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**Combined Action Platoons: A Possible Role  
in the Low-Intensity Conflict Environment**

**A Monograph  
by  
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19. see if there is a possible link to a Security Assistance Force, and how a CAPs styled organization could be more successful.

The conclusions show that a CAPs-type organization still has applicability today but may be limited where it can be applied.

SCHOOL OF ADVANCED MILITARY STUDIES

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## ABSTRACT

### Combined Action Platoons: A Possible Role in the Low-Intensity Conflict Environment

FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict, published in January 1981, provides a wealth of badly needed material on a LIC conflict and a LIC environment. Yet, there is no guide on a type of organization that could operate in a LIC environment or techniques that have been successful in the past.

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the Combined Action Platoon concept that was utilized by the Marine Corps in Vietnam from 1965 to 1971. The evaluation will attempt to determine if the program was successful, and if any lessons learned, techniques used, or structure employed has application today in a low-intensity conflict environment.

Further, the CAP program will be compared to a LIC environment to determine if it has applicability today, and if there is an interface or link between CAPs and FM 100-20. Finally, the CAPs structure will be examined to see if there is a possible link to a Security Assistance Force, and how a CAPs styled organization could be more successful.

The conclusions show that a CAPs-type organization still has applicability today but may be limited where it can be applied.

## TABLE OF CONTENTS

	<u>Page</u>
I. Introduction . . . . .	1
II. CAPs as a Program . . . . .	7
III. The CAPs Program: Success or Failure . . .	17
IV. CAPs Shortcomings: Corrections Needed . . .	22
V. Applicability of CAPs in a LIC Environment Today . . . . .	25
VI. Interface of CAPs and FM 100-20 . . . . .	27
VII. CAPs Security Assistance Force Structure Link . . . . .	33
VIII. Conclusion . . . . .	37
Endnotes . . . . .	39
Bibliography . . . . .	42
 <b>APPENDICES:</b>	
A. Correspondence Between General L. W. Walt and General Nguyen Chanh Thi Concerning USMC-PF Combined Action Units . . . . .	A-1
B. Combined Action Company Training Program . . .	B-1
C. Combined Action Force Locations as of January 1970 . . . . .	C-1

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# COMBINED ACTION PLATOONS: A POSSIBLE ROLE IN THE LOW-INTENSITY CONFLICT ENVIRONMENT

## I. Introduction

"He who understands how to use both large  
and small forces will be victorious."<sup>1</sup>

Sun Tzu

The leadership of the United States, to include the armed forces, faces a rapidly changing world. The possibility of confrontation between the two major superpowers in Europe seems remote, yet there are many conditions in various regions of the world that could cause the commitment of United States forces.

To account for this change in focus, there have been additional terms applied to conflict. These terms attempt to define the levels of, or the intensity of war. These levels have been defined as high-, mid-, or low-intensity conflicts.

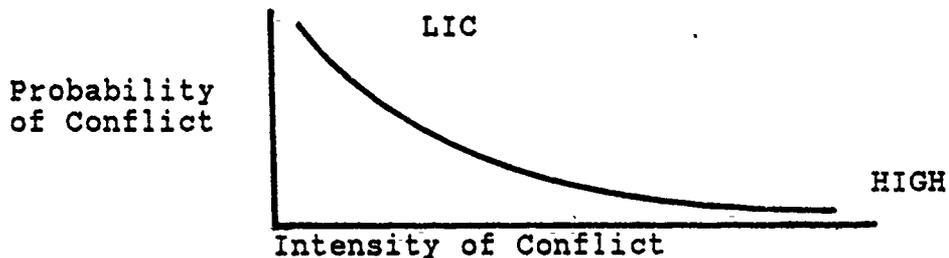
Though the terms are relatively new, the concept of intensity is not. Carl Von Clausewitz in On War stated,

Thus, it follows that without any inconsistency wars can have all degrees of importance and intensity, ranging from a war of extermination down to simple armed observation.<sup>2</sup>

From the above, and in concert with the established terms, there is a spectrum of war.

With the acceptance of this spectrum of war, a frequently used graph depicts the possible occurrence

of war or conflict. The graph uses probability of conflict on the vertical axis and intensity of conflict on the horizontal axis. The graph is used in the following manner:



From the graph it becomes clear that the probability of a low-intensity conflict is high with regards to the spectrum of war.

The focus of this paper is low-intensity conflict (LIC), and more specifically, whether there are techniques that have been utilized in the past which have relevance today. A LIC environment can include various conditions and parameters, but in many cases this environment exhibits those characteristics of either an insurgency or counterinsurgency. Therefore, there is merit in studying these types of operations and conflicts to determine if there are lessons learned that have application to a LIC environment today.

In this study of counterinsurgency and insurgency operations, the Vietnam War is an excellent source of information. Given the amount of material written,

studies conducted, and critical evaluations of that war, it is possible that techniques, programs, or tactics can be identified that may be applied to a LIC environment today.

It is my intent to concentrate on one program that seems to have been particularly successful, that being the Marine involvement in counterinsurgency and more specifically, the Combined Action Program (CAP). Further, the concept will be evaluated to determine if the CAP concept as applied to a counterinsurgency in the 1965-1970 timeframe has relevance for a LIC (counterinsurgency) today. If it can be established that the CAP concept has relevance, then the concept as applied to counterinsurgency will be compared to concepts as discussed in FM 100-20.

To understand the Combined Action Program and the Combined Action Platoons (CAPs) that executed the program, it is important to realize that the Marine Corps had been committed to a LIC environment previously. Prior to World War II, the United States Marine Corps engaged in approximately thirty actions that could be classified as commitment in a LIC environment. Many of the techniques utilized by the Combined Action Platoons, which were part of Combined Action Program, had their grounding in the "small wars" of the Dominican Republic, Nicaragua, and Haiti circa 1912-1932.

Based on the experiences of the Marine Corps in Central America, Navy Marine Corps Publication 2890, Small Wars Manual of 1940, was published as a guide for conducting "small wars." In The U.S. Marine Corps Story, J. Robert Moskin states,

In 1922, Major Samuel M. Harrington pulled together the Marines' expertise... By 1940, the Corps had developed a unique Small Wars Manual that was still in use when the Corps planned its pacification program in Vietnam 25 years later.<sup>3</sup>

Many of the situations faced by the Marine Corps in Vietnam had been faced previously. The Small Wars Manual at least offered a technique for dealing with them. For example, CAPs brought together Vietnamese Popular Forces (PFs) and U.S. Marines in a totally integrated unit. The PFs were not a major segment in the Vietnamese military strategy, yet they were probably the key to countering the insurgency since they were recruited from their own hamlet and led by their own village leadership. In a discussion between a Marine general and Defense Secretary McNamara in 1962, Secretary McNamara made the same point but more forcefully when he stated,

These may be the most important military people in Vietnam. They have something real to fight for--their own hamlet, their own family.<sup>4</sup>

The idea of using an indigenous force to counter an insurgency was not a new idea to Marines. The Marines had used this same basic concept during their

involvement in Haiti from 1915 to 1934 and during the Corps' involvement in the Dominican Republic from 1916 to 1924. These indigenous forces were known as "Armed Native Organizations" in the Small Wars Manual.

Chapter 12 of the Small Wars Manual presents an entire section dealing with "Armed Native Organizations." In this chapter, there is discussion of how to establish and organize a constabulary. Of interest is the integration of U.S. and native forces.

Initially, the officers of the constabulary are selected officers and enlisted men (usually qualified noncommissioned officers) of the United States military and naval forces. In time, as the domestic situation becomes tranquil and the native members of the constabulary become proficient in their duties, the United States officers of the constabulary are replaced by native officers. Officers and enlisted men of the United States forces appointed as officers of the constabulary should be acceptable to the local government and have the qualities considered essential for a position of similar importance in the United States forces.<sup>5</sup>

From the above, two questions become apparent: First, could this same technique or a similar technique be applied to a southeast Asian country forty-one years later; second, can this technique be applied in a LIC environment today? The LIC question will be addressed later; however, with regards to southeast Asia, there were many within the Marine Corps' leadership that felt this same concept, with variation, could be applied.

One of the CAP supporters was General Lewis W. Walt, who during the latter part of 1965 was the Commanding General of III Marine Amphibious Force (III MAF). As stated in his book, Strange War, Strange Strategy:

I was reminded of my early days as a young officer, learning the fundamentals of my profession from men who had fought Sandino in Nicaragua or Charlemagne in Haiti. The Caribbean campaigns had many lessons applicable to Vietnam forty or fifty years later. I could recall the instruction of veterans of those campaigns and their lessons on tempering the fight with an understanding of the people, compassion toward them, and the exercise of good works even in the midst of war.<sup>6</sup>

Though General Walt supported the program, the question remains, was the program a success? Further, what relevance, if any, does this have to a current LIC environment?

To determine if the CAP program has relevance today, it is necessary to address some important issues. First there is a need to examine the program and to assess its success or failure. Second, the study will attempt to determine if CAP has applicability in a LIC environment today, and if there is an interface with FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low-intensity Conflict. Finally, if the interface between FM 100-20 and CAPs is proven, what advantages would a CAP-type approach offer?

## II. CAPs as a Program

To examine the success or failure of the CAP program it is necessary to define the concept, role, mission and structure. Further, it will be necessary to look at assignment criteria of the individuals assigned to CAP.

Although the CAP program would eventually concentrate on defeating the Viet Cong (V.C.) insurgent, initially the program was driven by one simple need, more people to cover more ground. Though quoted at length the following sets the stage for the creation of CAPs in 1965:

The Marines recognized the close interrelationship between defense of the base area and the extension of Marine influence into the countryside. This was clearly demonstrated at Phu Bai where the 3d Battalion, 4th Marines faced the situation of defending an expanding area of operations with a limited number of troops. They responded by developing the Combined Action Program. When Zone A, the 10 square mile built up area directly north and east of the airfield, was incorporated in the Marine TAOR on 21 June, Lieutenant Colonel William "Woody" Taylor expected reinforcements from the 3d Marine Division to control the added area, but the diversion of Utter's Battalion to Qio Nhon forced Taylor to make do with the forces he had on hand.

At the suggestion of Captain John J. Mullen, Jr., the battalion adjutant and civil affairs officer, Taylor decided to tap a neglected resource, the South Vietnamese Popular Forces (PF). There were six PF platoons in the Phu Bai TAOR; one each in the villages of Thay Lvong, Thay Tan, Phu Bai, and Loc Son, and two guarding the railroad and Highway 1 bridges. In July, Lieutenant Colonel Taylor was granted limited operational control of the PF units in Zone A by General Chuan, the 1st ARVN Division commander. Major Cullen C. Zimmerman, Taylor's executive officer, developed plans for the incorporation of Marines into the PF units. Lieutenant Colonel

Taylor then discussed the concept with Colonel Wheeler, still commander of the 3d Marines, and General Wait. Colonel Wheeler assigned a young, Vietnam e-speaking officer from his staff at Da Nang, First Lieutenant Paul R. Ek, the responsibility for establishing the program at Phu Bai. Ek was to integrate a Marine squad into a PF platoon, forming what was then called a "joint action company," patterned along the lines of the British companies used in Malaya during the 1950s.<sup>7</sup>

From the above actions the CAP program is founded. Though similar in concept to the Central American experiences of 1916 to 1924 and 1915 to 1934, there is a difference. In the Vietnam experience there would be a true integration of Marines and the PFs.

As noted in U.S. Marines in Vietnam, the Landing and Buildup 1965, the most crucial task for Lieutenant Ek was selecting those Marines who would make up the units integrated into the PF forces. This was an extremely valid concern because the Marines who would make up these organizations not only needed a certain amount of experience in Vietnam or "seasoning" but must not have a prejudice against the Vietnamese or their country.<sup>8</sup>

In addition, a knowledge of Vietnamese customs was deemed helpful. From the Marines that volunteered for the program, Lieutenant Ek hand picked those he considered acceptable. As the program developed and expanded, there was a formal selection process. Many

of the same requirements used by Lt. Ek would be used later as the program continued to develop.<sup>9</sup>

Once Lt. Ek's personnel (squad) were trained, they were assigned to a PF platoon and billeted and stationed in a village or hamlet. This integrated relationship of PFs and Marine squads was extended to the company headquarters level also. Lt. Ek was the Combined Action Company Commander and his Executive Officer was a Vietnamese. In addition:

The company headquarters included a Marine first sergeant and three Vietnamese radio operators who manned the ARVN radio nets. These nets included the hamlet chief as well as the 3d Battalion's fire direction center. At first, Ek's headquarters served only as an administrative and coordinating center for the activities of each platoon, but, in time, the headquarters controlled company-size operations in which the combined unit operated with Regional Force ARVN units.<sup>10</sup>

On 1 August 1965, the joint company was activated. A Table of Organization (T/O) is provided. The table only addresses U.S. Marine Corps forces assigned.

TABLE OF ORGANIZATION  
FOR U.S. MARINE CORPS FORCES ASSIGNED TO  
COMBINED ACTION COMPANY\*

BILLET	RANK	MOS	OFF	ENL
Company Headquarters				
Company Commander	Capt	0302	1	
Company Sergeant	GySgt	0369		1
Supply NCO/Driver	Sgt	3041		1
Admin Clerk	Cpl	0141		1
Communications NCO	Cpl	2531		1
Motor Vehicle Operator	Pvt	3531		1
TOTAL			1	5
Combined Action Platoon (1 Marine Squad per Platoon)				
Squad Leader	Sgt	0311		1
Ass't Squad Leader	Cpl	0311		1
Fire Team Leader	Cpl	0311		3
Automatic Rifleman	LCpl	0311		3
Rifleman	Pvt	0311		6
Platoon Corpsman (USN)	HM3	8404		1
TOTAL			USMC	14
			USN	1

\*A CAC is composed of any number of CAPs; therefore, the number of Marines assigned to any one CAC will be dependent upon the number of CAPs assigned.<sup>11</sup>

Up to this point we have seen that the program was driven by a need for additional troops to provide security for an expanding tactical area of responsibility (TAOR). The organization is headed and manned by motivated people who have volunteered for the program.<sup>12</sup> To try and determine if the program was successful, and if it has relevance today, it is essential to examine how the Marine Corps Leadership regarded CAPs.

As previously noted, General Walt, the III MAF commander was extremely interested in the employment

of local forces and felt that the program was the key in the eventual successful prosecution of the war. As noted in the U.S. Marines in Vietnam...1965:

General Walt watched the Marine employment of local forces with intense interest. He realized that the PF soldier had the poorest training and worst equipment of the South Vietnamese armed forces, but he considered them to be a vital link in the process of providing real security for the population. During November, the III MAF commander persuaded General Thi to release eight PF platoons at Da Nang to the operational control of the 3d Marine Division. Seven of the PF units were assigned to the airfield defense battalion and the eighth to Lieutenant Colonel Ludwig's 1st Battalion, 9th Marines, operating south of Marble Mountain.<sup>13</sup>

The CAP program started to grow. In Appendix A there are copies of actual letters that passed between Headquarters III Marine Amphibious Force and Headquarters I Corps Tactical Zone of the Vietnamese Army. Though these letters are somewhat later than November 1965, they are provided so the reader has an understanding of the mechanism used to gain control of the PFs and how the program grew. In addition, the text of the letters serves to illustrate how important General Walt viewed this program. All copies of these letters were obtained from The Marine Combined Action Program Vietnam Fleet Marine Force, Pacific 1971.<sup>14</sup>

As can be seen from the correspondence, specifically his letter to Commanding Officer, I Corps Advisory Group, General Walt was "sold" on the program. Though General Walt believed in the program,

a point to consider is that the personnel that manned the CAP units were taken from standard line organizations. Infantry battalions, tank battalions, etc. were then short personnel. Further, to meet the assignment criteria, the personnel assigned to CAPs were usually the unit's better Marines. Additionally, being volunteers, the Marines had to meet the criteria of III MAF order 3121.4. This order stated the following:

- A. Personnel to be assigned to Combined Action units will meet the following criteria:
1. Preferably with 2 months in country and a minimum of six months remaining on current tour.
  2. Be a mature, motivated Marine and be highly recommended by his commanding officer for duty with a CAP. Selection of the squad leader should receive special attention because of the importance of his function as the U.S. representative for revolutionary development.<sup>15</sup>

The above order was taken from a handout provided to personnel that attended CAP school in Da Nang. Though this handout was dated August 1967, the basic criteria established by III MAF were formulated early on, when the program was established. As a result of the above there was some resentment of the program by line unit commanders.<sup>16</sup>

Though there was some resentment to the program, III MAF continued to develop the program. With this development came a mission statement. The official mission of CAPs was as follows:

\*Destroy the VC infrastructure within the village or hamlet area of responsibility.

\*Protect public security and help maintain law and order.

\*Protect the friendly infrastructure.

\*Protect bases and communication axes within the villages and hamlets.

\*Organize people's intelligence nets.

\*Participate in civic action and conduct propaganda against the V.C.<sup>17</sup>

Basically, this mission was the same mission given to the PFs. If each part of the mission was accomplished, CAPs should have been successful in conducting a counterinsurgency operation.

The final area to be examined is the training the CAPs received. When the program was in the embryo stage under Lt. Ek, the individual Marine was handpicked and received a week of preparation. Normally, the Marines would receive classes in the morning and conduct patrols in the afternoon and evening. These patrols would be conducted in the vicinity of the village that the squad would eventually be assigned. The classes were centered on language training, Vietnamese government and its organization, and the do's and don'ts of village relations.<sup>18</sup>

As the program grew, a more formalized training program developed to include the PFs. Training was vested in both the Vietnamese and the U.S. Marines and

complimented each other's area of expertise. U.S. Marines taught basic tactics, patrolling, security, etc., and the Vietnamese taught local customs, courtesies, and the language. The formal training program is provided in Appendix B.<sup>19</sup>

The CAP training program was well laid out and took into consideration that many of the Marines assigned to this program were not infantrymen by trade. Even though all Marines are "basic infantrymen," those skills necessary to succeed in those lone outposts had to be relearned and honed to produce a unit that would succeed. Further, the integration of the PFs into this training was essential, particularly qualification firing and drills to counter ambushes.

As can be seen from the preceding, CAPs was originally generated to take in an expanded TAOR and do more with less. Additionally, CAPs offered a way to destroy the VC infrastructure and get the Vietnamese involved in fighting for their country at the grass roots level.

Before determining whether the program was successful or not, it is important to establish the link between CAPs and the line units that operated in a TAOR. This link is important to examine for it may offer a solution that can be applied in a LIC environment in the future.

Initially the CAP was formed from personnel and assets taken out of "hide" from a tactical unit operating in a particular TAOR. However, there was much more involved as stated in The Marine Combined Action Program Vietnam. Fleet Marine Force, Pacific.

Formation of a Combined Action Platoon originates with the Vietnamese district chief and the senior Marine commander of the area, who mutually agree that a Combined Action Platoon should be formed. The district chief conducts the necessary coordination with the village/hamlet chief concerned and submits his request for the formation of the combined action platoon to his next higher political level. Simultaneously, the Marine commander submits his request for the formation of the Combined Action Platoon through Marine Corps channels to the commanding general, III MAF.<sup>20</sup>

The tactical link was to that Marine unit, normally a battalion, or a South Vietnamese unit, operating in a specific TAOR. There would be the needed coordination to resolve the specific issues of fire support, reaction forces, medevac procedures, patrol activity, etc.<sup>21</sup>

In order to provide a command structure able to support this command organization, Combined Action Groups (CAG), Combined Action Teams (CAT), and Combined Action Companies (CAC) were formed. Figure 1 shows the combined action and control structure. (See Figure 1.)

COMBINED ACTION COMMAND AND CONTROL

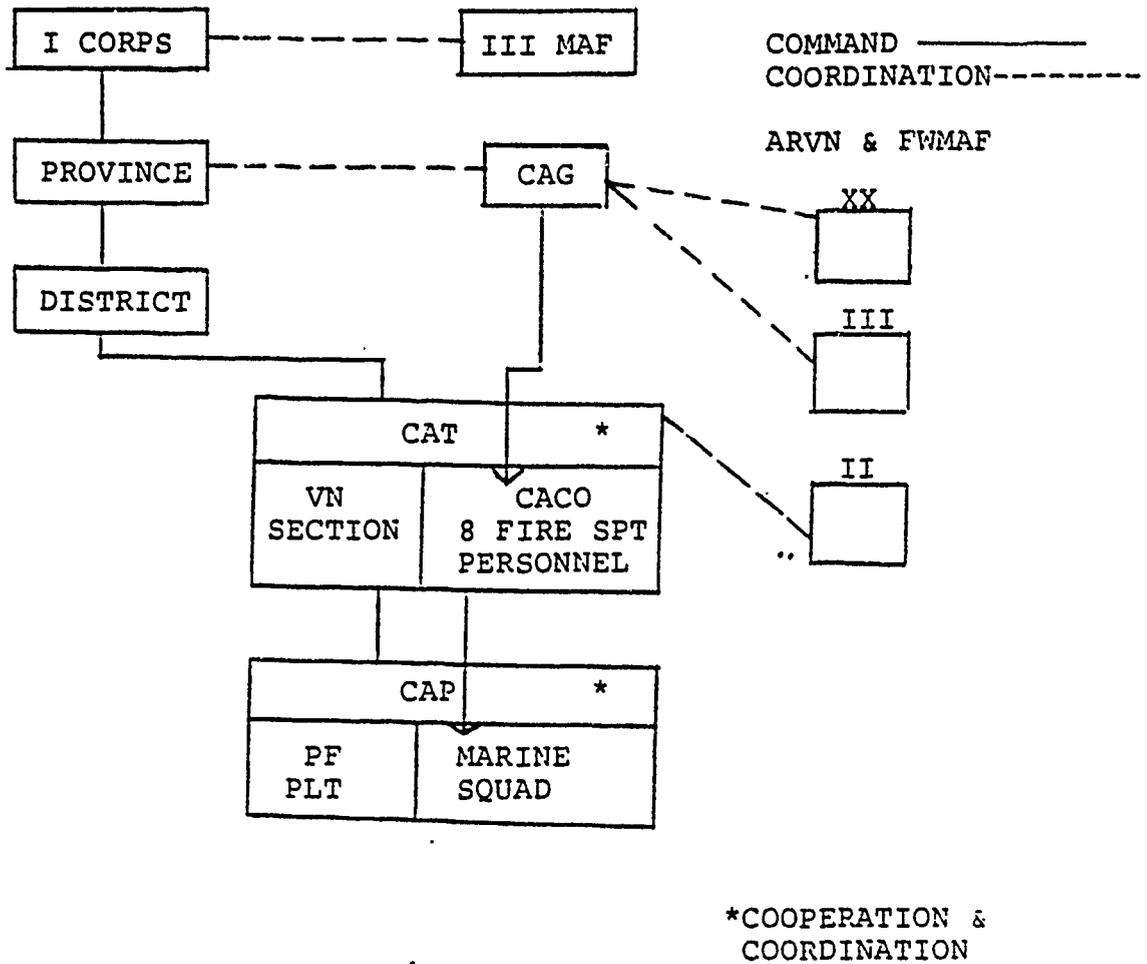


Figure 1.22

Logistic support was controlled by both the Marines and the Vietnamese. Marines receiving supplies through Marine Corps supply channels and PFs receiving supplies through their respective channels. Communications (radios) were provided to the Marine squad for administrative use, and facilitated the tie-in with supporting arms fire request and direction nets of the nearest U.S. Marine Tactical Unit.<sup>23</sup>

At this point we see an integrated unit of U.S. Marines and PFs that were commanded and controlled by a combined headquarters with a link to a tactical unit, either U.S. or ARVN to provide fire support and/or reaction forces. The program has been established; however, was it successful?

### III. The CAPS Program: Success or Failure

To determine whether the program was successful or not it is important to look for the answer from four different perspectives. Those sources are previous authors, the higher echelons of command that were involved with CAPS, the Marine on the ground carrying out the mission, and the V.C.

The author will have to rely on secondary sources for the first two and fourth perspectives. For the

third, the author will rely on questionnaires and interviews conducted with personnel that served in CAPs. Further, there will be some reliance on interviews conducted by secondary sources.

Though success varied depending on what TAOR (Appendix C)<sup>24</sup> that a CAP operated, official histories of the CAP program view the program as a success in relation to the mission assigned. As noted in U.S. Marines in Vietnam, Vietnamization and Redeployment 1970-1971, the Official Marine Corps

History of Vietnam:

In spite of continuing problems, most Marines in 1970 remained convinced of the overall success of the Combined Action Program. In Thua Thien Province, for example, Sergeant Tom Harvey later observed that 'we managed to keep the VC out of all the hamlets in Phu Thu District, in which six CAPS operated...'<sup>23</sup>

At least part of the mission was accomplished. The same publication states: "Time after time, villagers volunteered information which led to the capture of enemy soldiers and equipment."<sup>26</sup>

Throughout this publication there are accounts of CAPs accomplishing either part or all of their missions. The final observation offered from official Marine Corps history is as follows:

Combined action had been one of the Marines' most notable contributions to the pacification effort, a daring and generally successful attempt to engage the VietCong on their own ground among the people. Probably more effectively than any other American military force, the CAP Marines had done what had to be done to win the war: they had broken the connection between the guerrillas and the peasants.<sup>27</sup>

To continue to evaluate success it is important to look at what other authors have recorded. Some were members of the military hierarchy during Vietnam and some were not.

Andrew F. Krepinevich in his book, The Army and Vietnam, makes the point that CAPs were successful and that once CAPs were established in a village or hamlet, the security of that village was far better than when a village was occupied by only PFs. He further makes the point that CAPs usually operated in the "densely populated areas leaving the VC little to recruit or exploit in the remote, largely uninhabited region they controlled."<sup>28</sup>

Lieutenant General Victor H. Krulak, USMC (Ret.) was a supporter of CAPs. From 1964 to 1968, LtGen Krulak was the Commanding General of Fleet Marine Force Pacific (FMFPAC). As commander of FMFPAC, he had responsibility for all Marine units and their personnel in the Pacific Ocean region. Therefore, the Marines in Vietnam were a part of his command. He was a firm believer in the program and felt it was a success because:

It was a multiplier, where the final product had combatant value many times the sum of its individual components. There were hundreds of skirmishes and many casualties, but two extraordinary statistics reveal that the unique organizational arrangement paid off: no village protected by a combined action unit was ever repossessed by the VietCong; and 60% of the Marines serving in the combined action units volunteered to stay on with their Marine and

Vietnamese companions for an additional six months when they could have returned to the United States.<sup>29</sup>

It is clear that historically and officially the Marine Corps felt the program was a success. To truly evaluate the program however, it is important to determine what the Marine on the ground felt.

To attempt to answer this question, the author interviewed a small sample of personnel that had served in CAPs and sent questionnaires to other former CAP members. The questions addressed in the questionnaire were similar to those asked in the interviews.

Most former members felt the program had been a success. Others indicated that in their estimation, the program could have accomplished more. From interviews, research, and responses to the questionnaires, it seems that any lack of success was based on: TAOR in which the Marine served; amount of language training received; and the amount of cultural training received.<sup>30</sup> Though the first statement will have little bearing or relevance in a future LIC environment, the last two have relevance and will be addressed later.

One of the Marines interviewed was LtCol Corson, USMC (Ret.) who was the first director of the CAPs program. This interview was both telephonic and written. Further, he has written a book entitled The

Betrayal. Though the book discusses many subjects relating to the Vietnam War, CAPs is discussed in sufficient detail to give the reader an understanding of the program. At the completion of the author's discussions with LtCol Corson, USMC (Ret), the impression was that CAPs were the solution to winning the Vietnam War.

For the former enlisted Marine, success was defined in basic terms. A sampling of the responses to the question, "was the CAPs effort in your sector successful?" was as follows: "helping the people and keeping the VC out"; "most contacts with VC went our way"; "no one came in and took our rice and/or young men."<sup>31</sup>

One of the most thorough answers was provided by a LCpl Paul A. Hernandez (Ret.). In response to the success of CAPs in relation to the destruction of VC infrastructure, his response was, "It was hard for the VC to have any type of meeting with VC sympathizers and so, their unity was at a minimum."<sup>32</sup>

Robert A. Klyman in his thesis, The Combined Action Program an Alternative Not Taken, corroborates the premise that the program was a success and states:

Nearly every CAP Marine interviewed believed the program to be a huge success. Those who felt otherwise in part contended that while the CAP theory was fine, in practice the individual units were too small to handle VC attacks and too scattered to provide an interlocking network of support.<sup>33</sup>

The final analysis of success must come from the adversary (VC/NVA). Though this borders on the impossible, a technique to evaluate the success of a unit is how it is viewed by the enemy. Robert A. Klyman makes the point that:

The VietCong and NVA, according to CAP Marines, also recognized the value of the CAPs and regarded them as a threat. As a result the VC/NVA often tried to break up or eliminate platoons.<sup>34</sup>

The final vote on success on CAPs was offered by General William C. Westmoreland, CG MACV, who stated,

The Marines who lived and fought with their PF counterparts...contributed greatly to the allied effort and deserve the greatest credit and admiration."<sup>35</sup>

From the research it can be concluded that CAPs were at least marginally successful and therefore may have a place in a LIC environment.

#### IV. CAPs Shortcomings: Corrections Needed

Throughout all of the research conducted the one recurring theme was CAPs were good, but they could have been better. From the readings, research, and questionnaires the three things that hindered the performance of CAPs were cultural differences, language barriers, and training. If an organization similar to CAPs is to be employed in a LIC environment

and use the principles as established in FM 100-20, these points must be addressed.

It must be assumed that commitment of U.S. forces to a LIC environment will always entail some cultural differences between the host country populace and U.S. forces. If committed U.S. forces are not specially trained, regional specific forces, then cultural preparation or training takes on an even greater importance and must be started early.

During the research it became clear that cultural differences created misunderstandings which could cause, as Robert A. Klyman put it, "The resultant hard feelings led some Marines to lessen their commitment to the program in general."<sup>36</sup> Cultural preparation must address those specific issues that most U.S. forces would find offensive such as holding hands by males in a society, and those issues that the host country personnel would find offensive in our society.

The second issue is the language problem and how to overcome it. This is a difficult fix and suggests that only specially trained personnel or units should engage in this type of mission. This is not entirely correct, though it does argue for early, intense language training and commitment of members of an organization that can speak the language.

Finally, training needs to be addressed from two views. First, what does the U.S. force need to be

trained in to accomplish the mission in a specific country. Second, what training does the host country armed forces need to increase their level of proficiency in combatting a counterinsurgency.

All three of these points were addressed at one point or another in the CAP experience but not to the degree necessary. Part of this can be attributed to developing a program while actually being engaged in implementing that program and also with dealing with a huge expansion of the program over a short period of time.

If a CAP-type organization is to be successful in a LIC environment today, the shortcomings as noted would need to be overcome and corrected.

Additionally, because of the time required to hone language skills, learn all the nuances of a culture, and develop specific training programs, there is a credible argument that a CAP type mission should be performed by a specific type unit vice a general combat type unit.

## V. Applicability of CAPs in a LIC Environment Today

Though it has been established that in some regards CAPs were successful in Vietnam, the question remains, "Does the CAP's approach have applicability to a LIC environment today?" To answer this question, FM 100-20, Military Operations in Low-Intensity Conflict will be used as a guide.

Low-Intensity Conflict is defined in FM 100-20 in part as:

Low-intensity conflict is a politico-military confrontation between states or groups below conventional war and above the routine, peaceful competition among states. It frequently involves protracted struggles of competing principles and ideologies. Low-intensity conflict ranges from subversion to the use of armed force. It is waged by a combination of means employing political, economic, informational and military instruments.<sup>37</sup>

Given the structure of CAPs and the way they were used in Vietnam, the last line of the quotation seems to suggest a link. If the comparison is to be accurate, it is important to look at Vietnam in the total context of the war and then focus on that portion of the war that CAPs were involved.

South Vietnam and North Vietnam were two separate countries. From that context the United States was involved in two distinct operations at one time. One was a military operation against an aggressor (i.e. North Vietnam, NVA). The second operation involved combatting an insurgent (i.e. VC). Given the mission

of CAPs, it is clear that these combined platoons were involved in a counterinsurgency operation, thus at the lower end of the spectrum of conflict. In establishing if CAPs have use in a LIC environment today, it is necessary to restrict our application of CAPs to a LIC environment that is combatting a counterinsurgency.

In simplest terms, counterinsurgency is all efforts taken by an existing government to defeat an insurgency.<sup>38</sup> To understand what these efforts entail, it is important to define an insurgency. The definition will remain simple and will not attempt to cover the many different types of insurgencies. FM 100-20 defines an insurgency as, "an organized, armed political struggle whose goal may be the seizure of power through revolutionary takeover and replacement of the existing government."<sup>39</sup> Therefore, as previously stated, a counterinsurgency is the effort/action taken to defeat the insurgency.

At this point the assumption must be made that if the United States is to assist in counterinsurgency operations, there must be a reason that the United States wants the current government to remain in power. Normally the U.S. will come to the aid of a government currently in power for two reasons. First, if it is to our best interest as a nation and second, if it meets one of our national objectives.

For an insurgent to be successful, he must execute seven courses of action at one time. FM 100-20 outlines these actions as:

1. Mobilizing human and material resources to provide support.
2. Spread dissatisfaction with current government.
3. Fix blame on current government.
4. Offer programs to improve conditions.
5. Provide organizational and management skills to dissatisfied populace.
6. Neutralize groups supporting the government.
7. Seek at least passive support from the society at large.<sup>40</sup>

To be successful, the government must combat all of these actions through a variety of means. The majority of means employed by the host country to defeat the insurgent can be found under the heading of Internal Defense and Development Strategy in FM 100-20. The CAP mission was designed to combat all or part of these actions; therefore, the organization still has a use. Further comparison will show an interface with FM 100-20.

#### VI. Interface of CAPs and FM 100-20

To show how CAPs has application in this regard a comparison will be made using an abbreviated CAP mission and specific measures the host country can take as outlined in FM 100-20 under the internal

defense and development strategy. The comparison between the CAPs mission and principles as outlined in FM 100-20 will be done in the following manner:

<u>CAP Mission</u>	<u>FM 100-20</u>
Destroy VC infrastructure	Security force OPs
Protect public security	Security force OPs
Maintain law and order	
Protect friendly infrastructure	Neutralization
Protect communication networks	Security force OPs
Organize people's intelligence nets	Mobilization
Participate in civic action and conduct propaganda against VC	Balanced development

In the FM 100-20 column, all of the headings refer to specific topics addressed in the Internal Defense and Development Strategy section.<sup>41</sup> Internal Defense and Development is, "the full range of measures taken by a nation to promote its growth and to protect itself from subversion, lawlessness, and insurgency." Further, "the government mobilizes the population to participate in IDAD efforts."<sup>42</sup> In this mobilization, the host nation government must address the ills that have contributed to the insurgency and set the right climate for assistance by the United States prior to commitment of forces and assistance.

Once the host nation government has complete the mobilization phase, action must be taken against the

insurgent's infrastructure. The first part of the CAP mission was the destruction of the VC infrastructure within the village or hamlet area of responsibility. This was normally accomplished through aggressive patrolling and establishment of ambushes by the CAP Marines and their PF counterparts.

Additionally, once established in a village there usually was an effort to take a census, issue identification cards, and establish a controlled entry system into the village. The idea being to identify who was a member of that village, protect the populace and defeat the VC. These operations naturally included part two of the CAP mission, to protect public security and help maintain law and order.

The link to FM 100-20 can be found in Chapter 2 of that manual. Part of the IDAD program addresses security and states,

Security includes all activities to protect the populace from the insurgency and to provide a safe environment for national development. Protection and control of the populace permit development.<sup>43</sup>

The additional benefit is that the insurgent is denied access to the people that he depends on for support. As was shown previously, most CAPs felt they had at least accomplished that portion of their mission.

A further linkage of CAPs to FM 100-20 is the "How-to". The IDAD program in FM 100-20 is an excellent guide in determining what to do in

combatting a counterinsurgency. The CAP's mission statement did the same thing as FM 100-20: it established what had to be done. The program itself established the mechanism to accomplish the mission.<sup>44</sup>

Part of the CAP's mission was to, "maintain law and order." This was not a reasonable mission and it should not have been given to the CAPs. Though the platoon was an integrated unit, the potential for U.S. forces to make mistakes was great. The law and order mission should be left to the host nation organizations. This premise is revealed in FM 100-20 where the mission is included under Security Force Operations. U.S. forces are neither equipped nor should they become involved in the legal system of local villages, towns or cities. The potential for mistakes and possible insurgent use of this situation in propaganda efforts are too great.

Frank Kitson in Low-Intensity Operations makes it even clearer and offers some guidance that can be applied for all phases of a counterinsurgency:

The problem of coordinating civil and military measures is complicated enough when the campaign is the affair of a single nation, but it becomes vastly more so if allies become involved. If there is the slightest indication of the ally taking the lead, the insurgents will have the opportunity to say that the government has betrayed the people to an outside power, and that they, the insurgents, are the only true representative of the nation.<sup>45</sup>

Therefore, the point could have been made that the U.S. was involved in the internal affairs of the country and was taking the lead by allowing CAPs to do the law and order mission.

The CAP's missions of destroying the VC infrastructure and protecting public security are interrelated as is security operations and neutralization in FM 100-20. If the insurgent can be separated from the friendly infrastructure, he has very little opportunity to recruit or organize the general populace. This must include not only a physical separation, but a moral separation as well. If this separation effort is successful, there will be very little opportunity for the insurgent to spread anti-government propaganda. This also ties to the necessity of the security forces to work within the legal system to deny the insurgent incidents that could be used as propaganda to the insurgents' benefit.

Through all of the research conducted, there is very little reference made to protection of communication networks by the CAPs; therefore, there can be no logical conclusion drawn that the CAPs were successful at this mission. This part of the CAPs mission will not be addressed in relation to FM 100-20.

The one portion of the CAP mission that seemed most successful was the organization of the people's intelligence networks. Once a CAP was established in a village or hamlet and had won the trust of the leadership and the people in the area, information was provided willingly to the CAPs. This information was then passed on by the CAPs to their higher headquarters. The Combined Action Company, in turn, had information that could be used by tactical units operating in a particular TAOR to engage the VC.<sup>47</sup> This seems to have been one of the strengths of CAPs. This technique has a direct link to FM 100-20 in the subheading of mobilization within the IDAD strategy.

The final part of the CAP mission was to participate in Civic Action and conduct propaganda against VC. Though marginally successful from interviews with former CAP Marines this should remain a host country endeavor. That portion of the CAPs mission seems to fit under Balanced Development in FM 100-20. This section states in part, "balanced development attempts to achieve national goals through political, social, and economic programs." Further, "the government must recognize conditions that contribute to insurgency and take preventive measures."<sup>48</sup> The key point being, the government must take action to negate those conditions that contributed to the insurgency.

## VII. The CAP Security Assistance Force Structure Link

To understand how American forces could be committed to a LIC conflict, it is necessary to realize that the United States provides security assistance to a host of friendly and allied nations. The intent at this point is not to go through the complex and legal requirements to commit U.S. forces, but to show the link between the U.S. and an allied nation with regards to security force assistance.

Security assistance is, in part, managed by the Department of Defense through many programs and organizations. Many of the organizations that manage the security assistance program are currently in place in a host country and have the potential of being the initial source of contact and American response in a conflict or crisis.

One type of organization that could respond to an augment a security assistance organization is a Security Assistance Force (SAF). A typical SAF could be configured as depicted in Figure 2.

As illustrated in Figure 2, a combat element exists. Within this combat element an organization similar to a CAP structure could be organized or married to the security assistance force. The possible organization is depicted in Figure 3.

If a CAP-type organization was formed as part of the combat element as depicted in Figure 3, two advantages are offered. First it is a relatively small, task organized unit that is designed to accomplish a specific mission. Second, as a truly integrated unit, the tactical/line type units providing support do not have to be U.S.

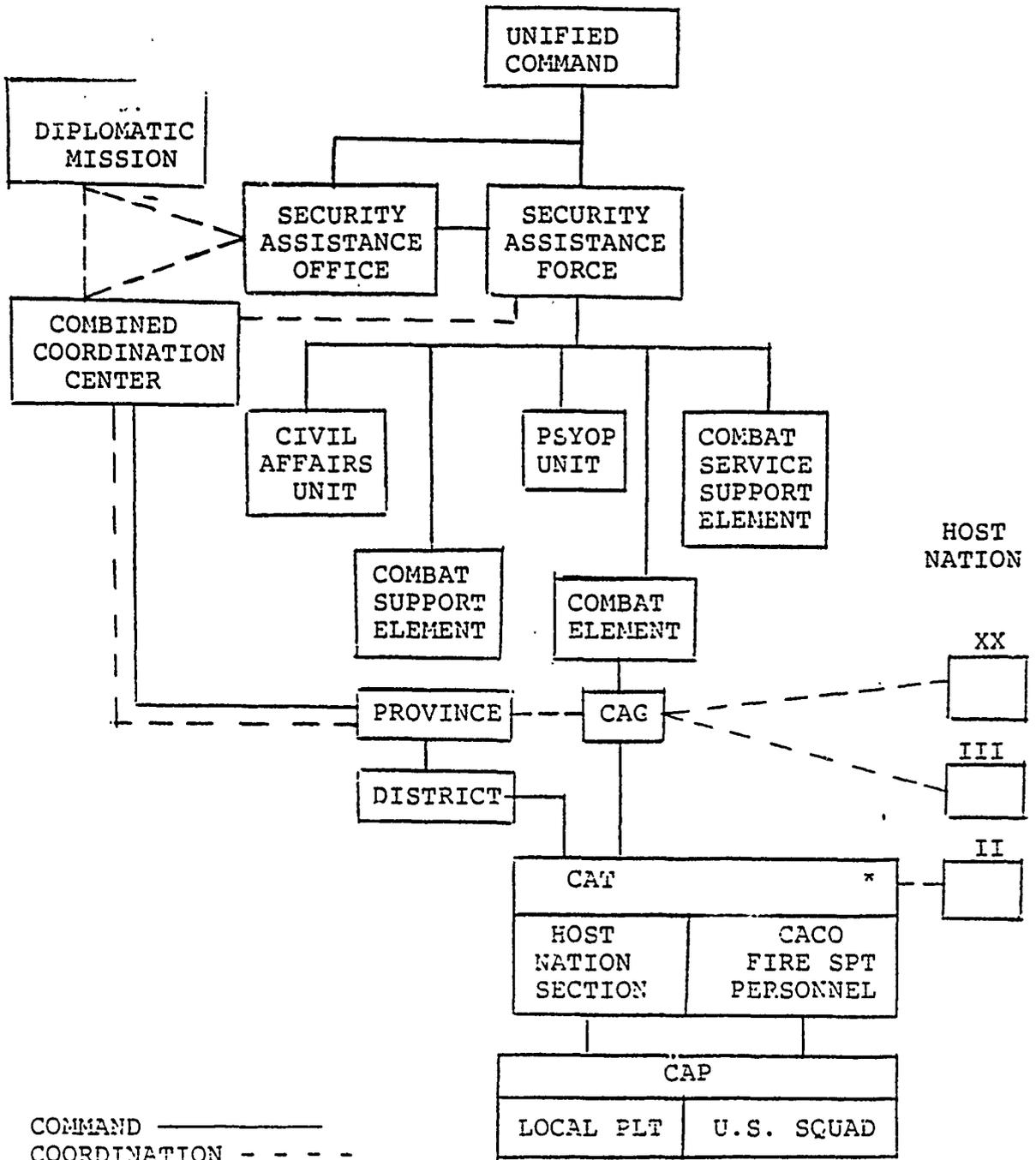
CAPs were at least marginally successful; therefore, this structure provides two important links. The first is the integration of host country armed forces who must do the bulk of the fighting and the U.S. forces. The second is, a system that allows for specially trained teams to work and have daily contact with the people.

This connection to the general populace proved beneficial in Vietnam when the people feared the VC and distrusted the local government. It gave the people a group or organization other than the two directly competing factions, to put their trust in. This may be necessary in the future, particularly if there are conditions present that have created fertile ground for an insurgency.

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\*COOPERATION AND COORDINATION

Figure 3.49

### VIII. Conclusion

From the previous review of CAPs as an organization, the execution of the program, and the success attained in Vietnam, a number of conclusions can be reached. First, the program was successful in various degrees and should still be useful in a LIC environment, if that environment is of a counterinsurgency nature.

Second, when the stated missions of a CAPs organization is compared to the parameters necessary for success as outlined in the Internal Defense and Development section of FM 100-20, they are extremely close. Therefore, a link is suggested to a CAPs type organization.

Third, if CAPs or a similar type organization were to work, the organization would have to be committed to a host country that had an infrastructure similar to that as encountered in Vietnam. Though CAPs were employed in densely populated areas (villages and hamlets), these areas normally were not true urban areas as we understand them. There are similar areas in the world that have this type infrastructure, further suggesting a use of a CAPs organization. A CAP-type organization must have contact with the host country populace in a village type environment to effect control of the populace and identification of

the insurgent. This would not be possible in a large, true urban area.

Finally, if a U.S. force is committed to a LIC environment, particularly to a CAP-type mission, it must be trained to carry out that mission. Therefore, the organization cannot be a general combat force (i.e. line infantry organization) exclusively. A CAP-type organization has the potential to be formed from a general combat force, but it would have to be augmented with those personnel that have resident skills in language and regional cultures.

In the final analysis, the CAP program filled a void that was initially driven by a need for people. As the program grew, it filled a void in the execution of counterinsurgency operations by U.S. forces in a LIC environment. In this execution, the personnel implementing the program convinced a local populace that the U.S. was serious in its commitment to that nation.

This need may be required again and as the United States evaluates counterinsurgency and the LIC environment, it is important to remember all lessons learned. Though the Vietnam experience still has a negative connotation to many, there were positive programs that have application today.

## Endnotes

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- <sup>14</sup> USMC: 32-36.
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APPENDIX A: Correspondence Between General L.W. Walt  
and General Nguyen Chanh Thi Concerning  
USMC-PF Combined Action Platoons

HEADQUARTERS

III Marine Amphibious Force and Naval Component Command  
Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
c/o FPO, San Francisco  
California 96601

103/CAW/jfa  
5 Jan 1966

From: Commanding General  
To: Commanding General, I Corps

Subj: Popular Forces

1. With your concurrence, I propose to expand the Marine/Popular Force program as established by your letter of 17 November 1965 to all Marine enclaves.
2. While we still have a lot of work to do in this initial project I am most pleased with the prospects and mutual benefits of this program. When the Marines and Popular Forces patrol together the problem of detaining innocent people is largely eliminated. Further, I think the Popular Forces are receiving some good training in addition to being provided with additional security. An important aspect of this program is that the Marines enjoy working with your forces and we have here the basis for building a more complete understanding and mutual respect among our units.
3. With the recent increase of VC activity directed at outposts I feel there is some urgency to implementing this cooperation. I intend to instruct my commanders to work with all Popular Forces units in their area of operation, to provide fire support, and reserve forces. After an initial period I plan to place Marine elements with selected Popular Force platoons.
4. Finally, I would hope that our mutual efforts would be reflected in an increase in numbers of men attracted to the Popular Forces. I know you are as concerned as I am about adequate forces to provide security for the rear areas as ARVN/USMC units move forward.
5. Of course, the shortage of Popular Forces is a problem not restricted to I Corps but generally applicable to all of Vietnam. In view of this, I know it would be a source of great satisfaction to you if I Corps could show marked improvement in building up this force and set the pattern for the other Corps to follow. I am prepared to assist in any way possible.

L. W. WALT

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HEADQUARTERS  
I Corps Tactical Zone  
APO 4109

28 January 1966  
1021/TMB/J

MEMORANDUM

From: Commanding General  
To: Commanding General, III MAF  
Subj: USMC-PF combined action policy, Expansion of  
Ref: III MAF Memo 103/CAW/JFC 5 January 1966

1. This command agrees with your idea of expanding the USMC-PF combined action policy which is to our mutual benefit, as has been pointed out by your referred memo.
2. This command will give detailed instructions to local authorities in a specific note with one copy forwarded to your command for information. It is kindly requested that you notify the TAORs Commanding Officers concerned of the subject policy so as to carry out the policy immediately whenever they are contacted by ARVN authorities.
3. In the presence of increasing needs concerning the local tactical situation, this command does hope that the subject policy we are about to execute will bring good results as expected.

NGUYEN CHANH THI  
LtGen ARVN

Copy to:  
-CG CJCoS  
-CG 11th TA  
-CG 12th TA  
-SS of QUANG NAM  
-RF and PF HQS I Corps  
-MACV/I Corps

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HEADQUARTERS  
I Corps TACTICAL Zone  
APO #109

28 January 1966  
1022/TM3/1

Corps ORDER

From: Commanding General  
To: Commanding General 11th Tactical Area  
Commanding General 12th Tactical Area  
Commanding Officer Special Sector of QUANG NAM

Subj: To reinforce PF with USMC troops

Ref: I Corps Order/12554/TM3/1 17 November 1965  
III MAF Memo/103/CAW/JFC 5 January 1966  
I Corps Memo/1201/TM3/1 28 January 1966

1. Formerly this command has chosen the area at the vicinity of DANANG as the test point for the USMC-PF combined action policy. In accordance with this policy, each PF platoon had been reinforced with 15 U. S. Marines with the purpose of boosting the fighting strength of supporting the PF with combat materials, and of training the PF on the fighting techniques.

This policy has brought good results after its test period as follows:

- The fighting spirit of the PF has been restored.
- The PF have been compelled to move
- The U. S. Marines and the PF have been able to exchange their fighting experiences; the mistakes by Allied troops which have proved to be harmful to the people have been decreased.

2. In order to exploit the good results of the policy and also in accordance with the Commanding General III MAF suggestion, this command has decided to expand the USMC-PF combined action policy to all USMC TAORs within I Corps.

It is instructed that immediately after receiving this order the 11th TA, the 12th TA and the SS of QUANG NAM will directly contact the local USMC commands concerned in order to establish the operating procedures and thus execute this policy.

3. It is instructed that the 11th and the 12th and the SS of QUANG NAM should strengthen the PF platoons assigned, check the undesired and suspected communist-minded elements; report all progresses to this command with recommendations consistent with the execution of this policy, and the obstacle encountered so that this command could find a solution to all problems.

Presently the VC has brought to the USMC TAOR numerous guerrilla forces with the purpose of intelligence, of harassing and slowly destroying our Allies, of carrying political warfare and of clearing the way for the Regulars to infiltrate. It is requested that addressees should realize the needs of the situation and try their best to fully accomplish the policy in a short period of time; guidance instructions should be given to Sectors, Districts assigned so as to deploy their PF forces assigned (which have been reinforced) to destroy every enemy efforts in those important areas.

NGUYEN CHANH THI  
LtGen ARVN

Copy to:  
-III MAF Commanding General  
-MACV/I Corps  
-TOC/I Corps  
-I Corps RF and PF HQS A-3  
-Sector+Province of THUA THIEN  
-Sector+Province of QUANG TIN  
-Sector+Province of QUANG NGAI  
-Province of QUANG NAM  
CG CLCofS

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HEADQUARTERS  
III Marine Amphibious Force and Naval Component Command  
Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
c/o FPO, San Francisco  
California 96601.

103/CAW/gna  
4 Feb 1966  
012366

From: Commanding General  
To: Commanding Officer, I Corps Advisory Group  
Subj: Popular Forces  
Ref: (a) CG I Corps ltr 1021/TM3/1 dtd 28 Jan 1966

1. By reference (a), General THI has concurred in the proposal to expand the Marine-Popular Force program. The success of this program depends heavily upon the advisory effort.
2. In view of this, you will ensure that advisors at all levels are well-acquainted with the program and its size. Specifically, the program instructs Marine commanders in each TAOR to coordinate closely with each Popular Force unit in their area of operations; to provide communications, supporting arms, reserve forces; and to place Marines with selected PF units. In addition, certain PF platoons in proximity to each other will be organized into Combined Action Companies. Under no circumstances will the present mission of the PF unit be changed or modified. The overall goal of the program is to improve the effectiveness of the Popular Forces.
3. The advisors have the ability to influence the Popular Force program not only inside the TAOR's, but throughout I Corps. The point of departure is to interest the GVN officials at all levels in working to build up this force. By continually highlighting the PF problem in discussion with counterparts and assisting recruiting efforts at the local level, sufficient attention can be focused on this problem. The importance of an adequate force to secure the rear areas to allow Marine/ARVN forces to move forward cannot be overstressed.

L. W. WALT

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HEADQUARTERS  
III Marine Amphibious Force and Naval Component Command  
Military Assistance Command, Vietnam  
c/o FPO San Francisco  
California 96601

103/CAW/dlm  
4 Feb 1966

From: Commanding General  
To: Commanding General, 3d Marine Division (Rein) FMF

Subj: Popular Forces

Ref: (a) CG I Corps ltr 1021/TM3/1 dtd 28Jan66  
(b) III MAF OpOrder 305-66

1. By reference (a), the Commanding General, I Corps has concurred in III MAF proposal to expand the Marine-Popular Force program throughout all Marine enclaves and has published instructions to subordinates throughout I Corps.
2. Action will be taken immediately to establish liaison through Province, District, and down to village/hamlet as required to take operational control of Popular Force units within a zone of action in accordance with reference (b). In each case ensure that local officials thoroughly understand the program and have been apprised of General THH's letter. Specifically, presentations will include that Marine forces intend to establish communications to Popular Force units, provide supporting arms, reserve forces, and plan to place Marines with selected Popular Force Platoons. Where possible Popular Force units in proximity to each other will be organized into Combined Action Companies. In discussions, stress the mutual benefits of the program in that Marines can profit from Popular Forces knowledge of area, language, and people while the Popular Force will receive valuable training and will be provided additional security. Of primary importance is the fact that this relationship will provide a basis for better understanding and building of mutual respect between our forces. In presenting the program to RVN officials, avoid the use of the term "operational control" by substituting "cooperation or coordination".
3. Insure a thorough indoctrination on the overall aims of programs to all concerned. These are to improve the effectiveness and prestige of the Popular Forces with a view to increasing recruitments to build up this critically under-strength force. The importance of the Popular Forces to provide security for rear areas which will allow Marine/ARVN combat forces to move forward, cannot be overstressed. At every opportunity when dealing with GVN officials, highlight the Popular Force problem and assess the adequacy of the program at local levels to improve this force.
4. Upon receipt of this letter, report:
  - a. Location of Popular Force units in area of operations.
  - b. Assigned mission of each unit,
  - c. Commander.
  - d. Personnel present for duty.
  - e. Amount and condition of equipment.
  - f. Uniform requirements.
  - g. Plans for implementing program.
5. After the initial report submit summary of operations conducted and evaluation of the program on a weekly basis.

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APPENDIX B: Sample CAC Training Program

CAC  
TRAINING PROGRAM

Week 1

- |                                      |   |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Maintenance of military equipment | Preventive maintenance, clearing of individual equipment                                  |
| 2. Preparation for range firing      | Position exercises (prone, sitting/kneeling, offhand), sight picture/alignment            |
| 3. Language training                 | Daily verbal drills   |
| 4. Citizenship and patriotism        | Role of popular force, discipline and bearing, proper relationship between PF and citizen |
- 

Week 2

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Missions of guards and sentries | General orders, challenge and counter-sign, use of password  |
| 2. Preparation for range firing    | Range safety, rapid fire exercises, review of sight picture and sight alignment, and trigger squeeze |
| 3. Language training               | Daily group exercises  |
| 4. Citizenship and patriotism      | Vietnam history, political history   |
- 

Week 3

- |                 |  |
|-----------------|--|
| 1. Range firing | Qualification firing of popular forces schedule and course of fire to be announced |
|-----------------|--|

- |                               |  |
|-------------------------------|--|
| 2. Hygiene                    | Individual hygiene in the field, sanitation in the field (cooking, water, latrines, storage of food) |
| 3. Language training          | Daily group verbal exercises   |
| 4. Citizenship and patriotism | Introduction to international communism  |
- 

Week 4

- |                                     |   |
|-------------------------------------|---|
| 1. Hand grenades                    | Description, use and effect of, positions for throwing, throwing techniques, practice for distance and accuracy (construct target/backstop) |
| 2. Hand to hand combat              | Falling and basic moves of self-defense   |
| 3. Language training                | Daily group verbal exercises  |
| 4. Psychological warfare operations | Popular force role in educating and influencing the village populace in GVN aims and Vietnamese history                                     |
- 

Week 5

- |                                    |  |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. Missions of guards and sentries | Review of general orders, use of password                                      |
| 2. Buddy aid                       | Artificial respiration, evacuation techniques, use and construction of litters |
| 3. Hand to hand combat             | Counter-techniques against kick, body hold, stranglehold                       |
| 4. Language training               | Daily group verbal exercises   |

Week 6

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Intelligence      | Intelligence consciousness, mission of individual in collecting and reporting information-who, what, where, when |
| 2. Buddy aid         | Treatment of fractures, burns, and bleeding  |
| 3. Language training | Daily group verbal exercises   |
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Week 7

- |                        |   |
|------------------------|---|
| 1. Intelligence        | Handling of captives (five S's), search techniques tagging of captives and captured equipment |
| 2. Hand to hand combat | Counter-techniques against knife stabbing and pistol menace                                   |
| 3. Communications      | Maintenance and use of PRC-10 and PRC-6   |
| 4. Language training   | Daily group verbal exercises  |
- 

Week 8

- |                       |  |
|-----------------------|--|
| 1. Buddy aid          | Review of previous instructions  |
| 2. Communications     | Wire communications, trouble shooting, practical application in splicing of wire lines. Review maintenance of comm equipment |
| 3. Techniques of fire | Determination of range, fire control and discipline, plunging-grazing-enfilade fire, characteristics of each                 |

4. Language training                      Daily group verbal exercises

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Week 9

1. Intelligence                              Refresher for intelligence consciousness, captive handling

2. Hand to hand combat                      Practical application of self-defense techniques

3. Field fortifications                      Organization of defensive position, fire planning

4. Language training                          Daily group verbal exercises

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Week 10

1. Field fortifications                      Use of wire and obstacles (natural and man-made), clearing fields of fire, types of foxholes and use

2. Missions of guards and sentries                      Review general orders, use of password

3. Preparation for range firing                      Position exercises, review of marksmanship principles, range safety

4. Language training                          Daily group verbal exercises

5. Mines and booby traps                      Use of explosives, caps, detonating cord and ignition fuse

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Week 11

1. Range firing                                  Qualification firing of popular forces, schedule and course of fire to be announced

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 2. Map reading       | Introduction to maps, orientation to terrain/cultural features, marginal data                     |
| 3. Compass           | Introduction to lensatic compass, practical exercises in determining principal compass directions |
| 4. Language training | Daily group verbal exercises  |
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Week 12

- |                          |  |
|--------------------------|--|
| 1. Map reading           | Use of contour lines, distance/scale relationship, position location by map inspection/orientation               |
| 2. Compass               | Relate to map by shooting azimuths to prominent terrain features and translating to map, use of compass at night |
| 3. Language training     | Daily group verbal exercises   |
| 4. Mines and booby traps | Characteristics, functioning, employment, laying, detecting and disarming mines and booby traps, VC booby traps  |
- 

Week 13

- |                      |  |
|----------------------|--|
| 1. Land navigation   | Practical exercises with map and compass, daylight and night compass marches |
| 2. Patrols           | Introduction to by type and mission, preparation for by type (day and night) |
| 3. Language training | Daily group verbal exercises   |

Week 14

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Patrolling        | Briefing, patrol order debriefing   |
| 2. Village searches  | Organization of search squad, duties of members, review of captive handling and tagging |
| 3. Immediate action  | Individual reactions in danger areas and under enemy fire, develop counter-ambush SOP   |
| 4. Language training | Daily group verbal exercises  |
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Week 15

- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| 1. Immediate action  | Drills of SOP to counter ambush during foot movement  |
| 2. Ambush            | Introduction to deliberate ambush, selection of sites (day and night), pre-planned killing zone, route of advance and withdrawal, assembly points (use sand tables to illustrate) |
| 3. Language training | Daily group verbal exercises  |
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Week 16

- |                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Ambushes         | Organization of members into search/security/main body elements, detailed examination of duties of each member, practical application drills |
| 2. Immediate action | SOP drills   |

3. Language training

Daily group verbal  
exercises

APPENDIX C: Combined Action Force Locations as of January 1970

