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INDUCEMENTS AND
DETERRENTS TO DEFECTION:
AN ANALYSIS OF THE MOTIVES OF
125 DEFECTORS

Leon Goure

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FOREWORD

This report is one of a series of Rand studies that examine the organization, operations, motivation, and morale of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese forces that fought in South Vietnam.

Between August 1964 and December 1968 The Rand Corporation conducted approximately 2400 interviews with Vietnamese who were familiar with the activities of the Viet Cong and North Vietnamese army. Reports of those interviews, totaling some 62,000 pages, were reviewed and released to the public in June 1972. They can be obtained from the National Technical Information Service of the Department of Commerce.

The release of the interviews has made possible the declassification and release of some of the classified Rand reports derived from them. To remain consistent with the policy followed in reviewing the interviews, information that could lead to the identification of individual interviewees was deleted, along with a few specific references to sources that remain classified. In most cases, it was necessary to drop or to change only a word or two, and in some cases, a footnote. The meaning of a sentence or the intent of the author was not altered.

The reports contain information and interpretations relating to issues that are still being debated. It should be pointed out that there was substantive disagreement among the Rand researchers involved in Vietnam research at the time, and contrary points of view with totally different implications for U.S. operations can be found in the reports. This internal debate mirrored the debate that was then current throughout the nation.

A complete list of the Rand reports that have been released to the public is contained in the bibliography that follows.

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For a description of the Viet Cong Motivation and Morale Project and interviewing process, the reader should first consult W. Phillips Davison, *User's Guide to the Rand Interviews in Vietnam*, R-1024-ARPA, March 1972.

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PREFACE

For several years The RAND Corporation has been studying the Viet Cong, with the continuing interest and support of the Advanced Research Projects Agency and the Assistant Secretary of Defense (International Security Affairs). Since 1964 RAND teams have interviewed about 2000 Vietnamese, largely captured or defected Viet Cong. The transcripts of these interviews provide a large, general purpose, data base that permits at least preliminary investigation of several topics.

This study concerns the attitudes and motives of 125 defectors from Local Forces, guerrillas, and VC civilian organizations -- mainly the latter two. VC Main Force and NVA defectors are not represented in the group examined. The 125 interviews, carried out between December 1966 and March 1967, formed a limited attempt to elicit information on defections, particularly on the timing of decisions to defect, on inhibitory and delaying factors, on the flow of information about Chieu Hoi, on defectors' motives, and on the role of VC families that move to GVN-controlled areas. The limits of the inquiry are defined in detail in Section I below.

SUMMARY

Between December 1966 and March 1967, RAND's interviewers made a limited attempt to learn about the background of VC defections, particularly:

- (1) the timing of decisions to defect;
- (2) the factors that inhibit or delay defections;
- (3) the channels by which knowledge of the Chieu Hoi program reaches defectors;
- (4) motives for defection; and
- (5) the influence exercised by VC families that move to GVN-controlled areas.

The limitations of the present study should be borne in mind. For various reasons VC prisoners were not represented in the interviewed group of 125 men. The data do not enable us to discuss why captured VC did not defect before being taken prisoner, or why VC deserters have or have not defected. Moreover, it cannot be assumed that the persons interviewed were representative of the totality of defectors, in character, attitudes, or motives.

The interviewees may not always have been willing to give an honest account of their motives or views. Some, no doubt, were ready to distort or exaggerate in order to avoid antagonizing the interviewer or to create a favorable image of themselves in the minds of GVN officials. The brevity of the questionnaires sometimes made it impossible to eliminate ambiguities from the responses.

Our group of 125 defectors includes members of

the Local Forces, guerrillas, and VC civilian organization -- mainly the latter two. No VC Main Force or NVA defectors are included.

In all, 117 of the 125 defectors gave replies to a question concerning how long it took them to make up their minds to defect. (The remaining eight were not asked the question.) The general trend was toward careful consideration and prior planning. Only 11 interviewees, for example, said they had decided to defect less than one month before acting. As many as 40 waited six months or more. Some even waited more than a year.

Concerning deterrents to defection, the interviews make it evident that the VC system of surveillance and control constitutes a serious obstacle to defection.

It is interesting, from a policy-making standpoint, that so many interviewees mentioned fear of the GVN. At least 75 interviewees (60 percent), including 34 out of the 48 cadres, said they had been afraid of the treatment they might receive at the hands of the GVN. The cadres interviewed tended to think that the GVN's amnesty and promises of good treatment did not extend to those who had served the VC for a long time in responsible positions. Direct GVN appeals failed to overcome fears of mistreatment and reprisals. Interviewees had tended to reject or question Chieu Hoi propaganda and assurances. Indeed they had spent time and effort to obtain reassurance from sources they trusted.

Relatives were often able to persuade VC members to surrender to the GVN, because their very eagerness conveyed confidence in GVN promises. Information on the

Chieu Hoi (open arms) program came not only from relatives, but also from villagers, earlier defectors, and other members of a man's unit. Many had heard about Chieu Hoi from more than one source.

Motives for defection, in order of frequency of mention, included:

- (1) personal hardships;
- (2) fear of being killed;
- (3) economic hardships of the family;
- (4) criticism and punishment;
- (5) homesickness and resentment over denial of home leave;
- (6) a feeling of having gained nothing from service with the VC;
- (7) dissatisfaction with VC policies and aims;
- (8) loss of faith in VC victory;
- (9) removal of the family to a GVN-controlled area;
- (10) arrest or execution of a family member by the VC;
- (11) forcible recruitment into the VC;
- (12) dislike of VC taxes.

The existence of other motives for defection may be deduced from indirect evidence in the interviews. For example, anything that tended to raise barriers between a man and his home and family seems to have increased the likelihood of his considering defection.

Allied attacks were an important factor in motivating defection. Of the various forms of assault, air attacks were rated the most frightening, with artillery attacks next, and armored attacks the least so.

Two categories of motives are worth special notice: decline in family income, and the removal of families to GVN-controlled areas. The two were linked in the minds of some interviewees. Removal increased the need for help from the main family earner. This may have been a bigger factor than our figures suggest.

The interviews, few as they are, do throw light on some important elements in defector motivation, for example:

(1) Fear of possible GVN mistreatment after defection and of arrest by the GVN while on the way to surrender may be a major deterrent to defection.

(2) Although Chieu Hoi appeals have had a noticeable influence on the defection process, most of the interviewees did not fully trust GVN assurances of good treatment.

(3) Removal of VC families to GVN-controlled areas was an important reason for defection among our interviewees.

(4) The interviews show that economic factors play a major part in motivating defection and therefore may be worth exploiting more fully in "psywar" operations.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Since February 1963 the government of South Vietnam (GVN) and American civilian and military agencies have made continuous efforts to persuade Viet Cong and North Vietnamese Army (NVA) personnel to defect and surrender to the GVN. Over the years much effort and money have been invested in the defector program. To carry on successful psychological warfare, it is important to be able to estimate the effectiveness of Chieu Hoi leaflets and broadcasts in inducing defections.

Between December 1966 and March 1967, a limited attempt was made, as part of the ongoing RAND interview program, to elicit information on defections, particularly (1) the timing of the defectors' decisions to defect; (2) the factors that inhibit or delay defections; (3) the channels by which knowledge of the Chieu Hoi program reaches defectors; and (4) the motives for defection, including the influence exercised by VC families that move from VC-controlled to government-controlled areas.

Field workers on the project used a short questionnaire directed to VC defectors in certain Chieu Hoi centers in South Vietnam. The questionnaire consisted primarily of open-ended questions that could be answered in about an hour. Though all interviewees, regardless of occupational category, were questioned on the main points mentioned above, separate forms were designed for (1) VC civilians, (2) hamlet and village guerrillas, and (3) Local and Main Force personnel, i.e., members of the VC regular military forces.

The inquiry was limited to VC defectors, because they were more easily accessible to the interview teams than prisoners and large numbers of them could be questioned within a relatively short time. The omission of prisoners from the groups interviewed introduces an unavoidable bias into the findings. Moreover, the data do not enable us to discuss why captured VC did not defect before capture, or why VC deserters have or have not defected.

The field workers at the Chieu Hoi centers made no attempt to be selective in choosing defectors for interview. Interviewers were instructed to question whomever they could find at the centers, regardless of rank or affiliation. At some of the Chieu Hoi centers all or nearly all defectors present were interviewed.

It cannot be assumed, however, that the persons interviewed were representative of the totality of defectors, in character, composition, or attitudes and motives. We do not know the precise relationship of the interviewees to various larger groups such as potential defectors and the VC as a whole. Some indications of bias arising from the character of the interviewees will be discussed in the next Section. It may be noted here that most interviewees came from provinces in III and IV Corps areas and that none came from I Corps area. Insofar as the character and motives of the defectors vary from area to area, the geographical distribution of the interviewees affects the findings. The interviewees tended to cluster in the relatively small number of provinces where the interviews were conducted, and were chosen largely for their accessibility. The group appears to have contained a larger proportion of VC cadres and to have served longer in the VC than the defector population as a whole.

Account must also be taken of the many uncertainties concerning the reliability of the interviewees' responses. The interviewees may not always have been willing to state honestly their motives or views, even to the extent that they were conscious of them. It appears likely that some of the responses represented "rationalizations" of the act of defection. Some interviewees perhaps tended to exaggerate certain factors or to suppress others in order to present what they took to be a favorable image of themselves or to avoid antagonizing the interviewer. Finally, the brevity of the questionnaires did not always permit an elucidation of ambiguous answers.

For the purposes of analysis, Main Force and NVA defectors were excluded, as were uninformative interviews with uncooperative subjects. The conclusions of the present study are based on a group of 125 defectors from the Local Forces, guerrillas, and VC civilian organizations, the latter two categories predominating. The findings are not concerned with the motives and attitudes of VC Main Force and NVA defectors.

The author tabulated and coded the motives and factors cited by the interviewees not only as direct responses to specific questions but also as indicated by clues contained in the entire text of each interview. The codes and tabulations included primarily affirmative answers by the interviewees to open-ended questions. It must be emphasized that, in view of the uncertainties about the representativeness of the interviewee group and of the responses obtained, one must be cautious in attributing statistical significance to, or in drawing general inferences from, the specific statistical breakdowns of the

group or from the order of ranking of the various factors. The findings may have a limited application beyond the interviewee group. The numbers presented do no more than suggest factors that may be important in shaping the motives and attitudes of larger groups of VC defectors.

Despite these uncertainties and limitations, the majority of the interviewees were cooperative and at times surprisingly candid in their replies. They clearly did not intend to please the interviewers or to accommodate to what they believed was the preferred GVN or American point of view. Although the breakdown of the interviewees according to classification and motives cannot be assumed to apply to the VC or the defector population as a whole, the findings are generally in accord with other RAND studies of VC defectors, which were based on larger interviewee groups and on in-depth interviews.* Moreover, although the interviews are over a year old, the more broadly based RAND studies of VC defectors up to December 1967 indicate that the factors motivating VC personnel to defect have not greatly changed over time and that other factors influencing decisions to defect have also remained fairly constant, though their order of importance may have undergone some changes. Finally, some defectors were reinterviewed on the basis of much longer and more detailed

* See J. Carrier and C. A. H. Thomson, VC Motivation and Morale: The Special Case of Chieu Hoi, RM-4830-ISA/ARPA. Past and ongoing analysis by J. Carrier of biographical data cards of over 20,000 defectors of the period between July 1965 and June 1967 also generally supports many of the findings derived from the interviews of these defectors.

questionnaires in general use in the RAND interview program. These in-depth interviews, which were also used in the analysis, provided further support for the findings of the short ones.

II. SOME CHARACTERISTICS OF THE INTERVIEWEE GROUP

The 125 interviewees in this study were predominantly VC civilians and guerrillas, with a small number of Local Force personnel. The interviewee group, consisting of 121 men and 4 women, ranged in age from 14 to 54, the great majority being in their twenties. Table 1 shows the composition of the group as to cadres,^{*} rank and file, organizational status, and levels of operation. The 12 civilians under "OTHERS" in the column labeled "R&F" had performed various support tasks away from their villages, such as growing food, transporting supplies, entertaining, or cooking for VC military units.

More than one-third of the interviewees had been cadres and about half military personnel. It would appear that the group included 72 persons (57 percent) from the VC "control structure" at various levels. Included in this number are the VC civilians (except the 12 who had performed support work away from their villages) and the 25 hamlet guerrillas who, in addition to their military activities, also performed control functions. Among the interviewees, 23 admitted to membership in the People's Revolutionary Party and 8 said they had been members of the Labor Youth organization.

All but two interviewees had defected between October 1966 and March 1967 (43 between October and December 1966,

*The VC term "cadre" applies to persons holding the rank of assistant squad leader and higher and to civilians holding some responsible position in the VC organization.

TABLE 1
COMPOSITION OF INTERVIEWEE GROUP

Organization	TOTAL		HAMLET		VILLAGE		DISTRICT		PROVINCE		REGION		OTHERS	
	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F	Cadre	R&F
Local Force	14	6	--	--	6	6	8	0	--	--	--	--	--	--
Guerrilla	9	37	4	21	--	16	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
Civilian	25	34	6	7	4	7	3	0	1	0	0	0	12	12
TOTAL	48	77	10	28	10	13	11	0	1	0	0	0	12	12

and 80 between January and March 1967).^{*} Two had defected prior to October 1966. The interviewees had operated in 15 provinces (out of a total of 44 provinces in South Vietnam), and most of them came from the III and IV Corps areas. The provinces and the number of interviewees who had operated in each were as follows:

<u>CORPS AREA</u>	<u>PROVINCE</u>	<u>NUMBER OF INTERVIEWEES</u>
II	Khanh Hoa	6
	Binh Dinh	4
	Darlac	1
III	Binh Duong	34
	Phuoc Tuy	21
	Bien Hoa	12
	Gia Dinh	3
	Hau Nghia	2
	Long An	1
IV	Kien Giang	21
	Vinh Long-Sadec	8
	Dinh Tuong	6
	Bac Lieu	4
	An Xuyen	1
	Ba Xuyen	1

The great majority (113) of the 124 interviewees^{**} who answered the question, "When did you join the Front

^{*}The distribution of the defections by months was as follows: in 1966, 1 in May, 1 in September, 8 in October, 17 in November, and 18 in December; in 1967, 47 in January, 29 in February, and 4 in March.

^{**}Information on one guerrilla cadre is unavailable.

[i.e., VC]?" had served one year or longer in the Viet Cong movement. Somewhat over half had joined prior to mid-1965, and 17 percent had served more than five years. Table 2 shows the distribution of length of service by organizational status.

TABLE 2
LENGTH OF SERVICE IN THE VC

Organization	Totals**	0-1 yr	1-2 yrs	2-3 yrs	3-5 yrs	over 5 yrs
Local Force	20	0	3	3	8	6
Guerrilla	45	4	18	11	6	6
Civilians	59	7	18	13	11	10
Cadres	47*	1	8	7	16	15

It is doubtful that the distribution of time spent in the VC and the proportion of cadres in the group are typical of all defectors from such levels of the VC organizations. The proportion of subjects with longer service may be somewhat greater than in the defector population as a whole, but more nearly representative of the experience of defectors from III and IV Corps areas, from which most of the interviewees came. According to an analysis by RAND staff member J. M. Carrier, of some 20,000 biographical data cards of Viet Cong defectors between July 1965 and June 1967,

* Information on one guerrilla cadre is unavailable.

** Many individuals fall into more than one of the four organizational categories listed.

there was in that period a marked upward trend in the length of service of VC defectors in all categories. The data cards also show that defectors from the III and IV Corps areas served longer than those in I and II Corps. However, the percentage of guerrilla and civilian cadres among defectors in III and IV Corps areas was 10 and 25 percent respectively, i.e., about half of the percentage of cadres in these categories in the interviewee group. Although most of the interviewees came from III and IV Corps areas, the atypically high proportion of cadres in the interviewed group and the fact that cadres have usually served longer than rank and file defectors result in an average length of service apparently somewhat greater than that for the total defector population.

Most of the interviewees were married and had children.* The majority (87) said they had been classified by the VC as poor farmers or fishermen.** Thus a large proportion of the interviewees had belonged to the social class which is wooed and favored by the VC and which, according to VC doctrine, forms the backbone of the movement.

The hamlets of most interviewees (105 out of 125) had been under VC control at least temporarily. The 125 interviewees had resided in 91 different villages. Thirteen of these villages had always been under GVN control

* Of 117 interviewees for whom relevant information is available, 86 were married and 31 were single.

** Of the 118 interviewees for whom relevant information is available, 87 had been classified as poor, 30 as middle-level farmers, and 1 as rich.

or had been pacified for a number of years. Of the remaining 78, 11 had been pacified a few months before the interviewees' defections or were undergoing pacification at the time of defection. The other 67 villages were either VC-controlled or contested. (At least 45 interviewees had operated or had homes in pacified villages.)

One factor that affected the defection of the interviewees was the growing tendency of villagers to move to GVN-controlled areas. The departure of the villagers had a multiple effect on local VC organizations and personnel. Where most or all villagers had moved away, many VC civilians were left without a job and, at the same time, were deprived of their sources of food, labor, and intelligence. The interviewees indicated that the VC were afraid to stay in deserted hamlets because they believed the Allies would no longer be deterred from attacking them now that there was no risk of hurting innocent villagers. The departure of the villagers tended to increase the hardships and dangers faced by the local VC and to discourage some of them.

Of the 67 villages that had been under VC control, part or all of the population of at least 54 was said to have moved to GVN-controlled areas. Information was lacking on 5 villages. According to the interviewees, the population of 8 villages had not moved. Of the 54 completely or partly deserted villages, 21 were said to have been evacuated by "most" or "all" of their inhabitants either voluntarily or by orders of the GVN authorities. These included some of the pacified villages whose residents had been moved to nearby strategic or "New Life"

hamlets. Another 7 were reported to have lost either "two-thirds" or "many" of their residents. In 5 villages, the interviewees indicated, the number of villagers who had moved was quite small. No precise information was available on the number of villagers who had left the remaining 21 villages. The movement of villagers from VC- to GVN-controlled areas included families of persons serving in the VC.

The most striking fact concerning the families of the interviewed defectors was their whereabouts at the time defection occurred. Of 123 interviewees with families of their own or close relatives, 113 had families living in GVN-controlled areas at the time of the interview, and only 10 had families still residing in VC-controlled or contested areas. The dates of movement of the families were not always clearly stated in the interviews and sometimes had to be deduced from the interviewees' account of various events. As far as the data permit, the movements of the families of interviewees are shown in Table 3.

TABLE 3
MOVEMENT OF INTERVIEWEES' FAMILIES
AND CONTROL OVER THEM AT TIME OF INTERVIEW

Families residing over one year in GVN areas (About 20 had always been under GVN control)	35
Families moved during year prior to defection	45
Families moved simultaneously with defector	12
Families not moved, but village pacified	20
Families moved after defection	1
Families' move arranged by defector*	22

* Including the 12 who moved simultaneously. Not included are several families which had moved more than

Since many of the interviewees mentioned hardships and fear of being killed as motives for defection, it is relevant to consider the exposure of the interviewees to Allied attacks. Our records cover the year preceding each individual defection. Of the 78 villages not under protracted GVN control, 46 had suffered air, artillery or ground attack.* More than a hundred interviewees had experienced some form of Allied attack in the six months preceding their defections. The distribution of these experiences among the interviewees is shown in Table 4.

one year before the interviewees' defection, and whose moves had also been arranged by the defectors. Most of the families which had left their homes had moved to nearby GVN-controlled hamlets or to district towns. Among those which had been moved by the GVN or American authorities, most had been resettled in nearby strategic or "New Life" hamlets. Some members of the families or other villagers who had moved to GVN-controlled areas periodically returned home to take care of their property or to harvest their crops. None, however, had returned permanently to VC-controlled hamlets. Some relatives, mostly wives, had followed the interviewee to a VC-controlled area when he had joined the VC. A few higher-ranking cadres, who operated far from home, had lost touch with their families.

* Of the 46 attacked villages, 29 had been attacked by ground forces and 23 by artillery and aircraft (fixed-wing or helicopters).

TABLE 4

EXPERIENCES OF A...ED ATTACKS DURING SIX MONTHS PRIOR TO DEFECTION

Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	All Types of Attacks			
		Air	Artillery	Ground	
Local Force	20	15 (75%)	15	8	5
Guerrillas	45	37 (80%)	24	20	28
Civilians	59	50 (85%)	29	8	27
TOTAL	124	102	68	36	60

By contrast, of the 66 interviewees who had served in military units only, 17 reported participating in VC-initiated operations in the three months before defection. Of these, 9 had gone on combat operations during the month preceding defection, 8 more during three months.

It should also be noted that, of 95 interviewees who were questioned about defections and desertions in their units or civilian organizations, 70 reported defections to the GVN and 27 reported desertions, including 25 who cited instances of both. All or most of the members of some small units and organizations were said to have defected or deserted.

III. TIMING AND DETERRENTS TO DEFECTION

Each defector was asked, "When did you decide to rally [defect]?" This was done in order to find out whether the interviewees were able and willing to date their decisions to defect, and to obtain a better perspective on the influence of various deterrents to defection and on the process of defection. The answers obtained were probably shaped by vague recollections not only of the time when interviewees decided to take steps toward defection, but also of an earlier time when they became willing to consider it. It is not possible on the basis of the interviews to distinguish clearly between these two stages in the defection process. Undoubtedly the interviewees had a tendency to exaggerate the time since they had become disaffected toward the VC.

As one might expect, the interviews show that the defection process is a complex one. Each individual passes through a number of stages, from loyal VC member, and later potential defector, to active seeker of ways to defect, and, ultimately, successful defector. Each stage of the process may be long or short, depending on a great many factors, including the prospective defector's vacillation, hesitation, and doubts. The interviews clearly indicate that a defector is not likely to act on sudden impulse, but tends to think and plan carefully before deciding when and in what circumstances it is safe to defect. Even the VC member who has come to a definite decision usually waits for an opportunity to evade VC surveillance and to surrender safely to the CVN, though his final flight from the VC may be unplanned and sudden.

Since the answers obtained to the questions on the timing of the decision to defect cover various stages of the defection process, they do not give any consistent idea of the duration of these stages. For example, a civilian defector whose village had been recently pacified might have thought about the possibility of defecting for a long time but might have been reluctant to leave his family and land. Once the village was pacified, he might decide to defect so as not to be separated from his family and land, and also because the process of defecting had been made easier for him by the pacification.

Nevertheless, over half of the interviewees spontaneously cited a specific month when they had "decided" to defect. The replies of the others were somewhat more vague. Some said "two or three months ago," others "mid-1966" or "during the planting season," while still others mentioned a year or simply said "a long time ago." For the vaguest respondents, the approximate time had to be guessed from their description of various events in the interviews.

In all, 117 interviewees replied to the question. The remaining 8 were not asked the question. Only 11 interviewees said they had decided to defect less than one month before they acted. Among the others, 26 said they defected within one to two months of their decision, 40 within two to six months, and 40 more than six months before. Some waited from one to two years before defecting. Among the 46 cadres who answered the question, 67 percent had decided to defect two months or more before doing so (37 percent over six months before).

The interviewees were also asked, "Why have you not defected sooner?" This question and others dealing with the story of each interviewee's defection served to elicit information on the factors that either had deterred the interviewees from deciding to defect or had delayed defection once they had decided on it. It was not always possible to distinguish clearly between pre-decision and post-decision deterrents. Many interviewees mentioned several factors that had deterred or delayed defection. In addition to the deterrents, other considerations, not mentioned by the interviewees, such as loyalty to the VC cause or unit, uncertainty about which side would be victorious, friendships, VC land grants, and uncertainties about GVN policies, probably resulted in some hesitation.

Table 5 shows all the factors cited by the interviewees as having deterred or delayed their defections, including multiple factors.

TABLE 5
FACTORS DELAYING OR DETERRING
DEFECTION

FACTOR	NO. WHO MENTIONED
Fear of being mistreated by the GVN after defection	64
VC surveillance and lack of opportunity	62
Families in VC area hostage to VC	21
Waiting to contact family or GVN authorities	21
Waiting to harvest crops or earn some money	15
Fear of being arrested or killed by GVN while on way to defect	12
Waiting for home leave or Tet holiday	10
Fear of having land confiscated by VC	6

It is evident that the deterrents cited by the interviewees had exercised influence at different stages of the defection process. Some involved fear of actions that the GVN might take against a defector. In this category were fear of mistreatment, arrest, or death at the hands of GVN authorities after the defection, or of arrest by GVN civilian or military authorities while on the way to surrender. These factors probably influenced both the interviewee's decision to defect and his delay in acting on it. Among other deterrents were actions the VC might take either to recapture the defector or to punish him for his defection. In this category were the problem of escaping from VC surveillance, the fear that the VC might take reprisals against one's family, and fear that the VC would confiscate one's land and property. More interviewees feared VC punishment (93) than mistreatment or arrest by the GVN (79). But this knowledge does not tell us which factors were dominant for each of the interviewees.

Other causes for delay in surrendering included actions on the part of the potential defectors designed to ensure his welcome by the GVN, to provide for the safety of his family, and to supply himself with funds to live on while in the GVN area. Another delaying factor was waiting for an opportunity to make a safe trip to the GVN authorities. Some waited to contact family or GVN, some for home leave or the Tet (Chinese New Year) holidays when more home leaves are granted and travel becomes safer, and some to harvest crops or earn some money.

Those defectors who cited the problem of evading VC surveillance as the sole reason for having delayed their surrender presumably were among those who had decided to defect and were waiting for an opportunity to do so. Fear of punishment in the event of their recapture may also have made them hesitate before taking the final step. Where families were hostages to the VC, the defection process involved the complex problem of contacting the family (done frequently by civilians and guerrillas, seldom by Local Force personnel) and arranging for its safe removal to a GVN-controlled area. This process made it necessary to wait for an opportunity to evade VC surveillance of the family as well as of the defector. Those who feared mistreatment by the GVN had other reasons for contacting their families or the GVN authorities: to obtain more information on the Chieu Hoi program, and to arrange for safe conduct and a good reception by the GVN.

Table 6 shows the distribution of the deterrent factors among those who cited one such factor as the sole reason for delaying final defection:

TABLE 6
FACTORS MENTIONED AS SOLE REASON FOR DELAYING DESERTION

FACTOR	NO. CITING AS SOLE REASON FOR DELAY
Fear of mistreatment by the GVN (including where subject waited to contact GVN or family)	29
VC Surveillance	21

FACTOR	NO. CITING AS SOLE REASON FOR DELAY
Family hostage to VC (including when subject waited to evade VC surveillance)	29
Wait for harvest or to earn money	5
Fear of arrest by GVN on way to surrender	2
Fear of confiscation of land by VC	1

The difficulties of escaping undetected from VC surveillance and control were an obvious deterrent to defection. The interviews make it evident that the VC system of mutual surveillance afforded by the three-man cells, constraints on freedom of movement, screening by guerrillas charged with checking strangers, and uncertainties about the location of the nearest GVN position constitute serious obstacles to defection. For example, a squad leader of a Local Force battalion operating in Hau Nghia Province said:

In the Front forces the members of the three-man cells watch each other. That was why I couldn't rally before. Aside from the Front forces' control, there was the people's surveillance. Wherever you went, you had to have a permit, otherwise you would risk being stopped by the people.... The most important reason for my not rallying before was the discipline in the Front forces. Wherever you went, you had to have a reason for it.

Opportunities to evade VC surveillance arose in many forms. Sometimes the would-be defector waited until he was sent alone on a mission. Others took advantage of Allied attacks, which disorganized or dispersed their units, or became deliberately "lost" during an operation or march.

The interviewees' fear of possible mistreatment, arrest, or execution by the GVN after defection or while on the way to surrender is of special importance since it relates to the interviewees' image of the GVN and of the Chieu Hoi program, as well as to the effectiveness of Chieu Hoi propaganda. The fact that so many interviewees mentioned fear of the GVN appears to be significant from a policy-making standpoint. Counting those in Table 5 who said they had feared being arrested while on the way to surrender but who had not mentioned fear of mistreatment after surrender (8), at least 75 interviewees (60 percent), including 34 cadres (of a total of 48) said they had been afraid of the treatment they might receive at the hands of the GVN. Of these, 12 said they had also delayed their surrender until they could contact their families or the GVN authorities, mainly for the purpose of gaining further information and assurances on the treatment of defectors.

Many interviewees reported that VC propaganda had played on the fear of mistreatment by frequent warnings that after a few weeks of good treatment, during which the defectors would be exploited by GVN intelligence and propaganda, they would be beaten, tortured, imprisoned, or even killed. For example, a VC civilian worker from Hau Nghia Province said: "I actually worried about the VC's propaganda which said that those who rallied would be beaten to death by the GVN." Another civilian from Binh Duong Province claimed that: "It has been three years since I began wanting to rally, but the VC propagandized that I would be killed if I came out here [to a GVN area.] I was so scared I didn't dare leave."

It is not surprising that a high proportion of the cadres among the interviewees said they had feared mistreatment by the GVN. In the opinion of many cadres, the GVN's treatment of a defector depended on his length of service in the VC, whether he was a Party member, and other indications of his past commitment to the VC and of activities on their behalf. The cadres interviewed tended to think that the GVN's amnesty and promises of good treatment did not extend to those who had served the VC a long time in responsible positions and thus had caused the GVN "a great deal of damage." At the same time the cadres were in a somewhat better position than the rank and file to evade VC surveillance. Among the cadres interviewed only 20 had cited the problem of escaping from VC surveillance as one of the factors that had delayed their defection.*

It seems likely that the answers of the interviewees were biased by their reluctance to mention fear of possible GVN mistreatment in case they might offend the interviewers or the GVN authorities. A civilian cadre from Binh Duong Province, who had not voluntarily mentioned any fear of possible GVN mistreatment, was asked directly by the interviewer: "Were you afraid of being mistreated by the GVN?" His reply was:

You said it! The VC told us that the ralliers were tortured and imprisoned. I didn't come out here [to a GVN area] before because of my fear of being mistreated by the government.

* Only 2, both civilians, cited it as the sole factor. The distribution of the cadres was as follows: 5 Local Force, 5 guerrillas, 10 civilians. Among the civilians, 2 had worked at province level, 4 at district level, 3 at village level, and 1 at hamlet level.

Since such probing questions were only used in a few cases, it is not known how many of the remainder who did not volunteer information about fear of GVN mistreatment might have responded in the affirmative to a direct question.

Only a few interviewees indicated that they had trusted the promises of good treatment in the Chieu Hoi propaganda, and other RAND interviews have frequently brought out fear of possible GVN mistreatment. Such fears may have been even more effective in discouraging defection than seems to be indicated by the answers to the questionnaires.

Table 5 shows that fear of VC reprisals against the families of defectors, when these families resided in VC-controlled areas, was also a major deterrent to defection among the interviewees. Nine mentioned it as the sole factor that had deterred or delayed their defection. Among the 21 interviewees who cited this as one of the factors delaying defection, 7 had families in villages pacified one month or less before they defected. Five other families had moved to the GVN area at the same time as a family member was defecting. The families of 5 interviewed defectors had escaped from the VC area within the preceding month. Of the remainder, one family had moved two months earlier, two over six months earlier. The removal date of one family is not known. This suggests that most (18 out of 21) interviewees with vulnerable families postponed defecting until their families were safe or could be taken along. Defection from the 7 families in recently pacified villages may have been

influenced not only by the fact that their families were no longer under VC control but also by a desire not to be separated from their families and land.*

The data suggest that in the period when the defections of the interviewee group took place, the direct GVN appeals were not sufficiently convincing to overcome fears about mistreatment and reprisals. As a consequence, the interviewees tended to reject or question Chieu Hoi propaganda and assurances. Indeed, they had engaged in complicated and often time-consuming efforts to obtain further reassurances from sources they trusted, or had waited until they had accidentally found sources of reassurance.

*This group of 7 interviewees was composed of one Local Force member, who was back in his village because of illness; 5 hamlet guerrillas, and one civilian rank and file member of a village organization.

IV. SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE CHIEU HOI PROGRAM

In its direct appeals, Chieu Hoi propaganda attempts both to persuade VC personnel to defect and to reassure them about good treatment by the GVN. The appeals are primarily in the form of leaflets, aerial broadcasts, and radio programs. There are indications in these and many other interviews that the great majority of VC personnel read these leaflets or hear the aerial broadcasts. Out of 115 interviewees who were questioned on the matter, 111 reported having read leaflets and 82 having heard aerial broadcasts. Two had listened to GVN radio stations. The interviewees asserted that, despite VC official prohibitions, it had become common practice among the VC to read the leaflets in secret. Many kept leaflet safe-conduct passes in case an opportunity to defect arose, or possibly in order to win better treatment in the event of capture by the Allied forces. For example, a veteran district propaganda cadre said: "Generally speaking, everybody, villagers as well as VC guerrillas, soldiers, and cadres, got and read government leaflets. Many people hid safe-conduct leaflets in order to use them at the first opportunity." Those who kept leaflets risked being punished by the VC if discovered. The interviewees indicated that some defectors would pick up leaflets while on the way to surrender in order to convince the GVN authorities that they had genuinely intended to defect.

If, however, the intending defector did not fully trust the promises of good treatment, he tended to fall back on other sources of information in which he had

greater confidence. Some would-be defectors asked persons they trusted, most often family members, to find out about the Chieu Hoi program or to arrange safe-conduct with the GVN authorities. In other cases, relatives or friends initiated a search for information or passed along news that they happened to have heard. Relatives were often able to persuade VC members to surrender to the GVN, because the very act of persuading indicated considerable confidence in the GVN's good treatment of defectors. Relatives were not the only source of information on the Chieu Hoi program. Others were villagers, earlier defectors, other members of one's unit, and GVN officials who had tried to reassure doubting individuals. Some interviewees had relatives serving in GVN military or civilian agencies and counted on their protection to win good treatment. In brief, many had heard about Chieu Hoi from more than one source.

Of the 115 interviewees who answered questions about their sources of information on the Chieu Hoi program, 68 said that they had been influenced to some degree by Chieu Hoi appeals. Only 24 of them, however, said they had relied exclusively on these appeals and had fully believed the promises of good treatment made in the leaflets and broadcasts. Some leaflets and broadcasts had conveyed "messages" from earlier defectors.

Table 7 shows how many interviewees were exposed to each of the various sources of information on the Chieu Hoi program and the treatment of defectors by the GVN.

TABLE 7

SOURCES OF INFORMATION ON THE CHIEU HOI PROGRAM

A. FAMILY

Family had contacted the GVN authorities	25
Appeal by relatives to defector	25
Family had met other defectors	8
Relative had defected from the VC	6
Relative serving in the GVN	7
	<hr/>
TOTAL	71 or 62%

B. OTHER SOURCES OF INFORMATION

Knew of other VC who had successfully defected	18
Told of Chieu Hoi program by friends or villagers	19
Interviewee had met defectors	10
Personal appeal by GVN or Chieu Hoi officials	4
	<hr/>
	51 or 40%

C. CHIEU HOI APPEALS

Influenced to varying degrees by Chieu Hoi appeals	68 or 59%
Among these:	
saw defector photograph on leaflet	6
heard broadcast by defector	5
used safe-conduct leaflet	24
Influenced primarily by Chieu Hoi appeal	24 or 20%

Two interviewees, both Local Force cadres, said they had been influenced by the Chieu Hoi leaflets and broadcasts, but had delayed defecting until they were able to steal some weapons and so assure themselves of a better reception by the GVN.

According to their statements, then, 91 interviewees had received information from sources other than Chieu Hoi appeals; 47 did not even mention being influenced by these appeals. Since nearly all the interviewees had seen Chieu Hoi leaflets or heard broadcasts, their failure to mention Chieu Hoi appeals was seldom, if ever, due to lack of exposure to them.

The interviewees' encounters with defectors usually occurred in one of two ways: the village was pacified and some earlier defectors returned to their homes, or the meeting took place during the Tet holidays when the interviewees visited their families in nearby strategic or "New Life" hamlets.

In the previous Section it was noted that 64 interviewees were temporarily deterred from defecting by fear of possible mistreatment by the GVN. This group consisted of 12 Local Force members, 23 guerrillas, and 29 civilians. Table 8 shows the distribution of various sources of information on the Chieu Hoi program for those who had feared mistreatment by the GVN and for those who had not. Of those who said they feared mistreatment, all 64 answered the questions on information sources, while 51 of those who said they were not afraid did so.

TABLE 8
SOURCES OF INFORMATION FOR SUBJECTS FEARING (AND NOT FEARING)

<u>MISTREATMENT BY GVN</u>	
<u>A. FEARING MISTREATMENT (64 interviewees)</u>	
Family had contacted the GVN authorities	16
Appeal by relatives to defector	17
Family had met other defectors	6

Relative had defected from VC	5
Relative serving in the GVN	<u>5</u>
TOTAL	49 or 76%
Knew of other VC who had successfully defected	8
Told of Chieu Hoi program by friends or villagers	14
Interviewee had met defectors	7
Personal appeal by GVN or Chieu Hoi officials	<u>1</u>
TOTAL	30 or 47%
Influenced to varying degrees by Chieu Hoi appeals	36 or 56%
Influenced primarily or solely by Chieu Hoi appeals (including 1 Local Force and 4 VC civilians)	5 or 8%
<u>B. DID NOT FEAR BEING MISTREATED (51 interviewees)</u>	
Family had contacted the GVN authorities	9
Appeal by relatives to defector	8
Family had met other defectors	2
Relative had defected from VC	1
Relative serving in the GVN	2
TOTAL	<u>22</u> or 43%
Knew of other VC who had successfully defected	10
Told of Chieu Hoi program by friends or villagers	5
Interviewee had met defectors	3
Personal appeal by GVN or Chieu Hoi officials	<u>3</u>
TOTAL	21 or 41%
Influenced to varying degrees by Chieu Hoi appeals	32 or 63%
Influenced primarily or solely by Chieu Hoi appeals (including 3 Local Force, 8 guerrillas, 8 civilians)	19 or 37%

According to our interviewees, therefore, those who feared mistreatment had sought or received more information from sources outside Chieu Hoi than those who had no such fears. Among the former, only 5 (8%) had trusted the promises made in the appeals, in contrast to 19 (37%) in the latter group. There was also a considerable difference between the two groups as to the role of the family as a source of information (76% vs. 43%). Contact with the family was unusually frequent among the "fearful" interviewees, perhaps because guerrillas and civilians lived at home or kept in touch with their families after the latter moved to GVN-controlled areas.

It would appear from the interviews that sources of information on the Chieu Hoi program other than GVN appeals (especially relatives) play an important role in the defection process. This was explicitly stated by several interviewees. For example, a Local Force squad leader from Phuoc Tuy Province said:

When they [potential defectors] find out through other people that the Government doesn't put ralliers into prison; when other people attest to the fact that ralliers enjoy the Government's leniency, then they will rally. [emphasis added]

A civilian district Party Committee cadre for Training and Propaganda from Bac Lieu Province said:

The feelings of a cadre before deciding to rally are very complicated and difficult. First, he would have to review his past to see if he had committed any crime, like robbery or murder, for which he could be persecuted by the GVN. Second, even though he knows the Chieu Hoi policy of the GVN, he would need to be assured about it by his parents, wife, brother or sister, or a close relative.

The data, insofar as they apply more widely, suggest that, in addition to Chieu Hoi appeals, VC families and villagers play an important role in the defection process and are valuable channels of communication with potential defectors. The data also suggest that the move of VC families to GVN controlled areas, where they can contact the GVN authorities, meet defectors, and learn more about the Chieu Hoi program, may facilitate the flow of information to potential defectors.

V. MOTIVES FOR DEFECTION

The interviewees were asked, "Why did you rally [i.e., defect]?" and, as a follow-on question, "What was the main reason why you rallied?" The answers to these questions showed a fairly wide range of motives, most personal rather than ideological. Many interviewees gave several reasons. The combinations varied. Generally speaking, the motives advanced match those reported in another RAND study of VC defectors based on a larger group of interviewees.*

In order of frequency, the motives cited by the interviewees included: personal hardships, fear of being killed, economic hardships of the family, criticism and punishment, homesickness and resentment over denial of home leave, a feeling of having gained nothing from service with the VC, dissatisfaction with VC policies and aims, loss of faith in VC victory, removal of the family to a GVN-controlled area, arrest or execution of a family member by the VC, forcible recruitment into the VC, and dissatisfaction with VC taxes. There appear also to have been other reasons for the interviewees' defections -- reasons which they did not always specify but which may have been influential. For example, the departure of villagers for GVN-controlled areas left elements of the VC control apparatus, including some of the interviewees, without jobs. Second, the intensity of Allied operations forced

* J. M. Carrier and C. A. H. Thomson, VC Motivation and Morale: The Special Case of Chieu Hoi, RM-4830-ISA/ARPA, May 1966.

the VC to run and hide further from their homes. Since the interviewee group was largely composed of low-ranking guerrillas and civilians, it is probable that a major motive for defection and desertion was the desire to stay near home, family, and land. When the VC were in the village, many may have worked for them mainly from a desire to avoid trouble and be allowed to stay near their homes. When Allied operations, pacification, or the departure of families threatened to separate the interviewee from his home or family, he may have become more inclined to consider defecting to the GVN.

Table 9 shows the number of responses to various questions on motives made by the 123 interviewees who mentioned one or more of the motives listed. Table 10 gives equivalent figures for the 48 cadres among the interviewees. As can be seen, the distribution of motives for cadres does not differ significantly from that of the sample as a whole. The cadres, however, were less discouraged by hardships (37 percent vs. 50 percent) and more sensitive to criticism (37 percent vs. 28 percent). The Local Force cadres appear to have been especially afraid of being killed: 9 of the 13 Local Force interviewees who mentioned this motive were cadres.

The motives cited by the interviewees as the primary ones in their decisions to defect are shown in Table 11. Of the 125 men in the group, 121 answered the question on primacy. As may easily be seen, only the first four factors listed seem to play a dominant role in the motivation of defection.

TABLE 9
ALL MOTIVES FOR DEFECTION

Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Hardships	Fear of Being Killed	Decline in Family's Income	Criticism and Punishment	Failure to Make			Loss of Faith in VC Policies	Loss of Faith in VC Victory
						Personal Gains	Relatives Killed by VC	Join VC		
LOCAL FORCE	20	15 - 75%	13 - 65%	2 - 10%	7 - 35%			4 - 20%		
GUERRILLA	45	24 - 53%	23 - 51%	15 - 33%	13 - 28%			7 - 15%		
CIVILIAN	58	23 - 40%	22 - 38%	25 - 43%	15 - 26%			11 - 19%		
TOTAL	123	62 - 50%	58 - 47%	42 - 34%	35 - 28%			22 - 17%		
Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Homesickness	Failure to Make Personal Gains	Relatives Killed by VC	Forced to Join VC					
LOCAL FORCE	20	6 - 30%	3 - 15%	2 - 10%	0 - 0%					
GUERRILLA	45	8 - 17%	8 - 17%	0 - 0%	4 - 9%					
CIVILIAN	58	10 - 17%	13 - 22%	7 - 12%	1 - 1.7%					
TOTAL	123	24 - 20%	24 - 18%	9 - 7%	5 - 4%					
Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Family Moved to GVN Area	Relatives Killed by VC	Forced to Join VC	VC Taxes					
LOCAL FORCE	20	5 - 25%	2 - 10%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%					
GUERRILLA	45	5 - 11%	0 - 0%	3 - 7%	4 - 9%					
CIVILIAN	58	8 - 14%	7 - 12%	6 - 10%	1 - 1.7%					
TOTAL	123	18 - 14%	9 - 7%	9 - 7%	5 - 4%					

TABLE 10
48 CADRES: MOTIVES FOR DEFECTION

Cadre Organization	Total Respondents	Hardships	Fear of Being Killed	Decline in Family Income	Criticism and Punishment
LOCAL FORCE	14	8 - 57%	9 - 64%	1 - 7%	5 - 36%
GUERRILLA	9	4 - 44%	4 - 44%	3 - 33%	5 - 55%
CIVILIAN	25	6 - 24%	9 - 36%	11 - 44%	8 - 32%
TOTAL	48	18 - 37%	22 - 45%	15 - 31%	18 - 37%

Cadre Organization	Total Respondents	Homesickness	Failure to Make Personal Gains	Loss of Faith in VC Policies
LOCAL FORCE	14	4 - 23%	1 - 7%	2 - 14%
GUERRILLA	9	2 - 22%	1 - 11%	2 - 22%
CIVILIAN	25	3 - 12%	8 - 32%	5 - 20%
TOTAL	48	9 - 18%	10 - 20%	9 - 18%

Cadre Organization	Total Respondents	Loss of Faith in VC Victory	Family Moved to GVN Area	Relatives Killed by VC
LOCAL FORCE	14	3 - 21%	5 - 36%	2 - 14%
GUERRILLA	9	1 - 11%	1 - 11%	0 - 0%
CIVILIAN	25	6 - 24%	1 - 11%	5 - 20%
TOTAL	48	10 - 20%	7 - 20%	7 - 15%

TABLE 11
121 INTERVIEWEES: PRIMARY MOTIVES FOR DEFECTION

Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Hardships	Fear of Being Killed	Decline in Family Income	Criticism and Punishment
LOCAL FORCE	19	6 - 30%	5 - 25%	2 - 10%	4 - 20%
GUERRILLA	44	11 - 24%	10 - 22%	11 - 24%	4 - 9%
CIVILIAN	58	9 - 15%	11 - 20%	13 - 22%	9 - 15%
TOTAL	121	26 - 21%	26 - 21%	26 - 21%	17 - 14%

Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Homesickness	Loss of Faith in VC Policies	Failure to Make Personal Gains	VC Taxes
LOCAL FORCE	19	0 - 0%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
GUERRILLA	44	2 - 4%	1 - 2%	1 - 2%	2 - 4%
CIVILIAN	58	5 - 8%	5 - 8%	2 - 3%	1 - 2%
TOTAL	121	7 - 5%	7 - 5%	3 - 2.4%	3 - 2.4%

Interviewees' Organization	Total Respondents	Forced to Join	Loss of Faith in VC Victory	Family Moved to GVN Area	Relatives Killed by VC
LOCAL FORCE	19	0 - 0%	1 - 5%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
GUERRILLA	44	1 - 2%	1 - 2%	0 - 0%	0 - 0%
CIVILIAN	58	1 - 2%	0 - 0%	1 - 2%	1 - 2%
TOTAL	121	2 - 1.6%	2 - 1.6%	1 - 0.8%	1 - 0.8%

As noted above, motives were predominantly personal rather than ideological. For example, loss of faith in VC policies often sprang from resentment over VC failure to keep promises about helping the VC soldier's family, over constant VC demands for labor, or over favoritism and corruption among some VC hamlet and village cadres. Many of the motives one would expect to hear from soldiers and civilians in a war-ravaged country. It is not surprising that hardships and fear of being killed were most often given as primary motives for defection. It is interesting that 38 of the 62 interviewees who mentioned hardships as a motive had complained about the insufficiency or poor quality of food. Others complained about inadequate medical assistance, hard work, having to sleep in the open, and long night marches.

That so many interviewees mentioned fear of being killed as a motive for defection may be due to the fact that many came from areas of intensive Allied military activity. This circumstance may not apply to defectors in general. Local Force interviewees, being more exposed to combat, showed a greater fear of being killed than either guerrillas or civilians. Of the various forms of Allied assault, the interviewees rated air attacks the most frightening, with artillery next, and armored attacks the least so. Twenty-three interviewees mentioned air attacks as one reason for their defections. Of these, six had been especially frightened by B-52 strikes.

Two categories of motives appear to deserve particular attention. These are the decline in family income and the moves of families to GVN-controlled areas. The guerrillas

and VC civilians may have had to watch while their families struggled to make a living. Many provided their families with food, clothes, and money, but could not give all the help that was needed. The interviews indicate that concern for the family's economic condition also grew out of the family's move to GVN-controlled areas. Once a family has left home and land, its ability to earn a living declines and its need for support from the main earner increases. Of the 42 interviewees (Table 9) who cited family economic problems as a motive for defection, 3 had families still residing in VC-controlled areas, and 4 had families that had been long-time or permanent residents of GVN-controlled areas. Among the remaining 35, 13 had families in recently pacified hamlets and 2 moved their families to GVN-controlled areas at the time of defecting. The families of 20 interviewees had moved to GVN-controlled areas before the defection took place. These men showed some concern that the family's economic condition would suffer as a result of its move.

It was also noted in Section IV that 15 interviewees said they had delayed defecting because they wanted to earn some money or to harvest crops for the support of their families, which had all moved to GVN-controlled areas. Of these interviewees, 13 had not cited declining family income as a motive for defection and 14 had not cited the factor of their families' move to GVN territory as a motive. It is possible, therefore, that these 13 could be added to those who were motivated by their concern over the economic condition of their families.

Similarly, of the 33 interviewees who cited concern for their families' economic difficulties as a motive for defection and whose families had moved to GVN-controlled areas prior to their defections, 25 did not mention their families' move as a motive for defection.

Of the 24 interviewees who cited homesickness as a motive, 22 did not mention their families' move to GVN-controlled areas as a factor in their defections. Among these 22, the families of 10 had moved before the defections took place. The homesickness of some of these interviewees, therefore, may have been due to the departure of their families from the village.

The motives of declining family income and removal of families to GVN-controlled areas may have been more important than the answers in Table 9 indicate.

VI. CONCLUSIONS

In view of the small size of the interviewee group and the uncertainties about its relation to the potential defector population as a whole, neither broad nor precise conclusions can be drawn. Conclusions about the implications of the interviews for Chieu Hoi and for "psywar" operations must be tentative. Statistically more reliable and exact conclusions would require further verification on the basis of larger and more representative defector groups.

The interviews do point to several possibly important elements in the situation:

1. Fear of possible GVN mistreatment after defection and of arrest by the GVN while on the way to surrender may be a major deterrent to defection or may significantly contribute to the potential defector's hesitation to surrender.

2. Although Chieu Hoi appeals have a noticeable influence on the defection process, a majority of the interviewees did not fully trust the GVN's assurances of good treatment. A major role in providing additional information on the Chieu Hoi program and in arranging for defections was played by the families of the defectors, and a somewhat lesser role by villagers and friends.

3. The movement of VC families to GVN-controlled areas was an important factor in motivating the interviewees to defect, in providing the families with a better understanding of the Chieu Hoi program, and in reassuring those who had delayed defecting because their families were hostages to the VC.

4. In addition to the predominant and expected motives for defection -- hardships and fear of being killed -- concern over decline in family income was also a major factor.

These findings suggest that, unless Chieu Hoi appeals have become more effective in reassuring potential VC defectors concerning GVN treatment, this problem deserves more attention. The use of VC families and villagers as channels of communication with potential defectors appears to be especially fruitful. The data also suggest that the removal of VC families to GVN-controlled areas should perhaps be encouraged. It seems that the movement of villagers in general from VC areas tends to have an adverse effect on the morale of local VC officials. It deprives them of much of their usefulness and it increases hardships and fear of attacks.

The interviews show that economic factors play a very important role in motivating defections and therefore may represent an important area for psywar operations. It may well be, however, as the interviews appear to suggest, that sensitivity to economic factors is greatest among those VC who operate in or near their villages, while Local Force and probably Main Force personnel who are only infrequently in contact with their families are less aware of, and less influenced, by it. If this is true, then psywar operations aimed at providing the Local and Main Force soldiers with better information about the impoverishment of villagers in VC-controlled areas, possibly citing specific cases of the VC's failure to help them, might have some effect on the propensity to defect.