

3. Popular Force members and their families.
4. Widows and survivors of armed forces personnel.
5. Orphanages and hospitals.

These priorities also served as a guide for concentration of effort in the provision of services and the distribution of commodities for civic action programs at any level of command in Vietnam throughout the year.

United States and Vietnamese personnel who were assigned the task of inventorying the ACTT commodities did not complete it until March 1966. By that time the tactical units and the provincial committee had made known their requirements and the I Corps JCC Commodities Distribution Committee coordinated the issue of the Christmas donations using transportation contributed by the military units and civilian agencies. The military commanders in ICTZ agreed through the JCC to give 20 percent of the commodities to the tactical units and to divide the remainder among the Vietnamese civilian authorities in the five provinces. (8)

Civic Action Pattern of Activity: January 1966

By January 1966, Marine Corps civic action had settled into an effective and well defined pattern. Important but unusual projects like the receipt of ACTT supplies were coordinated by the I Corps JCC. In the more characteristic day-to-day civic action, the medical assistance program was extraordinarily well-developed and the tendency was towards either permanent fixed dispensaries or mobile service operating on a regular schedule. Marines distributed the following types of supplies in large quantities and often in conjunction with medical services: food, clothing, soap, CARE school kits (see Appendix One), and candy. Marines assisted Vietnamese in construction projects which fell into the pattern of repairs on bridges and culverts and the construction of schoolrooms and dispensaries. The construction projects were simple, restrained, and oriented toward self-help on the part of the Vietnamese. Psychological warfare had been combined with civic action in many Marine Corps units by January 1966 under the direction of either a G-5 or a Civil Affairs Officer. Civic action visits were commonly combined with the distribution of propaganda leaflets, drama and cinema presentations, and loud-speaker broadcasts. (9)

The Growing Bond Between Civic Action and Psychological Warfare

The Vietnamese Open Arms Amnesty Program (its Vietnamese designation, Chieu Hoi) helped to focus Marine Corps civic

action and psychological warfare on an important part of Vietnamese revolutionary development--the encouragement of Viet Cong to defect to the government side. The Diem government had introduced Chieu Hoi in March 1963 as an effort parallel with the strategic hamlet concept of the time. The open arms campaign was based on the successful policy of the Philippines' Defense Minister Magsaysay in encouraging the defection of Huks. Magsaysay resettled them on land of their own with equipment and supplies for farming. "In effect he made it both easy and attractive to become loyal to the government."(10)

The Vietnamese government had made elaborate plans for Chieu Hoi late in 1963, but the coup in November 1963, which overthrew Diem, dislocated the program. Without firm direction, the program drifted throughout 1964. In 1965, however, with the arrival of major U. S. ground forces and the increase in government morale, the program became effective. Problems remained in the indoctrination of officials and infantrymen who received ralliers and in the provisions for resettlement; but, the rising numbers of defectors signalled important successes. "After mid-1965, an average of 1,000 returnees each month came to the government side; and the numbers for January (1,672) and February (2,011) of 1966 broke previous monthly records."(11)

Psychological warfare themes by the turn of 1966 were closely tied to Vietnamese revolutionary development.(12) The following themes were the key ones in mid-January 1966 and illustrated the importance of Marine Corps civic action and Vietnamese revolutionary development in the war: (1) the Viet Cong are losing the war, (2) the GVN has the resources to govern the people best, (3) the GVN can provide a more abundant life than the Viet Cong, (4) the Viet Cong are the real enemies of the people, and (5) surrender and be received with open arms.(13) The themes supported the allied war effort yet they were more closely associated with revolutionary development and civic action than formal combat.

The Marine Corps emphasized the five themes during Operation MALLARD (11-17 January 1966) but towards the end of the month introduced two others to support an effort of indoctrination during the celebration of the lunar new year by the Vietnamese. The celebration, known as Tet Nguyen Dan (TET) formally extended from 21-23 January 1966 but actually included about 12 days of activity.(14) During TET, in accordance with social custom, the Vietnamese reduced business activity and in some areas even raised prohibitions against receiving medical attention. The Vietnamese envisioned TET as a time of joyous family gatherings with games and feasting as well as the ritual associated with the veneration of the family ancestors.(15) Marine Corps psychological warfare concentrated on the burden placed on the people by the Viet Cong and especially the

separation of family members and the taxes and physical terror. Finally, the second fresh theme reminded the Viet Cong themselves of their own hardships during TET with particular emphasis on broken family ties.(16)

Emphasis on Medical Assistance

During January 1966, medical assistance continued to be the most important part of civic action. Marines and Navy corpsmen treated a sharply reduced number of civilians as a result of the TET celebrations, but in spite of the four-day suspension of medical assistance, Marine Corps units treated 56,000 people for medical and dental ailments. A total of 40 MEDCAP teams provided the assistance at 120 different locations. The most common ailment treated was skin infection especially in the scalp area. Headaches and complaints of the upper respiratory tract were the next most common ailments. Fifty-four percent of the Vietnamese assisted medically were treated for these three general afflictions.(17) The afflictions revealed the unsophisticated nature of the medical service in which children received most of the treatments with adult females and males following in that order. The bulk of the MEDCAP program consisted of quick and simple treatment for a multitude of scantily-clad and poorly attended children.(18)

The distribution of treatments revealed the following pattern. The 3d Marine Division with most of the Marines carried out the bulk of the medical assistance, treating more than 38,000 civilians. The 1st Marine Air Wing assisted approximately 2,000 civilians and the Force Logistics Support Group treated most of the remaining 16,000 citizens.(19) The thin effort of the air wing deserved examination because the static nature of the air installations favored a well-developed program. For example, a fixed operating area was important for the continuity of medical treatment and favored the build up of a large clientele. Part of the explanation for the paucity of medical treatment in the air wing lay in the general coincidence of civic action areas of responsibilities with TAORs. The TAORs of the battalions of the 3d Marine Division abutted on the perimeters of the air installations; and, the battalions carried out civic as well as combat action within their TAORs. The result was that little territory remained for the air wing in which to carry on civic action programs except on a shared basis with a neighboring battalion. The enormous maintenance and air control effort required to keep both the fixed wing and helicopter aircraft flying was another factor which drastically reduced civic action in the air wing.

Civic Action Programs Rivaling
Medical Assistance by January 1966

Although medical assistance remained the single most important part of civic action, several other programs were beginning to rival it in importance. The Catholic Relief Service, a private relief society, made an impressive effort in January 1966, delivering the huge quantity of 430,000 pounds of rolled wheat to units of III MAF. Project HANDCLASP, a combined effort of the naval service and a multitude of private relief donors in the United States, delivered through Navy and Marine Corps transportation approximately 63,000 pounds of miscellaneous basic commodities e.g., clothing, food, drugs, etc.. The special Christmas program carried on in the United States for Vietnamese relief and called American Christmas Trains and Trucks delivered 300 measurement tons (one measurement ton was the equivalent of 40 cubic feet of cargo space) of commodities to Vietnam in January. The Marine Corps Reserve Civic Action Fund for Vietnam operating through CARE channels delivered 3,666 school kits to III MAF as well as large quantities of other kinds of self-help kits, e.g., textile, woodworking, and midwifery (see Appendix One).(20) The reserve fund concentrated on improving rural education while the CRS was the major contributor of food.

Early in January 1966, the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, in the Chu Lai area launched an intensive civic action program in the Vinh An-Hai Ninh complex of hamlets (see Map Number Two) at the mouth of the Tra Bong River. The three hamlets, which were scheduled for revolutionary development by the Vietnamese with Marine Corps assistance, were a scant 6,000 meters from the southern edge of the air installation at Chu Lai. But no Vietnamese government had existed in them for the two years since the overthrow of the Diem regime late in 1963. No schools functioned and no medical assistance was available to the villagers. The hamlets served the Viet Cong as a convenient way station for movements into the Chu Lai area from the south and east. On 29 December 1965, Company A moved into the hamlets, established a permanent patrol base, and began to work closely with a 25-man People's Action Team.

While the People's Action Team ferreted out the Viet Cong infrastructure and established local government, Company A concentrated on medical assistance and the improvement of hygiene. The Marine rifle company provided saturation security for both its own civic action and Vietnamese revolutionary development, and as a result, progress was rapid. After a few days, the PAT discovered a former school teacher and soon after reopened a primary school. The people of the hamlets selected officials in elections organized by the PAT. Company A in close coordination with the political team began to organize a Popular Force unit. The people of the hamlets responded warmly to the program and were relieved at being withdrawn from Viet Cong

control. The village chief of the three hamlets proved to be an aggressive leader who concentrated on developing an effective Popular Force unit for the defense of his flock.(21)

What were the lessons of the rapid progress in Vinh An-Hai Ninh? Probably most important was the hard fact that the people feared and hated the Viet Cong. Once the people were assured of protection and were reorganized by the Republican Vietnamese they eagerly, almost pathetically, clutched at the opportunity to live productive lives in the Republic. The swiftness and ease with which the Vietnamese in the Vinh An-Hai Ninh area were returned to the government camp, proved the hatred of the villagers for the Viet Cong. Additionally, Company A provided blanket-like security in the limited area of the three hamlets and the combination of Marine Corps "power" and Vietnamese revolutionary development quickly reestablished a community responsive to the Republican will. The hold of the Viet Cong over the villagers had been based on psychological and physical fear and an enormous hostage system. The main force of the Viet Cong held the young fighters as hostages from their families while simultaneously the clandestine infrastructure held families as hostages from the fighters in the main force. But the Viet Cong hold over the countryside lapsed with the institution of security and the destruction of the infrastructure. Conversely, however, a loyal Republican peasantry could be terrorized back into submission to the Viet Cong practically overnight.(22)

Vietnamese New Year: 20-23 January 1966

On 19 January 1966, the Civil Affairs Officer of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, returned the PAT operating with Company A to Vinh Son for the celebration of TET. Civic action was a never-ending task and while in Binh Son the CAO turned over 16,000 dollars (VN) to Father Diek of the Catholic Refugee Center for the care of 40 orphans. TET officially began at 1200 20 January 1966 and III MAF carried out a drastic reduction of civic action on that day. But while III MAF reduced medical assistance to negligible proportions and restricted the distribution of the normal commodities, it increased face-to-face contacts with the Vietnamese people. The Marine Corps emphasized small cash gifts in envelopes for children; and numerous Marines and Vietnamese civilians met for the first time during the general distribution of the envelopes to the children.(23) Additionally, many local government officials and private citizens extended invitations to Marines to participate in the holiday festivities.

Early on the morning of 21 January 1966, Mr. Dien, the hamlet chief of Tri Binh (1) (see Map Number Two) and the man who had replaced the ill-fated Mr. Truong, extended a general invitation to the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, to celebrate TET



English classes: by the end of 1965, English classes burgeoned in the Marine TAORs. The Vietnamese people showed deep interest, and adults as well as children enrolled in large numbers. PFC Patrick Moore instructs in this scene in January 1966. (USMC A186596)

in his hamlet. Five officers and 46 men represented the Marine Corps in what turned out to be an extraordinarily successful affair. Mr. Dien initiated the celebration with sound political sense by reading messages from the Province and District Chiefs wishing the villagers a prosperous and happy new year. After the messages had been read, Mr. Dien raised the Republican flag over the hamlet. Then he explained to the villagers that five months ago Tri-Binh (1) had been poor, but since that time the Marine Corps had come to the assistance of the hamlet with medical treatment, food, and clothing. The chief emphasized that the Marines had helped the villagers to improve themselves. Finally, he picked up the ubiquitous theme of security and stated that he was not afraid and would work to improve Tri-Binh (1) even though the Viet Cong had killed the former chief, Mr. Truong.(24)

The villagers and Marines enjoyed each other's company so much on 21 January 1966, that the villagers extended an invitation for the following day. The visiting Marines enjoyed themselves even more on 22 January and at 2230 were still in the hamlet playing the Vietnamese version of bingo. At that time the village elders divided the Marines into groups of twos and threes and then took them to their respective homes where Marines and Vietnamese participated in an extensive banquet. "The villagers were excited and happy that the Marines were able to participate in TET" and requested that the Marines return for a third day of holiday revelry. The success of the face-to-face social activity at Tri-Binh (1) was based on several factors. The hamlet chief vigorously courted the Marine Corps for his hamlet. The Civil Affairs Officers of the 3d Battalion, 7th Marines, realized the privilege of social interaction with the villagers on their New Year's holiday and the beneficial impact of about 50 well-instructed Marines on the peasants. Finally, Chief Dien was a paragon of earthy peasant guile--50 Marines alert for a possible Viet Cong incident made Tri Binh (1) the most secure hamlet in the Chu Lai area during TET.(25)

In the TAOR of the 1st Battalion, 7th Marines, the villagers of the Vinh An-Hai Ninh area celebrated TET with two significant ceremonies. First, they planned and carried out an elaborate symbolic ambush of the Viet Cong. Apparently using the principles of homeopathic magic, the villagers sought to ensure a successful defense against their former harsh masters. In addition to the ambush, the villagers conducted a flag raising ceremony and committed themselves overtly to the Republican cause. These activities originated with the villagers; the People's Action Teams assigned to the village for Revolutionary Development had departed to celebrate TET in its own area around Binh Son.(26) Farther north, in the Da Nang TAOR, the 2d Battalion, 9th Marines carried on an active Civic Action Program concentrating on the local school at Duong Son (3) (999670). The villagers were anxious to get

their school in operation notwithstanding TET. As a result, the Marines presented CARE school and woodworking kits, and desks of their own making to the people and also treated patients at the battalion aid station.(27) At Hue/Phu Bai, the Vietnamese registered complete acceptance of the Marine Corps members of the CAC during TET. In one of the villages, the peasants invited members of the Marine rifle squad of the combined action platoon into more than fifty different homes for games and banquets.(28)

A Representative Day of Civic Action

January 1966 was a reasonable month to take stock of Marine Corps Civic Action in Vietnam in the general sense, for example, of representative activity on a particular day. The Marine Corps had been ashore in strength for almost a year and civic action had developed patterns which would be reflected on a carefully chosen day. On 15 January 1966, the Marine Corps operated in a representative way for the Vietnamese war, and civic action was not affected by unusual events like Christmas, TET, etc. Maps One, Two, and Three show Marine Corps civic action at work in the three TAORs. The Marine Corps units concentrated on medical assistance (red circles) but distributed commodities (blue circles) in significant quantities at numerous locations. Marines also assisted the Vietnamese in construction projects (green circles) which varied in complexity from the building of a schoolroom or a children's hospital to the repair of a culvert on a primitive road.(29) Dr. A. R. Frankle, Assistant Civil Affairs Officer, 3d Engineer Battalion pressed hard for a dispensary at Da Son and the Battalion technical personnel pooled their talents to produce a complex civil engineering effort in his support.(30)

The units of III MAF carried out most of their civic action close to the defensive centers of the TAOR, i.e., the air installations. Most of the ground units which supported the infantry battalions were located near the air installations. The air units themselves and the infantry battalions which manned the immediate perimeters were clustered in and around the bases. In the Da Nang area in particular, a pattern of saturation in civic action had grown up by the middle of January 1966. The battalions close to the base concentrated vigorously on the two hamlets of Phong Bac and Da Son. These hamlets became saturated with civic action while farther out in the TAOR in the vast areas controlled by the infantry battalions, civic action was spread more thinly. The pattern of action on the maps pointed to an enlargement of the civic action areas of responsibility of the supporting battalions and the air units to prevent an unfair distribution of services and commodities. The units of the 1st Marine Air Wing were especially restricted in their civic action programs by both the protecting and the neighboring ground units.

Unexpected Reinforcements

In February 1966, III MAF discovered unexpected reinforcements for civic action. The 3d Marine Division Band and Drum and Bugle Corps played at a series of public events and excited enthusiastic, favorable response. Warrant Officer William E. Black, director of the band (and the drum and bugle corps), presented one of the highlights of civic action in the TAOR of the 7th Marines. On 17 February 1966, the band gave concerts in several key areas for civic action. The band treated the hamlet of Vinh An, where Company A, 1st Battalion, 7th Marines had furnished unusually effective support for revolutionary development, to an impressive performance of western music and precision marching. The band also played at Tri Binh (1) and Nuoc Man and was applauded enthusiastically by the villagers. Two days later, at the Da Nang Catholic cathedral, in an area neatly cordoned off with white nylon line and with Vietnamese and U. S. flags flying, the drum and bugle corps performed before a huge curious crowd. Drum head designs set the theme of the presentation with flags of both states combined with a handshake symbol. The words, "Friendship Through Music," in Vietnamese tied together the theme. The Vietnamese responded ecstatically.(31) From that time onward, both the band and the drum and bugle corps became purposeful weapons in the campaign to place the Vietnamese people behind the government. Marines also began to include music appreciation periods along with English classes in order to appeal to the Vietnamese interested in music and drama.

Operation DOUBLE EAGLE: the Team of Civic Action and Psychological Warfare in Support of a Major Operation

By late January 1966, civic action was becoming more closely integrated into large unit operations of the Marine Corps, especially with the successful precedent of Operation MALLARD and various lesser cordon and search operations of 1965. On 28 January 1966, III MAF conducted the largest amphibious operation since the Korean War. The Marines of several battalions landed from shipping of the Amphibious Task Group of the Seventh Fleet near Thach Tru south of Chu Lai. The landing was part of a month-long joint ARVN/U. S. Marine Corps operation called DOUBLE EAGLE.(32) The operation showed the advances in Marine Corps thoughts about the team of civic action and psychological warfare in Vietnam. HQ, III MAF ensured that a civic action organization was included in the Marine Corps task organization. Two U. S. Army Civil Affairs Teams also came under Marine Corps control and were used to handle refugees and to assist the Vietnamese District Chief of Duc Pho (located approximately 50 miles south of Chu Lai on Highway One) in processing and caring for the expected influx of people. The civic action group brought ashore large

quantities of basic supplies to support civilians separated from their homes and to care for the expected refugees. The Marine Corps supported Operation DOUBLE EAGLE with more than 27 tons of food specifically for the care of civilians in the operating area. Claims against the Marine Corps for damage to crops, homes, etc., had been a persistent problem in Vietnam also. But the Civic Action Officer for DOUBLE EAGLE carried with him a special fund of 3,665 piasters to deal on the spot with small claims.(33)

The lessons learned about civic action in Operations MALLARD and DOUBLE EAGLE reinforced each other. To be effective, Marine Corps civic action had to be coordinated through the Vietnamese district government. The Marine Corps depended on the district headquarters to collect, classify, and clear all refugees and displaced persons once they had been transported to the general area of the district headquarters by Marine Corps helicopter or truck. The processes carried out by the Vietnamese with the exception of collection, were political and administrative and were a function of local government. The Marine Corps learned that the large quantities of captured foodstuffs and similar materials were best processed through the closest district headquarters. The Vietnamese officials were best equipped by language and local knowledge to effect redistribution. The major civic action lesson of both MALLARD and DOUBLE EAGLE was that coordination between the Marine Corps and local Vietnamese government ensured the greatest and most lasting effect on the local population.(34)

Marines carried out a major psychological warfare effort in support of DOUBLE EAGLE. Propaganda themes directed at the Viet Cong fighter predominated in the written and oral attacks against the enemy. The themes were both short and long-range and were capable of being used against civilians also. The Psychological Section coordinated the dropping of almost three million leaflets in the objective area during the first part of the operation. The Marine Corps received nine ralliers during the first phase of DOUBLE EAGLE largely as a result of emphasizing Viet Cong hardships and making it easy for the enemy to defect. Aerial loudspeaker systems proved especially effective and they broadcast the same effective themes found on the leaflets: Viet Cong lack of food, poor medical care, separation from home and family; as well as the strength of the GVN and its allies, surrender appeals, and explanations of how to surrender.(35)

Medical Assistance Twelve Months after the Landing

During February 1966, III MAF recovered handily from the adverse effects of TET on medical assistance. Units of III MAF using 40 MEDCAP teams treated either medically or dentally almost 67,000 Vietnamese citizens in 122 locations. The most



Medical assistance was the mainstay of civic action. The more advanced type is shown in this scene where two girls are being trained as rural health workers. The reinforcement of the Vietnamese rural health program was the goal of Marine assistance. Lt G.L. Williams MC,USN, supervises one of the girls who is treating a case of skin infection. 18Sep65 (USMC A185695)



Medical assistance even at the end of March 1966 was not an elaborate thing. In this photograph taken in March in the Chu Lai TAOR, a corpsman of the 7th Marines begins to treat a moderate-sized gathering consisting largely of children. (USMC A369926)

numerous ailments continued to be skin diseases, headaches, and respiratory infections which formed well over half of the ailments of individual citizens. In addition to medical treatment, and probably more important from the long-range viewpoint, Navy corpsmen trained 16 health workers, two volunteer nurses, and four volunteer medical assistants. By February, the medical training programs had taken on special importance as a source of Vietnamese medical personnel. Prior to December 1965, the GVN had insisted on giving the trainees the normal examination for hiring as health workers. The scheduling, testing, and correcting process was time consuming and affected the morale of the trainees. Additionally, the process did little to further the prestige of the U. S. military force which had conducted the training. The Vietnamese Minister of Health decided, therefore, on 4 December 1965, to hire automatically Vietnamese citizens trained by U. S. military/naval medical teams if the programs were approved in advance. As a result, by February 1966, appreciable numbers of Vietnamese medical trainees were flowing through III MAF medical training programs directly into the Public Health Service.(36)

The Marine Corps Reserve Civic Action Fund for Vietnam was used by CARE to provide major quantities of food as well as blacksmith kits, carpenter kits, and more than 2,000 textile kits. CARE delivered over 37 tons of rice to III MAF and this rice and the large number of textile kits represented a change in emphasis from previous months. Formerly, CARE had used the reserve fund primarily for school supplies. HQ, III MAF ensured that all of the material received during February was delivered to local government officials who actually distributed the supplies to the Vietnamese people. In the immediate vicinity of Da Nang, the powerful Buddhist faction of the population controlled an important system of schools and orphanages. Here, the CG, III MAF, supported the Buddhist program with large outlays from his reserve civic action contingency fund. General Walt had contributed over 9,000 dollars (U.S.) in support by February 1966.(37)

Project HANDCLASP

Project HANDCLASP, an official Navy program since 1962, shipped 63,000 pounds of miscellaneous, basic commodities to III MAF in February 1966. HANDCLASP was part of the Navy's people-to-people effort and overseas community relations program; and, since 1963, the Navy had been shipping HANDCLASP materials to Vietnam. Individuals and organizations within the United States donated material to the naval service and shipped it to warehouses at San Diego for further delivery by the Navy overseas. With the buildup of Navy and Marine Corps forces in Vietnam in 1965, the Navy began to emphasize civic action programs within Vietnam for both Navy and Marine Corps forces. Prior to 1965, HANDCLASP had been a Navy program only,

but in June 1965, the Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, notified the CG, III MAF that HANDCLASP supplies were available for use by the Marine Corps. The materials which were available were basic and included, clothing, food supplements, medical supplies, and books. The CG, III MAF accepted the support and requested in particular the following items: pens, soap, vitamin and worm pills, sewing needles, thread, and salt. The CG's request reflected in microcosm the whole Marine Corps civic action program. Pens reflected education; soap, and vitamin and worm pills reflected pressing necessities in medical aid; sewing needles and thread represented self-help for clothing; and salt was the most basic of food necessities.(38)

Project HANDCLASP became one of the major sources of supplies for Marine Corps civic action, but the project operated on a tenuous basis. Handclasp was a nonfunded activity of the Navy which meant that the Navy was able to move material only on a space available basis in naval shipping and aircraft. For example, Military Sea Transport Service ships and Military Air Transport Service aircraft could not be used to deliver Handclasp material. As a result, the shipment of material depended on naval operational requirements for space and the flow was uneven. After early 1965 naval operational commitments increased and threatened the effectiveness of the program in the Western Pacific. Simultaneously, however, the Navy realized the importance of civic action in the Vietnamese war and the end result was that space was made available. The shipment of Handclasp supplies rose sharply in 1966. Nevertheless, American charity seemed to be practically limitless and the final check on the program was limitations in shipping space.(39)

The Breadth of Civic Action by March 1966: From Candy to County Fair

By March 1966, after one year of operations in Vietnam, Marine Corps units were carrying out a broad range of civic action. Contrast, for example, the receipt of private U. S. charity commodities via naval operational shipping for use in soft and indirect civic action, i.e., the distribution of commodities through local governing officials, with the following technique. The 3d Marine Division originally tested something called the County Fair concept on a pilot basis in February 1966. The concept was a variant of Marine Corps cordon and search operations which had been used as early as August 1965 in the Da Nang TAOR by the 9th Marines.(40) The concept was further refined after February and established by March 1966 as a standard type of operation for division units.

County Fair was a joint Marine Corps/ARVN operation designed to destroy Viet Cong influence in chosen hamlets and to re-establish the authority of the GVN. Marine Corps units provided security during the County Fair operations by cordoning

off chosen hamlets with riflemen alert for a possible break-out by Viet Cong guerrilla fighters. Surprise was the vital necessity during the positioning of the cordon; if surprise were complete, members of the Viet Cong infrastructure would be trapped within the cordon. ARVN forces and GVN political workers then entered the cordoned area and moved all of the villagers to a central area where they were interrogated, processed for identification, fed, and exposed to propaganda lectures, drama presentations, and movies. While this combined military and civic action was being carried out, ARVN forces conducted a detailed search of the hamlet for hidden tunnels, food, munitions, and hiding Viet Cong.(41)

County Fair was designed to destroy the laboriously established Viet Cong infrastructure within a hamlet or village by trapping the Viet Cong within the inhabited complex and then methodically using police and intelligence techniques to isolate the Viet Cong from the villagers. Well conducted County Fair operations impressed the villagers with the power, efficiency, and benevolence of the GVN.(42) The operations in their refined form were a traumatic surprise to the Viet Cong, who emphasized in captured documents the necessity to take immediate countermeasures against the new technique. The Viet Cong concentrated on two defenses against County Fair: first, if surprise were not complete, every effort had to be bent towards breaking through the incomplete cordon; second, acknowledging that surprise might be complete, the Viet Cong ordered the preparation of stocks of food and water to support passive hiding for periods of three to five days.(43)

County Fair operations emphasized Marine Corps support for hard civic action, i.e., security and direct support for Vietnamese revolutionary development. They were a far cry from the candy and pill patrols of April 1965. They were also different from the distribution of Handclasp commodities in secure areas in March 1966. County Fair operations and Combined Action Companies represented Marine Corps civic action in its hardest and most aggressive state by March. Both concepts had been proven successful by the anniversary of the first year of major Marine Corps forces in Vietnam. In February 1966, the first CAC had been formed in the Da Nang TAOR in emulation of the successful company at Hue/Phu Bai. And shortly thereafter, III MAF introduced the CAC concept at Chu Lai. County Fair operations began to expand rapidly also. In March 1966, III MAF conducted a total of four County Fair operations under the immediate direction of HQ, 9th Marines. Several months later, in July 1966, operations numbered in the twenties and were taking place in all of the TAORs.(44)

The Importance of Civic Action:
Indicators of Progress

At the end of the first year in Vietnam, Marine Corps civic action with its many ramifications had become so important that it ranked almost equally with the formal combat effort. General Walt specifically emphasized the operational concept of two powerful hands, one a clenched fist used to smash the enemy main force and guerrilla fighters, and the other open and extended to the Vietnamese people to shield them from the terror and to assist their government. But HQ, III MAF found it difficult to describe or present civic action progress. Combat actions were measurable in terms of the numbers of actions fought, patrols run, and ambushes laid as well as the number of casualties inflicted on the enemy. But HQ, III MAF for the first year had no satisfactory system of quantifying the results of civic action in support of revolutionary development. Assuredly, HQ, III MAF had collected statistics on civic action including number of medical treatments, number of persons treated (uniformly a lower figure), pounds of food and clothing distributed, etc.. But the statistics were not satisfactorily correlated with progress in the war until February 1966.

Progress in the war largely depended on the advancement of Vietnamese revolutionary development. In February 1966, in an attempt to relate civic action to that progress, HQ, III MAF adopted a system of rating the progress of Vietnamese revolutionary development in the Marine Corps TAORs in ICTZ. The system was important because it not only related civic action and revolutionary development but also tied in Marine Corps combat operations with the latter. For the first time the Marine Corps had a system which allowed it to estimate its general progress in the Vietnamese struggle. The system essentially equated progress in revolutionary development to progress in the war in general and included certain indicators of progress which could only be accomplished by the Marine Corps or a similar military organization, e.g., ARVN. The system included the following general indicators of progress:*

1. Destruction of enemy units-----20 Points
 2. Destruction of enemy infrastructure---20 Points
 3. GVN establishment of security-----20 Points
 4. GVN establishment of local government-20 Points
 5. Degree of development, new
life program-----20 Points
- Total-----100 Points

(Equivalent to accomplishment of revolutionary development) (45)

* See Chart Number Two for a detailed breakdown of these indicators.

Chart Number Two

Detailed Breakdown of the Revolutionary Development
Indicators of Progress

	POINTS
1. Destruction of Enemy Units	
a. VC units destroyed or expelled	15
b. Local defensive force established	5
TOTAL	20
2. Destruction of Enemy Infrastructure	
a. Village census completed	2
b. VC infrastructure destroyed	8
c. Local intelligence net established	5
d. Census, grievance interviews completed	2
e. Action completed on grievances	3
TOTAL	20
3. Vietnamese Establishment of Security	
a. Defensive plan completed	2
b. Defensive installations completed	3
c. Security forces trained and in place	12
d. Communications net established	3
TOTAL	20
4. Establishment of Local Governments	
a. Village chief and council in office	4
b. Village chief residing in village	3
c. Hamlet chiefs and councils in office	4
d. Hamlet chiefs residing in hamlet	4
e. Psychological operations and information program established	3
f. Minimum social and administrative organization	2
TOTAL	20
5. Degree of New Life Program Development	
a. Adequate public health program	4
b. Adequate education facilities	4
c. Adequate agricultural development	4
d. Adequate transportation facilities	4
e. Necessary markets established	4
TOTAL	20