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January 27, 1966

Saigon
Security

PHU HOA DONG, SOUTH VIETNAM--On the outskirts of this sun-baked district capital only twenty miles north of Saigon, the Viet Cong Communist political cadre established teams of armed men and women to welcome Vietnamese government troopers into their zones.

In Than Phu Trung (New Central Richness), only 17 miles northwest of Saigon, the Viet Cong guerrillas showed military movies, held ~~cutural~~ cultural singing and dancing entertainment, and then held a four-abreast military review of their troops under the battery-operated flood-lights, beneath the jungle canopy.

In Thu Duc, a suburban-like town ^{only} seven miles northeast of Saigon, Viet Cong political cadre visited house-by-house the families of Vietnamese government troops, urging them to defect from the Saigon government ranks.

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These examples of armed propaganda and "proselytization"--
as the Communists call it--flourished openly on the outskirts
of Saigon during the Lunar New Year ceasefire la st week--and
then withered into invisible, underground, covert subversive
operations during the remainder of the year.

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In Phu Hoa Dong, a Viet Cong team of seven men and three women, dressed in polygot uniforms, welcomed the Saigon government troops as they departed ^{from} their positions on authorized leave and entered the Viet Cong zones on their way to visit their families, as had been arranged by the two independent Lunar New Year ceasefires ^{issued} ~~used~~ by the Saigon government and the Viet Cong political organization.

The three Viet Cong women, with short bobbed hair, carried modern submachineguns of Soviet design, and wore the traditional peasant garb of black pajamas. The seven men carried a mixture of long, antique Russian rifles and captured American tommy guns. The wore either or black pajamas or brownish khaki uniforms.

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Vietnamese government army regulars, reinforced by a
M-21 tank squadron, are assigned to secure Phu Hoa Dong, which
was the pilot case project for the Jop Hop Tac plans to secure
secure vitw bits of the seven provinces surrounding Saigon.
But, the Viet Cong welcoming teams--operating under the noses
of the government troop troops--illustrate the serious defects
in the Hop Tap plan and the general insecurity of the region
surrounding Saigon.

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At a Vietnamese government checkpoint near Phu Hoa Dong--which means Rich Eastern Peace--a Vietnamese government regular soldier wept because the military police jerked him off the tri-wheeled, motorized lambretta, seized his identity papers and assured him he would be reprimanded by his superiors.

"I've saved two months' pay to give to my mother," he sobbed, "but I can't get home to give it to her. She lives in the Viet Cong zone."

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In Tan Phu Trung, only 17 miles northwest of Saigon, reliable sources reported that during the Lunar New Year ceasefire, Viet Cong guerrillas and propagandists visited the village and held a two-hour performance. The performance began with a short war movie showing Viet Cong guerrillas fighting in neighboring areas and this was followed by a theatre performance with the theme of personifying the heroic deeds of Viet Cong fighters. The theatre performance included Vietnamese songs, accompanied by mandolin and guitar, and Viet Cong "renovated" dances.

The highlight of the evening for the villagers, however, was a half-hour military review, in which Viet Cong troops marched four abreast, carrying individual and unit weapons such as light mortars and anti-tank weapons. They were dressed in mixed unit uniforms of black pajamas, brownish khakis, and green locally-made hats. A handful of women were included in the review, which was held under four battery-operated floodlights beneath a thin jungle canopy. Reliable sources said several families drove their cars up to village to see the performance, which was held only 200 yards from the main highway.

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Reliable sources said that even Vietnamese government troops were invited to witness the performance--and several from a nearby post dressed in civilian clothes to attend the evening's entertainment.

Other reliable sources indicated that the Viet Cong also showed war movies, illustrating Communist heroism, only three kilometers from Ben Cat, a government district capital forty miles north of Saigon where elements of the U.S. Army 1st Infantry Division are based.

"A lot of Americans were killed and wounded in that movie," one spectator reported.

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In Thu Duc, seven miles from Saigon, Viet Cong propagandists visited the families of government troops, who wished them a Happy Lunar New Year, chitchatted about the local situation and ~~asked~~ inquired about the sons serving the Vietnamese Army.

"A lot of young people are fighting to liberate the country," ~~the Viet~~ Viet Cong cadre told one family. "But your son is serving the enemy and the Americans. Maybe your son can not escape from the ~~enemy~~ ^{ENEMY} army, or he can not escape the draft. But he should not shoot at the Viet Cong during a battle, and he should wait on the sidelines ready to turn his weapon against the Americans and the Vietnamese puppet forces."

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South of Saigon, on the main Highway No. 4 leading to the Mekong Delta, the Viet Cong established two mined roadblocks obstructing all traffic from a six-kilometer chunk of no-man's land. They then planted Viet Cong flags ^{— BLUE} green and red with a golden star and "Happy Year of the Horse—the Year of Victory" slogans along the roadside. One Vietnamese government police jeep was blown up, and even with 30 government armored ~~personnel~~ personnel carriers and tanks, but roadblocks were not removed for several hours.

During the Lunar New Year ceasefir e, the Viet Cong surfaced to implement the program they have reportedly given top priority for the remainder of the year; to agitate politically in the enemy rear—among government troops, along the government-controlled roads, cities and towns, while intensifying their frontline military offensives.