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DAAG-PAP-A (M) (1 Nov 72) DAFD-OTT 15 November 1972

SUBJECT: Senior Officer Debriefing Report: LTC Jack B. Cantrell, Senior Advisor, Binh Tuy Province, 12 Jan 71 - 9 Jul 72

SEE DISTRIBUTION

1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Program (U) 2 July 1971.

2. Transmitted herewith is the report of LTC Jack B. Cantrell, subject as above.

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

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Senior Officer Debriefing Report (RCS CSFOR-74)

LTC Jack B. Cantrell
Province Senior Advisor
Binh Tuy 12 January 1971 - 9 July 1972

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## SECTION I

NAME: JACK R. CANTRELL

GRADE: LTC

SSAN: 408-64-2385

BRANCH OF SERVICE: Army, Field Artillery

PROVINCE: Binh Tuy

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: 12 January 1971 - 9 July 1972

EXPECTED REASSIGNMENT DATE: Depart Binh Tuy 5 July, depart RVN 9 July 1972.

PREVIOUS TOUR(S) IN VIETNAM (DATES - INCLUSIVE) June 1961 - June 1962, Feb 1968 - Feb 1969.

ASSIGNMENT ON PREVIOUS VIETNAM TOUR(S): Artillery and Operations Advisor, 21st ARVN Division.
Assistant S3, 1st Field Force Artillery and Commander of the 2/17 Artillery Battalion (105mm, towed).



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SECTION II

1. What background did you have for your position?

In addition to advising ARVN units during my first tour, I also advised the Regional Forces of the 1961-62 time-frame (Civil Guard Battalion). In-country before, during and after arrival of the first US Helicopter units, I was given the assignment of training ARVN units in air-mobile operations methods, procedures and techniques; made aerial reconnaissance of prospective targets with my counterpart and participated in the planning, execution and critique of the operations; in addition to performing the normal functions of an artillery advisor, I taught counterparts methods of transporting howitzers, in increments by helicopter; served on TDY with the Airborne Brigade to advise in US free fall parachuting techniques; was the Advisory Project Officer to promote the formulation of a very primitive fore-runner to the (See continuation sheet)

2. What training did you have for this position?

I attended the Province Senior Advisors Course at the Foreign Service Institute.

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

None

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

One year with no R&R, leaves or Handclasp. The turbulance, administrative burden and, sometimes, near low-level chaos resulting from authorized absences, tour curtailments, reorganization and reassignments within the team were the largest deterents to the mission accomplishment capability during my tour. During the eighteen months that I served as a Province Senior Advisor the military portion of the Province Advisory Team Staff changed more than three times and, with the exception of one individual, the civilian members changed twice. When the underlap in replacements and the ( See continuation sheet )



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

Support from Region and Saigon Headquarters was outstanding.

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? Which ones?

Yes. The Advisory Pacification Fund (APF) is the biggest bang-for-the-buck in the development area. It is almost totally flexible in obtaining high impact at low cost continually, throughout the year. Its value was developed to an incalcuable degree when used to augment the capabilities of a civic action Sea Bee Team and even in self help projects does more than any comparable expenditure in impact "where-the-people live". During the past year APF expenditures by this team increased as team members learned to look for targets for its vital utility. Expedient approval of requests for additional APF and for Contingency Funds was ( See continuation sheet )

7. Do the reporting requirements as set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 provide a means for reporting all information of present and future value? If not, what changes would you recommend?

Yes. None.

8. Do the MACCORDS Management Information System Field Reporting requirements set forth in Joint Directive 2-69 adequately measure progress in pacification programs?

No. Their value and validity are seriously questioned by the undersigned. They may be the best of the type that we have, but the benefits derived from them at province-level by the Vietnamese are encompassed in their use as a "report card". They are only as good as their input, which could be checked formerly with substantial accuracy (See continuation sheet)



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

None of significance.

ANSWER QUESTIONS 10 - 15 BY GIVING AN ORDER OF PRIORITY.

10. The most clearly defined and directed programs are:

1. Land Reform

2. Village Self Development

3. Rural Credit

11. The most effective para military forces are:

1. Province Reconnaissance Units

2. National Police

3. Rural Development Cadre



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12. The most successful pacification programs are:

1. Public Works (Specifically Road Improvement and Construction Programs.) This category includes road construction performed utilizing NFLD, US contractors, US Army Engineers, US SeaBee and ARVN engineers as well as the Public Works Ministry.

2. Land Reform (Particularly, Land To The Tiller)

3. Agricultural Development Bank

13. The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort are:

1. Territorial Security: Security is the required environment for the success of all the other programs.

2. Rural Credit, Economy, Finance and Local Revenue: Actually four programs are considered because of their virtually inseparable and overlapping nature. When security is achieved (See continuation sheet)

3. Land Reform: Private ownership of land has a timeless, international appeal to people that tends to promote a solidifying purposefulness in their lives. As 1. and 2. above, it affects people personally. Therefore, its impact is great.

4. Protecting the people Against Terrorism: Although only three programs were specified in the question, this program is listed because its semi-covert potential is almost as great as the overt (See continuation sheet)

14. The least successful pacification programs are:

1. Peoples' Protection Against Terrorism: Unpopular and ill-implemented; one of the most needed, one of the least wanted. (See continuation sheet)

2. Peoples' Information: Except for the election periods, it has suffered from artificiality, lack of effective operators and (See continuation sheet)

3. Peoples' Organizations: Artificial, lack of spontaneousness, lack of common purpose, lack of funds.

15. The programs that have the least impact upon the pacification effort are:

1. Peoples' Organizations: For the reasons indicated above.

2. Youth Affairs: Excellent purpose but consistently underfunded, when funded at all, and understaffed.



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16. The rural people (are) (~~are/not~~) aware of the pacification efforts the GVN and US are making. If not, how can they be informed?

Considering the magnitude and scope of the pacification efforts, they are known, if incompletely. The people can learn in basically two ways: by experiencing the benefits of a program or by being told about it. The latter is a large part of the VIS mission.

Awareness of the effort does not necessarily mean that the political impact is favorable. Technical difficulties, poor planning, coordination, implementation or corruption can sometimes cause or expose more problems than the pacification program involved solves.

Moreover, a "what-have-you done for me, lately?" attitude (See continuation sheet)

17. The people, as you know them, are (more) (less) committed to the GVN than when you assumed your job. Why?

The GVN is unquestionably the established and, by far, the most influential power in Binh Tuy Province. Both in terms of legitimacy and in recognition of organized services, the people have accepted the Saigon Government. If they do not embrace it, they follow its direction without active resentment, or recourse to rebellion. It has and is continuing to become more their government than the lesser of two evils. The peoples' commitment has been augmented, strengthened and more effectively sought during the past eighteen months.

18. Do you feel that the pacification plan is sufficiently detailed to provide guidance and set goals that will result in security and growth of Vietnam ? (Yes)(No) If no, what change in the plan should be made?

Yes. The plan is sufficiently detailed but repetitious, and seeking to establish numerical goals for programs that do not lend themselves to such a statistically rigid approach, encouraging the fulfillment of goals, actually or otherwise, as an end in itself, replacing concern for the substantive accomplishments of a program or its defects. It is considered that the attempt at a four-year plan did not "make-the-grade" in phasing or clarity and is of less quality than its 1971 predecessor.

19. Do you feel that the pacification plan was adequately communicated and explained to you and your counterpart? (Yes)(No) If not, how can this be accomplished?

Yes. The lack of initiative and innovation at province-level perhaps is mitigated by the inordinate proportion of the planning year that was consumed at the Saigon-level and the subsequent mandatory goals that were directed from the top down.



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SECTION III

## Functional Areas

On the following pages give a history of the successes and failures and background of functional reas that have transpired during your tour as a province advisor. Give your comments on what changes should be made to improve each program in the future.

Recommendations for additional subjects for discussion during the debriefing interview should be included on Page 19 - Other Areas.

11

## TERRITORIAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

RF/PF:

A highly effective and economical fighting force. Although the weapons platoons will be valuable, across-the-board conversion of Company Control Groups to Battalion Headquarters regardless of local provincial enemy, terrain and population center situations is questioned and imposition of Sector Tactical Commands without the same consideration would be disappointing; particularly when either is at the expense of Popular Forces authorizations.

PSDF:

A commendable effort at its initiation and in its concept of earlier years; its functions, mission, purpose have become clouded, its strength unrealistic; inherently at odds with the draft; it has become a statistical, paper organization. Actually, its performance in Binh Tuy Province has probably been better than in many other locales, particularly when bolstered with Popular Forces. But its mission should be kept simple and expectations of its performance realistic.



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## PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTORATE

National Police Field Force:

Of doubtful necessity. RF/PF are better trained and more experienced to do virtually the same job in the bush and, augmented with National Police, can do the same mission in populated areas.

National Police Operations:

Improving but in dire need of quality personnel and honest, effective check-point/resource control operations. They need increased visibility, outside the flagpole, some of which will be provided by the village stations, if they are manned. They must work toward the achievement of a role of helping the people. And the only way that they can realistically achieve that goal is to practice.



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## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

Village Self Development:

Has outlived its intended use in wealthy villages and, in Binh Tuy Province, it has been an uphill fight to achieve project selection by-the-people rather than by a few officials.

RD Cadre:

As effective as they are supervised, they are still valuable, particularly in rural areas and with low-education-level people. In many locations they are still the leaders and still provide a highly valuable service.

Ethnic Minorities:

In Binh Tuy Province, hardly the down-trodden primitives that they are elsewhere. Although poor in the northern districts, they are receiving just attention from Land Reform, in particular, and, in Ham Tan District, with one of their own as a second term Village Chief, they are prospering.

Local Government:

Elections are generally on schedule and, considering the material available, officials are representative, with the quality of their performance varying with their individual capabilities and character.

Aid in Kind:

(Advisory Pacification Fund) This is one of the highest-potential programs/capabilities in the repertoire. Its prudent utilization provides the Advisory Team with a flexible, high impact resource to influence small local development situations with accuracy and timeliness. Teamed with the skills, equipment and material resources of previously assigned US SeaBee teams its effectiveness, in comparision to the accomplishment of funded projects, was almost unapproachable. In order to have these favorable attributes it is realized that the lack of association of APF, by the populace, with GVN, is a feature that must be partially foregone. The Advisory Pacification Fund should be retained in Vietnam until the last advisor leaves.



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## WAR VICTIMS DIRECTORATE

War Victims:

The GVN has proven its capability to provide for war victims commendably. However, the lack of comprehensive planning, fundamental coordination and basic cooperation between Saigon agencies in selecting sites for and placement of personnel during May and June 1972, as applied to the numerous on-again-off-again warning orders received by Binh Tuy Province, which caused much unproductive and time consuming spinning of wheels, were a discouraging disappointment.

Social Welfare:

This service, in Binh Tuy Province, has demonstrated the capability to perform effectively and, depending on the quality of the Chief of Service, with minimum advice and assistance.



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## CHIEU HOI DIRECTORATE

Chieu Hoi:

The big business accrued when large US combat units were in-country, capable of operating for extended periods in remote areas, lucrative in prospective Hoi Chanh, has deminished to a comparative trickle and is not expected to return to that volume again. Although the necessity of the program continues, there is little incentive for NVA personnel and the volume of VC participants and the consonant importance of the program will continue to decline.



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## REPORTS AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

Report Requirements:

Always an important aspect of the advisory mission, the number of required reports has declined and is not considered excessive.

Report Feedback:

Computerized report feedback is little used and not considered worth the time, effort and expense of its production for province-level purposes. The validity and, therefore, worthwhile utility of HES at any level is doubtful.



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PHUNG HOANG:

A vital mission, but the method of attack has never been embraced by the officials and working level in Binh Tuy. It is an unpleasant, distasteful and potentially dangerous business that goes against the grain of the individuals who must obtain the requisite information and the people who must provide it. The police have avoided, ignored or tolerated it in the past. Although the mission is duly theirs, they don't like it any more than before and, though its success is direly needed, prospects continue to be dim.



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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Public Health:

Due to the lack of dedication on the part of the Service Chief in Binh Tuy, the program has not achieved the degree of its potential that should be expected. Consideration should be given to prohibiting doctors employed by the Ministry from having private practices. This would necessitate pay increases or some form of conscription or standardized periods of government service and the necessity for such action is/would be regrettable. But the inspection/supervision system (See continuation sheet)

Education:

Binh Tuy can almost say: "Every child is within walking distance of a school." Progress has been and is being made. The people are interested in education. Therefore it improves.

Public Works:

Considering the volume of funds that have been spent for development in the Republic of Vietnam, the pitiful lack of operational construction equipment possessed by the Public Works Service of Binh Tuy is appalling. This agency has not had a bulldozer in more than eighteen months and has only one road grader. The promised "Province Package" would be of invaluable assistance to this agency in accomplishing (See continuation sheet)

Economic Development:

In Binh Tuy Rural Credit has come a long way from a slow start to nearing its rightful place as a leader in development. Price controls are erratically successful and taxation, like elsewhere, is still years behind in overall equitable assessment and effective revenue collection. (See Paragraph 13., Page 6, "The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort.")

Land Reform:

Highly successful in Binh Tuy during 1971 due to the efforts of an outstanding PLAS Chief, it is off to an impressive start for 1972. As long as the incumbent service chief is in the province, almost everything can be expected to be "coming up roses" in Land Reform (See Paragraph 13., Page 6, "The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort.")



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AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT (Cont)

Domestic Production:

Labor:

Although there is an active labor organization in La Gi, Binh Tuy is hardly urbanized sufficiently to be significantly influenced in this area.

Youth Affairs:

This program in Binh Tuy is reflective of the underfunded, understaffed, "make soup from a nail" national program. Purposeful but marginally effective.

Public Administration:

Considering the talent available in-province and the marked differences in officials' qualifications and attitudes, the program functions well in some areas, mostly where the boss is interested, and marginally in others.



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PSYOP:

Considering that any PSYOPS program has to deal with a substantial amount of artificiality and must "dance very well" to get and maintain audience attention, PSYOPS in Binh Tuy performs effectively, within its means, and coordinates and cooperates well with VIS. With the exception of the pre-election periods in 1971, VIS, with a different target audience and more complex and comprehensive subject material, has been less effective than its military partner. In Binh Tuy, during 1971, there appeared to be a protocol problem that prevented VIS from getting close enough to other agencies and programs to properly present their image to the public.



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SECTION II

Paragraph 1 (continued):

Pacification and Development or Community Defense and Local Development Plan (a want-list for provinces of the 33rd Tactical Zone). During my second tour as a battalion commander, I was concurrently the fire support coordinator for a major tactical area of operation in the Central Highlands, requiring close coordination with a District Advisory Team and its associated District Officials. The battalion surgeon participated in an area medcap program for the people in the district. The battalion also sponsored a "sister" ARVN artillery battalion augmenting the efforts of its advisors and operated a forward observer school in which Vietnamese as well as US personnel were trained. I attended a Special Warfare course at Fort Bragg, North Carolina after my first tour and a refresher course oriented toward duty in Vietnam at Fort Sill, Oklahoma, prior to my second tour.

Paragraph 4 (continued):

relative inexperience of a significant portion of the military personnel are considered, the slack that had to be taken up for unfilled positions and the repeated training, guidance and inordinant amount of supervision that were required were a deleterious distraction from the accomplishment of the PSA's primary mission. Considering the foregoing, the PSA is the primary source of binding continuity. A PSA could serve effectively for one year without a break. If a need ever arises for a similar program, a pay incentive, rather than a leave incentive, for PSA's, should be given serious consideration.

Paragraph 6 (continued):

gratifying and the results of their use was highly successful.

Paragraph 8 (continued):

but there are not enough advisors now in the field to assure reporting accuracy. The reports can be circumvented and it is considered that, in a significant number of cases, they are. Above province-level, the undersigned does not know the extent of their use but it is doubtful that their questionable accuracy or use by advisors justify their cost in time and money.

OTHER AREAS

None.



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SECTION II

Paragraph 13, Sub-paragraph 2 (continued):

the national economy must be made viable or one of the primary seeds of dissent sown by the Communists will continue to mature, multiply and undo the stabilization for which security provides the environment. This viability can come only from capital being made available, sound investments developed, and nurtured, prices naturally or artificially controlled and revenue collected, or the whole of the national economy can not shake it's artificiality.

Paragraph 13, Sub-paragraph 4 (continued):

potential of "Territorial Security" and if it were effectively implemented. its impact would compete with that of those programs previously listed. It is doubtful if the surface of that potential will ever be scratched because this program is an unpopular orphan.

Paragraph 14, Sub-paragraph 1 (continued):

Its history is not crowned with success, its future is not bright. It's requisite principles collide with human nature. Due to physical, social and financial fear, reliable informers and effective operators will always be at a premium.

Paragraph 14, Sub-paragraph 2 (continued):

a lack of adequate operable, well-maintained equipment. With one of the most important missions, it has seldom "come up to muster."

Paragraph 16, (continued):

can develop, with the illwill occasioned by the discontinuation or decrease in funding level more than counterbalancing the positive impact of the initial project or program.

SECTION III

Public Health (continued):

currently employed is not giving the people their program-intended due. A Korean medical team scheduled for departure in July 1972 has done a magnificant job and will be sorely missed by the patients. And the doctors.



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CONTINUATION SHEET 3 OF PROVINCE ADVISOR'S COMPLETION OF TOUR REPORT

SECTION III

Public Works (continued):

its own mission instead of its being shackled to the proximity of its maintenance buildings and dependent on ARVN, and US Army engineers and US Navy SeaBees to accomplish missions that should be its own. (That is, if the "Province Package" does not consist of rebuilt vehicles comparable to a "rebuilt" flat bed truck recently issued to Binh Tuy Public Works with 20,000 miles of previous use and a broken motor mount.) The importance of the Public Works' function in a remote province is measured in miles of usable roads, which are the life-line to provincial economy and, are the perennial, most significant single impact on economic progress in Binh Tuy. (See page 6.)

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## DOCUMENT CONTROL DATA - R & D

*(Security classification of title, body of abstract and indexing annotation must be entered when the overall report is classified.)*

| | |
|---|---|
| 1. ORIGINATING ACTIVITY *(Corporate author)*<br>HQ DA, DAFD, Washington, D. C. 20310 | 2a. REPORT SECURITY CLASSIFICATION<br>FOUO<br>2b. GROUP |

3. REPORT TITLE
Senior Officer Debriefing Report (LTC Jack B. Cantrell) - Senior Advisor, Binh Tuy Province - Inclusive Dates 12 January 1971 - 9 July 1972

4. DESCRIPTIVE NOTES *(Type of report and inclusive dates)*
Senior Officer Debriefing Report, 12 January 1971 - 9 July 1972

5. AUTHOR(S) *(First name, middle initial, last name)*
LTC Jack B. Cantrell

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| 6. REPORT DATE<br>20 October 1972 | 7a. TOTAL NO. OF PAGES<br>24 | 7b. NO. OF REFS |
| 8a. CONTRACT OR GRANT NO.<br>b. PROJECT NO.<br>N/A<br>c.<br>d. | 9a. ORIGINATOR'S REPORT NUMBER(S)<br>72B025<br>9b. OTHER REPORT NO(S) *(Any other numbers that may be assigned this report)* | |

10. DISTRIBUTION STATEMENT

| | |
|---|---|
| 11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES<br>N/A | 12. SPONSORING MILITARY ACTIVITY<br>DA, DAFD, Washington, D. C. 20310 |

13. ABSTRACT

DD FORM 1 NOV 65 1473



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