



# THE JOINT CHIEFS OF STAFF WASHINGTON, D.C. 20301

JCSM-394-70 15 August 1970

### MEMORANDUM FOR THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE

Subject: PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program (U)

- 1. (%) Reference is made to:
- a. A memorandum by the Deputy Secretary of Defense, dated 24 June 1970, subject as above, which requested specific recommendations to stimulate the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program.
- b. A memorandum by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs), I-23524/70, dated 15 July 1970, subject as above, which requested consideration of six additional questions in this response.
- 2. (9) The PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program is receiving increased emphasis by both the US and the Republic of Vietnam (RVN) Governments. The weaknesses and poor past performance of the program to neutralize the Viet Cong Infrastructure (VCI) have been recognized by both Governments. Extensive corrective action has been or is being taken.
- 3. (8) The insurgent organization is particularly strong in the VCI effort. Organizationally, the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program is at an immediate disadvantage in countering VCI subversion and terrorism. The multitude of separate Government of Vietnam (GVN) and US organizations involved in the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX effort and the ad hoc cooperation and coordination required to conduct operations have in the past contributed to reduced effectiveness and insufficient emphasis on this critical program.

SUBJECT TO GENERAL DECLASSIFICATION

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SCHEDULE OF EXECUTIVE OPDER 11652

AUTOMATICALLY DOWNGRADED AT TWO

YEAR INTERVALS

DECLASSIFIED ON DECEMBER 31

GROUP - 4
Downgraded at 3 year
intervals: declassified
after 12 years

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- 4. (2) COMUSMACV has recommended that the Federal Bureau of Investigation provide a team to study the VCI problem in the RVN and make appropriate recommendations. Specifically, this group would direct its attention to the development and coordination of effective counterespionage techniques aimed at the apprehension of highest level VCI.
- The National Police establishment has recently been given responsibility for the PHUNG HOANG Program. However, the National Police continue to receive a low priority for resources and particularly for personnel, both in numbers and in quality. This affects all National Police elements, but its impact is most severe on the Police Special Branch, whose members require extensive training and who are instrumental in the PHUNG HOANG Program.
- 6. (U) District and Province Intelligence and Operations Communating Centers are the focal point for the neutralization effect. Inasmuch as only token funds have been provided by the GVN for facilities, supplies, and equipment, the Department of Defense, through the MACCORDS PHOENIX Directorate, has supplied the bulk of the required funding support.
- 7. The slow GVN judicial process and inadequate detention facilities tend to alienate innocent persons detained under severe conditions. Additionally, members of the communist cadr may be released after serving the 2-year minimum sentence.
- The quota system has come under attack frequently. More fealistic, lowered numerical goals with incentives for additional neutralizations and particularly neutralizations of higher ranking VCI should be of benefit to the program. Such a system would have to be carefully controlled by GVN authorities and monitored by US advisers to insure its proper operation.
- While the GVN has shown increased recognition of the importance of the program, the historical lack of importance of the program, the historical lack of thuslasm and initiative toward PHUNG HOANG by certain GVN representatives indicates strongly that continued American advisory assistance will be required if the program is to be successful. PHOENIX adviser training and experience levels have been less than desired. Upgrading of the quality of personnel selected for assignment as PHOENIX advisers and an improved training course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina, will, in the near term, produce more highly qualified personnel. Graduates of the first course will be assigned to the field in late 1970.

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- 10. (%) Replies by COMUSMACV and CINCPAC to the questions posed by the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs) in reference 1b indicate the action being taken in the areas of:
  - a. Utilization of the National Identification and Registration Program.
    - b. Increased use of communications media.
  - c. Improvement of confinement facilities at local and national level.
    - d. Monitoring of released VCI.
    - e. Leadership training.
    - f. Improved dissemination of intelligence.
  - g. Training of GVN prosecutors and improved judicial processing.

Extracts of the COMUSMACV and CINCPAC responses provide additional detail and rationale on ongoing projects and are therefore forwarded in the Appendices hereto. The responses are based on May 1970 and previous statistical data and do not include the program results recorded in June 1970 which indicate increases in VCI neutralized and judicial backlogs.

- 11. (8) In view of the above, the following specific recommendations are made:
  - a. That consultation be initiated with the Attorney General by the Office of the Secretary of Defense to secure a team of two or three Federal Bureau of Investigation counterespionage experts to be sent to the RVN for the specific purpose of providing recommendations for the neutralization of important national level members of the Communist Party apparatus (VCI).
  - b. That it be made clear to all US and RVN agencies contributing to the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program that the objective of neutralization of the infrastructure is equal in priority to the objectives of tactical operations.

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- c. That the quality of the personnel input to the program and the field assignment of PHOENIX-trained personnel be carefully monitored by the Department of the Army and COMUSMACV to insure proper utilization and that priority emphasis continue to be placed on support to the US Army Institute for Military Assistance at Fort Bragg, North Carolina.
- d. That a long-term program be considered by the Department of the Army to provide more adequately experienced and trained PHOENIX officers.
- e. That COMUSMACV, in consultation with the US Embassy, Saigon, strongly urge that the GVN:
  - (1) Take action to improve personnel priorities for the National Police in order to relieve that agency of the problem of losing both potential and trained personnel to the draft and to permit growth of the National Police to planned strengths.
    - (2) Expand and improve detention facilities.
  - (3) Improve the speed and impartiality of the judicial processing of captured VCI suspects.
  - (4) Improve the processing and monitoring of released VCI.
  - (5) Continue to support the National Identity Registration Program, a vital element of population control, so that it receives the necessary resources to complete investigation and subsequent documentation for registration of the population by end CY 1971.
  - (6) Improve the funding support necessary to the expansion and maintenance of District and Province Intelligence and Operations Coordinating Centers.
  - (7) Insure that the information program in support of the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program receives priority over other projects which require use of similar facilities.

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- (8) Initiate an incentive program to foster greater neutralization achievement with continuing emphasis on neutralization of communist cadre at district level and higher.
- 12. (2) It is essential that the role of the infrastructure and the necessity to neutralize the infrastructure be recognized if the PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX Program is to achieve its stated objectives in the RVN. The priority of this effort must be appreciated by all agencies concerned. It is clear that, to improve the viability of a noncommunist government, PHUNG HOANG objectives must be met and their achievement depends on the motivation, initiative, and determination of the GVN.

For the Joint Chiefs of Staff:

FRANK B. CLAY

Major General, USA Deputy Director, Joint Staff

Attachments

#### SEPTOSE

APPENDIX A	1
COMUSMACV comments on areas of interest to the Assistant	2
Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs)	3
TAB A - National Identification and Registration Program	4
TAB B - Information Support of PHUNG HOANG	5
TAB C - Adequacy of Prison Space	6
TAB D - Surveillance of Released VCI	7
TAB E - PHUNG HOANG Leadership	8
TAB F - Exchange of Intelligence	9

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TAB A TO APPENDIX A	-
QUESTION - What steps have been taken to utilize the	
National Identification and Registration Program (NIRP) in	1
the identification of the VCI?	
ANSWER	
(1) The National Police Identification Center	
maintains a fingerprint bank of approximately 7,000,000	
individuals for the purpose of performing fingerprint	
searches on national identity card applicants, criminals,	
suspects, applicants for Government positions, and other	1
miscellaneous reasons.	1
(2) The NIRP has registered a total of 5,007,264 persons or	1
44.1 percent of all persons 15 years of age or over. With	1
the recent addition of trained personnel for both the field	1
and the ID center, the remaining 55.9 percent are scheduled	1
to be completed by 31 December 1971.	1
(3) Notices on all wanted persons are submitted by the	1
operational units to the ID center where the information is	1
placed in a name index file which is cross-referenced with	1
the fingerprint file (if a set of prints is available).	20
(4) When a new fingerprint card is received, regardless	2
of the reason, both name and fingerprint files are searched	2:
and results of the search, including negative results, are	2
transmitted to the contributing source.	24

GROUP 4
DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS
DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

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TAB B TO APPENDIX A	1
QUESTION - What measures have been used to stimulate	2
the publicity of the neutralized VCI in newspapers and	3
other media?	4
ANSWER -	5
(1) GVN authorities have generally displayed less than	6
enthusiastic attitude toward publicizing the neutralization	7
of individual VCIs. Neutralized VCIs who were known as having	8
been responsible for acts of terrorism are an exception.	9
Exploitation in these cases has taken the form of newspaper	10
accounts and frequently overprinted wanted posters. Appeals	11
from VCI Hoi Chanhs are regularly exploited through leaflets,	12
broadcasts, personal letters, etc. VCI neutralization	<u>13</u>
statistics are considered classified by the GVN and not	14
released to the public.	15
(2) Strong continuous effort has been made to stimulate	16
maximum and imaginative utilization of all available PSYOPS	17
techniques and informational media to publicize the neutrali-	18
zation of the VCI. PHUNG HOANG/PHOENIX is the number one MACV	19
PSYOPS priority; wanted posters of individuals and groups,	20
with pictures whenever available, are widely used throughout	21
the country. These posters are frequently shown on television.	22

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#### SECRET

TAB C TO APPENDIX A	1
QUESTION - What has been done to insure that sufficient	2
prison space is available to accommodate convicted VCI and	3
suspects both at the local and national levels?	4.
ANSWER -	<u>5</u>
(1) In September 1967, COMUSMACV that directed planning	<u>6</u>
be initiated to develop adequate confinement spaces to	7
accommodate the overcrowded prison population in Vietnam.	8
(2) In response to this directive, three major actions	9
were taken:	10
(a) An extraction program was begun to move	11
dangerous VCI prisoners from overcrowded military region	12
(MR) correction centers to Con Son Island. This was	13
later expanded to include the movement of prisoners	14
from other overcrowded correction centers to more	15
secure and more inhabitable confinement facilities at	16
Con Son and in the Saigon area.	17
(b) A construction program was initiated to build	18
screening and detention facilities to assist the National	19
Police in holding and processing of VCI prisoners.	20
(c) A construction program was begun within the	21
prison system to overcome the overcrowding problem.	22
(.3) The table below indicates the essential confinement	23
capacities available in Vietnam in 1967 with the estimated	24
confined populations at that time and the confinement	25
capacities available today with the best estimates of persons	26
confined as of this time:	27

GROUP 4 DOWNGRADED AT 3 YEAR INTERVALS DECLASSIFIED AFTER 12 YEARS

			1
Nat Police Facilities Cap Pop	Space Shortage (Approx)	Directorate of Space Corrections Shortage Cap Pop	. 2
1967 4,096 5,000*	904	22,000 33,323 11,323	3 4
1970 14,296 4,980	None	33,505 33,866** 361	<u>-</u> 5
*The figures on persons	held by the Nat	ional Police in 1967	<u>6</u>
are a rough estimate si	Ince there was r	o reliable national	7
collection of this type	e of statistical	data at that	8
time. A National Police	e detention bur	eau was established	9
in 1968. The 1970 figu	ires obtained by	this bureau are	10
considered to be closer	to reality, bu	t still subject to	11
considerable error beca	use of missing	and inaccurate	12
reports.			13
*This prison population	contains 7,214	detainees being held	14
for the National Police	e. Efforts are	underway by the GVN	15
to move these persons t	o the new deten	tion camps under	16
police control for scre	ening and judic	ial processing. This	17
is an area in which it	is very difficu	lt to obtain swift	18
action by the GVN.	¥	•	19