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AGO D/A ltr Jun 1980

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HQDA Ltr 525-73-4

Expires 29 May 1974

REPLY TO  
ATTENTION OF:

DAAG-PAP-A (M) (23 Apr 73) DAMO-ODU

11 29 May 1973

SUBJECT Senior Officer Debriefing Report: Senior Advisors, Bac Lieu, Kien Giang, Phong Dinh, and Ba Xuyen Provinces, MR 4, Period Ending February 1973

12 18p.

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1. Reference: AR 525-14, Senior Officer Debriefing Report (U), 2 July 1971.
2. Transmitted herewith are reports of Senior Advisors of the MR 4 Provinces, for the period ending February 1973.
  - a. LTC K. Kobata, SA, Bac Lieu Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B007, Inclosure 1
  - b. LTC Edward P. Metzner, SA, Kien Giang Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B018, Inclosure 2.
  - c. LTC William F. Fitzpatrick, Phong Dinh Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B023, Inclosure 3.
  - d. LTC Frederick R. Daly, SA, Ba Xuyen Province, DAMO-ODU, 73B030, Inclosure 4
3. These reports are provided to insure appropriate benefits are realized from the experiences of the authors. These reports should not be interpreted as the official view of the Department of the Army, or of any agency of the Department of the Army.

10 Katsuji / Kobata

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*Verne L. Bowers*  
VERNE L. BOWERS  
Major General, USA  
The Adjutant General

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HEADQUARTERS  
CORDS/ADVISORY TEAM 20  
BAC LIEU PROVINCE  
APO 96215

MACDR-20

26 January 1973

SUBJECT: Deputy Province Senior Advisor Completion of Tour Report  
(RCS: MACCORDS 174-01) LTC K. Kobata, 328-24-7678

THRU: Deputy For CORDS  
Delta Regional Assistance Command  
APO 96215

TO: COMUSMACV  
ATTN: MACCORDS (AcofS, CORDS)  
APO 96222

1. Attached is my Completion of Tour Report for the period 26 October 1971 to 26 January 1973.

2. I have completed fifteen months of duty as the Deputy Province Senior Advisor in Bac Lieu Province. The ceasefire is two days away. The much anticipated fight for the country-side has yet to erupt, but it must. What will the mosaic of GVN-VC controlled areas look like when the ceasefire becomes effective? In Bac Lieu, the GVN will control most of the population centers, the primary LOCs, and the adjacent peripheral areas. Terrain close to enemy base areas will cease to be contested, and revert to the enemy. The enemy's overt attempt to grab vital areas or interdict LOCs immediately prior to the ceasefire will result in sustained fighting, irrespective of the ceasefire date. He may be content to nibble away at GVN weaknesses with his infrastructure and legal cadres.

3. The GVN is entering a critical period. If from a lasting ceasefire there evolves political opportunity for the masses, then the ballot will decide what firepower could not accomplish. In Bac Lieu, the relatively benevolent and empathetic administration of the incumbent Province Chief is a plus factor. The greedy, venal, and self-serving administrators qui mangent trop, who still seem to abound at every level of local

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Inclosure 1

MACDR-30

26 January 1973

SUBJECT: Deputy Province Senior Advisor Completion of Tour Report  
(RCS: MACCORDS 174-01) LTC K. Kobata, 328-24-7678

government, are a negative factor. Fortuitously, and with some credit to the dedication and vision of Mr. Warren E. Parker, former PSA in Bac Lieu, the post ceasefire leadership at the district and province levels is reasonably honest and effective. (The Year of the Rat saw the removal of the former Province Chief and, subsequently, four District Chiefs - ending the reign of a flagrantly corrupt and/or inept administration). For the advisors who remain, I would counsel a close watch for dedicated, honest administrators and urge hounding, relentless pressures to remove the ineffective and corrupt officials.

4. The hypothesis that economic realities will overcome political dogma may be tested after the ceasefire. It is postulated that the side offering the most direct means to the acquisition of relative wealth will WHAM ("win the hearts ..."). Attributing a direct causal link with WHAM and economics is possibly too simple a notion; more probably economic, political and psychological appeal (and other factors) will interact to produce more WHAM. The advisors administering aid will play a key role, as quite obviously the GVN's capability to fulfill economic aspirations will be judged against the other side's. However, I hold the view that it is better to promise nothing than to promise a lot with the corrupters stuffing their pockets in view of the expectant recipients. I mean explicitly that assistance from the US through the GVN must be rigidly controlled. There is more at stake than the ends (how the school was built is as important as the school itself). The means to the end is perhaps, vital when taken in the context of the political struggle.

5. "The enemy is just entering another phase of the war", Mr. Wilbur Wilson said in early November, 1972, in reference to the ceasefire. He remains, as always, right. If the enemy concludes that political victory cannot be attained six or twelve months from now, when the POWs are home, and when to a vast majority of Americans the war is forgotten as a bad memory - will there be the resolve to counter another enemy offensive? I pray there will be.

*K. Kobata*

K. KOBATA  
LTC, IN  
Deputy Province Senior Advisor

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SECTION I

NAME: KOBATA, Katsuji

GRADE: LTC

SSAN: 328-24-7678

BRANCH OF SERVICE: Infantry

PROVINCE: Bac Lieu

INCLUSIVE DATES OF TOUR: 26 October 1971 - 31 January 1973

EXPECTED REASSIGNMENT DATE: 31 January 1973

PREVIOUS TOURS IN VIETNAM: December 1961 - December 1962  
October 1966 - October 1967

ASSIGNMENT OF PREVIOUS VIETNAM TOUR: Civil Guard (RF) and Self Defense  
Corps (PF) Training Advisor, I Corps,  
MAAG-Vietnam (subsequently MACV),  
61-62.  
Subsector Advisor, Phu Yen Province,  
II Corps, MACV.

## SECTION II

1. What background did you have for your position?

Born in the US of alien Japanese parents; grew up speaking Japanese as a first language, inculcated by my parents with a deep appreciation of the importance of "Mura - Gun - Ken" (village - district - province); twenty years military service, including language training in French and Vietnamese at the Defense Language Institute, West Coast Branch; Command and General Staff College; and Master of Science in Social Psychology from the Graduate School, Tulane University.

2. What training did you have for this position?

Seven months of training at Vietnam Training Center, 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?

Eighteen months.

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

Excellent, for all mission programs, and, in case of advisor comfort, bordering upon superfluity in a combat zone where salary advantages are supposed to be a balm for the inconveniences and hazards.

6. Were there any programs delayed because support was not forthcoming?

Yes: territorial security. The lack of security due to ARVN's incapability to restrain the movement of main force units from the clearing zone into the consolidation zone delayed all programs accordingly.

Were there any programs that were especially successful because support was readily available? Which ones?

Yes. Land to the Tiller. The support provided this program, with active advisors "pushing", monitoring, and assisting (Muller, Eney, Zannos) was truly outstanding.

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 changes would you recommend?

Yes.

8. Do the MACCORDS Management Information System Field Reporting requirements set forth in Joint Directive 4-70 adequately measure progress in pacification programs?

Definitely not. The Feed-in, even when there were numerous advisors in the field (MAT Teams) was essentially Vietnamese. Vietnamese are humans who want to present an exemplary picture, just as Americans.

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

Not intentionally. The surprise of the ceasefire was responsible for much of the conflict.

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

10. The most clearly defined and directed programs are:

1. Territorial Security
2. Land-To-The-Tiller
3. Rural Development Cadre

11. The most effective para military forces are:

1. Regional Forces
2. Popular Forces

3. Field Police

12. The most successful pacification programs in province are:

1. Land-To-The-Tiller
2. Rural Credit
3. Territorial Security (excluding PSDF)

13. The programs that have the greatest impact upon the pacification effort in Bac Lieu Province are:

1. Territorial Security
2. Land-To-The-Tiller
3. Rural Credit

14. The least successful pacification programs in Province are:

1. PSDF
2. Public Health
3. VIS

15. The programs that have the least impact upon the pacification effort in Bac Lieu Province are:

1. Vietnamese Information Service
2. Youth and Sports
3. PSDF

16. The rural people are aware of the pacification efforts the GVN and US are making.

No comment.

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

Security has not improved. As a matter of fact, there has been a regression. The ceasefire has caused many "fence-riders" to make a positive commitment for the GVN.

18. Do you feel that the pacification plan is sufficiently detailed to provide guidance set goals that will result in security and growth of Vietnam?

✓ Yes. I thought the GVN plans were excellent. In addition to the issuance of the written plan, each Service Chief attended meetings with their respective Ministries for clarification and detailed guidance.

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- but delay in receipt of plan and confusion of suspense dates may have caused some plans to be inadequately prepared. To meet the established deadlines, the various staff officers and service chiefs submitted their respective annexes without proper staffing, little coordination among the other related agencies, and without adequate time for review by the Province Chief. In many cases, the annexes were inaccurate, incomplete, and much too general. Phung Hoang was a (terrible) example.

### SECTION III

#### FUNCTIONAL AREAS

#### TERRITORIAL SECURITY DIRECTORATE

#### RF/PF:

The Bac Lieu Territorial Forces are now and should continue to be very dependable for security and defense, and should be capable of holding population centers for the GVN against any current threat. Their offensive capability is very questionable, however, The PF have almost no offensive capability; the RF only limited capability, Both the RF and

PF are limited by personnel absences; normally, a PF platoon will field barely a squad on tactical operations, and RF companies barely 50% of authorized strength.

Desertions alone have averaged about 25% of the total RF/PF authorized strength, or 220 per month. Unfortunately, desertions continue to rise with no apparent effort being made to reduce this severe drain of personnel. There also appears to be a severe "flower" and "ghost" soldier problem. This cannot be confirmed, although official reports for most units list far higher strength figures than can be seen in the OB's or on operations. There is almost a total lack of initiative or aggressiveness in the RF/PF, and I feel that all the problems stem from one factor - a lack of effective leadership. This is true throughout the sector chain of command with only a very few notable exceptions. Since all sector battalions are commanded by captains, and companies by first and second lieutenants, just the inexperience of these officers detracts from their effectiveness as combat leaders. Training of RF/PF is poor. Real attempts have not been made to meet training goals. The PMTT has been malutilized, and work on a sector training center, designed to improve both the quantity and the quality of training, has progressed not well at all.

The first step in improving the RF/PF must be to revitalize the leadership. Prestige must be restored to incumbents of command positions, and only the best officers available must be assigned to these positions. Command emphasis, starting with the sector commander, must be placed on the deficiencies listed above. Concerning desertions, for example, morale and welfare programs must be emphasized, while at the same time apprehension and punishment must be made sufficiently certain as to serve as a deterrent to desertion. Sector officers should frequently accompany RF/PF units on tactical operations to evaluate properly their effectiveness (this is seldom done now; on most operations, if sector officers participate at all, they operate a light command post many kilometers from the operational area). Increased emphasis must also be given to proper strength accountability. Personnel must be utilized in their proper positions, and commanders must be held responsible for any discrepancies. Likewise, more command emphasis would greatly increase the effectiveness of the training program. Commanders must be taught the importance of training, and staff officers at sector and subsector levels must be required to properly fulfill their duties in establishing and following through on an adequate training program.

#### PSDF:

The PSDF is not now and, during my tour, has never been a strong program in Bac Lieu Province. For the most part, it is malutilized and poorly trained. It is only marginally effective in providing security in secure areas, and is mostly ineffective in providing security in remote areas. The program is hampered by poor leadership; also, most

District Chiefs have not paid sufficient attention to their PSDF.

There are indications that there may be an improvement in the status of the PSDF, however. At Province level the PSDF officer of the past year, who was totally ineffective, has recently been relieved. The District Chief in Phuoc Long District, assigned only since June, 1972, has taken a personal interest in the PSDF and has revitalized their organization and training. In the more remote areas, he has correctly refused to arm them until he is sure of their loyalty. This is an extremely wise decision. In many cases, especially in the remote areas, PSDF members were not properly screened prior to being armed, and this resulted in many VC sympathizers in the PSDF ranks (many of the PSDF defected to the enemy during large-scale attacks in June). The District Chief in Vinh Chau District, assigned in November, 1972, has made the reorganization of the PSDF one of his highest-priority projects and appears to be on the road to success in improving this program, at least in the secure areas.

To bring this program to its desired level of effectiveness will require, first of all, strong command emphasis at all levels from province to hamlet. Training must be continuous and of high quality. PSDF must be employed as an early warning force and not as a hamlet or OB defense Force since, too often in the past, they massed in OB's or hamlet and village offices, ill-equipped and ill-trained for their defense, and became easy targets for the enemy. Employed in two - or three-man mobile patrols, they could be very effective in providing warning and in delaying the enemy pending the arrival of territorial forces. Only the total support of the GVN officials will insure the success of this vital program.

#### PUBLIC SAFETY DIRECTORATE

##### National Police Field Force:

The concept of employment of NPFF is violated by higher headquarters periodically. For example, during periods of high enemy activity or threat, NPFF have been used to protect district, province and Can Tho headquarters. Such abuses lead to further malemployment by the various districts. The MPFF have made significant contributions in draft evader operations in Bac Lieu. Many operation have been conducted against the VC/VCI with very little contact with the enemy and very little results reported. Over the last five month's total operations, less than twenty percent of the operations conducted resulted in contact with the enemy.

### National Police Operations:

The National Police in Bac Lieu Province since the start of the new enemy offensive, have conducted many operations, combined, independent, check points and family census, throughout the province. In many cases as with the Field Police, very little contact was made with the enemy. Results of these operations in most cases has been low, consisting mostly of the apprehension of deserters, draft dodgers, and people who have false and illegal papers. Overall results have been marginal in the rural areas because of personnel shortages in the isolated areas. When combined operations are conducted the results of each operation are double credited, i.e., total results are claimed by each participating agency. A survey was conduct and this finding was confirmed. These figures are being reported daily, weekly and monthly to higher headquarters, which is aware of the double figures undoubtedly, Police corruption will continue until salaries lessen temptation "to take".

### POPAT:

Over the past seven months, many operations have been conducted against the VC/VCI within the province. The results of these operations have been less than satisfactory, but when considered against its traumatic and sputtering beginning, POPAT is becoming more effective as the Police gain in experience. This program will be extremely important, more than ever before, after the ceasefire.

## COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT DIRECTORATE

### Village Self Development:

Funds for the 1972 program were reduced substantially because nine villages had already attained self-sufficiency which lowered the MORD matching fund allocation to these villages. Only 78 projects were programmed for this year, however the RD Cadre assumed responsibility from the PPDC/CC for implementing the program. In general, the VSD program has served to increase popular participation in GVN programs, and it has increased the people's awareness of the possibilities for improved living conditions through co-operation with government officials. Most projects have been small, such as water wells, sidewalks, school room construction, foot bridge, etc., but their impact on the citizens is great. A project that provided the proper combination of people's support and government assistance usually resulted in large psychological gains for the government and raised the expectations of the people.

Unsuccessful projects, on the other hand, were very visible indicators of an inept local government unable to respond to the simple desires of its citizens.

#### RD Cadre:

Formerly a paramilitary organization, the RD Cadre have now become involved in the entire milieu of development programs at the village level. At the same time this elite corps of young men and women have gradually become more independent of the Province Pacification and Development Council, which seems to be rapidly losing its influence in many MORD programs. In 1972, the cadre assumed responsibility for VSD and Rural Credit programs, the village postal service and the youth program. They have responded enthusiastically as political cadre when the need has arisen, and were cooperating in the Combined Psychological Operations which supported President Thieu's stance against the initial proposed peace settlement. The drama team, perhaps the liveliest element of the RD cadre province team, has actively supported the youth program in the villages and participates in many province sponsored social gatherings.

In short, the RD cadre have generally accepted their new responsibilities with enthusiasm and it is felt that potentially they are the sine qua non of many future development programs. However, their ultimate success will depend on enlightened direction from central which must provide tangible goals and structure for their activities at the village level.

#### Local Government:

Local government has improved its effectiveness considerably over last program year despite harassment by the VC, thanks to efficient supervision especially by the PMST's. The heaviest casualties among local officials occurred in the April to June period in Phung Long District and the in September to November in Vinh Chau District. However, most of the officials who were lost have been replaced and some have even received training in their new jobs at province. The Province Chief has made considerable use of his powers to replace ineffective local officials under Martial Law. He has appointed seven village chiefs, mostly for security reasons.

The province has completed the reorganization of village and hamlet governments under Prime Ministerial Decree No. 120 of 22 August 1972. This decree reduced the number of authorized village officials from 170 to 150 and hamlet officials from 970 to 421.

#### Assistance In Kind (AIK):

The province monthly allocation of AIK is 335,000\$VN, which is normally

adequate to meet our needs. On occasion, additional funds or special grants have been provided from DEPCORDS when the province allocation proved inadequate. Although the AIK has been used very selectively, our allocation have been exhausted each month. The AIK is necessary for contingencies, but must be dispensed with care.

#### REFUGEE DIRECTORATE

##### Refugee:

This province did not have a significant refugee problem during my tour. Several thousand war victims were temporarily displaced from their homes by heavy military activity in Phuoc Long District in the April to June period. No refugee camps were established. The refugees just moved further down the canals to stay with relatives of friends until the action decreased. Most have now returned to their homes. RD Cadre were effectively mobilized from all over the province in July to take census of these people. War victims payments for the year were 5,279,575\$VN to 229 families totalling 1,633 people. The backlog of unpaid war victims has been eliminated. There is a continuing problem with the long delay between when a person becomes a war victim and when he receives payment. Greater care should be taken in preparation of war victims lists at village so that all names and ID numbers are correct. Villages should submit their lists within a maximum of two weeks after the incident happened and a province should speed up its processing of the lists so that payments are made within six weeks of the incident that generated the war victims.

##### Social Welfare:

This service has been only partially effective due to poor management. Implementation of the 1972 Return-to-Village projects was delayed by order of OPDC until mid-November and little real work has yet begun. The small food for peace program has been plagued by rumors of corruption. The new Service Chief's practice of visiting the institutions concerned, including the bakery, appears to solve some of these problems. More care must be exercised in selecting RTV project sites to insure that adequate security is available. Also once work has begun on a project it should be quickly completed and put into use or its condition will rapidly deteriorate.

## CHIEU HOI DIRECTORATE

### Chieu Hoi:

This program has been very successful since the present Service Chief, Mr. Tran Ngoc An took over on 19 December 1970. The year's goal of 520 Hoi Chanh has been far surpassed with total of 643 Hoi Chanh as of 16 Dec 1972 including 190 military, 356 political, and 97 others. The great majority (about 85%) of these Hoi Chanh are ex-VC, i.e. inactive for the previous six months. Hoi Chanh released from the Chieu Hoi Center totalled 652 thd s year.

In November, a temporary combined Psychological Operations Center was set up at Province under the direction of the Chieu Hoi Service Chief. This should be continued so that Chieu Hoi, Polwar, VIS, and RDC programs complement each other rather than compete for limited resources in a fragmented manner. Also more funds for vocational training of Hoi Chanh should be provided and the vocational training goal raised 20% to 25% of all Hoi Chanh.

## REPORTS AND ANALYSIS DIRECTORATE

### Report Requirements:

HES. Considered to be one of the best management tools for overall comparison, analysis and area evaluation. The Vietnamese, unfortunately look upon it as a "report card" and, as a result, are extremely embarrassed when their respective HES status regresses. Because of this, they are reluctant to report unfavorable incidents. With Vietnamization of the HES and the absence of district advisory teams the dangers of an inflated report are obvious.

TEARS. Initial experience with the new TEARS has demonstrated a lack of response and interest in this report by the Vietnamese staff because, as was with the (?), they consider it to be a US generated and directed report. When the TEARS was first introduced to the Advisors, it was clearly emphasized as a Vietnamese report: US handling was to be only for distribution. Apparently, this information was not adequately made clear to the Vietnamese. I can understand the Vietnamese position because it was the US advisors who first informed their counterparts of the initiation of the TEARS it was the advisors who first received the handbooks; the advisors receive the update forms and give them to the Vietnamese, and the report is returned to the advisors for forwarding.

obviously the Vietnamese draw the only logical conclusion. To further reinforce this conclusion, the report has a space for the PSA's remarks and signature. It is, therefore, recommended that JGS reemphasize the purpose of the TFARS report and that the Vietnamese use their own channels for distribution of the report. It is also further recommended that this become a quarterly report rather than monthly. It is desired that the advisors be provided with a summary of the input information so as to continue low-key monitoring.

#### REPORT Feedback:

Except for the HES and TFES (TEARS) the feedback on reports submitted to Saigon is rare. Management By Exception is an exception.

### AGENCY FOR INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### Public Health:

Implementation of this program has been uneven. Immunization goals have been generally met with a total of 198,317 administered this year. Only one sanitary hamlet was constructed. As of 1 December 1972, rural health facilities in operation totalled two maternity/dispensaries, six maternity/health stations, and 37 health stations. The training of health personnel has suffered with the transfer of the one year assistant midwife courses to Soc Trang making it difficult to recruit people. Most of these that do go do not return. A lot of posters and leaflets on health education have been distributed but no improvement has been noted. Even the Province Hospital fails to keep its grounds clean. An outbreak of Dengue Hemorrhagic Fever that began in May was the most important health occurrence. It has resulted in 239 cases including 73 reported deaths, mostly of children under 12 years old. The worst month was August with 98 cases including 40 deaths. Since then, the number of cases has been greatly reduced with only seven, including four deaths, reported in the first half of December. Partial credit for this decrease was due to a successful combined Health Service, VIS, RDC, Youth and Education Service campaign with substantial AIK support to inform the people of the cause and preventive measures to take against the disease. Province Hospital admissions were 11,623 including 614 civilian war casualties of whom 160 were children under 12 and 163 were females over 12.

Health Education should be made the priority program. There is no point in giving people immunizations if garbage is just dumped in the street. The program should concentrate on elementary school children through

utilization of hamlet health workers and rural midwives. Emphasis should be placed on keeping schools and homes clean. Province and village officials must also be educated in the importance of sanitation. A couple of one hour classes for all officials attending the Province Training Center would be one way of doing this. Awards should be given for maintaining a sanitary hamlet, perhaps supplemented with AIK funds.

#### Education:

The Ministry of Education has steadily increased the availability of its service throughout the province. Fifty-one new classrooms were constructed in 1971, and 26 in 1972. Only 46 hamlets of 194 are without an elementary school room. During the 1971-1972 school year there were 757 teachers with 35,000 students, while in 1972-1973, there are 775 teachers with 36,000 students.

The statistical improvements notwithstanding, the education service has many problems typical of any developing country. Basic school materials are often lacking, and the over-crowded classroom is the norm. The student-teacher ratio in the primary schools still stands at approximately 50:1. Possibly the single most frustrating problem is the chronic teacher shortage in the elementary schools which presently stands at 117. Recruiting qualified and motivated teachers who are willing to work in remote and insecure areas is continuing problem. In 1971-1972, for example, 26 teachers transferred out of the province, while only six transferred into province. This problem will not be resolved until real security is restored to these areas, but perhaps if the villages supplemented the salary of rural teachers, the problem could be partially alleviated.

#### Public Works:

This service has greatly improved its performance under the capable leadership of Mr. Le Van Phuong, who arrived in August 1971. Progress this year has been rapid with approximately 30,000 meters of roadway throughout the province repaired or ungraded. The quality of the work is good. While working on QL-4 the Public Works Service has applied cold mix asphalt to surface failures for a temporary repair. So successful has this maintenance work been that travel time from Bac Lieu to the An Kuyen border has been cut 40%. Other road work accomplished within the Province includes TL-38, HL-7 and extensive planning for TL-23 between Vinn My and Phuoc Long. The first three roads have been a particular challenge to Public Works in that they all have been damaged by monsoon rains, heavy vehicular traffic, and generally poor maintenance from the past Public Works Service Chief. Presently, these roads have continuous maintenance performed and have brought service to the province on an uninterrupted basis.

In Bac Lieu City, Public Works has constructed over 1,233 meters of culverts, 54 drainage ditches, 83 manholes and many other miscellaneous culverts. In addition approximately 3,875 meters of the streets in Bac Lieu have had construction work to include upgrading, widening, and the application of asphalt in some cases.

Probably the most outstanding portion of the Public Works Service Chief's activity has been the effective supervision exercised over his subordinates. So effective has been the delegation of responsibility and supervision by the Service Chief that his program has been limited by other government agencies not being able to keep up with his request for funds and materials.

This problem was eased somewhat this year by an increase of seven million piasters in our 1973 CPDC funds. This increase was attributed to the fact that Mr. Phuong was able to complete all of his 1972 projects ahead of schedule and in an outstanding manner.

#### Economic Development:

This is a one rice crop agricultural province and will remain so for the immediate future. The most important economic development has been the increasing use of miracle (TN) rice from one of reported 25,000 hectares last year to 30,000 hectares this year. Total hectarage remained the same at 150,000. There is a continuing, serious problem with the Agriculture Extension Service's inability to educate the farmers concerning the proper use of fertilizer and insecticide. This has been aggravated by an 100% + increase in the price of fertilizer this year. Last year, there was a bumper crop with production estimated at 375,000 tons. The planned goal of exporting 160,000 tons of rice this year will not be met. As of 17 December 1972 only 125,173 tons of rice had been legally expected. In November prospects for this year were that there would be a good, but no record rice crop; however, a typhoon caused severe damage to the rice during the first week in December. As a result the harvest will probably be reduced by 25 - 30% and next year's exports reduced to 50,000 tons.

Major development of the economy here depends on construction of a dam across the My Thank river, which is planned for completion by 1975. This would prevent salt water intrusion into Vinh Chau and Vinh Loi Districts and allow double-cropping rice on a minimum of 10,000 hectares. Only the initial surveys have so far been made.

#### Land Reform:

The Land-of-the-Tiller program in Bac Lieu Province is one of the more successful programs, even though the 19 villages have very large program

goals. Province officials have been prompt to take corrective action when problems and irregularities were reported. Highest priority should now be given to distributing titles and returning second receipts to Saigon so that the province can meet its program goal by Farmer's Day, 26 March 1973. Next year the PLAS should concentrate on registering all the new landowners and distributing the remaining available land.

#### Youth & Sports:

The Youth and Sports Service simply does not have enough personnel to carry out effectively the program that is called for in the 1972-75 CD&LD plan. Fortunately the Service Chief has been energetic and sincere, and, by soliciting support from the private sector he has organized sports tournaments and other youth activities for regional competition. The village RD cadre have recently responded to the shortage of personnel and in September 1972 began to organize youth teams at the village level. An estimated 2,500 black pajama clad youth now participate in Cub Scout type activities under the direction and leadership of the cadre. The future of this program remains with the cadre and not with the Youth Service.

#### Rural Credit:

The Bac Lieu Agriculture Development Bank has an extremely efficient and effective program. The bank is fortunate to have a very capable and efficient staff. US advisors have provided mostly moral support. One hundred percent more money is available for agriculture loans in 1972 than in 1971. The Vinh Chau Rural Bank was opened on 12 May 1972, with a total operating capital of 40,000,000\$VN. Construction has started on the Rural Bank <sup>building</sup> in Gia Rai which is scheduled to open in February 1973. The Rural Development Credit Program (Village Credit Committee) was effective for the first time in 1971 with 7,514 loans for 16,094,000\$VN. Loans in 1972 totalling 1,615 for 22,759,000\$VN have been made through the Rural Credit Program as of 25 November 1972.

Rural Banks will be much more important in the future than the Village Credit Committees. Province should make sure that the Gia Rai Bank opens on schedule despite the recent transfer of the ADR Director. A goal should be set of establishing a Rural Bank in Vinh Loi by Tet 1974. In the meantime, the Village Credit Committees should be encouraged to expand their operations by use of compensation money from communal land distributed under the Land-to-the-Tiller program.

#### Public Administration:

The province organized ten training courses for a total of 474 local officials, some of whom took several courses. Another four courses were

held for 120 province officials. The courses were well attended, some of them being so popular that twice as many people requested to take a course as were planned. The quality of the instruction was uneven with too many lectures and not enough practical discussion of problems.

There has been a dramatic increase in tax collections with revenue for village, province, and national budgets, for above last year. The province budget has gained greatly because of the imposition of the export fee. The villages have also benefited, though to a lesser extent because of the new agriculture fee. The province achieved its goal of 13 villages self-sufficient in operational expenses including nine who are also self-sufficient in developmental expenses. There are still problems with making complete up to date land and business license tax registers.

The operation of the PMSTs is generally very good, but follow-up by the districts to insure that the recommendations of the PMSTs are implemented is weak. The Deputy District Chiefs should be charged with responsibility to preparing follow-up reports one month after a PMST visit. Also PMSTs' visits should be scheduled for villages with newly appointed village officials, especially village chiefs so they can help with their training rather than waiting to come into province or go to Vung Tau several months after taking office. A similar program of visits to hamlets with newly appointed hamlet officials should be arranged for the RD Cadre Mobile Training Team.

It seems that while officials are eager to attend training courses they do not always learn everything they could. Perhaps if a one or two day seminar, including a test, were held at Province six months after each course this situation could be remedied.

Province officials have expressed interest in an information program to explain taxes to the villagers. They often do not know what taxes they are supposed to pay or understand that local taxes are for the benefit of their village and province. The importance of this cannot be too highly stressed, especially now with the great increase in 1973's land taxes, if taxes are to be efficiently collected. There is a large discrepancy between the amount of land on village tax registers and that reported as under cultivation by the Agriculture Service. Village should be encouraged to use the Land Reform master overlays to make sure they record every piece of land and then determining which ones are not taxable. Most villages are not taxing all the businesses that are liable to pay taxes.