital. Most Chieu Hoi chiefs issued a temporary card which identified the individual as a hoi chánh. This was fine for normal passage about the larger towns and prevented unnecessary detention by police or military authorities. (Present procedure is to arrest anyone without an I.D. card and interrogate them.) But these temporary I.D. cards presented an obviously deadly risk on roads or in villages where a chance meeting with a Viet Cong sentry could require an I.D. check. This lack of normal identification had led to some unfortunate situations as this respondent indicated:

9C.H. 50, p 7
"As you know, the hoi chanh are given a "back to the village" certificate when they leave the Chieu Hoi Center. With this paper they run into trouble when looking for a job or dealing with local officials because it showed that its bearer was a returnee, coming from the other side. I proposed that, instead of the certificate, a hoi chanh be given a (normal) I.D. card. Moreover, this I.D. card would help him save his life in case he came upon a Viet Cong agent who could not distinguish him from other people."\textsuperscript{10}

The same rallier, who finally obtained work in Can Tho, described his problems and fears:

"Because I was a hoi chanh and had no normal identity card, no one wanted to employ me. Therefore, I resorted to cab-pedalling to earn my living. I found it hard moving about. I feared especially coming upon Viet Cong agents who could capture me."\textsuperscript{11}

The Front had begun making a concerted effort to liquidate returnees wherever possible. Viet Cong death warrants, a common device for intimidating rural Government officials over the last six years, had been appearing near Chieu Hoi camps--often with selected ralliers' names and biographical data. It now appears that the I.D. cards will be rapidly issued in the near future and this should partially rectify both the employment and intimidation difficulties.

\textsuperscript{10}C.H. 87/88, p 21
\textsuperscript{11}C.H. 87/88, p 23
4. **Tactical Utilization**

The best exploitation of _hoi chanh_ for tactical purposes was found in the heavily contested or infiltrated areas. They were salaried for these duties and had been decorated for heroism in some instances. Numerous techniques were being tried or experimented with. The national police were using _hoi chanh_ in the markets and at checkpoints, often in covered vans. Near Da Nang, the U. S. Marines were using them as scouts with sweeping units. Often they wore face masks for concealment during interrogation and processing. Ralliers had the added incentive of bounties for meritorious service. The guarantee of a bounty for honest efforts at apprehending Viet Cong was important. But if promised and then retracted, such as had happened with Tay Ninh's Province Chief and the Armed Propaganda Team there, it could have a demoralizing effect.\(^\text{11}\) It seemed much better to guarantee rewards for individual insurgents and then pay rapidly.

\(^{11}\) Conversations with Armed Propaganda Team, Tay Ninh city, 6 October 1966.
In Phu Cuong, the First Infantry Division headquarters intelligence section stationed a combined Vietnamese-U.S. interrogation team in the Chieu Hoi Center. This would be wise policy even without the advent of the "Phu Loi" Battalion.12

A native inducement team made up of ralliers (such as 1st Division intelligence has been considering establishing at Di An for the "Phu Loi" effort) had obvious utility in other tactical areas.

5. Military Service

All hoi chanh were exempt from the ARVN draft for twelve months following their rally. Since approximately two thirds of the hoi chanh served in military capacities with the Viet Cong—as private soldiers, medics, ammunition carriers, etc.—we might assume that this type of work would appear most suitable to them on the National side. However, there were two problems connected with this assumption. For the most part, the hoi chanh were drafted by the Viet Cong and are tired

12One thing absent in those interrogations was accurate small scale maps of villages and hamlets like those used to great success in Korea in pinpointing enemy families and infra-structure.
of military duties. Secondly, the ARVN was very hesitant toward bringing defectors into its midst. There had been numerous cases of disguised agents infiltrating ARVN units. Loyalty of tribal groups or ralliers used in the Special Forces camps had been very ephemeral.

If any generalization was possible concerning suspicion of hoi chanh by the ARVN, it probably could be identified as a youth versus age problem in the officer corps. Many ARVN middle level commanders fought for the Viet Minh against the French. They grew up in the Communist ranks, although few were party members. These men knew how the Front recruited and they realized how it double-crossed the nationalists. Their feelings about the current hoi chanh were naturally more liberal and they are willing to accept recruits with backgrounds similar to theirs. The junior commanders, lieutenants and captains, who were too young to fight in the war against the French, showed more hostility toward the Communists and hoi chanh.

Thus, the integration of combat experienced hoi chanh into military units carried a stigma remarkably similar to that evinced in the resettlement
patterns of civilian hoi chanh which will be brought out later. Mixing was difficult. In the absence of peaceful competition for jobs, the developing pattern had been separate living and working arenas. The evolution of segregated accommodations for fighting men had come about.

One technique that seemed on the verge of maturation in early 1967 was the creation of "counter units." Such a device was used in the Philippines by Magsaysay with success. Near Tay Ninh city in III Corps there are Special Forces units that are comprised almost entirely of hoi chanh. Approximately twenty percent of Tay Ninh's six hundred defectors last year went into these LLBD units. (The rate continues to be fairly steady.)\(^\text{13}\) This allowed these Tay Ninh hoi chanh to make a steady living and gave them a sense of national identification without the onus of shame and embarrassment so prevalent in competitive civilian wage earning. Counter unit approaches in the form of

\(^{13}\)Conversations with Maj. Trang, Tay Ninh Chieu Hoi Chief, 7 October 1966.
defecting entire Viet Cong units were being conducted upon selected main force outfits whose idiosyncrasies and emotional behavior patterns were familiar to and exploitable by allied intelligence offices. We have referred to the unit approach that is being put into operation by the U.S. 1st Infantry Division at Di An as it hunts the "Phu Loi" Battalion up and down Route 13 from Saigon to Tay Ninh. Whether this unit and others like it could be brought over intact to fight the Viet Cong or whether it must be destroyed (and that means neutralizing its peasant support base first) was a question that can only be answered by the allied forces that have to deal with them.

A number of the Special Forces camps employed hoi chanh as fighters. One camp in the Delta had employed Hoa Hao (an ethnic minority) hoi chanh and mercenaries to man surveillance posts along the Cambodian border. One of these soldiers, a hoi chanh who was given a squad leader's post, was caught sniping at an L-19 airplane as it dropped ammunition to a forward operating base.14 This one experience had colored the

Americans' feelings about the program at large, yet many such occurrences of questionable loyalty from either the hoi chanh or mercenaries have plagued Special Forces' endeavors, the Ashau incident possibly being the most notorious.\(^15\)

The Americans were bitter, but their frustration pointed up the increasingly difficult problems of these professionals in dealing with the Viet Cong through local ethnic and minority groups whose loyalties were divided or compromised and whose language they could not understand.

Our team also had the opportunity of interviewing the tribal chiefs of the KKK (Khmer Kapachea Krom) Cambodian bandit group that was pardoned by the Ky government in the last summer of 1965. The full text of the report is in Appendix H.\(^16\) These 1200 Cambodians

\(^{15}\) However, the American did corroborate an opinion that we had heard all over Viet Nam—that the Nungs and Montagnards (even those who had once worked for the Viet Cong) were the most loyal and hardest fighting local allies. The sergeant also mentioned that the Berets had never been performing the role in Viet Nam that they had originally been designed for; that of counter-guerrilla work behind conventional lines such as a European conflict might entail.

\(^{16}\) Visit to Chau Doc, 7-12 December 1966.
were welcomed and given a nearby valley in Chau Doc Province to farm and protect. Their leaders were commissioned as captains in the RVN forces. The KKK were then rearmed with American carbines, after receiving appropriate bounties for their older French and Czech weapons. They were under the hire of the Vietnamese Special Forces (LLBD) as irregular self defense troops (CIDG) or had been integrated into the Rural Forces. They split up into two groups organized around rival chieftains. Both camps were in Tri Ton District of Chau Doc Province.

Our team spent six days interviewing their chieftains and lieutenants at camp sites in the Nui Cam Mountains of Chau Doc Province. We laced our usual interview with thirty to forty special political and military questions in which Special Forces Intelligence was interested. Specifically, we attempted to learn the KKK's long term goals (stay in the valley or pick up and leave for Cambodia), and why some of their units were experiencing a loss of weapons while not engaging in combat.
Military sources estimated their quality as fighters to be absolutely worthless. They did no night patrolling; they seemed to be most interested in obtaining weapons and arms through the CIDG Program. The Special Forces men we interviewed, who knew them best, would not trust them on joint maneuvers. The KKK's own maneuvers appeared to be tactical walks. Chau Hien, the leader of the Ba Xoi camp, goes out on an operation with a gold walking stick and a Colt 45.

This strange, almost incredible, basis of loyalty and self defense was often typical of the border defense roles the allied command found itself dealing with in Viet Nam. The author considers that the KKK represent a truer basis of "defection" by Communist or pro-Communist insurgent forces in Viet Nam than we may ordinarily realize. Defection seldom carried high political or ideological overtones in Viet Nam. It was more often an individual decision to get out of the storm or, as in the case of the Cambodian bandits, a group choice to play both sides off against each other in the safest and most profitable manner.
6. **Armed Propaganda Teams**

Armed Propaganda Teams associated with the Chieu Hoi camps provide a final employment vehicle for hoi chanh. We have discussed their rationale and performance. There soon will be at least one full team associated with each camp. The more active camps have two teams (72 men). Their beginning pay was approximately 3,000 piasters per month and they often live with their families in villages near or associated with the Open Arms offices. When a camp was accustomed to many high level visits, the resident Armed Propaganda Teams could put on a public relations demonstration of vitality that may have very little resemblance to their performance in the field. Unannounced visits to camps where teams simply exist to fill up a payroll uncovered 50-75% absenteeism.\(^{17}\) As had been shown, however, the teams provided the most authentic vehicle for dispelling the grapevine rumor about disappearance of or brutality to hoi chanh. By mid 1967 there were approximately two thousand five hundred hoi chanh employed on these teams.

\(^{17}\)Visit to Rach Gia, 20 September 1966.
Salaries to the Armed Propaganda Teams had been late in coming, sometimes critically so. It drove the men to take on outside work, sapping both their enthusiasm and participation in the propaganda work. Often the creation of a new team took place before funds were available.

Q. "How do you make your living?"
A. "From labor on the outside."

Q. "Are you able to find enough labor on the outside?"
A. "Yes, I am now, but I may not always be able to. I am not able to devote much of my time to the APT because they haven't paid us for six months, and if they do not pay us pretty soon we will all starve. I have to earn my money on the outside."

This was an unfortunate occurrence and has been a function of poor budgeting. Often camps got an unexpected influx of ralliers and had to utilize officials' salaries for food and clothing allowances. There had yet to develop a procedure whereby one Province office could borrow from another where a loan is needed in 1966.

18 C.H. 74, p 25
7. Living Accommodations

The Chieu Hoi villages (there will soon be at least one Chieu Hoi village associated with every camp) offered a unique opportunity to observe these people's attempts at living normally once they left the Front. We should keep in mind that this technique of separate resettlement was not original to the Viet Nam war. The Huks were resettled separately on EOWA farms in Mindanao after being pardoned in the Philippine insurrection.¹⁹

There were, of course, two views on the idea of separate, segregated housing for the ralliers. One theory was that they should be integrated as soon as possible with other people, refugees, squatters, etc., to initiate their return to normal status. But, due to the lack of proper GVN housing and with an awareness that these people are "floaters" in the economy and carry a strong social stigma, there seemed to be no better alternative than to give them a separate housing arrangement and let them improve their lot among friends. The top American advisors involved in the Chieu Hoi Program

judged that it took between three and four years for the stigma to wear off. In the interim they strongly supported separate housing and livelihoods for the hoi chanh where there was an indication of rivalry or friction with other dislocated peasants.

Outside Tan An City in Long An Province there were forty immaculate, well-thatched huts built especially for the hoi chanh who surrendered there. The huts were built along a major route with rice fields in the background and fish ponds adjacent to the complex. No hoi chanh lived there in 1966. They were afraid to inhabit the camp until they were armed because they feared Viet Cong retaliation. They did not anticipate receiving arms from the province chief in the summer of 1966 because of his stated suspicion that they could not be trusted. The finished huts sat in the sun, mute reminders of the mistrust that often pervades the implementation of a concept so difficult to achieve in South Vietnam--national integration.

In Phu Bai above Da Nang was another Chieu Hoi village that is under the joint sponsorship of the Chieu Hoi Ministry and the U. S. Marines. As in Tan An, this
village lay adjacent to a large road with cleared land and farming facilities ready for use. However, Phu Bai, recently photographed by National Geographic Magazine, was a thriving concern when compared to Tan An. 20 The difference between the two was that in Phu Bai, the hoi chanh had the ability to protect themselves and they were encouraged by the Marines who give them a real chance to settle down and live quietly. Two hundred yards down the road was a refugee center also under the aegis of the Marines. It was constructed at equal cost and from the same materials as the Chieu Hoi Center. Yet, in comparison, the hoi chanh camp glistened. The refugees showed no willingness to keep their center clean or productive. Filth and garbage were seen throughout their camp. The refugees had little in common with each other except that they were miserable. 21


21 Visit to Phu Bai, 1966--The Marine Sergeant who volunteered to take the village under his wing was also a Baptist deacon. His total emersion into the concept of sympathy and honorable acceptance for the hoi chanh produced a vital, thriving community with a self-sufficient farming capacity for them and a famous reputation for himself.
The hoi chánh at Phu Bai prided themselves on their ability to show that they could be good citizens. They were "proving" to the Đà Nẵng authorities that amnesty with honor could be successful if given a chance. In a sense, the hoi chánh were on probation, and they knew it. With the number of American Congressmen, dignitaries and reporters that have toured the Phu Bai camp, the residents quickly learned the "rules of the game" and had seen the obvious advantages of productive behavior. This was adding, perhaps, an artificial quality to their attitude, but, nonetheless, the camp stood as a testimony to good faith on both sides. The separation of resettlement facilities from refugees appeared to be the best answer in the immediate future in the Republic.

8. Recontact

Follow-up surveillance of the hoi chánh once they leave the camps seemed to have been sporadically conducted. Around the urban complexes the hoi chánh were given post cards to send back to the camps indicating changes of address or work. Most hoi chánh simply forgot to notify the ministry this way. Another means
of recontact was the Chieu Hoi conventions. These meetings involved hundreds of ralliers who came back to Saigon or the Corps capitals for enthusiastic conferences led by the Ministry. At these jamborees the major reabsorption problems encountered were talked over, as well as suggestions for overall improvement of the Program.

District and Province chiefs were also charged with clandestine surveillance of hoi chanh under their jurisdiction. This was achieved through local intelligence sources as well as Chieu Hoi chiefs' reports. We found no data available on the resettlement of hoi chanh with respect to secure-insecure areas. Most of the administrators interviewed by our team estimated that twenty percent or one-fifth of the graduated hoi chanh come into recontact with the Front in one degree or another. This could mean they were living in areas where Viet Cong agitation is prevalent or they were actively working for the Front again. Probably recontact was in the form of hearing about or being near VC tax and manpower levies but not actually confronting Front personnel. If discovered by the Front, the most likely result would be impressment or assassination.
The difficulty of maintaining effective surveillance seemed to be a function of two occurrences. First, the fact that so much more of the countryside's population was becoming mobile due to the increased military pressure accounted for some of the *hoi chanh's* disappearance. The other factor was, undoubtedly, the *hoi chanh's* desire to keep their background quiet.
Summary

In the last analysis we could not separate the hoi chanh's difficulties with resettlement and employment from the general over-riding facts of South Viet Nam's hemorrhaging labor economy. With the increasing polarization of the productive labor stream around an intensifying war and its demands, the opportunities for more normal civilian pursuits were shrinking. This would be true even without the added suspicion and ostracism endemic to a civil war that the hoi chanh's were experiencing. But the hoi chanh's difficulties (possibly the most extreme of the war's dislocation) were certainly typical of the problems encountered by most transient laborers in the Republic. Our discussion allows us to better appreciate the integrative fracture and tension at large in the Republic.

As the war intensified, the tendency to draw hoi chanh into certain military or para-military functions (where they were trusted) increased. But this occurrence, it now appears, was becoming an increasingly American function. Such a polarization toward the American military overlay not only contributed toward the production
of essentially two economies in the South—one Vietnamese and the other foreign—it also enhanced the extraction of indigenous talent away from its most needed receptacle—the Vietnamese Government and economy. As we have seen, a minimal counterbalance to this unfortunate tendency was the introduction, recently, of more hoi chanh into the Chieu Hoi Ministry—essentially as a result of Lt. Col. Chu Yen's defection and his suggestions. Hopefully, this liberalization would spread rapidly across the other agencies associated with the Chieu Hoi effort.

There remained those pockets of official resistance to the embracement of the defectors—reservoirs where their utilization could have had cathartic short term or long term effects—the ARVN, the intelligence streams and the Revolutionary Development Program. For the foreseeable future there does not appear to be any chance of a liberalization of these biases; and the crossfeed between the Capital and the villages will, undoubtedly, suffer.

For the most part, the hoi chanh, where under Government surveillance or service, were carving out segregated paths of livelihood and settlement. Where
they could gain anonymity, as in the urban transportation systems, they were being reabsorbed more quickly and successfully.

Probably the real absorption of the hoi chanh must await the overall welding of a single political fabric in the South. The attainment of a vibrant national unity and the integrative growth associated with it must, of course, rest on the outcome of the war.
CHAPTER IV - CONCLUSION
IV. CONCLUSION

Our understanding of the nature of Communist insurgency is only minimal despite the torrent of private and official writing and research on this phenomenon. The countering of insurgencies is understandably an extremely complex civil-military endeavor. The risks of assuming that tactics utilized successfully in other conflicts will prove operationally exportable from one war to another have often resulted in hours of tragically misdirected efforts. The strategic hamlet program in Viet Nam is a classic case in point.*

The offering of political amnesty to antagonists in a civil war has become as much a part of the paraphernalia of counterinsurgency as selective, lesson-oriented terror is a tool of the Communists. Amnesty programs are a necessary, but not sufficient, component of a nationalist regime's successful response to internal

Communist insurrection. If there is to be any annealing of the wounds and dissidence at large in a country the offer must be made. But the offer must be backed up with a rehabilitative program capable of ameliorating the hatreds and devastation that go to the very core of the society's nerve. The healing process tests the capacity of any Government and its people to the utmost.

In Viet Nam one means of appreciating the difficulties that political development will eventually encounter is by looking at the problems involved in the implementation of a single aspect of the Nationalist's effort to stop the Viet Cong - amnesty for Communist insurgents. We have analyzed the Chieu Hoi device from both sides. The problem of each antagonist's perception of the other's motives has been discussed. As is often the case, the Nationalists, with a wide range of technical and consultative expertise at their command, are having problems exploiting the cleavages in the Front because of their own built-in operational impediments - either
psychological or administrative. Saigon's relative lack of rapport with the peasant base has yet to be overcome. The Communists' perception of amnesty carries little enthusiasm with it, partially because they are prisoners of their own propaganda and partially because of their memory of Diem. The peasants, toward whom the Viet Cong are unrelenting in their attentiveness, have yet to evince the trust toward Thieu and Ky that became Magsaysay's national mantle. The Government of Viet Nam has a much tougher job on its hands than did Magsaysay. In all fairness the strength of the Communist organizations in Viet Nam and the Philippines will bear little comparison. Twenty years of unhurried, selectively controlled recruitment and training in Communist ranks have produced in Viet Nam one of the most sophisticated internal mobilization efforts Communist organizations have ever produced. The Huks, while very dangerous, never numbered more than 12,000 actively armed men. Their demand was for land and jobs, and these Magsaysay finally gave them.
As the Government of Viet Nam allows the hoi chanh more meaningful and productive positions in the social structure, the Communists can be expected to step up their counter Chieu Hoi activities. The communications gap between Chieu Hoi appeals and the wavering Viet Cong's perceptions is something that in the final analysis can only be resolved by the peasant, that barraged little man who becomes the eyes, ears and voice of the Nationalists if they can succeed and the support base for the Communists as long as they can hold out. The achievement of the Chieu Hoi Program, finally, is dependent on a healthy maturation of the entire political and economic fabric in the South. When large masses of hoi chanh, refugees and other uprooted people can gain a productive stake in the future of South Viet Nam, then the peasants will know it—and so will the Front.

The hoi chanh have clearly stated their feelings over which of the antagonists has been most successful in motivating them. There is a great lesson the
Government can learn from the Viet Cong in this regard. The act of washing out a peasant's rice bowl can have any number of motives. The National Liberation Front of South Viet Nam's announced intentions are well documented in the public press and undoubtedly would bring forth, if allowed fruition, a society similar to what lies above the 17th parallel. The testimony of those who have lived in the North and gotten out does not inspire a humanistic confidence in either the end result or the means of attaining it.* The motivational techniques used by the Viet Cong lie before us in the records and research of this war, and they essentially come down to one corporal ingredient—sympathy. This is not to ignore the implied and often utilized elements of coercion and violence incipient to Communist activities. Nor is it to suggest that a simple emulation of Communist techniques and tactics can bring immediate victory. The French applied the identical techniques in Algeria

*Huong Van Chi - North Viet Nam: A Case Study from Colonialism to Communism, Praeger 1965.
they had experienced against the Viet Minh and still were unable to stop the Fellaga.

Motivation of and rapport with the Vietnamese peasant remains the crucial strata of the conflict. The findings of this study suggest that the Communists still hold a largely unchallenged edge in that element of the contest. One attempt to counter the Viet Cong's psychological hold on the villages that is now being refined by the GVN is the Revolutionary Development Program. This is a basic attempt to organize a cross-feed between the capital and the peasantry. These fifty-nine man teams are modeled upon Viet Minh techniques and indeed partially staffed by former Viet Minh personnel. This program may prove the start of the turning of the tide. It is a valiant effort and needs time. But its deficiencies are quite simply the manifestations of any oligarchical nationalist regime's attempts to counter Communist peasant mobilization.

All over South Viet Nam in many of the same villages that Viet Cong mobilizers and organization men slept in the night before come the Revolutionary Development
cadres by day. Some of them are very young and well scrubbed, without the trace of a callus on their hands. Some even have a two-inch fingernail on their right hand—the traditional sign of a Vietnamese mandarin. They will show (but all too often tell) the peasants how to build a bridge or repair a road. At sundown they slip off to the provincial capital for some night life. The contrast is utterly crucial to all comprehension of past failures to halt the Viet Cong and all hope for future improvement. The Chieu Hoi Program's indoctrination exhibits the same relative lack of rapport and shrewdness with the peasant. With the entrance of ex-Communist Lt Colonel Chu Yen into the training program the gap should begin to narrow.

No country in recent history has suffered to the extent of Viet Nam. We know little of the statistics of misery that have grown out of the two Indochinese wars. Estimates usually put Vietnamese deaths at over 500,000 in the first war and at something like 250,000 in the current conflict. A