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psyops 1 (normass/deepe)

Long An

(This is the last of a two-part series on the synchronized military encirclement and psychological warfare operations of the 1st Brigade, U. S. Army 9th Infantry Division).

TAN AN, SOUTH VIETNAM SEPTEMBER 27--The 1st Brigade's ground units go into battle carrying bullhorn s-- bullhorns and flashboards for broadcasting face-to-face to Communists units that they should surrender and that will be well-treated. The flashboards, wrt written in Vietnamese and in English, list pre-planned messages appropriate fro varying battlefield situations.

But, when the American ground units encircle on masse in a donut formation a Communist uh unit, then more centralized and sophisticated psychological warfare method is used--an heli-borne 1000-watt loudspeaker.

From H Helicopter.

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psyops 2 (normass/deepe)

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The brigade, which concentrates its psychological operations on capturing the Communists, has developed several battlefield techniques. One is called "instant psyops" ~~(psyops)~~. If one Communist prisoner or voluntary defector is taken by the brigade during a battle, he is asked fly over the war zone in a helicopter and broadcast an appeal to his comrades below, telling them he has been well-treated by the American troops. In other cases, "instant psyops" is especially tailored to that ~~the~~ Communist unit that is encircled; recently, for example, intelligence information indicated ~~the~~ *an encircled* surrounded unit was low on food and ammunition. The ~~if~~ airborne loudspeaker reminded the Communist troops of this and emphasized the futility of continuing to fight when they were completely encircled without hope of escape.

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Another technique is called "psyops with a punch." The heli-borne loudspeaker messages to the Communists below that the unit is surrounded-- and that ["]this-is-your-last-chance["] to surrender or defect before the next ~~heavy bombardment~~ ^{Bombardment} by air or artillery is directed onto their positions.

"We try to fight this war with every angle," one brigade officer explained.

The brigade's officer in charge of psychological operations is ~~Fire~~ First Lieutenant James MMM. Kilcrease repeat Kilcrease Junior of Nashville, Tenn. (800 Smiley Street). A young, sensitive Negro who was wounded as a platoon leader last month, he was ^{then} assigned to ~~set~~ the staff position ^{of} in the brigade headquarters. He also served in Vietnam in 1963 with the U. S. Special Forces and he speaks a smattering of Vietnamese.

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"The hardest part of this war is finding the enemy--not fighting him," Lt. Kilcrease explained. "And after finding him, ^{try to} then to stabilize the enemy--to make him stand still so that we can talk to him with our loudspeakers. If he isn't interested in listening to us, then we unlease our firepower. We try to use our firepower to get a psychological response from him--rather than to kill him. We hiv give him the choice of surrendering or dying."

Thus far, the battlefield's psyops program has had marginal success--but the brigade is continuing to experiment to get better results. Since arriving in Long An province in mid-June, the brigade has received eleven eleven voluntary defectors and 300 prisoners, all of them a direct result of psychological operations made during battlefield contacts. Many Communist defectors prefer to turn themselves into Vietnamese government units, rather than the brigade, yet roughly 40 per cent of these 127 defectors ^{in July} last month were induced to surrender because of the American psyops program.

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When the American brigade has encircled a Communist unit in a donut-styled formation, then Lt. Kilcrease flies over the hole Communist-held hold of the donut several hundred feet above Communist weapons to appeal to t for their surrende5 surrender. He has been shot at so many times, he has lost count. "It's just a common thing," he laughed.

"The donut confines the target," he explained. "When the enemy is not encircled, then we are talking to the target blind. Without the donut, the confusion of battle does not afford the enemy a chance to escape from his own comrades who watch each other. The Communists sometimes shoot their own comrades in the back rather than letting them surrender, but if there's enough confusion from our donut encirclement, then they can escape.

"When the donut is formed and the encirclement is complete, then I helicopter over the hole of the donut broadcasting to the Communists below with my 1000- from my loudspeaker."

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psyops 6 (normass/deepo)

Speaking softly, but confidently, he continued to detail the o
-psyops his psyops mission battlefield psyops mission:

"When the brigade first has contact with the enemy, we put on an
artillery display for psychological purposes for them. Then the brigade
commander orders a complete stop to all firing. There's no firing from
anywhere--from the artillery down to the lowest private with his M-16.
Then, I fly over in the helicopters an with an interpreter who is often
a former Communist defector. He explains to the Communists why the firing
has stopped, that they are surrounded and that it is senseless to keep
fighting it and that they can rally to us through the Chieu Hoi program, and the
We give them specific directions of on how to rally--like moving towards
a river or a road. Then we give them a time period to decide. In the
daytime, maybe it may be as long as 30 minutes, but near darkness it is
about ten minutes. We have to watch their reaction carefully, to be sure
they do not try to break out of the donut when we have stopped all our firing.

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psyops 7 (normass/deepe)

If there is no move by the Communists to rally, then more artillery is called directed into their positions. The firepower is so massive, that "sometimes I wonder how they live through it because the fires are so thro thoroughly inter-locking," he said.

"Then after awhile, the firing is stopped again. We emphasize an ^{to our troops} ~~immed~~ immediate stop to all firing, ~~down to the privates~~ because we don't want to tilt the psychological balance. We want the enemy to realize our weapons fire is a controlled thing. And then, I make another appeal to them--this time not to rally ~~us~~ i under the Chieu Hoi program, but to surrender as a prisoner of war. If there are alot of North Vietnamese troops in the unit, we assure them they will be treated ^{by the Geneva Conf Conventionw} ~~by the Geneva Conf Conventionw~~ Conventions; the local Viet Cong don't know about the Geneva Conf Convention Conventions, so we just assure them they'll be treated well. We always try to use military power to psychologically convince the enemy to give up, rather than to kill him."

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psyops 8 (normass/deepe)

American officers concede they face many problems in their psychological warfare campaign. Many Communists ~~paradehandman~~ would simply fight to their da death--much to the astonish bewilderment of American commanders--rather than surrendering or rallying to Allied units. When they do rally to Allied the Allies, many Communists prefer to come into Vietnamese government outposts and installations, rather than American units--and ~~many many of the~~ ^{Some} ~~government uni~~ governments units are none too enthusiastic in welcoming them. Some Communists prefer to rally to Vietnamese government units because of the language barrier with American troops--and also because of Communist propaganda, which has convinced ^{them} ~~their~~ troops that the American troops are more vicious than the Vietnamese troops in maltreating killing or torturing them on the spot. American commanders have taken great pains pains to disprove this point; American troops are specifically ordered to make sure the Communist defectors and prisoners are not ru roughed up or shot during ht the battlefield confusions. Sometimes, Commun wounded Communists are given medical treatment on the battlefield so that their comrades can witness it. Even when American troops have had their buddies killed by the Communists, they often ~~butter up the prisoners and~~ show the prisoners ^{some} kindness by giving them water: water, cigaree ~~cigaree~~ ^{cigarettes} food and gum during the battle. ²⁻¹⁰

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psyops 9 (normass/deepe)

Some Communist defectors and prisoners have been amazed that the Americans expressed amazement that the Americans treat them so kindly with superb medical care, food, boots and clothing. Still, many Communists are afraid to surrender or rally to Allied units, even when faced with death on the battlefield; Communist cadres have tightened their control over the troops by counter-countering the Allies psyops program. Communist cadre say American leaflet drops inform in Communist areas about the pro-Chieu Hoi program are poisonous and should be picked up by the Communist troops. After loudspeaker American loudspeaker missions are heard by a Communist unit, the troops are given indoctrination see impromptu indoctrination sessions and hold self-criticism sessions meetings because they listened to the "imperialistic propaganda."

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Also, the growing influx of North Vietnamese troops and hard-line commanders in Long An province has decreased the rate of prisoner and defection rate. The North Vietnamese are much more likely to fight to the last man-- while the Viet Cong locals generally try to break off contact and evade the American units. ^{terrorism} Also, the Communist command has taken pains to make surrenders and defections less attractive and more difficult.

The Chieu H Chieu Hoi ralliers have been specific targets of terrorism by the Communists since the Tet offensive; prison camps were also battlegrounds during and since the Tet; some ralliers or prisoners are shot in the back by their comrades rather than being allowed to cross to American lines.

"Hence, we're not getting as many alive as we'd like," Lt. Kilcrease said. "The Communists may be afraid of our artillery and air bombardments, but if the troop their comrades right next to them are going to shoot them, too, some of them are better to take ~~in~~ a chance of jumping in a foxhole to try to escape our firepower.

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pyops 11 (normass/deepe)

In one battlefield case, two ralliers came to the First Brigade, then volunteered to return to the Communist area to convince their comrades to either surrender or voluntarily rally. But, the Communists killed one and wounded the other rather than listening to their surrender ~~the~~ please please.

Once the prisoners and defectors are returned to base camp, American Vietnam and Vietnamese interrogators explain in detail and again ask each individual if he chooses to be classified as a prisoner or a rallier in under the Vietnamese government's Chieu Hoi program. The prisoner of war is placed in a designated ba4 barbed wire, well-guarded camp until the end of the war and is treated--by American units at least--according to the Geneva Conventions. For North Vietnamese troops, it means they can return to the North at the end of the war. In the Chieu Hoi program, however, many defectors must again take up arms within a year's time to fight their former comrades. The advantage, is, however, they can live with their families in the South and ^{they are} given full rights of other Vietnamese citizens, at rather than living out the rest of the war in a concentration camp.

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One North Vietnamese who rallied to the Americans under the Chieu Hoi program later said he wanted to be classified as a prisoner of war --he was tired of killing and risking being killed. Also, ~~unpublished~~ there are vague indications, but no specific statements, that North Vietnamese troops fear reprisals against their families in North Vietnam if it is publicized they have voluntarily defected to the anti-Communist side.

Another psyops ~~experiment~~ ~~prg program~~ ~~technique~~ technique that has been initiated is helicoptering the wives of Viet Cong or ex-Viet Cong over a Communist base area and having the woman ~~appeal~~ ^{Loudspeaker} to them through the loudspeaker to surrender. Interrogations have shown that many of the Communist troops are lonely for their families and wives, some of whom have been separated for years. Generally, the wife of the Viet Cong ^{from 303} appeals to the fighters to return to their families and that they will be treated well when they rally.

Last week, a ~~Viet Cong rallier~~ ^{Viet Cong} a rallier from the Viet Cong and his wife broadcast loudspeaker appeals over the target area where his comrades he had once fought with were hiding out. The next afternoon, four of the Communists from the unit rallied to a Vietnamese government unit. ⁰⁷²³⁵⁷ ~~unit~~; American officers considered the rallier's wife more articulate and imaginative in drawing up her appeal for the Communist troops than was her husband who had served with the unit.

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"My dream and the dream of other officers in the brigade is to get a whole unit to come in," Lt. Kilcrease said. "We're ~~concerned~~ concerned about the results of an operation, ~~especia~~ our ~~psychellg~~ psychological operation especially when the Viet Cong are so badly hurt and we wonder why don't these guys come ~~out~~ ^{over to us?}..."

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