First Lieutenant Jack G. Downing, Company I, 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, receives a warm welcome in a village of Quang Nam Province from those who General Lewis W. Walt has called, "the future of Vietnam." (Photo courtesy of the author).
Every Marine who has served in Vietnam has been heavily involved in efforts to improve the situation of the Vietnamese people. The civil affairs actions of the III Marine Amphibious Force have been every bit as important as the combat actions. In this reference pamphlet, which follows an earlier history of the first year of Marine Corps civic action in Vietnam, the story of the second year of civilian aid policies, programs, and activities is related.

The pamphlet is based largely on sources available in the Washington area, in particular the records of Marine units serving in Vietnam. Interviews with participants in the actions described were particularly fruitful. In some cases, documents from which information was taken are still classified, however, the information used in the text is unclassified.

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Introduction

The use of civic action by the Marine Corps to accomplish its assigned mission is nothing new. Examples of how the Marines have employed civic action in the past can be found by reading accounts of their exploits during the 1920s in Haiti, Nicaragua, and the Dominican Republic. From these accomplishments and astute observations made by men such as Major Earl H. Ellis and others, accounts of "lessons learned" about civic action can be found recorded in the Small Wars Manual of 1940, which points out:

"The motive in small wars is not material destruction. It is usually a project dealing with the social, economic, and political development of the people. It is of primary importance that the fullest benefit be derived from the psychological aspects of the situation. That implies a serious study of the people, their racial, political, religious, and mental development. By analysis and study the reasons for existing emergency may be deduced; the most practical method of solving the problem is to understand the possible approaches thereto and the repercussion to be expected from any action which may be contemplated. By this study and the ability to apply correct psychological doctrine, many pitfalls may be avoided and the success of the undertaking assured."(1)

With the basic concept of small wars in mind, the Manual of 1940 goes on to point out:

"The purpose should always be to restore normal government or give the people a better government than they had before, and to establish peace, order, and security on as permanent a basis as practicable. In so doing one should endeavor to make self-sufficient native agencies responsible for these matters. With all this accomplished, one should be able to leave the country with the lasting friendship and respect of the native population."(2)

The concept of civic action may be simply stated, but the organization and application of carrying out an effective program becomes a difficult matter. This difficulty in application can be seen through the scope and magnitude of the U. S. Marine Corps civic action effort in the I Corps area of South Vietnam. There the Marine Corps came face-to-face with the age-old problem of guerrilla warfare; winning the confidence of the population which is vital in defeating the insurgent. It was in the field of winning the confidence of a large civilian population, while at the same time fighting a war, that the
Marine Corps was least prepared when its troops landed in South Vietnam.

Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, who was Commanding General of FMFPac (Fleet Marine Force, Pacific) was aware that the Marine Corps needed a stronger capability for carrying out a civil affairs program. In the 1st Marine Brigade, at Hawaii, there was only one Civil Affairs Officer. During Operation Silver Lance, a west coast landing exercise in the spring of 1965, General Krulak focused emphasis on civil affairs by making it a part of the operation.(3)

The Marines had no formal organizational structure for carrying out large scale civic action projects when they landed at Da Nang in March of 1965. It did not take them long to realize that if they were to carry out successfully their mission they would have to deal with the civilian population in their midst. Fortunately for the Marine Corps, it learned early in the war that the important battles were not necessarily fought in open confrontation with the enemy. The battles of lasting importance would be fought against the Viet Cong infrastructure in the villages and hamlets throughout the country.

Lieutenant General Lewis W. Walt, who was the Commanding General of the III Marine Amphibious Corps, recognized early in 1965 the necessity of doing something about the large population around the Da Nang Airfield. He had stated, "I had a survey made and found that 180,000 civilians were living within 81mm mortar range of the airfield, so the Marines went into the Pacification business."(4) Necessity being the mother of invention, the Marines expanded their civic action program throughout I Corps in South Vietnam by every means possible. By the end of their first year in South Vietnam, the Marines had built an impressive civic action program compared to their modest beginning.
CHAPTER I

Background Through the First Year of U. S. Marine Corps Civic Action in Vietnam, March 1965-March 1966

On 8 March 1965 two battalion landing teams of the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade arrived at Da Nang, South Vietnam. The prelude to this U. S. Marine Corps landing was the many events that had taken place in Vietnam during the year 1964 and the early part of 1965.

It was during this period that the South Vietnamese government suffered severely from lack of internal stability. This instability was marked by a change in top government leadership at least seven times. Riots, demonstrations, and attempted coup d'etats had created a situation which was allowing the Viet Cong (VC), with the help of the North Vietnamese government, to make significant gains throughout the South.

The VC terrorist activity had doubled in 1964, and this and other VC-initiated incidents were taking their toll of the Army of the Republic of Vietnam (ARVN). One third more ARVN troops were killed in 1964 as opposed to 1963 and the enemy troop casualty rate dropped by 19 percent from the 1963 total.

During 1964 the North Vietnamese Army (NVA) began to go south in greater numbers. By the end of the year it was estimated that 12,000 NVA troops had infiltrated down the Ho Chi Minh Trail in Laos, a figure which represented a 50 percent increase over the 1963 total. With this large NVA troop movement and Viet Cong activity, I Corps (the northernmost region in South Vietnam) began to come alive with enemy activity. As the Government of Vietnam attempted to counter this activity, armed conflict between the ARVN and enemy forces began to grow. The number of enemy attacks and the number of enemy killed in the Republic of Vietnam showed its greatest increase in the I Corps Tactical Zone (ICTZ) during 1964. Another indication of enemy activity in I Corps was shown by the increase in terrorist attacks. While terrorism increased 100 percent nationwide from 1963 to 1964, it increased 525 percent in the ICTZ.

During 1964, not only did terrorist activity pick up throughout South Vietnam but it was evident that these attacks were becoming increasingly directed against American civilian and military personnel. On the 3d, 7th, 9th, and 11th of February such terrorist activity accounted for 10 Americans killed and 76 wounded. On the 3d of May and the 1st of November terrorist attacks accounted for 4 Americans killed and 8 wounded. One of the strongest blows came on Christmas day 1964 when an American living quarters was bombed. In this attack, 2 Americans
were killed and 108 Americans and Vietnamese wounded. These incidents, coupled with the attack by North Vietnamese torpedo boats in August against U. S. naval vessels in the Gulf of Tonkin, set the stage for the eventual U. S. Marine Corps landing in South Vietnam. (1)

During 1964, important decisions were made concerning the possibility of U. S. military troop movement to South Vietnam. By March, the United States had realized that previous hopes of a quick and favorable peace were premature. General Maxwell D. Taylor, Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff, pointed out that the Viet Cong had made significant gains as a result of the internal problems existing within the South Vietnamese government. It was also noted that the Strategic Hamlet Program had failed at effectively protecting the Vietnamese peasant from Viet Cong activity. (2)

By June 1964, General William C. Westmoreland had assumed command of USMACV (United States Military Assistance Command, Vietnam). On 23 June, General Maxwell D. Taylor became Ambassador to South Vietnam replacing Henry Cabot Lodge. At the closing of the year 1964, the American advisory effort in South Vietnam stood at 20,000 troops. (3)

In 1965 the conflict continued to expand as the Viet Cong attacked the U. S. compound at Pleiku on 7 February. President Lyndon B. Johnson ordered the evacuation of U. S. dependents from South Vietnam on 8 February and on 10 February the VC destroyed the U. S. enlisted quarters at Qui Nhon. (4)

In mid-February, the Joint Chiefs of Staff sent their recommendation to the Secretary of Defense concerning the deployment of U. S. Marines to South Vietnam. It was their recommendation that the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade (MEB) be deployed to Da Nang, South Vietnam, and another brigade be sent from Hawaii to Okinawa. These units were to move with combat support and combat service support and air. On 27 February, the Joint Chiefs of Staff relayed to CINCPAC (Commander-in-Chief, Pacific) and COMUSMACV (Commander U. S. Military Assistance Command, Vietnam) that approval had been given to deploy the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade to South Vietnam. (5)

The Marines Land

On the morning of 8 March 1965, the 3d Battalion, 9th Marines landed over Red Beach-2, Da Nang, South Vietnam, with the primary mission to defend the Da Nang Air Base. On the same day the 1st Battalion, 3d Marines began to arrive by air from Okinawa. On the 9th of March, 1st Marine Aircraft Wing elements already in Vietnam came under operational control of the 9th MEB. The Marine build-up continued throughout the month of March. By the end of the month, the 9th Marine Expeditionary Brigade had a total of 4,685 men within the Da Nang Tactical Area of Responsibility. This TAOR consisted of 4
On 10 April, elements of the 2d Battalion, 3d Marines landed over Red Beach-2 in Da Nang. That same day elements of VMFA-531 began to arrive at the Da Nang Airfield. On the 14th of April elements of the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines landed over Red Beach-2 in Da Nang and the remainder of the battalion landed at Hue/Phu Bai on 15 April 1965. At Hue/Phu Bai, the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines was assigned the mission of airfield defense along with the protection of the U. S. Army's 8th Radio Relay Unit. The 9th MEB's strength by the end of April was over 6,000 men with TAORs established at Da Nang and Hue/Phu Bai.

The last major Marine landing of the initial build-up in South Vietnam came during the month of May 1965. During the period of 7-12 May, three Marine battalions landed at Chu Lai, approximately 50 miles southeast of Da Nang. Just prior to the Chu Lai landing, the entire Marine organization in Vietnam was redesignated the III Marine Amphibious Force under the command of Major General William R. Collins. This command consisted of most of the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing. By the end of May 1965, the Marines had established three TAORs throughout the I Corps area in South Vietnam. These three Tactical Areas of Responsibility, Hue/Phu Bai, Da Nang, and Chu Lai, contained 17,567 Marines.

Throughout the remainder of the calendar year the Marine force continued to grow in I Corps. By the end of December 1965, the Marines had more troops committed to combat in South Vietnam than any other time since World War II.

The Marines' First Efforts at Civic Action in Vietnam

During the first two months ashore in South Vietnam, the Marines had little time for carrying out organized civic action. The Marines' area of responsibility was small and their contact with the civilian population was limited. The initial spread of good-will was more of a spontaneous people-to-people effort carried out by the individual Marine.

Throughout the month of May 1965, civic action began to pick up with the expansion of the Marine Corps responsibility in I Corps. During this month, the three Marine TAORs expanded to 239 square miles with a civilian population of approximately 77,000 persons.

Early in May 1965, Major Charles J. Keever arrived in Vietnam and became Civil Affairs Officer for the III Marine Amphibious Force. He immediately began to develop plans for carrying out a coordinated effort in civic action. Contact was made with the Vietnamese government officials and United States private relief organizations in the area. Major Keever made visits throughout the Marine TAORs and contacted local...
villagers to learn of their way of life and their needs. Armed with this information about the villagers and what the Marines were doing in civic action, he was better prepared to give concrete direction to the Marine Corps civic action program.

The importance of civic action by the Marine Corps was realized during a clearing operation in Le My village in the Da Nang TAOR. Between 4-10 May 1965, the 2d Battalion, 3d Marines was engaged in clearing the Viet Cong from Le My. After the initial operation was over, the battalion commander realized that his gains would soon become losses unless he could also eradicate the Viet Cong infrastructure within the village. On 11 May 1965, after most of the Viet Cong had been driven out of Le My, the first Marine pacification program began in earnest. (9)

During June 1965, great impetus was given to the Marine civic action program under the guidance and leadership of Major General Lewis W. Walt. On 4 June 1965, General Walt had assumed command of the III Marine Amphibious Force from Major General William R. Collins. From the start General Walt began to show interest in the Marines' effort to support the Vietnamese Rural Construction Program. This interest is reflected in a Marine Force order dated 7 June 1965, which states in part:

Civic action will be conducted as needed and/or requested in a guest-host relationship with the government of the Republic of Vietnam. Reliance will be placed upon agreement and cooperation for the achievement of mutually advantageous objectives of the two governments. (10)

Throughout June 1965, Marine units in their three TAORs had made considerable progress with their civic action programs. The most predominant civic action effort being carried out by the Marines at this time was the Medical Civil Assistance Program (MEDCAP). This program was initially carried out by the Navy corpsmen who accompanied Marine squads on patrols throughout the populated areas within the TAORs. As the Marines passed through the villages and hamlets, the corpsmen would render whatever medical assistance they could with their limited resources. The MEDCAP program later expanded into regularly scheduled sick calls within the villages and medical aid stations were set up to accommodate the seriously ill.

South Vietnam, with a population of approximately 15 million people is more than 75 percent rural with most of its population situated in the lowland and coastal areas. (11) This predominantly rural populace had long suffered from inadequate medical care. Many reasons contributed to this neglect; Viet Cong terrorism, insufficient sanitation, and a shortage of competent medical personnel. When the Marines began to give medical treatment to the villagers, they hit upon a program that
eventually paid off in tangible results with combat intelligence about Viet Cong activity in the ICTZ.

By the end of June 1965, the Marine civic action program was beginning to coordinate its efforts with the many United States government relief agencies in Vietnam. This coordinated effort gave support to the Vietnamese Rural Construction Program which had for one of its goals the elimination of the VC infrastructure within the village and hamlet. One reason for the continued growth of the Marine civic action program during June was the expansion of the III Marine Amphibious Force Tactical Area of Responsibility (TAOR), which now stood at 335 square miles with a civilian population of 124,876.(12)

On the 1st of July 1965, the Viet Cong made their boldest move against the U. S. Marine forces in I Corps. Early in the morning they launched a mortar and demolition attack against the Da Nang Airfield. This attack proved to be successful in destroying aircraft parked on the airstrip and creating confusion inside the Marine defensive perimeter. From this attack it became apparent that the Marine TAOR would have to be expanded to include the heavily populated area to the east and south of the Da Nang Airbase from which the attack came. General Walt requested permission from General Nguyen Chanh Thi, Commanding General of I Corps, to make such an extension. A few days later, the request made by General Walt was granted and the Marines began to compete directly with the Viet Cong for the friendship and support of the Vietnamese in the fertile rice-growing area adjacent to the city of Da Nang.

From the expansion of the Marine TAOR at Da Nang, the civic action program received a new challenge. The populated area southeast of the Da Nang Airfield was infested with VC political cadre, who were supported by the local guerrillas and who had received little opposition to their rule up to this time. General Walt realized that just extending the physical boundaries of the Marine TAOR to include the populated area southeast of the airfield would have little effect in preventing another attack by the VC unless the cooperation and confidence of the peasants could be won. With this idea in mind, the Marines launched a strong civic action program in the area to win the cooperation and confidence of the people. The initial progress was slow, but eventually the people responded to the Marines' efforts to help them and they began to come forth with information about enemy activity in the area.(13)

The Marine Corps civic action program continued to grow throughout the month of July. The Medical Civic Action Program continued to treat hundreds of Vietnamese daily. The Navy corpsmen distributed large quantities of soap, a rare item to the Vietnamese peasant, hoping that its use would help cut down infection and the spread of disease. Adequate sanitation was almost nonexistent in the Vietnamese village, so the corps-
men initiated a program of instruction to teach good hygienic practices.

The Marines began to initiate building programs that were designed to give the villagers new schools, wells, and hospitals. The Catholic Relief Service contributed material support in the form of Bulgar (a type of parched crushed wheat) to be distributed to the Vietnamese through the Marine Civic Action Program. By the end of July 1965, other relief organizations in I Corps were beginning to contribute to the Marine civic action effort by providing needed material to carry on the program. Organizations such as USOM (United States Operations Mission), CARE (Cooperation for American Relief Everywhere), and HANDCLASP (a U.S. Navy people-to-people program since 1962) eventually became a major source of supply for carrying on civic action. Aside from the professional organizations that were contributing support, thousands of U.S. citizens responded to letters from friends and relatives serving with the Marine Corps in I Corps and began to send goods to help the Vietnamese.

The assessment of the effectiveness of the Marine Corps civic action program by the end of July 1965 could best be measured through the willingness of the peasantry to give information about VC activity. Vital to this assessment was the understanding that civic action programs without adequate security to protect the peasant from Viet Cong terrorism had little chance of success. Security, when combined with good civic action, became a potent force in combating the guerrilla and destroying the VC infrastructure within the village and hamlet. On several occasions the Marines did receive good information about VC movement and acted upon this information with considerable success.

By the close of the first five months in South Vietnam, the Marines had expanded their areas of responsibility from the initial 8 square miles with a population of 1,930 to 417 square miles with a population of 198,840. The Da Nang TAOR now encompassed an area of 254 square miles with a population of 55,699, and Hue/Phu Bai had an area of 61 square miles with a population of 17,601. (14)

U.S. Marine Corps Civic Action Growth
August-December 1965

During the next five months many innovations and changes took place in I Corps that profoundly affected the Marine Corps civic action program. By early August 1965, the Marine Corps civic action effort had expanded to the point where coordination with other U.S. agencies in I Corps was imperative if good support was going to be given to the Vietnamese Rural Construction plan. Realizing this need, General Walt and Mr. Marcus J. Gordon, Regional Director for USOM in I Corps, gave
guidance for the creation of the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council. When this Council held its first meeting on 30 August 1965, it represented the first working regional council of its kind in South Vietnam. Although the council had no directive-making authority or material resources of its own, the influence of its members made it the most effective group for carrying out the total pacification program in I Corps. (15)

During the last part of August and throughout the month of September 1965, two other major events occurred that gave impetus to the Marine Corps civic action program and supported the rural construction effort; Operation GOLDEN FLEECE, and the development of the Combined Action Program. GOLDEN FLEECE was a program that was designed by the Marines to protect the Vietnamese peasant against Viet Cong during their autumn rice harvest. For a number of years the VC had depended on the local peasantry to supply them with food and other material resources. During the rice harvesting season the VC would levy a heavy "tax" on the peasant against the amount of rice produced. Through the use of terror and extortion, the VC had, in the past, been successful in taking what he considered to be his "fair-share" of the rice produced and had gone almost unchallenged in this activity. With the Marines protecting the rice harvest in Da Nang and Chu Lai in the autumn of 1965, the VC were denied a great portion of this valuable source of food supply. Since, initially, the Vietnamese villagers had asked the Marines to help them protect their rice harvest in the face of VC reprisal, it was another indication of the growing confidence the peasant was developing toward the Marines. (16)

To the north of Da Nang at Hue/Phu Bai, the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines, was in the process of organizing the first joint action company. This program integrated Marine rifle squads with Vietnamese Popular Force Platoons to provide continuous local security for the villages and hamlets within the TAOR. From the start, the joint action company concept proved to be successful and became an important organization for combating the guerrilla in his own "backyard" and destroying the VC infrastructure in the villages and hamlets. By the end of August 1965, the first joint action company was in operation at Hue/Phu Bai. Later, as the program expanded to include Da Nang and Chu Lai, the name was changed to reflect the organizational structure and became known as combined action companies. (17)

During August and September 1965, another program developed in the United States that gave material support to the Marine Corps civic action program in South Vietnam. Members of the Division of Reserve in Washington, D. C. worked out an agreement with the CARE office in Washington to coordinate an effort to provide the III Marine Amphibious Force with the necessary supplies to carry on their civic action program. On the 13th of September 1965, this program was officially launched
by the Commandant of the Marine Corps, who stressed the value and importance of the program. General Walt, who at the time was CG, III MAF, stated, "It was one of the most important assets for carrying on civic action in I Corps." (18) By 3 January 1966, the Marine Corps Civic Action Fund had contributed over $100,000 to the Marine civic action effort in South Vietnam.

During October 1965, a major organizational change took place within III MAF headquarters that brought more continuity to the civic action program. The Civil Affairs Section of the special staff became the fifth general staff section. With this change in designation, the Civil Affairs Officer became the G-5 for III MAF and eventually was charged with the responsibility of coordinating both civic action and psychological operations. Shortly thereafter, the 3d Marine Division and the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing designated G-5 sections to coordinate their civic action programs. By the end of the year, regiments and battalions, when available manpower permitted, had established S-5 sections to coordinate civic action effort in their assigned areas of responsibility.

During November and December 1965, III MAF continued to coordinate its civic action program with the Vietnamese program of rural construction. Although the Government of Vietnam (GVN) had suffered several setbacks in attempting to carry out its program of rural construction in Quang Nam Province, one of its national areas of priority, it was the considered opinion of III MAF that the program must succeed if South Vietnam was to survive and become a viable republic. With this opinion in mind, the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council used its influence to step up all civic action programs in support of rural construction.

One overriding fact continually presented itself about the success or failure of civic action in rural construction programs; no success was possible without adequate security. Lack of security had been one of the major problems of the Vietnamese pacification effort. The peasant in the rural areas, who must live with the VC both night and day, is reluctant to overtly support any program that does not provide adequate security for himself and his family against VC terrorist tactics. Since the political action teams, the teams responsible for carrying out rural construction, were poorly equipped and trained to fight the VC, they were unable to provide the necessary security required to convince the peasant that his government could, in fact, protect him from the VC.
By the end of December 1965, the Marine Corps Combined Action Program was proving that the original concept was a sound one. The platoons of the combined action companies, operating throughout different villages and hamlets, were able to provide the necessary security to carry out a continuous civic action program in their areas. Also, the Marines were able to provide the necessary training and guidance to improve the Popular Forces combat efficiency. As the Marines and Vietnamese ate, worked, lived, fought, and suffered hardships as an integrated unit in the combined action platoons, they posed a most formidable threat to the VC's control of the peasant.

At the close of the calendar year, great strides had been made in civic action since the Marines first came ashore on 8 March 1965. One way the progress was measured was by attempting to keep a statistical account of what went on in the civic action program. An example of the statistics by the end of December 1965 showed:

- Persons given medical treatment.....199,631
- Pounds of food distributed..........142,756
- Pounds of soap distributed........... 46,535

The statistics do not tell the whole story of civic action and many people disagree with their validity; but one thing is certain, that the comfort the Marine Corps civic action program brought to the Vietnamese peasant in I Corps was more than he had before the Marines arrived.(19)

The End of the First Year
January-March 1966

The period January through March 1966 closed out the first complete year of Marine Corps civic action in South Vietnam. The last three months of this year ashore continued to produce more change and reexamination of programs and projects underway. By January 1966, the Marine areas of responsibility had grown to 948 square miles containing a population of 506,732 and 109 villages. With this expansion in the Marine TAORs and the responsibility for a greater number of Vietnamese villages within those TAORs, the contact with Vietnamese efforts at pacification continued to expand. In January 1966, the Vietnamese revamped their rural construction plan of 1965 and attempted to regain some of their losses under a new plan designated as revolutionary development. The new plan of revolutionary development was designed to give better coordination, greater security, and a more dynamic philosophy for the political action teams working within the villages and hamlets. In February 1966, the Vietnamese government, in an attempt to give impetus to its pacification effort in Quang Nam Province, gave it the designation of Revolutionary Development National Priority Area of I Corps. The Marine Corps threw its support behind the
program and offered help whenever it could. Lack of security for the political action teams and a political upheaval in I Corps, which began in March, caused severe setbacks for the program. The III MAF, through the coordinated effort of the I Corps JCC, was able to provide support for the development of a New Life Hamlet Program in the Da Nang area. The New Life Hamlet Program was a part of the revolutionary development concept for destroying the VC infrastructure and returning the populace to the care of the government.

During the first quarter of the new calendar year, civic action proved its worth for the first time in conjunction with large combat unit operations. During Operation MALLARD, conducted southwest of Da Nang, and DOUBLE EAGLE, conducted south of Chu Lai, civic action and psychological warfare teams coordinated their efforts and made an important contribution to success. With these activities being conducted in heavily populated areas, collection points were set up to provide for the comfort, care, and safety of the people caught in the combat zone. During MALLARD, 35 tons of rice were returned to the people which had been taken by the Viet Cong. In DOUBLE EAGLE, 27 tons of food were brought in specifically to feed the people in the area of operation.

It was found during these operations that both civic action and psychological operations (PsyOps) working together could be mutually supporting for maximum benefit and that both programs were best carried out through close coordination with Vietnamese officials in the area. Unilateral programs of Marine Corps civic action, while providing immediate assistance to the local populace, would not provide the necessary essentials to give the peasant a positive identification with his own government. Until such an identification could be made by the peasant and confidence developed in the local government's ability to care for him, it was unlikely that any civic action effort would have a long range lasting benefit. During the Vietnamese New Year 1966, known as Tet Nguyen Dan (TET), which extended from 21-23 January, Marine Corps civic action and PsyOps were closely aligned with Vietnamese revolutionary development in an attempt to convince the people of the importance of allying themselves with the government. Themes were carried out which stressed: (1) the Viet Cong (VC) were losing the war; (2) the GVN had the resources to govern the people best; (3) the GVN could provide a more abundant life than the VC; (4) the VC were the real enemies of the people; and (5) VC who surrendered would be received with open arms, the Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) Program initiated by the Vietnamese government in 1963 to encourage defection from the VC ranks. Since TET, an important holiday throughout Vietnam, focused importance on family ties and veneration of the family ancestors, a direct appeal for defection was made to members of the VC by stressing the importance of family ties, separation from their family, and the hardships they were enduring and inflicting upon the people. The program proved to be successful and
during TET several defections occurred in the ranks of the VC. These returnees, or ralliers to the government cause, were reunited with families and given an opportunity to start a new life in support of the GVN. (20)

During February 1966, the Marine Corps civic action and PsyOps programs received an additional boost by the arrival of the 3d Marine Division Band and Drum and Bugle Corps. This unit, eager to help in any way, presented concerts for the Vietnamese people and received a warm response. The drum head design, used by the Drum and Bugle Corps, set the theme that was designed to express the mood of their performances; two flags, United States and Vietnamese combined, with a hand shake symbol and the words "Friendship through Music," written in Vietnamese. Marines also began to include music appreciation along with the English classes being taught in an attempt to appeal to the Vietnamese interest in music and drama.

By the end of February 1966, Medical Civic Action had fully recovered from the slowdown created by TET and was once again treating hundreds of Vietnamese daily. One of the most important programs conducted by medical civic action was the training of Vietnamese medical personnel. This effort was designed to train volunteers and other people selected for the program in medical aid and sanitation procedures and to help provide an additional source of needed medical personnel to work in the villages and hamlets. The Vietnamese Minister of Health agreed to hire personnel coming out of the training, if they were approved in advance. This provided an income for those Vietnamese trained in the program. During the month of February, Navy corpsmen trained 16 health workers, two volunteer nurses, and four volunteer medical assistants. At the same time, General Walt, who was helping support the Buddhist schools and orphanages in the Da Nang area, had contributed over $9,000 to these programs by the end of February. The money which was used for this support came from III MAF's Reserve Civic Action Contingency Fund. (21)

Throughout March 1966, the Marine Corps continued to apply a new technique, initially started in February 1966, by the 3d Marine Division, which coordinated civic action, psychological warfare, and combat power. These efforts which combined Marine Corps and ARVN forces in an operation to destroy the VC influence in selected hamlets and restore government influence, were called County Fair operations. County Fair operations, using the concept of the cordon and search method which had been initially started by the 9th Marines in August 1965, in the Da Nang TAOR, proved quite successful in seeking out the Viet Cong infrastructure within the selected hamlets where they were conducted. Essentially, the operation consisted of a Marine unit moving into position early in the morning around a selected hamlet and establishing a cordon to prevent the escape of any VC attempting to get out of the hamlet. At first light,
ARVN troops and political cadre of the GVN would enter the cordoned area and move all of the civilians to a pre-designed collection point where they would be fed, counted, and identified, given propaganda lectures, drama presentations, and shown movies.

While this military/civic action was going on, ARVN troops would thoroughly search the hamlet for hidden tunnels, food, ammunition, weapons, and VC who might be hiding within the hamlet. The key to success in County Fair operations, aside from the civic action aspect, lay in the ability to set up the cordon with stealth for maximum surprise of the VC. Civic action efforts were designed to favorably impress the civilian populace in whose hamlet the government operation was being conducted. It was also desirable that continuous security be provided, whenever practicable, for the hamlet where the operation had taken place to prevent reentrenchment of VC influence and possible reprisal against those civilians who might have cooperated in providing intelligence about VC activity. The County Fair operations were so successful that by the end of March 1966, they were considered standard type operations conducted by Marine Corps units in South Vietnam.

The concept and development of combined action companies and County Fair operations exemplified how far the Marines had come in developing techniques that would effectively support the Vietnamese revolutionary program and represent Marine Corps civic action in its hardest and most aggressive state. By the close of March 1966, the Combined Action program was operational in the Danang TAOR. This combined action company, initially started in February 1966, followed the organizational pattern of the first company which began in Hue/Phu Bai in August 1965. These companies consisted of combined action platoons (CAP) which had an organizational structure that provided for a composite unit of 50 men; one 14-man Marine rifle squad with a Navy corpsman and a 35-man Vietnamese Popular Force platoon. Although these units did not always operate at full strength, they continued to be an effective force for carrying out civic action projects and providing security in the villages and hamlets where they lived.

As the first full year came to a close for the Marine Corps in I Corps Area of South Vietnam, III MAF was attempting to make an evaluation of its effectiveness in support of the Government of Vietnam. Throughout the year, statistics had been collected pertaining to combat operations, patrols and ambushes, civic action projects started and finished, commodities distributed, money spent, and medical treatment and training given. Not until February 1966 was III MAF able to make a satisfactory correlation between these statistics and the progress of the war. In February 1966 III MAF initiated an evaluation system that tied civic action to revolutionary development in an attempt to measure the degree of total pacification in the
villages within the Marine TAORs. This system assigned specific points to each category covered on a Pacification Progress Chart and defined its degree of importance. The general categories are broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Points</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of Organized VC military forces</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Destruction of VC infrastructure</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of local security</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establishment of local Government</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Completion of initial New Life Hamlet Programs</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(The complete breakdown on Chart I)(22)

The month of March 1966 marked the first anniversary of large Marine Corps units ashore in South Vietnam. Within the past year Marine Corps civic action had moved from the initial people-to-people effort by individual units and individual Marines, to a well-coordinated, highly-organized program with leadership and direction residing in the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council.

After a full year in Vietnam, the Marine Corps had developed effective principles of civic action and had the organizational structure for carrying them out. As the year ended it was obvious that much had been learned about the process and procedure for carrying out organized civic action and psychological operations that would best support the development of a viable government in South Vietnam. It also became clear that civic action programs that were started and not finished were worse than no programs at all. To give the peasant a gleam of hope by initiating projects and then fail to follow through on them only intensified the frustration already present. It became basic procedure to carry out all civic action programs, whenever possible, through the local Vietnamese officials on the scene. Unilateral programs of civic action had a tendency to make the Marine Corps the benefactor of the peasants' good will, which did little or nothing for the support of his own government.

A knowledge of what the peasant wanted in the way of civic action projects became an important factor in the success of any project started. To indiscriminately build without consulting the peasant on his wishes and needs proved less than successful in many cases. On every project started, an effort would be made to enhance the prestige of the village chief or hamlet elder by bringing him into the planning and execution of the program. It was through gaining the respect and confidence of the local officials at the lowest level that civic action would produce the most lasting effect in support of revolutionary development. Marine civic action programs were to be designed not only to help the people but to be practical enough to be carried on by the people after American units left the area. It did little
CHART I

PACIFICATION PROGRESS INDICES

1. DESTRUCTION OF ORGANIZED VC MILITARY FORCES POINTS
   a. VC local/main force units destroyed or driven out 15
   b. GVN/FWMAF capable of defending the area 5

   Total 20

2. DESTRUCTION OF VC INFRASTRUCTURE
   a. Census completed 2
   b. VC infrastructure discovered and destroyed or neutralized 8
   c. GVN intelligence network established 5
   d. Census grievance teams completed interviewing each family 2
   e. Principal grievances processed 3

   Total 20

3. ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL SECURITY
   a. Defense plans completed 2
   b. Defense construction completed 3
   c. Local defense forces trained and in place 12
   d. Communications established with supporting unit 3

   Total 20

4. ESTABLISHMENT OF LOCAL GOVERNMENT
   a. Village Chief and council elected and functioning 4
   b. Village chief lives and sleeps in the village 3
   c. Hamlet chiefs and councils elected and functioning 4
   d. Hamlet chiefs live and sleep in the hamlet 4
   e. PsyOps and public information service established 5
   f. Village statutes enacted 1
   g. Village social and administrative organization completed 1

   Total 20

5. COMPLETION OF INITIAL NEW LIFE HAMLET PROGRAMS
   a. Necessary public health works, required to meet initial needs of populace, completed 4
   b. Necessary educational requirements, to satisfy initial needs, have been met 4
   c. Necessary agricultural works completed 4
   d. Adequate ground transportation into and out of the area has been established 4
   e. Necessary markets established 4

   Total (23) 20
good to start high caliber programs and then leave them without technical know-how or resources for completion. Whenever possible, local talent and manpower should be used to develop a sense of pride and ownership in the project being carried out. It was found that the peasant was much more inclined to protect property against VC attacks when there was a personal feeling of ownership involved. (24)

Mr. Gilbert H. Sheinbaum*, USAID Liaison Officer to III MAF, has commented on the success of the Marine Corps civic action program during its first year in country by pointing out eight significant developments which he believed contributed to it. These factors were as follows:

1. command support for civic action;
2. designation of civil affairs officers in all units down to at least battalion level;
3. assignment of geographic areas of responsibility to individual units;
4. close collaboration with local Vietnamese officials at all levels;
5. attention to the basic needs of the people;
6. joint U. S.-Vietnamese rather than unilateral efforts;
7. programs which can be easily sustained over a period of time, and which hopefully can and will be replaced by GVN programs; and above all,
8. for civil affairs officers to have an active interest in the local community and good common sense. (25)

With these "lessons learned" and observations made about the first year of Marine Corps civic action in South Vietnam, the second phase of Marine Corps efforts was launched in I Corps at "winning the hearts and minds" of the peasant and the destruction of the Viet Cong.

*Mr. Gilbert H. Sheinbaum was a USAID Liaison Officer to III MAF during its first year in Vietnam and was a participant in and close observer of military action.
CHAPTER II

Beginning of the Second Year for the Marine Corps in I Corps

The Changing Concept Of Civic Action

As the Marine Corps entered into its second year of operations in I Corps, many events had transpired since the beginning of the calendar year, January 1966, which were to have a profound effect on the conduct of these operations. From the Honolulu Conference in February, between the U. S. President, Lyndon B. Johnson, and the leaders of South Vietnam, Chief of State, Nguyen Van Thieu and Premier Nguyen Cao Ky, came the Honolulu Declaration. This declaration, issued on 8 February 1966, renewed the United States' pledge to support the Government of Vietnam in carrying on the fight against the insurgent forces. Strong emphasis was placed upon the importance of every phase of "nation building," with the primary interest of the people in mind. The declaration pledged renewed dedication to eradication of social injustices, development of a stable economy, and the building of a true democracy for the people of a war torn land.(1)

In an address before the Association of School Administrators in Atlantic City, New Jersey, on 16 February 1966, President Johnson reiterated the United States' pledge to the Government of South Vietnam. President Johnson pointed out that during the year 1966, every effort would be made to step up the program of building schools and training teachers to fill the schools, "for the real revolution is to build schools, and through them, build a new nation." Emphasis was to be placed upon the training of doctors, nurses, and health workers and on creating reforms in agriculture, which was basic to the needs of the rural populace. Support was pledged to continue to supply the South Vietnamese Army with adequate equipment to fight the Viet Cong and elements of the North Vietnamese Army, who were infiltrating into South Vietnam. Protection and security for the rural populace against VC terrorism and a concentrated effort to destroy the VC infrastructure were important themes of the President's address. President Johnson concluded by saying:

There is a job of liberation from disease, liberation from hunger, and liberation from ignorance. Unless this job is done, a military victory in South Vietnam would be no victory at all--only a brief delay until the aggressor returns to feed on the continuing misery of the people. We have the military might to win a war but the
building of a better society is the main test of our strength—our basic purpose. Until the people of the villages and farms of that unhappy country/South Vietnam/ know that they personally count, that they are cared about, that their future is their own—only then will we know that real victory is possible."(2)

The Honolulu Declaration pledged support to the entire country of South Vietnam in its pacification efforts, and the Marines in I Corps were making every effort to assure that this pledge would be fulfilled. The capability for carrying out extensive programs that would support the revolutionary development plan of South Vietnam had been one of the Marines' major accomplishments during their first year in country.

Lieutenant General Lewis W. Walt returned to Da Nang on 9 March 1966 after a short visit to the U. S. where he was promoted from major general to his new rank. He reassumed command of III MAF and began making plans for stepping up the Marine Corps civic action effort in I Corps. General Walt's agreement with the precepts of the Honolulu Declaration was evidenced by the emphasis placed upon the importance of winning the war within the villages and hamlets from the time he became Commanding General of III MAF. General Walt was interested in seeing that the school program go forward in I Corps since he was convinced that South Vietnam would have little chance of survival without well-educated leaders. It had always been the practice of the VC to harass, terrorize, and assassinate the capable leaders of the villages and hamlets under the guise of doing the peasant a favor by getting rid of corrupt government officials. School teachers had been one of their main targets for assassination. It was General Walt's intention, in the new year, to use his civic action program and combat capability in continuing support of Vietnamese revolutionary development, thereby making it a more effective program in destroying the VC infrastructure and restoring capable leadership within the villages and hamlets in I Corps.(3)

With the growth of total pacification in I Corps since March 1965, and the United States' renewed dedication to support this effort at the Honolulu Conference in February 1966, III MAF, in the new year, moved toward a larger concept of civic action. The transition from a somewhat disjointed people-to-people effort at civic action to a coordinated multi-program more aptly became known as "civil affairs." The concept of civil affairs gave a broader view to the Marine Corps efforts at pacification and support of Vietnamese revolutionary development in I Corps. The I Corps Joint Coordinating Council added new committees for better cooperation and coordination of the many projects underway; civil affairs officers were designated down through the battalion level, and unit areas of responsibility were assigned to prevent duplication of effort; all of these pointed to the magnitude of the Marines' involvement in civil
affairs activity in South Vietnam.

The concept of civil affairs as employed by the Marine Corps in South Vietnam, while contributing to the welfare of the populace and supporting the efforts of the Government of Vietnam, did not carry the old connotation generally associated with civil affairs—military rule with domination of the local government and the people. The Marine Corps civil affairs programs were designed to support the host government in every way, and were to eliminate any idea of the old post-World War II definition of civil affairs, which pointed to military control by a dominating foreign power.

U.S. Marine Civil Affairs Continues In I Corps in the Face of Political Crisis

A political upheaval in March 1966, caused by the removal of General Nguyen Chanh Thi as commanding general of I Corps, created problems for Marine Corps civil affairs activities. Although the crisis did not have a nullifying effect upon the Marine efforts at "winning hearts and minds," it did hamper these efforts. The major problem area was the inability to support effectively Vietnamese revolutionary development in the midst of the growing political crisis. There had been some encouraging signs prior to the dismissal of General Thi, that the Ngu Hanh Son pacification project, located in the southern part of Da Nang, would begin to make satisfactory progress, even though it had continually suffered from a lack of proper organization and effective security to protect the government cadre working in the area.* The I Corps Joint Coordinating Council (JCC) continued to meet weekly throughout the month of March and continued to provide the necessary coordination between all agencies, both U.S. and GVN, carrying out programs in support of the pacification effort. The committees that had been organized to function under the direction of the I Corps JCC to coordinate civil affairs activity continued to work in their respective areas of responsibility and to produce significant progress with the projects they were carrying out. The Port of Da Nang Committee was working on plans for a joint civilian/military effort at expanding and improving the utilization of the port facilities which would expedite the movement of ships and materiel coming into Da Nang to support the war effort. Plans for the military and civilian development of the port were coordinated with the Vietnamese at the local level and a mutual agreement was arrived at to implement this program of expansion.

* The Ngu Hanh Son Pacification project is the Vietnamese National Priority Revolutionary Development Area in the I Corps Tactical Zone. Located in Quang Nam Province, it is in the southern part of the Da Nang tactical area.
The Education Committee continued to work at providing the necessary impetus to improve the school programs. One of its major projects was the Vocational Training School in Da Nang. The school was significant because it provided an educational opportunity for the Vietnamese to improve their economic lot. Many of the graduates were employed by civilian agencies and military organizations to fill new jobs being created as a result of the growing demand for technically-trained personnel in South Vietnam. The Education Committee was also working on the improvement and expansion of vocational training facilities, on the upgrading of qualified instructors, and on better teacher salaries. It was pointed out by the committee that there was a shortage of funds specifically designated for salaries and there was no provision for paying teachers who were employed in self-help schools. Emphasis was placed on the fact that payment of salaries was a continuing requirement and that standard provisions should be made in the GVN budget to cover this.* In the Da Nang area considerable help was being provided by USAID and the Naval Support Activity in providing scholarships for needy children.

In the month of March, the continuing growth of medical assistance to the Vietnamese people and their responsiveness to this program was a positive indicator as to the importance of providing such a service. During the month, 48 MEDCAP teams provided 95,891 medical and dental treatments to 76,656 Vietnamese citizens in 158 locations throughout I Corps. The medical training being carried on by III MAF showed no signs of retardation during March as a result of the political crisis. At the Hue Medical School, 30 students were instructed in medical emergency procedures and a like number in dental emergency procedures. The training of health workers and volunteer nurses continued with the number reaching 21 and 2 respectively by the end of the month. This medical instruction was provided by doctors and corpsmen from III MAF. CARE, HANDCLASP, and the Catholic Relief program continued to contribute goods to III MAF for distribution to needy Vietnamese families which were increasing as a result of the growing number of refugees in I Corps. (5)

Throughout March, the Marines continued their COUNTY FAIR and GOLDEN FLEECE operations. The 9th Marines, which initiated the technique for carrying out County Fair operations, along with other units, continued to work with ARVN troops in searching out the villages and hamlets in an attempt to identify the VC sympathizers and destroy the Viet Cong infrastructure

* Since a great percentage of the schools in South Vietnam are private schools and the student has to pay a fee to attend, teachers salaries are provided for by the payment of such fees. However, the village public school, whenever there was one, often lacked adequate funds to support a full-time teacher.
within these villages and hamlets. GOLDEN FLEECE operations, another program initially started by the 9th Marines, were once again protecting the rice harvest against Viet Cong efforts to take the rice from the peasants. The success of these operations, COUNTY FAIR and GOLDEN FLEECE, which had been so successful in 1965, would depend upon the availability of ARVN troops and the cooperation of the Vietnamese Military Command in I Corps, both of which could be seriously affected by the growing political crisis. The Pacification Progress System, initiated in February 1966, was by now believed to be an adequate instrument for measuring the pacification status of villages and hamlets in I Corps. As March passed into April 1966, evaluation showed that there had been increases in all three Marine TAORs in respect to areas falling within the 60 percent level of pacification. (6)

By the 1st of April the Marine strength in Vietnam had risen to 51,905 men. This increase was due primarily to the arrival of elements of the 1st Marine Division, which were being located in the Chu Lai TAOR under the command of Major General Lewis J. Fields. General Fields assumed operational control of all Marine ground forces in the Chu Lai TAOR, which encompassed responsibility for Quang Tin and Quang Ngai Provinces in the I Corps Tactical Zone. With the growing number of Marine personnel and larger areas of responsibility with greater numbers of Vietnamese civilians to care for, civil affairs activity passed into the second quarter of the new calendar year faced with the growing political crisis throughout the country.

The political crisis that had begun in March reached a new peak of intensity during April 1966. Throughout April there were anti-government demonstrations in all major cities within five provinces of I Corps. During the month, the political situation vacillated between near civil war during the first part of the month to a relative calm by the end of the month. While the Marines were able to avert many incidents created by the crisis and deal skillfully with those encountered, one overriding fact remained present; the political crisis had taken its toll of the Marine pacification effort. Large unit combat operations were little affected, but the battle for winning the peoples' friendship remained in a state of flux. Nevertheless, the Marine Corps civil affairs programs continued to function as best they could in spite of the political crisis. By the end of April, it could be seen that even though there had been setbacks and few gains, it was still plain that the battle in the hamlet to win the confidence of the peasant was the one battle that had to be won.
While the political crisis in South Vietnam was receiving the greatest amount of attention, both by the press and those concerned with settling the crisis, the somewhat less publicized and often overlooked effort to stabilize the country by improving the plight of its populace continued to be carried on in the ICTZ by personnel concerned with advancing pacification. Although April was a most trying month in attempting to push forward civil affairs programs, many of these obstacles were overcome through the dependable organizational structure of the I Corps Joint Coordinating Council and dedicated concern on the part of these individuals who were charged with the responsibility of carrying on the "other war."

The I Corps JCC was able to meet only twice during April, as a result of the political crisis. The two meetings held provided an opportunity for discussion of the problems and the progress that was being made in pacification. It was pointed out during the two meetings that the Public Health Committee had been severely restricted in its operations as a result of the upheaval. However, the medical monitor of III MAF had been able to work up a training syllabus for rural health workers. The committee was advised that the syllabus would be submitted to the Central Government for approval and, if accepted, would become the basic instrument for training public health workers. The growing emphasis placed on providing medical services for the Vietnamese people was marked by the arrival of the first increment of the USAID-hired medical team made up of Cuban refugees. This team was to be assigned to Quang Ngai Province in support of the district dispensaries at Tu Nghai and Son Tinh. The medical team included a surgeon, a general practitioner, a dentist, and a male nurse. USAID representatives to the I Corps JCC also announced that the surgical team at Da Nang Provincial Hospital was functioning and was providing needed surgical assistance to many Vietnamese civilians. It was also noted in the medical area that the pediatric clinic, supported by the 3d Marine Regiment, had been expanded to care for a maximum of 31 children simultaneously. Significantly, the Vietnamese parents of the children now were showing enough confidence in the medical personnel to allow the children to remain in the clinic unaccompanied.

For many months, III MAF had been concerned about improving the educational facilities and opportunities for the Vietnamese people. Colonel Eric S. Holmgrain, G-5 for III MAF, remarked that the educational program promised to be one of the most hopeful programs yet developed in view of the long range benefits it would provide for the country. While the Da Nang Polytechnic School had received new financial support through funds approved by the Central Government, Rear Admiral Thomas Weschler, Commander
of the Naval Support Activity in Da Nang and a member of the I Corps JCC, announced that NSA intended, in the near future, to establish and equip a technical school in Da Nang-East. The stated purpose of this school was to provide technical training for Vietnamese adults, aged 18 to 45, and the graduates would help fill the critical shortage of technical personnel needed by the U. S. Military, U. S. civilian contractors, and the local economy. (7)

Further impetus was given to the educational programs during April by a meeting held at III MAF under the direction of the G-5. This meeting was called to determine the number and location of classrooms to be constructed by the joint U. S. Marine Corps Reserve/CARE program, in the Da Nang TAOR. Those in attendance at the meeting, USAID representatives, G-5, 3d Marine Division, and G-5, III MAF, discussed all aspects of the Vietnamese government school program in the Da Nang area. Consideration was given to the number of schools available, schools approved for construction, teacher availability, students not in school, and the availability of III MAF sponsors to support educational growth. A tentative agreement was reached at the meeting whereby III MAF would build four secondary school classrooms and 16 elementary school classrooms in 11 locations within the Da Nang TAOR. The final decision was to be made on the building program after coordination with the sponsoring units. At this meeting it was also agreed that III MAF would assist in the repairs of all damaged schools within its TAORs. During April, similar meetings were held at Chu Lai and Phu Bai to coordinate local programs of school building within these areas of responsibility.* (8)

The problems of logistics to support the civil affairs program were intensified during the month of April. The port facilities at Da Nang suffered for nine days during the month from the virtual suspension of activities resulting from the political crisis. MEDCAP supplies began to reach a critical level in I Corps areas during the month; the supplies available were barely sustaining the program's activities. (9) The III MAF was able to report by the end of the month that 43 MEDCAP

* The importance of coordinating school programs cannot be over-emphasized since it is of paramount importance to bring the local Vietnamese officials into the planning phase. It was found that the arbitrary erection of school classrooms on a unilateral basis by III MAF often failed to achieve the desired objectives. Classrooms built without teachers to fill them and construction without participation on the part of the local populace often left classrooms vacant. The desired objectives were best accomplished through bilateral construction programs of the self-help type; Vietnamese supplying the needs and manpower and Marine units supplying the material and technical assistance. Evans Interview.
teams did operate in 134 locations and administered 74,752 medical and dental treatments to 58,373 Vietnamese civilians.* These figures represented a 23.4 percent decrease in the numbers of civilians seen and treated during the month of March. During the same reporting period, III MAF also stated that 43 health workers and 2 volunteer nurses had received informal on-the-job training and that 26 senior medical students at the Hue Medical School had been given formal training in medical and dental emergencies by doctors and dentists of the command. (10)

Logistic relief was in sight, however, when it was reported to the I Corps JCC by Mr. Mark Gordon, Regional Director for USAID and a member of the I Corps JCC, that large amounts of USAID cargo had arrived in Da Nang harbor and off loading capabilities had reached 75 percent and would soon reach 100 percent. According to Mr. Gordon, the priority cargo was fertilizer since distribution had to be made throughout the ICTZ prior to the next rice planting season, and that requirements for fertilizer had reached 5,000 tons per month.** It was also reported that 897 tons of rice had arrived at the Da Nang port as a gift from West Germany to be distributed to the people in I Corps. (11)

By the end of the month commodity contributions to support III MAF in its civil affairs program resumed from CARE, Catholic Relief Service (CRS), and HANDCLASP.*** Some of the contributions made by CARE during the month included 10,000 school kits, 5,000 replacement kits, 500 woodworking kits, 500 bags of rice, and 70 mason kits. The Catholic Relief Service contributed 12,000 pounds of Bulgar wheat for distribution, and HANDCLASP contributed 5,900 pounds of miscellaneous commodities. By 30 April USAID, CARE, and CRS had all resumed full operation and as port conditions permitted, the backlog of commodities required to support the III MAF's civil affairs programs were being received. (12)

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* While there was a percentage breakdown available of the types of illnesses treated, no indication was made as to the nature or extent of treatments administered.
** One of the major programs being carried on in I Corps by USAID to improve the living conditions of the Vietnamese peasant was in the area of agricultural development. This program gave assistance both of a technical and material nature. (Personal interview with Mr. Mark Gordon, former Regional USAID Representative to I Corps, 25 July 1968, Washington, D.C.)
*** On 9 April, all American civilians were ordered evacuated from the ICTZ. With this order, USAID, CARE, CRS, and International Volunteer Service ceased to function as commodity distribution sources. By 20 April the restrictions on travel had been lifted and a return to normal operations was beginning. (III MAF Command Chronology, April 1966.)
Vietnamese farmers carry a bag of rice to a Marine LVT for transport to a warehouse during GOLDEN FLEECE crop protection operations. (USMC Photo #A185785)

During Operation COUNTY FAIR 1-3 in May 1966, a Marine distributes rice to Vietnamese village women. (USMC Photo #A187025)
The success of the Vietnamese Revolutionary Development Program in I Corps, which had been of major concern to III MAF, showed further signs of deterioration during April as a result of political tensions. Although there were six Vietnamese Armed Propaganda Teams (APT), ranging in size from 21 to 38 persons, operating within the Ngu Hanh Son Priority Area, little significant RD progress was observed during the month.* The RD program, which was designed by the GVN to win the support of the rural peasantry away from the Viet Cong, had suffered many setbacks in the past months. Any progress that had been made was due to the result of a few dedicated persons working within the program. During the political crisis in I Corps, however, few RD cadre remained aloof from the political maneuverings. While attempts were made to complete projects underway, there were few signs that new project plans would be made in the near future and this would continue to create breakdowns in the RD effort. Colonel Cach, the ARVN I Corps Deputy Chief of Staff for Rural Construction, was hopeful that Major General Nguyen Duc Thang, Secretary of State for Revolutionary Development/Rural Construction, would soon visit the ICTZ, and, along with the new Province Chief for Quang Nam, bring about a rejuvenation in the National Priority Area. The only other hopeful sign for the RD program in Quang Nam Province during the month of April came with the announcement that four full strength Revolutionary Development Pacification Cadre Teams (59 people to an RD Team), who would be graduating from the Vung Tau Training School on 1 May, would be assigned to the Ngu Hanh Son Area. (13)

During April, III MAF and civil affairs personnel were not solely concerned with the building of schools, distribution of commodities, providing medical services and training, and supporting the many self-help projects being carried out by the Vietnamese people. They were also concerning themselves with two major counterguerrilla type operations which had provided successful support to the total civil affairs program in the past. Throughout the month, GOLDEN FLEECE and COUNTY FAIR operations continued to be effective in destroying the enemy, disrupting the VC infrastructure, and securing large portions of the rice harvest for the Vietnamese peasantry.

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* The GVN programs of Rural Construction/Revolutionary Development had produced many names over the past months for the groups assigned to carry out these programs. Names such as Agrovile Cadre, New Life Hamlet Cadre, Mobile Administration Cadre, Rural-Political Cadre, Armed Propaganda Cadre, Peoples Action Team, and Revolutionary Development Cadre, all represent the same basic effort under these titles. (See LtCol Richard C. Kriegel, USMCR, "Revolutionary Development," Marine Corps Gazette, v. 5, no. 3 (March 1967), pp. 35-43, hereafter Kriegel, "Revolutionary Development."
The rice harvest had barely begun by the end of March, but by the latter part of April, the crop had encompassed such a large area in I Corps that GOLDEN FLEECE II, under the direction of III MAF, was involving a number of Marine units in the operation. The support given to the peasants by the Marines in the harvesting of their rice consisted of patrolling around the areas, providing security for the workers to and from the fields, and transporting the harvested rice to protected sites. One of the most successful operations of this type conducted in April was carried out by the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines in the Hue/Phu Bai area. During a 16-day period in mid-April, 3/4 made possible the harvesting and storage of 93 tons of rice, without any reported losses. It was estimated that this amount of rice was enough to feed more than nine Viet Cong battalions for one month. (14)

While GOLDEN FLEECE II was successfully protecting the rice harvest during April, a COUNTY FAIR operation, being conducted by Company M, 3d Battalion, 9th Marines along with elements of the 3d Battalion, 51st ARVN Regiment, was proving to be just as successful. During the early morning hours on 26 April, Company M surrounded the hamlet of Thanh Quet (5) in the Da Nang TAOR. At first light, elements of the ARVN regiment entered the hamlet, collected all the people, and moved them to a predesignated, centralized area. With the people collected, a census was taken, identification cards checked, medical treatment administered to the sick and ailing, political lectures given, commodities distributed, and the people fed. While the pacification effort was taking place, ARVN troops searched throughout the hamlet for hidden Viet Cong, stored weapons, and any other concealed supplies and equipment that could be used by the VC. The search operation uncovered a Viet Cong force hiding in the vicinity of the Marine blocking force. Upon discovery, the VC attempted to break out of their precarious situation and a fire fight ensued. As this COUNTY FAIR operation came to a close on 28 April, the brief but fierce engagement had resulted in 45 Viet Cong killed, 17 VC captured, and 14 weapons seized. A further blow was inflicted by the destruction of 25 tunnels in the vicinity of the hamlet, used for hiding the VC, as well as an unknown amount of supplies. During the same operation, two VC turned themselves over to the GVN for rehabilitation. (15)

During the month, other COUNTY FAIR and GOLDEN FLEECE operations were being carried out in I Corps. Early in the month, one COUNTY FAIR operation accounted for a VC hamlet leader and his entire cadre being killed or captured while attempting to slip through the line of encirclement. On 27 April the 1st Battalion, 5th Marines, a battalion landing team (BLT) of the 7th Fleet Special Landing Force (SLF), was committed in Operation OSAGE in the Phu Loc area near Da Nang. Its mission was to conduct search and destroy operations along with rice harvest protection within its assigned area. Success was being achieved by the end of April in denying the rice harvest to the Viet Cong.
The operation was terminated on the 2d of May. The importance of COUNTY FAIR and GOLDEN FLEECE operations, not only as a means for the physical destruction of the enemy but also as added support for pacification, continued to show its value as more Vietnamese peasants reciprocated by providing good intelligence about VC activities within the rural areas. (16)

In an effort to win the support of the populace in the countryside, the civil affairs personnel were also incorporating in their pacification program psychological operations as another instrument in the war for the minds of men. As other programs of pacification had suffered in April, resulting from the tensions surrounding the unstable political situation, likewise, psychological warfare (PsyWar) operations were severely affected. VC efforts at creating not only anti-government but anti-American agitation began to rise and much of the VC terrorism was directed at undermining the GVN and Marine Corps pacification effort. Abduction and assassinations were frequent and by the end of the month 21 such murders of village and hamlet officials had been recorded.

As the month closed and operations were returning to normal, there were hopeful signs that the losses could be regained during May, provided that the political situation remained stable. Aside from the purely statistical evaluation of the civil affairs program, there were growing signs that positive results could be obtained by protecting the peasant in the countryside and providing him with the necessary help to improve his social and economic conditions. These positive results would only be achieved by the GVN making available dedicated personnel to work with the Marine Corps in carrying out programs of pacification.

Encouragement was received when General Dinh, the new I Corps Commander, agreed to furnish III MAF with more Popular Force troops to continue to build the already successful Combined Action Program, although the number of troops needed continued to fall below the minimum requirement by the end of the month. Nevertheless, immediate steps were taken to increase the number of combined action companies by seven, which would raise the number to nine such integrated units working throughout the Marines' areas of responsibility. The success of the combined action companies and the civil affairs programs, by the end of April, was reflected through the Area Pacification Status Report, which was a result of the use of the recently established (February 1966) Pacification Progress System. On 30 April, the HES showed that the 1,185 square miles now making up the Marines' TAORs with 144 villages and a population of 694,489, were consistently moving toward the plus side of pacification. (17)
Pacification Continues as the Political Crisis Grows

May-1966

The Marine Corps had begun to regain the ground that had been lost in pacification resulting from the political crisis in April. While the situation remained tense in the ICTZ during the first part of May, tensions spiralled to new heights by the end of the month.

The I Corps JCC held its first meeting on the 3d of May and continued to concern itself with the backlog of commodities that were still on hand resulting from the labor problems and restricted distribution caused by the crisis. Other concerns of the council were centered around the school program, public health, agricultural advancements being made, self-help projects underway, the employment of psychological warfare in support of COUNTY FAIR operations, and the current status of the Vietnamese RD program. The solidarity of the council was evidenced by the representation of all major organizations, both military and civilian, U. S. and Vietnamese, who were once again meeting in a unified effort to produce tangible and effective programs of lasting benefit for the Vietnamese people, against the backdrop of a highly charged and emotionally unstable political situation.

Of special note at the first meeting was the announcement that the ARVN PsyWar Battalion would not be able to support COUNTY FAIR operations in the near future, due to other commitments; that a training program was being prepared by USAID for use in post-election training of village and hamlet chiefs; that a meeting would be held on 4 May to discuss the coordination of civic action between NSA and the city of Da Nang; and that the RD Cadre scheduled for Ngu Hanh Son area on 1 May would be delayed until 22 May. The second council meeting, held on 10 May, was a continuation of the same basic concerns of the previous meeting, with the exception that note was made that the special committees operating under the direction of the I Corps JCC were finding it difficult to hold their meetings, due to the political turmoil. It was also announced at this meeting by Major General Keith B. McCutcheon, Commanding General of the 1st Marine Aircraft Wing and Chairman of the I Corps JCC, that it would be the last time that he would meet with the Council, since Major General Louis B. Robertshaw, his relief as wing commander, would become the new chairman. General McCutcheon commented that his chairmanship of the council had been one of the most enjoyable aspects of his tour of duty in Vietnam.(18)

While the I Corps JCC was holding its meetings during the first two weeks of May, other civil affairs and counter-guerrilla operations continued to push forward the pacification effort. GOLDEN FLEECE operations were continuing to deny the VC access to the rice harvest along with providing protection for the
peasant against terrorist and reprisal attacks by the enemy. Six COUNTY FAIR operations were conducted during the month with one of the most successful operations starting on 9 May. Two Marine companies, in conjunction with two ARVN companies, were successful in routing the Viet Cong out of Le Son (2) and Thi Cam (1) in the Da Nang TAOR. While these operations were proving to be an added asset to pacification, one problem continued to threaten their future success: lack of ARVN personnel to work in conjunction with Marine units carrying out these operations.

The combined action units were also continuing to represent a major threat against the VC infrastructure and terrorist activity. These units had repeatedly received their "baptism of fire" while protecting the villages and hamlets in which they were living and operating and were showing that they could withstand the strongest VC thrusts which were attempting to dislodge and demoralize them. A lack of Popular Force troops to implement this program could seriously hamper its future growth. This shortage, which General Dinh was attempting to alleviate, nevertheless remained a constant problem to the Marines throughout May.(19)

With the Marines providing the villagers with substantial help, the people themselves began to show more initiative. The rise of self-help projects during May, along with the ability to carry out census taking, the establishment of intelligence nets within the villages, the development of defensive plans for the villages, and the establishment of local and governmental public information programs, attested to the desire of the people to continue to work at programs already started even though little material assistance was being given by the GVN as a result of the extended political crisis. As the villagers' confidence grew in the Marines' sincerity and willingness to help them provide a better life for themselves, a new high was recorded in May in the amount of information received from Vietnamese concerning VC activity.

Examples of such information received during the month can be seen by the following reports:

South of Da Nang, two young Vietnamese informed a reconnaissance patrol that they had just observed VC burying ammunition in an irrigation ditch nearby. At the identified spot, Marines uncovered two boxes of freshly oiled and belted machine-gun ammunition.

After a group of ten families had resettled, at their own request, inside the Marine secure area at Chu Lai, a youth from one of the families offered to lead a patrol to a concealed cave in his former hamlet, where he said seven VC had hidden during the move. When that cave was located and destroyed, entrances to two others were revealed. The armed VC inside the caves were killed and one was captured, along with seven weapons
and a quantity of clothing and ammunition.

There were numerous other reports during the month which provided the Marines with good intelligence information and directly contributed to the saving of many Marine lives. (20)

The I Corps JCC, which continued to meet during the last two weeks of May, attempted to resolve these problems caused by the continuing political disturbances. At the council meetings on the 25th and 31st of May, it was pointed out by the USAID representative that a critical problem existed at the Port of Da Nang due to the lack of workers and trucks available for unloading and transporting cargo. It was anticipated that this difficulty could be solved as the political crisis diminished in the area. Consideration was given to the necessity of helping the Vietnamese clean up debris and repair the damage that had occurred in the city in the wake of the crisis. Comment was made that the Vietnamese Revolutionary Development Program in the Ngu Hanh Son area had been hampered as a result of the Armed Propaganda Cadre having been withdrawn to guard the Hoa Vang District Headquarters. However, these people would soon be returned to the area and continue their work. It was also pointed out that the Mayor of Da Nang had organized a Special Welfare Committee to aid casualties and families of casualties which occurred during the recent unrest.* Food supplements, clothing, and other commodities were to be included in the aid provided to these families. Colonel Cach, one of the ARVN representatives on the Council, stated that General Hoang Xuan Lam would become the new I Corps Commander on the 31st of May. Brigadier General Jonas M. Platt, Chief of Staff, III MAF and a member of the Council, pointed out that although the current political crisis had created adverse conditions which had hampered meetings of the council and its committees, that a continuation of present policy and cooperation between various agencies was necessary and that they should continue to call on each other for help as needed. (21)

In an effort to make an assessment of significant accomplishments in pacification during May, III MAF relied upon the records kept by those units directly engaged in carrying out civil affairs programs. There were definite signs that some progress had been made in providing security and assistance to the Vietnamese people. Some of these accomplishments were reflected by the fact that the Marines had provided vocational training for some 5,800 Vietnamese, many of whom were refugees

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* Lieutenant Colonel Le Chie Cuong replaced Dr. Man as Mayor of Da Nang. Dr. Man had been arrested on the 23d of May, with the fall of the "Struggle Forces" in Da Nang. (Personal interview with Mr. Roger E. Burgess, USAID Province Representative to the city of Da Nang during the political crisis, Washington, D. C., 23 July 1968.)
with no previous technical skills. In a joint effort with the Vietnamese civilians, the Marines provided help in the construction of 7 wells, 11 schools, 5 dispensaries, and 3 bridges. There were also gains over the previous months in the number of village chiefs and councils functioning, village chiefs living in their homes, village markets established, and local village defense forces trained and in place. (22)

The concern of III MAF in improving the health conditions of the Vietnamese people remained as one of the major civil affairs efforts during May. Plans were made to provide formal dental instruction for students at the Hue Medical School starting in September. This program was to be carried out by the dentists of III MAF who would provide a training program consisting of weekly lectures and field trips which would include practical experience in carrying out dental procedures. Direct medical assistance was provided for the people by the undaunted efforts of MEDCAP teams who continued to operate in conflict-ridden areas. These teams were able to operate in 173 locations throughout the ICTZ and administer 67,913 medical and dental treatments to 58,651 Vietnamese civilians. A breakdown of the number of medical and dental treatments within each Marine TAOR showed that 40,106 treatments were administered in Da Nang, 21,304 in Chu Lai, and 6,503 in Phu Bai. While these totals represented an increase over the number of treatments provided during the month of April, it was believed by the personnel of III MAF that more could have been accomplished in this area had it not been for the on-going political crisis in I Corps. (23)

Attention was focused by III MAF on stepping up support for the Vietnamese Chieu Hoi (Open Arms) program.* This endeavor which had long been established by the Vietnamese Government had been plagued by alternate success and failure in the past, due primarily to the ambivalent attitude of those charged with the responsibility of carrying out the program. III MAF was convinced that this program provided another avenue for carrying out pacification and stepped up plans to provide support for its growth. These plans consisted of providing support for the building of new Chieu Hoi centers which would increase the handling capability of the Hoi Chanhs (returnees). Support was also given in the planning and execution of Psychological Operations in an effort to create a greater number of defections from the ranks of the Viet Cong. (24)

While May represented another frustrating and troublesome month for III MAF in carrying out civil affairs programs, it was hoped that within the month of June a better environment would be present, but this hope was not fully realized.

* An accurate account of the development of the Chieu Hoi Program can be found in Nighswonger, Pacification, p. 159.
Those military leaders who had supported the anti-government forces in their abortive attempt to bring about the downfall of the Ky regime were charged and punished for their actions by the GVN. General Thi, the principal figure, whose dismissal as I Corps Commander on 10 March had precipitated the political crisis, was allowed to leave the country. (25)

While civil disturbances resulting from the political crisis did not create the most favorable environment for carrying out pacification efforts in I Corps during the month of June, the Marines continued to carry on their civil affairs programs with notable progress. The apparent success of these programs in destroying the Viet Cong's efforts in the villages was marked by the appearance, for the first time, of Viet Cong shock troops whose mission was specifically designed to step up assassinations of Vietnamese Pacification Team members and increase terrorism in the villages and hamlets in an effort to disrupt and hamper the Marine Corps Civil Affairs Programs. (26)

The I Corps Joint Coordinating Council was able to meet four times during June. Two of its special committees, the Public Health Committee and the Commodities Distribution Committee, were also able to meet and carry on the business of providing services to the Vietnamese people. Reports given at these meetings focused emphasis on problems to be solved and successes being achieved throughout I Corps in pacification. One of the major problems being dealt with was an excessive shortage of trucks and truck drivers to maintain adequate distribution of goods being received at the Port of Da Nang. This shortage, along with the fact that distribution of goods throughout the countryside had been severely hampered due to the political crisis, prompted a fear that if the problem was not solved as soon as possible a rice shortage could develop in certain areas depending upon resupply by overland carriers. Although the possibility of a rice shortage was most apparent in Thua Thien and Quang Tri Provinces, major relief was available in these areas by the end of the month as Marines were able to secure and open more roads for travel. USAID was able to deliver 50 truck loads of rice to Hue on 22 June, and 50 truck loads of rice to Quang Tri Province on 23 June. (27)

A major rice shortage was also averted in the Dien Ban District, Quang Nam Province. Inspired by the example of the Marines, an ARVN unit, Company B, 104th Engineer Battalion, at the request of village, district, and province officials, assisted in the rebuilding of a coffer dam to provide water irrigation for the rice crop. Without this assistance in rebuilding the dam, the rice crop would have been completely lost. (28)
The III Marine Amphibious Force continued to emphasize the importance of education for the Vietnamese people and the necessity of fostering defections in the Viet Cong ranks, and to place strong emphasis on the school building program and the supporting of the development of Chieu Hoi Centers. It was realized that the current political crisis would probably have a negative psychological effect in creating defections among the ranks of the Viet Cong and every effort was made to step up the PsyWar campaign to avert such a setback.

Of special importance in the education program was the opening of the technical school being sponsored by the Naval Support Activity in Da Nang. Classes began on 1 June, with school sessions running from 1400 to 1800, six days per week. The initial enrollment at the school consisted of 57 students, all of whom were refugees. The instruction being given at the school centered around the practical skills of carpentry, heavy equipment operation, and truck driving. Plans were made to continue the training program throughout July and August with increased instruction amounting to eight hours a day. Also, efforts were being made to expand the student body to 200, which would include students other than refugees. With this expansion, instruction in typing and sewing was to be added to the school's curriculum. In an effort to improve and encourage the growth of the school, the Naval Support Activity attempted to find qualified Vietnamese instructors to teach the skills being offered. Further planning called for a transportation service to be set up for the students, thereby providing convenient and accessible travel to and from the school. While the technical school at Da Nang represented a major accomplishment in support of educating the Vietnamese in skills which would enhance their capability for employment and economic gain, it was by no means the only education program moving forward under the civil affairs effort. Throughout the needy areas of I Corps, the Marines continued their programs of building and repairing schools and providing instruction whenever and wherever possible.

The Chieu Hoi program, which had suffered from many inadequacies over an extended period of time, received renewed support during June. Increased allotments of money to enhance the program were released from the GVN to the provinces for construction of new centers and the improvement of old ones. III MAF and USAID personnel continued to provide impetus and physical support for this program and plans were being finalized for the development of a new Regional Chieu Hoi Center to be built in Da Nang.

During June, the Marines in I Corps continued to push forward their programs in psychological warfare, which were proving to be a major asset in supporting the overall civil affairs effort. Colonel Eric S. Helmgrain, who was the senior Civil Affairs Officer for III MAF, suggested that every opportunity be taken
by all of the PsyWar agencies to publicize the accomplishments by the ARVN in the field of civil affairs. It was felt that such publicity would not only continue to uplift the civil affairs effort, which had been suffering for a number of months from lack of leadership and interest on the part of ARVN commanders, but would also have a positive effect on the Vietnamese civilians who had long recognized their own military's lack of interest in their welfare.

With encouragement and assistance from the Marine command, the ARVN in I Corps stepped up their own programs of PsyWar and civil affairs. A major reorganization to enhance coordination took place during June by the ARVN as their PsyWar and civil affairs activities were combined under the direction of a PsyWar battalion. With this reorganization and new emphasis by the ARVN in the area of civil affairs, a concerted effort was made to improve not only the civil affairs projects that would materially assist the ARVN dependents but the civilian communities as well. This action was well received by the Marine command, which was fully aware that any long term and lasting civil affairs effort would have to be of a bilateral nature and not unilateral. It was due to this knowledge that the Marines had long been encouraging the ARVN to become actively engaged in civil affairs programs, which would hopefully improve their status within the civilian community. (31)

A major program being carried on under direction of the I Corps JCC by the representatives of the Joint U. S. Public Affairs Office, was the Census Grievance Cadre, made up of enlisted Vietnamese and located in Quang Nam Province. These people were principally operating outside the city of Da Nang and directing their efforts at the peasants in the outlying countryside. There were cadre located in 80 different hamlets and plans were being made to provide coverage for the city of Da Nang and 192 hamlets. The objective of the cadre was to collect vital census statistics within each hamlet. They were also charged with the duty of mapping each dwelling area, listing every person living in that area, identifying each family element, and determining political affiliations, where possible. The cadre also had the responsibility of soliciting grievances from the people, thereby providing a direct source of information to be used by all agencies concerned with improving the conditions of the civilian populace. Questions asked the civilians by the cadre were: (1) what has the GVN done for you?; (2) what can the GVN do for you?; (3) what has the GVN done to you? The desired results from knowing the grievances of the people would be the improvement of population and resource control, the discovery of VC cadre living within the hamlets, and the determination of the needs and grievances of the people. These cadre were another means whereby the peasant in the countryside could be made aware that his government was indeed concerned about his needs and desires and that efforts were being made to redress his grievances. (32)
Support came for the civil affairs programs on 12 June with the arrival of the U. S. Army 29th Civil Affairs Company, which was attached to and worked under the direction of III MAF. Upon its arrival, the company began to conduct an orientation course which acquainted its members with all of the agencies, both military and civilian, which were carrying on civil affairs projects throughout the five provinces in I Corps. It was pointed out at one of the monthly meetings of the I Corps JCC that the 29th Civil Affairs Company would perform an important function in refugee resettlement and the settling of foreign claims, both of which were growing as a result of the war. MACV granted authority for the establishment of a Foreign Claims Commission in I Corps. The officer in charge of the 29th Civil Affairs Company Legal Team was selected to be the claims commissioner. With the Legal Team's expertise, it was estimated that the commission could process approximately 90 percent of the foreign claims submitted in the area, which would be of great benefit to the Vietnamese people and a positive contribution to the overall civil affairs effort. The Refugee Team of the 29th Civil Affairs Company was assigned to advise and assist the GVN authorities in providing for the needs of these people. It was estimated that near the district headquarters in Dai Loc, Quang Nam Province, 17,335 refugees had gathered as a result of displacement brought on by combat operations within their village and hamlet areas. This was only one of the many areas throughout I Corps where refugees were gathering, and the GVN needed all the help it could receive in dealing with this growing problem. (33)

At the close of the month, III MAF made an assessment of the civil affairs program in I Corps, to attempt to measure its effectiveness against the problems faced during the 2d quarter of 1966. While the program had received its greatest setbacks during the political crisis, it appeared that this problem had been solved and that increased progress could be made in the following months. June had produced a 54 percent increase over May in medical assistance rendered to the Vietnamese people, and, while commodities distribution had been slowed down during the month, the USAID, CARE, CRS, and HANDCLASP programs continued to function as a vital source of support for the Vietnamese people. The school program, which was receiving considerable attention from III MAF, began to move forward with the opening of the Technical School at Da Nang, and plans were being made to expand the entire program of education for Vietnamese adults as well as children. (34)

COUNTY FAIR operations were carried on in June which increased the number of villagers being screened and identified for security purposes. This type of operation, along with other civil affairs efforts, produced an increase in the number of villages meeting the criteria to be classified as 80 percent pacified. In June, 22 additional villages with an estimated population of 182,335 moved into this 80 percent classification.
There were increases in the number of roads made secure for transportation, village markets being developed and opened, public information programs operating within the villages, and local defense systems functioning within the villages and hamlets to provide security against Viet Cong terrorist attacks. The Combined Action Program continued to grow with 37 combined action platoons operating throughout Marine areas of responsibility by the end of the month. Major impetus was given to this program during June with the integration of five Vietnamese Regional Force companies operating in the Da Nang area. General Lam, the ARVN I Corps Commander, was impressed by the past success of the program and indicated that ARVN support to the program would be increased. If General Lam was able to produce the necessary Vietnamese personnel to augment the Combined Action Program, III MAF planned to have 74 combined action platoons and 10 combined action companies operating in the ICTZ by the end of 1966. The Marines continued to provide support in the area of rice harvest protection, which not only allowed the Vietnamese farmer to harvest his rice in safety but also had the effect of driving the main force enemy units out of the mountains to the coastal lowlands area to secure food, thereby making them more vulnerable to Marine offensive operations. The Marines continued to put pressure on the Viet Cong with their combat operations in an effort to stem the rice flow to the main force enemy units. Operation JAY, a search and destroy operation, was able to demolish an enemy base-camp where the Marines found 130 tons of rice which had been stolen from Vietnamese farmers. The rice was seized and given to Vietnamese officials for redistribution to needy families within the area.

The total evaluation for June by the III MAF revealed that while progress had been slow in many areas of pacification the overall program showed signs of growth and progress. The most encouraging sign was that the civil affairs programs had met severe adversity, especially during the political crisis, and yet continued to function in an organized and coordinated way. Members of III MAF believed that the total pacification effort in I Corps was showing signs of maturity and sophistication, which had not been present during the first year of operation.
CHAPTER III

U. S. Marine Corps Civil Affairs in I Corps
July-August-September 1966

The Marines in I Corps continued to concentrate on pushing forward the civil affairs program which they had been developing. The political crisis had been stabilized and the Vietnamese political and military functions were returning to normal. The III MAF was hopeful that renewed interest and energies could be applied to furthering pacification in all areas of the ICTZ. The Vietnamese major efforts at pacification, known as Revolutionary Development, became a major interest of III MAF. A new Revolutionary Development Center had been established in I Corps for the purpose of training new cadre to work in the program and there was evidence that Major General Nguyen Duc Thang, the man in charge of Revolutionary Development for the GVN, would exert the type of leadership and influence needed to see that the program succeeded.

The I Corps Joint Coordinating Council, which had not been able to meet regularly during the past months of crisis, began to meet once again on a regular schedule to provide dedicated leadership in coordinating the many agencies dealing with civilian relief in the I Corps area. Due to a revision of the committees that had been functioning under the direction of the JCC, a more coordinated effort was generated that provided greater success in solving problems and providing services to those in need of such help. The committees, which were designated to function under the direction and support of the I Corps JCC, were Public Health, Psychological Warfare, Education, Commodities Distribution, Port of Da Nang, and Roads Committee. These committees had their own organizational structure and reported periodically to the I Corps JCC concerning their areas of responsibility or whenever immediate help was needed from the council. (1)

Many of the civil affairs programs began to show significant progress during July. The educational program, which was a major civil affairs effort in I Corps, continued to expand its activities in both the construction of classrooms and the provision of instruction for the people. Eighty-eight rooms were being built with emphasis on the construction of secondary and technical training facilities. A report by Rear Admiral Thomas Weschler to the I Corps JCC indicated that 204 students were attending the summer technical training classes and that several of the students who were completing the welding course had been hired by the Dillingham Dredging Company to work on projects in South Vietnam. Their employer had indicated that the hired students were more skilled at their trade than any welder already
on the payroll. Successful employment of these students indicated that the educational program was providing a major avenue through which economic improvement could be afforded to the Vietnamese people. (2)

Representatives of local religious schools met in July to explore the possibility of creating and establishing a scholarship program for meritorious students in the religious schools. The basic objective of the program was to identify superior students and finance their education to become school teachers. It was believed by members of III MAF present at the meeting, that financing for this program could come from the Chaplain Funds of III MAF units. A survey of these funds revealed that a sum in excess of $18,000 had been previously donated in direct support of the local religious organizations during Fiscal Year 1966. (3)

The Chieu Hoi program in I Corps began to move forward during the month as Lieutenant Colonel Thanh, the new Vietnamese I Corps Deputy Chief of Staff for Political Warfare, announced that the Vietnamese Minister of Information and Chieu Hoi had approved the plan for the construction of a new Chieu Hoi Center to be located in Da Nang-East. The GVN provided a budget of five million dollars to fund the program and the initial construction was to begin during mid-July.

The importance of the Chieu Hoi program was restated at a meeting of the I Corps JCC during July by Mr. Ogden Williams, the Chieu Hoi representative for the American Embassy in Saigon. Mr. Williams briefed the council on the history, progress, and current requirements of the GVN program. He pointed out that since the beginning of 1966, 10,500 ralliers had responded to the program and that projected estimates were that 20,000 would respond to the GVN's call for repatriation by the end of the calendar year. He pointed out that many people working in the pacification effort now believed that the combined total of ralliers and prisoners might be a better indicator of progress in the war than the total number of enemy killed. Mr. Williams stated that in August, 45 Philippine advisors would arrive in the RVN to work in the provinces with the Chieu Hoi Program and that all agencies should give priority to upgrading the program since its value had been well demonstrated. (4)

New programs continued to be generated in the area of medical assistance and public health which greatly enhanced the living conditions of the Vietnamese people. Plans were made to continue training students in the medical program at Hue University and increased effort was put forth to train rural health workers who could go into the countryside and administer medical aid to those who had no access to medical facilities. In a statement of principles, the Rural Health Workers Education Program set forth two main objectives to be accomplished. The first objective was to produce a trained Vietnamese cadre capable of working with the Vietnamese people,
to improve health and sanitation standards, and to treat the ill. The second objective was aimed at producing a cadre of well trained personnel capable of training others in their skills thereby providing for perpetuation and growth of the program. The training course was to run 12 weeks for each class with 200 hours devoted to intensive medical instruction, 40 hours to practical work in dispensaries or clinics, and 24 hours devoted to examinations. The class room instruction was to be taken at the Da Nang Polytechnic School and the cycle of instruction was to graduate 400 trained workers per year. (5) While this program would increase the medical services offered to the Vietnamese people, III MAF continued to concentrate on providing immediate medical help through its medical civic action program. MEDCAP patrols continued to go out daily and render service to the people on the spot, in the hamlets and villages within the ICTZ. During the month, 106,808 civilians received on-the-spot medical treatment by 64 MEDCAP teams operating in 297 different locations throughout I Corps. These treatments represented an 11.7 percent increase over those administered during the month of June. Plans were also being developed to construct a new dental facility in Da Nang to help meet the dental needs of the Vietnamese. An indication of this need can be found in the record of treatments provided by the 1st, 3d, and 11th Dental Companies during the month of July. Dental services provided to the Vietnamese people for the month were 4,357 treatments, along with 9,237 procedures. (6)

The 29th U. S. Army Civil Affairs Company, which had arrived in I Corps during June, had become fully operational by the end of July. Teams from the company were assigned by III MAF to Marine regiments throughout the ICTZ and became immediately involved in providing professional support to these commands. Assistance was given in many areas such as refugee handling, agricultural advice to the Vietnamese farmers, and surveys to discover the needs of the people. One such survey, conducted by the Food and Agriculture Team of the 29th Civil Affairs Company, found that there was a shortage of fertilizer for use by the farmers located inside the Marines' TAORs. This information was made available to the I Corps JCC and the USAID Regional Agricultural Representative, resulting in immediate attention being brought to the problem. With the establishment of the Claims Commission in I Corps, Captain V. P. Anderson, U. S. Army, the Team Leader of the Legal Team of the 29th Civil Affairs Company was named the Foreign Claims Commissioner. Captain Anderson proceeded to establish a claims office in the Da Nang area where his services would be readily available to the local Vietnamese people. The Claims Commissioner was granted the authorization from MACV to process and adjudicate claims arising throughout the ICTZ, up to and including $1,000. Claims for more than the authorized amount and combat claims were processed through previously established channels. Personnel of the 29th Civil Affairs Company were also helping the Marines provide assistance to the 27,239 refugees located in the Dien Ban and Dai Loc Districts of Quang Nam Province. Food, clothing, shelter,
and medical treatment were being provided by III MAF and civilian agencies to these people and plans were developed for resettling as many of them as possible and providing for their needs until they could become self-sustaining. (7)

In an effort to generate personnel for the continued development of the Combined Action Program, III MAF supported the GVN in carrying on their Motivation Indoctrination Program (MIP). It was a known fact that the Combined Action Program had not grown at the rate III MAF had hoped it would. This lack of growth was the direct result of inadequate numbers of Popular Forces available for augmentation into the program. This lack of availability of PF's was due to many circumstances, one of which was the high desertion rate which had existed. In an effort to solve this desertion problem and bolster the general morale of the PF's, the GVN had initiated a program of motivation and indoctrination whereby the PF's could be made aware of their important contribution to the war in providing security for the villages and hamlets. During this training, the PF's were also given instruction in military skills and made aware of their role in the Combined Action Program. In July, 50 Popular Force platoons totaling 1,988 soldiers underwent MIP training which brought the total number of trained PF's in I Corps up to 7,663. During the month all ARVN sector training centers and the Dong Ha National Training Center in Thua Thien Province operated at full capacity while carrying on this training. A special program was initiated at the Hoa Cam Training Center on 25 July, which provided a seven-week English language course designed to meet the needs of PF soldiers who were to be assigned to the U. S. Marine Combined Action Companies. The III MAF was hopeful that this type of training would provide for an increase in PF personnel so that the Combined Action Program could continue to grow and maintain the outstanding success it had achieved in the past months. (8)

In an effort to reach more people and bring them under the pacification program, III MAF stepped up its COUNTY FAIR operations. During July, 20 COUNTY FAIR operations were conducted throughout the ICTZ with favorable results. The success of these operations prompted III MAF to plan for 10 COUNTY FAIR operations per month in the future, provided that the necessary Vietnamese forces were available to support these operations. While COUNTY FAIR operations reflected an important joint program in carrying on pacification in I Corps, III MAF continued to innovate and develop new avenues for carrying on its civil affairs programs. A statement of the magnitude of its commitment by July 1966 in pacification revealed the objectives of III MAF's programs in assisting the GVN in the area of nation building. These objectives were set forth with the following considerations:

   a. Train local defense forces.
   b. Complete village defense plans.
c. Establish village defense nets.
d. Establish village PsyWar and Public Information Programs.

2. Establish Village Governments.
a. Encourage village census.
b. Assist in installing government officials.
c. Restore security for village officials.
d. Maintain close contact with village officials.

3. Improve Local Economy.
a. Assist in establishment of local markets.
b. Protect the rice harvests.
c. Improve communications.

b. Evacuate critically ill.
c. Give medical training.
d. Feed hungry Vietnamese.

5. Improve Public Education.
a. Support students.
b. Teach English language.
c. Help build schools.
d. Give vocational training.

Not only had III MAF established concrete objectives to work toward in carrying on pacification, it had also established a well-organized and highly effective means for carrying out these objectives. The organizational structure for carrying on its nation-building activities is depicted on the chart designated as Organization For Pacification In ICTZ. (9)*

At the end of the month, the people in the City of Da Nang were treated to a special event as the Seventh Fleet Band provided a concert for the enjoyment of the Vietnamese civilians and other personnel. It was reported by Rear Admiral Weschler, that the concert was well attended and well received by the Vietnamese and that the band wanted to give additional concerts the next time they were in the port of Da Nang. While the concert was not designed to fulfill any specific civil affairs role, such spontaneous acts of kindness typified the attitude of the great number of personnel who were genuinely concerned about developing a better relationship with the Vietnamese civilians and providing for their needs. (10)

* The organizational chart for pacification in the ICTZ was reproduced from FMFPac, Operations of U. S. Marine Forces, Vietnam, July 1966. This chart is found on the following page.