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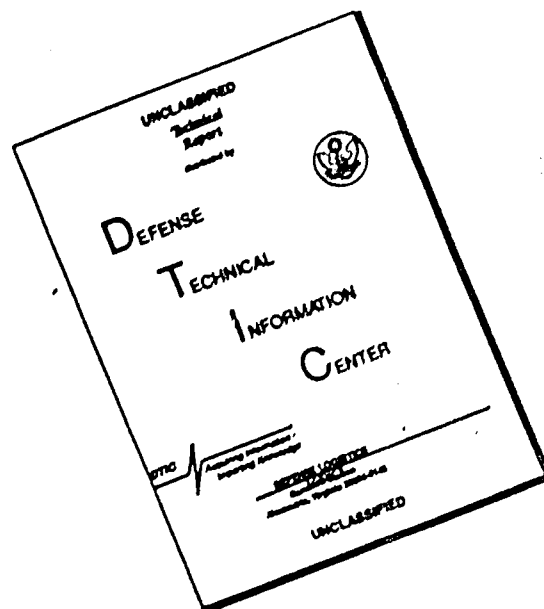
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HQDA Ltr 525-73-6



REPLY TO
ATTENTION OF:

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (24 Apr 73) DAMO-ODU

9 May 1973 ✓

Expires 9 May 1974

SUBJECT: Senior Office Debriefing Reports: Senior Advisors, Phu Yen, Pleiku, Quang Duc, and Darlac Provinces, MR 4, Period Ending February 73 (U)

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Report (U), 2 July 1971.
2. Transmitted herewith are reports of Senior Advisors to the MR 4 provinces for the period ending February 1973.

a. LTC John M. McDonald, SA, Phu Yen Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B015, Inclosure 1

b. LTC Frank L. Day, SA, Pleiku Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B019, Inclosure 2

c. LTC Griffin N. Dodge, SA, Quang Duc Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B027, Inclosure 3

d. LTC John C. Bosch, SA, Darlac Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B028, Inclosure 4

3. These reports are provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the authors. The reports should be reviewed in accordance with paragraphs 3 and 5, AR 525-14; however, they should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.

4. Information of action initiated under provisions of AR 525-14, as a result of subject reports should be provided to the Deputy Chief of Staff for Military Operations, ATTN: DAMO-ODU within 90 days of receipt of covering letter.

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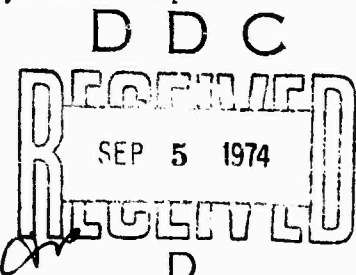
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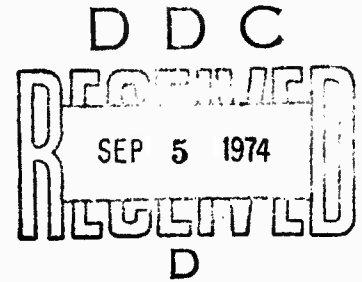
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PROVINCE ADVISOR'S

COMPLETION OF TOUR REPORT

(RCS: MACCORS 174.01)



SECTION I

19 Feb 73

NAME: John M. McDonald

GRADE: LTC

PII Redacted

BRANCH OF SERVICE: Army (Infantry)

PROVINCE: Phu Yen

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: 9 Dec 72 - 13 Feb 73.

EXPECTED REASSIGNMENT DATE: 15 Feb 73.

ASSIGNMENT ON PREVIOUS VIETNAM TOUR: Battalion S-3, 1st Bn, 327th ABN INF,
101st ABN Brigade; Bde S-1, 1st BDE,
101st ABN Div.

SECTION II

1. What background did you have for your position?

Inasmuch as I was selected to fill this position, i.e., I did not volunteer, I do not know what criteria were used in my selection. Possible qualifications that could have been considered include:

(a) Combat arms officer (Infantry) with combat experience in the Province to which I was assigned.

(b) BS in Military Art and Engineering from the United States Military Academy.

(c) MSBA with extensive work in economics and personnel administration (George Washington University).

(d) MSBA with a major in operations research/systems analysis (University of Rochester).

(e) Three years programming experience in the Office of the Assistant Vice Chief of Staff, Army.

DAMO-ODU
73B015
Inclosure 1

CLASSIFIED BY John M. McDonald
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2. What training did you have for this position?

I attended the Province Senior Advisor's Course at the US Army's Institute for Military Assistance, Fort Bragg, NC in a TDY status between 5 Sept 72 - 17 November 72. The course was designed as an 18-20 week course but the combination of my late selection and notification and early required in-country date precluded more than 10 weeks attendance.

3. What additional training would you suggest for your position?

I feel that each PSA should have a fluency in Vietnamese. My four weeks of language training were completely inadequate to give me the needed language proficiency.

4. What should be the length of tour for your position?

Not less than 18-24 months. The PSA advices on many important long range programs, changing program managers every 12 months, such as was scheduled in my case, would greatly reduce the possibility of continuity and the realization of major portions of possible program success. Receiving a new PSA every 12 months is a heavy burden on the Province Chief who has far more important things to do than "break-in" my PSAs.

5. Was support from Region and/or Saigon Headquarters satisfactory? If not specify deficiencies.

Support during the limited period (2 months) I was^a PSA was satisfactory.

6. Were there any programs delayed because support was not forthcoming? No

Were there any programs that were especially successful because support was readily available? No

Which ones? Not applicable.

During the two month period covered by this report the Advisory Team's personnel had been drawn down to the point that only the most essential programs received an adequate amount of effort from the US. Advisors. Only military aspects, i.e., defending the people and controlling the land were heavily emphasized.

7. Do the reporting requirements as set forth in Joint Directive 4-70 provide a means for reporting all information of present and future value? If not what change would you recommend?

All information of present value is reported under JD 4-70 and as far as I can project it appears information of future value is also preserved.

8. Do the MACCORDS Management Information System Field requirements set forth

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in Joint Directive 4-70 adequately measure progress in pacification programs?

I do not feel qualified to answer this question. However, after reviewing MR II overall MES ratings and the Province's January 73 monthly reports, I would think serious doubts would exist. Several of the alleged "more pacified" provinces experienced a sizable amount of enemy action and apparently the VC-NVA there possessed considerable more strength than the pacification program reports would have predicted.

9. Were instructions from higher headquarters clear with no conflicting requirements? If not, what specific instances occurred where conflicting instructions were received?

Instructions were clear and did not conflict until the "ceasefire" was announced, then numerous sets of conflicting instructions were received on records disposition and personnel outprocessing procedures.

10-19. I do not feel that two months as a PSA is sufficient for me to draw knowledgeable conclusions on these questions.

SECTION III

Functional Areas

Once again I do not feel qualified, based on two months experience to discuss successes and failures that have occurred in these functional areas. Instead I will comment briefly, on those areas in which I became involved, as to their current status.

Regional Forces/Popular Forces:

Regional Forces are the backbone of the military effort in Phu Yen. Until after the ceasefire no ARVN forces were present in Province. The RF are organized into 1 Lien Doi and 9 Battalions. They vary in effectiveness from inadequate to good. The major factors holding back their improvement are:

(a) Habitual shortage of officers and NCO's (25-30%). This results in the Battalions and the Lien Doi, with one exception, being commanded by Captains. (The 206th Bn is commanded by a Major). All companies are commanded by Lieutenants.

(b) Extreme shortages (up to 50%) in critical weapons, communications equipment and vehicles. This places a very heavy restriction on the military firepower, communications and mobility.

(c) An unwillingness to distribute the officers they do have more equitably. The "safer" staff positions are manned at about 100% while many companies have but one or two of the six officers they are authorized.

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Popular Forces:

The same comments pertain to Popular Forces as listed above for Regional Forces.

Peoples Self Defense Forces (PSDF):

The PSDF have been my biggest disappointment in Phu Yen. While the briefing charts reflect in excess of 9,000 armed PSDF, I would not expect to find over 6,000 present if a command muster formation were to be held. In addition several of the District Chiefs feel that the PSDF have been infiltrated by VC and in at least one District (Son Hoa) many of the weapons that had been issued have been withdrawn and are being held in District Arms rooms.

Once again the PSDF vary from completely inadequate to, in only a very few cases, good. Overall it is a toss-up whether the PSDF are producing enough added security to offset the cost of the weapons they have been issued.

PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTORATE

National Police Field Force/National Police Operations:

The National Police in Phu Yen have improved by a quantum jump since my previous tour here (1966-67). However, there is still much that remains to be accomplished; more village police stations must be constructed, many stations in existence are not manned 24 hours-a-day, social evils are overlooked, and the caliber of individual on the police force must be upgraded through improved selection standards and continuous training programs.

COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

I do not feel qualified to comment in these areas based on my 61 days in Province.

WAR VICTIMS DIRECTORATE

War Victims/Social Welfare: A general observation is that the Vietnamese have installed a system of rewards/benefits, apparently with our blessing, that makes it much easier for a villager to accept a creeping socialistic dole than make the harder decision to select the GVN or VC side and then remain committed to that side.

CHIEU HOI DIRECTORATE

Chieu Hoi: This program has impressed me most favorably during my short stay. While I believe a person should only be allowed to take advantage of such a

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program once, it has accounted for an impressive amount of turned-in enemy weapons and valuable intelligence in Phu Yen.

REPORTS AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

Report Requirements: Appear to have been logical when the Advisory Teams were staffed at a higher level.

Report Feedback: Adequate

AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

I do not feel competent to comment, in detail, on these programs.

OTHER AREAS

PACIFICATION ASSESSMENT: PREPOST CEASEFIRE"

Pre-Ceasefire Summary: Prior to the ceasefire, the GVN had established a position in Phu Yen where they were able to maintain the upper-hand in controlling the great majority (80-90%) of the people, and the critical crop producing lands. At the same time the Province Chief appeared to be content with that status and was not actively attempting to destroy or annihilate all of the NVA-VC in province. Instead he would react to enemy forays or attempts to takeover people/land.

Post Ceasefire Summary: To date, the cease-fire has brought little, if any, change to Phu Yen. The fighting goes on uncontrolled with a daily GVN artillery expenditure of 2-3,000 rounds and 3-8 air strikes a day. The Province Chief maintains he is only reacting to VC cease-fire violations; i.e., reacting to enemy attacks or post cease-fire enemy illegal infiltration. My assessment is that the Province Chief's GVN forces easily have the upper hand and are eliminating many of their "former" enemies. The Province Chief, apparently has drawn the same conclusion and he is in no hurry for the ICCS to arrive in Phu Yen. In fact it appears that the local GVN officials are actively attempting to delay the date when the ICCS begins operating in Phu Yen.

Existing Problems: There are three major problems that currently exist in Phu Yen, (a) interdiction of major ground lines of communication, (b) a lack of knowledge as to just how much territory in Phu Yen is physically controlled by the VC-MVA and (c) the isolated status of Son Hoa District.

(a) Interdiction of major ground lines of communication. Just prior to the ceasefire, the enemy was successful in destroying the Ban Thach (C-201351) and the Ngan Son (CW-066735) Bridges as well as 2-3 minor bridges along QL-1. The intent behind this bridge destruction is unknown, unless the VC-NVA anticipated much larger sized enemy actions and popular uprisings than developed. The results achieved were mainly harrasing - The QL-1 traffic was interrupted for approximately

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1 week, and it did the down two companies of ARVN Engineers for about two weeks. Militarily little was achieved. A greater threat is currently developing in the vicinity of the Ngan So Bridge where the K-9 Battalion has infiltrated and remained to present. If they are not ejected prior to ICCS arrival and peace keeping control, the VC could claim control of the communications lines in the critical QL-1 - Route 6B - Ngan Son Bridge intersection area. Another major problem exist on Route 7B connecting Tuy Hoa City and So Hoa District. This route was last opened in July 72 and since then has laid idle - due to suspected VC mining - and a shortage of sufficient friendly troops to conduct a road opening operating. The effects of this will be discussed in more detail in (c) below.

(b) Lack of knowledge as to just how much territory in Phu Yen is physically controlled by the VC-NVA. While the GVN has successfully controlled 80-90% of the population and the critical crop-lands (20%-30% of Phu Yen's land), there has been little or no attempt to operate in the remaining land masses. Consequently no one knows just how much of Base Area 236, the Cay Vung (Ky Lo Valley), the Ha Roi and the Hon Cheng areas are, or have been under VC-NVA physical control. If claimed by the VC-NVA it will be difficult for the GVN to refute their claims.

(c) Isolated Status of Son Hoa: With the closing of Route 7B from Tuy Hoa City to Son Hoa District (Jul 72), the last land line of communication into Son Hoa (15,000-16,000 inhabitants) was eliminated. Since then the only means of transportation has been air. The GVN has conducted the essential military/civilian resupply by CH-47 with the bulk of passenger traffic moving on spare seats on the Advisory Team - 28 helicopter. The result has been a long slow strangulation of the Son Hoa economy. The Province Service Chiefs have a built-in excuse for not developing Son Hoa and they have been quick to use it. If peace does in fact arrive in Phu Yen, the rich tobacco lands, fruit lands, and cattle areas existing in Son Hoa may solve the Route 73 opening problem. An alternate solution may develop in opening 7B between Son Hoa and Phu Bon. Phu Bon has shown a greater interest in opening 7B than have the Phu Yen officials.

EXPECTED MAJOR PROBLEMS

The major problems that I expect in the future in Phu Yen include the already discussed current problems.

SUGGESTED SOLUTIONS

(a) Interdiction of major land lines of communications: QL-1 interdiction is essentially a military problem that hopefully will be eliminated prior to ICCS control. I see little that a civilian team can do to eliminate this problem.

(b) Lack of knowledge as to VC-NVA controlled terrain. I would recommend that "exploratory teams" working on economic development projects be urged to move back into the areas mentioned before as a basis for re-instituting GVN claim to those areas or at least contesting VC-NVA claims.

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(c) Isolated status of Son Hoa: I would recommend the use of economic pressures, the loss of potential income to the tobacco, cattle, fruit interests, as leverage to force by Province Chief to open Route 7B. The road opening should be done first by Public Works and or GVN military personnel to avoid admitting VC control of Route 7B and only as a last resort by requesting the ICCS to require the VC to remove their mines on 7B. The latter means would of course admit de-fact VC control over 7B.

John M. McDonald

JOHN M. McDONALD
LTC, INF
Province Senior Advisor

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