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SVN - Phoenix

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PHUNG HOANG RESULTS

Territorial forces (RF/PF) continue to be the single most effective force in South Vietnam's struggle to neutralize the Viet Cong infrastructure.

- During July, RF/FF units brought in half of the nearly 1,500 VCI who were killed, captured, or who rallied to the GVN.

- About 20% of the neutralizations were direct ralliers to the Chieu Hoi program (another 10% rallied via the various action forces).

- About 5% were neutralized by regular forces.

- Only 25% of the VCI taken during July were neutralized by Phung Hoang forces (some improvement over the first quarter when these forces neutralized 20% of the total).

Thus, although neutralization of the VCI is the prime objective of the Phung Hoang program, most of the job (about 75%) is still being done by other than police forces.

Reports from field advisors indicate that the joint US-GVN program to dry up South Vietnam's drug traffic may have added to Phung Hoang's chronic problems:

- Phoenix assets are being used to ferret out drug dealers.

- Their attention has, in many provinces, been turned partially away from anti-VCI efforts.

While both problems are essentially police matters, theyapparently cannot be handled concurrently. The number of province advisors who mentioned this in their July reports underscores the lack of depth of the Phung Hoang organization.

Phung Hoang goals were lowered for 1971 (from 1800 per month to 1200 per month) in an effort to improve the quality of neutralizations.

While the Vietnamese are meeting the lowered goal:

- Total neutralizations have been in a downtrend this year (from about 2000 per month in the 1st quarter to the current 13-1500 per month).

- There has been no change in the quality of neutralizations. VCI serving at district level or higher represented about 22% of those neutralized during 1970; they have been 20-27% of any month's total this year.

In short, Phung Hoang has changed very little. Although everyone agrees that it is critical, no one seems to be able to improve it.

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